



Pick Direction 1: The Golden Rule

THE TERM "pick direction" simply means using either a downstroke or an upstroke. It's a bit of a thorny subject because many people find it difficult. However, it's worth working on, because it can help down the line.

The Golden Rule

It's very simple: use downstrokes ON the beat, and upstrokes in between the beats. Not so hard. However, things can get a little more complicated.

BEATS: ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

BEATS: ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

For example, if you play the notes on the left, a lot of people will use the pattern **du du ddud** - because if you're on a downstroke on the A string and you have to next play the E string, why not just keep going down? In my opinion it's false economy, and disturbs the

natural flow of the tune. It can be more difficult when the tunes get less straightforward. For example when you have a rest at the beginning of the bar, or when there is syncopation, it might feel like you're going against the grain, but it all makes sense.

BEATS: ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Counting

It helps some people to count the beats: 1, 2, 3, 4, and to say "and" in between the beats. Exercise 1 below would be counted "one-two-and-three-four"; exercise 2 would be "one-and-and-three-and-four". Ex.3 would be a long "one" followed by "and-three-and-four-and". Play the exercises through a few times and see if you make any progress.

1 BEATS: ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

2 BEATS: ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

3 BEATS: ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

4 BEATS: ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●