

Once the 3rd and 4th strings are locked, use the 3rd string in the same way to lock in the 2nd string notes (the A notes), and the 2nd string to lock in the 1st string notes (the E notes), all at the 7th fret.

This is not the simplest thing to master. I am still known to turn the wrong knob, throwing out of tune the **very** string I had just worked so diligently to get **into** tune. And you need to be patient enough to be sure that the **beating sound has dissipated**. And it seems as if even the tiniest twist of the knob makes a big difference in pitch. And always adjust the **open** string, never the fretted string. Maybe that's obvious.

Fat Fingers. We all have them, and by now it is clear that they need to be jammed into these microscopic spaces on the fretboard. My own fingertips are these huge, hulking **things**, so I can empathize.

Strumming Some Chords

While scales, tunes and melodies are vital to the practice of music, I think we should begin our Mando Mission learning to play some simple **chords** in the common **keys**. Chords are pretty and some of them are pretty easy to play. Strumming chords will help you develop your **rhythm** and prepare you for playing single note leads.

A **CHORD** is a combination of two or more notes played at the same time. Sometimes the notes blend harmoniously, as **consonant chords**; other times they blend **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 sounds dissonant to me may sound consonant to you.

A **KEY**, for now, can be thought of as a grouping of chords, a **Chord Family**, whose members are related by a common **scale**, or sequence of notes. More about scales will come later. For now, you are probably aware that there are 7 letters in the Musical Alphabet. Let's pick one of them, **G**, and look at the **G** chord.

Play This Chord. The diagram tells you to place your **1st** finger at the 2nd fret of the 2nd string, and your **2nd** finger at the 3rd fret of the 1st string. There's an "o" over the 3rd and 4th strings that tells you to let those strings ring "o-pen."

Take hold of the pick they sold you when you bought your mandolin and execute a downward stroke across the strings, making sure that all 4 notes are ringing. **Bluegrass enthusiasts:** We'll be looking at **CHOP** chords later when we take things Up The Neck.

