Chapter 18

Braille Numeral Repeats

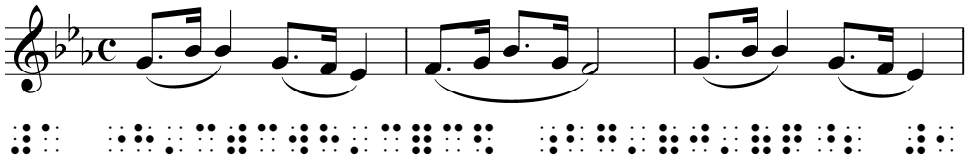
Braille music uses two numerical repeat devices for the exact duplication of multiple measures in instrumental music. The measure-number repeat (or forward-numeral repeat) is used when one or more measures are repeated after intervening music. Another device, the backward-numeral repeat, is used when two or more full measures are immediately repeated in the sequence of the music. The first note following any numeral repeat must have an octave mark.

18.1 Measure-Number Repeats

Repetition of one or more full measures in instrumental music is shown in braille by the use of lower-cell numerals, brailled between spaces, when intervening music separates the original music from the repetition. This device tells the braille reader to locate and repeat specific measure numbers of the score.

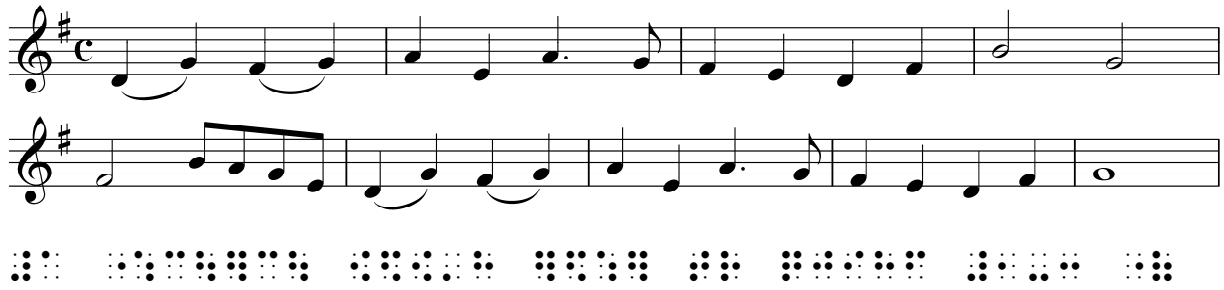
When only one measure is to be repeated, only the number of the original measure is given.

Example 18.1.1



If two or more consecutive measures are to be repeated, the beginning and ending measure numbers are given, connected by a literary hyphen (dots 36). The numeric indicator is not restated after the hyphen.

Example 18.1.2



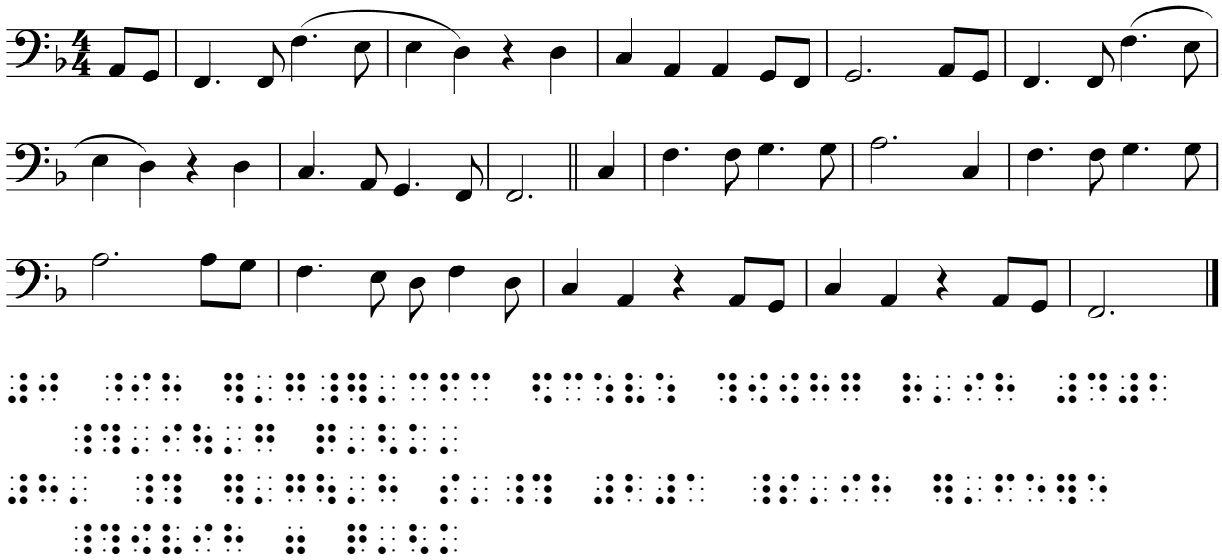
There is no limit to the length of the repeated passage, but it's important to make it easy to find. For a simple isolated measure or a random repetition of very short measures, the original music and the repetition should be on the same braille page. However, sometimes measure-number repetition of music from a previous braille page is very advantageous if the music to be repeated is structurally important, frequently repeated, or very complex.

For repeats of multiple measures, always begin the repeated passage with a measure whose number is shown in the margin of the original music. Such repeats are especially welcome when they help the braille reader visualize and memorize the structure of the music.

18.2 Backward-Numeral Repeats

The backward-numeral repeat device is used when two or more full measures are repeated within a short group of measures. This device consists of two upper numerals brailled together, each numeral with its own numeric indicator and with a blank space on either side of the combination. The first numeral shows how many measures must be counted back; the second numeral shows how many of those measures are to be repeated.

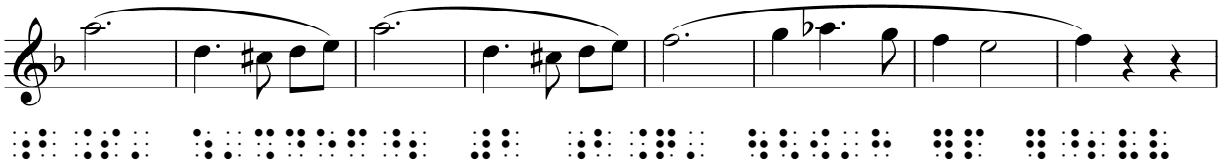
Example 18.2.1



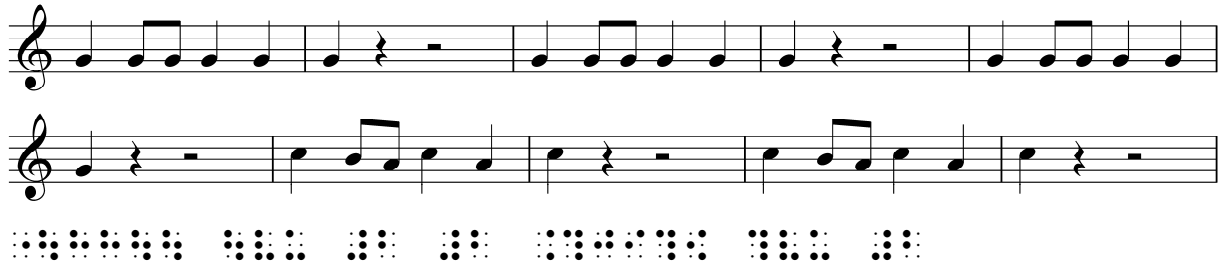
Counting backwards is a cumbersome maneuver for the braille reader, and therefore, limit the use of the backward-numeral repeat device. The amount of music to be repeated should be small, typically consisting of no more than eight measures. The number of measures to be counted backward should also be small and contained within one or two lines of braille music and always be located on the same braille page.

Sometimes a passage of two or more measures is to be repeated with no intervening music. For example, the repetition might consist of the immediately preceding four measures. In this situation, the two backward numerals would be identical, and therefore, only one upper numeral is brailled. The single backward-repeat numeral may be restated as many times as necessary, always between blank spaces.

Example 18.2.2



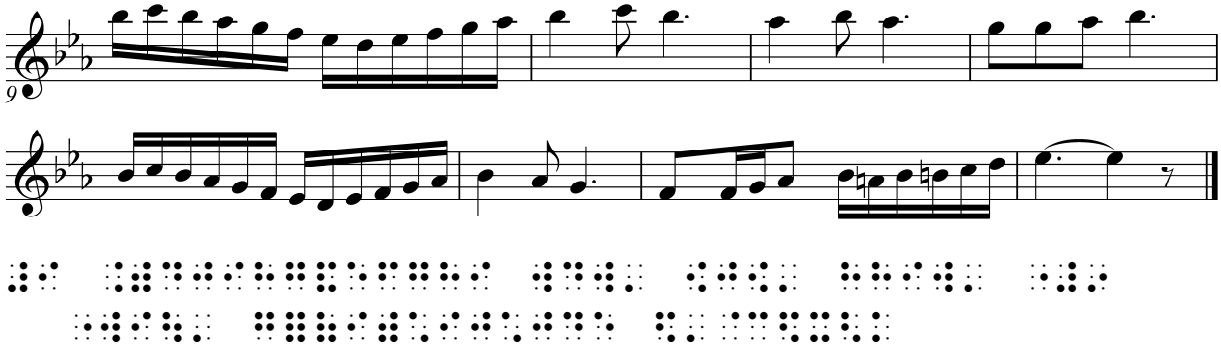
Example 18.2.3



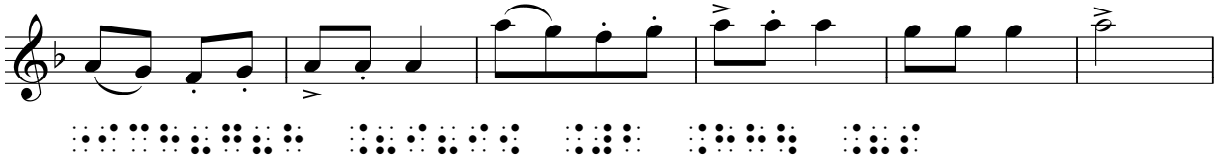
18.3 Numeral Repeats in Different Octaves or with Different Dynamics

When the repeated music and the original music are in different octaves, the appropriate octave mark for the repeated music must precede the numeric indicator of the numeral repeat. Make sure that the repeated music is an exact duplication of the original music.

Example 18.3.1

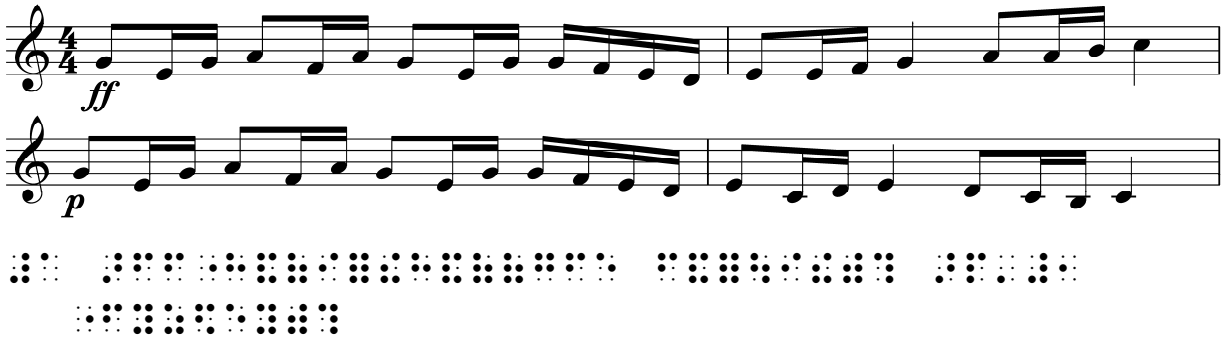


Example 18.3.2



Sometimes an exact repetition is modified by a different hairpin or word-sign expression. For instance, the original music might be marked "piano" and the repeated music might be marked "forte." In such a situation the appropriate hairpin or word-sign expression is brailled immediately before the numeric indicator of the numeral repeat. If there is any doubt about the applicability of the hairpins or word-sign expressions, braille out the music without using a numeral repeat.

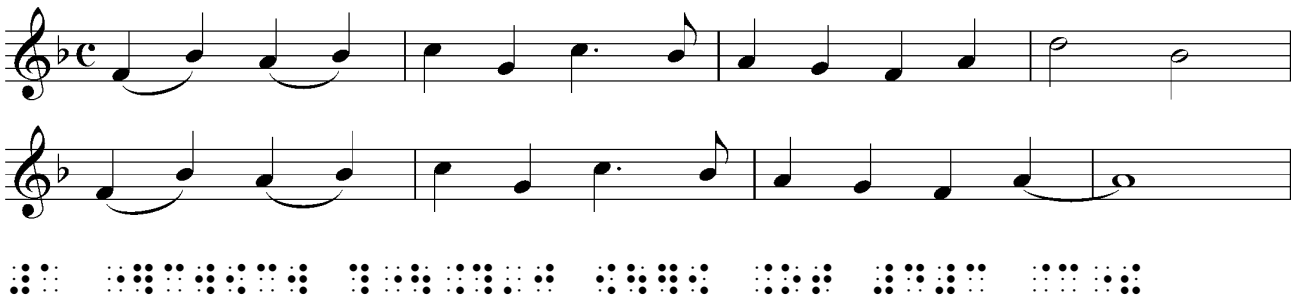
Example 18.3.3



18.4 Ties with Numeral Repeats

The numeral repeat includes a tie that is entirely contained within the original music. The numeral repeat does not, however, include a tie on the last note of the original music. If the last note of the repeated music is tied to the next note, the tie is brailled before that note. In other words, the tie will appear before the first note of the measure following the numeral repeat.

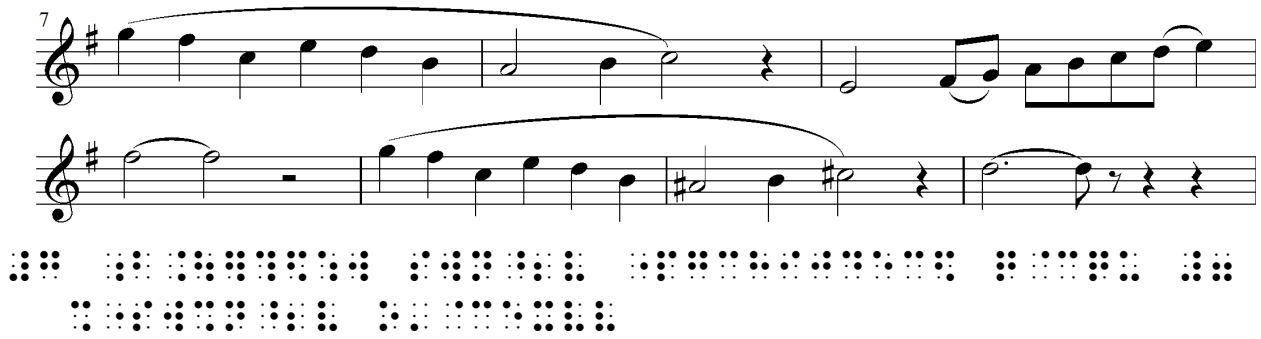
Example 18.4.1



18.5 Slurs and Phrases with Numeral Repeats

The numeral repeat includes all single slurs and bracket slurs that are contained within the original music. Braille out the repeated music if there could be any doubt about the phrasing.

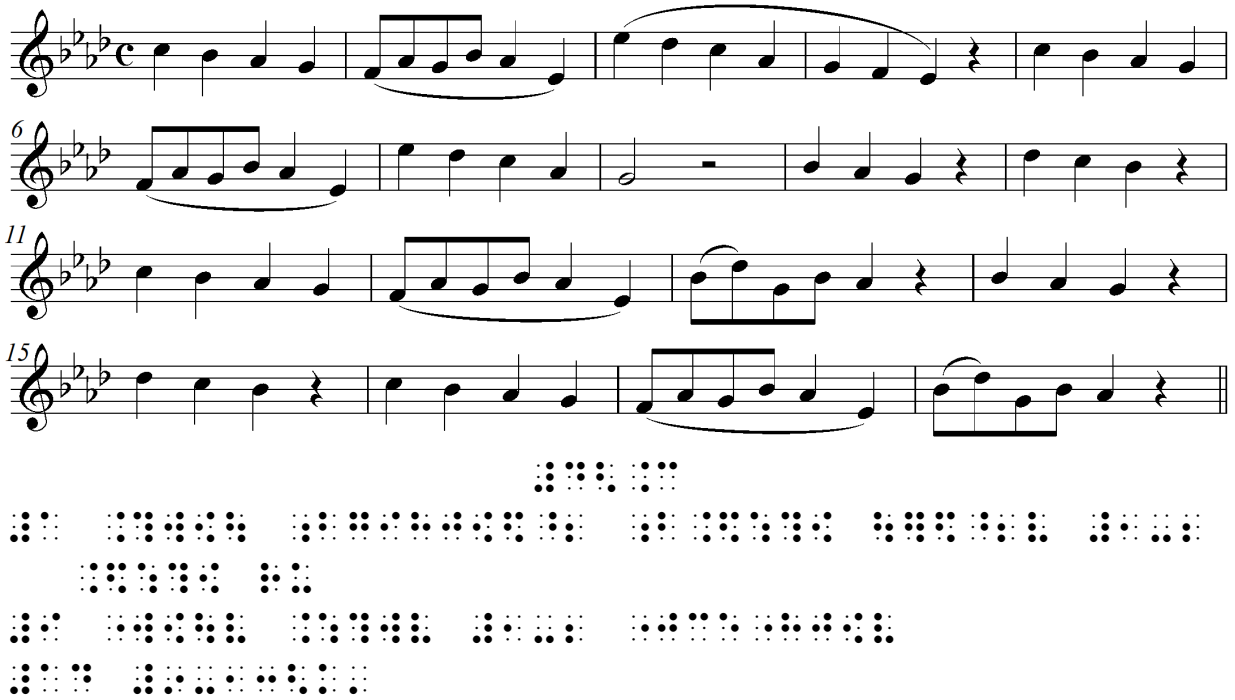
Example 18.5.1



18.6 Numeral Repeats and Other Added Signs

Numeral repeats can begin a new line of music or be followed, unspaced, by a double bar or final bar. The measure-number repeat may contain a shorter repeat, or "repeat within a repeat," as long as it is easy to understand.

Example 18.6.1



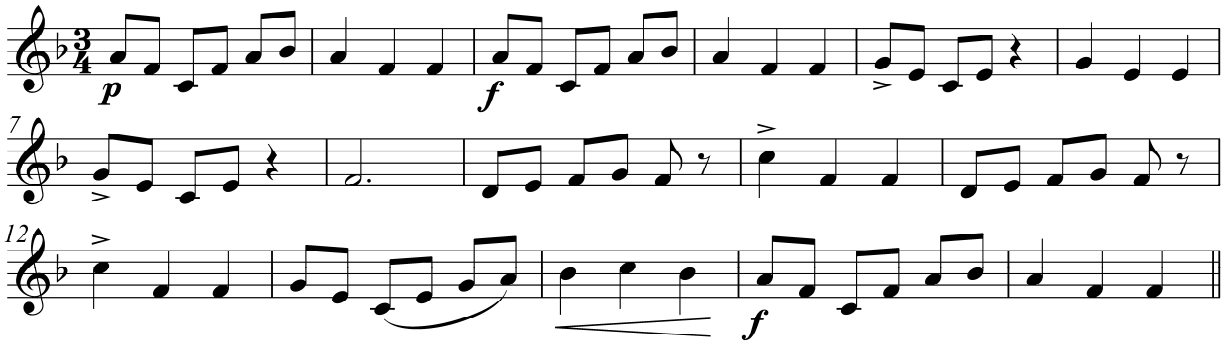
18.7 Numeral Repeats and Your Best Judgment

With braille numeral repeats, your discretion and thoughtfulness are essential. Before deciding to use a numeral repeat, imagine the thought processes and physical maneuvers that the braille reader must use to understand and perform the repeat. Similarly, if there is a choice between measure-number and backward-numeral repeats, consider the effect that your choice will have on the braille reader who must decipher your transcription. As you gain experience you will feel more and more comfortable about when and how to use the braille repeat devices, including numeral repeats.

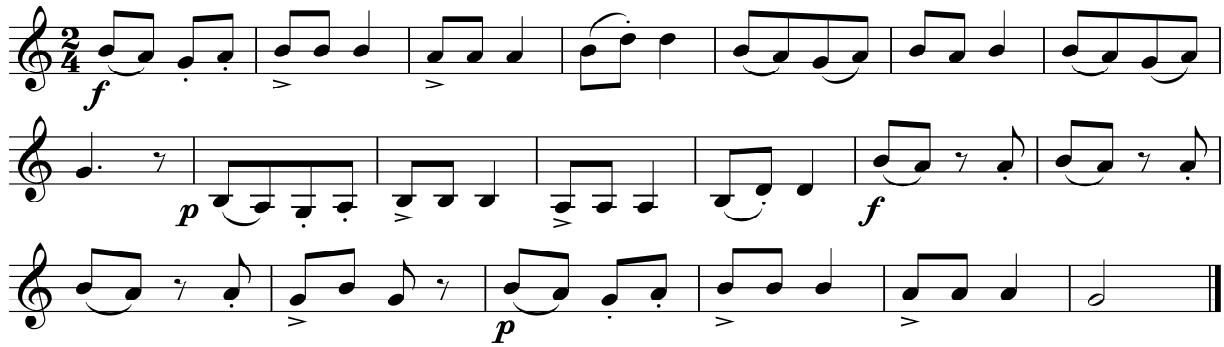
Drills for Chapter 18

(Correct transcriptions of these drills are at the end of this chapter)

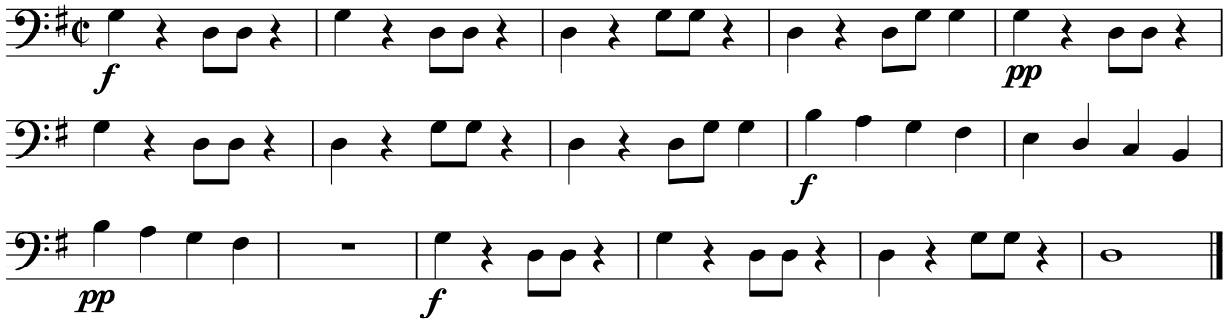
Drill 18.1



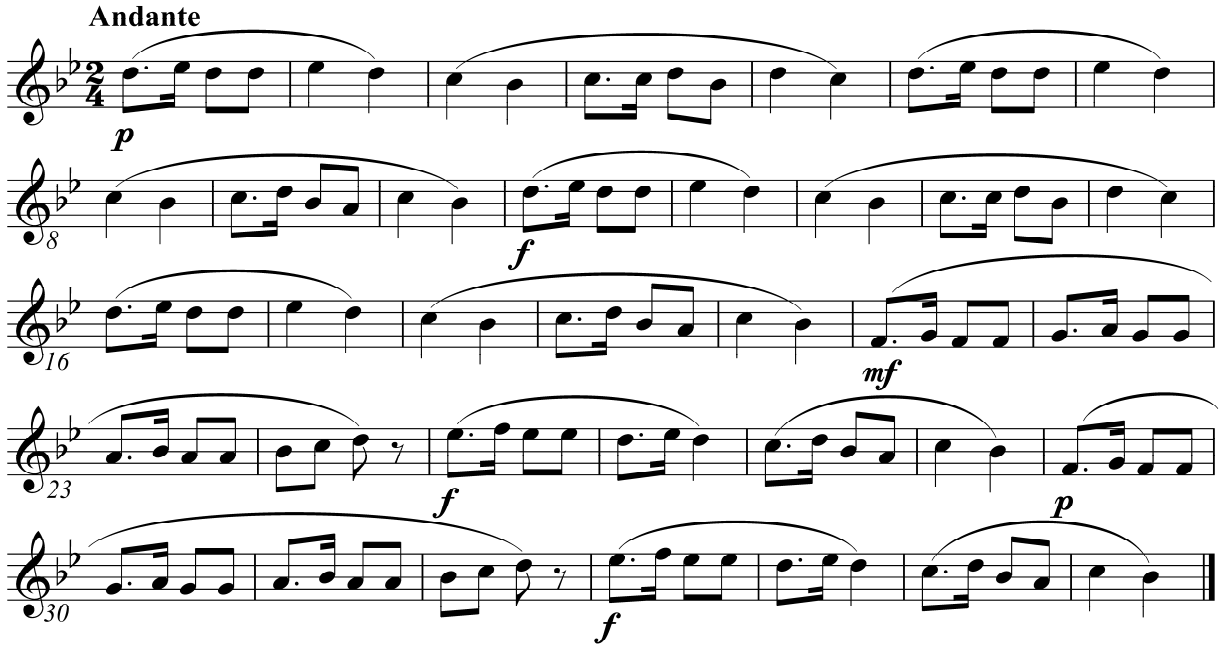
Drill 18.2



Drill 18.3



Drill 18.4

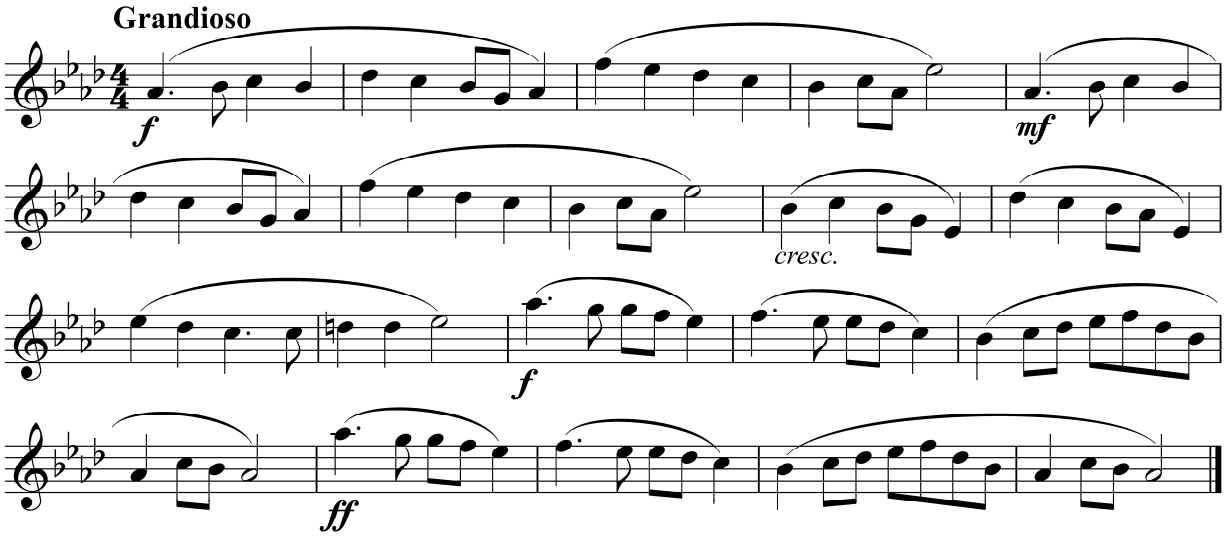


Exercises for Chapter 18

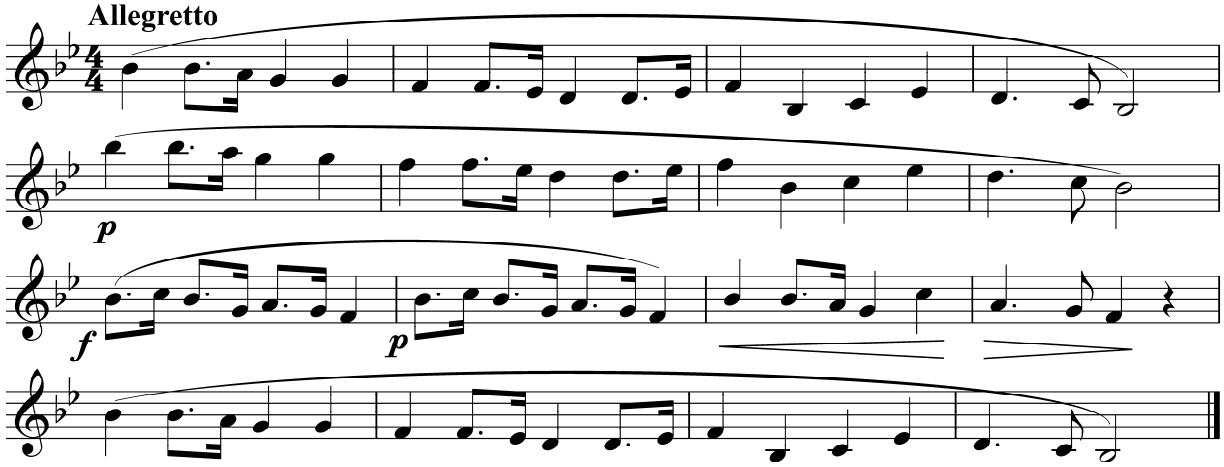
(Submit the following exercises to your instructor in BRF file format)

Exercise 18.1

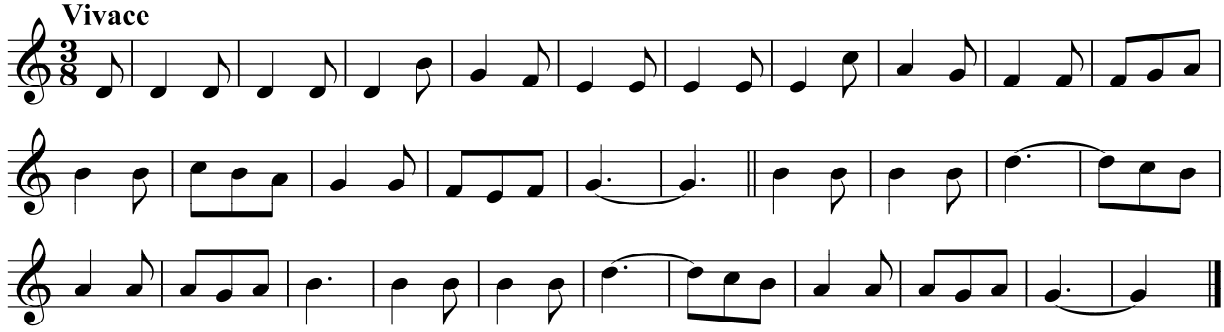
(Use at least one backward-numeral repeat in this exercise.)



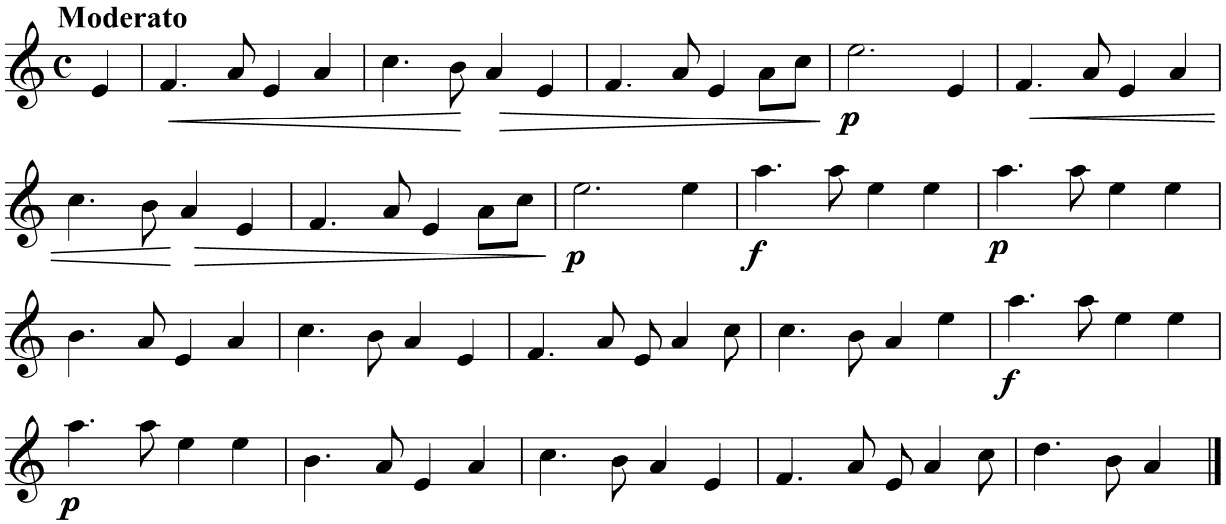
Exercise 18.2



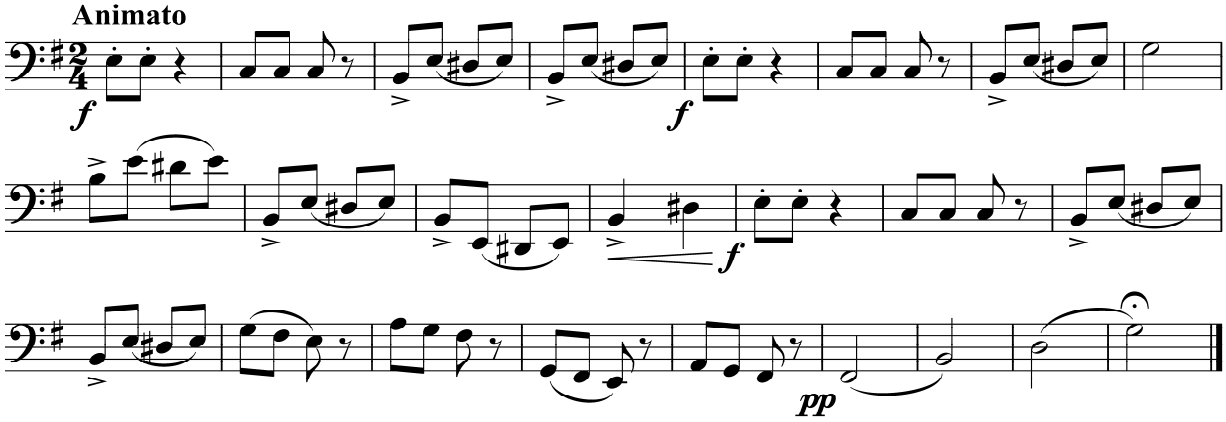
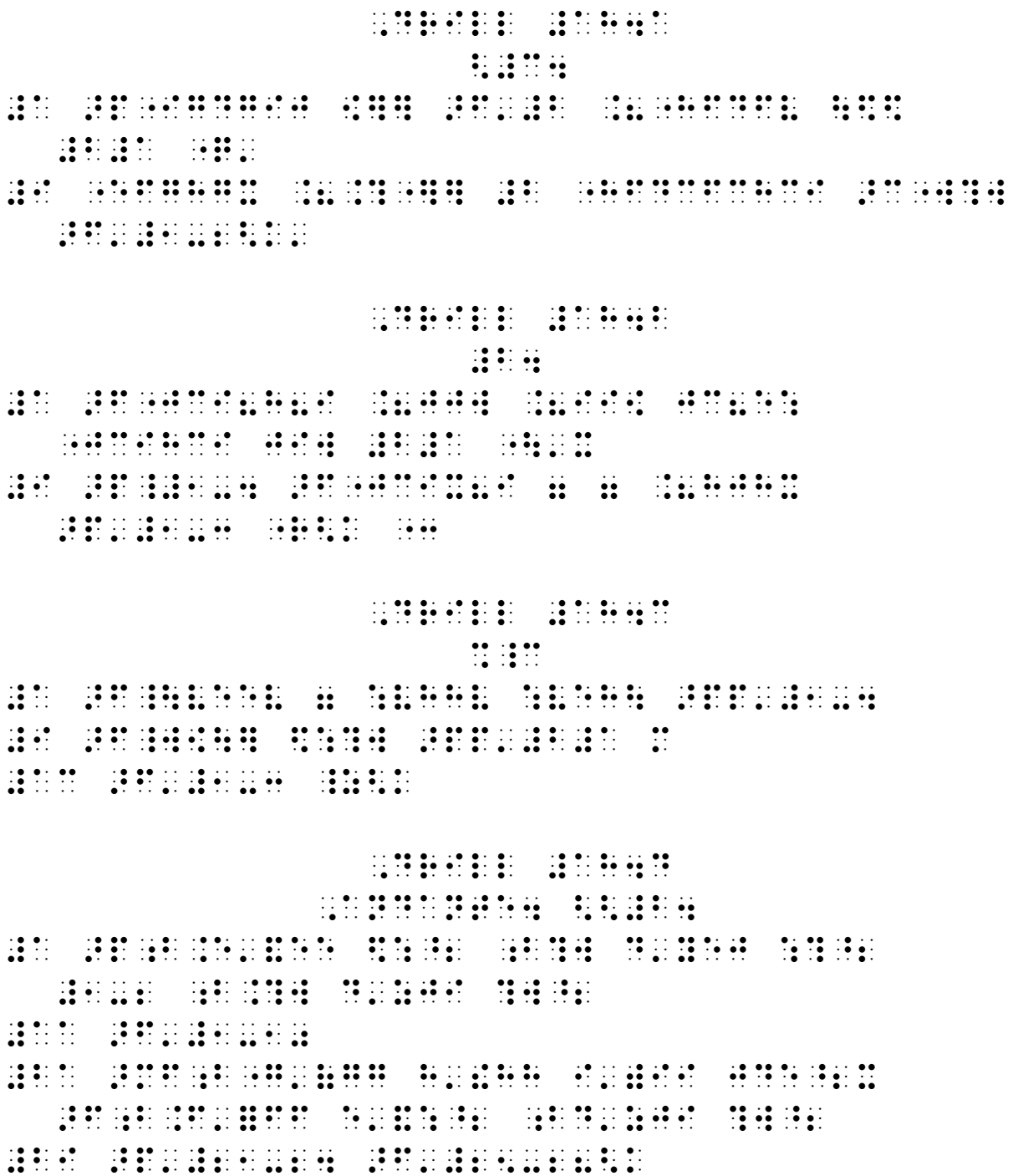
Exercise 18.3



Exercise 18.4



Exercise 18.5



Correct transcriptions of the Drills for Chapter 18