

## Sweep Picking

*Sweep picking* is a term used to describe consecutive down or upstrokes on two or more adjacent strings. This method works well with arpeggio shapes as they tend to have only one note on a string. Sweep picking also has a smooth horn-like sound and can conserve right hand energy. As with economy picking, sweep picking is not meant to replace any former picking systems, it is another way to produce notes that should be at the players command. Let's begin with a look at the physical elements of this concept.

The following exercise uses the top three open strings. The three consecutive downstrokes should be performed as one movement. Make a special note of this for the upstrokes as the player will tend to make three separate motions. As the name implies, "sweep" or drag the pick through the strings, allowing it to rest on the next string before producing an attack:

Fig. 4



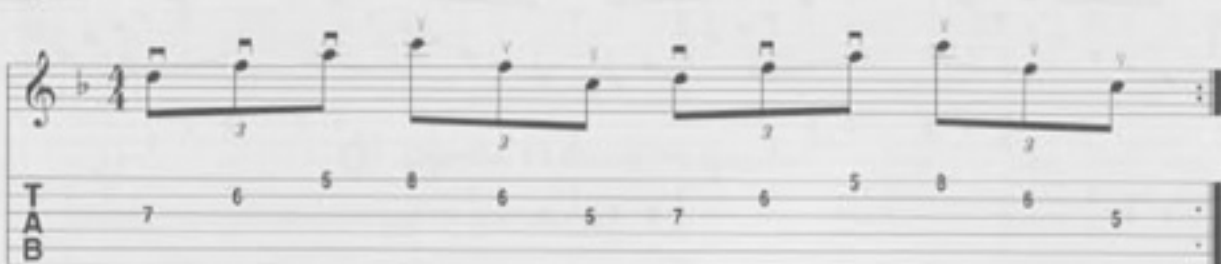
Try not to change the angle of the hand (and therefore the pick!) on the upstrokes as this will change the sound. Now try sweeping the top four strings:

Fig. 5



Let's add some notes to the three string sweep. When playing notes in this way, the finger must be lifted after the note is struck, otherwise all the notes of the sweep will run together. (When sweeping a barre, the finger must be rolled to stop previous notes from ringing.) Be careful of the timing so all notes are heard evenly:

Fig. 6



Now we'll add some notes which will be picked alternately, then sweep back down:

Fig. 7



Let's add some notes to the four string sweep:

Fig. 8



Entire arpeggios can be played using this approach:

Fig. 9



Notice that one note was left out of the previous arpeggio so that there was only one note per string. There are other ways in which that note may be added, and sweep picking still incorporated by using a hammer-on or by starting with an upstroke:

Fig. 10



These exercises only scratch the surface of this topic. The player needs to get comfortable with the basic physical aspects of sweeping and after doing this, licks of this nature can be seen using many chord shapes.

# Warmup #3

Pay close attention to picking scheme. Here, we alternate between alternate and sweep picking!

Alternate Picking (down, up, down, down, up):

Exercise 1: Alternate Picking (down, up, down, down, up). The notation is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with flags and 'V' marks indicating pick direction. The bass clef staff shows the corresponding fret numbers: 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Sweep Picking (down, down, down, down, up, up, up, up):

Exercise 3: Sweep Picking (down, down, down, down, up, up, up, up). The notation is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff shows a sequence of eighth notes with flags and 'V' marks indicating pick direction. The bass clef staff shows the corresponding fret numbers: 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Exercise 5: The notation is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff shows a single eighth note on the first line (F#4) with a '5' above it. The bass clef staff shows a single eighth note on the first line (F#3) with a '5' below it.