



SPA STRUMMERS UKULELE GROUP

Beginners guide

Beginners introduction to the ukulele

Page

- 2 Types of ukulele and description of parts
- 3 Tuning, frets and strings
- 4 Holding your ukulele
- 5 Finger placements for 3 starter chords C, F, G7
- 6 Common chords and finger placements
- 7 How to strum and strumming patterns
- 8 More strumming patterns
- 9 Chromatic music scale

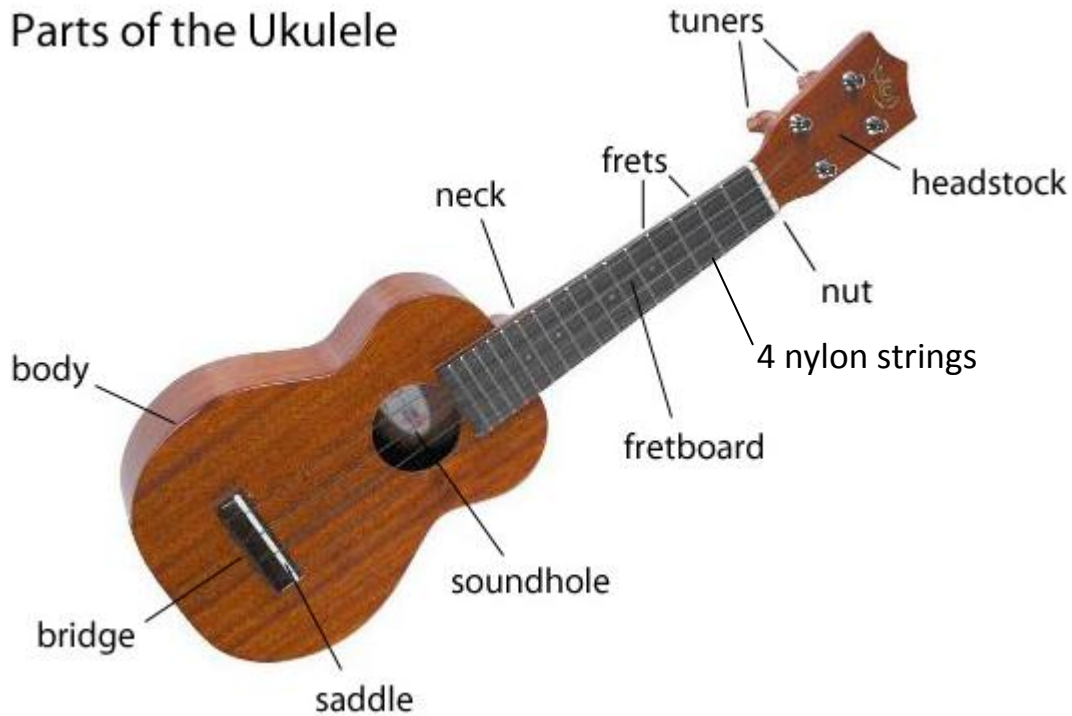
To be used at in conjunction with tutorials at Spa Strummers beginners/ improvers sessions together with beginners / improvers songbook 1



[Spa Strummers website](#)

Types of ukuleles

Parts of the Ukulele



Strings are made of nylon and are not harsh on fingers. Unlike other steel strings instruments which can result in sore fingers for beginners.

Types

There are two main types of ukuleles, the guitar shaped wooden uke and the banjo uke.

The classic **wooden ukelele** shape is shown above, and comes in 4 sizes

Soprano – smallest at 21” long and 13” scale length Tuned GCEA

Concert larger at 23” long and 15” scale length tuned GCEA

Tenor larger still at 26” long and 17” scale length tuned GCEA

Baritone largest at 30” long and 19” scale length tuned DGBE

The George Formby type **Banjo Ukelele**

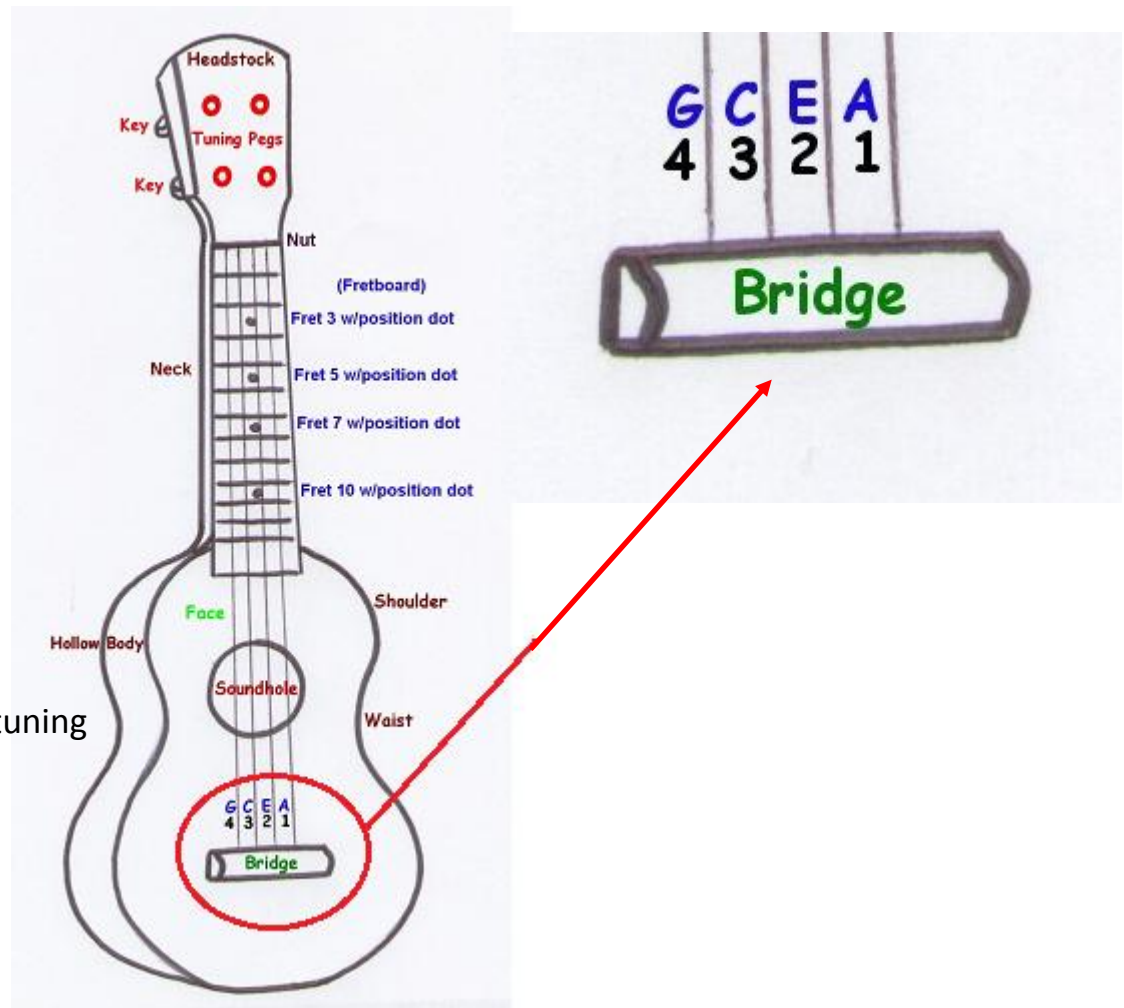
Has a stretched skin banjo type resonator

Drum body which makes it loud.

Developed for music halls with no PA



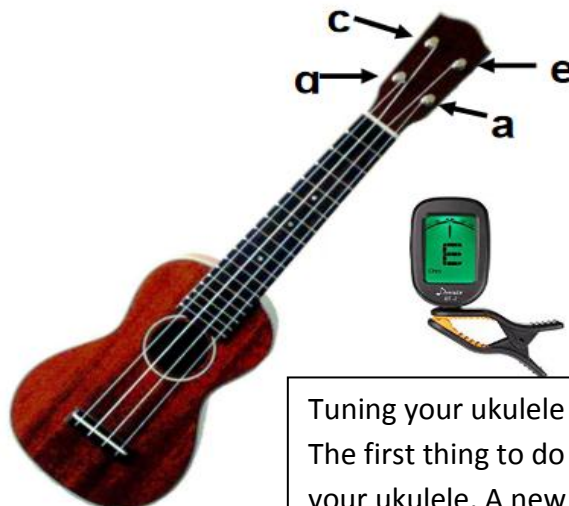
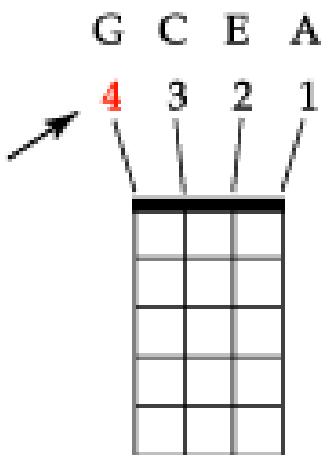
Beginners guide



Tuning

We shall use the 'C' tuning

- 4th string = G
- 3rd string = C
- 2th string = E
- 1st string = A



Tuning your ukulele
 The first thing to do before playing is to tune your ukulele. A new instrument will take a lot of tuning as the strings will be slack and they will take a while to bed in. The easiest way is to buy a "clip on tuner", costing between £10.00 and £15.00.

If you are left handed then reverse the strings and tuning.

Holding Your Ukulele

It's important you hold your ukulele correctly. Your dominant hand will be used to strum and your non-dominant will hold down the strings to form chords. Sit upright in a comfortable position with both feet flat on the floor. The fret board should be facing away from your body. When sitting you can rest the body of the ukulele on your leg leaving your strumming hand free to move. Alternatively hold your ukulele higher, supported between your forearm and chest. It is very important that you listen to your ukulele playing. Here are the things you should listen for:

1. When I play a chord are all the strings ringing out? Try this for all the chords you play and make sure all 4 strings are ringing out clearly.
2. When I change chords is it smooth with both chords being clear?
3. Am I playing the right chord in the right place?

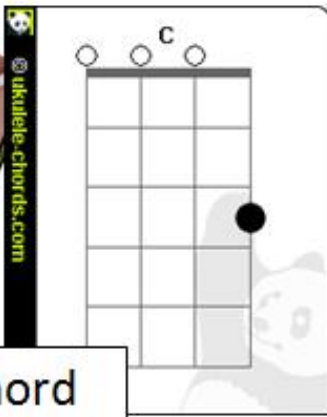
In a song you must change chords, it is easy to change early or late, listen to make sure you change in the right place.



Finger placements for 3 starter chords C F G7

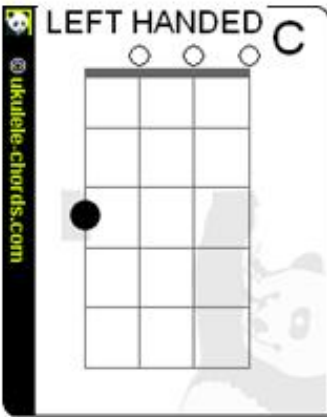
1

RIGHT HANDED

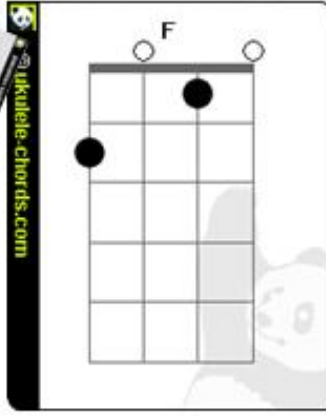


C chord

LEFT HANDED

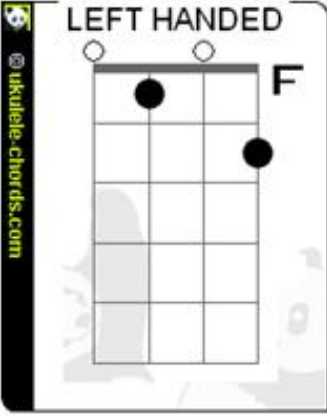


RIGHT HANDED

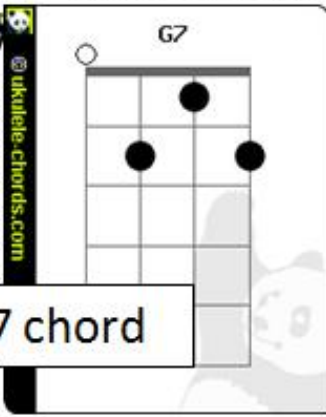


F chord

LEFT HANDED

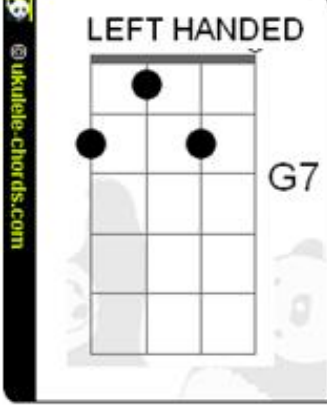


RIGHT HANDED



G7 chord

LEFT HANDED



Spa Strummers

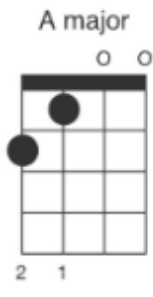
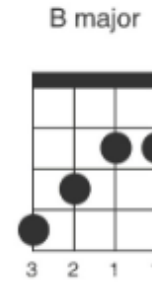

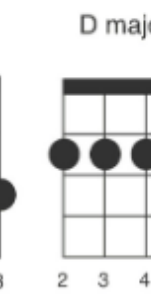
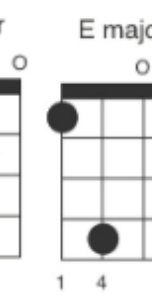
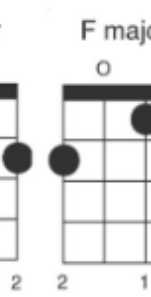
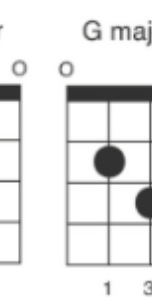
ukulele chords



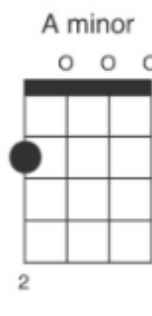
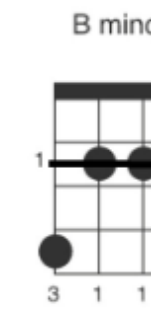
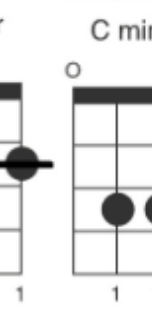
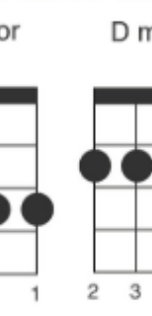
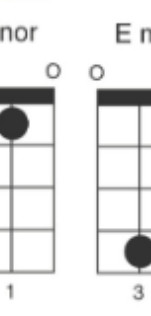
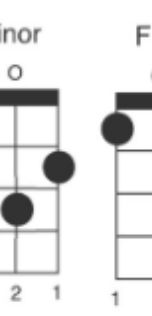
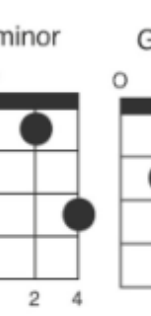
**major minor and 7th
with finger positions**

gCEA tuning

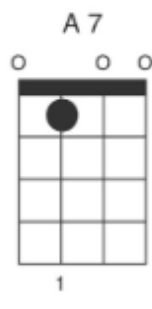
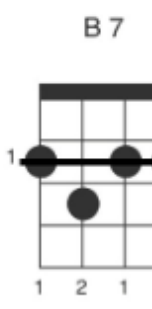
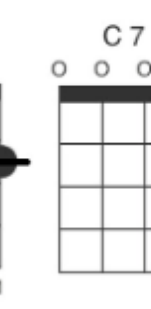
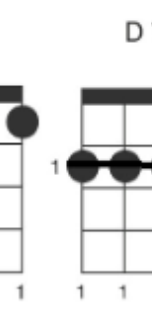
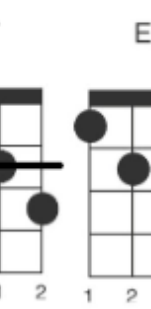
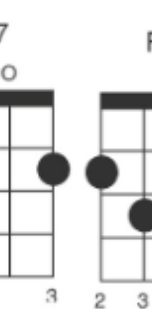
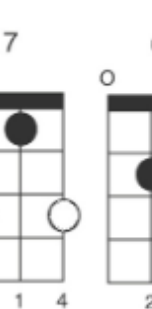
Ukulele Major Chords

A major	B major	C major	D major	E major	F major	G major
						

Ukulele Minor Chords

A minor	B minor	C minor	D minor	E minor	F minor	G minor
						

Ukulele 7th Chords

A7	B7	C7	D7	E7	F7	G7
						

STRUMMING AND PATTERNS

Important .-

You should look at this excellent YouTube video for correct strumming

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sn54XE5whnw>



Strumming is the main technique with the ukulele.

Strumming is used to provide a rhythm for songs.

Use the **index fingernail** to strum Down and Up on the strings to produce a chord.

Only if you have a problem with your finger flexibility should you use your thumb.

Your index fingernail should stroke all 4 strings for the downstroke, and the upstroke is with 4 strings with the **fleshy tip** of the same finger.

It's important that you keep a steady rhythm. Tapping your foot will help.

Roll your wrist for economy of movement.

On consecutive Down strums you do not stroke the strings coming Up.

On consecutive Up strums you do not stroke the strings going Down.

Whatever the strum pattern, your arm should be moving in an identical rhythmic way, with either the Up or Down strokes either striking or missing the strings.

Once you have viewed the video as above, then try these different strumming patterns.

D=down U=Up 4 beats per bar 4/4 time

STRUMMING PATTERNS

1: **DOWN DOWN STACCATTO** Basic Down Down 4/4 time

DOWN WITH THE INDEX FINGER NAIL

UP NOT TOUCHING THE STRINGS WITH THE INDEX FINGER

D & D & D & D & D & D & D & D as used for 500 Miles, Hi Ho Silver Lining

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 steady, like a slower ticking clock

2: **STRAIGHT SHUFFLE** 4/4 time

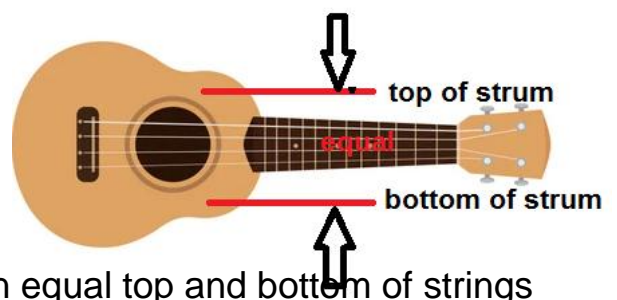
DOWN WITH THE INDEX FINGER NAIL

UP WITH THE INDEX FINGER FLESHY BIT

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 steady, like a ticking clock

D U D U D U D as used for Santa Catalina

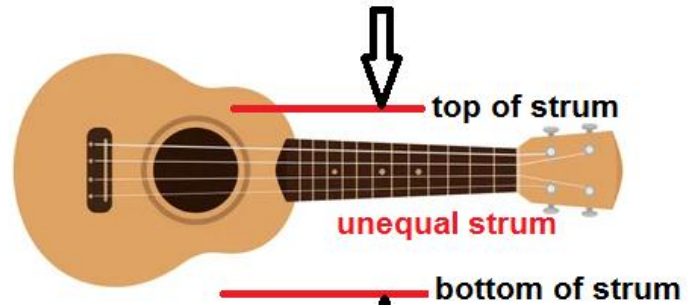
strumming arm motion equal top and bottom of strings



MORE STRUMMING PATTERNS

3: **SWING SHUFFLE** .4/4 time

DOWN WITH THE INDEX FINGER NAIL
UP WITH THE INDEX FINGER FLESHY BIT
 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 &
 DU DU DU DU DU



Same as Straight Shuffle above, but strumming arm motion has less travel at top of strings, more at bottom, which gives a swing to the strum

4: **CHURCH LICK** 4/4 time

DOWN WITH THE INDEX FINGER NAIL
UP WITH THE INDEX FINGER FLESHY BIT
 as used for Delilah sounds like tick tickertick tick tickertick
 D dud D dud D dud D dud More emphasis on 1st D

5: **CALYPSO** (AKA island strum or guitar strum)

This is the best all-rounder strum - can use it for many songs

DOWN WITH THE INDEX FINGER NAIL
UP WITH THE INDEX FINGER FLESHY BIT
 D DU UDU | D DU UDU | as used for Jamaica Farewell

6: **WALTZ** 3 / 4 time

this is only one of several ways to strum waltz

UP WITH THE INDEX FINGER FLESHY BIT
2 DOWNS WITH THE INDEX FINGER NAIL
 uDD uDD uDD uDD uDD **Waltz 3 / 4 time. (as used for Oom Pah Pah)**
Try down strokes as 2 fast strums and the upstroke slower for a better effect

7: **REGGAE** 4 / 4 time

Reggae strum is on the 2nd and 4th beat of a bar. **1 2 3 4**
Tap the body of the uke on beats 1 & 3 and strong Down strums on 2 & 4
 beat of bar 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 as used on Rudi
 t D t D t D t D t = tap uke body with nail for 1 beat



SPA STRUMMERS UKULELE GROUP

Beginners guide

CHROMATIC SCALE

Music uses the chromatic SCALE, consisting of 12 steps or semitones per octave
Named A through to G.

The frets on the uke fingerboard are spaced one semitone apart.

The intermediate steps are called sharps (#) if going up, or flats (b) if going down

Starting at A and going up in pitch this would be:

A
Bb (B flat) or A# (A sharp)
B
C
Db (D flat) or C# (C sharp)
D
Eb (E flat) or D# (D sharp)
E
F
Gb (G flat) or F# (F sharp)
G
Ab (A flat) or G# (G sharp)

Then back to A (higher octave)

Between B and C there are no intermediates, ditto E and F.

Doesn't matter how you refer to the note, sharp or flat, it's the same note !

ABCDEFG are the white keys on a piano keyboard, the sharps/flats are the black keys.