





Here Comes the Fretting Hand

Time to coordinate the activities of the Picking and Fretting Hands, a little like patting your cranium and rubbing your thorax at the same time. The key to this is for the Picking Hand to learn to do its job almost *mindlessly* so that you can do most of your thinking about the Fretting Hand. Of the two hands, the Fretting Hand has the more complicated job, considering all the possible chords and chord fragments that exist on the fretboard, so we have a better chance of getting the Picking Hand to learn to operate on autopilot. So let's get the Picking Hand going in a picking pattern and then challenge it by sneaking in some Fretting Hand activity.

Start with the open **Em** chord, 6th-string bass, Higher Tier, and play the following series of Ascending Arpeggios:


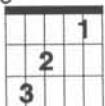
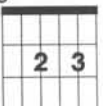
<p>o Em</p> 	<p>o C/E</p> 	<p>o A7/E</p> 	<p>o C/E</p> 																																																																																
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Once you get the Picking Hand going, you can "forget" about it as you turn your attention to the notes being added to the fretboard.

There are two arpeggios per measure for each chord. Across the bottom of the Tab Diagram you see the numbers "1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +," telling you that the Time Signature is 4/4, meaning that there are 4 strong beats per measure. But there are actually 8 *slots* where notes can appear. The "+" signs show where the half-beats are, and in this Picking Pattern we are indeed using all 8 slots, and are therefore playing 8 *Eighth Notes* per measure.

Look at what's happened in the **A7/E** chord: We've left the 1st finger on and just added the 2nd. This illustrates another great principle from classical playing: ***Once a finger is down, leave it there until you NEED to remove it.*** Of course, you may need to remove it immediately, but if you don't, leave it there in case you can use it in the next move. That's exactly what happens here, as we're moving back to the same chord we just came from. The presence of the 1st finger has no audible effect in the **A7/E**, since it's being overridden by the 2nd finger.

For you folk players, here are the full chords that you could have held down. Seems pointless, though, *if* you had intended to play only the notes indicated. The 2nd finger would have stayed in place during the chord changes as a Pivot Finger, even though you wouldn't have *played* that note. (The "E" after the slash means that an E note (6th string) appears in the bass of the C and A7 chords.)

<p>o Em</p> 	<p>o C/E</p> 	<p>o A7/E</p> 
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