



Welcome to  
**UKULELE**  
for  
**THE COMPLETE  
BEGINNER**

with  
**Faye Hicks**



## The plan for this course?

*Lots of playing – not much theory...*

- Week 1: Let's just start playing...
  - Ukulele basics
  - Tuning your ukulele
  - 2 easy chords – F and C7
  - Easy strum patterns
  - 2 chord songs using F and C7
- Week 2: the key of C
  - 2 new chords – C and G7
  - 3 chord songs using C, F, and G7
- Week 3: the key of D
  - 3 new chords – D, G, and A7
  - 3 chord songs using D, G, and A7
- Week 4: getting fancier – more chords
  - 2 new chords in the key of C – Am and Dm
- Week 5: playing in other keys
  - 3 new chords so we can play in the key of G – D7, Em, B7
  - All the chord in all the keys
  - Going forward on your own

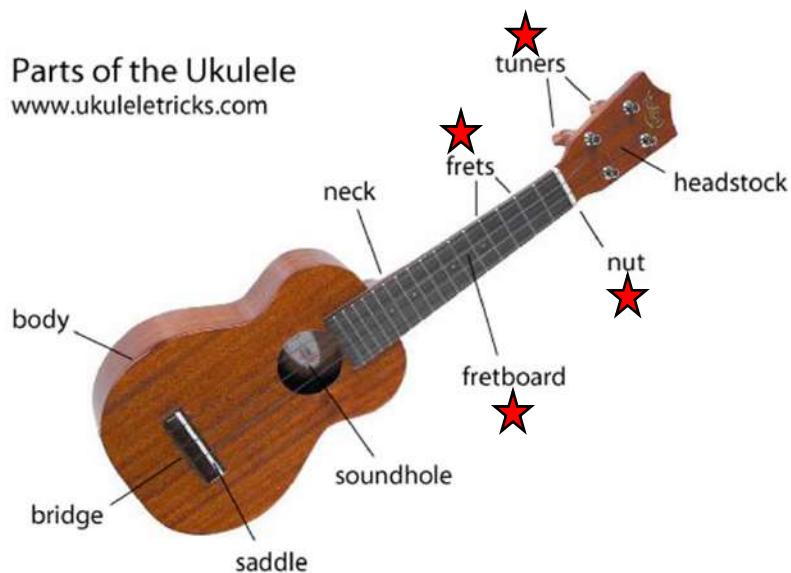
## Week 1: Let's just start playing...

- **Ukulele basics**
- **Tuning your ukulele**
- **2 easy chords – F and C7**
- **Easy strum patterns**
- **2 chord song using F and C7**



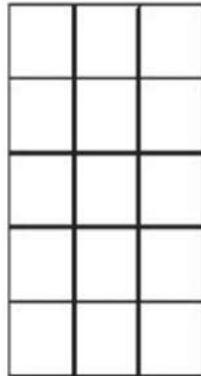
## Ukulele Basics

Parts of the Ukulele  
[www.ukuleletricks.com](http://www.ukuleletricks.com)



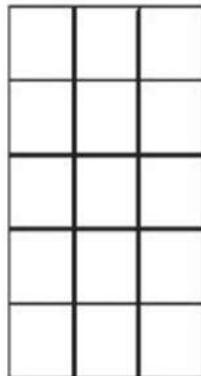
## Ukulele Basics

4 3 2 1



## Ukulele Basics – Re-entrant (high G) tuning

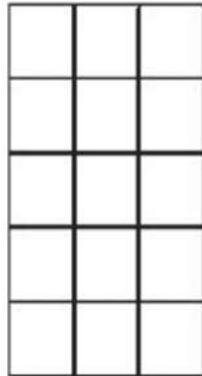
G C E A  
4 3 2 1



2 is lower than 1, 3 is lower than 2, but 4 is **higher** than 3.  
Most ukuleles sold in music stores come with this tuning.

## Ukulele Basics – Low G tuning

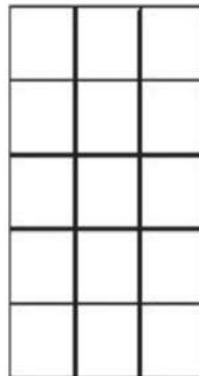
**G C E A**  
**4 3 2 1**



2 is lower than 1, 3 is lower than 2, and 4 is **lower** than 3.  
Most music stores sell these strings – the low G is nice for picking.

**Let's tune our ukuleles!**  
**ALWAYS DO THIS BEFORE YOU PLAY!**

**G C E A**



# Let's play!



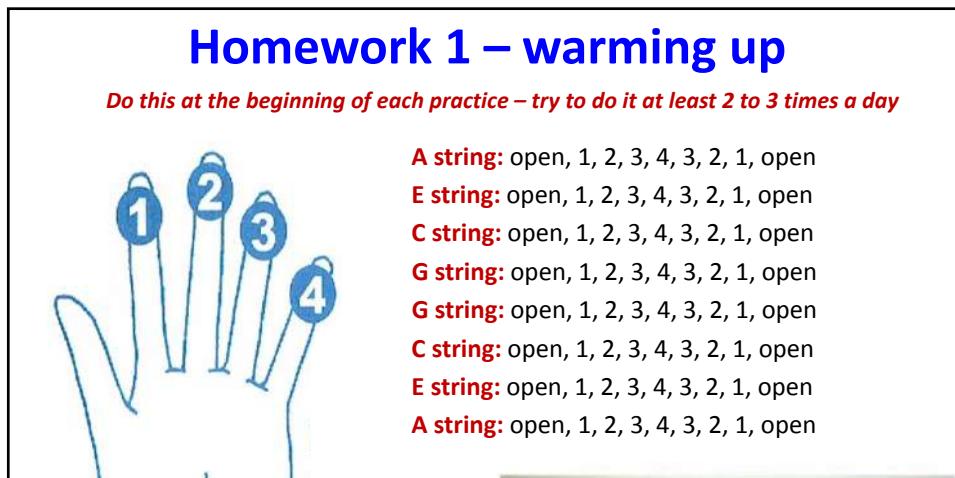
Each one is a different note...

To get a clean sound, press firmly with the tip of your finger.  
If a note sounds muffled or fuzzy, it means that you need to press more firmly.  
Be sure not to touch any other strings.

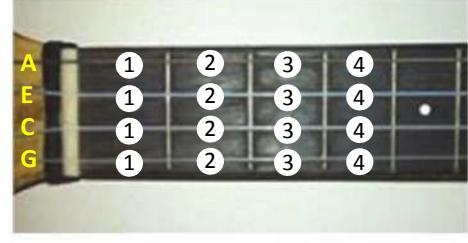
Note - You need to have pretty short fingernails on your left hand to do this effectively...

## Homework 1 – warming up

*Do this at the beginning of each practice – try to do it at least 2 to 3 times a day*



**A string:** open, 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1, open  
**E string:** open, 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1, open  
**C string:** open, 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1, open  
**G string:** open, 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1, open  
**C string:** open, 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1, open  
**E string:** open, 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1, open  
**A string:** open, 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1, open



Use your thumb – or use your fingers

**Strumming: You can go up and down with thumb or finger...**



## Thumb-Strum



## Finger Strum

Try to get comfortable doing both!

Try 4/4 timing:  1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4

**3/4 timing:**  1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3

# Chording

Chords are just a group of notes that sound good together!

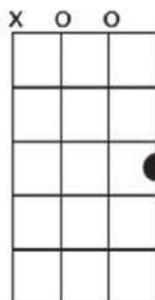
We use chord charts as maps to guide us in playing chords.

A black dot indicates where to place your finger.

An “o” means: play the string “open” (no finger needed).

An “x” means: do not play the string.

## Let's try this one!



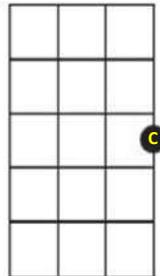
## Chording

Chords are just a group of notes that sound good together!

The name of the chord is always one of the notes in the chord.

G C E A

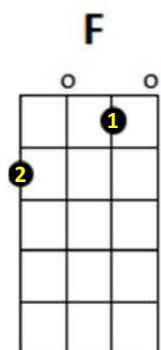
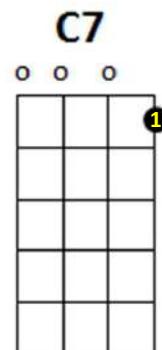
o o o



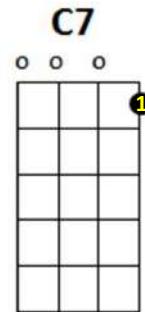
This one is called the “C” chord.

## Chording

Here are our first two – very easy - chords!

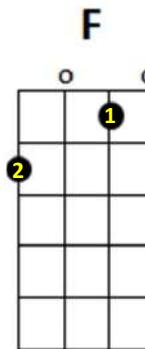


## Thumb Strumming



Try 4/4 timing:  $\downarrow$  1 2 3 4,  $\downarrow$  1 2 3 4,  $\downarrow$  1 2 3 4  
 $\downarrow$   
3/4 timing:  $\downarrow$  1 2 3,  $\downarrow$  1 2 3,  $\downarrow$  1 2 3

## Thumb Strumming

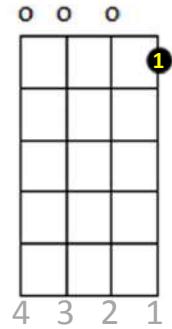


Try 4/4 timing:  $\downarrow$  1 2 3 4,  $\downarrow$  1 2 3 4,  $\downarrow$  1 2 3 4  
 $\downarrow$   
3/4 timing:  $\downarrow$  1 2 3,  $\downarrow$  1 2 3,  $\downarrow$  1 2 3

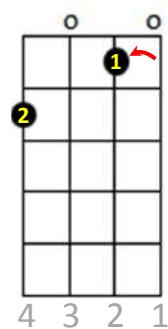
## Switching Between Chords

This is the tricky bit!

**C7**



**F**



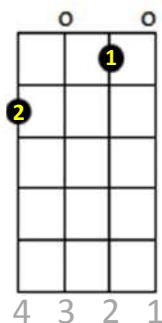
First move 'Finger 1'  
up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> string

Then put 'Finger 2'  
down on the 2<sup>nd</sup> fret  
of the 4<sup>th</sup> string

## Switching Between Chords

F to C7: This one is easier!

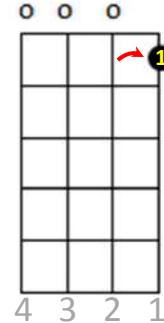
**F**



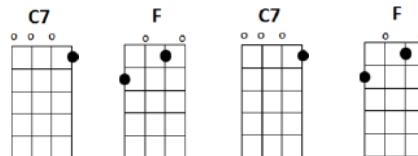
First, lift Finger 2

Then move 'Finger  
1' down to the 1<sup>st</sup>  
string

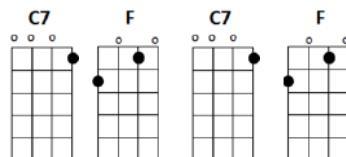
**C7**



## Thumb Strum Practice



**4/4 timing:** 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4



**3/4 timing:** 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3

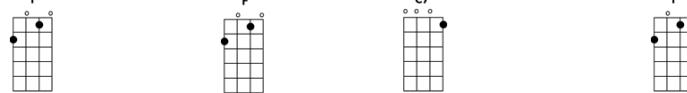
Play slowly at first – use a metronome to help you keep time.  
Gradually increase your speed as you get quicker at changing chords.

Okay – let's try our first song!

### Skip to my Lou $\frac{4}{4}$ - 160 BPM



Lost my partner, what'll I do? Lost my partner, what'll I do?



Lost my partner, what'll I do? Skip to my Lou, my darlin'.

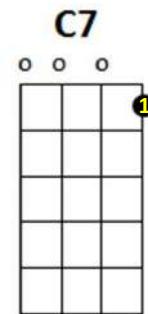


Skip, skip, skip to my Lou... Skip, skip, skip to my Lou...



Skip, skip, skip to my Lou... Skip to my Lou my darlin'.

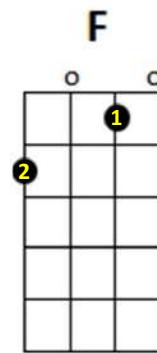
## Finger Strumming



Try 4/4 timing:  $\downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow$   
**1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4**

3/4 timing:  $\downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow$   
**1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3**

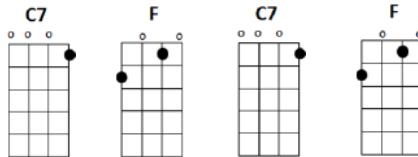
## Finger Strumming



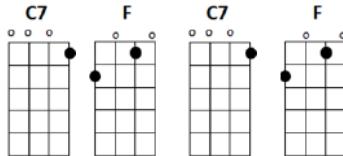
Try 4/4 timing:  $\downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow$   
**1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4**

3/4 timing:  $\downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow \uparrow \downarrow$   
**1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3**

## Finger Strum Practice



**4/4 timing:** 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4

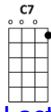
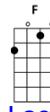


**3/4 timing:** 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3

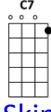
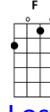
Play slowly at first – use a metronome to help you keep time.  
Gradually increase your speed as you get quicker at changing chords.

## Okay – let's try finger strumming our song!

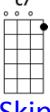
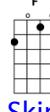
*We'll only show the chord changes... to keep it simple...*



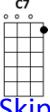
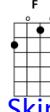
Lost my partner, what'll I do? Lost my partner, what'll I do?



Lost my partner, what'll I do? Skip to my Lou, my darlin'.



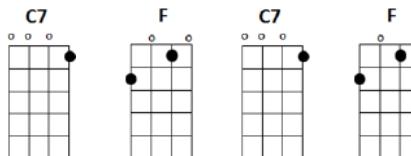
Skip, skip, skip to my Lou... Skip, skip, skip to my Lou...



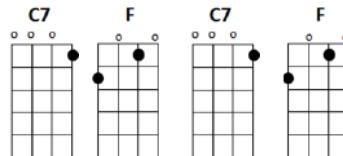
Skip, skip, skip to my Lou... Skip to my Lou my darlin'.

## Homework 2

**Practice both finger and thumb strumming...**



**4/4 timing:** 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4



**3/4 timing:** 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3

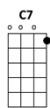
Play slowly at first – use a metronome to help you keep time.  
Gradually increase your speed as you get quicker at changing chords.

*Here's another song to try!*

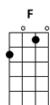
### He's Got the Whole World $\frac{4}{4}$ - 140 BPM



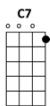
He's got the whole world in his hands,



He's got the whole, wide world in his hands,



He's got the whole world in his hands,



He's got the whole world in his hands.

## Final thoughts for today...

- Practice 2 or 3 times a day for 10 to 15 minutes each time – this will toughen up your fingers and help you to build “muscle memory”.
- Start with the finger exercises, then strumming, then songs.
- Play slowly at first – use a metronome to help you keep time.
- Gradually increase your speed as you get quicker at changing notes and chords.

*Next week – two new chords and “Happy Birthday to You”!*