10 Free 2 Chord Songs

Rebecca Bogart & Jenny Peters



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Welcome

Welcome to 10 Free 2 Chord Songs! We're glad you're here.

Please feel free to share this document with friends and fellow ukulele players. They can download their own copy by visiting https://ukulele.io/10-free-2-chord-songs/. Along with 10 Free Two Chord Songs, they'll get free sheet music + a new video lesson every week.

We've put together this short document to give you lots of practice applying what you've learned so far in *The Ukule-le Beginners' Handbook*. And you'll learn some new skills too. We'll be showing you some more difficult strumming patterns you can practice while getting more experience with the F and C7 chords.

In this PDF, we'll also be teaching you how to read ukulele tablature ("tab") and play melodies on your ukulele. Why play melodies? Many people don't like to sing, so playing the melody is a great alternative. Also, you can play the melody instead of singing as a way to create musical variety in your rendition of a song. For example, if you have a friend to play with, you could:

- 1. Sing and strum one or two verses.
- 2. Have one person play the melody while the other strums the chords.
- 3. Sing and strum another verse and/or chorus to round out the song.

If you haven't yet read The Ukulele Beginners' Handbook, you can download a copy at <u>ukulele.io/freeEbook</u>. Here's what you'll learn In this short ebook:

- 3 basic strums that are the building blocks of all ukulele strumming patterns.
- How to play the 3 easiest ukulele chords and read their chord symbols.
- How to change chords smoothly with your left hand while keeping your right hand strum going.

You'll also get detailed instructions on how and what to practice. We'll break each new skill down into small pieces that are easy to master, and you'll get lots of troubleshooting tips.

Some Notes on Strumming

Words in **bold italics** are defined in the Glossary at the end of this PDF.

Here are the three basic strumming patterns we will refer to in this book.

Strum #1 All down strums on a steady beat



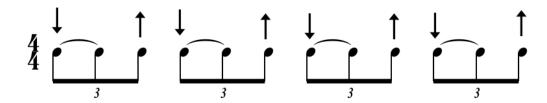
Strum #2 Down-up strums with an even division of the beat. All the strums are equally spaced.



Strum #3 Down-up strums with an uneven division of the beat. Wait a little longer after each down strum before you play the next up strum.



Here's music notation showing the rhythm of Strum #3.



Use the fingernails of your right hand for the down strum and the thumbnail of your right hand for the up strum. Some people also use the pads of their fingers. Do downward strums with the middle three fingers of your right hand. Adjust the angle of your strumming hand so that your fingernails rest gently on String 4, the string closest to the ceiling. Now turn your forearm as if you were rattling a doorknob and allow your fingernails to gently brush down all four strings toward the floor. You may have to experiment to refine your hand shape and the amount of pressure on the strings. Listen to be sure that you are strumming all four strings.

Just in case you were wondering, most uke players do not use a pick because it can break the ukulele's strings. There are felt picks available which will not harm your ukulele's strings.

You should strum across the bottom of the fretboard on the main body of the instrument, NOT where the strings cross over the sound hole in the middle of on the instrument. The drawing on the next page shows where your right hand should strum.

Learning these patterns takes time. If your fingers get sore, don't worry. It can take a while to build up thicker skin. We'll suggest some more complicated strumming patterns in the section called "Four Songs with a New Strumming Pattern" that are derived from these three basic patterns.

How to Practice Combining Singing and Strumming

While we covered this topic in *The Ukulele Beginners' Handbook,* we thought repeating the information here would be helpful. Learning how to practice well is an art. The better you are at practicing the faster you can learn new skills and songs.

When you are learning a new song, the first thing to do is make sure that you can sing the song all the way through, and that you can also strum the song all the way through. Can you strum the whole song in time with the video? Can you sing the whole song in time with the video? If not, practice each of these skills separately until they are easy.

It's easiest for most folks to practice these skills along with someone else. Jenny's videos at <u>ukulele.io</u> are great practice aid. Or maybe you can find a friend to practice with.

Here are some learning suggestions:

• First, be sure you can strum in time with the videos.

- Then learn to sing the song without playing. Listen and hum along with the video to learn the melody. Then try singing along with the video while you look at this book as necessary to read the words. If that is too hard at first, try just chanting the words in rhythm, then add singing the words to the melody you have learned.
- When you can easily sing the song, try clapping along as you sing the song, using the rhythm of the strum you will use. Doing the clapping movement with your hands will prime your brain to coordinate the strumming hand movements with singing.
- Now we're going to gradually integrate singing with playing. Try humming the tune along with the video while holding the C chord with your left hand. Next, try humming and strumming the C chord. You can always start with an easier strum, say Strum #1, and then switch to a harder strum like Strum #3 later.
 - Finally, change from humming the tune to singing the words while you strum the chords. If things still fall apart, there are several things to try.
 - Go back and be sure to repeat each step until it is easy, not just barely possible.
- Next, focus in on only one line of the song at a time. For example, sing and strum the first line as many times as you need to until it feels easy, or at least improved. Then move on to the next line. Continue until you can perform each line of the song easily.
- Then try singing and strumming the first two lines of the song in a row. You will probably make errors that did not occur when you did each of the lines alone; this is normal. Go back and review each of the lines separately a few times, and then try repeating the two lines in sequence. After several journeys through the lines, both separately and joined in sequence, you should be able to combine the first two lines in sequence at a reasonable accuracy level.
- Next, for songs with three lines, review the third line, as its coordination has probably faded from your short-term memory. Now try performing all three lines in the correct sequence. Again, new mistakes or confusion will most likely surface. Go back and review any trouble spots, and then try combining all three lines again. Repeat as needed.

If you are very new to singing or to using your hands to make music, you may find that it takes your brain a while to create the new neural pathways needed to sing and play. Spend as many days as necessary on this step, because it is crucial to playing ukulele.

How to Read Tab Notation

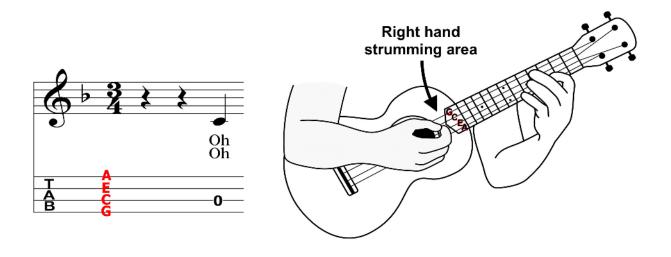
Lines of the Tab Staff

Each line of the tab staff represents a string on the ukulele. The sounds that are higher in *pitch* are closer to the top of the page just as they are on the standard music *staff*. However, the unfortunate result is that standard tab notation places the lines upside down from how they are arranged on the ukulele.

So:

- The top line of the tab staff is the A-string (the string closest to the floor when you're playing).
- The line below that is the E-string.
- The line below that is the C-string.

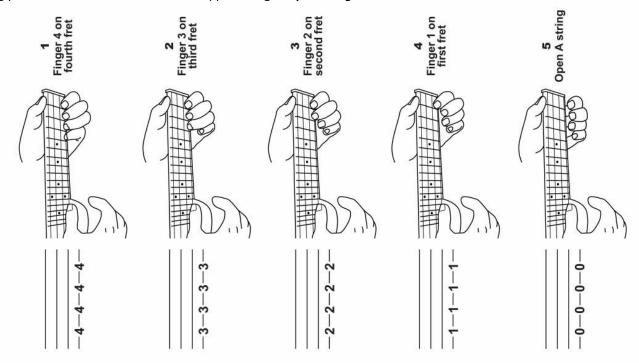
The bottom line of the tab is the G-string, which is the string closest to the ceiling when you are playing.



Numbers on the Tab Staff

The numbers on the lines of the tab staff tell you which fret to **stop** with a left hand finger. **Stopping** (also called **fretting**) a string means to use a left hand finger and push down firmly so that the string contacts the fret. Your finger goes between the frets, not on a fret.

For example, a 5 means to put one of your left hand fingers in the fifth fret, and push down on the string as you pluck it with your right hand. A 7 means to stop the string in the 7th fret and pluck it with your right hand. A 4 means to stop the string in the fourth fret and pluck it with your right hand. A 0 means to pluck a string with your right hand without using your left hand at all. We call an unstopped string an *open string*.



The previous image shows a person fretting the A string. Usually we use finger 1 on the first fret, finger 2 on the second fret, finger 3 on the third fret, and finger 4 on the fourth fret. Having your fingers in this arrangement is referred to as *first position*.

For practice reading tab, try playing the sounds shown in the parts of the image. Reading from right to left:

- 1. Start with finger 4 in the fourth fret and pluck the A string 4 times.
- 2. Then use finger 3 in the third fret and pluck the A string 4 times.
- 3. Next use finger 2 in the second fret and pluck the A string 4 times.
- 4. Next use finger 1 in the first fret and pluck the A string 4 times.
- 5. Finally, pluck the open A string 4 times.

Playing the C Major Scale in Tab Notation

We recommend practicing the C major scale while reading the tab notation as the next step to getting comfortable with reading and playing tab. It will help your brain link the look of the tab staff to the muscular patterns needed to play certain notes. Since most melodies are made from fragments of scales, learning this eye-hand coordination will make it a lot easier for you to read tab melodies.

C Major Scale

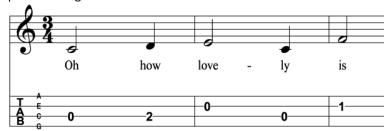




Putting it Together: Reading a Melody in Tab

Here's an excerpt from our first song, *Lovely Evening*. To read the tab, first look at which string line the number is on. Then use your left hand to stop that string in the fret that matches the number shown. Remember that 0 means an open string. We've labeled the lines to make it easier to see which line goes with which string.

- For the first note, don't do anything with your left hand and pluck the C-string with your right hand.
- For the second, stop the C-string in the second fret.



- For the third note, don't do anything with your left hand and pluck the E-string with your right hand.
- For the fourth note, don't do anything with your left hand and pluck the C-string with your right hand.
- For the fifth note, stop the E-string in the first fret.

Special Lesson Video Format for Tab Melodies

We've made lesson videos for each song in this PDF. You can <u>access them here</u>. Many have a special onscreen format to help you learn tab. As you watch the video lessons, you'll hear the way the music should sound. You'll also see lots of visual cues to help you link how the tab looks with how the music sounds.



Arrow #1 in the following screenshot points to the tab symbol that corresponds to the note you are hearing. In this example it is a 3 circled in red in the video lesson.

You'll see Jenny fretting and plucking the string in the main frame of the video. Arrow #2 points at Jenny's finger fretting the string in the third fret.

Arrow #3 points at a dot on the fretboard at the right of the screen. The dot is supposed to represent your finger. It's also supposed to help you see which

string and fret go with the tab symbol.

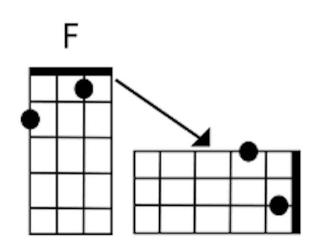
If you think Jenny's ukulele in the lesson videos sounds different from yours, it's not your imagination! She is playing a tenor ukulele in the videos, so her G-string is one octave lower than the soprano ukulele that most folks play. Tab staff

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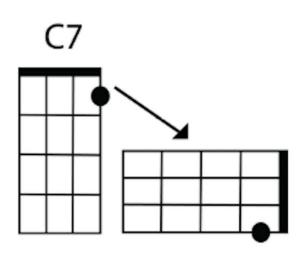
doesn't show the tenor ukulele's low G because there's no room for it, but as you train your musical ear you'll be able to hear the difference.

Three Songs with Strum #1

All ten songs in this PDF are in the *key* of F Major. You'll need two chords you've already learned in *The Ukulele Beginners' Handbook*.









Our first three songs use **Strum #1**, all down strums on a steady beat



Another way to show down strums is with the following symbol:



Up to now, all of our songs have had four beats in each measure. Most rock, rap and pop songs have four *beats* to a *measure*. Musicians call this time signature *quadruple meter*, or just 'simple' or 'common' time.

In this chapter we will introduce a new *time signature* which uses a pattern of three **beats** per **measure**. We call this kind of rhythmic organization *triple meter*. The second and third songs in this chapter are in triple meter. Since close to 95 percent of the music we hear is in quadruple meter, expect triple meter to feel different and take a while to learn. We are starting with a well-known song with easy chords to help you get used to triple meter.

Shoo! Fly! Don't Bother Me was popular in the 1860s during the American Civil War. People would call out "shoo!" and "fly!" to unwanted animals to drive them away.

Lovely Evening is a German folk song. It's usually sung as a **round**. Bing Crosby recorded the song in a medley on his 1961 album 101 Gang Songs. The music sounds very calm because there are only two chords. There's also a feeling of gentle swaying created by the use of three beats per **measure**.

Oh Christmas Tree originated in Germany as the folk song, "O Tannenbaum," which is German for fir tree. Although the melody dates back to the sixteenth century, the lyrics weren't written until the early 1800s. German composer Ernst Anschütz wrote the first version of the song in 1819 as a lament about a faithless lover, unflatteringly comparing her with the constant green of the fir tree. In 1824 he converted the song to a Christmas carol, around the time that Christmas trees were becoming a popular custom in Germany. The song eventually found its way to the United States, where its melody became a state song, "Maryland, My Maryland," in 1861. Although only the English translation of "O Tannenbaum" specifically mentions Christmas, the song is sung during the holiday season on both sides of the Atlantic.

To access the videos that go with this PDF, please visit <u>ukulele.io/10-2-songs</u>. If you have any questions or problems accessing the page, let us know so we can help you! Send us a message at <u>ukulele.io/contact-us</u>.

Shoo, Fly Don't Bother Me

Shoo Fly in F with Strumming



Lovely Evening

Strumming Pattern:



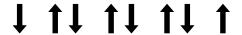
Oh Christmas Tree

Oh Christmas Tree

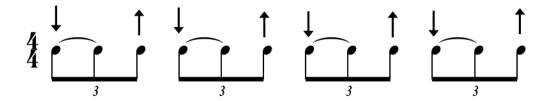


Two Songs using Strum #3

Here are two songs to help you practice Strum #3: down-up strums with an uneven division of the beat. Wait a little longer after each down strum before you play the next up strum.



The rhythm of Strum #3 sounds like the nursery rhyme "Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water". Here's music notation showing the rhythm of Strum #3.



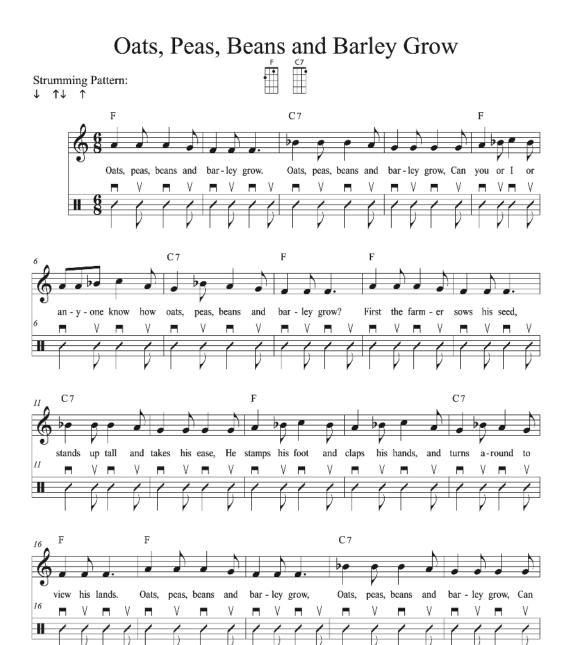
If you have trouble getting the hang of Strum #3, practice these songs with Strum #1 first. Once you can keep the melody and chord changes going with Strum #1, then you can switch to Strum #3.

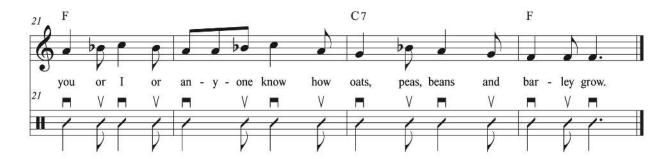
Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley Grow is a traditional American and British folk song. The melody dates back to 1790.

I Saw Three Ships Is a folk carol that originated in England, probably in the fifteenth century. Very little is known about its origin. It may be based on an obscure German legend from 1162, when three ships are said to have sailed into Cologne bearing relics from the journey of the Three Wise Men at the time of the birth of Christ. The song itself doesn't mention the Wise Men, though – the three ships refer to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Although a song about ships seems a bit odd for an event that occurred in Bethlehem in the Middle East, the melody is likable and easy to play on the ukulele.

To access the videos that go with this PDF, please visit <u>ukulele.io/10-2-songs</u>. If you have any questions or problems accessing the page, let us know so we can help you! Send us a message at <u>ukulele.io/contact-us</u>.

Oats, Peas, Beans and Barley Grow





I Saw Three Ships

0



1-

-3-





Five Songs with a New Strumming Pattern

In the first chapter, "Three Songs with Strum #1" you learned two songs in triple meter using all down strums, *Lovely Evening* and *Oh Christmas Tree*. In this chapter you'll learn four songs in triple meter but with this strumming pattern:



When you are first learning each song, use all down strums, three per measure (D, D, D). When you know the words and the melody reasonably well, you can try adding the up strum on beat two of each measure (D, DU, D). We've also included *Oh Christmas Tree* for a second time, but this time using the strumming pattern shown above.

Our final song is Li'l Liza Jane. It has two beats per measure and uses this strumming pattern:



Again, if you have any trouble with the strumming pattern, learn the words, melody and when to change chords first using all down strums. Once you're comfortable with the tune, lyrics and chord changes you can add the up strum on the second beat.

Clementine is an American western folk ballad from the late 19th century. Members of the Western Writers of America chose it as one of the Top 100 Western songs of all time.

Down in the Valley is a country-blues folk song recorded by many artists, including Burl Ives, Jerry Garcia, and Bing Crosby. It's performed in the Academy Award winning film Bound for Glory about the life of Woody Guthrie.

The Streets of Laredo is another western folk ballad, also voted as one of the Top 100 Western songs of all time. It was first published by John Lomax in 1910. It is related to an Irish song from the late 18th century called *The Unfortunate Rake*.

Goodbye, Old Paint rounds out our collection of western folk songs. It was written by an African-American cowboy who rode the Wyoming trail in the late 1800s, Charley Willis. He was a former slave who was in demand on cattle drives because his voice was calming to the herds.

Lil' Liza Jane is a song dating back to the beginning of the 20th century. It's become a standard, not only in New Orleans Jazz, but also in folk music, bluegrass, and rock and roll. It is one of the most recognized songs in the world, which makes for a perfect sing-along.

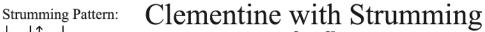
To access the videos that go with this PDF, please visit <u>ukulele.io/10-2-songs</u>. If you have any questions or problems accessing the page, let us know so we can help you! Send us a message at <u>ukulele.io/contact-us.</u>

Clementine



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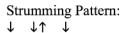
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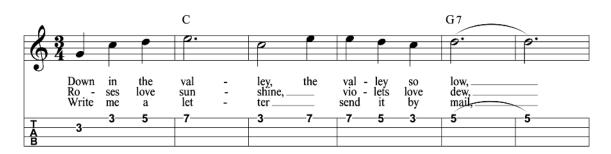


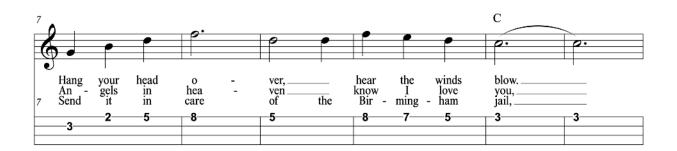
Down in the Valley

Down in the Valley

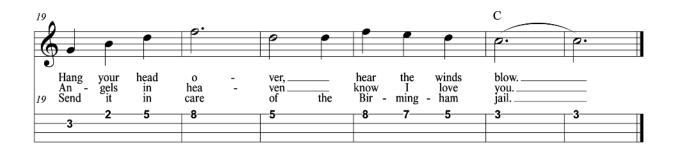












Down in the Valley with Strumming



The Streets of Laredo



young

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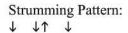
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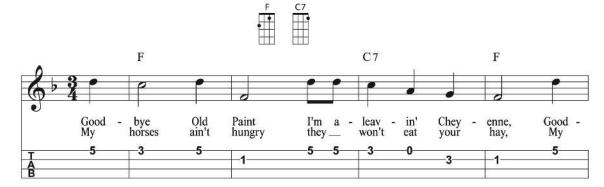
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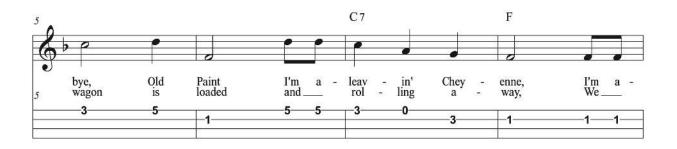


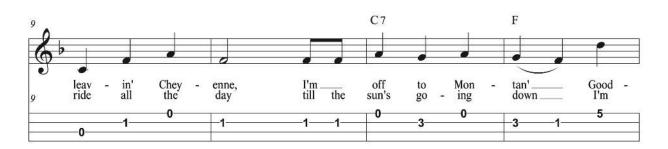
Goodbye, Old Paint

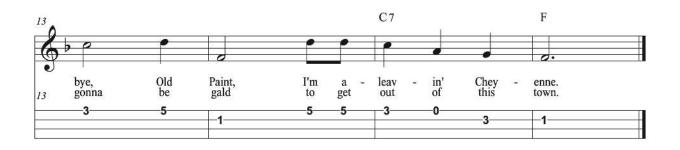


Goodbye, Old Paint









Goodbye, Old Paint with Strumming



Oh Christmas Tree with New Strumming Pattern

Oh Christmas Tree with Strumming



Li'l Liza Jane



Lil' Liza Jane with Strumming



Conclusion

We hope you have enjoyed learning these two chord songs. You're off to a great start! Now that you know how to play two easy chords, several strumming patterns, how to practice, how to read tab, and how to sing and strum at the same time, you can tackle harder songs. What makes a song more difficult?

- New chord shapes
- More and faster chord changes
- Fingerpicking accompaniments
- New rhythmic patterns

If you've enjoyed this PDF, we'd like to invite you to check out the other ukulele resources we offer.

Free Resources

There are lots of free resources to learn more ukulele songs. When you entered your email to download this PDF, you were automatically signed up for our email list. Every Monday, we'll send you a new video lesson & downloadable sheet music via email – all free :) Some of the songs will be at a level that you can tackle right now, while others will be more difficult than the material in this PDF.

If you got this PDF from a friend, please feel free to join our email list for free lessons every Monday! You can sign up at <u>uku-lele.io/get-free-ukulele-sheet-music/</u>.

Another great way to move along with ukulele is to join a ukulele club. Talking (and maybe even playing!) with fellow strummers may help you feel more encouraged about your learning process. Plus, it's fun.

There are lots and lots of tutorials on Youtube. You can visit our channel at <u>youtube.com/c/Ukuleleio.</u> We have playlists for two- and three- chord songs.

The Beginning Ukulele Songs Series

If you found the material in *The Ukulele Beginners' Handbook* took some work to master, then you might enjoy working through Book 1 of the Beginning Ukulele Songs series, *21 Songs in 6 Day: Learn Ukulele the Easy Way.* You'll learn more one chord songs that use the C Major, A Minor and F Major chords. You'll also learn the G7 chord which is a three finger chord and can be substantially more difficult than the one- and two-finger chords you've learned so far. We have a detailed, step-by-step way of teaching this chord that works really well for many people. By the end of the book you will be playing five chord songs.

If you found the material in this book really easy, then you can probably dive right in to Book 2 of the series, *Easy Ukulele Songs: Five with Five Chords*.

Here's all the details on our other books. Each one will walk you through everything you need to know to continue sounding better and better. Each is available in both paper and eBook versions and comes with its own companion video course at ukule-le.io.

We pick songs and carefully put them in an order that will help you build up gradually to more difficult skills. With our approach you'll continue to improve your playing without getting frustrated or developing bad habits. And each comes with its own companion video course at <u>ukulele.io</u>.

Book 1: 21 Songs in 6 Days: Learn Ukulele the Easy Way

Learn the five easiest ukulele chords (C, a, F, C7, and G7) and three basic strums. Learn to change chords while keeping a steady strum going. By the end of the book you'll be playing five chord songs.

Book 2: Easy Ukulele Songs: Five with Five Chords

Hone your ability to change chords by playing five favorite five chord songs. Learn four more easy chords. Also get more practice with harder tab melodies and an introduction to the blues and blues improvisation in the key of C. Comes with 10 lesson videos to help you learn the songs.

Book 3: 21 Easy Ukulele Songs for Christmas

21 seasonal favorites arranged in order of difficulty. After learning one new chord (D minor), you'll be able to play every song in the book with the chords you learned in Book 2 of the series. Get more practice reading tab melodies and using a variety of strumming patterns. There is a lesson video for every song in the book. Great for caroling or playing duets with fellow uke lovers.

Book 4: 21 MORE Easy Ukulele Songs: Learn Intermediate Ukulele the Easy Way

Learn the most important intermediate ukulele chords. If you've been working your way through the Beginning Ukulele Songs series, you'll learn five new chords, including the including the dreaded B flat chord: D, E minor, B flat, G minor, and C major 7.

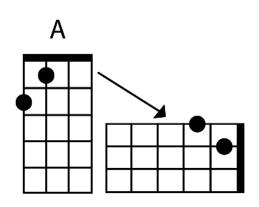
You'll get more practice fingerpicking melodies and learn how to fingerpick accompaniments too. We'll introduce new fancier strumming patterns, songs in minor mode, and songs with three beats per measure. And get more practice with the blues by playing more difficult blues songs in a variety of keys.

All songs include a lesson video, both a standard music staff and tab notation, and several strumming patterns.

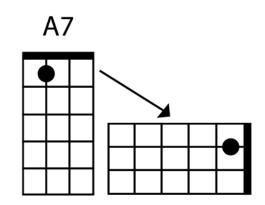
Book 5: 21 Easy Ukulele Folk Songs

Learn 21 classic folk songs arranged in order of difficulty. The book begins with easy 2 chord songs and progresses to 7 chord songs in the key of G major. Lots of practice fingerpicking melodies and accompaniments and some great ukulele solo (chord melody) arrangements. As always, every song in the book has a lesson video, both standard music staff and tab notation and several strumming pattern suggestions. Includes favorites such as *Happy Birthday*, *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*, and *Shenandoah*.

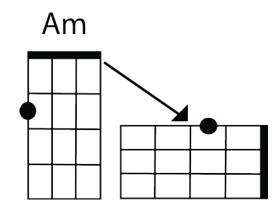
Chord Glossary



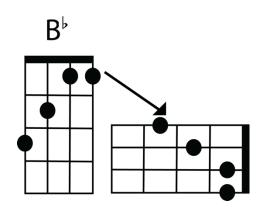




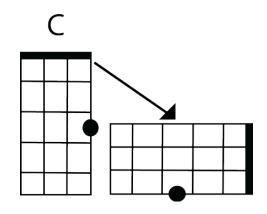




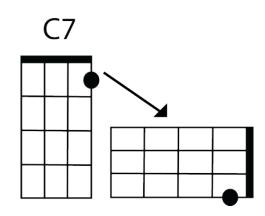




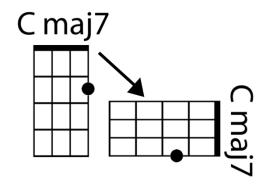




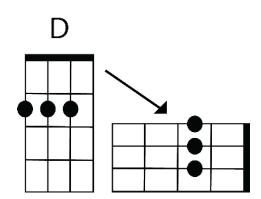




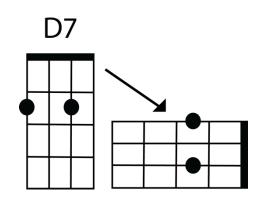




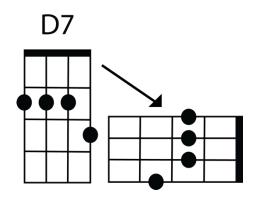




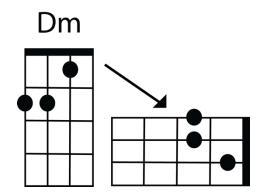




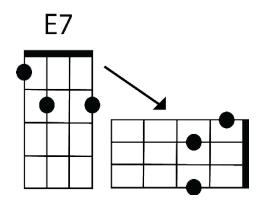




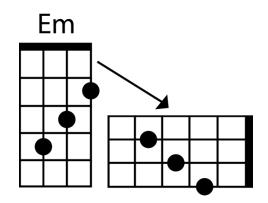




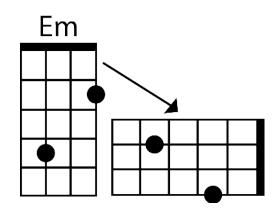




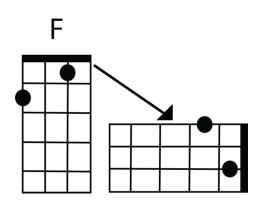




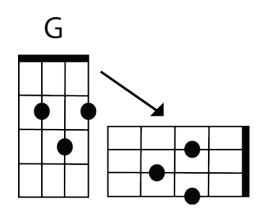




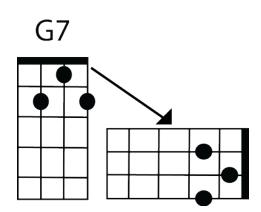




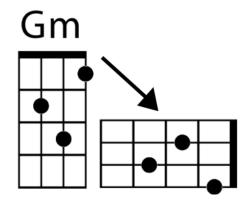














Glossary

Accidental - a flat, sharp or natural.

Bar - same as a *measure*. A measure is the space on a musical staff between two bar lines. Every measure begins with a strong beat.

Bar lines - the vertical lines on the musical and tab staffs that go from the top line of the staff to the bottom line of the staff. Bar lines are longer than note stems and do not touch any notes.

Barre or bar - using one or more fingers to stop multiple strings on the fretboard. Usually this is done with the index finger.

Barre chord - a chord that contains a barre.

Beat - regularly timed sounds that occur the same distance apart in time in a row. Examples of sounds with a beat are the sound your heart makes, i.e. a heartbeat, or the sound of someone dribbling a basketball.

Blue notes - a note or group of notes that are different than the notes used in Western folk music. Usually in the blues we play the different note near its next door note so our ears can imagine the note that belongs in the African scale. In staff notation, a blue note will have a flat, sharp or natural in front of it.

Blues scale - a group of musical sounds that are spaced in the specific way that is used in blues music. The blues scale probably came with African people to the United States. For the blues songs in this book we are playing in the key of C, which is the same as all the white keys on the piano. When we add a black key to the white key scale, the music sounds different. The black key, for example, E flat, added in on top of the white key, such as E, gives the music a bluesy feel. The added black key notes are an attempt to approximate African scales. Western folk music tends to use 8 notes per octave, while African folk music tends to use 5 notes equally spaced per octave. Some of these African scale notes do not exist in Western musical instruments. For example, if you look at a piano keyboard, you can see that there ARE five black keys but the spaces between them are not equal. Thus, when you sing or play a flat note and somebody else is playing a regular note, your ear hears the sound the flat note and the regular note make together as bluesy.

Bridge – transitional music that connects two different parts of a song, such as the verse and the chorus.

Braguinha - a Portuguese fretted string instrument, like a small guitar, that was an ancestor of the ukulele.

Broken chord - a chord played one pitch at a time. On the ukulele one plays a broken chord by plucking one string at a time rather than strumming all the strings together.

Cavaquinho - another Portuguese fretted string instrument like the braguinha.

Chord – two or more pitches played at the same time. On the ukulele, chords are usually four pitches played together because the instrument has four strings.

Chord progression - order of chords in a song.

Chord stamp - a symbol or drawing of the ukulele strings with little dots that represent where to place your fingers on the fretboard to make the chord.

Clef - A clef is a musical symbol used to indicate the pitch of the notes written on the staff. It is always shown at the beginning of each line or stave of music. See also *treble clef*.

Etude - a piece of music that is designed to help you learn and practice a new musical skill. In French, etude means study so etudes are sometimes called studies.

Finger numbers - these are applied to the left hand. Finger 1 is the index or "pointer" finger; finger 2 is the middle finger; finger 3 is the ring finger; and finger 4 is the pinky. For playing ukulele, we do not count the thumb because it is behind the neck of the ukulele and not available to stop a string (see "stopping").

Fingerpick (fingerstyle) – means to pluck the ukulele strings with the fingertips or fingernails as opposed to strumming them.

First position - means your finger 1 (index finger) is in the first fret, the one closest to the tuning pegs.

Flat - a musical symbol placed in front of musical note. It means to lower the sound slightly, by the amount that musicians call a "half step." When you look at a blues scale, you can see a little sign that looks like a small letter "b" next to some of the notes. That sign is called is a flat and it lowers the pitch of the note by one-half step.

Fretboard - the long skinny part of the ukulele with metal strips in it. It is usually made of a different color wood than the larger curvy part of the instrument.

Fretting - pushing the strings against the fretboard with the fingers of your left hand so each note you play sounds clear. "Fretting" means the same thing as "stopping."

Frets - strips of metal that run across the short dimension of the long skinny fretboard. When you push down a string with your finger in between the frets, the string is held very tightly against the fret.

Guitar - a large fretted string instrument. It usually has six or more strings in comparison to the ukulele's four strings.

Improvisation - Musical improvisation means to make up music as you are playing.

Key - short for "key signature," which is a group of flats or sharps at the beginning of each line of written music. The key signature matches up to a specific group of sounds that sound good together. These sounds have precise relationships with one another, and a name: "scale." Usually the name of the key is the same as the name of the chord that starts or ends the song. In most folk and pop music the starting and ending chords are the same.

Lead sheet - a way of writing out a song without using notes on a musical staff to show the pitches of the melody. Instead, the words are written out with chord stamps above them. You have to learn the melody of the song from hearing it sung to be able to use a lead sheet of a song.

Machete - another small guitar-like instrument like the braguinha, cavaquinho, and rajão.

Major - a type of chord. The distances between the pitches of a major chord make it sound happy or bright to most people.

Measure - the space on a musical staff between two bar lines. Every measure begins with a strong beat.

Melody - notes played one at time, one after the other.

Minor - another type of chord. The pitch relationships of a minor chord make it sound dark or sad to most people.

Mode - another word for scale.

Musical improvisation - to make up music as you are playing.

Natural - a musical symbol placed in front of a musical note. It cancels any sharp or flat symbol that would normally apply to that note.

Note - a round symbol that is placed on a line or space of a musical staff. Some notes are circles or ovals; other types of notes are circles or ovals with lines attached. The circle or oval part of the note can be filled in (sol-

id black) or left empty (white). This circle or oval is called the note head. Each note represents one sound. The color (either black or white) of the note head combined with the stem (the vertical line) indicates how long each sound should last. Sometimes the word "note" is used to refer to just the sounds. For example, you might say, "she played a lot of notes in that song."

Nut - the raised ridge at the top of the ukulele fretboard. It holds the strings slightly away from the fretboard so they can vibrate.

Octave - distance to the same letter note, either higher or lower. You might hear an octave in action when your mom and dad sing the same note and your dad's voice is lower and your mom's is higher but they both sound like they are singing the same note. In Western folk music we have eight notes in an octave. "Oct" means "eight." Two other examples of words that use "oct" to mean eight are octagon and octopus.

Octave transposition – Rewriting a song's melody so it goes up, rather than down, so ukuleles without a "low G" tuning can play it.

Pickup - a pickup means the music begins on a weak beat instead of a strong beat. Almost all music is organized into patterns of strong and weak beats. One very common pattern is strong-weak-weak-weak. Almost all the songs in this book use this pattern. Another common pattern is strong-weak-weak. *Amazing Grace* uses this pattern.

Pitch - whether a sound is high or low. An example of a high sound would be birds tweeting. An example of a low sound would be a thunderstorm.

Pluck - pulling your right (strumming) hand finger against a string firmly and then gradually releasing it so the string vibrates and you hear a nice clear musical sound.

Rajão - a Portuguese fretted string instrument, similar to a small guitar. Braguinha, cavaquinho and machete are other similar instruments.

Rhythm - how sounds make patterns in time. For example, a rainstorm has a different rhythm than a rooster crowing.

Round - a song that can be sung by two groups or two people starting at different times. This way of singing doesn't work with just any song – the song needs to have been written so that it will sound good when different parts of it are overlapped.

Scale - a ladder of musical notes arranged in a specific pattern, usually with small distances in pitch, all going up or down. The names of some common types of scales in Western music are major, minor, and blues. There are hundreds of types of scales in the world.

Second position - means your finger 1 (index finger) is in the second fret, one fret away from the tuning pegs.

Sharp - a musical symbol placed in front of musical note. It means to raise the sound slightly, by the amount that musicians call a "half step."

Stopping - pushing a string against the fretboard with a finger of your left hand so that one end of the string rests against a fret. The other end of the string is tied to the bridge below the sound hole. We say the fret is "stopping" the string because the string can't vibrate where it is being pushed onto the fret. The contact with the fret shortens the amount of the string that is vibrating. Only the part of the string that is in the air and not touching anything is free to vibrate.

Sound hole - round hole in the body of the ukulele.

Spiritual – a song created by African-Americans that imparted Christian beliefs and values while also describing the hardships of slavery.

Staff - a musical staff is made of five equally spaced horizontal lines. There are four spaces. Each line and space of the musical staff represents a specific musical pitch. A tab staff is also made of equally spaced horizontal lines but there are four instead of five for the ukulele. See "tab staff."

Stem - a vertical line attached to the round part of a musical note. The stem helps indicate the rhythm of the note. Note stems are shorter than bar lines and are attached directly to a round note symbol.

String numbers - ukulele strings are numbered from the floor to the ceiling when you are holding the uke in playing position. That means the string closest to your eyes is string 4 with a pitch of G. String 3 has a pitch of C. String 2 has a pitch of E, and string 1 is closest to the floor and has a pitch of A.

Strum 1- downward strums with a steady beat. Another way to think of it is down strums with equal time between each strum so that the strums sound evenly spaced in time.

Strum 2 - even down-up strokes played with a steady beat. This means there is an equal amount of time between each down and up strum so they sound evenly spaced in time.

Strum 3 - down-up strokes to a steady beat, but the time after the down stroke is longer than the time after the up stroke. Some well-known songs such as *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* or Queen's *We are the Champions* use a 6/8 time signature. The pattern of beats in 6/8 time is STRONG-weak-weak STRONG-weak-weak. Usually when we strum a song with a 6/8 time signature we use Strum 3. We do a down strum on the STRONG and an up strum on the second weak beat just before the next STRONG. Most listeners will hear this music as having steady beats that are unevenly divided. Your feeling when you play will be long-short long-short. This long-short pattern is the feeling of Strum 3.

Tablature, or tab staff - a staff especially for fretted stringed instruments including the ukulele. Each line represents one string of the ukulele. There are numbers on the tab staff that tell the player which fret to stop the string on.

Transpose – To play music originally in one scale in a different scale.

Treble clef – A clef is a musical symbol used to indicate the pitch of the notes written on the staff. It is always shown at the beginning of each line or stave of music. The treble clef is also known as the G clef and it indicates that the second line up from the bottom of the staff is G4, the same pitch as the ukulele G string (with standard ukulele tuning.)

Third position - means your finger 1 (index finger) is in the third fret, two frets away from the tuning pegs.

Time signature - the numbers at the beginning of each song on the staff immediately to the right of the clef. It tells you how many beats are in each measure and what the pattern of strong and weak beats is in the song. The 4/4 time signature has the pattern strong-weak-weak. The 3/4 time signature has the pattern strong-weak-weak STRONG-weak-weak. Every measure begins with a strong beat.

Tuning pegs - located just beyond the nut. Each string is wound around a tuning peg. You can change the pitch of the string by turning the peg to tighten or loosen the string. Tightening the string makes the pitch go higher (a sound more like birds chirping or a girl's voice). Loosening the string makes the pitch go down (a sound more like thunderstorm or a man's voice).

Transposing - playing or singing music starting on a different pitch but keeping the same sound of the melody and chords. When we transpose music, we change what is called the "key."

Triple meter – a time signature with three beats per measure.

Work song - a song people sing while working to help them stay together or to express their feelings about their job.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Jenny Peters is a Grammy nominated full time music educator in the Chicago area. She has taught thousands of beginners on a variety of instruments during her many years of teaching.

Jenny developed her unique beginner-friendly method of teaching ukulele when she learned to play in order to include ukulele to her fourth grade General Music classes. She has gone on to become a popular YouTube ukulele personality who owns seven different kinds of ukuleles!

Jenny and Rebecca have now written four books in the Beginning Ukulele Songs series: Book 1, 21 Songs in 6 Days Learn Ukulele the Easy Way; Book 2, Easy Ukulele Songs: Five with Five Chords; Book 3, 21 Easy Ukulele Songs for Christmas; and Book 4, 21 MORE Songs in 6 Days: Learn Intermediate Ukulele the Easy Way.

The Illinois Music Educators Association has invited Jenny to do presentations on how to teach ukulele, and she has written articles on the subject for the magazine of the Illinois chapter of the American String Teachers Association. She is a member of the National Association for Music Education (NaFME), the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP.)Jenny plays six other instruments besides ukulele: piano, violin, viola, cello, bass and organ. Right now she currently heads a successful elementary and middle school orchestra program. Before that she taught Elementary General Music for ten years.

Jenny has served on the faculties of Lake Forest College and the College of Lake County. She taught piano, violin and chamber music at the Music Institute of Chicago and the Lake Forest Music Institute. She holds a Master of Music in Piano Performance from the University of Illinois and Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance from the University of Washington. She earned her teacher's certification from Trinity International University in order to share her passion for music with students of diverse backgrounds.

Rebecca Bogart has been introducing beginners of all ages to music for over 40 years. She believes that helping more people play music makes the world a better place.

She learned to play ukulele from her sister Jenny using the method taught in the Beginning Ukulele Songs series. While she has spent countless hours playing music with two hands at the piano, learning to have the left hand fret chords while the right hand strummed was a surprisingly challenging experience! Rebecca brings a ukulele beginner's perspective to the Ukulele Sisters' writing team.

Rebecca has been passionate about the piano and music her entire life. She has played for audiences in Italy, taught master classes at Harvard and won more than a few piano competitions. She made her solo debut

at Carnegie Hall in early 2014. Several of Rebecca's piano students have won national and international awards and been featured on NPR's radio show "From the Top". She has been a featured presenter at the California Music Teachers Association, and has recorded a CD of American solo piano music *American Retrospective*. She completed her Masters degree in Piano at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

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