FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

RY NAYLOR GUITAR SINCE 2010

ARPEGGIOS BUILDING BLOCKS

AN IN-DEPTH EXPLORATION OF GUITAR ARPEGGIOS



THEORY
TECHNIQUE
APPLICATION

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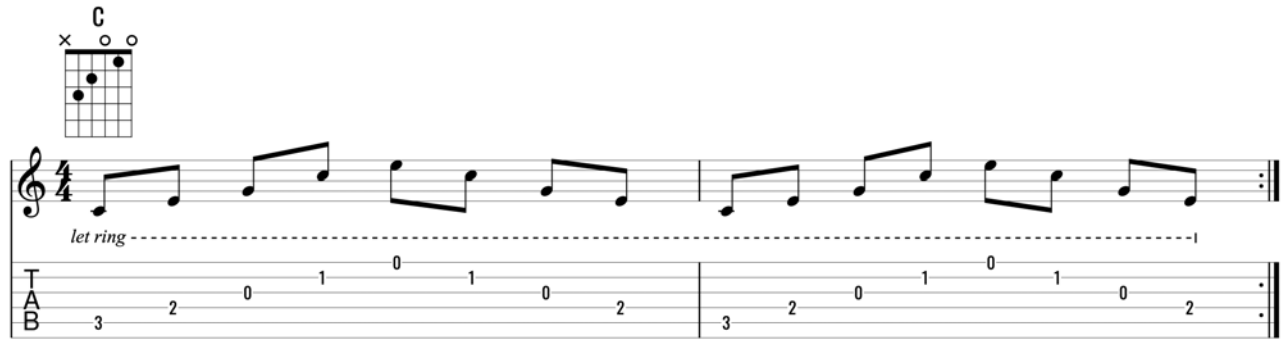
Introduction

Arpeggio derives from the Italian word *arpeggiare* which means 'to play the harp' (*Arpa* being the Italian word for harp). In modern music, it refers to a **playing a 'broken' chord**. Rather than strumming an entire chord shape, the notes within a chord are played in a sequence of individual notes.

An arpeggio is made up of the notes used to play the chord of the same name. For this reason you will often see notes of an arpeggio identified as **chord tones** as I will do here. These chord tones may be played in sequential order (up or down), or they can be played in different patterns.

Arpeggio Vs. Arpeggiating

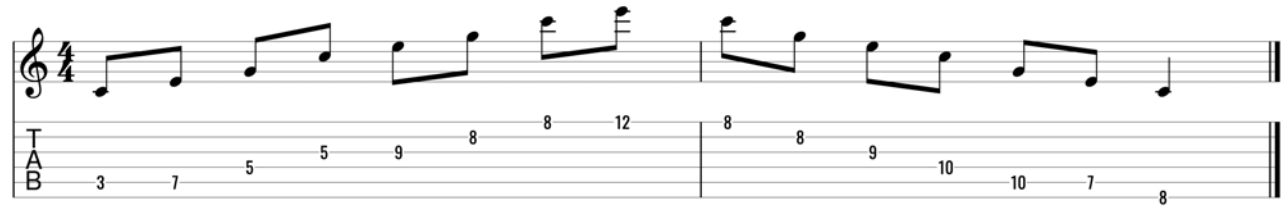
There is a subtle difference to be aware of between playing an arpeggio as opposed to *arpeggiating* (or picking) a chord. If you pick out a chord shape and the notes ring together (*let ring*) this is '**arpeggiating**' a chord:



Arpeggiating C major

Songs like 'Everybody Hurts' by R.E.M., 'Dust in the Wind' by Kansas, or 'Hallelujah' as performed by Jeff Buckley are great examples of this arpeggiating approach to chord progressions.

An **arpeggio** is slightly different with each note being played individually without the notes 'bleeding' in to one another. You want the guitar to sound like a vocalist with a single melodic line.



One way to play a C major arpeggio

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Used subtly, arpeggios allow you to target chord tones and make your solos and improvisations more refined and more *musical*. Taken to the extreme, arpeggio shapes can be played at blistering face-melting speeds and are the staple of shred players' vocabulary. Check out players like John Petrucci, Yngwie Malmsteen, Nuno Bettencourt or Paul Gilbert for examples of this.

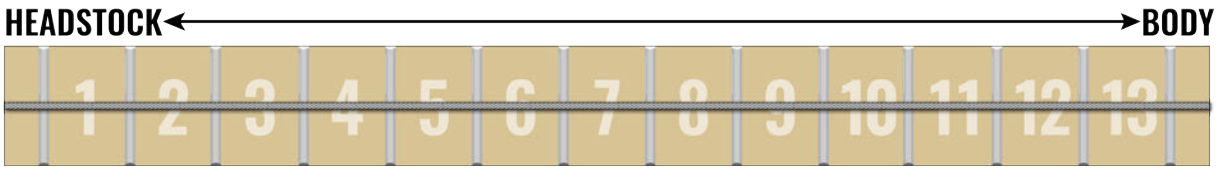
Arpeggios: Building Blocks will teach you the theory behind major key arpeggios and allow you to learn and apply them more effectively on the guitar fretboard with the help of my unique **Interval Colour System**. Each fretboard chart will be annotated with colour to highlight the relationship between each chord tone to help you better understand the theory of each arpeggio and why it appears so on the fretboard.

What You Will Learn

You will progressively learn the many ways to play all the three and four-note arpeggios found within **major scale theory** (with a couple of interesting additions):

- Major triad (R-3-5)
- Minor triad (R-♭3-5)
- Diminished (R-♭3-♭5)
- Augmented (R-3-♯5)
- Major Seventh (R-3-5-7)
- Dominant Seventh (R-3-5-♭7)
- Minor Seventh (R-♭3-5-♭7)
- Half-Diminished Seventh (m7♭5) (R-♭3-♭5-♭7)
- Diminished Seventh (R-♭3-♭5-♭♭7)

At each stage you'll begin with **horizontal vision** along a single string for a solid grounding in the construction of each arpeggio form:



Single String Scales

You'll then learn the different ways to approach arpeggios across a string pair and how these patterns repeat across multiple octaves along the fretboard. As well as starting from the Root notes you'll also learn the arpeggios starting from different chord tones (in their different *inversions*).

With a focus on the thinner strings you'll learn arpeggio forms across a three-string grouping before exploring the different ways to navigate arpeggio patterns to link up octave Root notes. Combining these patterns will complete the fretboard vision with the end goal of you playing arpeggio patterns effortlessly across the entire fretboard.

At each stage I'll suggest suitable practice exercises and give you tips on how to develop your own exercises and arpeggio practice routine.

Sound good? Then let's do this!

Ry
April 2023

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Learning Essentials

Just before we launch in, here are some essential concepts that you need to know to help you get the most out of the book.

My ‘House Style’

String names are identified by both string number and note name, e.g. string 4(D).

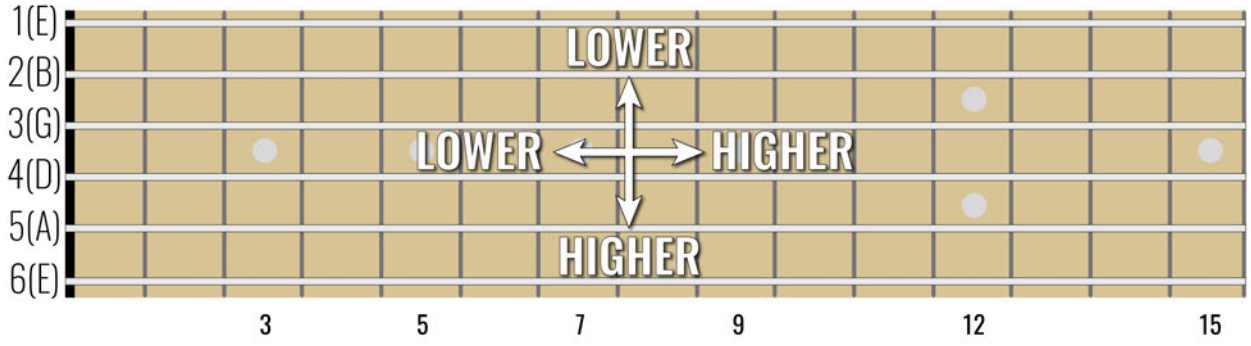
Whenever writing about intervals I use numbers in **bold**. For example the **5** (fifth) or **♭3** (minor third) etc. **Root** notes will always appear in **red** and will often be shortened to **R** like the fretboard diagrams.

When explaining movement around the fretboard there are two axes to consider: **horizontally** on a single string and **vertically** across the strings.

On a single string horizontally, *higher* refers to a higher fret, nearer the guitar body (for example fret 7 to 10). *Lower* is a lower fret, towards the headstock (e.g. fret 5 to 3).

When moving across the strings vertically, I do so in the physical space, so a lower string is *physically* lower towards the floor as you play. For example, moving from string 2(B) to 1(E) is *down* one string.

In the opposite way, moving *up* one or more string will refer to moving up towards the ceiling. For example, moving from string 2(B) to 4(D) is *up* two strings.



String Orientation

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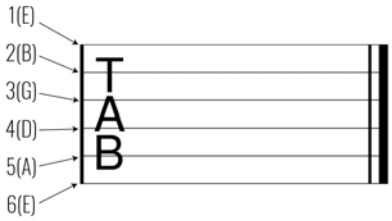
Reading TAB

As well as the fretboard charts, there will be accompanying TAB notation created with Guitar Pro 8.

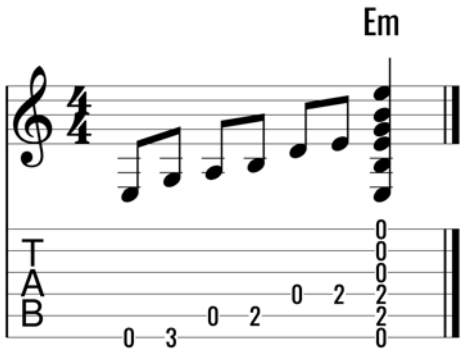


TAB (a diminutive of 'tablature') is a guitar-specific number notation method which indicates how the notes shown in the music ('standard notation') are to be played on guitar. TAB is also commonly seen without accompanying standard notation.

Unlike standard notation (which has 5 lines) TAB has six lines to represent the six guitar strings. The bottom line being string 6(E), the top line is string 1(E). If you are ever in any doubt, place your guitar face up on your lap. As you look down over the strings, this is how they are arranged in the TAB.

Numbers are placed on the lines to indicate that the string is played with a finger pressing at that particular fret number. A zero (0) represents a string that is played open (i.e. no fingers).

Numbers can be stacked on top of each other to show that they are played at the same time, like a chord.



Remember that the numbers refer to **fret numbers** *not* fingers. You will see numbers written in the standard notation either beside or below the noteheads to indicate which fretting hand finger to use.

Wherever possible I will provide both standard notation and TAB. Whilst you might not yet be able to read music, be curious about how what you are playing is represented in the music. Reading music can only benefit you in your musical journey. Embrace it.

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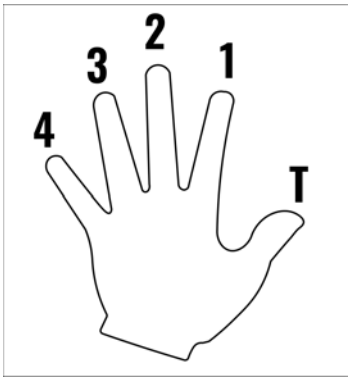
Playing Positions

As you learn arpeggios patterns (particularly across multiple strings), it's important to be confident with **playing positions** as I will sometimes instruct you where to place your hand using these labels.

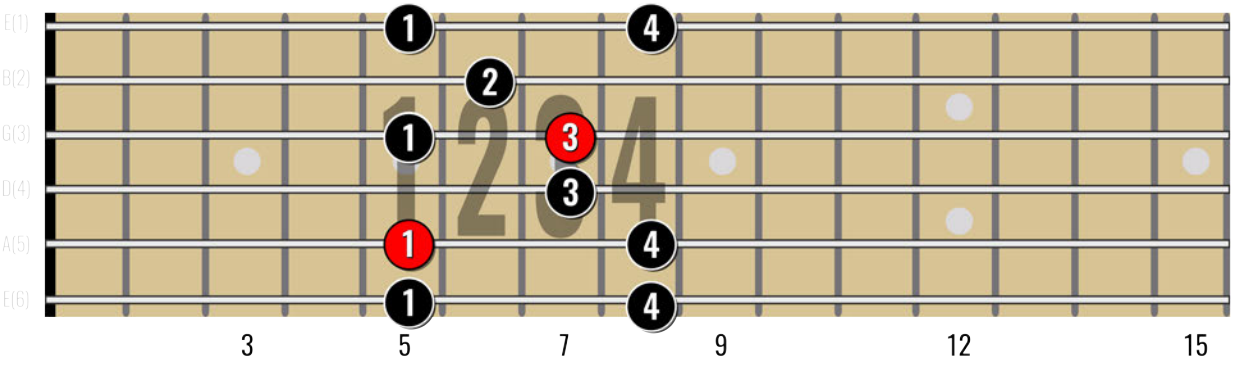


Fretting hand fingers

Arpeggio shapes will either be firmly in one playing position or will require **position shifts** (in which the fretting hand moves horizontally higher up or lower down the fretboard).

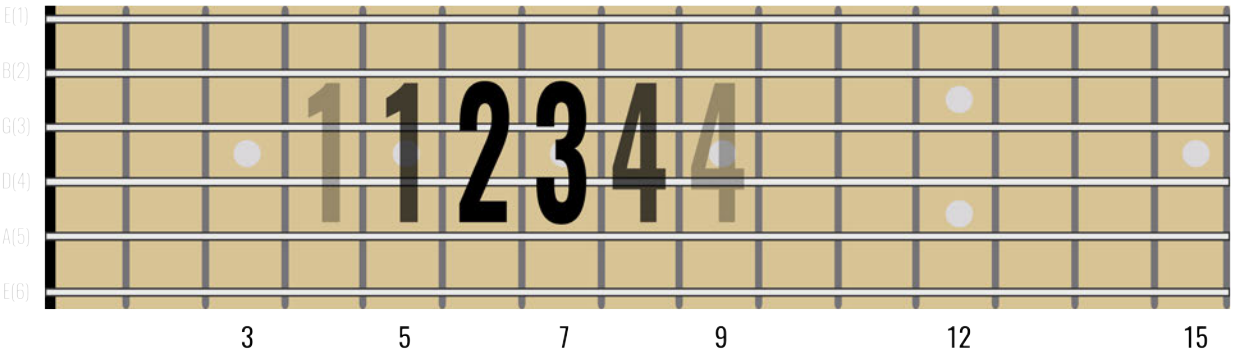
A playing position occurs when you are using all four fretting hand fingers across a four-fret area of the fretboard.

The position is numbered by the fret in which you place the index finger (1). For example, this following arpeggio pattern is in the fifth position (numbers represent the recommended fingering):



D minor seventh arpeggio in the fifth position

That's the easiest way to think about it. More specifically, a playing position is determined by the **fret immediately below the *middle* finger (2)**. The reason is that you can introduce stretches between fingers 1 and 2 and between fingers 3 and 4.



Fifth position *(finger 1 can reach back to the 4th fret, finger 4 can reach up to the 9th fret)*

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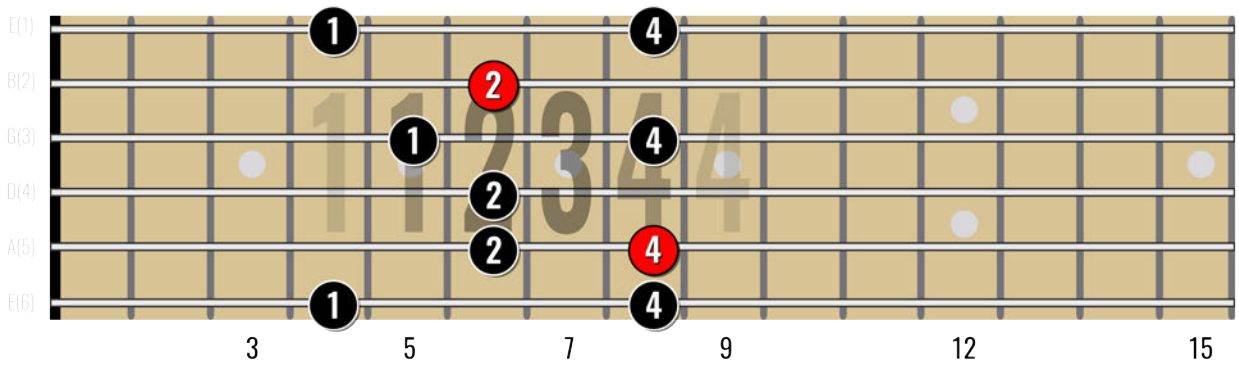
The arpeggio below would therefore *still* be in the fifth position, even though there are notes under finger 1 in the 4th fret:



F minor seventh arpeggio in the fifth position

Care should be taken not to confuse playing position with 'scale position'. Some instructors (myself included) may refer to scale patterns as, for example, 'position 3' which refers to position 3 of 5 and not playing in the third position.

The Imperfection of Standard Tuning

A key concept when learning anything on the guitar is understanding why note patterns and shapes change as you move them across the different string sets.

The answer is that the guitar strings are not tuned evenly. Standard tuning is imperfect. There is not an even distance between each of the adjacent string pairs. The strings are tuned a perfect 4th apart (spanning four alphabet letters) except between strings 3(G) and 2(B) which are a major 3rd apart:

String Numbers	String Notes	Interval
6 to 5	E to A	Perfect 4th
5 to 4	A to D	Perfect 4th
4 to 3	D to G	Perfect 4th
3 to 2	**G to B**	**Major 3rd**
2 to 1	B to E	Perfect 4th

That's why 'relative tuning' (or 5th fret tuning) is at the 5th fret...except you tune from the 4th fret on string 3(G) to tune string 2(B).

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As a result there are **two key rules** that you need to know:

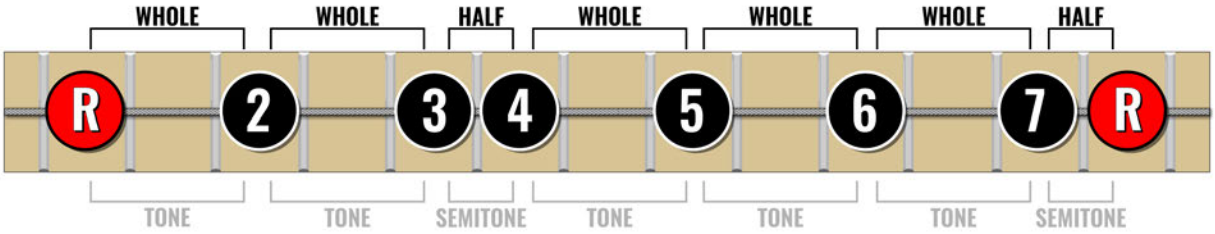
RULE 1: When moving an arpeggio shape vertically downwards across the string sets (towards the floor), any note(s) moving from string 3(G) to 2(B) must be **raised** one fret (towards the guitar body) for the intervals to remain the same.

RULE 2: When moving an arpeggio shape vertically upwards across the string sets (towards the ceiling), any note(s) moving from string 2(B) to 3(G) must be **lowered** one fret (towards the guitar headstock) for the intervals to remain the same.

We'll apply these rules to the arpeggio shapes as we progress to give this some context.

The "Ruler"

The ruler with which we 'measure' music is the **major scale**. All major scales, irrespective of the starting note name, are created by respecting the following formula of whole steps/tones (2 frets) and half steps/semitones (1 fret):



Whatever the starting **Root**, the notes of the major scale will always be numbered in this way by their **scale degrees**. These scale degrees are like the notches of a measuring ruler to **calculate the distance of any note from its Root**, known as an **interval**.

Frets falling *in between* the scale degrees are identified as **flattened** notes of the major scale,
(a note is flattened by lowering it one fret towards the headstock):



Identifying each note in one octave relative to the major scale degrees

For example, any note three frets above a chosen Root is known as its **♭3** ("*flat 3*" or "*minor third*"). Any note a whole step below a Root note is identified as its **♭7** ("*flat 7*" or "*minor seventh*").

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Certain intervals can also be considered as sharpened notes of the major scale (raised one fret towards the guitar body), most commonly the fourth and fifth scale degrees:



Common sharp intervals (not found in the pentatonic scales)

You shall see this as you learn about the **augmented** arpeggio.

The importance of context

As well as learning the physical layout of arpeggios on the fretboard, it's arguably as important to learn how each arpeggio **sounds**.

This requires the arpeggios to be played in some sort of context...*harmonic* context. I'd recommend doing this as much as possible in your practice. This context is achieved by one of the following (using the example of a **C** major arpeggio):

1. **Constant Root note** on its own, known as a **drone** (C note)
2. **Chord** formed from the notes of the arpeggio you are playing (C major chord)
3. **Chord progression** in the instances where you are working on moving from one arpeggio to another, for example C-F chord working the visualisation of a C major arpeggio to an F major arpeggio

Drones and chord backing tracks can be easily found on YouTube or music streaming services like Spotify.

Wherever possible, work your arpeggio practice with this harmonic context. It makes it *so* much more fun!

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Your Practice

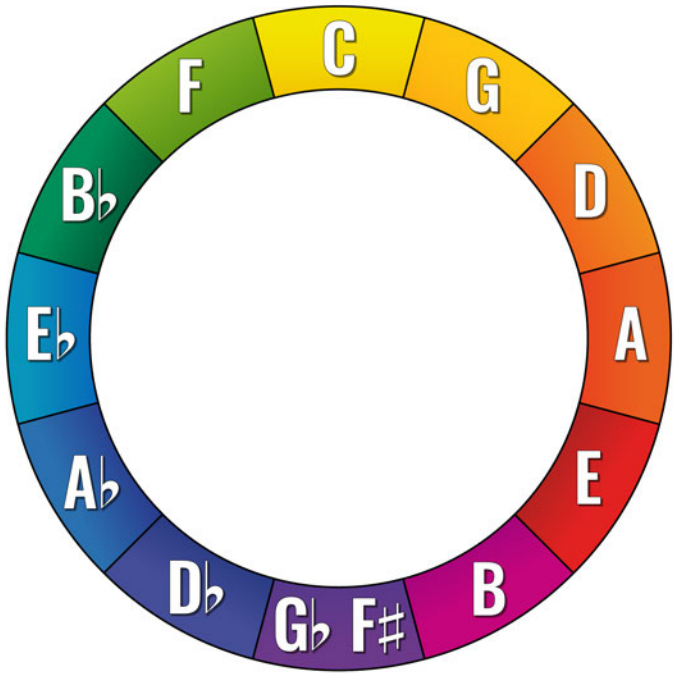
Wherever possible I am presenting the concepts from the **C** Root note. The C major scale is easiest when learning theoretical concepts as all the notes are those of the musical alphabet (i.e. no sharp or flat notes). You're also likely to be more confident with the musical alphabet when sourcing notes on the fretboard.

That said, when practicing the concepts and exercises I recommend that you move these concepts to different Root notes.

You will often hear teachers saying "practice in all twelve keys". This may sometimes feel like overkill but if you really want to master these arpeggios you should aim to do this, whether that's changing Root note with each practice session or doing 3 or 4 Root notes to each practice.

As a general rule, I'd encourage you to move root notes in ascending fourths (or descending fifths). Musically, it is also a very common and satisfying interval move especially if you are playing a single visualisation exercise through all 12 keys.

Your reference for doing this is *counterclockwise* around the Circle of Fifths - **A**...**D**...**G**...**C**...**F**...**B♭**...etc.



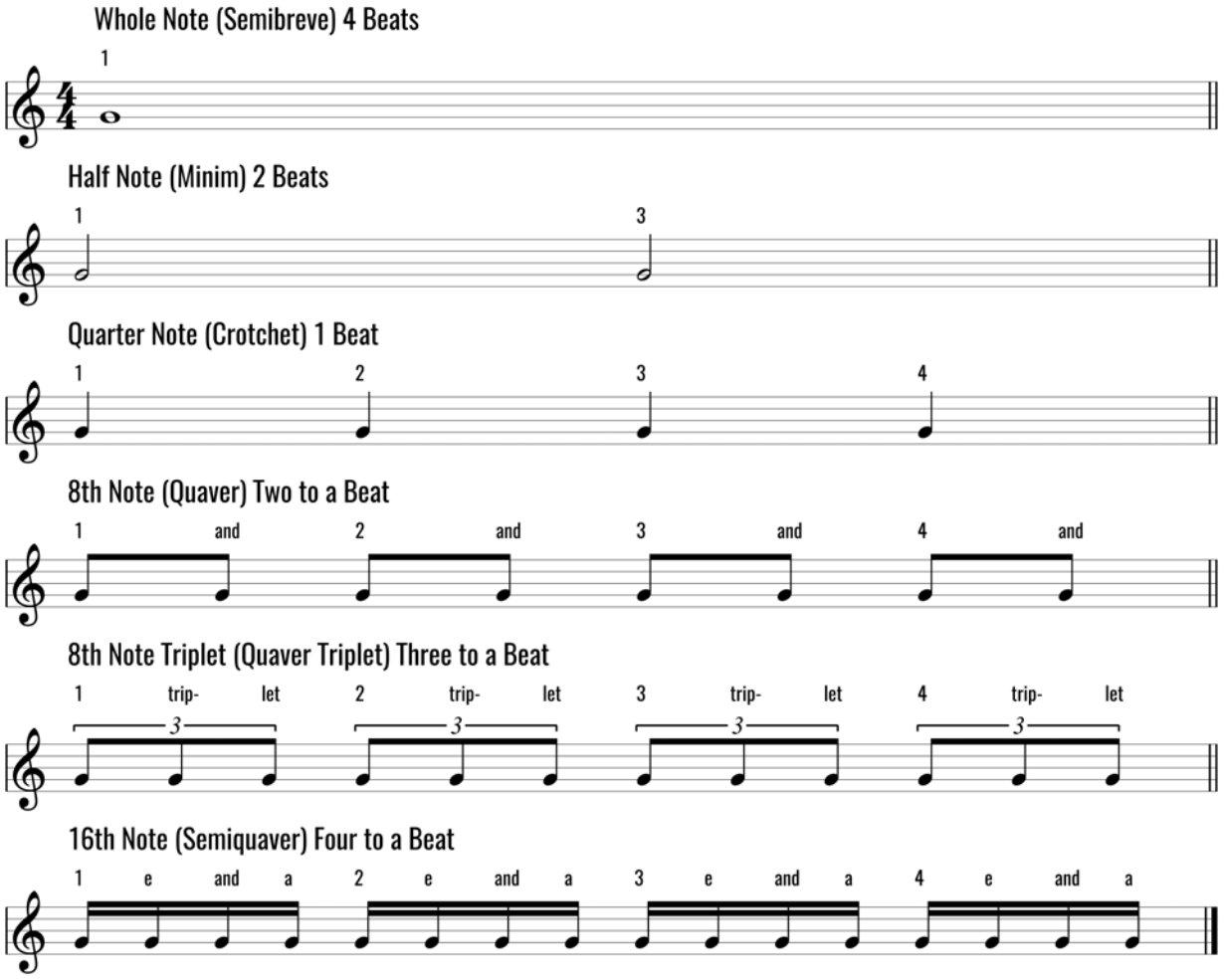
The Circle of Fifths

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

Use a metronome!

As well as changing Root notes, I'd *highly* encourage you to **work with a metronome** wherever possible. Doing so brings an additional level of focus and helps develop strong timing and groove.

If you are unfamiliar with rhythm notation, here are the common subdivisions of the beat in 4/4 time:



There are many metronome apps that can subdivide a beat at any chosen tempo if you are not familiar with the *sound* of these different rhythms. My favourite app is Tempo by Frozen Ape.

When working with the metronome I recommend an **80-160 BPM** (Beats Per Minute) range. As you master a concept at 160 BPM, you can then return to 80 BPM playing the exercise with the next beat subdivision. For example, playing quarter notes at 160 BPM is the same as playing 8th notes at 80 BPM.

As triad arpeggios are three-note groupings they work well as 8th note triplets. I'll be presenting that in some of the example practice exercises.

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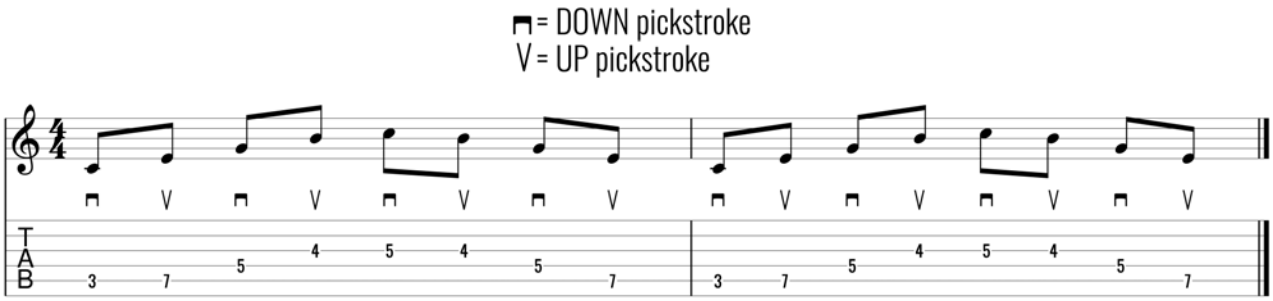
Picking Possibilities

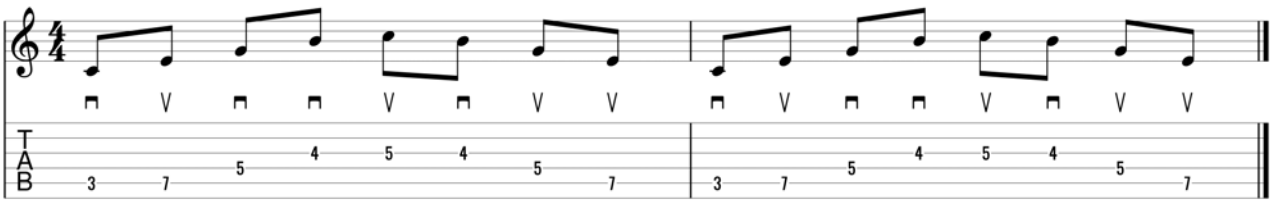
All the material here is aimed to be played with the pick. There are two main approaches and I'd encourage you to explore both as you practice:

1. **Alternate picking** - with constant down-up hand motion, alternating down picks and up picks:



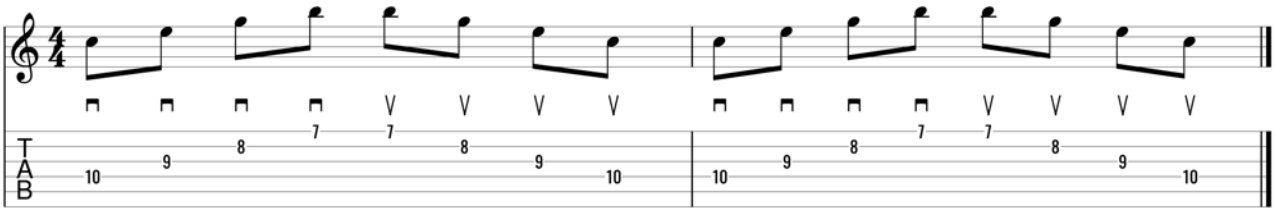
Cmaj7 arpeggio alternate picking

2. **Economy picking** - Limiting the movement of the fretting hand by only changing picking direction when *absolutely* necessary. Think of it as the picking direction being determined by the *next* note: If note #2 is on a lower string play note #1 with a down pick. If note #2 is on a higher string use an up pick for note #1:



Cmaj7 arpeggio economy picking

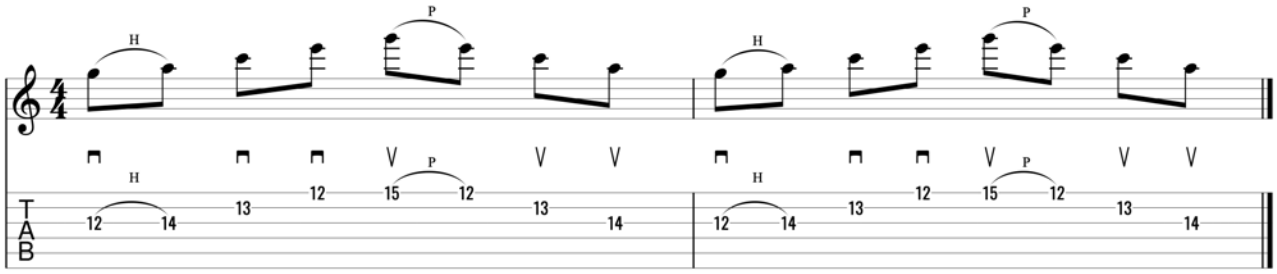
Sweep picking (a form of economy picking) is one continuous pick motion across three or more strings in which you push the pick down through the strings and then drag it back upwards. Ensure that you release fretting hand pressure on the fretboard immediately after a note has been played to reduce unwanted noise:



Cmaj7 sweep picking

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

A combination of hammer on (H) - pull off (P) technique with sweep picking allows you to build speed and fluidity. Here's an example:



Am7 arpeggio

Practice Exercise Themes

There will be two key variables for your practice:

1. **Arpeggio 'Type'** - major/minor/dominant seventh/diminished seventh *etc.*
2. **Arpeggio 'Shape'** - the physical arrangement of the chord tones the fretboard (for example, 1-2 two-string arpeggio / three-string arpeggio / three octaves / CAGED etc.)

Below are some core themes to the practice exercises that I will present. At the end of each chapter you'll learn a few exercises chosen from some of these core themes. My aim is for you to use these exercises as inspiration for creating your own practice exercises:

Static Root

Playing through all the possible arpeggio types of a chosen shape from the same Root note. This can begin on the Root or one of the other chord tones.

Static Root Inversions

Playing through the different inversions of an arpeggio type from the same Root on a chosen string grouping.

Cycle Static Shape

The same arpeggio type and shape but from *different* Root notes. This works nicely with the cycle of fourths or moving a shape up or down a certain interval (thirds works well here).

Cycle Inversions

Cycle Root notes in fourths, but as you change Root each arpeggio inversion will begin on the nearest chord tone.

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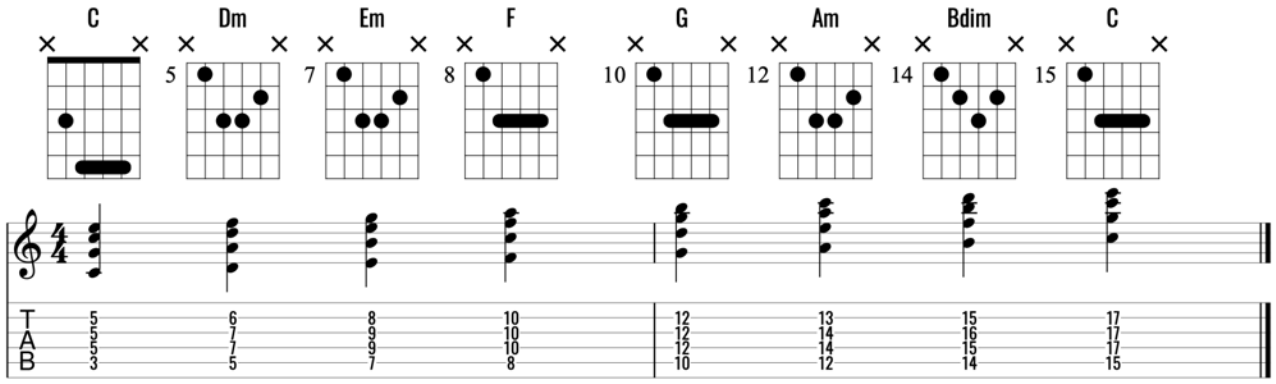
Playing Through a Key (Same Shape)

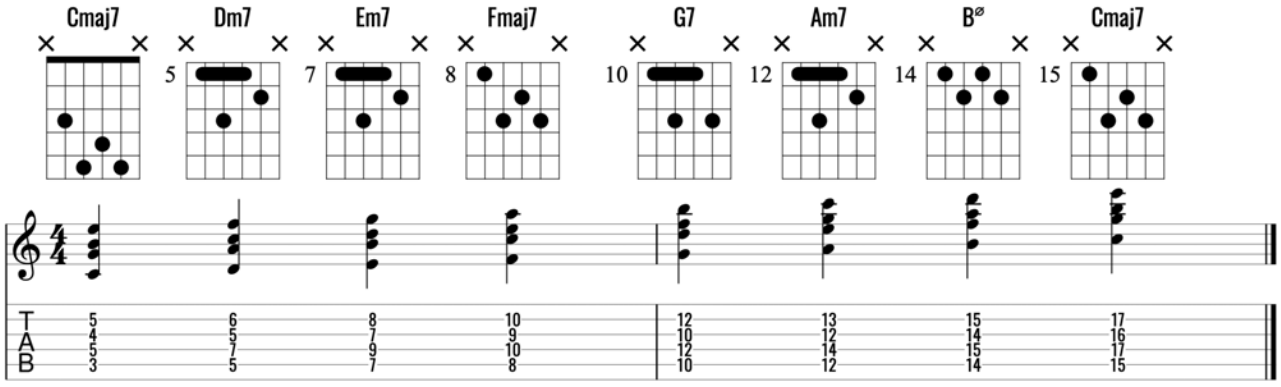
One shape played through the seven chords of the major/minor key. The arpeggios are the same as the chords in a key. With **C** major as the example key, the triads are as follows:



There are **three triad arpeggio types**:

- **Major** triads on the **1**, **4** and **5** (I, IV and V)
- **Minor** triads on the **2**, **3** and **6** (ii, iii and vi)
- **Diminished** triad on the **7** (vi°)

The seventh chords of the major key are as follows:



There are **four seventh arpeggio types**:

- **Major seventh** on the **1** and **4** (I^{maj7}, IV^{maj7})
- **Dominant seventh** on the **5** (V7)
- **Minor seventh** on the **2**, **3** and **6** (ii^{-7}, iii^{-7} and vi^{-7})
- **Half diminished seventh** on the **7** (vii∅)

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Playing Through a Key (Scale Pattern)

Playing the seven arpeggios in a key within a chosen 7-note scale pattern. This is a great way to get more from your CAGED or 3 note-per-string scale patterns.

Rhythmic Variation

As well as gradually increasing the speed at which you can play arpeggios with the BPM of the metronome, you can also play through the different subdivisions of the beat at one constant tempo.

For example, you could set your metronome at 60 BPM and can play quarter notes (pick with the click)...then 8th notes (two per click)...8th note triplets (three per click)...16th notes (four per click)... 16th note triplets (six per click)...*32nd notes (eight per click)?! The sky is the limit!*

Arpeggio Sequences

Here you'll explore the different ways to play through the chord tones. They needn't always be in strict ascending or descending order from the Root.

If you were to number the notes of an arpeggio ***1 2 3 4*** in ascending order, there are **24 possible permutations** (like 1324, 4123, 3124 etc). Be curious.

Random Note

Choose any note at random on any string with any fretting hand finger. This is your Root.

Choose an arpeggio type, and play one (or more) octaves of that arpeggio in any shape that suits the fretting hand position.

Keep doing this changing note, finger and arpeggio type. For an added challenge, change the starting chord tone i.e. the note you fret is the third, fifth or seventh.

Playing to a Progression

This is where things become more creative as you apply arpeggios to a chord progression. This can be a regimented number of notes in a particular shape and rhythm, or you can adopt a freer improvisatory approach.

It's a good idea to impose limitations on your note choice when playing to a progression, like playing everything within a 5 or 6 fret area. Studying the CAGED arpeggios in **Part 7** and **Part 12** will be particularly helpful as you do this.

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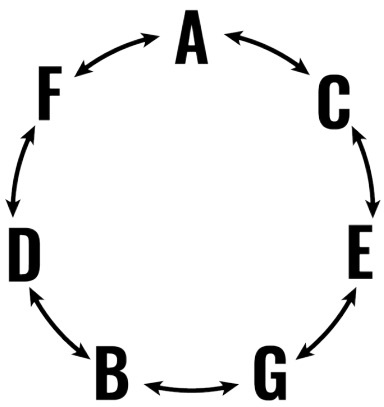
Part 1: Essential Intervals

The focus of **Arpeggios: Building Blocks** is to teach you the construction of each of the different arpeggios and, more importantly, to show you how they all lay out on the fretboard. To do so we'll consider the musical distance from one note to the next in each arpeggio and you will learn how each of these **intervals** link up to form larger fretboard-spanning shapes.

There is one interval that needs to be mastered more than any other when studying arpeggios...the **third**. A third is a distance between two notes spanning three musical alphabet letters.

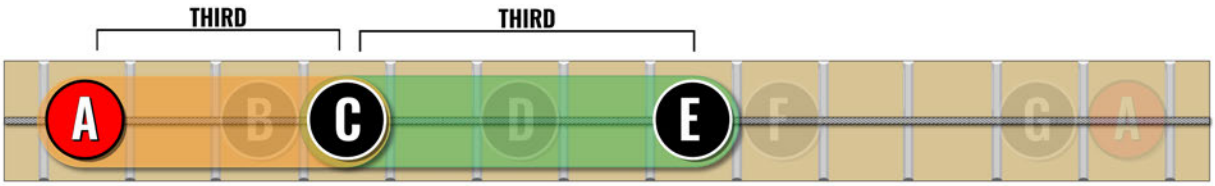
The **Circle of Thirds** (right) shows how the alphabet can be arranged in a never-ending loop of ascending thirds (clockwise) or descending thirds (counterclockwise).



Circle of Thirds

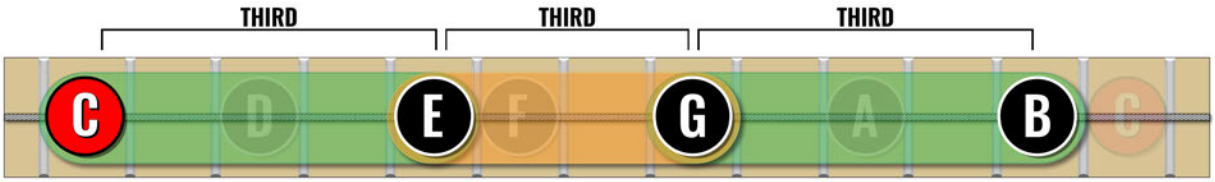
Make sure you're comfortable moving up or down through the musical alphabet in thirds. Say a few rounds of the Circle clockwise and counterclockwise (not so easy).

Chords and, in turn, arpeggios are created from **stacking thirds**.
Stacking two thirds gives a three-note **triad arpeggio**.
For example **A**-**C**-**E** are the notes of an A minor arpeggio.



*A minor arpeggio (A-C-E) (**R**-♭**3**-**5**)*

Stacking three thirds gives a four-note **seventh arpeggio**, for example **C**-**E**-**G**-**B** are the notes of a C major seventh arpeggio.



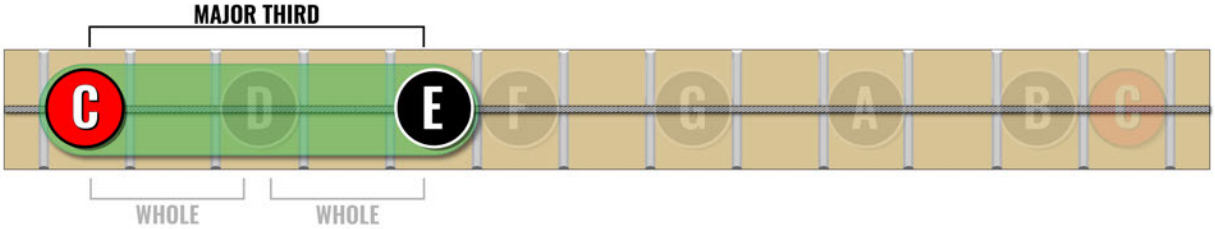
*C major seventh arpeggio (C-E-G-B) (**R**-**3**-**5**-**7**)*

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

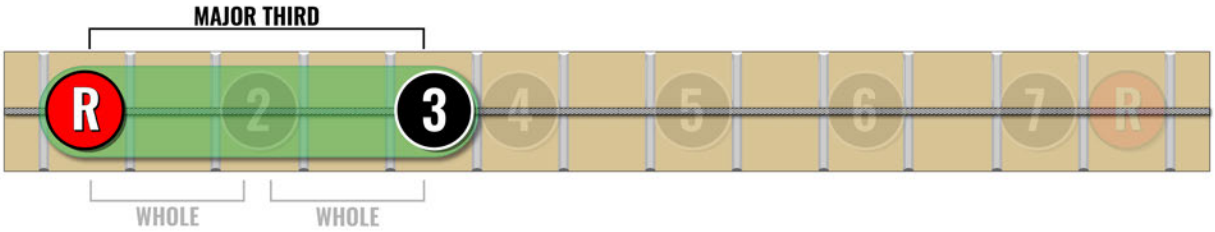
But all thirds are not born equal! There are two types of third and combining them in different ways gives you all of the different arpeggios.

Major Third (3)

The first interval is the **major third**, presumably named as such because it is the distance between the first and third note of any major scale:

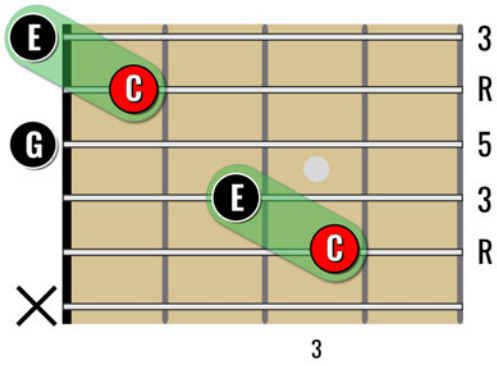


The major third spans three musical alphabet letters which are two whole steps apart. When identifying the interval, a major third above a **R** will be shortened to **3**.



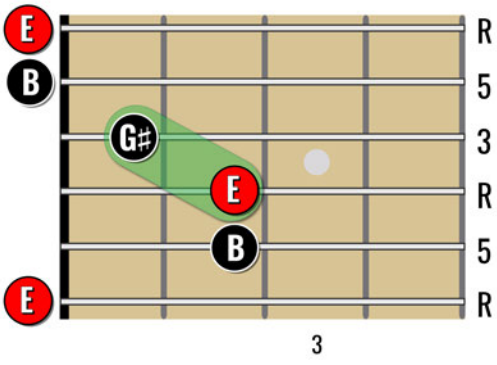
The major third interval will be green

Looking at the open **C major** chord, you can see what the major third looks like across an adjacent string pair.



A **major third** above any **R** will be **one fret lower** on the string physically below.

Here's another example in the open **E major** chord:



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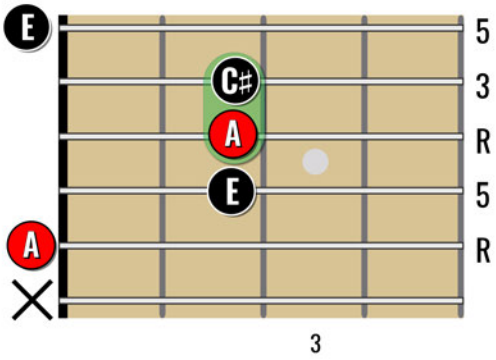
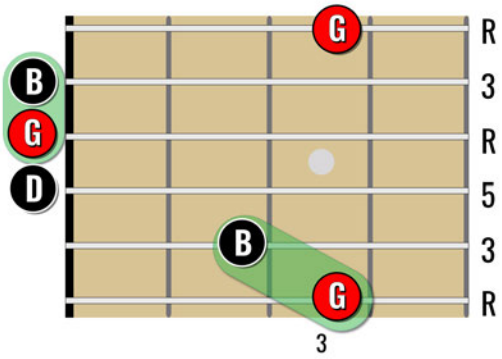
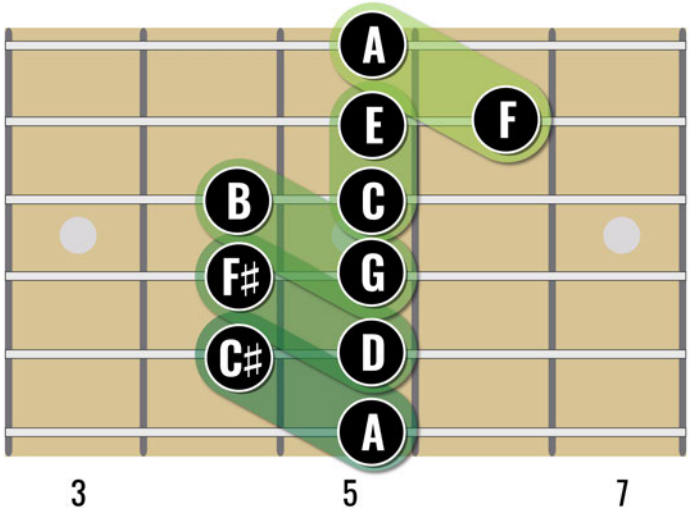
But, if you look at another familiar open chord you'll see that there is an exception. Here's **A** major:



Between strings 3(G) and 2(B) a major third will be in the **same fret**. You find a combination of these two third shapes in the open **G** major chord:



Here are major thirds across the string pairs from the 5th fret:



Notice how sometimes the major third will be a sharp note. For example the **3** above **A** is **C♯**. So what is **A** to **C**? That would be a **minor third**.

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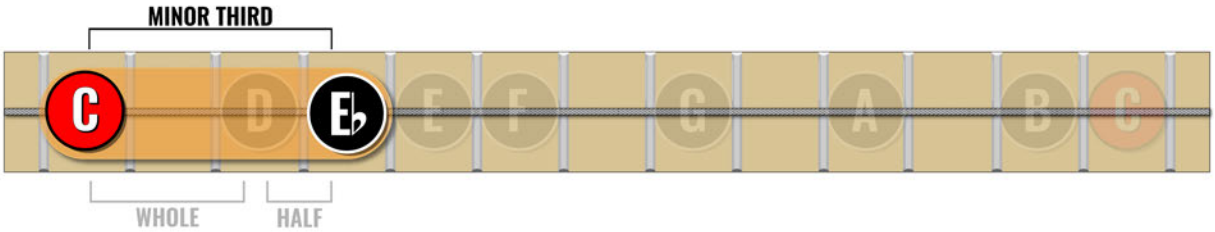
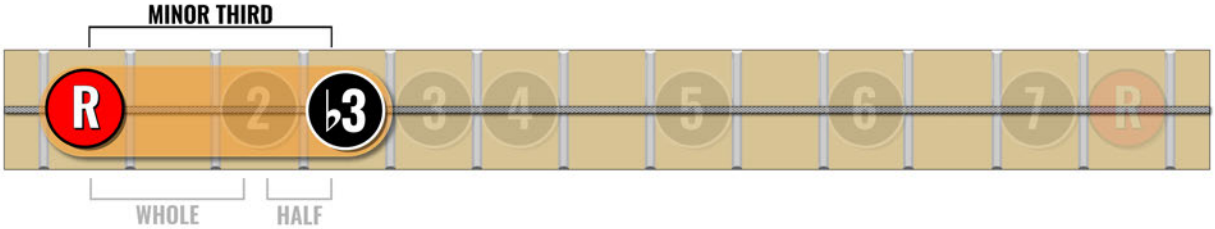
Minor Third (♭3)

When a **major** interval is *lowered* a half step (one fret) is becomes a **minor** interval.

A **minor third** also spans three musical alphabet letters a **whole step *plus* half step** apart (three frets horizontally on the same string).



When identifying the interval, a minor third above a **R** will be shortened to **♭3** (the flat symbol representing the flattening of the note one fret/half step).

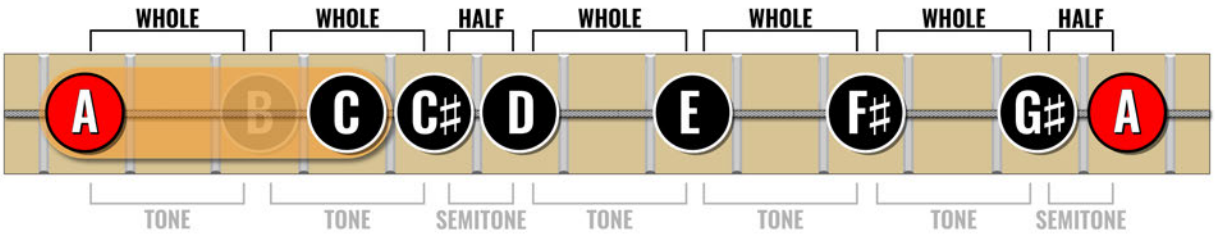


The minor third interval will be orange

Be careful with the **♭3** label. It does not mean that a minor third has to be a 'flat' note, merely that the note has been **lowered a half step** (when compared to its major scale equivalent).

For example, **C** to **E** is a major third. **C** to **E♭** is a minor third...makes sense.

Whereas **A** to **C** is a minor third (***not*** **A** to **C♭**). The reason being that, as we saw previously in the open chord shape, a major third above **A** is the note **C♯**. Flattening a sharp note makes it 'natural' (**C♯** flattens to **C**).



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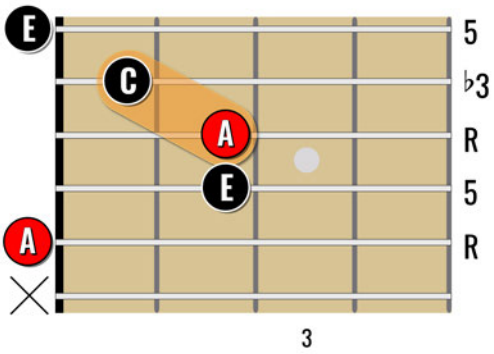
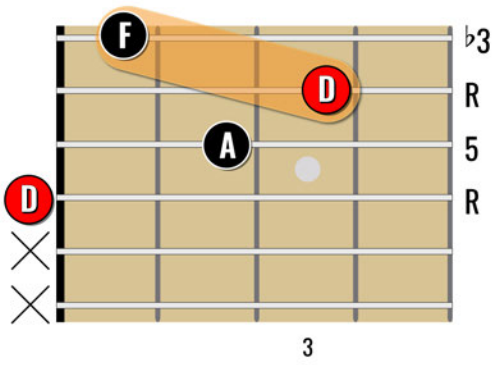
Looking at the open **A minor** chord (**Am**), you can see that the minor third in the chord shape resembles a major third across strings 3(G) and 2(B). The minor third between strings 3(G) and 2(B) is **one fret lower**.

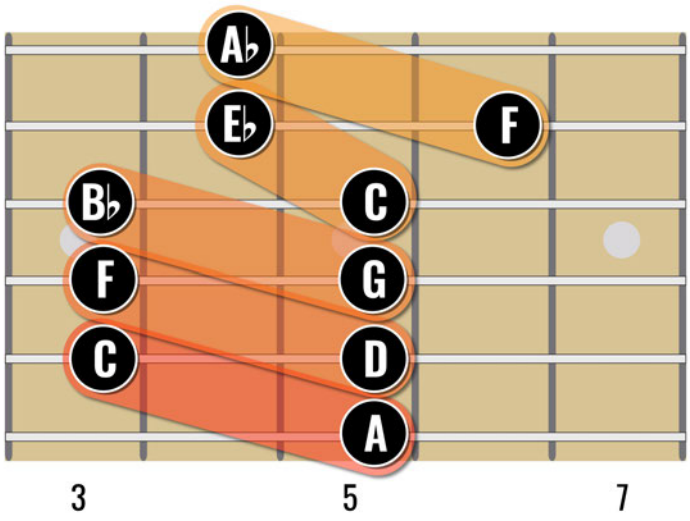


Remember that this string pair is the *exception*.

Between all other string pairs a minor third above any Root note will be **two frets lower** on the string below. Here's an example of that in the open **D minor** chord (**Dm**):



And here are minor thirds across the string sets from the 5th fret:



Minor thirds across the string pairs

That's the thirds done. Now it's time to start combining them to play some arpeggios.

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PRACTICE EXERCISES

Random Note

See if you can identify the note a major third above a random note. Find the **3** both on the same string and the string below. Do the same with a different note, this time finding the minor third (♭**3**). Repeat until you are confident with identifying both thirds above any note.

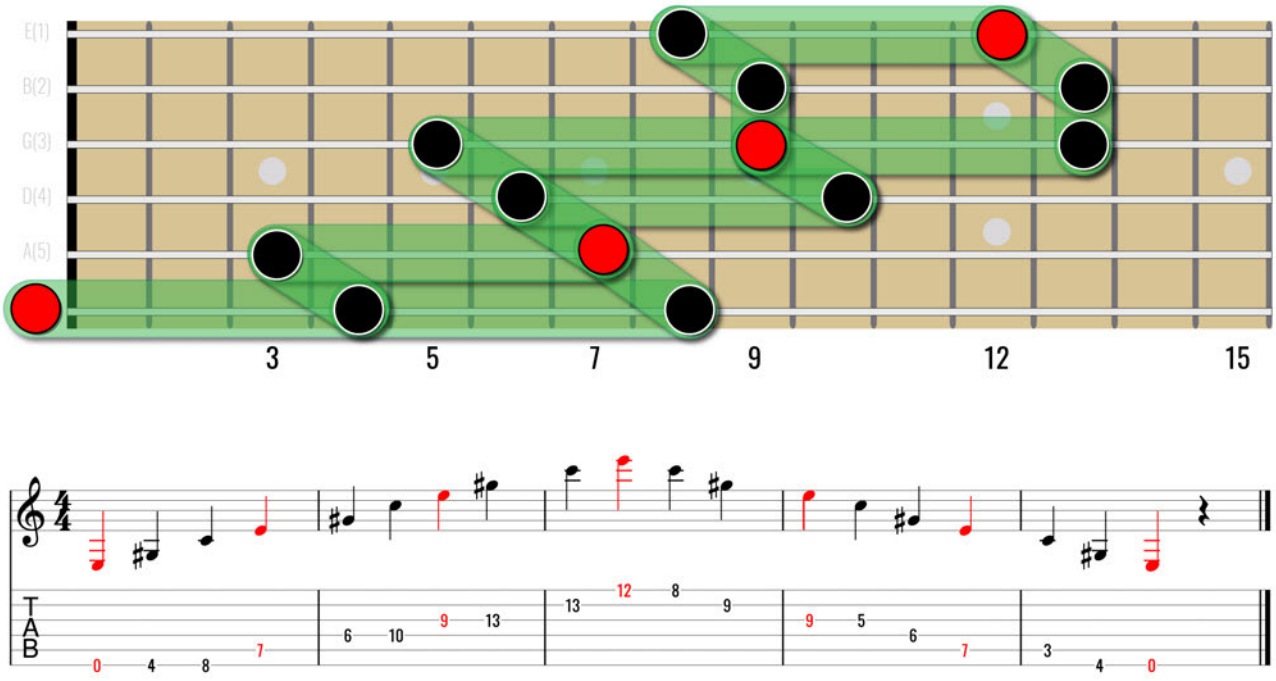
As preparation for what's to come, try these 'stacking' exercises:

Stacking Thirds

Try playing a constant stream of **major thirds** up and down an individual string and crossing vertically across the string pairs. Make a mental note of the starting **Root**.

You should be back on the Root every 3 notes (when moving in the same direction - higher or lower in pitch).

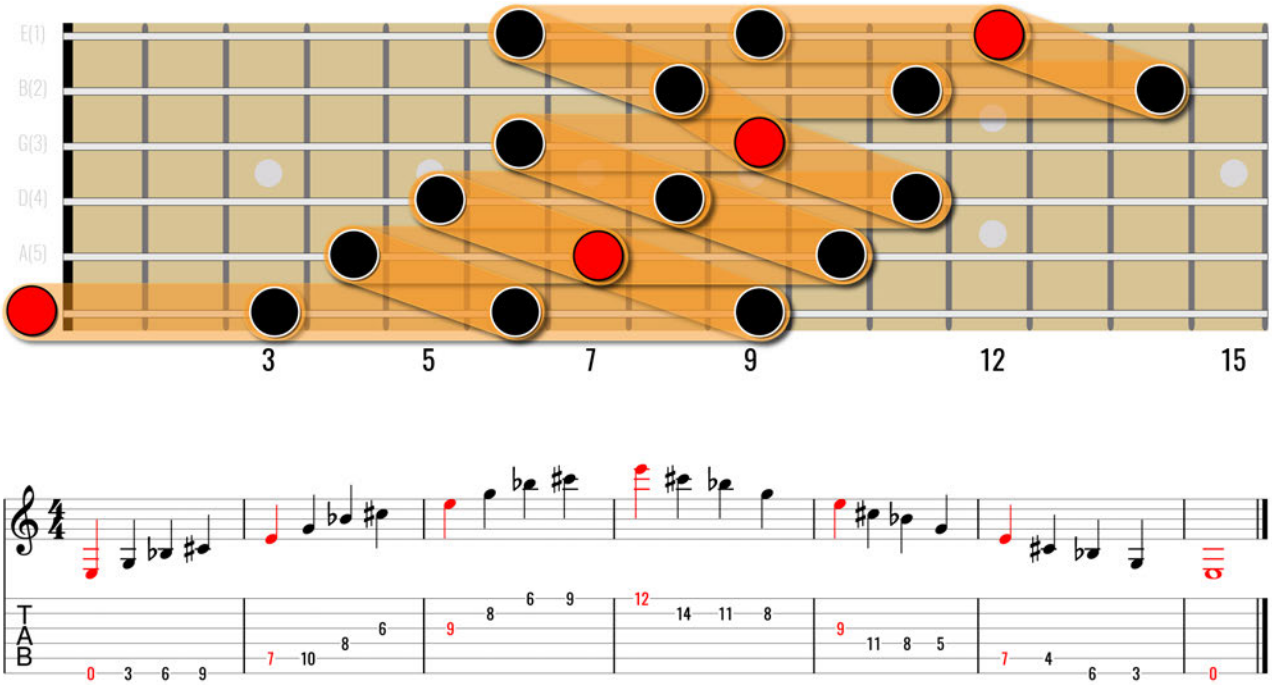
Here's an example from the open string 6(E), with each instance of the E note highlighted in red in the TAB:



 © Ry Naylor Guitar

Now try a constant stream of **minor thirds** up and down an individual string and vertically across the string pairs. Again, make a mental note of the starting **Root**. You should be back on the Root every 4 notes (when moving in the same direction).

Here's an example, again from the open string 6(E):



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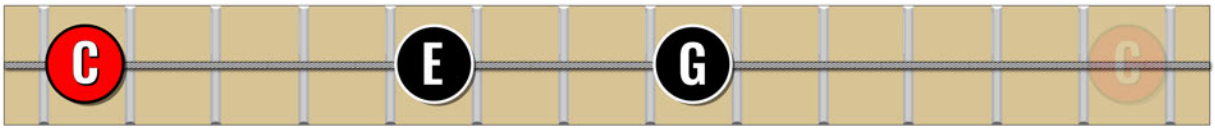
Part 2: Single String Triad Arpeggios

We begin by laying everything out on a single string. This will give you a better visual on the theory of each arpeggio and, ultimately, gives you more freedom across the fretboard as you'll be able to link up all the different arpeggio patterns.

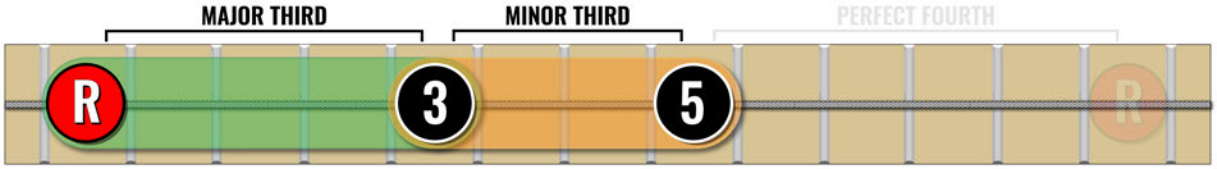
It'll also help you get a deeper understanding of classic licks like 'Thunderstruck' by AC/DC or Eddie Van Halen's tapping licks in 'Eruption'.

Major Triad Arpeggio (R-3-5)

First is the **major arpeggio** formed from the **R**(**C**), **3**(**E**) and **5**(**G**) of the major scale, the three notes which form a **major triad**:



Looking at the thirds within the arpeggio you can see that there is a major third between the **R** and **3** but there is *another* third to consider between the **3** and **5:**



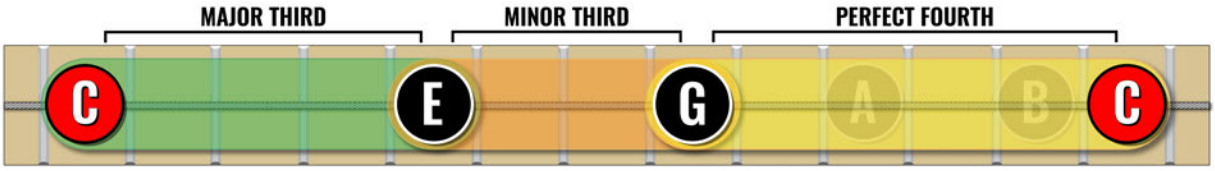
C to **E** is a major third, whereas **E** to **G** is a *minor* third. Thinking in stacked thirds:

MAJOR ARPEGGIO = MAJOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD

From your starting **R** it is four frets higher to the **3**, then an additional three frets higher to the **5**.

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

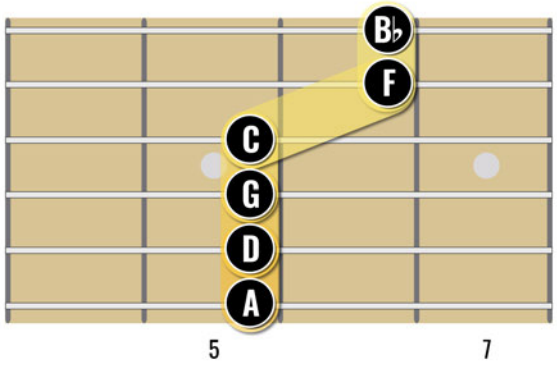
To repeat an arpeggio pattern into a second octave, there is one more interval to consider, namely the distance from the **5** up to the octave **R**:



The **5**(**G**) up to the **R**(**C**) is the distance of a **perfect fourth**, spanning four musical alphabet letters, five frets horizontally on the same string. It's the distance of a **R** up to **4** in the major scale.

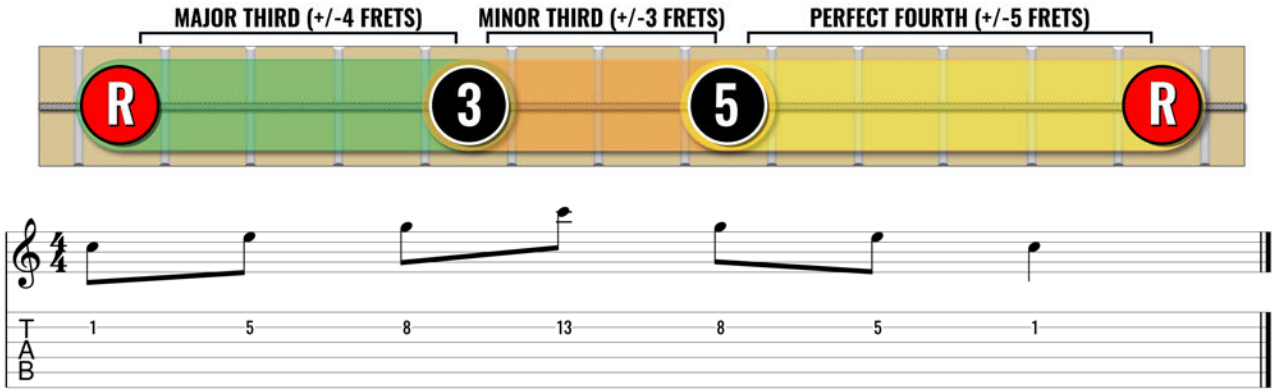
The perfect fourth interval will be yellow

On an adjacent string pair, the perfect fourth is the **same fret** on the string physically below and **one fret higher** between strings 3(G) and 2(B):



Perfect fourths across the string pairs

Below is the major arpeggio on a single string (with an example played on string 2(B). The major arpeggio will *always* be the same distance from one chord tone to the next:



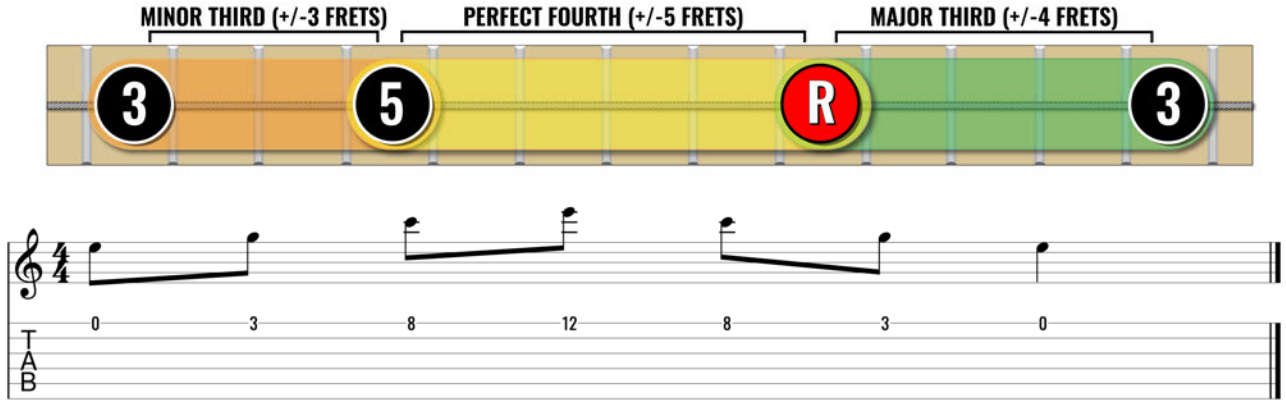
Root position C major arpeggio (String 2(B))

This is a **root position** major arpeggio as you are beginning from the **Root**.

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

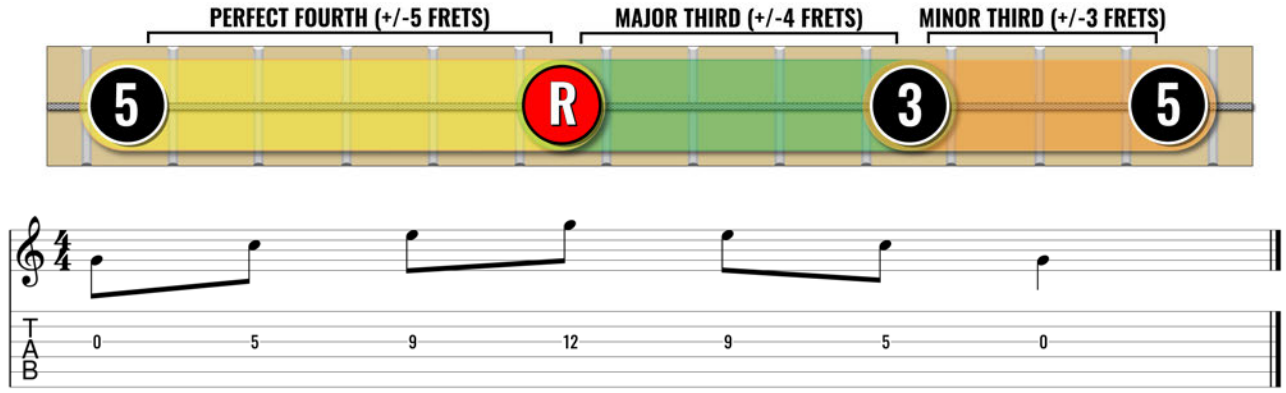
You will not always have the luxury of being able to begin on the **R** so you need to learn **arpeggio inversions**. If you're familiar with chord inversions, the principle is the same here.

If the lowest available note in pitch is the **3**, you'll play a **first inversion** arpeggio (**3**-**5**-**R**-**3**) and the first interval move is a **minor third** between **3** and **5**:



First inversion C major arpeggio (String 1(E))

If the lowest note in pitch is the **5**, you'll play a **second inversion** arpeggio (**5**-**R**-**3**-**5**) and the first interval move is a **perfect fourth** between **5** and **R**:



Second inversion C major arpeggio (String 3(G))

I am presenting one octave of each inversion but arpeggios can just be the three chord tones (**R**-**3**-**5**) or even extend beyond one octave as you'll see later on.

You'll notice that the C major arpeggio can begin from two of the open strings (E and G, the **3** and **5**) but, more often than not, the lowest chord tone will need to be a fretted note if you were to explore arpeggio inversions from different Root notes (*hint, hint*).

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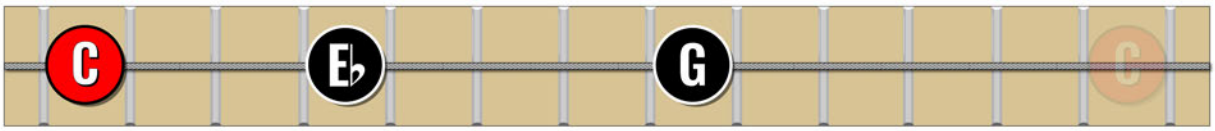
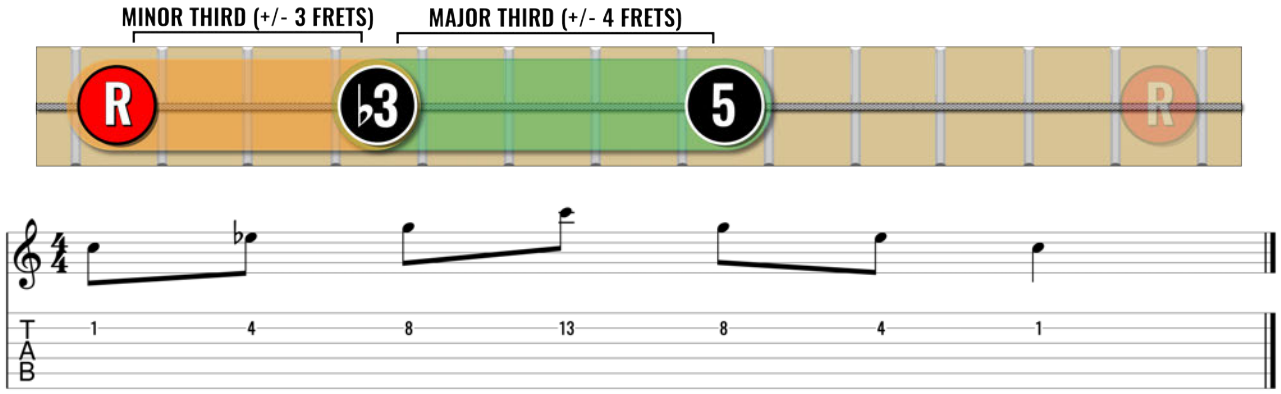
Minor Triad Arpeggio (R-♭3-5)

What's very interesting is that the **minor arpeggio**, formed from the **R**(**C**), **♭3**(**E♭**) and **5**(**G**) is, in a sense, the *opposite* of the major triad when thinking in stacked thirds:



C to **E♭** is a minor third, whereas **E♭** to **G** is a *major* third:

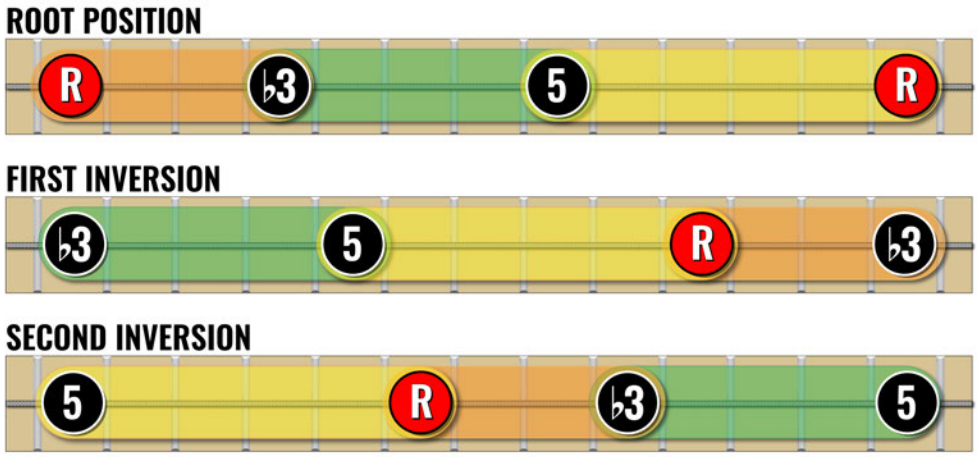


Root position C minor arpeggio (String 2(B))

MINOR ARPEGGIO = MINOR THIRD + MAJOR THIRD

A different combination of major and minor third will create *either* the major *or* minor arpeggio.

'Minor' as a label for chords, scales and arpeggios relates to the third being flattened. You'll find a **♭3** in any minor chord, minor mode, minor pentatonic and minor arpeggio.



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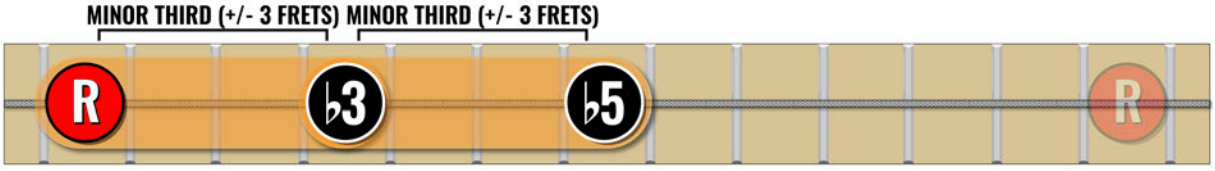
Diminished Triad Arpeggio (R-♭3-♭5)

The third triad arpeggio found in major scale theory is the **diminished arpeggio**, which is formed from the **R**(**C**), **♭3**(**E♭**) and **♭5**(**G♭**), the notes of a diminished triad:



The diminished triad is formed from **stacked minor thirds**:

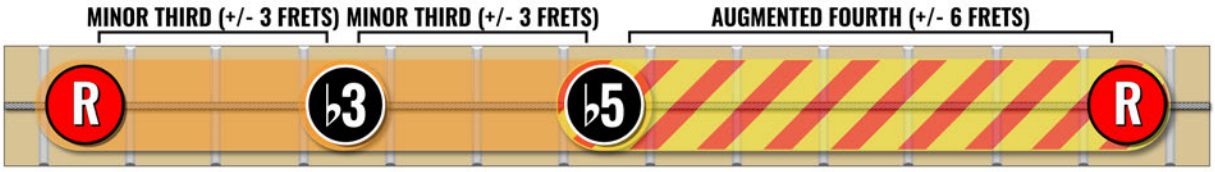


DIMINISHED ARPEGGIO = MINOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD

One thing that's important here is the **♭5** chord tone (a 'diminished' fifth, from which the triad gets its name). It is identified as a 'fifth' and not a **♯4** (**F♯**) because **the arpeggio is being formed from thirds which must span three alphabet letters**.

If you were to name the **♭5** as **F♯** theoretically there is a problem. The distance between **E♭** (the **♭3**) and **F♯** is some kind of a second (an *augmented* second if you were wondering) which is *not* a third.

Yes, it's the same sound but theoretically you must think about it in thirds to make sense in context.

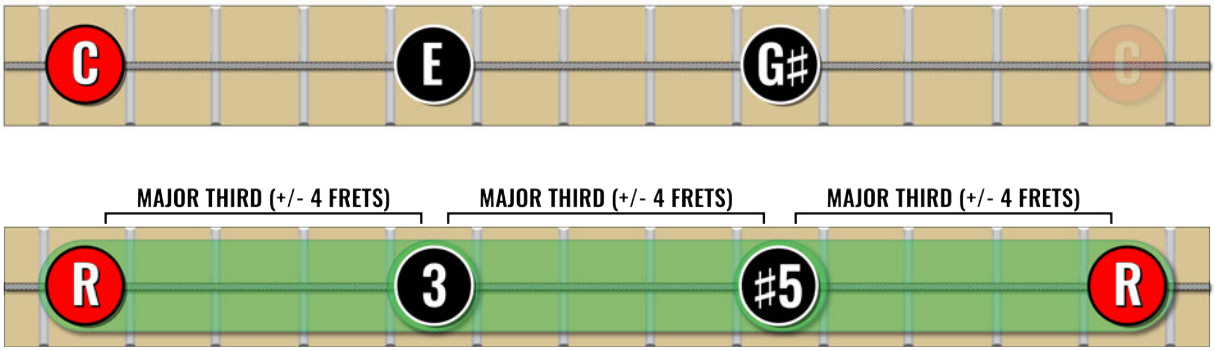


Since the **5** has been **flattened** it increases the distance to the octave **R** by an additional fret. This is known as an augmented fourth...6 frets up to the **R**. You'll see this interval with the **red and yellow stripes.**

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

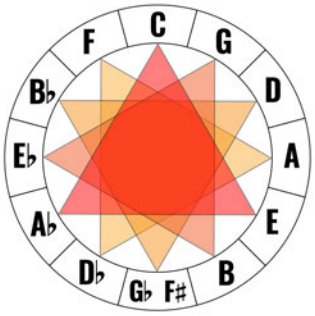
Augmented Triad Arpeggio (R-3-♯5)

If the diminished triad arpeggio was formed from stacked minor thirds, couldn't we also stack major thirds? Absolutely! The major third *plus* major third combination is formed from the **1**(**C**), **3**(**E**) and **♯5**(**G♯**):



Now, we don't find this particular arpeggio in major scale theory, but it's valuable to know what it is, so we'll be adding it in to the triad arpeggio shapes. This is the **augmented arpeggio** named as such because the perfect fifth (**5**) has been raised to an augmented fifth (**♯5**).

AUGMENTED ARPEGGIO = MAJOR THIRD + MAJOR THIRD

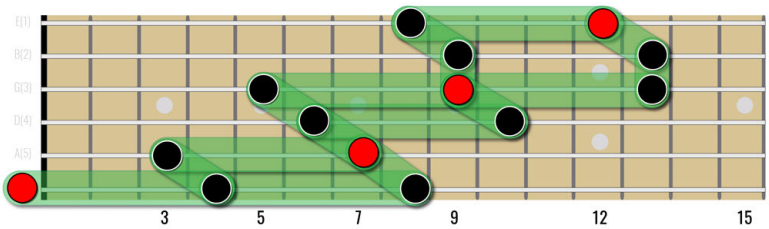


Augmented arpeggios formed from the Circle of Fifths

What is special about this particular arpeggio is that it actually creates an *additional* major third between the **♯5** and the octave **R**, **each chord tone spaced an equal 4 frets (major third) apart**.

A major third between each chord tone of the augmented arpeggio makes it **symmetrical**. As a result, the arpeggio shapes (and their inversions) will always be played in the same way irrespective of which chord tone you begin on. Any note could be considered the Root. It's three arpeggios for the price of one!

The stacked major thirds exercise from Part 1 got you playing an **E** augmented arpeggio across the fretboard.



Or wait, make that **A♭** augmented...no, **C** augmented. It all works!

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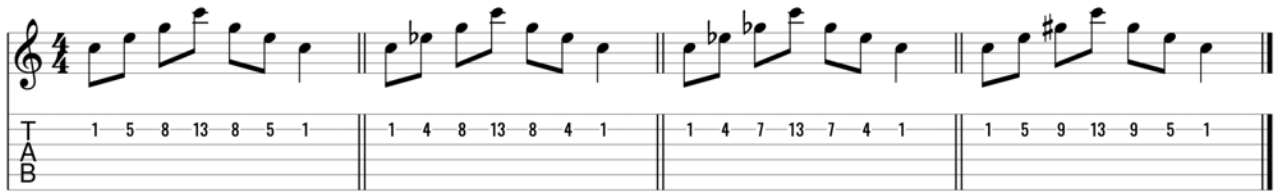
PRACTICE EXERCISES

Your first task is to be confident with playing each of the four triad arpeggios up and down a single string from any of the three chord tones: *Root*, *Third* or *Fifth*. Each suggested exercise can be played on each of the six strings.

Begin in free time (i.e. no metronome click). As you gain a little confidence you can add a metronome click to bring some laser focus to your practice.

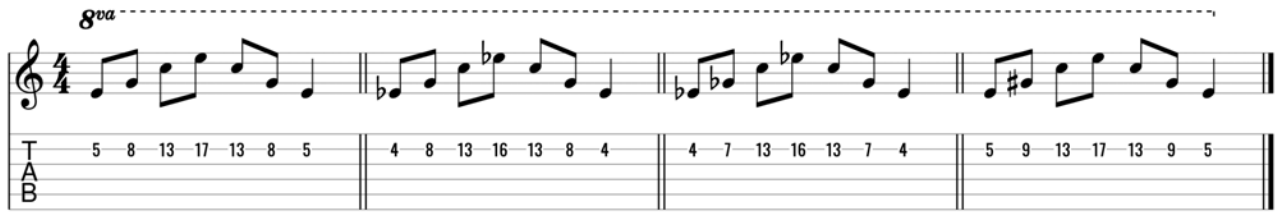
Static Root

Play through each of the four arpeggio types in order from the same Root. I like to work the following sequence: **Major**-**Minor**-**Diminished**-**Augmented**. Here's an example for **C** on string 2(B):



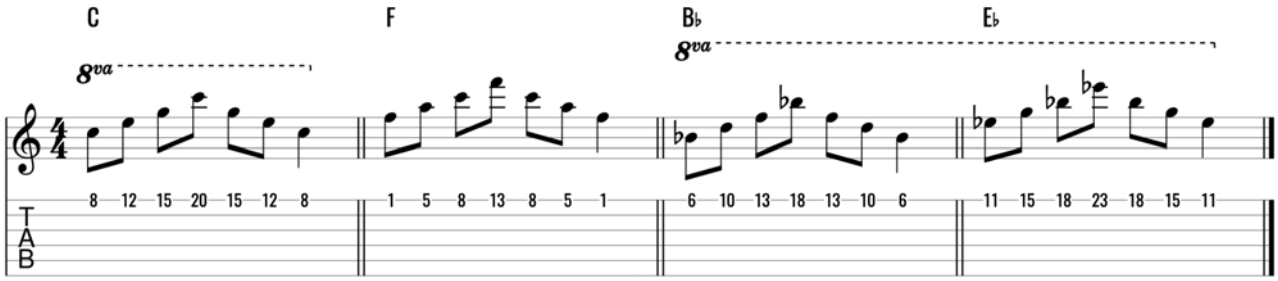
C major - C minor - C diminished - C augmented

These are root position arpeggios but you can do the same thing with the inversions. Here's an example of first inversion arpeggios with a **C** Root on string 2(B):



Cycle Static Shape

Play up and down [R-3-5-R-5-3-R] from each note around the cycle of fourths (C-F-B♭-E♭...). Repeat for each arpeggio type. On string 1(E) the major arpeggio would begin like this:



You'll see playing from the Root note has its potential limitations (especially if you don't have 24 frets on your guitar). So try these...

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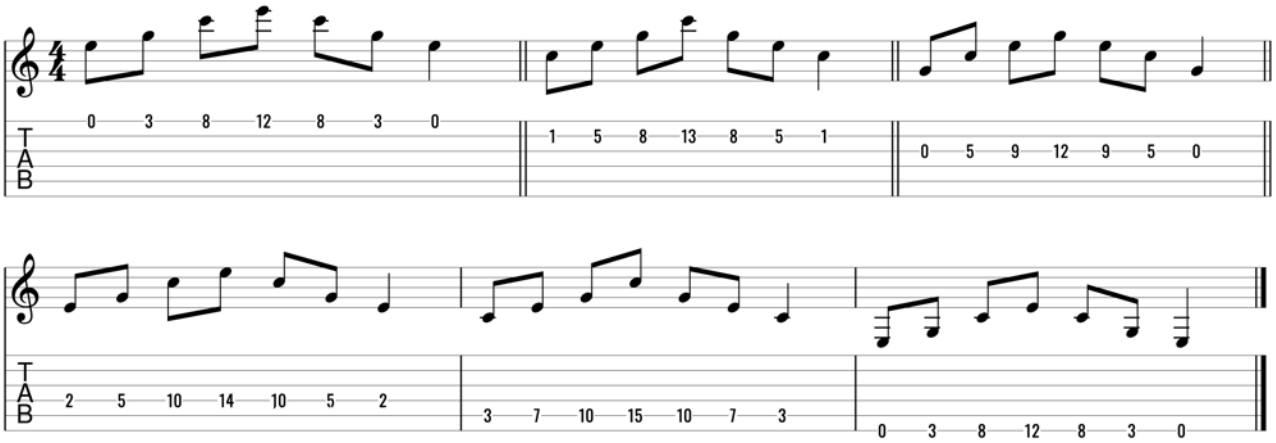
Static Root Inversions (Six Strings)

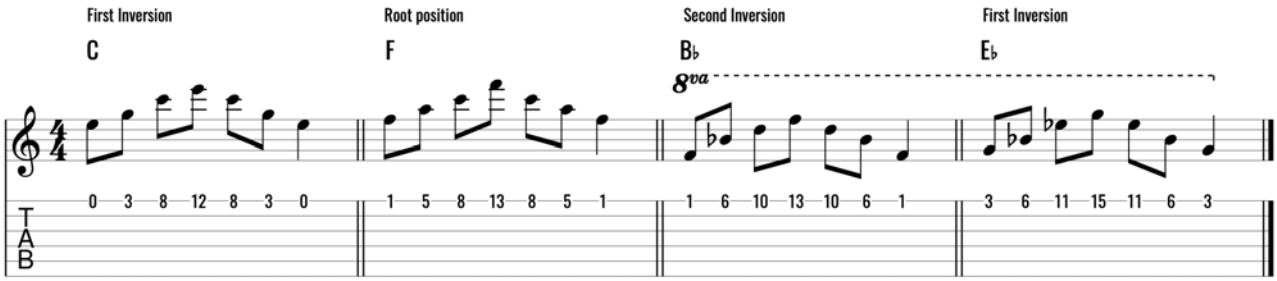
Play one octave of an arpeggio type from the **lowest chord tone** (nearest to the headstock). Here is that exercise for the **C** major arpeggio across all six strings:



You can work all arpeggio types for the same Root across all six strings and/or change Root.

Cycle Inversions

You can also cycle Root note inversions on the same string, playing the nearest chord tone as your change Root note. On string 1(E) the major arpeggio would begin like this, with the C major arpeggio beginning on the **3,** the note **E**:



Different arpeggio types will not necessarily have the same inversion. As an example, for the minor arpeggios the lowest chord tone for a C minor arpeggio is the **5**, G at the 3rd fret of String 1(E).

Different strings will give you different inversions for each Root. For example, **C** would be in root position on String 2(B) and a second inversion String 3(G).

Playing to a Progression

Maybe you could try using your arpeggio shapes to find chord tones on a single string over a chord progression. First source the **R** of each chord and then try adding the third, then fifth. Hear how each chord tones sounds different over its *Root*. Great work!

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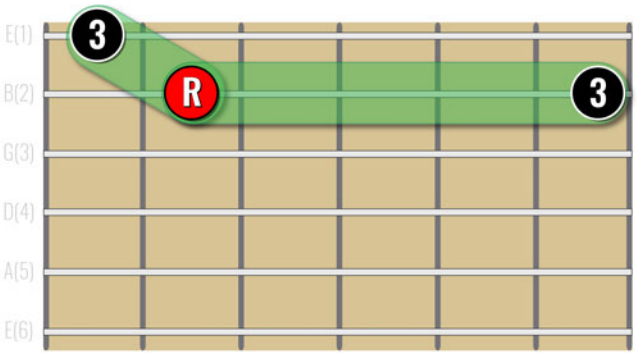
Part 3: Two-String Triad Arpeggios

The next stage is to consider the possibilities for triad arpeggios across an adjacent string pair. A Third above a **Root** can either be found horizontally on the same string ***or*** on the string below:



This gives **two possibilities** when playing an arpeggio across a string pair:

1. Play the **R** and source *both* the **3**-**5** on the string below (**1-2 Arpeggio**)
2. Play the **R**-**3** on one string and source the **5** on the string below (**2-1 Arpeggio**)

1-2 Triad Arpeggios (Root Position)

Here I'm presenting the root position shapes across strings 2(B) and 1(E). Remember that each shape presented will work on all the string pairs *except* strings 3(G) and 2(B) which will be presented separately.

In the accompanying TAB is the arpeggio shape across each string pair rooted on **C**.

My recommended fingering for each shape will be in the accompanying TAB, but it's *Player's Choice* - whatever works best for you!

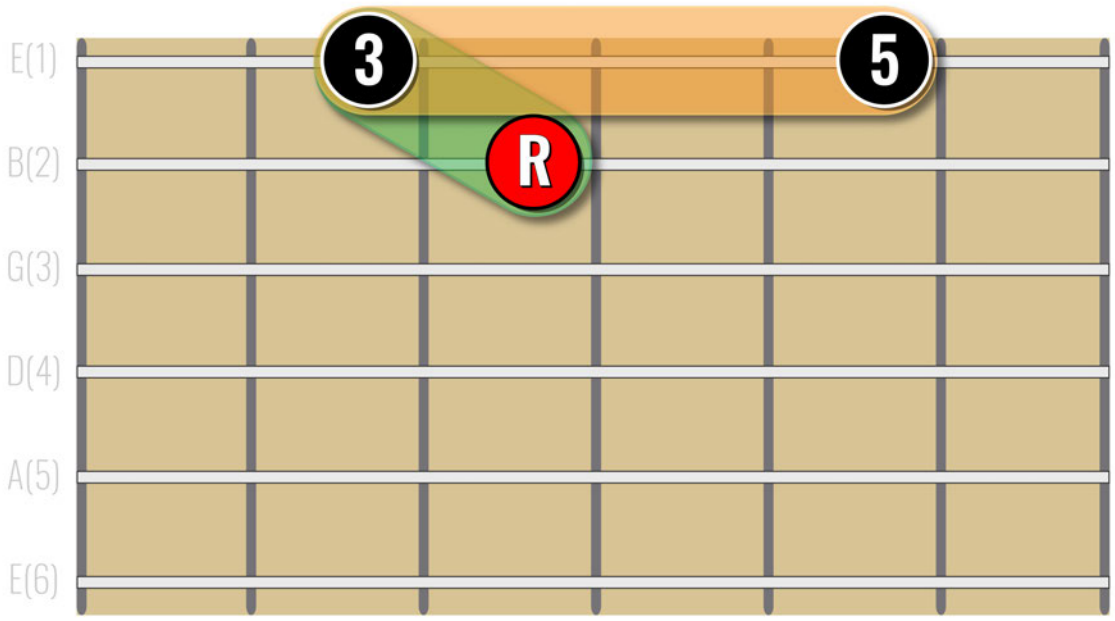
As you play through each shape I want you to think about them a couple of different ways:

- Say the chord tones as you play them "*root...three...five*" or "*root...flat three...flat five*"
- Say the thirds as you move from one chord tone to the next "*major third...minor third*"

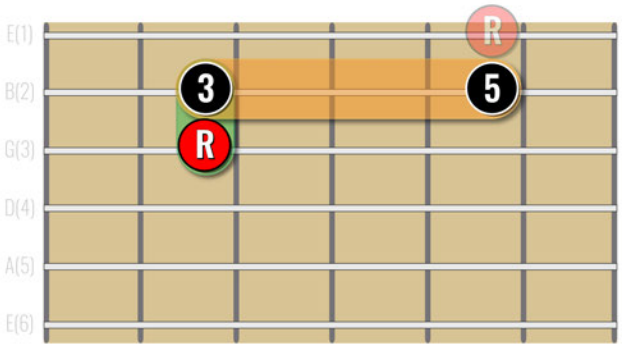
 © Ry Naylor Guitar

MAJOR ARPEGGIO

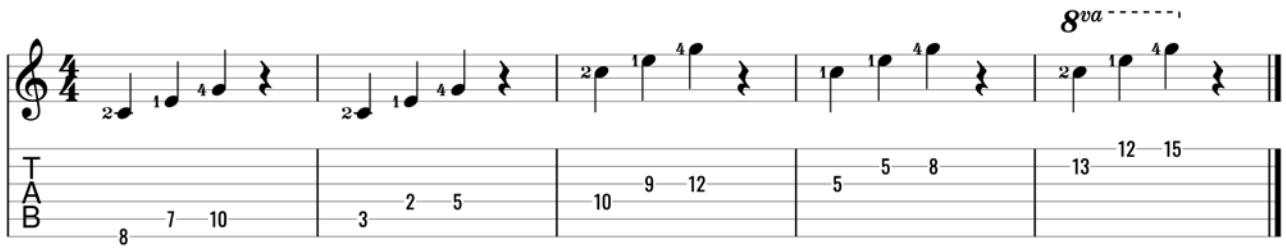
MAJOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD



Major arpeggio (root position)



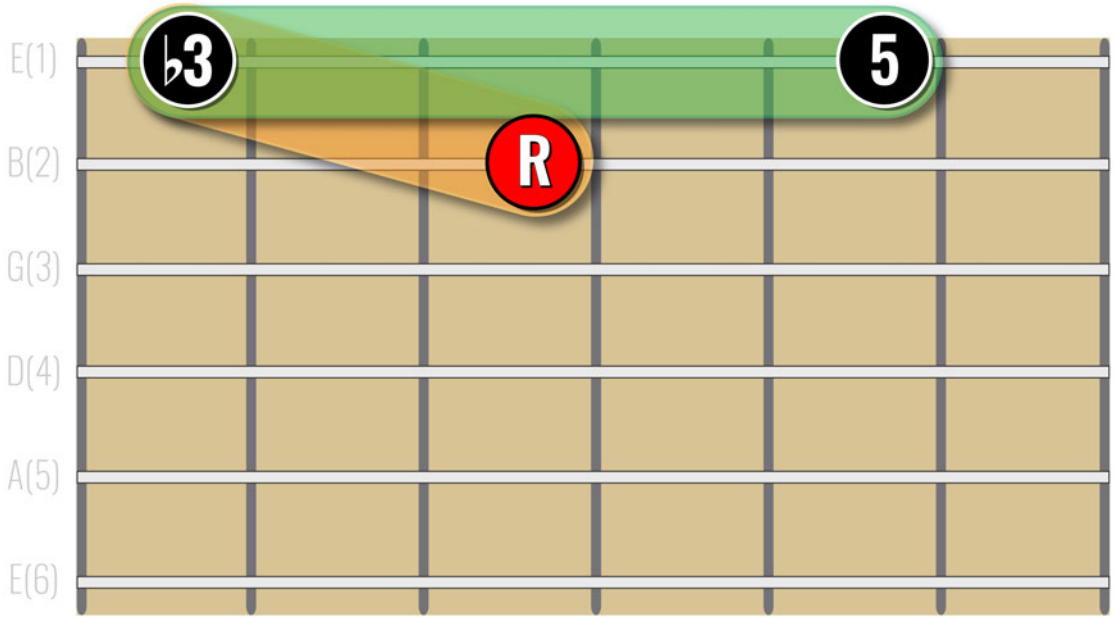
Major arpeggio (root position) Strings 3(G)-2(B) only



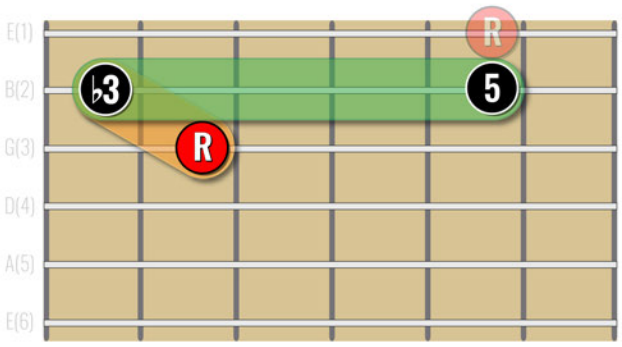
 © Ry Naylor Guitar

MINOR ARPEGGIO

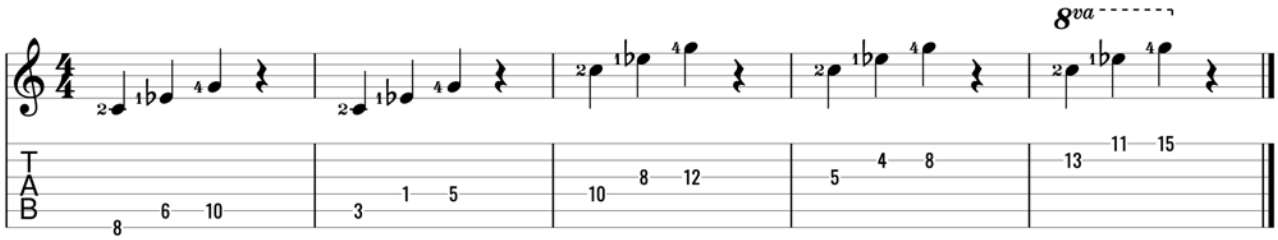
MINOR THIRD + MAJOR THIRD



Minor arpeggio (root position)



Minor arpeggio (root position) Strings 3(G)-2(B) only



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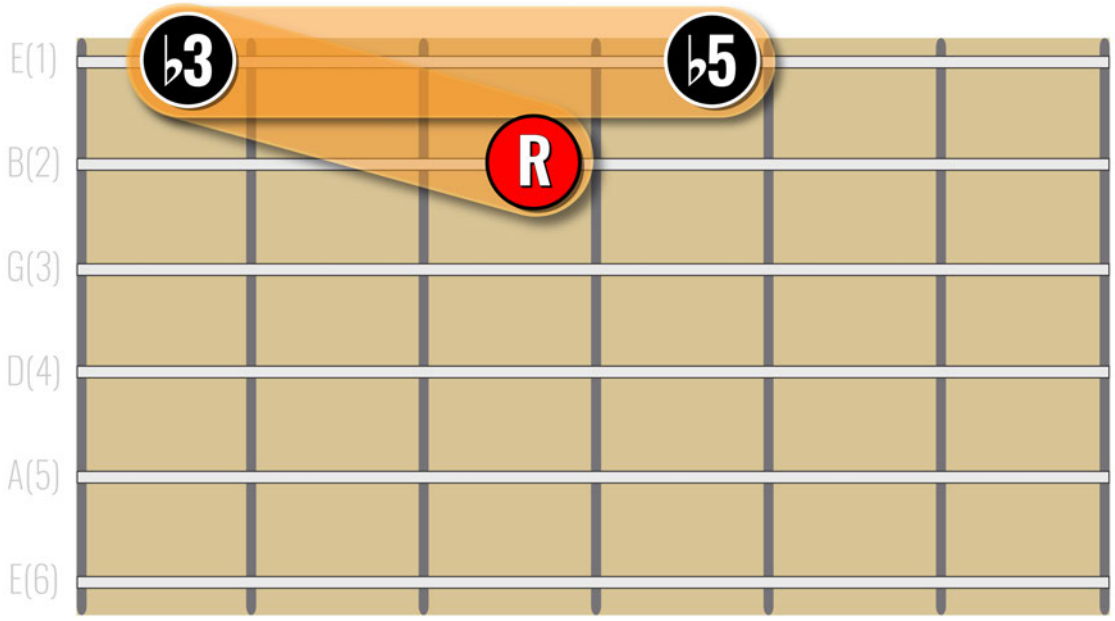
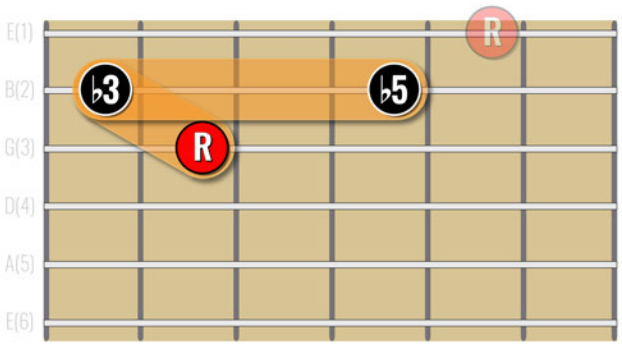
DIMINISHED ARPEGGIO

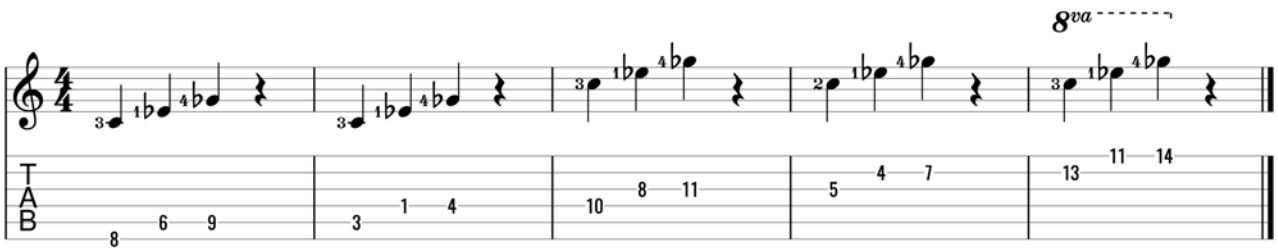
MINOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD



Diminished arpeggio (root position)



Diminished arpeggio (root position) Strings 3(G)-2(B) only



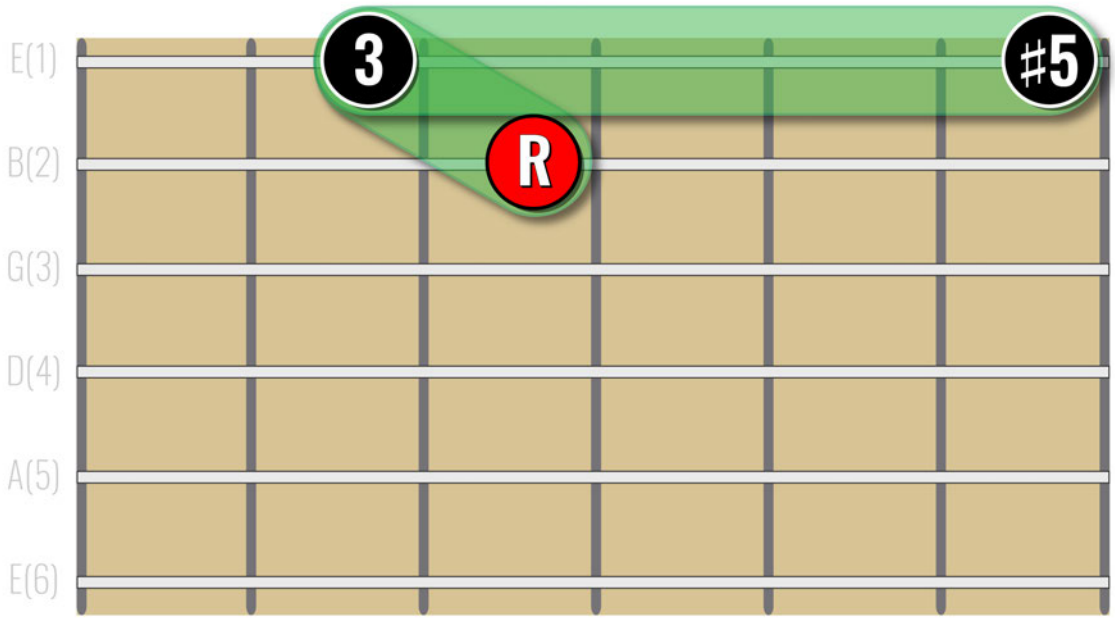
The diminished arpeggio has the sound of wanting to go somewhere like it's longing a musical full stop.

You can get that a couple of ways, either by playing a major chord / arpeggio a ***half step above*** *the Root of the diminished triad (****D♭ major****) or a minor chord / arpeggio a* ***whole step below*** *the Root (****B♭ minor****).*

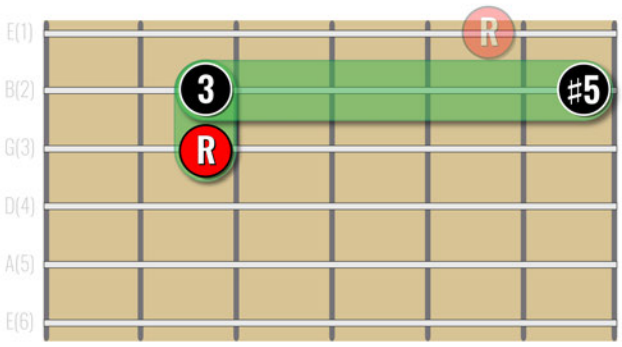
 © Ry Naylor Guitar

AUGMENTED ARPEGGIO

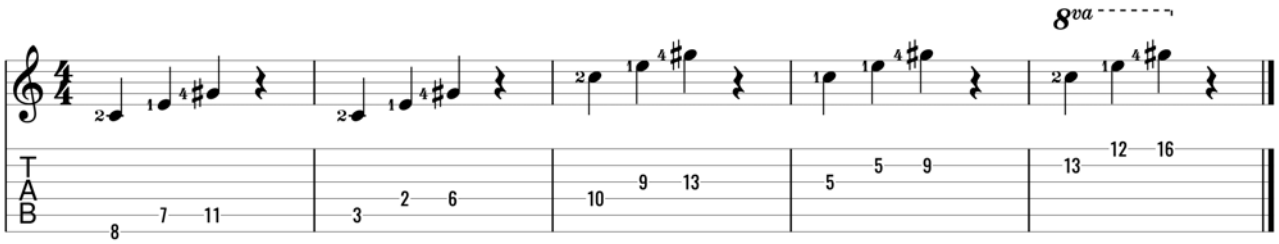
MAJOR THIRD + MAJOR THIRD



Augmented arpeggio (root position)



Augmented arpeggio (root position) Strings 3(G)-2(B) only



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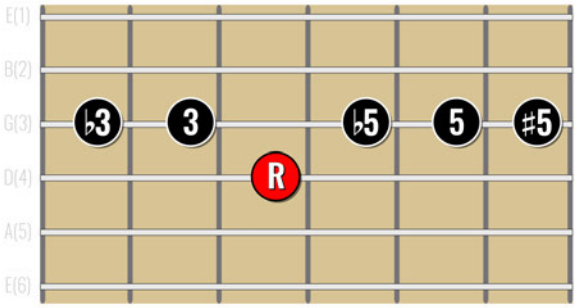
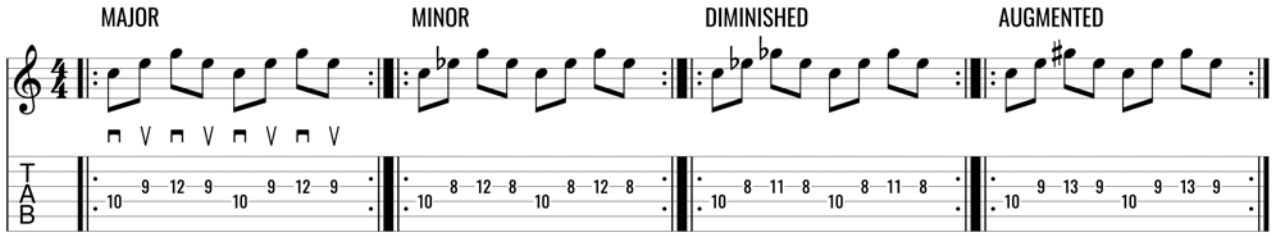
PRACTICE EXERCISES

Static Root

Chose a Root note (e.g. **C**) and string pair (e.g. 4(D)-3(G)) and then cycle through each of the four arpeggios types from the **Root** (**Major**-**Minor**-**Diminished**-**Augmented**).



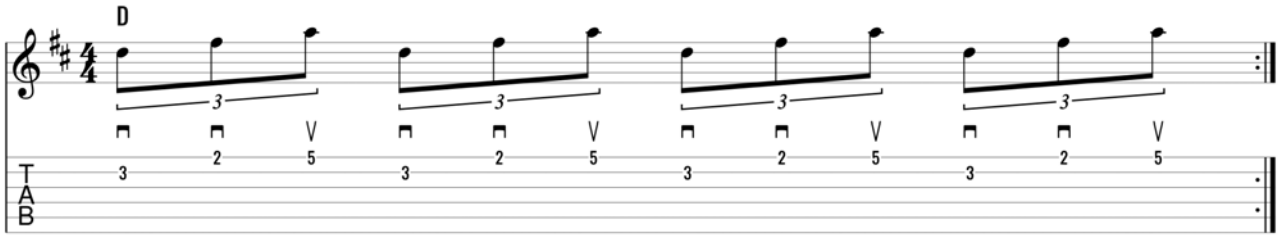
For this first example, you'll alternate pick 8th notes up and down the four-note grouping (R-3-5-3) repeating as many times as you wish before moving to the next arpeggio:



Play this with a **C** drone track to really *hear* the sound of each arpeggio.

Playing Through a Key (Same Shape)

Play the 1-2 arpeggio through the major key. 1-2 arpeggios are perfect for 'mini-sweeps' to help develop your sweep picking technique - two down picks followed by an up pick to bring you back to the string above, like this:



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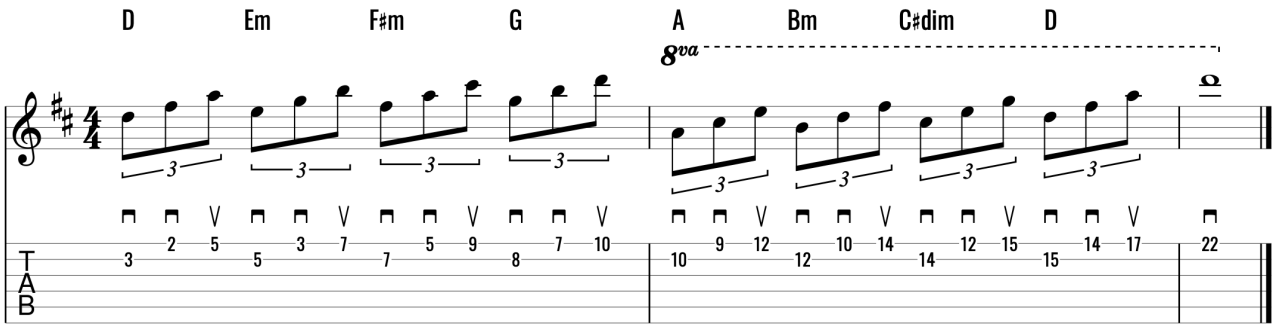
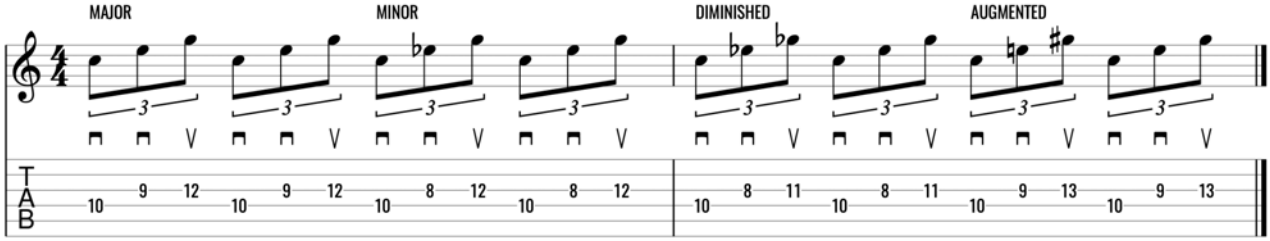
Here's an example through the key of **D** major in triplet 8th notes:



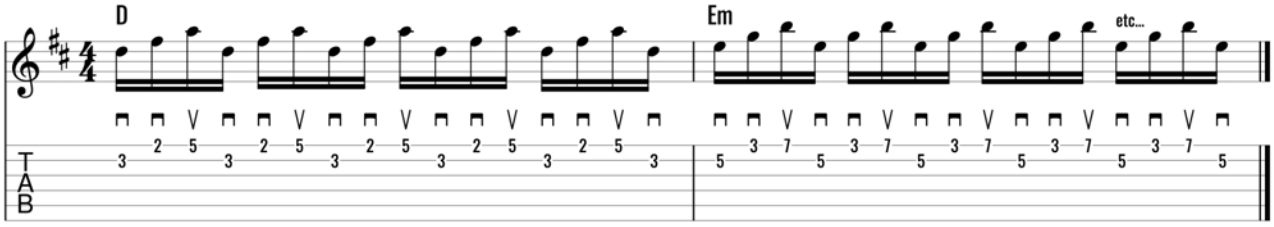
Rhythmic Variation

Exercises can be played through the different subdivisions of the beat or you can form four-note groupings for 8th or 16th note picking patterns.

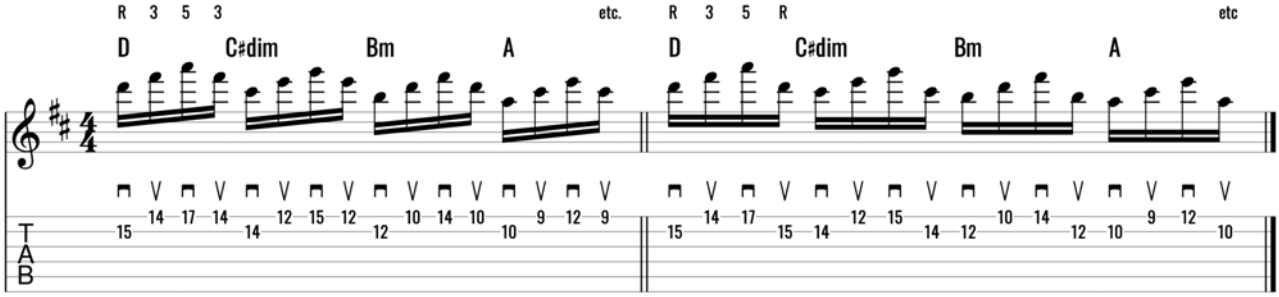
The Static Root exercise could be played as triplets:



'Playing Through a Key' could be done as 16th notes whilst maintaining the 3-note pattern:



...or you can create 4-note sequences of the chord chord tones, like these (descending this time):



Be as creative as you can as you learn the shapes.

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

2-1 Triad Arpeggios (Root Position)

Again, I'm presenting the root position shapes across strings 2(B) and 1(E). Each shape presented will work on all the string pairs *except* strings 3(G) and 2(B) which will be presented separately.

In the accompanying TAB is the arpeggio shape across each string pair rooted on **C**.

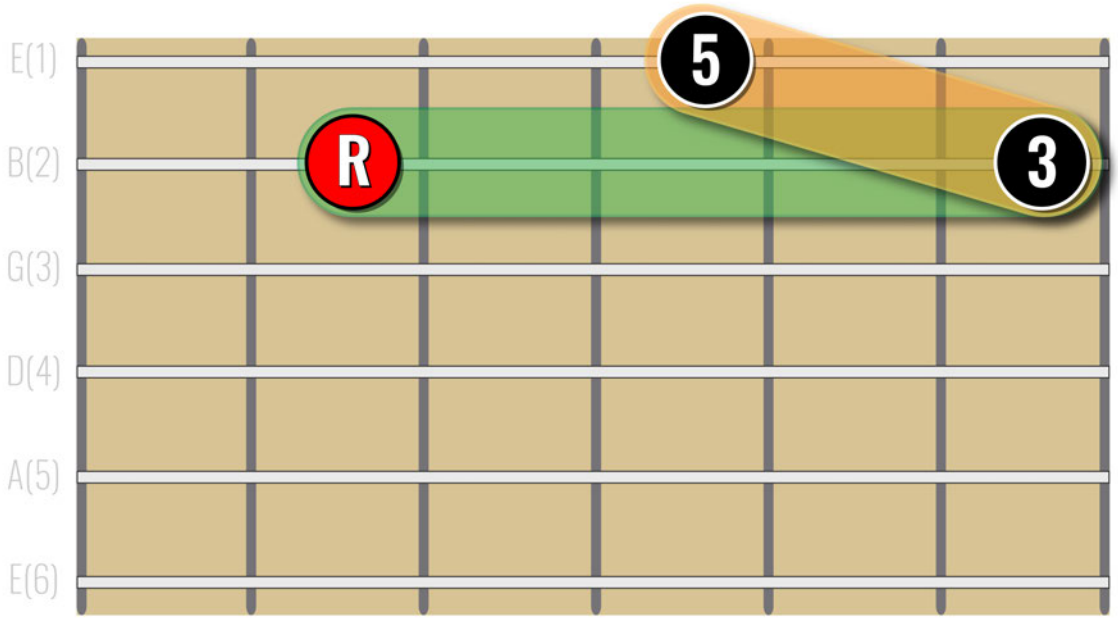
My recommended fingering for each shape will be in the accompanying TAB but, again, it's *Player's Choice*!

Same rules apply for practicing these shapes as you read previously for the 1-2 arpeggio shapes.

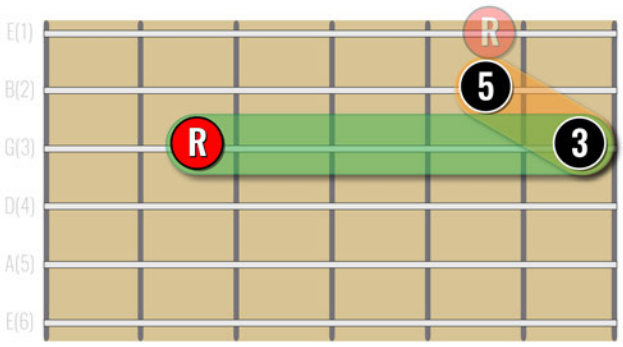
 © Ry Naylor Guitar

MAJOR ARPEGGIO

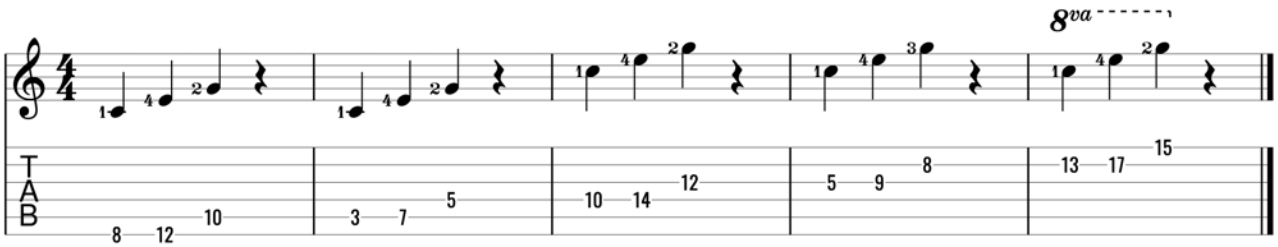
MAJOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD



Major arpeggio (root position)



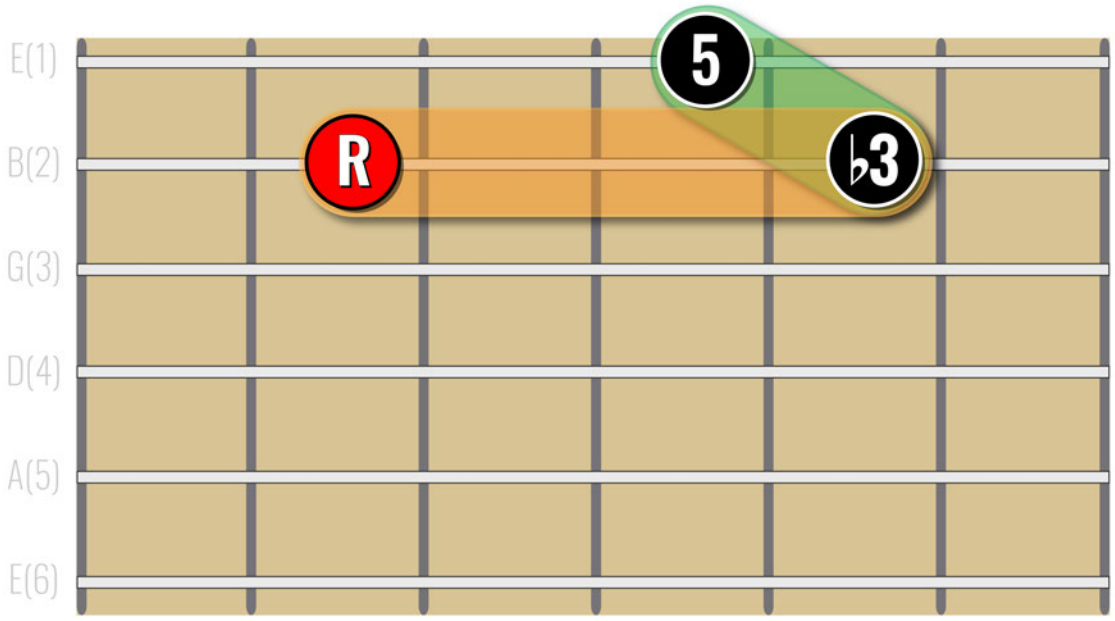
Major arpeggio (root position) Strings 3(G)-2(B) only



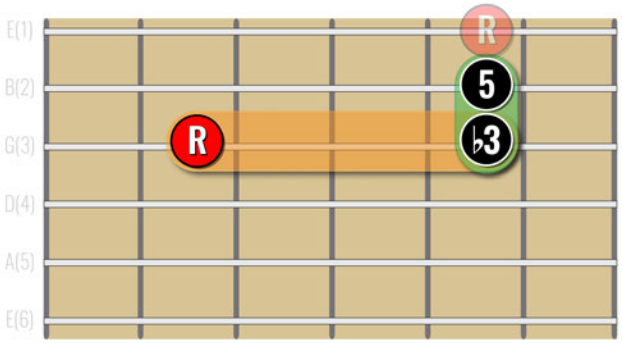
 © Ry Naylor Guitar

MINOR ARPEGGIO

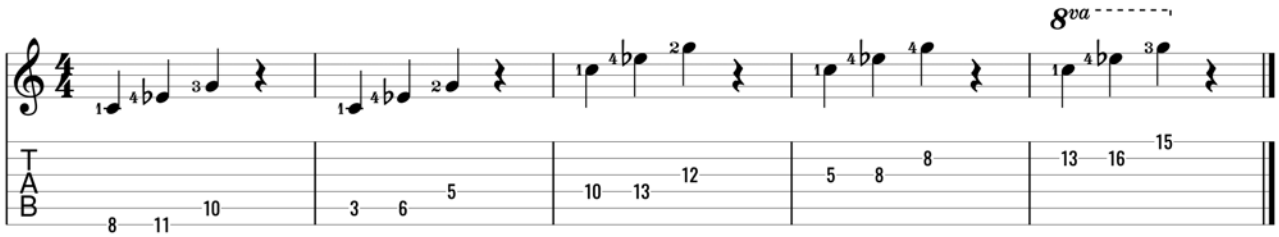
MINOR THIRD + MAJOR THIRD



Minor arpeggio (root position)



Minor arpeggio (root position) Strings 3(G)-2(B) only



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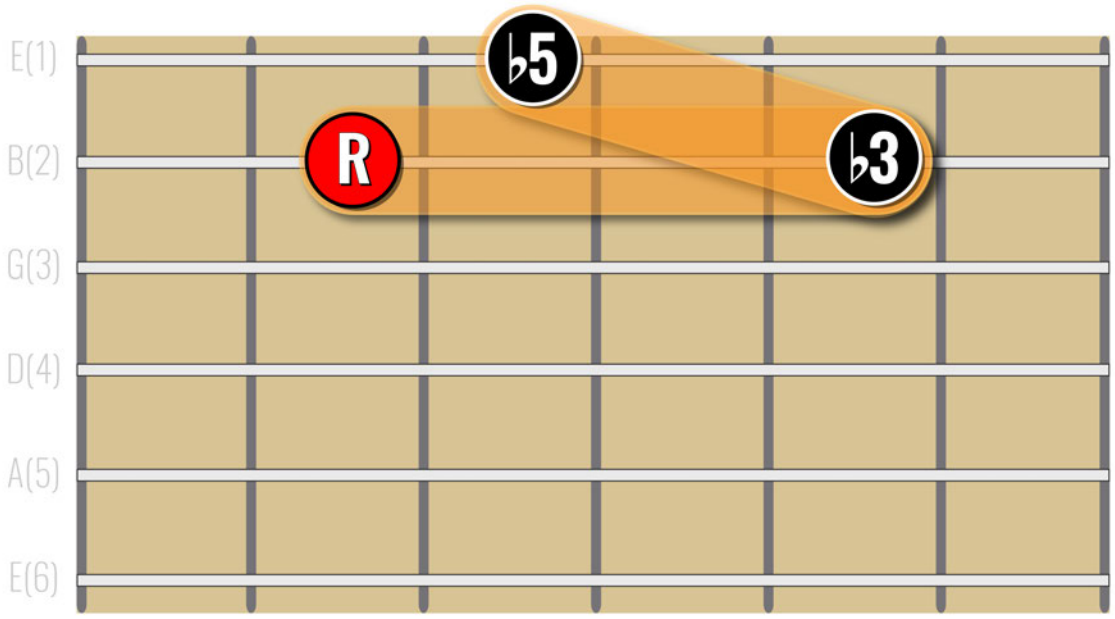
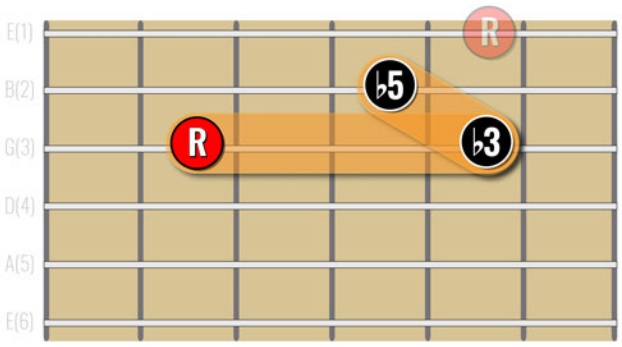
DIMINISHED ARPEGGIO

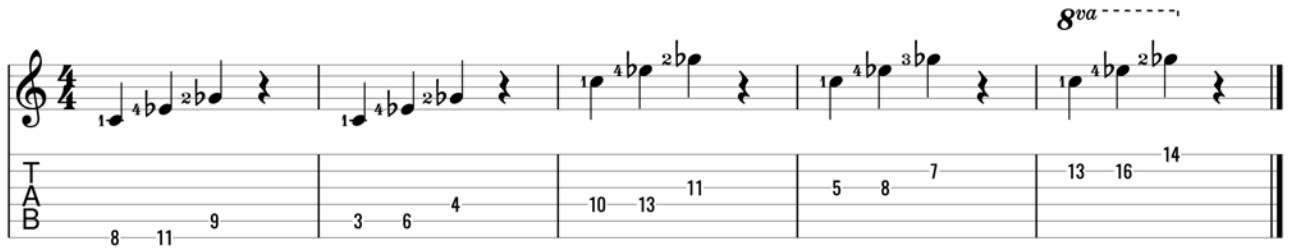
MINOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD



Diminished arpeggio (root position)



Diminished arpeggio (root position) Strings 3(G)-2(B) only



The diminished arpeggio has the sound of wanting to go somewhere like it's longing a musical full stop.

*You can get that a couple of ways, either by playing a major chord / arpeggio a **half step above** the Root of the diminished triad (**D♭ major**) or a minor chord / arpeggio a **whole step below** the Root (**B♭ minor**).*

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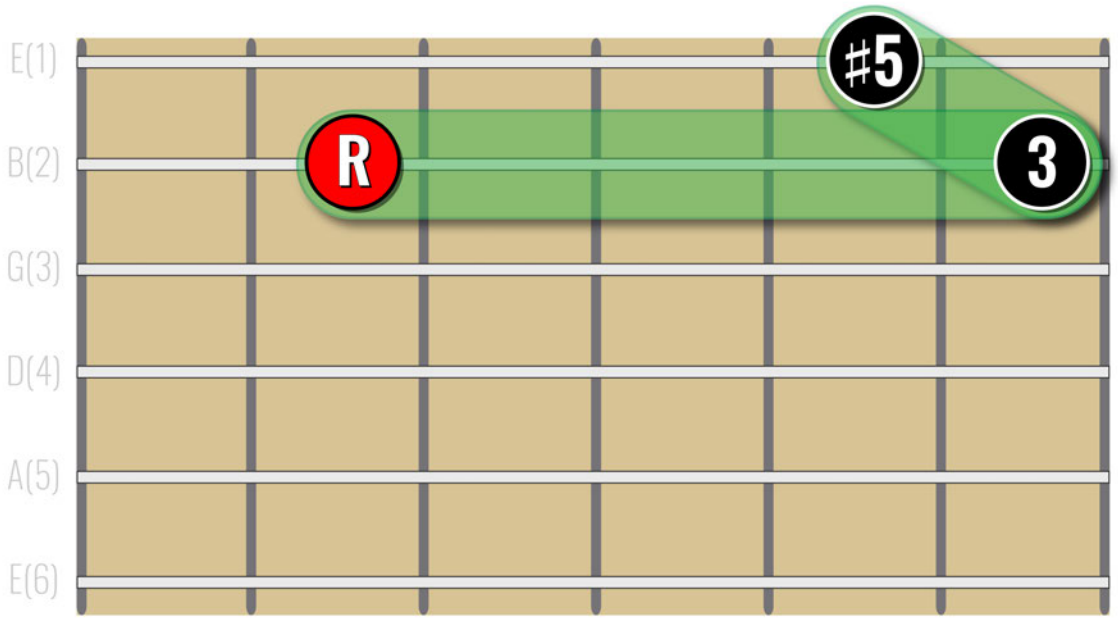
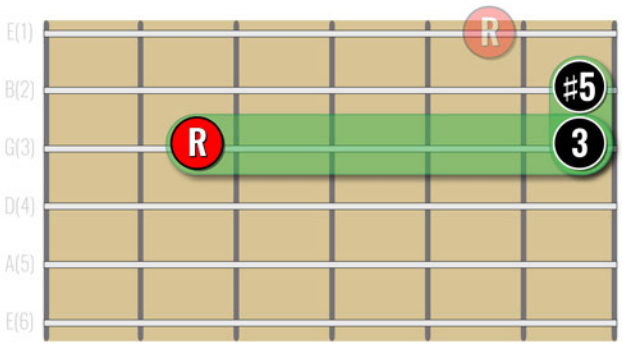
AUGMENTED ARPEGGIO

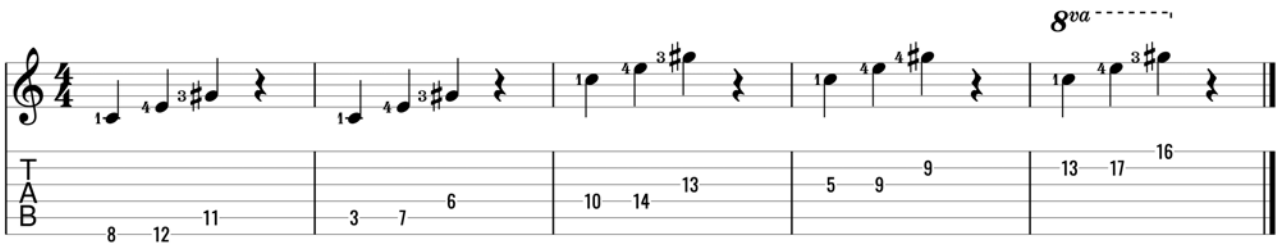
MAJOR THIRD + MAJOR THIRD



Augmented arpeggio (root position)



Augmented arpeggio (root position) Strings 3(G)-2(B) only



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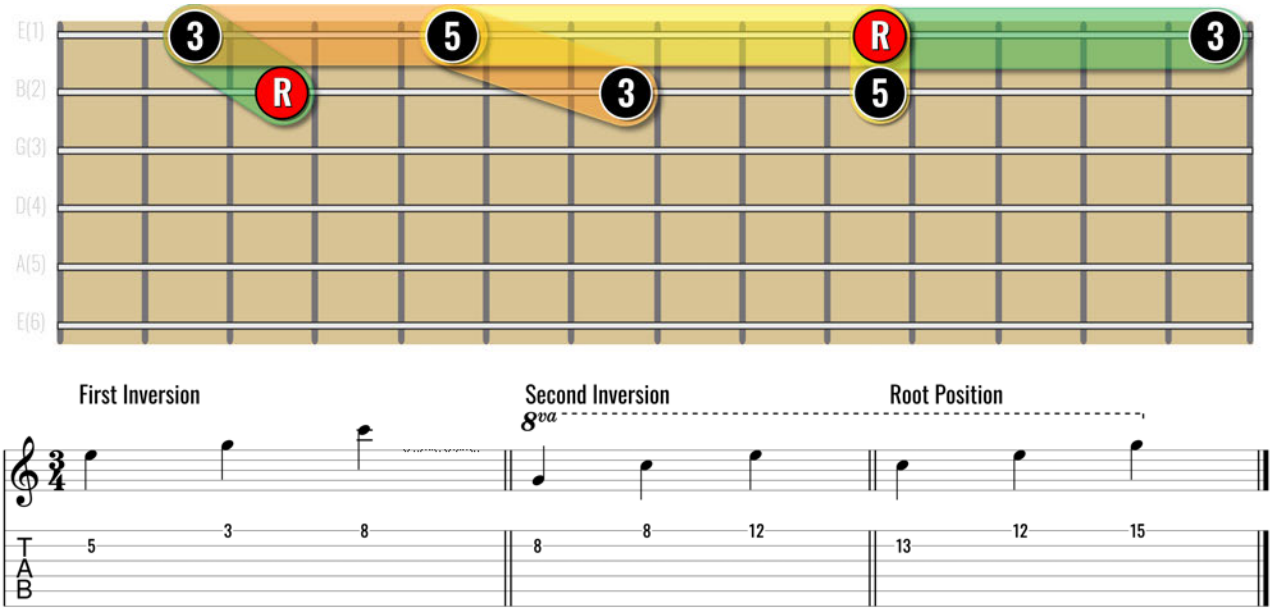
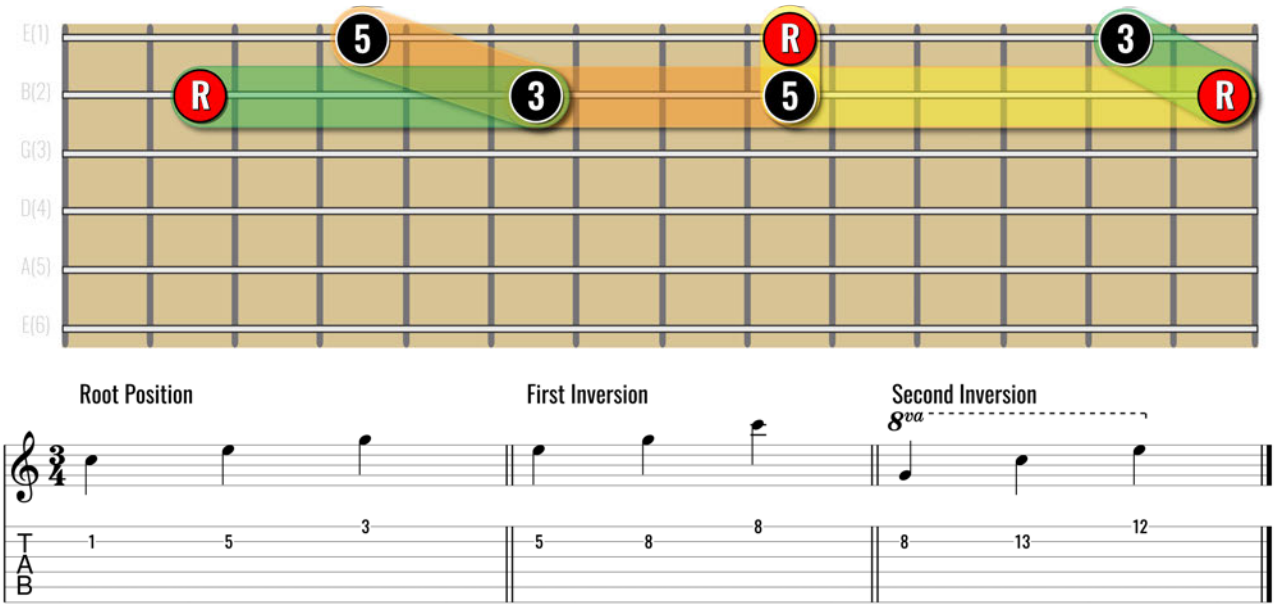
Two-String Triad Inversions

In this section I'm presenting the two two-string possibilities for each arpeggio type and its inversions. The harmonised arpeggios at the end of 'Hotel California' by Eagles come to mind here.

MAJOR 1-2

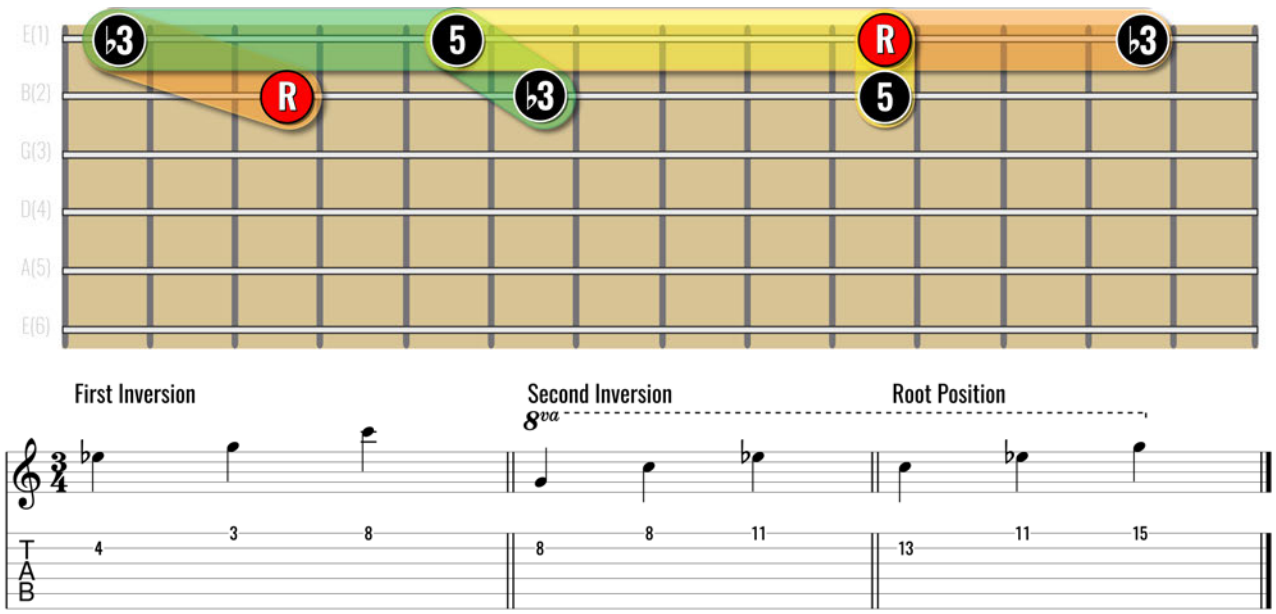


MAJOR 2-1

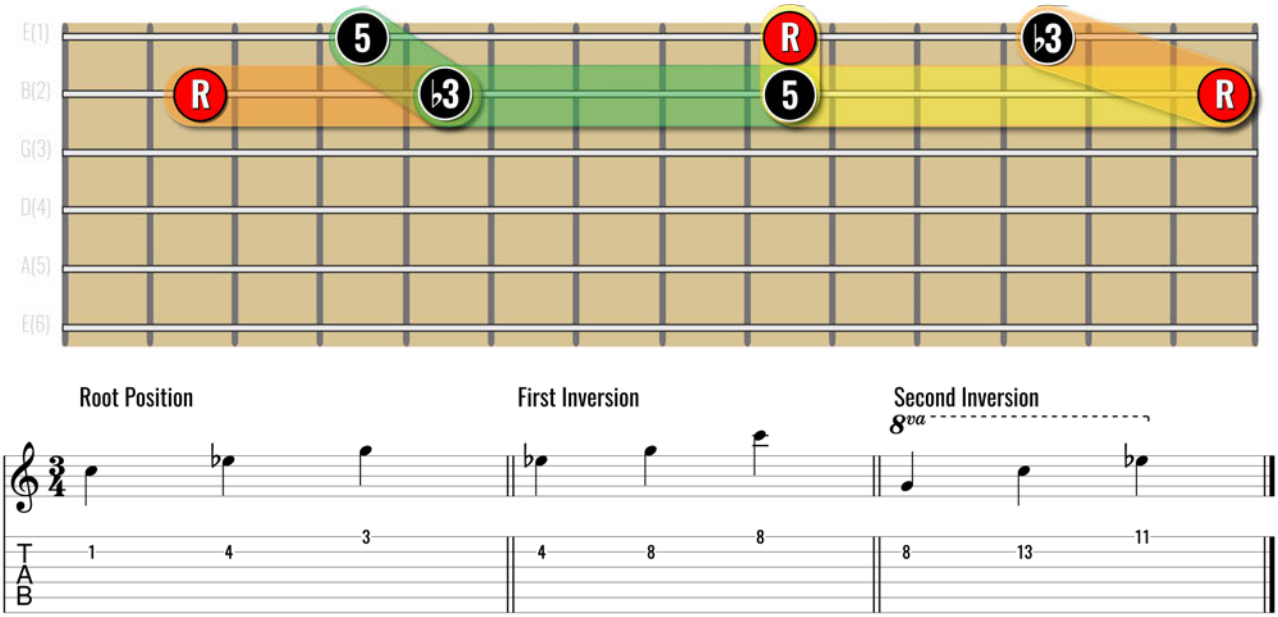


 © Ry Naylor Guitar

MINOR 1-2



MINOR 2-1



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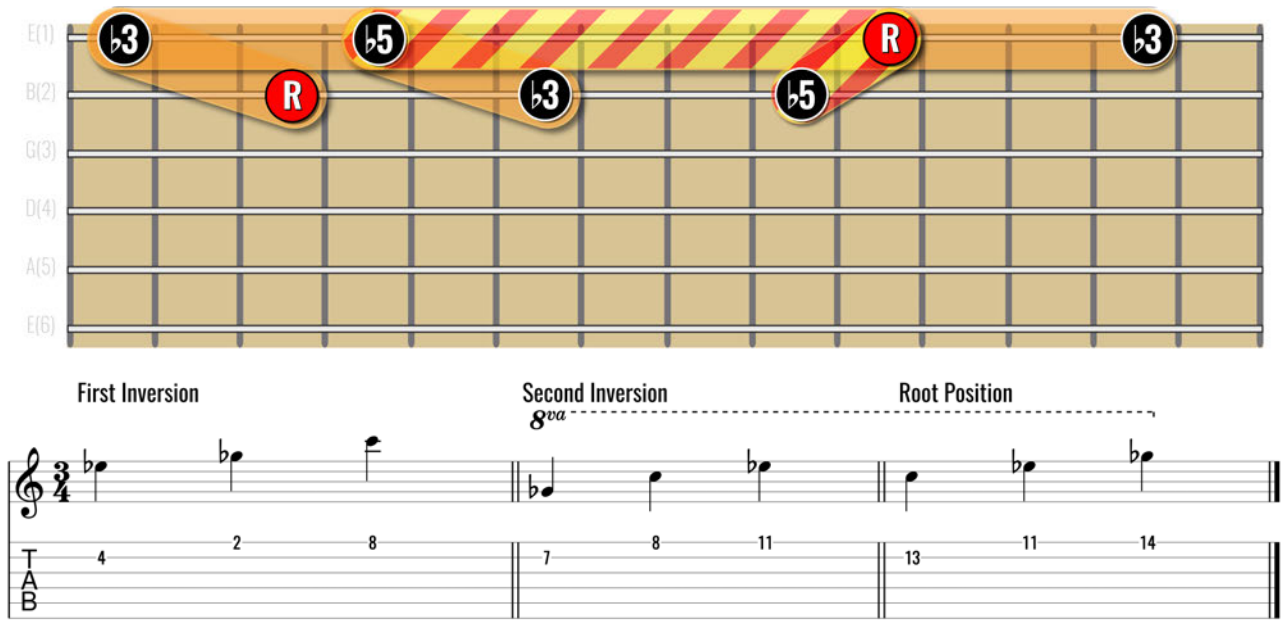
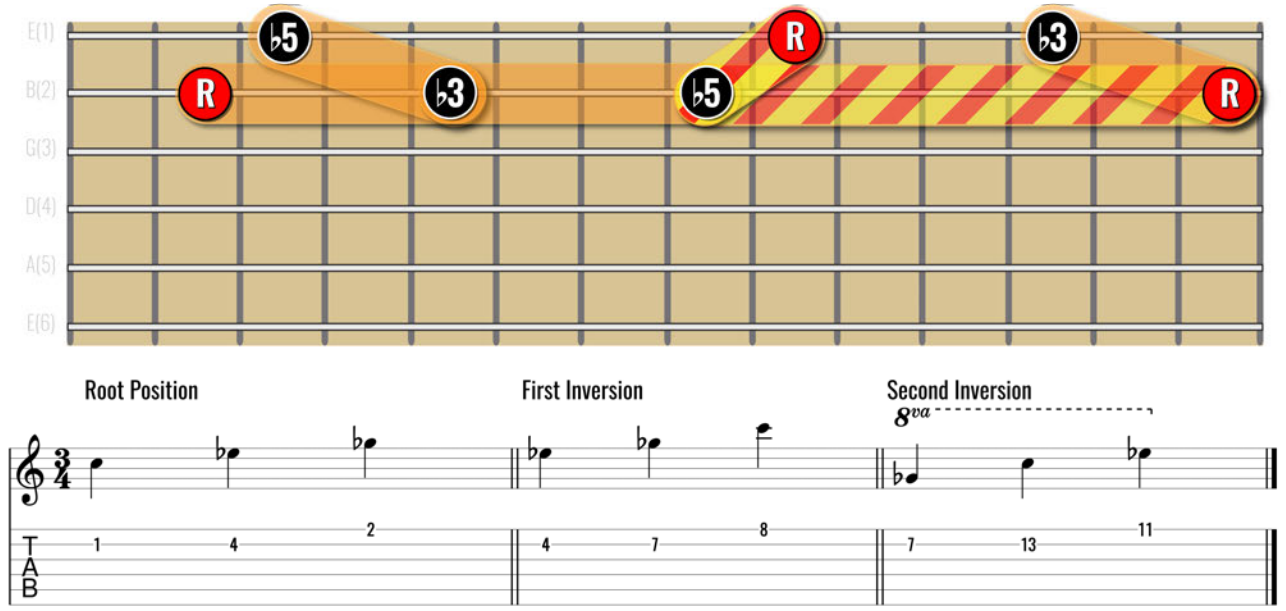
DIMINISHED 1-2

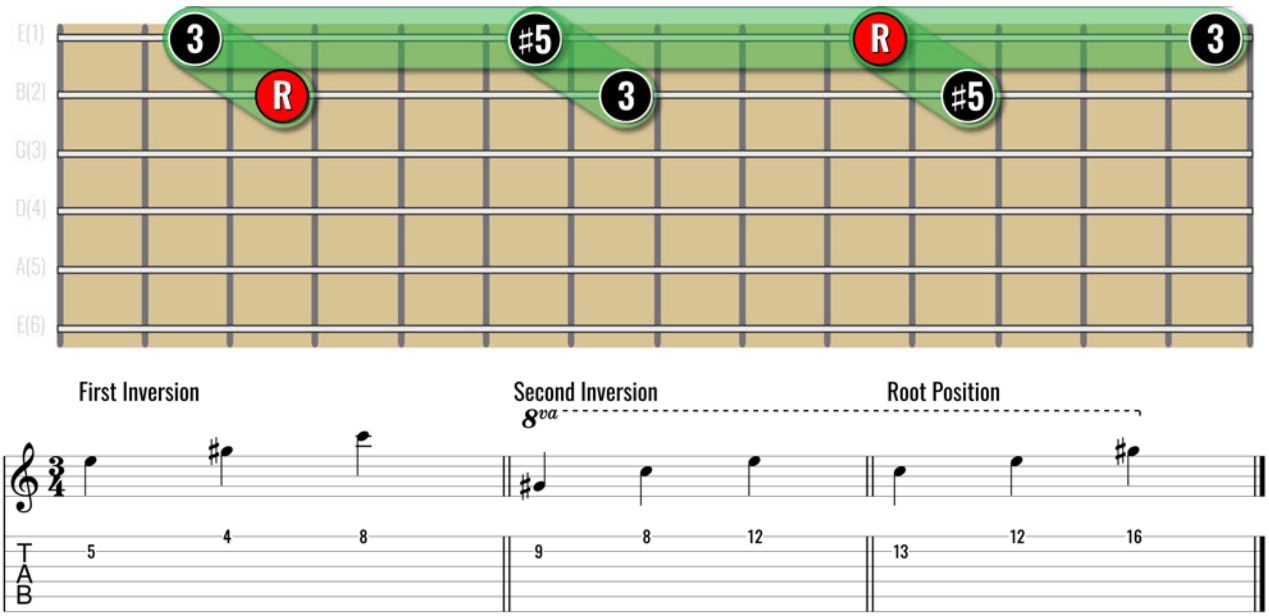


DIMINISHED 2-1

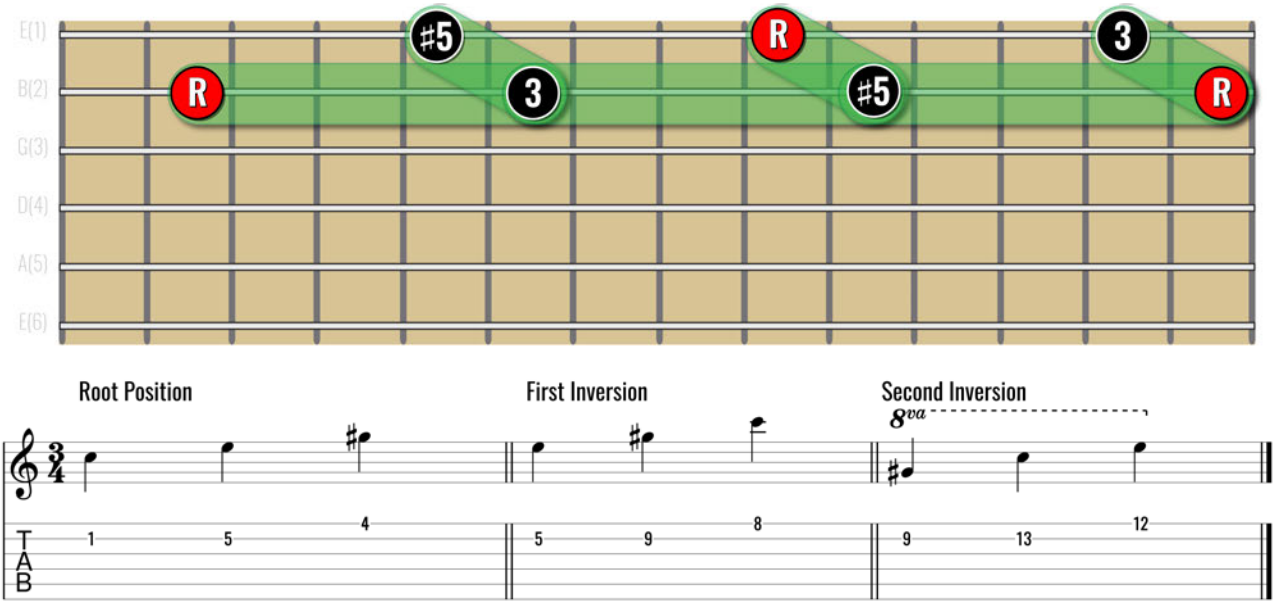


 © Ry Naylor Guitar

AUGMENTED 1-2



AUGMENTED 2-1



The symmetry of the augmented triad is really noticeable here in the inversions which will all look and play the same!

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Static Root

You can take each inversion shape through the different arpeggio types. Start experimenting with picking rhythmic variations as you work with a beat.

Static Root Inversions

Play through the different inversions of an arpeggio type from the same Root on a chosen string grouping. You can stay strictly with the same arpeggio shape (1-2/2-1) or mix them up. Explore what works best for you.

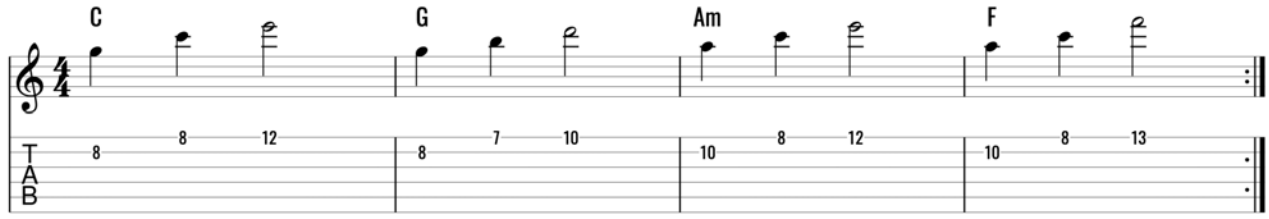
Cycle Inversions

Extend the Static Root Inversions exercise through a cycle of fourths, beginning from the lowest inversion for each Root note.

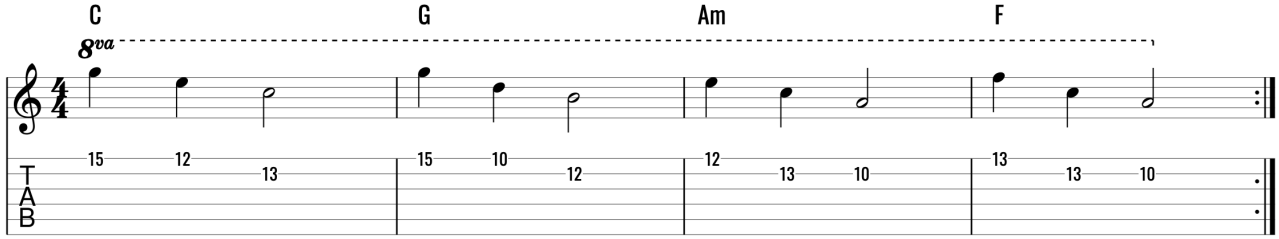
Playing to a Progression

Begin to develop your chord tone soloing using the arpeggio inversions. Work to a chord progression and find a starting shape for the first arpeggio.

Here's one way to do that with the classic I-V-vi-IV- in **C** major (C-G-Am-F) with ascending arpeggios:



And here's another set of shapes with descending arpeggios:



This can work with any progression. Have fun!

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

Part 4: Three-String Triad Arpeggios

For a perfect example of what we're looking at next, have a listen to the opening of Tamacun by Rodrigo y Gabriela. The lead part is playing arpeggios on the high strings which follow the progression Am-G-C-E.

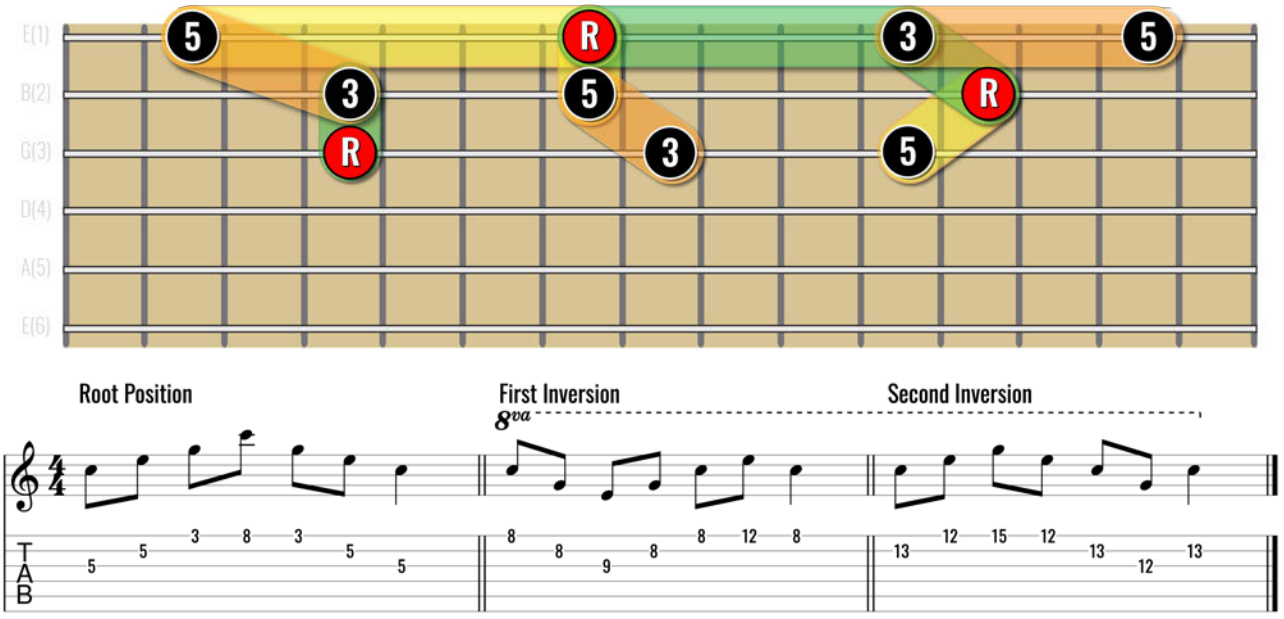
The next logical step to learning arpeggio patterns is to do so across a three-string grouping. The focus here will be **String Set 1**, the name I assign to the thinnest three strings (1(E), 2(B) and 3(G)).

The other three string groupings are studied in **Part 5: Linking Octaves**.

If you've studied triad chord shapes, what follows will be familiar to you. Importantly though you'll be playing the triad shapes as individual note arpeggios rather than chords.

The inversion of the arpeggio is named by the chord tone on string 3(G). As you learn these shapes, I recommend playing each inversion from the **Root**. In the accompanying TAB you will see that each inversion begins and ends on **R** and will link into the next inversion by playing the next chord tone on String 1(E). This will help you to link each inversion together.

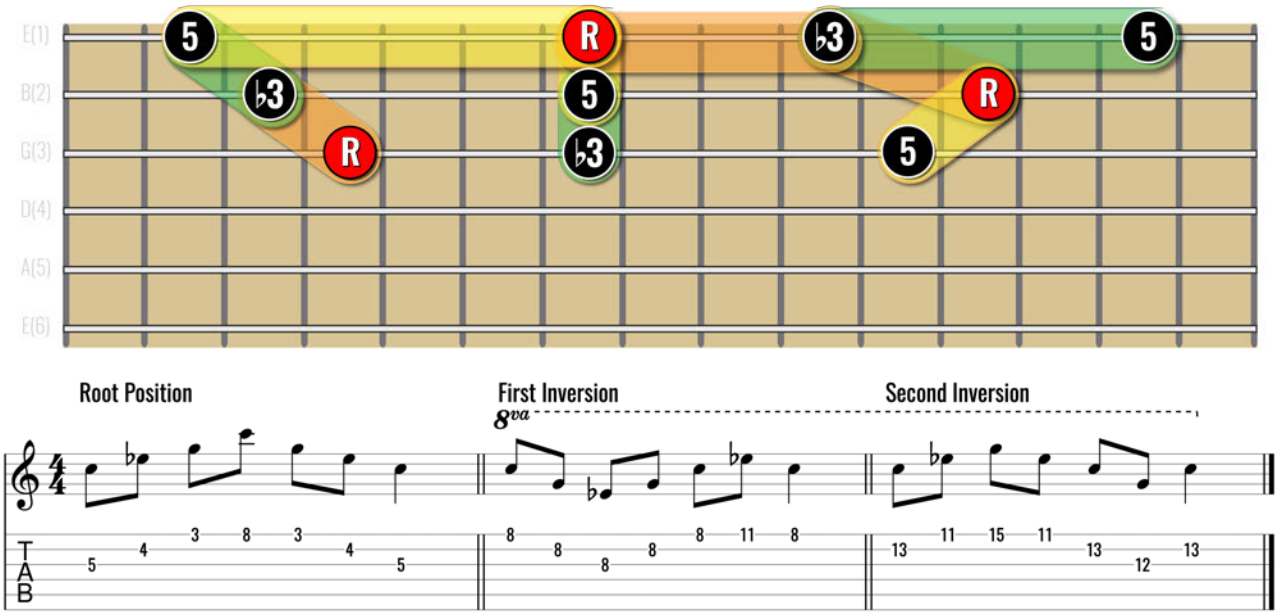
MAJOR TRIAD INVERSIONS (STRING SET 1)



***C** major arpeggio inversion (String Set 1)*

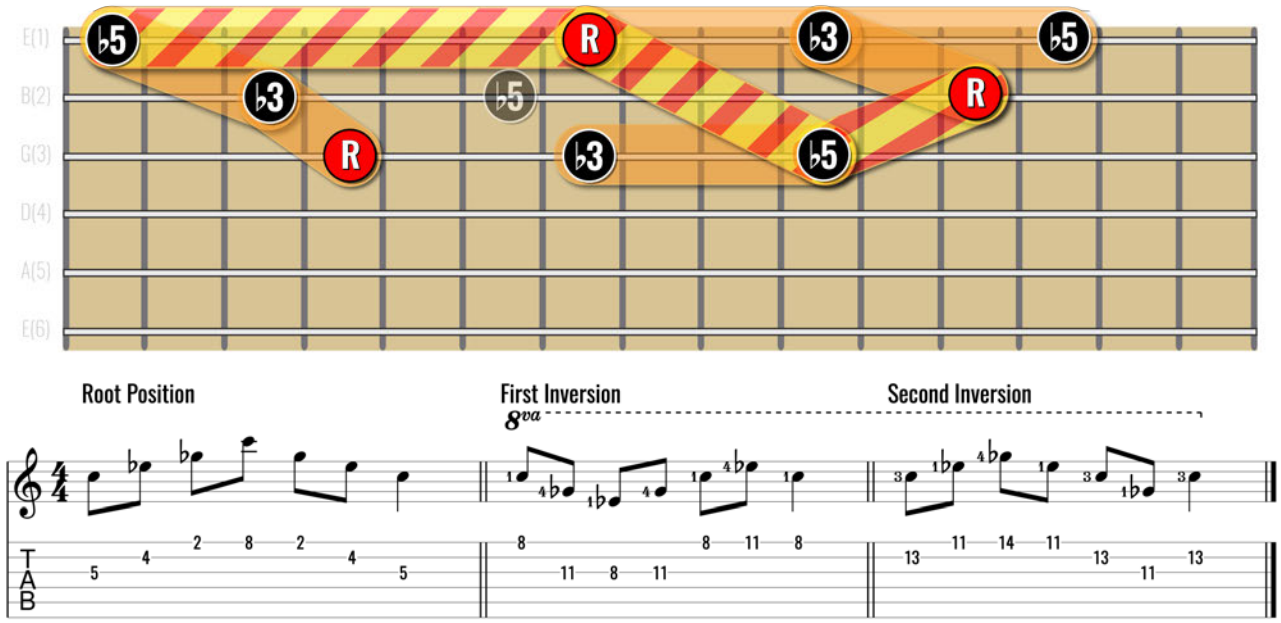
 © Ry Naylor Guitar

MINOR TRIAD INVERSIONS (STRING SET 1)



C minor arpeggio inversion (String Set 1)

DIMINISHED TRIAD INVERSIONS



C diminished arpeggio inversion (String Set 1)

You'll notice there is a difference here. The first inversion shape is much easier to play when playing both the ♭**5** and ♭**3** on string 3(G), essentially skipping over string 2(B). Follow the recommended fingering.

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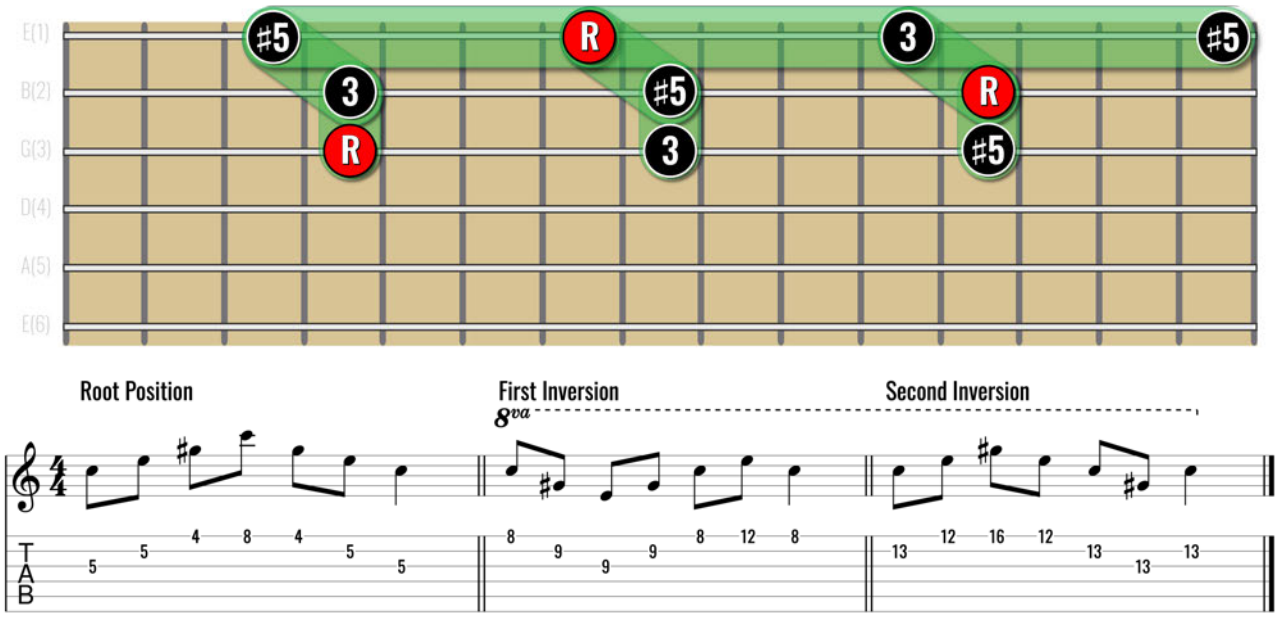
AUGMENTED TRIAD INVERSIONS



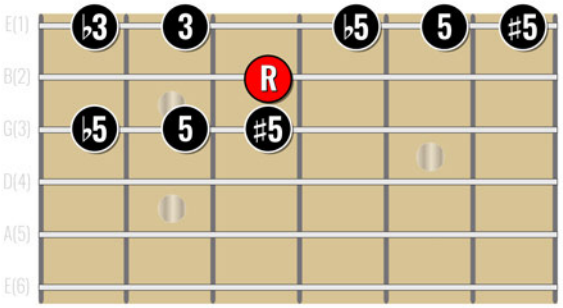
Once again, the beautiful symmetry of the augmented triad can be seen as each three-string inversion is identical in shape.

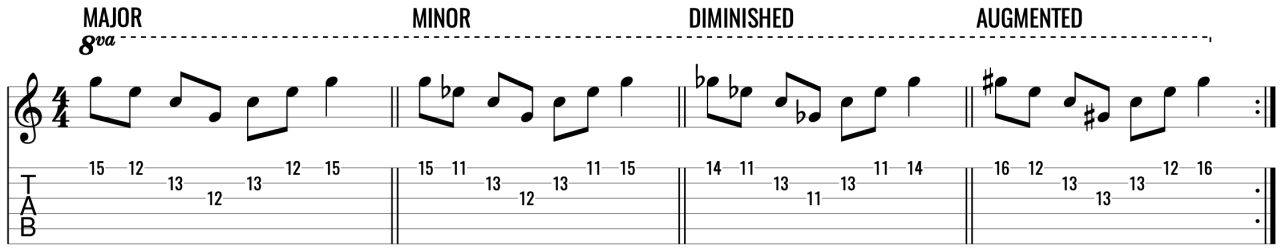
 © Ry Naylor Guitar

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Static Root

This time you'll chose an inversion and play through each of the four arpeggio types. You can do so from the Root note (like I presented earlier) or mix it up. Try up and down from the lowest chord tone on String 3(G) or even down and back up from the *highest* chord tone on String 1(E). Here's an example descending the first inversion shapes rooted on **C**:

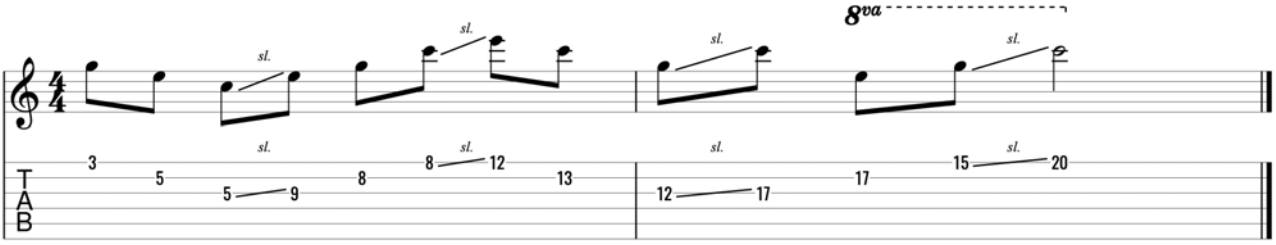




Explore different picking and rhythmic possibilities.

Static Root Inversions

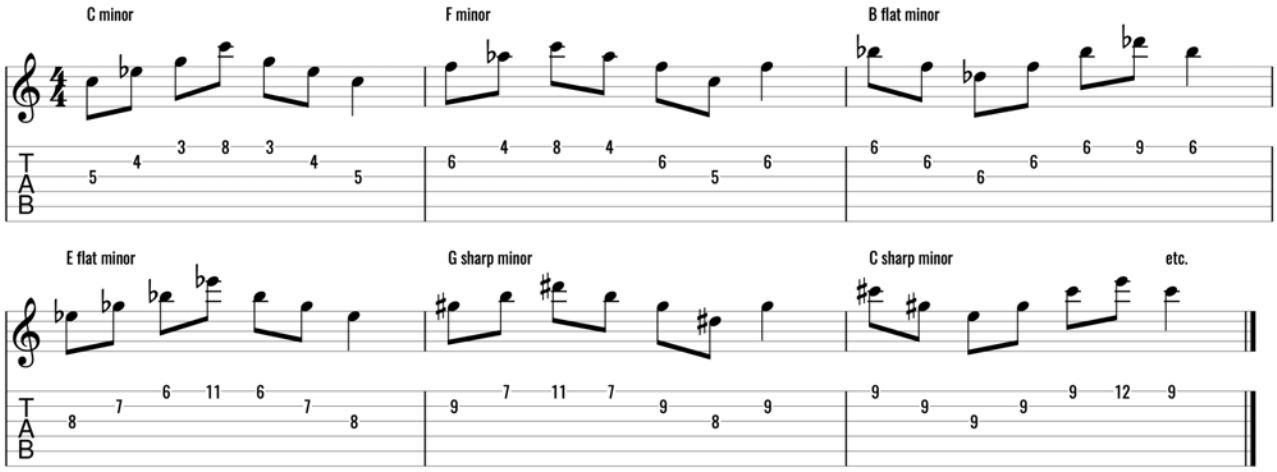
Take each arpeggio type through each of its inversions from the same Root. Be creative with how you link the inversions and when you shift playing position. Here's an example in **C** major:



Cycle Inversions

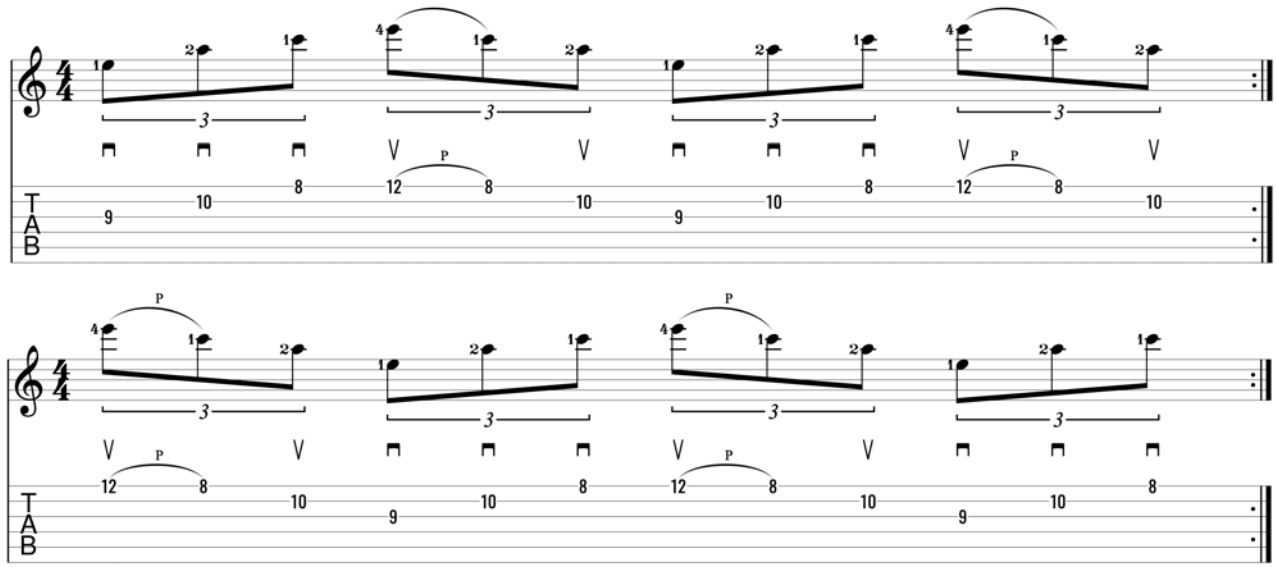
Choose an arpeggio type and take it through the fourths. You can begin each arpeggio from the Root, the lowest chord tone or the highest. Here's an example with the minor arpeggio starting from the Root note each time:

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

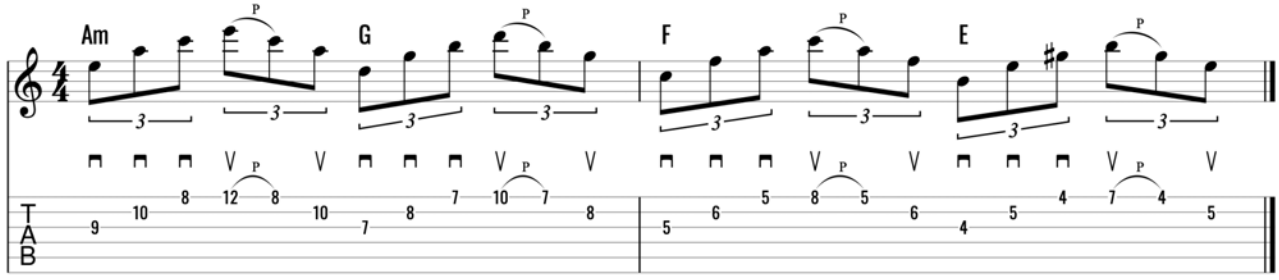


Sweep Picking

The second inversion triads are particularly useful when sweep picking. Here are a couple of approaches with the A minor arpeggio:



You can develop the technique taking the sweep picking through a progression, something like this:



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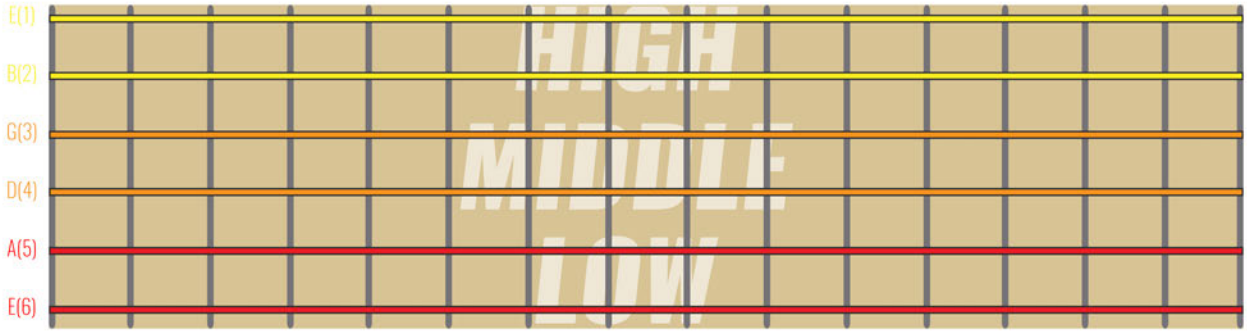
Part 5: Three Octaves (1)

Strings 3(G) and 2(B) are the awkward exception in standard tuning for which you have to learn a separate sets of arpeggio shapes that cross that string pair. *But*...that problem disappears as we group the six strings into three adjacent pairs:

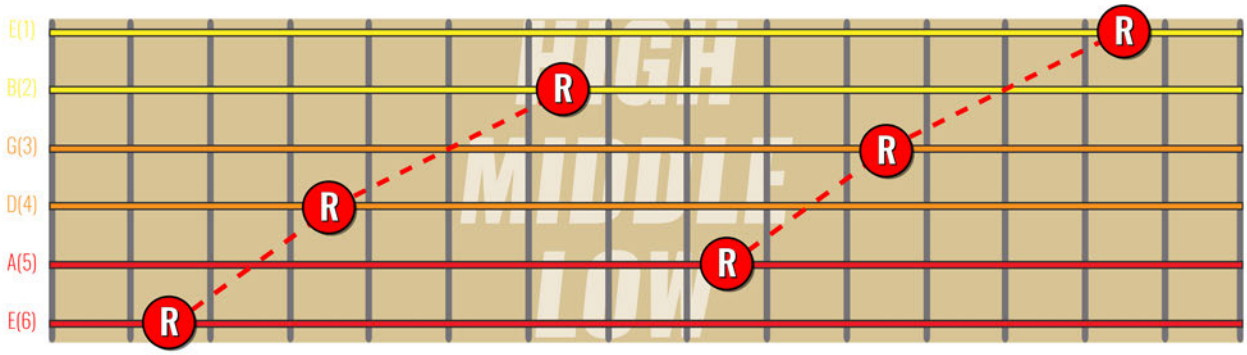
LOW: String 6(E) and 5(A)
MIDDLE: String 4(D) and 3(G)
HIGH: String 2(B) and 1(E)



The Three-Octave String Pairs

Each pair are tuned a perfect fourth apart so any arpeggio shapes will be consistent, allowing you to play through multiple octaves from the same Root note.

The key to knowing exactly where to place each arpeggio shape are the octave shapes linking each string pair. Each octave shape will skip over a string and the rules are:



- The octave above any note on the LOW pair will be **two frets higher** on the MIDDLE pair.
- The octave above any note on the MIDDLE pair will be **three frets higher** on the HIGH pair.

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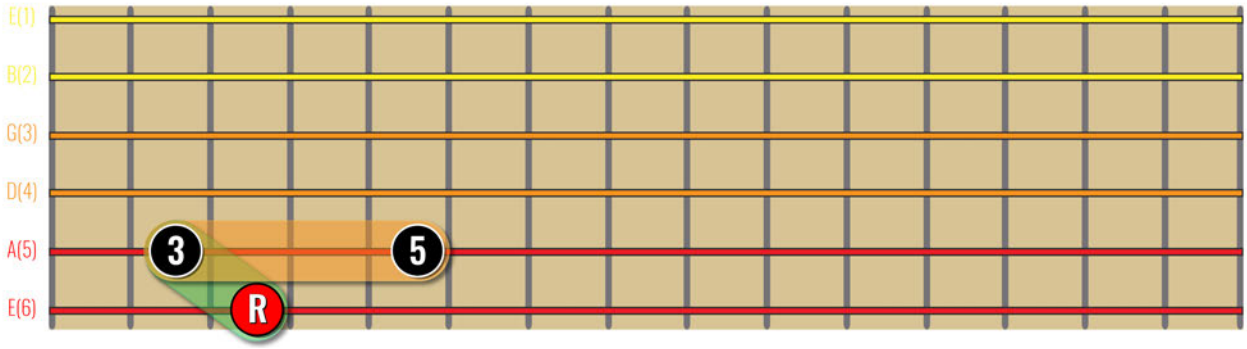
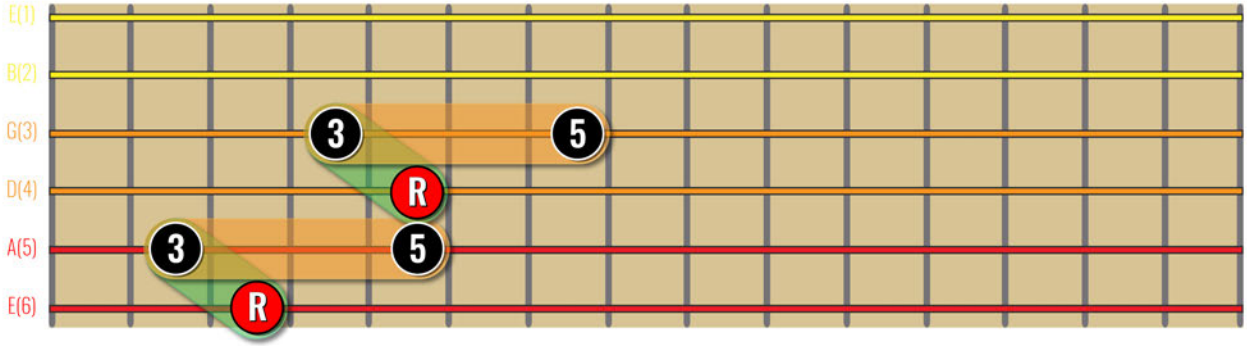
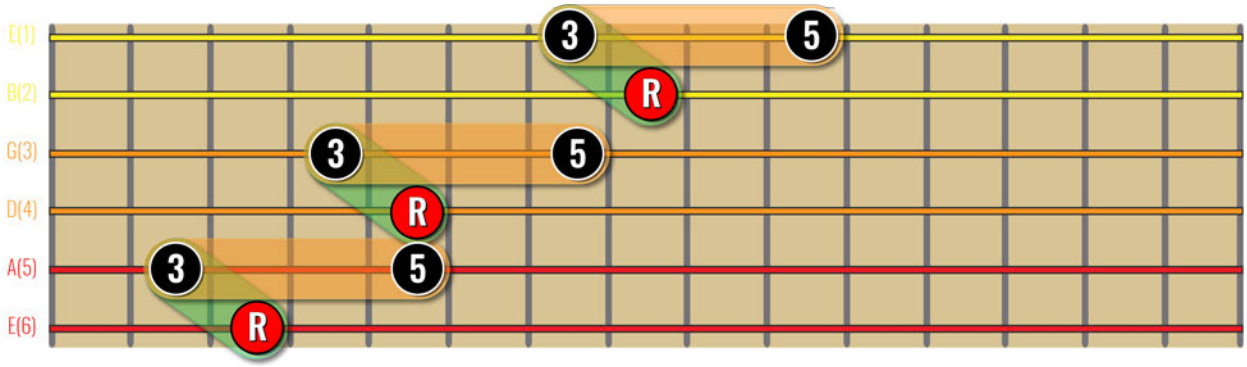
Any arpeggio pattern you place on the LOW strings, like a **1-2 major arpeggio**...



....can be repeated an octave above on the MIDDLE strings by moving the shape **two frets higher**...



...which can be repeated an octave above on the HIGH strings by moving the shape **three frets higher**...



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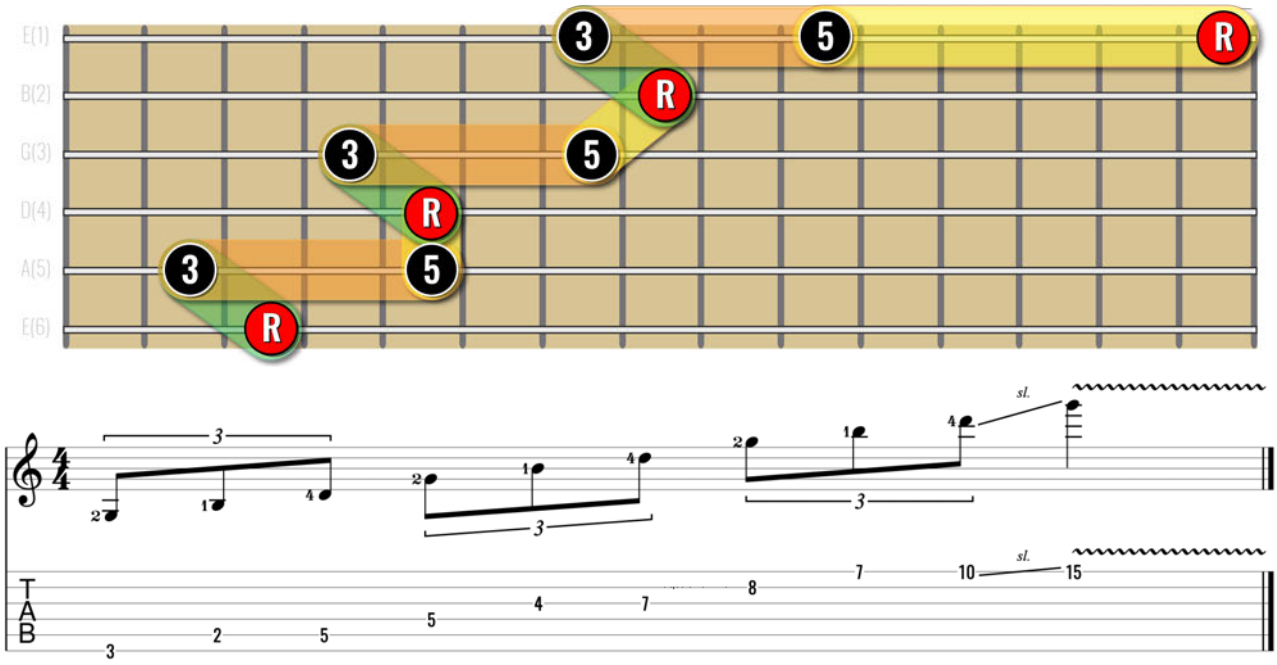
Below I've also added a final **R** up a perfect fourth to give you three full octaves of the major arpeggio:



G major arpeggio (three octaves)

Linking up all three octaves you can also see the **perfect fourth** between **5** and **R**. Between the LOW and MIDDLE pair up a perfect fourth is be in the same fret on string 4(D). Between MIDDLE and HIGH up a perfect fourth is one fret higher on string 2(B).

What follows are inversions of the three octave arpeggios for each triad type. There are two sets comprising the two arpeggio shapes across a string pair - **1-2** and **2-1**.

At the top you will see all the inversions on a **G** Root, and then a full three octaves of each inversion is presented separately below.

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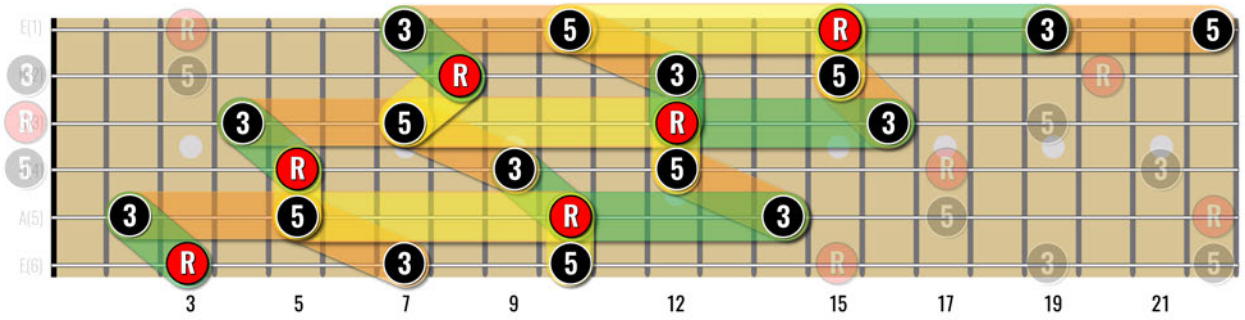
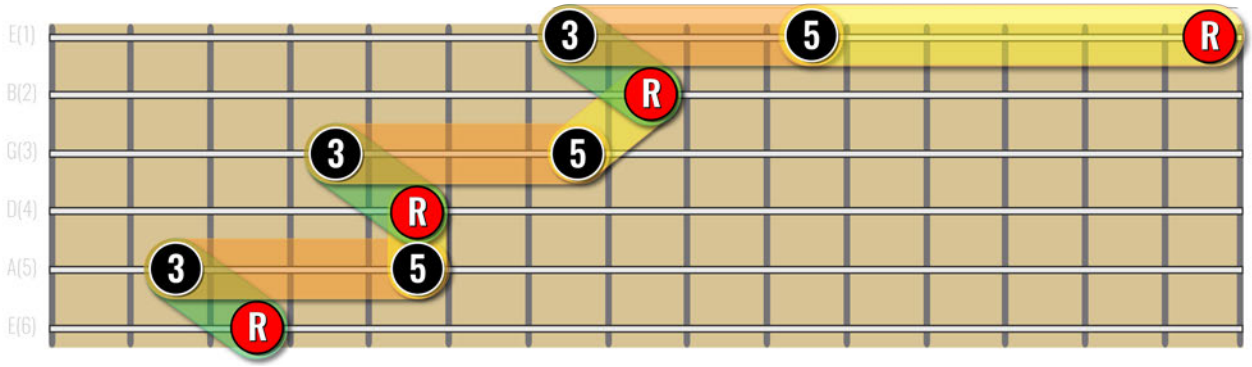
MAJOR ARPEGGIO (THREE OCTAVES)

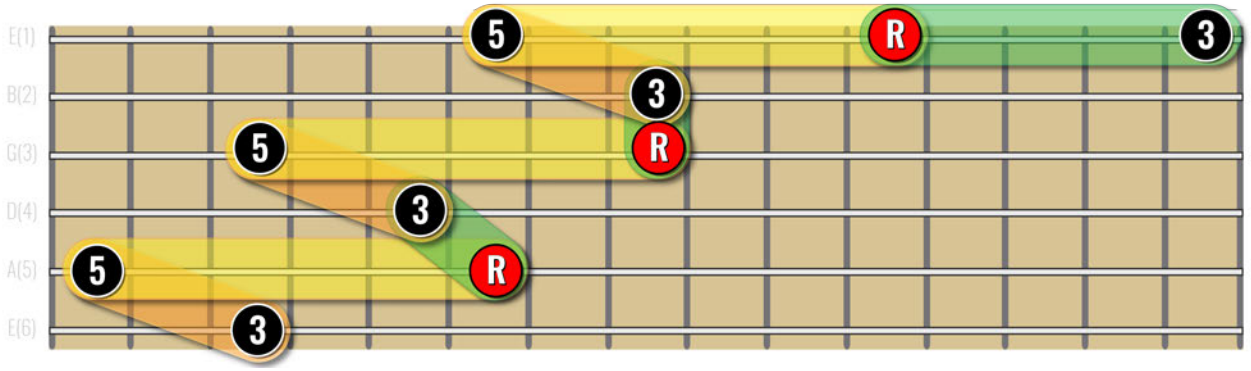
1-2 ARPEGGIO INVERSIONS



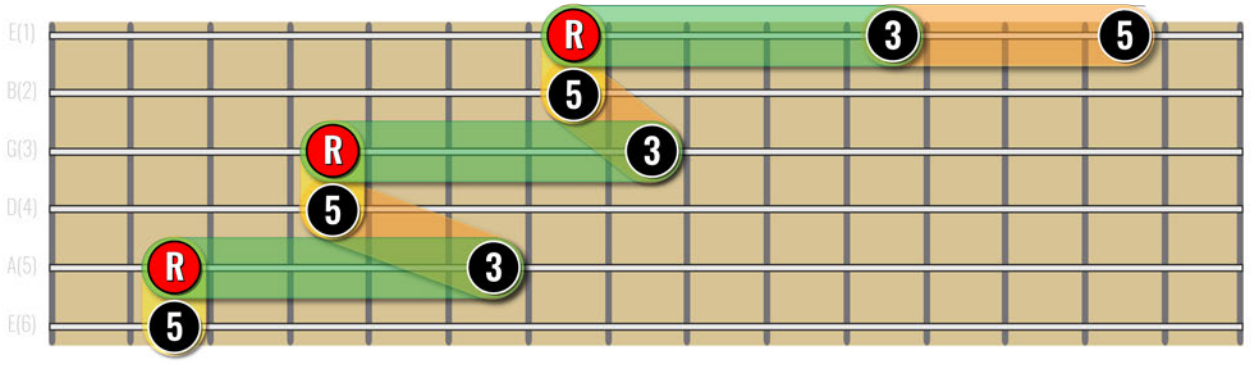
ROOT POSITION



FIRST INVERSION



SECOND INVERSION



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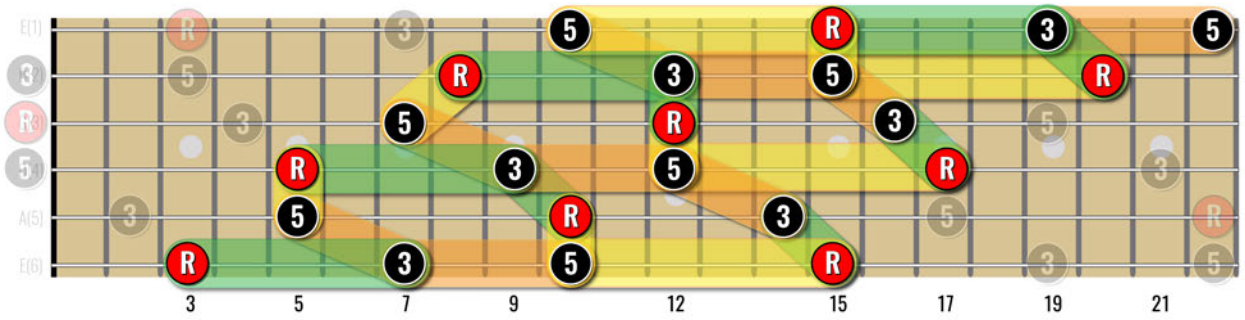
MAJOR ARPEGGIO (THREE OCTAVES)

2-1 ARPEGGIO INVERSIONS



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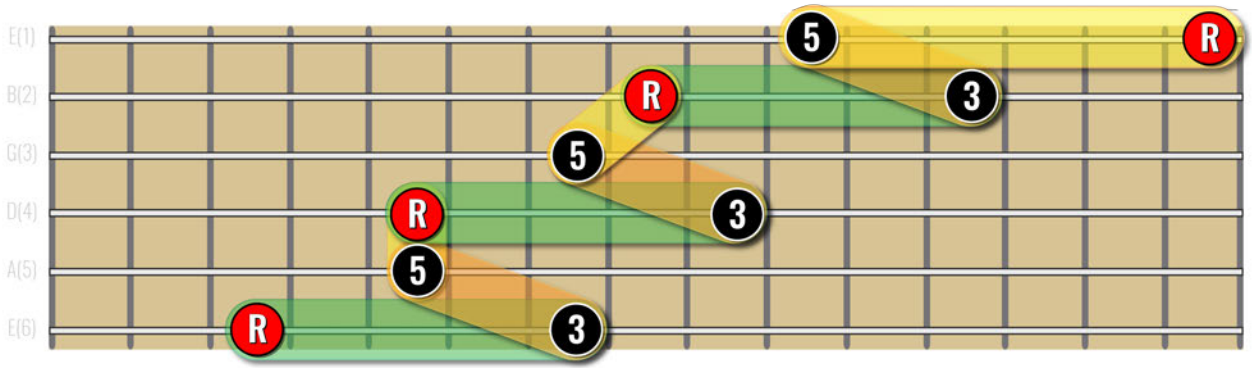

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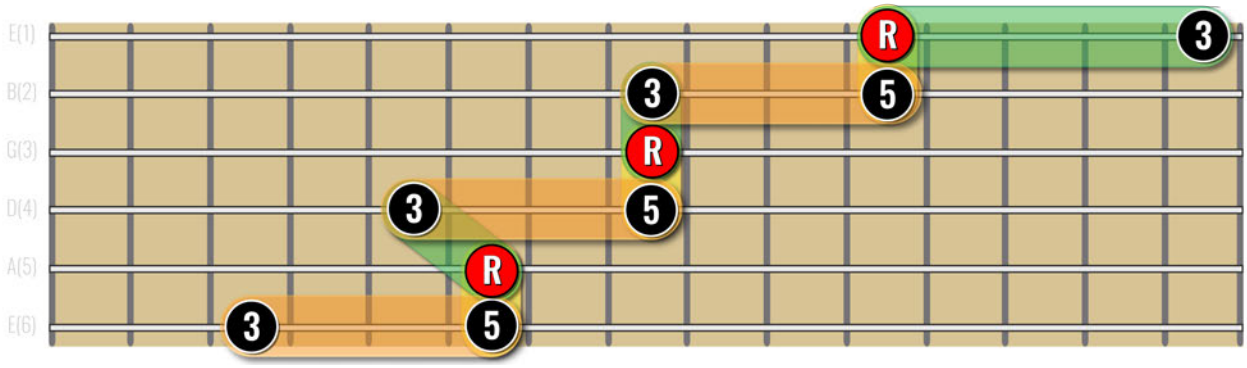

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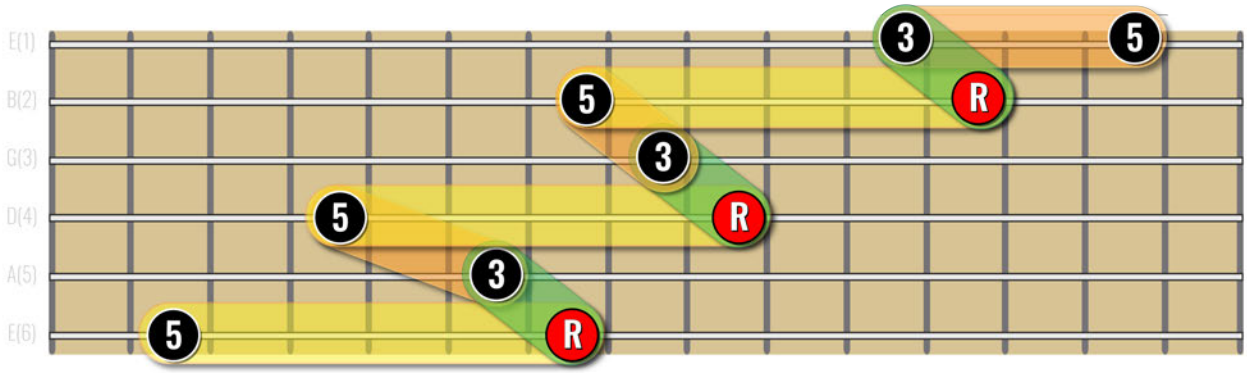

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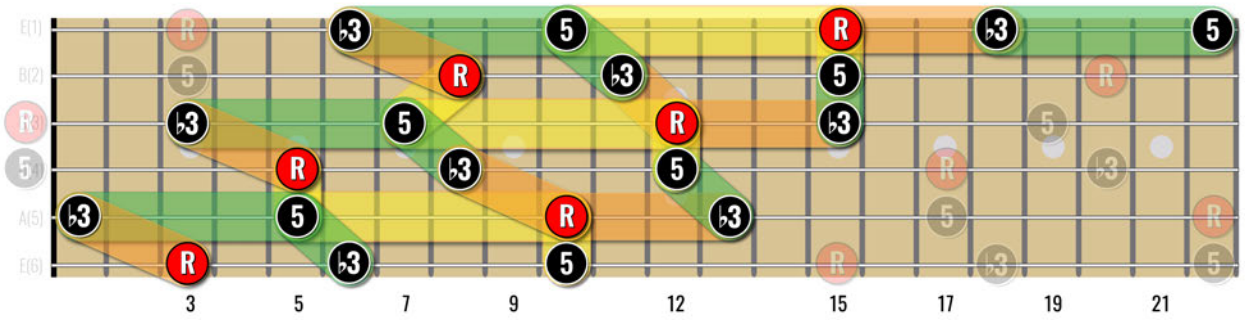
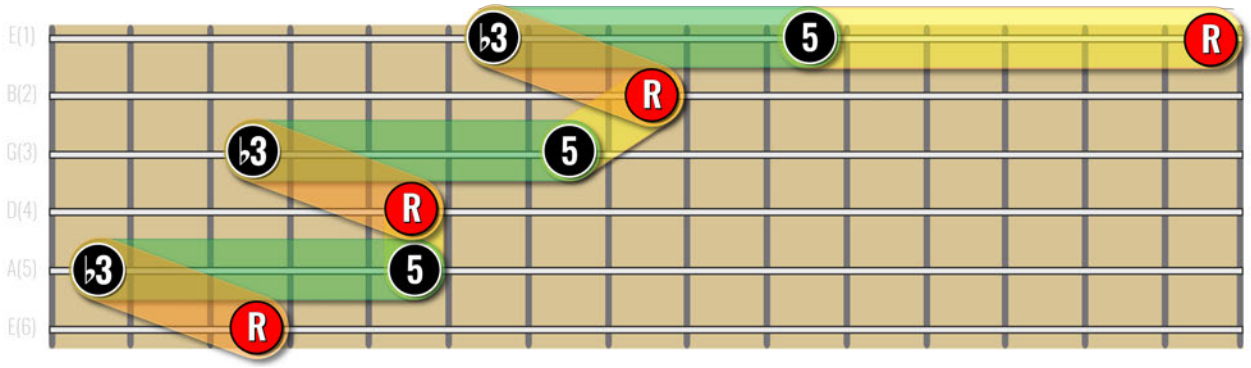
MINOR ARPEGGIO (THREE OCTAVES)

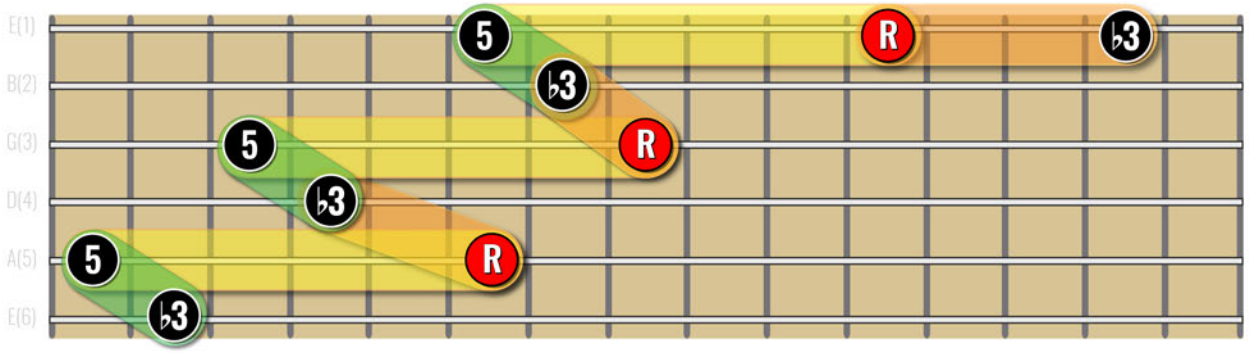
1-2 ARPEGGIO INVERSIONS



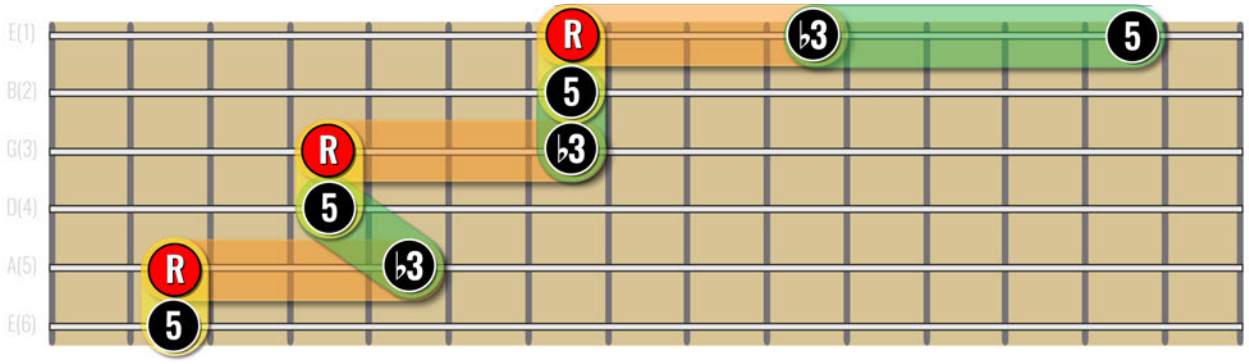
ROOT POSITION



FIRST INVERSION



SECOND INVERSION



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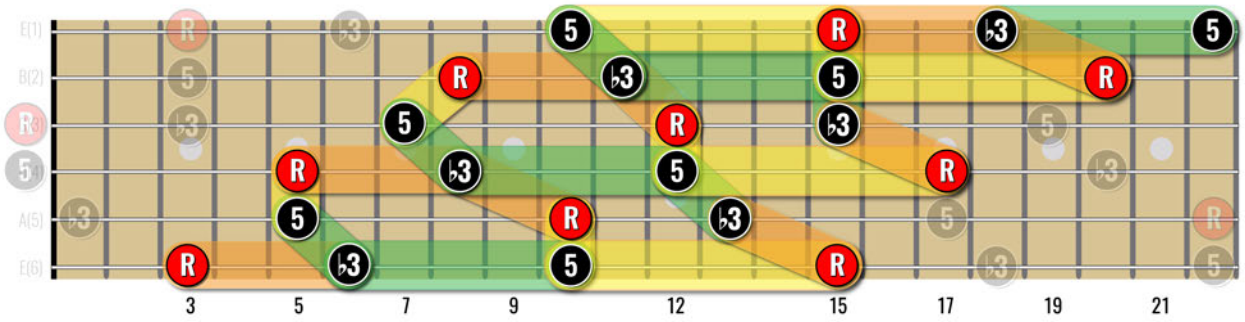
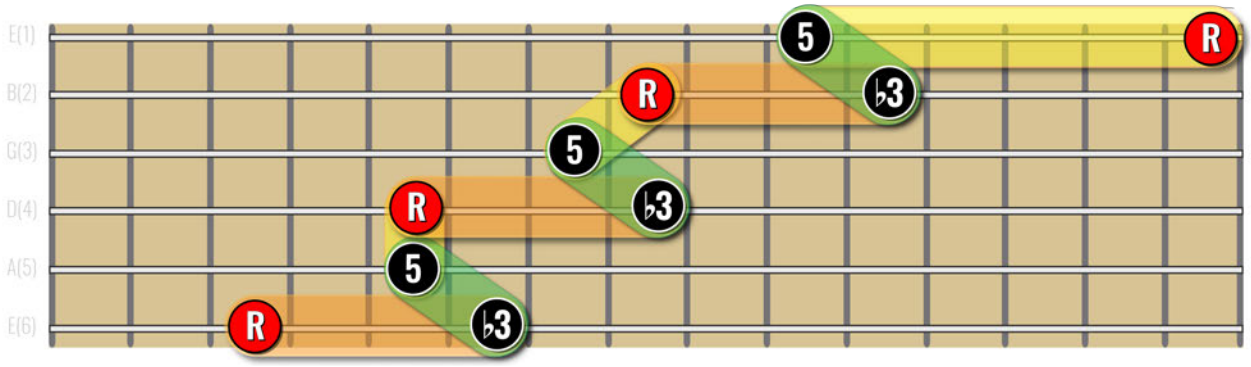
MINOR ARPEGGIO (THREE OCTAVES)

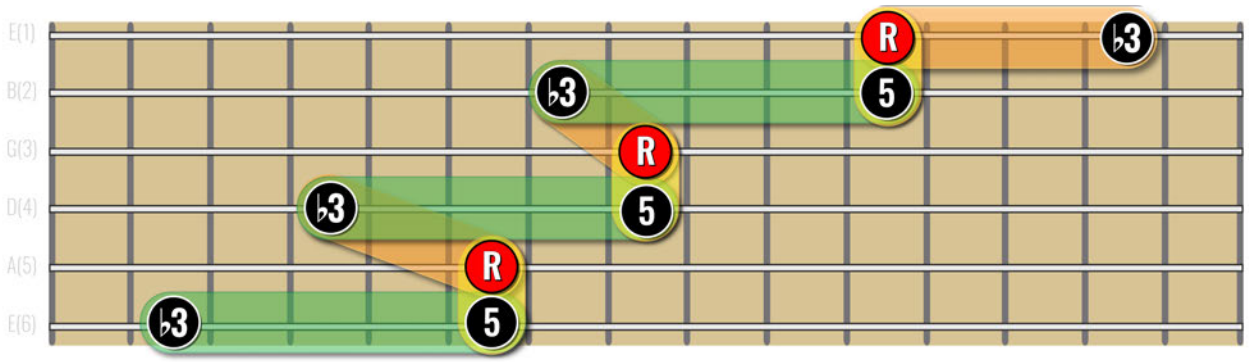
2-1 ARPEGGIO INVERSIONS



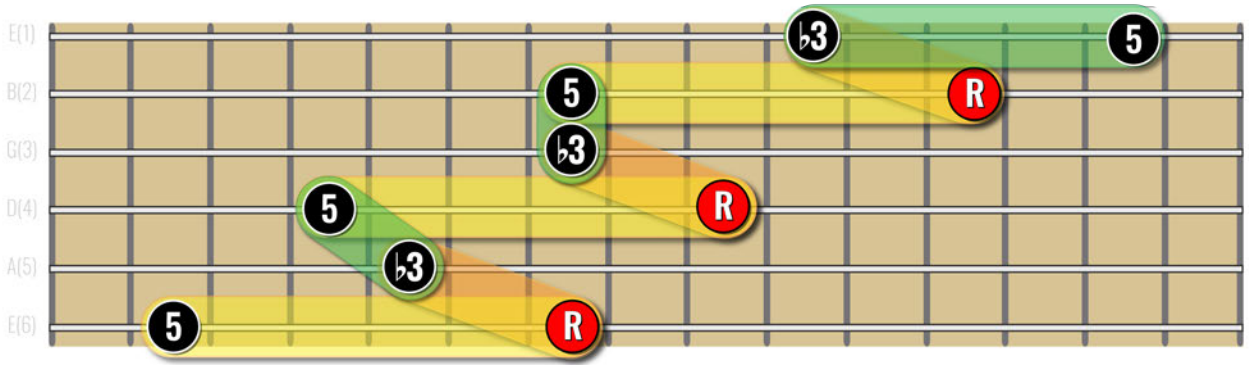
ROOT POSITION



FIRST INVERSION



SECOND INVERSION



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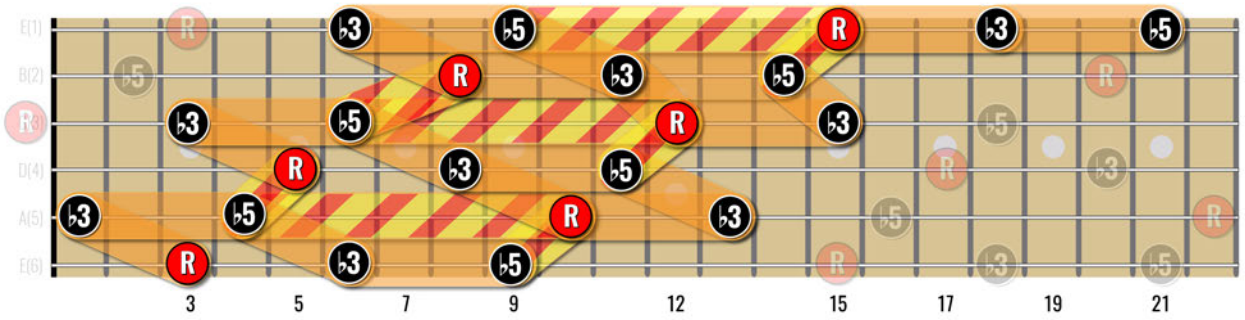
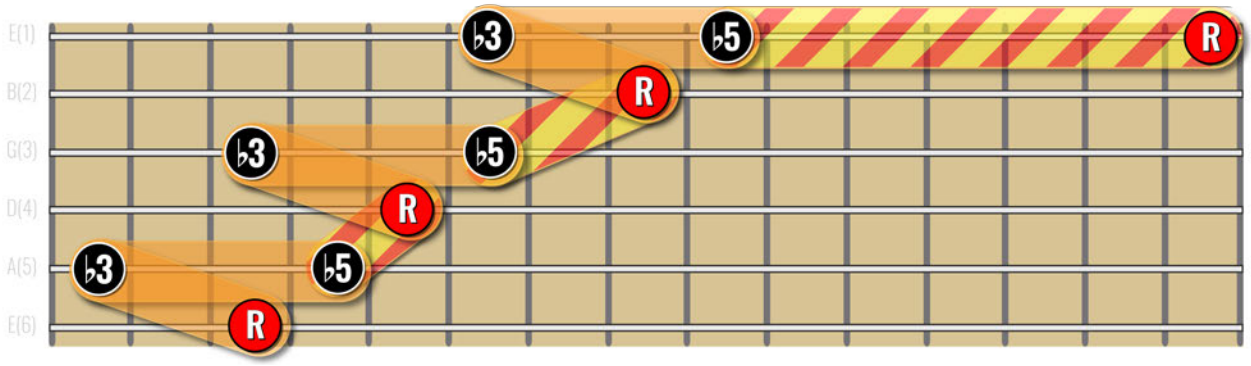
DIMINISHED ARPEGGIO (THREE OCTAVES)

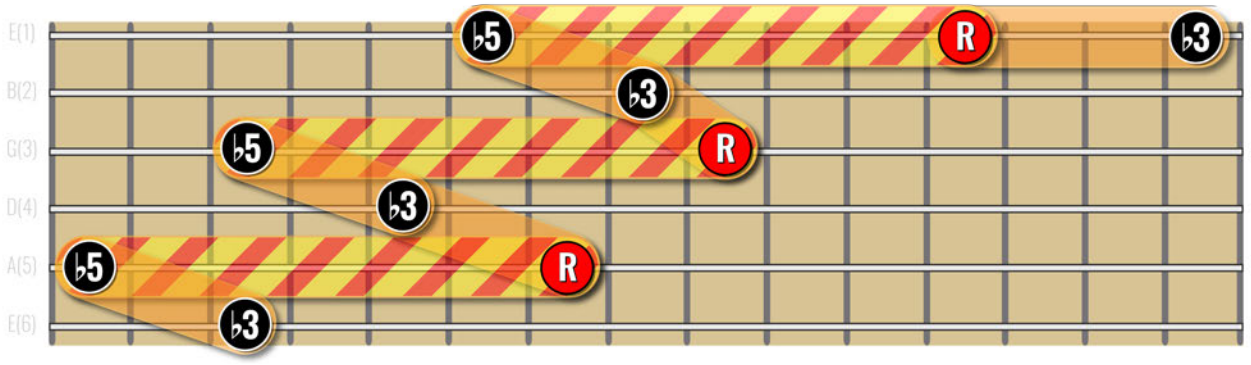
1-2 ARPEGGIO INVERSIONS



ROOT POSITION



FIRST INVERSION



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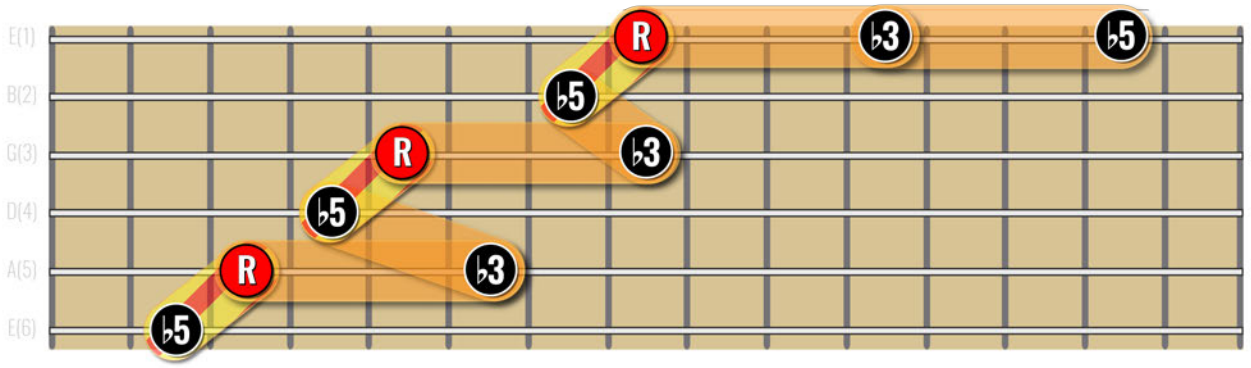

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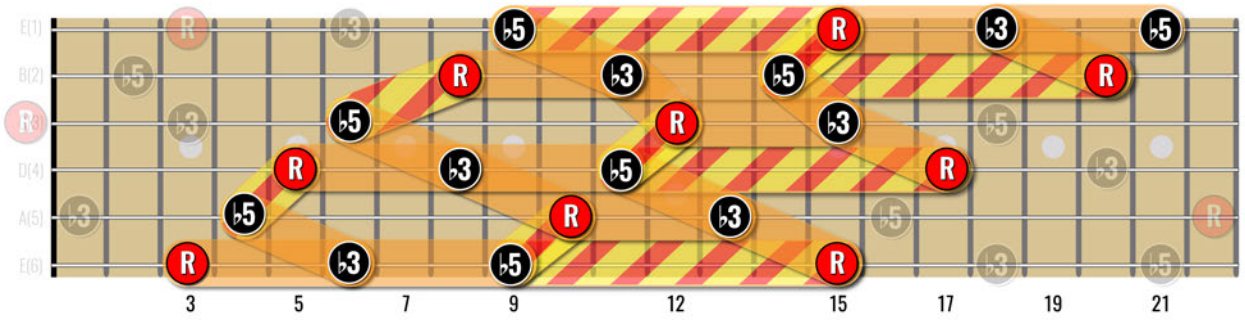
DIMINISHED ARPEGGIO (THREE OCTAVES)

2-1 ARPEGGIO INVERSIONS



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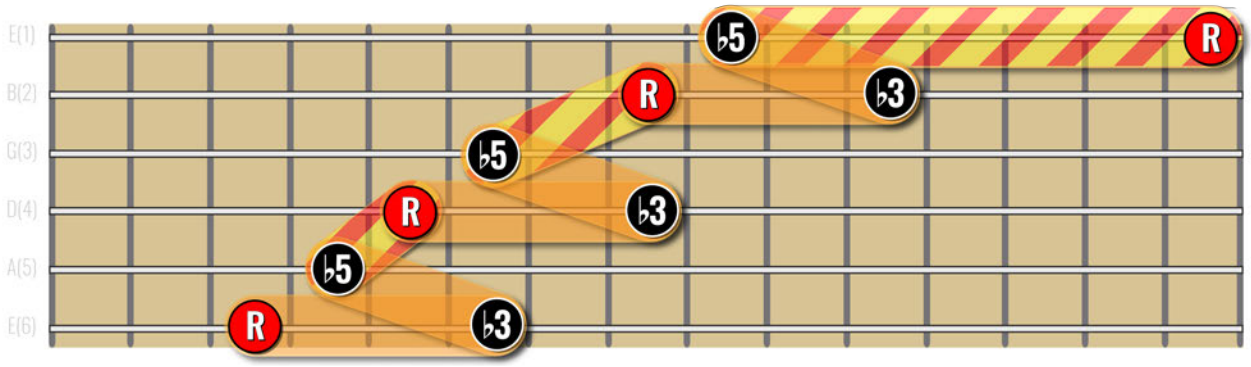

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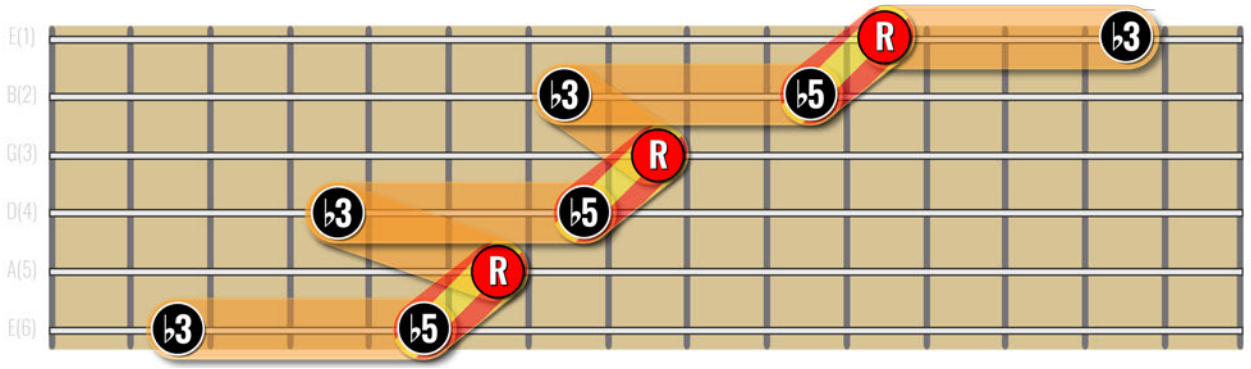

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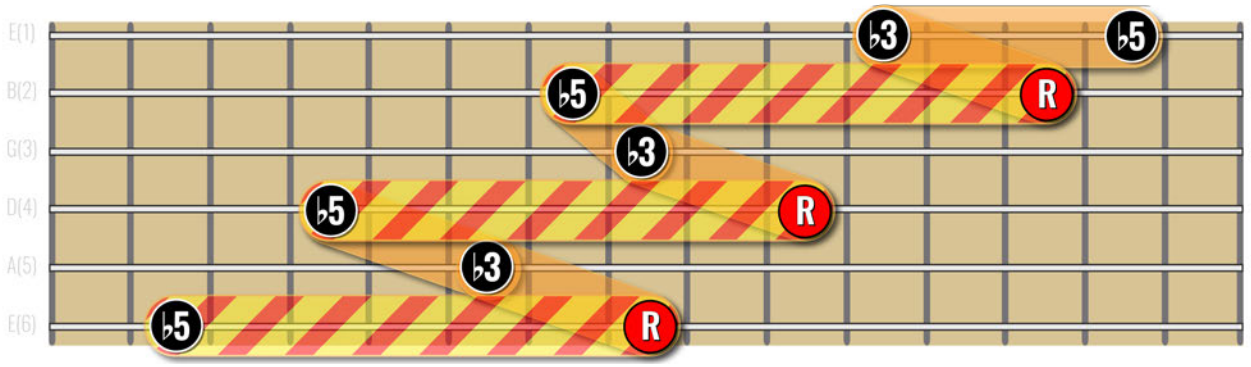

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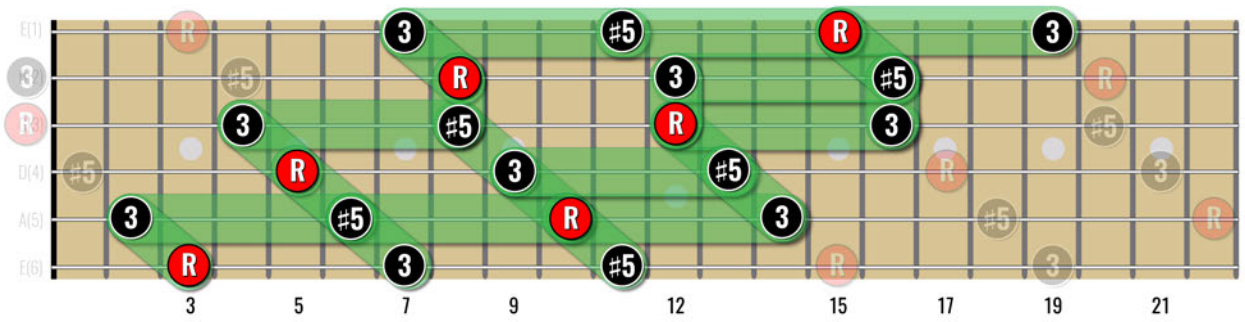
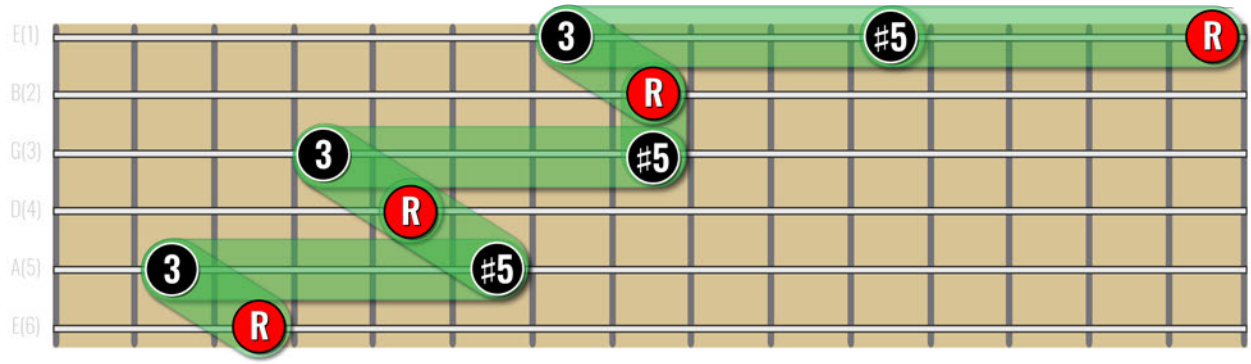
AUGMENTED ARPEGGIO (THREE OCTAVES)

1-2 ARPEGGIO INVERSIONS



ROOT POSITION



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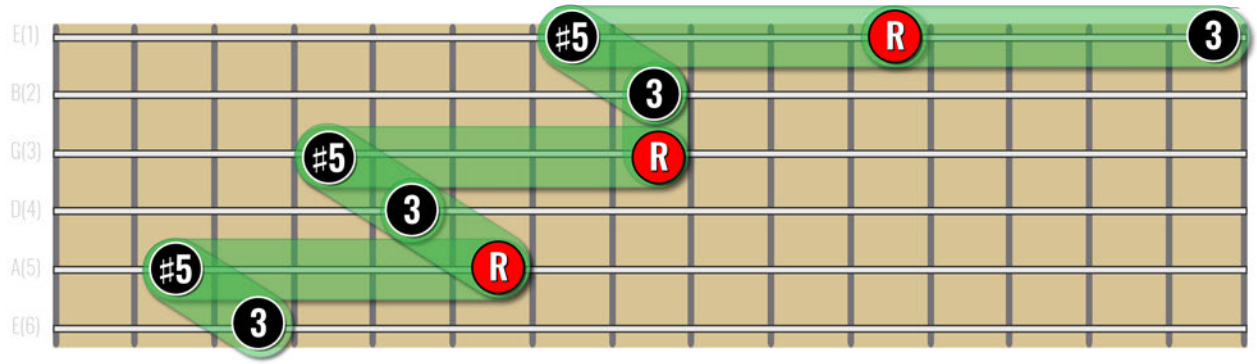

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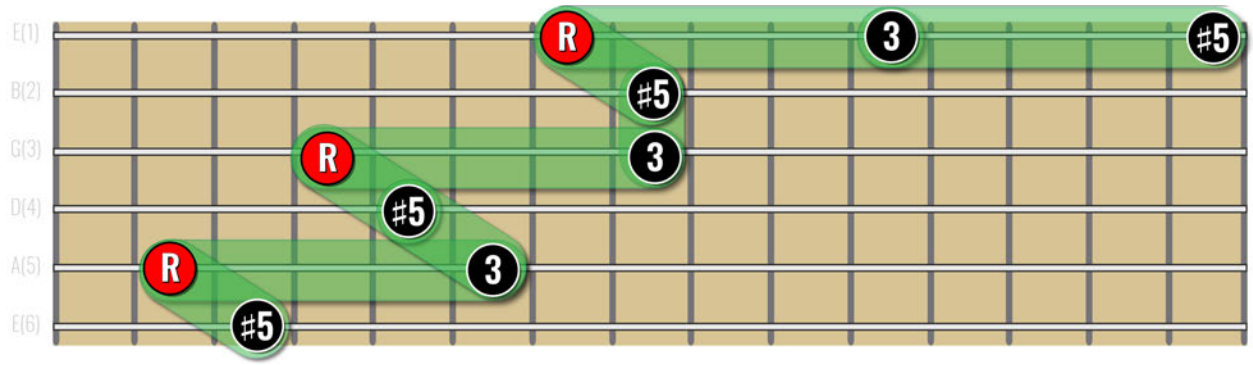

Yep, they're all the same. It's symmetrical after all!

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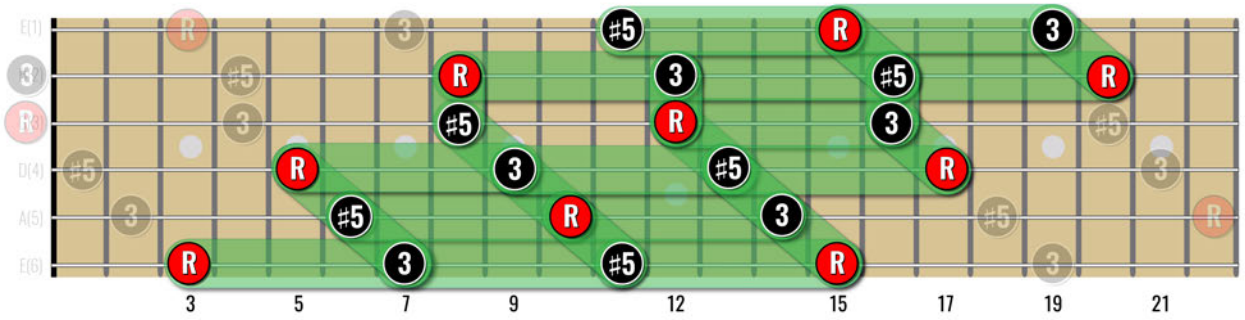
AUGMENTED ARPEGGIO (THREE OCTAVES)

2-1 ARPEGGIO INVERSIONS



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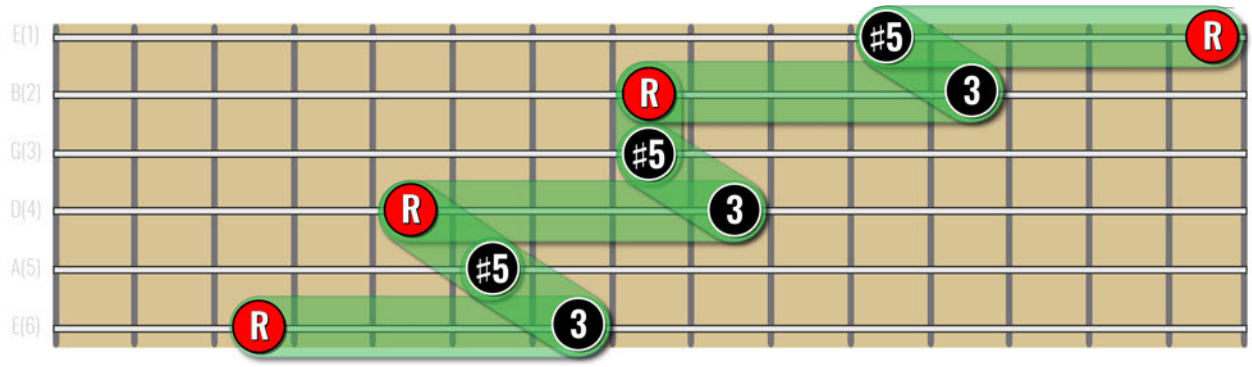

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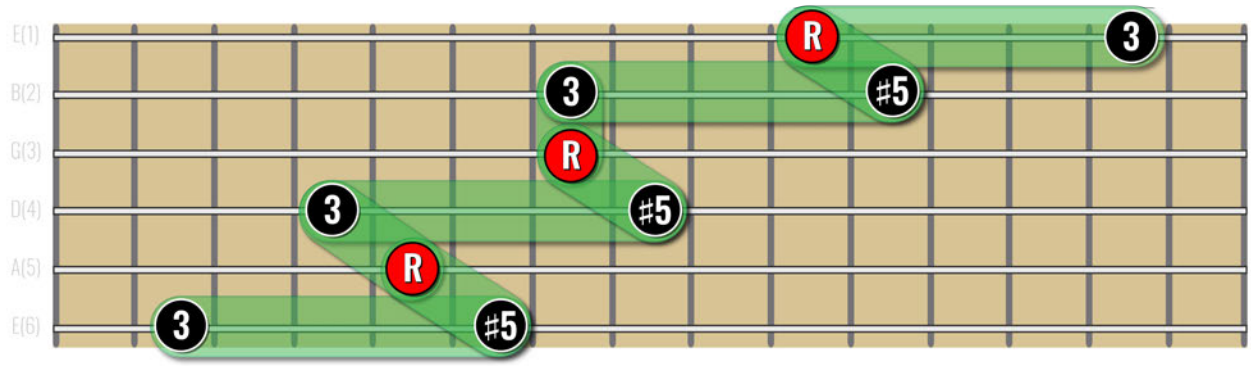

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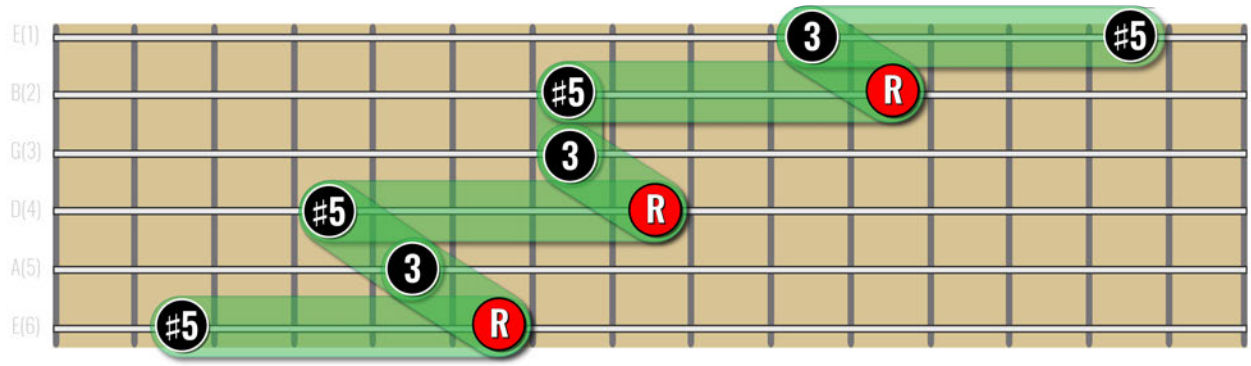

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PRACTICE EXERCISES

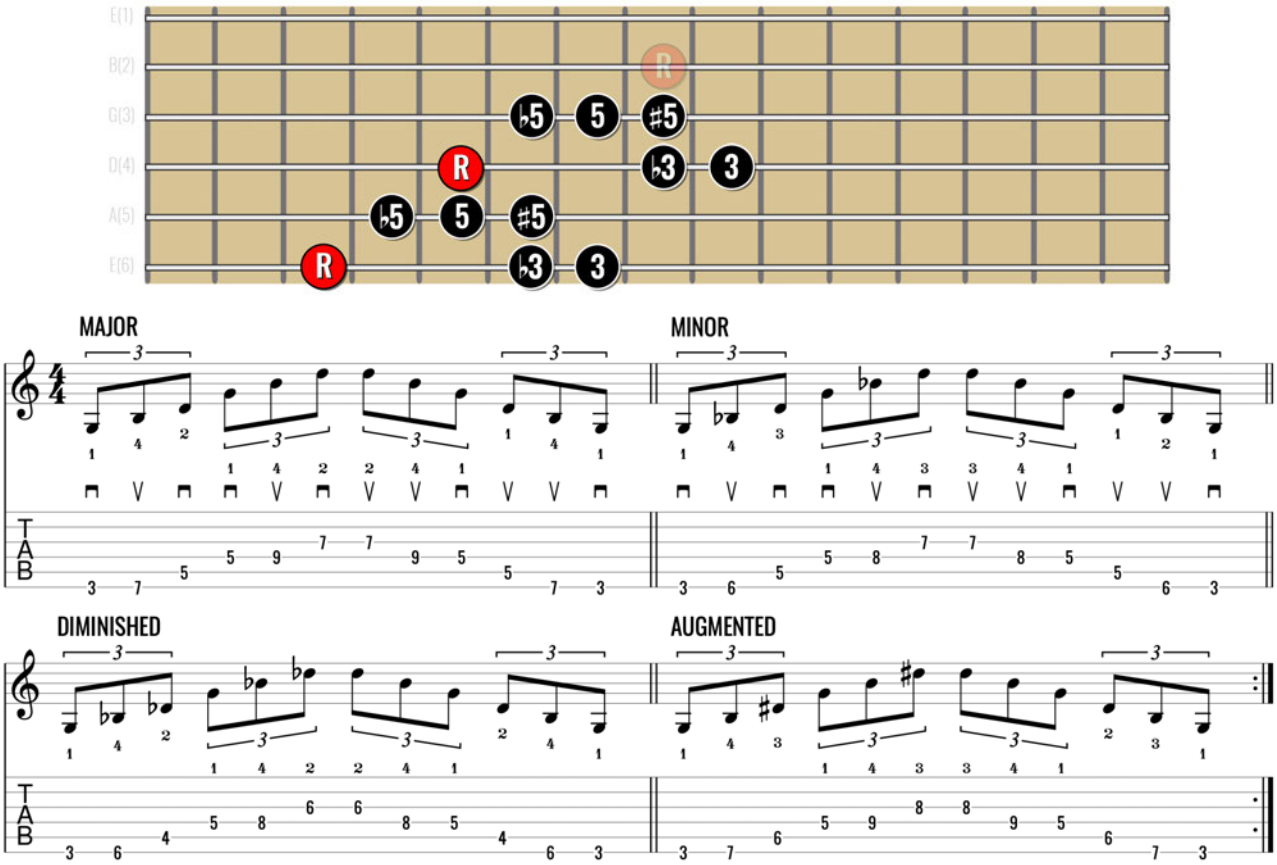
These three octave patterns make sense but the visualisation can be a little overwhelming as you first learn them, particularly hitting the right spot on the HIGH strings. It also needs some good position shifts with the fretting hand, so take your time.

If all three octaves is too much, start with two - LOW-MIDDLE or MIDDLE-HIGH (*trickier*).

Also mix things up in terms of your starting note. Generally we tend to always start at the lowest note and ascend. But starting from the highest note and *descending* is equally important.

Static Root

Here is a two-octave example of the Static Root with the 2-1 arpeggios (**G**). These are great shapes to work on your economy picking (look out for the double down pick as you change arpeggio type):



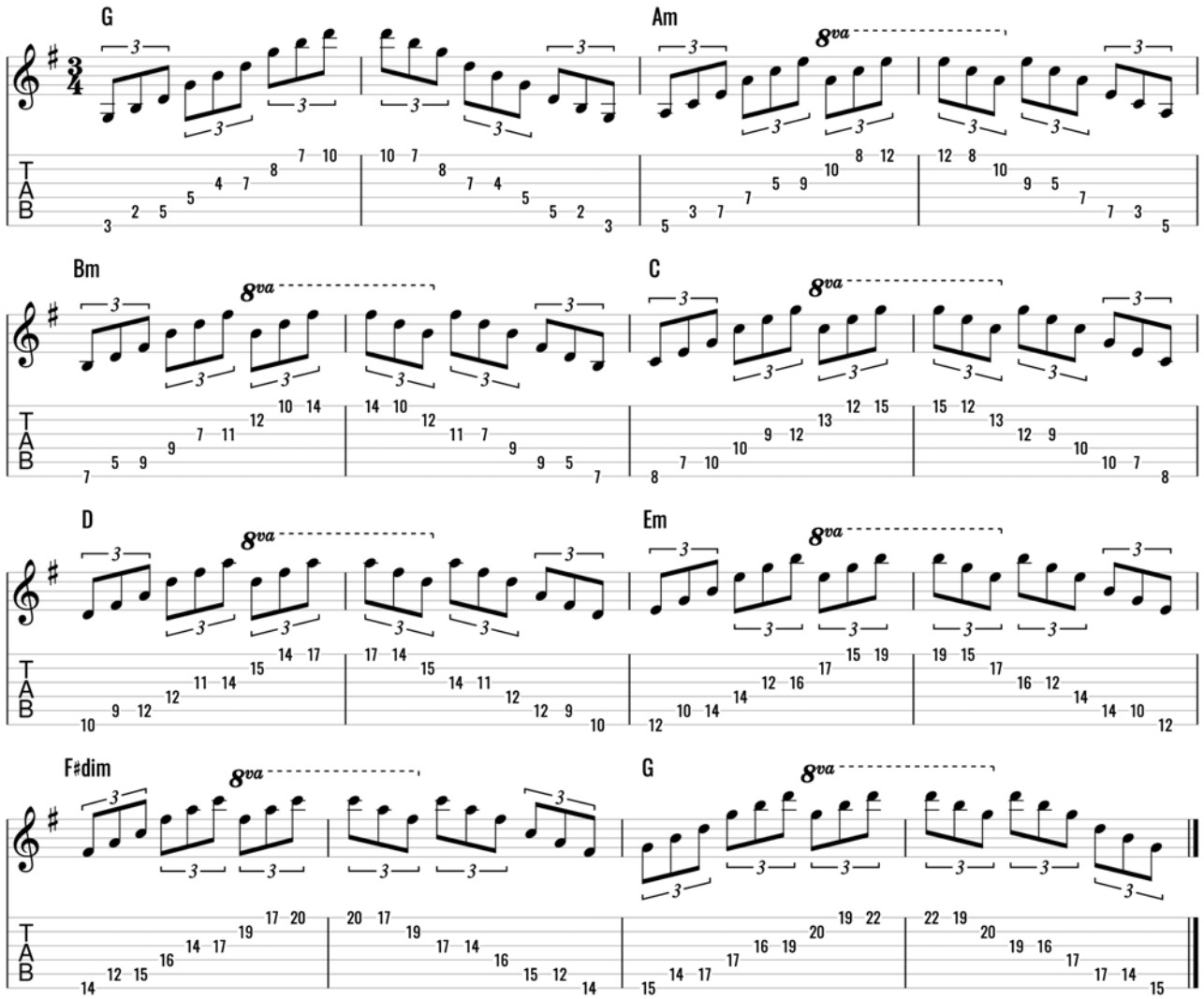
The fingering doesn't need to be the same in both directions. You'll notice that I recommend rolling finger 1 onto String 5(A) as you descend.

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

Try the same exercise with the MIDDLE-HIGH pairs and then see if you can work the vision across all three octaves.

Playing Through a Key (Same Shape)

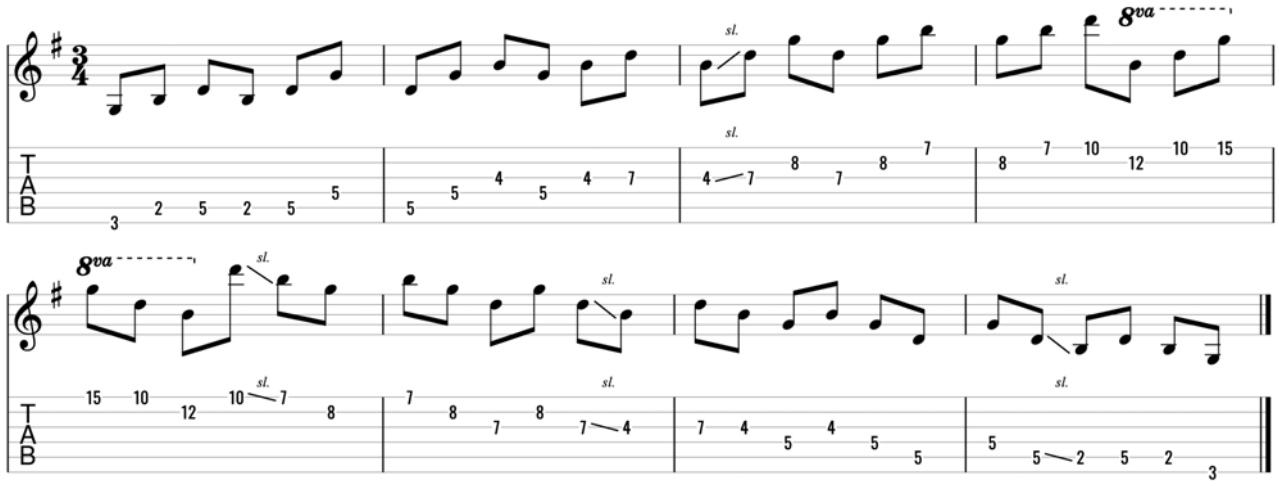
For a challenge you can play the three octaves through a key. You can play through each chord in the key for a full fretboard workout. Here's one way to do that with the key of **G** major:



 © Ry Naylor Guitar

Arpeggio Sequences

A great way to develop the vision of these larger shapes is to take it in sequences. Three in a row works nicely here. Here's an example with the 1-2 **G** major arpeggio:



I've added a couple of position slides (*sl.*) to the TAB where it makes sense for me to change playing position. Fingering here is *Player's Choice*.

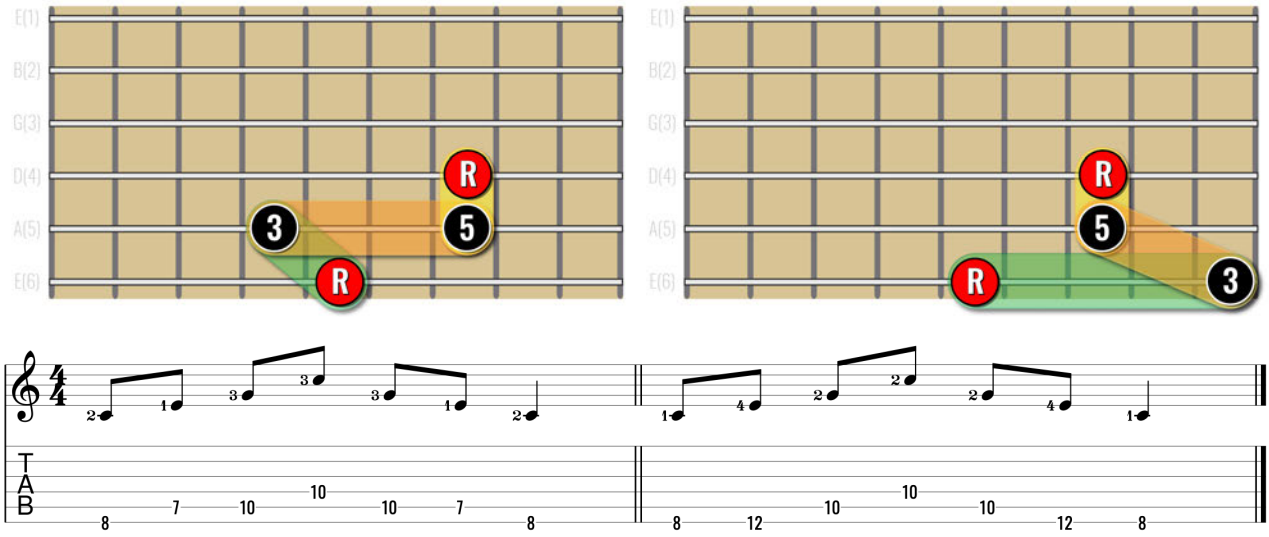
These three octave 'shapes' can then be used as a template for the **Static Root** exercise.

Using the three octave shapes as a framework, start exploring a little more and see if you can combine patterns to form continuous streams of chord tones up and down the fretboard.

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

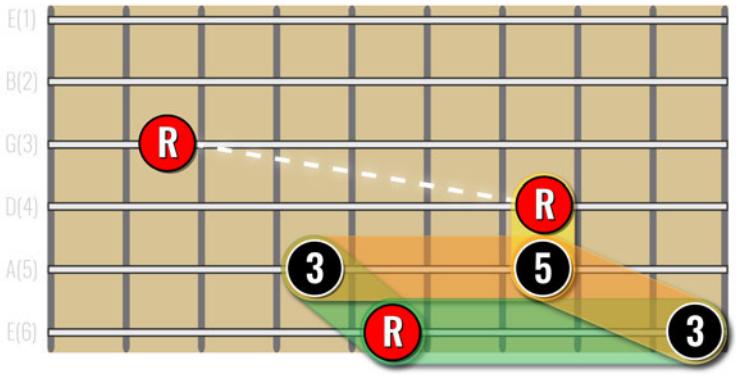
Part 6: Linking Octaves

In playing through the 3-octave patterns of **Part 5**, you've learned two different ways to play one octave of each arpeggio type starting either on finger 2 or finger 1. Taking the major arpeggio as an example:



C major arpeggio two different ways

But there are *even more* possibilities, because the octave Root can also be found five frets lower on String 3(G):

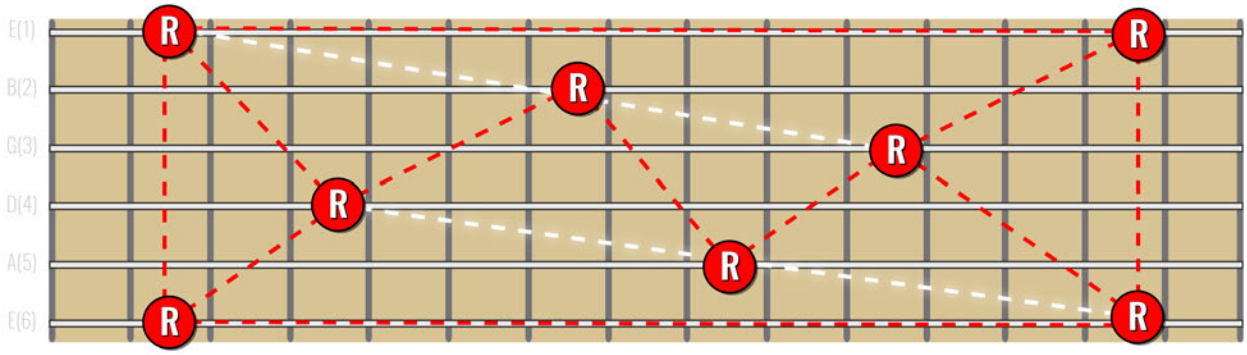


On the guitar there is always more than one way to do things! In **Part 6** you'll explore all the possible routes you can take to form arpeggio shapes between two Root notes one octave apart.

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

Octave Shapes

Below is an overview of all the octave shapes on the fretboard presented as red dotted lines. The white lines link Root notes in the *same* octave (i.e. same pitch). There's three octaves from bottom left on string 6(E) to top right on string 1(E):



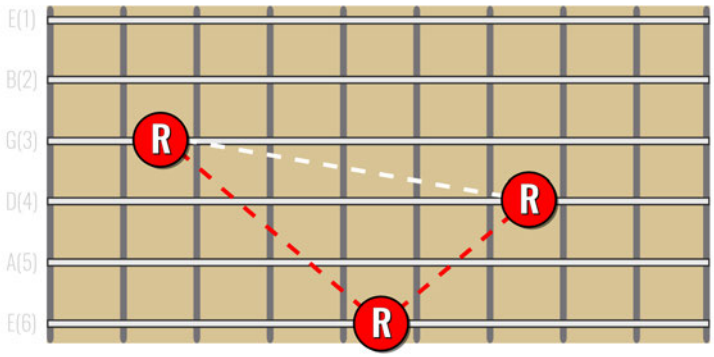
Octave Shapes (Red) / Unison (White)

In **Part 1** you learned that an octave on an individual string was the distance of 12 frets horizontally. There is a **two octave** distance between string 6(E) and the same fret on string 1(E).

You'll notice that the other octave shapes are in two different diagonals, either towards the guitar body or towards the guitar headstock. Which direction you choose is largely determined by **which fretting hand finger begins the arpeggio pattern**. Starting on finger 4 or 3 orientates the palm of the fretting hand towards the headstock, whereas starting on finger 2 or 1 will orientate the hand towards the guitar body.

Root 6(E)

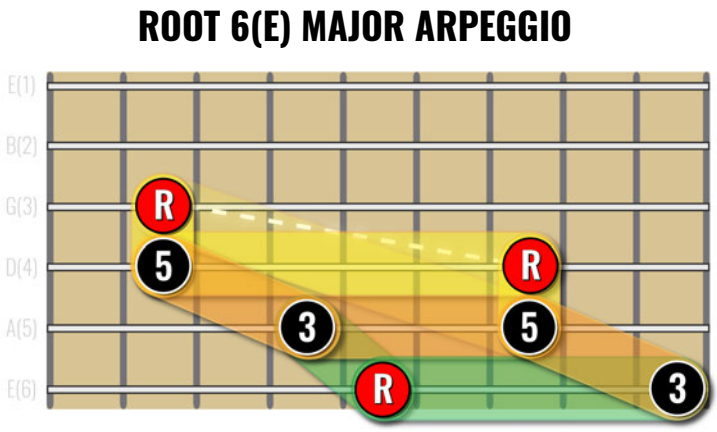
The octave above any note on string 6(E) is either three frets lower on string 3(G) or two frets higher on string 4(D) (the notes on string 3(G) and 4(D) are therefore the same pitch).



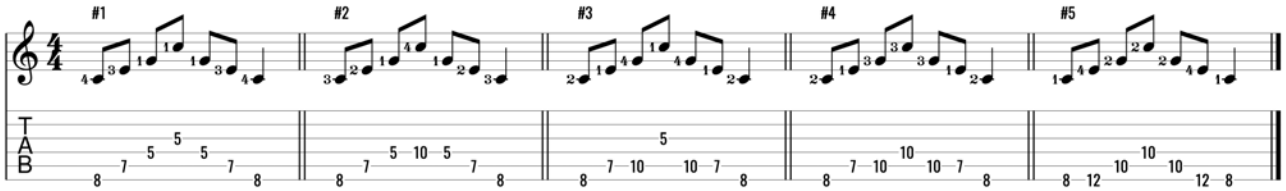
 © Ry Naylor Guitar

So let's follow the sequence of thirds (and fourths!) to see how many different ways you can link the octaves!

Using **C** as the Root note once again...



One octave major arpeggio Root 6(E)



C major arpeggio options

I count **five** possibilities. Notice how they begin on different fretting hand fingers. Maybe you've never considered #3 before but it's very useful, especially as you get into seventh arpeggios.

Look out for the finger rolls from the **5** up to the octave **R**.

What I'm not including here, but which is equally valid is continuing up to the octave Root note on String 6(E) or String 5(A). We have covered these previously but, if you want to fully exhaust the possibilities in your practice, you can add those in as well.

As you practice these you can also mix them up, ascending one pattern and then descending another.

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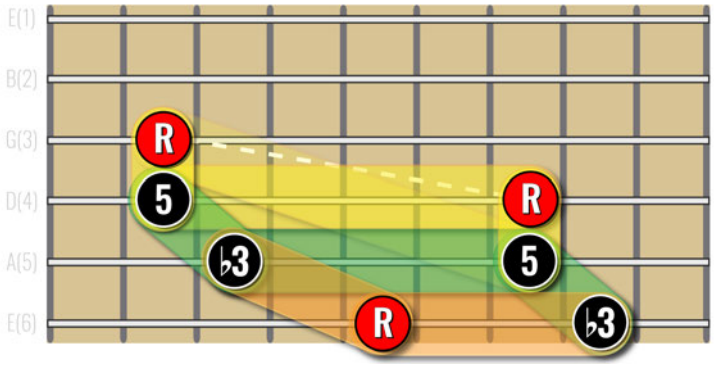
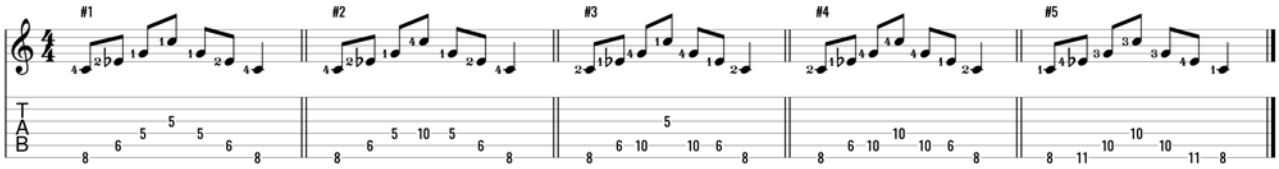
ROOT 6(E) MINOR ARPEGGIO

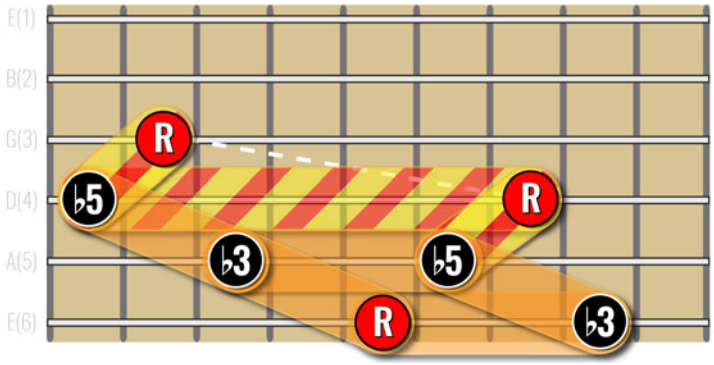


One octave minor arpeggio Root 6(E)

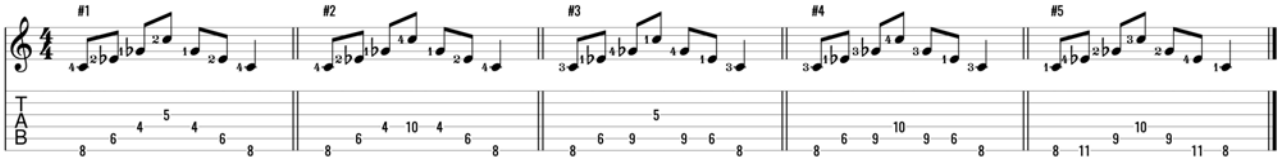


C minor arpeggio options

ROOT 6(E) DIMINISHED ARPEGGIO



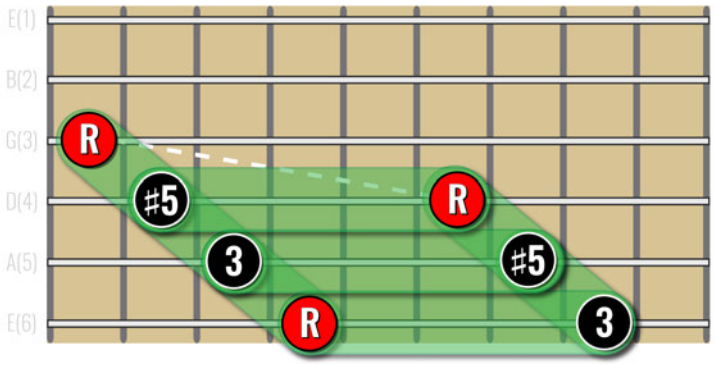
One octave diminished arpeggio Root 6(E)



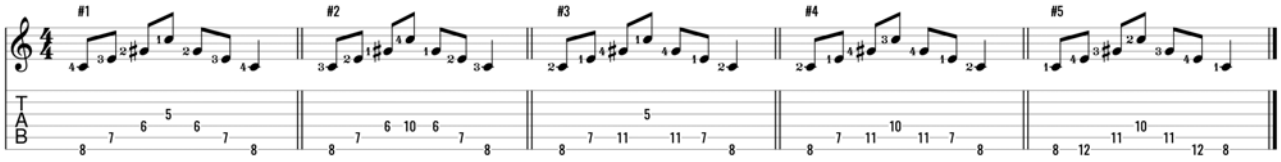
C diminished arpeggio options

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

ROOT 6(E) AUGMENTED ARPEGGIO



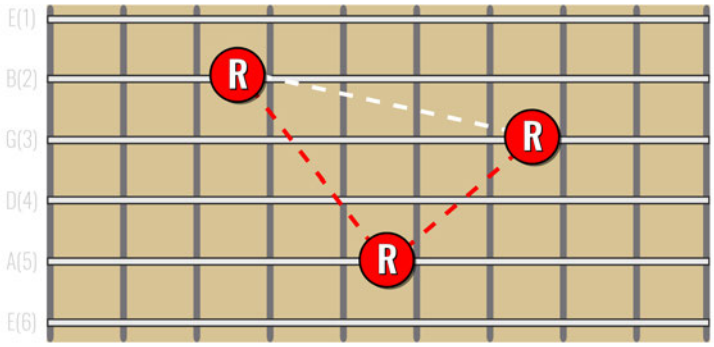
One octave augmented arpeggio Root 6(E)



C augmented arpeggio options

Root 5(A)

The octave above any note on string 5(A) is either two frets lower on string 2(B) or two frets higher on string 3(G) (the notes on string 2(B) and 3(G) are therefore the same pitch).



Using **F** as the Root note this time...

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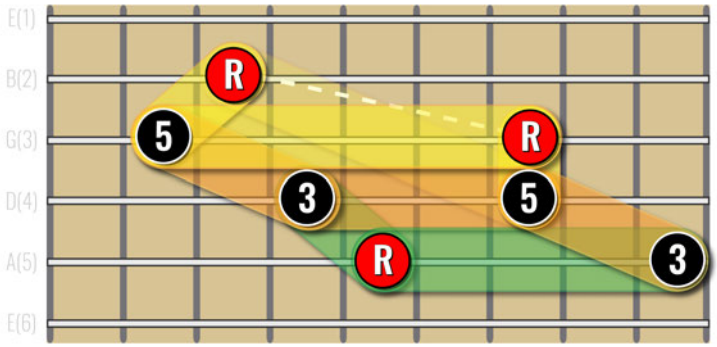
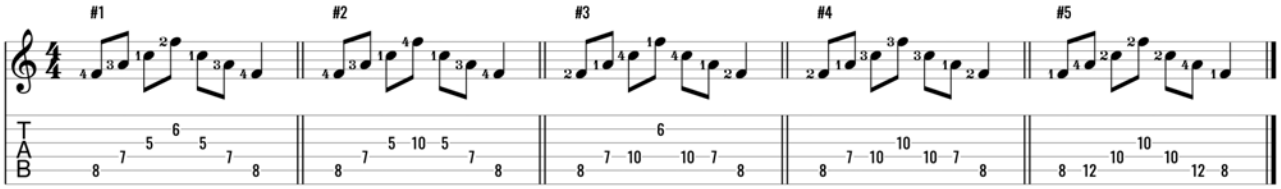
ROOT 5(A) MAJOR ARPEGGIO

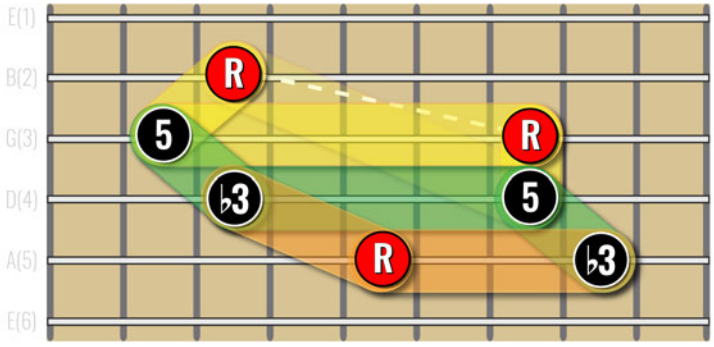


One octave major arpeggio Root 5(A)

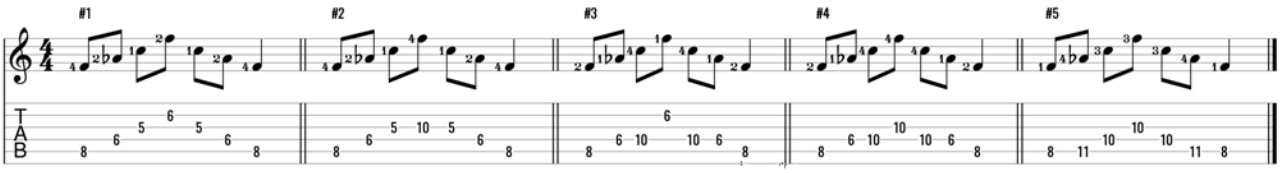


F major arpeggio options

ROOT 5(A) MINOR ARPEGGIO



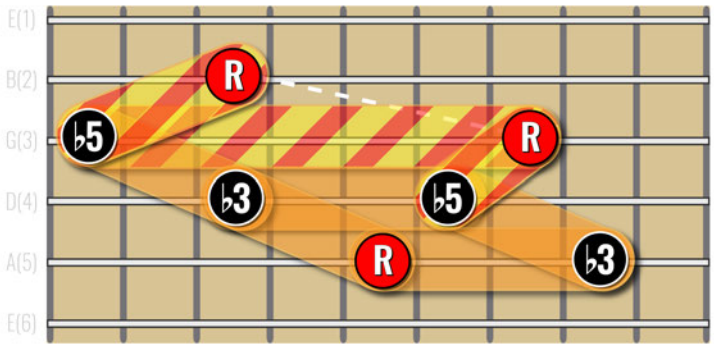
One octave minor arpeggio Root 5(A)



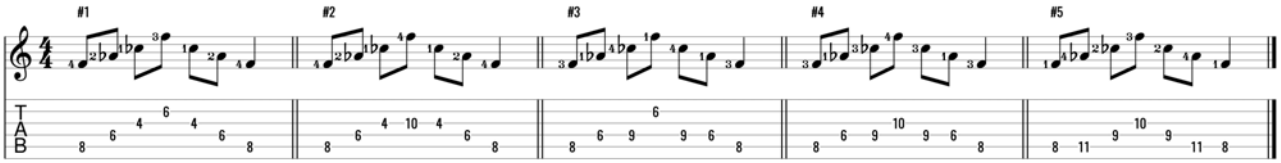
F minor arpeggio options

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

ROOT 5(A) DIMINISHED ARPEGGIO

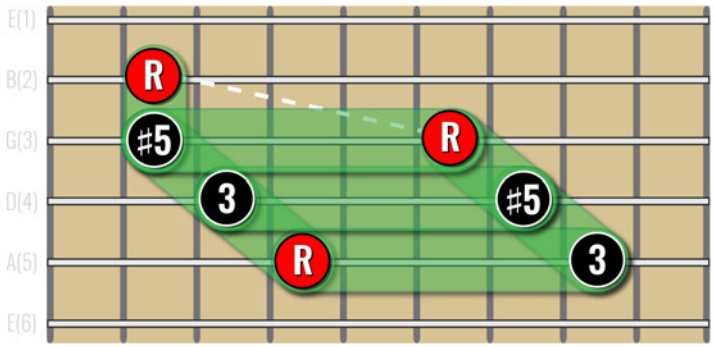


One octave diminished arpeggio Root 5(A)

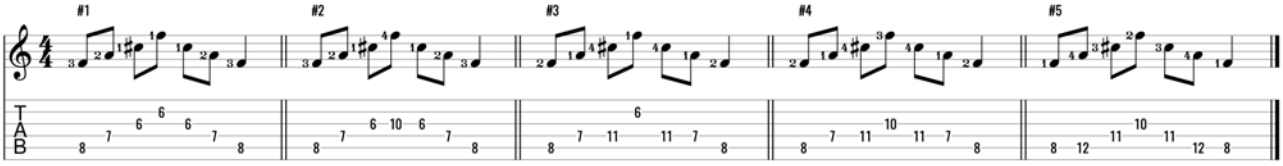


F diminished arpeggio options

ROOT 5(A) AUGMENTED ARPEGGIO



One octave augmented arpeggio Root 5(A)

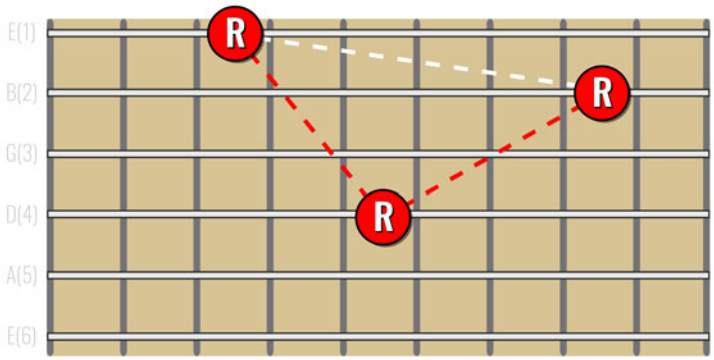


F augmented arpeggio options

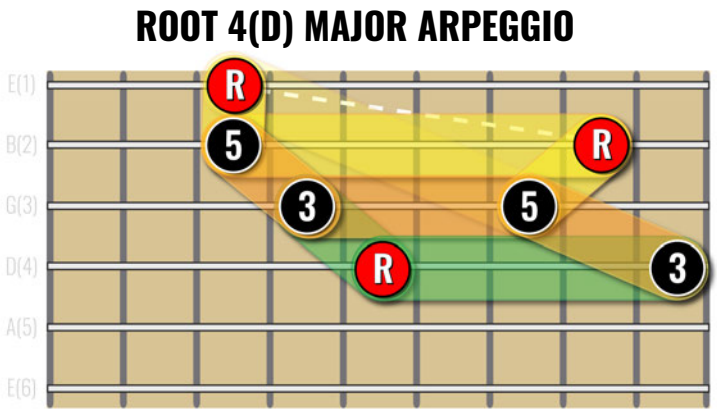
 © Ry Naylor Guitar

Root 4(D)

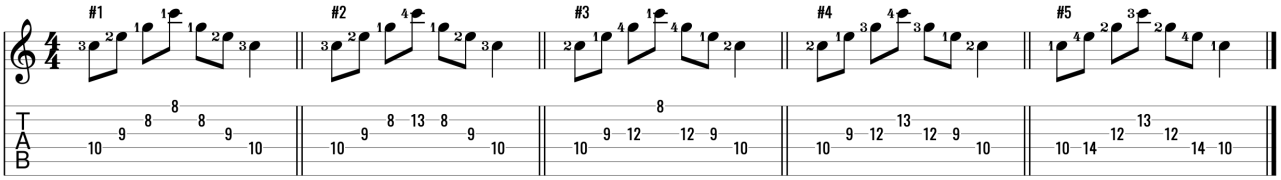
The octave above any note on string 4(D) is either two frets lower on string 1(E) or three frets higher on string 2(B) (the notes on string 1(E) and 2(B) are therefore the same pitch).



Using **C** as the Root note once again...



One octave major arpeggio Root 4(D)



C major arpeggio options

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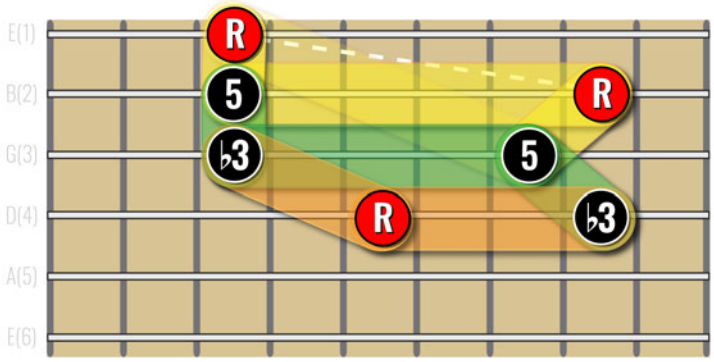
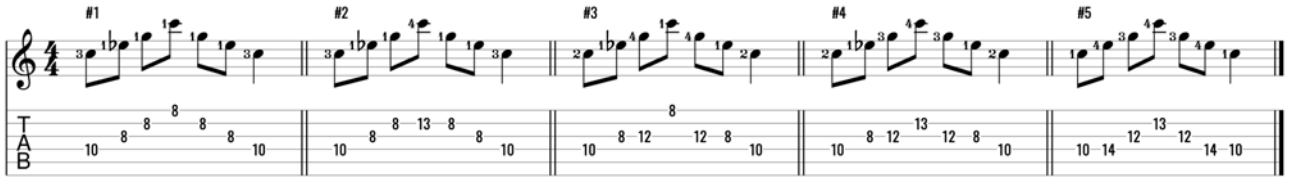
ROOT 4(D) MINOR ARPEGGIO

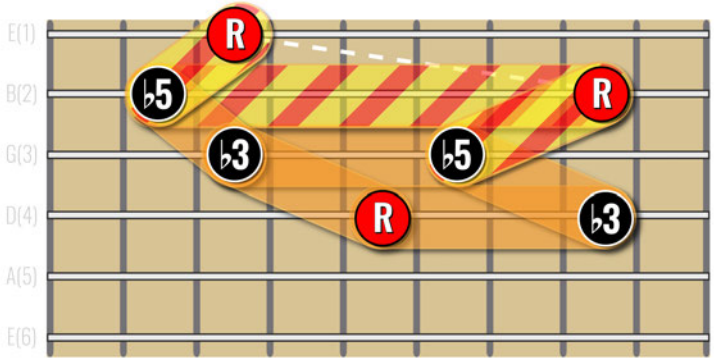


One octave minor arpeggio Root 4(D)

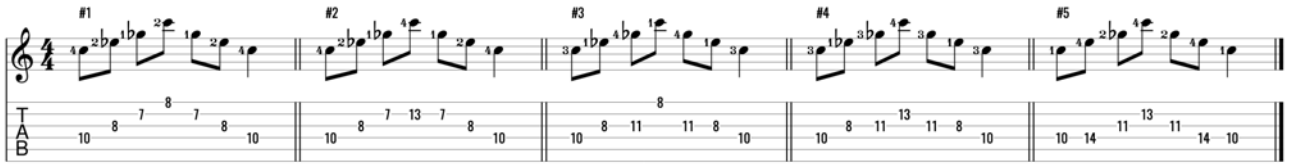


C minor arpeggio options

ROOT 4(D) DIMINISHED ARPEGGIO



One octave diminished arpeggio Root 4(D)



C diminished arpeggio options

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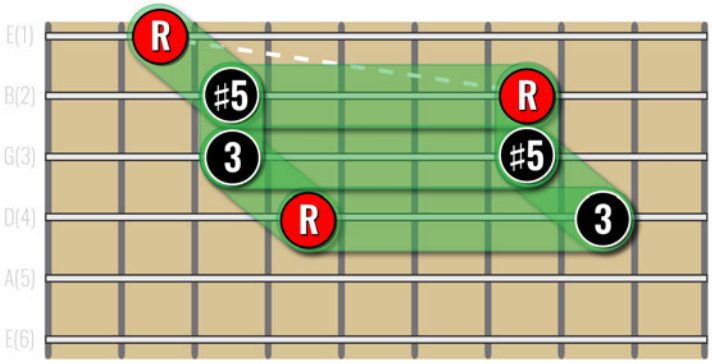
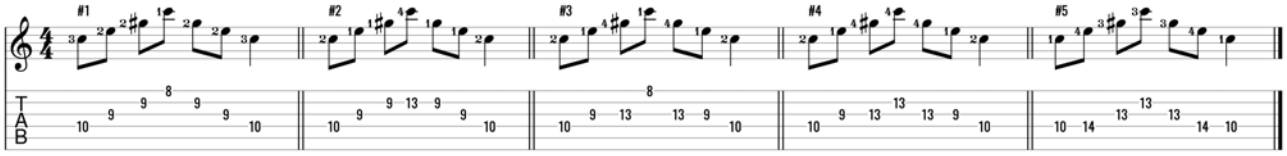
ROOT 4(D) AUGMENTED ARPEGGIO



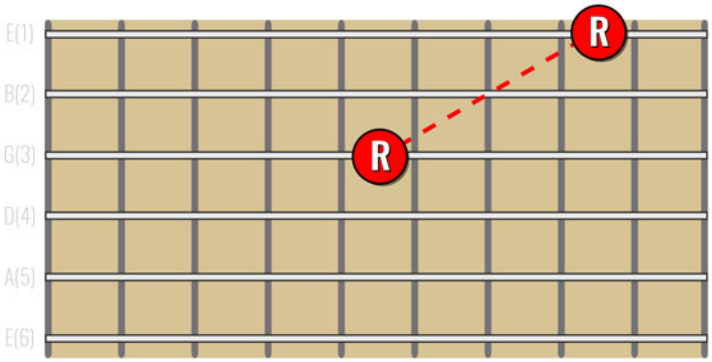
One octave augmented arpeggio Root 4(D)



C augmented arpeggio options

Root 3(G)

The octave above any note on string 3(G) is three frets higher on string 1(E).



Using **F** as the Root note once again, there are **fewer possibilities** across three strings...

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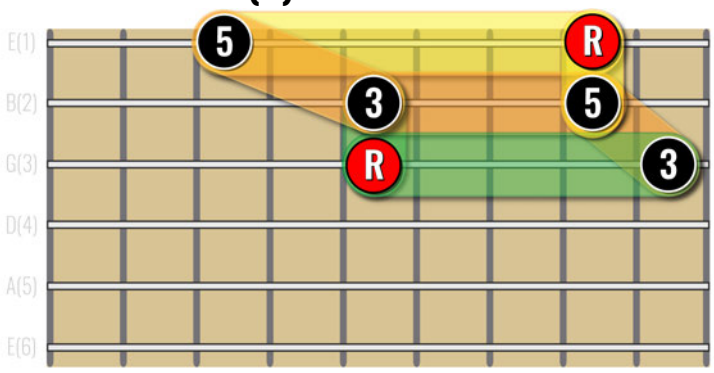
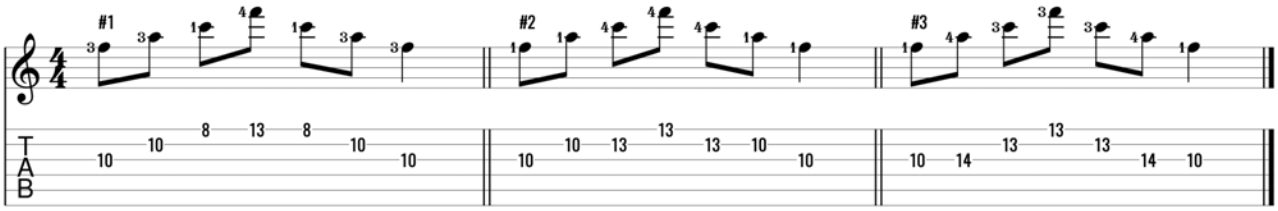
ROOT 3(G) MAJOR ARPEGGIO

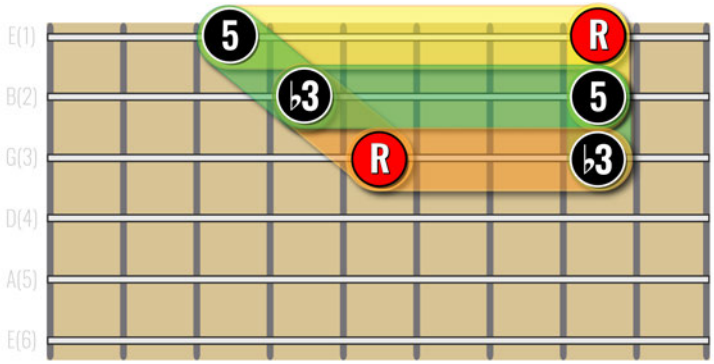


One octave major arpeggio Root 3(G)

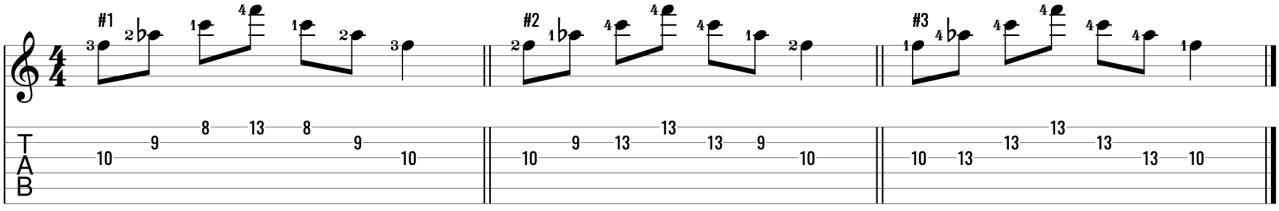


F major arpeggio options

ROOT 3(G) MINOR ARPEGGIO



One octave minor arpeggio Root 3(G)



F minor arpeggio options

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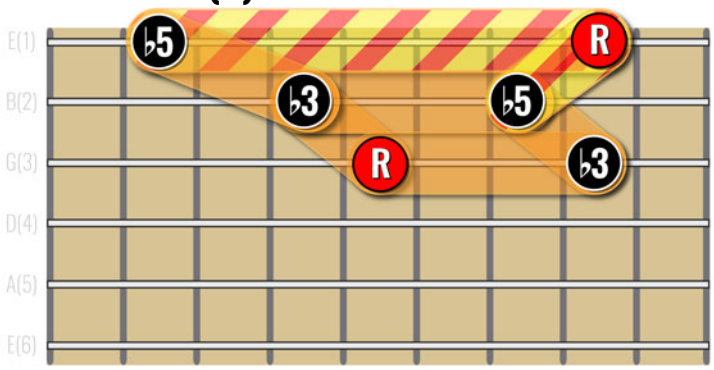
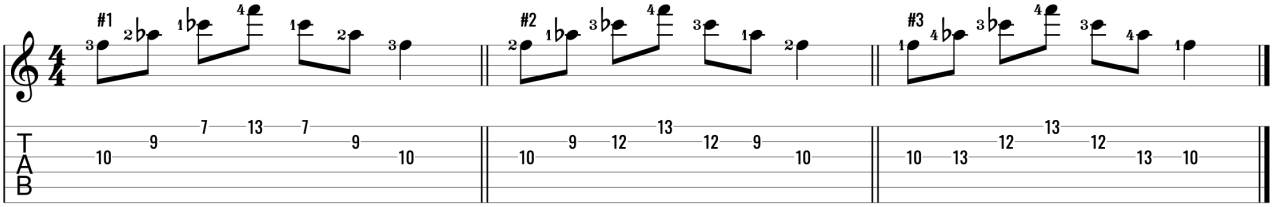
ROOT 3(G) DIMINISHED ARPEGGIO

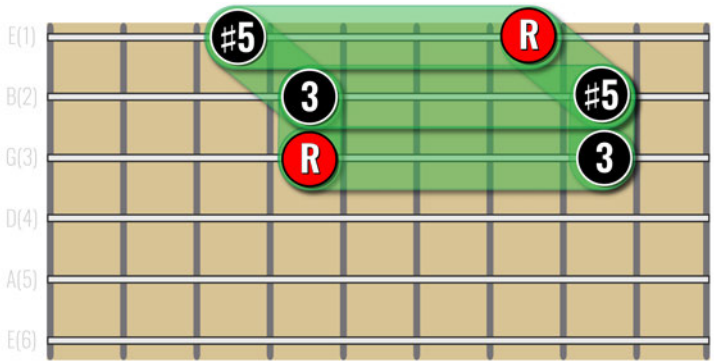


One octave diminished arpeggio Root 3(G)

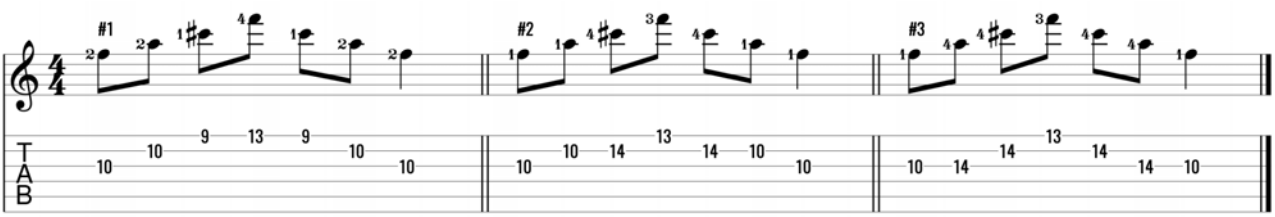


F diminished arpeggio options

ROOT 3(G) AUGMENTED ARPEGGIO



One octave augmented arpeggio Root 3(G)



F augmented arpeggio options

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Arpeggio Options

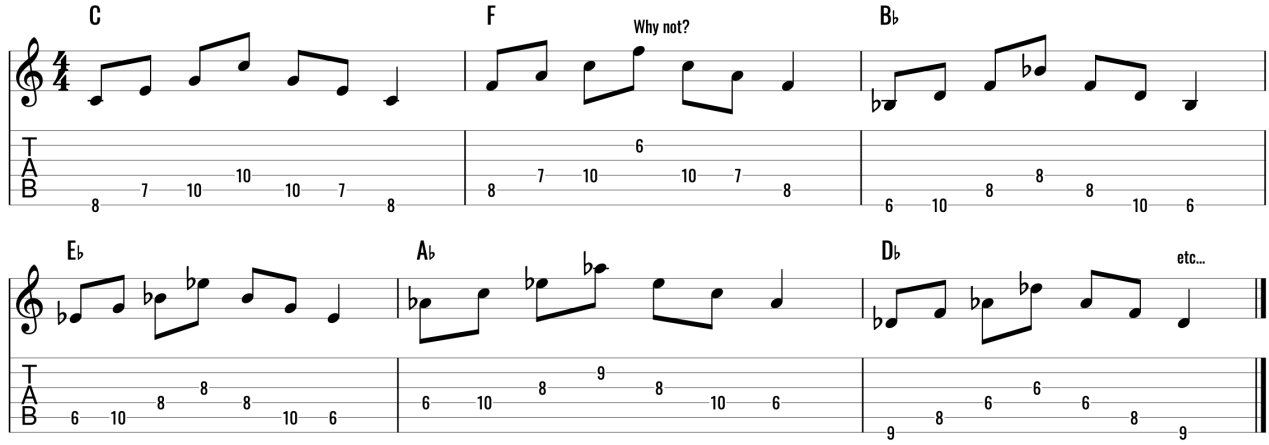
Review all the possible ways to play one octave of the same arpeggio, starting from each finger of the fretting hand (as per the TAB below each fretboard diagram). Cycle around different Root notes.

Static Root

As you learn a particular octave shape, play it through each arpeggio type.

Cycle Arpeggio Options

Play one octave up and down an arpeggio type then Cycle up a fourth. Find a suitable octave arpeggio for the next Root note. Continue though the fours, like this...



Repeat with different arpeggio types.

Playing through a Key (Scale Pattern)

Now you're developing your arpeggio vision across three and four strings, it's time to consider playing through a key with a vertical scale pattern. Any seven-note scale will contain *all* the arpeggios, but the arrangement of the notes in the scale pattern will result in different shapes for each arpeggio in the key.

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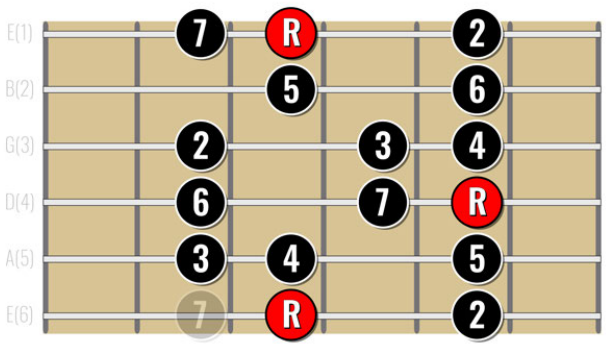
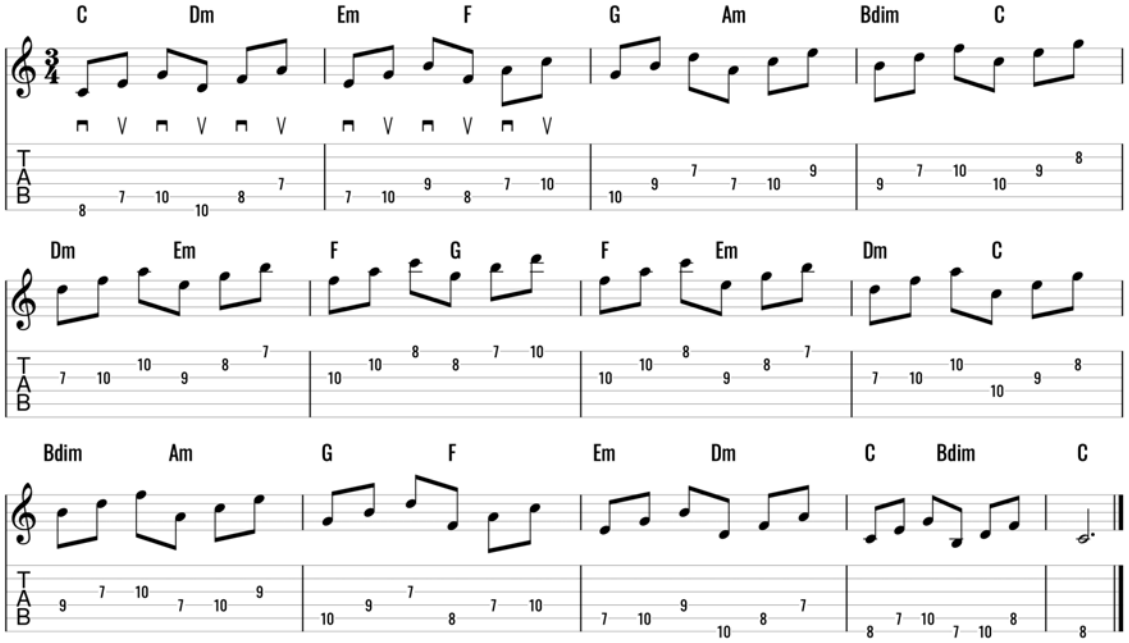
To illustrate that, let's take a couple of examples with a scale pattern rooted on String 6(E). First, the common scale pattern that I identify as the E-Shape:



Here's an example of playing the *Root-Third-Fifth* of each chord in the key of **C** major up to the highest possible chord tone (the D note at the 10th fret of String 1(E), the **5** of the **G** major arpeggio) . Notice that I've kept the arpeggios ascending (R-3-5) even as you descend down the scale.



Here are the same intervals but in a different scale pattern (3 Note-Per-String Position 1/'*Ionian*')...

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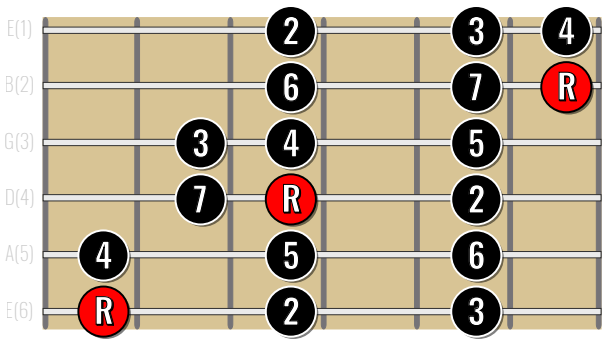
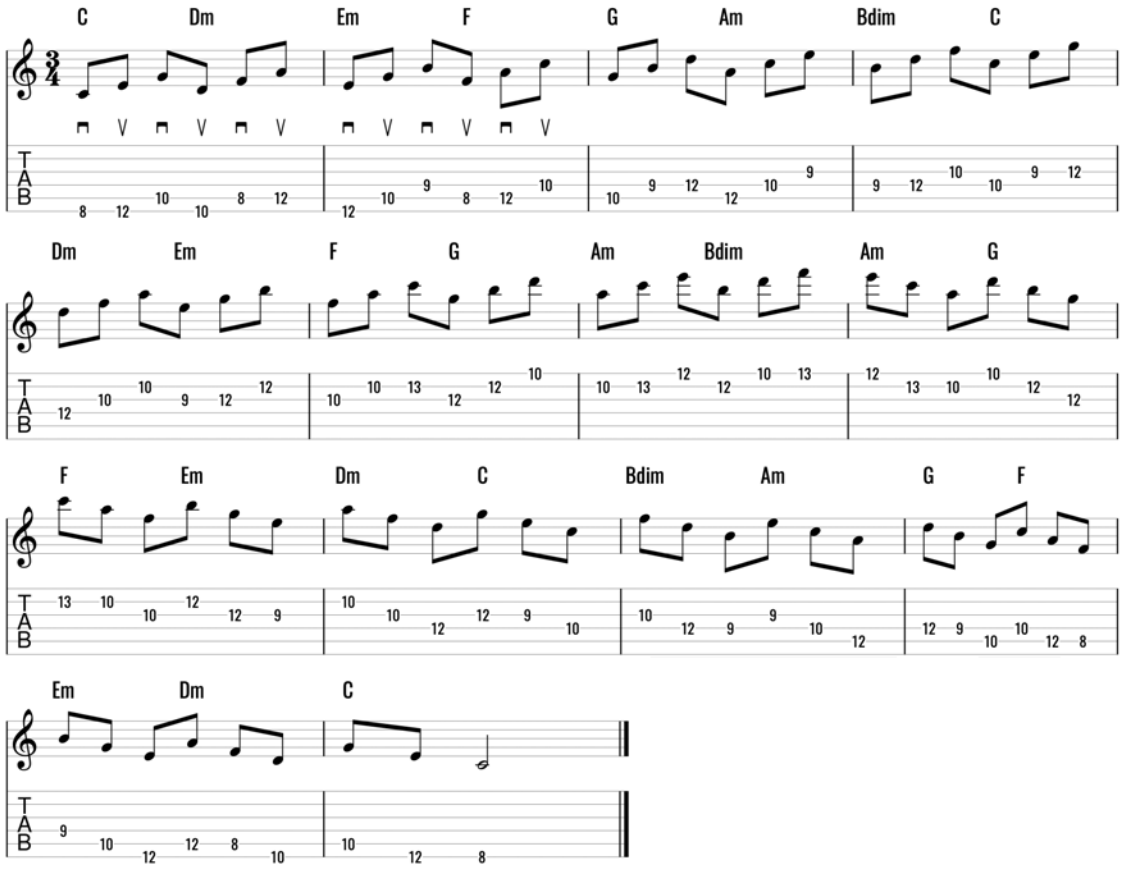


It's the same arpeggios again but the scale pattern will provide different ways to play each one.



The 3-note-per-string pattern covers two octaves of the arpeggios. See how you descend the arpeggios as you also descend the scale. Why not try descending arpeggios as you ascend the scale.

Explore this concept with as many scale patterns as you can. Mix up the rhythms and arpeggio sequences (R-3-5, 5-3-R, R-5-3...). Alternate up and down each arpeggio (e.g. up C, down Dm, up Em, down F...).

Also consider first or second inversion arpeggios within a scale pattern. Lots to keep you busy!

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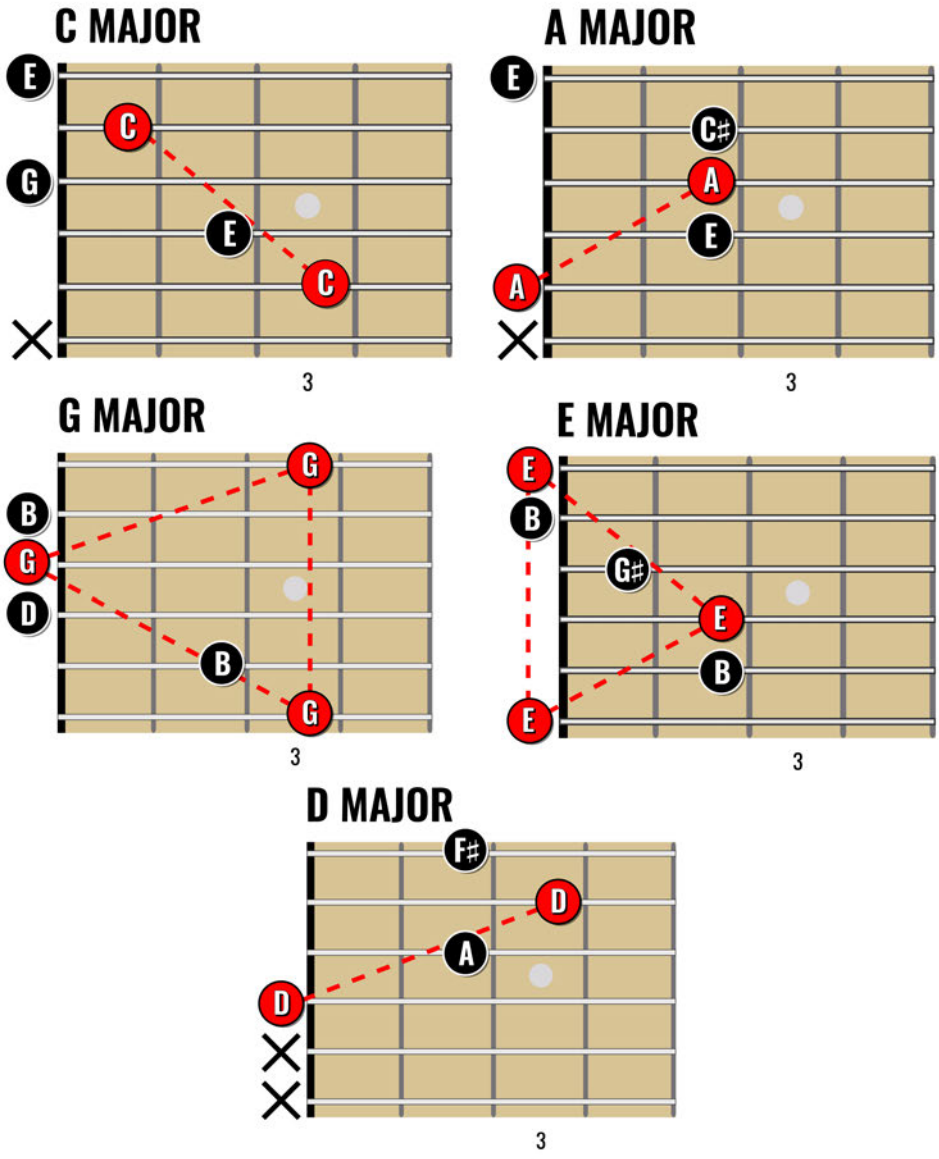
Part 7: CAGED Triad Arpeggios

As a final consideration for the triad arpeggios, let's take a brief overview of the arpeggio shapes when viewed within the **CAGED** framework.

This can be studied in greater detail in my Guitar Blueprint course or CAGED Clarity eBook but, for the sake of completeness, I felt it important to add them here as they form an invaluable fretboard reference to form the arpeggio shapes.

The label CAGED relates to the five open position chords that combine both fretted notes and open strings, namely **C** major, **A** major, **G** major, **E** major and **D** major.

Contained within each of these chord shapes are the octave Root shapes seen in **Part 6**:

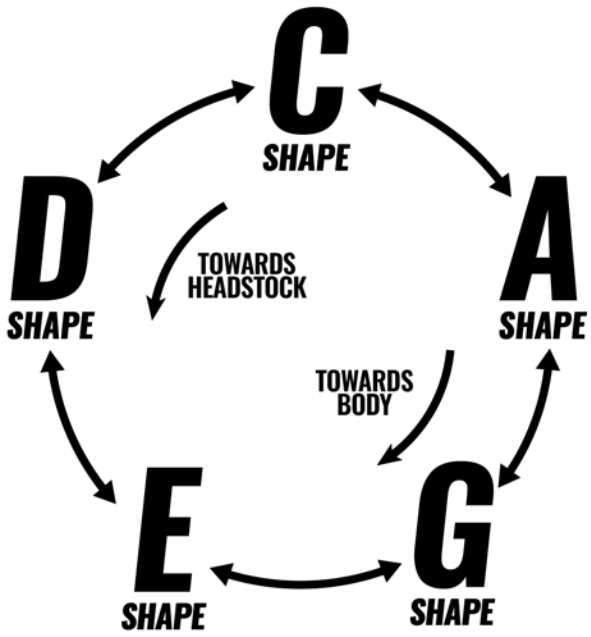


 © Ry Naylor Guitar

These Root note octaves can be placed anywhere on the fretboard and, in turn, upon them you can form a major barre chord resembling the corresponding CAGED chord. It's a case of remembering which chord corresponds with which octave shape(s) which is why I prefer to identify octave shapes by their CAGED counterpart.

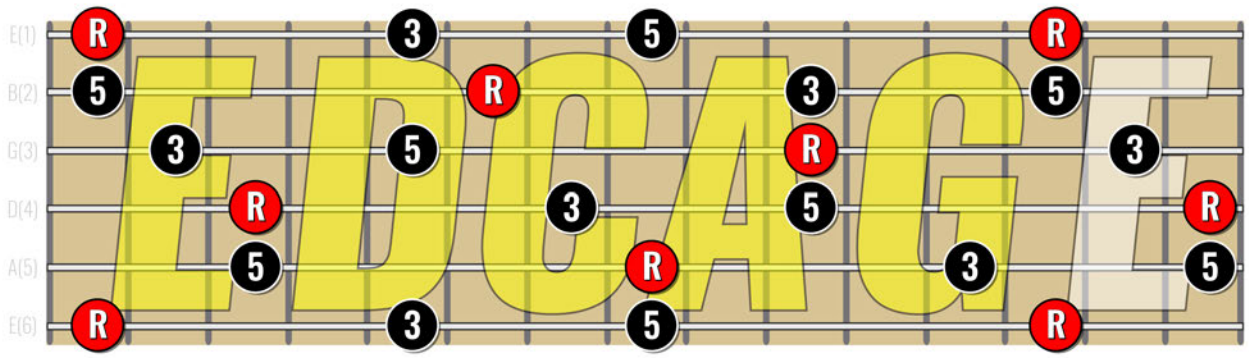
For example, the 5-2 octave shape is the "*C-Shape*" octave (see how its found between the two R notes in the chord shape). Linking the 6-3, 3-1 and 6-1 octaves forms the triangle of the "*G-Shape*" octaves.

CAGED gets its name as it is the order in which the different CAGED Shapes link together as you move up the fretboard. CAGED happens to be a word so it makes sense to begin on "C".



CAGED Cycle

But the fretboard does not always begin with the C-Shape! If you being with a Root on string 6(E) (for example **F** major) the ***EDCAG*** system would be the appropriate name:

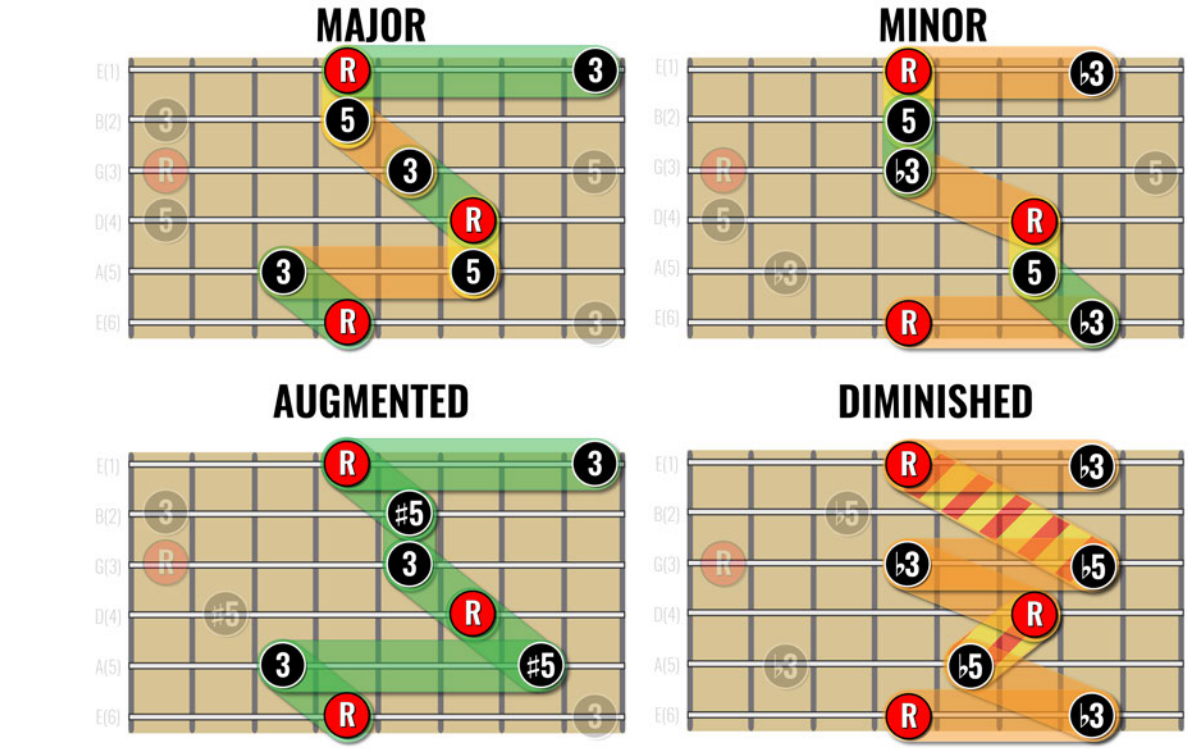


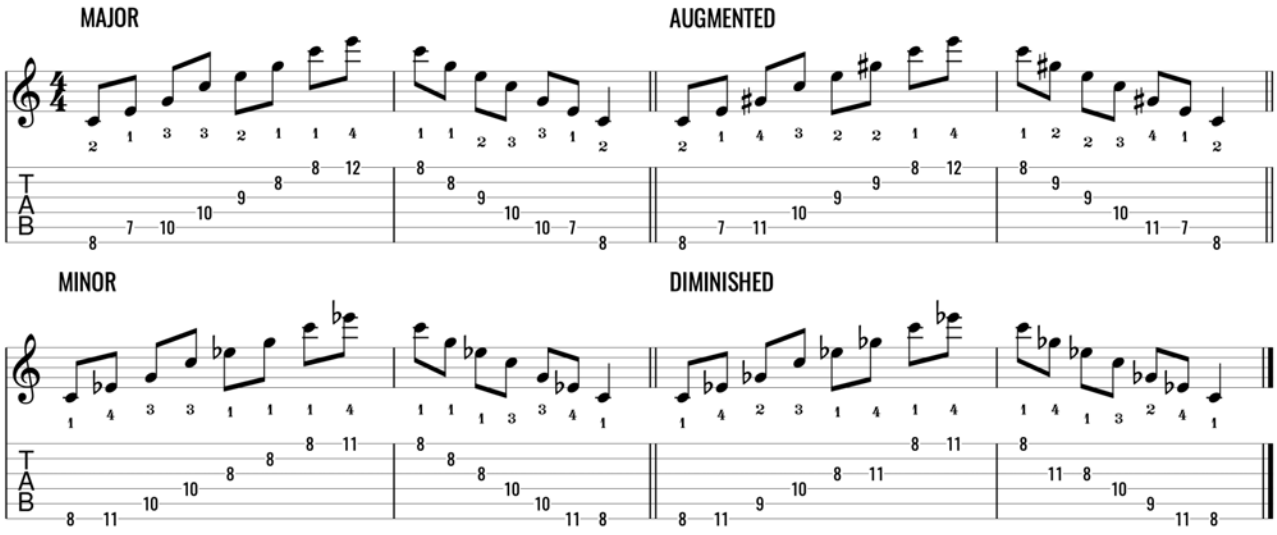
CAGED is a great way to be linking the octave arpeggios studied in **Part 6**.

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

What follows are the arpeggio types formed around each of the CAGED Shapes with a **C** Root (the C-Shape will be presented at the 12th fret octave position). I have opted for shapes that fall more easily under the fretting hand which might deviate slightly from what you've seen previously.

E-Shape





These are some great arpeggios shapes to develop you finger roll technique.

The major/augmented arpeggios will begin on finger 2 whereas minor and diminished begin on finger 1 (like the position 1 minor pentatonic - or *E-shape* minor pentatonic).

You'll notice that the diminished pattern has the string skip that you saw in **Part 4**.

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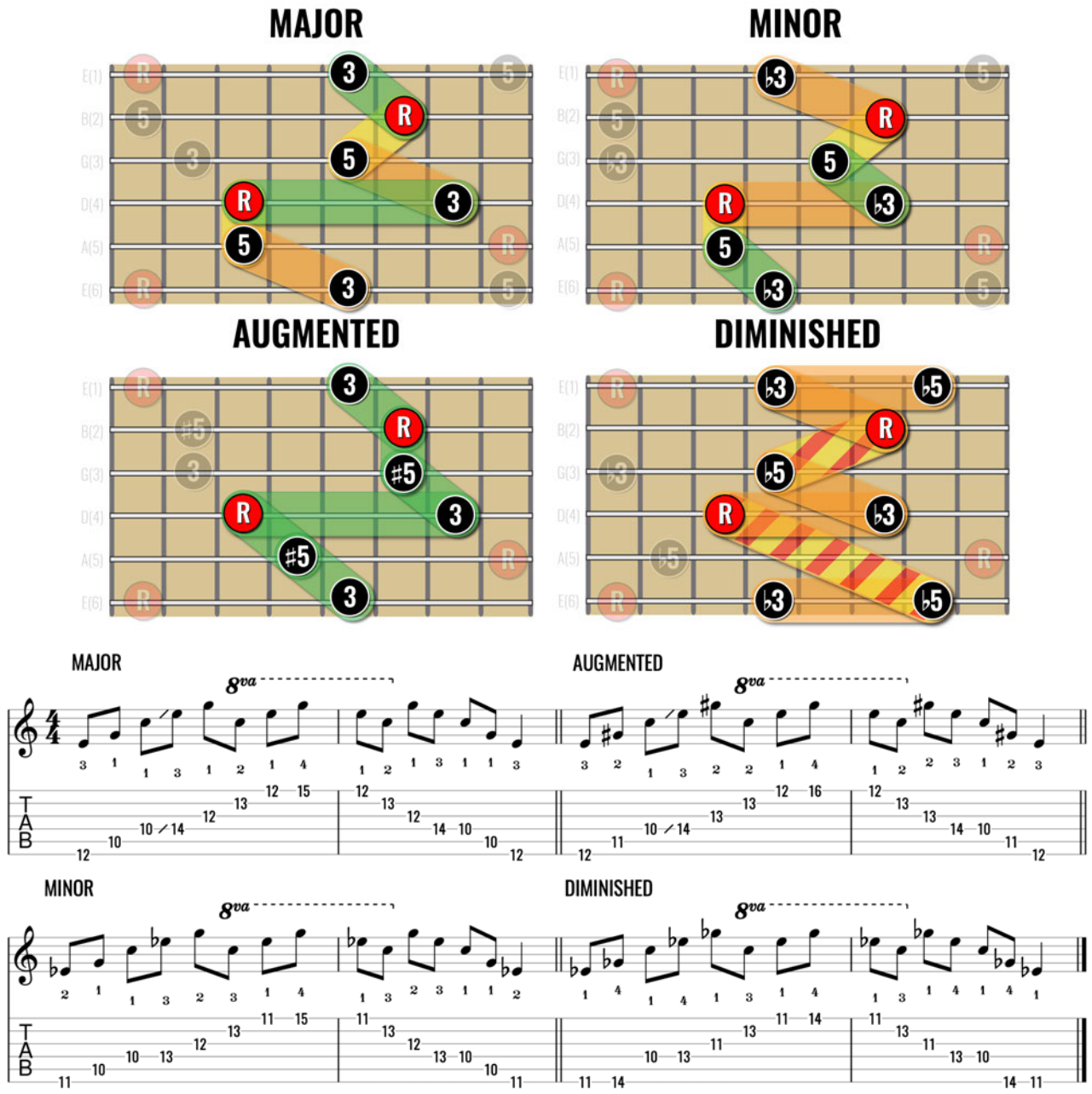
D-Shape



The D-Shape arpeggios presented begin from the *third* on string 6(E) but I'd encourage you to also work from the Root as high and low as you can go for each shape, ending back on the Root.

I've added the *fifth* on string 1(E) for an 8-note arpeggio pattern which can be looped more easily. Look out for the subtle position shift as you play the higher octave. For example, the major form begins in the tenth position, and the hand slides up to the twelfth position as you fret the **3** on string 4(D).

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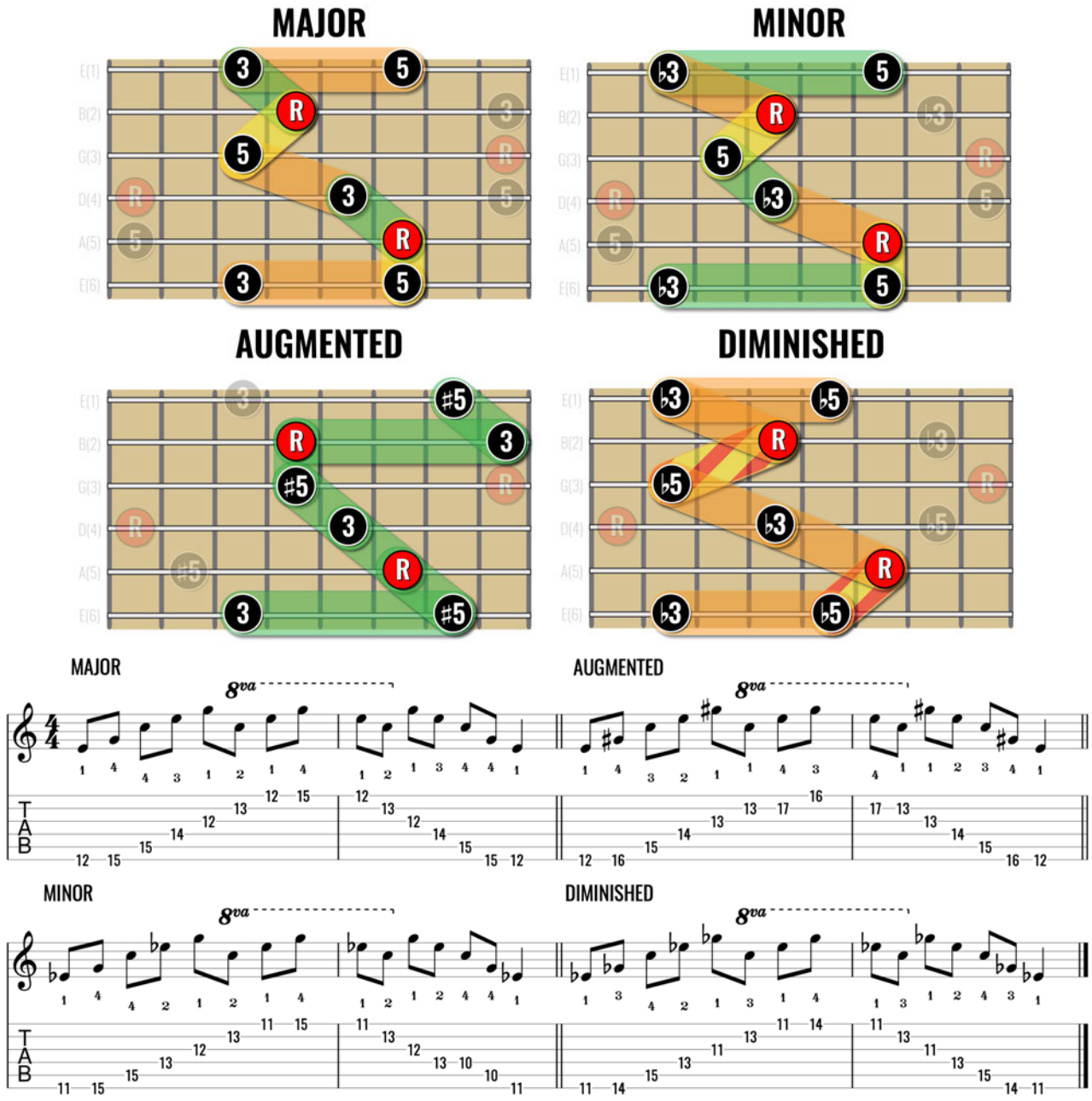
C-Shape



The C-Shape is possibly the most favoured with shred guitarists because the chord tones fall comfortably in order under the fretting hand. The *fifth* on string 1(E) (firmly part of the C-Shape) allows for a repeating sweep picking pattern (see **PRACTICE EXERCISES**).

The arpeggio shape changes for the augmented type as the Root on string 2(B) is fretted with finger 1, making the horizontal major third the most logical option.

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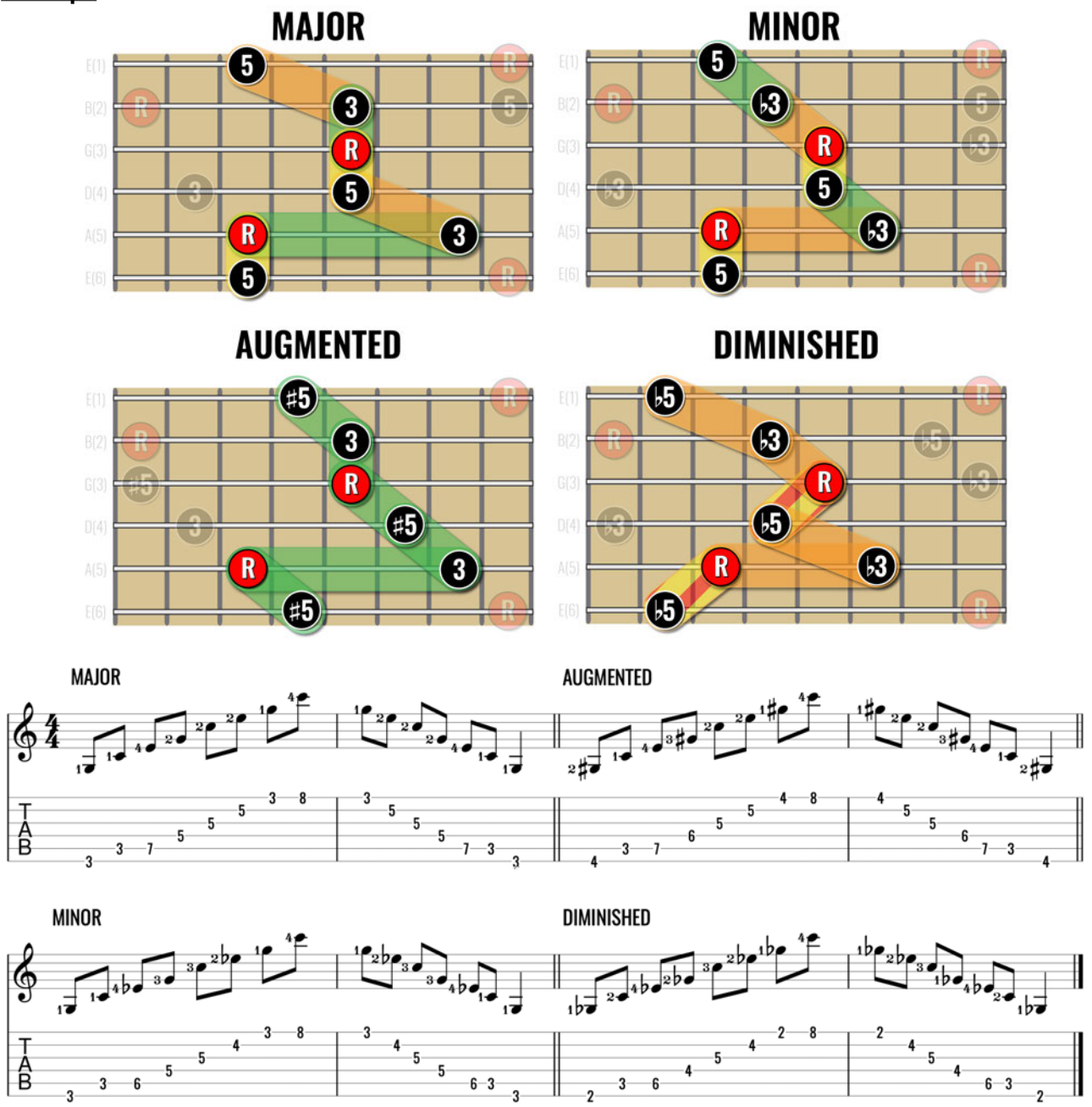
A-Shape



A close second for sweeping patterns is the A-Shape (when playing the *third* horizontally on String 5(A)). It's perhaps a little stretchy with the **C** Root note (especially reaching the octave Root on string 1(E)). If so, try this higher up the fretboard.

The diminished shape is a little clumsy and, realistically you won't use it. It is important to know the visual shape at least, particularly as you move into the seventh arpeggios formed from the diminished triad.

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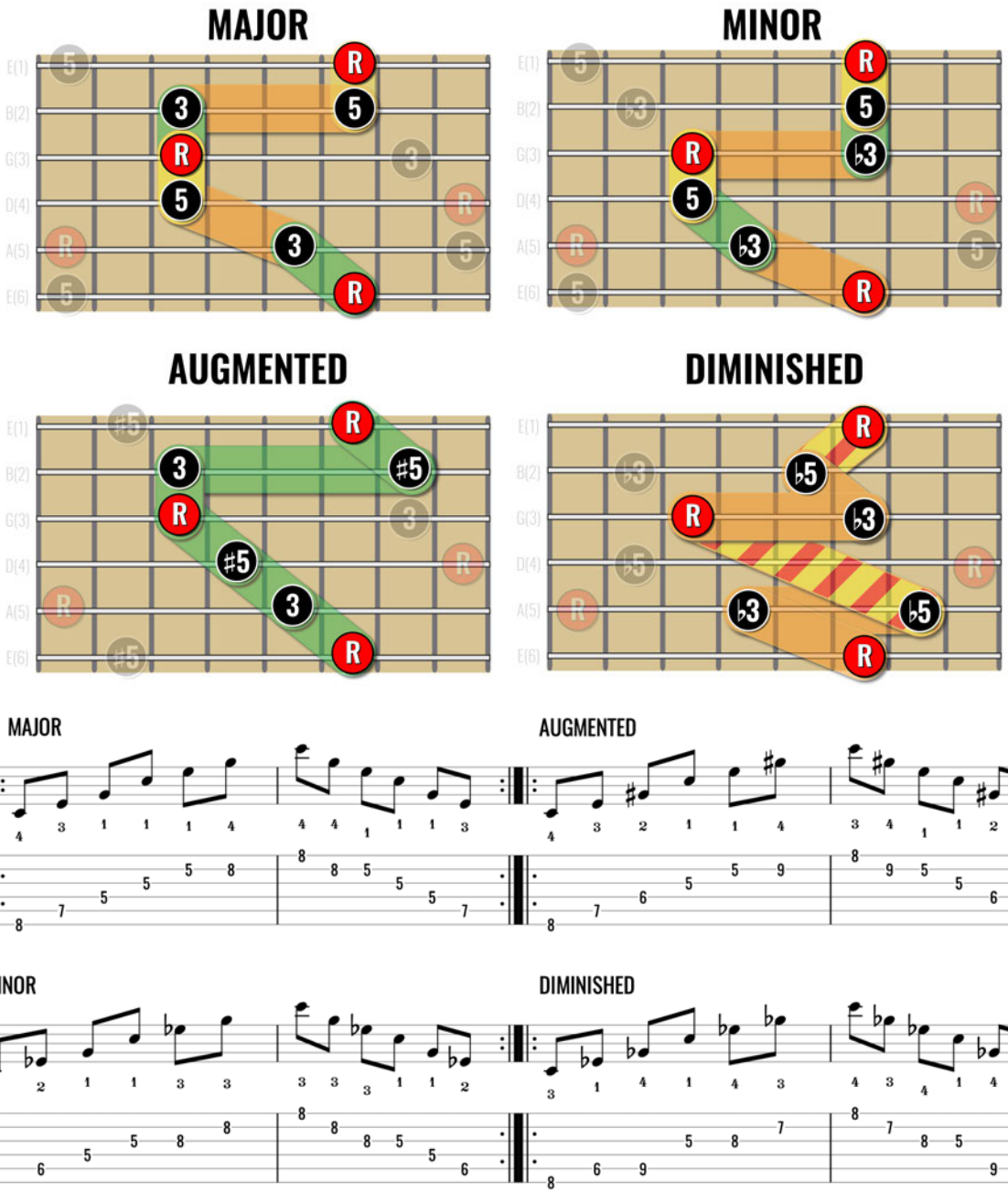
G-Shape



I've changed the time signature here as playing up and down the G-Shape falls nicely into **3/4** time (begin and end on the Root as you learn the arpeggios shapes).

The ♭**3** is better horizontally on string 3(G) and the 1-2 triad shape works best in the lower octave of the diminished shape. It's getting stretchy again but it's good preparation for the seventh arpeggios.

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PRACTICE EXERCISES

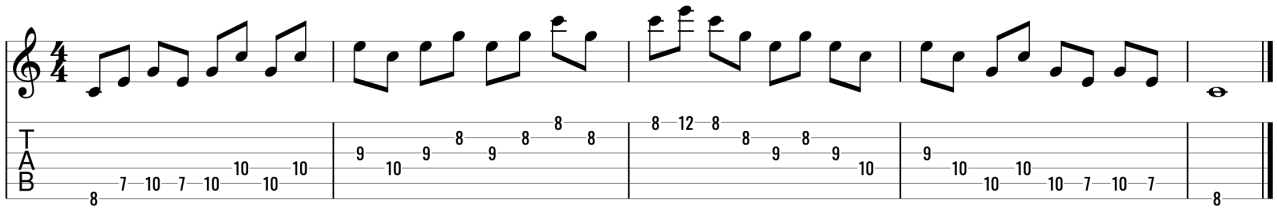
Static Root

Choose a CAGED shape and play up and down through each arpeggio type in sequence. You can add as many repeats as you wish before changing arpeggio. Progressively work through all five shapes. Do so in free time with a drone track, then look to add the click and begin subdividing the rhythms.

Arpeggio Sequences

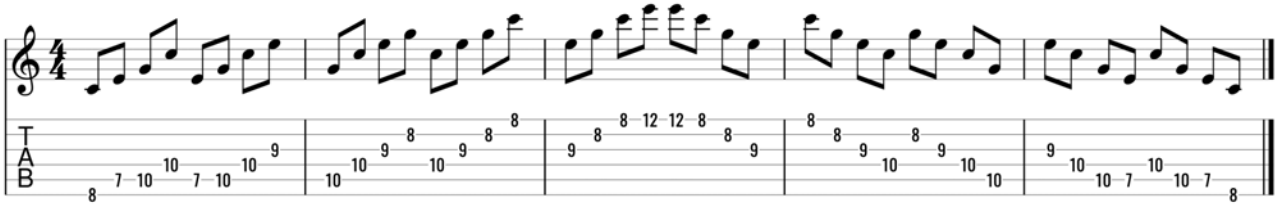
Arpeggio patterns across all six strings allow you to play through the arpeggios in many different chord tone combinations. Here are some possibilities using the E-Shape major arpeggio:

Three in a Row (8th notes)

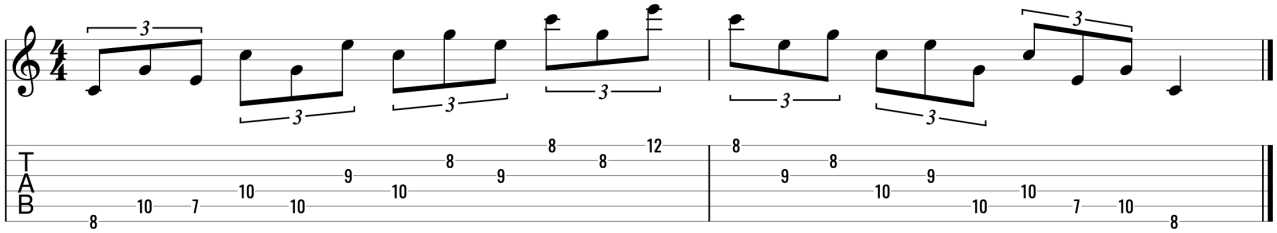


This will work well with 8th note triplets. Always experiment with different rhythms.

Four in a Row (8th notes)



Leap Frog (8th note triplet)



This will work well with straight 8th notes. It's a great warm-up exercise for hand synchronisation.

Explore the possibilities and potential fingering complications(!) with the other shapes and arpeggio types.

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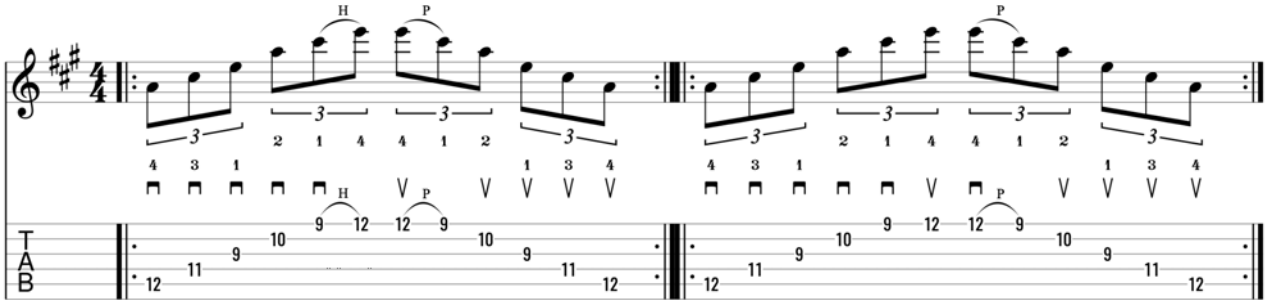
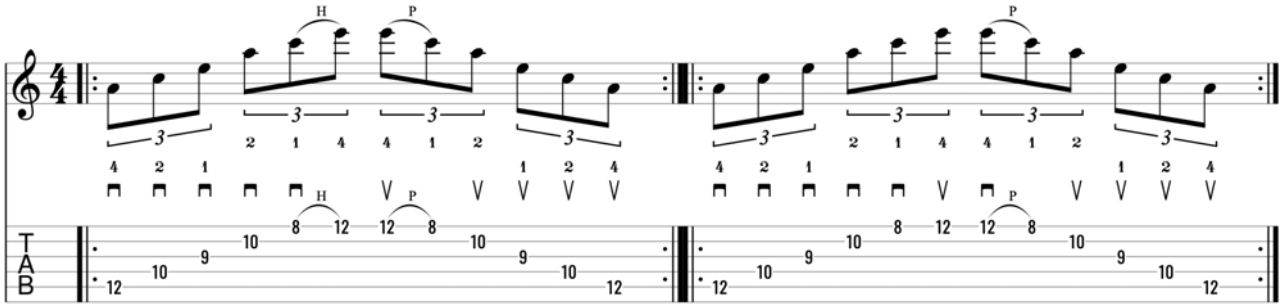
Sweep Picking

The CAGED Shapes rooted on String 5(A), namely the C-Shape and A-Shape, are particularly good to sweep. Here are a couple of possibilities for sweeping the C-Shape major arpeggio rooted on **A** at the 12th fret (with a slight variation in picking direction and hammer/pull in a triplet 8th feel):



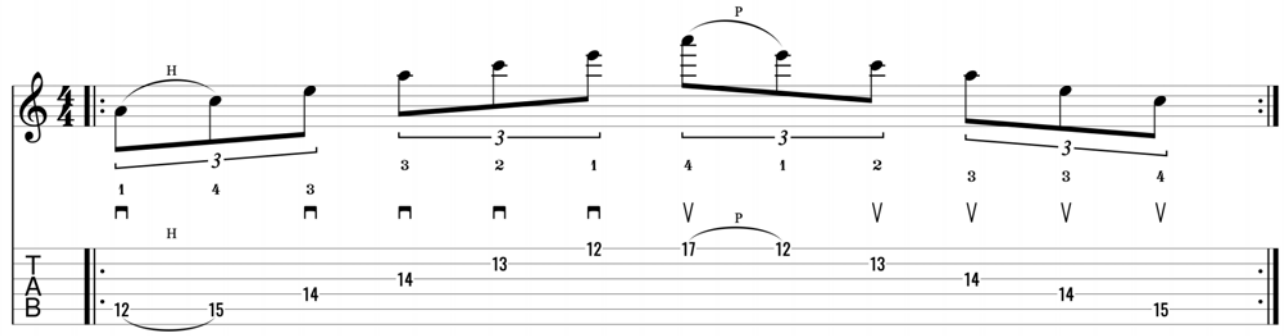
*Two options for a C-Shape sweep (**A** major arpeggio)*

And the same idea with the minor arpeggio...



*Same picking approach with the minor arpeggio (**A** minor)*

The A-Shape arpeggios work nicely when hammering on to third on String 5(A) and pulling off the octave Root on string 1(E). Here's the minor arpeggio, again rooted **A** at the 12th fret:



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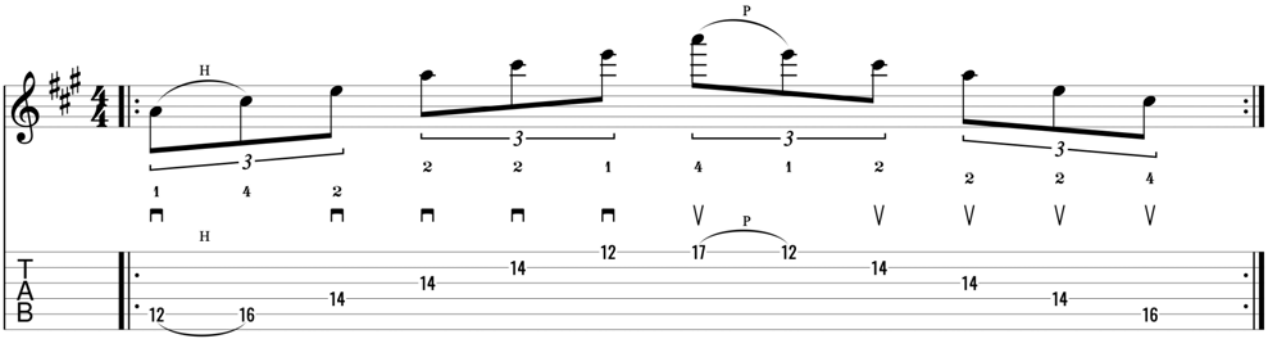
The A-Shape major arpeggio has more demand to it with the finger 2 roll across strings 4(D) to 2(B) but, with a little practice, you should get this flowing as well as the others:



Explore these sweep picking patterns from other Root notes. Maybe try it through a key.

Playing to a Progression

Check out this video to see the exercise in action.



Choose any 3 or 4 chord progression, and a starting CAGED shape for the first chord. Each of the 3 or 4 the chords can be played with a different CAGED shape near your starting chord. These chord shapes will be the CAGED reference for your arpeggio patterns.

Work through the progression playing eight notes per chord. Initially you can play eight notes up from the Root. The end goal is to continue in the ascending or descending order of notes whilst playing the nearest chord tone as the chord changes. This is the good stuff. Good luck!

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Part 8: Seventh Arpeggios Theory

Seventh chords are considered the most basic of chords in jazz harmony, but you find them in common chord progressions. They also feature predominantly in genres like the blues so a good working knowledge of seventh arpeggios is invaluable.

What is a seventh arpeggio? Quite simply it's the addition of another stacked third to the triads you studied previously. *Root-third-fifth* becomes *Root-third-fifth-seventh* (with all the possible variations of these chord tones...♭**3**, ♭**7** etc.).

To each triad arpeggio you can stack an additional third (either major or minor) upon the *fifth* to create a seventh arpeggio which you can play over the corresponding seventh chord.

There are, therefore, seven possibilities:

1. **Major Triad** (**R-3-5**) **+ Major Third**
2. **Major Triad** (**R-3-5**) **+ Minor Third**
3. Minor Triad (R-♭3-5) + Major Third
4. **Minor Triad** (**R-♭3-5**) **+ Minor Third**
5. **Diminished Triad** (**R-♭3-♭5**) **+ Major Third**
6. Diminished Triad (R-♭3-♭5) + Minor Third
7. Augmented Triad (R-3-♯5) + Minor Third

There are only **four** of these possible seventh arpeggios found within major scale theory (**in bold**). We shall though also consider option 6. which is often used in common progressions.

Let's first consider the two possibilities for the major triad.

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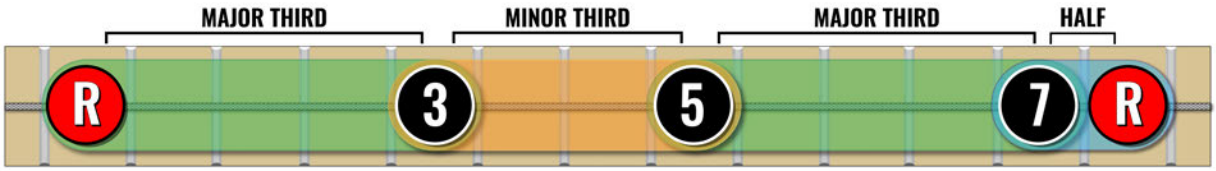
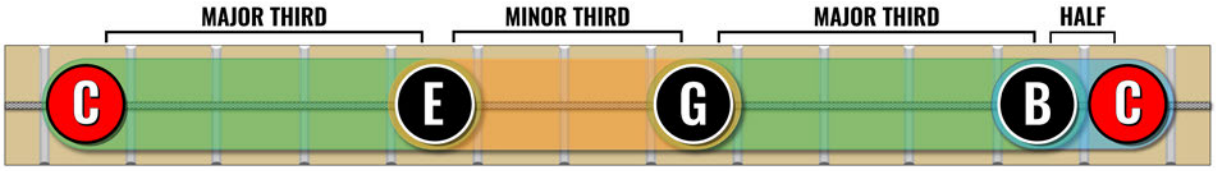
Major Seventh Arpeggio (R-3-5-7)

To the major triad (**R**-**3**-**5**) you can add an additional major third above the **5**. Doing so will add the major seventh scale degree (**7**), a half step below the octave **R**.

R-3-5-7 are the chord tones of a **major seventh** arpeggio:



Major seventh arpeggio

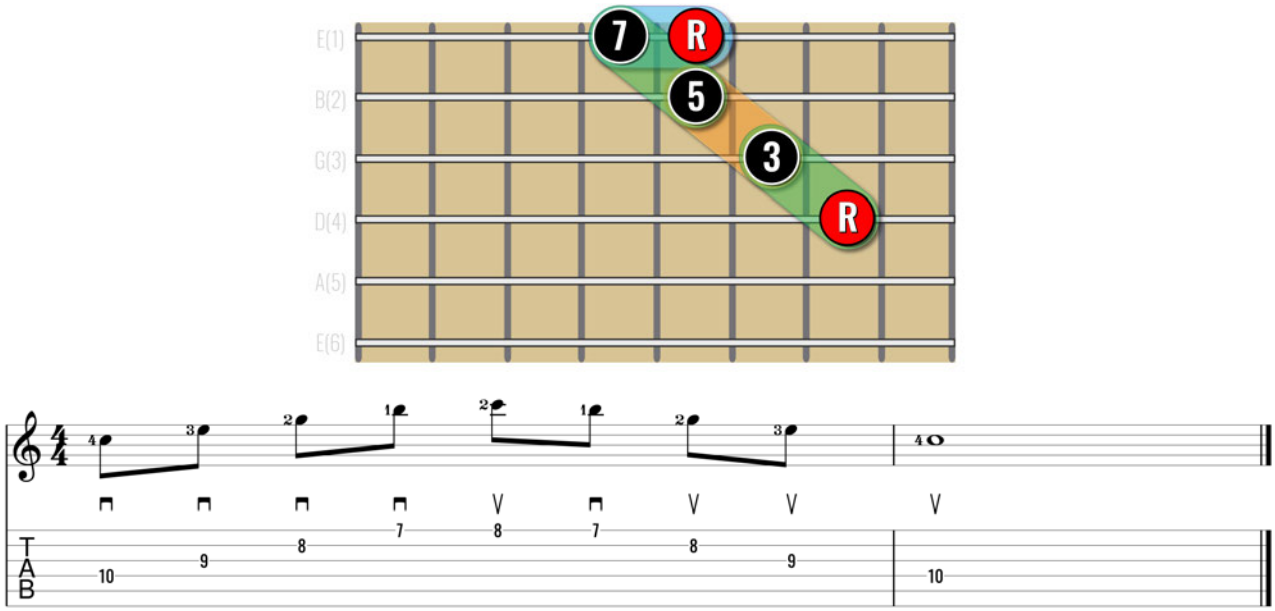


C major seventh arpeggio (Cmaj7)

The **half step** between **7** and the octave **R** will be presented in **blue**

Thinking in terms of the stacked thirds, the **major seventh arpeggio** is:

MAJOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD + MAJOR THIRD



Cmaj7 arpeggio

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

The major seventh chord, over which you will play the major seventh arpeggio, can be written in different ways.

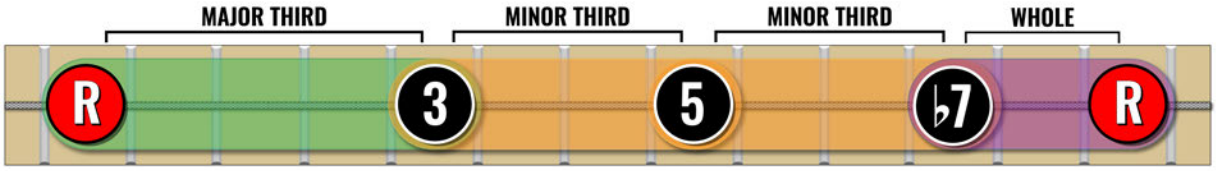
Cmaj7
C^{maj7}
C^{M7}
C$^{\triangle 7}$

In the major key a major seventh arpeggio occurs on the **first** and **fourth** major scale degrees. The key of **C** major has both a **Cmaj7** and **Fmaj7** chord/arpeggio.

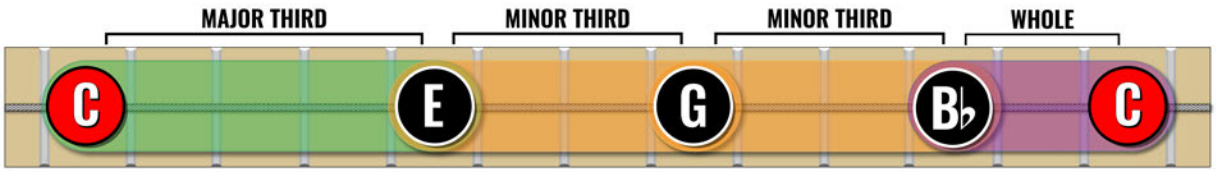
Dominant Seventh Arpeggio (R-3-5-♭7)

The other possibility is to add a minor third above the **5** of the major triad. Doing so will add the **minor seventh** scale degree (**♭7**).

R-3-5-♭7 are the chord tones of a **dominant seventh** arpeggio, an essential for all you blues players:



Dominant seventh arpeggio



C dominant seventh arpeggio (C7)

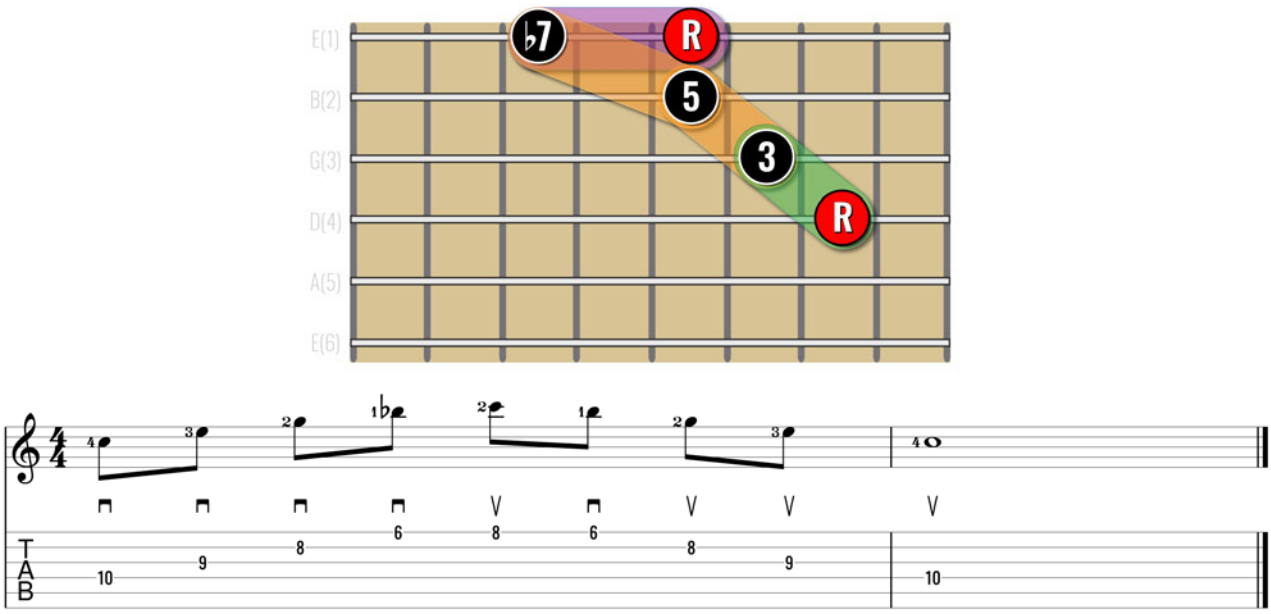
With the flattening of the seventh scale degree there is another interval to consider.

The **whole step** between **♭7** and the octave **R** will be presented in **purple**

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

Thinking in terms of the stacked thirds a **dominant seventh arpeggio** is:

MAJOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD



C7 Arpeggio

The dominant seventh chord, over which you will play the dominant seventh arpeggio, can be written in different ways.

Cdom7
C7
C^{7}

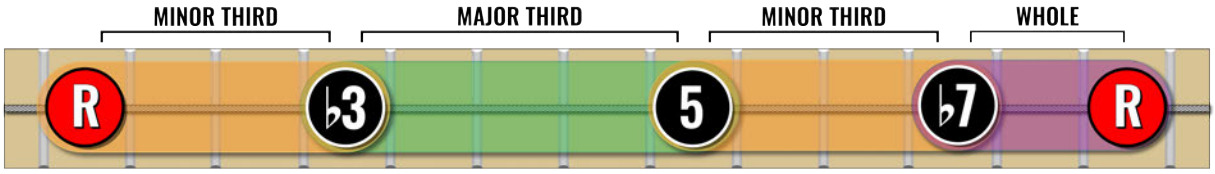
In a major key a dominant seventh arpeggio occurs uniquely on the **fifth** major scale degrees (which is also named the *dominant*, hence the arpeggio name). The key of **C** major has a **G7** chord/arpeggio.

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

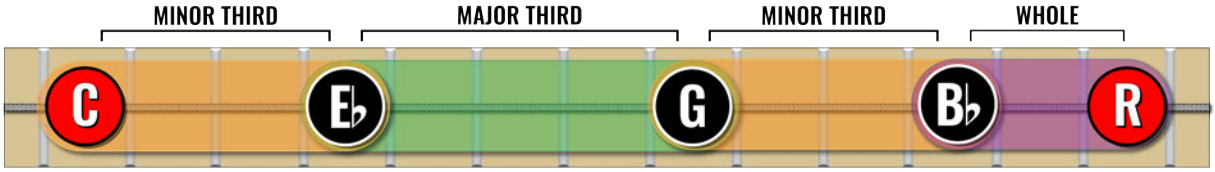
Minor Seventh Arpeggio (R-♭3-5-♭7)

To the minor triad (**R**-♭**3**-**5**) you can add an additional minor third above the **5**. Doing so will add the minor seventh scale degree (♭**7**).

R-♭**3**-**5**-♭**7** are the chord tones of a **minor seventh** arpeggio:



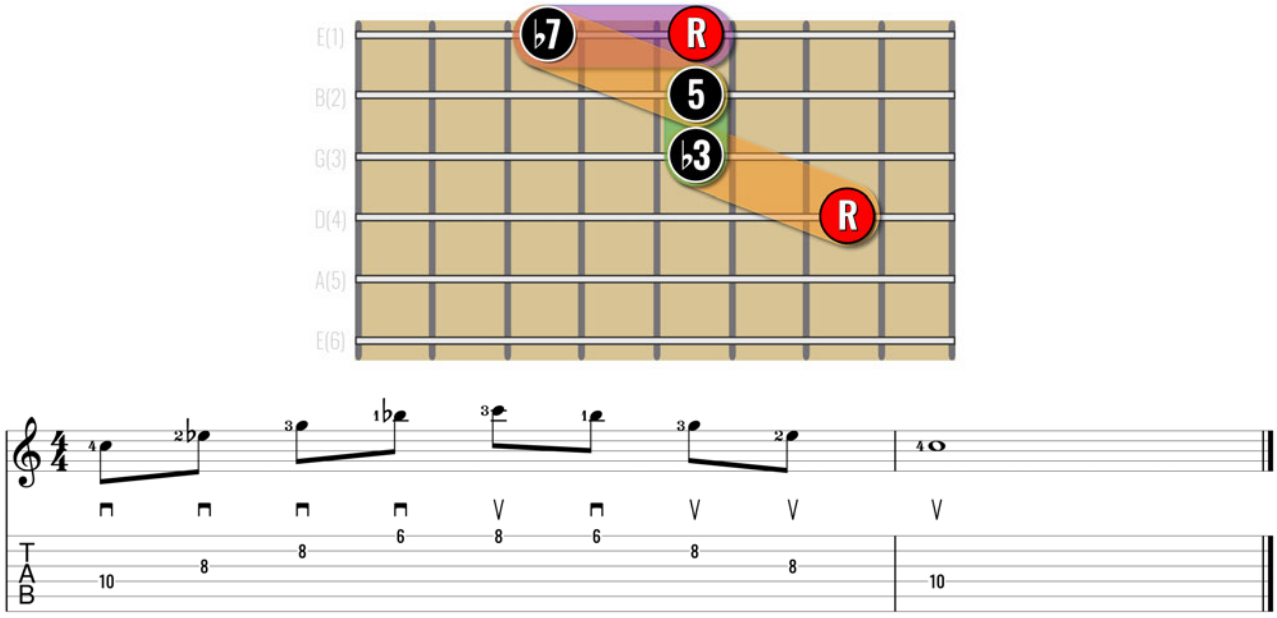
Minor seventh arpeggio



C minor seventh arpeggio (Cm7)

Thinking in terms of the stacked thirds a minor seventh arpeggio is:

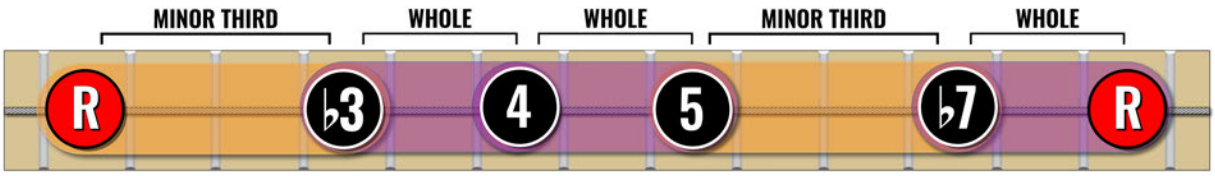
MINOR THIRD + MAJOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD



Cm7 arpeggio

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

If you know your minor pentatonic theory, you'll notice that this is one interval short of the minor pentatonic scale (the **4**). This might help as you begin learning the arpeggio shapes:



Minor Pentatonic Scale on a Single String

The minor seventh chord, over which you can freely play the minor seventh arpeggio, can be written in different ways:

Cm7
Cmi7
C^{-7}

The min(maj7) does exist and it's found in the seventh harmony of the harmonic minor and jazz melodic minor scale. I have therefore omitted it from this guide (something for the sequel).

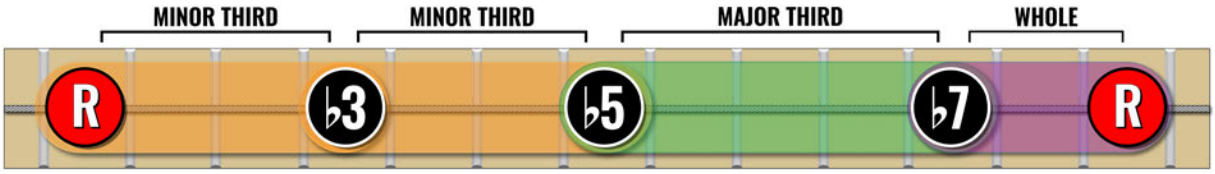
In a major key a minor seventh arpeggio occurs on the **second**, **third**, and **sixth** major scale degrees. The key of C major, therefore, has a **Dm7**, **Em7** and **Am7** chord/arpeggio.

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

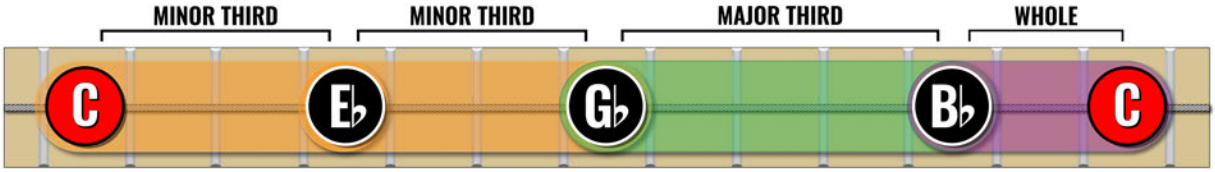
Half Diminished Seventh Arpeggio (R-♭3-♭5-♭7)

To the diminished triad (**R**-♭**3**-♭**5**) you can add an additional major third above the ♭**5**. Doing so will add the minor seventh scale degree (♭**7**).

R-♭**3**-♭**5**-♭**7** are the chord tones of a **half diminished seventh** arpeggio:



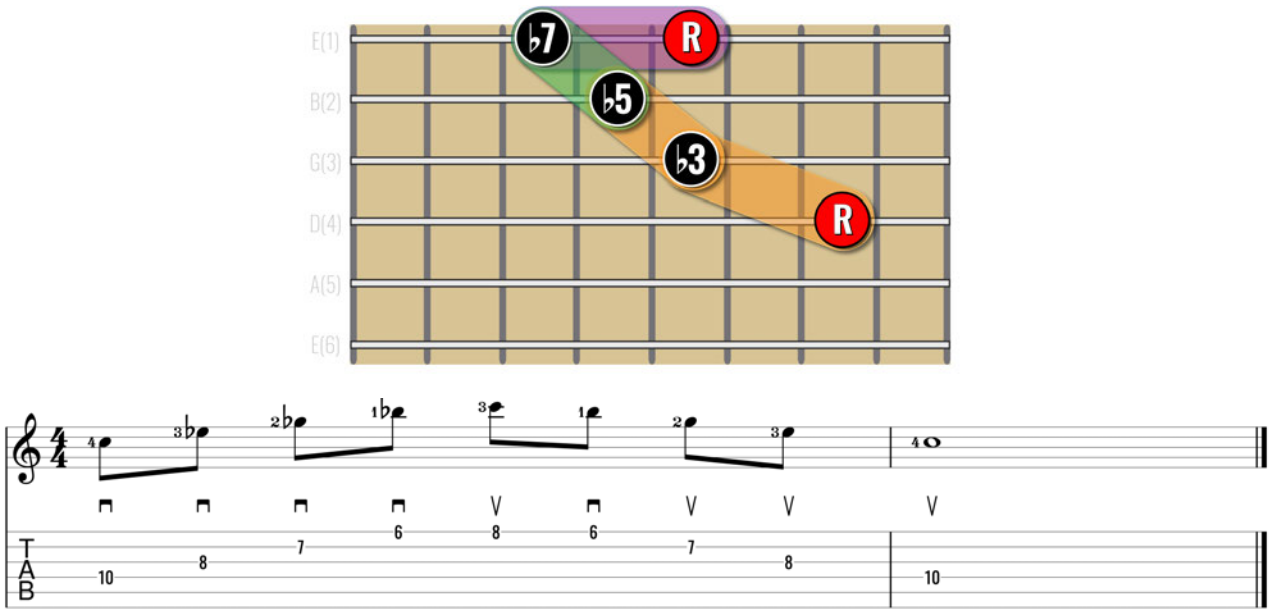
Half diminished seventh arpeggio



C half diminished seventh (Cm7♭5)

The **half diminished seventh arpeggio** (also known as the *"minor seventh flat five"*) is:

MINOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD + MAJOR THIRD



Cm7(♭5) arpeggio

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

The half diminished seventh chord, over which you can play the half diminished seventh arpeggio, can be written in different ways:

Cm7(♭5)

C-7♭5

C∅

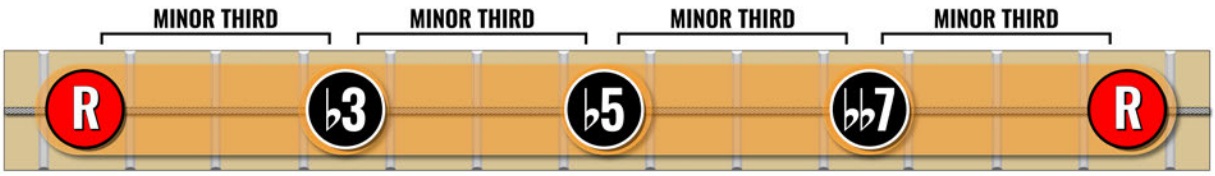
C∅7

In a major key a half diminished seventh arpeggio occurs uniquely on the **seventh** major scale degree. The key of C major has a **B**∅ or **Bm7(♭5)** chord/arpeggio.

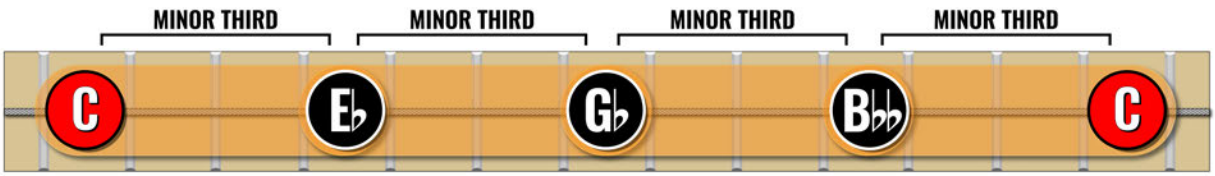
Diminished Seventh Arpeggio (R-♭3-♭5-♭♭7)

The 'full' diminished seventh (the last possibility) is not found in major scale theory, but the diminished seventh is commonly used as a passing chord. A good working knowledge of the diminished seventh arpeggio is helpful (it's also very interesting theoretically as you'll see!)

To the diminished triad (**R**-♭**3**-♭**5**) you can add an additional minor third above the ♭**5**:



Diminished seventh arpeggio



C diminished seventh arpeggio

Now this one needs a little explaining (yes that's a *double* flat seventh). This is a seventh arpeggio formed from stacked minor thirds.

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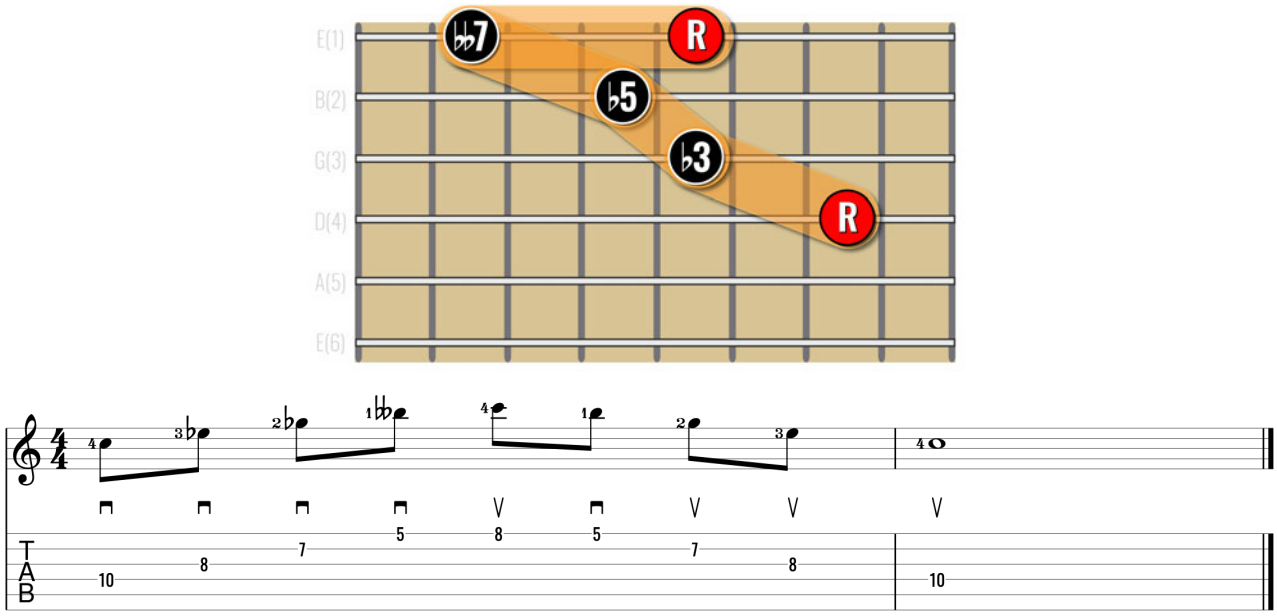
MINOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD + MINOR THIRD



Cdim7 arpeggio

The label 'diminished' can apply to two interval alterations. Flattening a perfect interval (like the perfect fifth (**5**)) make it diminished (♭**5** is a *diminished* fifth, the interval that names the diminished triad).

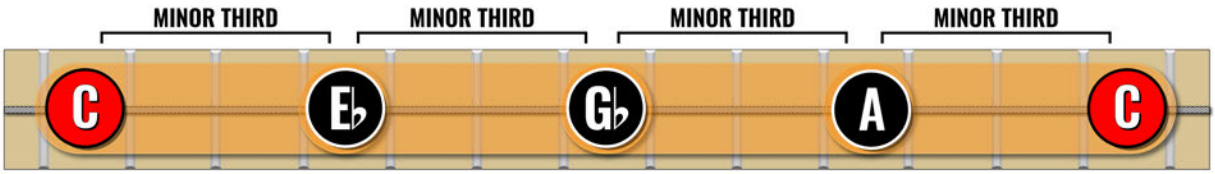
The diminished label also applies when **flattening a *minor* interval**. When a minor interval is lowered a half step, it becomes a **diminished** interval. The minor seventh (♭**7**) has been flattened an additional half step to a diminished seventh (♭♭**7**), giving the diminished seventh chord its name.

Theoretically it should be identified as ♭♭**7** because the arpeggio has been formed from the *Root-Third-Fifth-Seventh* stacked thirds 'framework'. That said, the ♭♭**7** is the same *pitch* as the **6**.

Some educators will then present the diminished seventh as follows:

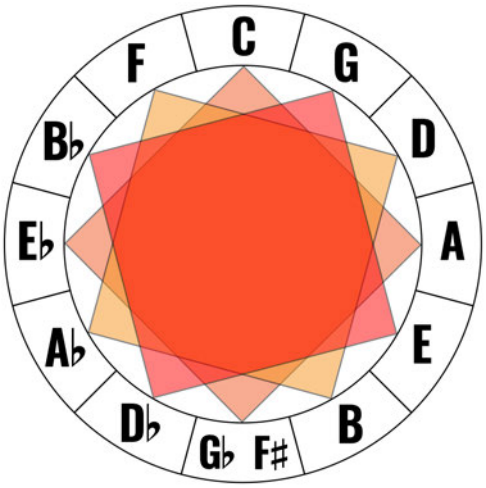
Diminished Seventh = R-♭3-♭5-6

(Root + Minor 3rd above Root+Diminished 5th above Root+Major 6th above Root)



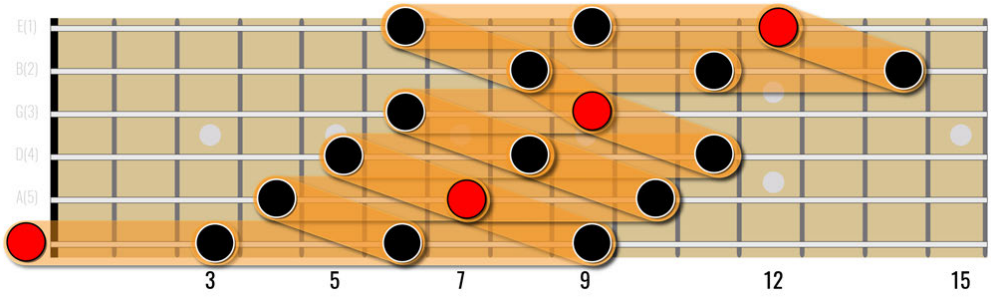
C diminished seventh arpeggio (alternative)

 © Ry Naylor Guitar



Diminished Seventh arpeggios formed from the Circle of Fifths

Like the augmented triad, this is another **symmetrical arpeggio**, with a minor third between each chord tone. All the inversions of the diminished seventh will therefore look and play the same way on the fretboard.



The stacked minor thirds exercise from Part 1 had you playing an **E** diminished seventh arpeggio across the fretboard. As you can see above from the Circle of Fifths, **E** diminished seventh is also **G** diminished seventh, or **B♭** diminished seventh or **D♭/C♯** diminished seventh.

With it possible for any of the four chord tones to be considered the Root, diminished seventh arpeggio shapes **repeat horizontally on the fretboard every three frets**, the distance of a minor third.

The diminished seventh chord can be written in different ways:

Cdim7

C°7

 © Ry Naylor Guitar

PRACTICE EXERCISES

I'd recommend you spend a little time with the horizontal arpeggios and being confident with the distance from one chord tone to the next. As you play through each arpeggio, I want you to think about them a couple of different ways:

- Say the chord tones as you play them "*root...three...five...flat seven*" etc.
- Say the intervals as you move from one chord tone to the next "*major third...minor third...whole*"

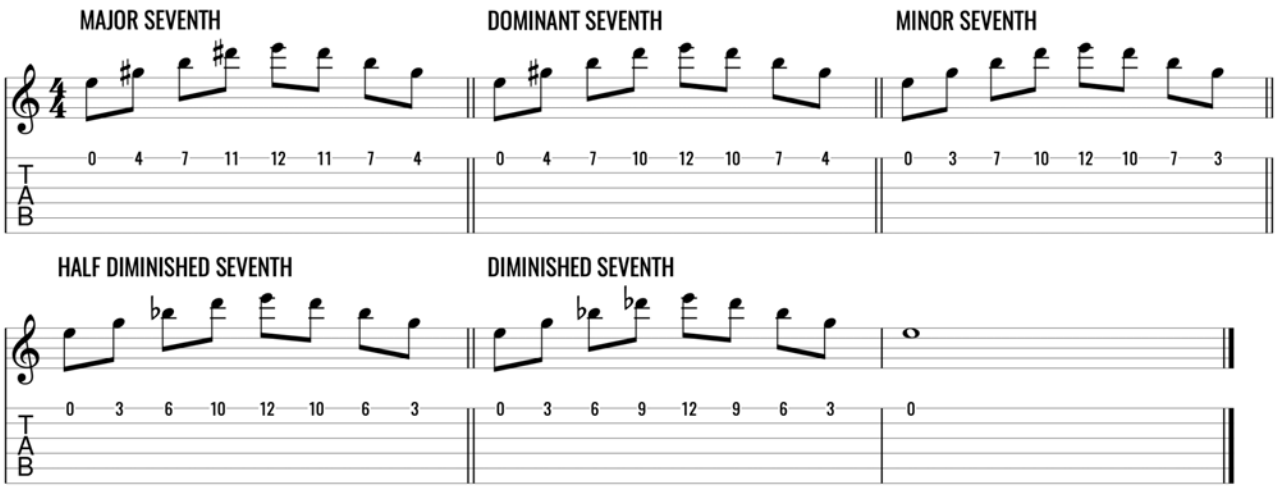
The best exercises will be the **Static Root** or **Cycle Static Shape** (playing one arpeggio type from different Root notes).

Static Root

A good, logical way to play through the different seventh arpeggios is the following order:

1. **MAJOR SEVENTH**
2. **DOMINANT SEVENTH**
3. **MINOR SEVENTH**
4. **HALF DIMINISHED SEVENTH**
5. **DIMINISHED SEVENTH**

Here's an example with an **E** Root (don't forget to play over an **E** drone to better hear the characteristic sound of each arpeggio):



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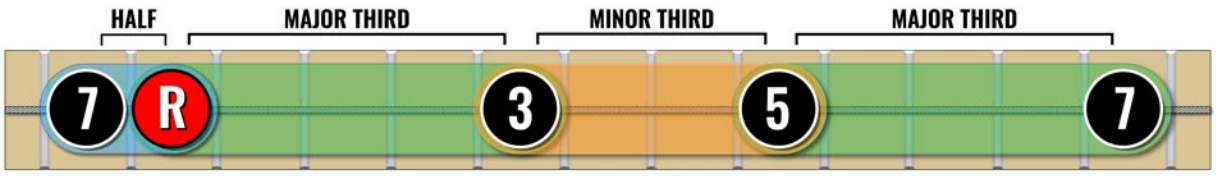
Part 9: Two-String Seventh Arpeggios

Let's move on to seventh arpeggios across a string pair. This will help you to plug them to the Three Octave approach (coming up in **Part 10**).

With the addition of a fourth chord tone the seventh arpeggios will have a Root position arpeggio and **three inversions**. You can begin an arpeggio on either the Root, Third, Fifth *or* Seventh.



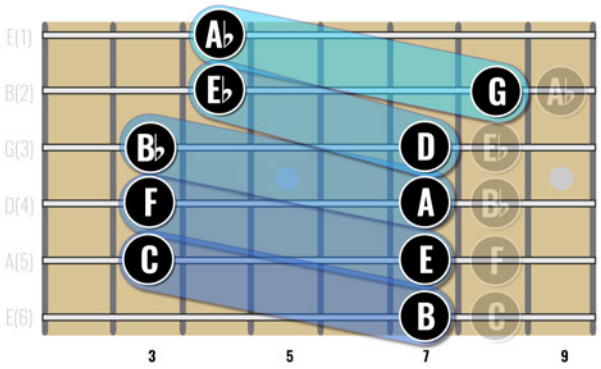
*Major Seventh Arpeggio (Third Inversion) (**7**-**R**-**3**-**5**)*

As they are four-note arpeggios you will only be learning **one way** to play the arpeggio inversions across a string pair - a **2-2 arpeggio shape** (two notes on each string).

Let's start by considering what the newly-added intervals look like across a string pair.

Half Step / Whole Step Across String Pairs

On an adjacent string pair, a half step is four frets lower on the string physically below, three frets lower between strings 3(G) and 2(B):



Example half steps across the string pairs

A whole step will be three frets lower on the string physically below, two frets lower between strings 3(G) and 2(B):

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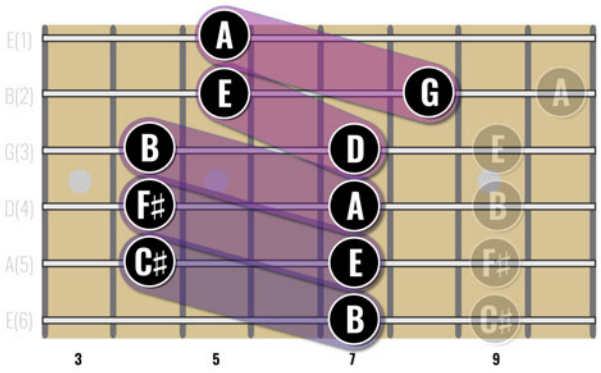
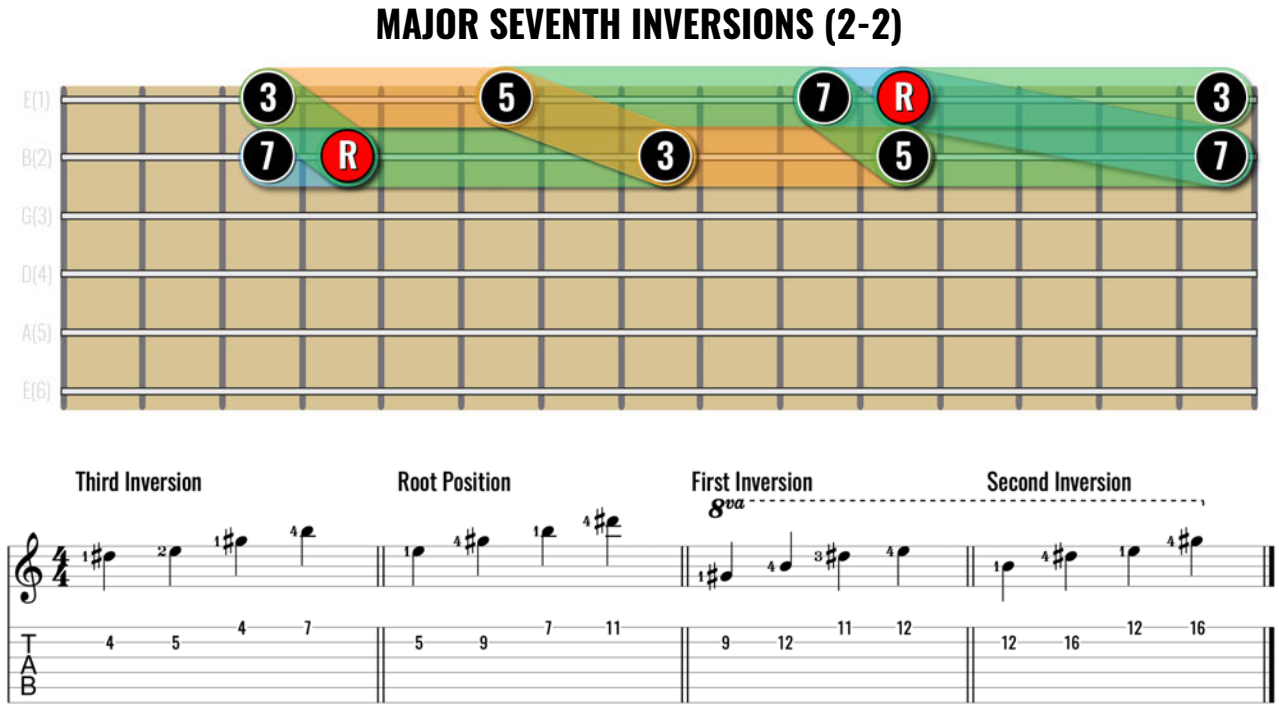


Example whole steps across the string pairs

What follows are the two-string inversions for each of the seventh arpeggios across String 2(B) and 1(E). **E** will be the example Root note in the accompanying TAB *(playing the open String 6(E) as a drone helps gives some harmonic context)*.



*Emaj7 Inversions (**R**-**3**-**5**-**7** - **E**-**G♯**-**B**-**D♯**)*

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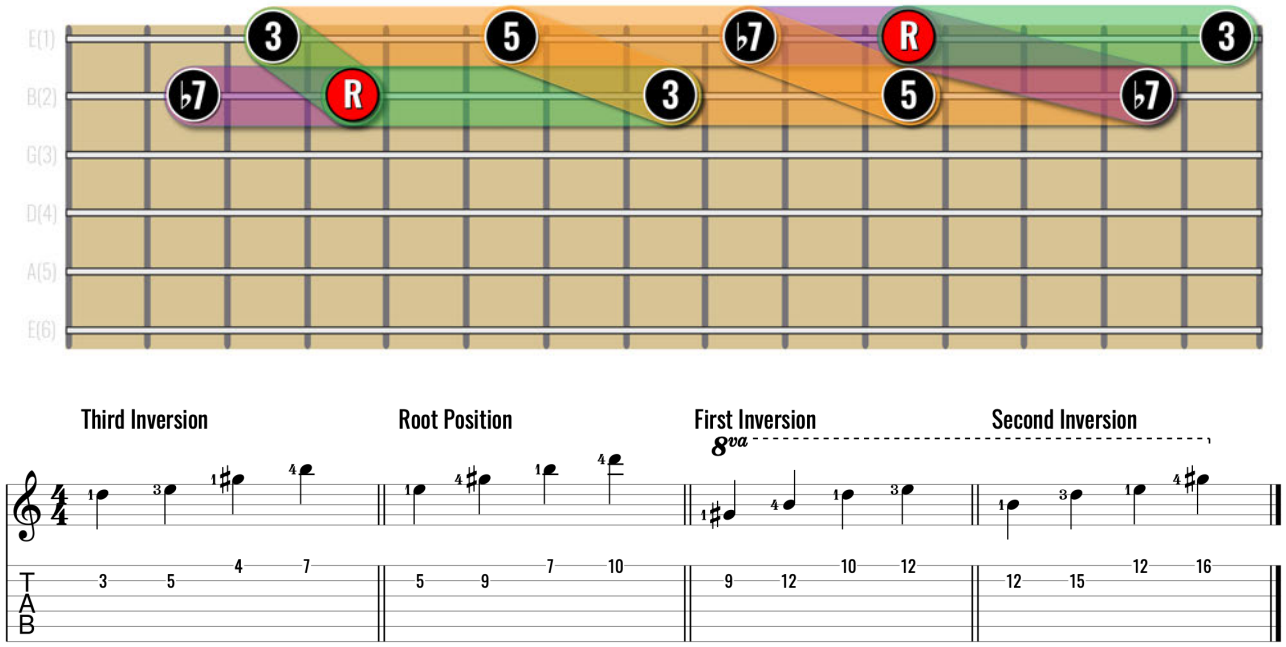
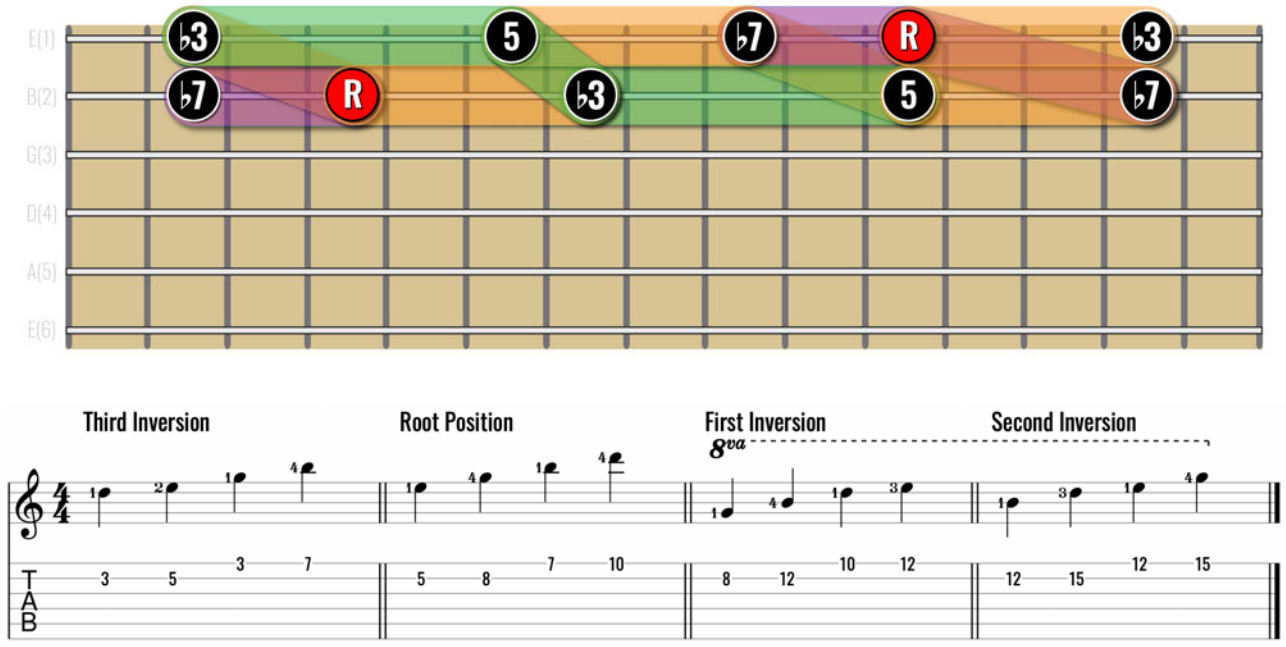
DOMINANT SEVENTH INVERSIONS (2-2)



*E7 Inversions (**R**-**3**-**5**-**♭7** - **E**-**G♯**-**B**-**D**)*

MINOR SEVENTH INVERSIONS (2-2)



*Em7 Inversions (**R**-**♭3**-**5**-**♭7** - **E**-**G**-**B**-**D**)*

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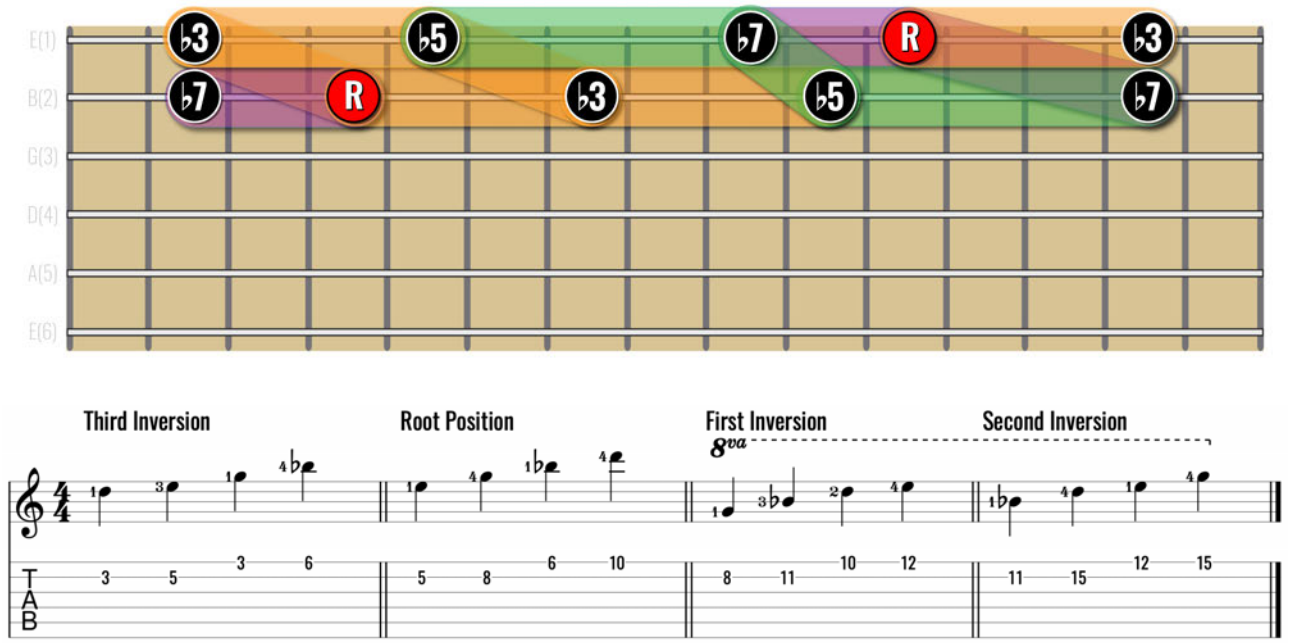
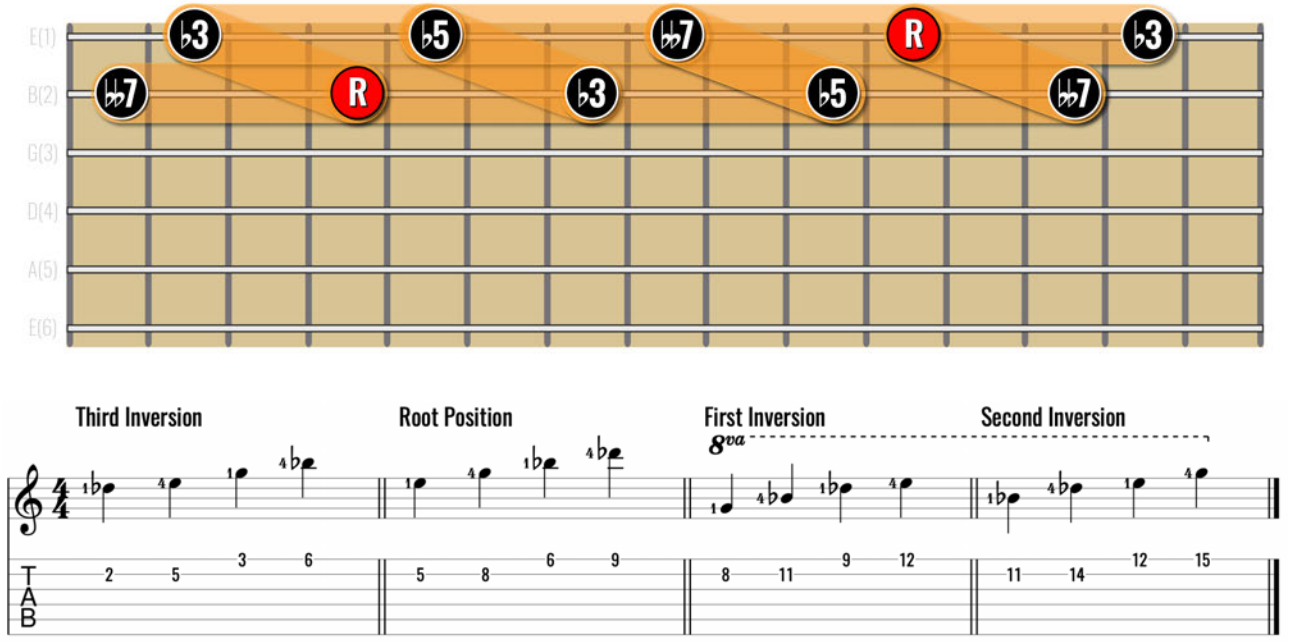
HALF DIMINISHED SEVENTH INVERSIONS (2-2)



*Em7(♭5) Inversions (**R**-♭**3**-♭**5**-♭**7** - **E**-**G**-**B**♭-**D**)*

Like the diminished triad, the instability of the half diminished seventh arpeggio can resolve *up* a half step to a major chord (F major) or *down* a whole step to a minor chord (D minor).

DIMINISHED SEVENTH INVERSIONS (2-2)



*Edim7 Inversions (**R**-♭**3**-♭**5**-♭♭**7** - **E**-**G**-**B**♭-**D**♭)*

Each inversion is identical, repeating every three frets. The tension of the diminished seventh can resolve a half step *above*/whole step below *any* chord tone. It resolves to either a major or minor chord. Very cool!

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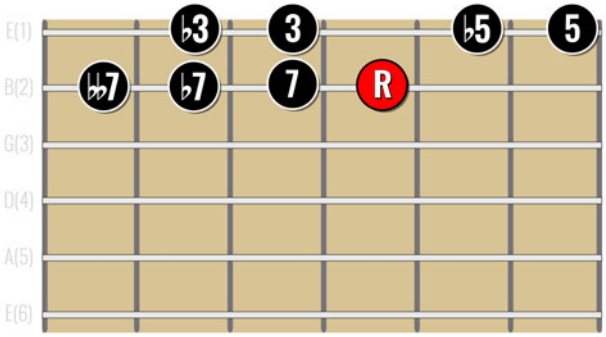
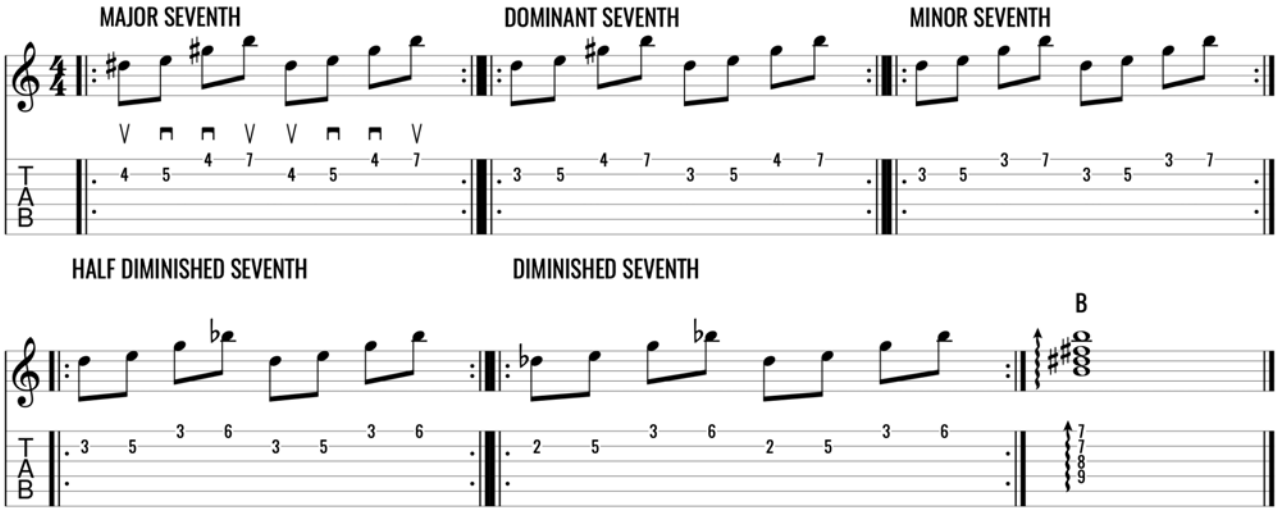
PRACTICE EXERCISES

Same rules apply here as previous arpeggios. Follow through as many of the different practice themes as you feel necessary to really have these shapes memorised.

Static Root

Choose an inversion and cycle through the different seventh arpeggios. Taking the example of the third inversion on the **E** Root:





Try the suggested economy picking mini-sweeps, and don't forget.... work the arpeggios from highest chord tone to lowest as well!

Repeat with each inversion on different string pairs.

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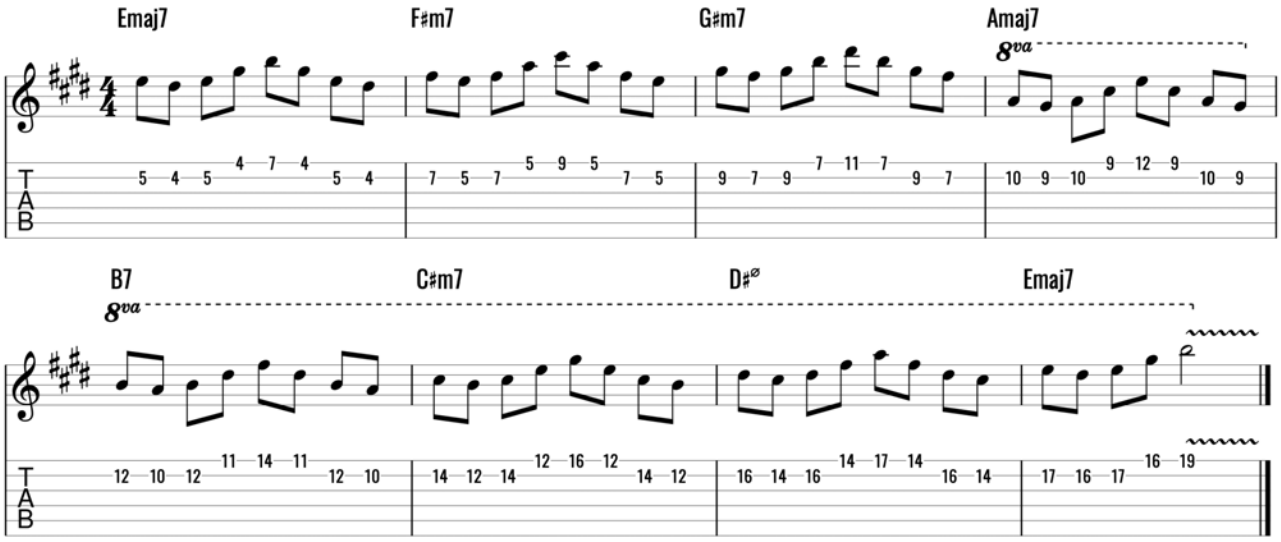
Playing Through a Key (Same Shape)

Let's take a review on the seventh arpeggios in a major key with the third inversion through the key of **E** major.

Rather than strictly up or down, here's a new chord tone sequence (R-7-R-3-5-3-R-7):



As a review, the **four seventh arpeggio types** are:

- **Major seventh** on the **1** and **4** (I^{maj7}, IV^{maj7})
- **Dominant seventh** on the **5** ($V7$)
- **Minor seventh** on the **2**, **3** and **6** (ii^{-7}, iii^{-7} and vi^{-7})
- **Half diminished seventh** on the **7** ($vii^{\varnothing}$)

Playing through the seventh arpeggio is a very musical way to learn the shapes. Try it from different Root notes and different inversions.

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Part 10: Three Octaves (2)

With the seventh arpeggio shapes across a string pair learned, you can now start to think about applying them across the three octave string pairs (LOW-MIDDLE-HIGH from **Part 5**).

As before, each inversion is presented in a full three octaves and you'll see each of the four inversions for the five different seventh arpeggios.

I've also added the chord tones across the entire fretboard so you can start to be making connections to the all the arpeggio shapes studied up to this point.

There'll be some **PRACTICE EXERCISES** at the end of the chapter.

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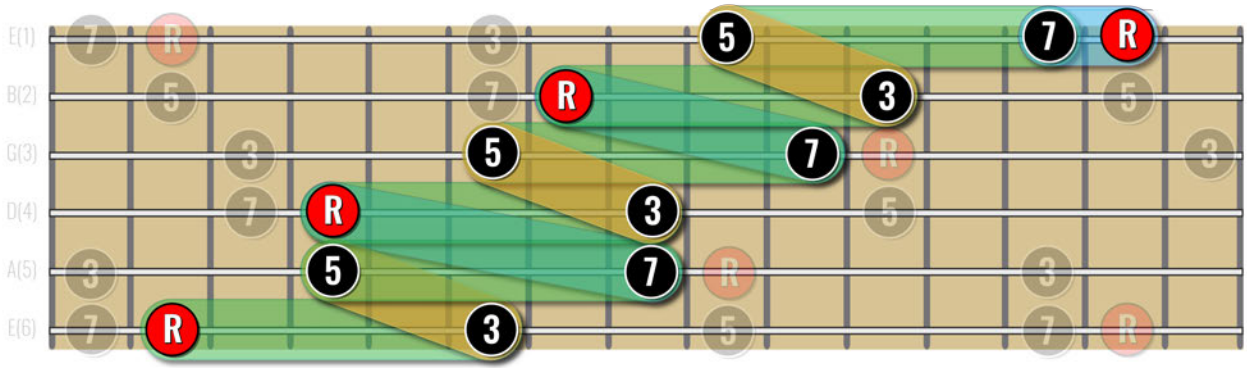
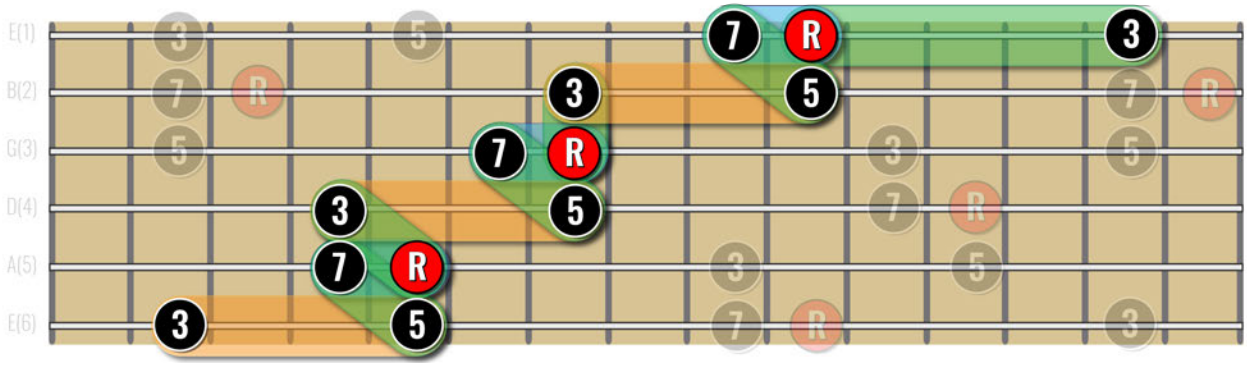
MAJOR SEVENTH ARPEGGIO

THREE OCTAVES

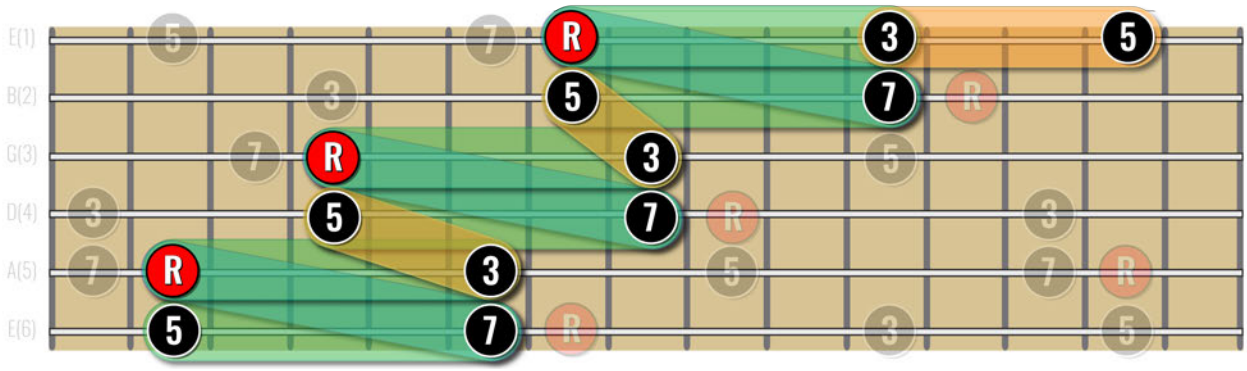
ROOT POSITION



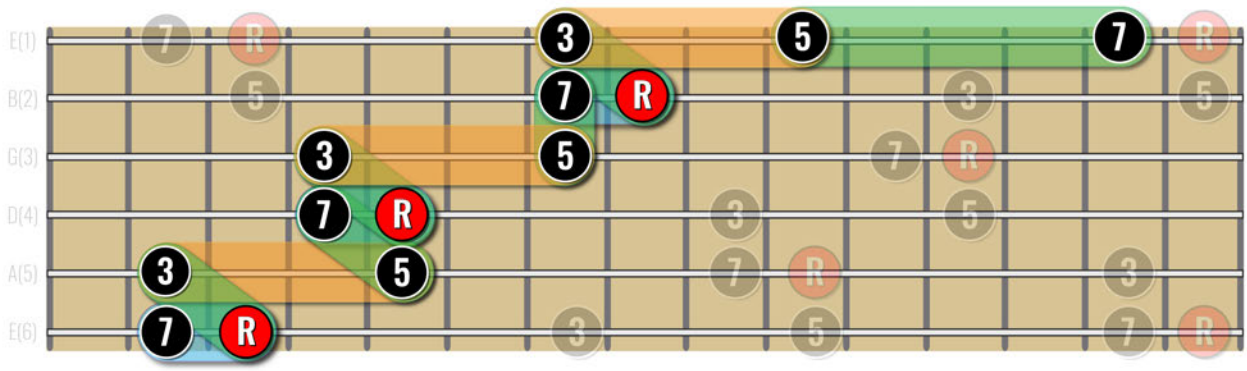
FIRST INVERSION



SECOND INVERSION



THIRD INVERSION



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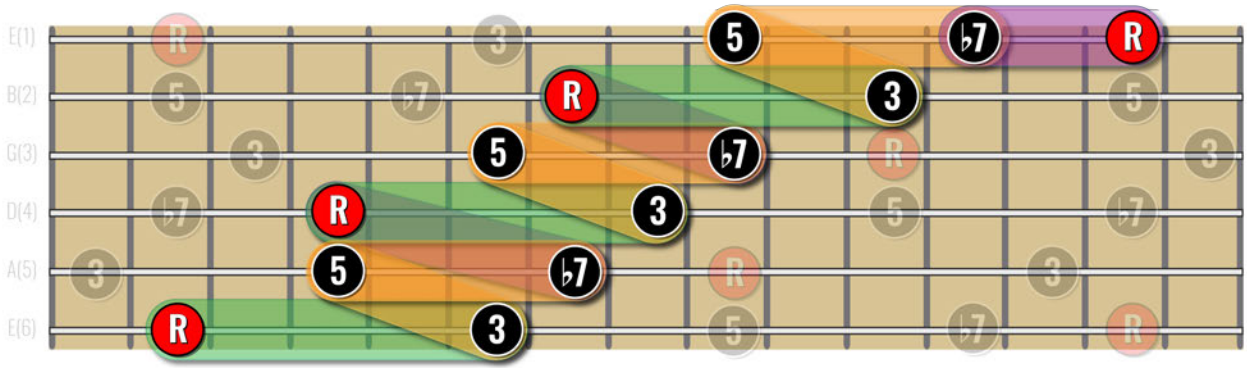
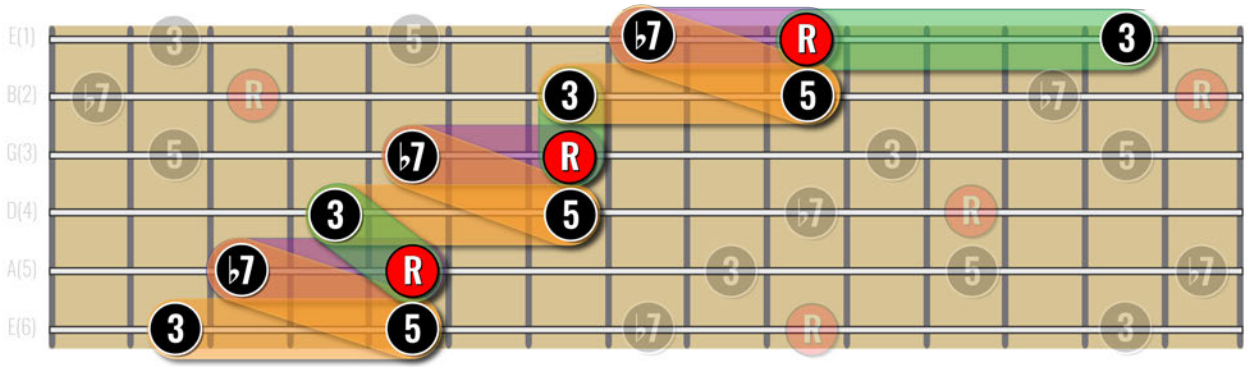
DOMINANT SEVENTH ARPEGGIO

THREE OCTAVES

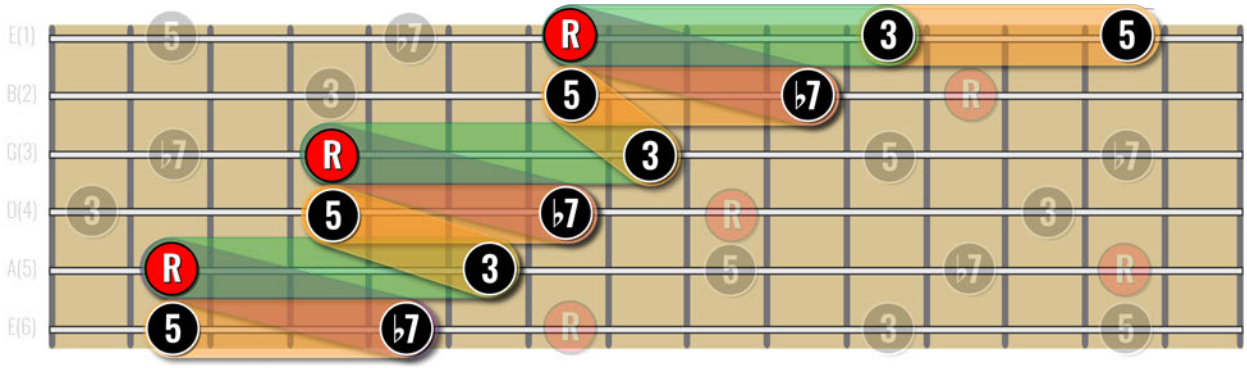
ROOT POSITION



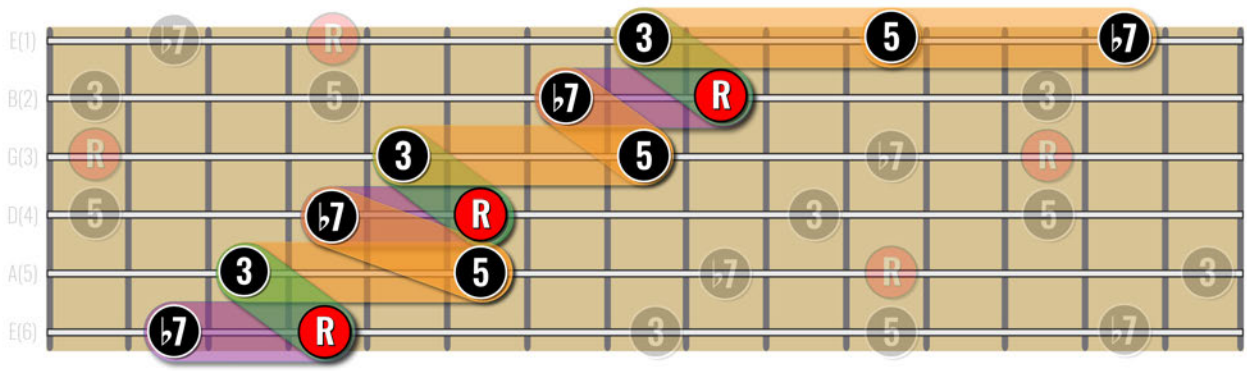
FIRST INVERSION



SECOND INVERSION



THIRD INVERSION



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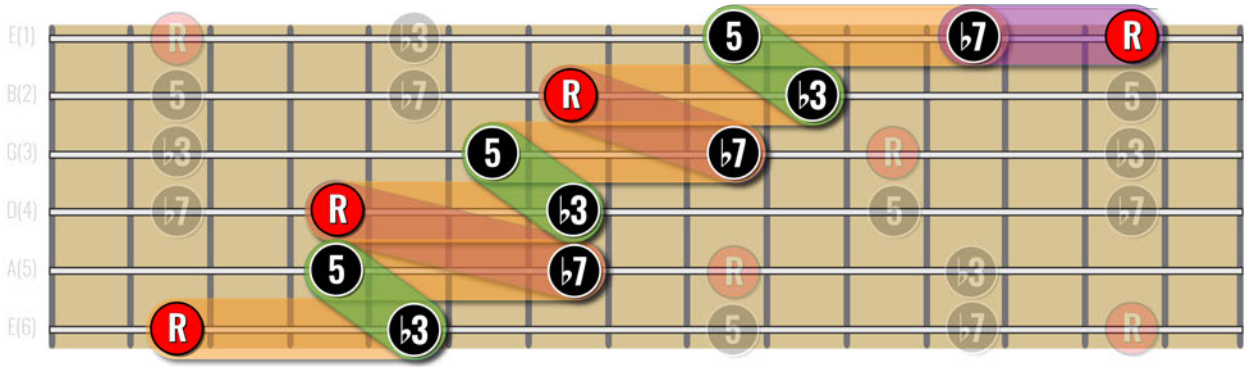
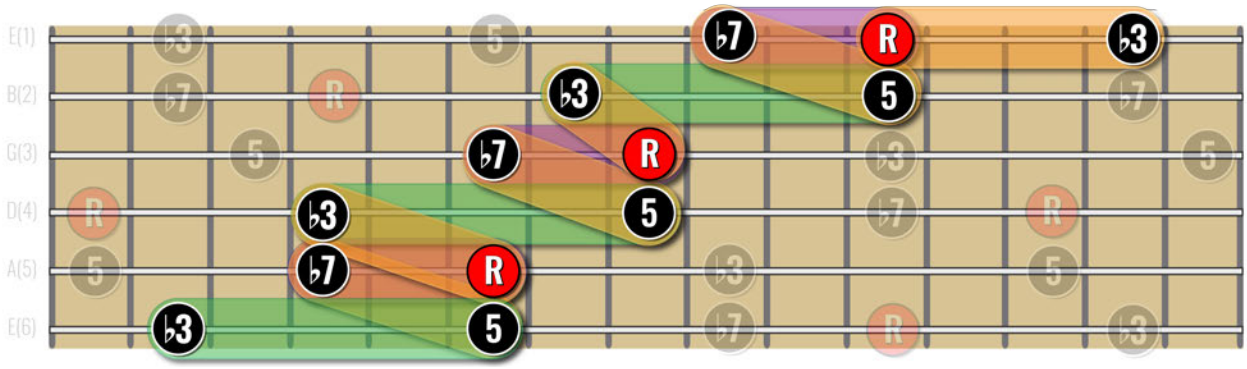
MINOR SEVENTH ARPEGGIO

THREE OCTAVES

ROOT POSITION



FIRST INVERSION



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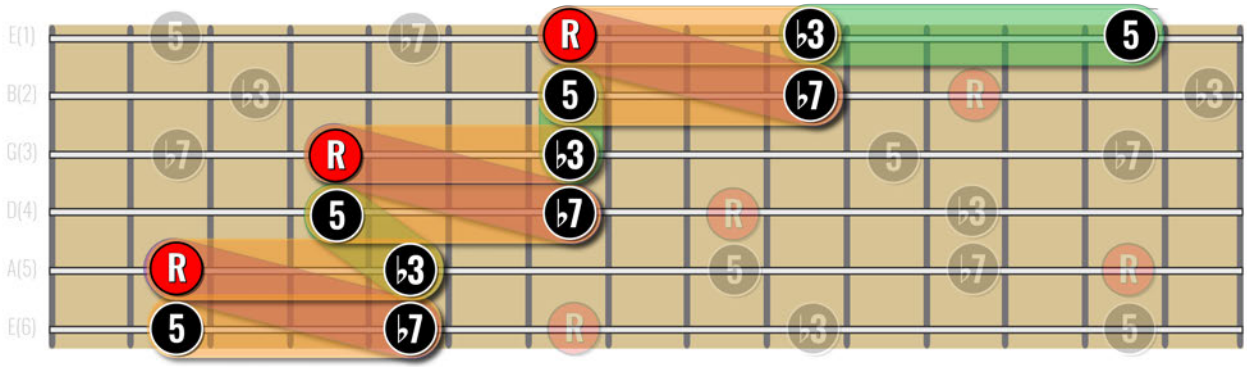
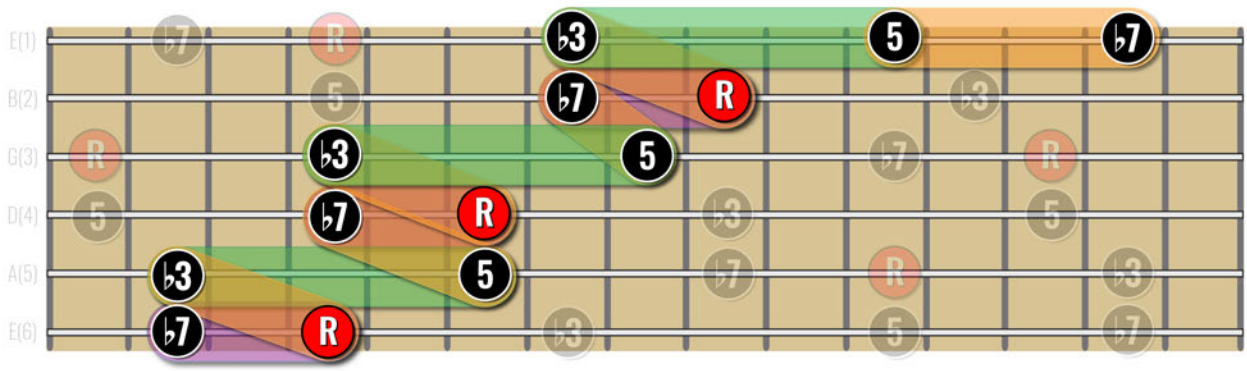


THIRD INVERSION



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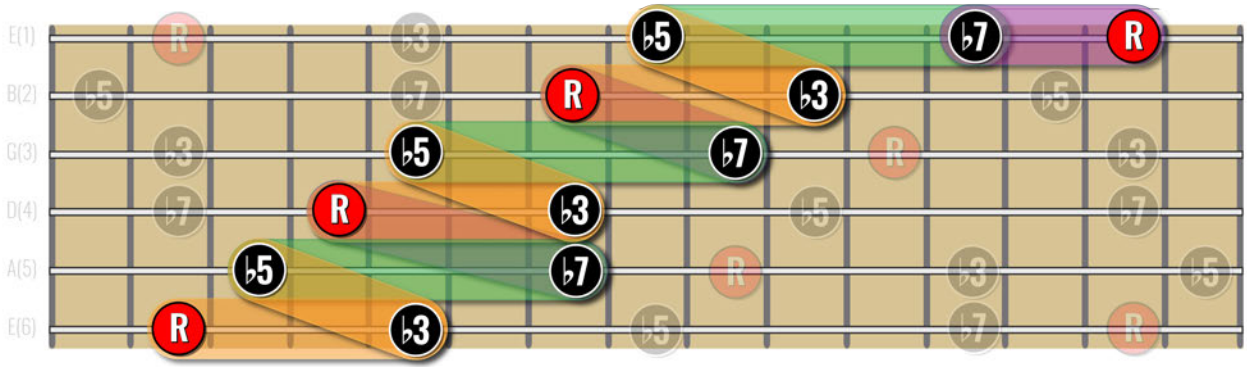
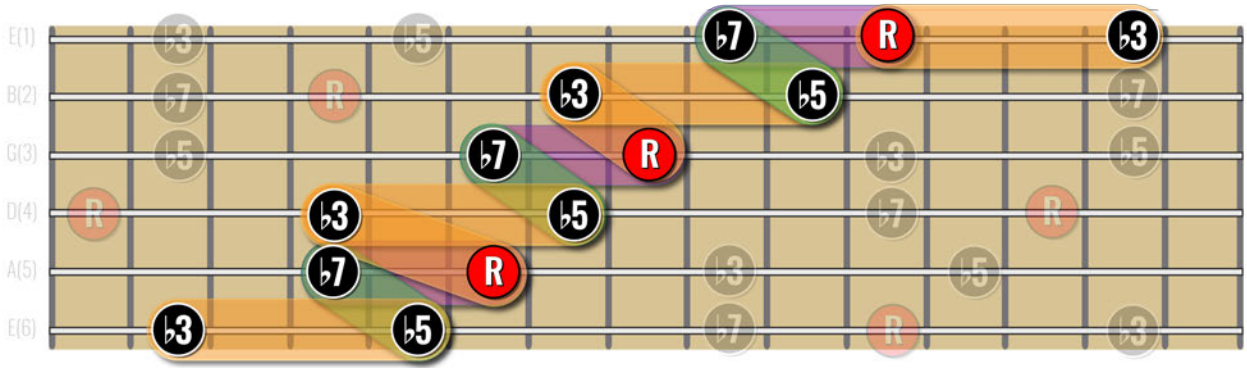
HALF DIMINISHED SEVENTH ARPEGGIO

THREE OCTAVES

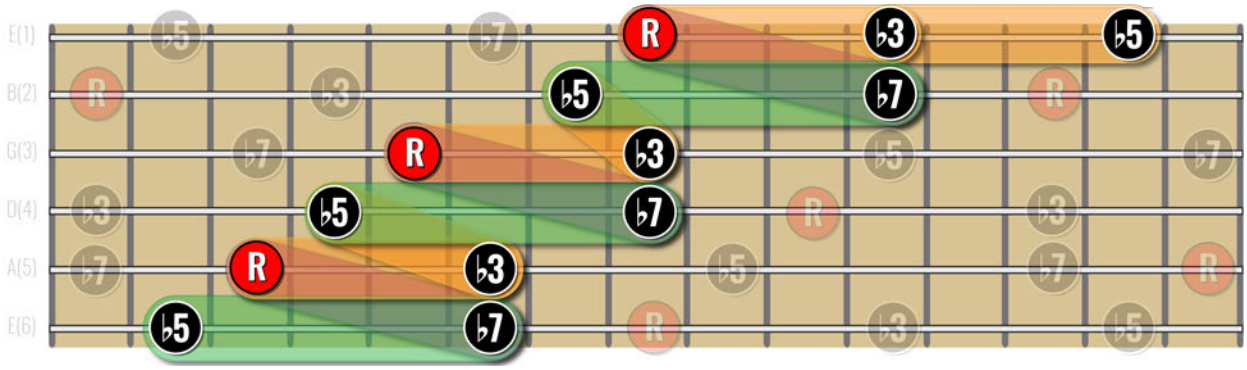
ROOT POSITION



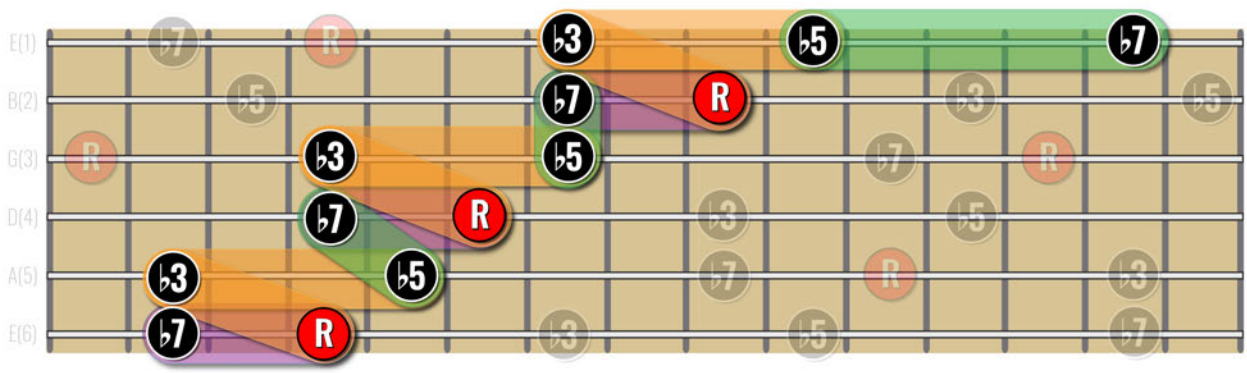
FIRST INVERSION



SECOND INVERSION



THIRD INVERSION



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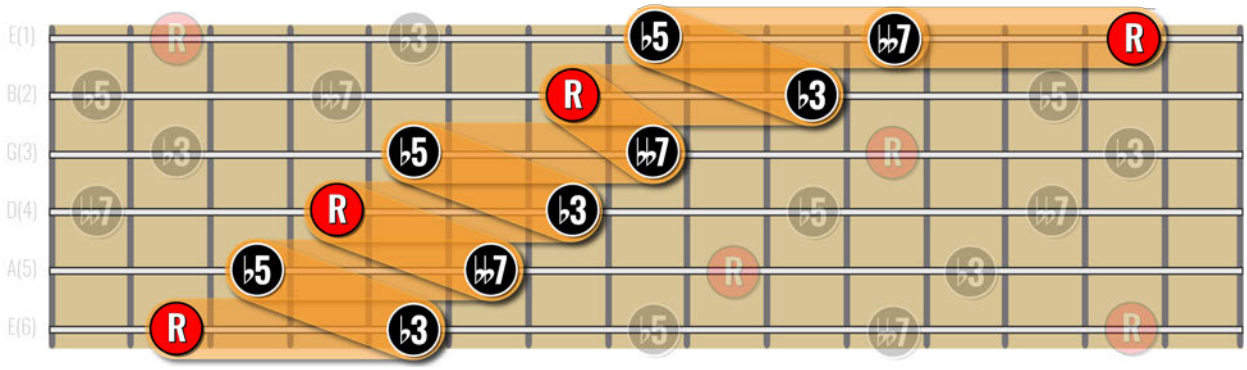
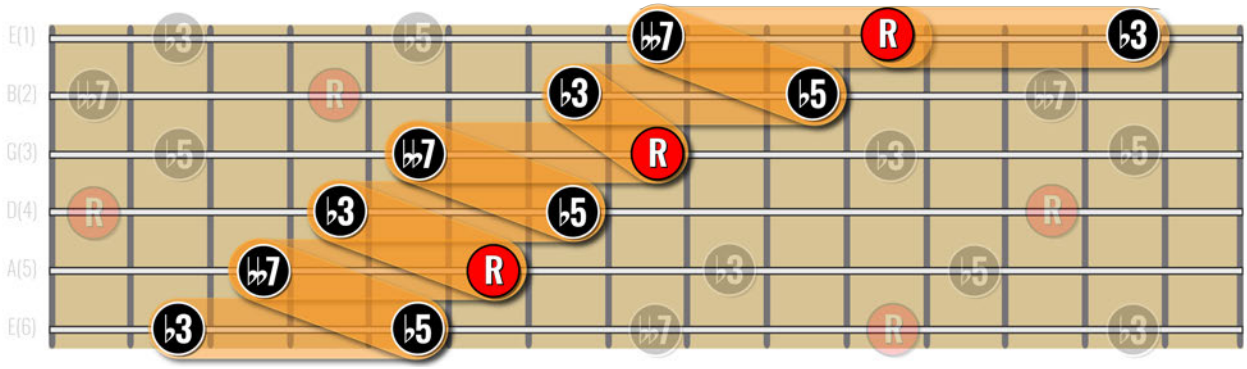
DIMINISHED SEVENTH

THREE OCTAVES

ROOT POSITION



FIRST INVERSION



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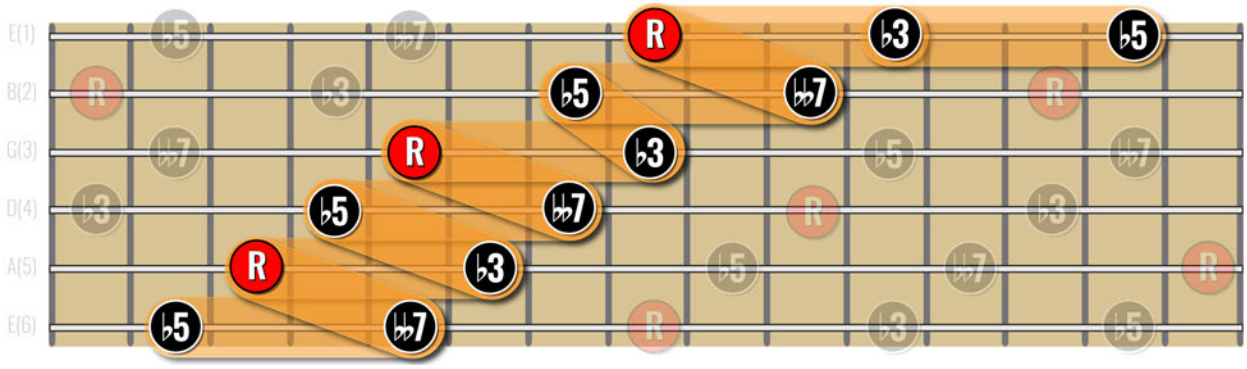
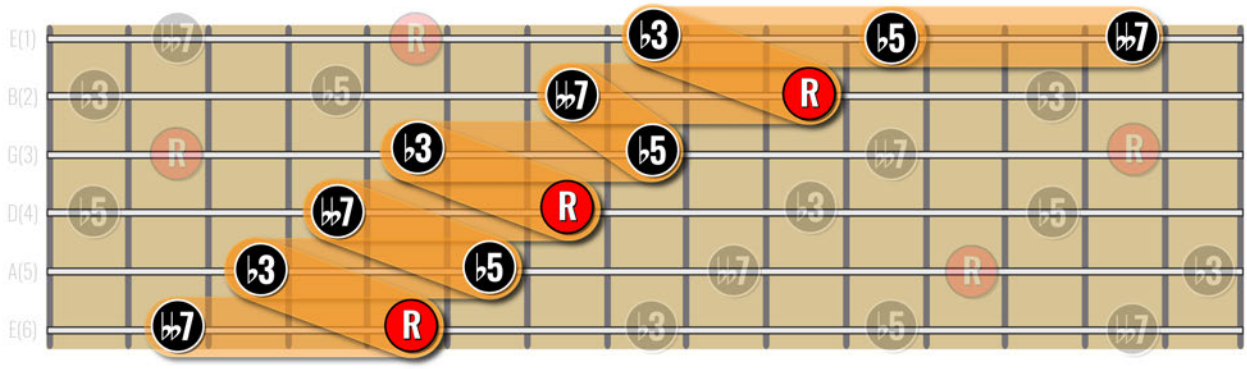


THIRD INVERSION



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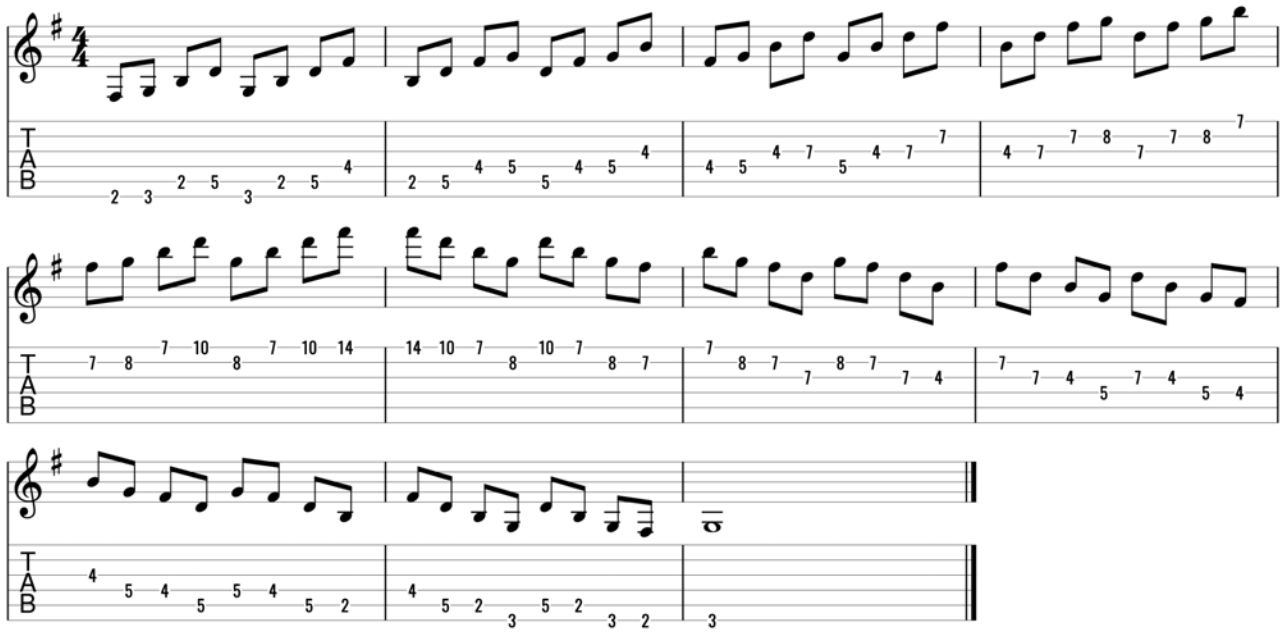
PRACTICE EXERCISES

As with the triad arpeggios, these three octave patterns can be overwhelming as you first learn them, so here are a couple of exercises to help you. Sequences are where it's at!

Arpeggio Sequences

"*X in a Row*" sequences are really beneficial, especially when learning the positions as you change strings. Example 1 is "four in a row" using the **Gmaj7** arpeggio. Play up four notes (7-R-3-5) then go up a note and play up the next four (R-3-5-7). Keep repeating until you hit the top of the pattern, then descend in the same way (7-5-3-R...5-3-R-7...3-R-7-5...):



Gmaj7 Four in a Row (from third inversion)

Player's Choice on the fingerings here. Do it with all inversions and seventh chord types. Oh, and don't forget to change Root notes!

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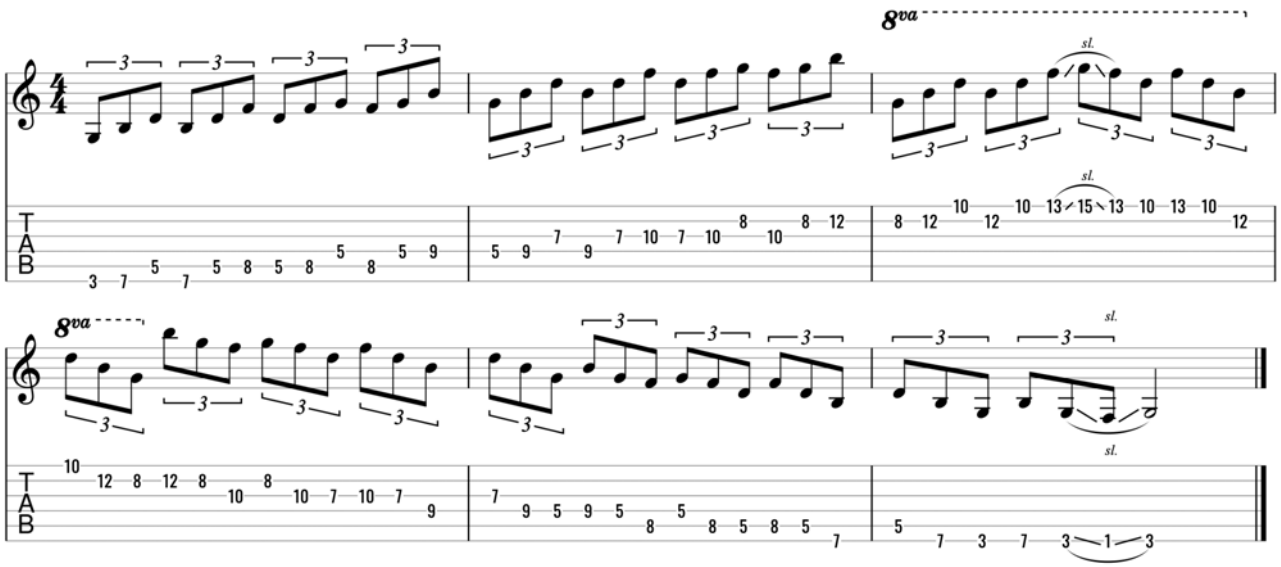
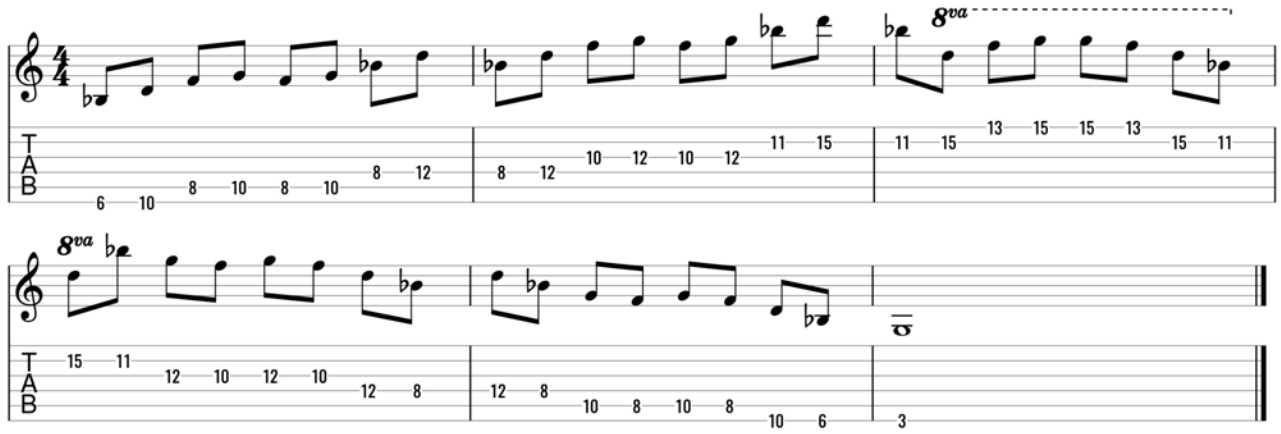
Example 2 is “three in a row” using the **G7** arpeggio. I’ve added a couple of slides at either end to make it fit nicely with the triplet 8th feel.



G7 Three in a Row (from root position)

The third example below is a sequence of string pairs. Instead of the LOW-MIDDLE-HIGH pairs, you’ll play the 4-note grouping on each string pair: 6(E)-5(A)...5(A)-4(D)...4(D)-3(G) etc. and turn it back round as you descend. This is a great way to really nail the connections in the patterns. This is **Gm7** from the first inversion:



Gm7 String Pairs (from first inversion)

All other practice exercises can also be applied here: **Static Root**, **Static Root Inversions**, **Cycle Static Shape**...even **Playing to a Progression**.

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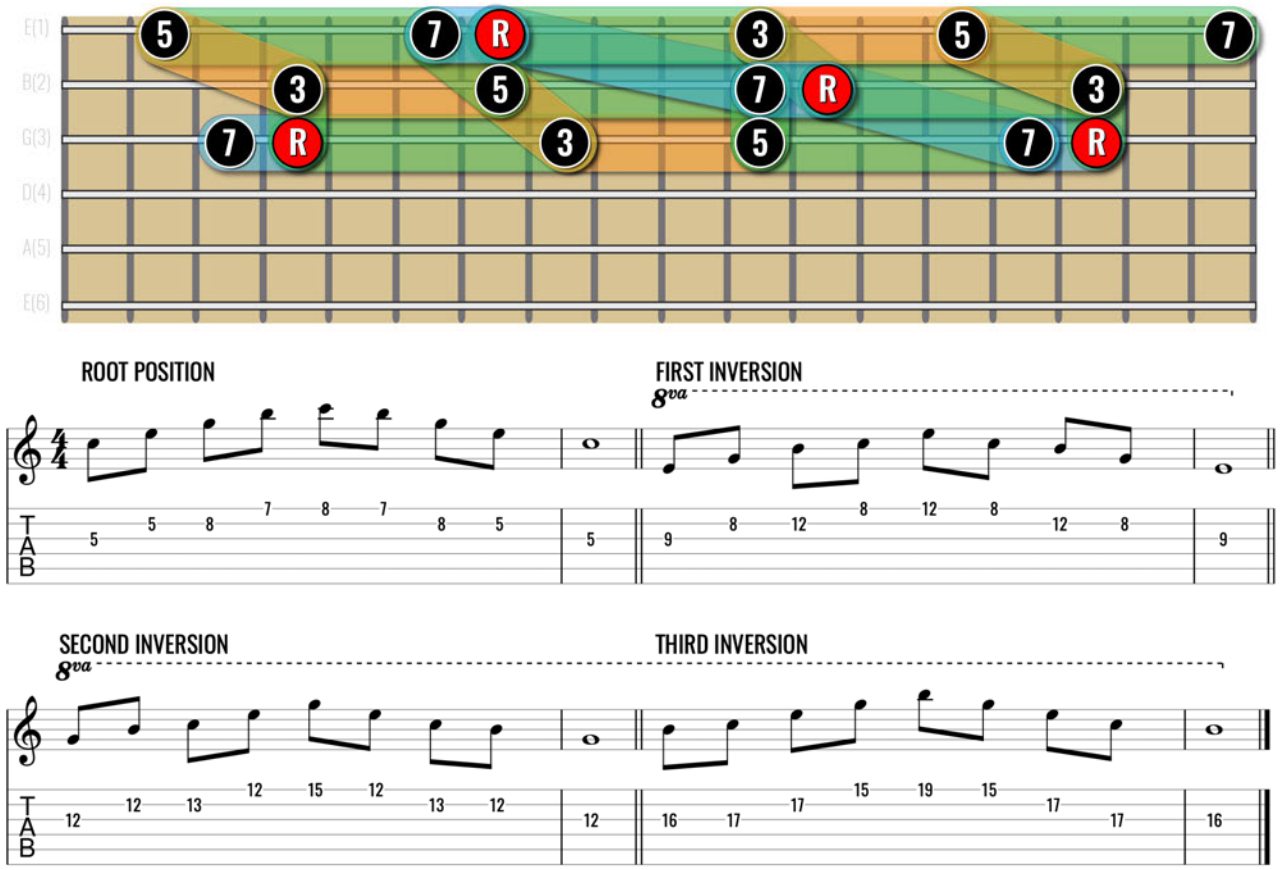
Part 11: Three-String Seventh Arpeggios

Now let's add String 3(G) to see the different seventh arpeggio inversions across **String Set 1**.

As the fretboard diagrams show, there's more than one way (as always) to play each arpeggio inversion. I'll leave you to explore them and decide which ones you prefer. **C** will be the example Root note in the TAB in which you'll find the inversions that makes most sense for me.

Major Seventh



C major seventh arpeggio inversions

The inversion shapes here illustrate something very cool. If you play the **3**-**5**-**7** of each inversion in order (excluding the second inversion) do you recognise the shapes?

It's the 1-2 and 2-1 **E minor** arpeggios (the notes **E**-**G**-**B**). The **C** major seventh arpeggio contains the E minor triad arpeggio. Mind blown!

Think of it like playing a minor arpeggio rooted on the **3** of your chosen major seventh **R** (Em/C). For example, if you wanted a Gmaj7 sound you could play a B minor arpeggio over a G bass or Gmaj7 chord chord (because Bm/G = Gmaj7).

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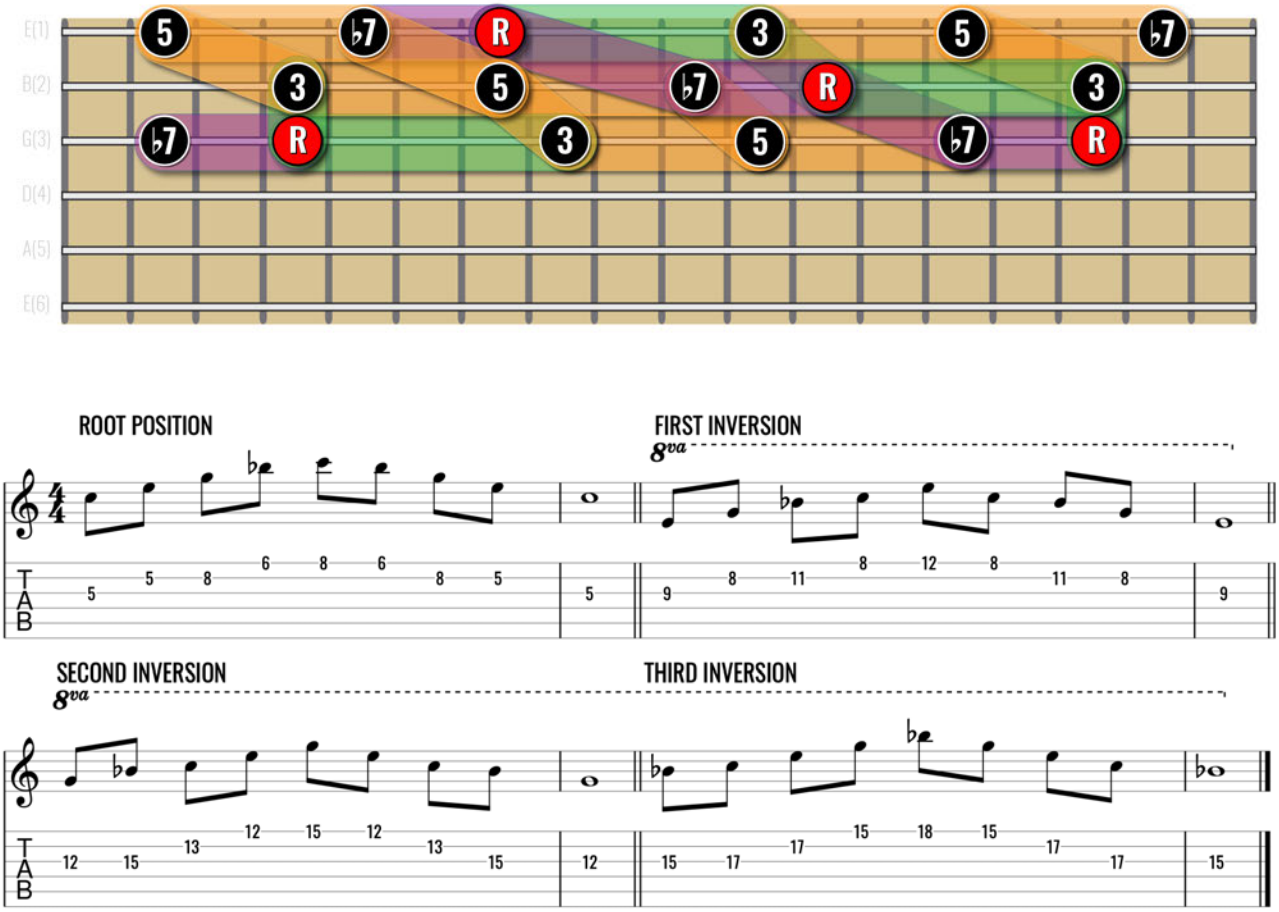
Dominant Seventh



Play the **3**-**5**-**♭7** of each inversion. Do you recognise these shapes (*hint*...minor third + minor third)?

Yep! It's the 1-2 and 2-1 **E *diminished*** arpeggios (the notes **E**-**G**-**B♭**) The **C** dominant seventh arpeggio contains the E diminished triad arpeggio.

Think of it like playing a diminished triad arpeggio rooted on the **3** of of your chosen dominant seventh **R** (ie. Edim/C).

So, if you wanted a D7 sound you could play F♯ diminished arpeggios over a D bass or D7 chord (F♯dim/D = D7).

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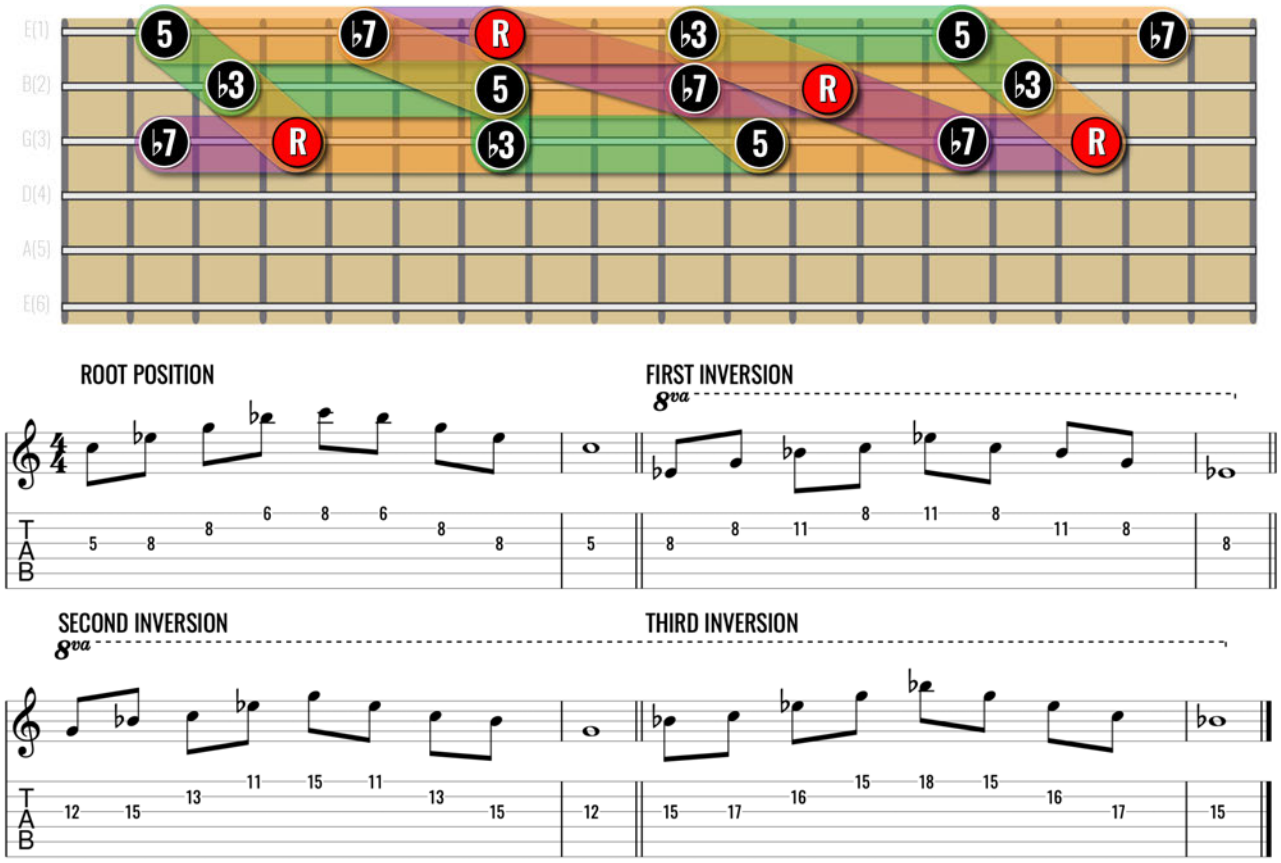
Minor Seventh



C *minor seventh arpeggio inversions*

You can see where I'm going wit this...play the ♭**3**-**5**-♭**7.** What is it this time?

It's the 1-2 and 2-1 **E♭ major** arpeggios (the notes **E♭**-**G**-**B♭**) The **C** minor seventh arpeggio contains the E♭ major triad arpeggio.

It's like playing a major triad arpeggio rooted on the ♭**3** over the **R** of your chosen minor seventh (so E♭/C - E♭ major over a C bass).

If you wanted a Am7 sound you could play C major arpeggios over an A bass or Am7 chord (C/A - C major over an A bass = Am7).

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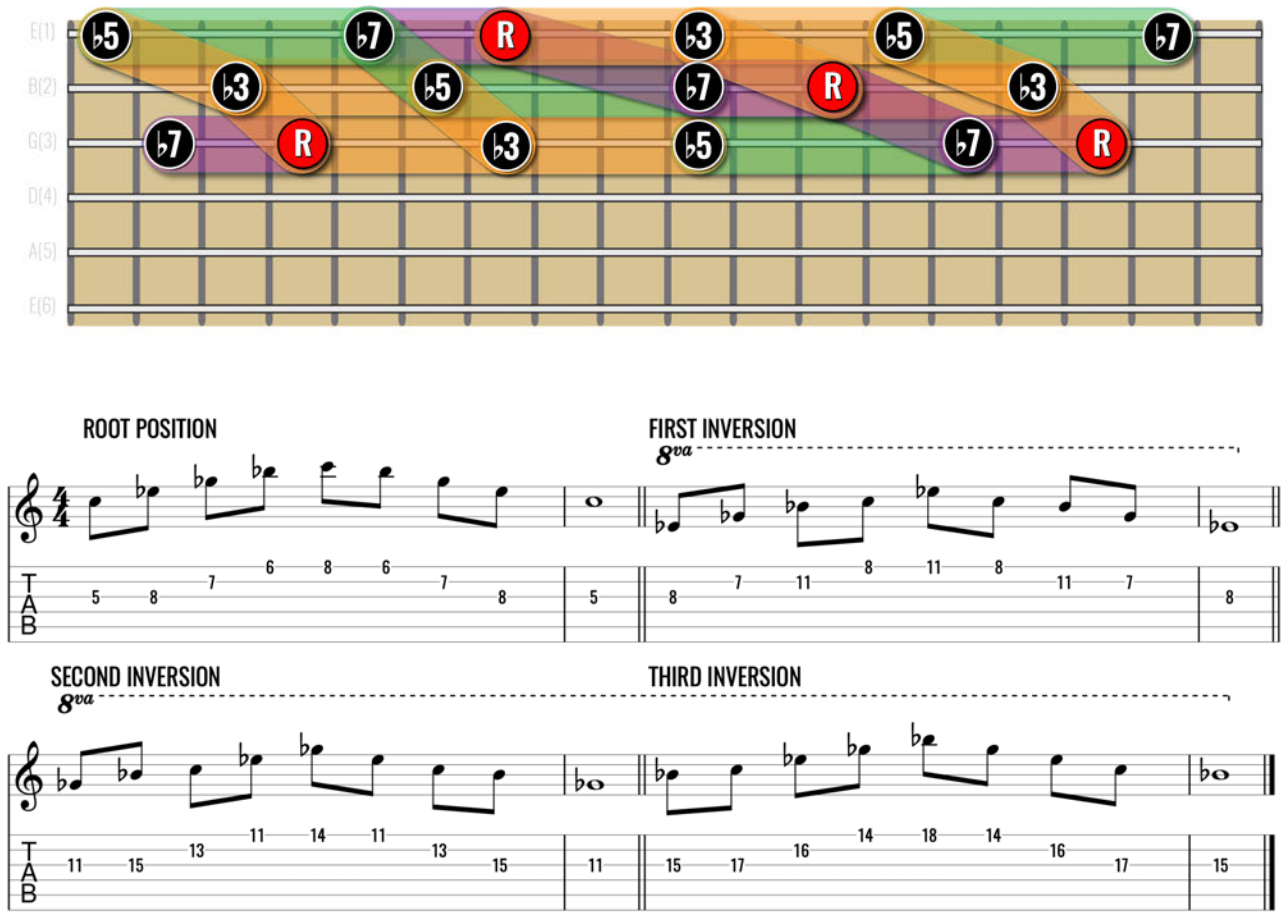
Half Diminished Seventh



C *half diminished seventh arpeggio inversions*

One more to check out...play the **♭3**-**♭5**-**♭7.** What is it? It's the 1-2 and 2-1 **E♭ minor** arpeggios (the notes **E♭**-**G♭**-**B♭**). The **C** half diminished arpeggio contains the E♭ minor triad arpeggio.

Applying that, it's like playing a minor triad arpeggio rooted on the **♭3** of of your chosen minor seventh (flat 5) **R** (so E♭m/C - E♭ minor over a C bass = C half diminished seventh).

If you wanted a Dm7(♭5) sound you could play F minor arpeggios over a D bass note or Dm7(♭5) chord (Fm/D = Dm7(♭5)).

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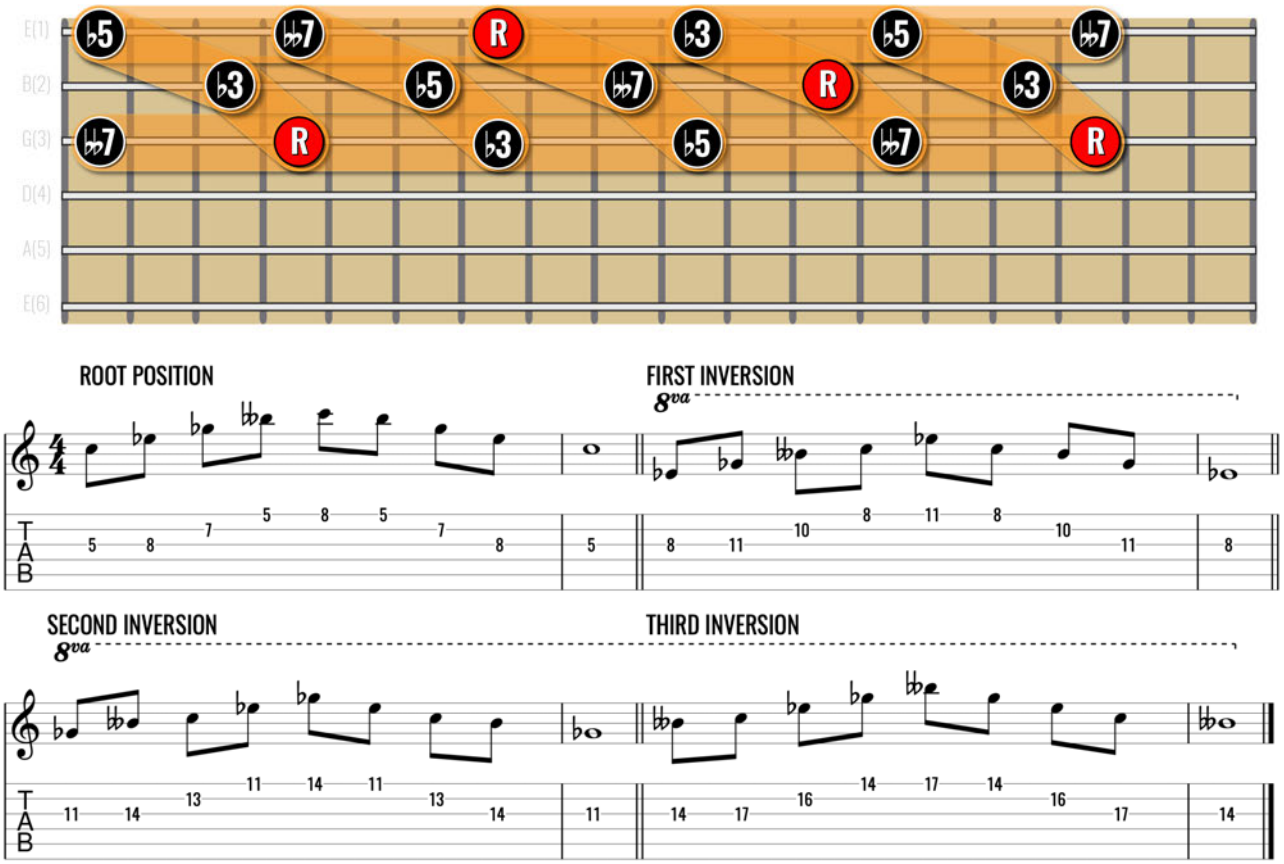
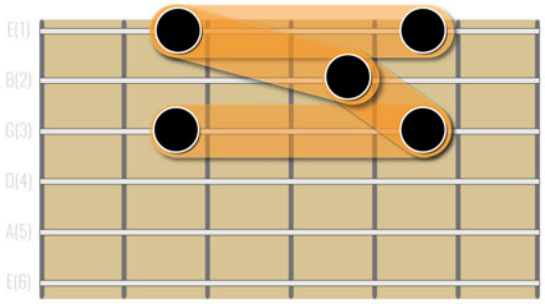
Diminished Seventh



As mentioned in previous sections, the diminished seventh arpeggio is symmetrical with an even three frets (minor third) between each chord tone. All the inversions look and play the same, so you can take this shape:



...and freely move it up and down three frets for the same diminished seventh in different inversions. I've not highlighted a Root because ***any* of the notes can be the Root**.

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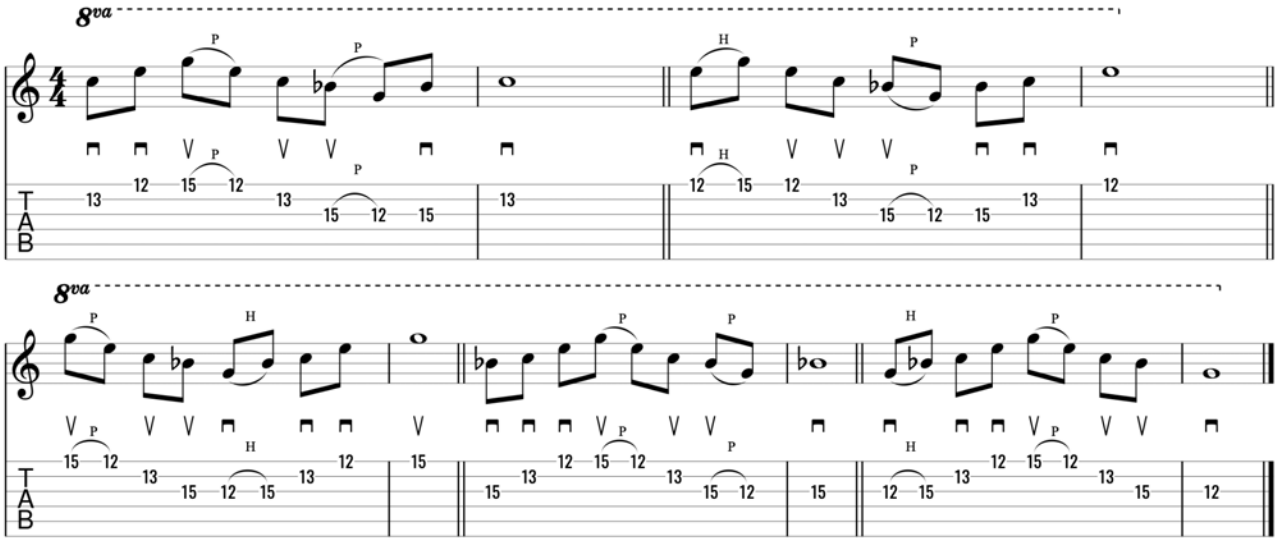
PRACTICE EXERCISES

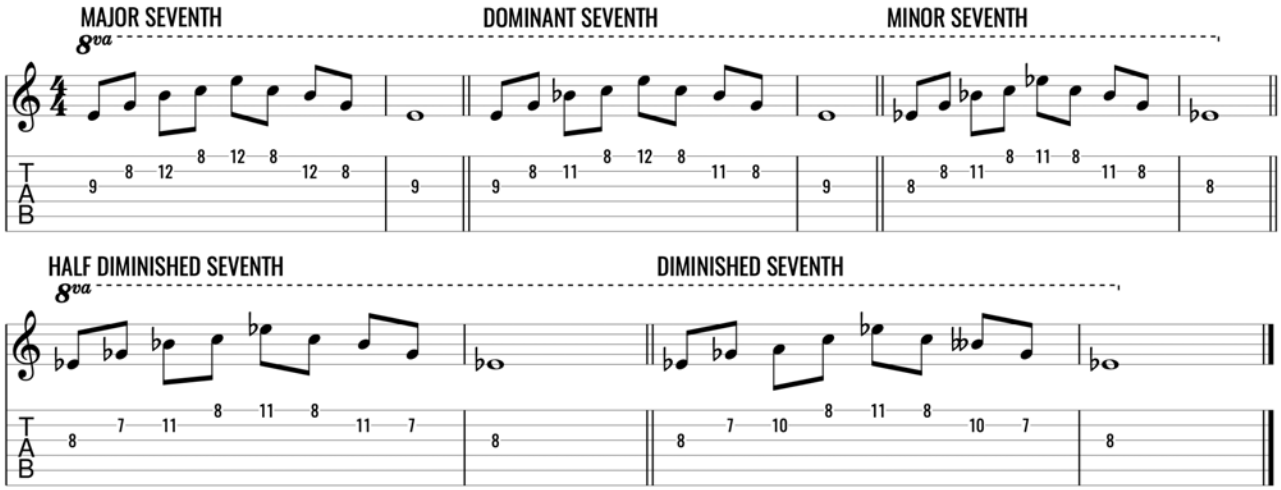
As you work on learning each inversion shape, approach them in different ways, both in terms of **note order** and **picking technique**.

Try starting on different chord tones whilst staying within the *same* inversion shape. Here's an example with the **C7 second inversion** (and some different picking approaches):



Static Root

Here's an example working through the **first inversion seventh** arpeggios (don't forget to work with a **C** drone track):



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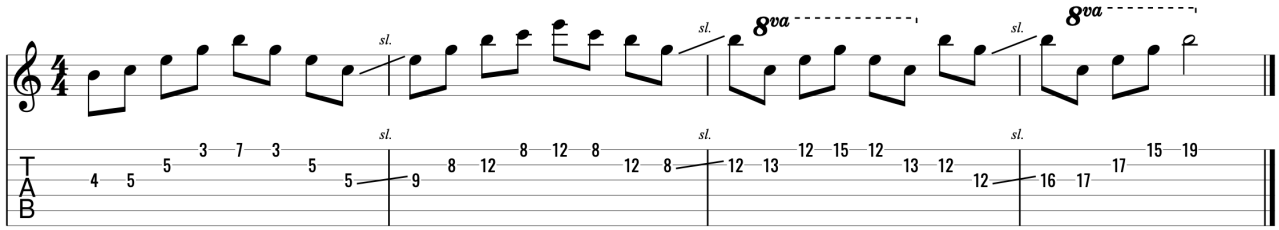
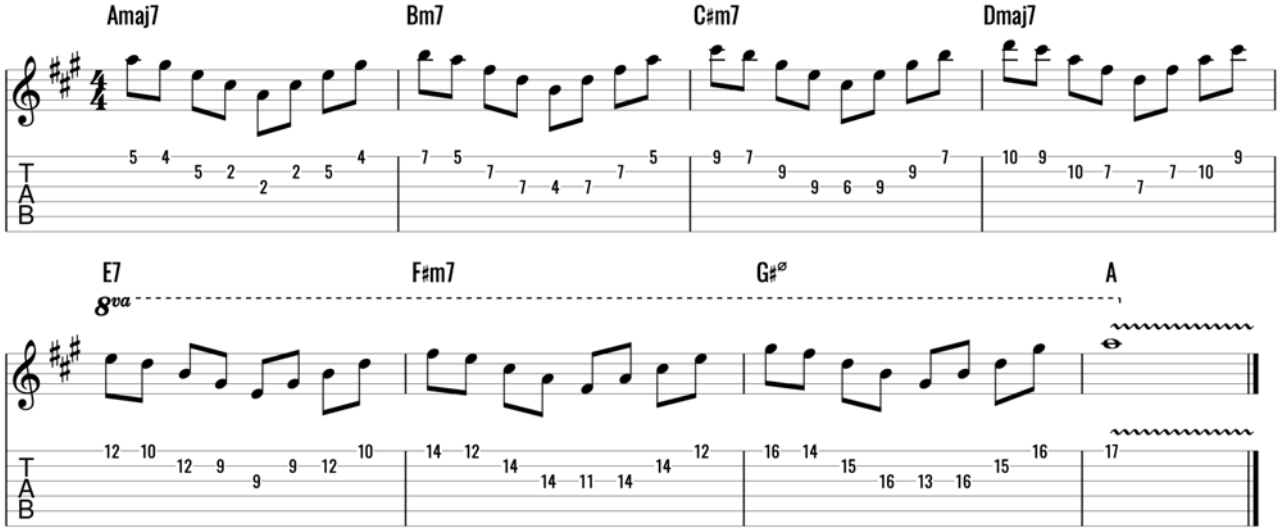
Static Root Inversions

Try and link through the inversions in creative ways to create melodic ideas. Here's one sliding through the inversions of the **Cmaj7 arpeggio**:



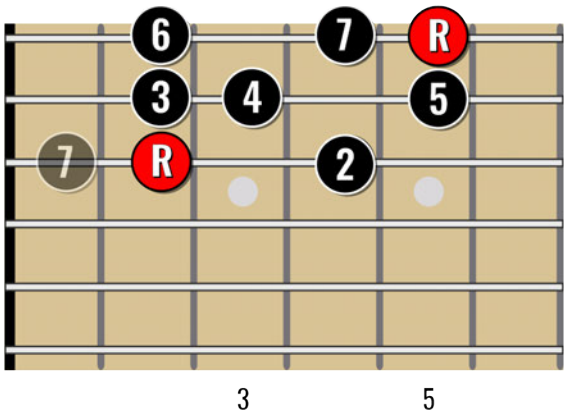
Playing Through a Key (Same Shape)

Here's an example in the key of **A major** through descending root position shapes (starting on the octave Root note):



Playing Through a Key (Scale Pattern)

With the three-string arpeggio inversions, you have everything you need to play through a vertical scale pattern on String Set 1. Using something like this...



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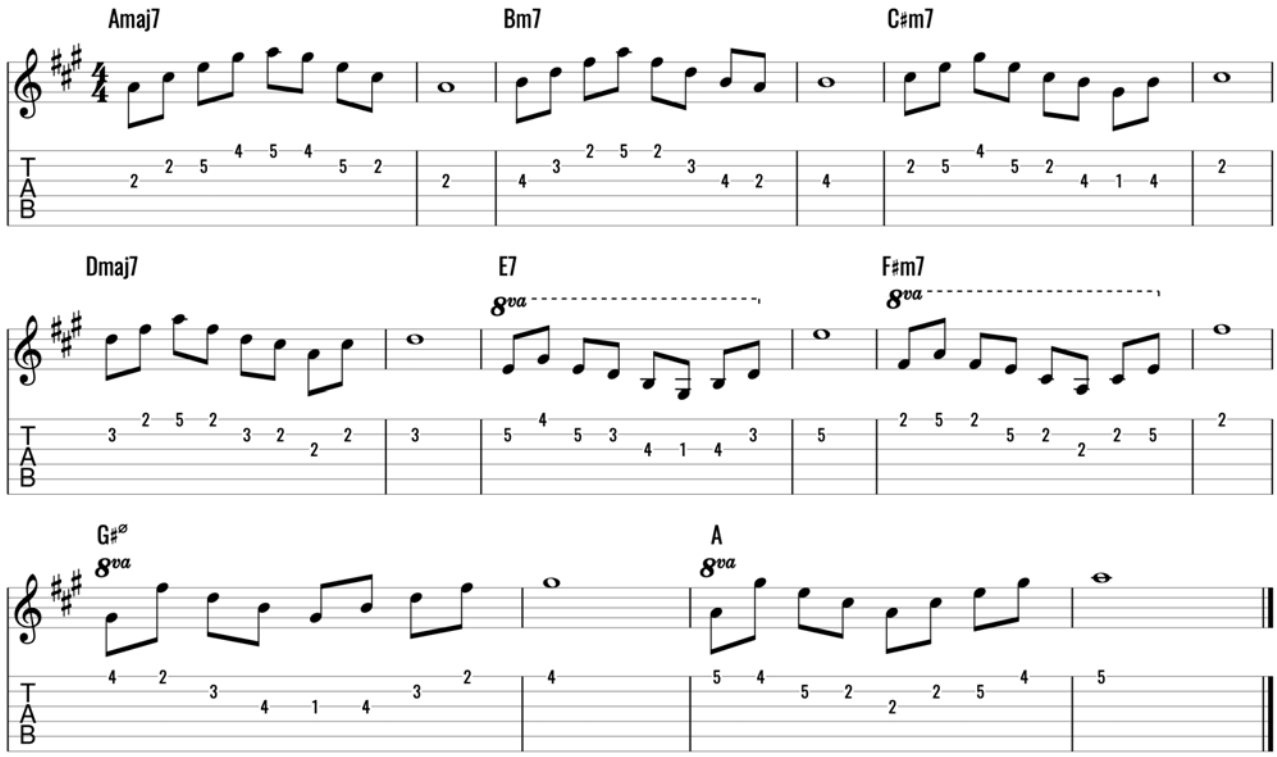
...you can play through each of the seven arpeggios (each arpeggio fits nicely within one measure picking 8th notes). In the example you're always going up to the highest chord tone within the scale pattern 'range' before coming back round to the starting Root note:



Random Note

Apply this to the seventh arpeggios by picking a random note to be your Root. Test yourself by playing different seventh arpeggios from different random Root notes. Develop this by making the random note the third, fifth or seventh. Establish where your problem areas are and focus on those patterns.

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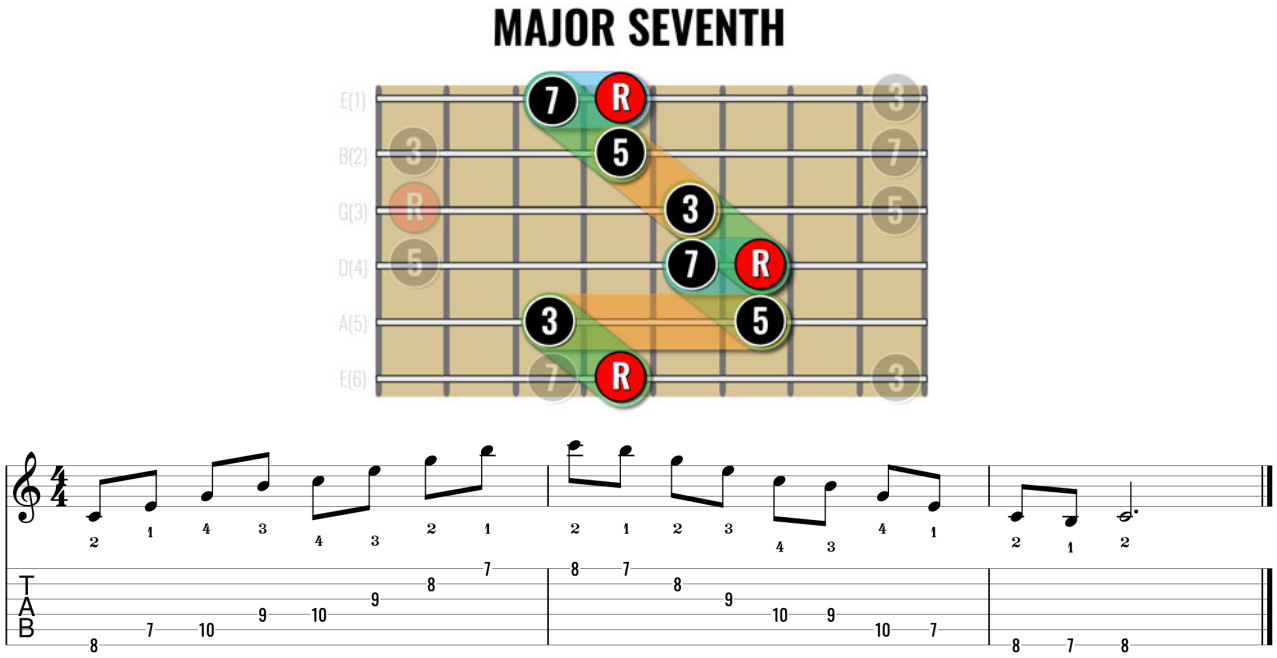
Part 12: CAGED Seventh Arpeggios

Let's look at how the seventh arpeggios can be played within the **CAGED** framework. Each example will begin and end on the **C** Root, helping you get a better feel for the sound of each arpeggios.
Do also test your visualisation from both the lowest and highest chord tones in each Shape.

E-Shape Seventh Arpeggios



Cmaj7 arpeggio (E-Shape)

Everything falls neatly under the hand in the seventh position. Notice how the note pattern goes back towards the headstock to link to the **R** on String 1(E) as opposed to continuing towards the body like you saw with the three-octave patterns.

You could fret the **5** on string 2(B) with finger 1 which opens up the possibility of the **7** and **3** in the 12th fret of Strings 2(B) and 1(E) (the first inversion shape from **Part 11**).

This is the approach I prefer for the dominant seventh...

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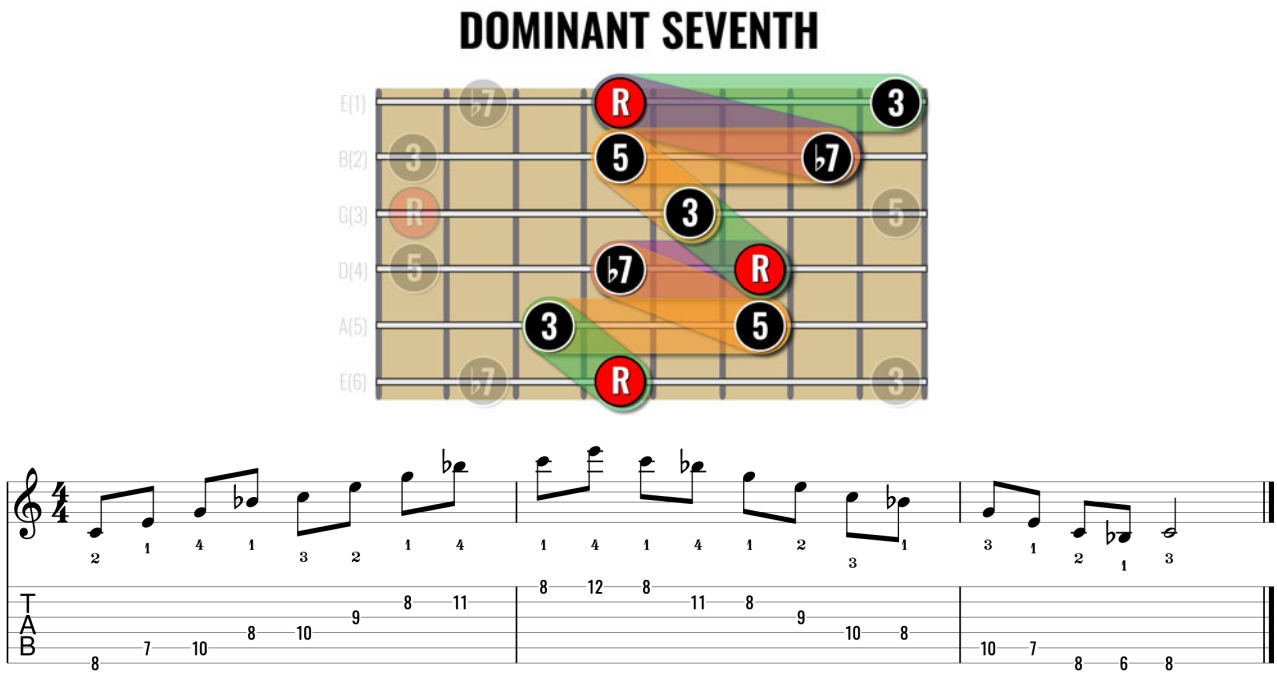

***C**7 arpeggio (E-Shape)*

Here you're using the second inversion 2-2 shape on Strings 2(B) and 1(E), which you can reach with a shift into the eighth position on String 4(D) as you play the **♭7**.

I seem to use finger 4 or 3 interchangeably for the **♭7** on String 2(B)...*Player's Choice!*

Borrowing from the major seventh shape, you could also play the **♭7** on String 1(E), keeping the fretting hand in the seventh position (the vertical shape seen in **Part 8**) The **♭7** can then be played with a finger 1 stretch.

For the minor forms you'll begin with the **R** on finger 1, playing the **♭3** on String 6(E)...

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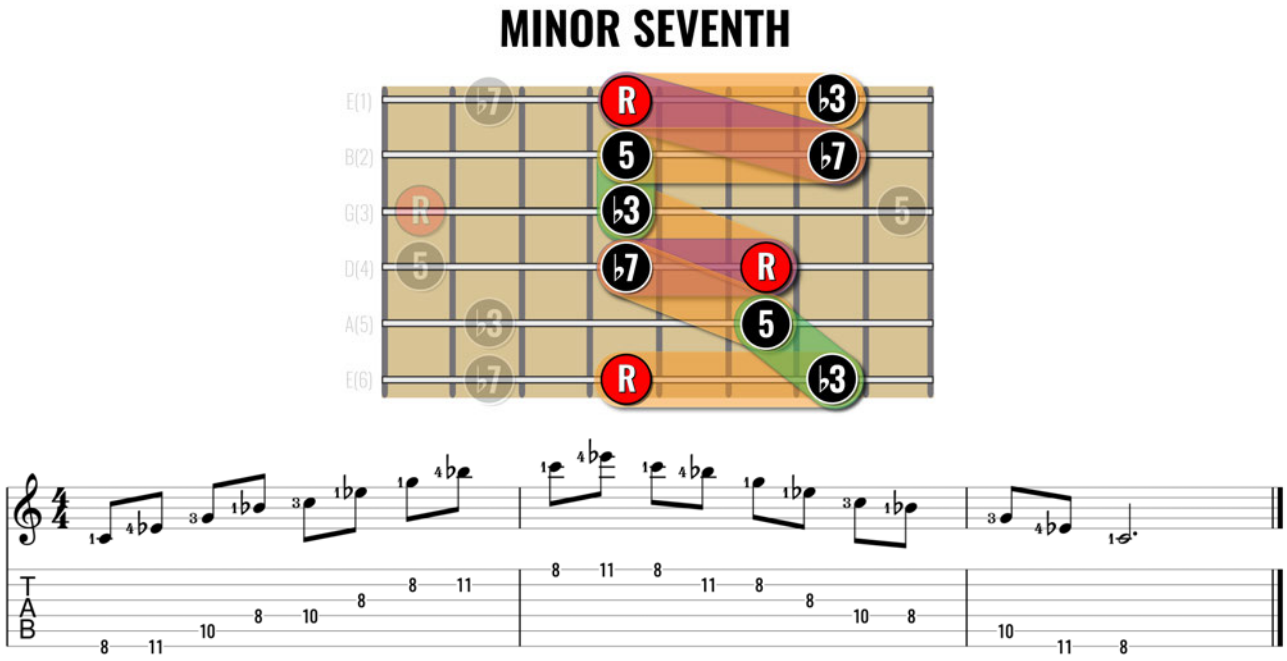

Cm7 arpeggio (E-Shape)

This has a familiar contour, just a couple of notes short of the good ol' Box 1 minor pentatonic scale.

This will be a recurring theme with the CAGED patterns as each of the five minor pentatonic 'boxes' are assigned to one of the five CAGED Shapes. The minor seventh arpeggio simply removes the **4** from the minor pentatonic box (perhaps a useful way to help you remember them).

This is the framework for the half diminished seventh...

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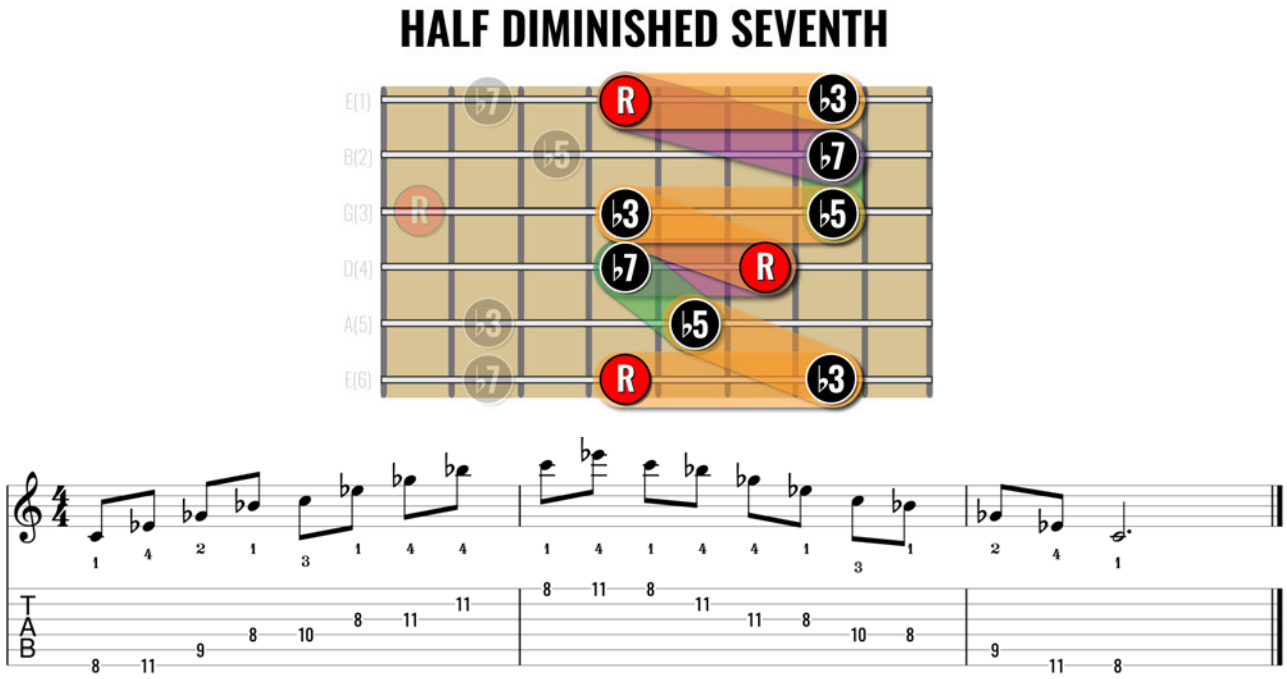
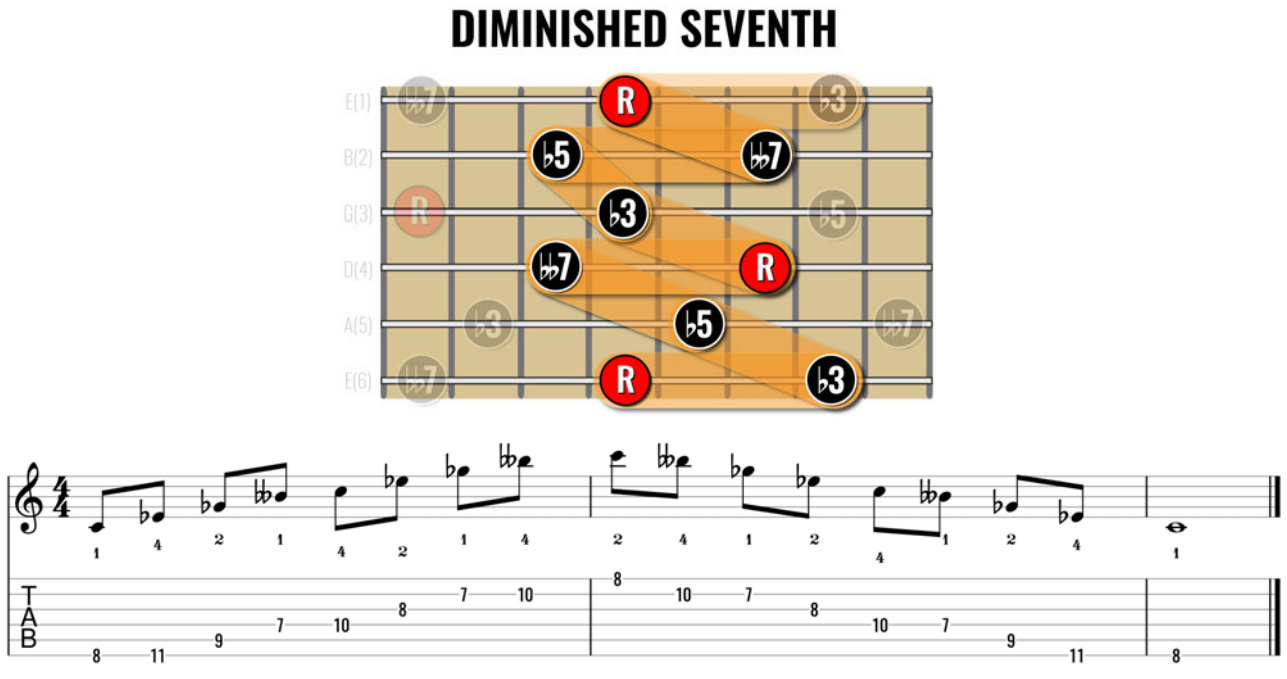


Cm7(♭5) arpeggio (E-Shape)

It's easiest to raise the **♭5** onto String 3(G) to keep everything the eighth position. A great shape to work the pinky finger rolls.



Cdim7 arpeggio (E-Shape)

If you can reach it with finger 4, the **♭3** is available to you on String 1(E).

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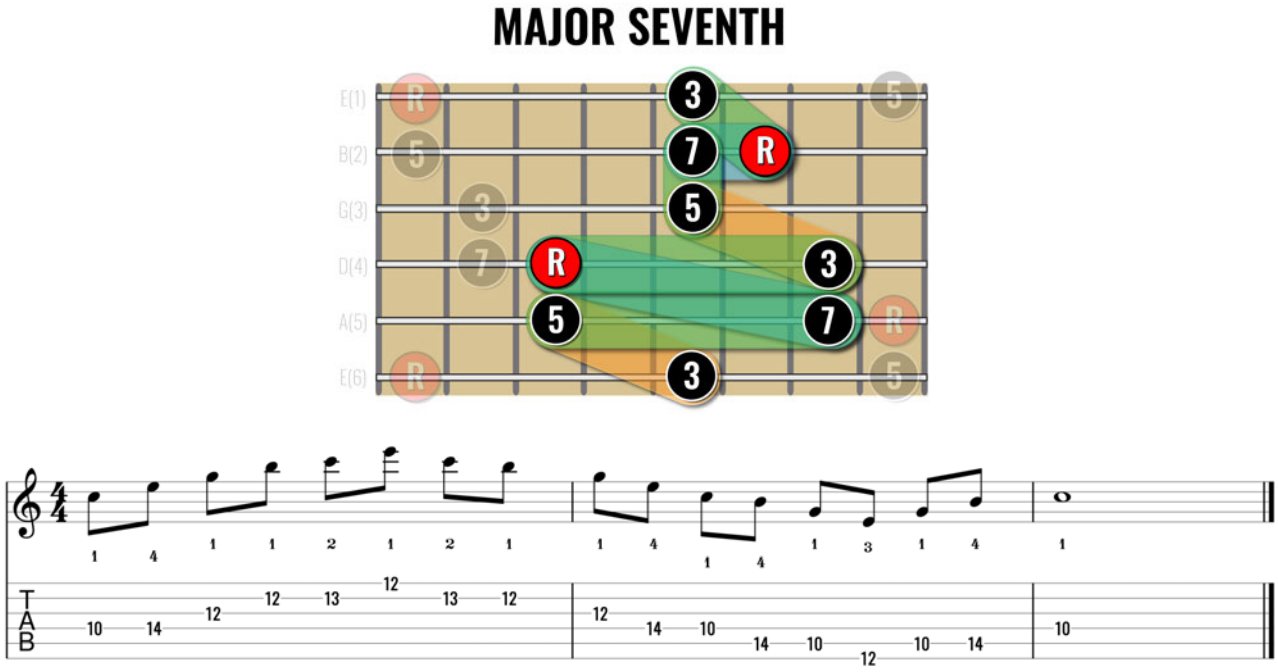
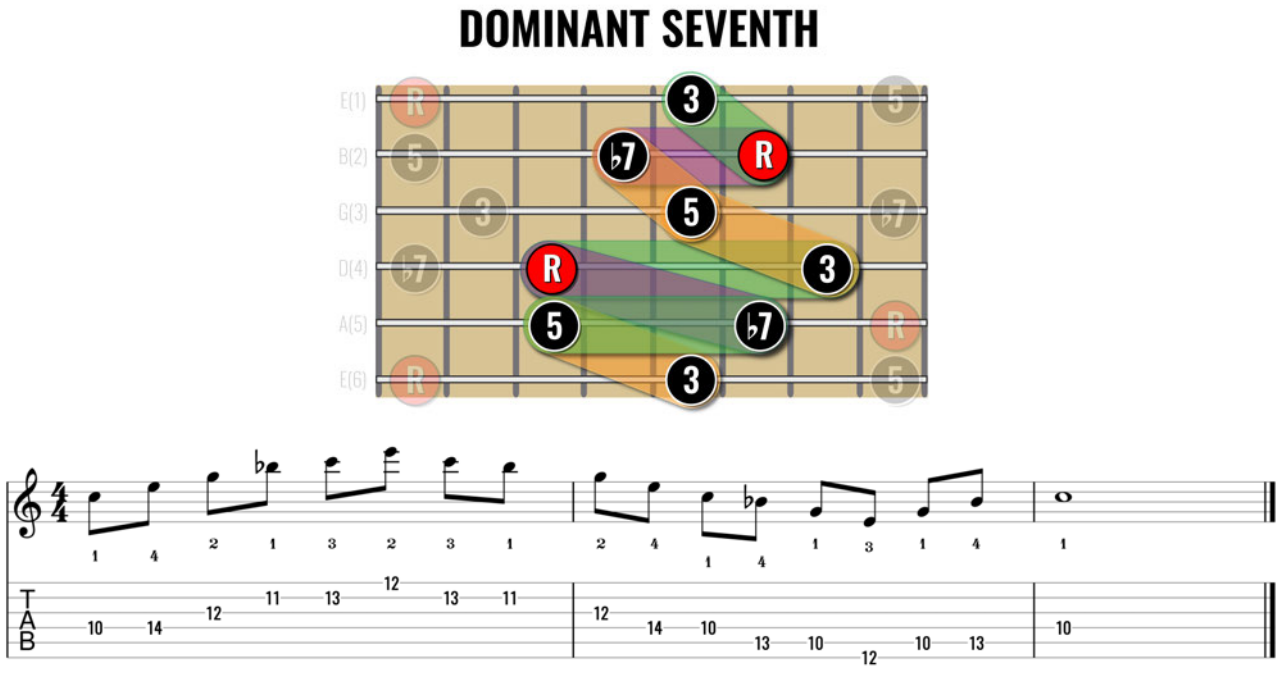
D-Shape Seventh Arpeggios



Cmaj7 arpeggio (D-Shape)

I recommend the position shift from tenth to twelfth position as you play the **5** on String 3(G). That opens up the possibility to play the **5** on String 1(E).



C7 arpeggio (D-Shape)

This one falls nicely under the fretting hand in eleventh position between Strings 4(D) and 1(E). Depending on how you play the arpeggio (particularly if in some kind of a note sequence) finger 3 may be preferable for the ♭**7** on String 5(A).

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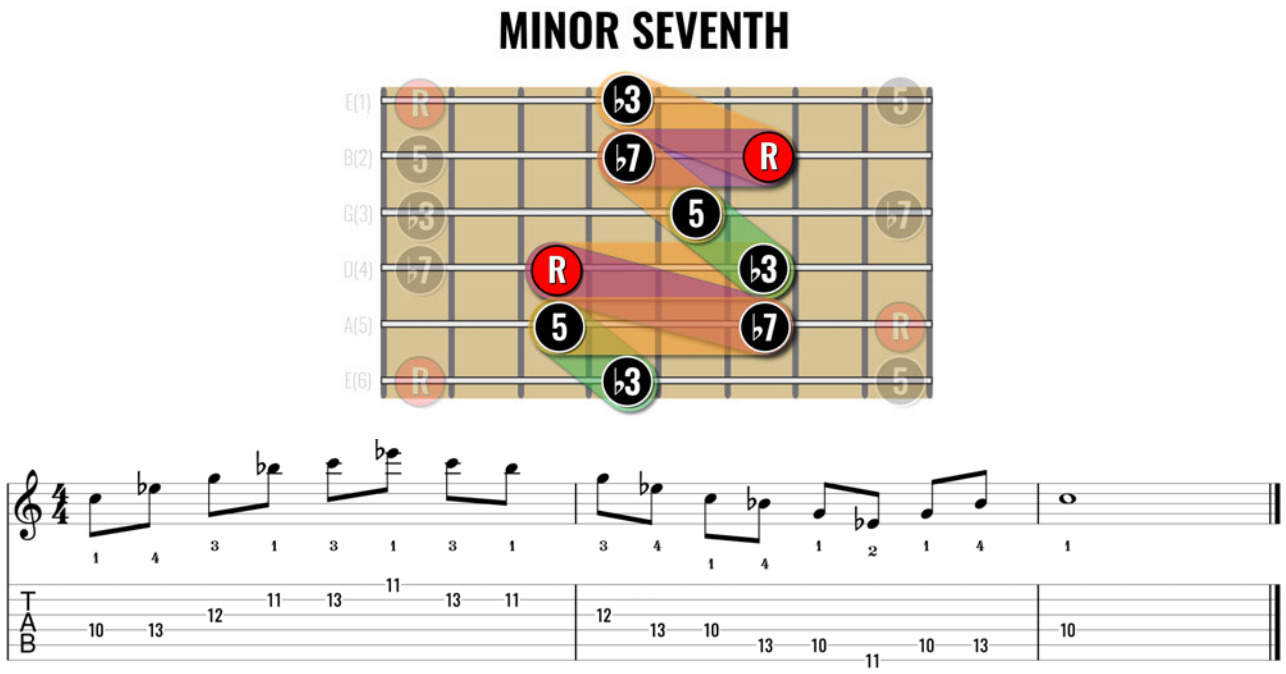

Cm7 arpeggio (D-Shape)

The fingering recommendations is based on how I would play through the D-Shape minor pentatonic scale, with a shift from tenth to eleventh position for the **♭7-R** on String 2(B). Finger 3 or 2 for the **5** on String 3(G).

If you have the reach, there is the possibility of the **5** at on String 1(E).

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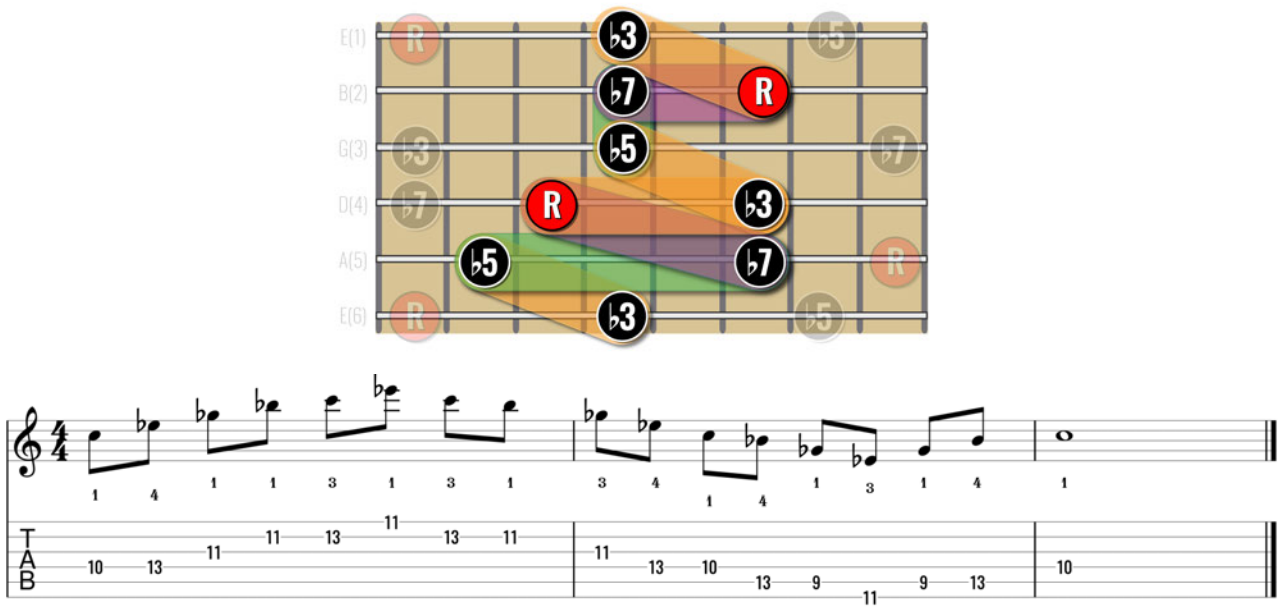

Cm7(♭5) arpeggio (E-Shape)

Another shift from tenth to eleventh position as you move to String 3(G). Definitely prefer those chord tones under finger 1, which then opens up the possibility of the **♭5** in String 1(E). You have the option of playing the **♭5** on String 6(E), but I prefer the feel of this shape.

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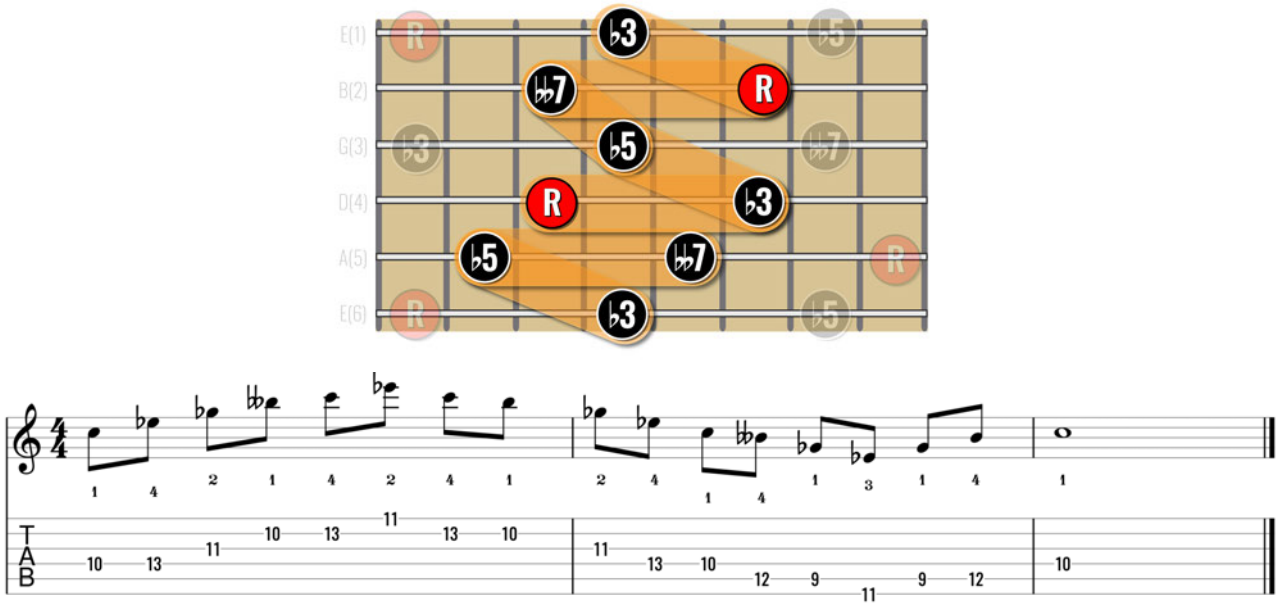

Cdim7 arpeggio (E-Shape)

The pattern between the **R** notes across Strings 4(D) to 2(B) falls nicely under the hand and can be repeated every three frets horizontally (higher or lower) as a result of the symmetry in the arpeggio.

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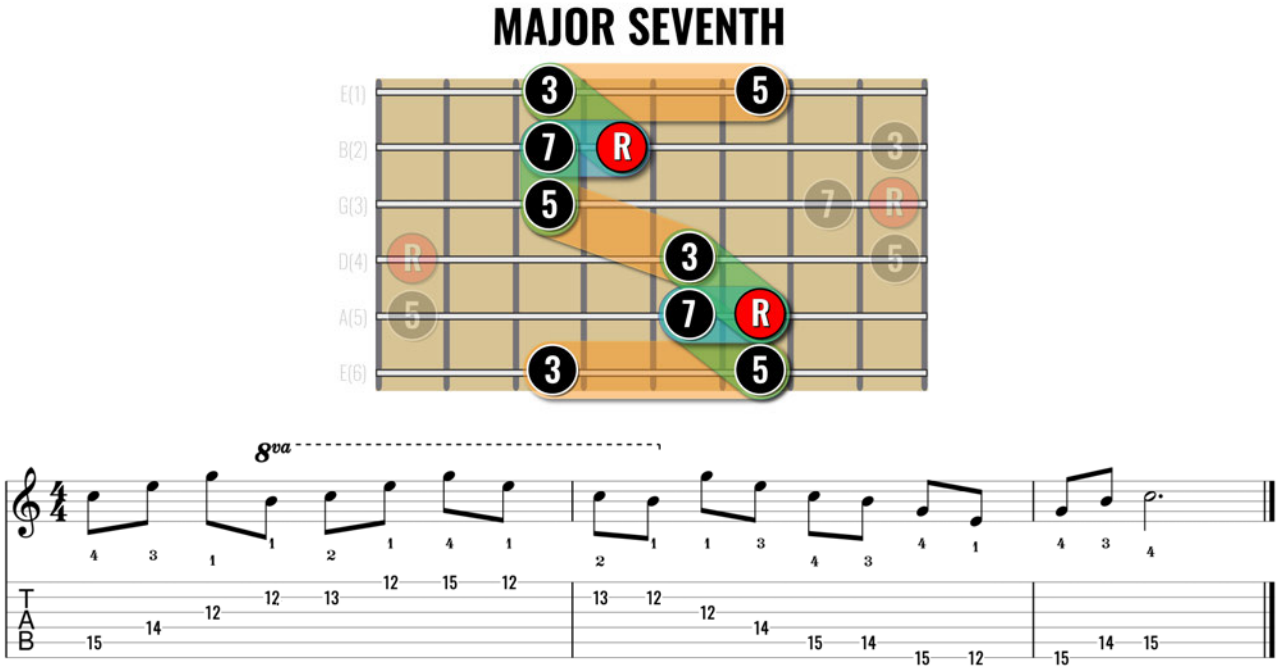
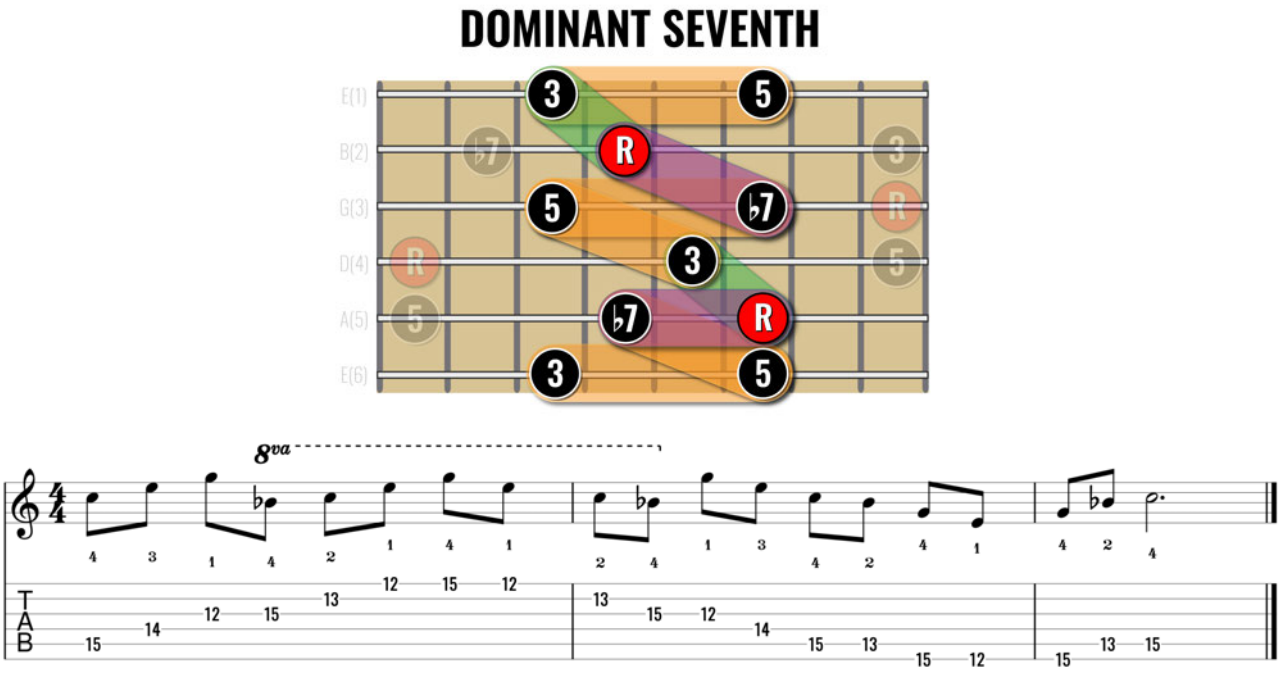
C-Shape Seventh Arpeggios



*C*maj7 arpeggio (C-Shape)

Similar to the E-Shape there is also the option of playing the **7** on String 3(G) with finger 4, giving you the **3** on String 1 with finger 4 and *possibly* the **7** on String 1(E), again with finger 4.



*C*7 arpeggio (C-Shape)

The ♭**7** on String 3(G) is definitely the best option here and gives a nice shape for the fingers, very similar to the dim7 shape (there's some theory there I'll leave you to ruminate on).

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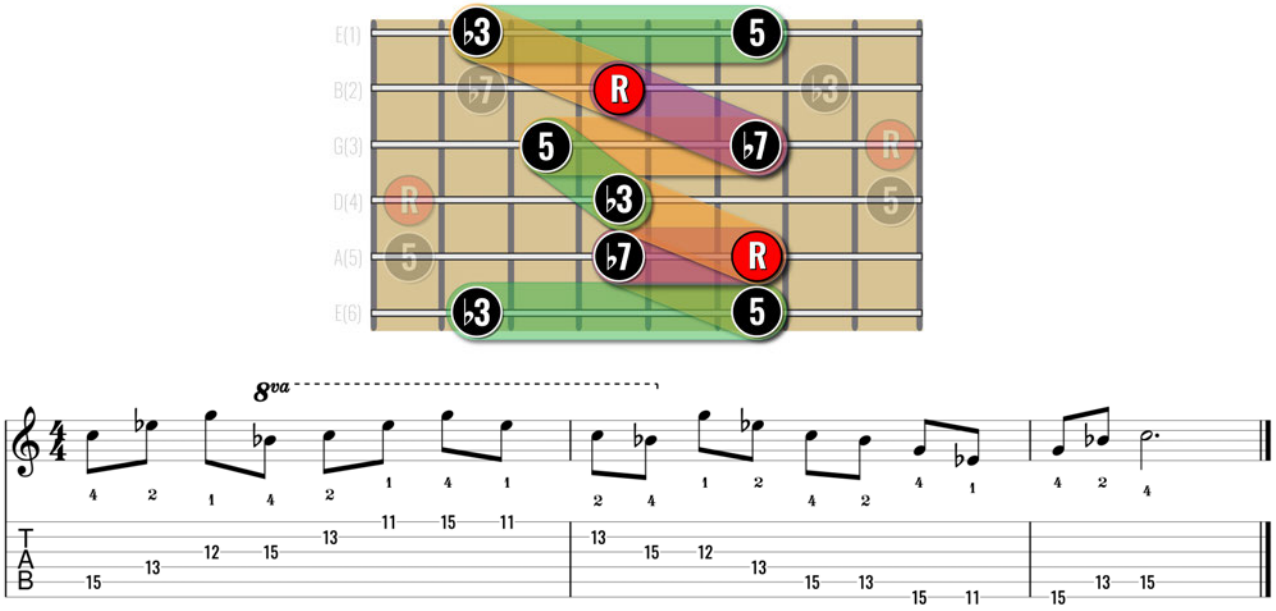
MINOR SEVENTH



Cm7 arpeggio (C-Shape)

The ♭**3** is often presented on String 2(B) which follows the C-Shape minor pentatonic, but placing it on String 1(E) keeps the fretting hand in the twelfth position and makes this flow more easily.

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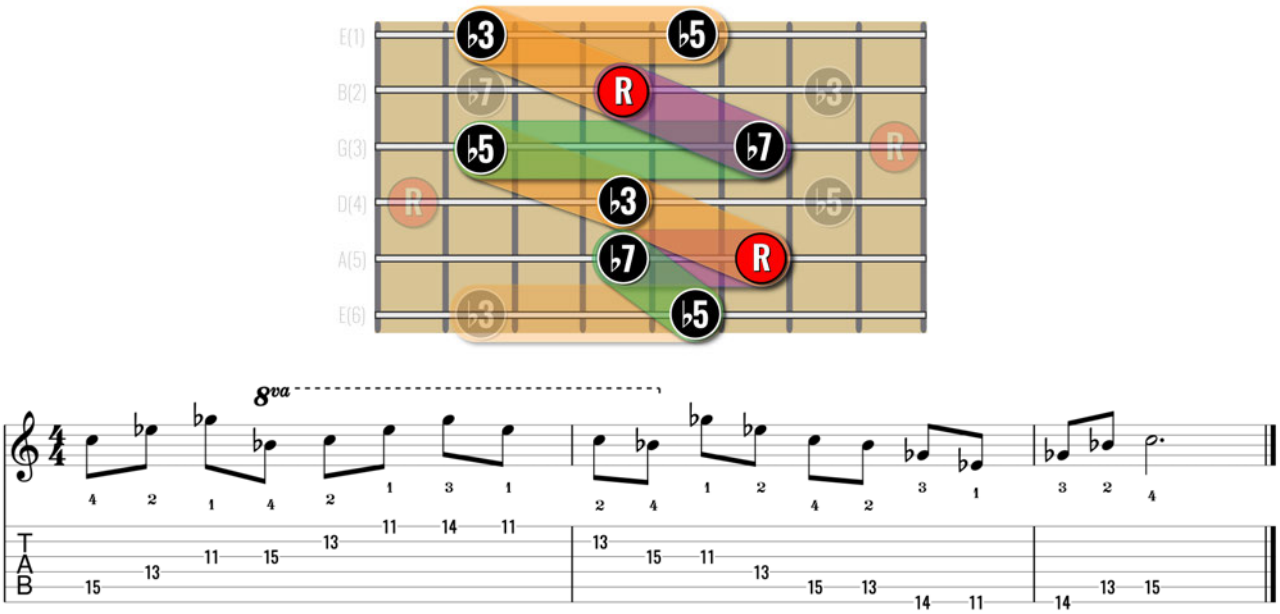

Cm7(♭5) arpeggio (C-Shape)

This follows the same contour as the minor seventh so it falls fairly comfortably under the fretting hand. The ♭**3** on String 6(E) is an optional note.

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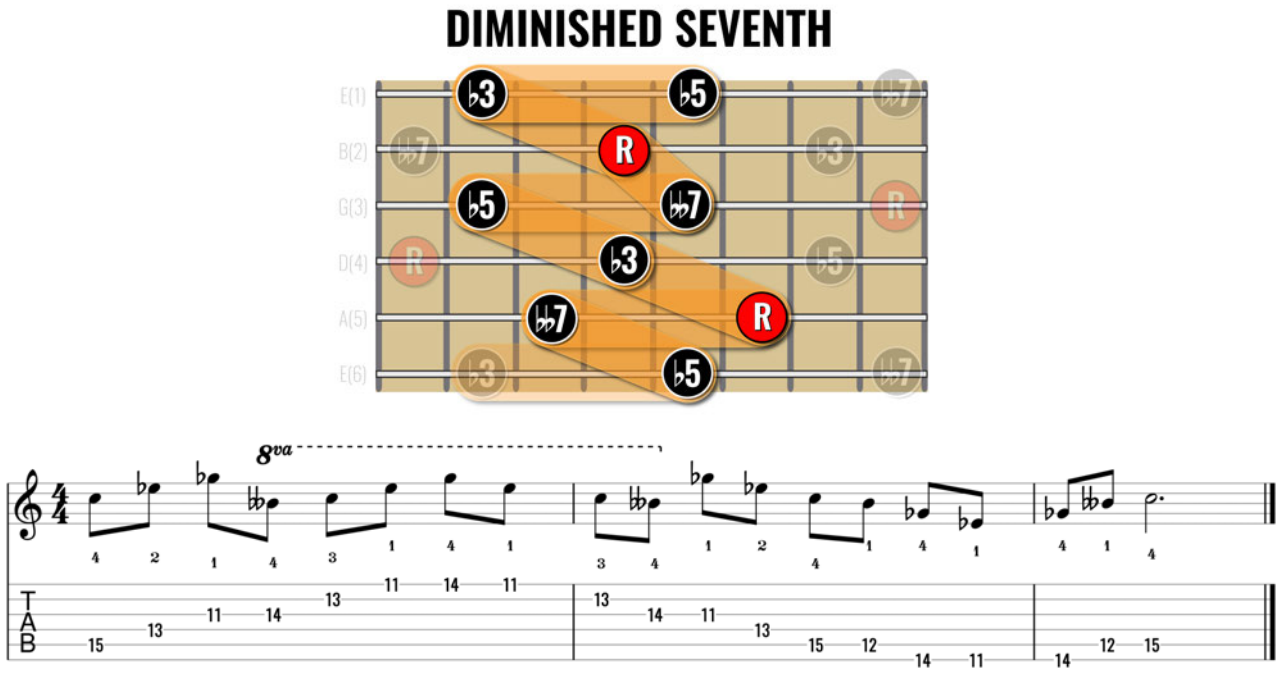

*C*dim7 arpeggio (C-Shape)

Depending on the Root note and where you play this on the fretboard it'll be either a 1-3-4 or 1-2-3 finger combination for the chord tones on Strings 3(G) to 1(E). That three-string shape is another great one to move up and down a minor third horizontally to extend the arpeggio.

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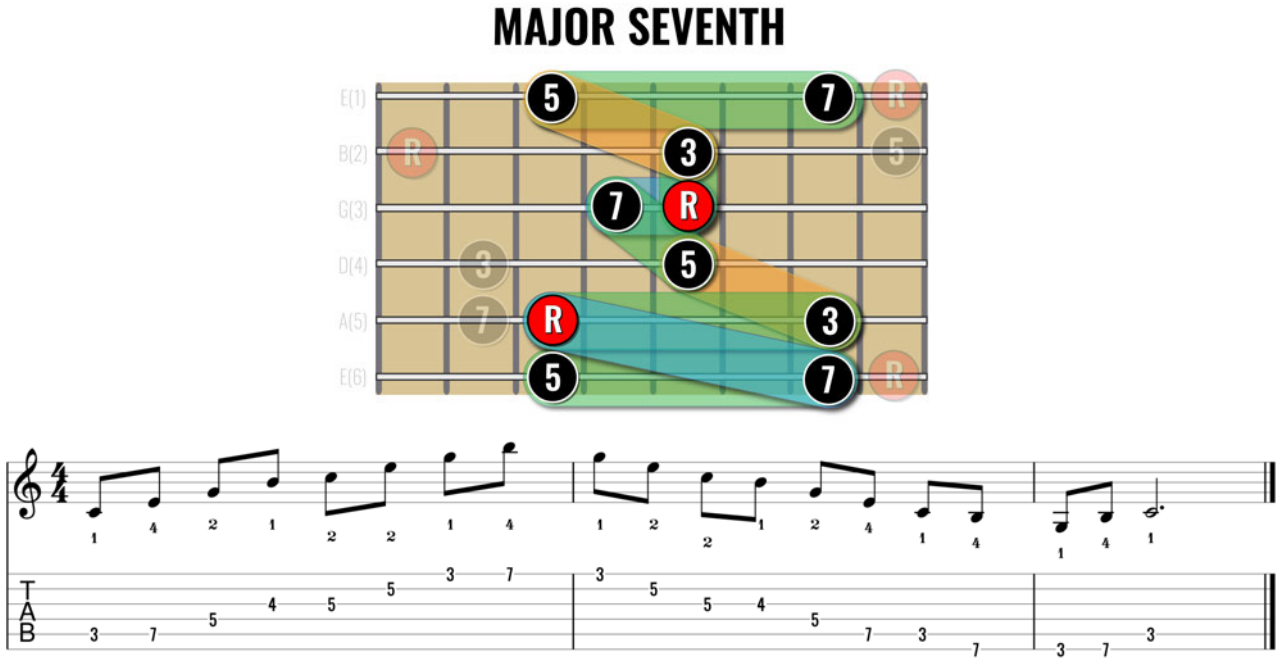
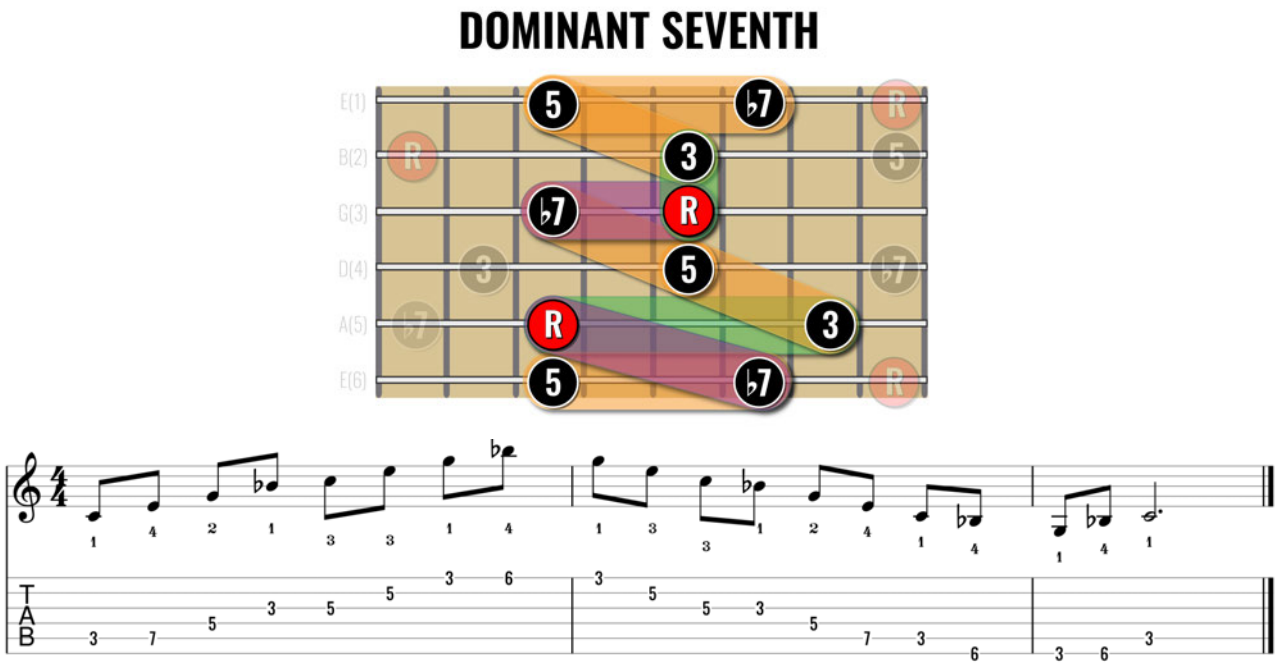
A-Shape Seventh Arpeggios



*C*maj7 arpeggio (A-Shape)

You can play the **3** on string 4(D), setting up with finger 2 on the **R** on String 5(A). I prefer this alternative as it falls nicely under the hand and allow the reach to the **7** on String 1(E)



*C*7 arpeggio (A-Shape)

Again, you can play the **3** on string 4(D), setting up with finger 2 on the **R** on String 5(A). The alternative above offers more economical picking, particularly if you hammer/pull between the **♭7**-**R** on String 3(G). (Visually, it also highlights that diminished triad arpeggio found in the dominant seventh between **3**-**5**-**♭7**).

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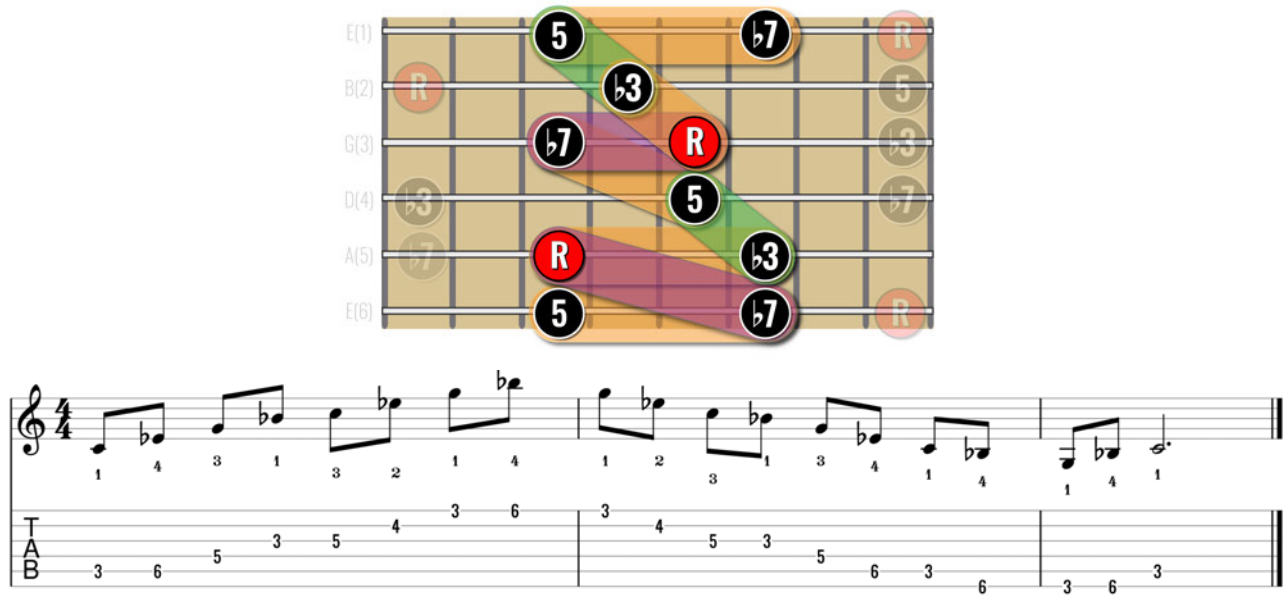
MINOR SEVENTH



Cm7 arpeggio (A-Shape)

Keeping the same chord arrangement but flattening the third gives the minor seventh arpeggio. This falls neatly under the hand in the third position.

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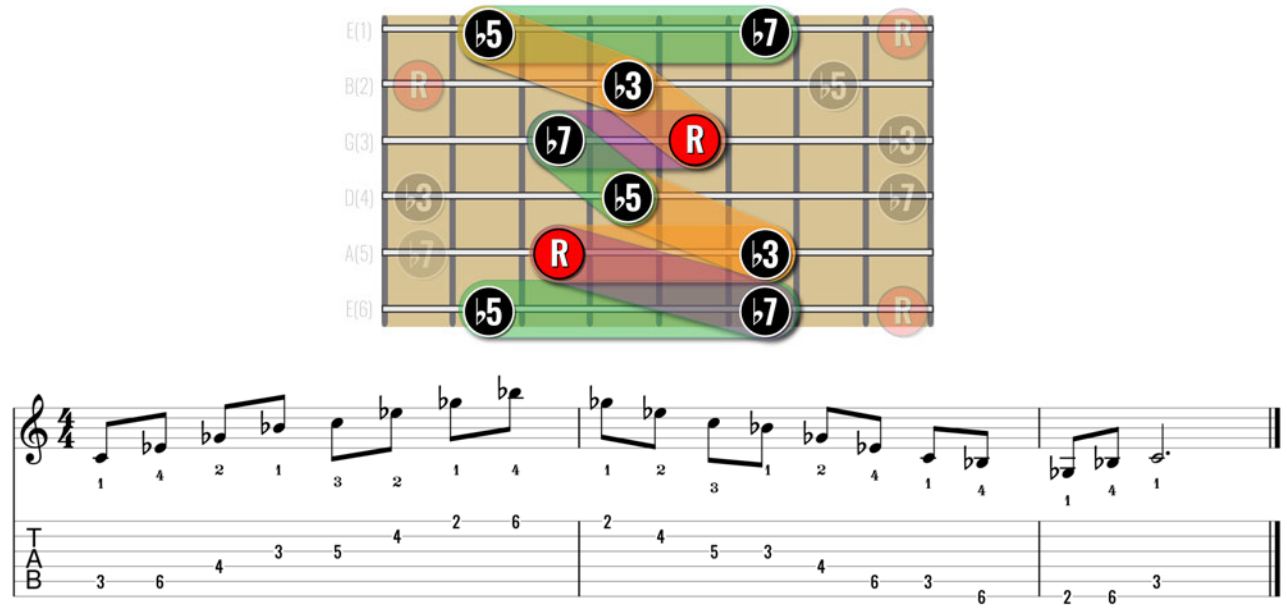

Cm7(♭5) arpeggio (A-Shape)

The fretting hand is still comfortably in the third position with a finger 1 stretch back for the **♭5** on the outer E strings.

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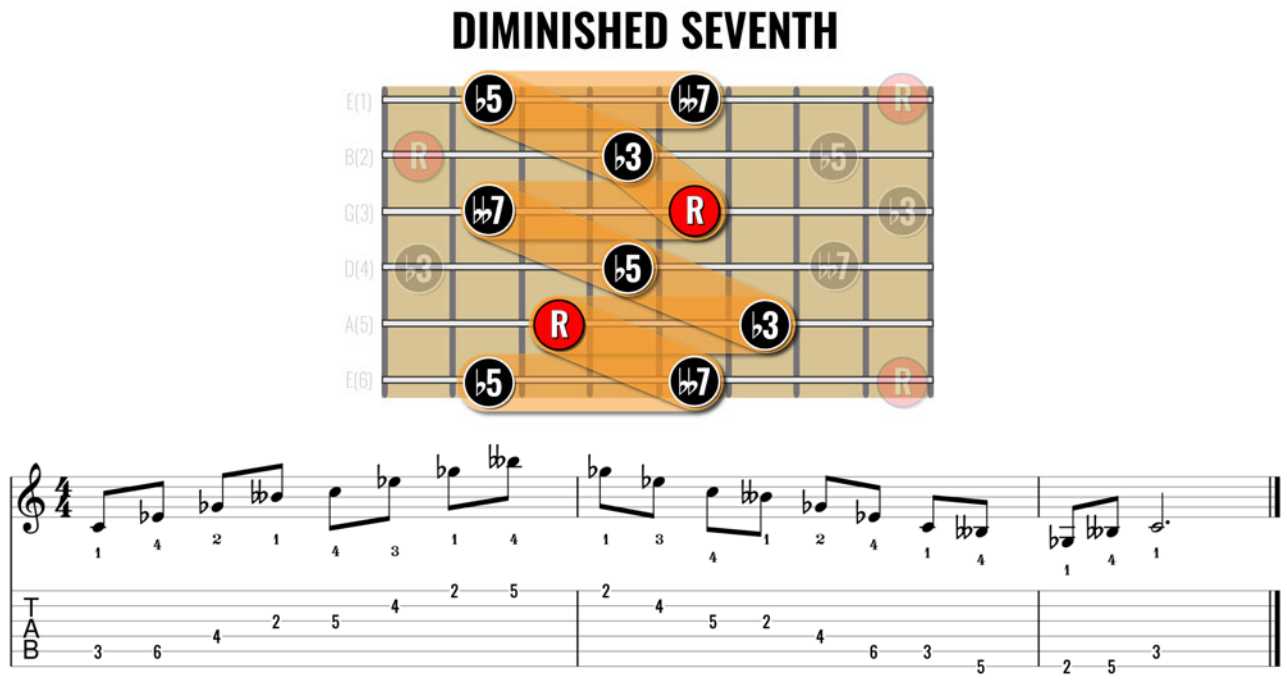
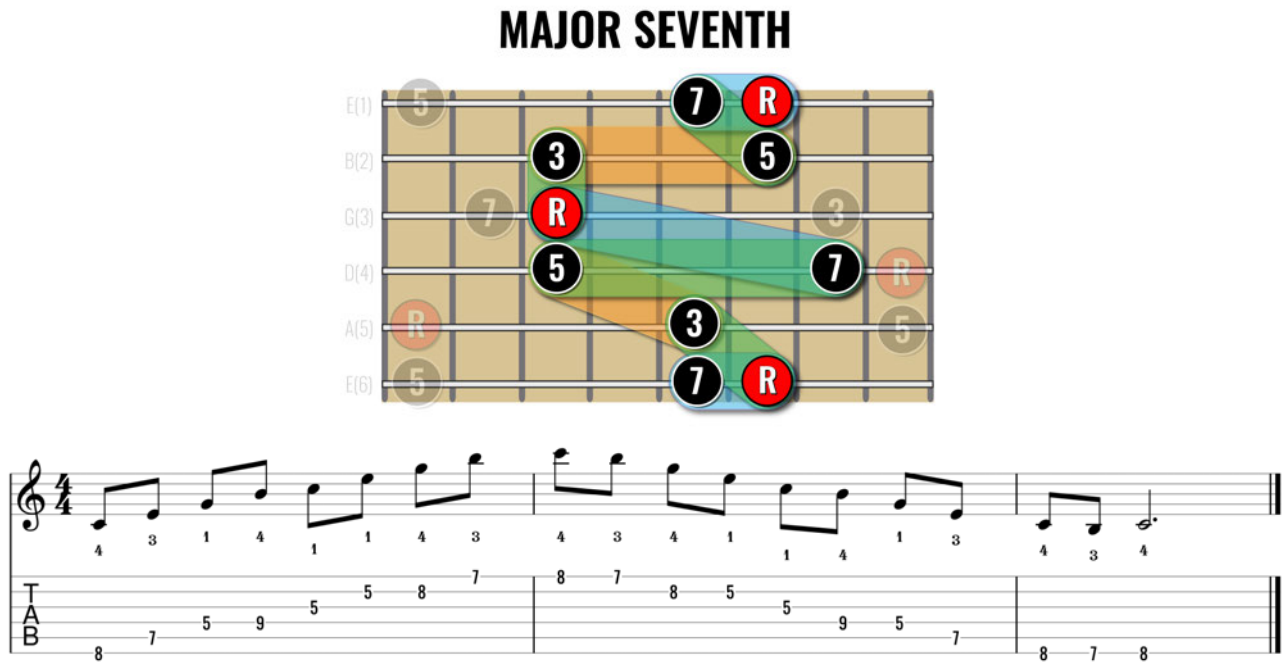


*C*dim7 arpeggio (A-Shape)

You begin once again in the third position, shifting back to the second position as you move to String 3(G) for the now (*hopefully*) familiar diminished seventh pattern on String Set 1.

G-Shape Seventh Arpeggios



*C*maj7 arpeggio (G-Shape)

Playing the **7** on String 4(D) allows you to stay in the fifth position. There's also the possibility of playing the **3** on String 3(G) rather than the finger 1 roll onto String 2(B).

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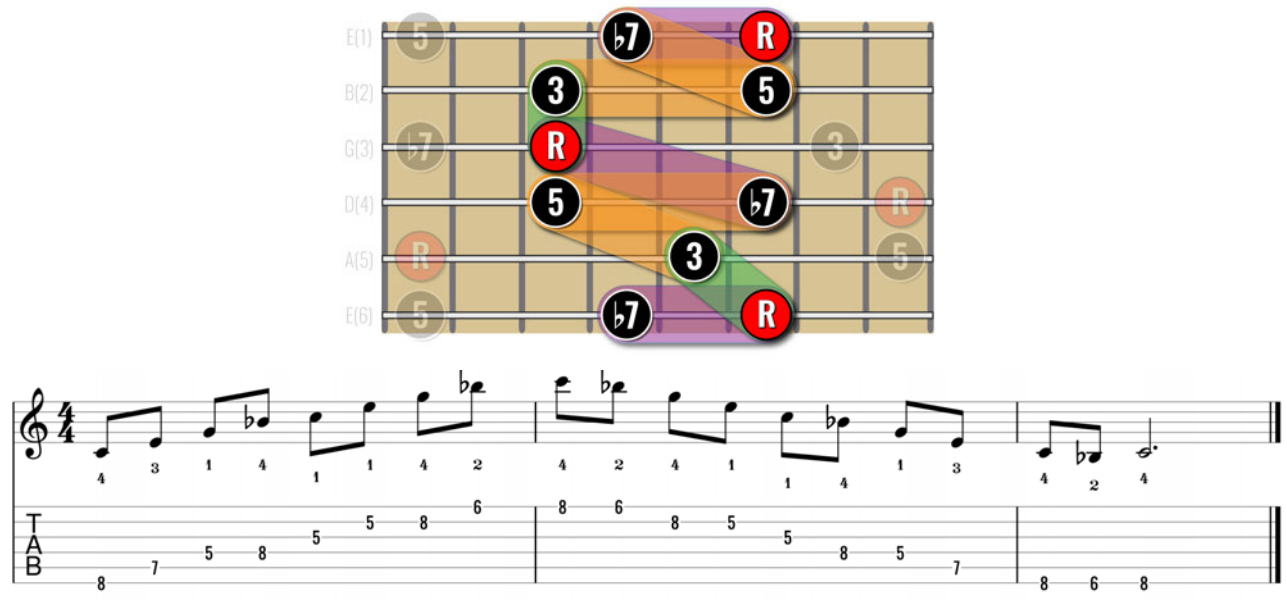
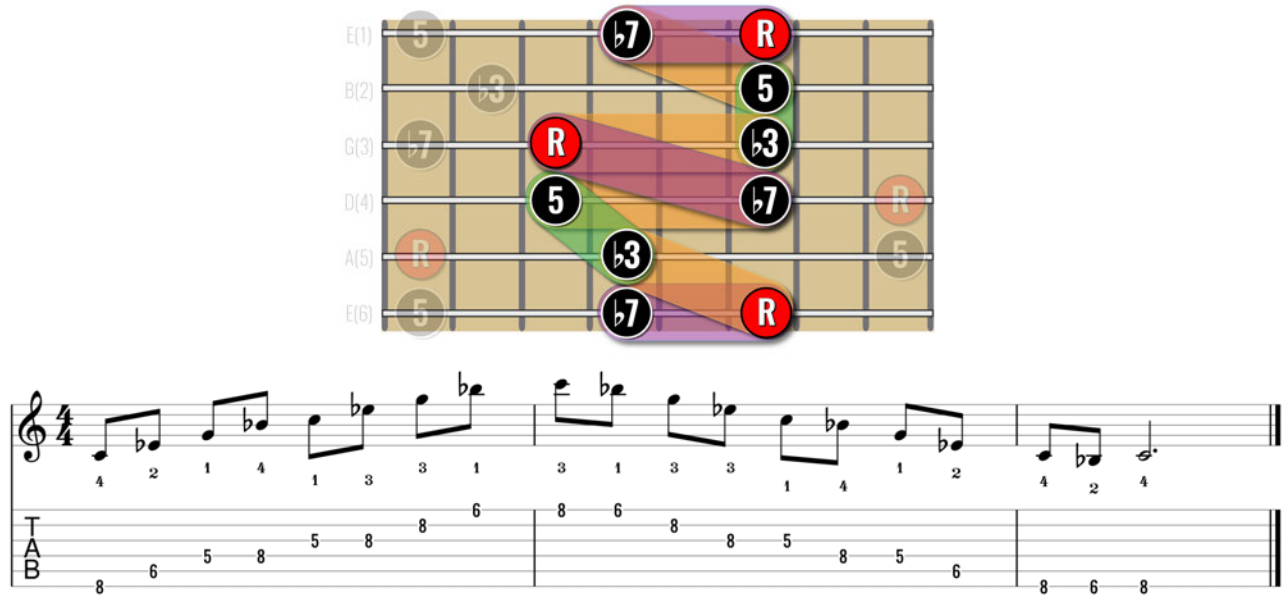
DOMINANT SEVENTH



C7 arpeggio (G-Shape)

Again, there is the option of the **3** on String 3(G), but this one falls nicely under the fretting hand.

MINOR SEVENTH



Cm7 arpeggio (G-Shape)

The third moves up to String 3(G) as it's flattened (♭**3**). I like to shift into sixth position for the second octave so the finger roll is under finger 3. This is how I would play the minor pentatonic shape (Position 5 / G-Shape) with fingers 1 and 3 for the notes on String 2(B) and 1(E).

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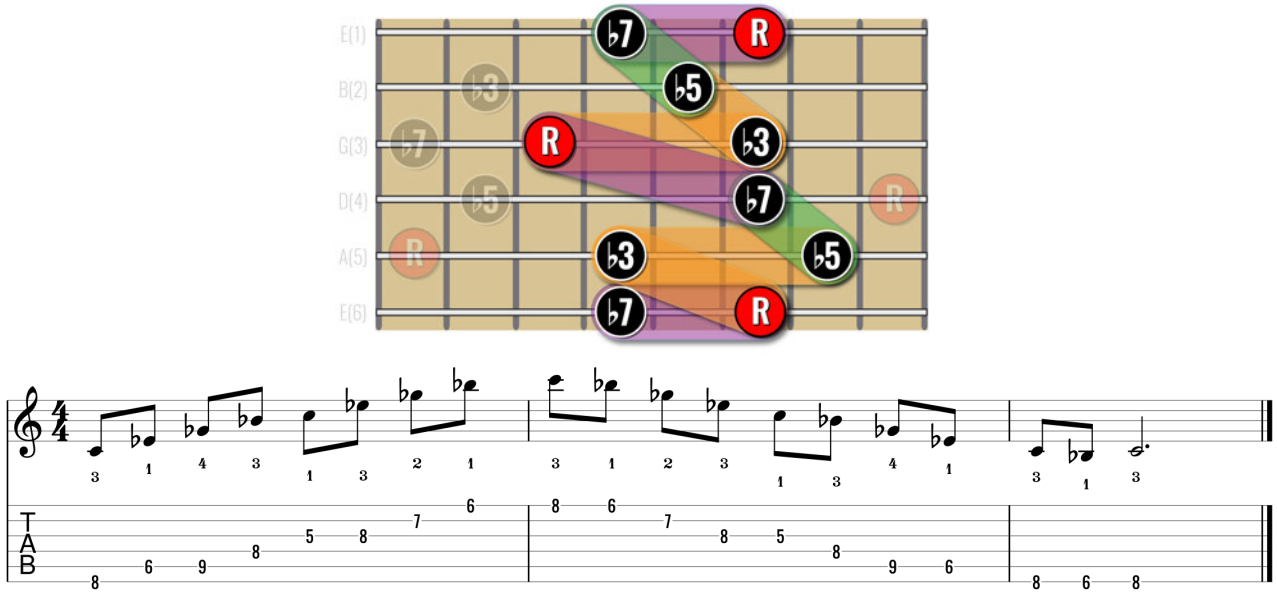
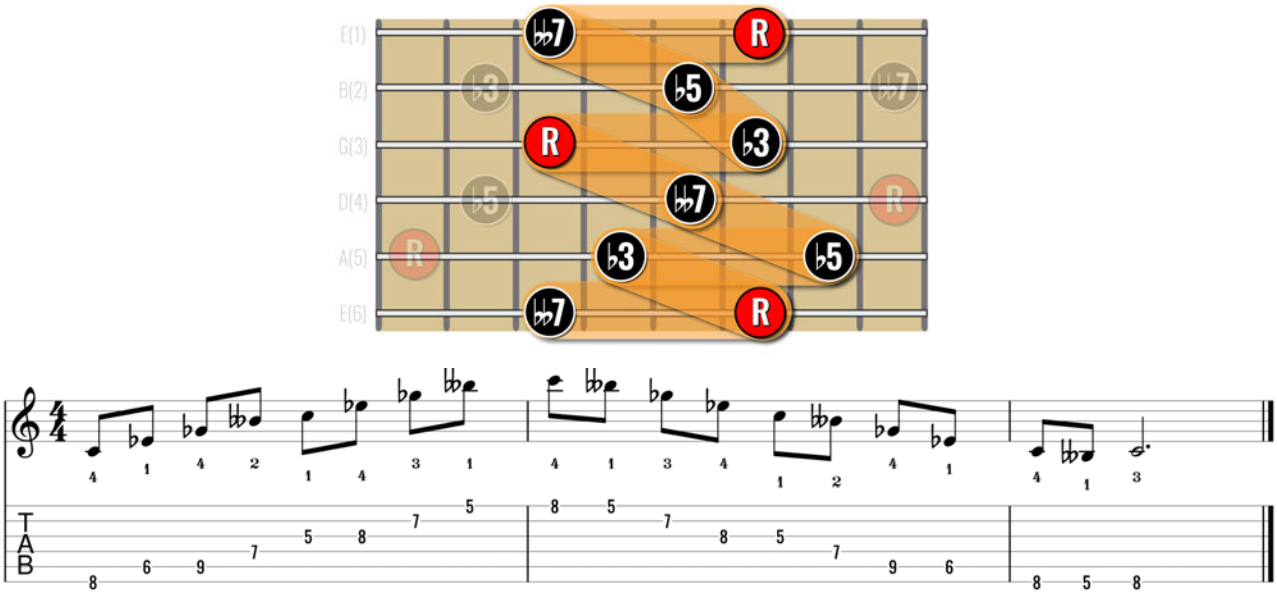
HALF DIMINISHED SEVENTH



Cm7(♭5) arpeggio (G-Shape)

The **♭5** on String 5(A) makes this one flow a little better, but it's equally valid to play it on String 4(D) if you have the dexterity.

DIMINISHED SEVENTH



Cdim7 arpeggio (G-Shape)

Feel familiar? It' the identical note arrangement as the C and A shapes, but you're viewing it from a different 'angle' with the chord tones in a different inversion.

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PRACTICE EXERCISES

There's *so* much scope for practice exercises when learning the CAGED forms. In the PDF reference pack you will find the CAGED arpeggios grouped by CAGED Shape and arpeggio type as well as full fretboards for the seventh arpeggios to help you with each exercise.

Static Root

Choose a CAGED form and play through each of the seventh arpeggios in this order:

- **MAJOR SEVENTH**
- **DOMINANT SEVENTH**
- **MINOR SEVENTH**
- **HALF DIMINISHED SEVENTH**
- **DIMINISHED SEVENTH**

Begin in free time then start working with the beat. Consider picking options and opportunities for legato technique (H/P) to make the arpeggios flow more smoothly.

Static Root Inversions

Choose your Root and arpeggio type and work up and down the CAGED Shape nearest to the headstock. Then slide into the next CAGED shape and repeat up and down. Keep doing this with each CAGED shape for one continuous arpeggio stream up the fretboard.

If all five Shapes is too much, then focus your attention on two adjoining Shapes, like C and A and practice going up and down between them. Consider at which moment to make the position shift. Which finger are you using? Try and be consistent.

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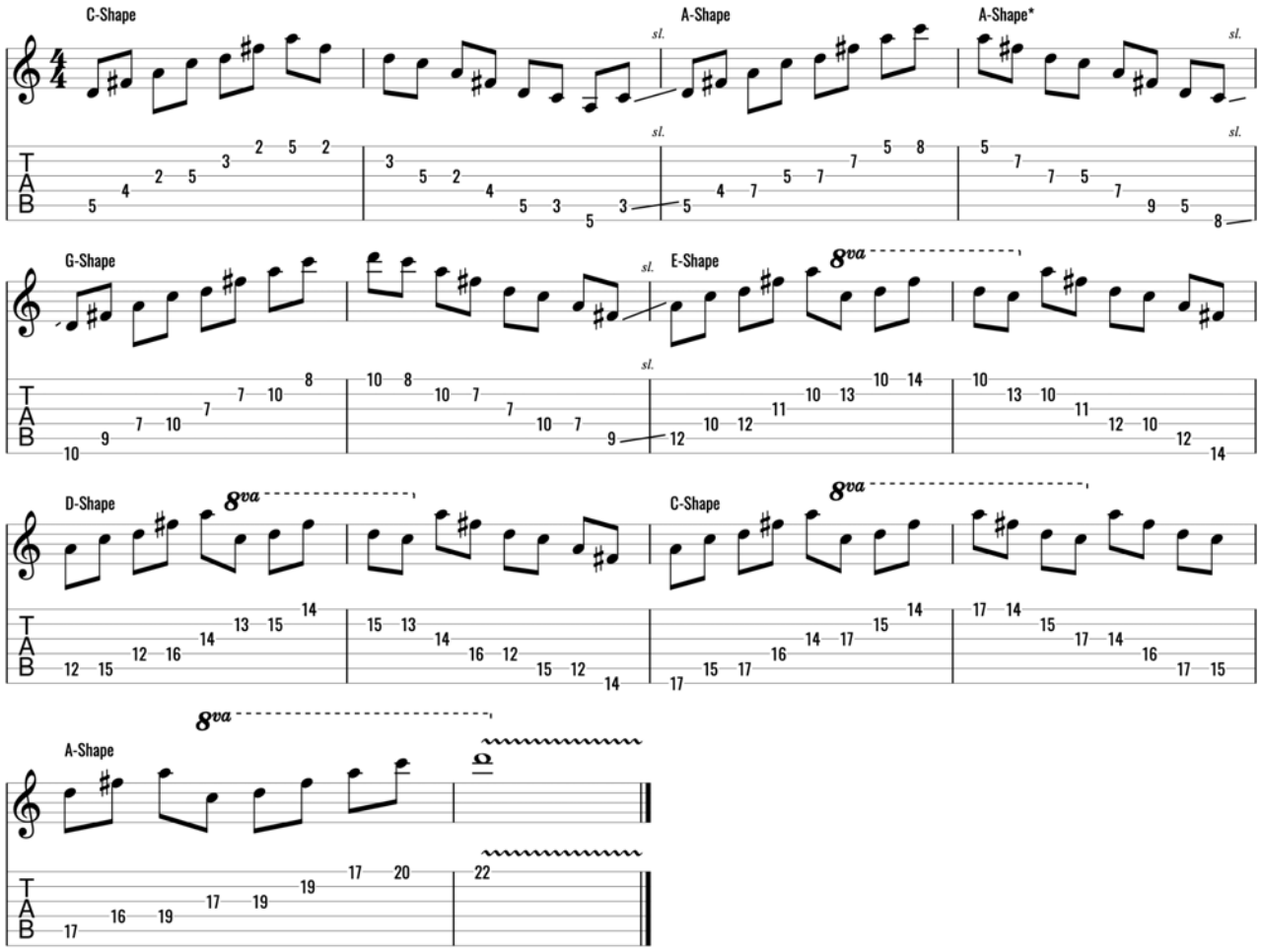
Here's an example of this with the **D** Root and dominant seventh arpeggios:



As an alternative you can alternate ascending and descending CAGED Shapes as you move higher up the neck. Also take things high to low descending downwards through CAGED shapes towards the headstock.

Cycle Inversions

Choose an arpeggio type and starting CAGED Shape. Play that arpeggio then move the Root up a fourth and play the same arpeggio type but with the corresponding CAGED Shape which is under your fretting hand for the new Root.

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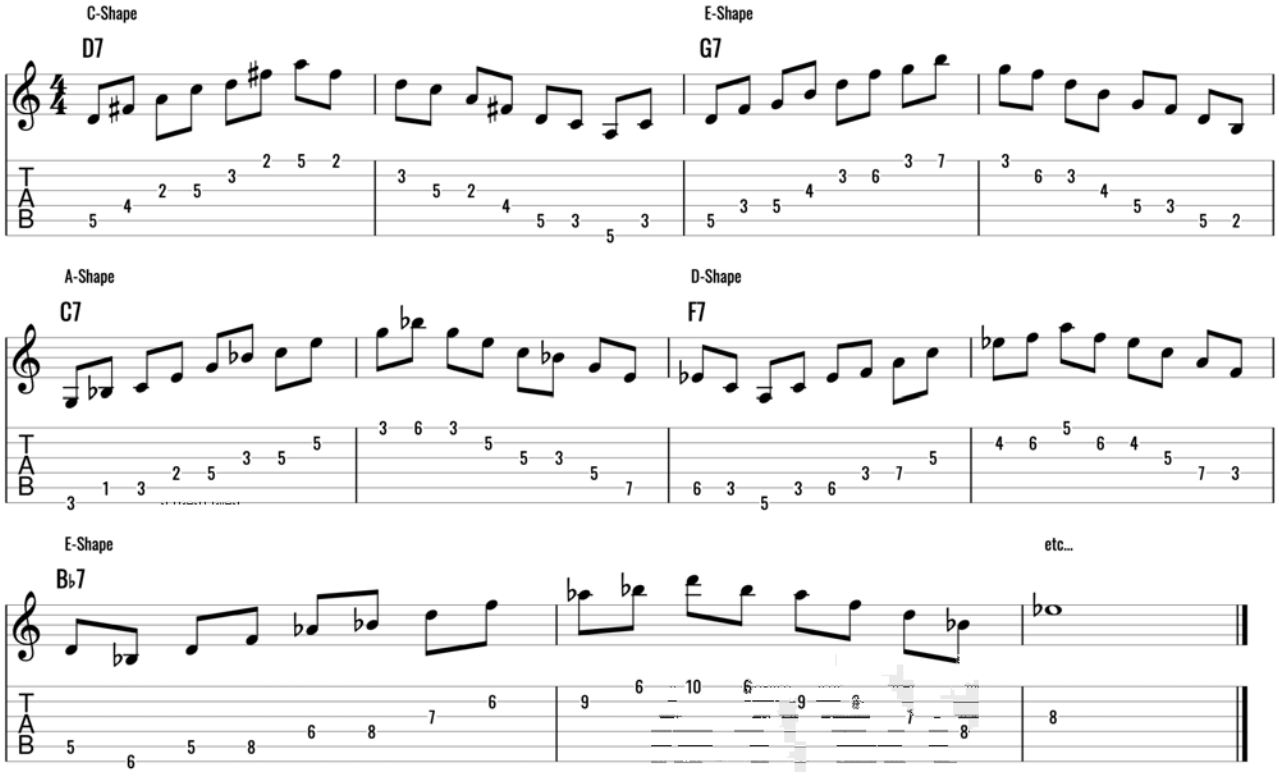
Let's take a few rounds of the dominant seventh arpeggio, once again from **D**, and see how this works. I'm giving each chord an even two measures of 8th notes before changing:



As you change Root you can begin from the Root note and as this develops you can work like the example and continue in the **same direction** from the **closest chord tone** as the Root changes.

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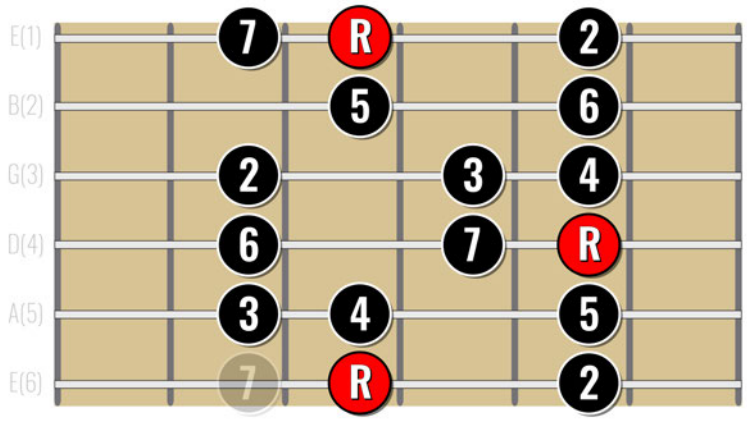
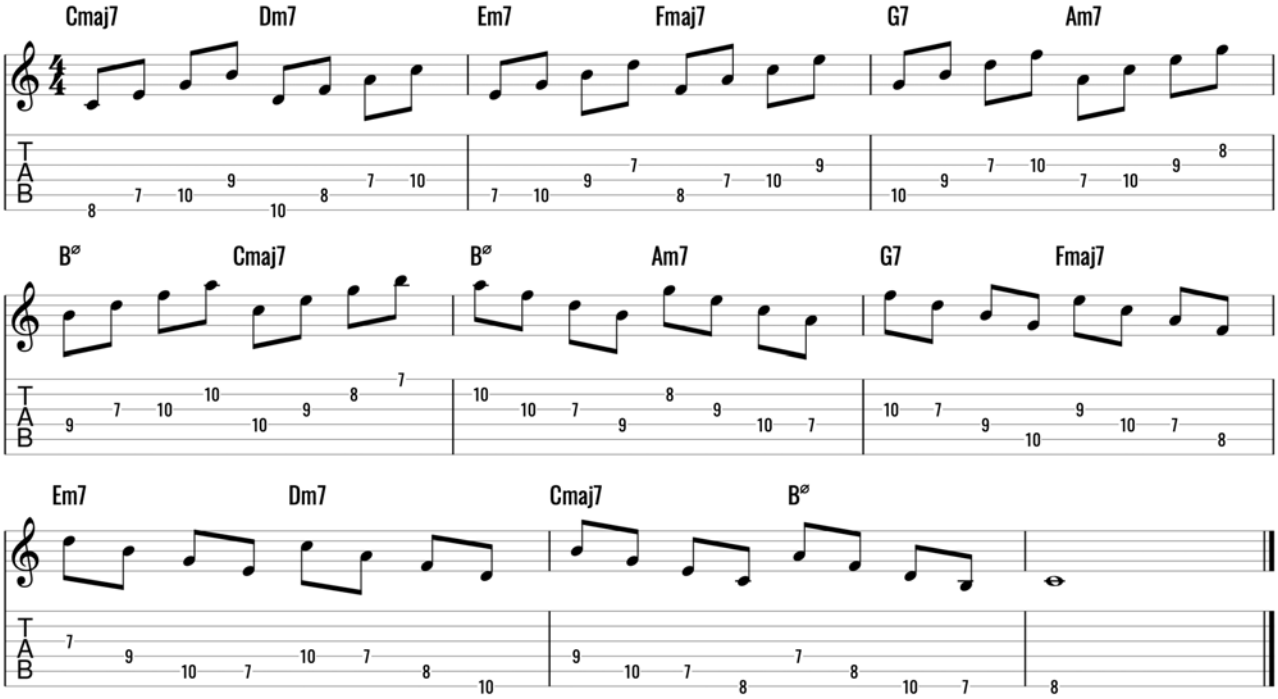
Playing Through a Key (Scale Pattern)

One last idea is playing through the seventh arpeggios within a vertical scale pattern:



Returning once again to the E-Shape major scale (above), here's an example of doing this with ascending arpeggios from each scale degree, key of **C** major:



Studying the CAGED Shapes will hopefully give you an insight into how all these arpeggios are being formed and which 'Shape' they all belong to.

Experiment with arpeggio directions. Work with different keys and scale patterns.

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Part 13: Time to Explore!

Phew! That's a pretty exhaustive introduction to the major scale arpeggios. But the fun has only just begun.

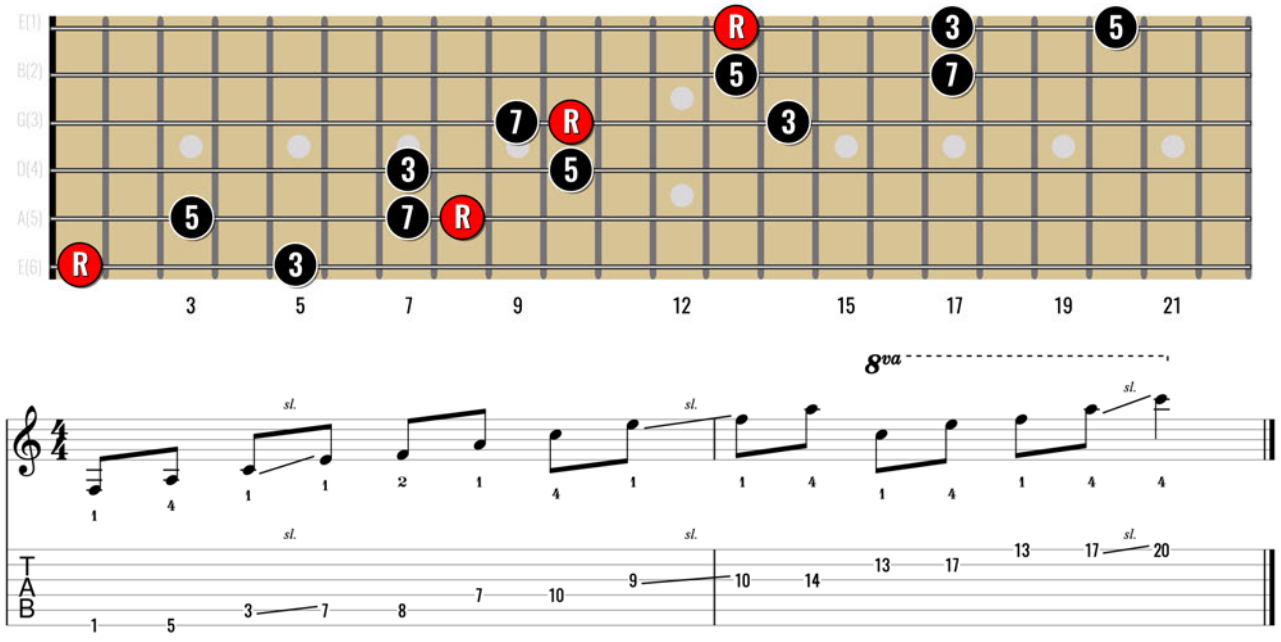
Armed with your new knowledge (and potentially a lifetime's worth of practice ideas) it time to start learning this stuff and bringing it all together.

Be aware that the the shapes presented are guidelines and you can amend or extend them in whatever way works for you and your playing style. In fact, I'd encourage you to do so!

If you don't like the way something plays under your hand, try it a different way. If that's not working maybe take out a note or two. No-one will judge you if you don't play all those chord tones in perfect order.

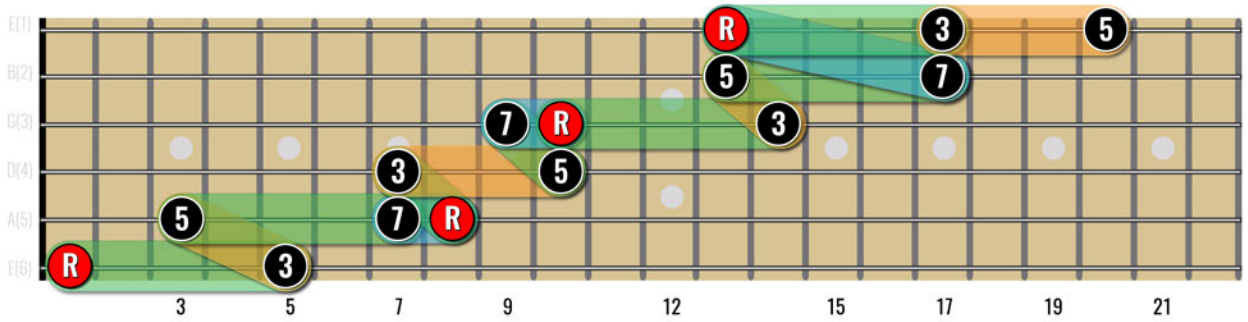
I want you to start thinking about how you can combine your theory and fretboard knowledge to come up with your own pathways and arpeggio shapes. Hopefully you will have noticed that everything is connected and that larger arpeggios shapes are ultimately formed from the basics - arpeggios on a single string and across a string pair.

For example, if I were to play something like an Fmaj7 arpeggio across the fretboard from low to high, I might come up with something like this:

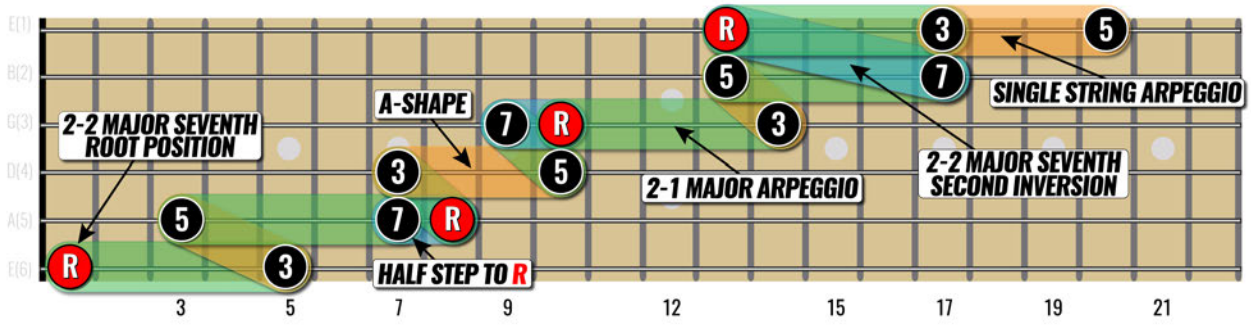


 © Ry Naylor Guitar

After reading **Arpeggios: Building Blocks** my hope is that you can *see* exactly how this arpeggio has been formed:



And with that you'll be able to *understand* the visualisation techniques that I have used to come up with this shape:



I'm not suggesting that I think like this when I'm playing, but these shapes are etched in my memory and fingers. My hope is, with a methodical study of the content in this book, you'll begin to see things in the same way.

Be patient. These things take time.

Be creative with your knowledge. Work concepts with progression as often as you can. One of the things I love to do is simply take a chord progression from a song and see if I can freely arpeggiate through the progression in different areas of the fretboard. If I hit a roadblock I know what I need work on!

The accompanying fretboards PDF will hopefully have all the charts you could possibly need for your practice. I hope they are pretty exhaustive but do let me know whether there are any additional resources that you would benefit from.

You can contact me via email at contact@rynaylorguitar.com.

I would love your feedback on the book and, if you enjoyed it and would be willing to share your experience, a short testimonial that I could share online would be hugely appreciated. You can send that to me at the email above.

Until next time...

Practice well 🙏



Ry

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