

YOUR FIRST UKULELE LESSON AND **THEN SOME**

A Complete Beginner's Crash Course
to Playing Ukulele

BY BRETT MCQUEEN



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by Brett McQueen of UkuleleTricks.com

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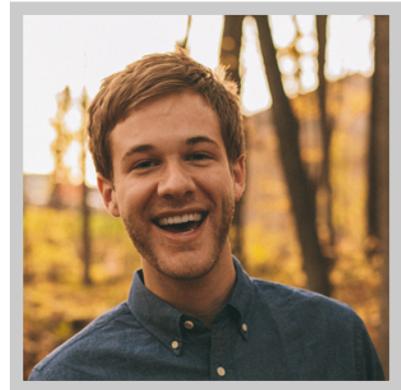
*This book is dedicated to my grandfather
who taught and inspired me to play ukulele.*

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Introduction and Welcome

Are you ready to dive into the world of ukulele? Before we get started, let me quickly introduce myself. My name is Brett McQueen (that's me on the right). I'm from [Ukulele Tricks](#)—a website that helps you become a better ukulele player.



If you ask me, ukulele is the best instrument you can learn how to play. For starters, no matter how young or old you are, you can learn to play the ukulele. My grandpa taught me when I was just six years old, and in my flagship Ukulele Tricks online video lesson course [Strumming Tricks](#), I routinely see people in their 60s, 70s, 80s and even 90s learning how to play the ukulele. Anybody can learn to play ukulele!

Secondly, the ukulele is a relatively simple instrument (say compared to the oboe!), so it's easy to start playing songs right from the start. You don't need a musical background. In fact, in this book, I'm going to teach you how to play a couple simple, well-known songs.

Thirdly, playing ukulele isn't the most expensive instrument. For around \$100, you can get a playable, decent-sounding ukulele. Not only is the ukulele a relatively inexpensive instrument, the ukulele is also a portable instrument. You can take your ukulele literally anywhere you go—beach, work, school, bus, park, or wherever you can imagine!

Lastly, from what I've experienced, the ukulele community is single-handedly one of the nicest and most welcoming. Most of us don't take ourselves too seriously, and because we've found a lot of joy in playing ukulele, we just want others to experience the same.

The ukulele has brought a lot of joy to my life, and I think it can to yours, which is why I wrote this "crash course." Wherever you're at, after going through this lesson book, you'll be playing your first song and have the skills to start playing some of your favorite songs.

These lessons are designed for the beginning ukulele player to get you started on your path towards ukulele success. Everything you need is here to get started *today*. However, even if you've played for a little while, I encourage you to keep reading because you just might pick up some new tricks.

If you have any questions whatsoever, send me an email at [Ukulele Tricks](#). I want to help you become a better ukulele player.

Let's get started!



If at anytime while reading this lesson book, you find yourself completely stumped, don't hesitate to jump over to [Ukulele Tricks](#) and send me an email through the contact page. You can also follow me on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

About the Ukulele

Before you start playing, take a minute to familiarize yourself with the different sizes of ukuleles and the parts of your ukulele.

The Four Different Ukulele Sizes

The ukulele is a four-stringed plucked instrument introduced to Hawaii by Portuguese immigrants in the 19th century. The most popular sizes of ukuleles are **soprano**, **concert**, **tenor** and **baritone**.



Soprano ukuleles are the smallest size and tend to be the most common as they can be had for a pretty low price (great for beginners). They are known for their bright, “jangly” classic sound.

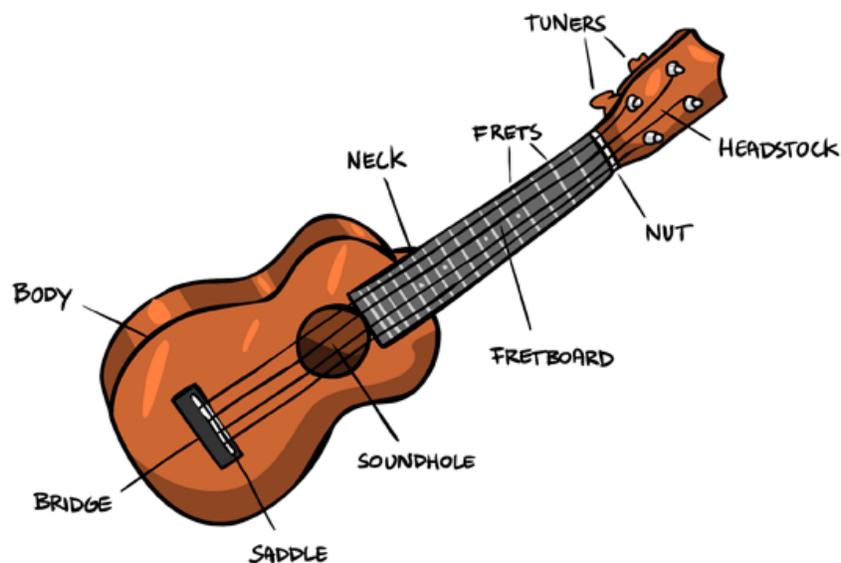
A concert ukulele is slightly bigger in size compared to a soprano and a tenor ukulele is even bigger than a concert. As the size of ukulele gets bigger, this makes the tone produced from the instrument sound warmer (not as bright), not to mention larger-sized ukuleles tend to be preferred by players with larger hands or fingers because there is more room between the frets to fit the fingers.

The biggest ukulele is the baritone ukulele. It sounds even deeper in pitch and tone than the other sizes because it is tuned like the bottom four strings of a guitar, although some tune it to standard tuning (more on that later).



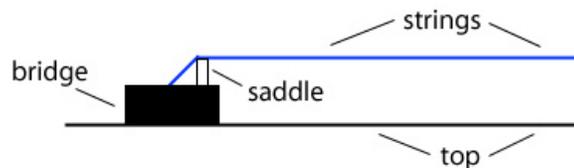
[Click here for an in-depth look at ukulele sizes.](#)

Ukulele Anatomy: Parts of the Ukulele



Sound is created whenever you pluck or strum a string. The string vibrates the **saddle**, which is the white piece of plastic or bone supported by the **bridge** on the top of the ukulele. The energy produced vibrates the **top** of the ukulele which resonates in the **body** of the instrument and is projected out the **soundhole**.

Bridge and Saddle Profile View

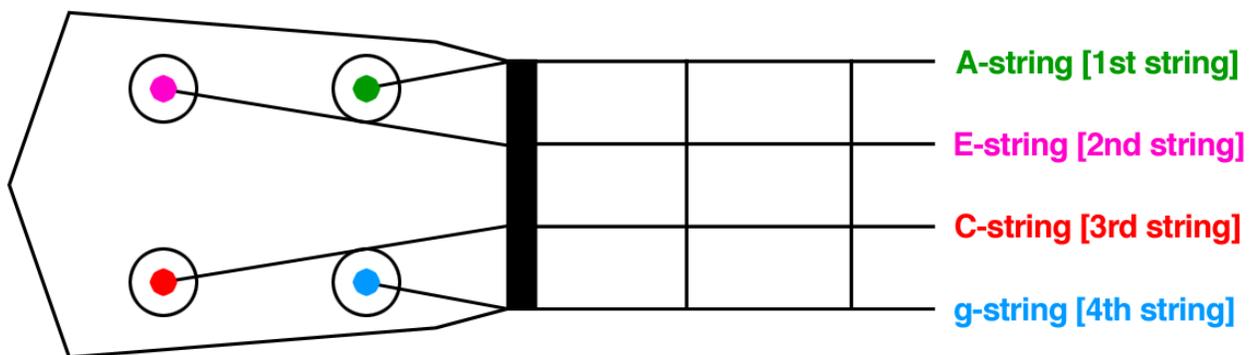


The most important thing you need to know for the purpose of this lesson book is how to identify the **neck**, **fretboard** and **frets**. Frets are the pieces of metal that lay perpendicular across the fretboard. You press your fingers between the frets and pluck a string to produce a pitch. The higher you go up the fretboard (closer to the soundhole) the higher the pitch.

Now that you know more about your ukulele it's time to tune up and start playing!

How to Tune Your Ukulele

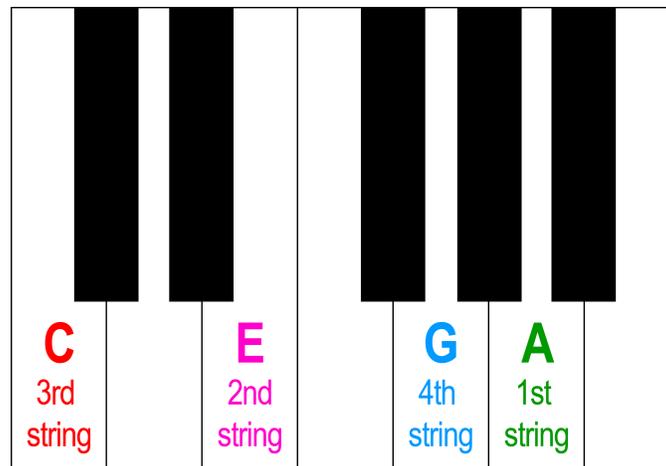
Soprano, concert, and tenor ukuleles are commonly tuned to standard *reentrant* tuning. The following figure shows a right-handed ukulele tuned to standard reentrant tuning.



As you can see, the bottom string or **first string** is tuned to an **A**. The **second string** is tuned to an **E**. The **third string** is tuned to a **C**, and the **fourth string** or top string of the ukulele is tuned to a **G**.

Please note that the above figure is a “top down” perspective of the ukulele, as if you were supporting it in your lap, ready to play. In this way, the bottom line of the figure represents the *top string* of the ukulele; likewise, the top line represents the *bottom string* of the ukulele.

From the top to bottom string, see how a ukulele is tuned on the music staff and piano keys:



Notice that the top g-string (4th string) is tuned higher than the middle two strings – the top g-string is tuned to a G-note *above* middle C on a piano. This is why it is called *reentrant* tuning. The lowercase “g” is used to indicate the G-note above middle C.



Are you a lefty and just learning to play ukulele? If so, as a lefty myself, I recommend tuning your strings as shown above, using your left hand to fret chords and right hand to strum. This will allow you to follow along with me. Remember equal use of your dominant and non-dominant hand is required to play the ukulele.

Tuning Your Ukulele By Ear

Use the [Ukulele Tricks' online tuner](#) to tune your ukulele by ear. When tuning by ear, you play a reference pitch of the note you want to tune to, and then, turn the tuning pegs to match the pitch of the reference note as closely as possible.

This takes some practice to get it right. One trick is to listen closely to the two pitches as they are ringing out simultaneously. If there is a “wobbly” or “warbly” sound between the pitches, this means they are out of tune. Your goal is to turn the tuning pegs till you hear the purest tone possible with no “wobble”.



[Click here to listen to an example of tuning your ukulele by ear.](#)

Using a Chromatic Tuner to Tune Your Ukulele

The easiest and most accurate way to tune your ukulele is to use a *chromatic tuner*. As you pluck each individual string on your ukulele, this little device detects the pitch and displays it back to you. It will indicate if you are sharp or flat (above or below the pitch), so you can get an accurate tuning. Every ukulele player should have a chromatic tuner.



[See my recommendations of the best chromatic tuners.](#)

If you have a smartphone, search for a “chromatic tuner” app to use, so you can tune up right now.

This is the basics of what you need to know for tuning. For a more in-depth explanation and to watch a video lesson demonstrating tuning with a chromatic tuner, [click here](#) for the full ultimate tuning guide.



FREE TIP: Always, I mean *always* tune up your ukulele before you play it. Strings stretch as you play them and can go out of tune from changes in humidity. As a ukulele player, you will be more inspired by a ukulele that’s in tune and so will your listeners!

What About Tuning For Baritone Players?

If you’re a baritone player, you have two main options.

One, you can tune your baritone ukulele to baritone tuning, which is like the bottom four strings of a guitar – D-G-B-E. If you do this, the chord diagrams will be different, but you can use the [Ukulele Tricks Baritone Chord Library](#) to follow along.

Alternatively, you can use a *tenor* set of standard ukulele strings to tune your baritone to standard tuning, as described above. This allows you to match the pitch of standard-tuned ukuleles and use the chord diagrams found in this book.

For more tips on how to follow along with my lessons using a baritone ukulele, [check out this guide here](#).

How to Hold Your Ukulele



How you hold your ukulele can vary slightly depending on what size of ukulele you have.

Typically though, to hold the ukulele, cradle the body of the ukulele in your right arm, while the part of your forearm, closest to the elbow, applies a little pressure to the top of the ukulele, so it is held snug against your body. Then, support the neck of the ukulele in the crevice of your left hand where your thumb meets your index finger.

To strum, use the nail-side of your index finger to strum down and the flesh-side of your index finger to strum up. Alternatively, you might use the flesh-side of your middle or ring fingers for up strums.



It's critical to keep your strumming hand and fingers loose and relaxed to avoid digging into the strings too hard. It just takes a little bit of contact from your strumming hand across the strings to produce a nice, even sound. Aim to strum near the 12th to 15th fret of the ukulele for a warm, balanced sound – right around where the neck of the ukulele meets the body. Avoid strumming directly over the soundhole. The closer you get to the bridge and soundhole the brighter the sound becomes (sometimes this is desirable though).

There are many different ways to strum the ukulele depending on the style you are playing. For now, the best way for you is the way that is most comfortable and produces a relaxed, even sound. That said, avoid strumming with just the thumb, since your movement will be restricted. It takes time to dial your strumming technique, so don't be discouraged if it feels awkward at first! Practice, and remember, the most important thing is to keep a loose, relaxed hand and wrist.

Your First Ukulele Chords

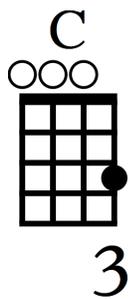
Now, it's time to make music! To start, learn three of the most basic and important ukulele chords: C major, G major and F major.

For each chord diagram, the *thick horizontal line* at the top indicates the **nut** on the ukulele. The *thinner horizontal lines* indicate **frets** and the *vertical lines* indicate **strings**. The *black dot(s)* on the strings indicate which fret you press down with your finger. There are numbers below to indicate which finger you use to press down on the string with the *number 1* representing the **index finger**, *number 2* the **middle finger**, *number 3* the **ring finger** and *number 4* the **little finger**.



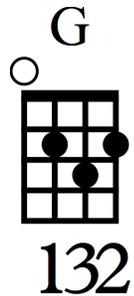
[Reference hundreds of chords at the Ukulele Tricks chord library.](#)

C major



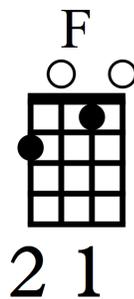
To play a **C major chord**, place your **ring finger** on the 3rd fret of the bottom string (1st string). The remaining strings ring completely open.

G major



To play a **G major chord**, place your **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the bottom string, **ring finger** on the 3rd fret of the second string and **index finger** on the 2nd fret of the third string. The top string (4th string) rings completely open.

F major



To play an **F major chord**, place your **index finger** on the 1st fret of the second string and **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the top string. Let the first and third string ring completely open.

How to Practice New Chord Positions

As you practice these chord positions, practice positioning your fingers for each chord and changing between each chord without strumming.

When learning a new chord on the ukulele, at first, it's difficult and frustrating to get your fingers to go where you want them. Through time and practice, you build **muscle memory** where changing chords eventually becomes second nature, like tying your shoes.

You might also notice that the ends of your fingers start to feel sore. This is very normal. Eventually, your fingers build calluses on the ends, which will prevent the tips of your fingers from hurting. After a week of dedicated practice, you should start to notice this to improve.



Bzzt! Are you having a hard time playing these chords without a string buzzing? String buzz can sometimes be caused by the quality of the ukulele but you can help minimize it by making sure your fretting fingers are pressed as closely behind the fret as possible. [Watch this video](#) to learn this trick.

Amazingly enough, with just these three chords, you can play hundreds of songs on the ukulele. Before you learn a song though, take a look at a key strumming pattern on the ukulele – perhaps the most important strumming pattern!

Your First Strumming Pattern

Even though the ukulele is a small instrument, when strummed, it has a bright, crisp rhythmic tone. At first, strumming can seem like a bit of juggling act; not only are you trying to keep a steady strumming pattern, you also have to factor in chord changes and singing too!

Not to fret though, before I show you a strumming pattern, I want to get you in the *mindset* of strumming that makes it a whole lot easier.

The Mindset of Strumming

Strumming is a form of **rhythm**. Rhythm, in music, is all about steady *timing* and *consistency*. Strumming isn't about how complicated or fast you play. If you can't keep time and aren't consistent, you've completely defeated the purpose of strumming.

To keep steady timing and a consistent rhythm, as you practice these first strumming patterns, I want you to **count out loud**. Counting out loud enables you to build up an internal "clock" where it becomes easier to keep steady timing and a consistent strumming rhythm. Being a rock-steady strummer is one of the most important skills.

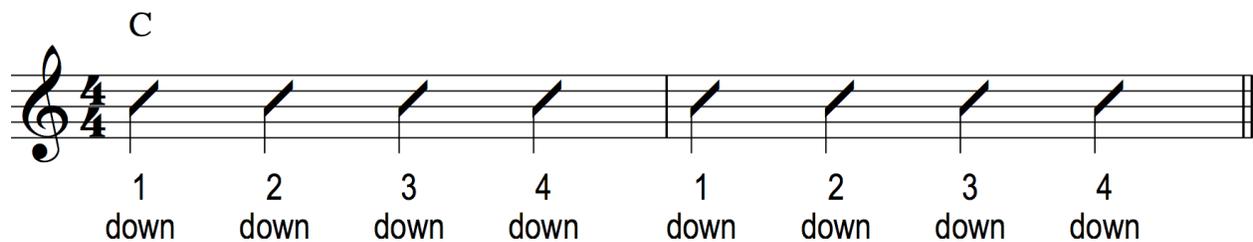
Let's learn your first strumming pattern!

Strumming Pattern #1: Down, Down, Down, Down

For this first strumming pattern, take the **C major chord** you learned earlier and strum all down strums. I recommend using the nail-side of your index finger to strum down across the strings.

For this pattern, play to a count of **four**, which means you count out loud “1, 2, 3, 4” and repeat this counting at a consistent but not too fast pace. Perform a down strum on each count. A count of four, referred to as “4/4”, is a common **time signature** in most modern and popular music.

Here is the strumming pattern played over a C major chord:

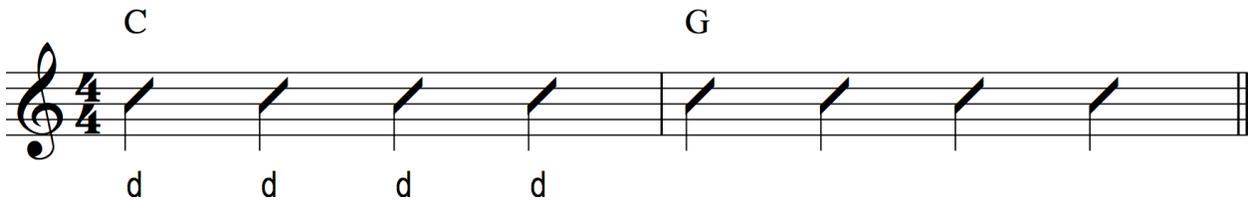


The image shows a musical staff in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. Above the staff is a 'C' indicating a C major chord. The staff contains eight down strums, represented by diagonal lines. Below the staff, the counts '1 down', '2 down', '3 down', '4 down' are written under the first four strums, and '1 down', '2 down', '3 down', '4 down' are written under the next four strums.

Practice counting out loud and strumming all down strums at a consistent moderate speed (not too fast, not too slow). If you're a natural, it might seem a little bit boring to count out loud and just do down strums, but remember, the key in all of this to develop and strengthen your internal sense of time.

As you become more comfortable, try adding a chord change. Here's where it gets a little more challenging. Change from a **C major chord**

to a **G major chord** every four counts while keeping the same steady, consistent tempo.



[Click to see this pattern explained and demonstrated in a video.](#)

Practice this until you can switch between the two chords without hesitating between the changes. The count should remain consistent and steady through the chord change. For extra practice, take this same idea and practice switching between a **C major chord** and **F major chord**.

Your First Song

Believe it or not, with the three chords and strumming pattern you've learned, you're ready to play a lot of songs on the ukulele! To start, let me show you a nice and easy tune – an oldie but a goodie – *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*.

Keep going with the down strums. The changes in this song happen often, so start off slow and think about anticipating the next chord.

Twin - kle Twin - kle lit - tle star How I won - der what you are
 C F C F C G C
 1 2 3 4
 d d d d
 5
 Up a - bove the world so high Like a dia - mond in the sky
 C F C G C F C G
 9
 Twin - kle Twin - kle lit - tle star How I won - der what you are
 C F C F C G C
 d d d



What's the top line in the music? The top line of the music staff indicates the notes of the melody that you sing. The bottom line indicates the chords and strumming pattern.

Practice *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* till you can sing and play it at a steady tempo without having to hesitate between the chord changes. It might take little bit of time to get it right – that's okay.

If you're having trouble, don't hesitate to slow it down. Practice counting out loud and just going through the chord changes without singing. As you get more comfortable, start humming under your breath in combination with your counting. And then, as this becomes more comfortable, sing it out and sing it strong!

Again, at this point, the goal isn't to be "fancy" ("fancier" stuff will come in the next part). Right now, it's important to focus on being steady and consistent. Once you're ready, keep reading and learn some more important ukulele chords.

Fantastic effort so far!

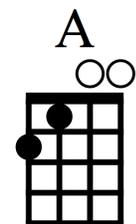
10 More Really Important Ukulele Chords to Know

By now, you should feel fairly comfortable changing between the C, F and G chords. Your fingers should feel used to switching and changing chords. It's time to learn some more really important and common chords. If you know these like the back of your hand, you'll be half way to learning about every song out there.

Major Chords

The following major chords are used in a lot of songs.

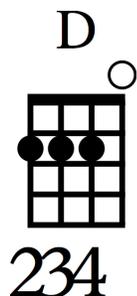
A major



21

To play an **A major chord**, place your **index finger** on 1st fret of the third string and **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the top string. The bottom two strings ring completely open.

D major

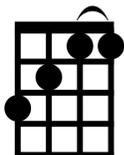


There are a couple ways to play a **D major chord**. The first way is to place your **little finger** on the 2nd fret of the second string, **ring finger** on the 2nd fret of the third string and **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the top string. Then, let the bottom string ring completely open. For people with smaller fingers, this tends to work well.

However, those of us with large fingers, the recommended way to play this chord is to *barre* the top three strings on the 2nd fret with your **middle finger** or **ring finger**. This means your finger lays across and presses down on the the top three strings at the 2nd fret. Bend the finger back a little to allow the bottom string to ring open. Sometimes I will even use my **index finger** to do this. This is hard to do and takes practice, so experiment with both ways to see which one works best for you.

Bb major

B \flat



3211

To play a **Bb major chord**, use your **index finger** to *barre* the strings at the first fret. This means you use your index finger to hold and press down all four strings. Then, place your **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the third string and **ring finger** on the 3rd fret of the top string.



[Click here for more specific tips on playing a Bb major chord.](#)

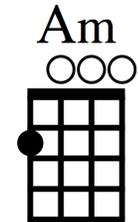
Minor Chords

The next set of chords you learn are **minor chords**. Minor chords are like major chords, except you change one note of the chord to make it minor. Minor chords tend to have a “sadder” sound to them.



[Click to read a more in-depth explanation on the differences between major and minor chords.](#)

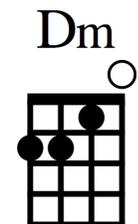
A minor



2

To play an **Am chord**, simply place your **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the top string and let the bottom three strings ring completely open.

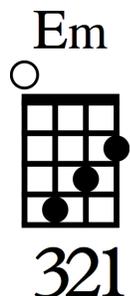
D minor



231

To play a **Dm chord**, place your **index finger** on the 1st fret of the second string, **ring finger** on the 2nd fret of the third string and **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the top string. Let the bottom string ring completely open.

E minor



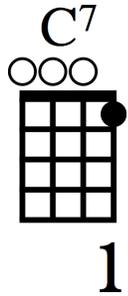
To play an **Em chord**, place your **index finger** on the 2nd fret of the bottom string, **middle finger** on the 3rd fret of the second string and **ring finger** on the 4th fret of the third string. Let the top string ring completely open.

Dominant 7th Chords

Major and minor chords only have three notes that make up the sound of the chord. Seventh chords are essentially major or minor chords with an added note called a *seventh*, which refers to the seventh or last note of a scale. You find seventh chords a lot in blues and jazz styles, as well as older traditional songs.

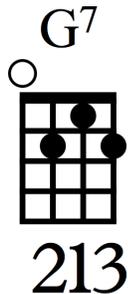
There are different types of seventh chords (major 7th, minor 7th, dominant 7th, diminished 7th), however, we're just going to learn some dominant seventh chords, which tend to show up the most.

C7



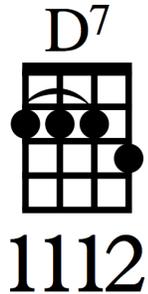
To play a C7 chord, simply place your **index finger** on the 1st fret of the bottom string. Let the other three strings ring completely open.

G7



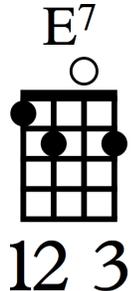
To play a G7 chord, place your **ring finger** on the 2nd fret of the bottom string, **index finger** on the 1st fret of the second string and **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the third string. Let the top string ring completely open.

D7



To play a D7 chord, lay your **index finger** across all four strings on the 2nd fret. While these strings are barred, place your **middle finger** on the 3rd fret of the bottom string.

E7



To play an E7 chord, place your **ring finger** on the 2nd fret of the bottom string, **middle finger** on the 2nd fret of the third string and **index finger** on the 1st fret of the top string. Let the second string ring completely open.



[Watch "10 Beginner Ukulele Chords Everyone Needs to Know"](#)

More Advanced Strumming Patterns

I admit that down strums can be a bit boring, however, they are extremely flexible, and if you can play a good ol' down strum pattern with steady timing (that's key, remember!) you can easily make your strumming pattern more interesting. Let's take a look at how you can do this.

Strumming Pattern #2: Down, Down-Up, Down, Down-Up

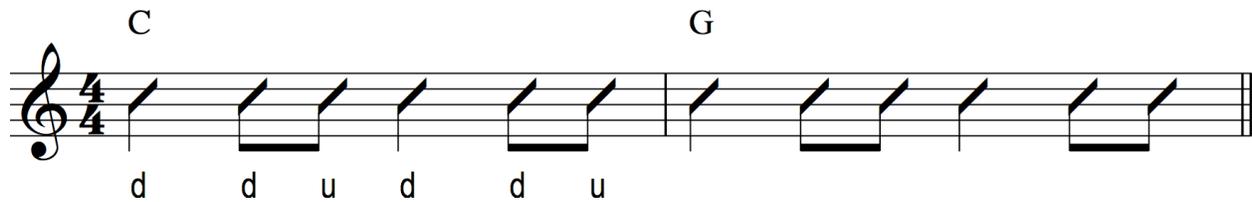
For this pattern, continue to strum to a count of four. However, this time, add an **up strum** between the second and third beat as well as between the fourth and first beat. This makes a strumming pattern of **down, down-up, down, down-up**.

Count this by saying "and" between these beats. All you're doing is splitting these beats (beats 2 and 4) in half or *subdividing* them. So the strumming pattern would look like this:

C

1 d 2 d and 3 d 4 d and

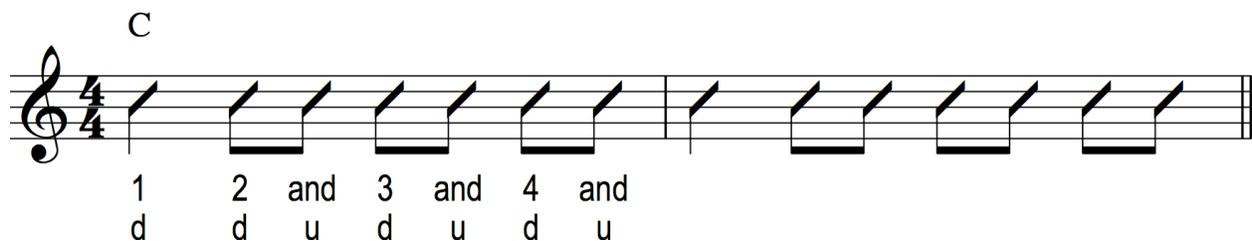
As you start to feel more comfortable with this strumming pattern, practice changing chords. In the following example, practice switching from a C chord to a G chord:



Again, practice this until you can change chords seamlessly. Start out slow at first and gradually increase your speed. Remember, it's all about keeping that solid and consistent rhythm. Don't forget to practice this pattern using other chords you've learned too!

Strumming Pattern #3: Down, Down-Up, Down-Up, Down-Up

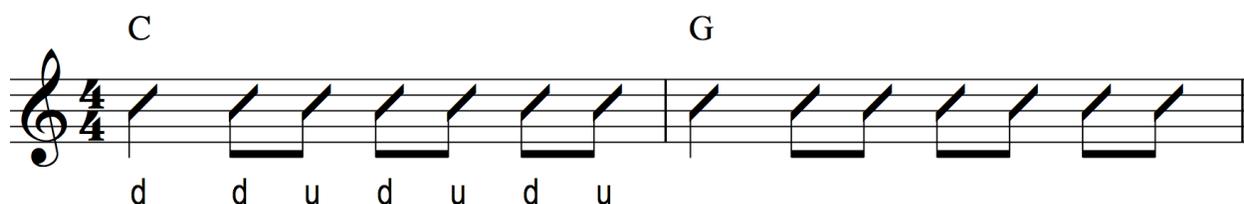
This strumming pattern goes a step further and adds another up strum in between the third and fourth beats. This is like the strumming pattern I used in my cover of [Somewhere Over the Rainbow](#). Check it out:



To add a different feel to these strumming patterns, you might **accent** certain beats. When you accent a beat, you strum a little bit harder, and consequently, strum the beats you aren't accenting a little softer.

For this third strumming pattern, I typically like to strum the second and fourth beat a little bit harder than the other beats. This gives the pattern a nice pulse and energy to it. **Experiment with these three strumming patterns and see what you come up with.** More often than not, there isn't a hard and fast right or wrong way to strum a song. All that matters is that you keep the timing steady and consistent.

Once you feel comfortable, add a chord change to practice this third strumming pattern:



The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time. The first measure is labeled with a 'C' chord above it and contains four strumming strokes. The second measure is labeled with a 'G' chord above it and also contains four strumming strokes. Below the staff, the rhythm is indicated by letters: 'd' for downstroke and 'u' for upstroke. The first measure has a downstroke on the first beat, followed by a pair of down and up strokes on the second beat, another pair on the third beat, and a final downstroke on the fourth beat. The second measure follows the same pattern: downstroke on the first beat, down and up strokes on the second, third, and fourth beats.



Take your strumming and rhythm on the ukulele to the next level. Join me in the *Strumming Tricks* online video lesson course teaching you these patterns and more as well as how to apply your skills to playing songs a variety of songs. [Learn more here.](#)

Play “I’ve Been Working On the Railroad”

I’ve Been Working On the Railroad is the very first song I ever learned how to play on ukulele, so I’m excited for you to learn it. It’s a classic, must-know song. My grandpa taught it to me, and ironically, he worked on the railroad.



If you’re not familiar with this song, [listen to me perform it here](#).

How to Learn a New Song on the Ukulele

Don’t be afraid to tackle a new song on the ukulele. You can do it! Whenever I learn a new song, the following things help me learn the song faster and more easily:

1. **Listen to the song.** For me, it’s easier to learn a song when I’ve heard it played over and over again. The goal is to get the song stuck in your mind, so you’re practically singing it in your sleep! Find the song online for digital download, or pull up the song by your favorite artist on YouTube. As you listen, try counting along to sense the rhythm (*tip: most songs are counted in four or three*).

2. **Study the song's chord chart.** You can find the chord charts for most songs online. A chord chart shows you the lyrics of the song with the chords written above the lyrics as an approximation of when you play that chord as you are singing the song. Always look over the chord chart and see what chords are used in the song. Without even playing, practice changing to and from these chords.
3. **Start with down strums.** Remember, that good ol' down strum pattern you first learned? When you have a good idea about what chords you're changing to and from, start to add some rhythm with just down strums. Try humming the melody of the song.

As you become more comfortable, add some up strums in between the down strums as it feels best to you. With most songs, there is not necessarily a right or wrong strumming pattern for the song. More often than not, you have to experiment and go with what feels right to you. Learning a song is a process, so be patient with yourself and don't give up. You can do it!

On the next page, learn how to play *I've Been Working On the Railroad*. For this song, I like to use strumming pattern #2 that you learned earlier. Work through this song and see how it goes.

If you run into any problems, remember, I can help. These strumming techniques are taught in detail with easy-to-follow, step-by-step video lessons in [Strumming Tricks](#).

I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE RAILROAD

TRADITIONAL
Arr. BRETT MCQUEEN

1
I've been work-in' on the rail - road All the live long day
C C7 F C
d d u d d u d d u d d u

5
I've been work-in' on the rail - road Just to pass the time a - way
C D7 G7

9
Don't you hear the whi - stle blow - in' Rise up so ear - ly in the morn
G7 C F E7

13
Don't you hear the cap - tain shout - ing Di - nah, blow your horn
F C D7 G7 C

Where Do I Go From Here?

First, let me congratulate you on working through this book!

If you've made it this far, you've made great strides in your ukulele playing and you should feel very proud of yourself. You're well on your way to making the music that inspires you. Let's keep going!

You've discovered how learning to play ukulele isn't a random process. It also isn't about having natural talent or about being a certain age.

Learning to play ukulele is about taking small easy steps, building your skills and confidence while *having fun*.

Why stop here?

You're only getting started and there's so much music to be made!

Can You Learn To Play Ukulele Online?

A lot of people wonder if you can truly learn to play ukulele with online lessons.

It's quite difficult to learn to play ukulele online if you're searching Google and YouTube for random ukulele lessons. While there's a lot of great free material (such as this lesson book!), what free lessons don't always take in account is your current skill level and the prerequisite steps required to play the music being covered.

There's nothing more discouraging than diving into the deep end of learning a song and not being able to follow along.

More than that, it's frustrating not knowing what steps to get to the point where you could play that song. The end result is frustration and discouragement.

Playing ukulele is about experiencing the joy of making music now, even if you're a beginner!

I'm a strong believer in the idea that a student learns fastest and has the most fun when there is an easy-to-follow, step-by-step roadmap.

Do you want to strum? Do you want to fingerpick melody? Do you want to play the blues?

You can do all these. As your teacher, let me do the heavy mental lifting of coming up with the right steps for you to follow to achieve those goals.

As a student, you should be focused on making music! Not inventing a curriculum and finding the right material that is in line with your current skill level and goals.

I've had the pleasure of teaching over 10,000 students how to play ukulele online with step-by-step, easy-to-follow video lesson courses.

You have all the steps you need to become a proficient ukulele player in various styles and techniques.

Check out what these students have to say about Ukulele Tricks online courses:

"Since age 6, I've tried to learn to play a musical instrument without success (first the piano, at age 16 the guitar, at age 30 the keyboard, at age 55 the banjo uke). At age 62, I bought a uke and began Brett's course. 1 1/2 years later, I've fulfilled my lifelong dream - I can play hundreds of songs!"

– **Dr. Linda S**



"I am a big believer in your lessons. I have friends who have just learned on their own from a mish mash of YouTube people. They don't have the fundamentals down and they get frustrated when they can't do a song. They try to start with stuff that is too hard at first. Your lessons have saved me from all of that frustration."

– **Jeff J.**

"Brett is a wonderful teacher who is very relaxed when he teaches and plays, which makes me relaxed when I play. He explains his lessons very well and the progression of his lesson plan makes total sense."

– **Gillett C.**



How to Learn Ukulele and Start Playing the Songs You Love In Less Than 30 Days... Even If You've Never Made Music Before In Your Life

Have you wanted to:

- Play and switch chords smoothly without hesitating or stopping
- Find the right strumming pattern for any song
- Sing and play at the same time without losing the rhythm
- Learn songs at your skill level to have fun and build confidence
- Fulfill your lifelong dream of playing an instrument

If you said “yes” to any of those and you’ve liked this book, then, the next step is to [join me in Strumming Tricks](#).



In *Strumming Tricks* you have step-by-step, easy-to-follow online video lessons at your fingertips teaching how to become a rock-steady strummer on ukulele being able to play the songs you love all while going at your own pace.

Learn to Fingerpick the Ukulele

Maybe you're beyond the basics and strumming just isn't your thing.

You dream of expressing yourself on the ukulele by fingerpicking intricate and beautiful melodies, patterns, and pieces. Rather than singing and strumming you prefer to pick the melody of the song.

If this is you, then, you'll love Fingerpicking Tricks—a complete step-by-step beginner to intermediate online video lesson course teaching you how to fingerpick the ukulele in multiple styles, including: pattern-based picking, arpeggio-based picking, melodic-based picking, and chord melody picking.

Learn how to play over twenty fingerpicking and fingerstyle songs and pieces—everything from the classics to Beethoven, Bach, Aguado, Tárrega, and more

[Join Fingerpicking Tricks today.](#)

Challenge Yourself with Ukulele Exercises

For those of you who are looking for more advanced material, exercises and concepts, I recommend my practice-based, physical book *Ukulele Exercises For Dummies* – now available in bookstores worldwide and online.

[Grab your copy on Amazon here.](#)

Join a Local Ukulele Club

I am here to help as you learn how to play the ukulele but one of the best ways to learn is to find friends that play the ukulele. Now, more than ever, there are ukulele clubs and groups popping up all around the world. See if there is a ukulele club in your local community, and if there isn't one yet, I encourage you to start your own!

By making music with other people, you end up learning all sorts of new things and are challenged in your abilities. I find when I play music with friends I'm constantly learning new things about myself as a musician and the instrument I'm playing (in this case, the ukulele!).

Keep in mind, you don't have to be a pro to join a ukulele club or to have a jam session with your friends. Because we are all different and come from unique backgrounds, we each have the ability to teach someone and encourage them in their pursuit of music.

Further Resources

1.) [Strumming Tricks](#)

<https://ukuleletricks.com/strumming-tricks/>

Perfect for beginners. Become proficient in strumming, rhythm and chord changes on the ukulele, improving your skills while learning actual songs.

2.) [Fingerpicking Tricks](#)

<https://ukuleletricks.com/fingerpicking-tricks/>

For those that desire to fingerpick the ukulele beautifully and expressively. This step-by-step online video lesson courses teaches you everything from technique, arpeggios, chord melody and more.

3.) [Ukulele Chord Library](#)

<https://ukuleletricks.com/ukulele-chords/>

Finger positions for over hundreds of chords in several different variations all across the fretboard.

4.) [Online Ukulele Tuner \(Desktop Only\)](#)

<https://ukuleletricks.com/ukulele-tuner/>

Easy-to-use online ukulele tuner to tune your ukulele by ear in standard tuning and several other tunings.

5.) [Ukulele Song Library](#)

<https://ukuleletricks.com/ukulele-songs/>

My favorite songs with chords and lyrics, often times with videos showing you how to play the song.

Final Thoughts

How are things going for you? Any part of this lesson book got you stumped? I would love to hear your questions and comments.

There are a couple ways we can connect. First, I'm most active on email, so feel free to hit reply to any of my emails. I read every reply and try my best to answer any question.

You might be excited to learn I'm almost to the 100,000 subscriber goal on YouTube, so I invite you to subscribe to the [Ukulele Tricks Channel](#). Be sure to "Like" [Ukulele Tricks on Facebook](#) too. You can also find me on Instagram [@ukuleletricks](#).

I would love to hear how it's going for you, and if there is a way I can help you out, it would be my pleasure to be able to do that.

I hope you've found this lesson book to get you started into the world of playing ukulele. It may feel daunting at first, but I'm telling you, the time and work you put in now pays off in dividends of joy.

Strum on!

Brett McQueen

<https://ukuleletricks.com>