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## Guitar Lesson - String Muting

By Bill McRea

String muting is another technique that can help you define your own personal style. There are two types of string muting, the palm mute with your pick hand and the string mute with your fret hand. They serve very different purposes, but both are important to good guitar playing.

Fret-hand muting is particularly important when playing chords and power chord. The purpose is to use part of your finger tips and fingers to mute the strings you don't want to include in the chord being played. For example the C majors chord is played from the 5th string to the first, your are not supposed to hit the 6th string. I use the tip of my 3rd finger that is holding down the 5th string 3rd fret to rub up against the sixth string thereby muting the string. I use this same technique with power chords, but in addition I use the fat part of my index finger to lightly lay across strings 1,2,3. with just enough pressure to mute the strings. The beauty is if you get a little wild with your pick it still sounds right. Fret-hand muting is used extensively.

Palm muting is more commonly used in distorted rock songs. The technique involves resting the heel of your pick-hand palm on the strings as you pick. Most people rest it directly over the bridge, but you can experiment with different positions for different sounds. Also try different levels of pressure to regulate the level of muting. This technique creates a percussive, muffled or chunky sound. Combine fast down strokes with palm muting in various patterns with moderate distortion for sounds similar to Metallica or other metal bands.

Both fret hand muting and palm muting are very individual and stylistic techniques. Incorporate practicing this technique every time you pick up your guitar and before long you'll master this necessary skill.

Bill McRea is the publisher of

<http://www.guitarwarehouse.com>

and

<http://www.kansasfans.com>

. Bill

has been an owner of a successful guitar retailer and a guitar teacher.

## **Your Free Acoustic Guitar Lesson**

**By Anna Rowe**

Here is a free acoustic guitar lesson to help you improve your guitar playing skills quickly.

This guitar learning technique will teach you how to fingerpick folk–style, but in a Latin rhythm in the key of A. This Latin rhythm has eight quick beats to the measure, and is accented on the first, the fourth, and the seventh beats.

This guitar lesson will focus on using your right hand, and your thumb will play the accented beats. Your fingers will follow. Finger number one, the index finger, is to pluck the third string on beats two, five, and eight, and fingers two and three will pluck the second and first strings together on beats three and six.

In the following acoustic guitar lesson, you will chord an A for the first sample. To keep it simple, let's take the beats one at a time...

Acoustic Guitar Lesson – 7 Steps to Chord an A:

- 1) First, the thumb plucks the open A string for a bass note.
- 2) Next, finger one plucks the third string, which is sounding an A.
- 3) Then fingers two and three pluck strings two and one together. These two notes will be a C–sharp and the open top E string.
- 4) Now the thumb immediately plucks string four, which is an E and works as an alternate bass string. That's beat 4.
- 5) Now beat five is just like beat two, with finger one plucking string three.
- 6) Beat six is just like beat three, with fingers two and three plucking the top two strings.
- 7) On beat seven, use the thumb to pluck the third string, then finish up with fingers two and three plucking the top two strings again.

When you've practiced the acoustic guitar lesson above a few times, it will become second nature to you to pluck this Latin rhythm.

## Guitar Lesson – String Muting

Your next part of this acoustic guitar lesson is to try the same finger picking pattern using an E chord. Since the open sixth string is your bass note, you'll pluck it on beat one. Follow through with the rest of the measure in the same pattern, except your thumb plucks the fifth string on beat four and the fourth string on beat seven. When you've mastered the E chord the acoustic guitar lesson moves on to the D chord. With D, you can just use the fourth string for your thumb-plucked bass note each time.

Acoustic Guitar Lesson Tip:

Here's a fast acoustic guitar lesson secret for making the above finger-picking style of guitar playing a little fancier. Chord an A. Here's how...

When you pluck the fourth beat of the measure lift your chording finger – it's the ring finger on your left hand. Lift it and then press it while plucking. You'll get a little slur at the start of the note. This sounds great when you build speed up. Try the same little trick when playing the key of E, too. It will be finger two that you will be lifting.

Finally in this free acoustic guitar lesson for you, put everything together in a chord sequence. Play A for two measures, then D for two measures. Play E for two measures, then back to D for two measures, then A to finish up.

Article by Anna Rowe. Visit her

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site to get guitar playing tips and

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