SPEED & THRASH METAL GUITAR METHOD

By Troy Stetina and Tony Burton

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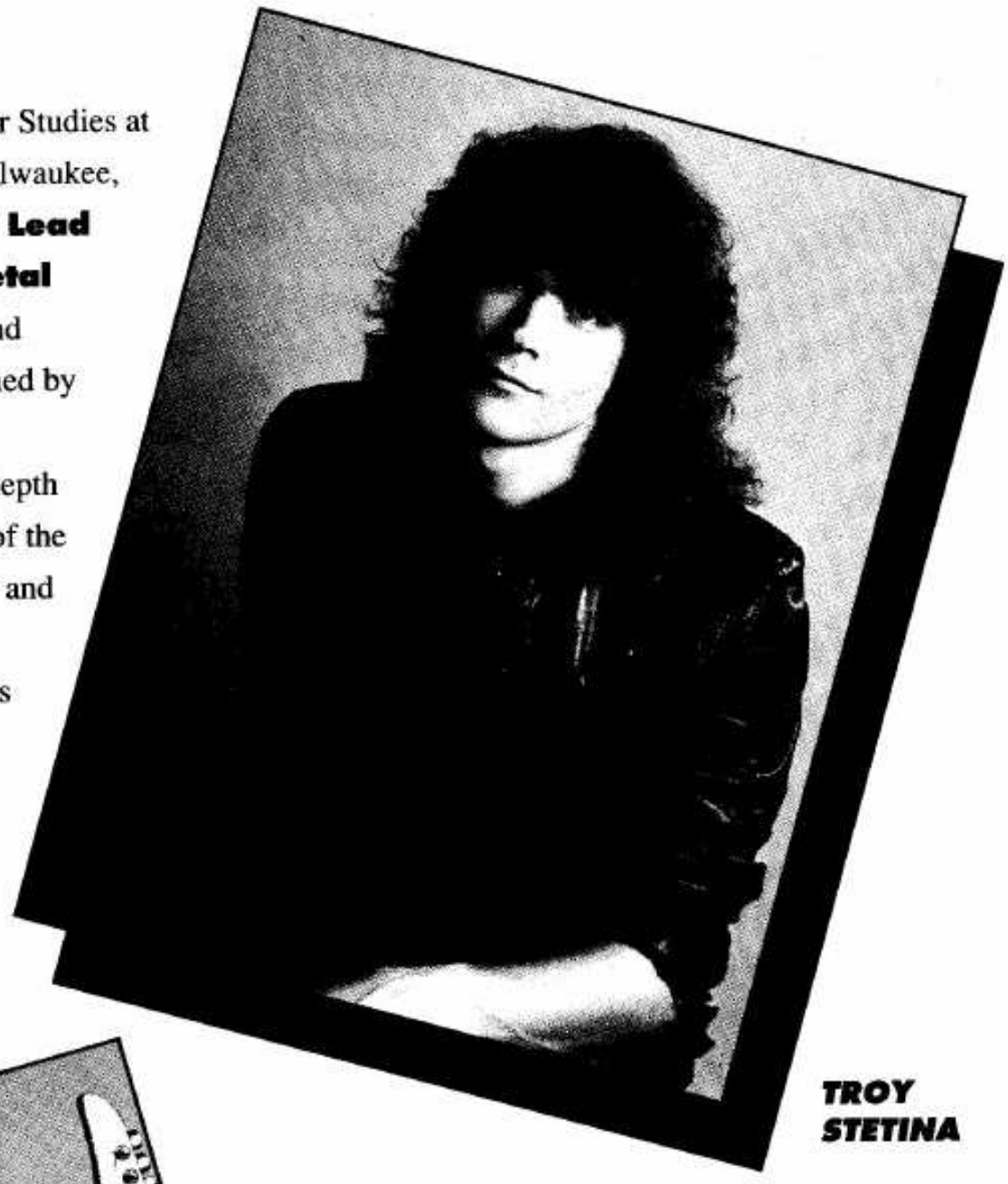
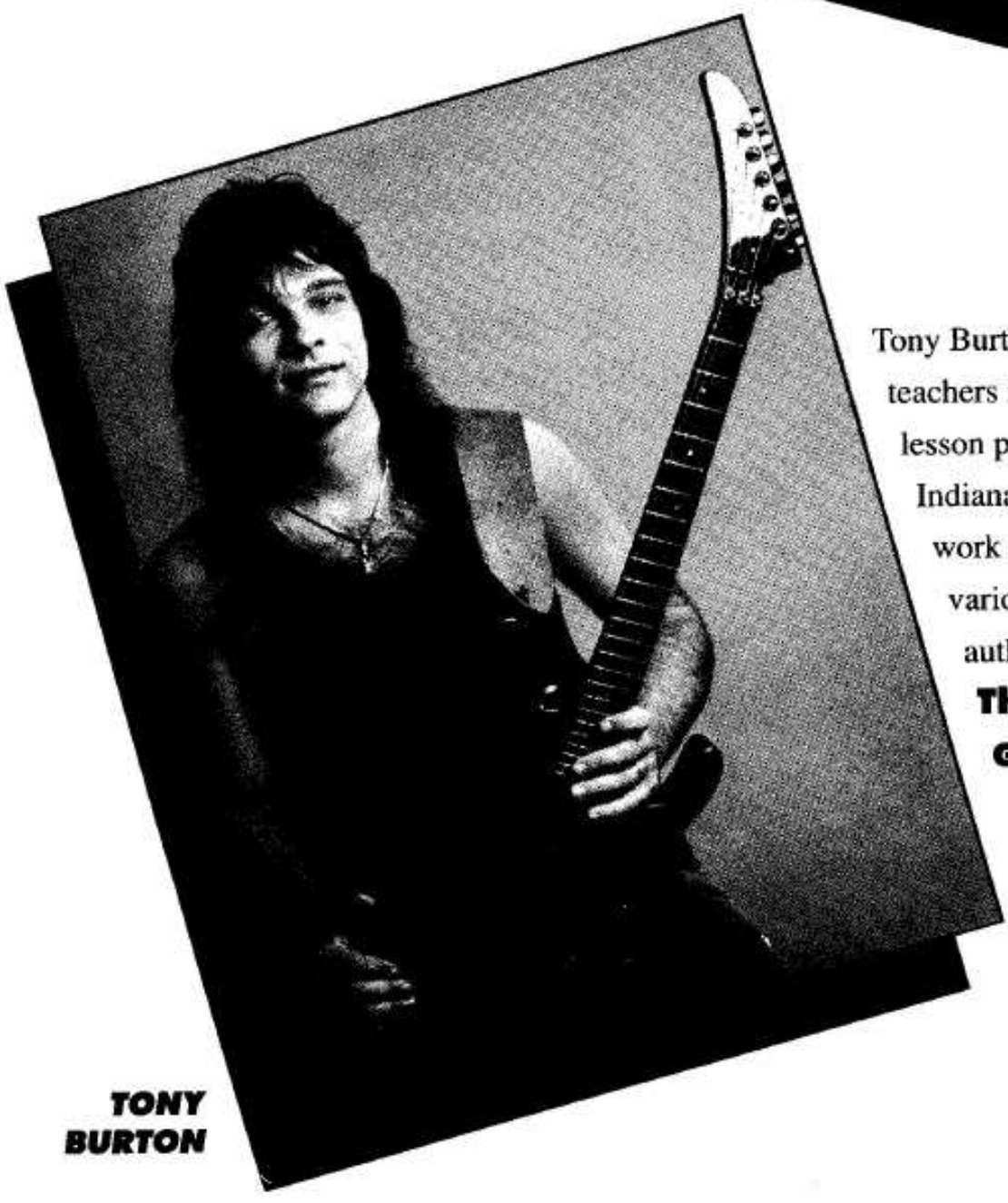
THE AUTHORS

Troy Stetina and Tony Burton teamed up in 1987 to write **Heavy Metal Guitar Tricks** for Hal Leonard Publishing. **The Speed and Thrash Metal Guitar Method** is their second joint effort.

Troy Stetina is the Director Of Rock Guitar Studies at the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and author of **Heavy Metal Lead Guitar (Vol. 1 and 2), Heavy Metal Rhythm Guitar (Vol. 1 and 2),** and **Heavy Metal Guitar Tricks**, published by Hal Leonard. His sixth book is **Speed Mechanics for Lead Guitar**, an in-depth look at guitar technique featuring "Flight of the Bumblebee," Paganini's "Caprice No. 10" and other exacting pieces. The **Speed and Thrash Metal Guitar Method** is his seventh work. Troy's recording work has appeared in *Guitar Player Magazine* and he is the primary songwriter for his band "Stetna" (formerly "Assent").



TROY STETINA



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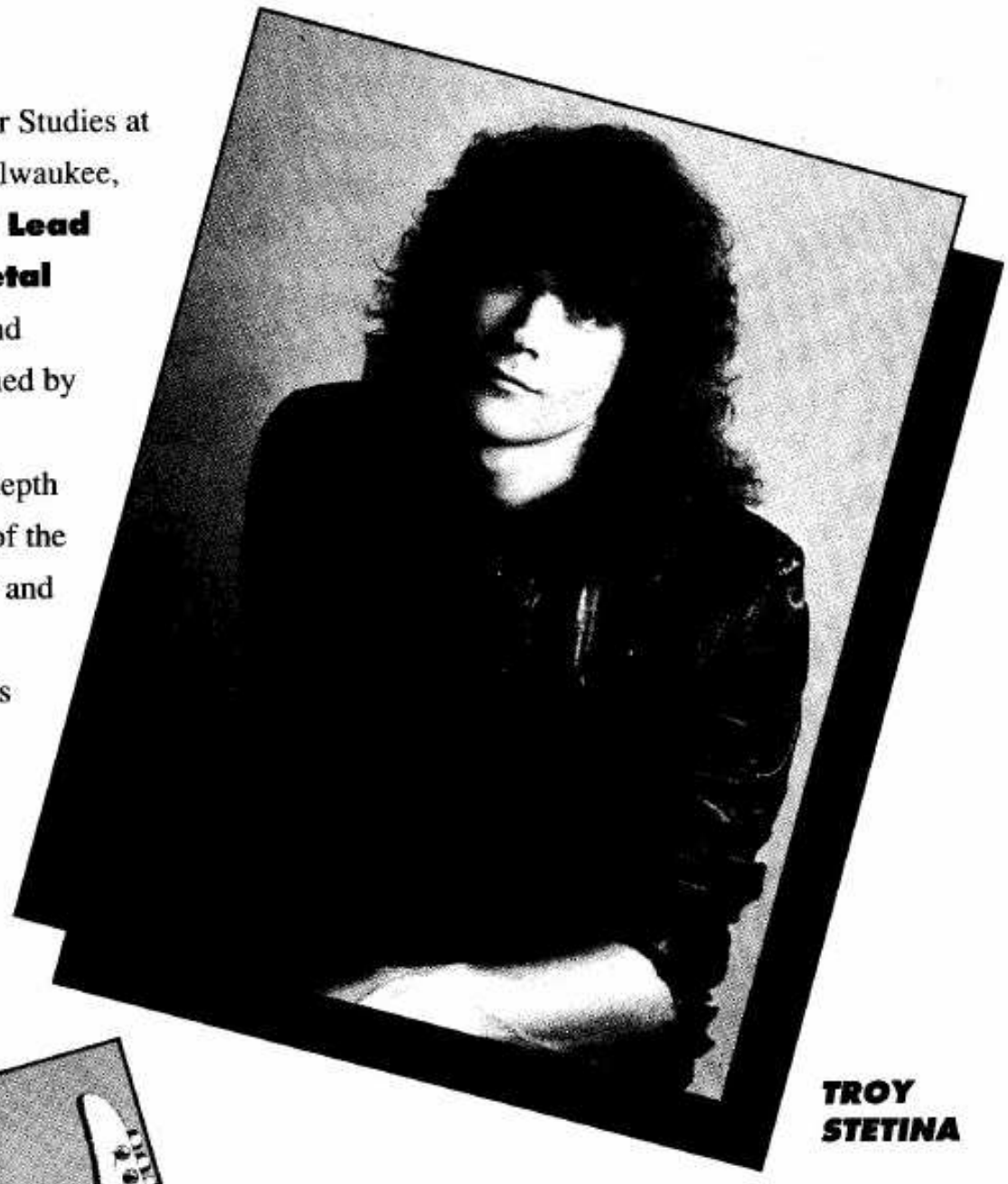

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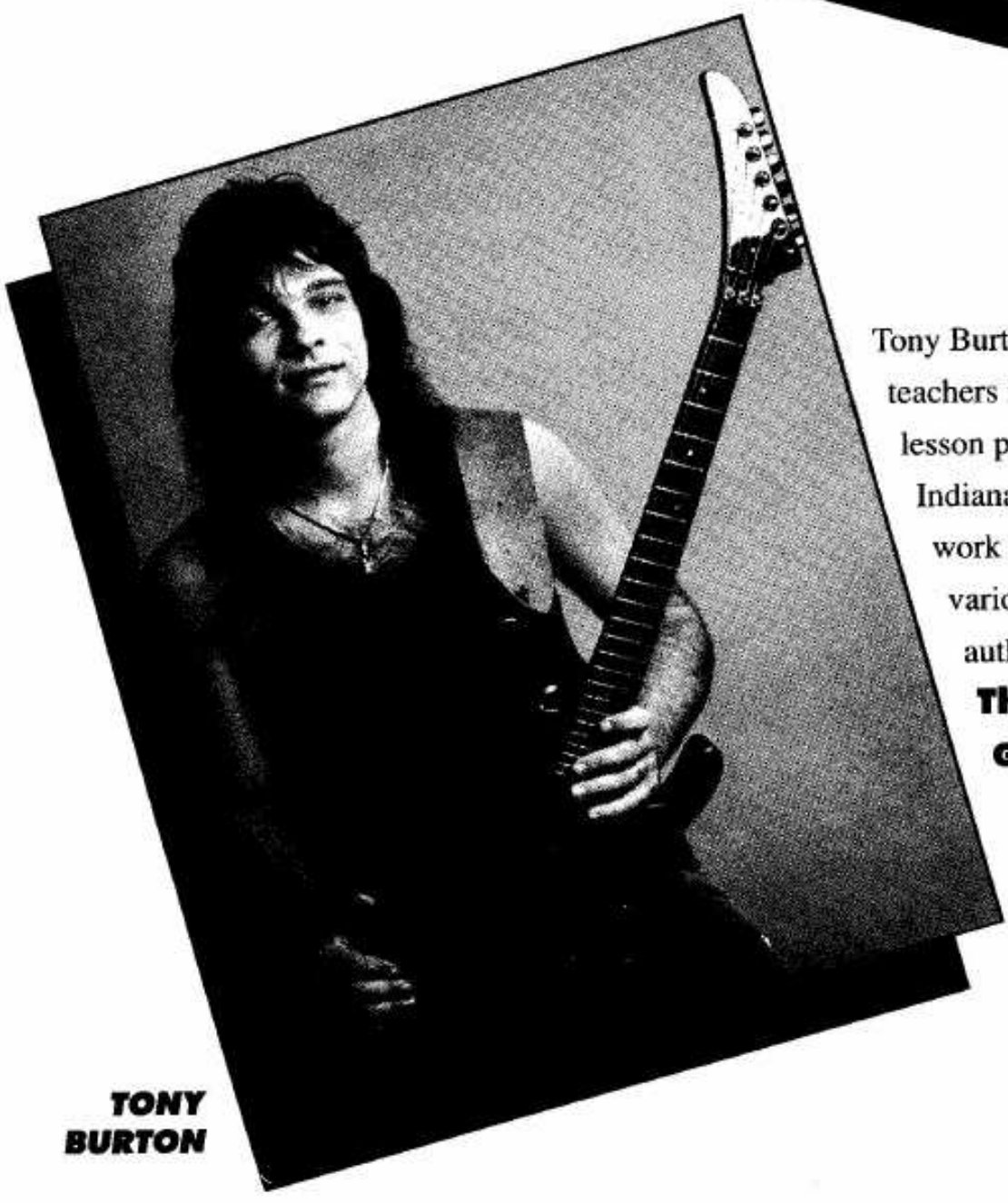

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FOREWORD

The term "heavy metal" was coined to describe intense, high-energy, guitar dominated rock, taken to extremes. But as time goes on, the extreme becomes the norm and a new extreme emerges. What was once considered "heavy metal" has become relatively tame. In the 1980's, Metallica and a wave of other superheavy groups combined heavy metal with the rebellion of punk rock, and speed and thrash metal was born. Today the roster includes Metallica, Megadeth, Slayer, Anthrax, Testament, Exodus, Nuclear Assault, Kreator, Death Angel, Prong, Overkill, Savatage, and many others. Some groups lean more toward punk rock, displaying more raw aggression without melody (pure thrash), while others blend that sound with a more straight-ahead heavy metal approach to arrive at speed metal.

This new wave of metal has become a firmly established and distinct style, featuring odd syncopations, tempo changes, shifting time signatures, "ear twisting" dissonances, driving doublebass drum rhythms, screaming vocals, and a heavily distorted, chunky, mind-numbing guitar tone. It is music taken to its most hyper extreme - its effect more akin to the experience of a tumbling, spinning midway ride. This book teaches the essential elements of this style, complete with musical examples. It brings the beginning guitarist all the way up to the most advanced thrash guitar techniques.

Beyond the guitar, however, we want to make it clear that we are not endorsing or legitimizing the negative and sometimes violent sentiments expressed by so many of these groups. As always, music is a vehicle which can express positive or negative ideas. The sad fact is that this style for music in particular seems preoccupied with themes of violence.

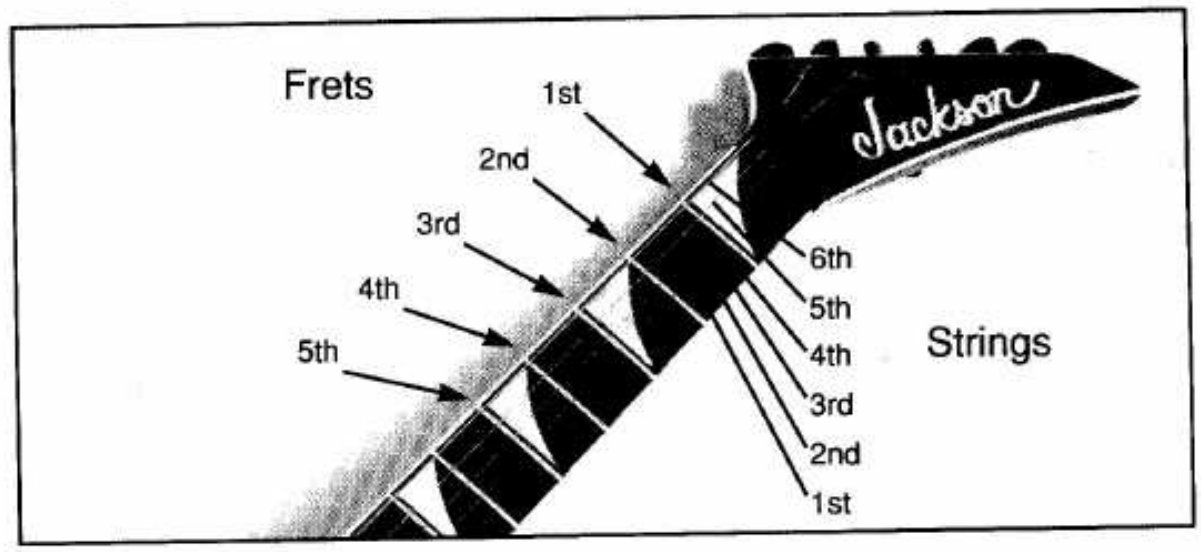
Of course not all thrash bands promote that image. Some express thoughtful or comical lyrics. Which just proves our point—the music doesn't need that image. Let's face it: screaming about killing and dying isn't doing us any favors. There comes a point where rolling around in the mud of society's shortcomings just perpetuates the problem. And certainly each of you would prefer to live in a better world, not a more violent one. We hope that you would think about this as you write music that will someday influence others.

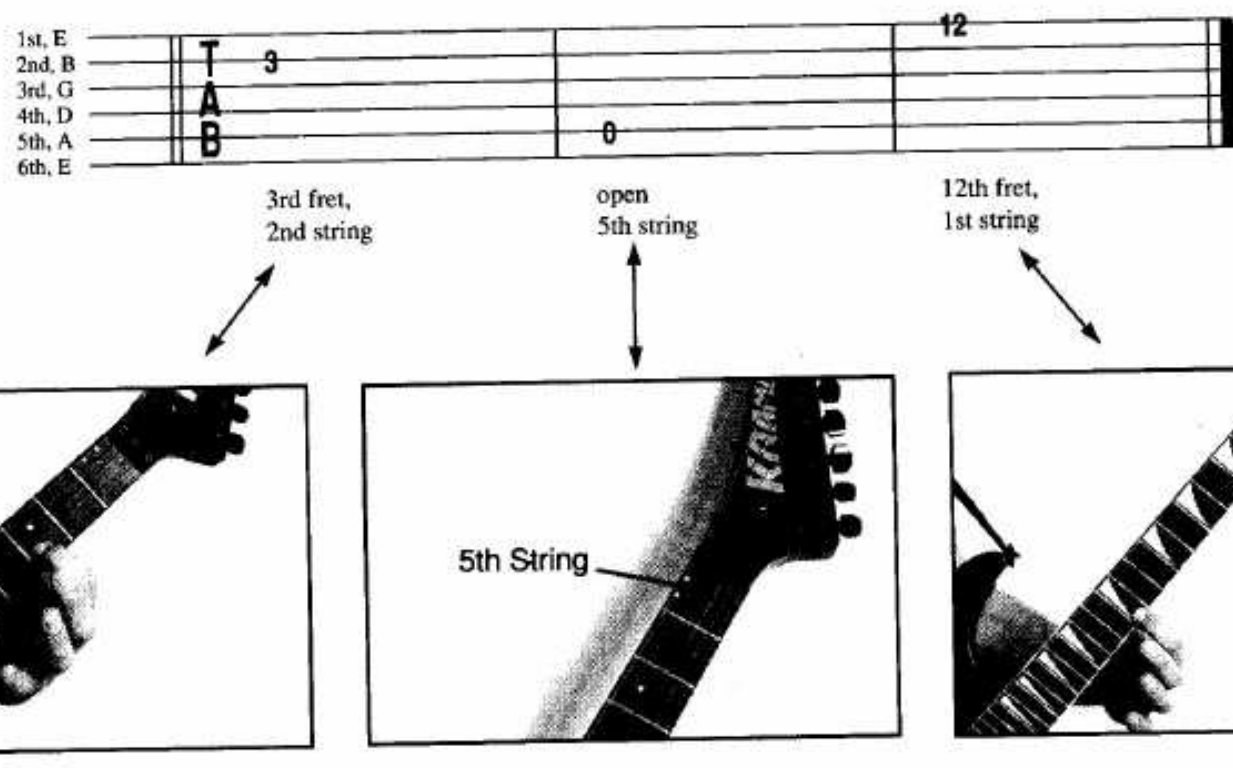
We hope that you enjoy this book as much as we enjoyed writing it and recording it. We hope it will help you learn this style of music, and them go beyond it, stretching the limits of music further still. Just remember that you don't have to be limited by the norm—you can make your music say whatever you choose. Good luck!

HOW TO READ MUSIC IN THIS BOOK

This book uses tablature (TAB) because it is the quickest, most efficient way to learn this style of music. (Sorry to you staff-readers out there: There wasn't enough space to write everything in both staff and TAB, and we didn't want to drop any material. Anyway, if you can read staff, TAB will be a breeze.) If you are not already familiar with tablature, the explanation below will turn you into a bonafide TAB expert within a few short minutes, guaranteed!

TAB is a system of reading music that describes notes by giving the string and fret number which is to be played.





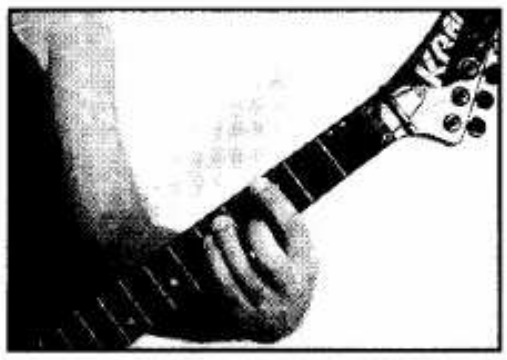
Downstrokes of the pick are indicated by the symbol "⊓". Upstrokes are indicated by "V".

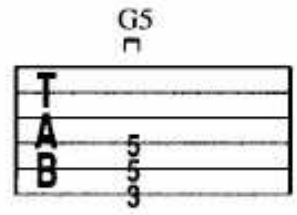
The fingers of the left hand are numbered: index finger - 1
middle finger - 2
ring finger - 3
little finger - 4

Rhythm figures are applied to the notes in the TAB and will be explained as they are introduced in the book. Down and upstrokes of the pick will appear above the TAB, and fingering numbers will appear below.

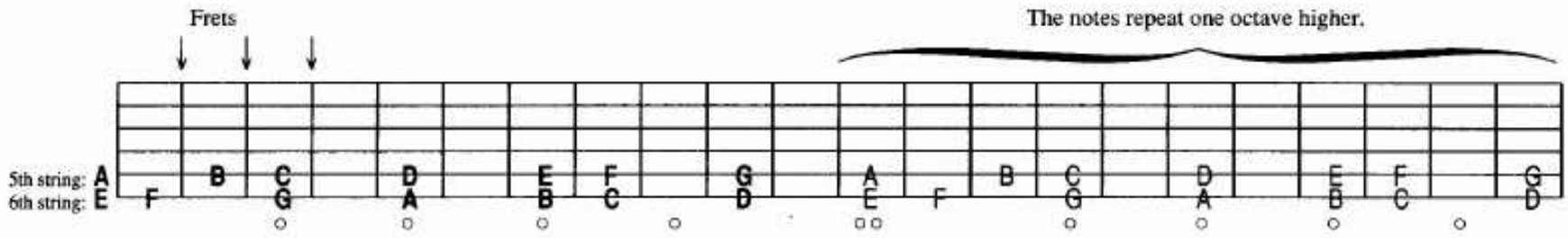
POWER CHORDS

Chords are built from a root note, which names the chord. For example, a chord built on "G" will be a "G" chord. Below is a "G" power chord (also called "G5" or "G no 3rd"). Lightly touch and hold the higher sounding strings quiet with the side of your first finger.





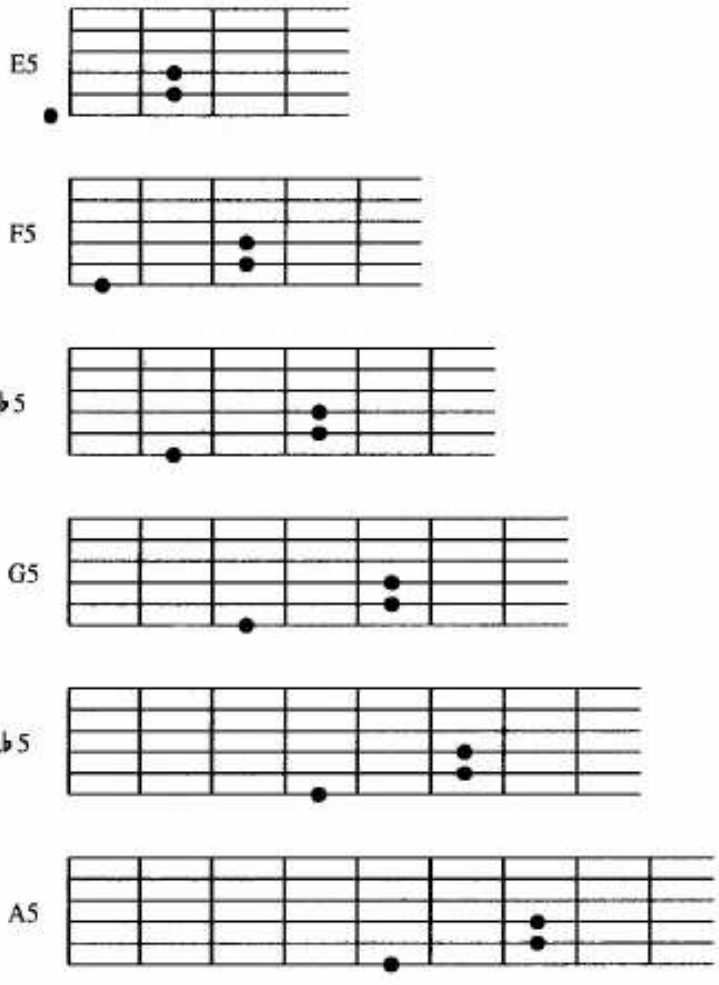
This chord form may be moved up and down the neck to play different chords. In order to know the names of the chords you'll be playing, you need to know the notes on the 5th and 6th strings:



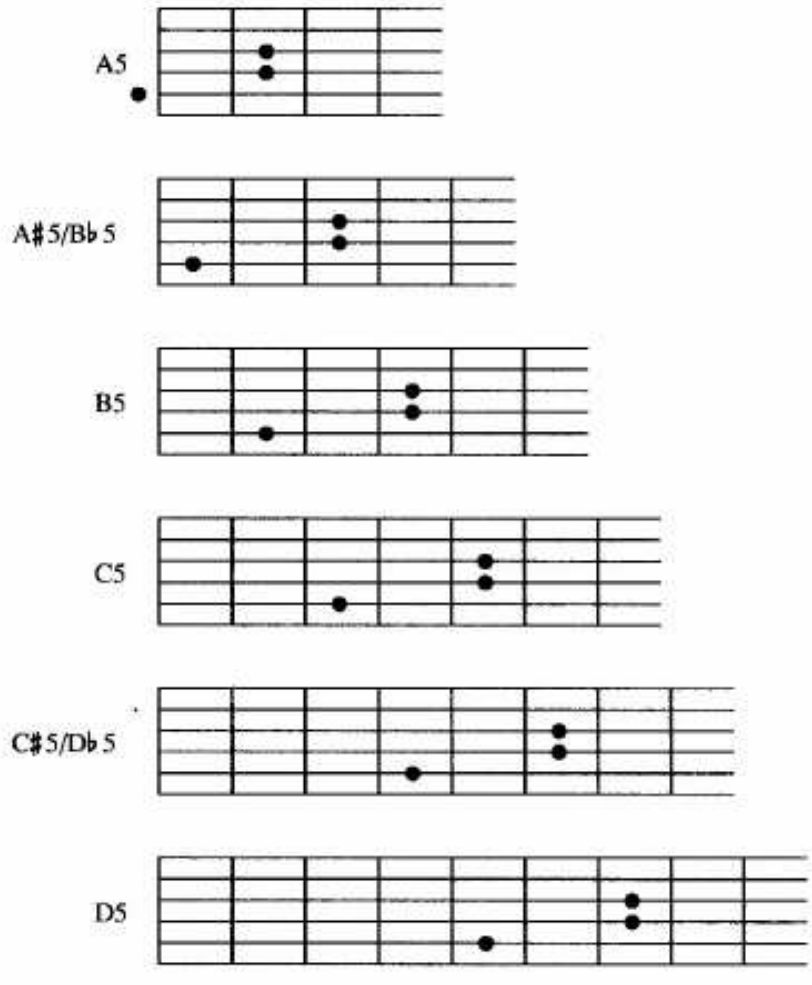
The frets not labelled above are flats (♭) and sharps (♯). A flat sign lowers a note one fret while a sharp sign raises it. (All flats and sharps have two names — the flat of the note above it or the sharp of the note below it.)

Below are the power chords on the 5th and 6th strings. When playing the chords with their root on the 5th string, you need to touch and hold the 6th string quiet with your first or second finger. On the first chord in each column, you can play the higher notes of the chord with your first finger. Also, all of these chords may be played with only two strings, leaving out the highest sounding string. The only difference is that the three-string version has a slightly fuller sound.

Root on the 6th string:



Root on the 5th string:

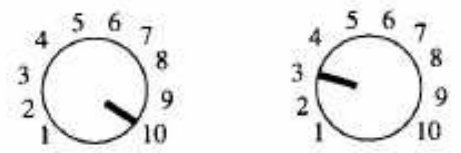


GETTING THE SOUND

A heavily distorted guitar sound characterizes this music. Distortion is also sometimes called overdrive, gain, clipping, fuzz, or a "dirty" sound. It is created when a signal is amplified beyond the capability of the circuit to faithfully reproduce the sound.

Most guitar amplifiers today are designed to achieve this "clipping" by using two amplifier stages. The first stage can be distorted or overdriven, and the second stage can then amplify that distorted sound to the desired listening level. Sometimes these amplifier stages are called "pre" and "post" gains, "gain" and "volume," "gain" and "master," or "volume" and "master." To get a fully distorted sound, turn the first stage, or gain, up all the way so that it distorts. Then you can control the volume of this distorted sound with the second stage.

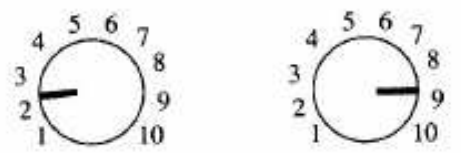
Distorted Sound =



First Stage Second Stage

The reverse of this will usually create a "clean," undistorted sound. Turn the master stage up high, but keep the first amplifier stage low.

Clean Sound =



First Stage Second Stage

If your amplifier has only one volume control, or has a limited or disappointing distorted sound, you can use a distortion "pedal" to add, in effect, another gain stage. Distortion, or overdrive pedals typically offer control over the amount of distortion and the output level (similar to the two stages in most guitar amplifiers), as well as a tone control which adjusts the sound for bass/treble. With a distortion pedal, the sequence would go like this: The signal leaves from the guitar clean (undistorted), enters the pedal which distorts the sound and alters the tone. Then that distorted signal leaves the pedal and hits the first amplifier stage. If the level control on the pedal is set high, this overdrives the first gain stage of the amplifier even more.

Some pedals offer distortion in combination with other effects, like compression, chorus, delay, or reverb. Also, the effects are sometimes combined into a rack mount unit. These units are usually programmable which means that you can set up a certain sound in one channel, say heavy distortion and delay, and set up a completely different sound in another channel, perhaps a clean sound with compression, chorus, and a different delay time. Then you can switch between these different sounds at the touch of a button. The advantages are obvious.

One characteristic of loud distorted guitar is the tendency to produce controlled feedback which you can hear occasionally in the music in this book. When the volume level is high, the sound waves travelling through the air cause the strings to vibrate more, which in turn causes more sound waves. A feedback loop has been created and the notes will sustain indefinitely, usually favoring a harmonic of the original note. Some devices, including the Sustainiac® GA-2 sustainer, offer the ability to achieve this natural feedback loop without the necessity of earsplitting volume.

For recording the music in this book, Tony used a 50watt Marshall amp with a 4x12 speaker cabinet, an Ibanez Tube Screamer distortion pedal, and a Kramer Nightswan guitar. I used a Jackson soloist equipped with the Sustainiac® GA-2 sustainer, an ADA MP-1, and a 100watt Marshall with a 4x12 cabinet. Slight reverb and delay sounds used to enhance the guitar were added during mixdown with the studio's effects.

PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

Eighth Note Subdivisions

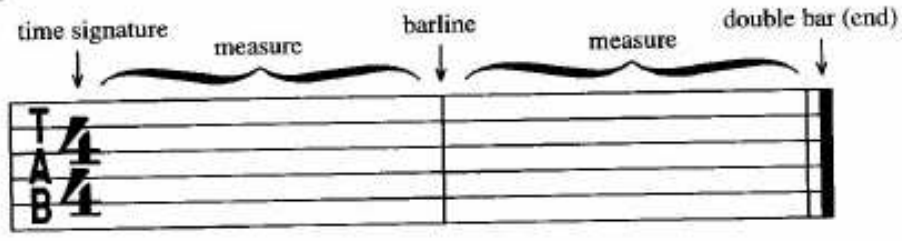
The Beat

When you listen to music you naturally sense a steady, recurring pulse seemingly "within" or "underneath" the music. This is called the *beat* and it is the unit of time in music. If you have ever tapped your foot (or banged your head) along to a song, you are already familiar with feeling a beat. It is the driving force behind all rock and metal, as well as other types of popular music.

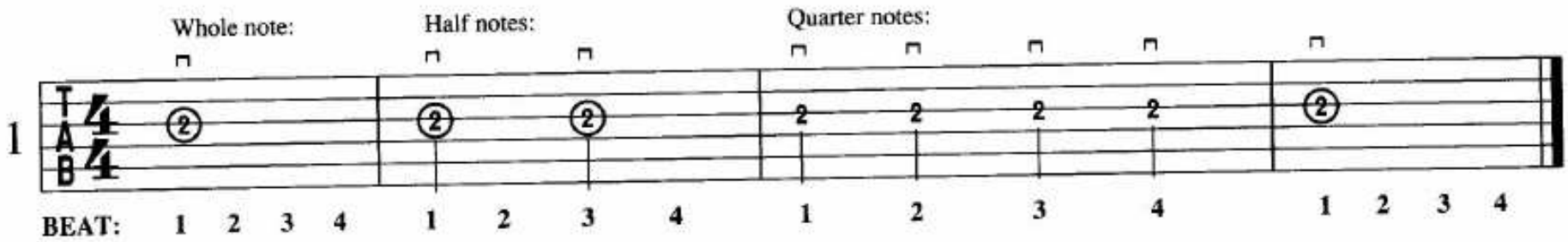
Usually, the beats are felt in groups of four with an emphasis on the first beat of each group:

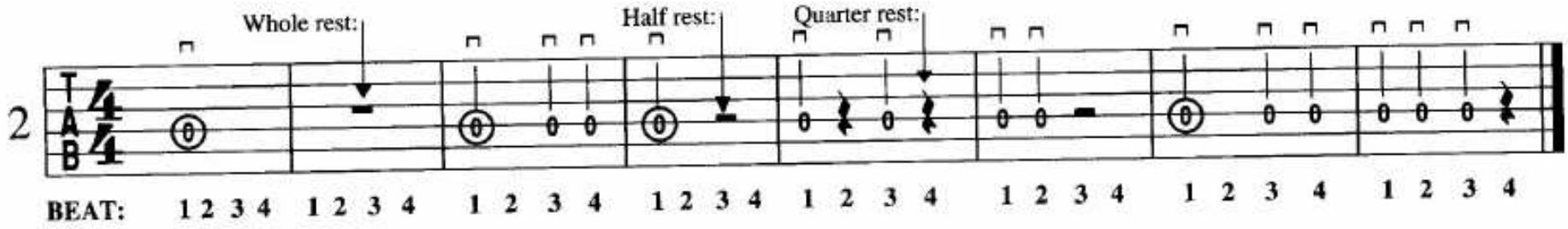
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

When the beats are grouped like this, the music is said to be in 4/4 time (also called Common time). The 4/4 symbol is called a *time signature*. Each group of four beats is called a *measure*, or *bar*, and is separated from the next measure by a *bar line*.

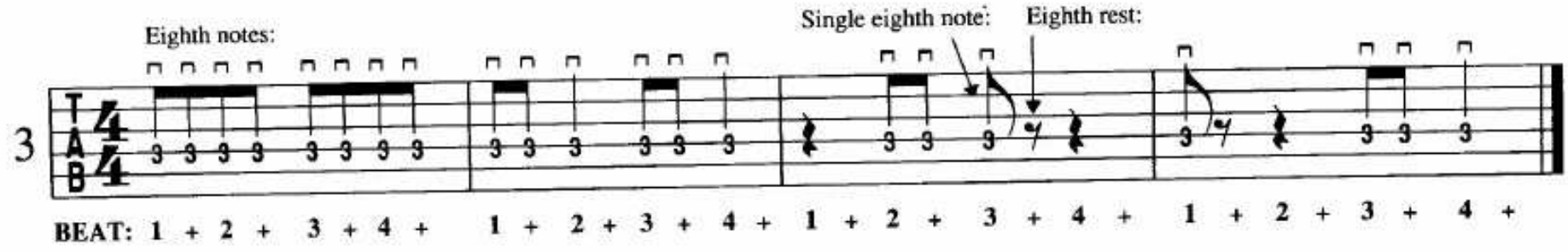


Every note has some relationship to the underlying beat. A whole note is four beats long (a *whole* measure), a half note lasts two beats, and a quarter note is one beat. A rest is a space with no sound – hold the strings quiet for the length of the rest. Count along with and tap out the beat steadily with your foot as you play the timing exercises below.





Eighth notes are one-half beat each and subdivide the beat into downbeats and upbeats. The downbeats are simply what you have already been tapping your foot to. The upbeats are halfway between downbeats. As you play number 3, say "one-and-two-and-three-and-four-and" out loud, making sure that your foot is down on each beat and up in the air on each "and".

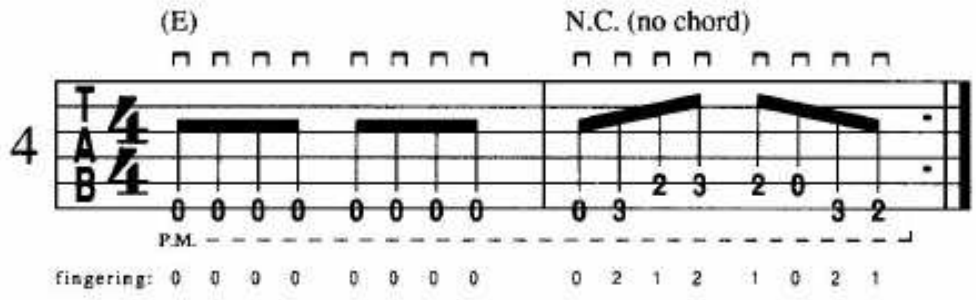


Muting

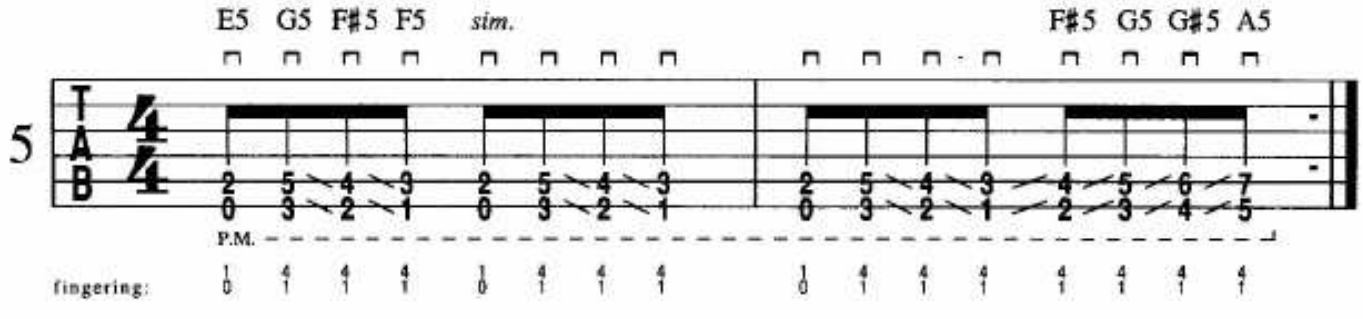
One of the characteristics of heavy metal guitar, especially speed and thrash metal, is the use of the right hand palm mute to get an aggressive "chunky" sound. Rest the palm of your picking hand over the ends of the strings as in the photo below, slightly deadening, or *muting*, the ringing of the strings.

To get a tighter palm mute, move your hand slightly toward the neck of the guitar so that your palm covers more of the strings. If you want to let the strings sound out more, move your palm back further on the bridge to cover less of the strings. *Don't press down too much on the strings or the pitch of the notes will raise.*

A palm mute is indicated by the letters "P.M." under the note. Also, it's a good idea to hold quiet all the strings that are not being played. Do this by touching and holding them lightly with your left hand, but don't press down or you'll be fretting extra notes. The symbol :‖ means to repeat.



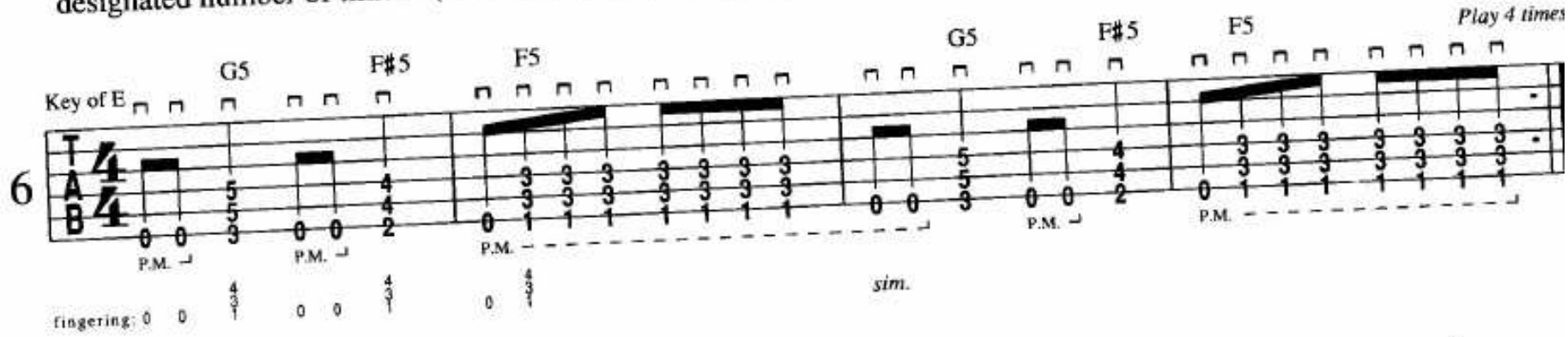
Sometimes chords are muted also. In example 5 slide from one chord to the next without lifting your left hand. The symbol \ or / between fret numbers indicates a slide.

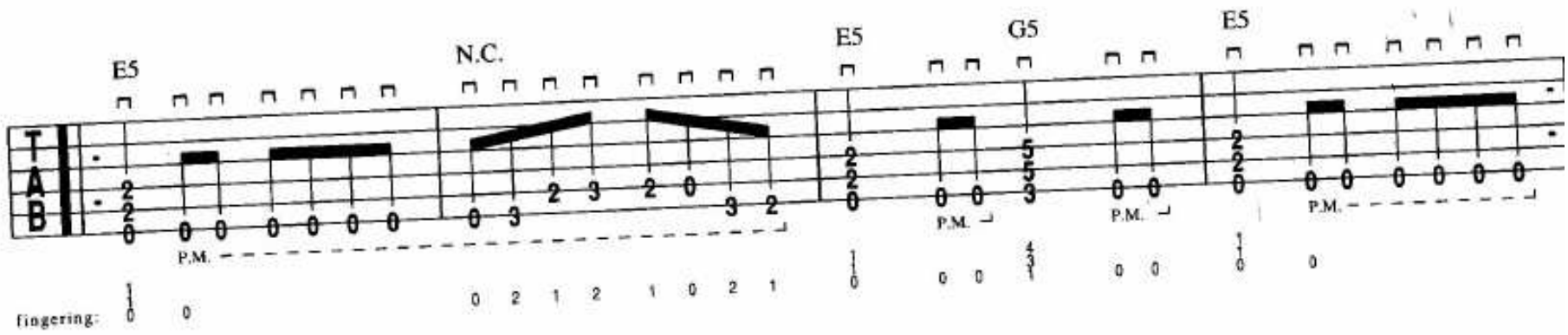


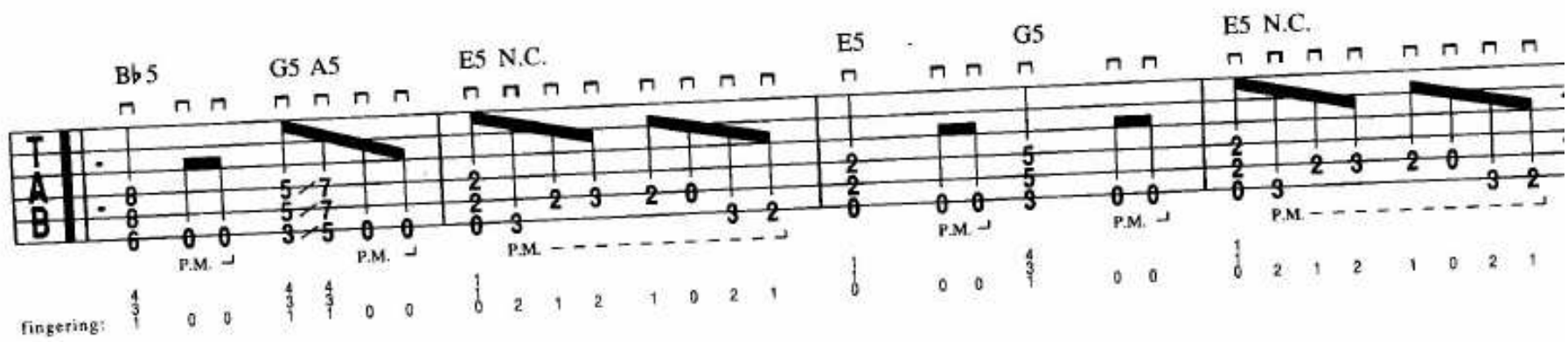
Accenting Chords

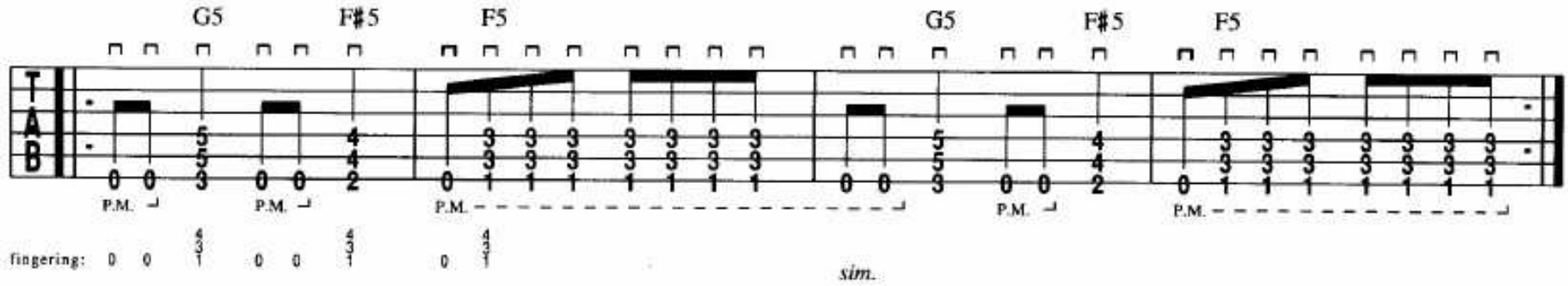
Playing strong un-muted chord accents amidst a phrase of muted notes is one of the most important techniques to master. Imagine that your hands are on opposite ends of a see-saw: When your left hand is pressing down to fret the chords, your right hand will be up. (This is the position for accenting chords.) When your right hand palm is touching the strings for the muted notes, your left hand will be up slightly.

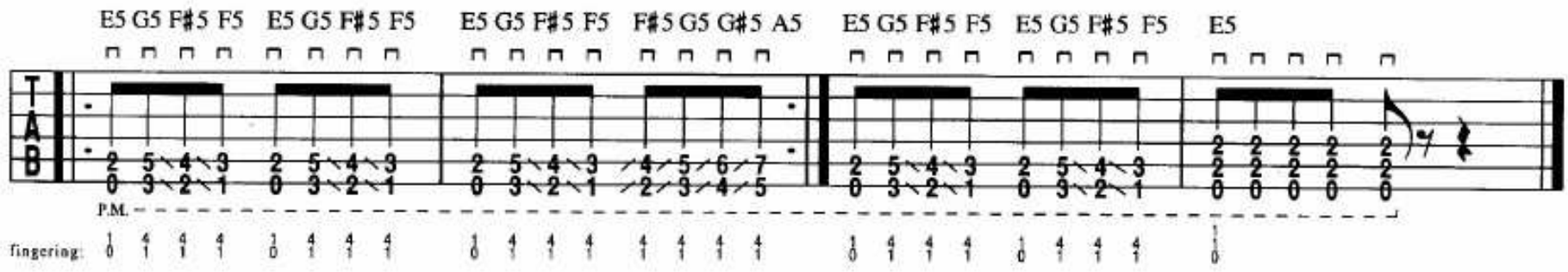
Lift your right hand up and off the strings entirely for the full length of the chords, but then go right back to a tight mute. Only press down and fret the chord when you want it to ring. During the mutes, your left hand should be lightly holding the other strings quiet. Repeat the material between the repeat symbols (𝄆 and 𝄇) the designated number of times. (If no number is given, play the section twice.)





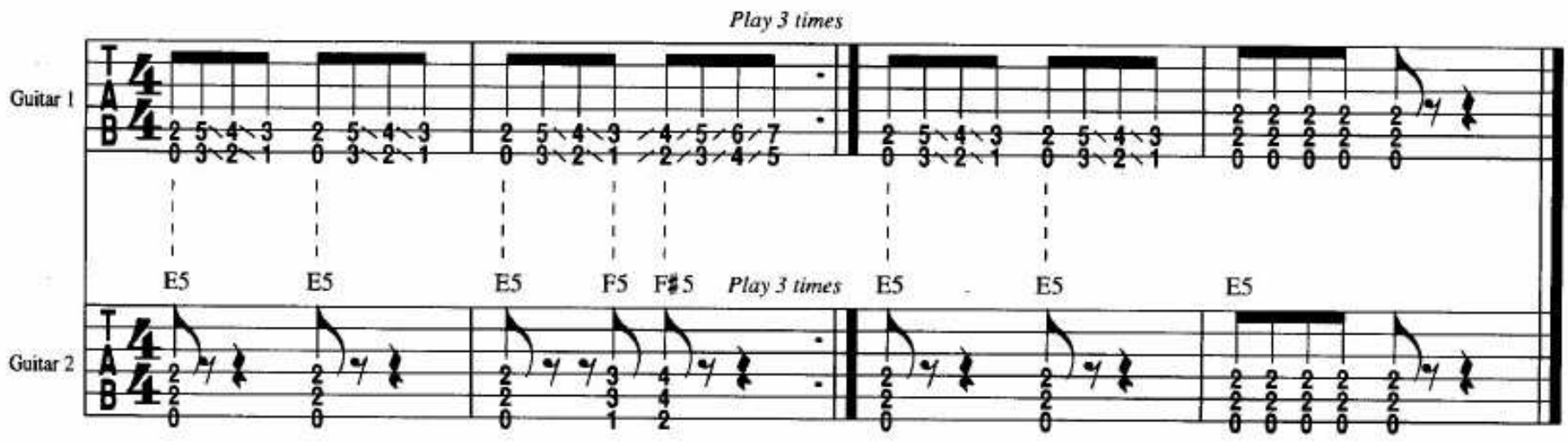






If you listen carefully, you'll notice that there are actually two guitars in exercise 6. Using two guitar parts in this manner is an important element in the style of speed and thrash metal. The second guitar enters with the bass and drums on the third repetition of the first line. Then, through the second, third and fourth lines, guitar 2 plays exactly the same as guitar 1 – until the last line. Then guitar 2 plays accenting chords. Below, the two parts are written one above the other so you can see how they interact.

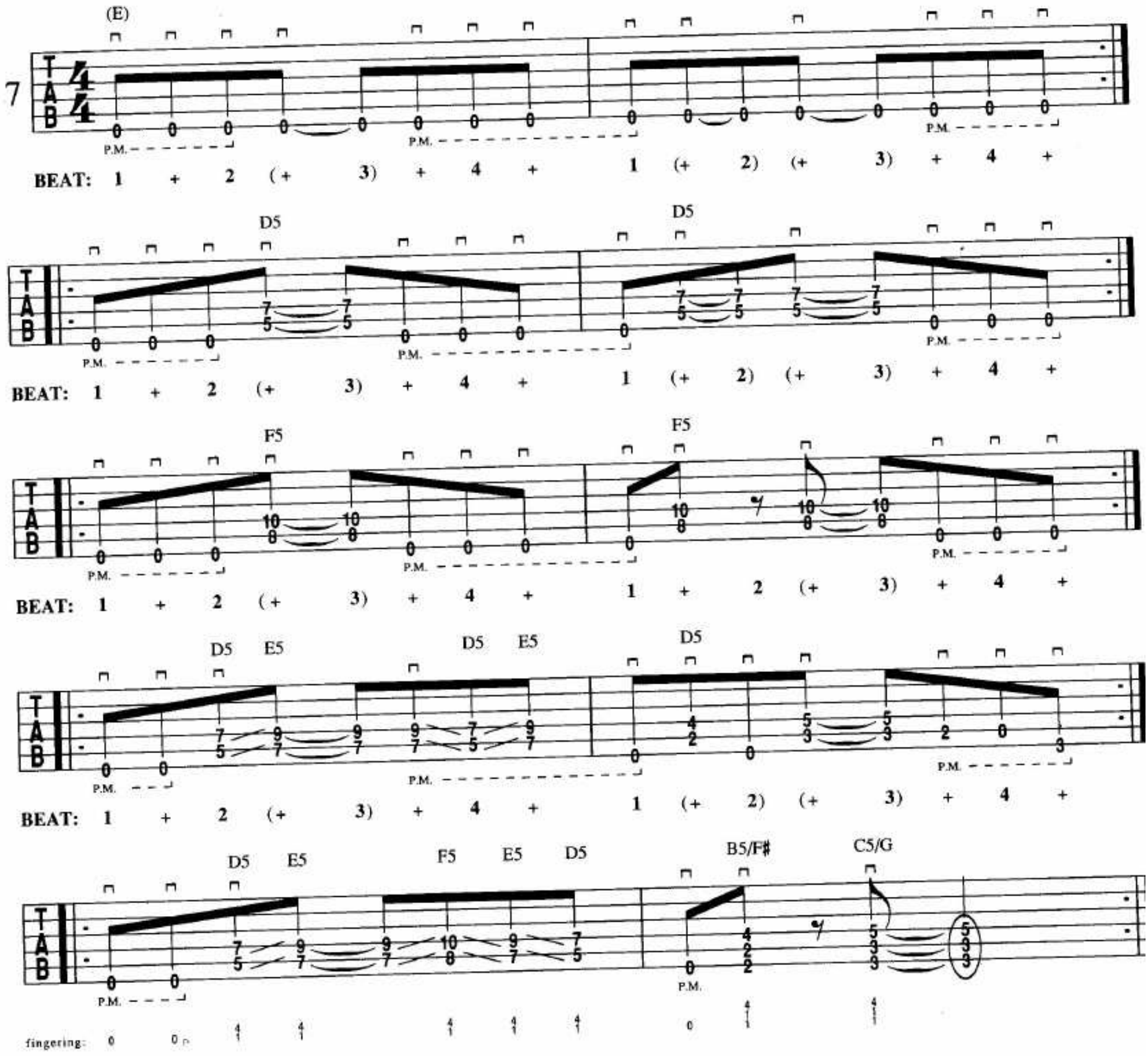
Exercise 6 - last line



Syncopation and Upbeats

As you remember from page 8, there is a steady underlying pulse of beats in music. These beats are naturally accented. When a note which falls between beats is accented and held over the following beat, the natural pulse is disturbed. This effect is known as *syncopation*. It creates a situation where the sounding rhythm temporarily contradicts the underlying pulse of the music.

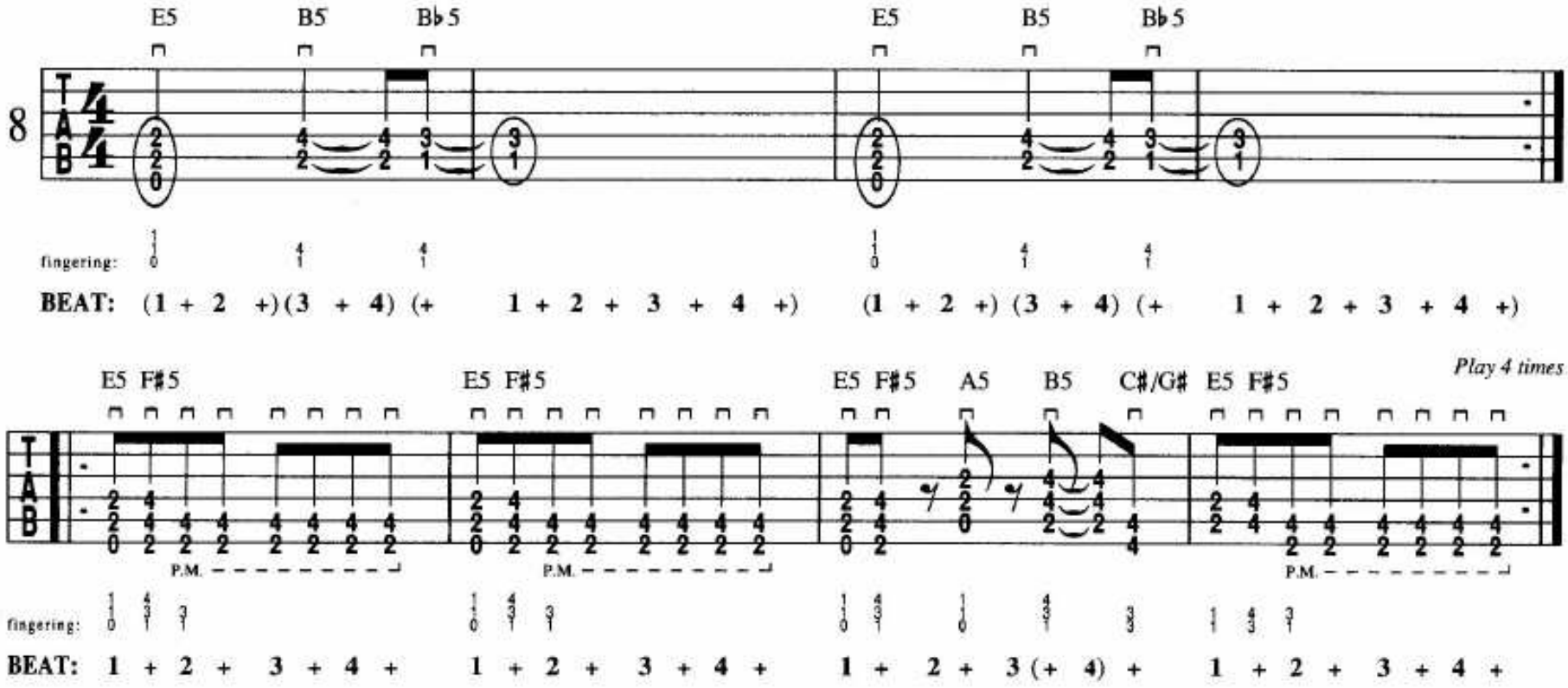
In the example below, a tie (‿) is used to connect notes. Play the first note and let it ring through the duration of both. Notice how the sounding rhythm moves against the beat. Although the notes change in each line, the same syncopation is maintained. Practice along with a metronome to see how steady you can keep the beat through the syncopations. The metronome never lies!

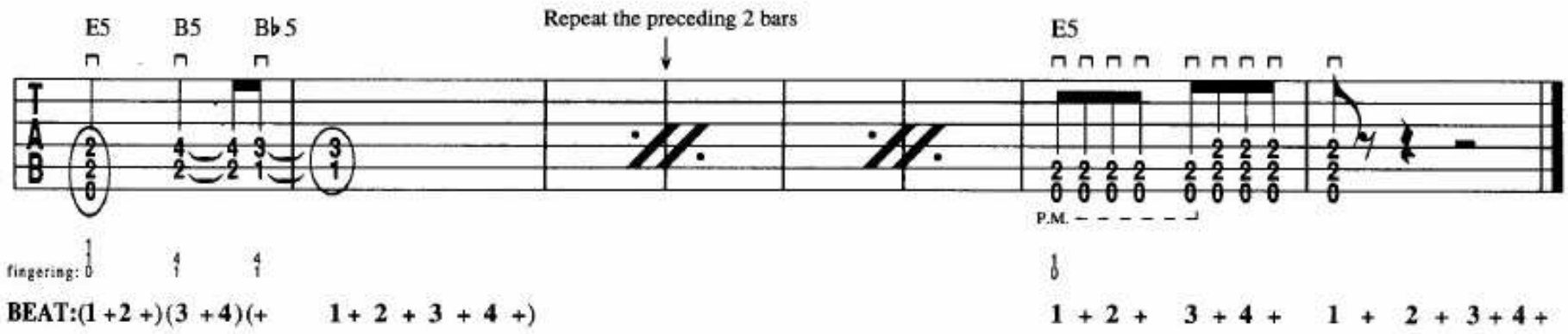


In the last measure above, notice the B5 and C5 chords. Usually, chords are played with the root as the lowest note in the chord, but not always. Here the 5th of the chord is the bass note. When a note other than the root is in the bass, the chord name will be followed by a slash, then the name of the note in the bass will be given.

To play metal guitar well, you need to master syncopation. You must be able to feel the beat underlying the music even when the music is fighting or obscuring the beat. How can you play offbeats in time if you can't feel where the downbeats are?

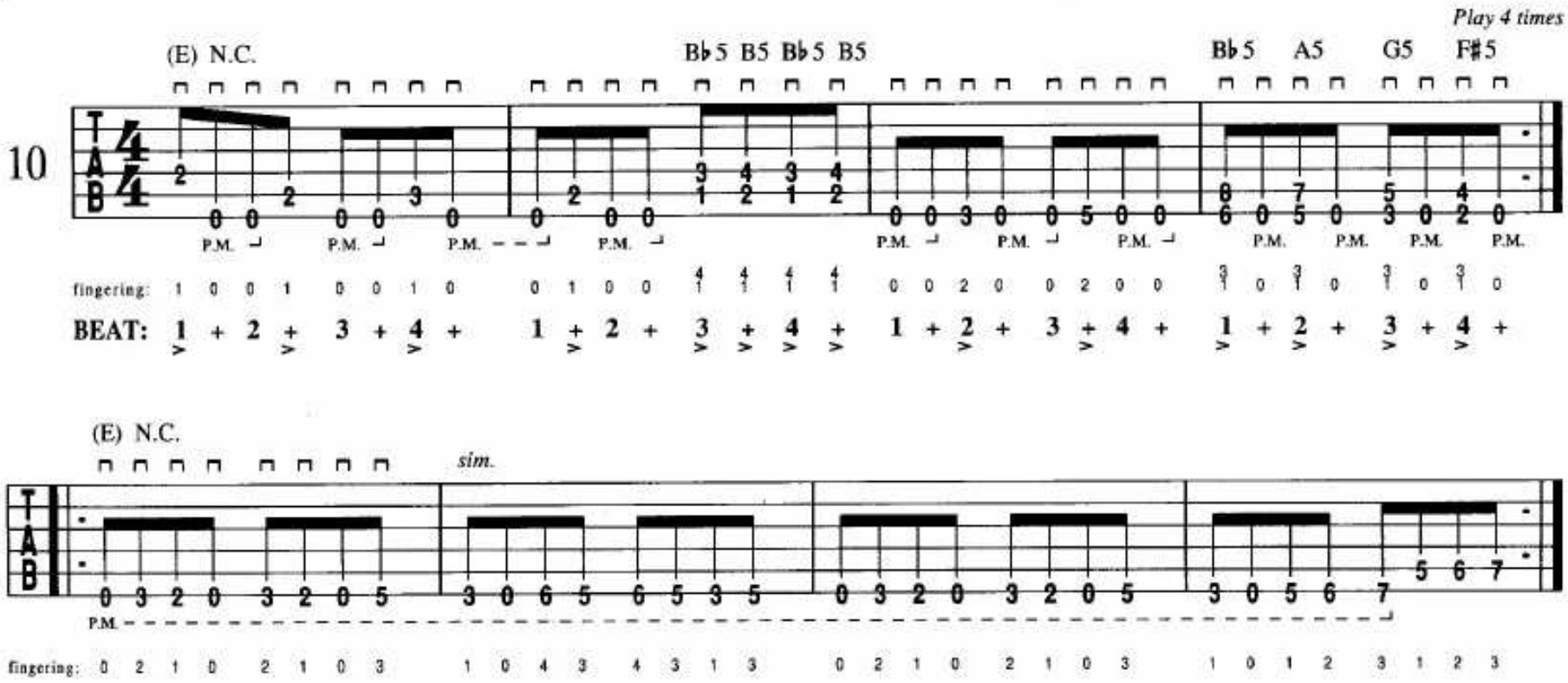
Numbers 8 and 9 both use syncopations and upbeat accents. Before you begin practicing these, first listen to them and tap your foot along with the beat, noting which chords fall on upbeats and which fall on downbeats. Then try playing them, making sure that you are tapping your foot with the beat, not with the accents. Your foot should be down on each downbeat and in the air on each "+". No exceptions!!!

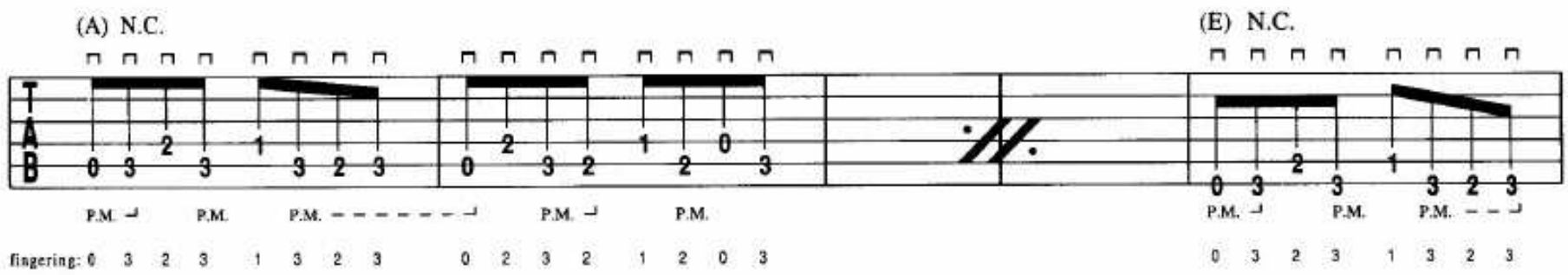


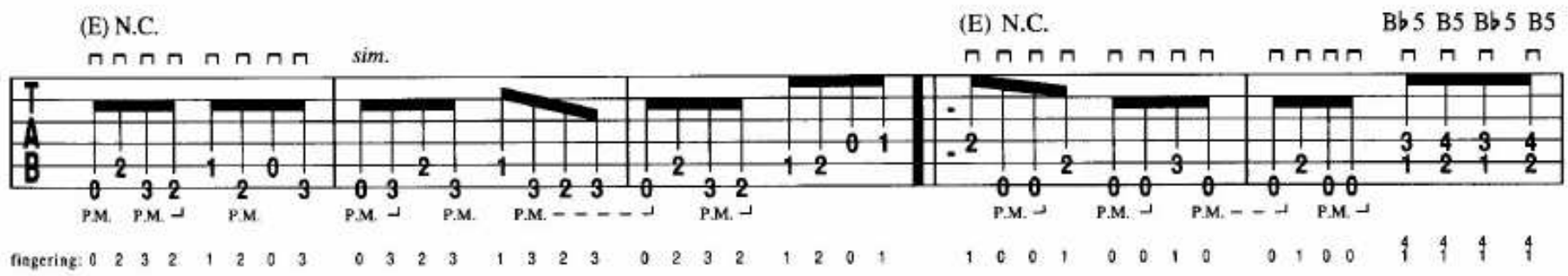


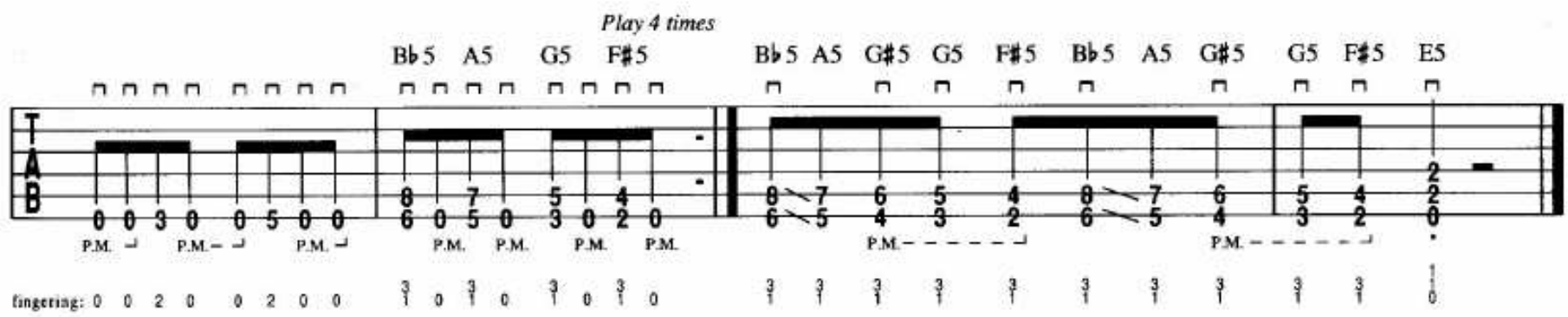
Shifting Accents

Constantly shifting the chord accents between downbeats and upbeats is a thrash and speed metal staple. Notice this principle used in the first line below. In the second line, a group of notes is repeated, but on the repetition they interact with the beat in a different way. The third line uses a similar idea, although the note grouping is not repeated exactly. Make sure that you're feeling the beat, and not just tapping out the accents.





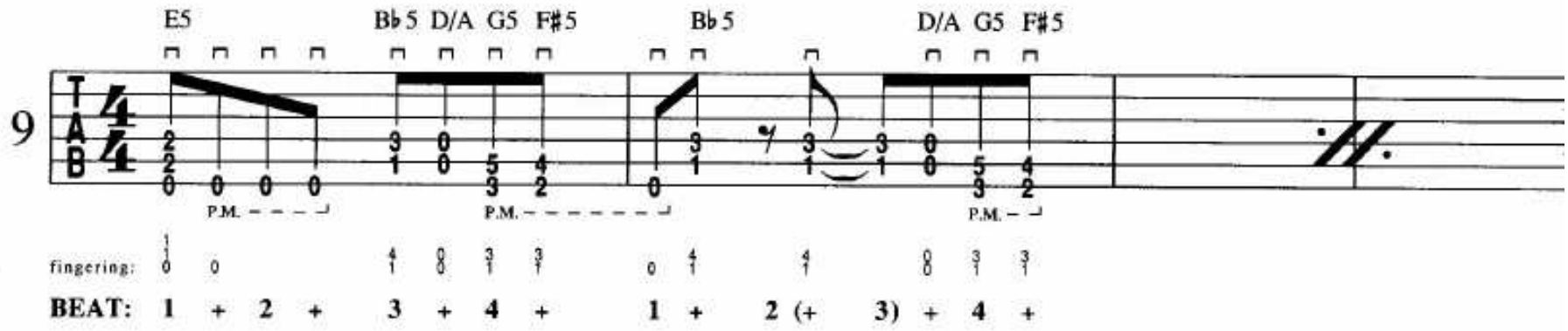


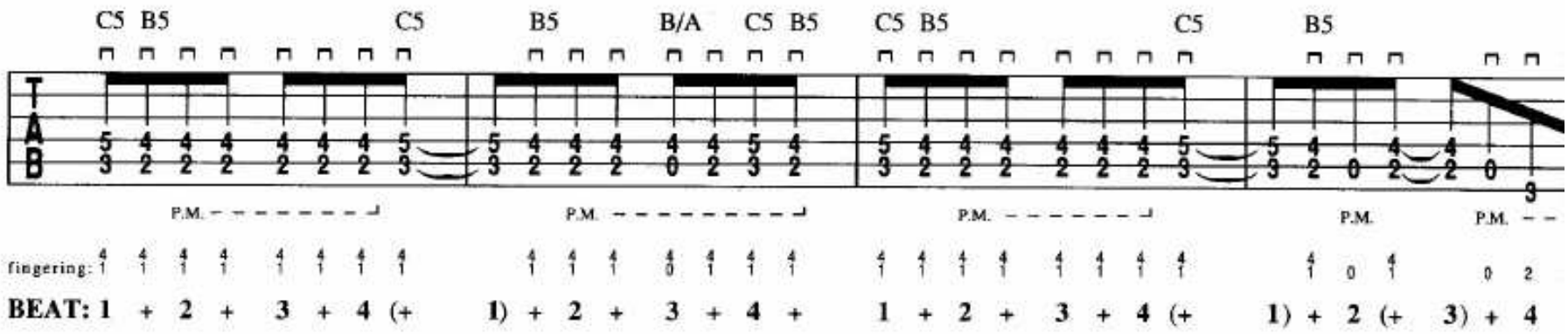


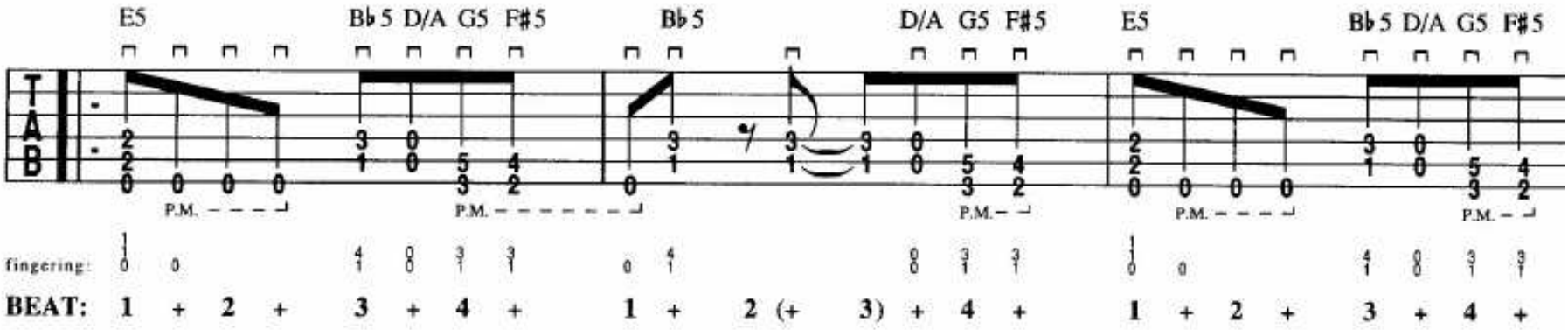
Number 9 also uses syncopations. Make sure you are feeling the downbeats consistently. The last repeated section uses two different endings. Play through the first ending (1.) the first time through, then on the repeat, skip the first ending and go directly to the second ending (2.).

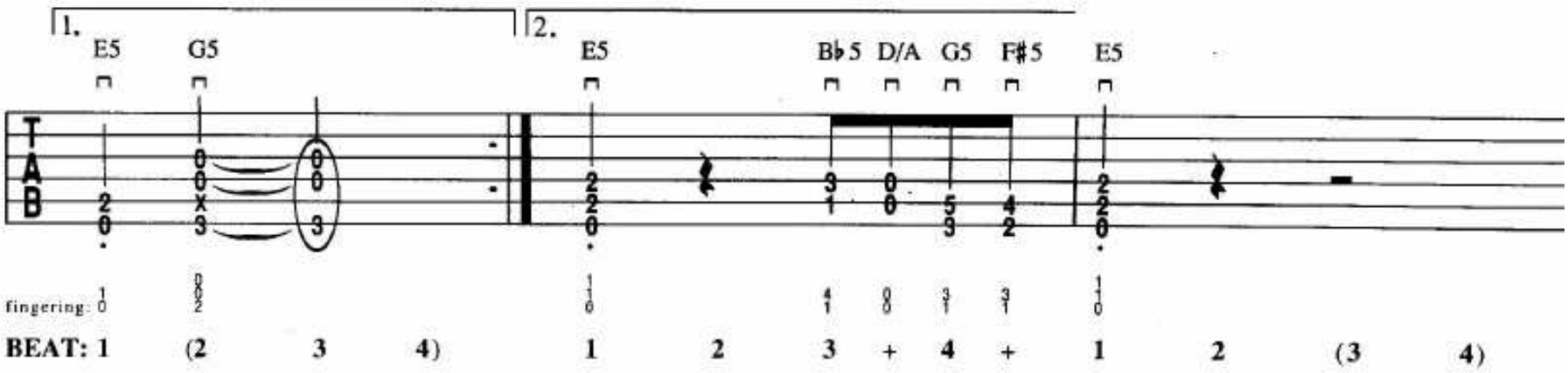
A dot placed under a note, as on the first note in ending no. 1, is called staccato, which means to play it very short. Use both your left and right hands to stop the ringing of the note.

To play the open G5 chord in ending no. 1, touch and hold the 5th string mute with your second finger at the same time that it is fretting the 6th string. You can hold the first and second strings mute with your third finger. The open G5 chord rings out more than the other G5 form.

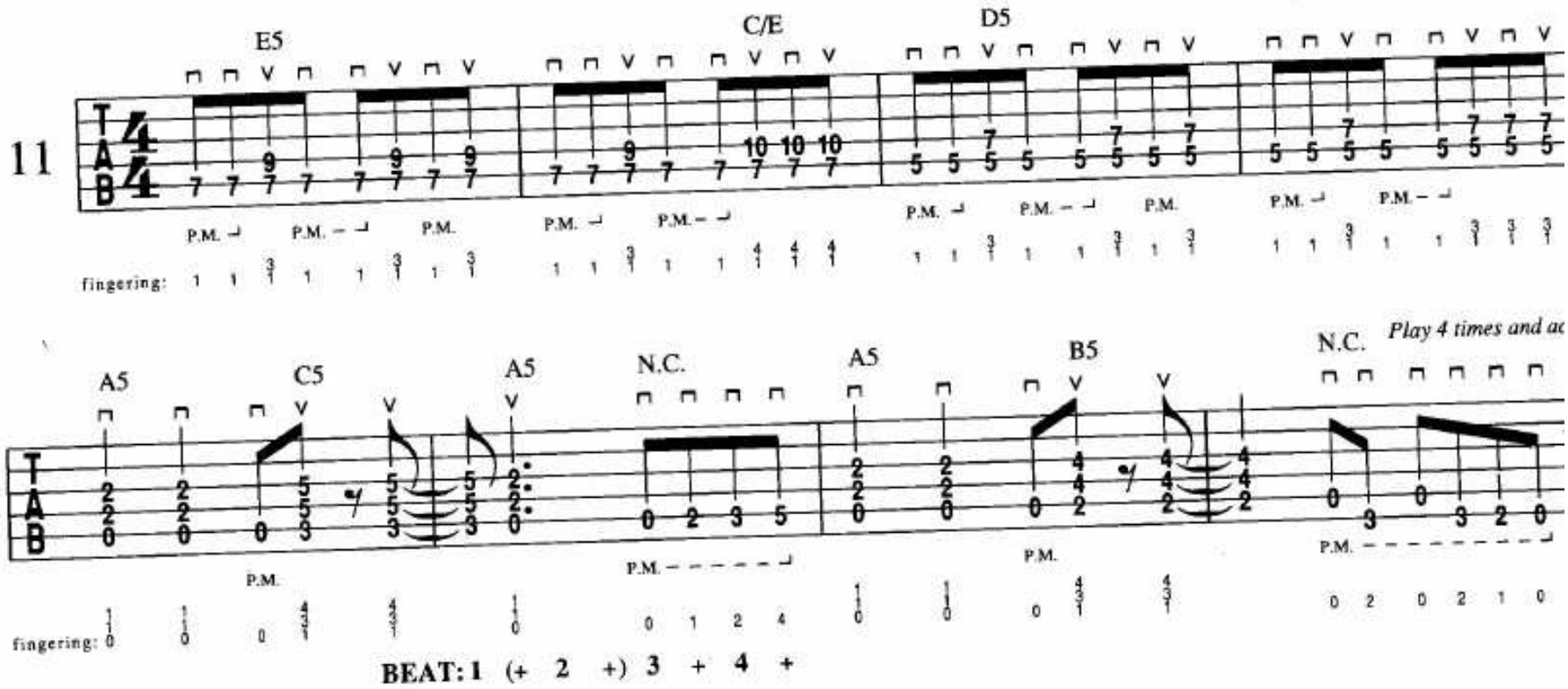






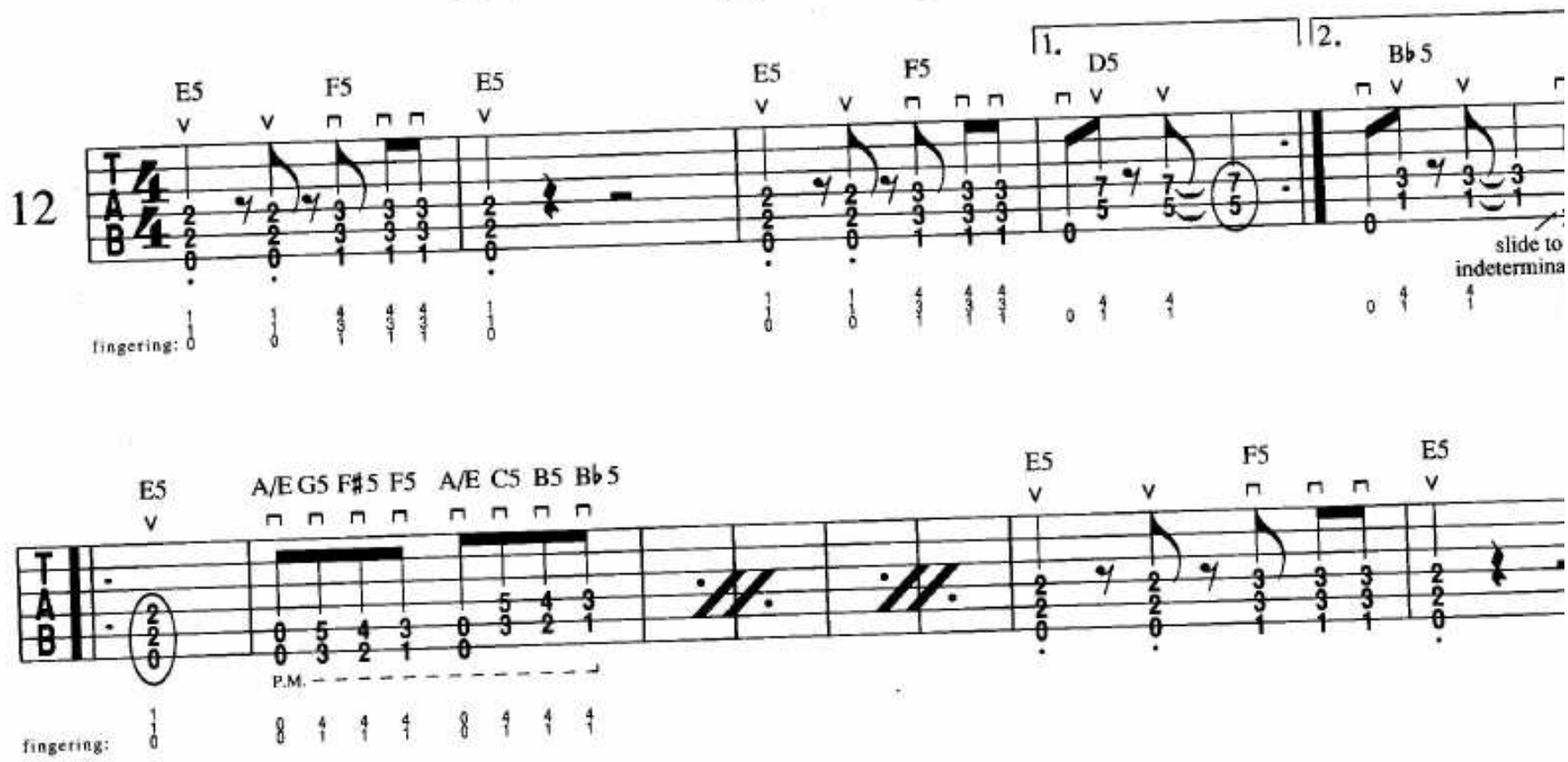


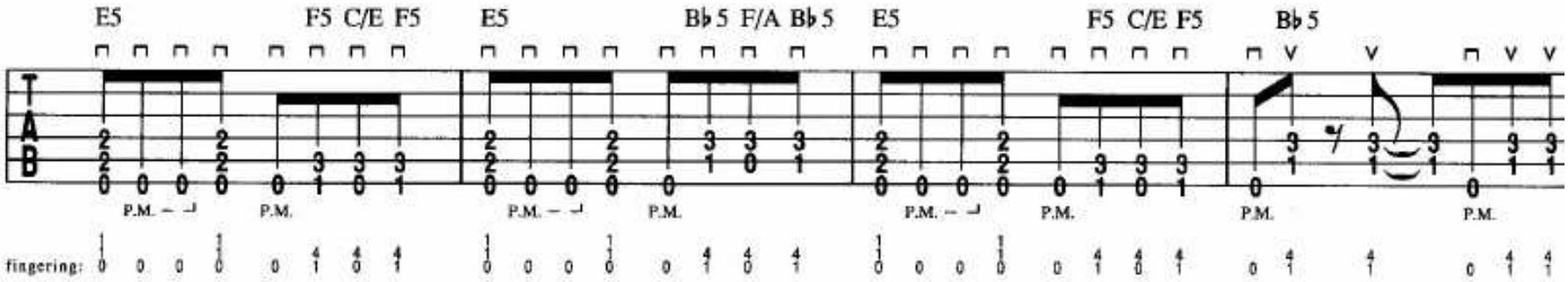
Number 11 uses another shifting rhythm. Here, the mutes are played with downstrokes while the accented chords are played with upstrokes to make them stand out better against the mutes. Also, the dotted quarter note is introduced. Since a dot placed after a note increases its value by one-half, a dotted quarter note will be one and a half beats — the same as a quarter note tied to an eighth note. The abbreviation *accel.* stands for accelerando and means to speed up.

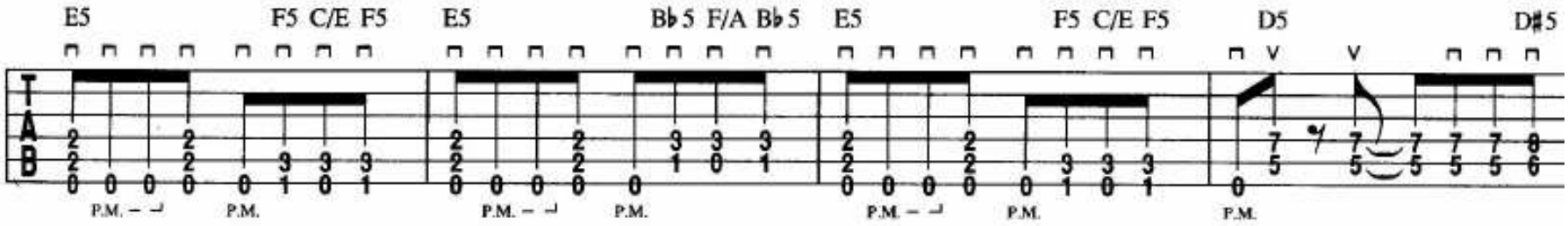


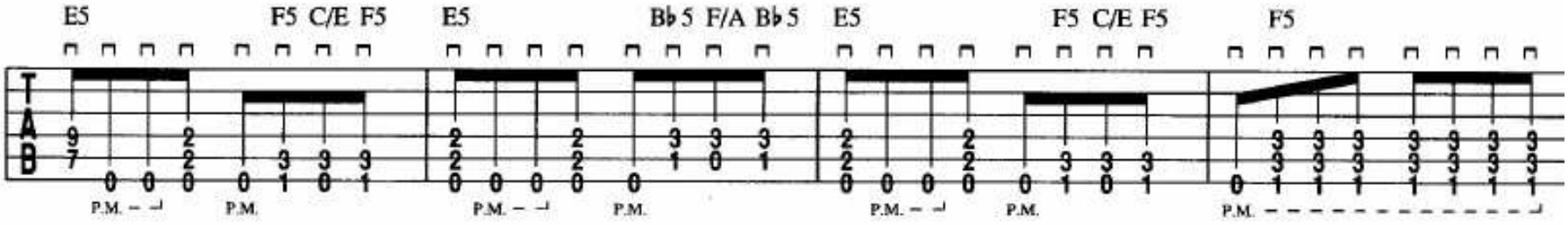
You should notice a slightly different sound when the chords are picked with upstrokes because the higher notes of the chord are favored, but it is a subtle difference at best. Practice so that you can control your picking, but you're not "wrong" if your picking is different. It will give the music just a slightly different interpretation. In "All Things Repulsive" I have indicated the picking actually used, however, if you wish you may use all downstrokes.

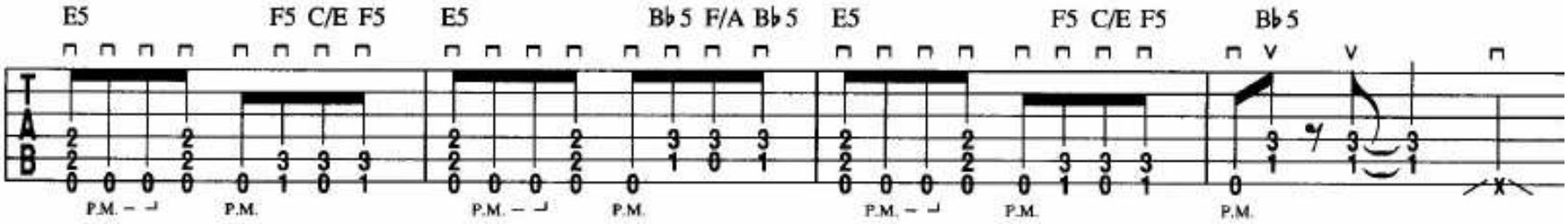
All Things Repulsive

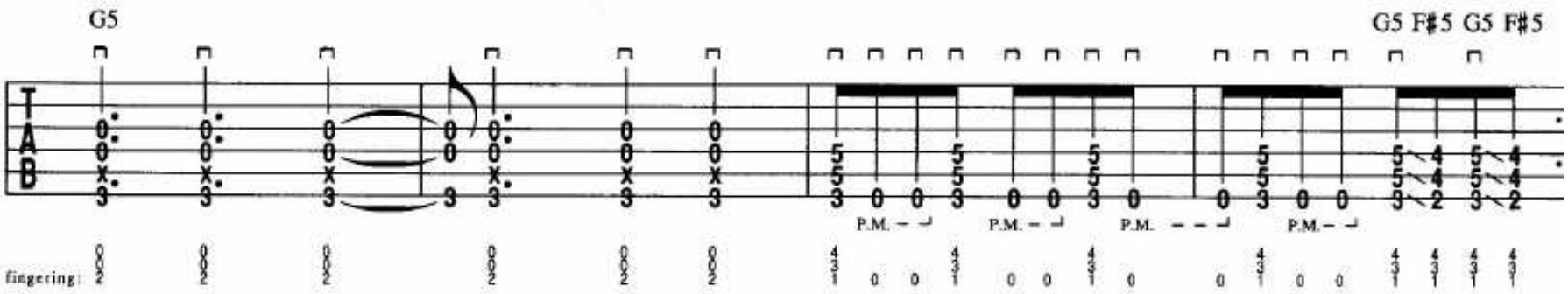


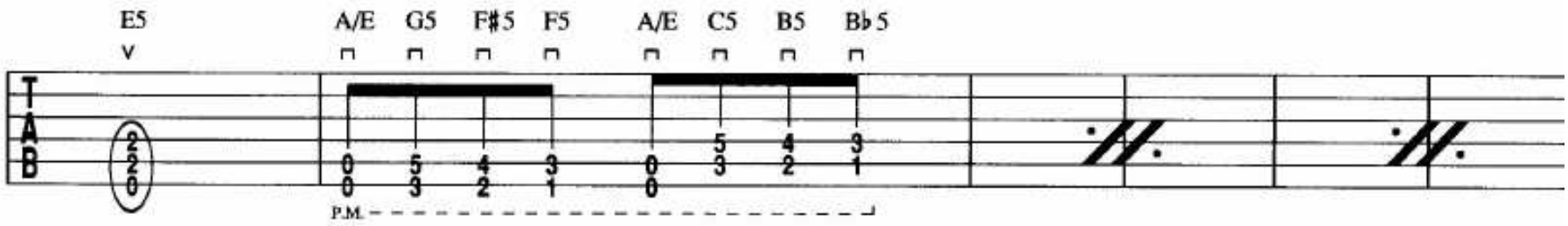

E5 F5 C/E F5 E5 B♭5 F/A B♭5 E5 F5 C/E F5 B♭5
P.M.
fingering: 1 1 1 1 4 4 4

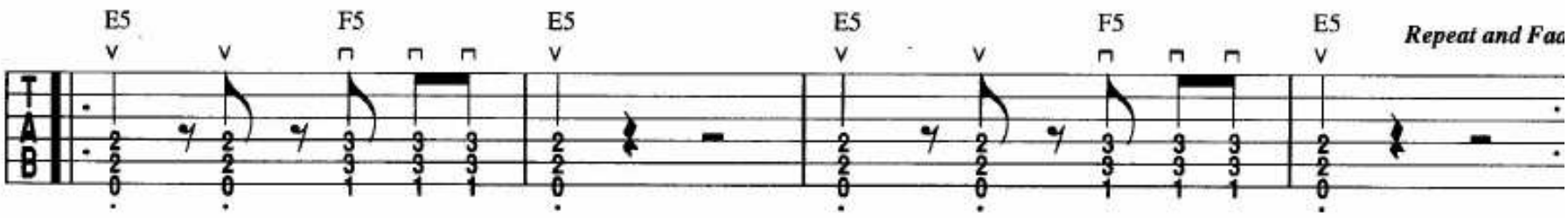

E5 F5 C/E F5 E5 B♭5 F/A B♭5 E5 F5 C/E F5 D5 D♯5
P.M.


E5 F5 C/E F5 E5 B♭5 F/A B♭5 E5 F5 C/E F5 F5
P.M.


E5 F5 C/E F5 E5 B♭5 F/A B♭5 E5 F5 C/E F5 B♭5
P.M.


G5 G5 F♯5 G5 F♯5
P.M.
fingering: 0 0 0 4 4 4

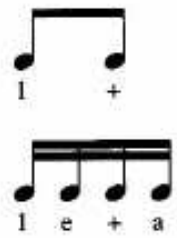

E5 A/E G5 F♯5 F5 A/E C5 B5 B♭5
P.M.


E5 F5 E5 E5 F5 E5
Repeat and Fad

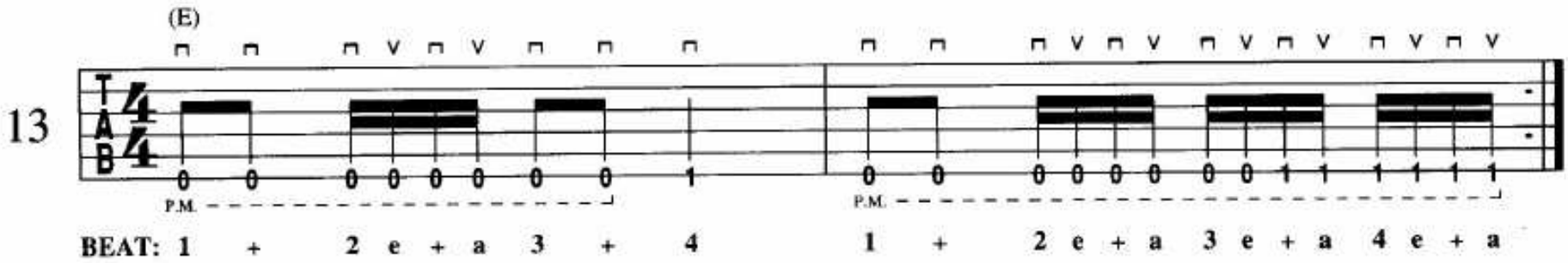
CHAPTER TWO — Sixteenth and Triplet Subdivisions

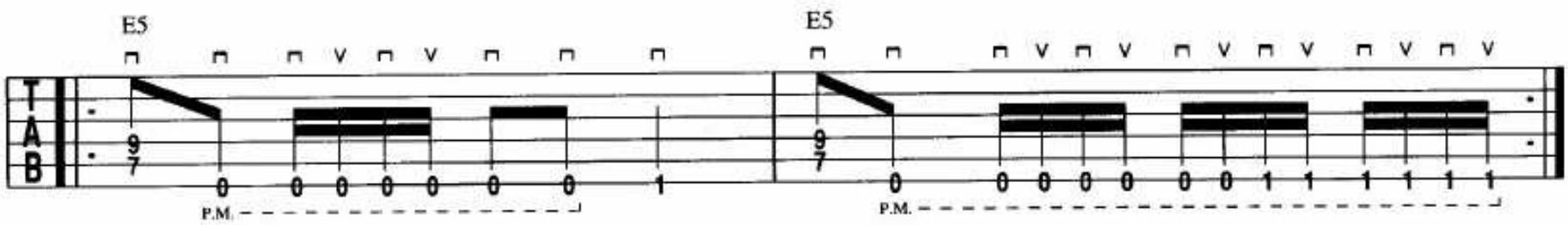
Alternating Picking

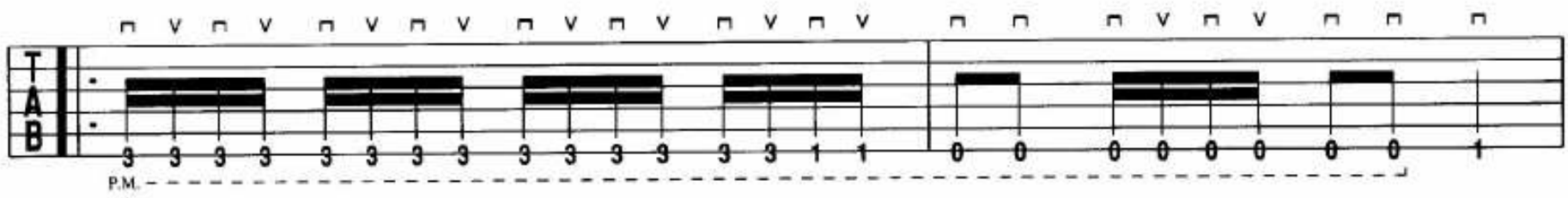
Sixteenth notes are four notes per beat — twice as fast as eighth notes at the same tempo. The best way to count them is "one-e-and-ah, two-e-and-ah, three-e-and-ah, four-e-and-ah," so that you can more easily keep the count of the downbeats of the measure. Notice that the downbeat (one) falls on the first sixteenth and the upbeat (and) falls on the third sixteenth.

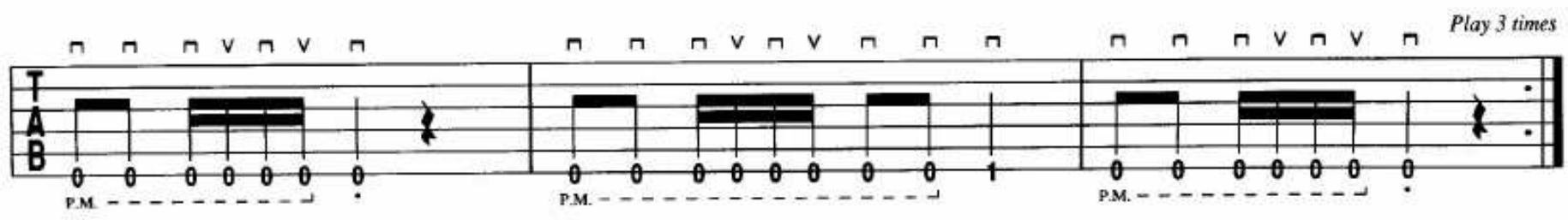


You can pick sixteenths with all downstrokes if the tempo is slow, however, at faster tempos you will need to use alternate picking. With alternate picking, you catch each upstroke as well as the downstroke so that you can play twice as fast without moving the pick any faster.





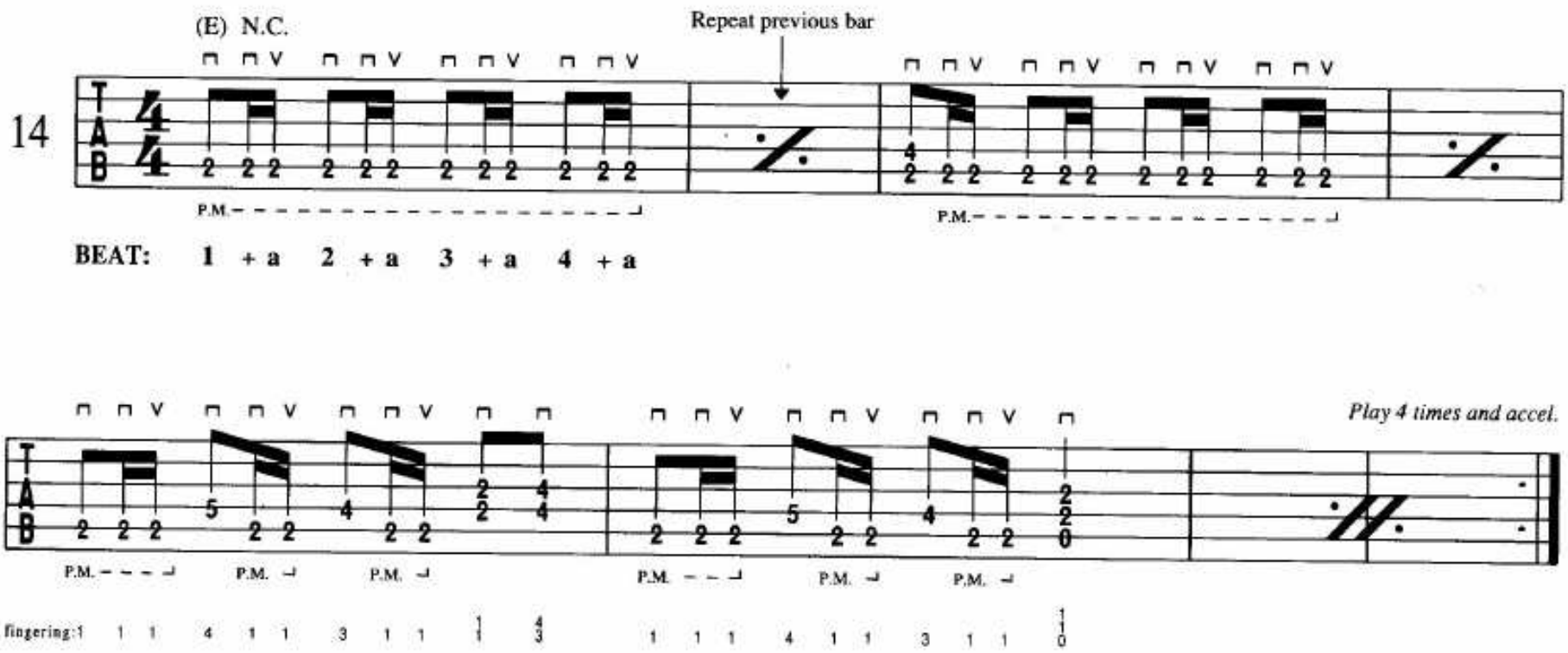




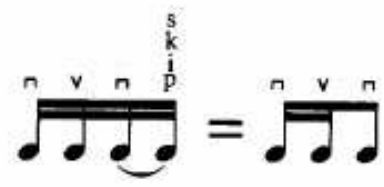
Gallup and Reverse Gallup

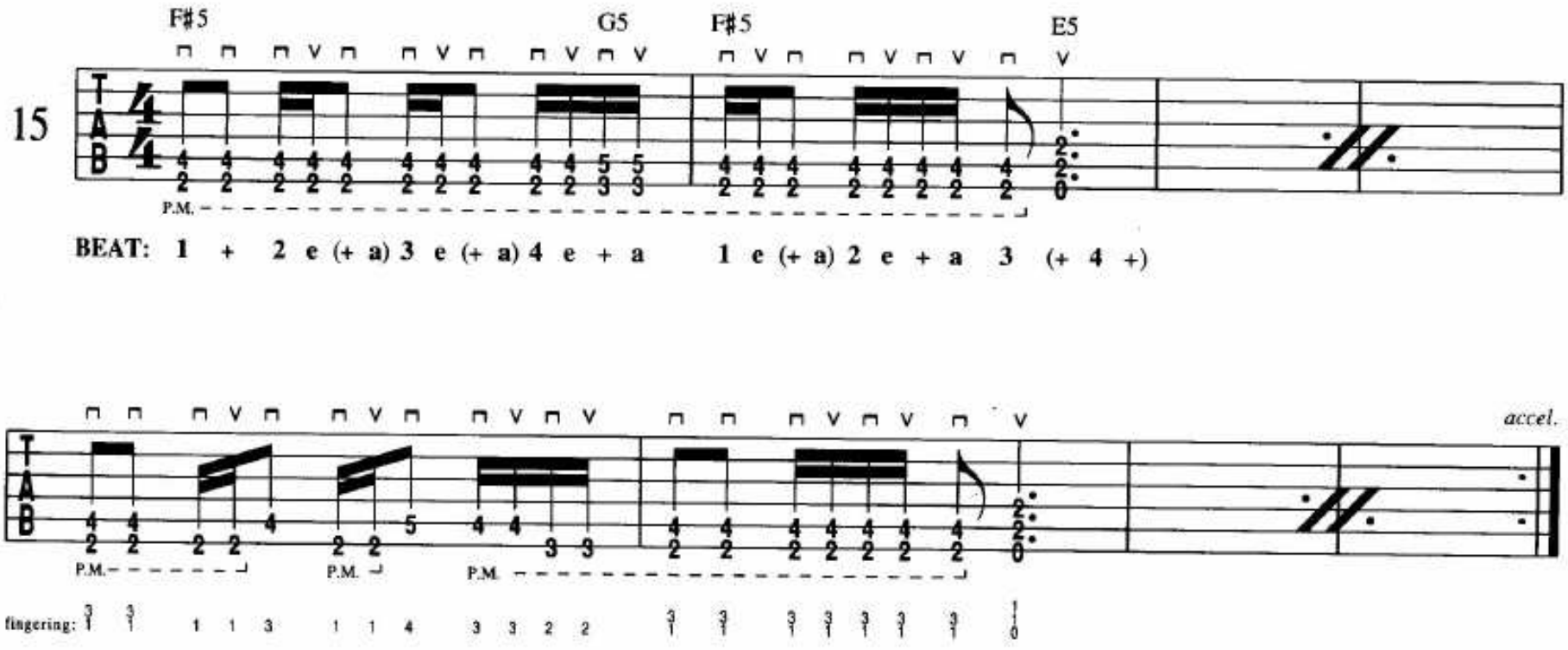
When you take four sixteenths and tie the first two together you have an eighth note followed by two sixteenths. Skip the upstroke that falls on the second sixteenth, but don't change the picking for the rest of the notes.

Played one after another, this rhythmic figure sounds like a gallup.

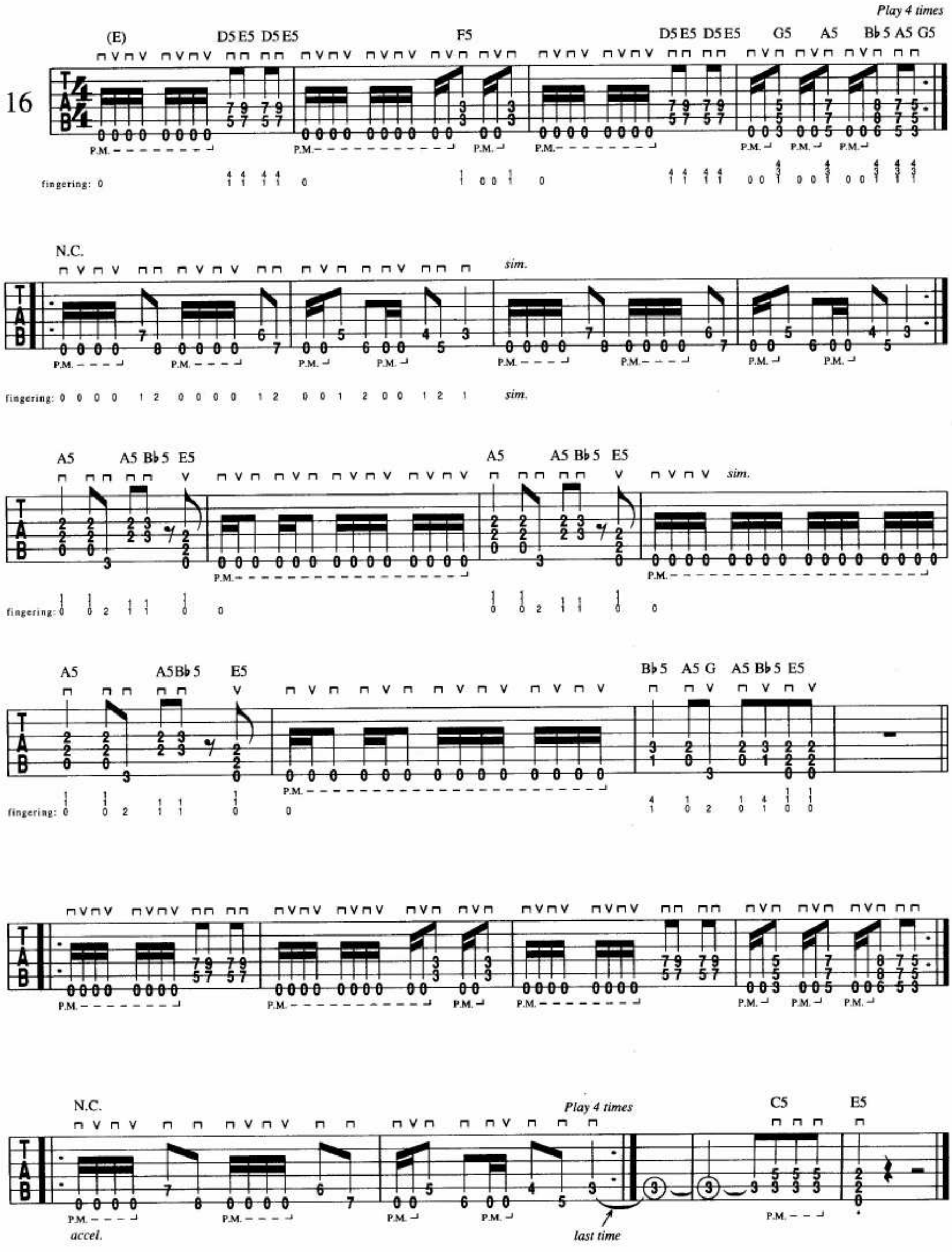


The reverse of the "gallup" rhythm would put the tie between the last two sixteenths of each beat. In this case you have the sixteenth notes first, then the eighth note is on the upbeat:



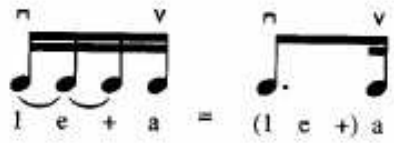


Number 16 uses both the gallup and reverse gallup as well as straight sixteenth note figures.

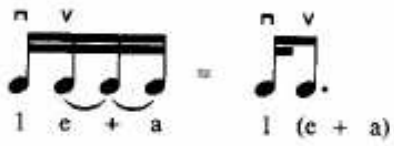


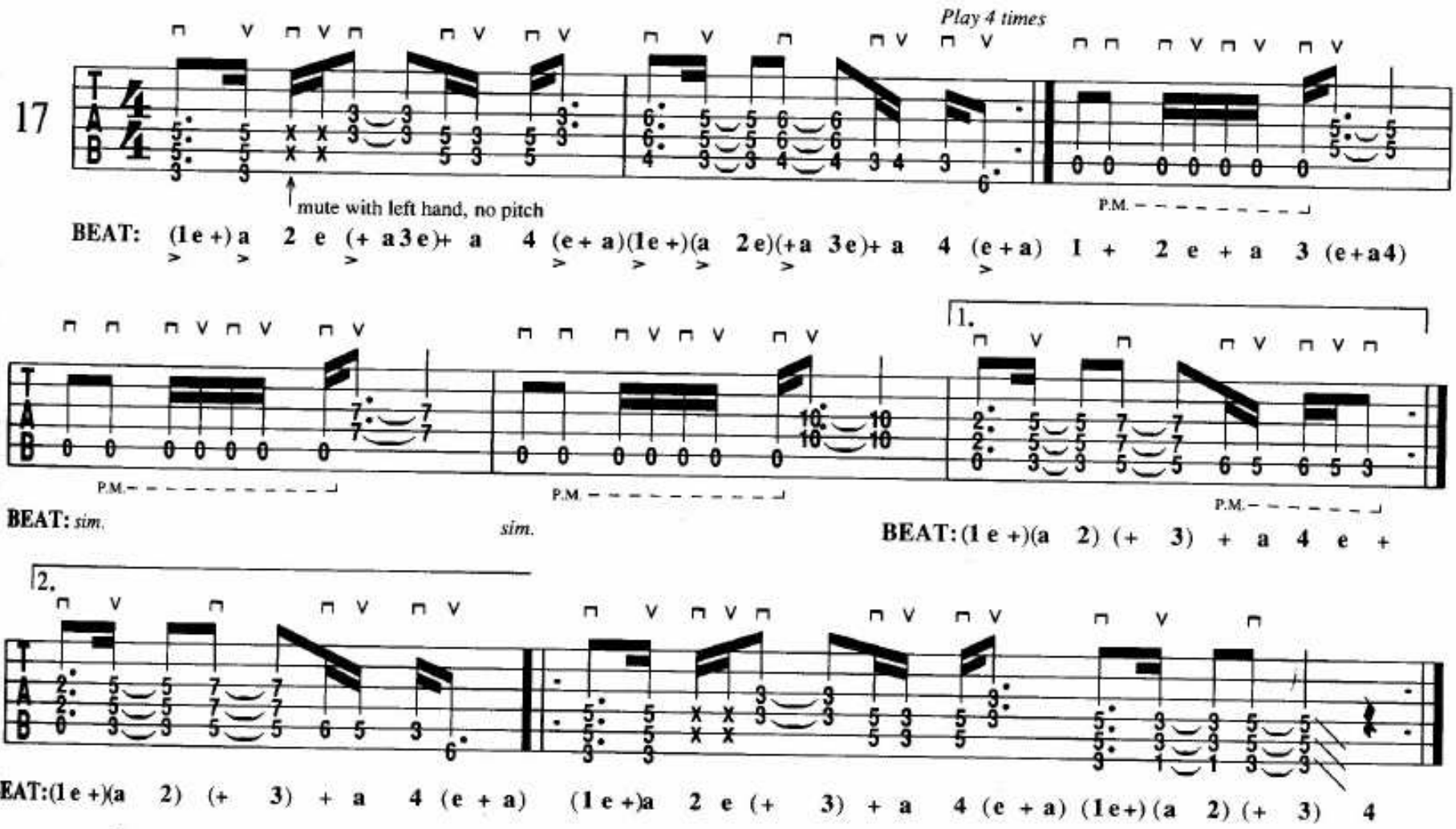
Syncopation and Offbeats

So far, accents have been confined to downbeats and upbeats (1 e + a). Now we'll look at accenting the second and fourth sixteenth note "offbeats" (1 e + a). In the first example below, the dotted eighth note is introduced. Since a dot increases the length of a note by one half, a dotted eighth will be 50% longer than a regular eighth note — the same length as three tied sixteenths.

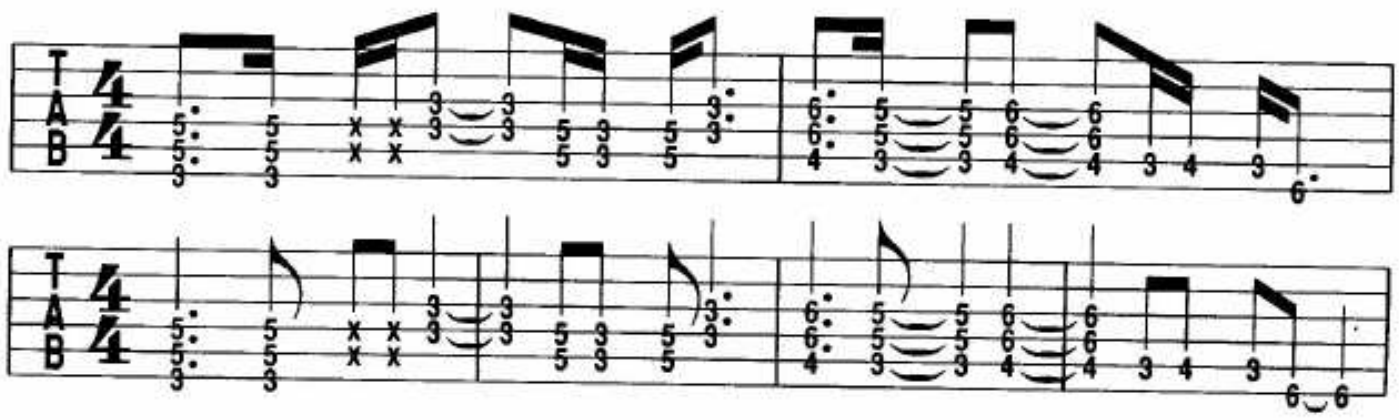


When the figure is reversed with the sixteenth note up front, you have this:



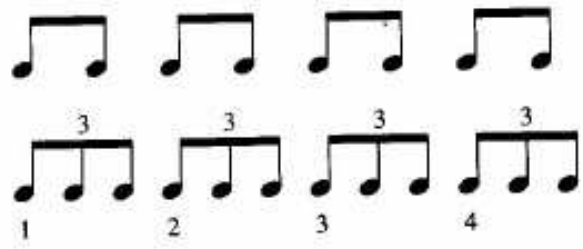


If all the time values are cut in half (sixteenths become eighths, eighths are replaced with quarters, quarters become halves, etc.), the riff would be half as fast. However, if the tempo is doubled you will be back to the original tempo, and the riff will sound exactly the same—except the beat will be twice as fast (double time). Since you already know eighth note syncopations, you can use this principle to help understand sixteenth note syncopations. Below, the first line from number 17 is rewritten, first as it appears above, then in eighth notes with all the time values cut in half. If played in double time, line two will sound exactly the same as line one.



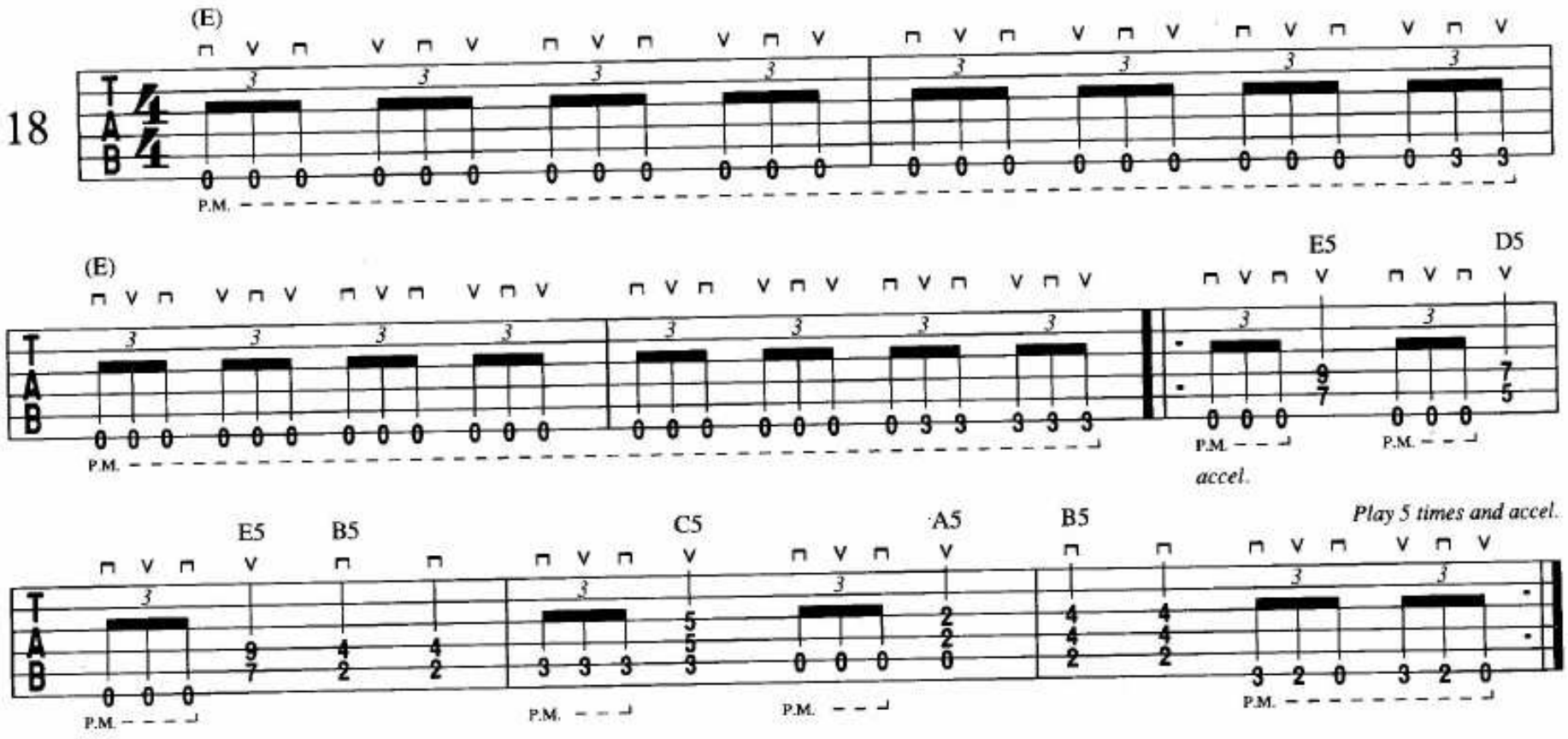
Triplets

A triplet is three notes evenly spaced where normally two notes would be. For example, eighth notes are two notes per beat, and eighth note triplets are three evenly spaced notes per beat.



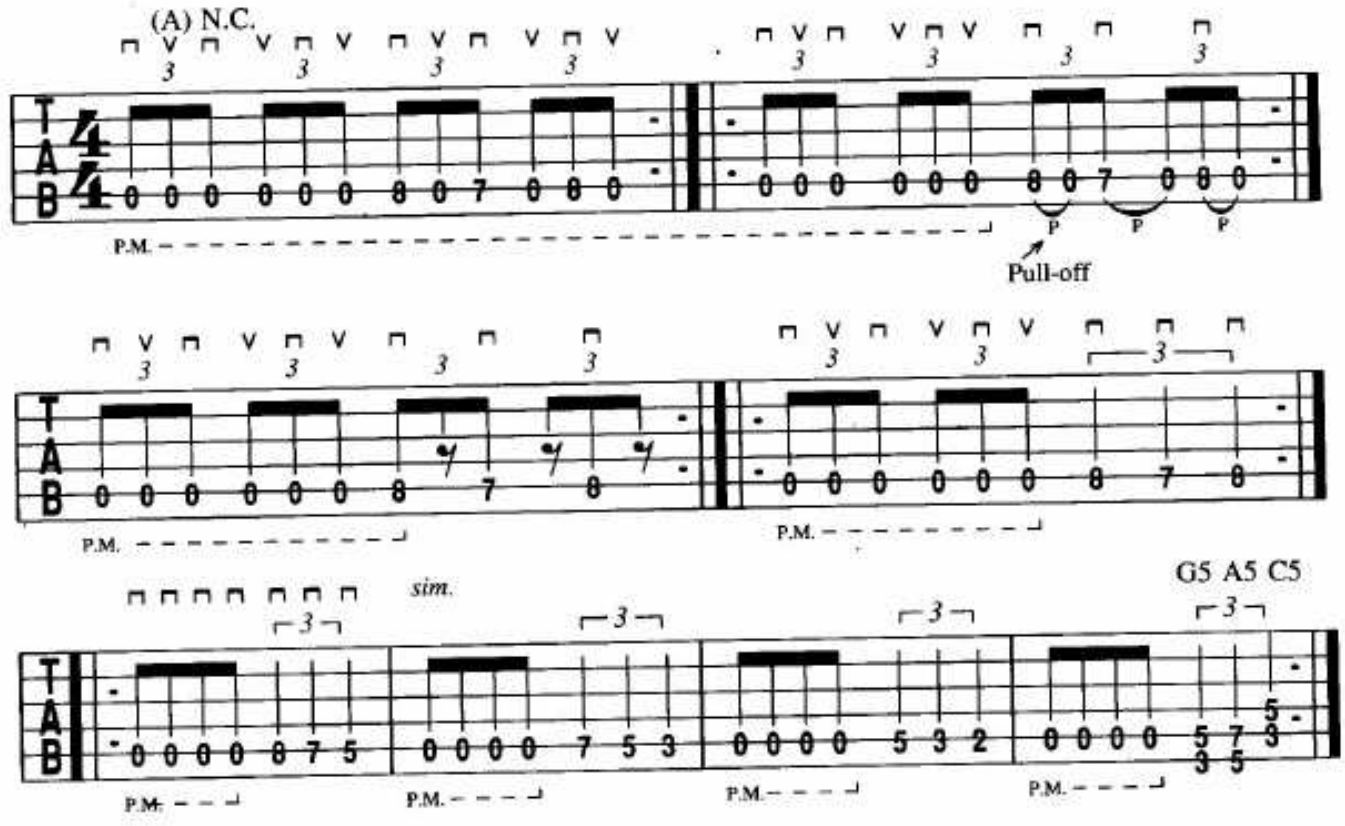
Just like sixteenths, triplets may be played with all downstrokes when the beat is slow, but at faster tempos you'll need to use alternate picking.

18



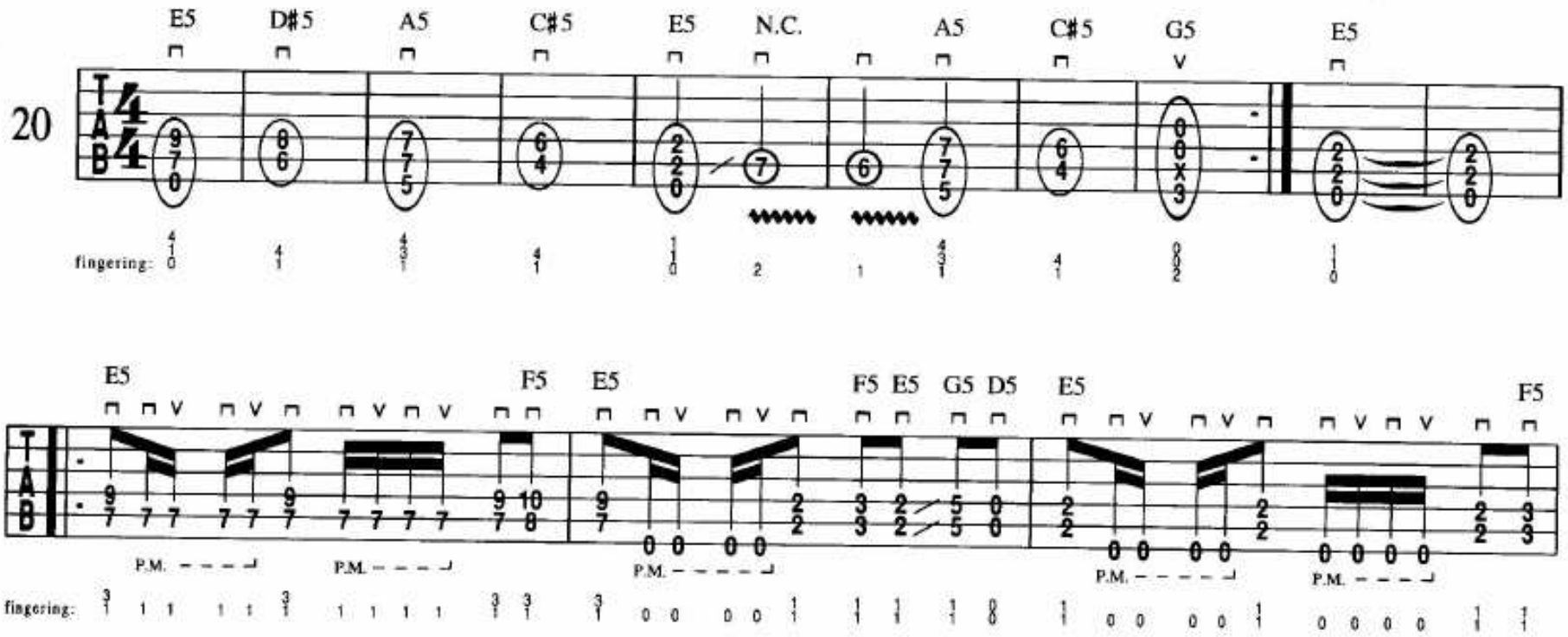
Quarter note triplets are three notes evenly spaced in two beats. The group of exercises below will help you get the feel for how the beat falls between the second and third notes of the triplet. Keep your foot tapping on the downbeats! In the second measure, a *pull-off* is indicated. Pull your finger down and off of the string to sound the second, lower note, instead of picking it.

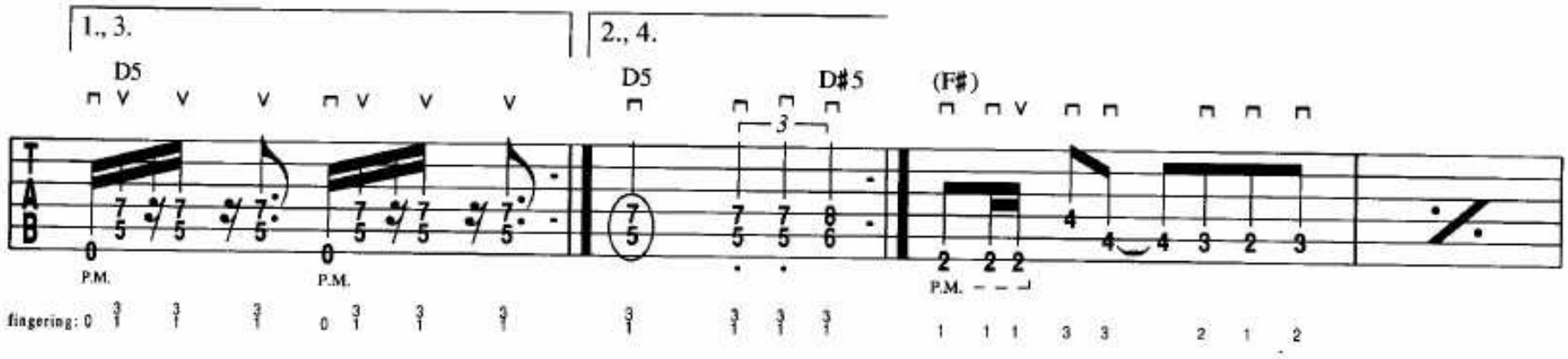
19

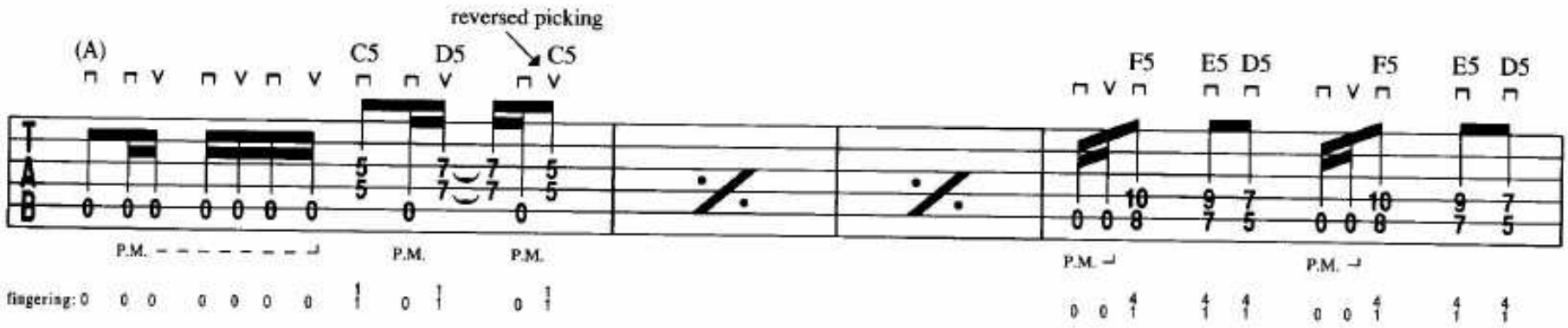


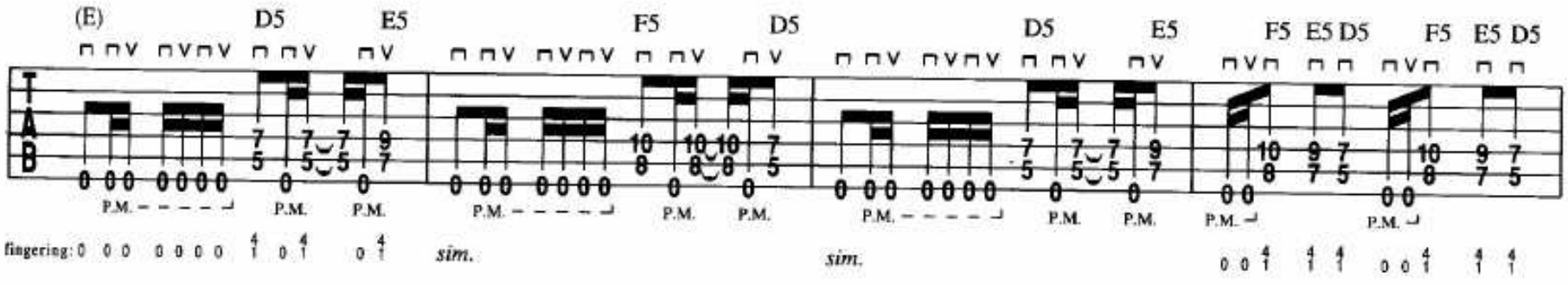
Vibrato, a series of small bends centered on a particular pitch, is introduced in the first line of "Worm Juice" below. Pull the string down slightly, causing it to bend and it's pitch to raise, then release the bend back to its unbent position several times. Slowly speed up your vibrato until it sounds like that used below. Vibrato is indicated by the symbol ~~~.

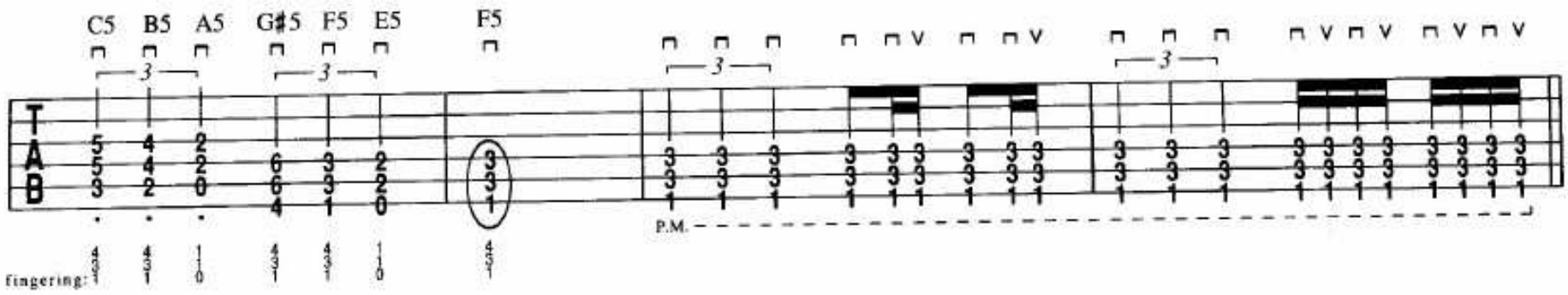
Worm Juice And Bat's Heads

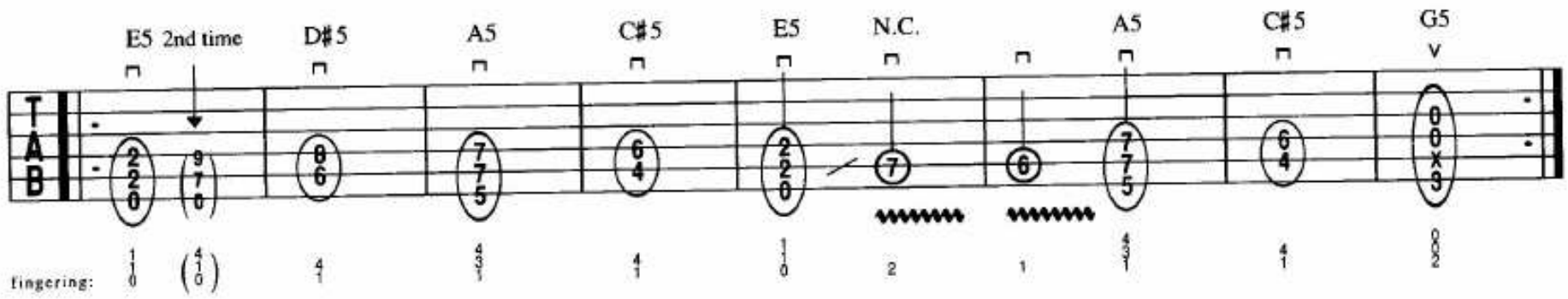


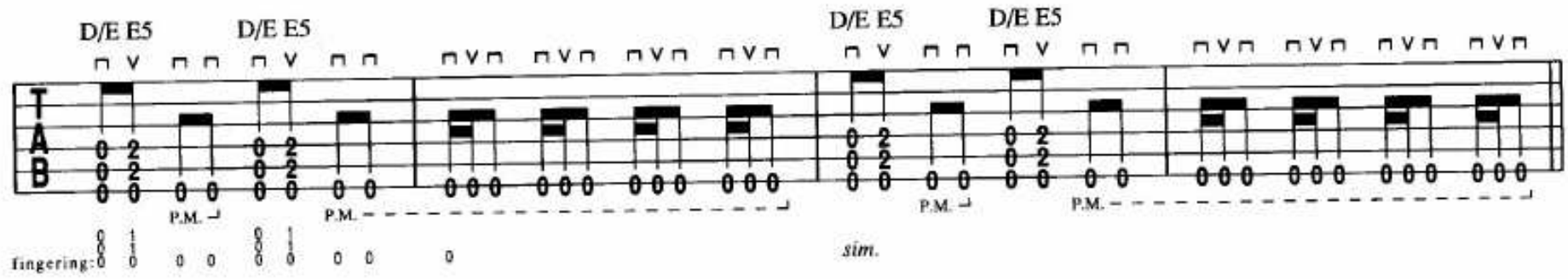


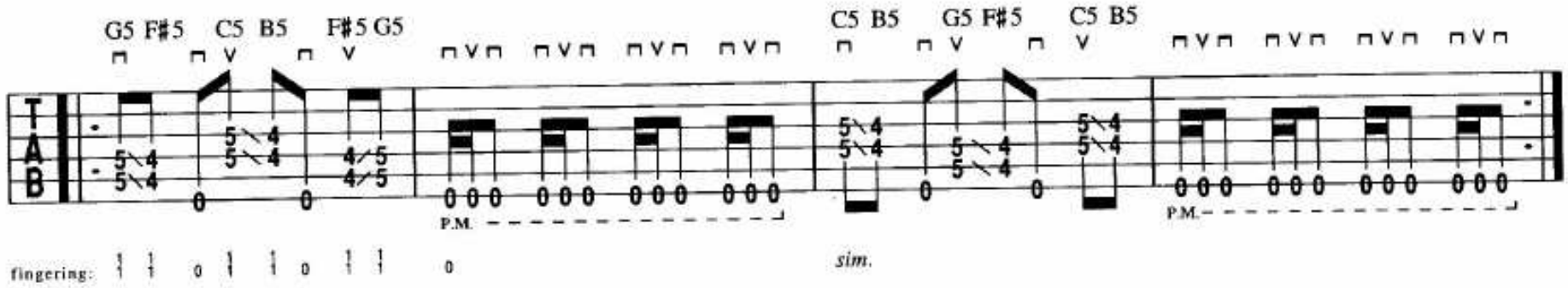


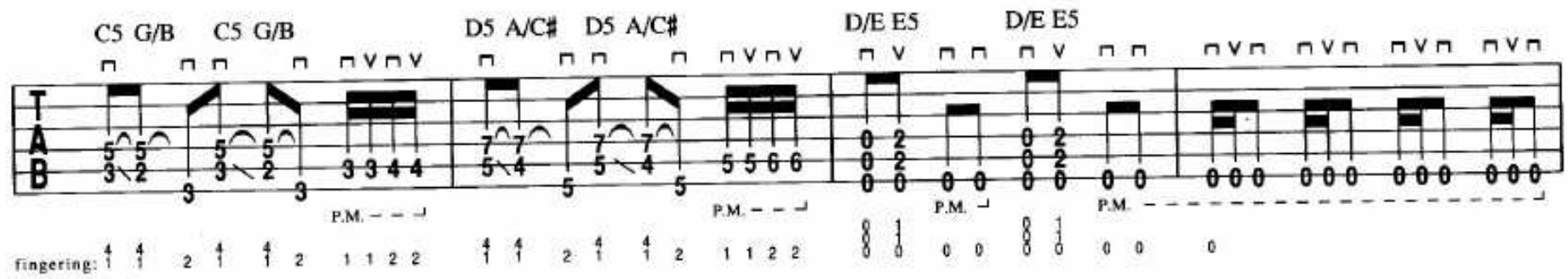


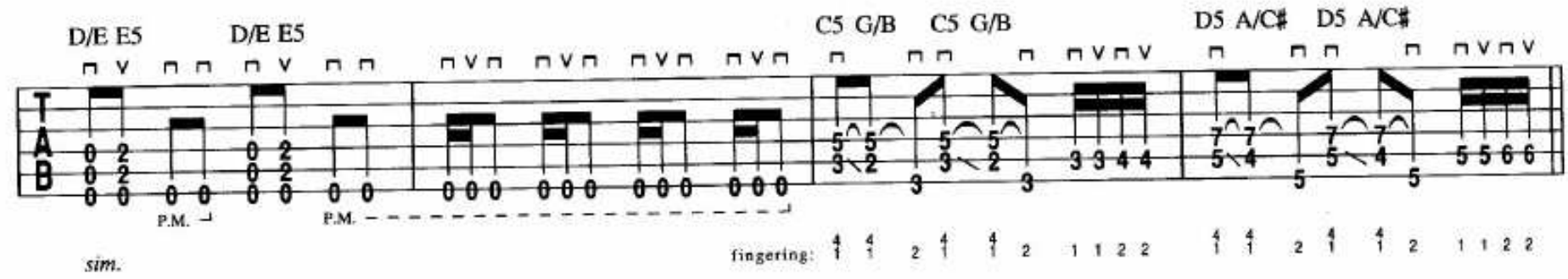

C5 B5 A5 G♯5 F5 E5 F5
3
3
3
3
P.M.
fingering:

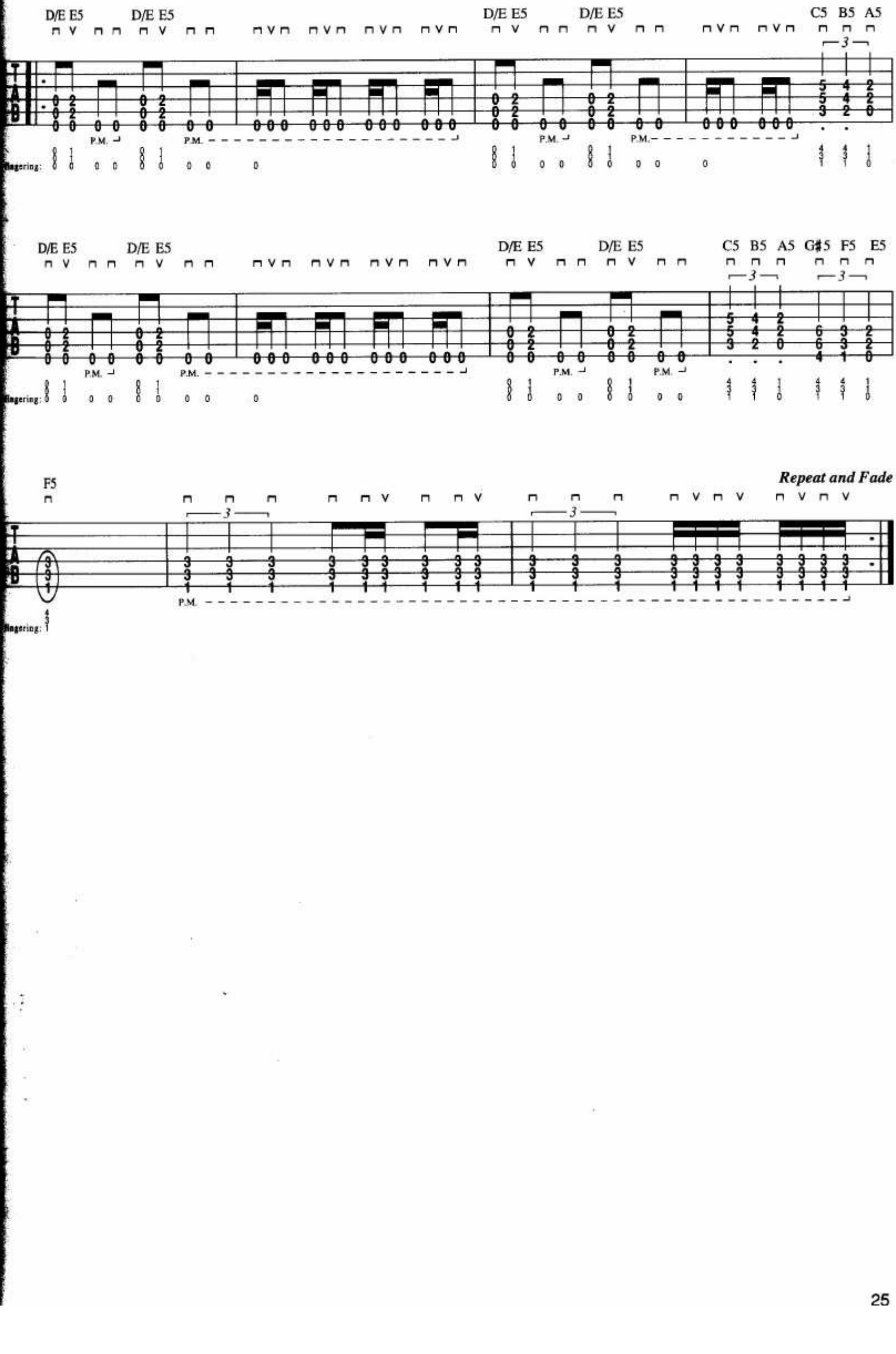

E5 2nd time
D♯5
A5
C♯5
E5
N.C.
A5
C♯5
G5
fingering:


D/E E5
D/E E5
D/E E5
D/E E5
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
fingering:
sim.


G5 F♯5 C5 B5 F♯5 G5
C5 B5 G5 F♯5 C5 B5
P.M.
P.M.
fingering:
sim.


C5 G/B C5 G/B
D5 A/C♯ D5 A/C♯
D/E E5 D/E E5
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
fingering:


D/E E5
D/E E5
C5 G/B C5 G/B
D5 A/C♯ D5 A/C♯
P.M.
P.M.
sim.
fingering:


D/E E5
D/E E5
D/E E5
D/E E5
C5 B5 A5
P.M.
Fingering:
D/E E5
D/E E5
D/E E5
D/E E5
C5 B5 A5 G♯5 F5 E5
P.M.
Fingering:
F5
Repeat and Fade
P.M.
Fingering:

CHAPTER THREE

Tonal Center

In music there is usually one note, the *keynote*, that serves as a tonal center. It is home base, and the other notes are seen in relation to it. This style of music most commonly uses E as a tonal center. (Sometimes the guitars are tuned down a half-step or a whole-step, in which case the keynote would actually be E♭ or D respectively.) A chord built on the keynote is called the tonic. (For example, the E chord is the tonic in the key of E.)

Common Scales

Scales are patterns of pitches. These pitches, or tones, are numbered to show their relationship to the root of the scale. The scales shown below are in the key of E (with E as the root), but they may begin on any note. The major scale is shown first because other scales are seen as alterations of it. A "W" means a distance of a whole step (two frets) and an "H" indicates a half-step (one fret).

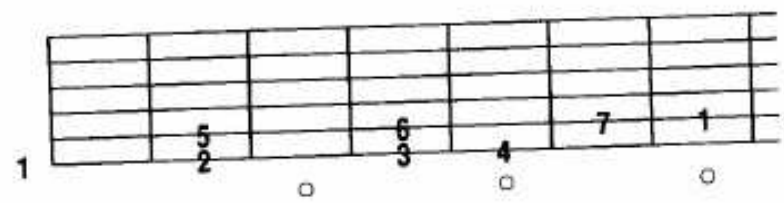
E major:

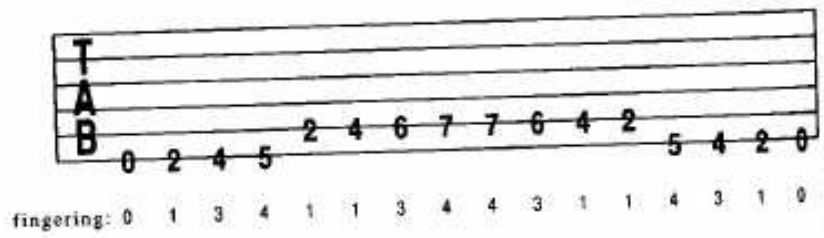
W W H W W W H

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1

E F♯ G♯ A B C♯ D♯ E

21





The natural minor scale is often used in metal. This scale is formed by flatting, or lowering, the 3rd, 6th and 7th steps of the major scale.

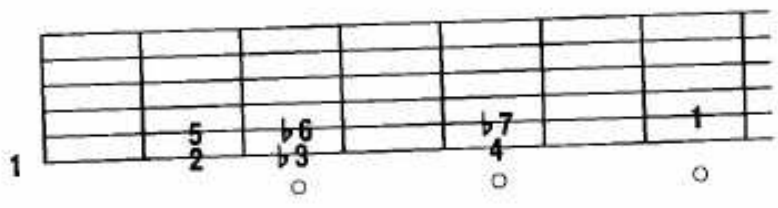
E natural minor:

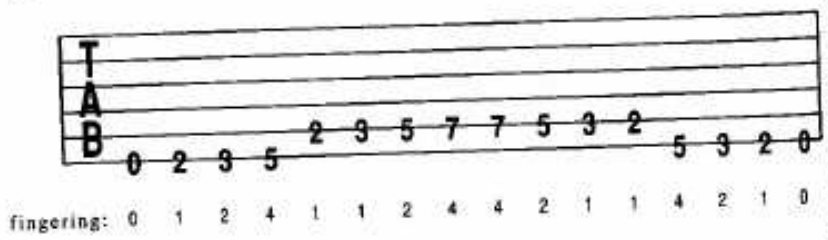
W H W W H W W

1 2 ♭3 4 5 ♭6 ♭7 1

E F♯ G A B C D E

22





Flatting the 2nd step of the natural minor scale produces a scale commonly used in thrash called the *phrygian mode*. (A mode is a series of pitches just like a scale, however, a mode implies that it is formed by displacing the root of a scale. For example, the phrygian mode is formed if you take the major scale and consider the third note to be the root. Phrygian mode is said to be the third mode of the major scale. For more information about modes, see *Heavy Metal Lead Guitar Volume 2*.)

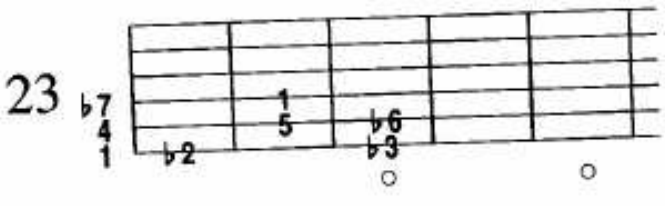
E phrygian:

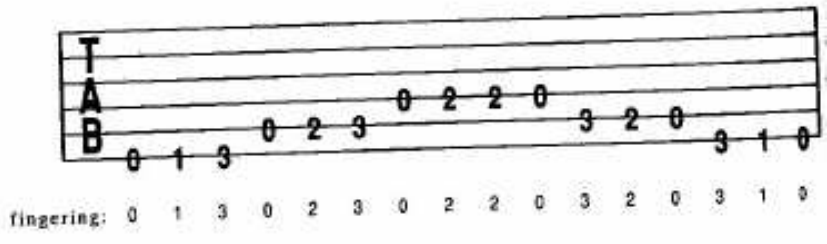
H W W W H W W

1 ♭2 ♭3 4 5 ♭6 ♭7 1

E F G A B C D E

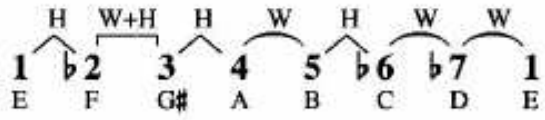
23





Raising the 3rd note of the phrygian mode creates an interesting scale with an exotic Middle-Eastern or Spanish flavor.

E spanish-flamenco:



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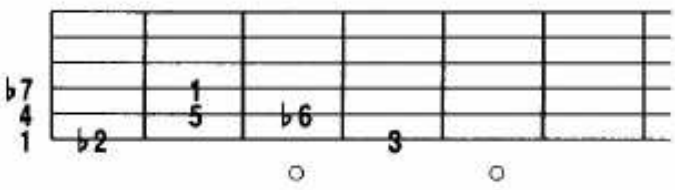
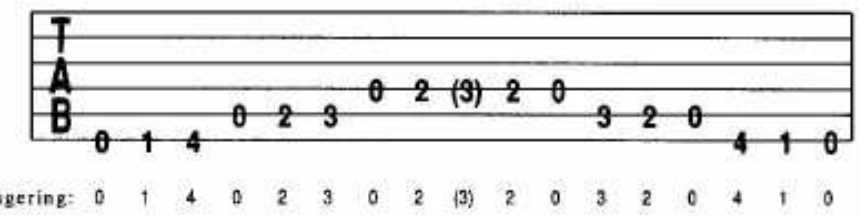
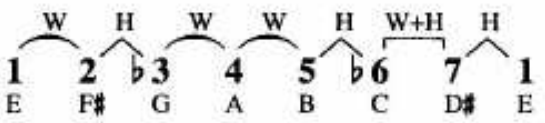




The harmonic minor scale is a natural minor scale with a raised 7th step. It also happens to be the 4th mode of the Spanish-flamenco scale. (Or, depending on your perspective, the Spanish-flamenco scale is the 5th mode of the harmonic minor scale.)

E harmonic minor:



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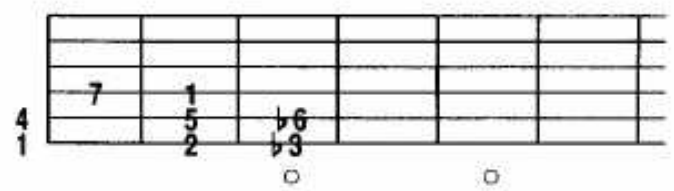
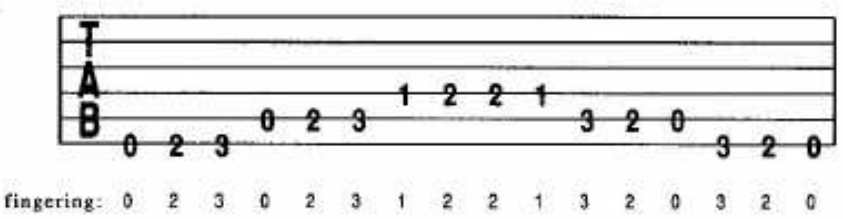
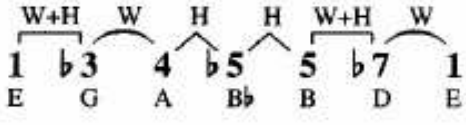




A *pentatonic* scale is a five tone scale. (The previous scales have all been *diatonic*, or seven-tone scales.) The minor pentatonic scale is the natural minor scale without the second and sixth tones. The "blues" scale is a minor pentatonic with the addition of the ♭5 tone, shown in parenthesis.

E minor pentatonic:
(and "blues")



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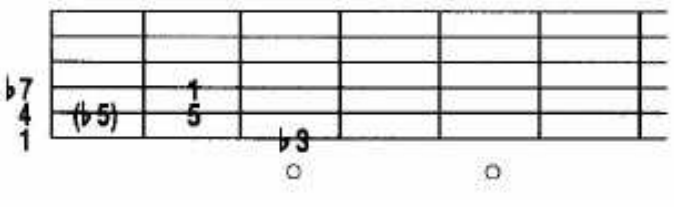
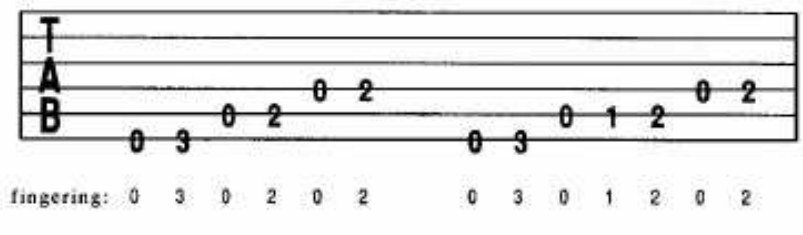
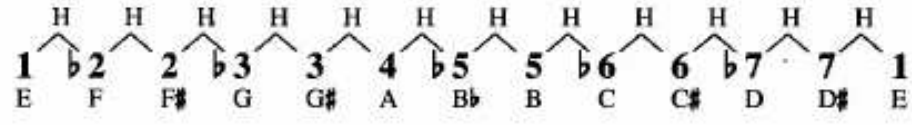




The chromatic scale uses every half-step and is *atonal* (gives no tonal center). All the notes are equally distant. Usually, small sections of this scale are added within the tonality of another scale, to add or alter notes. An example of this use of the chromatic scale can be seen in the "blues" scale above – the tones 4, ♭5, and 5 are chromatic.

E chromatic:



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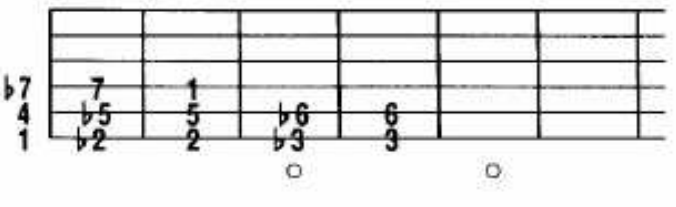
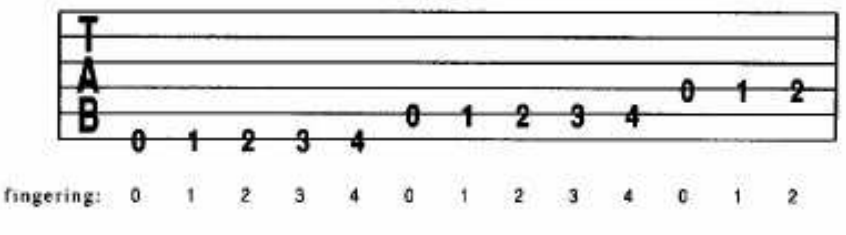
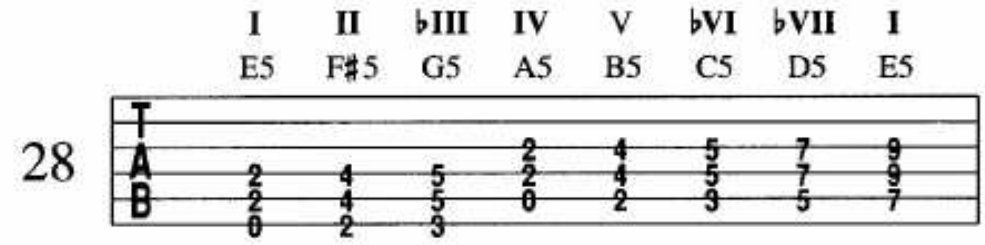


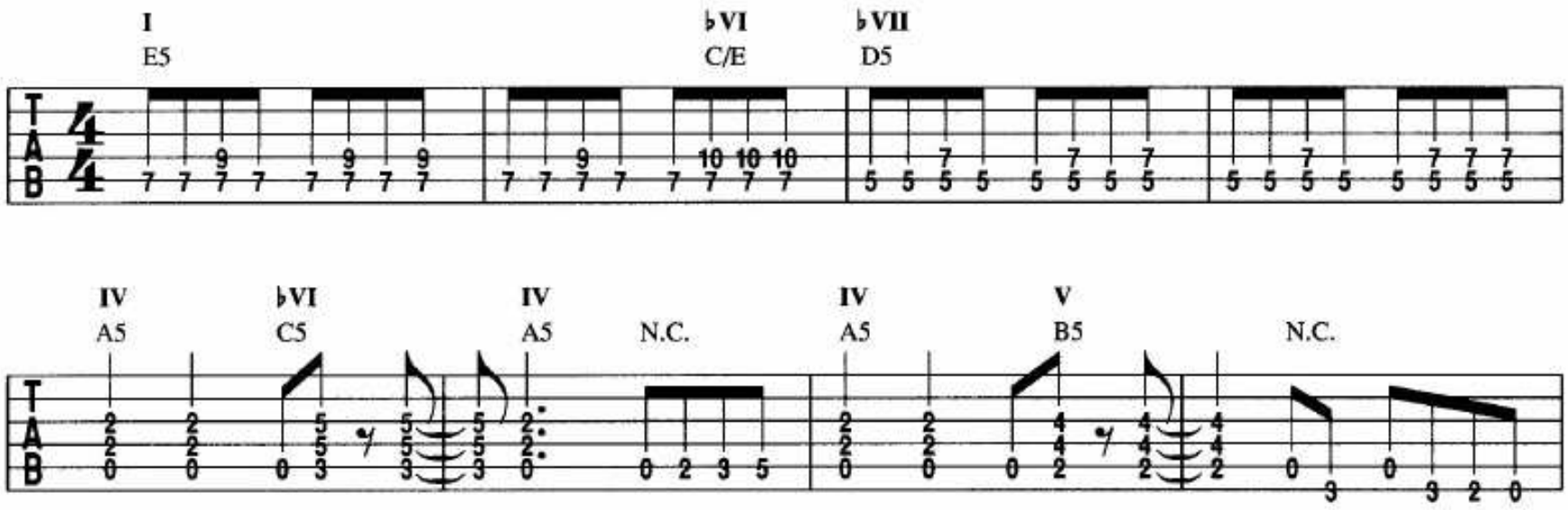


Chord Progressions and Riffs

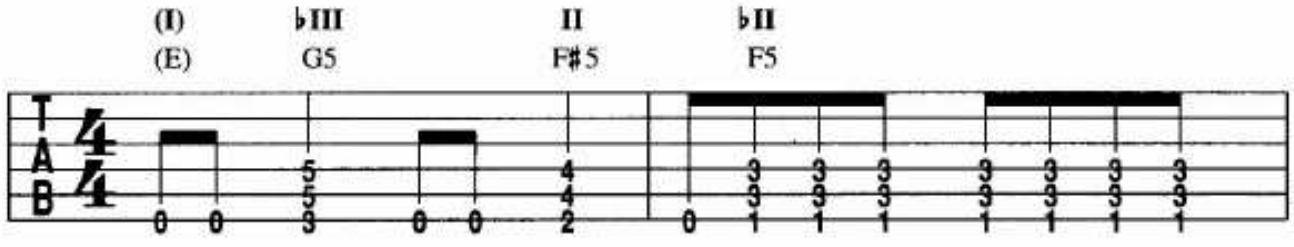
When chords are built on notes of a scale, roman numerals are used. For example, the power chords built on the notes of the E natural minor scale are below.



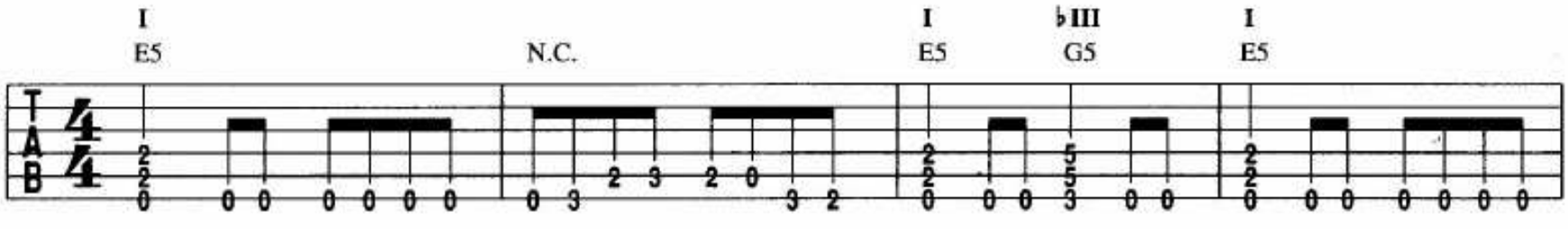
Riff number 11 back on page 16 is rewritten below, with the chord progression in roman numerals denoting each chord's relationship to the tonic chord. Notice that the progression follows the E minor scale above.



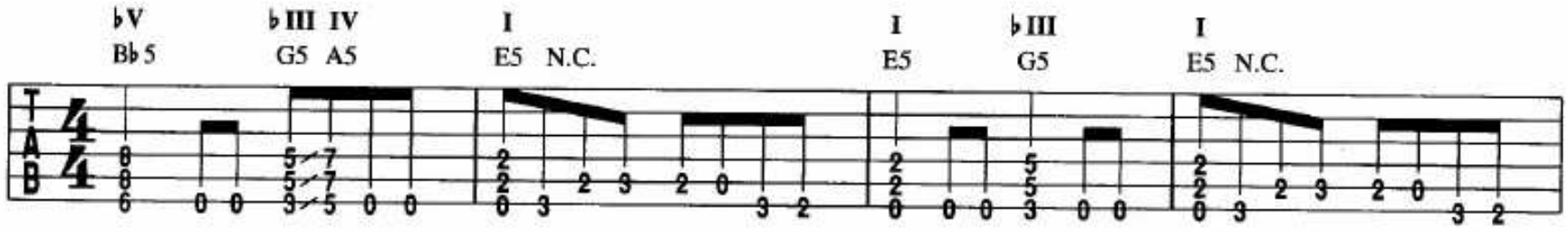
In number 6, on page 11, the tonality (E) is first established with two mutes, and although no E chord is used, the muted E notes maintain the tonal center. The progression in the first line begins in the natural minor scale, then goes chromatic, introducing ♭II borrowed from the phrygian mode.



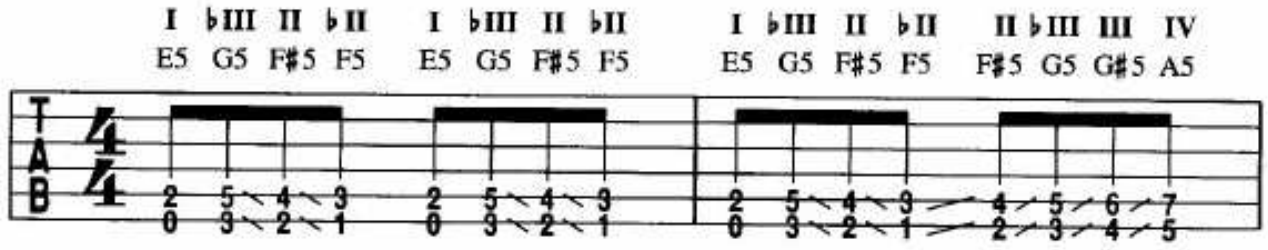
The second line of number 6 begins on the I chord (or *tonic* chord) for one bar, followed by a riff that moves through the E natural minor scale. The third and fourth bars follow the progression I- ♭III-I.



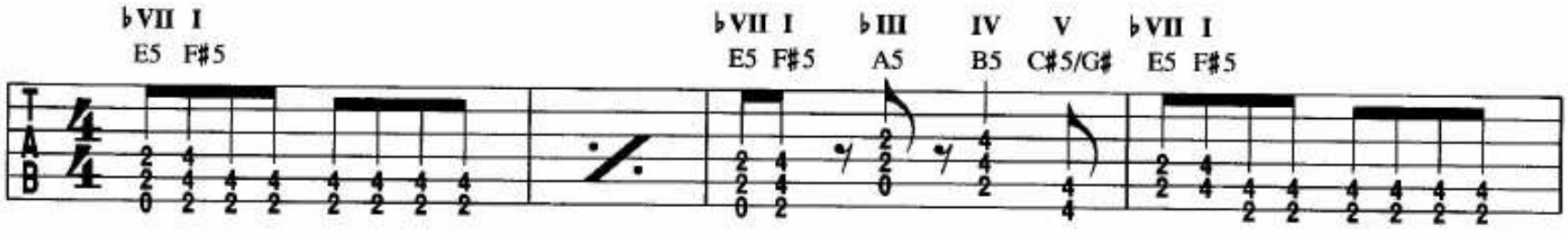
The third line introduces ♭V and IV from the blues scale.



The fourth line recalls the theme from line one, then the last line introduces a similar chromatic idea. The chords are: I -♭III - II - ♭II three times, then II - ♭III - III - IV.



Number 8 begins in the key of E, but after eight bars the tonal center moves up to F♯. The chords in the second line of number 8 are ♭VII - I, ♭VII - I, VII - I - ♭III - IV - V, ♭VII - I.



Now go back through each riff and write in the roman numerals above each chord. To correctly number a chord, you must first locate the key. If the key is other than E, you must shift the scale patterns up to be based on the new keynote. (Move the scale pattern so that the number 1 is on the new root, but maintain the same relationships between notes.) After you find the correct key, look for the root of each chord and find that note's number in the scale. If the riff favors a particular scale, write in the name of that scale.

Numbers 9, 10, 12, 13 and 16 are in E. Number 14 is in B, number 15 in F♯, and number 17 begins in G and changes to A, then back to G. Number 20, "Worm Juice and Bats' Heads," implies a temporary change of tonality when it moves to A in the fourth line. In the original key (E), A is the IV chord, so you can consider the whole section to be based on IV. However, on that IV chord there is a (I) - ♭III - IV - ♭III riff that views its home base as A.

"Melodic" Principles

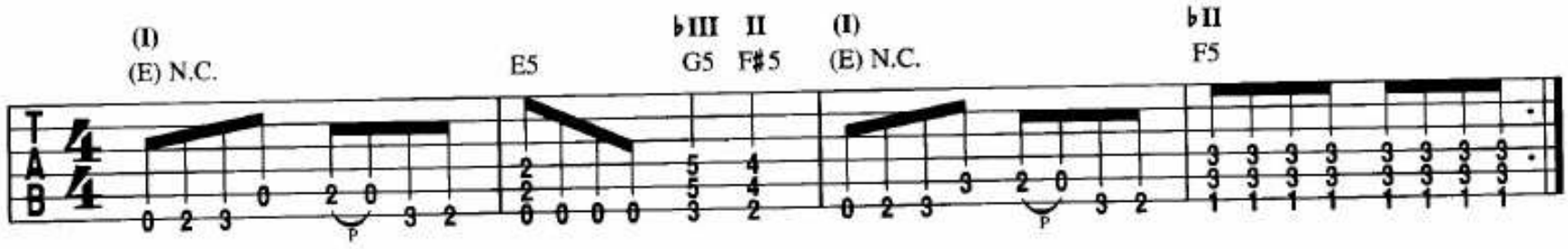
The term "melodic" usually refers to a melody that is particularly striking or beautiful, catchy and easily singable. With this definition, the following principles may be more appropriately called "anti-melodic" principles than melodic principles! However, in a broader musical sense, melody refers to any succession of pitches with a certain rhythm, regardless of whether it is easily singable or pleasing to most people — any sequence of notes can be said to be a "melody." With this broader definition, the following are in fact melodic principles.

Chromatic "Ear Twisting"

Chromatic tones that are out of the established key are often used. (i.e., E natural minor is implied and then F or C♯ is introduced.) Most Western music uses diatonic scales so our ears generally find those scales, particularly the major and natural minor, to sound the most natural. We are not so accustomed to hearing the chromatic tones "in between" the diatonic tones. When the sound of a diatonic scale is established, then some of these chromatic "in between" tones are introduced, they sound strange. The notes "offending" the diatonic key pull your ear strongly and twist your natural sense of melody.

For example, look again at the first line in number 6. E natural minor is first suggested by the progression (I) - ♭III - II... Then comes the F in all its ugliness — a twisted, grotesque parody of melody, contorting all things proper and decent, altering the minds of the impressionable, and reeking total devastation upon the planet!!!!! The example below illustrates.

29

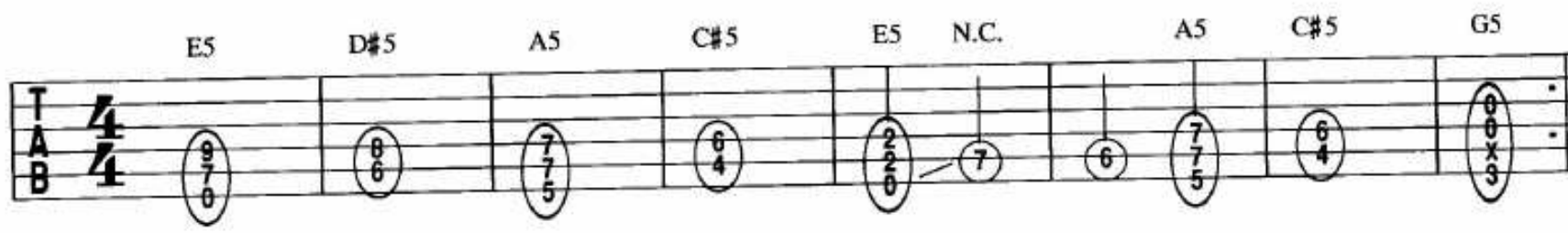


Melodic Dissonances

Notes that blend well together, like those in a power chord, are said to be *consonant*. Those that do not blend well together are *dissonant*. For example, the interval of a diminished 5th, i.e. E(1) to B♭(♭5), a minor 2nd, i.e. E(1) to F(♭2), and a major 7th, i.e. E(1) to D♯(7) are all examples of dissonances. If dissonant notes are played one after another (rather than at the same time) it is called a *melodic dissonance*. Melodic dissonances give odd or unusual sounding melodic leaps, where the notes sound disjointed.

Play the opening line to number 8 again, and notice the prevalence of E to B♭. In "All Things Repulsive" it again rears its ugly head in the last bar of the 1st, 3rd and 6th lines. Another good example is the opening line of "Worm Juice," below. Notice the unexpected pull of D♯ after E, then melodic dissonances (diminished 5ths) are found from D♯ to A and from C♯ to G.

30



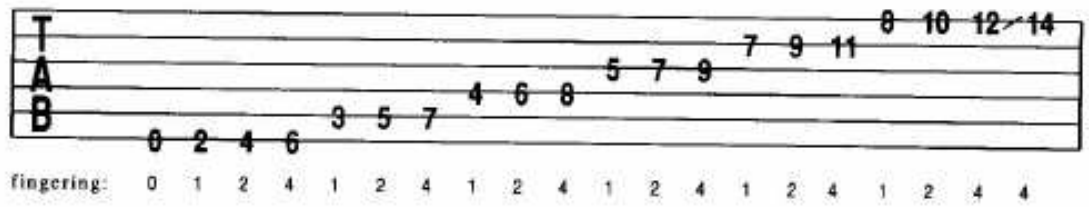
Try combining melodic dissonances with some twisted chromatic notes and you've got the recipe for some really vicious riffs! But if that's not enough (and by god, don't you think it ought to be?), there's more!

Atonal Riffs

The final step into complete melodic oblivion is *atonal* riffs, where the ear cannot grasp any tonality to regard as home base. The chromatic scale, if used properly, can accomplish this because it is an atonal scale — all the notes are equally distant and therefore no note stands out as being the tonal center. (Of course you could make one stand out if you prefer simply by staying on one note substantially longer than the others.) There are other tone series that also have no tonal center including the whole tone scale and the diminished seventh arpeggio. (An *arpeggio* is simply the notes of a chord played one after another.)

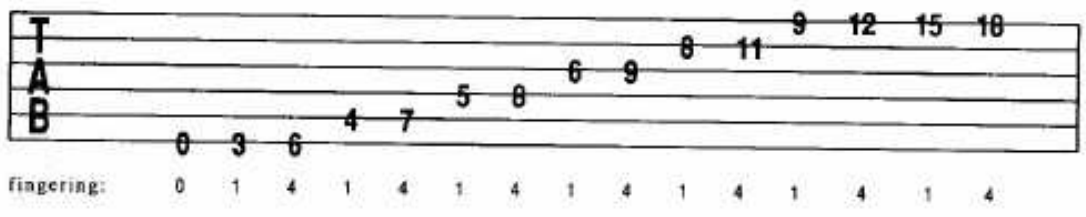
The whole tone scale is a series of whole steps. All of the notes are equally distant and therefore, any of them could function as a root. (There are only two different whole tone scales; that shown below and that beginning one half step higher.)

31



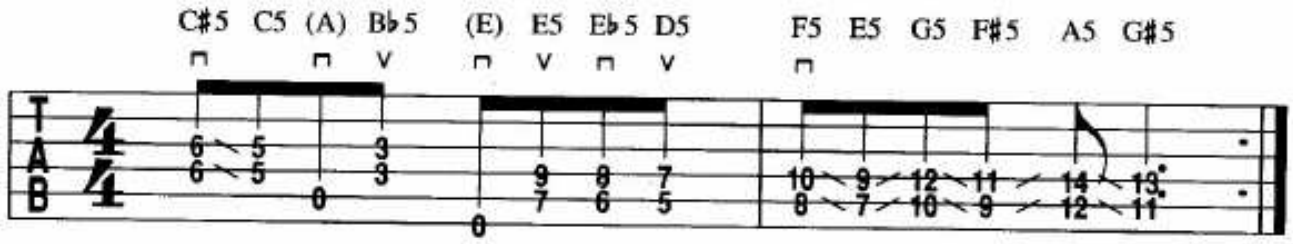
The diminished seventh arpeggio is a series of minor 3rds (intervals of three frets). Again, since all notes are equally distant, no tonal center is implied.

32



Number 33, below, demonstrates a relatively atonal riff.

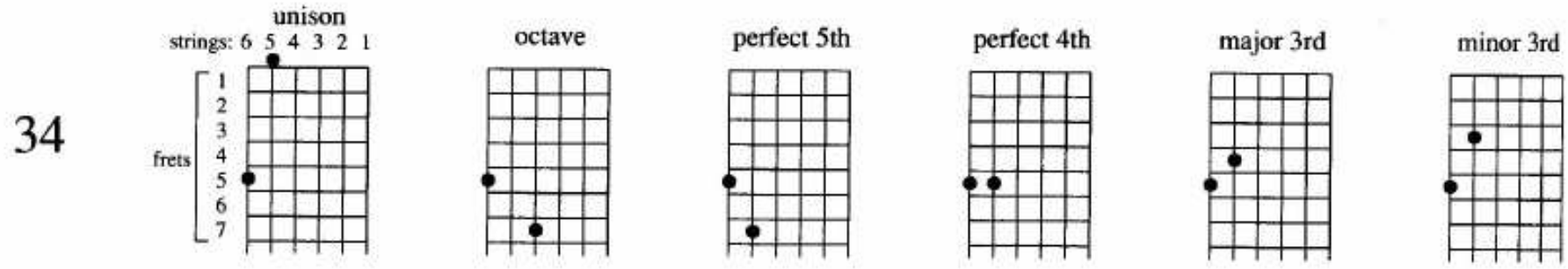
33

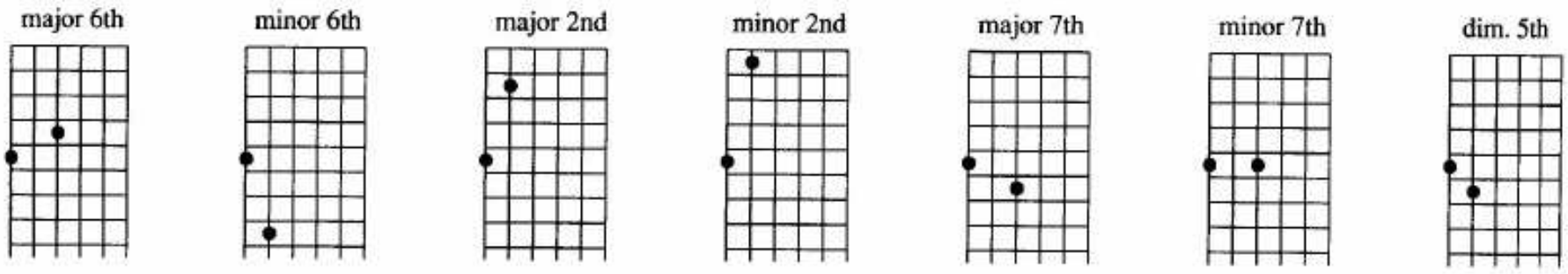


Harmony

Harmony is the sounding of two or more notes together. The intervals relative to A are shown below. They may be moved to any key.

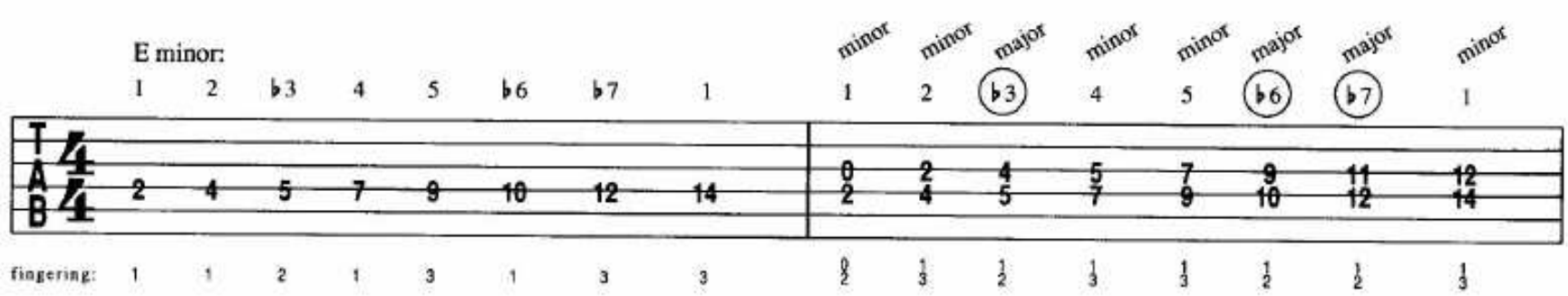
34





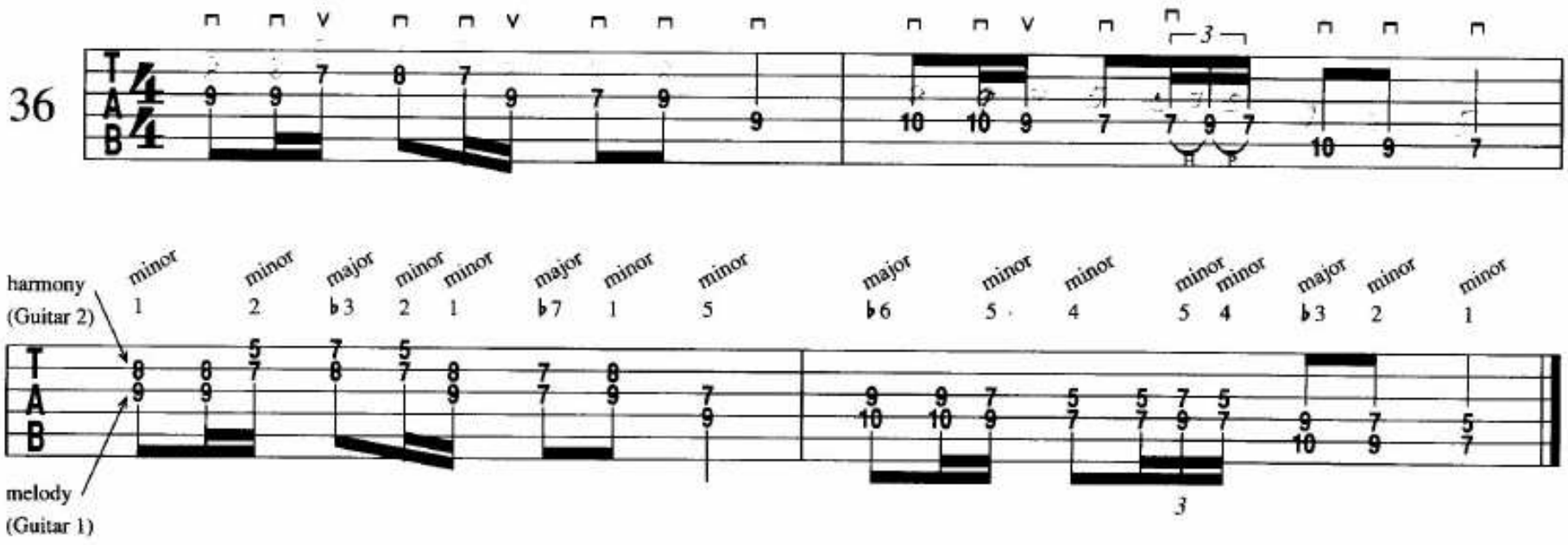
When one or more notes are added to each note of a riff or melody, it is said to be *harmonized*. Below, the E natural minor scale is harmonized in *3rds*. Notice the ♭3, ♭6, and ♭7 produce major thirds while the others are minor.

35

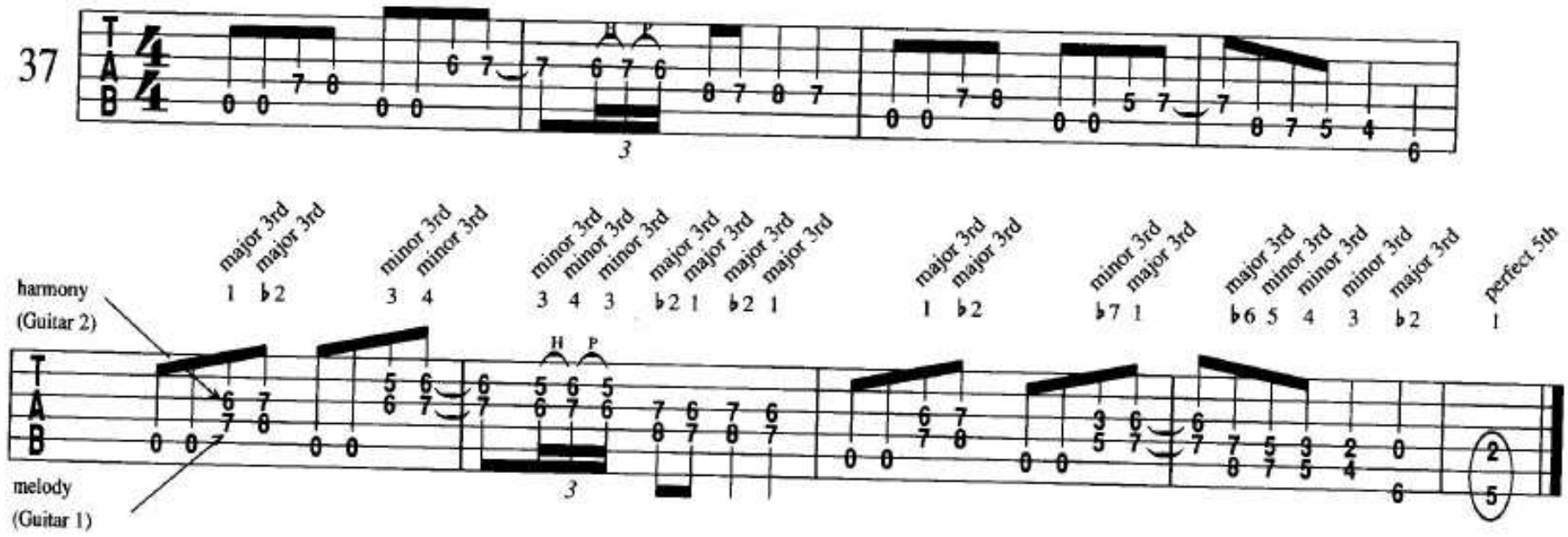


Here is a melody line in E minor, first by itself, then harmonized in thirds. Although the melody and harmony are played on separate guitars, after you learn each, combine them as if you were going to play both lines at the same time so you can see how the melody and harmony relate. Above each note, the scale number of the melody is given along with an indication of whether the harmony creates a major or a minor third. Notice that it follows the pattern in number 35. Harmonizing the natural minor scale in 3rds gives "melodic" sounding lines reminiscent of Iron Maiden. Also, a hammer-on is indicated in the second bar by the symbol H. Hammer your finger down to sound the string without picking.

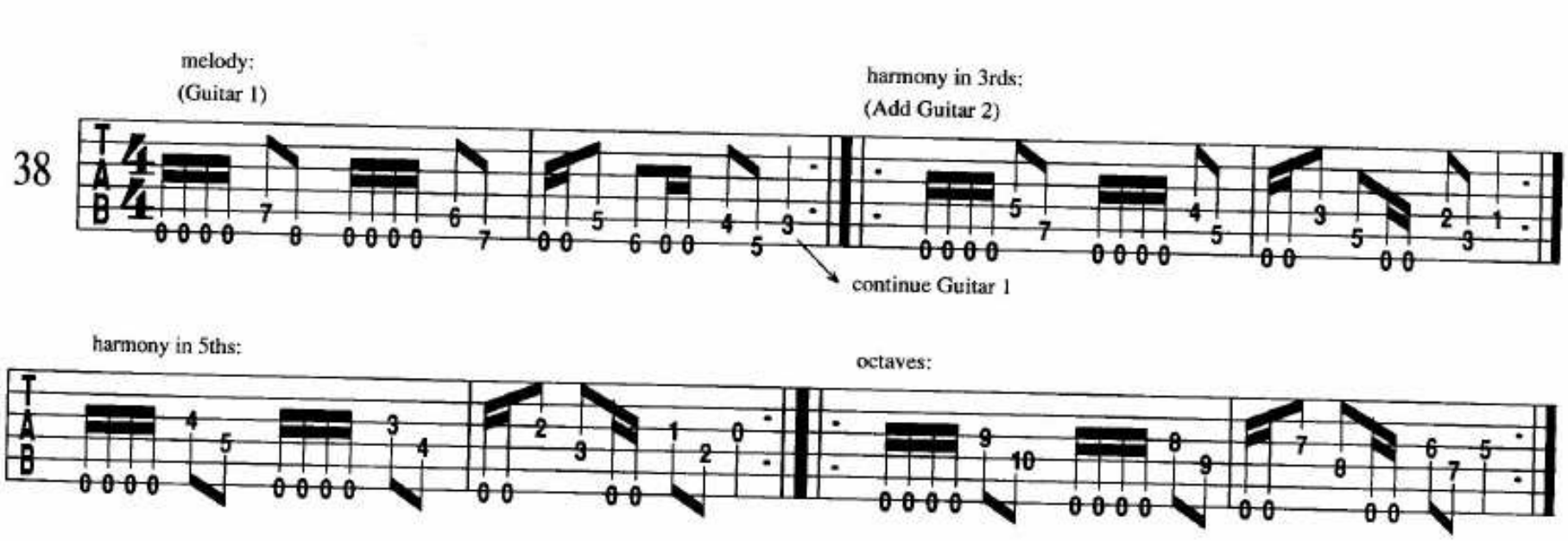
36



In number 37, the melody and harmony come from the Spanish-flamenco scale.



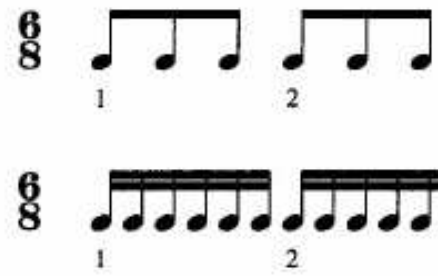
Number 38 calls back a melody from number 15, which uses chromatic "out-of-key" notes. First the melody plays twice, then a harmony guitar comes in on 3rds. Notice how the harmony follows on the chromatic tones. Then the harmony guitar moves up to fifths. Harmonizing in 5ths is easier because there is no major and minor versions to worry about. (Technically, there will sometimes be diminished 5ths, but these are usually altered.) The last line uses octaves. Try experimenting with other intervals.



Effects devices called "harmonizers" add a harmony as you play. Some can only produce a harmony note at a predetermined interval (all 5ths, octaves, 4ths, or minor 3rds, for example). This can be a great effect, but since "melodic" harmonies (3rds and 6ths) require some intervals to be major and others minor to fit into a key, this type of harmonizer is rather limited. With some of the newer, "smarter" machines you can program the key into it, and the machine will track your position in the scale giving you the correct major or minor harmony.

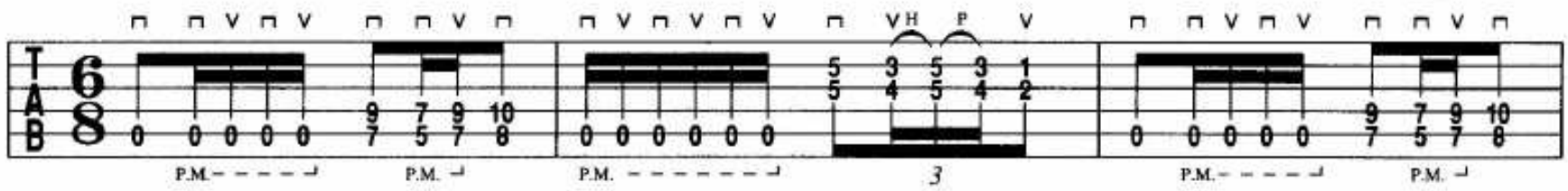
In examples above, the harmony moved parallel to the melody and maintained the same type of interval (thirds, for example). Harmony may also be "non-parallel," with the harmony voice moving independently of the melody and creating different intervals. (This is a really cool subject, but unfortunately due to space limitations, it is beyond the scope of this book.)

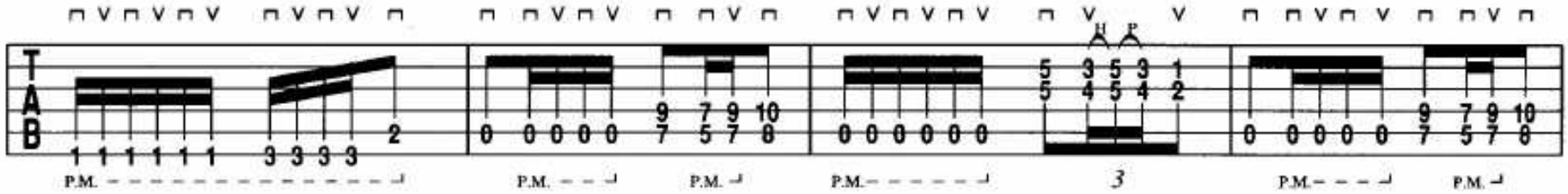
In 6/8 time there are six sixteenth notes per beat.

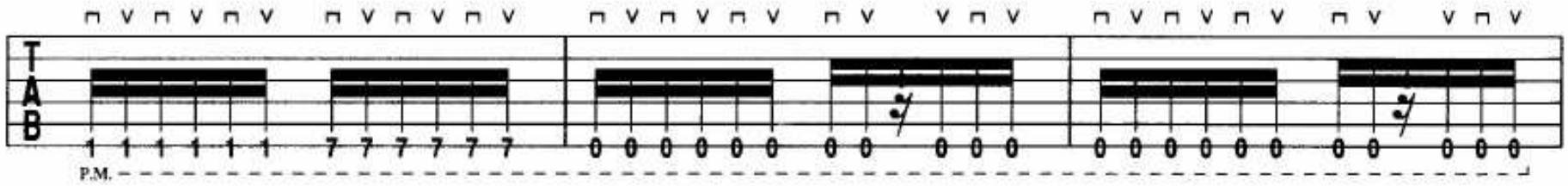


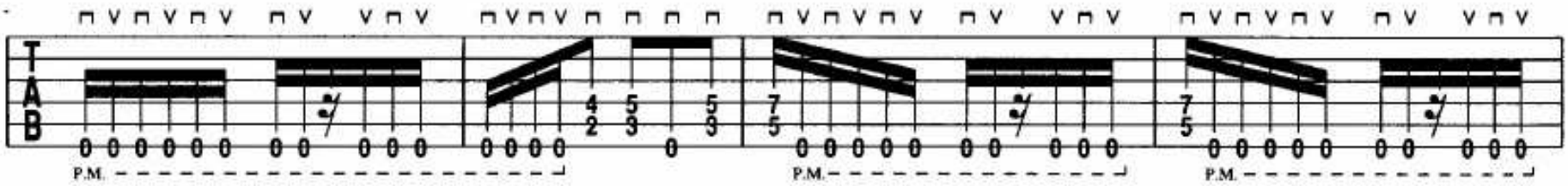
If you have trouble with this, you can count 6/8 in its original form — with six beats per measure. Then there will be two sixteenths per beat, with a strong accent on the first beat of each group of three beats.

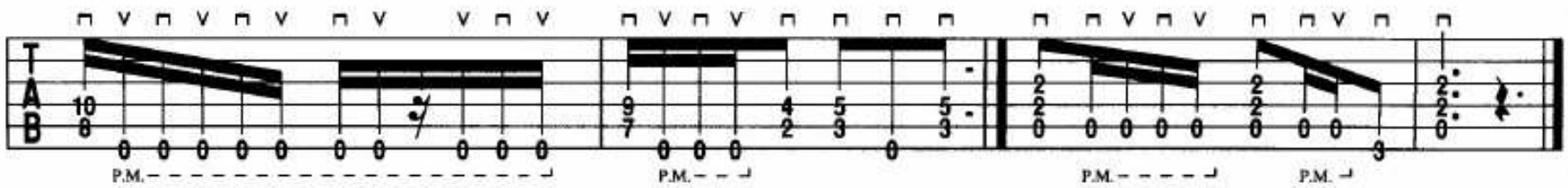
42





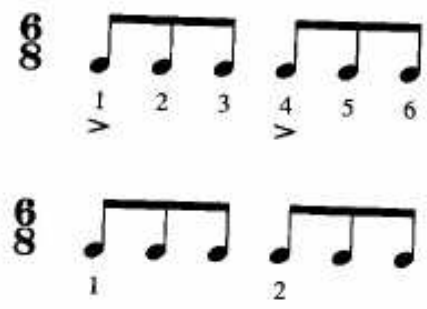




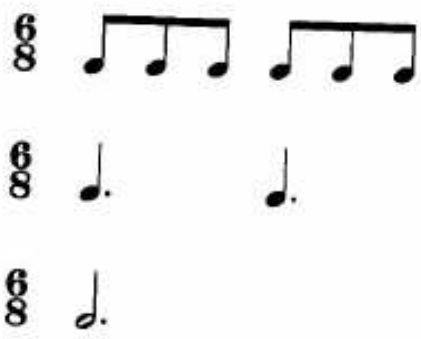


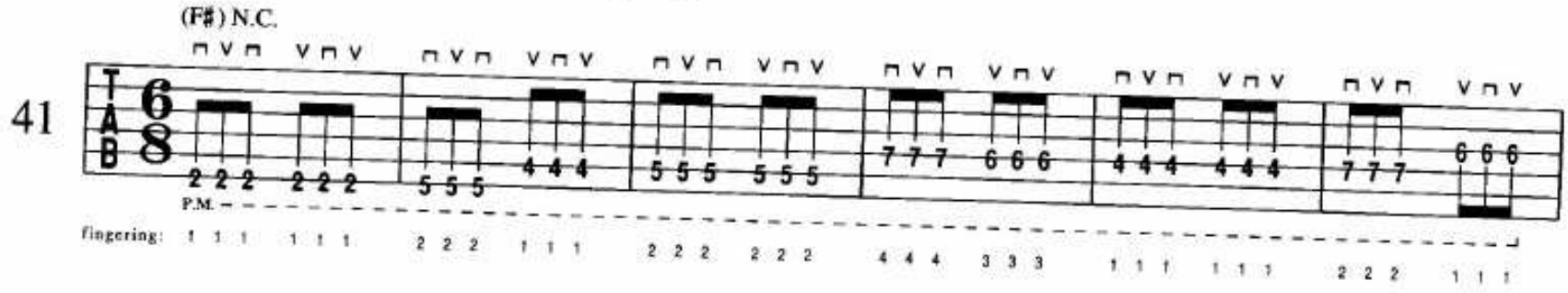
6/8 Time

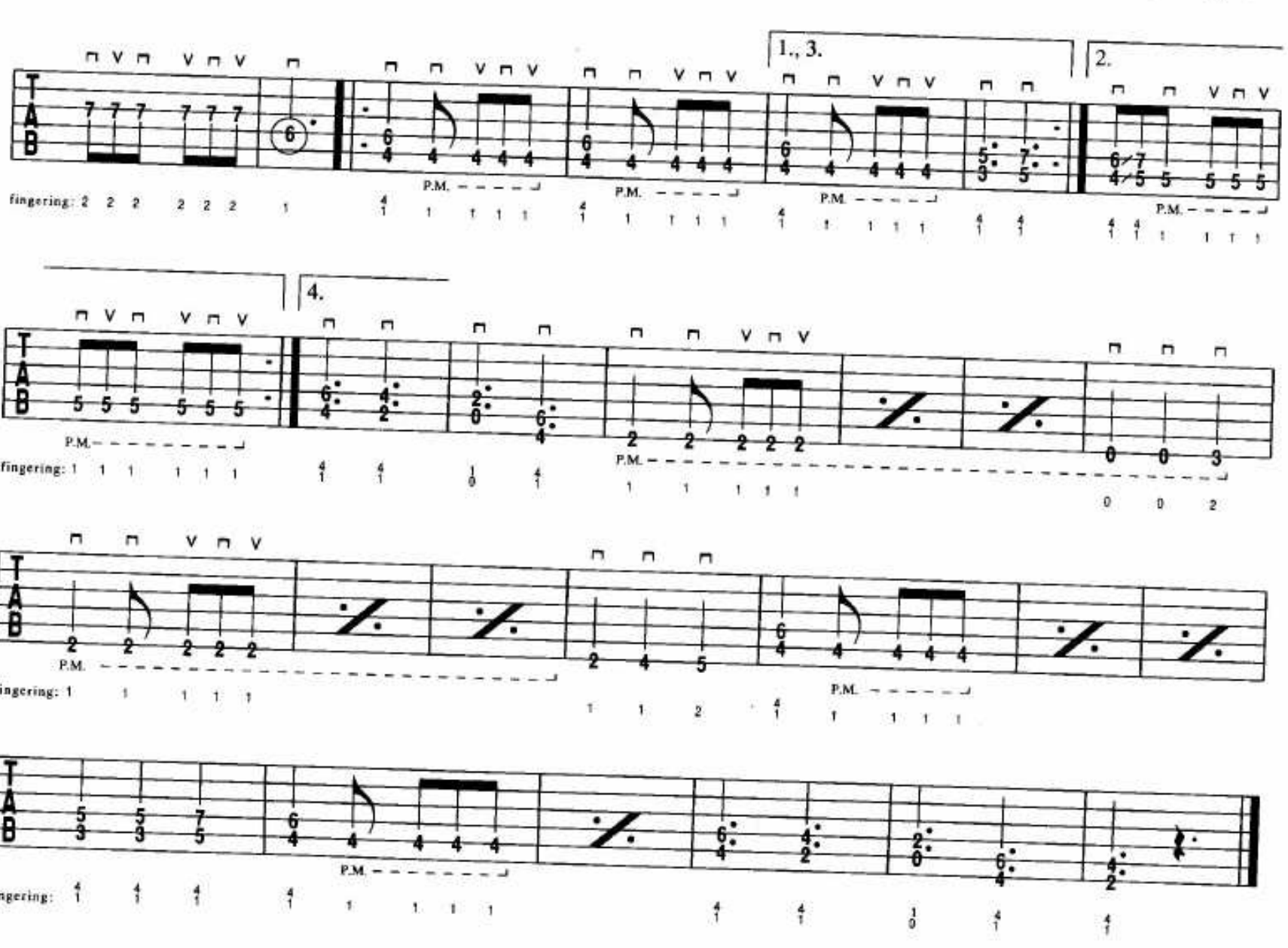
In 6/8 time there are six beats per measure with an eighth note receiving one beat. However, it is generally counted in its "cut time" version with only two beats per measure. This subdivides the beat into threes just like triplets in 4/4 time (but the triplet brackets are unnecessary).



Since three eighth notes add up to a dotted quarter, each beat in 6/8 time will be represented by a dotted quarter note. A dotted half note will last two full beats.



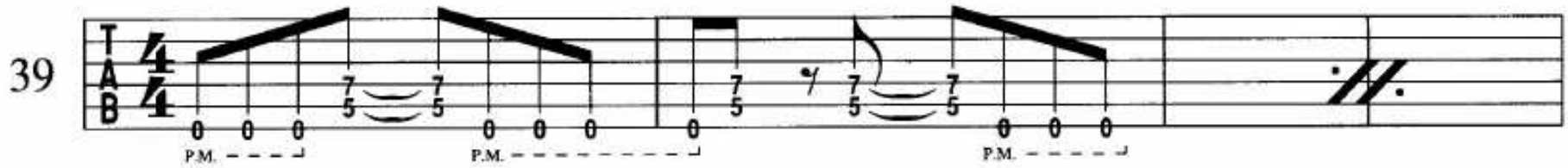




Double Time

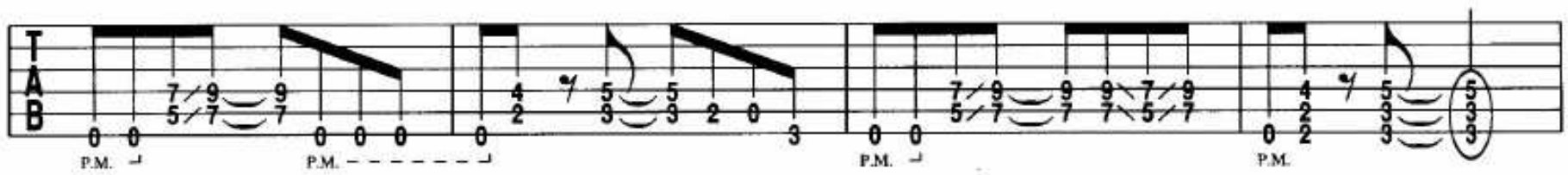
In double time, the drum beat changes, causing the tempo to be twice as fast. This is very common in thrash. Rather than the standard rock beat with the kick drum (bass drum) on 1 and 3 and the snare drum playing on 2 and 4, in double time, the kick is on each downbeat with the snare on each "and." This gives the music a different feel, which can take some getting used to if you're not familiar with it. Sometimes the beat is even turned around, putting the snare on the downbeats and the kick on the upbeats. In the example below, notice how the drumbeat changes to go between regular and double time.

Normal time

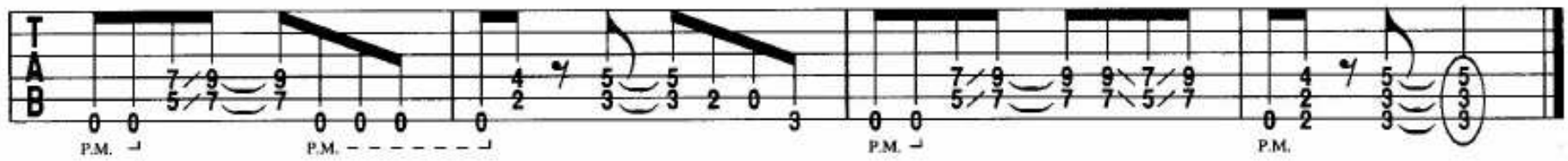


Double time

Normal time



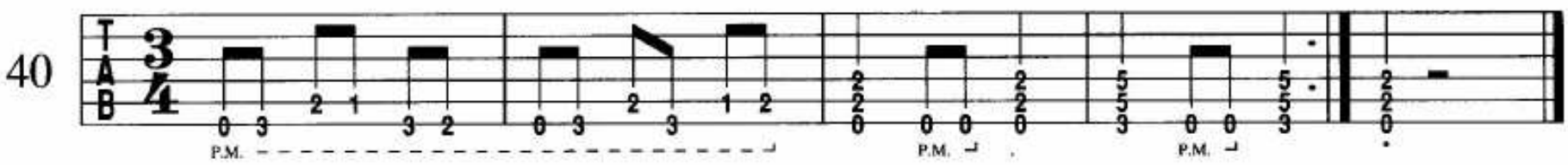
Double time



3/4 Time

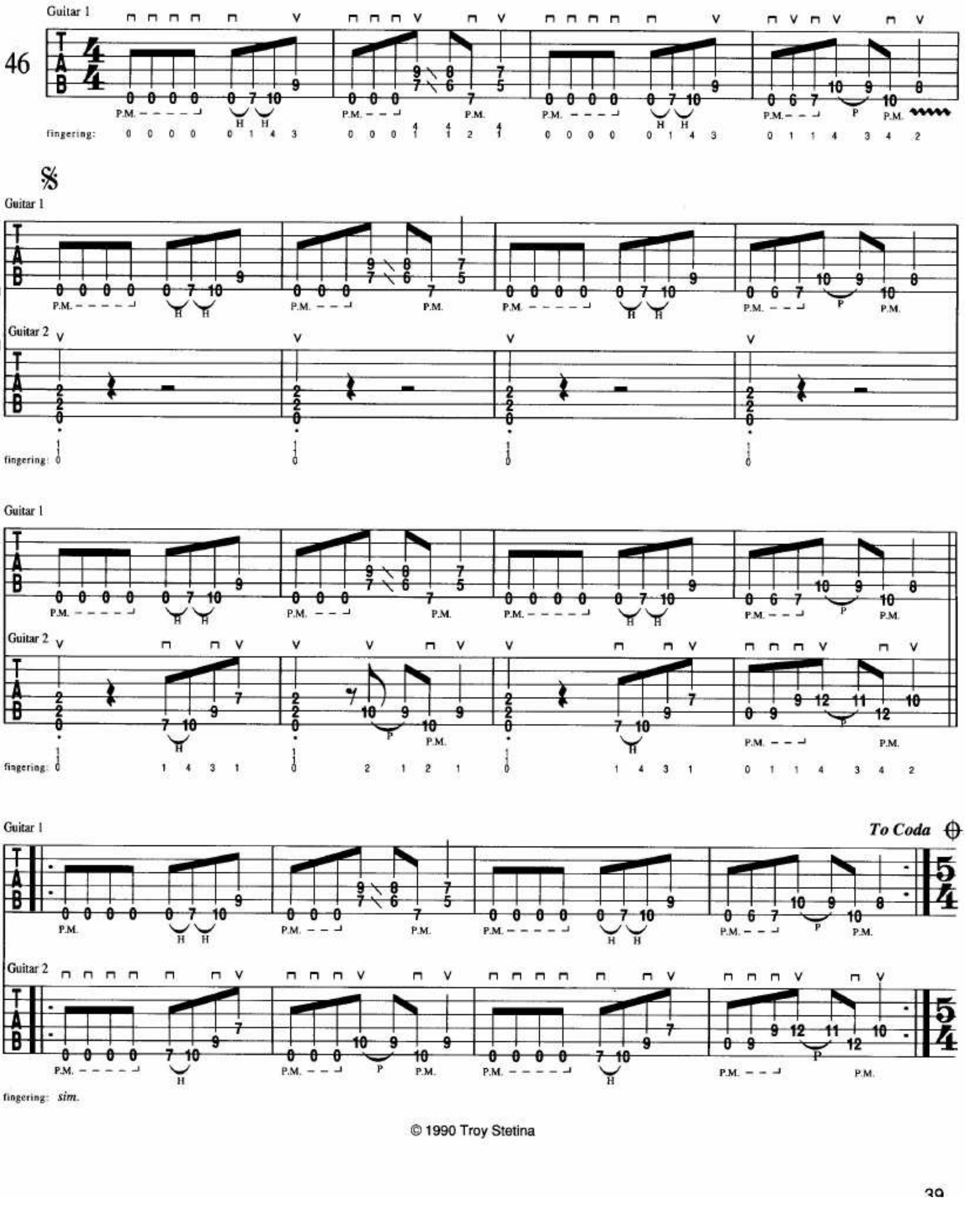
3/4 time is rare but not unheard of in metal. Here there are three beats per measure, and a quarter note receives one beat. The natural pulse of beats accents the first beat in each measure.

Play 4 times



When you reach the symbol "***D.S. al Coda***", repeat back to the sign (𝄋) and play until "***To Coda*** ⊕." Then skip to the ***Coda*** (⊕) and play to the end.

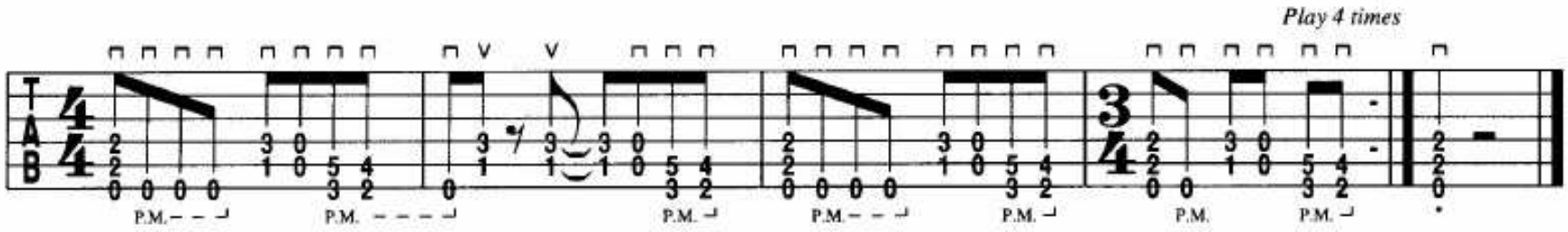
"The Sound Of Music?!?"



Shifting Time Signatures

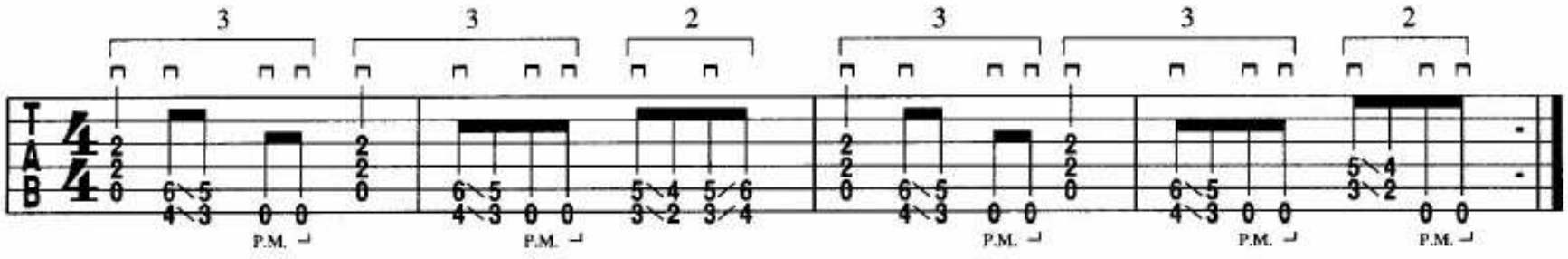
Sometimes, a song may use one time signature, but may switch to a different time signature to shorten or extend a particular measure. Number 43 uses 4/4 time until the fourth measure which is shortened one beat, to 3/4.

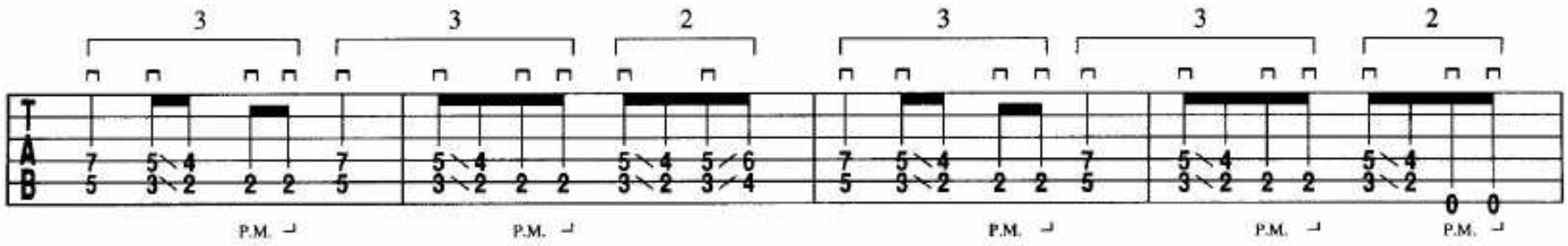
43

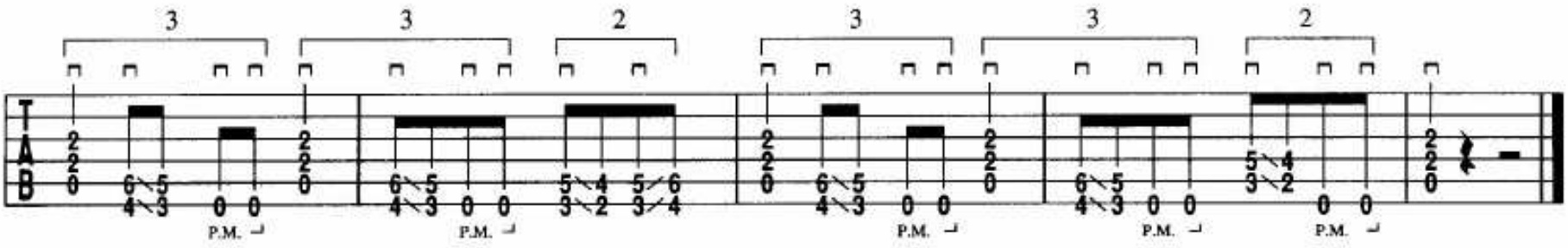


Below, a three beat figure is repeated two times and then a two beat figure occurs once. This could be written as a 3/8, 3/8 and 2/8 measure, however, the drums maintain a straight 4/4 feel behind this. The result is a series of conflicting accents that complete a cycle every two bars. This is called a polyrhythm —a result of two different meters played simultaneously.

44

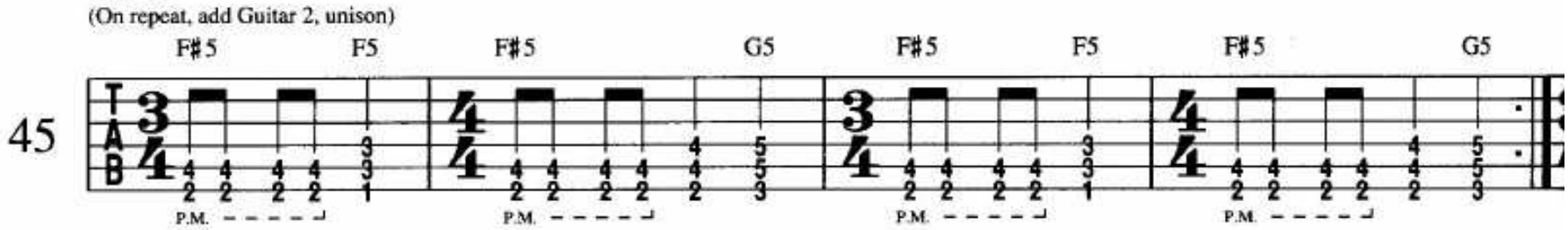




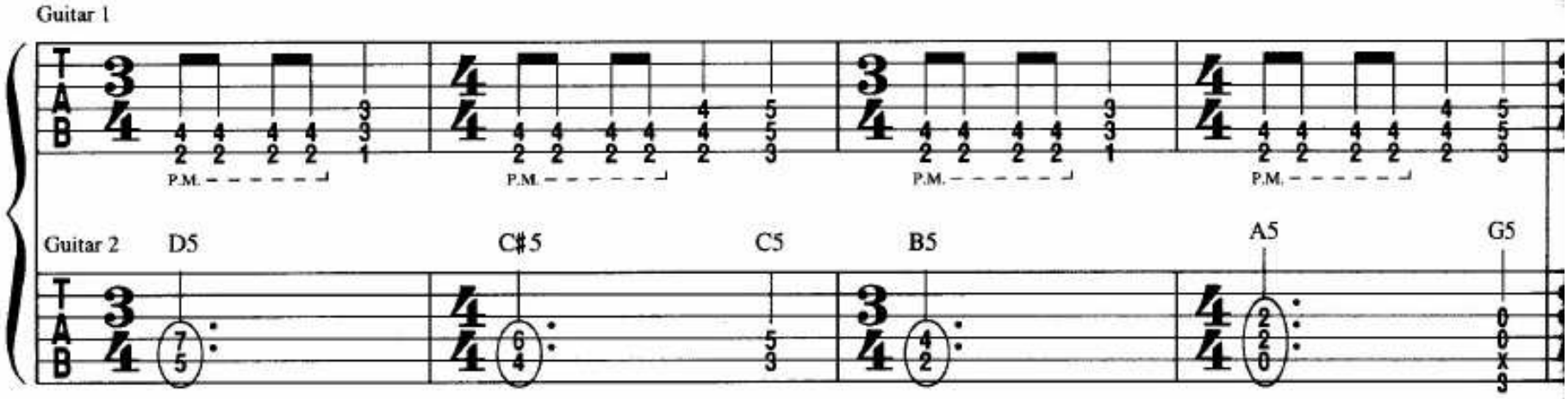


Number 45 alternates between 3/4 and 4/4 time, creating a recurring seven beat phrase.

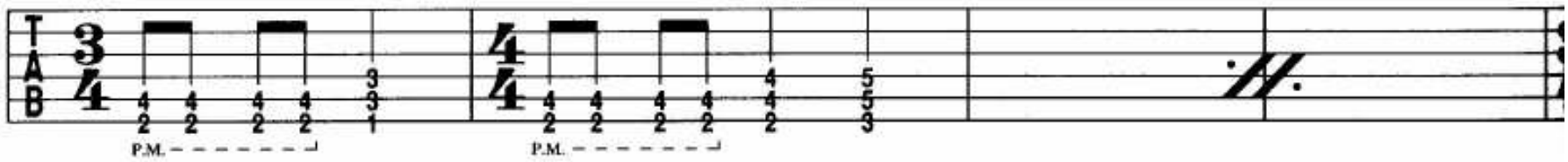
Guitar 1
(On repeat, add Guitar 2, unison)



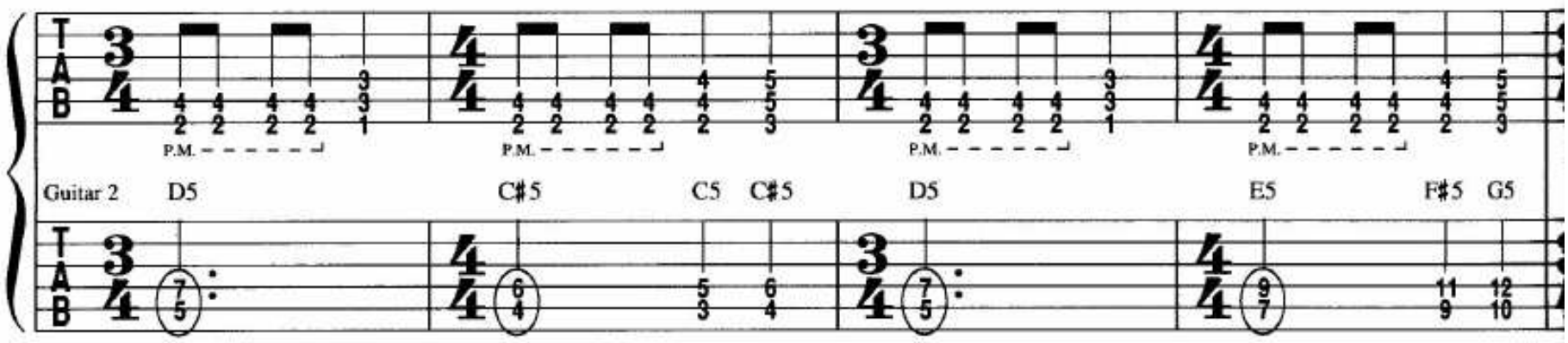
Guitar 1



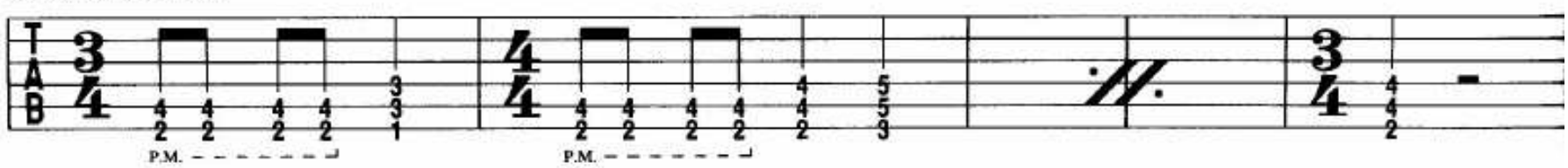
Guitars 1 and 2, unison



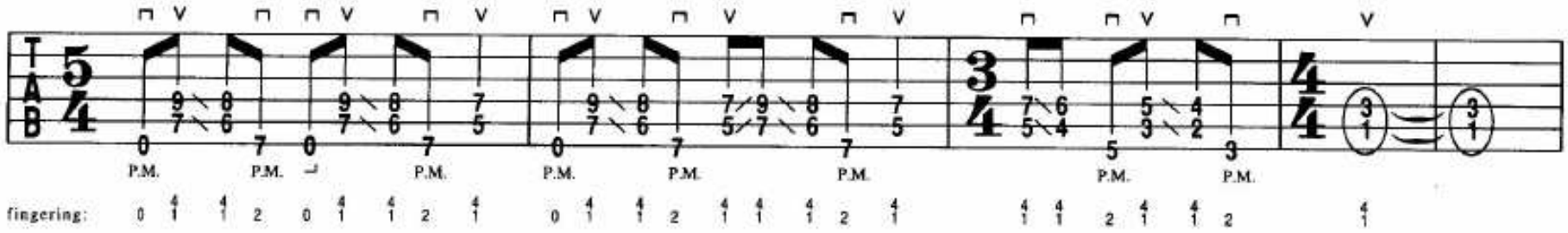
Guitar 1



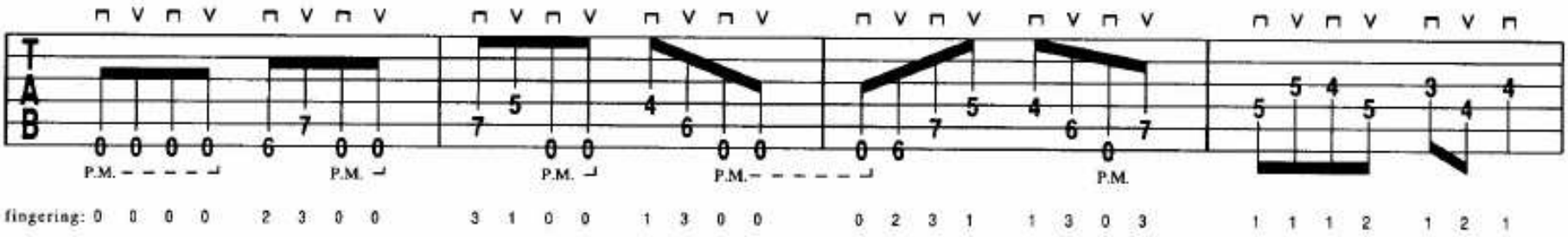
Guitars 1 and 2, unison



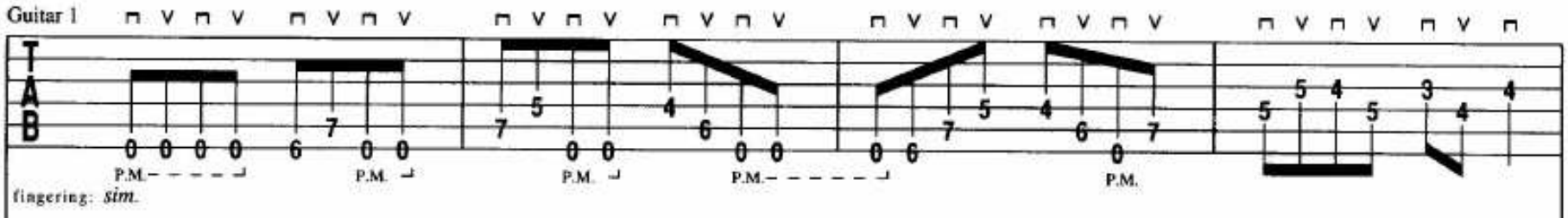
Guitars 1 and 2, unison



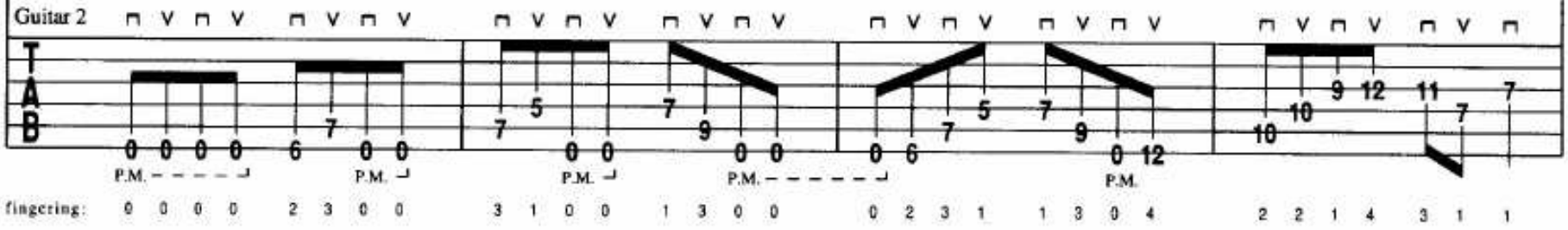
Guitars 1 and 2, unison



Guitar 1

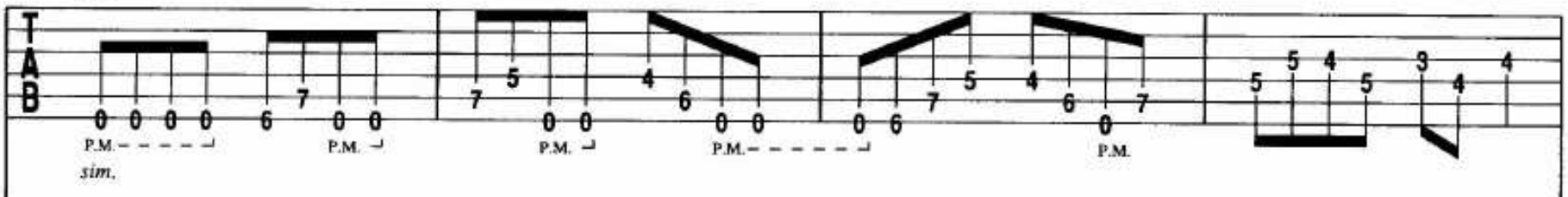


Guitar 2



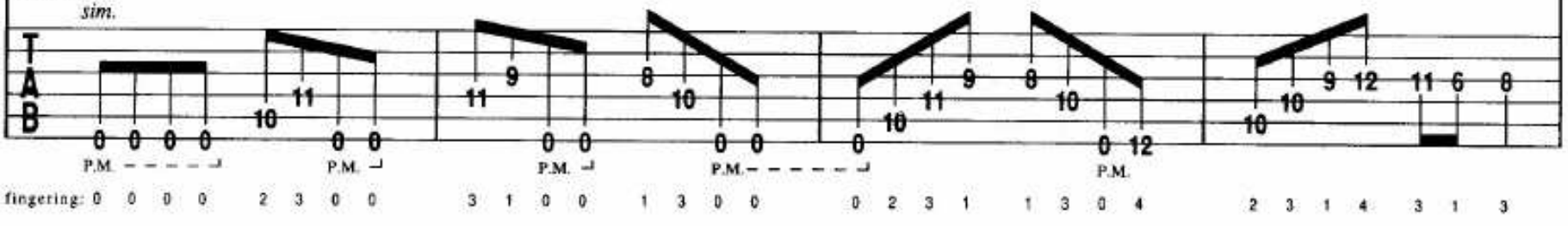
Guitar 1

sim.

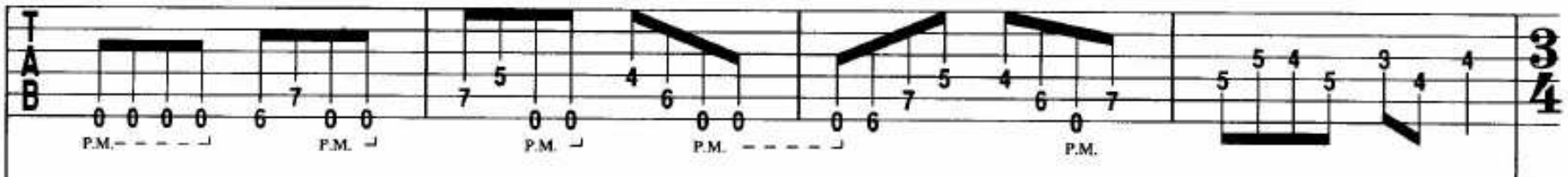


Guitar 2

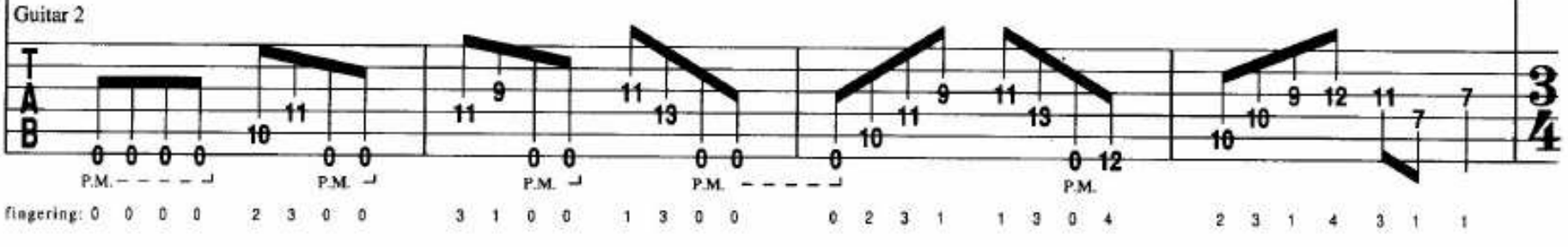
sim.

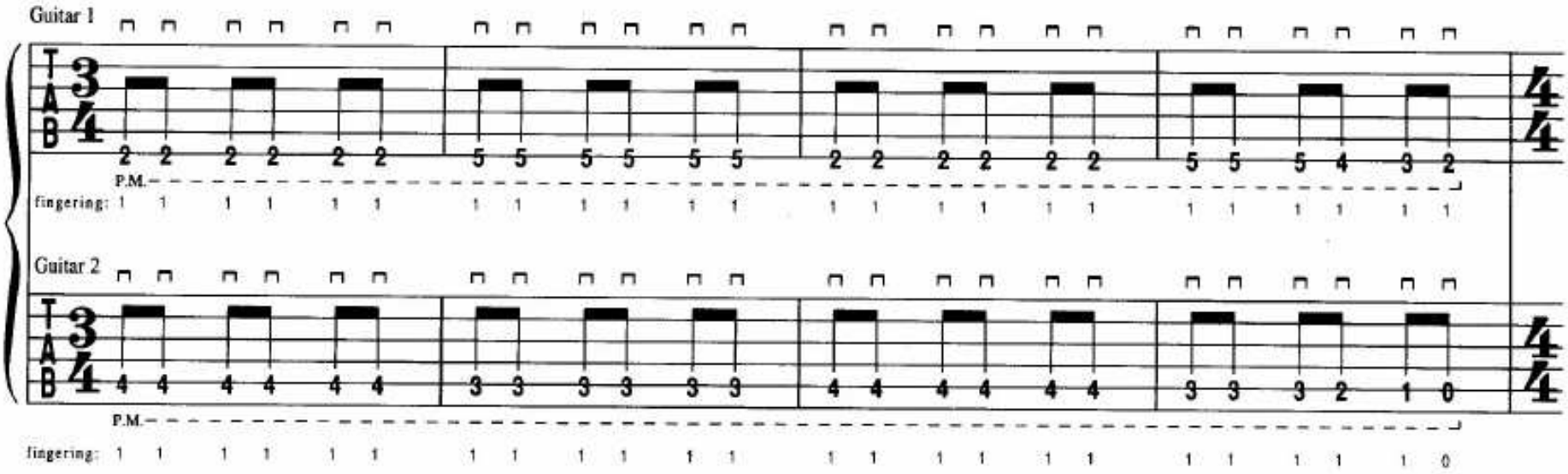


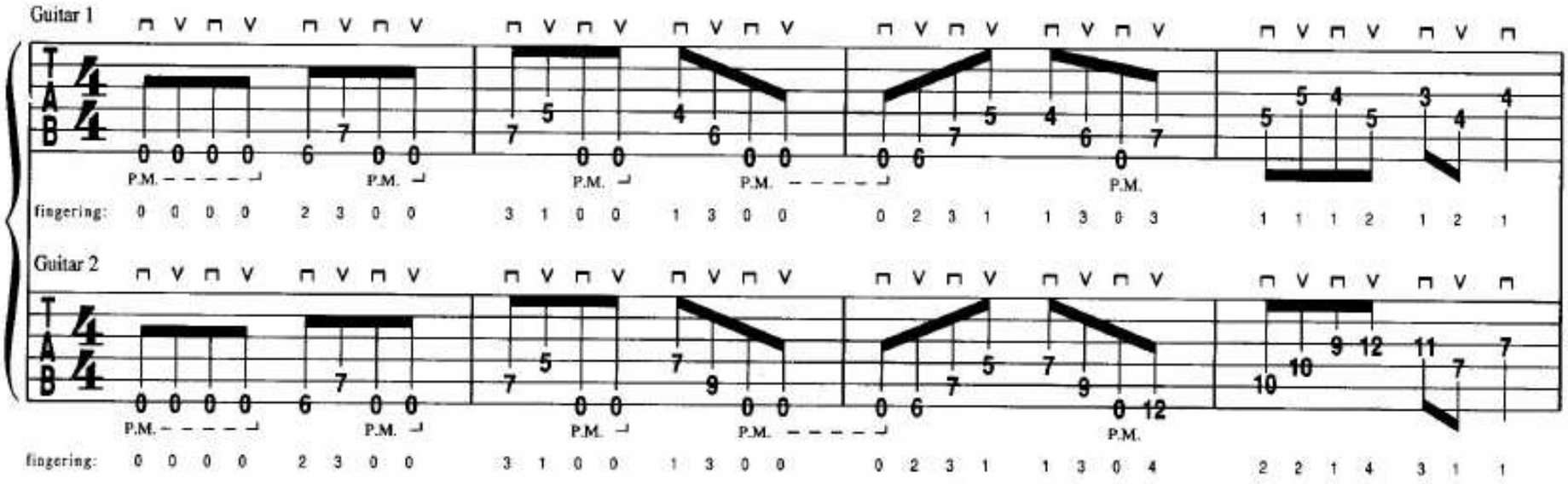
Guitar 1

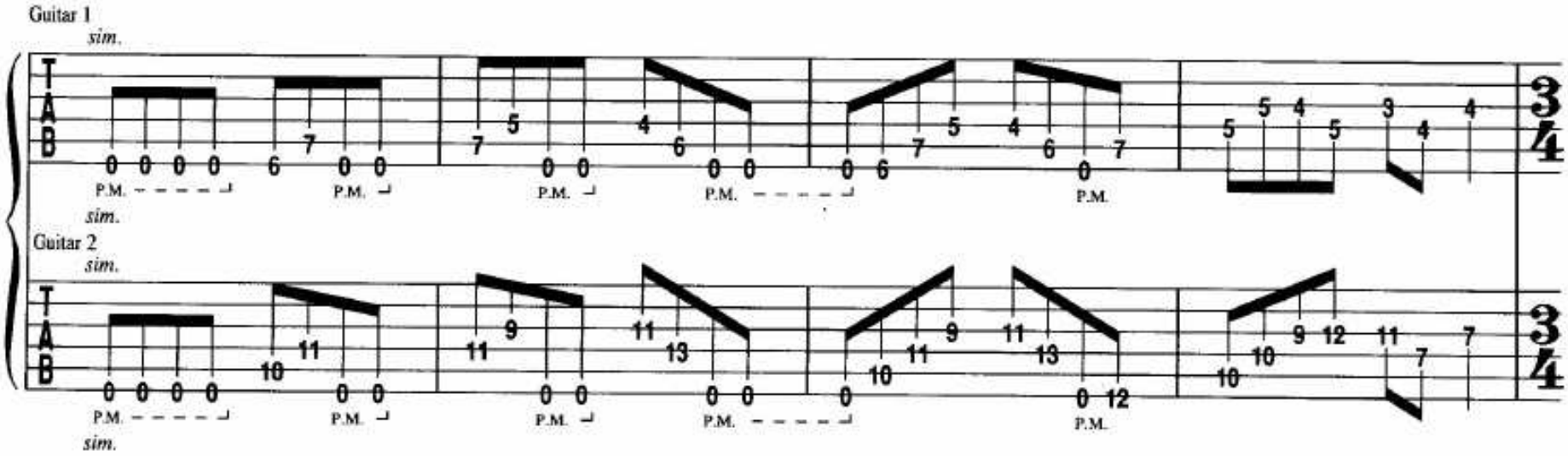


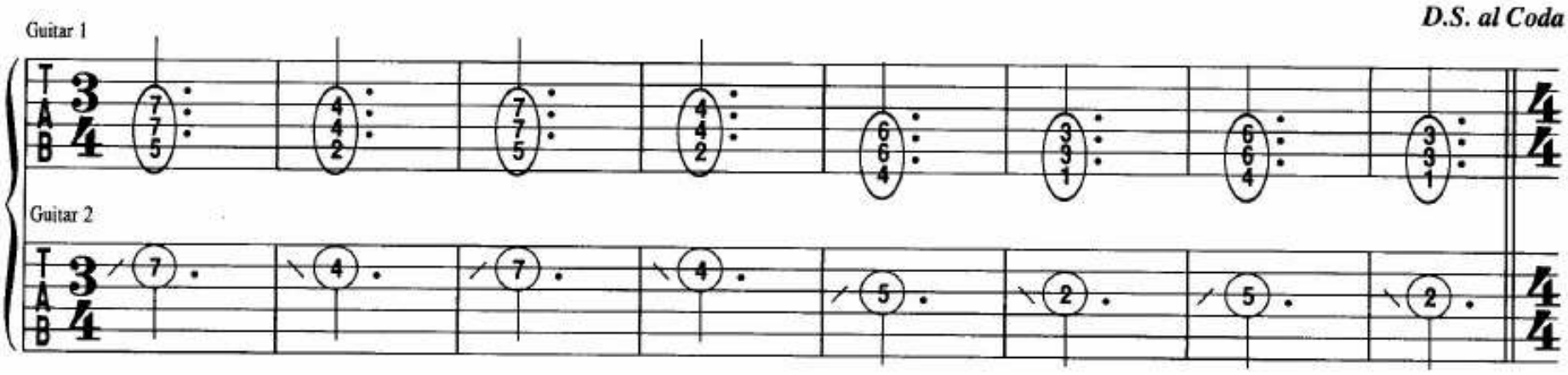
Guitar 2

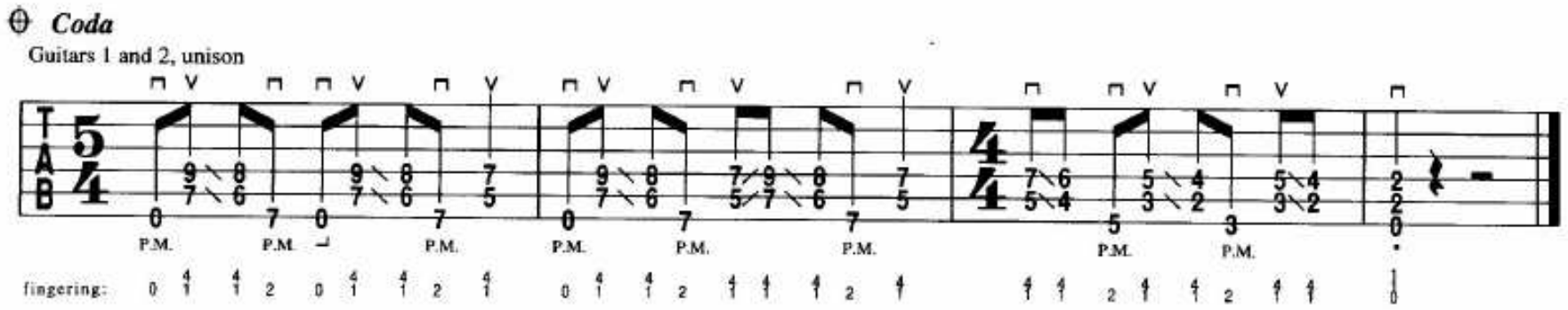



Guitar 1
P.M.
fingering: 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
Guitar 2
P.M.
fingering: 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 0


Guitar 1
P.M.
fingering: 0 0 0 0 2 3 0 0 3 1 0 0 1 3 0 0 0 2 3 1 1 3 0 3 1 1 1 2 1 2 1
Guitar 2
P.M.
fingering: 0 0 0 0 2 3 0 0 3 1 0 0 1 3 0 0 0 2 3 1 1 3 0 4 2 2 1 4 3 1 1


Guitar 1
sim.
P.M.
sim.
Guitar 2
sim.
P.M.
sim.


D.S. al Coda
Guitar 1
Guitar 2


Coda
Guitars 1 and 2, unison
P.M.
fingering: 0 1 1 2 0 1 1 2 1 0 1 1 2 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 2 1 1 1 0

PART TWO

Notes on "Anvil Head"

music: Troy Stetina, Tony Burton

A The opening section establishes the theme. This is an 8-bar phrase in 4/4 time in the key of E minor. The simplified chord progression is E / E / E / E / C / C / E / E B (I -♭VI - I - V). In the fourth bar, guitar 1 (Troy) plays a power slide up and back down the neck (see *Heavy Metal Guitar Tricks* page 15), however, it is picked in sixteenth notes. Since the actual pitches are not important, x's are used in place of numbers. (In fact the "19" that is indicated as the highest point of the slide is not really critical – any high note will give about the same effect. What is important is that the speed that you move up the back down the neck to create the desired effect.) Also in the fourth bar, guitar 2 (Tony) utilizes a "pick scrape." Slide the pick down the strings for the duration of the note. (See *Heavy Metal Guitar Tricks* page 14).

B Here, the rhythm (guitar 1) maintains the motif established in the theme but moves it through temporary tonal centers F♯ (II) for 4 bars, then A (IV) for 4 bars. Next comes the build up and climax that resolves back to the tonic chord (in the following restatement of the theme). Tony takes the first solo, beginning with an artificial harmonic, or pick harmonic, created by lightly touching the string with the right hand thumb or first finger as you are picking it. (See *Heavy Metal Guitar Tricks* page 17.) The arrow indicates that this note is immediately bent up one half-step from the 4th fret to the pitch of the 5th fret (hence the 5 in parenthesis – you are not actually playing the 5th fret, but bending the pitch of the fourth fret up to what would be the unbent pitch of the 5th fret.) This note is also immediately dropped with the vibrato bar. The solo starts in the F♯ blues scale with a brief appearance of G♯ (2) from the natural minor. The next 4 bars move to the A blues/natural minor. Throughout the buildup, the lead guitar hangs out in E (more or less). These solos are actually beyond the scope of this book, but we thought it best to include transcriptions for you adventuresome types. If soloing is new to you, or these solos are beyond your ability, see *Heavy Metal Lead Guitar* Volumes 1 and 2, and *Speed Mechanics for Lead Guitar* to build up your lead technique.

C Restatement of the theme, with a surprise appearance by the ever-dreaded "Ninja-Man."

D The drums give 4 bars of 6/8 time in the new tempo, then a secondary theme is established in the key of A minor. The structure is four 4-bar phrases, a 6-bar interlude, then a variation of the theme with harmony, followed by a surprise key change to F♯.

E This section is a repeat of the previous section with the following changes: The theme plays only twice, the interlude uses ascending rather than descending chords, the harmony variation is omitted, and the F♯ section comes in sooner than expected and lasts twice as long.

F The momentum builds with a third return to the theme, this time appearing with another harmony variation. Here is the main climax of the song.

G The drums break down to the original tempo, them the original theme is reintroduced.

H A new rhythmic idea is introduced, then guitar 1 (Troy) takes the outro solo. (Actually we had intended to fade out, but with all our strange and sometimes stupid sense of humor, we couldn't resist. That ending was just too classic! — Thanks, Tony.) Concerning the solo, the unusual rhythmic figures are the result of flat out "going for it" in an improvisational frenzy. (I doubt if I could ever accurately recreate it in its exact timing, however, recreating the overall feeling would be possible.) With that in mind, learn the notes and rhythms reasonably close, to achieve a similar effect, but don't worry about being perfect. One technique which you might find helpful to understanding some of the more obscure rhythm figures, is to count it in double time, changing all sixteenth notes to eighth notes, thirty-second notes to sixteenths, etc. Simply drop off the top connecting bar:

Anvil Head

Slow and Heavy ♩ = 98

A

Troy (right channel)

Tony (left channel)

P.M.

Slide up and back down neck

P.S.

Pick scrape

Slide to indeterminate point

B

Sounding pitch:D# to E

drop bar

return

A.H. 1/2

full

H

P

A.H.

fingering: 3 (2) 0 3 (2) 1 3 1 1 2 1 4 1 2 2 2 3 1 3 1 3 1 3

fingering: 3 1 3 1 1 1 3 1 3 3 1 3 1 3 3 3 (2) 3 1 3 1 1 1 2 1 4 1 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

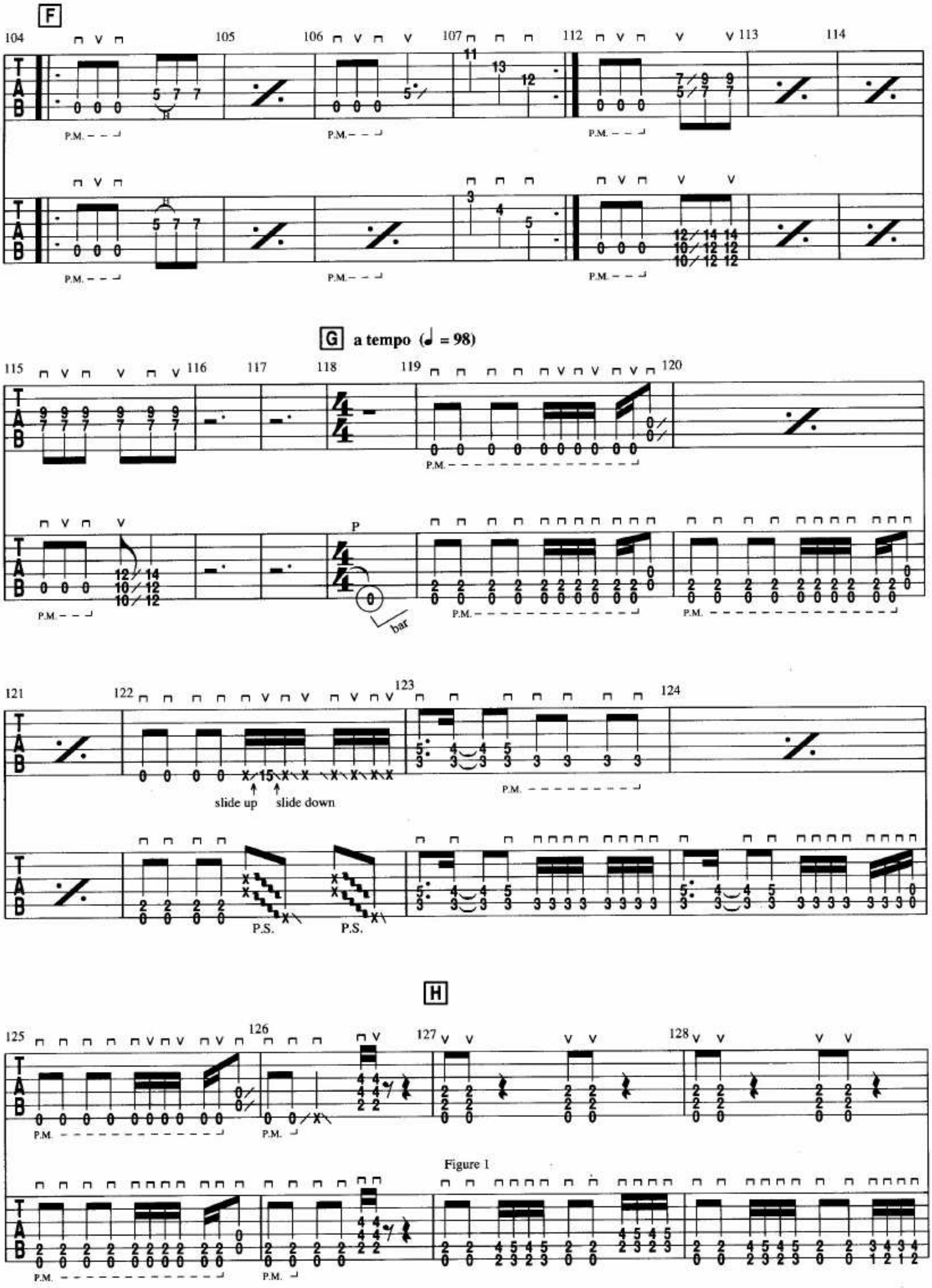


Figure 1

D

♩. = 156

29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

P.M. - - - - - -

Play 4 times

37 50 51 52 53 54 55

P.M.

P.M. - - - -

P.M. - - - -

56 57 58 59 64 65

P.M. - - -

fingering: 0 0 0 1 3 3

P.M. - - - - - - - - - -

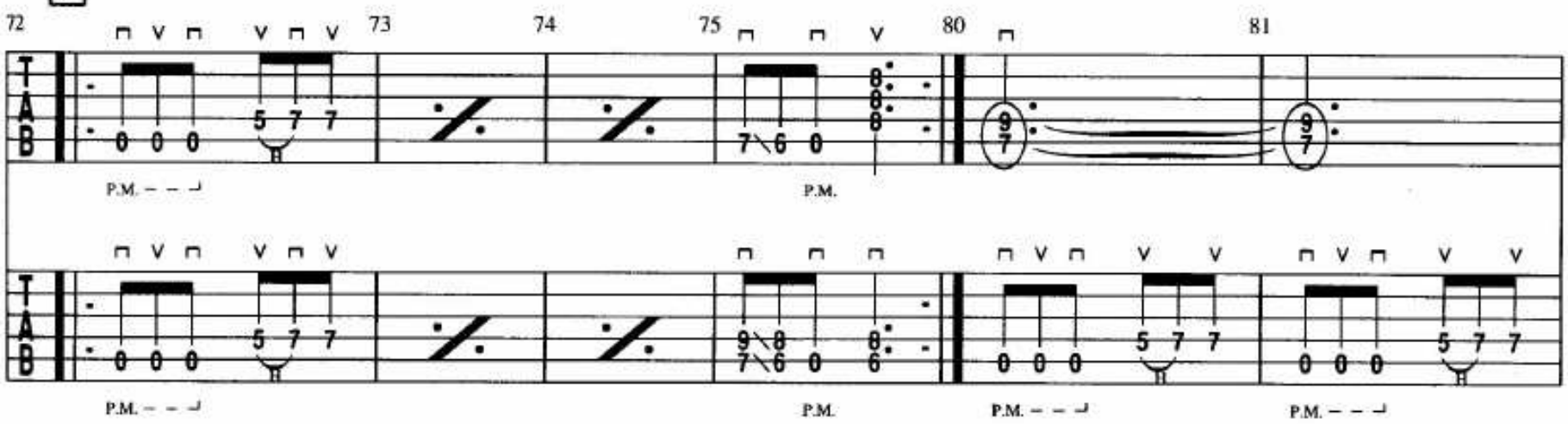
66 67 68 69 70 71

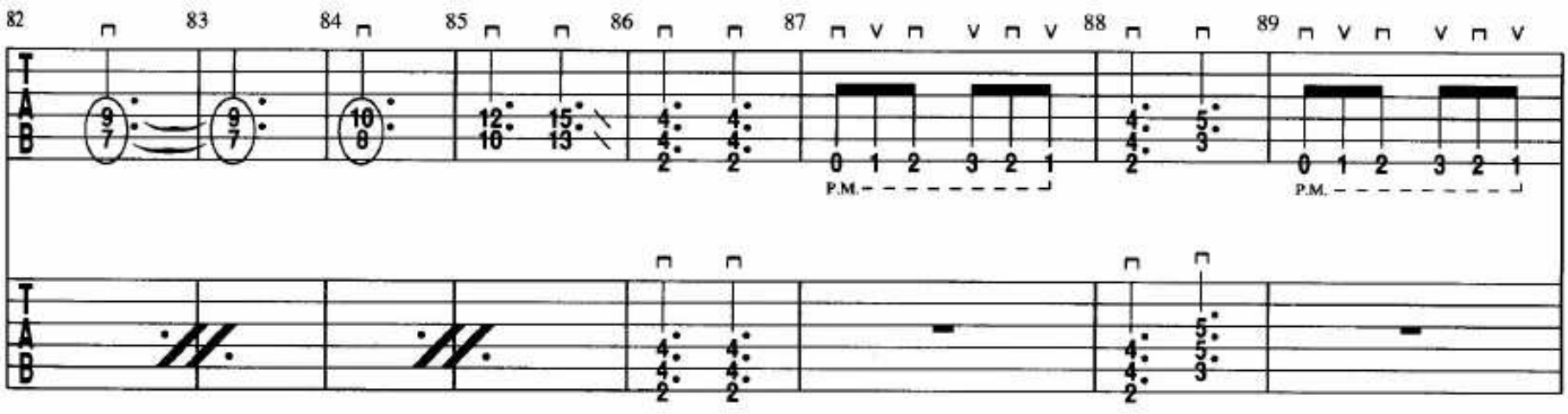
fingering: 4 4 1 1 4 3 1 4 3 1 2 1 0 2 1 0 4 1 4 1 4 1

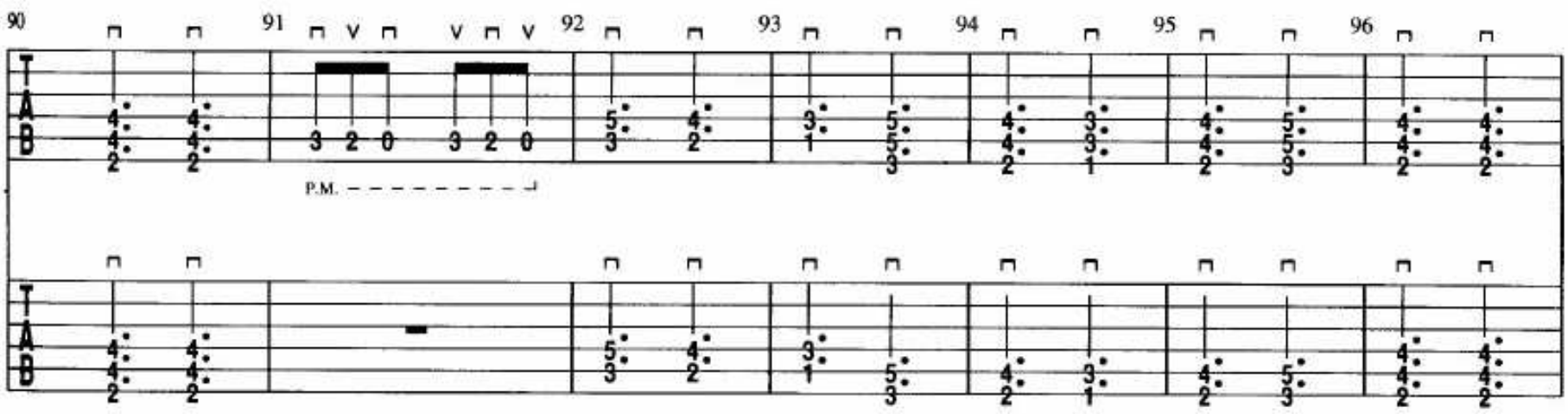
P.M. - - - - - - - - - -

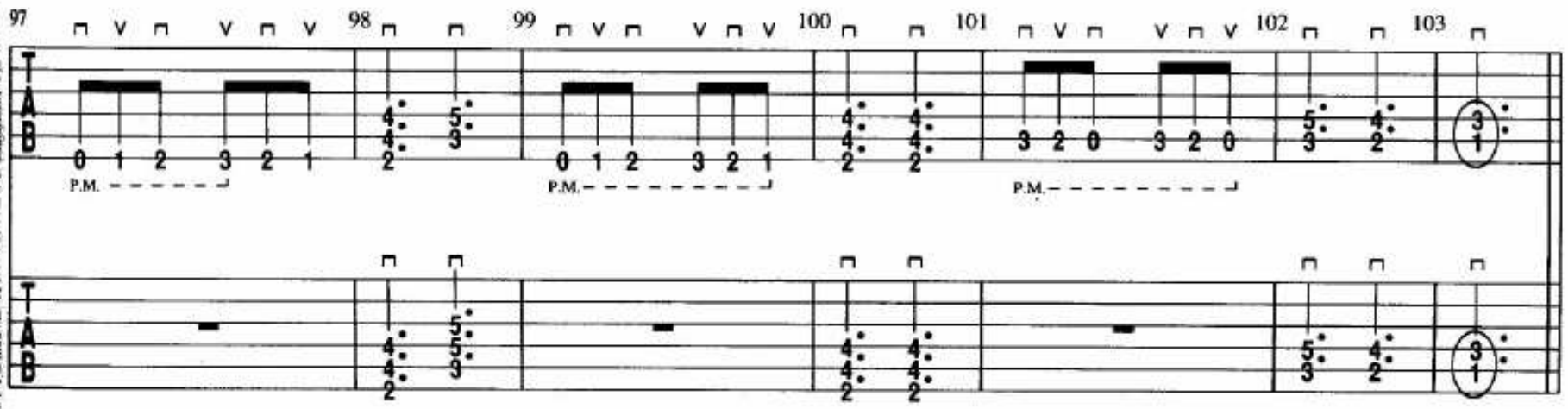
P.M. - - - - - - - - - -

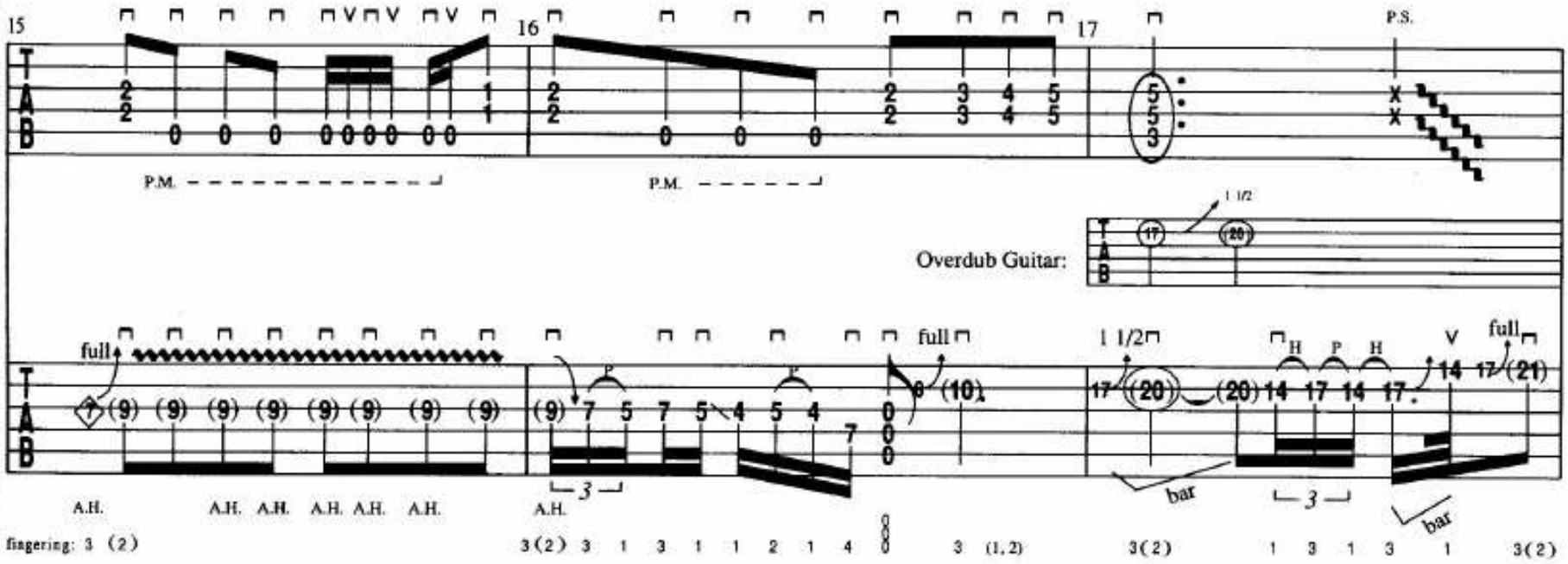
E

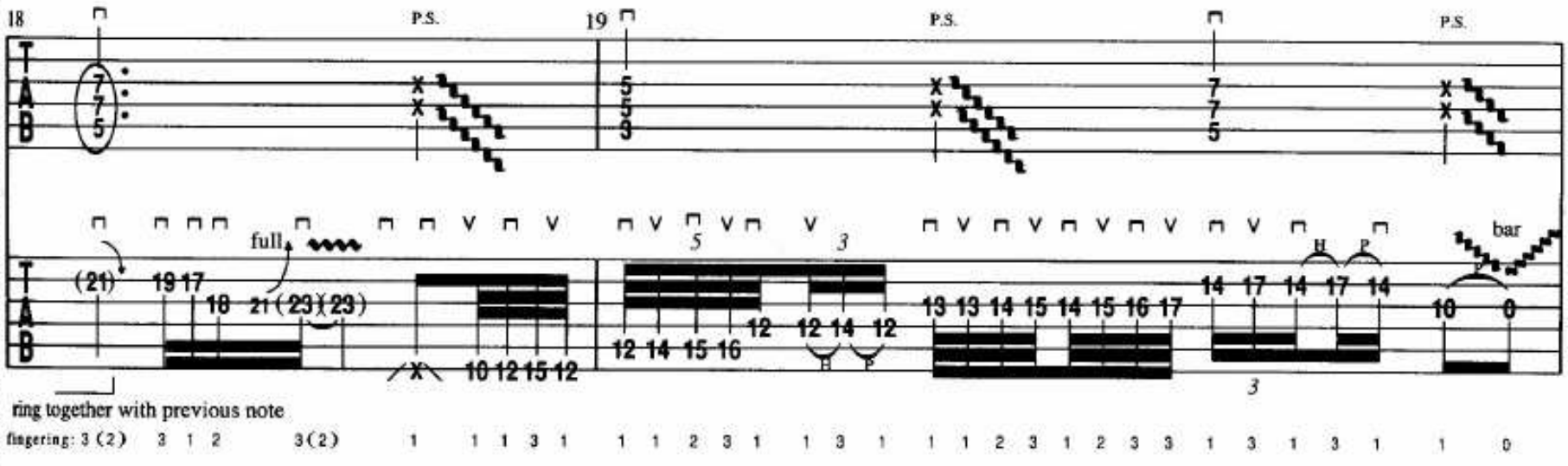

72
73
74
75
80
81
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.

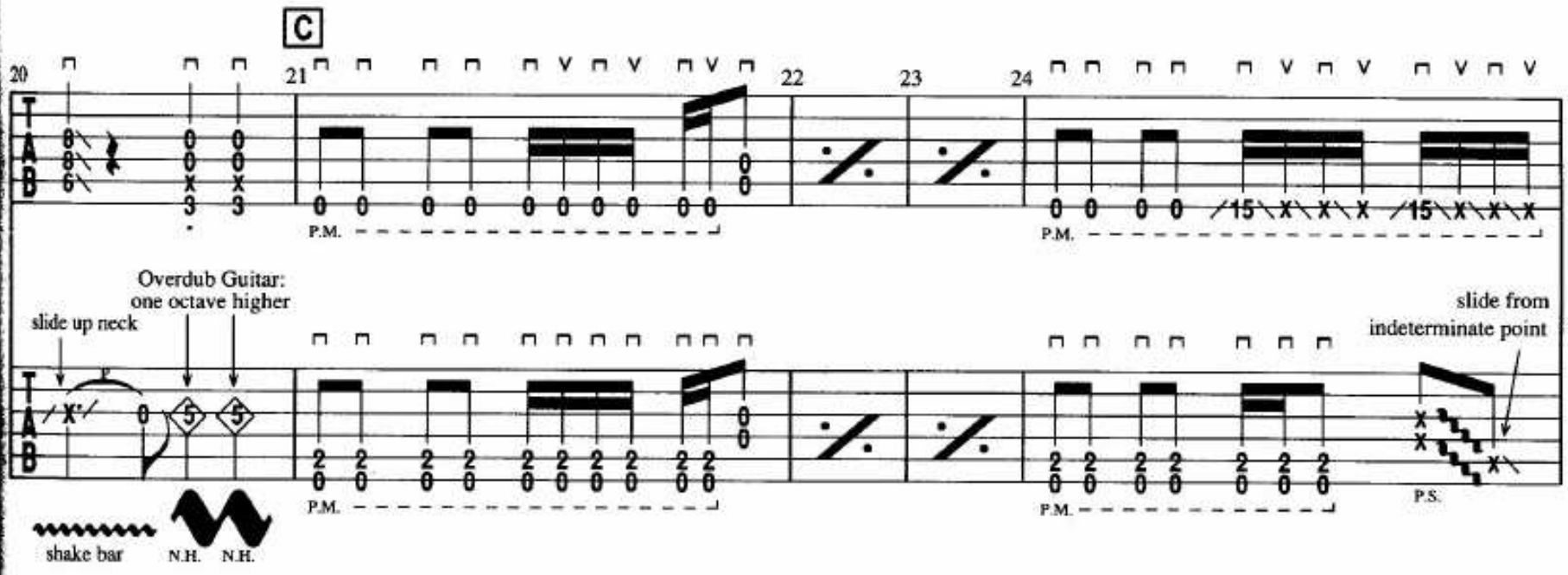

82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
P.M.
P.M.

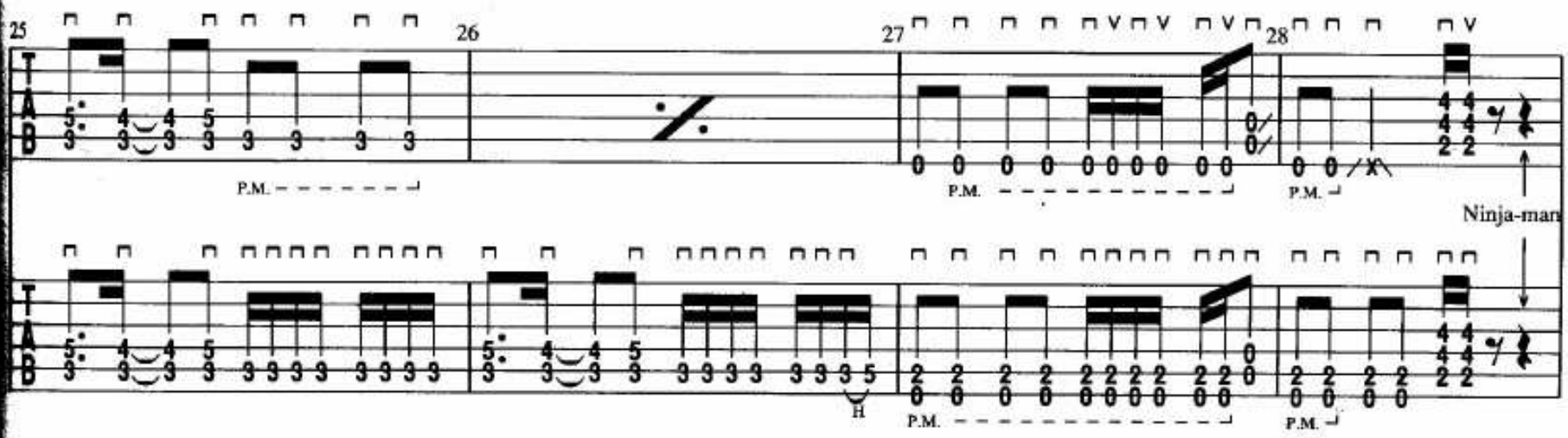

90
91
92
93
94
95
96
P.M.

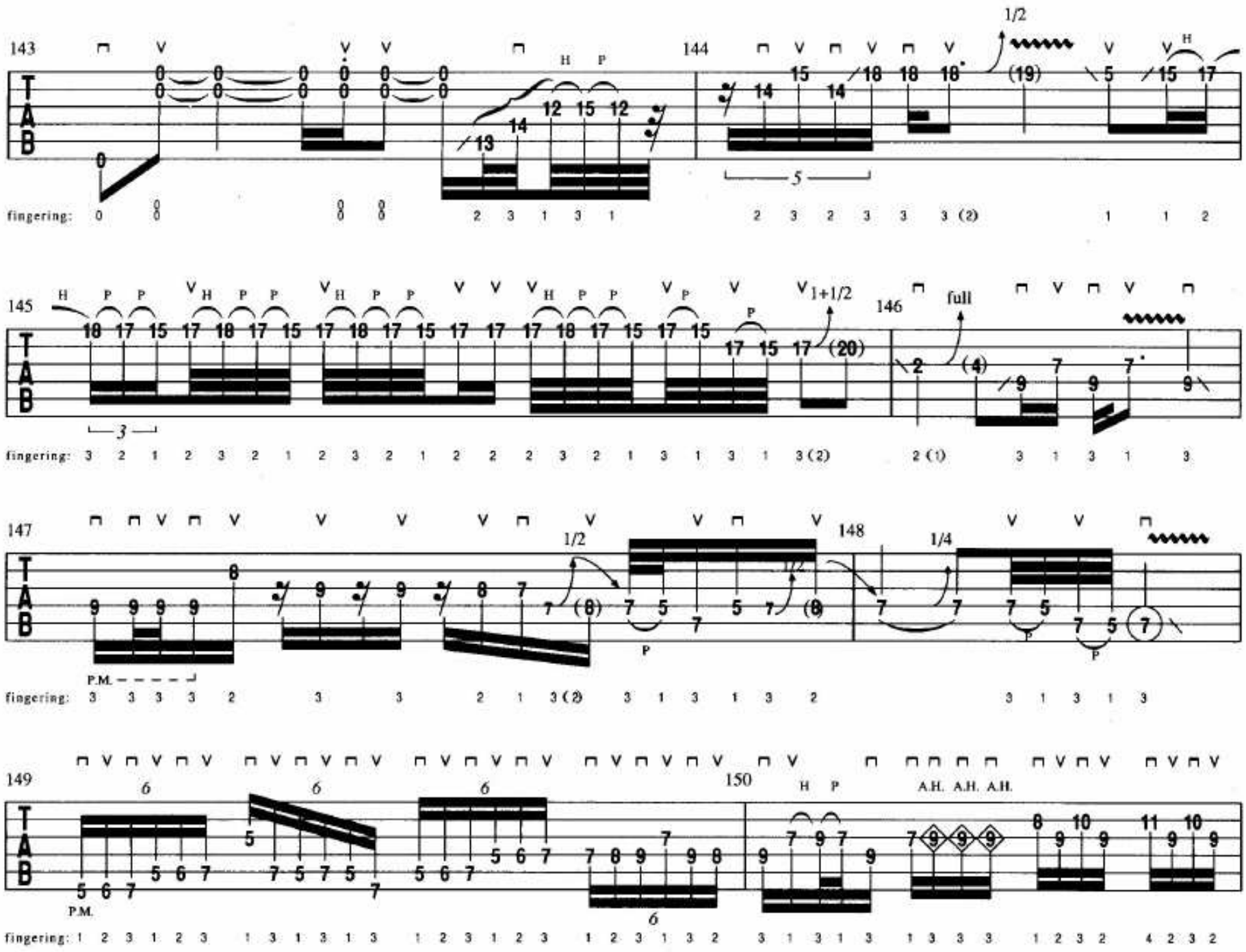

97
98
99
100
101
102
103
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.


15
16
17
P.S.
P.M.
P.M.
Overdub Guitar:
1 1/2
full
full
1 1/2
H P H
full
bar
bar
A.H.
A.H. A.H. A.H. A.H. A.H.
A.H.
fingering: 3 (2)
3(2) 3 1 3 1 1 2 1 4
3 (1,2)
3(2)
1 3 1 3 1
3(2)


18
19
P.S.
P.S.
P.S.
full
bar
ring together with previous note
fingering: 3 (2) 3 1 2 3(2) 1 1 1 3 1 1 1 2 3 1 1 3 1 1 1 2 3 1 2 3 3 1 3 1 3 1 1 0

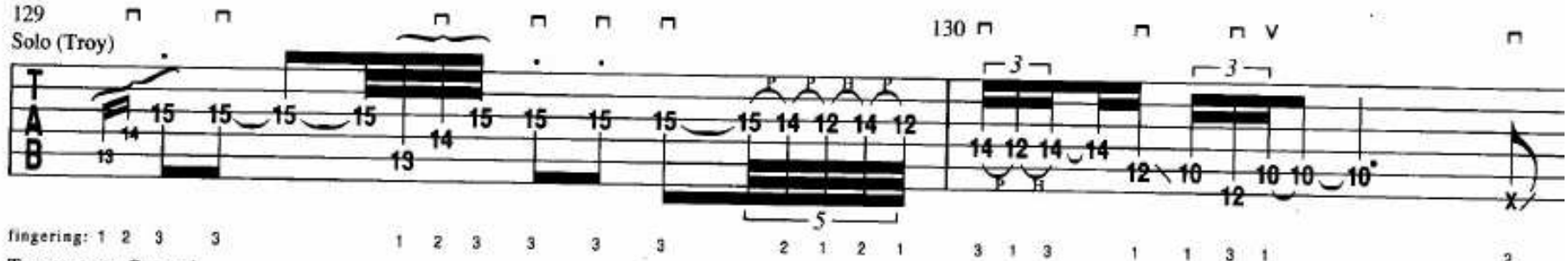

C
20
21
22
23
24
P.M.
P.M.
Overdub Guitar:
one octave higher
slide up neck
slide from
indeterminate point
P.M.
P.M.
P.S.
shake bar
N.H. N.H.


25
26
27
28
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
Ninja-man
P.M.
P.M.

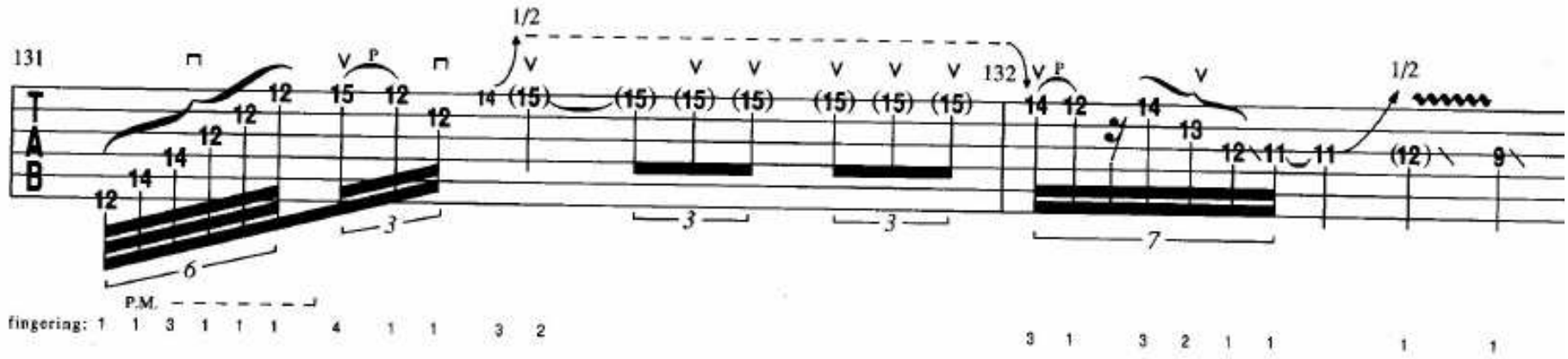


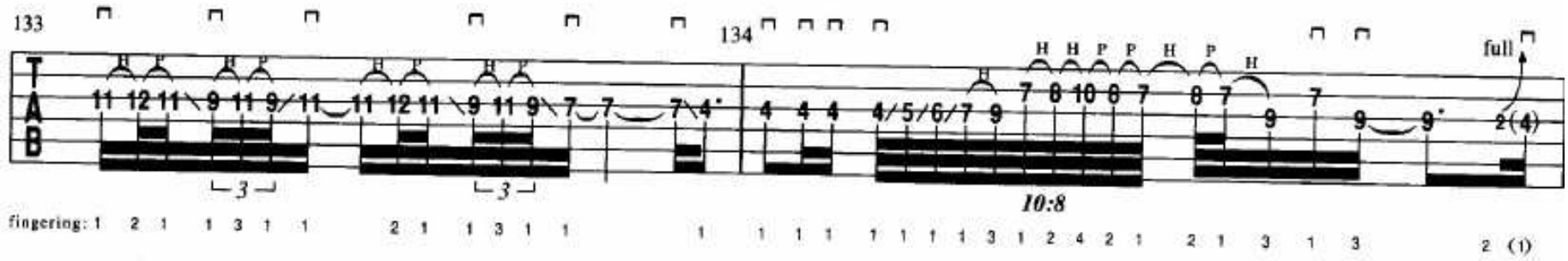
* Pick 1st string with middle finger (RH), pick third string with pick.

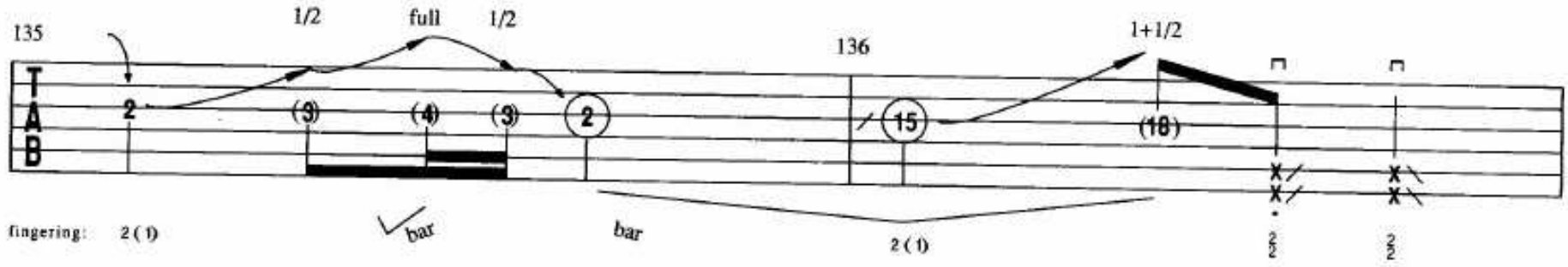
129
Solo (Troy)

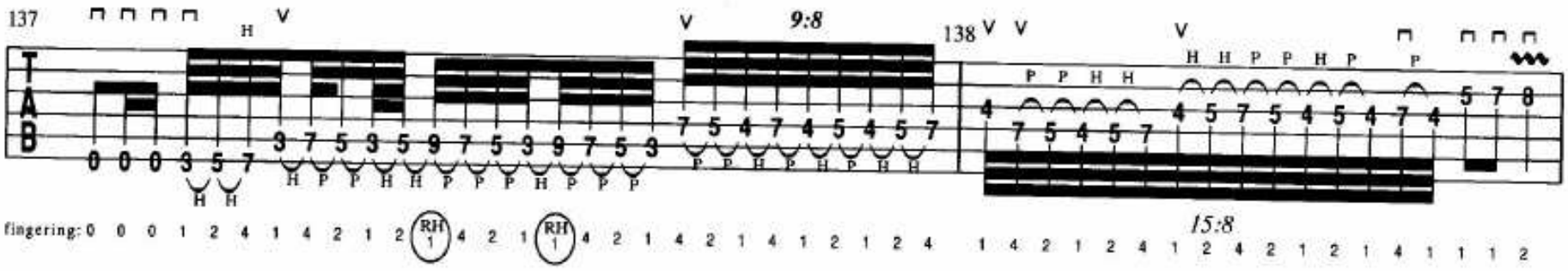


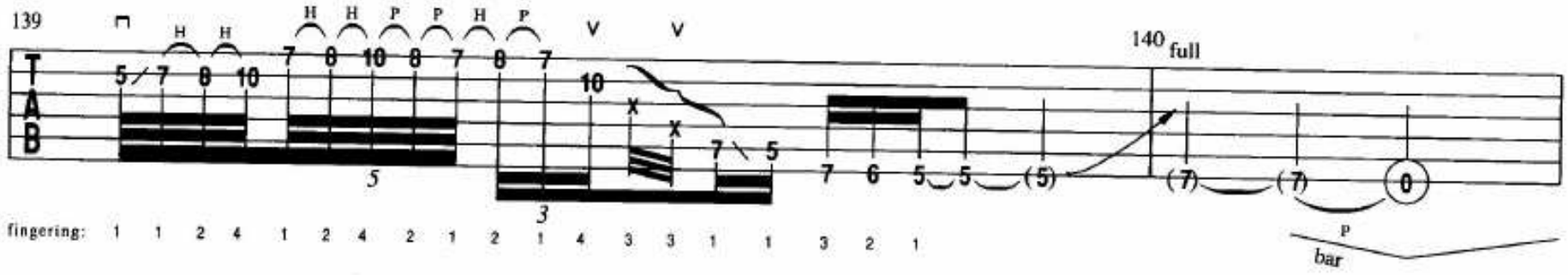
Tony repeats figure 1

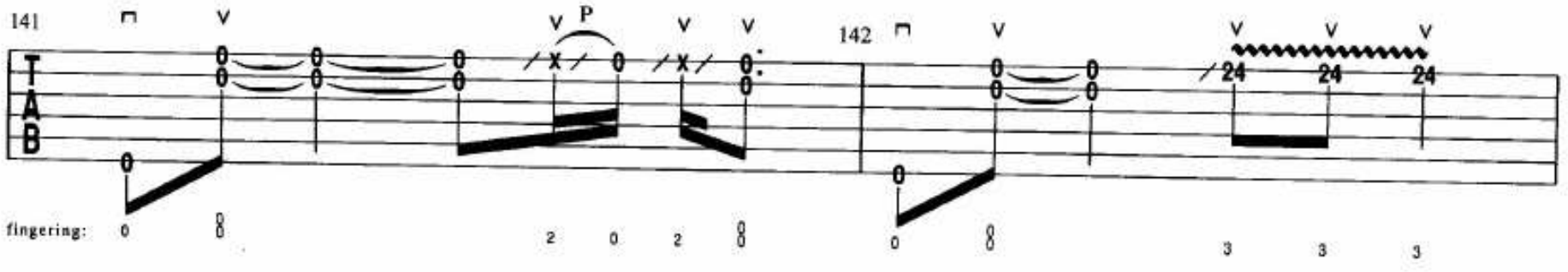












Bug Guts

A **Fast** ♩. = 148

With harmonizer (down perfect 4th)

Play 4 times

3rd time

4th time: 14

Troy (right channel)

fingering: 3 ( ) 3 1 3 1 1 2 3 1 1 2 1 3 3 1 1

2nd time:

Tony (left channel)

P.M.

fingering: 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 1 1 0 1 1 *sim.*

20 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

fingering: 2 1 2 1 3

P.M.

♩. = 140 **B** ♩ = 140 **Double time beat**

32 33 34 35 36 37 38

fingering: 1 3 2 1 3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 4 3 1 3 4 3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

P.M.

39 40 41 42 43 44

fingering: 1 3 2 1 3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 4 3 1 3 4 3 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

P.M.

sim.

Notes on "Bug Guts"

music: Tony Burton

A The theme is a repeating 4-bar phrase in 6/8 time in the key of E minor. The lead guitar (Troy) is using a harmonizer to add an additional note a perfect 4th below. The effect is subtle because it is mixed in rather quietly, but it is definitely there. After six repetitions of the phrase, the drums break down for two more repetitions leaving the rhythm guitar (Tony) to stand out alone. Two bars of 12/8 act as a transition section into B.

B This section changes to 4/4 with a double time beat. Notice the intensity rise as the key moves up from C# (VI) to D(♭VII). Also notice the dissonant harmonies and the different picking approaches. A break marks the end of this section.

C Taking the level of intensity one step higher, the double time beat is resumed with a new riff in E. Notice the chromatics used in bars 49-50. The breaks in bars 53 and 54 mark the peak of this section.

D The theme in 6/8 time is restated in a somewhat condensed version.

E As in section B earlier, this section also follows the two 12/8 bars with a 4/4 double time beat. Bar 75 shows a rather curious relationship between guitar 1 and 2, guaranteed to sound terrible. (Oh well, mistakes will happen – at least when the budget doesn't allow time to correct them!)

F Here, Tony improvises an incredibly intense guitar solo over a chromatically ascending chord progression — not the easiest thing to play over! (Good job, Tony.)

G The drums break for two bars while guitar 1 establishes a new riff in A. When the drums come back in (double time, of course) the progression is A / A / A / A / F / F and repeat. The second time on F, the band breaks while guitar 2 tremolo picks the F chord for two bars. (Just pick as fast as possible.) Then there's that strange, somehow ridiculously appropriate howling that, no matter how we tried to stop it, kept showing up at the end! Oh, well. Anyway, anyone who can play Tony's part on that last line definitely qualifies for the coveted "Wildman Noisemaker Guitar Award." Now that's music!! Keep practicing!

C

45 46 49 50

P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

D **Original tempo**

Add harmonizer

53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61

P P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

62 63 64 65 66

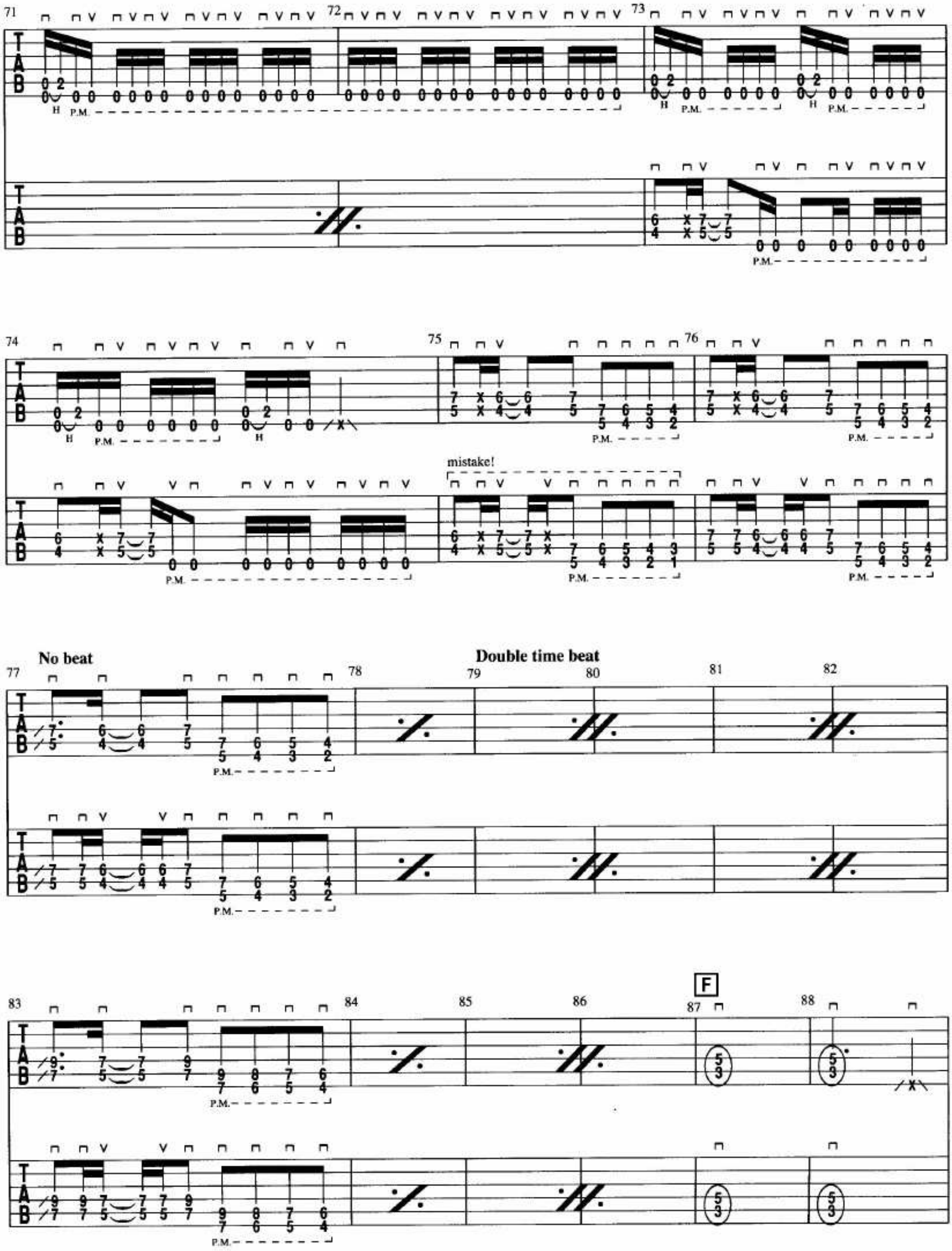
P P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

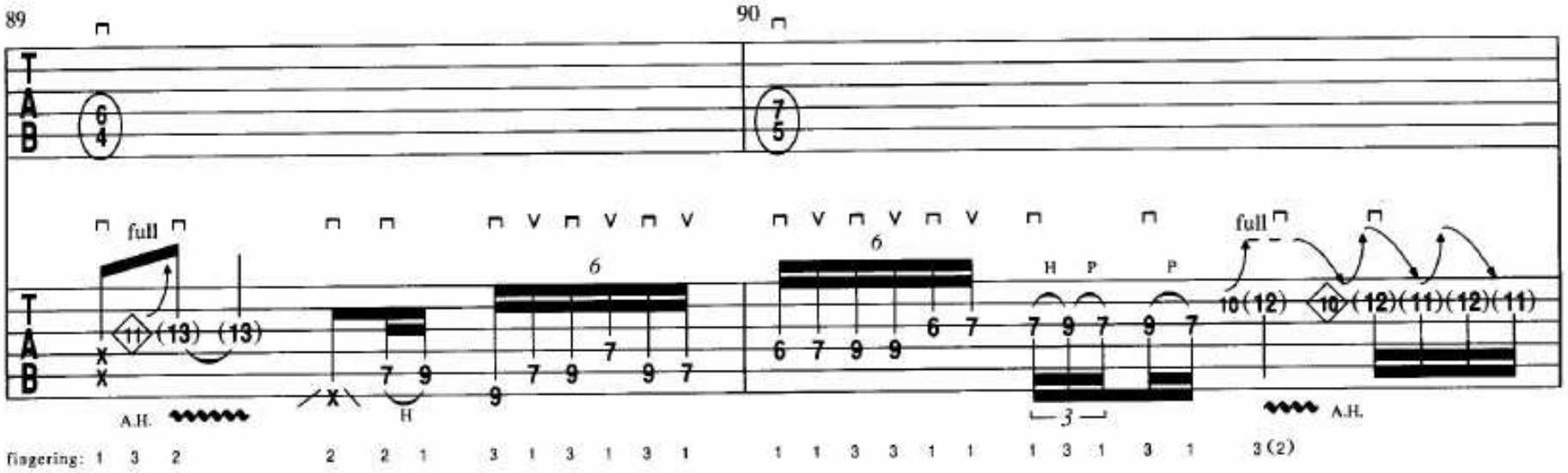
♩. = 144

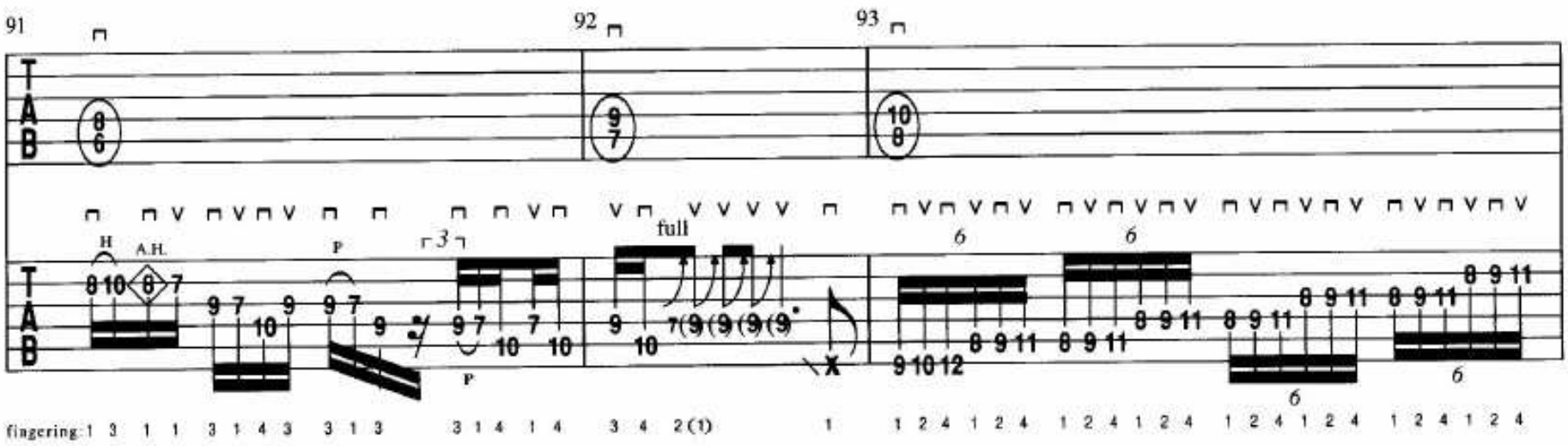
E ♩ = 144 **Double time beat**

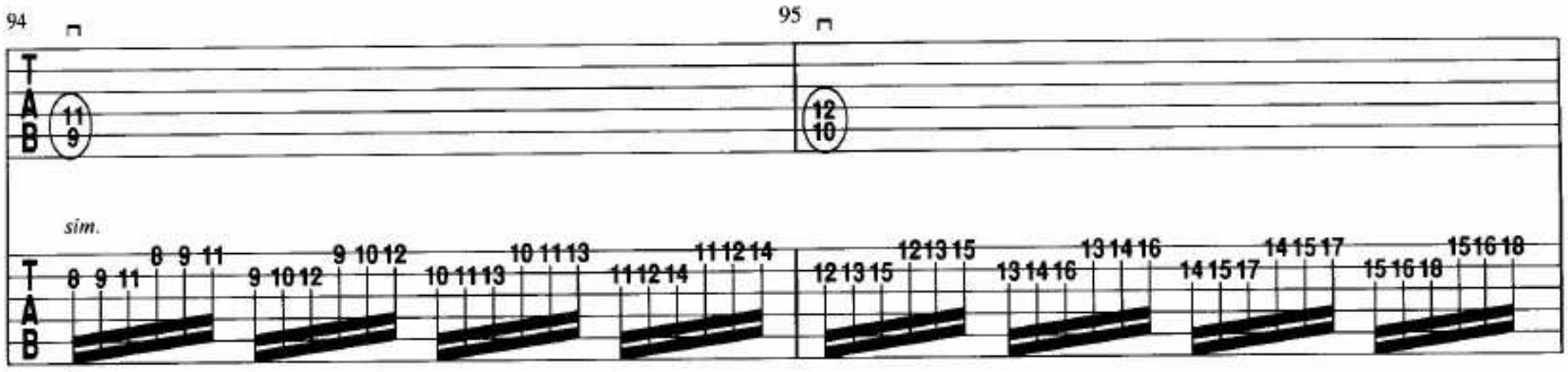
67 68 69 70 *sim.*

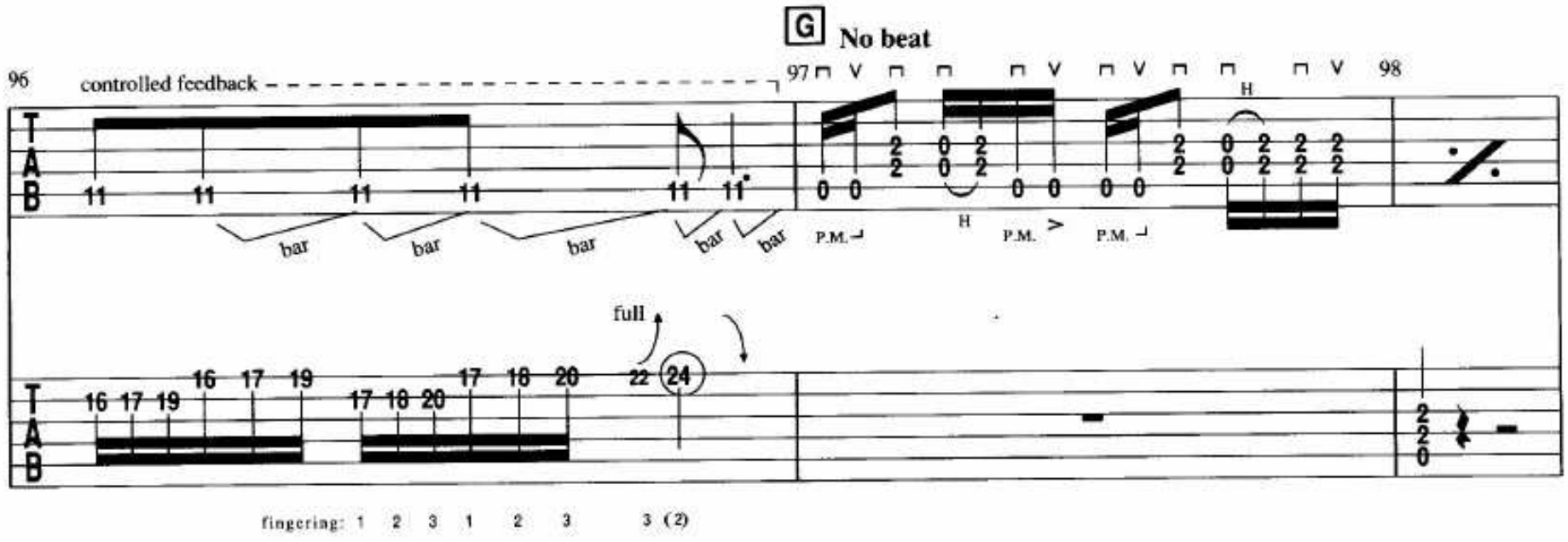
P.M. P.M. A.H.


71
72
73
74
75
76
mistake!
No beat
Double time beat
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
F
P.M.
H

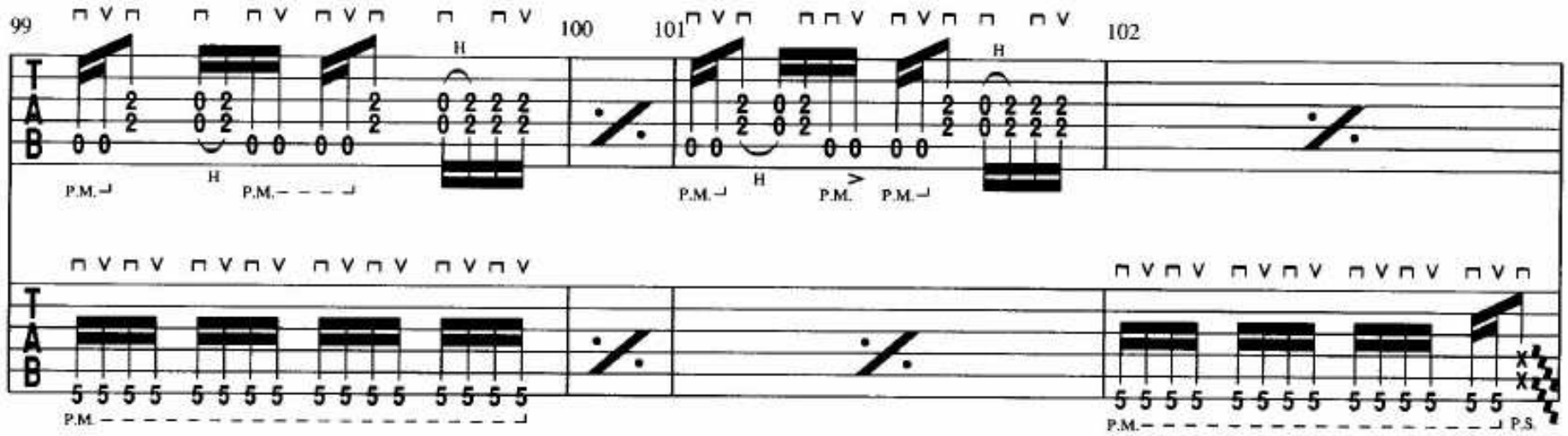

89
90
full
A.H.
H
P
full
A.H.
fingering: 1 3 2 2 2 1 3 1 3 1 3 1 1 1 3 3 1 1 1 3 1 3 1 3(2)

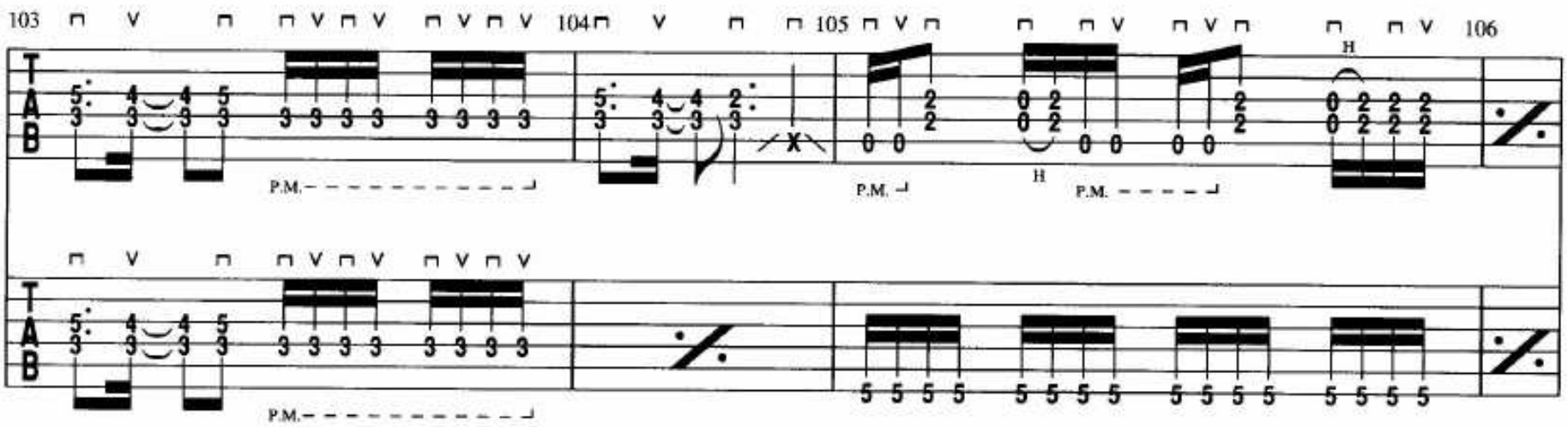

91
92
93
H
A.H.
P
full
fingering: 1 3 1 1 3 1 4 3 3 1 3 3 1 4 1 4 3 4 2(1) 1 1 2 4 1 2 4 1 2 4 1 2 4 1 2 4 1 2 4 1 2 4

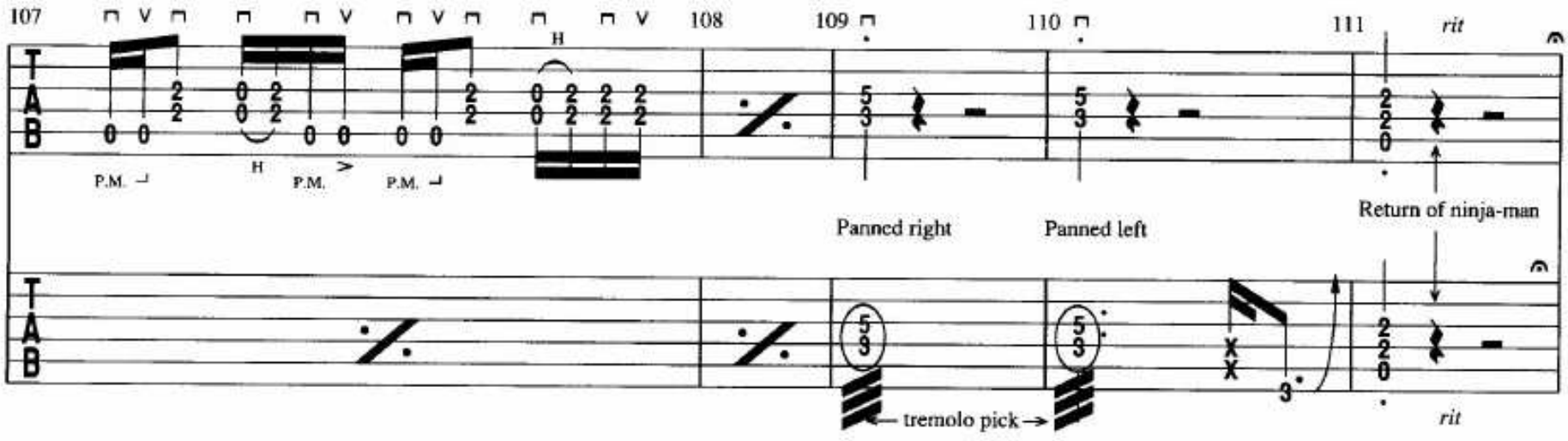

94
95
sim.
sim.

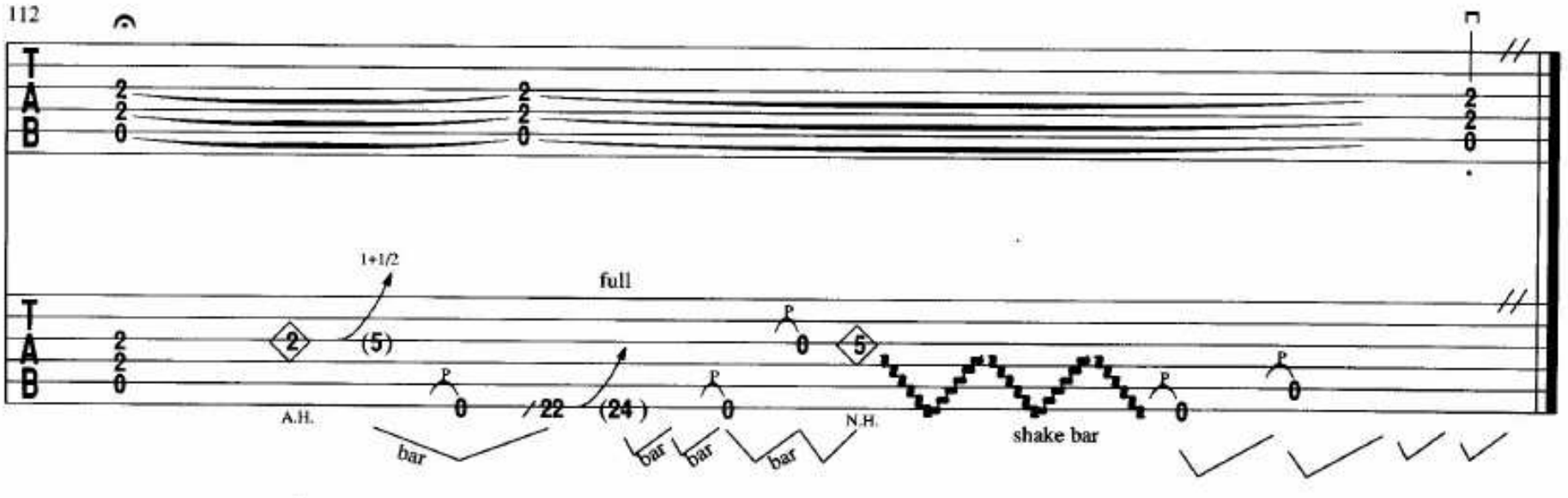

G
No beat
96
controlled feedback
97
98
H
bar
bar
bar
bar
bar
P.M.
H
P.M.
P.M.
full
fingering: 1 2 3 1 2 3 3 (2)

Double time beat









Notes on "Megadirt"

music: Tony Burton, Troy Stetina

A This section serves as both the beginning and the end of the song. The words "D.C. al Fine" on page 62 mean to repeat from the beginning to the *Fine* symbol (in bar 20). The only difference is that on the second time through, use the fret numbers in parentheses in bars 15, 17 and 18. (Tony was supposed to play the exact same thing as at the beginning, but by the time he reached the end he had apparently forgotten what he had played previously – it's O.K. though, we won't tell him.) The key is E minor.

B Here the drums give a double time beat with the snare on the downbeats. The tonal center moves up to F♯ for 8 bars, then G♯ for 4 bars.

C This short interlude in half-time gives a breathing space and acts as a transition into the next section. Although the beat is felt in half-time, because it is only 8 beats long it is written in normal time.

D A new riff is introduced in A minor. First, 4 bars are in normal time, then the beat goes into double time while guitar 2 (Tony) takes a short solo.

E Here the key is raised a half step to B♭, for a riff skirting between the natural minor and phrygian mode. Notice the harmonies and the different picking approaches. With a third repetition, the key shifts up to B, but then drops immediately, and unexpectedly, back to B♭.

F The pitches of the chords played here are not as important as their timing and general effect. In bar 62, don't try to play specific chords – start on the first chord and end in the right place on the last chord. The sliding notes in between are irrelevant. The effect is intentional dissonant noise.

G Surprise! Another new riff! This double time riff is is so fast and heavy, it's comical. After four 2-bar phrases of D to C♯, the stakes are raised as the progression moves up a whole step to E to D♯ and guitar 1 (Troy) goes into a short improvised solo. To help you master the techniques involved in these faster solos, check out *Speed Mechanics for Lead Guitar.*

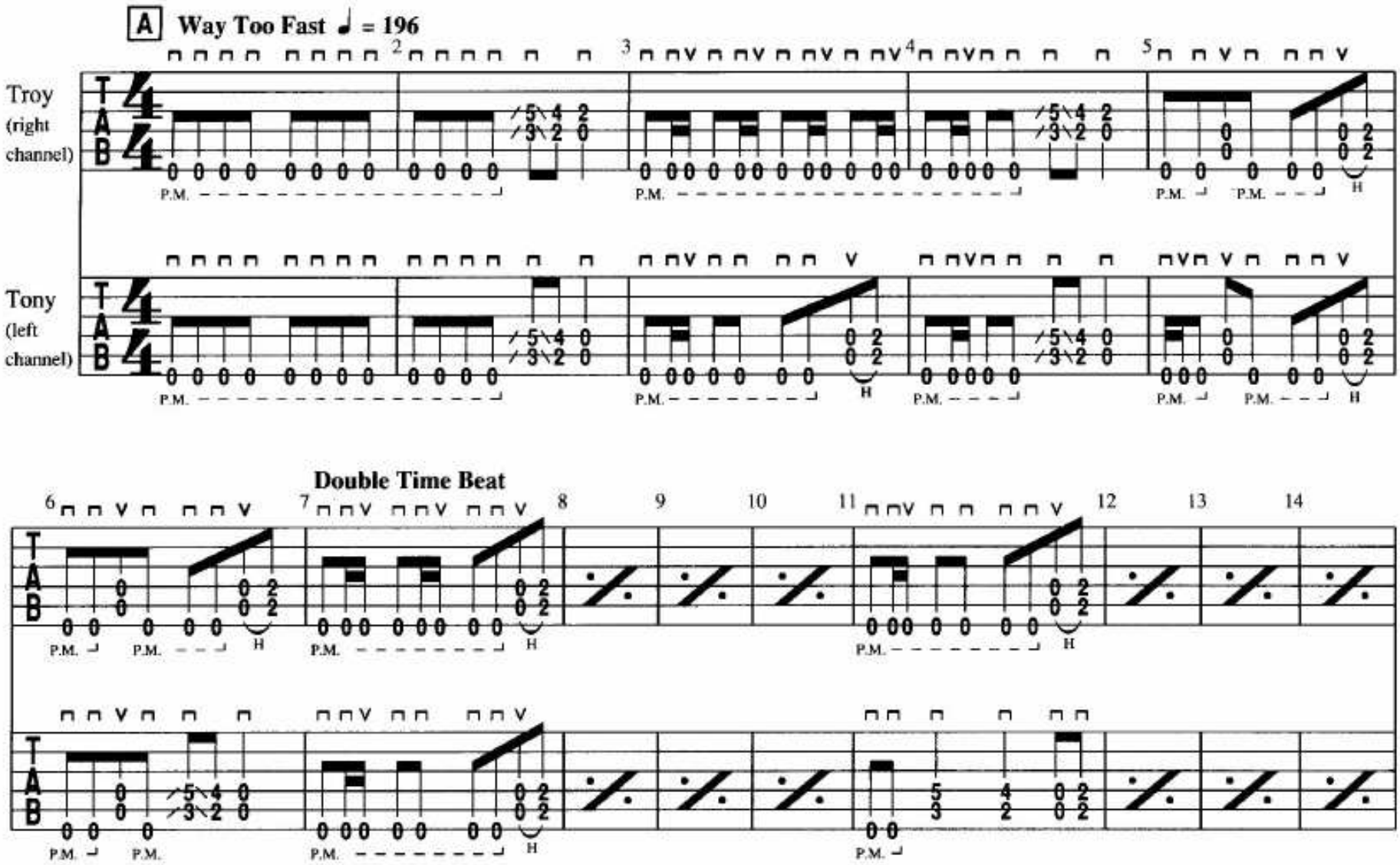
H Drum accents with no beat set this 4-bar interlude apart. The key is back to E minor – one half-step above the previous section.

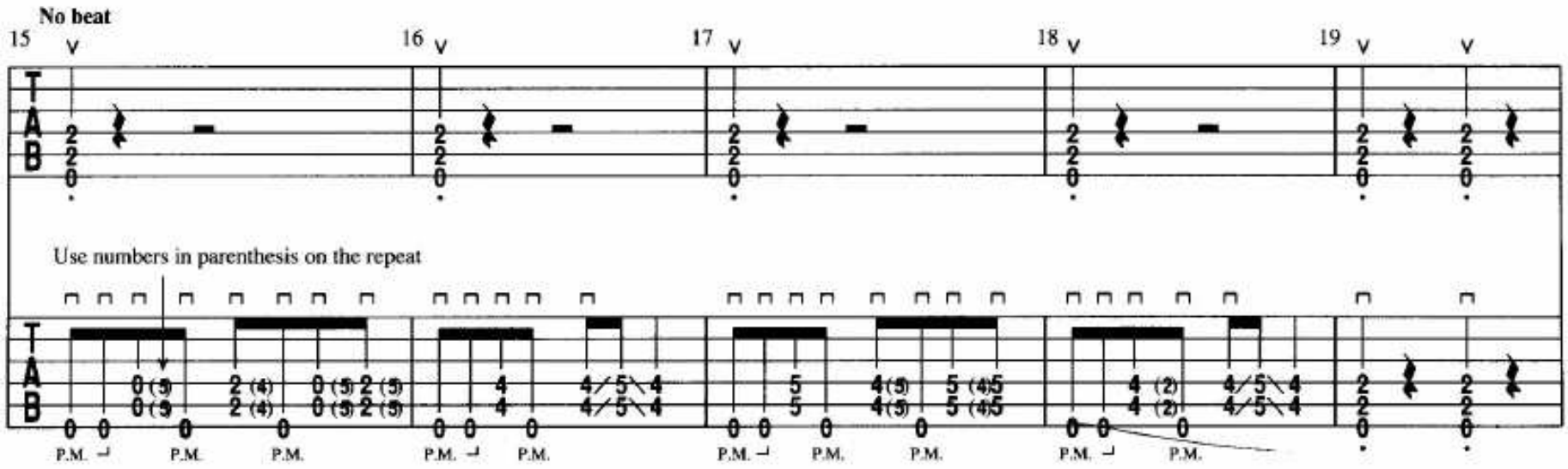
I Here the beat drops into half-time and guitar 2 (Tony) gives a melodic and totally cool solo over a six bar chord progression. As in "Anvil Head," to help you follow the faster and more complex rhythmic figures in bars 91-93, think of it in double time, dropping thirty-second notes into more manageable sixteenths. (And pick up a copy of *Speed Mechanics!)*

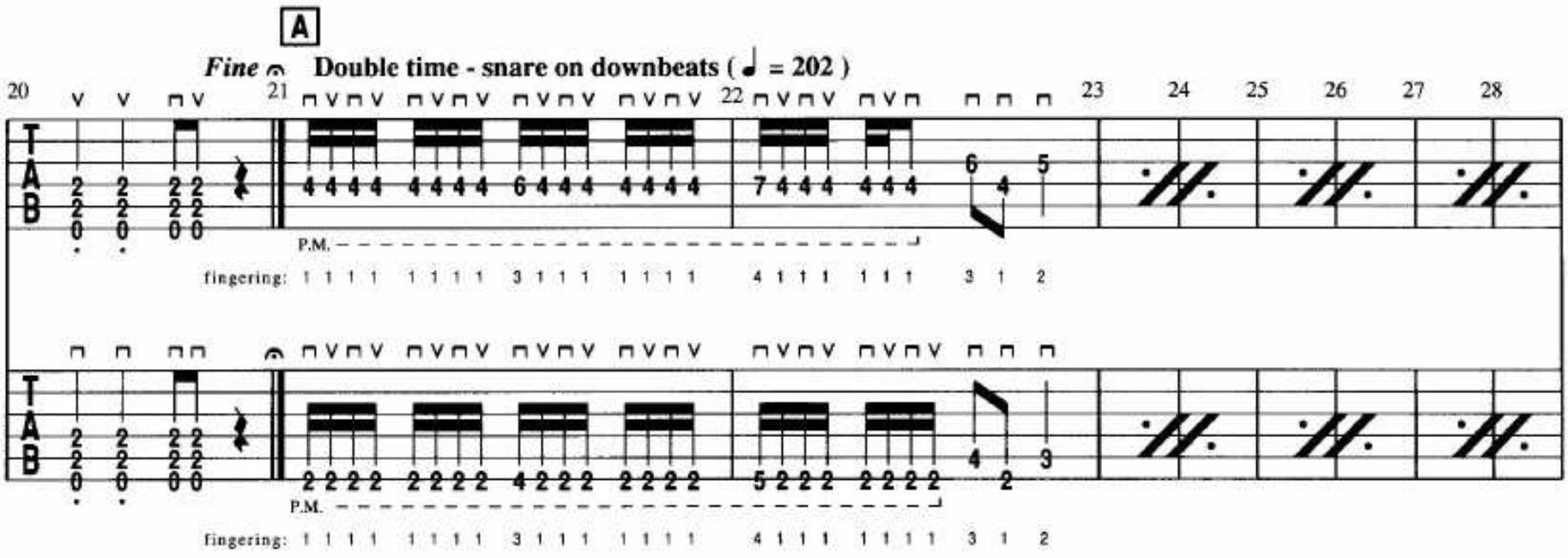
J The melodic theme from section E above is restated twice in B♭, followed by the interlude from section H in a shortened version. Then, before you can remember just where and when you've heard it before, back comes a half phrase of the B♭ riff. Whipped into a frenzy, there's no place to go but up, so a harmonized ascending chromatic line is just what the doctor ordered. And just when your circuits are about to overload on the quickening pace of changes, it's back to the beginning – back to the familiar – back home. Quite an adventure, I'd say.

This one's a little on the fast side, so good luck But who knows?...with some practice, you might surprise yourself! Take your time and work up to it.

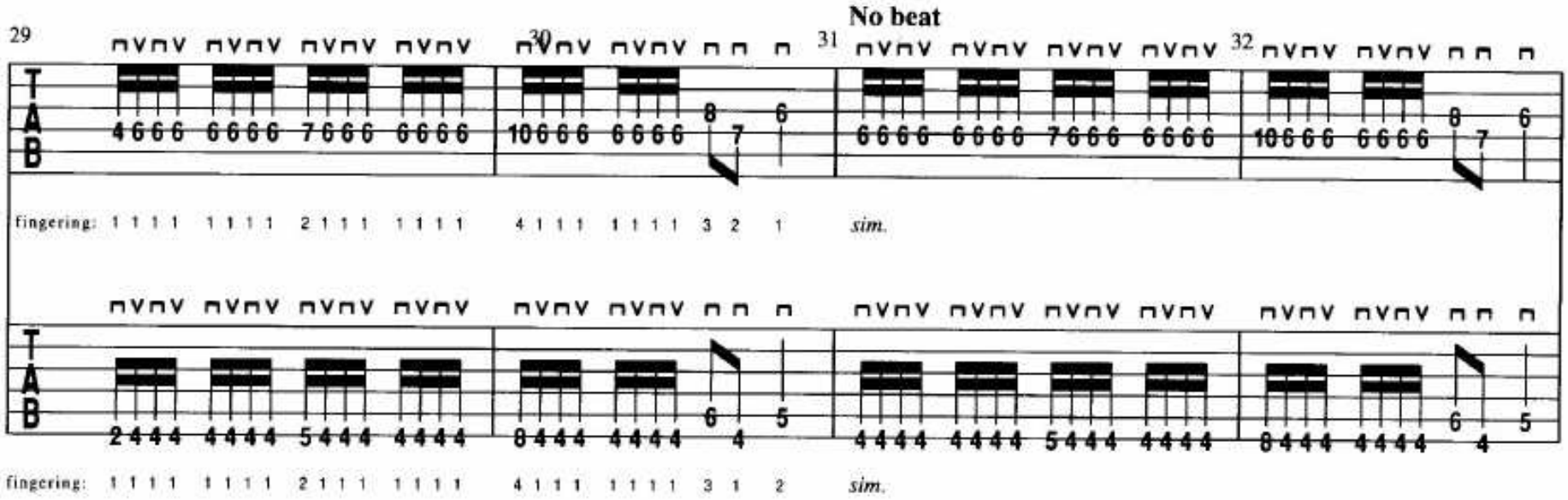
Megadirt







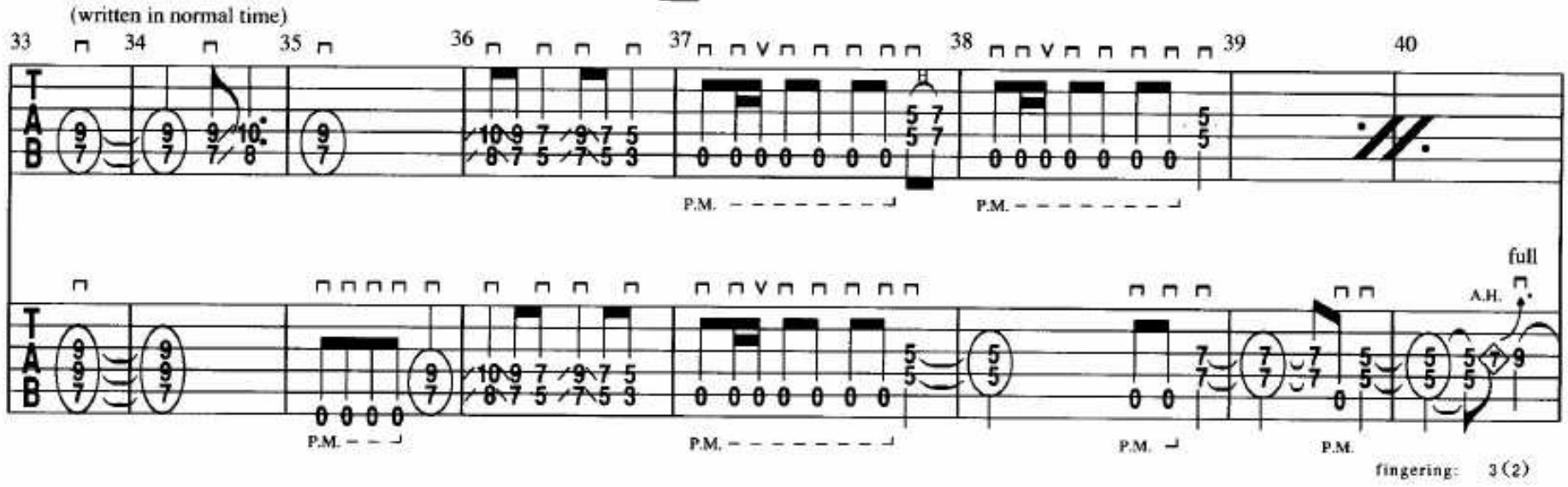
No beat



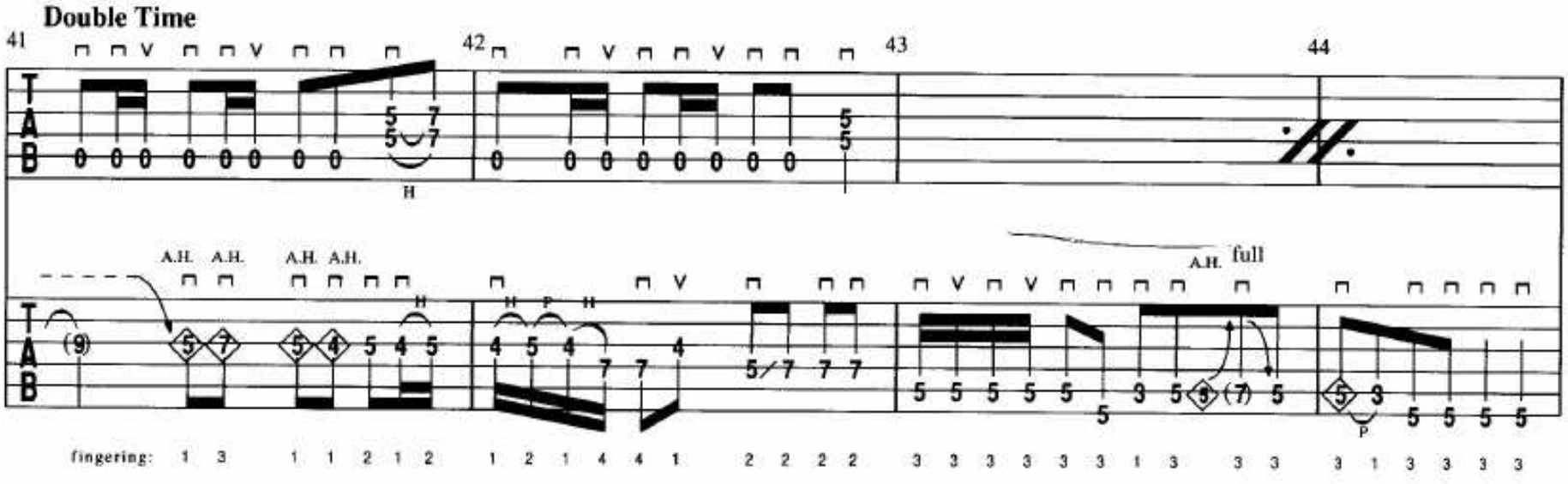
C Half time feel

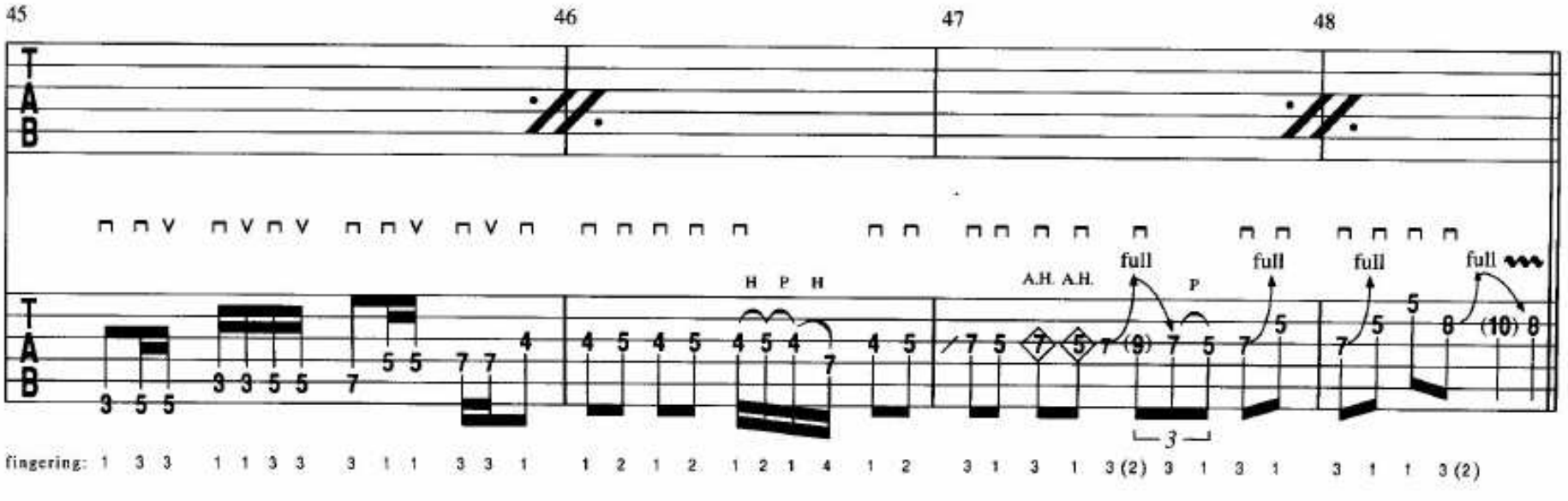
(written in normal time)

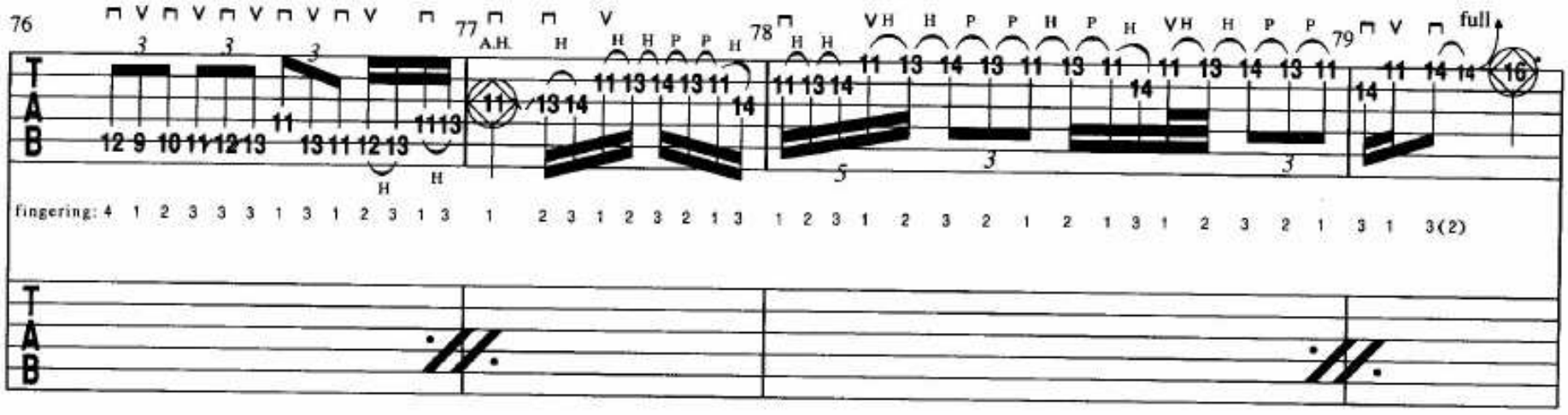
D Normal time



Double Time

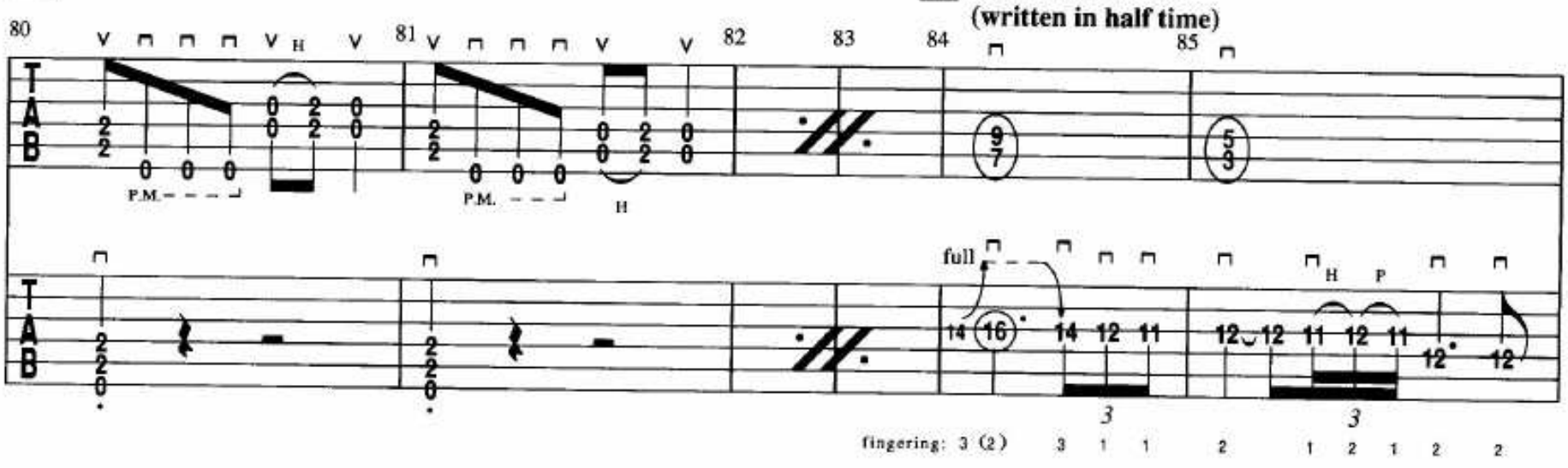


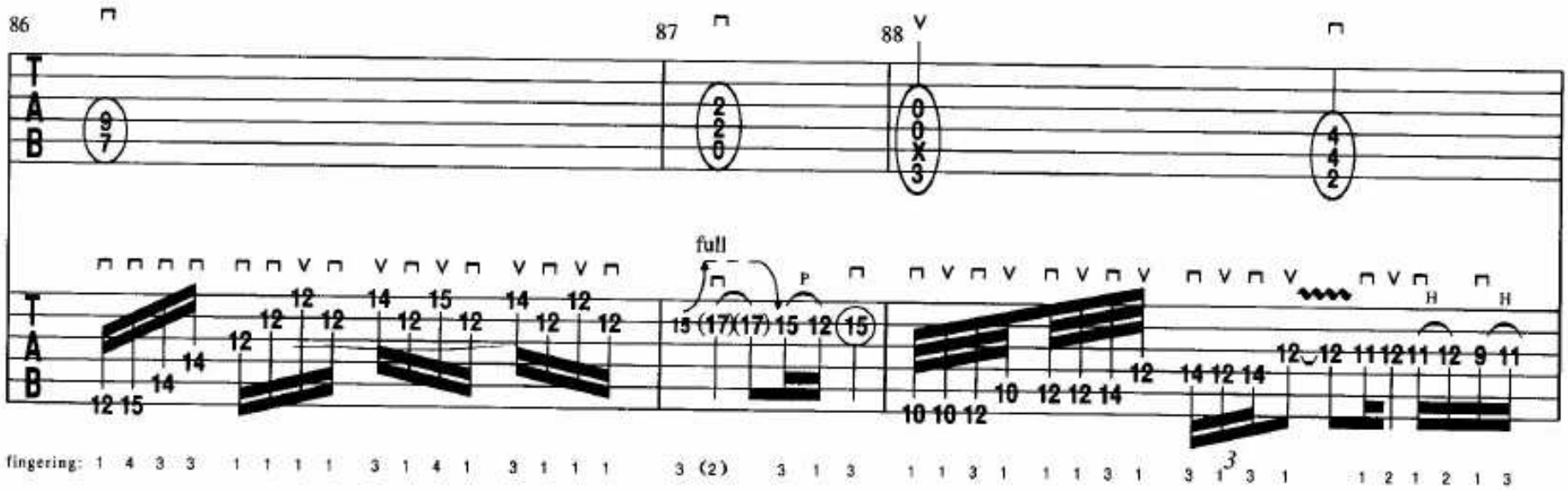


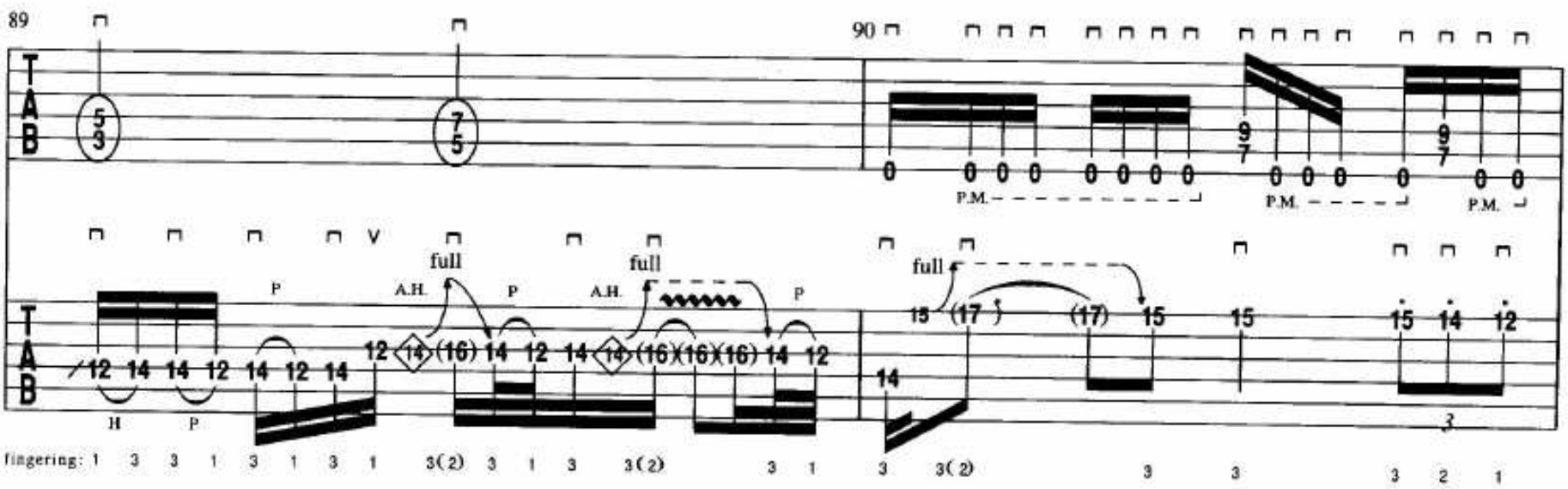


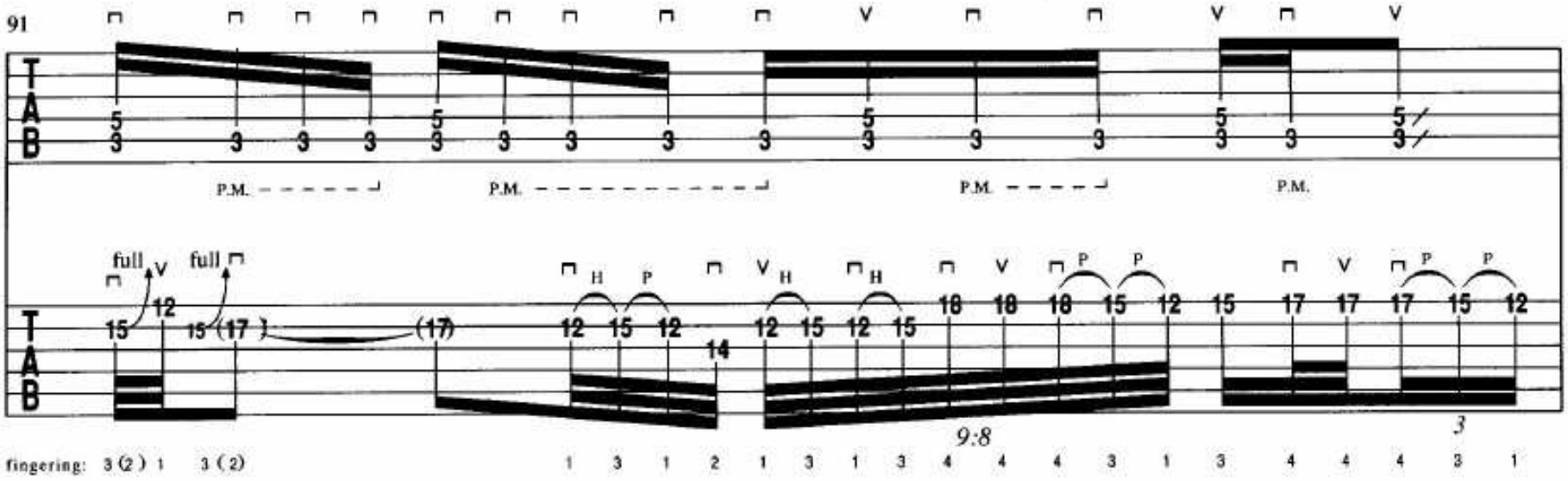
H No beat

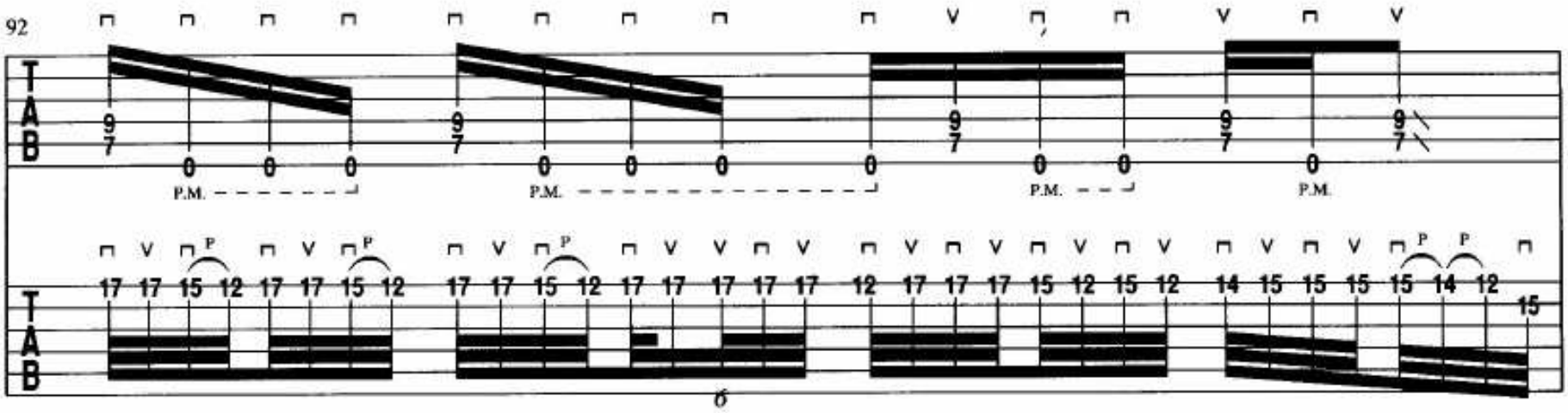
I Half time ♩ = 96
(written in half time)

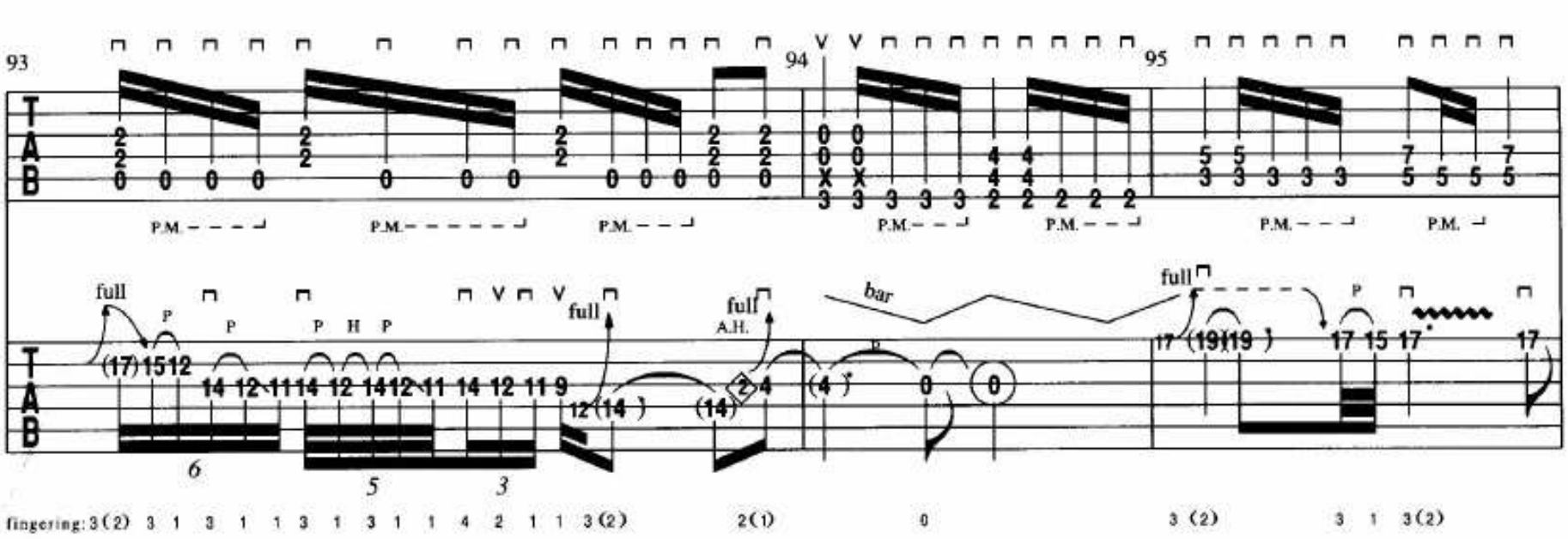




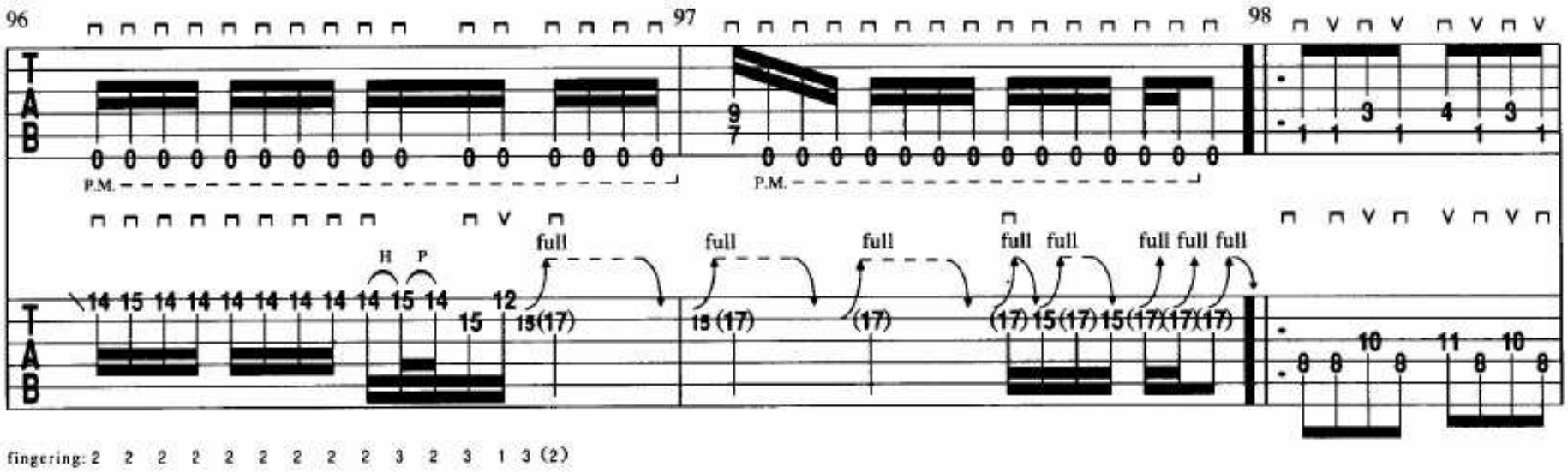




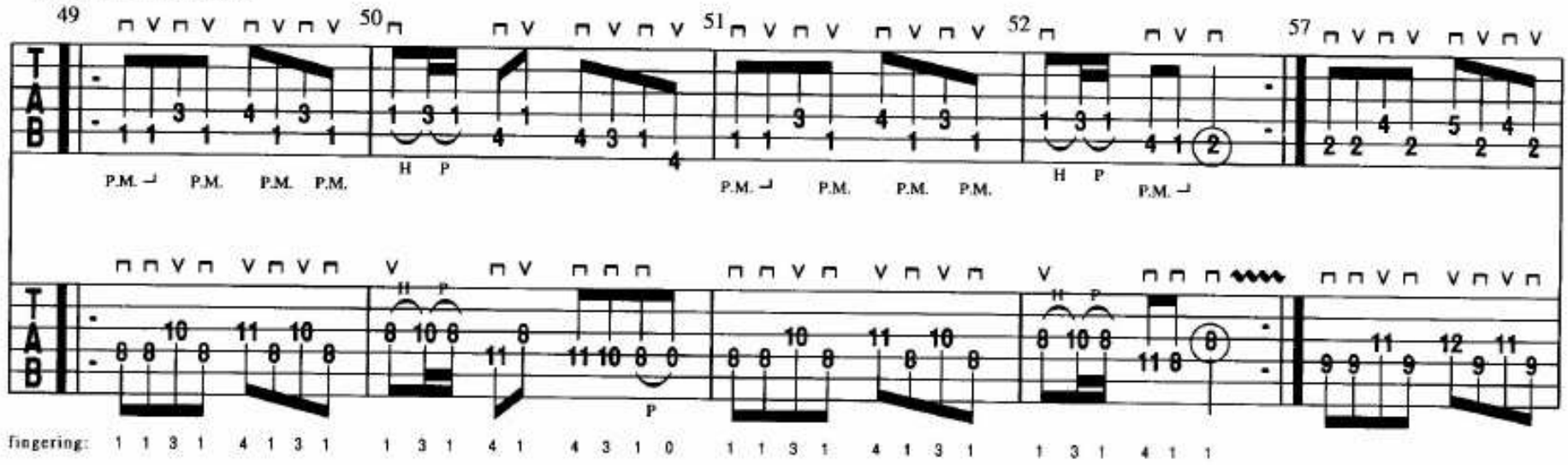




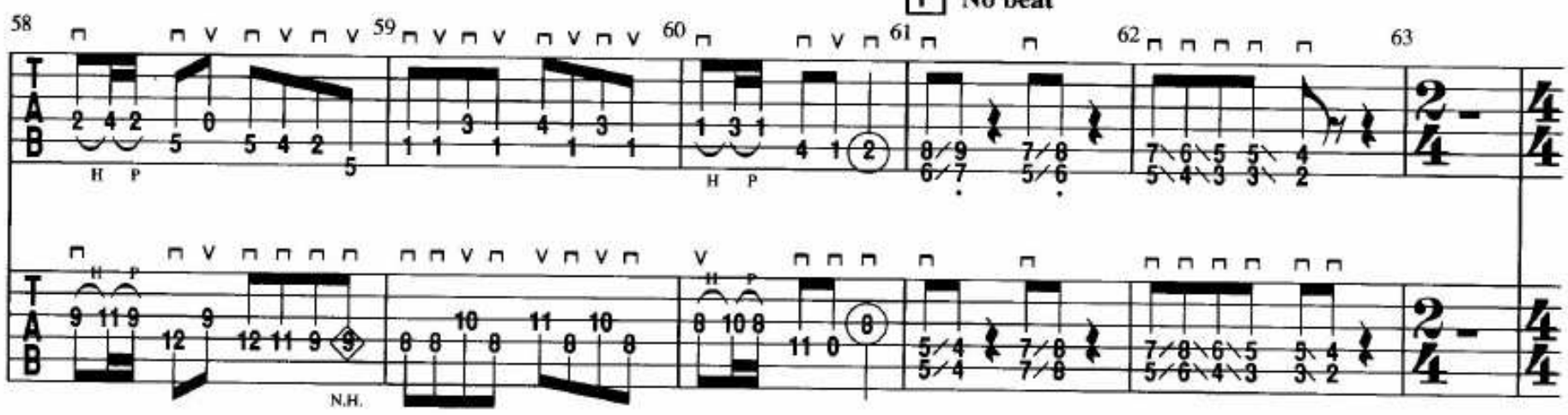
J Normal time ♩ = 196



E **Normal time**



F **No beat**



G **Double Time**