

TABLE OF COTENTS

Clawhammer ukulele basics	1
On our way to our first clawhammer song	3
What exactly is “boom cha-ka”?	
Step 1: the “boom” (ex. 1-16)	
What is the thumb doing in the meantime?	
Step 2: the “cha” (ex. 17-25)	
Step 3: the “ka” (ex. 26-28)	
We accompany songs - but much cooler than before!	17
<i>Will the Circle Be Unbroken</i> (ex. 29-31)	
Overview over the most important chords and how to use them in <i>clawhammer</i>	
We play clawhammer solos!	23
Exercises 32-39	
Solo pieces strictly using the <i>boom cha-ka</i> pattern	
<i>Old MacDonald Had a Farm</i>	
<i>London Bridge Is Falling Down</i>	
<i>Hänschen klein</i>	
The index finger moves on: more melody less cha-ka	32
<i>Old Cowboy</i>	32
<i>Skip to My Lou</i>	34
Let’s play some easy clawhammer tunes!	36
<i>Buffalo Gals</i>	36
<i>The Wheels On the Bus</i>	37
<i>In the Highways</i>	38
<i>I’ll Fly Away</i>	40
<i>Two Dollar Bill</i>	42
Let’s speed up! Focus on the left hand	
The hammer-on	43
Exercises 40-50	
<i>Turkey In the Straw</i>	47
<i>Oh Susanna</i>	48
The pull-off	49
Exercises 51-62	
<i>Buffalo Gals</i>	52
<i>Dirty Old Pants</i>	53
The slide	54
Exercises 63-65	
<i>Cripple Creek</i>	55
<i>The Leaving of Liverpool</i>	56
<i>Hop High Ladies</i>	57
And now what?	58

CLAWHAMMER UKULELE BASICS¹



What exactly is „clawhammer”?

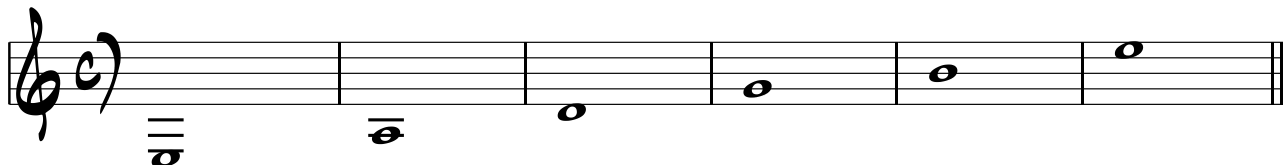
„Clawhammer” is a playing technique with origins in banjo playing. It is most common in folk music from the American South-East. *Clawhammer* style is often used in the songs and *fiddle* tunes in Appalachian Music. It is a form of song accompaniment that picks up certain elements of the lead voice and combines them with a rhythmic pattern. There are also many solo *clawhammer* tunes. If played well, it can develop a unique and irresistible groove. To get a first impression of the *clawhammer* sound, the songs of banjo players *Mike Seeger* and *Dirk Powell* are a great starting point. Artists like *Aaron Keim*, *Jere Canote* or *Richard Hefner* demonstrate what ukulele players can do with the *clawhammer* technique.

What do the uke and the banjo have in common?

In a nutshell: Both instruments are tuned in a strange way (at least to European ears). In order to understand why, we should first take a look at a conventionally tuned guitar. Strummed from top down, the strings start with the lowest note and end with the highest one – makes sense, right?



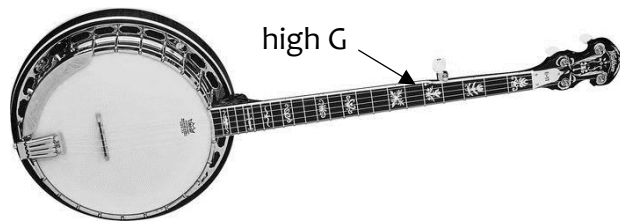
E A d g b e'



¹ You can find the video for this chapter on <http://www.tinyurl.com/ukefire1-1>.

Looking at the ukulele and the banjo, things are a bit different. At the top, you start with a high G, followed by the lower strings:

Banjo:



Ukulele:



This way of tuning stringed instruments is called „re-entrant”. Its origins lie in physical circumstances. Early ukulele and banjo builders depended on natural strings made from sheep or cow intestines and often it was impossible to manufacture those in a shape that was thick enough to make a low G string. Therefore, they simply used a thinner string and tuned it an octave higher, to a high g. And that’s when the magic happened: Many musicians used this „make-shift solution” and developed special playing techniques to coax sounds out of their instruments that are impossible to produce on a conventionally tuned instrument. We have finally arrived at *clawhammer*! This technique requires the right thumb to play the magical high G string very often and very rhythmically – and thus creates the unique *clawhammer* sound. Which also means you can’t *clawhammer* a uke with a *low G string*. Sorry!

Clawhammer is only possible on a ukulele with a high G string. You can also play it on one with a low G, it just doesn’t sound good.



What is *clawhammer* used for?

Clawhammer is essentially a slightly more sophisticated way of accompanying songs that can enhance a ukulele player’s strumming stock with an unusual and very rhythmic color. If desired, this accompaniment can be expanded with the help of melodic elements so that now and then a verse can be presented instrumentally. This changes up things and makes the song more fun. Many people even use *clawhammer* style for ukulele solo pieces, no singing at all. It works!

I demonstrate this based on the song *You Are My Sunshine* in the video. Check it out and then come back here.

Now you know what *clawhammer* is? So let’s get started!

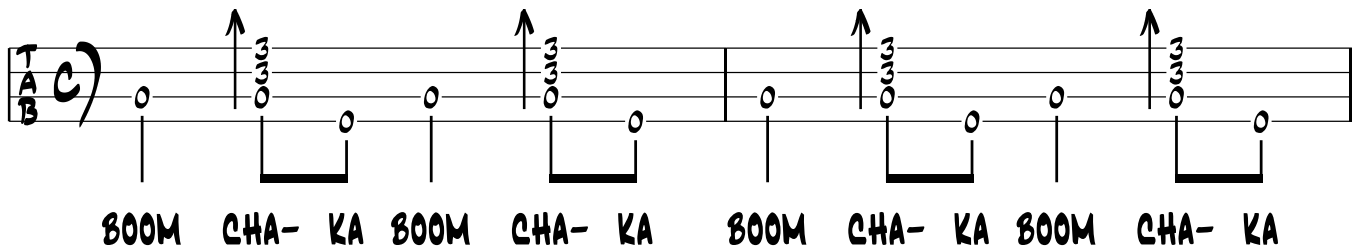
ON OUR WAY TO OUR FIRST CLAWHAMMER SONG

What exactly is „boom cha-ka”?²

Every *clawhammer* piece is based on the same basic structure: the “boom cha-ka”. In the US it is often referred to as *bum-diddy*³. You might know this groove from many Johnny Cash songs. On the first beat of a bar, the bass plays the *boom* (a quarter note), drums take the second beat and divide it in two eighths, the *cha-ka*. Same with third and fourth beat. This makes the song roll on groovily. If you want to understand what I mean, I recommend Johnny Cash’s *Folsom Prison Blues*.



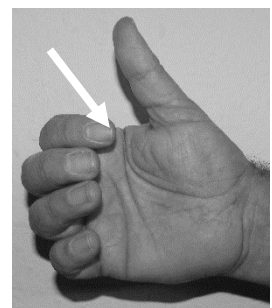
In *clawhammer*, this basic groove is transferred to the various strings of the ukulele. Over the next few chapters we will start by taking a closer look at the three individual syllables *boom*, *cha* and *ka* and practicing them carefully. After that we will piece them together and voila: The *clawhammer* groove will magically appear:



Don’t try playing this pattern yet, it won’t work. Just a little more patience, please!

Step 1: the „boom”

The *boom* is principally played with the index finger (footnote: In TABs, you’ll find the index finger marked with an “i”.) However, it is not picked conventionally. The string is rather struck from the top and is hit with the side of the fingernail. You can see the right spot in the picture on the right.



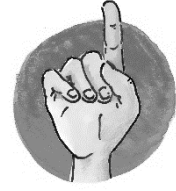
It’s important to hit only that one single string, neatly and fully. For that it is necessary to completely pull through and that the index finger stops at the string below the one that’s been struck. It rests there for a little while before doing the next *boom*.

The hand stays in a position similar to the way you would hold it to thumb a ride throughout all this. You can also imagine that you are holding a hammer all the time.

² You can find the video for pp. 3-7 on <http://www.tinyurl.com/ukefire1-2>.

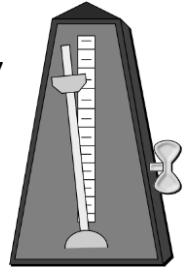
³ I use the term *bum-diddy* for the “double thumbing”, a technique that you learn in vol. 2 of *Ukulele on Fire*.

The term „*clawhammer*” comes from this position of the hand. It resembles a claw and should never be changed while playing. The fingers largely stay in their positions and under no circumstances should be stretched out. You mustn’t let go of the hammer! The movement comes from the forearm and wrist, not the fingers.



How to practice exercises 1-11 for fast progress:

- Always use a metronome. Please start as slowly as possible! I suggest 80 bpm. Play one *boom* for every two clicks of the metronome. Your target speed is 200 bpm.
- Increase your tempo only when your movements are really neat. Increase it in steps of 5 bpm. Keep a practice journal of your progress.
- Go for a steady rhythm, consistent volume and clear sound.
- Always watch the videos carefully to really understand what’s going on!



The *boom* is only done on the C, E and A string. The high G string is played by the thumb (for now).

EX. 1

UKULELE TAB C) [: 0 0 | 0 0 | 0 0 | 0 0]

METRONOME C) [: x x x x | x x x x | x x x x | x x x x]

TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC

EX. 2

UKULELE TAB C) [: 0 0 | 0 0 | 0 0 | 0 0]

METRONOME C) [: x x x x | x x x x | x x x x | x x x x]

TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC

In exercise 3, the index finger can't stop its movement on a string simply because there is none. Nevertheless, you should fully complete the *boom*. You can stop your fingernail on the body of the uke. Most *clawhammer* players do it like that. Additionally, it results in a nice percussive effect.

EX. 3

TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC

Tip: The right hand's movement should not simply be top to bottom. The strumming hand should also move towards the body of the uke. Imagine strumming into the ukulele, not parallel to it. Knock towards the ukulele belly, just like on a door!



EX. 4

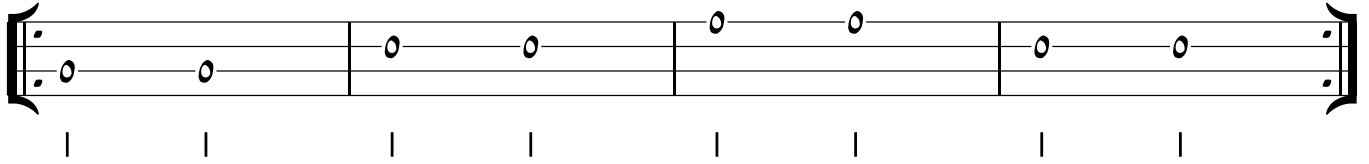
TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC

EX. 5

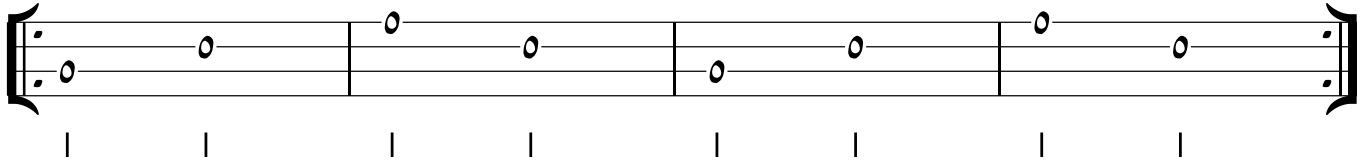
TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC ETC. ...

EX. 6

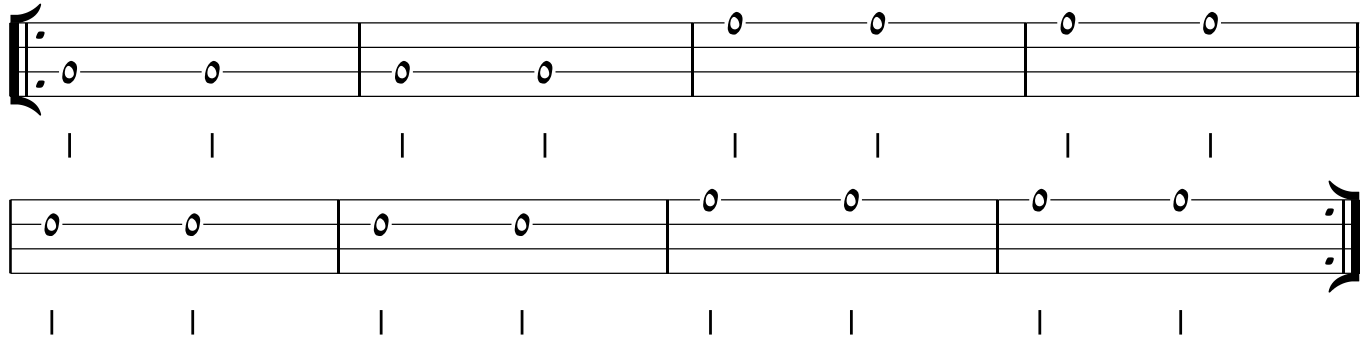
Ex. 7



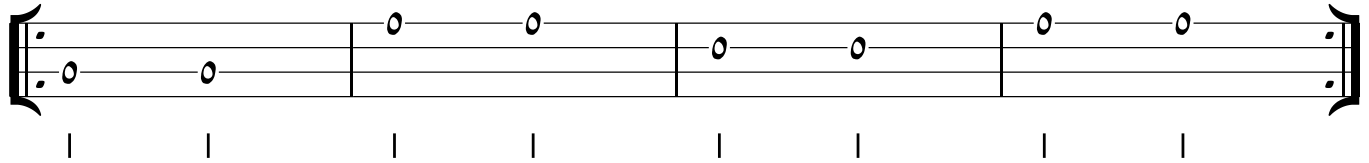
Ex. 8



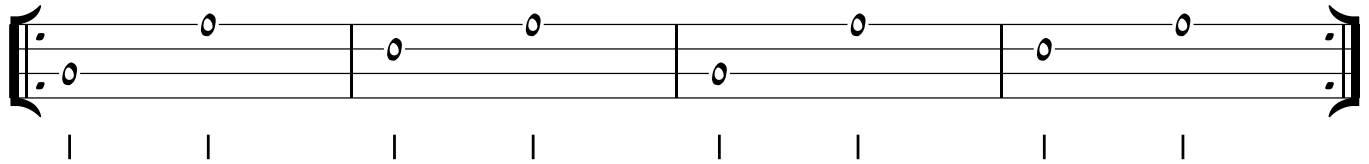
Ex. 9



Ex. 10



Ex. 11



Some artists (e.g. Richard Hefner) use the middle finger for this movement. Try it! If this feels better to you than the index finger, there's nothing wrong with that. Use the finger that feels best to you!

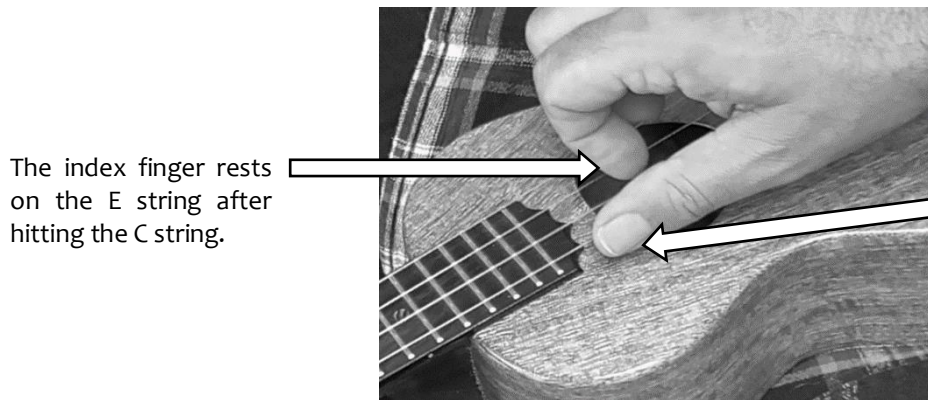


What is the thumb doing in the meantime?

This question is really essential! I've already hinted at the thumb frequently playing the high G string. In order for this to happen smoothly and with no unnecessary movements, the thumb has to be as close as possible to the G string at all times.

In practice, we achieve that by letting the thumb come to a rest on the high G string whenever the index finger plucks a string. Banjo players call that the "thumb rest".

Index and thumb touch their strings simultaneously. The index plucking its string, the thumb only touching the G string. At the end of the *boom*, both the index finger and the thumb come to a short rest on their respective strings before moving on to the next *boom*. Look here:



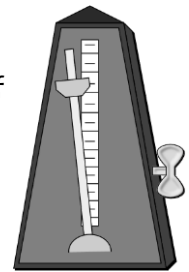
The index finger rests on the E string after hitting the C string.

The thumb rests on the high G string after the index finger has hit the C string. It got in touch with the G string when the index plucked the C string.

Sounds easy, but in practice it is a little tricky. That's why I'd recommend the following: Have another go at exercise 1 on page 4. This time, focus on resting your thumb on the high G string every time your index finger hits a string. This takes a lot of patience. So take your time and don't lose your confidence – it'll finally come, I promise! Start at 80 bpm. Slowly increase the speed. When you're comfortable playing exercise 1 at 200 bpm, you can continue with exercises 2-11.

How to practice the *thumb rest* in exercises 2-11 for fast progress:

- ♪ Play exercises 2-11 slowly, I suggest 80 bpm. Play one *boom* for every two clicks of the metronome. Your target speed is 200 bpm.
- ♪ **Concentrate on putting the thumb on the G string at the same time.**
- ♪ Increase your tempo only when your movements are really neat. Go for steady rhythm, even volume and clear sound.



Never forget to rest your thumb on the high G string with every hit! Throughout the next chapters you will see why that is so vital. And something else: Singing along to your playing helps you memorizing the melodies and hitting patterns. (That's a scientifically proven fact!)

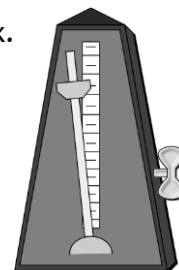




To get used to the *boom*-motion, you should simply play all the melodies you can think of. But instead of picking them as usual, use your right index finger's fingernail plucking the strings from above. Here are some recommendations⁴:

How to practice ex. 12-16 for fast progress:

- ♪ Are you sure that you can play ex. 1-11 at 200 bpm? If not, don't start practicing ex. 12-16. Take your time, be patient!
- ♪ The *boom* is a complex motion. You won't master it in a day. Take your time!
- ♪ Practice the *boom* on a regular basis. Every day for at least 15 minutes. Don't practice two hours on Monday, then doing nothing on Tuesday and Wednesday. Every day a little bit, ok?
- ♪ Start each exercise as slowly as possible. Consider my bpm suggestions.
- ♪ Make sure that you only hit ONE string at a time. Listen closely: Does it sound full and round? All booms should have the same volume.
- ♪ Don't forget the thumb! Does it really rest on the G string after each *boom*? Make sure it does!
- ♪ You should be able to play ex. 12-16 at the suggested target speed before you go on with the "cha" on p. 11.



EX. 12: ODE TO JOY (BEGIN AT 60 BPM, TARGET SPEED: 200 BPM)

Musical notation for Exercise 12: Ode to Joy. The notation consists of five systems of a four-line staff with notes and fingerings (0, 1, 2, 3) and rhythmic markings (TIC TIC TIC TIC) below. The first system has four measures: (0, 0), (1, 3), (3, 1), (0, 2). The second system has four measures: (0, 0), (2, 0), (0, 2), (2, 2). The third system has four measures: (0, 0), (1, 3), (3, 1), (0, 2). The fourth system has four measures: (0, 0), (2, 0), (2, 0), (0, 0). The fifth system has four measures: (0, 0), (2, 0), (2, 0), (0, 0). The notation ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

⁴ You can find the video for exercises 12-16 on <http://www.tinyurl.com/ukefire1-three>.

on our way to our first *clawhammer* song

In exercise 13, I introduce a new way of working with the metronome. Most of the time we play one note with each click. These are *quarter notes*. The last notes in bar 2 - 4 have two clicks, these are *half notes*. The very last note of the exercise is a *whole note*, it takes four clicks.

EX. 13: MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB (BEGIN AT 40 BPM, TARGET: 100 BPM)

0 2 0 2 | 0 0 0 0 | 2 2 2 2 | 3 3 |

TIC TIC TIC TIC | TIC TIC TIC TIC | TIC TIC TIC TIC | TIC TIC TIC TIC

0 2 0 2 | 0 0 0 0 | 2 2 0 2 | 0 |

TIC TIC TIC TIC | TIC TIC TIC TIC | TIC TIC TIC TIC | TIC TIC TIC TIC

As you should have a feeling by now how a metronome is used for uke practice, I will stop including the clicks in the TABs. The melodies in ex. 14-16 are well-known and I won't have any further theoretical explanations as they aren't necessary for *clawhammer*. For those of you who like traditional notation, I included a score.

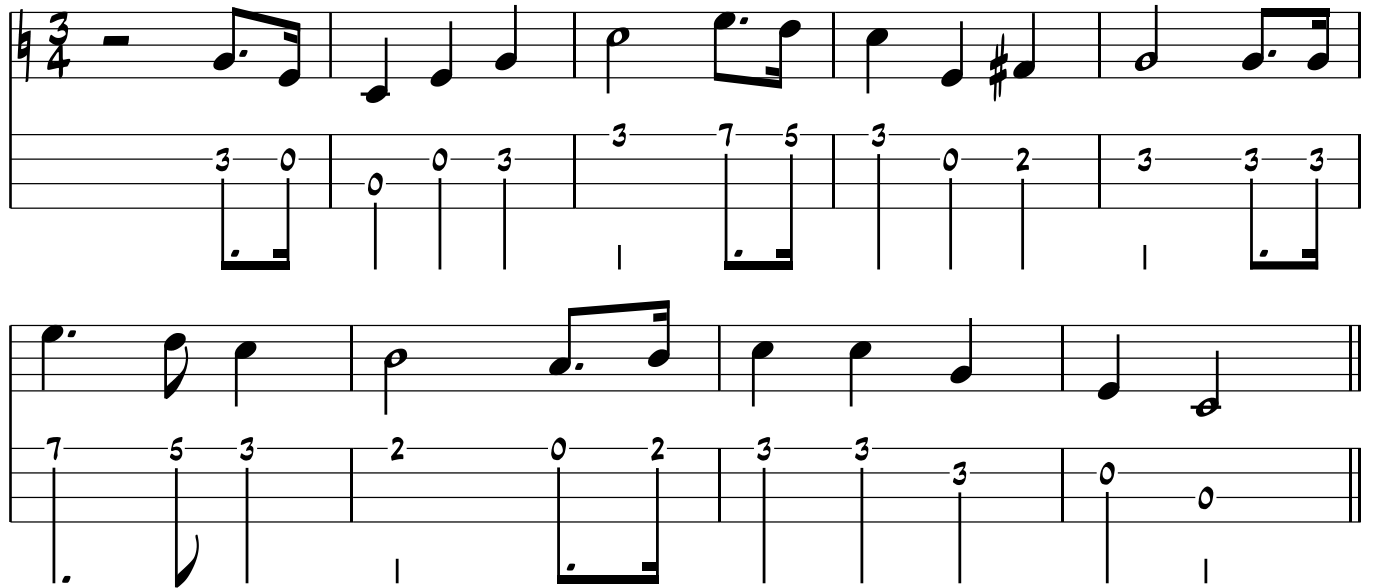
Begin ex. 14-16 at 60 bpm, target speed is 100 bpm.

EX. 14: WE'RE NOT GONNA TAKE IT!

1 1 0 1 3 | (3) 0 | 0 0 3 0 1 | (1) 1 |

0 0 3 1 3 | (3) 0 | 1 1 1 | (1) |

EX. 15: STAR SPANGLED BANNER



Musical score for "Star Spangled Banner" in 3/4 time. The score consists of two systems of two staves each. The top staff contains the melody, and the bottom staff contains the chordal accompaniment with fret numbers. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The melody begins with a whole rest, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, and a half note D5. The accompaniment starts with a 3-fingered chord on G4, followed by a sequence of chords: G4 (0), G4 (0), G4 (3), G4 (3), G4 (7), G4 (5), G4 (3), G4 (0), G4 (2), G4 (3), G4 (3), G4 (3).

EX. 16: MICHAEL ROW THE BOAT ASHORE



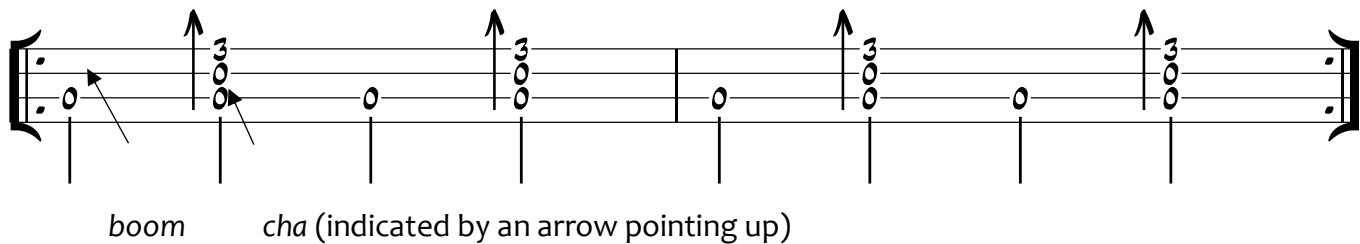
Musical score for "Michael Row the Boat Ashore" in 3/4 time. The score consists of two systems of two staves each. The top staff contains the melody, and the bottom staff contains the chordal accompaniment with fret numbers. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The melody begins with a whole rest, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, and a half note D5. The accompaniment starts with a 0-fingered chord on G4, followed by a sequence of chords: G4 (3), G4 (0), G4 (3), G4 (0), G4 (3), G4 (3), G4 (0), G4 (3), G4 (0), G4 (3), G4 (0), G4 (3).

Step 2: the „cha”⁵

The „cha” (the second part of our basic groove) is also played with the index finger’s fingernail. But it doesn’t use only one string, it’s a strumming motion involving the C, E and A string. Depending on the song, sometimes you will only use the E and A string. Me personally, I’ve gotten used to involving the middle and ring finger as well, producing a slightly more percussive sound. Most *clawhammer* players, however, only use the index finger. Try both methods and choose the one you’re more comfortable with.



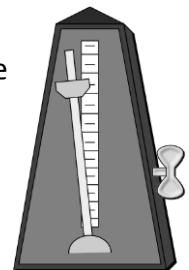
Here, too, the claw-like hand posture must not be changed during the motion. Never stretch the index, it always stays part of the claw. **And, of course, the thumb rests on the high G string after every hit.** Visually, the *boom* and the *cha* are barely distinguishable, but you can hear a big difference! This motion is less complex than the *boom*. In the following exercise (which is also ex. 17 on the next page), you use the *boom* on the first beat and the *cha* on the second one, etc.



The *cha* doesn’t strum the strings as powerfully as the *boom*, you rather stroke them. It’s not essential to hit every string every time, the rhythmic effect is more important than playing each note clearly. Focus on exact timing!

How to practice the *cha* for fast progress:

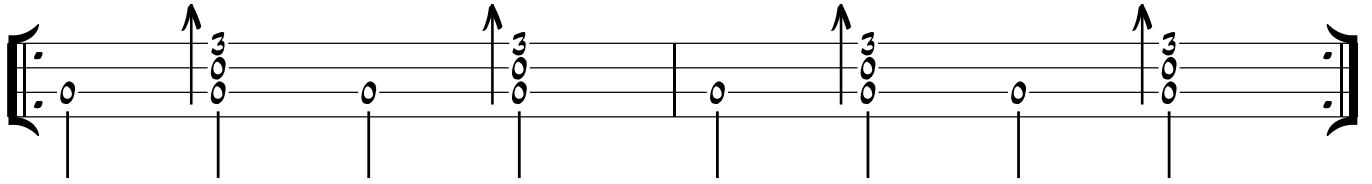
- ♪ Don’t change the claw-shape of your hand. Resist the temptation to stretch the index doing the *cha*. For those of you who already know the *Carter Scratch*: The movement you employ there is the exact opposite of what we go for in *clawhammer*.
- ♪ After the *cha*, the thumb rests on the G string. This is essential!
- ♪ Use your metronome. Two clicks for each note.
- ♪ Start at 80 bpm. Slowly increase the speed in steps of 5 bpm. Target speed: 200 bpm



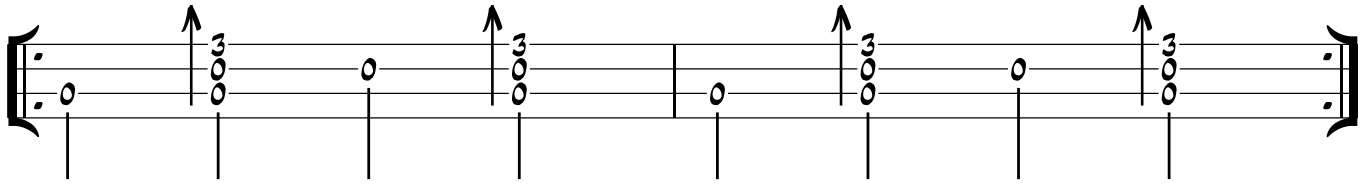
A bit of advice for the following exercises: Press down all the left-hand fingers you will need in the exercise right in the beginning. Then they will remain where they are throughout the exercise. In ex. 17-19 this is the pinky (or ring finger) on fret 3 of the first string. In ex. 20-22 you need two fingers (middle+ring or ring+pinky). Put them where you need them right from the start.

⁵ You can find the video for this chapter on <http://www.tinyurl.com/ukefire1-4>.

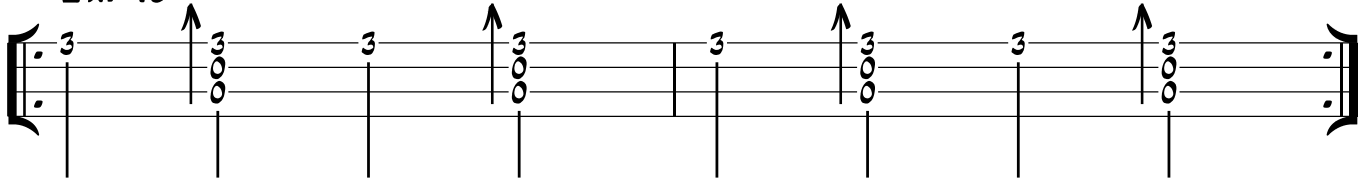
Ex. 17:



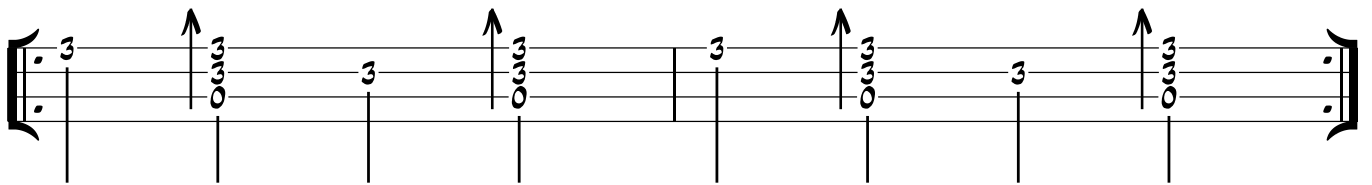
Ex. 18:



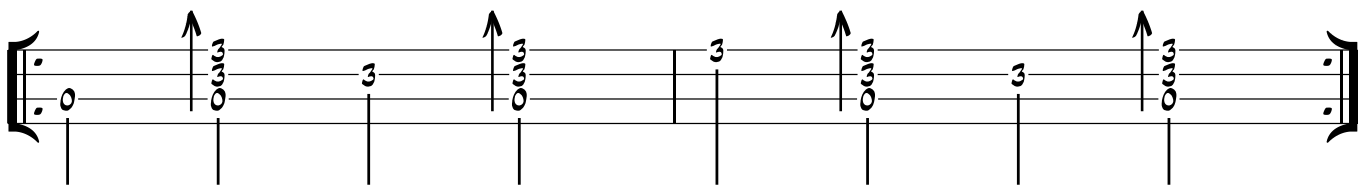
Ex. 19



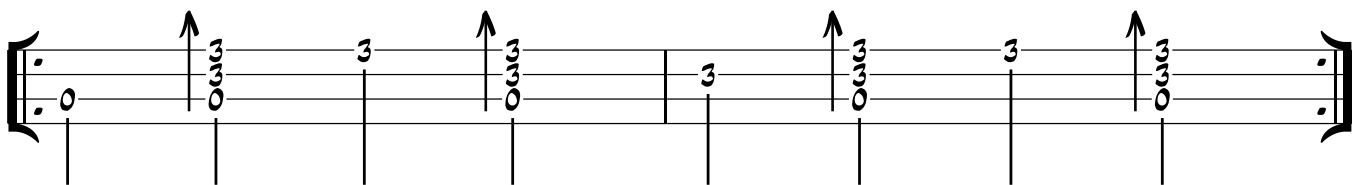
Ex. 20:



Ex. 21:



Ex. 22



Let's move on to other chords. In these exercises fret the chord at the beginning of each bar, even if you only need one string for the first beat. It will make playing a lot easier and the sound fuller.

EX. 23:

Exercise 23, first line: A guitar fretboard diagram showing six strings and frets 1-5. The first bar is marked with a G chord. The second bar is marked with a C chord. Fingering numbers (1, 2, 3) and arrows indicating string direction are present.

Exercise 23, second line: A guitar fretboard diagram showing six strings and frets 1-5. The first bar is marked with a G chord. The second bar is marked with a D chord. Fingering numbers (1, 2, 3) and arrows indicating string direction are present.

EX. 24:

Exercise 24, first line: A guitar fretboard diagram showing six strings and frets 1-5. The first bar is marked with a C chord. The second bar is marked with a G chord. Fingering numbers (1, 2, 3) and arrows indicating string direction are present.

Exercise 24, second line: A guitar fretboard diagram showing six strings and frets 1-5. The first bar is marked with a C chord. The second bar is marked with an F chord. The third bar is marked with a G7 chord. Fingering numbers (1, 2, 3) and arrows indicating string direction are present.

EX. 25:

Exercise 25, first line: A guitar fretboard diagram showing six strings and frets 1-5. The first bar is marked with an F chord. The second bar is marked with a B \flat chord. Fingering numbers (1, 2) and arrows indicating string direction are present.

Exercise 25, second line: A guitar fretboard diagram showing six strings and frets 1-5. The first bar is marked with an F chord. The second bar is marked with a C chord. Fingering numbers (1, 2, 3) and arrows indicating string direction are present.

Step 3: the „ka”⁶



The last part of the „boom cha-ka” is special: It is not played with the index; we use the thumb instead and we don’t use the thumbnail but pick it rather conventionally. And one last thing: The *ka* will mostly use the high G string, at least for now.

The *ka* has to be played extremely economically. Otherwise, we will never be fast enough to make the *clawhammer* really groove.

The single one most important exercise in the entire book:

index finger thumb

BOOM CHA- KA BOOM CHA- KA BOOM CHA- KA BOOM CHA- KA

Attention:

- ♪ Play the *boom* on the C string with your index. At the same time touch the G string with your thumb. Remember that after that, the index rests on the E string and the thumb is on the high G string. If you’re not sure why and how, go back to page 7 and look it up.
- ♪ Play the *cha*, brushing the first three strings. Remember that after that, the thumb is resting on the G string. If you’re not sure why and how, go back to page 11 and look it up.
- ♪ The thumb is still on the G string. Now we pull the *claw* back for the next *boom*.
- ♪ During this motion, the thumb casually plucks the high G string. This is the *ka*. Don’t lift your thumb before plucking the G string. There’s no need for that as the thumb is already in place for plucking the string. Just pluck the G string without visibly activating your thumb while you’re lifting your *claw* preparing for the next *boom*.
- ♪ This picking motion melts together with the pull-back motion. The *ka* is barely visible.
- ♪ The *ka* must be clearly heard, but it shouldn’t be too loud. The *boom* is the loudest part.
- ♪ The *claw* posture is maintained throughout the whole motion.

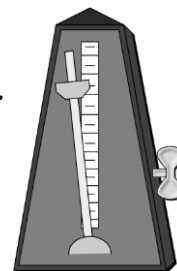
You should absolutely watch the video to understand how to put this into practice. Do the exercise real slow and be self-critical:

- ♪ Can you hear every string? Is the rhythm steady?
- ♪ Does the thumb really come to a rest after *boom* and *cha*?
- ♪ Do *cha* and *ka* really consist of a single motion?

⁶ You can find the video for this chapter on <http://www.tinyurl.com/ukefire1-5>.

How to practice for fast progress:

The exercise on page 14 (*boom cha-ka, boom cha-ka ...*) is the basis for everything else. Practice it over and over again until it has become second nature to you. Even after you have started accompanying songs with this pattern – take a few minutes every day practicing this basic groove. Best would be to use a metronome. And increase the speed very slowly. Promise?



Let's try the *boom cha-ka* with different chords.

EX. 26:

EX. 26: Musical notation for guitar, showing two staves of tablature. The first staff is in C major (C) and the second staff is in F major (F). The notation includes fret numbers (0, 2, 3) and rhythmic markings (upward arrows) indicating the 'boom cha-ka' pattern.

EX. 27:

EX. 27: Musical notation for guitar, showing two staves of tablature. The first staff is in G major (G) and the second staff is in D major (D). The notation includes fret numbers (2, 3) and rhythmic markings (upward arrows) indicating the 'boom cha-ka' pattern.

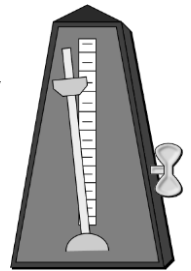
Ex. 28:

F **Bb**

The musical notation consists of two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). It contains eight measures of music. The first four measures feature a chord of F major (indicated by 'F') with notes G4, A4, and C5, each with an upward-pointing accent arrow. The notes are fingered 1, 2, and 2 respectively. The last four measures feature a chord of Bb major (indicated by 'Bb') with notes G4, A4, and C5, each with an upward-pointing accent arrow. The notes are fingered 1, 2, and 3. The second staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (F). It contains eight measures of music. The first four measures feature a chord of F major (indicated by 'F') with notes G4, A4, and C5, each with an upward-pointing accent arrow. The notes are fingered 1, 2, and 2. The last four measures feature a chord of C major (indicated by 'C') with notes G4, A4, and C5, each with an upward-pointing accent arrow. The notes are fingered 3, 0, and 0.

How to practice for fast progress:

You should make the *boom cha-ka* with the *boom* on the C string part of your daily practice routine. Practice it with all the chords you know. Do it over and over again. Slowly increase your speed and track your progress with a practice journal. Try to find out the highest speed at which you can neatly play the *boom cha-ka* and note it down. The next day, try increasing the speed a little bit, like 5 bpm. Can you still play the *boom cha-ka*?



If yes: Very good! Practice in this new speed until you're comfortable.

If no: Don't worry! Continue practicing in the old speed, until you feel you're ready to move on.

Play only so quickly that you can still play neatly! If you practice sloppily, your fingers will get used to the wrong motion. Then your practice session is just a waste of time.

At some point, you will discover the secret every real musician has discovered: If I have mastered a technique at a slow speed, I just have to practice it over and over again – in a controlled fashion. The speed will come on its own!



WE ACCOMPANY SONGS - but much cooler than before!⁷



Now you can introduce *clawhammer* to your song accompaniments. Start with simple songs which have easy chords. Don't strum - try the *boom cha-ka!* The left hand frets the chords as usual and the right hand *clawhammers*. Exactly like we have practiced: *boom* on the C string, followed by *cha-ka*. Just like exercises 26-28. In the video I play an example for you.

When you have mastered that, you can experiment with placing the *boom* on different strings. As you can see in these exercises, the *boom* alternates between the C and E strings.

EX. 29:

Musical notation for Exercise 29, G chord. The notation shows a four-measure sequence on a six-string staff. The left hand frets the G chord (3-2-0-2-3-0). The right hand plays a clawhammer pattern: a 'boom' on the C string (indicated by an upward arrow) followed by a 'cha-ka' pattern (indicated by downward arrows). The pattern repeats every two measures.

EX. 30:

Musical notation for Exercise 30, C chord. The notation shows a four-measure sequence on a six-string staff. The left hand frets the C chord (0-2-3-0-0-0). The right hand plays a clawhammer pattern: a 'boom' on the C string (indicated by an upward arrow) followed by a 'cha-ka' pattern (indicated by downward arrows). The pattern repeats every two measures.

EX. 31:

Musical notation for Exercise 31, D7 chord. The notation shows a four-measure sequence on a six-string staff. The left hand frets the D7 chord (2-0-2-2-0-2). The right hand plays a clawhammer pattern: a 'boom' on the E string (indicated by an upward arrow) followed by a 'cha-ka' pattern (indicated by downward arrows). The pattern repeats every two measures. A chord diagram for D7 is shown above the first measure.

⁷ You can find the video for this chapter on <http://www.tinyurl.com/ukefire1-6>.

As soon as you have no problem alternating the boom between the E and C strings anymore, you are ready to take on the real thing by combining the above pieces:

WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN

TABBED BY ANDREAS BÖRLEIN

TAB **C** ¹ **G**

WILL THE CIR- CLE

⁴ **G**

BE UN- BRO- KEN, BY AND

⁷ **C** **G**

BY LORD, BY AND BY- Y. THERE'S A

11 **G**

SET- TER HOME A- WAI- TING IN THE

15 **G** **D7** **G**

SKY LORD, IN THE SKY.

A little bit of theory

The alternation between the C , E, or A strings sounds best when there's a *fifth* (an interval of 5 notes) between the two notes.

- ♪ In the first bar, the *boom* alternates between *g* and *d*. That's a *fifth*: *g*(1) *a*(2) *b*(3) *c*(4) *d*(5)
- ♪ In bar 7, the *boom* alternates between *c* and *g*. Also a *fifth*! *c*(1) *d*(2) *e*(3) *f*(4) *g*(5)

Remember how I compared the *boom cha-ka* to the groove of Johnny Cash songs in the first chapter? Johnny Cash had the bass play the fifth alternation. And if we have our index finger do that, it sounds just as groovy.

The best sound can be achieved when the first *boom* of the bar is the root of the respective chord. In bar 1 we fret a G major chord and the first *boom* is a *g*. In bar 7 we fret a C major chord and the first *boom* is a *c*. In bar 16 we fret a D⁷ and the first *boom* is a *d*. Voilà!