

# **The Gypsy Guitar's Little Helper**

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## About the Author

The Singer and Songwriter Alexander Harnisch alias John Scrivo, born in São Paulo, Brazil, enjoyed the feeling of Bossa Nova and the soccer euphoria at the beach of the Copacabana as a child. For family reasons he grew up with two mother languages, Portuguese and English.

After he had been given an electric guitar, he doggedly practiced the solos of his favourite Band "The Fab Four" - The Beatles. An interesting musical mixture was born now.

As his Austrian stepfather was a connoisseur of the Jazz Music, he heard the jazz tunes constantly at home. He was fascinated by the Big Bands, the Vocal Groups and last not least by Gypsy Jazz.

## About the Book

This book gives a good entry for guitar players into the Gypsy Jazz music. With a lot of personal experience I composed performable samples edited with notations, chord symbols and tablatures. The shown licks and arpeggios help you to become acquainted with that Gypsy Jazz style. Basic knowledge of Jazz harmonies and theory will simplify the understanding of the various exercises. I have omitted the fingerings of the gripping hand, because every guitarist has his own way of playing and I did not want to impose my style.

I've grouped my compendium into three sections.

Although it is quite problematic to explain such a vivid technique as the authentic Gypsy Jazz rhythm with all its components, the **first section** of my compendium tries to give a brief theoretical explanation to this topic. But it is quite clear that the best way to get into the rhythm is by listening to good Gypsy Jazz guitar players.

The **second section** deals with arpeggios, scales that I have named "patterns". There are many different types and ways of playing arpeggios including the choice of the used fingerings. All arpeggios end with the chord based on the key it is played. If you want to get a deeper insight into this topic I would recommend you to gather further information in the various music portals.

The **third section** contains "melody patterns". Short melody sequences, interludes, and turnarounds that can be played to your own solo arrangement.

If you are new to Gypsy Jazz, definitely the best way to get into this style is to take lessons, because the teacher's feedback prevents false habits that sometimes are not easy to correct.

To get the real swing feeling watch the great guitar players in this genre, read and thoroughly practise the typical rhythm and picking techniques and try them out with other musicians.

But above all maintain patience!

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# The Gypsy Jazz Rhythm

The Term „La Pompe" refers in the gypsy jazz circles to the typically standard played percussive swing guitar rhythm. La Pompe is not only a rhythm pattern but a simulation of a rhythm section containing drums with a bass player. The quality and sound of a Gypsy Jazz band totally depends on the rhythm section. The chord voicings normally are played with the low strings that give a full bass dense volume sound. The voicings themselves are not very complex, mostly major or minor triads simple dominant 7th chords and occasionally colored by augmented 5ths or dominant 9ths.

There is a variety of ways playing "La Pompe" depending on the title or your own music arrangement. The most basic "La Pompe" pattern, is a four staccato downstroke per measure, with a slight emphasis on beats 2 and 4. To let your chord sound good, tense first and then release your gripping hand immediately before the next chord. Be aware if you lose the emphasis on the second and fourth beat your swing is lost and will sound jolty.

Chord diagrams for G6, G#dim7, and Am7 are shown above the staff. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a dynamic marking of *mf*. Below the staff are guitar tablature lines for Treble (T), Alto (A), and Bass (B) strings. The bass line shows a consistent pattern of downstrokes on the 3rd, 2nd, 3rd, and 2nd strings. Vertical arrows indicate the timing of the downstrokes, with a slight emphasis on beats 2 and 4.

You can enhance your rhythm by playing a quick upstroke before beats one and three!

Chord diagrams for G6, G#dim7, and Am7 are shown above the staff. The notation includes a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a dynamic marking of *mf*. Above the first measure, a triplet of eighth notes is shown with the notation  $(\text{♩} = \text{♪♪♪})$ . Below the staff are guitar tablature lines for Treble (T), Alto (A), and Bass (B) strings. The bass line shows a consistent pattern of downstrokes on the 3rd, 2nd, 3rd, and 2nd strings. Vertical arrows indicate the timing of the downstrokes, with a slight emphasis on beats 2 and 4.