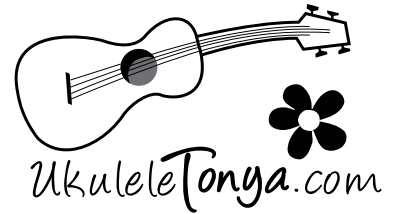


Beginner Lesson • Reading Tablature



Sometimes ukulele songs (and those of other stringed instruments) are shown in tablature. In ukulele tablature, the four lines each represent one of the ukulele's strings; I've included the string names to the left of the line to show you. Note that the "bottom" line, is the "G" string.

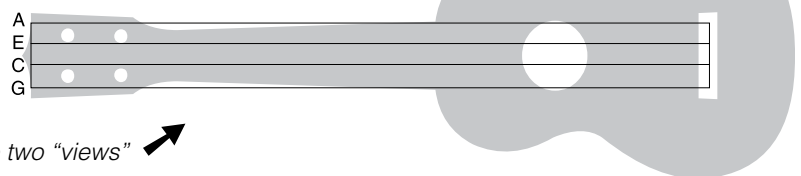
For many folks, tablature at first seems a bit "backwards" in where you'd guess the notes to be. It sometimes helps to think of holding up your ukulele to the tablature and you can "see" where the strings/notes are in relation to the lines.

The numbers on the line tell you which fret you need to press that string down. If there's a "0" it means you should pluck it as an open string (no fingers on any of the frets).

If you don't know how to read standard musical notation but you do learn to read tablature, you can quickly "teach" yourself to read simple musical notation by comparing the fingers you're using in the tablature to the note depicted directly above it in the standard notation. Then all you have to do is memorize the "letter name" of the fingers you're playing and you'll also learn to read the treble clef (no bass clef for ukulele--our instruments don't go that low).

Knowing how to read tablature allows you to venture into melody, not simply chords. You can also learn to play "chord-melody" style which blends playing melody with strumming chords; it's pretty impressive and not as difficult as it sounds.

A			3	3		5	5	3
E	1	1						
C								
G								



← Compare the two "views" →

Try it for yourself; pluck each note shown once.

A			3	3		5	5	3			1	1	0	0				
E	1	1														3	3	1
C																		
G																		

Here's how to "translate" it:

Measure 1: For the first two notes, hold down the second string (E string) at the first fret. For the second two notes, hold down the first string (A string) at the third fret.

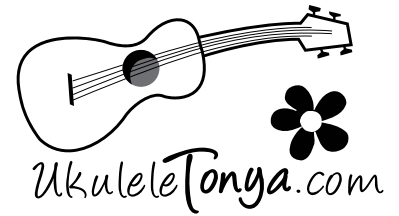
Measure 2: For the first two notes, hold down the first string (A string) at the fifth fret. The third and final note in the measure is on the first string, third fret.

Measure 3: For this measure, you're playing entirely on the first string (A string). The first two notes are on the first fret; the second two notes are "open" (no fingers) on that string.

Measure 4: This measure is played entirely on the second (E) string. The first two notes are on the third fret; the last note is on the first fret.

Beginner Lesson • Reading Tablature

Song: Brother John



Brother John

Fingerpicking exercise

melody w/ chords

F C F C

Courtesy of Mark Nelson
www.Mark-O.com
Ukulele teacher/writer/performer

F C F

w/ double stops and chords

F C F F C7 F C7 F C7 F

C7 F F C7 F

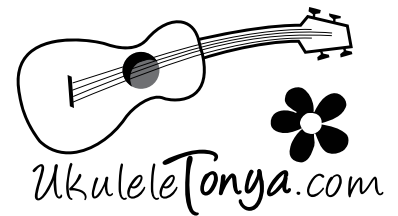
© 2004 Mark L. Nelson

Mark Nelson has an absolutely incredible book for developing your fingerpicking/chord soloing skills. Mark was kind enough to let our group use this this song to see if you might like this style of playing. Go to www.mark-o.com to find out about purchasing, "Learn to Play Fingerstyle Solos for Ukulele."

The book comes with a CD so you can hear what the songs "should" sound like—and play along!

Beginner Lesson • Reading Tablature

Song: What Child is This?



What Child is This?

Traditional
arr. by John King

Ukulele

Musical notation for measures 1-7. The top staff is a treble clef with a 3/4 time signature. The bottom staff is a six-line guitar-style tablature with fret numbers. Measure 1 starts with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Courtesy of John King
www.Nalu-Music.com
Ukulele teacher/writer/performer

Musical notation for measures 8-14. The top staff continues the melody. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fret numbers. Measure 8 starts with a treble clef and a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#).

Musical notation for measures 15-22. The top staff continues the melody. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fret numbers. Measure 15 starts with a treble clef and a key signature change to one sharp (F#).

Musical notation for measures 23-29. The top staff continues the melody. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fret numbers. Measure 23 starts with a treble clef and a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#).

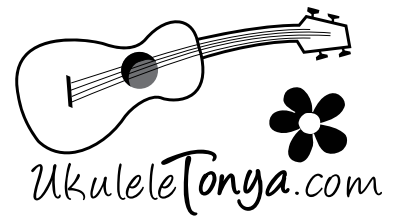
Musical notation for measures 30-36. The top staff continues the melody. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fret numbers. Measure 30 starts with a treble clef and a key signature change to one sharp (F#). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat signs for two endings.

© 2002 by John King

John King specializes in classical and historic songs, arranged for ukulele. This song is available on his website: <http://www.Nalu-Music.com>. Go there to purchase "The Classical Ukulele"—with 21 ukulele arrangements that are unbelievable—as well as an accompanying CD. The CD is great just to listen to even if you don't think you're up to that level of playing yet! Also head over to John's site for well-researched and well-written history pertaining to the ukulele, its players and makers.

Beginner Lesson • Reading Tablature

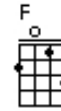
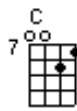
Song: *Amazing Grace*



Amazing Grace

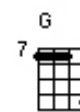
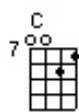
Ukulele Arrangement - EZ Chord Solo - Key of C

Arranged by Richard Hefner
<http://www.Uke101.com>



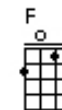
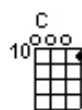
Tablature for measures 1-4:

Measure 1: A string (3), E string (3), C string (4), G string (0).
Measure 2: A string (0), E string (3), C string (0), G string (0).
Measure 3: A string (7), E string (8), C string (0), G string (0).
Measure 4: A string (5), E string (3), C string (0), G string (2).



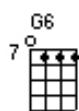
Tablature for measures 5-8:

Measure 5: A string (3), E string (0), C string (0), G string (0).
Measure 6: A string (0), E string (3), C string (0), G string (0).
Measure 7: A string (7), E string (8), C string (0), G string (0).
Measure 8: A string (5), E string (7), C string (10), G string (7).



Tablature for measures 9-12:

Measure 9: A string (7), E string (10), C string (10), G string (0).
Measure 10: A string (7), E string (5), C string (0), G string (0).
Measure 11: A string (3), E string (1), C string (0), G string (2).
Measure 12: A string (3), E string (0), C string (0), G string (0).

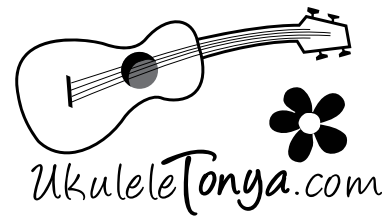


Tablature for measures 13-16:

Measure 13: A string (3), E string (0), C string (0), G string (0).
Measure 14: A string (0), E string (3), C string (0), G string (0).
Measure 15: A string (7), E string (8), C string (7), G string (7).
Measure 16: A string (5), E string (3), C string (0), G string (0).

Beginner Lesson • Reading Tablature

Song: Red River Valley



This arrangement will give you practice at reading ukulele tablature in a song that you probably already know—so it's easier to tell if you're playing it right or not!

Ron Middlebrook included this in the book, "Ukulele Song Book in Notation and Tablature." Middlebrook does a variety of "simple" arrangement books, including "Ukulele for Cowboys," "Fun Songs for Ukulele" and "Aloha Collection of Hawaiian Songs." All are available from Amazon.com.

G C

Come and sit by my side if you love me, _____

TAB 2 3 2 2 0 3 0 3 0 3

B

Detailed description: This block shows the first line of the song. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. Below the staff are three lines of tablature labeled T, A, and B. The lyrics are written below the staff. Chords G and C are indicated above the staff.

G A7

do not has - ten to bid me a - dieu. _____

TAB 3 2 3 2 3 2 5 3 2 0

B

Detailed description: This block shows the second line of the song. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. Below the staff are three lines of tablature labeled T, A, and B. The lyrics are written below the staff. Chords G and A7 are indicated above the staff.

D7 G C

Just re - mem - ber the Red Riv - er Val - ley, _____

TAB 0 5 3 2 2 0 3 0 2 5 3

B

Detailed description: This block shows the third line of the song. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. Below the staff are three lines of tablature labeled T, A, and B. The lyrics are written below the staff. Chords D7, G, and C are indicated above the staff.

D7 G

and one who has loved you so true. _____

TAB 3 0 2 2 3 0 2 0 3 3

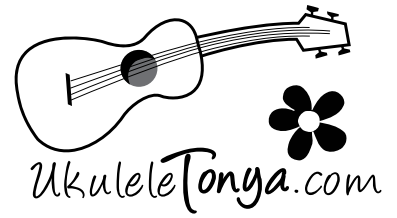
B

Detailed description: This block shows the fourth line of the song. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. Below the staff are three lines of tablature labeled T, A, and B. The lyrics are written below the staff. Chords D7 and G are indicated above the staff.

- From this valley they say you are going,
I will miss your sweet face and your smile
Just because you are weary and tired,
You are changing your range for awhile.
Chorus

Beginner Lesson • Reading Tablature

Song: Alona Waltz



This is a fun song—it's written in tablature, but it's an "old-fashioned" type of tablature with a few differences. It sounds especially nice with a "roll" strum for the first beat. It can sound quite impressive, but it's pretty simple—really!

First, you need to know it's a waltz and that means it's 3/4 time (three beats to the measure, quarter note gets one beat). The way Ernest Kaai (one of Hawaii's earliest ukulele teachers) presents this song is that you'll see the tab, broken into measures, but when there's only one set of notes or chords (as in the first measure) you play that *three* times. When there are single notes spread across the measure, they play once each. When it simply says "one" play the chord and hold for a count of three.

The song is basically three sections, each repeated twice.

Whew! Now give it a try!

To Miss Maria Piikoi, Honolulu

ALONA WALTZ

Ukulele Solo

By ERNEST K. KAAI

DU DU DU

7	5	3	3 2 0	G7	5 3 2	C	C	1	2
0	0	0						3 2 1	
0	0	0						0	0
0	0	0						0	0

F	5 3 0	C	3 2 0	G7	5 3 2	C	3 2 1	2
								one

10	7	10	7	F	G7	C	C	1	2
0	0	0	0					3 2 1	
0	0	0	0					0	0
0	0	0	0					0	0