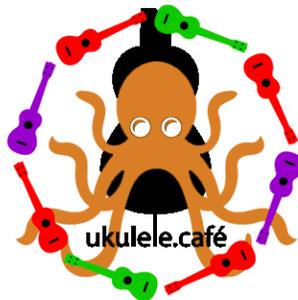




ONE FINGER UKULELE

Companion to the Video



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One Finger Ukulele

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Welcome to One Finger Ukulele. With this you can accompany yourself or jam with others on most popular songs – in any key – using only one finger on the fretboard!

This is a revised version of my One Finger Ukulele workshop from the 10th Annual Reno Ukulele Festival. If you attended that, you may remember that I had the tenors and baritone ukuleles tuning to different keys. This updated version now marries the two into one common key. The 3 part One Finger Ukulele video explains the basics. This document goes into more detail.

About Baritone vs. Tenor

Although you may play this system on either ukulele, a baritone is highly recommended. It sounds better because of the lower tones, the longer neck makes it easier to play, and the strings are more forgiving. I sell two baritones at ukulele.cafe that are customized for One Finger Ukulele. (Buying an additional uke is always good treatment for Ukulele Acquisition Syndrome!)

Should you prefer to stick with a tenor, please read the Warnings and Suggestions on the last page of this document.

Concerts? Sopranos? One Finger Ukulele will technically work on soprano and concert ukes but in a very limited way and is therefore not recommended. You are welcome to use a smaller uke to test and get a feel for One Finger Ukulele, but you should also review the “Tenor Warnings” on the final page and tune back to normal as soon as you are finished testing.

The Goals of One Finger Ukulele

- 1) Be able to play most songs by using only one finger at a time of your fretting hand.
- 2) Be able to play along with others in the same manner, in *any* key, when they are playing normally tuned ukes.
- 3) Finally have a *legitimate* reason for buying more ukuleles to treat your U.A.S.!

Why It Works – The Theory Behind One Finger Ukulele

A major chord is made up of the 1-3-5 notes in the root's scale. (C major is CEG: 1C 2D 3E 4F 5G 6A 7B)

To change a major chord into another common type of chord, like a minor or 7th, you *move* the number 3 note and/or add a note above the 5th note, but *common chord variations never* alter the 1 & 5 notes.

If you re-tune your ukulele so that all strings are either the 1 or 5 notes in a scale, barring any fret will give you a "5 chord" or "power chord" version of the root note, which will substitute or compliment any major, minor, 7th, minor 7th, major 7th, 6 chord and more. (After re-tuning for One Finger Ukulele, the root note for every chord is found along the 4th string of a baritone and the 3rd string of a tenor.)

Tuning for One Finger Ukulele

Baritone

From regular baritone tuning of DGBE, tune the 4th string from D *down* to C (1 full step down). Tune the 2nd string from B *up* to C (1/2 step up). Tune the 1st string from E *up* to G (1 1/2 steps up).

Tenor

From regular low-G tuning of GCEA, tune the 2nd string from E *up* to G (1 1/2 step up). Tune the 1st string from A *up* to C (1 1/2 steps up).

How To Play–The Mechanics of One Finger Ukulele

Once tuned as above, strumming the ukulele open will result in a C5 chord. This chord will substitute for C, Cm, C7, Cm7, Cmaj7, and many other variations of C. All other One Finger chords are played by barring all four strings on a given fret. The root note of that fret will dictate the chord. (After re-tuning for One Finger Ukulele, the root note for every chord is found along the 4th string of a baritone and the 3rd string of a tenor.) Here is a chart of all One Finger Ukulele chords:

Chord	C	C[♯]D[♭]	D	D[♯]E[♭]	E	F	G[♭]F[♯]	G	A[♭]G[♯]	A	B[♭]A[♯]	B	C
Fret	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Easier Barring!

Do you have trouble barring? In One Finger Ukulele, since you only need to use one finger, you can help your index finger bar more easily by pushing your middle finger down on top of it. Bonus! Over time, this will actually strengthen your barring with one finger for regular playing. Be sure to keep your thumb near the center of the back of the neck for maximum pinching/barring power.

1-4-5 Songs

Most songs in typical song books and played in uke clubs, etc. use the 1st, 4th, and 5th chords of a scale and often the 6 minor. The 2 and 3 minors are also common. These songs are referred to as “1-4-5 songs.” One Finger Ukulele tuning results in a C chord when the ukulele is strummed open. 1-4-5 songs in the key of C use the chords C, F, G (or G7). The 6 minor is Am, the 2 minor is Dm, and the 3 minor is Em. Once again, the full barring of any fret provides a substitute for any common chord including minor chords, but since you will encounter them in sheet music here are the locations of those six 1-4-5 chords:

Number	1		2m		3m	4		5		6m			1
Chord	C	C[♯]D[♭]	D	D[♯]E[♭]	E	F	G[♭]F[♯]	G	A[♭]G[♯]	A	B[♭]A[♯]	B	C
Fret	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Playing in other Keys

The most common keys in ukulele music are C, F, and G, with a few songs in D or A. Here is a chart of the 1-4-5 and 6-2-3 relative minors of all five keys, along with the fret locations for each chord in One Finger Ukulele.

KEY OF C

Number	1		2m		3m	4		5		6m			1
Chord	C	C♯D♭	D	D♯E♭	E	F	G♭F♯	G	A♭G♯	A	B♭A♯	B	C
Fret	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

KEY OF F

Number	5		6m			1		2m		3m	4		5
Chord	C	C♯D♭	D	D♯E♭	E	F	G♭F♯	G	A♭G♯	A	B♭A♯	B	C
Fret	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

KEY OF G

Number	4		5		6m			1		2m		3m	4
Chord	C	C♯D♭	D	D♯E♭	E	F	G♭F♯	G	A♭G♯	A	B♭A♯	B	C
Fret	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

KEY OF D

Number			1		2m		3m	4		5		6m	
Chord	C	C♯D♭	D	D♯E♭	E	F	G♭F♯	G	A♭G♯	A	B♭A♯	B	C
Fret	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

KEY OF A

Number		3m	4		5		6m			1		2m	
Chord	C	C♯D♭	D	D♯E♭	E	F	G♭F♯	G	A♭G♯	A	B♭A♯	B	C
Fret	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Enhancements

The C7

Even though you don't need to concern yourself with 7th chords, you can play a one finger C7 if you like. On baritone place one finger on the 3rd fret of the first string, on tenor place one finger on the 3rd fret of the second string. Then strum! You can hear how it adds flavor to "Down On The Corner" on the video.

The Sliding Bar

Try sliding into a bar chord position from the fret below it. For example, slide into an F chord by beginning in fret 4 and sliding to fret 5 as you strum. If used strategically, this technique enhances some songs.

Single Note Runs

A note or two thrown in-between chords can be effective. Play around with it! When you are strumming the open C chord, it is especially fun to fret individual notes with one finger *while strumming*. Start with the 2nd and 4th frets of the 2nd and 3rd strings then try others.

How to play Dim* chords

Diminished chords do pop up now and then in ukulele music. They do not lend themselves to the "5 chord" philosophy of One Finger Ukulele as the 5 note is flattened in a dim chord. You only have two "One-Finger" choices for a dim chord substitution. Both ignore the flattened 5 note:

- 1) Bar as usual but only play a single root note. (On baritone play only string 4, on tenor play only string 3.)
- 2) Bar as usual but only *pluck* the *two* root/1 notes. (On baritone pluck strings 4 and 2, on tenors pluck strings 3 & 1.)

**In case you ever look up Dim chords in a real/non-ukulele chord book, the dim chord commonly indicated in uke music is technically a dim7—I don't know why ukulele music refers to them incorrectly.*



Our Baritones—Customized for One Finger Ukulele!

To make it easier to play multi-chord songs in any key, we have customized two models of budget friendly baritone ukuleles.

The One Finger Ukulele Customizations are:

- D,E,F,G,A,Bb, and C markers on side of neck.
- Two strap pegs installed—(baritones are bigger, you'll want to play with a strap!)
 - Strings originally stretched and tuned to CGCG for "in-tune" longevity.
 - Padded Gig-bag included.

Starter songs diagrammed with three key variations and chord indicators.

A Few 1-4-5 Songs

Any of these songs and dozens more will work brilliantly with One Finger Ukulele.

Use the charts above to try them in several keys to find the best for your voice.

BAD MOON RISING
COTTON FIELDS
FREE FALLIN'
I WALK THE LINE
LAY DOWN SALLY
PANCHO & LEFTY
SLOOP JOHN B

BRING IT ON HOME TO ME
DOWN ON THE CORNER
FOLSOM PRISON BLUES
JOHNNY B GOODE
LOVE IS A ROSE
RING OF FIRE
TWIST AND SHOUT

BYE BYE LOVE
END OF THE LINE
I FOUGHT THE LAW
LA BAMBA
MIDNIGHT SPECIAL
SILENT NIGHT
WALK OF LIFE

Tenor Warnings

The required higher tuning of the 1st and 2nd strings puts additional strain on the bridge and *could* snap a string on any gcea tuned ukulele. Most modern ukuleles in good condition with a modern string set *should* be able to handle the extra strain, but ukuleles vary and you could snap a string or lift your bridge. Make sure that your bridge is not loose or lifting before re-tuning to One Finger Ukulele pitch. Please wear eye protection when tuning any strings up to a higher pitch.

Tenor Suggestions

Changing back and forth between two tunings on any ukulele will cause it to go out of tune more easily. If you like this method of playing, I highly recommend that you keep a tenor permanently set up for One Finger Ukulele. If you decide to obtain a new tenor to use with One Finger Ukulele, a cutaway body or sloping shoulder body is recommended to allow easy access to higher frets. An extended 18" scale also helps, providing a little more room when moving up the neck. Several builders will offer this as an option. (Our Pirate and Flatiron ukes have sloping shoulders and 18" scales. We can set up any of them like we do our baritones for One Finger Ukulele before shipping.)

How to Permanently Set Up a Tenor for One Finger Ukulele

Obtain a new high g tenor string set and a wound low G. My favorite is a flat wound .030 gauge string that eliminates finger squeak, such as the Fremont Soloist. (We sell them at ukulele.cafe for \$3.50.) You can also use any .030 wound string from a classical guitar set.

- Install low G/4th string and the 3rd and 1st strings as usual. Install the 4th/high g string in place of the 2nd string. Tune the strings as directed in the Tuning section below to GCGC. Vigorously strum the ukulele for about 60 seconds and retune. Repeat the strum/retune procedure a few more times.

**For more visit www.ukulele.cafe
or email playukemail@gmail.com**

