

# ROLL PATTERNS

Ukulele Tuesdays – Evergreen Library

July 30, 2019

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# PLAYING MUSIC IS MORE THAN JUST MEMORIZING A BUNCH OF CHORDS ON YOUR INSTRUMENT.

That's difficult. And takes a long time.

# ROLL PATTERNS

- A roll pattern is an alternative to a strum
- It is a series of notes played in sequence, then repeated
  - Each note is played by plucking a single string once using a single finger
  - Creates a stream of *arpeggios* or “*broken chords*”

# ROLL PATTERNS

- Played using your index finger, middle finger, and thumb.
  - Rarely, the ring finger is used
  - Finger Picks will help with volume and tone



- Used primarily by bluegrass banjo players
  - Pioneered by Earl Scruggs using his “3-finger style” picking
  - Can be used on any instrument

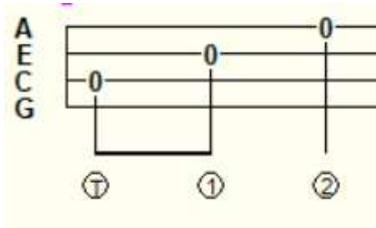
# BASIC TYPES

1. Forward Roll
  2. Backward Roll
  3. Forward-Backward or Forward-Reverse Roll
  4. Double Thumb or Alternating Thumb
- There are many other types of rolls

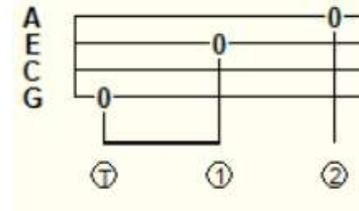
# FORWARD ROLL

- 3-note pattern, repeated
- Notes struck in ascending pitch order
- Can start on the C string or G string
- Can strike any of the strings, but the finger-picking order remains

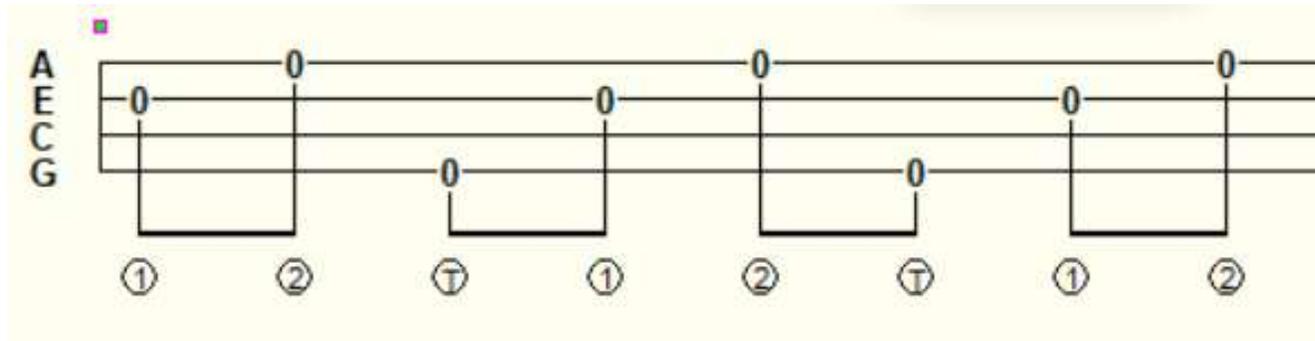
Starting on the C string



Starting on the G string



# FORWARD ROLL – 8 COUNTS

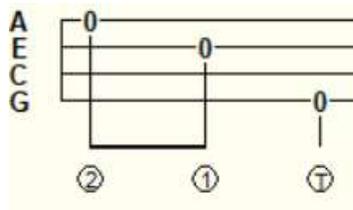


- This allows you to play the 3-note roll in 4/4 time (8 counts)
- Use 2 forward rolls (3 counts each), plus 2 additional notes
- The strings that are struck can (and should) change, but the finger-picking order remains

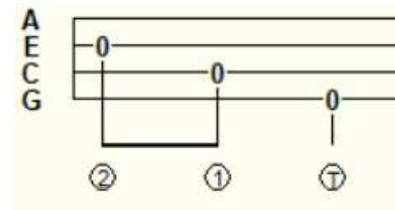
# BACKWARD ROLL

- 3-note pattern, repeated
- Notes struck in descending pitch order
- Can start on the A string or E string
- Can strike any of the strings, but the finger-picking order remains

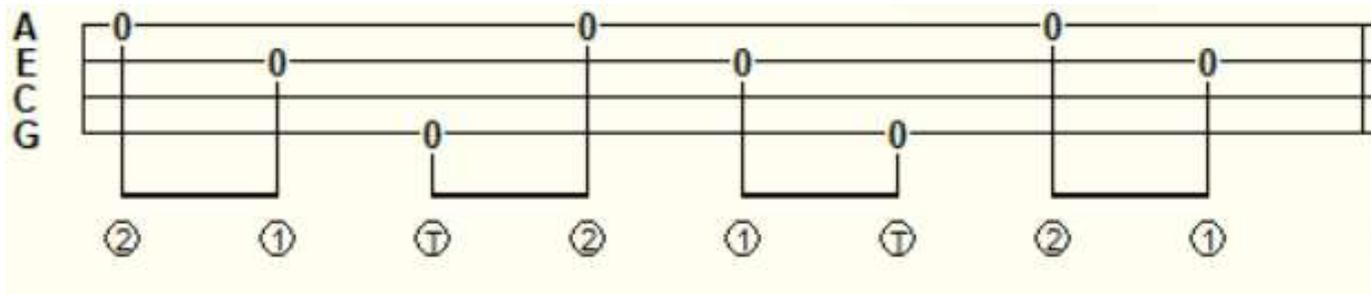
Starting on the A string



Starting on the E string



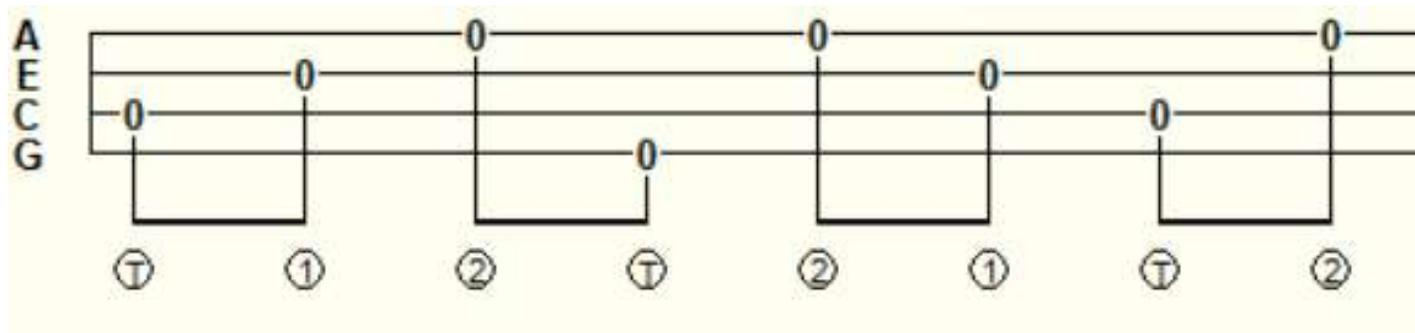
# BACKWARD ROLL — 8 COUNTS



- This allows you to play the 3-note roll in 4/4 time (8 counts)
- Use 2 backward rolls (3 counts each), plus 2 additional notes
- The strings that are struck can (and should) change, but the finger-picking order remains

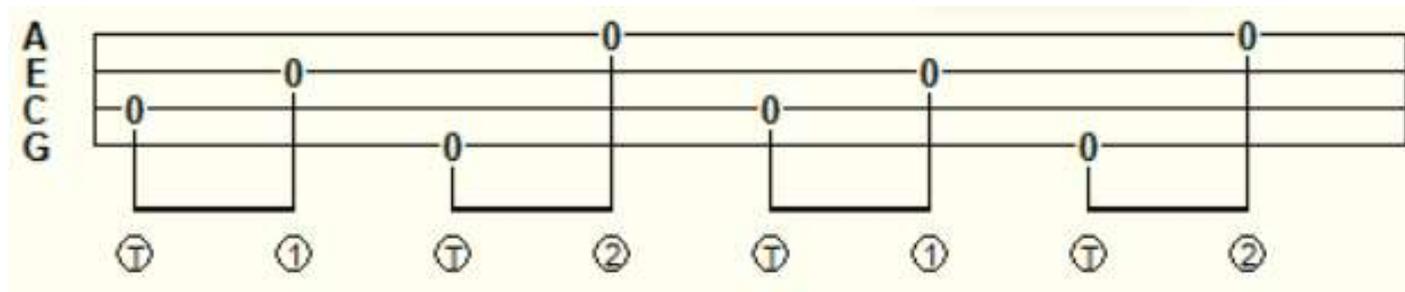
# FORWARD-BACKWARD ROLL

- Uses Forward Roll followed by a Backward Roll
- Is an 8-note sequence
- The strings that are struck can (and should) change, but the finger-picking order remains
- One of the most useful rolls



# DOUBLE THUMB

- A bit more complicated of a roll
- Is an 8-note sequence
- The strings that are struck can (and should) change, but the finger-picking order remains



# FINAL THOUGHTS

- Are meant to be played over-and-over while switching chords or fingerings
- Each note must be the same length
- Stringing the rolls should be smooth
- Don't strike the same string twice with the same finger
- Requires *a lot* of practice to get good at
  - Ideally you get to the point where you don't think about them



# QUESTIONS?

