Swift Guitar Lessons

Lead Guitar Lesson – Major Arpeggio Exercise

In this lesson, we will learn a powerful exercise in the form of a two octave major arpeggio in the key of A. We will focus on keeping our fingers stretched to the edges of each fret, while alternating the direction of our pick and "sweeping" when ascending through the strings.

Let's begin by reviewing a somewhat unorthodox position of our major scale, remember to track the order of whole steps and half steps as you play, W, W, H, W, W, W, H:

```
E | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 5 - |
B | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 7 - 9 - - - |
G | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 6 - 7 - 9 - - - - - - - - |
D | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 6 - 7 - 9 - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - |
A | - - - - - - - - 5 - 7 - 9 - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - |
E | - 5 - 7 - 9 - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - |
```

Assuming that you have practiced the scale in repetition and can confidently perform it both ascending and descending, let's move on to our arpeggio exercise:

```
E | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 5 - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - |
B | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - |
G | - - - - - - - - - - - - 6 - 9 - - - 9 - 6 - - - - - - - - - - - |
D | - - - - - - - - - 7 - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 7 - - - - - - - |
A | - - - - - - 7 - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 7 - - - - - |
E | - 5 - 9 - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 9 - 5 - |
Pick:  ↓   ↑   ↓   ↓   ↓   ↑   ↓   ↑   ↓   ↑   ↑   ↑   ↓
```

With your two octave arpeggio well-practiced, move on to playing those same notes in a triplet rhythm, being sure to alternate your pick as you go:

```
E | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | - - - - - - - 5 - - - 5 - |
B | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | - - - - - - - - - - - - - |
G | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 6 - - - 6 | - 9 - 6 - 9 - - - 9 - - - |
D | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 7 - - - 7 - - - 7 - - | - - - - - - - - - - - - - |
A | - - - - - - - - 7 - - - 7 - - - 7 - - - - - - - - - | - - - - - - - - - - - - - |
E | - 5 - 9 - 5 - - - 9 - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | - - - - - - - - - - - - - |
```

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PG.2 – Bonus Lick!

Practice your major scale and arpeggio exercises at a slow and steady tempo. I recommend using a metronome to gauge your progress as you work toward performing these techniques at faster speeds.

Learning scales and arpeggios does not make you a "great" lead guitar player. To truly captivate your audience, you will need to draw inspiration from your favorite players, and develop a thoughtful and melodic style over time. A top tier soloist knows that the "licks" he/she plays will compliment what's being performed in the rhythm section. Remember, your audience will perceive these sounds together, and interpret what they hear with a single emotional response. Here is a melodic lick that utilizes notes found within our Amaj arpeggio:

```
E |-5-7p5/4-5-7-5-----------|
B |-------------------(7)-|
G |-----------9-6---------|
D |---------------7-------|
A |-----------------------|
E |-----------------------|
```

Congratulations on all your progress! Through patient repetition you will gain a command over the techniques discussed in this lesson. Be sure to use this PDF as a supplemental resource to the video linked at the top of this page. Thanks so much for studying with Swift Guitar Lessons.

Happy Pickin'
-Rob Swift