

Ukulele Info and Resources

Firstly: The spelling is **UKULELE**, not **UKELELE**. This may help when you are looking for resources online!

There are several types, or sizes of uke. By far the commonest (what you likely have) is the **Soprano**. Other standard types are the

- Concert slightly bigger, thus more space for your fingers and louder.
- Tenor has a longer neck, allowing greater flexibility with melodies and Alternate chord patterns.
- Baritone. Much larger and more guitar like. Tuning is the same as the top four Strings on a guitar.

String numbering: There is a standard convention for numbering the strings. This is very useful info when being taught chords, replacing strings, reading Tabs (see below). The numbering starts at the bottom string ie. the one closest to your lap when you are holding the uke in a playing position, and goes from 1 to 4.

Tuning: The standard tuning of Soprano, Tenor and Concert ukes is C G E A:

- String 4 (nearest your head) G tuned up an octave compared to the others
- String 3 C
- String 2 E
- String 1 A

Hint: For some reason, when you buy strings the packet may state a different tuning – A D F# B. Ignore that – always work from the string numbers, which will also be on the packet.

If you have a keyboard instrument, pitch pipe etc and the ear for it that's all you need for tuning. If not, don't panic! There are accessories to help:

Online tuner: <http://www.ukuleletricks.com/ukulele-tuner/>

This site allows you to play the correct pitch of each of the string.

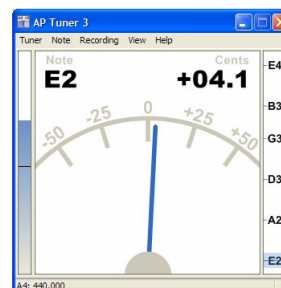
Tuner for Iphone, Ipad

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/ukulele-tuner/id327762565?mt=8>

If you have a Windows or Android Smartphone it will likely have an App Store button where you will find Uke Tuners. If you have an android phone, in the App Store search for Gstrings.

If you don't trust your ear, some tuners (including the Android one above) can also "listen" to the note you are playing and on a meter on the screen tell you what the note is and whether you are sharp or flat.

For your PC try <http://www.ap tuner.com>. To use this you will have to have a mic attached to your PC.



Probably your best friend will be an actual tuner that you can pick up and attach to your uke! There are a range of these available. Most being flexible in that they can tune other instruments eg guitar, bass as well as ukes. These are available from most music shops from around \$25.

Ones I have used are Fzone FT-2001 or FMY-700, both of which clip on to your uke tuning head and are essentially a meter to show you whether each string is sharp or flat. The Aroma AMT550B is a freestanding unit which works both by mic or by clipping onto your uke (better) and can sound the notes as well as having the meter.

Changing strings: Fiddly and not for the faint hearted. Here's a couple of tips: Before removing a string, note carefully which way it is wound round the tuning shaft and how it is attached at the bridge. You will find that strings are wound to the **inside** of the shaft. This is important or you will get confused when tuning. Also, you will see that the string is wound **DOWN** towards the body of the uke from the hole where it is inserted in the tuning shaft. This helps keep it seated in its slot where it passes onto the fretboard.

Tip: Don't buy real cheapo strings (eg \$8 ones from TradeMe). Good brands selling for under \$20 include D'Addario, Martin, Mahalo.

Tip: When you change a string, it will stretch for the first week or so, thus you have to tune it constantly.

Chord Chart: A MUST HAVE and available online. Download one from <http://www.ukalady.com/Images/UkeChart.pdf>

Tabs: Tabs are ukulele arrangements of songs. Most commonly they show the lyrics of songs with the chords indicated. However there are also tabs which show how to pick the melody of a song. You can probably find a tab for pretty well any song ever written on the web! This site has hundreds: http://www.muffin.net.nz/muffin/Pdf_Tablatore.html

Music Shops:

Piano Traders, 90 Mt Eden Rd have a splendid range of ukes ranging in price from \$47 to \$400+. They also have tuners, strings and books. I can recommend the book "Kiwi Ukulele" by Mike Dickison.

KBB Music, 157 Manukau Rd and **Mainline MusicWorks**, 219 Great South Rd both have small ranges of ukes.

Mainline MusicWorks, 219 Great South Rd sells Ashton ukes. They are the cheapest at \$30, however they are of variable quality and you need to pick a good one (ie one that sounds in tune when you play chords)

Kapona, 861a Dominion Rd manufactures exquisite hand made ukes, with inlaid mother of pearl etc. However, you will have to be serious about it – they start from \$550!.