



PRIVATE LESSONS

Slap & Pop Technique

for Guitar

52 LICKS AND LESSONS

by Jean Marc Belkadi





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by Jean Marc Belkadi

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Note: Use Track 53 to tune up.

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to provide a fresh perspective on the subject of funk guitar. For years, I played funk the way most guitarist do—with a pick. This sound is certainly a staple of funk music and a must-learn for all serious funk guitarists. After becoming increasingly interested in funk bass players and the techniques they used, however, I began experimenting with slap and pop techniques (commonly used with bass) in my guitar playing. Influenced by players such as Louis Johnson, Yanic Top, Marcus Miller, Stanley Clarke, Victor Wooten, and Kevin Eubanks, I began imitating the sounds I heard from them on my guitar. Years later, I've found that, although funk is an obvious choice, this technique can be applied to *many* styles. Throughout this book, we'll also see it applied to R&B, Motown, Reggae, and Latin styles. We'll also cover odd meters and straight-ahead funk-rock grooves. When it's all done, you'll have a new vocabulary of techniques to incorporate into your own playing.

Technical Performance Notes

In order to best digest the information in this book, it's probably necessary to discuss a few techniques that aren't commonly found in guitar notation. Below is a list of abbreviations and explanations that pertain to the musical figures found in this book. You may recognize many of these from conventional bass notation.

T – Strike or “slap” the string with the right-hand thumb.

P – Snap or “pop” the string by pulling upwards with the index finger of your right hand and quickly releasing it.

L – Slap the strings on the fretboard with your left-hand fingers laid flat, creating a muted percussive effect.


I – Strum with your right-hand index finger (downstroke) as if it were a pick.

⊕ – Hammer or “tap” the fret indicated with one of the fret-hand fingers.

F – Strum with the nail of your right-hand thumb (upstroke).

Though the “slap” technique is very familiar to most bass players, guitar players have usually not experimented with this before. Try different positions along the string to ensure that you are not producing a harmonic with your slap. Also, try to keep your right arm parallel to the strings.

About the Audio

Throughout this book, the numbers in the audio symbols () indicate the CD track number where each figure will be found on the accompanying CD.

Chapter 1

Funk Figures

Though this technique can be applied to other styles (as we'll discover throughout this book), its most obvious use lies in the funk genre. Here are plenty of grooves to get you acclimated to this new technique.

These first two figures make use of the open E string, as this provides a great way to learn the slap-and-pop technique.

1 Fig. 1

N.C.(Emi9)

Figure 1 is a funk figure in 4/4 time, featuring a sequence of notes and rests. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The figure is labeled "N.C.(Emi9)". The sequence of notes and rests is: T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop). The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers: 0, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7. The 'X' marks indicate open strings.

2 Fig. 2

N.C.(Emi9)

Figure 2 is a funk figure in 4/4 time, featuring a sequence of notes and rests. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The figure is labeled "N.C.(Emi9)". The sequence of notes and rests is: T (tap), L (lift), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), L (lift), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop). The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers: 0, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7. The 'X' marks indicate open strings.

Figures 3 and 4 make use of slapping the A string. You'll probably find this a bit more difficult than the low E string, but with practice you'll be able to slap the fourth, fifth, and sixth strings all equally. Figure 3 uses a downstroke with the index finger to play the sliding double stop.

3 Fig. 3

N.C.(Emi9)

Figure 3 is a funk figure in 4/4 time, featuring a sequence of notes and rests. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The figure is labeled "N.C.(Emi9)". The sequence of notes and rests is: T (tap), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop), T (tap), P (pop), I (slap), T (tap), P (pop). The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers: 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7. The 'X' marks indicate open strings.

4

Fig. 4

N.C.(D) (G) (c)

T P T P T P T T P T P T T

TAB 5 7 7 X X 3 5 X 4 5 X 3 5 3 5

This figure introduces the left-hand muted slap technique. One of the key elements of this style is to keep the rhythm solid. This sometimes requires the use of the left hand to produce an occasional sixteenth-note percussive click.

5

Fig. 5

N.C.(E)

T L T P T P T T P T P T T P T

TAB 0 X X X 9 9 X 5 7 X X 5 7 X 5 5 3

Pay attention to the rhythm of the first beat in this next figure. This triplet hammer-on is a nice way to spice up an otherwise straight sixteenth-note riff. Notice also the index-finger downstroke on the F/G on beat 4.

6

Fig. 6

N.C.

T T P T P T T P T P I P

TAB 0 5 7 X 5 X 3 5 X 3 X 3 3

Figures 7, 8, and 9 introduce the left-hand hammer-on technique. While figure 7 concentrates on the fifth and third strings, figures 8 and 9 concentrate on the sixth and fourth strings.

7 Fig. 7

N.C.

8va -----

loco

G

T

⊕ P T P I P T P T I T P

Harm. -----

TAB

0 5 7 7 7 X 5 X 5 0 5 7 0 0 X

8 Fig. 8

N.C.(Bmi7)

T

⊕ T P T P T

⊕ T P T P I T P

TAB

0 7 9 X X 0 5 7 X X 5 6 6 X

9 Fig. 9

N.C. (A7)

T

⊕ T P T P T

T P T P T P T P

TAB

0 3 5 X X 0 3 5 X X X X X

This figure features a bluesy A Mixolydian sound and a chromatic sliding double stop. Try this one at both medium and fast tempos.

10 Fig. 10

N.C. (A7)

T T P T P T T P T P T T P

TAB: 3 5 X X 3 4 X 5 6 X

Fig. 11 mixes triad punctuations with single-note riffing. Notice the implied A, C#mi, and D tonalities in measure 2.

11 Fig. 11

N.C. (Emi9)

T L T P T P T T T P T P T T L T P T P T T P T P T ⊕ T ⊕

TAB: 7 7 7 5 4 5 7 0 4 6 7

This figure in G minor features a disco-sounding progression, a serious groove, and a chromatic leading tone in beat 4 of measure 2.

12 Fig. 12

Gmi Bb C F N.C.

T ⊕ T P T P T T P T P T P T ⊕ T P T P T L T P

TAB: 5 6 5 3 3 3 2

The syncopation in this figure propels it forward with anticipation. Notice the chromatic chord movement in measure 2, leading nicely back to the F chord at the repeat.

13 Fig. 13

Fig. 13 shows a guitar riff in 4/4 time. The melody is in F major, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The riff consists of two measures. Measure 1 starts with an F chord, followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Measure 2 features a chromatic chord progression from D7 to Eb to E, leading back to F. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of one sharp. The guitar tablature below the staff shows the fretting for each note, with 'X' marks indicating natural harmonics or specific fretting techniques.

This riff in C features sliding chromatic triple stops, syncopated chord punches, and a bluesy Eb-to-E hammer-on.

14 Fig. 14

Fig. 14 shows a guitar riff in 4/4 time. The melody is in C major, with a key signature of no sharps or flats. The riff consists of two measures. Measure 1 starts with a natural C chord (N.C.), followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Measure 2 features a chromatic chord progression from C7 to Eb to E, leading back to C. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of no sharps or flats. The guitar tablature below the staff shows the fretting for each note, with 'X' marks indicating natural harmonics or specific fretting techniques.

Fig. 15 makes good use of accented chromatic approach notes in beats 1 and 4 of measure 2. Notice again the abundance of syncopated chord punches.

15 Fig. 15

Fig. 15 shows a guitar riff in 4/4 time. The melody is in C major, with a key signature of no sharps or flats. The riff consists of two measures. Measure 1 starts with a natural C chord (N.C.), followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Measure 2 features a chromatic chord progression from C11 to D7, leading back to C. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of no sharps or flats. The guitar tablature below the staff shows the fretting for each note, with 'X' marks indicating natural harmonics or specific fretting techniques.

The following two figures demonstrate bass-line figures played exclusively on the bottom three strings. A solid rhythmic feel is imperative in making these lines groove.

16 Fig. 16

N.C.(Emi7)

T T P T P T T P T P T T P T T P T P T ⊕ P T ⊕ P

T
A
B

5 7 X 0 X 5 7 X 0 X 5 7 X 0 X 0 3 0 5

17 Fig. 17

N.C. (Ami7) (F) (G)

T T ⊕ T ⊕ T P T P T ⊕ T P T P T T ⊕

T
A
B

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

This figure features right-hand tapping and index-finger strumming. Notice the bluesy hammer-on in measure 2, beat 2.

18 Fig. 18

N.C.(D9) (Bb⁶₉) (G7)

T ⊕ T ⊕ ⊕ T ⊕ ⊕ T T ⊕ I I I T P T P I T P T P T T

T
A
B

0 5 7 10 5 7 8 5 7 10 10 7 7 5 8 3 5 3 4 5 3 5 5

This figure makes extensive use of the index-finger strumming technique. All of the chords belong to the key of F major, with the exception of the D major in beat 2 of measure 4. Notice that this chord is the only different element when the progression is repeated.

19 Fig. 19

Fig. 19 displays two systems of guitar notation. Each system consists of a treble clef staff with notes and a corresponding guitar tablature staff with fret numbers and strumming indicators (I, T, P). The first system includes chords Bbm7, Ami7, Gmi7, F, C, and Csus C. The second system includes chords Bbm7, Ami7, Gmi7, F, and Dsus2 D. The tablature for the first system shows fret numbers 0, 7, 6, 5, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 3, 2, 3, 5, 6, 5, 7, 5, 5, 5, 3, 3, 3, 3. The tablature for the second system shows fret numbers 0, 7, 6, 5, 3, 1, 1, 1, 2, 3, 2, 3, 5, 6, 5, 7, 5, 5, 5, 3, 3, 3, 3, 8, 7, 7, 9, 7, 7, 7, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5.

Fig. 20, in E minor, features an effective combination of bass-note riffing (measure 1) and chordal strumming (measure 2). This two-measure vamp (Emi–C6/9) provides an excellent backdrop over which to improvise.

20 Fig. 20

Fig. 20 displays a single system of guitar notation. It consists of a treble clef staff with notes and a corresponding guitar tablature staff with fret numbers and strumming indicators (T, P). The notation includes a treble clef staff with notes and a corresponding guitar tablature staff with fret numbers and strumming indicators (T, P). The chords are (Emi7) and C6/9. The tablature for the first system shows fret numbers 0, 7, 6, 5, 3, 1, 1, 1, 2, 3, 2, 3, 5, 6, 5, 7, 5, 5, 5, 3, 3, 3, 3, 8, 7, 7, 9, 7, 7, 7, 7, 5, 5, 5, 5.

Chapter 2

Funk-Rock Figures

This section provides a few “four-on-the-floor” riffs that are guaranteed to get your feet moving. Whereas the sixteenth note dominates the funk figures, the eighth note dominates here. As with the funk figures, timing is absolutely crucial to making these groove.

This figure features almost exclusively bass notes and *serious* syncopation. You may have to count through this one a few times in order to “feel” the riff properly. The grace notes in measure 2 (beat 3) and measure 4 (beat 2) provide a subtle touch that keeps the riff from sounding stale.

21 Fig. 21

N.C.(Emi)

T P T P T T T P T P T P T P T T T P T T T P T T T P T P T T P T P

TAB: 0 2 X 3 2 0 X 2 X X 0 2 3 5 2 3 X 3 2 5 X 2 3 2 X 4 2 6 7 X 5

Chord punches and walking bass lines dominate in figures 22 and 23. Notice again in fig. 22 that the progression repeats exactly with the exception of the last chord; this concept can also be found in fig. 19.

22 Fig. 22

G7 B C C/D G7 B C F

T P T T P T T T P T T T P P T T P T T T P T T T P T T T T P

TAB: 3 5 6 2 4 2 3 X 3 4 5 3 4 5 1 3 5 6 2 4 2 3 X 5 5 1 2

23 Fig. 23

G Ami C F

T P T T T P T T P T T T P T T T P T T T

TAB: 3 4 5 X 0 3 X 3 3 1 X 1 3

Syncopation once again drives fig. 24. Notice how the second, third, and fourth chords are all anticipated by one eighth note.

24 Fig. 24

Fig. 24 is a musical notation example showing a 4/4 funk-rock figure. The staff features a treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth notes with syncopation. Chords are indicated above the staff: G, Ami, Ab7, and Cmi/Bb. The bass line is shown in TAB format with fret numbers and techniques like T (thumb), P (pull-off), and X (hammer-on).

In fig. 25, we see the slap technique applied to the common $i-\flat VII-\flat VI$ progression. The syncopation found in fig. 24 can be found here as well. Notice again the subtle touch provided by the grace note hammer-on.

25 Fig. 25

Fig. 25 is a musical notation example showing a 4/4 funk-rock figure. The staff features a treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody includes a grace note hammer-on. Chords are indicated above the staff: Bmi, A, G, and A. The bass line is shown in TAB format with fret numbers and techniques like T (thumb), P (pull-off), and X (hammer-on).

This final funk-rock figure will be the only one that features a sixteenth-note feel. It's basically a vamp between Emi and C with a Phrygian-sounding F5 wrapping it up.

26 Fig. 26

Fig. 26 is a musical notation example showing a 4/4 funk-rock figure. The staff features a treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of sixteenth notes. Chords are indicated above the staff: N.C.(Emi), (C), (Emi), (C), and (F5). The bass line is shown in TAB format with fret numbers and techniques like T (thumb), L (left hand), P (pull-off), and X (hammer-on).

Chapter 3

R&B and Motown Figures

These figures provide a new perspective and outlook on these guitar-dominated genres.

The following two figures feature syncopated chord punches and compound meter.

27 Fig. 27

N.C.(Gmi7) F/G

P L T P T P T P I T

TAB 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

28 Fig. 28

E/G# G D/F#

P ⊕ T P T P T P T P T

TAB 0 5 4 2 5 4 2 3 4 5 3 2 0

Figure 29 planes dominant 7th chords with a syncopated feel. Notice the percussive left-hand slap in measure 2 (beat 2), providing variety to the otherwise repeated pattern.

29 Fig. 29

G7 A7 C7 Bb7

T ⊕ T P T T ⊕ T P T ⊕ T ⊕ T P T L T ⊕ T P T ⊕

TAB 3 3 3 5 5 5 8 8 8 6 6 6 8 7 8 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

This next figure combines a typical Motown progression (I–IV–V–vi) with a smooth funk feel. Notice the first-inversion I chord and the bright Ama7 sounds in the first and third measures.

30

Fig. 30

System 1 (Measures 1-4):

- Measures 1-2: E/G# (first-inversion I), Ama7 (bright sound)
- Measures 3-4: B, C#mi7

System 2 (Measures 5-8):

- Measures 5-6: E/G# (first-inversion I), Ama7 (bright sound)
- Measures 7-8: F#mi, Bsus

The notation includes a treble clef staff with notes, a line of rhythmic notation (T, P, ⊕, ⊗, I), and a guitar TAB staff with fret numbers and 'X' marks for muted notes.

Chapter 4

Latin and Reggae Figures

The following riffs provide yet another application of this technique for guitar. The key to many of these figures is the separation of the bass and treble. Both of these genres usually feature chordal accompaniment that is both sparse and exact. With attention to detail, it is possible to effectively simulate both roles (bass and accompaniment) with one guitar part.

This Latin figure is built on a repeating bass figure. It features a very common progression.

31 Fig. 31

Figure 31 shows a Latin figure with a repeating bass figure. The notation includes a treble staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The treble staff contains four measures of music, each with a chord label above it: E7, E7sus, E7, and Emi7. The notes are: Measure 1 (E7): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 2 (E7sus): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 3 (E7): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 4 (Emi7): F#4, A4, B4. Below the treble staff is a TAB staff with fret numbers: 0, X, 7, 7, 0, X, 7, 7, 0, X, 7, 7, 0, X, 7, 7. The TAB staff also includes a 'T' (Tremolo) and 'P' (Palm Mute) indicator above the first measure.

Watch for the syncopated chords in figure 32. Notice also the use of the open low E string in the bass figure. Figure 33 sequences a I-IV progression up a whole step. Notice the chromatic walking bass figure on beat 4 of each measure. Figure 34 demonstrates a single-guitar approach to imitating a reggae feel.

32 Fig. 32

Figure 32 shows a sequence of syncopated chords. The notation includes a treble staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The treble staff contains four measures of music, each with a chord label above it: F#7, G7, Bb7, and A7. The notes are: Measure 1 (F#7): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 2 (G7): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 3 (Bb7): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 4 (A7): F#4, A4, B4. Below the treble staff is a TAB staff with fret numbers: 5, 0, 2, (2), 0, 3, 0, 6, 0, 5, 0, 2. The TAB staff also includes a 'T' (Tremolo) and 'P' (Palm Mute) indicator above the first measure.

33 Fig. 33

Figure 33 shows a sequence of chords moving up a whole step. The notation includes a treble staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The treble staff contains four measures of music, each with a chord label above it: G7, C7, A7, and D. The notes are: Measure 1 (G7): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 2 (C7): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 3 (A7): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 4 (D): F#4, A4, B4. Below the treble staff is a TAB staff with fret numbers: 3, X, X, 3, X, X, 3, 4, 5, X, X, 5, X, X, 5, 4. The TAB staff also includes a 'T' (Tremolo) and 'P' (Palm Mute) indicator above the first measure.

34 Fig. 34

Figure 34 shows a single-guitar approach to imitating a reggae feel. The notation includes a treble staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The treble staff contains four measures of music, each with a chord label above it: C6, G, F, and G. The notes are: Measure 1 (C6): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 2 (G): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 3 (F): F#4, A4, B4; Measure 4 (G): F#4, A4, B4. Below the treble staff is a TAB staff with fret numbers: 8, 5, 8, 3, X, 1, X, X, 1, 3, 5, 3. The TAB staff also includes a 'T' (Tremolo) and 'P' (Palm Mute) indicator above the first measure.

Chapter 5

Technical Exercises

This chapter will provide several figures that concentrate on one or two specific techniques each. They'll allow you to work on the skills needed for the rest of this book in a somewhat musical context.

The following two exercises nail home the left-hand hammer-on technique. The harmony in figure 35 consists of quartal sonorities (chords built upon stacked 4ths).

35 Fig. 35

36 Fig. 36

N.C.

mod.

7/8

T

⊕

T

⊕

sim.

TAB

5 6 7 8 7 6 0

0 3 0 4 0 5 0 6 0 5 0 4 0

37 Fig. 37

N.C.(D5) (C5) (G5) (A5)

TAB 0 5 7 0 3 5 0 3 5 0 5 7

39 Fig. 39

This figure requires precise slapping of open strings as well as precise hammer-ons.

40 Fig. 40

The following two figures combine slapping, left-hand hammer-ons, and popping.

41 Fig. 41

N.C.

P ⊕ T P ⊕ T *sim.*

TAB

2	2	3	3	5	5	7	7
3	X	3	X	5	X	7	X

9 9 10 10 12 12 13 13 15 15

10 X 10 X 12 X 12 X 13 X 13 X 15 X 15 X

TAB

9	9	10	10	12	12	13	13
10	X	10	X	12	X	13	X

42 Fig. 42

N.C.(D) D G/B C

T ⊕ T P T P T ⊕ T P T P T ⊕ T P T P T ⊕ T P T P

TAB

3	5	3	X	5	7	5	7	2	3	2	X	3	5	3	5
5	X	3	X	5	X	7	X	2	3	X	2	3	5	X	5

These remaining figures concentrate strictly on percussive exercises. This is a great way to work on timing. Since the rhythmic ticks are the only thing heard, it's very easy to hear if you're rushing or dragging a bit.

43 Fig. 43

P L T P L T P L T P L T P L T P L T P L T P L T P L T

44 Fig. 44

T F L P T F L P T F L P T F L P

45 Fig. 45

T L T P T L T P T L T P T L T P

For these latin percussion exercises, mute the strings with your left hand. The thumb notes here are normal thumb strokes (not slaps).

46 Fig. 46

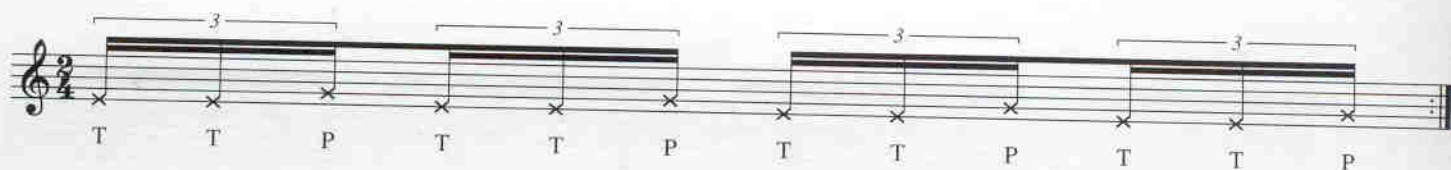
T T P T T T P T T T P T T T P T

47 Fig. 47

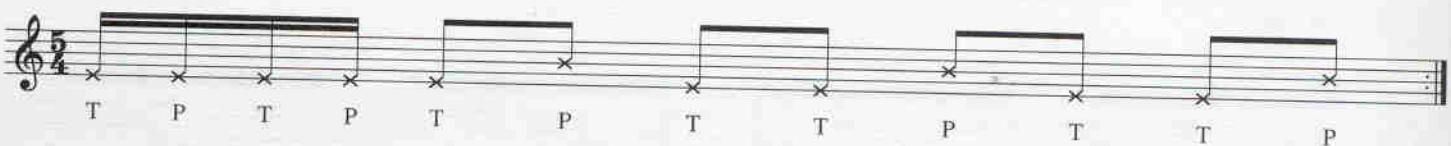
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These two figures concentrate strictly on slaps and pops.

48 Fig. 48

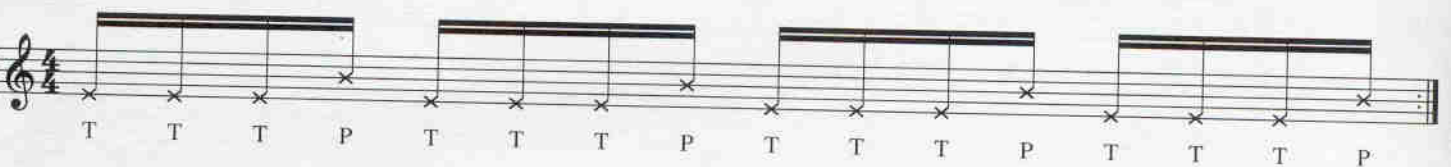


49 Fig. 49

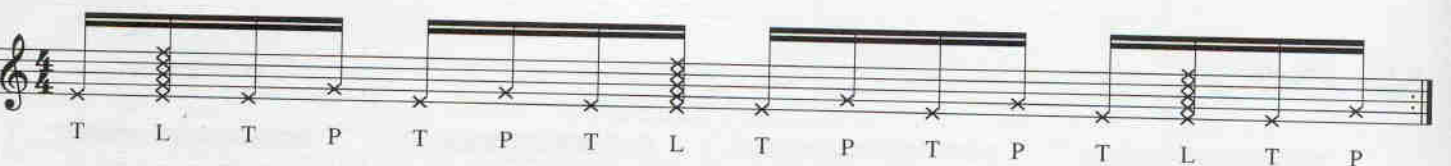


The remaining few figures combine slaps, pops, and left-hand hammer-ons with a straight sixteenth-note feel. Notice the syncopated accents.

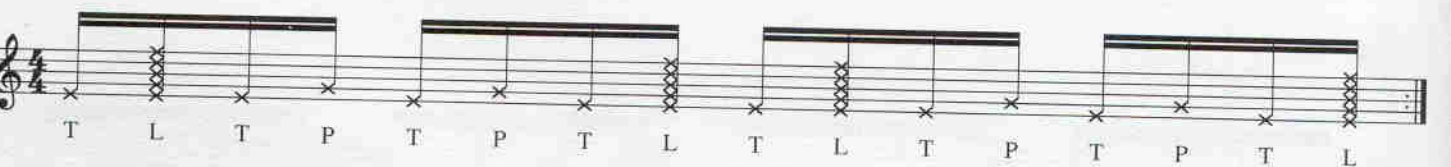
50 Fig. 50



51 Fig. 51



52 Fig. 52



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www.home.earthlink.net/~mcb1
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This book is dedicated to Ted Greene—my favorite chord melody player in the world.

About the Author

Jean-Marc Belkadi started playing guitar at age 14. He graduated from the Toulouse Music Conservatory in his hometown. In 1984, he left France for the U.S. to study at Musicians Institute in Los Angeles where he received the Best Guitarist of the Year award.

In 1989 and 1992, he was awarded third and second prize at the Billboard Song Contest. For three years, he was musical director of the Johnny Hune TV show. He has written three guitar method books—*A Modern Approach to Jazz, Rock, and Fusion Guitar*, *The Diminished Scale for Guitar*, and *Advanced Scale Concepts and Licks for Guitar*—and has recorded one solo album.





Slap & Pop Technique for Guitar

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