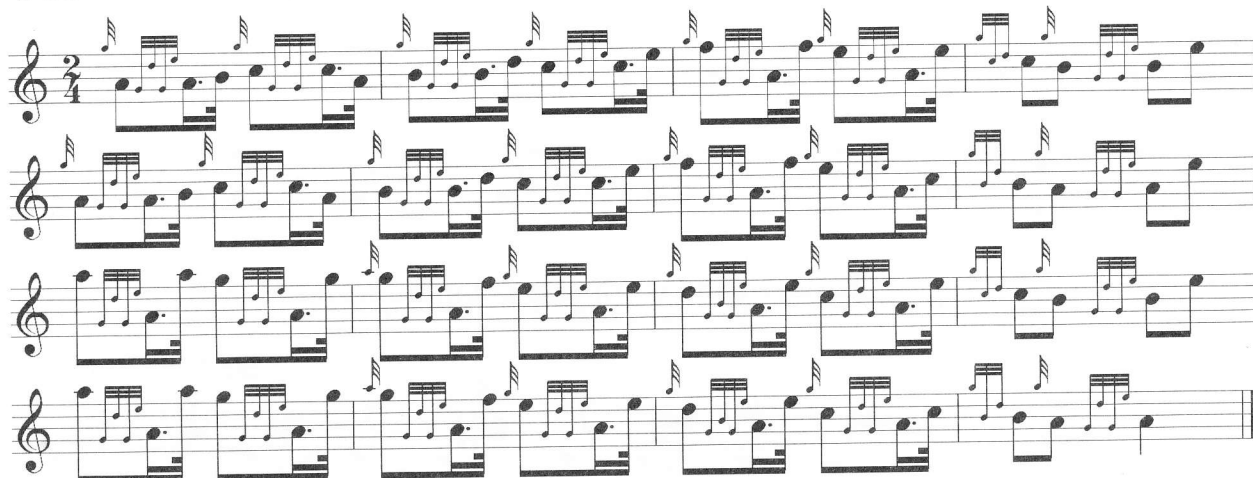


# 88

36-84 / 72-168



## D Throws

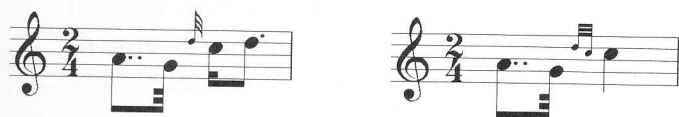
Now we come to one of the most controversial pieces of piping fingerwork. Probably more discussion has taken place on whether to play the 'open' or 'closed' D throw than on any other point in piping. People ask, "Which is right?" Well, neither is 'right'. Which style you play is a matter of preference. Traditionally the closed D throw has been much more common in North America than anywhere else, but the open style is also played there. The open movement prevails in *ceol mor* ('pibroch'), though the closed version may be played in this classical music as well. Many top pipers play the lighter, open throw in slower tunes like airs and 3/4 marches, but the heavier, closed movement in the rest of their light music. Some claim to play whichever style they want anywhere they want, but in practice this is difficult to do and quite rare.

Let's describe the two styles briefly and then see how they might be written phonetically.

**Open:** The open D throw is played pretty much as it is written. It begins with a short but solid low G. What follows next might best be described as a high G throw played using your D finger. In other words, play a **low G** and then:

- Play a **D gracenote** up to C.
- Lift up the D finger quickly after a very short C.

The beat falls on the D gracenote; the low G is very slightly in front of the beat. This style of D throw might be written out in two ways, and here they are:



Played in this way it is a light and airy movement — a classic 'throw'.

**Closed:** The closed D throw is sometimes called the 'grip' style, because it contains a prominent grip. To play a closed D throw from **low A**:

- Play a grip from **low A** to C.
- Lift the D finger quickly after a very short C.

Play one unified movement — don't stop on the C. Again, the beat is on the D gracenote in the grip. In the following example the grip is written phonetically to show the beat on the D gracenote:



Now let's try some exercises. You may have already decided which style throw you want to play, or you may be up for some experimenting. The open throw is written phonetically in #89, and the closed in #90. Play the throws much more open in these exercises than you would in a tune. It is very important in both that the beat be played on the D gracenote.

#### # 89 (Open throw)

52-84 / 104-168



#### # 90 (Closed throw)

42-84 / 84-168



From this point forward, the throw will be written in the traditional manner, though you are free to play the open or the closed style. But first, let's have a more advanced discussion about the freedom you have around beat placement in this embellishment.

**Beat placement:** Though in the phonetic and slowed versions of the throw you can put the beat very clearly on the D gracenote, when the movement comes up to speed, beat placement becomes a question of splitting hairs. Most top players, if asked to state where they play the beat in a D throw, would likely say it is on the first low G. This is probably fairly accurate, and it gives the throw a driving and powerful feel, as long as the throw is being played very quickly and clearly. Given this possibility, what's the bottom line? In theory, the beat is on the D gracenote. In practice and at full speed, you have the leeway to safely place it just about anywhere in the front end of the D throw. However, do not place it on the D after the movement or your playing will sound very lazy.

Exercise #91 is an extended version of the scale exercises given above. It is written in 2/4 time; the beat falls on the D throw. The pivotal point for the D throw for most people is likely the first low G, particularly when the throw is made from a top-hand note. It can be a challenge to get all the right fingers to hit the low G at the same time. If this is a problem for you, go back to the grip section and make #75 a long-term part of your exercise repertoire.

## # 91

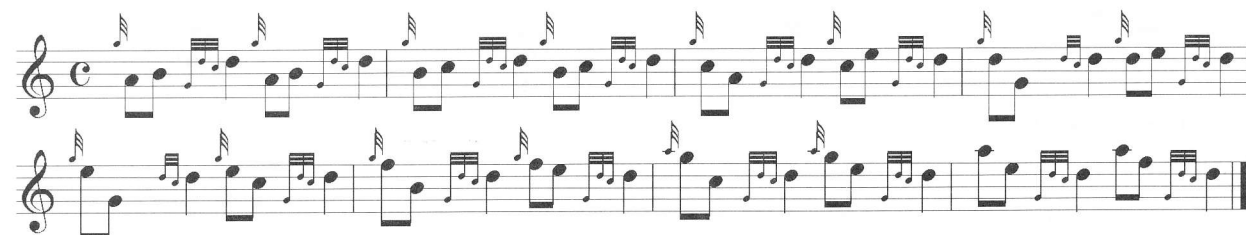
36-84 / 72-168



Next we have a 4/4 tune simulation. Play a firm and bold rhythm in this, with the beat on the D throw and on the first note in each pair of eighth notes.

## # 92

52-96 / 104-192



Finally, here is the same tune simulation in 2/4 time. The beat is on the throw throughout. The offbeat is on the dotted sixteenth, which will be quite pointed. Double-time the metronome and try singing the exercise before you play it, to get the exact rhythm.

# 93

36-84 / 72-168



## Darado – the ‘bubble’ note

This unusual embellishment is often called a ‘bubble note’, ‘bubbly note’ or just plain ‘bubbly’. It was originally a *ceol mor* movement – the term ‘*darado*’ is from the ancient canntaireachd vocable system – that has migrated into light music. It is not a very common movement, but chances are you’ll eventually run across it and if you’ve never played it before it will throw you for a loop.

The most common fault in the *darado* is to try to play it too fast. A professional player encountering one in a strathspey would play a sprightly movement. However, for the general-level player, clear, open and rhythmical is the ticket. The cardinal rule for the *darado* is this: if you’re having trouble with it, slow it down and open it up.

Here’s how it works. To play a *darado* from C to B, start on C and play:

- a low G gracenote
- a D gracenote (the beat is here)
- a low G gracenote
- a C gracenote
- another low G gracenote
- a B to finish.

The exercises that follow stress the importance of well articulated low G gracenotes to start and end the *darado*. What occurs between these low G gracenotes could be thought of as an E doubling played using the D and C fingers. Be careful that the D and C gracenotes don’t fall on top of each other; separate them with the low G. It is the clear articulation of the three low G gracenotes in the *darado* that produces its characteristic bubble sound.

Exercise #94 is in 4/4 time. There is a beat on each quarter note. Of course, the beat on the *third quarter note* falls on the D gracenote. Play the exercise slowly and evenly. Exaggerate the slowness of the movement.