

# THE U3A UKULELE

## STAGE 2 COURSE



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# UKULELE STAGE 2

## Introduction

This course is intended for players wishing to develop their playing skills beyond the regular strumming of familiar chords. Once chord fingering has become instinctive, more varied chords can be used and the strumming hand can develop a variety of styles and playing methods.

As well as for lively songs, a ukulele can be played for lyrical ballads or with exciting rhythms. It can be played by finger picking, or even as a melody lead. The following notes will encourage individuals to develop their own style, and each section can be used by group leaders as content for the development of their groups.

The course covers the development of rhythm, barred chords, an introduction to keys, ornamentation, other chord types, notation and tabs, finger-picking, relative tuning, buying a better instrument and suggestions for future progress. There is some overlap with the U3A Beginner's Course where reinforcement or amplification is often required, or to cater for players who have already learned the basics and approach this course directly. These notes contain suggestions, but as music is an art form, they can never be rigid.

A number of songs or part-songs are included as examples of the subjects covered. Chord boxes are shown for unusual chords. Instrumental interludes and choir backing is indicated in *italics*. The number of extra strokes in riffs is shown as C/// (i.e. 4 strokes on C), etc. Arpeggios are shown as 'arp'. Songs are in the original key where no key is shown in the title.

The D7 variant (F#dim) is shown where it integrates more smoothly with the other first-position chords. It contrasts well with the barred D7, especially where the use of both chords gives a useful effect. Also F7 is shown throughout as F7-5, which is easier to finger and often sits better in a song.

The course may be distributed digitally or as printed copy to U3A members only. For the best result, the sheets can be placed in punched plastic sleeves in a 4-ring binder.

As always, new questions or comments will arise. To discuss any points, contact me at [u3aukuleleadviser@btinternet.com](mailto:u3aukuleleadviser@btinternet.com) and I will be happy to take your thoughts on board.

Happy Strumming

Ken Cockburn  
U3A National Ukulele Adviser

# 1 Rhythms

You will by now have realised that while the chord hand gives musicality, the strumming hand gives life, energy and lyricism to your playing. Once a solid capability to find and change chords is mastered, players wishing to improve need to develop a variety of strumming rhythms to give expression. This can be easy to do, but hard to explain. Often an experienced player is unable to easily describe exactly what they do, and equally an aspiring player usually has great difficulty in interpreting a description. Trying to follow a set formula is usually unproductive, resulting in a wooden interpretation.

Rhythms are built from four elements - tempo, time signature, pattern and emphasis within the bar, and timing, whether even or syncopated. The natural and easiest way to learn is allow your strumming hand to move to the music in the same unconscious way that you may tap the rhythm of a song on your knee. The music drives the pattern, not vice versa, the pattern is the means of expressing the idea of the rhythm. Play the music in your head, slowly if necessary, and fit the strum to the music. Often, the rhythm of the words of the song will give a clue. Try strumming to each syllable as you sing.

An alternative is to listen to (not watch) an experienced player, and attempt to achieve the same result. Surprisingly, this often results unconsciously in the same action, as the rhythm of the music drives your choices

Examples of several rhythms are shown in the accompanying 'Rhythm Examples 1, 2 & 3'.

**DEVELOPING A RHYTHM:** The tempo is optional, so the first step is to establish the time signature by identifying the emphasised words and counting the beats in the bar between - is it basically a three beat (3/4 time, waltz) or four beat (4/4, common time) type song? Note that there is not always a strum on every beat - see Rhythm Examples 2 'Jingle Bells'.. Once the time signature is established the rhythm within the bar can be decided.

The simplest rhythm is a strong strum on the first beat followed by lighter down strums. To give more interest, the number of strokes in each bar can be doubled by strumming up on the return, to give a faster, more sustained sound. Moving on, the player can then select whether or not to strum on each down or up stroke, giving a large range of choices for patterns.

Further variation is achieved by varying the strength of each strum. Notice that an up-strum has a different tone to a down strum. At this stage the strumming action is not usually interrupted, being a smooth, continuous down/up action.

Playing slow ballads in free time (rubato) with a semi-arpeggio soft thumb-stroke will give great emotional feel to a song - see Rhythm Examples 2 'Help Me Make It'

**OTHER TECHNIQUES:** When you have mastered these, there are many other techniques to add colour to your playing:

Hi-lo strum - a down-stroke moving away from the strings to emphasize just the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> strings, followed by up-strokes emphasizing the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> strings. This is very effective for waltzes, especially with a low G tenor uke. This works well with 'Delilah', Rhythm Examples 1.

Semi-arpeggio strum - stroking more slowly across the strings with the thumb or plectrum, so that each string sounds separately on each beat is very pleasing in slow ballad songs. It can be a single stroke on each bar, or two or even four to a bar (4/4), or even mixed with other styles. It sounds best played individually. This is very effective when ornamentation or passing notes/chords are included. Try this with Rhythm Examples 2, 'Help Me Make It'.

Mix in an arpeggio - This can give a calypso or Latin feel to the rhythm. Use in 'Save the Last Dance' in Rhythm Examples 1.

Syncopation - syncopation (uneven timing) can be achieved either by the uneven distribution of strokes in the pattern, or by varying the timing slightly. One way to do this is by varying the arc of the strumming arm, giving a longer arm movement to one side. The longer arc will take more time to complete, and vice versa, similar to the uneven beat of a badly adjusted pendulum clock - good for jazz or blues like 'Singing the Blues', Rhythm Examples 3.

Emphasis - Look out for phrases to amplify by single bold strums and stops, and mix-and-match as you learn patterns.

Stops/First Beat - An abrupt stop mid-song adds emphasis and is often indicated in the song sheet using a single strong stroke on the first beat only. Alternatively, emphasise certain syllables or words is effective. Try Rhythm Examples 2, 'Folsom Prison Blues' and 'Rave On!' Examples 3

Country guitar style - alternately picking 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> string (or the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> on a low 'G' uke), each followed by a slow or fast strum. Easiest using fingers or a harder plectrum. Suits 'Country Roads', Rhythm Examples 3.

Double speed strum - introduce a double speed section at suitable points. The riff in Rhythm Examples 3. 'Have a Drink on Me' shows this.

Here are some other effects you can combine to make your own performance, giving many permutations:

Mix various rhythms in a song, vary the tempo, or vary the volume.

Strike all or fewer strings (angle the stroke)

Damping (lift off strings after strum or mute by palm or side of thumb) for staccato effect

Intersperse single string notes of the melody

Change the rhythm of a well known song

Try all these techniques out, or develop your own unique style! Most of all - experiment.

## FOR MORE ADVANCED PLAYERS

A picked melody riff can be inserted into strumming when you're good enough. Interposing a picked chorus or picked verse gives good contrast. Double stroke, split-stroke and fan (George Formby style) are techniques you will have to master on your own: there are many video demonstrations on the internet for these techniques.

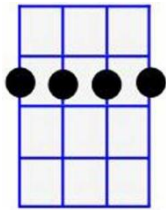
## 2 Barred Chords

### 2.1 How to play barred chords

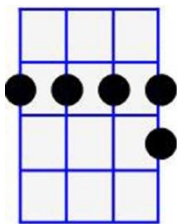
Barred chords, comprising the full D7 and the B series, which includes B flat ( $Bb$ ), are essential to play songs in the popular key of 'F'.

A 'Barre' is an index finger placed across all four strings to stop them to raise the pitch, leaving the remaining fingers to stop additional strings nearer the bridge. This is sometimes shown as four dots, or a line across all four strings. Sometimes it is not shown at all, but is implied where all four strings are stopped, which often necessitates a barre.

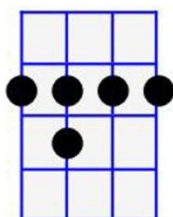
Use a barre to make **D6** (also known as **Bm7**) at the second fret. The middle finger can be used initially to support the barre. Check for a clear sound.



Moving the second or third finger onto string 1 gives **D7**. This can give a delightful lift to a song when used instead of, or contrasting with, the simple two finger form of D7. Often shown as 'D7 bar', this is the full, correct version of the chord. Try it with 'Silent Night', song 4.



Moving the second finger to string 3 gives **B7**. Very useful in the right place.

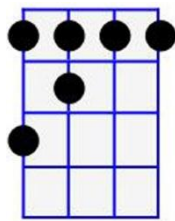


B7



## Playing B Flat

By moving down the neck (towards the head) and placing the third finger on string #4, we finally get to everyone's 'favourite' - *Bb*.



*Bb*



It helps to position the barre finger along the fret so as to feel it. Rotating the hand a little with the barre finger as the axis, turning it away from the fretboard, will assist, as will pushing the barre finger further across the fretboard and raising the uke neck. As with all chords, try to form the shape in your head and let your fingers make it like a rubber stamp, not looking and consciously placing them. These are distinctly different processes. Consciously placing fingers delays finding the chord, so trust your fingers to find the shape.

I suggest that you first practice and use the barred D7 wherever possible, to get used to making the barre. Then move on to B7, which is nearly a *Bb* shape. You can then develop B7 to make *Bb*.

It is worthwhile to pay attention to the string height above the first fret. This is often too high and requires more pressure to make a barre. Ideally, the strings should be level, and just hold a credit card (0.8 mm thick) placed under the strings on the first fret with the uke neck vertical, perhaps a little lower for good quality fretboards. This can be corrected professionally at a price, or instructions are available on the internet.



Be reassured, everyone has difficulty at first with B flat. It is a long term process, and it may take months to find *Bb* cleanly and quickly. You will go through enthusiasm, frustration, anger and despair, but it is really worthwhile to persevere with making a barre. All the barred chord shapes you learn can be moved up or down the neck to make whole families of same-shape chords, e.g. *Bb* moved up one fret makes 'B', up another is 'C', and D7 moved up two frets is E7, and so on. Any one or two finger chord using the first three frets can be moved up the neck four or five semi-tones with a barre - C7, CM7, F, A, A7, Am, Am7, and with a stretch C, all can be moved giving many useful alternative chords, a series of sharps and many obscure chords, over 36 in total.

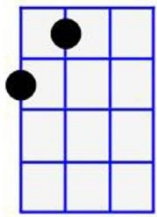
Stepping or sliding a barred chord up or down the neck can also be effective for run-ups or run-downs.

When you are ready, try *Bb* with the song 5 'Pearly Shells', and 6 'All Shook Up'.

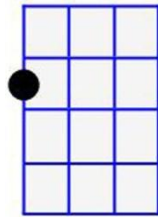
The internet site 'ukebuddy.com' is a good reference for chord shapes; the number on the head of the uke diagram will show you alternative fingering.

## Some Moveable Chords

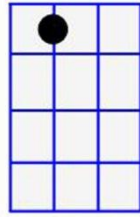
The 'A' series has the nut as the barre and can be moved up in semi-tone steps.



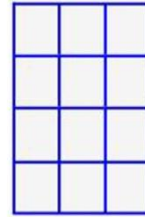
A



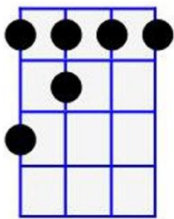
Am



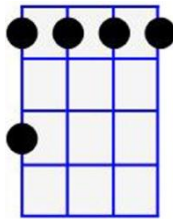
A7



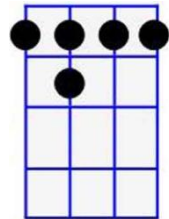
Am7



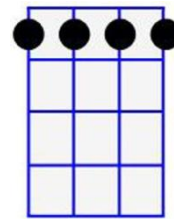
Bb



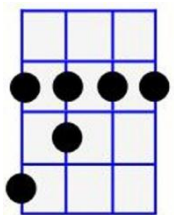
Bbm



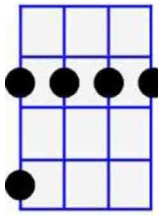
Bb7



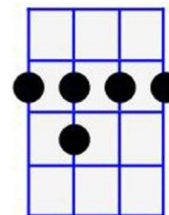
Bbm7



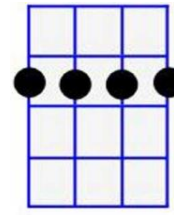
B



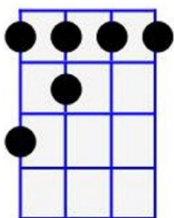
Bm



B7

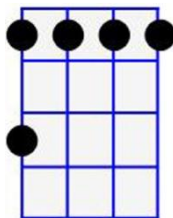


Bm7

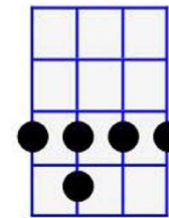


C

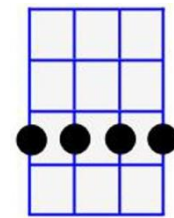
3<sup>rd</sup>  
<Fret>



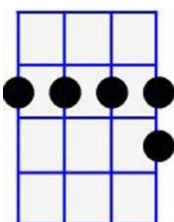
Cm



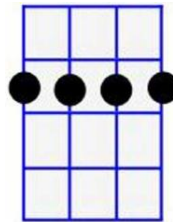
C7



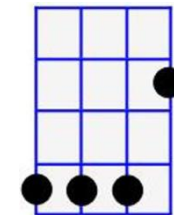
Cm7



D7



D6



E

And so on, through C#, D, D#, etc.

These and others can be moved up and down in semi-tone steps..

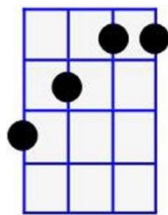


## 2.2 Barred Chord Alternatives

Some players find difficulty early on in forming a secure barre. It is not easy and requires practice and finger strength, but, when you can do it, it opens up a series of alternative chords, and is the mark of an accomplished player.

Until you can achieve the full barre, there are some options - some may say opt-outs. Be aware that as well as being fairly difficult in themselves, they are all restricting, and in one case, inferior to a full barre. It is far better to persevere with the full barre for the best ultimate result.

1. If your finger will flex back enough, **B flat (B $\flat$ )** can be made using the fore-finger across strings 1 & 2, at the first fret, instead of using a full barre. This does not allow development into B7, Bm or Bm7, but can be moved up or down the fret-board, to give B, C, C sharp (C $\sharp$ ), etc.

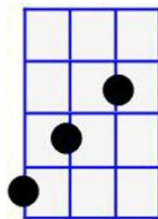


B flat

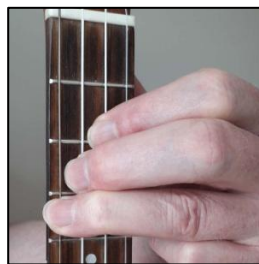


B flat

2. **B7** can be made by placing the fingers in the Em position and moving the shape across to strings 2, 3 & 4. This method works for this chord alone, and cannot be moved up or down the fretboard, or developed into any other chord. It can be useful on occasion as Em and B7 sometimes occur together.

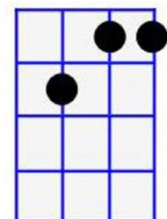


B7 alternative



B7 alternative

3. An inferior approximation to both **B $\flat$**  and **B $\flat$ 7** can be made by forming the chord Gm7 and not striking the fourth string. This chord is not as strong, and is difficult to execute at speed. This shape can be moved up the fretboard to make B, C $\sharp$ , etc. with the same limitations.



Gm7

It makes a good **C maj** at the third fret, playing all four strings.

### 3 Using Keys

**SCALES:** Each musical note has a fixed pitch, agreed internationally, and is named from A to G, repeating in each octave. A note may be raised half-way ( $\sharp$  = sharp), or lowered ( $\flat$  = flat). Using 'C' as the start point, the steps between notes are set mathematically and are not even, separated by tones or semi-tones. The steps from 'C' are tone, tone, semi-tone, tone, tone, tone, semi-tone. Notes a full tone apart have a sharp ( $\sharp$ ) or flat ( $\flat$ ) between: there is no B $\sharp$  or E $\sharp$ .

A scale is a specific selection of notes. There are many different types of scales, but we are only interested here in the two most commonly used - major and minor scales. The major scale is the tonic sol-fa (do-re-mi-fa-sol-la-te-do). Each scale is named from the start note (root) and type, e.g. 'C Major', and the intervals in the scale have the same relationship whatever the start point, i.e. the tonic sol-fa can start on any note. Thus a scale may use any of the notes, sharps or flats, depending on where the intervals fall.

**KEYS:** The Key of a piece is the particular scale used,. The Key of 'C Major' is the easiest, as it contains no sharps or flats, i.e. no black notes on a piano. It is simply all the white notes - C D E F G A B. Keys other than C Major and A minor will contain one or more sharps or flats. The key of a song is usually indicated by the final chord, and a song may be played in a different key if the scale is the same type but starts at a new note.

We sometimes refer to notes by their position in the scale, e.g. root, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup>. These three notes form the major chord of the key. For example, for the key of 'C' Major, C is the root, E is the third and G is the fifth. The two types of scale, major and minor, provide two sets of fundamental chords. Other chord types can be obtained by modifying or adding to these basic chords.

**CHANGING TO ANOTHER KEY:** Published songs are often presented in unfamiliar, or more difficult keys, either to suit the range of the original singer's voice or a particular instrument. We may wish to change the key of a piece to raise or lower the pitch to suit our own voice or to match an artist's performance, or to make it easier to play or even to improve the sound. For example, songs written for the guitar will often appear in 'G', but we may wish to play it in 'C', a more familiar key for a uke.

The pitch of a song can be changed in several ways - retuning, using a capo, etc. Re-tuning lower can be carried out to a limited degree. To raise the pitch, a capo is kinder. A capo is a clamp across all strings, similar to using a barre. However, the normal route to changing key is by 'transposing', that is, changing all the chords by the same number of semi-tones higher or lower, retaining the same chord type (e.g. Major, minor, 7<sup>th</sup>, etc). For example, when changing a chord sequence of C, G7, C in 'C' to the key of 'G', it would become G, D7, G, i.e. moved 7 semi-tones up (or 5 down). A picture of a piano keyboard or a list of all twelve semi-tones is useful for this. A simple paper slider can also be used. Transposing and a capo can be used together for tricky songs.

You can also use 'UltimateGuitar.com' internet site which has a transposing function. Look up the song you want, and use the 'Transpose' buttons at the bottom. Select a key that suits and print it out. By trial and error this sometimes results in a far easier set of chords to play, or the ability to play along to a recording of the original artist.

**CHANGING KEY FOR EFFECT:** Often, a song benefits from being given an added lift by 'shifting up a gear', i.e., moving up a key for the last verse or two. This is achieved by moving all the chords by the same amount, retaining the chord type. For example, for a two semi-tone shift, move to the next letter of the alphabet and C7 becomes D7, etc. Note that in this case E will become F $\sharp$ , and B will become C $\sharp$ . For ease of playing, D can often be used instead of Bm (shifted Am) and G for Em (shifted Dm).

**LINKING CHORDS:** We often play songs with a single contrasting chord between the verses, or verse and chorus. I call this a 'linking chord', bridging the gap and preparing for the next section. The chord will vary depending on the key of the song. For example, songs in 'C' will use G7, in 'F' it will be C7, and in 'G', D7 is used as a link.

A linking chord can also prepare for a key change. Here the new key applies to the link as well, so a C to D change would use A7 as a link, instead of G7, and similarly F to G uses D7, and G to A uses E7. Using a linking chord correctly smoothes out the change, making it sound natural. Note the use of A7 as a link before the third verse of song 7 'The Rose'.

Use it, it's a beautiful effect.

## 4 Ornamentation

### 4.1 Intros, endings, etc.

Performing a song with no frills can be unsatisfying. Variety can be added in several ways:

**INTROS:** The simplest intro is a single strum or a simple sequence on the first chord. The last line or last two lines of the verse or chorus is frequently used, played while humming the words in your head to get the timing. Sometimes the full chorus is used, or, more rarely, the full verse. Some pop songs will even show a short melody.

**ENDING/OUTROS:** There are several ways of finishing a song - gradually slowing down, repeating the last line or two, stopping dead, a continuous strum on the last chord, etc. Most frequently used for songs in 'C' is the usual C-G7-C riff. For songs in 'F' this becomes F-C7-F, and songs in 'G' require G-D7-G. Practice these until you are as quick as for C-G7-C. Slowing and finishing with a single arpeggio stroke is very effective. A set of extra chords or lines added to finish is called an 'outro'.

**LIFT-OFF** - quickly pulling one or more fingers off and back on a chord for one beat gives an attractive varying sound which can be worked into the song at any point except the first beat of the bar. Best used on a long run of one chord. Try C6 while on C, or G6 on G, etc. See chord chart for fingering.

**HAMMER ON** - quickly adding a different note/s to a chord for one beat also gives a varying sound similar to the lift-off, which can be worked into the song at any point except the first beat of the bar. Use on a one chord run. Try Csus4 while on C, Dm on F, etc.

**VARIETY:** Finally, the secret to making a performance interesting is variety. Don't stick to one strum; vary it between the verse and chorus. Use the calypso strum wherever you can. Add different effects at different points. Strum on the upper strings, then on the lower. Use a slow thumb strum. Change key for the last verse. Use all the techniques that you can master to build a unique performance of your own.

Most of all, experiment; don't wait to be told how to play a song; there are many ways - yours can be unique. Play what you enjoy, the way YOU want to play it.

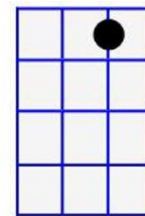
## 4.2 Passing chords, ornamentals, etc.

A competent player will use further techniques to decorate a song. Some examples are the use of passing chords, ornamental chords, run-downs, and slides.

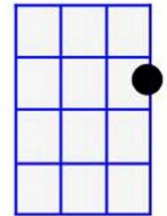
**PASSING CHORDS:** A passing chord is made when a move between two chords is not completed immediately, being made in two steps, on the beat. The intermediate chord is not identified, occurring naturally. It is usually harmonious, as the intermediate chord will have some of the characteristics of the chords either side of it. It gives a gliding effect between chords.

Examples: C - CM7 - G, C - FM+9 - G7, or C - FM+9 - F.  
See sheet 8 'Passing Chords & Ornamentals Examples'  
Try 'The Rose', full song is at number 7 and 'A Bunch of Thyme', full song is at number 9.

Often C6 (Am7) can be used as a passing chord between any of the chords.



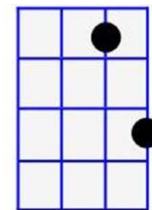
Fm+9



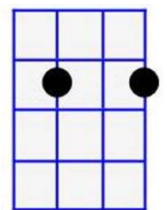
CM7

**ORNAMENTALS:** These are chords which are used to vary the 'flavour' of a chord, by moving to it and back to the original chord for a bar or part bar, often using a hammer-on or lift-off technique, or sometimes a slide (see 'slides' below). These are very effective at the end of line in slow ballads.

Examples: C-Csus4-C, C-FM+9-C, F-Dm-F, G7-G6-G7  
'Help Me Make It ' illustrates this.  
Full song is at number 10.



Csus4



G6 (Em7)

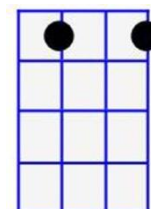
**RUN-DOWNS:** Run-downs are similar to passing chords, but are specific steps on the way between two chords, executed quickly on the beat. Often used in jazz or blues type songs.

Examples: C-CM7-C7-A7, or C-E7(2 beats)-A7. 11 'San Francisco Bay Blues' illustrates this.

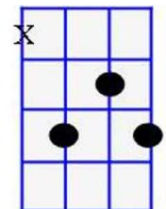
**SLIDES:** Slides use moveable chords, used either to move from one chord to another, or as an ornament (see 'ornamentals' above), usually on the beat. Often used in jazz or blues type songs.

As a move: C7(barred)-B7-Bb7-A7  
Shown in song 11 'San Francisco Bay Blues'.

As ornament: G7 up-slide to Gdim7, or G7 down-slide to G#7.  
(X means don't play this string.)



Gdim7

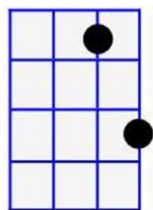


G#7

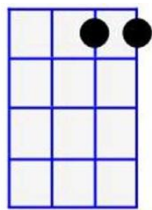
Try them all out, and develop your own. You will be surprised how often you can use them.

## 4.3 Suspended, augmented & diminished chords

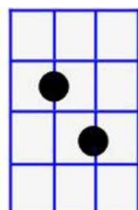
Suspended Chords – Here are a few, useful as decoration or passing chords.



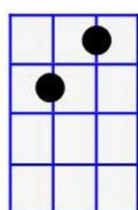
C sus 4



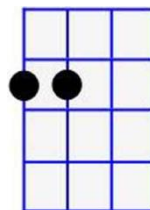
C7 sus 4



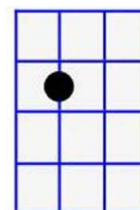
G sus 2



G7sus 2



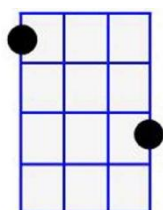
A sus 4



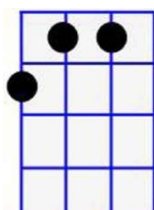
A7 sus 4

See sheet 8 'Passing Chords & Ornamentals Examples'. 8.2 'Help Me Make It' shows how some of these can be used. The complete song is at number 10.

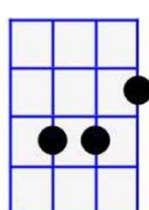
Augmented Chords - As the name suggests, they 'push' the major chord.



C aug



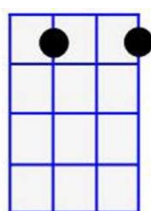
F aug  
A aug



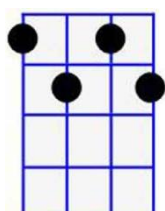
G aug

Use the internet to look up others – just enter 'ukulele chords' or 'left hand ukulele chords' - and chose a site, or use 'UkeBuddy.com'. Don't forget to specify 'G C E A' tuning.

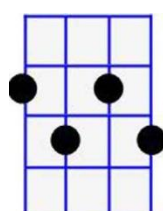
Diminished 7 (often just called Diminished) - Unsettled, suggesting mystery. These are moveable chords. Each has 4 names.



Bb dim7  
Also C#dim7  
and E dim7  
and G dim7



B dim7  
D dim7  
F dim7  
G#dim7



C dim7  
Eb dim7  
F# dim7  
A dim7

1st & 3rd strings

whole shape

one fret down

## 5. Finger Picking

### 5.1 Picking styles

Finger-picking style is playing the strings in a sequence, sounding each string separately. It is usually a solo performance with voice, or with well rehearsed melody, chord or bass backing. There are two versions:

- 1 Free or chord picking. Used as an alternative to strumming chords, where the picking sequence (roll) is repeated for each bar throughout a piece as the chords are changed, perhaps with variations. It is mainly used for ballads and is usually shown as string number sequence (see below) or a tab (tabulation) as shown in section 7.2.
- 2 Melody picking. Can be a short melody intro or hook (riff), associated with a particular song, or even a complete melody. It is a sequence of specific notes, not chord based or repetitive, and is shown as a tab or classical music notation. Initially we concentrate on free picking.

### 5.2 Picking a roll

To play a roll, position the hand over the strings, with the uke neck raised and the body lower than usual. The hand is angled across the strings for the fingers to pluck upwards, and the thumb to pluck downward. The hand and arm remain immobile, with the arm perhaps resting on the side of the uke body, with only the fingers moving to pluck the strings. This position is more secure using a strap, or sitting with the uke on the thigh.



The index finger can be used for string #1 (nearest the ground), and index or middle finger for strings #2 and #3. The thumb is usually used for string #4 and sometimes #3, but this is optional. Try different fingers and patterns to find one you are comfortable with. It is often recommended to touch the little finger on the sound-board as an anchor.

Here are some waltz-time roll patterns you can try. Double rolls covering two bars are shown here as many songs have at least two bars between chord changes, or to illustrate doubling (i.e. 6 picks for a 3 beat song).

- |          |    |                |  |
|----------|----|----------------|--|
| 3/4 TIME | 1. | 1 4 3, 2 4 3 , | (middle, thumb, index in sequence)           |
|          | 2. | 4 3 2, 1 2 3 , | (thumb, index, middle, third, middle, index) |
|          | 3. | 4 3 2, 1 4 3,  | (thumb, index, middle, third)                |
|          | 4. | 4 3 2, 4 3 2,  | (thumb, index, middle, third)                |

There are many other roll patterns which suit various songs and high or low G tunings. Choose one that suits you to start with - learning others will become easier later.

**STEP 1:** Form a chord and pick each string in a waltz-time pattern - 1 4 3, 2 4 3 is a versatile one to start with, covering two bars. Practice playing this roll continuously using only one chord, until it becomes automatic and embed into your 'muscle memory'.

Constant practice will be required until the pattern can be repeated continuously at reasonable speed without thinking about your fingers, and it takes time. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CHANGE CHORD** at this stage.

## 5.3 Changing chord

**STEP 2:** Changing to another chord is difficult, as the regular rhythm must be continued without interruption. **DO NOT ATTEMPT IT** until you can continue the roll while walking about and talking to someone! This will prove you have enough spare brain capacity to take on the extra task of thinking about changing chord.

Start slowly on G7, just changing to C to get the timing. This is one of the simplest possible changes. Practise G7 to C and only when you have the timing right, try changing from C to back to G7.

If you have trouble with the timing, slow right down until it works, though this suggests you are not yet ready to change chords.. If all else fails, try making the change on its own using a slow arpeggio strum on three strings to avoid thinking about your fingers. Once the timing is established you can return to a roll.

When you can change these two chords easily, you can slowly add additional chords, using more and more of your chord repertoire. When you can do this reliably, use the 'Song without Words' technique, playing familiar chords in random order, using C, G7, C7, F, Am, until eventually you can change chords smoothly.

**DO NOT** try to play a song at this stage, just change chords. The purpose of these steps is to remove as much pressure as possible, embedding one part of the process at a time. Playing a song requires the selection the correct chords at the right time and following the words, all of which requires additional brain power.

If you find you cannot hold the rhythm when you change chord, **DO NOT CONTINUE**, go back to STEP 1. Sometimes a complete lay-off for a few days will unlock a mental block. Continuing will only reinforce a hesitation.

## 5.4 Picking a 3/4 song

**STEP 3:** You can now fit your picking to slow, easy waltz-time song, perhaps by choosing one that a random chord sequence suggests. To get the timing, count the beats as you hum the song in your head. See song 12 'Beat Examples - Silent Night', using one finger pick per beat.

The complete songs 4 'Silent Night, and 13 'The Spinning Wheel Song' are included for you to try, both in 3/4 time.

With practice, you can double-up the roll in each bar, playing a six beat roll to each bar (double-time).

## 5.5 Picking a 4/4 song

**STEP 4:** Now you can try changing to a four beat roll. A three-beat roll can be stretched to a four-beat roll by placing a rest at every fourth beat to change it to 4/4 time, which also allows more time to change chord. It uses the same sequence but the timing is changed.

4/4 TIME      1.      1 4 3 -, 2 4 3 -,      Think 'Jingle Bells,      jingle bells      '.

Then move string 2 to the first roll and add string 2 at the end, missing out only the last beat:

2.      1 4 3 2 , 4 3 2 - ,      Think 'Oh what fun it, is to ride      '.

Add string 4 to become:

3.      1 4 3 2 , 4 3 2 4 ,      Think 'Bunch of Thyme'; song 12 'Beat Examples'

'Bunch of Thyme' works well in 4/4 time and is shown in full as song 9.

Changing chord half-way through a bar is straightforward with a 4 pick rhythm, especially when doubled.

## 5.6 Picking intros, riffs and melodies

A picked chord sequence is sometimes used as an intro with the sequence shown as a tab - see section 7.2. Normal chord shapes can be used, usually those of the song, and it is played as a normal roll.

Alternatively, a short melody phrase or hook (a catchy phrase or riff) may be used which is unique to a specific song and is not composed of chord shapes, so will require individual strings to be stopped for each note of the tab. The sequence will be learned in association with the song. It is an advanced skill, achieved by practice.

Picking a melody is an extension of playing a riff, using a continuous tab for the whole song. Using a ukulele for melody is unusual, due to the limited pitch range of the instrument, but is entirely possible. Melody playing is a separate study outside the scope of this course. However, the tabbed section of song 14 'Alberta', and 'Norwegian Wood', song 15 will demonstrate the principle - see section 7.2.

## 5.7 Further progress

Picking rhythms are almost always 3/4 (waltz) or 4/4 (common, sometimes shown as C ) and your roll will normally have the same, or a multiple of the number of beats of the time signature. Each basic rhythm can be altered - doubled, stretched, syncopated, re-emphasised - to make a wide variety of rhythms to fit any number of songs. Picking is most effective in moderate or slow ballads, especially those in waltz-time. Note that not all bars have words, or melody notes, but will always have beats (a silent beat is a rest).

In time, it will become easier to use a different rhythm or picking pattern to extend your capability. Your fingers will become more responsive and the concept of 'thinking' a pattern for your hand to perform will have taken root. You can change to a different roll within the song, pick on four, three, two or a single string, throw in an arpeggio and perhaps alternate with single time, or even mix strumming or melody playing into the performance. In time, your fingers can develop a life of their own and make patterns for you!

Usually, a chord will contain some of the notes present in the song. In this case, the picking pattern can be modified to accentuate these notes to bring out the melody. Good examples are the arpeggios shown in song 13 'The Spinning Wheel Song'.

It sounds good to finish with a slow arpeggio thumb-strum on the final chord. Experiment and develop your own style - music is so flexible that the possibilities are endless.



## 6 Notation

### 6.1 Song chords

There are two main methods of showing the chord identity with the words of a song, and each has its fans: either exactly above the start of the word or syllable as used in this course, or inset into the lyric, as follows:

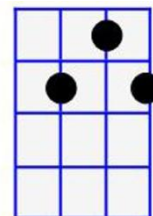
A[C]mazing [C7]grace, how [F]sweet the [C]sound  
That [C]saved a [Am]wretch [G7]like [G7]me.

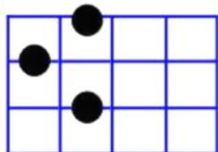
The fingering of each chord is usually shown by chord diagrams (boxes), but there are other methods, either by a tab or numerically, both explained below.

### 6.2 Tabs, etc

A 'tab' (tabulation) is a method of music notation specifically for stringed instruments.

The usual chord diagram is a vertical representation of the fretboard showing finger positions for a chord, in this example G7.



1 (A)  The diagram can be turned sideways, becoming  
2 (E) the player's view of the fretboard, and the string  
3 (C) numbers (and/or sometimes the tuning) added.  
4 (G)

1 | - 2 - - - - - |  
2 | - 1 - - - - - |  
3 | - 2 - - - - - |  
4 | - 0 - - - - - |

Now, instead of showing the finger positions, they can be identified numerically, using the fret number.

This shows G7. 0 means an open string, i.e. not stopped.

This method may be reduced to a number series to specify a chord, e.g. 2120 for G7, by assuming the string order as 1,2,3,4. This technique is occasionally used to identify chords instead of a box, especially where space is limited.

To specify a one bar arpeggio, a time dimension can be added, reading from left to right, showing when each string is plucked, and at which fret. This is a simple G7 arpeggio.

1 | - - - 2 |  
2 | - - 1 - |  
3 | - 2 - - |  
4 | 0 - - - |  
Time →

The timing can be modified to define a particular sequence or rhythm, describing a finger picking roll. This example is a 1 4 3 2 - 4 3 - pick on C, with 8 beats shown in 4/4 time, with notes missed on 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> beat.

```

      C
1 | 3 - - - - - - - |
2 | - - - 0 - - - - |
3 | - - 0 - - - 0 - |
4 | - 0 - - - 0 - - |
Time →

```

By adding further bars, a longer picking sequence can be shown, similar to a piano roll. Chord names are often shown above the tab as indicated below. This is not essential as the information is in the tab. This example is again a 1 4 3 2 - 4 3 - pick. For a repeating finger-picking sequence, the pattern may only be shown once to describe the timing.

```

      C              G7              C
1 | 3 - - - - - - - | 2 - - - - - - - | 3 - - - - - - - |
2 | - - - 0 - - - - | - - - 1 - - - - | - - - 0 - - - - |
3 | - - 0 - - - 0 - | - - 2 - - - 2 - | - - 0 - - - 0 - |
4 | - 0 - - - 0 - - | - 0 - - - 0 - - | - 0 - - - 0 - - |
Time →

```

More advanced tabs can show additional information, but are limited by the inability to show sophisticated timing and expression information. Conventional music notation can show this more accurately.

## TABBING A SONG

By constructing a tab with melody notes, a part or whole song can be shown. Here is the two bar lead-in to 'Alberta'. The full song is shown at number 14.

Tab for first two lines	Strum G7	Strum C
1   - - - -   7 - - -	2   - - - -	3   -
2   0 1 2 3   - - - -	1   - - - -	0   -
3   - - - -   - - - -	2   - - - -	0   -
4   - - - -   - - - -	0   - - - -	0   -
Al- berta, Al - ber - ta - a - a.	Where .....	

Here is 'Norwegian Wood'. The full song is shown at number 15.

```

1 | 5 - - 7 5 3 2 - - 0 3 2 | - - - 3 - - - - - - - |
2 | - - - - - - - - - - - | 3 - - 1 - 0 - - - - - - - |
3 | - - - - - - - - - - - | - - - - - - - - 2 - - - |
4 | - - - - - - - - - - - | - - - - - - - - - - - |

```

Depending on the rhythm or interpretation, full melody tabs are often accompanied by conventional music notation as the timing may not be regular.

## MELODY PLAYING

For those wishing to progress to full melody playing, there is a choice to be made - to use tabs or to play from classical music notation. Either system will need to be learned, tabs being the easier but more limited option. Classical notation is able to define greater nuances in timing, etc.

Playing to tabs is a continuation of the examples above, and tabbed songs are widely available on the internet. Tabs for guitar can often be used for a uke where the lick or melody uses only strings 1 to 4 of the guitar. This will preserve the key on a baritone uke tuned D G B E, but will raise the pitch by five semitones on instruments with G C E A tuning.

For classical notation, the note positions for an instrument tuned to G C E A are shown at sheet 16. Scales for all keys are published widely on the internet, the relevant notes being selected as needed and the whole subject of melody playing is covered in detail.

## ALTERNATIVE CHORDS

Most players only use the first-position chords, but there are many alternative ways to play each chord further up the neck. Use 'Ukebuddy.com' to research alternatives. Many are a difficult stretch, or are too high in pitch to be useful, but try finishing a song with C on the 7<sup>th</sup> fret (see 'Help Me make it', number 10), or use the barred C7 in a run-down (see 'San Francisco Bay Blues', song 11), or introduce the barred D7 which contrasts so well with the simple D7 (see song 4, 'Silent Night').

Use them to spice up your performance.

## 7 Relative Tuning

If you are without a tuner and playing alone, or if you can tune the 'C' string (#3) to 'C' on another instrument, you can use relative tuning. You may see this method used by a band member to tune to the other instruments to play together, or used by an in-store demonstrator to set up a new instrument.

1 For soprano, concert and 'high G' tenor with G C E A tuning, tune the 'C' string (# 3) by any means available (another instrument, piano, tuning fork or a pitch-pipe).

2 Stop the 'C' string at the seventh fret and adjust the 'G' string (#4) to match 'C'. When they are close, when played together a beat will be heard, like a vibrato, and a rapid pulsing can be heard or felt on the sound board. The faster the beat, the further apart are the notes of the two strings. Continue adjusting the 'G' string to slow the beat down, until it ceases. The strings now match.

3 Stop the 'C' string (#3) at the fourth fret, and adjust 'E' to match 'C', as above.

4 Stop the 'E' string (#2) at the fifth fret and adjust 'A' to match 'E'.

The strings of your instrument will now be in tune relative to each other, and to the other instrument if playing together.

For a 'low G' tenor, tune the 'C' string (# 3) by any method. Stop the 'G' (#4) string at the fifth fret and adjust it to match the third string ('C'), then continue as steps 3 & 4 above.

For a baritone uke, tuned to D G B E, the method for the low 'G' tenor can be used, but tune the 'G' string (#3) to 'G' of another instrument.

## 8 Choosing a Better Ukulele

After developing your basic skill, you may start to think about buying a better instrument. Beware! This will not automatically make you a better player.

The first decision is the size and type. Soprano, Concert and High 'G' Tenor have the same tuning and differ only in size and intonation, the larger sizes having a deeper, rounder tone and better volume and resonance. The Concert is by far the most popular follow-on instrument. The Tenor with a low 'G' (G string tuned an octave lower) has less attack, but is becoming more popular for slow ballads and finger-picking. The Baritone has a pleasing, acoustic guitar-like sound, but less volume, and has different tuning, similar to a guitar, so that the chord shapes you have learned are used, but in different places (e.g. a 'C' shape will play 'G', and 'Bb' plays 'F'). There are also special body shapes (cut-away, triangular) if required. The Banjolele (ukulele-banjo) with a round drum-skin sound board is similar to the concert or tenor and has a distinctive, strong attack and of course, lots of volume.

For a competent instrument, expect to pay at least three to four times the cost of a starter instrument for a soprano, more for a concert. There are, of course, much more expensive ukes. Higher priced instruments are either very good, or are for the decoration or rare woods, and you would have to be skilled with a good ear to tell the difference. Some models have a combined built-in tuner and electric pick-up for an amplifier. A padded gig-bag is good, a solid foam or rigid case is better but bulkier.

If you want to use a strap, you will need a button on the base. Sometimes the shop will fit this, or buy one and fit it at home (check for a strut and drill a pilot hole to avoid splitting).

For left-handed players, budget and mid-priced ukes are usually re-strung reversed, but the best instruments are built specifically for left-handers, having subtle differences internally and to the string set-up.

High quality, graded nylon strings are a must: Aquila and D'Addario are generally regarded as the best. Unless you really want a traditional uke with pegs, machine heads (geared string tensioners) are so much easier to use. Check the gap between the strings and the first fret. Ideally, it should be level and just hold a credit card (0.08 mm) placed under the strings at the first fret with uke standing upright, or maybe a little less. You may have to adjust this. Too high an action will make playing harder and your fingers sore - too low and it will buzz. Height at the bridge is less important, but should be even. Look at more expensive ones to see the optimum.

Buying on the internet may save money, but will limit your ability to choose your ideal instrument, and different examples of the same model often vary. If you must use the internet, choose from an on-line music store, who are likely to have knowledgeable staff and stock suitable instruments, but you are not likely to get the best example of a model.

Take your tuner, both to tune instruments and test the octave on each string. When in-tune, an open string should be also be correct at the first, second, and 12th fret (octave). Test by setting the tuner to 'Chromatic' (C). Remember, a new uke from the rack will go out-of-tune very quickly, in minutes even. Why not take the opportunity to try an expensive instrument.

Have a selection of familiar music to play at the store to gauge tone, clarity and comfort. Check that the sound is even over various chords. Try to play privately, as playing in front of an assistant can be inhibiting. Don't be shy, try each instrument both softly and loudly, and take your own uke to compare. Don't expect to make a decision at first sight. Lastly, don't forget, mention your membership of WU3A and you may get a discount!

## 9 Internet Support

There is a great deal of information in the internet. Here are some useful sites:

### Instruments & Equipment;

For quality instruments and equipment, try the many music stores on-line, preferably ones that have a physical presence, as they will have knowledgeable staff. For accessories, try eBay (usually cheapest) or Amazon. Much comes from China and will take up to 4 weeks to arrive.

### Maintenance;

There are many articles and demos of maintenance and optimising processes - fitting strings, changing action height, etc.

### Ukulele Internet Tuner;

UkeBuddy - select gCEA tuning, or use a mobile phone app.

### Feltrums (Soft Felt Plectrums);

Southern Ukulele Store (SUS), Natural wool felt ukulele plectrum, Code 2007

Also use thin leather, or thinnest plastic (0.38 mm) guitar picks.

### Chord Finder/Namer, Etc;

UkeBuddy - Put this one on your 'favourites'! Also Ukulele Chordfinder, UkuGuides.

Alternatively, enter ('chord name', ukulele) in your browser, and see what pops up. You can also obtain free chord chart printouts at various sites, though these show only first (usual) positions for each chord.

### Metronome:

'Free Online Metronome' at 8notes.com and simple drum accompaniment. Accent 3 is waltz, Accent 4 is common time.

### Demos/Tutorials;

Ukulele Mike (enter 'Name of song', Ukulele Mike), Chordu.com, Cynthia Lin, various YouTube tutorials, and many others.

### Performances to Listen or Play Along to;

Put ('Name of song', 'artist', YouTube), or just ('name of song', YouTube) into Google and choose a YouTube performance. Playback can be slowed down by clicking on the 'Settings' symbol (rosette) on the right, below the progress bar. Select 'Speed' (0.75 is good).

### Song Books;

There are very many suitable free song books available to download. Just enter 'ukulele song book' to get over a hundred, each with 150 + songs.

### Song Chords, Words & Key Change;

There are many ways to find the correct chords/words for a favourite song. You can just put in 'song name', chords', or 'song name, words', and see what you get.

For best results, try UltimateGuitar.com, etc (use box at top to find a title or artist), and select a version of the song (usually the most popular). Songs are often in unfamiliar keys, but can be played in any key to suit you by transposing. To change key, use 'Transpose + or -' on the bottom line - often an easier key will be available.

# 10 Using an Amplifier

## MICROPHONES

When you are ready to play publically in a larger venue, you may wish to use an amplifier. You can use a simple set-up comprising a single microphone and stand to just amplify the uke, two microphones if you want to sing or announce, or one for voice together with a uke with a built-in pick-up, usually combined with a tuner. Clip-on pick-ups are very cheap but respond to handling sounds.

There are three main construction types for microphones - dynamic, condenser and ribbon. Dynamic microphones are the most common and usually cheaper variety. Condenser and ribbon mics tend to be pricier but have better sound characteristics. While this is important in a studio setting, dynamic mics are usually preferred for live playing as they have adequate reproduction and are more robust than other varieties. Ribbon mics in particular are very delicate and condenser mics are somewhere in the middle. A fourth type is piezo-electric - this technology is rarely used for mics but is common in musical instrument pick-ups being relatively cheap and robust.

There are also two main functional varieties of microphone - omni-directional, which pick up sounds from all directions but will perhaps pick up unwanted sounds, and cardioid, which is sensitive directly in front but the positioning is critical. Other pick up patterns are possible but these two are by far the most common. A wireless mic uses a radio transmitter to carry the signal to a remote receiver connected to the amplifier and wireless set ups are also available for instruments.

Generally speaking, a single mic for voice and instruments could use an omni-directional mic and a multi mic set up would use cardioid mics for soloists and perhaps omni-directional for backing, choir, etc. Keep spare batteries as performing is hungry for energy!

## THE AMPLIFIER

For the instrument only, just plug the uke directly into an amplifier. For two inputs, a dual-input amplifier or mixer is necessary. A mixer has a number of inputs, usually with special channels for microphones having pre-amplifiers for the weaker signals from them. For groups playing together, multiple microphones are often used, giving the ability to boost the volume of soloists or balance sections of the group. Levels for each channel can be adjusted, and there are often special effects included. The single output from the mixer can be mono or stereo (stereo is not necessary for a single performer). A 240 volts supply is usually needed though there are lower power battery options available. Standard 6.35 mm jack cables (mono) are used for interconnection, although cables to separate speakers need to be appropriate for the power.

For larger rooms a 20 watt amplifier is the minimum required, more can always be turned down. Choose a general purpose (PA) type known as Full Range Full response (FRFR) or a specific ukulele amp if possible. Guitar amplifiers are made to respond to the lower tones of the guitar and often feature unnecessary effects.

There are many other electronic gadgets that can be used in the set up. The choice of equipment is vast so knowledgeable advice is sensible.

# 11 Maintenance

## Changing a String

Strings seem to last forever, but extended use or over-tightening may cause a string to break. Alternatively, a new set of strings can restore brightness to the tone.

Strings are usually supplied in sets with each size labelled or colour-coded at the end. Number one string is 'A'. Thread the new string through the bridge from below and take the end to the peg. Now loop the tail-end round the string and twist twice. Pull tight.

Keeping tension on the string, bring it to the peg and pass it through the hole, and ideally round the peg and again through the hole, leaving it slack, lifting at least 3" (75mm) above the fretboard with a finger. Adjust the length and tighten the string, keeping a finger on the peg to retain its anchorage. A peg winder is useful here. The string should make at least two turns around the peg. Pull the tail tight and trim off the surplus at each end with scissors or nail clippers.



Peg winder

It will take some time before the tuning will remain stable.

## Machine Head

Keep the machine head (peg gears) clean and maybe use a minute amount of oil or Vaseline on the gears.

## Clean the Interior

The interior will collect fibres, particularly from a soft wool plectrum. The resulting felt will tend to dampen the tone.

## Fretboard Oil

The fretboard is bare wood and over time will become dry and faded. It's colour and surface can be restored using a fretboard oil treatment. Spray the oil on and allow a few minutes to soak in, then wipe off the surplus and clean the strings

## Chips and Scratches

The best advice is 'don't let it happen', but it does. Don't prop it up on a chair or place it where it can fall sideways - if it can fall, it will. Beware of hard objects - table edge, a music stand, etc. Always immediately use a bag or case, or put it on the floor using an instrument stand. Any crack may need professional repair and is unlikely to be economic. Pegs can be replaced as sets.

Use normal DIY techniques to touch-up any damage to wooden parts. etc.

## General

Check the tightness of fixing screws, particularly the strap button if fitted. Dust and polish the instrument to show it at its best. Have a spare tuner battery and a spare plectrum. As a leader or performer, have a spare instrument, ready tuned.



























































































































## 12 Further Progress

When your group has learned the most common chords and can play competently, you may wish to consider the future. There are several directions you may take:

1. Most commonly, groups continue to play together, tackling different songs and familiar favourites, learning new chords as and when required. There are many song books published on the internet for free downloading, with many hundreds of songs of all types. Just enter 'ukulele song book' into your browser to get a large range. This will keep you supplied for years to come.
2. With time you may find the need for an occasional or regular teaching unit, to meet the needs of new players, or experienced players could mentor newer players.
3. The object may be to progress to more complex chords and strumming patterns to play more difficult, faster songs. Alternatively, to try more gentle, tuneful ballads using a slow thumb stroke.
4. One person may develop a song with extra ornamentation, an intro and outro, a special rhythm, etc. to demonstrate and become part of the group repertoire.
5. If songs are in the right key, playing along to a recording artist is very effective, either individually at home, or as a group. A mobile phone can be linked to a small amplifier (20 watts, more for larger rooms), or a CD player or MP3 player can be used. YouTube performances can be slowed down - find the 'Settings' button (rosette below the progress bar) and select 'Speed' (0.75 is good). Use 'UltimateGuitar' to transpose songs if necessary to match a performance or use a capo.
6. Finger-picking chords (playing arpeggio fashion) is a new skill, and can produce some beautiful music.
7. Set up specialist groups for particular types of music - country, blues, jazz, old-time, George Formby, etc., or for those wishing to progress further.
8. It may be possible within your U3A to link up with a singing group, or other instrument groups for joint rehearsals and performances, or to incorporate other musicians with different instruments into the ukulele group (choir, piano, guitar, drums, bass, harmonica, etc).
9. Join up with another U3A group for a joint session. You can find a group by putting 'U3A Oversights' in your browser, then in Search put 'Ukulele' - this shows U3A uke groups by region and county.
10. Try playing at care homes, social clubs, fetes, etc, singly or as a group. This needs well rehearsed, orchestrated songs, and perhaps song-sheets or a projector for audience participation. An audience sing-along will cover many shortcomings of performance. Professionally produced backing tracks can enhance individual performance.
11. For individuals, there are many ukulele clubs meeting in pubs or village halls where enthusiasts will welcome new members with modest ability, developing your skill and allowing the transfer of ideas back to the group. Try the internet or ask around.
12. Finally, never forget, many groups expect no more than to enjoy a happy, relaxed play-along with friends without the pressure of progress, and to go home with a smile!

# Ukulele Chord Chart (Standard GCEA) v1.0

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## RHYTHM EXAMPLES 1

Key D = down, U = up, - = rest, lower case = softer, # = string number

### AMAZING GRACE 3/4 – slow waltz, lo-hi strum (strings 4&3, 2&1, 2&1)

C C7 F C  
A-mazing Grace, how sweet the sound,  
C Am G7 G7  
That saved a wretch like me.  
C C7 F C  
I once was lost, but now am found.  
Am G7 C C  
Was blind, but now I see.

### DELILAH -3/4 fast waltz (D-d-d-, or D-dud-, or D-dudu)

Am Am Am Am E7 E7 E7 E7  
I saw the light on the night that I passed by her window.  
Am Am Am Am E7 E7 E7 E7  
I saw the flickering shadows of love on her blind.  
A A A7 A7 Dm Dm Dm Dm  
She was my woman.  
Am Am Am E7 Am Am G7 G7  
As she deceived me I watched, and went out of my mind.

### SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME - 3/4 time (D D D - d D)

C C C  
You can dance every dance with the guy who gives you the eye,  
G G  
Let him hold you tight.  
G G G  
You can smile every smile for the man who held your hand,  
C C  
'Neath the pale moonlight.  
F F C  
But don't for-get who's taking you home, and in whose arms you're gonna be.  
G G7 C C//  
So darling, save the last dance for me.

You can also mix in an arpeggio on each second bar.

### PUTTIN' ON THE STYLE - 4/4 or C (common)(D-d-d-d), stops/first beat

C C C G  
Sweet sixteen goes to church just to see the boys,  
G G7 G7 C  
laughs and screams and giggles at every little noise.  
C C C7 F  
Turns her face a little, then turns her head a- while,  
G (stop) G(stop) G7 C  
but everybody knows she's only putting on the style.

## RHYTHM EXAMPLES 2

### FOLSOM PRISON BLUES - Fast 4/4 (D-dudud)

Change to single strum on syllables of 'ever play with guns' & 'just to see him die', etc.

G G G G  
When I was just a baby my Mama told me 'Son,  
G G G7 G7  
Always be a good boy; don't ever play with guns'.  
C C C G  
But I shot the man in Reno, just to watch him die.  
D7 D7 D7 G  
When I hear that whistle blowin', I hang my head and cry.

### JINGLE BELLS - 4/4, 3 strums with a rest at 4th (D D D - )

CHORUS: C C C F C  
Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way!  
F C D7 G G7  
Oh what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh, hey!

### HELP ME MAKE IT 4/4 - Rubato (free time) Full song is at number 10

C G7 C C C  
Take the ribbon from your hair.  
C C F F F  
Shake it loose and let it fall.  
F Dm G7 G7 G7  
Lay it soft against my skin  
G7 G7 C C C  
Like the shadow on the wall.

### JAMAICA FAREWELL 4/4 - Calypso or island strum (D - D U - U D - )

C C F F  
Down the way, where the nights are gay,  
G7 G7 C C  
And the sun shines brightly on the mountain tops.  
C C F F G7 G7 C C  
I took a trip on a sailing ship, and when I reached Ja-maica, I made a stop.  
C C F F  
But I'm sad to say, I'm on my way.  
G7 G7 C C  
Won't be back for many a day.  
C C F F  
My heart is down, my head is turning a-round,  
G7 G7 C C  
I had to leave my little girl in Kingston town.

## RHYTHM EXAMPLES 3

### SINGIN' THE BLUES 4/4 - Syncopated (uneven swing)

Well, I never felt more like singin' the blues  
'cause I never thought that I'd ever lose  
Your love dear, why'd you do me this way?

### RAVE ON! - Calypso strum again (very versatile) or with stops

Well, the way you dance and hold me tight. The way you kiss and say goodnight.  
Rave on, it's a crazy feelin', and I know it's got me reelin'.  
When you say "I love you", Ra - ve on.

Rave on, it's a crazy feelin', and I know you got me reelin',

I'm so glad that you're revealin', your love for me.

Rave on, rave on and tell me. Tell me not to be lonely.

Tell me you love me only, Rave on to me.

### COUNTRY ROADS 2/4 - Country & Western (strong #3 or #4 then strum)

Country roads, take me home, to the place I be-long,  
West Vir-ginia, mountain mama, take me home, country roads.

### HAVE A DRINK ON ME 6/8 - Double speed section in riff

In eighteen-eighty down a dusty road, along came a miner with a big fat load.

Hey, hey, everybody drink on me.

He was caked in dirt from his head to his foot, his hair so black, that it looked like soot.

Hey, hey, everybody drink on me.

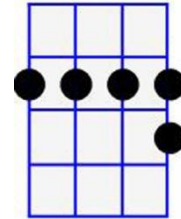
## 4 SILENT NIGHT - Joseph Mohr, Franz Gruber - 1818

Translated: John Freeman Young 1859 (3 verses), now in 300+ languages.

3/4 time, with semi-arpeggio thumb stroke.

Intro: D7 D7bar G G7, G D7 G (last 2 lines)

G  
Silent night, holy night,  
D D7 G G7  
All is calm, all is bright,  
C G  
Round yon virgin mother and child.  
C G  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
D7 **D7bar** G G7  
Sleep in heavenly pe - eace.  
G D7var G  
Sleep in heavenly peace.



D7

G  
Silent night, holy night,  
D D7 G G7  
Shepherds quake at the sight.  
C G  
Glory streams from heaven afar,  
C G  
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia;  
D7 **D7bar** G G7  
Christ the Saviour, is bo - orn!  
G D7 G  
Christ the Saviour, is born!

G  
Silent night, holy night,  
D D7 G G7  
Son of God, love's pure light;  
C G  
Radiance beams from thy holy face,  
C G  
With the dawn of redeeming grace.  
D7 **D7bar** G G7  
Jesus, Lord, at thy bir - irth.  
G D7 G C  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. SLOWING

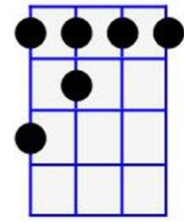
G D7 G C G  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

# 5 PEARLY SHELLS – Hawaiian traditional. John Kalapana/Leon Pobar

Play along with Leon and Malia Hawaii Kids Calabash Choir

INTRO: As last line of verse x 2

F  
Pearly Shells from the ocean,  
Bb C7  
Shining in the sun, covering the shore,  
F Bb  
When I see them my heart tells me that I love you,  
F C7 F  
More than all the little pearly shells.



Bb

C7  
For every grain of sand upon the beach  
F  
I've got a kiss for you.  
C7  
And I've got more left over,  
G7 C7  
for each star that twinkles in the blue.

F  
Pearly Shells from the ocean,  
Bb C7  
Shining in the sun, covering the shore,  
F Bb  
When I see them my heart tells me that I love you,  
F C7 F  
More than all those little pearly shells.

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For every grain of sand upon the beach  
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Bb C7  
Shining in the sun, covering the shore,  
F Bb  
When I see them my heart tells me that I love you,  
F C7 F  
More than all those little pearly shells.

F C7 F  
More than all those little pearly shells.  
F C7 F  
More than all those little pearly shells.  
F SLOW C7 F C7 F  
More than all those litt - le pear - ly shells.

## 6 ALL SHOOK UP in F - Otis Blackwell

Elvis plays in A#

F

Well, bless my soul, what's wrong with me? I'm itching like a man on a fuzzy tree.

My friends say I'm actin' wild as a bug.

Bb C F

I'm in love, I'm all shook up. Uh-huh, uh-huh, yeah, yeah!

F

Well, my hands are shaky and my knees are weak.

I can't seem to stand on my own two feet.

Now who do you thank when you have such luck?

Bb C F

I'm in love, I'm all shook up. Uh-huh, uh-huh, yeah, yeah!

Bb

Well please don't ask me what's on my mind.

F

I'm a little mixed up, but I'm feelin' fine.

Bb

When I'm near the girl, that I love best,

C

My heart beats so it scares me to death!

F

She touched my hand, what a chill I got. Her lips are like a volcano that's hot.

I'm proud to say she's my buttercup.

Bb C F

I'm in love, I'm all shook up. Uh-huh, uh-huh, yeah, yeah!

Bb

My tongue gets tied when I try to speak.

F

My insides shake like a leaf on a tree.

Bb

There's only one cure for this body of mine,

C

That's to have that girl that I love so fine!

F

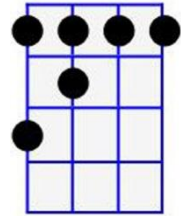
She touched my hand, what a chill I got.

Her lips are like a volcano that's hot.

I'm proud to say she's my buttercup.

Bb C F

I'm in love, I'm all shook up. Uh-huh, uh-huh, yeah, yeah! I'm all shook up.



Bb



## 7 THE ROSE - Gordon Mills

Play along with Bette Midler (no key change). (G7 may be used for Em, A7 for F#m)

INTRO: C G7 F C (first line) Use a slow thumb stroke

C G7 F C  
Some say love, it is a river, that drowns the tender reed.

C G7 F C  
Some say love, it is a razor, that leaves your soul to bleed.

Em (G7) Am F G7  
Some say love, it is a hunger, an endless aching need.

C G7 F C  
I say love, it is a flower, and you, it's only seed.

C G7 F C  
It's the heart afraid of breaking, that never learns to dance.

C G7 F C  
It's the dream afraid of waking, that never takes the chance.

Em (G7) Am F G7  
It's the one who won't be taking, who cannot seem to give

C G7 F C  
And the soul afraid of dying, that never learns to live.

C G7 F C  
When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long.

C G7 F C  
And you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong.

Em (G7) Am F G7 SLOWING  
Just remember in the winter, far beneath the bitter snows,

C G7 F C F C  
Lies the seed, that with the sun's love in the spring becomes the rose.

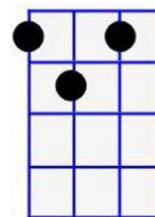
OR WITH KEY CHANGE A7

D A7 G D  
When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long.

D A7 G D  
And you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong.

F#m (A7) D G A7  
Just remember in the winter, far beneath the bitter snows,

D A7 G D G D  
Lies the seed, that with the sun's love in the spring becomes the rose.



F#m

## 8 PASSING CHORDS & ORNAMENTALS EXAMPLES

### 8.1 PASSING CHORDS

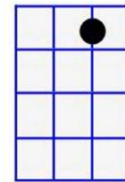
Try this version of 'The Rose', also at number 7. Use a slow thumb stroke. (Em can be G)

C FM+9 G7 F FM+9 C  
Some say love, it is a ri - ver, that drowns the ten - der reed.

C FM+9 G7 F FM+9 C  
Some say love, it is a ra - zor, that leaves your soul to bleed.  
FM+9

Em Am F FM+9 G7  
Some say love, it is a hunger, an endless aching need.

C FM+9 G7 F FM+9 C  
I say love, it is a flow - er, and you, it's only seed.

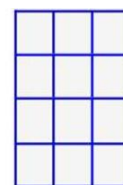


And this version of 'A Bunch of Thyme,' also at number 9, adding several passing chords.  
(G may be used for Em)

C G C6 C  
Come all ye maidens young and fair,  
C Em G7  
All you that are blooming in your prime.

C CM7 C7 F C CM7 G  
Always be - ware and keep your garden fair - air - air.

C G7 C6 C  
Let no man steal away your thyme.



C6



CM7

### 8.2 ORNAMENTALS

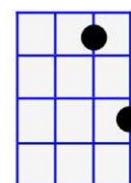
This version of song 10 'Help Me Make It' has several ornamentals, play with soft thumb stroke.

C G7 C Csus4 C  
Take the ribbon from your hair.

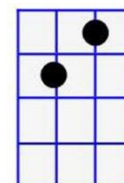
C7 F Dm F  
Shake it loose and let it fall.

Dm G7 G7sus2 G7  
Lay it soft against my skin

C Csus4(arp) C  
Like the shadow on the wall.



Csus4



G7sus2  
(lift off G7)

## 9 BUNCH OF THYME - Irish traditional

INTRO: C G7 C (G may be used for Em)

C G C C Em (G) G7  
Come all ye maidens young and fair, all you that are blooming in your prime.

C C7 F C **Cmaj7** G

Always be-ware and keep your garden fair.

C G7 C

Let no man steal away your thyme.

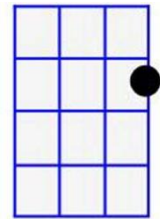
C G C C Em (G) G7  
For thyme it is a precious thing, and thyme brings all things to my mind.

C C7 F C **Cmaj7** G

Thyme with all its labours along with all its joys,

C G7 C

Thyme brings all things to my mind.



Cmaj7

C G C C Em (G) G7  
Once she had a bunch of thyme, she thought it never would decay.

C C7 F C **Cmaj7** G

Then came a lusty sailor who chanced to pass her way.

C G7 C

He stole her bunch of thyme away.

C G C C Em (G) G7  
The sailor gave to her a rose, a rose that never would decay.

C C7 F C **Cmaj7** G

He gave it to her, to keep her reminded

C G7 C

Of when he stole her thyme away.

C G C C Em (G) G7  
So come all ye maidens young and fair, all you that are blooming in your prime.

C C7 F C **Cmaj7** G

Always beware and keep your garden fair.

C G7 C

Let no man steal away your thyme.

C G C C Em (G) G7  
For thyme it is a precious thing. And thyme brings all things to my mind.

C C7 F C **Cmaj7** G

Thyme with all its labours along with all its joys.

C G7 C

Thyme brings all things to an end. SLOW (picking, end on string 1)

C G7 C

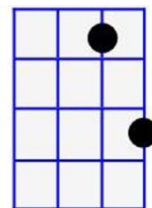
Thyme brings all things to an end.

# 10 HELP ME MAKE IT THROUGH THE NIGHT in C - Kris Kristofferson

Intro : As verse

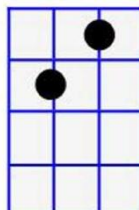
Rubato with a soft thumb stroke / = additional stroke

C G7 C Csus4 / C C7 F Dm / F  
Take the ribbon from your hair. Shake it loose and let it fall.  
Dm G7 G7sus2 G7  
Lay it soft against my skin,  
C Csus4(arp) C  
Like the shadow on the wall.



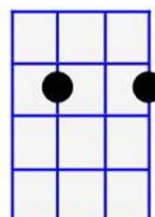
Csus4

C G7 C Csus4 / C C7 F Dm F  
Come and lay down by my side 'til the early morning light.  
Dm G7 G7sus2 G7  
All I'm taking is your time.  
C Csus4(arp) C  
Help me make it through the night.



G7sus2

C7 F C  
I don't care who's right or wrong. I don't try to under-stand.  
D7var D7full G7 G6 Gdim7 G6  
Let the devil take to-morrow, for to-night I need a friend.

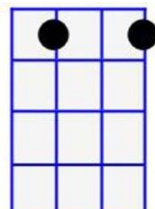


G6

G7 C Csus4 / C  
Yester-day is dead and gone.  
C7 F Dm / F  
And tomorrow's out of sight.  
Dm G7 G7sus2 G7  
And it's sad to be a-lone.  
C Csus4(arp) C  
Help me make it through the night.

*INSTRUMENTAL: Strum through verse*

C7 F C  
I don't care who's right or wrong. I don't try to under-stand.  
D7var D7bar G7 G6 Gdim7 G6  
Let the devil take to-morrow, for to-night I need a friend.



Gdim7

G7 C Csus4 / C C7 F Dm / F  
Yester- day is dead and gone, and tomorrow's out of sight.  
Dm G7 G7sus2 / G7  
And it's sad to be a-lone.  
C Csus4(arp) C  
Help me make it through the night.  
Dm G7 G7sus2 G7  
And it's sad to be alone.  
C Csus4 C C(7<sup>th</sup> fret) C  
Help me make it through the night.

7th Fret →

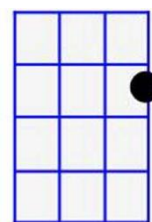
C (7<sup>th</sup> fret)

# 11 SAN FRANCISCO BAY BLUES - Jesse Fuller (1954)

Play along with Eric Clapton

INTRO : As verse

C F C C7  
 I got the blues from my baby livin' by the San Francisco Bay.  
 F C C7  
 The ocean liner's gone so far away.  
 F C / CMaj7 C7 A7  
 Didn't mean to treat her so bad, she was the best girl I ever had.  
 D7 G7  
 Said goodbye, I can take a cry, I want to lay down and die.

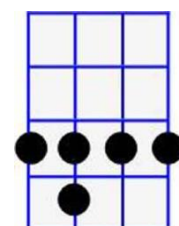


CMaj7

C F C C7  
 I ain't got a nickel and I ain't got a lousy dime.  
 F E7  
 If she don't come back, think I'm gonna lose my mind.  
 F C / CMaj7 C7 A7  
 If I ever get back to stay, it's gonna be another brand new day.  
 D7 G7 C G7  
 Walkin with my baby down by the San Francisco Bay.

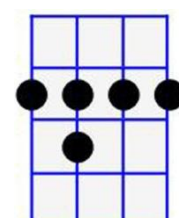
SOLO (Verses 1 & 2)

C F C F C  
 Sittin' down looking from my back door....wonderin' which way to go.  
 F C.  
 Woman I'm so crazy 'bout....she don't love me no more  
 F C / Cmaj7 C7 A7  
 Think I'll catch me a freight train....cause I'm feel - in blue.  
 D7 G7  
 Ride all the way to the end of the line....thinkin' only of you.

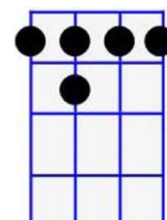


C7 bar

C F C F C  
 Meanwhile livin' in the city....just about to go insane.  
 F E7  
 Thought I heard my baby's voice....the way she used to call my name.  
 F C7bar / B7 Bb7 A7  
 And if I ever get back to stay....it's gonna be another brand new day.  
 D7 G7 C E7/ A7  
 Walkin' with my baby down by the San Francisco Bay. Hey Hey!  
 D7 G7 C E7/ A7  
 Walkin' with my baby down by the San Francisco Bay.  
 D7 G7 C C F F C G7 C  
 Yeah, walkin' with my baby down by the San Francisco Bay.



B7



Bb7

## 12 BEAT EXAMPLES

### Silent Night (Song 4) 3/4 (Waltz time) Simplified

G7 / / = 3 single finger picks on G7, etc, giving a 3 pick roll to a bar.

G7 / / G7 / / G7 / / G7 / /  
Si - i - lent night, holy night,

D7 / / D7 / / G7 / / G7 / /  
All is calm, all is bright,

C / / C / / G7 / / G7 / /  
Round yon vir- ir - gin mo - ther and child.

C / / C / / G7 / / G7 / /  
Holy in-fant so ten-der and mild,

D7 / / D7 / / G7 / / G7 / /  
Sle - ep in heav-en-ly pe - eace.

G7 / / D7 / / G / / G arp  
Sle - ep in heav-en-ly peace.

### 9 BUNCH OF THYME - 4/4 (common time) Simplified

C / / / G7 / / / C / / / C / / /  
Come all ye maid-ens young and fair,

C / / / C / / / G7 / / / G7 / / /  
All you that are bloom-ing in your prime.

C / / / C7 / / / F / / / C / G7 / (change mid- bar)  
Al - ways be - ware and keep your gar-den fair - air - air.

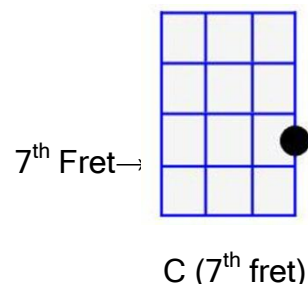
C / / / G7 / / / C / / / C arp  
Let no man steal a - way your thyme.

# 13 THE SPINNING WHEEL SONG - 3/4 time - Irish Traditional

Various versions in C, C# and D, with varying number of verses and key changes

Intro: Dm C G7 C

C (7<sup>th</sup>fret) C C arp G7  
Mellow the moonlight to shine is be-ginning.  
G7 G7 G7arp C  
Close by the window young Eileen is spinning.  
C C7 F C  
Bent o'er the fire, her blind grandmother sitting,  
Dm C G7 C  
Crooning and moaning and drowsily knitting.



## CHORUS

C (3<sup>rd</sup> fret) G7  
Merrily, cheerily, noiselessly whirring  
G7 C  
Spins the wheel, rings the reel while the foot's stirring.  
C C7 F C  
Sprightly and lightly and merrily ringing  
Dm C G7 C  
Sounds the sweet voice of the young maiden singing.

C G7  
'Eileen, a chara, I hear someone tapping'.  
G7 C  
'Tis the ivy, dear mother, against the glass flapping'.  
C C7 F C  
'Eileen, I surely hear somebody sighing'.  
Dm C G7 C  
'Tis the sound, mother dear, of the autumn winds dying'.

C G7  
'What's the noise that I hear at the window I wonder?'  
G7 C  
'Tis the little birds chirping, the holly bush under'.  
C C7 F C  
'What makes you shoving and moving your stool on,  
Dm C G7 C  
And singing all wrong the old song of the "Coolin"'.  
C G7  
There's a form at the casement, the form of her true love.  
G7 C  
And he whispers with face bent, 'I'm waiting for you love.  
C C7 F C  
Get up from the stool, through the lattice step lightly,  
Dm C G7 C  
And we'll rove in the grove while the moon's shining brightly'.

Continued ....

'Spinning Wheel Song, continued.

C G7  
The maid shakes her head, on her lips lays her fingers.  
G7 C  
Steps up from the stool, longs to go and yet lingers.  
C C7 F C  
A frightened glance turns to her drowsy grand-mother.  
Dm C G7 C  
Puts her foot on the stool, spins the wheel with the other.

KEY CHANGE A7

D A7  
Lazily, easily, now swings the wheel round.  
A7 D  
Slowly and lowly is heard now the reel's sound.  
D D7 G D  
Noiseless and light to the lattice above her.  
G D A7 D  
The maid steps then leaps to the arms of her lover.

D A7  
Slower ... and slower ... and slower the wheel swings. SLOWING  
A7 D  
Lower ... and lower ... and lower the reel rings.  
D D7 G D  
Ere-the-reel, and-the-wheel stop their ringing and moving.  
A7 D A7 D  
Through-the-grove the young lovers by moonlight are roving.



# 14 ALBERTA - Traditional/Lead Belly. Play along with Eric Clapton unplugged.

/ = extra strokes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0X67kd7MHS4>

Tab for first line

Strum G7										Strum C									
1		-	-	-	-		7	-	-	-		2	-	-	-		3	-	
2		0	1	2	3		-	-	-	-		1	-	-	-		0	-	
3		-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-		2	-	-	-		0	-	
4		-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-		0	-	-	-		0	-	

Al- berta, Al - ber - ta.

Where .....

INTRO: As Verse

Am7/ FMadd9/ Am13/ Am7no5 C (7<sup>th</sup> fret)

Al - berta, Al - ber - ta.

G7 C F C

Where you been so long?

C7 F

Al-berta, Al-berta,

C G7 C

Where you been so long?

G7

Ain't had no loving,

C/ F/ C

Since you've been gone.

Am7/ FMadd9/ Am13/ Am7no5 C

Al - berta, Al - ber - ta.

G7 C F C

Where'd you stay last night?

C7 F

Al-berta, Al-berta,

F C G7 C

Where'd you stay last night?

G7

Come home this morning,

C/ F/ C

Clothes don't fit you right

*PIANO/GUITAR INTERLUDE: As Verse*

Am7/ FMadd9/ Am13/ Am7no5 C

Al - berta, Al - ber - ta.

G7 C F C

Girl, you're on my mind.

C7 F

Al-berta, Al-berta,

C G7 C

Girl, you're on my mind.

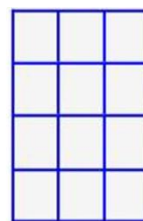
G7

Ain't had no loving

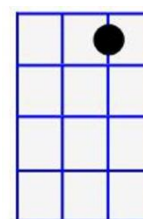
C/ F/ C

Such a great long time.

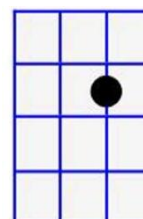
REPEAT FIRST VERSE



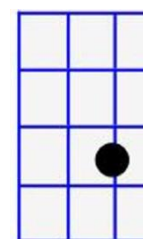
Am7



FMadd9



Am13



Am7no5

Extra verse:

Got a bird that whistles, got a bird that sings.

Got a bird that whistles, got a bird that sings.

But without Alberta, life don't mean a thing.

# 15 NORWEGIAN WOOD - The Beatles

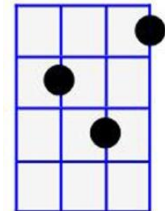
3/4 time.

## INTRO RIFF

1 | 5 - - 7 5 3 2 - - 0 3 2 | - - - - 3 - - - - - - - |  
 2 | - - - - - - - - - - - | 3 - - 1 - 0 - - - - - - - |  
 3 | - - - - - - - - - - - | - - - - - - - 2 - - - - - - - |  
 4 | - - - - - - - - - - - | - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - |

X 2

G F G  
 I once had a girl, or should I say, she once had me.  
 G F G  
 She showed me her room, isn't it good, Norwegian wood.  
 Gm C  
 She asked me to stay and she told me to sit anywhere.  
 G Am D  
 So I looked around and I noticed there wasn't a chair.



Gm

RIFF 2      1 | - - - |  
               2 | - 0 2 |      (or C2, E0, E2)  
               3 | - - - |  
               4 | 2 - - |

G F C G  
 I sat on a rug, biding my time, drinking her wine.  
 G F C G  
 We talked until two, and then she said, it's time for bed.

## INTRO RIFF

Gm C  
 She told me she worked in the morning and started to laugh.  
 Gm Am D  
 I told her I didn't and crawled off to sleep in the bath.

## RIFF 2

G F C G  
 And when I awoke, I was alone, this bird had flown.  
 G F C G  
 So, I lit a fire, isn't it good, Norwegian wood.

## INTRO RIFF

16 UKULELE NOTE POSITIONS (G C E A Tuning)

	STRING #				
	4	3	2	1	
	G	C	E	A	(Open strings)
	<hr/>				
	G#	C#	F	B $\flat$	
	A	D	F#	B	
3rd	B $\flat$	D#	G	C	
	B	E	G#	C#	
5th	C	F	A	D	
	C#	F#	B $\flat$	D#	
7th	D	G	B	E	
	D#	G#	C	F	
	E	A	C#	F#	
10th	F	B $\flat$	D	G	
	F#	B	D#	G#	
12th	G	C	E	A	