The 24 Possible Left Hand Fingering Combinations
Robert Higginbotham

Practicing these fingering combinations will help to develop left hand finger independence. There is enough material on this page to last you for a few decades. These should be practiced anywhere and everywhere up and down the neck. Here are the combinations, and then we can talk about how to practice them.

1.	1-2-3-4	7.	2-1-3-4	13.	3-1-2-4	19.	4-1-2-3
2.	1-2-4-3	8.	2-1-4-3	14.	3-1-4-2	20.	4-1-3-2
3.	1-3-2-4	9.	2-3-1-4	15.	3-2-1-4	21.	4-2-1-3
4.	1-3-4-2	10.	2-3-4-1	16.	3-2-4-1	22.	4-2-3-1
5.	1-4-2-3	11.	2-4-1-3	17.	3-4-1-2	23.	4-3-1-2
6.	1-4-3-2	12.	2-4-3-1	18.	3-4-2-1	24.	4-3-2-1

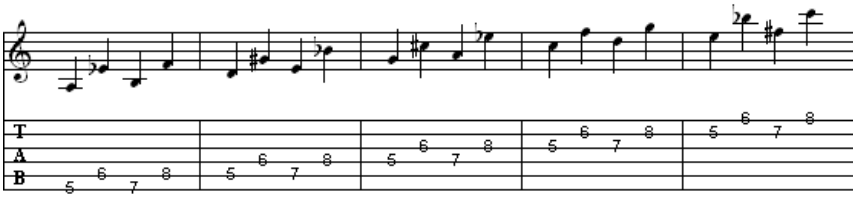
Practice Tips

Use a metronome with these exercises. Locking in with the metronome prepares you to lock in with other musicians. Repeat each pattern many times in a row. Four beats per measure with no rests.

Repeat on one string
Repeat across strings descending and ascending

Don't try to play all 24. It is better to focus on a few for a week or two then move on.

Once you are comfortable with a particular pattern, challenge yourself by introducing string skips. These will create some great challenges and occasionally some great sounds. Here's an example of pattern #1 with string skips introduced.



(Musicians Institute calls this exercise 'the spider')

Accent beat one of each 4 beat grouping. This way exercises 10, 17 and 24 above don't 'morph' into sounding like exercise 1.

For added fun, accent beat two, or beat three.

Even more challenging, play each four note grouping as triplets and listen to the the rhythm resolve every twelfth beat.

Keep the pick close in to the strings and pick clean. Keep your motion economical. Make sure all your notes sound good. Focus on the combinations that are harder and work them out.