

~ 3 String Arpeggios Etude 1 ~

The following etude will help you to improve your 3 string arpeggio playing and to become more creative with the sweep picking technique.

Although the etude is several pages long, it uses only two arpeggios played in different positions all over the neck of the guitar: A minor and E Major.

Here is how I want you to practice this exercise:

1. First learn the notes of each shape until you can play them without constantly looking at the notation. Don't use the metronome for this step.
2. After doing step 1, find your top speed for this exercise (this time using the metronome).

Before you can begin applying specific speed building strategies to your sweep picking practice (which I will show you later), you need to establish your top speed and observe what mistakes and difficulties you are having with this exercise.

These 2 steps are the process I want you to use when practicing this exercise. (We will build on it later.)

Watch the picking and fingering guidelines shown below. The notes connected by an arc are to be played with hammer ons and pull offs. Pay attention to the fretting hand fingers that must be used for each shape. This will allow you to easily shift from one shape of the arpeggio to the next.

Remember that the picking hand motion needs to be controlled and continuous. When you sweep pick, it is not a rake or a quick strum but a succession of consecutive downstrokes or upstrokes.

Even when you play hammer ons and pull offs, your hand DOES NOT STOP MOVING. Each downstroke stops when the pick touches the next higher string and immediately pushes through it (in other words, the pick **does NOT stop in between the strings**). This is very important.

As you can see in the notation below, you sometimes need to play more than one note on the same fret across several strings with the same finger (on 2 or 3 strings). This means you must use the rolling technique. Here is how you need to do it:

When ascending (playing from the lowest note to the highest note) the rolling portion of the arpeggio, you need to play the 1st note of the roll with the fingertip of the finger, as you would play any other note. To play the remaining

notes of the roll, you must fret them with the **fingerprint** (instead of finger tip). Your finger actually bends backwards like a banana.

It is critically important that you do NOT think of the rolling technique as barring (as in playing barre chords). When you play barre chords, you are letting all strings ring together.

When rolling, only ONE string must be sounding at a time. This is a critically important difference between the two techniques. Many players confuse them, so I want to make sure that you understand why they are very different.

When descending the rolling portion of the arpeggio, think of “rewinding” (as if on camera) the motions of the ascending roll described above. You begin by playing the first note of the roll with the **fingerprint** (instead of finger tip), continue until you play the last note of the roll with the fingertip.

In other words, you simply perform the motions of the ascending roll, only backwards (which makes sense, considering we are descending the arpeggio). So keep these things in mind as you practice rolling.

Important: Don’t expect to fully master this exercise and be able to play it flawlessly by the next lesson. It is perfectly normal if you are only able to play it at a slow speed or if you still have some issues you want to refine.

When the next lesson arrives, I want you to shift your attention to it, and the materials provided there. Remember that “this” particular exercise “by itself” has little meaning.

The overall strategy and the progression of the materials I design for you is the most important part of our lessons and that is where I want your focus to be at all times. There will be enough technique building exercises for you to enable you to develop your physical playing to the level you want to reach.

I build your lesson strategy in such a way that the new materials you receive will reinforce the training you receive from the previous lessons (and provide enough variety to give you time to practice the older material if necessary).

So as long as you have consistently practiced this exercise, and can play it at least at a slow tempo all the way through, you are in good shape to move on.

Over time (as we do more of these and other technique building exercises), you will find that as you come back to the older materials, you will be able to play them much faster, cleaner and more accurately. True mastery will develop with time...it cannot be rushed.

3 string arpeggios etude

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