



# DAMPENING TECHNIQUE

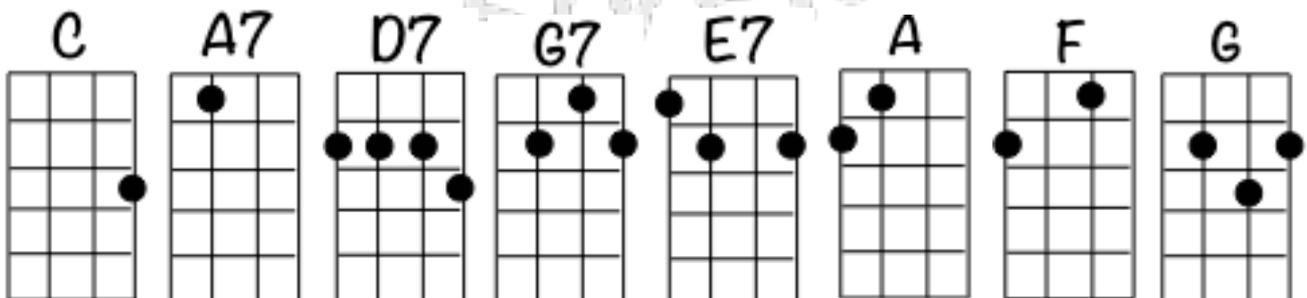
The dampening technique can also be referred to as 'choking' or left hand muting. To master this technique, you should start off slowly and make sure the ringing length is not too short nor too long. This is a great technique to use for achieving rhythmic strumming and works well as part of arrangements with two or more parts.

We will be exploring 3 options for dampening as follows:

1. **DAMPENING OPEN CHORDS:** This is probably the trickiest method because as well playing the open chord shapes, you need to use what fingers you have free on your fretting hand (*usually the ring finger or pinky*) to gently rest onto the strings to cut off the ringing sound after you have struck the chord. Try not to apply too much pressure otherwise other unwanted notes may ring out. The key is to relax the fingers onto the strings gently and lift them off in time for the next strum.
2. **DAMPENING BARRED CHORDS:** The second method shows you how to dampen chords that utilise all four fingers, usually barred chords or those fancy 7ths. All you need to do is simply relax the fingers on the left hand once you have struck the chord, but don't take them off the strings completely. This allows the notes to be cut short.
3. **ALTERNATIVE START POSITION:** The third way to achieve this technique, especially using open chords, is to gently place your unused left hand fingers over the strings before strumming and simply remove them as you strike each chord before gently placing them back down onto the strings again.

**TASK 1:** Try the above techniques using the following chords shapes and notice how the different shapes require the different methods of dampening.

Just use down strums and alternate between thumb and index finger strumming. The thumb should bounce off the top 2-3 strings but the index should hit all strings.



**TASK 2:** Once you get used to the technique for each chords try playing them all consecutively using two bars each and then one bar each.