

# Smile Time Beginners' Ukulele Guide



# Tuning Your Ukulele

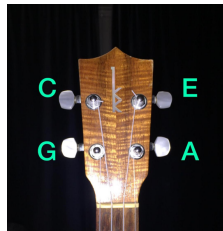
**Your playing will never sound good if your ukulele isn't in tune.**

The easiest way to tune your ukulele is with an electronic tuner, but it's important that you understand how to use your tuner. Some tuners have various settings for different instruments and different pitch settings – but these can lead to tuning mistakes if you accidentally select the wrong setting. If your tuner has an instrument setting (usually indicated by letters such as B, G, U etc.) we recommend selecting the letter C. This stands for the word chromatic. If there is a pitch setting you need this to be on 440.

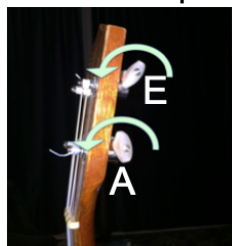
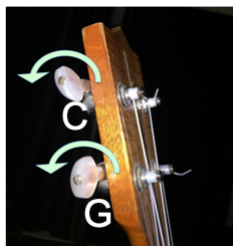
If in doubt about your tuner consider investing in one that is simple to use and has a large clear display, such as a Snark tuner.

A standard 4 string soprano, concert or tenor ukulele is tuned to the notes G, C, E, A

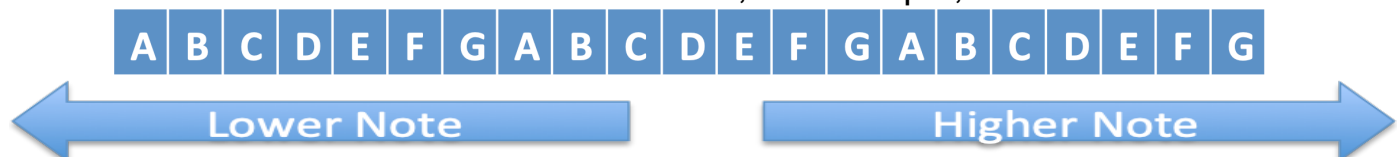
The string at the top (nearest to the ceiling) is tuned to a G, then working down the instrument the next string is tuned to C, then E and then the string closest to the floor is tuned to an A. The strings are connected to the tuning mechanism in the following arrangement;



Tightening the string will raise the pitch of the note, when you slacken the string the note will go lower. Look at your ukulele sideways on (directly at the tuning mechanism) Turning the mechanism clockwise will lower the pitch, turning anticlockwise will raise the pitch. The pictures below show how to raise the pitch.



If your tuner is not showing the correct letter name for the string you are tuning, you need to think through the alphabet to work out whether to make the note higher or lower – remember that in music A follows G, for example;



Sharps and flats are the notes in between these letters.

Sharp (#) means the note is a little bit higher (so F# is a bit higher than normal F).

Flat (b) means the note is a little bit lower (so Bb is a little bit lower than normal B).

**Lastly – Remember to tune regularly – Even the best Ukes go out of tune**

## Right Hand Fingering and the Common Strokes

The “Common” or “Ordinary” stroke is the basis of all the other right hand strokes and should be thoroughly mastered before any of the more complicated strokes are attempted.

### Strumming

A basic common strumming stroke is made up of a downstroke followed by an upstroke

### Downstroke

Starting 1-2 inches above the neck of the instrument, lightly strike the strings with the nail of the first finger and follow through until 1-2 inches away on the opposite side. The movement should be with the wrist and the forearm, not the full arm.



### Upstroke

Brush the strings with the soft, fleshy part of the first finger returning to the starting position for the next downstroke.



The thumb or a light plectrum can also be used.

## Left Hand Fingers and Chord Diagrams

The standard ukulele chord diagram is simply a vertical representation of the ukulele fret board.

The horizontal lines represent the frets.

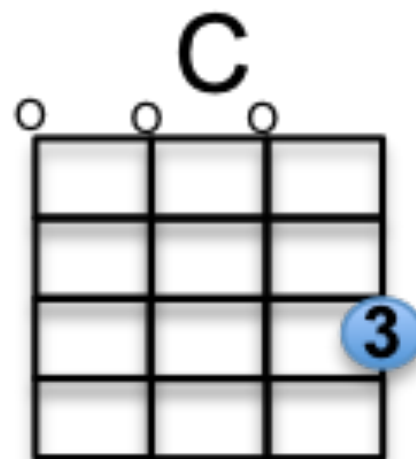
The vertical lines represent the strings.

The numbers on the vertical lines represent the fingers of the left hand (index=1, middle=2, ring=3 and pinky=4).

A little “o” above a vertical line indicates that the open string (a string with no left hand finger on it) below that “o” should be strummed.

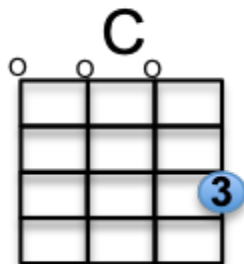
A little “x”, which you probably will rarely see, would mean that you do not strum that open string.

Here is a picture of the finger position for a C chord, and a chord diagram of the same chord:



Because there are three little “o”s above the three strings that have no fingers on them, they are to be strummed as well.

## Songs using only the C Chord



### Frere Jacques

C / / / C / / /  
Frere Jacques, Frere Jacques

C / / / C / / /  
Dormez vous ? Dormez vous ?

C / / / C / / /  
Sonnez les matin – es, sonnez les matin – es

C / / / C / / /  
Ding Dang Dong, Ding Dang Dong

### Catch a Falling Star

C / / / C / / /  
Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket

C / / / C / / /  
Never let it fade away

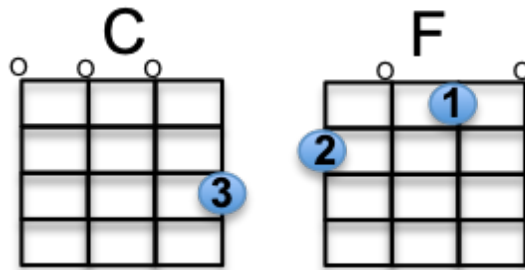
C / / / C / / /  
Catch a falling star and put it in your pocket

C / / / C / / /  
Save it for a rainy day

## New Chord – F

### Songs with 2 Chords (C and F)

#### Row, Row, Row Your Boat



F / / /  
Row, row, row, your boat

F / / /  
Gently down the stream

F / / /  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily

C / F /  
Life is but a dream

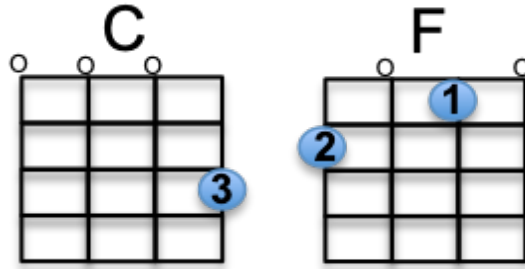
F / / /  
Row, row, row your boat

F / / /  
Gently down the stream

F / / /  
If you see a crocodile

C / F /  
Don't forget to scream - Aghh!

## London Bridge is Falling Down



F / / / C / F /  
 London bridge is falling down, falling down, falling down

F / / / C / F /  
 London bridge is falling down, My fair lady

F / / / C / F /  
 Build it up with iron bars, iron bars, iron bars

F / / / C / F /  
 Build it up with iron bars, My fair lady

F / / / C / F /  
 Iron bars will bend and break, bend and break, bend and break

F / / / C / F /  
 Iron bars will bend and break, My fair lady

F / / / C / F /  
 Build it up with stone so strong, stone so strong, stone so strong

F / / / C / F /  
 Build it up with stone so strong, My fair lady

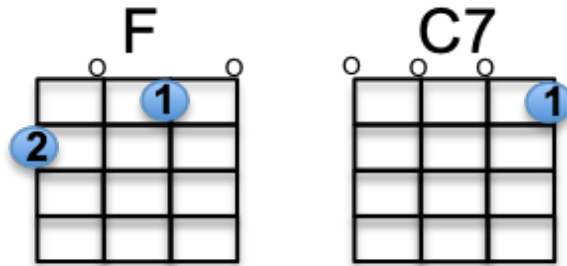
F / / / C / F /  
 London Bridge is falling down, falling down, falling down

F / / / C / F /  
 London Bridge is falling down, My fair lady

## New Chord – C7

### Songs with 2 Chords (F and C7)

#### Bobby Shafto



F / / / C7 / / /  
Bobby Shafto's gone to sea, Silver buckles on his knee,

F / / / C7 / F /  
He'll come home and marry me, Bonnie Bobby Shafto.

F / / / C7 / / /  
Bobby Shafto's bright and fair, Combing down his yellow hair;

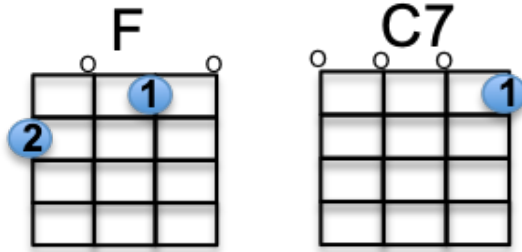
F / / / C7 / F /  
He's my love for ever more, Bonnie Bobby Shafto.

F / / / C7 / / /  
Bobby Shafto's gone to sea, Silver buckles on his knee,

F / / / C7 / F /  
He'll come home and marry me, Bonnie Bobby Shafto.



# Singing in the Rain



♩ = 100

Ukul.

*mf*

0 1-3-1 2 1 | 0 1-3-1 2 1 | 0 1-3-1 2 1 | 0 1-3-1 2 1

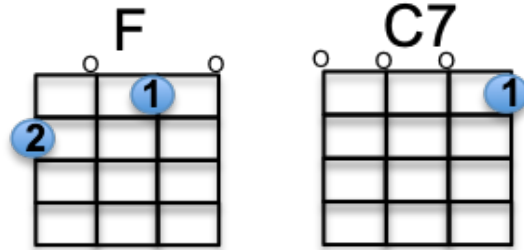
(Musical notation for Ukulele in 4/4 time, starting with an F chord and a triplet of eighth notes.)

F // / F / / / F // / F / /  
 I'm singing in the rain - Just singing in the rain  
 / F // / F / / / C7 // / C7 / /  
 What a glorious feelin' - I'm happy again  
 / C7 / / / C7 / / / C7 // / C7 / /  
 I'm laughing at clouds - So dark up above  
 / C7 / / / C7 / / / / F // / F / /  
 The sun's in my heart - And I'm ready for love

/ F // / F / / / F // / F / //  
 Let the stormy clouds chase – Everyone from the place  
 F / / / F / / / C7 // / C7 / /  
 Come on with the rain - I've a smile on my face  
 / C7 // / C7 // / C7 // / C7 //  
 I walk down the lane - With a happy refrain  
 / C7 / / / C7 / // / F // / F //  
 Just singin', - Singin' in the rain

\*The tune here is written in something called Ukulele TAB. You will learn about this later.

## Clementine (starting note for singing is f) in 3 time



F / / F / / F / / C7 /

In a cavern, in a canyon, excavating for a mine

/ C7 / / F / / C7 / / F /

Dwelt a miner, forty-niner, and his daughter Clementine

### CHORUS

/ F / / F / / F / / C7 /

Oh my darling, Oh my darling, oh my darling Clementine

/ C7 / / F / / C7 / / F /

You are lost and gone forever. Dreadful sorry Clementine

/ F / / F / / F / / C7 /

Drove she ducklings to the water, every morning just at nine

/ C7 / / F / / C7 / / F /

Hit her foot against a splinter. Fell into the foaming brine

### CHORUS

/ F / / F / / F / / C7 /

Ruby lips above the water, blowing bubbles, soft and fine

/ C7 / / F / / C7 / / F /

But alas I was no swimmer, so I lost my Clementine

### CHORUS

/ F / / F / / F / / C7 /

How I missed her, how I missed her, how I missed my Clementine

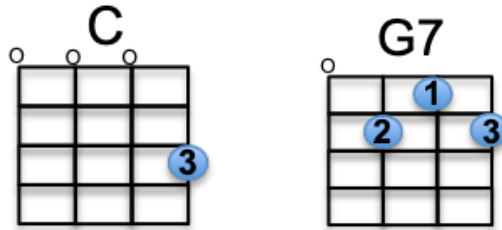
/ C7 / / F / / C7 / / F /

So I kissed her little sister, and forgot my Clementine

### CHORUS

## New Chord – G7

### He's Got The Whole World

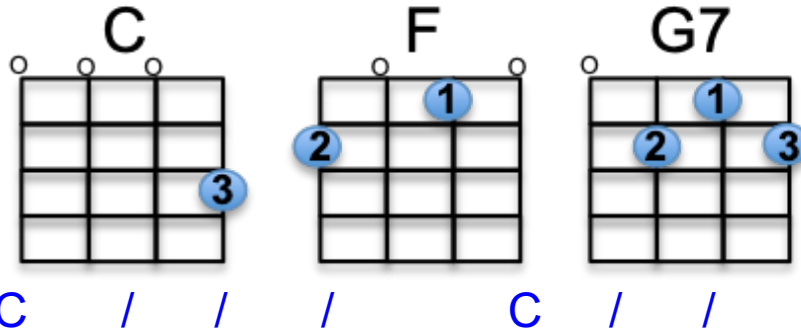


C / / / C / /  
He's got the whole world in his hands  
/ G7 / / / G7 / /  
He's got the whole wide world in his hands  
/ C / / / C / /  
He's got the whole wide world in his hands  
/ G7 / / / C / /  
He's got the whole world in his hands

C / / / C / /  
He's got you and me brother in his hands  
/ G7 / / / G7 / /  
He's got you and me brother in his hands  
/ C / / / C / /  
He's got you and me brother in his hands  
/ G7 / / / C / /  
He's got the whole world in his hands

C / / / C / /  
He's got everybody here in his hands  
/ G7 / / / G7 / /  
He's got everybody here in his hands  
/ C / / / C / /  
He's got everybody here in his hands  
/ G7 / / / C / /  
He's got the whole world in his hands

## When the Saints go Marching in (starting note c)



Oh, when the saints..... go marching in

/ C / / / C / /

Oh, when the saints go marching in

/ C / / / F / /

I want to be..... in that number

/ C / G7 / C / /

When the saints go marching in

/ C // / C / /

And when the sun begins to shine

/ C / / / G7 / /

And when the sun begins to shine

/ C // / F / /

I want to be in that number

/ C / G7 / C / /

When the sun begins to shine

/ C // / C / /

Oh, when the trumpet sounds its call

/ C / / / G7 / /

Oh, when the trumpet sounds its call

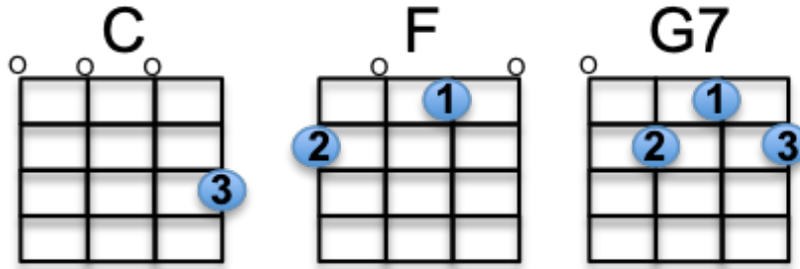
/ C // / F / /

I want to be in that number

/ C / G7 / C / /

When the trumpet sounds its call

## If You're Happy and You Know It (starting note g)



C / / / G7 / /  
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands

/ G7 / / / C / /  
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands

/ F / / / C / / /  
If you're happy and you know it and you really want to show it

/ G7 / / / C / /  
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands

2) Stamp your feet

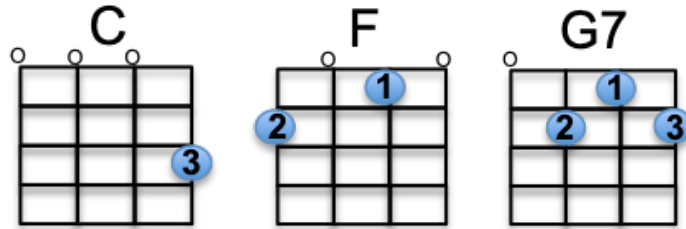
3) Turn around

4) Nod your head

5) Jump about

6) Clap your hands

## Yellow Bird (starting note g)



C / / / C / / / F / G7 / C / / /

Ye....llow bird Up high in banana tree

C / / / C / / / F / G7 / C / / /

Ye....llow bird You sit all alone like me

F / / / C / / /

Did your lady friend - Leave the nest again?

G7 / / / C / / /

That is very sad - Make me feel so bad,

F / / / C / / /

You can fly away - In the sky away,

G7 / / / C / / /

You're more lucky than me.

C / / / C / / / F / G7 / C / / /

Ye....llow bird Up high in banana tree

C / / / C / / / F / G7 / C / / /

Ye....llow bird You sit all alone like me

F / / / C / / /

Let her fly away - On the sky away,

G7 / / / C / / /

Picker coming soon - Pick from night to noon,

F / / / C / / /

Black and yellow you - Like banana too,

G7 / / / C / / /

He might pick you someday.

C / / / C / / / F / G7 / C / / /

Ye....llow bird Up high in banana tree

C / / / C / / / F / G7 / C / / /

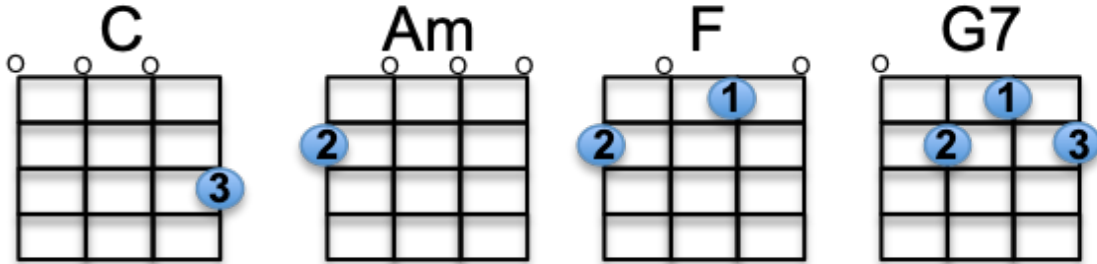
Ye....llow bird You sit all alone like me

} repeat

# New Chord – Am (A minor)

## Songs with 4 Chords (C, Am, F and G7)

### Stand By Me (starting note e)



Count in – 1,2,3

C / / / C / / / Am / / / Am / / /  
 When the night has come - And the land is dark  
 / F / / / G7 / / / C / / / C / / /  
 And the moon is the only light we'll see  
 / C / / / C / / / Am / / / Am / / /  
 No, I won't be a...fraid - Oh, I.... won't be a..fraid  
 / F / / / G7 / / / C / / / C / / /  
 Just as long as you stand, stand by me So darling, darling

C / / / C / / / Am / / / Am / / /  
 Stand by me, o...h stand by me  
 F / / / G7 / / / C / / / C / / /  
 Stand, stand by me

/ C / / / C / / / Am / / / Am / / /  
 If the sky, that we look upon - Should tumble and fall  
 / F / / / G7 / / / C / / / C / / /  
 And the mountain should crumble to the sea  
 / C / / / C / / / Am / / / Am / / /  
 I won't cry, I won't cry - No, I.... won't shed a tear  
 / F / / / G7 / / / C / / / C / / /  
 Just as long as you stand, stand by me So darling, darling

C / / / C / / / Am / / / Am / / /  
 Stand by me, o...h stand by me  
 F / / / G7 / / / C / / / C / / /  
 Stand, stand by me So darling, darling

C / / / C / / / Am / / / Am / / /  
 Stand by me, o...h stand by me  
 F / / / G7 / / / C / / / C / / /  
 Stand, stand by me

# Teenager in Love

Intro C /// Am /// F /// G7 /// C /// Am /// F /// G7 ///

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

Each time we have a quarrel, it almost breaks my heart

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

Cause I am so afraid, that we will have to part

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

Each night I ask the stars up above

C (Stop)

Why must I be a teenager in love?

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

One day I feel so happy, next day I feel so sad

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

I guess I'll learn to take the good with the bad

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

Each night I ask the stars up above

C (Stop)

Why must I be a teenager in love?

\* F / / / G7 / / / F / / / G7 / / /

I cried a tear for nobody but you

F / / / G7 / / / F / / / G7 / / /

I'll be a lonely one if you should say were through

/ C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

Well if you want to make me cry, that won't be hard to do

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

And if you should say goodbye, I'll still go on loving you

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

Each night I ask the stars up above

C (Stop)

Why must I be a teenager in love? **(1<sup>st</sup> time Back to Middle \* 'I cried')**

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

Why must I be..... a teena..ger in love,

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / /

Why must I be..... a teena..ger in love,

C / / / Am / / / F / / / G7 / / / C

Why must I be..... a teena..ger in love, in Love...