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Thank You,

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Rasqueados Are for Everyone

the guitarist's rasqueado method

by Nitin Arora



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Rasqueados Are for Everyone: V. 2

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art on cover by Francisco Goya, circa 1796.

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This book is dedicated to the late Jeremy Brett.

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Preface

Although this book is a rasgueado method for players of the classical guitar no matter what style of music they play, it is primarily directed towards classical guitarists. It is intended for advanced players. It assumes that the reader has good technique and problem solving skills. It also assumes that the reader plays right handed. If you find this book to be too difficult try coming back to it at a later date.

This book does not present every rasgueado pattern possible. It does, however, present what the author believes to be the information needed to acquire more than sufficient rasgueado technique.

Some of the ideas presented here are vastly different than what you will encounter in books which present some discussion of rasgueado technique. The author firmly believes in his approach and believes that the lack of good rasgueado technique amongst most players proves the existence of a general misunderstanding regarding this technique.

Finally, many of the terms used in this book were created specifically for Rasgueados Are for Everyone. It was necessary to do this so that a detailed explanation of rasgueados could occur.

Enjoy...

Preliminary Terms

these are terms to which I shall be referring

fingers:

"c" - little or "pinkie" finger

"a"- annular or "ring" finger

"m" - middle finger

"i" - index finger

other:

"p" - thumb

other terms (these terms apply to the fingers. remember that the thumb is not a finger.)

extension - when from the "fist position" (which will be explained later) a finger is brought outward and the finger joints become roughly aligned.

flexion - the bending of a finger at one or more of the finger joints.

contraction - when from an extended position a finger is brought, or curled, inward and returned to the palm. Flexion occurs in the knuckle, middle, and tip joints. do not confuse this with muscle contraction or muscle "shrinking"; in this book "contraction" means "to be brought together" (with the palm point)

palm point - the area of the palm at which a finger is positioned before an outstroke and after a contraction. The dots in the photograph below show the approximate location of the palm points. The dots correspond with the finger under which they lie.



outstroke - an extension of the finger which sounds the strings, from those of lower pitch to higher, with the **outer** part of the nail. notated by ↑

instroke - a flexion of the finger at the middle and knuckle joints which sounds the strings, from those of higher pitch to lower, with the **inner** part of the nail. notated by ↓

*other terms will be presented as necessary

Introduction

Rasgueados are the guitarist's method of strumming. Although originating in the classical tradition, one must turn to flamenco guitar to hear this technique pushed to the limit. The term derives from the Spanish verb "rasgear" which means to strum a guitar or make flourishes with a pen. Yet, in the hands of a good flamenco player the term seems more likely to have come from the verb "rasgar" which means to tear or to rip!

As far as the general guitar population is concerned, flamenco guitarists are well known for two things: rasgueados and *fast* rest stroke scales. Interestingly enough, the two may be related. Rasgueado practise helps develop the extensor muscles of the right hand which in turn increases that hand's overall strength. Many people feel that highly developed extensor muscles in the right hand will cause a finger, during a finger stroke, to return more quickly to its "starting" position after the stroke is made. The idea being: *the faster you can get that finger back to its starting position, the faster you can begin to move it back towards the string.* This would seem to make sense since an increase in speed is actually the diminution of time between strokes and not an increase in the speed of the stroke itself. Furthermore, rasgueado practise warms up your fingers and it's FUN!

Sadly, complex rasgueado practise is an often neglected area of classical guitar technique. Many players feel that they will never employ the technique and therefore ignore it. Others may feel that they can always use the standard up/down strumming of the "i" finger. Although there are instances where strumming with "i" is not only easier but more appropriate, there might be times when you need to achieve a different effect. Unfortunately, there are several guitarists who are limited to "i only" rasgueados due to the lack of good and reliable explanations of more complex patterns. I hope that, in some small way, I can help change this. After all, rasgueados are for everyone.

So how do you go about practising this technique? The same way you practise anything: *Slowly and Thoughtfully.* For whatever reason, many good players feel that they should be able to develop rapid rasgueados in no time at all. The word "strum" doesn't exactly conjure up images of difficulty. If you ever feel like this and start to rush or even give up, ask yourself if you developed fast scales in a very short time? ...arpeggios? ...musicality? I doubt it. Anything done well takes time and patience. A fast eight note rasgueado sequence should be just as even as an eight note scale passage played with "i" and "m" rest strokes.

Unlike other areas of guitar technique, rasgueados can and **SHOULD** be practised away from the guitar. Alternating your "i" and "m" fingers in the air won't give you a blazing rest stroke. This is not the case for rasgueados. They may be practised in the air, against the wrist of your left hand, or even against your knee! You might think that this is silly, if not stupid, but it's good for you. Practising rasgueados like this discourages the tendency to rush, as with the guitar in hand, and encourages one to watch the fingers and perfect the moment when individual fingers extend and contract. You won't master

rasgueados by only practising them away from the guitar, but you won't master rasgueados by only practising them on the guitar. You need to do both.

When practising rasgueados strive for evenness as opposed to speed. If you do things right at first, speed will not be hard to achieve. In fact, it's much easier to play fast rasgueados than it is to play them slowly. You do, however, have to play them slowly in order to perfect the motions. Remember: *It's better to play something slower and true as opposed to rapidly playing that which lacks integrity.*

The proper use of tension is also important to good rasgueado technique. Having the right amount of tension in the fist position will aide you in your quest for rhythmic evenness and control. You'll need to experiment in order to find the right amount of tension. As your rasgueados get faster, less tension will be used. Tension will create resistance and friction between the fingers and the palm. Being able to control this amount of friction is paramount if you plan to execute rasgueados well and at various speeds. Tension gets a bad rap but the term is tossed about too freely. Tension is a lot like cholesterol. There are good kinds and bad kinds. Without the good kind you cannot survive just as without "good tension" you cannot play the guitar well. "Bad tension" is that which is unnecessary, can cause pain, hinders playing, and results in wasted energy. People often use the "bad tension" when attempting rasgueados by "squeezing" while in the fist position and forcefully "pushing" the finger out. This, like other fruitless approaches to rasgueados, consists of too much effort and too little thought.

Another thing to keep in mind is that you won't always be stroking the same strings or the same number of strings as you play rasgueados. Nevertheless, one thing you REALLY don't want to do is something like this: let's say you are playing a triplet rasgueado such as that which you'll encounter as Chapter 1: figure 2 ...if "m" and "i" make their outstrokes and only sound strings 5, 4, 3, and 2 (the "B" string) then you absolutely DO NOT want the "i" instroke to sound strings 1, 2, and 3. The high "E" will stand out too much and sound really corny. Just use your ear and don't worry about trying to always strum the exact same strings ...it's not going to happen but it should sound like its happening.

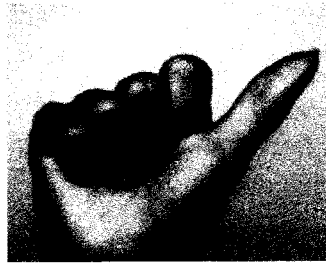
To help get a particular pattern going you should practise it with various rhythmic patterns, just as you probably do with scales. Also, practise EVERY permutation of each rasgueado. Some permutations may work out better for you than the "original". Permutations will also come in handy if, for example, you have to play a Group 1: 4 note rasgueado but are forced because of previous notes to start on the "i" outstroke as opposed to the "a" outstroke.

I divide rasgueados into four primary groups which are presented in the first four chapters. After that I've included chapters on combinatory rasgueados, super rasgueados, and incorporating rasgueados. Remember to be patient!

Group 1

The first of the four groups I alluded to is that which employs outstrokes of the fingers and ends with an "i" instroke. The thumb does not play and does not actively participate in the finger movements. The thumb should rest on either the string of lowest pitch or on the side of the fretboard around the nineteenth fret; this prevents cutting off the lowest string from sounding. At this point simply strum on open strings to avoid complexity and the use of the left hand. Now we must assume the fist position. For now, it may better to work without the guitar.

To make the appropriate fist position for rasgueados start with a totally loose and relaxed hand. Since, in a relaxed position, your fingers will be slightly extended you must now contract them and bring the tips of the nails against the palm points. Flexion will occur at the knuckle, middle, and tip joints of your fingers. Your thumb should not rap around the "i" and "m" fingers (you aren't going to hit someone). Your hand should now look like the fist below...



The fist needs to be relaxed but firm. It should not be so tight so that you are squeezing, yet not so relaxed that if you jiggle your hands violently your fingers will flop around. There should actually be enough space between the fingers and the palm so that you can just barely slide a pencil through the gap! Position the fist so that if you were to extend a finger it would strike the strings at approximately a 45° angle. Your wrist should be straight. Remember to rest that thumb on the string of lowest pitch or on the side of the fretboard.

Many players find finger outstrokes difficult. If you can make the fist position and then in one motion open your hand up (so that it looks like the photograph below) you can make an outstroke with any finger. The key is to, through the use of tension, prevent all but the finger you want to make the outstroke with from extending. That's pretty much it!



Finger instrokes don't require much explanation. They are like free strokes except that you sound more than one string and continue to follow through until the finger returns to its palm point. Remember that instrokes are made by flexing the knuckle and

middle joints. The tip joint collapses as it comes into contact with the strings. After the finger leaves the strings the tip joint "un-collapses" and the finger continues to move towards the palm until it contracts back to its palm point. Flexion will now be present in the knuckle, middle, and tip joints.

Contractions are similar to instrokes except that the tip joint never collapses due to the fact that no string will be contacted. If you can make your hand look like the "open hand" in the second picture and then instantly assume the fist position, you can make any necessary contractions.

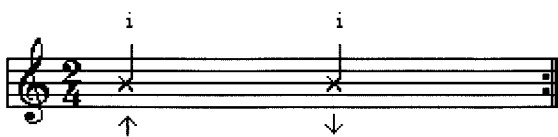
Keep in mind that finger outstrokes, instrokes, and contractions cannot be practised slowly. For example, trying to make a slow outstroke is impossible because you either extend the finger or you don't. If you tried to slowly curl the finger outward you'd no longer just be extending the finger; you would be initiating a series of complex muscle activity (which is what you don't want to do). Practising slowly is not slowing down the strokes. Practising slowly is augmenting the time between the strokes.

I. The first rasgueado is the famous "i" outstroke followed by an "i" instroke. Remember that your fingers do the playing ...so leave your elbow out of it!

2 Note Rasgueado (Figure 1)

1. Assume the fist position. Remove "c", "a", and "m" from the fist and relax them.
2. Make an outstroke with "i". "m" will extend further as a result.
3. Make an instroke with "i". "m" slightly follows. "i" eventually returns to its palm point but flexion cannot be present in the tip joint since the finger must immediately make an outstroke. Exceptions like this will always be specified. Otherwise, after an instroke, "i" will contract back to its palm point and flexion will be present in the knuckle, middle, and tip joints.
4. Go to step 2.

Figure 1

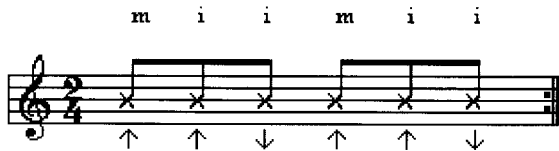


II. Now that the two note rasgueado is out of the way we can add to it to form a three note, or triplet, rasgueado. Just add an "m" outstroke to the two note rasgueado.

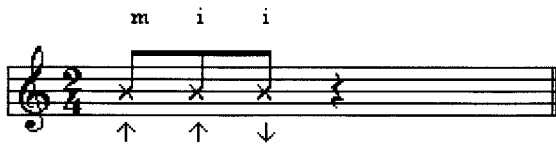
3 Note Rasgueado (Figure 2)

1. Assume the fist position. Remove "c" and "a" from the fist and relax them.
2. Make an outstroke with "m". "a" will extend further as a result.

3. Make an outstroke with "i". simultaneously, "m" contracts back to its palm point. "a" and "c" follow but will not fully contract or touch their palm points.
4. Make an instroke with "i". "i" eventually contracts back to its palm point.
5. Make an outstroke with "m". "c" and "a" extend as a result.
6. Go to step 3.

Figure 2

If you are not going to repeat the three note rasgueado (Figure 2a) you should practise as above except that in step 3 "m" does not have to contract. You should, however, practise Figure 2a with and without "m" contraction. When practising without the contraction, flexion will not occur in the tip joint of "i" during the completion of its instroke and "i" will relax afterwards.

Figure 2a

III. Of course the next logical step is to add a note to the triplet rasgueado to form a four note rasgueado. This time the "a" finger will be added.

4 Note Rasgueado (Figure 3)

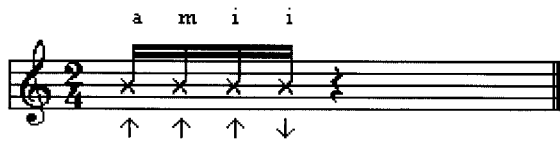
1. Assume the fist position. Remove "c" from the fist and relax it.
2. Make an outstroke with "a". "c" will extend further as a result.
3. Make an outstroke with "m". "a" will extend further as a result.
4. Make an outstroke with "i". simultaneously, "a" and "m" contract back to their palm points. "c" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
5. Make an instroke with "i". "i" eventually contracts back to its palm point.
6. Make an outstroke with "a". "c" extends as a result.
7. Go to step 3.

Figure 3



Also practise Figure 3a with and without the contractions in step 4. When practising without the contractions, flexion will not occur in the tip joint of "i" during the completion of its instroke and "i" will relax afterwards.

Figure 3a

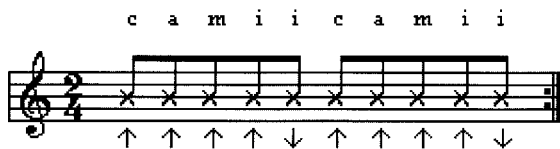


IV. And finally we add the black sheep of the family: the pinkie. With the addition of this finger you can play a five note rasgueado. Again, all you basically need to do is add a "c" outstroke to the four note rasgueado you just learned.

5 Note Rasgueado (Figure 4)

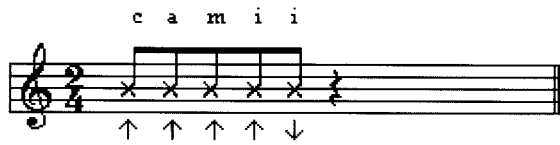
1. Assume the fist position.
2. Make an outstroke with "c".
3. Make an outstroke with "a". "c" will extend further as a result.
4. Make an outstroke with "m". "a" will extend further as a result.
5. Make an outstroke with "i". simultaneously, "c", "a", and "m" contract back to their palm points.
6. Make an instroke with "i". "i" eventually contracts back to its palm point.
7. Go to step 2.

Figure 4



Also practise Figure 4a with and without the contractions in step 5. When practising without the contractions, flexion will not occur in the tip joint of "i" during the completion of its instroke and "i" will relax afterwards.

Figure 4a



That raps it up for Group 1 patterns. It is vital that you remember and pay very close attention to the act of contracting your fingers during the "i" outstroke within the 3, 4, and 5 note continuous rasgueados. As for the 2 note rasgueado, "i" will not, at faster speeds, touch its palm point during the instroke. Also, with the 2 note rasgueado you can leave "c", "a", and "m" fixed against their palm points.

With these patterns you may also, after the "i" outstroke, plant "i" on the second string (or whichever string you choose to start from) before you make the instroke. This will only work at slower speeds, but it's good training for accuracy.

Group 2

If you've practised the Group 1 patterns you might have realised that (at faster speeds) during the 3, 4, and 5 note pattern "i" outstrokes you can get the other fingers, during their contraction, pretty close to their palm points and REALLY get them set up during the "i" instroke. The great thing about Group 1 patterns is that the "i" instroke buys you more time. With Group 2 patterns you essentially remove the "i" instroke from the Group 1 patterns. Hence, your timing must be more precise.

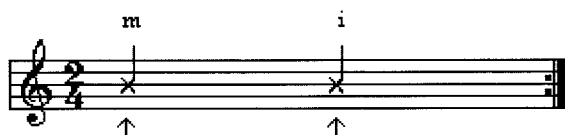
Group 2, like Group 1, avoids the use of the thumb. The thumb rest in the same manner as in Group 1. Also, if Group 1 was difficult for you don't be afraid of these new patterns. Go ahead and try! While I consider Group 2 to be the more difficult of the two groups, you might think differently! At the very least you'll be adding variety to your practise. Don't be hesitant. That will just lessen the probability that you can do these.

With Group 2 you'll learn 2, 3, and 4 note rasgueado patterns.

2 Note Rasgueado (Figure 1)

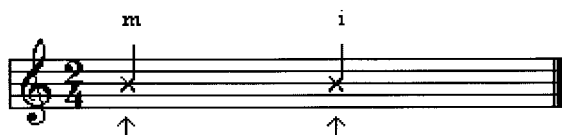
1. Assume the fist position. Remove and relax "c" and "a".
2. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
3. Make an "i" outstroke. simultaneously, "m" contracts back to its palm point. "c" and "a" follow but do not fully contract or touch their palm points.
4. Make an "m" outstroke. "c" and "a" extend as a result. simultaneously, "i" contracts back to its palm point.
5. Go to step 3.

Figure 1



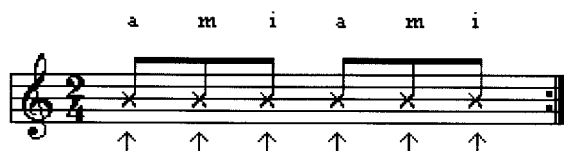
Also practise Figure 1a with and without the contraction in step 3.

Figure 1a

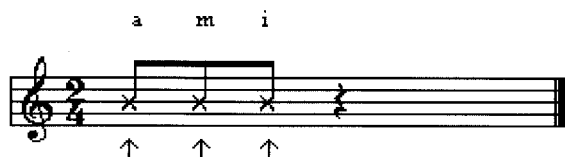


3 Note Rasgueado (Figure 2)

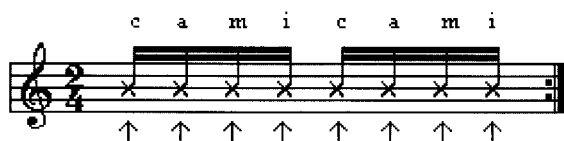
1. Assume the fist position. Remove and relax "c".
2. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends further as a result.
3. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
4. Make an "i" outstroke. simultaneously, "a" and "m" contract back to their palm points. "c" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
5. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends as a result. simultaneously, "i" contracts back to its palm point.
6. Go to step 3.

Figure 2

Also practise Figure 2a with and without the contractions in step 4.

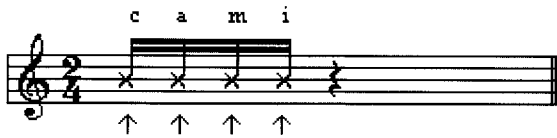
Figure 2a**4 Note Rasgueado (Figure 3)**

1. Assume the fist position.
2. Make a "c" outstroke.
3. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends further as a result.
4. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
5. Make an "i" outstroke. simultaneously, "c", "a", and "m" contract back to their palm points.
6. Make a "c" outstroke. simultaneously, "i" contracts back to its palm point.
7. Go to step 3.

Figure 3

Also practise Figure 3a with and without the contractions in Step 5.

Figure 3a



I personally prefer the permutation of these patterns which begins on the "i" outstroke. This helps to create a natural accent on the beginning of the beat. In the 3 and 4 note patterns "i" will, at faster speeds, totally contract one finger stroke after the finger stroke at which "i" initially contracts. For example, during the four note pattern "i" makes an initial move toward the palm during the "c" outstroke but truly gets set during the "a" outstroke. This is analogous to the "time buying 'i' instroke" of Group 1.

Group 3

While the first and second group rasgueados did not involve the thumb, these patterns do. Group 3 involves outstrokes of the fingers and an instroke of the thumb. The thumb instroke uses the outer part of the nail and sounds the strings from those of higher pitch to lower.

Before we begin I need to describe, as opposed to defining, some new terms. These are **pronation** and **supination**. In order to do this follow these instructions...

1. Stand up and be loose. Your arms should be dangling at your sides.
2. Now flex the joint at the elbow in your right arm. You should now be seeing the palmar side of your hand. Assume the fist position.
3. Now pretend that you write an "S" on this side of your hand.
4. Rotate your forearm so that you now see the dorsal side of your hand. Your thumb will initially point to the right, secondly towards you, and finally to the left as this happens.
5. Write an imaginary "P" on this side of your hand.
6. Rotate your forearm so that you see the "S" side again. Your thumb will initially point to the left, secondly towards you, and finally the right as this happens.

While your hands are in guitar playing position the act of rotating your forearm from the "S" side to the "P" side is pronation. Rotating the forearm so that from the "P" side you see the "S" side is supination.

Thumb Instroke

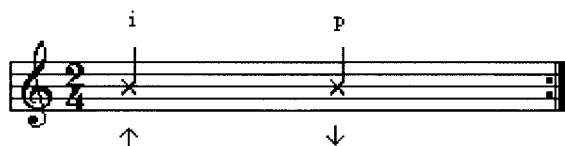
1. Assume the fist position.
2. Let the thumb hover slightly past the highest pitched string; the palmar side of the hand will be facing the soundboard. You may lightly rest the outer nail of the thumb on the highest pitched string.
3. Supinate the forearm so that the thumb will end up past the lowest pitched string. Make sure that the strings are contacted during this motion and a strum is produced which sounded from higher pitches to lower. The thumb should be held slightly rigid during this motion. Remember that this is a rotation of the forearm and not an elbow flexion!

Group 3 contains 2, 3, 4, and 5 note patterns.

2 Note Rasgueado

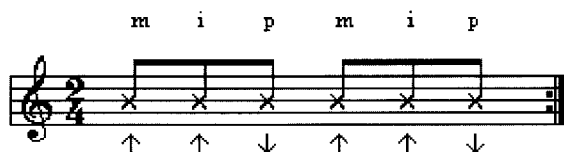
1. Assume the fist position. Remove and relax "c", "a", and "m".
2. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result. simultaneously pronate the forearm so that "p" passes the string of highest pitch.
3. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously, "i" contracts back to its palm point. "m" slightly follows.

4. Go to step 2.



3 Note Rasgueado

1. Assume the fist position. Remove and relax "c" and "a".
2. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
3. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result. simultaneously pronate the forearm until "p" passes the string of highest pitch.
4. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously, "m" and "i" contract back to their palm points. "c" and "a" follow but do not fully contract or touch their palm points.
5. Make an "m" outstroke. "c" and "a" extend as a result.
6. Go to step 3.



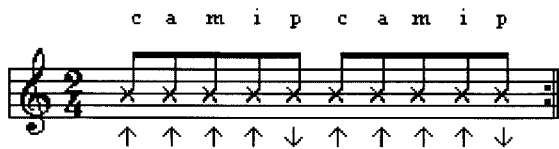
4 Note Rasgueado

1. Assume the fist position. Remove and relax "c".
2. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends further as a result.
3. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
4. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result. simultaneously pronate the forearm until "p" passes the string of highest pitch.
5. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously, "a", "m", and "i" contract back to their palm points. "c" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
6. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends as a result.
7. Go to step 3.



5 Note Rasgueado

1. Assume the fist position.
2. Make a "c" outstroke.
3. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends further as a result.
4. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
5. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result. simultaneously pronate the forearm until "p" passes the string of highest pitch.
6. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously "c", "a", "m", and "i" contract back to their palm points.
7. Go to step 2.



At faster speeds your forearm won't necessarily be pronating and supinating all the way past the highest and lowest pitched strings, respectively. Another thing that will occur at faster speeds is that, during the 2 note rasgueado, flexion will begin to diminish (and eventually disappear) in the tip joint of "i" (while contracting) during the "p" instroke. Also, "i" will, at this speed, not actually (while contracting) touch the palm point during the "p" instroke. The 2 note rasgueado also works very well with "c", "a", and "m" fixed against their palm points.

Many players prefer the permutation of these patterns which begins on the "p" instroke. This helps to define the beat. See what you like!

Group 4

This is the last of the primary groups. Just as Group 2 was directly related to Group 1, Group 4 is related to Group 3. Group 4 involves outstrokes of the fingers, a thumb outstroke, and a thumb instroke.

Let me explain the mechanics of a thumb outstroke which uses the inner part of the nail.

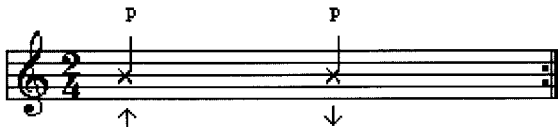
Thumb Outstroke

1. Assume the fist position.
2. Let the thumb hover slightly past the string of lowest pitch. You may lightly rest the inner part of the nail on the string of lowest pitch.
3. Pronate the forearm so that the thumb will end up slightly past the string of highest pitch. You must contact the strings while you do this so that the strings are sounded from those of lower pitch to higher. The thumb must be held slightly rigid during this motion. Remember that this is a rotation of the forearm and not an elbow movement.

Group 4 gives us 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 note rasgueado patterns.

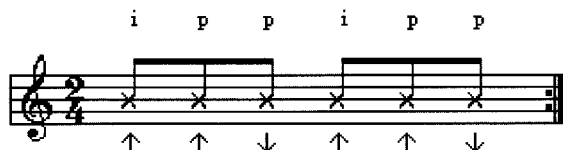
2 Note Rasgueado

1. Assume the fist position.
2. Make a "p" outstroke.
3. Make a "p" instroke.
4. Go to step 2.



3 Note Rasgueado

1. Assume the fist position. Remove and relax "c", "a", and "m".
2. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result.
3. Make a "p" outstroke.
4. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously, "i" contracts back to its palm point. "m" slightly follows.
5. Go to step 2.



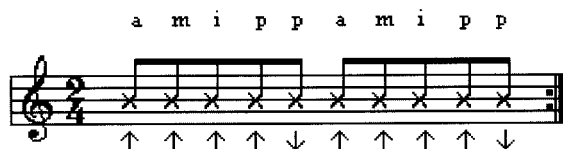
4 Note Rasgueado

1. Assume the fist position. Remove and relax "c" and "a".
2. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
3. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result.
4. Make a "p" outstroke.
5. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously, "m" and "i" contract back to their palm points. "c" and "a" follow but do not fully contract or touch their palm points.
6. Make an "m" outstroke. "c" and "a" extend as a result.
7. Go to step 3.



5 Note Rasgueado

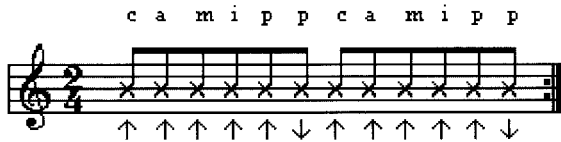
1. Assume the fist position. Remove and relax "c".
2. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends further as a result.
3. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
4. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result.
5. Make a "p" outstroke.
6. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously, "a", "m", and "i" contract back to their palm points. "c" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
7. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends as a result.
8. Go to step 3.



6 Note Rasgueado

1. Assume the fist position.
2. Make a "c" outstroke.

3. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends further as a result.
4. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
5. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result.
6. Make a "p" outstroke.
7. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously, "c", "a", "m", and "i" contract back to their palm points.
8. Go to step 2.



The 2 note rasgueado may be played with the fingers fixed against their palm points and the 3 note rasgueado may be played with "c", "a", and "m" fixed against their palm points.

As with the 2 note rasgueado in Group 3, flexion will begin to diminish and eventually disappear in the tip joint of "i" (while contracting) within the Group 4: 3 note rasgueado's "p" instroke. Also, "i" will, at this speed, not actually (while contracting) touch the palm point during the "p" instroke. This paragraph does not apply if this pattern is played with "c", "a", and "m" fixed against their palm points.

That's it for Group 4 patterns. One fun thing you can do is to play the 3, 4, and 5 note rasgueados while keeping the "i" finger fixed against its palm point. Of course if you do this you must replace "a" with "c", "m" with "a", and "i" with "m" in the instructions since "i" cannot play. I love Group 4 patterns done like this; it adds stability to the hand. Mess with it. You may or may not like it.

Combinatory Rasqueados

After you've gotten familiar with the primary four groups you're ready to get a little creative. This brings us to a group of rasqueados which I call *combinatory rasqueados*. These rasqueados involve the combining or superimposition of two or more rasqueado patterns from the primary four groups to form a hybrid pattern. Obviously, there is an infinite number of patterns you can make and several ways of deriving the same pattern (is the number 3 the sum of 2+1, 1+2, or 1+1+1? ...that sort of thing). For this reason I can only show you a few patterns in the hope that you'll understand how to form your own combinatory rasqueados. It's more important to learn the concept than it is to necessarily learn the particular patterns I've chosen. In this chapter I've included 4, 5, 6, and 8 note patterns as well as a 16 note sequence for demonstrative purposes. These types of rasqueados can be very useful as a replacement for the certain primary patterns which you may find difficult. You do, however, need a pretty good grasp on the primary patterns and their permutations before you start with these. If you are ready then you'll have a lot of fun with this stuff. I won't be presenting step by step instructions for these since they come from what you have learned in the previous chapters and since it would defeat the purpose. I will, however, be providing tips to guide you through them.

The derivations of these patterns are presented as standard mathematical problems.

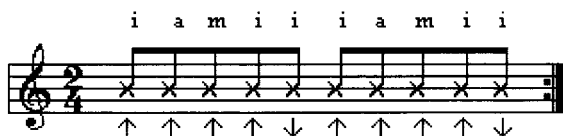
4 Note Rasqueado = Group 1: 2 note rasqueado + Group 4: 2 note rasqueado

tip: "i" remains contracted (and without tip joint flexion) during the "p" strokes. You may play this with or without "c", "a", and "m" fixed against their palm points.



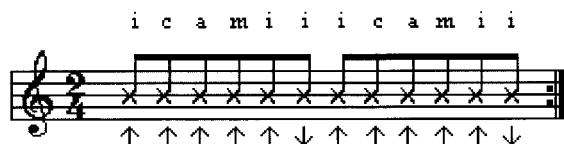
5 Note Rasqueado = permutation of Group 2: 3 note rasqueado + Group 1: 2 note rasqueado

tip: "i" contracts back to its palm point during the second stroke which is an "a" outstroke. "a" and "m" contract back to their palm points during the fourth stroke which is an "i" outstroke.



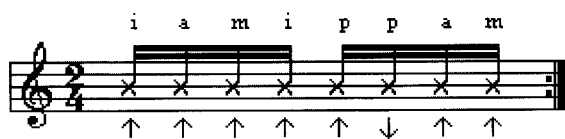
6 Note Rasgueado = permutation of Group 2: 4 note rasgueado + Group 1: 2 note rasgueado

tip: "i" contracts back to its palm point during the second stroke which is a "c" outstroke. "c", "a", and "m" contract back to their palm points during the fifth stroke which is an "i" outstroke.



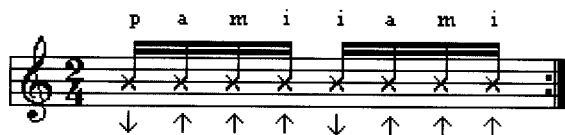
8 Note Rasgueado = permutation of Group 2: 3 note rasgueado + permutation of Group 4: 5 note rasgueado

tip: "i" contracts back to its palm point during the second stroke which is an "a" outstroke. "a" and "m" and "i" contract back to their palm points during the sixth stroke which is a "p" instroke. "a" and "m" contract back to their palm points during the first stroke which is an "i" outstroke (during subsequent repetitions).



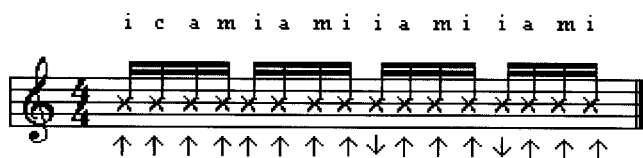
8 Note Rasgueado = permutation of Group 3: 4 Note Rasgueado + permutation of Group 1: 4 Note Rasgueado

tip: "a" and "m" contract back to their palm points during the fourth stroke which is an "i" outstroke. "a", "m", and "i" contract back to their palm points during the "p" instroke (during subsequent repetitions).



16 Note Rasgueado Sequence = permutation of Group 2: 4 note rasgueado + (permutation of Group 2: 3 note rasgueado + "i" outstroke) + 2(permutation of Group 1: 4 note rasgueado)

tip: "i" contracts back to its palm point during the second stroke which is a "c" outstroke. "i" contracts back to its palm point during the sixth stroke which is an "a" outstroke. "a" and "m" contract back to their palm points during the fifth, eighth, and twelfth strokes which are "i" outstrokes.



Now that was fun wasn't it?! One thing you want to be aware of with combinatory rasgueados is grouping. The sixteen note sequence will sound like 4 + 4 + 4 + 4. The six note rasgueado will sound like a sextuplet unless you want to make it sound like two triplets. You can always change the grouping through accentuation and rhythmic manipulation. Go nuts with it if you want to.

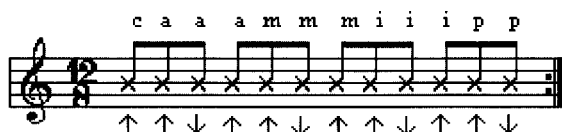
Super Rasqueados

Now for Super Rasqueados! Super Rasqueados are more fun than they are practical but you should practise them anyway. They are not as hard as they look and are an excellent exercise for the hand. If practised enough, they can become very practical indeed.

As with the two note rasgueado of Group 1, flexion will not be present in the tip joint of a finger which after an instroke must make an immediate outstroke. These occurrences are denoted by asterisks.

12 Note Rasgueado

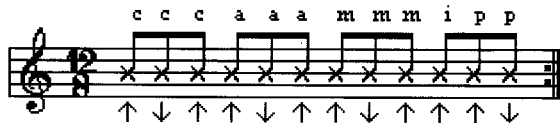
1. Assume the fist position.
2. Make a "c" outstroke.
3. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends further as a result.
- *4. Make an "a" instroke. "c" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
5. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends as a result.
6. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
- *7. Make an "m" instroke. "a" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
8. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends as a result.
9. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result.
- *10. Make an "i" instroke. "m" slightly follows.
11. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result.
12. Make a "p" outstroke.
13. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously, "c", "a", "m", and "i" contract back to their palm points.
14. Go to step 2.



12 Note Rasgueado

1. Assume the fist position.
2. Make a "c" outstroke.
- *3. Make a "c" instroke.
4. Make a "c" outstroke.
5. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends further as a result.
- *6. Make an "a" instroke. "c" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
7. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends as a result.

8. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
- *9. Make an "m" instroke. "a" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
10. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends as a result.
11. Make an "i" outstroke. "m" extends further as a result.
12. Make a "p" outstroke.
13. Make a "p" instroke. simultaneously, "c", "a", "m", and "i" contract back to their palm points.
14. Go to step 2.



12 Note Rasgueado

1. Assume the fist position.
2. Make a "c" outstroke.
- *3. Make a "c" instroke.
4. Make a "c" outstroke.
5. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends further as a result.
- *6. Make an "a" instroke. "c" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
7. Make an "a" outstroke. "c" extends as a result.
8. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends further as a result.
- *9. Make an "m" instroke. "a" follows but does not fully contract or touch its palm point.
10. Make an "m" outstroke. "a" extends as a result.
11. Make an "i" outstroke. simultaneously, "c", "a", and "m" contract back to their palm points.
- *12. Make an "i" instroke.
13. Make an "i" outstroke.
14. Make a "c" outstroke. simultaneously, "i" contracts back to its palm point.
15. Go to step 3.



Just as with the combinatory rasgueados you must keep rhythmic grouping in mind.

On Incorporating Rasgueados

My biggest fear is that someone using this book will develop good rasgueado technique but will not know how to incorporate rasgueados properly into a piece of music. Therefore, I've included a few examples of rasgueado sequences using the Group 1: 5 Note Rasgueado so that you can see how to incorporate rasgueados properly.

Figure 1

tip: "c", "a", and "m" contract back to their palm points during the "i" outstroke which falls on the first beat of each measure. Since the 5 note rasgueado is followed by an "i" outstroke you will not make any contractions during the "i" outstroke which occurs within the 5 note rasgueado.



Figure 2

tip: "c", "a", and "m" contract back to their palm points during the "i" outstroke which falls on the first beat of each measure. Since the second 5 note rasgueado is followed by an "i" outstroke you will not make any contractions during the "i" outstroke which occurs within the second 5 note rasgueado.

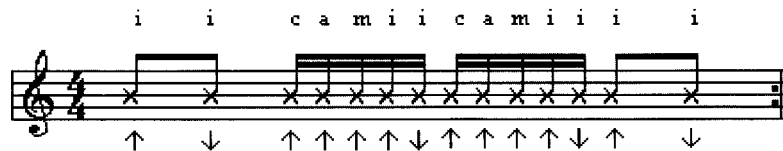
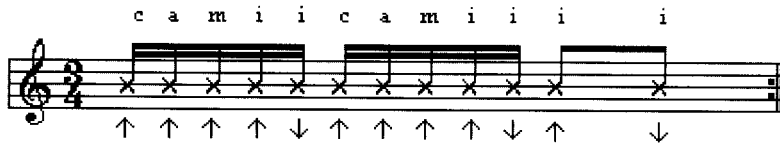


Figure 3

option #1 tip: "c", "a", and "m" will contract back to their palm points during the "i" outstroke which occurs within the 5 note rasgueados. Therefore, the "i" outstroke and "i" instroke which occur on the 3rd beat of the measure are made with "c", "a", and "m" already contracted.

option #2 tip: "c", "a", and "m" contract back to their palm points during the "i" outstroke which falls on the 3rd beat of each measure. Since the second 5 note rasgueado is followed by an "i" outstroke you will not make any contractions during the "i" outstroke which occurs within the second 5 note rasgueado.



Figures 4 & 5: Rasgueado with golpe

If you are familiar with the flamenco technique of *golpe* then you might be aware of the problems which arise during a rasgueado sequence in which golpes are present. The act of making a golpe often eats up valuable time in which you should be contracting the fingers. Golpes are notated by "G".

Figure 4

tip: This is the traditional fingering for such as passage. Since the 5 note rasgueado is followed by an "i" outstroke you will not make any contractions during the "i" outstroke which occurs within the 5 note rasgueado. Also, because you must make the golpe you will not be able to contract "c", "a", and "m" during the "i" outstroke which falls on the 3rd beat of the measure. You must, in this case, contract them back to their palm points just ever so slightly after the "i" instroke which falls on the second half of the 3rd beat. This can be done since the "i" instroke is an eighth note and you will have more time.

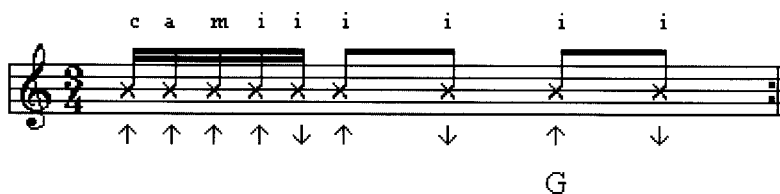
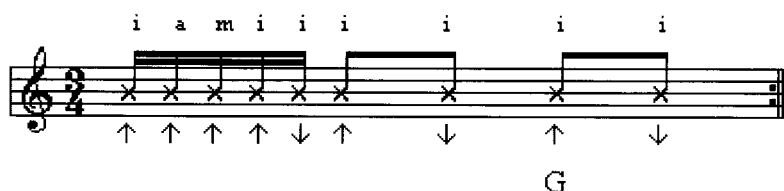


Figure 5

tip: This alternative fingering for the same passage uses the 5 note rasgueado from the *combinatory rasgueados*. You will contract "c", "a", and "m" during the "i" outstroke which begins the 5 note combinatory rasgueado. This will make things easier and smoother and you do not have to change the moment at which the fingers should contract.



These examples of rasgueado sequences can, of course, be thought of as combinatory rasgueados themselves. Remember this when you are faced with learning a sequence that I've not covered. Also, you should substitute the 5 note rasgueados in the examples with 3 and 4 note rasgueados from Group 1. Eventually you will be able to incorporate any rasgueado pattern into your playing. Just remember that the fingers must be set up before it's too late.

Visual Dictionary

All photographs by Christopher William Stock

The visual dictionary contains photographic sequences or "visual definitions" of all of the primary rasgueados. Photos that have "DNR" below them are not repeated. "DNR" signifies "do not repeat". Obviously, "DNR" must be written under the first photo of each page since that will be the fist, or starting, position. If there is any doubt please refer to the chapters on primary rasgueados.

The photographs were purposely not taken of a hand playing the guitar as I felt it more important that you see the palmar side of the hand.

The photographs are "read" from left to right. I hope you find these photos helpful.



DNR

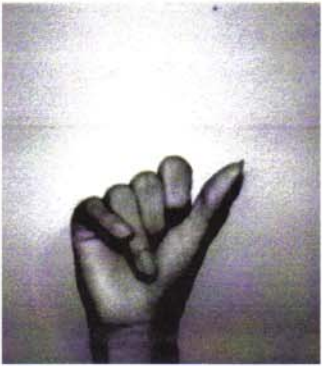




DNR



DNR





DNR



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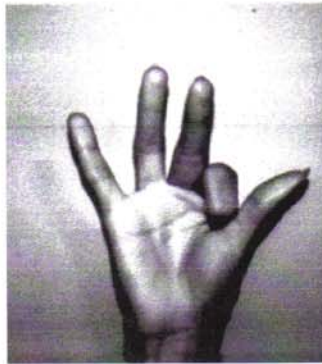


DNR





DNR



DNR





DNR



DNR





DNR



Conclusion

I hope you've enjoyed reading this book and working with it as much as I have enjoyed writing it. Please be patient and strive for quality in your work. I'll say it again ...pay extremely close attention to the act of contracting your fingers to their palm points at the right moment. If you don't you are going to hit a brick wall. It's that simple.

Another thing to keep in mind is that for certain patterns, such as the Group 3: 2 note rasgueado and Group 4: 3 note rasgueado, you can replace the "i" outstroke with an "m" outstroke. You could also replace "i" with "c" or "a" if you feel like it. With these patterns you can even substitute the "i" outstroke with a *big finger* outstroke. In other words, you could make the outstroke with "c", "a", "m", and "i" all at once. Other combinations of the *big finger* are also possible as well, such as "i" and "m" together.

You also probably noticed that no rasgueado patterns in this book contain consecutive outstrokes of more than one finger followed by consecutive instrokes of the same fingers (*half rasgueados*). An example of a half rasgueado would be: "a" outstroke, "m" outstroke, "i" outstroke, "i" instroke, "m" instroke, "a" instroke. Every instroke in this book is immediately followed by an outstroke of some kind. The consecutive instrokes of half rasgueados will not allow for tip joint flexion when returning to the fist position. This creates unnecessary tension in the hand and makes subsequent outstrokes extremely awkward. Unlike a finger which makes an instroke and immediate outstroke, *this* is "bad tension" and is not immediately released by the outstroke. In half rasgueados you must "hang on" to the "bad tension" so that all the fingers can complete their instrokes. Also, at faster speeds you would need to actually add *more tension* in the hand to even things out in a rhythmic sense (otherwise the instrokes would sound like one *big finger* instroke). For these reasons I strongly discourage you from practising these types of rasgueados. They sound as awkward as they look.

If your goal is to have rasgueados down well enough so that you don't have to worry about them anymore, I recommend that you pick 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 note patterns that use the fingers only and also pick 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 note patterns that incorporate the thumb and really concentrate on your ten "chosen" patterns. That'll take care of anything you'll encounter in pieces. Being able to do both "finger only" patterns and thumb patterns increases your options in terms of effect.

Another type of "rasgueado" that will come in handy are *tremolo rasgueados*. These are highly affective but are not true rasgueados. An example of this would be a big finger outstroke followed by instrokes such as: big finger outstroke, "a" instroke, "m" instroke, "i" instroke.

Finally, I hope that rasgueados will add a new dimension to your playing and practise. There is so much that you can do with them. For example, pick a "finger only" rasgueado pattern or tremolo rasgueado pattern and play a C Major tremolo scale in thirds on strings 1 (high E) and 2 while the thumb rests on string 3.

It's all up to you now...

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Addendum

This page serves as a place for me to clarify matters without having to reformat the page layouts of the book.

pg 47, paragraph #1: It should be noted that as one gains more control over their extensors and general right hand stability while executing rasgueados, finger contraction and will diminish somewhat. In other words, the original 'fist' position will open up and not all of the fingers will necessarily touch their respective palm points (tip joint flexion will decrease too) after contraction. Finger outstrokes, of course, only need to go far enough to play the strings you want to play. In the end, it will all depend on your preferences and on what effect you are seeking. Keep in mind that rasgueados, in the end, are almost more about a physical gesture, rather than all these individual instructions.

pg 47, paragraph #3, last 2 sentences: Ok, I'm still not a fan of these types of rasgueados, but it was a little unfair of me to be so harsh -that's your job!

pg 47, paragraph #5, sentence #2: "affective" should be "effective"

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