

# Better Strumming With Dynamics



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Key: All

Tempo: Any

Chords needed: C, Am

Video Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auXc076MKvI>

Before explaining how to use dynamics we should talk quickly about what dynamics are. In general dynamics are small little changes that you make your strumming to give it more power, flavor, or groove, and this is done by subtracting or increasing the force used when strumming. Let's look at some examples of how that is used.

Strum Pattern 1 - Use C chord, it is best to learn these ideas with basic harmonies.

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &  
C  
D D D D U

Now we are going to do the same thing but we will emphasize the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> beats and back of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &  
C  
< <  
D D D D U

- if you see < that means that you will need to put an emphasis on that note or strum.

Example two - Old faithful

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &  
C  
D D U U D U

Now with this example we can see that not all emphasis will always be on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> beat, here we will place the emphasis on the 2<sup>nd</sup> beat to give it a nice country bounce.

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &  
 C  
 <  
 D D U U D U

Example 3 - Reggae style bounce in 1/16<sup>th</sup> time.

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a  
 C  
 D U D U D U D U D U D U D U

This strum with no dynamics is BORING! Watch what happens when we add dynamics to the offbeat (this is called syncopation)

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a  
 C  
 < < < <  
 D U D U D U D U D U D U D U

Example 4 - Off beat action latin style

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a  
 C Am  
 D D D D U D U

Because the change is on the offbeat we will emphasize that to make it pop.

1 e & a 2 e & a 3 e & a 4 e & a  
 C Am  
 < <  
 D D D D U D U

Lastly I'd like to illustrate how this also works with riffs, let's look at this riff played with no dynamics and then how much of a change it makes by just emphasizing just one note!

A|-----5--2-----|  
 E|3-5-3-----5--3-|  
 C|-----|  
 G|-----|

<  
 A|-----5--2-----|  
 E|3-5-3-----5--3-|  
 C|-----|  
 G|-----|

Listen to how your artist use this and experiment with the ideas in songs that you already know, you'll be amazed how these little changes will add so much depth and color to your songs.