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THE THUMB ROLL

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +
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The Thumb Roll is a fantastic strum more commonly referred to as a triplet or triple strum. This is because you get three strikes per beat when playing it. Once you get the hang of it, you will find it difficult not to use it in almost every song you play.

TRIPLETS (*Thumb Roll*)

A universal strum and one you will hear in many ukulele recordings. George Formby was an advocate for all kinds of triplet strumming and managed to thumb roll at warp speed often inverting the roll and doing all kinds of weirdly wonderful flips with it.

INSTRUCTION: Remember to keep your index finger and thumb fairly relaxed and twist your wrist instead of waving your arm up and down. Try dampening the strings when you begin practicing so you can concentrate on rhythm.

- **Step 1:** As you strum downwards on the strings with your index, allow your thumb to remain upright and then follow it through with a twist of the wrist. You should get two strums sounding here. ★
- **Step 2:** After your thumb strums down on the strings, allow it to catch up and rest gently on your index. ★
- **Step 3:** Then for the up stroke use your index to catch the strings for the third and final strum. ★

There are numerous ways to achieve the thumb roll effect but for now we will concentrate on just these three examples:

- Example 1: *The Thumb Roll in its natural form as a triplet* ↓↓↑
- Example 2: *Thumb Roll followed by an extra down stroke with the index* ↓↓↑↓
- Example 3: *The Thumb Roll with an upstroke with the index to start and the down stroke to end* ↑↓↑↓

EXERCISE: Try inserting the thumb roll as illustrated on the strumming patterns below:



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