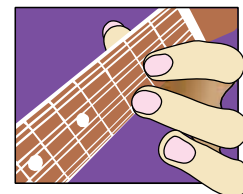




Chords 4: Accompaniment

WE'VE BEEN learning strumming and the various strumming patterns one can use. There are a couple of other accompanying techniques which are useful to know, not least because they are at once easy to achieve, and sound fantastic. Once you are confident with these techniques, apply them to the chord progressions on the back of the *Chords 1* sheet.



Bass Strum

The bass-strum method - often known by guitarists as the "dum-ching" system - is where you sound a bass string and then strum the chord. Whereas on the guitar you have a choice of three bass strings, on the mandolin because it's *always* the G string. The "dum" is the strike of the bass note, the "ching" is the sounding of the whole chord.

Form a G chord; sound the G string with a downstroke, and then lift the pick up and strum all four strings with another downstroke (see Fig.1). Get into a pattern with it: *dum-ching, dum-ching, dum-ching*, etc. Now keep up that rhythm with your right hand, but change chord every so often. Use any chord progressions you can find to practise changing chords while keeping the bass-strum up all the time.

With a change of time-signatures it's going to be slightly different. For example, with a 3/4 signature you're going to play dum-ching-ching, dum-ching-ching, and so on (Fig.2).

Fig.1

Fig.2

Arpeggio Picking

Arpeggio picking is when you pick the strings one by one instead of a single strum through all the strings. Once again, it involves forming particular patterns, the order in which you pick the strings. For example, form a G chord. Now strike the G string, the D string, the A string and the E string,

in that order and repeat a few times, trying to speed up as you do. That's about the simplest pattern. It's not easy to master straight away, but it can be very effective, and it's worth spending time on. Use downstrokes on the first three strings and an upstroke on the E string (see Fig.3).

Fig.3

With a 3/4 rhythm it sounds good to formulate a six-note pattern (Fig.4). The first 3 strings (G-D-A) will use downstrokes and the next 3 strings (E-A-D) use upstrokes.

Fig.4