

PRELIMINARIES

Three Basic Strum Patterns

↓ = strum down

↑ = strum up

Fretboard Fellowship uses three basic strum patterns:

- If the time signature is 4/4 , use:

↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑
1	2	+	3	+	4	+

- If the time signature is 3/4 , use:

↓	↓	↑	↓	↑
1	2	+	3	+

- If the time signature is 2/4, use:

↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑
1	2	+	1	2	+

A Mighty Fortress is our God on page 32 uses a 1/4 time signature, in which case strum down each chord once.

How To Read The Song Sheets

The song sheets are set up as follows:

1 - Time Signatures

A time signature is given in each song that corresponds to one of your three strum patterns. Every chord in the song gets one strum pattern. For example, *Firm Foundation* has a **2/4** time signature:

FIRM FOUNDATION

(A-B-A-B-A)

2/4 Intro: G - G - C - D - G - G - C - D

A

G G C D
Je - sus, You're my firm foundation,

G G C D
I know I can stand secure,

A 2/4 time signature means every chord in the song is strummed for two beats.
ex.)

G	G	C	D
↓ ↓ ↑	↓ ↓ ↑	↓ ↓ ↑	↓ ↓ ↑
1 2 +	1 2 +	1 2 +	1 2 +

It does not matter how close or how far apart the chords are from each other. Every chord, unless otherwise indicated, gets a 2/4 strum pattern.

When chords have a **(3)**, **(2)**, or **(1)** next to them, this simply means the chord is strummed for however many beats are signified by the number in the brackets. For example:

O WORSHIP THE KING

3/4 Intro: G**(2)** - D**(1)** - G - C - D

The G chord is strummed for two beats, the D chord is strummed for one beat, and the following chords (G - C - D) are all strummed for three beats.

example:

G		D	G		C		D											
↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	↓	↑			
1	2	+	3	1	2	+	3	+	1	2	+	3	+	1	2	+	3	+

2 - Song Form Designations

Many songs will have song form designations. These appear directly below the title of the song. *Firm Foundation* has a song form designation of **(A-B-A-B-A)**.

FIRM FOUNDATION

(A-B-A-B-A)

2/4 Intro: G - G - C - D - G - G - C - D

A

G G C D
Je - sus, You're my firm foundation,

G G C D
I know I can stand secure,

See page for the whole song.

The song is made up of two sections, sections:

A **B**

A begins with: "Jesus, You're my firm foundation", and ends with: "I put my hope in Your holy Word"

B begins with "I have a living hope", and ends with: "Of this I'm sure"

(A-B-A-B-A) means:

Play through section **A**, then **B**, then **A** again, the **B** again, and finish off with **A**.

3 - Intro

The introduction of a song is played first. Introductions establish the tempo and key of a song. The easiest way to create an intro is to use the first or last few chords of the song. It helps if the last chord in the intro is the first chord in the song.

4 - Capo Designation and Key

To play a song in its original key, or a key that is in an easier voice range, capo designations are provided. Capo designations tell you what fret to place the capo on. For instance, (capo IV) means place the capo across the fourth fret. Keys have been adjusted whenever a capo is used. For more information on keys, see the section entitled Transpositions.

5 - Verses

Some songs will have several verses. The verses of a song are written the same way you would find them in a hymnal. The top line is always the first verse, the second line is always the second verse, the third line is always the third verse, and so on.

6 - Refrains and Choruses

Some songs have Refrains and Choruses. They are both very similar. A refrain is a section of music sung after every verse. A chorus is the same thing, only it can be sung all by itself.

Changing Chords in Rhythm

You need to be able to change from one chord to another chord throughout a song. The trick, however, is to switch chords in rhythm, without falling behind in a song.

You may have found it hard to keep a steady rhythm when making difficult chord changes. Generally, this is the result of the amount of time it takes to get from one chord to the next. This is when a *Leave Time* comes in handy.

Strum Leave Time Exercise

What we are going to do is strum your chord as usual, but when you get to the third beat, lift your fingers and prepare them for the next chord, all while maintaining a consistent strum on the open strings.

G			C			D		
↓	↓↑	↓↑	↓	↓↑	↓↑	↓	↓↑	↓↑
1	2 +	3 +	1	2 +	3 +	1	2 +	3 +
		open			open			open

It sounds a bit strange, but this is exactly how one smoothly changes from one chord to the next.

When you are comfortable with this exercise, begin to shrink the *Leave Time*. Now it won't sound so strange.

G			Em			C			D		
↓	↓↑	↓↑	↓↑	↓	(continue)						
1	2 +	3 +	4 +	1	2 +	3 +	4 +	1	2 +	3 +	4 +
			open			open			open		open

Leave Time works great when you have to switch to a harder chord, like **B7**.