

STRUMMING LESSON

A. LOCATION

The sweet spot for strumming is between the sound hole and the edge of the box. This is the midpoint of the string for better tone and volume.

B. FINGERS OR THUMB

It is your choice to strum with your finger, fingers or thumb. Usually that depends on the song and the crowd. You can get more volume from finger strumming but a more mellow sound from thumb strumming.

C. PAINTING vs PICKING

Brush the finger or thumb across all four strings, smoothly, like you were painting the strings not plucking the strings. This gives a more mellow sound and allows the ukulele to continue to “ring” between strums.

D. ITS ALL IN THE WRIST

Try to strum using your wrist rather than the arm, elbow or shoulder. This will allow for easier holding of the ukulele while playing and less strain or possible physical problems while strumming.

E. UPS AND DOWNS

Strumming strokes can be either an UP stroke or a DOWN stroke. The combination of UP and DOWN strokes creates the rhythm of the strum. (See Item G)

F. TO SWING OR NOT TO SWING

By changing the value of the strum length, ie; quarter, half or eighth note, you can create a swing or staccato effect with the strum.

G. TIMING – BEAT vs RHYTHM

4/4 time: 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and 3/4 time: 1 and 2 and 3 and

H. COUNTRY, ISLAND, BALLAD, WALTZ

The various strumming patterns are created by changing the UP or DOWN strokes Beat or rhythm.

I. TECHNIQUES

A desired effect or technique, can be created by a flick of the strings or a slow strum 1 2 3 4 across the strings to highlight a particular chord or word sequence. Or by deadening the sound, called chucking, by releasing the pressure on the strings for a strum or chord length.

GOAL – MAKE THE UKE SING THE SONG