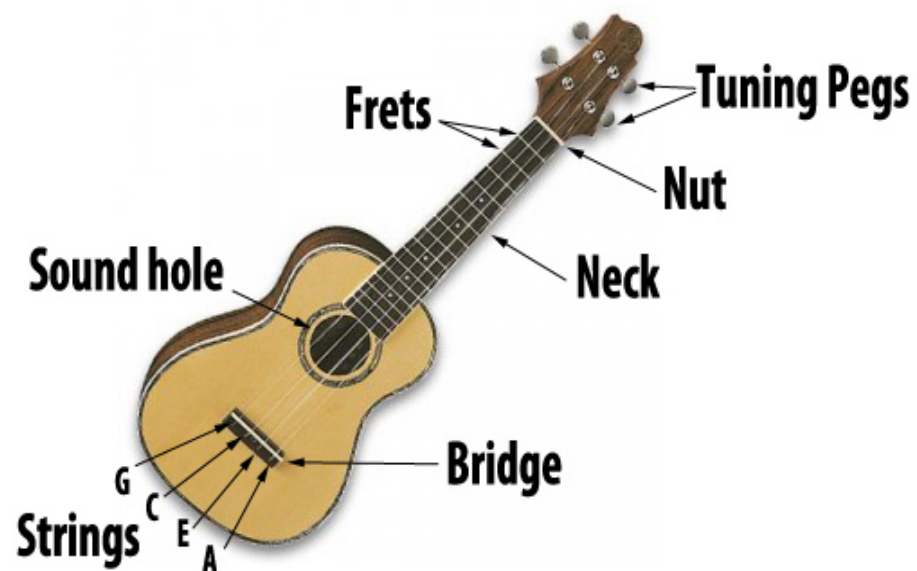


Beginner Ukulele

Ukulele Basics



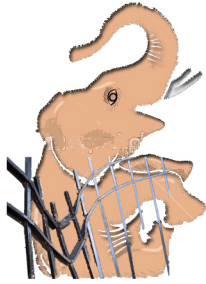
Ron McLaughlin
2012

Check out **GRUB** ukuleles
<https://ronmclaughlin.wixsite.com/grubukuleles>
for songs, lessons and links

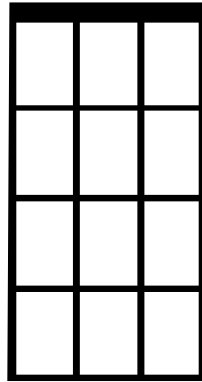
Beginner Ukulele

Ukulele Basics

1. String names:



An Elephant Crushes Gates



4 3 2 1
G C E A



Goats Can Eat Anything

The strings are numbered from the string closest to the floor to the string closest your head as you hold the Ukulele - 1 to 4 and named in order A, E, C, G. this can be remembered by the saying:

An Elephant Crushes Gates

string: 1 2 3 4

Some people prefer to remember the string names from the 4th to the 1st using the saying:

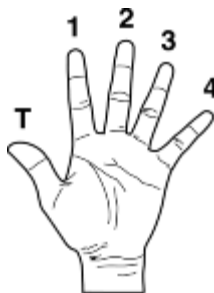
Goats Can Eat Anything

string: 4 3 2 1

If in tune, when you play the strings from the 4th string to the 1st it should have the familiar sound "my dog has fleas"

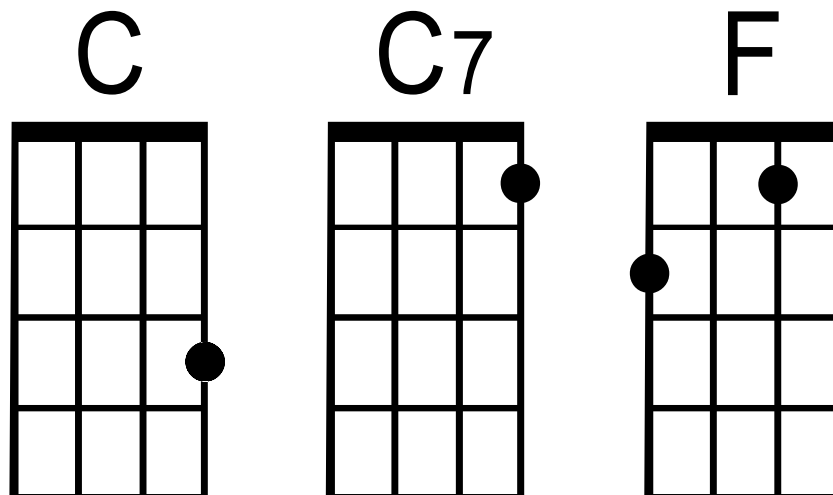
2. Reading Chord Diagrams

Below are diagrams of ukulele chords. The diagram represents the fretboard of the ukulele, as it would appear standing up in front of you. The numbers next to suggested fingering represent the fingers to be used. A uker's fingers are numbered 1 (index finger) thru 4 (pinky), as shown in the diagram below.

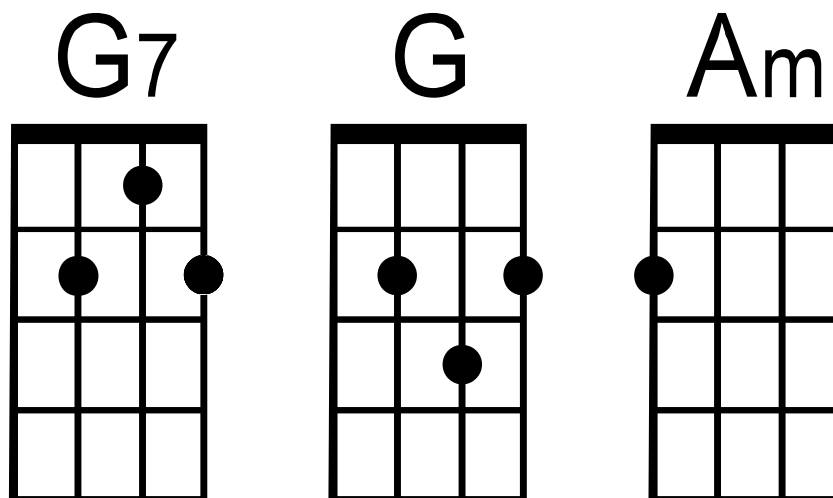


3. Chords in the key of C

The following chords are common chords used in many ukulele songs. They are the main chords found for songs in the key of C



Suggested fingering: 3 1 2 1



2 1 3 1 3 2 2

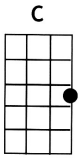
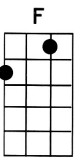
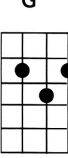
4. Songs in the key of C

Check out the G.R.U.B. web page for suggested songs:
<http://ronmclaughlin.wix.com/grubukuleles>

One Chord Songs:

ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT

Nursery Rhyme

One chord throughout:  or  or 
4/4 time

Row, row, row your boat,

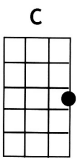
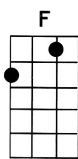
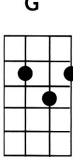
Gently down the stream.

Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,

Life is but a dream.

FRERE JACQUES

French Nursery rhyme

One chord throughout:  or  or 
4/4 time

Frere Jacques, Frere Jacques,

Dormez-vous? Dormez-vous?

Sonnez les matines, sonnez les matines

Ding dang dong, ding dang dong.

Are you sleeping, are you sleeping?

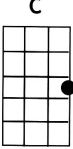
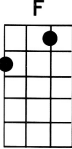
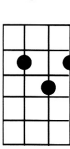
Brother John, Brother John?

Morning bells are ringing, morning bells are ringing

Ding dang dong, ding dang dong.

LONDON'S BURNING

English Nursery Rhyme

One chord throughout:  or  or 

3/4 time

Often sung as a round

London's burning, London's burning.

Fetch the engines, fetch the engines.

Fire fire, Fire Fire!

Pour on water, pour on water.

London's burning, London's burning.

Fetch the engines, fetch the engines.

Fire fire, Fire Fire!

Pour on water, pour on water.

London's burning, London's burning.

Fetch the engines, fetch the engines.

Fire fire, Fire Fire!

Pour on water, pour on water.

Pour on water, pour on water.

Pour on water, pour on water.

Two Chord Songs:

JAMBALAYA

Hank Williams

4/4 time

Verse 1:

C G
Goodbye Joe, me gotta go, me oh my oh

C
Me gotta go pole the pirogue down the bayou

G
My Yvonne, the sweetest one, me oh my oh

C
Son of a gun, we'll have good fun on the bayou

C

Chorus: C G
Jambalaya, a-crawfish pie and-a fillet gumbo C
'Cause tonight I'm gonna see my ma cher amio
G
Pick guitar, fill fruit jar and be gay-oh
C
Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the bayou.

G

C G
Verse 2: Thibay-deaux, Fontaineaux, the place is buzzin'
 C
 Kinfolk come to see Yvonne by the dozen
 C G
 Dress in style, go hog wild, me oh my oh
 C
 Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the bayou.

Repeat Chorus Jambalaya, a-crawfish pie

Verse 3:

C	G
Settle down far from town, get me a pirogue	
	C
And I'll catch all the fish in the bayou	
C	G
Swap my mon for Yvonne what she need-o	
	C
Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the bayou.	

Repeat Chorus Jambalaya, a-crawfish pie

Ending:

	G	C
Son of a gun,	we'll have big fun	on the bayou.
	G	C
Son of a gun,	we'll have big fun	on the bayou

HE'S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS

Traditional American Spiritual

4/4 time

Verse1: C
He's got the whole world in his hands
 G7
He's got the whole wide world in his hands
 C
He's got the whole world in his hands
 G7 C
He's got the whole world in his hands

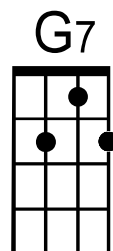
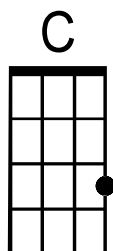
Verse2: C
He's got the itty bitty babies in his hands
 G7
He's got the itty bitty babies in his hands
 C
He's got the itty bitty babies in his hands
 G7 C
He's got the whole world in his hands

Verse 3: He's got you and me brother in his hands

Verse 4: He's got you and me sister in his hands

Verse 5: He's got everybody here in his hands

Verse 6: He's got the ukulele players in his hands



Three Chord Songs:

OH, SUSANNAH

Stephen Foster (1826–1864)

4/4 time

Verse1: C G7
I come from Alabama With a banjo on my knee
C G7 C
I'm going to Louisiana, My true love for to see.
C G7
It rained all night the day I left The weather it was dry
C G7 C
The sun so hot, I froze to death Susannah, don't you cry.

F C G7
Chorus: Oh, Susannah, Oh don't you cry for me
C G7 C
For I come from Alabama with a banjo on my knee.

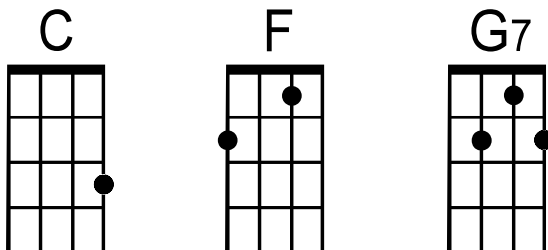
Verse2: C G7
I had a dream the other night when everything was still
C G7 C
I dreamed I saw Susannah dear a-coming down the hill.
C G7
The buckwheat cake was in her mouth, the tear was in her eye
C G7 C
Says I, "I'm coming from the south, Susannah, don't you cry."

F C G7

Chorus: Oh, Susannah, Oh don't you cry for me ...

Repeat Verse1: I come from Alabama With a banjo on my knee ..

Repeat Chorus: Oh, Susannah, Oh don't you cry for me ...



YOU AIN'T GOING NOWHERE

Bob Dylan

4/4 time

Verse 1: G Am
Clouds so swift, the rain won't lift
 C G
The gates won't close, the railings froze
 Am
Get your mind off wintertime
 C G
You ain't going nowhere

Chorus G Am C G
Ooo-wee, ride me high, Tomorrow's the day my bride's gonna come
 G Am C G
Ooh, ooh, are we gonna fly Down in the easy chair

Verse 2: G Am
I don't care how many letters they sent
 C G
The morning came and the morning went
 Am
Pick up your money, pack up your tent,
 C G
You ain't going nowhere

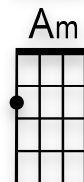
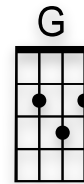
Chorus Ooo-wee, ride me high

Verse 3: G Am
Buy me a flute and a gun that shoots
 C G
Tailgates and substitutes
 Am
Strap yourself to the tree with roots
 C G
You ain't going nowhere

Chorus Ooo-wee, ride me high ...

Verse 4: G Am
Gengis Khan he could not keep
 C G
All his kings supplied with sleep
 Am
We'll climb that hill no matter how steep
 C G
When we get up to it

Chorus Ooo-wee, ride me high ...



Multiple Chord Song:

BLOWING IN THE WIND

Bob Dylan

4/4 time

Verse1: C F C Am C F G G7
How many roads must a man walk down, before you call him a man?
 C F C Am C F G G7
How many seas must a white dove sail, before she sleeps in the sand?
 C F C Am C F G
How many times must the cannonballs fly, before they're forever banned?

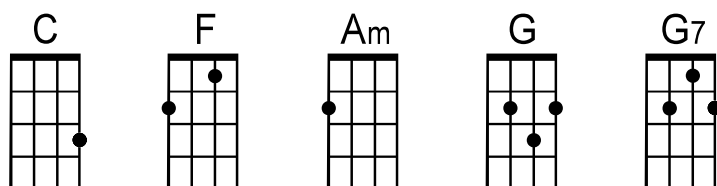
Chorus: F G C Am
The answer my friend, is blowing in the wind.
 F G C
The answer is blowing in the wind.

Verse 2: C F C Am C F G G7
How many years must a mountain exist, before it is washed to the sea?
 C F C Am C F G G7
How many years can some people exist, before they're allowed to be free?
 C F C Am C F G
How many times can a man turn his head, and pretend that he just doesn't see?

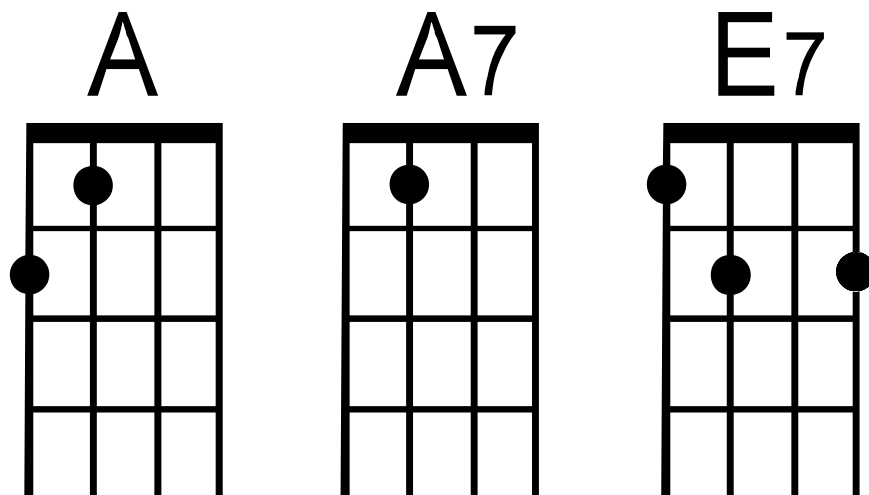
Chorus: F G C Am
The answer my friend, is blowing in the wind.
 F G C
The answer is blowing in the wind.

Verse 3: C F C Am C F G G7
How many times must a man look up, before he can see the sky?
 C F C Am C F G G7
How many ears must one man have, before he can hear people cry?
 C F C Am C F G G7
How many deaths will it take 'till he knows, that too many people have died?

Chorus X2: F G C Am
The answer my friend, is blowing in the wind.
 F G C
The answer is blowing in the wind. (repeat)



6. Some New Chords:

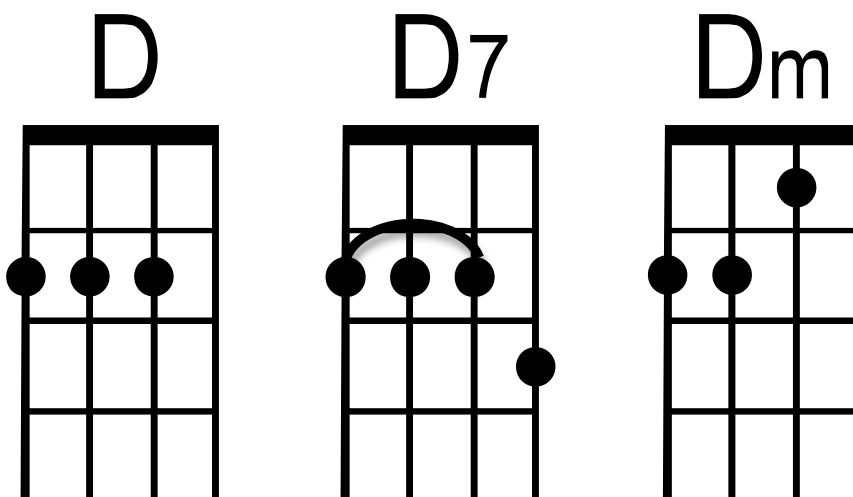


Suggested fingering:

2 1

1

1 2 3



Suggested fingering: 2 1 3

1 1 1 2

2 3 1

These new chords allow you to play many songs in the keys of

G – using the main chords G; G7; C ; D7;

D – using the main chords D; D7; G; A7;

A – using the main chords A; A7; D; E7;

F – using the main chords F; C; G7; Dm

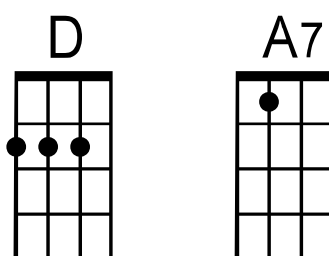
7. Some more songs

DOWN IN THE VALLEY

Traditional American folk song

3/4 time suggested strum: D _ D U D U

- Verse1: D A7
Down in the valley, the valley so low
 D
Hang your head over, hear the wind blow
 A7
Hear the wind blow, dear, hear the wind blow;
 D
Hang your head over, hear the wind blow.
- Verse2: D A7
Roses love sunshine, violets love dew,
 D
Angels in Heaven know I love you,
 A7
Know I love you, dear, know I love you,
 D
Angels in Heaven know I love you.
- Vese3: "If you don't love me, love whom you please,"
 "Throw your arms round me, give my heart ease,"
 "Give my heart ease, dear, give my heart ease,"
 "Throw your arms round me, give my heart ease,"
- Verse4: Write me a letter, send it by mail;
 Send it in care of the Birmingham jail,
 Birmingham jail, dear, Birmingham jail,
 Send it in care of the Birmingham jail.
- Verse5: Roses love sunshine, violets love dew,
 Angels in Heaven know I love you,
 Know I love you, dear, know I love you,
 Angels in Heaven know I love you.



BIG YELLOW TAXI

Joni Mitchell

4/4 time suggested strum: D _ D U _ UD _

Verse:

G D
They paved paradise and put up a parking lot

G A7 D
With a pink hotel, a boutique and a swinging hot spot

D
Chorus: Don't it always seem to go
 G D
 That you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone
 G A7 D
 They paved paradise and put up a parking lot

Verse:

G D
They took all the trees and put them in a tree museum

G A7 D
And they charged the people a dollar and a half just to see 'em

Chorus: Don't it always seem to go ...

Verse:

G D
Hey farmer, farmer put away that DDT now

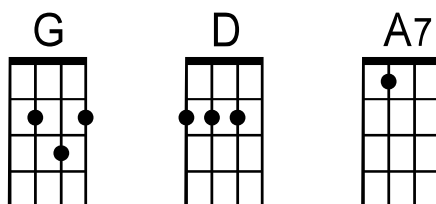
G A7 D
Give me spots on my apples But leave me the birds and the bees, Please!

Chorus: Don't it always seem to go ...

G D
Verse: Late last night I heard the screen door slam
G A7 D
And a big yellow taxi took away my old man

Chorus x2

G	A7	D
They paved paradise and put up a parking lot		
They paved paradise and put up a parking lot		



IKO IKO

folk tune
New Orleans Rhythm: D _ U UD _ _ UD D _ _

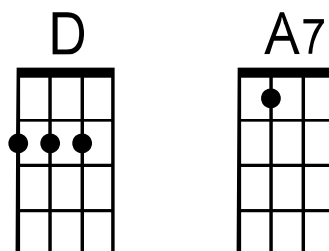
Verse 1: D A7
My grandma and your grandma were sittin' by the fire
D
My grandma told your grandma I'm gonna set your flag on fire

Chorus: D A7
Talkin' 'bout hey now, (hey now!) Hey now, (hey now!) Iko, iko unday
D
Jockamo feeno ai nanay Jockamo fee nanay
(Chorus after each verse)

Verse 2: D A7
Look at my king all dressed in red Iko, iko, unday
D
I betcha five dollars he'll kill you dead Jockamo fee nanay

Verse 3: D A7
My flag boy and your flag boy Were sittin' by the fire
D
My flag boy told your flag boy I'm gonna set your flag on fire

Verse 4: D A7
See that guy all dressed in green Iko, iko, unday
D
He's not a man, he's a lovin' machine Jockamo fee nanay



MAGGIE

Foster & Allen

4/4

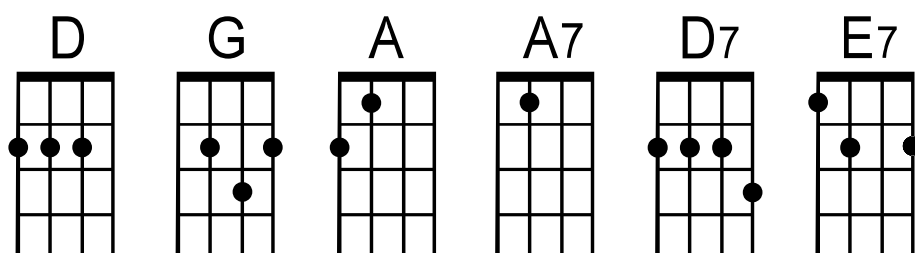
suggested strum D_ DU DU DU

Verse 1: D G
I wandered today to the hills Maggie,
 D A A7
To watch the scene below,
 D G
The creek and the creaking old mill Maggie,
 D A7 D D7
As we used to long, long ago,

Chorus 1: G D
The green grove is gone from the hills Maggie,
 A E7 A A7
Where once the daisies sprung.
 D D7 G
The creaking old mill is still Maggie,
 D A7 D
Since you and I were young.

Verse 2: D G
Oh they say that I am feeble with age Maggie,
 D A A7
My steps are much slower than then,
 D G
My face is a well written page Maggie,
 D A7 D D7
And time all alone was the pen.

Chorus 2: G D
They say we have outlived our time Maggie
 A E7 A A7
As dated as songs that we've sung,
 D D7 G
But to me you're as fair as you were Maggie,
 D A7 D
When you and I were young.



5. Basic Strum Patterns

Keep your strumming hand loose and use your wrist rather than your whole arm. If you strum your ukulele too close to the bridge it sounds very tinny (which might be an effect you want sometimes) The 'sweet spot' on a ukulele is usually where the neck hits the body. Most people use their pointy finger to strum. When you strum down, you should be hitting the strings with your nail. When you're strumming up, use the fleshy tip of your finger and keep a regular up/down movement going. But you can use your thumb or all or any of your fingers depending on the sound you want

D = down stroke; U = up stroke

Basic 4/4 – ballads	D _ D _ D _ D _
	1 2 3 4

4/4 - variation	D _ D U D _ D U
	1 2 & 3 4 &

In some styles you might emphasise certain beats e.g. folk and rock styles sometimes emphasise beats 2 and 4 (*blowing in the wind; jambalaya; you ain't going nowhere*)

Swing 4/4 (or blues)	D_U D_U D_U D_U
	1&a 2&a 3&a 4&a

Basic 3/4 – Waltz	D _ D _ D _
	1 2 3

3/4 - variation	D _ D U D U	(emphasises 1 st beat of the bar)
	1 2 & 3 &	

There are endless variations on strumming patterns and there are no right or wrong patterns as long as 1: you play in time 2: all players are playing the same pattern

Many variations of the above patterns can be used. Different patterns suit different styles of song.

E.g. New Orleans rhythm (such as for Iko Iko)

D _ _ U _ U D _	_ U D _ D _ _ _
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Also similar to the "Bo Diddley" rhythm:

D _ D U _ U D _	_ U D _ D _ _ _
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

(Used in songs like *Willie & the Hand Jive* **Eric Clapton** or *Not Fade Away* by **Buddy Holly** and *Faith* by **George Michael**)

Strum Patterns – part 1

1. **Down Strokes on the beat**

Down strokes occur on the beat only

1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
↓	-	↓	-	↓	-	↓	-
D		D		D		D	

Eg: Row, row, row your boat
 London's burning
 Happy together

2. **Down / up**

down stroke on the beat , up strokes on the off beat (+)

4/4	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑
	D	U	D	U	D	U	D	U

Eg: Hes got the whole world
 Horse with no name
 Tom Dooley
 26 miles
 If I had a Hammer

3/4	1	+	2	+	3	+
	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑
	D	U	D	U	D	U

Eg: I Can't help falling in love
 Brahm's Lullaby

Strum Patterns – part 2

3.. Miss the 1st up beat in the bar

4/4	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
	↓	-	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑
	D	-	D	U	D	U	D	U

Eg: You a'int goin' nowhere
Route 66
Ukulele bay
Jolene
Daydream

3/4	1	+	2	+	3	+
	↓	-	↓	↑	↓	↑
	D	-	D	U	D	U

Eg: House of the rising sun
Catch the wind
Amazing grace

4. Offbeat (2 & 4 only)

works with a lot of gospel songs

4/4	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
	-	-	↓	-	-	-	↓	-
	-	-	D	-	-	-	D	-

or emphasise 2 & 4 in down/up rhythm

4/4	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑	↓	↑
	D	U	D	U	D	U	D	U

Eg: jambalaya
Brand new key
I'll fly away

Strum Patterns – part 3

5. Skip the middle beat

4/4	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
	↓	-	↓	↑	-	↑	↓	↑
	D	-	D	U	-	U	D	U

Eg: Stand By Me
Jackson
Leaving On A Jet Plane
Jamaica Farewell

6. Hiccup off beat

4/4	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
	-	-	↓	-	-	↑	↓	-
	-	-	D	-	-	U	D	-

Eg: Will The Circle Be Unbroken
I'm Walkin'
These Boots Are Made For Walkin'
Jambalaya

7. Ska / Reggae off beat

4/4	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
	-	↑	-	↑	-	↑	-	↑
	-	U	-	U	-	U	-	U

Eg: Ob La Di Ob La Da
Walkin' To New Orleans

Strum Patterns – part 4

8. Shuffle (Swing or Blues)

4/4 1 + a 2 + a 3 + a 4 + a
 ↓ _ ↑ ↓ _ ↑ ↓ _ ↑ ↓ _ ↑
 D _ u D _ u D _ u D _ u
 long short long short

Down beats held, up beats short

Eg: Lots of Blues Tunes such as
 Sweet Home Chicago
 Kansas City
 Don't You Lie To me

9. Step, Step & Hop

4/4 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +
 ↓ _ ↓ _ _ ↑ ↓ _
 D _ D _ _ U D _

Eg: Chapel Of Love

10. Off Beat with final skip

4/4 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + a
 _ ↑ _ ↑ _ ↑ _ ↑↓
 _ U _ U _ U _ U D

Eg: Down By The Riverside

11. Combining Rhythms

Many songs or tunes can combine various rhythms to make things more interesting. Sometimes just to spice up a song as it progresses or to highlight different sections. E.g. one rhythm for the verse another for the chorus.

Some songs you could try this with are:

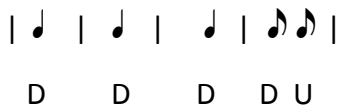
I'm Walkin'; Da Do Ron Ron; Stray Cat Strut; They're Red Hot;
 Feelin' Groovy; Ain't She Sweet; Bye Bye Love
 Or any number of others

RHYTHM IDEAS

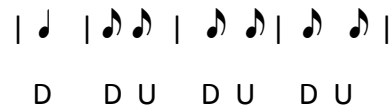
Each box represents one beat.

- Clap hands to get the rhythm
- Play each rhythm on the instrument (the first beat in each box should be a down stroke)
- Try to combine two or more of the rhythms one after the other

eg 1: pop tarts hot cocoa



eg 2: hot cocoa chicken nuggets



RHYTHM DEMONSTRATION

 Pop Tarts 	 Hot Cocoa 	 Scrambled Eggs 	 Chicken Nuggets 	 Pork Tenderloin 
2a.jpg	3a.jpg	3b.jpg	4a.jpg	4b.jpg
 Cinnamon Bun 	 Strawberry Jam 	 Apple Turnover 	 Barbeque Chicken 	 Pizza Casserole 
4c.jpg	4d.jpg	4e.jpg	5a.jpg	5b.jpg
 Carrot Sticks and Dip 	 Beef Ravioli 	 Rice Crispie Cookies 	 Pancakes, Maple Syrup 	 Cinnamon Applesauce 

FOR MY MUSIC LEARNING FRIENDS.

CHORD CHART

	maj	6	7	9	maj7	m	m6	m7	m9	sus2	sus4	+	dim
A													
A# / Bb													
B													
C													
C# / Db													
D													
D# / Eb													
E													
F													
F# / Gb													
G													
G# / Ab													