

SHREDDDED 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.

The image shows a musical exercise for guitar. It consists of four measures, each representing a different triad based on the E root note. The notation is written in a treble clef with a 3/4 time signature. Below the staff is a TAB line. The chords and their fret numbers are: 1. Emaj (0, 4, 7), 2. Emin (0, 3, 7), 3. Eaug (0, 4, 8), and 4. Edim (0, 3, 6). The notes are arpeggiated, meaning they are played one by one in sequence.

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.

The first exercise is in 4/4 time and consists of two measures. Measure 1 is labeled 'Em' and contains an arpeggio of the E minor chord (E2, G2, B2, D3, E3) with triplets. Measure 2 is labeled 'G' and contains an arpeggio of the G major chord (G2, B2, D3, F#3, G3) with triplets. Below the staff is a TAB section with the following fret numbers: 12 7 8 9 8 7 15 12 12 12 19 15 17 17 15 19 for the first measure, and 19 15 15 15 10 12 12 10 10 7 8 7 8 7 10 for the second measure.

V - - - - | V - - - - | V - - - - | *sim.*

The second exercise is in 4/4 time and consists of four measures. Measure 3 is labeled 'Gaug' and contains an augmented triad arpeggio (G2, B2, D#3) with triplets. Measure 4 is labeled 'D#dim' and contains a diminished 7th chord arpeggio (D#3, F#3, A3, B3) with triplets. Measure 5 is labeled 'Em' and contains an E minor arpeggio (E2, G2, B2, D3, E3) with triplets. Measure 6 is labeled 'Em' and contains a sweep-tapped E minor arpeggio across five strings (E2, G2, B2, D3, E3) with triplets. Below the staff is a TAB section with the following fret numbers: 11 7 8 8 8 7 15 11 12 12 11 14 11 13 13 11 17 14 16 17 16 14 for the first three measures, and 17 17 16 17 15 19 24 19 15 17 16 17 19 for the last measure.

□ - - - - | V - - - - | □

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

Emaj

Emin

Eaug

Edim

1 **3/4**

TAB 0 4 7 | 0 3 7 | 0 4 8 | 0 3 6

1 **Em**

2 **G**

TAB

V - - - - | ■ - - - - | V - - - - | ■ - - - - | *sim.*

3 **Gaug**

4 **Em**

■ - - - - | V - - - - | ■