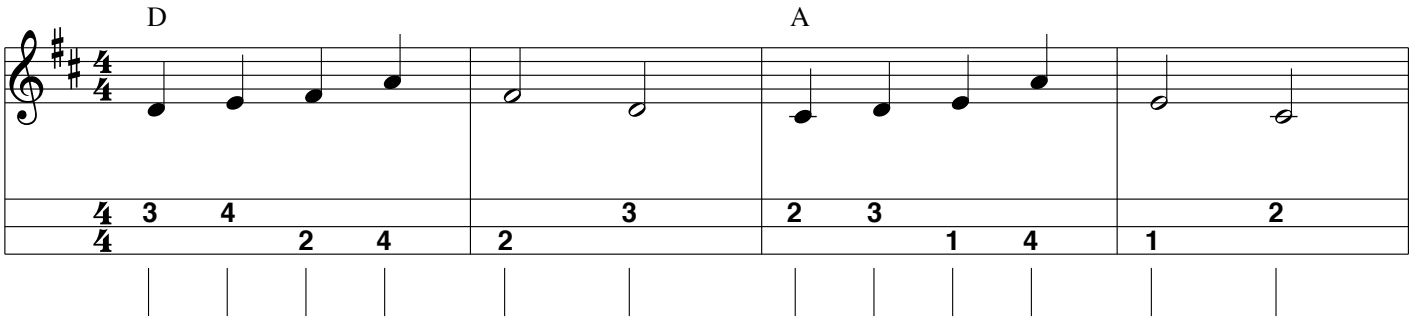
More Sequences on D-A-Bm-G
basic ideas and explanations

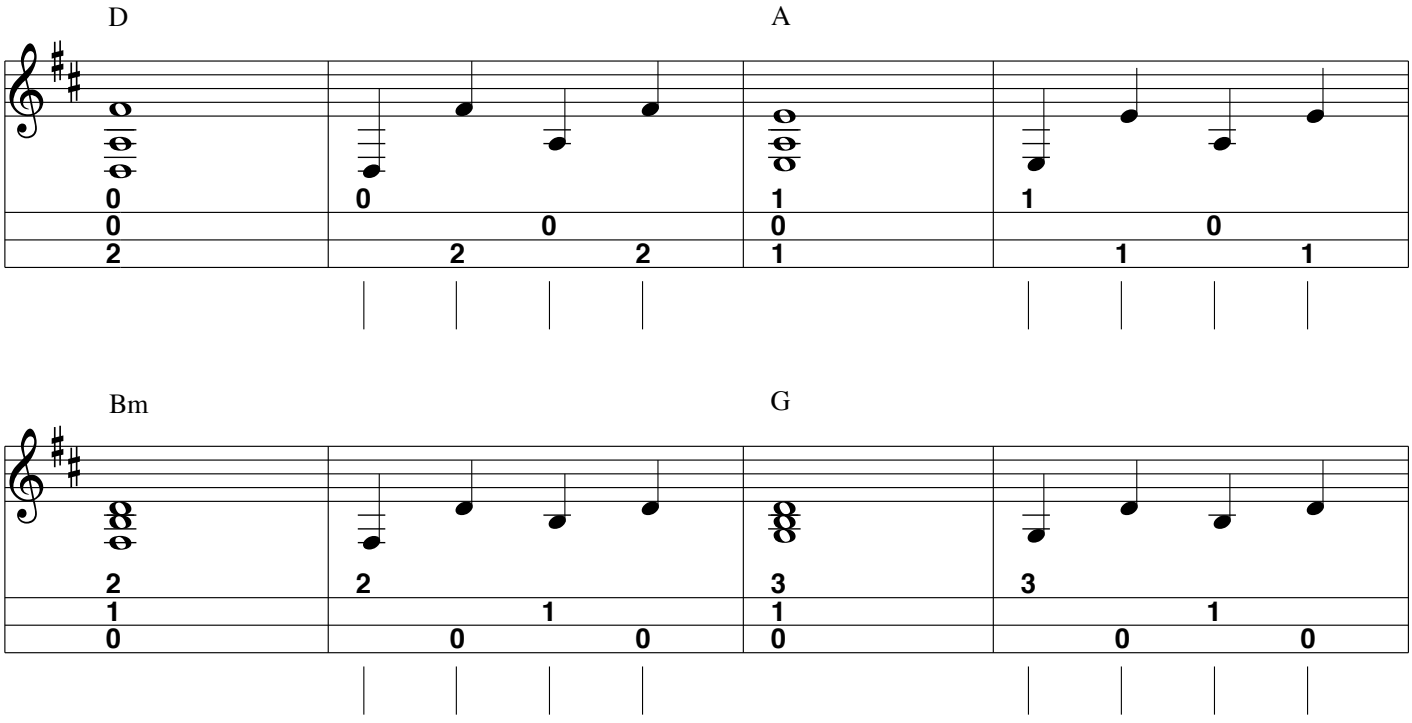
Tuning: DAD

by Jerry Rockwell



Above you have the first four measures of the 8 measure form for the D-A-Bm-G chords. So there are two measures on D, then two measures on A. These melodic ideas are built right off the chords, and you can make up your own little riffs by just messing around a bit. If you can see how the melodic design in the first two measures just gets moved down a step in the 3rd and 4th measure, that's the basic idea of sequences, and it is really pretty simple.

Since the melodic ideas come from the chords, I usually always start with some sort of chord accompaniment. Here is a sample ballpark back-up with block chords for one measure, then arpeggios (chord-tones). Try your own favorite chords and use your own approach!



If you try playing some version of the chords yourself -- anything close to this is fine -- you might find yourself noodling with some melodic stuff here and there, and that's how I came up with the first seeds of ideas for the measures at the top of the page.

You've probably heard the line: "any note you play on the dulcimer will work - you can't hit a wrong note" -- well, I have to tell you that this is ESPECIALLY TRUE right here! The only hint I have for you is to sustain chord tones as much as possible: try to leave your fingers down when you know you are holding a chord tone.

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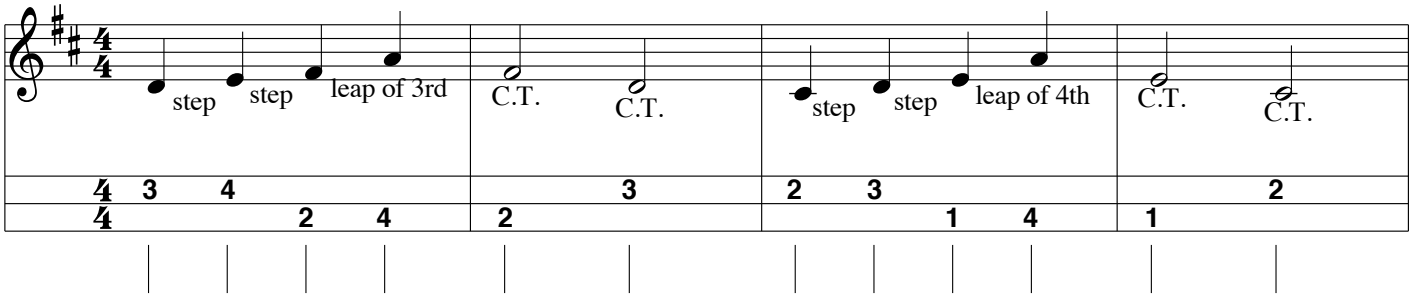
Tuning: DAD

More Sequences on D-A-Bm-G
Details, analysis, and explanations

by Jerry Rockwell



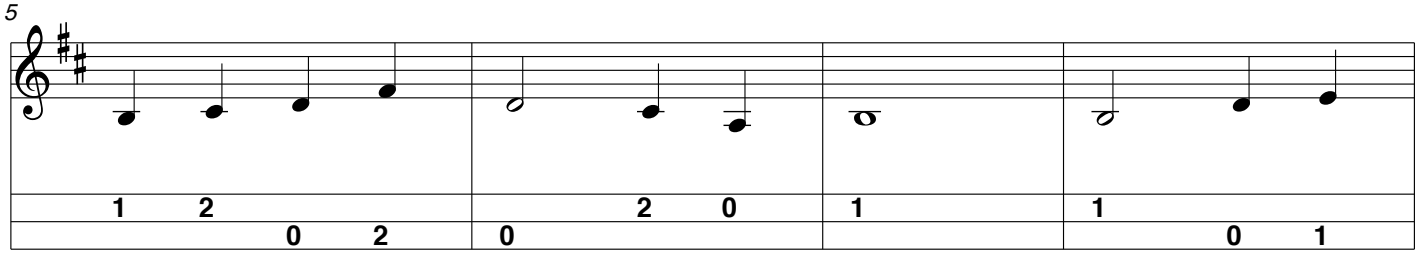
So here's the whole idea of sequences, and how they can help you develop some workable musical ideas: basically you have a melodic design or interval structure which you then port around to different places in the scale. This is like transposing a riff or phrase, but it is WAY easier, because you don't have to THINK about it!! (go over that again and say it to yourself ten times in a row). The dulcimer will actually TEAM UP with your intuitive trial-and-error process, and you will find that reasonable music will come out.

Transposing (or a REAL transposition as it is usually used for a key change) involves the moving around of the exact interval content to any other place in our 12-tone system. A TONAL transposition, as we're doing here, is SO EASY on the mountain dulcimer: you just move the design down one fret (as in this case above) and you get that same design that sounds a little lower but the overall landscape is similar. It sounds COOL! Do you have to understand everything about WHY this works? I hope not because I certainly don't know, beyond just some basic common sense.

One of the reasons this seems to work for me personally is that I always make it a point to be aware of what chord I'm on at any given time: in the first two measures I'm on a D Major or I chord. My little musical idea starts with the Root - 2nd - 3rd - and 5th of the chord. On measure two I just play two adjacent chord tones (C.T.) 3 and Root(R). Measure three is on the A Major or V chord. When I do roughly the same intervals from the C# instead of the D, we have 3rd, 4th, 5th, and R in relation to the A chord. (this may be WAY too detailed and geeky for you, and that's perfectly OK! These ideas will STILL work for you. I've been like this for a long, long time and I'm not about to change!! Theorists are a weird lot by and large!). In measure four I have the 5th and 3rd of the A chord, in the same logical descending third interval I used in measure two.

(one thing you might notice is that I made the leap of a 4th from E up to A in measure three, instead of the 3rd used in measure one. You could try using the interval of a 3rd in measure three, so you'd have E up to G--3rd fret melody string--It works fine, so try it and you might like it better than what I have)

Below, I've illustrated measures five through eight. Your harmony here is Bm and G, two measures on each. You can see here that I changed the "game" somewhat, just to break up the monotony of the sequence. You always have to change things up a bit from pure formulas or "algorithms" and this is where you find the human element in music, which is inspiring to me and this is what keeps me on the composing trail.



One final thought here: if you have access to a piano or other keyboard, I strongly suggest playing some of this as best you can. With me, I have to go VERY VERY slow on the keyboard and I've forgotten any good fingerings I once had from class piano when I was in music school. You might be amazed at how this will help!!

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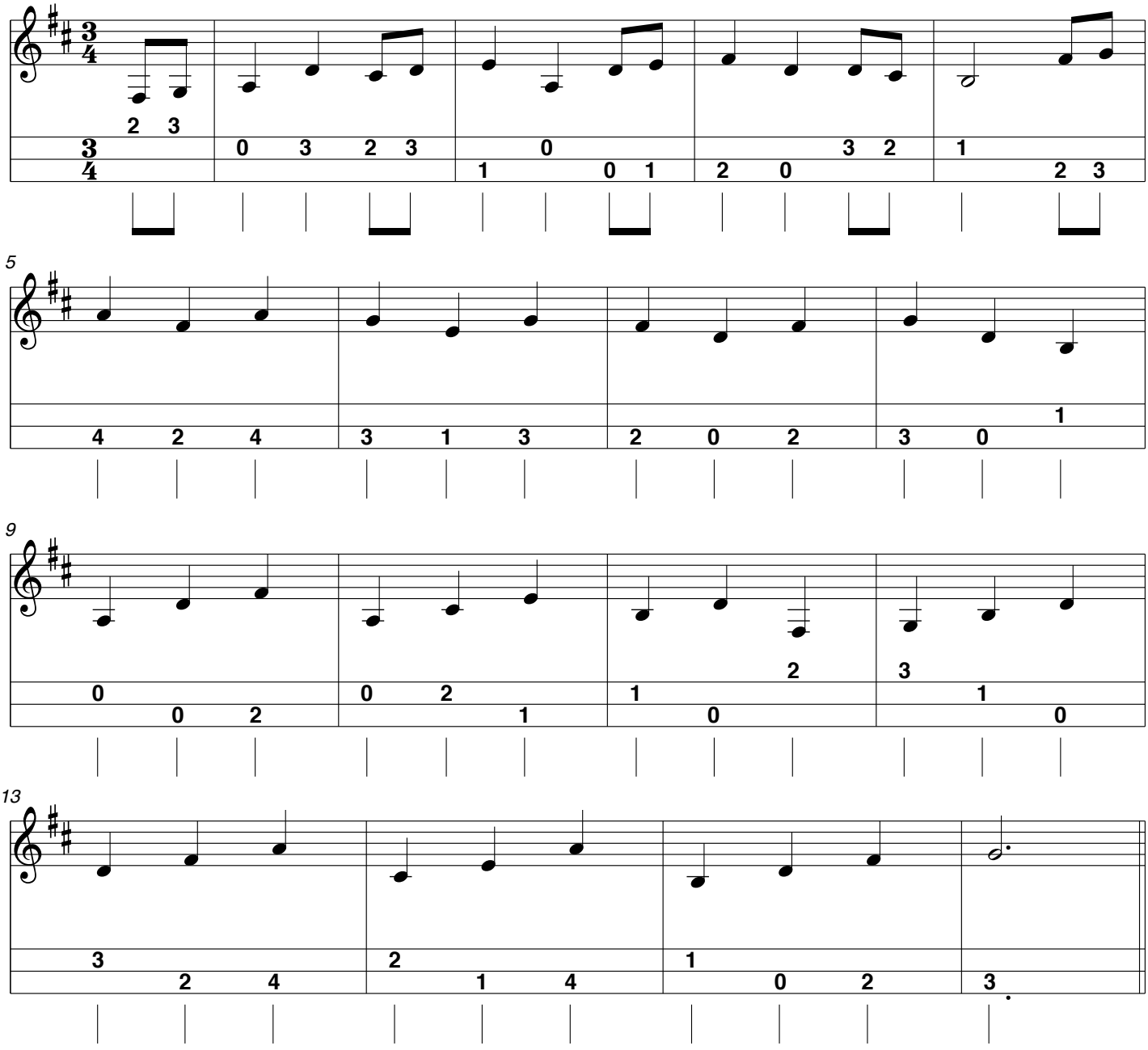
Light Into Darkness: Sequences

Tuning: DAD

by Jerry Rockwell



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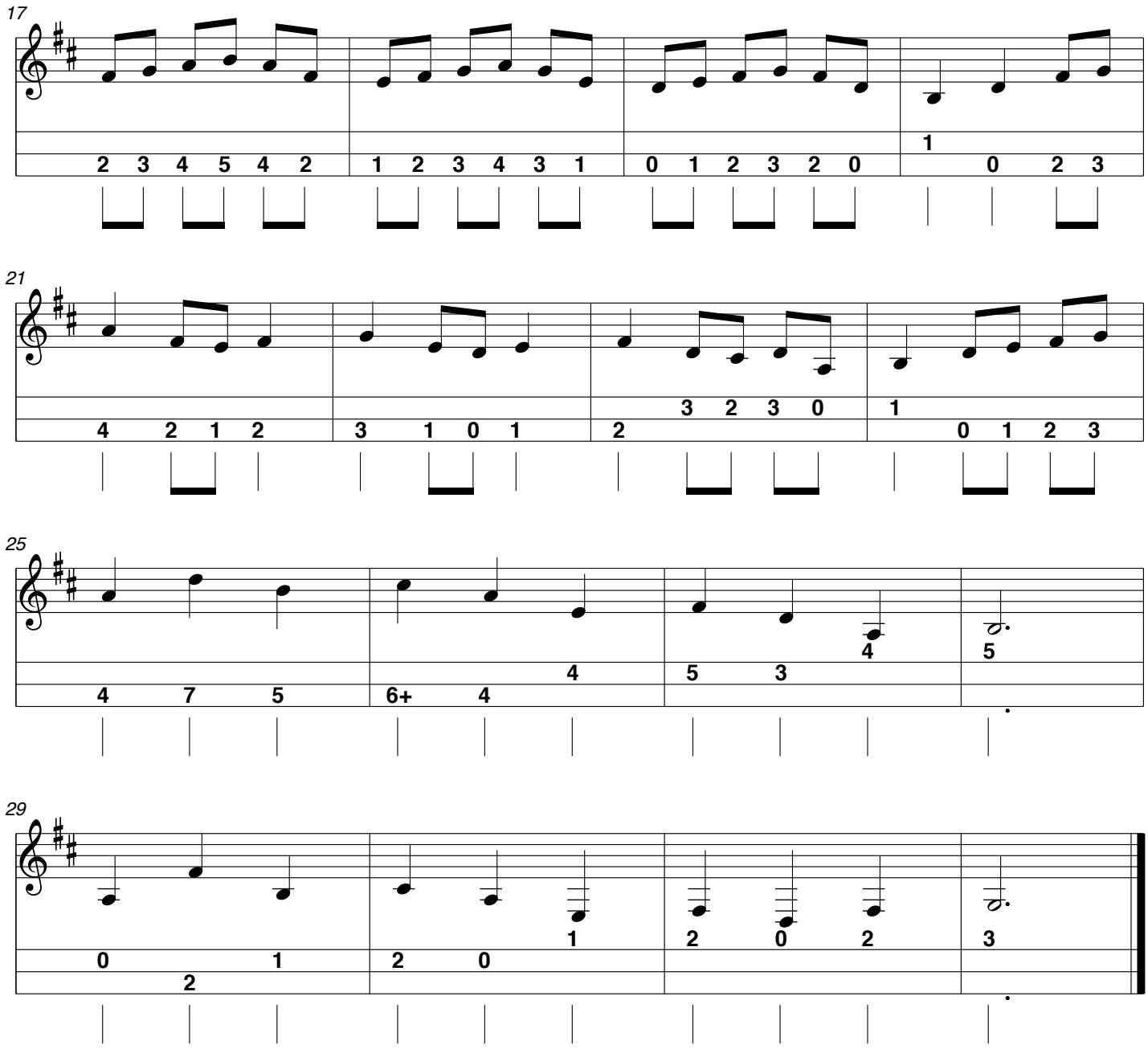
Sequences (cont.)



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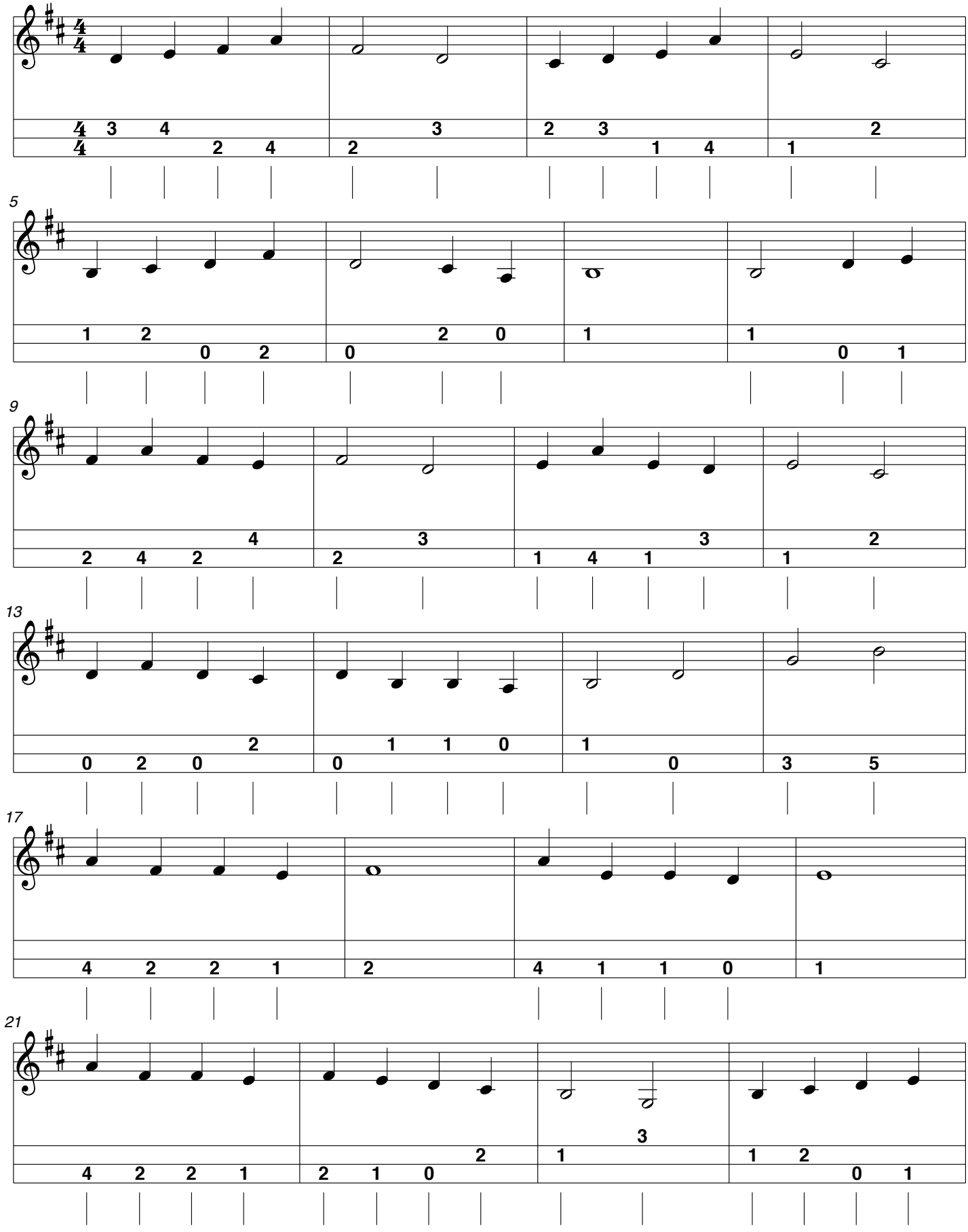
More Sequences on D-A-Bm-G

Tuning: DAD

by Jerry Rockwell



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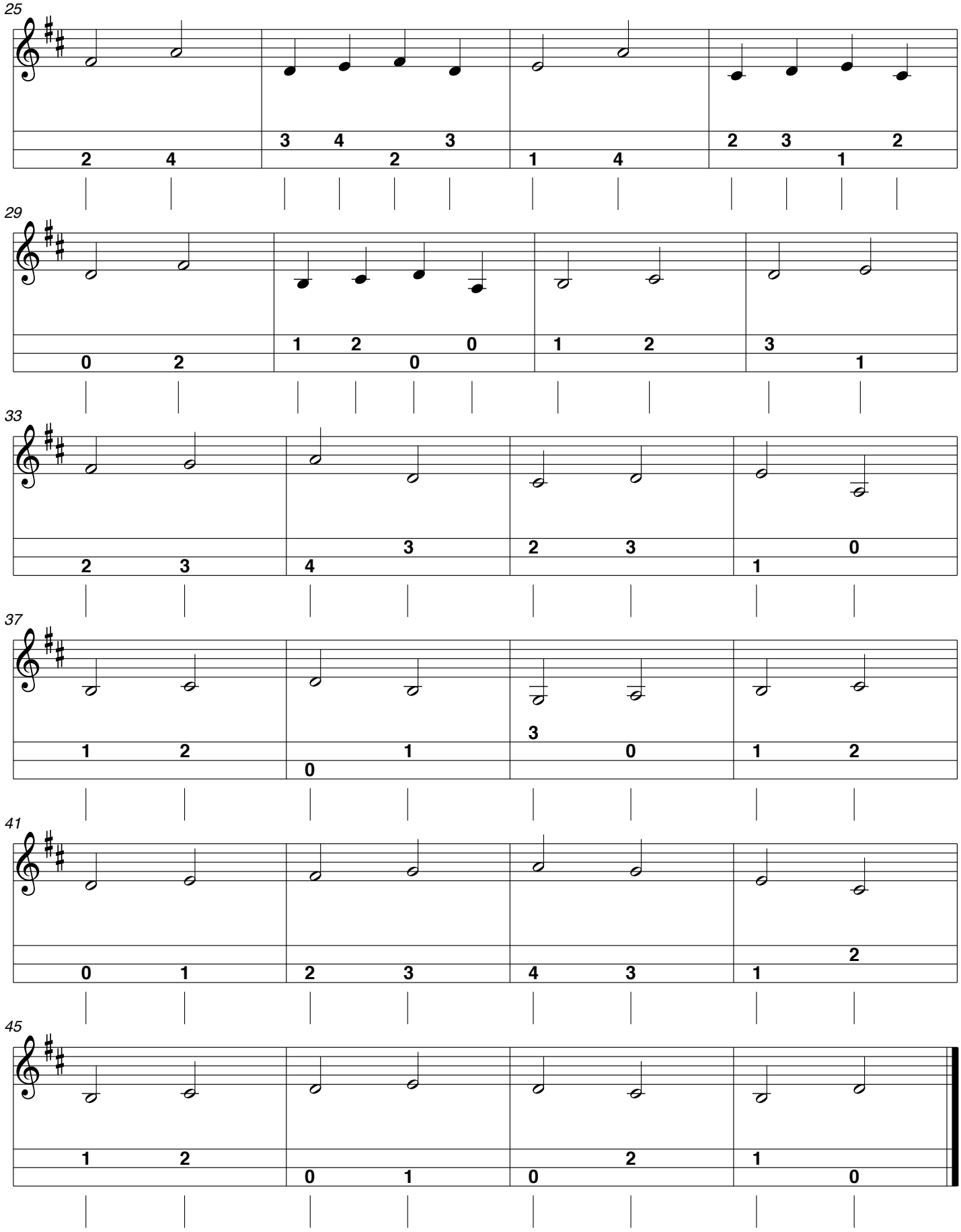

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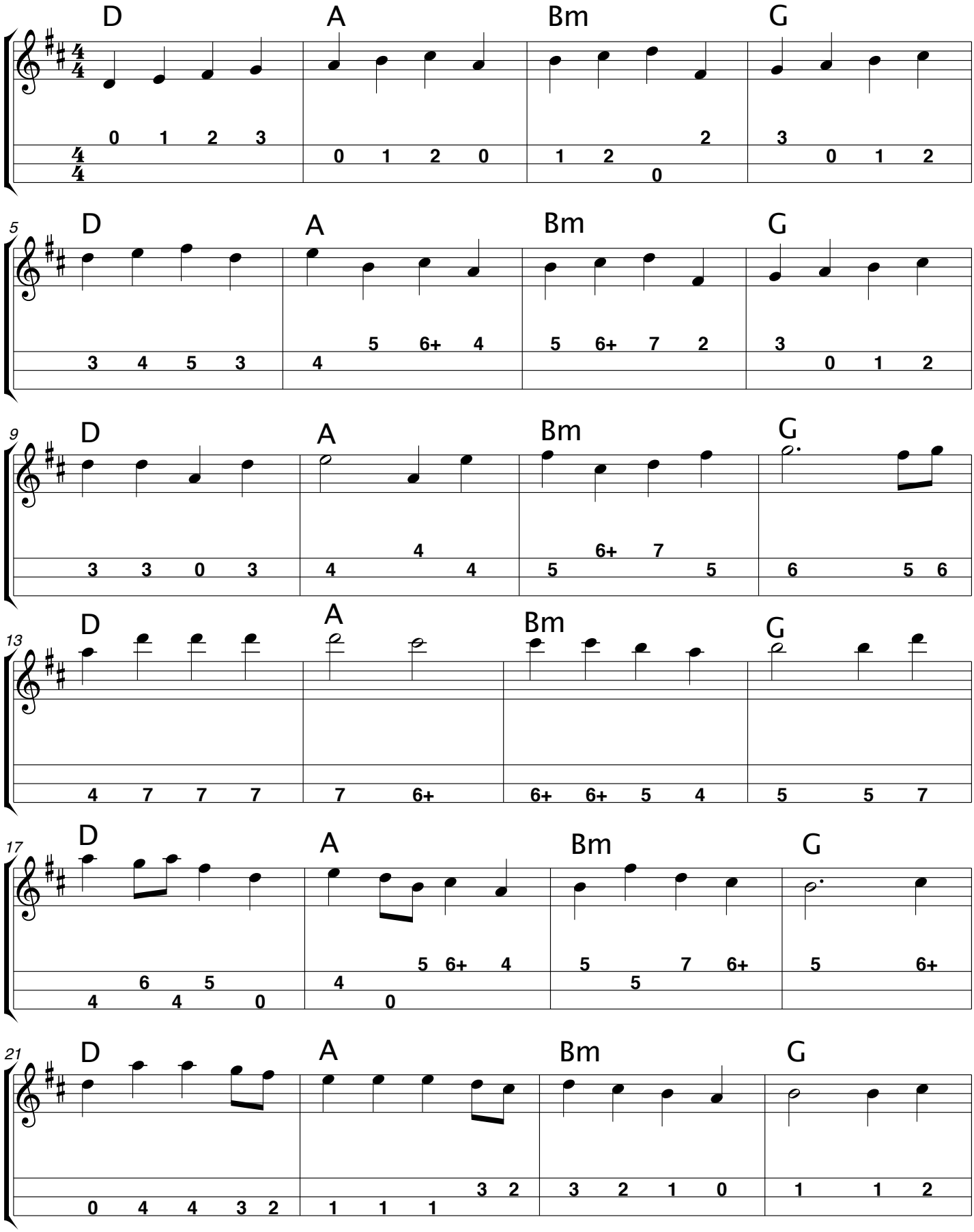
Light Into Darkness: solo study with ground

tuning: DAD

by Jerry Rockwell



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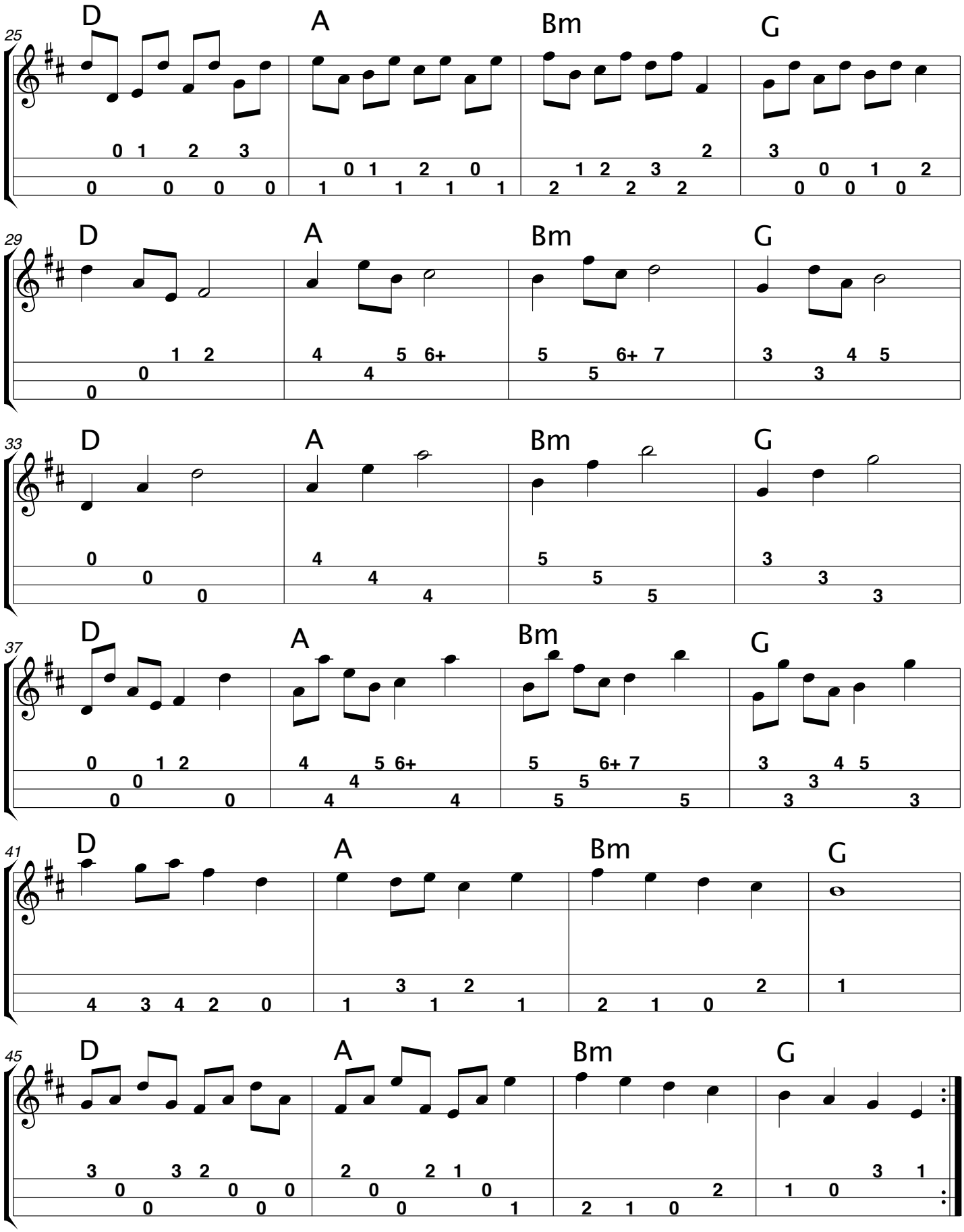
Light Into Darkness: solo study with ground (cont.)



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Light Into Darkness: solo study with ground

tuning: DAD

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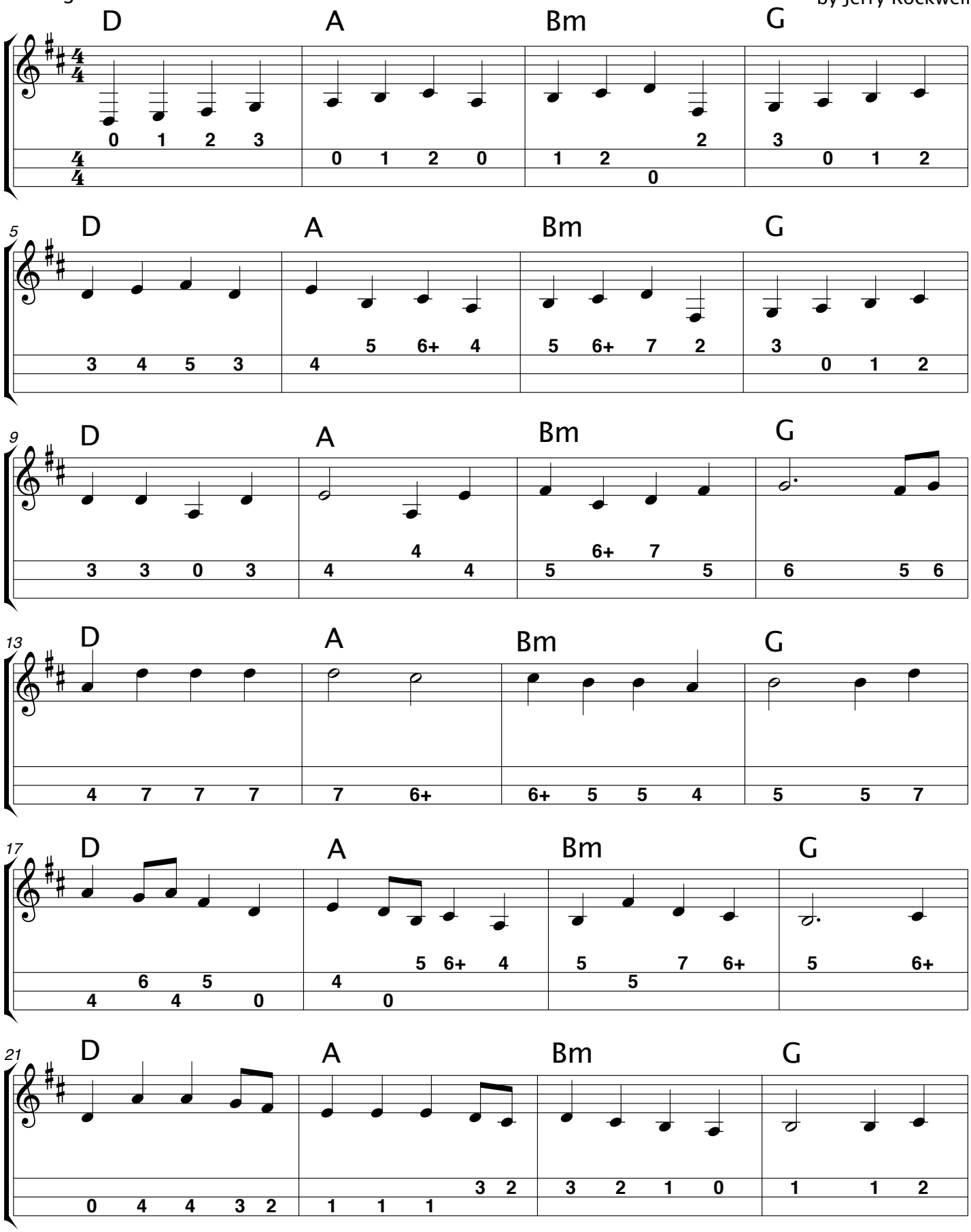

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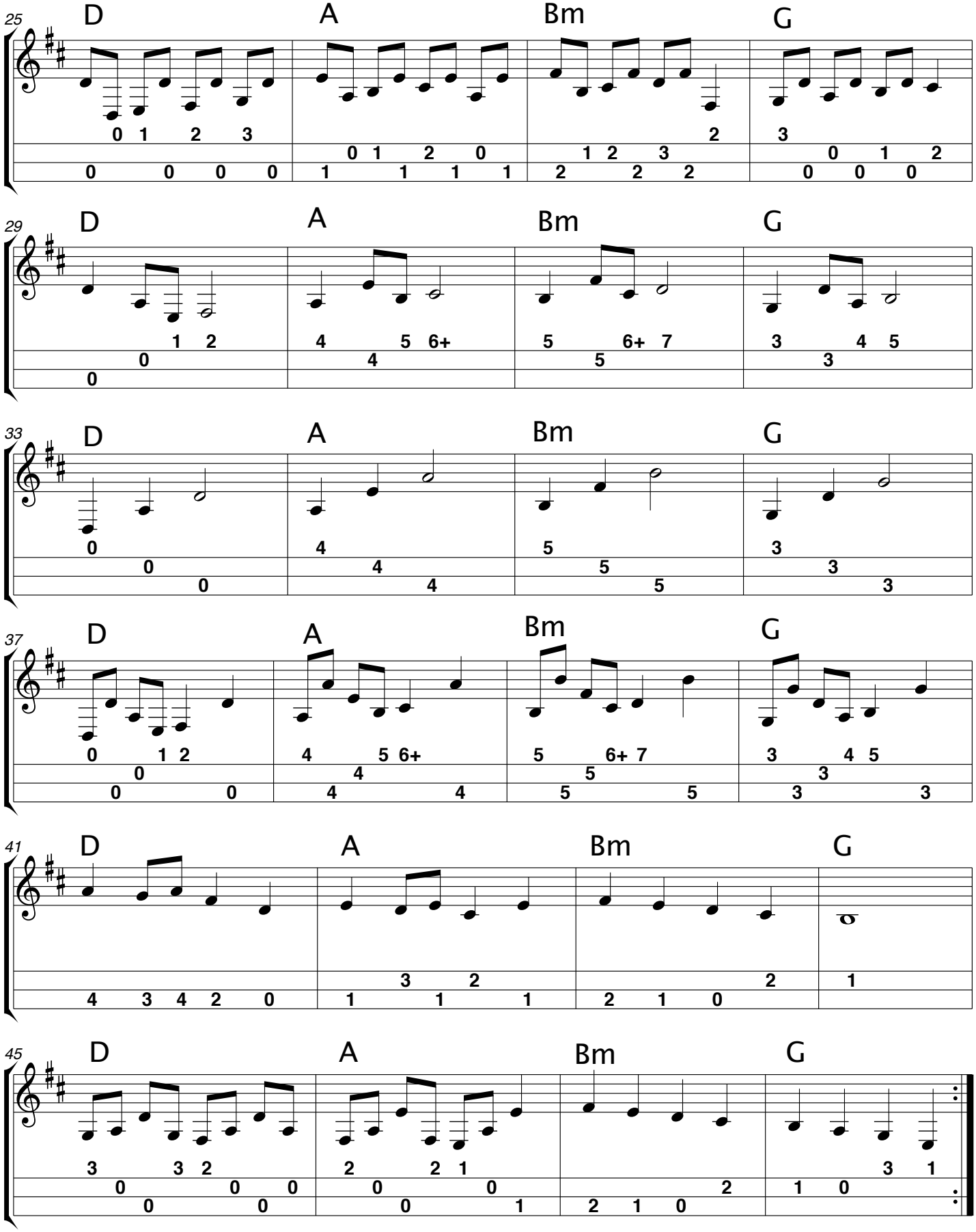

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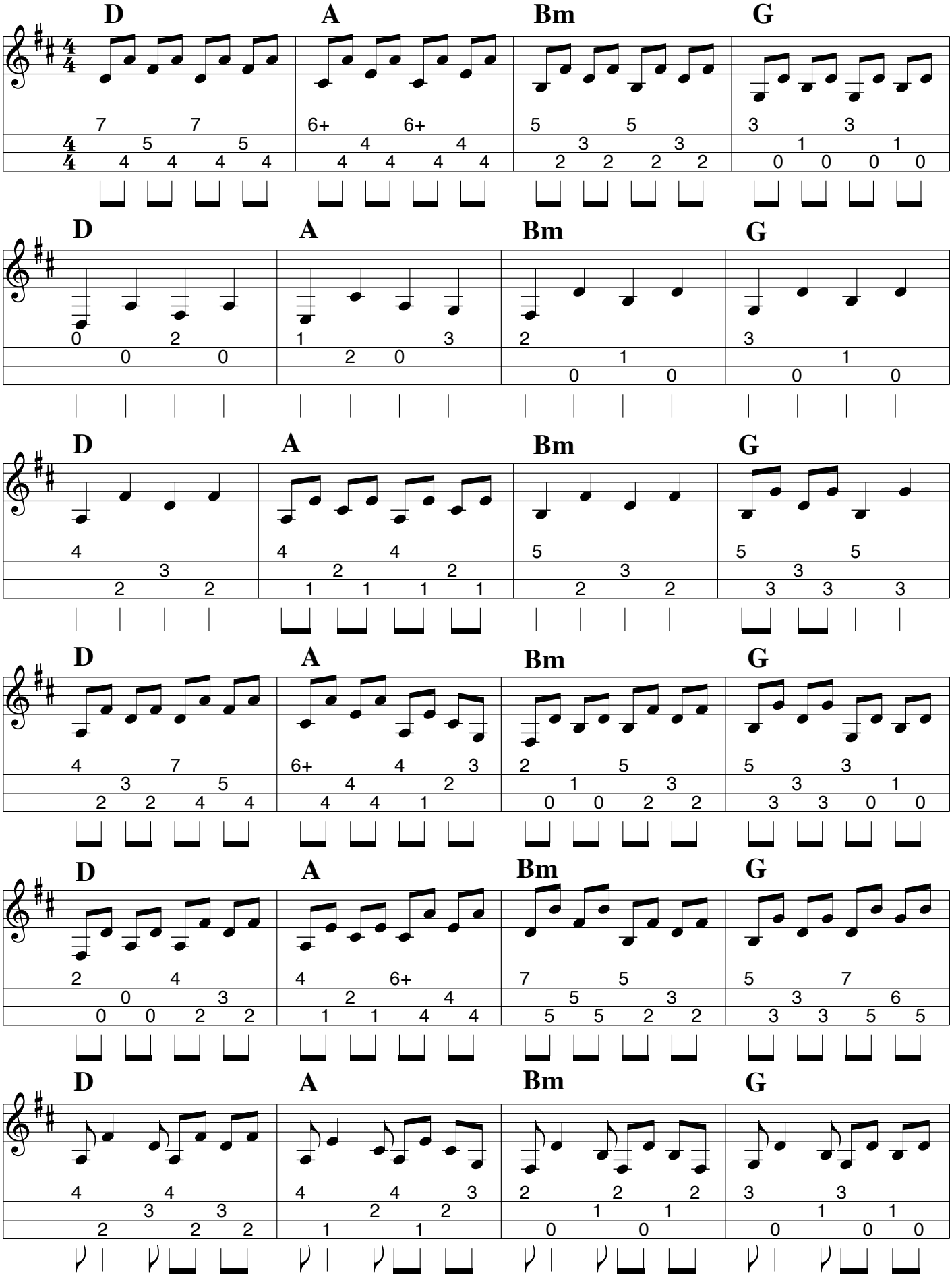
Fingerpicking Exercises for D - A- Bm - G

Tuning: DAD



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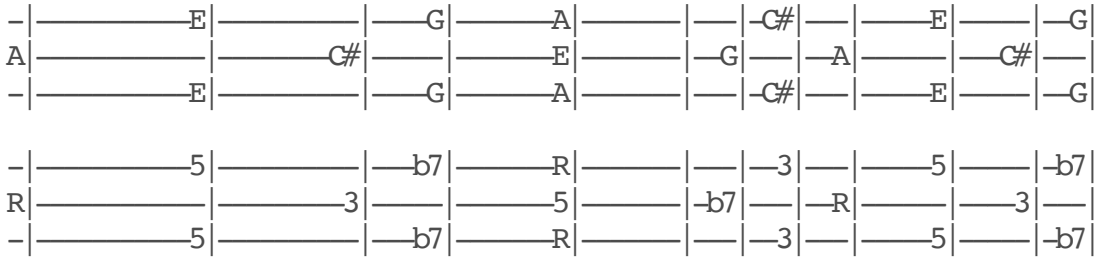
Fingerboard Survey: D Major

D	F#	A
R	3	5

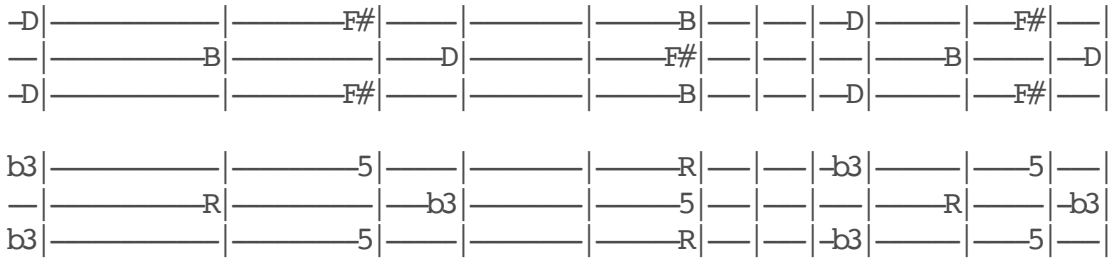
Fingerboard Survey: A7

A	C#	E	G
R	3	5	b7



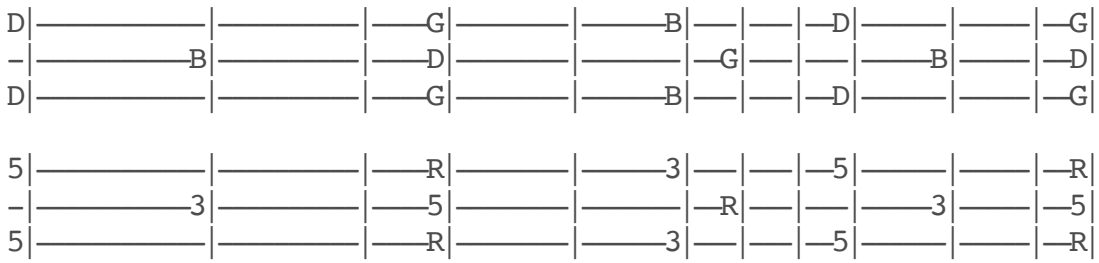
Fingerboard Survey: B Minor

B	D	F#
R	b3	5



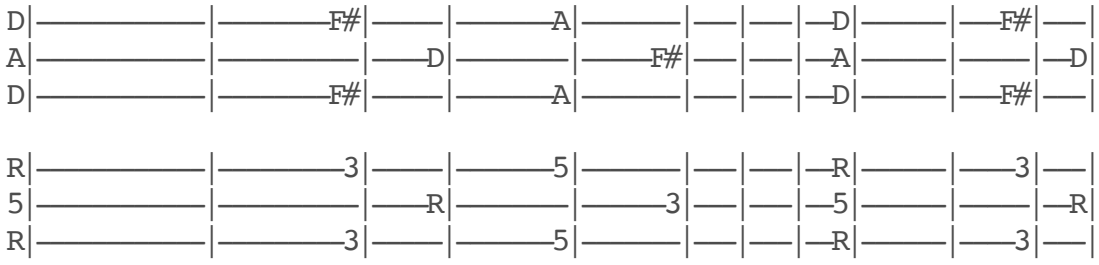
Fingerboard Survey: G Major

G	B	D
R	3	5



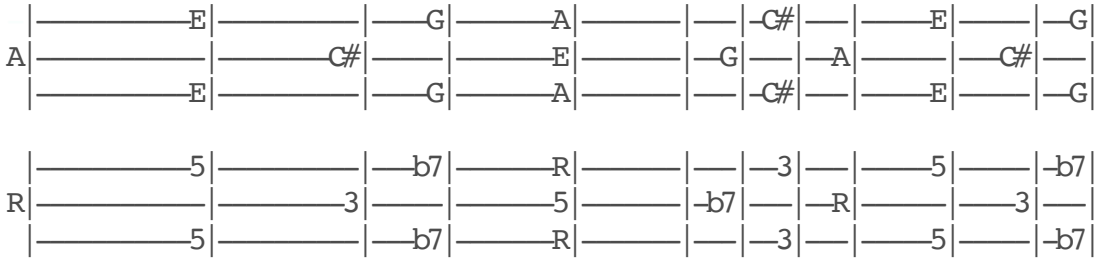
Fingerboard Survey: D Major

D	F#	A
R	3	5



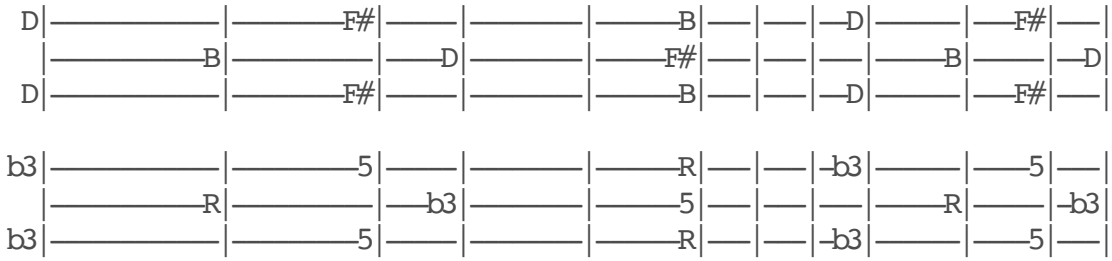
Fingerboard Survey: A7

A	C#	E	G
R	3	5	b7



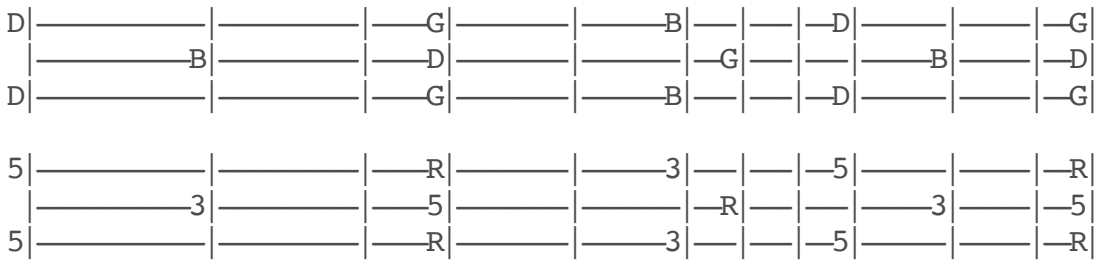
Fingerboard Survey: B Minor

B	D	F#
R	b3	5



Fingerboard Survey: G Major

G	B	D
R	3	5

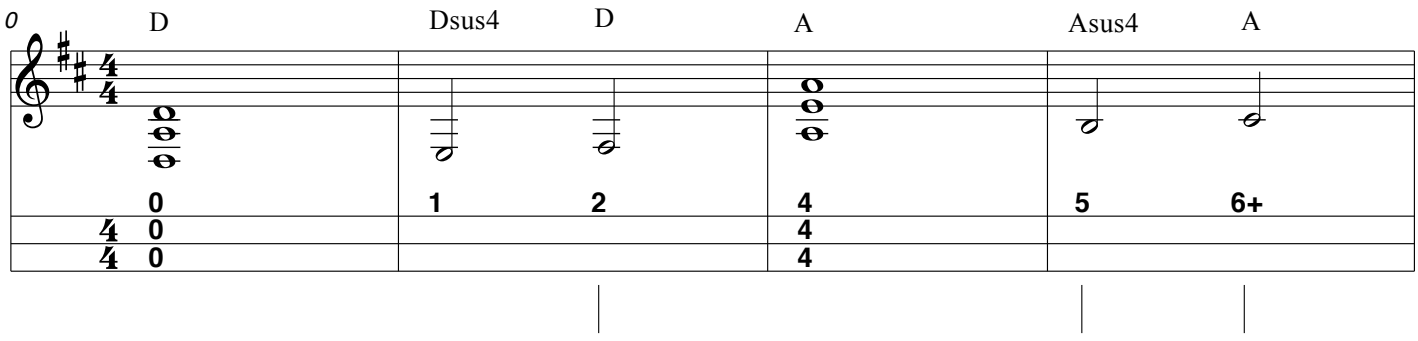


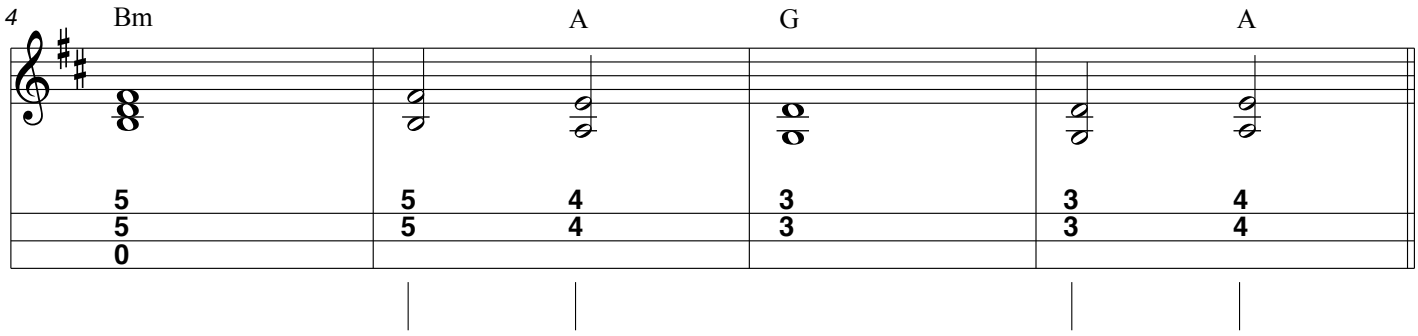
Light Into Darkness (Baroque flavored round)

Tuning: DAD

by Jerry Rockwell

Part 1





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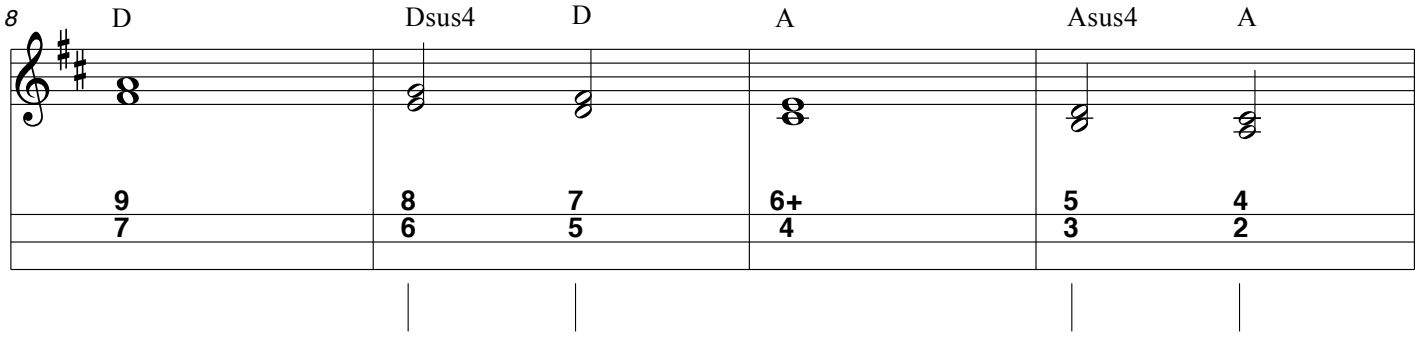

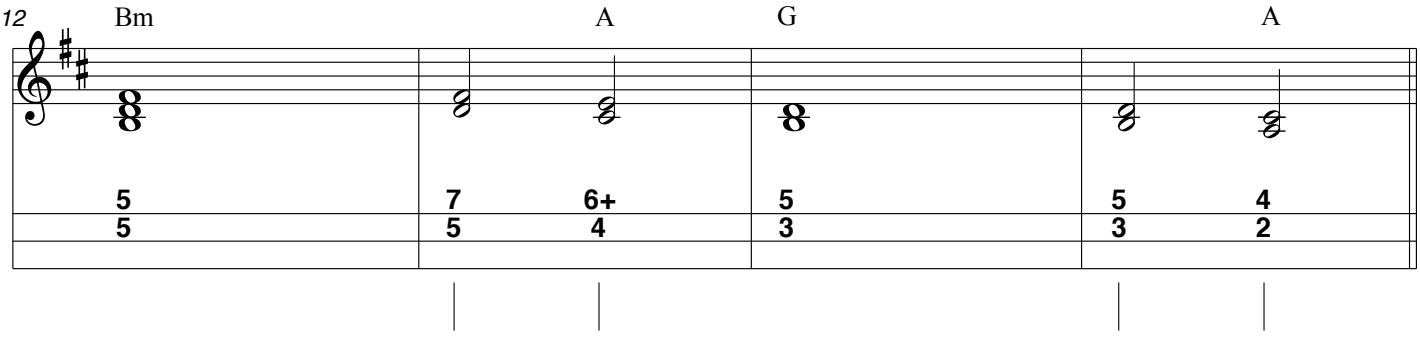

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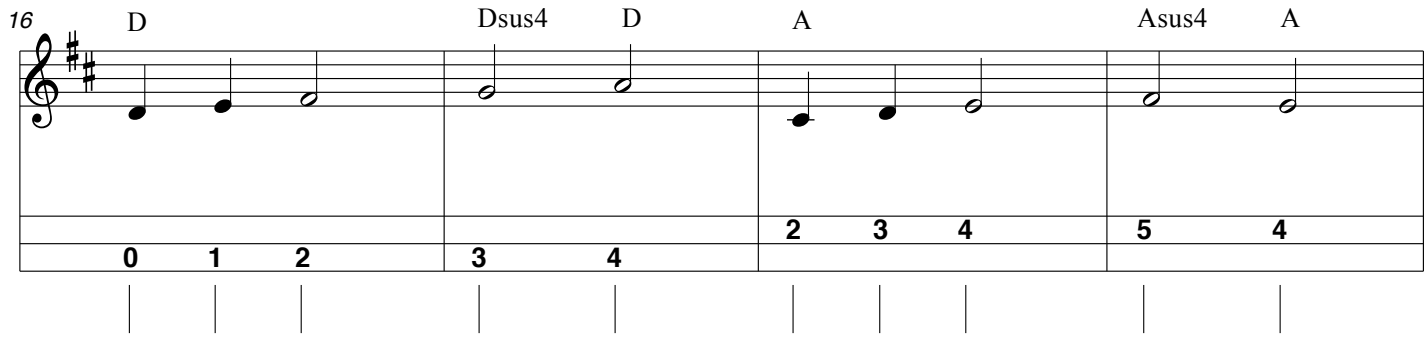

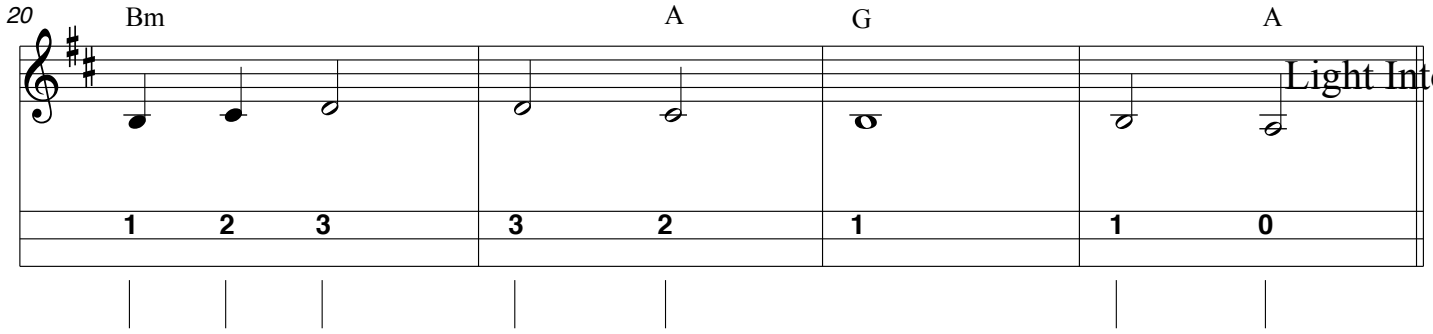

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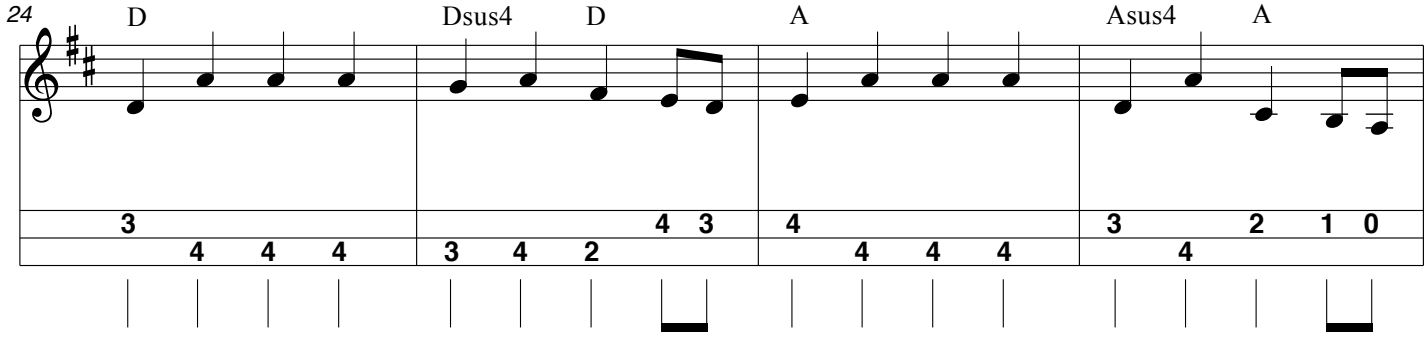

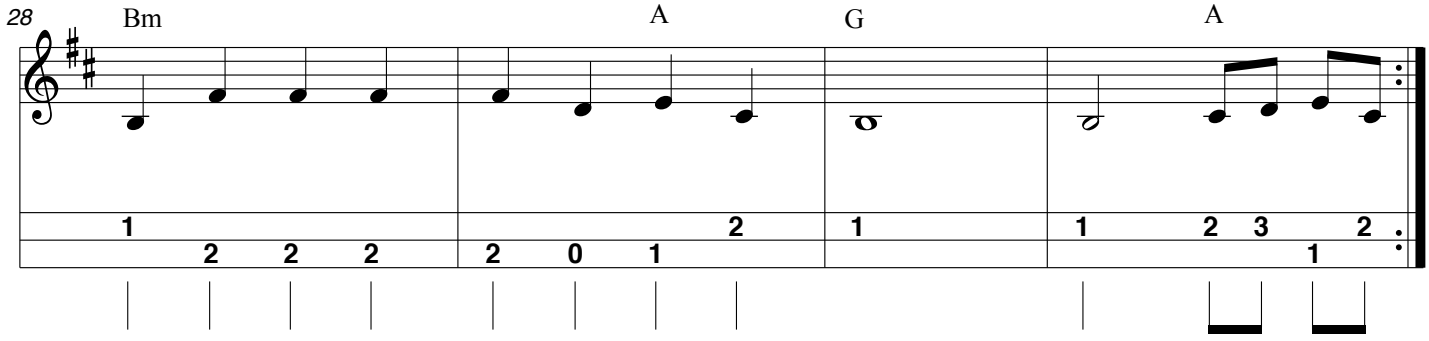

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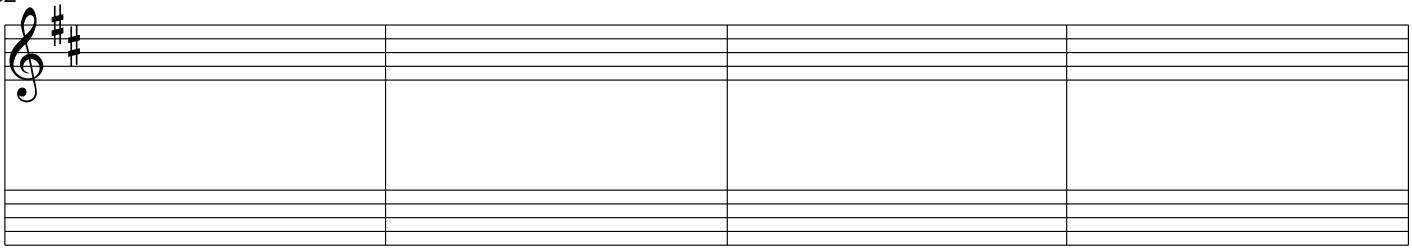

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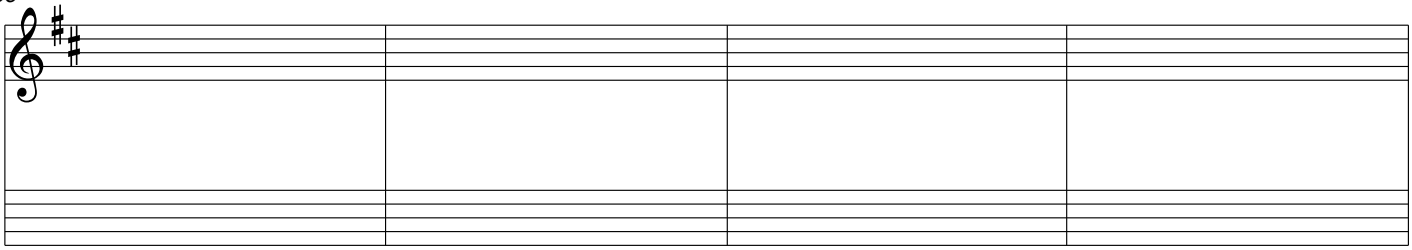

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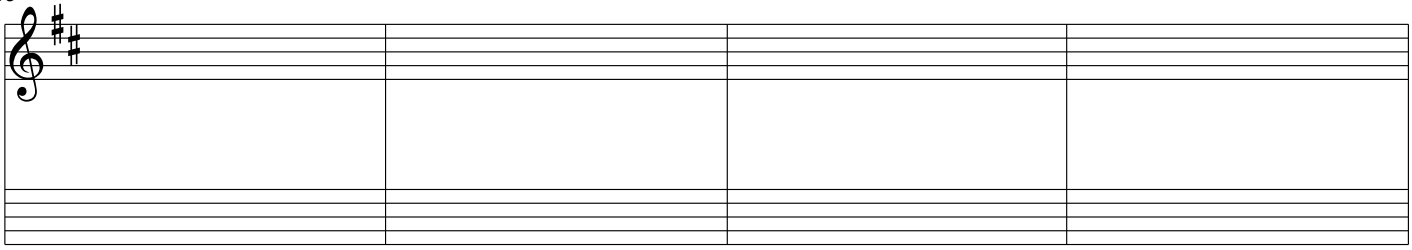

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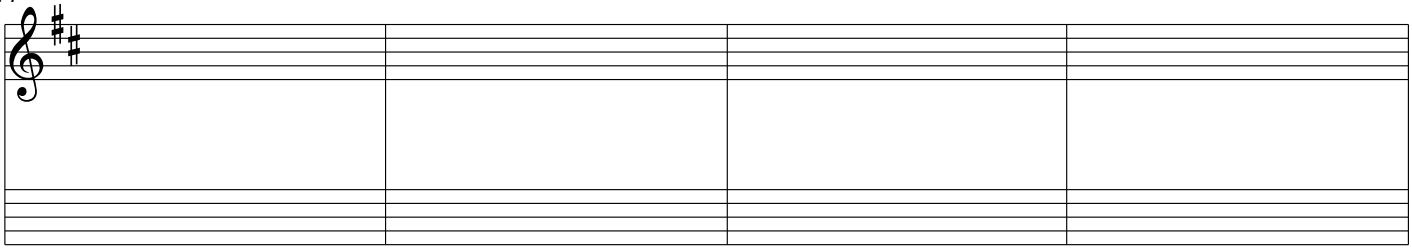
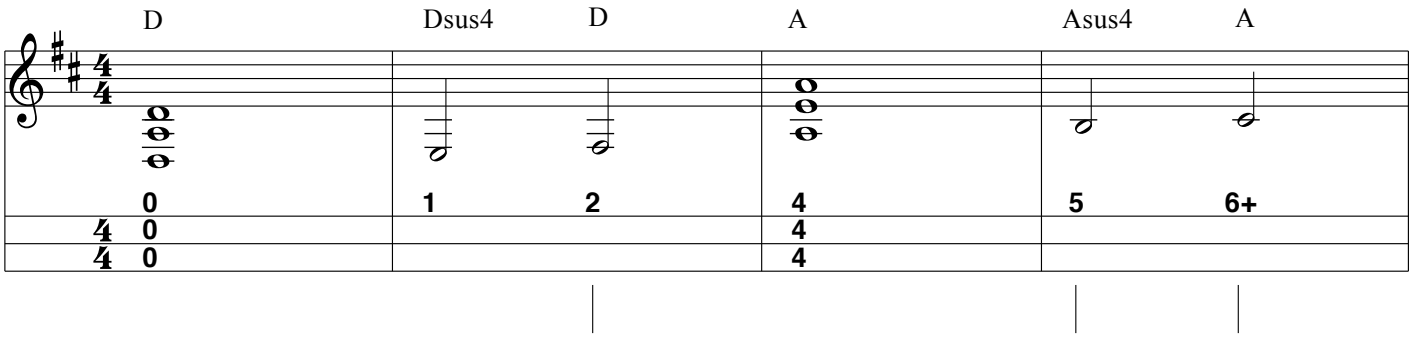


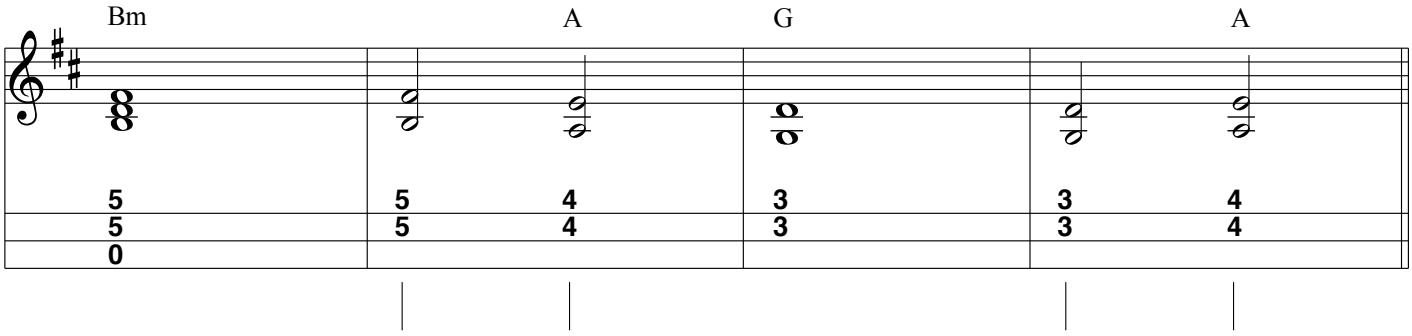
Light Into Darkness (Baroque flavored round)

Tuning: DAD

by Jerry Rockwell

Part 1





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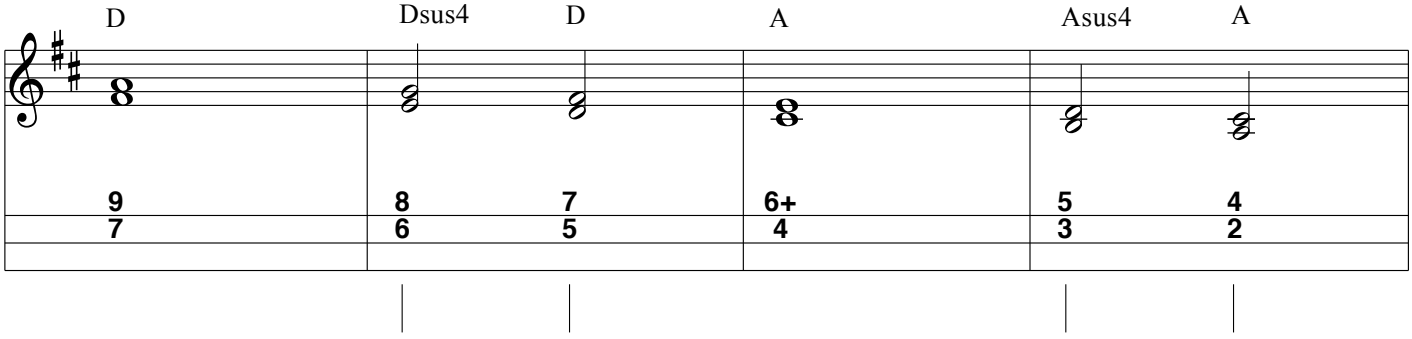

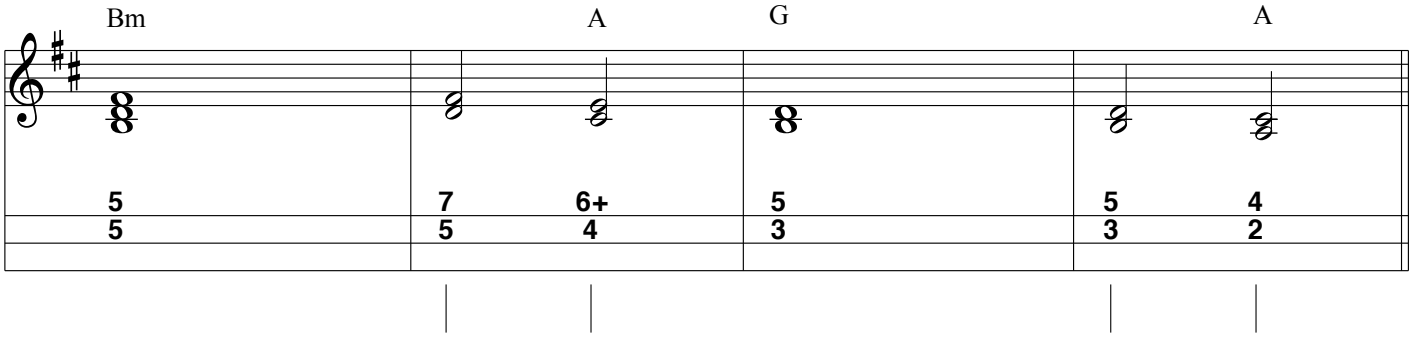

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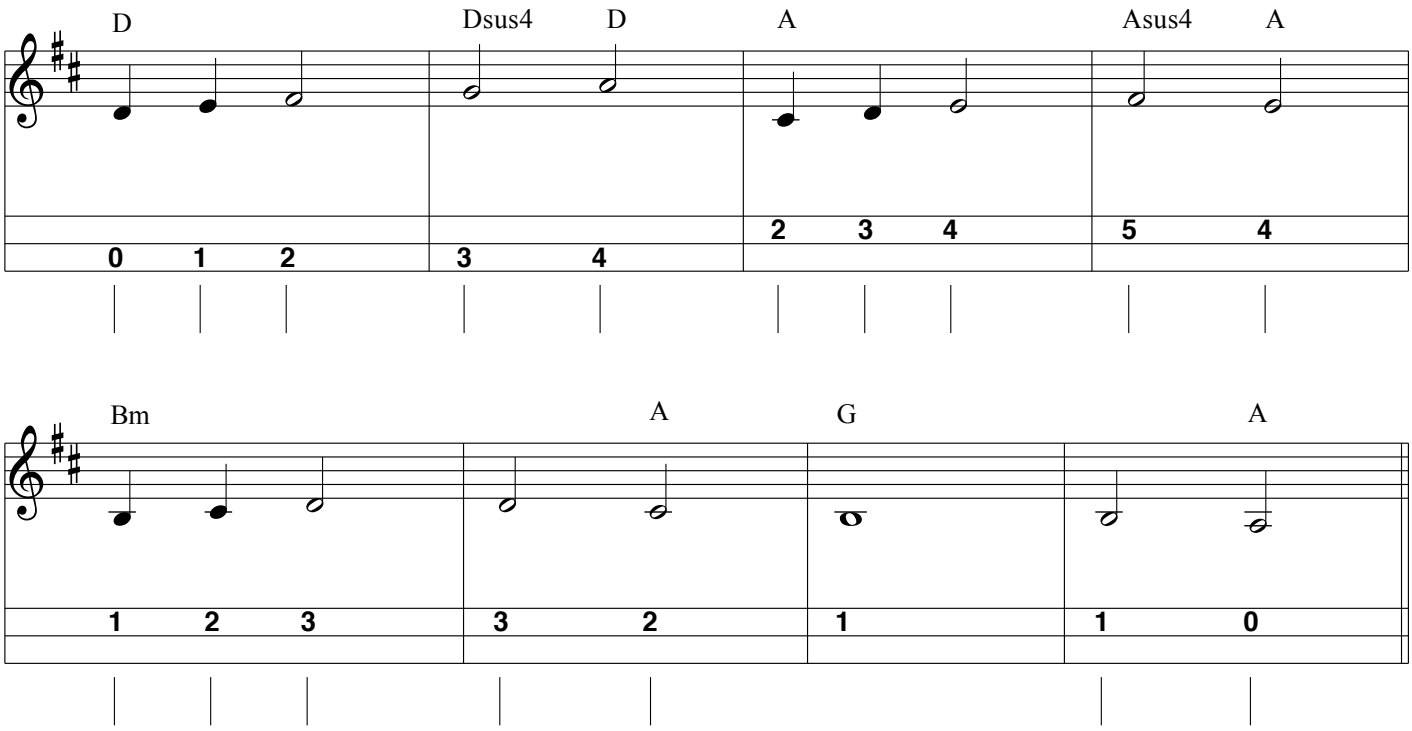

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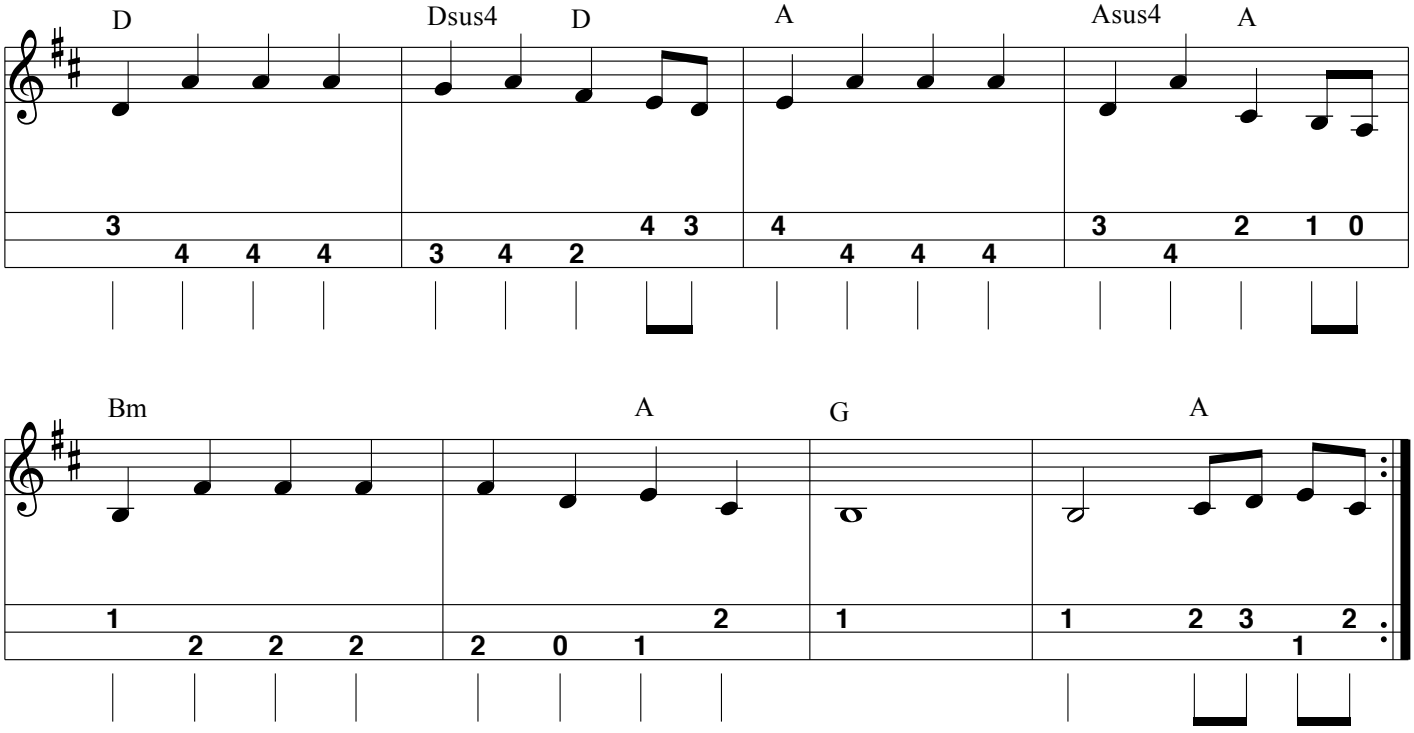

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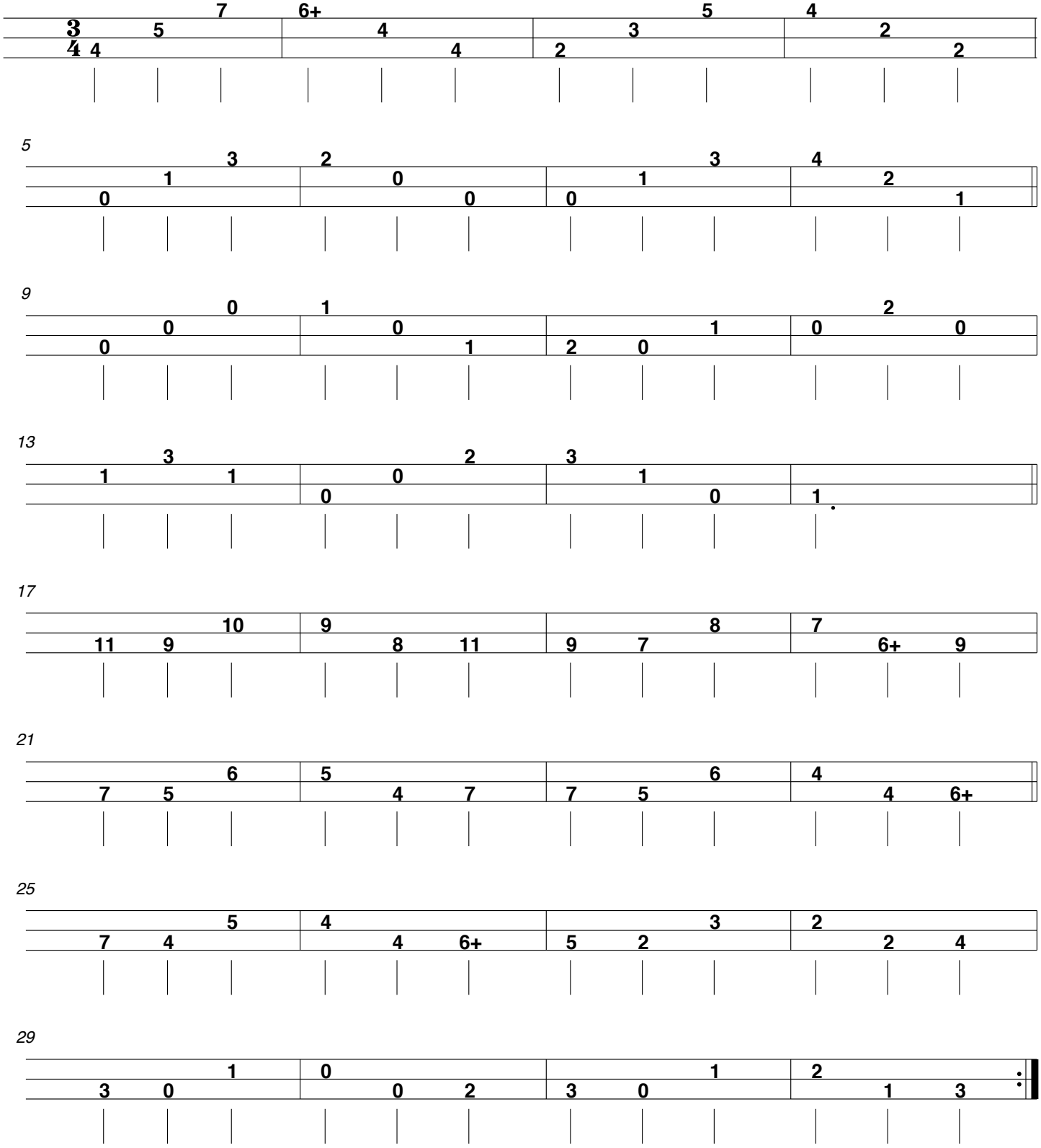
More Pach Chords in 3/4

Tuning: DAD

from Pachelbel Canon in D



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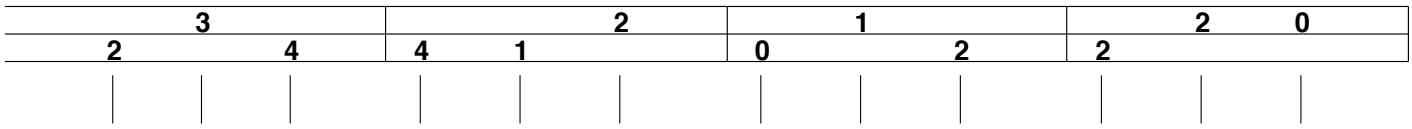

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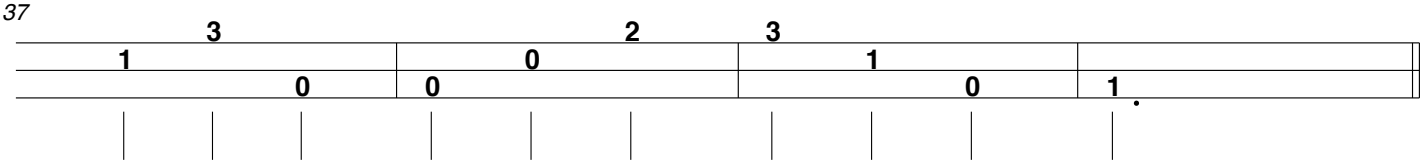

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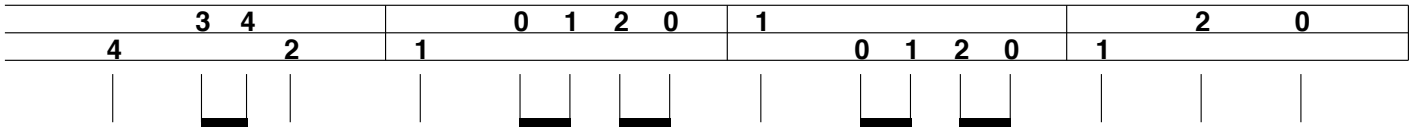

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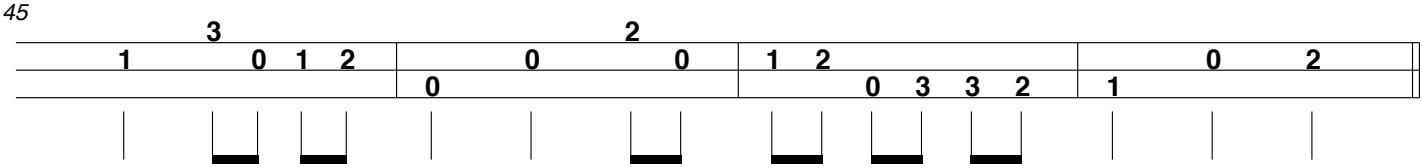

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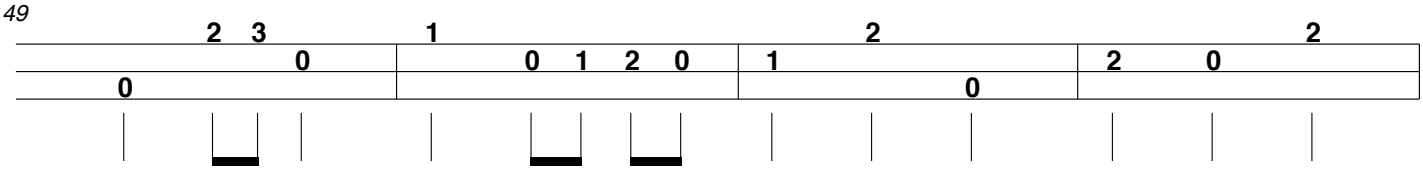

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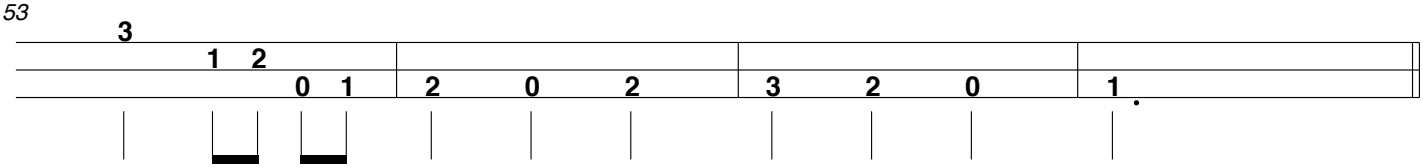

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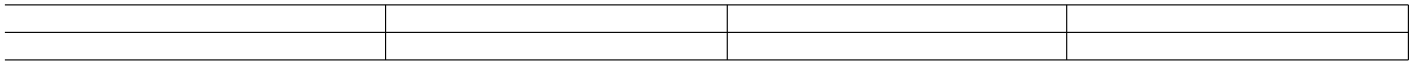

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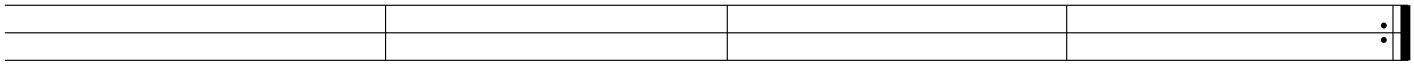
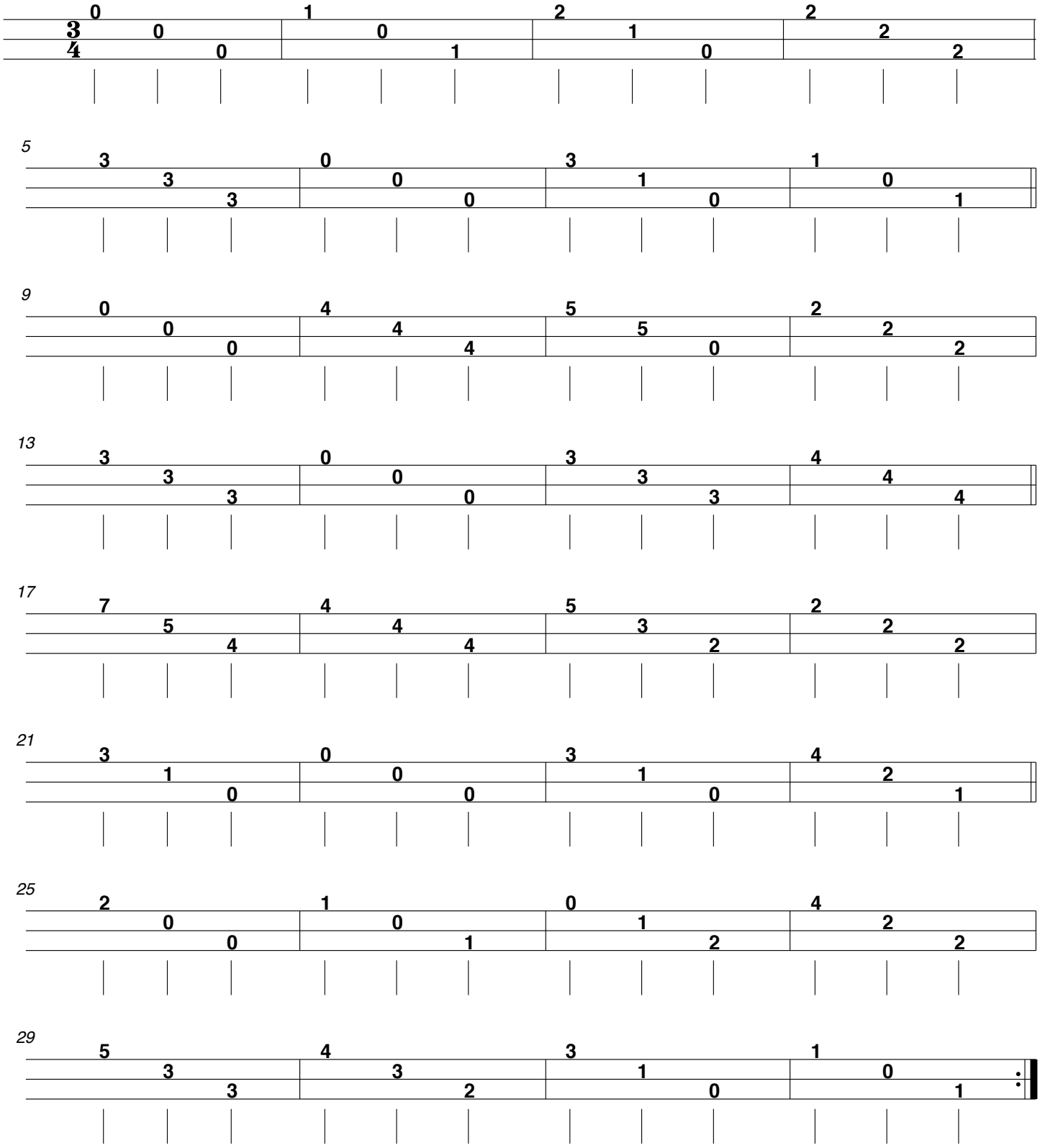


Pach Chords in 3/4

Tuning: DAD

from Pachelbel Canon in D



arrangement ©2013 Jerry Rockwell

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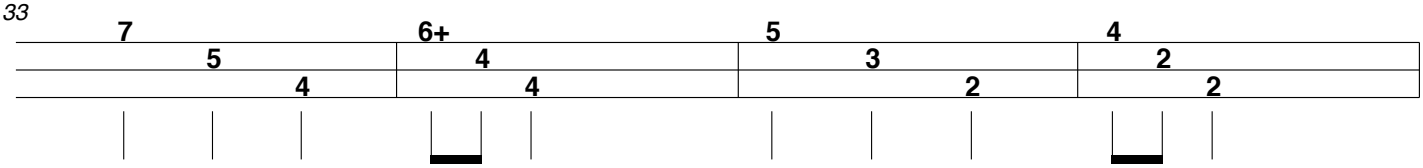

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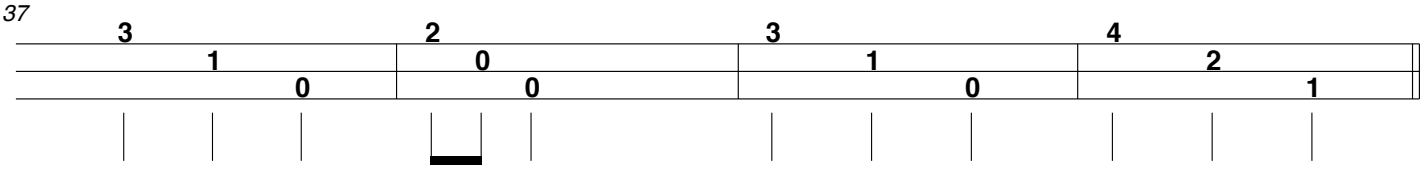

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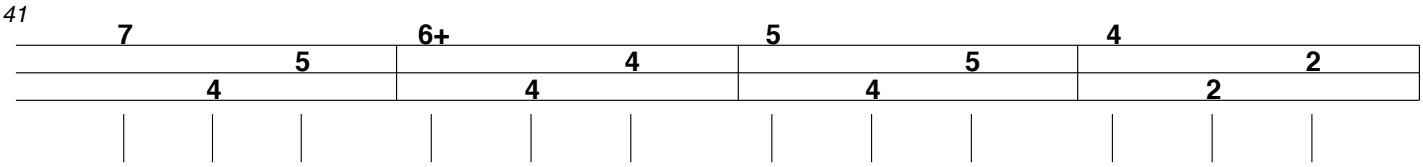

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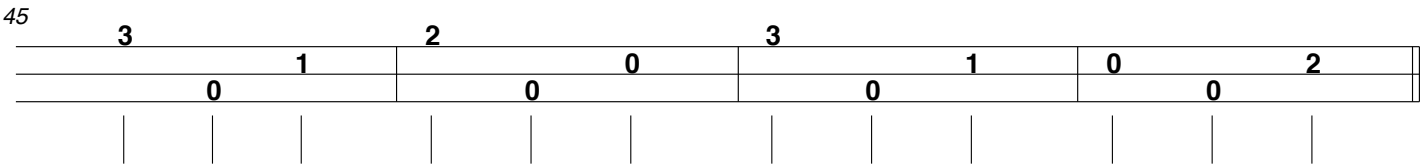

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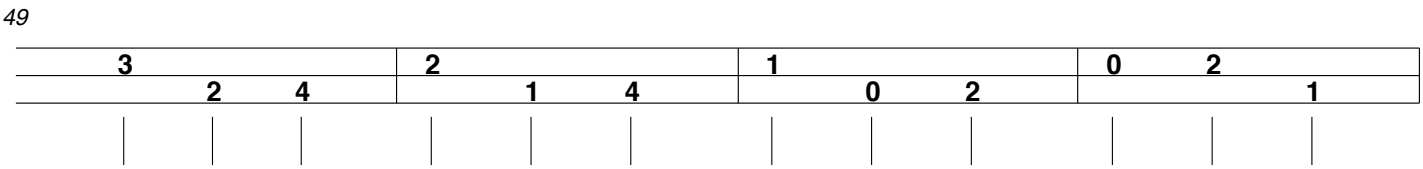

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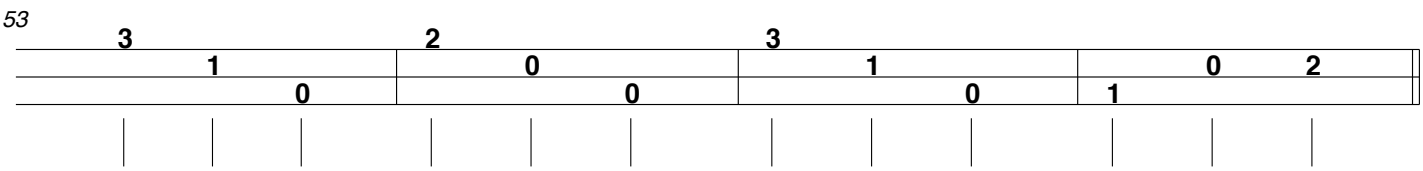

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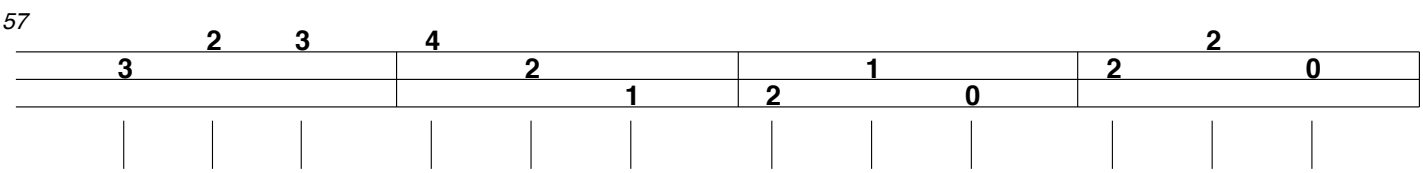

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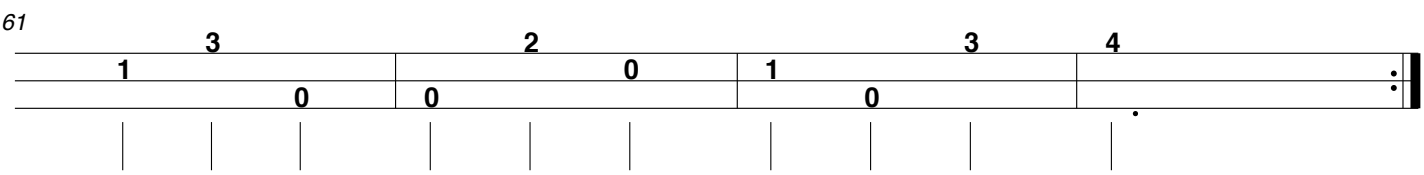

Salisbury Winter

Tuning: DAD

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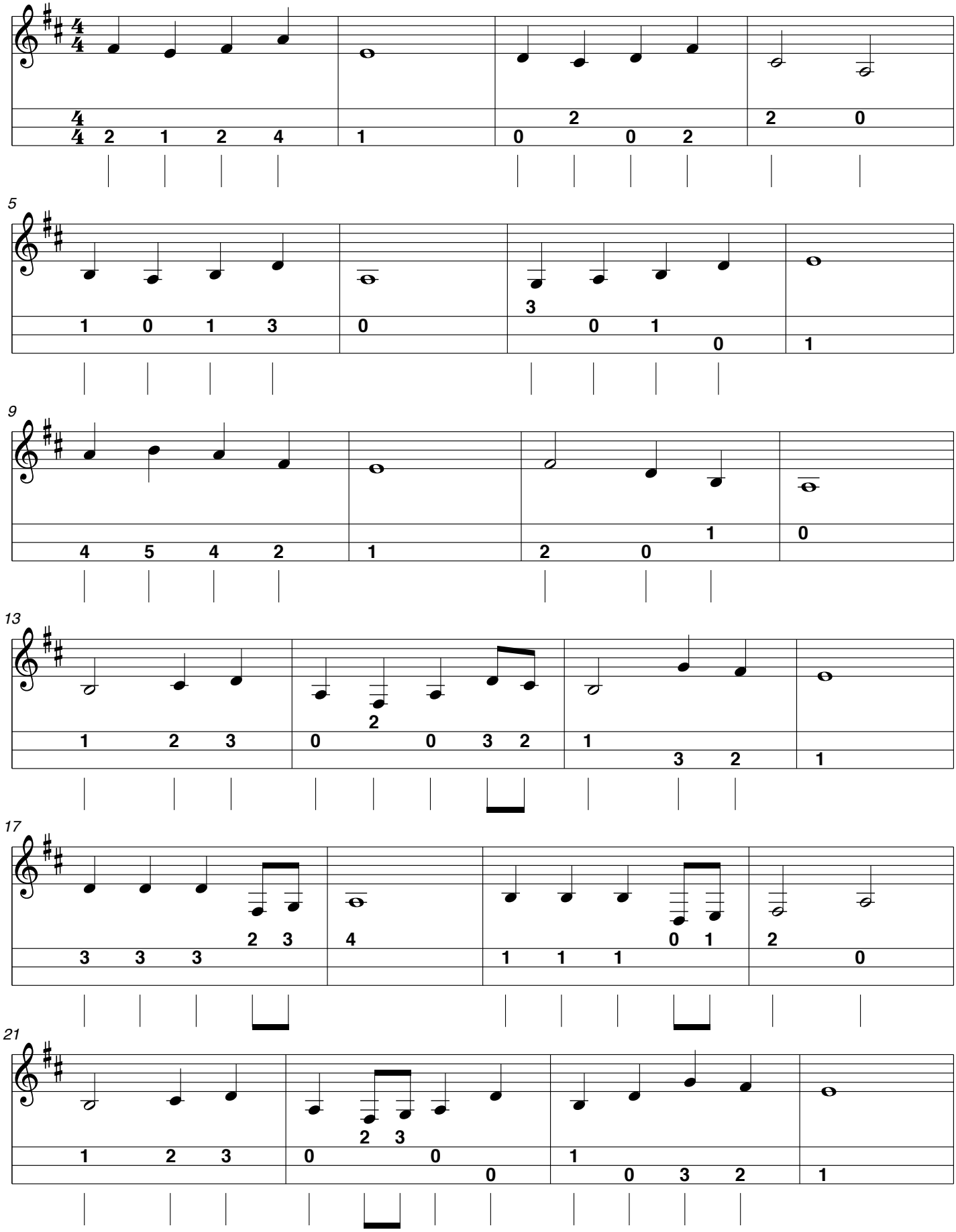

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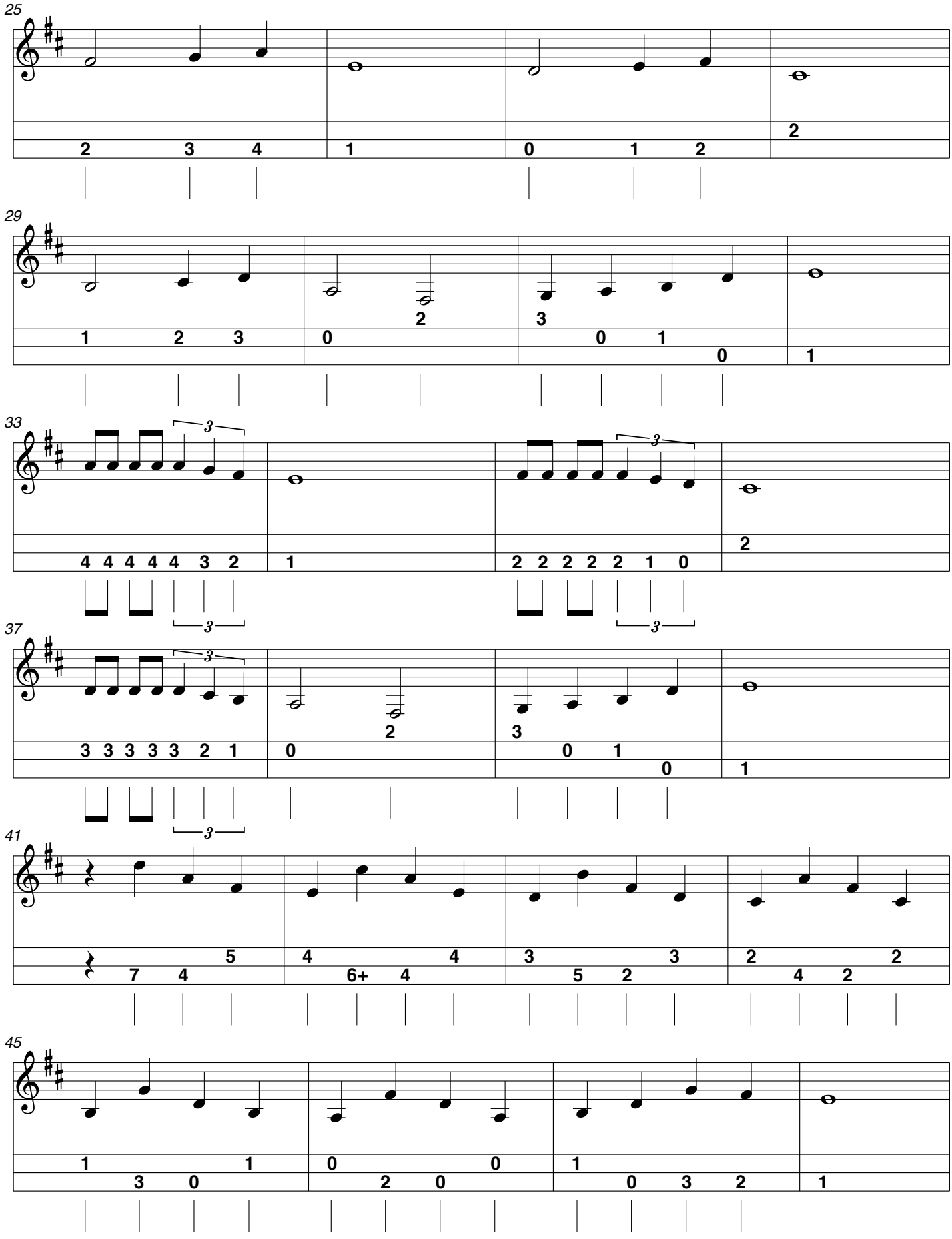

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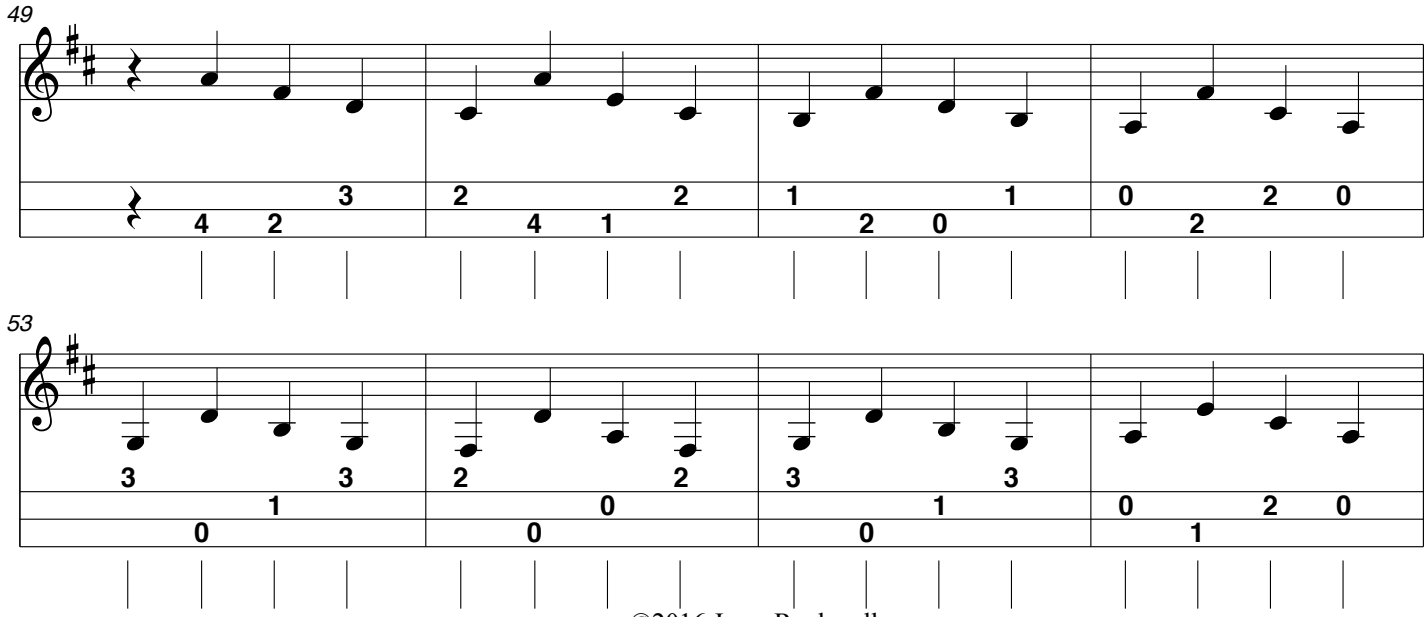

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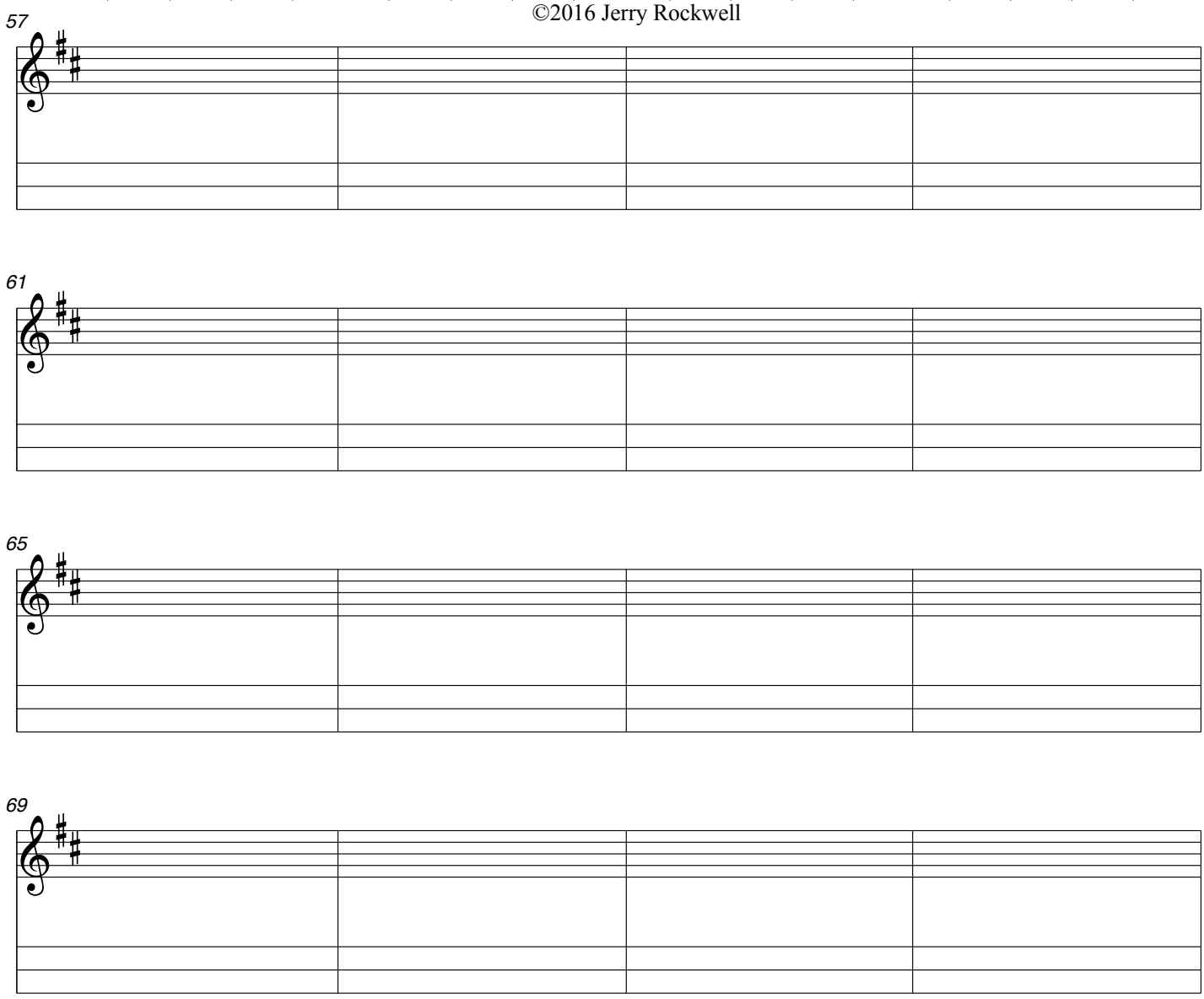

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