

FREE!



# UKULELE PROGRAM STARTER KIT



# UKULELE PROGRAM STARTER KIT

*Everything you need to start a ukulele program is right here in your hands.*

This Starter Kit contains enough guidance, strategy and teachable material to start and sustain a program for for weeks. And it's yours, completely **free**.

**Ready? *Let's go!***



# Advocacy

You love ukulele and think it's the best way to bring music enjoyment and literacy to your students. Congratulations, you're right! But not everyone will agree with you. Principals, parents and colleagues may need some convincing. Be ready with these advocacy ideas. Make your case!

Students

Administrators

Parents

## TOP 10 REASONS TO CHOOSE UKULELE

1. It's cheap.
2. It's portable.
3. It sounds good.
4. It's a solo instrument.
5. It's an ensemble instrument.
6. It's ideal for ear training.
7. It's perfect for learning music theory.
8. It's cross-cultural.
9. You can sing and play at the same time.
10. ***IT'S FUN!***

*"It makes no difference what instrument you choose – recorder, trumpet, piano, bass, guitar, mandolin; none can compare with the ukulele as a means of music education in our schools."*

— J. Chalmers Doane  
*Teacher's Guide to Classroom Ukulele (1977)*

# Preparation

## *5 Steps to Success*

1

### **Learn to Play!**

Yes, you need to play well enough that you can inspire your students. Bring your ukulele to school and play for your class. Become “the ukulele teacher” at your school. Continue to develop your own skill through private study, books, online resources and workshops.

*If the teacher is having fun,  
the students will, too!*

2

### **Do Your Homework**

Learn about ukulele teaching strategies. Read *Ukulele Yes!* and get a copy of a *Ukulele in the Classroom* Teacher Edition book (the preface is full of information on teaching techniques and approaches). Read our Frequently Asked Questions page at [www.ukuleleintheclassroom.com/faq](http://www.ukuleleintheclassroom.com/faq)

*Immerse yourself in ukulele!*

3

### **Meet with Admins & PACs**

Meet with your administrator and/or parent advisory committees. Use the material in this kit to demonstrate the value of a ukulele program. Make it known that the ukulele is a fun, proven vehicle for music and that it has been used successfully in North American schools for over 50 years. Ask for funding to help get your program off the ground. Every little bit helps. What isn't covered by these funds can be supplemented by fundraising activities, parents, and/or students themselves.

*When a student works to raise money to buy his or her own ukulele, he or she will take better care of the instrument and have a greater sense of pride in it.*



## Inform and Educate Parents

Hold a parent meeting and give a short, to-the-point “pitch” for the program.

Share some good-quality ukulele recordings. Answer questions about the program (usually these will centre around costs and time commitments). Make sure parents understand their role in the program: **to provide a supportive home environment and to help their child to establish a practise routine.**

Consider ending the meeting with a sing-a-long.

*Follow up after your meeting with a letter to parents outlining the ukulele program. Want a template? Legendary Canadian ukulele teacher Jamie Thomas shares his template with you on the next page. Thanks, Mr. Thomas!*

## Purchase Instruments and Books

Every student must have a ukulele and a method book. A companion CD or audio download that includes recordings of all the repertoire is also highly recommended for class use and home study.

### Starter Instruments

**EMPIRE MUSIC**  
www.empire-music.com

**KALA UKULELE**  
www.kalaukulele.com

**OHANA UKULELES**  
www.ohana-music.com

*Learn more at [www.ukuleleintheclassroom.com/faq](http://www.ukuleleintheclassroom.com/faq)*

### Beginner Books

*Ukulele in the Classroom*  
Book 1

**BOOSTER UKE:**  
Beyond Beginner in 10 Lessons

*You Can Play Ukulele Today!*  
The Quickstart Guide for Everyone

*Bulk discounts are available for class sets.*



*“Starting a school ukulele program isn’t easy but it’s worth it.”*

— *Jamie Thomas*

*Mr. T’s No-nonsense Guide to Starting a Ukulele Program*  
*www.ukuleleyes.com*

Dear parents/guardians of ukulele students,

Our school’s music students will once again be learning and making music with the ukulele. Some of the reasons for the past success of this program are that the ukulele is:

1. portable and small enough for young students
2. excellent as a solo or ensemble instrument
3. an excellent tool for developing ear-training and teaching music theory
4. relatively inexpensive compared to other instruments
5. an instrument that students can play while singing

Participation in the program requires that you purchase a ukulele for your child.

I am presently making inquiries to see if any of our grade 7 students would be interested in selling their used ukuleles for approximately half the price listed below. If you are interested in the possibility of buying one of these ukuleles, please let me know (don’t send money).

To ensure that the ukulele lasts for the duration of the program, I would appreciate it if you would reinforce with your child the importance of caring for the instrument. Thank you for your assistance.

If you are unable to purchase a ukulele at this time, please do not hesitate to contact me, and other arrangements will be made to acquire them.

Please fill out the order form and return it with money or a cheque made out to “Belmont Elementary School” by Tuesday, September 16th.

I am looking forward to working with the students of Belmont and making music an important and enjoyable part of their education.

Sincerely,

Mr. J. Thomas  
Belmont School Music Teacher

.....

Please detach return to Belmont with cash or cheque made out to “Belmont Elementary School” by Tuesday, September 16th. Thank you.

Student’s name: \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Items desired:

- \_\_\_ Small ukulele and case: \$58.00
- \_\_\_ Large rounded ukulele and case: \$73.00
- \_\_\_ Triangular ukulele and case: \$82.00

# Words of Wisdom

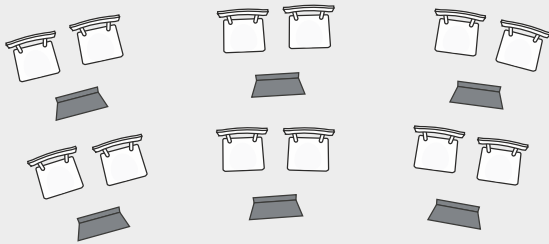
## *Ukulele Teachers Share Their Advice On...*

### **Classroom Setup: Chairs, Stands, etc.**

Students side-by-side, two to a stand.



*Ed Dorosh, Squamish, Canada*



Make sure you can always reach the students – using a centre aisle or space between rows – so no one is parked where you can't see or get to them to help deliver information or rein in behaviour.



*Trish O'Reilly-Brennan, Toronto, Canada*

Staggered rows so I can see everyone's left and right hands.

*Lucy Woldboldt, Colorado, USA*

### **Instrument Storage**

I like to hang them up on individual dowel pegs – it makes a colourful and eye-catching display and just screams “PLAY ME!”



*Cathy Welsford, Brisbane, Australia*

I've always loved a good two-tiered rack with wheels. This allows for easy mass transport during tight performance times.



*Bryan LaPlante, Halifax, Canada*

I didn't have a budget for storage, so I had to make my own. I put cardboard dividers inside a large box to make storage compartments and then cut pool noodles to go around the edge of the box so that the ukuleles had a soft edge to lean on or bump up against.

*Christina O'Brien, Calgary, Canada*

## Student Motivation

Keep each section short, no more than ten minutes on any one idea. Don't teach too much, don't talk too much. Try for one idea a session, don't be afraid to repeat the lesson using different materials

*Ash Brammah, London, UK*

Give them lots of performance opportunities. This includes simple demos in class as well as formal performances.



*Tom Rawson, Seattle, USA*

Keep challenging them by learning new and varied repertoire; new chords and strumming patterns; invite interested students to accompany on the double bass.



*Monica Dear, Edmonton, Canada*

I try to stay excited myself, by going to festivals, workshops, and concerts. I often invite students to these events as well. I also show videos of good ukulele players or ensembles.

*Sally Armstrong, Lancaster, USA*

## Communication

Face to face with administrators. They are too busy to read emails.

*Dianne Murray, New Lambton, Australia*

Get parents involved by having a parent ukulele fun night where the parents get to learn to play.

*Stephanie Laderman, Toronto, Canada*

Try and remember the teachers that made the most impact with you and model their communication techniques. Chances are they spoke to you like your feelings, opinions, and growth were important to them.



*John Nash, Colorado, USA*



# Ready, Set... TEACH!

## So... What is the “C Chord Trap?”

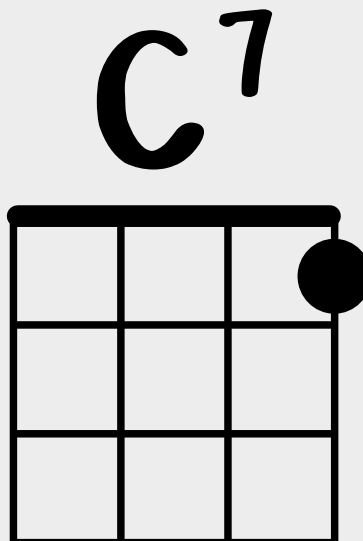
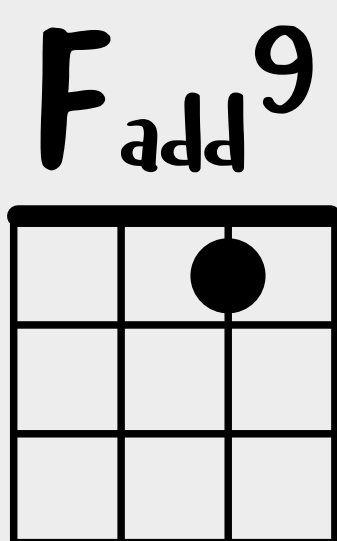
Hundreds of free online lessons will tell you the same thing: teach the C chord first.  
***Don't!!!*** Try one of these approaches instead and you'll get further, faster.

## The Magic of C7

*“Put your **first** finger on the **first** fret of the **first** string.”*

It's that simple. The C7 chord is a beautiful thing. But what happens next is nothing short of sublime: “Now put your first finger on the first fret of the *second* string.”

*Magic!* You've just learned the tonic and dominant chords in the key of F.  
Now it's time to sing some songs.



*This exercise is based on Chord Twins, a uniquely ukulele phenomenon where tonic and dominant chords can be played using a single chord “shape.” To have a lot more fun with this amazing concept, check out **BOOSTER UKE**, a media-rich method based entirely on Chord Twins.*


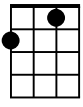
[www.theukuleleway.com/boosteruke](http://www.theukuleleway.com/boosteruke)

# The Wheels on the Bus

A fun two-chord classic! F or Fadd9 will both work... take your pick!

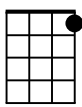
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F

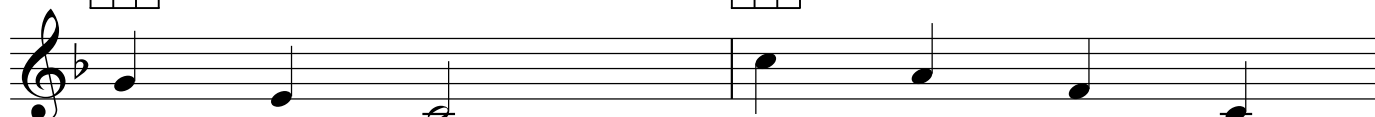
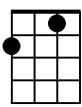


The wheels on the bus go 'round and 'round,

C<sup>7</sup>

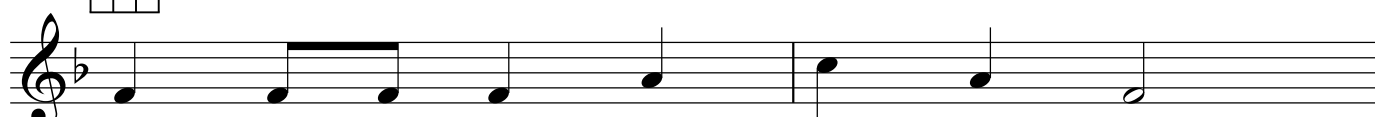
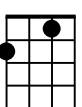


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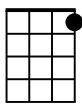
'Round and 'round, 'round and 'round The

F


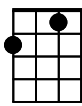


wheels on the bus go 'round and 'round,

C<sup>7</sup>



F



All through the town!

# Sample Lesson Plan: The Wheels on the Bus

## Materials and Preparation

- Tune ukuleles (ideally before class begins).
- Every students must have a ukulele to play.
- Sheet music is optional; this can be taught by ear or by rote.
- Students should already know **rest position** (i.e. both hands on the neck of the ukulele, holding the instrument vertically) and **playing position** (i.e. “Hold the ukulele flat against your front with the headstock pointing slightly up and to your left.”).

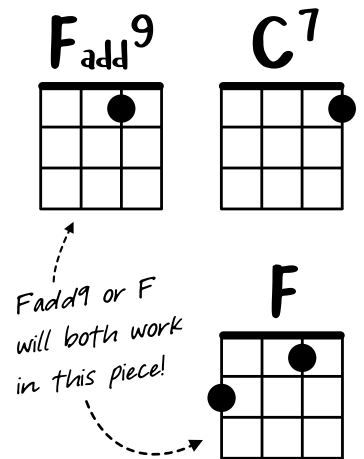
## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- **Play tonic and dominant chords in the key of F**
- **Sing a familiar song** (“The Wheels on the Bus”)
- **Create additional lyrics** for the song.

## Introduction / Warm Up

- “Using your right thumb, gently strum the open strings 8 times.” Count, snap or tap to help students play in time. The name of this chord is **C6**.
- Help students find the “sweet spot” for strumming where the ukulele’s tone is warm and clear. The sweet spot is where the neck and the body meet.
- “Take your first finger and put it on the first fret of the first string.” (Have students check with their neighbour to make sure they’ve got it right.) Strum 8 times. The name of this chord is **C7**.
- “Now put your first finger on the first fret of the SECOND string.” Strum 8 times. The name of this chord is **Fadd9** (you could also call it *F-ish* just for fun!).



## Assessment

Are students able to change chords at the right time without stopping?

To what degree are students able to strum steadily and sing clearly at the same time?

Is the strumming tone warm and clear?

## Guided Practise

- “When I raise the head of my ukulele, play the Fadd9 chord. When I lower it, play C7.” Have students try the actions with you. Try again, this time sit for Fadd9 and stand for C7.
- Strum and sing “The Wheels on the Bus,” indicating the chord changes by the position of your ukulele. Optional: split the class in two; one half strums, the other half sings. Switch parts and repeat.

## Get Creative!

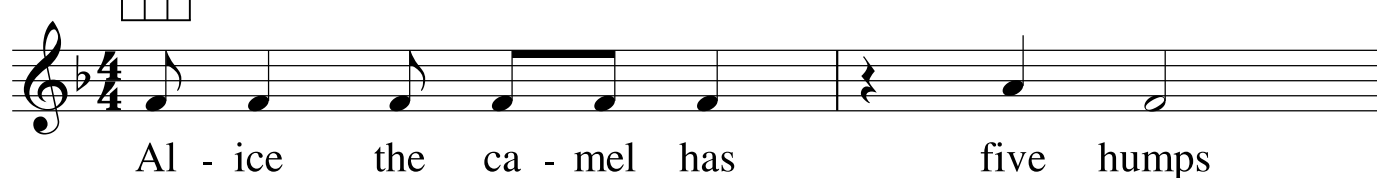
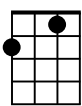
Ask students to suggest animals that might be on the bus and what sound they make (e.g. “The flamingos on the bus go squawk, squawk, squawk!” or “The goldfish on the bus go bloop, bloop, bloop” etc.). *Have fun!*

# Alice the Camel

Get into it: sit for the F chord, stand for the C7!

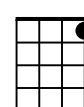
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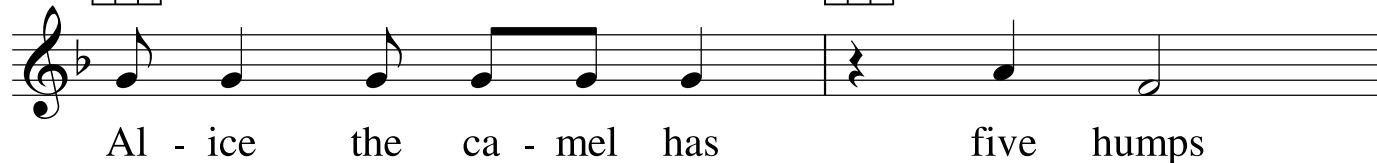
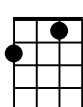


Al - ice the ca - mel has five humps

C7

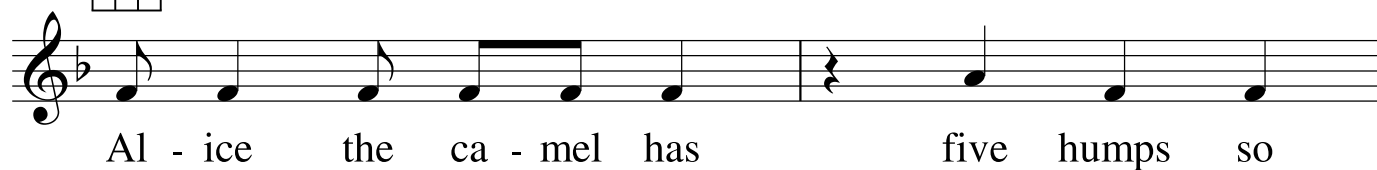
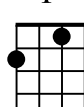


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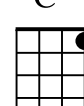
Al - ice the ca - mel has five humps

F


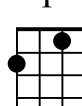


Al - ice the ca - mel has five humps so

C7



F

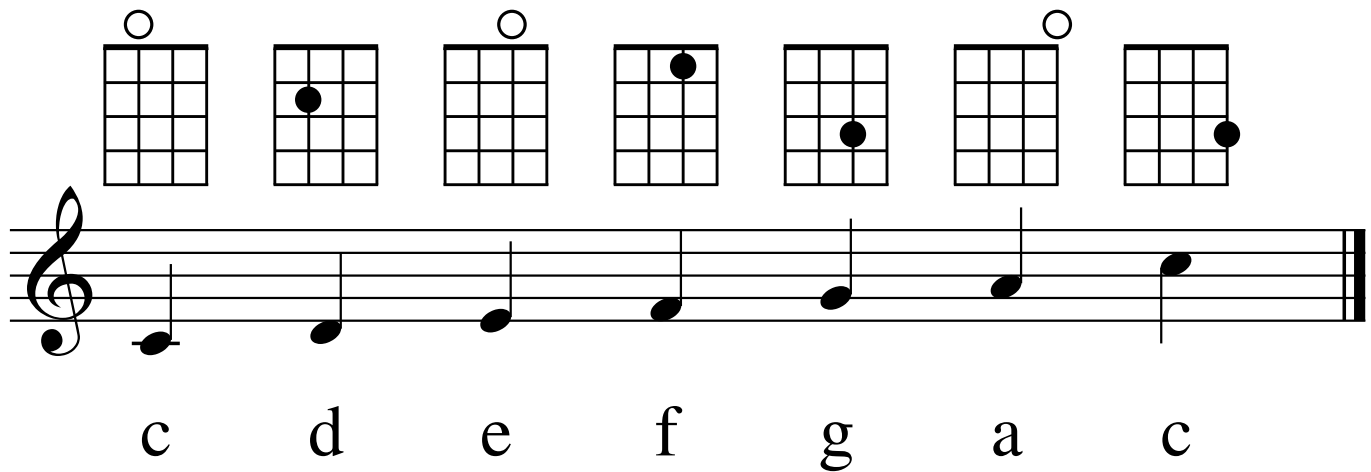


go, Al - ice go! (Bump, bump, bump)

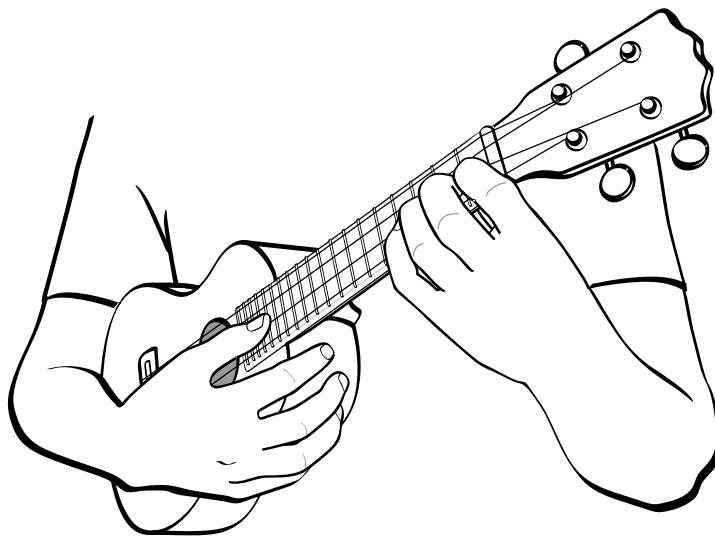
*On each repeat, reduce the number of humps until there are none.  
Last line, last time: "So Alice was a horse!" (with a gradual slow-down).*

# Easy Pickin's

Here are the notes you need to pick the melodies in *Alice the Camel* and *The Wheels on the Bus*. Aim for a full, warm tone with each note.



**Teaching adults or teens?** Try more adult-friendly two-chord songs like *Jambalaya*, *Singing in the Rain* or *Iko Iko*.



**Playing posture:** hold the uke flat against your front. Angle the head up slightly. For a start, you can pick and strum with your thumb.

# What Now?

You've started your ukulele journey! *What now?*  
Here are just a few options to explore.



By James Hill & J. Chalmers Doane

*Ukulele in the Classroom* is a thoughtfully structured, sequential, performance-based ukulele method that **sets the standard for classroom ukulele pedagogy.**

Over the course of three volumes, students explore elements of music including melody, harmony, rhythm, form, tempo, dynamics, and tone. Areas of skill include singing, picking, strumming, ear training, sight-reading, improvising, music theory, harmonizing, arranging, and more.

*“Provides a roadmap to comprehensive musicianship for a new generation of students. Bravo!”*

- Warren Dobson, M. Ed.  
Author of “U for Ukulele”

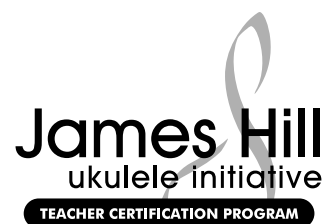


*The Ukulele Way* is more than a method book. **Ideal for self-learners and one-on-one private instruction**, the method teaches the art of solo ukulele: how to play melody, harmony and rhythm simultaneously on one instrument.

Video lessons, sheet music, audio tracks and a supportive community: it's all online and can be accessed anytime from your computer or mobile device. Join for free and get full access for a low monthly fee. Full Membership includes also includes all *BOOSTER UKE* video lessons!

*“The content is great, the path is clear... it's just too good to pass up.”*

- GuitarLifestyle.com



The *JHUI Teacher Certification Program* is the only program of its kind in the world: **a comprehensive training course for ukulele teachers.**

A JHUI Teacher Certificate recognizes the attainment of knowledge and performance skills as well as a pedagogical understanding of the James Hill Ukulele Method. Certification provides acknowledgment of an ability to teach music literacy through the ukulele, providing tangible evidence of achievement to employers and/or students.

*“I really see the potential of the ukulele as a teaching instrument. Certification is a great way to get more techniques for teaching.”*

- Eve Golderg  
JHUI Level 3 Teacher

[www.ukuleleintheclassroom.com](http://www.ukuleleintheclassroom.com)

[www.theukuleleway.com](http://www.theukuleleway.com)

[www.jhui.org/certification](http://www.jhui.org/certification)

READ MORE



By James Hill & J. Chalmers Doane

## THE *UKULELE IN THE CLASSROOM* STORY: 50 YEARS IN THE MAKING

*“Is there an instrument that can be used to foster music literacy in classroom settings that is fun to play, inexpensive, portable, and suited to any style of music?”*

This was the question that faced a young J. Chalmers Doane in 1967. Doane, then newly-appointed Director of Music Education in Halifax, Nova Scotia, found his answer in that chronically underestimated instrument of Hawaiian fame and European ancestry, the ukulele. The Canadian school ukulele program was born and the rest, as they say, is history.

Fast-forward forty years. Canadian virtuoso James Hill – a student of the Doane ukulele program – emerges as one of the world’s foremost masters of the instrument, his new and dynamic approach to the ukulele inspiring ukulele enthusiasts, professional musicians, music educators, ukulele teachers and a host of others to take a serious look at a fun instrument.

Passionate about sharing the gift of music with a new generation of students, James envisions a method that builds on the foundation laid by the Doane ukulele program, that is be “fun from day one” and that opens doors for students wishing

to pursue music further. Naturally, he seeks the benefit of Chalmers’ experience and together they begin to develop *Ukulele in the Classroom*, a new and exciting resource for music teachers everywhere.

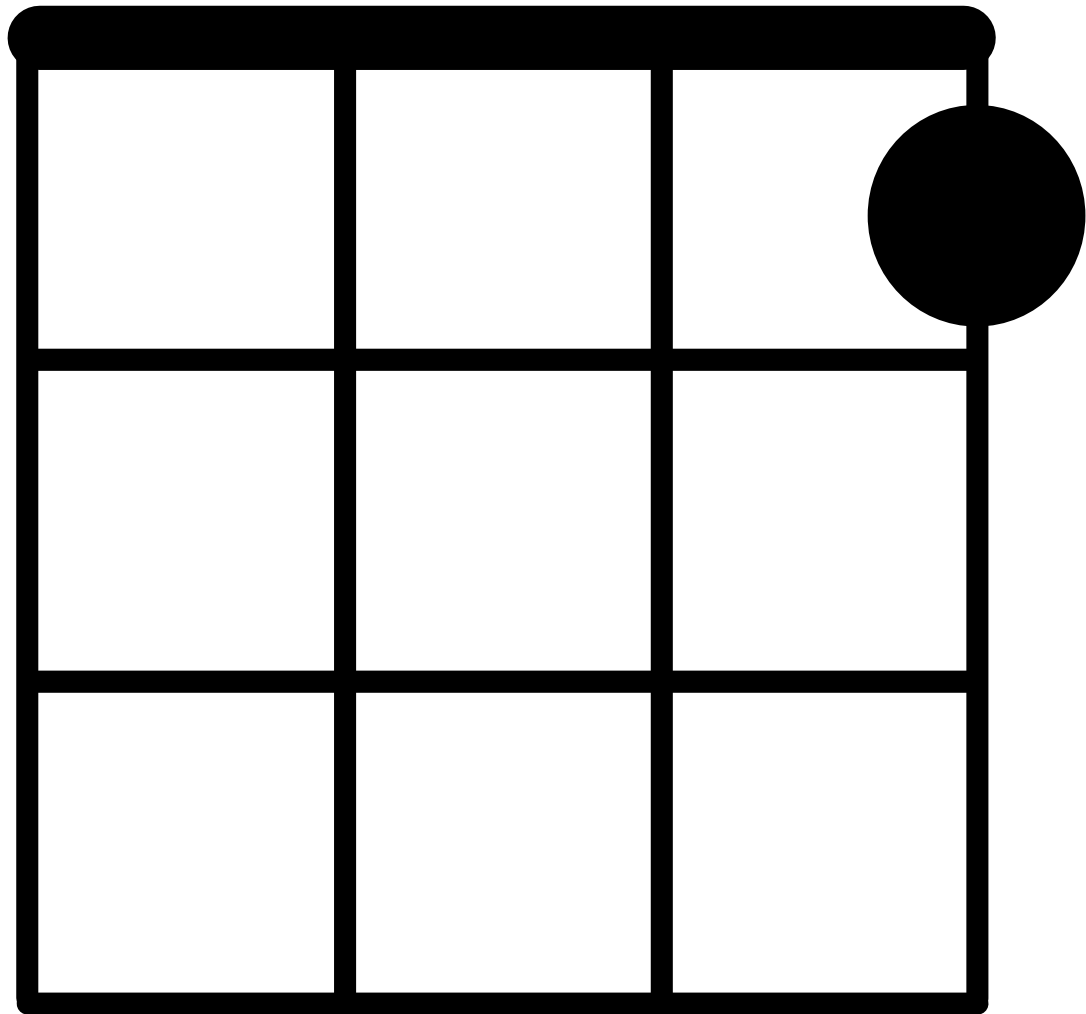
The result is a sequential, performance-based ukulele method through which students explore elements of music including melody, harmony, rhythm, form, tempo, dynamics, and tone. Areas of skill include singing, picking, strumming, ear training, sight-reading, improvising, music theory, harmonizing, arranging, and more. In many ways the *Ukulele in the Classroom* series melds the lessons of the past with a vision for the future, infusing the wisdom of elders with the creative energy of youth.

James and Chalmers share not only a love of the ukulele and of teaching, but also a passion for developing and supporting music literacy in schools and other learning environments; they warmly invite you to join them in their new approach to *Ukulele in the Classroom*.

**It’s fun. It works. It’s music literacy...  
the ukulele way!**

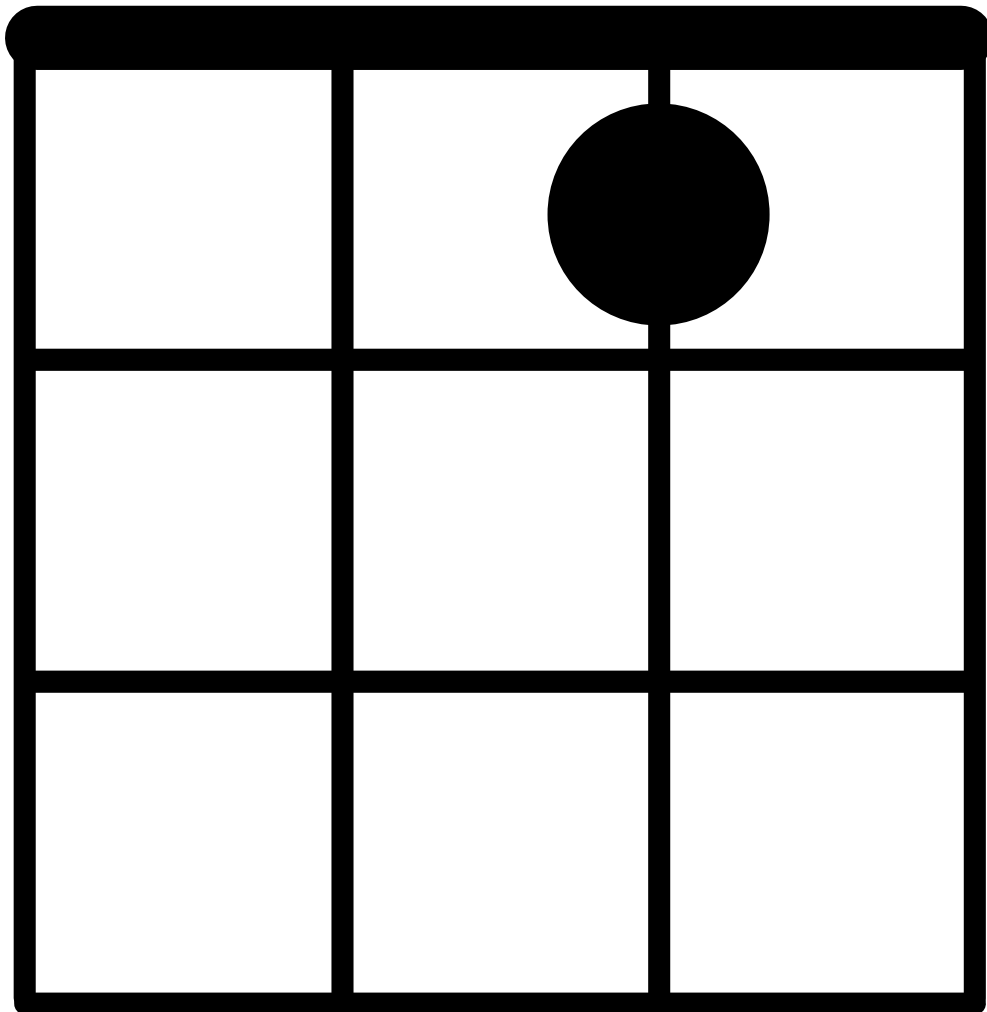


# C7





# F add 9



# F

