



# THE UKULELE IS FUN

SOMEONE WHO PLAYS THE UKE

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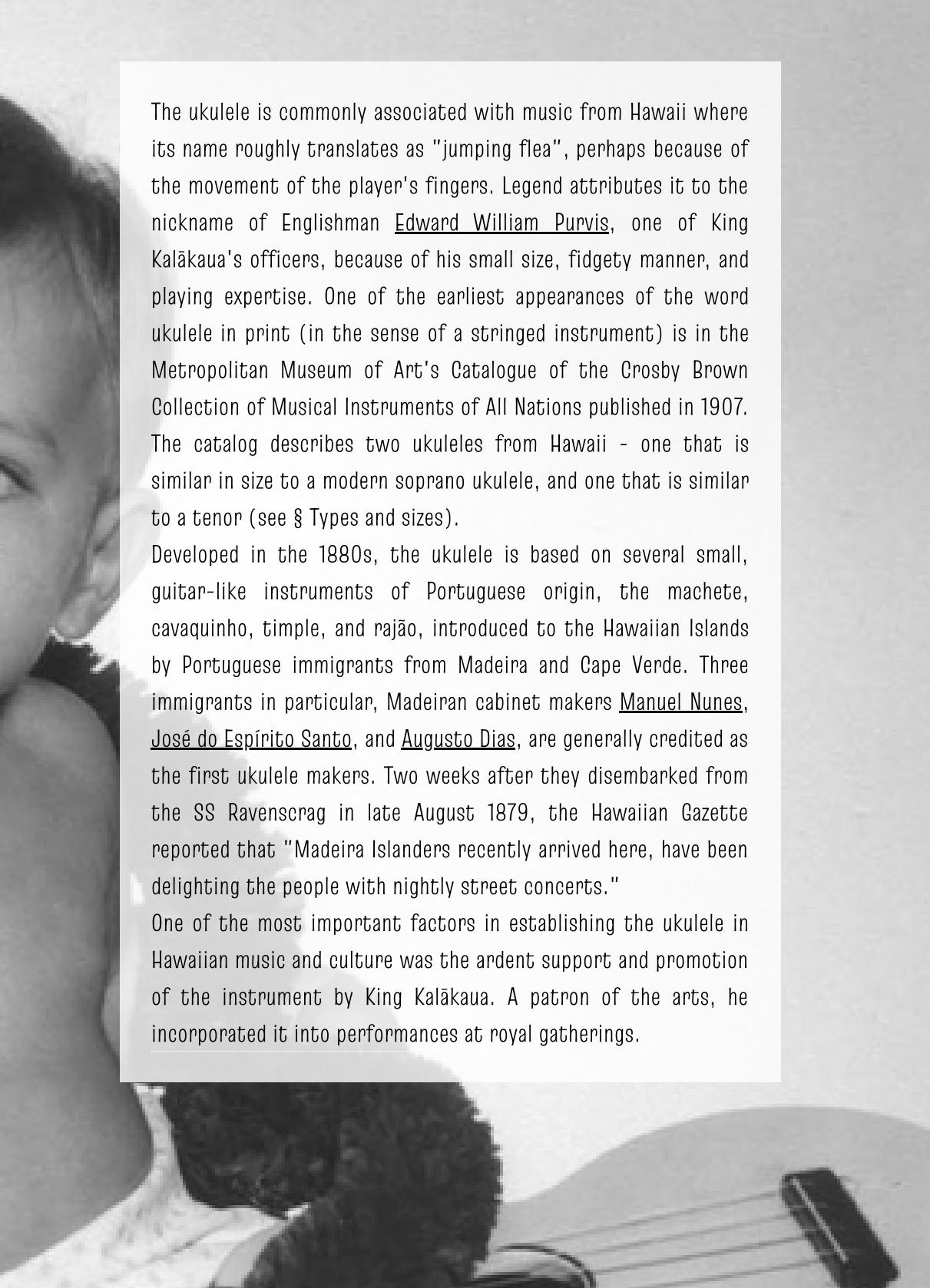
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Chapter 1

# IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SURF





The ukulele is commonly associated with music from Hawaii where its name roughly translates as "jumping flea", perhaps because of the movement of the player's fingers. Legend attributes it to the nickname of Englishman Edward William Purvis, one of King Kalākaua's officers, because of his small size, fidgety manner, and playing expertise. One of the earliest appearances of the word ukulele in print (in the sense of a stringed instrument) is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Catalogue of the Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments of All Nations published in 1907. The catalog describes two ukuleles from Hawaii - one that is similar in size to a modern soprano ukulele, and one that is similar to a tenor (see § Types and sizes).

Developed in the 1880s, the ukulele is based on several small, guitar-like instruments of Portuguese origin, the machete, cavaquinho, timple, and rajão, introduced to the Hawaiian Islands by Portuguese immigrants from Madeira and Cape Verde. Three immigrants in particular, Madeiran cabinet makers Manuel Nunes, José do Espírito Santo, and Augusto Dias, are generally credited as the first ukulele makers. Two weeks after they disembarked from the SS Ravenscrag in late August 1879, the Hawaiian Gazette reported that "Madeira Islanders recently arrived here, have been delighting the people with nightly street concerts."

One of the most important factors in establishing the ukulele in Hawaiian music and culture was the ardent support and promotion of the instrument by King Kalākaua. A patron of the arts, he incorporated it into performances at royal gatherings.

## CANADA

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In the 1960s, educator J. Chalmers Doane dramatically changed school music programs across Canada, using the ukulele as an inexpensive and practical teaching instrument to foster musical literacy in the classroom.[11] 50,000 schoolchildren and adults learned ukulele through the Doane program at its peak.[12] "Ukulele in the Classroom", a revised program created by James Hill and Doane in 2008 is a staple of music education in Canada.

## JAPAN

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The ukulele arrived in Japan in 1929 after Hawaiian-born Yukihiko Haida returned to the country upon his father's death, and introduced the instrument. Haida and his brother Katsuhiko formed the Moana Glee Club, enjoying rapid success in an environment of growing enthusiasm for Western popular music, particularly Hawaiian and jazz. During World War II, authorities banned most Western music, but fans and players kept it alive in secret, and it resumed popularity after the war. In 1959, Haida founded the Nihon Ukulele Association. Today, Japan is considered a second home for Hawaiian musicians and ukulele virtuosos.

## UNITED KINGDOM

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British singer and comedian George Formby was a ukulele player, though he often played a banjolele, a hybrid instrument consisting

of an extended ukulele neck with a banjo resonator body. Demand surged in the new century because of its relative simplicity and portability. Another British ukulele player was Tony Award-winner Tessie O'Shea, who appeared in numerous movies and stage shows, and was twice on The Ed Sullivan Show, including the night The Beatles debuted in 1964. The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain tours globally, and the George Formby Society, established in 1961, continues to hold regular conventions.

## UNITED STATES MAINLAND

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**PRE-WORLD WAR II →** The ukulele was popularized for a stateside audience during the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, held from spring to autumn of 1915 in San Francisco. The Hawaiian Pavilion featured a guitar and ukulele ensemble, George E. K. Awai and his Royal Hawaiian Quartet, along with ukulele maker and player Jonah Kumalae. The popularity of the ensemble with visitors launched a fad for Hawaiian-themed songs among Tin Pan Alley songwriters. The ensemble also introduced both the lap steel guitar and the ukulele into U.S. mainland popular music, where it was taken up by vaudeville performers such as Roy Smeck and Cliff "Ukulele Ike" Edwards. On April 15, 1923, at the Rivoli Theater in New York City, Smeck appeared, playing the ukulele, in *Stringed Harmony*, a short film made in the DeForest Phonofilm sound-on-film process. On August 6, 1926, Smeck appeared playing the ukulele in a short film *His Pastimes*, made in the Vitaphone sound-on-disc process, shown with the feature film *Don Juan* starring John Barrymore.

The ukulele soon became an icon of the Jazz Age. Like guitar, basic ukulele skills can be learned fairly easily, and this highly portable, relatively inexpensive instrument was popular with amateur players throughout the 1920s, as evidenced by the introduction of uke chord tablature into the published sheet music for popular songs of the time, (a role that was supplanted by the guitar in the early years of rock and roll). A number of mainland-based stringed-instrument manufacturers, among them Regal, Harmony, and especially Martin, added ukulele, banjolele, and tiple lines to their production to take advantage of the demand.

The ukulele also made inroads into early country music on old-time music parallel to the then-popular mandolin. It was played by Jimmie Rodgers and Ernest V. Stoneman, as well as by early string bands, including Cowan Powers and his Family Band, Da Costa Woltz's Southern Broadcasters, Walter Smith and Friends, The Blankenship Family, The Hillbillies, and The Hilltop Singers.

**POST-WORLD WAR II →** From the late 1940s to the late 1960s, plastics manufacturer Mario Maccaferri turned out about 9 million inexpensive ukuleles. The ukulele remained popular, appearing on many jazz songs throughout the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. Much of the instrument's popularity (particularly the baritone size) was cultivated by Arthur Godfrey on The Arthur Godfrey Show on television. Singer-musician Tiny Tim became closely associated with the instrument after playing it on his 1968 hit "Tiptoe Through the Tulips".



Empire workshop in 1883, where he made various stringed musical instruments, including guitars and mandolins. Both of his sons joined the family business, and in 1902, Louis, Jr., took over running it (August was the other son), and added ukuleles to the catalogue in the late 1910s to '20s.

**POST-1990 REVIVAL →** After the 1960s, the ukulele declined in popularity until the late 1990s, when interest in the instrument reappeared. During the 1990s, new manufacturers began producing ukuleles and a new generation of musicians took up the instrument. Jim Beloff set out to promote the instrument in the early 1990s and created over two dozen ukulele music books featuring modern music and classic ukulele pieces.

All-time best selling Hawaiian musician Israel Kamakawiwo'ole helped repopularise the instrument, in particular with his 1993 reggae-rhythmed medley of "Over the Rainbow" and "What a Wonderful World," used in films, television programs, and commercials. The song reached number 12 on Billboard's Hot Digital Tracks chart the week of January 31, 2004.

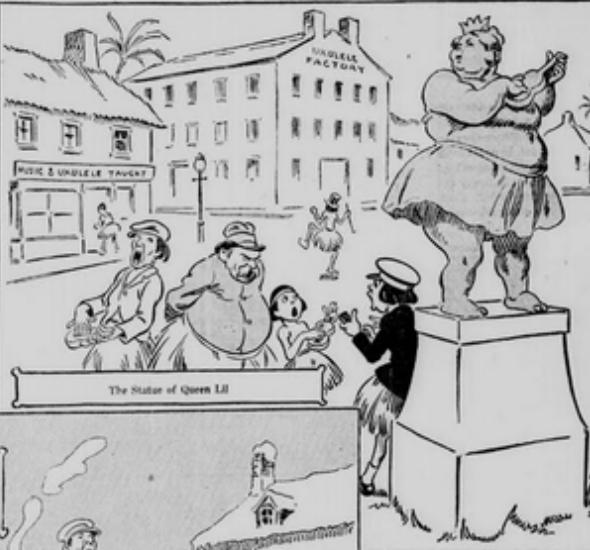
The creation of YouTube was a large influence on the popularity of the ukulele. One of the first videos to go viral was Jake Shimabukuro's ukulele rendition of George Harrison's "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" on YouTube. The video quickly went viral, and as of September 2020, had received over 17 million views.

# Ukulele Square, the Hawaiian Quarter of New York

(Drawn by L. M. Glackens.)



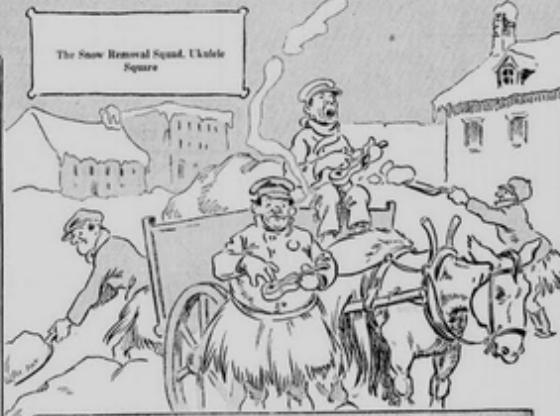
A Smart Church Wedding in Ukulele Square



The Statue of Queen Liliuokalani



Getting His Grass Trimmed



The Snow Removal Squad, Ukulele Square



Gentleman of the Hawaiian Quarter Misplaces His Skirt



Even the Cats Have the Habit



1916 cartoon by Louis M. Glackens satirizing the contemporary ukulele craze content

The Junk Man in Ukulele Square Is a Specialist

"What Every Think of  
Me Grass Skirt?"

Ukulele the Baby to Sleep

L.M.GLACKENS



A close-up photograph of a classical guitar's neck and headstock against a brick wall. The guitar's neck is made of light-colored wood and features six tuning pegs at the top. The headstock is dark brown. In the background, a wall made of light-colored, rectangular bricks is visible.

Chapter 2

# THE OBJECT

## CONSTRUCTION

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The ukulele is generally made of wood, though variants have been composed partially or entirely of plastic or other materials. Cheaper ukuleles are generally made from plywood or laminated woods, in some cases with a soundboard of a tonewood such as spruce. More expensive ukuleles are made of solid hardwoods such as mahogany. The traditionally preferred wood for ukuleles is a type of acacia endemic to Hawaii, called koa.

Typically, ukuleles have a figure-eight body shape similar to that of a small acoustic guitar. They are also often seen in nonstandard shapes, such as cutaway and oval, usually called a "pineapple" ukulele (see image below), invented by the Kamaka Ukulele company, or a boat-paddle shape, and occasionally a square shape, often made out of an old wooden cigar box.

These instruments usually have four strings; some strings may be paired in courses, giving the instrument a total of six or eight strings (primarily for greater strumming volume.) The strings themselves were originally made of catgut. Modern ukuleles use nylon polymer strings, with many variations in the material, such as fluorocarbon, aluminium (as winding on lower-pitched strings), and Nylgut.

Instruments with six or eight strings in four courses are often called taropatches, or taropatch ukuleles. They were once common in a concert size, but now the tenor size is more common for six-string taropatch ukuleles. The six-string, four-course version, has two single and two double courses, and is sometimes called a lili'u, though this name also applies to the eight-string version. Eight-

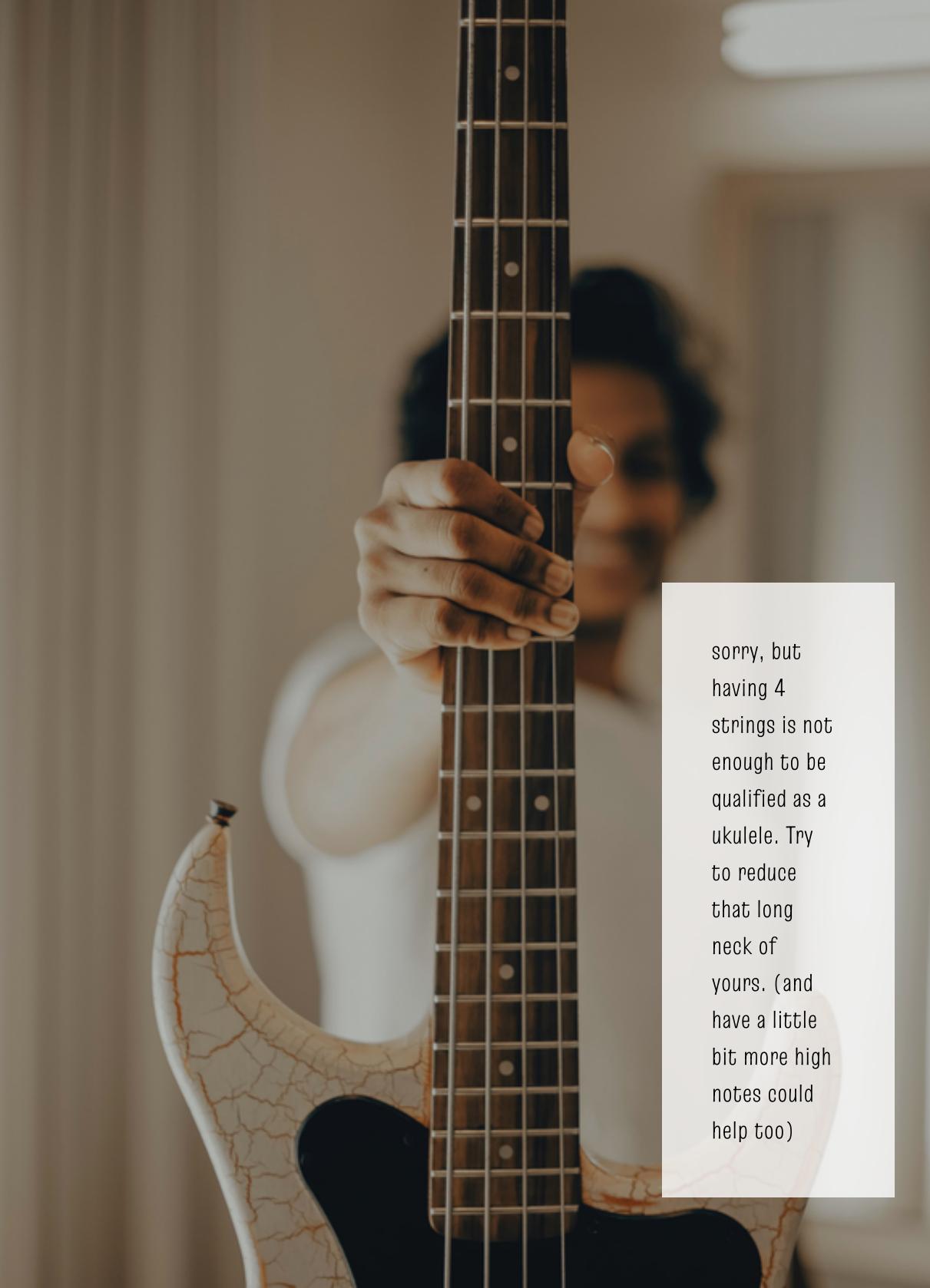
Type	Alternate names	Typical length	Scale length	Frets	Range	Common tuning	Alternate tunings
Pocket	piccolo, sopranino, soprannissimo	16 in (41 cm)	11 in (28 cm)	10–12	E <sub>1</sub> –G <sub>5</sub>	G <sub>5</sub> G <sub>4</sub> B <sub>4</sub> E <sub>5</sub>	C <sub>5</sub> F <sub>4</sub> A <sub>4</sub> D <sub>5</sub>
Soprano	standard, ukulele	21 in (53 cm)	13 in (33 cm)	12–15	C <sub>4</sub> –A <sub>5</sub> (C)	E <sub>4</sub> G <sub>4</sub> C <sub>4</sub> F <sub>4</sub> A <sub>4</sub> D <sub>5</sub>	A <sub>4</sub> D <sub>4</sub> F <sub>4</sub> B <sub>4</sub> G <sub>3</sub> C <sub>4</sub> E <sub>4</sub> A <sub>4</sub>
Concert	alto	23 in (58 cm)	15 in (38 cm)	15–18	C <sub>4</sub> –C <sub>6</sub> (D)	G <sub>4</sub> C <sub>4</sub> E <sub>4</sub> A <sub>4</sub>	G <sub>3</sub> C <sub>4</sub> E <sub>4</sub> A <sub>4</sub>
Tenor	taro patch, Liliu	26 in (66 cm)	17 in (43 cm)	17–19	G <sub>3</sub> –D <sub>6</sub> (E)	G <sub>4</sub> C <sub>4</sub> E <sub>4</sub> A <sub>4</sub> ("High G") G <sub>3</sub> C <sub>4</sub> E <sub>4</sub> A <sub>4</sub> ("Low G")	D <sub>4</sub> G <sub>3</sub> B <sub>3</sub> E <sub>4</sub> A <sub>3</sub> D <sub>4</sub> F <sub>4</sub> B <sub>4</sub> D <sub>3</sub> G <sub>3</sub> B <sub>3</sub> E <sub>4</sub>
Baritone	bari, bari uke, taropatch	29 in (74 cm)	19 in (48 cm)	18–21	D <sub>2</sub> –A <sub>5</sub> (C)	D <sub>3</sub> G <sub>3</sub> B <sub>3</sub> E <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>3</sub> G <sub>3</sub> B <sub>3</sub> E <sub>4</sub>
Bass		30 in (76 cm)	20 in (51 cm)	16–18	E <sub>2</sub> –B <sub>4</sub> (C)	E <sub>2</sub> A <sub>2</sub> D <sub>3</sub> G <sub>3</sub>	
Contrabass	U-Bass, Rumbler	32 in (81 cm)	21 in (53 cm)	16	E <sub>1</sub> –B <sub>3</sub>	E <sub>1</sub> A <sub>1</sub> D <sub>2</sub> G <sub>2</sub>	D <sub>1</sub> A <sub>1</sub> D <sub>2</sub> G <sub>2</sub> ("Drop D")

string baritone taropatches exist, and, 5-string tenors have also been made.

## TYPES AND SIZES

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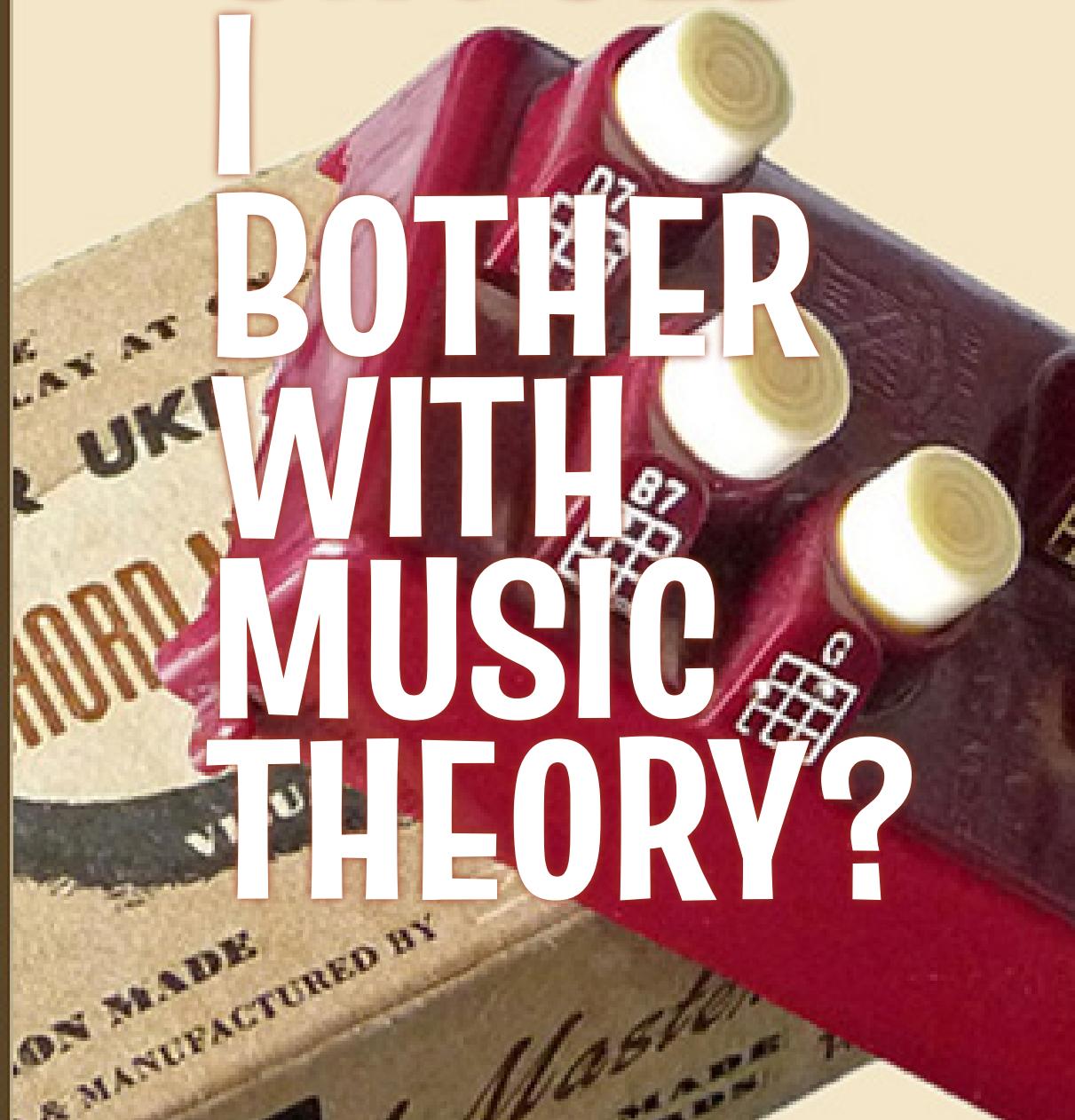
Common types of ukuleles include soprano (standard ukulele), concert, tenor, and baritone. Less common are the sopranino (also called piccolo, bambino, or "pocket uke"), bass, and contrabass ukuleles. Other types of ukuleles include banjo ukuleles and electric ukuleles. Of the standard ukuleles, the soprano, often called "standard" in Hawaii, is the second-smallest and was the original size. The concert size was developed in the 1920s as an enhanced soprano, slightly larger and louder with a deeper tone. Shortly thereafter, the tenor was created, having more volume and deeper bass tone. The baritone (resembling a smaller tenor guitar) was created in the 1940s, and the contrabass and bass are recent innovations (2010 and 2014, respectively).

A close-up photograph of a person's hands playing a guitar. The guitar has a light-colored pickguard with a distinct crack pattern. The neck is dark wood with white binding and silver-colored tuning pegs. The person's left hand is on the neck, and their right hand is visible near the bridge. The background is blurred.

sorry, but  
having 4  
strings is not  
enough to be  
qualified as a  
ukulele. Try  
to reduce  
that long  
neck of  
yours. (and  
have a little  
bit more high  
notes could  
help too)

Chapter 3

# SHOULD I BOTHER WITH MUSIC THEORY?



One of the most common tunings for the standard or soprano ukulele is C tuning: G<sub>4</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-E<sub>4</sub>-A<sub>4</sub>, which is often remembered by the notes in the "My dog has fleas" jingle (see sidebar). The G string is tuned an octave higher than might be expected, so this is often called "high G" tuning. This is known as a "reentrant tuning"; it enables uniquely close-harmony chording.

A musical staff with a treble clef and four horizontal lines. Below the staff, the words "My dog has fleas" are written in a cursive font. Below each word is a note: "My" has a note on the first line; "dog" has a note on the second line; "has" has a note on the third line; and "fleas" has a note on the fourth line. Below the staff, there is a vertical column of letters: T, A, and B. To the right of the staff, there are three small circles representing notes: the first circle is on the second line, the second is on the third line, and the third is on the fourth line.

"My dog has fleas" tuning.

A musical staff with a treble clef and four horizontal lines. On the second line, there is a large, bold note symbol consisting of two curved strokes meeting at a point. Below the staff, there is a vertical column of letters: T, A, and B. To the right of the staff, there are three small circles representing notes: the first circle is on the second line, the second is on the third line, and the third is on the fourth line.

Ukulele C tuning

More rarely used with the soprano ukulele is C linear tuning, or "low G" tuning, which has the G in sequence an octave lower: G<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-E<sub>4</sub>-A<sub>4</sub>, which is equivalent to playing the top four strings (DGEB) of a guitar with a capo on the fifth fret.

Another common tuning for the soprano ukulele is the higher string-tension D tuning (or simply D tuning), A<sub>4</sub>-D<sub>4</sub>-F<sup>#</sup><sub>4</sub>-B<sub>4</sub>, one step higher than the G<sub>4</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-E<sub>4</sub>-A<sub>4</sub> tuning. Once considered

standard, this tuning was commonly used during the Hawaiian music boom of the early 20th century, and is often seen in sheet music from this period, as well as in many method books through the 1980s. D tuning is said by some to bring out a sweeter tone in some ukuleles, generally smaller ones. D tuning with a low fourth string, A<sub>3</sub>-D<sub>4</sub>-F♯<sub>4</sub>-B<sub>4</sub>, is sometimes called "Canadian tuning" after its use in the Canadian school system, mostly on concert or tenor ukuleles, and extensive use by James Hill and J. Chalmers Doane.

Whether C or D tuning should be the "standard" tuning is a matter of long and ongoing debate. There are historic and popular ukulele methods that have used each.

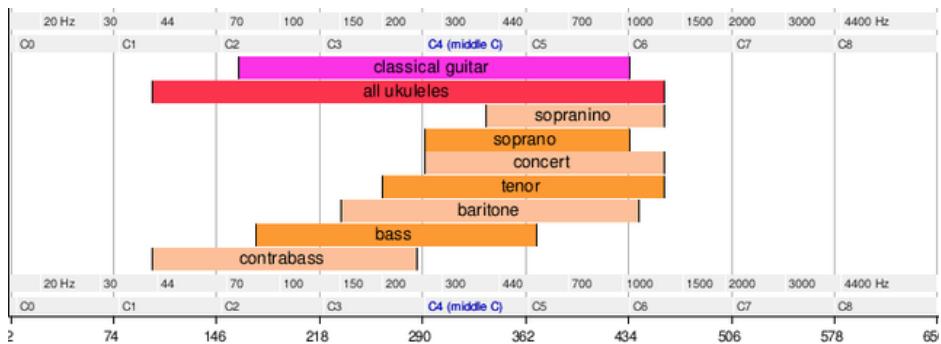
For the concert and tenor ukuleles, both reentrant and linear C tunings are standard; linear tuning in particular is widely used for the tenor ukulele, more so than for the soprano and concert instruments.

The baritone ukulele usually uses linear G tuning: D<sub>3</sub>-G<sub>3</sub>-B<sub>3</sub>-E<sub>4</sub>, the same as the highest four strings of a standard 6-string guitar.

Bass ukuleles are tuned similarly to bass guitars: E<sub>1</sub>-A<sub>1</sub>-D<sub>2</sub>-G<sub>2</sub> for U-Bass style instruments (sometimes called contrabass), or an octave higher, E<sub>2</sub>-A<sub>2</sub>-D<sub>3</sub>-G<sub>3</sub>, for Ohana type metal-string basses. E-A-D-G is also the same tuning as a double bass (the only bowed chordophone tuned to perfect fourths rather than perfect fifths as is the case with all other instruments in its class), or the first four strings of a standard guitar.



James Hill, that canadian player who did a lot of good to the ukulele by offering Mario Bros theme cover (among other less known tubes)



example, re-entrant G tuning: D<sub>5</sub>-G<sub>4</sub>-B<sub>4</sub>-E<sub>5</sub>.

As is commonly the case with string instruments, other tunings may be preferred by individual players. For example, special string sets are available to tune the baritone ukulele in linear C. Some players tune ukuleles like other four-string instruments such as the mandolin, Venezuelan cuatro, or dotara. Ukuleles may also be tuned to open tunings, similar to the Hawaiian slack key style.



# THE END

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-  The "scale" is the length of the playable part of the strings, from the nut at the top to the bridge at the bottom
-  Exact range depends on the tuning and the number of frets.
-  On the soprano, concert, and tenor instruments, the most common tuning results in a "bottom" string that is *not* the lowest in *pitch*, as it is tuned a 5th higher than the next string (and a major 2nd below the "top" string). This is called *re-entrant tuning*.
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-  Eight-string "taropatch" baritone ukuleles have been made; however, they are very rare. See, for example, the Kamaka HF-48
-  See the Luna Uke Bass and the Kala U-Bass
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EDWARD WILLIAM PURVIS (page 5) ! GEORGE E. K. AWAI (page 7)  
! GEORGE FORMBY (page 6) ! JONAH KUMALAE (page 7) !  
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O'SHEA (page 7) ! UKULELE ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN (page  
7) ! YUKIHIKO HAIDA (page 6)



# COLOFUN

This thing was made (in a rush thanks to computers updating their os by themselves and breaking all that was working before) with Editoria in June of 2021 using all kind of open content from wikipedia, unsplash, and other.

Obviously, we'll add credits to all this.

The main important thing is that this booklet will be finished to honour the workshop of dominique chevalier, closed in 2019.

My dog has flea too.