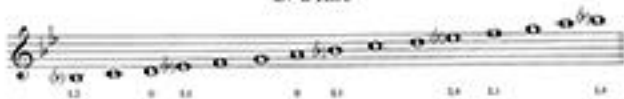


Lesson #43: A New Key!

If you have played violin for a few years, you have probably already played in B \flat . The key of B \flat is really no big deal. However, in the fiddle world I have noticed a peculiarity. Many fiddlers when they refer to B \flat , talk like it's something hard and different and a mystery to them. I have noticed that fiddlers who have played many years in the open keys (G, D, A) and then tried B \flat sometimes had some difficulty. While as I have seen students who have only played a couple of years try B \flat and have no problem. I came to the conclusion that those who had played for years in the open keys simply got used to those finger patterns, and anything else felt strange.

Here is a B \flat scale written out so you can get used to the finger patterns in B \flat .

B \flat Scale



When you play in B \flat , be sure to not play an open "E" string, but a few fourth fingers on the "A" string.

Now we can use our B \flat playing skill to play one of my favorite waltzes, THE SATURDAY NIGHT WALTZ. I heard this years ago when playing in Canada and fell in love with it the very first time I heard it. I have had a lot of good luck with this waltz when I have played it in "old time" style contexts, because it has such a great danceable rhythm. "LORDAGS VALSIN" was the original name of this Norwegian waltz. This translates to "Saturday Waltz," but Americans added the word "Night" to it. It was made up by Axel Johnson in 1921, and was a favorite among Scandinavian-Americans during the 1920's and 1930's.

One of my "secrets" when I play this waltz is to put the "fat one" (a heavy emphasis on the first beat of every measure) throughout. This waltz already has great danceability, but the "fat one" brings it out even more. Listen to this danceability on your recording.

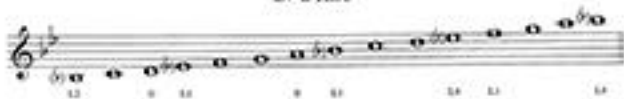


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