

# **The Flamenco Guitar**

## **Lesson 2**

**by “Flamenco Chuck” Keyser**

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**[Intro to Lesson 2 \(Solea\) Click To Play](#)**

**The Academy of Flamenco Guitar**  
**P.O. Box 1292**  
**Santa Barbara, CA 93102**

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I Basic Harmony (Cont.)

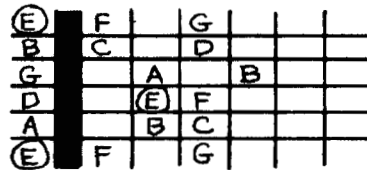
The Primary Keys of the Phrygian Mode

In the preceding lesson, you will recall that we defined the Phrygian Mode in terms of its interval relationship to be 1/2, 1, 1, 1, 1/2, 1, 1. We then found the notes of the Phrygian Mode in the key of E to be E, F, G, A, B, C, D, and again E; we chose those notes in sequence from the tonic, picking them from the chromatic scale according to the formula given by the interval relationship.

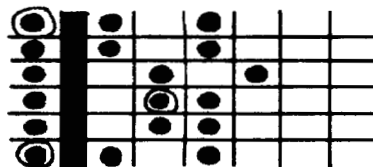
You also learned that the notes of the E Phrygian Mode form a physical pattern on the guitar neck because of the position of the notes in the open position; i.e., we omitted the other notes of the chromatic scale.

You then learned the pattern physically on the guitar neck not by considering the letter names of the notes; rather, you memorized their locations, placing special emphasis on the position of the tonic notes. Hence, there are two concepts involved:

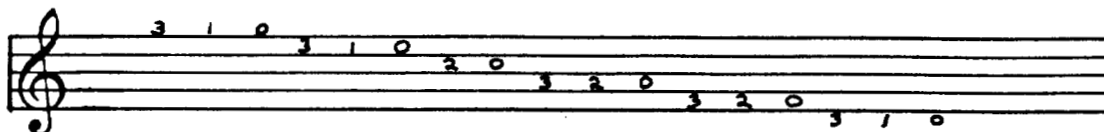
1. The position of the notes of the E Phrygian Mode in the open position:



2. The pattern that these notes form there:



We recall that if these notes were played sequentially, from the highest note to the lowest (leaving out the redundant B), we had:



Let us note a very important fact about the Phrygian Mode in the key of E:

The notes of the open strings of the guitar are all included as notes of the Phrygian Mode in this key.

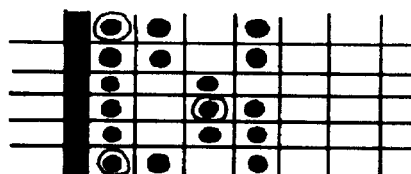
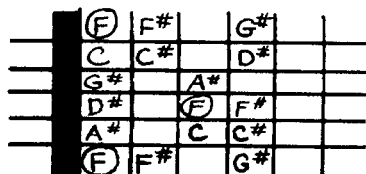
The notes of the open strings of the guitar are E, A, B, D, G. The notes of the Phrygian Mode are E, F, G, A, B, C, D, and E; thus the notes of the open strings are all notes of the E Phrygian Mode.

Now, since the notes of the E Phrygian Mode are going to be the basis for our music in that key, the above fact means that it will be possible to use the open strings of the guitar as well as the other notes in the open position.

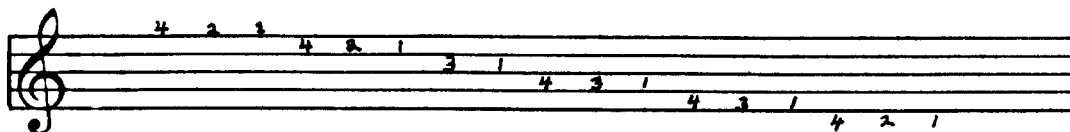
Lest this seem trivial, let us examine an alternative. In Exercise 9 of the first lesson, you wrote the notes for the Phrygian Mode in the key of F. These notes were:

F F# G# A# C C# D# F  
 1/2 1 1 1 1/2 1 1

We notice that none of the notes of the open strings of the guitar occur in this key. Let us look at the pattern and notes for the F Phrygian Mode:



If we play this pattern, beginning with the high note and descending, we have:



Note that no notes appear to the left of the nut of the guitar in these patterns, or as zeros in cipher, indicating that no open strings are played. If you try to play in the F Phrygian Mode, you will find it extremely inconvenient; you will not be able, in general, to use the open strings of the guitar in your falsetas, and none of the primary chords are part of the primary chord progression in that key. Hence, the F Phrygian Mode is never used in the flamenco guitar.

This consideration limits the guitar to certain keys for the Phrygian Mode, and similar limitations apply to the major and minor scales.

The traditional tuning of the guitar and the relations of the notes of the scale to the notes of the open strings of the guitar determine the keys in which the flamenco guitar is played.

Hence, the keys in which flamenco music is most likely to be played are those in which all, or almost all, of the notes of the open strings of the guitar also occur as notes of the scale. This is only natural, since the flamenco guitar is essentially a folk art, and developed those keys which were naturally suited to the guitar.

Definition - The primary keys of the guitar for any scale are those which include all, or almost all of the notes of the open strings in the notes of the scale for that key.

The primary keys, then, depend on two things:

- (a) the interval relationship defining the scale
- (b) the notes of the open strings of the guitar

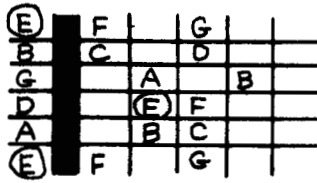
(The second point will become important when we change the tuning of the guitar for different effects. We shall encounter this in the Zambra in D and the Rondena in a more advanced course, but at present, they are outside the scope of our discussion.)

We now list the primary keys for the Phrygian Mode. There are five of them, and if you will turn back to Written Exercise 9 of Lesson 1 and examine the other keys, you will find them there.

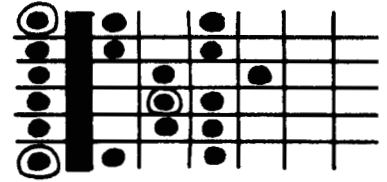
These keys have all, or at most are missing only one, of the notes of the open strings of the guitar.

	$\frac{1}{2}$ '   '   ' $\frac{1}{2}$ '   '		Note of open string not included
E Phrygian Mode	E   F   G   A   B   C   D   E		
A Phrygian Mode	A   A#   C   D   E   F   G   A	B	
B Phrygian Mode	B   C   D   E   F#   G   A   B		
F# Phrygian Mode	F#   G   A   B   C#   D   E   F#		
C# Phrygian Mode	C#   D   E   F#   G#   A   B   C#	G	

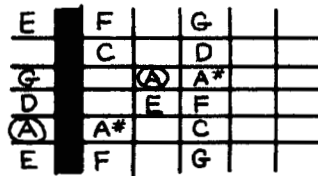
The notes of the Phrygian Mode in these keys form the following patterns in the open position:



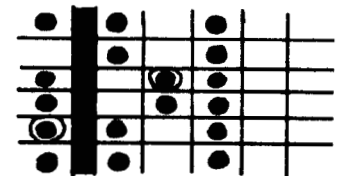
Notes of the  
E Phrygian Mode



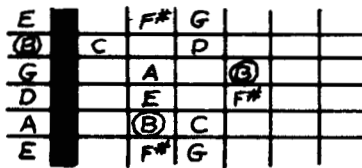
Pattern of the  
E Phrygian Mode



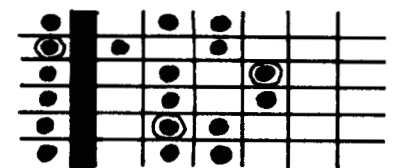
Notes of the  
A Phrygian Mode



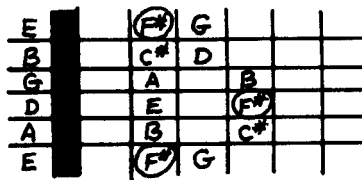
Pattern of the  
A Phrygian Mode



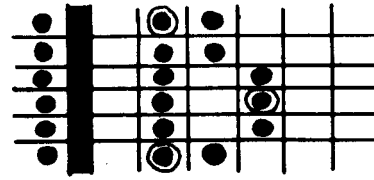
Notes of the  
B Phrygian Mode



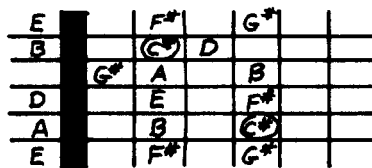
Pattern of the  
B Phrygian Mode



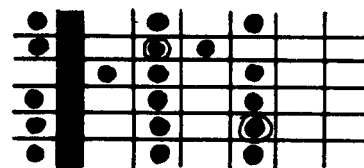
Notes of the  
F# Phrygian Mode



Pattern of the  
F# Phrygian Mode



Notes of the  
C# Phrygian Mode



Pattern of the  
C# Phrygian Mode

Hence, these are the keys in which nearly all flamenco in the Phrygian Mode is played. For example, Soleares is played in the E Phrygian Mode, Tientos is played in the A Phrygian Mode, Taranto is played in the F# Phrygian Mode, and Granadinas is played in the B Phrygian Mode. If we tune the G string to F# and the 6th (E) string to D, we can play Rondena in the C# Phrygian Mode. (Of course, the chords have to be changed because of the de-tuning.)

Our first classification of the toques of the flamenco guitar will be in terms of the key in which they are performed.

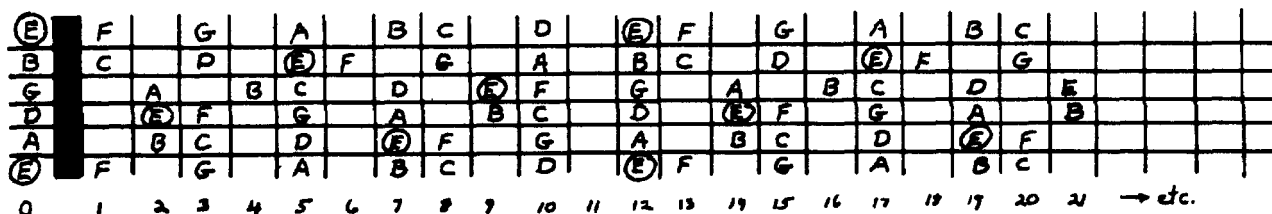
We shall provide this later in the lesson. We now explore the concept that unifies the theory we have presented up to now.

### The Infinite Guitar Neck

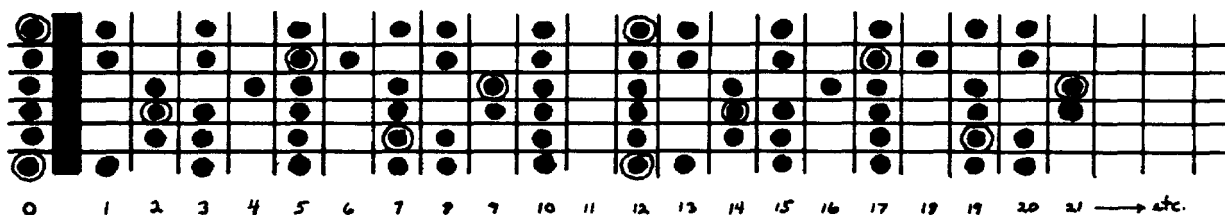
For many students, the upper neck of the guitar remains a mystery, as far as freedom of improvisation is concerned. Obviously, to memorize all the notes on the guitar neck would be a laborious task. However, if we can relate the primary keys of the Phrygian Mode, we can shorten our task from learning the notes of thirteen possible positions per octave to only five.

We proceed to do this with the concept of the Infinite Guitar Neck.

Let us, for the sake of argument, choose to begin our discussion with the Phrygian Mode in the key of E. Suppose we consider an arbitrarily long guitar neck, and write the notes for the E Phrygian Mode, but this time not stopping at the 5th fret, as we did for the open position, but continuing on up the guitar neck. We will then have the following:

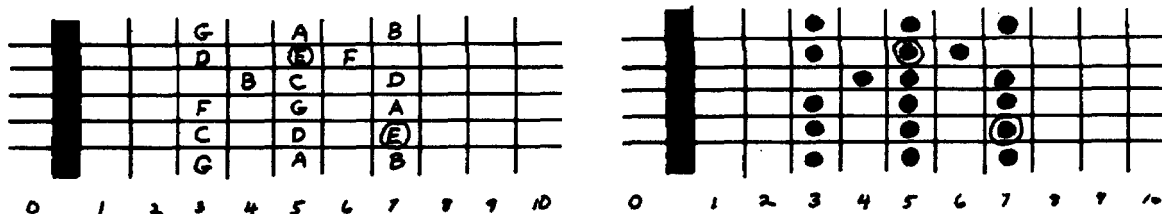


Note that we have circled the tonics, as before. Now let us consider the pattern that these notes make on the guitar neck, again circling the tonics:



Let us notice some things about the pattern just formed:

- (a) The pattern at the open position is the same as the pattern for the E Phrygian Mode. (This is obvious, since we began with the E Phrygian Mode.)
- (b) The pattern at the third position is the same as the pattern for the C# Phrygian Mode. Note that all the tonics that occur in this position, occur in the "C#" places (i.e., if the third fret is considered to be the "nut" of the guitar, the tonics occur where the C#'s would be), but that these tonics are actually E's. That is, if we play at the third position as if we are playing in the C# Phrygian Mode, we will actually be playing in the key of E.  
The pattern of the E Phrygian Mode at the third position is:



Compare this with the pattern for the C# Phrygian Mode in the open position.



- (c) The pattern at the fifth position is the same as the pattern for the B Phrygian Mode. Compare the tonics and patterns as for (b).
- (d) The pattern at the seventh position is the same as the pattern for the A Phrygian Mode. Compare the tonics and patterns as for (b).
- (e) The pattern at the tenth position is the same as the pattern for the F# Phrygian Mode. Compare the tonics and patterns as for (b).
- (f) The pattern at the twelfth position is the same as the pattern for the E Phrygian Mode, again. Compare the tonics and patterns as for (b). Note that we have progressed a full octave (thirteen positions, counting the open position.) The relationships now repeat themselves as we continue up the neck.

We see that if we were to lay the forefinger of our left hand flat across the guitar neck, pressing down all the strings,<sup>1</sup> we could play the notes of these patterns with the other three fingers of our left hand, since there are at most three notes (counting the note pressed down by the index finger as an "open" string) on a guitar string at each position.

Moreover, even though the patterns are those of the other keys, we will always actually be playing in the key of the E Phrygian Mode. The notes that appear as tonics in the patterns for their respective keys will actually be E's; that is, the tonics for the key we originally chose.

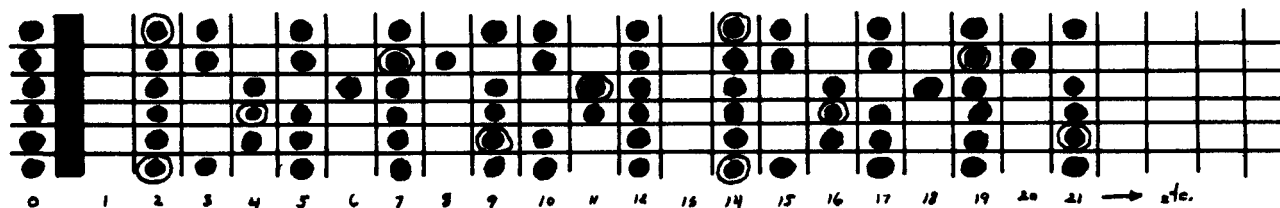
We could have begun with any of the primary keys. For example, if we begin with the F# Phrygian Mode instead of the E Phrygian Mode, we would have the following notes:

E	(F#) G	A	B	C#	D	E	(F#) G	A	B	C#												
B	C#	D	E	(F#) G	A	B	C#	D	E	(F#) G												
G	A	B	C#	D	E	(F#) G	A	B	C#	D	E											
D	E	(F#) G	A	B	C#	D	E	(F#) G	A	B												
A	B	C#	D	E	(F#) G	A	B	C#	D	E	(F#) G											
E	(F#) G	A	B	C#	D	E	(F#) G	A	B	C#												
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	→ etc.

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<sup>1</sup> This technique is called the bar (Fr. barre), cejilla, or capo, and is fundamental to the left hand.

This would give us the pattern:



Note that:

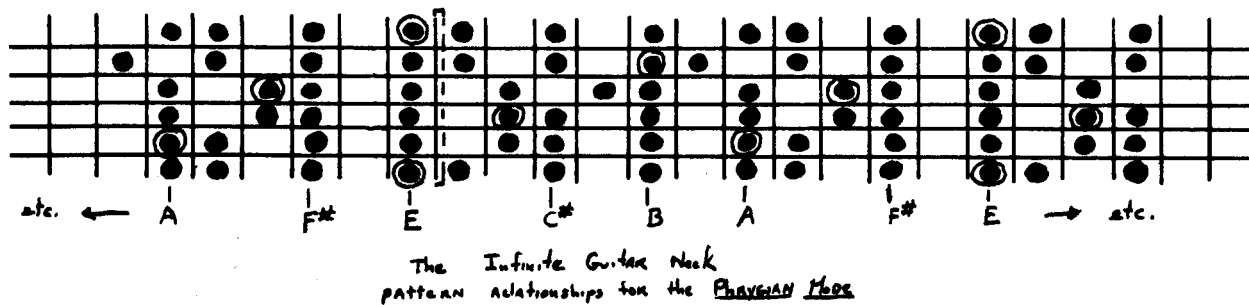
- (a) The pattern at the open position is the same as that for the F# Phrygian Mode.
- (b) The pattern at the second position is the same as that for the E Phrygian Mode. Compare the tonics and patterns as before.
- (c) The pattern at the fifth position is the same as that for the C# Phrygian Mode. Compare the tonics and patterns as before.
- (d) The pattern at the seventh position is the same as that for the B Phrygian Mode.
- (e) The pattern at the ninth position is the same as that for the A Phrygian Mode.
- (f) The pattern at the twelfth position is the same as that for the F# Phrygian Mode, again.

Hence, at the twelfth position we have covered an octave, as before, and the patterns again repeat as we continue farther up the guitar neck.

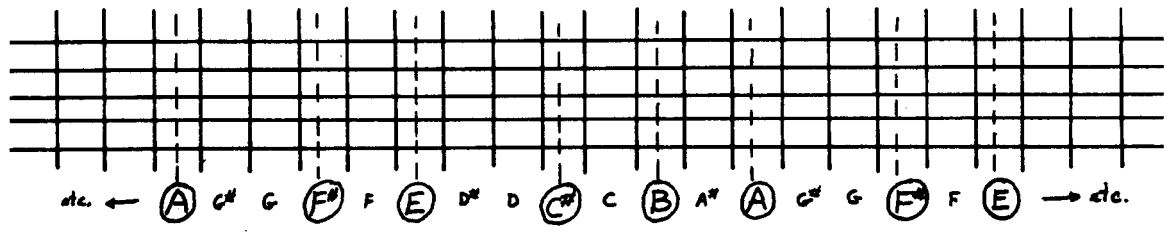
Note that what has changed is that all the patterns have merely shifted two positions to the right, but that the intervals between the patterns and their sequential ordering has remained constant.

Hence, once the key of the tone is chosen, the patterns are arranged automatically in the preceding manner. We then have a fourth interval relation; the interval relation between the patterns of the primary keys.

We can summarize this in the concept of the Infinite Guitar Neck. Consider again the patterns for the E Phrygian Mode. If we replace the nut of the guitar with a fret, and consider the guitar neck to extend in the left-hand direction, we can continue the patterns to the left as well.



The important point is the concept that interval relationships exist between the patterns. Depending on the key in which we are playing, we need only imagine the nut of the guitar to be the fret to the right of the key of position in which we wish to play, and the rest of the scale patterns are laid out to the right automatically:



Note that the patterns arrange from right to left in chromatic intervals; we have circled the primary keys.

This is important, not only because it opens up the whole range of the guitar for improvisation at the logical positions, but also because of the idea of transposition of musical ideas.

For example, if you are playing a Bulerias in the A Phrygian Mode, and an idea from a falseta you know in Soleares (E Phrygian Mode) occurs to you, you can bar on the fifth fret and develop that idea as if you were playing in E; you only have to change your fingering. But the physical relation of the notes of the idea will be the same as they were for Soleares; and since you are at the fifth position, you will actually be playing in the A Phrygian Mode. It is not even necessary to actually apply the bar - just imagine one at the appropriate position and finger accordingly.

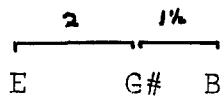
We realize that it probably seems a bit abstract at this point, and you'll have to acquire a bit of musical experience before the relevant applications of these ideas become apparent. We shall point out examples and relate falsetas to these ideas as we progress,

and if you keep trying to apply these concepts you will become more musically free as time goes on. These concepts are at the heart of the ability to improvise, and the musical relationships of flamenco are directly related to these concepts of position.

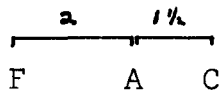
Barred Chords

In the first lesson, we defined the chord; in particular, three types of chords, the major, the minor, and the seventh chords. We also spoke of primary chords, which we defined as those chords which could be made in the open position with three fingers or less. We saw how the notes of the chord, together with the traditional tuning of the guitar, determined the physical configuration of the chord on the guitar neck.

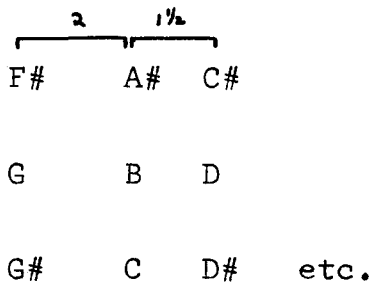
Consider the E major chord. The notes of the E major chord are:



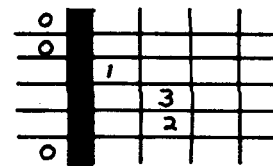
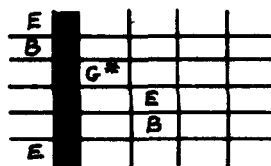
Now, suppose each note of the chord is raised one half-step in pitch. The notes will then be:



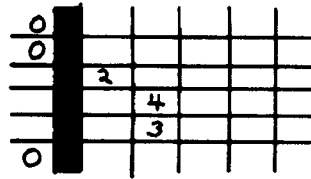
That is, we now have an F major chord. We got this chord by raising each note of the original E chord up by a half-step. We could, of course, continue the process, a half-step at a time:



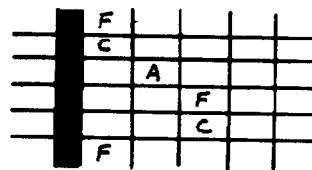
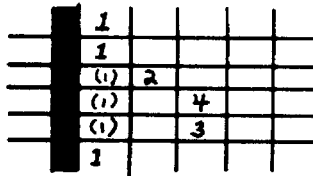
Now consider the position of the notes of the primary chord E and its fingering:



Since the chord is a primary chord, we can make it with the other three fingers of the left hand, leaving the first finger free:

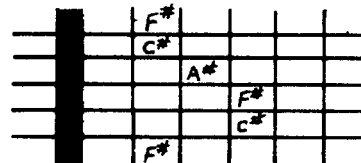
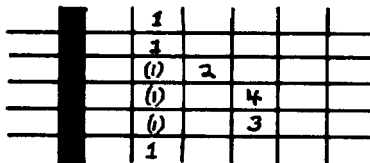


Now, let us move each finger to the right one fret on the guitar neck, and press down all the notes at the first fret by laying the index finger of the left hand flat across the guitar at the first position. This has the effect of raising all the notes of the original E chord one half-step. Hence, this gives us the F chord:

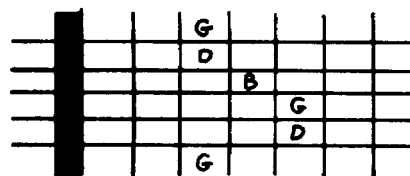
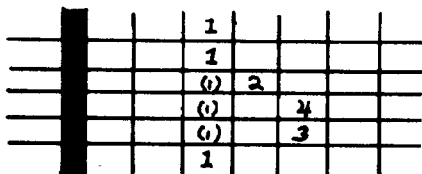


We can repeat the process, advancing to the right, fret by fret (i.e., half-step by half-step upwards in pitch), which gives us major chords ascending upwards in pitch chromatically.

One fret further gives us F#:



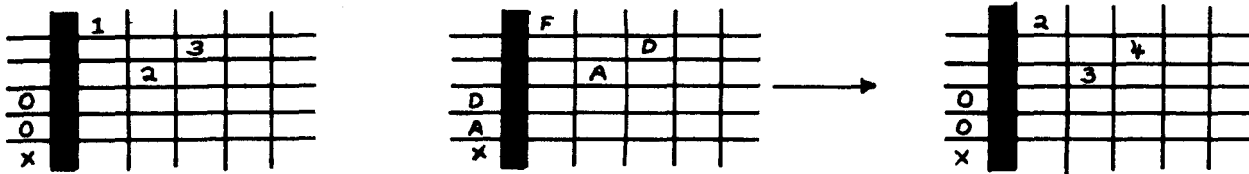
Once again gives us G:



and so forth. Hence, by using the primary E major chord, in connection with the bar and the chromatic nature of the guitar neck, we can make all the major chords; and when we have covered an octave, the chords will again repeat, only an octave higher in pitch.

For example, we note that the G we just made using the E chord as a basis is an alternative to the G that we exhibited as a primary chord (note that the letters of the notes are the same). If we take our barred E up two more positions, going to G# and A, we find that the A just made is an alternative to the A we exhibited as a primary chord.

We were able to use the bar because of the nature of the primary chord. We can use any of the primary chords in this manner. For example, we can begin with a Dm chord:



One fret up gives us a D#m:



Two frets up gives us an Em:



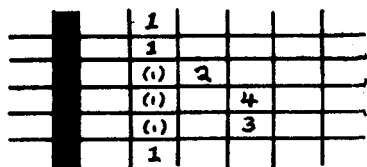
This Em is an alternative for the Em we exhibited as a primary chord.

We can continue as before, giving us Fm, F#m, Gm, G#m, Am, A#m, Bm, Cm, C#m, and finally, again, Dm. We have run through all the possible minor chords of the guitar neck, in this manner. (Note that the length of the guitar neck limits us, just as it did for the scale patterns.)

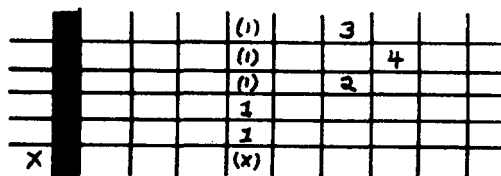
Hence, using any primary chord of a particular type (major, minor, or 7th), and by making the chord with the other three fingers and using the bar, we can make the chord of that type for any pitch, by progressing up the guitar neck chromatically to the appropriate position.

Since we have five primary major chords, we have five alternatives of every major chord on the guitar neck (per octave). Here are the five ways of making an F# major chord:

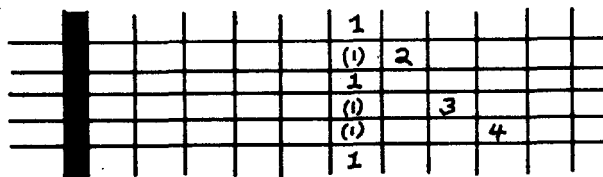
Using E:



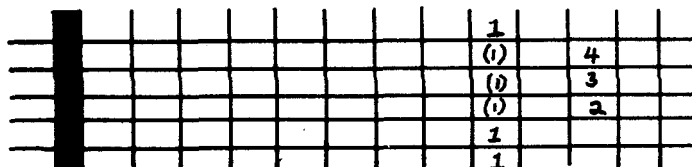
Using D:



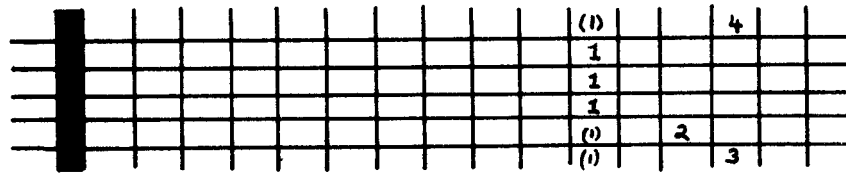
Using C:



Using A:

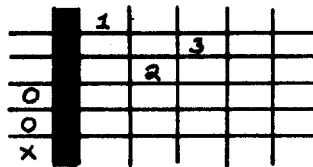


Using G:

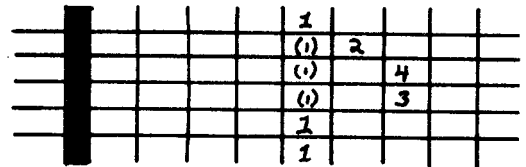


Note that we have used a different primary chord each time. Similarly, we have three primary minor chords, and hence, three ways of making every minor chord on the guitar neck. For example, here are the three ways of making a Dm:

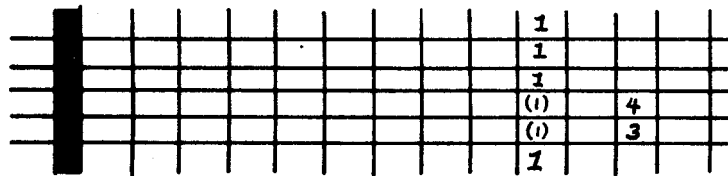
Using Dm:



Using Am:

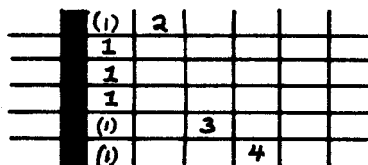


Using Em:

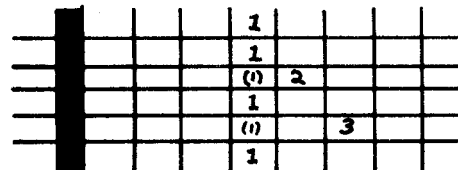


Finally, we have four primary 7th chords, and four ways of making every 7th chord on the guitar neck. Here are the four ways of making a G#7 chord:

Using G7:

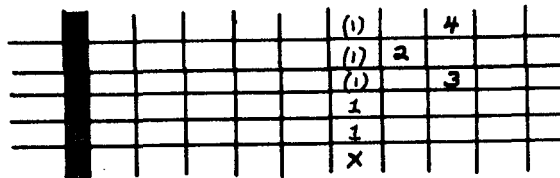


Using E7:

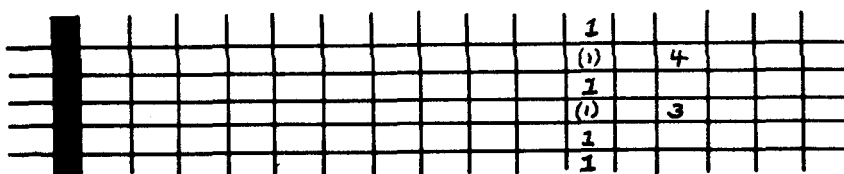




Using D7:



Using A7:



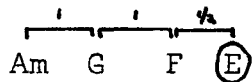
OR replace "4" with "3"  
and "3" with "2"  
for alternate  
fingerings

Note that the chords are the "same", because the same lettered notes are used to construct them, but "different", because the physical configurations of these notes are different.<sup>2</sup>

The use of barred chords as alternatives provides much of the color in the music of the flamenco guitar. Often the bar is the first stumbling block, as it is physically difficult to use at first; there are new muscles and strength that have to be developed. Nevertheless, it becomes second nature with practice, and is one of the most worthwhile left hand techniques you can learn.

### Classification of Flamenco Toques in Terms of Harmony (Key and Scale)

We mentioned in the first lesson that each type of scale has a primary chord progression for it; in the E Phrygian Mode, the progression was:



With the exception of the F chord, all the other chords in the progression were included among the primary chords.

<sup>2</sup> Alternative configurations of the same chord are sometimes called inversions.

If we examine the other primary keys of the Phrygian Mode in the open position, we find that the associated primary chord progressions are:

	$\overset{ }{\text{---}} \overset{ }{\text{---}} \overset{1/2}{\text{---}}$
A Phrygian Mode	Dm C A# (A)
B Phrygian Mode	Em D C (B)
F# Phrygian Mode	Bm A G (F#)
C# Phrygian Mode	F#m E D (C#)

In the A Phrygian Mode, all the chords are primary except A#. In the B Phrygian Mode, all the chords are primary except B. In the F# Phrygian Mode, Bm and F# are not primary, and in the C# Phrygian Mode, F#m and C# are not primary.

Now let us note an interesting fact; in only two of the primary keys for the Phrygian Mode are the tonic chords (i.e., the most musically important chords for the key), also primary chords (i.e., chords that can be made conveniently in the open position). These are the keys of E and A in the Phrygian Mode.

Therefore, most of the flamenco rhythms in the Phrygian Mode are in the keys of A and E, because of the convenience of resolving to the tonic chord in that key.

(Note also that the tonic notes for these keys occur as notes of open strings in the 5th and 6th strings, respectively, as well as the 1st string, in the case of the E Phrygian Mode.)

Traditionally, there is only one toque for the key of B (Phrygian Mode), the Granadinas. Similarly, the F# Phrygian Mode has only the Taranto and Tarantas, which are closely related, and the C# Phrygian has no toques in the traditional tuning; if the 6th and 3rd strings are de-tuned, the Rondeña is played in this key. (We mention the C# Phrygian Mode as a primary key because of its use as a pattern in connection with the other keys.)

Hence, the scale structure determines the primary keys of the flamenco guitar, and the nature of the tonic chords and notes determines which of these are most often used. Again, this is only natural because flamenco is a folk art, and depends on the dynamics possible when a resolution can be effected conveniently in the open position. Concert guitarists make up solos in odd keys of course, but even concert flamenco sticks pretty much to the traditional keys. However much fine fingerwork they exhibit on the upper neck of the guitar, there is still a strong relation of the kind of music performed to the natural structure of the guitar.

We shall see later in the course that the major and minor scales also have similar considerations. We now exhibit the classification of the flamenco toques in terms of the scales and keys in which they are generally interpreted. This is a Harmonic Classification, and later we shall classify the toques in terms of their Rhythm Structures, or Compas. Hence, you will notice that the same toques are played in several keys. This implies that the Rhythm Structure is a more important determining factor in classification.

Classification of Flamenco Toques  
In Terms of Harmonic Structure

Phrygian Mode

<u>E</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
Bulerias	Alboreas	Granadinas
Caña and Polo	Bulerias	Media Granadinas
Danza Mora	Jaleos	
Fandangos Grandes	Marianas	
Fandanguillos (Fandangos de Huelva)	Playeras	
Livianas	Sevillanas	
Malagueñas	Siguiriyas	
Peteneras	Solea por Bulerias	
Serranas	Tangos	
Sevillanas	Tientos	
Soleares		
Verdiales		
Zambra		
Zorongo		

<u>F#</u>	<u>C#</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>G# (rarely)</u>
Cartageneras	Rondeña	Zambra	Tarantas
Tarantas			
Taranto			

Major Scale

<u>A</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>D</u>
Alegrias	Cantinas	Romeras	Sevillanas	Sevillanas
Bulerias	Caracoles	Rosas		
Chufas	Garrotin	(Alegrias por Rosas)		
Columbianas	Sevillanas	Sevillanas		
Guajiras	Zapateado	Mirabras		
Sevillanas				
Tanguillo				

Minor Scale

<u>Am</u>	<u>Em</u>	<u>Dm</u>
Bulerias	Bulerias	Sevillanas
Farruca	Rhumba Gitana	
Rhumba Gitana	Sevillanas	
Sevillanas		

Note: Some toques have parts in other scales; e.g., Alegrias has a traditional sequence in Am. Also, some guitarists have created solos in keys not traditional; e.g., Sabicas' Zapateado en Re (D).

Chord Progressions

We return to the primary chord progression for the E Phrygian Mode; i.e.,

$$Am \longrightarrow G \longrightarrow F \longrightarrow E$$

Since we now have three ways of making each minor chord, and five ways of making each major chord, we now have quite a variety of ways of playing this chord progression. For example, if we label the fret at which the equivalent chord is barred by a superscript (e.g., an F is made by barring an E at the first position, i.e.,  $F = E^1$ ; an F is also made by barring a C at the fourth position, i.e.,  $F = C^4$ ), we have as alternatives to the primary progression:

1.  $Am \longrightarrow G \longrightarrow F \longrightarrow E$
2.  $Em^5 \longrightarrow E^3 \longrightarrow E^1 \longrightarrow E$
3.  $Em^5 \longrightarrow D^5 \longrightarrow C^5 \longrightarrow C^4$
4.  $Dm^7 \longrightarrow D^5 \longrightarrow D^3 \longrightarrow D^2$
5.  $Dm^7 \longrightarrow C^7 \longrightarrow D^3 \longrightarrow E$

There are many such possibilities; the chords under the Am column are all different versions of an Am chord, using the other primary chords as the basis. All the progressions will have the sound of the Andalusian Cadence, and all will have a different "color", musically.

Therefore, when you are learning a particular toque, you should learn two things immediately:

- (1) The positions of all the chords relevant to the particular scale and key in which you are playing.
- (2) The configuration of the patterns of notes for that particular scale and key.

All this will take some time, of course, and we do not expect you to absorb the chords and scales relevant to flamenco in a week, a month, or even a year. But you should firmly understand the principles involved, and practice with conscious reference to them, so that you can grow to be as musically free as you possibly can.

## II Basic Rhythm (Cont.)



### The Use of the Metronome

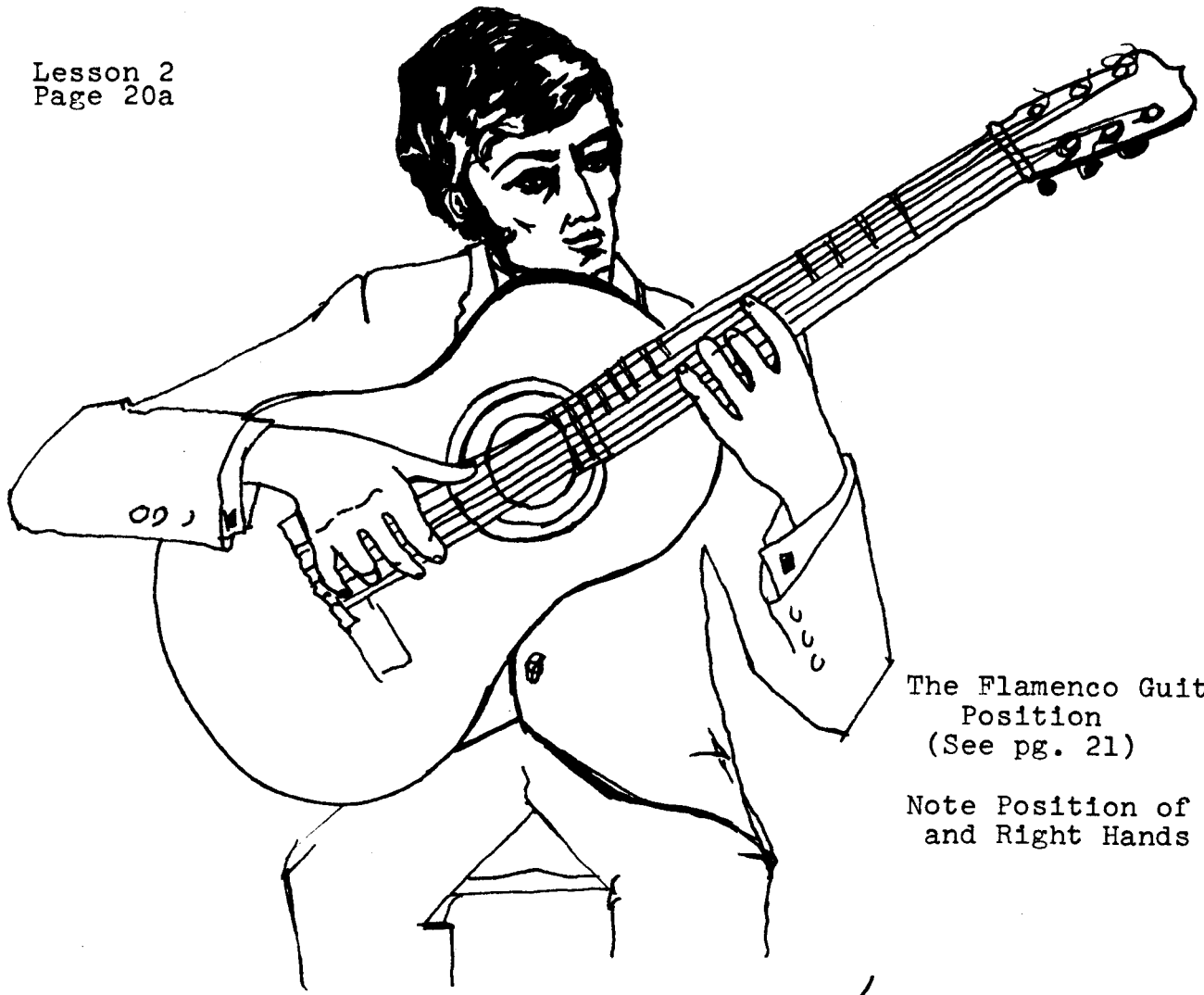
Since very few of you have the opportunity of living in a situation where there is a surrounding environment of rhythm, it is important to know how to use an artificial source of rhythmic reference; for example, the metronome. Rhythm is a very subjective thing, especially if you are practicing alone, and you'll have to develop your innate sense of rhythm. Many students who practice independently in isolated situations for years, learning falsetas from records, and so forth, are surprised to find upon encountering a dancer that they are completely non-plused by what she is doing.

The metronome is highly effective for several reasons. It slows you down, forcing you to develop control over your technique. The metronome does not falter if you make a mistake; forcing you to keep the melody and compas going, and helping you develop an ear so that even if you make a mistake with your hands, you'll still be able to hear the falseta progressing in your head, so you can come back in later on in the compas. It helps you develop your sense and perception of the rhythmic divisions in flamenco, so you can eventually make a clear distinction between singlets, doublets, triplets, etc., both in listening to outside sources, and in your own music.

Therefore, as we progress, we shall explain how to use the metronome, both for technique practice, and in relation to the compas. Then, after you have a sure control of your technique, you'll be able to control the rhythmic shading that lends your own character to each interpretation, as well as accompany effectively.

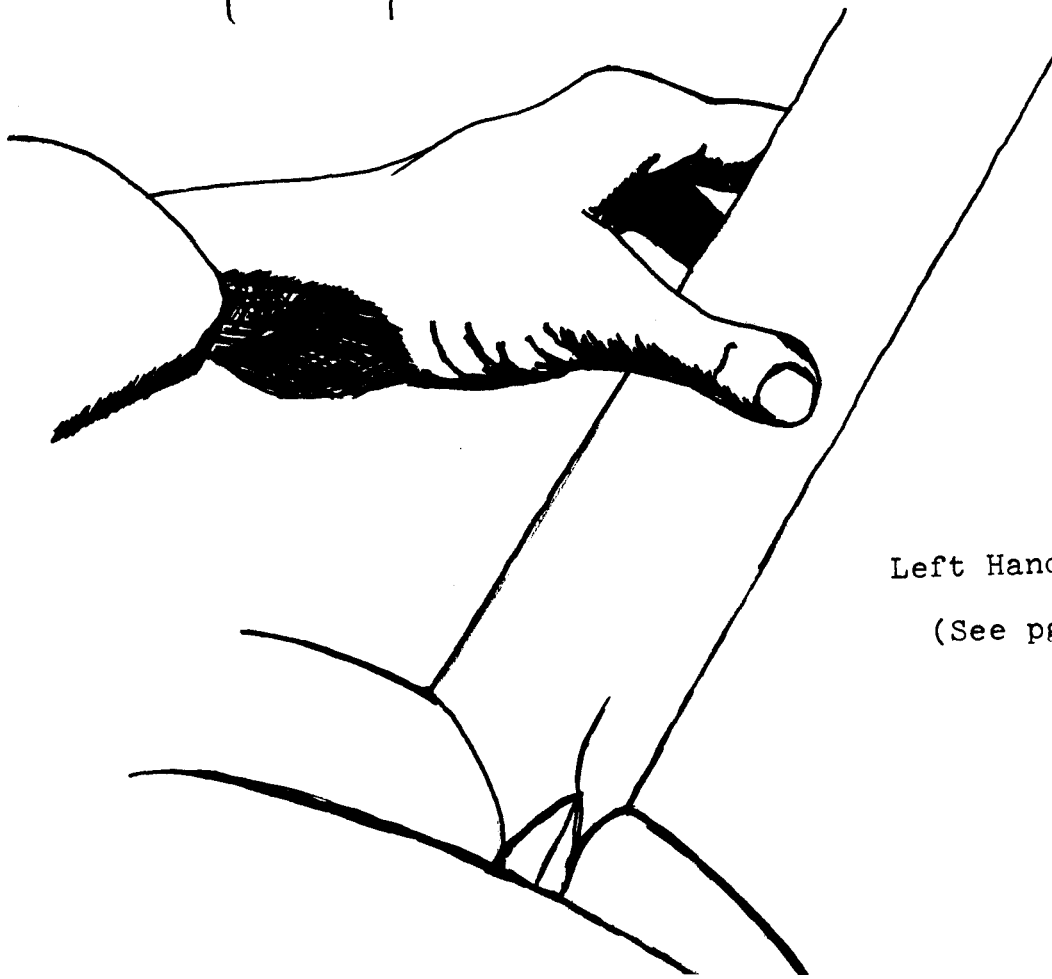
Of course, a balance must be struck - you should also try to express yourself from the beginning, or your playing will sound computerized, which is the other extreme. But you should remember that expression in the rhythmic toques comes from dynamics and accentuation, and not by lack of rhythm. Serious musicians are unanimous on the constructive use of an external rhythm source, be it dancing, palmas, other musicians, or the metronome. The latter, if used effectively in private practice, can help you develop your compas in short order.

Simply stated, the metronome ticks on the beat, or on every other beat, depending on the toque. The tick corresponds to the tapping of the foot, which also should be developed as a medium reference between a rhythm source that is wholly external, and your own internal sense of rhythm as actuated by your fingers. So - when practicing, set the metronome going, coordinate your foot with it, and begin playing. Coordinating your foot and hands to the metronome will probably be difficult at first, but the effort will be more than amply rewarded.



The Flamenco Guitar  
Position  
(See pg. 21)

Note Position of Left  
and Right Hands



Left Hand Position  
(See pg. 22)

### III Basic Technique (Cont.)

#### The Flamenco Position

The traditional way of holding the flamenco guitar is in the seated position, with the guitar on your right thigh, and the neck extending upwards across your body from right to left. The body of the guitar is held with the pressure of the right arm above the elbow, so that the left hand is free to roam the fingerboard. The right fore-arm extends diagonally down, and the right wrist is cocked so that the knuckles of the right hand are parallel to the guitar strings.

You'll probably find this position difficult at first, not only because of the wrist and hand position (which will probably be painful as you develop strength), but also because it will be difficult to see what you are doing. So in the beginning, strike a happy medium - devote some of your time to concentrating on the music, with the guitar held in the most comfortable position for you, and some of the time to playing the music in this position, when you are concentrating on developing the physical capacity to play in this position.

(Once you have memorized the positions, and associated the sound of the notes visually with their position on the guitar neck, you should then develop the ability to play without looking; i.e., to associate the sound with the physical feeling of the note positions of the left hand. Again, however, this is something to work for in the future.)

#### Right Hand Position

Generally, for techniques making individual use of the fingers and the thumb, the wrist is cocked so that the knuckles of the hand are parallel to the guitar strings, and the fingers strike the strings perpendicularly. The thumb extends as horizontally as possible, and should operate independently of the rest of the right hand. This means that when notes are struck with the thumb, the wrist should not move. This, however, is a concept of technique applicable primarily to the concert guitarist. Many guitarists "collapse" their hands, so the notes are struck with more of a wrist motion. If you plan to go on, you should try to develop independence. It is outside the scope of this course to develop the philosophy of the right hand as it pertains to the concert guitar; however, we shall try to indicate exercises that you can practice if you wish to go on, but can ignore if you merely wish to play for your own amusement and juergas.

### Left Hand Position

The thumb of the left hand extends perpendicularly across the back of the guitar neck, with the thumb in the center. The fingers arch over and descend vertically on the guitar strings. The neck is never cradled between the thumb and index finger, and the thumb is never used to make the bass notes of chords, as in blues and jazz guitar. The fingers are arched so that independence can be developed and each note felt as it is played.

### Technique in General

We now begin a discussion of the actual techniques of the flamenco guitar. These fall into two basic categories of left-hand techniques and right-hand techniques.

Each technique will be analyzed in terms of the basic rhythm divisions; i.e., in singlets, doublets, triplets, etc. They then will be applied to the compas of the toques under discussion.

You should feel free to apply these techniques whenever you can to each additional toque, as you learn it.

For the present, we can divide techniques into two categories; chording techniques and melodic techniques.

Definition - A chording technique is one which is performed with the right hand while the fingers of the left hand are held on a fixed chord. A melodic technique is one in which the fingers of the left hand move individually, picking out the notes struck with the right hand.

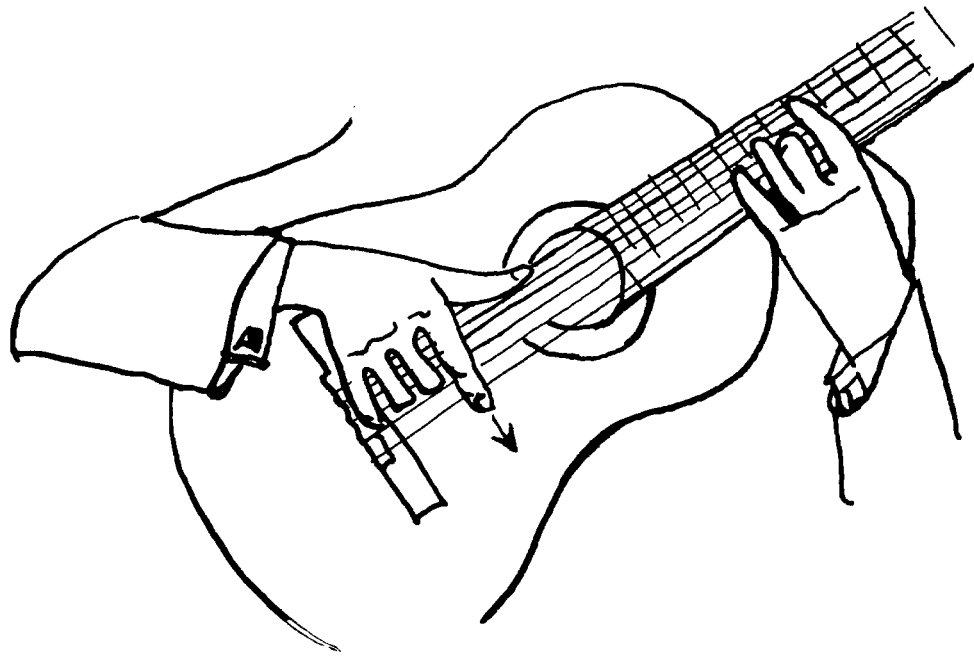
(In actual performance, there are many techniques that have characteristics of both kinds. For the present, we shall restrict our discussion to the categories above.)

We have already discussed chording, scales, and the bar as examples of left-hand techniques. We now turn our attention to the right hand.

### Rasgueados

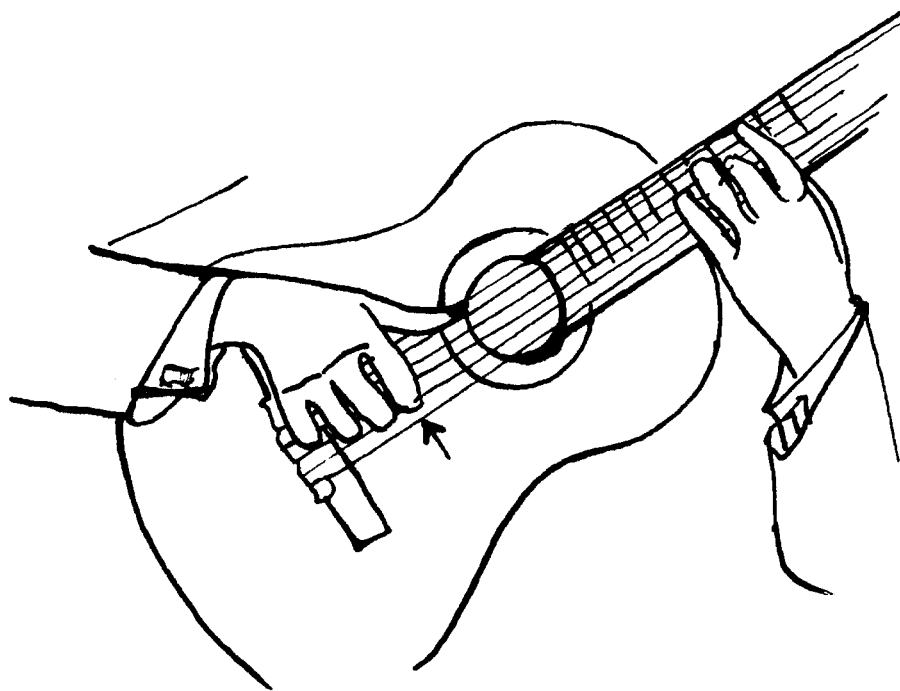
The most fundamental right-hand technique of the flamenco guitar is the rasgueado (the word comes from the Spanish verb rasgear - to scratch). This is because it is associated with the most fundamental left-hand technique, that of chording. Together, these two techniques provide the backbone and heart of the flamenco toques.





Downstroke for Singlet Rasgueado

(See pg. 23)



Upstroke (for Doublet Rasgueado)

(See pg. 23)

Definition - The rasgueado is a chording technique performed by striking all or most of the strings simultaneously with an upward or downward stroke with the fingers or the thumb.

The strings are not struck exactly in unison, of course, since the stroke is across the strings. Nevertheless, the stroke is performed so fast that for all practical purposes the notes are simultaneous, and hence the strokes of the rasgueados have the same time equivalents as notes. There are singlet rasgueados, doublet rasgueados, triplet rasgueados, etc.

Singlet and Doublet Rasgueados

We have already discussed the simplest form of rasgueado, the downstroke and upstroke with the index finger; we indicate this in our notation by:



Downstroke

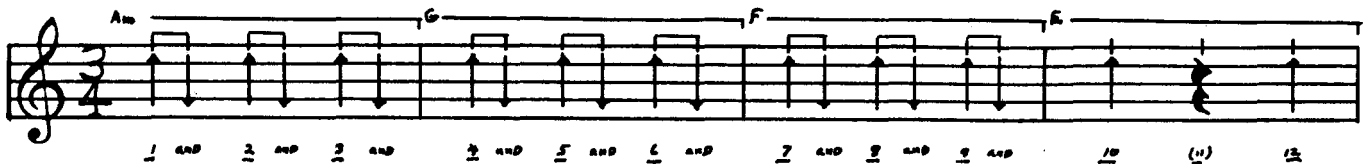


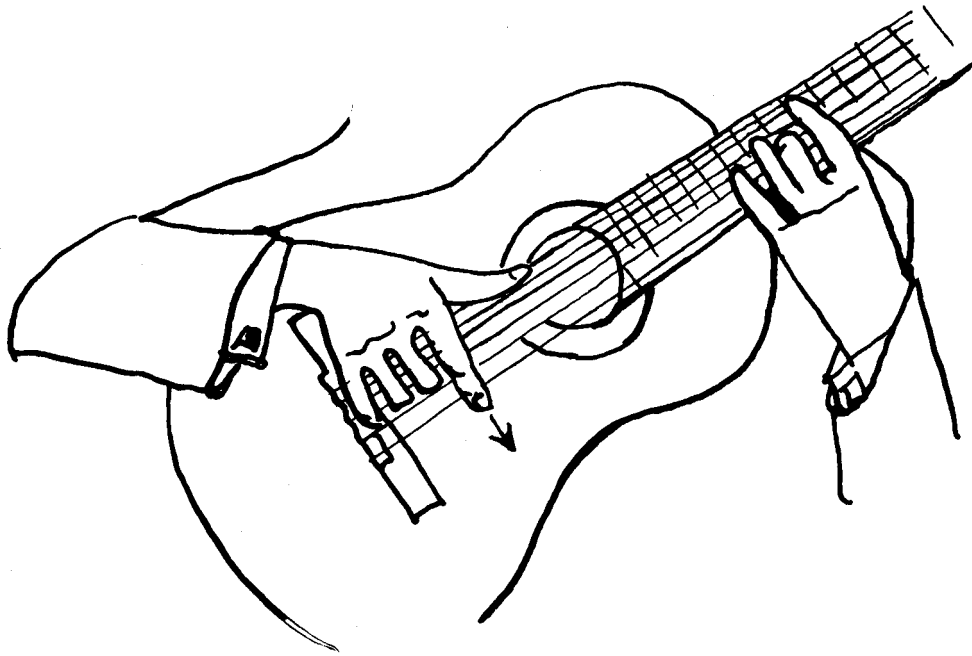
Upstroke

In general, the downstroke is used for singlets; e.g.,



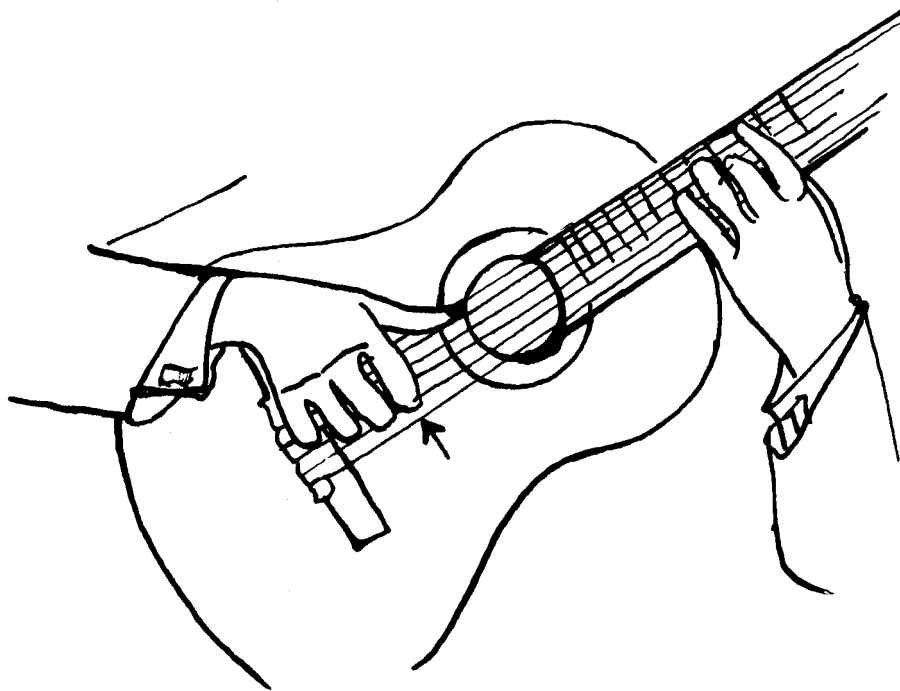
The up and down strokes are used together to give doublets, with the downstroke falling on the beat; e.g.,





Downstroke for Singlet Rasgueado

(See pg. 23)



Upstroke (for Doublet Rasgueado)

(See pg. 23)

### Quadruplet Rasgueado

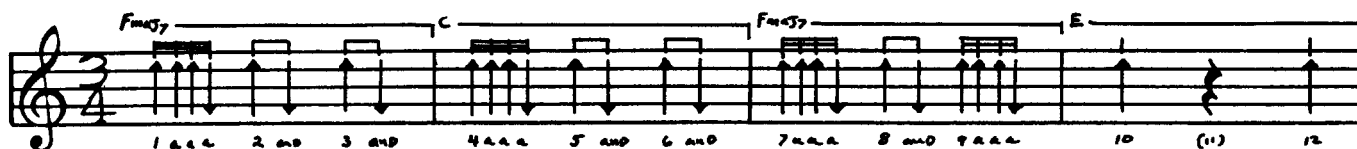
The next important rasgueado uses the index, ring, middle, and then index fingers to produce a quadruplet rasgueado; the ring, middle, and index fingers follow each other in succession in downstrokes, followed by an upstroke with the index finger. (Note: rasgueados will always be indicated by vertical arrows.)



Since the wrist is cocked, with knuckles parallel to the strings, the fingers strike the strings perpendicularly.

You'll probably find it difficult at first to get your fingers independent enough to produce the quadruplet sound clearly, especially the first two strokes of the rasgueado. This is because the ring finger is usually the weakest and most dependent of the fingers (i.e., it is more difficult to move without moving the adjacent middle finger.) But always work for the quadruplet sound, rather than just a fuzzy blur of notes.

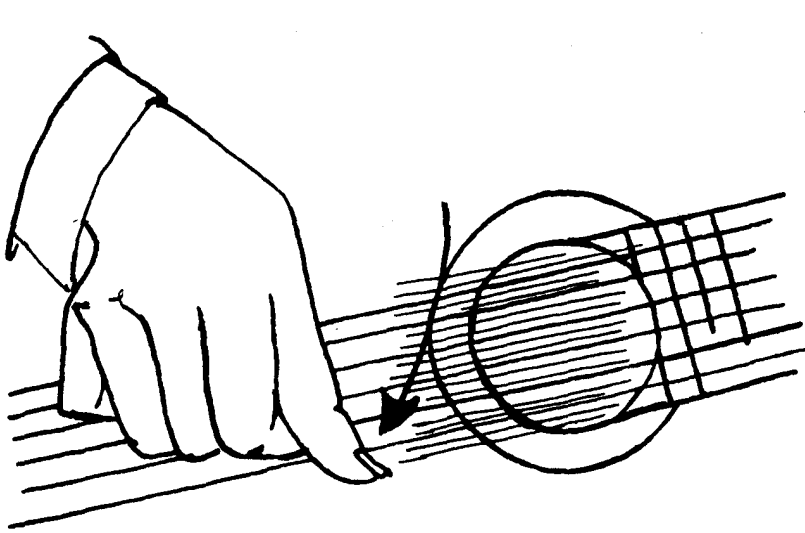
Here is an example of the use of the quadruplet rasgueado in the basic chording compas of the Soleares:



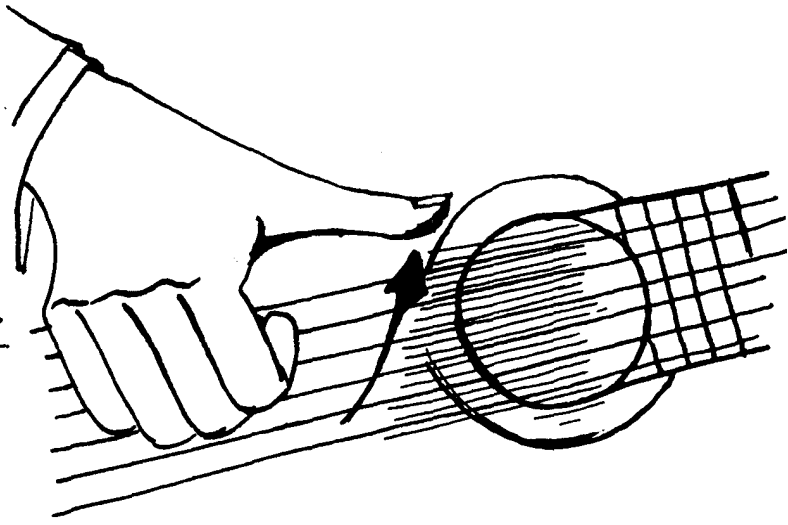
We can insert the rasgueado anywhere we like in the compas structure. Here is a variation of the above:



Chording Techniques of the Thumb (See pg. 25)

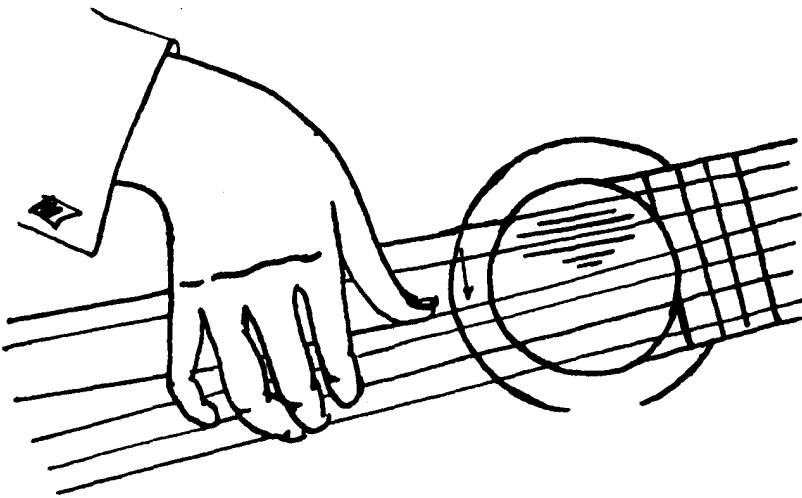


Downstroke



Upstroke

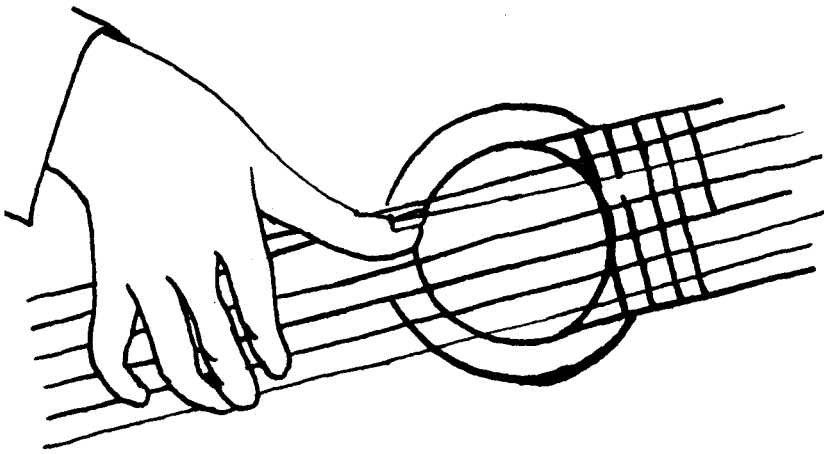
Melodic Techniques of the Thumb



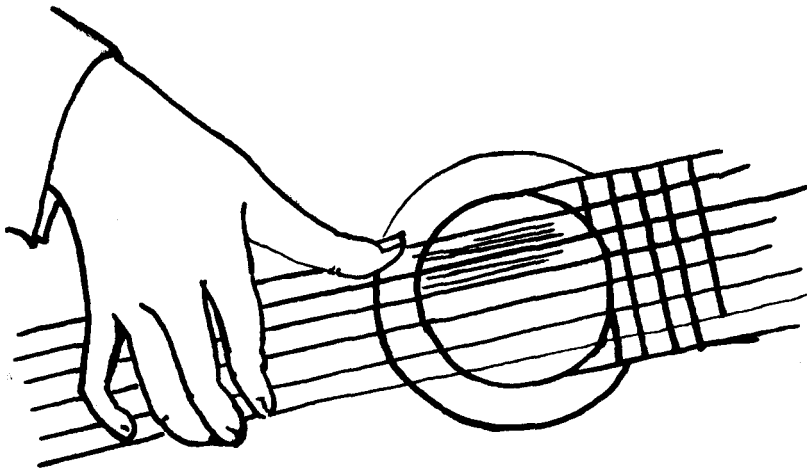
Downstroke on the fifth string



Melodic Techniques of the Thumb (cont.)

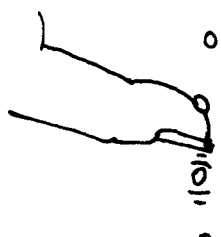
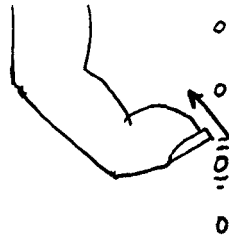
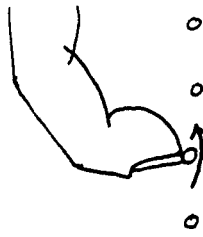
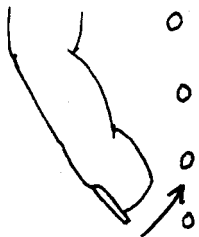


Upstroke on the fifth string  
(Prior to release)



Upstroke on the fifth string  
(Immediately after release)

Index Finger Techniques  
(See pg. 26)



Free Stroke

Hammer Stroke

## Basic Thumb Technique

Your thumb can be used either as a chording technique or as a melodic technique. It has four fundamental actions:

### Chording Techniques

- (1) Downward across all the strings simultaneously, striking a chord.
- (2) Upward, with the back of the thumbnail across all the strings simultaneously, striking a chord.  
(Hence, these can be thought of as rasgueados.)

### Melodic Techniques

- (1) Downwards on an individual string, striking the note, and coming to rest on the string below it.
- (2) Upwards with the back of the thumbnail on an individual string, striking a single note.

The downward stroke of the chording technique is often used to accentuate a particular beat of the compas. We will give examples of how to use these techniques and exercises to develop them as the course progresses. For the present, let us consider the downstroke of the thumb, of the melodic technique.

There are two ways of performing this technique in general use; you can either pluck the string in such a way that the thumb swivels away from the guitar after the stroke, or by driving the thumb downwards with a positive, forceful action, snapping it across the string, and coming to rest on the string below it. The first way is called the free stroke and is applicable to the classic guitar; the second is called the hammer stroke, or rest stroke, and is applicable to flamenco.

The hammer stroke should be developed as strongly as possible for the flamenco guitar, and should be used whenever possible.

This is because strength and volume are essential to the dynamics of the flamenco guitar.

The hammer stroke is generally used to strike individual notes in singlets or doublets. It is also used in the next basic technique we shall discuss, the ligado.

### The Ligado

The ligado is a melodic technique of the left hand, and is performed by striking a note held by a finger of the left hand, and:

- (1) Removing that finger to sound the next note (without striking again with the right hand), either an open string, or a note held with another finger. (This is called "pulling off" in folk terminology.)
- (2) Pressing a finger on to sound the next note (without striking again with the right hand), either from an open string, or from a note already held with another finger. (This is called "hammering on" in folk terminology.)

This is a fast technique, and is generally used for triplets, quadruplets, quintuplets, and even sextuplets; rarely, for doublets, and almost never for singlets. We indicate this in cipher notation by a curved line bridging the notes ligadoed; the first note of the grouping is the note struck. It is obvious that ligadoed notes for any one stroke with the right hand all lie on the same string.

P and a 2 and a 3 and a 4 and a 5 and a 6 and a 7 and a 8 and a 9 and a 10 and a 11 and a 12 and a

The thumb of the right hand is used to pick the single notes and the first notes of the ligados. Note that the falseta is in triplets for the first 9 counts and in doublets for the last three. The last three counts use the technique we describe next. Remember, coordinate the first note of each grouping with the metronome or your foot.

### Basic Hammer Stroke with the Index Finger

The concepts of free and rest stroke apply equally to the fingers of the right hand; in the free stroke, the finger plucks in a semi-circular fashion, moving up and away from the guitar after the stroke. In the hammer stroke, the finger snaps upward perpendicularly across the string, coming to rest on the string above.

As before, the rest, or hammer stroke should be used whenever possible, and should be developed strongly.



(It is almost always possible, but there are certain applications for concert playing that are outside the scope of this course.) The volume and dynamics of flamenco require as much force as can be developed (with control and clarity). It is important to develop strength, because you can then control your dynamics. You have to develop the muscles of your hand. When you have these muscles, you can then work for control, (use a metronome), and finally for control of volume. But develop those muscles first!

#### IV The Soleares

At this point, we can begin a serious discussion of the Soleares as a toque. For a discussion of the role of the Soleares in the art of flamenco, we refer you to The Art of Flamenco, by D. E. Pohren, an excellent book on this subject. We shall concern ourselves with the structure of the music.

The best way to approach the structure of the Soleares is to begin by discussing the nature of the dance. The original Soleares developed out of the juerga situation, where there was no essential structure to the toque as a whole except the accompaniment of the cante (or song). The rest was up to individual creativity and the rapport of the surrounding environment.

However, the juerga situation is still pretty much of a closed circle, usually, and the student is expected to know a great deal before he can be accepted. In addition, the juerga situation is dying out, a tragedy to all concerned; largely because the rhythms and tradition are difficult to learn and keep alive in an electronic chrome-bedecked civilisation.

Hence, it is better to discuss the basic structure of the toque as it is related to the dance, as you are more likely to encounter dancers outside of Spain, than singers. Also, the keeping of compas is much more defined for the dance; and we will include the traditional palmas, or hand-claps, as we go along, so you can teach your non-guitarist friends to play the palmas as you play the guitar, which is at least a beginning.

Certain ideas relating to arrangements have become more or less common. The basic form of the Soleares usually begins with an introduction on the guitar, followed by a series of falsetas and/or coplas (verses) of the cante, followed by a building up in speed and dynamics of the chording compas, and finally ending when the dancer signals a llamada,<sup>3</sup> or call. (The llamada on the guitar is a characteristic sequence of chording compas, conforming to the steps of the dancer, and suddenly ending on the 10th count, at which point the dancer poses.)

The guitar slowly and lyrically resumes playing, perhaps the singer sings another copla, the chording compas begins to build again, and the cycle is repeated.

---

3 From llamar - to call.

This can be done as many times as the participants feel are appropriate to the interpretation, usually 3 or 4 times. After this comes the finale, which the dancers perform either as a final llamada, by dancing off-stage, or by breaking into the Bulerias (another toque we shall discuss in subsequent lessons).

The structure of the Soleares as a whole, when accompanying the dance, is cyclic, and the dancer signals the end of each cycle by means of llamadas (or desplantes, a similar concept).

Now, of course, falsetas can take the place of the song, in a guitar solo, and it is outside the scope of this course to teach the accompaniment of the song and dance. But you can (and concert guitarists often do) structure your toque after the same form, beginning with falsetas interspersed with chording compas (as you feel moved), building up in speed and dynamics, terminating with a llamada, and beginning again.

Hence, we shall approach the Soleares from these aspects; that is, chording compas, falsetas, llamada, and other traditional structures within the toque (Paseo Castellano, Escobilla, desplante, and other concepts relative to the toque.) Furthermore, this approach will be used in the subsequent rhythms as we progress.

### Chording Compas

The most important aspect of playing, as we emphasize again, is the keeping of the compas, or cyclic rhythm, and the most fundamental way to do this is by means of chording compas. We presented the basic chording compas at the end of the first lesson, and we here present several variations, using some new chord progressions:

1.

2.

3.

4.

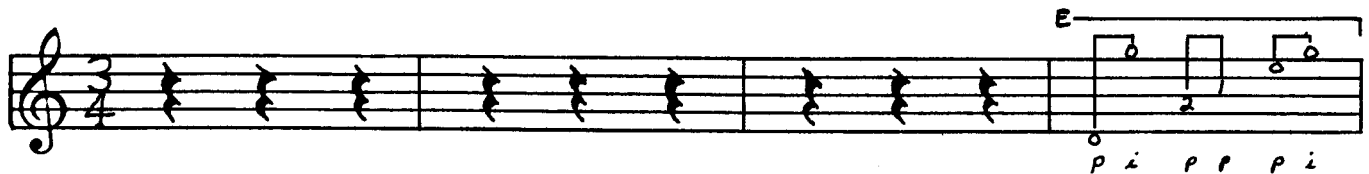
Note that we exhibit these as individual 12-count cycles; however, you should be able to keep them going, one right after the other. Note also, that the music resolves to the tonic E chord on the 10th count.

If you wish, you may tap on the guitar with your ring finger on the 11th count, instead of resting. (This tapping technique is called the Golpe, and is a way of keeping rhythm, both when actually playing and when resting. We'll return to a discussion of the technique in a subsequent lesson.) We indicate this by a "T" (for "tap") in the notation.

### Falsetas

When you are interpreting the Soleares, you can insert falsetas in your toque as you feel moved, but when practicing individual falsetas, always precede and follow them by chording compases (unless you are concentrating on a particular part). It is a good idea to pay particular attention to coordinating them with your foot and metronome.

The Soleares falseta has a traditional resolution on the 10th count; this is a musical phrase which can always be played as the ending of a falseta. We give the basic phrase:



There are many variations of this, but they are generally some chording variation on the E chord (the tonic). This way of resolving melody is common throughout the art of the flamenco guitar.

The Soleares falseta has, in general, three kinds of phrasing:

- (1) A phrase extending the whole cycle from counts 1 - 10, and resolving to E on the 10th count. (The 10th count is the last note of the phrase.)
- (2) A sequence of four phrases, from counts 1 - 3, 4 - 6, 7 - 9, and resolution on 10 ( - 12), as before. You have already seen this type of phrasing in our presentation of chording compas.
- (3) A special case of type 2, which consists of a sequence of two phrases, 1 - 6, and 7 - 12, followed by a second cycle of type (1). The two short phrases resolve on counts 4 and 10, respectively. (This is sometimes referred to as a "question and answer" falseta; two "questions", followed by an "answer".)

Here is an example of a falseta of type (1):

Here is an example of a falseta of type (2):

Here is an example of a falseta of type (3):

The Soleares typically begins with a traditional falseta; here is the most basic variation:

This falseta is also often used to accompany the Escobilla, or taconeo (heelwork) section of the Soleares dance.

There are endless variations of this, and we'll present more as we progress. Finally, we present the llamada:



The toque should be practiced in the form: falsetas → chording compas → llamada. We will give you falsetas to improve your knowledge of the guitar; each falseta will be presented as either traditional or illustrating an aspect or aspects of technique or music. We will also give you exercises so you can begin to make up your own, so that eventually you will have a thorough knowledge of your instrument.

In the next lesson, we shall continue our discussion of the Soleares, introducing new techniques and applying them in the form of falsetas. We shall also discuss briefly the accompaniment of the cante, in terms of the chord progressions and phrasing used.

## V Practice Exercises

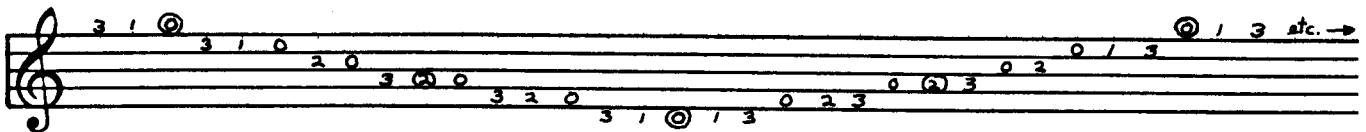
Note: Again, these are exercises that should be practiced until they are absorbed, which may take months, or even years. So return to them again and again as you progress.

1. It goes without saying that you should practice all the falsetas and chord progressions given in the text. Work slowly and carefully, and strive for rhythmic precision. To begin with, set your metronome for about 80 beats per minute, and work up gradually in speed. But practice slowly every day.

2. Using the hammer stroke of the thumb, practice the patterns of the primary keys of the Phrygian Mode, in the open position. Get your fingers accustomed to them as soon as possible.

3. Since you are learning the Soleares (that is, the E Phrygian Mode), after you have learned the patterns for all the primary keys as in exercise 2, learn the scales using the bar in the appropriate positions for the E Phrygian Mode, practicing them up and down the neck in sequence. E.g.,

Open Position  
(E Phrygian Mode Pattern)

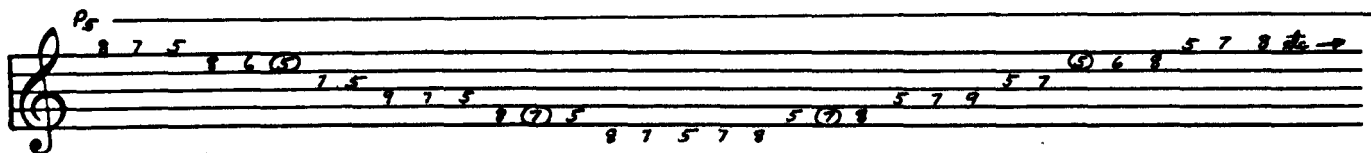


Bar at 3rd Position  
(C# Phrygian Mode Pattern)

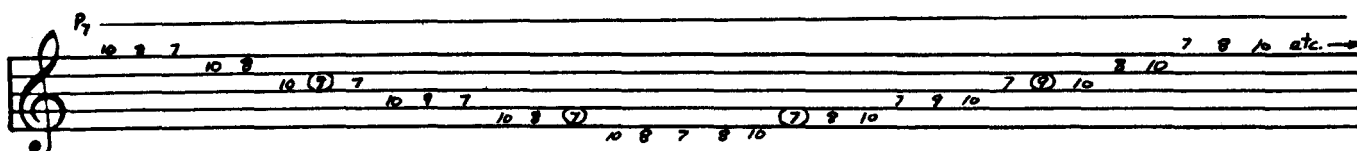


Note: When we are at a position other than the open position (barred or otherwise) we will indicate this, as in the above example, by P<sub>3</sub> (P for position), unless the fingering is obvious.

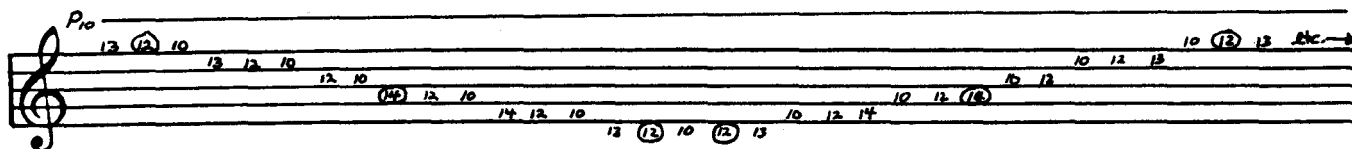
Bar at the 5th Position  
(B Phrygian Mode Pattern)



Bar at the 7th Position  
(A Phrygian Mode Pattern)



Bar at the 10th Position  
(F# Phrygian Mode Pattern)



Repeat the sequence backwards, down the guitar neck.

If you keep a full bar, this will develop strength in your left hand (it'll probably hurt at first, but grit your teeth and keep at it!) It will also familiarize you with the sounds of the notes in the patterns that you'll be using for falsetas in this key. We have circled the tonics in the patterns, and you should pay special attention to their location.

4. Once you have learned the patterns for Exercise 3 in sequence, practice them in rhythm; i.e., in doublets, triplets, and quadruplets. In the beginning, set the metronome to about 80 beats per minute.

5. Learn the positions of all the chords of the primary chord progression in the E Phrygian Mode. Practice them in compas, and be able to change freely between them. Make up sequences of your own, and become acquainted with the sounds of the results.

6. Learn the alternatives to the other chords of the E Phrygian Mode (i.e., C, Dm, etc.). Make up alternatives to the chord progressions given in the text. Become free with these changes also, and listen for their sounds.

## VI Written Exercises

1. There are other positions in which it is possible to play in the E Phrygian Mode. If you bar at these positions, you can play two, three, or four strings "open" (i.e., barred with your forefinger).

(a) What are these positions?

(b) To what keys of the Phrygian Mode do the patterns at these positions correspond?

2. The Rondena toque is played in the C# Phrygian Mode, with the 6th (E) string detuned to D, and the 3rd (G) string detuned to F#.

(a) Why is the G string detuned to F#?

(b) Write the pattern for the notes of the C# Phrygian Mode with this new configuration in mind.

3. Write the five ways of making a C chord.

4. Write the three ways of making an Am chord.

5. Write the four ways of making an E7 chord.

6. Write three possible alternatives of the primary chord progression (not given in the text) for the E Phrygian Mode.

### Cassette Tape (Ear Training)

7. Identify the type of phrasing of the following falsetas:

(1) (\*)

(2) (\*)

(3) (\*)

(4) (\*)

(5) (\*)

(6) (\*)

8. One of the most important procedures you will learn will be the technique of taking falsetas off of tapes and records. We will begin training you to do this by presenting progressively more difficult falsetas for you to write down. Write what you hear in cipher notation, and we will correct it and mail it back with the fingering correctly noted.

In this lesson, in these exercises, all falsetas will be in the open position and will conform strictly to the Phrygian Mode (with the exception of the traditional resolution phrase. Where is the exception?). The falsetas will use only techniques that have been discussed and/or presented up to the level of the text for the lesson. Be sure and note the rhythm as well as the melody.



Falseta (1) (\*)  
Falseta (2) (\*)  
Falseta (3) (\*)  
Falseta (4) (\*)

9. Also very important is the ability to pick out chords. We will play the following chords as broken chords (i.e., very slowly, from the 6th string to the 1st string), using a downstroke with the thumb. All use the primary chords in connection with the full bar. Write the name of the chord and the primary chords used to make it (e.g., F = E<sup>1</sup> ).

Hint: Find the fret by comparing the tone of the first note of the chord on the tape with the notes of the 6th string of your guitar. When you have found this note, it should be clear that, with a few exceptions, (e.g., the G primary chord), this will be the fret at which you will bar. Trial and error will fix the particular chord.

(1) (\*)  
(2) (\*)  
(3) (\*)  
(4) (\*)

10. Make up a simple falseta using ligado, and write it in cipher, taking care to note it properly.

## VII Script

1. Here are the sounds of the notes of the primary keys in the open position, descending and ascending:

E (\*), A (\*), B (\*), F# (\*), C# (\*)

2. Here is the sound of the notes of the E Phrygian Mode in the open position. (\*)

3. Here is the sound of the notes of the E Phrygian Mode at the third position. (\*)

4. Here is the sound of the notes of the E Phrygian Mode at the fifth position. (\*)

5. Here is the sound of the notes of the E Phrygian Mode at the seventh position. (\*)

6. Here is the sound of the notes of the E Phrygian Mode at the 10th position. (\*)

7. Here is the sound of the notes of the E Phrygian Mode at the 12th position. (\*)

8. Here is the sound of the F# Phrygian Mode in the open position. (\*)

9. Here is the sound of the F# Phrygian Mode in the 2nd position. (\*)

10. Here is the sound of the F# Phrygian Mode in the fifth position. (\*)

11. Here is the sound of the F# Phrygian Mode in the seventh position. (\*)

12. Here is the sound of the F# Phrygian Mode in the ninth position. (\*)

13. Here is the sound of the F# Phrygian Mode in the 12th position. (\*)

14. Here are the notes of the E major chord:

E (\*), G# (\*), B (\*)

15. Here are the notes of the F major chord:

F (\*), A (\*), C (\*)

16. Here are the notes of the F# major chord (\*), the G major chord (\*), and the G# major chord (\*).

17. Here is the E major chord, open position. (\*)

18. Here is the F major chord, barred at the first fret. (\*)

19. Here is the F# major chord, barred at the 2nd fret. (\*)  
Here is the G barred at the third fret. (\*)

20. Here is the primary chord G in the open position. (\*)  
Here is the G chord, barred at the third fret. (\*)

Here is the primary chord A in the open position. (\*)  
Here is the A chord, barred at the fifth fret. (\*)

21. Here is the primary Dm chord in the open position. (\*)  
Here is the D#m, barred at the first fret. (\*) Here is the Em,  
barred at the second fret. (\*) Here is the primary chord Em in  
the open position. (\*)

22. Here are the five F# chords: using E (\*), using D (\*),  
using C (\*), using A (\*), using G (\*).

23. Here are the three Dm chords: using Dm (\*), using Am (\*),  
using Em (\*).

24. Here are the four G#7 chords: using G7 (\*), using E7 (\*),  
using D7 (\*), using A7 (\*).

25. Here is the chord progression (1). (\*) Chord progression  
(2). (\*) Chord progression (3). (\*) Chord progression (4). (\*)  
Chord progression (5). (\*)

26. Here are singlet rasgueados. (\*) Here are doublet  
rasgueados. (\*)

27. Here are quadruplet rasgueados. (\*)

28. Here are quadruplet rasgueados in the basic chording  
compas of the Soleares. (\*)

29. Here is a variation of the chording compas of Soleares. (\*)

30. Here are the chording techniques of the thumb. Downstroke (\*).  
Upstroke (\*). In sequence (\*).  
Here are the melodic techniques of the thumb. Downstroke (\*).  
Upstroke (\*). In sequence (\*).

31. Here is a Soleares falseta using ligados.
- 32: Here is a simplified, shortened version of a cycle of the toque of Soleares. (\*)
- (falseta chording compas llamada falseta, etc.)
33. Here are the four variations of chording compas in the text; (1) (\*). (2) (\*). (3) (\*). (4) (\*).
34. Here is the resolution phrase of Soleares on the 10th count. (\*)
35. Here is falseta (1) of the text. (\*)
36. Here is falseta (2) of the text. (\*)
37. Here is falseta (3) of the text. (\*)
38. Here is the falseta of the text. (\*)
39. Here is the llamada. (\*)

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The next part of the tape refers to the Written Exercises.