The guitar technique book

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Really we got a lot of these from our teachers, who got them from their teachers, who got them from ...

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Warm up

In the beginning of a longer work out on, you should do some easy warm up exercises. This may help you avoiding tendonitis and other stuff that you really don't want interrupting your guitar playing. Warming up should be playing easy stuff that you know. A warm up may consist of:

- Strumming some chords or a song that you know.
- A few chromatic runs (e.g. 1-2-3-4 on each string).
- Some well known scale runs (e.g. playing all the modes in C in one position).
- A few well known arpeggios.

This easy warm up sequence would be great and probably sufficient for most of us. However, some exercises are considered to be good for warming up.

Warm up exercise 1

This is a nice warm-up exercise that takes you through a great set of stretches. As with any warm-up exercise, take it slow and work up to playing it in time. This exercise is inspired by recommendations by <u>Eric Vandenberg</u> on how to warm-up for a practice session. The BIG stretch can be found in measures 9, 10, 13 and 14, take them slow!!



I play the first 8 bars as chords. I repeat the 8 first bars one fret down, and continue down until I can't stretch it no more. Hence, the tab is more like an outline. My rather small hands are limiting my stretching abilities, and that's why I focus on these exercises also. Bar 9 etc I play note by note. It is still a good stretching exercise, but I can't finger them as chords.

Warm up exercise 2

This is a nice warm-up exercise that takes you through 4 notes per string chromatics to 2 notes per string in different fret skipping patterns and finally arpeggiated triplets. This is intended as

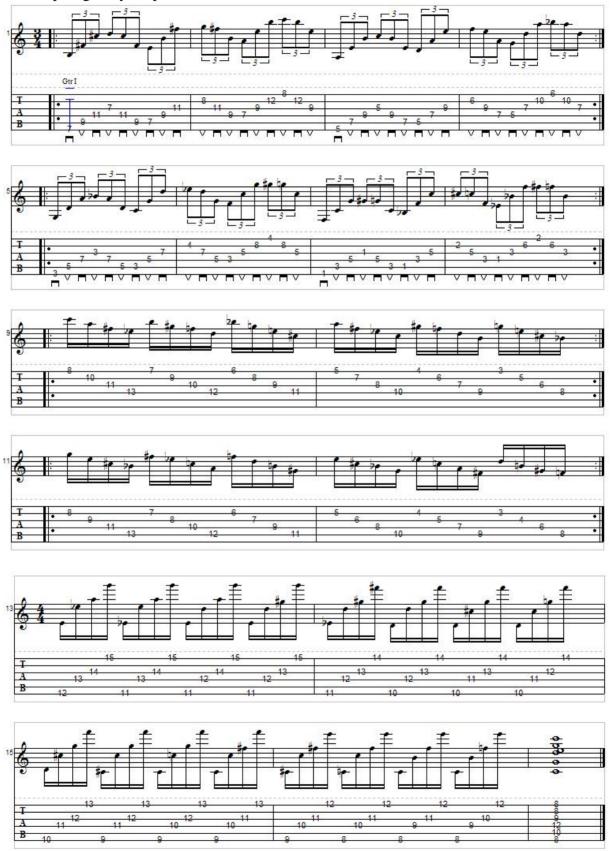
a warm-up so take it at a relaxing pace with no metronome. Let it get the blood flow moving to your fingers.



The last part will give nice stretches for your fingers. The parts in bar 10 - 15 will also give nice stretches if you use adjacent fingers (1 and 2, 2 and 3, 3 and 4).

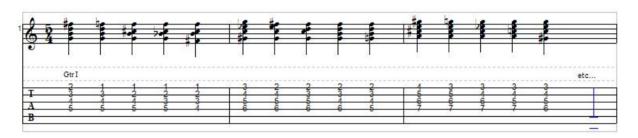
Warm up exercise 3

This exercise was specifically designed as a warm-up exercise. It is intended to stretch your fretting hand and work different finger separations. Take it slow as you should during the warm-up stage of your practice session.



Warm up exercise 4

The key purpose of a warm-up exercise is in my opinion to stretch the fingers a little. It's important to do something simple (like walking / light jogging) before the real work-out starts, and not do something difficult as the warm-up. This easy little stretching exercise should be easy to remember. It starts with a Gmaj7 chord. Then the first finger is lowered down to 1st fret, forming a G7 chord. This gives a good stretch between the 1st and 2nd finger. Then the second finger is moved down to the 2nd fret, forming a G7b5 chord. The stretch is now between the 2nd and 3rd finger. The next step is to lower the 3rd finger one fret, forming a Gm7b5 chord. Stretch is now between 3rd and 4th finger. Finally the 4th finger is lowered 1 fret, forming a F#maj7 chord. Repeat this exercise by starting a fret higher (G#maj7), or by reversing the progress from the F#maj7 back to the Gmaj7 chord a few times. You may strum all the chord notes at once or play each note of the chord by alternate picking or by sweeping.



Do to my rather small hands I normally start this exercise one octave higher than written in the tab and work my way down rather than working my way up as written in the tab.

Warm up exercise 5

Another possible warm up exercise is the so-called spider. Try starting with both an up-stroke and down-stroke (as indicated in the tab).



Warm up exercise 6

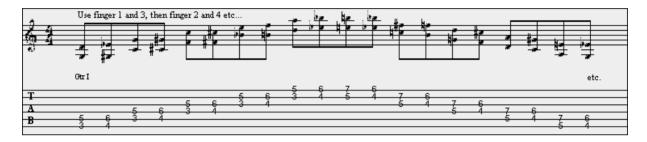
This is really a left hand finger-strength exercise that can be used in the end of the warm up part of you exercise. Hammer-on all notes in this exercise.



Returning by using pull-offs (pull-off with the first finger to an open string) would be a good additional exercise to this one.



Warm up exercise 7

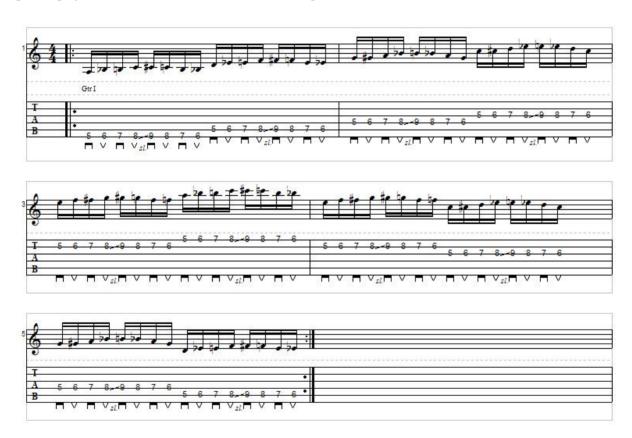


Synchronization Exercises

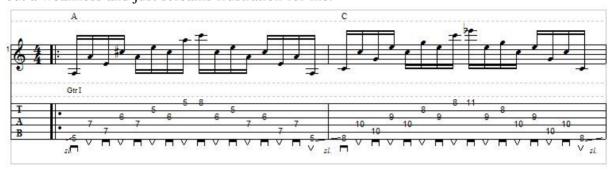
In order to play technical difficult stuff, it is very important that both hands are synchronized. The synchronization exercises are intended to improve your synchronization between your left and right hands. The exercises are working on your picking, left hand finger coordination and on your timing. The technique is an important basis to be able to play your musical ideas out on the guitar. You should start your speed improvement by working with these exercises first. Use your metronome. Start slow and get it accurate. Then increase speed.

JJ Sync 1

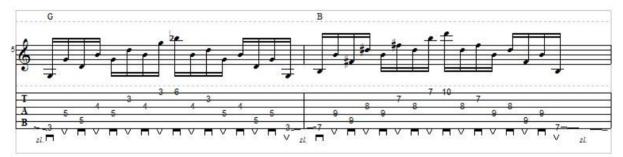
A chromatic 16th note exercise. Four notes up four notes down per string. This is a chromatic 16th note exercise. It moves through four up and four notes down per string. Pay close attention to the picking pattern, because that is what we are working on. Notice that even on the slide the note is picked. With this exercise we are trying to strengthen the alternating picking syncronization between the left and right hand.

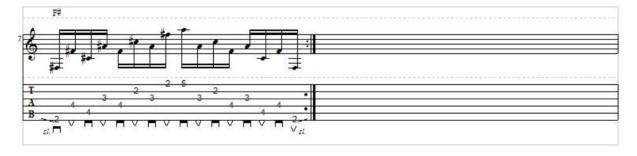


A string skipping 16th note exercise. This exercise outlines chords. This is an exercise one of my teachers gave me to synchronize the left and right hands during string skipping. I found this very difficult initially. Well, I still find it difficult. It is one of those exercises that points out a weakness and just screams frustration for me.



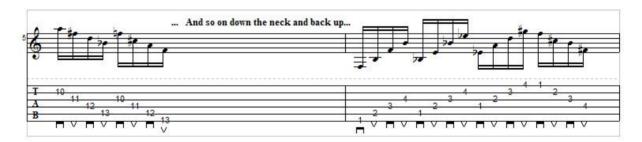


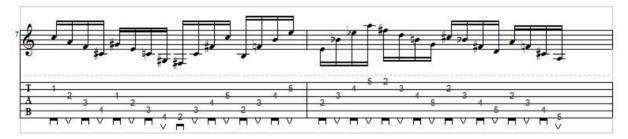




A chromatic arpeggio like 16th note exercise. This one is a hard one. My teacher gave me this one and said he thought it was a Steve Vai exercise. I have an old guitar magazine that has an exercise similar to this by Joe Satriani called smart fingers. However, that exercise was more focused on chords. Make sure you take this all the way up and down the neck.



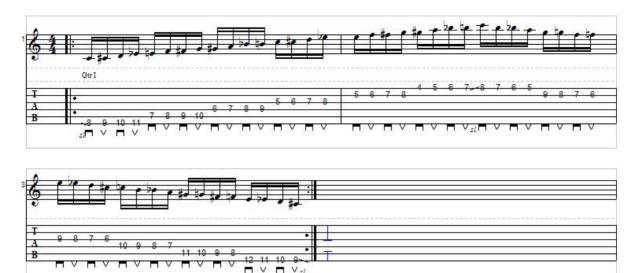




This one is a finger twister with 3 different variations. This is one of those exercises that drives you crazy until you get it. When you finally get it it feels pretty cool to play. Again, I got this from one of my teachers. Take it slow and get it right before speeding it up. There are 3 variations of this exercise provided here. Each has its own challenges.

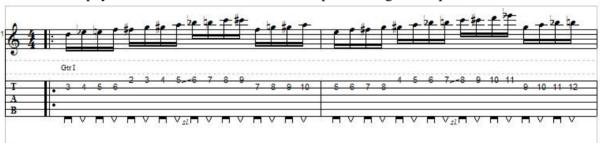


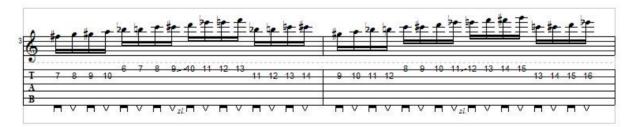
4 notes per string chromatic. Make sure you take this one slow. Don't let it get sloppy.

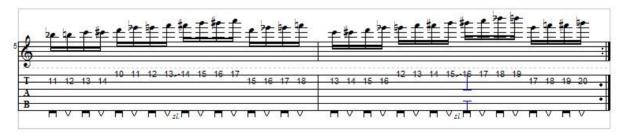


JJ Sync 6

4 notes per position shifting. This is another one I got from one of my teachers. This one again is syncronizing right and left hand. This also works on acurate position shifting. Take this slow and pay careful attention to the frets and positioning of the patterns.

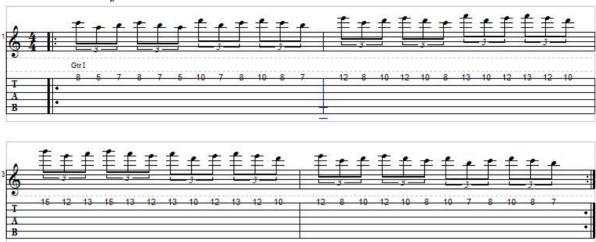






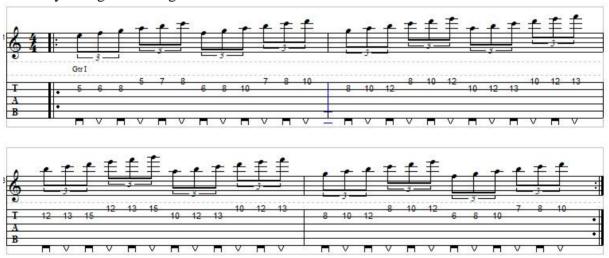
Synchronization Exercise 7

Diatonic single string position shifting. This is another one I got from one of my teachers. This one again is syncronizing right and left hand. This is a diatonic exercise that shifts up and down the neck on a single string. I think the is an Al Di Meola exercise. It sounds really cool with a clean jazz sound.



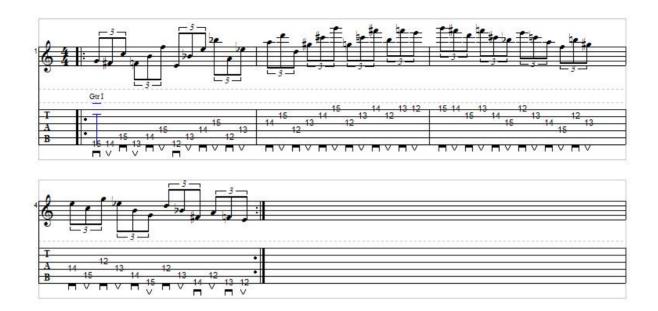
Synchronization Exercise 8

Diatonic two string position shifting. This is another one I got from one of my teachers. This one again is syncronizing right and left hand. This is a diatonic exercise that shifts up and down the neck on two strings. This exercise also helps visualization of the scale paterns and how they fit together along the neck.



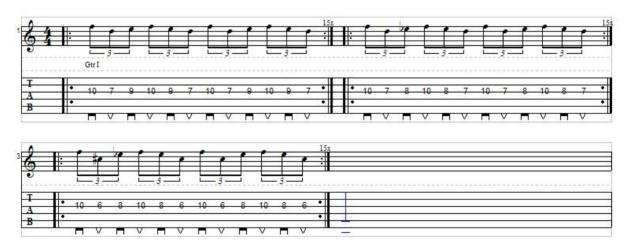
Synchronization Exercise 9

Dense chromatic triplet block. This one is a dense chromatic exercise in triplets. It is similar to SYNC-3 but in triplets. PAy attention to the alternating picking. Additionally, try to accent the first note in each triplet. If you can accent the first note of each triplet this exercises takes on an interesting sound.



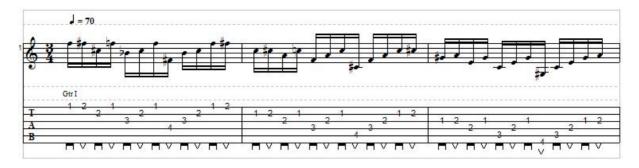
Synchronization Exercise 10

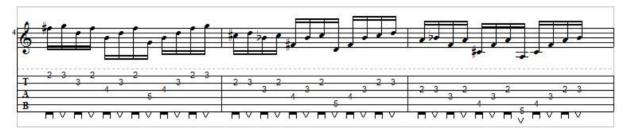
Repeating diatonic single string triplets. This one works both synchronization and endurance. Repeating patterns are often times difficult to maintain. Notice the "15x" on the repeats! I had difficulties maintaining patterns for a long time at high speed and this exercises helps. This is an example of writing an exercise to work on a particular weakness. If you know you are weak in an area you should not avoid it during practice sessions - you should take it on as vigourously as you can!

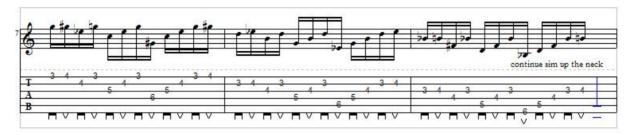


AshC Synchronisation Exercise 1

This is not 100% original (what is), it's my twist on the <u>Steve Vai</u> angular exercises. This one bears a similarity to one of the angular exercises from the "10 hour workout" but it's not a copy. I changed the order around and added a tag note on the end of each section to make it fit nicely in the 3 beats. I doesn't sound too bad to play as exercises go. Here I show the first 3 positions, the idea is to go all the way up the neck at least as far as the 12th fret. Alternate picking for me, but economy picking if you want....

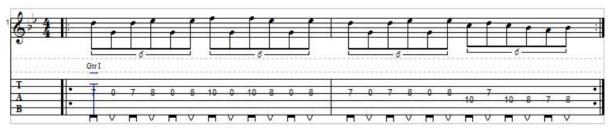






Pedal Tone Synchronization Exercise (PA-SYNC-1)

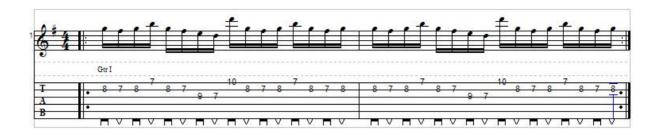
This exercise will train the dynamics of your left hand. While your right hand is picking constantly all the way through, your left hand must always "be in time"! Watch that second part of the second measure and make sure you keep the alternating picking going! After getting it mastered with the picking shown switch it around and start with an up stroke. The first part of the audio sample is palm muted. As with all synchronization exercises, work with a metronome!! Take it slow at first and then increase your speed only as you master the exercise at the speed you are at.



This exercise will train the dynamics of your left hand. While your right hand is picking constantly all the way through, your left hand must always "be in time"!

Synchronization Exercise 2 (PA-SYNC-2)

This is an excellent exercise for practicing your alternating picking. It is a great lick too over the key of G Major or any of its modes!



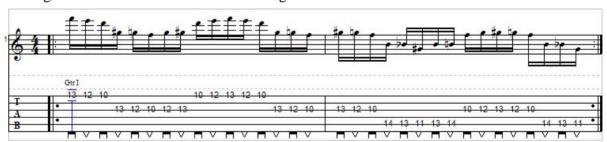
Synchronization Exercise 3 (PA-SYNC-3)

This is an exercise from <u>Yngwie Malmsteen</u>. The point in this one is that its fingering is quite unusual to the hand.



Synchronization Exercise 4 (PA-SYNC-4)

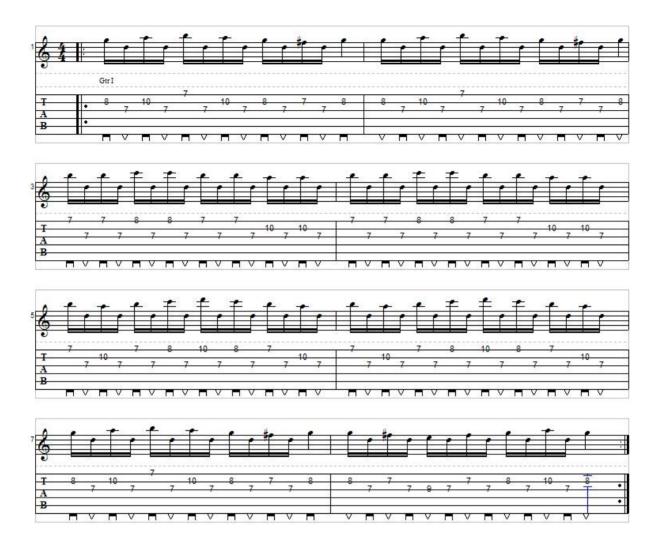
This is actually an exercise of <u>Michael Romeo</u>. This a diminished string skipping lick, and also a good exercise. Do this both on the higher and lower frets



Synchronization Exercise 5 (PA-SYNC-5)

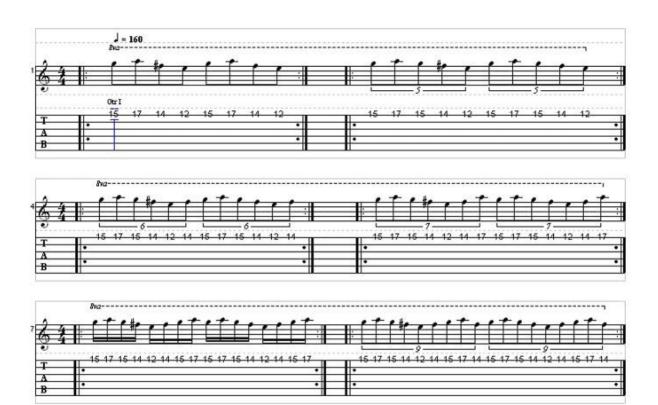
This one focuses on fast sring changing/skipping during alternate picking. I got the main idea from one of John Petrucci's "inside the string picking" exercises, but in my opinion this one is harder. It is important to do this exercise both starting with an upstroke and then starting with a downstroke, because this way this one exercise can focus both on inside and outside picking. This is a string skipping lick in C major, with two variations.

It is a good exercise for your fingers and also for learning patterns, and it can sound really good in a solo as well! Do this in every other position of the G major scale! (and other keys, of course).



Synchronization exercise 1 (GE-SYNC-1)

I found this exercise on the internet. It is a good exercise for picking, left hand finger coordination and especially timing. It's a simple sequence that is repeated in different rhythmical patterns. Use alternate picking starting with a down-stroke, then start over again starting with an up-stroke. Repeat until you are playing it perfecto.



Scales, scales

The modes

The most used scales are the modes:

- Ionian mode
- Dorian mode
- Phrygian mode
- Lydian mode
- Mixolydian mode
- Aeolian mode
- Locrian mode

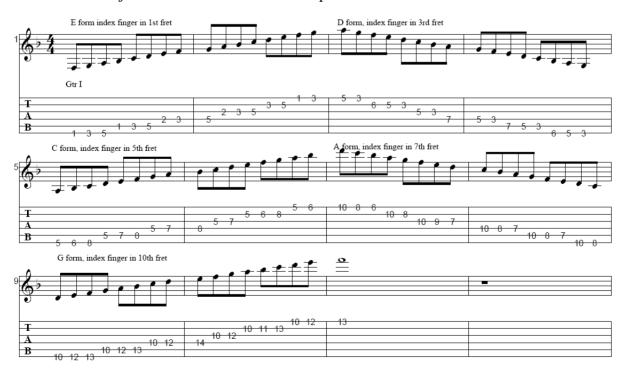
This is not a music theory book, so I'm not going to talk much about the modes. Each mode fits certain chords, and this is a bit of music theory that is rather important. So get yourself a theory book and learn the basics. Here I'm going to concentrate on the technique of playing these modes on your guitar.

There is a lot of different ways of systemizing how to play the modes. There is the CAGED system and the 3NPS (3 notes per string) approach, and I guess a lot more. Here the CAGED and 3NPS is included.

The CAGED system

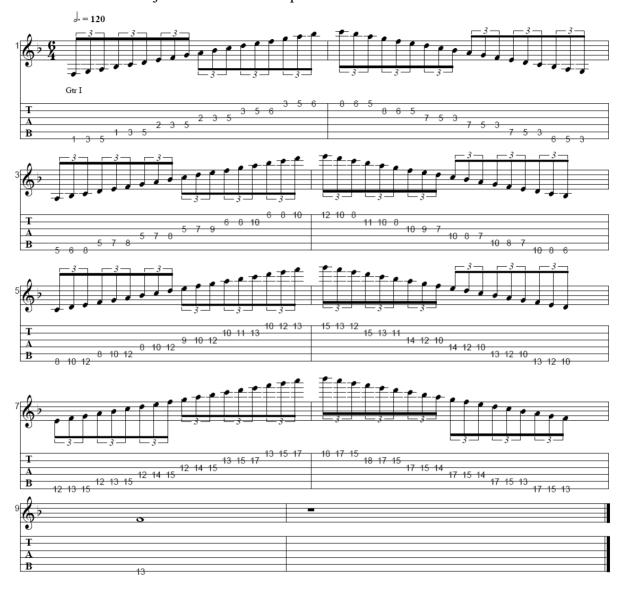
The CAGED system is using positions that relates to the 5 different ways of playing a major chord. The names are related to how the chords are played in open position. The C form, the A form, the G form, the E form and the D form. Hence the name CAGED.

Here is the F-major scale shown in all CAGED positions:



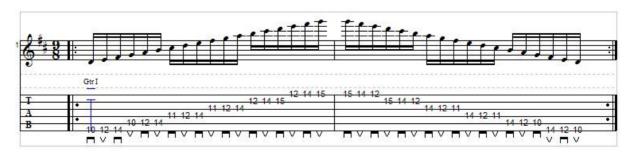
The 3NPS system

The 3NPS is a bit different from the CAGED system, but you will also see a lot of similarities. The F-major scale in all 3NPS positions:



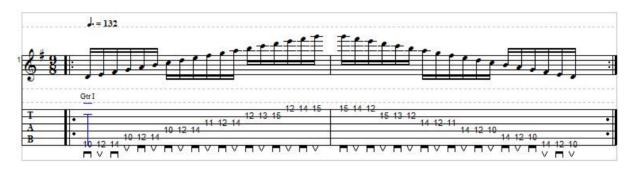
Scale Exercise 1

Scale 3 NPS Major Scale - Ionian or First Mode. This is a diatonic exercise in the key of D Major or D Ionian. This is a three note per string exercise. Make sue you take care to use the alternating picking as shown. Alternating picking is the focus of the exercise. Start out slow as usual with a metronome and then slowly increase as you become competent at the speed you are working on.



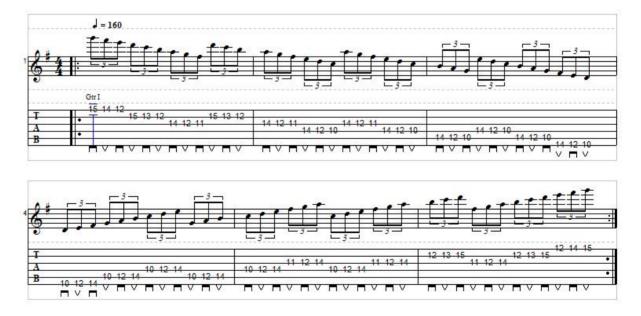
Scale Exercise 2

Scale 3 NPS Dominant - Mixolydian (Ionian b7) 5th Mode of the Major Scale. This is a diatonic exercise in the key of G Major but centered on D Mixolydian. This is a three note per string exercise. Make sue you take care to use the alternating picking as shown. Alternating picking is the focus of the exercise. Start out slow as usual with a metronome and then slowly increase as you become competent at the speed you are working on. Notice that Mixolydian is the same as Ionian b7. Compare the scale pattern with Scale Exercise 1.



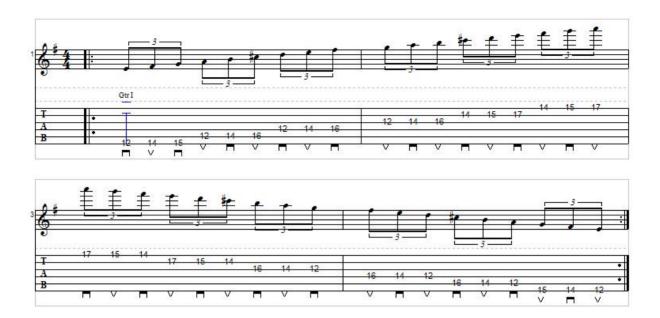
Scale Exercise 3

Mixolydian Cascading Triplets. This is a diatonic exercise in the key of G Major but centered on D Mixolydian. This is a three note per string exercise. It is called cascading triplets because of the sound. Move down three strings in triplets and then move back one string. Make sue you take care to use the alternating picking as shown. Alternating picking is the focus of the exercise. Start out slow as usual with a metronome and then slowly increase as you become competent at the speed you are working on.



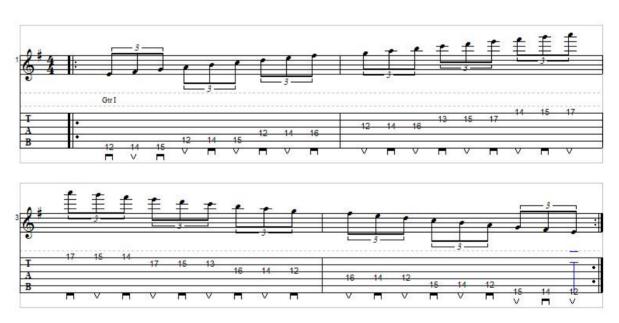
Scale Exercise 4

Minor 3 NPS - Dorian (Mixolydian b3) 2nd Mode of the Major Scale. This is a diatonic exercise in E Dorian. This is a three note per string exercise. Make sue you take care to use the alternating picking as shown. Alternating picking is the focus of the exercise. Start out slow as usual with a metronome and then slowly increase as you become competent at the speed you are working on. Notice that this mode is the same as Mixolydian b3. Compare it to exercise SCL-2.



Scale Exercise 5

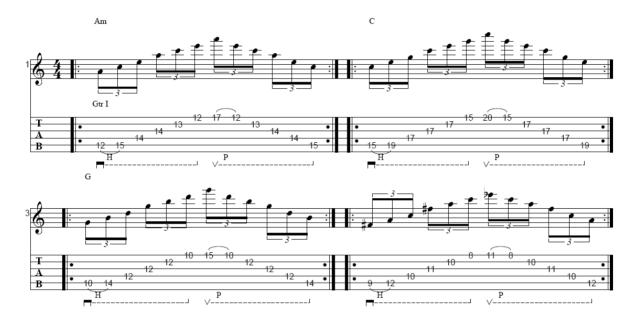
Minor 3 NPS - Aeolian (Dorian b6) 6th Mode of the Major Scale. This is a diatonic exercise in E Aeolian This is a three note per string exercise. Make sue you take care to use the alternating picking as shown. Alternating picking is the focus of the exercise. Start out slow as usual with a metronome and then slowly increase as you become competent at the speed you are working on. Notice that this mode is the same as Dorian b6. Compare it to exercise SCL-4.



Arpeggios

Arpeggio Exercise 2 (JJ-ARP-2)

This is a set of exercises focused around sweeping with hammer-ons and pull offs. This is one of the few sweep picking exercises that have ben provided in this exercise book. Sweep picking is difficult to keep even so make sure you work with a metronome and pay carful attention to the timing you generate.



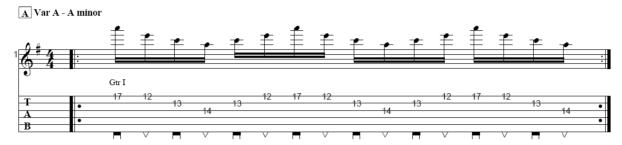
Arpeggio Exercise 3 (JJ-ARP-3)

This is a set of exercises focused around string skipping with hammer-ons and pull offs. Be sure to pay close attention to the alternating picking that is noted in the tab.

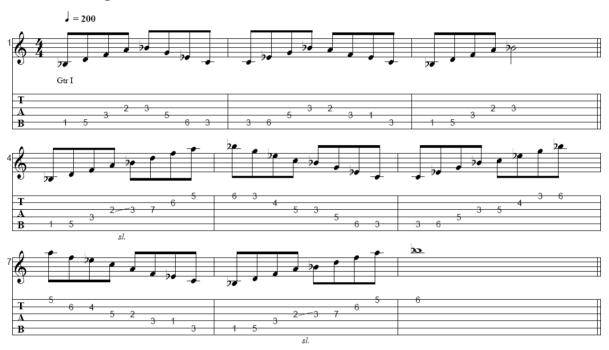


Arpeggio Exercise 3 (JJ-ARP-3) – Pure alternate picking arpeggio

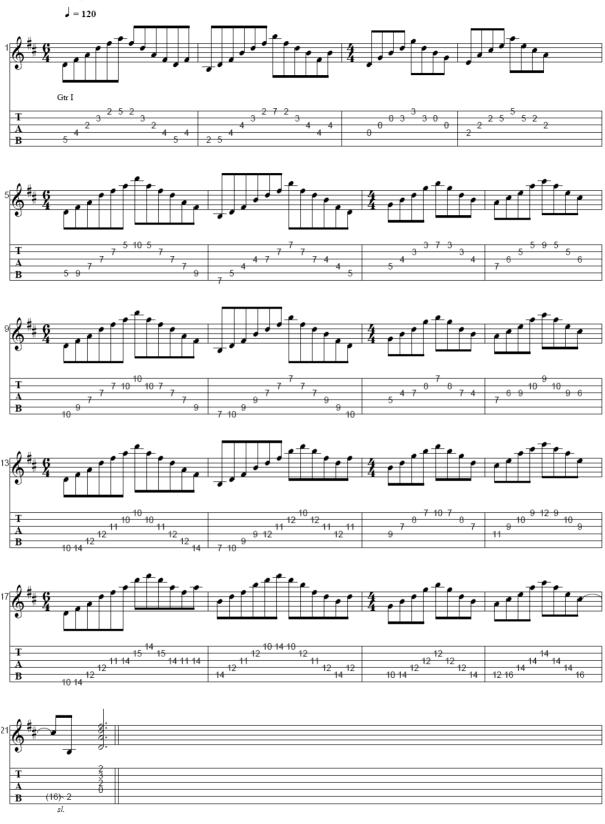
The hardest part of this exercise is the timing. It is somewhat difficult to get the sixteenth note timing.



Al Di Meola arps:



CAGED arps:

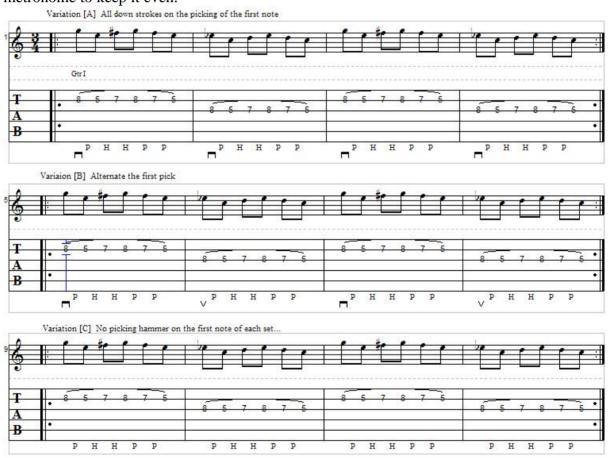


Techniques that you need to exercise

Hammer on and pull offs

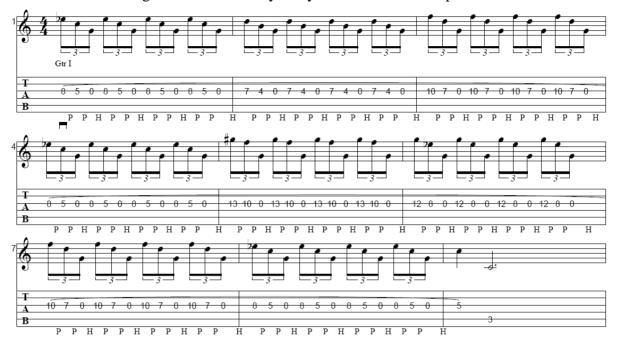
Hammer-on Pull-off Exercise 1 (GE-HOPO-1)

This is an exercise I had laying around. I did not create it. The actual author is "unknown" but I think I got it from iBreatheMusic. If you were the original author then let us know! This is a hammer-on pull-off exercise that can increase the stamina of your fingers. Repetitive exercises like this are often difficult to keep going. The first variation uses down strokes only. As you are able to play faster you may need to shift to alternating picking. The final variation is all hammer-ons and pull-offs. Take it slow at first and make sure to practice with a metronome to keep it even.



Legato etude (GE-HOPO-2)

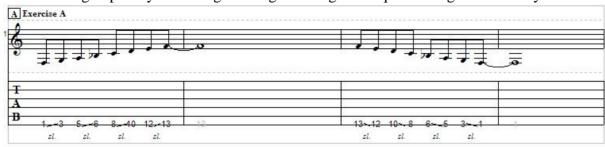
This is a nice little legato etude that really test your hammer-on and pull-off abilities.

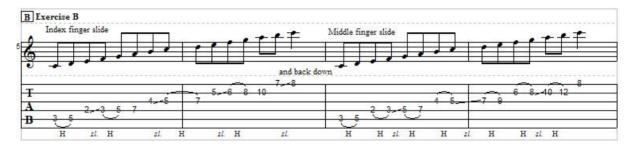


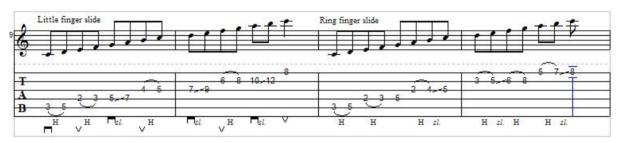
Finger sliding

Slidin' the Scales (GE-SLIDE-1)

Today's exercise is on finger sliding, primarily. Two very basic scale exercises with extensive use of sliding hopefully will bring our finger sliding technique to a higher level. Try these:

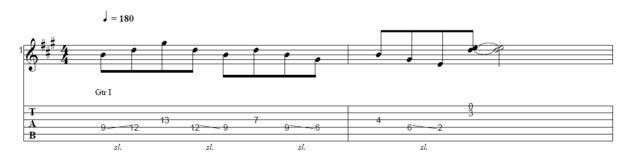






If you are slow on the alternate picking, this can help you gain more speed, and it sounds good. Enjoy.

Slide hot-lick (GE-SLIDE-2)

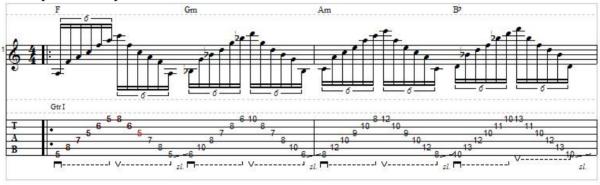


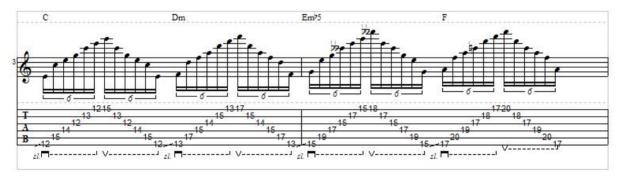
Position shifting exercise

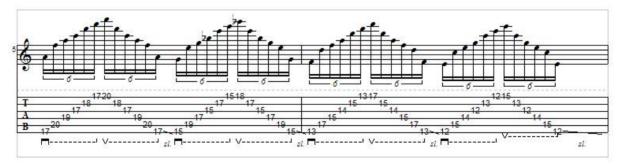
Sweeping

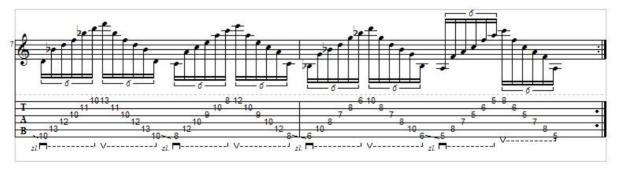
Sweeping Arppegio Exercise 1 (JJ-ARP-1)

This is a diatonic exercise in the key of F Major. Each of the diatonic chords in the key of F are arranged in ascending and then decending order. The chord notation for each of the chords are I,ii,iii,IV,V,vi,vii. Those chords in F Major are FMaj7, Gmin7, Amin7, BbMaj7, C7, Dmin7, Emb5. This is one of the few sweep picking exercises that I have. Sweep picking is difficult to keep even so make sure you work with a metronome and pay carful attention to the timing you generate. Once this gets going is is a beautiful exercise. Although this exercise goes straight through the diatonic chords in the key of F try mixxing them up once you get them up to some speed.







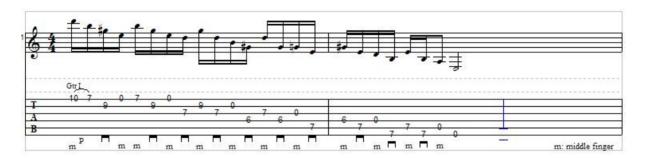


Hybrid picking

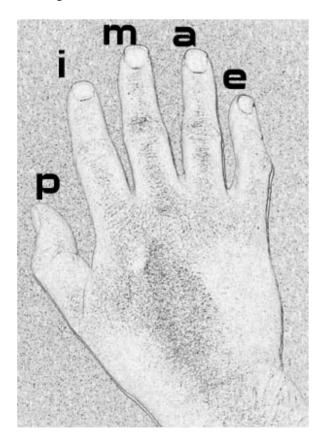
Hybrid Picking Lick (GE-LICK-1)

This is hybrid picking exercise in the form of a cool lick. Hybrid picking combines the use of the picking hand fingers and the picking hand pick. In this exercise you are using the middle (m) finger of the picking hand to pick every other note. Fingers (p) and (i) are used to hold the pick. Once you have mastered the lick using (m) try it using (a). See the diagram below for the letters refrencing each finger.

If you are having a hard time with this lick try practicing it in groups of four notes. Once you master each set of four notes then put the full lick together. You could think of it as a string of six different licks.



The figure below shows the letter that refers to each of the fingers on the picking hand.



Hybrid Picking Lick (GE-LICK-2)

Yet another hybrid picking exercise. Pick the bass with your pick and the double stops with your "m" and "a" fingers. The cascade in the end is a variation of GE-LICK-1 and should be played in the same manner.

