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Section One

DEVELOPING RHYTHM TECHNIQUE

Since much of this book deals with various rhythms and their applications to the guitar, let's begin by going over a few basic rhythm guitar techniques.

In this section, we will focus on building a solid foundation for rhythm guitar playing. By practicing the following exercises, you will develop your right and left hands and greatly improve your rhythm chops. It's always a good idea to practice these examples with a metronome. Using a metronome can become a valuable part of developing into a great rhythm player.

16th-note basics

The first exercise is derived from 16th-note groupings and is designed to develop muting and syncopation. Strum all strings with a percussive stroke while *applying* and *releasing* pressure with the *left* hand. This will take a little practice if you are not used to it.

Learning to count these 16th-note pulses will also aid in playing the more complex rhythms found later in the book. Now fret the G major chord shape on the first four strings while muting the low E and A string with your *thumb*. You might also try fretting the low E string with the pad of your thumb while muting the A string with the *tip* à la Jimi Hendrix for a fatter sound.



Track 3

Examples 1a–1b: (16th-notes are counted 1 e & a, 2 e & a, etc.)

□ = downstroke V = upstroke

EXAMPLE 1a

G

EXAMPLE 1b

G