

Learn to Play Guitar the Easy Way

Module 4

This is a basic introduction to picking. For a mind-blowing example have a listen to “Duelling Banjos” featured in the movie Deliverance. Sure, you’re playing guitar, but both instruments have strings, and the exercises in this module aren’t as fast, or as complex.

I’ve chosen two numbers which I think are not only good to practise; but they also show how The Rolling Stones stepped away from rhythm and blues to bring back the traditional values of folk music in their popular song “Ruby Tuesday” It is doubly useful because it changes from picking to strumming throughout.

Two more songs for your introduction to some serious picking:

- 20 The Power and Passion of Folk**
- 21 Right-hand fingering for picking “House of the Rising Sun”**
- 22 Song Sheet for “House of the Rising Sun”**
- 23 Change of Style and Mood in the Same Song with “Ruby Tuesday”**

Published by aseasonofhappiness.com



Copyright © 2017 All Rights Reserved

This tutorial is published FREE of charge for the education of students and is not to be offered for sale, or reproduced in any form intended for commercial purposes without the written permission of the copyright holders.

The song lyrics used in this tutorial are the property of the copyright holders and are subject to the current laws relating to said copyright. Permission from the respective copyright holders is required before any of the aforementioned are performed in public, or included on any recording or in any publication which is to be offered for commercial sale.

The Power and Passion of Folk

Folk songs deliver a message which is often a strong and passionate one. On the surface, some seem quite lulling and pleasant like the Kingston Trio's "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" But the words actually tell a sad tale of flowers ending up on the graves of dead soldiers! The number I've chosen, however, is powerful, hits hard and is definitely uncompromising.

Many artists have covered "House of the Rising Sun", but I don't reckon you can go past the different tempos in the two versions I've selected for this next exercise. I bought Bob Dylan's very first vinyl in 1961 when he was just a lad (so was I), and his rendition blew me away. It was strummed, powerful; and Bob's raw vocal painted a very graphic picture of the theme and its consequences.

In 1964, Alan Price changed the original words, because his re-vamp was thought to be more saleable; and I think he was right which is why I've used his version. With Eric Burdon growling out the same tune but new words; and with The Animals backing him, House of the Rising Sun became a big hit. The main difference for me was Alan Price's musical arrangement. He had the lead guitar picking the chords as single notes, from base to top, then top down to base, repeated throughout the song.

I've treated the song sheet like the previous ones, so that you can strum along. This can be as simple or complex as you like. Have a listen to Dylan's attack and try copying it; but just remember: his words are pretty much the original ones, not those I've used.

As a guide to The Animals' treatment of picking the notes individually, have a look at the diagrams below. This is a simplified pick, counting one, two, three, four, five, six for each chord and picking a separate note on each count. I have numbered the strings in the order they are to be picked. Just bear in mind, **this is the picking order** and not the accepted numbers of guitar strings. To see what I mean, have a look at a set of new strings and you'll find they are numbered from 1 (top E string) to 6 (Base E string). Note also that each set of 3 picks is one beat and these six chords take up only 3 bars of 4/4 time.

Back to the exercise. You will be picking the individual strings with a plectrum or a thumb-nail (if you haven't chewed it off already!); up then down in the numbered order:

Beats: one two three four one two

Am C D

Beats: one two three four one two

Dm Am E

Obviously, the chord changes above are only an example of how to pick. Just get the hang of each one and use this page to practise moving from one to the next without breaking step.

Right-hand fingering for picking House of the Rising Sun

Here is your guide to The Animals' treatment of picking the notes individually, have a look at the diagrams below. This is a simplified pick, counting one, two, three, four, five, six for each chord and picking a separate note on each count. I have numbered the strings in the order they are to be picked. Just bear in mind, **this is the picking order** and not the accepted numbers of guitar strings. To see what I mean, have a look at a set of new strings and you'll find they are numbered from 1 (top E string) to 6 (Base E string). Note also that each set of 3 picks is one beat and these six chords take up only 3 bars of 4/4 time.

You will be picking the individual strings with a plectrum or a thumb-nail, up then down in the numbered order:

Beats: one two three four one two

Below the neck are three chord diagrams:

- Am**: Fingering 3, 2, 1 on strings 3, 4, 5. Open strings 1, 2, 6. String 6 is marked with an 'x'.
- C + open 5th**: Fingering 3, 2, 1 on strings 3, 4, 5. Open strings 1, 2, 5. String 6 is marked with an 'x'.
- D**: Fingering 3, 2, 1 on strings 2, 3, 4. Open strings 1, 5, 6. String 6 is marked with an 'x'.

Beats: one two three four one two

Below the neck are three chord diagrams:

- Dm**: Fingering 3, 2, 1 on strings 1, 2, 3. Open strings 4, 5, 6. String 6 is marked with an 'x'.
- Am**: Fingering 3, 2, 1 on strings 2, 3, 4. Open strings 1, 5, 6. String 6 is marked with an 'x'.
- E**: Fingering 3, 2, 1 on strings 1, 2, 3. Open strings 4, 5, 6. String 6 is marked with an 'x'.

And this is a variation of the C chord. Only 2 strings are fingered, while the 5th string is played open.

If you wish to use this extra string, simply start the first 3 picks from the 5th (1,2,3), then play 4, 5 and 6 from either the top string, or the next down (the note C).

C + open 5th



House of the Rising Sun (Traditional; arrangement and new words by Alan Price)

Intro: Am C D Dm Am C E
Am C D Dm Am E Am E

E Am C D Dm
There is a house in New Orleans
Dm Am C E
They call the Rising Sun;
E Am C D Dm
And it's been the ruin of many a poor boy;
Dm Am E Am E
And God I know I'm one.

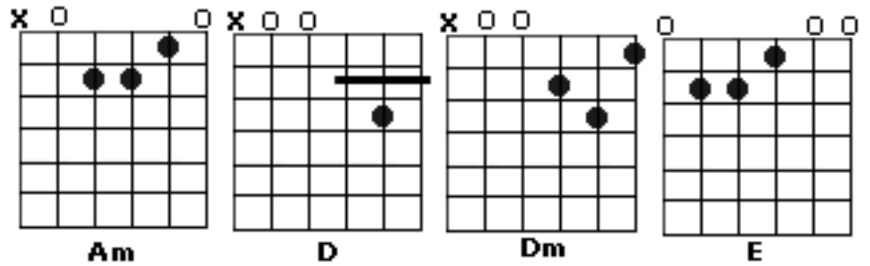
E Am C D Dm
My mother was a tailor,
Dm Am C E
She sewed my new blue jeans.
E Am C D Dm
My father was a gamblin' man
Am E Am E
Down in New Orleans.

E Am C D Dm
Now the only thing a gambler needs
Dm Am C E
Is a suitcase and trunk;
E Am C D Dm
And the only time he's satisfied
Dm Am E Am E
Is when he's on a drunk.

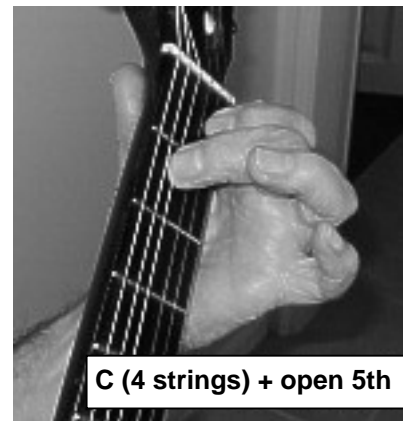
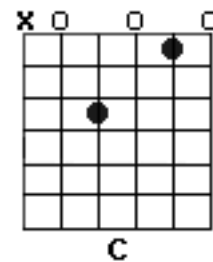
E Am C D Dm
Oh mother, tell your children
Dm Am C E
Not to do what I have done:
Am C D Dm
Spend your lives in sin and mise-ry
Dm Am E Am E
In the House of the Rising Sun.

E Am C D Dm
Well, I got one foot on the platform
Dm Am C E
The other foot on the train:
E Am C D Dm
I'm goin' back to New Or-leans
Dm Am E Am E
To wear that ball and chain.

E Am C D Dm
Well, there is a house in New Orleans
Dm Am C E
They call the Rising Sun;
E Am C D Dm
And it's been the ruin of many a poor boy;
Dm Am E Am
And God I know I'm one.



These are all chords you should know by now. The major difference will be C. The chord in the picture was only intended to be played with the top 4 strings, but in this song I think it sounds better if the 5th open string is added.

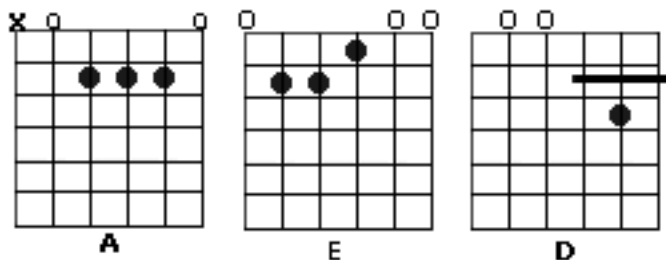


Try strumming right through the song. If you can access the 1961 Bob Dylan recording, that should give you some inspiration.
Next, give the picking a go. Start with the simple 1,2,3 like the practice version; then have a listen to The Animals' rendition. You'll notice that some of the picks are run through quicker in the middle of the chord.
You can also mix it up a bit by picking each chord in the verse, but heavy-strumming the final E chord before going back to picking for the next line.

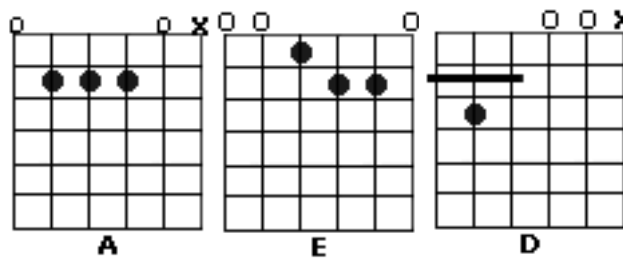
Next, for something kind-of similar is the Rolling Stones' "Ruby Tuesday" - pick plus strumming for a change of pace.

Change of Style and Mood in the Same Song

Left-hand Fingering



Right-hand Fingering



Ruby Tuesday (Keith Richards & Mick Jagger)

D E
 She would never say where she came from.
 D E
 Yester-day don't matter if it's gone.
 D E
 While the sun is bright,
 E D E
 Or in the darkest night,
 E A E
 No one knows, she comes and goes

Chorus:

A E D A
 Good-bye Ruby Tuesday.
 A E D A
 Who could hang a name on you?
 A E D
 When you change with every new day,
 E ----- single strum ----- E (pause)
 Still I'm gonna miss you.

D E
 Don't question why she needs to be so free:
 E D E
 She'll tell you it's the only way to be.
 D E
 She just can't be chained
 E D E
 To a life where nothings gained,
 E A E
 And nothings lost, at such a cost.

Chorus:

D E
 "There's no time to lose", I heard her say:
 D E
 Catch your dreams before they slip away.
 D E
 Dying all the time,
 D E A
 Lose your dreams and you will lose your mind:
 A E
 Ain't life un-kind?

Chorus X 2

Pick the chords in the verses. You can choose how you do this, but I prefer to use fingers (nails) for the top three strings and alternate the base notes with the thumb nail.

The chorus needs some oomph, so strum these chords with a back-beat.

Notice that "Ruby" starts on the second chord D, and doesn't return to the A Key it is written in except on the last line of each verse and in the chorus.

I reckon Keith and Mick took a heartfelt concept and weaved some pure magic with this one.

Apparently, the Stones originally figured this song was a bit wimpy for inclusion in their repertoire. Later, they put it in and it was a huge success.

Listen to their recording for a lesson in how to tell a story about a girl who drifts in and out of people's lives; an enigma who leaves behind an indelible impression. The right words with just a few simple chords can get the message across.

Keith Richards picks the chords in the verses, while Mick Jagger sings the words as he reflects on the free spirit called Ruby Tuesday.

The chorus is a contrast, strummed and sung with gusto because, though she's going now, Ruby has made such an impact while she was around that she'll never be forgotten.

Some songs even change the pitch part way through, like Kenny Rogers with The Gambler – Next.