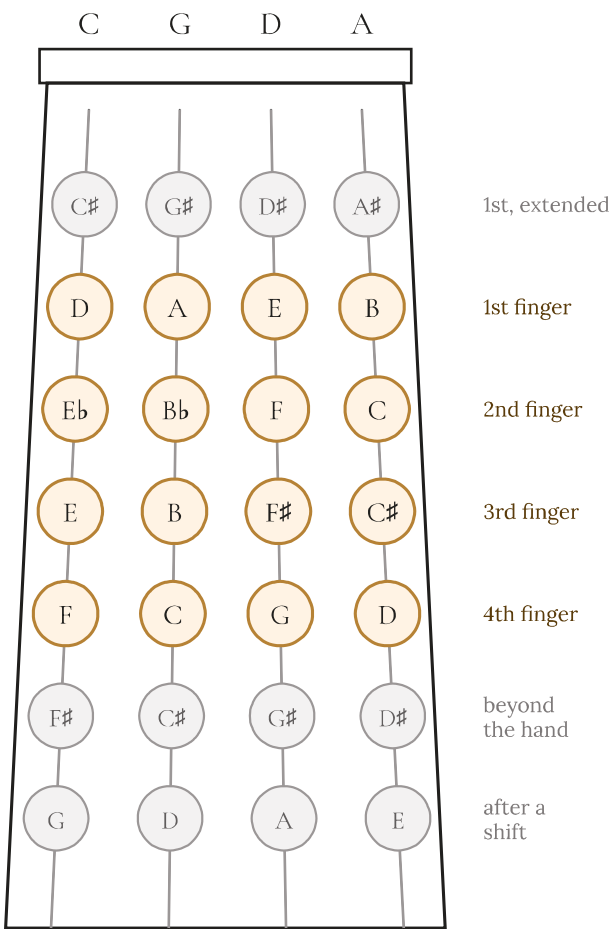


The Cello Fingerboard

Every note the hand can reach in first position, and where it moves next. Gold rows are the four fingers of the first-position frame — on the cello they sit a semitone apart, so the whole hand spans a minor third.

The fingerboard, note by note Strings tuned in fifths — C G D A, low to high



The neck as the player sees it, looking down from the scroll. Gold circles are the four fingers of the first-position frame, a semitone apart; pale circles lie outside it — reached by extending back or by shifting.

	C LOWEST	G	D	A HIGHEST
open no finger	C	G	D	A
1st, extended 1 semitone	C#/Db	G#/Ab	D#/Eb	A#/Bb
1st finger 2 semitones	D	A	E	B
2nd finger 3 semitones	D#/Eb	A#/Bb	F	C
3rd finger 4 semitones	E	B	F#/Gb	C#/Db
4th finger 5 semitones	F	C	G	D
— 6 semitones	F#/Gb	C#/Db	G#/Ab	D#/Eb
shift needed 7 semitones	G	D	A	E

Read a column downwards and you have that string from the open note up to the fourth finger. Where two names share a box they are the same pitch spelled two ways — Eb in a flat key, D# in a sharp one.

There are no frets — the lines are where your ear says they are. **Open** means the string sounds on its own, no finger down.

In first position the four fingers sit **one semitone apart**: the hand covers a minor third from 1st finger to 4th.

The **backward extension** reaches one semitone below the first finger without moving the hand — that is the pale row above the gold ones.

The gap from the open string to the first finger is a whole tone, wider than the gaps between the fingers.

The same finger on the next string up sounds a fifth higher, because the strings themselves are a fifth apart.

Tune with the open strings first: C–G–D–A, each a perfect fifth above the last.

Positions — where the hand sits Named by the note under the first finger

POSITION	C STRING	G STRING	D STRING	A STRING
1st	D	A	E	B
2nd	E	B	F#/Gb	C#/Db
3rd	F	C	G	D
4th	G	D	A	E

A **position** is simply where the hand sits on the string. Everything else follows from the first finger.

Shift by moving the whole arm, keeping the semitone finger pattern intact.

Third position puts the first finger a perfect fourth above the open string, and fourth position a perfect fifth — the same pitch as the next string, so it tunes itself.

Higher up, the thumb comes onto the string as a fifth stopping point: thumb position, well beyond this chart.

Scales that stay in first position Start here — no shifting needed

C major
C D E F G A B C

G major
G A B C D E F# G

D major
D E F# G A B C# D

F major
F G A Bb C D E F

A minor
A B C D E F G A

D minor
D E F G A Bb C D

G minor
G A Bb C D Eb F G · uses the extension

Eb major
Eb F G Ab Bb C D Eb · uses the extension