

# How To Make A Chord Sound Nice And Clear When You Strum It

Playing a chord is a collaboration between your left and right hands. Your left hand determines what notes are to be played, and how clean they'll sound. Your right hand performs the chord.

Basic strumming is relatively easy and there's not much that can go wrong. Most of the mistakes that you might make will have more to do with your left hand. Strumming will reveal these mistakes.

When you hold a chord down correctly it will sound nice and clean. If not, you'll know.

But not to worry because I'm going to go through all the common left hand mistakes and how to fix them.

Pick a chord and put down your left hand fingers to make the shape of it.

Now strum.

If you're holding it down properly it should sound clean. You should be able to hear each string clearly and there should be no fret buzz or other weird noises, or muffled strings. If the chord sounds bad when you strum it, do the following :

- \* Relax your hand, and keep a light grip on the neck and a light touch on the strings as you fret the chord.
- \* Then hold down the chord firmly but not too hard.
- \* Play each string one by one and **listen**.

If it doesn't sound good, it's almost certainly due to one or more of the following reasons :

- \* **Your fingernails are too long**
- \* **You're not pressing down hard enough on a string**
- \* **You're pressing down too hard on a string**
- \* **Your finger is way too close to the fret**
- \* **Your finger is too far away from the fret**
- \* **One of your fingers or your palm is touching a string**
- \* **Your thumb is touching a string**

For each string, make sure that you're not making any of the above mistakes. And make sure that only the tips of your fingers are touching the strings. Make the necessary adjustments to ensure that every string sounds clear. Take as long as it takes.

I know it's a lot to think about, but as you get better you'll learn to automatically adjust your fingers and hand without having to think.

Remember, you only need to apply enough pressure on the strings to make the notes ring out. Too much pressure will make you tense and inflexible, and too little pressure will muffle the notes. As you get better you'll instinctively learn how much pressure to apply.

If the chord still sounds bad even though you've done all you can, it might just be that you're out of tune. This may cause you to think that you're doing something wrong, even if you're not. If so, tune up and try again.

When changing from one chord to another, you'll probably need to make little adjustments as you go, to maintain a good, clear, clean sound.

As with everything else on the guitar, it's usually the minor things that accumulate to create a bad result. That's why you should go through this process for all chords so that they'll all sound nice and clear.