

## Ukulele for Beginners

*“I love the ukulele. It's got a beautiful, melodic tone to it. There's something innocent and romantic, and it's just a grand instrument to play.”*

~Pierce Brosnan

### **Course Overview:**

Each student will realize that they can be a ukulele player. This course serves as an introduction to the instrument and will provide students with an instant access to making music on the ukulele. Focus points will be strumming and rhythms, reading music, improvising, and beginning songwriting.

### **Course Description:**

Students will be led through an intensive one-month course to introduce them to the ukulele. The course will be split into several units that cover various aspects of understanding the instrument and the music that can be created with it (see below for more in-depth descriptions). Each day, students will be led through a routine of tuning their ukuleles, warming-up, group instruction, and independent group practicing and playing. Students will also learn basic maintenance of the instrument and how to change strings, clean the ukulele's surface, clean strings, and maintain tuning. Throughout the one-month course, students will keep a *learners journal* and *manuscript notebook* to record and reflect upon their process of learning.

### **Course Goals and Objectives**

1. **Goal:** Students will recognize and identify fundamental aspects of beginning ukulele
  - a. **Objective:** Students will be able to identify the parts of the ukulele and their uses
  - b. **Objective:** Students will be able to apply tuning techniques using the relationships between the strings, note intervals, and chords.
2. **Goal:** Students will develop the finger dexterity and strumming abilities in order to begin making music.
  - a. **Objective:** Students will perform exercises such as playing through scales, chord charts, strumming patterns and rhythms and they will practice these rhythms independently and in groups.
3. **Goal:** Students will be able to read basic music on the ukulele

- a. **Objective:** Students will play through simple solo songs and duets and will do so while staying *on the beat* and in the *time signature*.
- 4. **Goal:** Students will be able to play popular songs using chord charts, lyrics, and time signatures.
  - a. **Objective:** Students will recognize musical notation and chord charts and be able to produce and perform music from it.
  - b. **Objective:** Students will point out various common song structures (The Blues, I-IV-V progressions, etc.) and be able to play them with independently and in groups.
- 5. **Goal:** Students will learn basic improvisation
  - a. **Objective:** Students will combine their knowledge of scales and chords to learn approaches to improvisation.
  - b. **Objectives:** Students will learn to play with their peers and compose music (such as blues, etc.) spontaneously.
- 6. **Goal:** Students will be introduced to the basic tenets of songwriting and some possible approaches for doing so.
  - a. **Objective:** Students will compose songs using their knowledge of chords and keys.
  - b. **Objective:** Students will perform these songs (if so desired) for their peers which may include lyrics, rhythm patterns, improvisation, duets etc.
- 7. **Goal:** Students will recognize the importance of steady practice routines, ukulele maintenance and regular tuning.
  - a. **Objective:** Throughout the course, students will keep a *learners journal* and *manuscript notebook* to monitor and evaluate their learning and ideas.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

*Students who are a part of 'Beginning Ukulele' should be prepared to practice on their own time outside of class. To progress towards the course's final goals and objectives, **daily independent practicing is essential**. We have only one month together so let's make the most of it!*

Course Materials (not provided)

- 1) The Ukulele – acoustic (+ Ukulele picks)  
*available at McCabe's Music, Ukulele Center, Sam Ash, West L.A. Music, etc.*
- 2) A marble notebook (or other variety) to use as the Learner's Journal  
*available at any store that sells school supplies*
- 3) Blank (Musical) manuscript paper booklet  
*available at any musical instrument or sheet music store.*

### **Classroom Behavior:**

The student is expected to demonstrate mature, polite behavior and extend courtesy to everyone at all times:

1. Actively participate, and respectful verbal and nonverbal interaction with all opinions must be shown at all times.
2. Since differing views will be expressed, the teacher and the student(s) will mutually maintain a safe environment for courteous dialogue.
3. Respect is to be shown for all CSUN property.
4. No food or beverages will be permitted in the classroom. Snacks must be eaten outside between the designated breaks.
5. Warnings for behavior / discipline problems will be given once. Any further problems will result in a phone call to the parent(s) or guardian(s) and possible dismissal from the program.

### **SAEP Electronics Policy**

#### **Cell phones, music players and headphones are not permitted to be used during class hours.**

- a. Please put your cell phone on silent (NOT vibrate).
- b. No texting is allowed during class.

You will be given one verbal warning if the above is not followed. Should a second warning be necessary, your cell phone, music player and/or headphones will be confiscated and held by the teacher until after class. If a third time occurs, your cell phone, music player and/or headphones will be confiscated and held in the SAEP office and **MUST BE PICKED UP BY A PARENT.**

# Ukulele

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After reading through the syllabus, please sign and date and have your student return it to class. The signature constitutes your commitment to the class as we partner to make the next five weeks a life-long educational experience for your student.

**Student/ Parent Agreement:**

Please bring this signed and dated **Ukulele** syllabus agreement to class tomorrow.

If you do not understand any portion of this syllabus, or if you have any questions regarding this class, please do not hesitate to email the teacher.

We have read and understand the contents of this syllabus.

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_