

# Uncle Rod's 'Ukulele Boot Camp'®

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A Field Guide  
for Non-Music Majors  
on how to use the 'ukulele  
to make music

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# Uncle Rod's 'Ukulele Boot Camp'®

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If someone handed you an 'ukulele,  
would you know how to use it to make music?

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Uncle Rod's 'Ukulele Boot Camp'® will help you learn the **basic skills** you must acquire to make musical sounds with your 'ukulele. This "quick & dirty" method does NOT require you to read music or to learn Music Theory.

The basic skills needed to play the 'ukulele involve learning chords by name & forming them accurately and developing the eye-hand coordination needed to move from chord to chord smoothly while strumming the strings in time with the music/melody/song.

There are only 2 parts to Uncle Rod's 'Ukulele Boot Camp'®: learning about **Chord Diagrams** and using **Practice Sheets**.

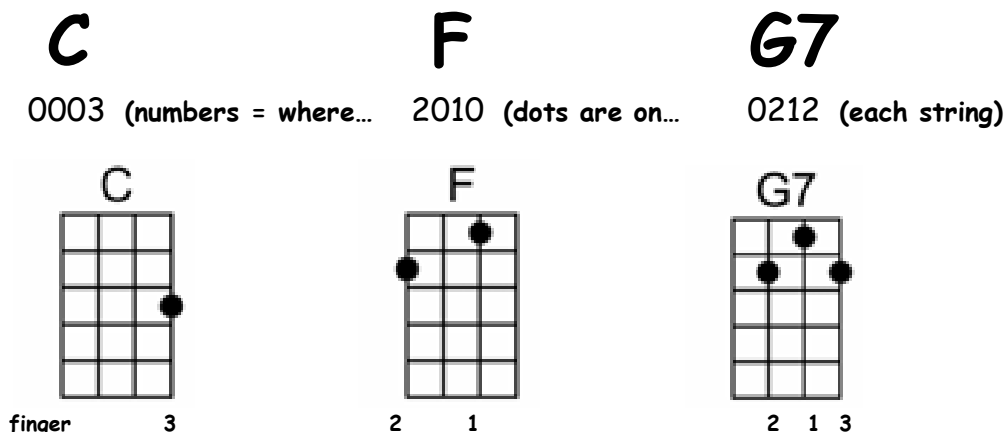
**I. Chord Diagrams** show you how to form the chords you will use to make musical sounds with your 'ukulele. These **chord diagrams** represent the 'top' portion of your 'ukulele's finger-board, near the tuning pegs, where you will be forming most of the chords.

The **4 vertical lines** of the diagram correspond to the strings of your 'ukulele. From Left to Right, the names of the lines/strings are **G, C, E, and A**. [If you are playing an 'ukulele which is tuned differently, please refer to the appropriate chord chart for that tuning and form the chords according to its diagrams.]

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The **horizontal lines** of the diagram represent the **frets**, the metal bars across the neck of your 'ukulele. The first (top) line corresponds to the **nut** at the top of the neck. The **nut** helps to position the strings over the fingerboard. (see the diagrams below)



The **dots** on the diagram indicate where your fingers should be placed on the strings to create the chord/sound of a given name. **Finger numbers** ( 1 - index, 2 - middle, 3 - ring, 4 - pinky ) indicate a conventional way to form the chords.

**II. Practice Sheets** present a series of "obstacle courses" for your mind and fingers to assist in developing the eye-hand coordination, finger strength, and mental dexterity needed to play the 'ukulele. The challenge/goal is to 'play' through each **Practice Sheet** (left to right, top to bottom) at a steady tempo without looking at your fingers or interrupting your strumming.

The **Practice Sheets** introduce you to frequently used chords in 5 commonly played keys: C, F, G, A, & D. When you have worked through each **Practice Sheet**, you will be able to play many of the songs written in those keys.

When you have worked through all the **practice sheets**, you will be able to play songs directly from 'ukulele songbooks. The more you practice, the more skillful you will become at playing the 'ukulele.

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## Some Important Guidelines:

1. Always TUNE your ukulele before beginning your practice sessions. Only practice with a properly-tuned instrument. This will help to train your 'ear'.
2. Don't worry about your STRUMMING style or your RHYTHM, yet. Those are the *last* things to work on. For now just practice forming the chords and changing from chord to chord at a regular strumming tempo.
3. Practice by strumming each chord 4\* TIMES then smoothly moving to the next chord. Reduce to 3 strums, 2 strums, and finally 1 strum per chord to challenge yourself. But always start with 4\* strums per chord. (\* or 8, then 4, then 3, etc)
4. There is NO MELODY for the Practice Sheets. There are only CHORDS and Chord CHANGES. Your Goal is to 'play' through each Practice Sheet smoothly, at a regular tempo. Start as slowly as necessary to ensure a uniform tempo *with smooth chord changes*.
5. Always say/think the NAME of the chord you are playing. You want to know the name of each chord you're forming and strumming.
6. Remember, you are laying a FOUNDATION for all your future 'ukulele efforts.

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# Practice Sheet #1 - key of C

**C**  
0003  
C

**Am**  
2000  
Am

**F**  
2010  
F

**G7**  
0212  
G7

**C**

**C°**  
2323  
Cdim

**Dm7**  
2213  
Dm7

**G7**

**C**

**C7**  
0001  
C7

**F**

**Fm6**  
1213  
Fm6

**C**

**Am**

**D7**  
2223  
D7

**G7**

**E7**  
1202  
E7

**Am**

**D7**

**G7**

**C**

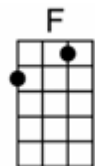
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# Practice Sheet #2 - Key of F

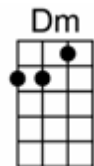
**F**

2010



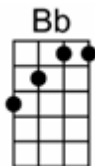
**Dm**

2210



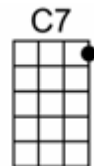
**Bb**

3211



**C7**

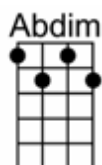
0001



**F**

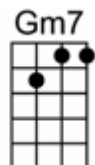
**F°**

1212



**Gm7**

0211

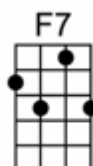


**C7**

**F**

**F7**

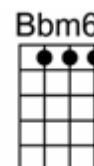
2313



**Bb**

**Bbm6**

0111

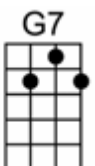


**F**

**Dm**

**G7**

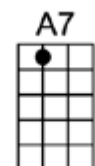
0212



**C7**

**A7**

0100



**Dm**

**G7**

**C7**

**F**

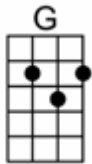
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# Practice Sheet #3 - key of G

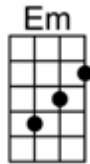
**G**

0232



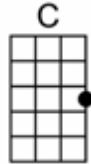
**Em**

0432



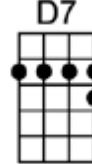
**C**

0003



**D7**

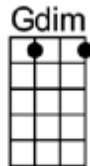
2223



**G**

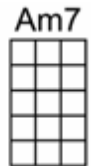
**G°**

0101



**Am7**

0000 (this is a real chord)

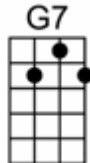


**D7**

**G**

**G7**

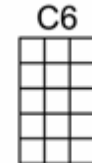
0212



**C**

**Cm6\***

2333\*

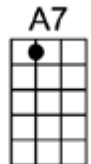


**G**

**Em**

**A7**

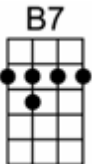
0100



**D7**

**B7**

2322



**Em**

**A7**

**D7**

**G**

\*(Cm6 diagram incorrect, like B7 but with strings 1 & 2 also covered)

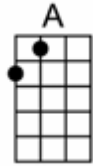
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# Practice Sheet #4 - key of A

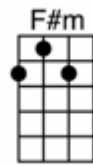
**A**

2100



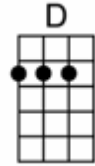
**F#m**

2120



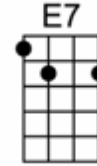
**D**

2220



**E7**

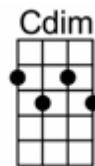
1202



**A**

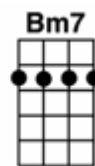
**A°**

2323



**Bm7**

2222

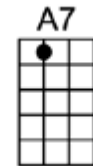


**E7**

**A**

**A7**

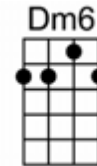
0100



**D**

**Dm6**

2212



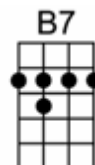
**A**

**F#m**

**B7**

**E7**

2322



**C#7**

1112



**F#m**

**B7**

**E7**

**A**

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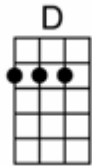
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# Practice Sheet #5 - key of D

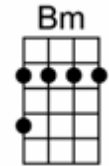
**D**

2220



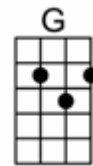
**Bm**

4222



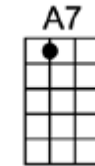
**G**

0232



**A7**

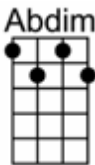
0100



**D**

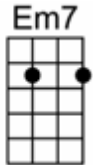
**D<sup>o</sup>** (also Fdim)

1212



**Em7**

0202

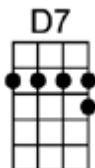


**A7**

**D**

**D7**

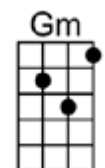
2223



**G**

**Gm6\***

0201\*

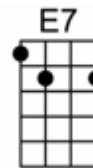


**D**

**Bm**

**E7**

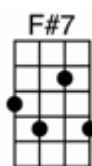
1202



**A7**

**F#7**

3424



**Bm**

**E7**

**A7**

**D**

\* (Gm6 diagram incorrect, remove dot from 2nd string, 3rd fret)

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**NOTE:** \*(diagram corrections for Cm6 and Gm6 at bottom of their pages)

You may have noticed that the 'Boot Camp Method' does NOT teach you how to play specific "songs".

When you are new to the 'ukulele, trying to play songs right from the start may NOT be the best way to learn to play the 'ukulele because you do not yet know what the chords are, how to form them, or how to change from chord to chord smoothly.

First learn to make musical sounds (chords) with your 'ukulele and practice chord changes. Then play songs. Attempting to play songs without prior preparation is doing it the hard way. It's like trying to write without knowing the alphabet or how to form the letters.

Until you are familiar with the chords, their names and how to form them, and until you have practiced changing from chord to chord so you can do so easily and smoothly, you have not really prepared yourself to play songs on the 'ukulele.

The fundamentals of playing the 'ukulele are:  
a) knowing the chords & forming them properly, and  
b) being able to change chords smoothly, in time with the tempo of the music. When you can do that, you can play any song on a 'ukulele.

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