

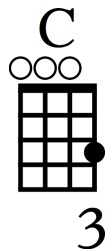
Lesson #7

So far, you've learned a strumming pattern with all quarter notes and then one with all eighth notes. Now, it's time to mix the two.

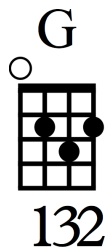
In this lesson, you're going to learn:

- a versatile strumming pattern that can be used for hundreds of different songs
- a song: **Row, Row, Row Your Boat**
- how to use strumming patterns to create dynamics

You will need to know the following chords:



To play a C major chord, place your **ring finger** on the 3rd fret of the bottom string. The remaining strings ring completely open.



To play a G major chord, place your **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the bottom string, your **ring finger** on the 3rd fret of the second string, and your **index finger** on the 2nd fret of the third string. The top string rings completely open.

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Strumming Pattern #3

For this strumming pattern, combine the last two strumming patterns by mixing and matching some quarter and eighth notes. Take a look at the next figure to see what this looks like.

The diagram shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. A C chord diagram is shown above the staff. The strumming pattern consists of two measures. The first measure contains four quarter notes: a downstroke on beat 1, an upstroke on the 'and' of beat 2, a downstroke on beat 3, and an upstroke on beat 4. The second measure contains four quarter notes: a downstroke on beat 1, an upstroke on the 'and' of beat 2, a downstroke on beat 3, and an upstroke on beat 4. The letters 'd' and 'u' are placed below the notes to indicate downstrokes and upstrokes respectively.

This is nearly the same as the last strumming pattern, but the up strums on the 'and' of beats 2 and 4 are taken out.

First, practice getting the timing of this strumming down by just playing over one chord. As you start to feel more comfortable, throw in a chord change. For example, in the first measure you might play a C chord and then in the second measure play a G chord, as shown in the following figure.

The diagram shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. A C chord diagram is shown above the first measure, and a G chord diagram is shown above the second measure. The strumming pattern is identical to the previous figure, consisting of two measures of quarter notes with downstrokes on beats 1 and 3, and upstrokes on the 'and' of beats 2 and 4. The letters 'd' and 'u' are placed below the notes to indicate downstrokes and upstrokes respectively.

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Row, Row, Row Your Boat

This strumming pattern can be used for a lot of different songs. One song that it works perfect with is “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the song "Row, Row, Row Your Boat". Each system consists of a melody line and a strumming line, both in 4/4 time.

The first system is for the first line of the song. The melody line starts with a C chord and contains the lyrics: "Row row row your boat gently down the stream". The strumming line below it shows a pattern of four strums per measure, with the lyrics "1 and 2 3 and 4" and "d u d d u d" written underneath.

The second system is for the second line of the song. The melody line starts with a C chord, has a triplet of eighth notes for "Mer-ri-ly", then another triplet for "mer-ri-ly", followed by another triplet for "mer-ri-ly", and then a G chord for "life is but a dream". The strumming line below it shows a pattern of four strums per measure, with the lyrics "d u d d u d" written underneath.

This is the last time I include a full rhythm chart along with the lyrics. This is because, as we go on from here, the songs will continue to get more complicated, where the melody line doesn't always line exactly up with the strumming.

Don't worry about this though right now because we'll look at how each of these upcoming songs should sound with the different strumming patterns. It's important to continue to focus on making your strumming pattern as consistent and steady as possible. Continue to count out loud so you are developing your sense of timing. As you keep a steady and consistent rhythm, you start to naturally hear and feel how the melody fits over top of the strumming pattern.

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As you learn these strumming patterns, you want to be practicing them at a variety of different tempos or speeds. All these strumming patterns you are learning can be played fast and slow. So practice this song at a slow tempo first and then experiment with playing it at a faster tempo too.

How to Use Strumming Patterns Dynamically

In some songs, you can vary up your strumming pattern for different parts of the song to create dynamics. **Dynamics** can refer to how loud or soft a song gets, but it can also refer to how the rhythm might vary throughout the song. Different rhythms can create different feels that contribute to the dynamics of the song.

For “Row, Row, Row Your Boat,” let’s use strumming pattern #2 for measure 3 of the song--the “Merrily, merrily” part.

The image displays musical notation for the song "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" in 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a guitar strumming line.

- System 1:** The vocal line starts with a C chord and contains the lyrics "Row row row your boat gently down the stream". The strumming line shows a pattern of quarter notes with accents: 1, and 2, 3, and 4, d.
- System 2:** The vocal line starts with a C chord, has a triplet of eighth notes for "Mer-ri-ly", then another triplet for "mer-ri-ly", followed by "mer-ri-ly", and ends with a G chord for "life is but a dream". The strumming line shows a pattern of quarter notes with accents: d u d u d u d u d u d d u d.

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Additionally, you might try strumming louder through measure 3 to really accent the “merrily merrily” lyric.

There will be some songs where it works well to vary up your strumming pattern for a certain part in a song. This gives the song some variety that makes it more interesting for your listener.

Because of this, feel free to experiment with mixing and matching different strumming patterns in the songs we are learning. This is good!

Practice Objectives

You’ll want to focus your practice on these things before you move to the next lesson:

- learn strumming pattern #3
- practice this new strumming pattern and the old ones at different tempos
- work on “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”
- experiment with varying your strumming pattern at different parts in “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”
- continue to write out different chord progressions for strumming pattern #3

How’s it going for you? Don’t forget you can post a comment or question to this lesson in the online member’s area at anytime!