

# Kapsberger's Chitarrone Instructions

Tuning of the 19-course Chitarrone or Theorbo.

V I2 I3 I4 I5 I6 I7 I8 I9 #8

unisons                      octaves


[Editor's note: If your theorbo doesn't have more than 14 courses, but courses 17-19 or #8 are indicated in a piece, you may have to retune some of your courses or play the note an octave higher.]


The trill sign "tr" is implemented in several ways on a single string, by pulling with the left hand on the open string or below [i.e., closer to the bridge than] the marked fret, or by hammering with the left hand on the same fret after striking it with the right hand.

The arpeggiation sign % (the direct opposite of plucking) is implemented in various ways, by plucking the strings of that stroke separately according to the example below, repeating the stroke for the duration of the time written above. Three digits are used in arpeggiating the thumb, the index, and the middle, which for greater clarity we will show as one, two, and three dots . . . in the examples below. [Editor: For clarity, I will be using conventional left hand fingerings instead.]

Arpeggio on 4 strings      On more strings                      On 3 strings

In the absence of the arpeggiation sign, where a chord occupies more than three strings, the first ones are plucked with the thumb and the last three are played together.

The slur sign  is prolonged as needed and it is implemented by slurring the marked strings with the left hand, always aiding their beginnings with the right hand, and mostly at the open strings.

Sign for 24 notes in a measure [triplets of semiquavers]: 

1) Brackets indicates notes played together.