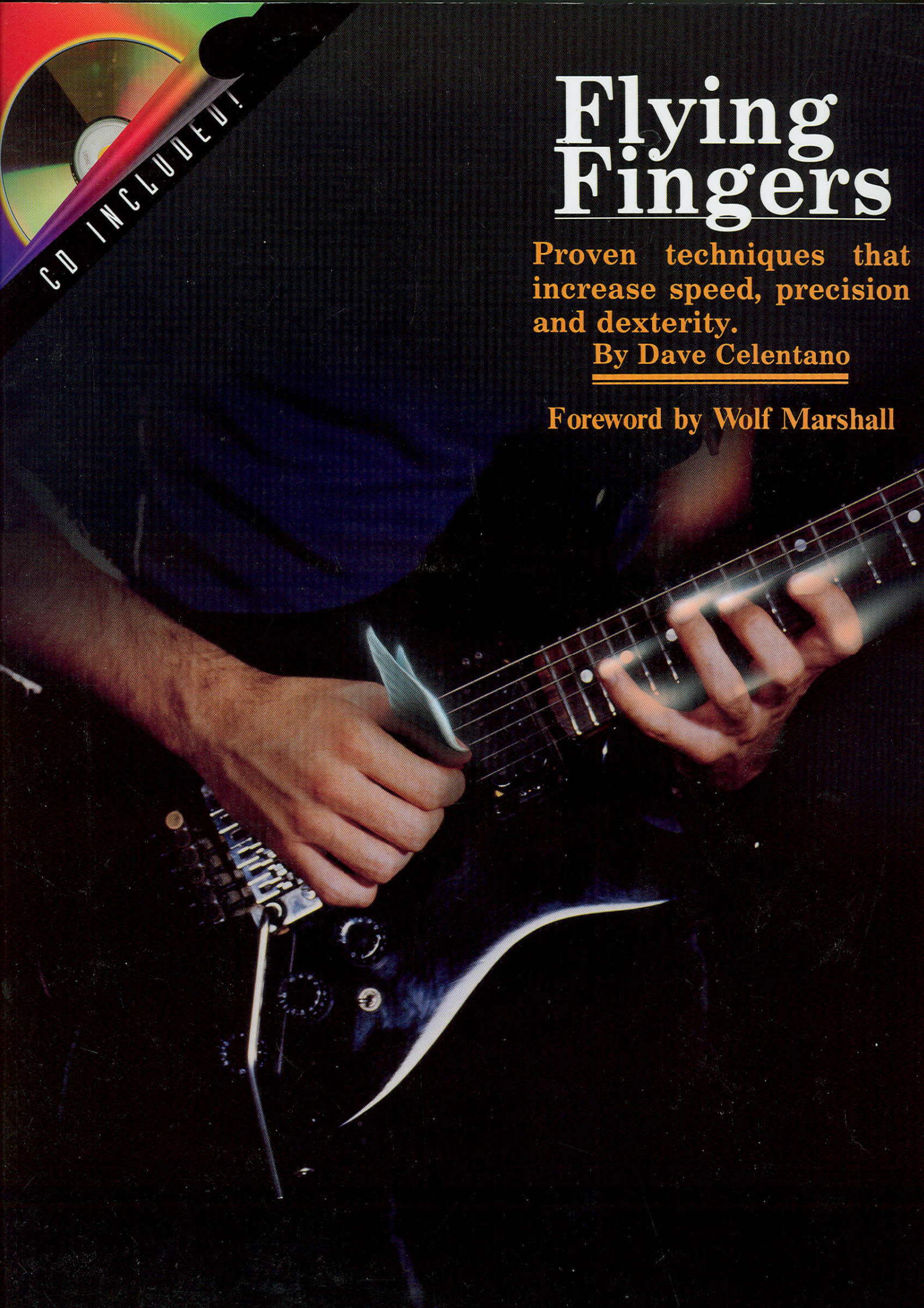

Flying Fingers

Proven techniques that increase speed, precision and dexterity.

By Dave Celentano

Foreword by Wolf Marshall

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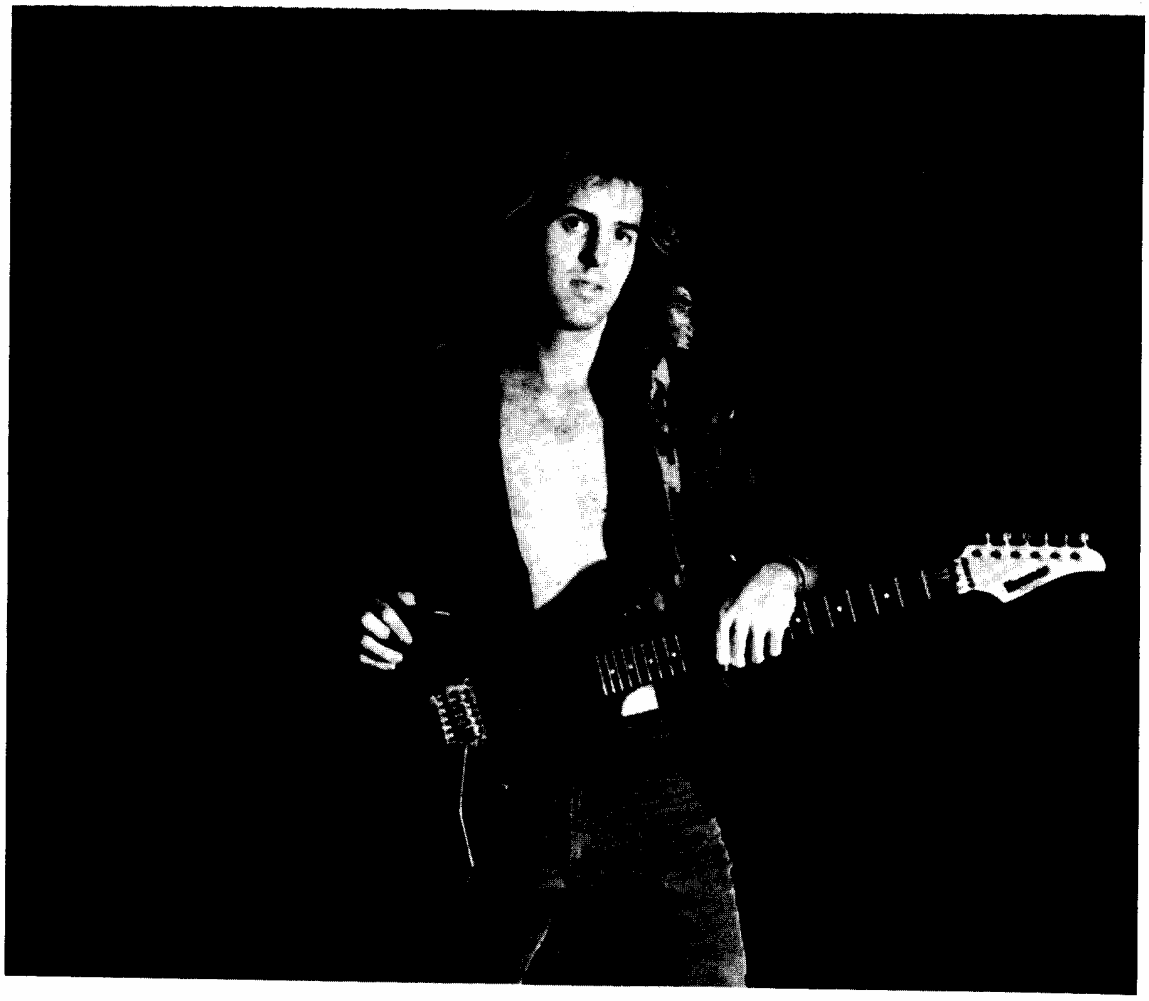


Dave Celentano grew up in Laurel, Maryland where he began playing guitar at an early age. After playing in various local bands he decided to further his musical horizons by attending Musicians Institute (G.I.T.) in Hollywood, California. Soon after his graduation he had his first book, The Magic Touch (two hand tapping), published by Centerstream and has done many successful clinics for this technique at various music stores in the Los Angeles area.

Dave is presently on the teaching staff at John Waltrips's Music Center in Arcadia, California and enjoys teaching all guitar players from beginning to advanced.

His current projects include recording and performing with his band "ALIAS" and he has just completed a guitar instruction video on two handed tricks for Star Licks.

FOREWORD

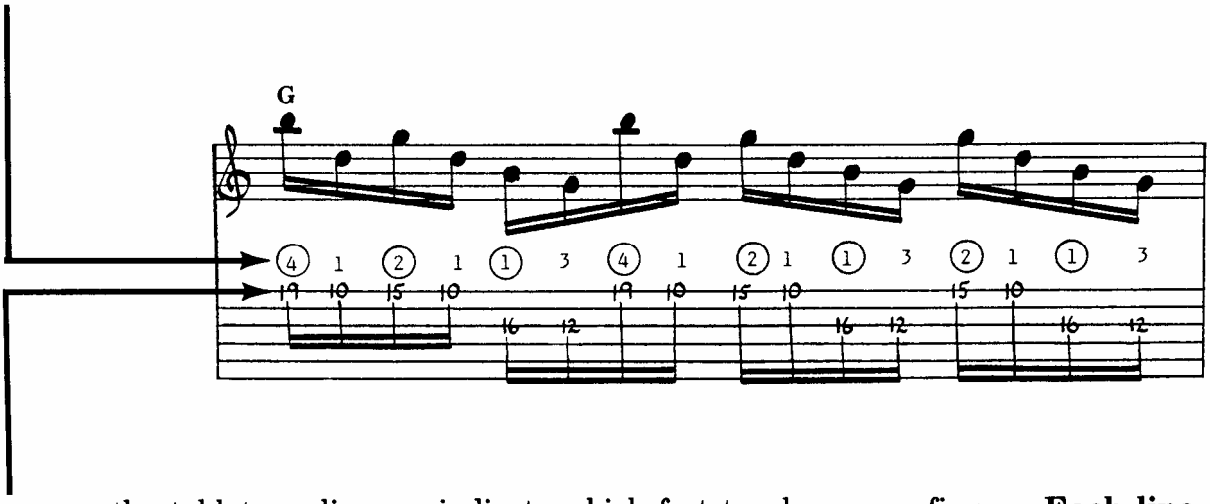
When I began conducting guitar clinics and seminars, I was struck by the lack of materials available for aspiring rock guitarists. This void encouraged and challenged a new generation of guitarists/instructors to contribute to what is now a veritable plethora of information. Indeed, today we are living in an age where music history acknowledges the modern rock guitarist as more than just a "passing phase". A great deal of attention and energy is being directed to the study of rock guitar resulting in the first important steps taken in advancing the modern guitarists' literature. These have assumed the shape of accurate transcriptions, specific etudes, theoretical concepts, actual methods and even monthly magazines devoted to the evolution of the art.

I met Dave Celentano while he was compiling material for his first book, "The Magic Touch". I was impressed with his sincerity and his enthusiasm for teaching. Now, barely a year later, he has prepared a second volume exploring a different facet of his expertise. Here, Dave addresses subjects crucial to a guitarist's development. The vital areas of vibrato, picking and melodic etudes (sequences, arpeggios, etc.) are exercises and principles in this book that will benefit all guitarists concerned with increasing their facility, expression and fluidity.

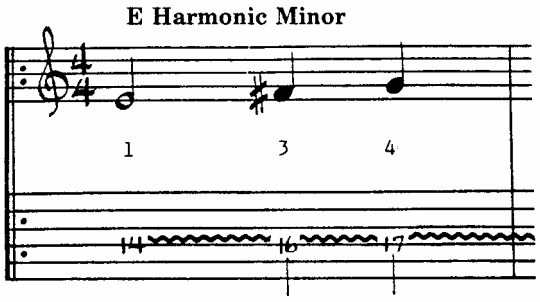
WOLF MARSHALL

EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS

Numbers directly under the music staff indicate which finger to use (1-index, 2-middle, 3-ring, 4-pinky). Numbers under staff that are circled represent right hand fingerings. Non-circled numbers represent left hand fingering.



Numbers on the tablature diagram indicate which fret to place your finger. **Each line represents one of the six strings on your guitar.** The top line on the tablature is the first string (E string), the second line from the top is the second string (B string), the third line from the top is the third string (G string), and so on.



Vibrato

Bending the string and releasing it repeatedly causing the note to go sharp and flat.

Down Stroke

Pick the string with a downward motion from the pick.

Up Stroke

Pick the string with an upward motion from the pick.

8va ——— Play designated notes one octave higher than written.

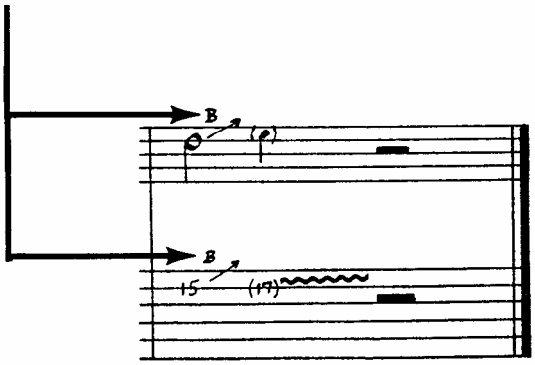
Loco ——— Return notes to actual pitch when an 8va was used.

Simile

Continue established pattern until further notated or until the end of the phrase.

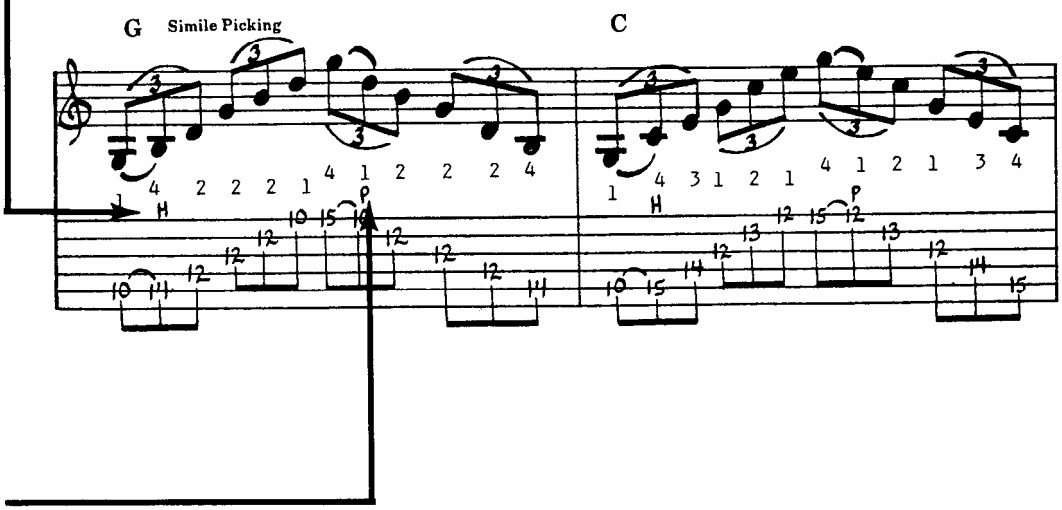
Bend

Playing a note and pushing that string upward towards the ceiling causing the pitch of the note to raise.



Hammer on

Playing a note and striking a higher note on the same string with another finger, producing the higher note.



Pull off

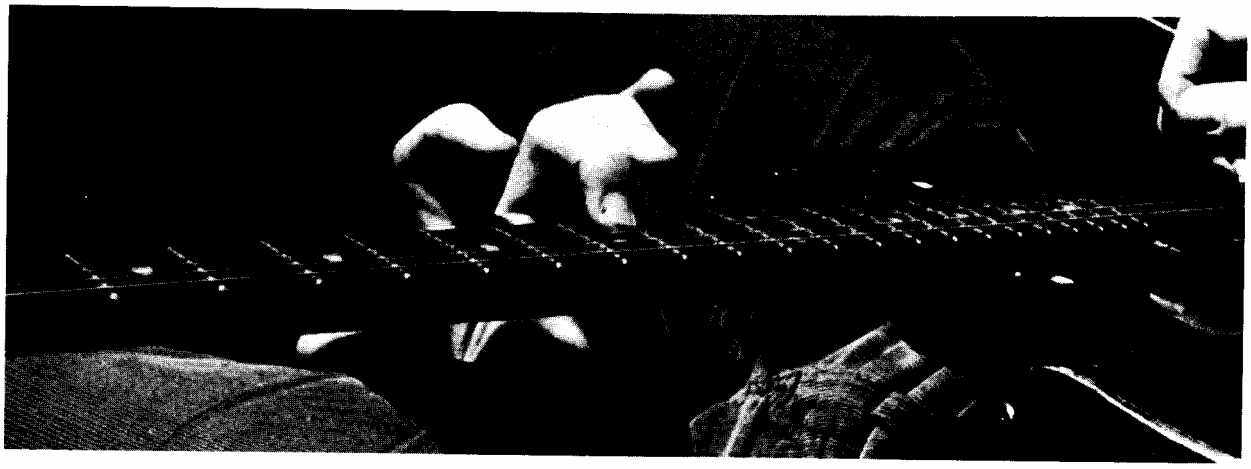
Playing a note and **pulling your finger off,** producing a lower note on the same string.

VIBRATO

Vibrato is one of the most valuable techniques for putting feeling and emotion into your playing. It's also one of the most difficult to master. Time spent on developing a good vibrato will be well worth the effort. Here are three different types of vibrato that are important to know. Each one conveys a different expression:

Classical Vibrato

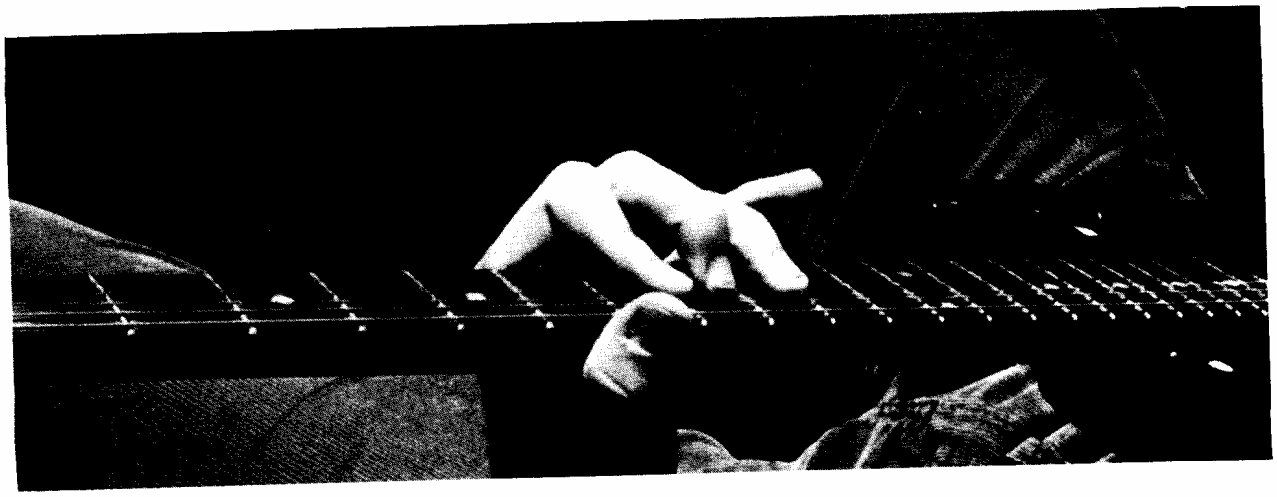
This type is used widely by classical string players (violin, cello), but is very effective on guitar. This is produced by moving your finger in a horizontal manner, back and forth, causing the note to go sharp and flat.



Rock Vibrato

Found in almost every rock and roll guitar solo, this vibrato is by far the most widely used. The technique behind this vibrato is a pivoting motion caused by the wrist turning while pivoting the side of the hand on the edge of the guitar neck, like this:

The string is rocked vertically, up and down, while keeping the fingers perfectly rigid. All the movement is from the wrist. Notice that the note can only go sharp in this type of vibrato.

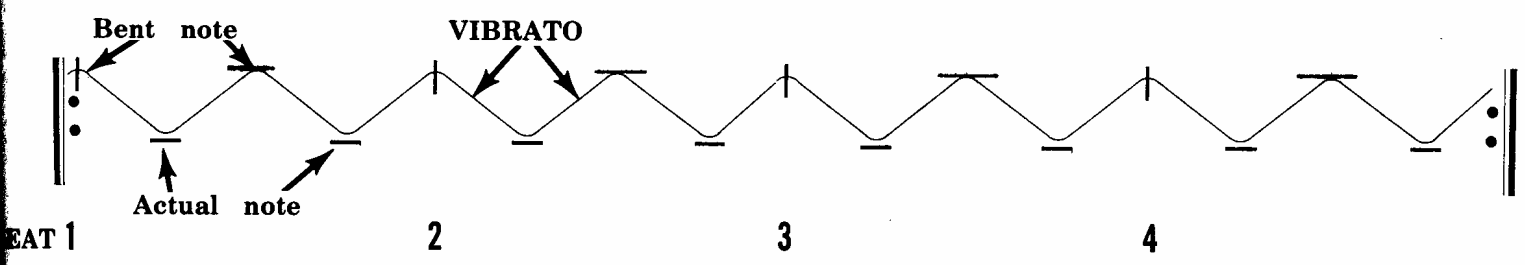


Circular Vibrato

After mastering the two previous vibratos, you'll find that combining them can create an interesting sound. By moving the finger in a counter-clockwise circle on the string, you are blending the classical and rock types.
Try starting out slowly, with small circular motions, gradually building up to larger circles.

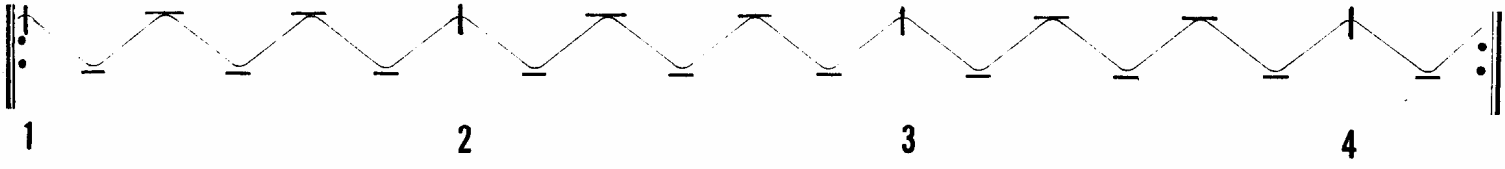
I chose the rock vibrato to go into depth with because it's the most widely used. Let's look at a few examples on how to achieve a smooth rock vibrato:

Example 1



Example One illustrates an 8th note vibrato. You'll want to bend the string up and release it two times per beat. A really wide vibrato is produced by bending the string a whole step (two frets) above the actual pitch and then releasing it.
If you're practicing with a metronome (you should be!), every other bent note would land on the click, as in the diagram above. Practicing with a metronome is the best way to develop this and the rest of the techniques in this book.

Example 2

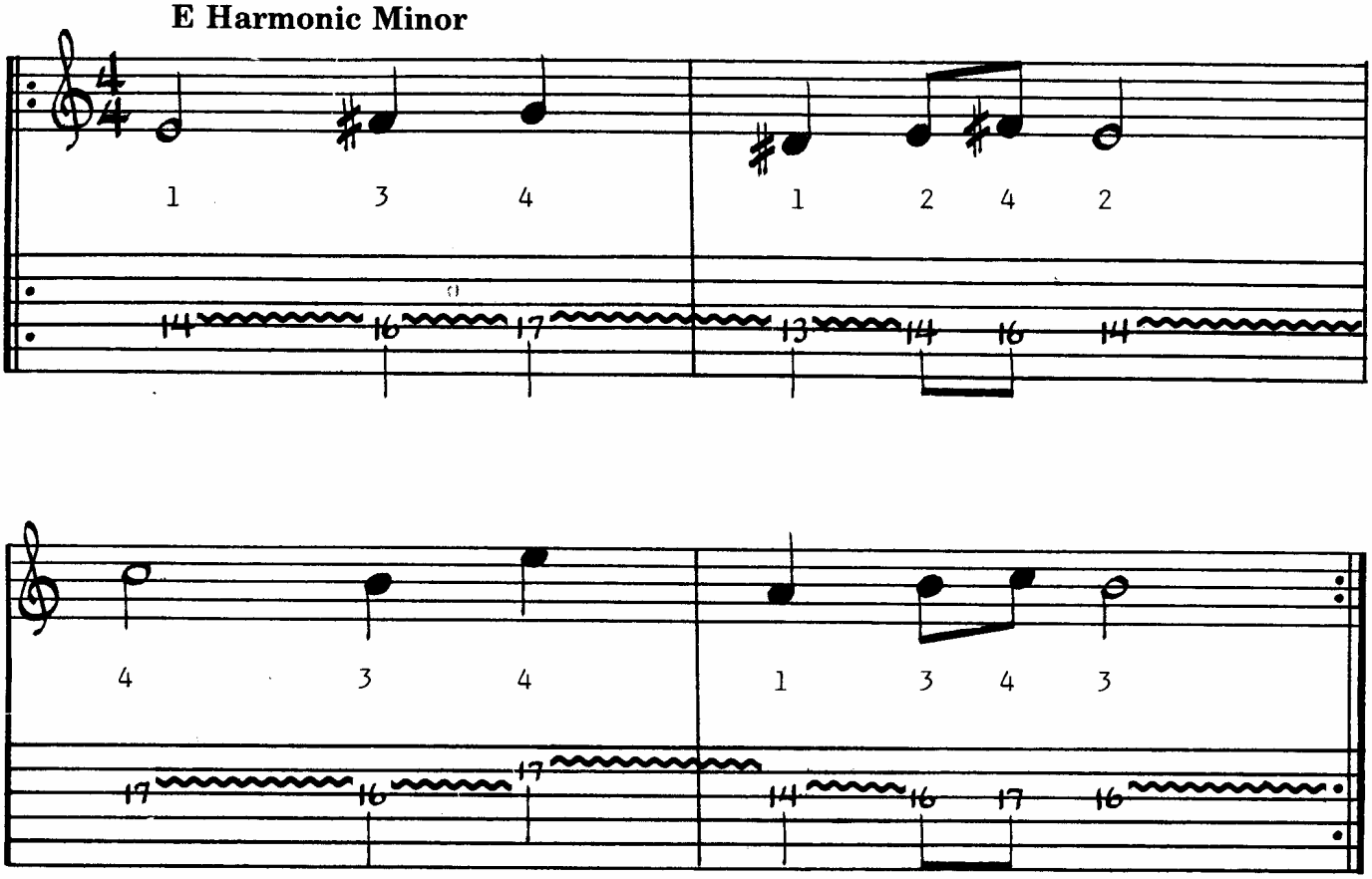


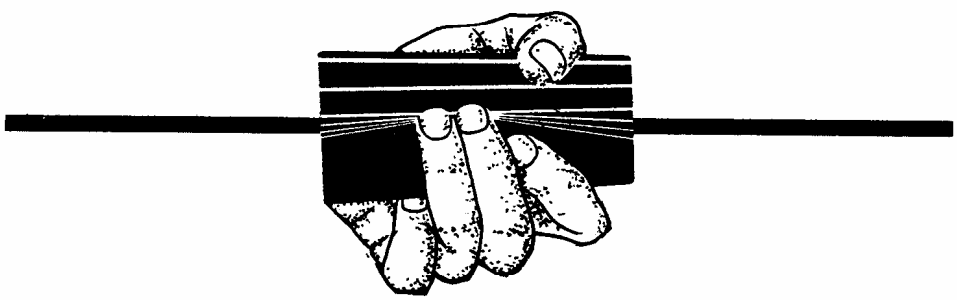
Example Two shows an 8th note triplet vibrato. In other words, you'll bend the string and release it three times per beat.
Good control of the vibrato is very important in maintaining a smooth, polished sound. So remember, start out very slow and experiment using all three types of vibrato in as many places as you can, on all six strings.

This is a little melody using vibrato on all the notes except for the two 8th notes in bars two and four. Practice this at all speeds (slow, medium and fast).

Example 3

E Harmonic Minor





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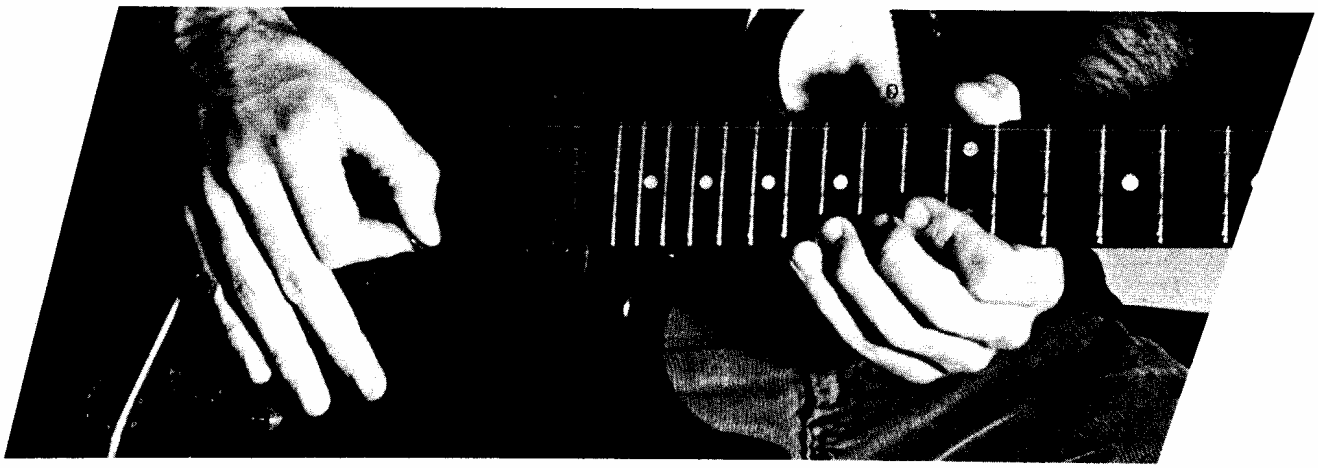
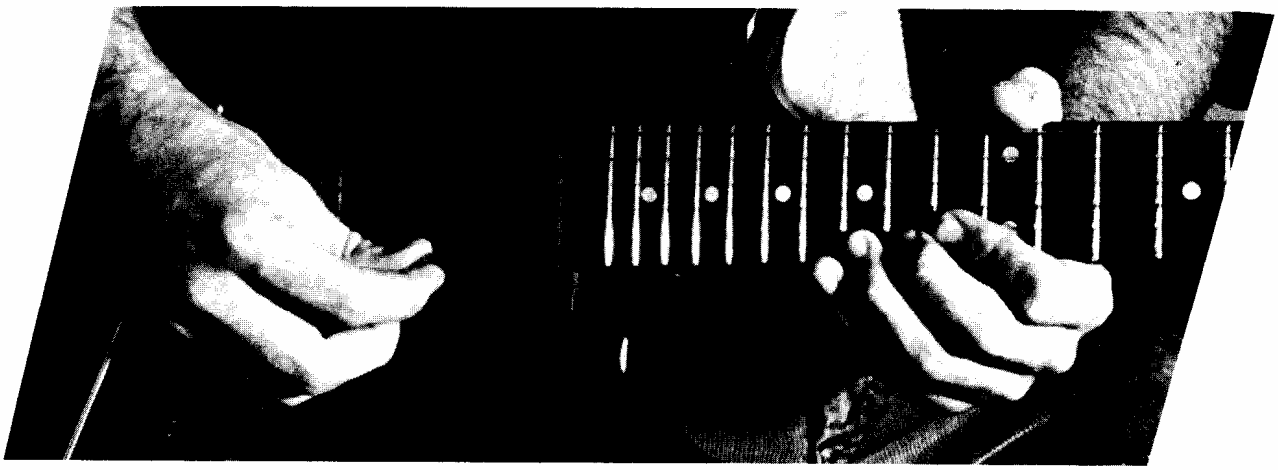
Picking Hand

The picking hand is probably the most overlooked area for guitar players, yet it's one of the most important facets in good tone and speed. By isolating the picking hand and developing a few techniques, you can double and even triple your picking speed!

Let's check out a few tips for picking at sonic speeds:

To get the most speed out of your picking, I would suggest holding the pick loosely, between your thumb and index finger. Try using a heavy or extra heavy pick (Jim Dunlop Jazz III picks). By using a heavy pick, the pick isn't allowing any duration in time between your hand movement and the string attack. So, when your hand moves to attack the string, the string is attacked. Remember, the heavier, the faster. Also, try angling the pick at a 45 degree angle to the string. Experiment with a 45 degree angle pointed towards the floor and 45 degree angle pointed towards the ceiling as in the diagram below:





This allows the pick to cut across the string more quickly and easily. **Keep the hand relaxed!**

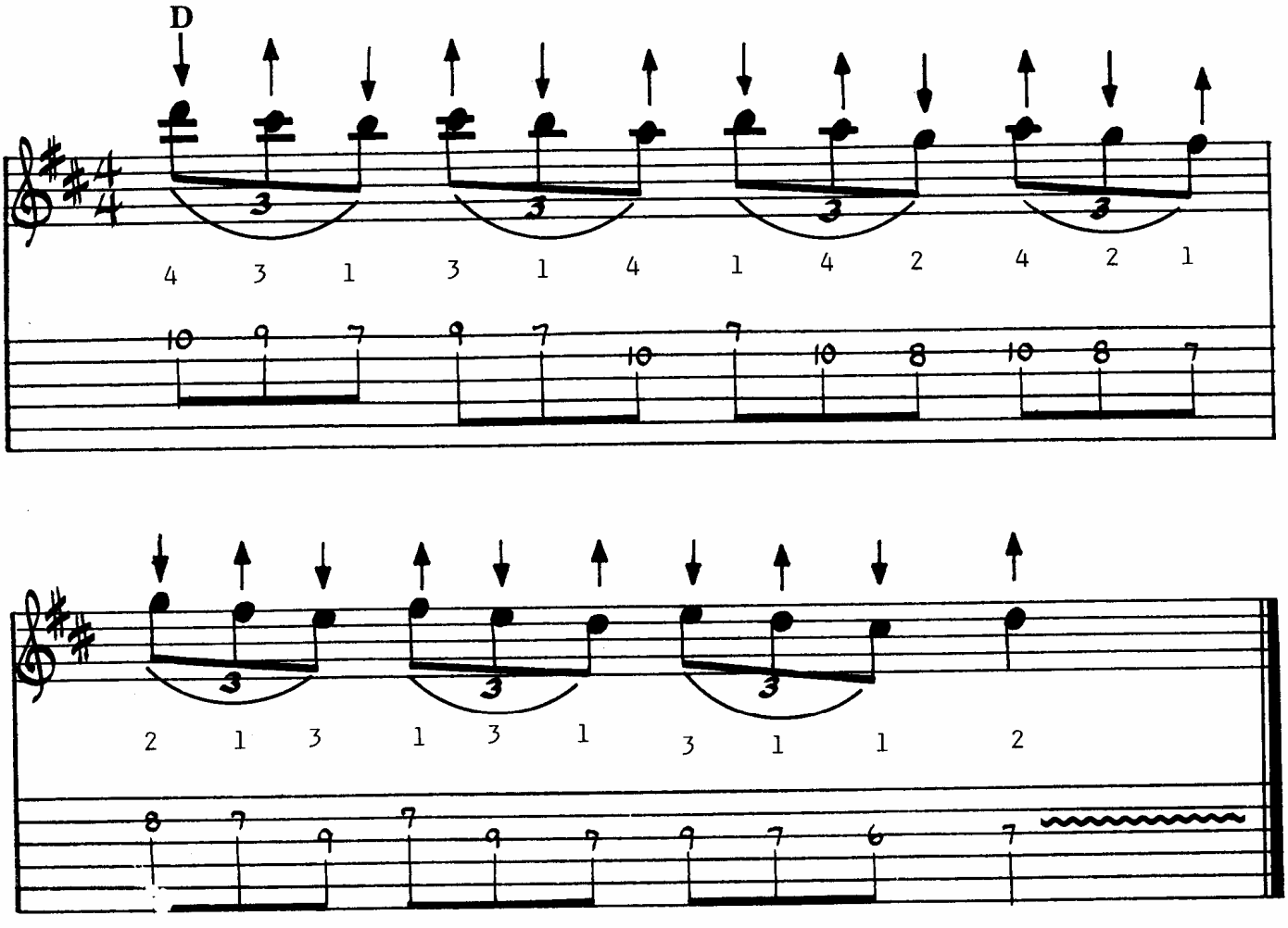
Now we'll look at three different picking techniques:

Alternate Picking

This is the most widely used style of picking. In this style the pick direction changes for every note like this: up, down, up, down, up, down, etc., or down, up, down, up, down, etc.

The next two examples feature this picking style.

Example 4



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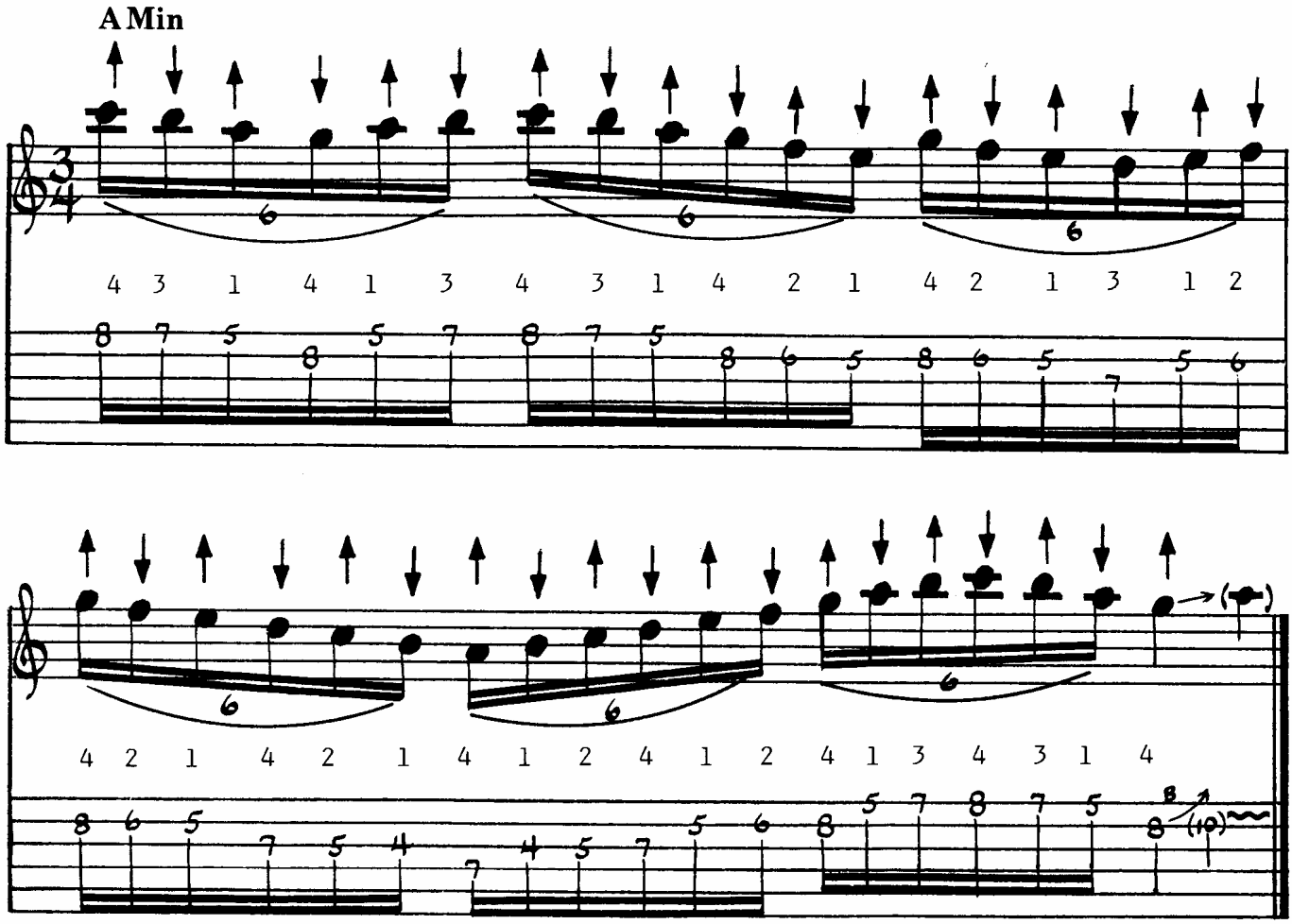
Example 5



Sweep Picking

Sweep Picking is the most efficient way of picking, meaning that you don't waste any pick motions. It's like alternate picking except that when you cross strings the pick stays in the same direction as the previous note on the previous string. In other words, you want to get the most out of one pick motion as possible.

Sweep picking works great with scales. By playing scales arranged with three notes per string, the picking works out perfectly. Let's try a few examples.

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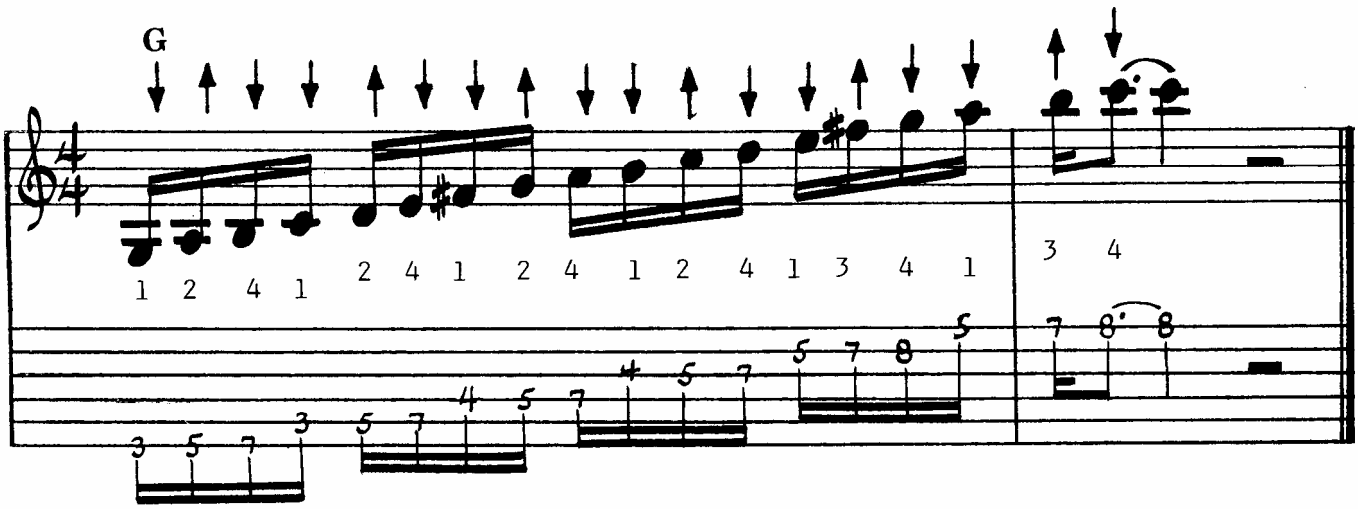
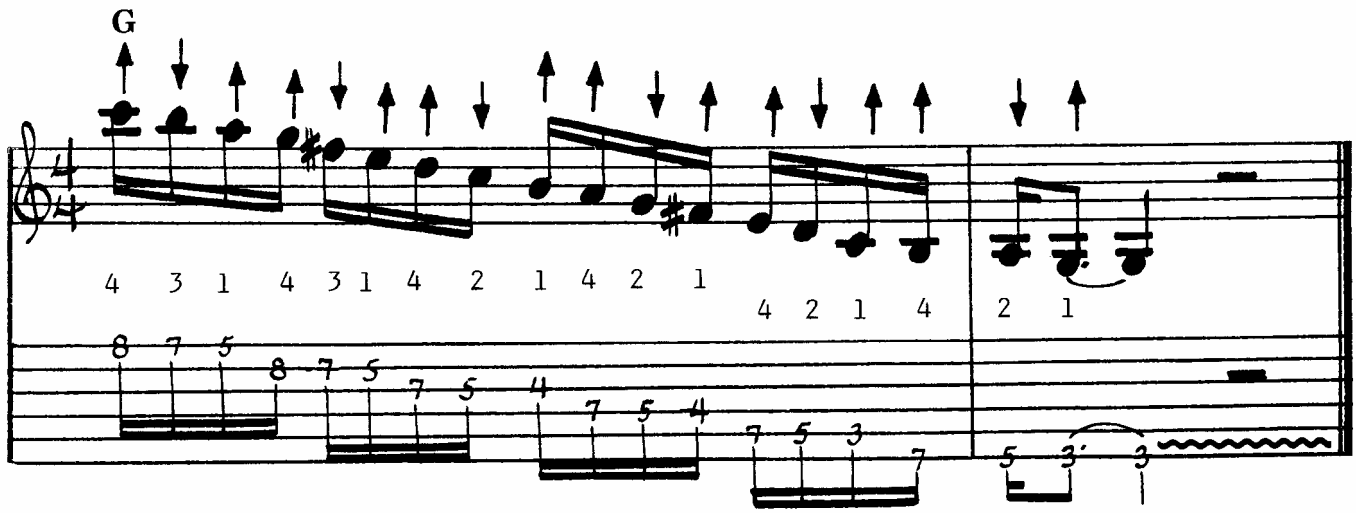
Example 6

(Ascending - down, up, down, down, up, down, down, up, down, etc.)



Example 7

(Descending - up, down, up, up, down, up, up, down, up, etc.)



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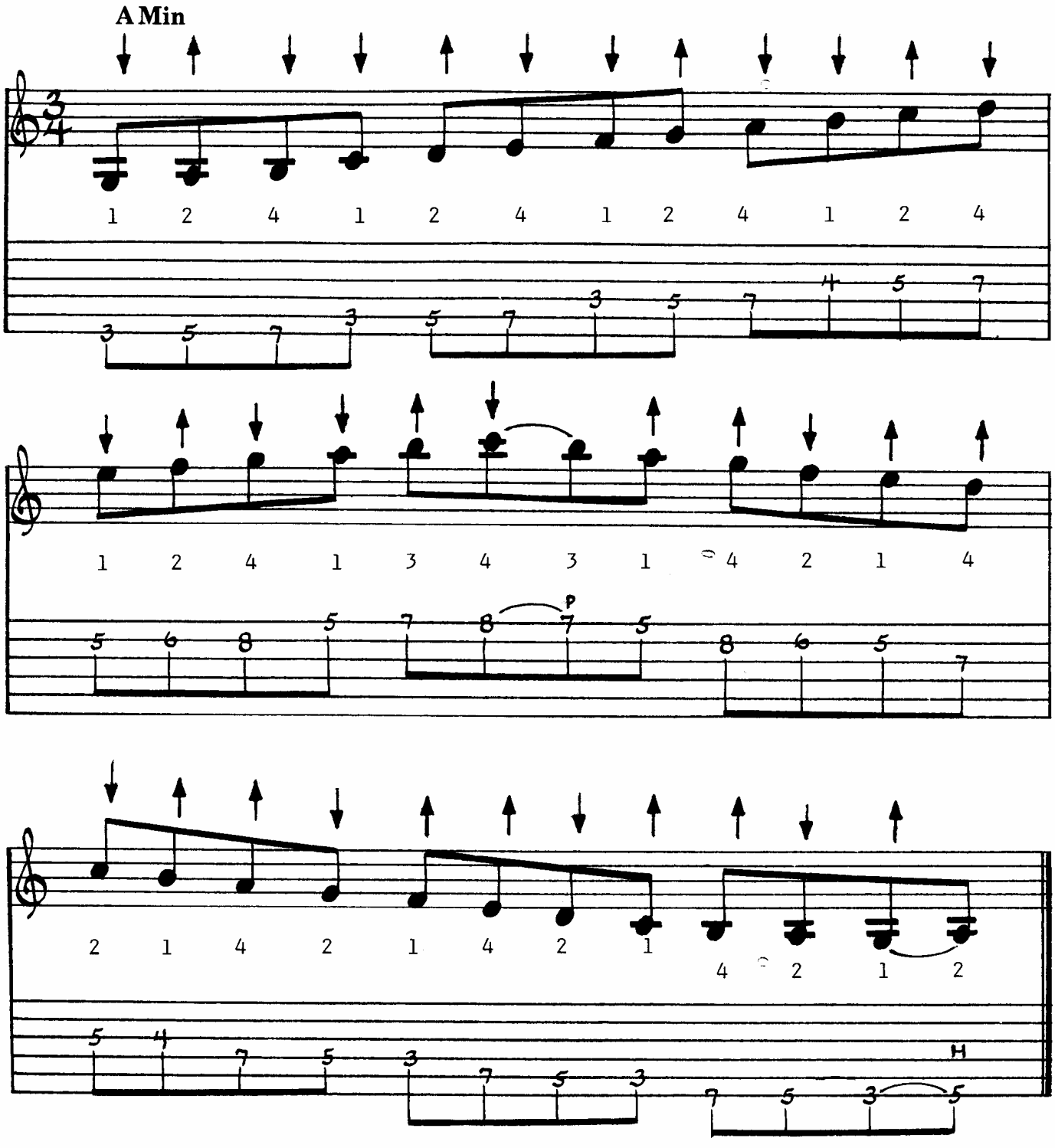
There are two ways to change the direction of the scale using sweep picking. One is to place a pull-off on the string that you are changing direction on like this:

Example 8



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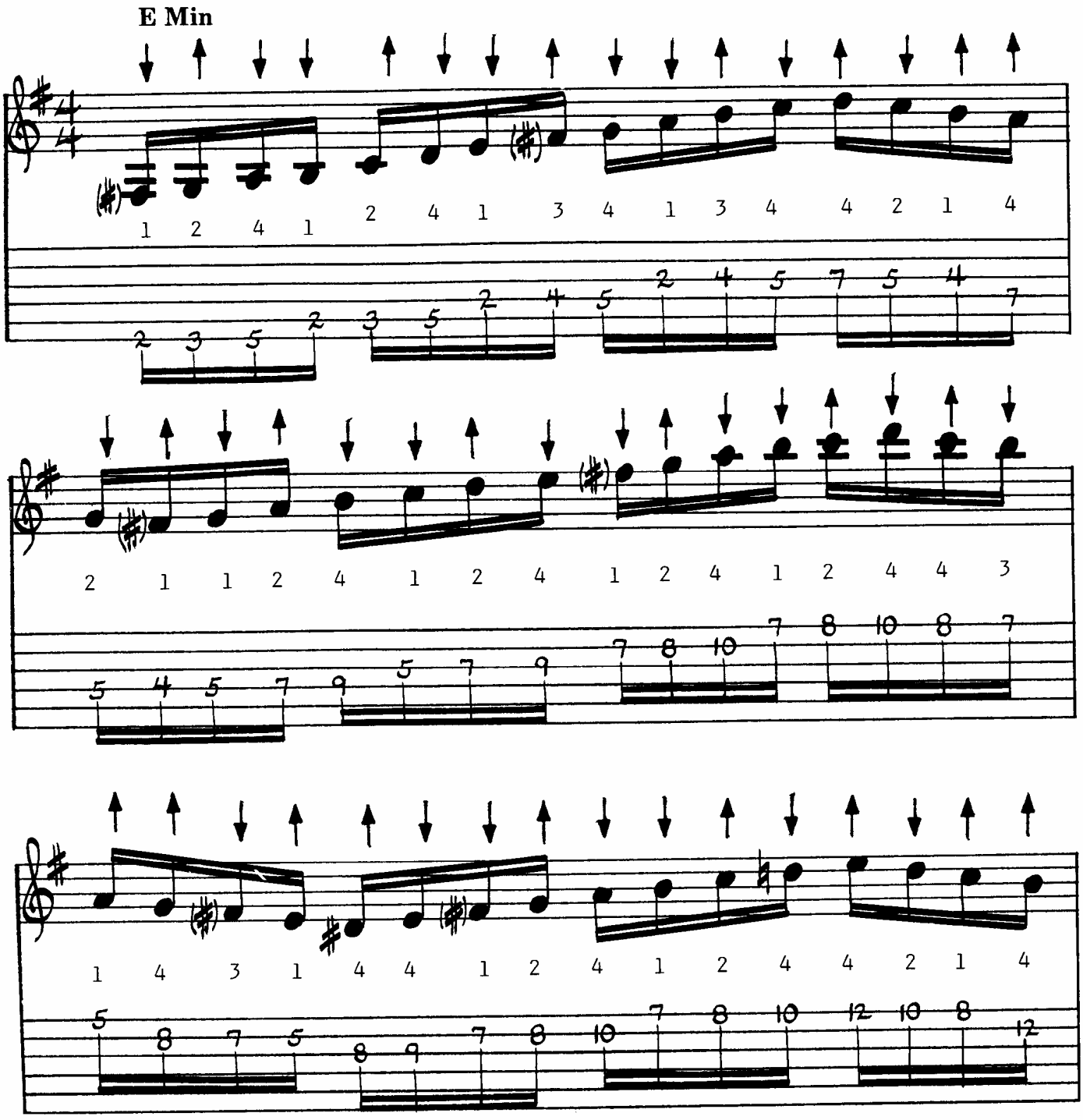
The second way is to play an even number of pick strokes (2,4,6) on the string you are changing direction on. To keep the line going in the same direction, play on odd number (1,3,5) of pick strokes on the string.

Example Nine shows this technique.

Example 9



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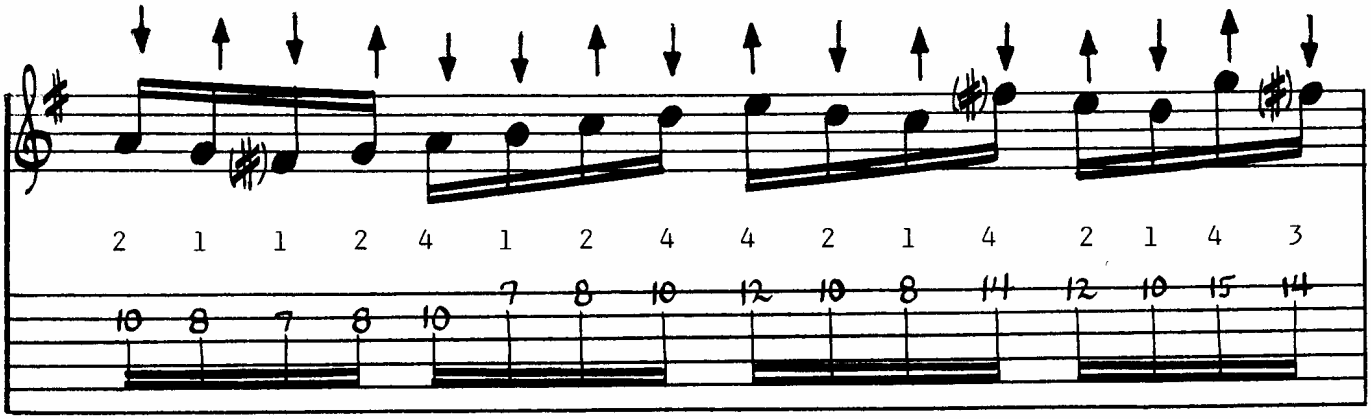
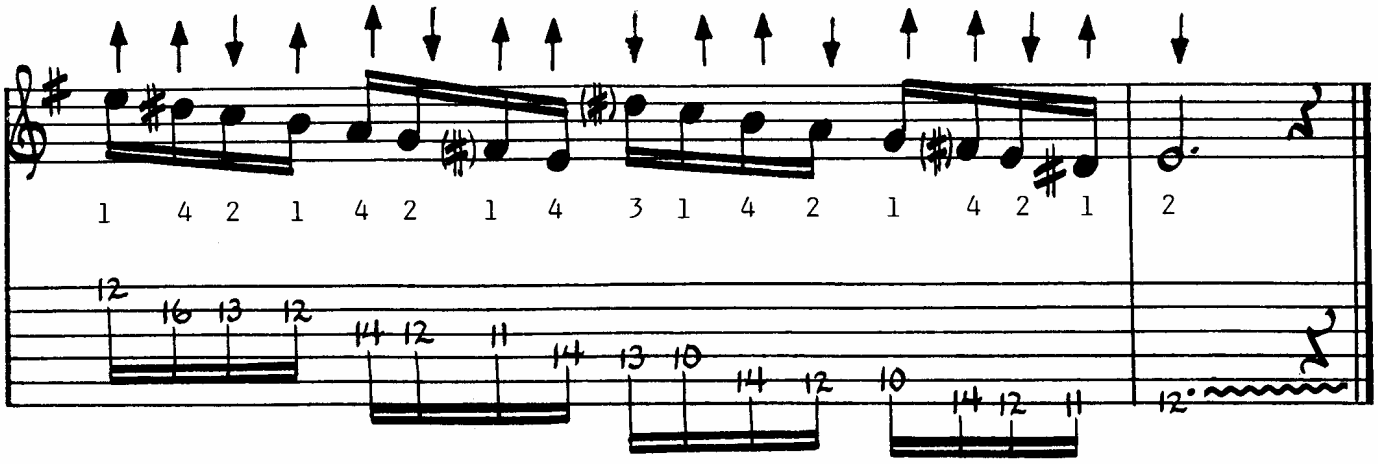
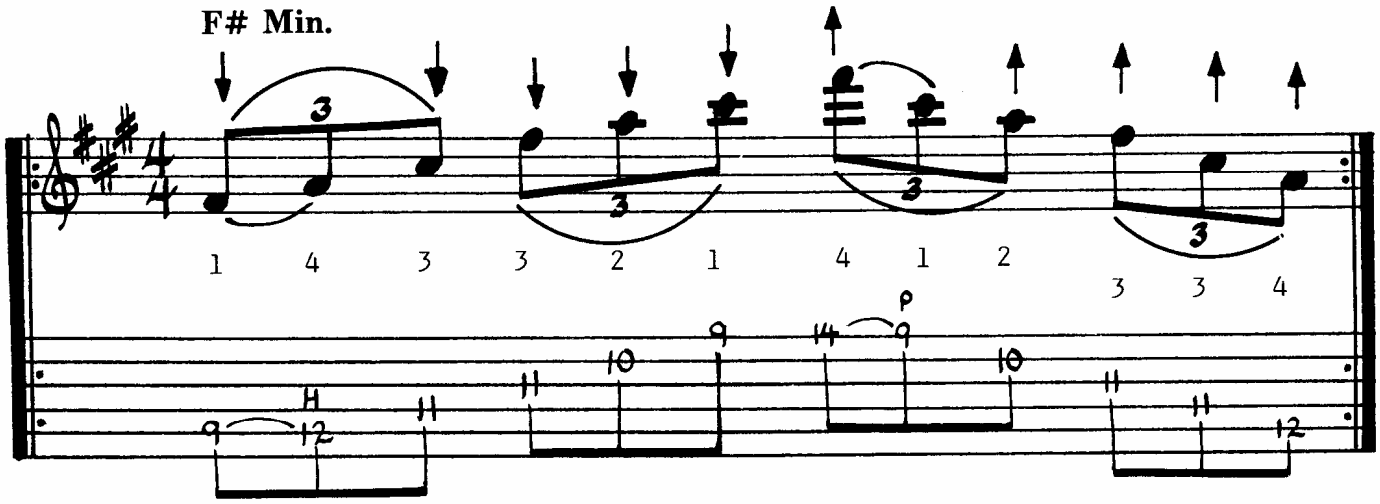




Applying the sweep to arpeggios is very effective. By placing each note of the arpeggio on a different string, the pick direction can remain the same ascending (down, down, down, down, etc.) and descending (up, up, up, up, etc.). Examples Ten and Eleven show this technique applied to and F# minor arpeggio and B minor arpeggio respectivlv

Note: See arpeggio chapter for an explanation of what an arpeggio is.

Example 10



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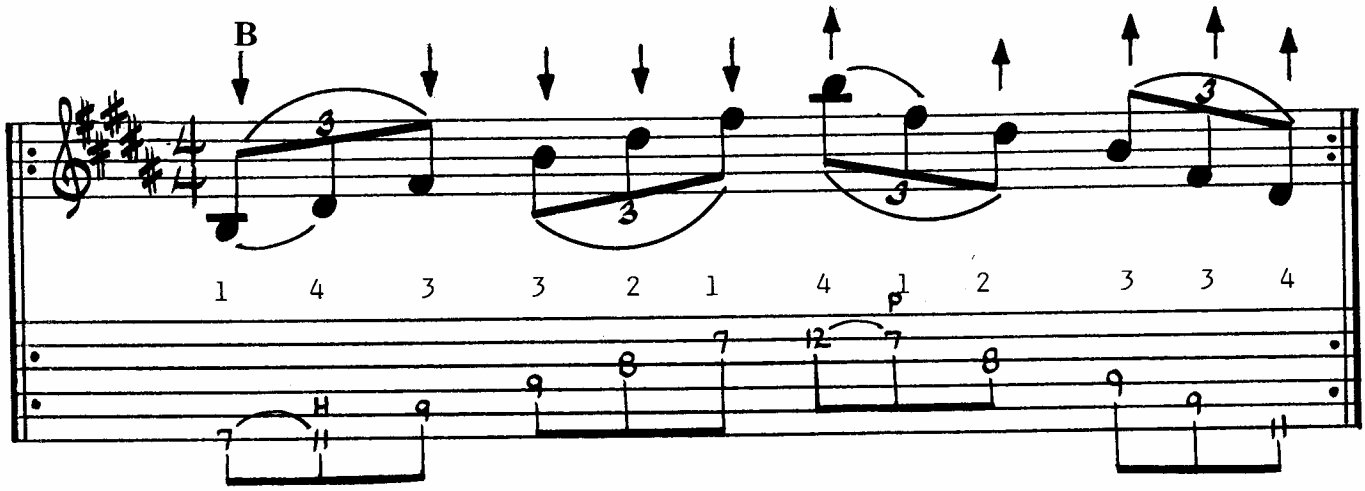
Example 11



Circular Picking

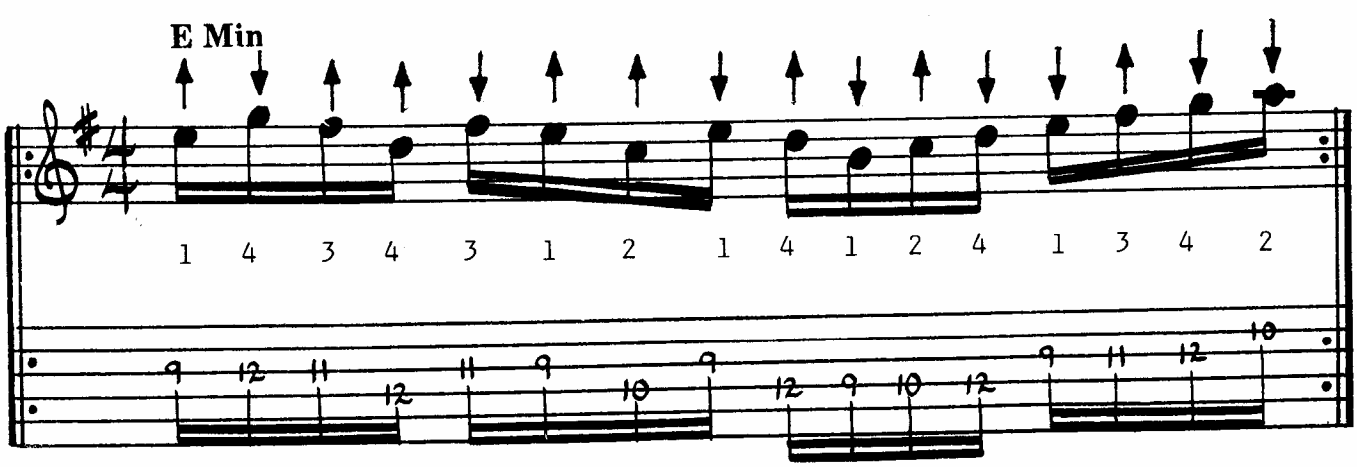
Circular picking works best with single note playing. The desired effect is small circular motions by the thumb and index finger pivoting the pick back and forth in a counter-clockwise direction. Basically the thumb pushes the pick towards the string on the down-strokes and then the index finger pivots the pick back up to attack the string again on the up-strokes.

This technique minimizies arm and wrist movement to almost nothing, which in turn means a more accurate and efficient picking technique.

To get the best results in mastering the circular picking style, repeat one note over and over using large, exaggerated circular motions until the desired effect is established. Once you get the hang if this, the circular motions should be very small and minimal.

Try incorporating circular picking into this repeating motif:

Example 12



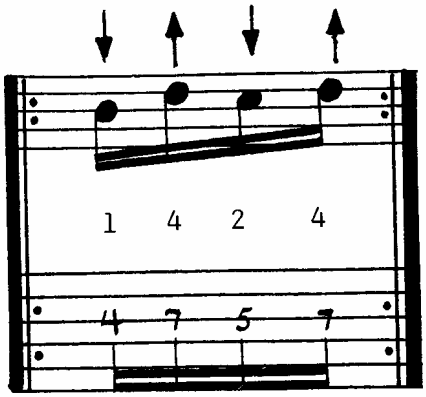
Notice the small application of sweep picking in the last example.

MELODIC SEQUENCES

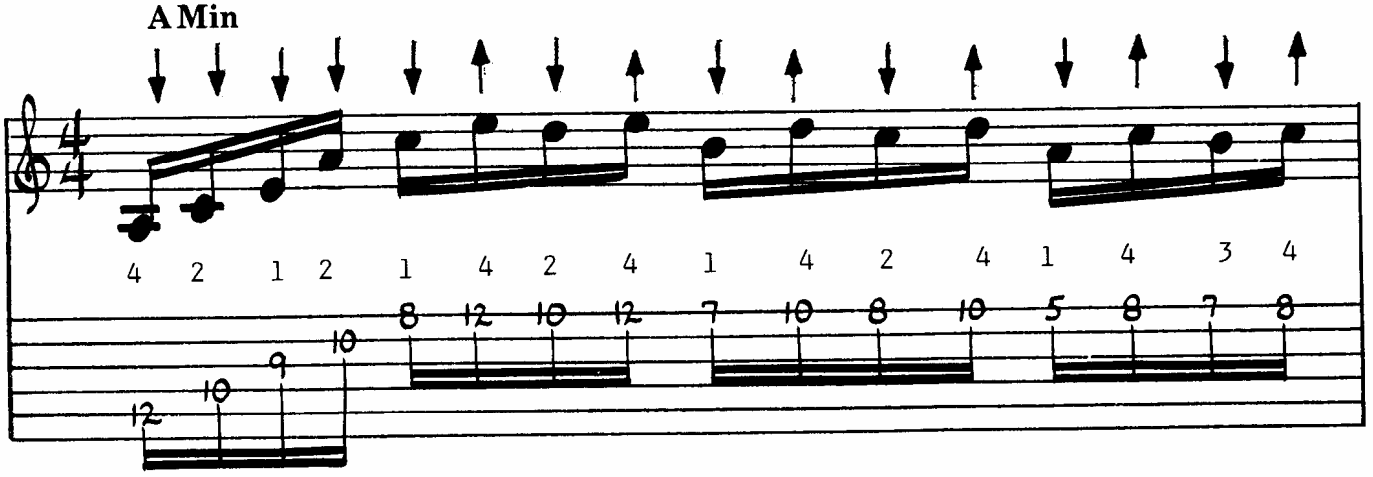
A melodic sequence is a melodic group of notes that is moved systematically throughout the scale, keeping the same melodic contour. To get a better understanding of what a sequence is, let's go ahead and check out the next example. The first of the sequence licks is a four note pattern. This one has a classical sound to it.

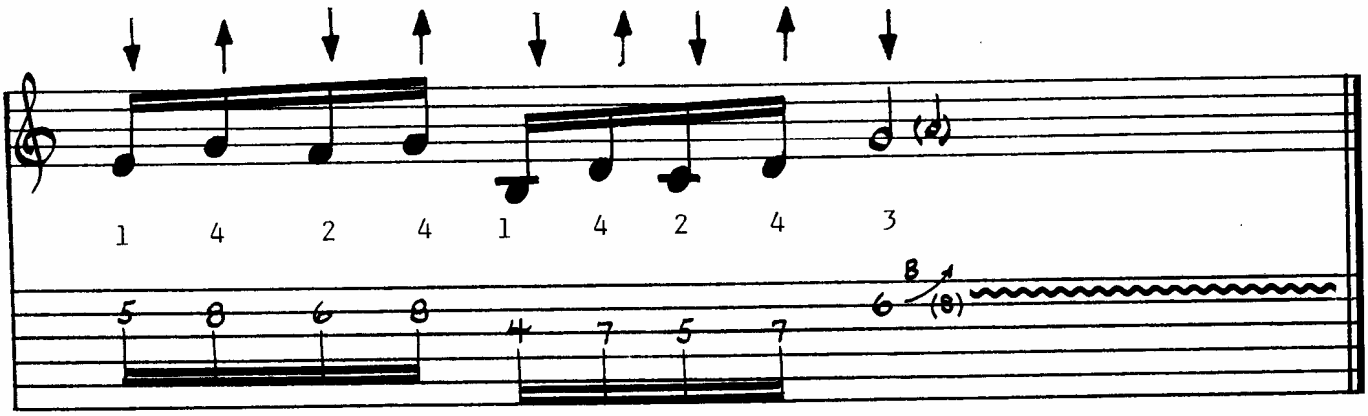
Example 13

Sequence pattern



A Min





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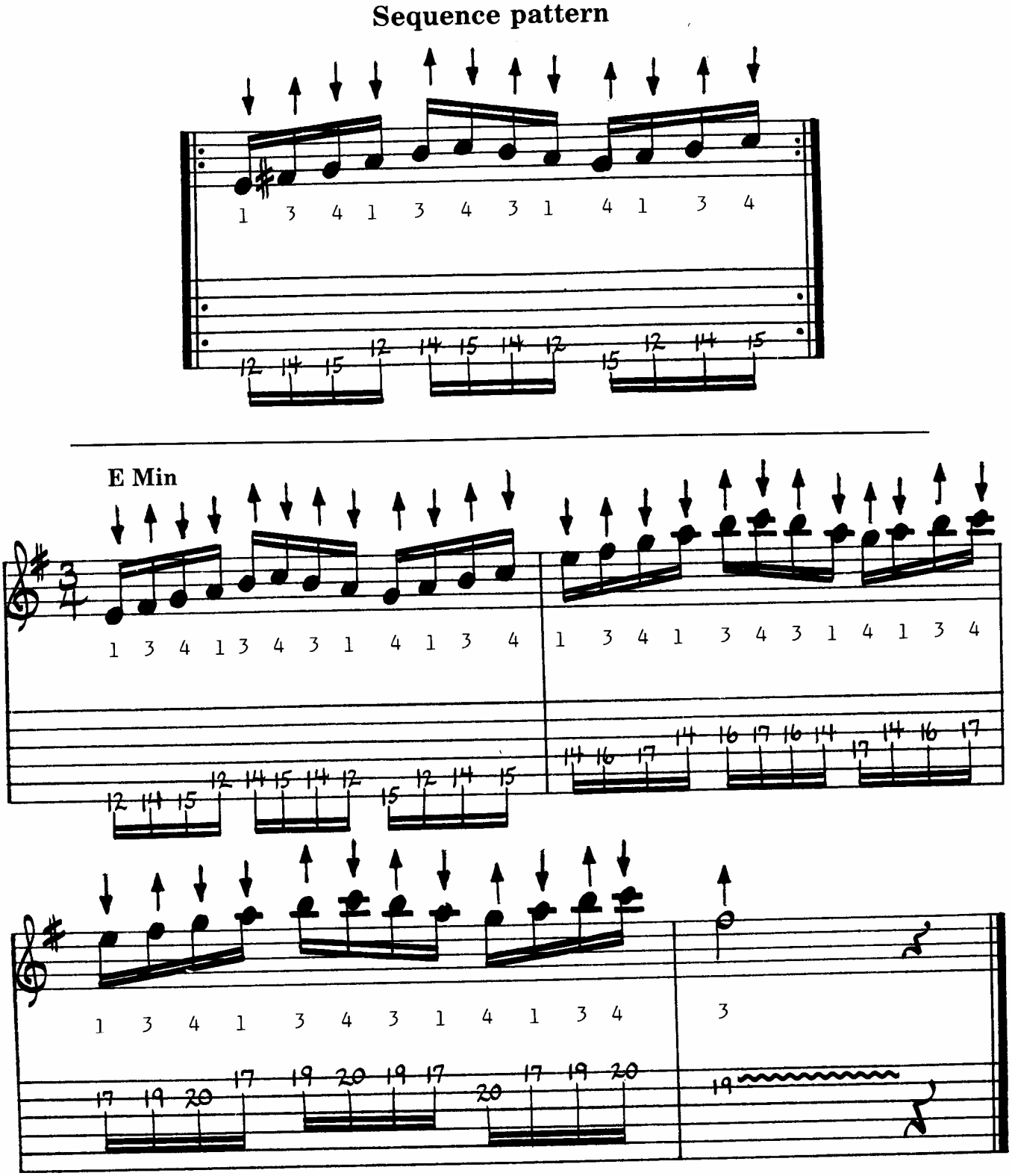
This next sequence lick is played in three different octaves.

Example 14



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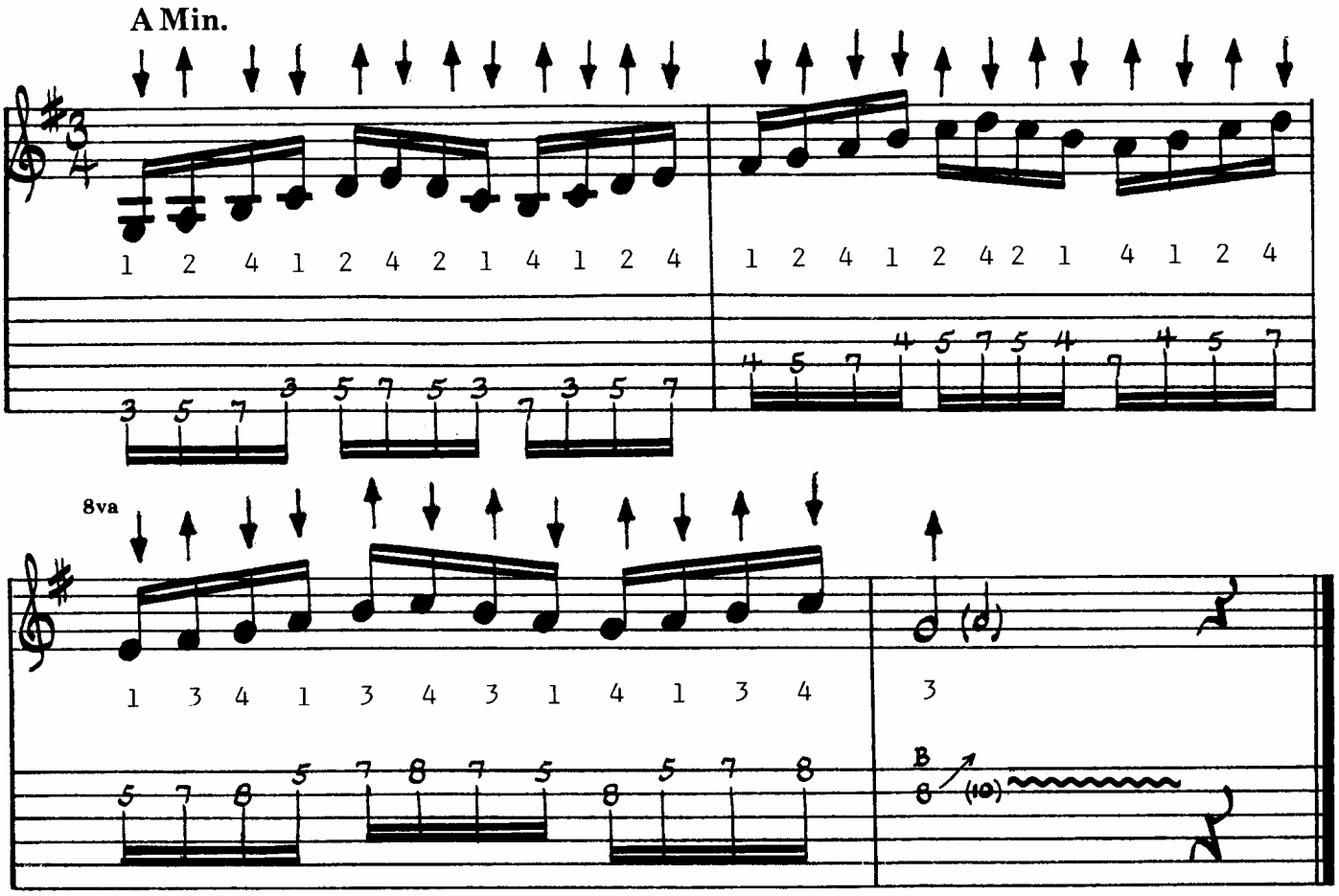
Example Fifteen is the same sequence as the previous, but this time we'll play it in one scale position.

Example 15



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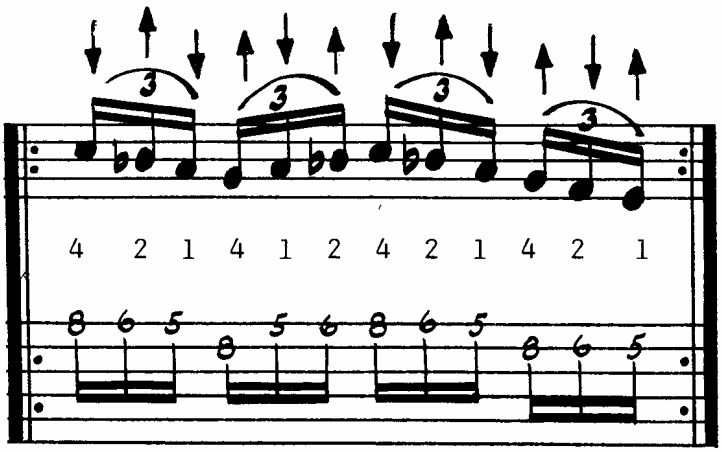
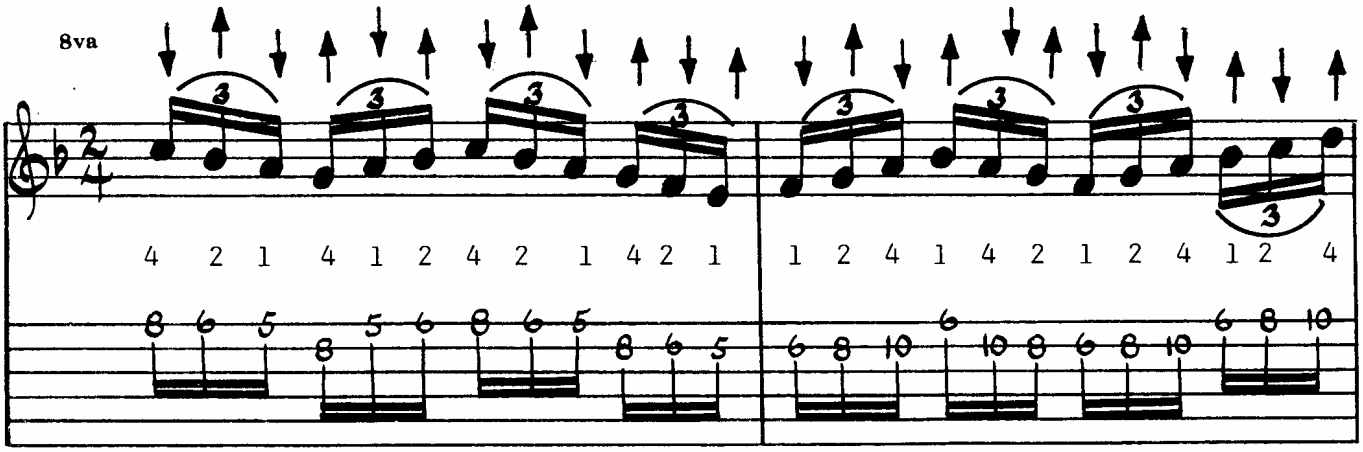
Here is another idea with a new sequence. We'll play every other sequence in reverse and then end on a C major arpeggio followed by a D minor arpeggio.

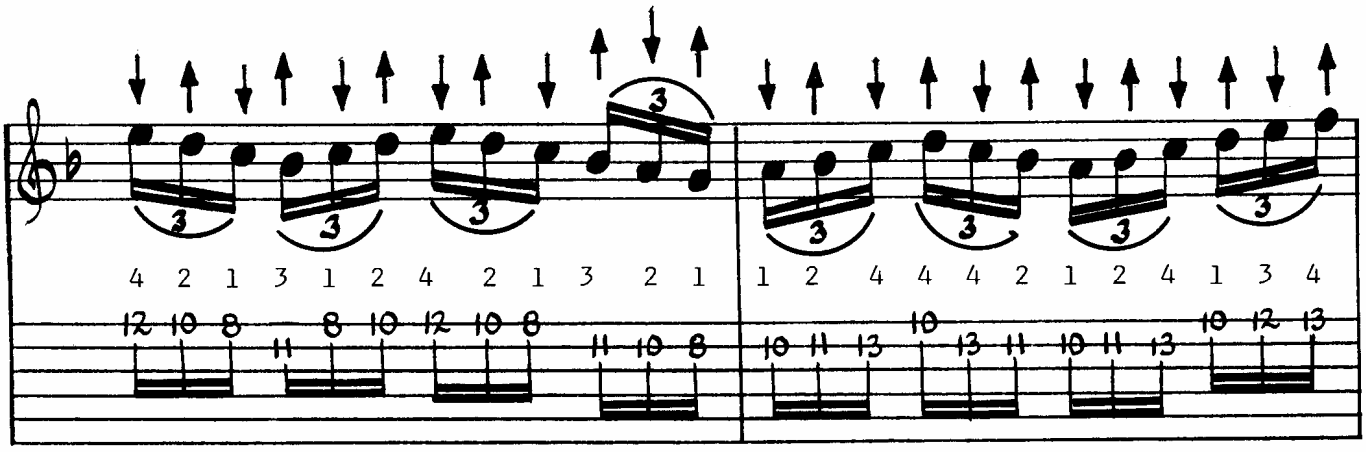
Example 16

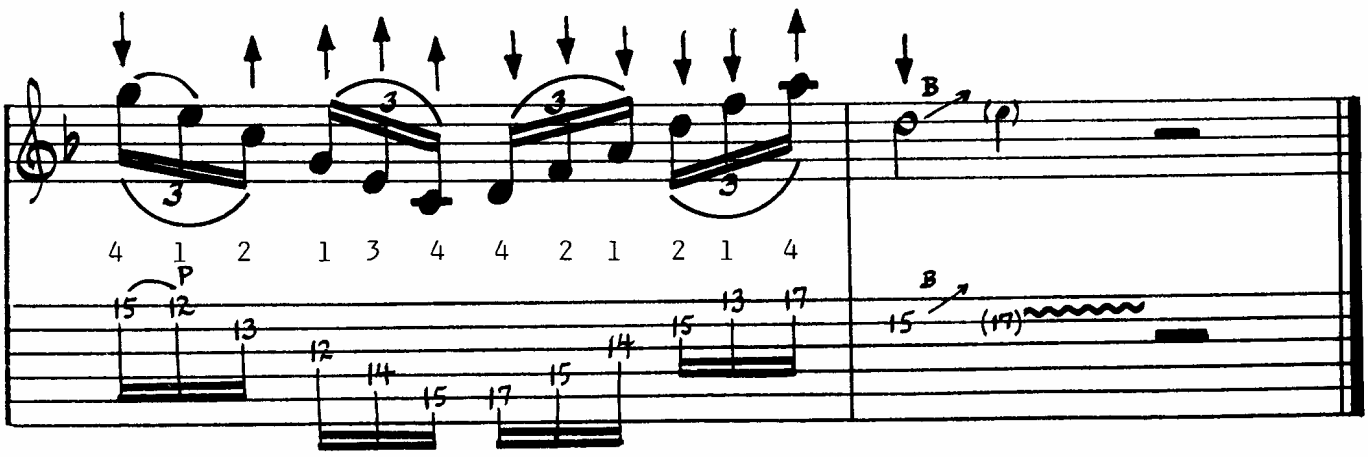
Sequence Pattern



D Min







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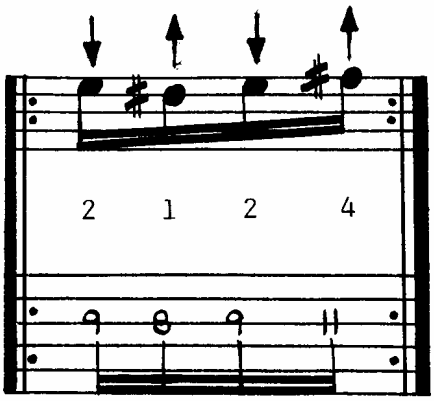
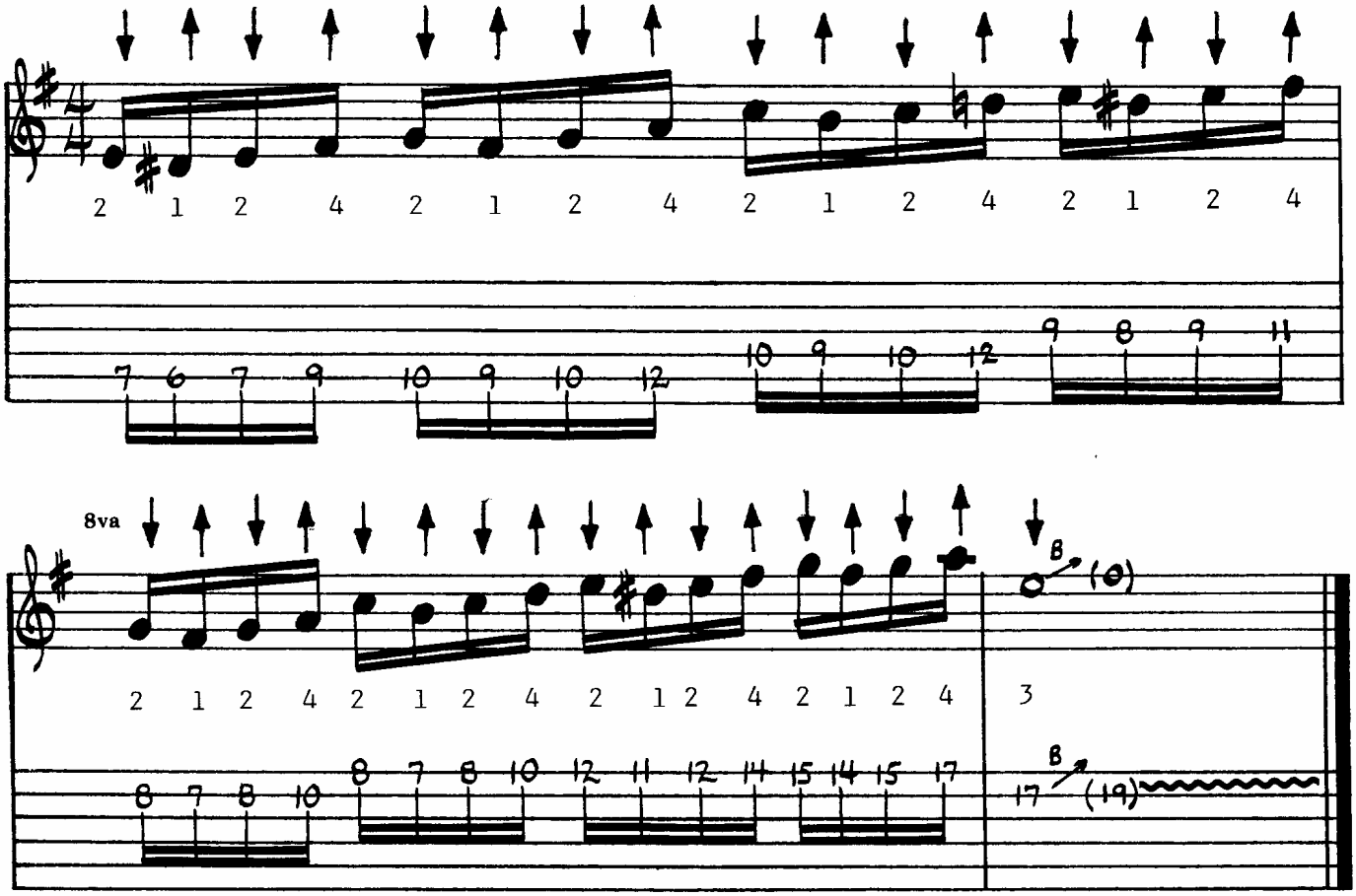
A good idea is to combine scales to give a little different tonal characteristic. In this next example we'll combine an E natural minor with an E harmonic minor scale. Check it out:

Example 17

Sequence pattern



E Min



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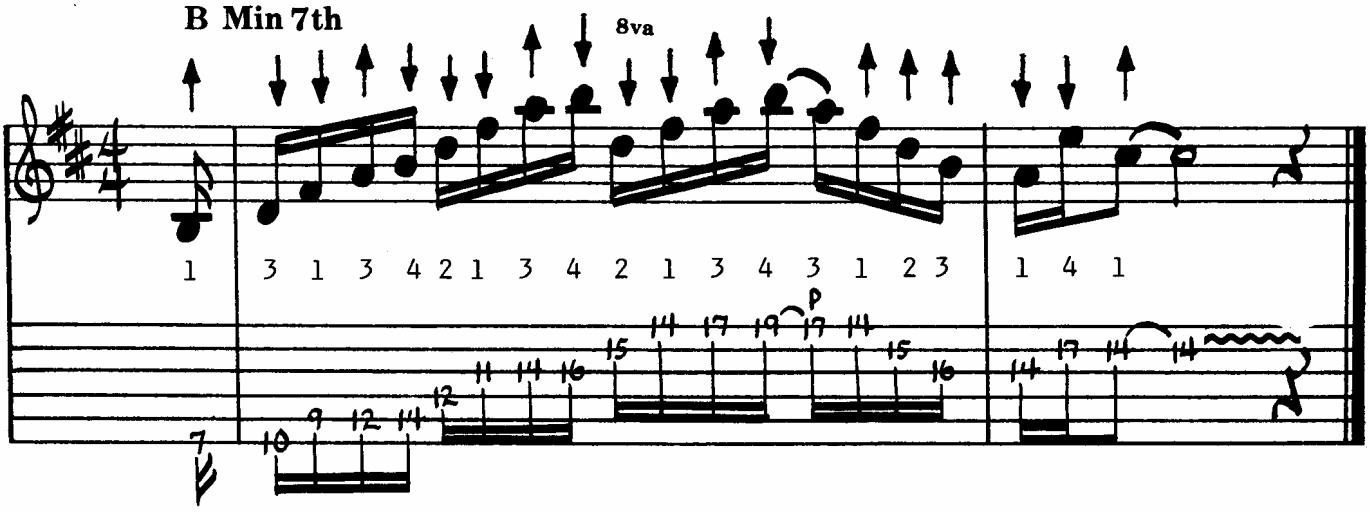
ARPEGGIOS

This chapter displays a number of ways to play arpeggiated ideas. For those of you wondering what an arpeggio is, it's simply this: An arpeggio is the notes of a chord played consecutively, one after another.
All three picking techniques (alternate picking, sweep picking and circular picking) will be used in the following examples, along with hammer-ons, pull-offs, vibrato and some two hand tapping techniques.

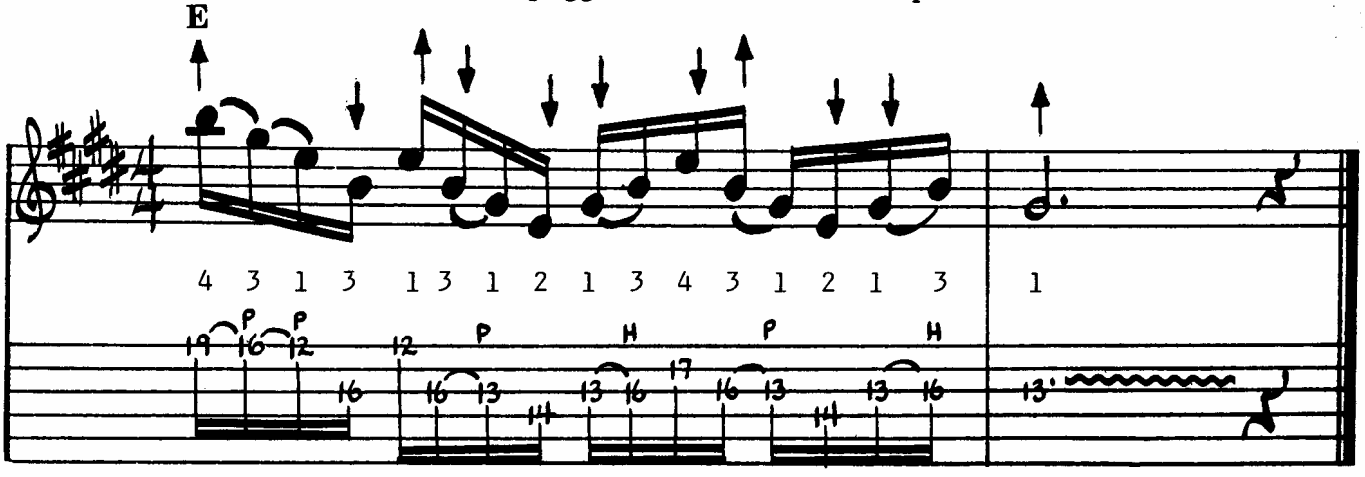
Example 18

Here is a B minor 7th arpeggio that cover a great deal of the fret board. Notice the combination of alternate picking and sweep picking.



Example 19

Instead of just playing the arpeggio from lowest to highest note or from highest to lowest note, try making up a lick using the notes of the arpeggio as in the next example.



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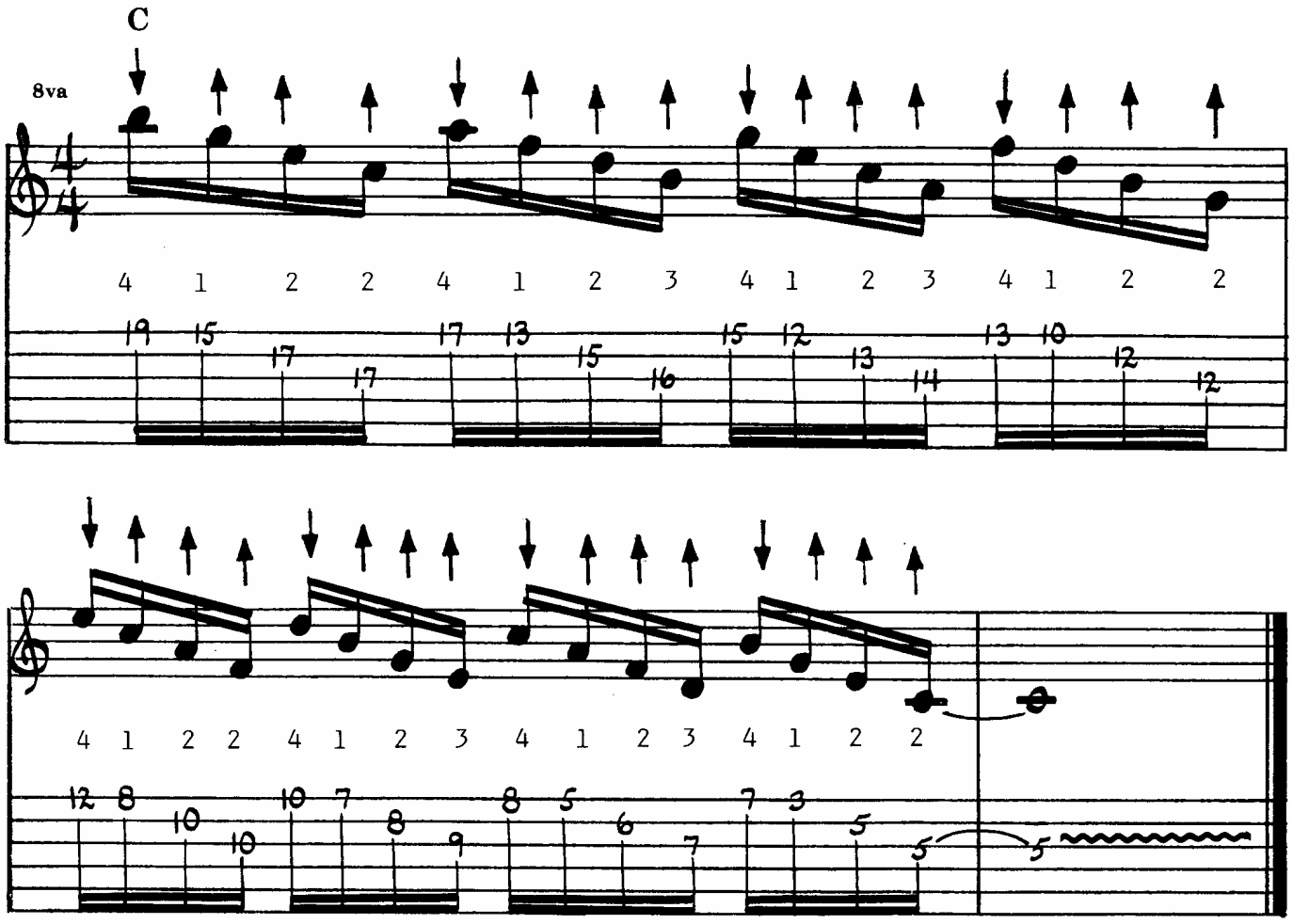
Here is a speedy little line that consists of all seven arpeggios in the key of C major. This lick uses the sweep picking technique.

Example 20



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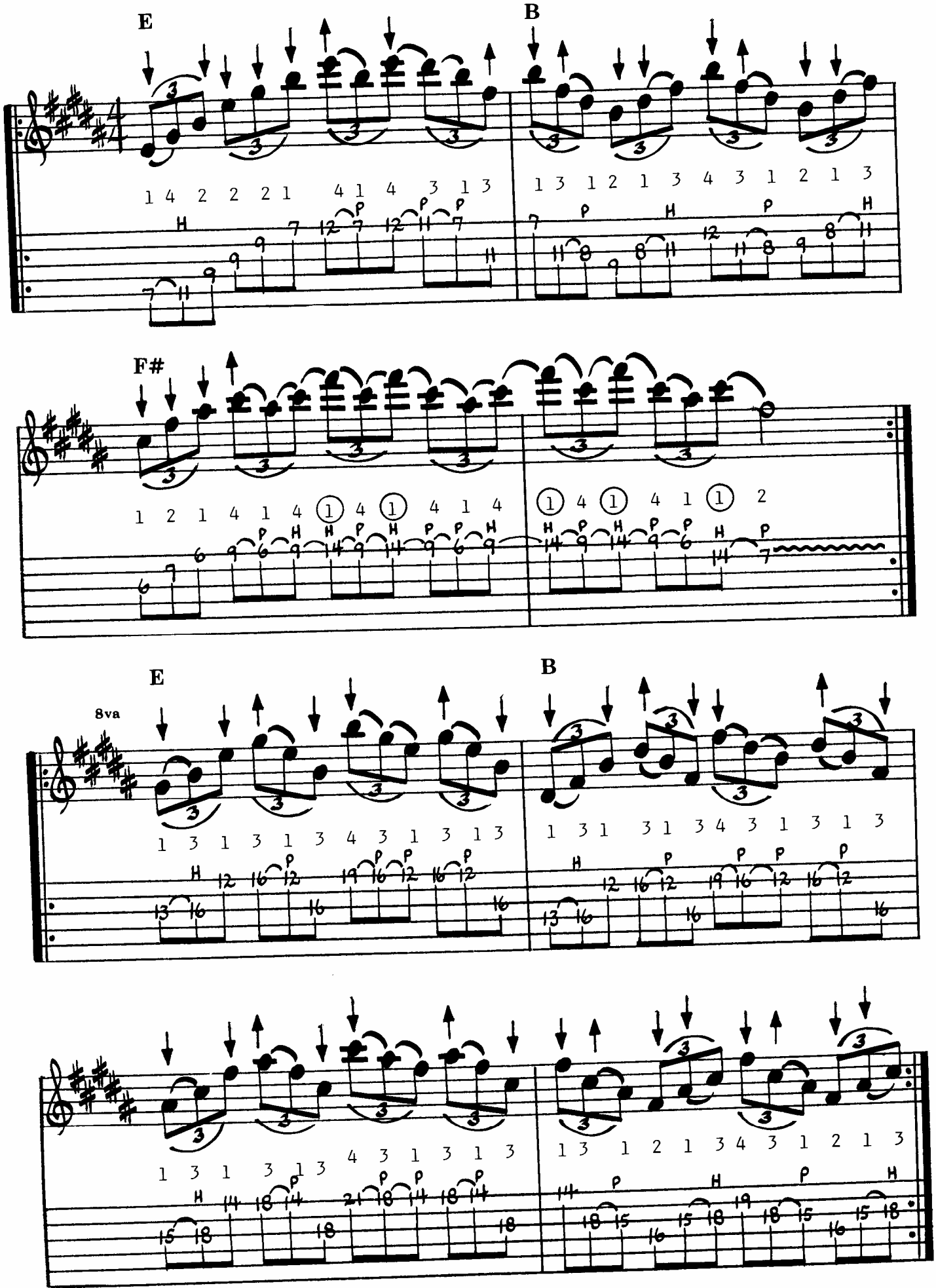
Flying Fingers

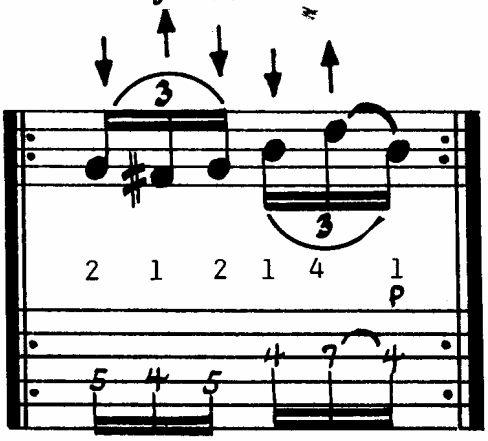
Now I'll show you what arpeggios sound like in a playing situation. This piece is an original composition called "Flying Fingers."

by Dave Celentano



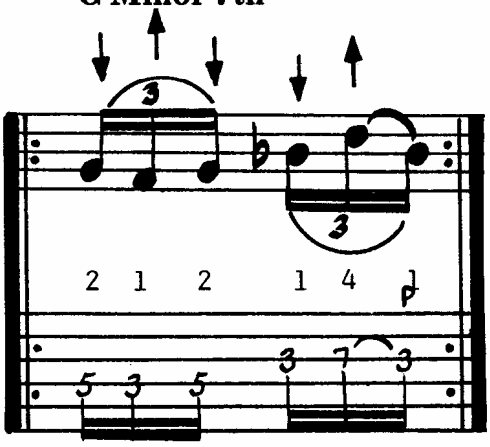
The next two examples sound hot when played in repetition at high speeds. The first one is a G major 7th arpeggio.

Example 22 **G Major 7th**



Example Twenty-Three is a G minor 7th arpeggio. It's the same shape as the previous example, except that you lower your first finger one fret.

Example 23 **G Minor 7th**



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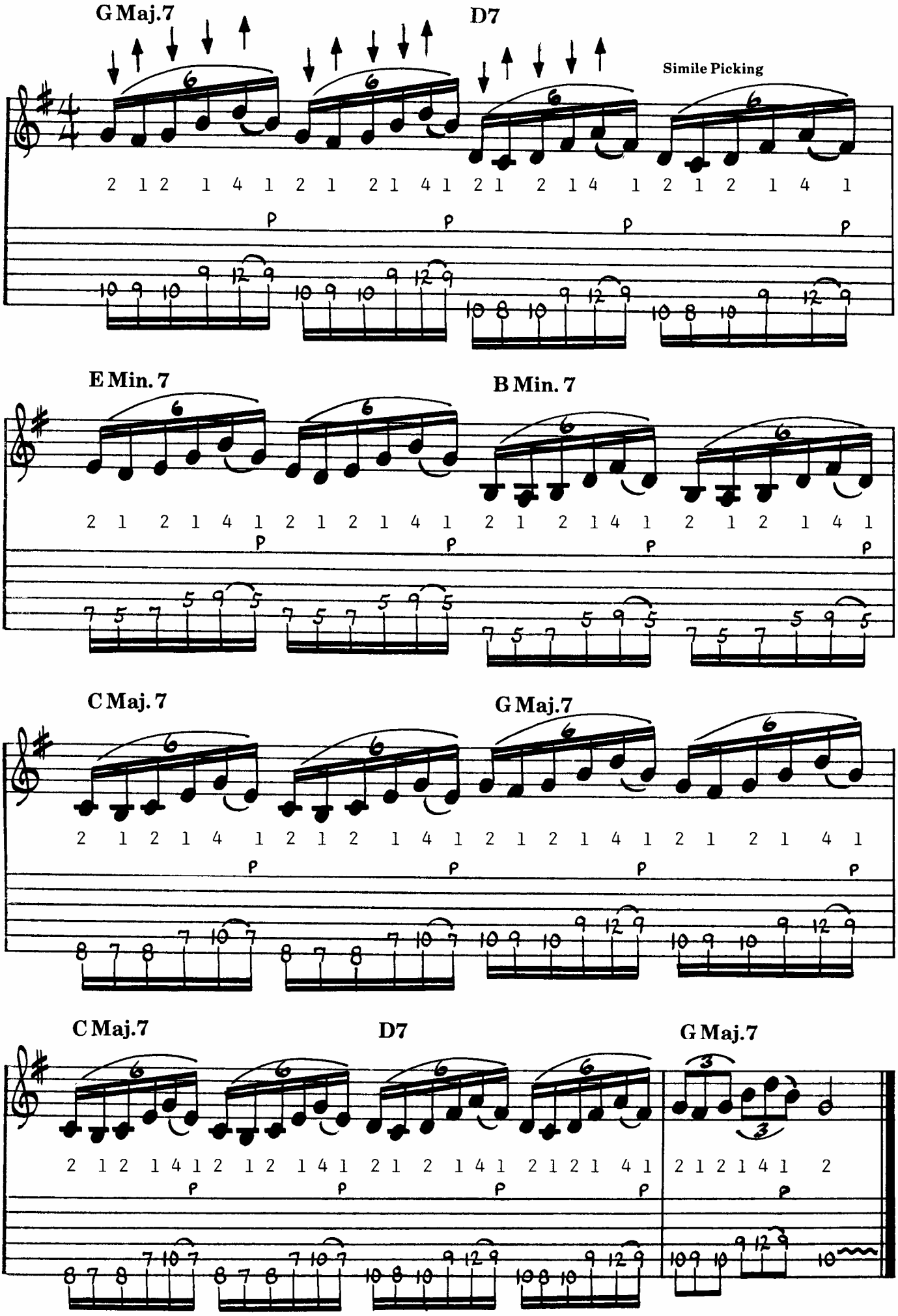
Example 24 Next is a study in G major featuring the two previous arpeggio shapes plus a dominant 7th arpeggio. Try using circular picking with this one.



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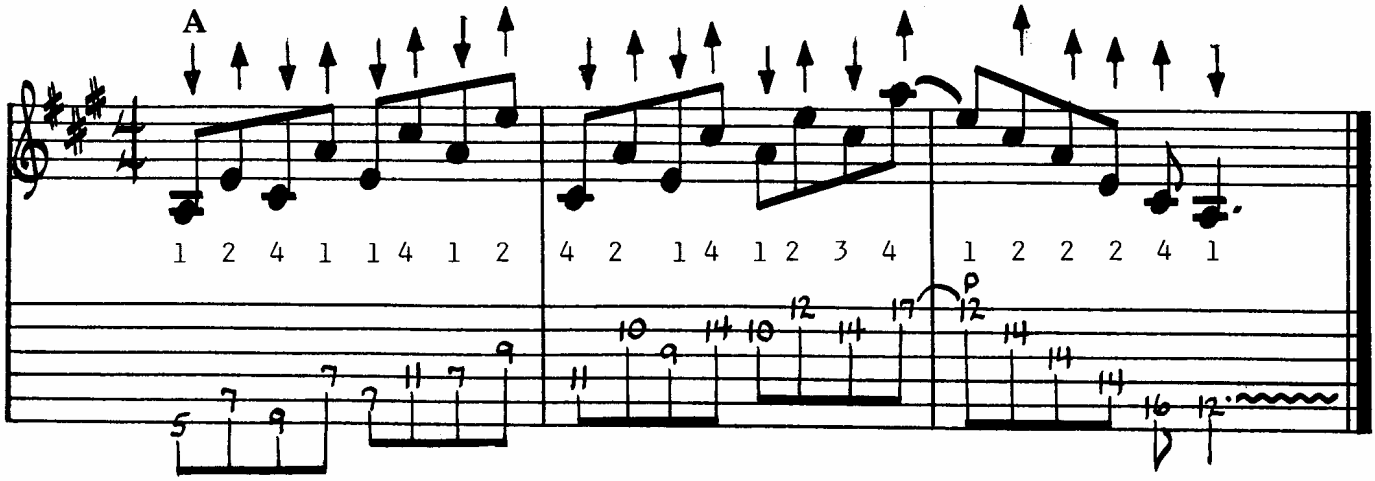
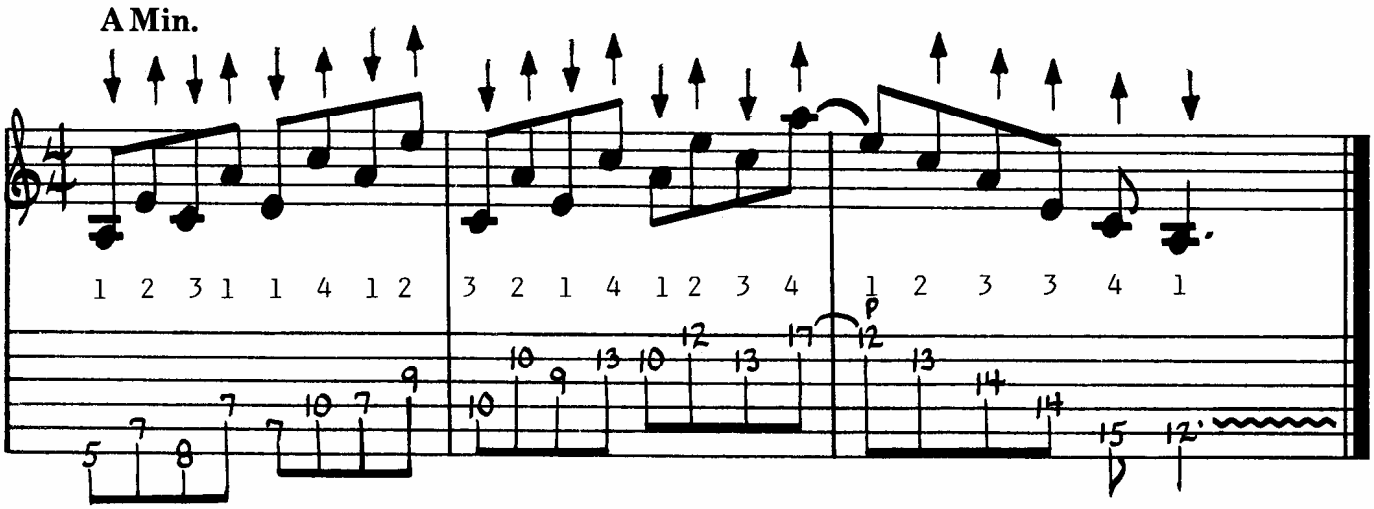
The next six examples display arpeggios played in different sequences. The first one is grouped in two's. Let's take a look:

Example 25



And here is the same lick, but changed to minor:

Example 26



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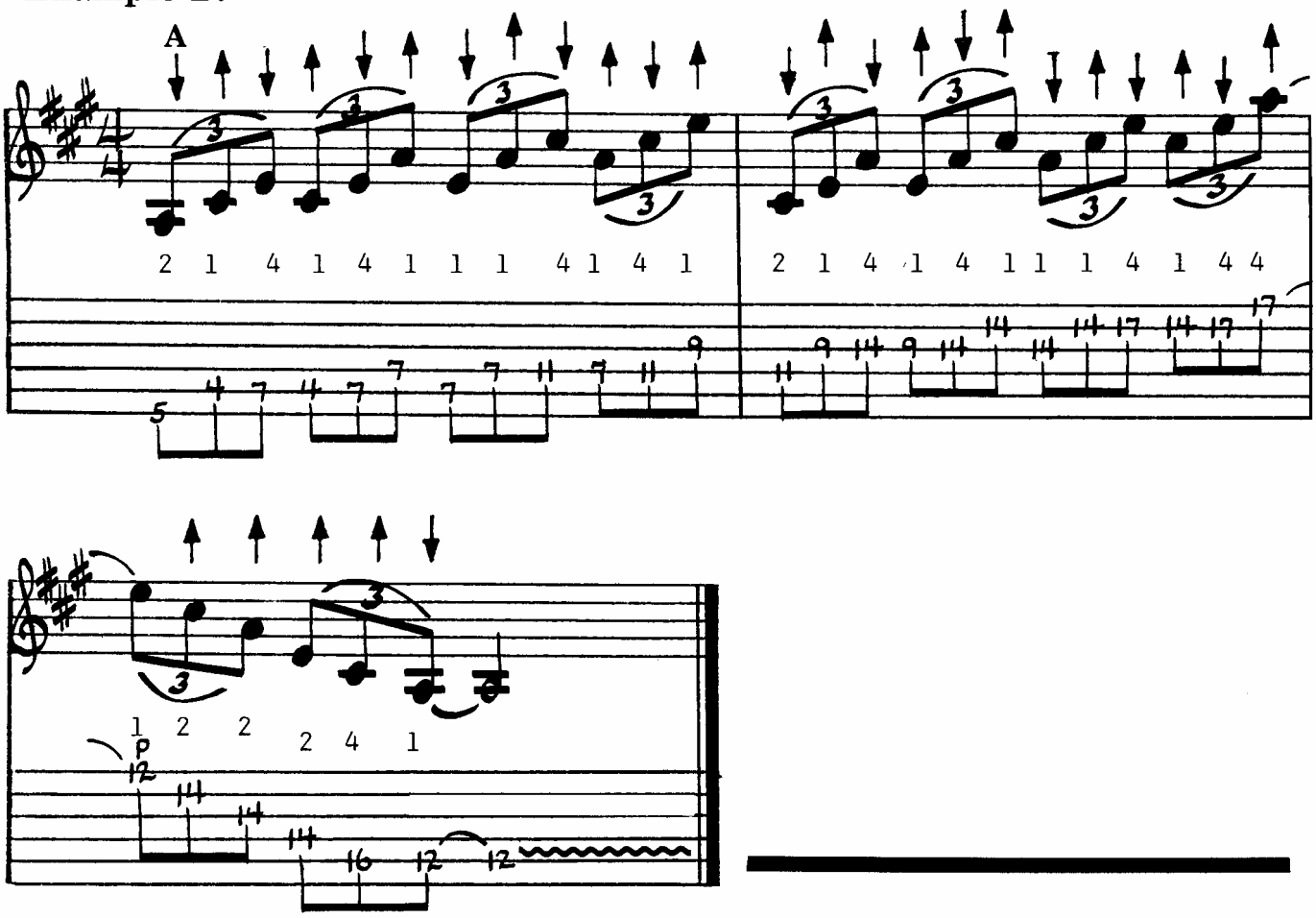
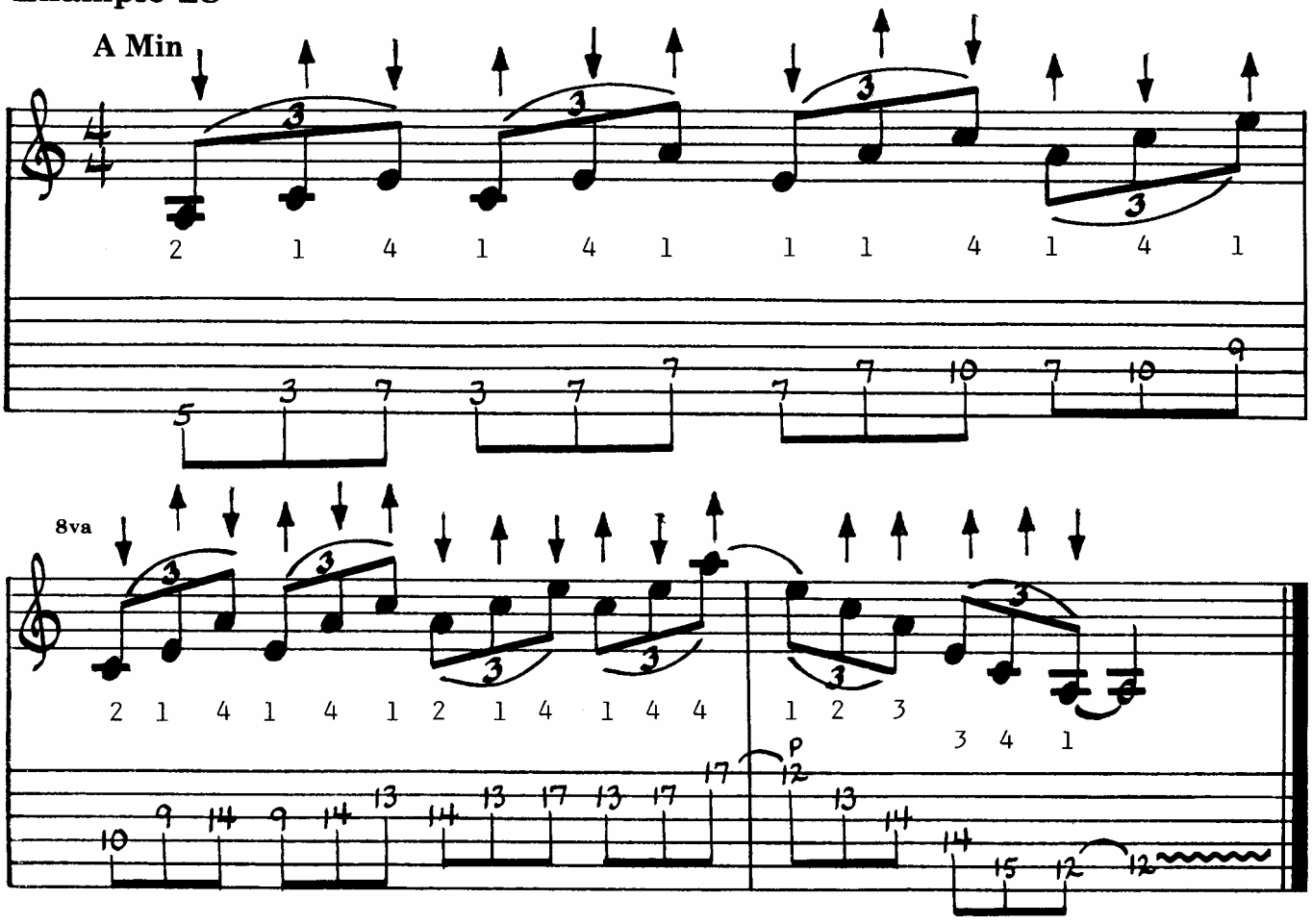
Now we'll play the A major arpeggio in groups of three's.

Example 27



And A minor in groups of three's:

Example 28



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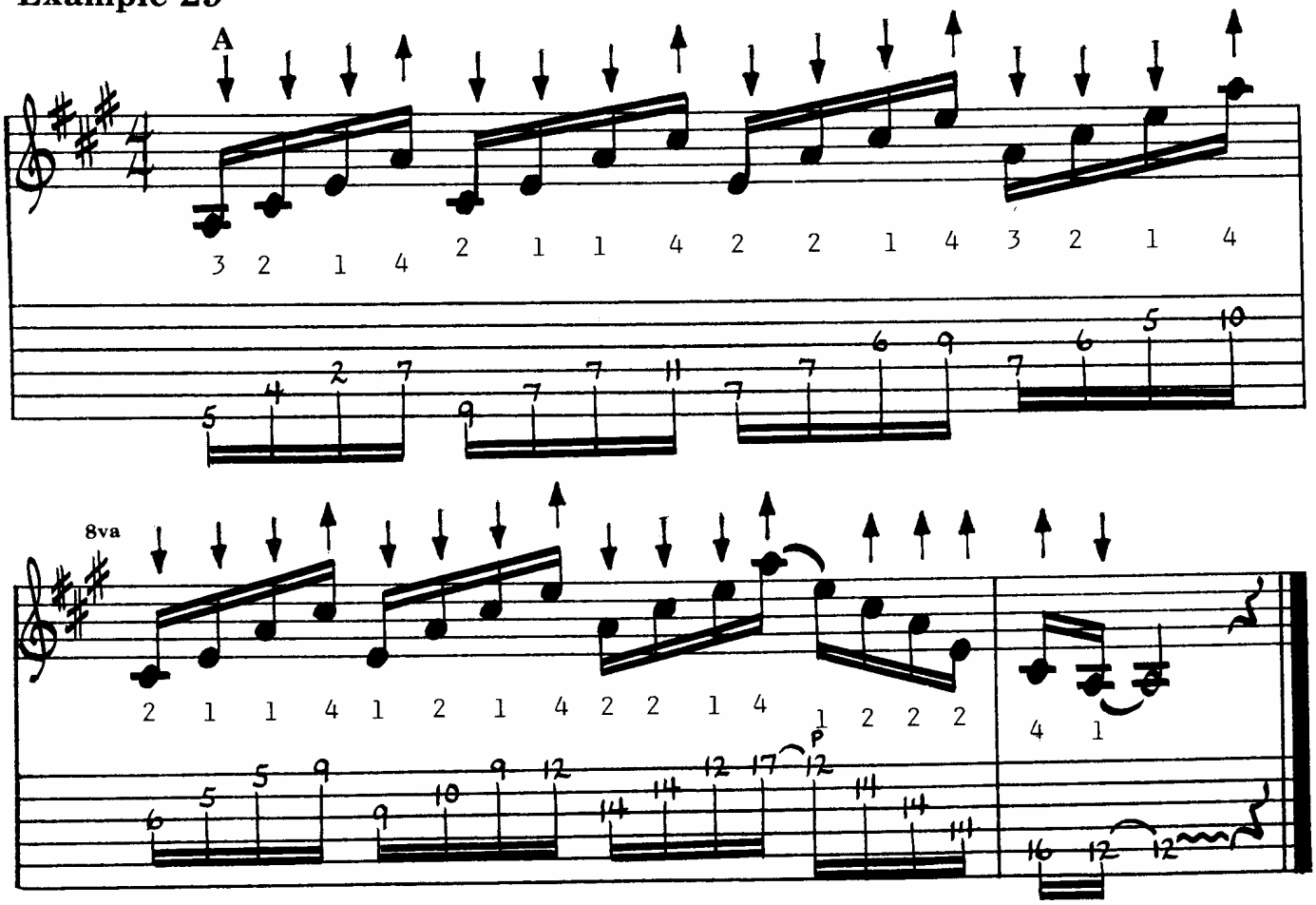
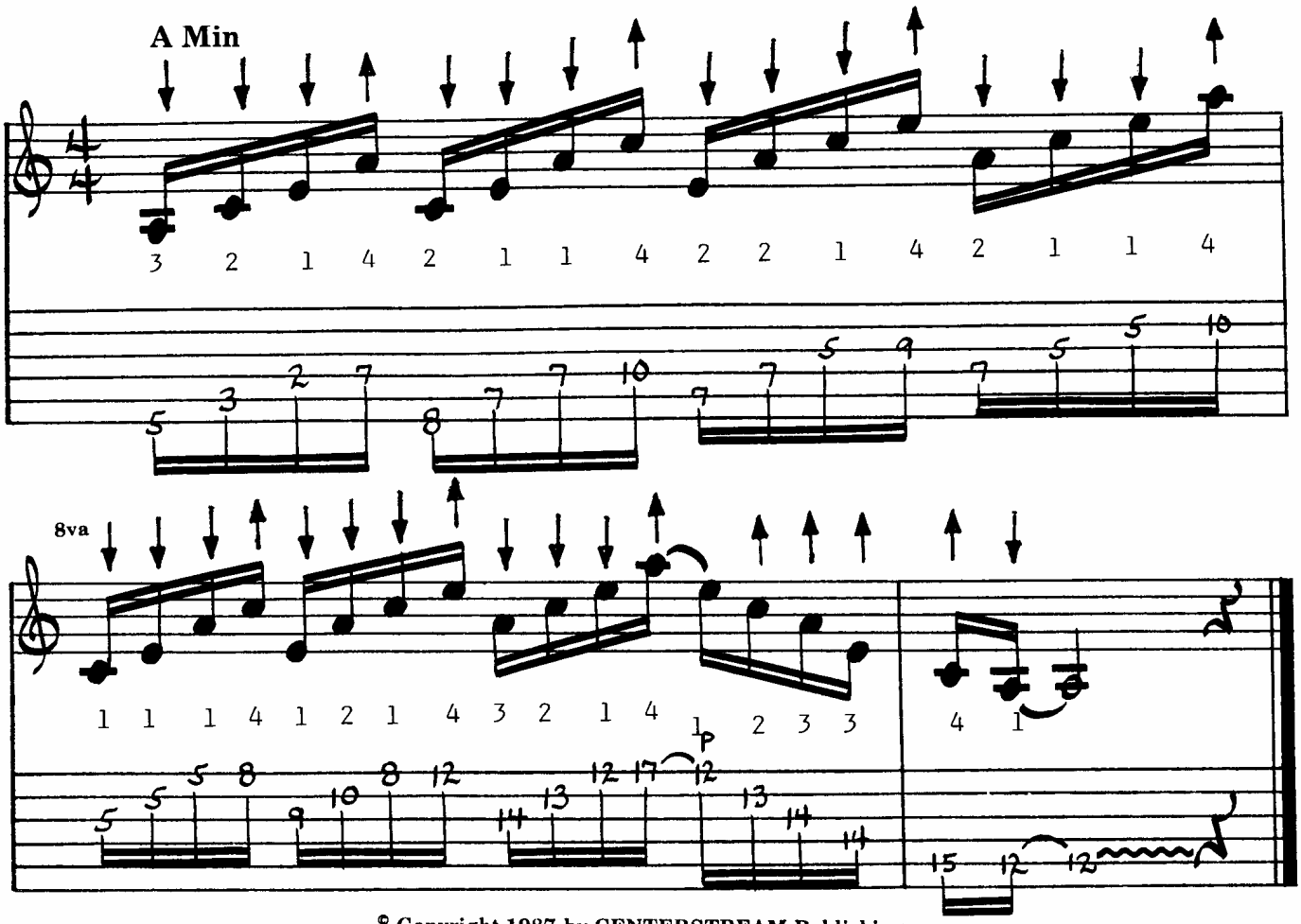
Of the three patterns discussed (two's, three's and four's), this next one is my favorite to play. It involves mostly sweep picking, which allows you to play it very rapidly.

Example 29



And lastly, A minor in groups of four's:

Example 30



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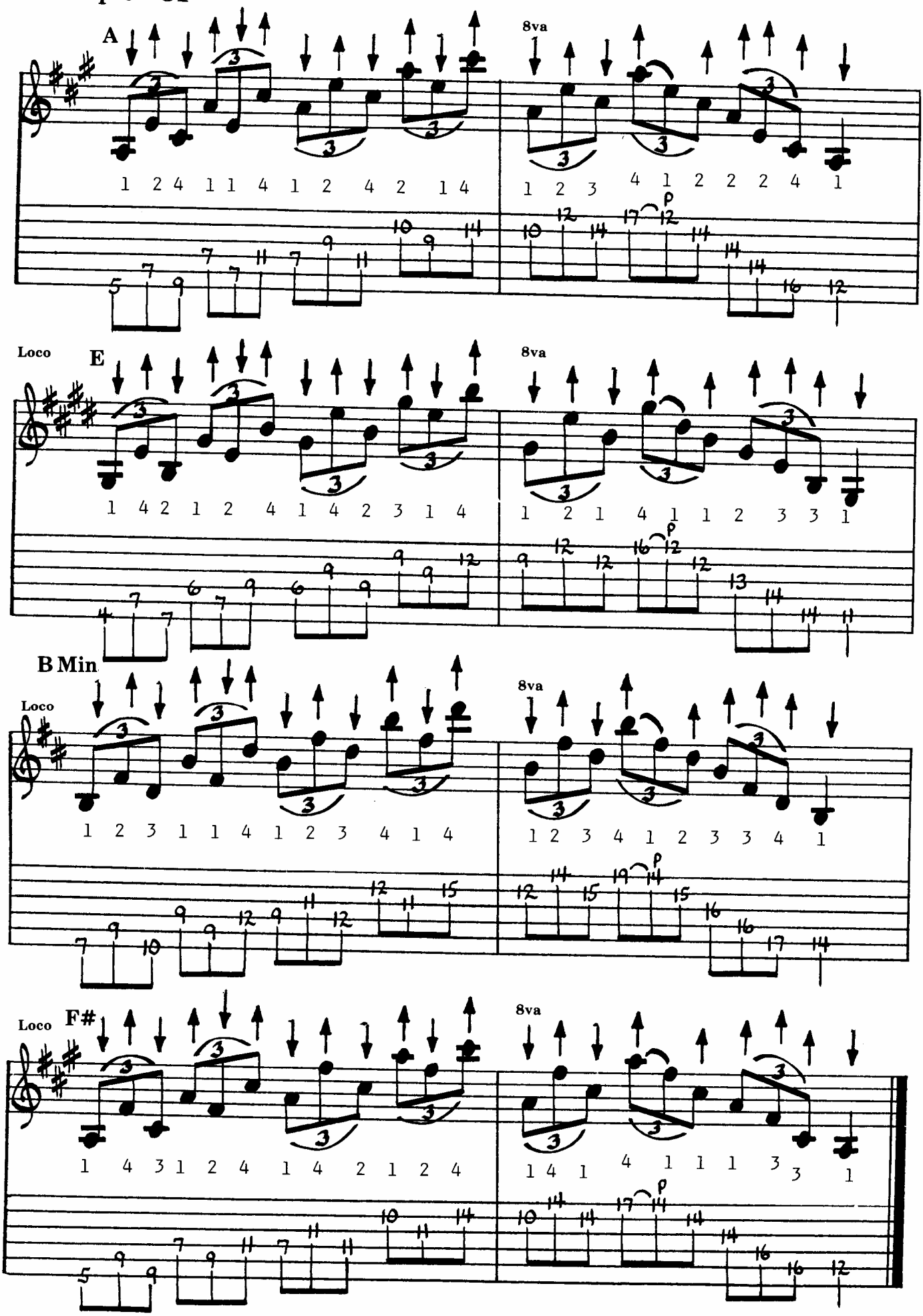
Now we'll check out an exercise that utilized arpeggios in groups of two's:

Example 31



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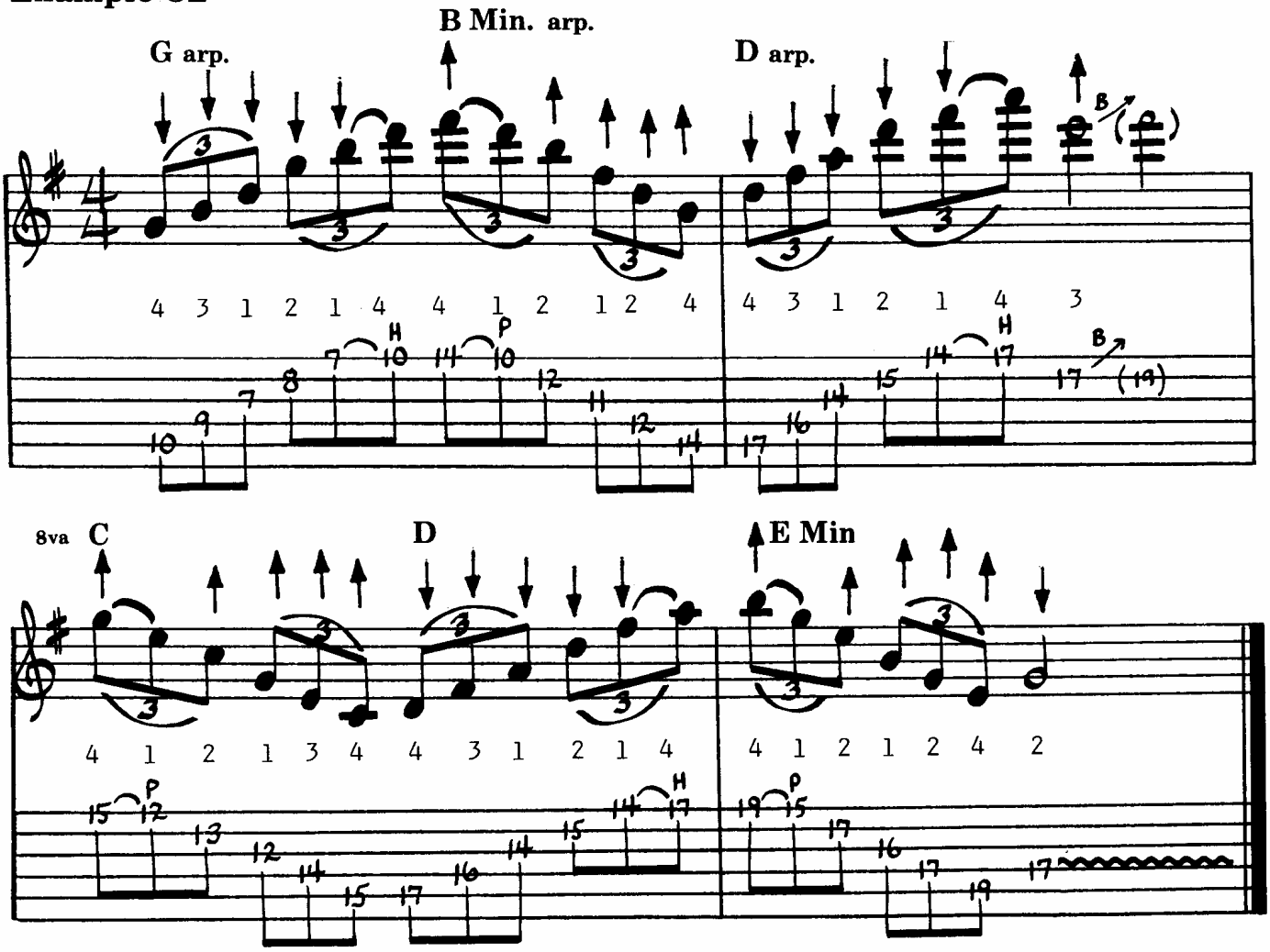
The point I'm getting at is that there are endless ways to play arpeggios (check out my book entitled "The Magic Touch" for ideas using the two hand tapping technique with arpeggios).

Treat arpeggios like licks. You wouldn't play the same lick over and over all the time, because it would get very boring, right? So invent many ways to play arpeggios to keep your music exciting.
Here's a cool exercise that gives you a good workout using sweep picking with arps. All the arpeggios are in G major.

Example 32



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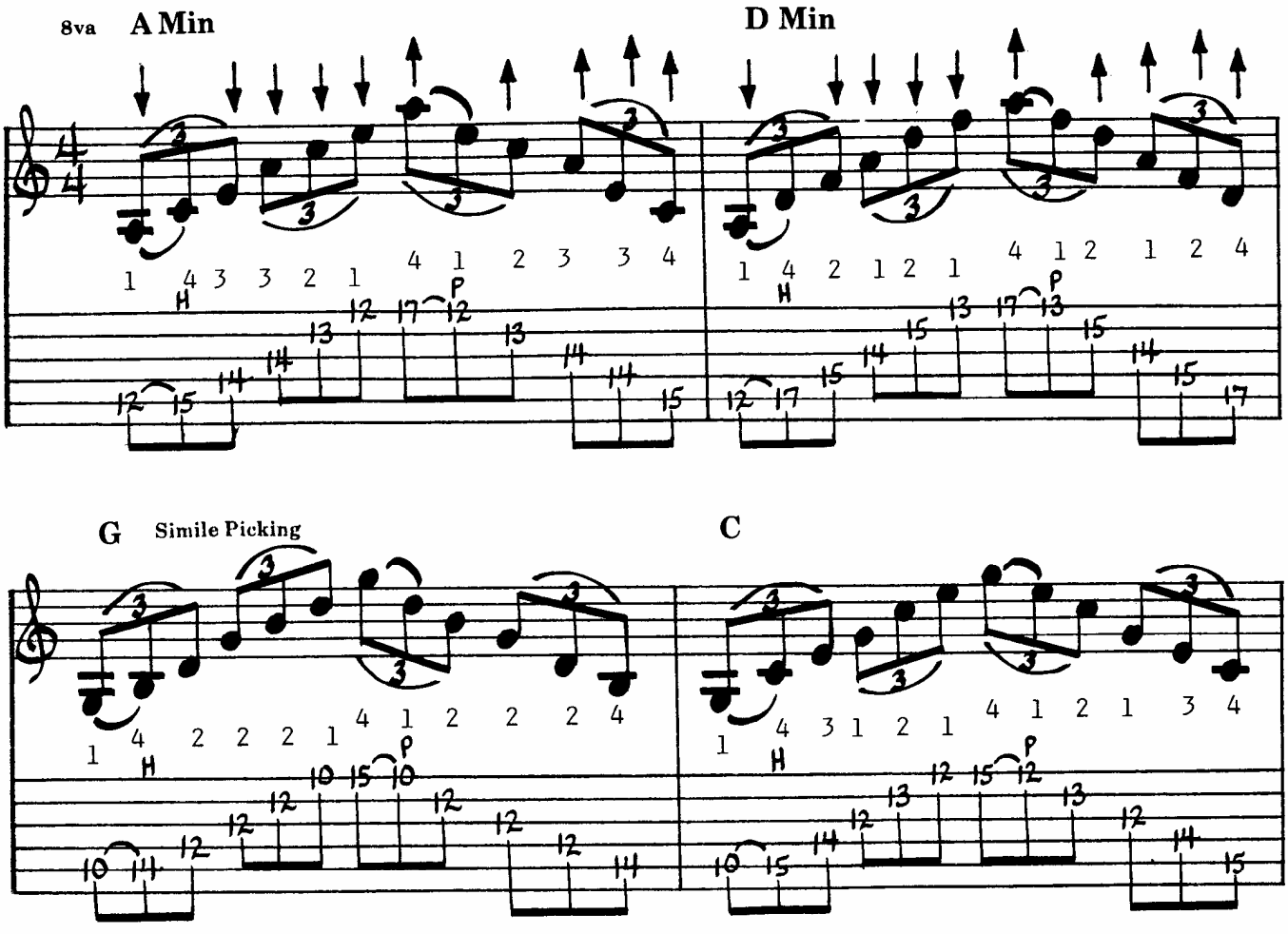
And wrapping it up with a transcription of the piece I opened the tape up with. This is an original composition called "Shredded Strings," which follows a classical progression ascending in the cycle of fourths.
This piece combines arpeggios in the first half and two handed tapping in the second half. Make sure that the taps are even and clear.

NOTE:
When you're learning long pieces of music, break it down into segments. It makes it much easier to learn.

Shredded Strings

PART 1

by Dave Celentano



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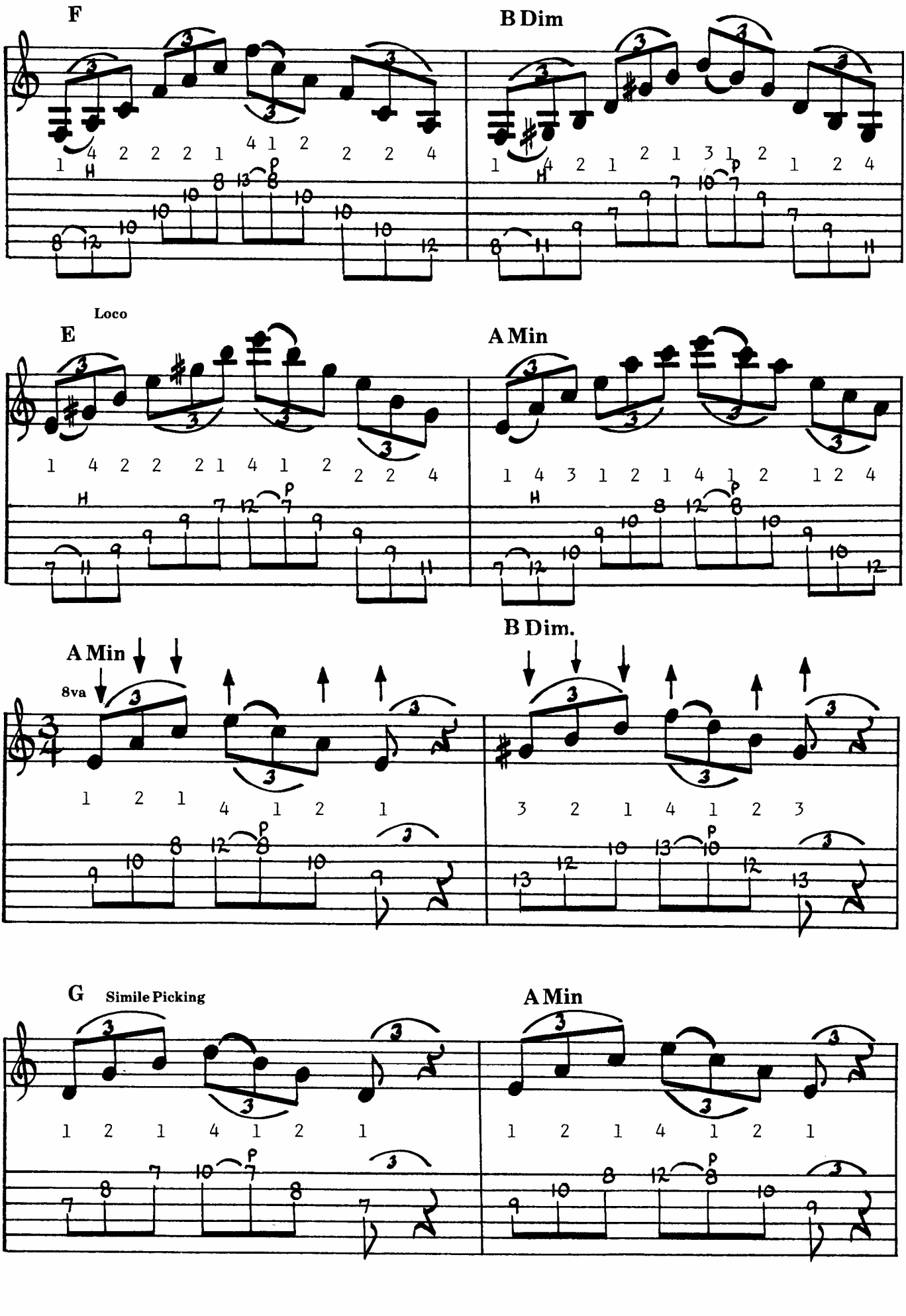

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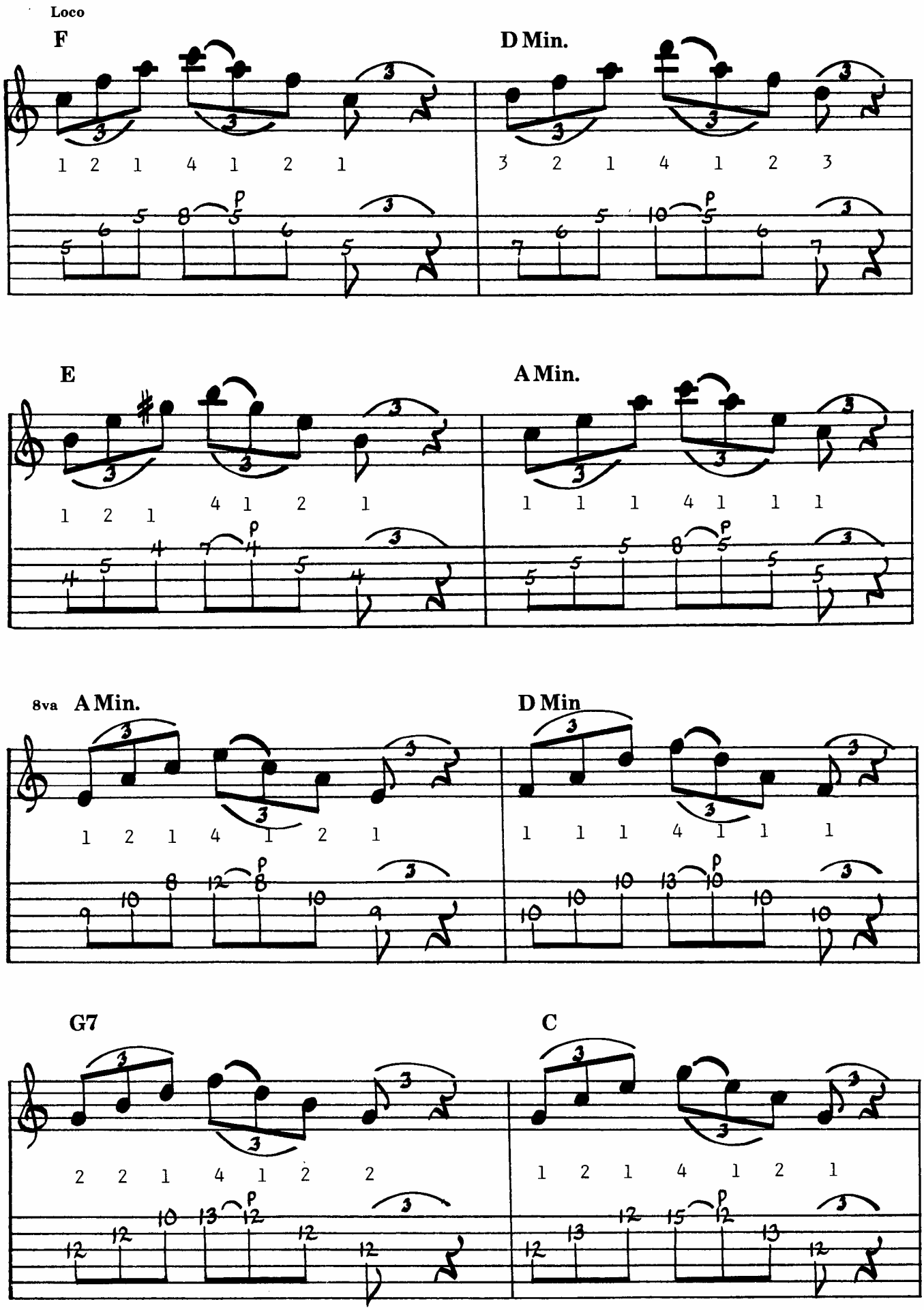

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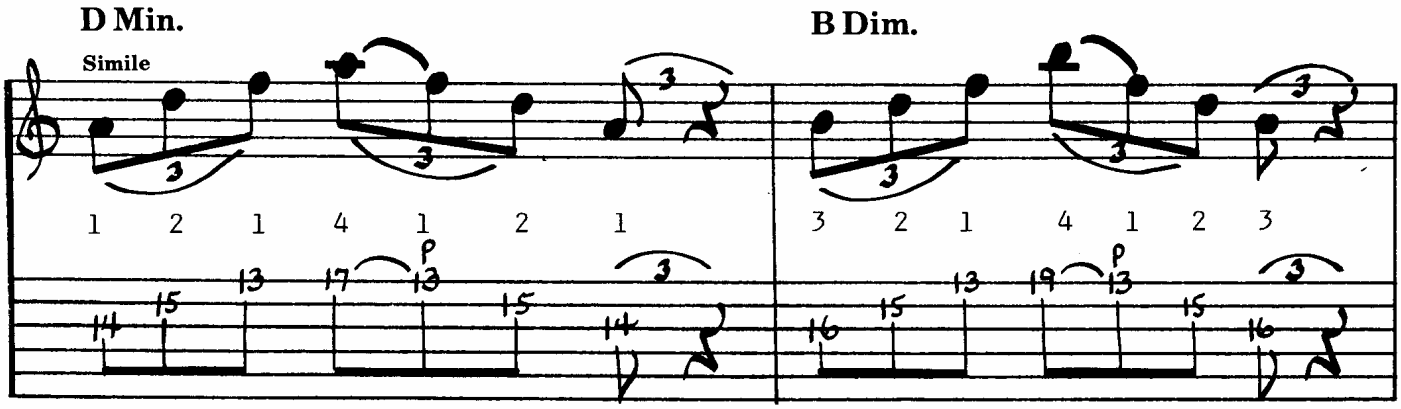

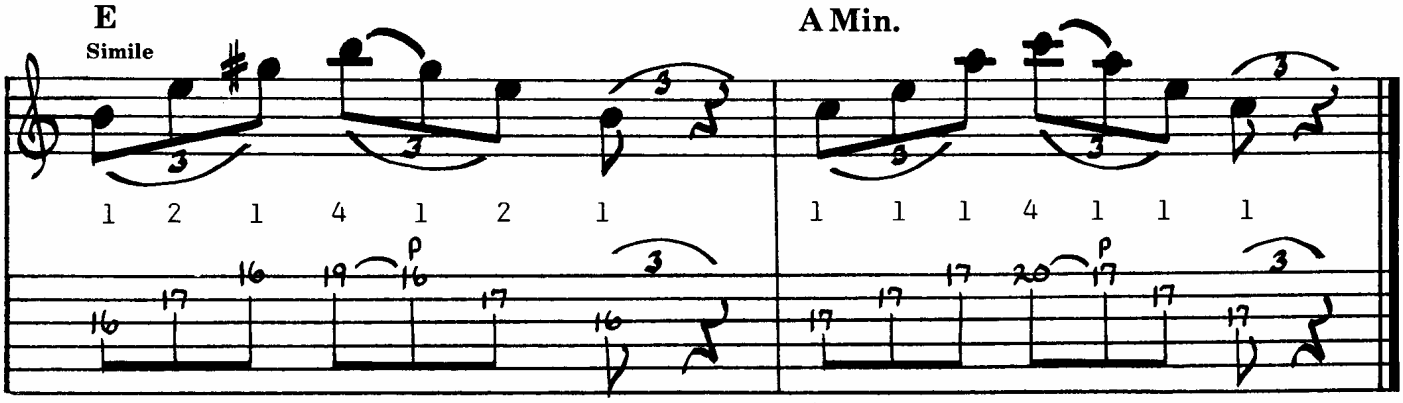

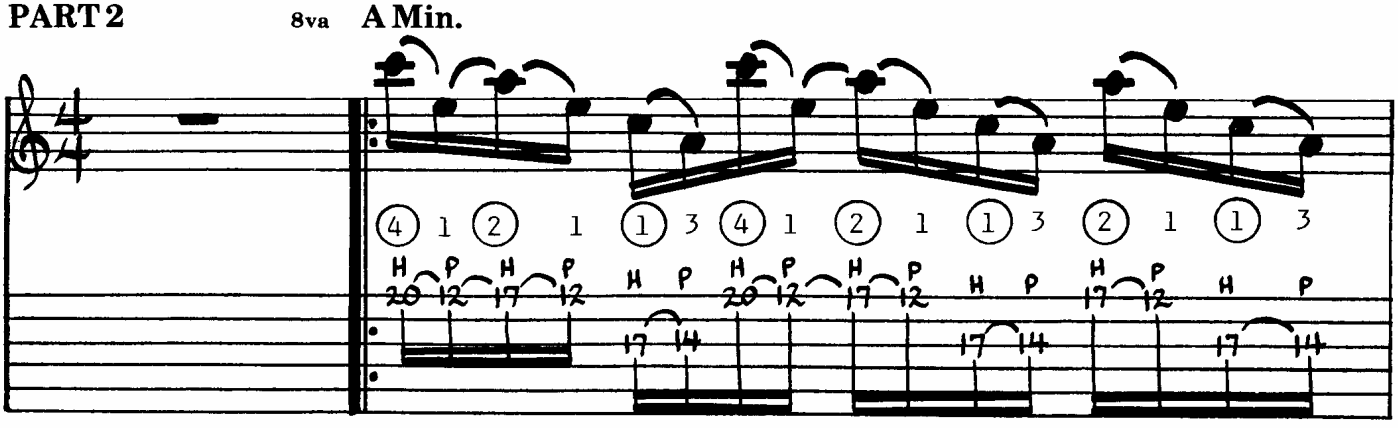

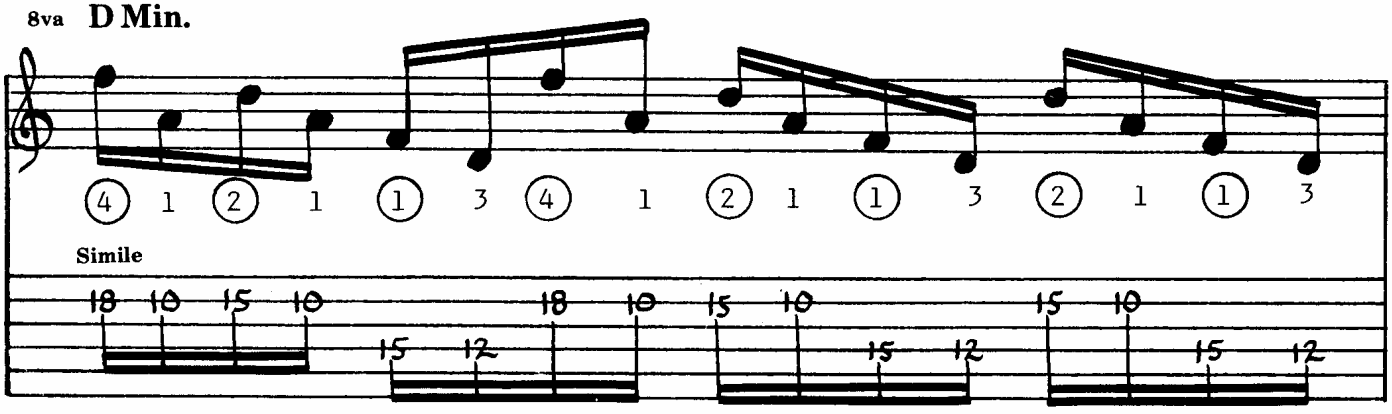

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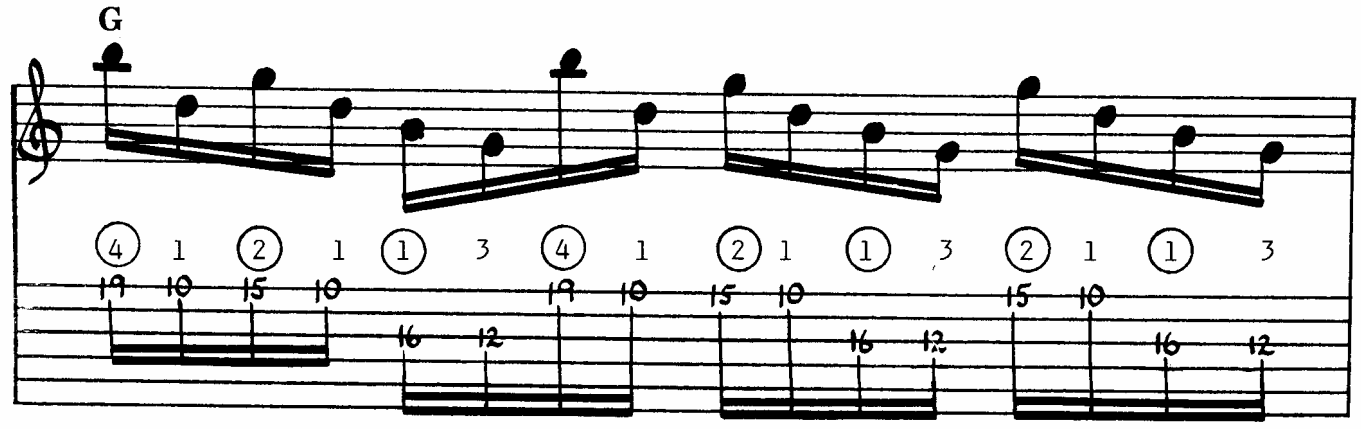

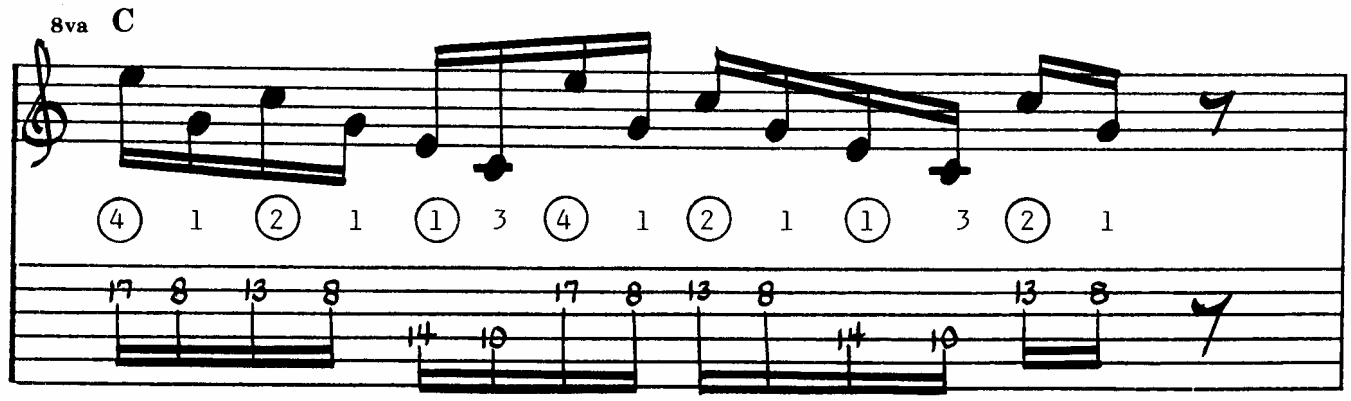

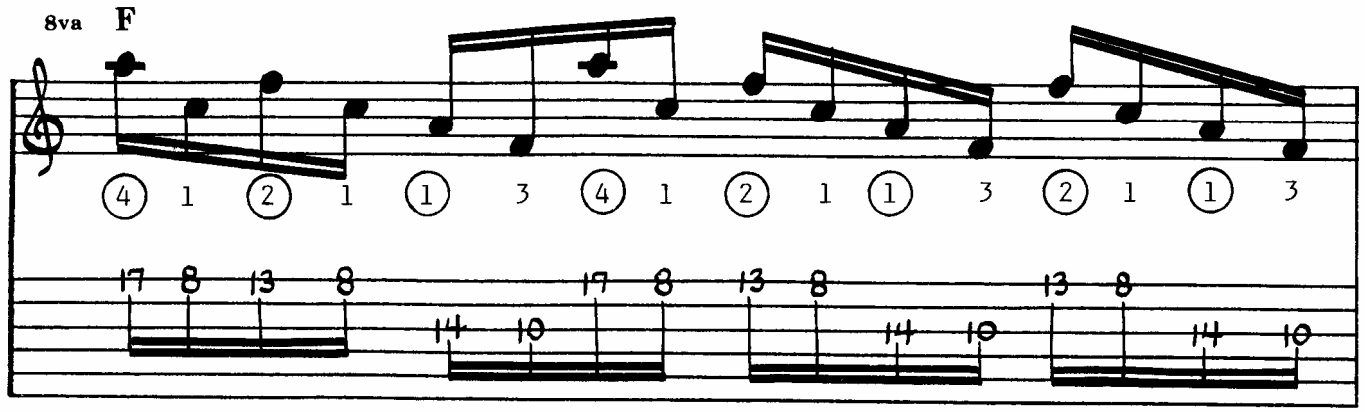

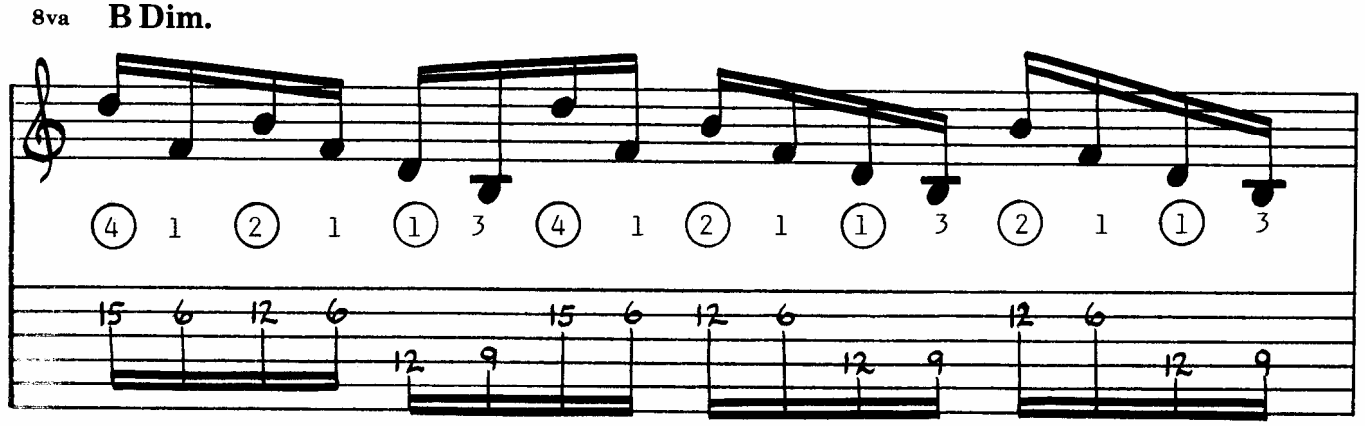

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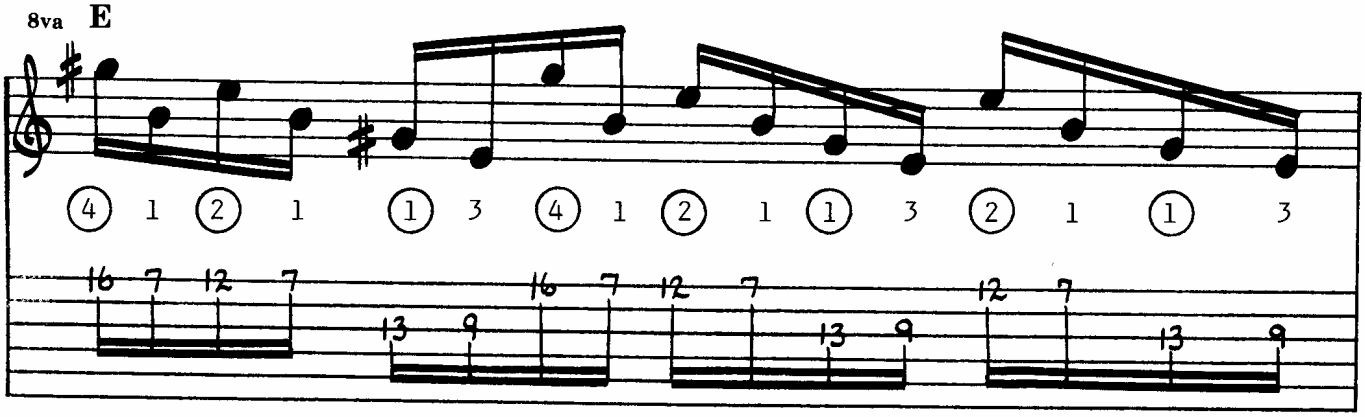
8va **E**



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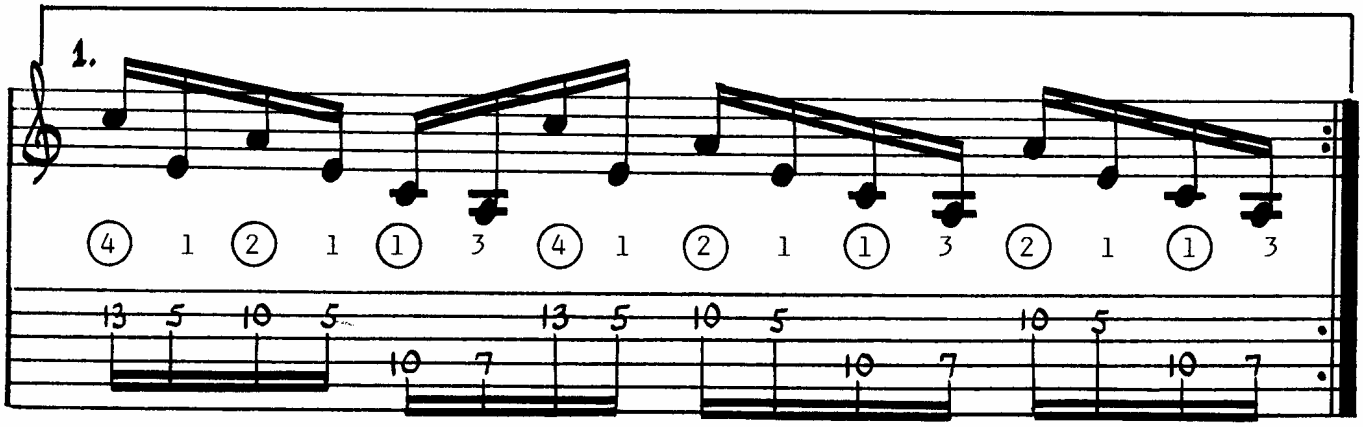

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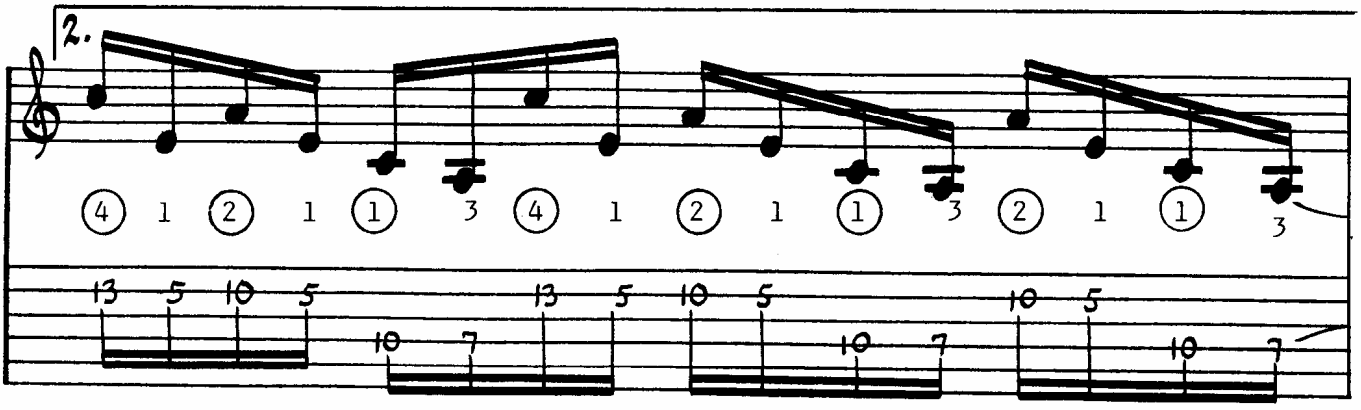

Loco

Simile Picking

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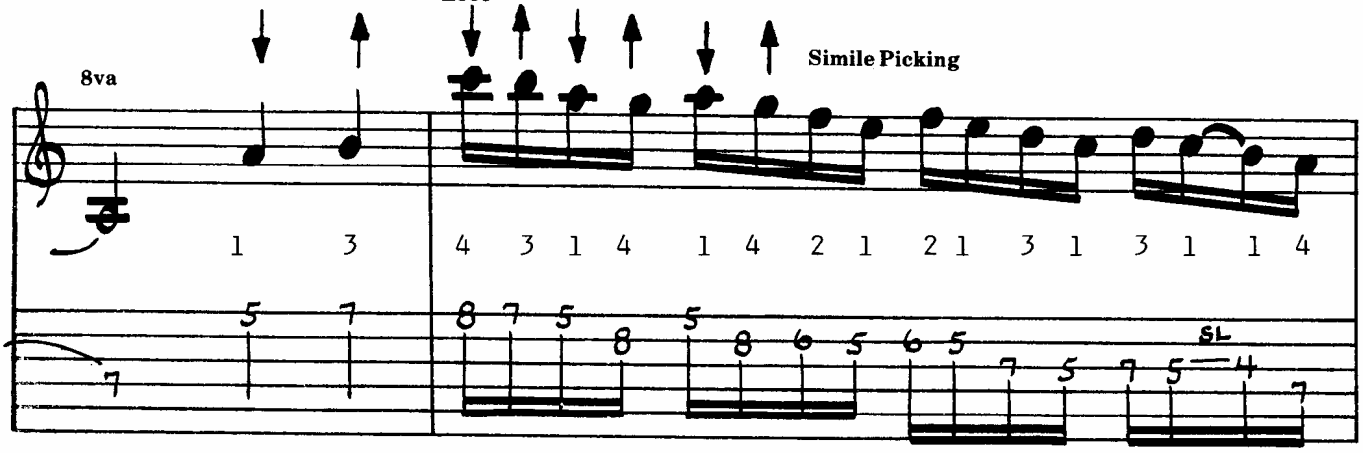

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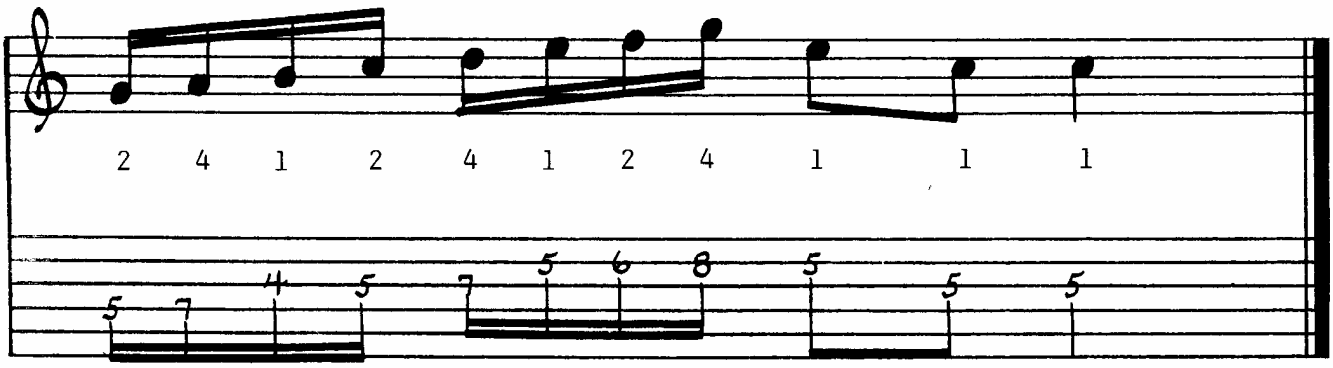

Conclusion

The road to becoming a great guitarist is filled with many pitfalls and diversions, so stick to your guns. Don't let anything get in the way of your first love, music.

Use the licks in this book as guidelines. And remember, all great guitar players spend many hours in the woodshed, so practice, practice, practice. Good luck!

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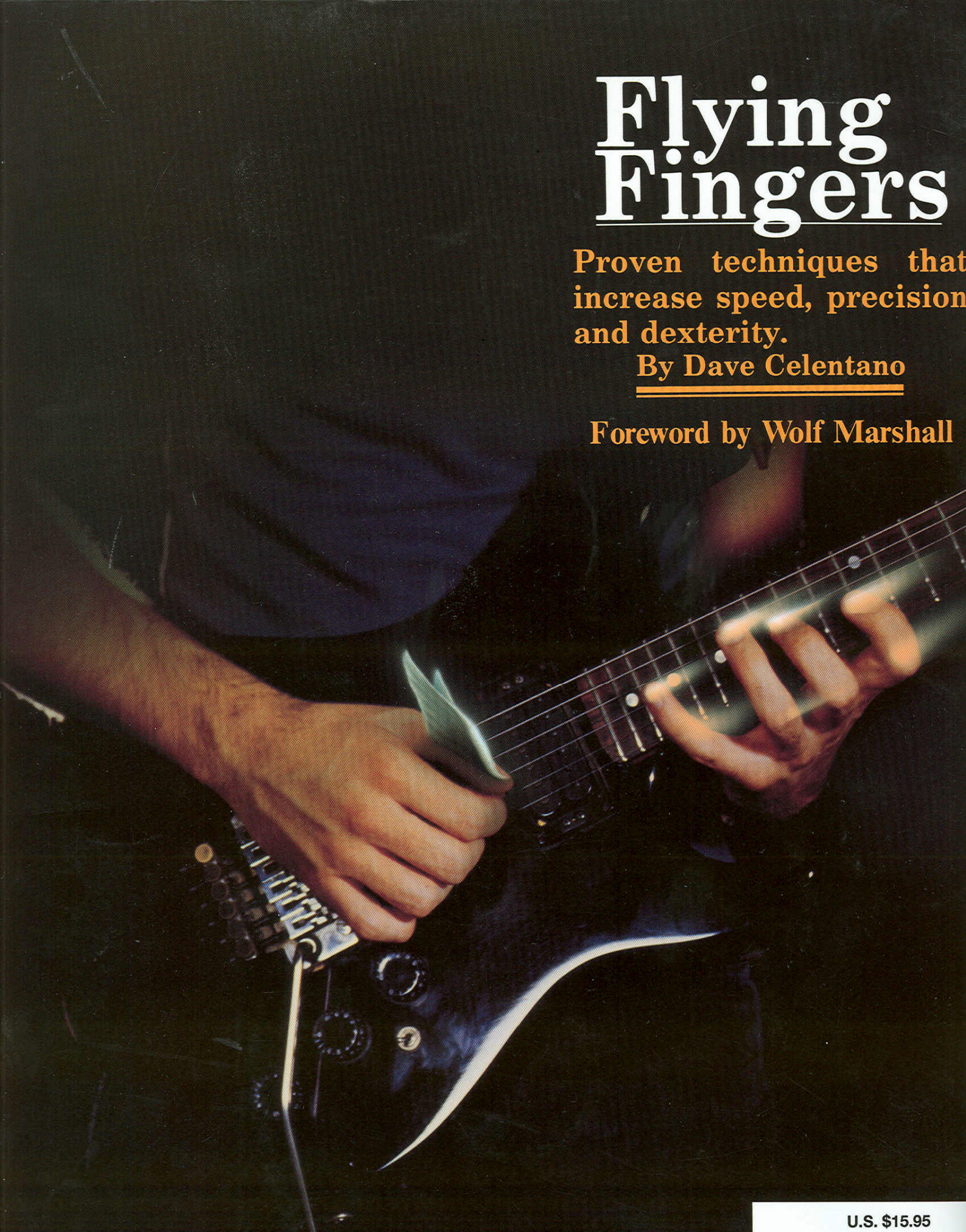
Flying Fingers

Proven techniques that increase speed, precision and dexterity.

By Dave Celentano

Foreword by Wolf Marshall



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Exclusively Distributed by
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ISBN 0-931759-20-X

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