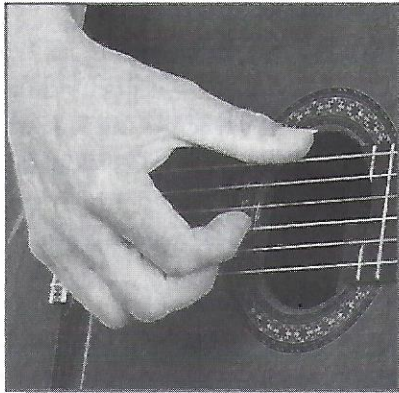
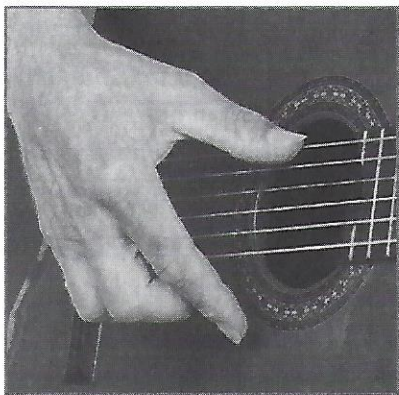


There are a variety of fingerstyle strum techniques. The most basic and perhaps the easiest to learn is the **index finger strum**. I recommend that you avoid strumming with the thumb since it often leads to the development of bad right-hand playing positions. Place the forearm on the edge of the guitar just above the bridge base.



**fig. 1** *Finger strum preparation*

Strum *down* across the strings with the nail of the index finger. The motion of the strum is primarily a finger motion, fig. 1 and 2. This type of strum is often called a *brush*, *scratch*, or a *finger strum*. Some guitarists prefer to use the index finger and the middle finger when strumming down across the strings.

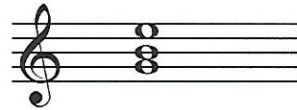


**fig. 2** *Completion*

When two or more notes are played at the *same time*, it is called a **CHORD**. The notes are placed above and below each other on the music staff and are played together (simultaneously), fig. 1.

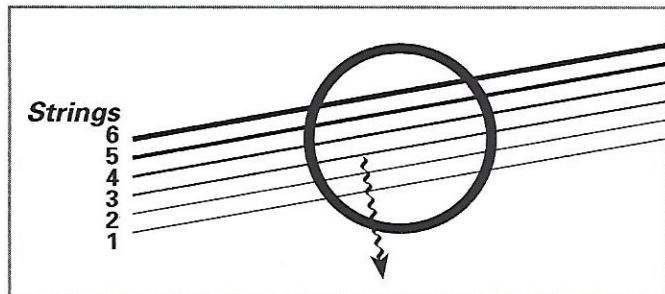
There are several techniques used to play chords. You can **STRUM** the strings with a pick or with the fingers. You can **PLUCK** the strings with the thumb and fingers. It is useful to learn all of the various right-hand techniques.

**fig. 3** *Chord*



## Basic Strum No. 1

The **STRUM TECHNIQUE** is the easiest to use when you are just beginning to learn how to play chords. Using one of the techniques just described, strum the open 3rd string and then continue *downward* across the 2nd and 1st strings, fig. 2.



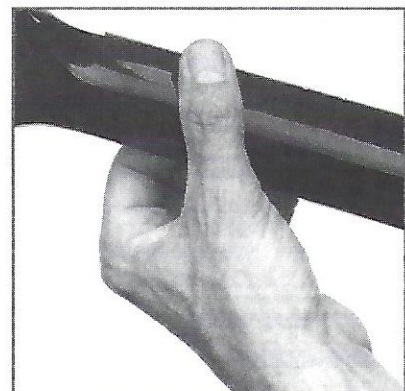
**fig. 4** *Strum technique*

## Left-Hand Position Chord-Playing

The **LEFT-HAND POSITION** will vary slightly with each individual chord. However, there are some basic principles that apply to all chord playing. The *finger nails* must be short so that you can depress the string near the tip of the finger, fig. 5. On many chords, you need to arch the fingers to avoid touching adjacent open strings. To achieve a good sound, and to avoid "buzzing," you need to depress the string as close to the fret wire as is possible. Buzzing occurs when the fretting finger is too far from the fret wire. The *palm* of the hand should not touch or cradle the neck of the guitar and the *thumb* needs to be placed on the back of the neck of the guitar so that it can oppose the fingers in a grip position, fig. 6. How far the thumb extends beyond the back of the guitar depends on the width of the neck and the size of the hand.



**fig. 5** *Finger position*



**fig. 6** *Thumb position*