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Strumming the Strings

To *strum* means to play the strings with your right hand by brushing quickly across them. There are two common ways of strumming the strings. One is with your fingers, and the other is with a pick.

Strumming with a Pick

Hold the pick between your thumb and index finger. Hold it firmly, but don't squeeze it too hard.

Strum from the 6th string (the thickest, lowest-sounding string) to the 1st string (the thinnest, highest-sounding string).



Start near the top string.



Move mostly your wrist, not just your arm. Finish near the bottom string.



Strumming with Your Fingers

First decide if you feel more comfortable strumming with the side of your thumb or the nail of your index finger. The strumming motion is the same with the thumb or finger as it is when using the pick. Strum from the 6th string (the thickest, lowest-sounding string) to the 1st string (the thinnest, highest-sounding string).

Strumming with the thumb



Strumming with the index finger



Important:

Strum by mostly moving your wrist, not just your arm. Use as little motion as possible. Start as close to the top string as you can, and never let your hand move past the edge of the guitar.

Time to Strum!



Track 3

Strum all six strings slowly and evenly.

Count your strums out loud as you play.

Repeat this exercise until you feel comfortable strumming the strings.

	strum	strum	strum	strum	strum	strum	strum
	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Count: 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Skip to My Lou



G⁷

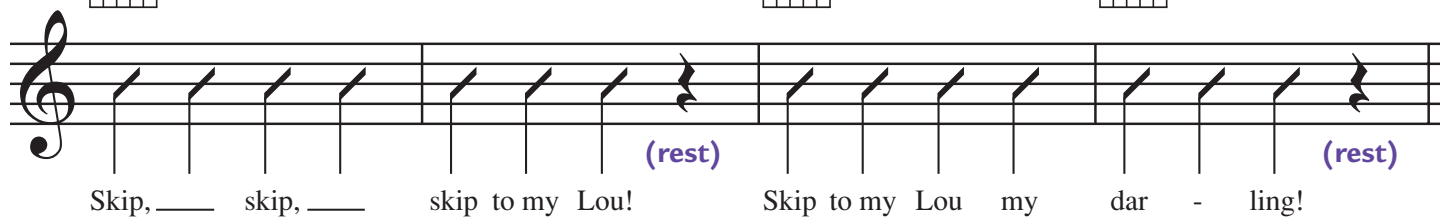
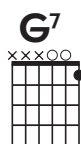
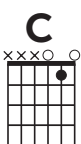
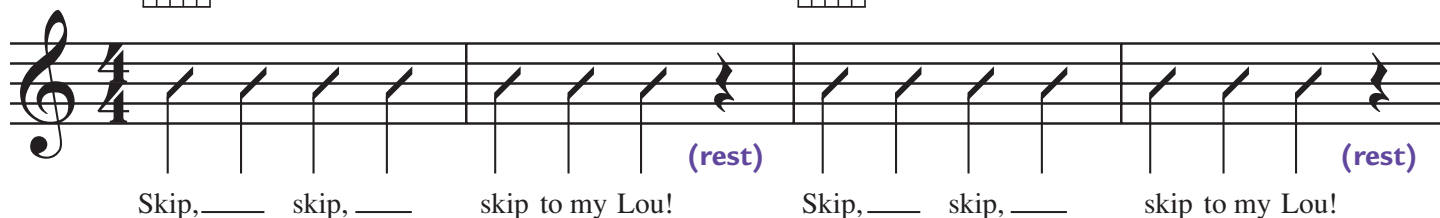
C

Practice Tip

To change quickly from G⁷ to C in the last two measures, just move your finger from the 1st string to the 2nd string—that's not very far.

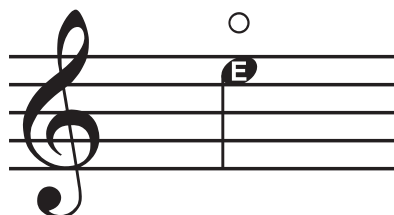


Track 12



Notes on the First String Introducing E

A note sitting on the top space of the treble clef staff is called E. To play this note, pick the *open* 1st string (meaning without putting a left-hand finger on it).



Hear
this note!

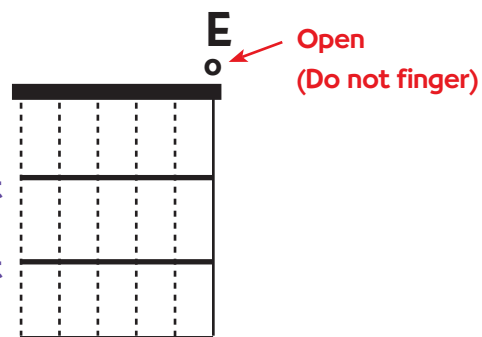


Track 27

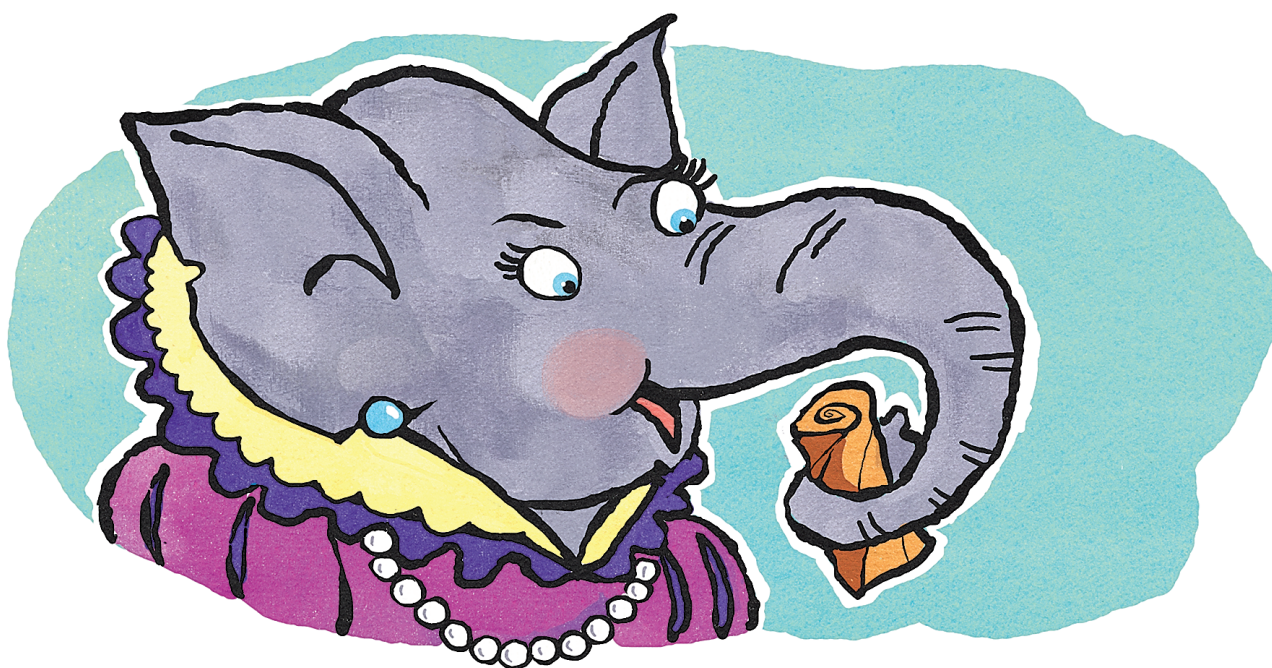
1st fret

2nd fret

3rd fret



Elizabeth, the Elephant

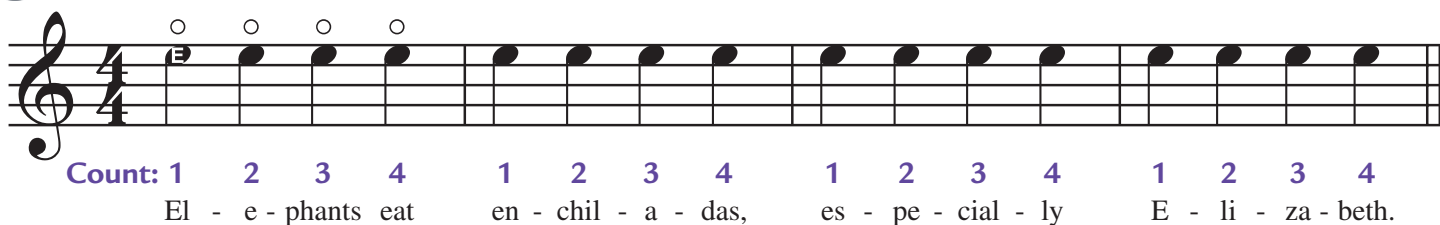


Picking

- Play each E slowly and evenly, using a *downpick* motion. We will use only downpicks for the rest of Book 1.
- Use only a little motion to pick each note, just like strumming.



Track 28



Notes on the Third String Introducing G

Hear
this note!



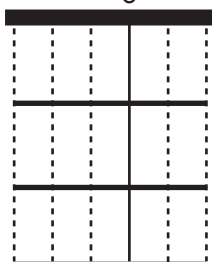
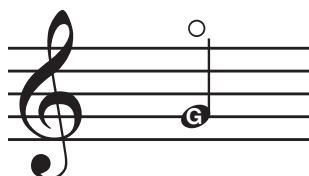
Track 59

A note on the second line of the staff is called G.

Pick the 3rd string open.

Open

G



Track 60

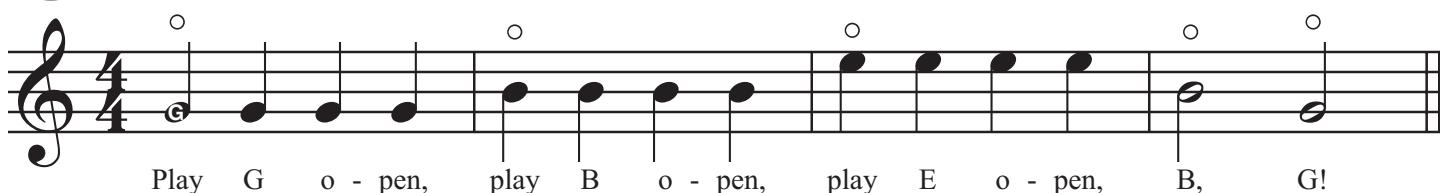
G Warm-up



Three Open Strings



Track 61



Little Steps and Big Leaps



Track 62

