

LESSON 4 – BASIC STRUMMING PATTERNS & RHYTHM

Title: Luc Taylor Music School – Lesson 4

Subtitle: Getting Your Strumming Hand Moving

Overview

In this lesson you will:

- Learn how to hold and use the pick
 - Learn your first down-strum and down-up patterns
 - Practice a classic pop/rock strumming pattern
 - Start building steady timing and groove
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Holding the Pick

- Pinch the pick between the side of the index finger and the pad of the thumb.
 - Let a small tip of the pick stick out (not too much).
 - Keep your grip firm enough that it doesn't fly away, but relaxed enough to move smoothly.
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Strumming Motion

- Move from the wrist and forearm, not just fingers.
 - Keep your arm moving in a steady down-up motion, like a pendulum.
 - You won't always hit every string on every motion – that's normal.
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Pattern 1 – All Downstrokes

- Count: **1 2 3 4**
- Strum down on each number.
- Practice on one easy chord, like Em or E.

- Focus on:
 - Even volume
 - Even spacing between strums
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Pattern 2 – Down & Up

- Count: **1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &**
 - Strum:
 - Down on the numbers (1, 2, 3, 4)
 - Up on the “&” between each number
 - Try to keep your arm moving constantly, like a clock.
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Pattern 3 – Classic Pop/Rock Feel (D D U U D U)

- Think in 8 counts: 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &
 - A common way to feel it:
 - Beat 1 – Down
 - Beat 2 – Down (on the number), Up (on the &)
 - Beat 3 – Up (on the &)
 - Beat 4 – Down (on the number), Up (on the &)
 - Start very slowly. Let the pattern feel natural before speeding up.
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Muting & Dynamics

- **Palm muting:**
 - Rest the side of your strumming hand lightly on the strings near the bridge.
 - Experiment with more or less pressure to get different sounds.
- **Dynamics (volume):**
 - Strum more gently for verses.

- Strum harder for choruses.
- This makes your playing sound more like a real song.

Practice Goals for Lesson 4

- Keep your strumming hand moving without “locking up”.
- Play Pattern 1 and Pattern 2 smoothly on at least two different chords.
- Begin to feel comfortable with the D D U U D U pattern at a slow tempo.