

does not become boring or monotonous, vary it with different techniques:

- how fast or slow you strum
- which beats you select for accentuation
- how tightly you hold the pick
- how strongly you strike the strings
- where you strum along the fretboard
- the angle at which you strike the strings
- when you mute and un-mute the strings

All the elements we've discussed—beats, tempo, tone, accent, string emphasis—are part of what makes up a basic rhythmic playing style, but rhythm itself is greater than the sum of its parts. Rhythm is the cornerstone of music. It is the counting out that marks the passage of time colored in different ways. Even in a-rhythmic playing, it is conspicuous in its absence, for somehow the flow of time has to be marked, whether you choose to dwell within it or not.