

1.12 The 4-stroke rasgueo. Thumb resting on 6th string.

Upper row (from left to right)

- starting position
- after stroke with e
- after stroke with a

Lower row

- after stroke with m
- after stroke with i.

### Practising the 4-stroke RASGUEO without a guitar

You can build up facility and strength by practising this *rasgueo* at any time, at home, at work, on the bus. To do this, flex the fingers so that their nails do actually press into the palm of the right hand, then flick each out separately in the order e a m i against the resistance provided by the ball and base of the thumb. Alternatively you can balance the thumb on the top or edge of a table, the side of your thigh, your seat on the bus, and then use the surface or edge as the resistance against which you flick the fingers.

The important thing is to learn to control each finger at a time, making the separate stroke of each equally powerful. With continued practice you should be able to repeat the sequence e a m i e a m i etc. in a smooth unbroken rhythm without pause between the i of one *rasgueo* and the e of the next. Once you can do this you have the basis for longer or continuous rolls on the guitar.

Ex. 4

Exercise 4 shows a way to fit the 4-stroke *rasgueo* into the steady rhythm of down- and upstrokes with the index you played in Exercise 3. Listen to the recording carefully, counting in 6's again, until the rhythm is fixed in your mind.

Note that the upstroke after beat 4 is left out. Instead, at the instant you would have played it, the 4-stroke *rasgueo* starts with the stroke by the little finger, e. e, a and m strokes then take up the duration of half a beat so that the fourth stroke, with i, carries the accent of the *rasgueo* on beat 5. You can treat this stroke with the index just like the previous index downstrokes on the beat and follow it with an index upstroke before the next downstroke on beat 6. The right thumb rests lightly on the 6th string throughout.

**Notation of RASGUEO**

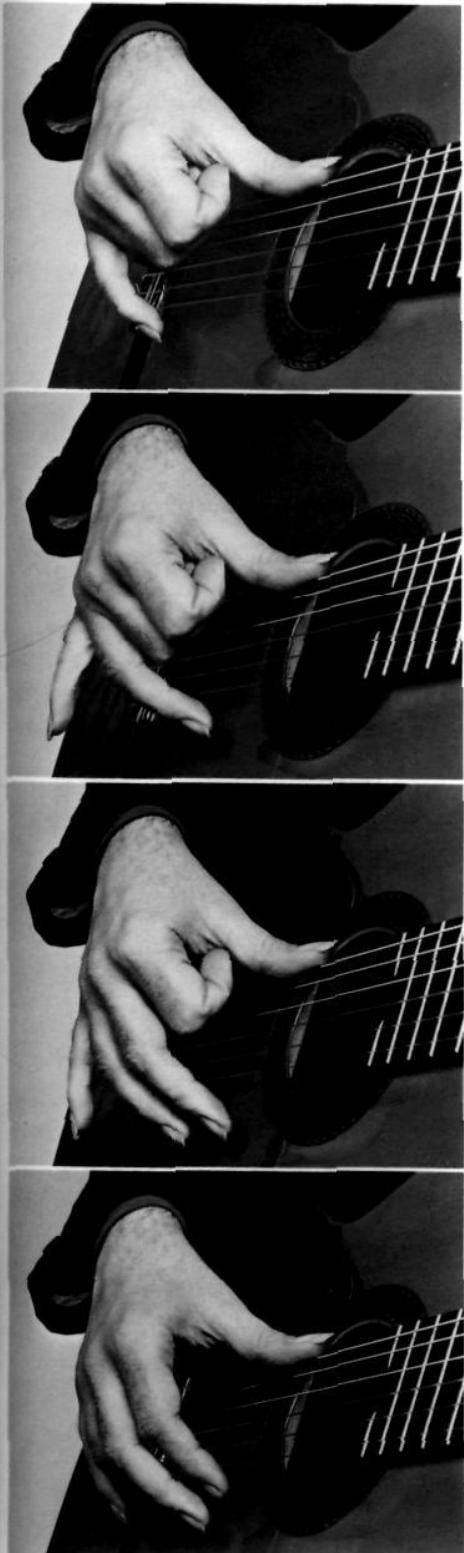
In this book the *rasgueos* are written out in full, with the stroke of each finger represented by a separate arrow placed immediately to the left of the chord each finger sounds.

This method shows clearly where the accent falls, and in the 4-stroke *rasgueo* it indicates accurately that the movement of each finger is important and distinct. It will also allow the exact representation of other and more complicated *rasgueos*.

In the exercise above the 4-stroke *rasgueo* with accent on the final downstroke with the index is shown as follows:

Upstrokes with the index finger usually hit fewer strings than downstrokes. This was shown in the notation for Exercise 3 by giving 6 notes to the downstrokes and only 4 (sounded by the top four strings) to the upstrokes.

You do not need to become too obsessed about exactly how many strings each finger hits. In the case of the downstroke it is usually important that it begins from the correct bass string. With upstrokes, on the other hand, the impact of the stroke will fall mainly on the higher-pitched strings and sometimes only on the 1st and 2nd.



1.13 The 4-stroke *rasgueo*. Sometimes, to give the stroke of each finger extra emphasis (as well as for practice purposes), the fingers are pressed into the palm and are then flicked out in turn. The bottom photo shows how the index is flicked out against the thumb.