



# Alternate Picking Speed Guarantee

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# **Alternate Picking Speed Guarantee**

Alternate picking.... the mother of all guitar techniques that surprisingly few master, that is of course meant regarding playing fast

I have been practicing and playing intensely since the late eighties. That being said I got my first guitar in maybe eighty four but did not start to take it seriously until some years later.

Through my years of playing I have noticed what worked and what did not. I have to add here that I strongly believe that there are many different ways to develop speed and my way of course only represents one. But here's the kicker.... it certainly does not matter which way you chose, what matter is that you stay focused on the way you chose and never get tempted to try other ways because this often ends up taking more time developing your speed if you lose track because something or someone else convinces you that you have to do it in a different way.

I also believe that we all develop whatever craft we choose or focus on in different ways and some people seem to have more talent than others.

I have read books on the way the brain develops to cultivate the creative arts like music and sports, and yes I believe sport can be creative.

And I must say that playing, practicing and teaching for most of my life have revealed to me that science will proof that theres no such thing as talent, I just don't agree with that. And that practicing the correct way will make everyone equal, I don't see that, only partly anyway. I experience through my life that some people have an advantage or a "call". That can be to anything like music, art, sports and anything else.

So with this info I just try to give you a more realistic idea of how to develop your craft.

Now it's critical and I can't put enough emphasis on that you must never use that as an excuse to not practice, just know that you may meet people who develops faster or slower in a field than you, just never let that stop you

Personally I think my "talent" if you will is choosing to be very disciplined with some things.... but certainly only some things. So with guitar and few other things in my life I am and have been extremely disciplined, but then again other things I have absolutely no discipline.

I realize you could discuss whether some people have discipline to practice or some people practice very little but at the right time when they're in the zone and develop to the maximum in a very short time. But then again I don't believe science and any kind of measuring apparatus can show everything that goes on in humans.

So getting this out of the way and start practicing in the way I present here in this book is what we are here for. So as I touched upon earlier I have noticed what works and what does not regarding develop alternate picking speed but regarding how quick you develop is impossible for me to say, but the reason the book is called alternate picking speed guarantee is because if you promise yourself to do exactly as the book says you will positively develop speed, be that sooner or later, but you will absolutely develop your technique which in turn will make you able to increase speed dramatically, that's for sure.

But as I said you have to promise yourself and not for me that you do the maximum everyday you

can to become fast.

### **Interesting fact about developing alternate picking speed**

Interesting fact about developing speed is that its not the drill or drills in itself that will get you there, so what I mean by this is that there's not any special secret super techniques that will get you there, so that means you you can use almost any piece on the guitar as long as its alternate picking. Of course there's something that makes a little more sense than others but that will be obvious to you. So scale based pieces makes a lot of sense whether that be just a simple scale or a more musical piece does not matter. That being said, some musical pieces may be arranged in a way where it's difficult to play it super fast, but it will still develop your alternate picking technique.

And I highly recommend that you play different types of pieces, but we will get to that in a jiffy.

Another thing is of course I will have lessons for you to drill in this book but what im saying is that if you have some drills that you for some reason reason with then by all means use those. But as you will learn later on in this book, you will go through many alternate picking drills to keep developing your technique

### **The basics**

So to make totally sure you dont waste any time doing anything wrong, here is a rundown of what exactly goes on in the technical side, which is relatively simple.

First of all we will discuss the picking hand. The picking hand obviously plays down up down up all the time, there are little tweaks here and there you can do to optimize your technique but to be honest some of them may not be the most important in the world.

The never ending discussion on the internet as you may already know is that some people argue that to be fast you just have to practice more, and the other side says that it's critical how you practice, and the truth is somewhere in the middle.

Once you got the basic technique down, the repetitions is unavoidable. But this is only if you are one hundred percent sure you are doing the right technique all the time, because if not you will develop bad habits that will just prolong your alternate picking development or keep you from it altogether.

Through all my year of teaching guitar or more precisely since the mid nineties I have seen the same scenario many times, guitarists who has been playing for years practicing speed, the answer is always the same, they are not consistent in their technique like precisely what is your fingering in the sequence you try to get up the tempo and what is the picking hand doing.

But when these matters are a dead cert you are good to go doing your repetitions. So in that sense the people who claim it's easy to obtain speed by just practicing more as my example explained before is fixed, they are right to some degree, but if not, they are dead wrong.

### **The process**

There will of course be some difference in the process you are beginning. If you are a complete beginner you have to get the basics down and start working and in some way that may be easier than

a person who has been playing for years and if that's the case, and you are reading this book, chances are definitely quite big that you have developed some bad habits.

The last example is something many people really believe is a big deal and takes a lot of effort to lose, but my experience is that as long as you are really focused on precisely what's going to happen it does really not have to take such a long time. But sure it requires focus for sure for a period for time.

So let's get started. The first example I'm giving now is for the beginners that may know about alternate picking, what it is, but want to perfect it and become able to play really fast alternate picking, and be able to play as fast as you personally are able to.

### **The picking hand**

Let's start with the picking hand. As the name explains you alternate so that means down and up all of the time, quite simple, right..... but of course there's more to it than that. It always depends on what you play and what makes sense and how it works for you personally but as a general I always start with a down stroke. There's very few examples where I prefer to start with an up stroke. Also it depends on what type of pattern you play, regarding how I start but typical scale based shapes for three and four notes per string I generally start with a down stroke. In some situations playing two notes per string in the string you start out on it can sometimes make sense to think about what type of technique you want to use. If you want to play fast using alternate picking three and four notes per string is what people generally use. Any other amount of notes per string should make you reflect on using techniques like economy picking, sweep picking, legato or combinations of those. Unless you are using it as a real tough and hard drill for your alternate picking, kind of to work exclusively on picking and not necessarily with the goal to play it ultra fast.

So there's no doubt that the concept of moving your hand up and down is a pretty simple concept, but I want to give you the simple little tips on what needs to happen.

### **Basic control**

First of all you rest your palm on the bridge of the guitar and exactly this spot is where your control is happening. So from this spot is where the movement is happening, and nowhere else. When you are getting into your first drill and feel comfortable with it and you are able to take a little bit of your focus away from the lesson itself I want you to pay attention to your palm and notice if this is the only place where the movement is going on, and make sure you check in both in slow tempos and fast tempos because sometimes people change technique in different speeds which I definitely don't recommend.

### **The grip**

I suggest you hold the pick with the thumb and on the side of the index finger and the index finger is bent as far as it goes into the hand, relaxing as much as possible without losing the pick.

You can slant the pick a little bit forward or back, whatever feels good to you. Here I want to be honest, back in the days when I started drilling alternate picking at the late eighties I just thought I wanted to keep the pick straight or flat when it hit the string to get the most sound from the string

because I noticed the pick direction changed when my palm was fixed on the bridge different when I was on the low E string as opposed to when I was on the high E string, but among others because it was impossible to do this perfectly I ended up slanting the pick a little bit forward and keeping the pick relatively similar to the string whether I am on the low or high E string.

### **The pick test**

So now I want you to start doing a tremolo on whatever string you feel like. While you are doing so I want you to test how loose you can hold on to the pick but still avoiding the pick is changing or you lose it between the fingers

I call this “don't fight the string” because if you are holding the pick too tight you will sometimes experience what's called pop outs which is when you only move the string, but the string never lets go of the pick which results in a pop out or no note. But if you in this situation was not holding on too strong to the pick but instead the string gently pushing the pick aside you would get the desired note. So with this description you should get an understanding exactly how the “relationship” should be between the pick and the string.

But as I said before, it's crucial that the pick cannot slide in any way so that the pointy side of the pick stays in the direction you chose.

### **The fretting hand**

What makes the guitar particularly difficult to play is the synchronization between the right and left hand. Of course it has pros and cons using a pick because you can create so many different sounds with the pick that are totally unique to the guitar. But for example regarding playing fast alternate picking, you have to be extremely precise in when and how you play the note with the pick and how that fits with what's happening in the fretting hand. So I think that this may also be one of the reasons that playing fast alternate picking is such a big deal for so many guitar players, and maybe even also that in generally a lot of guitar players are obsessed with playing fast.

So as you can appreciate that I'm stressing that you want to practice alternate picking really slow and slowly build up speed.

As I have said before there are more than one way to build speed and that I am just presenting to you what worked for me and all my personal students here in Denmark where I live. So don't be bothered with the people on the internet saying that you have to do it their way and that's the only thing that works. Because through time you understand more and more that people are different and there's many ways to do things. But what I will say that you should be adamant with is that once you choose a way to do things, you stay with that way and don't be tricked into suddenly try something new just because someone on youtube says that his way works much better than anyone else's. Doing this just keeps you from reaching your goal and you end up wasting time trying different ways in the middle of your process. I speak from experiencing people trying exactly that and it makes sense that if you are working on something and then suddenly you change your process. This will only prolong the process or keep you from it altogether as I stated earlier. So with that out the way we can now focus on the fretting hand.

I suggest working with a part of a scale or a full scale playing three notes per string for example. We

are doing this to get down to business with the synchronization. So under here is an example you can start drilling but as I said before the drill in itself is not that interesting but more the method and the technique in itself.

### Lesson 1

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a guitar exercise. Each system consists of a standard musical staff labeled 'S-Gt' and a guitar tablature staff labeled 'TAB'. The first system is marked with a '1' and a dynamic marking of 'mf'. The second system is marked with a '2'. The tablature for both systems is: 12 13 15 12 13 15 12 14 15 14 12 15 13 12 15 13. The musical notation shows a sequence of notes on a treble clef staff in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes correspond to the fret numbers in the tablature: 12 (F#), 13 (G#), 15 (A#), 12 (F#), 13 (G#), 15 (A#), 12 (F#), 14 (G#), 15 (A#), 14 (G#), 12 (F#), 15 (A#), 13 (G#), 12 (F#), 15 (A#), 13 (G#).

As you can see that this lesson is really basic. That can be a really good thing because when you have a really simple pattern then you can put your focus on what's important, and in this course it's the picking and of course the synchronization.

And I just want to explain that the reason the synchronization is so important is that, you can be the fastest picker in the world but if the synchronization isn't happening then it will sound like garbage. Same thing with the dampening, if you can't damp excess string noise, you will never sound good, but we will get to that later.

### The process

I like to divide a lesson up when I learn it so I maximize the learning process. So the first thing I do is to learn the pattern. So I just wanna add here that this is also one of the reasons it's very fitting with short drills sometimes. Because this means you will quickly get into the pattern so you can get down to business with what is important, drilling alternate picking and synchronization.

So you should quickly get into this pattern, there's two different scale three notes per string patterns. Two with a half note, whole note interval and one with a whole note, half note interval.

Once you can play this and are one hundred percent sure that you can play it correctly every time you go through it. Then you can start with the metronome

### Metronome

I personally love practicing with the metronome and have done it for many years. The metronome is awesome to work with because it makes it so easy to monitor your progress.

But the key is to always start way below the point where you start to tighten up in your arm. This will happen once you become able to play really fast. Because generally you can say that you can play as

fast as your picking hand let's you, what I mean is that if you try to play a tremolo on one note again then try to play the tremolo as fast as you can and try to keep the speed at the same pace throughout and notice that you will start to tighten up in your arm you are using for picking.

IN some way you can say that you "just" need to get the fretting hand to follow. I would like to put a smiley face emoji winking here at the end of that sense.

If you really zoom in what needs to happen in alternate picking, especially if you are playing scale stuff, it's actually quite amazing how precise you need to be, to make it sound good anyway. Because if you play a scale three notes per string the pick needs to hit the string precisely at the same time that the fretting hand finger has pressed down the note you want. So now that you have this understanding you probably appreciate how much practice this will take to be able to rip through a scale in a high speed.

So for this, the lesson I just gave you on the previous page is perfect. Of course you can choose any scale pattern you want and you can move it lower or higher on the neck and also move it to different strings. That's not so important, what's important is that get the thousands of repetitions that will develop your technique to be able to play really fast. So as I stated in the beginning since this is my way of teaching reaching alternate picking high speed I will give you the process that I went through and to some extent still go through every day. So also understand that playing fast alternate picking with a high quality sound is an ongoing process, so when you reach some of your goals regarding speed you cannot stop drilling. I know that many or most players do that but as I have touched upon before, that's also the reason they lose their amazing sound that they may have had in the past, even though they can still play relatively fast, it's not with the same power and gusto anymore because they only play these days and not drill.

So first take some time to learn the pattern which should not take that long, but you have to be sure you can play it perfectly at a slow pace every time you go through it. So now if you can promise yourself you can play the pattern perfectly you should be ready for the metronome.

You do also have to understand what needs to happen for you to play to a metronome because a lot of people struggle with playing to a metronome. You have to know the pattern well enough so that you can take a little bit of your focus away from what you play on the guitar and put that focus on the metronome. Same thing with playing in a band. You have to be able to listen to the band or drums or metronome while at the same time being able to play your own stuff. So chances are that if you seem to not follow the metronome you are still spending too much focus on the metronome. If that's the case, stop the metronome and practice the pattern a little more and become more familiar with it before attempting playing it with the metronome again. If you are not sure you are following the metronome, you probably don't. You should sort of feel the pulse of the metronome. You can also try to put emphasis on the notes that are supposed to hit a "click" if you look at the tablature you will notice the standard music notation above it. That's called sixteenth notes. That means that every time you hear a click you have to play four notes before you hear the next click so now you can see which notes should hit a click. Another possibility is to film or record yourself and then go back and listen if it's correct what you are doing. It's really important that you learn to play to the metronome and it's possible to learn for everyone even though some people struggle more with it than others, but we are all different so some people comes easy to this than others. But once you get more comfortable with this you can start the process of monitoring your speed progress. So lets say that

you are now able to play the lesson to the metronome. You should start way low on the metronome. Now most standard metronomes start around 40 beats per minute or bpm which is how I will refer to the speed from now on. Some metronomes start at 0 bpm but much below 30 bpm is difficult to start on, and it does not have to be, so let's start from 40 bpm and see if this is possible and then move on from there. If 40 bpm seems too fast for you, you can also start with eighth notes which is exactly half of the sixteenth notes meaning now you only have to fit two notes in on every click. If that's still too fast you can also play a note on every click. But I believe that most can do eighth notes even as beginners to 40 bpm.

If this lesson is difficult for you and you struggle with the speed then don't worry because it's a big deal just the fact you can play it to a metronome. Or once you are ready to play it to a metronome you should be really happy because at this point it is only a matter of time. But not only that, it's a matter of measured time since you can closely monitor your progress every day. And while we are on that subject of frequency. Yes, of course you must practice everyday in order to progress within a measurable time.

So if being able to play fast alternate picking is important to you which I guess since you are reading this book. In order to get to your goal with this you have to promise yourself that you practice this each and everyday without any days off. So schedule a time everyday for this, if you know you have time every morning or every evening you could benefit from creating a habit of doing it at a specific time every day to ensure it gets done, it does not matter when or where as long as it gets done.

Let me give you an example of how this could play out because once you become faster you also will benefit from having a minimum time the lesson can last until you are using more than one alternate picking drill.

So let's say you start on 40 bpm and your maximum tempo is reached at for example 60 bpm, you should spend most of your time in the slower pace. So let's say the lesson lasts for 15 minutes altogether, then maybe the 10 minutes will be spent from 40 to 50 bpm and the last 5 in the last five minutes. Of course this is an example that does not have to be emulated down to the point, it's just to give you an idea.

Once you become faster than that you will benefit from letting the lesson last for at least twenty minutes. That's what I experienced, because this let me be warmed up and work deeply with the technique so about the last twenty percent I will easily be able to reach my max without I end up tightening up in my arm. At some point when you are months or years into drilling alternate picking you may choose to experiment with other ways, like have several different drills, which also works, and I do that as well in periods but sometimes I also just use one.

One little extra thing I want to add is that I really enjoy when I have the possibility to alternate pick drill in the morning because for some reason if I do that it has a tendency to have an effect the remaining of the day and the process just feels better than doing it when I'm really tired for example.

This way is of course not always possible because of how our lives are. But if you do as I describe in this book of setting time aside every day for this you will excel for sure. I see this in all my students and it's always the guitarists that promise themselves to do this everyday or guitar players that just cannot not play everyday because they enjoy it so much.

So the more you can enjoy this the easier it is of course. I remember when I started drilling everyday I just noticed that guitar playing just become more and more fun because my technique developed so I could play more and more of the things that I wanted to. In case you really don't like drilling you of course have to be a little more disciplined to get it done, but you will still get to enjoy the fruits of your drilling after some time. The best thing is if you can avoid looking for your excelleration too much and just let it happen. But you will still have the metronome that also give you a hint of what goes on.

Regarding how many bpm you should raise it every time you feel ready to move up from the pace you are at is as many other things in drilling is something you at some point will find your own personal way of doing. What I mean is that I have always used a metronome with a physical wheel you can turn to go up and down in speed, and this wheel moves more than one bpm at the time which is very convenient because a single bpm is hard to hear and feel. On that wheel I turn two to three clicks which is between six to fourteen in conjunction to where you are on the metronome. In the slow side of the metronome the numbers go up in a not so fast manner and opposite in the fast end. An example is that three clicks up from forty is only six bpm and three clicks up from hundred and thirty eight goes to hundred and sixty.

You can also just download an app on your phone for free if you like it that way. Personally I like a real metronome with a turning wheel but I guess it's a matter of taste and if you are younger than me you may like apps.

I dont recommend moving up one single bpm at the time but also don't move very large numbers up both because you are building your technique and also as described earlier the lesson needs to be so long so you can develop your nervous system well enough to really let it sink in to your muscle memory.

I remember I was teaching a guy here in Denmark many years ago and I realized he started he's alternate picking only few bpm's below he's top speed which resulted in him not developing he's technique well enough to become fast. Or more precisely he became very sloppy sounding because he did not develop he's synchronization between right and left hand so when he tried to take up the speed it sounded horrible. So in other words you really need to respect the process that I describe here. If you don't follow all the steps you will end up wasting your time.

### **Dampening the strings**

Another thing that is critical to become a great alternate picker is to master the dampening technique properly.

Mostly you will hear people say that you need to master palm muting, but that will only take you some of the way. Palm muting is great for damped riffs but for alternate picking scale playing you need more than that.

It's again something I realized in teaching because when I developed my technique I used too much time because no one told my how to make it sound great so I had to develop my technique trial and error, and nothings wrong with that but it takes significantly longer than learning from this book, that's for sure.

So on top of you developing you palm muting you also have to develop what I like to call thumb muting. The thump will get rid of the excess string noise you will end up getting if you rely solely on palm muting, so the thump will clean it up so it will sound totally killer.

You also damp with the fretting hand so all in all you get three elements to block out excess string noise but let's start with the palm.

### **Palm muting**

Positioning the palm on the bridge can feel a little different on different types of guitars but the basic idea is the same, establishing picking hand control and give you a basic or light dampening of the strings.

Your picking hand arm's first contact is on the top and side of the guitar where your arm rests. After this your palm can rest on the bridge. If you are playing a guitar with the Tune o matic type bridge you will find on Les Pauls and also other guitars, I used to borrow an Esp - Ltd guitar that had this type of bridge and I felt it was a little harder to get a good control from the palm but to be honest I believe its mostly a matter of getting used to it, so im sure if you mostly play Les Pauls you probably feel its the best. I personally prefer Strat and Super strat type guitar bridges and Floyd Rose bridge, but then again I always played those type of guitars so I am certainly biased on that topic.

You can both play with a open or closed hand, what I mean by this is that you of course grab the pick with the thumb and the index finger and then the remaining fingers or hand can be open or closed, that does not matter. That being said there's also people who hold the pick in a completely different way, I used to have a student who grabbed the pick with the thumb and long finger, so what I wanna say is that you can do it a number of ways, but do what feels naturally to you. Or said in a different way, don't change technique if what you do works.

### **Thumb muting**

So next thing I wanna talk about is something I came up with unconsciously because I just wanted to damp enough to avoid excess string noise, not getting any directions from a teacher so I just came up with something that worked for me. To be honest I'm not completely sure if everyone else do this as well but I have been teaching this method for many years and it just works.

The way you do it is to while you play you move the side of your thumb into the strings. So if you look down on your hand when you are playing alternate picking you just make sure the side of your hand and thumb gets as close as possible to the strings.

You have to practice this with an amp or any way you can connect your guitar adding some gain. This way you can test how it works. It will as with everything else on the guitar take some time to get used to.

### **Fretting hand muting**

Finally I want to talk about the fretting hand. It's interesting that you don't really think about how big a role your fretting hand plays in dampening, but in general everything under your fretting hand is dampened by the fretting hand and everything below the fretting hand is dampened by the picking hand either using palm muting together with thumb muting if you are playing scale stuff. If you are

playing dampened chugga type Metal riffs you can rely on just palm muting.

So let me give you an example. If you are playing scale stuff on the G string you will damp the B and high E string with your fretting hand, it should happen just because the fingers on the fretting hand goes downward and so this way gets a light connection to the strings under it.

The A and low E string will be dampened by the picking hand using the palm and with scale stuff in connection with the thumb muting.

### **Quick talk about fingering**

I want to give you a basic theory on how the fretting hand fingers generally should work. First of all I see the fret board as it created for the four fingers, index, long, ring and little finger to lie next to each other, you could say to play a chromatic phrase of four notes.

So this will be our basic idea of how to arrange the fretting hand fingers on the fretboard. Now since we generally play scales with intervals other than semi notes or chromatic it makes a lot of sense to play three notes per string unless you want to play the traditional way of playing the Pentatonic scale which is only five notes which makes it extra challenging to play more than two notes per string. But as long as you are playing scales with more than five notes and probably mostly scales with seven notes like the Major minor scale, Harmonic minor scale and Melodic minor scale plus many more, but these three scales apart from the Pentatonic scale are the ones that are used the most plays they will make you able to play and improvise over pretty much any chord.

So in the last three scales I mention it makes the most sense to play three notes per string, but I want to start with the Major minor scale or also called Ionian scale or natural minor scale which is the same scale but starting two different places in the scale giving you different sequences of intervals. You will have three different sequences of three notes per string intervals being whole note step - half note step. Half note step whole note step and finally whole note step whole note step.

The theory is that you always start with the index finger and end with the little finger. Making use of that theory on the three options I just mentioned will give you index finger, ring finger and little finger on the first. Index finger long finger and little finger on the second option and finally on the last which has two whole note steps will give you two options, index finger long finger and little finger or you can also choose to use the ring finger in the middle. If you descend in this interval of two whole note steps you will probably feel most comfortable with using the long finger in the middle but if you ascend the same notes you will most likely prefer the ring finger in the middle

So this means that you will probably prefer to have an extra finger between the two fingers playing a whole note step.

So if you agree to this that both ways have a pro and a con you will realize that you probably just have to choose one and start practicing. I will give you a little heads up that I think most people use and prefer the long finger in the middle because it's stronger than the ring finger and easier to control, but go with what feels right to you and if both ways feels equally uncomfortable maybe go with the long finger in the middle.

So once this is something that has become second nature to you, you can start drilling. I just need to

note that if you are using this theory, you can use the same logic and theory to play the Harmonic minor scale even though you have a one and a half note interval in that scale, the same logic a theory goes for this one.

So now you should be ready for drilling the first lesson but make one hundred percent sure that you are using the same fingering every time and the same picking pattern all the time. Because through all my years of teaching I realized that the people who never become fast at alternate picking have not worked the above mentioned into their muscle memory.

If this is the only alternate picking lesson you are working on and you see yourself as a beginner I recommend that make sure that the lesson should last for at least fifteen to twenty minutes.

If you have been playing guitar for many years and want to get deep with the alternate picking technique I recommend the same time frame for the first lesson but you can move on to another lesson relatively quickly.

If you are a beginner then continue with this lesson for about a month before moving on to the next one that I will present and you have to make absolutely sure that you dont skip any days drilling this and also stay with the time frame. If you dont then you can't expect to develop in a way that will inspire you to keep working on the technique.

Something I experienced early on in my technical development was that the more I practiced the better my technique became, this in turn made it more and more fun to play. And at some point I realised that my picking started to sound like the guitar players I was listening to on my records and that I was inspired by.

This is where it becomes so awesome to play guitar but to reach this point you have to promise yourself that you practice alternate picking everyday preferably twenty minutes. Doing this will surely make you excel to become a great alternate picker.

To be honest sometimes guitar players with a lot of experience who just want to become faster has more difficulties staying on track. I think it is because they may already have had some success on some parts of guitar playing like chords, songs, playing in a band or some other techniques they have more success with but they just do not have success with alternate picking.

If you fit into this category you have to really stay on track and maybe be more disciplined because its so easy to just say oh well I can still make something work on the guitar and thats good enough, once you maybe get bored with drilling and do not see development as quick as you expected.

One thing is for sure if you start to skipping days of drilling you will not see development fast enough to inspire you to keep at it. So in other words be vigilant if you fall into this category.

One more thing before we move on, you may have heard me talk about this before but you must also understand that alternate picking develops in a different way than other techniques like sweep picking, legato, tapping and so forth. Alternate picking takes quite a while before you see increasement in speed and you develop more in what I like to call quantum leaps. As an example you may stay at sixteenth notes at 80 bpm for a long long time. And then suddenly you may be able to move all the way to 95 bpm or 100 bpm. Where a technique like sweep picking or legato develops

more gradually in my experience. So you really have to be either very disciplined or learn to enjoy the drilling enough for you to do it every day or a combination of both.

This last statement is also one of the reasons that I wrote this book to show you a way to develop alternate picking and make the process much more inspiring and effective.

So im now assuming you have been working like we discussed with the first lesson for about a month and that you are ready for something new

## Lesson 2

This one takes a little longer to learn I must say

The image shows a guitar lesson sheet for Lesson 2, consisting of four measures of music. Each measure is presented with a standard musical staff and a corresponding guitar tablature (TAB) staff. The music is in 4/4 time and features a harmonic minor scale. The first measure is marked with a first finger (1) and a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The second measure is marked with a second finger (2). The third measure is marked with a third finger (3). The fourth measure is marked with a fourth finger (4). The tablature for each measure is as follows:

- Measure 1: 24 19 20 22 19 20 22 19 20 22 19 20 19 22 20 19
- Measure 2: 23 17 19 20 17 19 20 17 19 20 17 19 17 20 19 17
- Measure 3: 20 17 19 16 19 17 20 17 19 15 17 16 17 15 19 15
- Measure 4: 17 14 16 15 16 14 17 14 15 12 16 12 14 9 10 7

It's pretty harmonic minor sounding and it is also composed by the Harmonic minor scale.

### Tip.

You could skip the last four notes and start all over again to make it a little easier to play without a break, but that's up to you what works best for you.

This is not the type of lesson that you will learn to play extremely fast. Its more a melodic lesson that is inspiring to learn that luckily is working on your alternate picking technique. Its important to understand that you are developing the alternate picking technique using many different types of lessons. As I stated earlier to stay focused and keep developing but also to maintain your alternate picking technique you need to get new lessons maybe once a month.

That being said I cant say precisely how often will fit you personally so when I write a month its only a guess what would fit you. Many factors play a role in this because some people practice the minimum and some people practice all the time. But it also play a role what types and how long the lessons are and the level of difficulty too of course.

So now you have got two extremely different lessons. One very short and simple and one long and difficult one.

### **How much should I practice**

As you may or may not have heard me say before about practicing alternate picking, this technique is of course developed by practicing a lot but there are other factors that also play a role that will probably surprise you.

If you exclusively practice alternate picking and you do that a lot you will become more and more tired in the musculature that you use for alternate picking plus you will get mentally tired too, so you will actually experience your alternate picking development more if you dont exclusively practice alternate picking.

So as an example if you do two alternate picking lessons a day and on top of that you also practice sweep picking and legato or some other techniques you want to work on, you will not get tired in the musculature in the same way and you will be more relaxed in your playing making the alternate picking sound much better.

Its like anything you try to force will kind of slip away, so of course you need to drill alternate picking every day but you also have to trust the process and just let it happen and not become totally obsessed with just exclusively alternate picking.

Many years ago I went through a period where I practiced alternate picking for hours every day using different lessons ot do it, but it felt like I played slower than if I just practiced one or two lessons every day together with practicing all my other techniques as well. So in other words getting too obsessed with just that one single aspect of guitar playing did not help me at all. Quite the contrary. I'm not saying that drilling in that insane way did not do anything for my alternate picking but what I am saying is that it did nowhere near what I would have expected it to do. So you could say that the math of just saying thirty minutes has this much effect on my playing making three hours having five times the effect. Unfortunately it does not work that way.

Even though I don't have any real experience with working out, I still think there could be a comparison to that since the muscles and nerves and ligaments needs its restitution before it can develop and not just get injured.

So I highly recommend that you dont exclusively drill or practice alternate picking but you do

something else too. Or if you are in a band or like to play songs to backing tracks that you do something like that as well. Plus it's also extremely important that you do what motivates you to play which for a lot of people is to play music. And if you exclusively want to play solos or improvise then by all means do that so it's not only drilling alternate picking. Doing so may kill the motivation at some point which would be such a shame. Unless of course you are a person who can just drill and enjoy that alone.

### **New drills**

When should I introduce new drill into my practicing schedule? that's a great question that I will answer in this way. Its easier for you to do the judgement on when to introduce new material into your daily practicing schedule. I can of course give you an idea and I can tell you what works for me. But its always a matter of how the lesson I want to drill is, I mean how long is it, how difficult is it and how much time do I have and so forth.

Personally I like to have one advanced or relatively advanced alternate picking lesson and then also one very simple one. On top of that I also make sure to practice other techniques or songs, riffs or whatever, as I mentioned before in my experience you need to drill other techniques to really see the benefits of your alternate picking drilling.

What I just described is something I can't explain why it works, it just does and that's what's important.

Of course I do practice quite a bit every day but I made a pact with myself many years ago saying that I would try to become as good as possible and use all the time I possibly can to practice. Now I know this sounds obsessive but today I am very happy I did that because now that im older I just see that I use my time much better than most people my age. Plus it does not feel like an obsession today but just something that I do whenever I have the time.

If you have a normal job or school it's also extremely effective to practice for about an hour a day, so don't worry that it would not be enough. I have many students who are not young anymore and have family and day jobs. But im extremely pleased to see that they develop a lot from just promising themselves to practice an hour a day.

I think what makes a big difference is that you have to make a deal with yourself that this is crucial to you to reach the goal to be really fast.

Some people view the fact that they maybe have limited time a day because of job, school, family or whatever, but I actually think you should view this as something very positive. The reason I say this is because I view this as you got pretty much everything else in your life down so everything else works. So now you can be more focused on your guitar playing.

Let's say that you fall into this category in one way or another. Then your wish is to become a fast guitar player. So now you just have to follow this book every day.

Your only challenge is to realize when its time to start a new lesson but as I wrote earlier I like to have simple lessons and then maybe a longer more advanced one. Maybe you even like to have just one, the only thing absolutely certain is that you need to drill a lesson every single day for no less than

twenty minutes.

### **Why change lessons**

The reason for getting new lessons onto your playing is because you need to stay focused on the technique. What can happen is that you find a lesson that really helps you excel and chances are that it will feel comfortable to just stay with that, but the problem is that what happens is that you will stop developing once you really master the lesson, so you need something new to stay vigilant on the technique. If you don't in some situations you will actually become a little counterproductive and the lesson you used to rip in now becomes less fast and sloppy.

I know it's a little annoying to learn new drills but it really works wonders for your alternate picking technique.

### **When to drill**

One more thing that has an effect on your playing is what time of day you practice, I know that most people don't have time to drill alternate picking in the morning when they get up, but I still need to do you this. If you decide to get up a little earlier every day to drill your alternate picking technique you will absolutely feel a difference.

Personally I mostly drill technique in the evening but in some periods I do it first thing in the morning and there certainly is a difference, but just know that if you decide to drill in the evening or afternoon you will probably be a little more tired but you still develop your technique just as much but it just feels much greater in the morning and also it seems that you can get to your top speed over less time. What I mean is that if I drill an alternate picking lesson in the evening for thirty minutes then I can maybe do the same in the morning and only spend about twenty five minutes.

Now getting back to the decision on when to change your lessons. Some lessons, like the more advanced difficult lessons, like the second one in this book for example, as I explained on that lesson you should probably not expect to play it sixteenth notes at two hundred bpm. But if you do do that I must congratulate you.

But if you notice that you stop getting faster in it, and maybe a little sloppy in it then I would say its time to change it for another lesson. You can always go back to it at some point. I do that too.

Regarding your first lesson, as it is really simple you can maybe use it to reach your ultimate speed. I do this with the really simple lessons. So if my ultimate speed is two hundred or three hundred bpm at sixteenth notes, then I make use of that lesson until I reach that.

Described in another way, when you picking hand cannot move any faster, you are getting close to your ultimate speed

One thing that needs to be said about the ultimate speed is that if I aim to hit my ultimate speed with a lesson, what I do is to cut down on the repetitions once I get to my fastest paces. The reason being that endurance plays a large role as well. So for example at hundred and eighty I can go on for a long time playing sixteenth notes but at two hundred and fifty I'm much more limited.

That's also one of the reasons the first lesson is arranged as it is. It is extremely easy to make sure

you are following the metronome because you will have a click on the first note when you start and you will have a click on the final note when you ascend and then one again when the whole sequence is done. This way you can make sure you follow the click, but be hard and true to yourself with this.

So said in a different way, if you notice the clicks from the metronome are not exactly where I just described, you need to take down the tempo.

### **Revealing**

back in the early two thousands a lot of young guitar players popped up on the internet claiming they played at some ridiculous bpm's. But the problem was that once they got a little up the speed they stopped following the metronome because they lost track of it playing so many notes within one click. When you have a super simple lesson like the first one it becomes easier to make sure you follow the click and more realistic.

### **Continuing the process**

So lets say you stick with the first lesson for quite some time, for example until you hit a tempo that is so fast it makes you happy. Or you could set a goal and work for that. Be realistic but also make it a stretch. What I mean is that maybe tempo five hundred is very unrealistic but hundred and eighty or two hundred is very realistic and sounds really fast.

So if you have been working with lesson two a month or whatever, the time is not important really, what's important is that if you feel like you dont improve anymore in the second lessons it could be time for a change. This takes a month for some people and several months for others. So if you are ready for a change, here we go.

### Lesson 3

The image displays a musical score for Lesson 3, consisting of three systems of guitar notation. Each system includes a standard musical staff with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature, and a corresponding TAB staff. The first system (measures 1-2) is marked with a dynamic of *mf*. The second system (measures 3-4) continues the piece. The third system (measure 5) concludes the excerpt. The TAB staves provide precise fretting instructions for each note, including fingerings and bends.

This one is also pretty advanced and is one of those lessons I think are quite hard to play fast, even with lots of practice. But that does not matter because we still have our super simple first lesson that should take us to a tempo beyond belief. So take your time with this one to get it under your skin so you can start to practice it to a metronome. If in doubt go back to the book and reread the section about drilling the first lesson.

#### About the longer view and process

You must realize that developing fast alternate picking takes time, a long time. Of course it varies from person to person regarding how much you practice and other factors too, like your age, how much have you played before. I mean are you a beginner or have you been playing for a longer time but have not become a fast alternate picker yet.

It is crucial that you don't look for excuses for not practicing or saying, maybe "this is not for me or it's only some people who can do it with a special talent" Everyone can do it, but just know that the aforementioned factors play a role. But please for your own sake, don't ever give up on this dream, it's worth putting in the hard work.

#### As time goes by

You will as time goes by have thoughts and concerns about your picking and fingering and technique in general, or most people do. But you have to understand that once you are dead certain that you always play down up down up and so on and that you make use of the fingering you decided on, you are on the right track. Certainly you can do little adjustment here and there along the way but just

understand whether you adjust or not you are on the right track to fast alternate picking success. So the little adjustments you may or may not do have little impact on the result as long as the before mentioned is in check.

That being said you also have to learn to trust your instincts regarding practicing in general, use logic and instinct to judge if something makes sense to change in your playing.

In other words, everything is cool as long as you practice every day with no exceptions and as long as the basic technique is being used as discussed before.

So remember as time goes by this little section when you are starting to doubt what you do or lose focus or trust in the process. Plus also remember that alternate picking for most people is a technique that develops a little different than other techniques where you can have long periods where it seems like nothing happens and you stay in the same tempo and that you often experience big leaps in tempo but before you see those leaps can take long time

### Pros and cons to the metronome

Personally I always loved to practice to the metronome and still do and its so awesome because its so easy to monitor your progress with it. But there is one thing that can be a little counter productive to it that you have to be aware of.

Once you get used to practicing the metronome and become comfortable with it, it's easy to forget to stretch your tempo to new heights. You can easily tell your self something like "this lesson I can play to eighty bpm and this lesson I can play to hundred bpm so now im done practicing" you should stretch all your lesson maybe a few bpm's to where it feels comfortable, but just remember to end all lessons with playing them through extremely slow a few times or more. But remember never to keep going on in tempos where you start to mess up for longer times because this can start to develop bad habits. This is also the reason I want you to end all lessons by playing them through extremely slow a few times or more to sort of get them back on track.

### Moving on, if your'e ready? Lesson 4

The image shows musical notation for a guitar piece, Lesson 4. It consists of two systems of music. The first system starts at measure 6 and ends at measure 7. The second system starts at measure 8 and ends at measure 9. Each system includes a guitar staff with a treble clef and a bass staff with a bass clef. The guitar staff contains a melodic line with alternate picking. The bass staff contains a bass line with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-5. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

This next lesson is as we discussed before only if you feel ready for something in your practicing schedule. If you still feel the previous lessons is developing in a very positive way you don't need to start working on something new. It's only if you have hit a point in your development where you kind of feel that nothing at all is happening and you find yourself losing focus while you are drilling. Or regarding the first lesson, if you have hit a very high tempo where the picking hand is starting to tighten up because you are reaching your absolute max. But that may not be the case.... yet.

So if you feel you need a new lesson then by all means let's dig into this one. A quick look will probably tell you that this again is not one of those you end up playing at two hundred and fifty bpm playing sixteenth notes because it's a lot of two and single note string ideas that will be insanely tough to play really fast. Of course always just strive to become as fast as possible in the lesson but don't get frustrated if you don't reach the before mentioned tempo. This is more a melodic piece that's awesome to play and sounds really great.

The more lessons you experience the more you will also find that something resonates with you. I mean everybody develops and gravitates towards certain techniques, ways to play and so forth so with time you will become better and better to choose lessons that helps you and you become better at knowing yourself in regards of when to choose new lessons how much and how long works for you. As I keep stating I will show you my way but the longer you play the more you will develop your own personal way from what you started with.

Now I want to give you another pretty simple lesson. It's just a scale pattern but the intervals are not so typical so it will kind of wake up your brain. Remember you have to imagine that time goes by as you read this book, so it's a type of book you keep going back to and learn new stuff. So you must understand that if you read it in one go, the lessons does not follow in the same tempo. As we discussed it will take weeks or months to develop to the fullest in each lesson. I want you to get everything you can from each lessons and some of them take long time and some of them not so long plus we develop differently as we already talked about. So here is a new one that you should be able to play pretty fast as time goes on.

## Another quick one, Lesson 5

The image shows a musical score for an electric guitar (S-Gt) in 4/4 time, marked *mf*. It consists of three measures of music, each with a standard staff and a corresponding TAB staff. Measure 1 starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is an ascending eighth-note scale: F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5. The TAB for this measure shows fret numbers 15, 18, 19, 15, 18, 19, 16, 17, 20, 16, 17, 20, 17, 19, 20, 18. Measure 2 continues the scale: G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6. The TAB shows fret numbers 19, 20, 19, 18, 20, 19, 17, 20, 17, 16, 20, 17, 16, 19, 18, 15. Measure 3 concludes with a descending eighth-note scale: F#6, E6, D6, C6, B5, A5, G5, F#4. The TAB shows fret numbers 19, 18, 15.

Please remember to NOT play an extra picking stroke when you reach the top notes or get back to the first note again. Just one picking stroke for each note.

Also of course you continue the lesson when the final note is played you just continue.

A lot of people think they must play an extra picking stroke these two places I just mentioned, but that will change your up and down sequence it the alternate picking so be sure you don't do that accidentally.

This lesson is also one you can end up play really fast. Remember or go back to the part called *Quick talk about fingering*, to make sure you play this lesson with the right fingering.

I guess there's not so much to say about this one except that it's not a scale pattern you would normally play I guess unless you are playing Fusion or Jazz. Or some pretty experimental Prog. I must admit I have not really used it much other than as a technical drill, or maybe a crazy riff once many years ago.

It's interesting that you will reach a point in any alternate picking drill where you sort of stop developing or just lose your focus. And if you are drilling something as basic as a three notes per string scale, all it takes is just a new pattern, so what I mean is if you for example are using the second position of the Major scale and you have taken it to its max and you start to get a little sloppy in it or in other words stop developing anymore, then all you need to do to get focused and develop again is to take another scale pattern, so why not just the next in line? the third position of the Major scale.

I like to use some more crazy scale patterns, like this one though just to get some intervals and patterns i'm not that used to.

Of course you also need to make use of the more intricate patterns like the two previous you learned to work on your technique. I like a little bit of both ways. But let me just say that if you sometimes have periods where you don't have much time to work on the guitar technique, just promise yourself that you at least make use of one of the simple lessons and take them to your max because as I said before, alternate picking is a high maintenance technique.

Another thing in general practicing guitar is that if you never skip a day practicing guitar you will develop your technique gradually but surely. So even though you don't feel like you excel in speed for pretty long periods of time, your technique do develop for the better. And in general you feel more and more comfortable with the guitar, what happens is that it just becomes more and more fun to play guitar. I think guitar playing is also physical in a way because in periods where you practice a lot things just flows a lot better from your hand. This makes the guitar playing experience so much more enjoyable and should make you want to practice more. On the contrary of you skip days practicing you keep struggling which is of course not very much fun or inspiring. This is of course speaking about technique that makes you a great player, it does not mean that you cannot write a great song or play a Bob Dylan song, but that's not the topic as you know.

So after a number of weeks or even months or whenever you feel it's time for new material because you are getting sloppy after a period of excelling in the lesson or lessons you are working on as we discussed, it's time to throw an old lesson or lessons and start working on something new, so here is the next example I want to give you. In general you can often keep the simple lessons for longer just because you in most cases can keep working on them to a pretty high tempo whereas the longer or more intricate lessons you more quickly reach a top speed. Of course it takes a little longer to learn to play them, but personally I use the longer more difficult lessons for seldomly more than a month whereas the simpler lessons that I can take to my top speed I sometimes keep more several months. So the next one I will present to you is also a more difficult one just by judging by my own personal experience.

### **Chromaticism**

In this lesson as you can see that you are playing four semi notes in a row, and the way I do this is to use four fingers, this is a given to some people but others are used to play three notes per string and never anything else, I will suggest to you to start using four fingers, I don't think that using three notes per string for chromaticism is a good idea. And especially not for this particular lesson. Also as you can see you do have to play those chromatic lines on several different strings so I really think it will benefit to try it this way.

Back in the late eighties or beginning of the nineties I was strictly playing three notes per string myself and four notes per string felt really uncomfortable but I think I relatively quick got the hang of playing four notes per string so chances are you will as well. In general it just makes chromatic playing so much easier once you get used to the four notes per string patterns. It's like three notes per string for chromatic patterns is a lot of work because you have to jump pretty far every time you shift strings.

## Lesson 6

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Lesson 6. Each system consists of a standard musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a corresponding guitar tablature staff below it. The tablature uses numbers 1-5 to represent frets and hyphens to indicate string changes. The first system covers measures 11 and 12, the second covers measures 13 and 14, and the third covers measures 15 and 16. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals, with the tablature providing precise fretting instructions for each note.

So chromaticism is also a simple way to create patterns to drill your alternate picking because there's pretty much no rules as long as it sounds cool. Or if you are a fan of theory then if you are using the chromatic sequences in improvising or soloing over a chord progression or riff then of course its good to know that you will get the best sounding results if you end a chromatic phrase on a chord note. That's certainly also true for any note you rest on in improvising or soloing that you get the best sound by resting or ending a phrase on a chord note.

So to explain myself a little deeper. If you are soloing in D minor and you are ending a phrase then it sounds best if you end the phrase or chromatic idea on D or F or A. If the chord progression consists of chords of many different chords then the note you rest on should still be a chord note. So as an example if you are playing in the key of D minor but the chord progression consists of Gm - Am and Dm then if the phrase ends while the chord progression has come to the G minor then you will get a better sound by landing on G or Bb or D.

So this was a little segway into make you more fitted into an improvisation situation even through the topic of the book is more technical. But now you know and then lets get back to the alternate picking topic.

As time goes by and if you are pressing your tempo every day you will probably experience that the alternate picking technique takes a lot of work and constantly needs to be worked on. Of course all techniques needs to be worked on to be racer sharp but the alternate picking technique is something else I think or for me at least. I get the best sound in general by practicing every day but alternate picking always needs extra attention.

You must be extremely aware if you are starting to become sloppy at any point, if that happens I find that a period where I only practice super slow to kind of resetting my technique. Also if this happens

I may drop all my alternate picking drills and only take new lessons into my practicing schedule to sort of get back on track.

### Are you ready for a really extensive drill, Lesson 7

24 25

TAB 15-17-18 15-18-17-15 17-15 18-17 15 14-15-17 13-17-15-13 17-15-14 16-15-13-15-13 16

26 27

TAB 15-13-12-13-9-12-13 10-11-13 10-11-14 10-12-13 15-17-18 15-18-17-15 17-15 18-17 15 18-17-15

28 29

TAB 14-15-17 13-17-15-13 17-15-14 16-15-13-15-13 16 15-13-12-13-9-12-13 10-11-13 10-11-10 13-11-10

30 31

TAB 8 11-10-11 7 10-8-10 4 8-6-8 3 6-5-3 7 4-3 6-4-3 4-3-1 0

32 33

TAB 15-17-19 15-19-17-15 19 17-15 19-17 15 19-17-15 14-15-17 14-17-15-14 17-15-14 17-15-13-15-13 17

34 35 36

TAB 15-13-12-13-8-10-12 8-10-12 9-10-12 8-10-12 9-10-12 10-11-13 9-10-12 10-11-13 10 13

So this one is probably some of the longest alternate picking drill I have played, but it really works wonders for me to use this one for a long long time since it's so extensive I can work on it and benefit from it for months to be honest. I suggest that you use my way of learning something as long as this

one which is only learning a bar at the time and getting that under the skin so to say before you move on to the next bar. So learning the full pattern can absolutely take a day if you take your time. If you do that then you may also have to spend some extra time on it the next day before being able to start using the metronome with it.

Remember that to be able to practice with a metronome you really have to know the pattern well. Well enough so you are a hundred percent sure you are using the same fingering all the time and that your picking patterns are in check.

In case you need more than a few days to learn the full thing, that's much better to be completely sure that you have it down instead of having to start over at some point because you realize you don't play it the same way every time.

If you after a week or so after you have learned the pattern good enough to practice with a metronome. If you are in that situation and you are not able to excel in speed or you keep goofing off somewhere in the pattern, chances are that you are not playing it the same way every time you play it. The easiest way to check if that's the case is to film yourself playing it through a few times so you can see where the problem lies.

### **The benefits of daytime practicing**

I just keep getting surprised of how effective practicing in the morning or early day or mid day. Or in other words, everything but evening. I just need to be clear that i'm not saying "don't practice in the evening" not at all, i'm just saying that I feel a great benefit from practicing in the morning or early day when I have the possibility.

If you have been playing for years and have ever been in a slump or feel that you get worse than you used to even though that sounds a bit weird but this is something I experienced a few times after maybe pressing my tempo too much, the morning drilling really helps getting back on track, plus another thing that I will discuss here

### **If you are losing synch**

If you have been practicing a lot and tried to pressure your tempo, sometimes it can happen that you feel your picking gets worse. I experienced this a few times and what I do is that for a period I only practice super slow without a metronome, no fast practicing for some days or a week.

As described in the previous chapter I experienced this a few times and I think it happens because of practicing for longer periods of times where i'm tired so I either move to quick up in tempo with the metronome so I never become properly warmed up as I drill. This is also one of the reasons I think the lesson should always last more than fifteen minutes. Of course also because the slow tempo is what develops precision in the technique which again is also one of the reasons I like to spend about seventy five to eighty percent in the slow end of the practicing session but again also as I said before, to get properly warmed up.

And believe it or not, I also can be doing the session for so long so I get too tired in the musculature, so much so I get too fatigued to reach my maximum speed without becoming too tense in the arm and hands. And I believe that this causes me to develop some bad habits in my alternate picking

which then in turn makes my fast alternate picking sloppy.

So if this situation seems like something you have experienced or experience as well then by all means try to approach it as I just described with a period where I only play super slow simple alternate picking, and I would suggest maybe just using one of your super simple lessons of this. And also you don't need a metronome for this.

The other thing you can eventually do is to practice the normal way you usually do but just in the morning for a period and see what it can do for you.

Now onto a new lesson.

This next lesson is the longest one I have presented until now and it will of course take quite some time to just learn the patterns.

As I described in the previous lesson which was also very long, but this one as you can see is even longer, you need to learn it in a way so you can be one hundred percent sure that you are doing the technique properly.

The worst thing that can happen when you drill is if you are spending a lot of time drilling and are playing the lesson in more than one way, you know as we discussed, having more than one fingering for the patterns or if you are playing more than one downstroke in a row or more than one upstroke in a row.

That will first of all make sure you never excel in speed in this lesson and then as a result waste your time.

And since this lesson is so long chances are in a way bigger that these things can happen. So please make sure that everything is perfect in your technique before you attempt to start using the metronome.

And of course the quickest way to master a long piece like this is as before to just work out a few bars at a time or the way that I do it is really to maximum do a complete bar and then be one hundred percent certain that I do it correctly and the same every time I drill it before I move on to the next bar. This is the quickest way to learn it even though it feels like you get stuck with a little piece at a time, but you will end up spending less time than if you try to move on to the next bars before you can do the previous properly.

And take note if you are experiencing parts that you feel look a lot the same so you don't start to mix up the patterns.

And finally, you should only move onto this new lesson if you feel that you have been working on too long on the lessons you are practicing and that you maybe start to become more sloppy in the lessons, which can start to happen after drilling something every day for a long time, like many weeks or months

### **Let go of old lessons**

So of course you will need to discard old lessons eventually so you don't end up with more than

maximum an hour of drilling alternate picking. In my opinion that is the most you should drill alternate picking a day, because as I said before, drilling other techniques like sweep picking and legato will also help your sound generally.

### Lesson 8

37 38

TAB: 16-15-13, 16-14-13, 15-13-12, 15-13-11-13-15, 12-13, 13-14-16, 13-16-15-13-15-13-11, 14-13-11, 13-12

39 40

TAB: 10, 13-11-10-11-13, 10-12-13, 11-13-14, 11-15-13-11, 13-11-9, 13-11-9, 12-10-8, 11-10-8-10-11, 8-10

41 42

TAB: 12, 9-11-13, 9-13-11-9-12-9-8, 11-9-8, 10-9, 6, 10-8-6, 10-8-7, 9-8-6-8-9, 7-8-10, 6

43 44

TAB: 8-10, 6-9-10, 8-9-11, 8-9-12-9-8, 11-9-8, 6-9-8-6, 8-11-9-8-9-13-11-9-11-14-13-11

45 46

TAB: 13-17-14-13-18-17-14, 17-15-13, 17-15-14, 16-15-13, 16-15-13-12-13, 11, 11-15-11-15, 15, 10-10-13-10

47 48

TAB: 8, 8-13-8-13-16-13-16-20-21-20-24-21, 13, 13, 20, 23-21-20-21-23, 20, 23-21-20, 22-21-22, 20-21-20

So that's a pretty long one I think. So I think you should not have more than this one and a short quick one to reach your maximum speed.

### Creating an alternate picking session from multiple lessons

I often create an alternate picking session from multiple lessons. What I mean is that I like to reach my max pretty much everyday but I mostly play alternate picking lessons where it's not possible for me to reach my overall maximum tempo.

As I write this my daily drilling session consists of at least three different alternate picking drills or often I also use four different lessons and they are all from this book. The two first I drill is lessons is lesson two and three. Once I cannot play them anymore I move on to lesson five and the last few tempos I play I use lesson 1.

I also often come up with little parts of scale patterns I don't use often in other situations. The reason for choosing scale patterns I don't use so often is that those keep my attention a little better than the ones I use all the time like the seven different modes of Harmonic minor and Natural minor.

So in many situations I will use any of the seven modes from the Melodic minor or also from the double harmonic minor scale like the lesson 5.

At some point in your development in alternate picking I would also suggest that you do the same just to always stay focused when you are drilling alternate picking.

I know it feels very comfortable to just use the same lessons year in and year out but as I have tried to describe throughout this book it will become counter productive at some point. That's my experience.

Its interesting that the awesome thing about playing and drilling on the guitar is as opposed to some other instruments very easy to create an environment where you can really relax with the instrument and just spend hours and hours drilling, this is what I have done through the years and at some point it becomes the way you relax and sitting with the guitar becomes what you do to relax.

Of course I also sit up and are very focused for some lessons like new licks or parts I have to learn. Stuff like that needs a higher focus. But then there's stuff like the first lesson in this program where you can almost lie down in the sofa watching telly or listen to music at the same time and still get a lot of repetitions down on the guitar.

I do this everyday at the end of the day to relax, just sit with the guitar and drill licks or lessons that I know well but still need to develop the technique. Like some alternate picking or some sweep picking

patterns or legato or tapping patterns.

### Here's one of my quick favorites, Lesson 9

This is nice and short and I have been using the pattern for many years. It's one that I keep going back to after not using it for months or even years.

S-Gt

mf

1

2

3

T  
A  
B

15 16 18 15 18 16 15 16 18 15 16 18 16 15 18 16

15 16 18 16 15 18 16 14 16 18 15 16 18 15 18 16

15

I often use it at the end of a longer alternate picking session like what I talked about in the previous chapter about creating a practicing session from several alternate picking drills, being some longer and difficult ones, to something simple like this.

### How to stay on track

This is a bit of a challenge for a lot of people, maybe mostly people who has been playing for a long time and maybe even play or have played in a band. It's like people who already are able to play some things like songs and maybe simple solos have to go through a tougher time requiring more discipline. And I think the reason is that its easy to just go back to whatever works for people who already have some success with the guitar. So if you fall into this category you probably should arm yourself with some extra patience with the development of your alternate picking speed.

Another challenge is people, in many situations young ones who are in a period of their life where they are going to school and they at some point have to start new educations. Maybe even in new places that then challenges the life they used to lead, changing the time they used to spend on guitar. They may meet new people and get new interests and so on. These people are also in for a challenge and if this is you, you really need to find that passion for guitar that I described earlier in a chapter or really expect for you discipline to be challenged. It's perfectly natural of course to be in these situations and I think its relatively simple to stay on track with your practicing. I have personally

been in these situations in my life, both with guitar and with other things that means a lot to me. The guitar situation was many years ago where I for some reason started an education that I ended up never using for anything to be honest. So that took up some of my daytime, but I still made sure to practice as many hours I could cram into a day anyway. On and off I also experienced having to work with things that are not guitar related, and I hate it. When stuff like that happens, which happens for pretty much anyone as you know of course, you can still work on the guitar everyday.

Even if you are in a situation where you have almost no free time for one reason or another, as long as you get the heavy practicing down, like your alternate picking sessions. So let's say you work all day and have young kids, what you can do is to spend the required time to learn one of the longer lessons and then one of the short ones and then combine those to an alternate picking session. So for example if you can play the long lesson from 40 bpm to 60 bpm and then the easy short lesson from 60 bpm to a 100 bpm. And maybe you can spend thirty minutes on that every day even though you have an extremely busy day. That way you can keep developing your alternate picking even though you are extremely challenged on time.

I highly recommend you do this because I personally have experienced stopping doing something I loved doing for several years because I had some difficulties arranging it or whatever. After years I took it up again and deeply regretted ever stopping, so I know how it feels to kind feeling like you have lost so much time because you can't help but feeling "where would I have been in my development if I did not stop?" in my personal experience in my situation I should just have accepted having a period where my time was very limited, and just if possible stop evaluating myself all the time, so you kind of keep your head down and just do what you do because over time it will still have an effect even though its less than what you would have wished.

I think its an ego thing that you end up dealing with because you think you should have been after drilling for a long time. But just realize what you lose if you completely stop your work. Ask yourself is it really worth dropping just because you don't see results as fast as you would have wanted.

The amount of students I have taught through the years that tell me that they used to play when they were younger but they stopped playing and practicing because of a job or a girlfriend or wife or getting a family tell me how they wished they did not stop, because where could they have been now if they kept on playing and practicing if they just accepted that the situation was not ideal for a period of time.

So instead of quitting because the situation in your life right now is not ideal, keep on practicing as I described earlier, maybe thirty minutes a day, and see if you can limit yourself from evaluating how much you achieve and just keep your head down, and then eventually your technique will develop for you to excel in speed.

So don't be one of the many students I have come across regretting stopping because of something that you feel obstruct your life, since everything is a period.

I hope the chapter will inspire you to keep on keeping on your journey with your guitar. Finally I just want to say I have reached an age where I meet people my age that don't have anything in their life but their job and family. Although that is the basis of a good living, remember that there are for most people many hours left in the day after going to work and take care of the family and I just see so

many people my age sitting with their phones every evening, having nothing better to do and that's fine if that's what you want, but I hear a lot of people complaining that they wished they had something else to do than look at their phone.

### **On top of your game**

This book can function as a continues tool to stay on top of your game regarding alternate picking. This means that once you find yourself finishing all the lessons, and let me make this extremely clear, no matter how developed your technique is and how fast you have become, finishing or put in a more correct way, having been playing each lessons for months and finding yourself becoming sloppy in each lesson after being through a long period where you become faster and faster plying the lessons. This all in all should take maybe a year and a half which then means you can actually start over on the second lesson or the first if you have not been playing that the whole time anyway.

If you prefer getting new lessons I can also suggest you sign up to my subscription based program of the same name on nielsvejlyt.com. or any of my other alternate picking programs under the menu called store.

If you are in that situation I describe in the above section then you are probably also experiencing that not only your technique has become more perfected but also your overall picking sound sounds better and better and your speed also increased.

I keep seeing guitar players and my students forget that the development in alternate picking is quite different from other techniques in the way that it can take a very long time before you see increase in speed, and then even if you do experience increasing in your speed then after that speed development it can take a very long time again before anything happens. So with the risk of repeating myself keep reminding yourself of this when and if you experience that you become discouraged and feel that it's not gonna happen because for sure it will.

But I keep saying this because I experience many of my students keep forgetting this truth and it's very understandable.

If you are contrary to my own experience and pretty much everyone I ever tout this technique should happen to get very positive results quicker than I explain here, you should be very happy and if that's the case I hope you don't skip the lessons altogether because you will still benefit from the lessons for sure, especially your overall sound, like the flow and quality of your sound.

### **Stay a percent under your max**

There's also a difference in your sound if you keep this concept. Let me explain, let's say you are able to play up to 200 bpm. Then instead of trying to reach this tempo every time you solo, instead try to stay a percentage under that. It's difficult to say how many percent, it's easier to explain it in this way. If you try to reach your absolute max whether that being a hundred bpm or two hundred bpm then you most definitely will use force to be your fastest, so try to play really fast but stay really relaxed in your picking arm.

This concept will give you maybe a little bit slower but a much better overall sound that sounds more like you have a lot of surplus energy which sounds much better like you are totally tightening up all

the time to be as fast as possible.

#### Final words

If you want to make sure you actually develop your alternate picking and that you really have a deep wish to become fast, then you absolutely must follow the directions.

If the wish to become fast is not that important or you feel “that could be cool or kinda nice” the chances are that you will skip lesson or try to force the development or not practice enough, so in other words, your wish of playing fast has to be serious for you to stay focused and keep working on it in times where you get tired of it or you don't see exceleration as fast as you wanted.

You are always welcome to contact me with any guitar related questions on my website [nielsvejlyt.com](http://nielsvejlyt.com)