



Right Hand for Beginners: Lesson 2

By Christopher Schlegel

When starting to use a pick it is best to place it between your thumb and index finger. Later, more advanced techniques can call for other fingers. But don't worry about that until you've got the basics down. When using a pick it is important to hold the pick tight enough so that it will not slip out of your fingers. It is also important to not hold it too tightly. Otherwise you are wasting effort and your fingers will cramp up.

It is important to "choke up" high enough on the pick that your thumb and index finger have covered most of it leaving just enough sticking out in order to strike the strings. When striking the strings with a pick or your fingers do not "dig in" too far. This will only make it harder to get to the next string (or back over the same string in the opposite direction). Striking too hard or striking with the pick too deeply in between the strings also can cause the string to vibrate too excessively and make the note sound too sharp (too high in pitch). When strumming, it is important not to "dig in" too far also. This is best accomplished by working on "lightly grazing over" the strings instead of hitting them too hard or heavily.