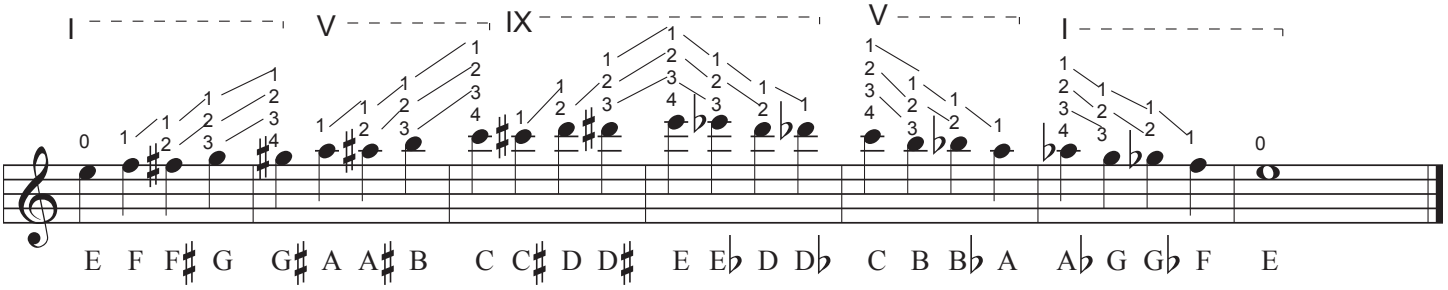
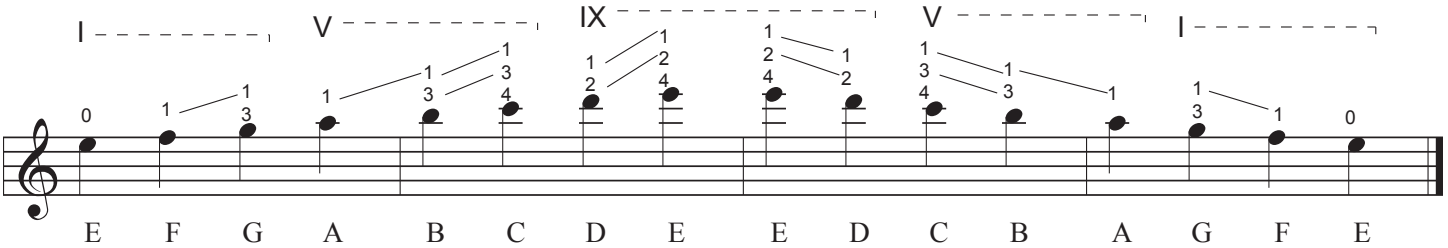
(Book 2) Lesson 1.

The basic principles of fingering notes on the entire neck of the guitar will be presented in a logical order.

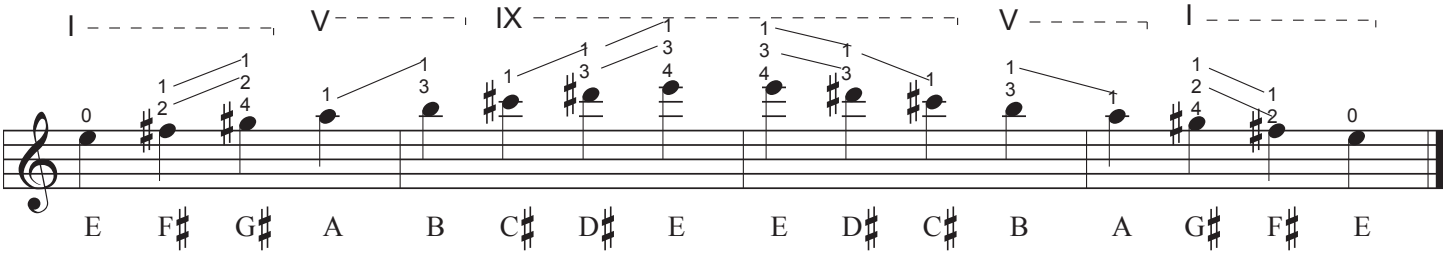
Any one octave scale beginning on the open string would be fingered in 1st, 5th and 9th positions. The open string and the following 12 frets are going to be needed in any scale. You have four useable fingers on your left hand so the 1st position covers the first four frets. The 5th position covers frets five through eight and the 9th position covers frets nine through twelve. The fundamental principle is first demonstrated in the chromatic scale from E to E. After the open string is played, notice that the first finger never leaves the string until you have returned to the last note. During the position change, release the pressure but glide along the string.



The whole process would be easy if we had twelve fingers (or maybe thirteen) but we only have four. The thumb should not be considered because it is used to counter the pressure of the other fingers. In the scales below, notice that the fingering follow the same basic rule as above except not every fret is played.



This is the "E" Phrygian Mode or you can simply think of it as the "E" alphabet in the key of C. In this scale, finger only the frets that are needed. However, keep the index finger in contact with the string once you have played the first fret. The consequence of this is that when you move to the 9th position, you will have your first finger on the C# fret even though that note is not a part of this particular alphabet. (More about the first finger on the next page.)



The above scale is "E" Ionian or "E" Major or think of it as the "E" alphabet in the key of E. (I chose to write it with accidentals rather than a key signature mostly for the ease of demonstrating a fingering principle.) In this scale, the first finger is placed on the first fret although the note is not sounded. This is simply to get the first finger into contact with the string. When you play any scale think of these basic rules.
1. Say the notes as you play. (say the letter only and if need be, think the accidental) **2.** Visuallize the note on the staff. **3.** Think of the fret, finger and hand position. **4.** Keep the first finger in contact with the string at all times but of course not when playing the open string. **5.** When changing positions, establish the position by moving the first finger to the appropriate fret. (This is particularly important when playing the descending scale. **6.** Play slowly and carefully, avoiding clipped notes and glissandos.