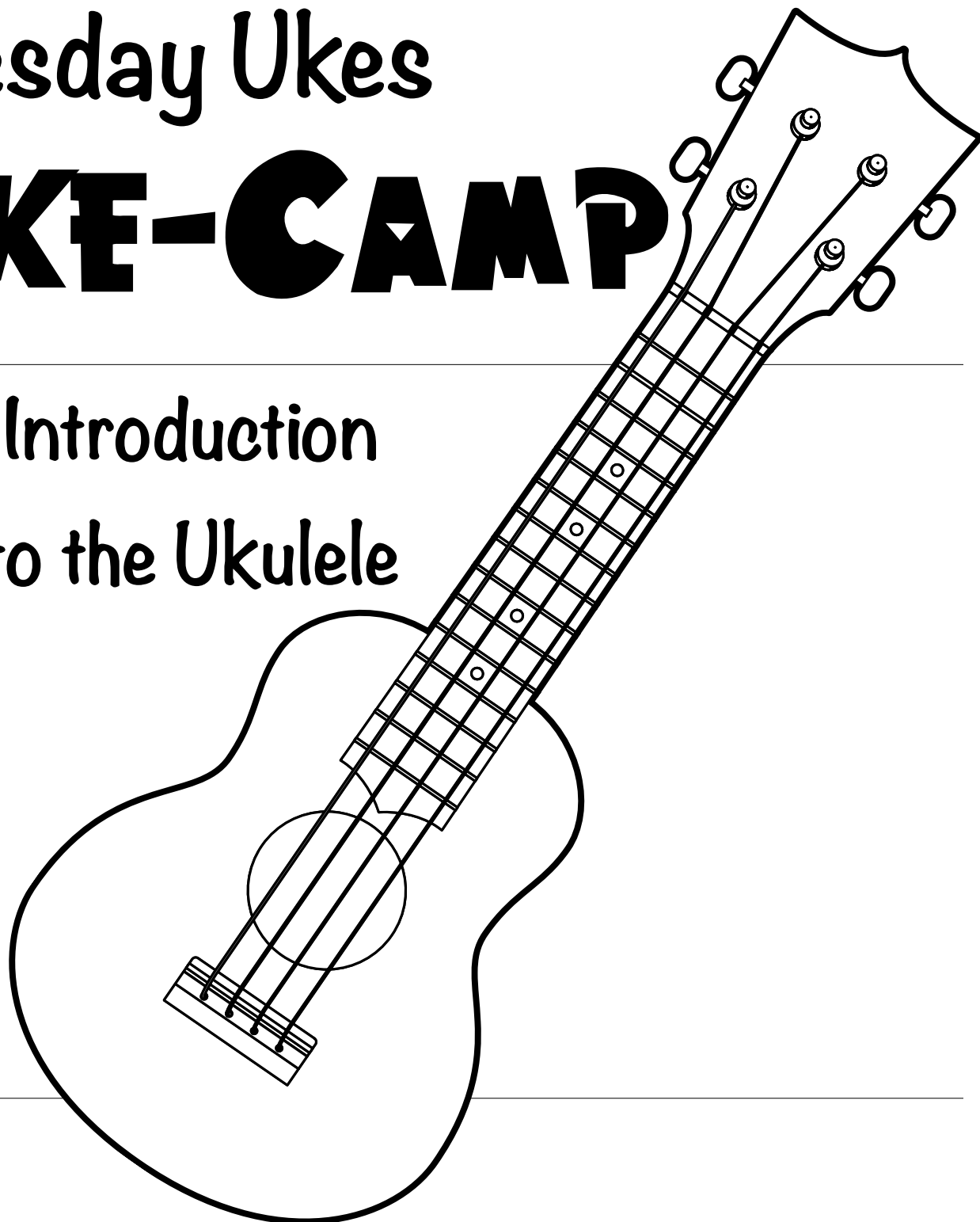


Tuesday Ukes

UKE-CAMP

Introduction to the Ukulele



Version 2



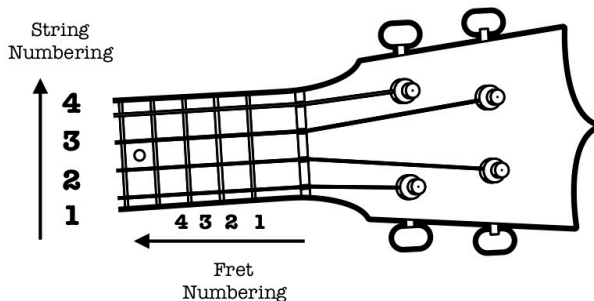
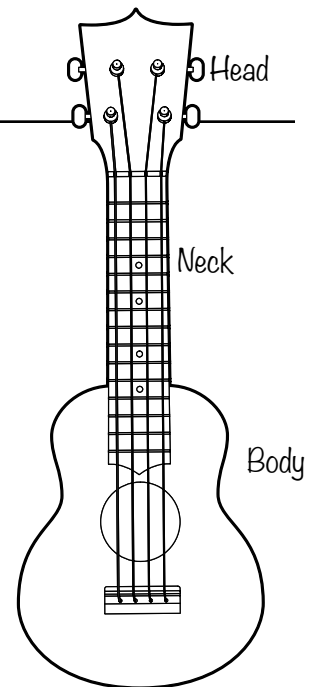
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Getting Started

Ukuleles By The Numbers

The main parts of the ukulele are the head, the neck, and the body. The strings connect to the tuning pegs on the head and connect to the bridge on the body.

The strings on a ukulele are numbered from the bottom up like the floors on a building - starting with the string closest to the floor - 1-2-3-4. The frets on a ukulele are the wires that cross the neck. But, when we talk about frets what we really mean is the space between those wires. Frets are numbered from the head to the body - 1-2-3-4 . . .



We use the fret numbers to “spell” chords. To spell a chord we say the number of the fret that is pressed down for each string from the 4th string to the first string. If the string is not fingered, then we say “zero” (O). A string that is not pressed is also called an “open” string.

A **C** chord is spelled “O-O-O-3” - open 4th string, open 3rd string, open 2nd string and press the third fret on the first string.

Holding Your Uke

- 1) Place your ukulele on your right thigh, with the rounded part of the bottom on your leg, and the strings facing away from you.
- 2) Let your left arm hang free at your side, spread your fingers, with your palm towards you. Wiggle your fingers. Relax.
- 3) Raise your hand pointing your thumb at your left ear. Just raise your hand to where you feel comfortable. Keep your fingers spread. Keep your thumb pointed at your ear.
- 4) Let the neck of the ukulele rest between your thumb and index finger. The curve where the uke neck and body come together should be touching the joint where your index finger joins your palm. Keep the strings pointed away from your body.
- 5) Let your thumb wrap around the neck of the ukulele.
- 6) Gently curl your fingers down - like you are squeezing a marshmallow. Lay them on the first string of the ukulele (the string closest to the floor).
- 7) Try to place your first finger on the first fret, second on the second fret, third on the third fret, and fourth on the fourth fret. Say to yourself - “One”, “Two”, “Three”, “Four” as you place each finger.

The approach insures that your wrist is straight, and your fingers approach the string at an angle (which makes fingering chords much easier). Follow this process each time you pick up the ukulele. In a week or two it will be second nature.

Strumming Your Ukulele

- 1) Make a pointer with your right hand, Keep your fingers relaxed, and your thumb pointed up.
- 2) Point your index finger at the place where the neck and body of the ukulele meet. This is the strumming "Sweet Spot".
- 3) Your palm should be up, and your thumb pointed at the head of the ukulele.
- 4) Rotate your wrist so your index fingers strums across all four strings. Don't swing your arm. The motion is like screwing in a lightbulb.
- 5) On the downstroke (towards the floor), you should strike the strings with your fingernail.
- 6) On the upstroke (towards your head), you should strike the strings with the meaty tip of your finger.



Strum down and up on the open strings of the ukulele. You are playing your first chord. The **C6** (0-0-0-0) chord.

Downstroke Strum

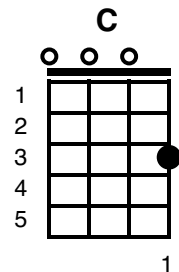
The key to strumming is keeping a steady beat - and a way to help do that is to count - out loud. For the downstroke strum hit the strings on the downstroke, and miss the strings when you bring your finger back up. Count out loud on each downstroke - "1 2 3 4".

You'll see strumming patterns presented in a little chart like this:

D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

Chord Diagrams

Chord diagrams show how to finger a chord. The horizontal lines are the frets and the vertical lines are the strings. The name of the chord is at the top of the diagram. Open circles indicate that those strings are not pressed down. A closed circle indicates that you should press down the string on that fret. If you see numbers at the bottom of the chord diagram, those are suggestions on which finger(s) to use to finger the chord. If we spelled this chord - it would be "0-0-0-3".

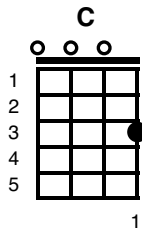


Best Chord Ever - ZED

Place all four fingers of your left hand across the strings, don't press hard - just lay them on the strings. Strum - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4. This is the ZED chord. It's a great chord to use to practice strumming. It's also handy when you're playing in a group and don't know a chord.

Are You Sleeping?/Farmer In The Dell

Traditional



Are You Sleeping?

First Sung Note: C

[C] Are you sleeping?

Are you sleeping?

Brother John,

Brother John,

Morning bells are ringing!

Morning bells are ringing!

Ding, dang, dong.

Ding, dang, dong.

The Farmer In the Dell

First Sung Note: G

The farmer in the dell

The farmer in the dell

Hi-ho, the derry-o

The farmer in the dell

The child takes the nurse

The child takes the nurse

Hi-ho, the derry-o...

The child takes the nurse

The farmer takes a wife

The farmer takes a wife

Hi-ho, the derry-o...

The farmer takes a wife

The nurse takes the cow

The nurse takes the cow

Hi-ho, the derry-o...

The nurse takes the cow

The wife takes the child

The wife takes the child

Hi-ho, the derry-o...

The wife takes the child

The cow takes the dog

The cow takes the dog

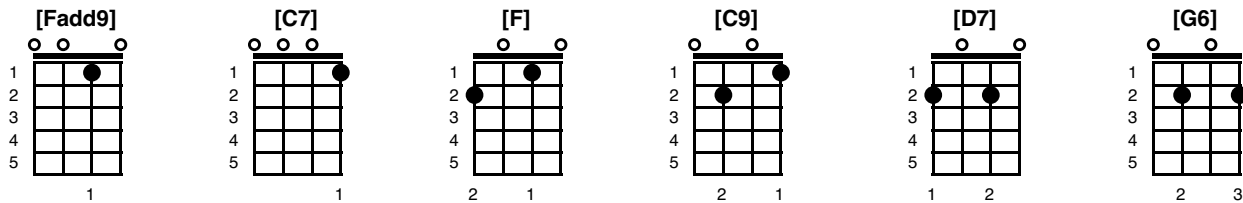
Hi-ho, the derry-o...

The cow takes the dog

First Chords

First Chords - Chord Twins

These chords are called chord twins - they have the same shape - so learning these chords is a two-for-one.



Pressing The Strings - Be Goldilocks

To make a note ring clearly you only need to press down a string so that it touches fret wire - you **never** need to press the string down so that it touches the wood of the fretboard. Use only pressure necessary to make a clear, clean tone. Think of Goldilocks - not too hard, and not too soft.

Chord Practice - Pulsing the Chord

This is a great way to learn new chords.

1. Play a slow down-up-down-up strum,
2. On each down-stroke (d), press the strings just enough to make the chord ring.
3. On each up-stroke (u), relax your fingers so the chord does not sound.
4. As you play say, "Press", "Relax", "Press", "Relax"
5. When you can lift your fingers off the strings on the up-stroke, and make a clean sounding chord on the downstroke - you have learned that chord.
6. Play slowly - accuracy is more important than speed. Press just enough (**gently!**) to make a clean sound - no buzzing and no dead strings.

The most important part of pulsing chords is relaxing - focus on letting your fingers get loose with no pressure on the strings. This will help you change chords more quickly and accurately when you're playing songs.

The One Minute Practice

To practice chords - or anything - try a **one minute practice**. Use a timer - a kitchen timer, or the timer on your phone - and start pulsing a chord. Keep going until the timer goes off. Don't worry about how many repetitions you do, or how long play - just continue until the timer beeps. Nice thing is - you can do anything for a minute!

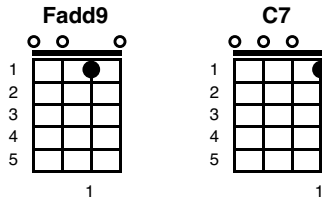
Ain't Gonna Rain No More (CT)

Wendell Hall - 1923

First Sung Note: F

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dLk6x2656c>

Key of F
100 BPM in 4/4



Strumming Pattern: d du d du d du d du
 1 2& 3 4& 1 2& 3 4&

[Fadd9] It ain't gonna rain no more no more, It ain't gonna rain no [C7] more
[C7] How in the heck can I wash my neck, If it ain't gonna rain no [Fadd9] more

[Fadd9] We had a cat down on our farm, It ate a ball of [C7] yarn
[C7] When those little cats were born, They all had sweaters [Fadd9] on

[Fadd9] Well the butterfly flits on wings of gold, The June Bug wings of [C7] flame.
[C7] The bedbug has no wings at all, But he gets there just the [Fadd9] same.

[Fadd9] It ain't gonna rain no more no more, It ain't gonna rain no [C7] more
[C7] How in the heck can I wash my neck, If it ain't gonna rain no [Fadd9] more

[Fadd9] We had a goat down on our farm, It ate up old tin [C7] cans
[C7] When those little goats were born, They came in Ford [Fadd9] sedans

[Fadd9] Some people swear that fleas are black, But I know it ain't [C7] so
[C7] 'Cause Mary had a little lamb, Whose fleece was white as [Fadd9] snow

[Fadd9] It ain't gonna rain no more no more, It ain't gonna rain no [C7] more
[C7] How in the heck can I wash my neck, If it ain't gonna rain no [Fadd9] more

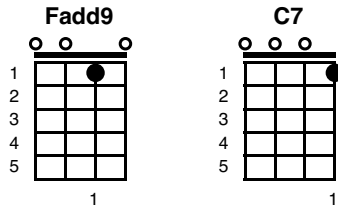
Take Me Back to Tulsa (CT)

Bob Wills and Tommy Duncan

First Sung Note: F

<https://youtu.be/BCjbMdY8dZE>

Key of F
100 BPM in 4/4



Strumming Pattern: d du d du d du d du
 1 2& 3 4& 1 2& 3 4&

[Fadd9] Where's that gal with red dress on some folks called her [C7] Dinah
[C7] Stole my heart away from me way down in Louis-[Fadd9]-iana
[Fadd9] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [C7] marry
[C7] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [Fadd9] marry

[Fadd9] Little bee sucks the blossom big bee gets the [C7] honey
[C7] Little man raises the cotton big man gets the [Fadd9] money
[Fadd9] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [C7] marry
[C7] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [Fadd9] marry

[Fadd9] Walk and talk to Suzy walk and talk to [C7] Suzy
[C7] Walk and talk to Suzy walk and talk to [Fadd9] Suzy
[Fadd9] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [C7] marry
[C7] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [Fadd9] marry

[Fadd9] I went down to the railroad, laid my head down on the [C7] track
[C7] I thought about that gal of mine and I gradually eased it [Fadd9] back
[Fadd9] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [C7] marry
[C7] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [Fadd9] marry

[Fadd9] We always wear a great big smile we never do look [C7] sour
[C7] Travel all over the country playing by the [Fadd9] hour
[Fadd9] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [C7] marry
[C7] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [Fadd9] marry
[Fadd9] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [C7] marry
[C7] Take me back to Tulsa I'm too young to [Fadd9] wed

Strings

Ukulele Tuning

The notes of the strings on the ukulele are **G, C, E** and **A** - this is often referred to as “C” tuning. Strumming the open strings produces a **C6** chord. A mnemonic to remember the notes is **Godzilla Can Eat**

Anything. These are the notes you will use to tune your ukulele. As you have heard from strumming your ukulele, the 4th (top) string is higher than the 3rd string. This is called re-entrant tuning, and helps give the ukulele it’s bright, happy sound.

Listen to the sound of the four strings as you pluck across them slowly. Sing - “**My Dog Has Fleas**” as you pluck. When you tune your ukulele, sing (or hum) “My Dog has Fleas”- and pretty quickly you will have the pitch of those 4 notes firmly in your ear.

G C E A

1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Plucking the Strings

You can pluck the strings to play melodies, or combine plucking with strumming to combine chords and melodies into what is called chord-melodies. We’ll start by plucking with our thumb on the 4th string.

1. Let your thumb rest on the string - this is “positioning” your thumb
2. Push your thumb **through** the string - so that it rests against the next string.
3. Move your thumb back into position on the string you are plucking.
4. Repeat

Go slowly, and strive for a clear, clean tone. The most important part of the movement is getting positioned on the string before you pluck.

Tuning Your Ukulele

It is simple to tune your ukulele using an electronic tuner. You can get a ukulele tuner app on your phone, or buy a clip-on tuner for \$10-20. They all work basically the same way. Start tuning on the 4th string (closest to your head) and work down to the 1st string.

- 1) Turn on your tuner, and pluck the 4th string.
- 2) The tuner will show whether the string is flat (too low) or sharp (too high)
- 3) Turn the tuning key for that string. Keep plucking as you turn the tuning key - the tuner will show whether you are moving the pitch up or down
- 4) When you get to the correct pitch the tuner will show a different color

Memphis (CT)

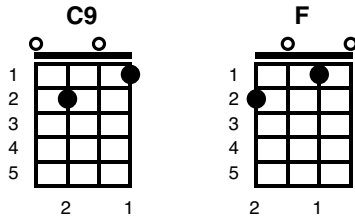
Chuck Berry - 1959

First Sung Note: C

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAc0FKyBgks&t=5s>

Key of F

100 BPM in 4/4



Strumming Pattern: d d dudu d d dudu
 1 2 3&4& 1 2 3&4&

[C9] Long distance information give me Memphis, Tennessee
[C9] Help me find the party that tried to get in touch with me
[F] She could not leave her number but I know who placed the call
[C9] Cause my uncle took a message and he wrote it on the [F] wall

[C9] Help me information get in touch with my Marie
[C9] She's the only one who'd call me here from Memphis, Tennessee
[F] Her home is on the southside high upon a ridge
[C9] just a half-a-mile from the Mississippi [F] bridge

[C9] Last time I saw marie she was wavin me goodbye
[C9] Hurry home teardrops were tricklin from her eye
[F] We were pulled apart because her mom did not agree
[C9] It tore apart our happy home in Memphis, [F] Tennessee

[C9] Help me information more than that I cannot add
[C9] Only that miss her and all the fun we had
[F] Marie is only six-years old, information please
[C9] Try to put me through to her in Memphis, [F]Tennessee

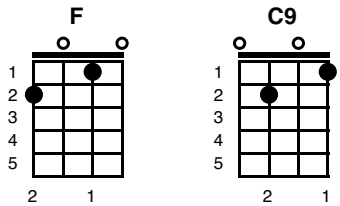
The Wheels on the Bus (CT)

Verna Hills - 1939

First Sung Note: F

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7kr40Z8zs4>

Key of F
100 BPM in 4/4



Strumming Pattern: d d dudu d d dudu
 1 2 3&4& 1 2 3&4&

[F] The wheels on the bus go round and round

[C9] Round and round, round and round

[F] The wheels on the bus go round and round

[C9] All through the **[F]** town

[F] The people on the bus go up and down

[C9] Up and down, up and down

[F] The people on the bus go up and down

[C9] All through the **[F]** town

[F] The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish

[C9] Swish, swish, swish, Swish, swish, swish

[F] The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish

[C9] All through the **[F]** town

[F] The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep

[C9] Beep, beep, beep, Beep, beep, beep

[F] The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep

[C9] All through the town

[F] The children on the bus make too much noise

[C9] Too much noise, Too much noise

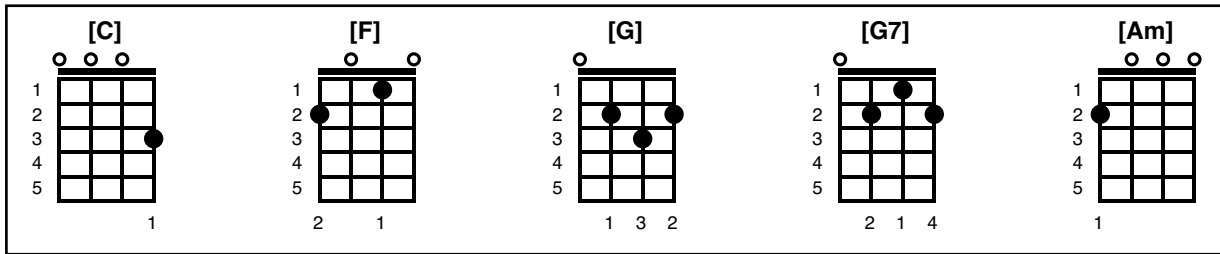
[F] The children on the bus make too much noise

[C9] All through the **[F]** town

More Chords

Common Chords in the Key of C

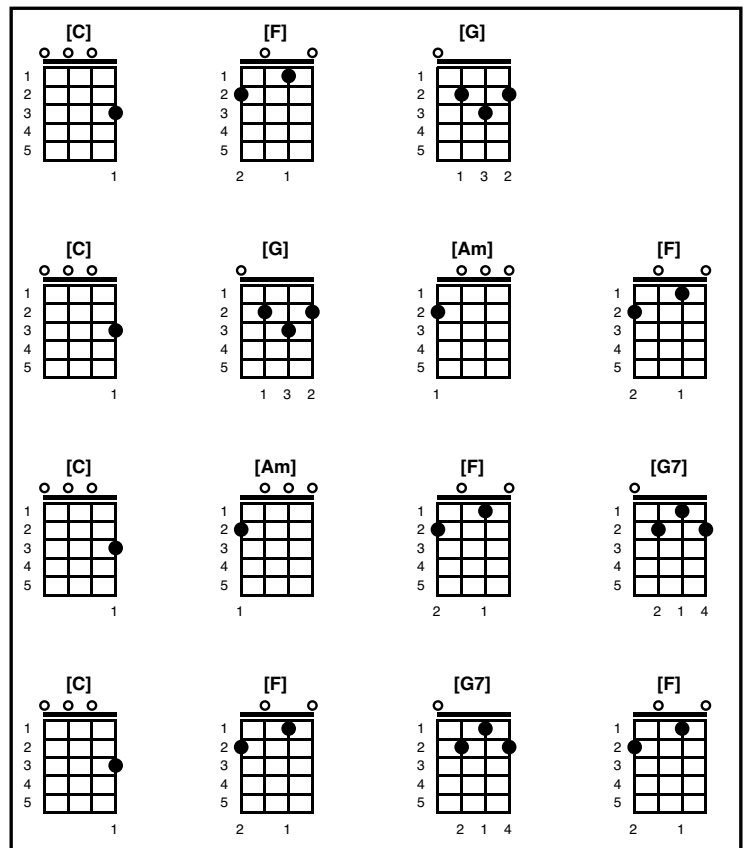
Here are the 5 most common chords for ukulele songs in the key of C. If you know these 5 chords you can play literally thousands of songs.



Chord Progressions in the Key of C

In songs the chords follow a progression which usually repeats over and over. Here are four common chord progressions. Play each chord for 4 beats, and then play the next chord for 4 beats. After you've played the last chord repeat from the beginning of the progression. Each progression starts with a **C** chord. If you're having trouble changing the chord shapes as you play, pulse the chords like this:

- 1) Play the first chord on the downstroke
- 2) Relax your fingers on the upstroke and move your fingers to the next chord
- 3) Play the second chord on the downstroke
- 4) Repeat to the end of the progression.
- 5) Play as slowly as you need to play each chord cleanly.



Buffalo Gals

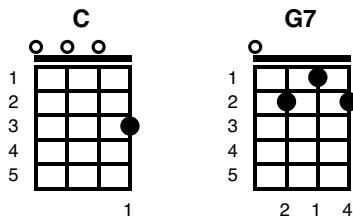
Traditional 1844

First Sung Note: C

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S92bWBB0ymo>

Key of C

120 BPM in 4/4



Strumming Pattern - d Du d Du d Du d Du
1 2& 3 4& 1 2& 3 4&

(Intro - Strum on [C])

[C] Buffalo gals, won't you come out tonight?
[G7] Come out tonight [C] come out tonight?
[C] Buffalo gals, won't you come out tonight
And [G7] dance by the light of the [C] moon

As [C] I was walking down the street
[G7] Down the street [C] down the street,
A [C] pretty little gal I chanced to meet,
Oh [G7] she was fair to [C] see

[C] Buffalo gals, won't you come out tonight?
[G7] Come out tonight [C] come out tonight?
[C] Buffalo gals, won't you come out tonight
And [G7] dance by the light of the [C] moon

I [C] asked her if she'd stop and talk
[G7] Stop and talk [C] stop and talk
Her [C] feet took up the whole sidewalk
And [G7] left no room for [C] me

[C] Buffalo gals, won't you come out tonight?
[G7] Come out tonight [C] come out tonight?
[C] Buffalo gals, won't you come out tonight
And [G7] dance by the light of the [C] moon

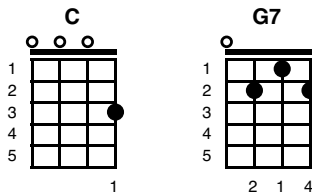
Jambalaya

Hank Williams - 1952

First Sung Note: E

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JX4SQAS9w0

Key of C
120 BPM in 4/4



([NC] = No Chord - don't strum)

Strumming Pattern - d Du d Du d Du d Du
1 2& 3 4& 1 2& 3 4&

(Intro - Strum on [C] - STOP)

[NC] Good-bye [C] Joe, me gotta go, me oh [G7] my oh
Me gotta go pole the pirogue down the [C] bayou
My Yvonne, the sweetest one, me oh [G7] my oh
Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou (STOP)

[NC] Jamba-[C]-laya and a crawfish pie and file [G7] gumbo
'Cause tonight I'm gonna see my ma cher-[C]-amio
Pick guitar, fill fruit jar and be [G7] gay-o
Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou (STOP)

[NC] Thibo-[C]-deaux, Fontainenot, the place is [G7] buzzin'
Kinfolk come to see Yvonne by the [C] dozen
Dress in style and go hog wild, me oh [G7] my oh
Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou (STOP)

[NC] Jamba-[C]-laya and a crawfish pie and file [G7] gumbo
'Cause tonight I'm gonna see my ma cher-[C]-amio
Pick guitar, fill fruit jar and be [G7] gay-o
Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou (STOP)

[NC] Settle [C] down, far from town, get me a [G7] pirogue
And I'll catch all the fish in the [C] bayou
Swap my mon to buy Yvonne what she [G7] need-o
Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou (STOP)

[NC] Jamba-[C]-laya and a crawfish pie and file [G7] gumbo
'Cause tonight I'm gonna see my ma cher-[C]-amio
Pick guitar, fill fruit jar and be [G7] gay-o
Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou
[G7] Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou [G7] [C]

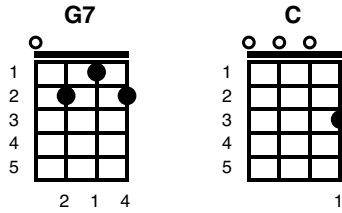
Dream Baby

Cindy Walker

First Sung Note: B

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txfVKHMIOy8>

Key of G
100 BPM in 4/4



Strumming Pattern - d Du d Du d Du d Du
1 2& 3 4& 1 2& 3 4&

(Intro - Strum on [G7])

[G7] Sweet dream baby
[G7] Sweet dream baby
[C] Sweet dream baby
[G7] How long must I [C] dream

(Change to just downstrums)

Strumming Pattern - d d d d d d d d
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

[G7] Dream baby got me dreaming sweet dreams
[G7] The whole day through
[G7] Dream baby got me dreaming sweet dreams
[G7] Night time too

(Back to original strum)

Strumming Pattern - d Du d Du d Du d Du
1 2& 3 4& 1 2& 3 4&

[C] I love you and I'm dreaming of you
[C] But that won't do
[G7] Dream baby make me stop my dreaming
[G7] You can make my dreams come [C] true

Repeat 3 Times

Austin Ukulele Info

Tuesday Ukes

<http://tuesdayukes.org/>

Every Tuesday at 7:00p.m.
Hancock Recreation Center
811 E 41st St, Austin, TX

Austin Ukulele Society

<https://austinukulelesociety.com/>

Second Thursday of each month - 7:00pm
Memorial United Methodist Church
6100 Berkman Drive, Austin, TX
In the school at the back of the church - just follow the ukes
Their web page has other ukulele group and events - check them out!

Places to Buy a Ukulele

Strait Music - <https://www.straitmusic.com/c-2-ukuleles.aspx>

Fiddler's Green - <http://www.fiddlersgreenmusicshop.com/>

Austin Bazaar - <https://www.austinbazaar.com/> (Online only)

Ukulele Web Sites for Beginner Lessons

Jake Shimabukuro :

<https://www.jakeshimabukuro.com/home/beginner-ukulele-lessons/>

Will Grove White :

<https://willgrovewhite.com/learning-to-play-the-ukulele-lesson-one/>

Cynthia Lin :

<https://www.youtube.com/user/cynthialinmusic>

Jim Deville :

<http://www.playukulelebyyear.com/>

Live Ukulele :

<https://liveukulele.com/lessons/for-beginners/>