

Learn the uke in an hour or less songbook

Created by Jake Rodrigues

**Learn the uke in an hour or less
with Jake @ www.jakerodrigues.com**



Part 1 : Introducing the uke - takes 15 mins
Buying a uke and where to buy
Uke sizes
Advice for lefthanders

Hello folks here is the accompanying songbook that goes along the videos I've made called learn the uke in an hour or less. Contained here are the songs I play on the videos and also complimentary information on buying a uke, what size uke, tuning etc. You'll also find a chord chart in the booklet which is pretty useful too and gives the best fingering positions for playing your first chords.

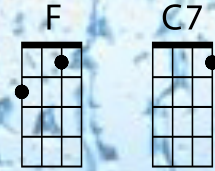
The songs are set out in an easy to read format & I try and keep the information on strumming etc down to the minimum. They are designed for you to sing along to and the timing for most folks is quite logical if you follow that formula. Chords are written either above the word where the chord changes or just before the word, and the chords used in the song are normally located on the sheet. As a rule the chords normally change on the 1 beat (or strong beat in the bar measure) and they normally change after 1 or 2 bars of playing (a bar being a count of 4)

There is an extra video on tuning (about 5 mins) which talks you through tuning & feel free to write you own caption below after doing the songs !



Singin' in the Rain

Arr.jakerodrigues.com2018



Intro: **(In F)** Do be do do

F

I'm singin' in the rain just singin' in the rain

C7

What a glorious feele*n*' i'm happy again

I'm laughing at clouds so dark up above

F

The sun's in my hear*t and I'm ready for love*

F

Let the stormy clouds chase everyone from the place

C7

Come on with the rain i've a smile on my face

I walk down the lane with a happy refrain

F

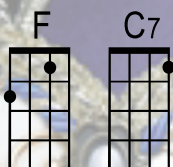
Just singin', singin' in the rain

Outro: **Do be do do etc**



Iko Iko : New Orleans Mardi Gras Song

Arrangement jakerodrigues.com2021



Verse1

F **C7**
My grandma and your grandma were sitting by the fire
C7 **F**
My grandma told your grandma I'm gonna set your flag on fire

Chorus

F **C7**
Talkin' 'bout hey now (hey now) hey now (hey now) Iko Iko un day
C7 **F**
Jockamo feeno ai nanay Jockamo fee na nay
F **C7**
Talkin' 'bout hey now (hey now) hey now (hey now) Iko Iko un day
C7 **F**
Jockamo feeno ai nanay Jockamo fee na nay

Verse2

F **C7**
Look at the king all dressed in red Iko Iko un day
C7 **F**
I betcha five dollars he'll kill you dead Jockamo fee na nay

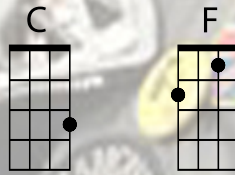
Chorus

Verse 3

F **C7**
See that guy all dressed in green Iko Iko un day
C7 **F**
He not a man he's a loving machine Jockamo fee na nay

Chorus

I FOUGHT THE LAW: THE CLASH



VERSE: C/F-C/C/F-C/C/F-C X2

CHORUS: F/F/C/C/F/F/C/F-C/C/F-C

C **F** **C**
BREAKING ROCKS IN THE HOT SUN
C **F** **C**
I FOUGHT THE LAW AND THE LAW WON - REPEAT
C **F** **C**
I NEEDED MONEY 'CAUSE I HAD NONE
C **F** **C**
I FOUGHT THE LAW AND THE LAW WON - REPEAT

F **C**
I MISS MY BABY AND I FEEL SO SAD I GUESS MY RACE IS RUN
F
WELL SHE IS THE BEST GIRL THAT I EVER HAD
C **F** **C**
I FOUGHT THE LAW AND THE LAW WON - REPEAT X4

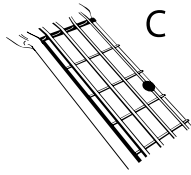
C **F** **C**
ROBBIN' PEOPLE WITH A SIX GUN *
C **F** **C**
I FOUGHT THE LAW AND THE LAW WON - REPEAT
C **F** **C**
I MISS MY BABY AND I MISS MY FUN
C **F** **C**
I FOUGHT THE LAW AND THE LAW WON (REPEAT TILL THE END)



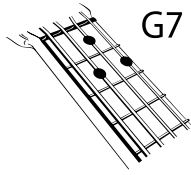
ROCK N ROLL ENDING PLEASE !

Jambalaya : Hank Williams

Arrangement jakerodrigues.com 2019



C



G7

This is Hank Williams classic song about love, fishing, eating & punting all the way down in Louisiana, USA.



Intro: |G7|G7|C | C ///|

Verse 1

[C] Goodbye Joe me gotta go me oh
 [G7] My oh, _ me gotta go pole the pirogue down the
 [C] Bayou, _ my Yvonne the sweetest one me oh
 [G7] My oh, _ son of a gun we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou _

Chorus

[C] Jambalaya and a crawfish pie and filé
 [G7] Gumbo, _ cause tonight I'm gonna see my ma cher
 [C] Amio, _ pick guitar fill fruit jar and be
 [G7] Gay-o, _ son of a gun we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou _



Verse2

[C] Thibodaux Fontaineaux the place is
 [G7] Buzzin', _ kinfolk come to see Yvonne by the
 [C] Dozen, _ dress in stile and go hog wild me oh
 [G7] My oh, _ son of a gun we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou _

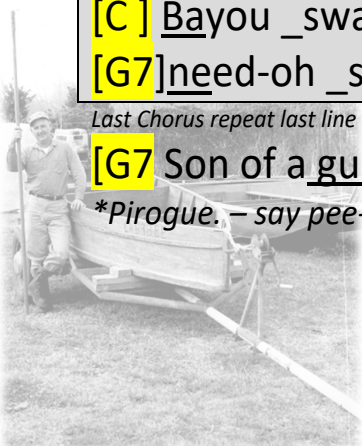
Verse3

[C] Later on, swap my mon, get me a
 [G7] Pirogue _ and I'll catch all the fish on the
 [C] Bayou _ swap my mon, to buy Yvonne what she
 [G7] need-oh _ son of a gun we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou _

Last Chorus repeat last line

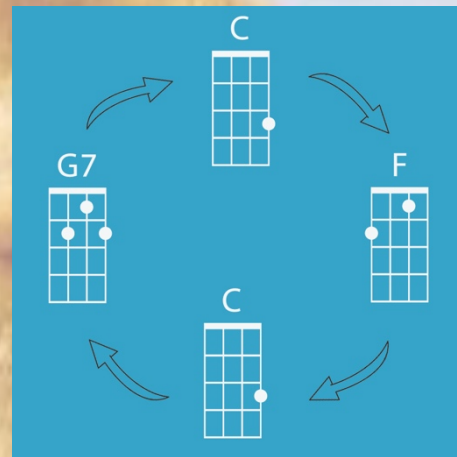
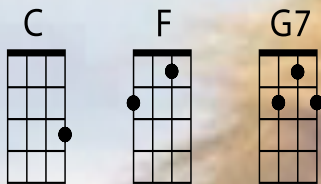
[G7] Son of a gun we'll have big fun on the [C] bayou _

*Pirogue. – say pee-ro



The lion sleeps tonight

Arr: Jakerodrigues.com 2018



Chorus

C	F
A-wimoweh, a-wimoweh	A-wimoweh, a-wimoweh
C	G7
A-wimoweh, a-wimoweh	A-wimoweh, a-wimoweh
C	F
A-wimoweh, a-wimoweh	A-wimoweh, a-wimoweh
C	G7
A-wimoweh, a-wimoweh	A-wimoweh, a-wimoweh

C	F
Ahhh Eeeee	Ahhhh Eeeeeeee Ahhhh
C	G7
Eee Umm Umm	A-Way -yyyyyyy
C	F
Ahhh Eeeee	Ahhhh Eeeeeeee Ahhhh
C	G7
Eee Umm Umm	A-Way -yyyyyyy

C	F	C	G7
In the jungle the mighty	jungle the lion	sleeps tonight	
C	F	C	G7
In the jungle the mighty	jungle the lion	sleeps tonight	

Chorus

C	F	C	G7
Near the village the peaceful	village the lion	sleeps tonight	
C	F	C	G7
Near the village the peaceful	village the lion	sleeps tonight	

Chorus

<i>(play this verse with thumb for a different effect)</i>			
C	F	C	G7
Hush, my darling don't fear	my darling the lion	sleeps tonight	
C	F	C	G7
Hush, my darling don't fear	my darling the lion	sleeps tonight	

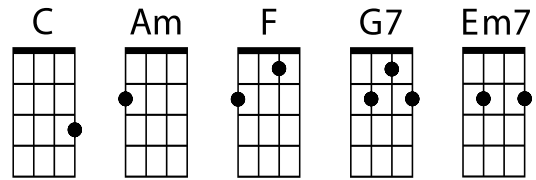
Chorus x 4 (Fading in last Chorus)

YMCA : Village People

Arrangement: jakerodrigues.com 2017

Verse: C/C/AM/AM/F/F/G7/G7 x 2
Chorus: C/C/AM/AM/F/F/G7/G7 x 2

Intro with Kazoo: Em7/Em7/Am/G7/G7 *this is entirely optional*



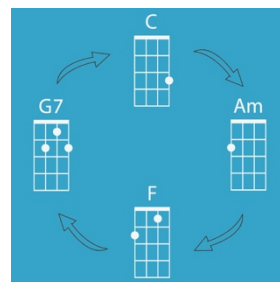
C	Am
Young man, there's no need to feel down. I said, <u>young</u> man, pick yourself off the ground.	
F	G7
I said, <u>young</u> man, 'cause you're in a new town, there's no <u>need</u> to be unhappy.	
C	Am
Young man, there's a place you can go. I said, <u>young</u> man, when you're short on your dough.	
F	G7
You can <u>stay</u> there, and I'm sure you will find many <u>ways</u> to have a good time.	

Chorus

(Pick C note x 8)-----

C	Am
It's fun to stay at the <u>Y-M-C-A</u>	It's fun to stay at the <u>Y-M-C-A</u>
F	G7
They have <u>everything</u> for you men to enjoy, You can <u>hang</u> out with all the boys...	
C	Am
It's fun to stay at the <u>Y-M-C-A</u> . It's fun to stay at the <u>Y-M-C-A</u>	
F	G7
You can <u>get</u> yourself cleaned, you can <u>have</u> a good meal, you can <u>do</u> whatever you feel...	

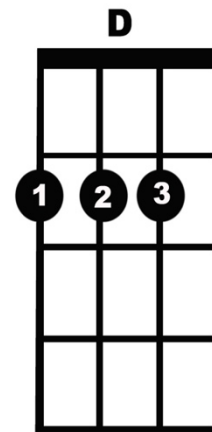
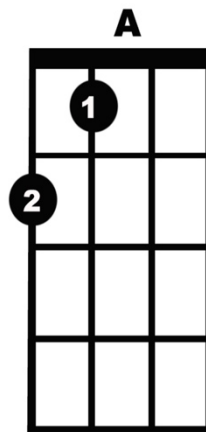
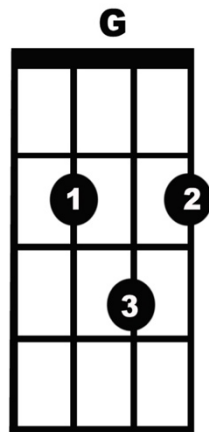
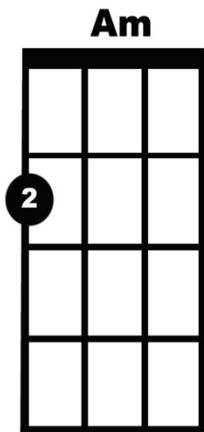
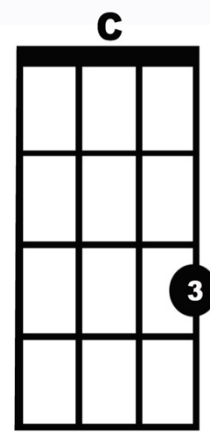
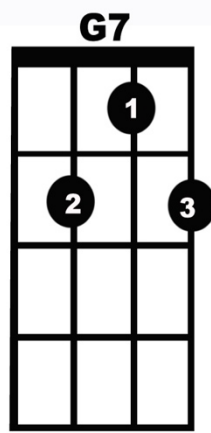
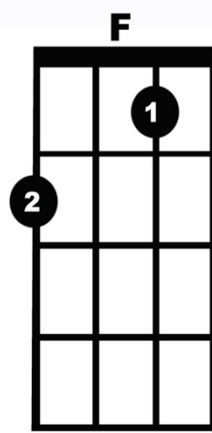
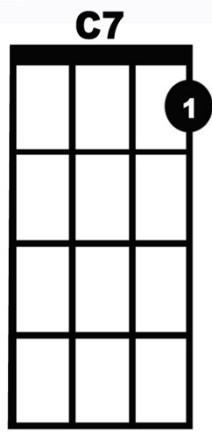
(C) Young man, are you listening to me? I said,
 (Am) Young man, what do you want to be? I said,
 (F) Young man, you can make real your dreams but you
 (G7) Got to know this one thing!
 (C) No man does it all by himself. I said,
 (Am) Young man, put your pride on the shelf, and just
 (F) Go there, to the Y.M.C.A. I'm sure
 (G7) They can help you today.



(C) Young man, I was once in your shoes. I said,
 (Am) I was down and out with the blues. I felt
 (F) No man cared if I were alive. I felt
 (G7) The whole world was so jive.
 (C) That's when someone came up to me, and said,
 (Am) Young man, take a walk up the street, there's a
 (F) Place there called the Y.M.C.A they can
 (G7) Start you back on your way.

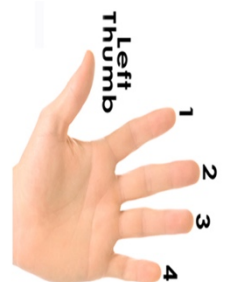
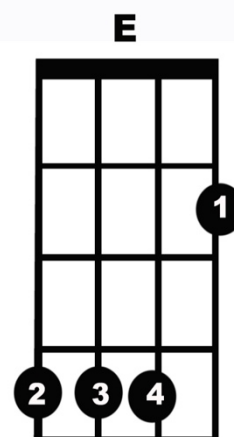
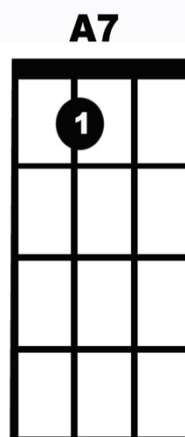
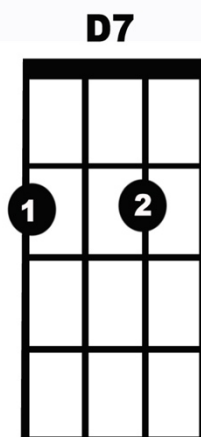
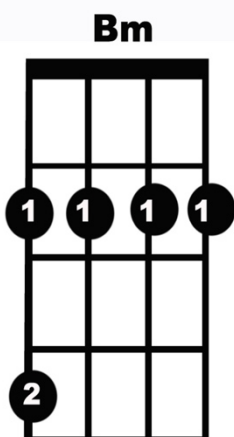
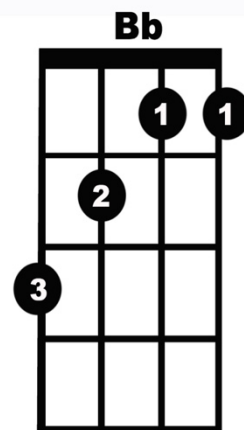
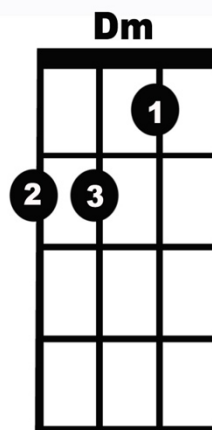
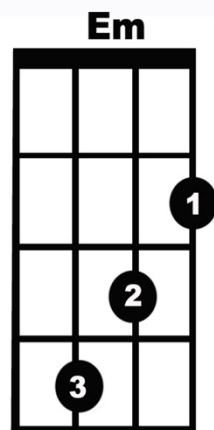
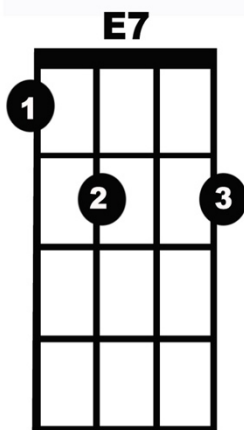


Which one are you ?



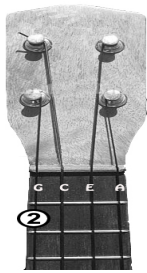
Ukulele Chords

jakerodrigues.com



Tuning the Uke

Ok so once we have a ukulele we want it to sound really pleasant when we sound chords. Here is a basic guide to getting you going on tuning. Firstly here are the notes you need to tune to.



The notes here are marked GCEA on the correct strings . The 2 number is the fingering for an Aminor chord to help you get your bearings.

I recommend an electronic tuner which costs between £5-20 . Either buy a dedicated uke tuner or buy one with a chromatic setting (often abbreviated to Chro) . Tuners should be set on the default position which is 440 Hz. You don't need to know what this means but essentially this is a standardised way of setting notes the same, sometimes you can set by accident to 442 etc so reset to 440 !



They normally clip on the headstock of the uke and tune by vibration. Be careful to only pluck one string at a time. There is normally a dial that will go to the 12 o'clock position when the tuning is correct. There is normally a visual of the note (eg.C and the dial will tell you whether it is sharp (too high) or flat (too low).

Notes are arranged in the following and follow the 8 letters of the alphabet ie ABCDEFG they then repeat ABCDEFG. Therefore if your G note says E you will have to turn your tuning peg round (probably 3-4 rotations for each note/letter).

If the string feels impossibly tight or very slack you are probably trying to tune too high or low by an octave (ie the right note but much too high). A rule of thumb is all the strings should feel the same tension as they are designed to work like this.



There are other tuners like these pitch pipes but you will need to hear the note and copy that to the string. Tuner Apps are also available for free on phones nowadays .

Lastly of you can tune up to the note ! not down . Sometimes this helps the friction pegs hold the wound string tighter and its normally easier to judge the change in pitch

Strumming the Ukulele :

Strumming the ukulele creates the energy and drives songs in particular forward. If you can dance (even really badly) you can strum OK ! Here are some real pointers to help though ...

- Most music/songs are in 4/4 or 2/4 time (often called standard) what this means is we split the rhythm into blocks of pulses to help us play. Remember the word 'most' here as a lot of the time you don't have to count you can be more instinctive just like when your dancing
- We strum mainly with our first finger (Peter Pointer) but we can use all our digits, though I caution about playing with our thumb as it engages our whole arm and only works with slow tempos
- The notes/chords sounded by strumming are a result of friction in hitting the strings, when we strum down it is a pushing motion & up strums are like pulling. This is why we need to practice to get used to controlling the energy we put into the act. Remember this is instinctive
- 4/4 & 2/4 are similar rhythm's except 2/4 is used more with uptempo dance tunes. 4/4 means 4 beats to the measure & 2/4 means 2 beats . We normally create a pulse by making the 1 beat or 'downbeat' slightly louder
- There are obviously other rhythms in music the most popular being $\frac{3}{4}$ & $\frac{6}{8}$
- In these classes I use word sounds to help us keep good time so we often count using the words Tea & Coffee, see below for details

Standard 4/4 strum: **TEA** TEA TEA TEA **TEA** TEA TEA TEA
 1 2 3 4 **1** 2 3 4

Standard 4/4 strum. Coffee Coffee Coffee Coffee Coffee Coffee Coffee Coffee
With an 8 quaver feel. 1 & 2 & 3. & 4. & 1 & 2 & 3. & 4. &

Play TEA as a downstrum & play COFFEE with a Down – Up strum ie Coff – ee

Now a 2/4 strum. Tea Coffee Tea Coffee. This plays as Down Down Up
 1. 2. & 1 2 &

- The patterns above will work for many if not most tunes & by varying them you can achieve a range of dynamics to help your playing
- One last vital strum is the simple notion of strumming the rhythm of what you sing ! This is the best way to add instant variety to your playing

Ukulele Question & Answers

- **Tuning my Uke** :All ukes need tuning regularly. The good news is electric tuners take the trouble to a certain extent out of tuning, they should cost between £5-£15. Go for one that is either a dedicated Uke tuner or one with a chromatic function. You can also use the internet, free tuning apps or old fashioned pitch pipes.
- **Buying a Uke**: Uke's can vary enormously in price. The starter uke's begin at around £25-35, but you can pay a lot more than them. From a reasonable shop you should be able to get a good uke for around £40-50 but I have taught many students who play extremely cheap uke's that are fine to play. For those on a very tight budget I'd suggest looking for a second hand Mahalo on ebay/charity shop which you should get for under £15 with postage if your canny. A new set of strings would really help to improve a cheap uke.
- **Strings**: You don't need to change strings on Uke's like you do on a guitar they are pretty reliable and as the tension is low they rarely break. If you buy an old Uke or a cheap one you might buy a set of strings to improve the sound. Strings take time to settle in so once they are put on they keep loosening for note for normally about a week before they settle in so don't panic. The best known strings for Ukes are Aquila strings (approx £5-7) which can be bought on the internet or in good music shops. A tip ! go for heavy gauge if possible ! Check out youtube for re- stringing instructions (there should be a couple of tutorials on my youtube uke link)
- **What Size Uke**: Uke's come in 4 sizes. Soprano, Concert, Tenor and Baritone. The first three listed are all able to take the C standard tuning. I've seen very large hands play tiny soprano ukes so it is possible. However if you know you struggle with finger mobility you might consider a larger uke (I use a Tenor most of the time !). The larger Ukes are a bit more pricey £50-80 starting price but they are comfortable to play and hold so be afraid. They do however take more space in your bag. Super petite is the Sopranino uke (the smallest and cutest you can get !)