Guitar Ensemble Method

- 7th edition -

Lead Guitar

Method Book I

7th Edition

Brad Richter

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*Words that are **bolded** have definitions in the glossary at the back of the book.

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Welcome to Method Book I!

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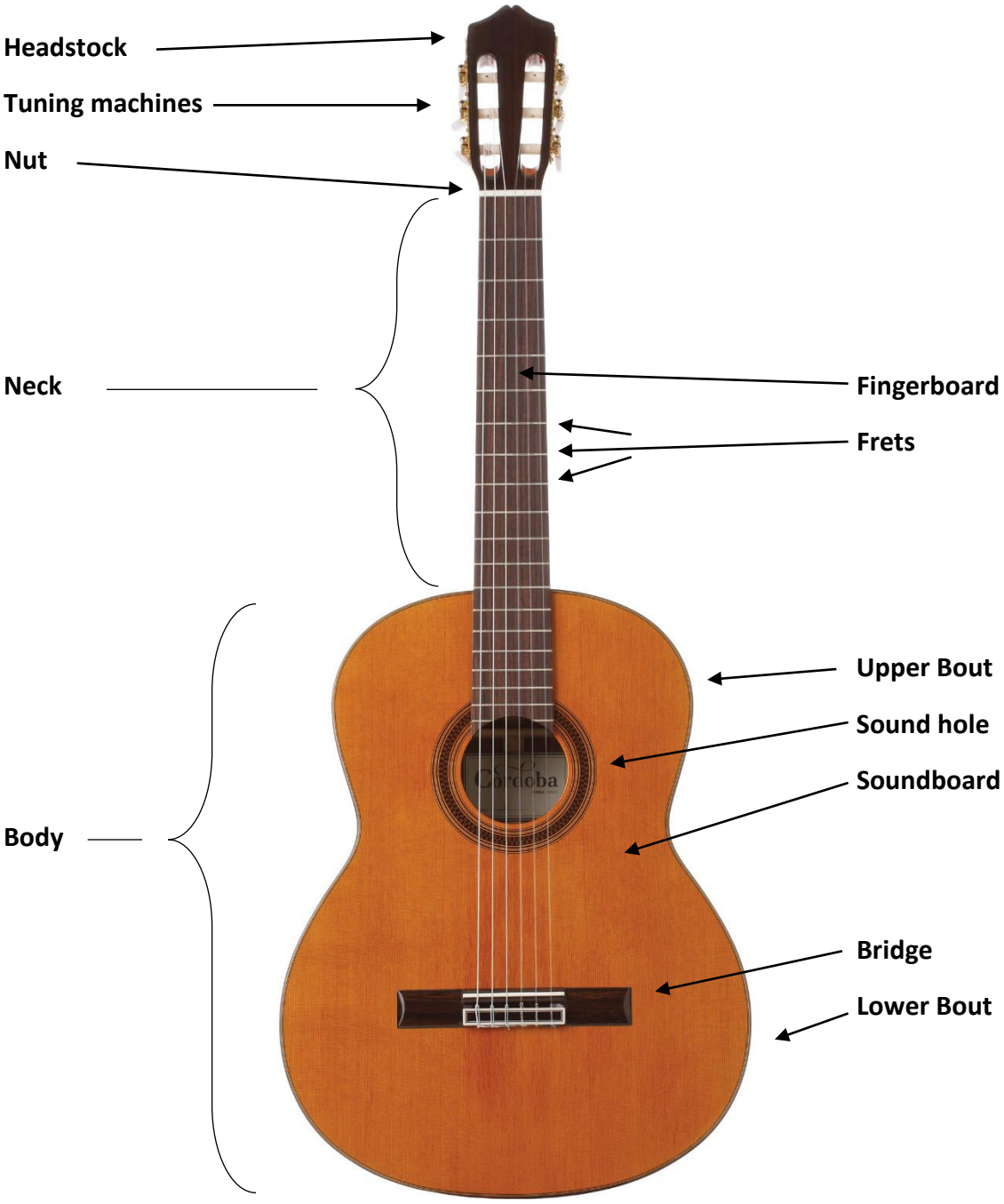
Parts of the Guitar



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Sitting Position

The most important thing to remember about sitting and hand positions is to relax. Keep the muscles in your hands and arms loose as well as the muscles in your shoulders, neck, and back.

Sit towards the front edge of your chair.

Raise your left leg by placing your left foot on a foot stool. A coffee can or a stack of books is a good substitute if you don't have a footstool yet.

Rest the waist of the guitar on your left leg with the lower bout between your legs and the guitar's neck angled upwards (at about a 45-degree angle).

The back of the guitar should be quite close to your body with the face of the guitar pointing forward.

Keep your shoulders squared and relaxed while you rest your right forearm (near the elbow) on the edge of the guitar top.

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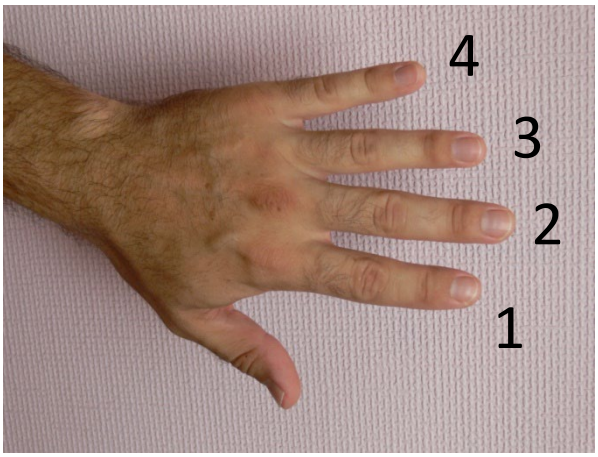
Left Hand



The fingers of the left hand are indicated with the following numbers:

4 – little finger

3 – ring finger

2 – middle finger

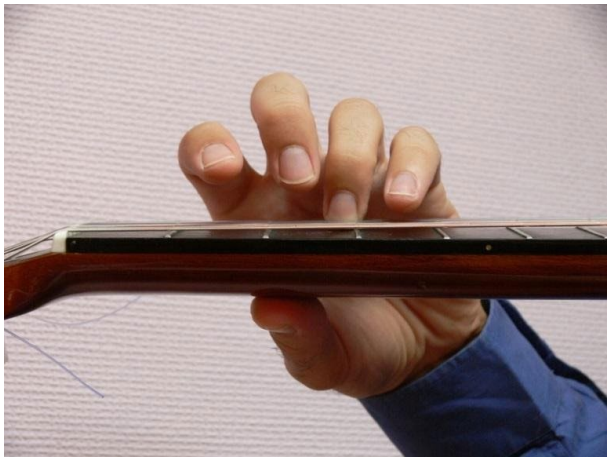
1 – index finger

Setting up your left hand to play

Place your thumb on the back of the guitar neck pointed upwards.

Keep your wrist straight and behind the neck with your arm and shoulder relaxed.

Line up your left-hand knuckles with the bottom of the neck, leaving a small gap between your hand and the neck.



Keep your fingers curved naturally.

Use the tips of your fingers to press down the strings.

Place your fingers just behind the fret for the best tone.

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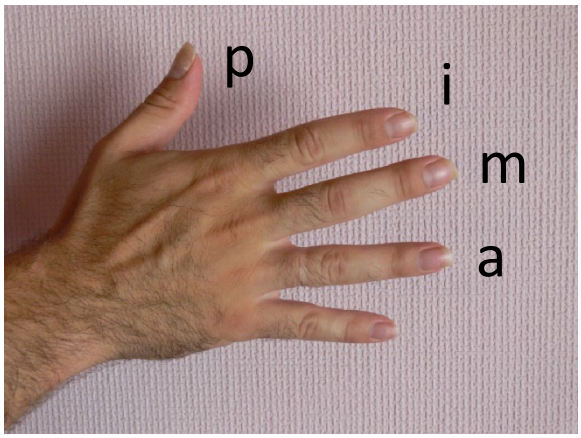
Right Hand

The fingers of the right hand are indicated with the following letters:



p – thumb

i – index finger

m – middle finger

a – ring finger

The letter abbreviations come from the Spanish words for the fingers. The “c” finger (little or pinky finger) is rarely used in fingerstyle guitar.

Setting up your right hand to play

Rest your right forearm (near your elbow) on the edge of the guitar top.

Place your right hand over the strings at the back of the sound hole.

Place the tip of your thumb (**p**) on the fifth or sixth string.

Keep your wrist comfortably arched underneath without bending it from side to side.

Place the tip of your index (**i**) finger on the 3rd string, your middle (**m**) finger on the 2nd string, and your ring (**a**) finger on the 1st string.

After you are sitting correctly and your elbow, thumb and fingers are in place, you should have a straight line running from your forearm through your wrist to your index finger.

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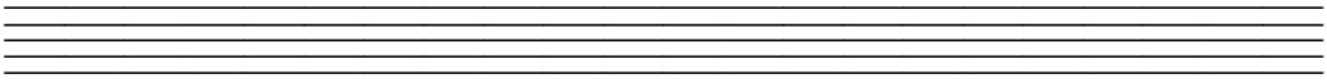
Reading Music on the Guitar

The Staff

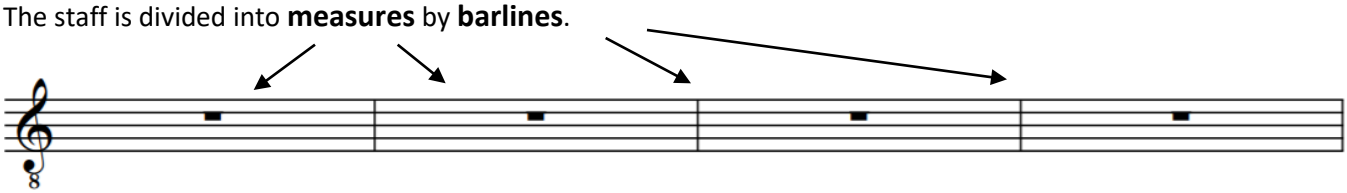
Music is written on a staff using notes placed on the lines and spaces of the staff.
This is a standard blank staff. It has four spaces and five lines.



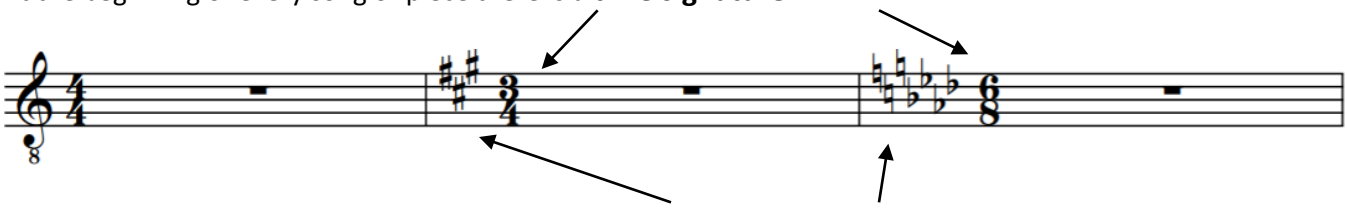
Treble Clef

A clef determines the range of pitches found on a staff.
Guitar music is written on a treble clef staff like this one:

The staff is divided into **measures** by **barlines**.



At the beginning of every song or piece there is a **time signature**…

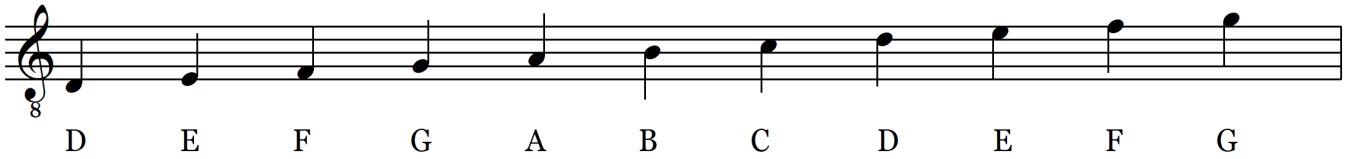


...and at the beginning of every line (or system) there is a **key signature.**

Time signatures tell us how many beats are in each measure and what the value of those beats are. Key signatures tell us what the tonic note is (the note on which a song sounds complete and often the note with which the song begins and ends) and therefore what notes are to remain sharp or flat throughout the piece.

Note Names

The names of notes occurring on the lines and in the spaces of the treble clef staff are:



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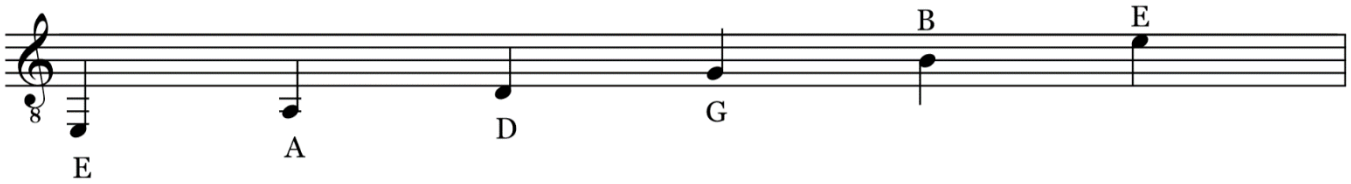
Guitar String Names

These are the names of the six strings on the guitar and their corresponding places on the staff:

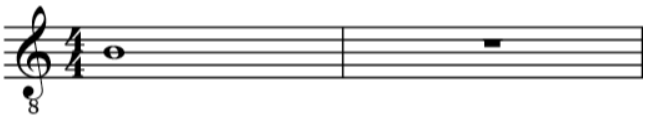


The thickest and lowest string in pitch (closest string to the sky)

The thinnest and highest string in pitch (closest string to the ground)

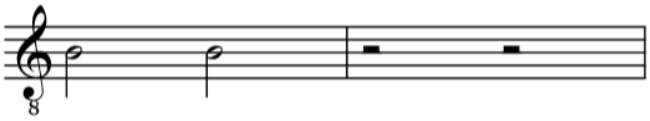
Note Values

A whole note equals four beats (in 4/4 time).



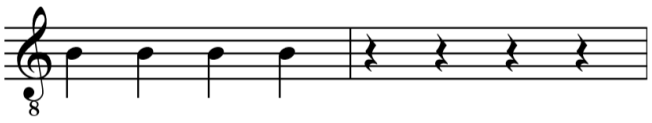
A whole rest equals 4 beats of silence

A half note equals two beats.



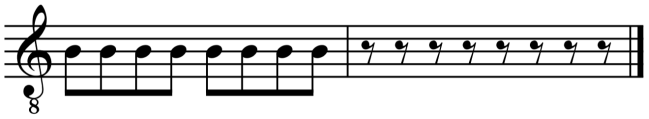
Half rests

A quarter note equals one beat.



Quarter rests

An eighth note equals half of one beat.



Eighth rests

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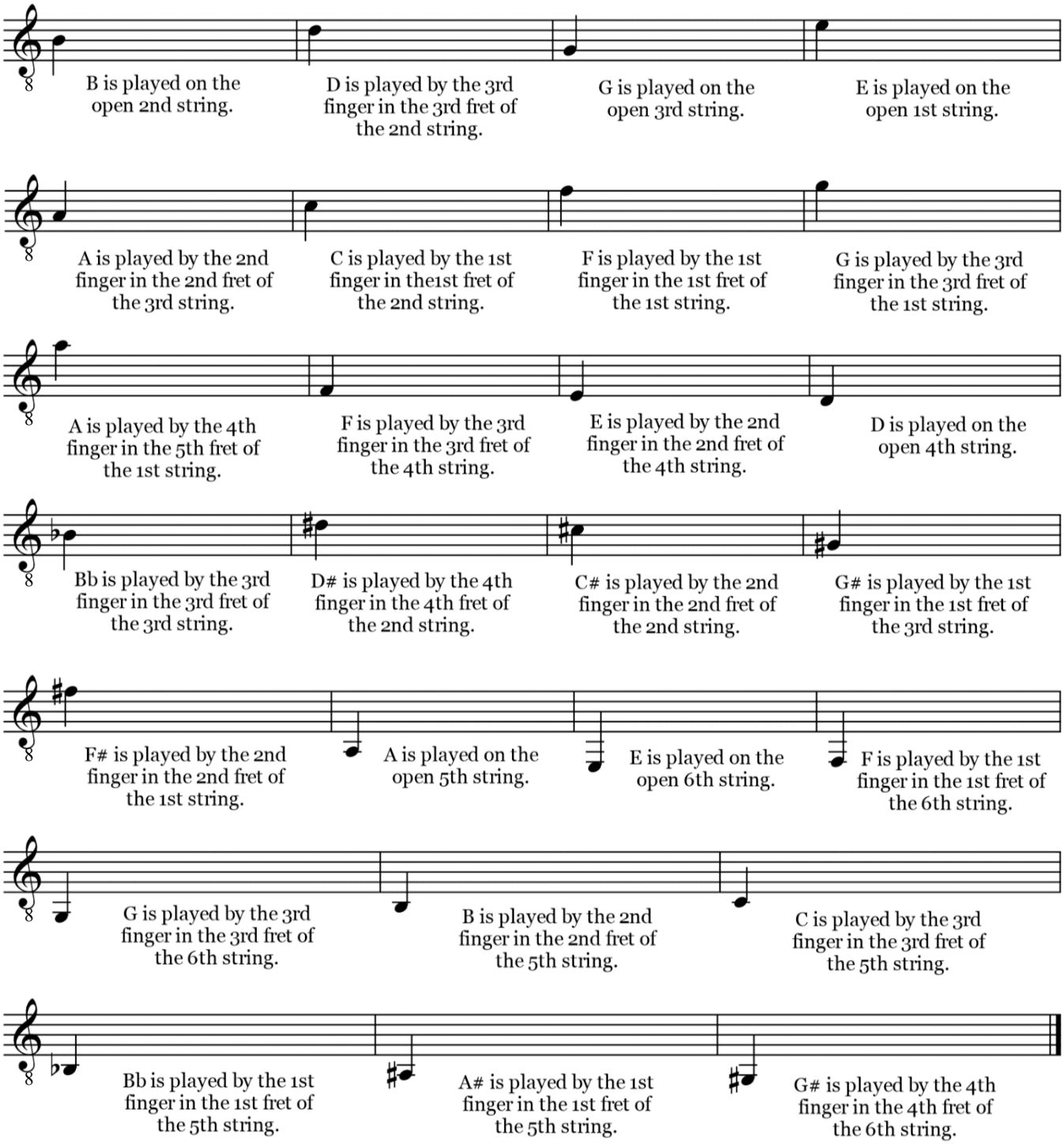
Note Chart

Notes appear below in the order they occur in the book.



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Getting Ready to Play

Below are three exercises that will help your hands and fingers get ready to play the first few songs in the book. Like the songs, these exercises are very simple at first glance, but doing them well requires focusing on several aspects of good technique.

It is essential to use the best possible hand positions and finger movement from the very beginning. Using inefficient hand positions or moving your fingers incorrectly can set up bad habits that will be difficult to unlearn later and, while you can often play easy songs with bad technique, it becomes impossible to progress to more advanced material without a good technical foundation. In extreme cases, bad technique can even cause injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome or tendonitis and may even cause your hands to spontaneously combust. Ok, that last one isn't actually true. We just wanted to make sure you were actually reading this stuff.

These exercises are also examples of a method that should be applied throughout your guitar playing life: breaking complex things down into their component parts and practicing each part separately.

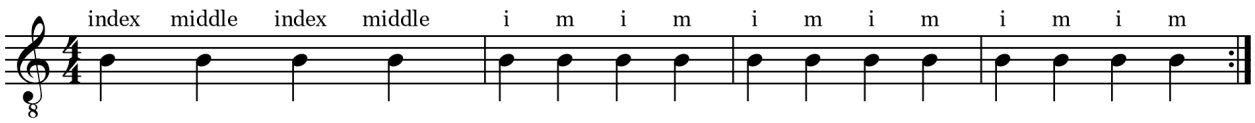
Rest Stroke

1. Set up your right hand as explained on page 7 with your thumb resting lightly on the 6th string (low E) and your middle (**m**) finger resting on the 2nd string (B). Your thumb should rest on the E string to help keep your hand in place while your finger learns to move and build dexterity. You might think of it like the kickstand of a bicycle, keeping your hand and wrist from collapsing onto the face of the guitar.
2. Move your **m** finger down through the string and back towards your hand and wrist, coming to rest on the 3rd (G) string. Repeat the movement until it becomes comfortable and consistent.
3. Now do the same with your index or forefinger (**i**).

Alternating Fingers

Another very important concept that will be applied throughout this book is alternating fingers. Except in very rare cases you should never use the same right-hand finger twice in a row. Imagine you were running a race. What would happen if you suddenly used the same leg twice in a row? You might fall, stumble or slow down, but the results would certainly not be good, right? The same thing happens with guitar playing (although probably with less dramatic results) when you use the same finger twice in a row.

Practice alternating fingers on the B string:



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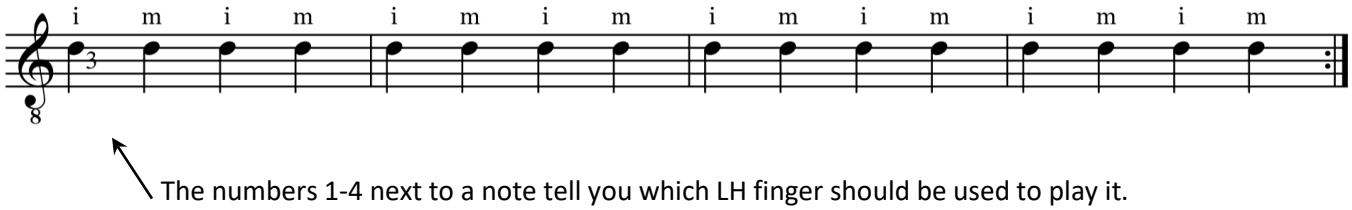
Left-Hand Third Finger

1. Set up your left hand as explained on page 7.
2. Place your 3rd finger on the 2nd string (B) just behind the third fret.
3. Press down on the string with the tip of your finger, being careful not to touch any other string.
4. When you press down on the 3rd fret of the 2nd string you are playing a D note. Check the quality of the note by playing the 2nd string with a right-hand finger. Press down until you create a clean tone with no buzz or other noise.
5. Practice your LH 3rd finger separately from your right hand by pressing down on the third fret and lifting off over and over again until the movement is comfortable and consistent.

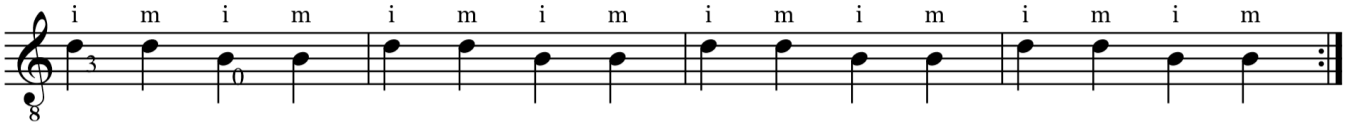
Combining the Hands

First play a series of D notes focusing on two things: 1. pressing down hard enough with your 3rd finger to make a clean tone, and 2. alternating right-hand fingers for every note.



The numbers 1-4 next to a note tell you which LH finger should be used to play it.

Next change between D and B notes. Playing each note twice (as indicated) makes the finger alternating easier. You play each note once with each RH finger before changing notes.



Daily Warm-up Routine I

Beginning every practice session with a warm-up routine gives you time to isolate and focus on each component of technique and relaxes your mind and body to transition into effective practice. The goal is to establish good habits in your hands and body before diving into all of the additional complications that come with playing a song, so that the fundamental physical things you need to enjoy playing happen automatically. From this point until you reach Daily Warm-up II your warm-up should consist of these four things, spending 2-3 minutes on each.

1. Set-up - establishing and refining the “four points of contact” between body and guitar.
2. Alternating between **i** and **m** playing rest strokes on the B string (page 12).
3. Practice pressing down and letting go of the D note with the LH 3rd finger as described in point 5 above.
4. Play the two Ds and two Bs exercise under “combining hands” above

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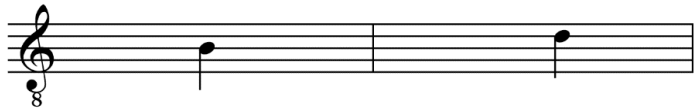
Tactile Memory and Component Practicing

Warm-up routines reinforce our tactile memory. Also known as touch memory or sense memory, your muscles retain tactile memory subconsciously by repeating the same action in isolation over and over in the same way. We experience tactile memory in multiple ways every day: texting, tying shoes, buttoning a shirt and even walking are examples of complex actions our muscles undertake without us having to think about them actively. Because playing guitar requires focusing on many things simultaneously – stabilizing the guitar, alternating fingers, pressing down strings, reading music and listening to others to name but a few – we can learn more efficiently if we activate our tactile memory by applying the idea of component practicing to music learning as well. The exercises preceding "One, Two, Buckle My Shoe" can be applied to songs throughout the Method Book, particularly in Levels 1 and 2.

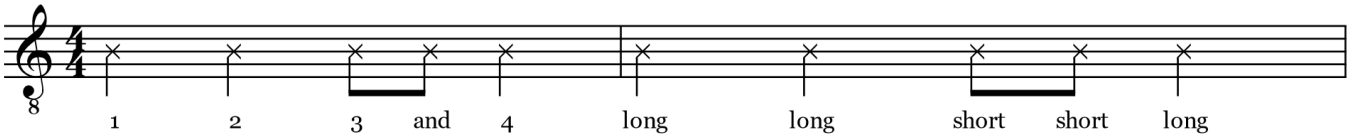
One, Two, Buckle My Shoe



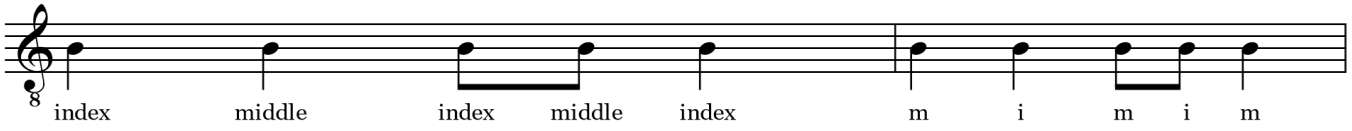
B is the 2nd string played open.

D is played by the 3rd finger of the left hand in the 3rd fret of the 2nd string.

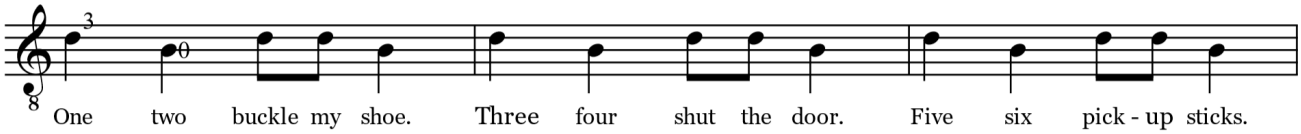
Before you play "One Two Buckle My Shoe," clap and count the rhythm…

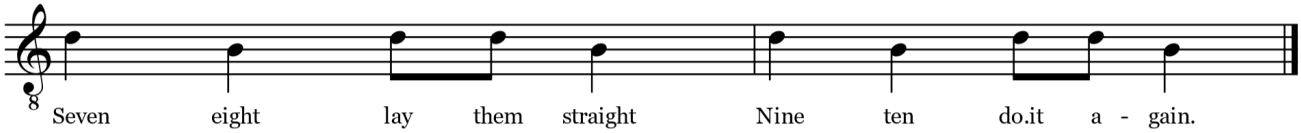


...and practice alternating right hand fingers while playing the rhythm on the open B string.



Next, practice (with your guitar silent) reading and saying (or singing) note names in rhythm as you press and release the D note with your 3rd finger. Then, put it all together to play "One Two Buckle My Shoe":





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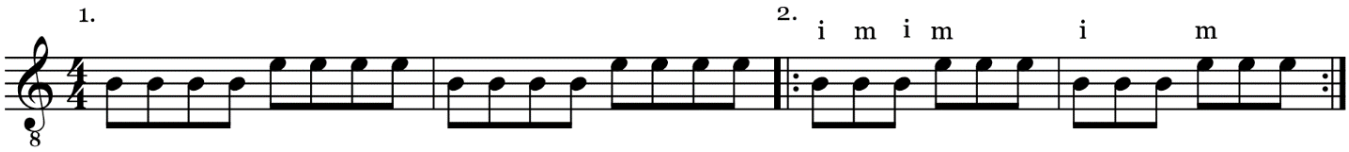
String Crossing

String crossing is simply shifting the right hand from one string to the next (adjacent) string, but it's more easily said than done. There are many ways to accomplish this but perhaps the best and most efficient for your right-hand technique is to pivot from your elbow slightly so that your forearm shifts just enough to move your fingers from one string to the next. This movement enables you to keep your wrist straight and the angle at which your finger strikes the string consistent.

String Crossing Exercise

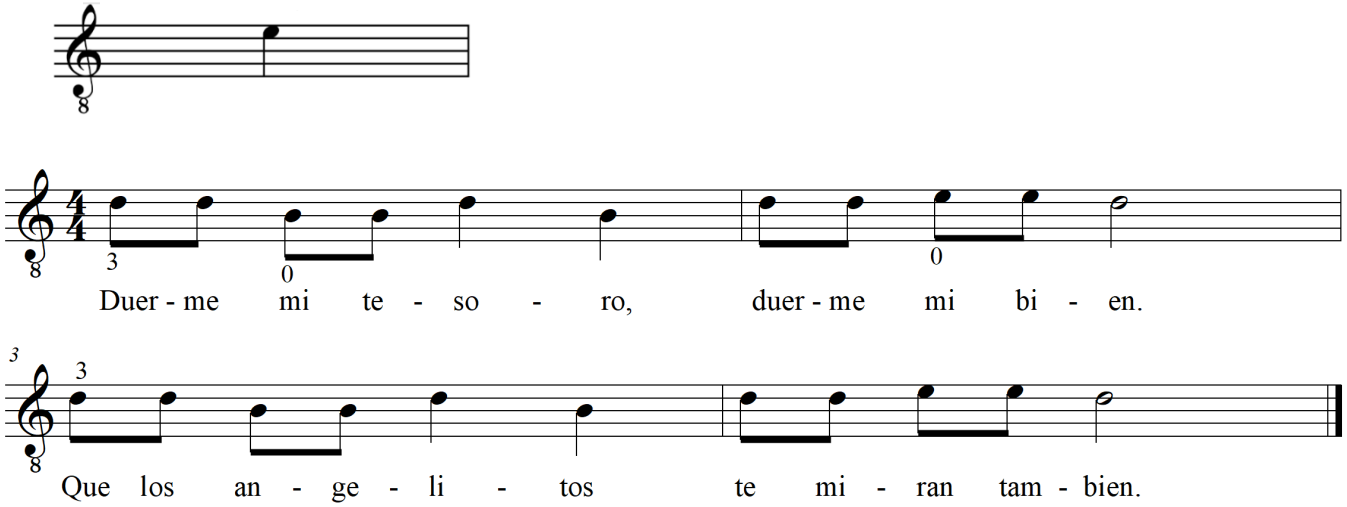
Below are two exercises to practice crossing strings (changing from one string to another with your RH fingers). It is very helpful to practice string crossing by itself with the right hand alone before mixing in your left hand. Remember, it is always important to practice slowly and break complex tasks into their component parts (practicing each part separately) when learning new techniques and concepts. In the following exercises, watch out particularly for the RH finger alternating in Exercise 2. Because each string is played three times, here you will change your starting finger each time you change strings.



Duerme mi Tesoro

Duerme mi Tesoro has one new note:

E is the 1st string played open.



Words to Play By:

"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new."

- Albert Einstein

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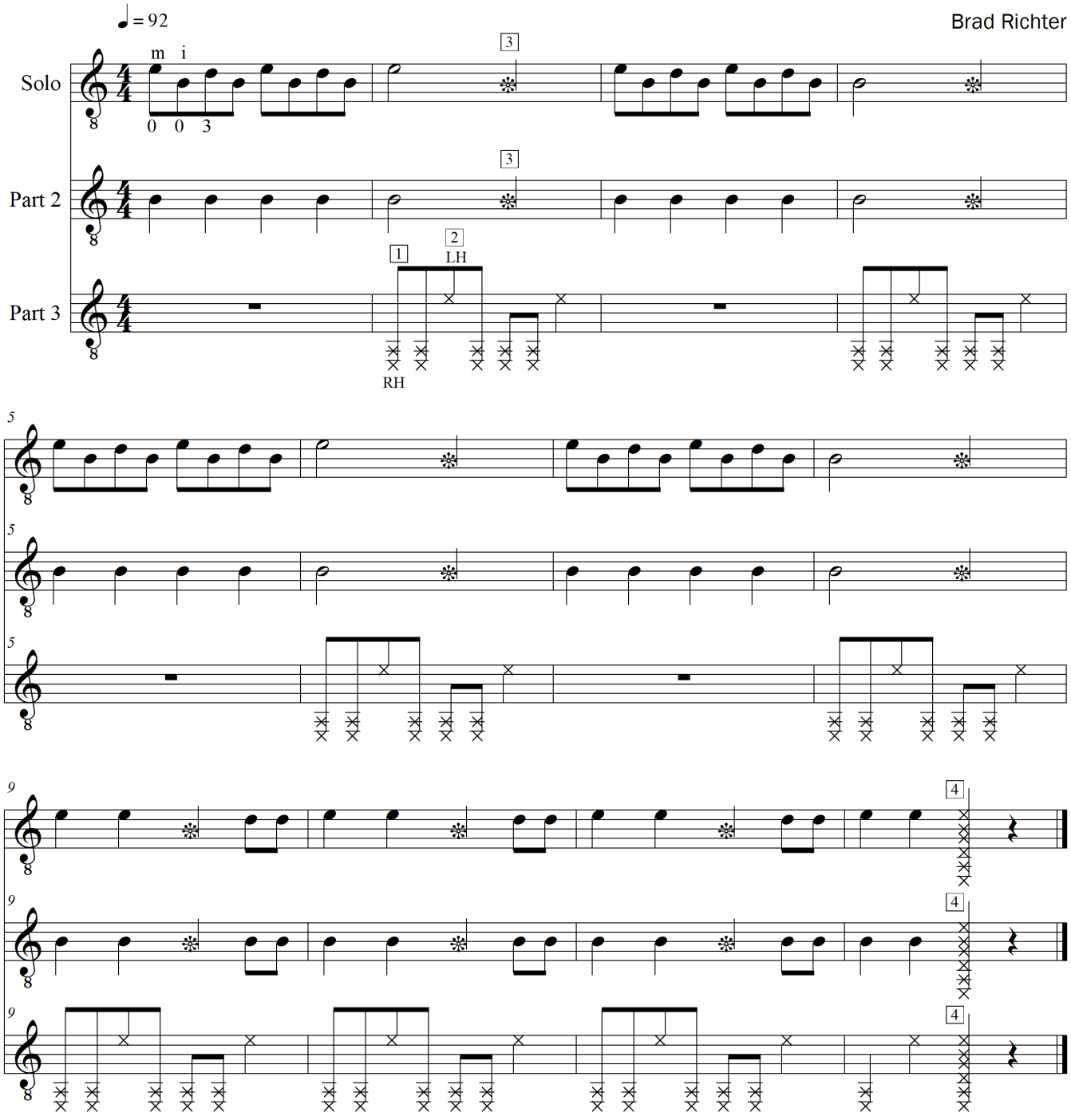
Fire Dance



1 Open Right Hand tapping the bridge

2 Open Left Hand striking the side of the guitar under the neck

3 Right Foot stomping on the floor or, alternatively, use the open Right Hand sound described below

4 Open Right Hand striking the strings over the sound hole

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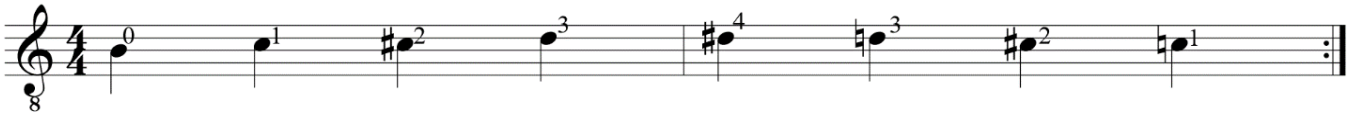
Chromatic Scale

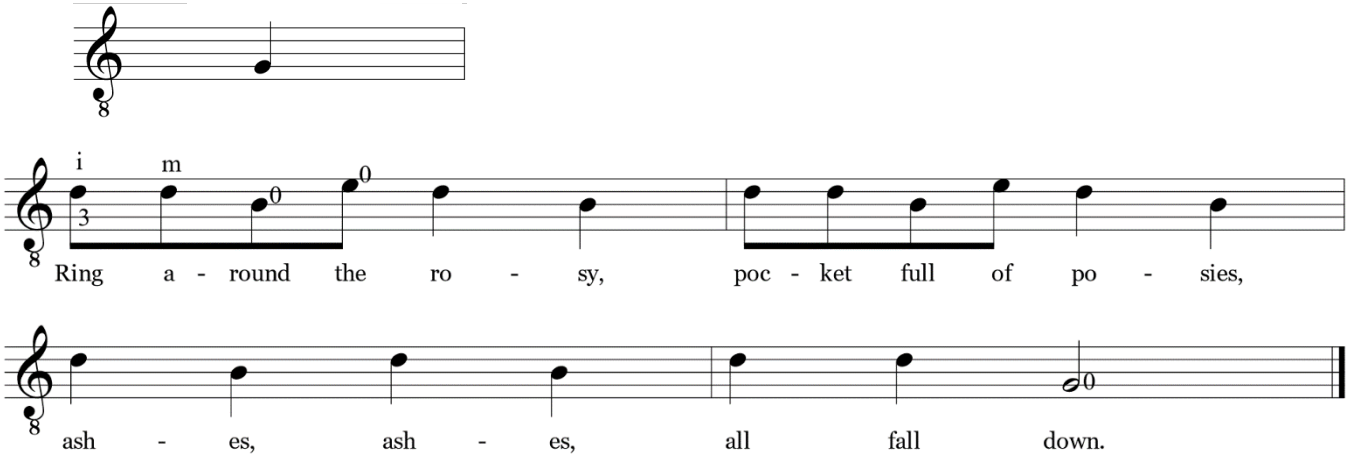
A chromatic scale is a series of notes that moves up or down in half steps, or, on the guitar, one fret at a time without skipping any frets. You don't need to be able to read the new notes in this scale. You go up the scale by playing the open B string, then your first finger plays the first fret, your second finger plays the second fret, third finger plays the third fret, and fourth finger plays the fourth fret. You go back down the scale by playing the same frets and fingerings in reverse. As you play, focus on keeping your fingers curved and pressing down the string with your fingertips. Begin practicing the chromatic scale by playing each note four times while you alternate Right-Hand fingers. Then try three times, two times, and finally just one time for each note.



Ring around the Rosy

Ring around the Rosy has one new note:

G is the 3rd string played open.



Improvisation I

Improvisation is the spontaneous creation of music from one's imagination. While there are no rules for improvising, using some structure and applying the notes, sounds and techniques we can execute with confidence helps us learn to connect our imagination to our instrument.

In this improvisation exercise, each student describes an accompaniment they imagine for their improvisation using descriptors like emotions, speed, intensity and density of notes, which their teacher can interpret into an accompaniment style and choice of chord (either G Major or E minor).

Students then improvise a short solo melody over their accompaniment using only these elements:

1. Notes: G, B, D and E
2. Any of the percussion sounds introduced in "Fire Dance"

There are no restrictions on rhythm. This exercise works well as an extension activity over the course of several class periods with 4 to 5 students taking a turn each session.

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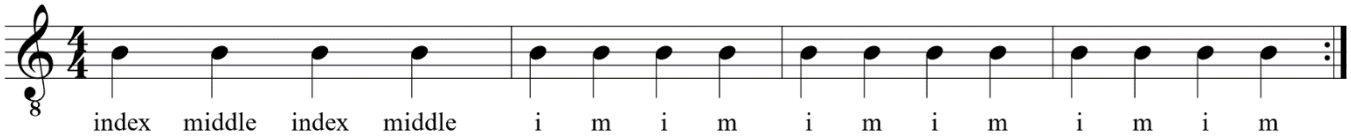
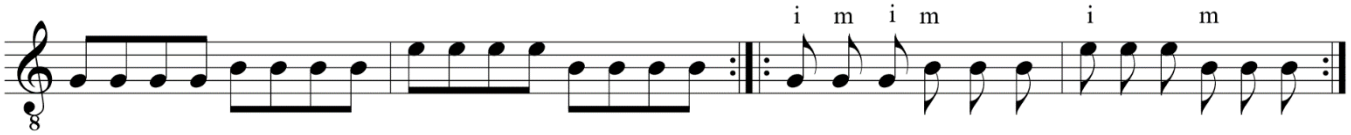
Daily Warm-up Routine II

Right Hand

1. Walking on the B String



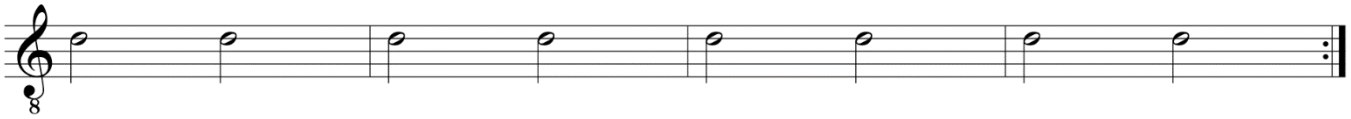
2. String Crossing



Watch out for the right-hand finger alternating in the second part of this exercise as you play each note three times. Because each string is played three times, you will have to change your starting finger each time you change strings. Keep your eyes and your focus on your right hand during this part of your warm-up.

Left Hand

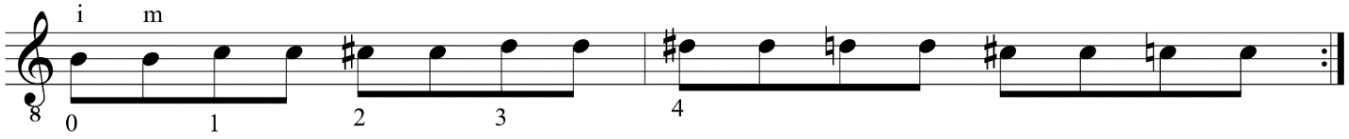
3. LH 3rd Finger - No RH



This is the most important left-hand exercise in the book. It allows you to focus only on your LH and each of the details that make for relaxed, accurate fingers. Curve your finger, land on its tip just behind the fret, keep your thumb behind the neck, flat, relaxed and pointed up. While you are focused on your left hand alone, hold your right hand in playing position with your “m” finger resting on the B string and your thumb anchored on the low E. Keep your eyes and your focus on your left hand during this part of your warm-up.

Combining the Hands

4. Chromatic Scale



We start with playing each note twice to reinforce our RH finger alternating - each note is played with an index then a middle finger before moving to the next note. Later, you can substitute this scale with the extended chromatic scales on pages 25 and 33 and continue to use this warm-up routine until you reach Warm-up III.

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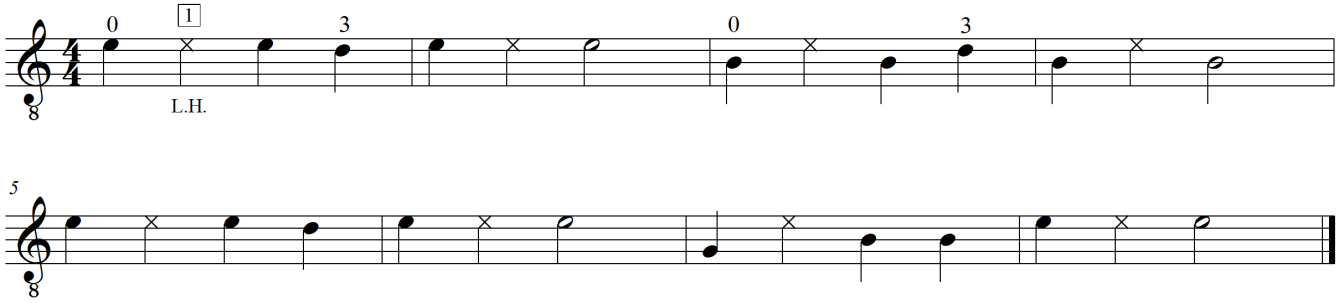
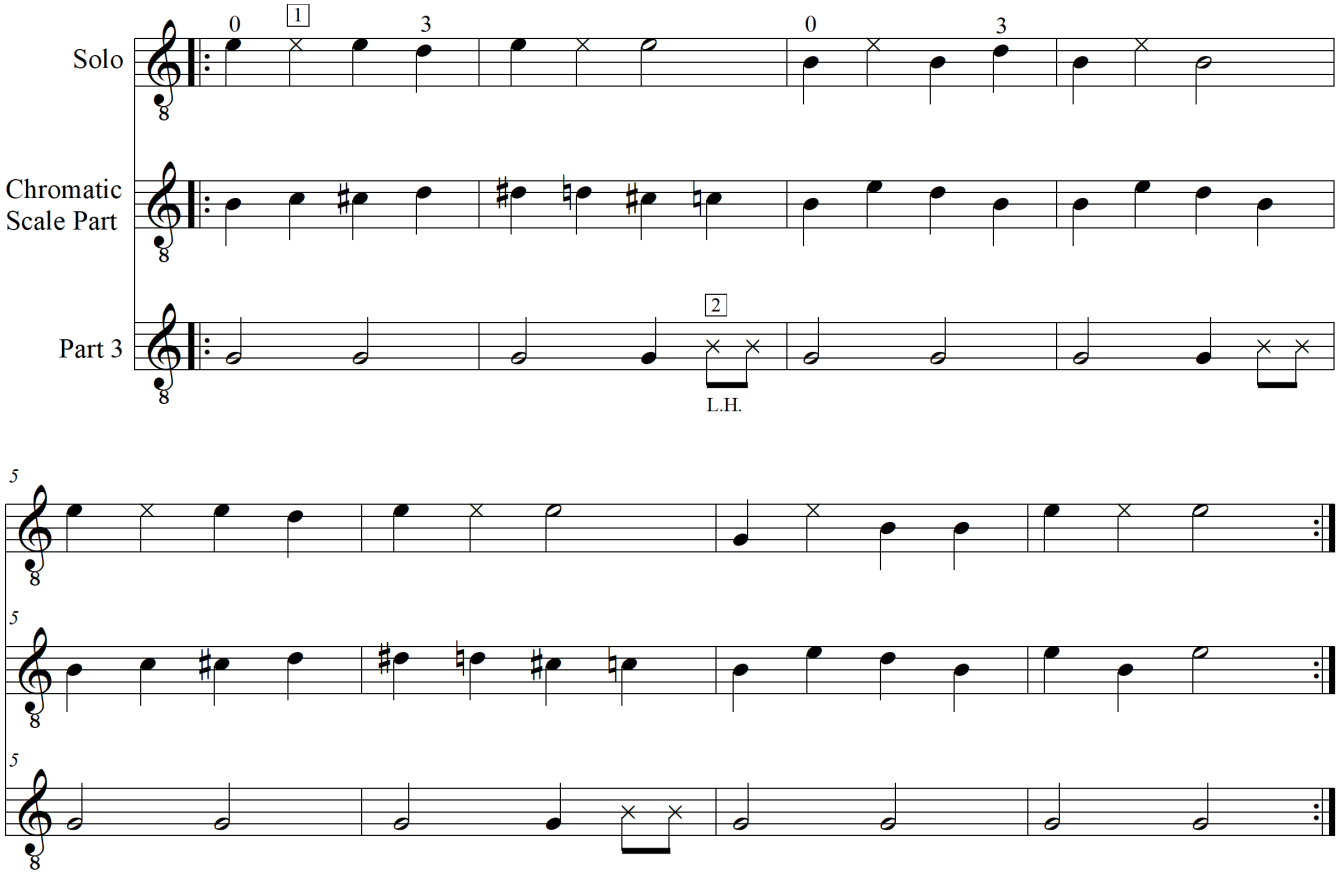
Rube Goldberg Machine

Brad Richter



ensemble

begin with part one only, adding parts 2 and then 3 on subsequent repeats



1 Open Left Hand striking the side of the guitar under the neck

2 Left-Hand knuckles tapping the side of the guitar under the neck - as if knocking

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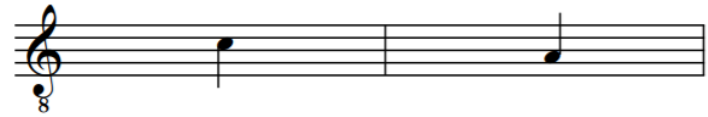
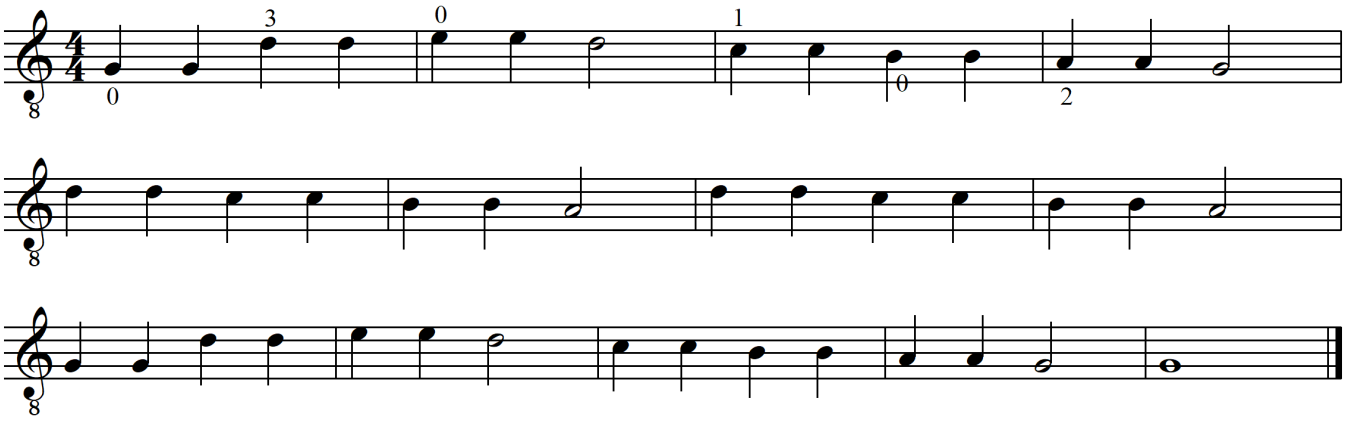
Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Twinkle and Un Elefante Se Balanceaba have two new notes:

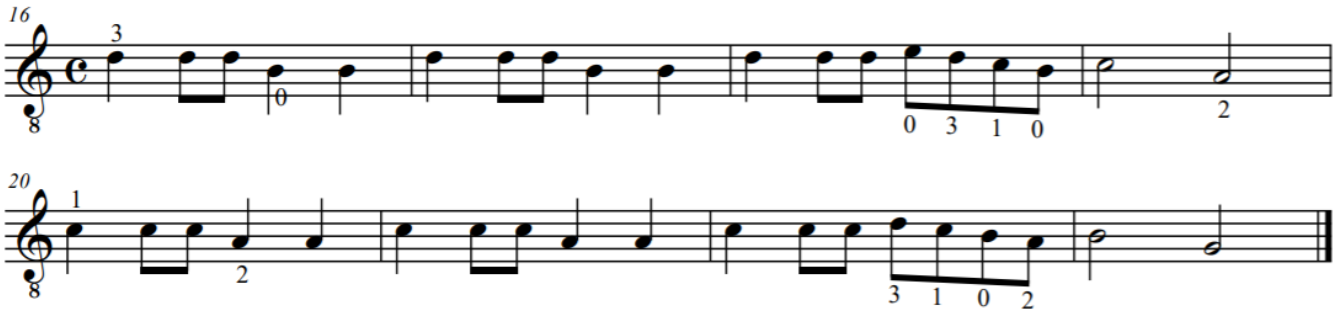
C is played with the
1st finger in the 1st fret
of the 2nd (B) string.

A is played with the
2nd finger in the 2nd fret
of the 3rd (G) string.





Un Elefante Se Balanceaba



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Chant

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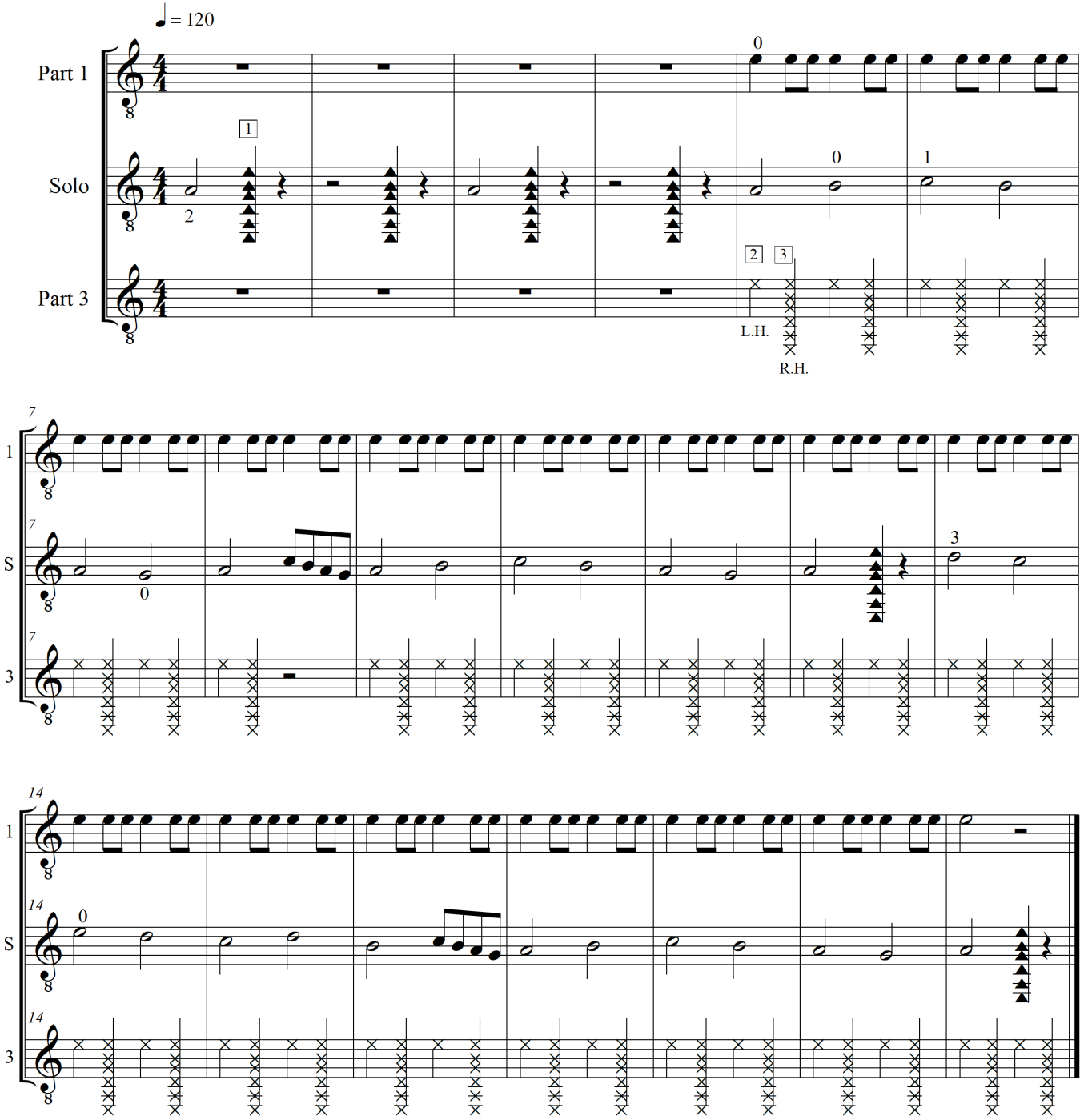

1 'i' finger nail scraping down through the strings just behind the bridge where the strings are tied

2 Open Left Hand striking the side of the guitar under the neck

3 Open Right Hand striking the strings over the sound hole

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Let's Create!

Now that you've learned to play six notes on the guitar, you can compose your own melody using those notes. Before we begin composing, here are some things to remember:

1. Neatness counts! When you draw a note head, do your best to draw it very neatly and accurately. If a note is in the space between lines (A, C, E), make sure that the oval of the note head fits neatly between the two lines and does not extend outside of the lines. If a note is on a line (G, B, D), make sure that the oval of the note head is clearly centered on that line.
2. Note stems. When a note is on the third line or higher, the stem of the note will go on the LEFT side of the note head and it will point DOWN. When a note is in the second space or lower, the stem of the note will go on the RIGHT side of the note head and it will point UP.
3. Four beats in a measure. Each measure must contain exactly four beats. Be sure to remember that half notes equal two beats, quarter notes equal one beat, and two eighth notes equal one beat.

Composition #1

Compose a four-measure melody using only quarter notes and half notes. Use any of the six notes that you know and move only by STEP. A step is when you move from one note to its next-door neighbor. For example, G to A is a step and B to C is a step. G to C is not a step; that is known as a skip.

Composition #2

Compose a four-measure melody using half notes, quarter notes, and groups of two eighth notes. Once again, use any of our six pitches and move only by step.

Once you have written your melodies, be sure to get your guitar out and try to play them! When we compose music, we should always focus on how it sounds. Play your melodies and then make any changes that you think would sound better.

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Level Two: Increasing Rhythmic Complexity and First Chords

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Words to Play By:

"You can't possibly hear the last movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony and go slowly."

- Oscar Levant (explaining his way out of a speeding ticket)

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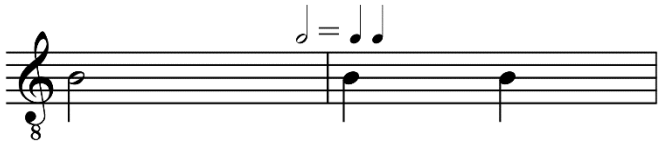
More about Rhythm I

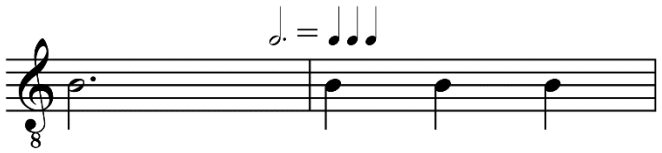
Dotted Notes:

A dot attached to the right side of a note head adds half of the original rhythmic value to that note. For example:

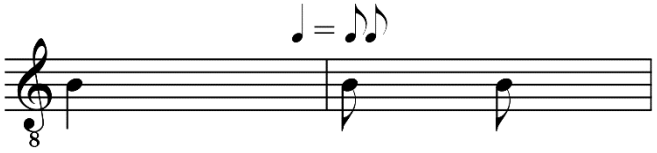
A half note is equal to two quarter notes...



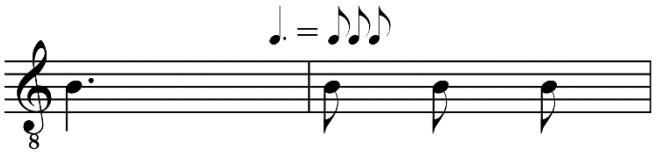
...but a dotted half note is equal to three quarter notes.



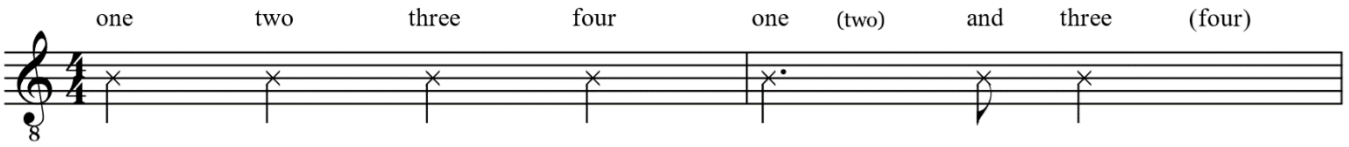
A quarter note is equal to two eighth notes...



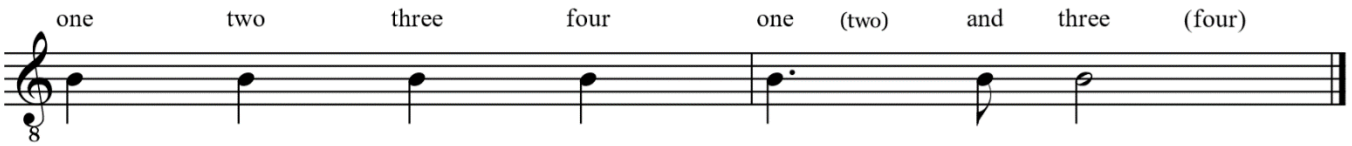
...but a dotted quarter note is equal to three eighth notes.



Before you play Ode to Joy, clap and count the dotted quarter note rhythm as it appears in the last two measures of lines 1, 2 and 4...



...and practice alternating right-hand fingers while playing the rhythm on the open B string.



Octave

You already know how to play the G note on the open third string. Ode to Joy introduces a second G note that is one octave higher than that on the open third string. Octaves are notes that share a letter name and sound almost identical but are higher or lower in pitch than one another. Compare the G note on the third string with the G note introduced below. What about the two pitches is the same?

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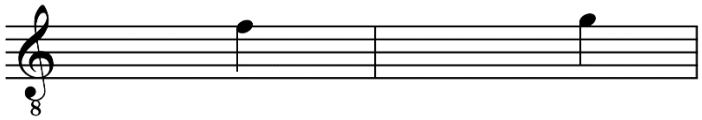
Ode to Joy

Excerpt from Symphony No. 9

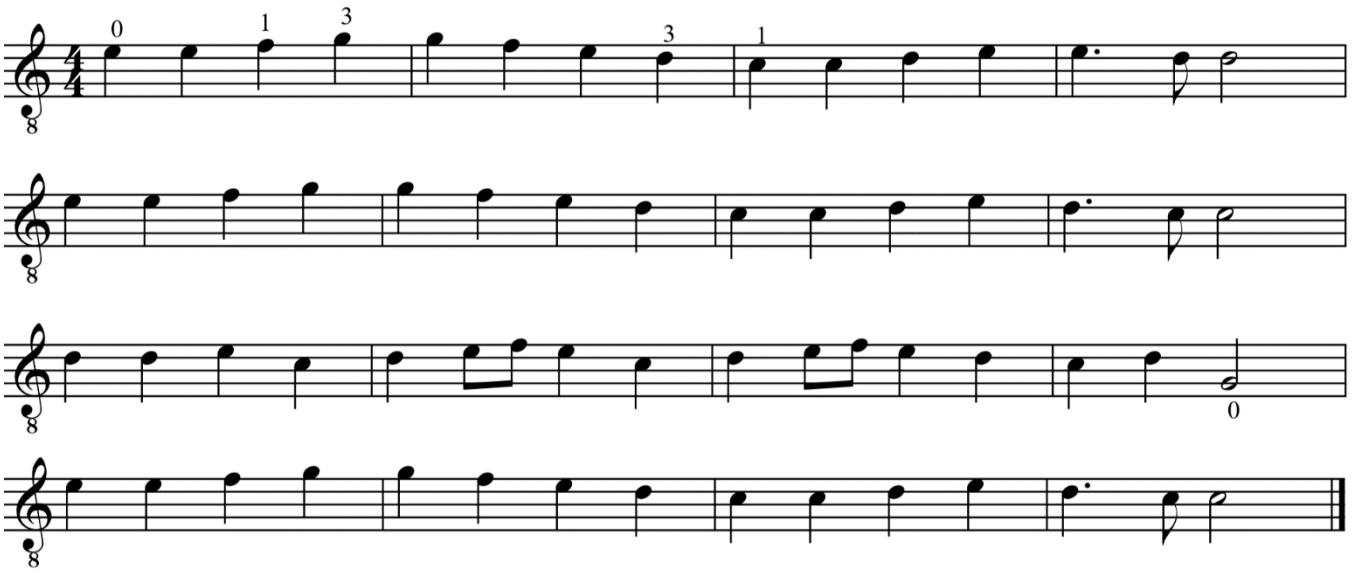
Ode to Joy uses two new notes:

F is played with the 1st finger
in the 1st fret
of the 1st (E) string.

G is played with the 3rd finger
in the 3rd fret of
the 1st (E) string



Ludwig van Beethoven



Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) composer and pianist, was born in Bonn, Germany. In his early twenties, he moved to Vienna, Austria to study composition with Franz Joseph Haydn. While studying with Haydn he became a virtuoso pianist and refined his composing. He also met Mozart who, already an accomplished composer, said of Beethoven: "This young man shall make a great noise in our world." He was right of course! Beethoven wrote piano sonatas, concerti and string quartets, but he is best known for his nine symphonies which are certainly among the greatest musical accomplishments in history. He became troubled in his late twenties and early thirties because of his growing deafness, which is attributed to lead poisoning. He was totally deaf by the time his ninth symphony was finished, yet it was one of his finest works.

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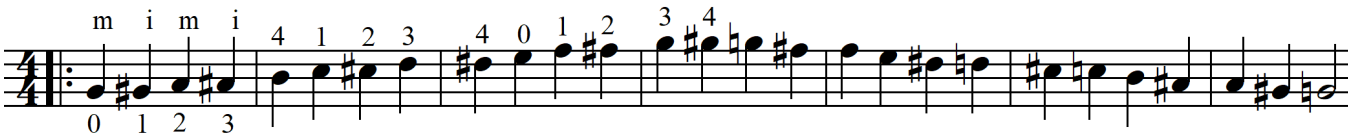
Chromatic Scale Expansion

Here, we expand our chromatic scale on the 2nd string to include the 3rd and 1st strings. Our new scale starts on the open 3rd (G) string and moves one fret and one finger at a time to the 4th fret of the 3rd string. After playing the 4th fret, it moves directly to the first fret of the 2nd string - your C note - rather than playing the open 2nd B string. This is done because the fourth fret of the 3rd string is also a B note. We are choosing to play B with the 4th finger to give it a better workout.

You should play without pausing as you move from the 3rd to the 2nd string and continue up the frets of the 2nd string to the 4th fret as you had previously. The scale then continues moving up to the 1st string, which we do play open, before again playing the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and then 4th frets with their corresponding fingers. As before, begin by playing every note four times. Then try three times, two times, and one time each.



Left-Hand Spider Exercise

This is a challenging exercise that increases the independence in your left-hand fingers. To make it more comfortable for your left hand, we are going to move your hand up to the 5th fret of the guitar where the smaller width of the frets will make some of these stretches more comfortable.

Set up your left hand with your first finger resting on the 5th fret of the 1st string, your 2nd finger on the 6th fret, 3rd finger on the 7th fret and 4th finger on the 8th fret. You now have your left hand in 5th position: with your 1st finger assigned to the 5th fret rather than the 1st fret. Be sure your fingers are curved and ready to press the strings with their tips.

We are going to move our fingers two at a time and in a variety of combinations across the strings. Beginning each time with your 1st through 4th fingers assigned to frets 5 – 8 on the 1st string.

Exercise 1:

1. Lift fingers 1 and 2 from the 5th and 6th frets of the 1st string simultaneously, place them on the 5th and 6th frets of the 2nd string and hold them there
2. Then lift fingers 3 and 4 from the 7th and 8th frets of the 1st string simultaneously and move them over the 2nd string to place them on the 7th and 8th frets of the 3rd string.
3. Then fingers 1 and 2 skip over the 3rd string to land on the 5th and 6th frets of the 4th string, fingers 3 and 4 move to the 5th string, 1 and 2 to the 6th string and finally 3 and 4 join fingers 1 and 2 on the 6th string.
4. The exercise continues by duplicating that pattern in reverse, moving fingers 3 and 4 to the 5th string, 1 and 2 to the 4th string and so on until all fingers arrive back on the 1st string.

For **Exercises 2 and 3**, apply the pattern above to these alternate finger parings: 1&4|2&3 and 1&3|2&4

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Metallophone

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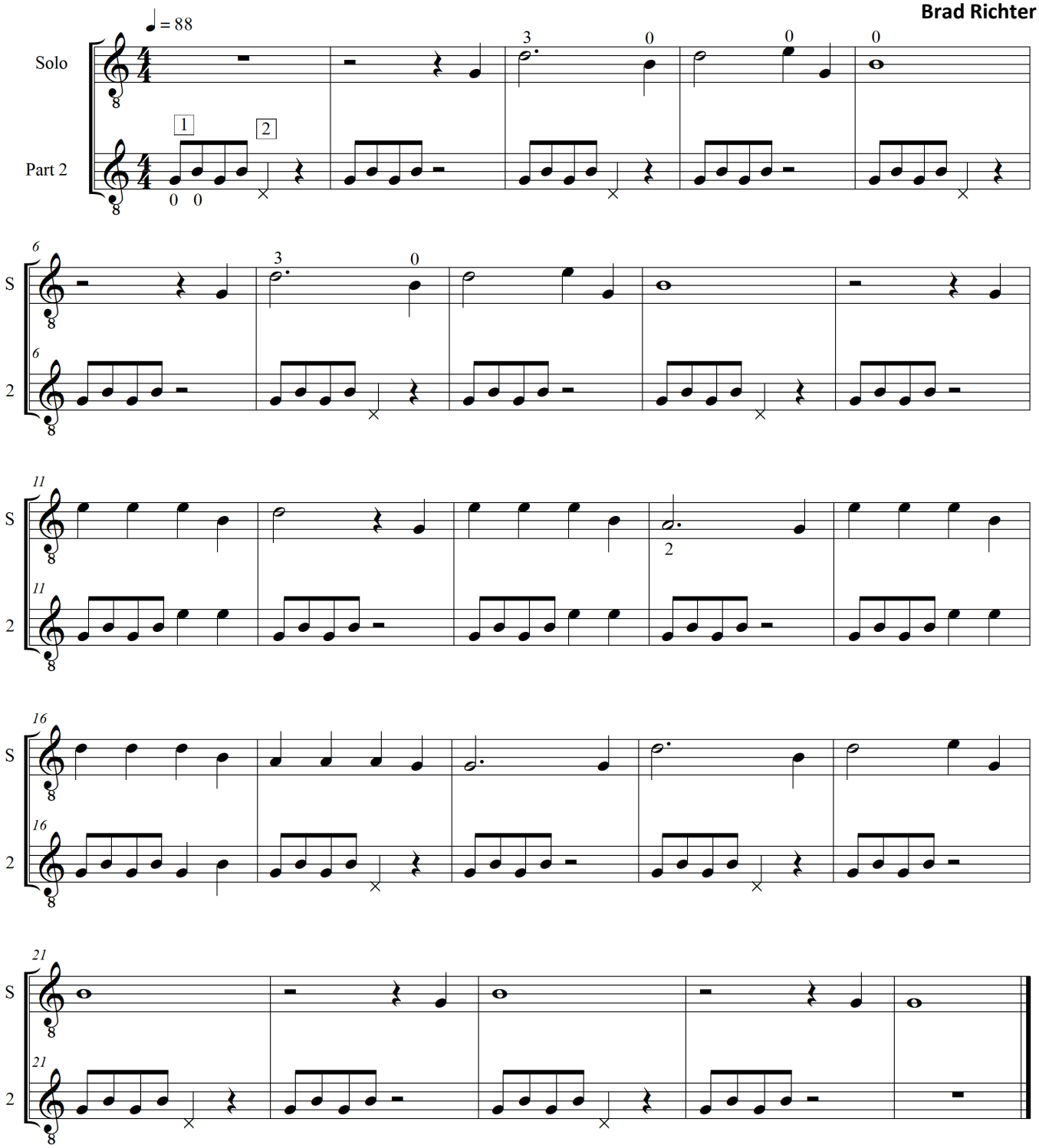

1 With a toothpick woven under the E, over the B and under the G string about 2 inches from the bridge

2 Heel of the L.H. palm bumping against the side of the guitar under the neck

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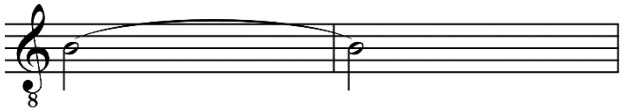
More about Rhythm II

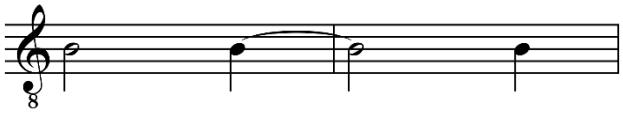
Tied Notes

A tie is another way of increasing the rhythmic value of a note. A tie is an arched line that connects two notes of the same pitch. It indicates that a note is to be sounded only once, but held for the time value (or rhythmic value) of both notes. It is often used to extend the duration of a note over a bar line. For example:

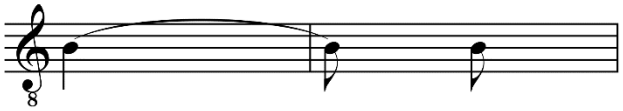
A half note tied to another half note sounds for 4 beats.



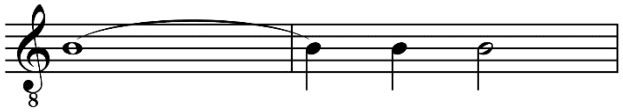
A quarter note tied to a half note sounds for 3 beats.



A quarter note tied to an eighth note sounds for 1 ½ beats.

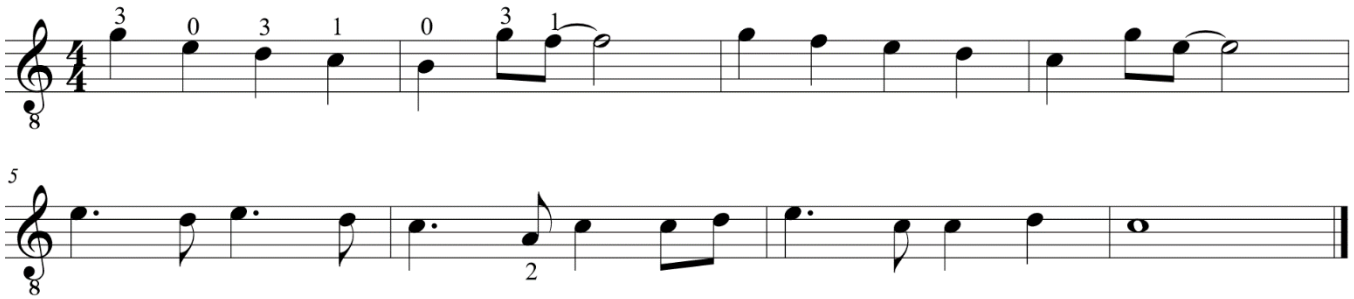


A whole note tied to a quarter note sounds for 5 beats.



Freight Train

Elizabeth Cotten



Elizabeth "Libba" Cotten (1893-1987) was an American blues and folk musician, singer, and songwriter. Cotten was born to a musical family near Chapel Hill, North Carolina and began playing her brother's banjo at the age of 7. "From that day on, nobody had peace in that house" she later said. When she was 11 years old, she scraped together enough money to buy a guitar for $3.75 and began teaching herself to play. In 1984, she won a Grammy Award for her album "Elizabeth Cotten Live". When she accepted the award at 91 years old, she said to the audience: "Thank you. I only wish that I had my guitar so I could play a song for you all."

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Staccato/Legato

Until now, our goal has been to play **legato**, allowing the sound of each note we play to connect to the sound of the next. **Staccato** is the opposite of legato. To play staccato we shorten the sound of the notes we play by stopping the string from ringing immediately after we play a note.

Practice playing staccato following this sequence:

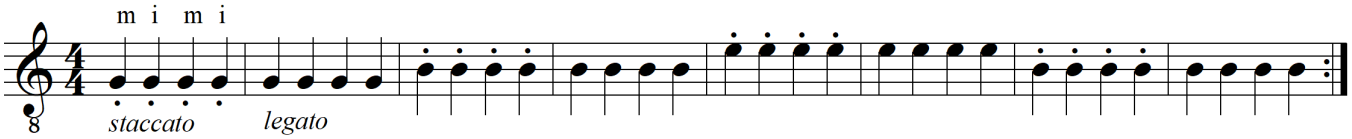
1. play the 2nd string with your **i** finger
2. then immediately plant your **m** finger on the 2nd string to stop it from ringing
3. keep your **m** finger on the string ready to play
4. play the 2nd string with your **m** finger
5. then immediately plant your **i** finger on the 2nd string to stop it from ringing
6. keep your **i** finger on the string ready to play
7. continue alternating fingers as above until you can make a consistent, **staccato** sound 10 times in a row.

Daily Warm-up Routine III

Right Hand

1. Staccato/Legato Exercise

Practice switching between staccato and legato notes as you alternate right-hand fingers and cross strings. Staccato notes are marked with a dot above or below the note heads.



Left Hand

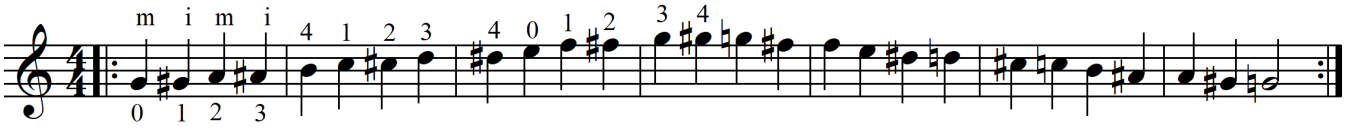
2. Spider Exercise

Pick one of the three left-hand finger combinations from *Left-Hand Spider Exercises* on page 26 and practice the entire sequence from 1st string to 6th and back two times. The three left-hand finger combinations are 1&2|3&4, 1&4|2&3 and, the most difficult, 1&3|2&4.

Combining the Hands

3. Chromatic Scale

Play the three-string chromatic scale below: first with four repetitions of each note, then two, then one.



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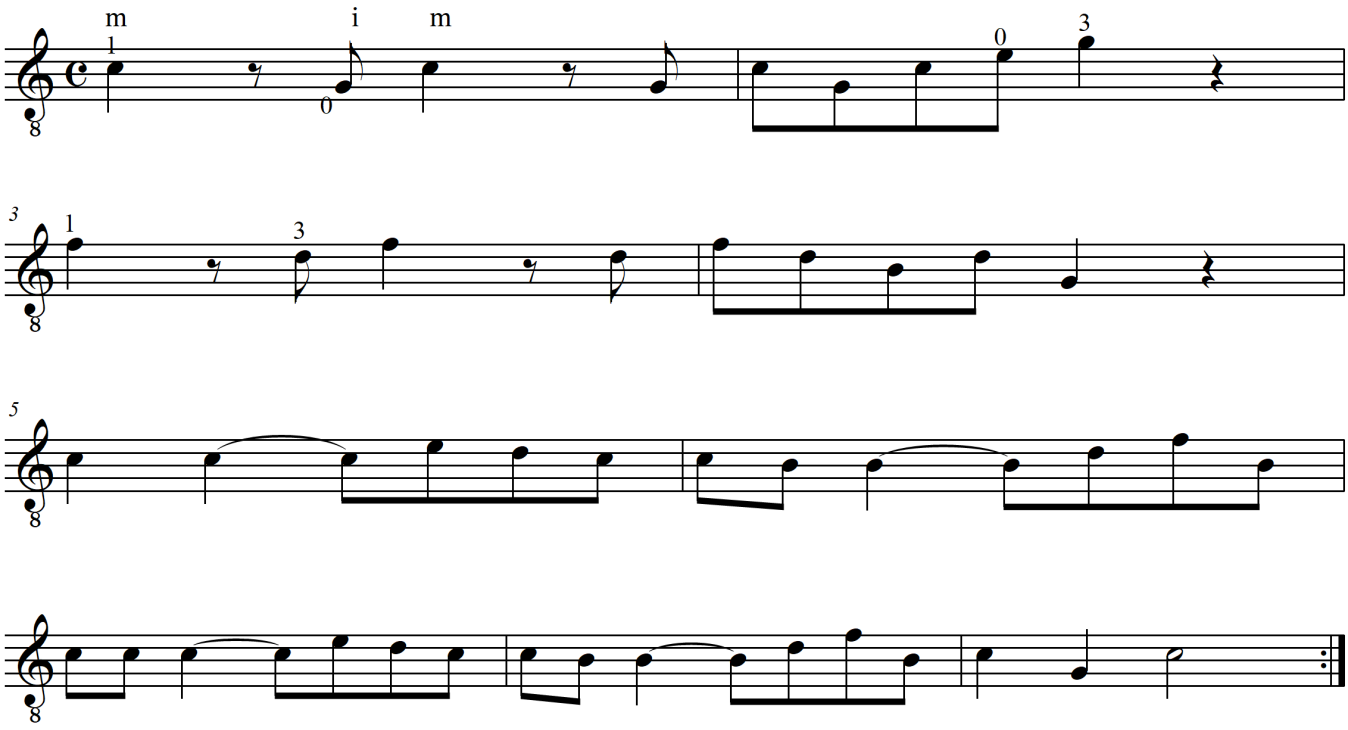
Eine Kleine Nachtmusik

W.A. Mozart



Classical period composer and virtuoso musician **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)** was born in Salzburg, Austria. When he was just five years old, he played concerts throughout Europe and wrote his own music. He could play both keyboard and violin amazingly well for a child and was considered a child genius. His father, Leopold Mozart, was his music teacher during his early years, forcing him to practice, compose and perform for many hours each day. At age seventeen, Mozart accepted a position as court musician in Salzburg then later moved to Vienna, Austria where he wrote many of his most important works. Mozart was a funny and quirky individual. He often composed while playing billiards or other games, he loved playing practical jokes and even bought a pet bird which he taught to sing his music. Mozart composed over 600 pieces of music during his short life time. He died when he was thirty-five.

Words to Play By:

"Don't give up trying to do what you really want to do. Where there is love and inspiration, I don't think you can go wrong." - Ella Fitzgerald

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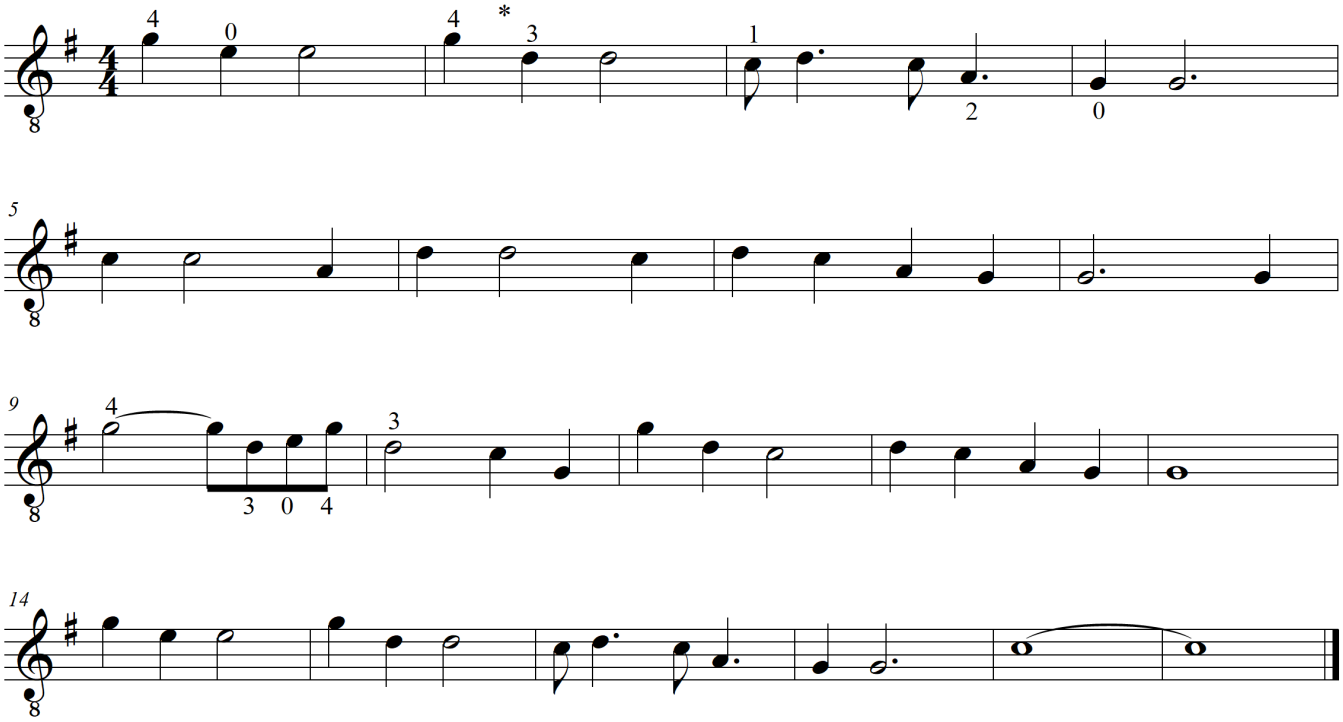
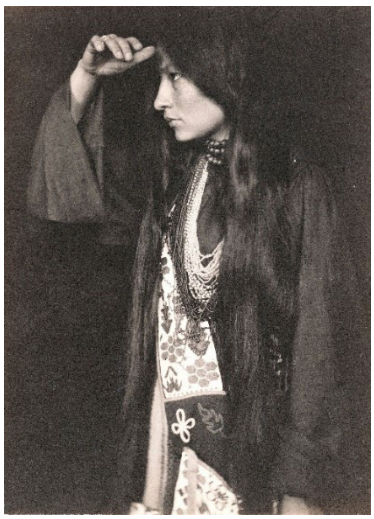
Left-Hand Contractions

A left-hand contraction happens when two different LH fingers are used to play notes on adjacent strings in the same fret, forcing the fingers to contract together in order to line up in the same fret. In the case of “Sun Dance Opera,” we do this in order to avoid using the same LH finger twice in a row for different notes on adjacent strings. As with the right hand, it's best to avoid using the same LH finger twice in a row whenever possible. The contraction in “Sun Dance Opera” happens between the first note (G) and the second note (D) of measure four.

Sun Dance Opera

Zitkála-Šá





Zitkála-Šá (1876–1938), which means “Red Bird” in Lakota, was a Yankton Dakota Sioux writer, editor, translator, musician, educator, and political activist. She wrote books and articles that told of the struggles she had with cultural identity. Zitkála-Šá studied violin at the New England Conservatory of Music and eventually became the first Native American to co-author an opera. Her opera, “The Sun Dance Opera,” was based on a sacred Sioux ritual and was first performed in 1913. She was also a political activist who worked to preserve the Native American way of life while pushing for rights and full American citizenship for Native Americans. She continued to advocate for civil rights and women’s rights until her death in 1938.

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Introduction to Chords

Like with any instrument capable of playing multiple notes simultaneously, it is valuable to learn the skills and concepts involved in playing and reading a single note on the guitar before we play several notes at once – chords. At this point in your learning, many of you are ready to play chords and apply them to a variety of songs and styles within and outside of this curriculum. We encourage that enthusiastically.

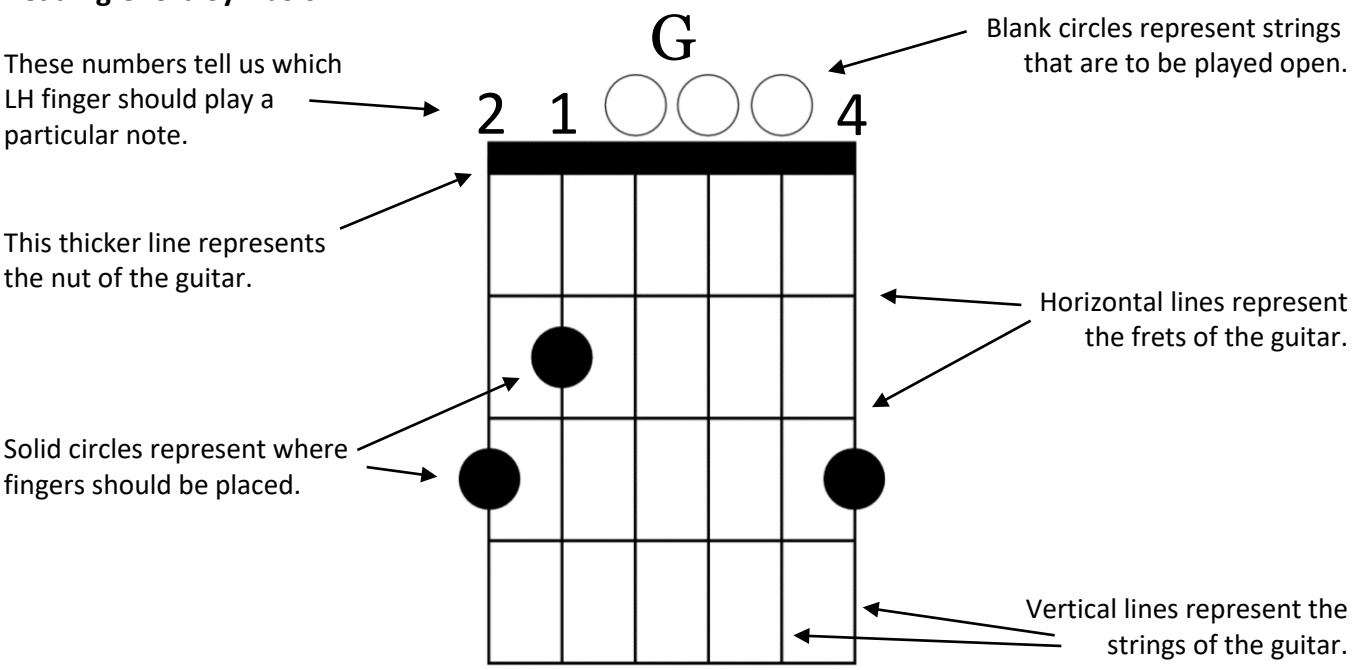
In Level III we introduce 14 chords in open position and have added chord accompaniments to most songs in Levels III – V. We also suggest ways you can use those chords in learning or writing songs on your own. Bar chords, which are too difficult to play with fluency for most players at this level, are covered in detail in Method Book II Level IX.

For many other players, especially younger players, full chords are still very difficult for the left hand. Don't let that be discouraging. If that is the case for you, try playing the simplified chords below and in 12-Bar Blues and focus rather on continuing to master your rest strokes, reading and, in Level IV, thumb free-strokes as we move forward. Chords will become easier as your left hand continues to build strength and coordination.

More about Chords:
Most chords have at least three different notes, and it is common to have one or more of those notes appear twice in the chord. The most common chords are major chords and minor chords.

Guitar players can read chords in two ways: notated on a staff and as a chord symbol - a graphic illustration of a chord. We will start by using chord symbols only until we introduce reading ledger lines and bass notes in Level IV.

Reading Chord Symbols



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Chord Technique

Left Hand – Apply the good technique principles you learned in Level I to playing chords: thumb behind the neck and pointed up, fingers curved and finger tips pressing down the strings. Now though, you will sometimes adjust the angles of your left hand, wrist and elbow slightly to find the position from which all of your left-hand fingers can most comfortably reach and hold down all necessary notes. As a general rule, rotate your hand slightly to the left when your 1 finger is fretting a string lower in pitch than your 3 or 4 fingers, and rotate to the right if your 3 or 4 finger is fretting a string lower than your 1 finger. In the full D and G chords for instance, your left hand will be most comfortable if your hand, wrist and elbow move a little out to your left, allowing your hand to angle in towards the second fret from the nut.

Right Hand - There are many ways to play or strum a chord on the guitar. We will begin strumming with a downward thumb stroke. Simply drag your right-hand thumb through the strings from the lowest in pitch downward through the highest in pitch string quickly enough that the notes sound almost simultaneously. Experiment with different strumming speeds to see how that affects the sound.

G

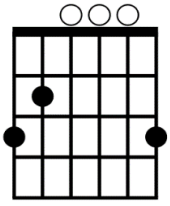
C

D

First Chords

Full Chord Shape

G



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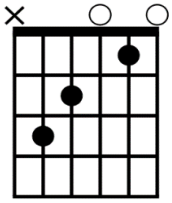

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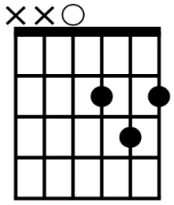
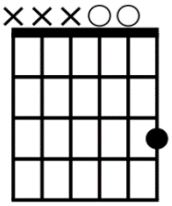


Simplified

G



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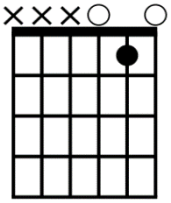
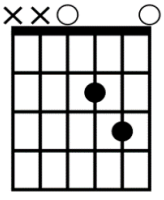


Dsus



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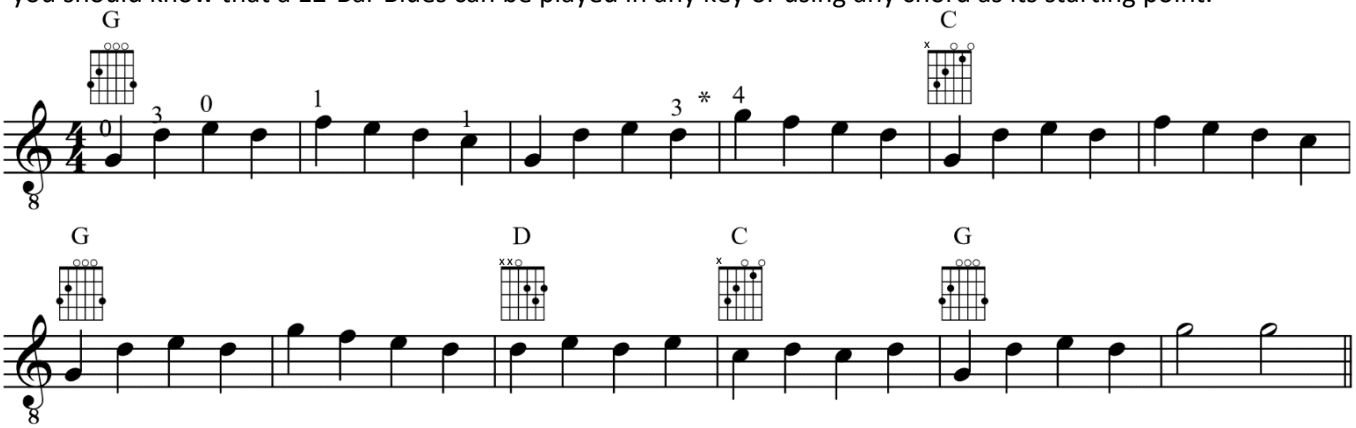
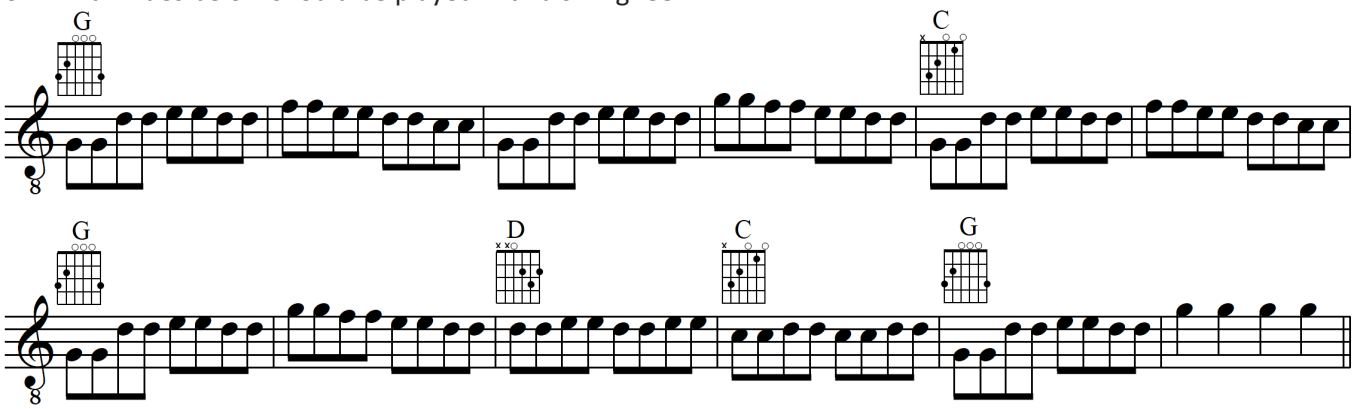
12-Bar Blues

The “12-Bar Blues” is a chord and phrase structure used to create countless blues, jazz, rock, pop and hip-hop songs over the last 150 years. It was first written down by W. C. Handy in the early 20th century but the form and genre had long-since been perfected by other, less prominent African-American musicians. To create a typical 12-Bar Blues in the “key” of G, we use a G chord for measures 1-4, a C chord for measure 5-6, another G chord for measures 7-8, a D chord for measure 9, C for measure 10 and back to G for measure 11-12. Chord building, harmony and key changes are addressed in detail in Method Book II Level IX. For now, you should know that a 12-Bar Blues can be played in any key or using any chord as its starting point.



In the blues style, eighth notes are played with a swing feel, rather than with a straight or even feel. When you hear swinging eighth notes, you’ll notice that there is more emphasis on the first eighth note than the second in each eighth-note grouping. Try saying the words “LONG-short, LONG-short, LONG-short, LONG-short” or “DOO-bah, DOO-bah, DOO-bah, DOO-bah” to feel how they swing. The eighth-note arrangement of 12-Bar Blues below should be played with a swing feel:



King of the Delta Blues

We can’t very well introduce the 12-Bar Blues form without also introducing one of the most influential guitarists of all time from any genre. Blues musician Robert Johnson (1911–1938) changed the course of 20th Century music with his landmark recordings made in the 1930s, but his life was poorly documented. One of the first members of the “27 Club” – a group of gifted musicians who died far too young – the cause of his death at the age of 27 is listed as “unknown.” In 1961, his legend had almost completely faded when his recordings were reissued, inspiring artists from around the world with playing that, 30 years later, was still utterly groundbreaking. Johnson’s influence on Rock and Roll was so profound, that he was posthumously inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in its first induction ceremony in 1986.

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Improvisation II

Improvising has been part of Blues music since its inception. To get a sense of how contemporary blues musicians use improvisation, watch the video *Walking Blues by Robert Johnson, featuring Keb' Mo', Playing for Change | Song around the World*.

Most of the guitarists in the video use an open right hand, or fingerpicking, rather than a pick. Some are playing acoustic guitars, some are playing electric guitars and some are using notes and techniques we haven't learned yet, but they are also doing things we can imitate, like using repeated notes in highly expressive ways.

For this improvisation session:

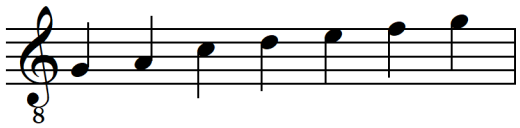
1. Divide into pairs or small groups.
2. Choose a soloist and one or more accompanists in each group/pair.
3. Trade roles regularly as you practice improvising several times.

The Accompanist's Role:

1. Play either the full or simplified G, C and D chords following the 12-bar blues pattern from the previous page (with each measure getting four beats):
   G Major: 4 measures (or bars)
   C Major: 2 measures
   G Major: 2 measures
   D Major: 1 measure
   C Major: 1 measure
   G Major: 2 measures
2. At the beginning, it is simplest to strum each chord 4 times per measure to mark the four beats in each measure and track when chord changes should happen.
3. As you get familiar with the pattern, you can try varying the rhythm.

The Soloist's Role:

1. Use the notes G, A, C, D, E and F (all the notes we have learned except for B).



2. Play them in any order or with whatever frequency you imagine.
3. Experiment with repeated notes, swinging eighth notes, tied notes and dotted rhythms if you can but also try just letting your hands play what pops into your mind.

Accompanists and soloists should practice their part several times in a row before changing roles. Even as we improvise, we make note of what we like and what we like less, and our imagination evolves.

Words to Play By:

"The most valuable possession you can own is an open heart. The most powerful weapon you can be is an instrument of peace." – Carlos Santana

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Level Three: Time Signatures, Key Signatures, Sharps and Flats

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Across the Ice 50
Let's Create! 52

Words to Play By:

"Don't let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do."

- John Wooden

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Time Signatures

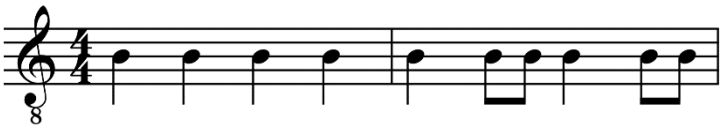
Time signatures appear at the beginning of a song to indicate how many beats are in each measure, and the value of each of those beats. Until now, all of the songs in this book have been in 4/4 time:

4 — The top number indicates the number of beats in each measure.

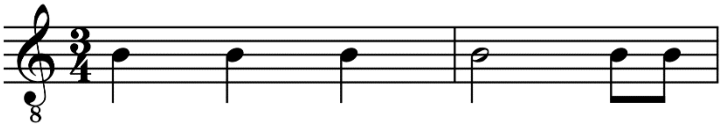
4 — The bottom number indicates the time value of each beat (2 = half note, 4 = quarter note, 8 = eighth note).

Further examples:

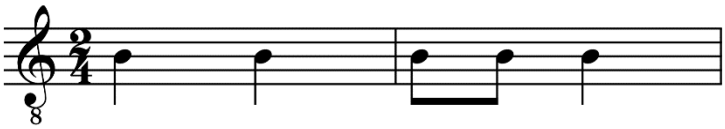
4/4 = four quarter-note beats per measure



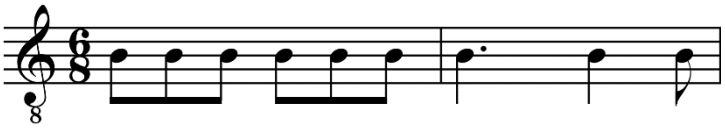
3/4 = three quarter-note beats per measure



2/4 = two quarter-note beats per measure



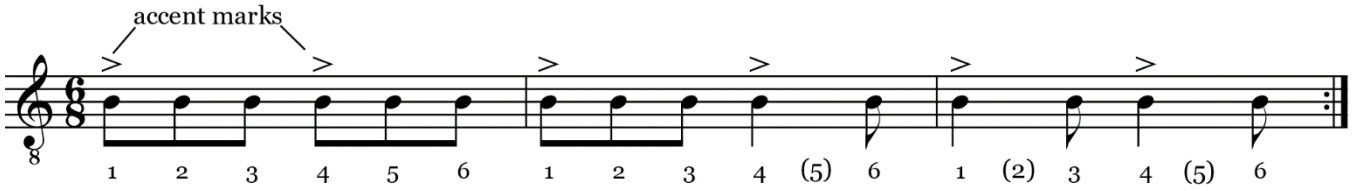
6/8 = six eighth-note beats per measure



A Closer Look at 6/8

In 6/8 time, each measure has six eighth notes or the equivalent. The most distinct feature of 6/8 time is that, while it is organized as six eighth note beats, the pulse or beat we feel is two beats, each equal to three eighth notes or one dotted quarter note. This can be heard by placing an accent on the first and fourth eighth note in each measure.

To get used to feeling a pulse in 6/8, clap and count, and then play the following rhythm on an open string, accenting beats one and four:



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Pas de deux

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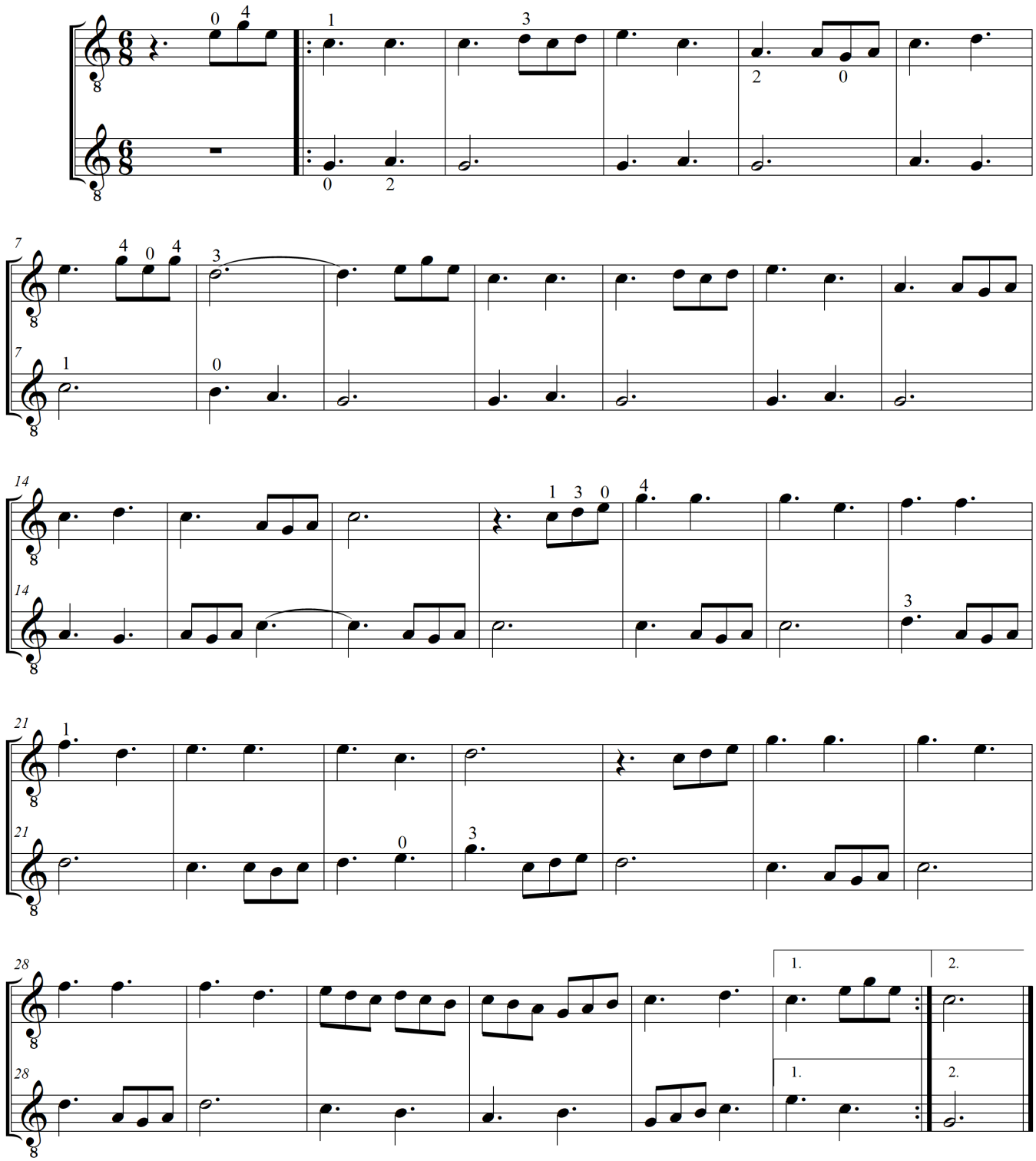

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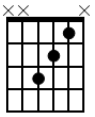
Cielito Lindo

Cielito Lindo has a new chord:

To play the simplified F Major Chord you can choose to either strum only the 4th, 3rd, and 2nd strings or let your 1st finger mute the E string with the pad of that finger as it holds the C on the 2nd string. That muting of the E string by the 1st finger is something that often happens accidentally anyway.

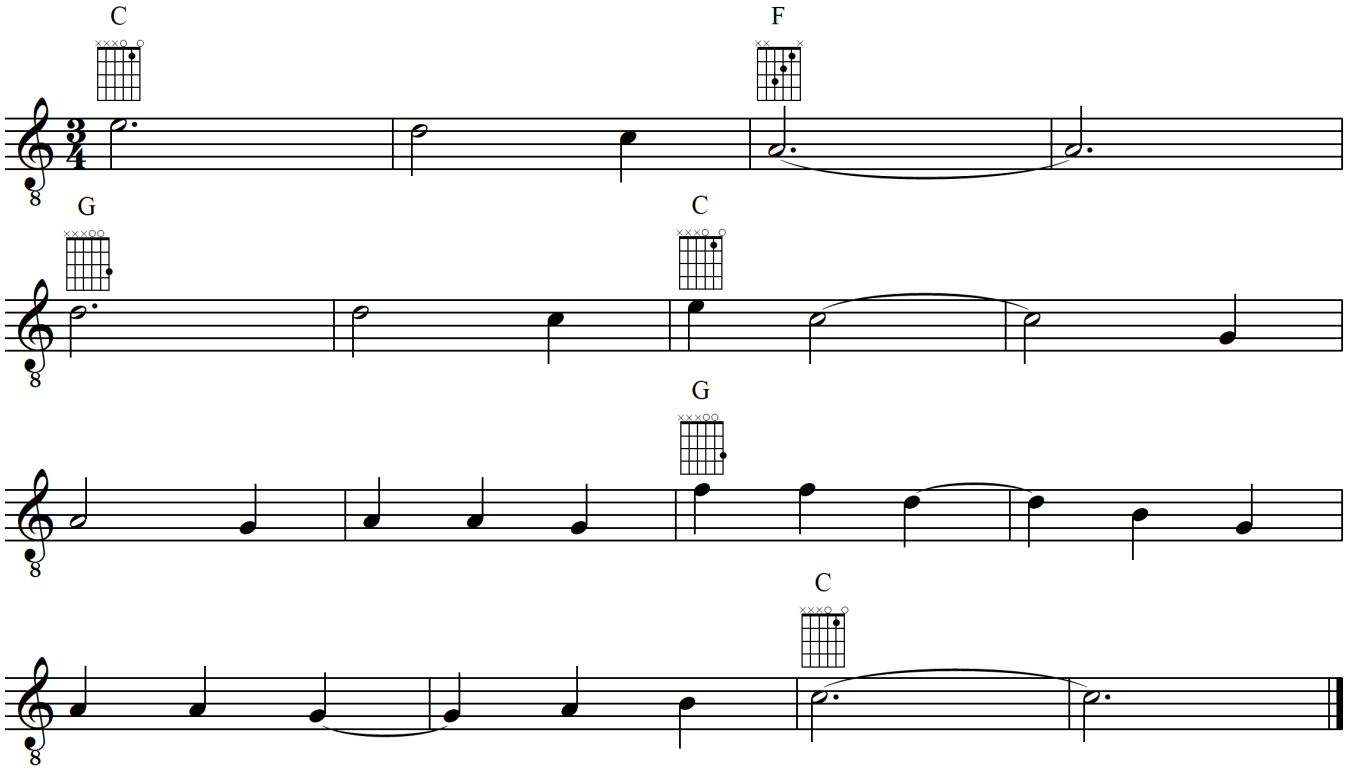
Simplified

F

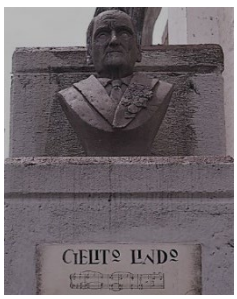


Count and clap “Cielito Lindo” several times before playing it on the guitar. You can substitute the simplified chords in the score below with full chords if you prefer.

Quirino Mendoza y Cortez



Quirino Mendoza y Cortés (May 10, 1862 – 1957) was a Mexican composer of the famous traditional songs "Cielito Lindo" and "Jesusita en Chihuahua". Cortés' father was an organist at a local church and inspired Quirino to learn music. As a teenager he learned to play the piano, flute, violin, guitar, and the organ while taking lessons from his father.



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More About Chords

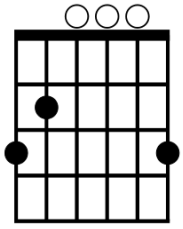
Exploring Chords with and beyond your Lead Guitar Class

The focus in your Lead Guitar class should still be on reading the progressively more difficult pieces in this book and online and on refining your technique ahead of combining right-hand fingers and thumb to play music in two voices. It's an exciting leap forward coming in Level IV. Once you can play each piece with some fluency, try adding the chords and trading parts. Don't forget there are also accompanying ensemble parts online for many of the pieces in this book.

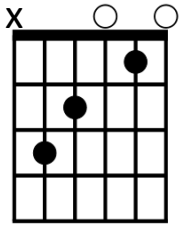
Try combining these chords to write a song of your own or learn your favorite song that includes guitar – explore!

Glossary of Chords in Open Position - *Chords appear below in the order they appear in the book*

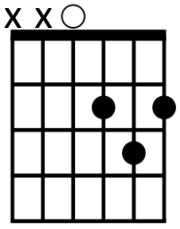
G



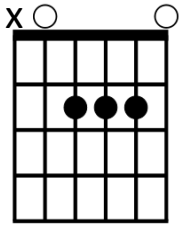
C



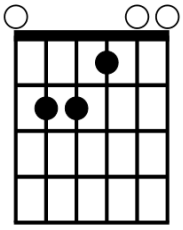
D



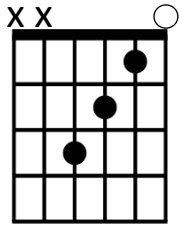
A



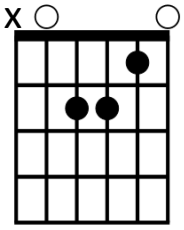
E



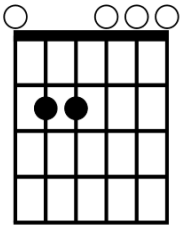
F maj7



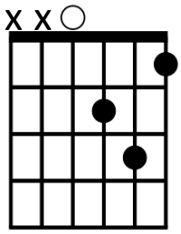
A m



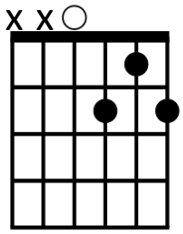
E m



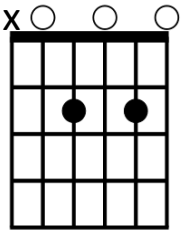
D m



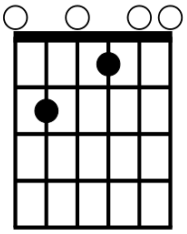
D 7



A 7



E 7



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Sharps and Flats

♯ - A sharp sign placed immediately before a note raises its pitch by a half step, or one fret on the guitar.

♭ - A flat sign placed immediately before a note lowers its pitch by a half step, or one fret on the guitar.

♮ - A natural sign cancels out a previous sharp or flat sign and returns a note to its normal pitch. Remember, a sharp or a flat note lasts for the rest of the measure unless cancelled out by a natural sign.

Greensleeves

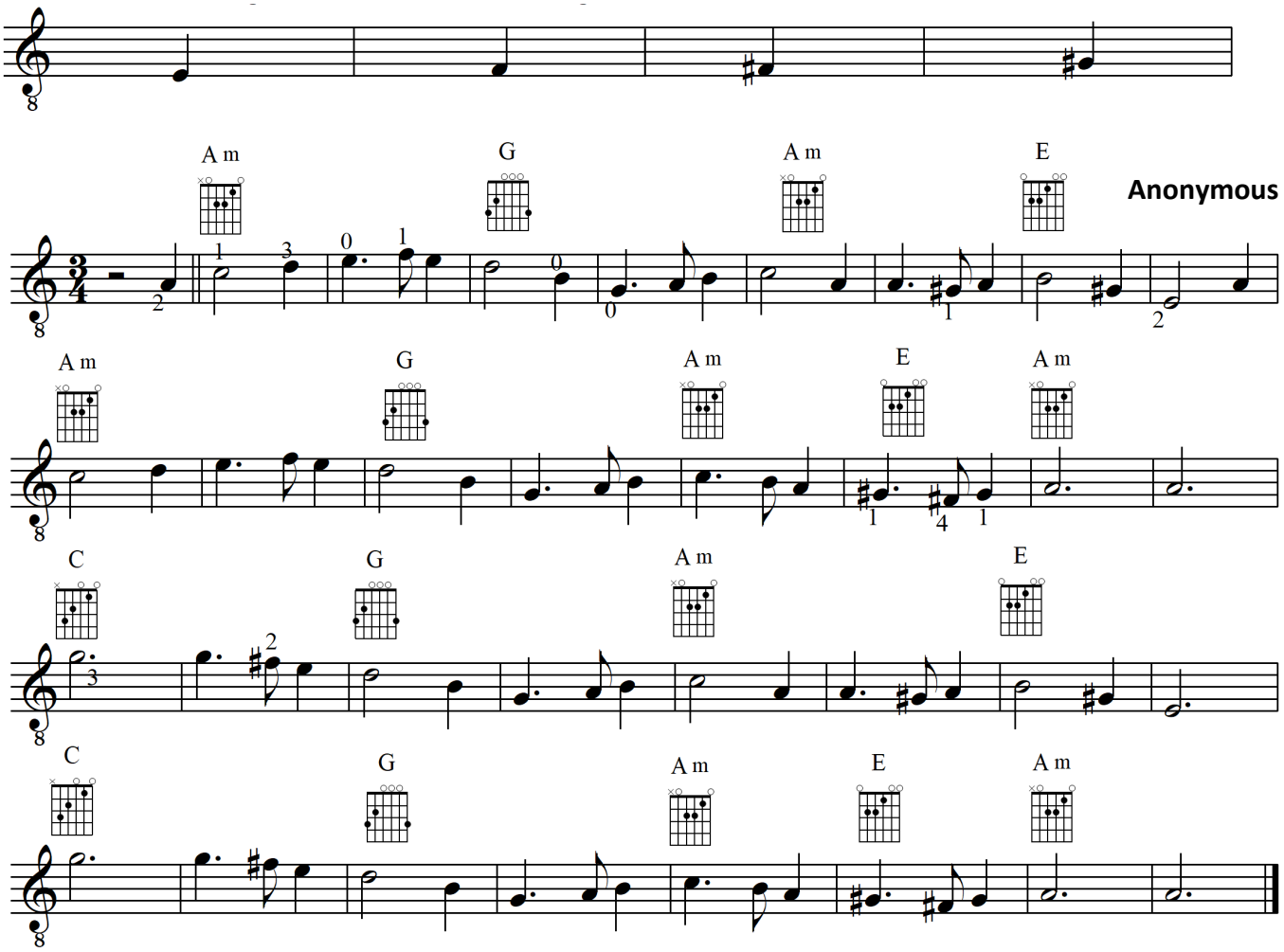
Greensleeves has four new notes:

E is played with the 2nd finger in the 2nd fret of the 4th (D) string.

F is played with the 3rd finger in the 3rd fret of the 4th (D) string.

F# is played with the 4th finger in the 4th fret of the 4th (D) string.

G# is played with the 1st finger in the 1st fret of the 3rd (G) string.



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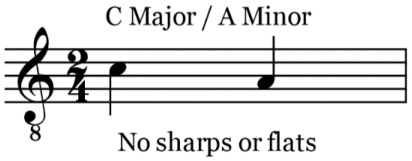
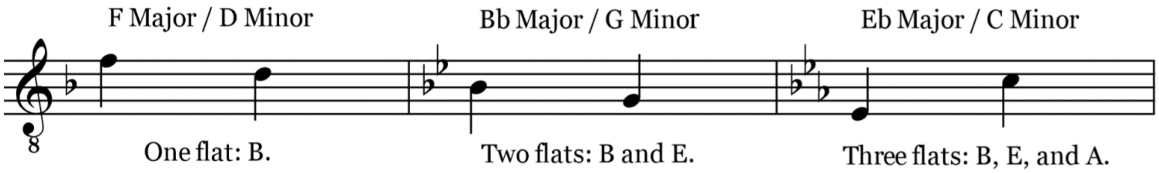
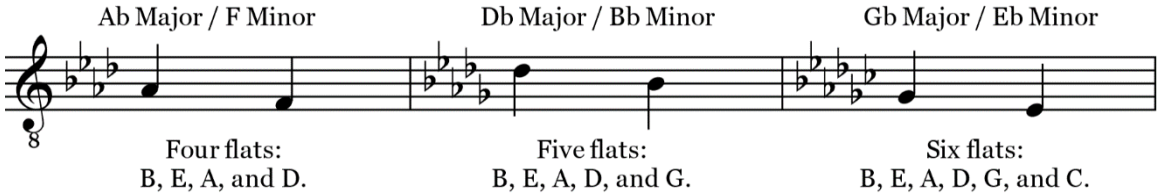
Key Signatures

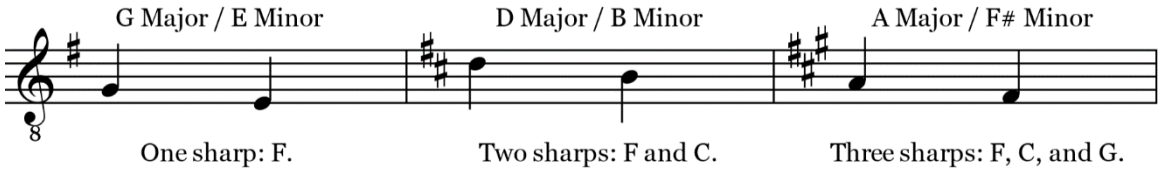
A key signature is a grouping of sharps or flats at the beginning of a song. It tells us what notes are sharp or flat throughout the song. It also tells us in what **key** a song is written. The key is a group of notes based on a particular note--the **tonic** note--and comprising a scale. The tonic note is the note with which the song often begins and ends, and the note that makes the song or scale sound complete.

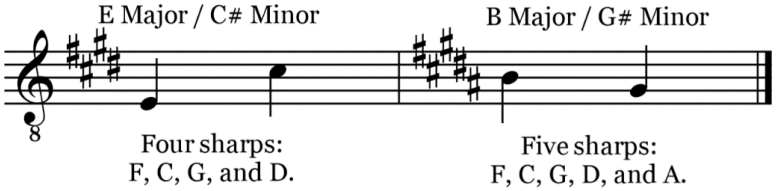
Every major key has a corresponding minor key. The major key often sounds "happy" while the minor key sounds more "sad" and mournful, and the difference has to do with the pattern of the space between notes. Below are examples of all the major and minor keys and their key signatures.











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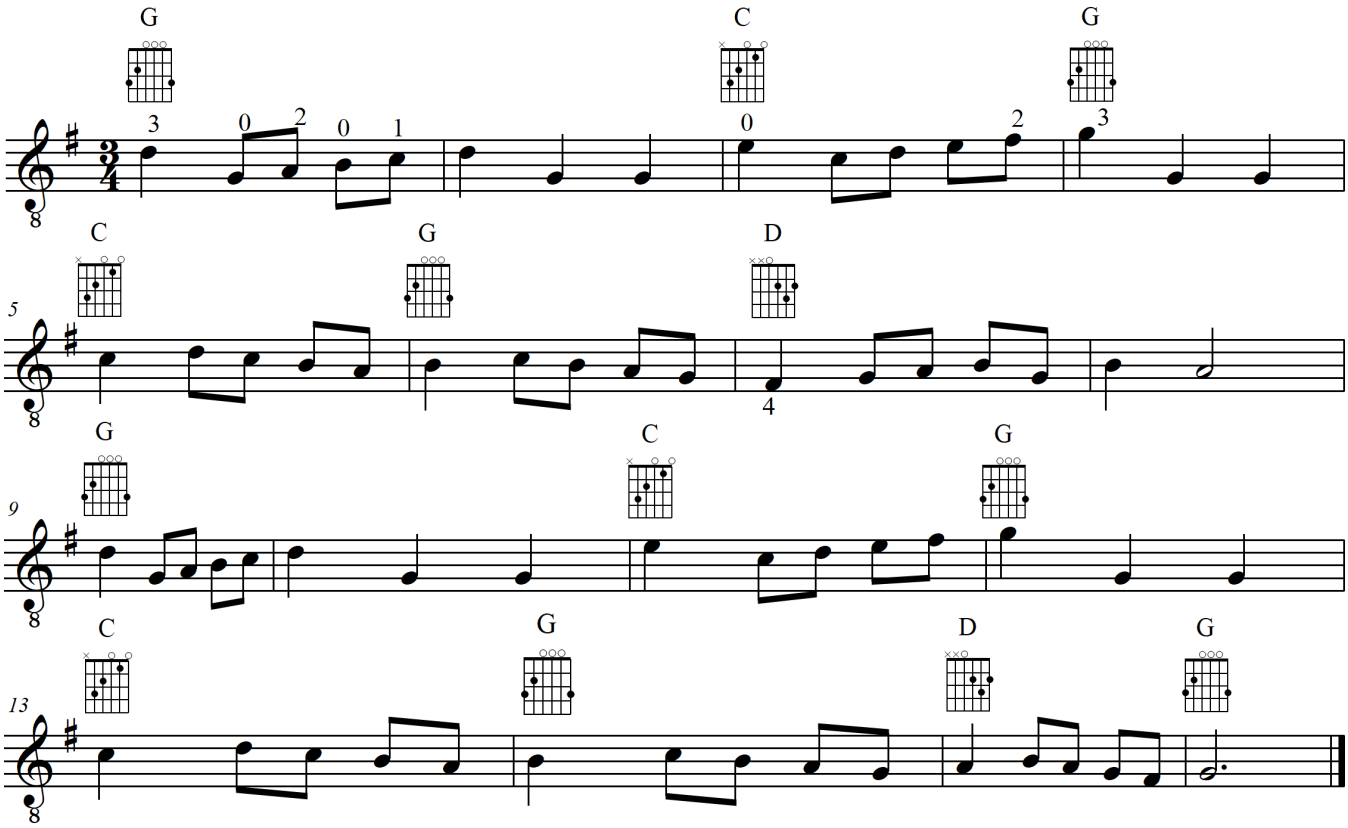
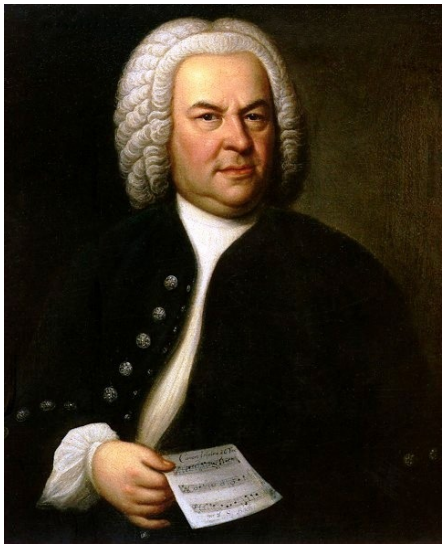
Minuet in G

J. S. Bach





Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was born in Eisenach, Germany. At the age of fourteen, he was awarded a choral scholarship to study at St. Michael's School in Lüneburg, Germany. Bach wrote over one thousand pieces of music for a wide variety of instruments. He was particularly known for keyboard compositions as well as concerti, masses and cantatas. Bach is considered the father of classical music by many composers who followed him. A good deal of the music theory we practice today is derived from his work. In fact, the historical period of music called the high baroque is marked by Bach's birth and death dates. Bach had twenty children, four of whom would become composers. Although Minuet in G was attributed to Bach until the 1970s, the actual composer was Bach's contemporary Christian Petzold.

Words to Play By:

"One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is preparation."

- Arthur Ashe

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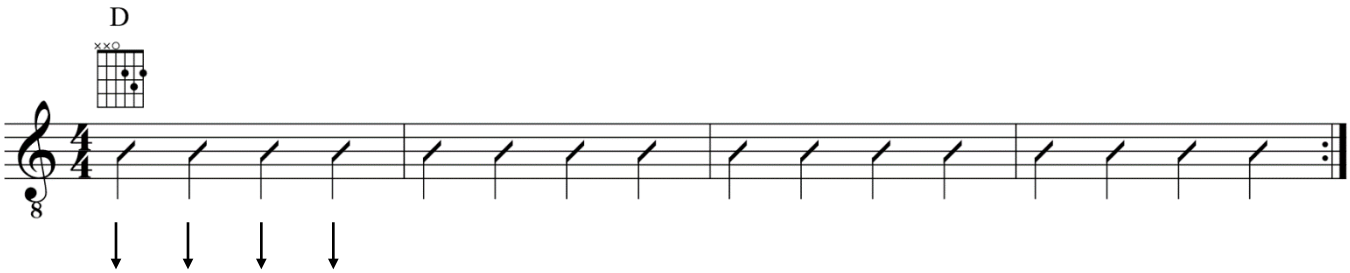
More About Chords II

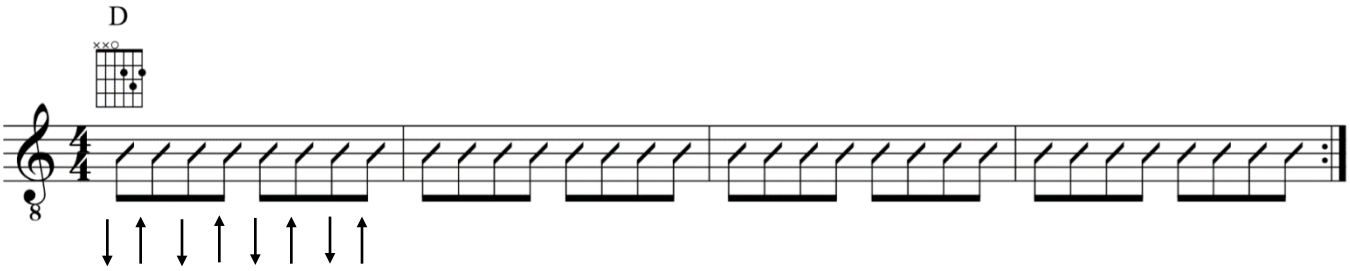
Strumming Patterns

When you strum chords on your guitar, you are playing an important role in creating the rhythmic and harmonic foundation for a piece of music. Think of a piece of music like a picture or a painting; the melody is the smiling face that you initially focus on in the foreground, and the chords being strummed are the beautiful background that gives the image context and meaning. To successfully create this musical background, we must develop our sense of rhythm with strumming patterns.

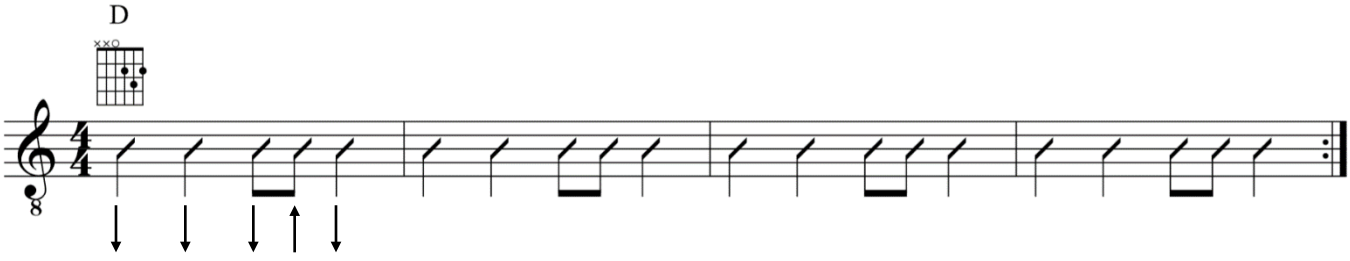
Start by strumming down toward the floor on each quarter note. Use your thumb for these downstrokes. Remember that the D chord only uses the top four strings, so be careful not to strum strings 5 or 6.



Now adding upstrokes toward the sky on the eighth notes in between the counts. Use your index finger for the upstrokes while you continue to use your thumb for the downstrokes on the beat.



Now you're ready to build your own patterns by taking away some down and upstrokes to create interest, while keeping track of where you are in the eighth note counts. Play the following examples, and then try to come up with some of your own!



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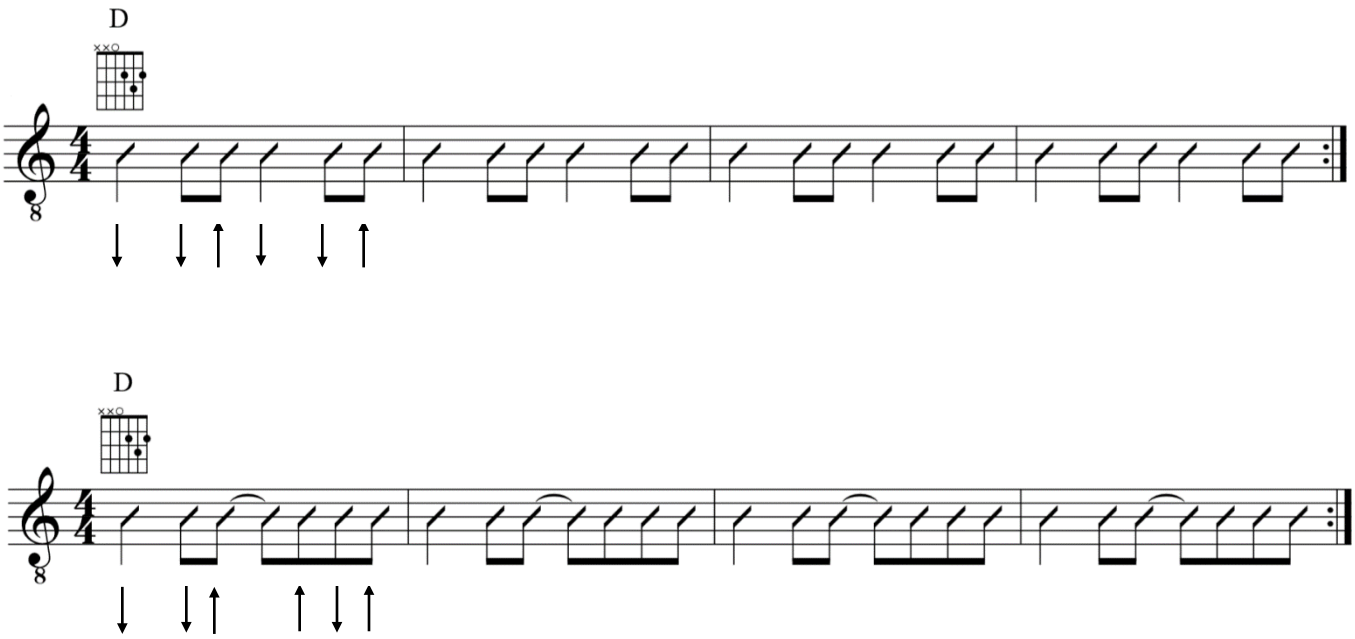
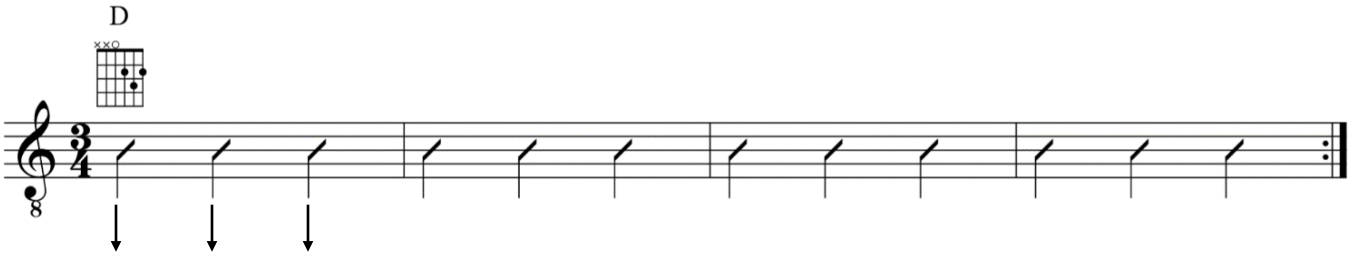
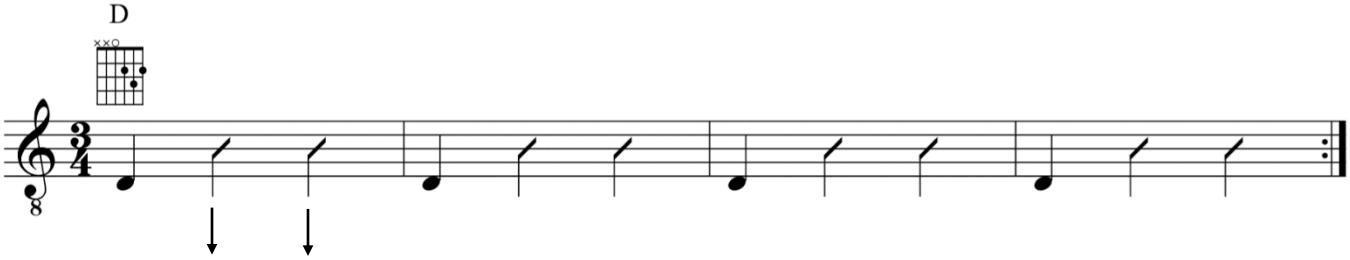


Adding a Bass Line with Your Thumb

You can create even more interesting patterns by adding in a bass line of single notes with your strumming. Try playing this simple pattern of downstrokes in 3/4.



Now substitute the first downstroke in each measure with a single note played by your thumb. With thumb or "p" we use a "free stroke" which means thumb plays a string and circles back to play again without resting on any other string. We work on this technique in detail in Level IV. Also, make sure this bass note is the lowest note of the chord you are playing; for example, the lowest string in a D chord is the 4th string, the lowest note in an A chord is the 5th string, and the lowest note in an E chord is the 6th string.



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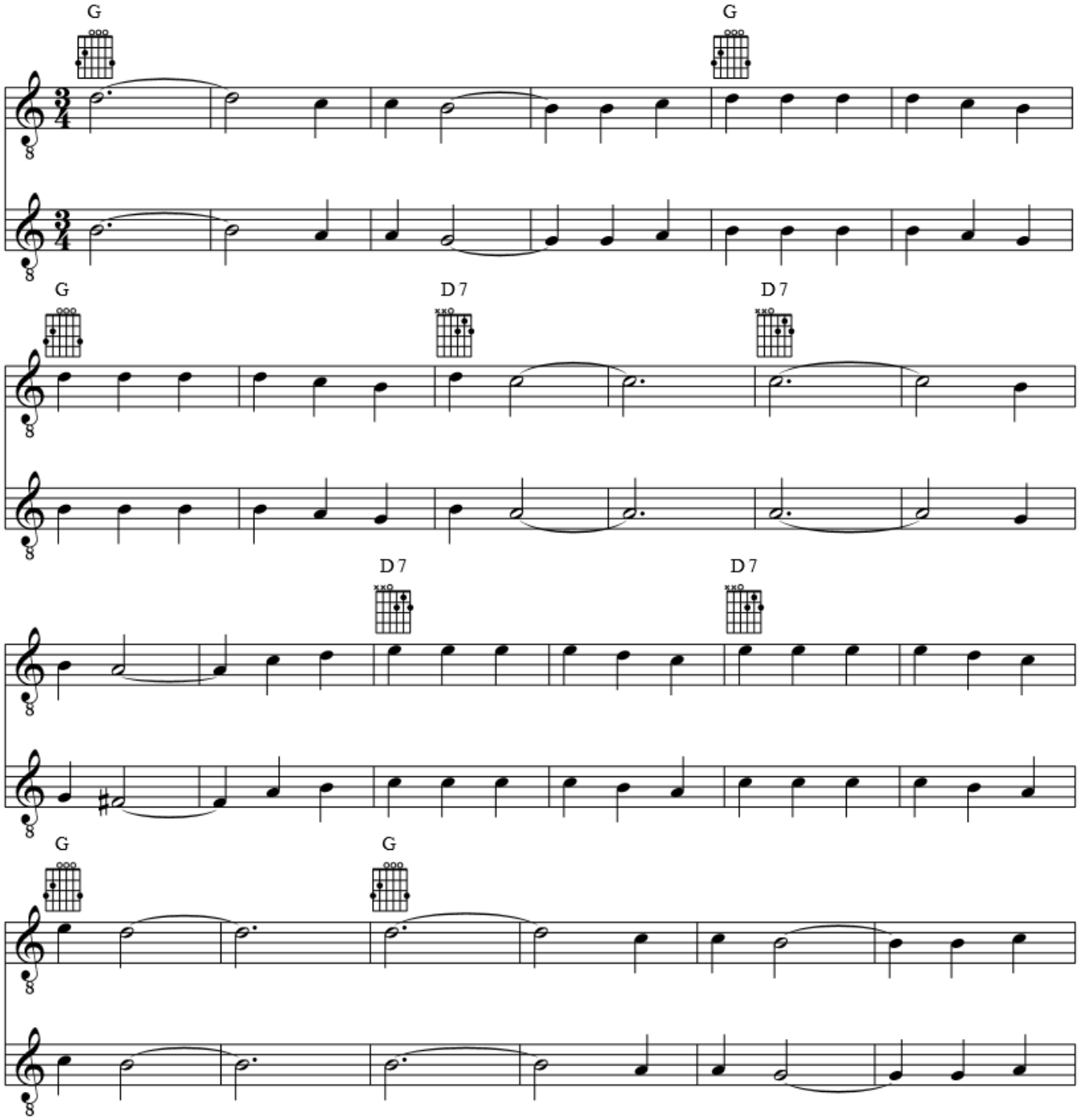
De Colores

Once you know the melody and harmony below, the class can divide into three groups: one playing the melody, one playing the harmony and one playing the chords where marked above the score. Try playing the bass line pattern in 3/4 from *More about Chords II* when strumming the chords.

Mexican Traditional



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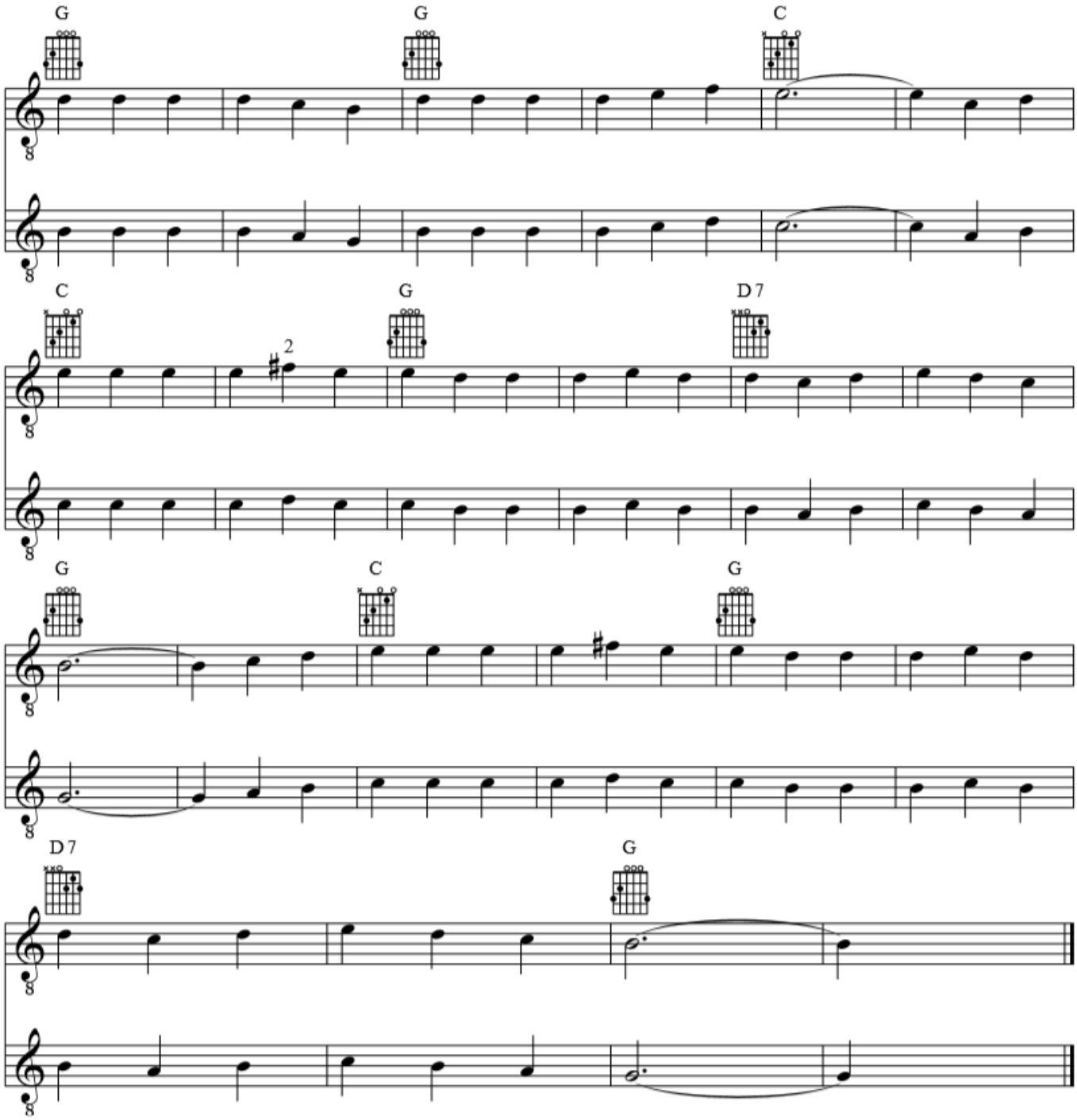

Words to Play By:

"Be who you are and say how you feel, because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind."

- Dr. Seuss

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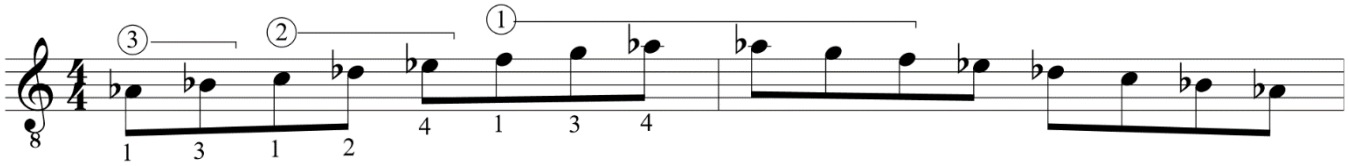
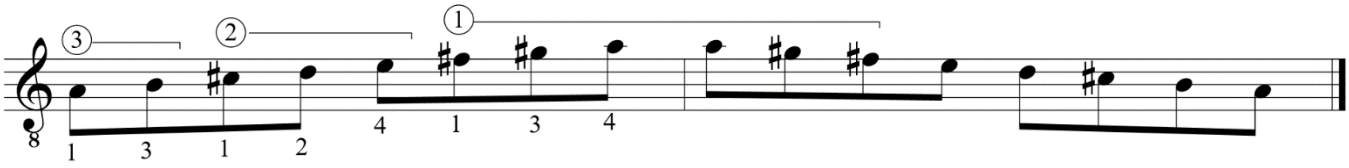
Transposable Major Scale

Below is a one-octave major scale (Ab Major) in first position set up so that you are assigning one finger to each of the first four frets of the guitar, just as you have done throughout this book. The scale pattern is transposable. It can move up and down the neck in any position. Play the scale many times (at least ten) until you have memorized the finger pattern it uses. In this case, focus less on reading the notes and more on memorizing the LH fingerings.

Now that we are beginning to play in higher positions, we will frequently use circled numbers to indicate on which string a note should be played as we have below.



Once the pattern is confidently memorized, shift all of your fingers up one fret so that your first finger is playing the second fret, your second finger is playing the third fret, your third finger the fourth fret, and your fourth finger the fifth fret. This is called playing in second position. With your first finger starting on A (second fret of the third string), you are playing an A major scale.



Try playing that pattern in all positions up and down the neck. For now, don't worry about what kind of scale you are playing or the names of the notes. Just keep the pattern the same and continue to assign one finger to each fret as you shift up and down the neck.

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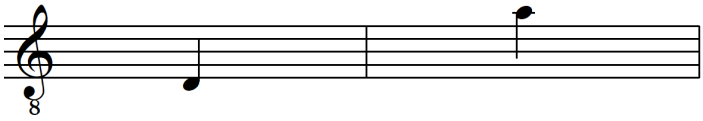
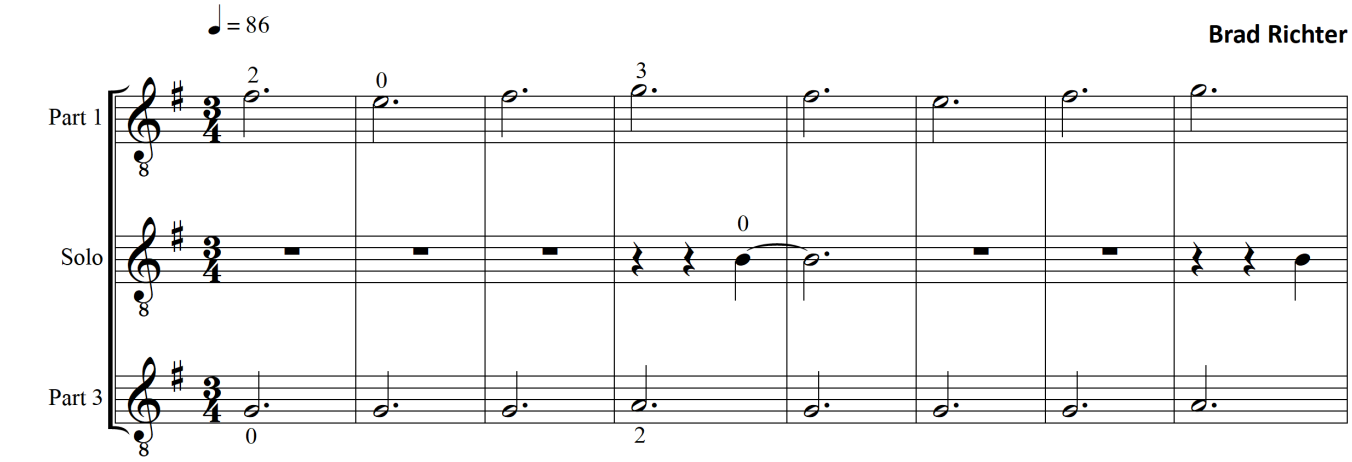
Across the Ice

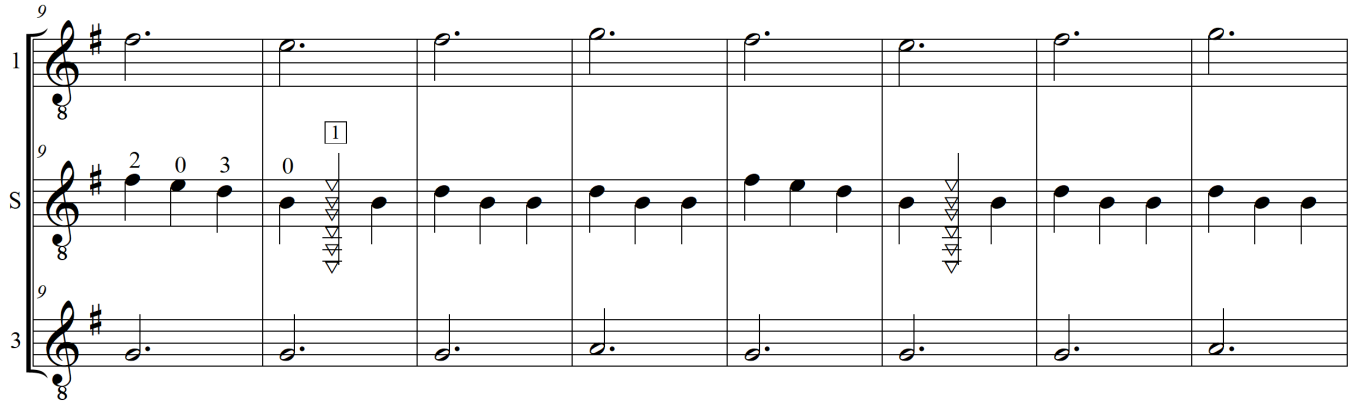
Across the Ice has two new notes:

D is played on the open 4th (D) string.

This A is played with the 4th finger in the 5th fret of the E string







[1] Scraping the L.H. 1st finger up through the strings above the nut

[2] The G notes in measures 39 and 40 should be played as Es (2nd fret, 4th string) when playing part 2 as a solo.

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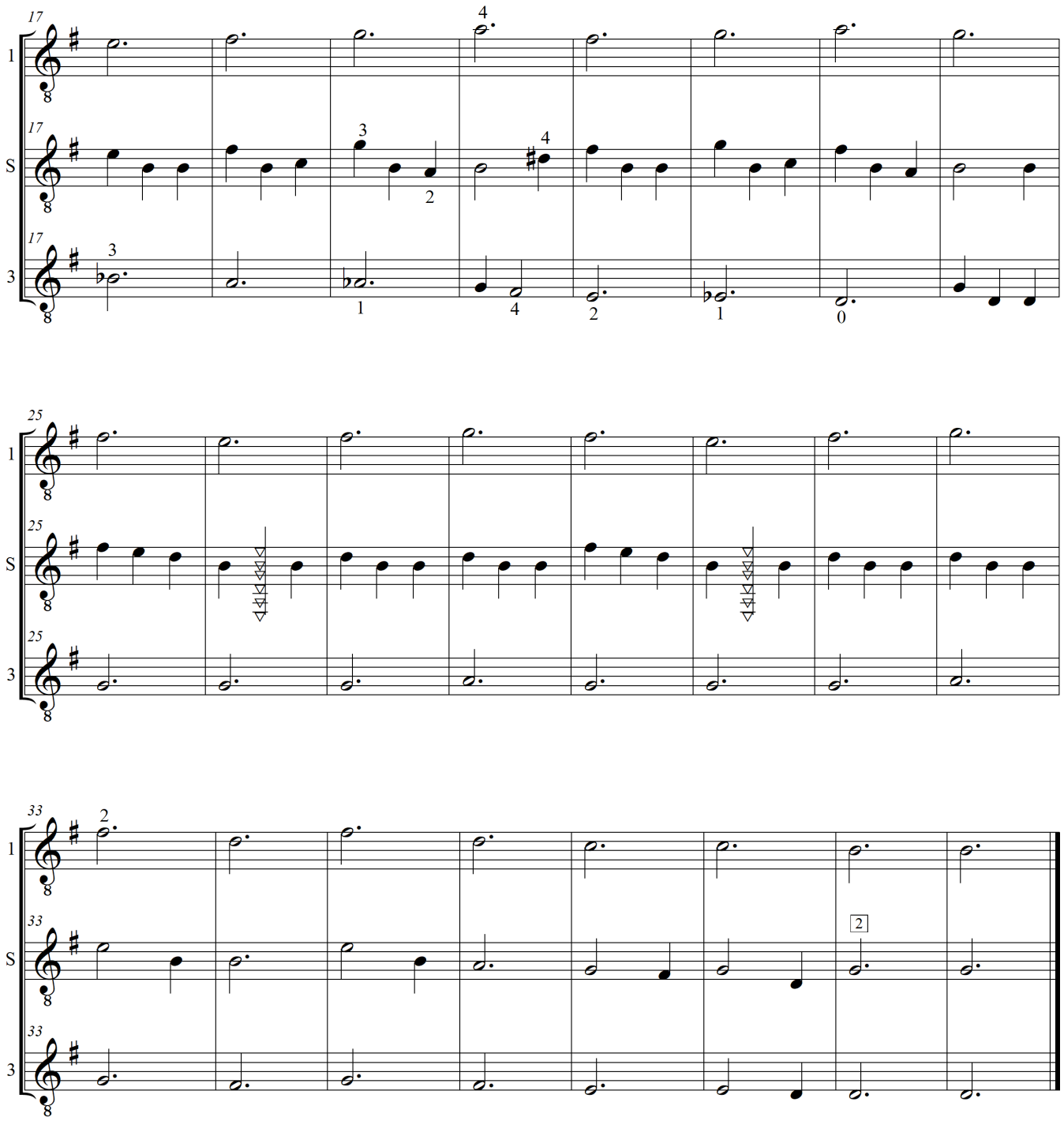

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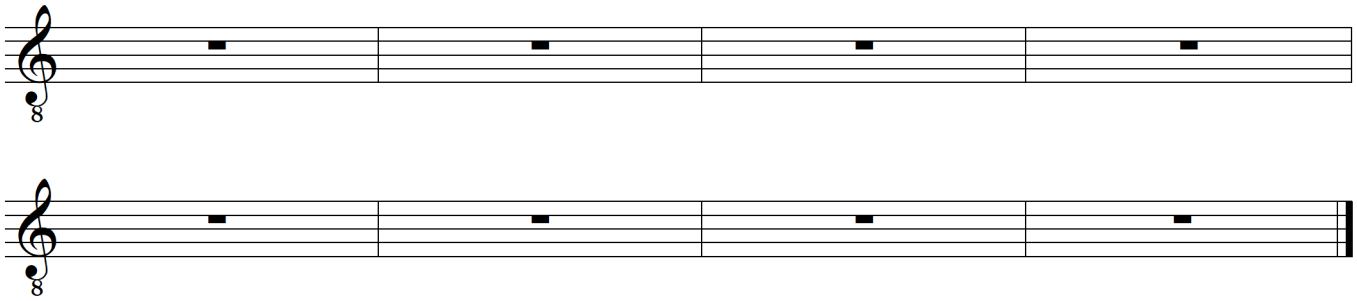
Let's Create!

Since our last composition at the end of Level 1, you have played in 6/8 and 3/4, mastered new rhythms like tied notes and dotted notes and read music with key signatures, sharps, and flats – all elements we can use to make our original music more interesting.

This composition can be in any musical style you choose or create. Before you begin composing, build a musical framework that will help guide some of your creative decisions by choosing one element from each of the categories below:

1. Meter/Time Signature: 3/4 or 6/8
2. Key: G Major, C Major, or A minor
3. Rhythm: dotted note(s) or tied note(s)

Using your chosen meter, key, and incorporating a dotted or tied note, write an eight-measure melody using a copy of the blank measures below. At the bottom of the page, there are important tips about the composition elements to be included.



Tips:

1. Each measure must contain the same number of beats as the top number of the time signature. The bottom number of the time signature tells us what kind of note value the beat should be. For example, in 6/8 time we have 6 beats in a measure, and an eighth note counts as a beat.
4. Here are the notes in each of the three keys you can choose from for your melody:
    a. G Major: G A B C D E F# G
    b. C Major: C D E F G A B C
    c. A minor: A B C D E F G(#) A

Start and end your melody with the 'tonic' note in your key (the note G in the key of G for instance) to create a unified sound. Think of the tonic note as home, and the course of the melody as a journey. You start at home, go on a journey, and then return to home at the end.

5. A dot attached to the right side of a note head adds half of the original rhythmic value to that note. For example, a half note is equal to two quarter notes, while a dotted half note is equal to three quarter notes.
6. A tie is an arched line that connects two notes of the same pitch. It indicates that a note is to be sounded only once but held for the rhythmic value of both notes. It is often used to extend the duration of a note over a bar line.
7. Once you have written your melody, be sure to get your guitar out and try to play it! When we compose music, we should always focus on how it sounds. Play your melody and then make any changes that you think would sound better.

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Level Four: Using the Right-Hand Thumb

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Ring the Bells Ensemble 67
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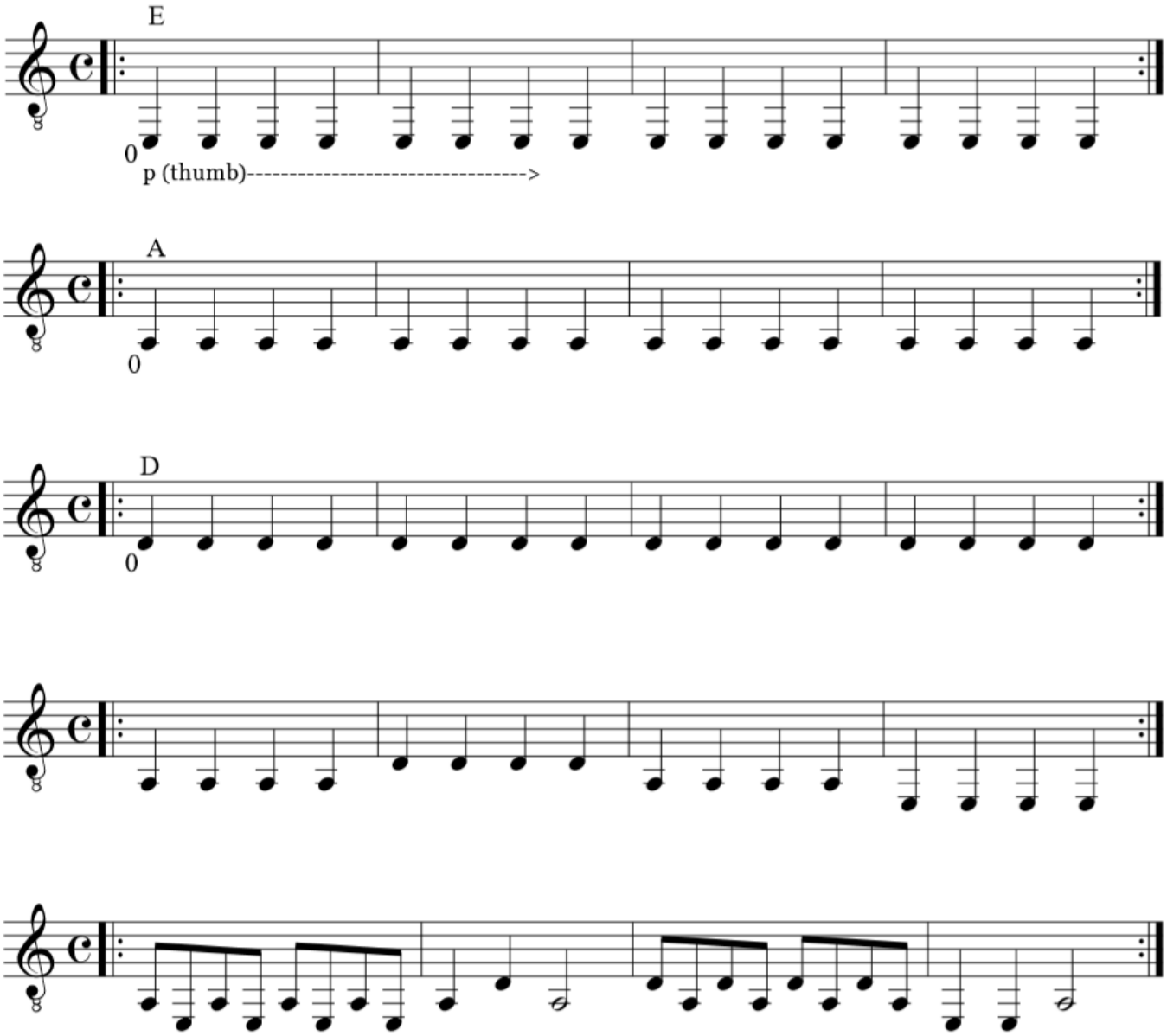
Using the Thumb: Free Stroke

As we add the thumb to your playing, we will be using free strokes most of the time. Thumb free strokes will combine with your finger rest strokes when we begin to play music in two parts. Here are a few things to keep in mind while playing the following exercises with thumb free strokes:

1. Keep the same good RH position you have learned for playing rest strokes with your fingers.
2. Your thumb should remain straight and relaxed.
3. Move your entire thumb from the point at which it connects to your wrist.
4. Strike the string with the tip of the thumb on the corner that is closest to your body by moving down through the string.
5. Without coming to rest on any other string, return the thumb to a playing position by making a small circular motion back toward the string.



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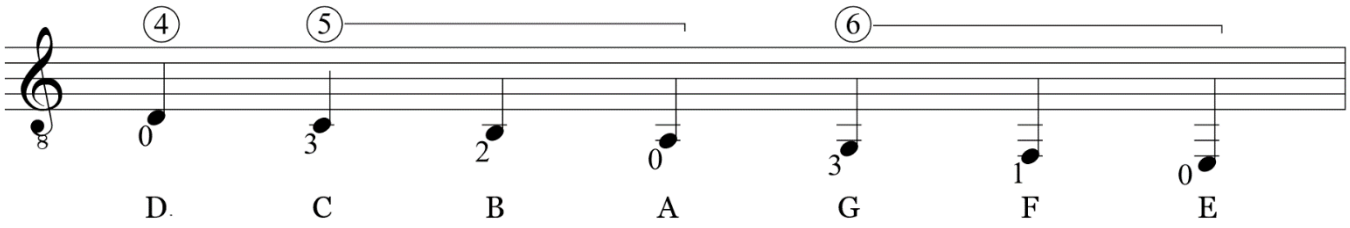
More About Reading Music: Ledger Lines

The guitar uses many notes that are written on ledger lines below the staff. You practiced playing the D (4th string), A (5th string), and E (6th string) notes in the first few exercises for thumb free strokes. Memorize their positions below the staff well and consider them marker notes: notes that are immediately familiar, that act as guide posts when you see them and help you recognize the notes on the ledger lines above and below them.

Using the open string notes as markers, see if you can find where to play the C, B, G and F notes (below) on the guitar. Here are some tips:

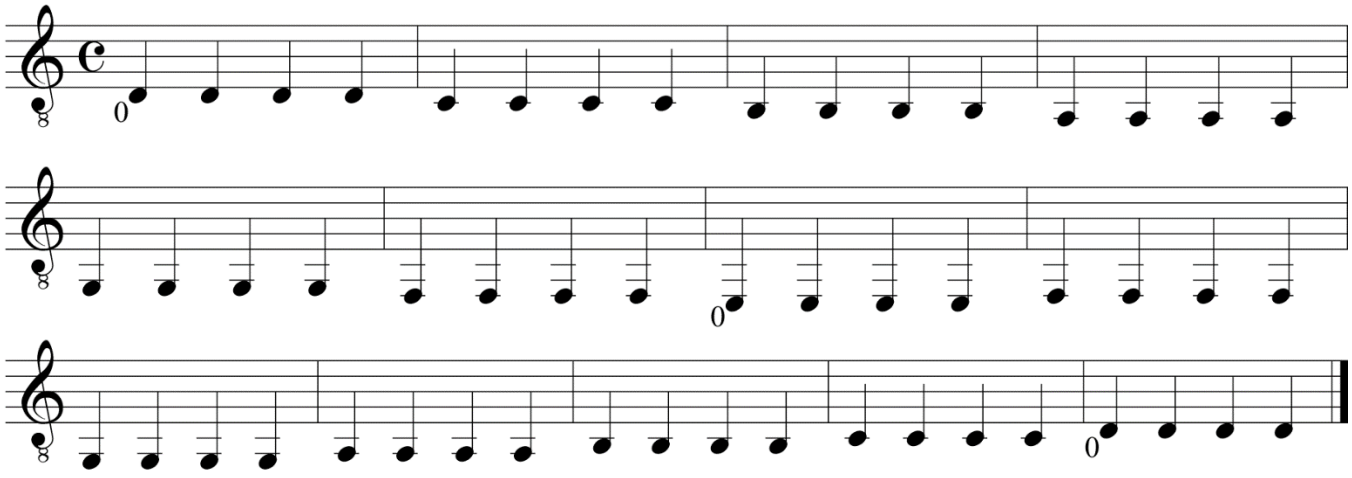
1. Use the left-hand finger numbers to help you. Since we are in first position the finger number and fret number will be the same.
2. Remember that a note that is lower on the staff will also be and sound lower in pitch.
3. If the note you are reading is just below an open string note, then it will be on the next string down.



Now that you have found the ledger line notes above, practice reading them in the exercises below. Do not write the finger number or note name above any of the notes. Recognize them by counting the number of ledger lines they use and by relating each to the note before.

Play slowly and continue to concentrate on your thumb free stroke technique as well.

Exercise 1:



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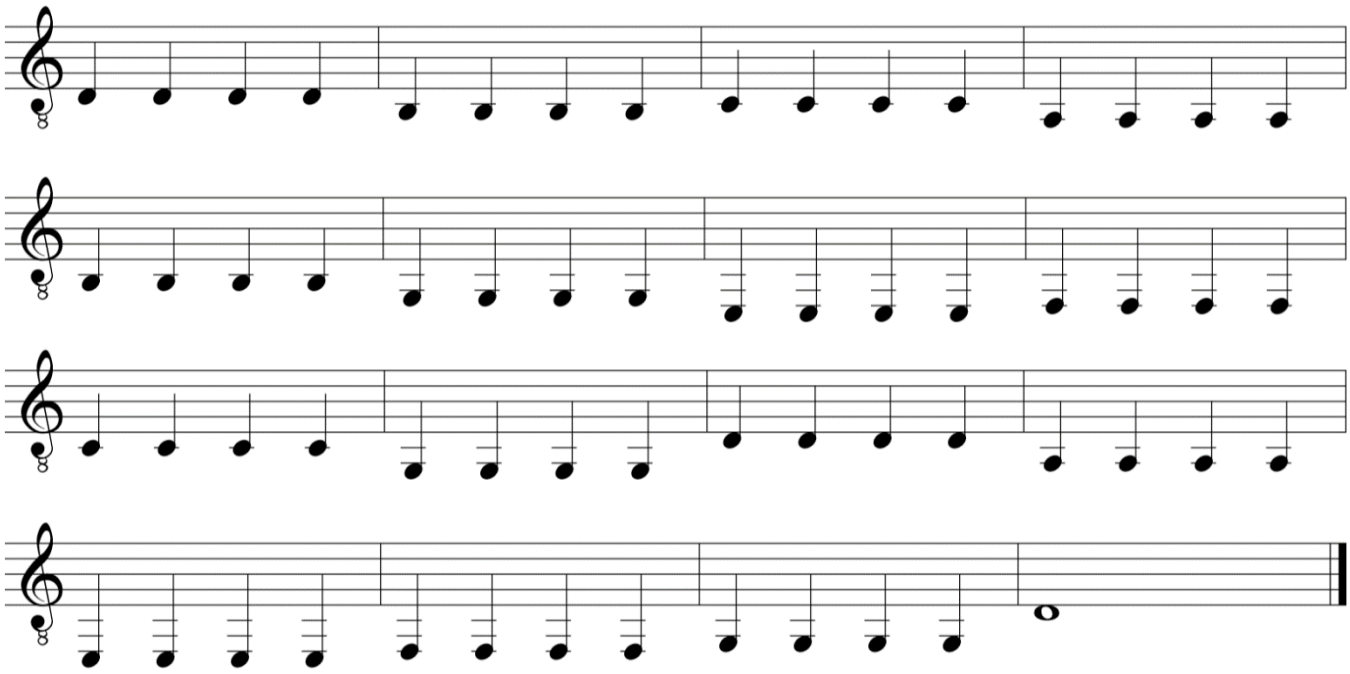
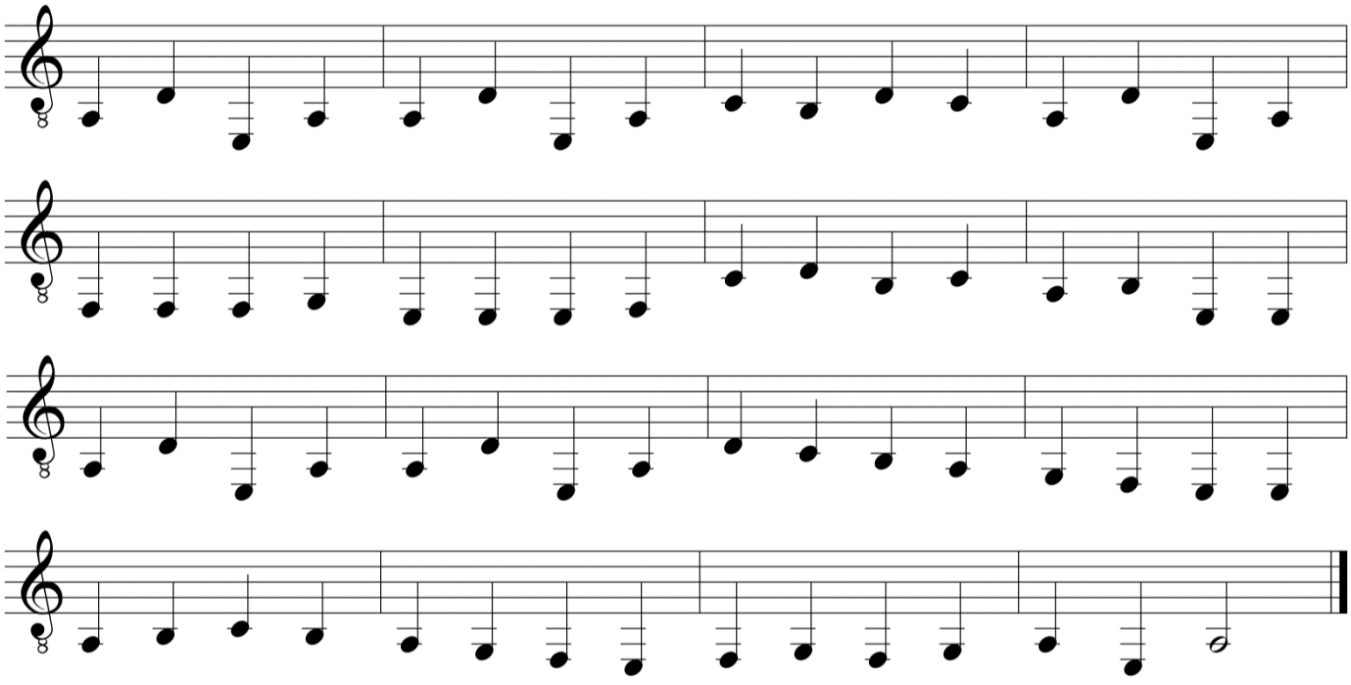
Exercise 2:



Exercise 3:



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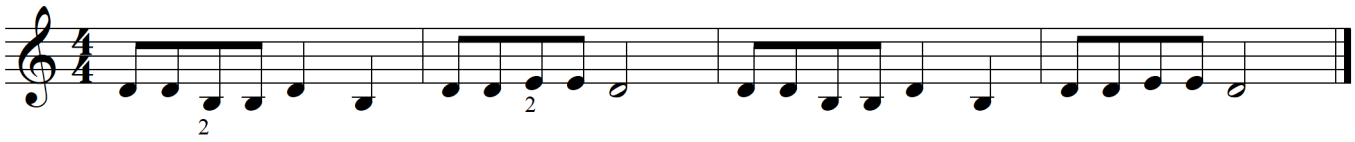
Remember These Melodies?

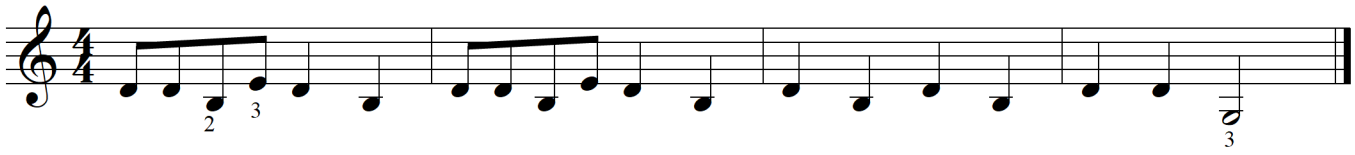
Below are five melodies from the beginning of the book transposed down one octave. All of the notes except for the higher G in Ode to Joy are on strings 4, 5 and 6. Read and play them using thumb free strokes.

For songs that are not written out in their entirety, try using your ear, your memory of the melody and the notes that are written below for the beginning of the song, to work out the remainder of the song.

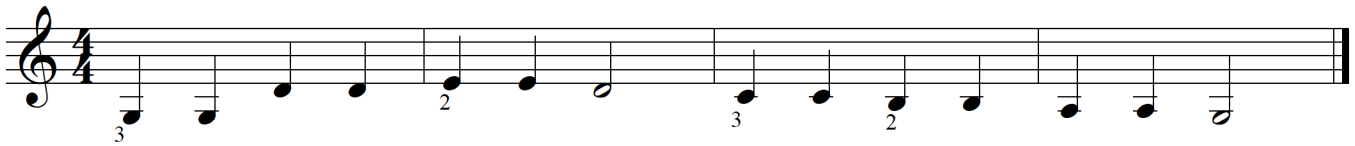
Melody 1:



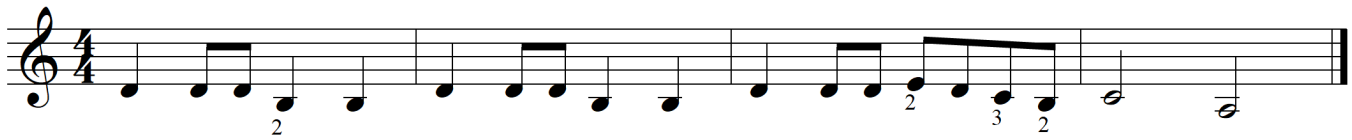
Melody 2:



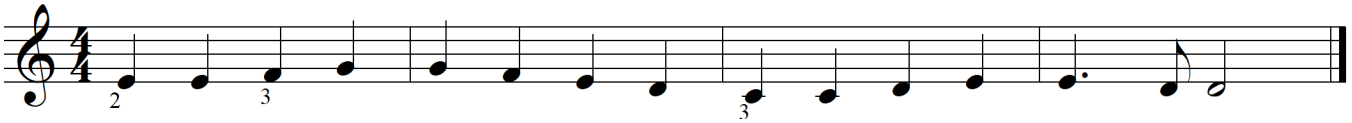
Melody 3:



Melody 4:



Melody 5:



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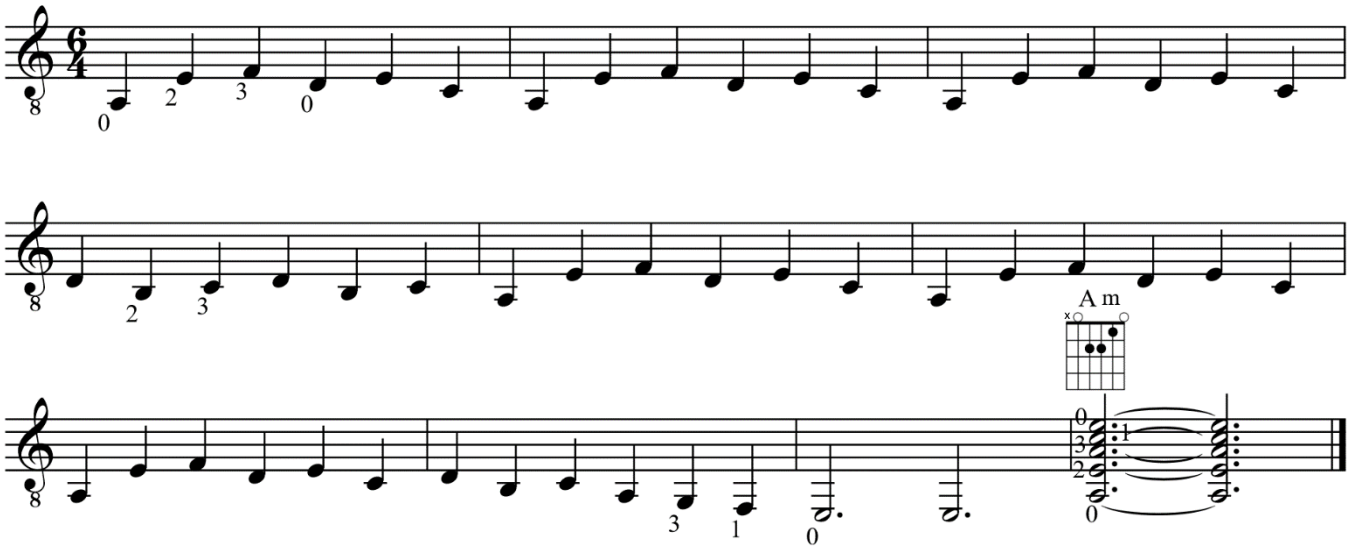
Theme from Leyenda

Isaac Albéniz



Spanish composer and pianist **Isaac Albéniz** (1860-1909) gave his first public performance in Barcelona at the age of four. When he was seven years old, his mother tried to enroll him at the Paris Conservatory. He even gave an audition but was denied admission because he was too young. Felipe Pedrell, a music teacher and composer, influenced Albéniz to compose music in the Spanish style. He mastered the style and his music is now one of the most recognizable signatures of Spanish culture. Isaac's most notable pieces are the Suite Española, OP. 47 and Iberia, a suite of twelve piano pieces.

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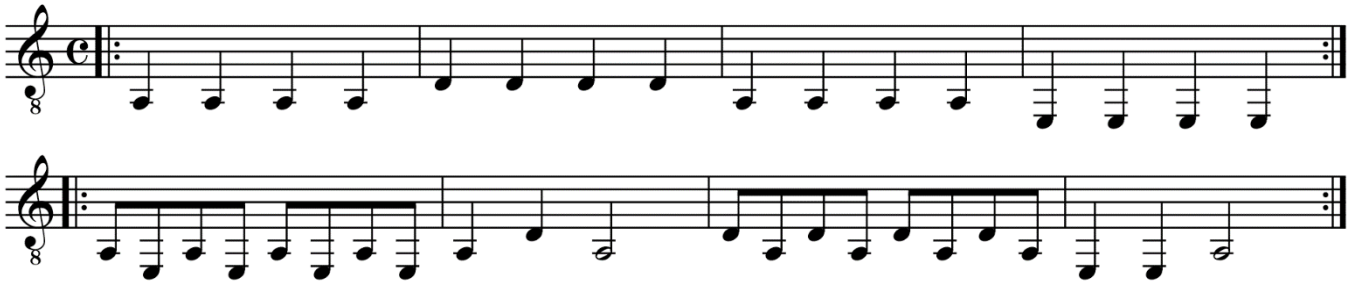
Daily Warm-up Routine IV

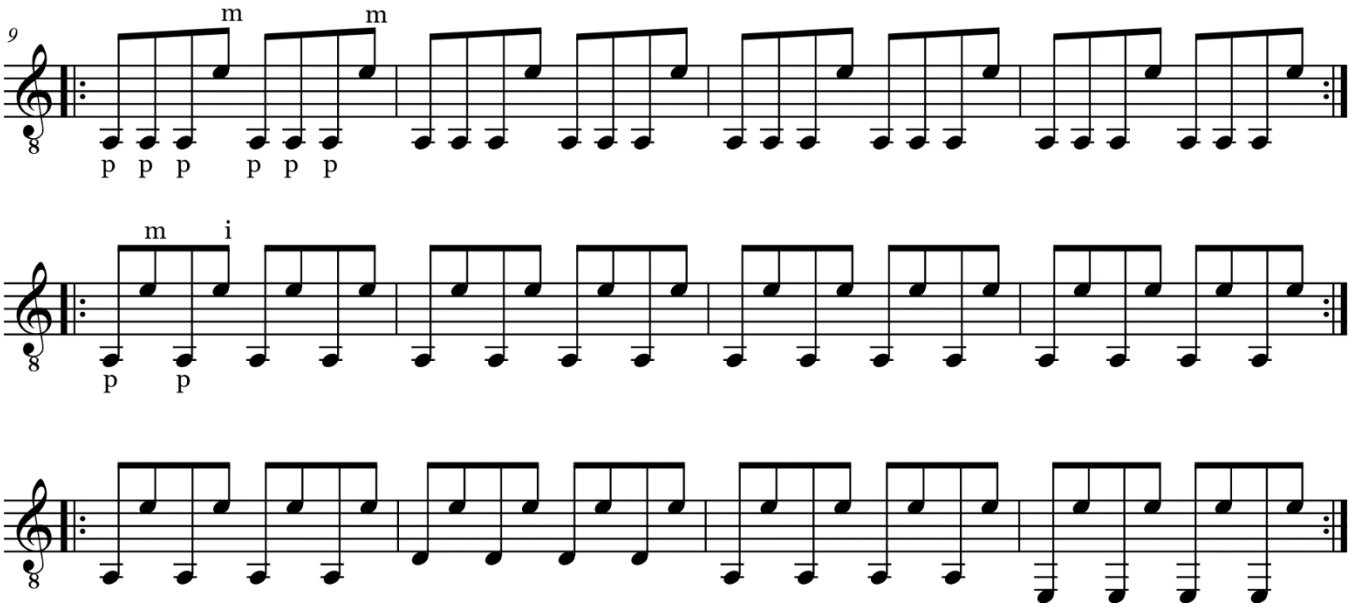
Right Hand:

1. Thumb Free Strokes



2. Mixing Thumb Free Strokes and Finger Rest Strokes

You have become fluent in using finger rest strokes to play melodies and have started using thumb free strokes to play bass lines. Now we will get your right hand ready to do both at the same time, giving you the ability to make your guitar sound like two independent instruments playing simultaneously! To help get your hands ready for the first song that mixes thumb and fingers, try the exercises below.



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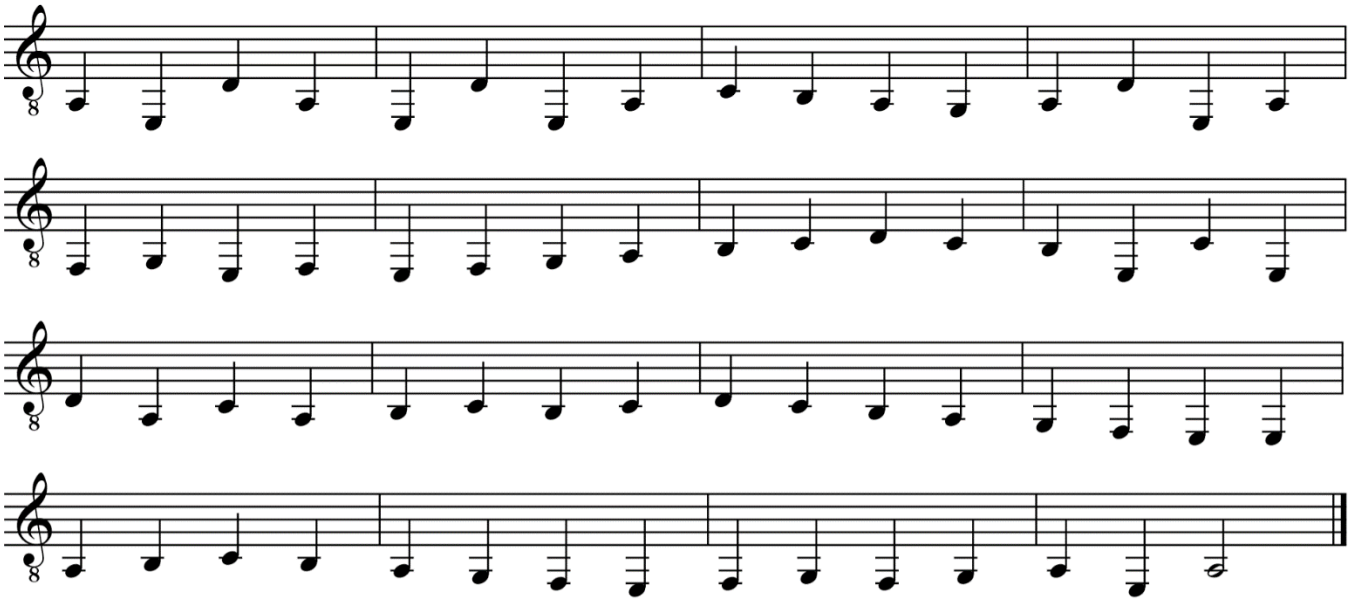
Combining the Hands:

3. Reading and Playing Notes below the Staff



To improve your fluency with notes on the 5th and 6th strings, try playing the melodies from Levels 1 and 2 down the octave. For example, “One Two Buckle My Shoe” can be played using the D on the open 4th string and the B on the second fret of the 5th string.

4. Transposable Major Scales

Complete your warm-up by playing four scales using the transposable major scale pattern introduced in the previous section of the book. The pattern begins and ends with the root note or tonic note of the scale – the note on which the scale sounds completed or resolved. Practice finding notes in higher positions by first choosing a scale at random (D Major, for instance) and then finding the corresponding fret on the G string where the pattern needs to start in order to produce the selected scale (the 7th fret in the case of D).

Words to Play By:

“I do know one thing about me: I don't measure myself by others' expectations or let others define my worth.”

Sonia Sotomayor

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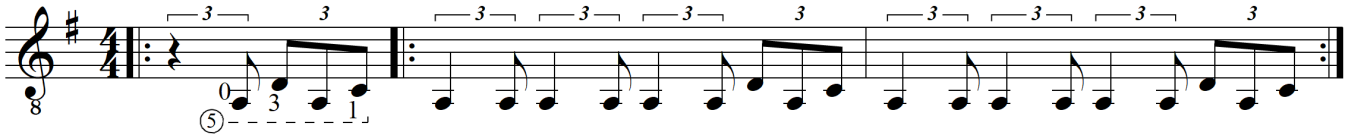
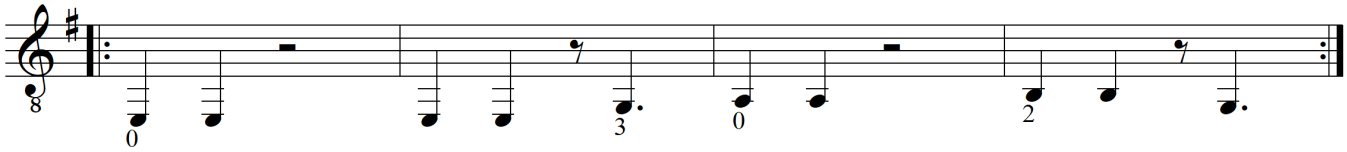
Six Rock Riffs Every Guitarist Should Know

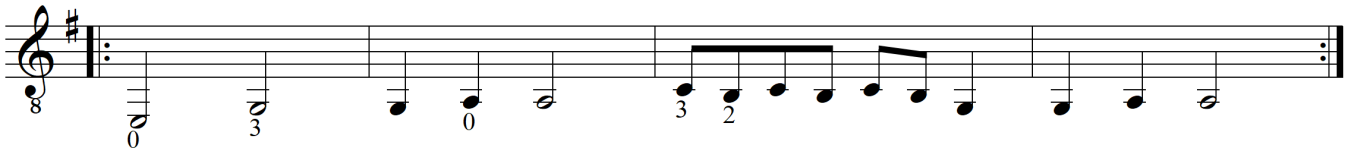
I'm a Man (Mannish Boy): Muddy Waters



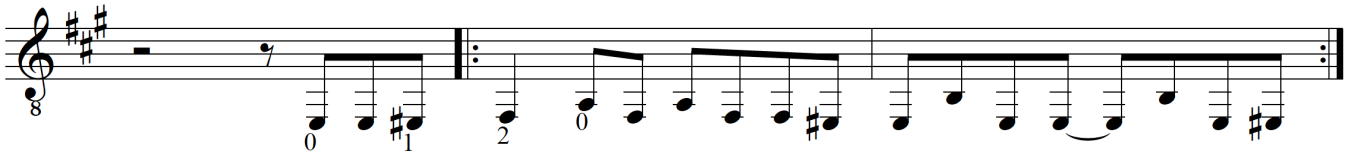
I Love Rock 'n' Roll: Joan Jett and the Blackhearts



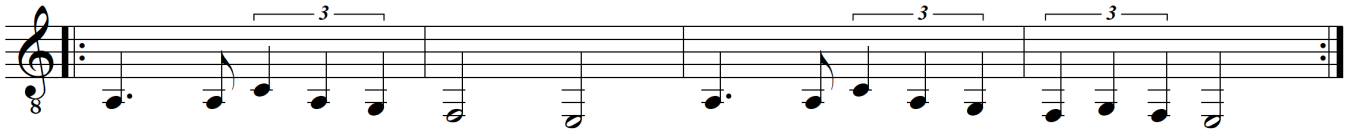
Iron Man: Black Sabbeth



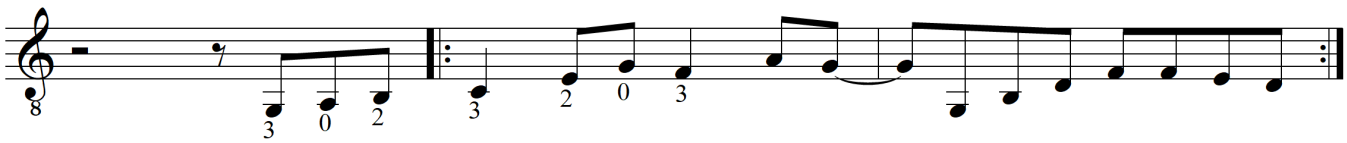
Come as You Are: Nirvana (transposed to F# minor)



Seven Nation Army: The White Stripes (transposed to A minor)



La Bamba: Richie Valens



I'm a Man (Mannish Boy): as performed by Muddy Waters (BMG Rights Management, Kobalt Music Group Ltd.)
I Love Rock N' Roll: as performed by Joan Jett and the Blackhearts (Kobalt Music Group Ltd.)
Iron Man: as performed by Black Sabbath (Westminster Music Ltd.)
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Dynamics

Dynamics are changes in volume that can help make music more expressive or create contrast. Here is an overview of commonly used dynamic indications in music. You will find them used throughout the remainder of this book. The words we use to describe dynamics come from Italian.

ff *fortissimo:* an 'ff' indication under a note or group of notes means to play very loudly

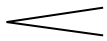
f *forte:* play loudly

mf *mezzo forte:* medium loud

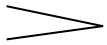
mp *mezzo piano:* medium quiet

p *piano:* quiet

pp *pianissimo:* very quiet



crescendo: growing louder



decrescendo: growing quieter

Occam's Razor

solo

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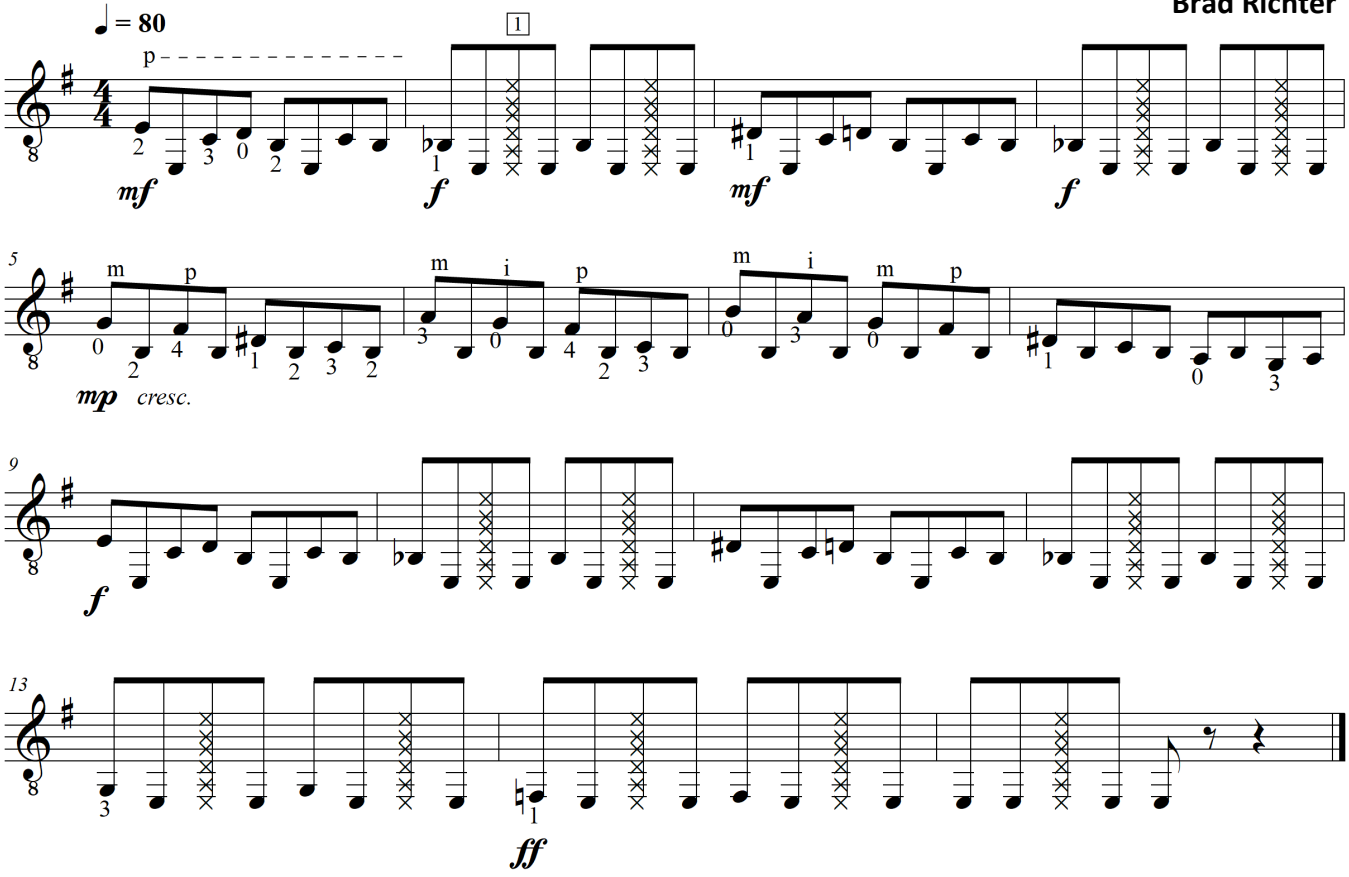

1 Open Right Hand striking the strings over the sound hole

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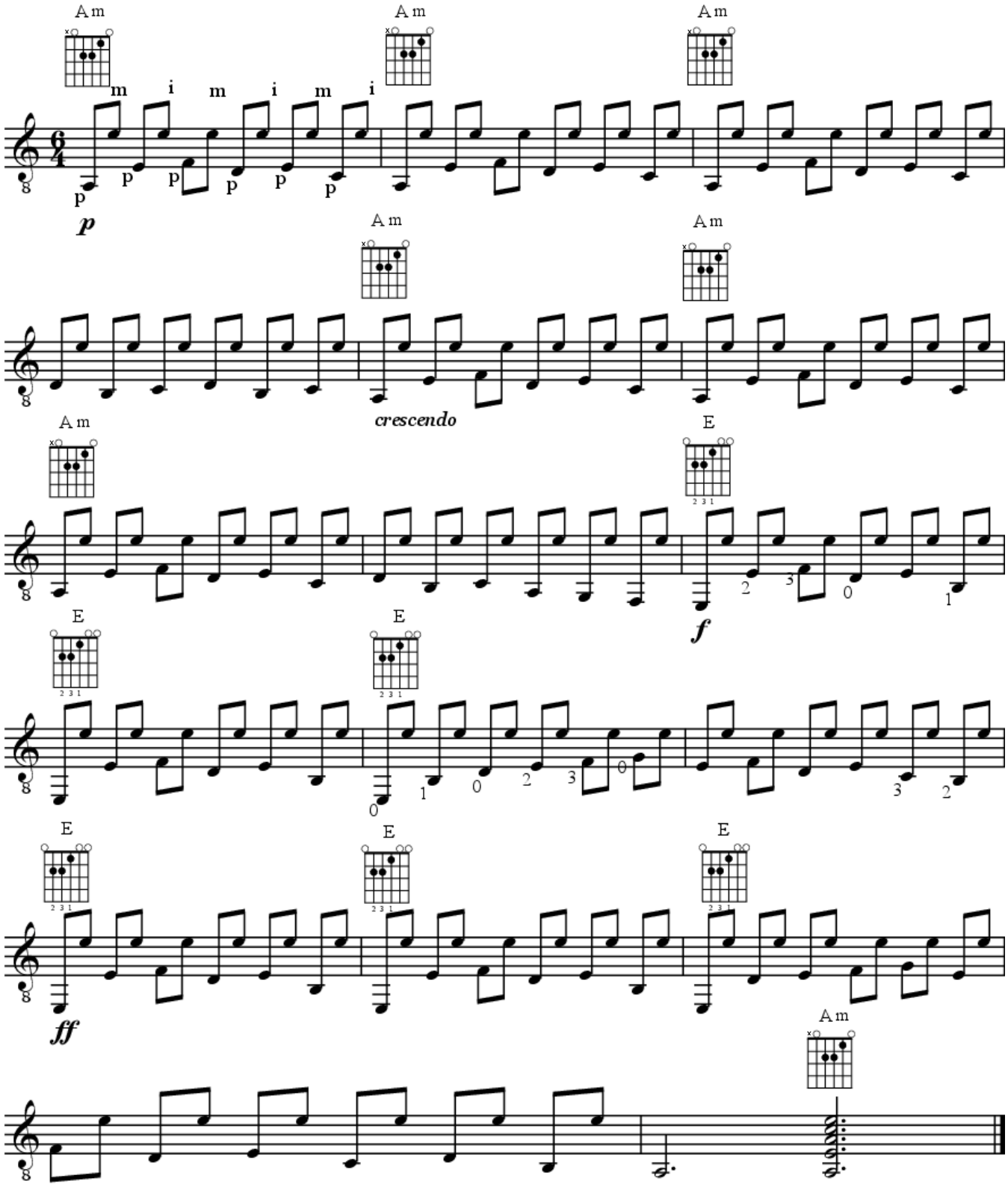
Leyenda

Isaac Albéniz



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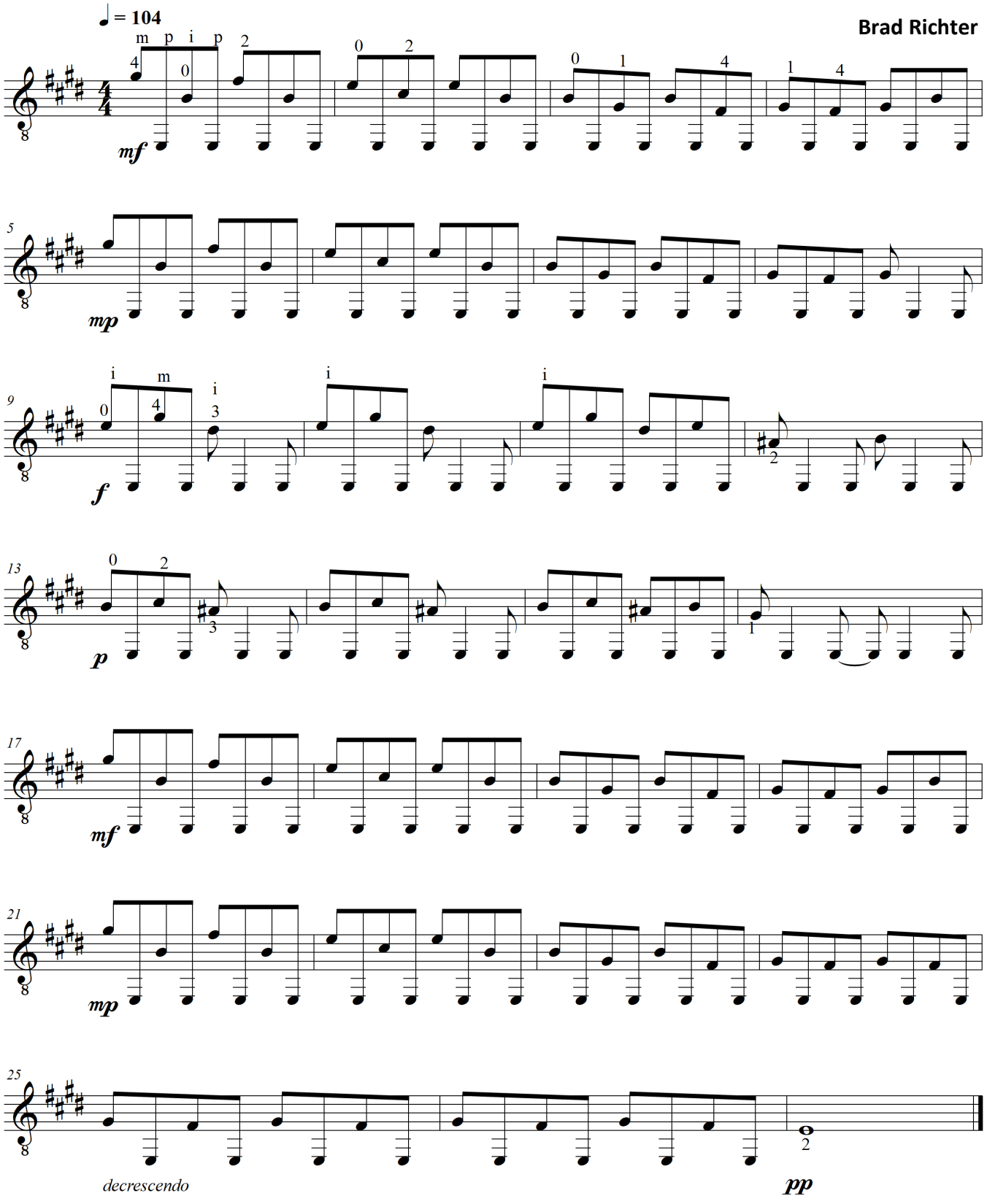
Ring the Bells

solo



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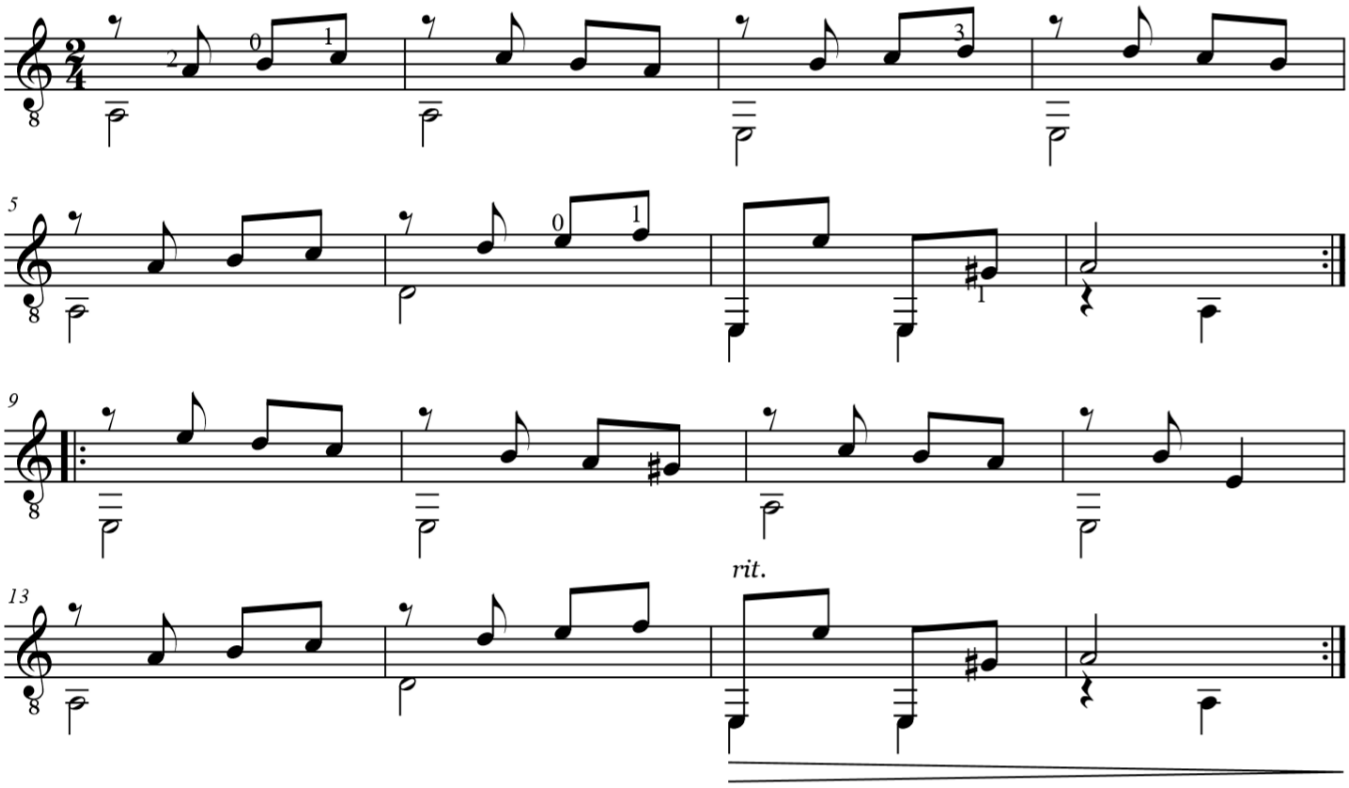
Music in Two Voices

Guitar music is often written in two or more voices or lines. Each voice represents an independent musical part. When guitar music is written in two voices, often the bass line, or lower sounding line, is written with the note stems pointing down and is played by the thumb, while the treble line, or higher sounding line, is written with the note stems pointing up and is played by the fingers.

Look at the first measure of “Lección No. 2” below. Notice that the bass line has one half note and the treble line has an eighth rest followed by three eighth notes. These two voices occur simultaneously (the eighth rest in the treble line happens at the same time as the half note in the bass voice) and both lines have a rhythmic value that equals two quarter note beats.

Lección No. 2

Dionisio Aguado
(1789 - 1849)



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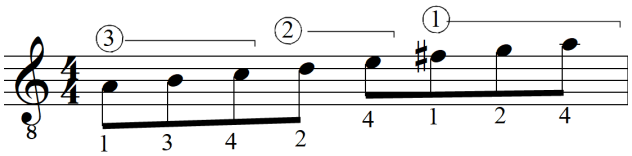
Reading in Positions II and IV

The transposable major scale you learned in Level 3 was a good example of what we call "position playing." It is the same concept you have always applied to align the fingers of your left hand with the fretboard of the guitar – assigning the first finger to notes in the first fret, second finger to notes in the 2nd fret and so on.

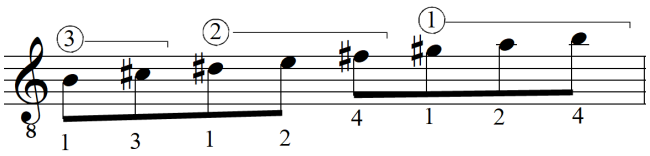
To play in second position, we simply shift that concept up one fret so that our first finger plays notes in the 2nd fret, our second finger plays notes in the 3rd fret, third finger/4th fret and fourth finger/5th fret. Given that, you can imagine what it means to play in fourth position. In written music, positions on the guitar fret board are identified with Roman numerals: Positions II (2) and IV (4).

"Occam's Razor" and "Ring the Bells" ensembles introduce melody parts in positions II and IV respectively. There are detailed indications that will help you decide which finger, fret and string to use for most notes, including one that you learned with the transposable scale: circled numbers are used to indicate on which string a note should be played. To get ready to play the new ensemble parts, explore the 2nd and 4th position notes and accompanying finger, fret and string indications below.

Position II notes in Occam's Razor Part 1



Position IV notes in Ring the Bells Part 1



Ring the Bells Ensemble

Ensemble

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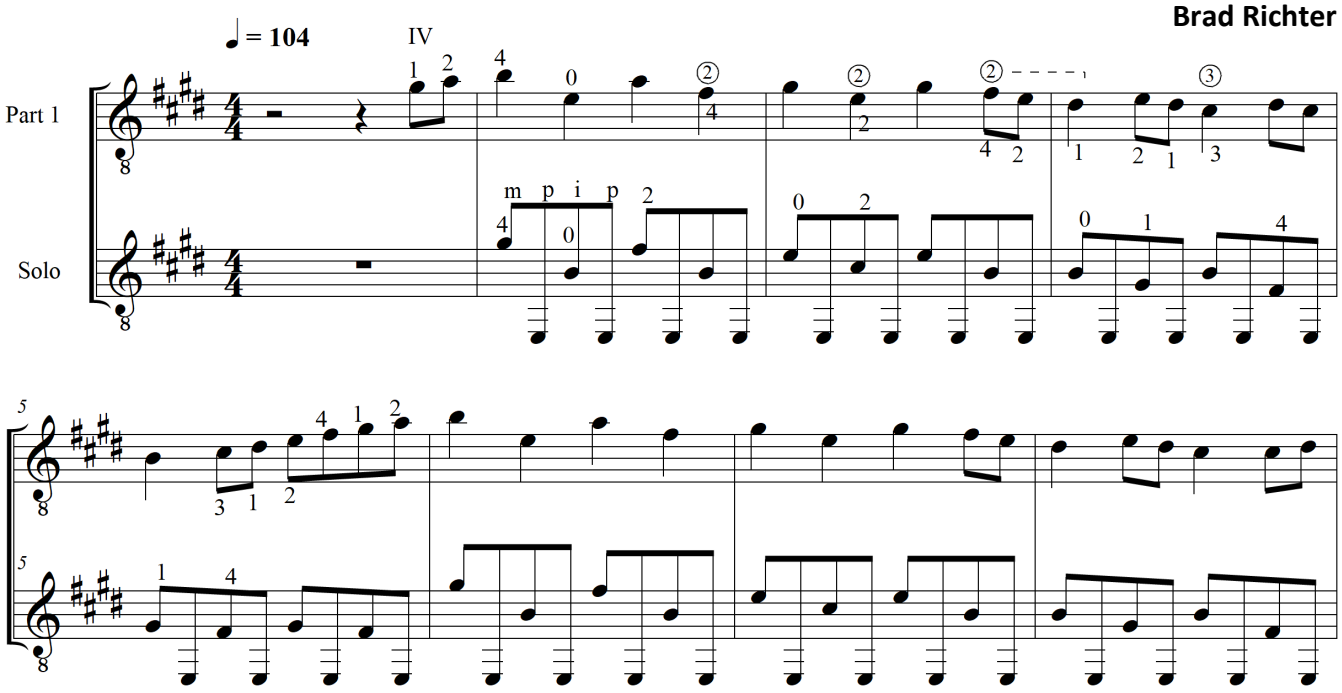

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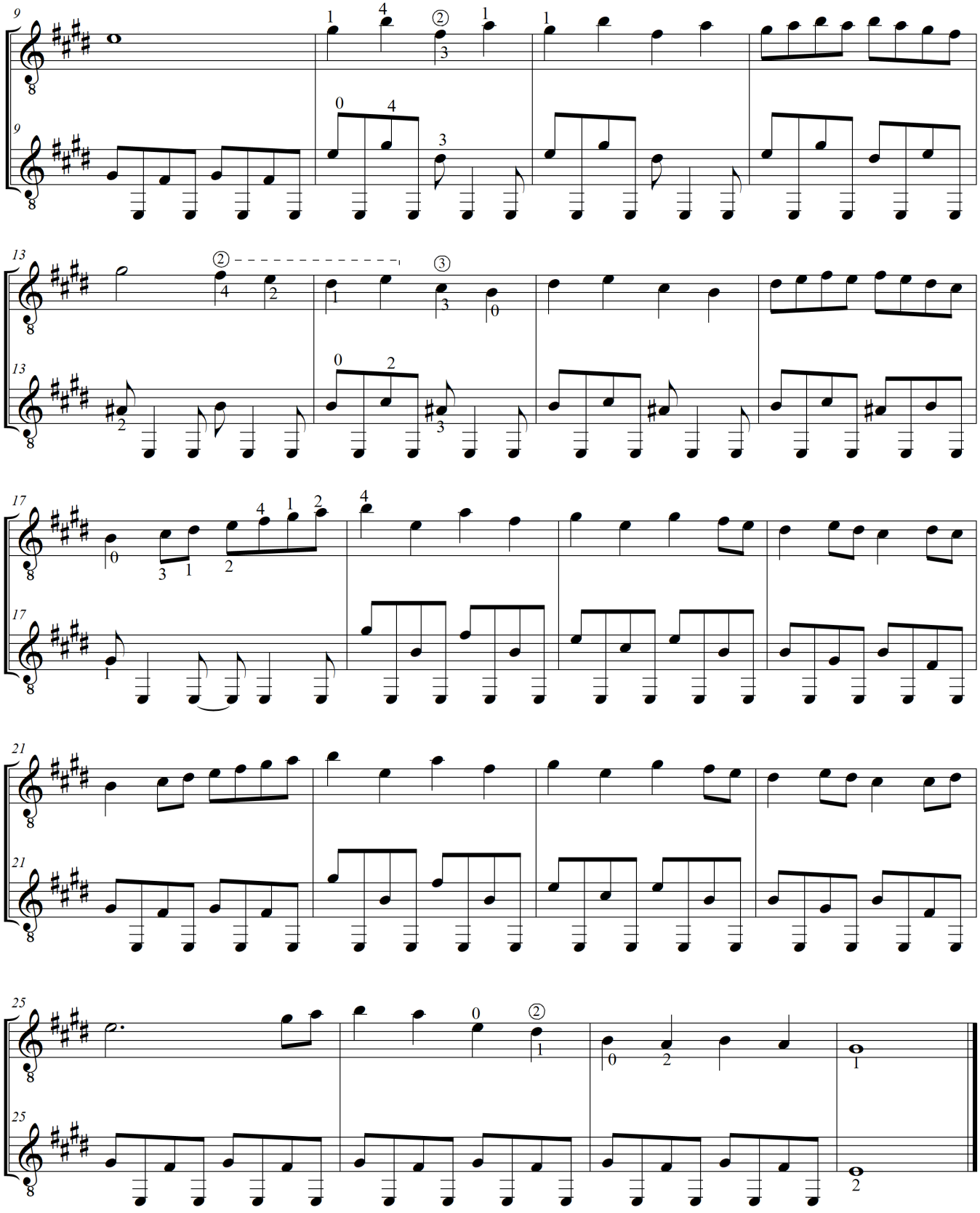

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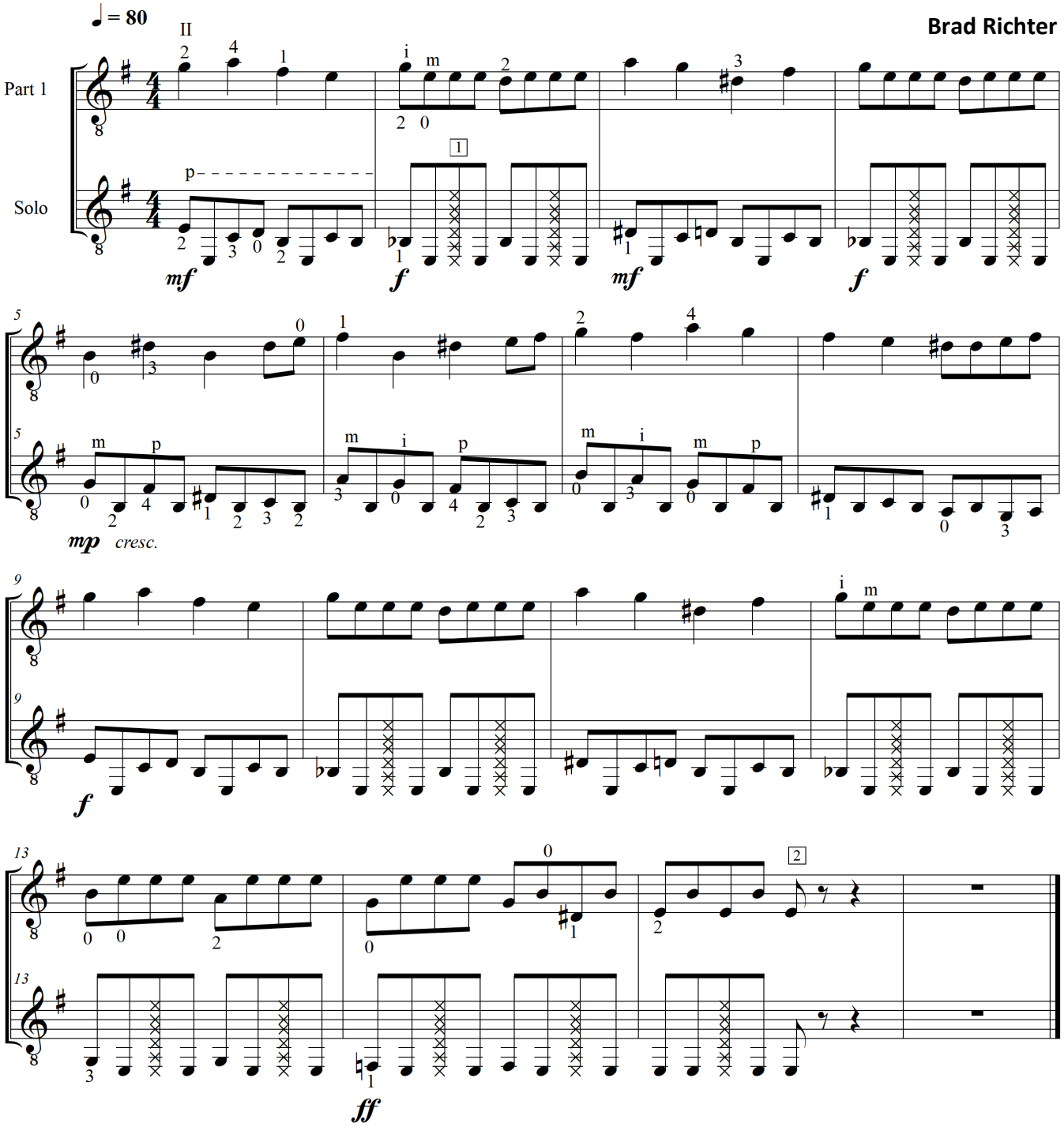
Occam's Razor

Ensemble



1 Slapping the strings over the sound hole with the Right Hand

2 The ending for 'part 1' has been editied for this ensemble version of Occam's Razor.
It ends two beats earlier than the version in Level 3.

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Let's Create!

You can now write some complex and interesting music using the skills that you learned in Levels 3 and 4! Let's use our understanding of chords, melody, and bass notes to compose a piece in two voices with chordal accompaniment.

For this exercise, choose any time signature you know (2/4, 4/4, 3/4, 6/8), and use the key of A minor - same key as Lección #2 - to take full advantage of the open bass strings and several familiar chords. The key signature for A minor is the same as C major - no sharps or flats - but you may want to occasionally add a G#. G# in the melody sounds good when it leads immediately to an A note, and an E Major chord (which includes a G#) sounds good if the next chord is A minor. We often raise the seventh note in a minor key in this way to create a leading tone one half step below the tonic or home note. Doing this helps increase the sense of tension and resolution in the music. The chords you know in the key of A minor are Am, C, Dm, Em, E, FMaj7, and G.

Step 1 – Crafting a Chord Progression
Write a 16-measure chord progression using any of those chords by filling in the chord diagrams on the staff below. Make sure to begin and end your piece with the tonic chord - A minor - to create the sense of leaving and then returning home. Also, the chord E major, with its G#, creates a strong pulling sound toward A minor, so it's a good idea to have E as your second to last chord. You can repeat a sequence of chords or even have your 16 measure be the same four chord loop four times. You decide. It's always a good idea to strum the chords while writing to figure out the order that sounds best to you.

Step 2 – Creating a Bass Line
Once you have your chords, write the bass line by filling in the first beat of each measure with a note string 4, 5, or 6. Use a note that is part of the chord you've chosen for that measure, using an open string wherever possible. For example, use an open E in any measure that has an E minor or E major chord. We want these bass notes to ring for the whole measure in whatever time signature you've chosen, so make sure to write each as a long rhythmic value. Also, remember that the stems should point down for bass notes, so we have room on the staff to write a melody.

Step 3 – Composing a Melody
Now that you have your chords and your bass line, you are ready to add the melody. Make sure that the rhythmic values of the notes in your melody add up to the right number of beats in each measure. Each voice, both melody and bass, must have enough beats to fill each measure. You can add rests to the melody at the beginning of a measure like in Lección 2 if you want to play the bass note by itself.

When writing your melody, think about the individual notes in relationship to the chord for that measure. Notes that are part of the chord are called **Chord Tones** and will always sound great. Notes that are not part of the chord, **Non-Chord Tones**, can be used to add color and interest. For example, if you look at the chord diagram for A minor you can easily see that the chord tones of A minor are A, C, and E. Take a moment to figure out the chord tones for each of the chords you've chosen and use more chord tones than non-chord tones in your melody writing.

Now that you have your chords, bass line, and melody, try playing your composition with a friend strumming the chords! Remember to play the bass line with your thumb free stroke and the melody with i & m rest strokes. Have your friend strum the chord once at the beginning of each measure at first, and then experiment with different strumming patterns.

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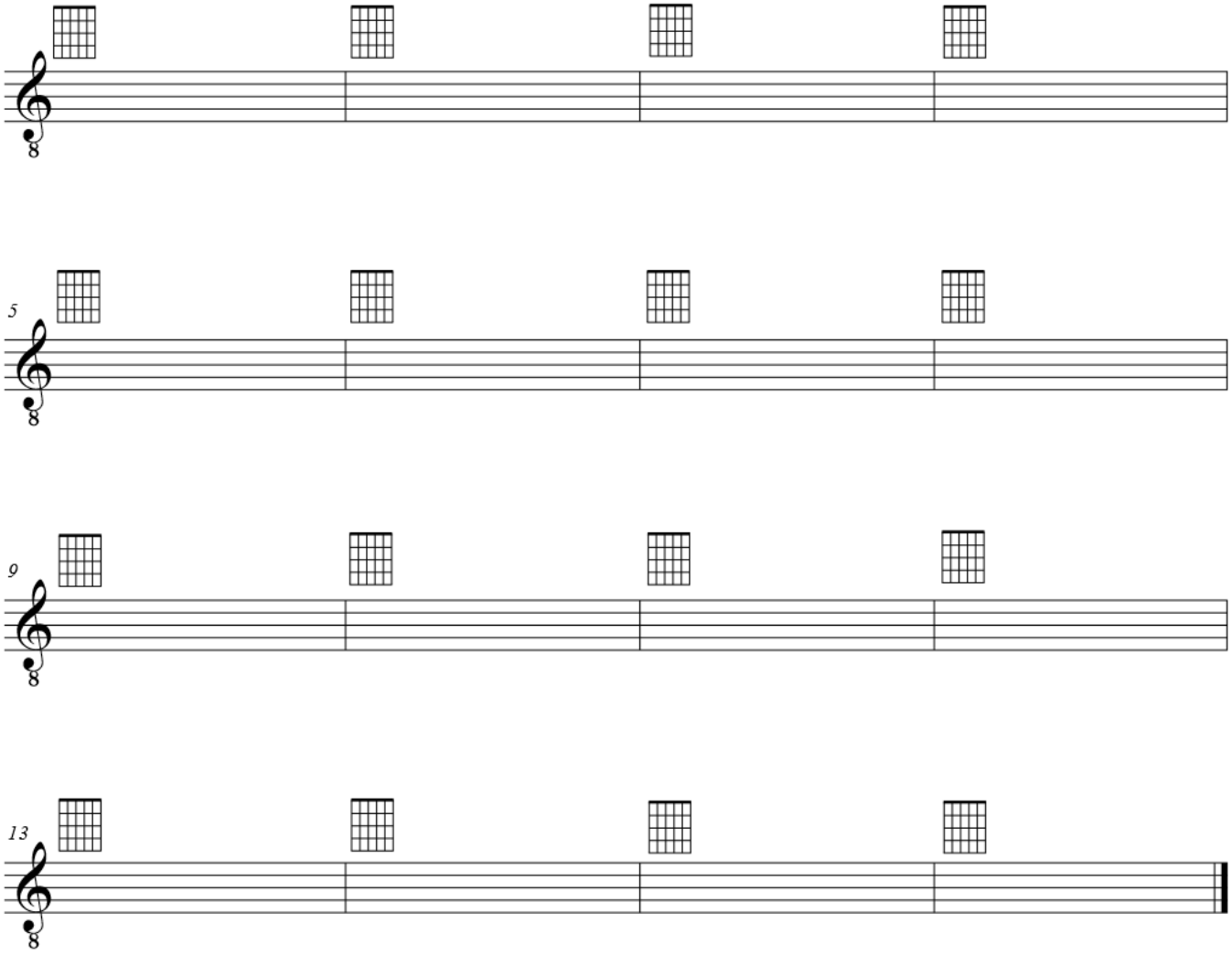
Title: _____

Composer: _____



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Level Five: Free Strokes

Free Stroke 73
Study in E minor 75
Samara (Study in G) 76
Massif (Study in Am) 76
Malagueña 77

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Free Stroke

Free strokes for the thumb were introduced earlier. Until now you have used only rest strokes with your fingers. That has helped stabilize and coordinate your right hand and prepared you to switch the majority of your playing to free strokes moving forward.

Free strokes are different from rest strokes in several ways, but the most important difference is that a free stroke pulls back through the string without touching or resting on the next string. Musically, they allow strings to ring over one another more readily than rest strokes and, along with the addition of the "a" finger, make playing arpeggios and other string crossings easier and quicker. Below are several pointers for executing good free strokes but your Lead Guitar Instructor is your best asset for helping you master the subtleties of this technique.

1. Hold your right hand in front of you as if you were holding a small glass of water.
2. Let your hand and fingers completely relax (without letting the imaginary glass of water spill) and then look closely at the curve of your **i** finger.
3. Using that same relaxed, curved position for your **i** finger, place the tip of your **i** finger on the G string.
4. Be sure your wrist is slightly arched underneath and that your hand, wrist and forearm are in a straight line.
5. The top of your hand should be nearly parallel to the top/soundboard of the guitar with the largest knuckle of your index and pinky fingers approximately the same distance from the top of the guitar.
6. Pull back through the string, moving through the string at the same angle you have used for rest strokes (straight back towards your elbow), without coming to rest on the string behind.
7. Move your whole finger from the largest joint.
8. Try not to let the relaxed curve of your finger change as it goes through the string.
9. Let your finger relax and fall back to the 3rd string, ready to play again.
10. Repeat steps one through nine with your **m** finger (on the B string) and your **a** finger (on the E string).

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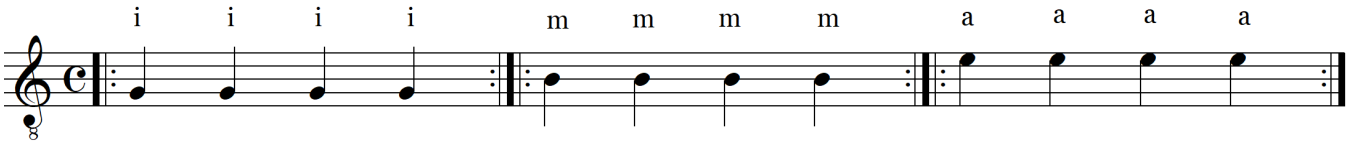
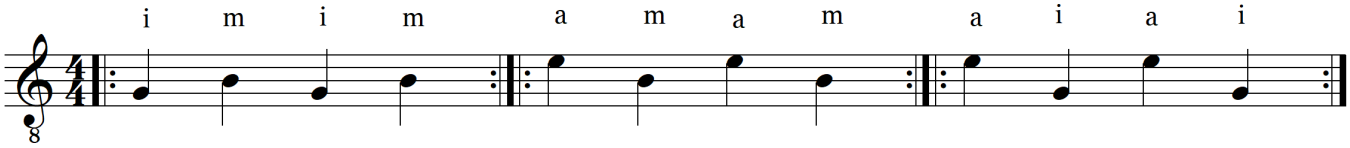
Free Stroke Exercises

Play all of the free stroke exercises below daily. Practice slowly paying careful attention to your right-hand position and the movement of each finger. Try to let each finger recover quickly to its ready to play position over its assigned string before the next finger plays by simply relaxing it.

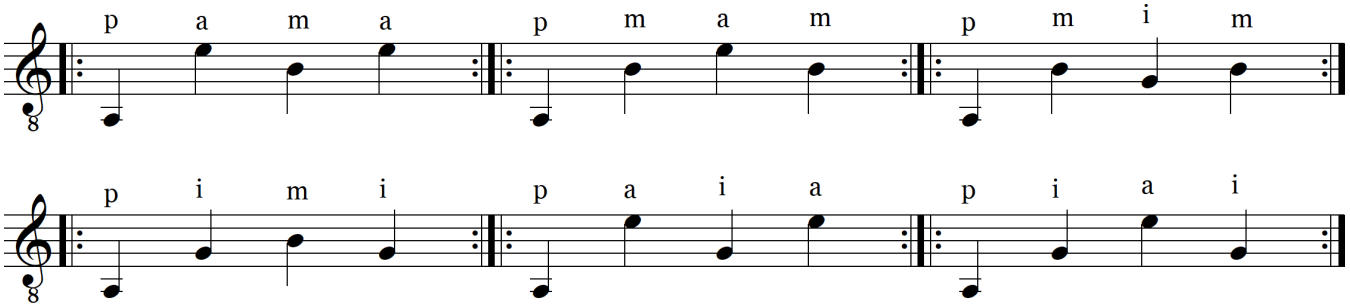
Exercise 1: Practice free strokes one finger at a time



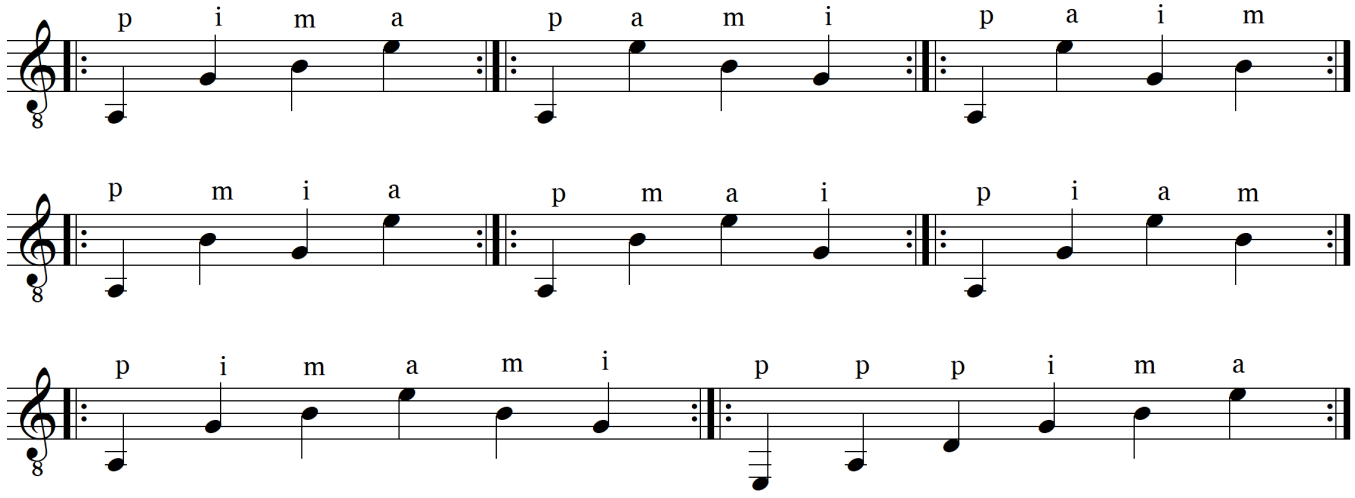
Exercise 2: Two fingers



Exercise 3: Two fingers with thumb combinations



Exercise 4: Three fingers with thumb combinations



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Study in E minor

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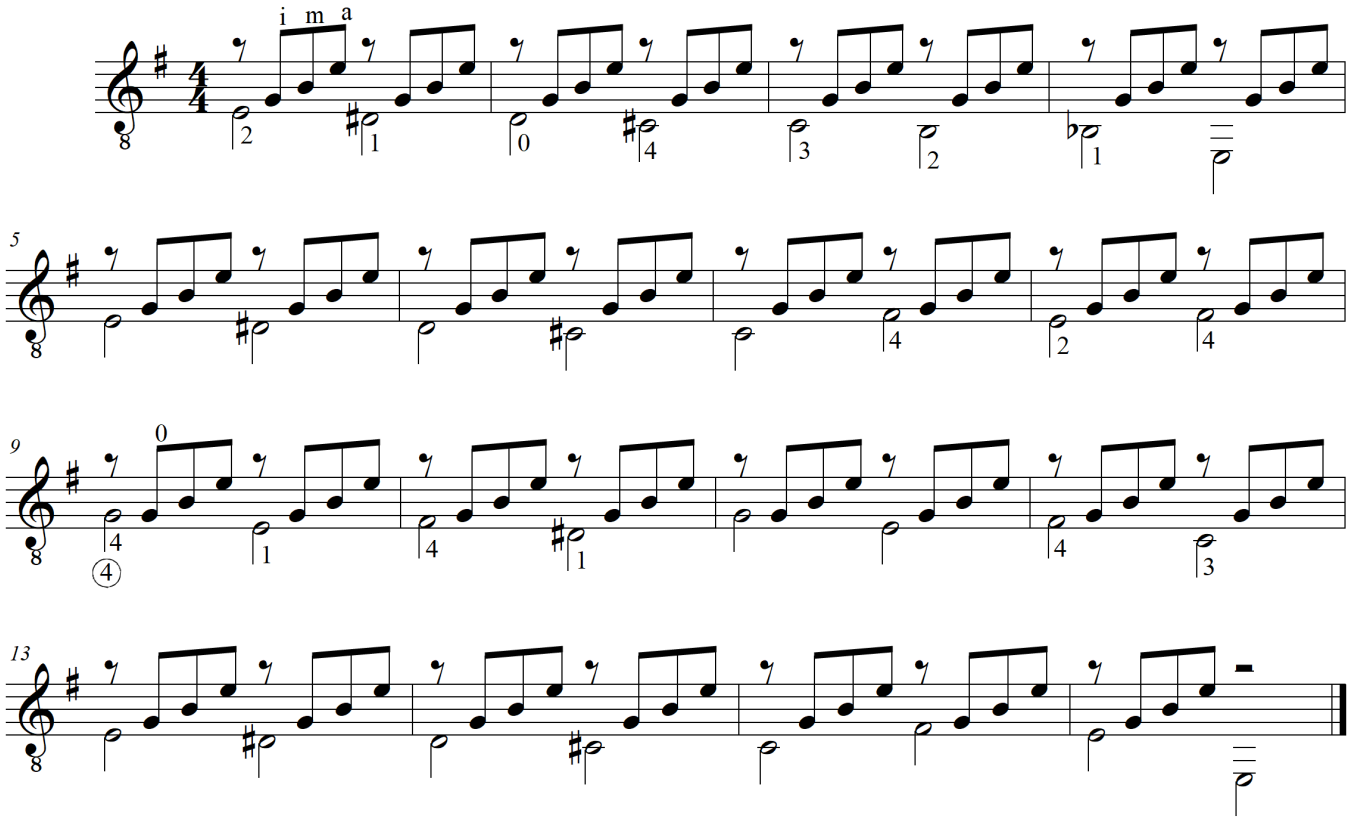

Words to Play By:

"Face challenges, fear, and frustration by seeking out knowledge and opportunities for growth."

Fanny Mairena

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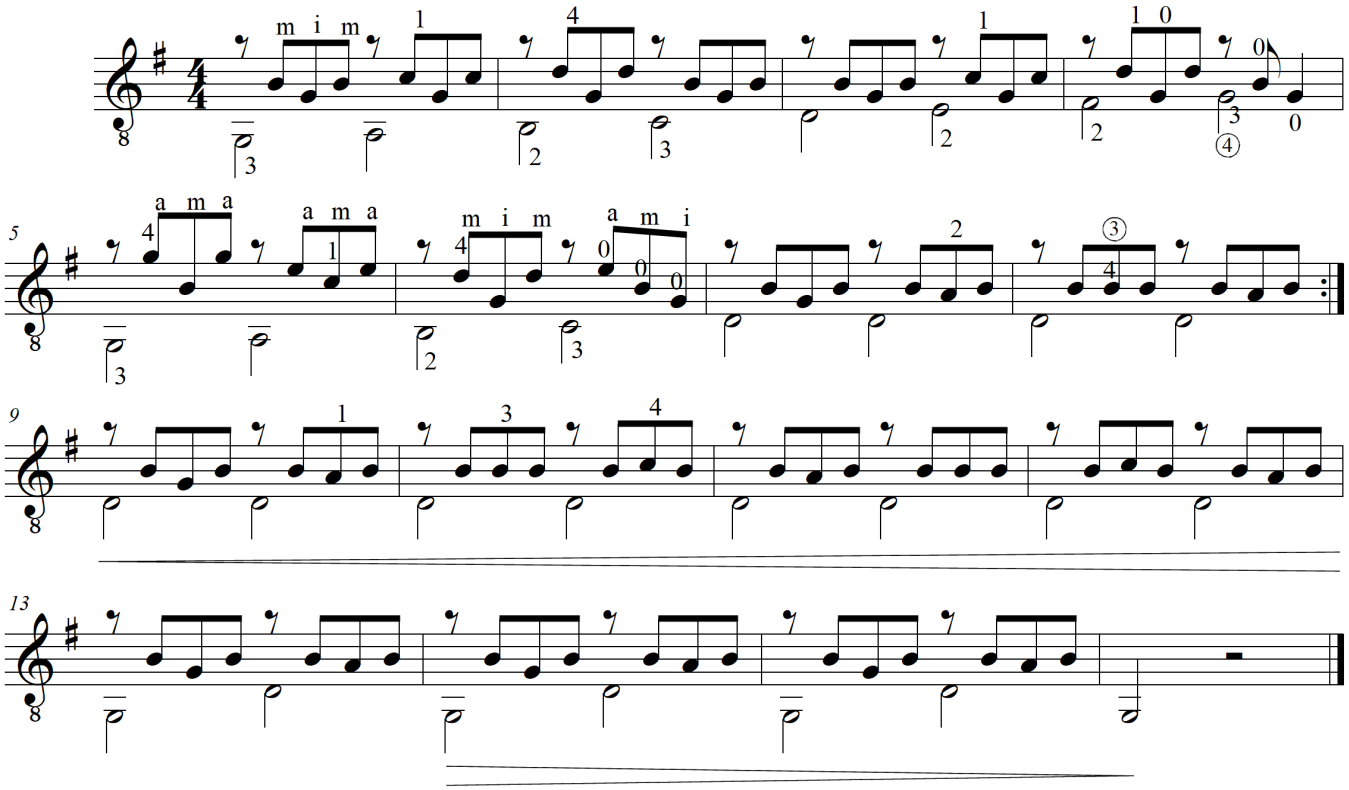
Samara

Study in G

Brad Richter



Massif

Study in A minor

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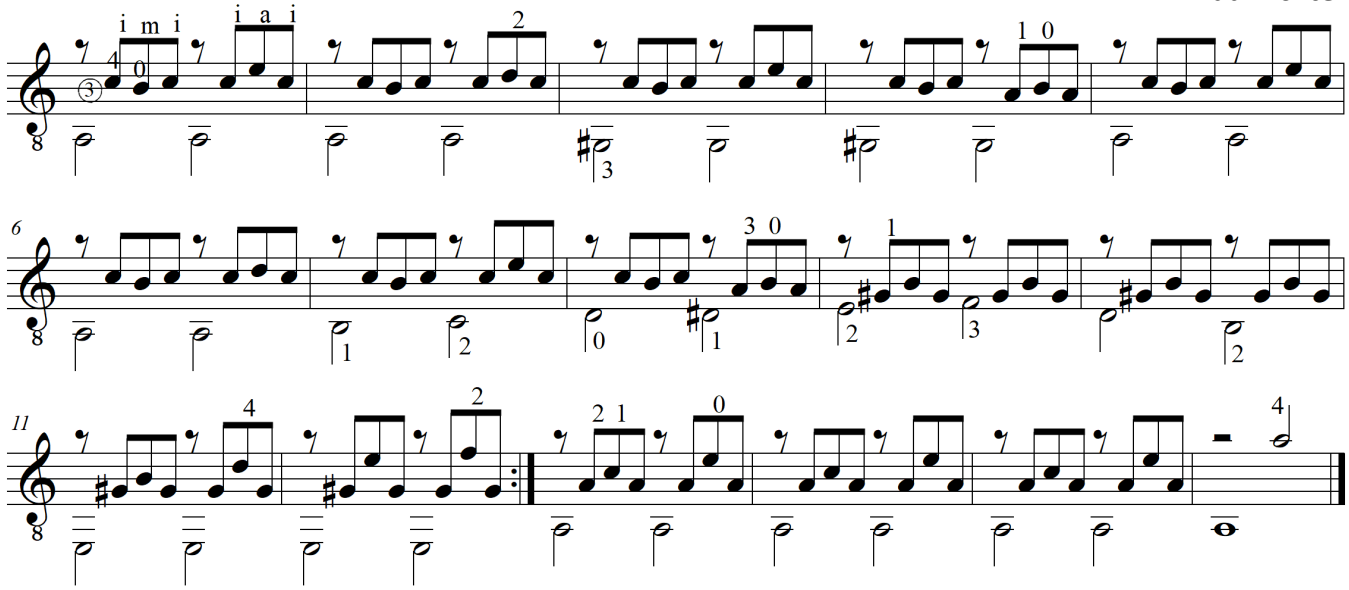

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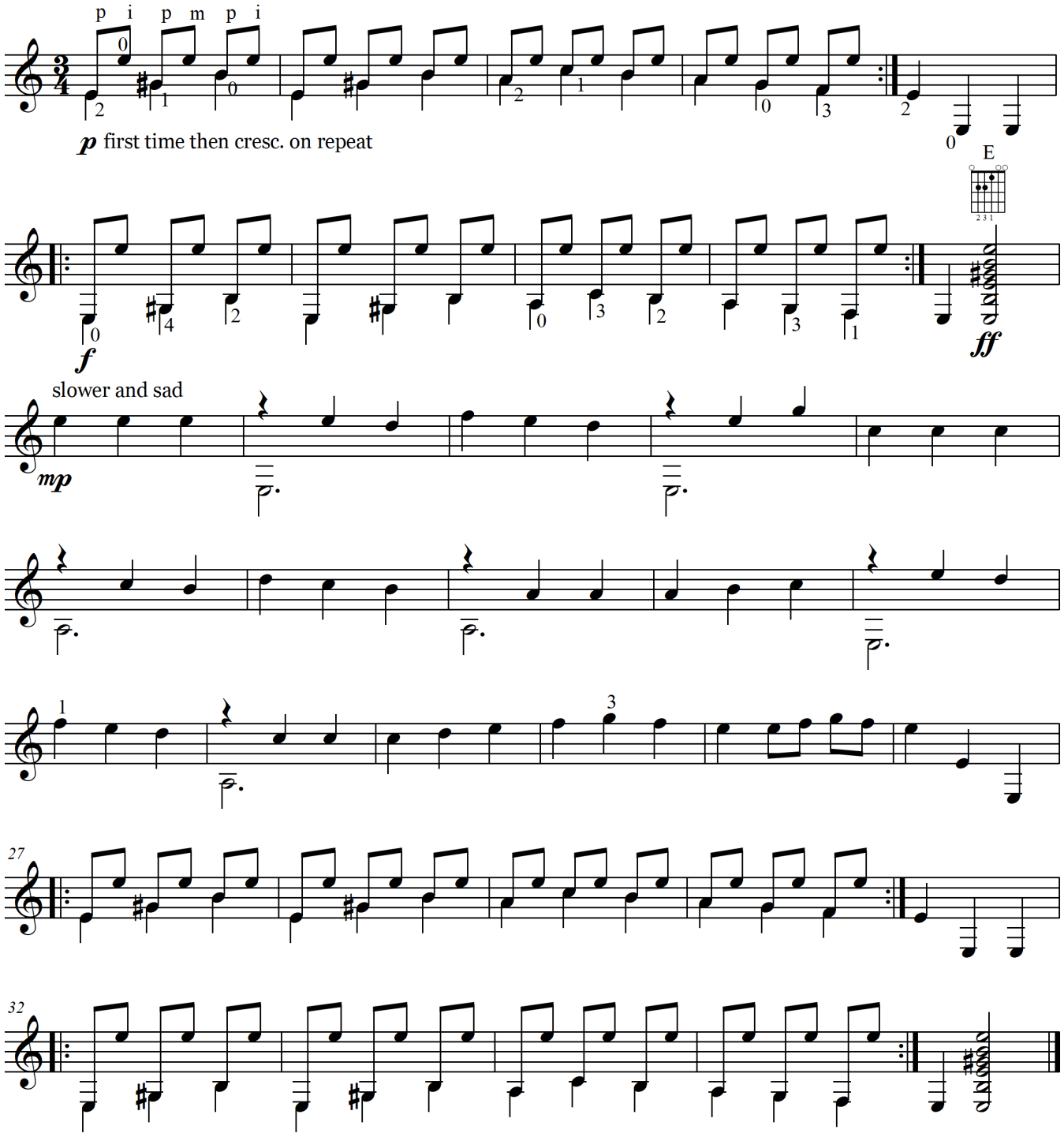
Mixing Free Strokes and Rest Strokes

In “Malagueña,” use free strokes with your fingers in measures 1-9 and again in measures 31-36, but rest strokes in the slower melodic part (measures 11 - 30).

Malagueña

Traditional



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Glossary

A
a: anular (ring finger)
ACCIDENTAL: A flat, sharp, or natural sign that is placed before a note.
A-STRING: 5th string (metal-wound nylon string, 5th from the bottom)
ARPEGGIO: Tones of a chord played one after another

B
B-STRING: 2nd string (nylon string, 2nd from the bottom)
BARLINES: Barlines divide the **staff** into **measures** of equal beat values.
BASS: A low-pitched sound or tone or the bottom voice of multiple musical lines

C
CHORDS: Groups of three or more notes played at the same time.
CHROMATIC SCALE: Musical scale made up entirely of half steps
CONTRACTION: Multiple fingers play on the same fret, but on separate strings.
CRESCENDO or **CRESC.**: Grow gradually louder.

D
D-STRING: 4th string (metal-wound nylon string, 4th from the bottom)
DECRESCENDO or **DECRESC.:** Grow gradually quieter.
DOT: A dot attached to a note adds half of the original note value.

E
E-STRINGS: A guitar has two E strings, a low E-string and a high E-string. The high E-string is the 1st string (nylon, 1st from the bottom) and the low E-string is the 6th string (nylon, but metal-wound, 6th string from the bottom)
EADGBE: The names of the open guitar strings
EIGHTH NOTE: An eighth note is equal to one-half of one beat in common time.
EIGHTH REST: An eighth rest means that no sound should be made for one-half of one beat.

F
FINGER SWITCHING: Plucking technique where two fingers take turns plucking the strings.
FLAT SIGN: A flat sign lowers a note one half step or fret.
FORTE: To play loudly or forcefully.
FREE STROKE: Plucking technique where the plucking finger does not rest on another string after plucking.

G
G-STRING: 3th string (nylon string, 3rd from the bottom)
GLISSANDO or **GLISS.:** To slide the left-hand finger up or down the string.

H
HALF NOTE: A half note is equal to two beats in common time.
HALF REST: No sound should be made for two quarter note beats.

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I
i: *indice* (fore/index finger)

K
KEY: A way of organizing notes so that one note becomes the tonal center of a scale or set of notes.
KEY SIGNATURE: The collection of sharps or flats that follow the clef and indicate the key of a piece.

L
LH: Left hand
LEDGER LINE: A short line which extends the range of notes above or below the staff.
LEGATO: Playing in a smooth connected style. Opposite of Staccato.

M
m: *medio* (middle finger)
MAJOR SCALE: A scale with notes separated by whole tones except for the 3rd and 4th and 7th and 8th degrees.
MEASURE: Division of a piece of music with a fixed number of beats in each unit.
MINOR SCALE: A scale with notes separated by whole tones except for the 2nd and 3rd and 5th and 6th degrees.

N
NATURAL SIGN: A natural sign makes a note natural if it is normally sharp or flat in the piece of music; it eliminates the sharp or flat designation for that particular note only.

P
p: *pulgar* (thumb)
PIANO: To play soft or quietly.
PICK-UP MEASURE: An incomplete measure at the beginning of a music piece

Q
QUARTER NOTE: A quarter note is equal to one beat in common time.
QUARTER REST: No sound should be made for one beat.

R
REST STROKE: Plucking technique for which the plucking finger rests on another string after plucking.
RH: Right hand
RHYTHM: The division of music into metric portions that create a defined pattern. The controlled movement of music in time.
RITARDANDO or **RIT.** : To slow down.

S
SCALE: A series of notes organized by half steps and whole steps.
SHARP SIGN: A sharp sign raises a note one half step or fret.
SIXTEENTH NOTE: A sixteenth note divides a quarter note into fourths.
SIXTEENTH REST: No sound should be made for one quarter of a quarter note.
STACCATO: Playing notes in a short, separated style. Opposite of Legato.
STAFF: A set of five lines and four spaces on which music is written.
STEM (NOTE STEM): A line attached to the note head.

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STRUM: Brushing the fingers of the right hand over the strings.
SYNCOPATION: A rhythm which emphasizes notes between the beats or beats that are normally not accented.

T
TACTILE MEMORY: Tactile memory or touch memory is the memory that one´s muscles subconsciously retain from repeating the same action multiple times in the same way.
TECHNIQUE: The physical aspect of making music.
TIE: A tie is an arched line that connects and combines the rhythmic values of two notes of the same pitch.
TIME SIGNATURE: Indication of the value and the number of beats in each measure.
TONIC: The tonic is the first scale degree and the tonal center or final resolution tone of a scale.
TRANSCRIBE/TRANSCRIPTION: Arranging an existing piece of music for another instrument, or in another key.
TREBLE: A high-pitched sound or tone or the top voice of multiple musical lines.
TREBLE CLEF: Guitar music is written on this clef (also called the g-clef).
TRIPLET: A grouping of three notes.

V
VOICE: A single melody or a line of music.

W
WHOLE NOTE: A whole note is equal to four beats in common time.
WHOLE REST: No sound should be made for four beats.

NUMERICAL ABBREVIATIONS IN GUITAR PLAYING:

1: Abbreviation for right-hand fore/index finger
2: Abbreviation for right-hand middle finger
3: Abbreviation for right-hand ring finger
4: Abbreviation for right-hand little finger/ pinkie

NOTE VALUES:

WHOLE NOTE: A whole note is equal to four beats in common time.
HALF NOTE: A half note is equal to two beats in common time.
QUARTER NOTE: A quarter note is equal to one beat in common time.
EIGHTH NOTE: An eighth note is equal to one-half of one beat in common time.
SIXTEENTH NOTE: A sixteenth note divides a quarter note into fourths.

REST VALUES:

WHOLE REST: A whole rest means that no sound should be made for four beats.
HALF REST: A half rest means that no sound should be made for two beats.
QUARTER REST: A quarter rest means that no sound should be made for one beat.
EIGHTH REST: An eighth rest means that no sound should be made for one-half of one beat.
SIXTEENTH REST: A sixteenth rest means that no sound should be made for one quarter of a quarter note.

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DYNAMICS:
CRESCENDO or **CRESC.**: To grow gradually louder.
DECRESCENDO or **DECRESC.:** To grow gradually quieter.
FORTE: Play loudly or forcefully.
PIANO: Play softly or quietly.

MUSICAL EXPRESSION MARKS:
ACCELERANDO or **ACCEL**.: To gradually speed up.
RITARDANDO or **RIT.:** To gradually slow down.
LEGATO: Playing in a smooth connected style.
STACCATO or STAC.: Playing notes in a short, separated style.

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Johann Sebastian Bach
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https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Johann_Sebastian_Bach.jpg.

Ludwig van Beethoven
Source: Stieler, Joseph Karl. *Painting of Ludwig Van Beethoven.* 1820. *Wikimedia Commons*.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Beethoven.jpg.

Elizabeth Cotten
Source: Cohen, John. *Elizabeth Cotten Performs*. No date. Premium Archives via *Getty Images*.

W. C. Handy
Van Vechten, Carl. *American composer W. C. Handy in 1941*. 17 July 1941. *Wikimedia Commons*.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:W._C._Handy_(1941_Van_Vechten_portrait).jpg.

Quirino Mendoza y Cortés
Source: MaximeBVN. September 2015. *Wikimedia Commons.*
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cielito_Lindo_Statue_Palacio_Municipal_Tulyehualco.jpg

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Source: della Croche, Johann Nepomuk. *Mozart Family*. 1780–81. *Wikimedia Commons*.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Croce-Mozart-Detail.jpg.

Zitkála-Šá
Source: Käsebier, Gertrude. Untitled. 1898. *Wikimedia Commons*.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zitkala-Sa.jpg.

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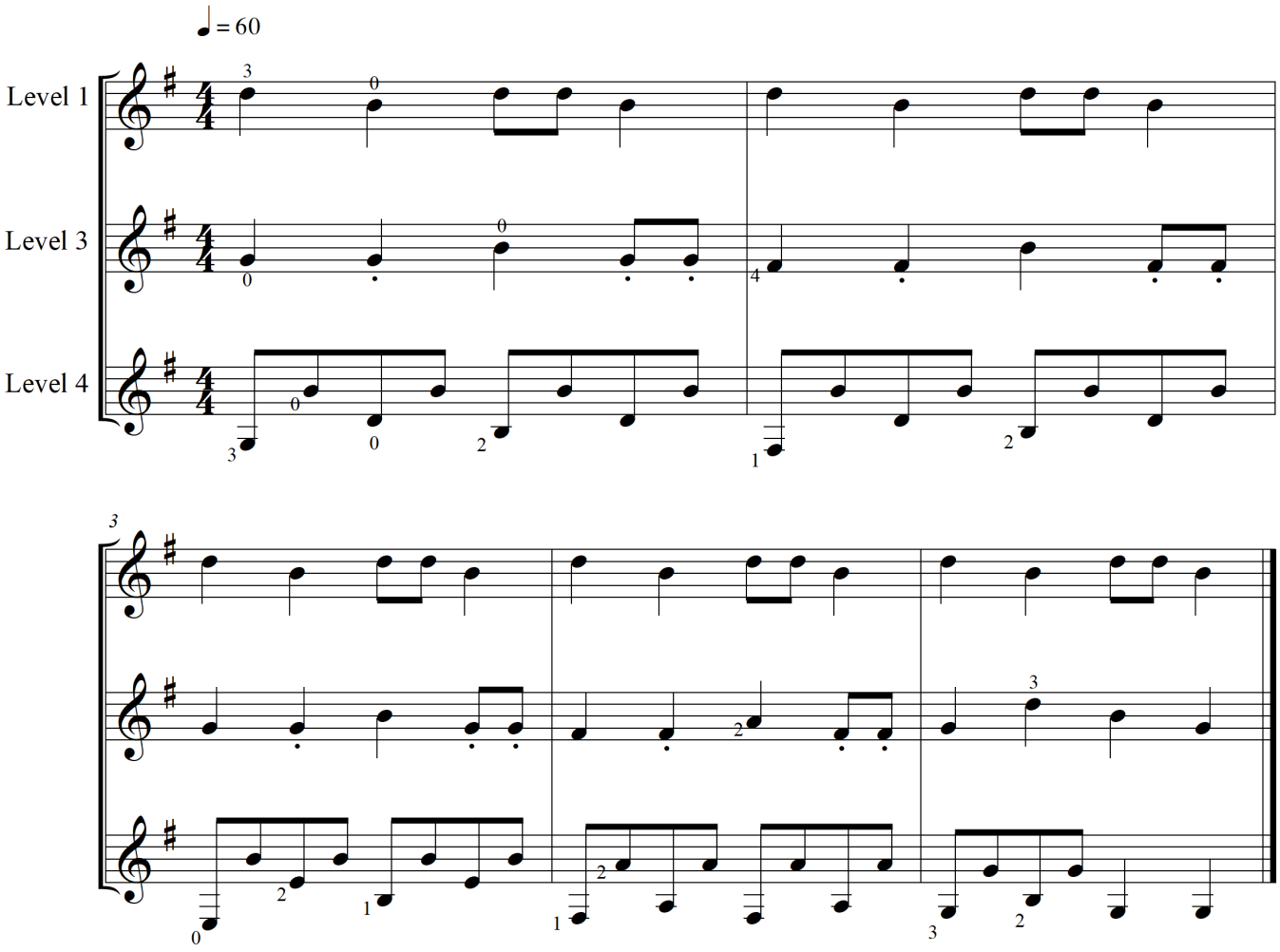
Ensembles

The first 11 ensembles presented here take melodies from Levels 1 through 3 and add accompanying parts appropriate for players who have advanced to the later learning levels in the book. In Levels 4 and 5, we begin to focus on solo pieces with a self-contained melody and accompaniment. We suggest supplementing solo practice with the ensembles at the end of this section.

One, Two, Buckle My Shoe

Traditional

arr. Jordan Mandela Knudson



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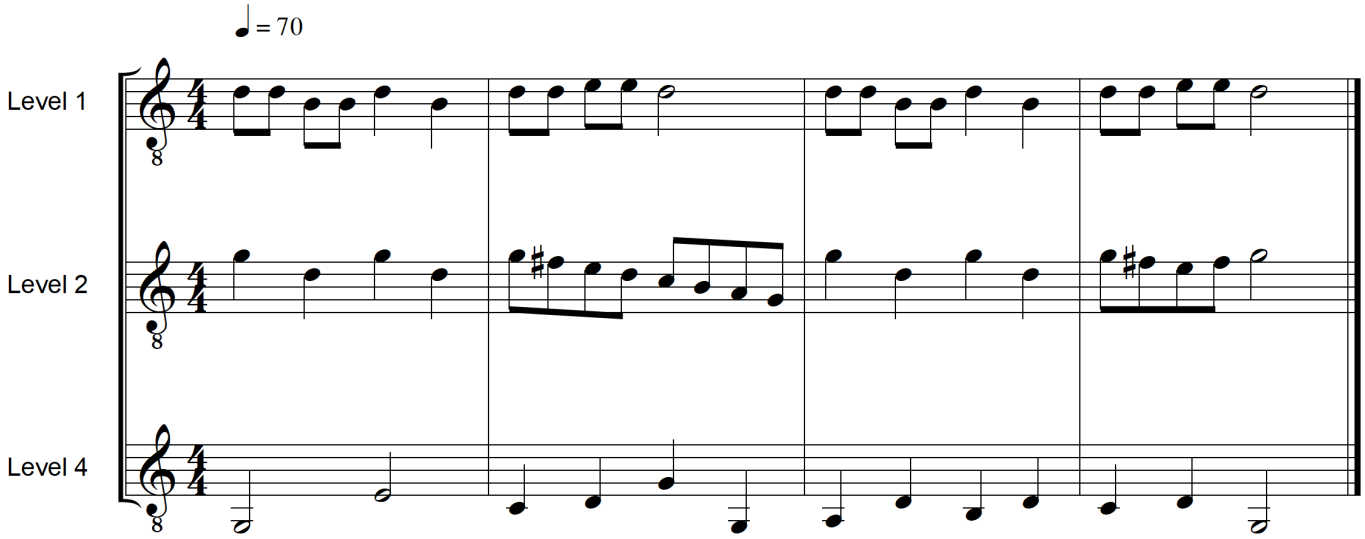
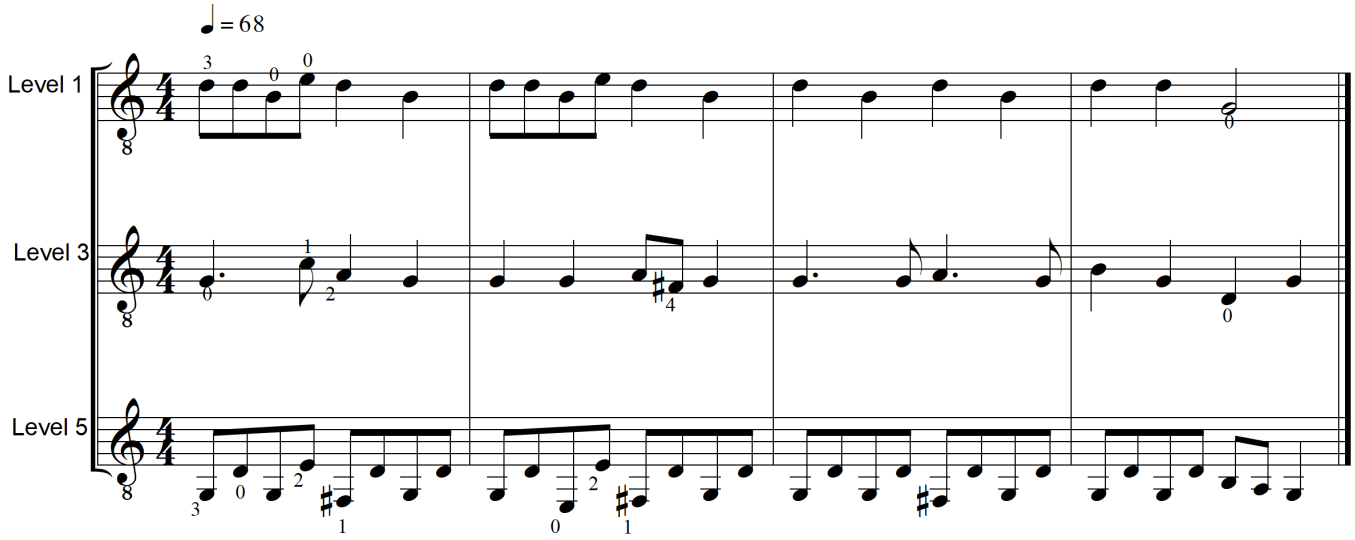
Duerme, mi tesoro

Puerto Rican Folk Song
arr. Alfredo Vazquez



Ring Around the Rosy

Traditional
arr. Zhivko Nikolov



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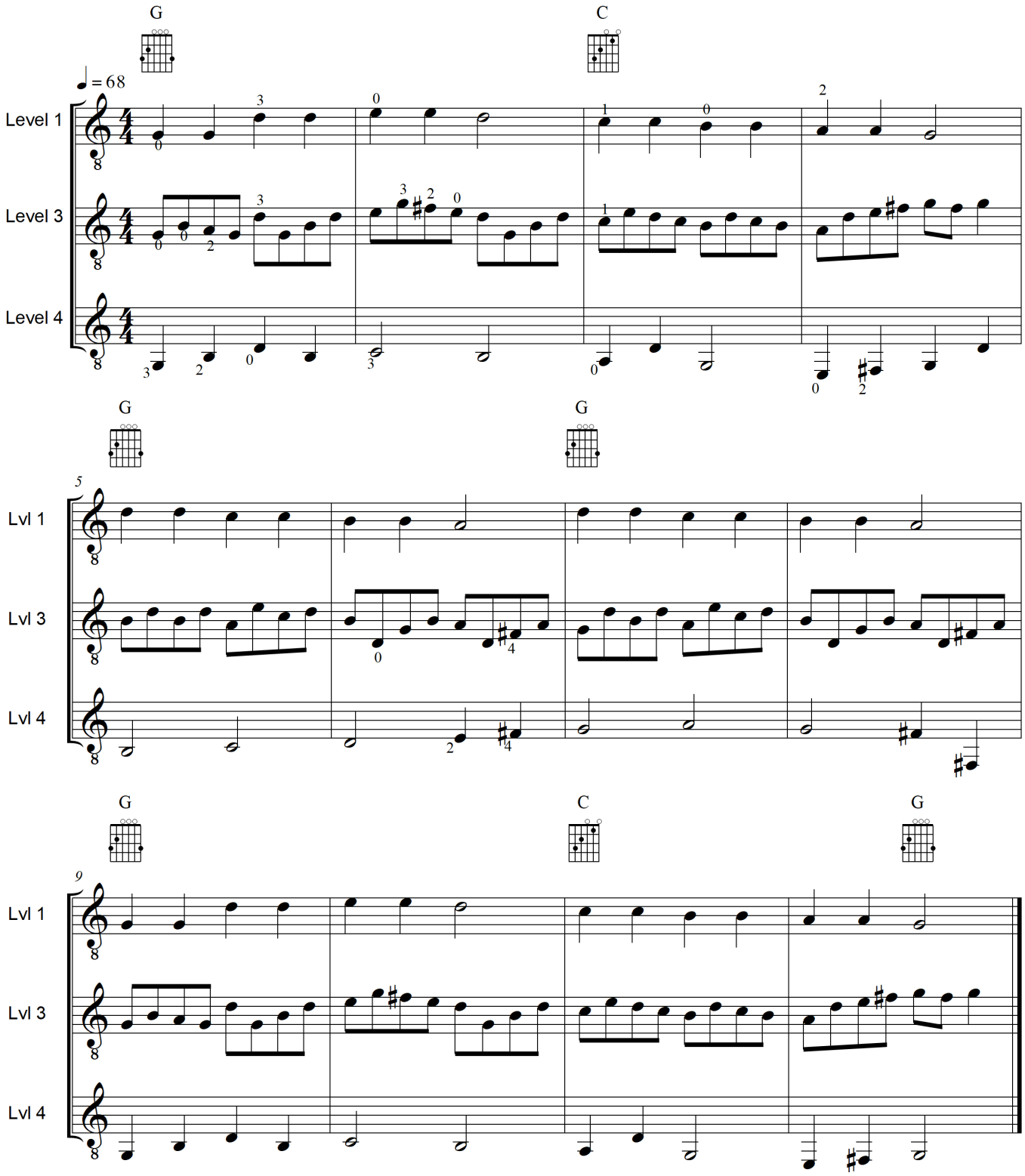
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Traditional
arr. Brad Richter



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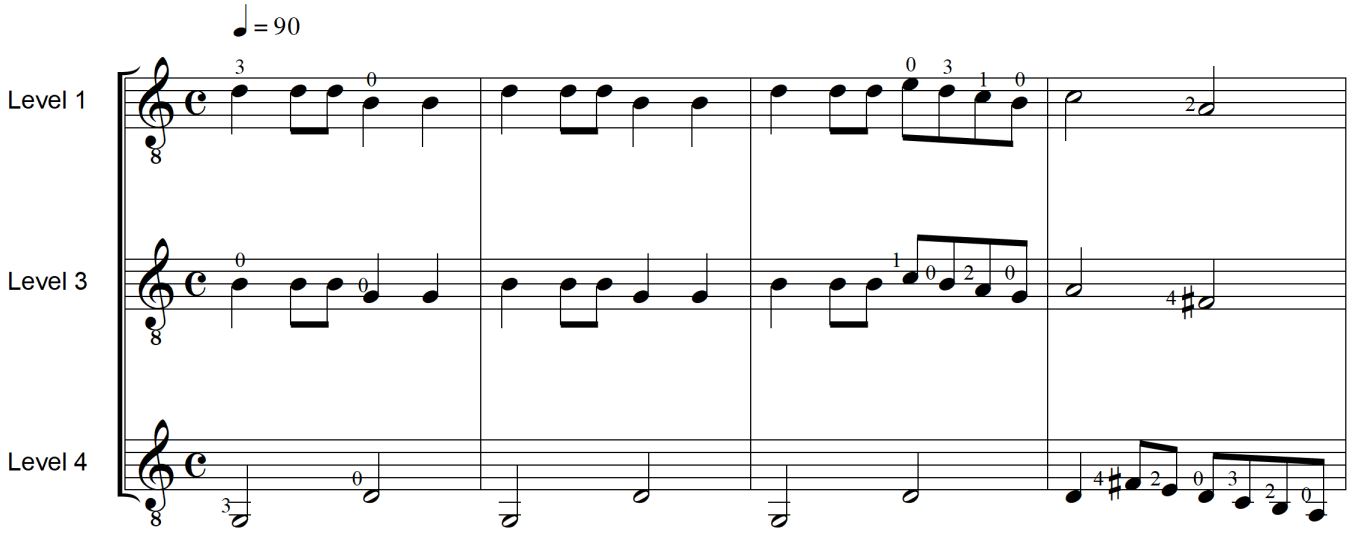
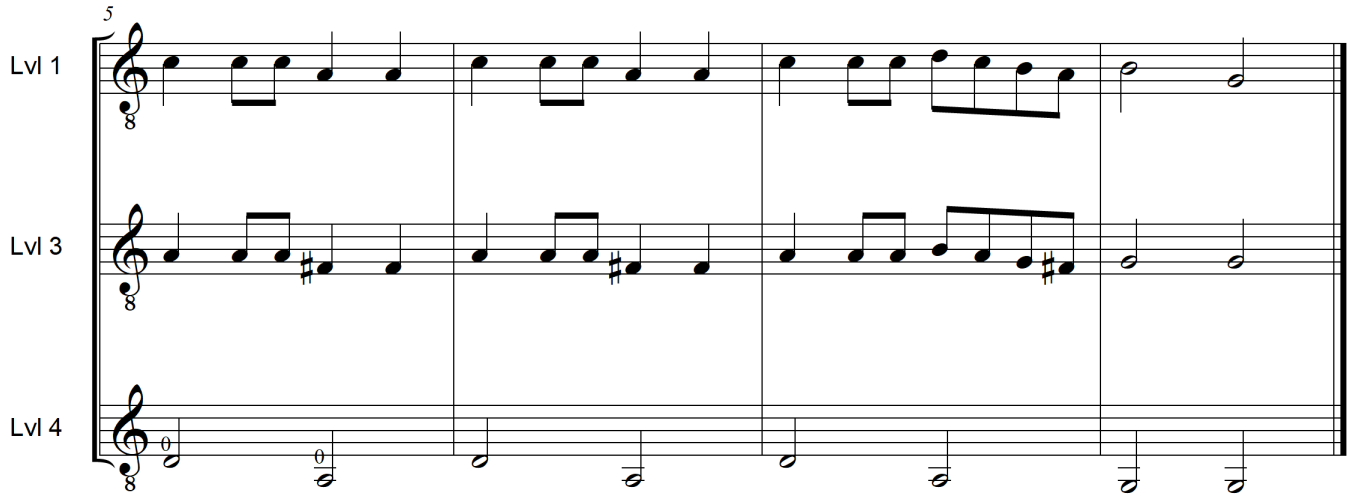
Un Elefante Se Balanceaba

Traditional
arr. Alex Resnick





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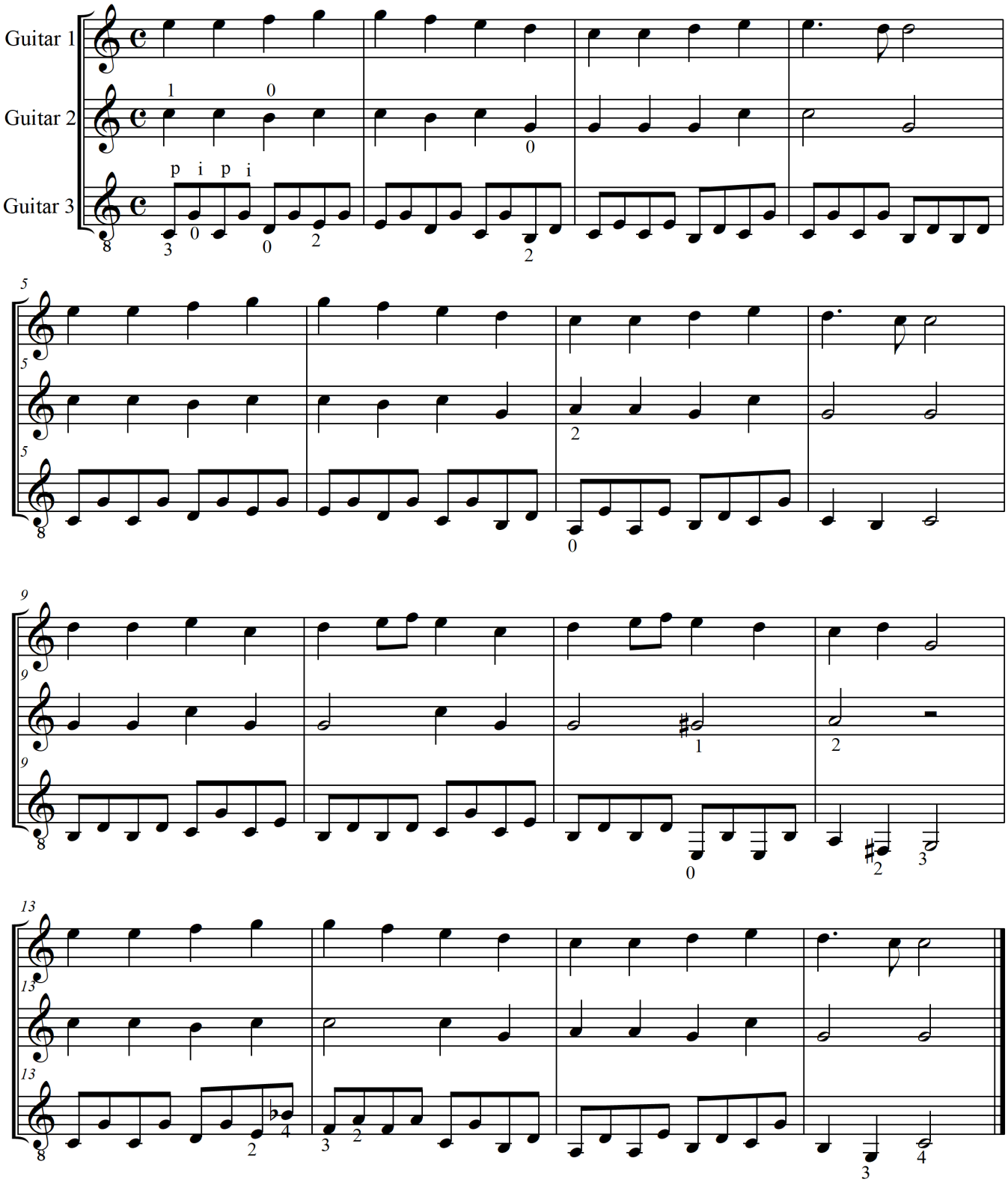
Ode to Joy

Excerpt from Symphony 9

L. v. Beethoven
arr. Brad Richter



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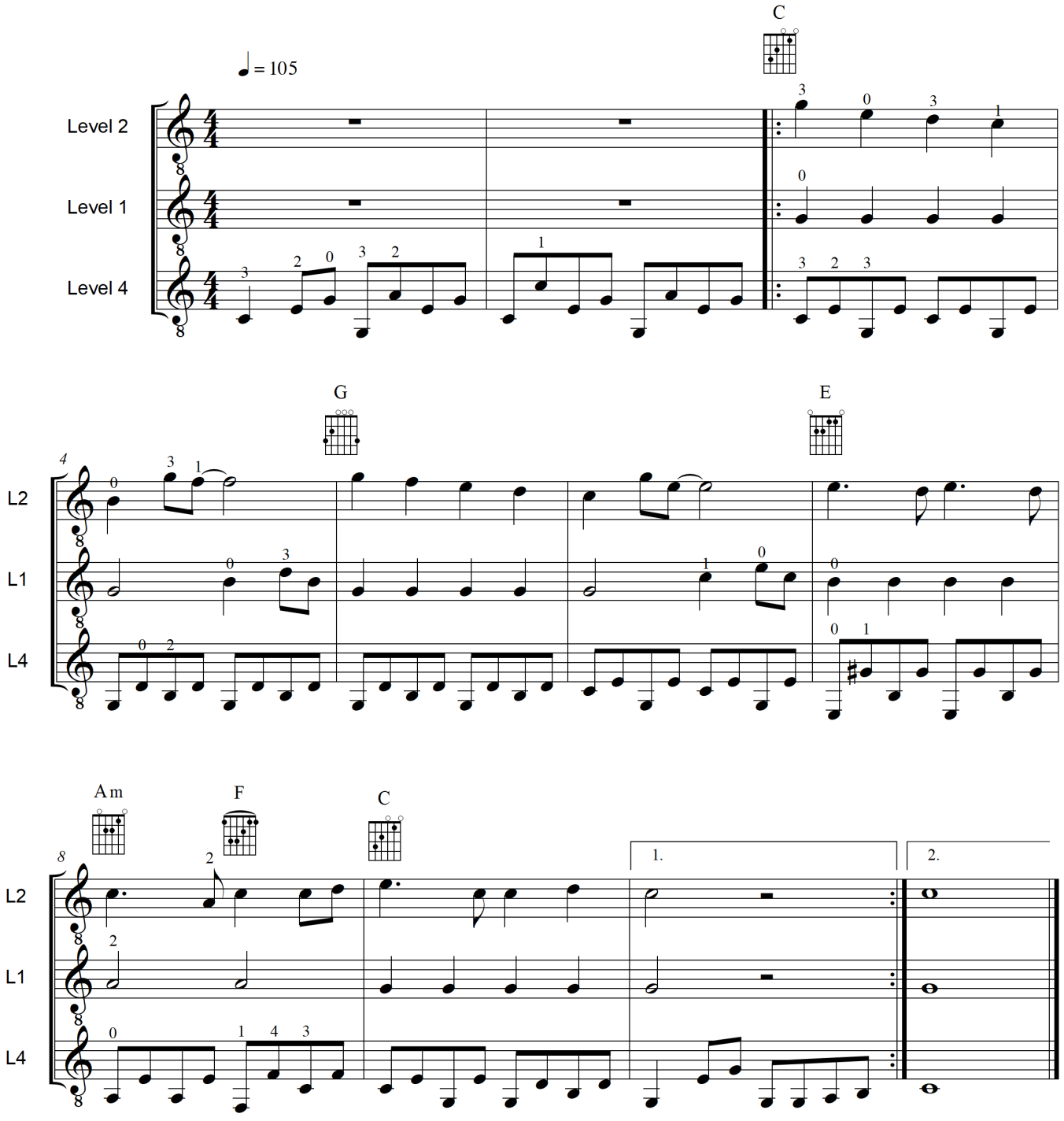
Freight Train

Eliazabeth Cotten
arr. Alfredo Vazquez



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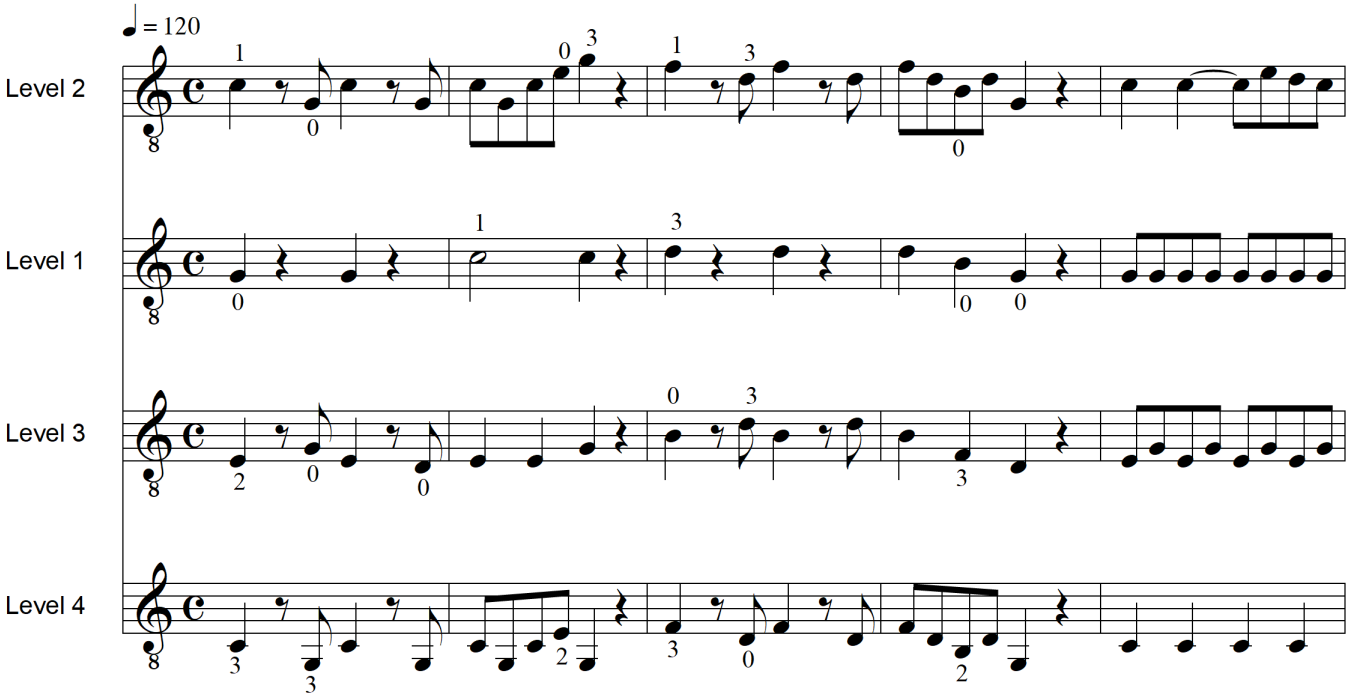
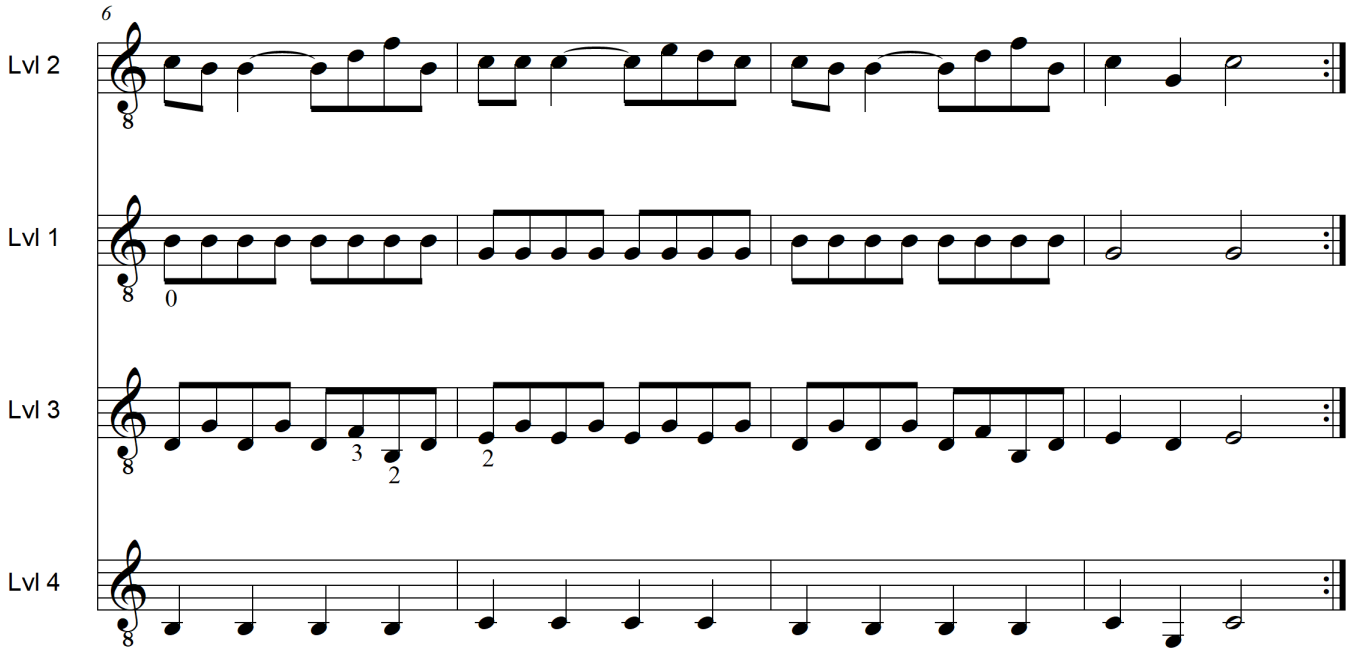
Eine Kleine Nachtmusik

W.A. Mozart

Arr. Richter/Vazquez





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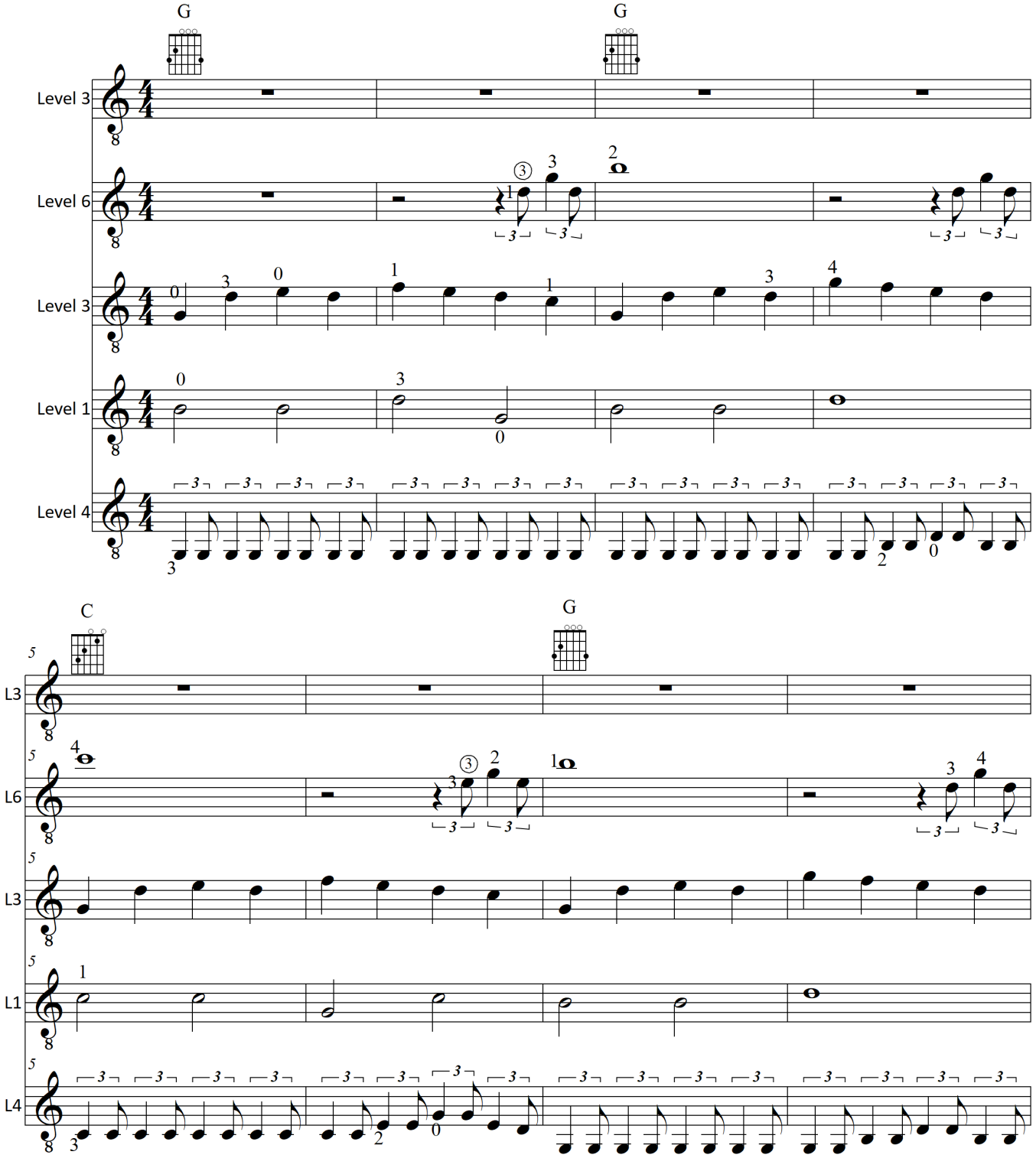
12-Bar Blues

Traditional
arr. Brad Richter



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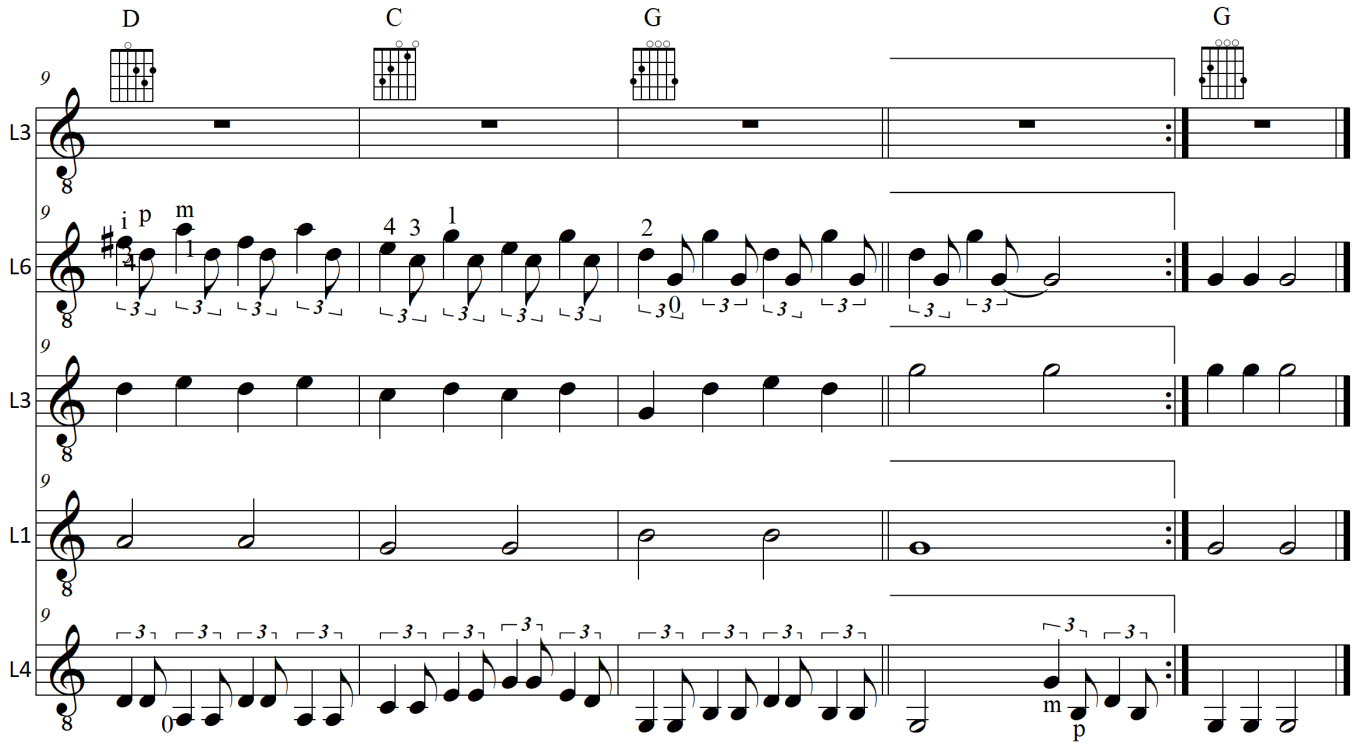

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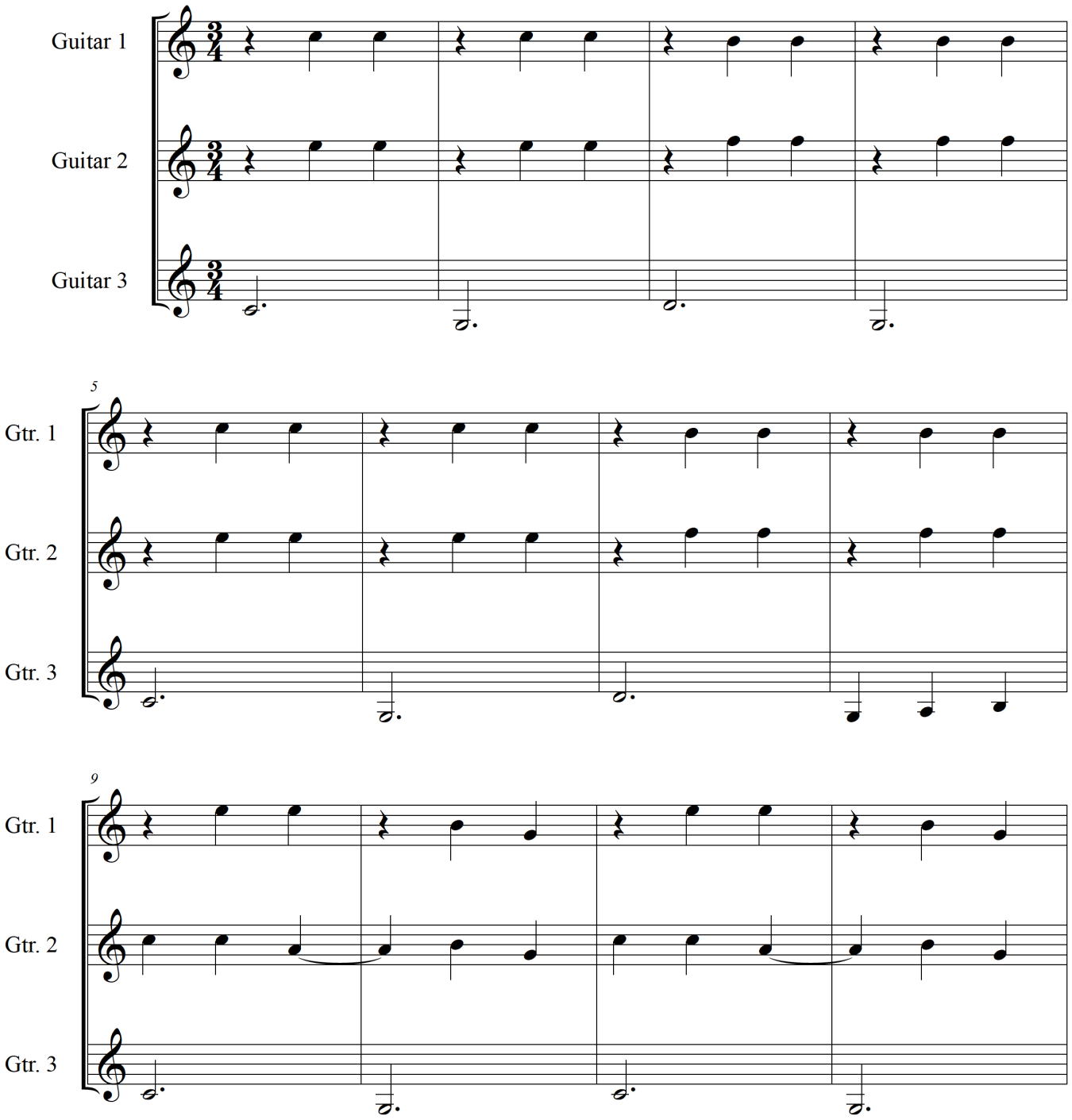
Cielito Lindo

Quirino Mendoza y Cortés
arr. Jonathan Crissman



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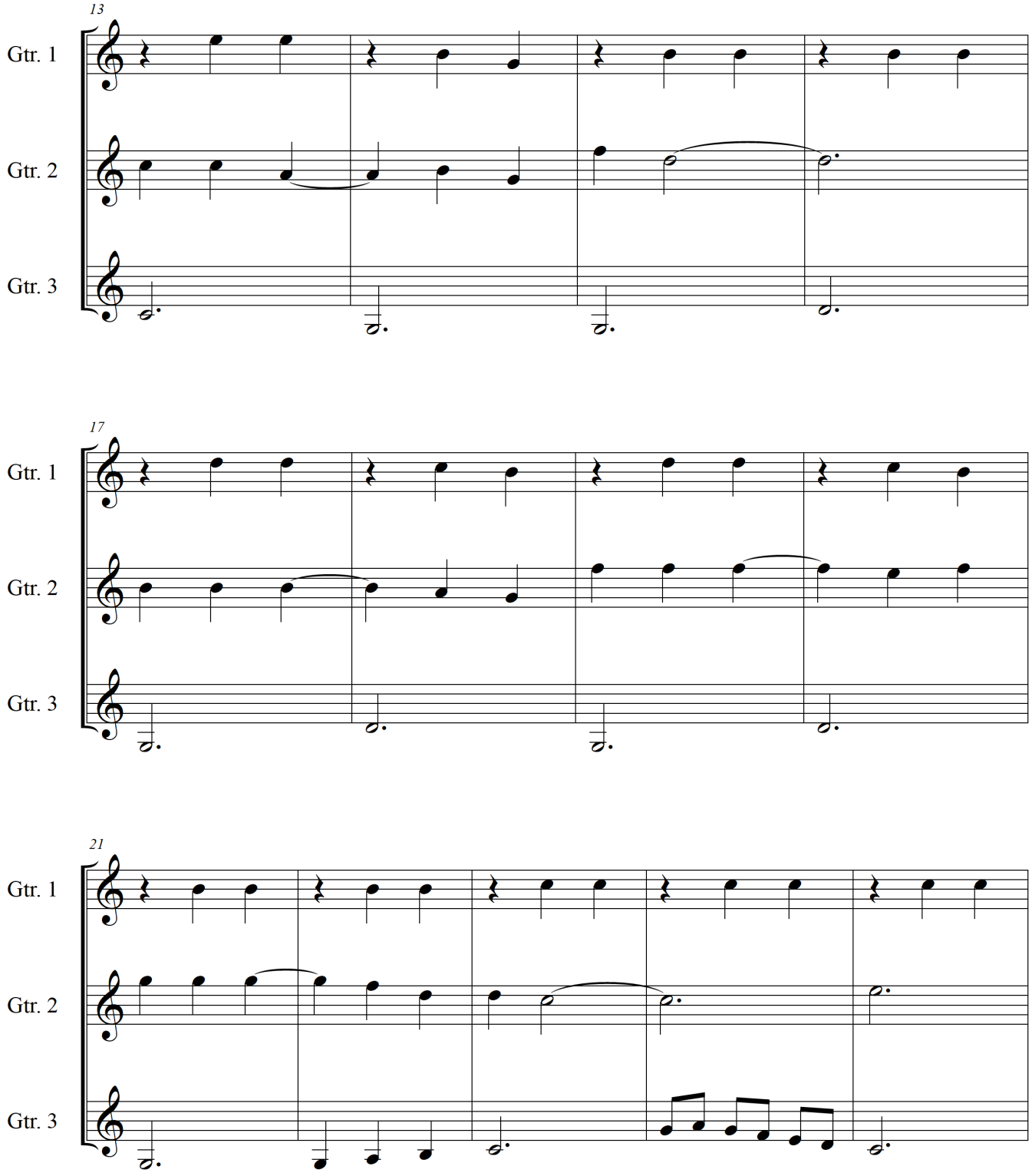

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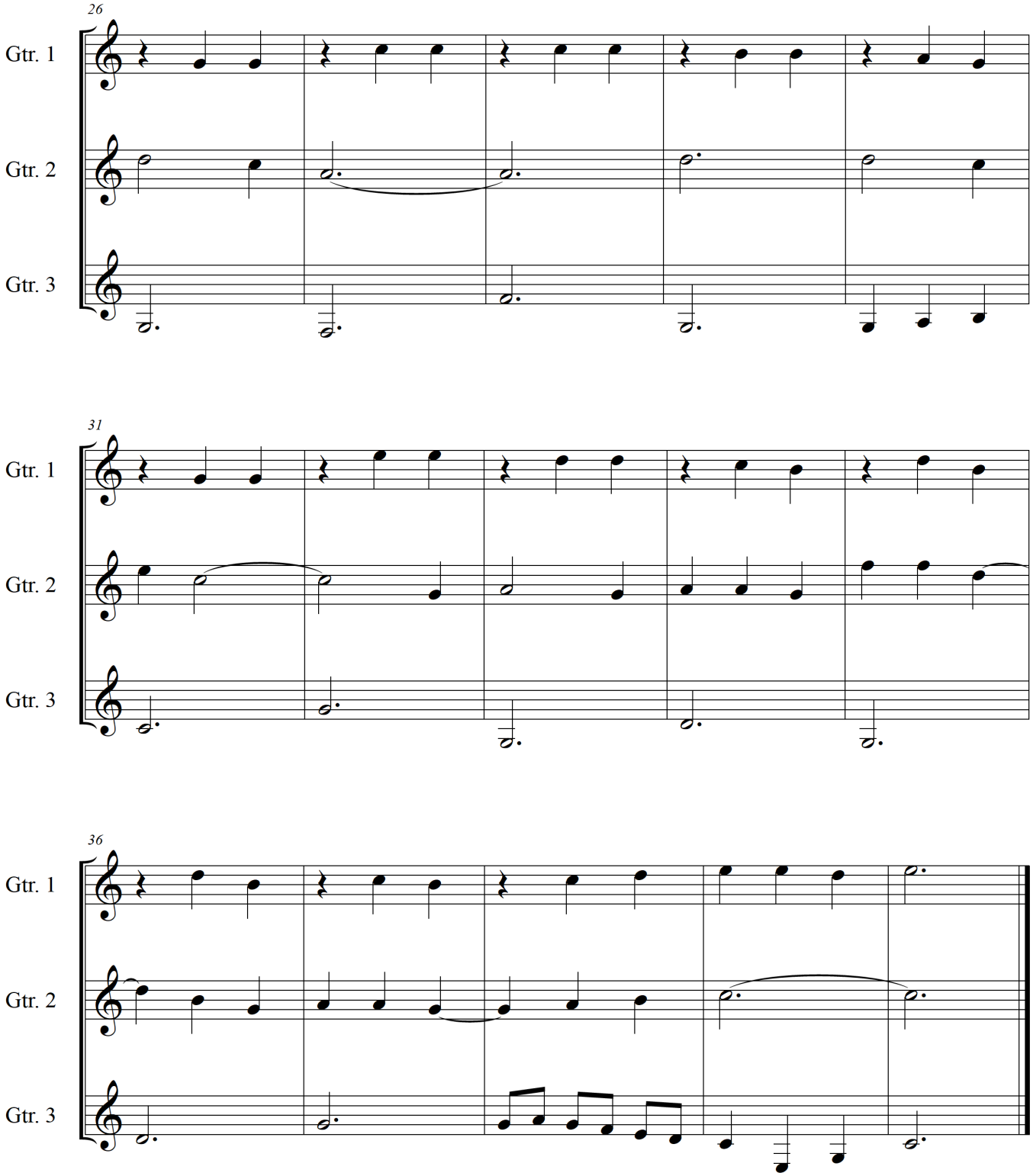

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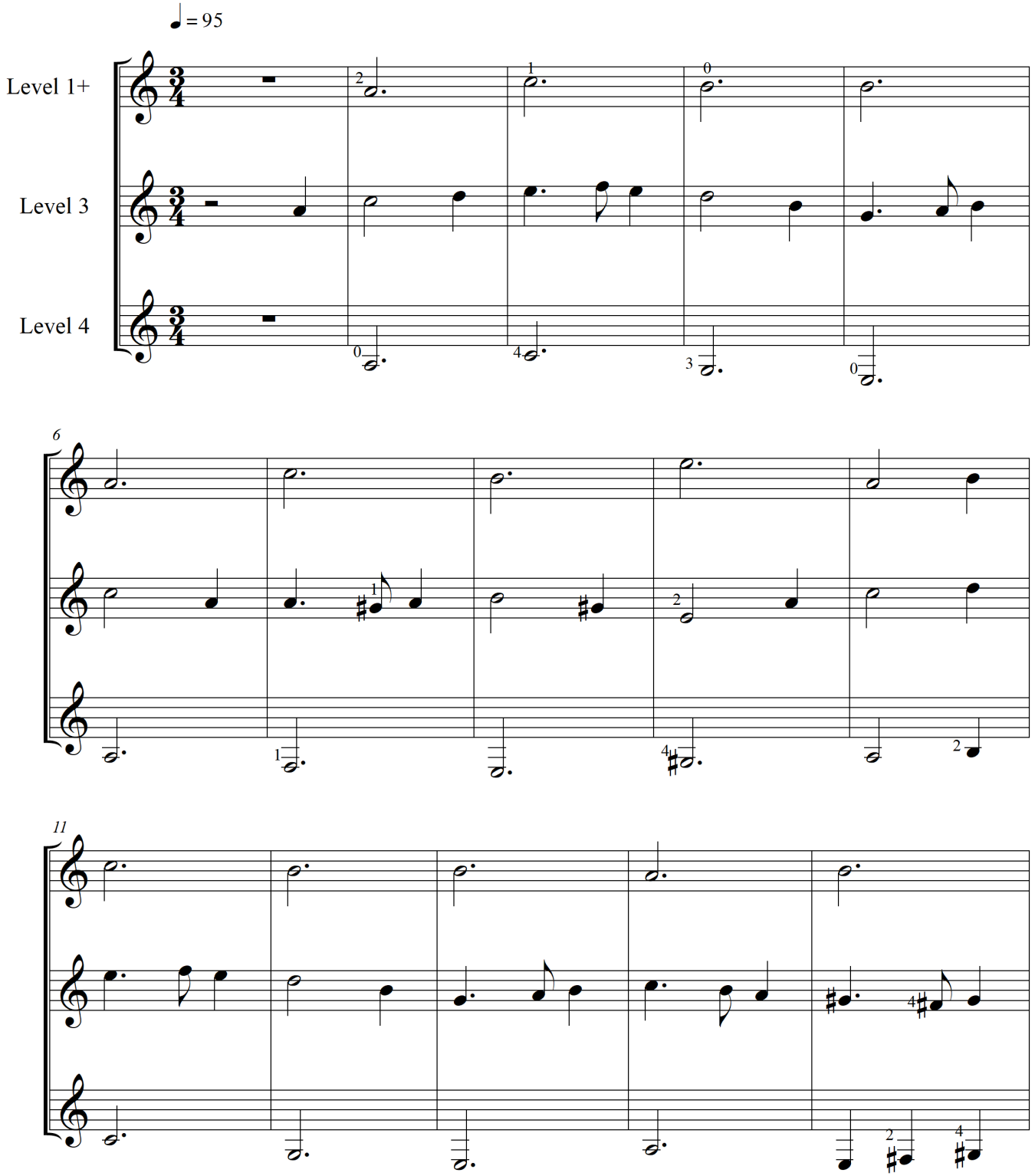
Greensleeves

Anonymous
arr. Jonathan Crissman



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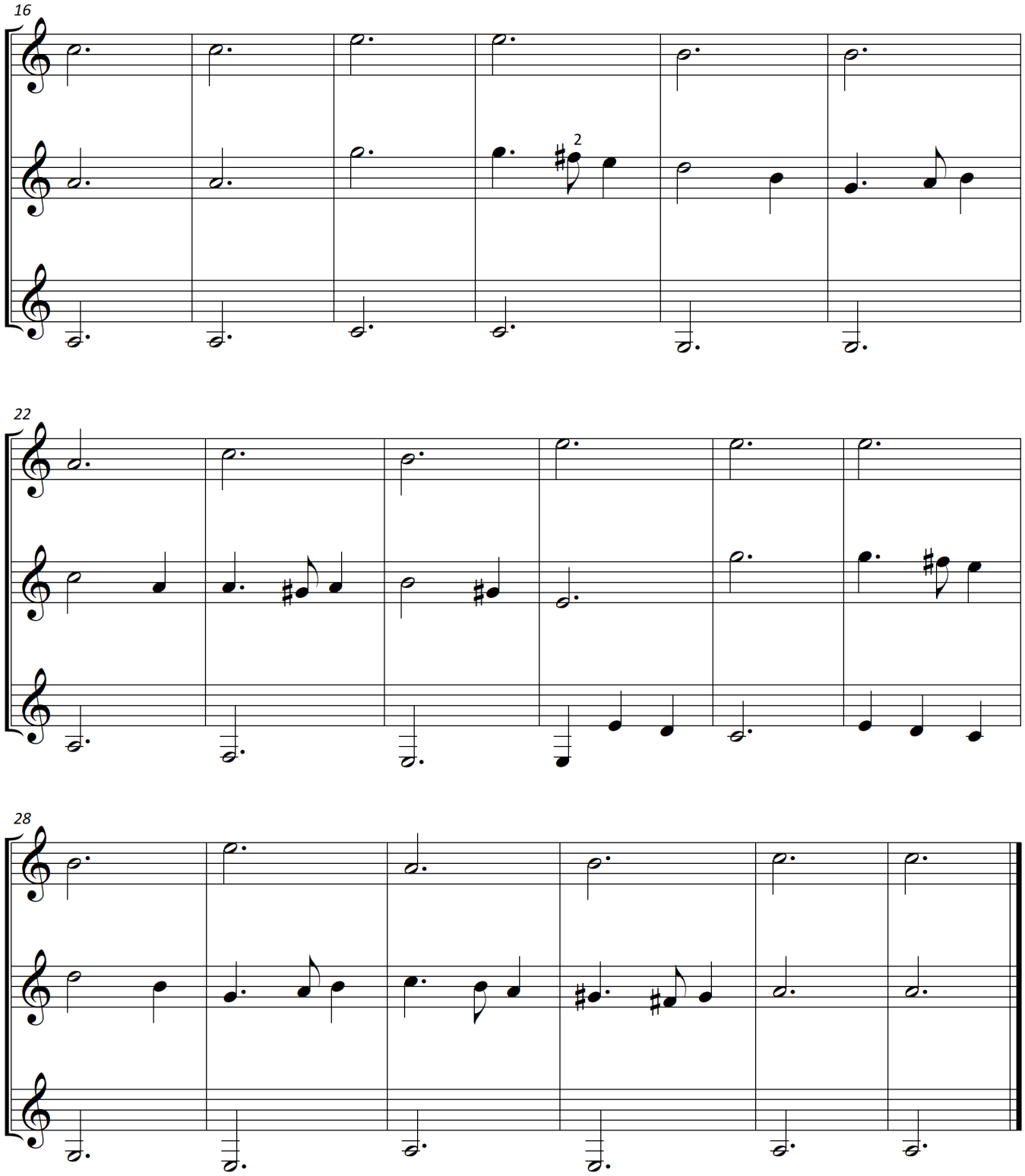

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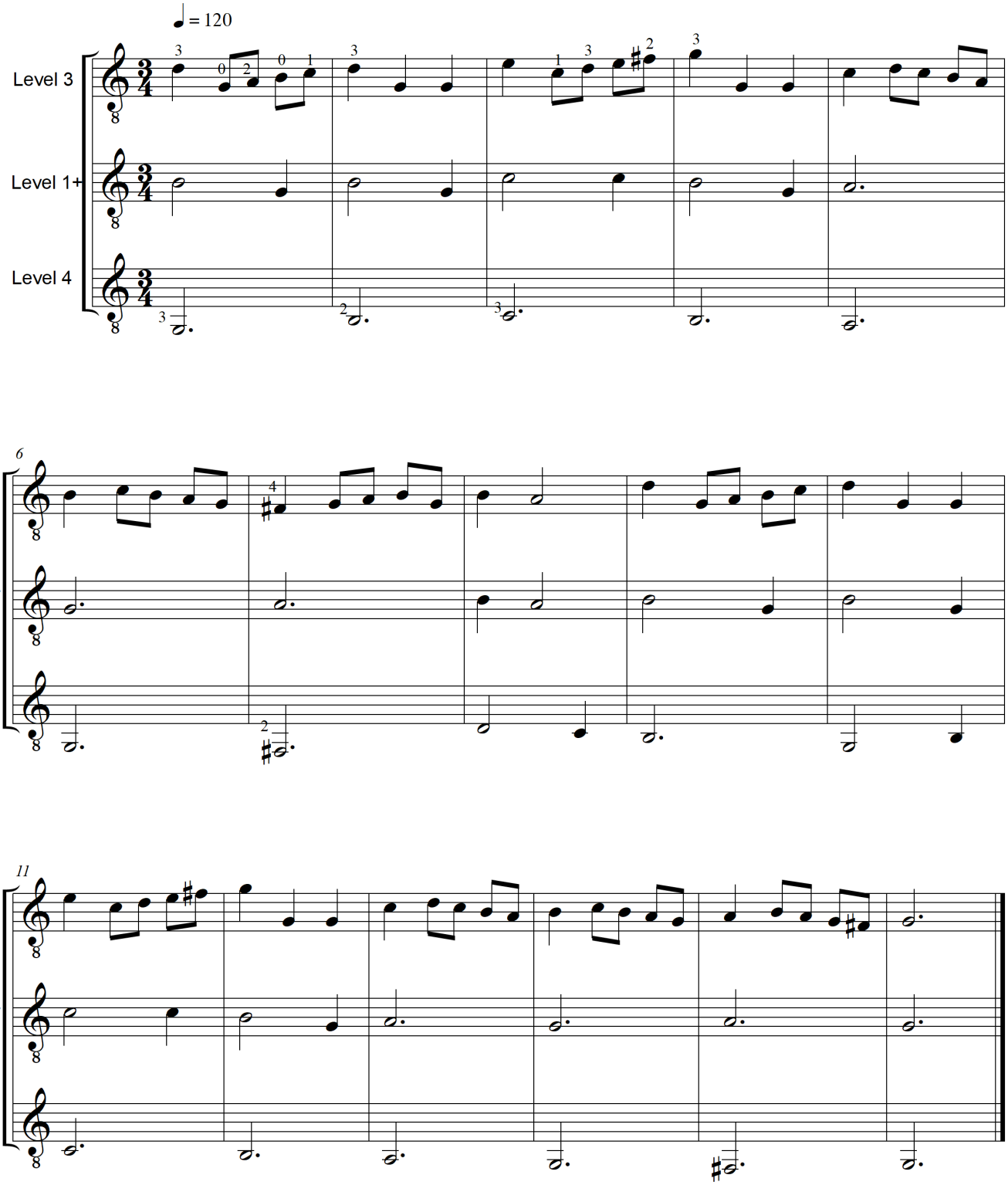
Minuet in G

J.S. Bach
arr. Mark W. Akin



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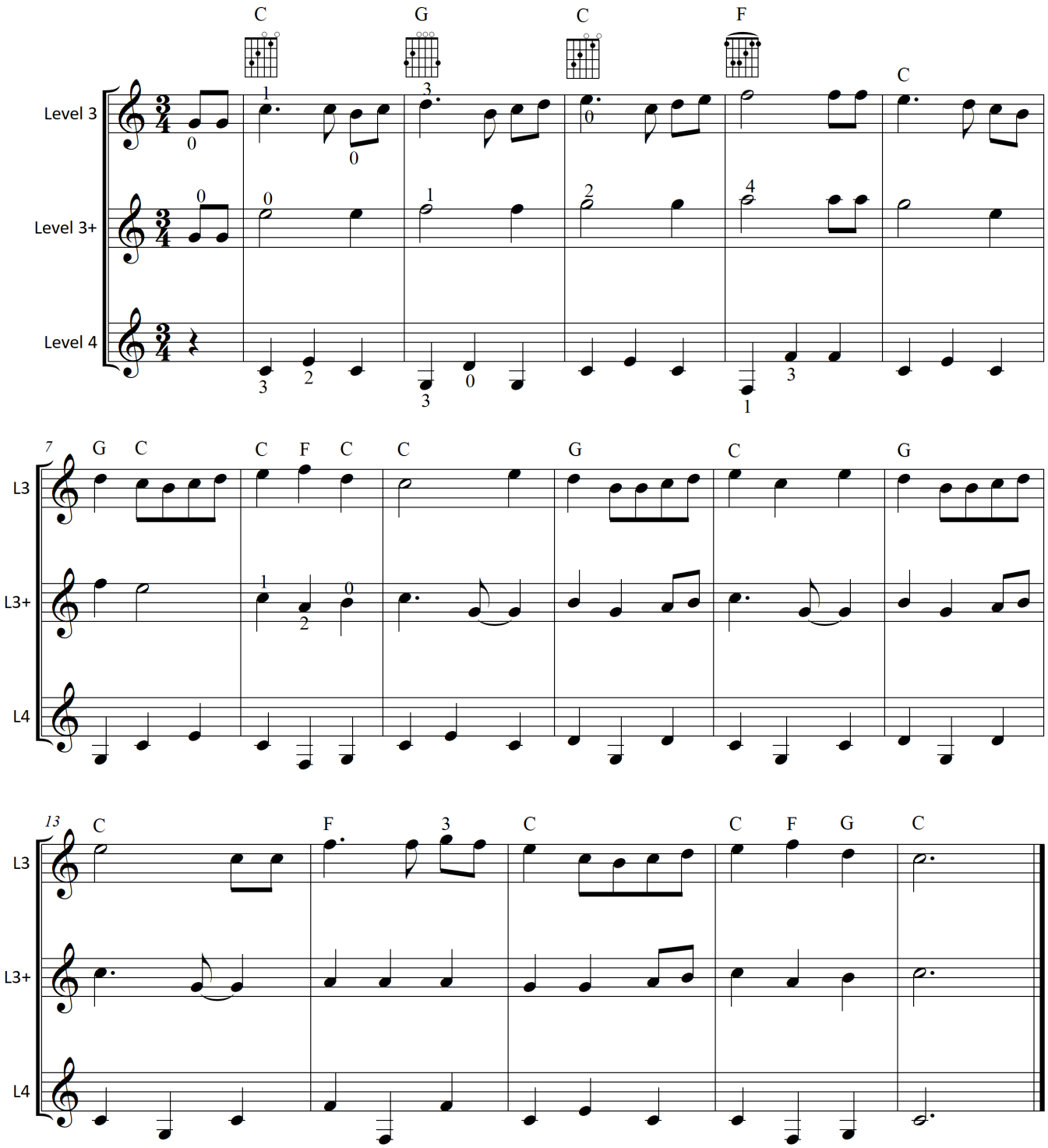
Las Mañanitas

Mexican Traditional
arr. Christian Cruz



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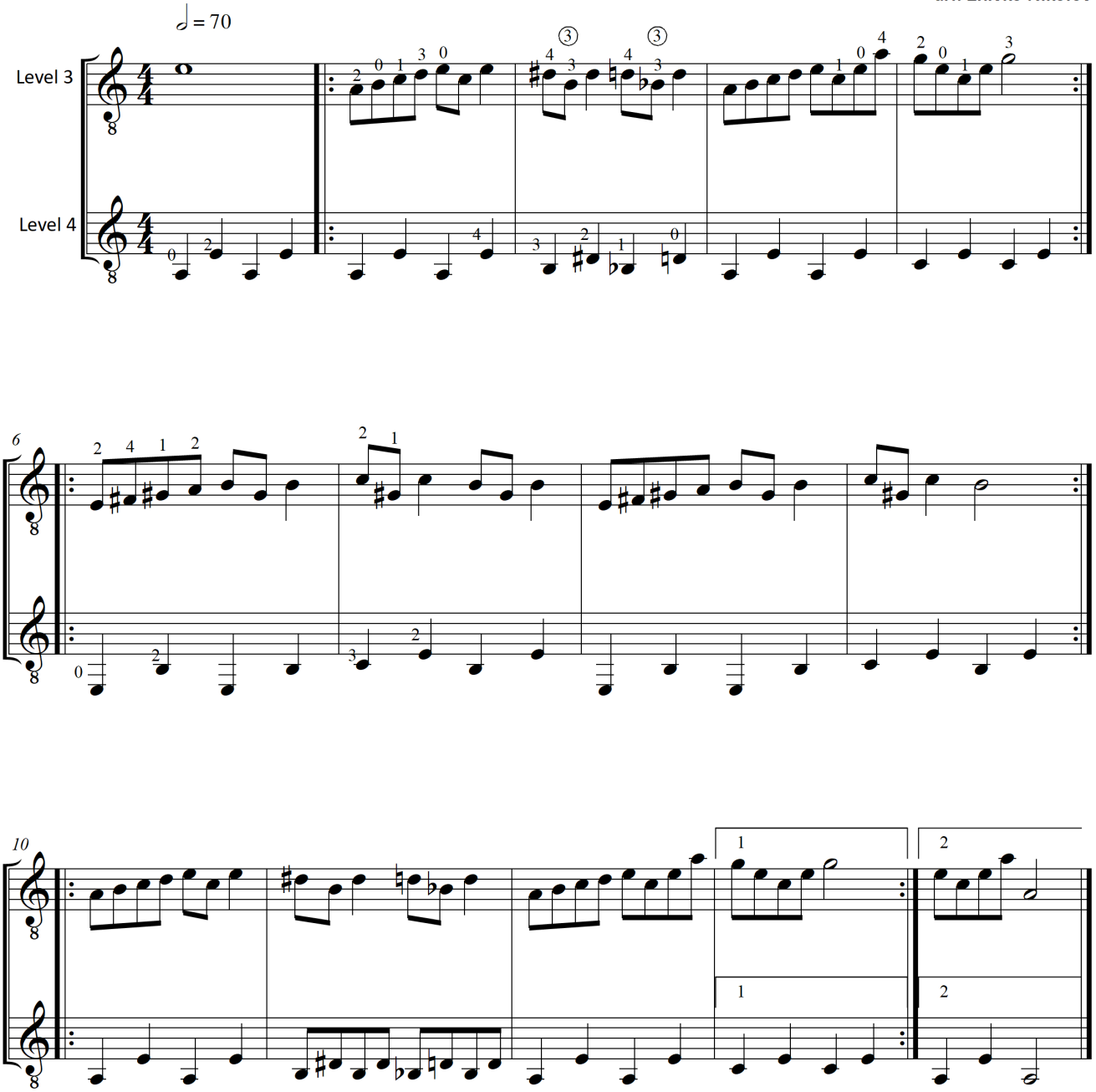
Hall of the Mountain King

Edward Grieg
arr. Zhivko Nikolov



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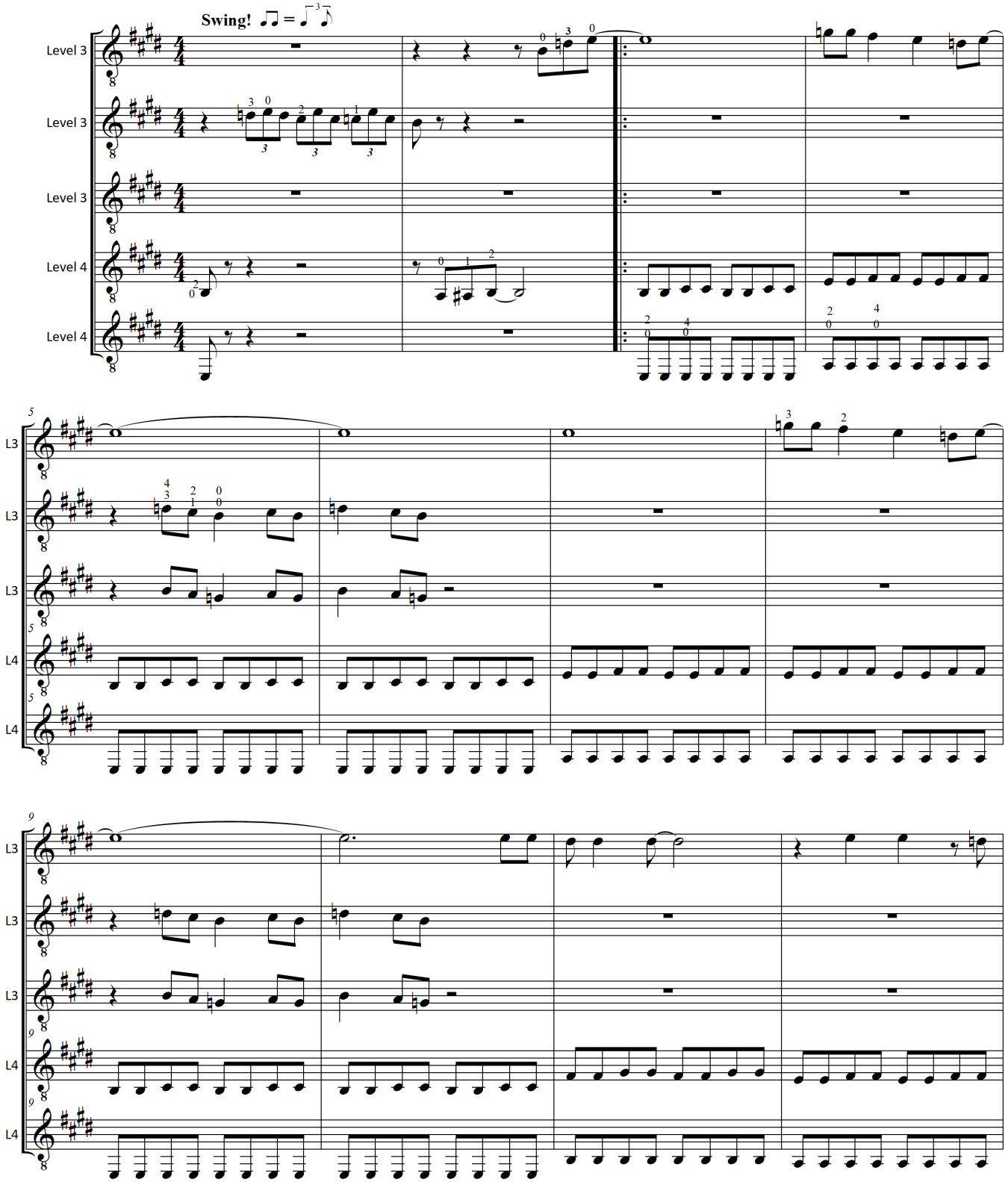
Sweet Home Chicago

Robert Johnson
arr. David Redick



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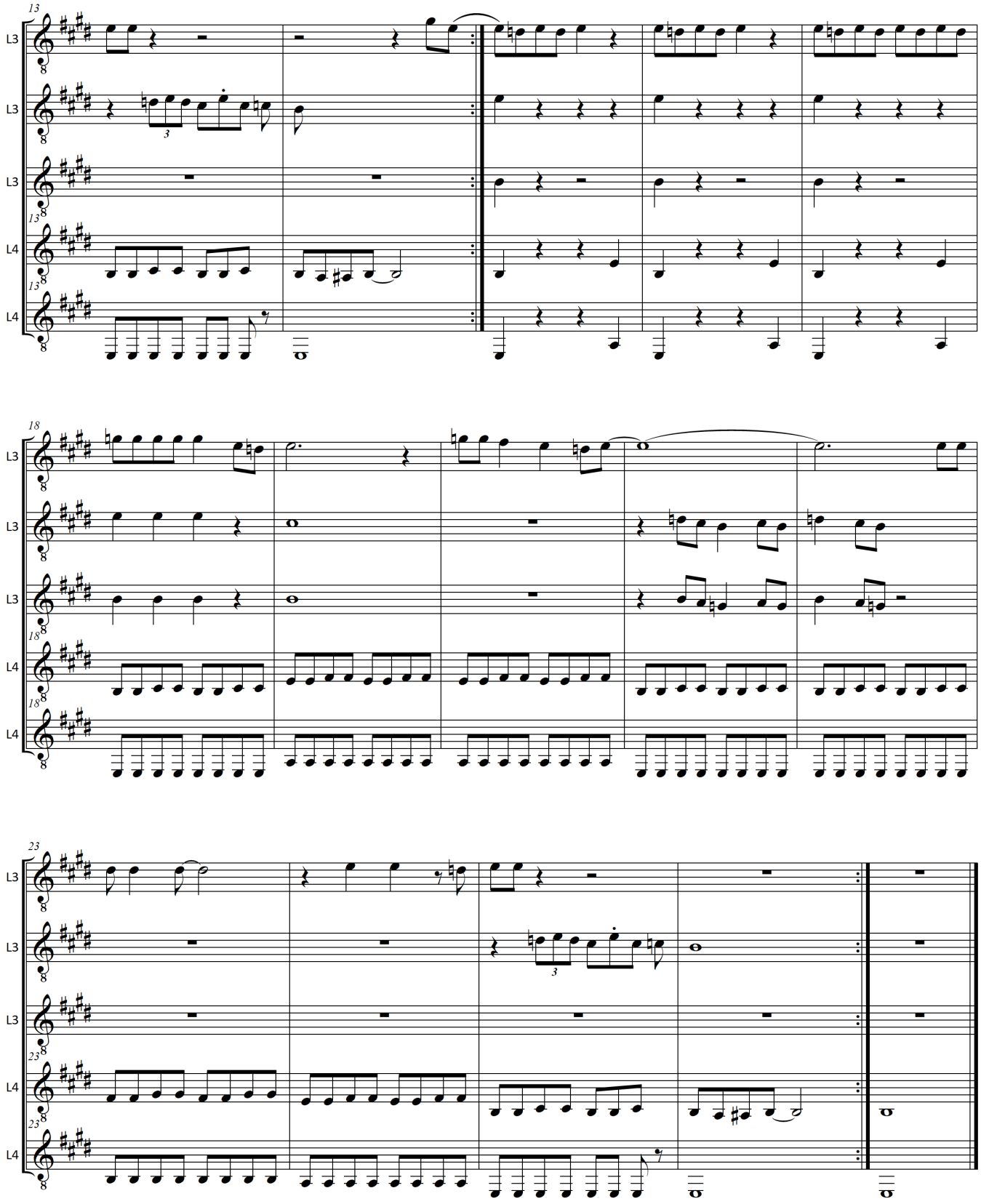

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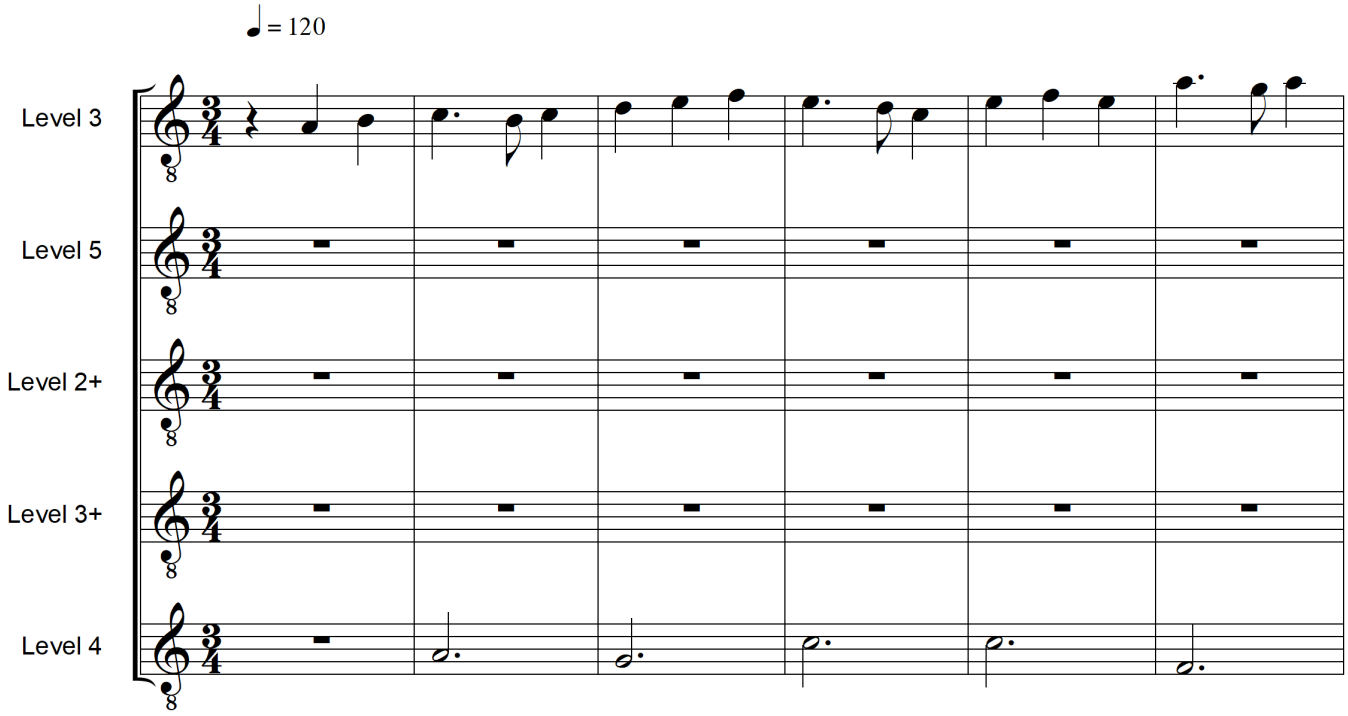
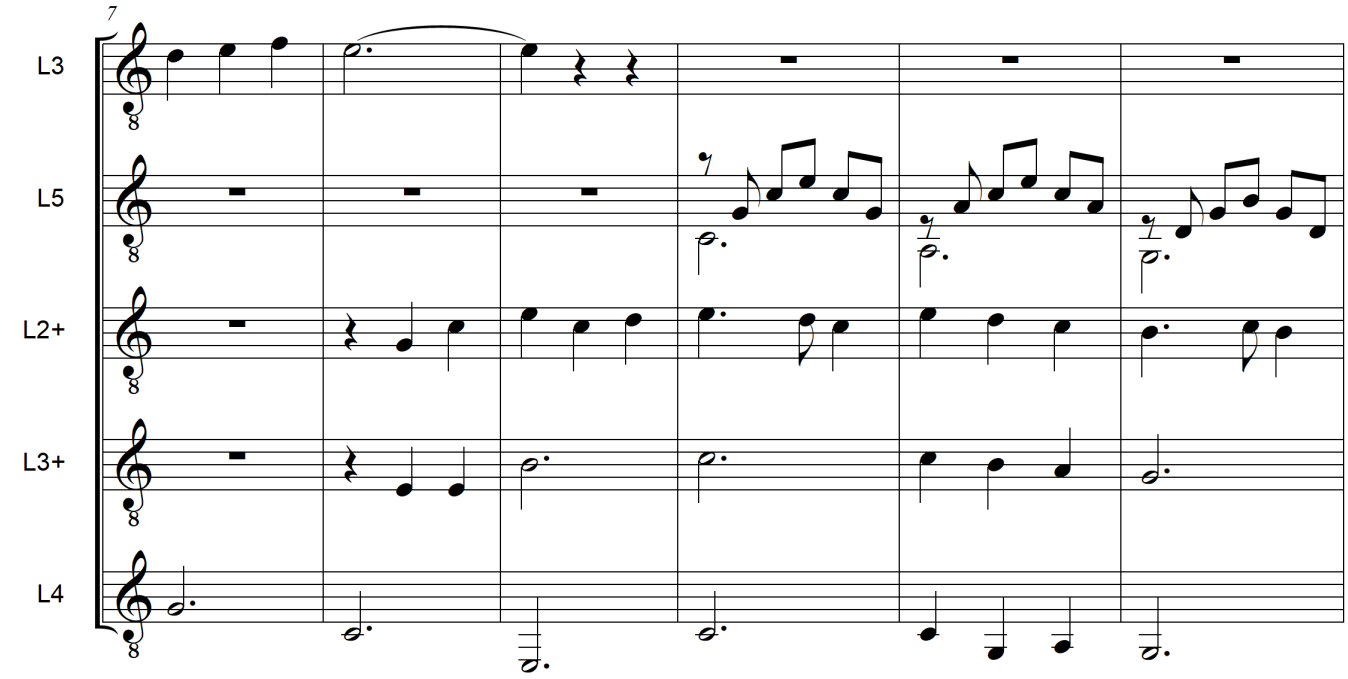
Española

Gaspar Sans
arr. Brad Richter





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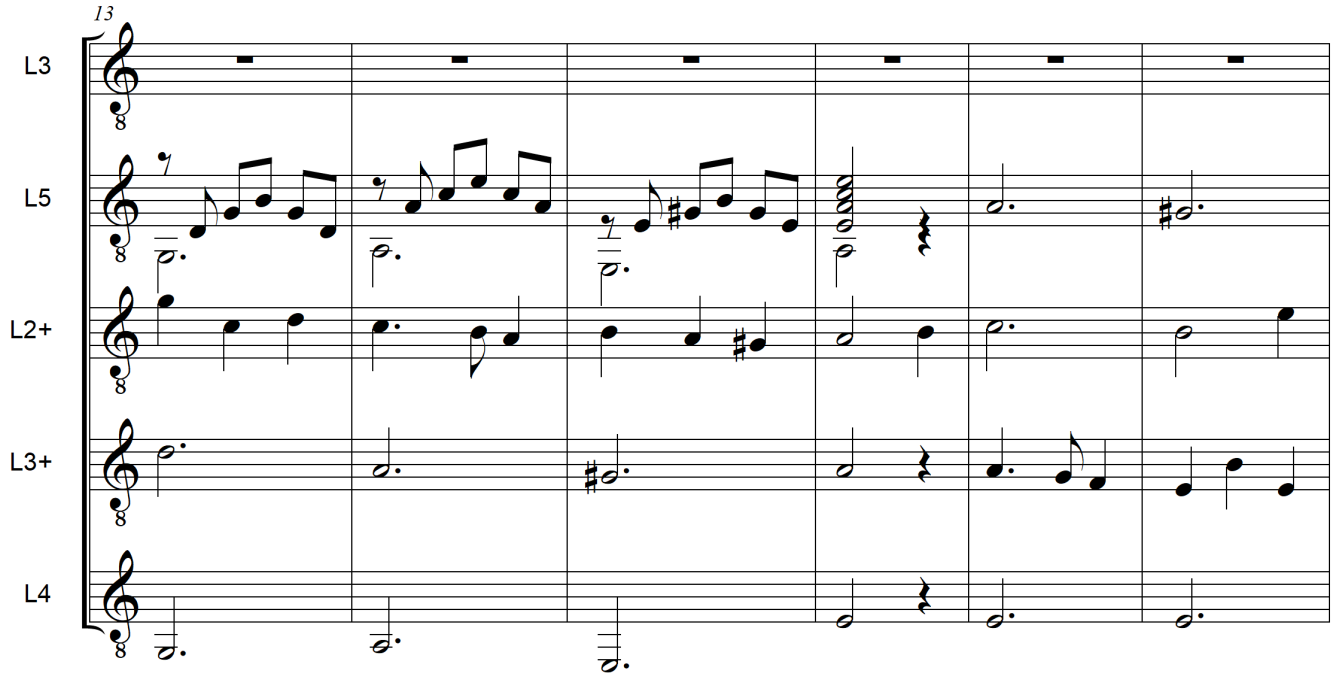

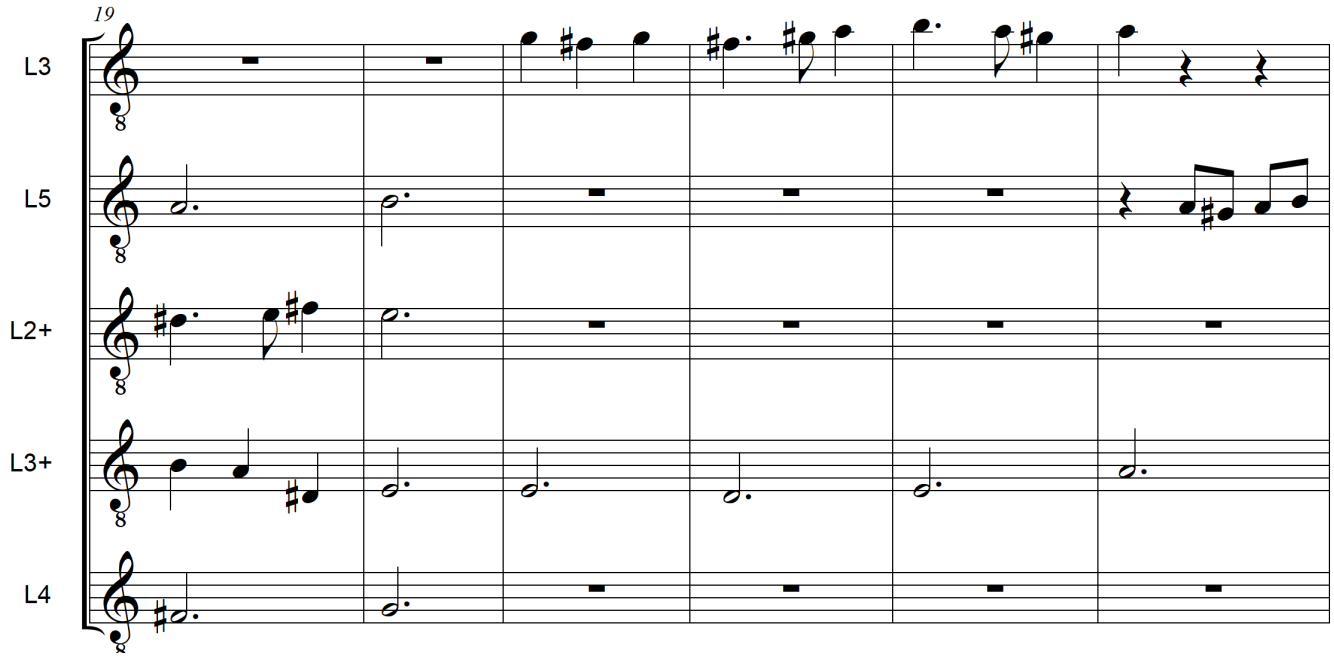

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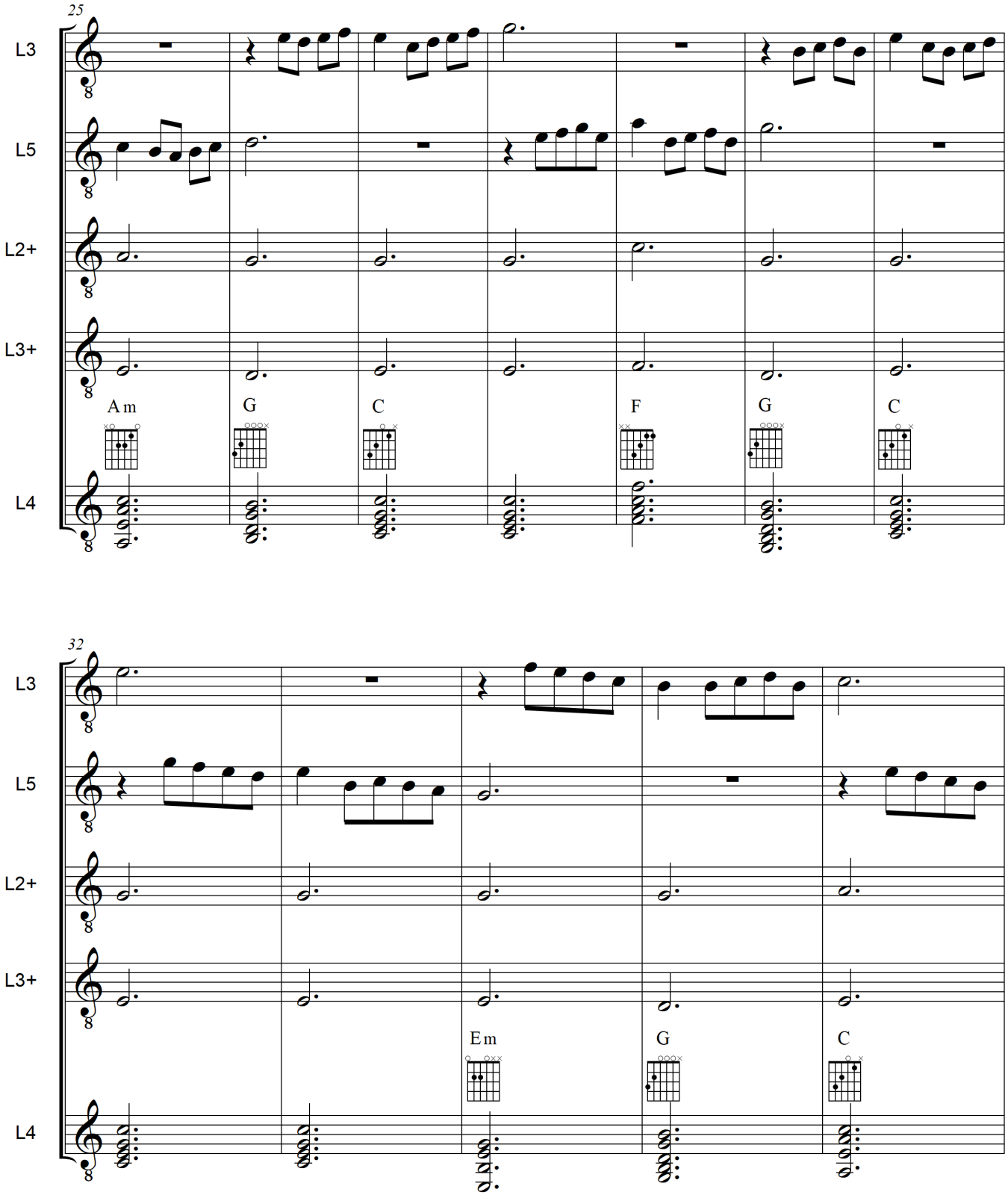

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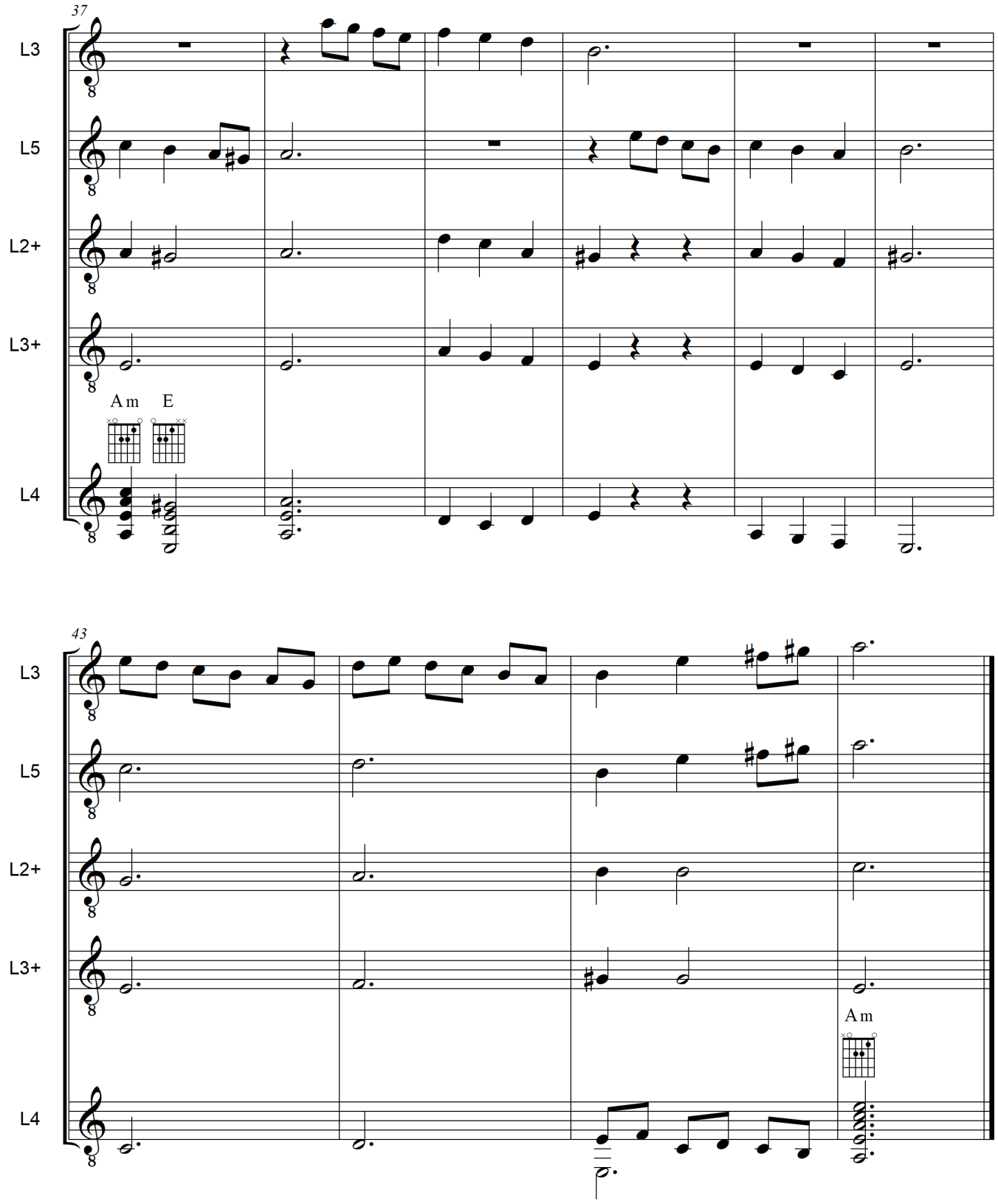

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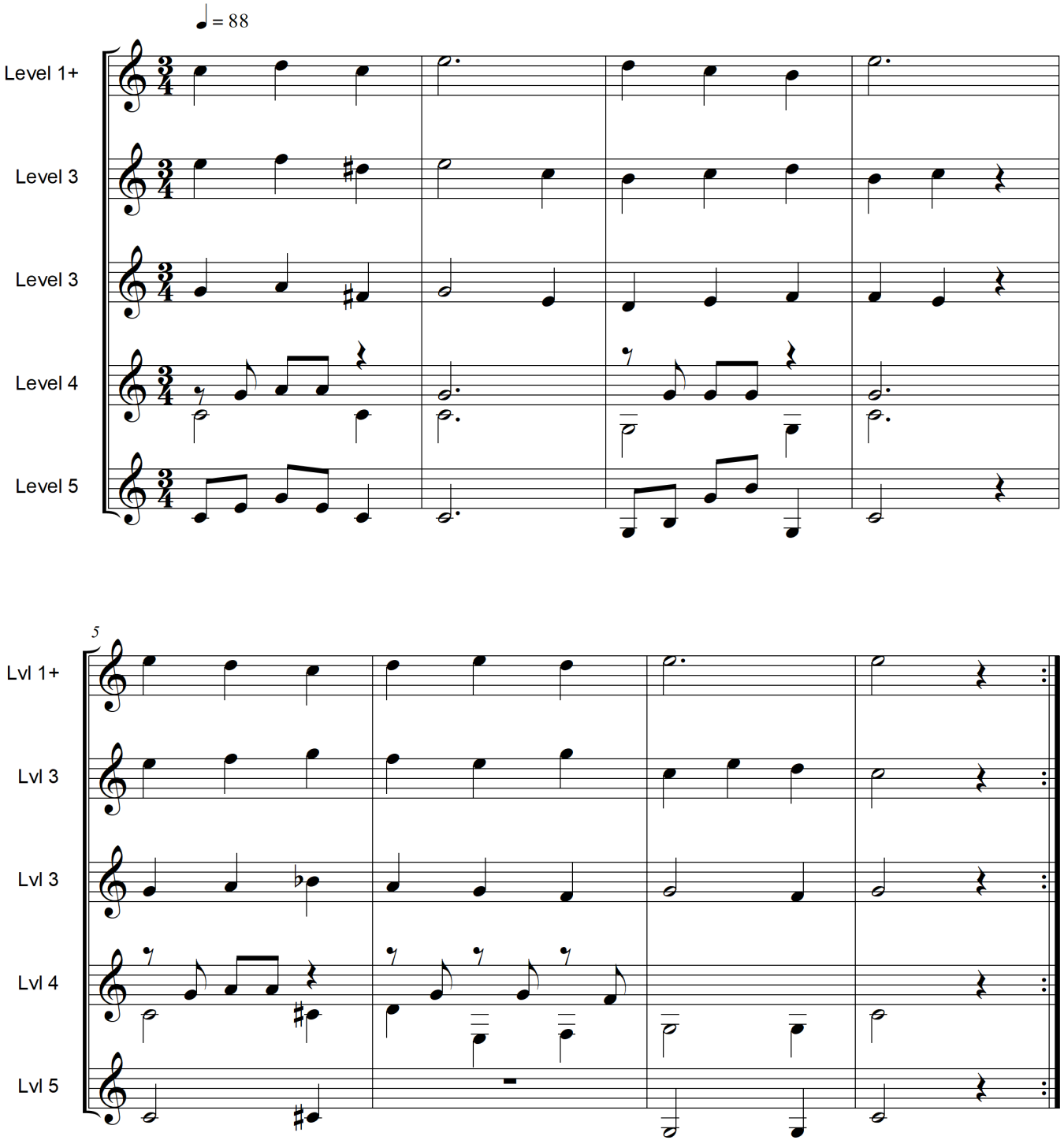
Etude No. 1 in C

Dionisio Aguado
arr. Jose Luis Puerta



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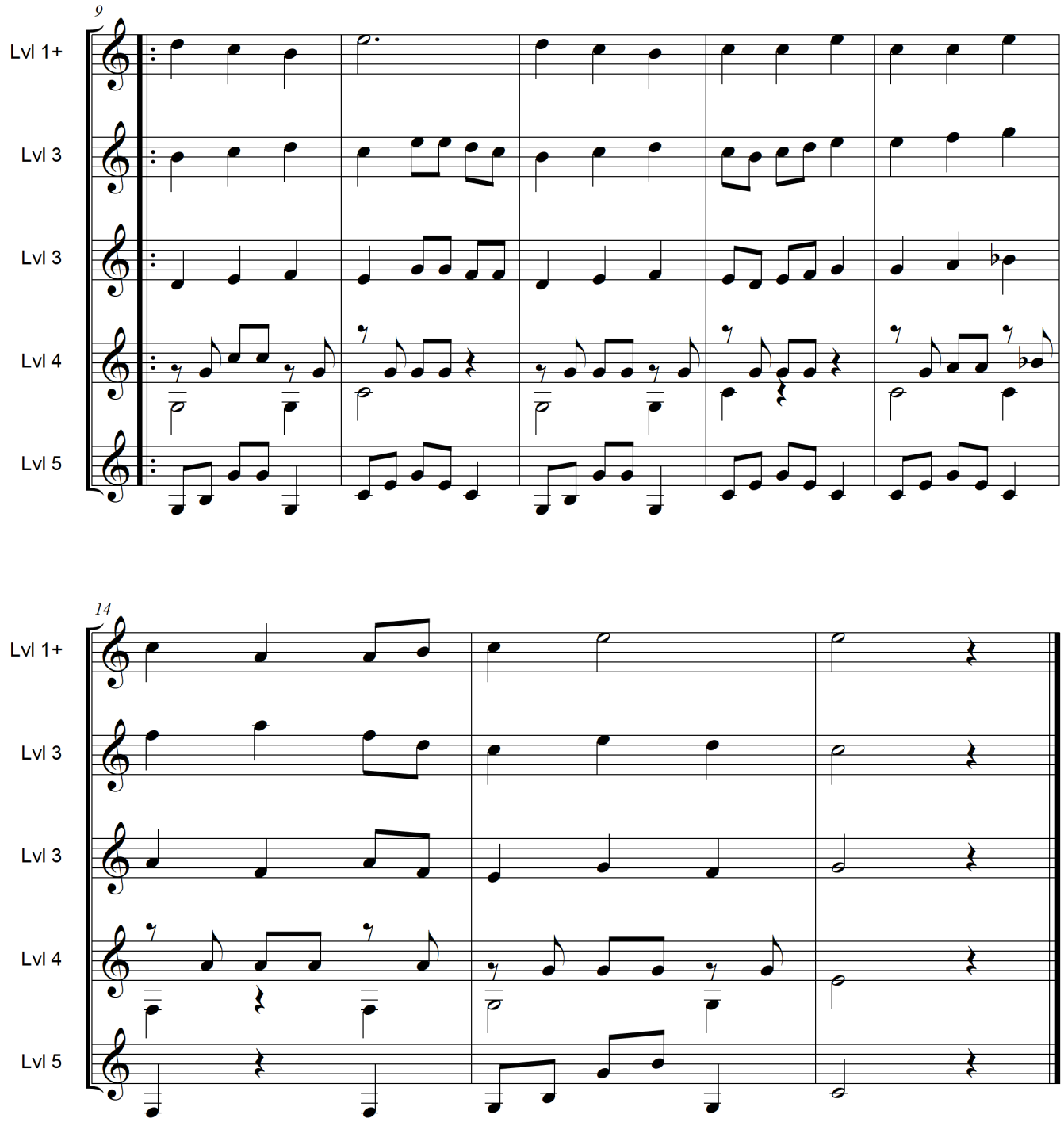

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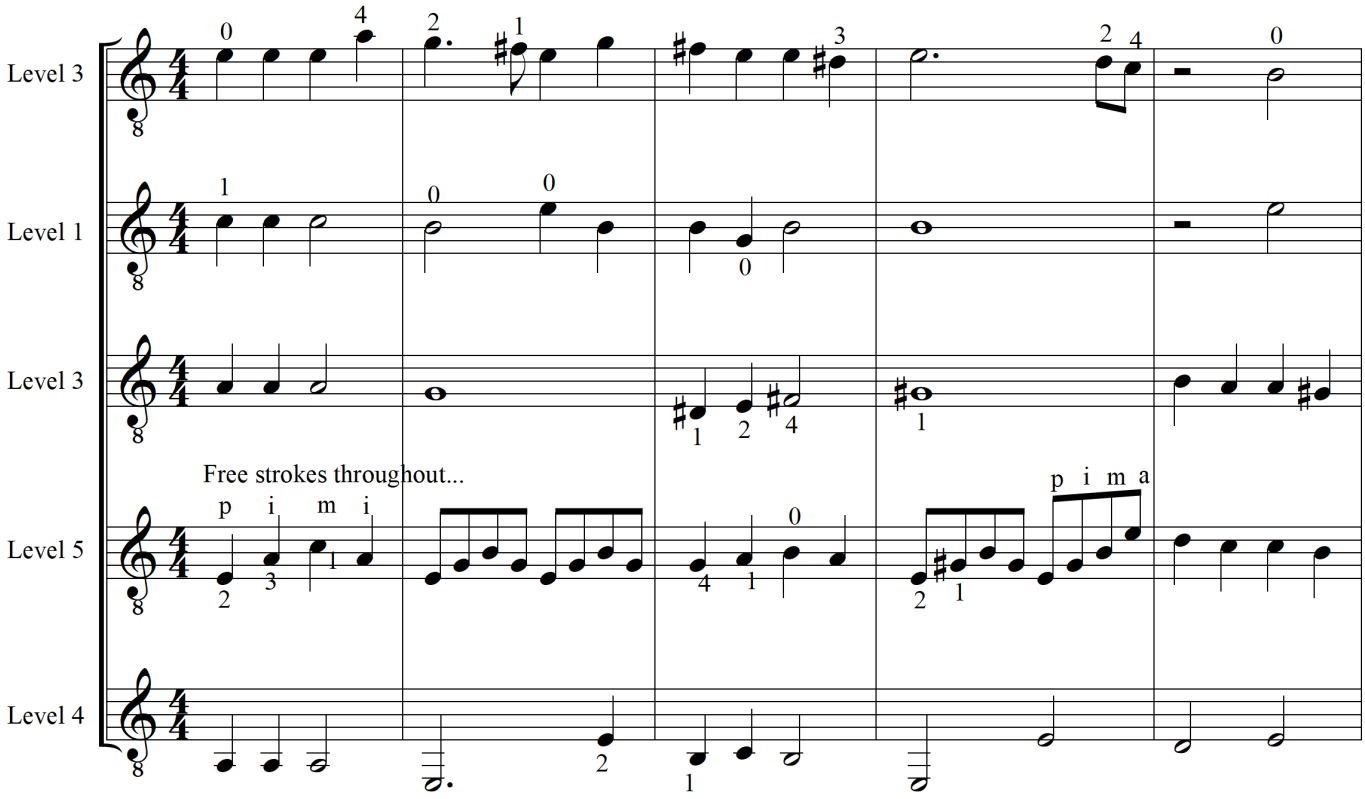
Pezzo Tedesco

Anon.
arr. Brad Richter



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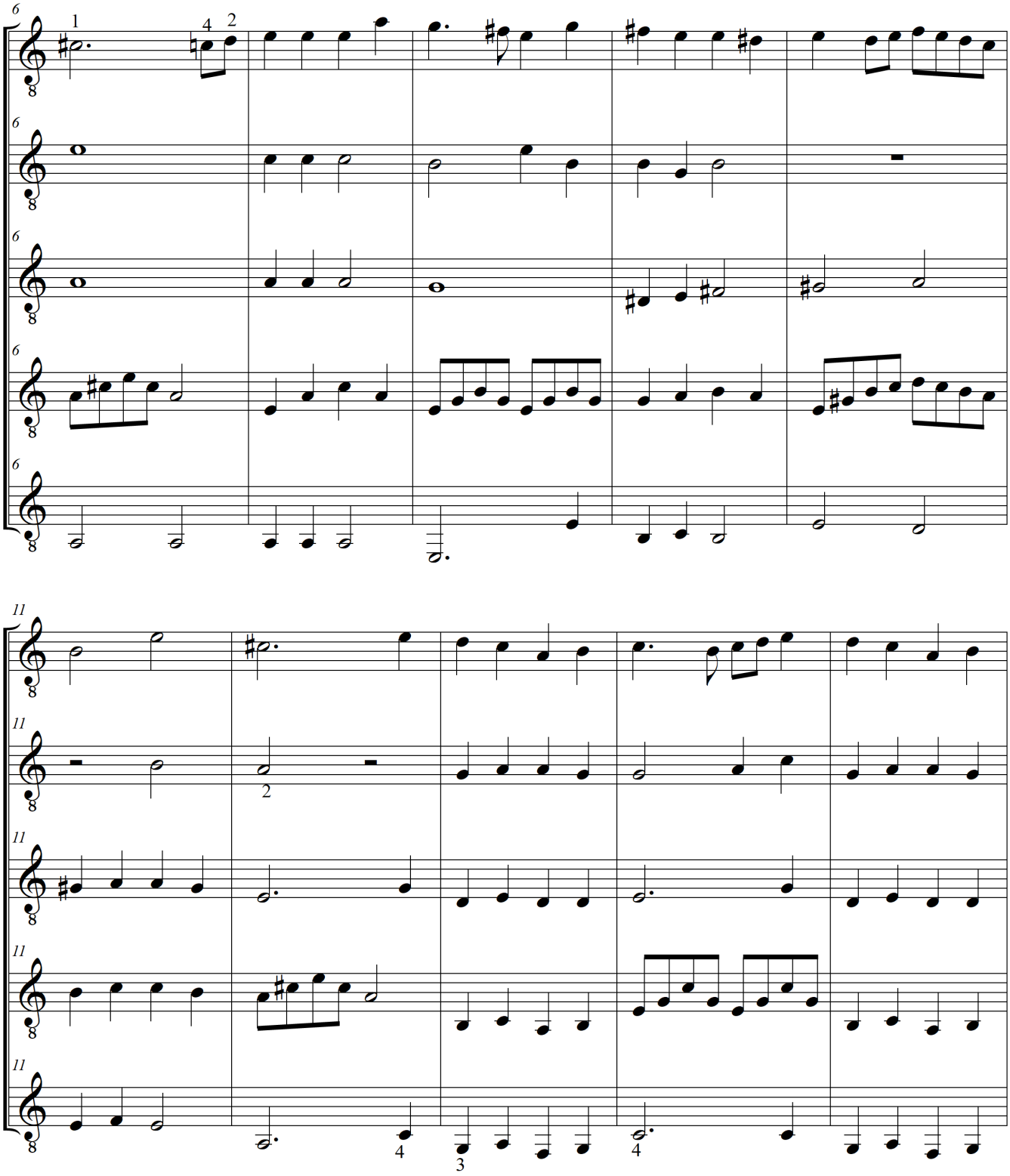

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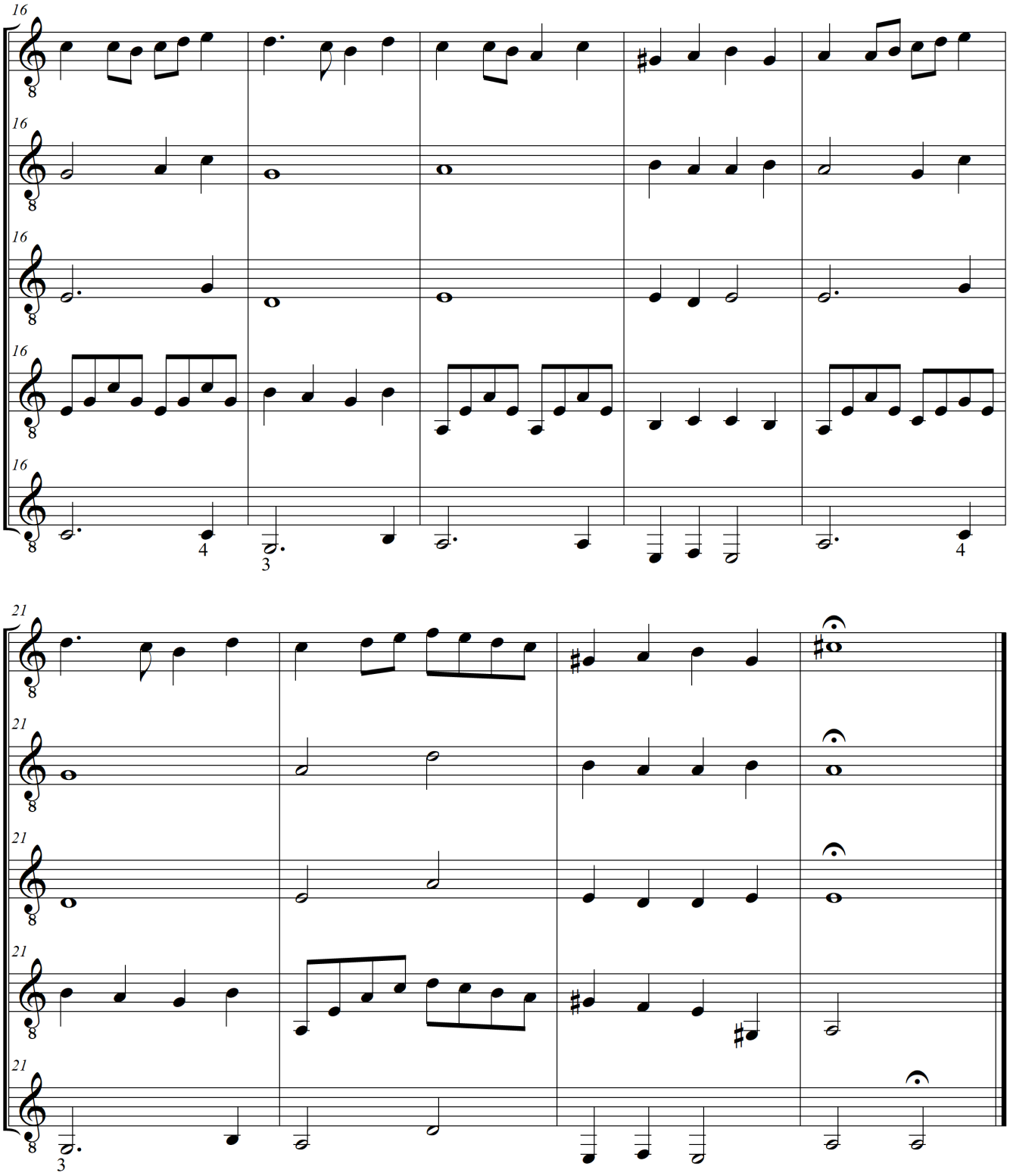

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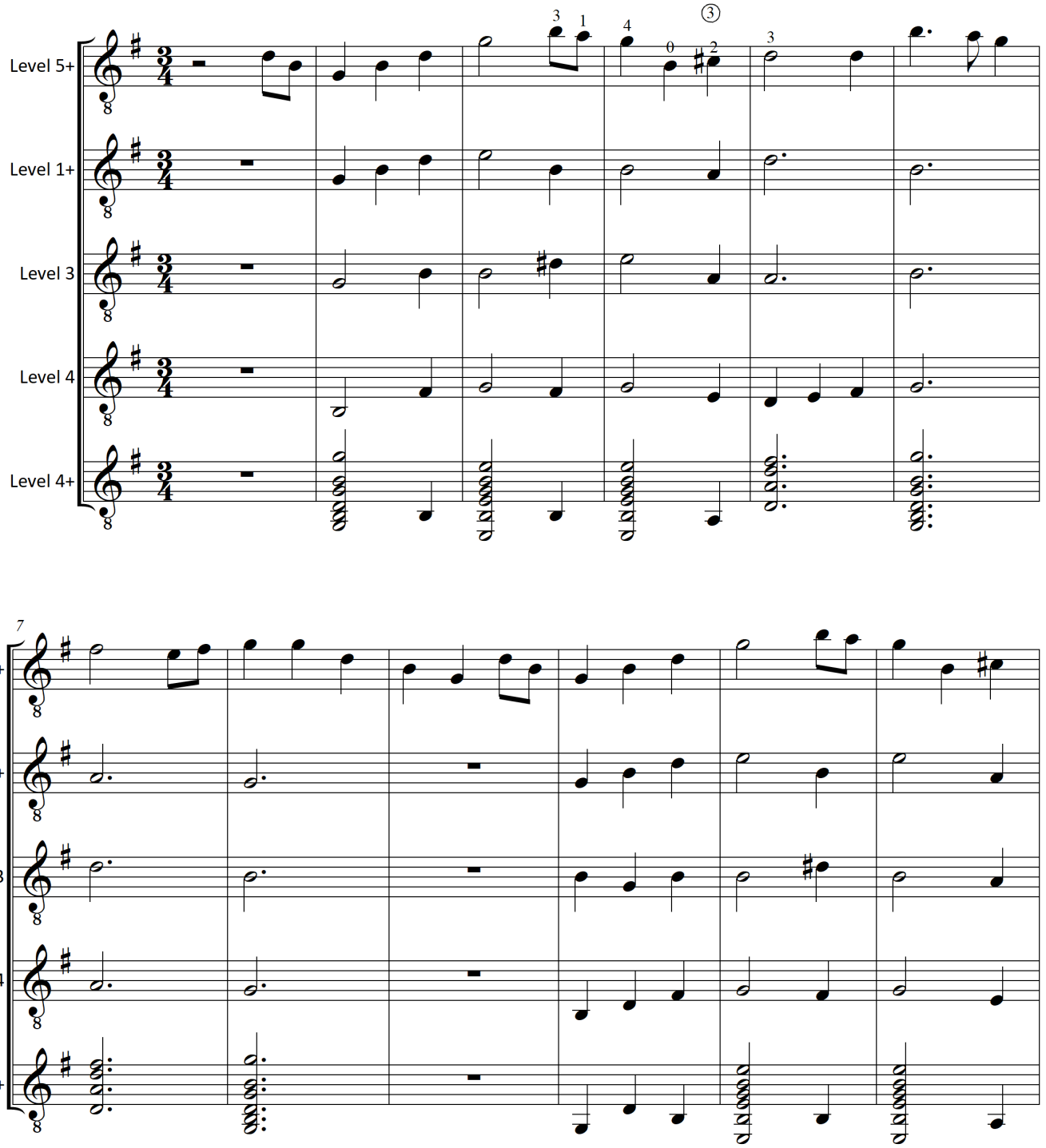
Star Spangled Banner

John Stafford Smith
arr. Brad Richter



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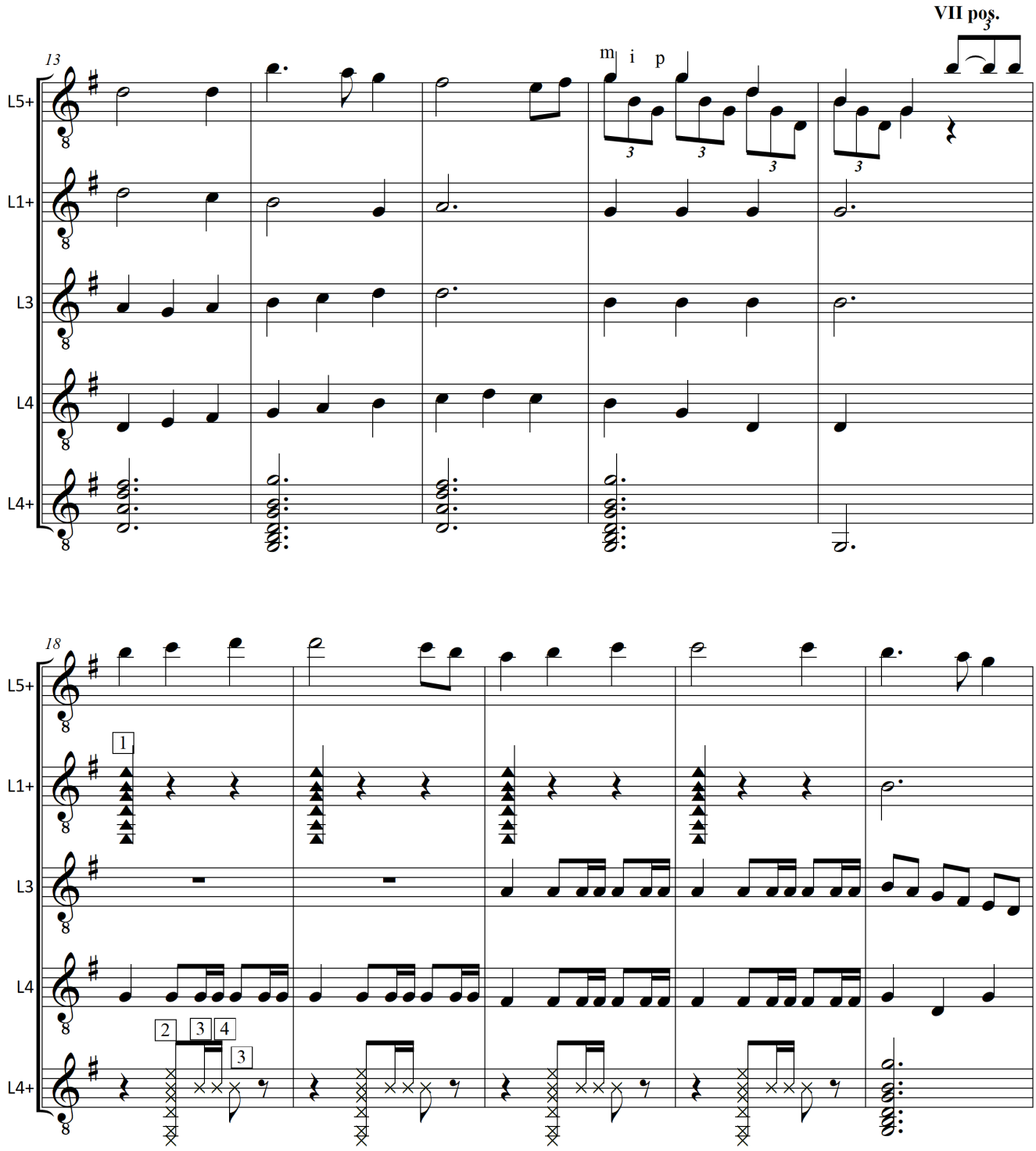

1 R.H index finger strumming down through the tied string ends behind the saddle
2 R.H slapping all six strings and the soundboard over the soundhole
3 L.H tapping on the soundboard below neck
4 R.H thumb tapping the soundboard above the soundhole

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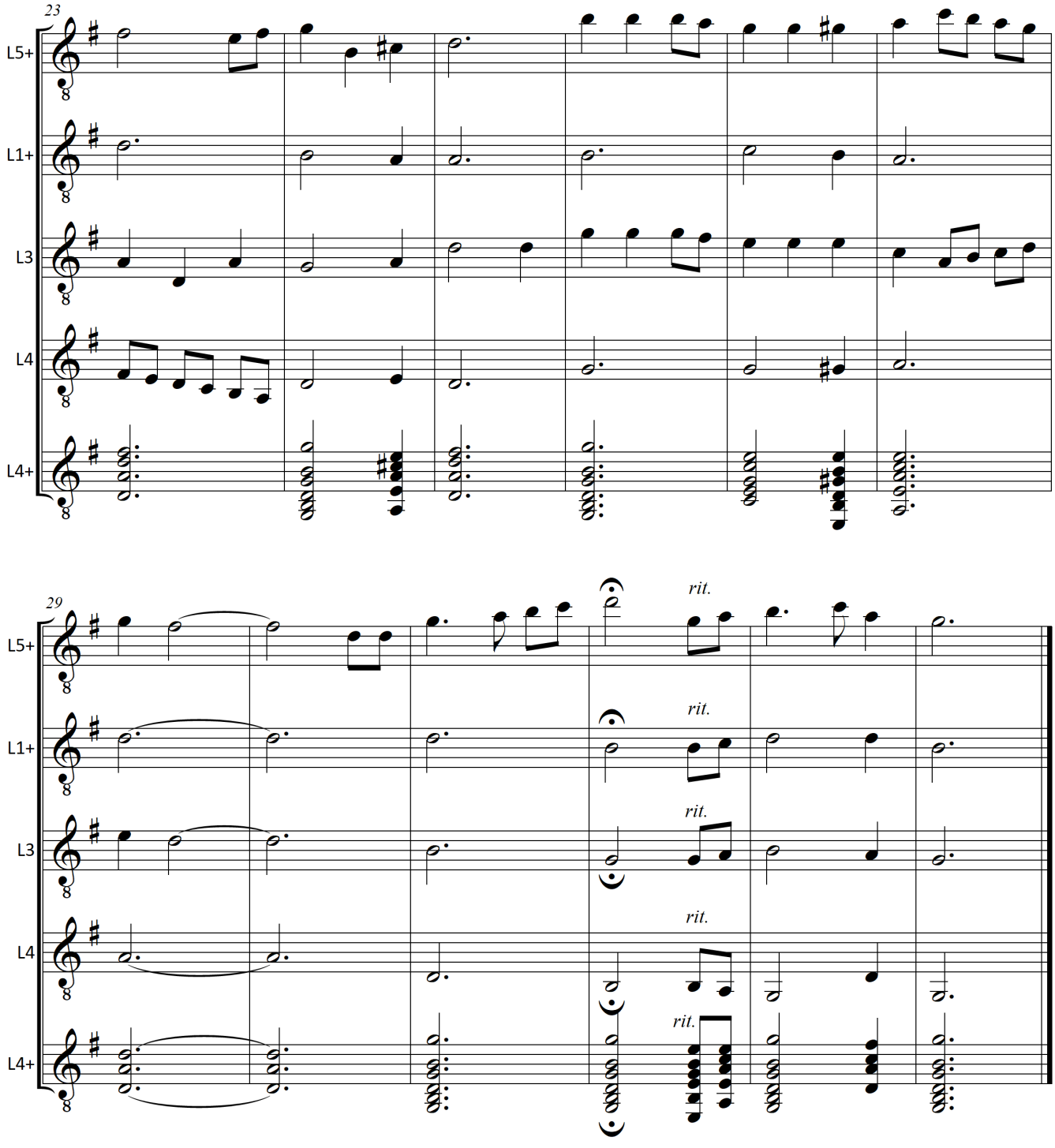

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