

Alternating-Bass-Chord Rhythm in "A" Major

Perhaps the biggest problem with rhythm guitar in the key of "A" is that the root bass note for each of the principal chords is an open string. The problem is mostly on the E7 chord in that the low E bass note will sometimes continue sounding when you move to the next chord. A light touch on this string using the heel of the right hand is usually the best method of stopping that string.

Tempo

Chord progression: A D E7 A

Chord progression: A D A E7 A

Chord progression: D E7 A A7

Chord progression: D A E7 A

damp the low E string

Another way of damping the sound of a ringing string is to touch it with a spare finger in the left hand. This is sometimes easier said than done. Another problem which you may have already become aware of is that sometimes the guitar will continue producing some sound even when you have stopped playing. A quick investigation will show that most likely, some open bass string continues sounding in "sympathetic vibration." The most common culprit is the "A" string. Here is one reason for keeping the right hand very close to the strings when you use the pick. Briefly touch the heel of the right hand on to the bass strings to stop the ringing.

Many years ago, one of my smart students discovered that if you never change the bass strings on the guitar, this problem will mostly disappear. He had the deadest strings which I have ever heard. Not a great solution. (G.A.)

Progress Report: _____
