

10 Classical Etudes

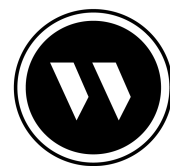
By Carcassi, Giuliani, & Sor

Edited Bradford Werner

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Study Notes

These etudes represent a mix of excellent musical compositions and educational content. The selections have been arranged in progressive order so practice them one at a time from start to finish. The first and last etude emphasize the importance of developing a *musical* technique. Aim for expressive but solid musical skills. Over-exaggerate musical ideas such as dynamic shaping, phrasing, articulation, and form. I have tested these etudes with my students and found them to be very beneficial for developing musical and technical concepts on the classical guitar. Enjoy.

Study, No. 6, Op. 60 by Fernando Sor (1778-1839)

The first etude is a basic legato study by Fernando Sor. As you improve your technique you'll want to focus on the elegance that this basic etude requires. Use your right hand thumb for the lower voice (down-stem notes) unless otherwise indicated. Listen for the four bar phrase length and make it clear to the listener. Aim for a very legato performance with good dynamic shaping, clean playing, and elegant execution. Mute the voices as the rests indicate (watch the video lesson for clarification).

Allegretto, No. 22, Op. 50 by Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829)

This etude focuses on slurs and helps develop the basic four-finger position (one finger per fret in the left hand). Try to keep the left hand knuckles in-line with the strings. Do not reach out the left hand fingers for the frets, instead, hover your fingers over the fret and keep your movements small and economic.

Study No. 14, Op. 60 by Matteo Carcassi (1781-1829)

This etude develops free-stroke scale-work with a focus on legato and position shifts. Do not add slurs to accomplish the legato. The shifts are somewhat difficult but remember that 'the arm moves the hand'. Keep a good left hand position while the arm shifts the hand up or down the neck of the guitar.

Study No. 19, Op. 60 by Matteo Carcassi

Despite being No. 19 in the Op. 60 collection, this etude is not as difficult as it first appears. The focus is on arpeggios, right hand balance, and upper voice melodic phrasing. Once you have the chord shapes in the left hand it's pretty much up to the right hand. Remember the hierarchy of balance: melody is loudest, bass is medium loud, and the accompaniment (repeated sixteenth notes) are soft. These are generalizations but that is the basic idea.

Study No. 6, Op. 60 by Matteo Carcassi

I know, I've put these Carcassi etudes all out of order! However, I think this etude, although easier to play than No. 19, is *musically* more difficult. Right hand balance and voice independence (counterpoint) is tricky to pull off but it will build right and left hand control. Make sure to play the lower voice with your thumb and aim for a legato and even sound (you can also add dynamic shaping). Sustain all the notes for their full value. Really listen for the horizontal *sustain* of *both* voices.

Study No. 24, Op. 60 by Fernando Sor

This study is an excellent workout for arpeggios. The focus is control but also speed. Keep the right hand still as it executes the arpeggios. This is one of my favorite Sor etudes both educationally and musically.

Study No. 10, Op. 60 by Matteo Carcassi

This is a wonderful study for the left hand position, slurs, and shifts. Playing thirds and slurs are two of the most common things guitarists face in tonal repertoire. Be economic in your movements and relax during the shifts. Aim for a clean and elegant execution.

Thirds in G Major No. 5, Op. 1 by Mauro Giuliani

As in the above study, thirds are excellent for the left hand position. In particular, thirds are a great way to get students to play on their fingertips as it is common to accidentally mute the below string if using poor technique. The exercise is also good for shifts, accuracy, and economy of motion. Practice the thirds as solid chords and also as broken thirds (as written).

Octaves in G Major No. 7, Op. 1 by Mauro Giuliani

Octaves are a real workout and great for the left hand position, basic reach, stretches, shifts, and accuracy. Keep the left hand stable and let the fingers do all the moving. Do not change your hand position for every new octave shape. Be careful to not injure yourself. Take breaks!

Study in B Minor (Allegretto) No. 22, Op. 35 by Fernando Sor

The final study is focused on musicality. The whole point of etudes is to combine good music with a technical element. Work on shaping, phrasing, arpeggios, melody, tone and more. The notation is a bit strange in this work but in general you just play eighth note rhythms most of the time. The longer note values implied are just a suggestion regarding sustain.

Video Performances & Lessons

Watch on the purchase page at Werner Guitar Editions or at This is Classical Guitar:
thisisclassicalguitar.com/ten-classical-etudes-guitar/

Legend

Right Hand Fingering

p = thumb / i = index / m = middle / a = ring

Left Hand Fingering

1 = index / 2 = middle / 3 = ring finger / 4 = pinky

Barre Examples

BII2 = Barre the 2nd fret, two of the strings

BX5 = Barre the 10th fret, five of the strings

Position Number Examples

I. - play in first position (1st finger around first fret)

V. - play in fifth position (1st finger around the fifth fret)