

Welcome to the Ukulele Band of Alabama!

We are so glad you joined us! This is a fun, supportive group. Our purpose is to Strum Happy by promoting joy and friendship through ukulele playing. The only rule for UBA is to have fun. You can know a little or a lot, either way, you are an important part of the UBA.

STRUM HAPPY!

Ukulele Playing Tips:

1. Choose a well made, set up ukulele with good strings. It does not have to be expensive to be a good instrument. Keep your instrument in a case or gig bag. A chromatic clip-on tuner will keep your instrument in tune. A music stand will hold your sheet music and books comfortably.
2. Good posture, finger and hand position will make the instrument easier to play and will relieve muscle strain.
3. Chord Correctly - good thumb position on the back of the neck, good finger position, fingertip right behind the fret, use the least amount of pressure to make the string ring
4. Practicing - Repetition of moving between chords is important. The chord shapes will start to feel natural and comfortable once you have practiced often and repeated the motions several times over a long period of time.
5. Progress Slowly - Work on one thing at a time. Concentrate on one hand only (only the chord shape, only the strumming) until you are comfortable and ready to add the other hand.
6. It helps to keep your sheet music organized in a notebook. We have a lot of music, and some of our members have several notebooks.
7. Listen and Watch - YouTube is a great resource, as is Ukulele Underground, and lots of other online sites.
8. Play In A Group - You will have more fun and have a ton of support in your musical journey.
9. Remember - Slow, methodical, relaxed, repetitive playing will make the magic happen. Slow it all down, take it easy, relax, and enjoy it.

Brief History of the Ukulele:

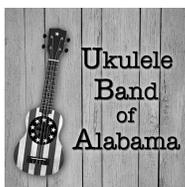
In 1879, Portuguese immigrants from the island of Madeira came to Hawaii to work on the pineapple plantations. With them, they brought their native instrument the machete/braguina. This small stringed instrument became wildly popular with the native Hawaiians, who claimed it as their own and renamed it "ukulele". Both the origins of the instrument and the name meaning have multiple theories, but Ukulele is thought to mean "jumping flea" due to how the fingers jump around on the strings.

Three immigrants stopped working in the fields and put their carpentry skills to work, making ukuleles. They were Manuel Nunes, Augusto Dias, and Jose do Esperito Santo. Nunes designed and produces instruments the longest, with the most success. He handed down his art to his sons and apprentices, which eventually became the Kamaka company.

In 1915, the ukulele hit the mainland, during the Panama Pacific International Exposition, held in San Francisco. Mainland makers, like Martin Guitars, started producing instruments. The ukulele became one of the symbols of the Jazz Age and the Roaring 20's. During the 1930's, popularity peaked and began to wane. The WWII era gave a short bump in popularity as servicemen and women brought the instrument back from the Pacific. With Rock&Roll and the music of the late 50's and 1960's, the ukulele slipped into obscurity.

Since the 1990's, the ukulele has enjoyed a great revival, with more and more popular musicians incorporating the ukulele into their music. Ukulele clubs have sprung up all over the world. Production and sales of the ukulele have increased greatly. The ukulele is being shared in many different cultures and is showing up in classrooms all over the world. It is a great time in history to be a Ukulele Player!

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**The
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