

Easy Ukulele Songs

Student Book

by Denise Gagné

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Themes & Variations

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 Email: tvinfo@telus.net Web Site: www.musicplay.ca
 Toll Free Phone or Fax: 1-888-562-4647
 Printed in Canada © 2015 reprinted 2017
 Cover Design and musical arrangements by Craig Cassils
 ISBN Number: 978-1-927062-61-6

Introduction

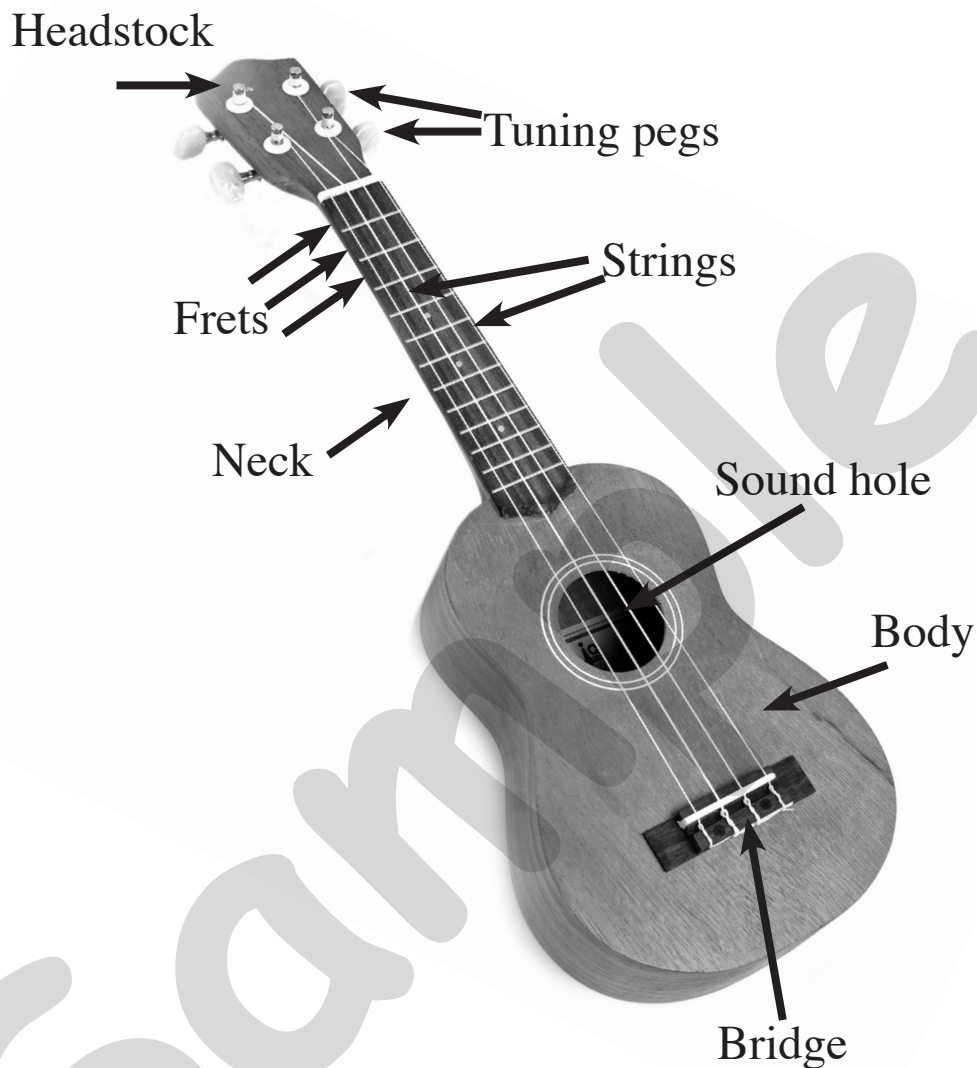
This collection of easy songs for ukulele is designed to get you singing and playing the ukulele in the very first lesson! The chords used in this collection are introduced through a series of 15 one chord songs. Mastering the chords before having to learn to change chords eliminates much of the frustration that young beginners face. After introducing the chords used, 15 easy two chord songs are given. If you find it difficult to switch chords, choose one of the chords and play along with the recording. Practice changing the chords slowly without looking at the fretboard. When you are able to “feel” where the fingers go, changing the chords will be easy. The last two songs in the collection use three chords. A CD with recordings of all the songs is included. If you don't have a CD drive on your computer, email info@musicplay.ca to request a download.

You will learn the chords and how to change chords using the folk songs that are given in the collection. In addition to the songs in the collection we've given links (in the projectable PDF included on the CD) to easy pop songs on YouTube that use the same chords. You will really enjoy playing along with pop songs. Where possible, links to the original artists' performance and to a video with the chords and lyrics are given. This collection does not address reading notes and playing melodies - the focus is on learning songs to sing and strum.

The ukulele originated in the 19th century as a Hawaiian interpretation of the machete, a small guitar-like instrument taken to Hawaii by Portuguese immigrants. Since then, the ukulele has been commonly associated with music from Hawaii, where the name roughly translates as “jumping flea,” perhaps because of the movement of the player's fingers. The ukulele gained great popularity elsewhere in the United States during the early 20th century, and from there spread internationally. It has been popular with performing musicians, and also in music education.



Parts of the Ukulele



Ukulele is sometimes abbreviated to uke. The ukulele is a member of the guitar family of instruments. It has four strings that are played by plucking or strumming. Ukuleles are generally made of wood, though variants have been composed partially or entirely of plastic or other materials. There are four main sizes of ukulele: soprano (standard), concert, tenor and baritone. The soprano, concert and tenor are good sizes for the young beginner.



Tenor Ukulele



Soprano Ukulele

Playing Position

Sitting

- Sit up straight with your feet flat on the floor and your shoulders relaxed.
- If the ukulele is large enough, rest the ukulele on your right leg.
- If the ukulele is too small to rest on your leg, hold it against your ribcage with your right forearm.

Standing

- Press the ukulele against your ribcage with your right forearm to keep the uke in place.

Use a strap

- Some players like to use a strap to keep the ukulele in place.



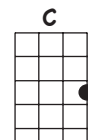
The Right Hand

- You can use either your thumb or your index (pointer) finger to strum.
- Some players like to use a pick. Hold the pick between your thumb and the middle knuckle of your pointer finger, in the same way you would hold a key. Felt picks are used most often on ukulele.

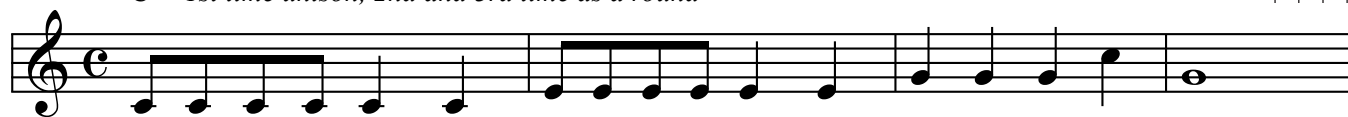


1. Little Tommy Tinker

Intro 2 bars



C 1st time unison, 2nd and 3rd time as a round



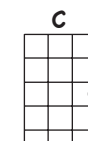
Lit - tle Tom-my Tin - ker sat up - on a clink - er. He be - gan to cry.



Ma! _____ Ma! _____ Poor lit - tle in - no - cent guy.

2. Johnny One Hammer

Intro 2 bars



C



John - ny plays with one ham - mer, one ham - mer, one ham - mer.

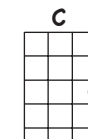


John - ny plays with one ham - mer, then he plays with two.

2. Johnny plays with two hammers...
 3. Johnny plays with three hammers...
 4. Johnny plays with four hammers...
 5. Johnny plays with five hammers...
- Then he takes a rest.

3. Funga Alafia

Intro 2 bars



C repeat 2 times

Liberia



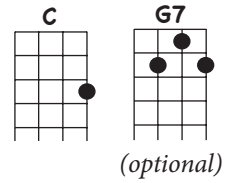
Fun - ga a - la - fia. Ah - shay, ah - shay. Fun - ga a - la - fia. Ah - shay, ah - shay.



Fun - ga a - la - fia. Ah - shay, ah - shay. Fun - ga a - la - fia. Ah - shay, ah - shay.

Intro 2 bars

4. Row, Row, Row Your Boat



C

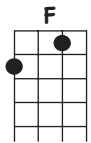
Row, row, row your boat, gent - ly down the stream.
 Row, row, row your boat, gent - ly down the stream.
 Row, row, row your boat, gent - ly down the stream.

(G7) C

Merri - ly, merri - ly, merri - ly, merri - ly, life is but a dream.
 Ha _____ ha! _____ Fooled _____ you! _____ I'm a sub - ma - rine!
 Throw your teach - er o - ver board and lis - ten to her scream!

5. Adieu My Comrades

Intro 4 bars



F

A - dieu to my com - rades for a while we must part. And
 Our ship is well rigged and she's — read - y to sail. Our

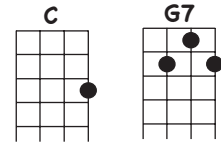
like - wise the las - sie who's sto - len my heart. I am
 crew they are anx - ious to fol - low the whale. Where the

bound out for Green - land and read - y to sail. In
 ice - bergs do float and the storm - y winds blow, Where

hopes to find rich - es in hunt - ing the whale.
 land and the o - cean is cov - ered with snow.

Intro 2 bars

20. This Old Man



C G7

This old man he played one, he played knick-knack on my thumb. With a
 C G7 C
 knick-knack pat - tywhack, give a dog a bone, This old man came roll - ing home.

C
 2. This old man, he played two,
 G7
 He played knick-knack on my shoe.

C
 With a knick-knack patty whack, give a dog a bone,
 G7 C
 This old man came rolling home.

C
 3. This old man, he played three,
 G7
 He played knick-knack on my knee...

C
 4. This old man, he played four,
 G7
 He played knick-knack on my door...

C
 5. This old man, he played five,
 G7
 He played knick-knack on my hive...

C
 6. This old man, he played six,
 G7
 He played knick-knack on my sticks...

C
 7. This old man, he played seven,
 G7
 He played knick-knack up in heaven...

C
 8. This old man, he played eight,
 G7
 He played knick-knack on my gate...

C
 9. This old man, he played nine,
 G7
 He played knick-knack on my spine...

C
 10. This old man, he played ten,
 G7
 He played knick-knack once again...

Easy Pop Songs to Play on the Ukulele

1. Coconut - Harry Nilsson

Chord: C7

Lyrics/Chords: <https://youtu.be/AQgDVtHg49s>

Students can play along with the performance video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgdU9OaSMkw>

2. Run Through the Jungle - Creedence Clearwater Revival

Chord: D

Lyrics/Chords: <https://youtu.be/siY6PMUWr9g>

Students can play along with the performance video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iP3TTGuddjY>

3. Chain of Fools - Aretha Franklin

Chord: Cm

Lyrics/Chords: <http://youtu.be/o1On-Er3wYU>

Students can play along with the performance video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xroRNBvvF9M>

4. Madeleine-Mary - Palace Brothers 56

Chord: Am

Lyrics/Chords: <https://youtu.be/IW9Fvo7thUQ>

5. Jambalaya - Jeff Healy

Chords: C and G

Lyrics/Chords: https://youtu.be/dI_B2m3vQ4E

Students can play along with the performance video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4f2NO9hYGkg>

6. Jambalaya - The Mudbugs

Chords: D and A

Lyrics/Chords: <https://youtu.be/jTD4yfphxxo>

7. Jambalaya - The Mudbugs

Chords: D and A (D Tuning)

Lyrics/Chords: <https://youtu.be/QG6-4wAaxn0>

8. Unkown Legend - Neil Young

Chords: G and C

Lyrics/Chords: <https://youtu.be/gkUY6zr8pjQ>

Students can play along with the performance video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsblaVJcQeM>

9. Uptown Funk (Kidz Bop) - Mark Ronson featuring Bruno Mars

Chords: G7 and Dm

Lyrics/Chords: https://youtu.be/k_w_jB92IX4

Students can play along with the performance video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPf0YbXqDm0>