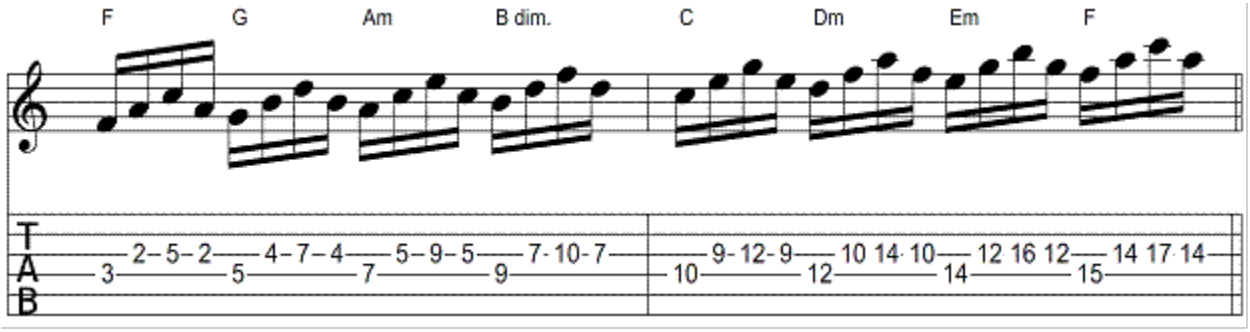
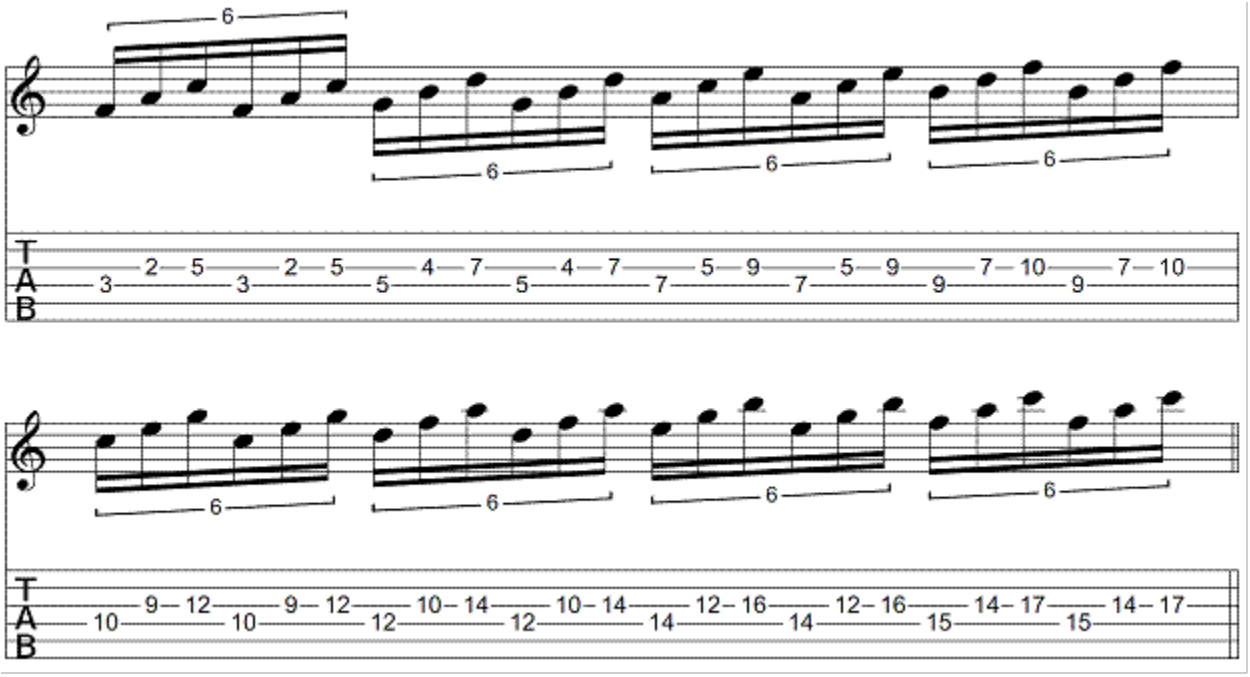
Exercise Series #1

These exercises go through basic diatonic two-string triads. This run (1a) ascends in the key of C (Am):



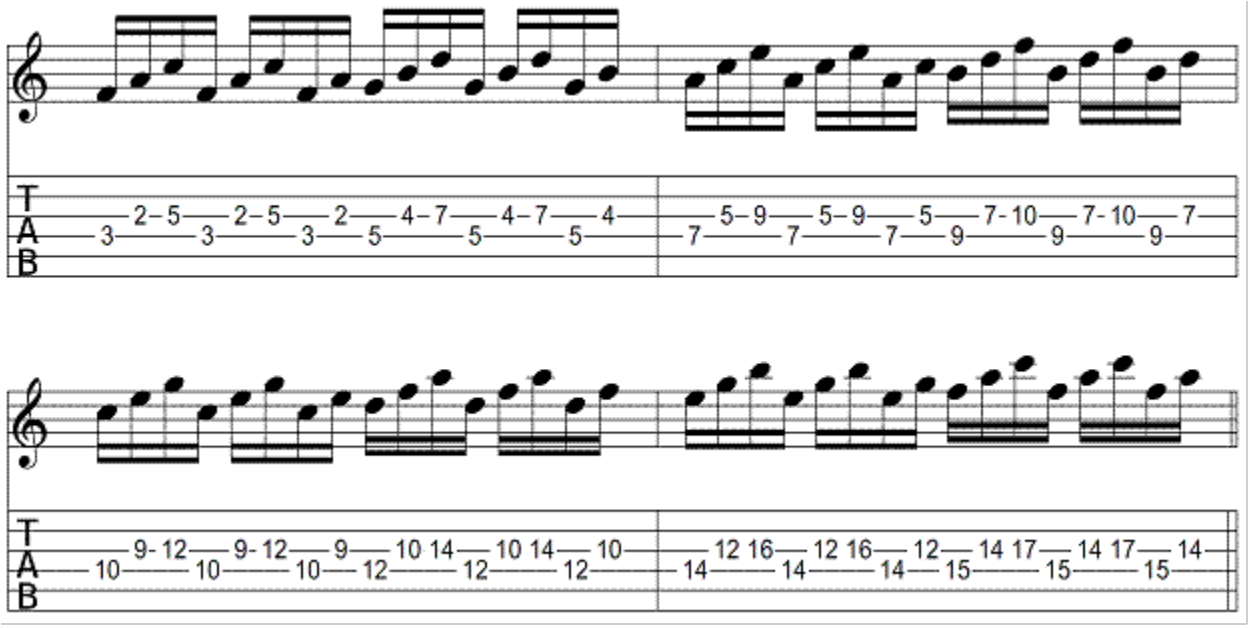
Make sure you play the exercise up and back down the neck. It may seem that descending is basically the same thing as ascending, but while you are using the same notes, it's important to train your hands to the position shifts in each direction.

Here is the same run in sextuplets (1b), with each triad played twice instead of once:



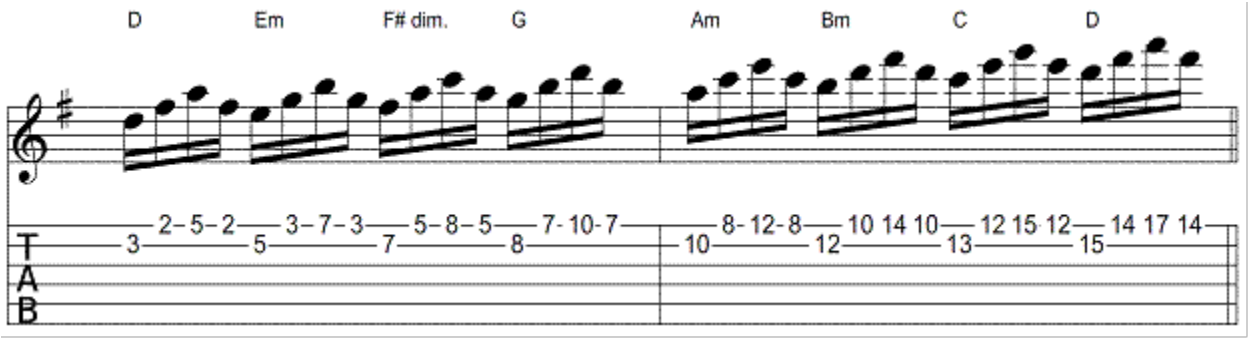
The first thing to do is get the fingering shapes of each of the three triads (major / minor / diminished) memorized, and then observe the movement through the diatonic cycle.

Here's a cool variation (1c) on the first 16th-note run, sort of a 3-on-4 rhythm.

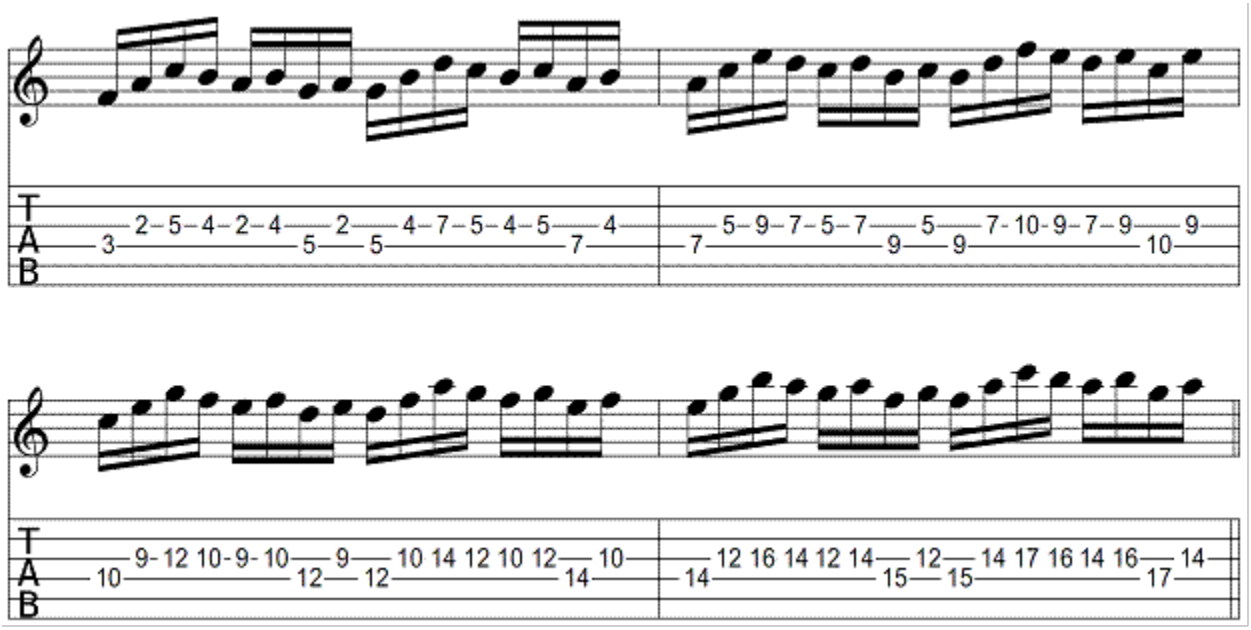


Notice how that changes your alternate-picking synchronization. Take it slow at first, and get comfortable with how your hands are synchronized throughout, with all the position shifting.

Now let's revisit our original two-string triad idea, this time on the first two strings (1d), in G (Em):



This should present a great many ideas to try out. For one, take any adjacent string pair, and work out the ascending diatonic progressions in every key. Try working through the circle of fifths/fourths; only one note changes each time you go from one key to the next. This is a good tactic to use with any picking exercise, not only to play it in all twelve keys, but to run through those keys in a progression.

And then, of course, run through the circle of fifths/fourths on *other* string pairs….

The final exercise (1e) in this series runs the Etude #2 triadic melody through the diatonic progression: