

Rhythm Words - 16th Notes

A lot of music has the beat (where you tap your foot) subdivided into two parts. That's counted 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +, so that we have a sound that corresponds with every possible rhythmic subdivision in the bar. This is called 8th note feel or strumming because there are eight possible places in the bar where a thing can happen whether it's a strum, a note, etc.

It is also quite common for the beat to be subdivided into four equal parts instead of two. This is counted 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a etc, and means we have a maximum of 16 subdivisions in a bar, not 8, hence 16th note strumming. This means you have four strums per foot tap instead of two.

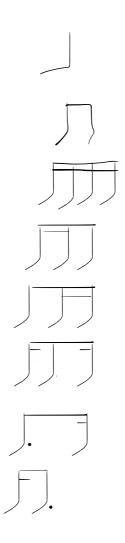
In this type of strumming, each of the RWs now fit into ONE beat, instead of two.

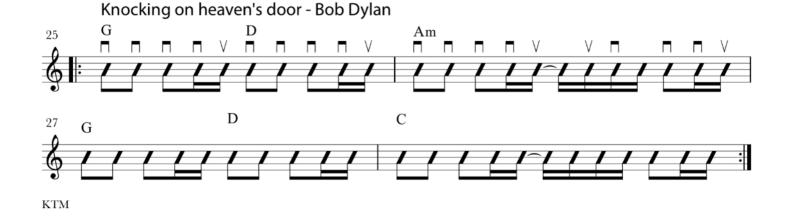
At this point, if you're not 100% confident with the notation and reading/play of the first set of rhythm words, don't worry. There will be opportunities to review that.

The very useful thing is that in terms of gesture and what they sound like, you have already played the configurations, and you can still understand the patterns we'll play in terms of different combinations of RWs while you get used to the notation.

Jot down how each RW is notated when each adds up to one beat:

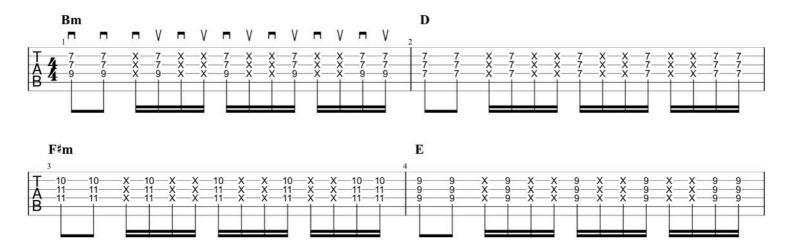
	1 Down	e Up	& Down	a Up
1	X			
2	X		x	
3	X	x	x	x
4	X	x	x	
5	X		x	Х
6	X	x		Х
7	X			X
8	X	X		





Knocking on Heaven's Door is a RW 2 + 5 + 2 + 5 in the first bar, then a 2 + 5 + 3 + 5 in the second bar. The mark connecting the end of the RW 5 to the beginning of RW 3 in the second bar is called a tie, and it means we don't strike the first of the four strums but simply move our right arm down to catch the upstroke.

Get Lucky - Daft Punk



This can be played with a capo on the second fret and the chords Am, C, Em and D instead of Bm, D, F#m, E if you have yet to start exploring barre chords.

The crosses represent the percussive sound you get when you hit the strings but they're muted. To get this effect, press down so the chords can ring out when you see the tab numbers in, and unsqueezed your hand a bit when you see the crosses so you get that percussive muting. It doesn't sound like all that much when it's slow, but it sounds excellent when you get to the point of playing it a bit faster.

Don't be surprised if this is a bit more involved that some patterns you've looked at - it takes a while to get this technique sounding good but it's totally worth it.

Tangled Up In Blue - Bob Dylan

A lot of Bob Dylan's style is this very propulsive way of strumming. Both A to Asus and A to G/A are chord changes that don't require a lot of movement; G/A is just the open B G and D strings with the open A in the bass. Essentially, just take the fingers off where you had them for the A chord, hit the open A string and then D G B and you'll get the G/A.

Pencil in which RWs each figure is. For example, the first bar is RWs 1, 4, 3 and 3.

Where there's a bar that starts with two over four, that just means we have one bar with two beats instead of four in it. Apart from that, every other bar has four beats in it.

Again, take the chords and strumming separately if you are in the first few months of your playing as when the strumming gets faster, there is less time available to switch chords. It is still very valuable to start developing your understanding as chord speed will come soon enough if it's not quite there yet. If you haven't let got into barre chords but want to play this, just play the three thinnest strings for the F#m chord and use finger 1 to press down on all the frets or fingers 1 2 3.

