


Basic Strum Patterns


Pattern 1



Count 1 2 3 R 1 2 3 R 1 2 3 R 1 2 3 R

Count as you play strum down on each count and try to tap your foot with the count. The R stands for rest. Use this rest to change chord, but don't strum the new chord until the 1 count of the next bar. It is more important to change chords in the right place than try a fancy strum pattern and change in the wrong place. Try this pattern with chords you know, I would suggest C major to A minor as only one finger moves. The beats you are strumming are called crotchets and you are playing in four four time, that means four crotchet beats in each bar.


Pattern 2



Count 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

This is the next step. Strum down on each beat again, play slowly so as you can change chords in time for beat 1 of the next bar. Remember to try and tap your foot as you play. When you can strum and change chord without gaps move to the next pattern.


Pattern 3



Count 1 2 & 3 4 1 2 & 3 4 1 2 & 3 4 1 2 & 3 4

This pattern uses a mixture of crotchets and quavers. Keep tapping your foot 4 times each bar, and strum down each time. However, this time you need strum up on the & between beat 2 and 3.

Pattern 4



Count 1 2 & 3 & 4 1 2 & 3 & 4 1 2 & 3 & 4 1 2 & 3 & 4

This pattern is a development of the previous one Down, Down, Up, Down, Up, Down.

In practice guitar players tend vary patterns through a piece, you could try this yourself. For example in a four bar sequence you could play pattern 2 for bar 1, pattern 3 for bar 2, go back to pattern 2 for bar 3, then use pattern 4 for bar 4. This will add interest and variety to your playing.