## SHREDDED METAL

## **FOUR TRIADS**

There are four basic triads (three note chords) in music – major, minor, augmented, and diminished. I'm sure you're all familiar with basic major and minor chords, but augmented and diminished can often cause some confusion. The construction of these four chords is outlined below:

- Major (1-3-5),
- Minor (1-b3-5)
- Augmented (1-3-#5)
- Diminished (1-b3-b5)

A major triad is built from the first, third, and fifth degrees of a major scale. With minor chords, the third degree is lowered (flattened) a semitone. The determining scale degree for augmented and diminished chords is the fifth. For augmented, you take the major triad and raise the fifth a semitone. Diminished is the opposite of this – you take the minor triad but lower the fifth a semitone.

## **EXERCISE 1**

To highlight the difference between these four triads, I've notated them as arpeggios on one string and all based off an E root note. Notice how the fifth degree of the major triad moves up a fret to form the augmented chord, while the fifth degree of the minor triad shifts down a fret to make it diminished.



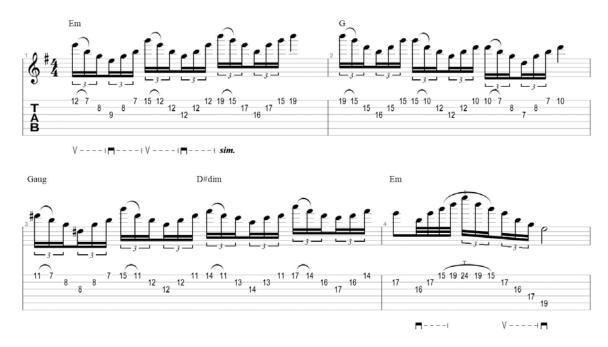
## **EXERCISE 2**

Putting this theory into practice, I've written a short technical exercise incorporating major, minor, augmented and diminished arpeggios. In the key of E minor, these arpeggios are played in the common three-string sweep picking style where each shape incorporates a pull-off on the first string.

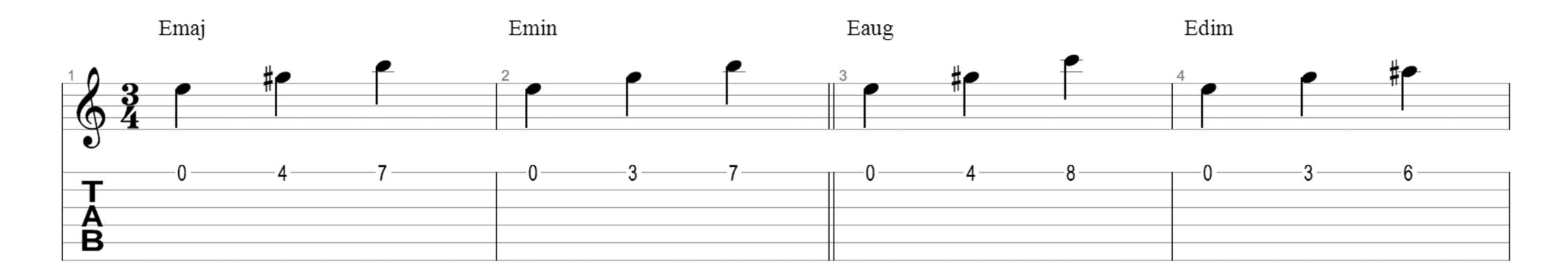
Here are a few main points to note from this exercise:

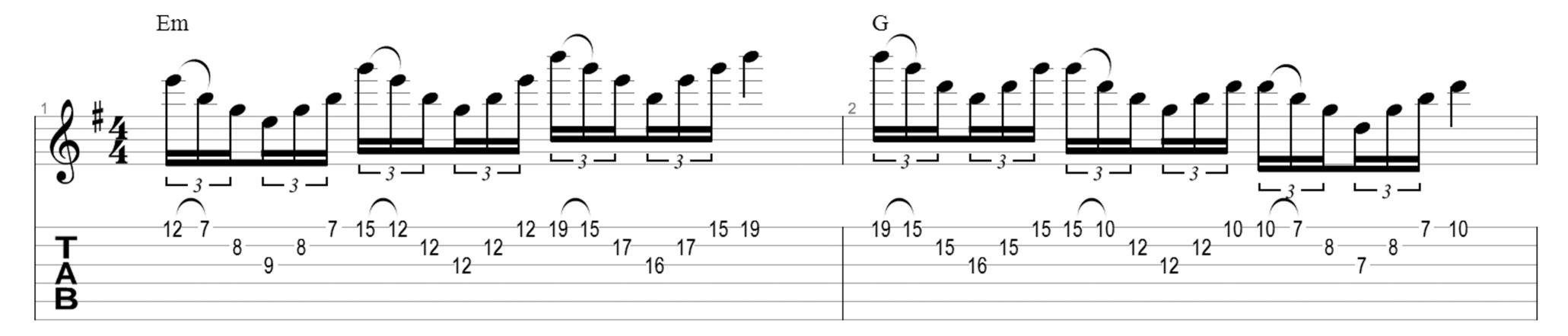
- For each chord, the sweep picked arpeggios move through different inversions.
- A lot of these shapes require you to roll your finger on and off adjacent frets to avoid the strings ringing together.
- The G augmented and D# diminished chords denote an E harmonic minor tonality.
- It's quite rare to see straight diminished triads in music usually a seventh is added as well. This is what I've done here by using diminished 7th arpeggios (1-b3-b5-bb7).

- The notes of augmented triads and diminished 7th chords are equidistant. Therefore, the inversion shapes are the same up and down the fretboard (four frets apart for augmented, three frets apart for diminished 7th).
- Although not notated here, a plus (+) sign is another symbol used to indicate an augmented chord, while a small circle next to the chord name also indicates diminished.
- To make things a bit more interesting, I finish off the exercise by using a sweep-tapped E minor arpeggio across five strings.



Give these arpeggios a try for yourself, and check out www.australianguitarmag.com.au to hear me play them fast and slow.





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