

## Strumming the Chords

By Christopher Schlegel

The backing track will start with six hi-hat clicks. This is called the count in. The purpose is to let you know that the song is about to begin, how fast the tempo (the pace) is, and exactly when it will begin. Since the song is in 6/8 time, this means that we are counting 6 over and again: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 1, 2, and so on. Listen for the 6 count in clicks and then when the next "downbeat" comes along, notice that the bass plays an A, you are supposed to strum the A minor chord along with this note!

Count 6 more times and the bass plays another note, a C. You are suppose to play the C major chord with this note! Count 6 more times and the bass plays another note, a D. You are suppose to play the D major chord with this note! Count 6 more times and the bass plays another note, an F. You are suppose to play the F major chord with this note!

See how this works yet? :)

Each chord gets a full measure, or count of 6 beats. The chords, in order go like this:

A minor  
C major  
D major  
F major  
A minor  
C major  
E major  
E major

At this point we get kind of a repetition with a slightly shortened ending.

A minor  
C major  
D major  
F major  
A minor  
E major

Then the whole thing starts over!

At first you might want to play each chord. Then immediately, mute it with your picking hand to stop the notes from ringing. Then immediately change hand positions to get ready for the next chord. Don't play it yet, but just get your hands in position and ready. When the next downbeat happens, then play the next chord. Again, mute that chord with your picking hand to stop the notes from ringing. Then immediately change hand positions to get ready again for the next chord. Don't play it yet, but just get your hands in position and ready. When the next downbeat happens, then play that next chord. Repeat this process for the whole progression.

Eventually you will want to let each chord ring for as long as possible before muting the notes, switching chords and playing the next chord on the next downbeat.

Notice that even on the E major, the only chord that gets repeated, you should use this muting technique. It is very good practice and even sounds better because it emphasizes the rhythm. Even though the chord doesn't change, it is a new measure and downbeat. Stress this fact by muting the chord and solidly strumming it again on that next downbeat.

Go slowly and go evenly at first. A metronome is a great tool for this purpose. You might want to practice it with a metronome at a slow tempo first. The backing track is 115 BPM (Beats Per Minute). So, if you are having trouble keeping up with it at first, don't rush yourself or get mad.

Turn on a metronome at (for example) 60 BPM and play the picking pattern at that slower tempo. Gradually move the tempo up as you can successfully, confidently play along.

Ready to try it with the backing track?

Click on the audio file at the bottom of this page. And listen for the six hi-hat clicks that count in the song. Strum the A minor chord right after the hi-hat count in. Strum each chord at the beginning of each measure and you are on your way.

If you have trouble keeping up with the backing track, then turn it off! Don't torture yourself. Take some time to practice the physical motions of changing chords a bit longer. Try again with the metronome at slower speeds. When you've practiced a bit longer, then give it try.



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Be patient with yourself and remember this is supposed to be fun!

# "House of the Rising Sun"

## Simple Strumming Arrangement

Moderate ♩ = 115

Music Traditional

A min C D F A min C E E

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

TAB

A min C D F A min E

9 10 11 12 13 14

TAB