

strums. Each flick is a percussive hit that hits the strings of a chord simultaneously and instantaneously as if they were one string. It is a machine gun rat-tat-tat attack.

METHOD #1; FINGER FLICKS FROM BEHIND THE THUMB

Practice AWAY from the guitar first!

1. Doing a finger flick from behind the thumb is like shooting a spitball from a tabletop. To shoot a spitball, you set the index finger behind the thumb and build up the necessary tension before firing. Playing a flicked rasgueado stroke is the same thing except we learn to use all the fingers, not just the index finger.

Turn the hand palm up. Straighten out the fingers and the thumb. Then curl the fingers, bend the thumb (including the tip joint), and place the thumb across the face of all four fingernails. The fingers are now behind the thumb.

Watch me demonstrate:



Rasgueados Part 1: Finger Flicks from Behind the Thumb Away from the Guitar

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2. Engage the finger muscles and push the fingernails against the thumb. The thumb creates resistance against the fingers. This is good tension.

3. Keeping the palm of the hand turned up, practice five finger flicks with each finger one at a time.

Begin with c. Keep ami locked behind the thumb as you flick out only the c finger. The c finger will probably be very weak, but try to make each flick forceful. Do not unfurl or extend the finger completely. At high speed the fingers (especially i) will not have time to extend completely. After each flick, relax the finger. Don't hold it stiffly straight out. Reset the c finger behind the thumb before each flick. Be sure the thumb tip joint remains bent. Repeat 5 times.

Seeing it makes it easier to understand:



Rasgueados Part 1: Finger Flick with c Away from Guitar

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Next, practice finger flicks with the a finger. Lock ami behind the thumb but allow c to extend out loosely. Keeping mi locked behind the thumb, flick out the a finger. The m finger will want to come out with a. Keep it behind the thumb. The c finger should stay relaxed and can mimic the movements of the a finger. Each flick should be forceful, but after each flick, relax the finger. Do not unfurl or extend the finger completely. At high speed the fingers (especially i) will not have time to extend completely. Don't hold it stiffly straight out. Reset the a finger behind the thumb before each flick. Be sure the thumb tip joint remains bent. Repeat 5 times.

Watch me:



Rasgueados Part 1: Finger Flick With a Away from Guitar

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Next, practice finger flicks with the m finger. Lock mi behind the thumb but allow c and a to extend out loosely. Keeping i locked behind the thumb, flick out the m finger. The c and a fingers should stay relaxed and can mimic the movements of the m finger. Reset the m finger behind the thumb before each flick. Each flick should be forceful, but after each flick, relax the finger. Do not unfurl or extend the finger completely. At high speed the fingers (especially i) will not have time to extend completely. Don't hold it stiffly straight out. Be sure the thumb tip joint remains bent. Repeat 5 times.

Watch:



Rasgueados Part 1: Finger Flick With m Away from Guitar

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Finally, practice finger flicks with the i finger. Lock i behind the thumb but allow the c, a, and m fingers to extend out loosely. Flick out the i finger. The c, a, and m fingers should stay relaxed and can mimic the movements of the i finger. Each flick should be forceful, but after each flick, relax the finger. Do not unfurl or extend the finger completely. At high speed the fingers (especially i) will not have time to extend completely. Don't hold it stiffly straight out. Reset the i finger behind the thumb before each flick. Be sure the thumb tip joint remains bent. Repeat 5 times.

Watch me demonstrate:



Rasgueados Part 1: Finger Flick With i Away from Guitar

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4. Next, practice flicking each finger out in succession: c-a-m-i. Lock cami behind the thumb. Flick out c, then flick out a, then flick out m, and finally flick out i. Play very slowly. Try to relax each finger after it flicks out. Only allow one finger to flick out from behind the thumb at a time. Your goal is to flick out each finger in an even rhythm with equal force.

Stop and reload the four fingers—lock them behind the thumb. Repeat the pattern 5-10 times.

Watch this demo:



Rasgueados Part 1: Finger Flicks 4 Fingers in Succession Away from Guitar

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METHOD #2: FINGER FLICKS or SNAPS FROM THE PALM

Practice AWAY from the guitar first!

1. Make a loose fist and wherever your fingers land in the palm is the spot from which you will flick or snap out the fingers.

2. With the nails tucked into the palm, engage the finger muscles and push the fingernails against the palm of the hand. This creates resistance against the fingers. This is good tension. Each finger should thump as it strikes outward.

Continue with step 3 above but **reload the fingers into the palm of the hand instead of behind the thumb.**

Watch:



Rasgueados Part 1: Finger Flicks from the Palm Away from Guitar

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NOW, PRACTICE THE FINGER FLICKS FROM BEHIND THE THUMB (OR FROM THE PALM) **ON YOUR GUITAR!**

The first step will be totally foreign to classical guitarists. Bend the tip joint of the thumb and set it *lightly* on the 5th string. You will set it so that the far right side of the nail is against the 5th string. It is okay for the back of the thumb to touch the 6th string. Again, the thumb should be kept extremely bent at the tip joint. This is the only way for all four fingers to lock themselves behind the thumb and is important for tone production. Anchoring the thumb on a bass string also helps steady the hand.

If you are going to execute the finger flicks from the palm, you will still plant the thumb on the 5th string. But bending the tip-joint of the thumb is optional. Some teachers are emphatic that the thumb tip joint must be kept bent. But many fine players such as Pepe Romero keep the thumb in its normal position for the palm flicks.

Watch me demonstrate:



Rasgueados Part 1: Bent thumb tip on strings

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With the thumb resting *lightly* on the 5th string, and keeping the tip-joint of the thumb bent (optional for palm flicks), lock the fronts of all four fingernails against the back of the thumb (or tucked into the palm). If the thumb tip joint is not bent, you will not be able to lock all four fingers behind it.

Watch:



Rasgueados Part 1: Lock fingers against back of thumb or palm

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Now, watch as I demonstrate how to play flicked downstrokes from behind the thumb with each finger one at a time, and then flicked downstrokes with each finger in succession c-a-m-i.



Rasgueados Part 1: Finger flicks from behind thumb with each finger on guitar

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