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# Strumming the Strings

To *strum* means to play the strings with your right hand by brushing quickly across them. There are two common ways of strumming the strings. One is with your fingers, and the other is with a pick.

## Strumming with a Pick

Hold the pick between your thumb and index finger. Hold it firmly, but don't squeeze it too hard.

Strum from the 6th string (the thickest, lowest-sounding string) to the 1st string (the thinnest, highest-sounding string).



**Start near the top string.**



**Move mostly your wrist, not just your arm. Finish near the bottom string.**



## Strumming with Your Fingers

First decide if you feel more comfortable strumming with the side of your thumb or the nail of your index finger. The strumming motion is the same with the thumb or finger as it is when using the pick. Strum from the 6th string (the thickest, lowest-sounding string) to the 1st string (the thinnest, highest-sounding string).

**Strumming with the thumb**



**Strumming with the index finger**



### Important:

Strum by mostly moving your wrist, not just your arm. Use as little motion as possible. Start as close to the top string as you can, and never let your hand move past the edge of the guitar.

## Time to Strum!



Strum all six strings slowly and evenly. Count your strums out loud as you play.

Repeat this exercise until you feel comfortable strumming the strings.

strum strum strum strum strum strum strum strum  
/ / / / / / / /  
**Count: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8**

# Skip to My Lou



G<sup>7</sup>

C

## Practice Tip

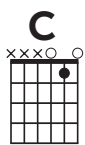
To change quickly from G<sup>7</sup> to C in the last two measures, just move your finger from the 1st string to the 2nd string—that's not very far.



Track 12



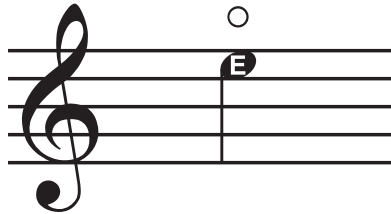
Musical notation for the first line of the song. It consists of a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a staff with notes and rests. The lyrics are: Skip, \_\_\_ skip, \_\_\_ skip to my Lou! (rest) Skip, \_\_\_ skip, \_\_\_ skip to my Lou!



Musical notation for the second line of the song. It consists of a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a staff with notes and rests. The lyrics are: Skip, \_\_\_ skip, \_\_\_ skip to my Lou! (rest) Skip to my Lou my dar - ling!

# Notes on the First String Introducing E

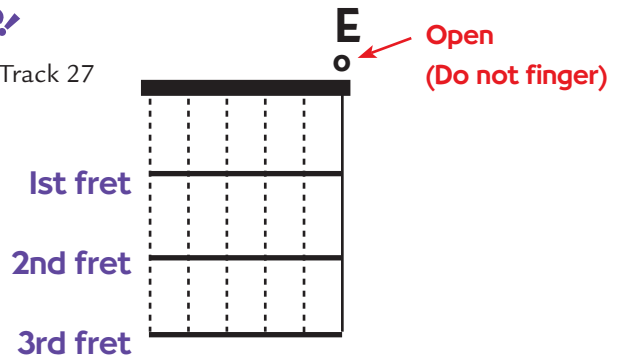
A note sitting on the top space of the treble clef staff is called E. To play this note, pick the *open* 1st string (meaning without putting a left-hand finger on it).



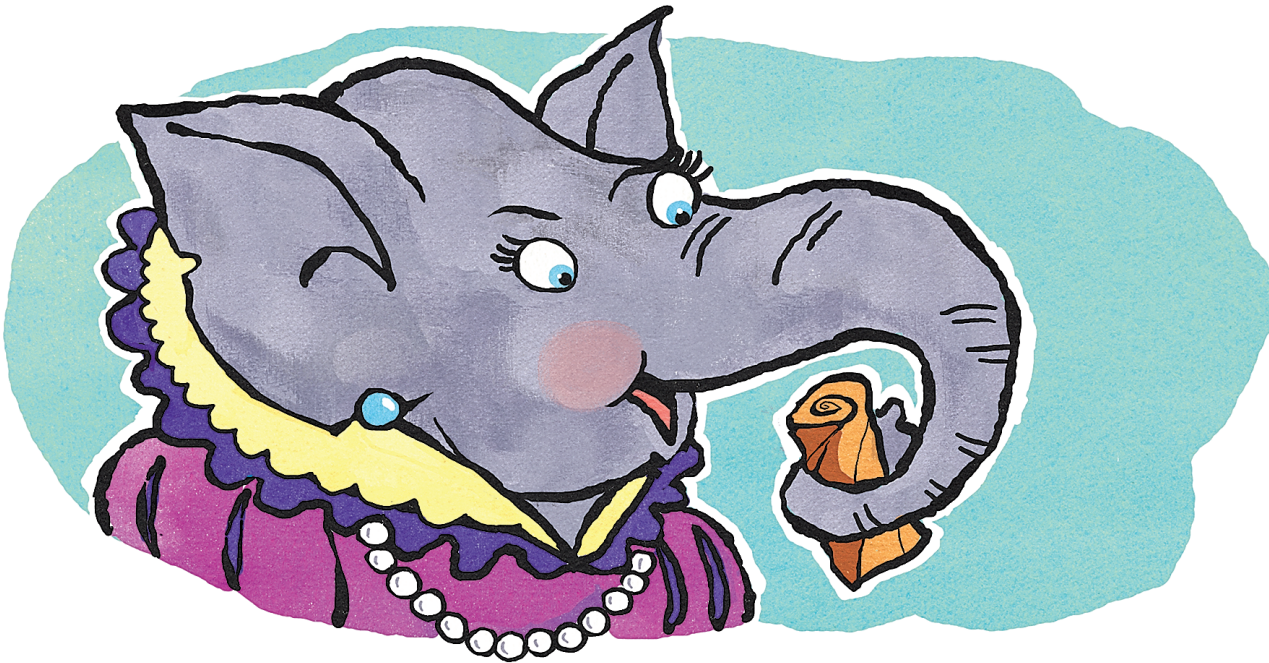
Hear this note!



Track 27



## Elizabeth, the Elephant

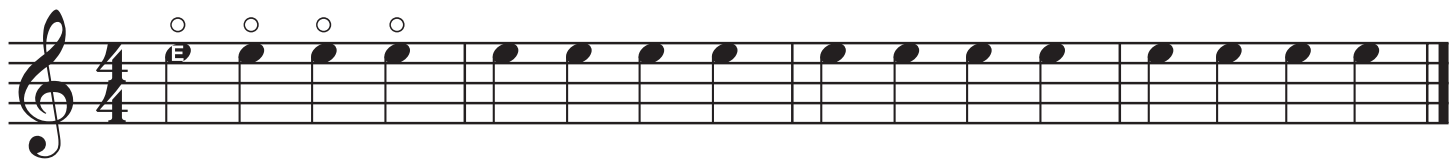


### Picking

- Play each E slowly and evenly, using a *downpick* motion. We will use only downpicks for the rest of Book 1.
- Use only a little motion to pick each note, just like strumming.



Track 28



Count: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4  
El - e - phants eat en - chil - a - das, es - pe - cial - ly E - li - za - beth.

# Notes on the Third String

## Introducing G

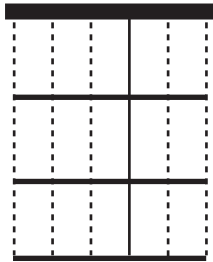
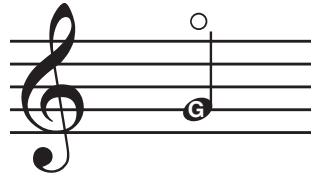
Hear this note!



A note on the second line of the staff is called G. Pick the 3rd string open.

Open

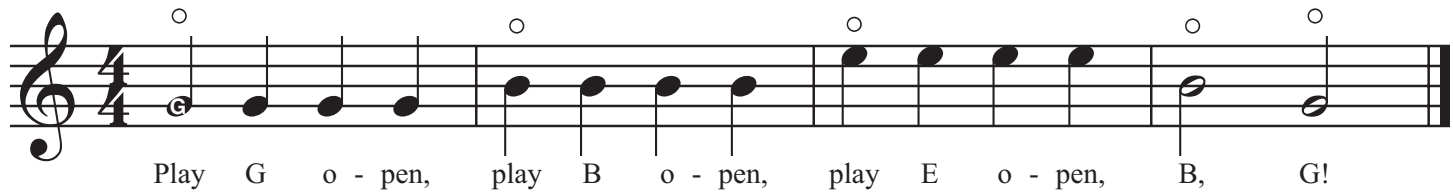
G



### G Warm-up



## Three Open Strings



## Little Steps and Big Leaps

