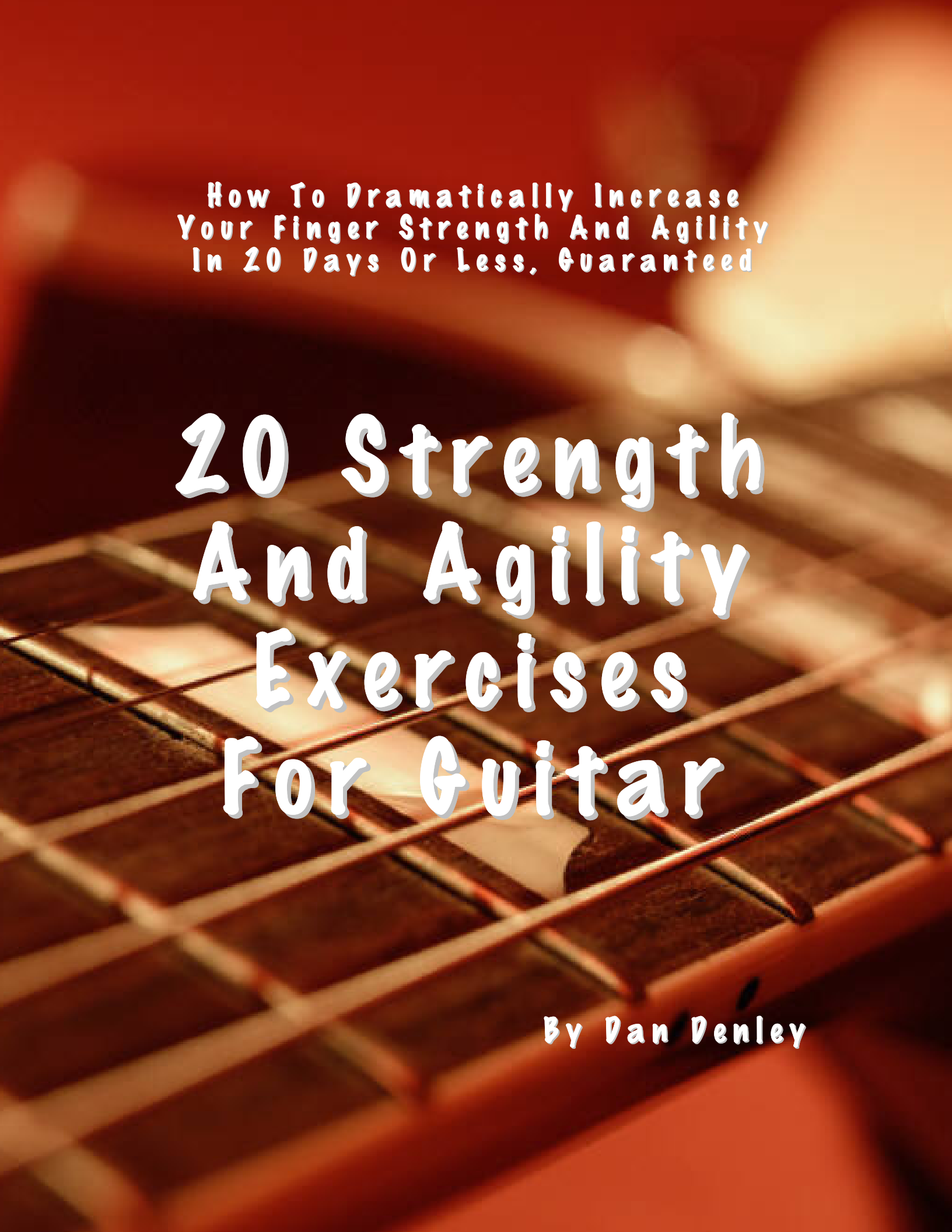
How To Dramatically Increase
Your Finger Strength And Agility
In 20 Days Or Less, Guaranteed
20 Strength
And Agility
Exercises
For Guitar
By Dan Denley

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Intro

Many guitarists have trouble fretting difficult chords, playing certain scales and reaching big intervals. This book sets out to solve these problems and more.

One of the biggest problems I see routinely with guitarists (especially those who played for less than a year) is finger strength.

It's actually not taught much anymore (or maybe I'm just not aware of it). And I don't understand why. I almost never hear of instructors giving practice assignments that are specific for building finger strength, dexterity and agility.

Think about it. If you're a professional football player how much time do you spend off the field training your body? You run, lift weights, swim, ride a bike, stretch, etc., all to train your body. Now imagine if a player decided he wasn't going to work out. He just wants to show up at game time and play. He'd get slaughtered. He wouldn't last 15 minutes on the field with the guys who worked hard to get in shape.

It's the same thing with guitar. Your hands and forearms are made up of a bunch of muscles, bones and connective tissue. And you've got to train them to do what you tell them to do.

There is an inherent disconnect between what your brain *wants* to play and what your muscles are *capable* of playing. In order to bring your brain and your muscles together in perfect harmony, you've got to put in a little work.

What You Can Expect

Here's the deal. If you will commit yourself to practicing one of these twenty exercises for 10 minutes a day, for twenty straight days, you'll be able to rip a four-inch, yellow pages into two pieces with your bare hands!

Well... ok, ok. Maybe you won't be able to do that, exactly.

But I will say this. You will be *shocked* at how much faster and stronger your hands and fingers get. And not just playing these exercises. You'll have more control, in general: more control over your songs, solos and riffs. You will essentially be a much better player.

A Great Side Benefit

What's amazing about these exercises is that they have a double effect: one on your left hand, and one on your right.

In other words, not only will your left hand (if that's the one your use to fret with) be much stronger, but your right hand will be much more accurate! Why? Well, think about it. All these exercises involve your right *and* left hand. So as your practicing them you'll not only get a

much stronger and more agile left hand, you'll also be able to pick with greater speed and accuracy.

I Admit It

Ok, I'm going to go ahead and admit it, right on the front end. Playing these exercises isn't that fun. Ok, dang it. They're pretty stinking boring. There, I said it. But you know what, Brett Favre probably didn't think running three miles every day was much fun either. But I assure you, he definitely thought winning the Super Bowl was fun. But without his dedication to training, he wouldn't have been able to win the big game.

You've got to think of these 20 exercises as guitar, boot-camp for your fingers. They are the training your fingers need in order to play in the "big game."

In other words, if you want to play the solo guitar part in "Free Bird" (Lynard Skynard) you better get in shape. Why? Well, because that song is *long*. I think it's something like ten minutes. And it has a lot of hammer-on's and pull-off's. It takes a lot of strength, agility and speed.

Or maybe you just want to play in a three-chord, rock band. You still need to have massive finger strength. Why? Because I used to play in a three-chord, rock band. And even if you're only playing three chords, after you rehearse for two hours, you're going to be tired if you're not in shape. And you know when you get tired: you can't fret your guitar, you're not able to hold down the strings, your fingers slip, your forearm burns and your back aches.

The point I'm driving at is this: no matter what your goals are for guitar, having super-strong hand and fingers is going to be a huge asset. It just can't hurt.

Practical Ways To Use This Book

Ok, now that we've gotten the philosophical "Why?" questions out of the way, let's talk about real-world, practical, down-to-earth ways to use this book.

About the notation

I've written twenty exercises for you. They are all here for your enjoyment. I've given you both the standard notation and the tablature for each exercise. This will help you start to memorize the notes on the fretboard. Try to ask yourself as you practice, "What note am I playing?" Then relate the note on the staff to the string you are fretting.

Most of the symbols you will be familiar with. A few you may not be. For those symbols that might be out of the ordinary, I've created a few notes next to the diagram to explain.

"Are you nuts?"

If someone walks in the room while you're playing these, she'll probably look at you as if you have three eyes. The immediate thought might be, "OK, he's completely lost it." But never fear. I assure you. You're not nuts. You're practicing. And that's going to make you that much better when it does come time to play your favorite songs.

One nice thing about these exercises is that they are *atonal*. In other words, they aren't based the diatonic scales, modes or pentatonic scales. They're just exercises. So they aren't supposed to be sweet to your ears. And you do *not* want to play these for your sweetheart on the first date.

Your old friend, Mr. Metronome

If you do not have a metronome. You need to invest in one. You can get them at practically any music store, on or offline. If you're looking for a recommendation on where to get gear a reasonable prices, you can always go here:

http://www.amazingguitarsecrets.com/gear

Anyway, here's why I like to practice these with a metronome. You get to watch yourself improve day-by-day. How? Well, when you're first starting out, you want to pick a relatively slow speed: say, 60 beats per minute. Just set you metronome to 60 BPM and play the first exercise. Now, tomorrow you'll want to try to increase it to 75BPM, the next day, go to 90, etc. You get the idea.

And it's a good idea to keep a journal of your practice. Write down *what* you practiced and for *how long*. For example, you might record that you practiced exercise one for five minutes at 60 BPM. Then a week later you might notice that you've increased that same exercise to 120 BPM! That kind of feedback is good for you. You should definitely make the effort to keep a journal, or practice log. When you look back a year from now, you'll be amazed at how much better you've gotten, in such a short amount of time.

How to quickly and easily make massive progress

There are a total of twenty exercises in this book. Each one gets a little more difficult. By the time you get to the twentieth one, you'll be doing some pretty advanced stuff. But it's kind of like math. You can't multiply until you can add. And you can't bypass the first nineteen exercises and jump to number twenty. That won't work. You need to go in order.

What I suggest is that you practice number one for five minutes, at a given BPM. Tomorrow, you practice number two for five minutes. The next day, number three for five minutes and so-on and so-forth. Then after twenty days you will have been exposed to each one at least once.

At the end of those twenty days, you start to put more than exercise into your practice routine. For example, you might have a five day practice routine where you play four a day (5 X 4 = 20). Because you'll be getting stronger and faster, you'll be able to play more exercises in the same amount of time.

When you really get smoking, you'll be able to do say one exercise per minute. So, in ten minutes you'll have half of these done! That will put you on a two-day routine (ten one day, ten the next).

Keep in mind that these are just suggestions. You should definitely adapt these ideas to your own personality, skill level and goals.

A word of caution

This probably goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway. If you ever feel *any* pain whatsoever while you're playing these exercises, stop immediately. Put your guitar down for a day or at least the rest of the afternoon and come back later. You don't want to go hog-wild with these things. You can get hurt *if* you over do it. I'd say about ten minutes is enough (maximum).

Use good common sense. You wouldn't sign up for the Boston marathon if you couldn't even run two miles would you? It's the same principle. You need to *gradually* build up your finger strength. Just be patient with yourself and go at your own pace.

How far should you go?

You'll notice that each exercise ends quite abruptly. In fact, I didn't even create a final ending bar to indicate where to stop. This is on purpose. Here's why: you can take these exercises all the way up the fretboard if you want. On the other hand, you can just go up to the fifth fret. Or you can start on the fifth fret. It doesn't really matter. It's up to you how far you take each exercise. I've given you the tab for about the first 15-20 measures. This is plenty for you to get the idea of how the pattern works.

Ready, steady, go!

One more thing before you get started. You want to make sure that you play each of the exercises with exacting precision and control. You don't want any dead notes (where the note doesn't sound because it wasn't fretted properly). You don't want to speed-up and slow-down. You want to play as steady as possible. Your metronome will help you with this.

Keep in mind that *speed* can not come until you have control. Always, always stay in control. You don't want to ever feel like the guitar or metronome is a run-away freight train. Those things wreck, and that's no fun. Play within your means and gradually increase the speed. In the end you'll be glad you did.

Zoom! Zoom!

If you are viewing this book in Adobe Acrobat you might want to zoom in to make reading the tab for each exercise a little easier. Here's how to use the zoom function in Adobe Acrobat Reader. When you have the document open in Acrobat click on the "Tools" menu. Then click,

"Zoom." Place a check next to the "Zoom" toolbar option. The zoom toolbar appears. Now you can click the "+" button on the toolbar to zoom in. Click the "-" button to zoom out. It's easy!

Time to play!

Well that's enough talk. It's time to play. So grab your favorite beverage, lock the door and get to work. You're going to have the strongest hands and fingers on the block!

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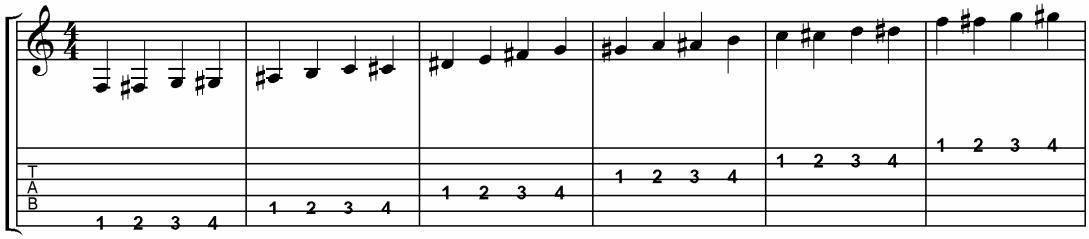
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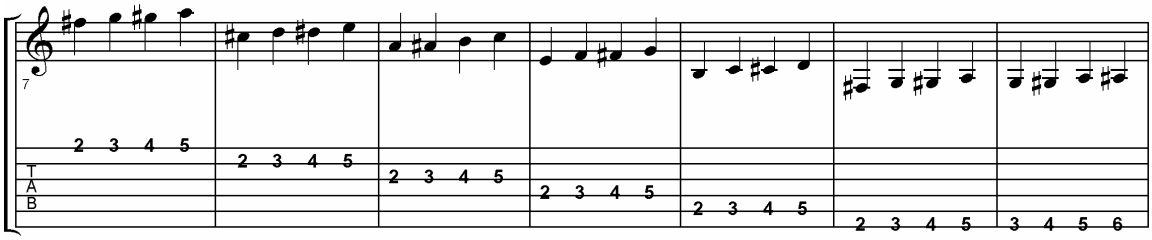
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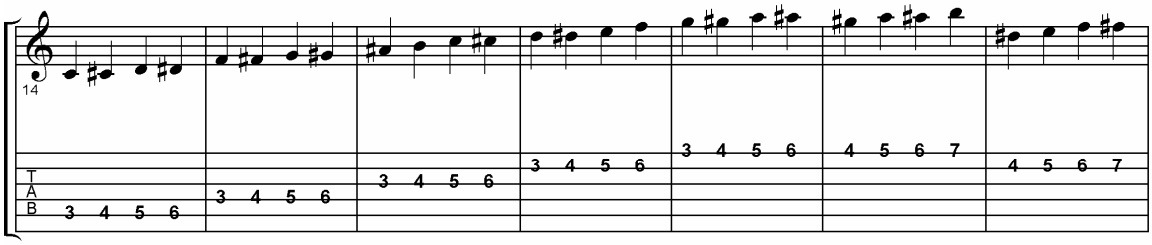
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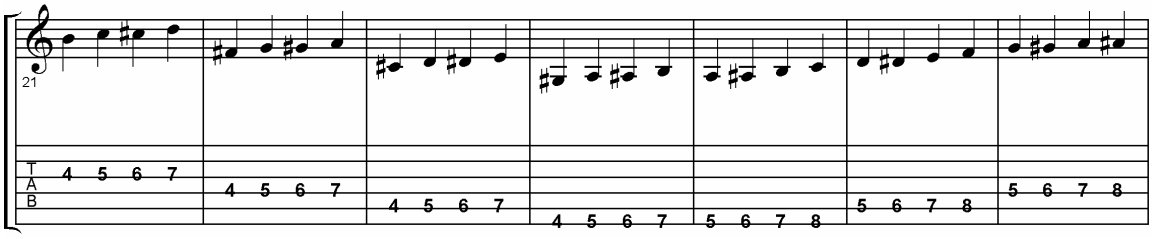
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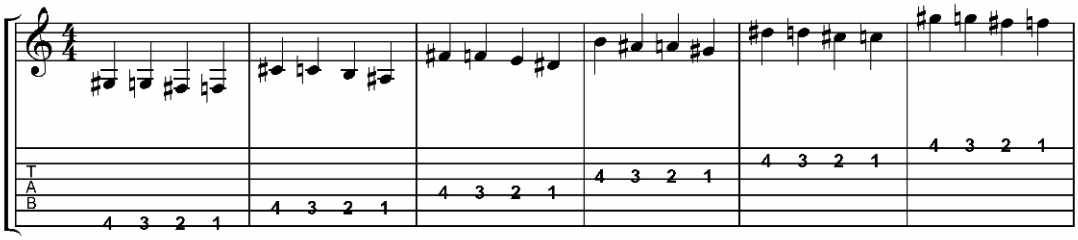
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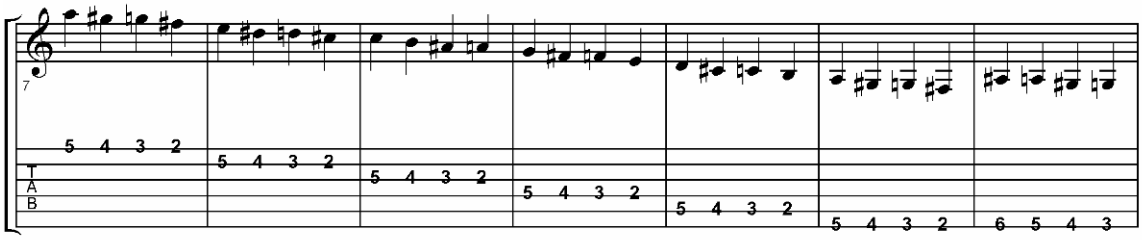
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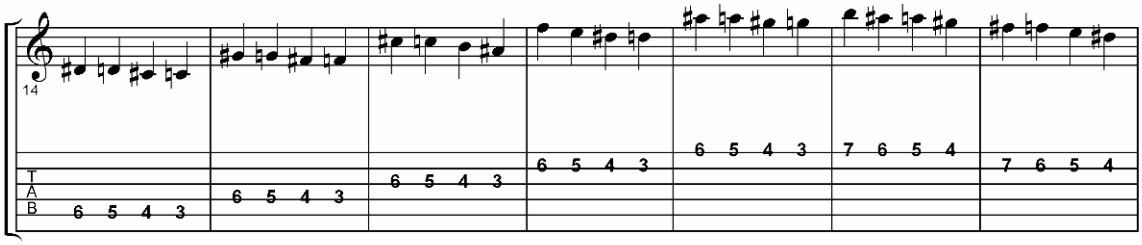
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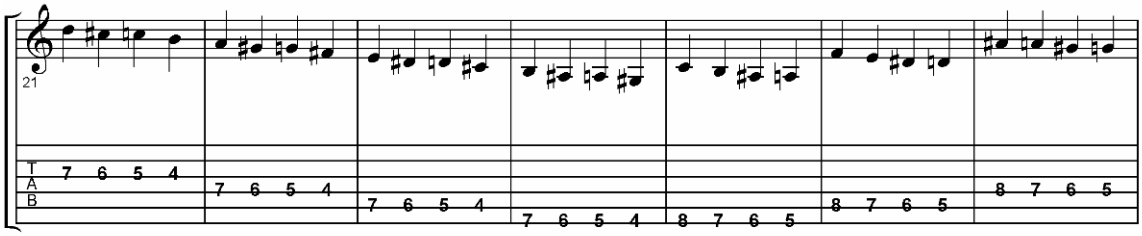
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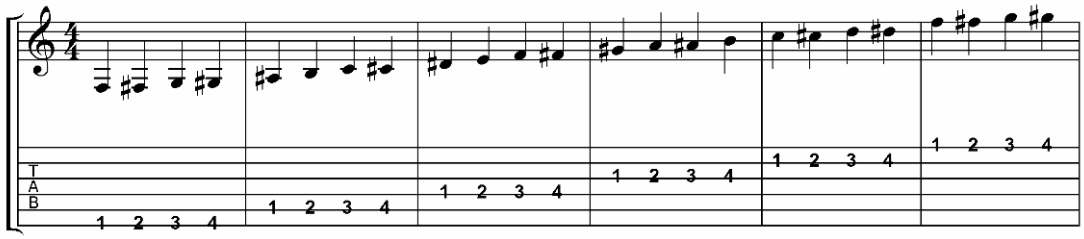
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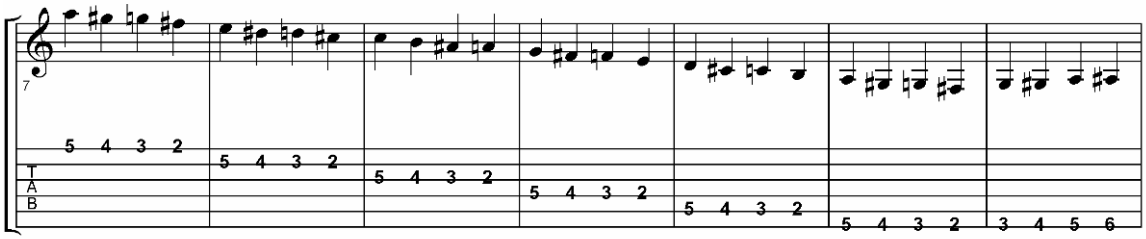
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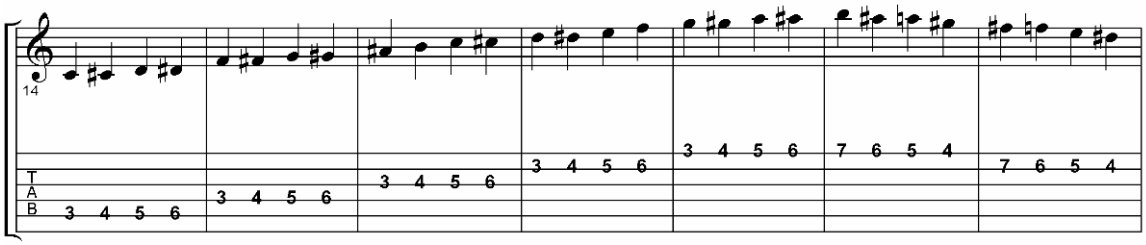
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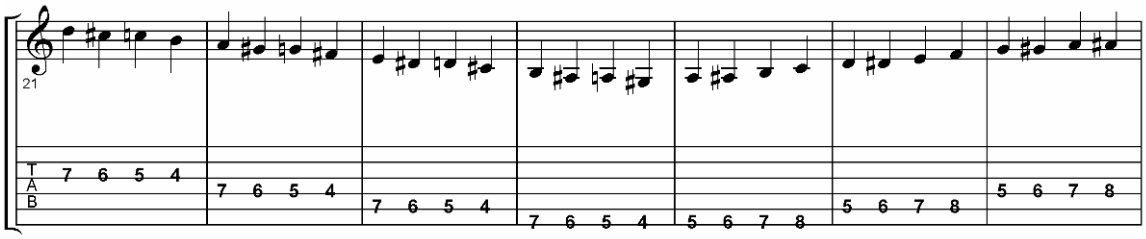
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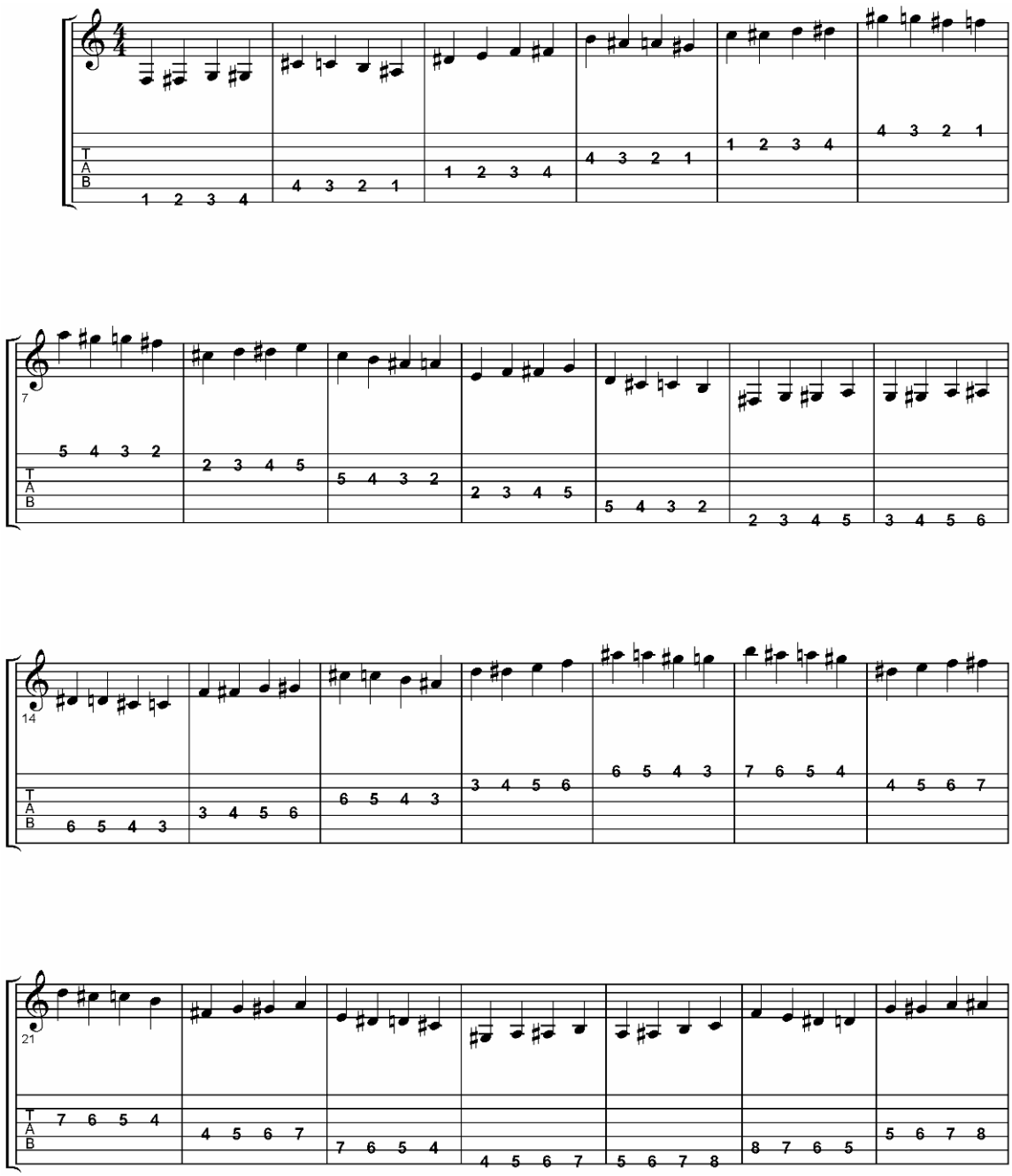

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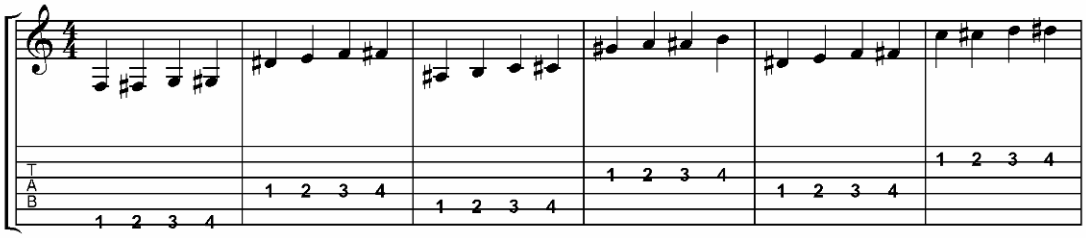

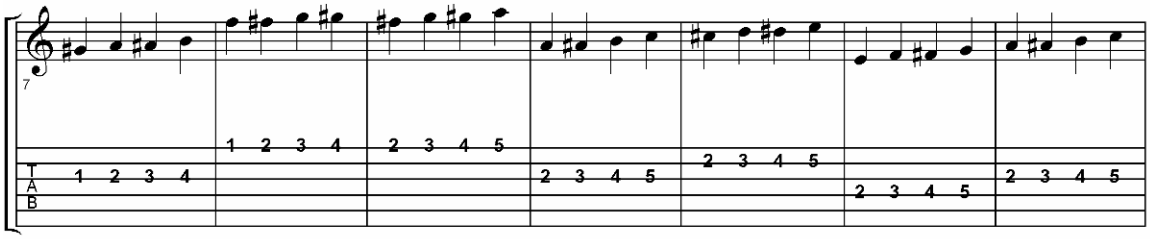

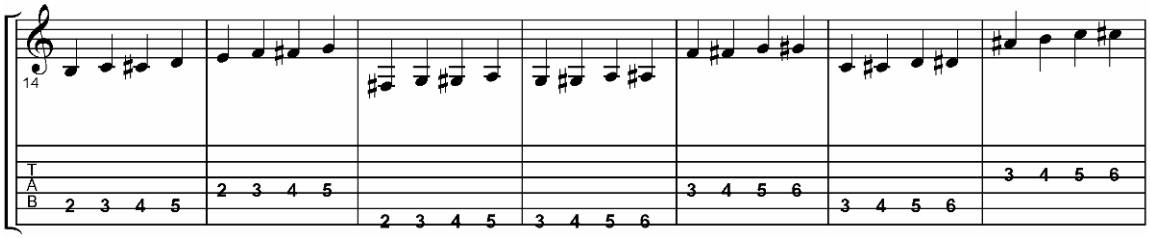

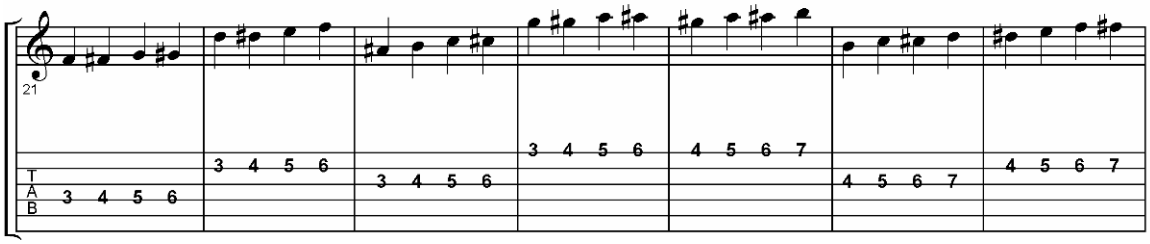

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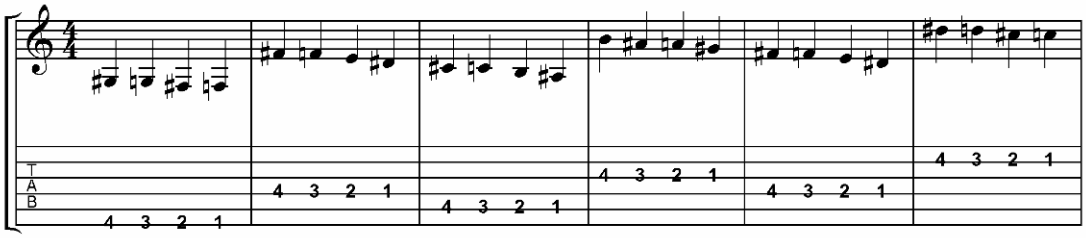
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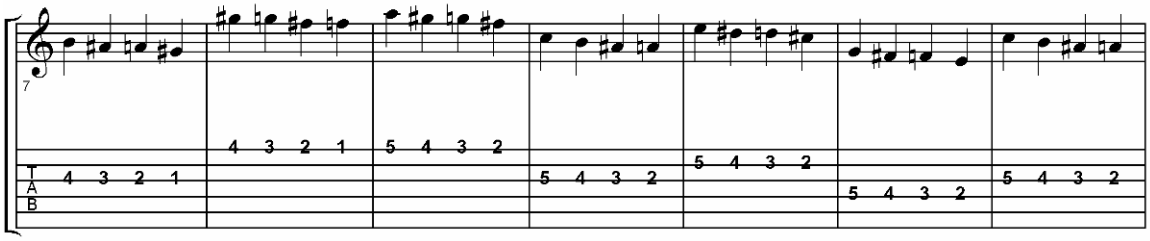
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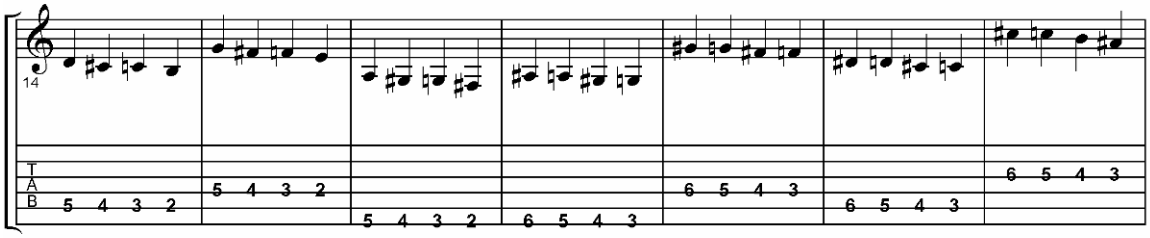
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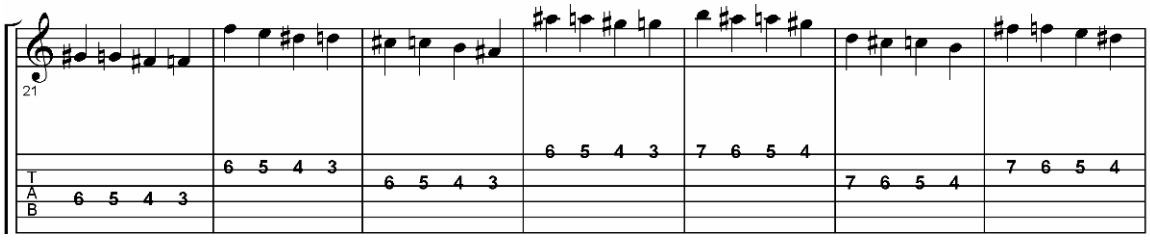
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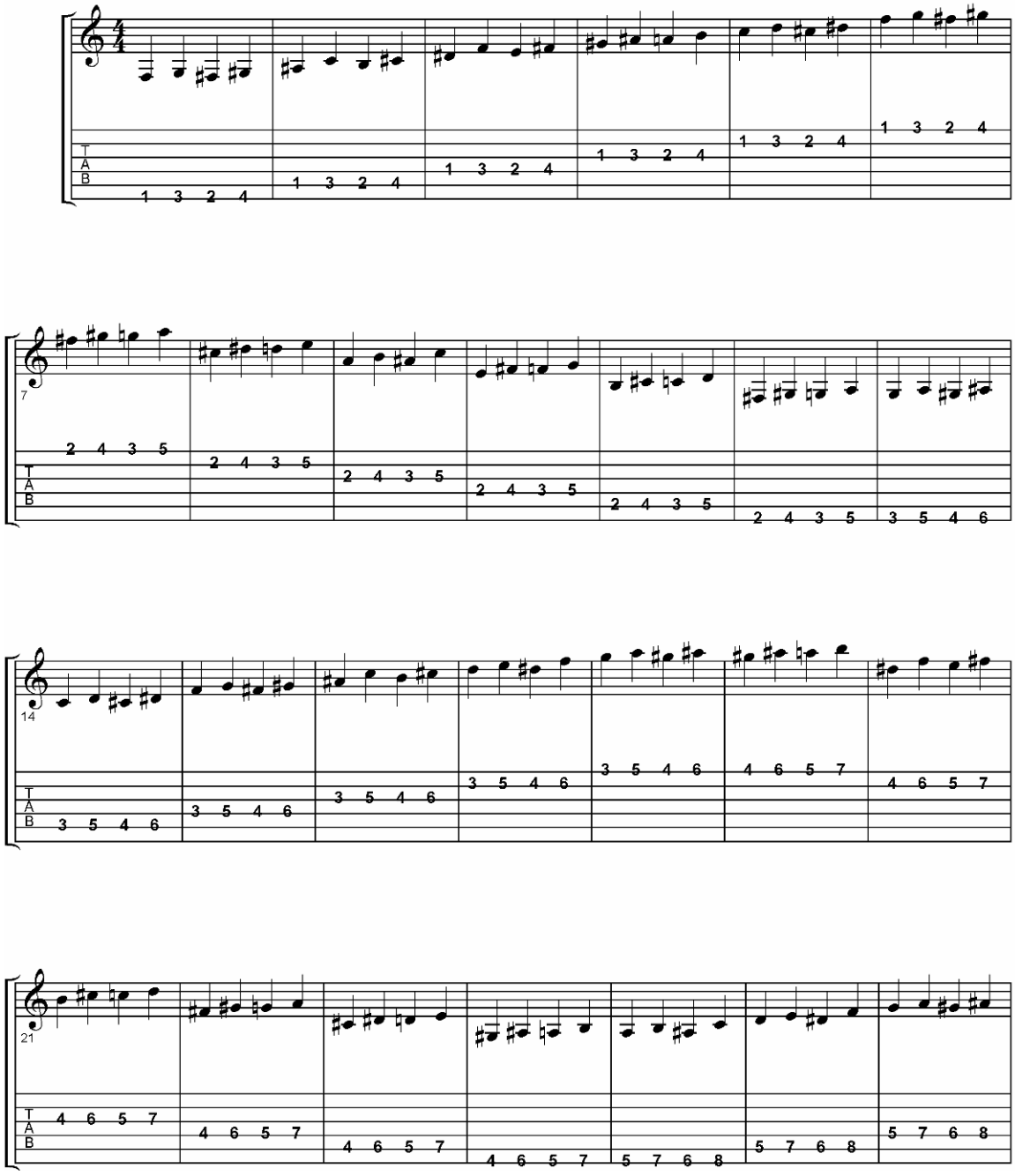

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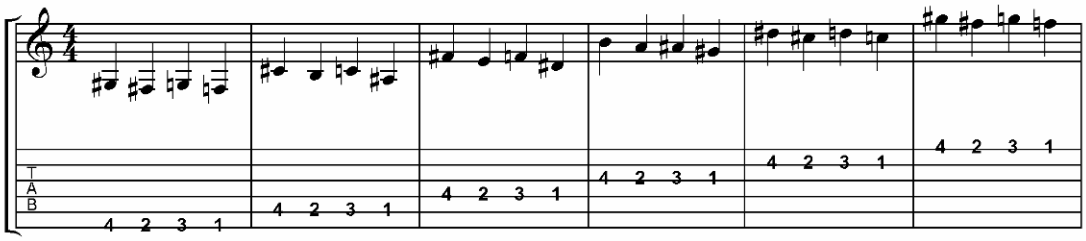
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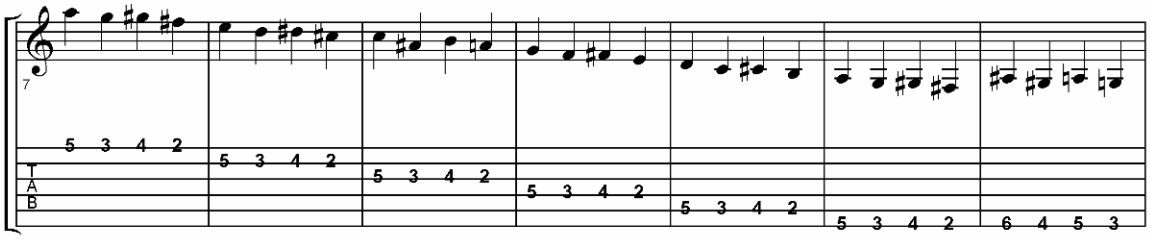
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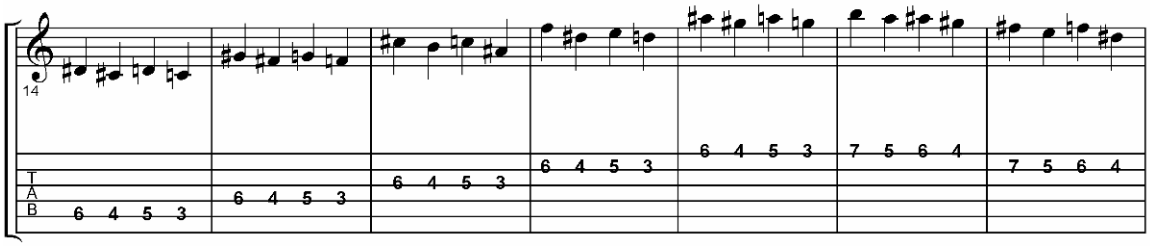
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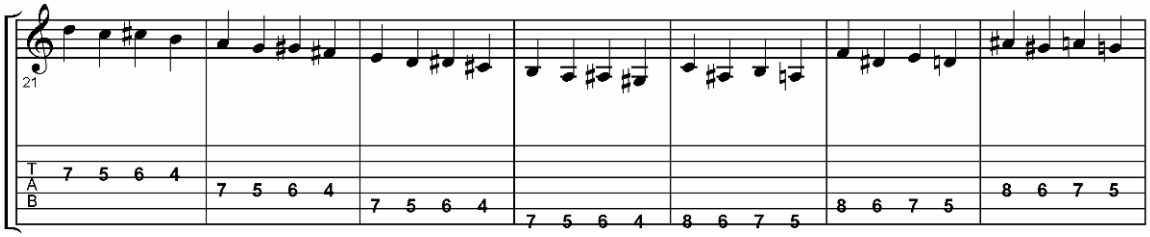
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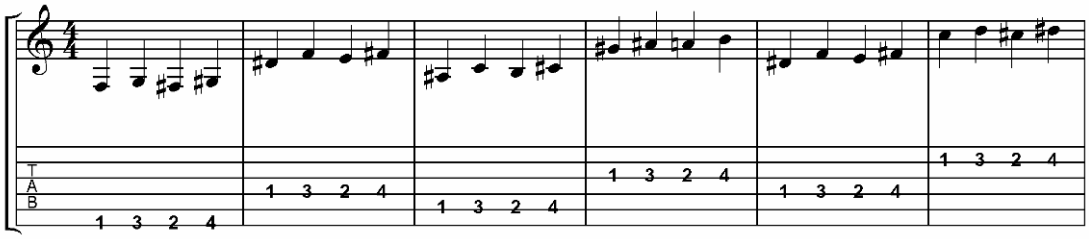
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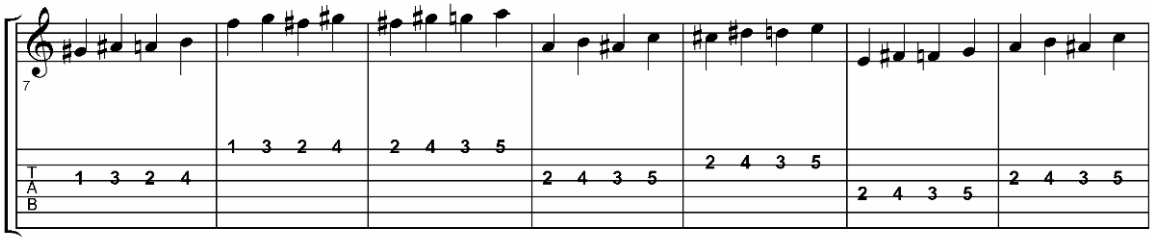
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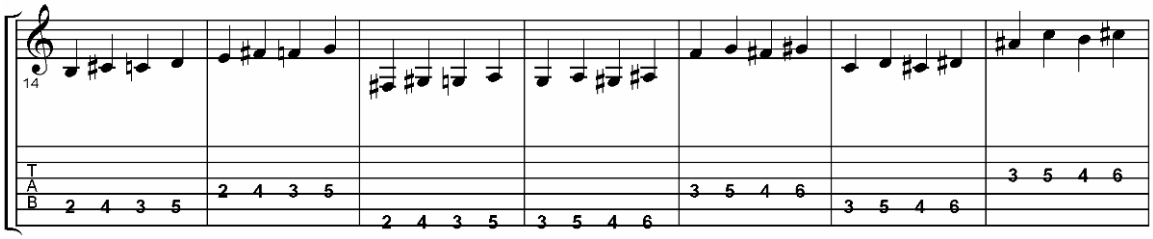
14
T
A
B
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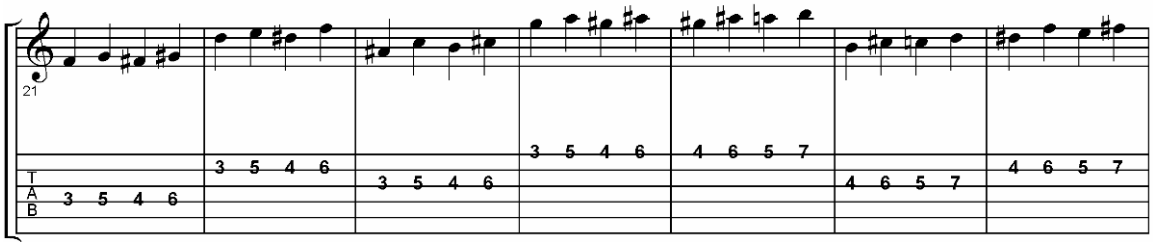
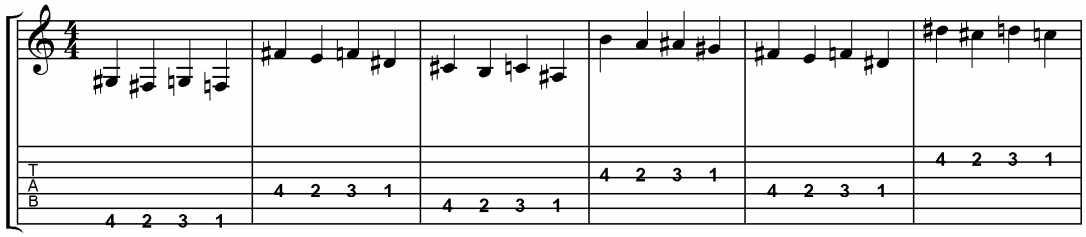
2 4 3 5
2 4 3 5
3 5 4 6
3 5 4 6
3 5 4 6
3 5 4 6


21
T
A
B
3 5 4 6
3 5 4 6
3 5 4 6
3 5 4 6
4 6 5 7
4 6 5 7
4 6 5 7

Exercise 10


T
A
B
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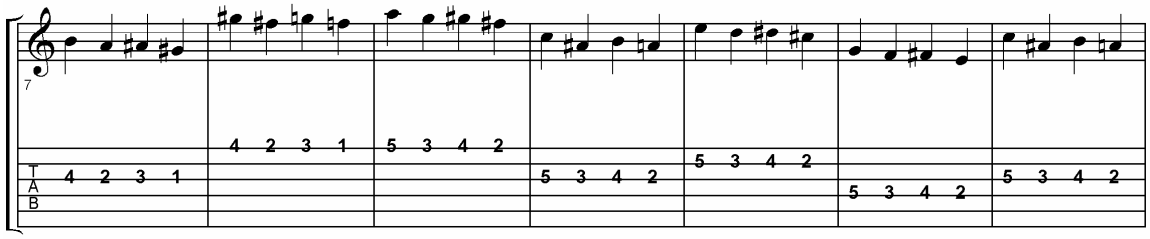
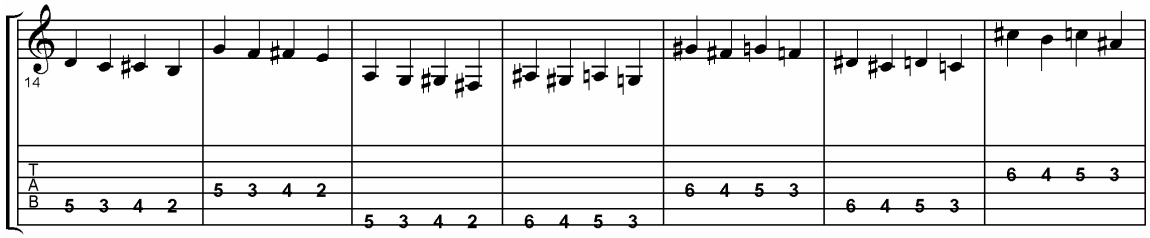
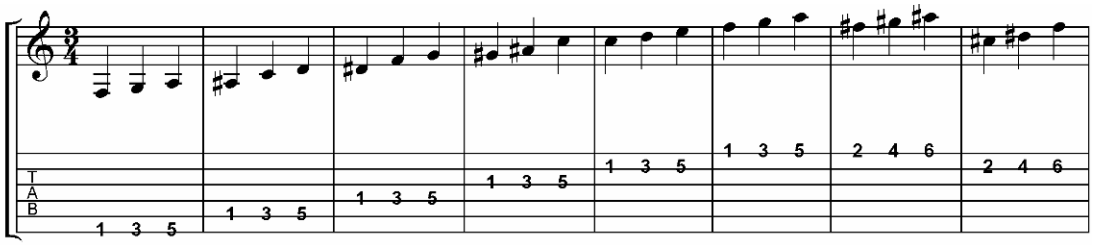
4 2 3 1
4 2 3 1
4 2 3 1
4 2 3 1


7
T
A
B
4 2 3 1
4 2 3 1
5 3 4 2
5 3 4 2
5 3 4 2
5 3 4 2


14
T
A
B
5 3 4 2
5 3 4 2
5 3 4 2
6 4 5 3
6 4 5 3
6 4 5 3

Exercise 11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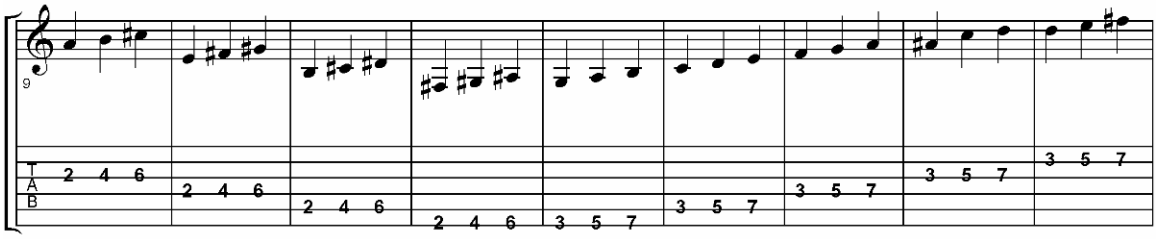
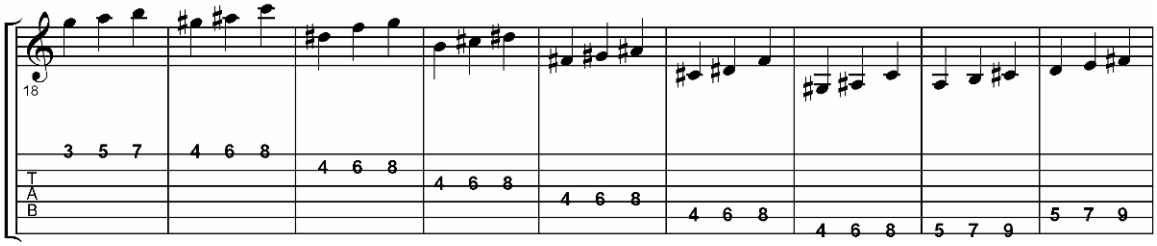
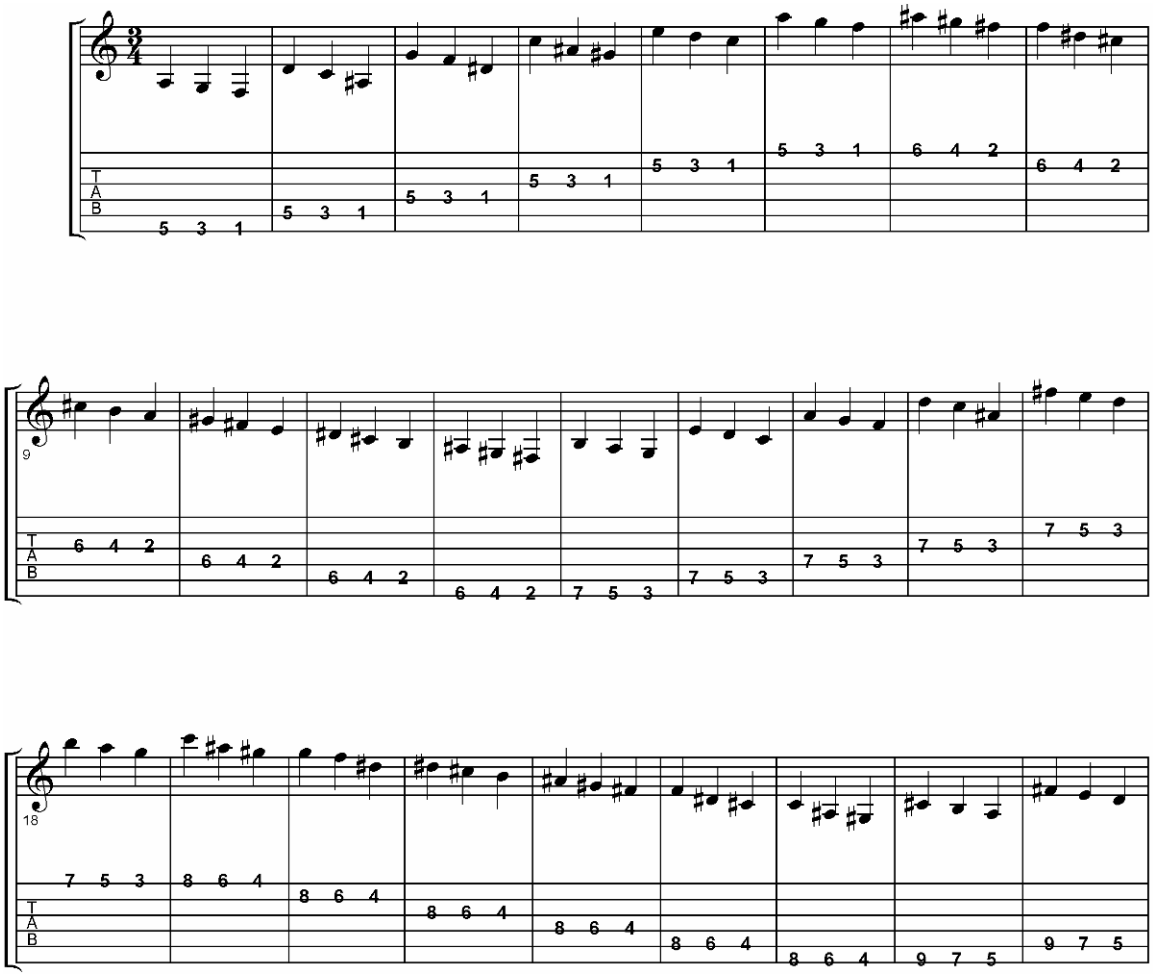
1 3 5
1 3 5
1 3 5
1 3 5
1 3 5
2 4 6
2 4 6

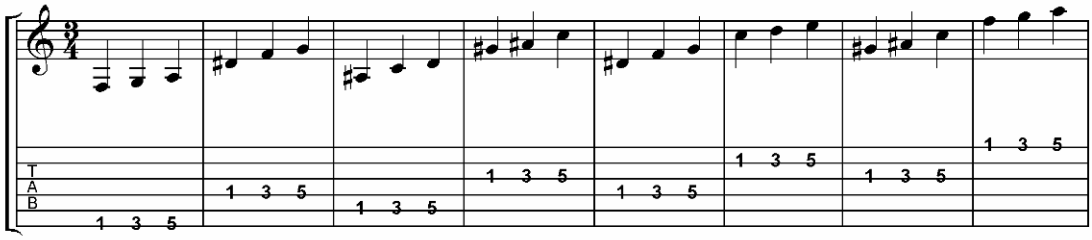

9
2 4 6
2 4 6
2 4 6
2 4 6
3 5 7
3 5 7
3 5 7
3 5 7

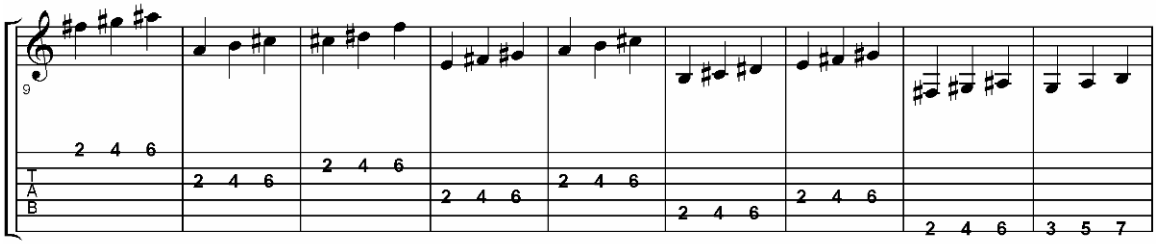

18
3 5 7
4 6 8
4 6 8
4 6 8
4 6 8
4 6 8
4 6 8
5 7 9
5 7 9

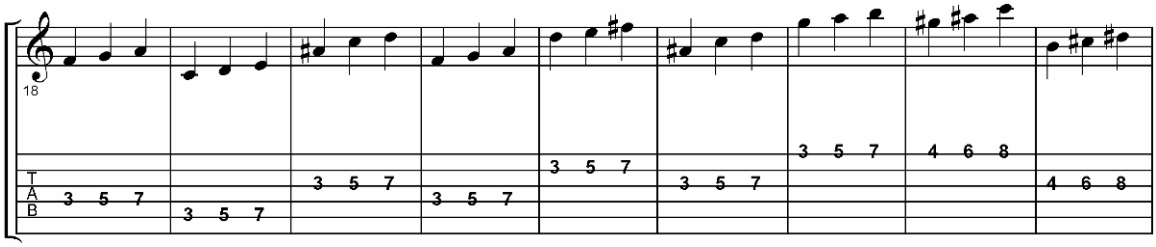
Exercise 12



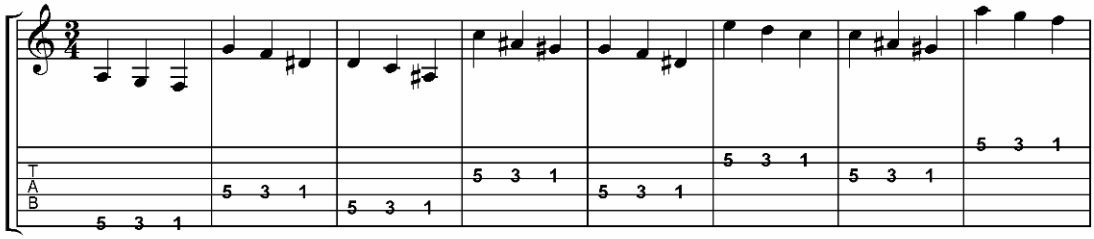
Exercise 13

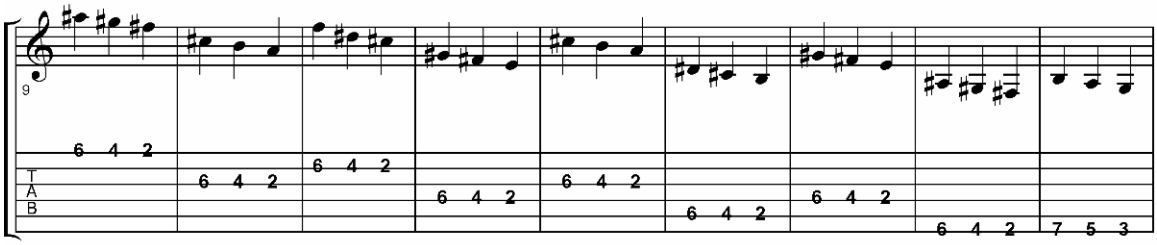

T
A
B
1 3 5
1 3 5
1 3 5
1 3 5
1 3 5
1 3 5
1 3 5

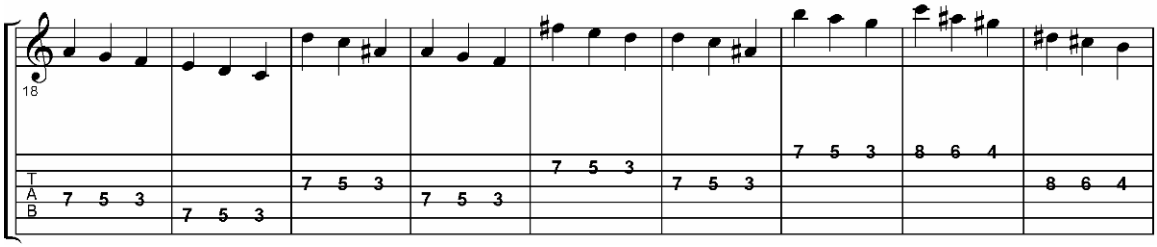

9
T
A
B
2 4 6
2 4 6
2 4 6
2 4 6
2 4 6
2 4 6
2 4 6
2 4 6
3 5 7


18
T
A
B
3 5 7
3 5 7
3 5 7
3 5 7
3 5 7
3 5 7
3 5 7
4 6 8
4 6 8

Exercise 14

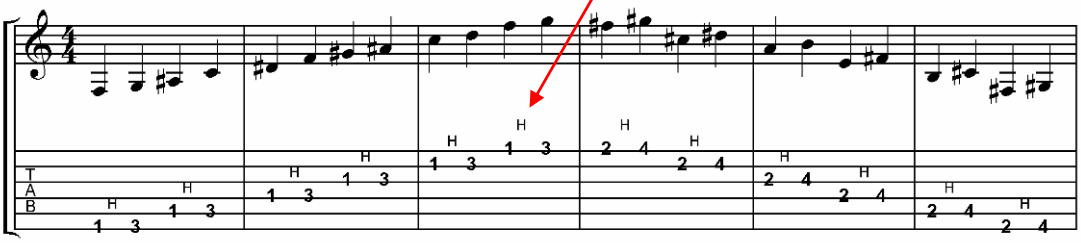

T
A
B
5 3 1
5 3 1
5 3 1
5 3 1
5 3 1
5 3 1
5 3 1

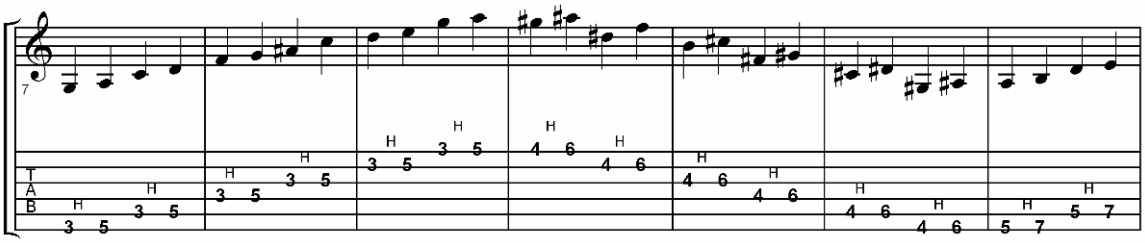

9
T
A
B
6 4 2
6 4 2
6 4 2
6 4 2
6 4 2
6 4 2
6 4 2
6 4 2
7 5 3

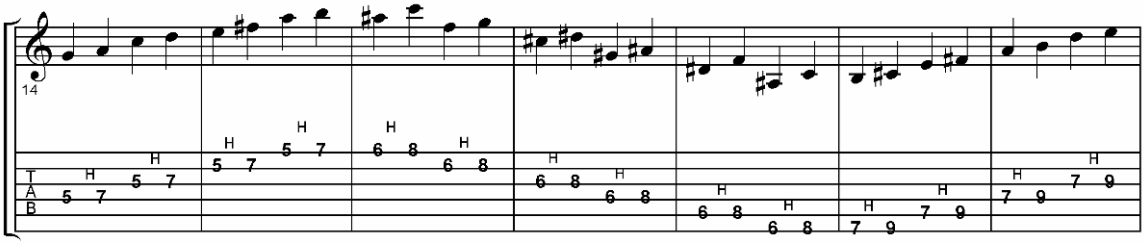

18
T
A
B
7 5 3
7 5 3
7 5 3
7 5 3
7 5 3
7 5 3
7 5 3
8 6 4
8 6 4

“H” stands for “hammer-on.”

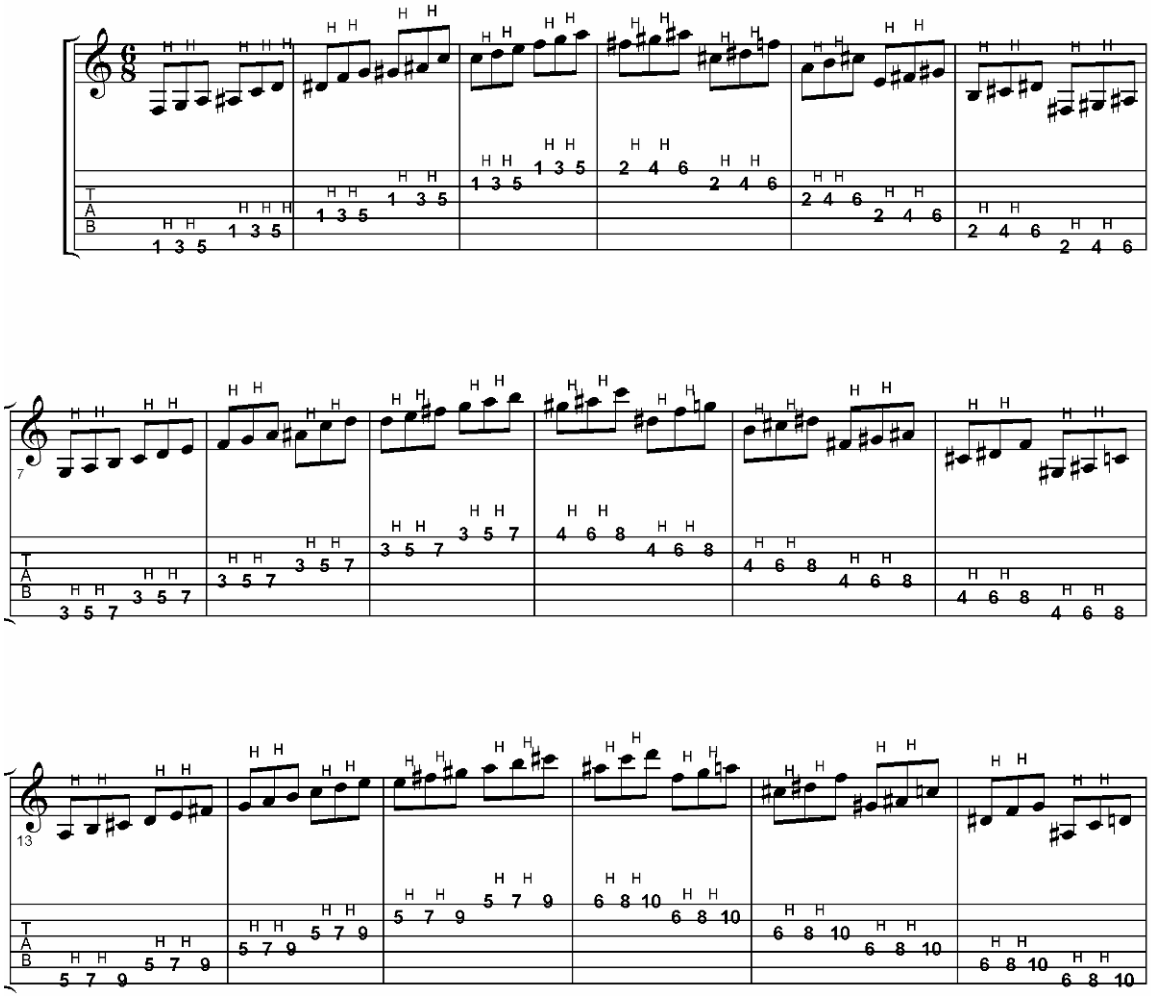
Exercise 15



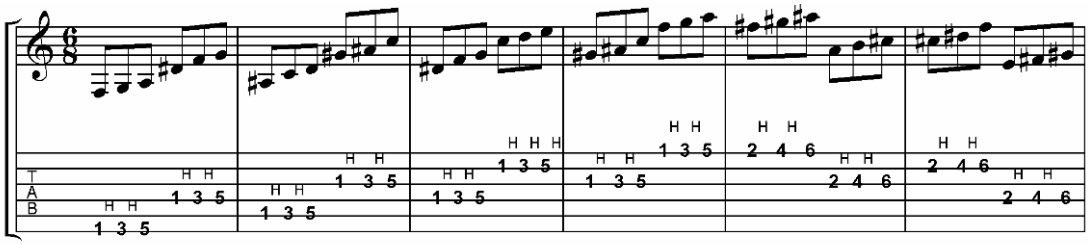


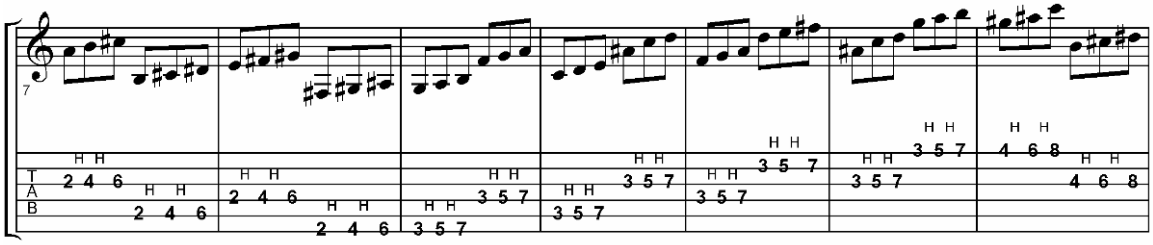


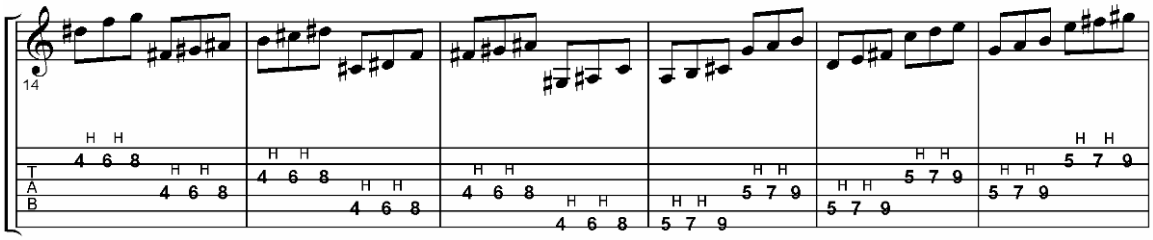
Exercise 16



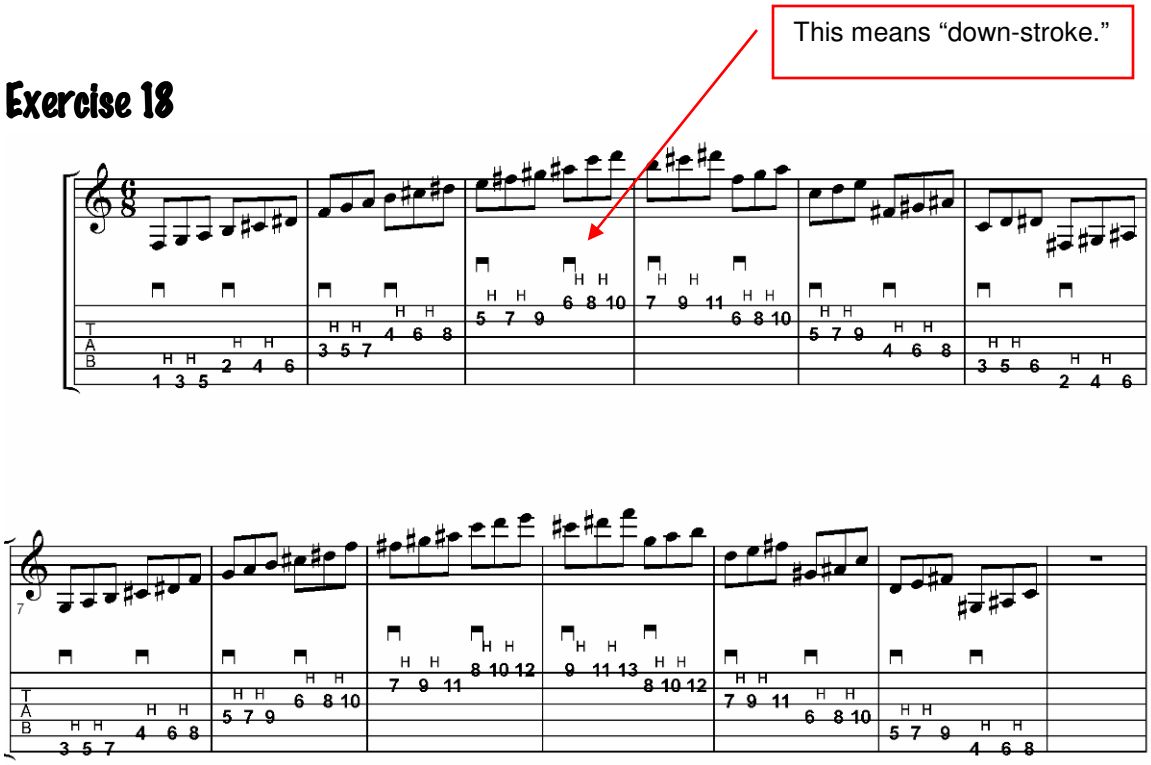
Exercise 17







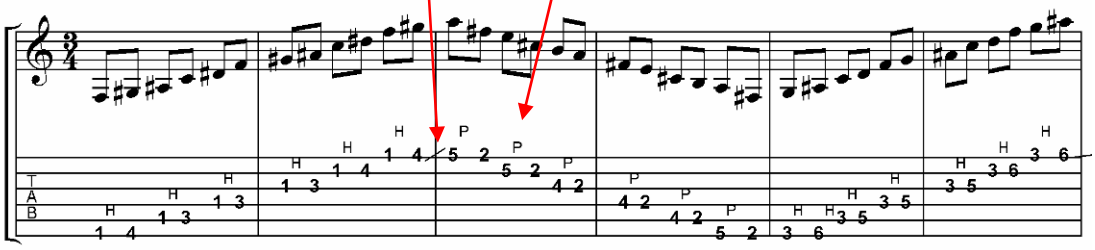
Exercise 18

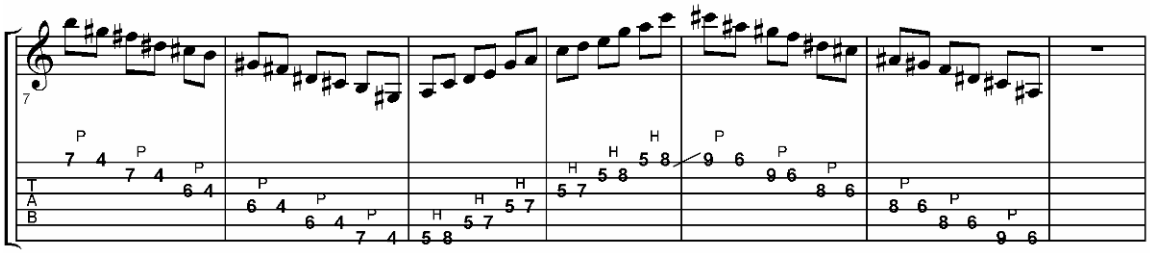


Slide symbol.

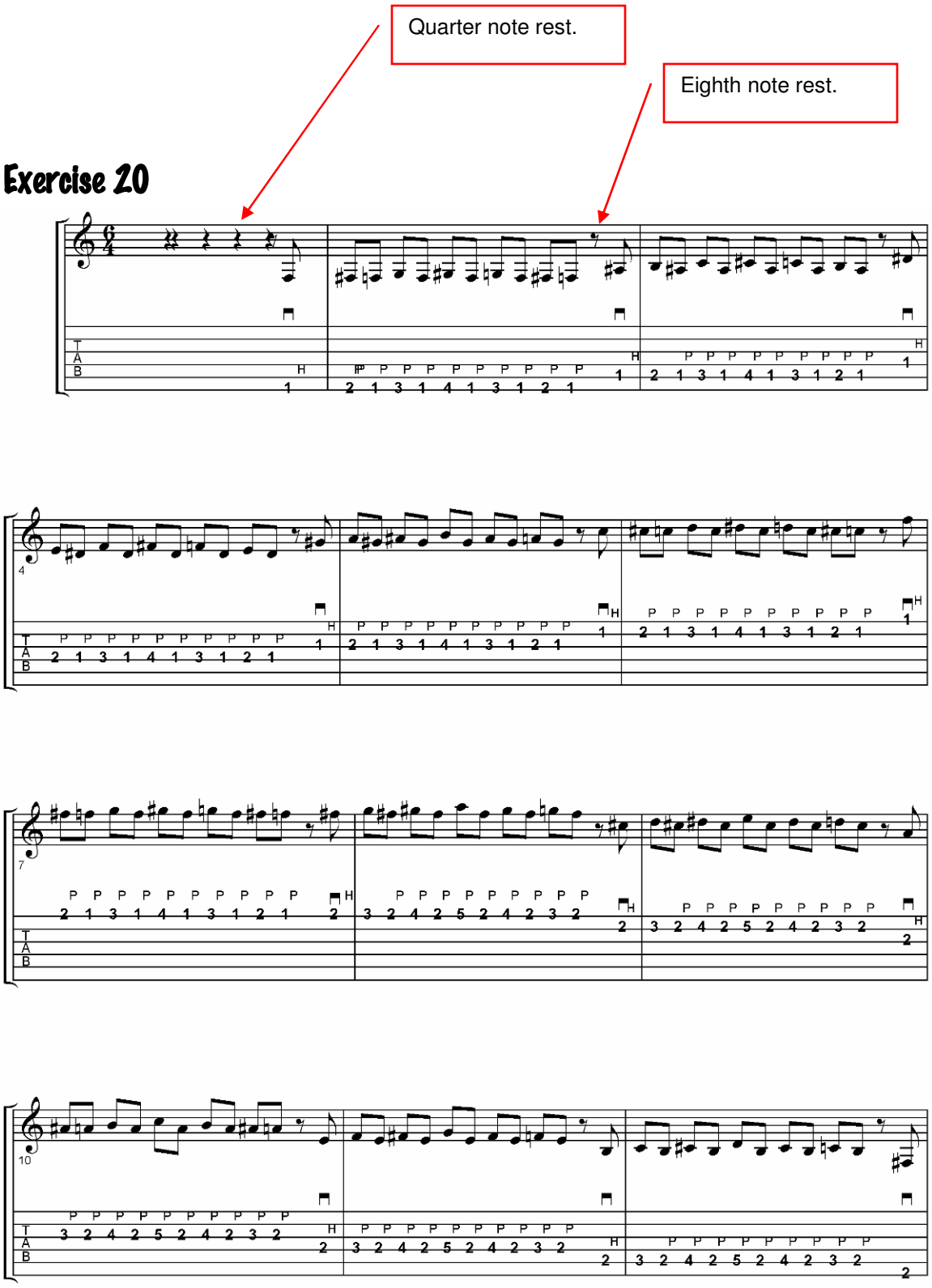
“P” stands for “pull-off.”

Exercise 19





Exercise 20



Final Thoughts

I sincerely hope you've enjoyed this book. And more than that, I hope you've greatly increased your finger strength, agility and dexterity. You are well on your way to playing nearly any chord, solo lick or riff.

All the best to you and your guitar playing future!

Cheers,

Dan Denley