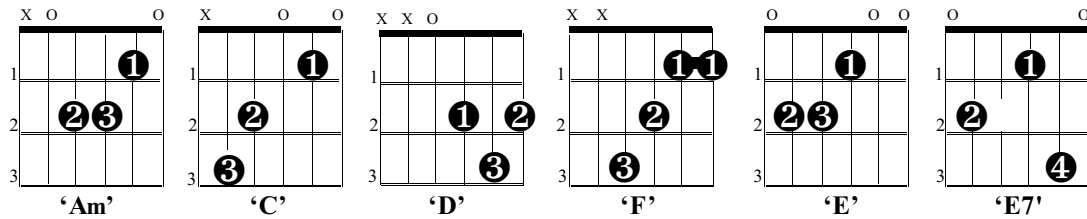# 'House of the Rising Sun' *(strum-along version)*

*Traditional English Ballad   Transcribed by **Kevin Paluzzi***

Key of 'A' Minor

'Am'   'C'   'D'   'F'   'E'   'E7'

Verse 1

```
        Am      C       D         F       Am      C      E           E
    There  is...   a house.  in New Orleans  They call 'The Rising Sun'
        Am      C       D         F       Am      E       Am      E7
    And  its been the ruin    of many a poor boy  And God  I'm know I'm one
```

Verse 2

```
        Am      C       D         F       Am      C       E           E
    My mother    was a      tailor          She sewed my new blue jeans
        Am      C       D         F       Am      E       Am      E7
    My father    was a       gamblin' man        down in  New    Orleans
```

Verse 3

```
        Am      C       D         F       Am      C       E           E
    Now the only    thing a   gambler   needs   is a suitcase   and    a trunk
        Am      C       D         F       Am      E       Am      E7
    And the only    time that he's satisfied       is when he's on    a drunk.
```

Verse 4

```
        Am      C       D         F       Am      C       E           E
    Oh mother        tell your children       Not to do the what I have done
        Am      C       D         F       Am      E       Am      E7
    To spend your life      in sin and misery    In the House of the Rising Sun
```

Verse 5

```
        Am      C       D         F       Am      C       E           E
    I got one foot    on the    platform        The other foot    on the    train
        Am      C       D         F       Am      E       Am      E7
    I'm going        back to   New Orleans       to wear that      ball and chain
```

Verse 6

```
        Am      C       D         F     Am      C       E           E
    There is a      house    in New Orleans     They call 'The Rising Sun'
        Am      C       D         F     Am      E       Am      E7
    And its been the  ruin       of many a poor boy And God    I know I'm one
```

'House of the Rising Sun' - Performance Notes

One of the most popular or 'traditional' strum-along songs for guitar, *'House of the Rising Sun'* has origins dating back to the eighteenth century. The original author is unknown, and with so many arrangements and variations of lyrics, the song has become a standard for many styles of music including Folk, Rock, and Blues. This lesson features a step-by-step approach to learning a basic 'strum-along' arrangement for beginners.

Strumming

The strum pattern remains the same throughout the song, using either a: '*down... down-up-down-up, down... down-up-down-up*' strum, or a '*1... 1-2-3-4 - 1... 1-2-3-4'* count. Repeat this strum with 'Am' a few times in order to establish a consistent rhythm before moving on to chord changes.

The Strum Pattern

> *'down- down-up-down-up down- down-up-down-up'*
> *'1 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4   1 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4'*

Arranging Sections

Four Chords at a Time. The best way to learn the complete arrangement is to memorize one *four-chord sequence* at a time. Section A *('There is... a house... in New Orleans... ')* is an *'Am-C-D-F'* progression. Section B *('They call the rising sun..')* is an *'Am-C-E-E'* progression. Section A is then repeated, while Section C *(And God... I know... I'm one)* will be the final four-chord sequence *('Am-E-Am-Am')* to memorize.

Four Sections per Verse. Once each four-chord sequence is memorized, the next step is to arrange sections in order to play a complete verse. With sections one and three being the same, each verse can be summarized *(by section)* as *'A - B - A - C'.*

Sections

Section 1:	**Am - C - D - F**
Section 2:	**Am - C - E - E**
Section 3:	**Am - C - D - F**
Section 4:	**Am - E - Am - E7**
(Alt Sec 4):	**Am - E - Am - Am**

Adding Vocals

To combine vocals and strumming, slowly *'sync-up'* lyrics with chord changes. For this step, it isn't necessary to actually sing at proper pitch but to instead simply 'talk' through the lyrics and to 'land' each chord change to its corresponding lyric. This can be done at any pace as the priority is to establish a steady tempo.

Three Strum-Along Steps

1. **Memorize Chord Progression**
2. **'Sync-up' Chords with Lyrics**
3. **Focus on Vocal Melody**

'Syncing' Chords with Lyrics

The lyrics on the previous page are aligned so that the first downstroke of each strum pattern occurs with each chord symbol. For example, the initial 'Am' downstroke 'lands' on the '*is*' vocal, while the initial 'C' downstroke lands on the '*house*' vocal *(see below)*. Once the proper timing of syncing chords with lyrics is accomplished, the focus can then shift to singing at proper pitch.

Am	**C**	**D**	**F**
↓ -	↓	↓	
There is...	*A house...*	*in New Orleans...*	

Arrangement Notes

Every verse uses the same 16-chord progression. For an ending, simply add a strummed 'Am' chord at the end of any verse. Some may prefer to *substitute* an 'E7' chord for 'Am' ('*Am-E-Am-E7*') at the end of each verse to *'lead-in'* to another verse. The strum pattern for 'E7' can be changed to add more dramatic effect.