

The Little Book  
Of  
Ten Easy Melodies  
for  
Ukulele

First Pieces for Ukulele

Samantha Muir ARCM

*Twinkle Twinkle, Michael Row the Boat Ashore, Kum Bah  
Yah, Frere Jaques, Shortnin' Bread, Ode to Joy, When the  
Saints, Lavender's Blue, Shady Grove & O Susanna.*

*In tab & notation. Includes notes on how to play the pieces,  
basic theory, fret board diagram & chord charts.*

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For additional tips on using this booklet please visit  
<https://iloveclassicalukulele.com/blog/>

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## About Me

I am a performer, arranger and teacher based in Dorset in the UK. I studied classical guitar at the Royal College of Music in London. A few years ago I picked up a ukulele and fell in love with it! Inspired by the great John King I arrange classical pieces for the ukulele, often in campanella style. Campanella literally means “little bells” and this effect is achieved by placing the melodic notes across the strings. The notes ring on and over each other creating a beautiful sonorous sound.

In 2015 I was commissioned by music publishers Schott to arrange a book of 35 Scottish Folk Tunes for ukulele. The book comes with a CD. Some of the pieces are also included on The Beauty of Uke CD. You can buy that book/CD from Schott or Amazon.

<https://uk.schott-music.com/shop/scottish-folk-tunes-for-ukulele.html>

The Little Book of ... Series for ukulele includes a number of ebooks of my own classical and traditional arrangements for ukulele. Please visit my website for more information.

<http://www.samanthamuir.com/ukulele-2/>

In 2017 I launched a new website called I Love Classical Ukulele which is intended to be a resource for classical ukulele players. The site promotes my own work and the work of other classical ukulele players and arrangers.

<https://iloveclassicalukulele.com>

I am currently doing a PhD at the University of Surrey, Guildford, UK. The aim is to create new works for classical ukulele.

If you have any queries or comments, or if you just want to say *hi*, you can contact me on the following email:

[uke4u2@icloud.com](mailto:uke4u2@icloud.com)

*“Something truly unique in the British ukulele scene.”*

- The Grand Northern Ukulele Festival -

<http://northernuke.com/home/>

# Tab & How to read it

## Background

Tablature, or tab, is an ancient form of musical notation which indicates fret positions and strings rather than musical pitches. This system was used by fretted stringed instruments such as the lute, vihuela and guitar during the Baroque and Renaissance Periods. Tab is still used today to notate many styles of music including rock, pop, bluegrass, folk, ragtime and classical music.

## How To Read Tab

Strings are represented by horizontal lines.

The ukulele has 4 strings so there are 4 lines.



Numbers are placed on the horizontal lines tell you which fret to hold down.

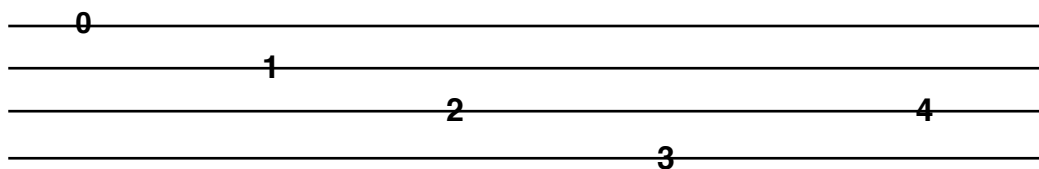
0 = open string

1 = 1st fret

2 = 2nd fret

3 = 3rd fret

4 = 4th fret etc



So, 0 placed on the 1st line tells you to play the open 1st string.

1 placed on the 2nd line indicates 1st fret 2nd string.

2 placed on the 3rd line indicates 2nd fret 3rd string.

3 placed on the 4th line indicates 3rd fret 4th string.

4 placed on the 3rd line indicates 4th fret 3rd string.

Rhythm and phrasing are established by dividing the horizontal lines into bars with vertical lines.

### Bar Lines

Divide the notes into bars.

### Double Bar Lines

Indicate the end of the piece.

The diagram shows a three-line ukulele tablature for strings T, A, and B. The time signature is 4/4. The first bar contains four crotchets (0, 0, 0, 0). The second bar contains two crotchets (0, 0) with a tie between them. The third bar contains four crotchets (1, 1, 0, 0). The fourth bar contains four crotchets (2, 2, 0, 0) and ends with a double bar line. Labels with arrows point to the time signature, bar lines, double bar lines, and crotchets. A text box explains that a curved line between two identical notes indicates they are tied.

Ukulele

Time Signature

Bar Lines

Double Bar Lines

Crotchet beats

A curved line between 2 identical notes indicates the notes are tied. The 2nd note is held rather than played.

### Time Signature

The top number of the time signature tells you how many beats are in each bar and the bottom number tells you what type of beats make up each bar. In 4/4 time there are 4 crotchet beats (or quarter notes) per bar. See the above example. In order to make music more interesting there are a whole range of different rhythmic values. Throughout this tutor we will look at the different rhythms associated with each piece.

### Example of lute tab

The image shows a musical score with two staves. The top staff is labeled 'VOICE' and contains a melody in G major with lyrics: 'Go crys-tal tears, like to the morn - ing show'rs, And'. The bottom staff is labeled 'LUTE' and contains a lute tablature with letters 'a', 'b', 'c', 'd' on the strings. The lute part is in 4/4 time and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

VOICE

Go crys-tal tears, like to the morn - ing show'rs, And

LUTE

# Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Chords: C, F, C, F, C, G<sup>7</sup>, C

4/4

T  
A  
B

0 0 0 0 1 1 0 0 2 2 0

5

Chords: C, F, C, G<sup>7</sup>, C, F, C, G<sup>7</sup>

T  
A  
B

0 0 1 1 0 0 2 0 0 1 1 0 0 2

9

Chords: C, F, C, F, C, G<sup>7</sup>, C

T  
A  
B

0 0 0 0 1 1 0 0 2 2 0

# Michael Row Your Boat Ashore

The first system of music is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff contains a melody of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and a whole note F4. Above the staff are three chord diagrams: C major (x02321), C major (x02321), and F major (113321). The bass clef staff contains a bass line of quarter notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, G2, and a whole note F2.

The second system of music is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff contains a melody of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, and G4. Above the staff are two chord diagrams: C major (x02321) and C major (x02321). The bass clef staff contains a bass line of quarter notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, and G2.

The third system of music is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff contains a melody of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, and G4. Above the staff are four chord diagrams: G7 (320003), C major (x02321), G7 (320003), and C major (x02321). The bass clef staff contains a bass line of quarter notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, B2, A2, and G2.

# Kum Bah Yah

First system of musical notation for 'Kum Bah Yah'. It consists of a treble clef staff in 4/4 time and a guitar tablature staff. The treble staff contains a melody of quarter and eighth notes. Above the treble staff are five chord diagrams: C, F, C, C, and C. The tablature staff shows fret numbers (0, 1, 2) and includes a bar line.

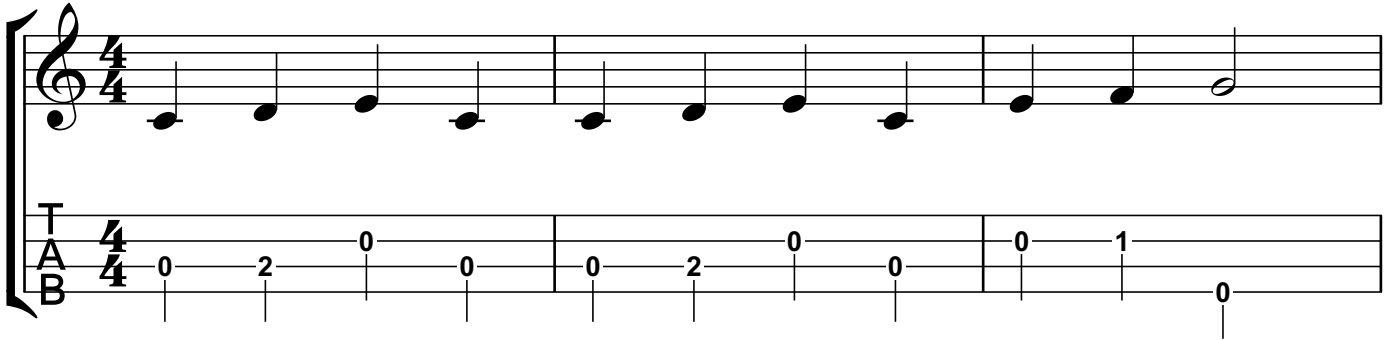

Second system of musical notation for 'Kum Bah Yah', starting at measure 5. It consists of a treble clef staff in 4/4 time and a guitar tablature staff. The treble staff contains a melody of quarter and eighth notes. Above the treble staff are four chord diagrams: F, G7, C, and C. The tablature staff shows fret numbers (1, 0, 2, 2, 0, 0) and includes a bar line.

Third system of musical notation for 'Kum Bah Yah', starting at measure 8. It consists of a treble clef staff in 4/4 time and a guitar tablature staff. The treble staff contains a melody of quarter and eighth notes. Above the treble staff are six chord diagrams: F, C, F, C, G7, and C. The tablature staff shows fret numbers (0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 2, 2, 0) and includes a bar line.

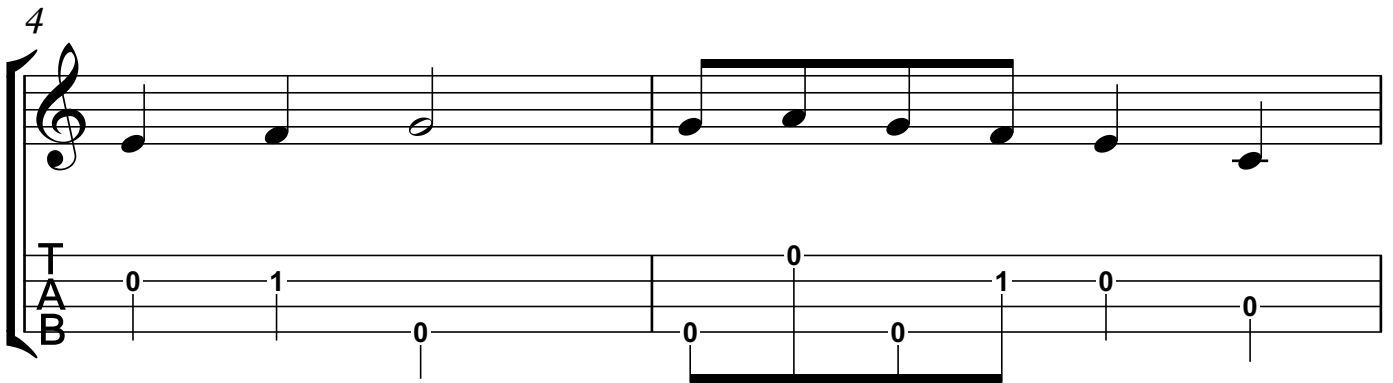


# Frere Jaques

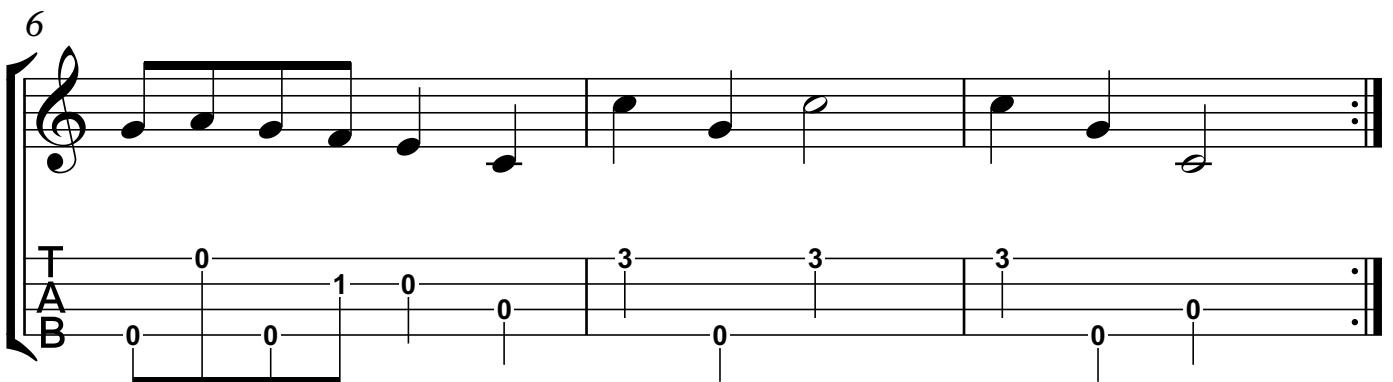
C (use C throughout)



4



6



# Ode to Joy

Beethoven

The first system of music for 'Ode to Joy' is in 4/4 time. The treble clef staff contains a melody of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The bass clef staff contains guitar tablature: 0 0 1 0 0 1 0 2 0 0 2 0 0 2 2. The 4/4 time signature is written above the bass staff.

5

The second system of music continues the melody from the first system. The treble clef staff contains a melody of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The bass clef staff contains guitar tablature: 0 0 1 0 0 1 0 2 0 0 2 0 2 0 0. The number 5 is written above the treble staff.

9

The third system of music continues the melody. The treble clef staff contains a melody of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The bass clef staff contains guitar tablature: 2 0 0 2 0 1 0 0 2 0 1 0 2 0 2 0. The number 9 is written above the treble staff.

13

The fourth system of music concludes the piece. The treble clef staff contains a melody of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The bass clef staff contains guitar tablature: 0 0 1 0 0 1 0 2 0 0 2 0 2 0 0. The number 13 is written above the treble staff.

# Shortnin' Bread

Swing Rhythm

The musical score for "Shortnin' Bread" is presented in two systems. The first system consists of a treble clef staff in 4/4 time and a guitar tablature staff. The melody line begins with a quarter note on G4, followed by quarter notes on A4, B4, and C5, then a half note on B4, and another half note on A4. The second measure of the first system contains a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, and a half note on B4. The guitar tablature for the first system shows fret numbers 0 for all notes. Above the first system, two chord diagrams are provided: "C\*" (C major with a star) and "C" (C major). The second system continues the melody and tablature. The first measure of the second system is marked with a "3" above the treble staff, indicating a triplet. The melody line in the second system has a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, and a half note on B4. The second measure of the second system has a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, and a half note on B4. The third measure of the second system has a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, and a half note on B4. The fourth measure of the second system has a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, and a half note on B4. The guitar tablature for the second system shows fret numbers 0 for all notes, except for a "2" on the second string in the third measure of the second system. Above the second system, three chord diagrams are provided: "C", "G7", and "C". The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

\* C chord may be replaced with C7 (see chord charts at the back of the book).

# When The Saints

Musical notation for measures 1-4. Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Chords: C, C, C, C. Tablature: 0 0 1 0, 0 0 1 0, 0 0 1 0, 0 0 1 0.

Musical notation for measures 5-9. Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Chords: C, C, G7, G7, C. Tablature: 0 0 0 0, 2 0 0 2, 0 0 0 0.

Musical notation for measures 10-12. Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Chords: C, F, F. Tablature: 0 0 0 0, 1 0 1 0, 0 0 0 0.

Musical notation for measures 13-16. Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Chords: C, C, G7, C, C. Tablature: 0 0 0 0, 0 2 0 0, 0 0 0 0.

# Lavender's Blue

Chord diagrams for the first system:  
C:

Chord diagrams for the second system:  
C:

Chord diagrams for the third system:  
F:

Chord diagrams for the fourth system:  
F:

Chord diagrams for the fifth system:  
C:

Chord diagrams for the sixth system:  
C:

Chord diagrams for the seventh system:  
G7:

Chord diagrams for the eighth system:  
C:

# Shady Grove

The first system of music for 'Shady Grove' is written in 4/4 time. It consists of a treble clef staff and a guitar tablature staff. The treble staff contains four measures of music with notes and rests. Above the treble staff are four chord diagrams: Dm, C, Dm, and F. The guitar tablature staff shows fingerings for the strings: 2-2-2-2 for the first measure, 0-2-0 for the second, 2-2-1 for the third, and 0 for the fourth.

The second system of music for 'Shady Grove' is written in 4/4 time and begins with a measure rest labeled '5'. It consists of a treble clef staff and a guitar tablature staff. The treble staff contains four measures of music with notes and rests. Above the treble staff are five chord diagrams: Dm, C, Dm, C, and Dm. The guitar tablature staff shows fingerings: 3-0-0 for the first measure, 0-2-0 for the second, 2-1-0-0 for the third, and 2 for the fourth.

# O Susanna

Stephen Foster

The musical score for "O Susanna" is presented in four systems. Each system consists of a treble clef staff with a 4/4 time signature and a guitar accompaniment staff. The guitar accompaniment is written in tablature, with numbers 0, 2, and dots indicating fret positions and string numbers. Chord diagrams for C and G are provided above the treble staff in each system. The score is divided into four systems, with measure numbers 4, 7, and 10 indicated at the beginning of each system.

System 1: Treble staff starts with a C chord diagram. Tablature: 0 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0

System 2: Treble staff starts with a G chord diagram. Tablature: 2 | 0 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2

System 3: Treble staff starts with a G chord diagram. Tablature: 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0

System 4: Treble staff starts with a G chord diagram. Tablature: 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2

2

13

C

T  
A  
B

16

C

F

T  
A  
B

19

C

G

C

T  
A  
B

22

G

C

T  
A  
B



# C Major

## Scale, Chord & Arpeggio

### *C Major Scale*

Treble Clef: C (0), D (2), E (0), F (1), G (3), A (0), B (2), C (3)  
 Bass Clef: C (0), D (2), E (0), F (1), G (3), A (0), B (2), C (3)

Treble Clef: B (2), A (0), G (3), F (1), E (0), D (2), C (0)  
 Bass Clef: B (2), A (0), G (3), F (1), E (0), D (2), C (0)

**C**  
  
*C Major*  
 Chord

### *C Major Arpeggio*

Treble Clef: C (0), E (0), G (0), C (3), E (0), G (0), C (0)  
 Bass Clef: C (0), E (0), G (0), C (3), E (0), G (0), C (0)

## SCALES

### What Is A Scale?

A scale is a series of notes organised in order of pitch. When the pitch increases the scale is called ascending and when the pitch decreases the scale is called descending.

### What Is A Major Scale?

In Western music the major scale (also called the Ionian mode) is one of the most commonly used scales. There are 12 different major scales (i.e. 12 different keys). The major scale has 7 different notes. The 1st and 8th notes are the same but the 8th note is an octave higher (from Latin "octavus" meaning eighth). The major scale encompasses one octave. The major scale is the foundation for all other scales. It is also the foundation for understanding chords and harmony.

### C Major

One of the most commonly used keys (especially on the ukulele) is C major. The C major scale consists of the following pitches:

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C (an octave higher)
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII

Note: The key signature of C major has **no sharps or flats**.

### Why Is A Major Scale A Major Scale?

Different scales have different sounds. Minor scales sound sad while major scales sound happy. Pentatonic scales can sound Eastern or bluesy.

In order to understand these differences we need to understand how the major scale is constructed.

### Tones and Semitones

According to the Harvard Dictionary of Music a semitone (also called a half step) is "one half of a whole tone (also called a step). The semitone is the smallest interval in the tradition of Western music."

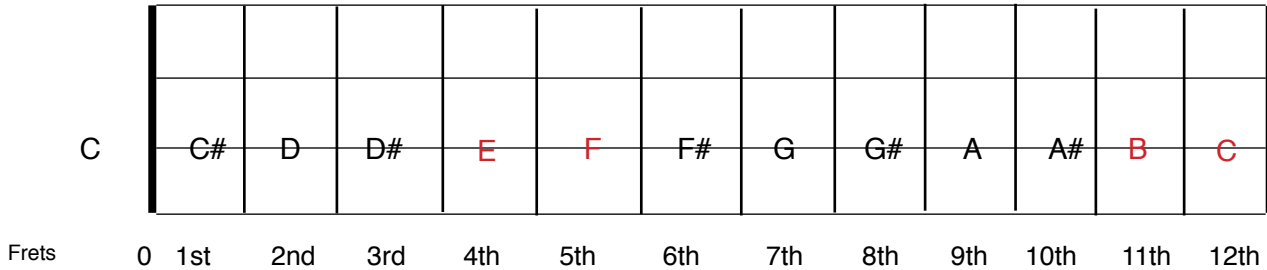
On the ukulele: **one fret = one semitone**  
**two frets = one tone**

### What Does That Actually Mean?

In order to understand semitones lets look at the chromatic scale starting on C. This scale uses all 12 pitches between C and C an octave higher.

C   C#   D   D#   E   F   F#   G   G#   A   A#   B   C  
 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12   (1\*)

You could play this scale on the 3rd string of the ukulele in the following way -



Note: The chromatic scale is a great way to learn the fingerboard of the ukulele! The scale can, however, also be played across the strings (please see the next page).

Note: The E on the 4th fret is the same note as the open E second string.  
 The G on the 7th fret is the same note as the open G fourth string (using high G tuning!).  
 The A on the 9th fret is the same note as the open A first string.

The distance from C to C# is a semitone. The distance from C# to D is a semitone. The distance from D to D# is a semitone. The distance from D# to E is a semitone. The distance from E to F (marked in red) is also a semitone. Similarly the distance from B to C (also marked on red) is a semitone. It is important to remember these 2 semitones:

**E to F**  
**B to C**

Back to C Major

Let's just recap on the notes of the C major scale.

C   D   E   F   G   A   B   C  
 I   II   III   IV   V   VI   VII   VIII

I have highlighted the semitones in red. The other notes are a tone apart. i.e. C to D = tone; D to E = tone; F to G = tone; G to A = tone; A to B = tone.

And, Voila! We have a simple formula for constructing major scales.

TONE - TONE - SEMITONE - TONE - TONE - TONE - SEMITONE

C Major Scale  
A look at the tones & semitones

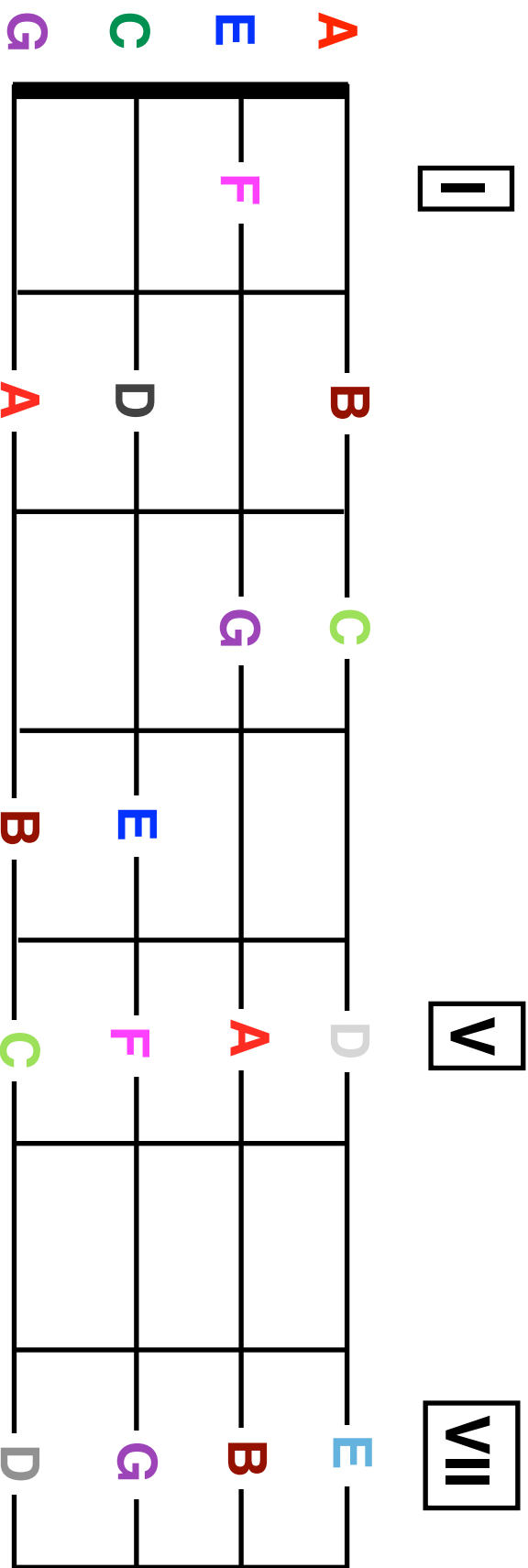
The image shows the C Major Scale in 4/4 time. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The notes are C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), and C5 (half). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB in 4/4 time. The fret numbers are 0, 2, 0, 1, 3, 0, 2, 3. Brackets connect the fret numbers to labels: T (Tone) for 0-2, T (Tone) for 2-0, S (Semitone) for 0-1, T (Tone) for 1-3, T (Tone) for 3-0, T (Tone) for 0-2, and S (Semitone) for 2-3.

Chromatic scale starting on C (in semitone steps)

The image shows a chromatic scale starting on C in 4/4 time. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The notes are C4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), D#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), and C5 (half). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB in 4/4 time. The fret numbers are 0, 1, 2, 3, 0, 1. Brackets connect the fret numbers to labels: S (Semitone) for 0-1, S (Semitone) for 1-2, S (Semitone) for 2-3, S (Semitone) for 3-0, and S (Semitone) for 0-1.

The image shows a chromatic scale starting on C in 4/4 time. The top staff is a treble clef with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are C#4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), D#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), E#4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), and C5 (half). The bottom staff is a guitar TAB in 4/4 time. The fret numbers are 2, 3, 4, 0, 1, 2, 3. Brackets connect the fret numbers to labels: S (Semitone) for 2-3, S (Semitone) for 3-4, S (Semitone) for 4-0, S (Semitone) for 0-1, S (Semitone) for 1-2, and S (Semitone) for 2-3.

## Ukulele Fingerboard to 7th Fret

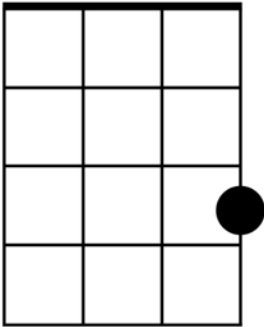


The notes are colour coded to indicate the same note but in the different positions. Notes which are the same but a higher pitch are indicated with a lighter colour. Sharps & flats have been left out.

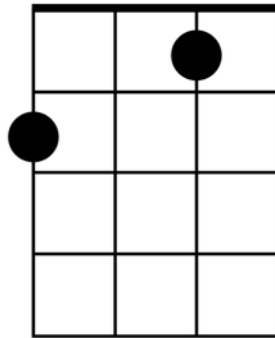
- C** The open C or open 3rd string is the lowest note on the ukulele (C6 tuning with high G).
- C** The light green C indicates C an octave higher than the open 3rd string C.
- D** 2nd fret 3rd string is the only D at this pitch.
- D** Indicates D an octave higher than D at the 2nd fret 3rd string.
- E** At the 7th fret 1st string is an octave higher than the open E 2nd string.

# Some Useful Chord Shapes

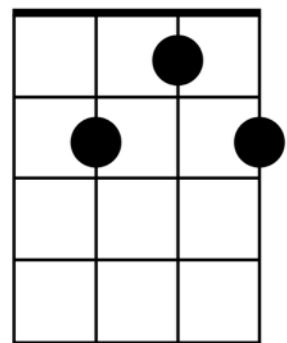
C



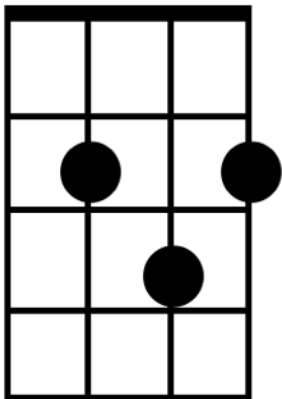
F



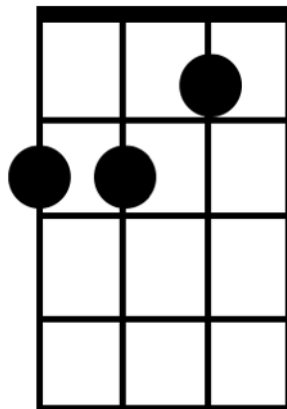
G<sup>7</sup>



G



Dm



C<sub>7</sub>

