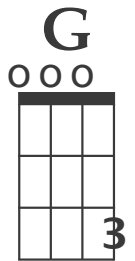


Holding and Strumming a G Chord

A chord is a combination of two or more notes that are played at the same time. Sometimes they blend together harmoniously, as **consonant chords**, and sometimes they blend together **less** harmoniously, as **dissonant chords**. And of course there is a whole range of chords from the most consonant to the most dissonant, and what may sound consonant to you may sound dissonant to me.

The **G** chord, which is probably the most common chord and is also among the easiest to play, is perfectly consonant, a very harmonious little chord. You'll see **why** it is called "**G**" in the scary theory portion of the book. The diagram to the right shows that the 3rd finger is holding the 1st string at the 3rd fret and that the 2nd, 3rd and 4th strings are left to ring open (witness the little "O's" on top.)

(Apparently a picture is worth about 25 words.) By the way, we don't really distinguish musically between fretted and unfretted notes, regarding them all as equal components of the chords we play. And we usually find ourselves strumming 4-note chords, some of which will have all 4 strings fretted.



So why is the 3rd finger used instead of the 1st, 2nd or 4th? One consideration in forming chords is **what other chords** we are likely to visit. For our current purposes, the 3rd finger is the one that allows the easiest access to the chords that are played most frequently with **G**, like **C** and **D7**; you'll see other fingerings for **G** later.

Strumming. I don't think it really matters what tool you use to strum a chord. As a child, I used a floppy felt pick, but nowadays it is more the style to play with the fingers unadorned. Use the Index and/or the Middle Finger to strum **Down** and **Up** with nail and/or skin in either or both directions. You can also work in your Thumb somewhere, either **Down** or **Up**, with nail or skin. But whether you prefer to use a plastic pick, a buffalo nickel or a stale Funyun, I have nothing to say.

Look at the 4 following Down-Up patterns that we will apply to the **G** chord. We'll talk about each of these over the following pages:

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