given a strong rhythmic profile to provide thrust to a song, as in the Beatles' 'All My Loving' or 'This Boy' or at the beginning of the Amboy Dukes' 'Journey to the Center of the Mind.'

The strumming motion of the right hand may be simple up-and-down movements of the wrist or larger arcs of the forearm moving from the elbow, while some more spectacular displays of showmanship involve the entire arm outstretched, pivoting from the shoulder, as practised by Elvis Presley and Pete Townshend.

Strumming also embraces power chords — that is, two- or three-note chords built of fifths and octaves, often played as riffs, as in the Kinks' 'You Really Got Me' and 'All Day and All of the Night.' The staccato 'chops' of the mandolin in bluegrass music can also be classed as strumming.

Although many may associate strumming with the guitar, virtually all stringed instruments may be, and frequently are, strummed. The playing technique of certain of these — for example, the ukulele, the autoharp and the Appalachian dulcimer — involves strumming primarily, if not exclusively.

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Vamping
The term 'vamping' was used in early jazz to describe an improvised 'oom-pah' ragtime or stride piano accompaniment, played with two hands: the left took the pedal notes on beats 1 and 3 of a measure, and the right played chords on beats 2 and 4. The term derives from the French avant-pied (the front part of a shoe) and came into jazz argot from the cobbler's term to 'vamp up' or improvise a boot repair. The usage subsequently narrowed, denoting a short introductory passage repeated ad infinitum until a soloist or singer entered. 'Vamp 'til ready' was the instruction printed on sheet music above such sections. By the 1950s, the term was being used for ostinato introductions (such as the start of Dizzy Gillespie's 'Kush'), and in the 1960s its meaning once more broadened to denote the ostinatos used to accompany entire solos in Latin jazz, jazz-rock and modal jazz.

Bibliography