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Five Things to Know

1 How the Ukulele Is Tuned

From the string nearest your head to the string nearest the ground it goes: GCEA (there are other tunings, but this is by far the most common, so don't worry your pretty little head about those for now). Unlike most instruments, the string nearest your head is pitched higher than the next two strings. You can hear the notes here: fleamarketmusic.com/e-tuner/

2 How to Read Chord Charts

ukulele.me/presents/readchords

3 How to Make Your Ukulele Sound Good

Definitely worth getting into good habits right from the start:

ukulele.me/presents/goodtone

4 The History of the Ukulele

John King is the patron saint of ukulele history. This is an excellent article on the early history of the uke:

ukulele.me/presents/history

5 These 10 Tips for Beginners

ukulele.me/presents/tentips

Five Chords to Learn

1C



Ring finger on the third fret of the A string.

2F



Middle finger on the G string at the second fret. Index, E string first fret.

3G7



Middle finger: C string, second fret. Index (pointer) finger: E string, first fret. Ring finger: A string, second fret.

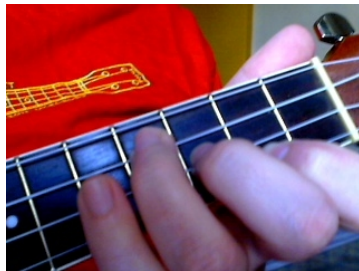
So You've Just Got Your First Ukulele

4 Am (A minor)



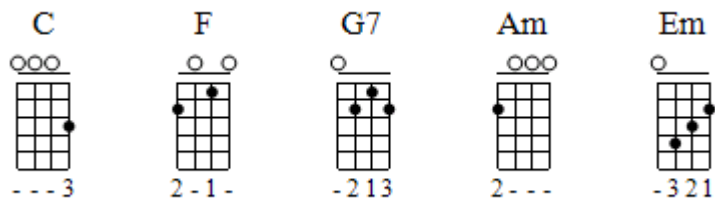
Middle finger: G string, second fret.

5 Em (E minor)



Ring finger: C string, fourth fret. Middle finger: E string, third fret. Index finger: A string, second fret.

This is how the chords look in diagram form:



Five Songs to Play

1 Somewhere Over the Rainbow

When Israel Kamakawiwo'ole covered this song it became an instant ukulele classic. Jason Castro played a nice, simple version of the song on American Idol: ukulele.me/likes/Rainbow

2 Five Years Time

The ukulele hit of 2008 by Noah and the Whale. It only has three chords - C, F and G - so it's ideal for beginners: ukulele.me/likes/fiveyears

3 Hallelujah

Originally by Leonard Cohen but the definitive version was recorded by Jeff Buckley. Beirut regularly play this live on the ukulele:

ukulele.me/likes/hallelujah

4 Blitzkrieg Bop

Three chord classic from the Ramones. Make sure you start by shouting, "1,2,3,4" at an entirely unrelated tempo: ukulele.me/likes/bop

5 Foundations

Get your fake cockerny accent for this Kate Nash song:

ukulele.me/likes/nash

Five Websites to Visit

1 Ukulele Hunt

That would be my website and probably the place you got this. To make sure you don't miss anything, you can get email updates by entering your address in the sign up form in the top right hand side of most of the pages: ukulelehunt.com

2 Top 50 Ukulele Sites

Including this one on the list is cheating; a bit like being granted 3 wishes and saying, "I wish for a million wishes." There are loads of websites here that you have to check out. The best place to start finding out what's available on the net: boatpaddleukuleles.com/top50/

3 Sheep Entertainment Chordfinder

A handy website for showing you any chord you want to play. Make sure you click 'soprano-C' on the right hand side first if you're playing in standard tuning: ukulele.me/likes/chordshapes

4 Le Soir Ukulele Sessions

Ukulele songs from well known acts (such as Yael Naim and Jolie Holland) with less well known, but equally good acts: ukulele.me/likes/lesoir

5 Chordie

If you can't find the chords for a song written up for ukulele, Chordie has loads of chords and can be adjusted for uke. It's aimed at guitar so it's not always ideal or accurate, but it's better than nothing: chordie.com

Five Things to Get Free

1 AP Tuner

Nothing is going to ruin your ukulele playing more than being out of tune. With AP Tuner you can play the uke into a mic and it will tell you when it's in tune. For standard tuning, you're looking for G4,C4,E4,A4. aptuner.com

2 Chordette

A set of fonts in the shape of chord diagrams. Very handy for putting chord shapes in your documents: ukulele.me/recommends/chordette For more uke fonts check out: ukulele.me/recommends/ukeyfonts

3 Audacity

Free sound recording software. The quickest way to get better is record yourself as often as possible and catch what mistakes you're making: audacity.sourceforge.net/

4 Power Tab

Write your own ukulele tabs. The [website itself](http://website.itself) is very confusing. You can download it directly here: ukulele.me/recommends/powertab

5 Ukulele MP3s

I get most of my (legal) MP3s from eMusic - it's a great service. Even if you've no intention of subscribing, you can [get 25 MP3s for free](#). They have a ton of great uke tracks from Jake Shimbukuro to Beirut. I've put together a list here: ukulele.me/recommends/emusicukes

Five Things to Buy

1 Intelli Tuner

If you're going to be playing the uke out and about, you'll need a tuner. These clip on to the end of the uke and can tell whether you're in tune no matter how much noisy it is: ukulele.me/recommends/intelli

2 Strings

If you've got a cheap ukulele, the chances are the strings that came with it are poor. Putting better quality strings such as Aquila will improve the sound: ukulele.me/recommends/AquilaStrings

3 Ukulele 101

I was a little annoyed that all the beginner ukulele books left out so much stuff that beginner uke players need to know. So I gathered 101 questions, answered them, and released an ebook: ukulele.me/recommends/ukeone

4 Mandolin Capo

A capo straps across the ukulele neck - it's like having an extra finger. Makes it easy to play in different keys. You can get ukulele capos, but mandolin capos are the right size and higher quality: ukulele.me/recommends/capo

5 Ukulele Tags and Cards

The coolest tags to hang off your uke case. Make sure you check out the other items for sale at the Jumping Flea Market: ukulele.me/recommends/uketags

Five Videos to Watch

1 Jake Shimabukuro - While My Guitar Gently Weeps

The most popular ukulele video on YouTube. It's a masterclass in arranging a song for instrumental ukulele.

ukulele.me/likes/jake

2 James Hill - Down Rideau Canal

James Hill is absolutely the best ukulele in the world right now.

ukulele.me/likes/james

3 Roy Smeck - His Pastimes

The Wizard of the strings. A legend on the ukulele and many other stringed instruments.

ukulele.me/likes/roy

4 Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain - Wuthering Heights

The original ukulele orchestra and still the best.

ukulele.me/likes/uogb

5 Bobby McGees - A Dog At All Things

Like Dostoevsky doing skiffle.

ukulele.me/likes/bobby

Five YouTube Channels To Subscribe To

1 GUGUG

Ukulele punk riot.

youtube.com/user/GUGUG

2 heftone

Brian Hefferan's arrangements of tunes for ukulele are a big inspiration to me. And his playing is incredibly fluid.

youtube.com/user/heftone

3 ukebucket

Original songs from Amber Nash.

youtube.com/user/ukebucket

4 howlinhobbit

Hot jazz and hokum from the ukulele style guru and his band Snake Suspenderz.

youtube.com/user/howlinhobbit

5 rikilind

Actors Kate Micucci (Four Kings, Malcolm in the Middle) and Riki Lindhome (Life is Short, Gilmore Girls) team up for duets. And don't miss [Kate Micucci's Dear Deer](#).

youtube.com/user/rikilind

So You've Just Got Your First Ukulele

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