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## LESSON 2: THE FAN STROKE

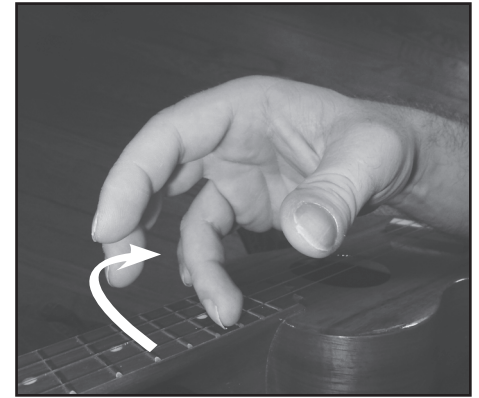


The *fan stroke* is one of many special strums made famous by George Formby in many films. It is a type of triple strum that also creates a visual effect for your audience. The best way to learn it is to break it down into three steps.

### STEP 1

Start with your hand in a normal strumming position, ready to do a downstroke on all four strings. Your fingers should be curled in slightly, as they normally would be. The first part of the fan stroke could be done with the pinky (as Formby did), or the ring finger, which makes a more consistent sound. We will use the ring finger here.

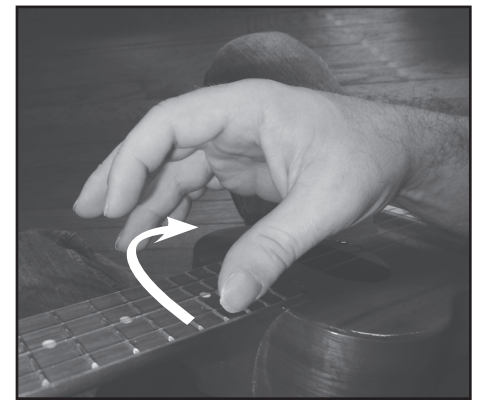
Use your ring finger (labeled in music as “*a*”) to make a downstroke across the strings, somewhere over the fretboard. As you make the downstroke, allow your fingers to fan out in a circular motion. If your uke was a clock, and the neck was at 12 o’clock, the path of your ring finger would be roughly 10:00 to 2:00. As you make the stroke, let your thumb stick out—you’ll need it next.



Step 1: Ring-finger downstroke.

### STEP 2

Follow the ring-finger downstroke with a downstroke of the thumb (*T*). Follow the same path of 10:00 to 2:00 as in Step 1, allowing the thumb motion to push the rest of your hand farther around the circle. Your fingers will naturally curl back into your palm.

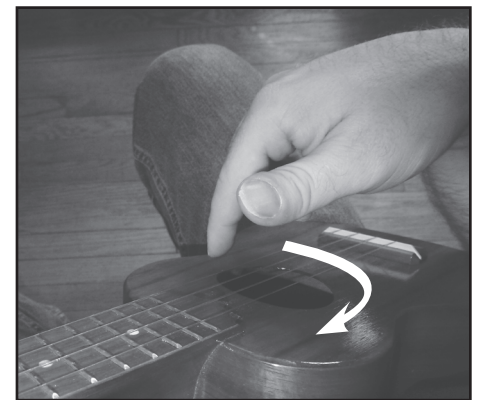


Step 2: Thumb downstroke.

### STEP 3

Finish the fan stroke with an upstroke of your index finger (*i*), following a path of 4:00 to 7:00 around your imaginary clock. This part of the stroke is hard to see from the front and helps create the illusion that you are making magical sounds happen just by whirling your hand around the strings in a circle.

The fan stroke can be used like a triple strum to make various rhythms, or it can be done in a solid stream of fast triplets for a tremolo or rolling effect. Try practicing the fan stroke in slow quarter notes, then in triplets. Make sure each part of the strum is a distinct rhythmic sound.



Step 3: Index-finger upstroke.

7 VIDEO EXAMPLE

*a T i a T i a T i a T i a T i a T i*