

Part II

Warm-Up Exercises

(Right Hand)

Now that the left hand is warmed up, it's time to give it a rest and focus on the right hand. The exercises that follow are based on the arpeggio figure depicted below which is derived from a familiar moveable major barre chord shape with the root on the 6th string, and an added 3rd on the 1st string. In the case of an A triad (spelled 1 [A] 3 [C#] 5 [E]), the 3rd is C#. The figure itself is two bars in length and is moved along the fingerboard to imply the chords A, C, E, C#, G, B and F#.

The intervallic string skips in this exercise require precise articulation and pickhand efficiency. This becomes particularly difficult when using alternate picking (consistent alternation between down- and up-strokes) beginning with a down-stroke.

In order to be comfortable using alternate picking in any situation that may arise, it is recommended that any exercise practiced to perfection using alternate picking beginning with a down-stroke should also be practiced starting with an upstroke. This forces the right hand to become equally adept at picking any arrangement of notes. Play the primary figure of Example 4 and see how reversing the picking trips up its picking potential.

Example 4

Example 4 consists of two musical exercises, A and E, each with a treble clef staff and a corresponding guitar tablature. Exercise A is in the key of A major and features a sequence of notes: A2, C#3, E3, A3, C#4, E4, A4, C#5, E5, A5, C#6, E6. The picking pattern is indicated as 'V V V simile' (down, up, down, up, etc.). The tablature shows the following fret numbers: 5, 7, 6, 7, 5, 6, 9, 6, 5, 7, 6, 7, 7, 5, 8, 10, 9, 10, 8, 9, 12, 9, 8, 10, 9, 10, 10, 8. Exercise E is in the key of E major and features a sequence of notes: E2, G#3, B3, E3, G#4, B4, E4, G#5, B5, E5, G#6, B6, E6. The picking pattern is indicated as 'V V V simile'. The tablature shows the following fret numbers: 12, 14, 13, 14, 12, 13, 16, 13, 12, 13, 14, 14, 12, 9, 11, 10, 11, 9, 13, 10, 9, 10, 11, 11, 9.

G B

TAB

F#

TAB

Example 4 (Variation 1)

Create variations of this exercise by playing each of the notes from the arpeggio more than one time. In the first variation, each note is played twice in a steady eighth-note rhythm using alternate picking beginning with a down-stroke. As discussed earlier, as a means of making an exercise even more challenging, use alternate picking starting with an up-stroke instead of a down-stroke. To make this exercise as interesting as possible, try playing through the entire chord sequence using this new variation.

TAB

TAB

Example 4 (Variation 2)

In this next variation, each note from the arpeggio is played three times. This generates a handful of eighth-note triplets, or three notes per beat. Because there are an odd number of notes per beat, this makes it a little tricky when it comes to alternate picking — especially when starting with an up-stroke.

First system of Example 4 (Variation 2). The treble clef staff shows eighth-note triplets in G4, A4, B4, and C5. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 5 5 5, 7 7 7, 6 6 6, 7 7 7, 5 5 5, 6 6 6, 5 5 5.

Second system of Example 4 (Variation 2). The treble clef staff shows eighth-note triplets in C5, B4, A4, and G4. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 9 9 9, 6 6 6, 5 5 5, 7 7 7, 6 6 6, 7 7 7, 7 7 7, 5 5 5.

Example 4 (Variation 3)

The final variation involves four notes per beat, or 16th notes. Again strive to consistently alternate pick strokes, picking down, up, down, up, etc. Repeat the entire exercise again reversing the picking; up, down, up, down strokes.

First system of Example 4 (Variation 3). The treble clef staff shows 16th-note groups in G4, A4, B4, and C5. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 5 5 5 5, 7 7 7 7, 6 6 6 6, 7 7 7 7, 5 5 5 5, 6 6 6 6, 5 5 5 5.

Second system of Example 4 (Variation 3). The treble clef staff shows 16th-note groups in C5, B4, A4, and G4. The bass clef staff shows fret numbers: 9 9 9 9, 6 6 6 6, 5 5 5 5, 7 7 7 7, 6 6 6 6, 7 7 7 7, 7 7 7 7, 5 5 5 5.