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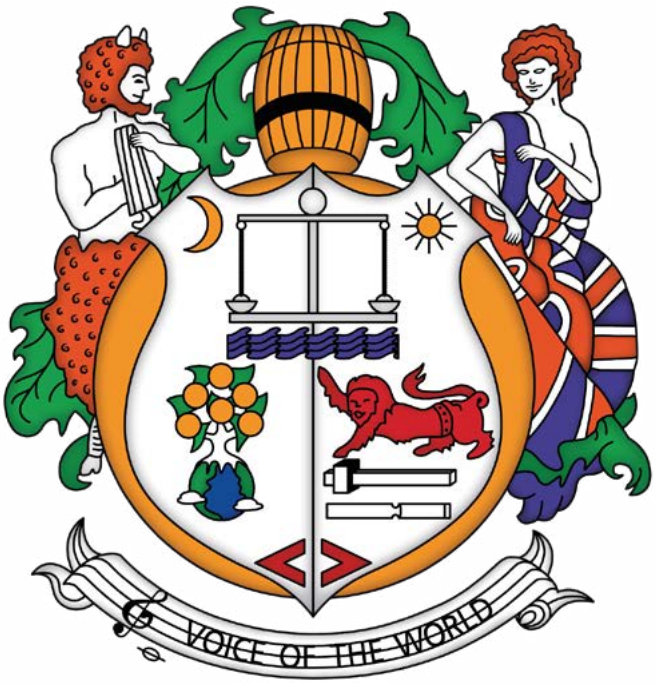


London | England

ORANGE ROCK GUITAR

ADVANCED COURSE

Grade 6 - Grade 8

Orange Rock Guitar - Advanced Course

Orange Rock Guitar Advanced Course

Grade 6 - Grade 8

Version 1.2 July 2019

Diatonic and Chromatic Intervals

Diatonic intervals

The intervals found within the Major and Natural minor scales are called diatonic intervals - so all Major, Perfect, and minor intervals are diatonic. We can also consider the diminished 5th interval and Augmented 4th intervals as diatonic.

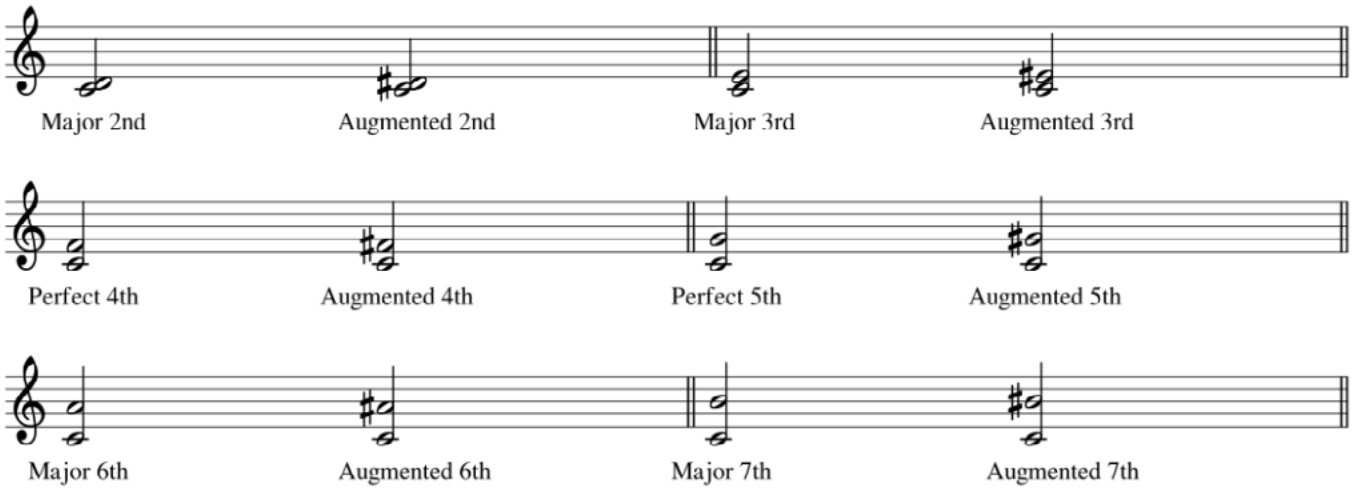
Diatonic intervals refer to both the intervals from the root note to the other scale degrees, and to the intervals between the scale degrees themselves - the relationships between all the scale degrees have been written below:

Chromatic intervals

The definition of a chromatic interval is one that is not found within a Major or Natural minor scale. All diminished and Augmented intervals are chromatic (except for the diminished 5th/Augmented 4th). Though unusual, these intervals are found in many places, including modal scales and chord extensions.

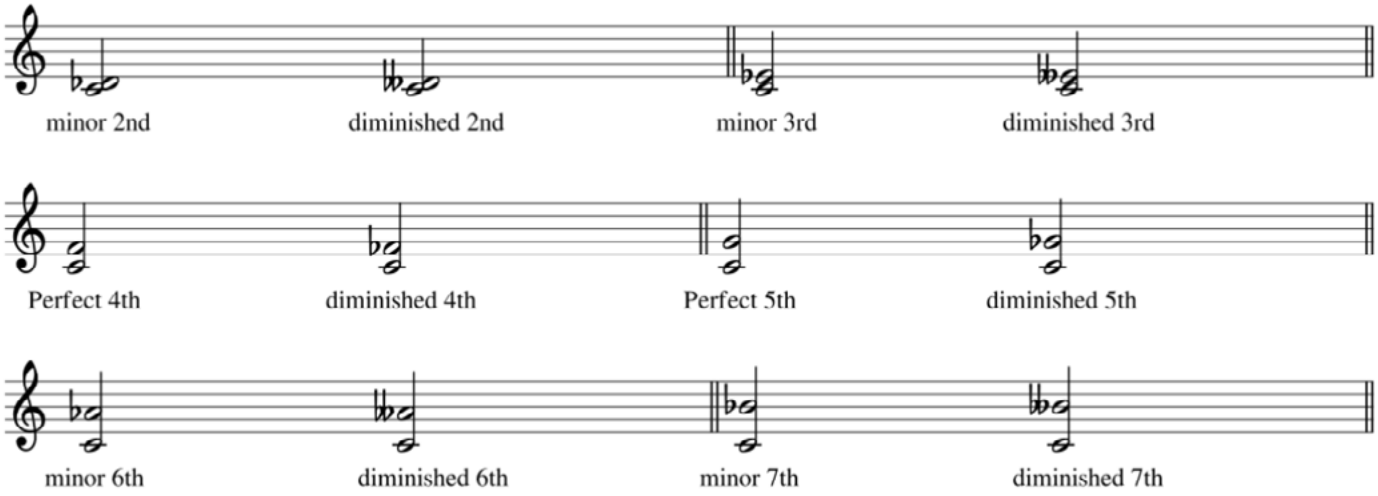
Augmented intervals

An Augmented interval is one semitone larger than a Major or Perfect interval:



Diminished intervals

A diminished interval is one semitone smaller than a minor or Perfect interval:



Diatonic intervals

Major Scale Intervals

Major 2nd -> Major 3rd = Major 2nd
Major 2nd -> Perfect 4th = minor 3rd
Major 2nd -> Perfect 5th = Perfect 4th
Major 2nd -> Major 6th = Perfect 5th
Major 2nd -> Major 7th = Major 6th
Major 2nd -> 8ve = minor 7th

Major 3rd -> Major 2nd = Major 2nd
Major 3rd -> Perfect 4th = minor 2nd
Major 3rd -> Perfect 5th = minor 3rd
Major 3rd -> Major 6th = Perfect 4th
Major 3rd -> Major 7th = Perfect 5th
Major 3rd -> 8ve = minor 6th

Perfect 4th -> Major 2nd = minor 3rd
Perfect 4th -> Major 3rd = minor 2nd
Perfect 4th -> Perfect 5th = Major 2nd
Perfect 4th -> Major 6th = Major 3rd
Perfect 4th -> Major 7th = Augmented 4th
Perfect 4th -> 8ve = Perfect 5th

Perfect 5th -> Major 2nd = Perfect 4th
Perfect 5th -> Major 3rd = minor 3rd
Perfect 5th -> Perfect 4th = Major 2nd
Perfect 5th -> Major 6th = Major 2nd
Perfect 5th -> Major 7th = Major 3rd
Perfect 5th -> 8ve = Perfect 4th

Major 6th -> Major 2nd = Perfect 5th
Major 6th -> Major 3rd = Perfect 4th
Major 6th -> Perfect 4th = Major 3rd
Major 6th -> Perfect 5th = Major 2nd
Major 6th -> Major 7th = Major 2nd
Major 6th -> 8ve = minor 3rd

Major 7th -> Major 2nd = Major 6th
Major 7th -> Major 3rd = Perfect 5th
Major 7th -> Perfect 4th = Augmented 4th
Major 7th -> Perfect 5th = Major 3rd
Major 7th -> Major 6th = Major 2nd
Major 7th -> 8ve = minor 2nd

8ve -> Major 2nd = minor 7th
8ve -> Major 3rd = minor 6th
8ve -> Perfect 4th = Perfect 5th
8ve -> Perfect 5th = Perfect 4th
8ve -> Major 6th = minor 3rd
8ve -> Major 7th = minor 2nd

Natural minor Scale Intervals

Major 2nd -> minor 3rd = minor 2nd
Major 2nd -> Perfect 4th = minor 3rd
Major 2nd -> Perfect 5th = Perfect 4th
Major 2nd -> minor 6th = Diminished 5th
Major 2nd -> minor 7th = minor 6th
Major 2nd -> 8ve = minor 7th

minor 3rd -> Major 2nd = minor 2nd
minor 3rd -> Perfect 4th = Major 2nd
minor 3rd -> Perfect 5th = Major 3rd
minor 3rd -> minor 6th = Perfect 4th
minor 3rd -> minor 7th = Perfect 5th
minor 3rd -> 8ve = Major 6th

Perfect 4th -> Major 2nd = minor 3rd
Perfect 4th -> minor 3rd = Major 2nd
Perfect 4th -> Perfect 5th = Major 2nd
Perfect 4th -> minor 6th = minor 3rd
Perfect 4th -> minor 7th = Perfect 4th
Perfect 4th -> 8ve = Perfect 5th

Perfect 5th -> Major 2nd = Perfect 4th
Perfect 5th -> minor 3rd = Major 3rd
Perfect 5th -> Perfect 4th = Major 2nd
Perfect 5th -> minor 6th = minor 2nd
Perfect 5th -> minor 7th = minor 3rd
Perfect 5th -> 8ve = Perfect 4th

minor 6th -> Major 2nd = Diminished 5th
minor 6th -> minor 3rd = Perfect 4th
minor 6th -> Perfect 4th = minor 3rd
minor 6th -> Perfect 5th = minor 2nd
minor 6th -> minor 7th = Major 2nd
minor 6th -> 8ve = Major 3rd

minor 7th -> Major 2nd = minor 6th
minor 7th -> minor 3rd = Perfect 5t
minor 7th -> Perfect 4th = Perfect 4t
minor 7th -> Perfect 5th = minor 3rd
minor 7th -> minor 6th = Major 2nd
minor 7th -> 8ve = minor 2nd

8ve -> Major 2nd = minor 7th
8ve -> minor 3rd = Major 6th
8ve -> Perfect 4th = Perfect 5th
8ve -> Perfect 5th = Perfect 4th
8ve -> minor 6th = Major 3rd
8ve -> minor 7th = Major 2nd

Other Useful Scales

All of the scales featured in this lesson are examples of shiftable positions. By moving them around the fretboard, you can play each of these scales in different keys.

Harmonic minor scale

Often found in classical music, this scale is a natural minor scale with a raised 7th note. The characteristic note of this scale is the raised 7th or Major 7th, which creates two interesting intervals:

The distance between the Major 7th and the root note in a minor context.
The distance between the minor 6th and Major 7th, which creates an **Augmented 2nd** interval.

These intervals give this scale a very distinct flavour - try improvising with E Harmonic minor over an E minor chord progression.

The Harmonic minor scale has become a staple in heavy metal music due to its unique sound, check out the following songs for a better idea of how it is used:

Yngwie Malmsteen - Vengeance
The king of the Harmonic minor, this Yngwie Malmsteen song uses the scale almost exclusively (as do most of his songs), bar a few parts of the solo which use the Natural minor and minor Pentatonic scales.

Django Reinhardt - Minor Swing
Probably the most famous Harmonic minor guitar song. This song is quite difficult, and Reinhardt managed to perform it with only 2 functioning fingers on his left hand!

Blues scale

The blues player's go-to, this scale is the same as the pentatonic scale but with an added flat 5/diminished 5th note, which gives this scale it's bluesy character.

Check out the following examples:

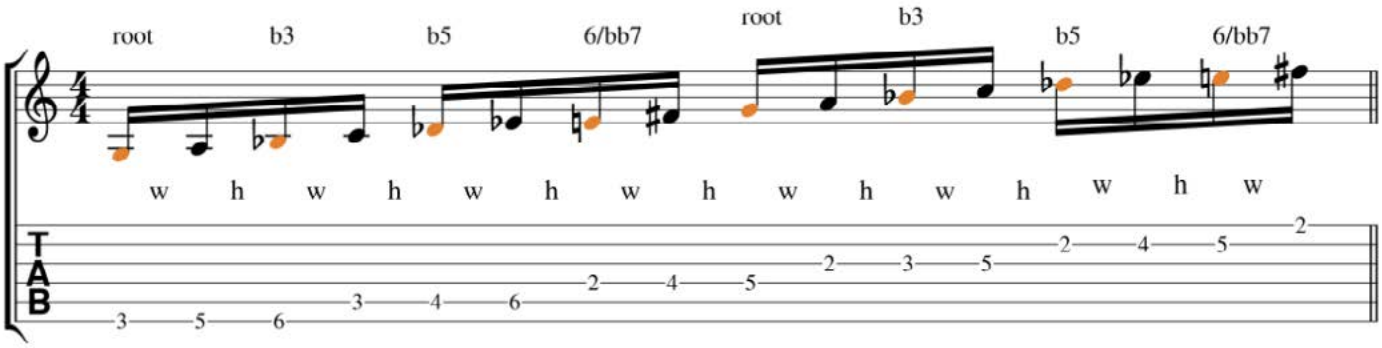
Cream - Sunshine of Your Love
The main riff of this song uses both the D Blues scale and the G Blues scale.

Led Zeppelin - Heartbreaker
Similar to the above example, this song also uses 2 parallel blues scales, in this instance the A and B blue scales.

Diminished scale

Often found in jazz, this scale can add an element of tension to your solos. The diminished scale is constructed by alternating whole-tones and semitones from any root note, which creates a stack of minor 3rds. This matches up with the formula used to create a diminished 7th chord, 1 - b3 - b5 - bb7 (root - minor 3rd - diminished 5th - diminished 7th). Look at the following example to see how the notes of a G diminished 7 chord (highlighted in orange) fit into the G diminished scale, and how it is built with whole-tones (w) and semitones/half-tones (h) to create minor 3rd stacks:

NOTE: the bb7/diminished 7th notes are written as 'E' (a Major 6th from G) instead of 'Fbb', as they are enharmonic equivalents, and it is far easier to read.

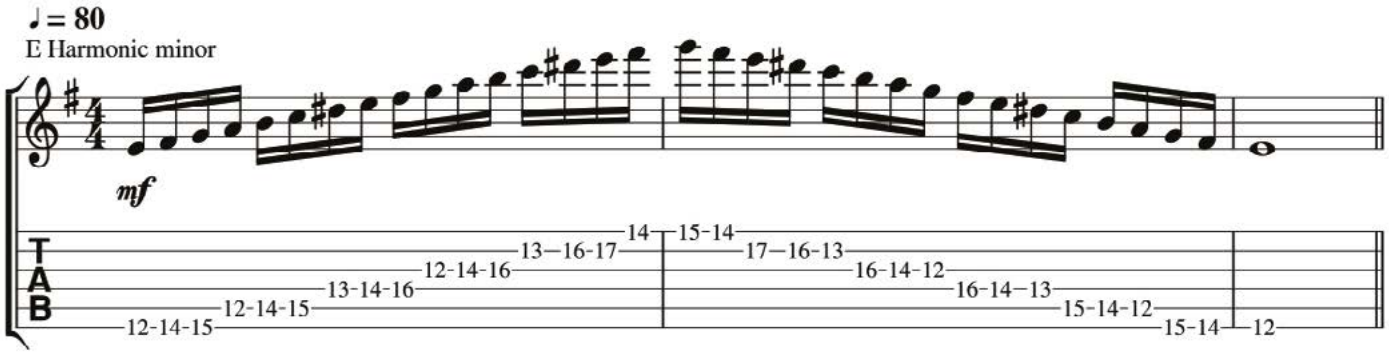


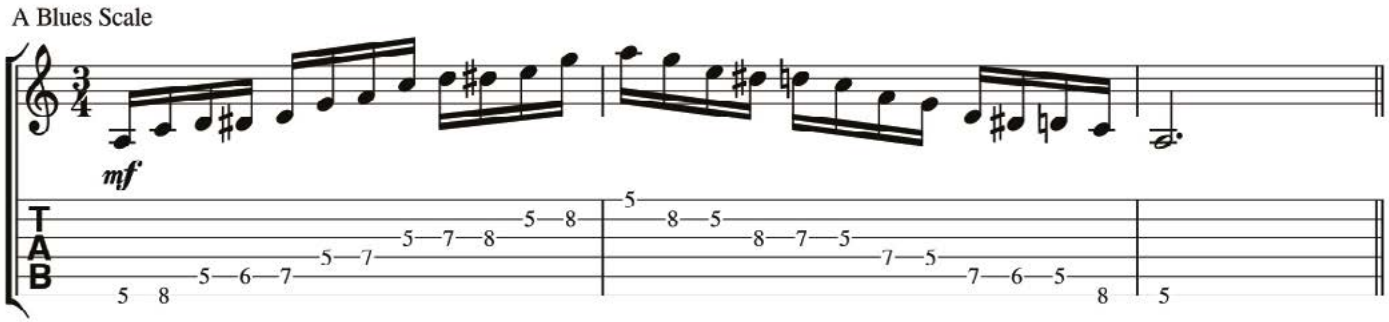
Try improvising with this scale over a G diminished 7th chord, or a G minor 7-b5 chord.

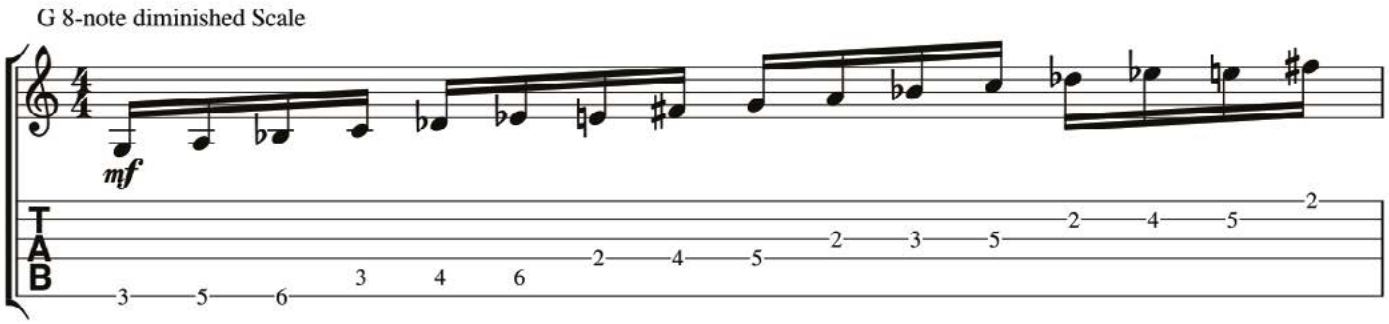
Check out the intro to

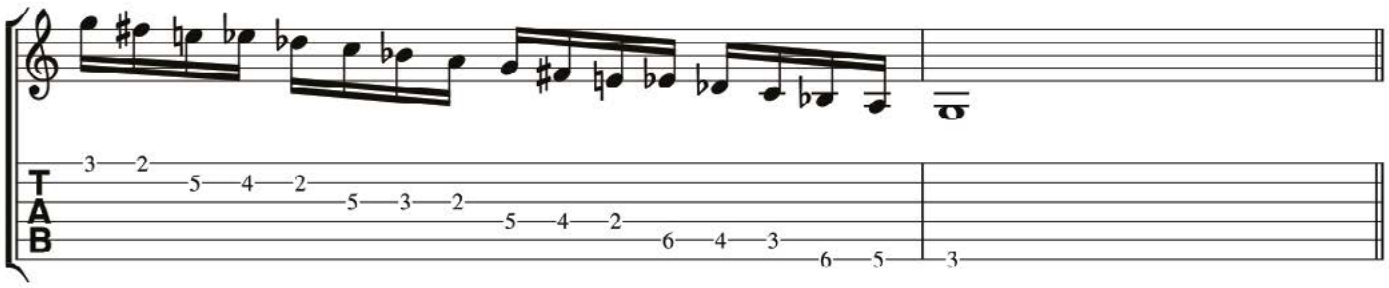
Jeff Loomis - Jato Unit ›
which uses the diminished scale before resolving to the root chord for the first verse.

Other Useful Scales









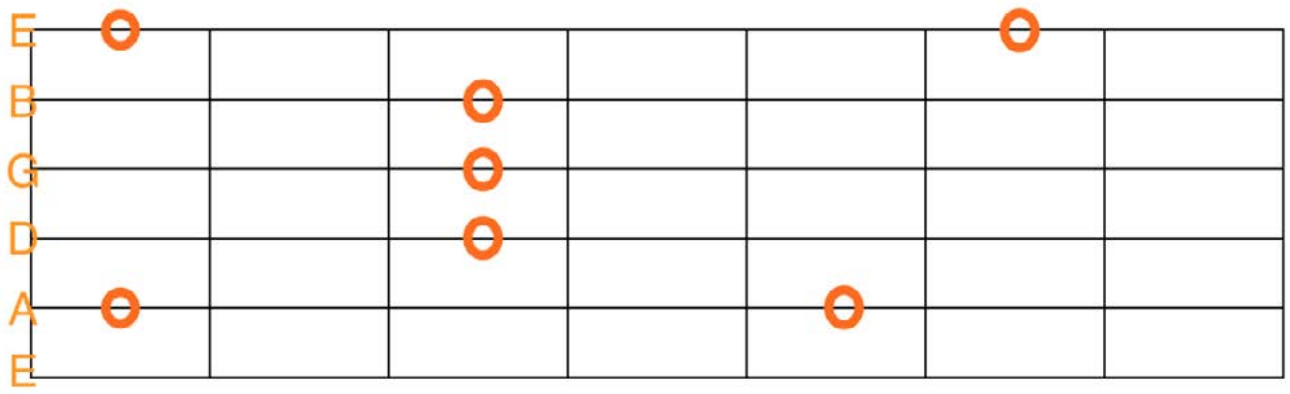
2 Octave Arpeggios

Click here for this lesson's audio playlist ›

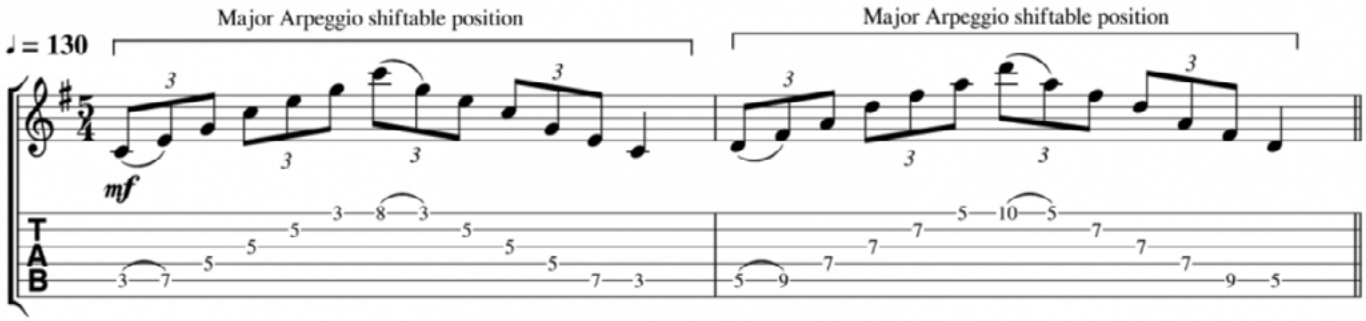
Arpeggio shapes

Arpeggios are when we take the notes of a chord, and play them separately, one after the other. Therefore, the formula for figuring out an arpeggio is the same as figuring out a chord. Since we already know chords are made from the 1st, 3rd, and 5th notes of the Major and minor scales (Major and minor chords), or from a root, Major/minor 3rd, and a Perfect 5th, we can deduct that Major and minor arpeggios also use these notes.

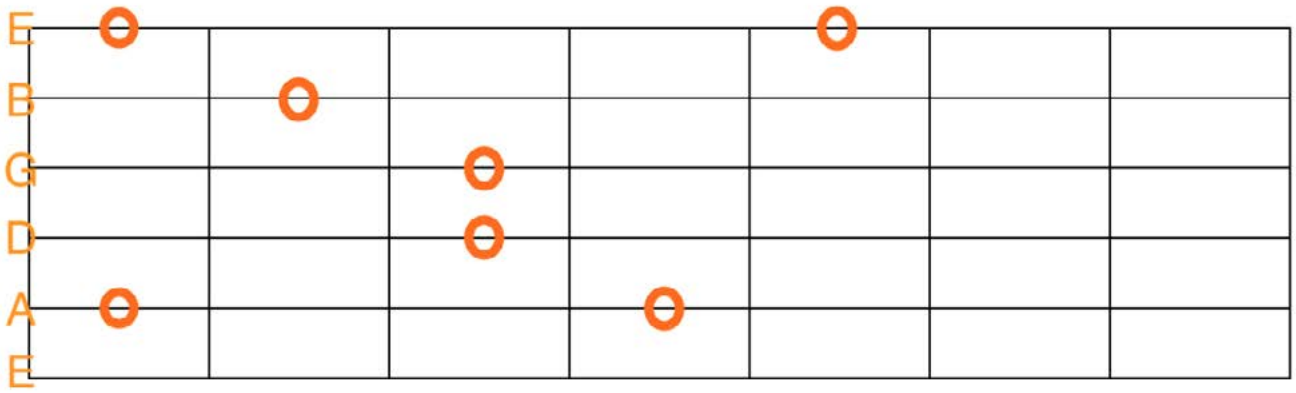
The Major and minor arpeggios introduced in this lesson use what are known as shiftable positions, which means they can be moved horizontally up and down the fretboard to be played in different keys - if we compare the 3 Major arpeggios shown in this lesson's course materials, G Major, C Major and D Major, we can see that they are all the same shape, shifted to different parts of the fretboard. The following fretboard diagram shows this shiftable Major arpeggio position.



Look at the following excerpt from this lesson's course materials - a C Major arpeggio is followed by a D Major arpeggio, both using the same position 2 frets apart:



The following fretboard diagram shows the shiftable minor arpeggio position:



By moving these positions around, you can play a Major or minor arpeggio in any key.

Sweep picking

Rather than alternate picking these arpeggios, the lesson video demonstrates the technique known as sweep picking, which is achieved by sweeping the pick across the strings, playing consecutive downstrokes and upstrokes. This technique works well when playing one note per string, as it requires much less movement to execute when compared to alternate picking.

Sweep picking can be a tough technique to master, but be patient! The shapes that you just learned are very common sweep picking, and can be seen in the following songs:

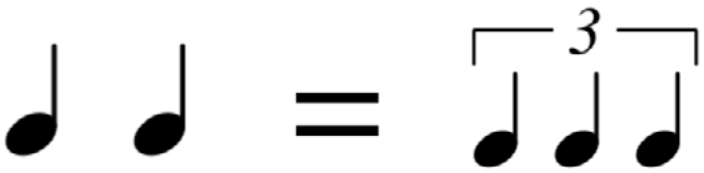
Symphony X - Smoke and Mirrors
This song prominently features the Major shape shown in this lesson (albeit at warp-speed). Slow this song right down and practice it slowly for a great 2 octave arpeggio workout.

Jason Becker - Altitudes
Another song that's too fast for its own good, this features a variety of 1 octave arpeggios and their 2 octave equivalents, and is another great song to slow down and practice slowly. Enjoy!

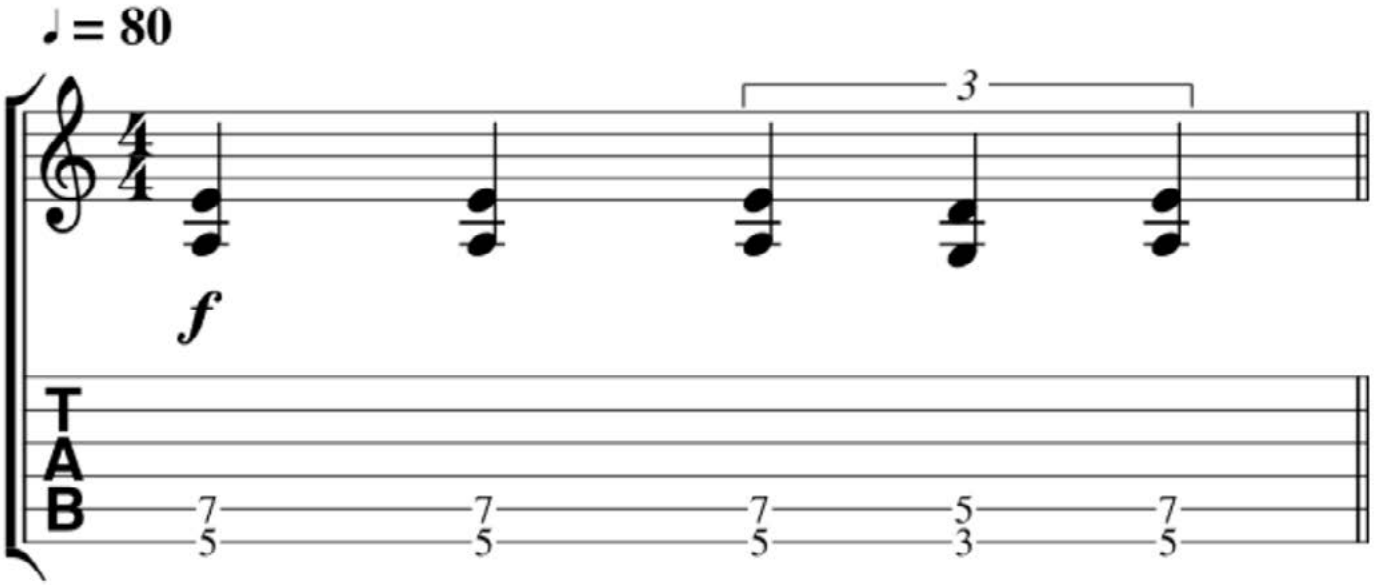
Triplets

A triplet is when we play 3 notes in the space of 2.

For instance, we can fit 3 notes into where 2 crotchets would usually be, but the total value would still be 2 crotchet beats:

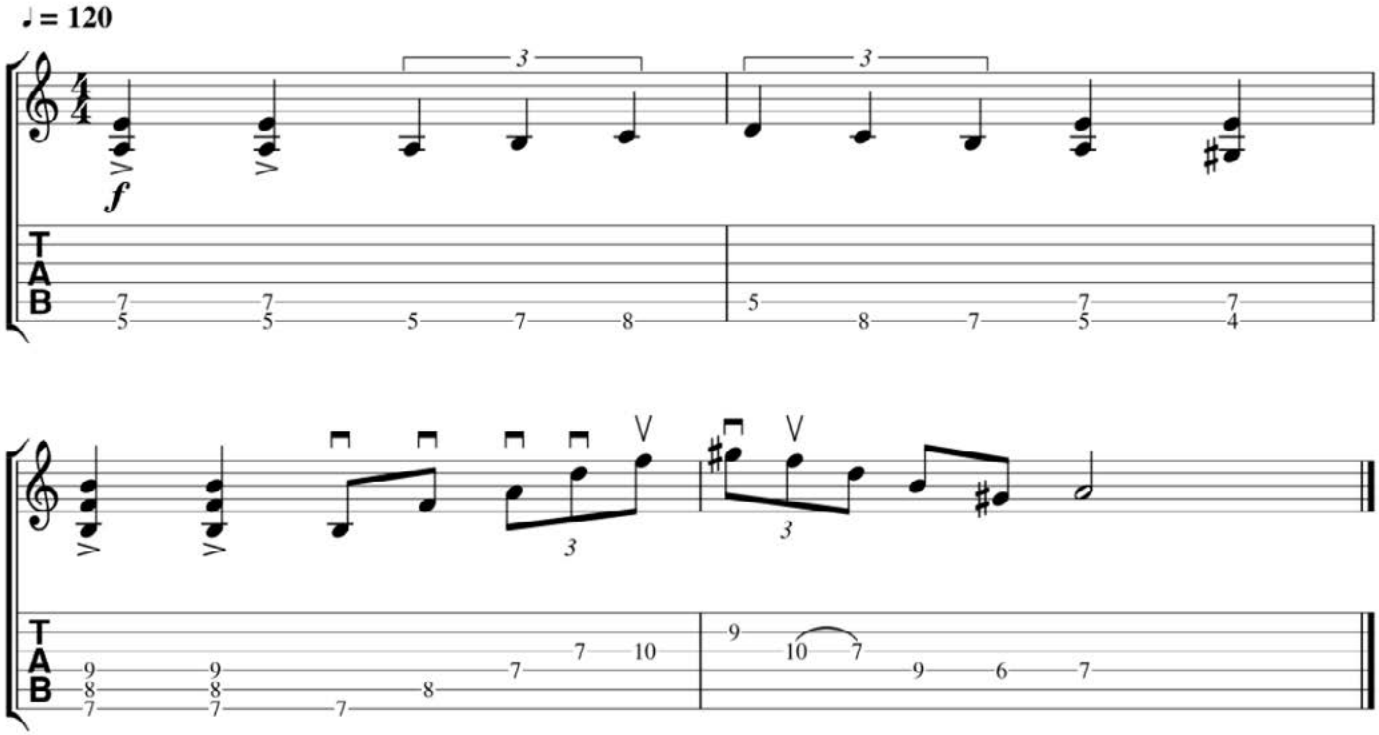


Listen to the following example to hear the contrast between standard and triplet crotchets. The example will be repeated twice - in the first example, a voice will count each standard crotchet beat, and in the second example, a voice will count each triplet crotchet beat.



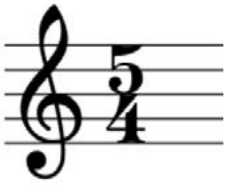
Triplet example ›

Triplets are a great way to add rhythmic variety to your playing. The following riff combines triplets with power chords and sweep picking to add a rhythmic drive.



Triplet riff ›

5/4 time signature

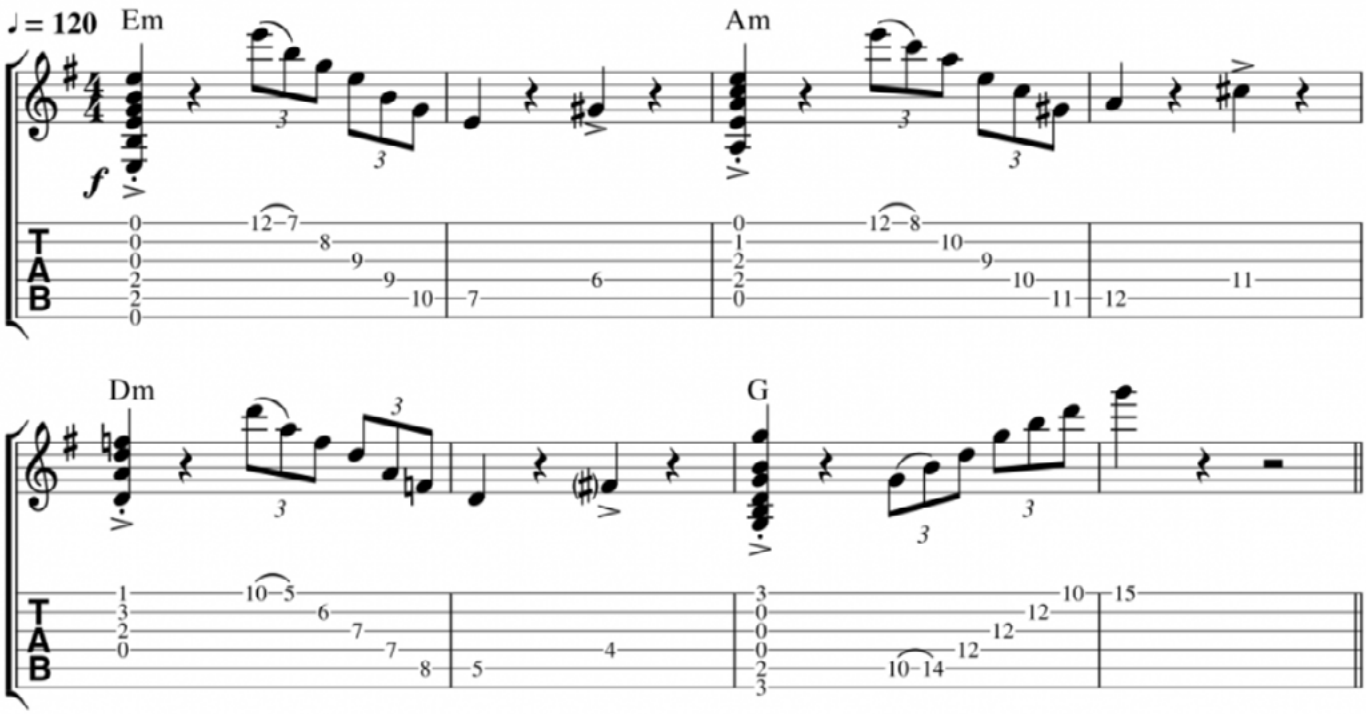


The top number indicates how many beats each bar has (in this case, 5) and the bottom number indicates what beats they are - the 4 on the bottom refers to a crotchet beat.

Since 5/4 is such an unusual time signature, there aren't a great number of songs that use it exclusively, but you'll quite probably hear it pop up for a bar or two in some songs - for instance, take the intro the Rush's YYZ, which starts in 5/4 before settling into a comfortable 4/4 groove.

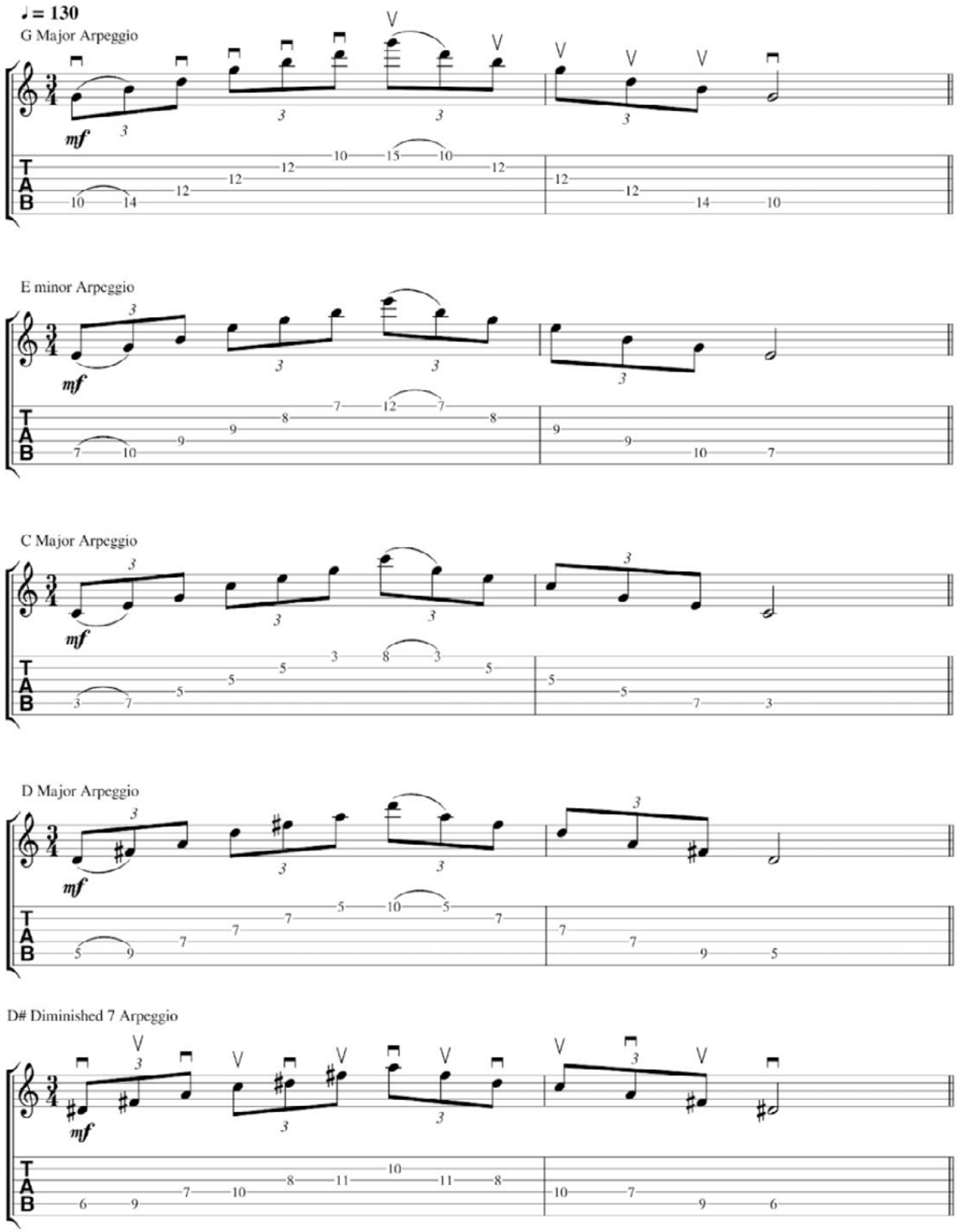
Lil’ licks!

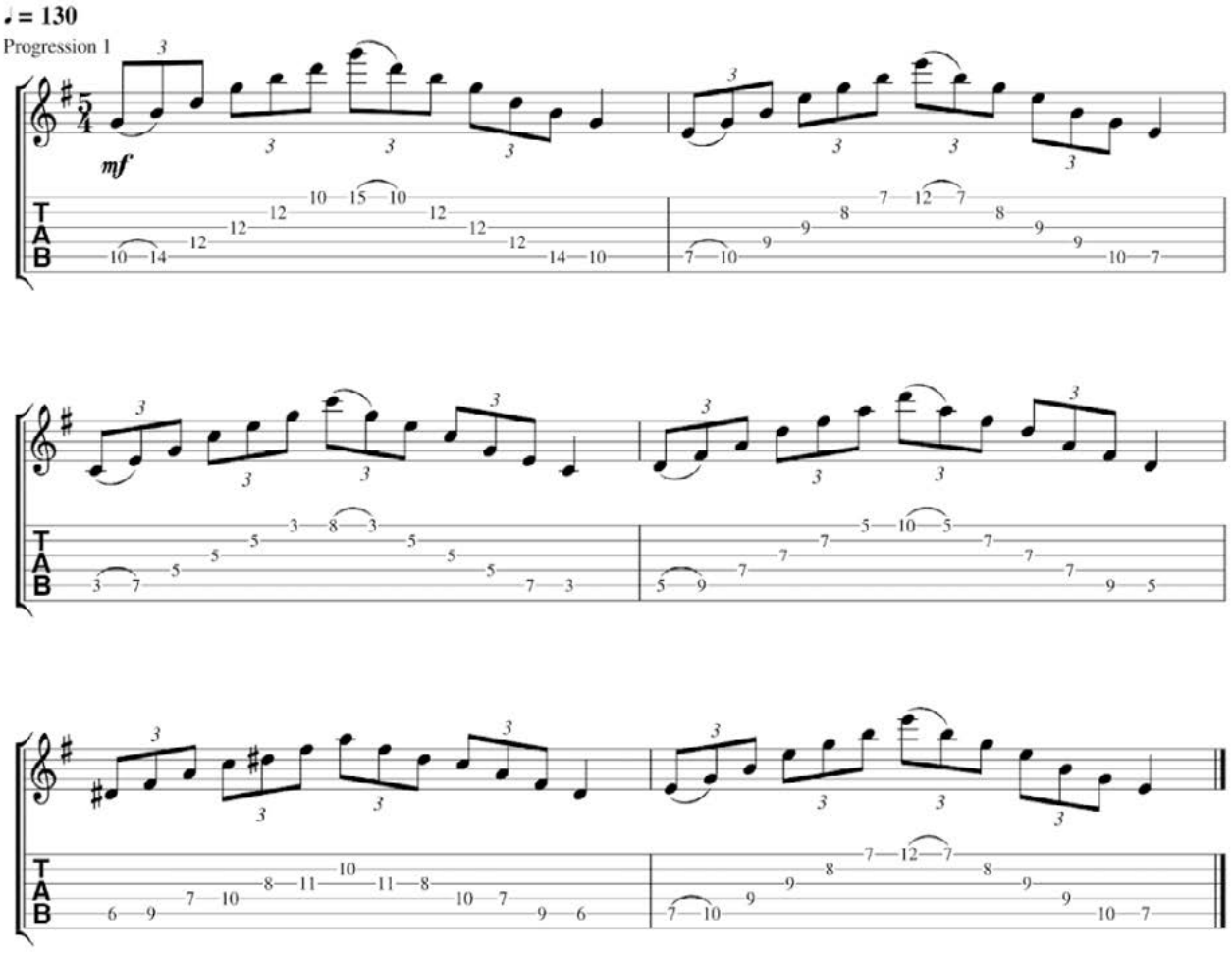
This lesson’s lil’ lick is a neo-classical inspired sweep picking phrase, using open chords followed by their sweep-picked arpeggios. This lick will work best with plenty of distortion and at high speeds, but here’s a slower example to start off with!



Lil’ Licks - 2 Octave Arpeggios ›

2 Octave Arpeggios



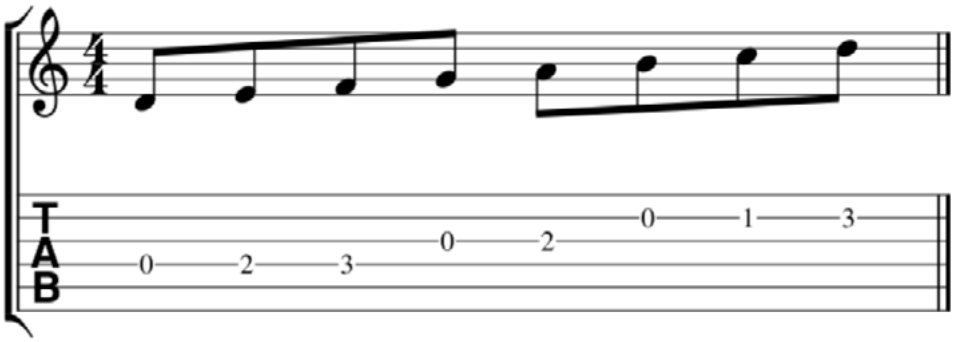

♩= 130
Progression 1
mf
T
A
B

Introduction to Modes

Click here for this lesson's audio playlist ›

The **modes** are a set of scales derived from the Major scale. There are 7 modes in total, 1 corresponding to each scale degree of the Major scale.

Put simply, modes of a Major scale start on a degree of the scale other than the root, or considering the root to be a different note in the scale. For example, if we take C Major and start the scale on D, we create the modal scale **D Dorian.**



Modes use the same notes as their relative Major scales, but since we consider the root to be a different note, it creates a new musical flavour distinct to that mode.

Before you are introduced to the modes, it's important to know that they can be understood in a few different ways:

Modes as derivations of the Major scale:
Understanding each mode in relation to its parent Major scale is a common approach for improvisation.

Modes as individual scales/keys:
Each mode has a different formula, and can be understood as an individual modal scale and modal key. Since the modes all have different scale formulae, and we are able to build chords from these formulae, many modes have distinctly 'modal flavoured' chord progressions, rather than outright Major or minor chord progressions.

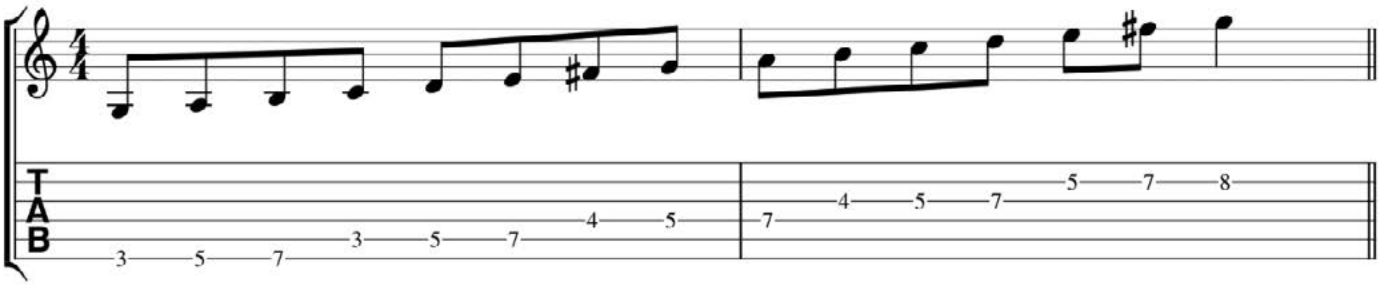
Modes as variations of the Major and minor scales:
Most of the modes are similar enough to either a Major or minor scale that it is common practice to understand them as extended or altered versions of these scales, with usually only 1 or 2 different notes. They can therefore sometimes be used as alternatives to the major and minor scales (depending on the scale formula).

The following introduction to the 7 modes of the Major scale will go through all of these different methods of understanding the modes.

The 7 modes of the Major Scale

Ionian

The Ionian mode is another name for the Major scale, and consequently uses the formula of the Major scale. Any Major scale can also be considered an Ionian mode, for instance, G Major = **G Ionian:**



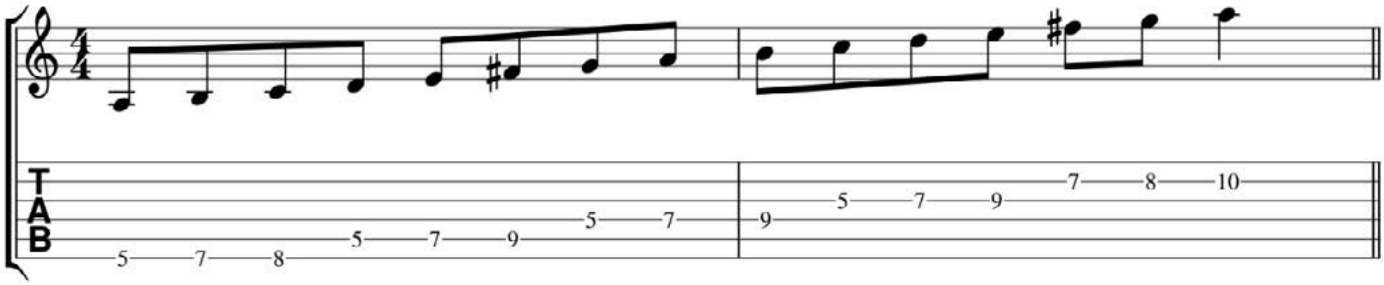
Ionian scale ›

The formula for the Major Scale/Ionian mode is:

Root - Major 2nd - Major 3rd - Perfect 4th - Perfect 5th - Major 6th - Major 7th - 8ve

Dorian

The Dorian mode is created when you start the Major Scale from the Major 2nd degree. For instance, the Dorian mode derived from G Major would be **A Dorian:**



Dorian scale ›

The Dorian mode is very similar to the Natural minor, but has a Major 6th. The formula for the Dorian mode is:

Root - Major 2nd - minor 3rd - Perfect 4th - Perfect 5th - Major 6th - minor 7th - 8ve

Since the Dorian mode is so similar to the Natural minor scale, it's commonly played over minor chord progressions. Try playing A Dorian over an A minor backing track and note how the characteristic Major 6th note (in this case, B) gives this mode it's 'hopeful' flavour. But be careful - the Major 6th note may clash with some minor chord progressions.

Minor chord progressions that replace the iv minor chord with a **IV** Major chord are distinctly Dorian.

Try the chord progression **i - IV - i - V**, for instance, **Am - D - Am - E**

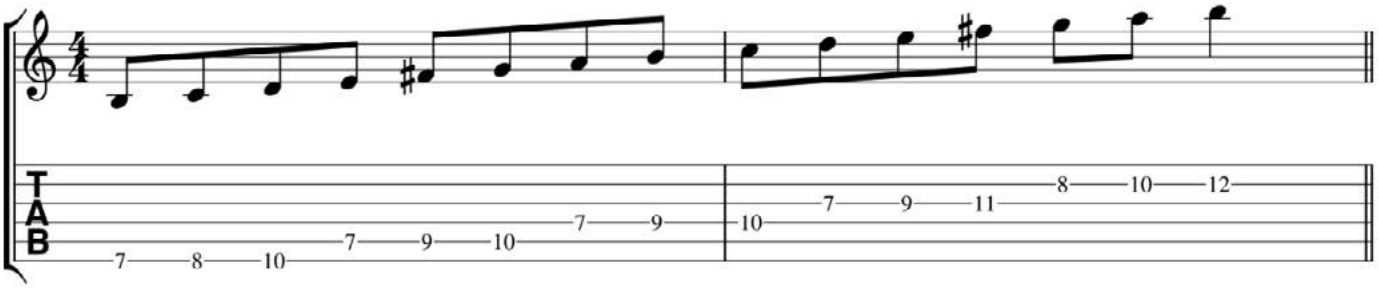
Dorian progression ›

Check out

Carlos Santana - Oye Como Va ›
which uses a repeating i - IV progression in A minor (Am - D).

Phrygian

The Phrygian mode is created when you start the Major Scale from the Major 3rd degree. The Phrygian mode derived from G Major is **B Phrygian:**



Phrygian scale ›

The Phrygian mode is very similar to the Natural minor scale, but has a minor 2nd/flat 2nd. The formula for the Phrygian mode is:

Root - minor 2nd - minor 3rd - Perfect 4th - Perfect 5th - minor 6th - minor 7th - 8ve

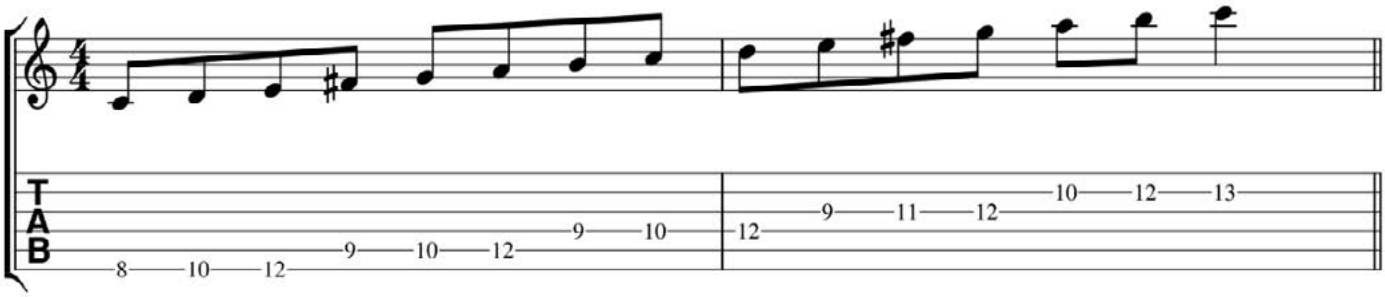
Since the Phrygian mode's characteristic note is the **minor 2nd,** it can be quite difficult to use this scale over a minor chord progression - this scale lends itself best to heavy power-chord riffing - but minor chord progressions that use a **II** Major chord can work well - try the progression **i - II - i - VI,** for instance, **Bm - C - Bm - G**

Phrygian progression ›

White Rabbit - Jefferson Airplane ›
emphasises a i - II harmony throughout its Phrygian sections.

Lydian

The Lydian mode is created when you start the Major Scale from the Perfect 4th degree. The Lydian mode derived from G Major is **C Lydian**:



Lydian scale ›

The Lydian mode is very similar to the Major Scale, but has an Augmented 4th/sharp 4th. The formula for the Lydian mode is:

Root - Major 2nd - Major 3rd - Augmented 4th - Perfect 5th - Major 6th - Major 7th - 8ve

The Lydian mode's characteristic note is the **Augmented 4th.** This mode will work well with most Major chord progressions, but a distinctly Lydian trait is to use a **II** Major chord instead of a **ii** minor chord. This can be a difficult chord to pull off, and is often better used as a temporary effect.

Try the progression **I - II - ii - V**, for instance, **C - D - Dm - G**

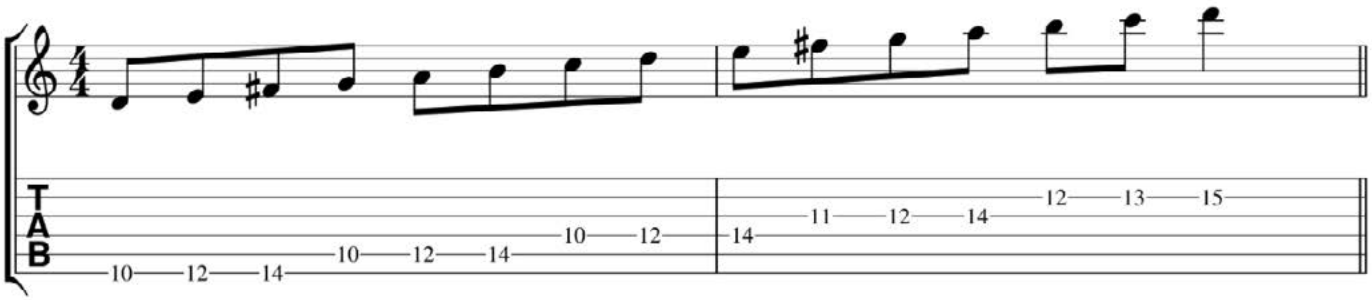
Lydian progression ›

Joe Satriani is a pioneer of the Lydian mode in contemporary guitar music, and his song

Joe Satriani - Flying in a Blue Dream ›
is a great example of C Lydian.

Mixolydian

The Mixolydian mode is created when you start the Major Scale from the Perfect 5th degree. The Mixolydian mode derived from G Major is **D Mixolydian:**



Mixolydian scale ›

The Mixolydian mode is very similar to the Major Scale, but has a minor 7th/flat 7th. The formula for the Mixolydian mode is:

Root - Major 2nd - Major 3rd - Perfect 4th - Perfect 5th - Major 6th - minor 7th - 8ve

The Mixolydian mode's characteristic note is the **minor 7th** - this doesn't usually sit too well with a Major chord progression. To compensate, we can use a distinctly Mixolydian trait of replacing the diminished **vii** with a **VII** Major chord, and the **V** Major chord with a **v** minor chord, when in a Major chord progression.

Try the progression **I - v - VII - I**, for instance **D - Am - C - D**

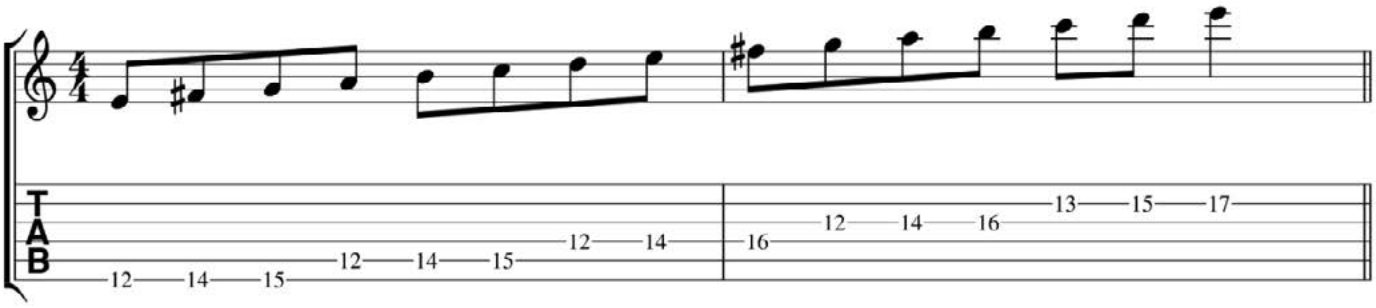
Mixolydian progression ›

It's also common to play the Mixolydian scale over individual Dominant 7th chords, as they share similar foundations (Root - Major 3rd - Perfect 5th - minor 7th). For instance, playing the Mixolydian scale of each chord in a 12 bar-blues can yield good results.

Hiperson(幕布 - 海朋森) - The Curtain ›
is a great example of the Mixolydian mode, as most of the song uses a C Major chord resolving to a D Major chord (VII - I).

Aeolian

The Aeolian mode is another name for the Natural minor scale, and consequently uses the formula of the Natural minor scale. It is created when you start the Major scale from the Major 6th. The Aeolian mode derived from G Major is the same as the **relative minor**, and so would be **E Natural minor/E Aeolian:**



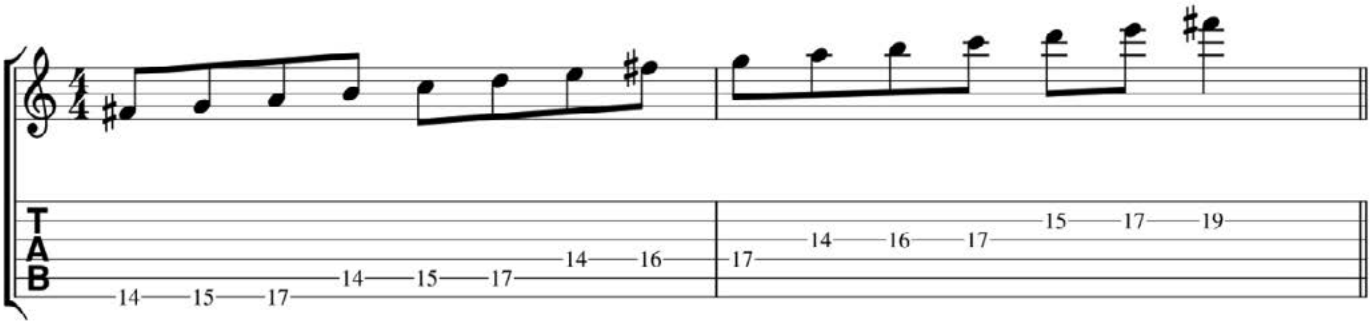
Aeolian scale ›

The formula for the Natural minor scale/Aeolian mode is:

Root - Major 2nd - minor 3rd - Perfect 4th - Perfect 5th - minor 6th - minor 7th - 8ve

Locrian

The Locrian mode is created when you start the Major scale from the Major 7th degree.
The Locrian mode derived from G Major is **F# Locrian:**



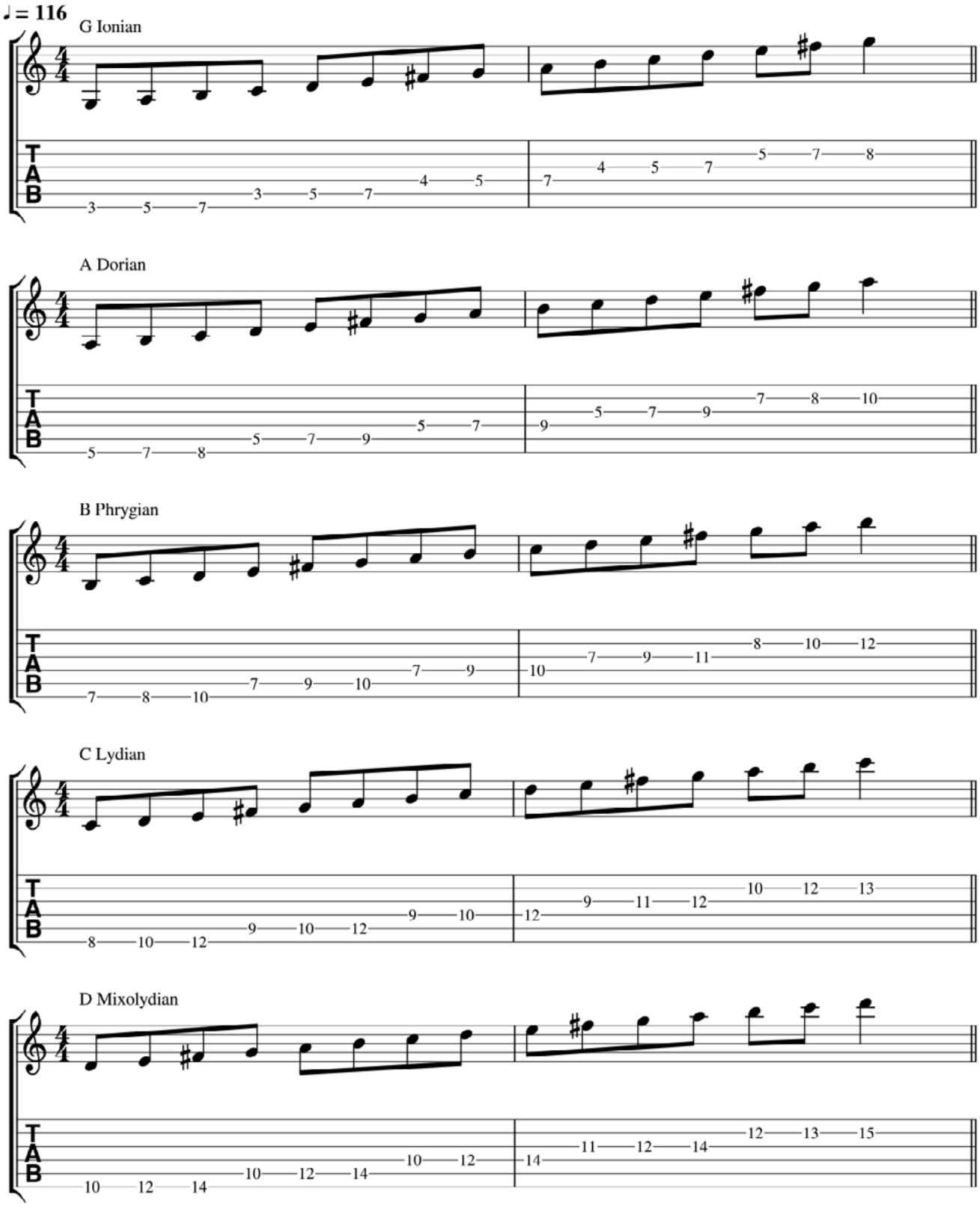
Locrian scale ›

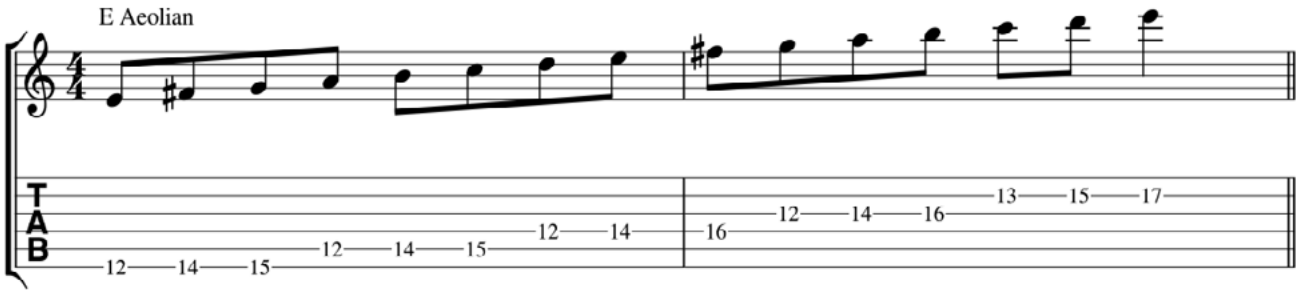
The Locrian scale is similar to the Natural minor scale, but has a minor 2nd/flat 2nd, and a diminished 5th/flat 5th.
The formula for the Locrian mode is:

Root - minor 2nd - minor 3rd - Perfect 4th - diminished 5th - minor 6th - minor 7th - 8ve

This mode is notoriously difficult to employ - it has a strange, unresolved quality, partially because it outlines a diminished chord (note the minor 3rd and **diminished 5th** in the formula) which is its characteristic note. Playing this scale over diminished chords is its primary use.

Introduction to Modes

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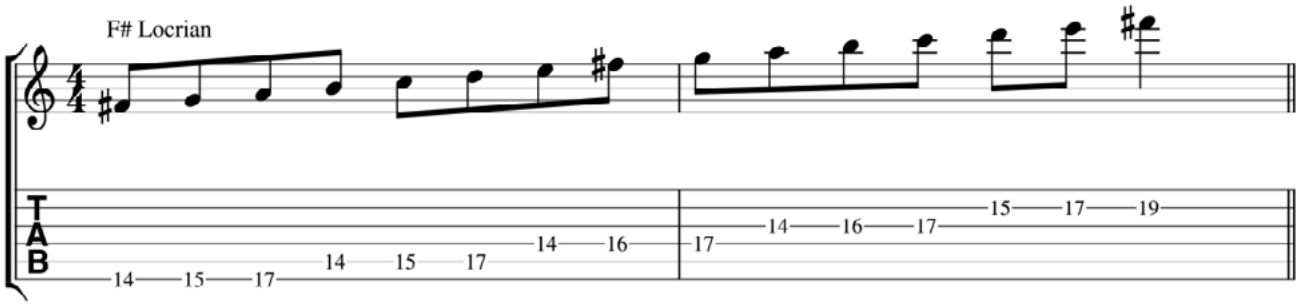

F# Locrian
T
A
B
14 15 17 14 15 17 14 16 17 14 16 17 15 17 19

Bar chords - part II

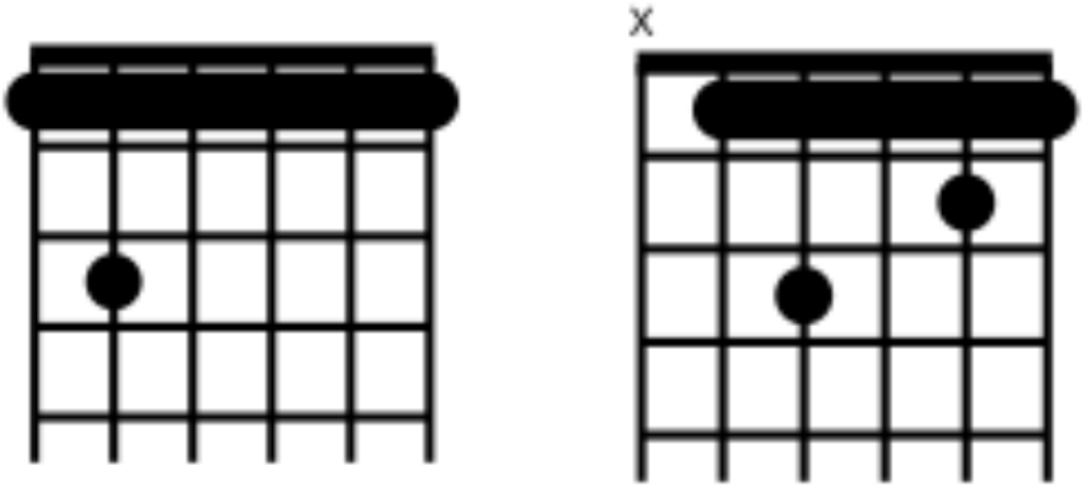
As you're no doubt aware, a bar chord is created when we place our 1st finger across more than one string, creating a 'bar'. The chord is then completed by placing the remaining fingers on the fretboard to make up the rest of the chord.

Bar chords can be used all over the neck using the same positions - they are examples of shiftable chord positions. As you can see in the course materials, we can start bar chords on either the low E string or the A string.

Minor 7th and suspended 4th bar chords

This lesson introduces 2 new kinds of bar chord - the minor 7th bar chord and the suspended 4th bar chord.

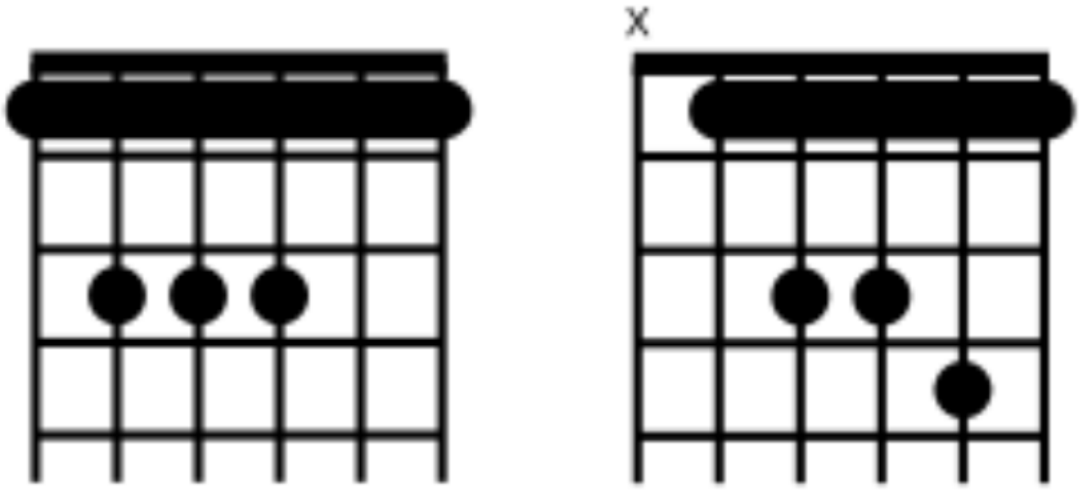
To construct minor 7th bar chords, the following shapes are used:



Check out the opening to

Baseball Bear - Stairway Generation ›
which uses a Dm7 bar chord over a changing bass note.

To construct suspended 4th bar chords, the following shapes are used (the A string root position of the suspended 4th bar chord is not included in this lesson's course materials):

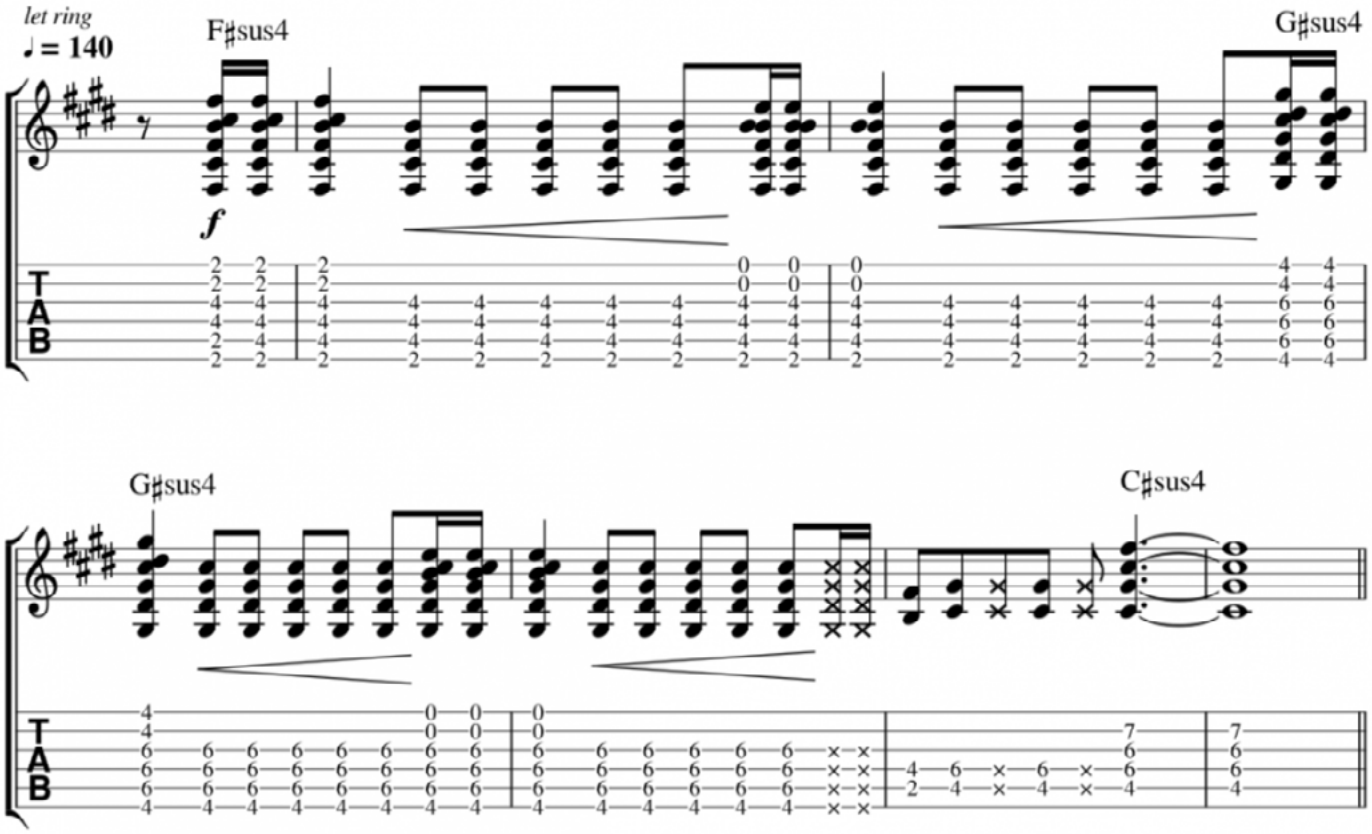


Alex Lifeson of Rush is known for his extensive use of sus4 bar chords - for instance, the beginning of the song

Rush - Chemistry ›
is based around two sus4 bar chords, Dsus4 and Csus4.

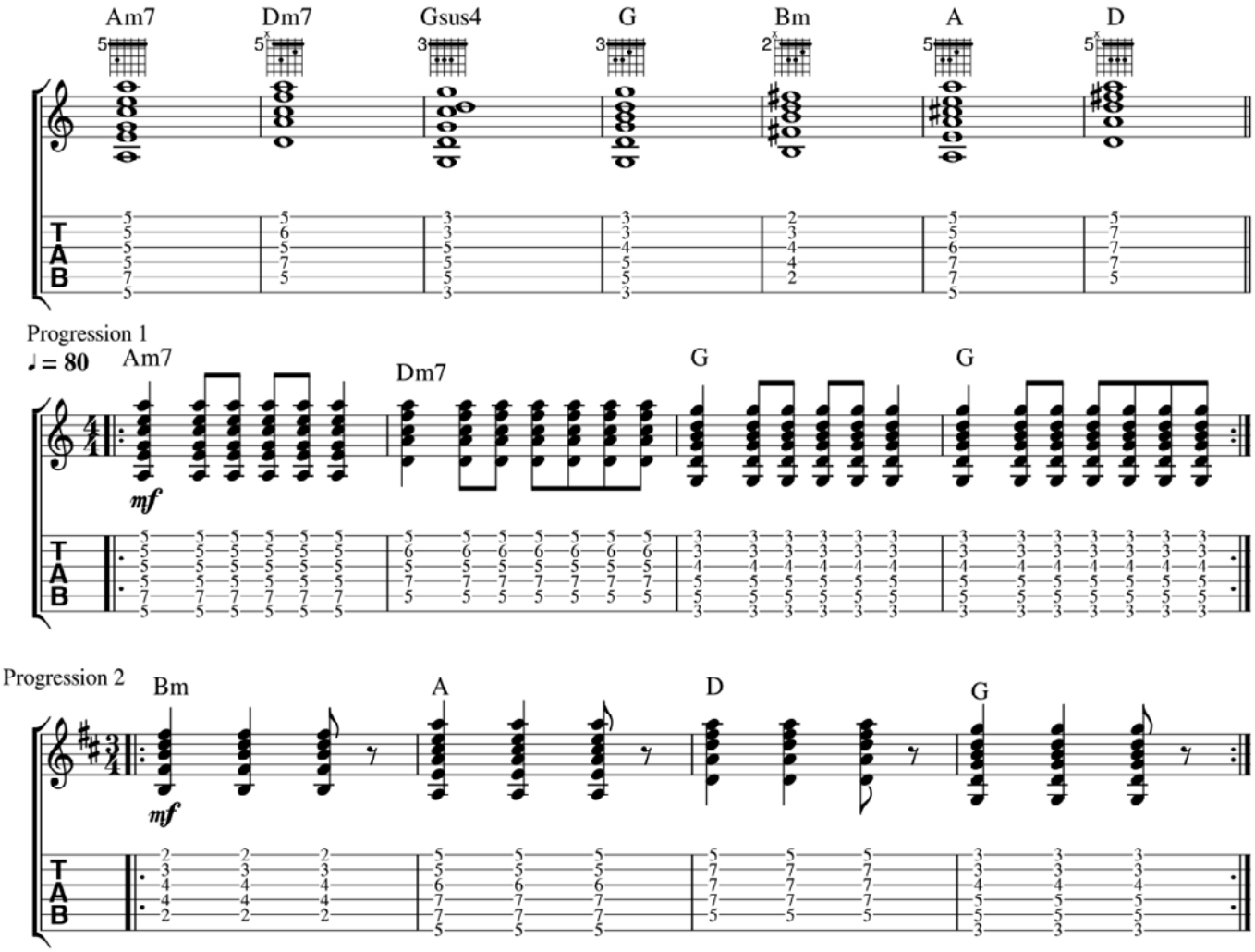
Lil' licks!

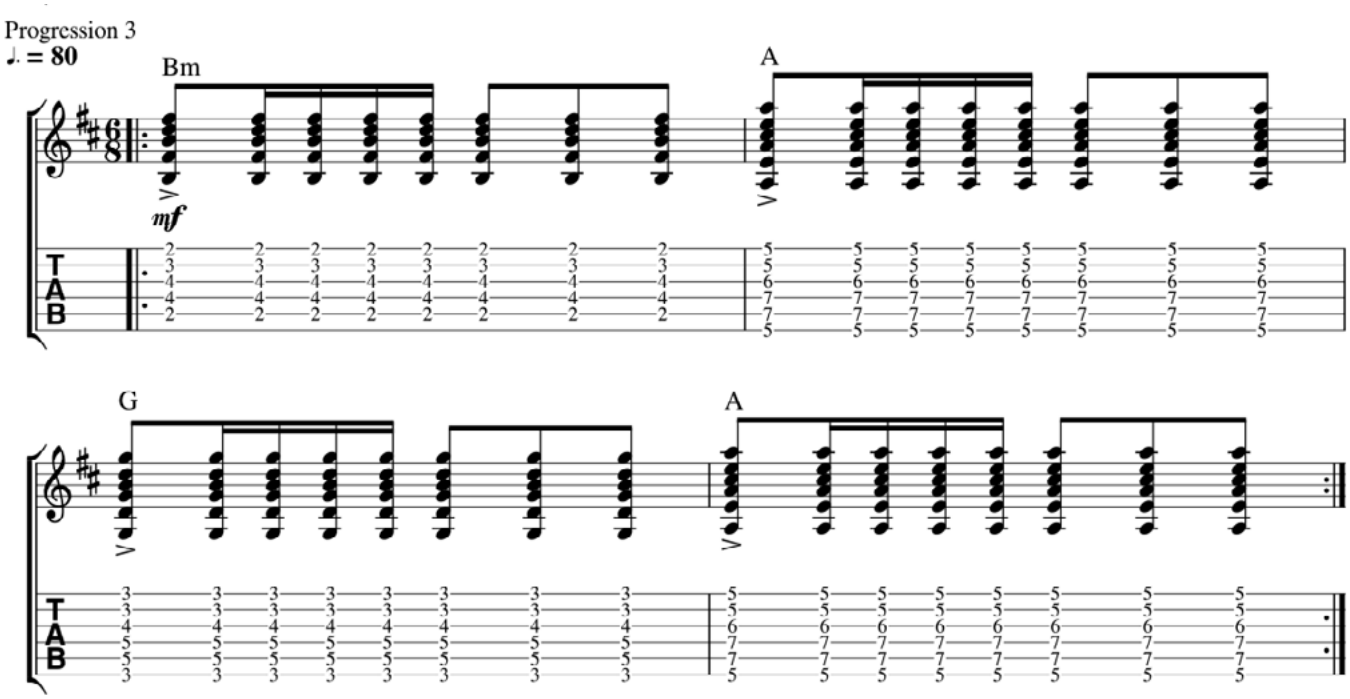
This lesson's lil' lick is a Rush inspired sus4 bar chord riff. It uses a variation of the F#sus4 bar chord (by leaving the highest 2 strings open) to create an F#7sus4 chord, which is colloquially known by Rush fans as 'The Alex Chord' (due to its frequent use by Alex Lifeson) or 'The Hemispheres Chord' (as it is the opening chord of their song Hemispheres).



Lil' Licks - Bar Chords Part II ›

Bar Chords - Part II





Click here for the Bar Chords part II course material recordings ›

Click here for the Bar Chords part II course material backing tracks ›

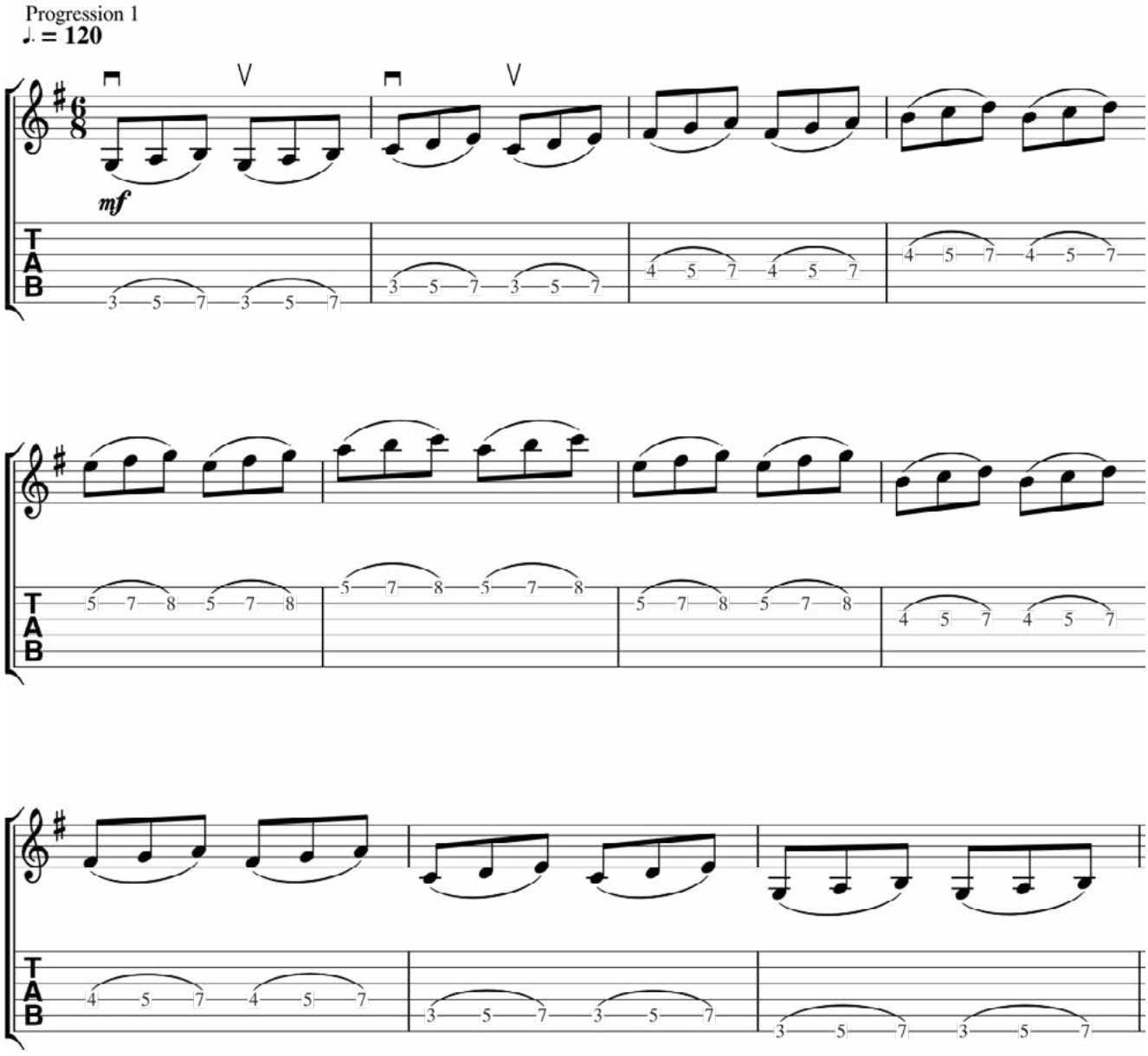
Legato study

Playing using legato means playing something with a sound smoother than it would sound when picking. Be aware that though 'legato' most commonly refers to using hammer-ons and pull-offs, it encompasses a number of techniques such as slides, bending, sweep picking - anything that creates a smoother sound than standard picking.

You can combine both alternate picking and legato techniques to create dynamic contrast in your playing.

In your exam, you'll only have to play the exercises in this lesson's course materials (in G Ionian). For a full-on workout, try applying the legato patterns to all of the modal positions!

Legato study



Modal workout

Part I

These exercises will help develop both your fretting and picking hand dexterity, and gradually build speed - as long as you practice with a metronome!

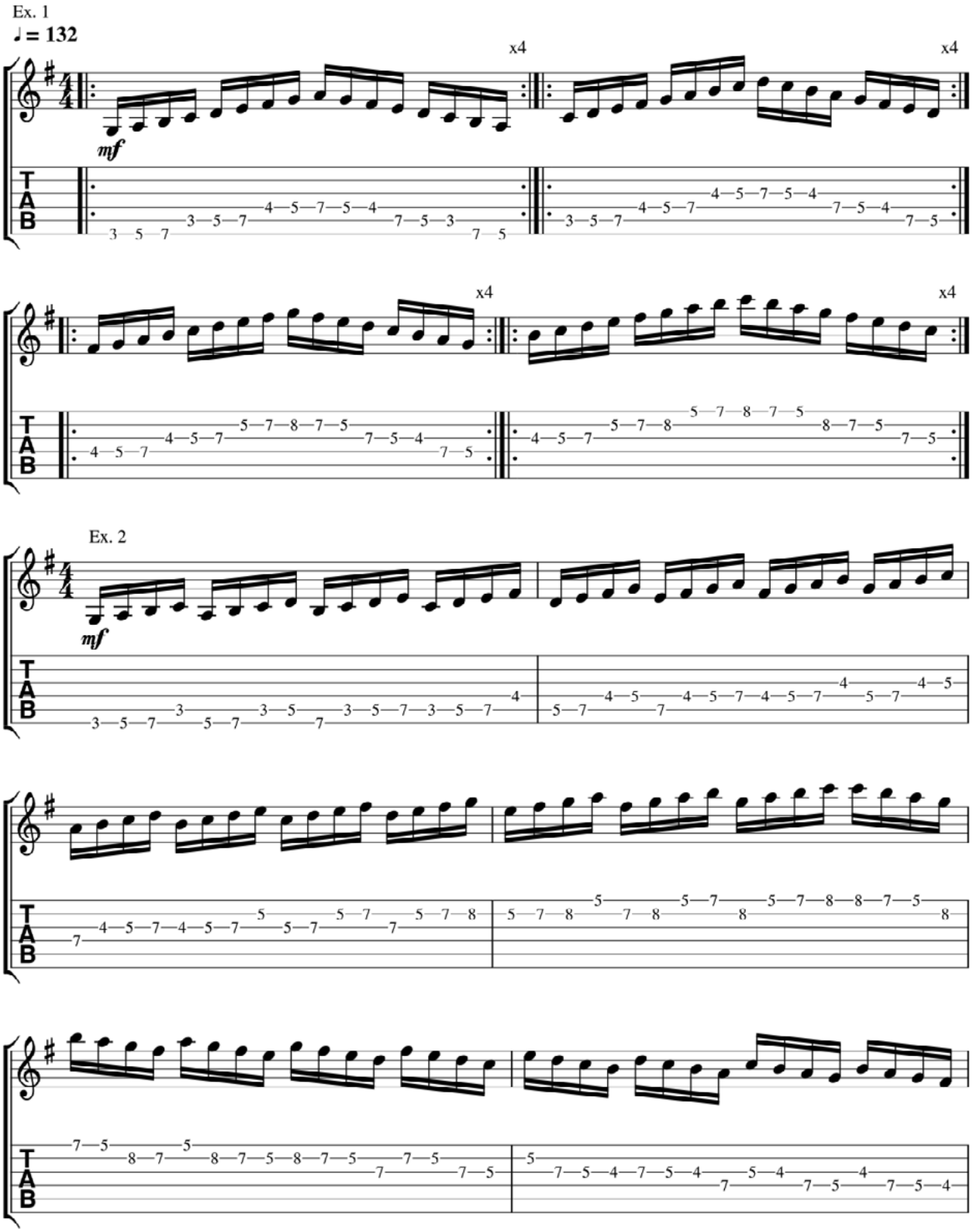
In your exam, you'll only have to play exercises 2 and 3 of this lesson's course materials (in G Ionian).
For a full-on workout, play all of the exercises, and try applying the alternate picking patterns to all of the modal positions!

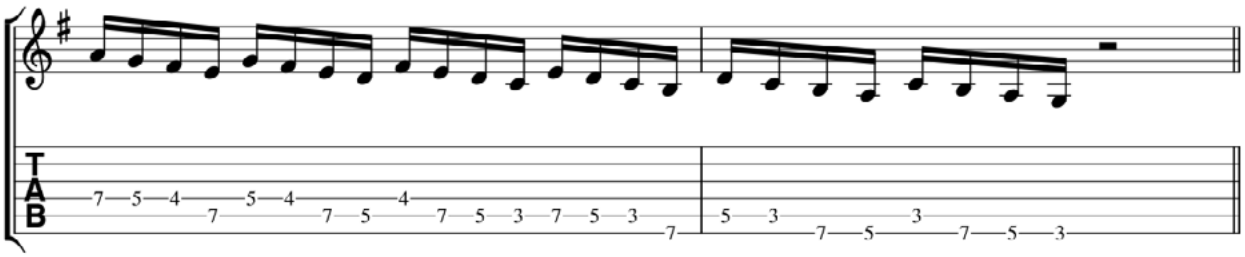
Part II

In this lesson, you will again exercise the modes but using 6/8 triplet-style alternate picking permutations across a selection of different exercises.

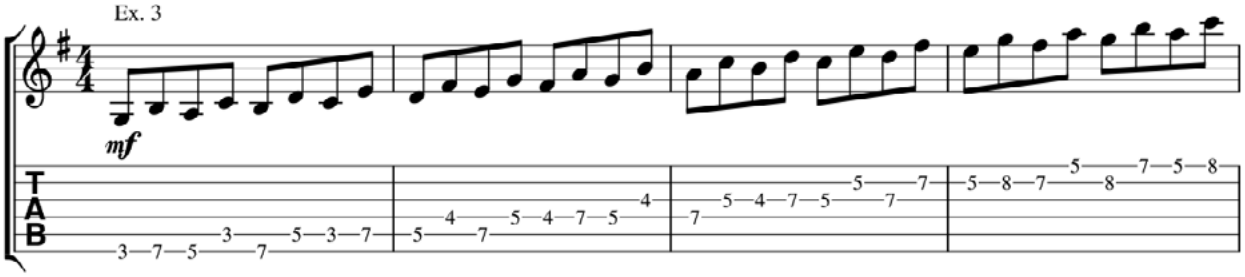
In your exam, you'll only have to play exercise 2 of this lesson's course materials. For a full-on workout, play all of the exercises, and try applying the alternate picking patterns to all of the modal positions!

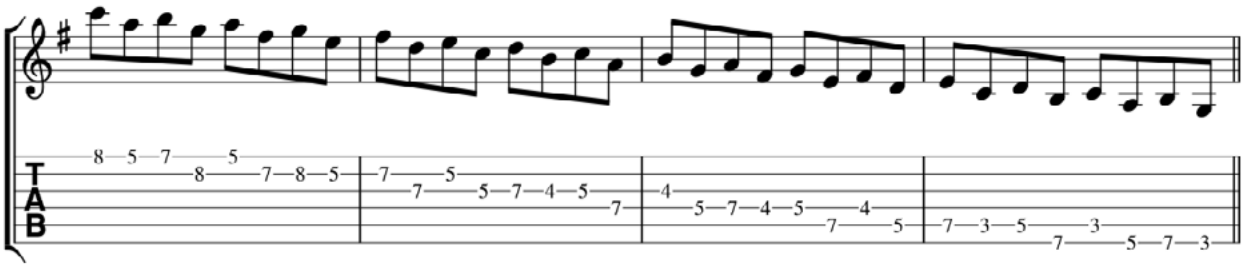
Modal workout - Part I



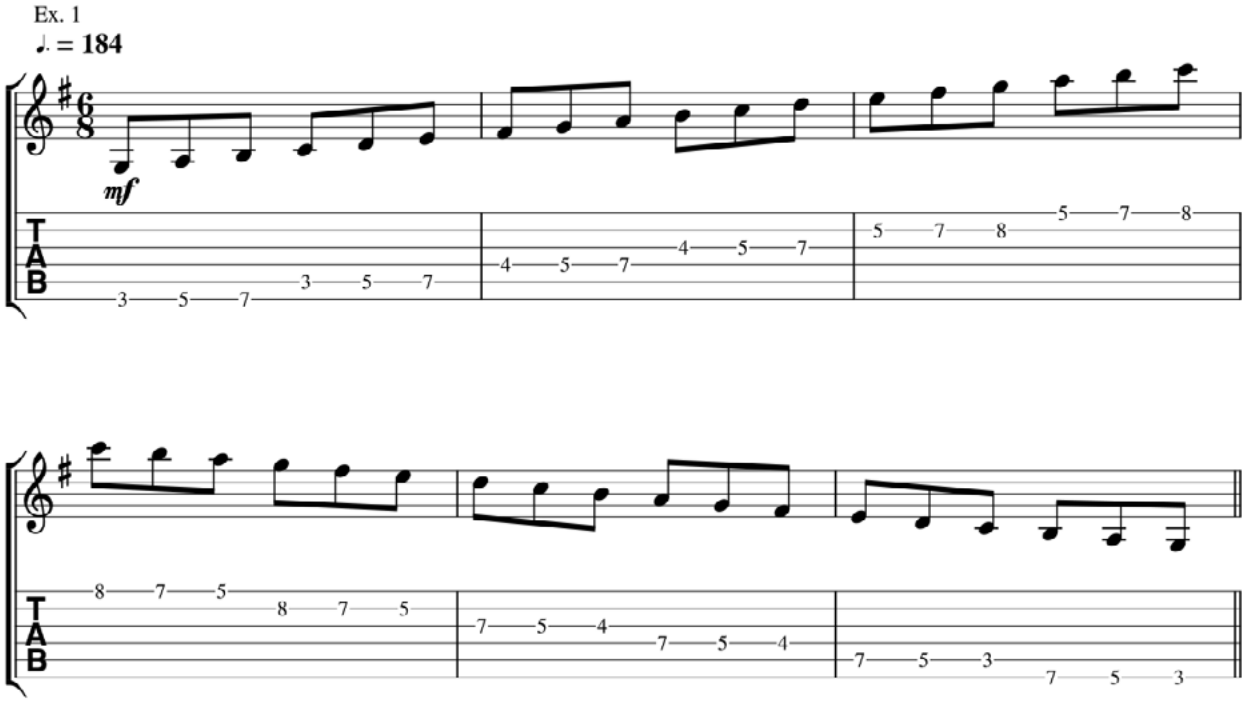


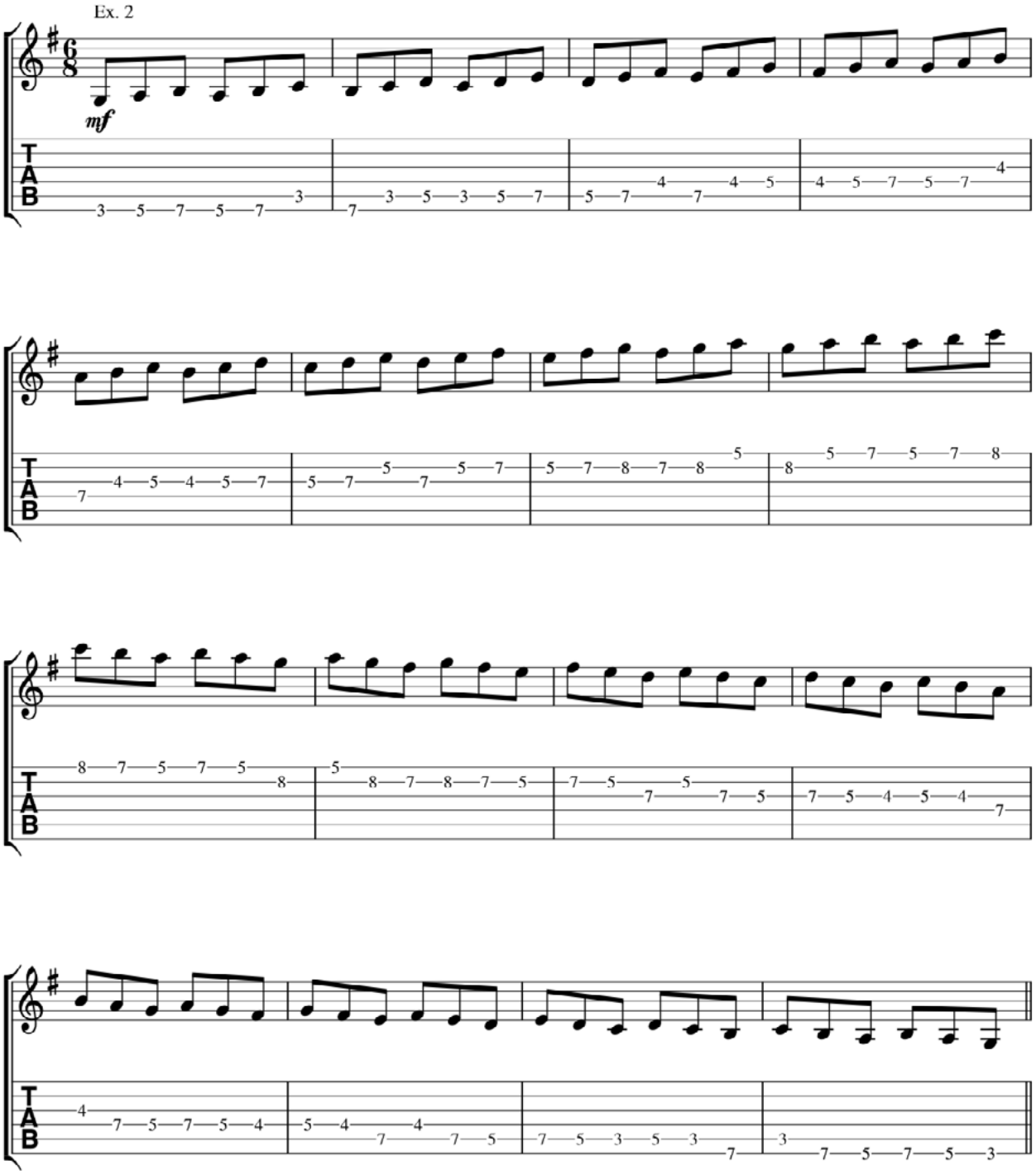
Ex. 3



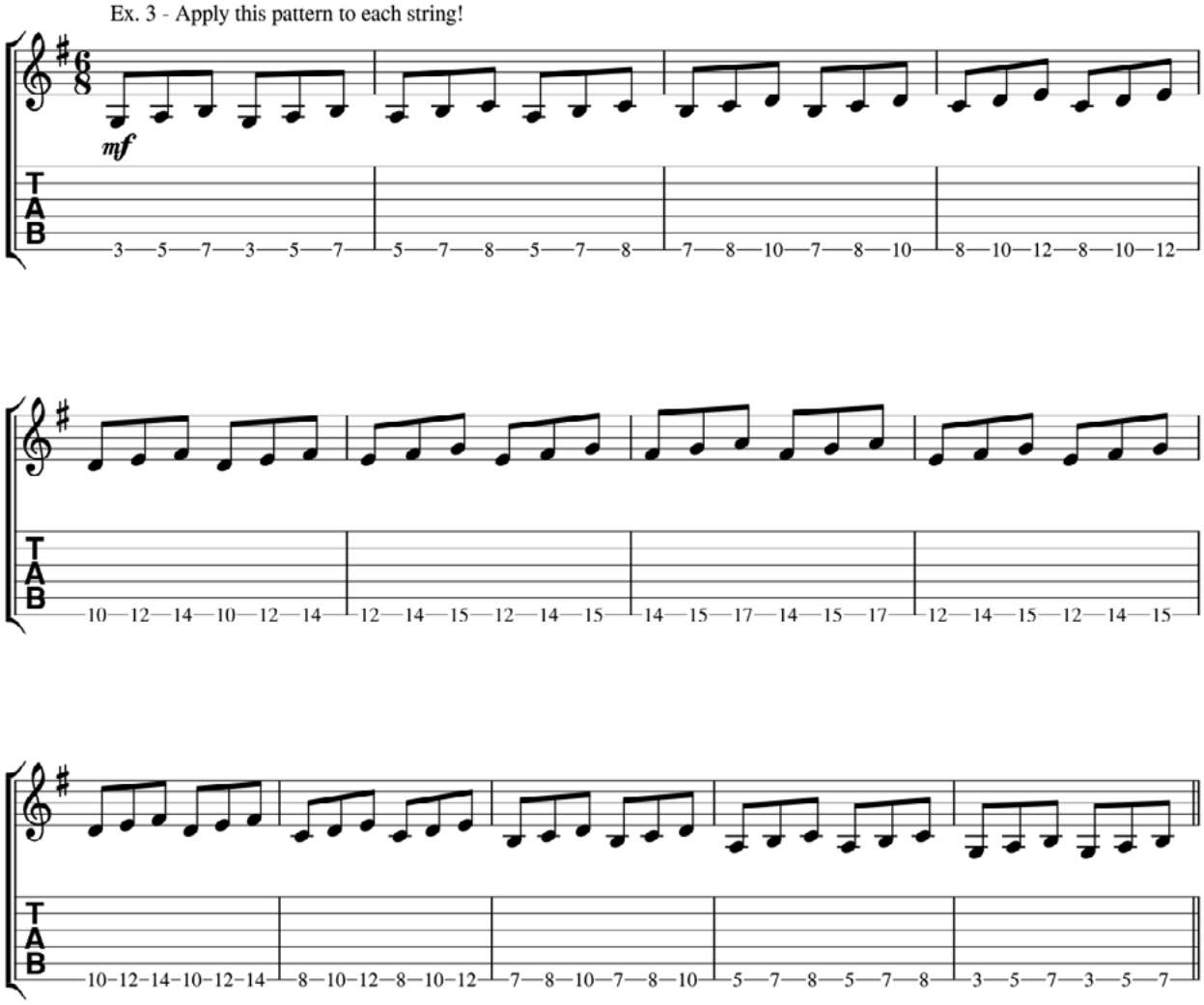


Modal workout - Part II

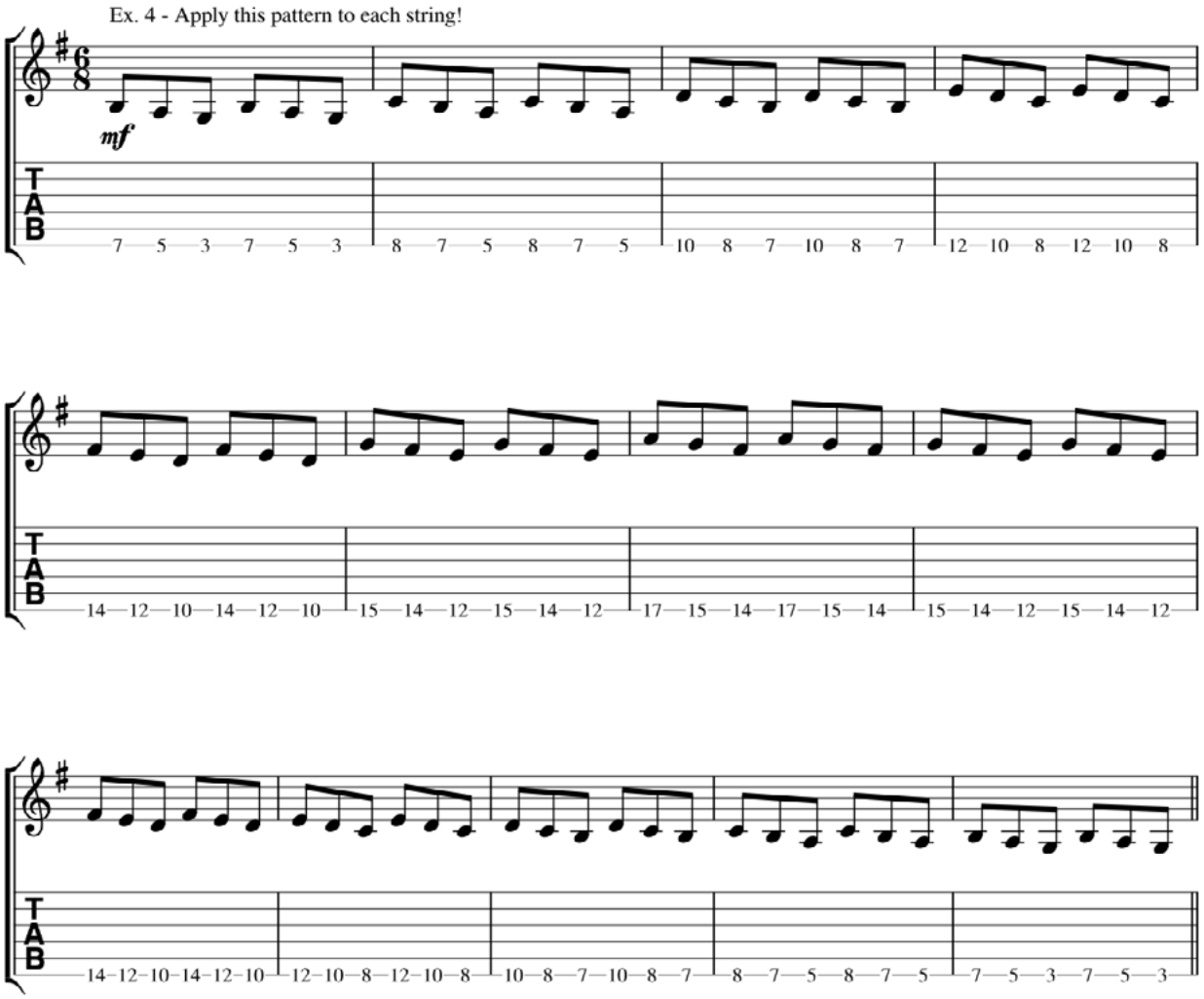



Ex. 2
mf
TAB

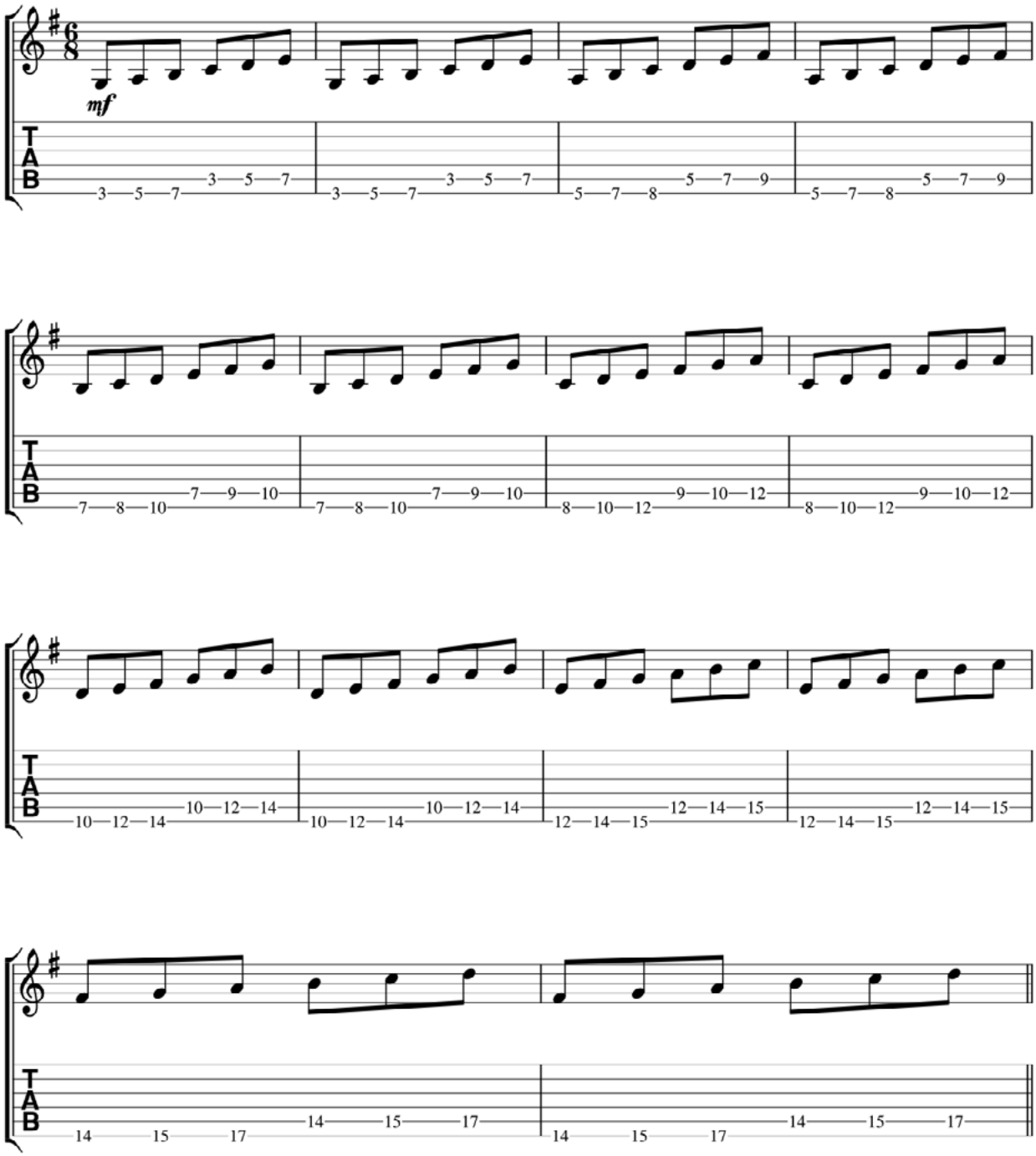
Ex. 3 - Apply this pattern to each string!



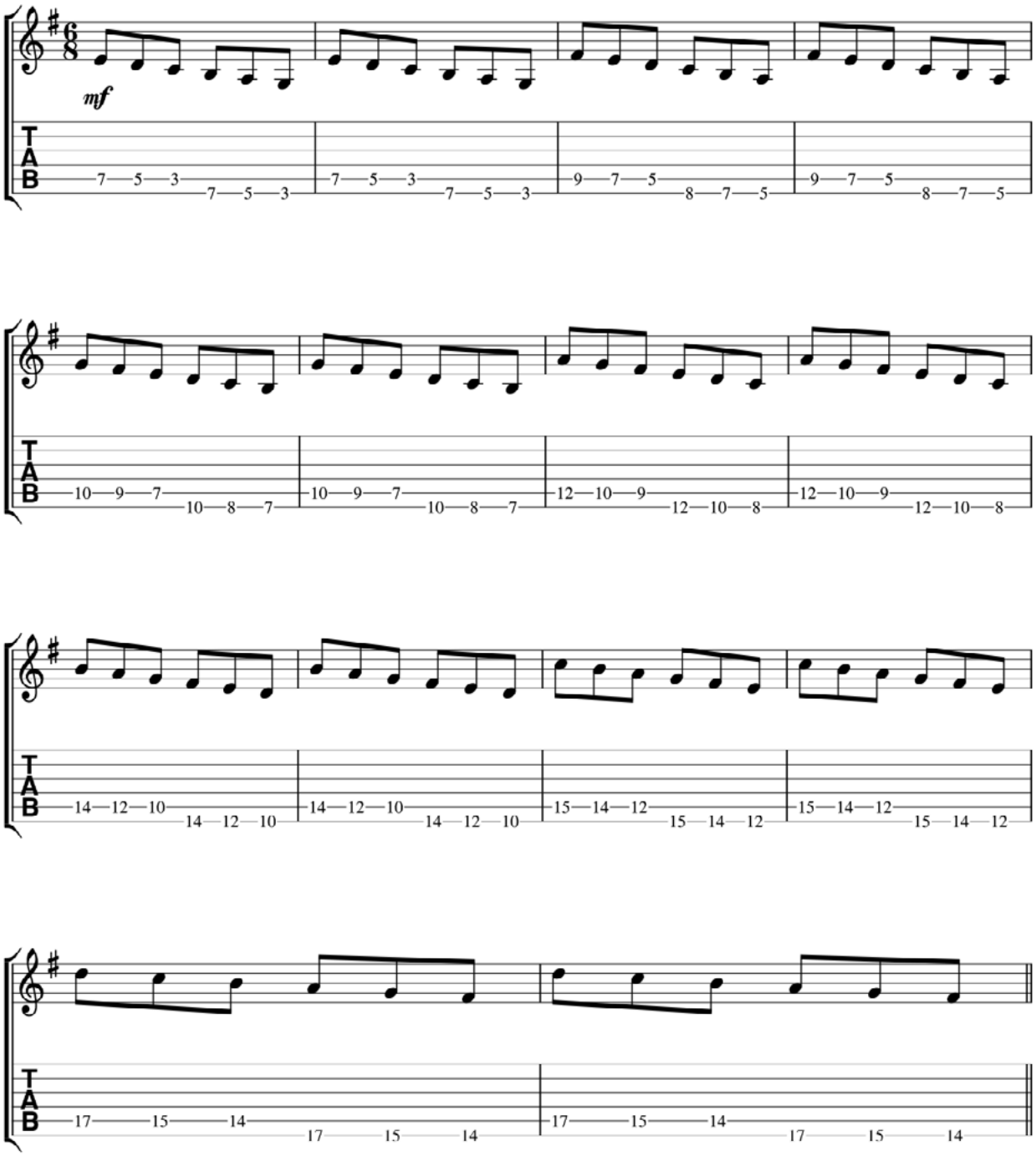
Ex. 4 - Apply this pattern to each string!



Ex. 5 - Apply this pattern to each pair of strings!



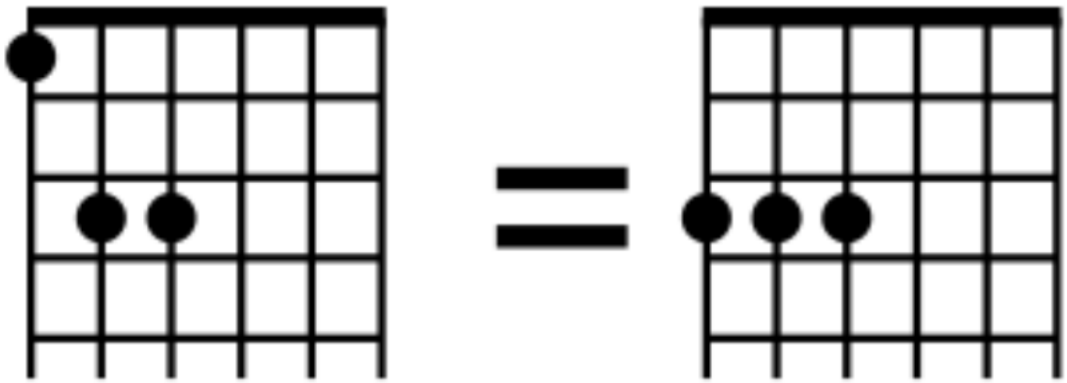
Ex. 6 - Apply this pattern to each pair of strings!



Drop D Power chords

Drop D tuning is when you tune the low E string down to D. This creates a lower, heavier sound, and produces a new chord shape for power chords with their root on the lowest string.

Power chords are constructed using only a root note and a Perfect 5th above the root note (this is why they are also called '5' chords). When you tune the lowest string to D, the Perfect 5th on the A string is found directly underneath the root note on the D string (on the same fret), so the shape to play power chords changes - for instance, look at how the shape for F5 changes:



This new shape can be played by barring one finger across the lowest 3 strings (as opposed to 2 or 3 in the normal position), making it much easier to rapidly change power chords.

It's a tale as old as time - when you can't get any heavier with standard tuning, you either drop tune your guitar or add a lower string! Drop D has solidly become the domain of heavy metal.

Here are some examples of its use:

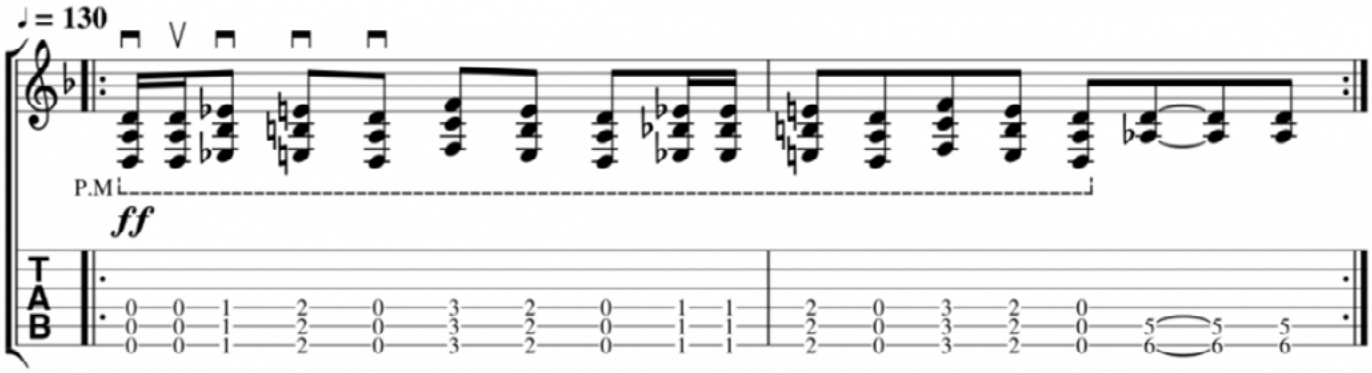
The Birthday Massacre - Blue ›
Extremely simple, but a great example of how Drop D can sound absolutely huge with only a few power chords.

Lamb of God - Walk With Me In Hell
Since this song is quite intricate, it could lose some of its edge if it was written using standard tuning. Drop tunings allow many bands to explore more complex sounds without losing their edge.

Lil’ licks!

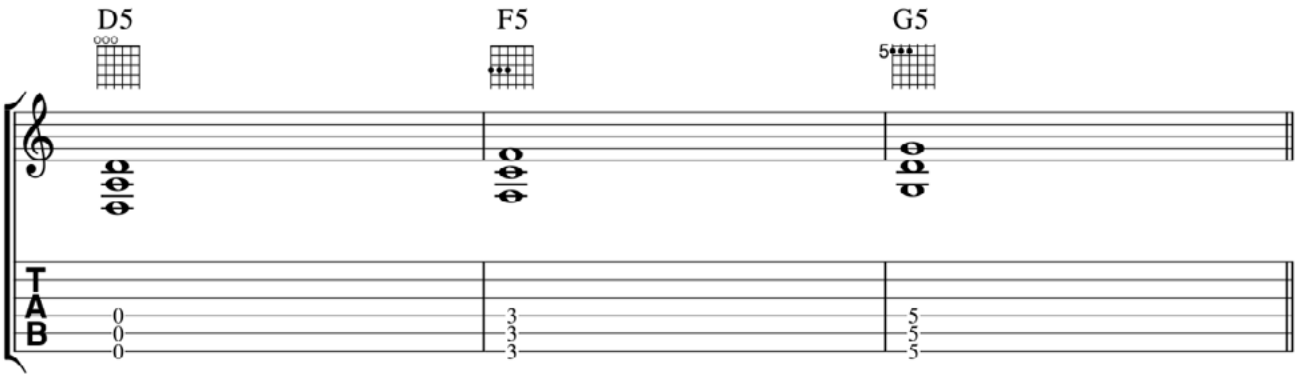
One of the benefits of Drop D tuning is that power chords become much simpler to play, so you can play them faster. This lil’ lick will have you doing just that, with a thrash metal style chromatic power chord looping riff. Try playing the whole thing using downstrokes (except for the semiquaver parts) to get a full, chunky sound.

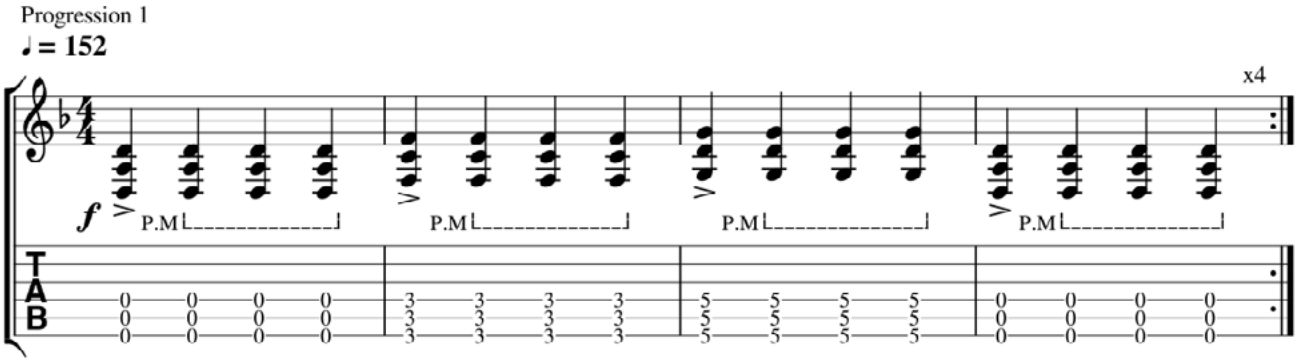
Note the fortissimo dynamic - don’t be afraid to really dig into the strings.

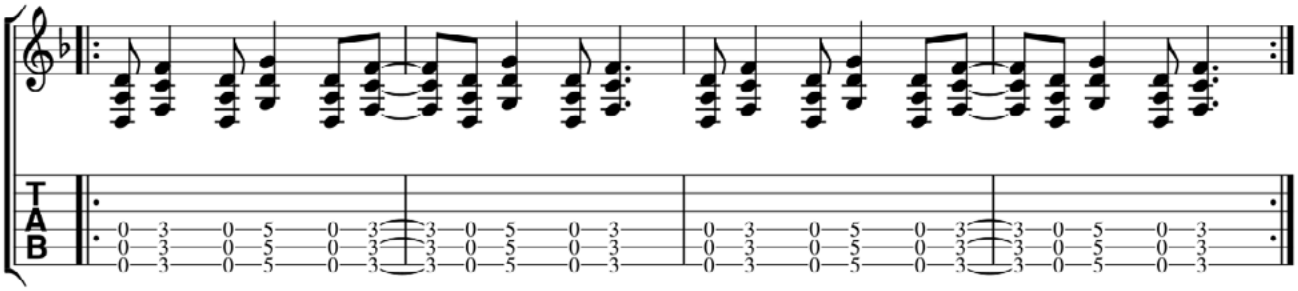


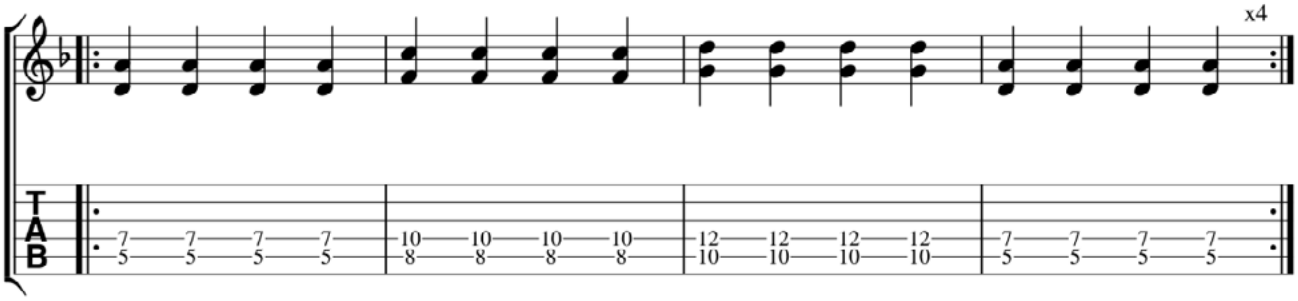
Lil’ Licks - Drop D Power Chords ›

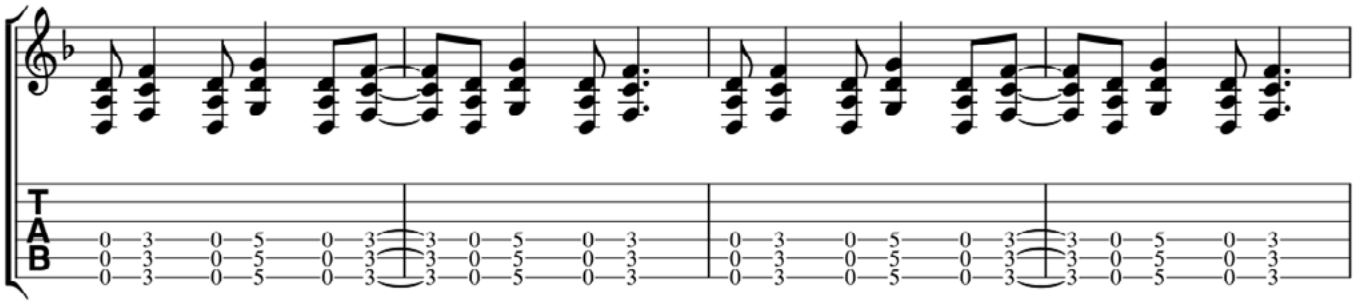
Drop D Power Chords

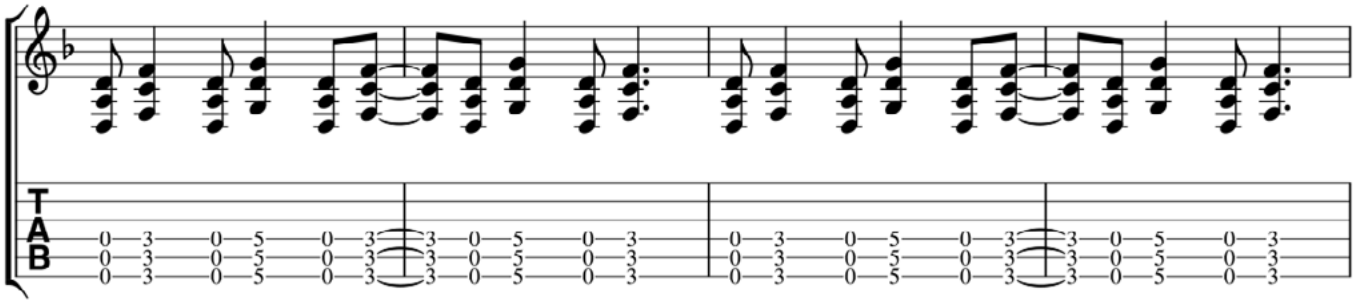


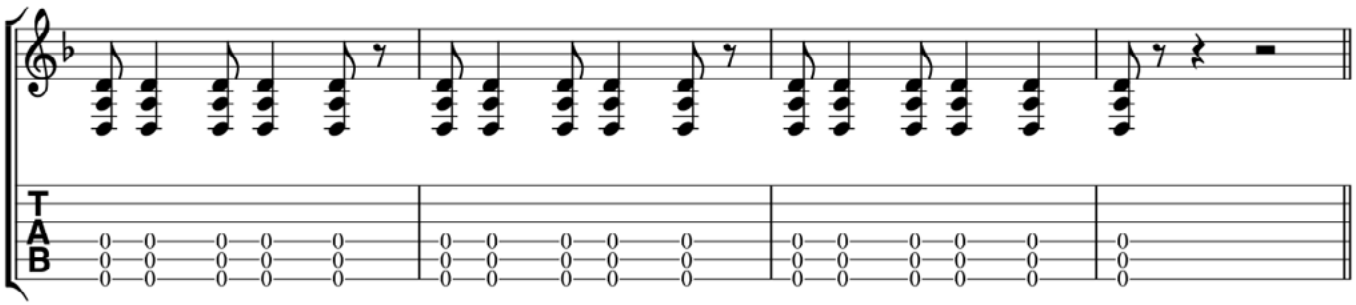












Click here for the Drop D Power Chords course material recordings ›

Click here for the Drop D Power Chords course material backing track ›

Performance pieces

If you decide to take the Rock Guitar exam, you will need to learn one performance piece.

The song you choose must contain the following elements:

1. Have a variety of open chords, power chords, bar chords, chord extensions, and at least one altered chord.
2. Contains a solo element that consists of at least one technique learned in the advanced course, e.g. 2 octave arpeggio sweep picking, advanced legato, etc.
3. Include articulation learned in the Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced courses e.g. staccato, legato, palm muting, left-hand muting, vibrato, etc.
4. Be between approximately 2 and 5 minutes long.

When you have decided which piece you would like to play you must:

1. Find a backing track for your chosen piece that does not have the guitar part.
2. Obtain a version of the TAB/notation to read during your exam (please make sure you do so legally).

Choose your own

You may choose any song from any artist that you wish (as long as it adheres to th above parameters), but here is a list of songs we've put together from a range of different styles of rock music to help you decide what to play:

- **Queens of the Stone Age - No One Knows**
- **Rush - YYZ**
- **Iggy Pop & The Stooges - Your Pretty Face is Going to Hell**
- **Jimi Hendrix Experience - Little Wing**
- **Megadeth - She Wolf**
- **Mastodon - Oblivion**
- **Paul Gilbert - Down to Mexico**
- **Abingdon Boys School - Strength**
- **My Chemical Romance - Thank You For The Venom**
- **St Vincent - Birth in Reverse**
- **Muse - Knights of Cydonia**
- **Lamb of God - Ruin**
- **凛として時雨/Ling Tosite Sigure - Telecastic fake show**
- **Killswitch Engage - Arms of Sorrow**
- **Children of Bodom - Was It Worth It?**

Improvisation

Click here for this lesson's audio playlist ›

Improvisation is the ability to play music without prior preparation, with little or no musical material as a basis.

In your exam, you must improvise over a 16-bar backing track. You will be given the chord progression of the backing track in lead sheet format. You will hear the backing track 3 times before being expected to improvise.

The backing track may be in any of the following keys/modes:

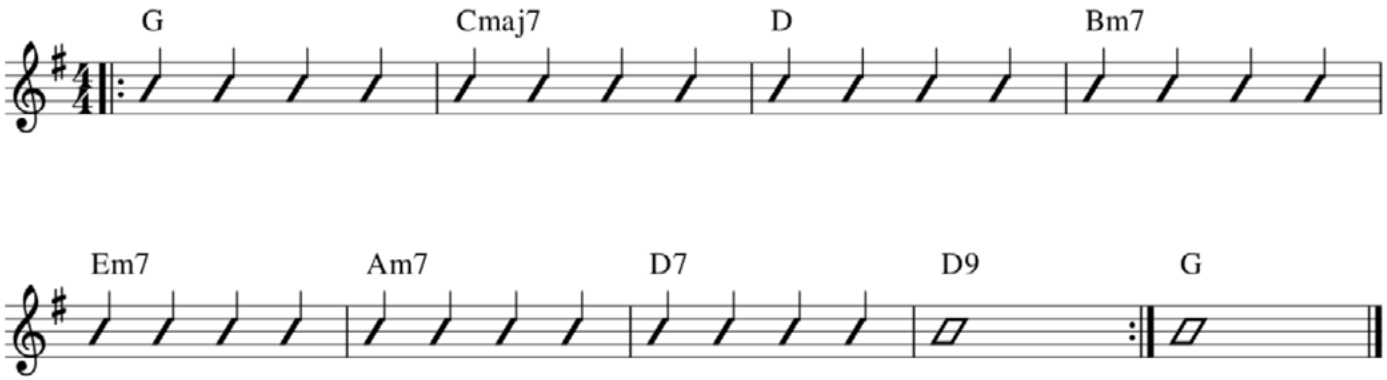
G Major
A Dorian
B Phrygian
C Lydian
D Mixolydian
A minor

You will be given the chord progression of the backing track as a lead sheet. Be sure to refer to the Introduction to Modes page for tips on how to exploit each mode's characteristic flavour, and for clues as to which mode to best use over the chord progression you are given.

Any of the following time signatures may appear: 3/4, 4/4, 6/8

Look at how we might improvise over the backing tracks included in this lesson, by analysing their musical qualities:

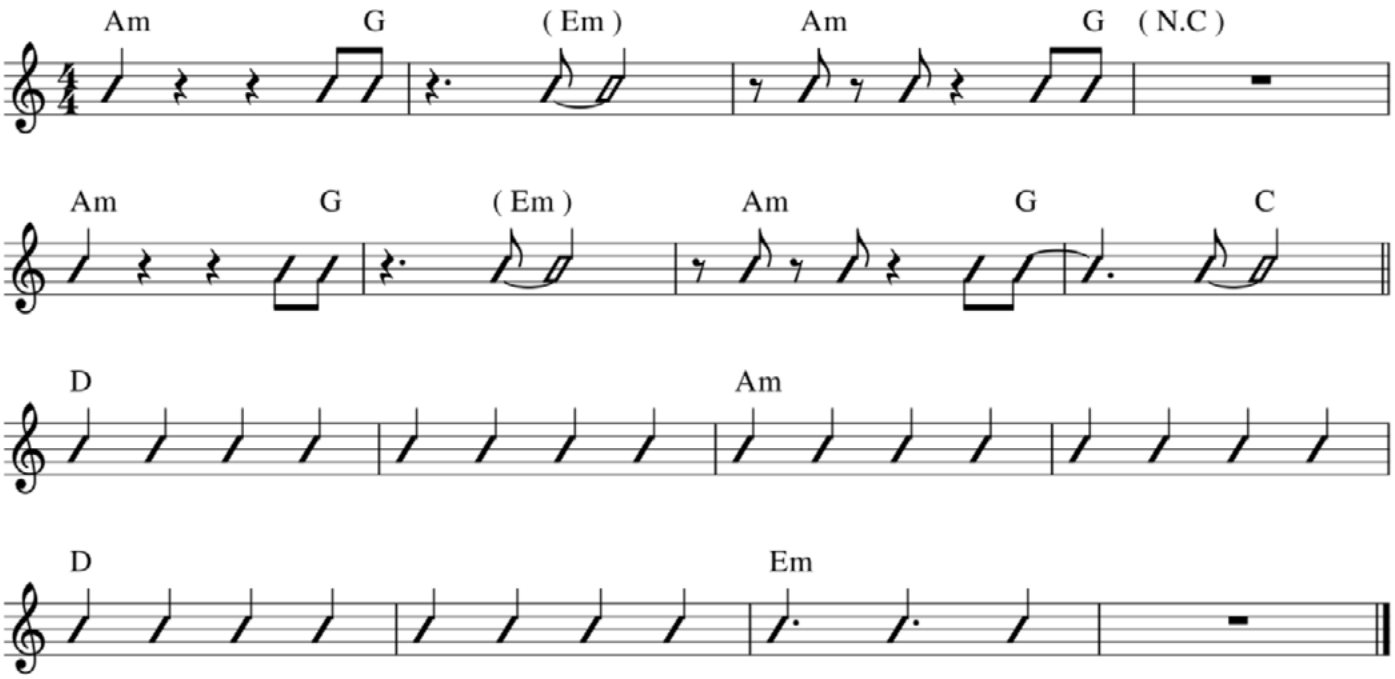
G Ionian/G Major backing track ›



For this chord progression, we could use both the G Ionian/Major scale and the G Major Pentatonic scale. Since this chord progression is quite colourful (using 7th and 9th chords), the G Major scale will allow you greater scope for a more advanced chord tone approach to this progression, though the Major Pentatonic scale is a great way of keeping tonal stability over more complex chord progressions - use both for the most balanced approach.

There are a few common Major chord progressions here - the music begins with G - Cmaj7 - D, which is a **I - IV - V**, and repeats/ends on Am7 - D7/D9 - G, which is a **ii - V - I**. Preparing soloing ideas for common chord progression fragments is a good idea, as they are very likely to appear at least once.

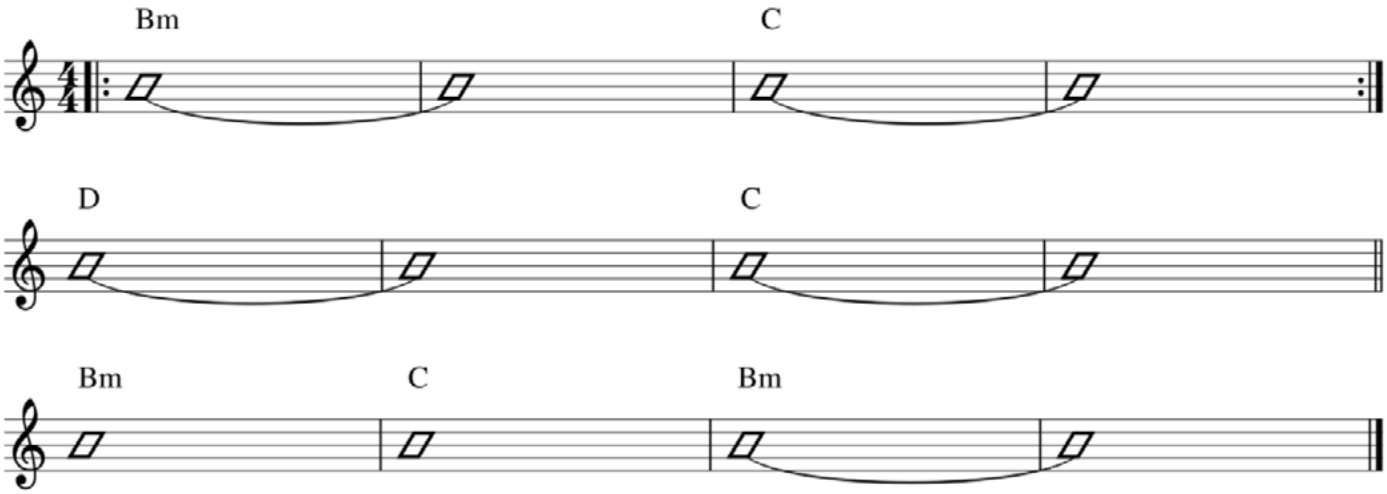
A Dorian backing track ›



This chord progression is based off of the A Dorian mode, so consequently the A Dorian scale is the most obvious choice for soloing here. The A minor Pentatonic scale would also work here, but it ignores the characteristic note of this mode (the Major 6th) - a compromise could be to use the A minor Pentatonic, and add the Major 6 for a hybrid scale.

There are plenty of Dorian flavoured chord movements here - the movement D - Am is the characteristic **IV - i** (the Major IV with a minor root (i) is a Dorian characteristic). The use of Major **VII** (G) and the minor **v** (Em) also reinforce the Dorian flavour.
Emphasise these chords in your improvisation.

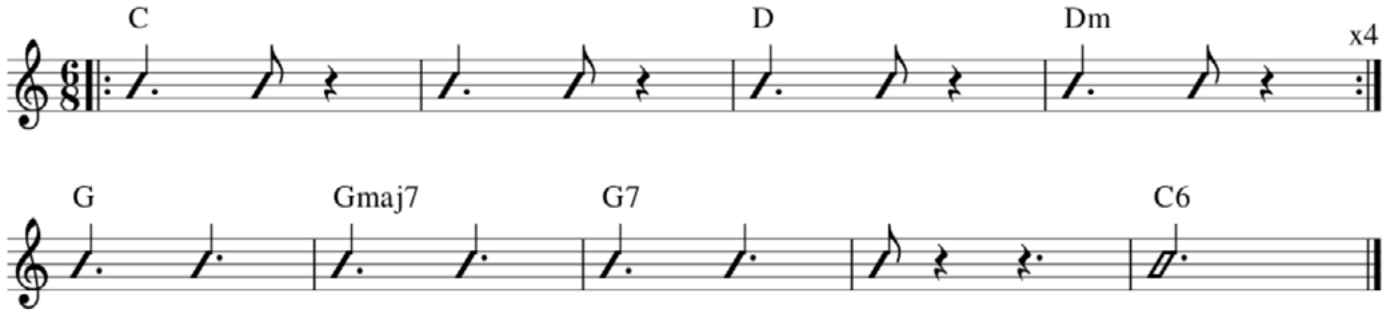
B Phrygian backing track ›



We can use the B Phrygian scale on this progression. B minor Pentatonic would also work, but would definitely end up sounding very sparse as it omits the minor 2nd interval, so unless this is your intent, be cautious of using this scale.

The characteristic chord in the Phrygian mode is the **bII** - when next to the minor i, the Phrygian flavour is unmistakable. The chord progression D - C - Bm, or **III - bII - i** is particularly good at emphasising this chord, and is likely to appear in a Phrygian progression. Another progression common to the Phrygian mode is the **VII - i** (which would be A - Bm in this case).

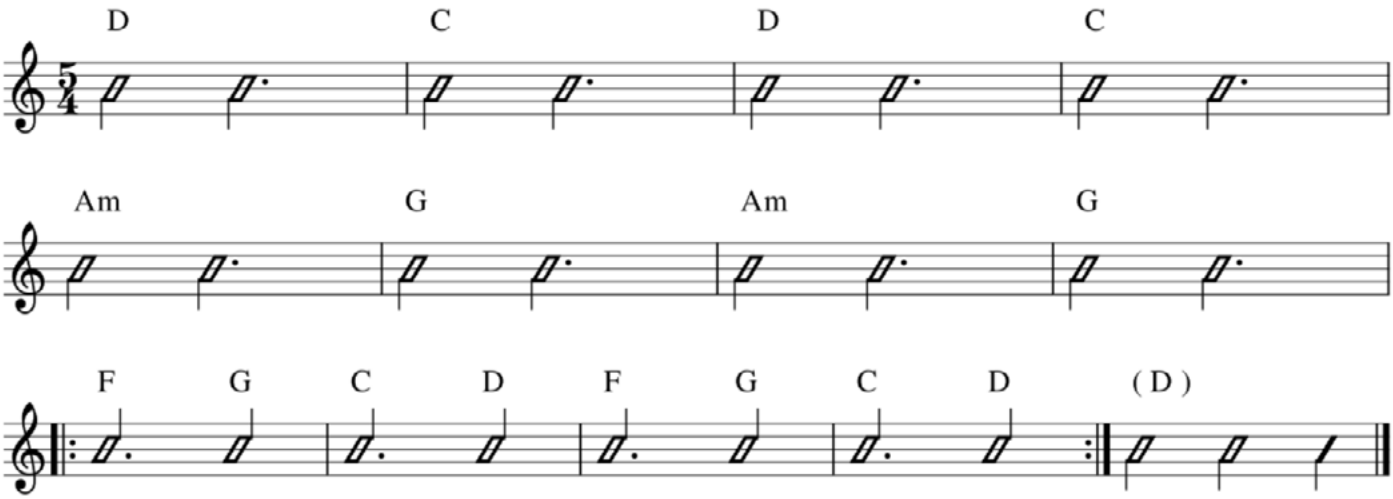
C Lydian Backing Track ›



This chord progression calls for the use of 2 scales, both C Lydian and C Major, to differentiate between the non-Lydian chords in the progression.

The two characteristically Lydian chords in this progression are D and Gmaj7, as they both include the chord tone **F#**, which is the augmented 4th interval in the C Lydian scale. However, we also have the chords Dm and G7, which include the chord tone **F**, which is a Perfect 4th interval and therefore brings this progression back to the C Major key. Due to the alternating nature of this progression, you will move between C Major and C Lydian as you improvise. As purely Lydian chord progressions are quite rare, be sure to practice improvising using both scales in the same context.

D Mixolydian backing track ›

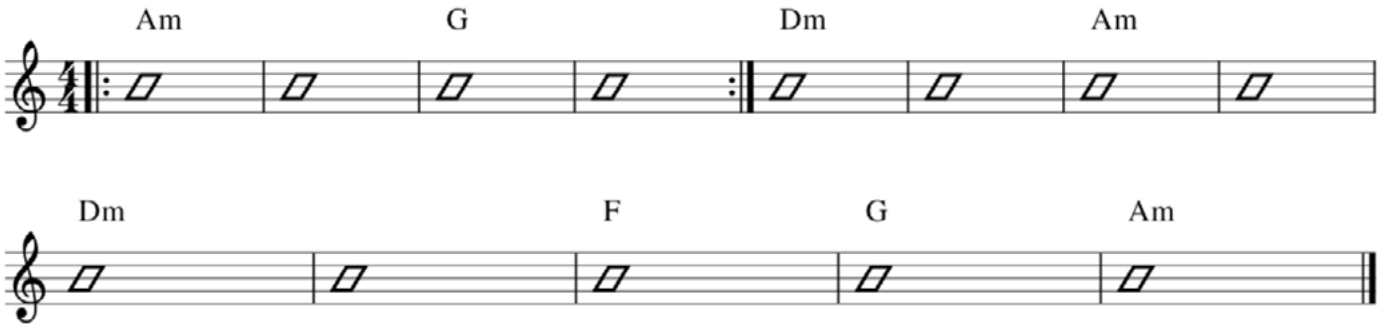


This chord progression requires the use of the D Mixolydian mode. You could also use the D Major Pentatonic scale, but since it lacks the characteristic notes of the Mixolydian mode, it should be treated with caution - using a Major Pentatonic scale with an added flat 7th would be a good compromise.

The two most characteristic Mixolydian chords are found here - the Major **VII** chord (C) and the minor v chord (Am). **VII - I** and **v - I** are very common Mixolydian progressions, and will more than likely appear multiple times. Note the use of F Major in this progression - this chord is chromatic to the Mixolydian mode. The tonal centre sits somewhere between C Lydian and D Mixolydian, depending on whether you decide to emphasise F or F# in the final 8 bars.

The time signature to this backing track is 5/4 (this time signature won't appear in your exam, don't worry!) - make sure you phrase your improvisation to compliment the emphasis in each bar.

A minor backing track ›



This chord progression is built from the A Natural minor scale/Aeolian mode, so this is the best option for improvising here. You could also use the A minor Pentatonic scale.

There are a number of common natural minor chord progressions here - **VII - i** is often used, though this is also characteristic of a number of other modes, such as Dorian and Phrygian, so be careful. The last 3 chords in this backing track create a **VI - VII - i** progression, which is a particularly common minor chord progression.

Tips

- **1.** Learn to recognise common chord progressions and the common chords of Major/minor keys and the modes. YouTube is chock full of chord progression backing tracks in different keys/modes, and these are a great way to practice.
- **2.** Less is more! Playing 1 or 2 well thought out notes in each bar will sound far better than aimlessly jamming as many notes as possible into a bar - speed will come naturally as you get more used to improvising.
- 3. Be confident. Though theory is important in improvisation, nothing can replace a musician's intuition. Sometimes it's better to switch your brain off and just play what feels right - trust your fingers!
- **4.** Rhythm is an extremely important aspect in improvisation, and can change a dull, basic improvisation into something very interesting. Experiment with different rhythms to see how they can change a sound!
- **5. Play, play play!** The more you learn and play other songs, the better you will become at improvisation. The best improvisation comes from structured practice.

Sight-reading

Click here for this lesson's audio playlist ›

As well as developing your listening skills, it is also important to develop your **sight-reading** skills. Sight-reading means that you have to play a piece of written music straight away without learning it, **without TAB**.

During your exam, you will be required to sight-read an 8 bar chord progression and an 8 bar melody, both at 80 BPM. You will be given 90 seconds to look at the melody/chord progression before you are expected to play it. During the 90 second countdown, you can use your guitar to help you figure out how to play the melody/progression. After the 90 second countdown, you must attempt to play the melody/progression on screen in time to the metronome. When you are asked to give your answer, you must **play** the melody back on your guitar, **NOT** sing it.

Note that you will be expected to sight-read from scales and chords from the Orange Rock Guitar Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced courses. You may also encounter any of the key signatures or time signatures that appear in the Foundation and Intermediate courses. Rhythms will consist of combinations of crotchets, quavers, semiquavers, minims, semibreves, dotted notes, tied-notes and their corresponding rests. Dynamics will range from pianissimo through to fortissimo. The following articulation may also appear: accents, palm-muting, left-hand muting, staccato, legato (hammer-ons, pull-offs, slides), bending, crescendos and diminuendos.

Any of the following chords may appear:

Open chords: **G Major, D Major, C Major, A Major, E Major, A minor, E minor, D minor, Cadd9, A7, D Major 7, D7, Dsus4, F#half-diminished, Asus2**
Power chords: any 5/b5 chords
Bar chords: any Major, minor, sus4, or minor 7th bar chords

Any of the following scales may appear:

1 Octave scales: **C Major, A minor, G Major, E minor, A minor Pentatonic, C Major Pentatonic**
Any of the 5 positions of the A minor Pentatonic Scale
Any of the '3-note-per-string' positions of the G Major scale
Any of the 7 Modes of the G Major scale - **G Ionian, A Dorian, B Phrygian, C Lydian, D Mixolydian, E Aeolian, F# Locrian**
Other useful scales: **E Harmonic minor, A Blues Scale, G 8-note diminished Scale**

Any of the following time signatures may appear:
3/4
4/4
5/4
6/8

Any of the following key signatures may appear:

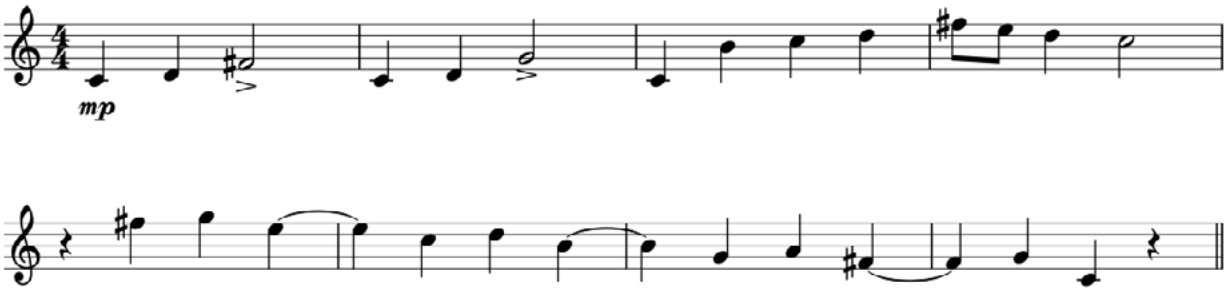
No sharps/flat = **C Major/A minor**
1 sharp = **G Major/E minor**
2 sharps = **D Major/B minor**
3 sharps = **A Major/F# minor**
1 flat = F **Major/D Minor**

The following course materials have some practice examples. Try and play each example all the way through within 90 seconds of first seeing it. Then listen to the audio track after to see how it should sound. Best of luck!

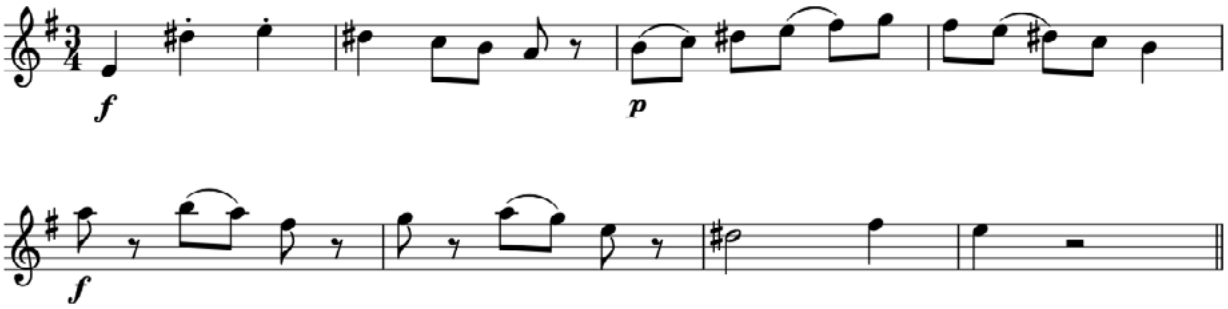
Sight-reading examples - Melody

♩ = 80

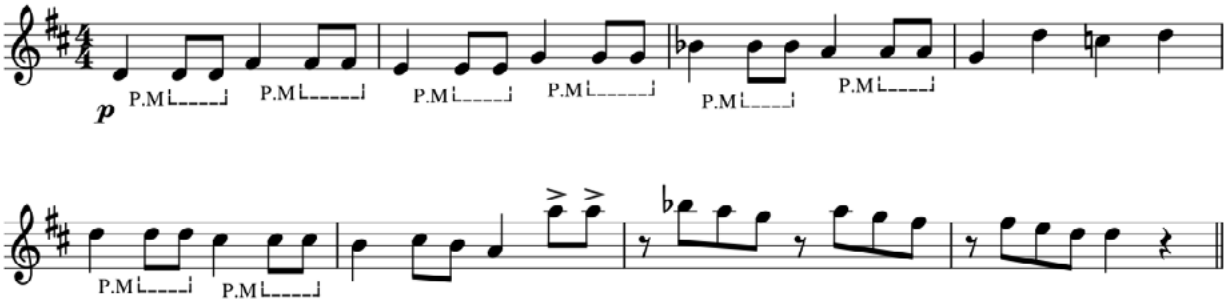
Example 1



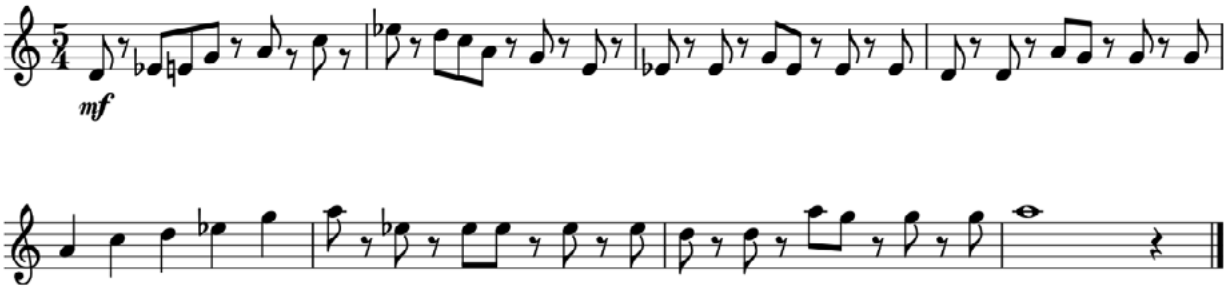
Example 2



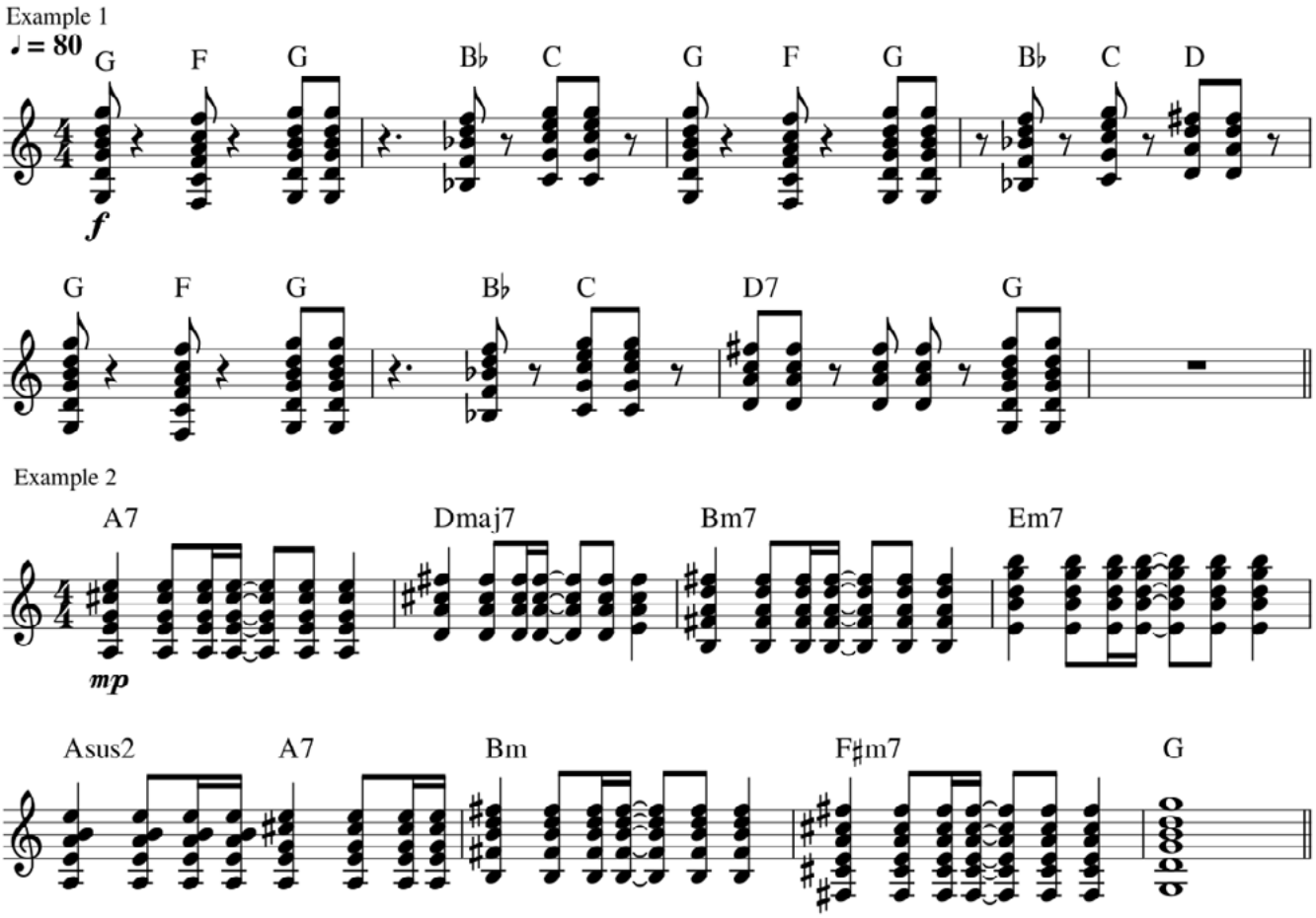
Example 3



Example 4



Sight-reading examples - Chords



Answers can be found in

this lesson's audio playlist ›

Tips

- **1.** Check the **time signature** first so you know how many beats are in each bar.
- **2.** With your foot, tap the tempo of the piece as if you were tapping to a **metronome**. Make sure this speed is slower rather than faster to give you time to read each note without hesitating.
- **3.** Try not to stop - if you make a mistake don't try to correct it, just concentrate on keeping your tempo and completing the piece. Imagine you were playing the piece with a band - the band wouldn't stop if you played a wrong note.
- **4.** Remember to read unfamiliar music - if you've heard a piece of music before, then you are not sight-reading - you will subconsciously use your musical ear to help you figure out what and when to play. Similarly, when you have sight-read a piece of music more than 2 or 3 times, you will be familiar enough with it that you will play it more from memory than from reading it.
- **5.** Similar to aural testing, try to reduce the written rhythm to its smallest possible note values - so if the smallest note value is a semiquaver, try counting the whole phrase using semiquavers, i.e. 1 crotchet = 4 semiquavers.
- **6. Read, read, read!** Sight-reading only gets better with practice, so read anything you can get your hands on.

Aural development

Click here for this lesson's audio playlist ›

Developing your aural ability is a vital part of your development as a musician. Put simply - aural development is ear training. You need to develop your listening skills so that you are able to easily recognise chords, rhythms and melodies just by listening to them.

The aural part of the exam can be split into 4 different sections:
harmonic recognition, interval recognition, melodic recall, and harmonic recall.

Harmonic recognition

This part of the exam tests your ability to differentiate between types of chords.

NB You are **NOT** permitted to use your guitar at any point during this part of the exam. If you attempt to use your guitar to figure out the chords, ***you will be disqualified!***

In your exam, you will be played 3 chords, and for each one you must specify the chord quality, which may be any of the following: Major chord, minor chord, Augmented chord, diminished chord, 7th chord (Major, minor, Dominant), Suspended 4th, Suspended 2nd.

In you exam, you will hear the 1st chord 3 times. There will then be a 10 second gap in which you must give the name of the chord you heard. You will then hear the 2nd chord 3 times followed by a 10 second gap to give the name of the chord, and finally the 3rd chord 3 times followed by a 10 second gap to give the name of the chord.

You will be given the root note of each chord, and in your answer you must specify both the root note and the chord quality (e.g. Major or minor). You must **say** your answer, **NOT** play it.

1

Time to put it to the test! Listen to the following chord. If the root note is G, what chord is it?

Harmonic recognition - chord #1 ›

2

Listen to the following chord. If the root note is A, what chord is this?

Harmonic recognition - chord #2 ›

3

Once again, listen to the following chord. If the root note is D, what chord is this?

Harmonic recognition - chord #3 ›

4

Listen to the following chord. If the root note is Bb, what chord is this?

Harmonic recognition - chord #4 ›

5

Last one! Listen to the following chord. If the root note is F# what chord is this?

Harmonic recognition - chord #5 ›

Answers at the end of this section.

Harmonic recognition - answers

1. G diminished - the b5 interval from the root is the giveaway here.

2. Amin7. It can be easy to confuse this with a standard minor chord - try playing the minor 7th chord followed by the minor 7th interval, so you can hear how it contributes to the sound of the chord.

3. Dsus2. Since suspended 2nd and suspended 4th chords both suspend the 3rd of the chord, it can be difficult differentiating between them. It's also very difficult to differentiate between an add9 chord and a suspended 2nd, the only difference being the presence of the Major 3rd in the add9 chord.

4. Bb Augmented

5. F Major

Interval recognition

This part of the exam tests your ability to differentiate between different intervals.

You are NOT permitted to use your guitar at any point during this part of the exam. If you attempt to use your guitar to figure out the intervals, **you will be disqualified!**

In your exam, you will be played 3 intervals, and you must name each one. Any chromatic intervals may appear.
Intervals may be ascending or descending from the root note.
You will hear the 1st interval 3 times. There will then be a 10 second gap in which you must give the name of the interval you heard. You will then hear the 2nd interval 3 times followed by a 10 second gap to give the name of the interval, and finally the 3rd interval 3 times followed by a 10 second gap to give the name of the interval. You **must** say your answer, **NOT** play it.

1

Listen to the following example. The root note is D - what interval is it?

Interval recognition - interval #1 ›

2

Listen to the following example. The root note is F - what interval is it?

Interval recognition - interval #2 ›

3

Once again, listen to the following example. The root note is C - what interval is it?

Interval recognition - interval #3 ›

4

Listen to the following example. The root note is G - what interval is it?

Interval recognition - interval #4 ›

5

Last one! Listen to the following example. The root note is Ab - what interval is it?

Interval recognition - interval #5 ›

Answers at the end of this section.

Interval recognition - answers

1. minor 7th.

2. Major 6th. 6th intervals are quite difficult to recognise, so it can be handy to try and relate them to a reference interval that you can better comprehend, e.g. a Major 6th is a tone further from the root than a Perfect 5th.

3. Augmented 4th/diminished 5th. Since this interval is quite dissonant, sometimes it can be hard to differentiate it from other dissonant intervals, such as Major 7th, Augmented 5th, and minor 2nd intervals. Be sure to look for the distinct character and harmonic functions that each interval has, and use a nearby reference interval if you need to.

4. Major 2nd

5. Perfect 4th. Make sure you don't confuse Perfect 4th and Perfect 5th intervals!

Melodic recall

In this part of the exam, you will be tested on your ability to memorise and reproduce melodies.

You will be played an 8-bar melody, and you must play this melody back during your exam.
The melody may use any of the following scales:

G Ionian, A Dorian, B Phrygian, C Lydian, D Mixolydian, E Aeolian

The melody will be played using minims, crotchets, quavers, semiquavers, dotted notes, tied notes, and their respective rests, at 80 BPM. The time signature will be 4/4 or 3/4. Dynamics will range from piano through to forte. The first note of the melody will always be the root note of the scale. The following melodic articulation may also appear and should be recalled: staccato, legato (hammer-ons/pull-offs, slides), crescendos and diminuendos.

In your exam, you will hear the melody 3 times. There will be a 30 second gap between each repetition, and after the final repetition, you will have 30 seconds before you have to play the melody back. During this part of the exam, you may use your guitar to help you figure out the melody. When you are asked to give your answer, you must **play** the melody back on your guitar, **NOT** sing it.

1

Let's get to it! Listen to the following melody using the A Dorian mode.

Melodic recall - melody #1 ›

2

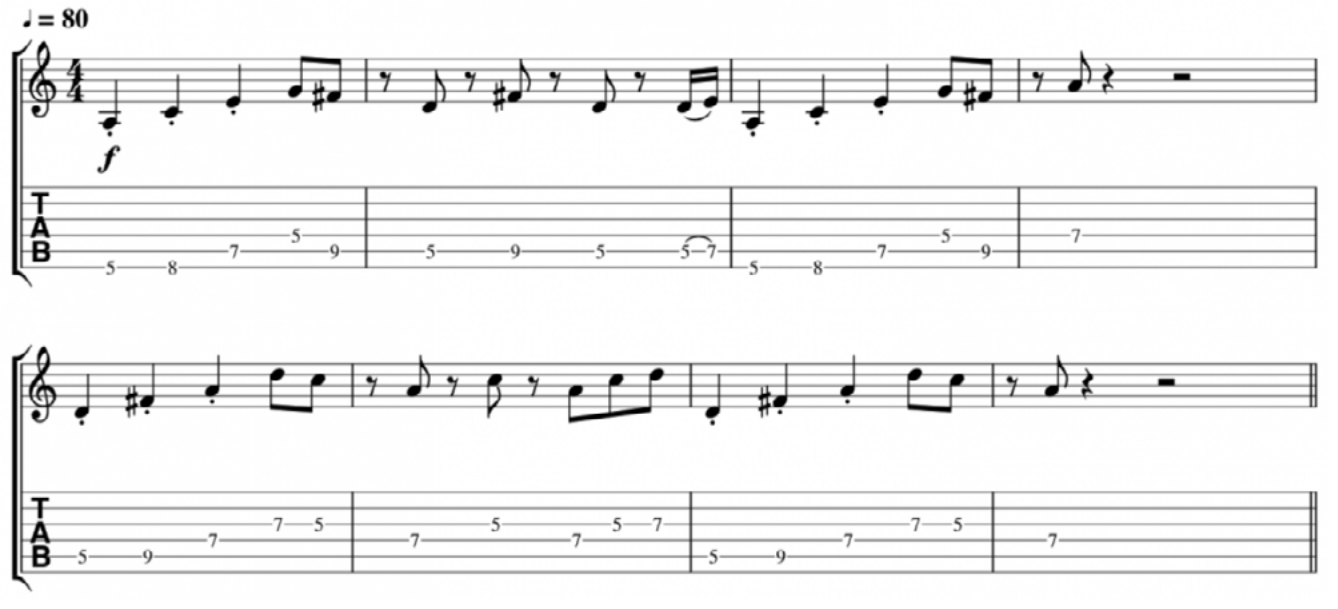
Once again! Listen to the following melody using the G Ionian mode.

Melodic recall - melody #2 ›

Answers at the end of this section.

Melodic recall - answers

1



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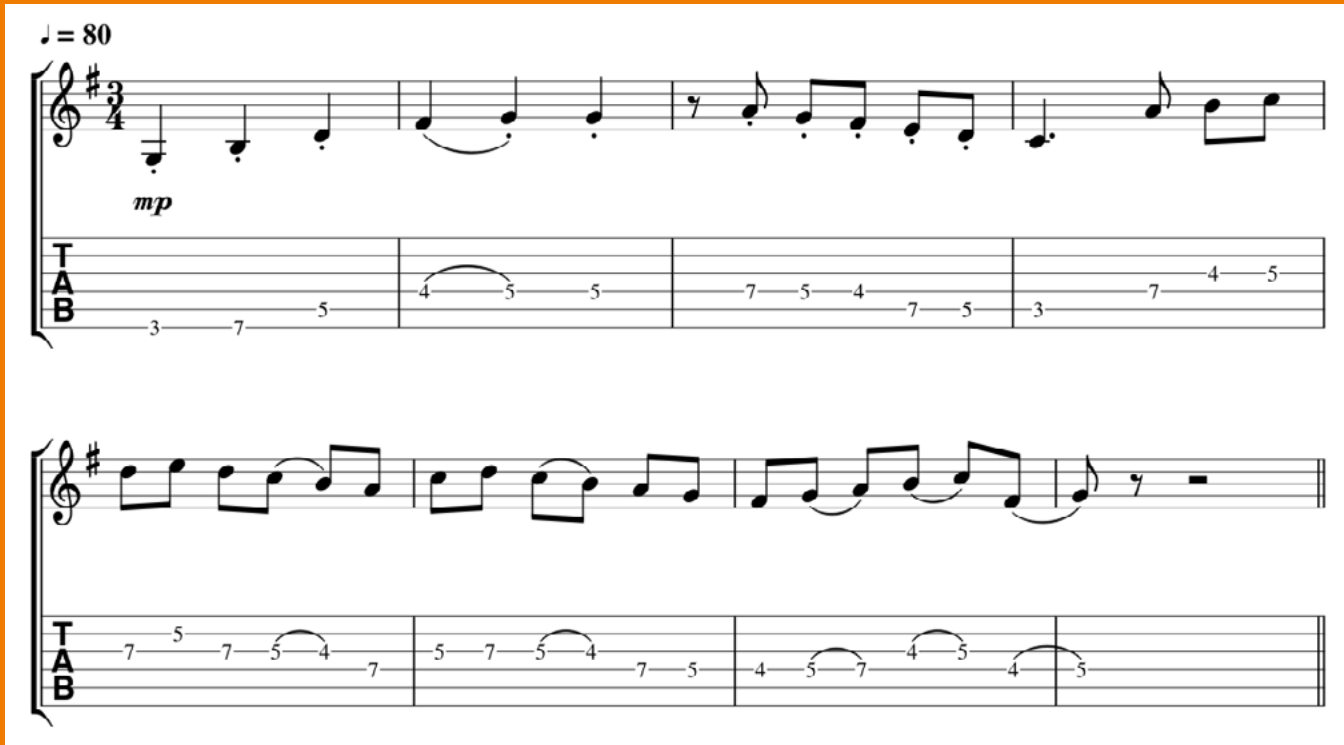


Harmonic recall

In this part of the exam, you will be tested on your ability to memorise and reproduce chord progressions.

You will be played an 8 bar chord progression, and you must play this progression back. The progression will be in the key of C Major, A minor, G Major, or E minor, and may include some modal harmony, using a combination of Open Chords, Power Chords, and Bar Chords learned in the Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced courses. It will be played using minims, crotchets, quavers, semiquavers, dotted notes, tied notes, and their respective rests, at 80 BPM. The time signature will be 4/4 or 3/4. The first chord of the progression will always be the root chord of the key. Dynamics will range from pianissimo through to fortissimo. The first chord of the progression will always be the root chord of the key. The following articulation may also appear and should be recalled: staccato, left-hand muting, crescendos and diminuendos.

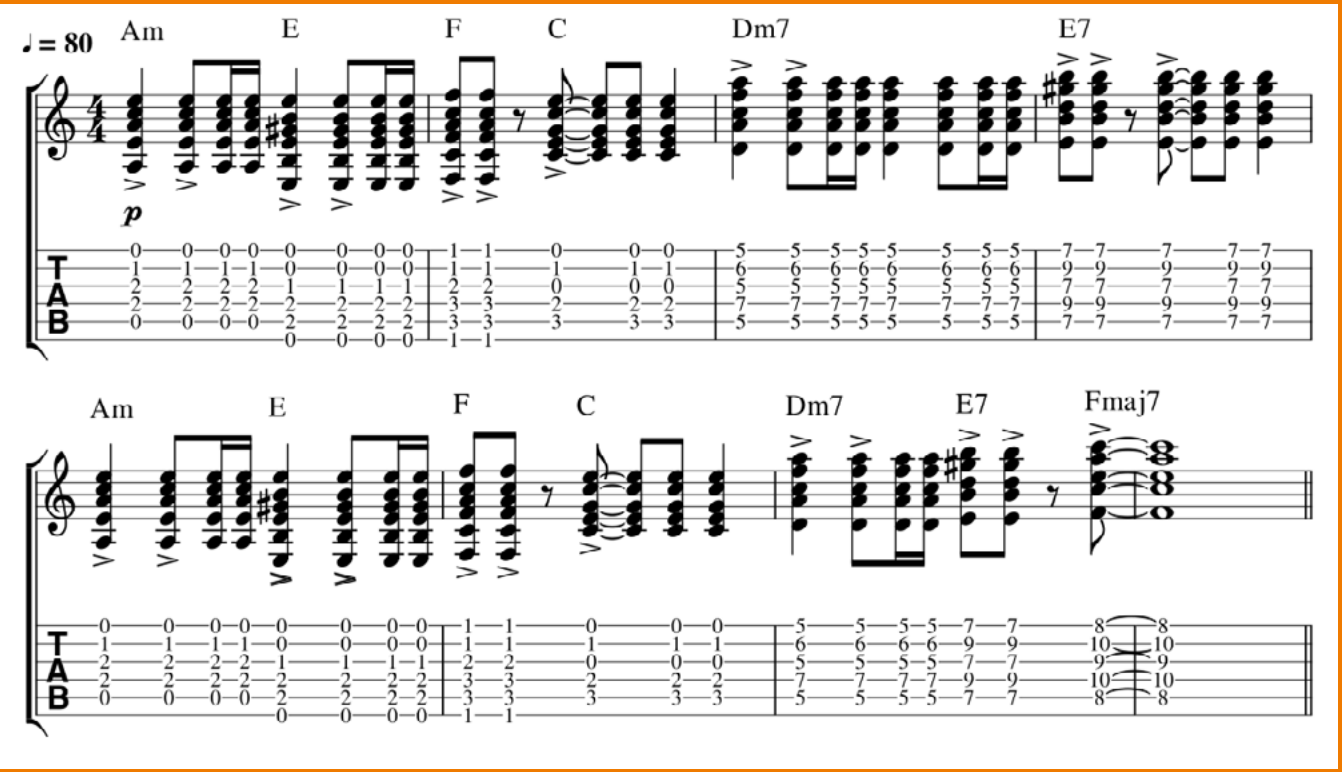
In your exam, you will hear the chord progression three times. There will be a 30 second gap between each repetition, and after the final repetition, you will have 30 seconds before you have to play the progression back. During this part of the exam, you may use your guitar to help you figure out the progression. When you are asked to give your answer, you must **play** the progression back on your guitar, **NOT** sing it.

1	2
Listen to the following chord progression in the key of A minor.	One more time - listen to the following chord progression in the key of G Major.
Harmonic recall - melody #1 ›	Harmonic recall - melody #2 ›

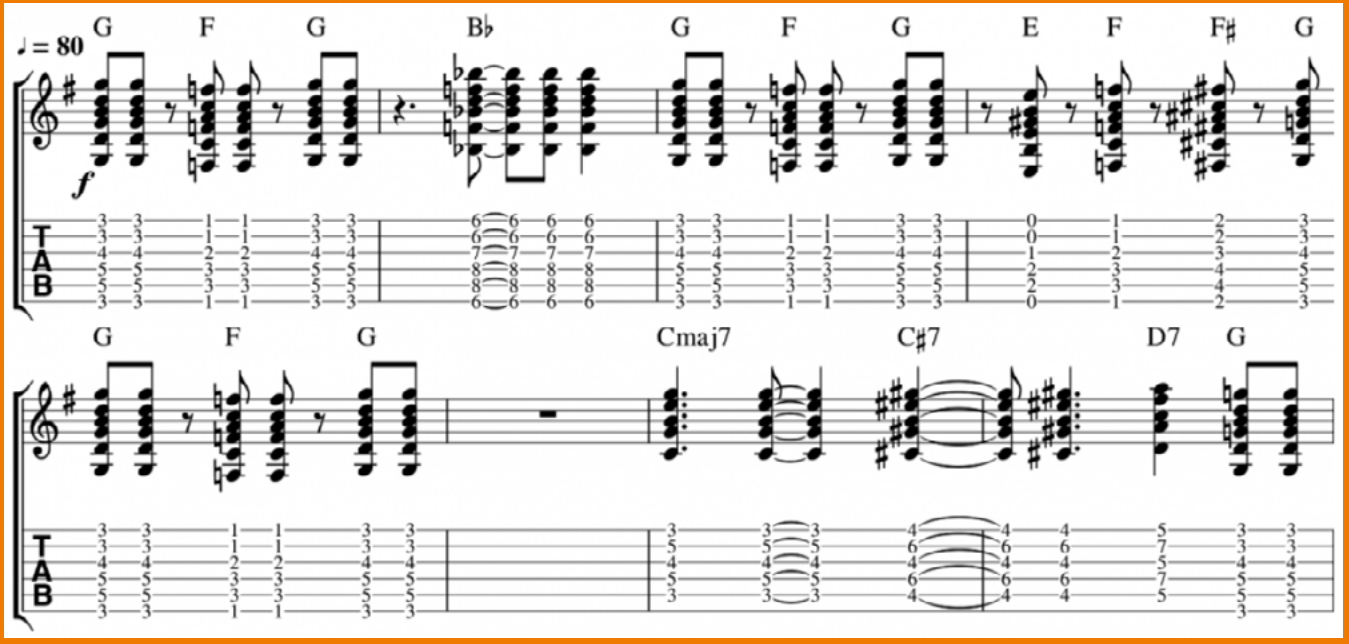
Answers at the end of this section.

Harmonic recall - answers

1



2



Tips

- **1.** Working out rhythms can be tricky - by dividing a rhythm into its smallest note values, it is far easier to get to grips with it. For instance, if the smallest note value in a complicated rhythmic phrase is a quaver, try counting the whole phrase in terms of quavers, i.e. a crotchet = 2 quavers, etc.
- **2.** Remember to use your guitar when figuring things out - sometimes we remember certain chords, melodies, and rhythms better with our fingers than with our ears!
- **3.** Practicing melodic and rhythmic recall with melodies and rhythms you've heard before is not a good idea, as you'll also subconsciously rely on your memory to do the work for you. Every time you practice, make sure you are using unfamiliar material - ask a friend to come up with some simple melodies and rhythms, or try and find some online.
- **4.** For melodic recall, try to differentiate between small and large movements, or step and leap respectively - moving by step is when a melody moves in a scale-like fashion, usually by 1 or 2 scale degrees at a time (for instance, C-D-E would be a stepwise melodic movement), whereas moving by leap is when a melody moves multiple scale degrees at once (for instance, C-G-B would be melodic leaps).
- **5.** On each reiteration of the melody or rhythm, try to hum, sing, or play along - this is much easier than trying to remember purely by ear.
- **6.** For interval recognition, use reference notes - for example, many guitarists are able to quickly recognise the note E (as it is the low open string). If this note were to appear in your exam, and you knew that you were in the key of A minor, you can instantly deduce that the interval will be a Perfect 5th. Creating mental reference notes can be a great way to approach interval recognition - try using songs to quickly recognise notes.
- **7.** You can also create reference intervals in this way - for instance, the opening to the Star Wars theme is a perfect 4th, so you can use this as a reference for trying to recognise Perfect 4ths. A common approach is to have 1 example memorised for each interval.

Exam specification

Once you have completed any of the Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced courses, whether with your teacher or on your own, you should be ready to take the internationally recognised and accredited online exam. Your mark will help towards your future education in music and will be registered on the RQF and EQF qualification frameworks. If you pass the Advanced exams you will also receive UCAS points which can give vital extra points that contribute to further education establishments in the UK.

Please refer to the **Rock Guitar syllabus** for detailed information on exactly how to take your exam and exactly how it is marked.

Technical Exercises

Scales

All scales must be played using alternate picking at the indicated tempo, and using the indicated note values. Scales must be played as specified in the course materials. Any fingering that is economical and sounds good will be accepted.

Other useful scales
80 BPM using semiquavers (4-notes-per-click)
E Harmonic minor, A Blues scale, G 8-note diminished scale

Introduction to modes
116 BPM using quavers (2-notes-per-click)
G Ionian, A Dorian, B Phrygian, C Lydian, D Mixolydian, E Aeolian, F# Locrian

Arpeggios

All arpeggios must be played as part of the progressions included in the course materials, using sweep picking. Any fingering that is economical and sounds good will be accepted.

2 Octave Arpeggios
130 BPM using triplet quavers (3-notes-per-click)
Progression 1

Modal workout part I

132 BPM - Exercises 2 and 3

Modal workout part II

184 BPM - Exercise 2

Technical Studies

Chords

All chords must be played as part of the chord progressions included in the course materials. All chords are in root position. Any fingering that is economical and sounds good will be accepted.

Bar chords part II - 80 BPM
Progressions 1 - 3. These progression must be played with their corresponding backing tracks.

Drop D power chords - 152 BPM
Progression 1. This progression must be played with the corresponding backing track.

Legato study

120 BPM - Progression 1

Performance piece

You must perform 1 piece of music for your final exam, with unaccompanied or using a backing track. You may perform any piece of electric guitar music from any artist, as long as it adheres to the parameters outlined below. Performance pieces may be played using an alternative tuning. Students may read from notation/TAB during the exam.

Performance pieces MUST:

1. Be between approximately 2 and 5 minutes long.
2. Contain a variety of open chords, power chords, bar chords, chord extensions, and at least one altered chord (augmented or diminished).
3. Contain a solo element that consists of at least 1 technique learned in the advanced course.
4. Include articulation learned in the Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced courses, e.g. staccato, legato, palm muting, left-hand muting, vibrato etc.

Sight-reading

During your exam, you will be required to sight-read an 8 bar chord progression and an 8 bar melody, both at 80 BPM. You will be given 90 seconds to look at the melody/chord progression before you are expected to play it. During the 90 second countdown, you can use your guitar to help you figure out how to play the melody/progression. After the 90 second countdown, you must attempt to play the melody/progression on screen in time to the metronome. When you are asked to give your answer, you must **play** the melody back on your guitar, **NOT** sing it.

Note that you will be expected to sight-read from scales and chords from the Orange Rock Guitar Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced courses. You may also encounter any of the key signatures or time signatures that appear in the Foundation and Intermediate courses. Rhythms will consist of combinations of crotchets, quavers, semiquavers minims, semibreves, dotted notes, and their corresponding rests. Dynamics will range from pianissimo through to fortissimo. The following articulation may also appear: accents, palm-muting, left-hand muting, staccato, legato (hammer-ons, pull-offs, slides), bending, crescendos and diminuendos.

Any of the following chords may appear:

Open chords: **G Major, D Major, C Major, A Major, E Major, A minor, E minor, D minor, Cadd9, A7, D Major 7, D7, Dsus4, F#half-diminished, Asus2**
Power chords: any 5 chords/b5 chords
Bar chords: Any Major, minor, sus4, or minor 7th bar chords

Any of the following scales may appear:

1 Octave scales: **C Major, A minor, G Major, E minor, A minor Pentatonic, C Major Pentatonic**
Any of the 5 positions of the A minor Pentatonic scale
Any of the '3-note-per-string' positions of the G Major scale
Any of the 7 modes of the G Major scale (same positions as above) - G Ionian, A Dorian, B Phrygian, C Lydian, D Mixolydian, E Aeolian, F# Locrian
Other useful scales: E Harmonic minor, A Blues Scale, G 8-note diminished Scale

Any of the following time signatures may appear:

3/4
4/4
5/4
6/8

Any of the following key signatures may appear:

No sharps/flat = **C Major/A minor**
1 sharp = **G Major/E minor**
2 sharps = **D Major/B minor**
3 sharps = **A Major/F# minor**
1 flat = **F Major/D minor**
2 flats = **Bb Major/G minor**

Aural

Harmonic recognition

In your exam, you will be played 3 chords, and for each one you must specify the chord quality, which may be any of the following:

Major chord, minor chord, Augmented chord, diminished chord, 7th chord (Major, minor, Dominant), Suspended 4th, Suspended 2nd.

In your exam, you will hear the 1st chord 3 times. There will then be a 10 second gap in which you must give the name of the chord you heard. You will then hear the 2nd chord 3 times followed by a 10 second gap to give the name of the chord, and finally the 3rd chord 3 times followed by a 10 second gap to give the name of the chord.

You will be given the root note of each chord, and in your answer you must specify both the root note and the chord quality. You must **say** your answer, **NOT** play it.

Interval recognition

In your exam, you will be played 3 intervals, and you must name each one. Any chromatic intervals may appear. Intervals may be ascending or descending from the root note of the scale.

You will hear the 1st interval 3 times. There will then be a 10 second gap in which you must give the name of the interval you heard. You will then hear the 2nd interval 3 times followed by a 10 second gap to give the name of the interval, and finally the 3rd interval 3 times followed by a 10 second gap to give the name of the interval. You must **say** your answer, **NOT** play it.

Melodic recall

You will be played an 8 bar melody, and you must play this melody back. The melody may use any of the following scales:

G Ionian, A Dorian, B Phrygian, C Lydian, D Mixolydian, E Aeolian

The melody will be played using minims, crotchets, quavers, semiquavers, dotted notes, tied notes, and their respective rests, at 80 BPM. The time signature will be 4/4 or 3/4. Dynamics will range from piano through to forte. The first note of the melody will always be the root note of the scale. The following melodic articulation may also appear and should be recalled: staccato, legato (hammer-ons/pull-offs, slides), crescendos and diminuendos.

In your exam, you will hear the melody 3 times. There will be a 30 second gap between each repetition, and after the final repetition, you will have 30 seconds before you have to play the melody back. During this part of the exam, you may use your guitar to help you figure out the melody. When you are asked to give your answer, you must **play** the melody back on your guitar, **NOT** sing it.

Harmonic recall

You will be played an 8 bar chord progression, and you must play this progression back. The progression will be in the key of C Major, A minor, G Major, or E minor, and may include some modal harmony, using a combination of Open Chords, Power Chords, and Bar Chords learned in the Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced courses. It will be played using minims, crotchets, quavers, semiquavers, dotted notes, tied notes, and their respective rests, at 80 BPM. The time signature will be 4/4 or 3/4. The first chord of the progression will always be the root chord of the key. Dynamics will range from pianissimo through to fortissimo. The first chord of the progression will always be the root chord of the key. The following articulation may also appear and should be recalled: staccato, left-hand muting, crescendos and diminuendos.

In your exam, you will hear the chord progression 3 times. There will be a 30 second gap between each repetition, and after the final repetition, you will have 30 seconds before you have to play the progression back. During this part of the exam, you may use your guitar to help you figure out the progression. When you are asked to give your answer, you must **play** the progression back on your guitar, **NOT** sing it.

Improvisation

You must improvise over a 16-bar backing track. You will be given the chord progression of the backing track in lead sheet format.

The backing track may be in any of the following keys/modes:

G Major
A Dorian
B Phrygian
C Lydian
D Mixolydian
A minor

Any of the following time signatures may appear: 3/4, 4/4, 6/8.

In your exam, you will hear the backing track 3 times. There will be a short gap between each repetition, and after the final repetition, you will have 20 seconds before you must improvise over the track. During this part of the exam, you may use your guitar to help you come up with improvisation ideas.

Theory

You will take a multiple choice theory exam. The contents of the exam will consist of all of the theory introduced in the lessons of the Foundation, Intermediate, and Advanced courses.

Any of the following theory subjects may appear:

- Notation & TAB - staves, clefs, note names, enharmonic notes
- Note names and note values - semibreve, minim, crotchet, quaver, semiquaver, dotted notes, tied notes
- Rest names and rest values
- Bars and bar lines
- Accidentals - sharps, flats, and naturals
- Time signatures - 4/4, 3/4, 6/8
- Up and down picking symbols
- Tones and semitones
- Legato symbols - Slurs, tapping, sliding
- Scale formulae - Major, Natural minor, Harmonic minor, Melodic minor, Major Pentatonic, minor Pentatonic, Blues scale, Diminished scale
- Mode formulae - Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian, Locrian
- Chord formulae - Major, minor, added 9, Major 7th, Dominant 7th, Suspended 2nd, Suspended 4th, Half-Diminished/minor 7-b5, power chords, b5 power chords
- Arpeggio formulae - Major, minor
- 2 octave arpeggio shiftable positions - Major and minor
- Bar chord shiftable positions - Major, minor, suspended 4th, minor 7th
- Key signatures - C Major/A minor, G Major/E minor, D Major/B minor, A Major/F# minor, F Major/D minor
- Relative keys
- Repeat lines and volta brackets
- Palm muting symbols
- Intervals of the Major and Natural minor scales
- Chromatic intervals (Augmented and diminished)
- Compound intervals
- Triplets
- Keys and chords - Major key chords, Natural minor chords, Harmonic minor chords, Melodic minor chords
- Modal chord progressions

Contact details:

Website: orangeamps.com/learn
Email enquiries: education@orangeamps.com

Orange Music Education:
Orange, Orange Music Education, 108 Ripon way, Borehamwood, Herts, WD6 2JA