

UKULELE BASICS

Ukulele Tuesdays – Evergreen Library
October 9, 2018

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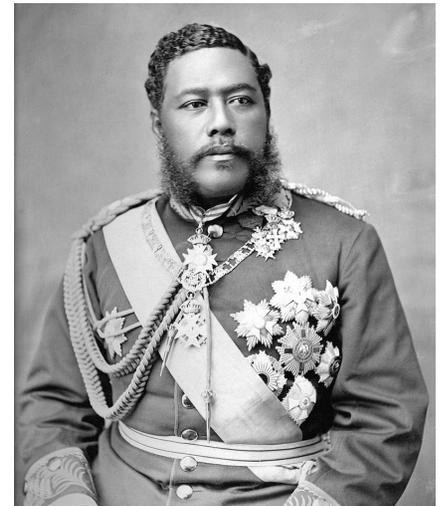
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PLAYING MUSIC IS MORE THAN JUST MEMORIZING A BUNCH OF CHORDS ON YOUR INSTRUMENT.

That's difficult. And takes a long time.

THE UKULELE

- Pronounced “ooo-koo-lay-lay”
- Developed in the 1880s by Portuguese immigrants living in Hawaii
- King Kalākaua (1836-1891) was a big fan of it and played himself
- Lore has it that the name is a loose translation of “jumping flea” or “my dog has fleas”
- Gained great popularity during the 50s due to the increased plastic manufacturing and the proliferation of Hawaiian culture through Hollywood
 - Tiny Tim
 - Elvis movies *Blue Hawaii* and *Paradise, Hawaii Style*
 - Surf culture



DESIGN

- Member of the lute family of stringed instruments
- An adaptation of the Portuguese machete
- Usually made of wood, but also plastic and carbon fiber
- Four strings, usually of nylon (formerly gut)

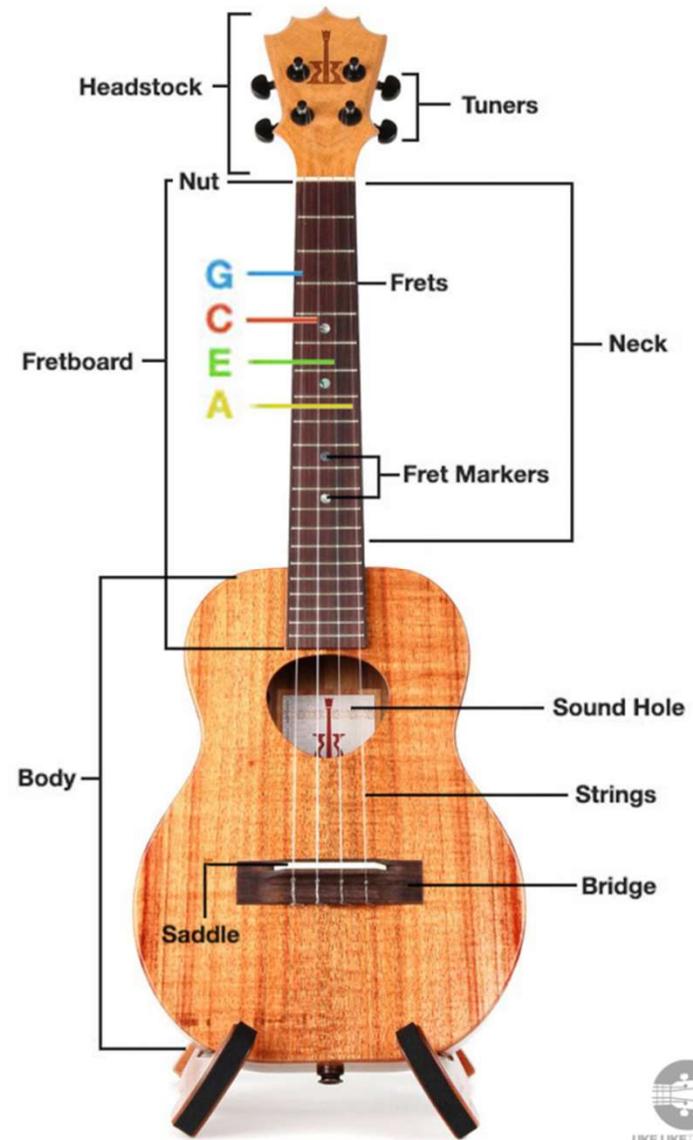


MACHETE



UKELELE

PARTS OF A UKULELE



TYPES

- **Soprano**
 - Smallest
 - Sometimes Pineapple shaped
- **Concert**
- **Tenor**
- **Baritone**
 - Largest
 - Uses *Baritone Tuning* instead of *Standard Tuning*



OTHER TYPES

- Banjolele
- Pocket Ukulele
- Electric Ukulele
- Harp Ukulele
- Lap steel Ukulele
- Bass / Contrabass Ukulele
- Guitalele



TUNINGS

- **Standard Tuning / C Tuning**
 - A reentrant tuning (meaning the top string isn't the bass most pitch)
 - G_4 C_4 E_4 A_4
- **Standard Tuning / C Tuning with a "Low G"**
 - A non-reentrant tuning
 - Equivalent to the top 4 strings of a guitar capoed at the 5th fret
 - G_3 C_4 E_4 A_4
- **Baritone Tuning**
 - Used almost exclusively by baritone ukuleles, but sometimes electric ukuleles, too
 - D_3 G_3 B_3 E_4

OTHER TUNINGS

- **D Tuning**
 - The former standard tuning
 - Commonly used in Hawaiian music
 - A_4 D_4 $F\sharp_4$ B_4
- **Slack-key Tuning**
 - Used for Hawaiian slack-key style of music (particularly slack-key guitars)
 - Done by detuning (or slacking) strings until you attain an open tuning
 - G_4 C_4 E_4 G_4
- **Open C-Minor**
 - Can strum the ukulele without fretting any strings and get a C Minor chord
 - G_4 C_4 E_b_4 G_4

CARING FOR YOUR UKULELE

- Keep it in a case when not playing
 - Don't store it near a fireplace or heater vent
- Control humidity
 - Store wood instruments in 40%-60% humidity
 - Use a case humidifier
- Careful with your fingernails or picks
- Don't let the strings get too slack
- Restring once a year or so
 - Coming Soon – How to restring your Ukulele



RESOURCES

- **Print**
 - Ukulele Magazine (www.ukulelemag.com)
 - Hal Leonard Books (www.halleonard.com) – Chord and song books for all instruments
 - Tony Mizen – Classical arrangements for ukes
- **Online**
 - Uku Tabs (ukutabs.com)
 - Internet Chord Database (www.internetchorddatabase.com)
- **Local**
 - Wild Acoustic Music (wildacoustic.com) – Downtown Evergreen
 - Rocky Mountain Music Exchange (www.rockymountainmusicexchange.com)



QUESTIONS?

