



Strumming What You Feel: Knowing When To Pause

Ok, this chapter is really easy. It's easy because you can pause ANYWHERE you want to, as long as you hold the note that you need to. Don't worry! We are going to show you how!

When pausing in a song, sometimes for emphasis, sometimes for dynamics, and even more so – sometimes because you FORGOT where to go next, is crucial in other artists' work or even in your own. We are still focusing on "Mr. Jones" by the Counting Crows. Have you ever heard the OTHER version of this song? It is slow, the words change a little, and it turns into a rather cool but sappy ballad. Not this song, right? Yep. It does. He performs this song on their live album, "Across the Wire," with just a little bit of hinted guitar.

Now, let's take a look at the verse and chorus AGAIN!

Verse

Am..... F..... Dm..... G

....I was down at the New Amsterdam staring at this yellow haired girl

.....Am..... F..... G

Mr. Jones strikes up this conversation with this black haired flamenco dancer

Am..... F..... Dm..... G

She dances while his father plays guitar. She's suddenly beautiful

.....Am..... F..... G

We all want something beautiful, man I wish I was beautiful

.....Am..... F..... Dm..... G

So come dance this silence down through the morning. Sha la la la la la

Am..... F..... G

yeah....Uh, huh..yeah.

Chorus

C.....F.....G

..Mr. Jones and me tell each other fairy tales

C..... F

Stare at the beautiful women

.....G

" She's looking at you. Ah no, no she's looking at me."

C.....F

Smiling in the bright lights

G

..Coming through in stereo

.....C.....F.....G

When everybody loves you, you can never be lonely

You don't see any chord changes or movements do you? You don't see any pauses, right? The good news is that there doesn't actually have to be any different notation to play it slower. This may seem really easy, but try this :

On each and every line, on each and every note, only strum the chord **ONE** time. **DO NOT** try to strum the G chord more than once. What you will do is create a sense of space in the song, where once again another instrument can accompany you. **If you want to know the truth, this is how you should BEGIN learning this song and all of the others on the site. Start one note at a time.** By doing this, you will also understand how to fit some of those long and confusing words in the song. If you run into trouble just strumming **ONE** chord at a time, this could be because you are trying to pick the chords out, which is very easy to try to do when there is a void in the song. **DO NOT DO THIS** for the time being. Remember, you are trying to slow the song down without changing the timing. No, you don't **ACTUALLY** slow the song down in this way, but you do when you play to your audience. **They may actually even tell you, " I loved the way you made that song sound sweet. I loved how you slowed it down."** This is ok to hear from people. **If they are not musicians, they DID hear the song much more slowly to their ears.** They aren't listening to the timing, they are listening to you, and you, the artist, can drag this song on for days.

You can also create a bit of drama or dynamics by completely pausing the song. There is a line that I love so much in this song that I will pause it playing it the right way AND slowed down. Here it is :

C.(pause).....(the F is gone)....G..(back to strumming)....

” I wanna be Bob Dylan.....Mr. Jones....”

Just try it and see what you can do with it. Right after you play that C going back into the formula for the chorus, don't play the F that comes in right after. Pretend in your head that it is playing, because if you don't your timing will get all strange and you will try to go back in with the F chord. Instead, just go into the G chord. All you did was omit that F chord to provide a little pause, or air to breathe. You can do that virtually anywhere in the song, as long as you remember to completely omit the chord that you are pausing through. **DO NOT** try to pick it back up. Pick up the next note. Tuck it away for some other time.