

Chopping and Groove

You can use your string instrument not only to play improvised solos or melody, but also to accompany other instruments or singers, playing different roles or functions of the rhythm section:

- Bass role: mainly the root notes of the chords, often on the heavy beats (violinists can do this, too!)
 - Percussive role: percussion, percussive sounds, rhythmic notes and chords
 - Chord function: Chord notes (3, 5, 7, 9 etc of the chords), double stops and larger chords
- You can also mix these different roles, playing all three at once.

Inventing Accompaniment (preplanned or improvised):

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|--|--|
| Play basslines: | Basic bass (root note of the chord)
Alternating bass (root & 5 of chord)
Walking bass (only in swing feel)
Bossa/samba figures, etc.
Riffs or hooks: short melodic patterns („Stand By Me“, etc.) |
| Play percussive elements: | Play percussion on the string instrument
Add chops (arco), slaps (pizz), other dead notes or percussion
Imitate drum patterns using low & high strings for different drums |
| Play any rhythm pattern:
(pizz or arco) | As bass: on root note of the chord (choose style & pattern)
Alternating root and other notes, changing back & forth
On chord notes (arpeggios or chords)
On double stops on root and 5 („power chords“ = rock styles)
On double stops of chord notes (1, 3 5 or 7, etc.) |
- Some playing techniques:
- | | |
|-------|---|
| pizz: | Walking bass pizz
Bossa/samba bass pizz
Strumming
Finger picking
Bossa Nova pizz (chords & bass in polyrhythmic patterns)
Dead notes |
| arco: | Chopping
Groovebowing
Rhythmic string changes
Dead notes ...etc. |

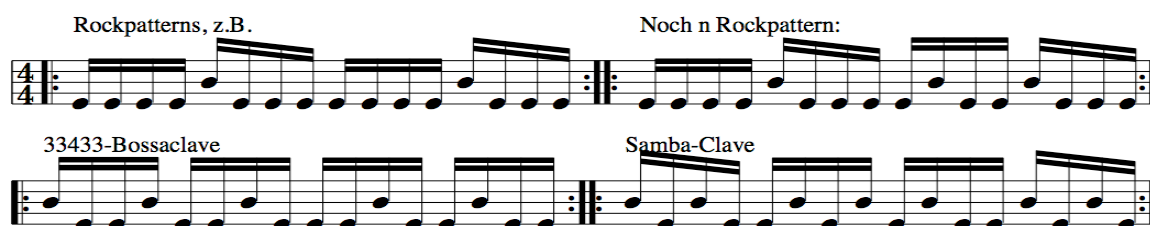
Imitate all kinds of styles (jazz, bossa, rock, funk...)

Imitate all kinds of instruments (bass, guitar, percussion...)

Some Rhythm Patterns for Accompanying

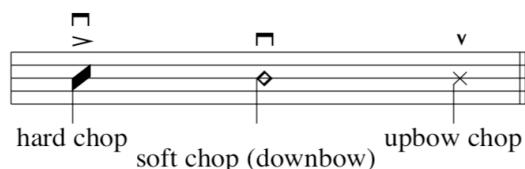
Arco patterns with alternating notes (you can stay on one string, or change strings).

To play this kind of pattern: lower note = root note ; higher note = 3, 5, 8 or double stop



Chopping:

Chops are short, crisp, pitchless percussive sounds made with the bow



1 Hard chop

A loud, short, crisp chop that is made with a downbow moving down onto the string vertically/sideways and resting there (without bouncing up again), as if glued to the string until the next note. Only a loud, accented percussive sound is to be heard, never a definite pitch.

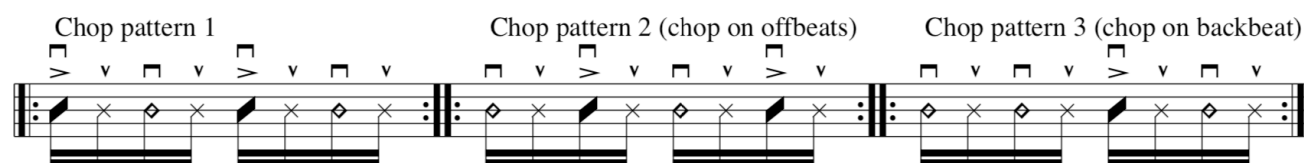
2 Soft chop (Downbow)

A soft, ghosted chop that is made with a subtle downbow movement of the bow down onto the string and resting there (not bouncing up again). After it, the bows stays glued to the string to prepare the next upbow or upbow chop. Only a soft percussive sound (ghost note) is to be heard, never a definite pitch. This is an „active pause“, a typical element of groove-oriented playing techniques. Again, you can mute the adjacent open strings with the fingers of your left hand. - This kind of soft chop is always downbow and onto the string.

3 Soft chop (Upbow)

A percussive chop that is made by lifting up the bow from the string with an upbow movement leaving the string after a (hard or soft) downbow chop, releasing the string with a marcato or accent. Here, it is very important to mute the string with the fingers of your left hand! Basically, you just make the same bowing movement you make to play an accented, „normal“ sounding upbow note – the only difference being that here you mute the strings with your left hand, so that you can hear only a soft percussive sound, not a definite pitch. - This kind of soft chop is always upbow.

Some chop patterns to get you started:



You can combine chopping with normal notes – some more examples:



Strumming:

Pizz technique: move your strumming hand back and forth over the strings continuously, as guitarists do. On your accents, strike the strings; and on other beats play dead notes (= strum empty airostrokes or strike muted strings for a more percussive sound) (this is similar to Groovebowing).

Some strumming patterns:

Funky strum pattern A



Funky strum pattern B



Funky strum pattern C ("Bo Diddley")

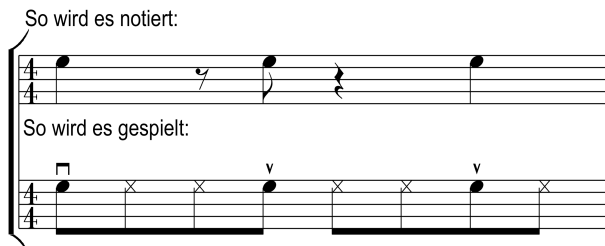


Groovebowing:

If you use strumming technique with your bow, you get what I call „groovebowing“: Use continuous bowing movement on all eighth notes. In neutral mode, your bowstrokes are **pp** and extremely short; and your left fingers are barely touching the strings, muting them. Play only the accents loud: give your bowstroke a marcato beginning with your right index finger and briefly press down the string with the finger/s of your left hand. Then go back to „neutral“ with bow and left hand. (mute the string while bow softly wipes the string)

Notation:

How to play it:



Rock:

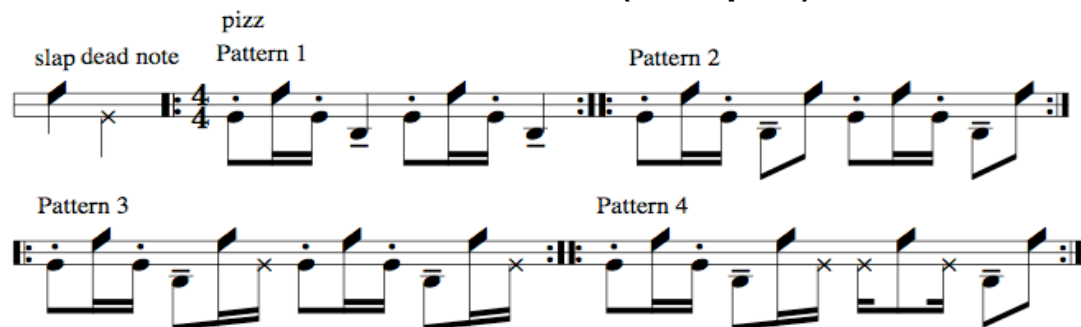
Imitate a distorted electric guitar: Heavy bowing arm, heavy sound. „Powerchords“ sound good: play root note & 5 in double stops (also imitating the electric guitar). Often, chopping works nicely, too.

"Smells Like..." strumming:

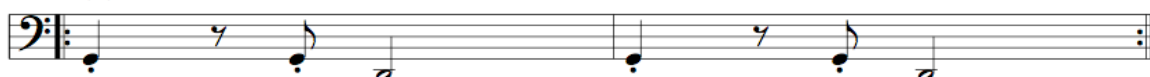


"Smells Like..." arco:

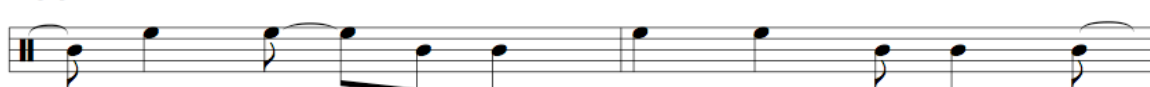


Brazil - Bossa/Samba Bass Variations: (examples)**More Samba Patterns:**

(you can use groovebowing with these patterns)

Samba BatucadaSurdo
z.B.Samba-Clave
z.B.Tamborim
z.B.Partido Alto
z.B.

Agogó

**Funk:**

(Use chopping, strumming etc.)

"Chameleon" - Head Hunters*"Hot Pants" - James Brown*