# INTRODUCTION:

Hi and Welcome,

This book is a developmental approach in that it builds upon simple sweep picking patterns for superimposition and extension. This can then be applied to all styles of music.

This book starts from the basics and then moves forward by demonstrating the extreme possibilities available on the guitar fingerboard.

https://youtube.com/c/AlternatePickingGuitar

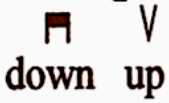
https://www.jazzimproviser.com

# WHAT IS “SWEEP PICKING”?

Sweep picking or raking is a technique where the guitar strings can be crossed with the same picking stroke. For instance when executing an arpeggio we can literally “Sweep/Rake” across the strings with one picking stroke, as you will find in these exercises. For simplicity’s sake we will concentrate on arpeggios and variations around them.

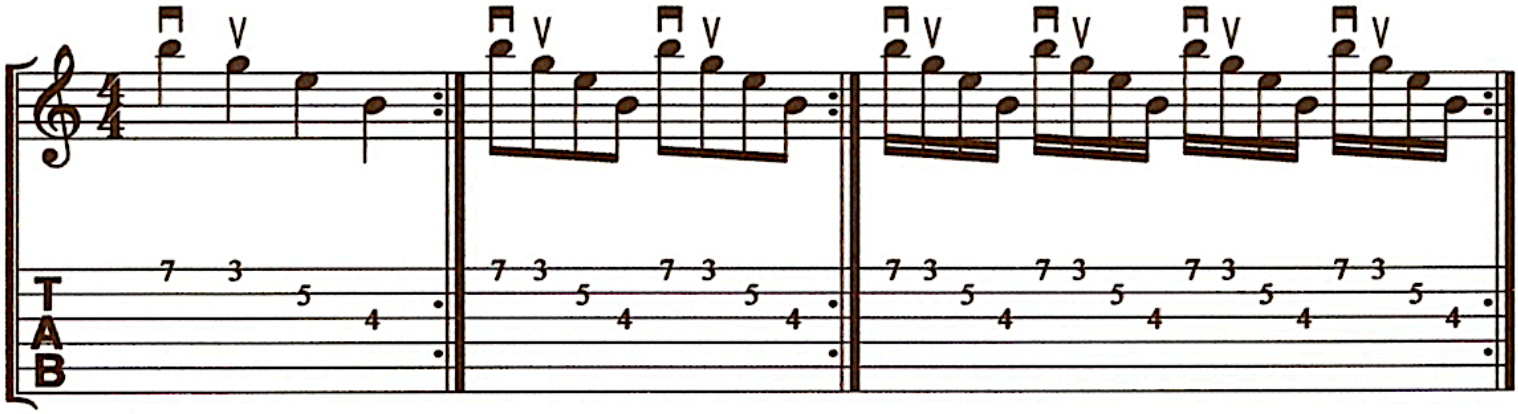
**BE WARNED THOUGH:** This technique can become sloppy and unmusical if the player doesn’t count time to begin with and follow the “CORRECT” picking strokes.

The following exercises are based upon “Simple Picking Strokes/Patterns that are quite similar and so are easy to remember. The down stroke is indicated by an upside down looking box and the Up stroke by a V looking sign. [See below]



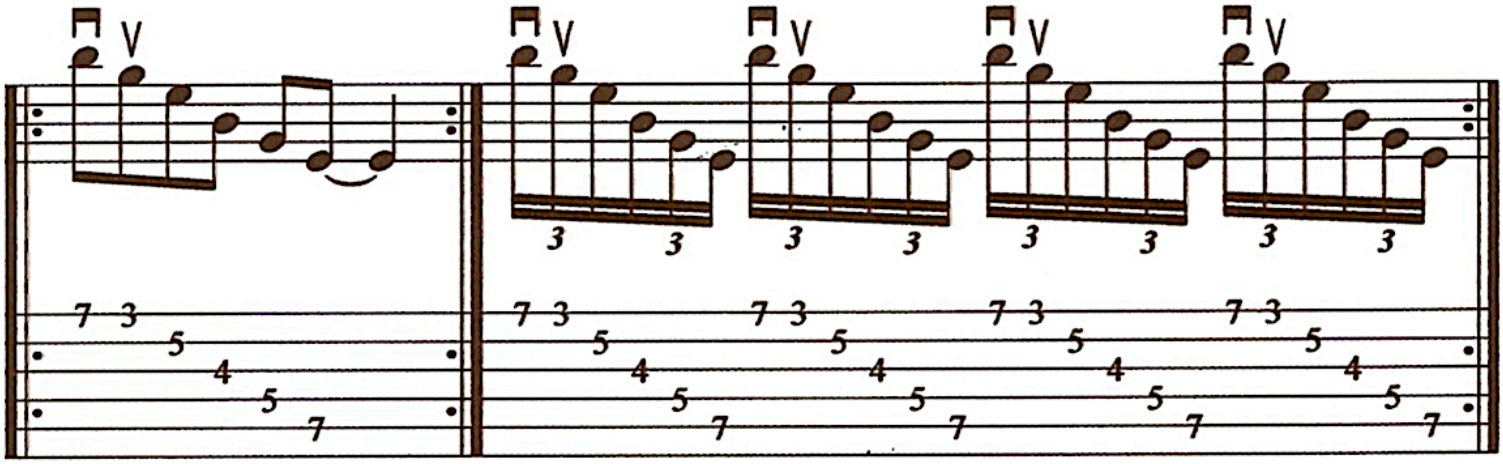

In the first example below we pluck Down and then up and sweep down on a simple Em arpeggio. Starting with crotchets we move through quavers to semiquavers [16’s].

In the first example below we pluck Down and then up and sweep down on a simple Em arpeggio. Starting with crotchets we move through quavers to semiquavers [16’s].



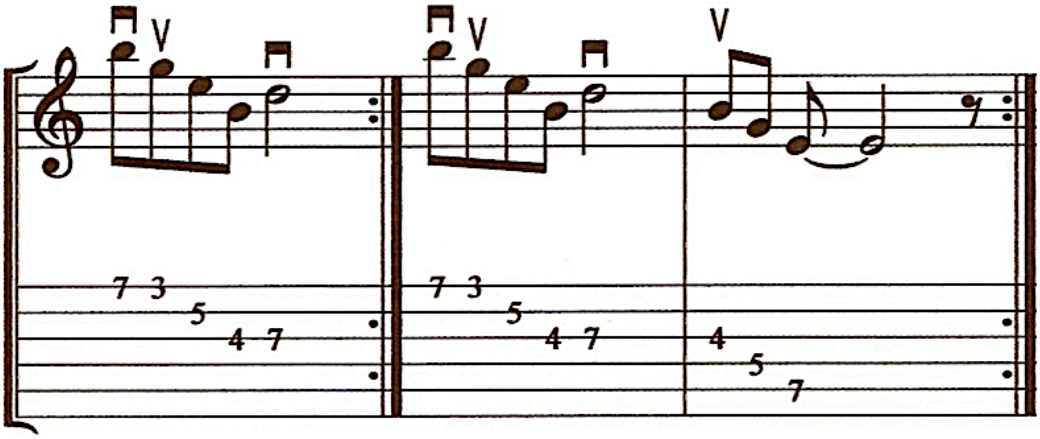
# Extending the arpeggio:

In the next exercise we descend a full octave Em arpeggio with the Down and Up and sweep down motion. Firstly in quavers and then in 6's or you can count in triplets. *[You can also "Pull Off" the G note and pick UP from the E note. We will look at this concept in greater detail as we progress but keep it SIMPLE for the moment].*

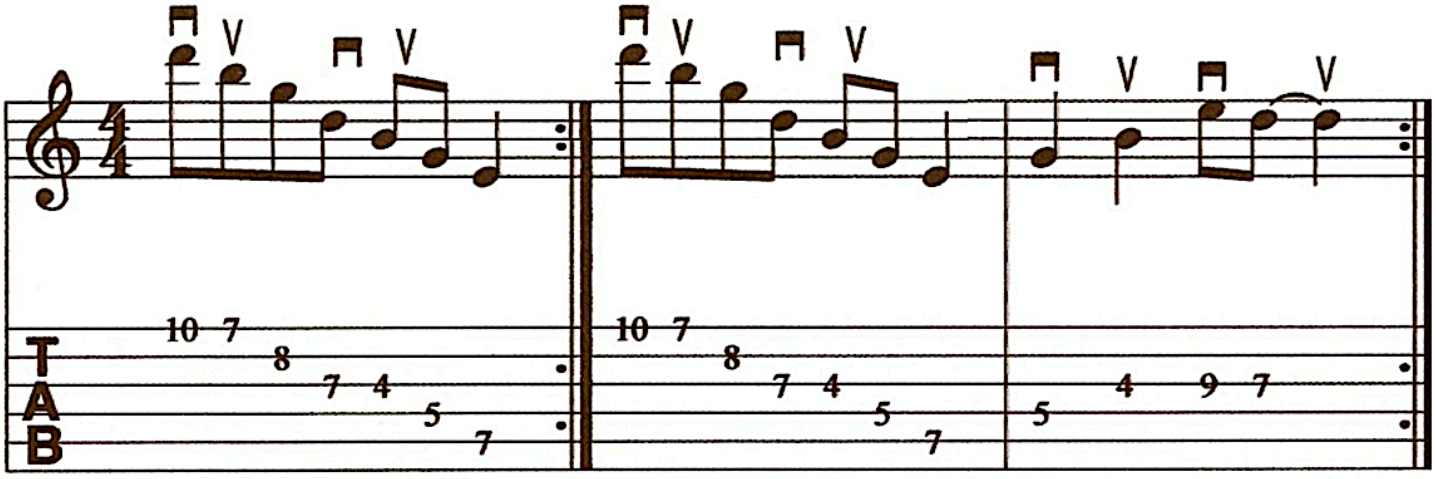


# COMPLETING MUSICAL PHRASES

Here we pluck down when we land on the note of D [or in this case the minor seventh of the Em arpeggio]. In the variation next to it we then pluck UP to finish the full octave of this minor seventh descending sweep arpeggio.

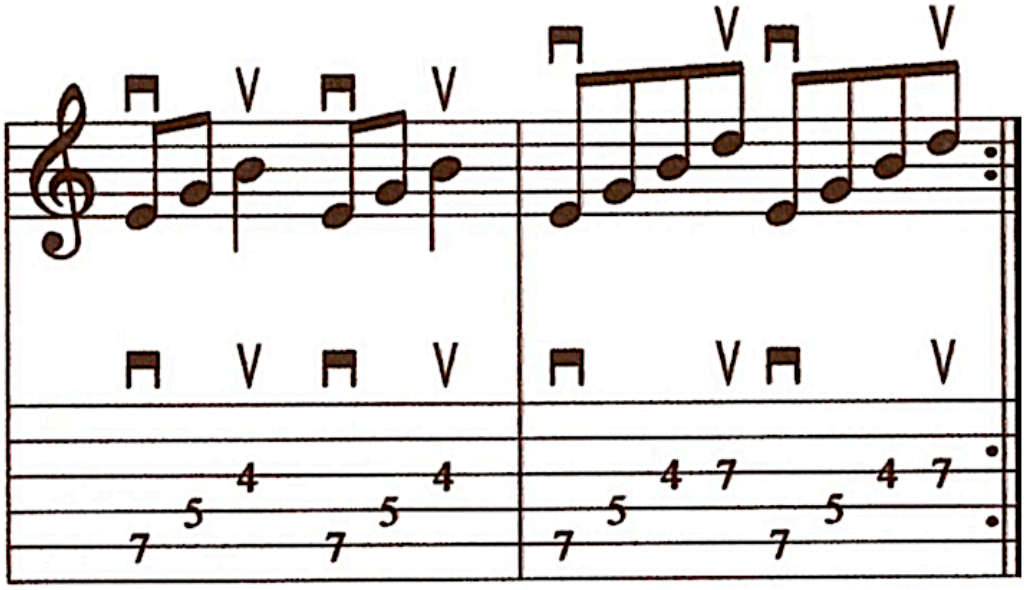


Next we will EXTEND into an E minor seventh 2 ocatave descending sweep arpeggio. This is followed by a variation with some "Embellishment" employing alternate picking in order to give you an idea of how to phrase at the end of a sweep lick or arpeggio so that a phrase sounds finished and professional.

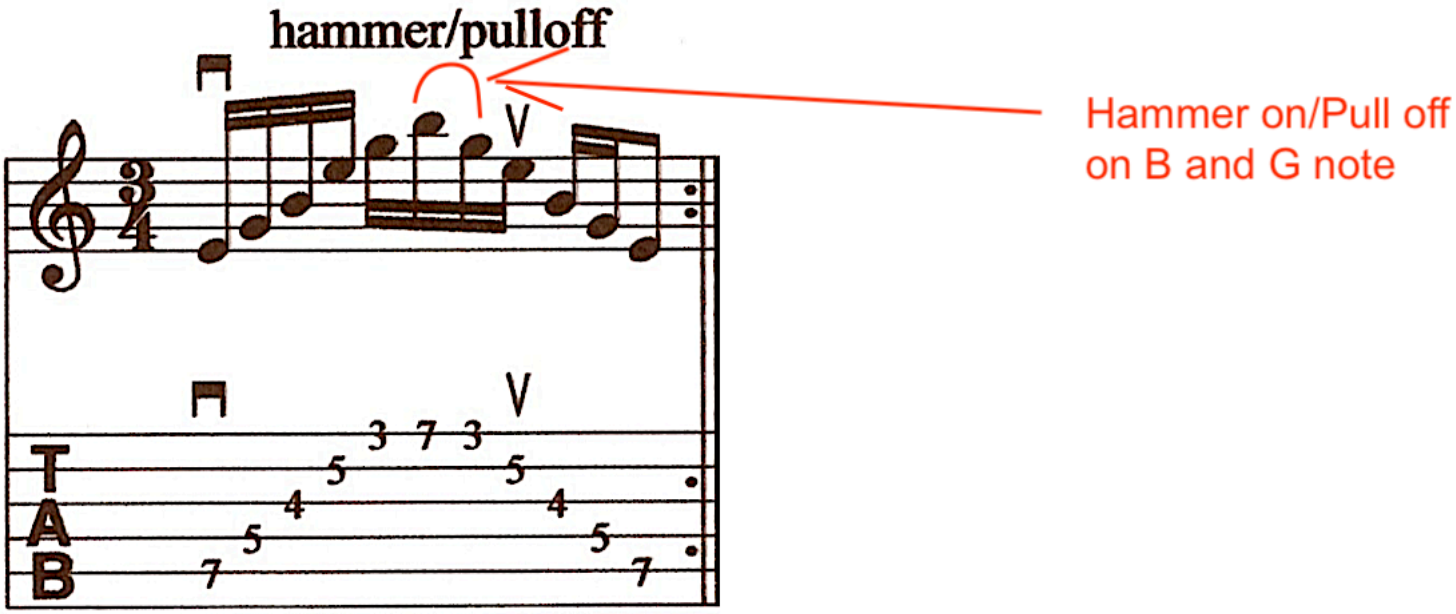


# ASCENDING SWEEP PICKING CONCEPTS

We will now look at SIMPLE ascending sweep picking strokes and patterns. The first is a simple Em arpeggio followed by an Em7 arpeggio. So the first bar is DOWN DOWN UP and the second bar is DOWN DOWN DOWN UP.



Going back to what was mentioned earlier we can now see in the exercise below the "Hammer on/Pull off" approach that can be employed. The hammer on/pull off is between the B and G notes as the UP STROKE is on the E note of the second string. Some players prefer this approach.

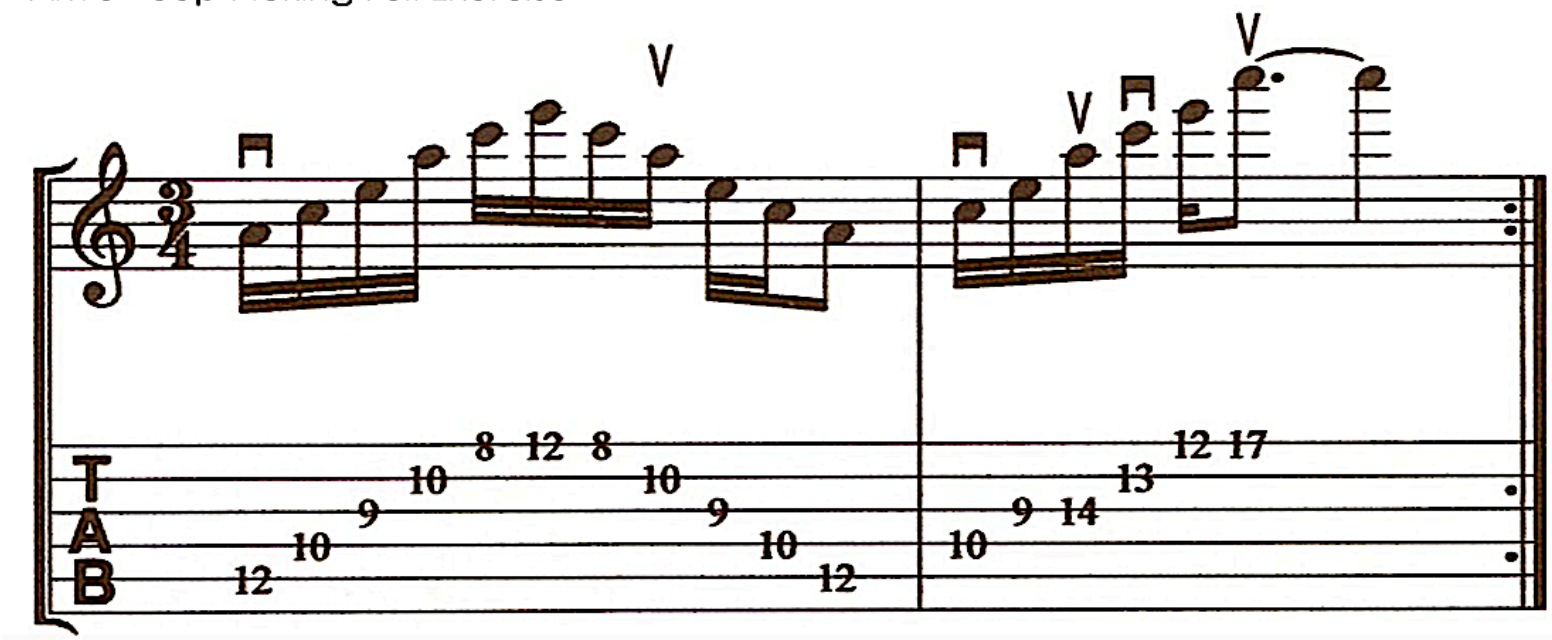


# ASCENDING AND DESCENDING EXERCISE

Below is a full ascending, descending and ascending sweep arpeggio exercise. Look carefully at the SUGGESTED PICKING STROKES. Remember you can use the hammer on/pull of technique on the C ad A notes before the upstroke on the A note of the second string. Start very slowly and get the FRETTING HAND comfortable with the SHAPES of the arpeggios in this pattern. Put both hands together and SYNC the fretting hand with the picking hand and learn what strokes go with which fingers.

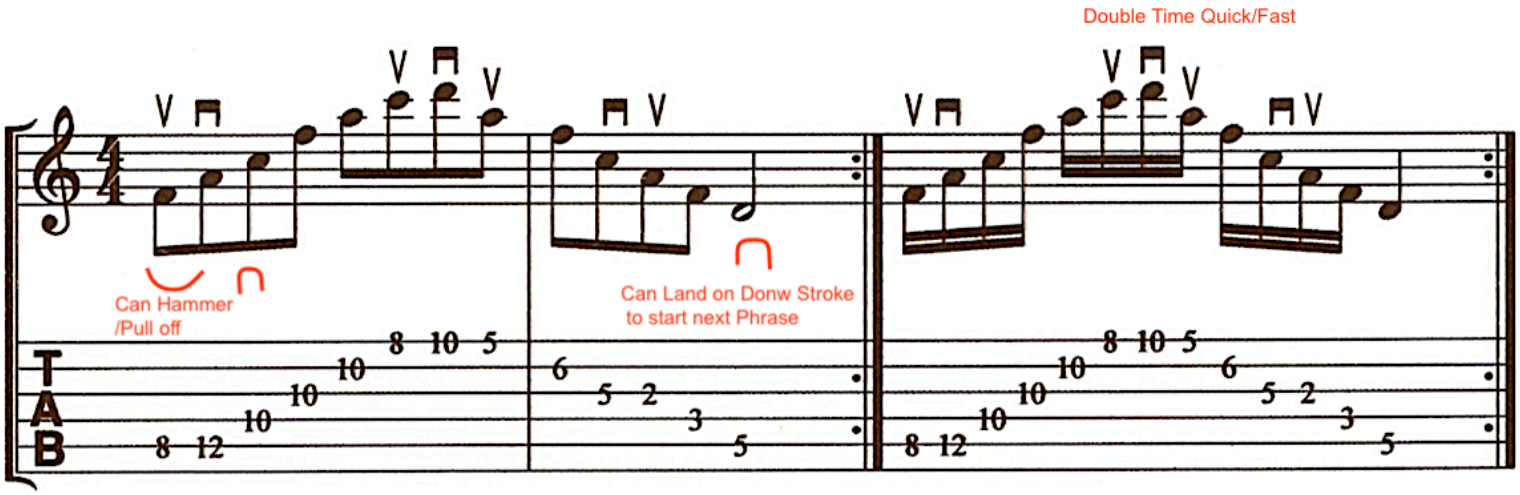
Although this is getting a bit advanced if you learn each part chunk by chunk by breaking it down and familiarize the fretting hand shapes with the picking hands strokes then it WILL start to flow and you will gain confidence quickly.

Am Sweep Picking Full Exercise



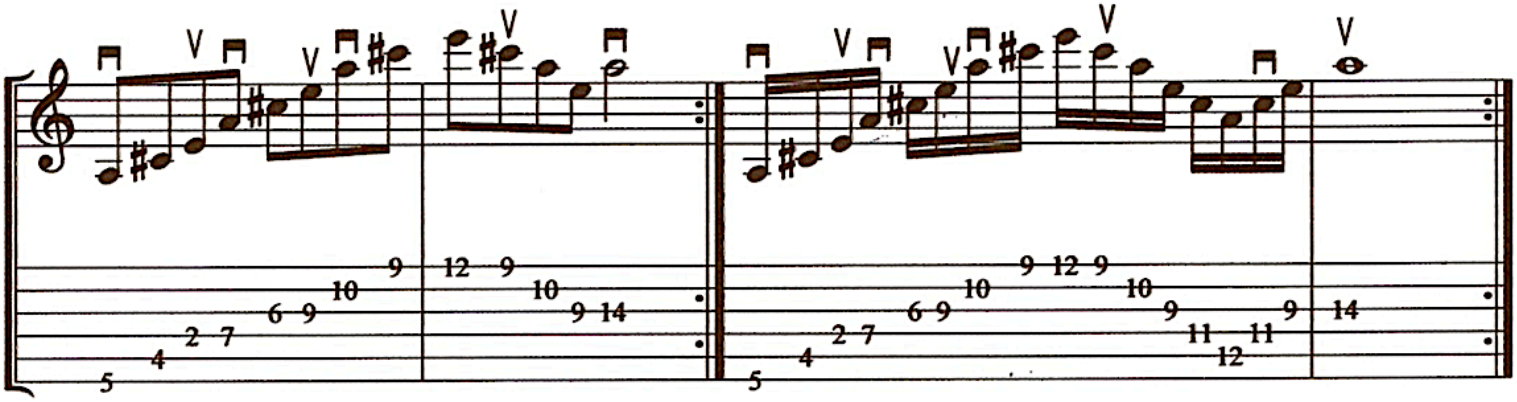
# EXTENDING SWEEP ARPEGGIOS

Employing what we have practiced and learnt in the first FULL exercise above we will descend DOWN the guitar neck with an F major and a D minor arpeggio joined together [or superimposed]. Notice that we start with an UPSTROKE to down stroke. Get the shapes of the fretting hand familiar. This exercise is actually quite easy as the fretting hand shapes are very comfortable on the hand.



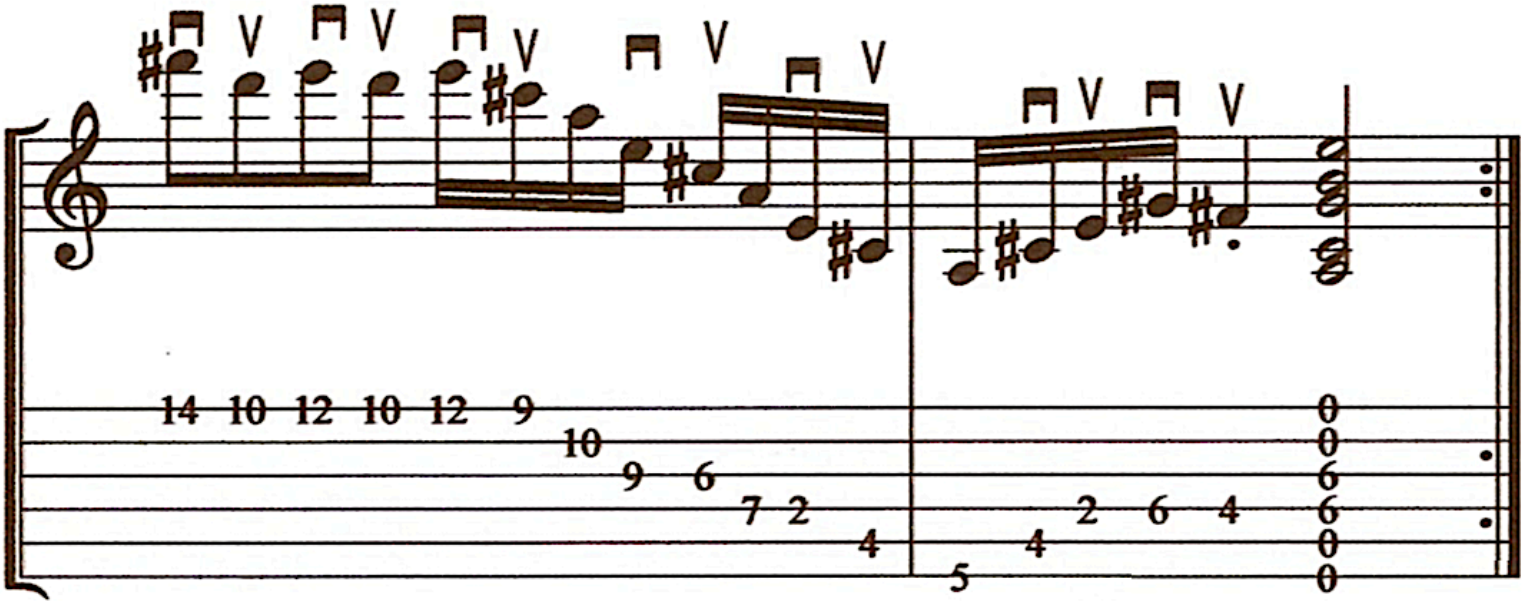

# A Major 3 Octaves Sweep Picking

In the Exercise below we will ascend the guitar neck with an A major three octave arpeggio. Again, get the fretting hand comfortable and sync it to the picking strokes and gradually build speed. The second variation covers even more ground so take your time. Although it looks difficult it has to be said that the fretting shapes are very comfortable and relatively easy to play.



# ALTERNATE PICKING SET-UP FOR SWEEP PICKING ARPEGGIOS

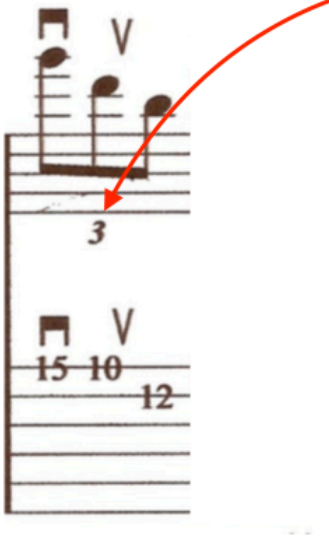
In the beginning example we noted how it is important to finish a sweep picking phrase with a bent note or a lick or some other embellishment. Well, It is also important to start a phrase with something, so here we will give it some RHYTHMIC drive by employing alternate picking. The alternate picking line is in 8th notes and lets go on 16th notes for the sweep picking arpeggio. We also finish the line with some more alternate picking and a chord.



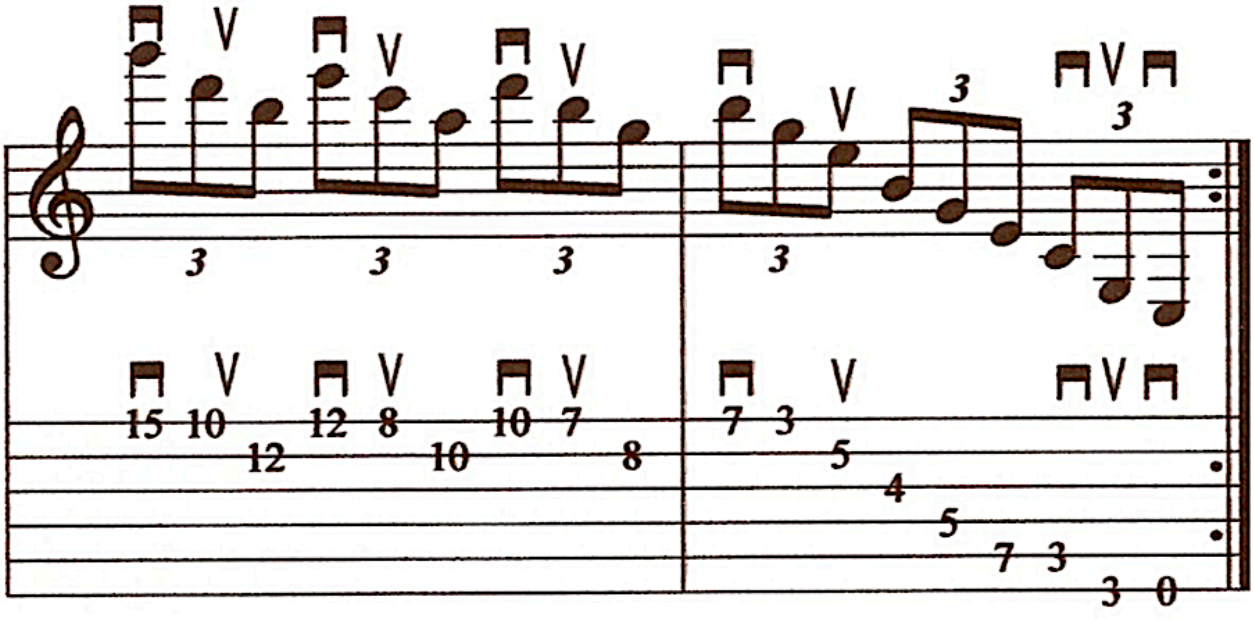
# Triplet simple pattern: VARIANT TO ALTERNATE PICKING

A variation of alternate picking will be looked at now. This simple pattern can be applied to scales, pentatonics and arpeggios. The key to start with is to feel the triplet rhythmic drive because then it will really flow effortlessly. The strokes are also very simple, just, down up up.

Count the Triplet time: Feel the “tri pi let” or “1 trip let 2 trip let” etc

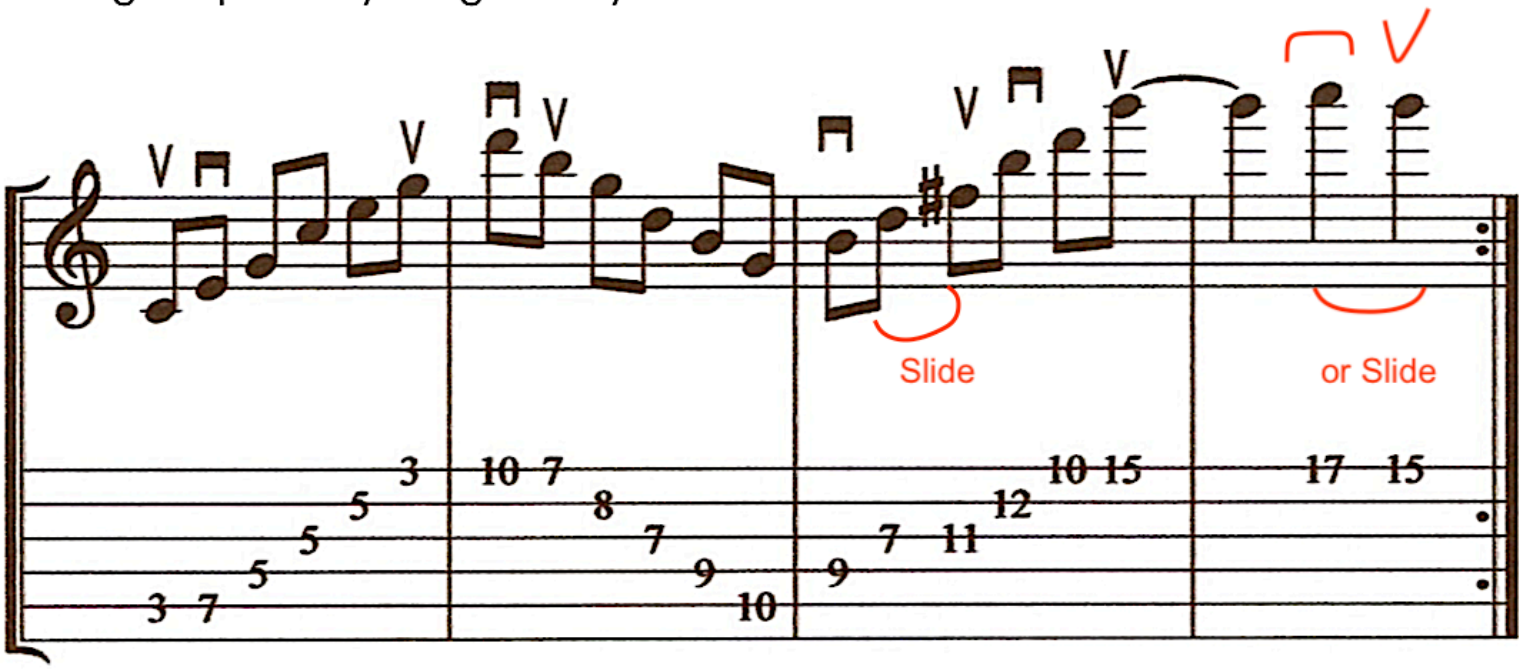



We can then extend this by adding an arpeggio. This concept is actually quite simple and flows very easily with the triplet rhythmic feel.



# ONE LAST EXERCISE TO FINISH!

Okay, one last exercise for a bit of fun. It is a C lydian idea. Go through the usual things like looking at the fretting hand shapes, the picking hands strokes whilst building tempo slowly but gradually.



# EPILOGUE:

I hope that this book has been of value to you. As I always say it is best to have a few exercises and MASTER them by understanding the sync between the picking hand and the fretting hand than to have a million exercises un learnt. Truly if you only master a few and have a few good picking stokes and you can do them easily then you can start to create your own patterns and lines within your own preferred style.

*Thanks for taking the time to study this book and good luck!*

*Clifford Martin c2021*

https://www.jazzimproviser.com

https://youtube.com/c/AlternatePickingGuitar