

Chuckling:

Chuckling adds so much to the playing. You will realize you are following the music instead of cramming the music into a rhythm. Good for off-beat percussion, driving the beat. This skill transfers directly over to guitar if you go there. You may realize that you are joining in with the rhythm section -- falling in line with the percussion and the bass. Most songs, you can use chuckling, but there are definitely songs that do not work well with chuckling. You will feel it.

Chuckling. You are doing a downstroke and a palm mute, which makes a "chuck" sound, then doing the upstroke. The upstroke is where you add syncopation.

Recommend that you come up with a chord progression you like, and come up with a chuckling rhythm that you like, and practice the progression with that chuckling rhythm until you get it. Soon, you will be doing it without thinking about it and you'll wonder how you didn't get it before. Play without and with chuckling and you will usually see that the "one man band" is with the chuckling.

link for my example:

https://youtu.be/WYO4_KuuaC4

This example is the most basic. You will realize that you just follow the music, and you will feel where a chuck needs to come in. The hand movement in the video is a little exaggerated, especially the upstroke flourish.

JJ Milare

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/zrgmgJFLOuY>

Bernadette:

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Yd9Led4lvI4>

UkuleleCheats:

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/lwuFW5FSGpU>

Cynthia Lynn:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBBmUVqM6Vw>

SpicyUke - This guy is always pushing and challenging:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CUMhRSWcUA>

Travis Picking:

Merle Travis. Strumming, picking and plucking with the strumming hand. You are not doing fingerstyle, because you are fretting chords with your fretting hand, and the fretting hand is not free to wander around the fretboard.

This is an amazing thing -- after you get it, your strumming/picking hand will just follow the music without you thinking about it at all. You just have to concentrate on the fretting hand to make sure you are fretting the correct chord. Because your fretting hand is playing chords, and your strumming hand is picking out a known pattern that is following the music, you can immediately use Travis Picking on any song - there is no need to know how to play scales to be able to play a good bit of the melody (and bass). This makes Travis Picking very useful and relatively easy.

You will find your picking hand joining in with the rhythm section -- percussion and bass. You hear yourself playing pieces of the melody, the bassline, pickup notes, and you fall in picking something with the percussion as well.

Sometimes, you realize that you are picking like you are a classical guitarist.

The In-side-Out-side is the basic idea. What took me weeks to pick up, Debbie and Jen, both were able to immediately pick up the basics of TP, just with this In-side-Out-side pro-tip...

FYI - It is not exactly a Travis pick, most of all, because we are not palm-muting the strings with the picking hand, which is what Merle Travis usually did for his country sound.

Arpeggios are another picking technique and not nearly as useful. After you do this for a while, you will realize that your hand swaps out and does arpeggios when it needs to -- it follows the music without thinking about it.

Baseline ideas:

The trick for the basics is "In-side-Out-side. In-side-Out-side. In-side-Out-side..." This means the 2 strings in the middle, then the 2 strings outside

- The Thumb rules/stays on the 3rd and 4th strings. If you have a low-G, you will hear the more standard OOOM-PA. This is the alternating bass, and you will look down and your thumb will be moving same speed, from the 3rd to the 4th strings.
- The index finger rules the 2nd string.
- The middle finger rules the 1st string.
- **The pinky is placed below all the strings, on the body of the ukulele, to anchor your hand into place.** If you do not anchor, it is difficult to keep fingers on the strings they are supposed to be on. Arpeggios, you do not anchor.
- as an aside, your ring finger is not used for Travis Picking on the ukulele.

So, on ukulele:

- The Thumb alternates on the 4th and 3rd strings. Generally in a regular rhythm. This is a relatively well known feel as the "alternating bass notes" you hear often in music.
- While the thumb is doing a regular alternation between the 4th and 3rd string (or reversed), the index and middle finger are following the music. Often times, you hear the melody in the index and middle fingers.
- There are, like, 7 patterns of Travis picking. After you play a while, you realize that it takes almost nothing to switch from pattern to pattern - not a whole lot of brain power is used to do it, and your picking hand generally just follows the music, and changes pattern when it needs to.
- The ukulele, strung with GCEA, doesn't have these oom-pa bass notes, but GCEA does.

My samples:

https://youtu.be/cU_ubMZN2us

-- Travis Picking 101

https://youtube.com/shorts/3_0tUigpZf8

-- Travis Picking 102, with a pluck

Ukulele Mike gave away so much of his knowledge:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QptdcF13ro>

Lara does a pretty good job:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWQByqkFKBo&t=6s>

This is the one where Travis Picking sunk in with me (thank you Colleen):

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/vQwbC-QQd3M>

Dust in the Wind - Kansas - by Gracie. This is great implementation of Travis picking...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9xAn8r3RVg>

I really like Paul Davids -- he's guitar, but this 7 minutes is captivating. This post is why I wanted to play TP

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6b371mNkCw>

----- **Hammer-Ons**

-- so good with country or blues songs. Good with A, D, G, G7 -- chords with # of fretted strings. If you were playing the guitar, hammer-ons are a bell and whistle that makes you sound like you are not a beginner.

----- **Muting with fretting hand**

- split second after strumming the chord, release pressure on strings
- makes for punchy notes

