

# Doing Ukulele Right!



## Here is the **ONLY** “rule”

The pad of your left thumb goes behind the neck of your ukulele and follows along behind your middle finger just like Stu is doing above. We should never ever ever ever see your left thumb. There are no exceptions ... and if you do this one thing, your life will be so much easier down the road when we end up dealing with difficult chords and when speed matters.

## A Simple Way to Make Playing Easier

Add a button onto the end of your ukulele and wear a strap when you play. You'll need to drill a small pilot hole in the end of your uke. It's OK.

## What You **DON'T** Need

**A Capo:** You'll be making so many bar chords a capo will just get in the way. If you have guitar in your background, you'll have to let it go.

**A Pick:** Seriously throw them away. You'll be using all of your fingers simultaneously in lots of different ways and a pick will be of no help. If you want to grow out the fingernails on your right hand it's kinda weird but useful. Sorry, but the fingernails on your left hand hafta go. A manicurist can still get unicorn stickers onto short nails.

## Ukulele Types

**Soprano:** Small and traditional.

**Concert:** A little bigger and easier to play.

**Tenor:** Most adults should be playing tenor.

**Baritone:** Four string guitar for bigger hands.

**U-Bass:** The lowest ukulele is tuned like a bass.

**Banjolele:** An ukulele with a banjo head for playing real loud without teeth or shoes.

Your hand size and finger shapes determine the best size for you. Wait to buy an expensive ukulele until you know what sound and playability issues matter for you. Almost all ukuleles can be amplified by adding an electronic pickup.

## Stuff You'll Need

- An ukulele, duh!
- A button and an ukulele strap
- A gig bag with a shoulder strap
- A Snark ST-8 clip-on tuner
- A music stand and light
- A three-ring binder with section dividers
- Highlighters and pencils
- A kazoo ... no really

**Strings:** If your strings are white or black, you need to change them to modern fluorocarbon within six months of your initial purchase. You need to change strings at least once a year.

**A Note About Low-G Tuning:** A metal-wound Low-G string can tear your instrument apart if it's not built for the pressure. You can always use a plastic Low-G string (but they don't sound good). Low-G ukuleles are built stronger and cost more.

## Other Helpful Notes

- Hold your ukulele at a 60-degree angle.
- Make sure the back of the ukulele remains in contact with the front side of you.
- Don't lay your ukulele in your lap or let it fall into a horizontal position.
- Dots are on frets 5, 7 and 10. Memorize!
- Tension will ruin your joy in music. The only pain you should feel is on your fingertips and your left thumb should feel tired.