

Toque Flamenco: The Flamenco Guitar

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Introduction

Flamenco Guitar Position

The traditional flamenco guitar is balanced on the right thigh; with the neck extending diagonally across the body upwards from right to left. (from the player's point of view). The body of the guitar is held in place by the pressure of the upper right arm, and the right forearm extends downward to the guitar strings.

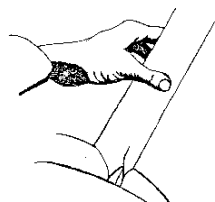
This is a difficult position to master, and is used most often in accompaniment of a singer or dancer, since it lends itself to active participation in the surrounding flamenco environment. It is difficult at first; the hand position will probably be cramped, the guitar will tend to slip, and it is difficult to see the strings (when accompanying, flamenco guitarists rely on their guitar experience, and play without looking; they “internalize” the basic techniques necessary).

An alternative is to with the right leg crossed over the left (or vice versa), a more comfortable position, and one used by a great many guitarists today (including Paco de Lucia). However, the traditional position is far better suited for driving rasgueado and basic thumb technique. The fancy fingerwork up the neck isn't nearly as important in flamenco as the social participation, keeping solid rhythm, and feeling the music, and the traditional position is more effective for these priorities.



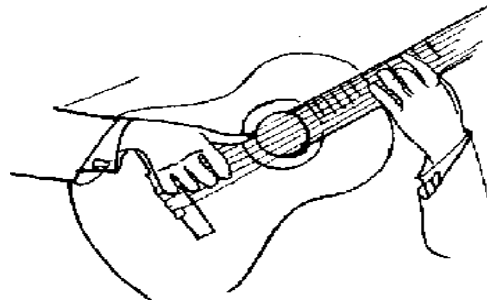
Left Hand Position

The thumb of the thumb extends perpendicular to the back of the guitar neck, with the thumb in the center. The fingers arch over and descend more or less 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 the jazz and blues guitar styles. The fingers are arched so that finger independence is maximized, and each note felt as it is played (eventually, flamencos have to learn to play the guitar without looking, to keep their eyes on the dancers!



Right Hand Position

It is a good general rule to keep the knuckles of your right hand more or less parallel to the guitar strings, so that your fingers strike the strings in the most efficient way. This rule, of course, is broken all the time in the heat of battle (i.e., performance); hand position actually depends critically on the particular techniques used (e.g., thumb techniques, tremolo, etc.). For the traditional flamenco position, the wrist will probably have to be cocked, which again will be uncomfortable at first. It is mostly a process of natural selection.



The best advice is just to learn and play as much as possible, especially for dancers and singers, and for classes. There are really no secrets, but keeping compas and strength are the priorities; missing a note in a falseta is not anywhere near as important as failure to keep compas; Flamenco guitarists learn to “sing along” in their minds while recovering from mistakes. (Dancer’s won’t complain about a note being off or fuzzy, but they will complain (or worse) if a guitarist loses compas!)

The Use of the Capo (Cejilla)

The guitar is tuned to A = 440 cps., but Flamenco guitarists often make use of an artificial bar (or “nut”) on the neck of the guitar, called a **capo**, **capotasto**, or **cejilla**. This is a wooden, plastic, or “thela” (compressed fiber) piece clamped at a given position on the neck, which stops the string at the fret just above it. It performs the same function as the left index finger when “barring” (bridging) at a position; it changes all the pitches of the (open) strings simultaneously to those at the new position. Once the capo is in position, the guitar is played just as without it; the only difference is the “starting” pitches of all the relationships on the neck. The capo, then, functions as the new “nut” of the guitar.

The capo was used originally to facilitate the accompaniment of singers; it is an automatic adjustment for pitch. In addition, some Flamencos think that the capoed guitar sounds “more Flamenco”, since the higher tensions of the strings produce a more brilliant sound.

The capo, limits the range of the left hand, since it limits the range available (the guitar body blocks the strings at the 12th fret. The cutaway guitar allows freer access to the upper ranges, but these are only now coming into some use in flamenco circles. Many guitarists put the capo at the 2nd fret when playing solo, since that position still allows free access to the 7th position (where the E and B Phrygian modes have an important note pattern).

In the final analysis, it is pretty much up to the singer, or in solo work, the guitarist. When taking material off of records or CD’s, the usual procedure is to listen for a resolution, or a familiar phrase, find it on the guitar, and then set the capo so that the material parallels that on the record.

The Flamenco Guitar in General

The traditional role of the Flamenco guitarist is as an accompanist of the two other major aspects of the art, the *cante* (song), and the *baile* (dance). Virtuoso guitarists, from Don Ramon Montoya, through Nino Ricardo and Sabicas, to Paco de Lucia, Victor Monge “Serranito”, and finally the new generation have carried the art of the solo guitar to record heights (although sometimes strange directions), but the foundation aspect of the flamenco guitar remains its participation and the artistic relationship to performers in intimate circumstances and appropriate ambiente as a serious art of personal expression.

The unifying rhythmic concept of the Flamenco guitar, dance and song is the **compas**, (literally, “meter”) or cyclic rhythm, which refers to the recurrent cycles of accentuation and phrasing that characterize Flamenco. It is similar to the concept of the *Tal*, or *Tala* cycle in Indian classical music (it is generally accepted that Gypsies originally have migrated from India). Again, it is essential to understand and to keep the *compas*; i.e., to stay within these cyclic rhythms. Even in the unstructured guitar pieces (*toques*), the phrasing of the *falsetas* (melodic sections similar to jazz riffs) will be similar to those in *palo* which have a defined *compas*.

The music of the Flamenco guitar has two components in performance; **chording compas** and **falsetas**. Chording compas consists of expressing chord progressions with the techniques of various types of **rasgueados** (right hand strumming techniques) in compas. Falsetas are sequences of individual notes or techniques (in compas) inserted at appropriate times between the chording compases; at the virtuoso level, guitarists use highly developed techniques - *picado*, *ligado*, *arpeggios*, *tremelos*, *alza pua* and many other variations, together with complex musical phrasing, polyrhythm, and counter-time.

The present work focuses on chording compas, the most essential element of performance for the Flamenco guitarist. It has already been introduced to in the sections on counting compas in the *Compas Analysis* and in the essentials of music theory in the *Music Theory* section; the next step is the study of the basic chords, *rasgueados*, and chord progressions as implemented on the guitar.

The Role of Question and Answer in Compas

The concept of “question/answer”, (or “tension/resolution”) is crucial for understanding the way compas sequences relate to each other. For the flamenco guitar, there are several ways of providing “question / answer” emphases; either applied individually, in combination, or simultaneously. Among them are:

1. **Harmonically** - this refers to the chord progressions used to express flamenco; in particular the Dominant -> Tonic relationship, or its equivalent in the Phrygian Mode.
2. **Rhythmically** - this refers to the use of contrasting measures in the compas cycle by using different rhythm sequences via rasgueado or falsetas to provide interest. (e.g., 6/8 Questions -> 3/4 Answers)
3. **Density** - measures can be “sparse” “dense”, depending on how thoroughly they are “filled” with percussive technique (e.g., rasgueado, footwork). The form is usually from “sparse” -> “dense”, but not always.

Although formal sequences of compas cycles are presented as examples, keep in mind that when accompanying the number of measures before a resolution is often not fixed (especially por Bulerias); so a rasgueado sequence may be continued for some time as a question before finally resolving, depending on the performance of the other artists.

Note: it is important for the accompanying guitarist to be able to find the “tono” of a singer quickly. Often a singer will point to the position on the guitar neck, and then tell you to sing “**por arriba**” (E Phrygian) or “**por medio**” (A Phrygian), which refers to the “cross string” position of the basic chords most often used keys for accompaniment (from the singer’s perspective). For example, the E (Major, Minor, Phrygian mode) is said to be “por arriba”, while the A (Major, Minor, Phrygian Mode) is said to be “por medio”.

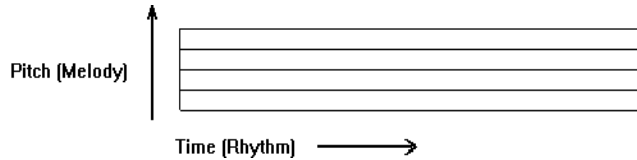
Tablature Notation

Music for the guitar can be written in the traditional format, by establishing a key signature and using spaces and lines on a 5 line staff to represent scale steps. Traditional tablature notation indicates note position (relative to the cejilla) with numbers superimposed on 6 horizontal lines to represent the guitar strings; an alternative is to use the spaces between the lines on a standard 5-line staff to represent the strings of the guitar; since standard music paper can then be used to write falsetas. For this discussion, the 5-line alternative will be used. As before, numbers then indicate the position at which the string is stopped relative to the nut or cejilla (capo).

Basic Rhythm

The Beat

Music has fundamentally two components; a “vertical” component that refers to pitch (i.e., the “highness” or “lowness” of notes), and a “horizontal” component that refers to rhythm (an ordered sequence of events in time).



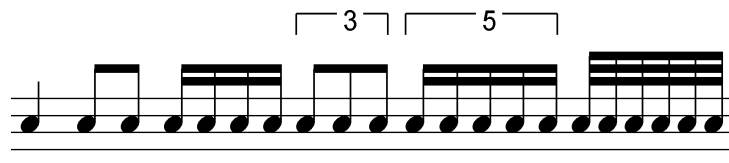
Taken together, these components express chord progressions or melody. The music of the guitar is essentially percussive (individual sounds of relatively short duration); the left hand of the guitarist is responsible for harmony and melody, and his/her right hand is responsible for rhythm (as expressed in rasgueado or falsetas).

The basis of rhythm is the **beat**, which divides time into equal periods, and is represented by the **quarter note** (♩) or the **dotted quarter note** (♩.). The “dot” indicates a period of time half again as long as the note it follows (in this case, a quarter note). Quantitatively the **tempo**, (i.e., the speed at which the music is performed) is defined by the number of beats per minute; for example, indicated by (♩ = 120), a tempo of 120 beats per minute (bpm). Musicians often tap their foot on the beat; and the tempo partially determines how fast a given technique can be executed. Individual techniques often have a duration of a note group. Typical Flamenco tempos are from 85 b.p.m. to 160 b.p.m..

Note Groups

The beat can be divided into subdivisions, which are indicated by the number of horizontal bars or flags on the note. A quarter note can be divided into two eighth notes, indicated by the symbol (♪); e.g., ♩ = ♪ + ♪. Similarly, the beat can be divided yet again, into sixteenth notes, indicated by two flags: (♩). Thus, for example, ♩ = ♪ + ♪ = ♩ + ♩ + ♩ + ♩. The flags are often tied together at the top of the note to indicate a **note group**, which is an example of a **rhythmic phrase** (an interval defined by several notes).

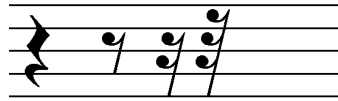
Here are examples of a number of note groups that have the same duration as a quarter note:



The above groups are a quarter note, 2 eighth notes (a **doublet**), 4 sixteenth notes (a **quadruplet**), 3 eighth notes (a **triplet**), 5 sixteenth notes (a **quintuplet**), and 6 thirty-second notes (a **sextuplet**).

Rests

Musical silences are indicated by symbols called **rests**. Here is a quarter rest, an eighth rest, a sixteenth rest, and a thirty-second rests, each of durations corresponding to their respective note equivalent.



Each of these rests can be extended by half, indicated by appending a dot to the symbol, as with notes. By using combinations of notes of varying duration within the beat, more complex rhythmic variations can be expressed.

Counting

Beats can be grouped together in larger phrases; the easiest way to think of these phrases is by the number of beats the phrase contains. Flamenco rhythms consists of two fundamental (and distinct) families of phrasing; those counted in multiples of 2 counts (the so-called **binary** rhythms), and those counted in multiples of 3 counts (the **trinary** rhythms). For Flamenco, the binary rhythms are most often counted in phrases of **four** counts, the trinary phrases are counted in phrases of **three**, **six**, or **twelve** counts.

Each of the compas phrases in the above families can be counted on each beat/quarter note (a slow compas timing), or with two counts for every beat (counting in eighth notes, a compas timing twice as fast for a given tempo.)

For example, a phrase of four notes might be counted as:
(F = Foot tap = Beat)

1 2 3 4 (Slow compas phrasing)
F F F F

or as:

1 2 3 4 (Fast compas phrasing)
F F

Time Signatures

The length of a rhythmic phrase and its accentuation (or **meter**) is indicated (both conceptually and notationally) by a **time signature**. A time signature is symbolized by a fraction, the denominator of which indicates the note duration used as the basic interval of time, and the numerator of which indicates the number of notes making up the phrase.

For example, a time signature of $3/4$ indicates a phrase three quarter notes ($3 \times 1/4$) in duration. The phrases are indicated on the staff by vertical lines - each phrase thus indicated is called a **measure**. These phrases (or combinations of them) are often repeated in music; a time signature holds on the staff until changed by another.

The important accents usually (but not always) fall on the first note of the first note group of the measure. Lesser accents usually fall on the first note of the other note groups, although this is not the case when counter-time, syncopation, or hemiola is applied (these terms will be explained elsewhere; see also the Compas Analysis).

Mnemonics

Another aid in expressing rhythm is to vocalize them using a consistent vocal pattern for each note group. The form of vocalization is up to each individual, but below are some suggestions:

Quarter Note/Eighth note - Tum or tum (Accented)
(abbreviated to Tm or tm if space is a factor) ; Ty or ty (unaccented)

Doublet - Tum-ty

Triplet - Rumpity (accented) or tumpity (unaccented):(abbr. Rmpity or tmpity)

Quadruplet - Rumpidity (accented) or tumpidity (unaccented)

Examples

Here are some examples of the above rhythmic concepts:

2/4, 4/4 Example

The symbol at the left of the staff is called a **clef** (in this case a treble clef); it indicates a range of pitches for the staff. The number above it is the measure number, and the number below is an octave offset indicator. Note that the time signature of 2/4 is continued for the first four measures after which it shifts to 4/4.

In the 2/4 measures, the count is on eighth notes (every other beat) with major accents on the beat (counts 1 and 3), while in the 4/4 measures the count is on every beat.. Note the triplet ending on count 3 in the fourth measure, mnemonically expressed as “rumpity tum”. This sequence is analagous to a drum roll, and is often expressed by ragueo (strumming) on the guitar, a redoble (footwork sequence) or vuelta (turn) in the dance. Note also the beat can be kept steady, but that the phrases are twice as long in the 4/4 measures as the 2/4 measures.

3/4 Example

This is an example of a 12 count compas cycle expressed as 4 measures of 3/4 meter. (The “7” above the clef is the measure number in the piece; this is an artifact of the notation program; ignore such numbers). If you say the rhythm to yourself, note that the first and third measures suggest “questions” while the second and fourth measures suggest answers. (Compare with the 2/4, 4/4 example above.)

3/4,6/8 Example

In this example, the dots at either end of the first measure indicate (arbitrary) repetition. The “hats” indicate accentuation. Notice that the accents in the first measure are against a beat defined in 3 quarter notes, producing a “3 vs.2” polyrhythm (or, more precisely, polymeter). Note that the 6/8 measure and 3/4 measure are exactly the same duration. The 3/8 sequence is a 12 count compas, but to keep the counting (and beat) consistent requires a 1/8 transition measure. This is a brief example of the complexity of Flamenco Compas that will be explored more deeply

in subsequent sections (see also (especially) the Compas Analysis for further examples.

Basic Chords

Chords are the fundamental means of expressing harmony on the guitar, and together with rasgueado (rasgueo, strumming) form the foundation of the chording compas.

Chords consist of three or more (different) notes struck simultaneously. Different versions of the same chord are called inversions, which are determined by which of the three notes are the lowest in pitch (since these notes will generally have emphasis).

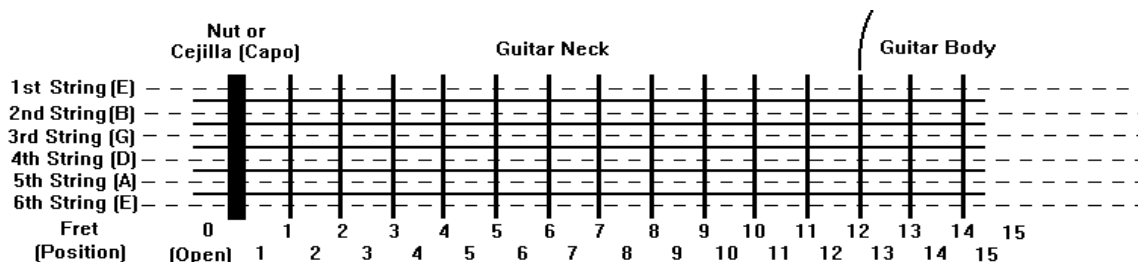
Many of the keys in which the toques are interpreted are determined by the ease of which the chords are made in the open position, as well as the scales which contain the open strings of the guitar.

Chord Notation

A five line diagram can be used to indicate the positions of the left hand fingering of notes on the guitar neck, with the spaces between the lines serving as guitar strings. The first string (treble E) is lies in the space immediately above the top horizontal line, with the sixth string (bass E) in the space below the bottom line, and the other four strings between.

The notes of the chromatic scale consists of all the available notes on the guitar; they are arranged in half step intervals, corresponding to individual frets on the guitar. (In the diagram, they are shown them by sharps or flats according to the keys most likely to be used for Flamenco. These correspond to the keys of A Phrygian Mode to the G# Phrygian Mode CW around the top of the Circle of Fifths, and their related major and harmonic minor keys.

Note that the distance from the right side of the nut (where the string is stopped) to the 12th fret is one octave in pitch (divides the length of the string in half), which is where the guitar neck meets the body on the traditional flamenco guitar. (The notes at a **position** refer to the position itself, but also includes the four places to the right.)



E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#
B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#
G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A
D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E
A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B
E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#

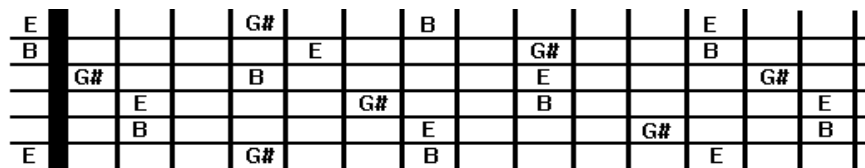
Notes of the Chromatic Scale

E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A
D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F

Notes of the Natural Scale

Of these notes, the Natural Scale consists of notes without sharps or flats .(corresponding to C Major, A (Natural) Minor, and the (“pure”) E Phrygian Mode. This scale is modified by sharps or flats depending on the key of the palo.

The **diatonic** (“two tonic”, i.e., major/minor) scales serve as the basis for chord construction. Again, notes are selected according to the chord required. For example, the E Major chord (E, G#, B) uses the following notes on the guitar neck:



Notes of the E Major Chord

Note that the open 3rd, 4th, and 5th open strings (G, D, and A) are not included in the notes of the chord.

Open Position Chords

The basic chords for keeping compas in Flamenco are those which can be made easily in the **open** position (relative to the capo) of the guitar. Left hand fingering is indicated by numbers (1 = index, 2 = middle, 3 = ring, 4 = little) at a given position (which takes its number from the fret directly to its right, which is the fret at which the string is actually stopped; for this reason, “fret” and “position” are sometimes used interchangeably, depending on the context of the discussion. The position for the unstopped strings is called the “open” position.

The root of the chord (its most important note) is be indicated with a circle in the following discussion. Among the most important chords used for Flamenco are the Major, Minor, and Dominant 7th chords, together with a few important variants. Rather than precisely defining latter chords at this first discussion, we will simply use quotes to indicated their usage.

Optional fingerings are indicated by parentheses, and strings that are open but not played or de-emphasized while strumming (playing on the treble or bass strings to more or less avoid stiking them) are indicated with an “x”. (Practically, sounding these strings is often determined by the heat of battle).

Open Position Major Chords

The **Major** chords in the open position are:

The diagrams show the following chord structures:

- E Major (E, G#, B):** 0 2 2 | 1 3 | 0 2
- D Major (D, F#, A):** 0 2 2 | 1 3 | 0 2
- A Major (E, C#, E):** 0 2 2 | 1 3 | 0 2
- G Major (G, B, D):** 0 2 3 | 2 4 | 0 3
- C Major (C, G, E):** 0 3 3 | 2 4 | 0 3
- G Major (G, B, D):** 0 2 3 | 2 4 | 0 3

(The first joint of the index finger is bent to make the A chord.)

Open Position Minor Chords

The **Minor** chords in the open position are:

The diagrams show the following chord structures:

- A Minor (A, C, E):** 0 2 2 | 1 3 | 0 2
- E Minor (E, G, B):** 0 2 2 | 1 3 | 0 2
- D Minor (D, F, A):** 0 2 3 | 2 4 | 0 3

Open Position Dominant 7th Chords

The **Dominant 7th** chords in the open position are:

E7 (E, G#, B, D)	E7 (E, G#, B, D)	E7 (E, G#, B, D)	E7 (E, G#, B, D)
A7 (A, C#, E, G)	A7 (A, C#, E, G)	A7 (A, C#, E, G)	A7 (A, C#, E, G)
G7 (G, B, D, F)	G7 (G, B, D, F)	D7 (D, F#, A, C)	D7 (D, F#, A, C)

Additional (Basic) Chords for flamenco

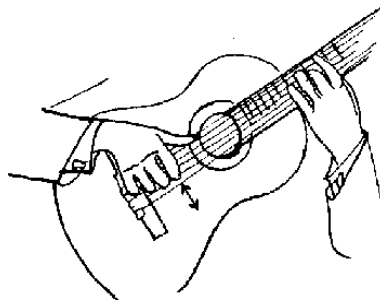
The following additional chords are also important for Flamenco:

FMaj7 (F, A, C, E)	B7 (B, D#, F#, A)	B11 (B, D#, F#, A, E)	B7 (B, D#, F#, A)
BbMaj7 (Bb, D, F, A)	C7 (C, E, G, Bb)	BbMaj7 (Bb, D, F, A)	C7 (C, E, G, Bb)

Basic Rasgueado (Guitar Strumming)

Basic rasgueados are indicated by vertical lines with arrows; an up arrow for a downward stroke ("away" from the body (or head), and a down arrow means an upward stroke (towards the head). The fingers of the right hand are indicated by **p** (pulgar), **i** (indice), **m** (medio), **a** (annular), and **c** (chico) for the thumb, index, middle, ring, and little fingers, respectively.

The simplest rasgueados are down and up strokes of the index finger of the right hand across the guitar strings (a chord is held the left), indicated by up and down arrows, respectively: The right thumb is also extensively used, (the index finger emphasizes the treble strings, while thumb emphasizes the bass strings.)



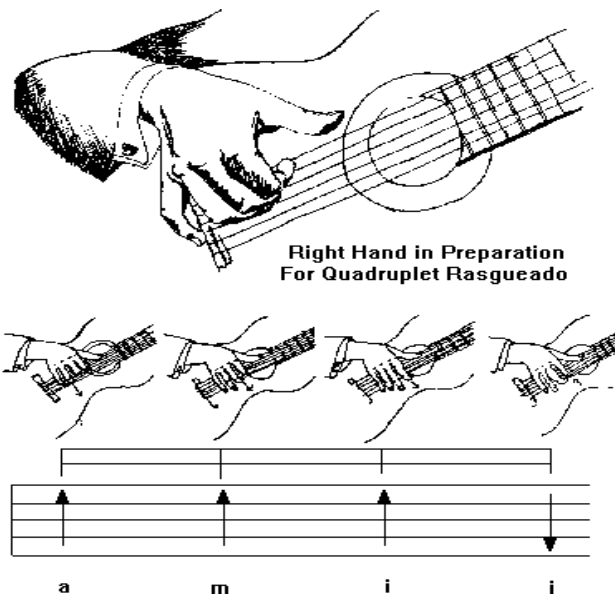
Here are thumb down and up strokes (the upstroke is used with the triplet rasgueado):



The upstroke is sometimes referred to as “**alza pua**”, or “upward thorn”; although pua could also be taken as a derivative of “pulgar” (thumb).

Quadruplet Rasgueado

The basic quadruplet rasgueado is performed (down, down, down, up):



Rasgueado Variations

There are many variations of rasgueo, single or continuous; chords can be indicated above the staff, with horizontal or curved lines indicating phrasing; repetitions of a technique (and sometimes rests) are indicated by a diagonal line:

Am	Am	G	F	E	E	5	3 3	
i	i	i i	p[m,a]i	i i i i	p a m i	p c a m i	a m i a m i	c a m i c a m i
P	P	p i	p a i	p i i i		Quintuplet	Sextuplet	(Continuous) Octuplet
down stroke	up stroke	Doublet	Triplet	Quadruplet	Quadruplet	(Continuous)	(Continuous)	
Singlet								
(thumb) (index)								

Repetition Marks

If the type of rasgueo is arbitrary or understood, it can be indicated by a shorthand; e.g.,

Rasgueados can also be used in a guitar interpretation of the **redoble**:

i a m i i	i p[a,m]i p	P i i i p c a m i i
ta ri - a ta	ta ri - a ta	pa ta ta ta pa ri - a pi ta
1 2 and a 3 (4)	1 2 and a 3 (4)	7 a 8 a 9 10 (11 12)
Redoble —	Redoble —	Redoble —

Try different combinations to see which is the best for you; there are many possibilities. The rasgueado when used as a redoble can be a powerful way to emphasize resolution phrases.

Chord Progressions and Compas

The most commonly used keys for Flamenco chording compas are given in the diagram below. These are presented in a general form consisting of two (or more, if “marking” rhythm”) chording compases (basic question-answer sequence) followed by a longer closing sequence. For the 2/4, 4/4 rhythms, this sequence is associated with a **cierra**, a closing sequence for the series of chords. For the 6/8, 3/4 rhythms the final chord progression is more characteristics of falsetas within a toque (e.g. Bulerias), but is often used in other contexts as well, so is a good starting point for this family as well.

	Key	Crd.Cmp.		Crd.Cmp.		Cerra			
Phrygian Mode	A	Bb	A	Bb	A	Dm	C	Bb	A
	E	F	E	F	E	Am	G	F	E
	B	C	B	C	B	Em	D	C	B
	F#	G	F#	G	F#	Bm	A	F#	G
Minor	Am	E7	Am	E7	Am	Dm	Am	E7	Am
	Em	B7	Em	B7	Em	Am	Em	B7	Em
Major	A	E7	A	E7	A	D	A	E7	A
	E	B7	E	B7	E	A	E	B7	E
	C	G7	C	G7	C	F	C	G7	C

Note that some of the keys near the top of the Circle of Fifths are not generally used with Flamenco palos (except as related keys). There are a number of reasons; for example, the tonic D chord (D Major, Minor) has its root on the 4th string, and therefore lacks a solid “bottom”; the G Major chord is slightly awkward to make in the open position, so is not commonly used as a basis for toques.

The key of B Phrygian Phrygian has been included because of its common use in Rumba solos and as the key for Granadinas; similarly for the F# Phrygian mode (Taranto, Tarantas)

In addition, the key of D Minor and D Phrygian Mode is sometimes used for Farruca and Zambra with the 6th string tuned to D (a step lower than E) to provide the bottom; an additional re-tuning of the 3rd string to F# (a half step lower than G) is characteristic of the Rondena solo guitar toque. (Note: some contemporary guitarists are experimenting with different tunings; open G or open D tuning, so be careful if the solo has special effects not traditional to Flamenco).

There are many other chord sequences used with Flamenco, and we’ll return to this subject after we’ve discussed the basic rasgueado techniques used for the Flamenco rhythm families.

2/4, 4/4 Compas Family

The 2/4, 4/4 Family of Flamenco Rhythms can be divided into two main groups; those in which the compas is **primarily** expressed in doublets or quadruplets (note groups of multiples of two), and those expressed in triplets (note groups in multiples of three). This distinction is somewhat arbitrary, however, since a performance can (and usually will) contain sequences made up of some or all these note groups.

1. 2/4 and 4/4 Flamenco forms expressed primarily as doublets/quadruplets.

Farruca, Tangos, Rumba, Zambra (Danza Mora), Taranto, Garrotin, Colombianas

2. 2/4 Flamenco forms expressed primarily expressed as triplets.

Tientos, Tanguillo (de Cadiz), Zapateado

The basic 2/4 and 4/4 “question / answer” forms are:

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{Q} \qquad \qquad \qquad \text{A} \\
 \left| \begin{array}{c} \frac{2}{4} \quad \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \frac{2}{4} \quad \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \end{array} \right| \quad \text{[e.g., Rumba Gitana]} \\
 \\
 \text{Q} \qquad \qquad \qquad \text{A} \\
 \left| \begin{array}{c} \frac{4}{4} \quad \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad a \quad 2 \quad a \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 3 \quad a \quad 4 \quad a \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad a \quad 2 \quad a \quad 3 \quad a \quad 4 \quad a \end{array} \right| \quad \text{[e.g., Taranto]}
 \end{array}$$

This format, with “questions / answers” as **V7** -> **I** for the **major** and **minor**, and **II** -> **I** for the **Phrygian mode**), is one **chording compas** (in 2/4 or 4/4, respectively).

When marking rhythm, the “question” sequence can be repeated an arbitrary (odd) number of times before finally resolving (the full sequence is an even number of measures), depending on the context of the performance. A number of these chording compases are usually performed in sequence, which is finally closed (“cerrado”) by a longer sequence called a “**cierre**” (close), or “**llamada**” (call) using the sub-dominant chord sequence or its equivalent (IV -> I -> V7 -> I, or IV -> III -> II -> I).

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{Q} \longrightarrow \text{A} \longrightarrow \\
 \left| \begin{array}{c} \frac{2}{4} \left(\frac{4}{4} \right) \quad \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \end{array} \right| \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{Q} = \text{V}, \text{V7} \text{ chord [Major, Minor]} \\ \text{II} \text{ chord [Phrygian Mode]} \\ \text{A} = \text{I} \text{ chord [Major, Minor, Phrygian Mode]} \end{array} \\
 \text{[: = repeat]}
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{Cierre} \quad \text{IV} \qquad \qquad \text{III} \qquad \qquad \text{II} \qquad \qquad \text{I [Phrygian Mode]} \\
 \text{IV} \qquad \qquad \qquad \text{I} \qquad \qquad \text{III7} \qquad \qquad \text{I [Major, Minor]} \\
 \text{Q} \longrightarrow \text{A} \longrightarrow \text{Q} \longrightarrow \text{A} \longrightarrow \\
 \left| \begin{array}{c} \frac{2}{4} \left(\frac{4}{4} \right) \quad \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \end{array} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \overline{\quad} \overline{\quad} \\ 1 \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \end{array} \right|
 \end{array}$$

2/4 , 4/4 Compas Family Rasgueado Sequences

The 2/4, 4/4 family of Flamenco palos are divided into compas expressed primarily as doublet or quadruplet note groups, and those in triplets.

2/4, 4/4 Palos in doublets/quadruplets.

These palos include:

Farruca (Am), **Tangos** (A Phrygian), **Tientos** (A Phrygian), **Zambra - Danza Mora** (E Phrygian), **Taranto** (F# Phrygian), **Garrotin** (C Major), **Columbianas** (A Major)

(Note: the above keys are somewhat arbitrary, since (especially modern) Flamenco makes use of all keys, and in addition modulates back and forth between keys considerably.)

Flamenco Chording compas is expressed by rasgueados; here are some chording compas sequences often used with 2/4 rhythms. Note in particular that those sequences with redobles (rasgueados ending on count 3 in 2/4, or 4 in 4/4) are particularly important for their use in **cierres (llamadas)**.

The image displays several musical examples of rasgueado sequences. Each example consists of two staves, one for 2/4 time and one for 4/4 time. Above the staves are rhythmic patterns with flags and brackets, and below are fingerings (1-4) and accents (a). The sequences are as follows:

- Top Left:** Sequence with two measures. First measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4). Second measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4) with a redoble (wavy line) on count 3.
- Top Right (Counter-time):** Sequence with two measures. First measure: 2/4 (1 [2] a 3 [4] a), 4/4 (1 [2] a 3 [4] a). Second measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4) with a redoble on count 3.
- Middle Left:** Sequence with two measures. First measure: 2/4 (1 a 2 a 3 4), 4/4 (1 a 2 a 3 4). Second measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4) with a redoble on count 3.
- Middle Right (Cierre (llamada) Farruca, Tangos, etc.):** Sequence with two measures. First measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4). Second measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4) with a redoble on count 3.
- Bottom Left:** Sequence with two measures. First measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4). Second measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4) with a redoble on count 3.
- Bottom Right:** Sequence with two measures. First measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4). Second measure: 2/4 (1 2 3 4), 4/4 (1 2 3 4) with a redoble on count 3.

Sequences to be repeated, or alternated.
Rasgueados as preferred.

These sequences can be repeated (for two sections of question and answer in 2/4, one section of question in 4/4), and can be mixed in sequences as required. Eventually, sequences like this becomes second nature to Flamenco performers.

Rumba Gitana (Rumba Flamenca)

The following are some basic rasgueados for the chording compas characteristic of Rumba Gitana:

The image displays six examples of rasgueados (strumming patterns) for Rumba Gitana, presented on a 4/4 staff with two systems of notation (treble and bass clefs) for each example.

Example 1: Shows a pattern with quarter notes and slaps. Fingerings: 1 p, [2] a, 3 p, 4 [a,m]. A legend indicates **S = Slap**.

Example 2: Shows a pattern with quarter notes and slaps. Fingerings: 1 p, [2] a, 3 p, 4 [a,m].

Example 3: Shows a pattern with eighth notes and slaps. Fingerings: p [a,m] [a,m] p, [a,m] [a,m] p, p [a,m] [a,m] p, [a,m] [a,m] p.

Example 4: Shows a pattern with eighth notes and slaps. Fingerings: [a,m] [a,m] p, [a,m] [a,m] p, p [a,m] [a,m] p, [a,m] [a,m] p.

Example 5: Labeled **Cierre (llamada) Rumba Gitana**. It shows a pattern with eighth notes and slaps. Fingerings: i, 1 [2] a, [3] 4, [1] 2, 3 [4].

Triplet Flamenco Toques

Tientos (A Phrygian), Zapateado (C Major), Tanguillo (A Major)

Another form of 2/4 time is anacrusic in nature; i.e., the phrasing is actually felt as starting from “pickup” notes in the measure before the harmony change. This means that the last part of the preceding measure is actually felt as beginning the phrase, even though the chords actually change on the measure boundaries.

At a fast tempo, the phrasing is performed in doublets and quadruplets, characteristic of Tangos; however, for Tanguillo and Zapateado (and occasionally Tangos as well), the emphasis is in “triplets” (actually, sextuplets as shown).

The image displays musical notation for Flamenco triplets in 2/4 time, divided into two main sections: "1 Chording Compas" and "Cierre (llamada)".

1 Chording Compas: This section shows a three-measure phrase. Above the staff, the chords are indicated as (Phrygian Mode) I, II, and I. Below the staff, the rhythmic patterns are: [3] 4 a, 1 2aa 3 4 a, and 1 2aa 3 [4 a]. The first measure includes an "anacrusis" bracket. To the right, "Triplet Phrasing" is shown with three groups of three notes, with the rhythmic pattern 4 [a] a, 1 a 3, and 4 [a] a.

Cierre (llamada): This section shows a four-measure phrase. Above the staff, the chords are indicated as IV, III, II, and I. Below the staff, the rhythmic patterns are: 1 2aa 3 4 a, 1 2aa 3 4, [1] 2 a 3 a 4aa, and 1. The first measure includes an "anacrusis" bracket.

Note that the cierre ends on count 1 of the last measure, instead of count 3 in the previous compas phrasing.

These techniques can also be applied in 4/4 time, with the counting (and chord progressions) half as fast compared to the techniques employed. 4/4 meter would be characteristic of a slow Tientos or Taranto, which has both quadruplet and sextuplet phrasing, depending on the context of the performance. With a slow phrasing, the interior musical structures (techniques / note grouping) within the compas cycles (measures) can be correspondingly more musically complex.

6/8, 3/4 Compas Family

Although the 2/4, 4/4 rhythms are an important part of the Flamenco repertoire, it is the 6/8, 3/4 rhythms that form the heart of the art; included in the rhythms (“palos”) are the all-important Soleares, Bulerias, and Siguiryas. The 6/8 and 3/4 measures provide a richer rhythmic foundation than the 2/4, 4/4 rhythms and have been developed to a high degree of complexity in Flamenco. (The 2/4 rhythms are much easier, and therefore more accessible to the beginner.)

In traditional Flamenco, there are no palos in pure 6/8 with the arguable exception of Sevillanas. (There is a great deal of Spanish theatrical, popular and folk music in pure 6/8, however). The 6/8 measures always function as questions (except for Siguiryas); however, 3/4 measures can function as questions or answers, depending on the musical context. These measures (as compas cycles or parts of them) can be applied in sequence or in combination, and previous remarks about harmony and density in “questions” and “answers” apply to rhythms in this family as well.

Combinations of these measures are almost always in combinations of two, often making a total of 12 counts for a complete compas cycle. For some palos, the two measure (12-count) sequence is highly structured (e.g. Peteneras) , while for others it is highly arbitrary (e.g., Bulerias). Odd multiples of measures can happen (primarily por Bulerias), especially when “cooking” falsetas in a fiesta.

6/8, 3/4 Family Rasgueado Sequences

Alegrias, Soleares, Caracoles, Cantiñas, Peteneras, Guajiras, Sevillanas

In the following sections we will give basic forms of the various compas structures as generally applied; their application to specific Flamenco palos (e.g., Solea, Buleria) will be presented in the (guitar) section on Flamenco Forms.

3/4 Compas

The 3/4 compas cycle forms the basis of the resolution phrase for many of the flamenco toques, as well as being used by itself when marking rhythm in Bulerias (where it can be applied as both question and answer, depending on its harmony).

The first beat is counted as "12" or "1" depending on the context (review the Compas Analysis), and the next most important beat is count "4" (or "10", if it is part a 3/4 12-count cycle). Chords can be held for the entire measure, change on count 4, or change on each beat depending on the context. (Chords only change on count "2" in the chording compases for Sevillanas and Fandangos de Huelva).

6 count cycle 12 count cycle

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$ or $\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 1 \ a \ 2 \ a \ 3 \ a \end{array} \right|$, 6 - 12 etc.

(multiples of 2)

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} Q \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$ $\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} A \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \\ 6 \ 7 \ 8 \ 9 \ 10 \ 11 \end{array} \right|$ Q = V, V7 chord (Major, Minor)
 A = I chord (Major, Minor, Phrygian Mode)

(: = repeat)

Resolution Phrases

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} A \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$ or $\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} Q \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$ $\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} A \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$

(as Question)

IV III II I (Phrygian Mode)
 IV I III7 I (Major, Minor)
 Q A Q A

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$ $\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$

Sevillanas

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} Q \ A \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$

Fandangos de Huelva

E7 Am G F E (Phrygian Mode)

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} Q \ A \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$ $\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$ $\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} A \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$

The following are some examples of rasgueado sequences in 3/4 6-count compas; the specific rasgueados are optional. In particular, many of the sequences can also function as resolution phrases.

Resolution Phrases (or Marking)

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$ $\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$ $\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$

12 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 (5) (Tap on 5 or 11 optional)
 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11) (as resolution phrase)

i p i = (c),a,m,i triplets
 p,(c),a,m,i

(Marking)

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$

Counter-time

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$

Verdiales

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$

Fandangos de Huelva Sevillanas

$\left| \frac{3}{4} \begin{array}{c} \square \square \square \\ 12 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \end{array} \right|$

6/8 Compas

The 6/8 Six-Count Compas is another compas cycle fundamentally important for Flamenco. It functions as a “question” in Flamenco, since there are no traditional Flamenco rhythms that resolve in 6/8 (with the arguable exception of Sevillanas). It is particularly important in alternating 6/8, 3/4 cycles which forms the basis of many of the Flamenco palos. However, it can repeat a number of times before closing with a 3/4 resolution phrase in Bulerias.

$\begin{array}{c} \text{Q} \longrightarrow \\ \text{A} \longrightarrow \text{Q} \longrightarrow \end{array}$
A (resolution phrase)

$\left| \begin{array}{c} \frac{6}{8} \\ \frac{3}{4} \end{array} \right|$
12 1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 10 (11)

Q = V, V7 chord (Major, Minor)
II chord (Phrygian Mode)
A = I chord (Major, Minor, Phrygian Mode)

[: = repeat]

The following are several examples of 6/8 rasgueado sequences:

[Marking]

$\begin{array}{c} \text{6} \\ \text{8} \end{array}$
12 (1) a 2 a
3 (4) a 5 a

$\begin{array}{c} \text{6} \\ \text{8} \end{array}$
12 (1) 2 aa
3 (4) 5 aa

$\begin{array}{c} \text{6} \\ \text{8} \end{array}$
12 1 a 2 a
3 4 a 5 a

Counter-time

$\begin{array}{c} \text{3} \\ \text{4} \end{array}$
12 a (1) a (2) a
3 a (4) a (5) a

[Sevillanas]

$\begin{array}{c} \text{6} \\ \text{8} \end{array}$
12 1aa 2aa
3 4aa 5aa

= [c], a, m, i triplets
 p, (c), a, m, i

6/8,3/4 12 Count Compas

The 6/8, 3/4 12 Count compas cycle is one of the most important in Flamenco; it is the basis of some of the most important Flamenco palos, including cantes and bailes por Bulerias, Soleares, and the Alegrias family (as well as the Paseo Castellanos) of the two latter forms. Peteneras and Guajiras are exclusively characterized by 6/8, 3/4 structures, as are Siguiryas and Serranas (in a separate compas structure).

As mentioned above, the 6/8 compas functions as a Question, with various forms of 3/4 compas cycles serving as resolution phrases. Here are some typical 12 Count 6/8, 3/4 sequences characteristic of Bulerias (variations can be applied to other palos as well):

The image displays three musical examples of 12-count sequences in 6/8 and 3/4 time signatures, characteristic of Bulerias. Each example consists of a 6/8 measure followed by a 3/4 measure.

Example 1: Shows a sequence of notes with accents (^) and dynamics (p, i). The 6/8 measure contains notes 12, 1, a, 2, a, 3, (4), (5). The 3/4 measure contains notes 6, 7, a, 8, a, 9, a, 10, (11). A legend indicates that a wavy line with an upward arrow represents [c], a, m, i triplets, and a wavy line with a downward arrow represents p, [c], a, m, i triplets.

Example 2: Shows a sequence with triplets. The 6/8 measure contains notes (12), 1aa, 2aa, 3, (4), (5). The 3/4 measure contains notes 6, 7aa, 8aa, 9aa, 10, (11).

Example 3: Shows a sequence with counter-time. The 6/8 measure contains notes 12, (1), 2aa, 3, (4), (5). The 3/4 measure contains notes 6, a, (7), a, (8), a, (9), a, 10, (11). The word "Counter-time" is written above the 3/4 measure.

12 Count 3/4 Cycle

The 12 Count 3/4 Cycle is an important sequence for accompanying taconeo and cante in the Soleares and Alegrias families. Although written in 3/4 meter to account for changes in harmony, the actual accentuation is on 3, 6, 8, and 10 (and sometimes 12) as in the 6/8, 3/4 compas structures.

Here's an example of a chording compas and llamada that might be used with Soleares:

Chording Compas (Soleares)

Fmaj7 → C → Fmaj7 → E

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 [11] [12]

Tap optional on 11
Stroke optional on 12

Llamada (Soleares)

E →

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 [11] [12]

Alegrías

The following are typical sequences for the Alegrías family:

Alegrías Family

Cante Accompaniment (Paseo Castellano)

Cante I → V7 → I
 Cante V7 → I → IV → I
 Llamada IV → I → V7 → I

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (11) (12)

Chording Compas

I → V7 → I

I → V7 → I

T = Tap

3/8 Chording Compas (Jaleo/Chufra)

The Jaleo (Chufra) compas is similar to the 3/4 Chording Compas phrasing is performed at twice the tempo, which can then be described with a 3/8 time signature. It is sometimes used (particularly in the major key) as a finale for Alegrias and Soleares.

The compas of Jaleo/Chufra is also used in the context of Bulerias; note particularly the transition phrases between the 12 Count 6/8, 3/4 Bulerias cycle and Jaleo (necessary to keep the counting consistent):

12 Count Bulerias

12 1 a 2 a 3 (4) (5) 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

(12) 1 2 3 a 4 5 6 1 2 3 a 4 (5)

12 Count Bulerias

12 1 a 2 a 3 (4) (5) 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

12 Count 3/8 Cycle

If the 3/4 Compas cycle is performed at twice the tempo, it becomes 3/8; compare the sequence below with the equivalent version in 3/4. (For example, note that the rasgueados on the anacrusic counts 1- 2 have half the density of those in the latter compas.) The sequence below is characteristic of a fast basic compas por Alegrias:

Alegrias

I V7 → I → V7 → I →

3
8

1 a 2 a 3 4 a 5 a 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 [11] 12

6/8, 3/4 Flamenco Palos: Rhythm Structures

The 6/8, 3/4 Compas families can be characterized by their Rhythmic structures in a general way; specific differences will be discussed in the section on Flamenco forms.

Toque (Palo)	Rhythm Structure
Soleares	3/4 12 Count, 6/8, 3/4 12 Count 4 × 3/8 12 Count
Solea Por Bulerias Alegrias, Rosas Caracoles, Cantinas	3/4 12 Count, 6/8, 3/4 12 Count 4 × 3/8 12 Count
Fandangos, Tarantas Granadinas, Rondena, Malaguenas	2 × 3/4 (12 Count), 6/8, 3/4 12 Count 3/4 Cycles, 6/8 Cycles (in falsetas)
Bulerias	3/4 Six Count, 6/8 Six Count 6/8, 3/4 12 Count, 2 × 3/8 Jaleo (Six Count)
Peteneras, Guajiras	6/8, 3/4 12 Count
Fandangos de Huelva	2 × 3/4 (12 Count), 6/8, 3/4 12 Count
Verdiales	3/4 Cycles
Sevillanas	3/4 Six Count, 6/8 Six Count

Alegrias (Cantiñas Family)

The popular chording compas for Alegrias used to be primarily in the key of A Major; but recently the key of E Major has become quite popular. The generic name for this family of compas forms (palos) is Cantiñas; the chord progressions can be transposed to other keys for the other members of the family (Rosas (E), Caracoles (C), etc.)

Basic Chording Compas

The following compase sequences give a flavor of the basic chording compas for the Alegrias (Cantinas) family of Flamenco palos..

Alegrias (A Major)

Introduction

1 2 3 4 5 6 7aa 8 a 9aa 10 (11) 12

Chording Compas

1 2 3 (4) a 5 a 6 7aa 8 a 9aa 10 (11) 12

Llamada

1aa 2aa 3 a 4aa 5aa 6 a 7aa 8 a 9aa 10 (11) (12)

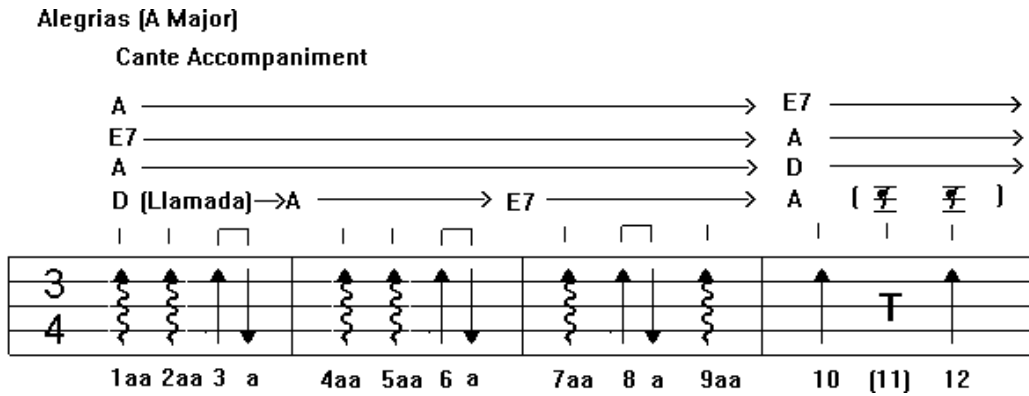
The first compas is one that you might use as an introduction. The second is a characteristic chording compas, and the third is a typical llamada. For slower tempos, you might try doubling the rasgueados (e.g. 9aaAaa 10).

The accents are on counts 3, 6 8, 10, and 12; this is actually a 6/4, 3/2 meter which is polyrhythmic against the 3/4 chord phrasing; the rhythmic phrasing is then anacrusic to the accented counts (the rasgueados function as “pickup” strokes which emphasize the counts, similar to redobles).

(Note: Modern Flamenco guitarists are experimenting with substituting alternative chords into these progressions; for example, an F#m chord for B7 in E Major. Also listen for modulations to the relative minor, even in the basic compas.

Paseo Castellano (Cante) chord accompaniment

The next diagram shows a typical sequence for accompanying the cante (or Paseo Castellano) in A Major:



The other members of the Alegrias family have similar compas forms, but are distinguished by their letras, and traditionally by the keys in which they are performed (although the latter distinction is less important these days).

Caracoles, Cantinas (C Major)

Rosas (E Major)

Romeras (E Minor)

Baile por Alegrias

One example of the traditional form of the Alegrias dance has the following form:

Cante and Baile Entranced (Braceo (arms), Ti-ni-ti-tran, etc.....)

Llamada

Paseo

Desplante

Paseo Buildup (in dynamics, tempo)

Llamada

Silencio (sequence in Minor key)

Paseo Castellano (Buildup)

Llamada

Taconeo (footwork solo)

Buildup

Llamada

Ida (old style)

Bulerias

Desplante

Bulerias

Desplante

.

Final Desplante

(see the section on Bulerias for a discussion of the Desplante)

The taconeo solo is often accompanied by falsetas, e.g.:

The image shows two musical systems, each consisting of a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The first system is labeled 'A' and the second 'E'. Below each staff is a guitar tablature with six lines. The lyrics are written below the tablature, with numbers 1-12 indicating the fret position for each syllable. The lyrics are: '1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 a 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 a 11 a 12 a' and 'p i p i p i p i p p p i p i p i p i p i p i p i p i p p p i'.

The Silencio

The Silencio is a passage in the relative minor which is used to briefly change the mood of the dance to a bit more somber, for artistic contrast. In the example below, the first line (2 12-count compasses) is repeated (note the repeat signs).

Musical notation for the Silencio passage. The first line consists of two 12-count compasses, each starting with a repeat sign. The second line continues the melody with a key signature change to major (two sharps) at the end. Fingerings and dynamics (p) are indicated below the notes.

The guitarist usually performs a falseta that follows this chord progression. The sequence modulates to the major again for the Paseo Castellano and/or rapid (brief) taconeo section following it, which builds up to the llamada just before the taconeo solo.

Alegrías Silencio (A Minor) (Picado)

Guitar tablature for the Silencio falseta. It shows six systems of guitar strings (3 and 4) with fret numbers and rhythmic patterns. Chord changes are indicated above the systems: Am, E7, Am, E7, Dm, and A Major.

La Ida

La Ida is a rasgueado/dance sequence used in the old style of Alegrias to mark the transition between the taconeo buildup and the Bulerias finale. The (F#7,Bm) and (G#7,C#m) chords are performed at the 2nd and 4th positions, respectively. Carmen Amaya performs the Ida in her film “Maria de la O”.

The example below shows the transitions from the llamada of the Alegrias to the first compas of the Jaleo.

The musical notation is divided into three sections:

- Llamada:** Measures 1-10. Chords: D (measures 1-3), A (measures 4-6), E7 (measures 7-9), A (measure 10). Fingerings: 1 i, 2 a, 3 a, 4 a, 5 a, 6 a, 7 a, 8 a, 9 a, 10 i.
- La Ida:** Measures 5-12. Chords: A (measures 5-6), E7 (measure 7), A (measure 8), F#7 (measures 9-10), Bm (measures 11-12), G#7 (measures 13-14), C#m (measures 15-16). Fingerings: 12 i, (1) i, 2 i, (3) i, 4 i, (5) i, 6 i, (7) a, 8 i, 9 i, 10 i, 11 i, (12) i, 1 a, 2 a, 3 a, 4 a, 5 a, 6 a, 7 a, 8 a, 9 a, 10 a, 11 a, 12 i.
- Jaleo (etc.):** Measures 12-16. Chords: E7 (measures 12-13), A (measures 14-15), E7 (measure 16), A (measures 17-18). Fingerings: (1) i, a, 2 i, 3 i, 4 i, 5 i, (6) i, 7 a, 8 a, 9 a, 10 i, (11) i, 12 i, 1 a, 2 i, 3aa R, 4 i, 5 i, 6 i.

Bulerias

The Bulerias can be performed in all the keys available to the Flamenco Guitar. The most important compas cycles (both of which can be used as “marking” compases between falsetas or letras of the cante) are the 12-Count 6/8, 3/4 Cycle, the 6-Count cycles (6/8 and 3/4), and the Jaleo/Chufra compas. The 6/8 6-Count compas cycle is always a “question” which must be resolved to an “answering” 3/4 resolution phrase. 3/4 measures can be either “questions” or “answers” in a marking sequence, with the resolution expressed by a different rasgueado sequence than the preceding questions. The combinations of “questions” and “answers” are most often in multiples of two measures (e.g. an odd number of “questions” followed by a single resolution measure), but this rule is subject to breakage, especially in the heat of battle (performance) or the throes of falseta improvisation.

Both the 6/8 and 3/4 Six-Count cycles can be used in a “falseta” context, either continuously (using chord progressions relative to the keys), or in “question-answer”, but always ends in a resolution phrase on the tonic chord. The first section of the letra to the copla form of the cante often uses a 12-Count cycle; the cambio chord progression is given in the diagram. The Jaleo, with transitions to and from is also given. The following examples will be expressed in the key of A Phrygian Mode.

12 Count Chording Compas

The foundation of Bulerias compas is the 12 count compas cycle, which is expressed in alternating measures of 6/8, and 3/4. Note that the music is anacrusic on count 3 (that is, counts 1 and 2 function as pickup notes which emphasize the third count. You can also use a rasgueado on these counts (Rpty tm = Rumpity tum).

6 Count 3/4 Chording Compas

You can maintain compas by marking with 3/4 6-Count compas phrases. In this example any of the measures can be repeated, and other chords can be substituted (e.g., and F or a Dm chord in the first measure. The resolution phrase here is expressed with triplet rasgueados, but any rasgueado can be substituted provided the compas is maintained.

Triplet Rasgueado Resolution Phrase

Resolution Phrase

6 7 and a 8 and a 9 and a 10 (11)
 i p m,i p p m,i p p m,i p p
 Tm Rm pi ty Rm pi ty Rm pi tyTum

6 Count 6/8 Chording Compas

The 6 Count 6/8 compas cycle can also be used to mark compas, but it has to end ultimately with a 3/4 resolution phrase. Even though the accentuation is on counts 12 and 3, the 6/8 cycles can be thought of as polyrhythmic, with and implied 3/4 beat on the even counts; the 6/8 pulse being felt against them. Notice the phrasing in the third measure; if the beat is felt on counts 12, 2, and 4 the phrasing is felt as “3 vs. 4” polyrhythm, an example of “hemiola”.

Resolution Phrase

14
 "Q" Bb "Q" C "Q" Bb "A" A
 12 (1) a 2 3 4 5 12 a 1 a 2aa 3 (4) a 5 a 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 (7) (8) 9aa 10 (11)
 p i i i i i p i i i R i i i i p i i p i i p i i i i i i R i
 Tm ty tm Tm tm tm Tm ty tm ty Rpty Tm ty tm ty Tm ty ty Tmty tyTmty tyTmty ty Tm Rpty Tm

The 3/4 resolution phrase in this example can also be used as a marking compas in the previous example.

The “Cambio”

There are several distinctions in the cante worth discussing; the first is a distinction in the cante “por **copla**”, which has a fairly definite form, and “por **cuple**” which is cante set to Buleria compas (i.e., 3/4 or 6/8) but can consist of all sorts of folk music, including “Cielito Lindo”, etc. ported into Bulerias.

In the “copla” form of Bulerias (in an even more rigid form, called “cuadrado”, or “squared off”, the form of the cante is a theme stated by the first letra, usually repeated (separated by a compas), followed by a sequence of two 12 count compases that modulate to the related major (F,C7 related to A Phrygian) in the first compas called the **cambio** (“change”).

An example of the copla form of the cante might be (e.g.):

1. 12 count compas letra “Ya mi me duele, me duele”
2. 12 count chording compas
3. 12 count compas letra “Ya mi me duele, me duele” (Repetition of 1)
4. Cambio (12 count compas 1) “La boquita te decirte”
5. Cambio (12 count compas 2) “Ay, Gitana, si tu mi quiere”

An example of the chord sequence for the cambio might be:

Resolution Phrase

19

"Q" A Bb

Cambio F C7

"Q" A Bb

"A" A

12 1 a 2 3 (4) (5) 6 7aa 8aa 9aa 10 (11) 12 1 a 2 3 (4) (5) 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

p i i i p i R R R p p i i i p p i i p i i i p

Often a dance step called the “desplante” either accompanies or “answers” the cambio. A slightly different version of desplante accompaniment is given below in the major key.

Jaleo/Chufra Compas

The Jaleo/Chufra compas is an old form of Bulerias that often serves as the finale to the dance of Solea and Alegrias (“fin de fiesta”). The original form was developed as an ending to the 12 Count 3/4 Solea compas, but speeded up to 3/8. The rhythmic difficulty comes when integrating it with the other Compas forms of Bulerias. One solution is to use a 1/8 transition measure before and a 2/8 transition measure after the 3/8 sequence when integrating it with the conventional Bulerias Compas structure:

The musical notation illustrates the Jaleo/Chufra Compas structure across three systems, each starting on a treble clef with a 3/8 time signature. The notation includes rhythmic patterns (upstrokes and downstrokes) and fingerings (p, i, a, R, 1-5). Above the notes, phrases are labeled as "Q" (Quinta) and "A" (Alcazara). The first system (measures 1-12) shows a sequence of "Q" and "A" phrases with a "Resolution Phrase" and a "Transition Phrase" (measure 12). The second system (measures 6-11) is labeled "Jaleo/Chufra Compas" and shows a sequence of "Q" and "A" phrases with a "Transition Phrase" (measure 11). The third system (measures 14-21) is labeled "6/8, 3/4 12 Count compas" and shows a sequence of "Q" and "A" phrases with a "Transition Phrase" (measure 21).

When used as a finale to Alegrias and Solea (baile), the Jaleo is usually performed in the Major key.

Desplante Accompaniment

The desplante accompaniment in the finale to Alegrias or Solea has a slightly different form than the cambio, particularly if there is no singer. Below is a possible version for Alegrias; although the desplante often is used with the Jaleo/Chufra form of Bulerias, the transition measures are given for reference.

The musical notation shows the Desplante Accompaniment structure, starting on a treble clef with a 3/8 time signature. It includes a "Transition" measure (measure 23) and a "Desplante" section (measures 24-30) with chords E7, A, and D. The notation includes rhythmic patterns (upstrokes and downstrokes) and fingerings (i, 1-5). The "Desplante" section is followed by a "Transition" measure (measure 31) with a chord A.

Solea (Soleares)

The basic chording compas for Soleares (and Cana) has the form:

Chording Compas [Soleares]

Fmaj7 → C → Fmaj7 → E

Llamada [Soleares]

E →

Tap optional on 11
Stroke optional on 12

Copla Form of Solea

The cante of the Soleares often has a copla form similar to that of the Bulerias, with a modulation to the related major (G7,C) referred to as the cambio: The form of the copla are two 12 count phrases; the first phrase sets the theme (Letra A), and the second phrase responds to it (Letra B - the cambio).

Sometimes Letras A and B are separated by one or more chording compases in performance. If the tempo is slow, you can double the rasguados (4 16th's instead of 2 eighths).

Letra A

E7 Am Am G F E E FMaj7 E FMaj7 E E

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (11) 12 1 2 3 4 (5) 6 7 8 9 10 (11) 12

R R R R i R R R R i R R i i R R i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i

Letra B (Cambio)

E E7 F G7 C C Am G F E FMaj7 E FMaj7 E E

1 2 3 (4) a 5 a 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11) 12 1 2 3 (4) a 5 a 6 7 8 9 10 (11) 12

i i i i i i R R R R R R R i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i i

Solea Dance Form

The Soleares dance has an informal structure; for example:

Temple (Singer warms up voice with repeated “Ay’s”; dancer marks time with braceo)

Llamada

Solea Copla

Llamada

(Possible repetitions of Solea Copla/llamada/Paseo combinations)

Llamada (Pose)

Taconeo (Footwork) solo, building up in speed and dynamics

Llamada

Bulerias

Desplante

Final Desplante

Basic Solea Falseta

The footwork solo is usually accompanied by falsetas (as por Alegrias); a very simple example might be:

Chords: E FMaj7 C FMaj7 E FMaj7 Resolution Phrase

1 a p 2 a p 3 a p 4 a p 5 a p 6 a p 7 a p 8 a p 9 a p 10 a p 11 a p 12 a p

Caña

The Cana compas is identical to the Soleares, with minor variations in the accompaniment of the letras. However, it is characterized by an ascending/descending section of the cante called the “lamento”, with the singer interpreting the melody by vocalizing “Ay’s”; below is a basic chord progression for accompanying the “lamento”:

The musical notation shows a basic chord progression for accompanying the “lamento” in 3/4 time. The notation consists of two staves, each with 12 measures. Chords are indicated above the notes, and dynamics (p) are indicated below the notes. Measure numbers 1 through 12 are shown below the notes.

Staff 1 (Measures 1-12):

- Measures 1-5: E, F, G, F, E
- Measures 7-10: E, F, G, F, E
- Measures 11-12: E, F, G, F
- Measures 13-16: F, C, G, F

Staff 2 (Measures 17-28):

- Measures 17-20: F, C, G, F
- Measures 21-24: G, D, A, G
- Measures 25-28: F, C, F, F
- Measures 29-32: FMaj7, E, FMaj7, E

(There is a traditional sequence of dance steps that roughly follow the same pattern as the lamento.

The form for the lamento is not rigid in the number of compases for each “Ay”; measures can be repeated in various combinations. November 11, 1997 In the example below, the melodic figure for the resolution phrase of the Solea example can be applied to measures beginning on counts 4 and 10 (except for the first 12 count compas). Note the modulation to the secondary dominant chords in measures 6 and 10.

Guajiras, Peteneras

Although Guajiras and Peteneras have entirely different feelings and contexts, they are grouped together here because traditionally they are both in consistent alternating measures of 6/8 and 3/4. The Guajiras (like the Columbianas) is an “ida y vuelta” cante; on that “went out” and “came back” from and to Spain - in the case of Guajiras, the country was Cuba, and in the case of Columbianas, of course, Columbia. Guajiras is usually performed in the key of A Major.

Peteneras is performed in the E Phrygian Mode (with sections in Am). The theme is of a beautiful Jewish courtesan who broke many men’s hearts, and finally herself died a violent death.

Here is an example of a 6/8, 3/4 sequence used for Peteneras or Guajiras:

[Guajiras]	A	→	E7	→	A	→	
[Peteneras]	Am	→	E7	→	Am	→	
	G	→	F	→	E	→	

12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7aa 8 9aa 10 [11]

= (c),a,m,i triplets
 p,(c),a,m,i

Fandangos de Huelva

The Chording Compas for Fandangos de Huelva can be performed as either straight 3/4, or 6/8, 3/4 depending on how you think of the rasgueado; both forms have been included below in the notation. The 3/4 chording compas form or the more modern 6/8, 3/4 form (which is like the accompaniment to Paseo Castellano, can be used to accompany the copla, since many dancers use 6/8, 3/4 pasos when dancing to coplas):

Fandangos (de Huelva), Fandanguillo

Basic Chording and Copla Compas (12 - Count)

[Traditional Form] E Phrygian Mode

12a1 a 2 3aa 4 5 6 7 8 9aa10 11

Modern Copla Compas (Similar to Solea, Buleria)

121aa 2aa 3 (4 5) 6 7aa 8aa 9aa 10 (11)

Basic Copla

Version 1 C Major

G7 → C →
 C → F →
 F (or G7) → C →
 C → G7 →
 G7 → C →
 C → F → E →

12a1 a 2 3aa 4 5 6 7 8 9aa10 11

Version 2 A, A Minor

E7 → A →
 Am → E7 →
 E7 → A →
 Am → E7 →
 E7 → A →
 E7 → Am → G F E →

12a1 a 2 3aa 4 5 6 7 8 9aa10 11

Falseta Compas for Fandangos (and Fandangos de Huelva)

Falsetas for Fandangos can use the phrasing of the traditional chording compas, but a more common phrasing is a six count cycle counted from 4 (or 10 of the entry compas) to the following 3 (4 5 **12** 1 2 **3**); the traditional compas ends on count 8 (omitting the rasgueo from 9aa 10) for the transition phrase (indicated as a 2/4 measure). Count 3 is often a bass note (open E or A in E Phrygian or A Phrygian, respectively).

The extra count is added (as a 1/4 measure) when exiting the falseta cycle. (This is similar in concept to the transitions to Jaleo and back in the discussion of Bulerias compas). (Note: the fact that the falseta tends to be accented on 12 and 3 implies a 6/8 meter; however, guitar falsetas begin on 4 and end on 2, with the 3 added as a kind of "mark" in the falseta. It is one of those polyrhythmic ambiguities characteristic of Flamenco.

Fandangos, Fandangos [de Huelva], Fandangillo Falseta Compas Structure

Basic Compas **Transition Phrase** **Falseta Compas**

12a1 a 2 3aa 4 5 6 7 8 [9] 4 a5 a 12 1aa 2 [3] 4 a5 a 12 1aa 2 [3]

Transition Phrase Basic Compas

4 a5 a 12a1 a 2 3aa 4 5 6 7 8 9aa 10 11

Cantes (Toques) Intermedios

The Fandangos, Malagueñas, Tarantas and Granadinas are all toques (cantes) considered as Intermediate (intermedios) in expression, as compared with the cantes grandes and cantes chicos. They are related to the Fandangos because of their common chord progression used in accompanying the letras of the cante. These chord progressions are similar to those of the Fandangos de Huelva; that is a departure from the Phrygian mode to the related major. The differences between the toques are the keys used for accompanying the cante.

The traditional chord progressions are:

Fandangos (E Phrygian): G7->C->F->C->G7->C->(Am->G->F->E)

Malagueñas (E Phrygian): G7->C->F->C->G7->C->(Am->G->F->E)

Tarantas (F# Phrygian): A7->D->G->D->A7->D->(Bm->D->G->F#)

Granadinas (B Phrygian): D7->G->C->G->D7->G->(Em->D->C->B)

The general approach to accompanying the cante is to listen closely to the singer as his melody follows these progressions during the course of his expression of the letra. When he aims for the root of the next chord in the progression, sound the chord, using a combination of a short melodic phrase and chord voicing. Between letras, falsetas and/or rasgueo is used to inspire the singer for the next sequence.

Although there is no real compas, the phrasing of the falsetas and rasgueo inserted between the letras of the cante are generally in 3/4 or 6/8, which is the reason these toques are included here. They are also performed as guitar solos, usually in the above keys.

The Rondeña of this family is a guitar solo created originally by Don Ramon Montoya, in the C# Phrygian mode, with the 6th string (E) tuned down to D, and the 3rd string (G) tuned down to F#, allowing for ligado (hammer on/over) effects similar to those of Tarantas. Occasionally falsetas will follow the above progression. It should be noted that there are also versions of Rondeña in 2/4 compas (e.g., Sabicas, Paco de Lucia)

Sevillanas

The Sevillanas is a popular song and dance, but is considered to be borderline Flamenco. It is a couples dance, and has a rigid structure, which makes it possible for everyone to perform, which is why it has caught on in the nightclubs on the Costa del Sol.

Sevillanas Formal Structure

A “Sevillanas” letra consists of a single line that sets the theme (called the “**salida**”), and five lines of development, repeated three times for the complete letra, e.g. The dance begins with a chording compas introduction, called the entrada, followed by the salida, a chording compas, and the three verses, separated by chording compases.

Four complete “Sevillanas” comprise a “grupo” (**group**); at the completion of a group couples are free to change partners, etc.

(Entrada)

“Lo tire al pozo, lo tire al pozo” (**Salida**)

(Chording Compas)

“Lo tire al pozo
el clave que mi diste
lo tire al pozo
que no quiero clavel
de ningun hermosa”

(Chording Compas)

“Anda que ere
Anda que ere
que ere las mas bonita
que ere las mas bonita
de las mujeres”

(Chording Compas)

“Ay que me pesa
ay que me pesa
si el tiempo que lo tuve
si el tiempo que lo tuve
si en la cabeza”

Sevillanas Chording Compas and Accompaniment

The form of the song and dance of Sevillanas has a 6-Count compas, predominantly in 6/8 meter, (the older form uses a 3/4 chord progression, with rasgueo on counts "3aa4") and redobles emphasizing transitions between sections (as well as performed in a step characteristic of the third Sevillanas). Modern Sevillanas emphasizes the 6/8 for more strongly, (often with an electric bass).

Sevillanas is performed in all keys available to the flamenco guitar; the following examples use a basic "Question-Answer" (Dominant 7th -Tonic,E7-Am) chord progression for illustrative purposes. In the key of Am, the 6 Count chording compas is identical to the first 6 counts of the basic chording compas for Fandangos de Huelva.

An example of the basic 6 Count 3/4 chording compas is:

1 2 a 1 a 2 3aa 4 5
i i i i i R i i

The basic 6 Count chording compas with 6/8 accentuation can also be written:

1 2 a 1 a 2 3aa 4 5
i i i i i R i i

In the more modern form, the following rasgueo is sometimes used, occasionally substituting the form above for the chording compases of the 4th and/or 5th lines and/or the compases between the verses:

1 2 1aa 2aa 3 4aa 5aa
p R R p R R

Entrada

The dance begins with an introduction by the guitar called the “**entrada**” which begins on count 2, and continues for an arbitrary number of measures (usually 3), often with a redoble on counts 3aa4 to signal the salida.

Salida

The Salida consists of a two measure expression of the theme of the letra or accompanying falseta; its basic form is:

Letra

One line of the letra consists of 5 measures (chording compases). There are an infinite variety of chord progressions/letras/melodies performed in Sevillanas; the following example is a very basic form:

Finale

The final letra ends abruptly on count 3 of the final compas, here shown in 6/8 for emphasis:

Verdiales (Fandangos de Malaga)

The Verdiales is related to the Fandangos de Huelva by the structure of its cante; the modulation to the related major is similar, but the basic chording compas is a 6 count rasgueo sequence, with two measures for each chord change. The dance is folkloric, with the dancers wearing characteristic hats with trailing ribbons. Below is an example of a typical chord progression for Verdiales; note the characteristic chromatic descending phrase in the next to the last measure:

Verdiales

1

E F G F# F E

12 1aa 2 3aa 4 5 12 1aa 2 3aa 4 5 12 1aa 2 3aa 4 5 12 1aa 2 3aa 4 5 12 1 2 3 4 5 12 1aa 2 3aa 4 5

i R i R i i i R i R i i i R i R i i i R i R i i i i i i i i i

The cante is accompanied with a chord progression similar to that of Fandangos de Huelva, with two measures for each chord, except for the final sequence.

G7->C

C->F

G7->C

C->G7

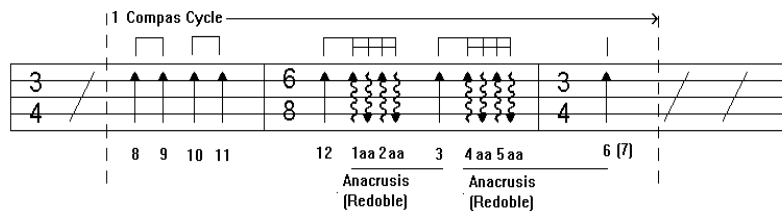
G7->C

C (one measure)-> F (two measures -> E (one measure)

Siguiriyas Serranas

The Siguiriyas is traditionally accompanied in the A Phrygian Mode, and the Serranas in the E Phrygian Mode.

The compas of Siguiriyas (and Serranas) is in alternating measures of 3/4 and 6/8, with the compas cycle beginning on the 2nd beat of the 3/4 measure and ending on the 1st beat of the following 3/4 measure, with the resolution phrase from counts 3 thru 7 (in a resolving compas cycle). Note the rasgueo emphasizing counts 3 and 6 in this example (the important counts in the resolution phrase; counts 8, 10 and 12 can be emphasized in the same way).



Other chord progressions can be substituted; for example, (Dm,C) or (F,C) on counts (8,10), and often the A chord is held throughout in a resolution compas cycle.

The Serrana cante has a characteristic ascending/descending vocal melody, similar in nature to the “lamento” of the Caña.

Basic Siguiriyas Falseta

Here is a basic Siguiriyas falseta you can use for accompanying the dance (as an alternative to the arpeggio,, you can strum a chord, or drag your forefinger up across the strings, or just sound the open note on the first string as in the Solea and Alegrias falsetas. Note that the bass notes suggest Dm->C->Bb->A on counts 8, 10, 12, and 3, respectively.

Resolution Phrase
A

8 a 9 a 10 a 11 a 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 4 5 6 (7)
p a m i p a m i p a m i p p i p p

Barred Chords

One of the most powerful devices for creating other chords is through the use of the “bar” (barre), using the left index finger across the fingerboard to stop multiple strings simultaneously at a position. The six strings can be barred completely (full bar) or partially in the trebles or basses (partial bar); you’ve already had an example of the latter in the example of the open position A Major chord above.

If the physical form of a chord is preserved as the fret board is traversed from position to position, the notes of the chord will change as well; new variations of chords with the same character, but different roots are created.

The chords used as the bases for barred chords are those which can be made with three fingers or less in the open position (since you use your index finger to bar), and are called **moveable** chords (or chord **forms**). The set of moveable chords include the following; the fingering changes to the open position chord are shown first. (Notes that are barred but not sounded are indicated with parentheses).

The basic Major moveable chords are E, A, C, D, and G.

E Major (moveable chord)

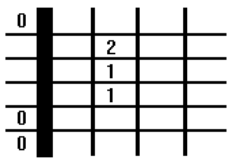
The image displays seven chord diagrams for major chords. Each diagram shows a six-string guitar fretboard with a vertical bar (barre) at the first fret. The diagrams are arranged in four rows:

- Row 1: E Major (open position, 0-1-3-2) and A Major (open position, 0-2-4-3).
- Row 2: A Major (barred E at 5th position, 1-1-2-4-3-1), F Major (barred E at 3rd position, 1-1-2-4-3-1), and A# Major (barred E at 7th position, 1-1-2-4-3-1).
- Row 3: G Major (barred E at 3rd position, 1-1-2-4-3-1) and B Major (barred E at 7th position, 1-1-2-4-3-1).
- Row 4: G# Major (barred E at 7th position, 1-1-2-4-3-1).

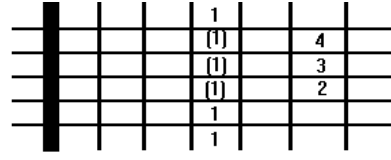
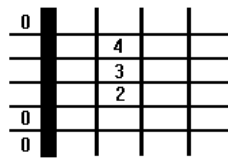
In all barred diagrams, the notes on the strings that are barred but not sounded are indicated with a '1' in parentheses. The open position diagrams have '0' at the bottom of the strings.

Compare the sound of the G Major chord (barred E at the third position) with the G Major chord in the open position; compare the sound of the A Major chord (barred E at the fifth position) with the A Major chord in the open position.

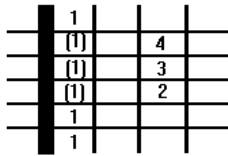
A Major (Moveable Chord)



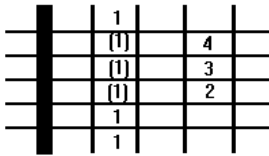
A Major



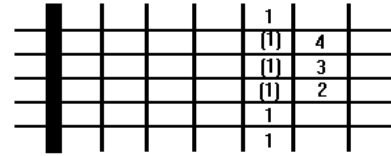
C# Major



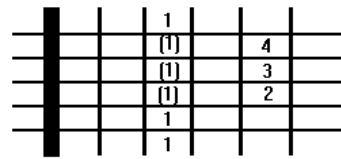
A# Major



B Major

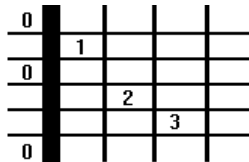


D Major

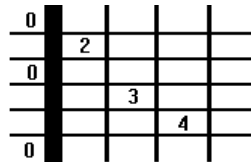


C Major

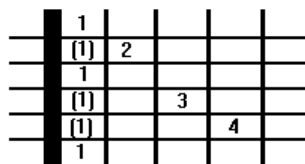
C Major (Moveable Chord)



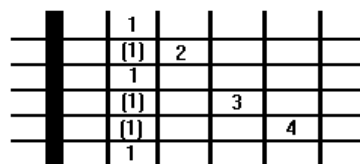
C Major



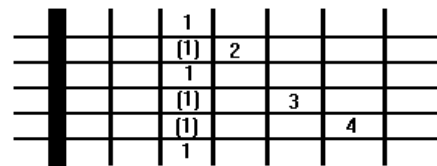
C Major



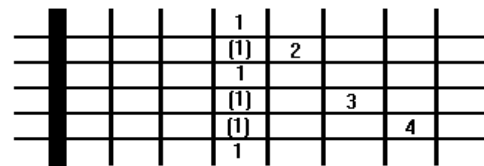
C# Major



D Major

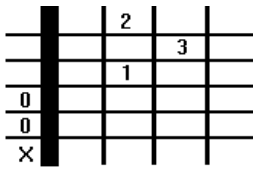


D# Major

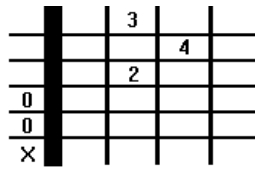


E Major

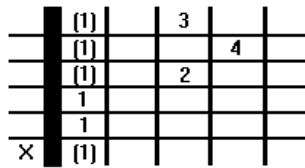
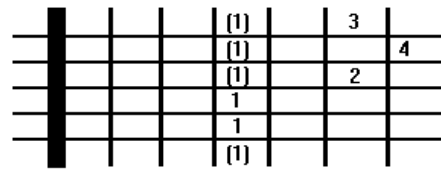
D Major (Moveable Chord)



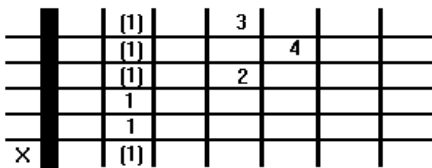
D Major



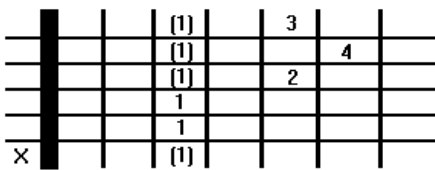
F# Major



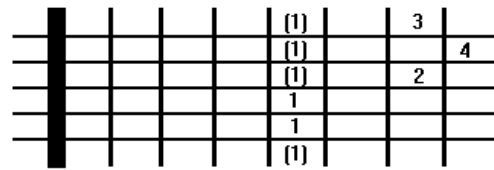
D# Major



E Major

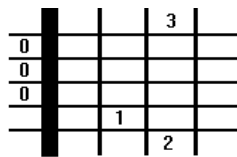


F Major

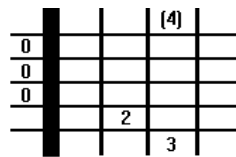


G Major

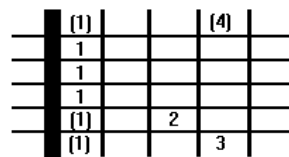
G Major (Moveable Chord)



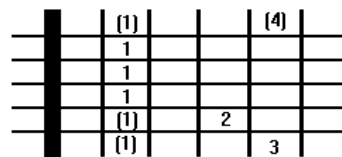
G Major



G Major

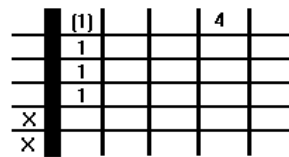


G# Major

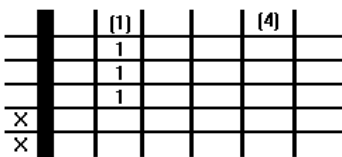


A Major

, etc.



G# Major



A Major

, etc.

Minor Moveable Chords

The Minor moveable chords are **A^m**, **E^m** and **dD^m**:

A Minor (Moveable Chord)

The diagram shows six guitar chord diagrams for minor chords, each with a thick vertical bar representing the barre. The strings are numbered 1 to 6 from top to bottom. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 and (1) for the thumb.

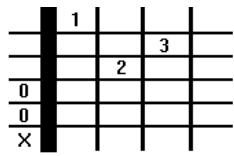
- A Minor**: Barre at fret 0. Fingering: 1 (index), 3 (ring), 2 (middle), 0 (thumb).
- A Minor**: Barre at fret 2. Fingering: 2 (index), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 0 (thumb).
- A# Minor**: Barre at fret 1. Fingering: 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 2 (middle), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).
- B Minor**: Barre at fret 1. Fingering: 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 2 (middle), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).
- C Minor**: Barre at fret 1. Fingering: 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 2 (middle), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).
- C# Minor**: Barre at fret 1. Fingering: 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 2 (middle), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).
- D Minor**: Barre at fret 2. Fingering: 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 2 (middle), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).

E Minor (Moveable Chord)

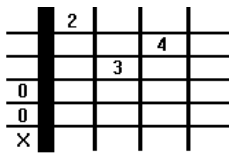
The diagram shows six guitar chord diagrams for minor chords, each with a thick vertical bar representing the barre. The strings are numbered 1 to 6 from top to bottom. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 and (1) for the thumb.

- E Minor**: Barre at fret 0. Fingering: 0 (index), 0 (thumb), 3 (ring), 2 (middle), 0 (thumb).
- E Minor**: Barre at fret 0. Fingering: 0 (index), 0 (thumb), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 0 (thumb).
- F Minor**: Barre at fret 1. Fingering: 1 (index), 1 (thumb), 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).
- F# Minor**: Barre at fret 1. Fingering: 1 (index), 1 (thumb), 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).
- G Minor**: Barre at fret 2. Fingering: 1 (index), 1 (thumb), 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).
- G# Minor**: Barre at fret 2. Fingering: 1 (index), 1 (thumb), 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).
- A Minor**: Barre at fret 2. Fingering: 1 (index), 1 (thumb), 1 (index), (1) (thumb), 4 (ring), 3 (middle), 1 (index), 1 (thumb).

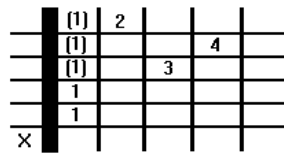
D Minor (Moveable Chord)



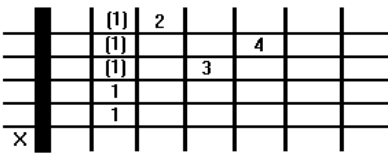
D Minor



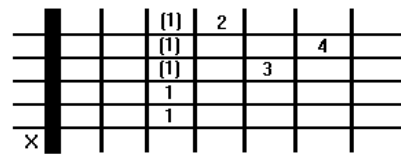
D Minor



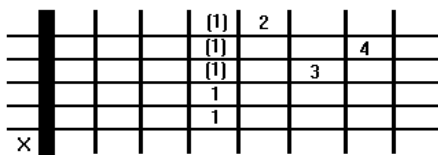
D# Minor



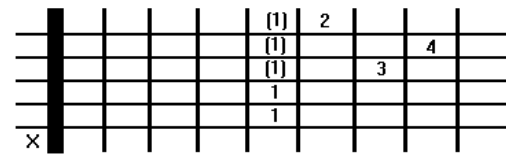
E Minor



F Minor



F# Minor



G Minor

Dominant 7th Moveable Chords

The moveable Dominant 7th chords are: E7, A7, D7, and G7.

E7 (Moveable Chord)

Diagram showing the fingerings for the moveable Dominant 7th chords E7, F7, F#7, G7, and A7. Each chord is represented by a guitar fretboard diagram with six strings and six frets. The diagrams show the following fingerings:

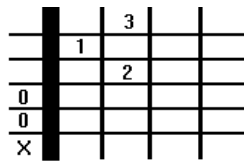
- E7:** Two diagrams. The first shows the open string (0) on the 1st string, 1st fret on the 2nd string, 2nd fret on the 3rd string, and 4th fret on the 4th string. The second shows the open string (0) on the 1st string, 2nd fret on the 2nd string, 3rd fret on the 3rd string, and 4th fret on the 4th string.
- F7:** Shows the 1st fret on the 1st string, 1st fret on the 2nd string, (1) on the 3rd string, 2nd fret on the 4th string, 1st fret on the 5th string, and (1) on the 6th string.
- F#7:** Shows the 1st fret on the 1st string, (1) on the 2nd string, 1st fret on the 3rd string, 2nd fret on the 4th string, (1) on the 5th string, and 1st fret on the 6th string.
- G7:** Shows the 1st fret on the 1st string, (1) on the 2nd string, 1st fret on the 3rd string, 2nd fret on the 4th string, (1) on the 5th string, and 1st fret on the 6th string.
- A7:** Shows the 1st fret on the 1st string, 1st fret on the 2nd string, (1) on the 3rd string, 2nd fret on the 4th string, (1) on the 5th string, and 1st fret on the 6th string.

A7 (Moveable Chord)

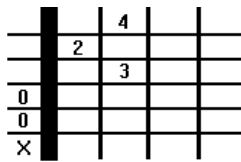
Diagram showing the fingerings for the moveable Dominant 7th chords A7, A#7, B7, C7, and D7. Each chord is represented by a guitar fretboard diagram with six strings and six frets. The diagrams show the following fingerings:

- A7:** Two diagrams. The first shows the open string (0) on the 1st string, 3rd fret on the 2nd string, 2nd fret on the 3rd string, and 4th fret on the 4th string. The second shows the open string (0) on the 1st string, 4th fret on the 2nd string, 3rd fret on the 3rd string, and 4th fret on the 4th string.
- A#7:** Shows the 1st fret on the 1st string, (1) on the 2nd string, 4th fret on the 3rd string, 3rd fret on the 4th string, 1st fret on the 5th string, and 1st fret on the 6th string.
- B7:** Shows the 1st fret on the 1st string, (1) on the 2nd string, 1st fret on the 3rd string, 4th fret on the 4th string, (1) on the 5th string, and 1st fret on the 6th string.
- C7:** Shows the 1st fret on the 1st string, (1) on the 2nd string, 1st fret on the 3rd string, 4th fret on the 4th string, 1st fret on the 5th string, and 1st fret on the 6th string.
- C#7:** Shows the 1st fret on the 1st string, (1) on the 2nd string, 1st fret on the 3rd string, 4th fret on the 4th string, (1) on the 5th string, and 1st fret on the 6th string.
- D7:** Shows the 1st fret on the 1st string, (1) on the 2nd string, 1st fret on the 3rd string, 4th fret on the 4th string, (1) on the 5th string, and 1st fret on the 6th string.

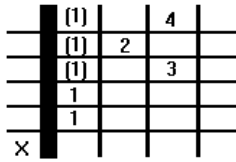
D7 (Moveable Chord)



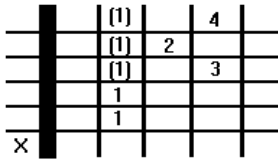
D7



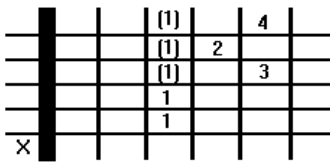
D7



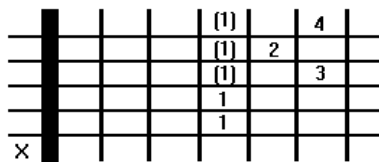
D#7



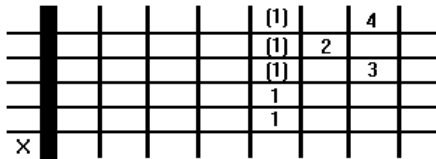
E7



F7

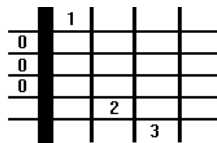


F#7

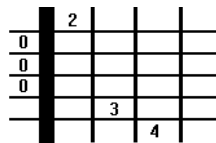


G7

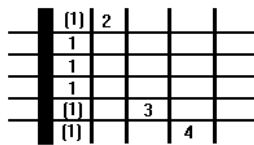
G7 (Moveable Chord)



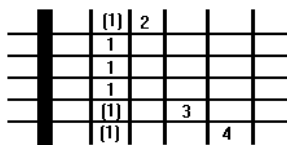
G7



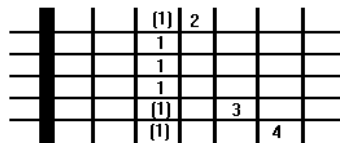
G7



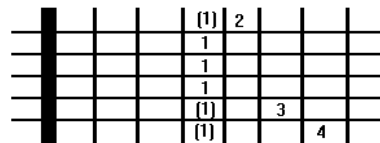
G#7



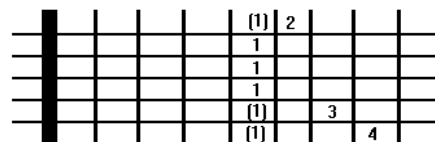
A7



A#7



B7



C7

(Suggestion: try using a partial bar with the G7 chord)

Barred Chords in Progressions

The most important keys for chording compas for the traditional toques of Flamenco are those in which the open position tonic chords are easily accessible; the keys of C, A, and E Major, A and E Minor, and A and E Phrygian mode. Of secondary importance are D minor (F Major), B Phrygian Mode for Granadinas (G Major), F# Phrygian Mode for Taranto/as (D Major, B Minor), G# Phrygian Mode for Mineras, and C# Phrygian Mode for Rondeña.

Within these keys (and the other auxiliary keys), the most important chord progressions are the fundamental “question-answer” sequences; for the **Major** and **Minor** keys, these are the **V7 -> I** progressions, and for the **Phrygian Mode** these are the **II -> I** progressions, where I is the tonic chord, and the other Roman numeral chords are calculated from their position relative to the tonic of the scale.

One way of extending harmonic interest is through the use of barred chords, which were discussed in the previous section; these are particularly important in falsetas, but are also often used to add variation to chording compas. For example, the open position (relative to the capo) A major chord barred at the third position becomes a C major chord. The A major chord barred at the 7th position becomes an E major chord.

Phrygian Mode Alternative Progressions

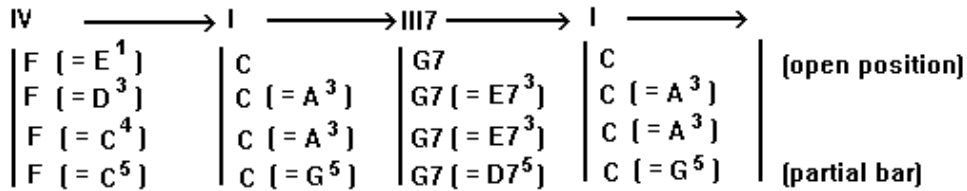
The different forms of the same chords made in this way can be indicated through the use of a superscript in the chord progression. Some alternatives for the **Phrygian Mode** (**iv -> IIII -> II -> I**) in the open position are:

Phrygian Mode (E) (e.g. Soleares, Fandangos, Zambra)									
IV	→	III	→	II	→	I	→		
Am		G		F		E		[open position]	
Am (= Em ⁵)		G (= E ³)		F (= E ¹)		E			
Am (= Em ⁵)		G (= D ⁵)		F (= D ³)		E (= D ²)			
Am (= Em ⁵)		G (= D ⁵)		F (= C ⁵)		E (= C ⁴)			
Phrygian Mode (A) (e.g. Tangos, Tientos, Bulerias)									
IV	→	III	→	II	→	I	→		
Dm		C		Bb		A		[open position]	
Dm (= Am ⁵)		C (= A ³)		Bb (= A ¹)		A			
Dm (= Am ⁵)		C (= G ⁵)		Bb (= G ³)		A (= G ²)			[G Partial Bar]
Dm (= Am ⁵)		C (= A ³)		Bb (= G ³)		A (= G ²)			[G Partial Bar]
Phrygian Mode (B) (Granadinas)									
IV	→	III	→	II	→	I	→		
Em		D		C		B(7)		[open position]	
Em (= Dm ²)		D (= C ²)		C		B(7)			
Em (= Am ⁷)		D (= A ⁵)		C (= A ³)		B (= A ²)			
Em (= Am ⁷)		D (= A ⁵)		C (= G ⁵)		B (= G ⁴)			
Phrygian Mode (F#) (Taranto, Tarantas)									
IV	→	III	→	II	→	I	→		
Bm (= Am ²)		A (= G ²)		G		"F#"		[open position]	
Bm (= Am ²)		A		G		"F#"			
Bm (= Em ⁷)		A (= E ⁵)		G (= E ³)		F# (= E ²)			
Bm (= Em ⁷)		A (= D ⁷)		G (= D ⁵)		F# (= D ⁴)			

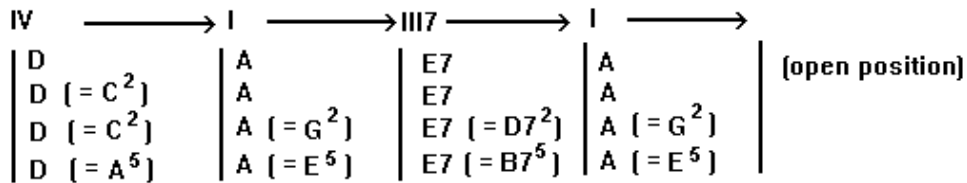
Major Key Alternative Progressions

Some alternatives for the Subdominant->Tonic->Dominant 7th->Tonic progression (IV -> I -> V7 -> I) for **Major Chords** are:

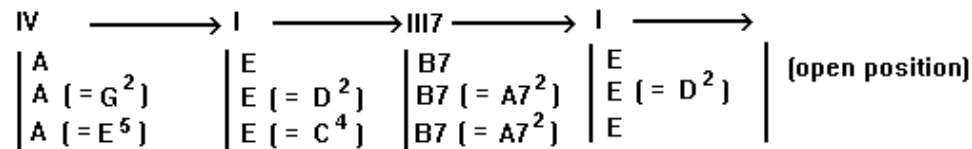
C Major (e.g., Zapateado, Caracoles)



A Major (e.g., Alegrias, Columbianas, Bulerias)



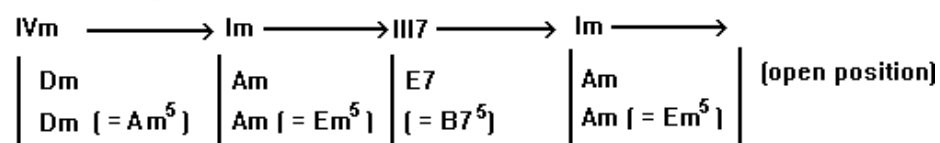
E Major (e.g., Alegrias (por Rosas))



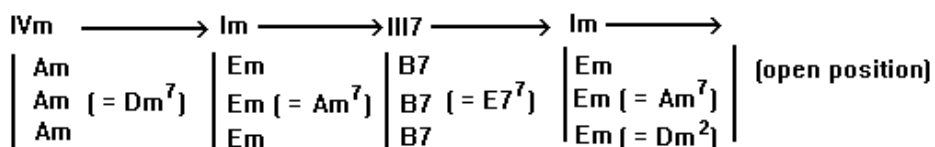
Minor Key Alternative Progressions

Some alternatives for the Subdominant->Tonic->Dominant 7th->Tonic progression (IV -> I -> V7 -> I) for **Minor Chords** are:

A Minor (e.g., Farruca, Rumba, Bulerias, Silencio por Alegrias)



E Minor (e.g., Farruca, Rumba)



There are many other alternative chord progressions; check for relationships in other keys as well.

Alternative Chords in Progressions

There are two important approaches to creating alternative chord sequences:

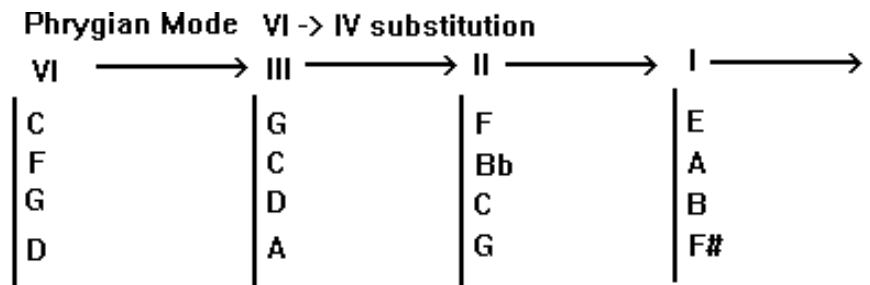
1. Chord sequences at a single positions. Note that the Phrygian Mode chord progression using the chord forms for the key of A Phrygian, but performed at the 7th position are actually progressions in the key of E Phrygian. Similarly, “A major” chord progressions performed at the 3rd position are actually in the key of C related to the open position.

2. Chord sequences down the neck (For example, the iv chord at the 5th position, the III chord at the 3rd position, the II chord at the 1st position, and the I chord at the open position for the A and E Phrygian modes, respectively). Note that if the A or E Phrygian sequences is begun two frets higher, the chords will actually be in the B or F# Phrygian mode, respectively.

Many flamenco chord progressions as expressed on the guitar are combinations of these approaches.

Phrygian Mode VI -> IV Chord Substitution

One important substitution is that of the VI chord for the IV chord in the Andalusian Cadence; for example, the progression VI->III->II->I (C->G->F->E). This can be thought of as a partial sequence in the related major (C->G7->F->E), with the C->G7 as a “question” in the related major resolved to the F->E “answer” in the Phrygian Mode.



Half Measures

In the diagram below notice that the 6/8 and 2/4,4/4 measures are divided in half in terms of their chord progressions. These beats are reasonable places to change harmonies (in both chord progressions and melody) within the measure, as well first beat of the measure; secondary dominant chord sequences are often used in this context.

One particularly effective way of doing this is in the third measure of a 4 measure (12 count) sequence:

Meter	$\frac{2}{4}, \frac{4}{4}, \frac{3}{4}, \frac{6}{8}$	→	$\frac{2}{4}, \frac{4}{4}, \frac{6}{8}$	→	Resolution (2/4, 2/4, 3/4)																								
E Phrygian	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: left;"> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">III7</td><td style="padding: 5px;">VI</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">(G7)</td><td style="padding: 5px;">(C)</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">1 —</td><td style="padding: 5px;">1 —</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">12</td><td style="padding: 5px;">12</td></tr> </table>	III7	VI	(G7)	(C)	1 —	1 —	12	12	→	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: left;"> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">III</td><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">II</td><td style="padding: 5px;">I</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">(G)</td><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">(F)</td><td style="padding: 5px;">(E)</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">1 —</td><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">3 —</td><td style="padding: 5px;">1 —</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">12</td><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">3</td><td style="padding: 5px;">12</td></tr> </table>	III	II	I	(G)	(F)	(E)	1 —	3 —	1 —	12	3	12	→	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: left;"> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">I</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">(E)</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">1 —</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">12</td></tr> </table>	I	(E)	1 —	12
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A Phrygian	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: left;"> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">V7</td><td style="padding: 5px;">II</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">(F7)</td><td style="padding: 5px;">(Bb)</td></tr> </table>	V7	II	(F7)	(Bb)	→	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: left;"> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">III</td><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">II</td><td style="padding: 5px;">I</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">(C)</td><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">(Bb)</td><td style="padding: 5px;">(A)</td></tr> </table>	III	II	I	(C)	(Bb)	(A)	→	<table style="border-collapse: collapse; text-align: left;"> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">I</td></tr> <tr><td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">(A)</td></tr> </table>	I	(A)												
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I7	II																												
(A7)	(Bb)																												
III	II	I																											
(C)	(Bb)	(A)																											
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(A)																													

3/4 Chord Sequence

Finally, since the 3/4 measure is divided into 3 note groups, an effective technique is to precede a resolution phrase with a 3/4 measure that changes harmony rapidly, e.g.:

				→	→	→	Resolution
$\frac{3}{4}$	IV	III	II	I			
	(Am)	(G)	(F)	(E)			
	12	2	4	6 —	11		

All of these concepts are transposed to other keys and characters (major, minor).

Moveable Diminished 7th Chords

The diminished 7th chord is used as a substitute (or embellishment) for the dominant 7th chord in the Minor key and for the tonic of the Phrygian Mode. It is the same as a 7th(b9) chord without the root: the V7(b9) in the case of the Minor key, and the I7(b9) in the case of the Phrygian Mode.

The notes of the chord are equal intervals apart (minor 3rds), and are named from any of the notes (since all the inversions are equivalent). For example, the G[#]dim7 chord includes the notes (G[#], B, D, F); compare this with the E7(b9) chord (E,G[#],B,D,F). The G[#]dim7 then serves as a substitute for the E7(b9) chord which is the V7(b9) chord in the key of A Minor and the I7(b9) in the key of E Phrygian.

Note: it is also sometimes substituted for the V chord of the Major key, but in this case (A Major), the F is an accidental to the key.

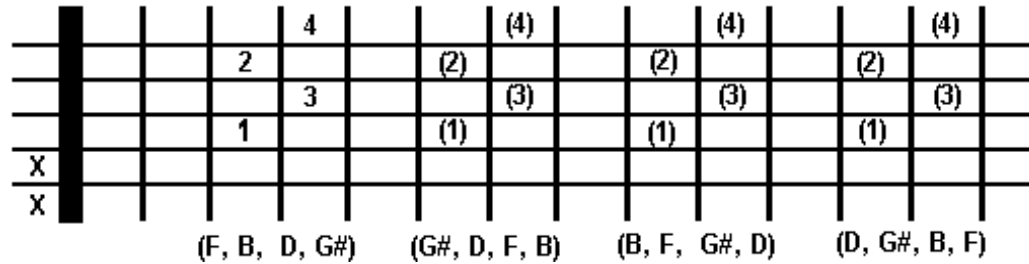
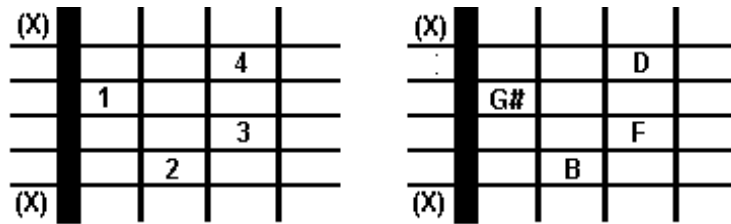
Since the notes repeat every 4 frets, the chords will repeat up the guitar neck. The following are moveable variations for the G[#]dim7 = Bdim7 = Ddim7 = Fdim7 chord. These are substitutes for the E7, G7, Bb7 and D[#]7 chords (note their substitutes for as dominant 7ths in the major and minor keys, and for the I chord in the Phrygian Mode).

Diagram 1: G[#]dim7 chord at 2nd fret (notes: D, G[#], B, F) and at 6th fret (notes: D, G[#], B, F).

Diagram 2: Moveable variations of the G[#]dim7 chord at frets 2, 6, 10, and 14.

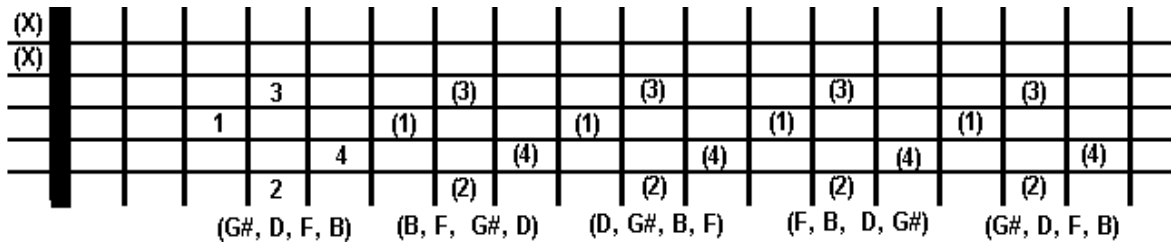
Fret	Notes
2	(F, B, D, G [#])
6	(G [#] , D, F, B)
10	(B, F, G [#] , D)
14	(D, G [#] , B, F)

Another commonly used variation is:



Note that the open E strings would serve as the roots of the corresponding I7b9 chord.

In the following variation, the open 2nd string (B) is a note of the chord as well:



Note there are three sets of diminished 7th chords, one position above, and two positions above:

<u>Set 1</u>	<u>Set 2</u>	<u>Set 3</u>
G#dim7	Adim7	Bbdim7
Bdim7	Cdim7	C#dim7
Ddim7	D#dim7	Edim7
Fdim7	F#dim7	Gdim7

These serve as 7th or I7b9 (no root) for other keys as well. It should be emphasized that these chords function as dominant 7ths (with a missing root).

Scales and Modes

(Note: The Compas Analysis, Music Theory and Basic Flamenco Guitar are pre-requisites for this section.)

Recall that the chromatic scale consists of the natural notes of the scale from A to G, with notes in between labeled by sharps (#) if named by the note below, or flats (b) if named by the note above. (Notes with the same pitch but different names are called **enharmonic**):

A A# B C C# D D# E F F# G G# A (**Chromatic Scale**)
 Gb Db Eb Gb Ab (**Enharmonic Notes**)

Also recall that the determining factor for naming the note is the key (and scale) to which it belongs; (i.e., its position in the Circle of Fifths). Also recall that the three scales used for Flamenco are the Major scale, the Harmonic Minor scale, and the Phrygian mode.

The interval between each note of the chromatic scale is $\frac{1}{2}$ step, and corresponds to a fret (position) distance on the physical guitar neck. The notes of the chromatic scale on the guitar neck are (sharps or flats have been chosen to conform the most common use for Flamenco - the keys of F Major to E Major and their relatives CW around the Circle of Fifths - Bb, F#, C#, G#, D#):

E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#
B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#
G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B
D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#
A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#
E	F	F#	G	G#	A	Bb	B	C	C#	D	D#	E	F	F#	G	G#
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Position																

Major Scale Patterns

The notes of each scale and key are defined by interval relations between the notes of the scale. For example, the C Major scale is defined by the interval relation 1, 1, $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, 1, 1, $\frac{1}{2}$, beginning on the note C of the Chromatic scale:

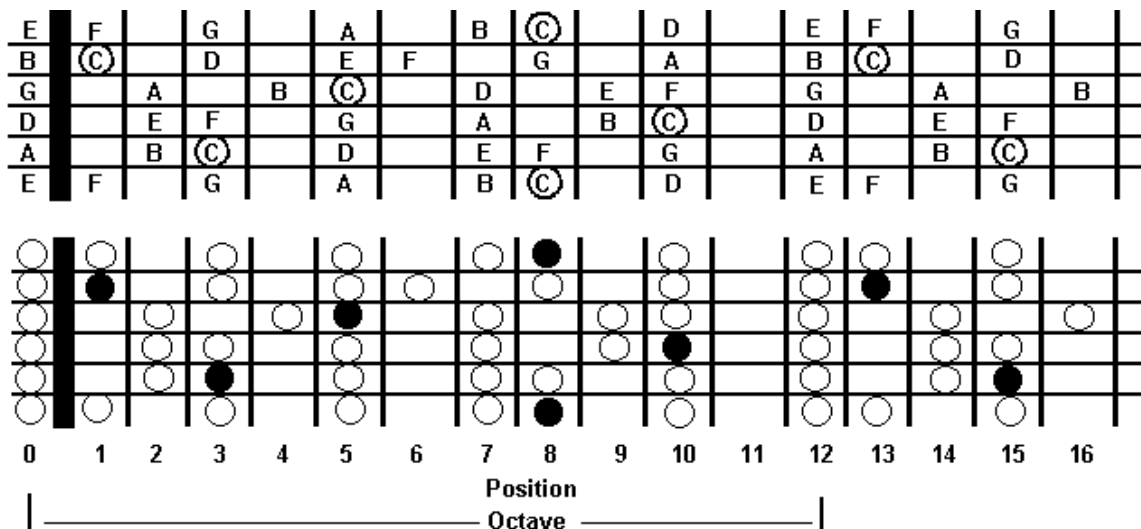
1 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ 1 1 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ (Note Intervals)
 C D E F G A B C (C Major Scale)
 C C# D D# E F F# G G# A A# B C (Chromatic Scale)

These notes form a **pattern** on the guitar neck, and these notes are those most likely to be used for a melody or chord within that key. Notice that the notes of the chords (C, Dm, F, G, Am) are all included in the pattern.

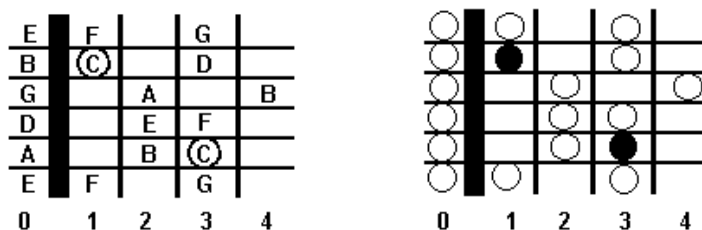
(Note: The other chords would be E and Bdim7, which include a G# as a substitute for G, (changing Em to E) for use with the relative A Harmonic Minor and E Phrygian Mode).

C Major Scale Pattern

The pattern for the C Major scale (C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C) is the same as the natural scale (no sharps or flats), and is given by the form below. The tonic note C of the scale is indicated by circling the letter note, and filling in the circle of the patterns made by the notes on the guitar neck:

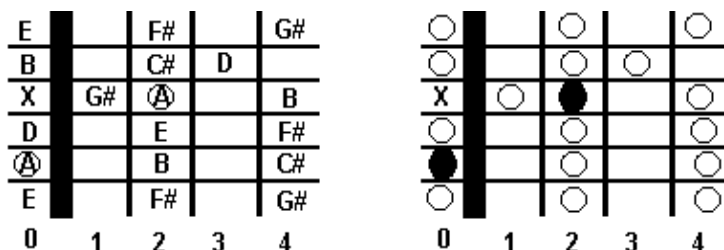


At the open position, the C Major scale makes the pattern:



The A Major Scale Pattern (open position)

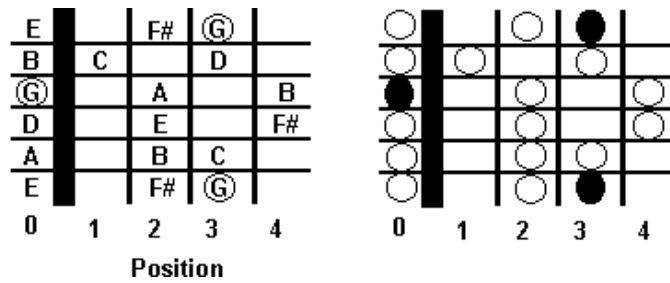
At the open position, the A Major scale (A, B, C#, D, E, F#, G#) makes the pattern:



Notice that the pattern (and the location of the tonics) of the A Major scale at the open position and the pattern of the C Major scale **at the third position** are the same. That is, one could “transpose” a melody or chord progression in A Major (at the open position) to C Major simply by performing its pattern(s) at the third position.

The G Major Scale Pattern (open position)

At the open position, the G Major scale (G, A, B, C, D, E, F#) makes the pattern:

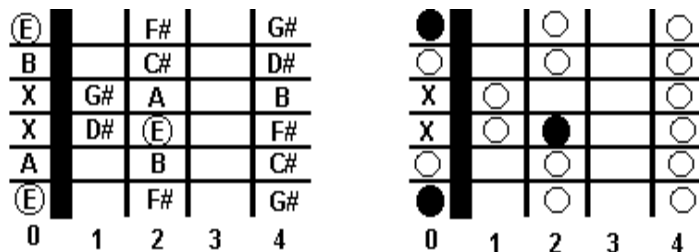


In this case, the pattern and location of the tonics of the G Major scale at the open position and the pattern for the C Major scale at the **fifth** position are identical. Again, a melody or chord progression in G Major at the open position can be transposed to C Major simply by performing its pattern(s) at the fifth position.

There are five open position patterns for the Major scale, determined by the open 1st and 6th strings in the pattern (thus making them available for the full bar). Those for the keys of C, A, and G Major have just been discussed; the additional patterns those for E Major and D Major:

The E Major Scale Pattern (Open Position)

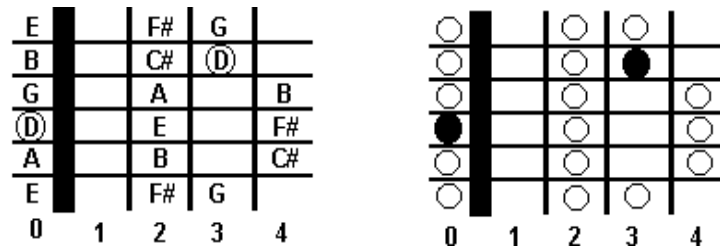
At the open position, the E Major scale (E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, D#) makes the pattern:



Here the pattern and locations of tonics of the E Major scale and the pattern for the C Major scale at the eighth position are identical, and again, a melody or chord progression in E Major at the open position can be transposed to C Major by performing it at the eighth position.

The D Major Scale (open position)

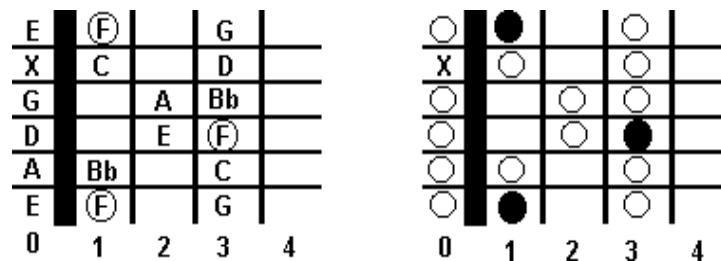
Finally, at the open position the D Major scale (D, E, F#, G, A, B, C#) makes the pattern:



Here the pattern and locations of tonics of the D Major scale and the pattern for the C Major scale at the eighth position are identical, and again, a melody or chord progression in D Major at the open position can be transposed to C Major by performing it at the tenth position.

The F Major Scale (open position)

The pattern for the F Major scale (F, G, A, Bb, C, D, D) is also important because of its use with the relative A Phrygian Mode (which will be introduced shortly). This pattern appears at the seventh position for the key of C Major:



The patterns at other positions are used also, and several more will be covered specifically with relation to the Phrygian Mode.

The Infinite Guitar Neck

To summarize, melodic and chordal ideas in the keys of A, G, F, and D Major can be used for the key of C Major by simply performing them at the appropriate position on the guitar neck.

The patterns for the key of C Major appear at the following positions.

Diagram illustrating the patterns for the key of C Major on the guitar neck. The fretboard shows notes (E, F, G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G) and positions (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16). The key signature is indicated as C, A, G, F, E, D, C, A.

Notice that the patterns repeat at the 12th position (the octave). The relation between scale patterns holds for the other keys. For example, if you imagine the nut of the guitar (or the capo) to be at the 3rd position, the patterns will be those for the key of A Major:

Diagram illustrating the patterns for the key of A Major on the guitar neck. The fretboard shows notes (E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, D, E, F#, G#) and positions (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16). The key signature is indicated as A, G, F, E, D, C, A, G.

For example, the pattern for C Major now appears at the ninth position; a melody and/or chord progression in C Major can be immediately transposed to A Major by playing it at the ninth position.

This concept of transposition works for all keys (modes and scales), and is fundamental for improvisation. The basic patterns appear in the same order on the guitar neck (chromatically, from right to left on the guitar neck); by mentally shifting the starting position (or capo), the patterns for the keys are arranged accordingly. The patterns repeat at the 12th position (the octave) in all cases. It is left as an exercise for the reader to write out the full patterns for other keys.

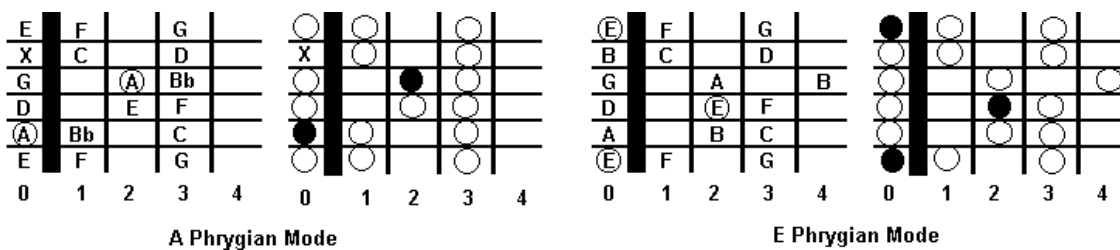
Phrygian Mode patterns

The most important patterns for Flamenco are those of the Phrygian mode. With the exception of the accidental note related to the tonic (e.g., in the case of E Phrygian mode, G# as a substitute for G in the context of the E tonic), the patterns are identical to those of the major scale, with a shift of the tonic note.

A and E Phrygian mode patterns

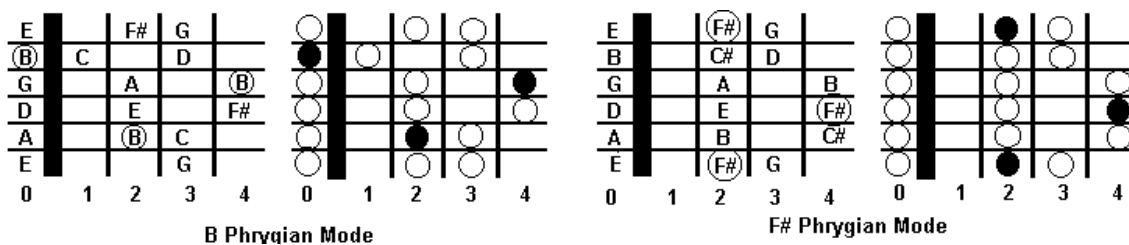
The most important mode patterns for Flamenco are those for the keys of A and E Phrygian, which are identical to those for F and C Major. The notes of these keys are (A, Bb, C, D, E, F, G) and (E, F, G, A, B, C, D), respectively.

In the open positions these patterns are:



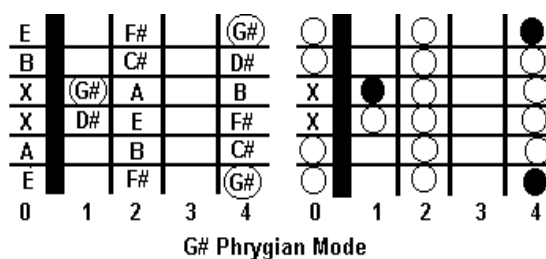
B and F# Phrygian mode patterns

The B and F# Phrygian Mode patterns (which are identical to those for G and D Major, respectively) are also important; for the palos of Granadinas and Taranto/Tarantas respectively, as well as for patterns for transposition from other keys. The notes for these modes are: (B, C, D, E, F#, G, A) and (F#, G, A, B, C#, D, E), respectively.



G# Phrygian mode pattern

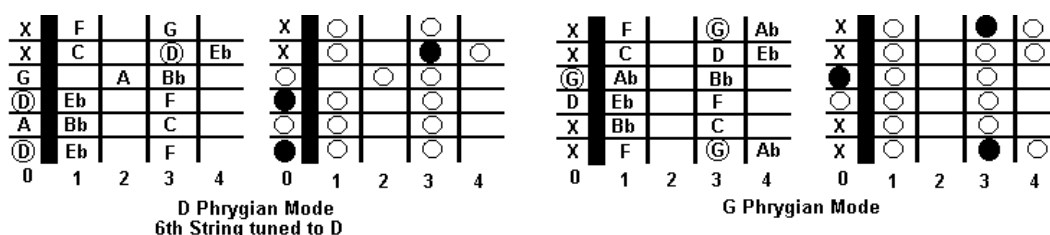
The pattern for the G# Phrygian mode is used for the palo of Mineras, as well as being useful as an auxiliary pattern for the A Phrygian mode. It is identical that for E Major; the notes of its scale are (G#, A, B, C#, D#, E, F#):.



D and G Phrygian Mode patterns

The D Phrygian mode is sometimes used as a basis for Zambra (Danza Mora) with the 6th string detuned to D. This provides a strong bass for some of the techniques characteristic of this palo, as well as an interesting series of chords derived from the open strings carried up the neck at obvious positions. It is also partially barred at the second fret for use as an auxiliary pattern for the E Phrygian Mode. The pattern is shown below with the 6th string tuned to D. The D Phrygian mode is relative to the key of Eb Major and G Minor; its notes are (D, Eb, F, G, A, Bb, C).

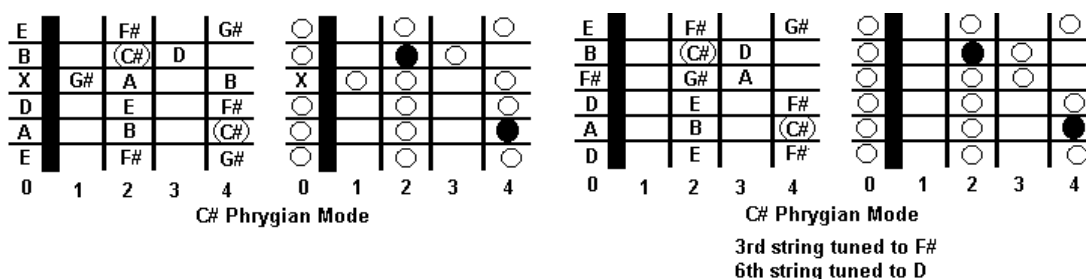
The G Phrygian mode is sometimes the basis for versions of Zambra and Mineras; it is also used as a partially barred pattern at the second fret for the A Phrygian mode. The G Phrygian mode is relative to the key of Ab and C Minor; its notes are (G, Ab, Bb, C, D, Eb, F):



C# Phrygian Mode pattern

The C# Phrygian mode pattern is identical to that of A Major in the normal tuning for the guitar, and as such is used as an auxiliary pattern for the E and A Phrygian modes. For example, for the E Phrygian mode it appears at the third position.

However, the C# Phrygian mode also is used as the basis for the Rondeña, a guitar solo created by Don Ramon Montoya. In this case, the 3rd and 6th strings are tuned to F# and D, respectively with all the patterns on the guitar neck altered accordingly; both patterns are shown below for the open position:



The C# Phrygian mode is relative to the keys of A Major and F# Minor; its notes are (C#, D, E, F#, G#, A, B). Note that the moveable chord forms must be changed as well to correspond to the new scale patterns due to the changed tuning for the Rondeña.

Phrygian Mode Pattern Relationships

The Phrygian Mode patterns are arranged from right to left chromatically, as with those for the Major scales. For example, the E Phrygian mode patterns are arranged:

The diagram illustrates the E Phrygian mode patterns. The top part shows a fretboard with notes circled and labeled with their names. The bottom part shows a fretboard with circles representing notes, with some filled black to indicate the Phrygian mode (lower second).

E Phrygian Mode Patterns

For the corresponding patterns for the A Phrygian mode, imagine the nut or the capo at the 7th position of the E Phrygian mode. The patterns for the A Phrygian mode are :

The diagram illustrates the A Phrygian mode patterns. The top part shows a fretboard with notes circled and labeled with their names. The bottom part shows a fretboard with circles representing notes, with some filled black to indicate the Phrygian mode (lower second).

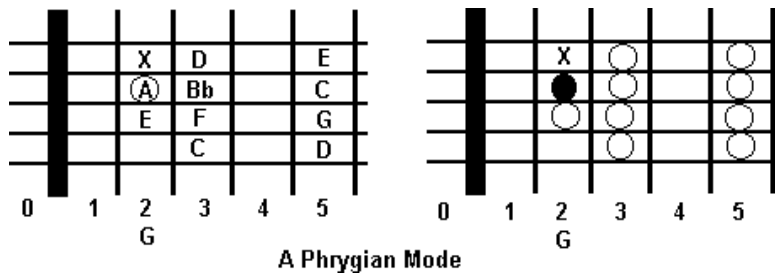
A Phrygian Mode

The patterns for the other keys are arranged accordingly. As before, it is left as an exercise for the reader to write out the patterns for other keys as required for the other palos. Eventually these patterns and their relationships will become committed to memory.

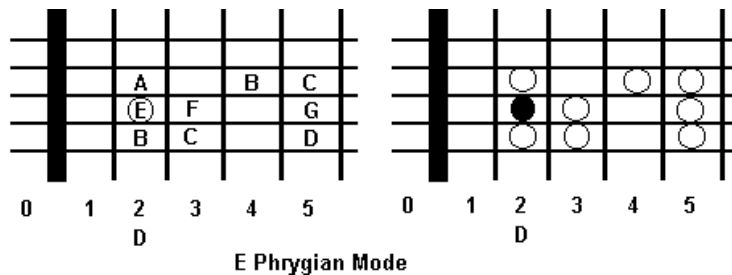
Partial Patterns for the A and E Phrygian Modes

There are two partial patterns that are worth special attention.

For the A Phrygian Mode, this pattern is part of that for the G Phrygian Mode, made by partially barring the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th strings at the second fret (with the pad of the index finger of the left hand, bent at the joint), and fingering the other notes accordingly:



For the E Phrygian Mode, the pattern is part of the D Phrygian Mode, made by partially barring the 3rd, 4th, and 5th strings at the second fret (i.e., one string lower in pitch), again with the pad of the index finger of the left hand, bent at the joint, and fingering the other notes accordingly:



Harmonic Minor scale patterns

A (Harmonic) Minor scale pattern

The three most important Harmonic Minor scale patterns are those for A Minor, E Minor, and D Minor, which are relative to the C Major (E Phrygian), G Major (B Phrygian), and F Major (A Phrygian), respectively. The patterns differ from those of their relative keys due to the accidental introduced in changing the chord built on the third of the scale from Minor to Major so that it functions as the dominant for the key (hence the name “Harmonic” Minor as opposed to “Natural” Minor. For example, in the case of A Minor, the change is from Em to E Major; note that this chord is also the tonic of the relative Phrygian Mode; the note that is changed is the third of the chord, from G to G#.

For example, in the E Phrygian Mode, the G# is played in the context of the tonic chord (E) or Bdim7, which is a substitute for that chord. The G (natural) is played in the context of the G and C chords. Am is particularly important because of the ease of making the chords associated with the scale (Am, E7 and Dm).

The notes of the A Harmonic Minor scale are (A, B, C, D, E, F, G#); the pattern for the key of A Harmonic Minor is given by:

E	F			G#	(A)		B	C		D		E	F			G#
B	C		D	E	F			G#	(A)		B	C		D		G#
X	G#	(A)		B	C		D	E	F			G#	(A)		B	
D		E	F		G#	(A)	B	C		D		E	F			
(A)		B	C		D	E	F			G#	(A)		B	C		
E	F			G#	(A)		B	C		D		E	F			G#

0 Am 2 Gm 5 Em 7 Dm 10 Bm 12 Am

A Harmonic Minor

Note that the keys of Bm and Gm can be used partially barred patterns; there are others, of course (e.g. Cm).

Em (Harmonic) Minor scale pattern

For the E Harmonic Minor, the note D is changed to D#, Bm -> B(7), and the notes of the scale are (E, F#, G, A, B, C, D#). As with Am, the Em scale is important because of the ease of making the chords of the key (Em, B7, Am):

The scales and pattern for the Em scale are:

(E)		F#	G		A		B	C		D#	(E)		F#	G	
B	C			D#	(E)		F#	G	A		B	C			D#
G		A		B	C			D#	(E)	F#	G		A		B
X	D#	(E)		F#	G		A	B	C		D#	(E)		F#	
A	B	C			D#	(E)		F#	G	A		B	C		
(E)		F#	G		A		B	C		D#	(E)		F#	G	

E Harmonic Minor

Dm (Harmonic Minor) scale pattern

The D Minor is formed from D Natural Minor (relative to A Phrygian Mode and F Manor) by changing the C to C#; the notes for D Harmonic Minor are (D, E, F, G, A, Bb, C#). The 6th string is usually tuned to D, since the open D string on the 4th string is too high to serve as an effective tonic. D Minor in this form is sometimes used for Farruca:

E	F	G	A	Bb		C#	D		E	F		G		
X		C#	D	E	F	G	A	Bb			C#	D		
G		A	Bb		C#	D	E	F		G		A	Bb	
D		E	F		G	A	Bb		C#	D		E	F	
A	Bb			C#	D		E	F	G		A	Bb		C#
D		E	F		G		A	Bb		C#	D		E	F

D Harmonic Minor
6th string tuned to D

“Secondary Dominant Scales”

Recall that the chords within a given key can be considered to be temporary tonics with their own dominants. For example, in the chord sequence for the Andalusian Cadence in the key of E Phrygian:

Am → G → F → E (Andalusian Cadence)
(E7→Am) → (D7→G) → (C7→F) → E (“Secondary Dominants”)

Here, the “secondary dominant” chords are E7, D7 and C7. The progression A7→Dm is also used in E Phrygian. The secondary dominant chords introduce accidentals into the key, which imply a key change;

Secondary Chord	Accidental	Key Change
E7	(G→G#)	(A Harmonic Minor)
D7	(F→F#)	(G Major)
C7	(B→Bb)	(F Major)
A7	(C→C#)	(D Minor)

These scales are implemented practically by imagining the corresponding pattern at the guitar position. For example, the Andalusian cadence in **A Phrygian** might be expressed as:

Dm (= Am at 5th position) → (C = A at 3rd position) → (**Bb** = A at 1st position) → **A**

The corresponding secondary dominant pattern would be:

(A7→**Dm**) → (G7→**C**) → (F7→**Bb**) → **A**,

with the A7 = (the chord form) E7 at 5th position, the G7 = E7 at the 3rd position, and the F7 = E7 at the 1st position. These forms are essentially the A Major Dominant → Tonic relationship at the 5th, 3rd, and 1st positions, respectively, with a final resolution to A (Phrygian) at the open position.

This suggests that the corresponding Major scale patterns can be substituted for the Phrygian Mode patterns at the corresponding positions. For example, it has already been suggested that the Harmonic Minor pattern be used in the context of the resolution chord (A); in the open position, this would be Dm (relative to A Phrygian). However, it can also be implemented at the **fifth** position by performing in the A Harmonic Minor scale.

At the **third** position, the pattern for the actual key of A Phrygian mode corresponds to the F# Phrygian Mode (D Major) performed at that position. However, the substitution of the pattern for the A Major scale at the third position changes the actual scale to C Major, to correspond with the secondary dominant chord progression (G7 → C). (Bb → B accidental)

At the **first** position, the pattern for the actual key of A Phrygian mode corresponds to the G# Phrygian Mode (E Major) at that position. The substitution of the pattern for the A Major scale at the third position changes the actual scale to Bb Major, to correspond with the secondary dominant chord progression (F7 → Bb). (D → D# accidental)

The scale pattern then returns to A Phrygian Mode at the open position. Recall that the Bb chord serves as the “dominant” to the tonic A chord, so that the F7 is the “dominant of the dominant

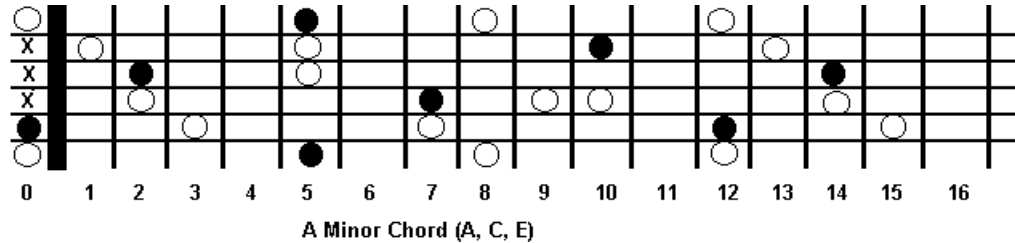
The above example has used a consistent A Major pattern in traversing down the guitar neck from the fifth position to the open position. However, the same chord/scale patterns can be implemented at a given position; for example, playing the appropriate patterns while remaining at the fifth position, or at the open position, by changing the progressions and introducing the accidentals as appropriate.

The reader should experiment with the equivalent progressions in the E, B, F# Phrygian Modes, keeping in mind that the progressions can also be used with the relative Majors and Minors of those keys.

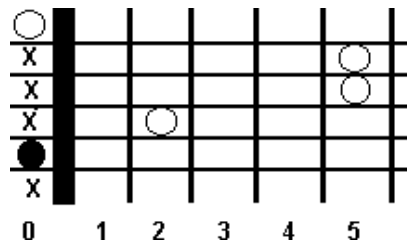
This form of modulation is used extensively in Flamenco, both in chord progressions and in melodies constructed from them.

General Chord Construction

Although chords can be constructed from the basic moveable chords, the notes of the chords themselves can be thought of as scales in their own right, to investigate alternative fingerings. The notes of a given chord can be written on the guitar neck in order to investigate other possibilities. For example, consider the notes of the A Minor chord on the guitar neck:



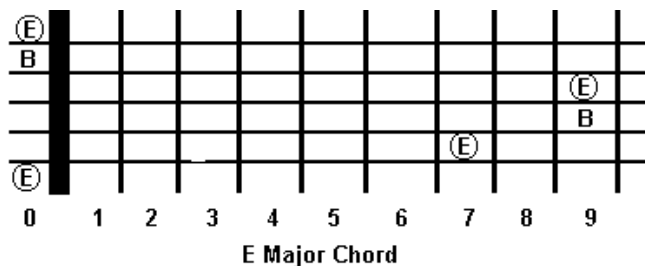
For example, the following form for the Am chord is used in the first measure of Tarrega's Recuerdos de Alhambra (a well known classical guitar composition):



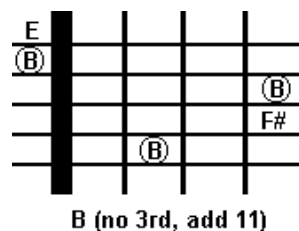
This method is very effective in searching for alternatives for the more complex chords used for Flamenco; for example, the I7(b9) chord used as a substitute for the Phrygian Mode tonic or The V7(b9) in the case of the Dominant 7th for the Minor key (E7b9 in the case of E Phrygian / A Minor).

Open String Chords

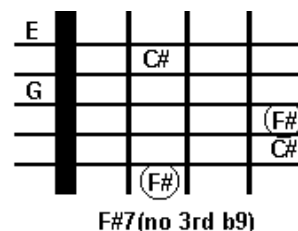
When constructing chords, always consider the open strings and their effects; here is a variations of the E Major (Minor) Chord (with no 3rd) used for Solea (or Granadinas):



Here is a variation of the above chord (at the 2nd position) that can be used for Granadinas and a similar approach for the F# chord at the 2nd position for Taranto/Tarantas:



B (no 3rd, add 11)



F#7(no 3rd b9)

Falseta Techniques

Falsetas are melodic sequences made up of notes and chords, similar to jazz riffs. The basic strategy for flamenco guitar performance is to establish the chording compas for accompaniment and rhythm, and insert falsetas where appropriate. The major emphasis (in the rhythmic palos) is in keeping compas, and the tapping of the foot is an aid to marking the beat. Flamencos can accept a missed note now and then, but never losing compas, since it is the fundamental way the music is felt.

The development of the right hand is very important in Flamenco, since it is the right hand that controls rhythm, tempo, and dynamics; and is much more difficult to develop than the left.

Traditionally, the Flamenco guitarist doesn't perform (e.g.) a Solea "solo", but rather interprets the toque "por Solea", which emphasizes the improvisational nature of Flamenco. All Flamenco guitarists have a traditional library of guitar falsetas, but the experienced guitarist will be able to insert them at will, according to the context of the performance. Eventually he will be able to improvise on them; inserting different melodic or rhythmic fragments, musical ideas, resolution phrases, etc., all the while maintaining the all-important compas and phrasing.

Finally, there are exceptions that prove the rule. Diego del Gastor (and other Flamenco greats) sometimes go out of compas for effect in a particular phrase, but still manage to preserve the integrity of the palo. This requires a great deal of knowledge and experience within Flamenco circles, however, and beginning guitarists should pay close attention to compas until it becomes fundamental to their toque.

Scalar vs. Chording Techniques

Flamenco guitar falsetas can be roughly divided into two categories, reflecting the scalar and harmonic nature of the guitar.

Scalar techniques consist of the performance of the notes of the scale in sequence (e.g., picado runs, ligados); these techniques take advantage of the scale patterns at relative positions on the guitar neck. Right hand techniques such as thumb strokes and picado are used to voice the individual notes.

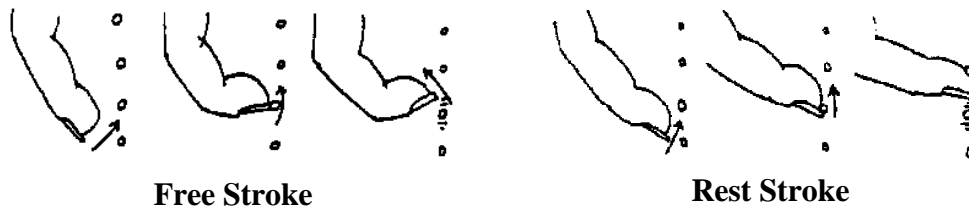
Chording techniques expressed chords held with the left hand in progressions; rasgueado (Flamenco strumming) is used to project rhythm, and individual chord note sequences are voiced with techniques which include arpeggio, tremolo, various thumb/index finger techniques and many others. Many falsetas include elements of both, but it is important to practice each separately to focus on the physical requirements of each technique until it can be integrated smoothly into the toque.

Free Strokes vs. Rest Strokes

There are two basic ways of voicing notes with the thumb and/or fingers of the right hand; the **free stroke**, in which the finger pulls away from the string after striking it, and the **rest stroke**, (or “apoyando”) in which the thumb or finger comes to rest on the string below or above, respectively.

For example, a thumb rest stroke on the 5th string would come to rest on the 4th string after striking the note; a free stroke would strike the string and lift off in preparation for the next stroke. A rest stroke of the middle or index finger on the 2nd string would come to rest on the 3rd string, where a free stroke would pull away from the 2nd string after striking it.

The rest stroke is generally more powerful than the free stroke; the latter is used where a lyrical quality is required, and in combination techniques such as arpeggio and tremelo.



Technique Development

Techniques vary in the difficulty and investment of time for their development; and the relation of tempo to technique is a critical consideration in performance. Some techniques are relatively easy to use, and can be immediately applied in the performance of falsetas; others take many years to develop, and even then require constant practice to keep in shape. Technical development depends a great deal on experience, ability, commitment, time resources, and personal taste, and so can vary greatly with each guitarist.

A rough priority for flamenco techniques can be established by classifying them into easy and difficult categories; the former can serve as a foundation for a basic toque, and an entree into the art; the latter includes those techniques that take a long time and much effort to develop properly.

Easy Techniques

Ligado
Thumb
Thumb/Index (Arpeggios)
Rasgueado

Difficult Techniques

Picado
Arpeggio (pami, etc.)
Tremelo

Phrasing and tempo are particularly important in the application of technique; it is difficult to quantify priorities, since they depend so much on individual goals, but the first priority should be to perform rasgueo chording compas, keeping aware of the tempos. Since chording compas as expressed with rasgueo is fairly easy to perform (and fun!), it will become the rhythmic foundation against which other techniques will be measured.

One reason the guitar is easy to play is that it lends itself to these chording techniques quite effectively; one reason it is difficult to play is that advanced techniques require simultaneous coordination of the fingers of both hands (e.g, single note runs using picado).

In classical guitar technique, the right hand thumb techniques operate on the bass strings (the 4th, 5th, and 6th strings), and the index, middle, and ring fingers operate on the treble strings; this rule is often broken in Flamenco. Flamenco guitarists use whatever “makes sense”; that is, whatever technique gets the notes out in compas according to their “aire”. As suggested above, it is often an engineering problem as much as an artistic one.

Left Hand Techniques

The left hand techniques can be divided into chording and melodic techniques; in chording techniques the fingers of the left hand stop the strings to make the chord; for melodic techniques, individual notes are voiced by using the scale patterns available to the guitar at the various positions.

Ligado

Ligado is an important left hand technique that consists of “pulling off” or “hammering on” notes:

“Hammering on” - Pressing a finger onto the next note in the pattern or scale after sounding the string, either on an open string or a note held by another finger.

“Pulling off” - Removing a finger to sound the next note in a pattern after having struck the string; either to an open string or a note held by another finger.

Basic Ligado Falseta

The following is a basic ligado falseta por Soleares, using thumb (p) downstrokes in the open position. Note that the harmony is essentially an E Major chord throughout (the tonic of the E Phrygian mode). The accidental (#) note, together with the E Resolution phrase (counts 10 thru 12) gives a clue that the melody is in E Phrygian mode (rather than C Major or A Minor).

1

E

E

0 0

4 2 1 3 2 3 1 2 4 2 1 3 0 2 1 0 4 2 1 3 2 3 1 2 4 2 1 3 0 2 1 0

p p p p p p i p p p p p p p p i p p p i

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

5

E

0 0

4 2 1 3 2 3 1 2 4 2 1 3 4 2 1 3 2 3 1 2 4 2 1 3 4 2 1 3 2 3 1 2 4 2 1 3 0 2 1 0

p p p p p p p p p p p p p p i p p p i

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Here's the same musical idea at a different pitch (position), with the same pattern. Note the melodic repetition in both the falsetas, but that the second is more interesting because of the pitch change:

(P0) E P5 E

4 2 1 3 2 3 1 2 4 2 1 3 | 0 2 1 0 0 | 7 5 4 6 5 6 4 5 7 5 4 6 | 0 2 1 0 0

p p p p p p p i p p p p p p p p p i p p p i

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 3 10 11 12

P5 (P0) E

7 5 4 6 5 6 4 5 7 5 4 6 | 4 2 1 3 2 3 1 2 4 2 1 3 | 2 0 3 2 3 2 0 4 1 0 3 1 0 | 0 2 1 0 0

p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p i p p p i

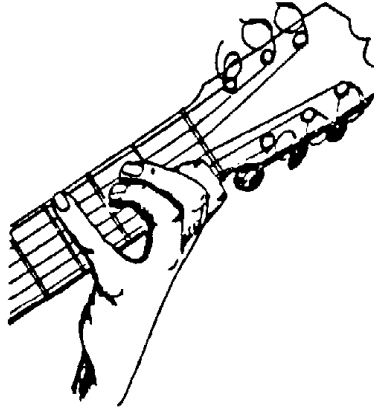
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Note the Bb in the last note group of measure 7 of the falseta, which suggests a secondary dominant (C7->F) before resolving melodically to E.

Repetition is as an important concept as variety in melody. The musician has to establish continuity in the minds of the audience just long enough so they assimilate it, but not so long as it becomes boring. Preceding and following falsetas with rasgueo sequences, or falsetas using different dynamic techniques are other ways of keeping the listener interested.

Parado

The parado (“stopped”) technique of the left hand is a rhythmic effect achieved by damping all the guitar strings simultaneously with the little finger of the left hand, while holding the rest of the chord with the other fingers (it is performed as part of the chording compas). It is particularly effective in the rhythmic palos such as Bulerias:



The following chording compas sequence is a typical use of the parado technique por Bulerias:

The diagram shows a musical notation for a chording compas sequence. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff (top) and a bass clef staff (bottom). The treble staff has a 6/8 time signature. The bass staff has a 3/4 time signature. The sequence is divided into two measures. The first measure contains two chords: (A) and (A). The second measure contains a Bb chord. The third measure contains an A chord. The notation includes fingerings (12), (1), (2), 3, (4), (5), 6, 7 a, 8 a, 9 a, 10, and (11). Above the treble staff, there are brackets indicating the duration of the chords: (A) (A), Bb, and A. The bass staff shows the rhythmic pattern of the chords, with notes and rests.

The first measure can be repeated several times (e.g., three) before resolving to the final measure (which can also start in A on count 6, instead of changing on count 10 as in the example.) Needless to say, other rasgueados can be performed for the resolution phrase as well (e.g. triplet sixteenths - “sextuplets”).

Thumb Techniques

Thumb techniques are the foundation of the flamenco guitar falseta, and are used for both melodic (scalar) and chording compas sequences. The thumb has four fundamental actions:

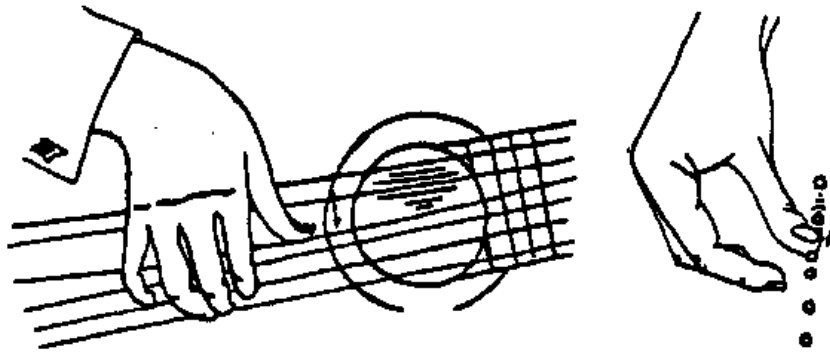
Chording Techniques

1. Downward across the guitar strings (striking them almost simultaneously as a rasgueado, or sounding each string individually like an arpeggio).
2. Upward with the back of the thumbnail across the guitar strings, sounding a rasgueado.

Melodic Techniques

1. Downward on an individual string, sounding the note.
2. Upward with the back of the thumbnail on an individual string, sounding the note.

The downstroke of the thumb is often used to accentuate a count of the compas in contrast to the index finger strokes (which emphasize the treble strings); both up and down strokes are used in combination rasgueados.



Thumb Downstroke (Rest Stroke)

Basic Solea Falseta

Here is a basic Soleares Falseta, using simple thumb strokes in “Question-Answer” phrasing. If played slowly it is relatively easy to play.

p p p p p p p p p p i p p p p p p p p p p p p p p i p p p i
 1 and a 2 and a 3 and a 4 a 5 a 6 a 7 and a 8 and a 9 and a 10 a 11 a 12 a

p i p p p i
 1 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 a 11 a 12 a

Soleares Falseta (Diego del Gastor)

Here are some variations on Diego del Gastor falsetas. Note the pattern carried up the neck to the G chord in measure 6:

p p p p p p p p i p p p i p p p p p p p p i p p p i
 1 and a 2 and a 3 and a 4 and 5 and 6 and 7 and a 8 and a 9 and a 10 and 11 and 12 and

p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p i p p p i
 1 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 11 and 12 and

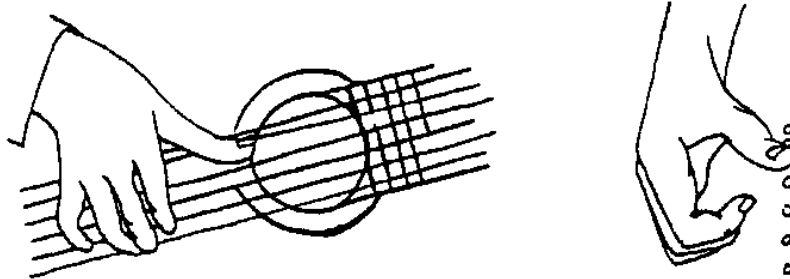
The following falseta is a variation of the above idea:

p p p p p p p p i p p p p p p p p p p p p p i p p p i
 1 and a 2 and a 3 and a 4 and 5 and 6 and 7 and a 8 and a 9 and a 10 and 11 and 12 and

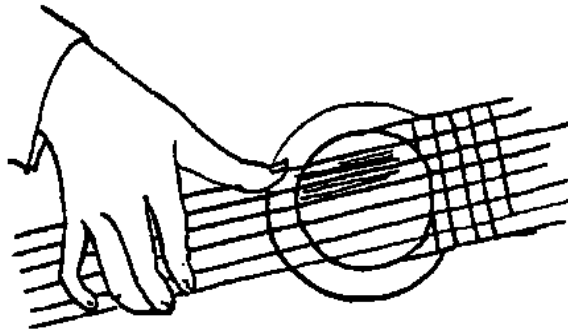
p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p p i p p p i
 1 and a 2 and a 3 and a 4 and a 5 and a 6 and a 7 and a 8 and a 9 and a 10 and 11 and 12 and

The Thumb Upstroke (Alza Pua)

The thumb upstroke is called **alza pua** (“upward thorn”) by Flamenco guitarists.



Thumb Upstroke (just prior to release)



Upstroke just after release

Both up and downstrokes are used for effect.

Arpeggios

Arpeggios consist of the individual notes of chords voiced over time, most often as a note group. Often the thumb plays a note on a bass string (4th, 5th, or 6th string), followed by a sequence of notes on the trebles (1st, 2nd, and 3rd strings) with the ring, index, and/or index finger. The bass notes create a “melody” line, while the notes in the trebles act as “fillers”.

Technically, the term “arpeggio” refers to chords voiced by any technique; for example, the falsetas above, and Solea resolution phrases are examples of arpeggios. Flamencos most often use the term to distinguish thumb/finger techniques from the thumb/index techniques.

The fingers of the right hand are indicated by:

p = thumb (pulgár)
 i = index finger (índice)
 m = middle finger (medio)
 a = ring finger (anular)
 c = little finger (chico)

The index, middle, and ring fingers often voice the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st strings respectively, but there are also many alternatives. (Note: the little finger is seldom used for any of the right hand technique except rasgueado). Arpeggios are often classified as **forward** (p,i,m,a), **back** (p,a,m,i), **combination** (p,i,m,a,m,i), or **thumb/index** (many variations). There are many different forms of arpeggios. Among them are the following (an x means a rest, and R means rasgueado):

Doublets	Triplets	Quadruplets	Quintuplets (tremelo)	Sextuplets
(p, i)	(p, i, i)	(p, i, i, i)		(p, i, i, p, i, i)
	(p, p, i)	(p, a, m, i)	(i, a, m, i, R)	(p, x, i, a, m, i)
	(p, m, i)	(p, i, m, a)		(p, i, m, a, m, i)
	(p, a, i)			

(Forward Arpeggio) (Back Arpeggio)

1 Bb A Bb A

p i m a p i m a p i m a p i p p p i p a m i p a m i p a m i p i p p p i

1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 6

(Combination Arpeggio) Thumb/index arpeggio)

5 Bb A Dm C Bb A

p i m a m i p i m a m i p i m a m i p i p p p i p i p p p i p i p p p p p i p p p p i

1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 6

Note that the tempo will have to be slower for the more complex arpeggios (for consistent counting in time) with respect to the resolution phrases.

Tremelo

The **tremelo** technique is a form of arpeggio in which all the treble notes are sounded on the same string (often expressing its own melody), with the bass providing an accompaniment. The Classical guitar form of tremelo (e.g., Tarrega: Recuerdos de Alhambra) uses the sequence (p,a,m,i), while the Flamenco form of tremelo traditionally uses (p,i,a,m,i). “**Octaves**” is a form of arpeggio in which the bass notes and trebles are an octave apart, as in measures 12, 13, and 14 of the Juan Maya Bulerias Falseta above.

(**Tremelo**) (p, m, i) (p, a, m, i) (p, i, a, m, i) (p, m, i, a, m, i)
 (p, a, i) (p, x, i, a, m, i)

Here's an example of a traditional Soleares tremelo falseta:

The musical score consists of four systems, each representing a 4-measure phrase in 3/4 time. The notation includes a treble clef, a 3/4 time signature, and a 3-string tremelo pattern in the treble clef. Below the staff are three lines of guitar-specific notation: a line for the treble string (string 1), a line for the middle strings (strings 2, 3, 4), and a line for the bass strings (strings 5, 6, 7). The treble string notation shows a sequence of notes with a '5' above each, indicating the fifth fret. The middle and bass string notations show various fret numbers and picking patterns. Below the guitar notation is a line of picking patterns (p, i, a, m, i) and a line of measure numbers (1-12).

System 1 (Measures 1-4): Treble clef, 3/4 time. Chords: C, G7, C. Picking: p i a m i p i a m i p i a m i etc. Measure numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

System 2 (Measures 5-8): Treble clef, 3/4 time. Chords: C, F7, E. Picking: p i a m i p i a m i p i a m i etc. Measure numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

System 3 (Measures 9-12): Treble clef, 3/4 time. Chords: F, E, F, E. Picking: p i a m i p i a m i p i a m i etc. Measure numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

System 4 (Measures 13-16): Treble clef, 3/4 time. Chord: E. Picking: p i a m i p i a m i p i a m i etc. Measure numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

Flamenco tremelos can be performed smoothly, which gives a flowing effect, or with a brief pause between the thumb melody stroke and the first index stroke, (as if the note group were a sextuplet with the second note a rest), which is more emotionally expressive.

Sometimes a reverse tremelo technique is used, where the treble strings are struck first, followed by a thumb downstroke, (e.g., in the order (i,a,m,i,P), especially for effect in the intermediate palos (e.g., Granadinas, Tarantas, Malagueñas)

(**Rasgueado**)

(i, a, m, i, P)

(x, i, a, m, i, P)

The following is a fragment of an introduction to Granadinas (B Phrygian Mode):

Interpret freely -----

The sequence “i a m i” acts as an introduction to the following chord, which is a kind of “pickup” or “lead in” to the chord. Technically, this is called an “Anacrusis”. The series of chords is performed “libre”, or freely with respect to compas; as such it functions as a textural effect rather than as a melody.

Anacrusic Melodies and Feminine Endings

Anacrusis

Although harmonic changes usually occur at logical rhythmic time divisions (e.g., at the beginning of measures, or note groups) melodic phrases can overlap the beginning or end of a measure. Melodic phrases that begin before a measure are called **anacrusis**; the notes preceding the measure serve as an introduction to the beat, and are often called “pickup” or “lead-in” notes.

Tientos, Zapateado, and Tanguillo are examples of palos in which the rasgueado begins before the measure, as “and-a-ONE and-a-TWO”, etc., with the “and-a” as the anacrusis

The following falseta is an example of an anacrusic melody por Bulerias (Sabicas, A Minor), in which the melody is the one note that introduces the chord/rasgueo “answer” of the phrase, preceded by a melodic introduction:

The image displays a musical score for a falseta in A Minor. It consists of two systems of notation. The first system covers measures 1 through 4, and the second system covers measures 5 through 8. Each system includes a melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (A Minor), guitar chords, and a six-string guitar tablature. The lyrics 'i a m i a' are written below the tablature, with arrows indicating the fretting hand movements. Measure 1 starts with an anacrusis of two eighth notes (1 and 2) followed by a measure of four eighth notes (3, 4, 5, 6). Measures 2 and 3 continue with similar rhythmic patterns, with measure 3 featuring a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 4 concludes with an anacrusis of two eighth notes (1 and 2) followed by a measure of four eighth notes (3, 4, 5, 6). The second system begins at measure 5 with an anacrusis of two eighth notes (1 and 2) followed by a measure of four eighth notes (3, 4, 5, 6). Measure 6 continues with an anacrusis of two eighth notes (1 and 2) followed by a measure of four eighth notes (3, 4, 5, 6). Measure 7 features an anacrusis of two eighth notes (1 and 2) followed by a measure of four eighth notes (3, 4, 5, 6). Measure 8 concludes with an anacrusis of two eighth notes (1 and 2) followed by a measure of four eighth notes (3, 4, 5, 6).

In measures 5 and 6, the note (1) “a” could also be considered anacrusic to count 2.

Feminine Ending

A similar situation occurs when the falseta extends past the end of the measure (i.e., past the beginning of the "resolution" phrase). In this case, the melody is said to have a feminine ending; the following falseta of Diego del Gastor is an anacrusic falseta with both anacruses and feminine endings (F.E.) at resolution phrases (A Phrygian):

F.E. = Feminine Ending

1 A Bb A (Anacrusis) A7 "Bb" "C" "Bb"

5 A7 A A Bb A (Anacrusis)

9 A "Bb" C Bb (F.E.)

13 A Bb A (Anacrusis) F C C (Anacrusis)

17 C Bb Bb (F.E.)

12 1 a 2 3 (4) (5) 6 (7) a 8 (9) 10 a 11 a 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 (4) (5) 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11) 12 1 a 2 3 (4) (5) 6 7 a 8 (9) 10 a 11 a 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 a 7 (8) 9 a a 10 (11) 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 a 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 a 11 a 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 a 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 a 11 a 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 a 7 (8) 9 a a 10 (11)

Three Solea Falsetas

The following three falsetas are variations on the same theme; they serve as “filler” falsetas between letras of the cante, or as accompaniment to Solea taconeo steps. It is especially instructive to compare different kinds of arpeggios; for example, substitute (p,i,i,i) thumb/index arpeggio, or (p,i,m,a,m,i) sextuplet arpeggio at a slow tempo (E Phrygian):

The musical score consists of three systems, each representing a different falseta. Each system includes a treble clef staff with a 3/4 time signature, a guitar tablature staff, and a line of lyrics with fingerings.

System 1 (Measures 1-4): Chords: E, FMaj7, C, FMaj7, E, FMaj7, E. Lyrics: p a m i p a m i p p a m i p a m i p p a m i p a m i p a m i p i p p p i. Fingerings: 1 2 3 2 2, 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12.

System 2 (Measures 5-8): Chords: (FMaj7), (FMaj7), FMaj7, E, FMaj7, E. Lyrics: p a m i p a m i p p a m i p a m i p p a m i p a m i p i p p p i. Fingerings: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12.

System 3 (Measures 9-12): Chords: Am, C, FMaj7, E, Eb, E. Lyrics: p a m i p a m i p p a m i p a m i p a m i p a m i p p p i. Fingerings: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12.

Picado

The **picado** Flamenco guitar technique refers to the voicing of individual notes (usually scales) by striking them rapidly with alternating fingers. The traditional Flamenco picado is performed **apoyando** (hammer strokes), using the alternating fingers of (m,i) or (a,i).

Picado is one of the most difficult of the Flamenco guitar techniques at the concert level, since fast picado runs require simultaneous and instantaneous coordination between the fingers of both hands. This requires focused development, concentrated practice, and daily maintenance for years; it is not a casual technique. That said:

The picado technique can be applied in several ways:

1. As a “burst” of notes, similar to a redoble, either on the same note, or as a short pattern.
2. As a textural effect (e.g., long fast runs); these often are showcases for the technical expertise of the guitarist.
3. As a melodic technique, where the technique is used to express a melody (or series of melodies) in musical phrases.

Traditional Picado

Picado is often inserted in short melodic phrases during accompaniment, with these phrases transferable to other positions on the guitar. For example, here is a melodic figure in 3/4 time for Bulerias (A Phrygian):

(Resolution Phrase) (A)

0	1	0	1	3	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
2							3	3	3	1	1	1	1	3
2							3	2	2	0	0	0	0	3
2							0	2	2	2	2	2	2	0
							1	1	0	1	3	1	0	1

↑ i m i m i m ↑ i m i m i m ↑ ↓ ↑ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↑ i m i m i m

i i i i i

12 (1) a 2 a 3 a 4 (5) 12 (1) a 2 a 3 a 4 (5) 12 a 1 (2) 3 a 4 (5) 6 (7) a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

Note the repetition of the melodic figure on different strings. The figure in the last measure can also be performed against an A resolution phrase beginning on 6, rather than ending on 10, as above.

Often melodic figures end (anacrusically) on the roots of chords in a progression:

Chord progression: A, Dm, C, Bb, A (Resolution)

Fingering: \uparrow i m i m i m, \uparrow i m i m i m, \uparrow i m i m i m, \uparrow i m i m i m

Tablature: 12 (1) a 2 a 3 a 4 (5), 12 (1) a 2 a 3 a 4 (5), 12 (1) a 2 a 3 a 4 (5), 6 (7) a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

Picado / Ligado

Picado can also be used with ligado. The following Bulerias (Jaleo) falseta of Diego del Gaster's (A Phrygian) illustrates the use of picado and ligado in countertime - the stroke is on the counter time, pulling onto the note on the count:

Chord progression: A, A, A

Fingering: \uparrow i m i m i m i, \uparrow i m i m i m i, \uparrow i m i m i m i

Tablature: (12) 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 (5) 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11) 12 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 a

Additional notation: m i p i m i m i m i m i m i m i m

Tablature: 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 a 11 a 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 a 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

Chord progression: A, Bb, A

Fingering: $\uparrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \uparrow$, $\uparrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow$

Tablature: 12 (1) (2) 3 (4) (5), 6 (7) a 8 a 9 a 10 (11), 12 1 a 2 3 (4) (5), 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
 m i m i m i m m m i m m m i
 p p p p p p p p p p p p

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
 m i m i m ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ m i m i m i m i m ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ 5 ↓ ↑
 p p 12 (1) 2 3 (4) 5 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11) 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 5 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
 m i m i m i m i m ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ m m i m m m i m
 p p 12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 5 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11) 12 (1) (2) 3 4 5 12 (1) (2) 3 4 5

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
 m m i m m ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑
 p p 12 (1) (2) 3 4 5 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11) 12 (1) 2 (3) 4 (5) 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

Note the use of repetition and contrast with respect to the melodic figures in this falseta, as their phrasing.

12 - Note Runs

The 12 note run appears in many contexts in Flamenco, in all keys. There are two basic patterns for this descending scale run, which ends on the “open” string (at a given position). The resolution actually makes the 13th note in the run. This run can be thought of as either a 3/4 or 6/8 run, since evenness in voicing is the key criterion.

Both versions begin with two notes on the uppermost string (in pitch); and there is one other string with two notes on it, with three on the others:

(E.g.) String #	pitch	I (E.g. A,Am)	II (e.g., A,E Phrygian)
(1)	highest	2 notes	2 notes
(2)	next	3 notes	2 notes
(3)	next	2 notes	3 notes
(4)	next	3 notes	3 notes
(5)	next	3 notes	3 notes (Resolution)

For example, compare the two patterns for A Minor and A Major, both of which conform to I:

The image shows musical notation for two scales: (A Harmonic Minor) and (A Major). Each scale is followed by a 'Resolution Phrase'. Below the notation is guitar tablature for the first four strings (1-4). Underneath the tablature are fingering diagrams for the left hand, showing fingerings for notes 1 through 10 on the strings. The diagrams use 'm' for middle finger and 'i' for index finger, with arrows indicating the direction of finger movement.

Note that the notes on the strings, the ordering of the m,i fingers have the same form. Contrast this with the patterns for A Phrygian Mode and E Phrygian Mode (which conform to II):

The image shows musical notation for two modes: (A Phrygian Mode) and (E Phrygian Mode). Each mode is followed by a 'Resolution Phrase'. Below the notation is guitar tablature for the first four strings (1-4). Underneath the tablature are fingering diagrams for the left hand, showing fingerings for notes 1 through 10 on the strings. The diagrams use 'm' for middle finger and 'i' for index finger, with arrows indicating the direction of finger movement.

Note that the r.h. finger ordering is the same, even though the runs begin on different strings.

The run can be performed in sextuplets (relative to the beat) in 2/4:

(A Phrygian Mode)

Resolution Phrase

1 0 3 1 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 1 0 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

m i m i m i m i m i m i m ↑ ↑ ↑ ↓ ↑
 1 and a 2 and a 3 and a 4 and a 1 2 and a 3 4

Although the run uses exactly the same pattern, the feeling will be different because of the different note groups relative to the compas.

By shifting the starting time (and coordination) relative to the beat, the 12-count run can be used in 2/4 time; e.g. por Tangos:

(A Phrygian Mode)
Bb

Resolution Phrase

0 3 3 0 3 2 0 3 1 0 2 2 2 2 2 2

↑ p m i m i m i m i m ↑ ↑ ↑ ↓ ↑
 1 2 3 4 1 2 and a 3 4

Note that if your foot is tapping on the beat (counts 1 and 3) por Tangos, this is a very fast run at 85 b.p.m; that is, the run is in octuplets relative to the beat.

Slipping Fingers in Runs

One approach (used by some guitarists) to improving recovery time in descending picado runs is to “slip” the fingers as the string is crossed, playing two successive notes on different strings with the same finger.

In the following examples, note that fingers are repeated whenever a string is crossed; the idea being that the finger is already in position to strike the next note.

The image shows four musical examples in 3/4 time, each with a treble clef staff, a guitar-specific staff with fret numbers, and a tablature staff with fingerings (m, i, a) and directional arrows (↑, ↓).

- (A Minor):** Treble clef, 3/4 time. Fret numbers: 1 0, 3 1 0, 2 1, 3 2 0, 3 2, 0. Fingerings: m i i m i m m i m. Arrows: ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑.
- Am Resolution Phrase:** Treble clef, 3/4 time. Fret numbers: 0 0 0 0 0 0 0, 1 1 1 1 1 1 1, 2 2 2 2 2 2 2, 2 2 2 2 2 2 2. Fingerings: i i i i i i i. Arrows: ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑.
- (A Phrygian Mode):** Treble clef, 3/4 time. Fret numbers: 1 0, 3 1, 3 2 0, 3 2 0, 3 1, 0. Fingerings: m i i m m i m m i m. Arrows: ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑.
- A Resolution Phrase:** Treble clef, 3/4 time. Fret numbers: 0 0 0 0 0 0 0, 2 2 2 2 2 2 2, 2 2 2 2 2 2 2, 2 2 2 2 2 2 2. Fingerings: i i i i i i i. Arrows: ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑.

I don't recommend this approach as a general technique, since it detracts from the evenness of the runs and is falseta specific, in the sense that the fingering for each run has to be tailored to a specific case. And in any case, there are points in the runs at which the technique cannot be used (e.g., where there are three notes on the string).

If (m,i) or (a,i) is used consistently, eventually the fingering of the runs become more independent of the music, which is especially important for improvisation.

Nevertheless, there are specific cases (like the index finger arpeggio) where the slip finger technique can be used effectively.

The Three Finger Picado

Although the traditional Flamenco picado technique in Flamenco uses alternating m,i or a,i right hand fingering, and can be developed to lightning speed, there are several other techniques that can be used for scale runs. One of these techniques is the three finger picado, in various forms.

For the analysis, there are a number of important observations and factors worth considering:

1. The scale patterns for each string at each position consist of three notes on each string, except for one (either the 2nd or 3rd string, depending on whether the pattern is “like” A Phrygian, or E Phrygian, respectively).
2. Recovery time for a double technique (such as traditional picado) is only one finger for each stroke; for a three stroke technique each stroke has two strokes recovery time. Absent other factors, the guitarist should be able to play twice as fast using a three stroke technique than a two stroke technique. (Note: in my opinion recovery time is not as important as the musical coordination aspects (the 3 note coordination on the guitar strings to the 3-stroke technique.)
3. Much of Flamenco music is in combinations of three notes, reflecting both the physical structure of the guitar as well as the 6/8 and 3/4 meter of the most important rhythms. In addition, a three finger technique would be obviously useful in guitar phrases in triplets, for any time signature.
4. Much of Flamenco depends on polyrhythm - particularly hemiola (3 vs. 4 quadruplet patterns) for musical interest. The three stroke picado played polyrhythmically is a natural candidate for these musical phrases.
5. Picado techniques using (m,i) and (a,i) are less difficult than those using (m,a), since articulation is (much) more difficult to develop. This is because the (m, a) fingers are on the same tendon. For three finger picado using (a,m,i) this means that the baseline speed will be determined by (m,a), so that the maximum possible speed will be double the two-stroke speed, absent all other factors.
6. The coordination and strength developed for the three-stroke techniques will also apply to techniques such as rasgueo, arpeggio and tremelo, especially in the articulation of the “m,a” fingers.

The main candidates for the three stroke scale techniques are:

a, m, i
p, m, i
p, a, i

It is also possible to consider using a four stroke technique for quadruplets in some contexts. All of these techniques can be used alone, or in combination with other right hand techniques (thumb/index, alzapua, etc.)

Physical Layout and Three Stroke Techniques

The traditional Flamenco guitar uses the Phrygian mode, the Major scale, and the Harmonic Minor scale, together with their associated chords, with the guitar tuned to 4th's (E, A, D, G, B, E), the 3rd string being the one exception. The scales implemented on the strings, as voiced at the fret positions on the guitar form patterns. These scale patterns consist of three notes on each guitar string.

For a straight scale run, one of the notes is duplicated in pitch (e.g., B, E Phrygian), or not included in the scale (B, A Phrygian); the scale on that string will only have two notes.

The a, m, i Picado technique

The pattern for a descending scale can be performed using the a, m, i sequence of r.h. fingering, with the normal m,i at the point where the scale has only two notes on the string:

Full Scale Pattern; C Major, A (Natural) Minor, E Phrygian Mode A Minor Am

3 1 0 3 1 0 2 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 1 0
a m i a m i m i a m i a m i a m i m i a m i m i a m i a m i i ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑
12 a 1 a 2 a 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

In this case, there are only two notes on the 3rd string. When crossing strings with only two notes, the gain in recovery time is not as important as consistency of technique for speed (i.e., the finger order a, m, i on each string where triplets are concerned).

The finger order (a, m, i) is arguably the most natural, but the order (i, a, m) is also useful, because that is the order of the traditional Flamenco tremolo. The order (m, i, a) is more difficult, since it involves crossing the strings using the (m,a) fingers.

As with all other 3-stroke techniques, the three finger picado can be performed with melody patterns on the guitar neck (Bulerias, A Phrygian):

P0 (Dm) P3 (C) P1 (Bb) A

3 2 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 7 5 3 7 5 3 7 5 3 5 3 1 5 3 1 5 3 1 0
a m i a m i a m i a m i a m i a m i a m i a m i a m i a i ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑
12 1 2 3 a 4 a 5 a 12 1 2 3 a 4 a 5 a 12 1 2 3 a 4 a 5 a 6 7 a 8 a 9 a 10 (11)

Hint: practice sequences like this using (i,a,m) and (a,i,m) as well, in other scales and keys at other positions, and on different strings. Try to end on the root of the target chord.

The basic 12-note run can be extended to longer runs (Soleares, E Phrygian):

0 0 0 0 0 0 1 3 5 3 1 0 3 1 0 2 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 1 0 0 0 0

1 1 1 1 1 2 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 1 0 1 1 1 1

2 2 2 2 2 0 2 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 1 0 2 2 2 2

↑ ↑ ↑ i a m i a m i a m i m i a m i a m p i p p p i

1 2 3 (4) 5 6 7 8 9 10 a 11 a 12 a

Here's the same run in Fandangos de Huelva (E Phrygian, Paco de Lucia):

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 3 5 3 1 0 3 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

1 1 1 1 1 2 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 1 0 1 1 1 1

2 2 2 2 2 0 2 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 1 0 2 2 2 2

↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ i a m i a m i a m i m i a m i a m i a m i ↑ ↑ ↑ ↓

12 a 1 a 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 and a 10 (11)

Note that if you are tapping your foot on the beat (the even counts), the run is in octuplets. (Tempo about 85 b.p.m.)

For ascending runs, the same considerations hold, e.g. (Alegrias, A Major, Sabicas):

0 2 4 0 2 4 0 2 4 1 2 0 2 3 0 2 0 3 2 0 2 1 4 2 0 4 2 0

0 2 4 0 2 4 1 2 0 2 3 0 2 0 3 2 0 2 1 4 2 0 4 2 0

0 2 4 0 2 4 1 2 0 2 3 0 2 0 3 2 0 2 1 4 2 0 4 2 0

a m i a m i a m i m i a m i a m i a m i m i a m i a m i

l 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 (11) (12)

You can also use your thumb in ascending runs effectively, as indicated - trading off in the descending section. (Play in 3/8 for fast tempo.)

Here is a Taranto falseta (F# Phrygian Mode).

Measures 1 thru 4 establish the compas, with the actual falseta beginning anacrusically in the 4th measure. Note the timing of the rasgueado in comparison with the slow 4/4 beat. In the 5th measure, m,i is used twice in the scale run, consistent with the idea that the finger ordering is more important than recovery time. In measures 5 and 7, the runs begin at the barred 2nd position, transferring to the open position on the 3rd (g) string (i.e., the “4 2 0” notes), also an aid to preserving fingering order.

Here’s another Picado falseta por Bulerias (A Phrygian, Sabicas), fingered with a combination of these right hand techniques:

There are many alternative ways to finger falsetas, and you should experiment to determine what works for you. Keep in mind potential difficulties (e.g., crossing strings), and work short runs into falsetas, building up to longer ones as your techniques get stronger and your sense of compas becomes more sure. Be especially aware of how to enter and leave falsetas within the compas (i.e., anacrusic entrances and feminine endings).

Taking Material off Records and Cd's

Records, CD's and Videos are a major source of study material, and the following are some hints toward learning from these sources.

1. Once the toque has been identified, determine the key by listening carefully for the tonics, usually at resolution phrases (if you can't hear a resolution phrase, it is probably "flamenco con-fusion"... Adjust the capo on the guitar accordingly.
2. A two speed cassette recorder, or even better, a computer program such as CoolEdit (IBM PC), that allows you to slow the the falseta down to half speed (the latter will do it without changing pitch). Half speed in the former case will lower the pitch by an octave, so you'll still be in tune..
3. Listen carefully for the begining of the falseta relative to the compas, and note whether it has an anacrusic beginning or feminine ending. Practice entering and leaving the falseta from the compas correctly.
4. Usually it is fairly easy to determine the pitch of the notes. Complications mostly arise in the cases of countertime and syncopation.
5. A metronome (or even better, a drum maching programmed for Flamenco compas) is invaluable for setting the tempo and in the latter case, providing rhythmic phrasing to test your compas. Better yet, of course, is experience accompanying a Flamenco dance class in your locality.
6. Keep an open mind about technique; flamencos are not restricted by "good" classical techniques - whatever works is legal.

Concluding Remarks

This concludes our introduction to the compas structures and the basic techniques of the Flamenco guitar. The techniques introduced here should give you a start in understanding this great and profound art. You should try to find Flamenco records with dancers, since the compas is usually clear; solo guitarists often break the compas rules for artistic effect.

Salud, Amor, y Dinero, y Tiempo para Gustarlos! Hasta Pronto!