

# Fun With the Ukulele

## Part Two Session One

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<http://drphreddee.com/uke.html>

Go to the website to download this lesson and other material.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- One advantage the ukulele has over instruments like the trumpet, saxophone or flute is that it can play more than one note at a time.
- An advantage the ukulele has over keyboard instruments is that it can play many of the notes on the scale in different locations, unlike keyboard instruments which have a single key for each note.
- This allows the musician to play in a variety of ways that can turn a basic melody into a pleasing arrangement.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- The basis of such arrangements is what is known in music as the chord triad, a set of notes that form a major or minor chord.

- Examples: C: C, E, G



- Or G: G, B, D



- The letter that identifies the chord is called the root tone.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- Playing one or more notes with the notes of the melody is called playing harmony. Harmony parts are integral for duets and ensemble arrangements. A simple example will illustrate the process.

The image displays two staves of musical notation, labeled 'Inst. 1' and 'Inst. 2' in red text on the left. Both staves use a treble clef. A large blue bracket on the left side groups both staves together. The notation consists of two measures. In the first measure, both instruments play a sequence of five quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, and D5. In the second measure, both instruments play a sequence of three notes: D5, E5, and F5. The notes in the second measure are positioned higher on the staff than in the first measure, illustrating a change in the harmonic structure.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- A duet becomes more interesting and pleasing when harmony is employed. This example from *Au Claire De La Lune* illustrates the principle:

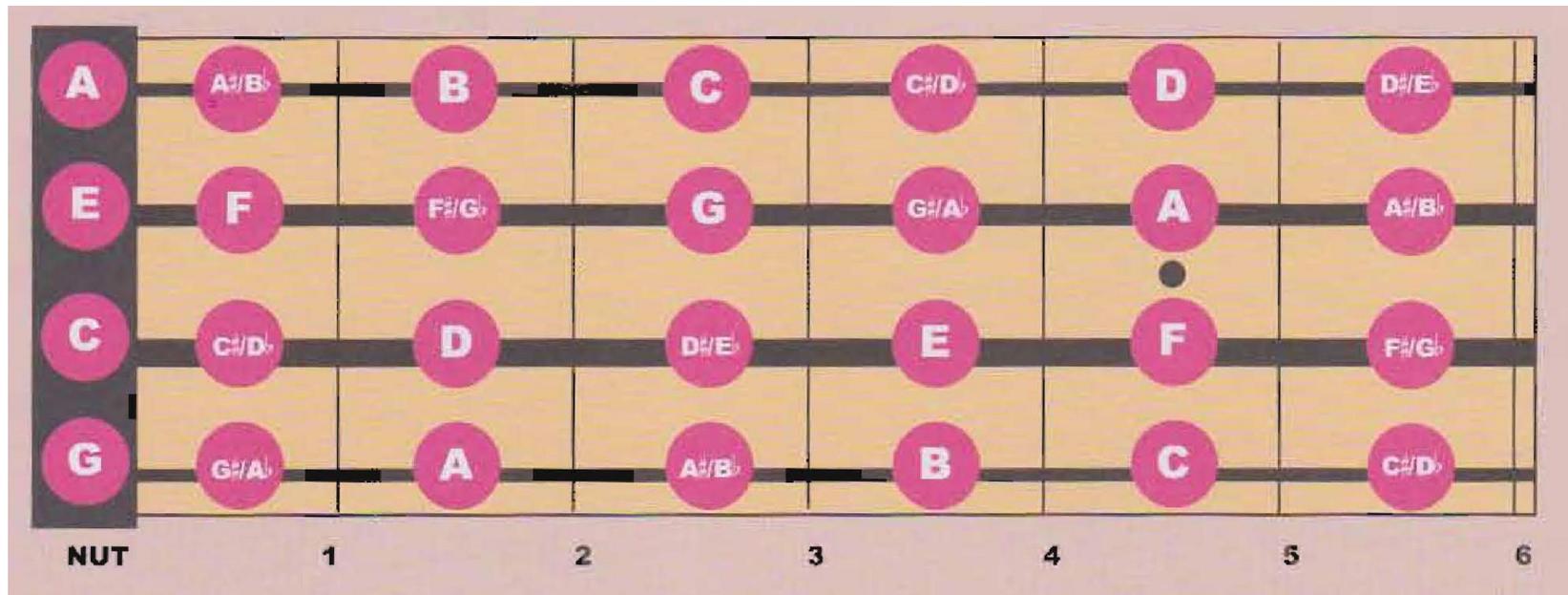
The image shows a musical score for two instruments, labeled 'Instrument 1' and 'Instrument 2', in a duet. The music is in common time (C) and features a sequence of chords: C, G, C, G, C. The notes for each instrument are as follows:

Instrument	Chord 1 (C)	Chord 2 (G)	Chord 3 (C)	Chord 4 (G)	Chord 5 (C)
Instrument 1	C4, E4, G4	B3, D4, F#4	C4, E4, G4	B3, D4, F#4	C4, E4, G4
Instrument 2	C4, E4, G4	B3, D4, F#4	C4, E4, G4	B3, D4, F#4	C4, E4, G4

- The harmony notes fit into the scale or the triad.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- The ukulele's design affords many opportunities to pair notes in harmony because certain notes are repeated in higher fret positions.



# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- Sometimes a single harmony note can be played along with melody notes. This is called a “pedal tone” in music terminology because of the use of a repeated note on the bass pedals of an organ.
- On stringed instruments, like the five-stringed banjo or the sitar, it is called a “drone” like the fixed notes on a bagpipe.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- This arrangement of “*Yankee Doodle*” shows how a single drone note can harmonize with a simple melody.

The image displays a musical score for the song "Yankee Doodle". It consists of two staves. The top staff is a treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody is written in a simple, stepwise fashion. The bottom staff is a guitar fretboard diagram with six strings and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The fret numbers are: 0, 0, 2, 4, 0, 4, 2, 3, 3, 5, 7, 3, 3, 2. The first two measures of the melody correspond to the first two measures of the fretboard diagram, showing a C note (open string) and a G note (4th fret) being played together.

- This is because the G note is part of both the C and the G chord triads and fits in with both.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- Building melody parts for duets or solo performance can be done by considering the chord symbol in the score and locating notes that fit the triad for that chord. An example comes from Beethoven's "Ode to Joy."

C                      G                      C                      G

0 0 1 3 | 3 2 1 0 3 | 0 0 2 0 | 0 2 2

0 0 0 0 | 2 2 0 2 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- The “Ode to Joy” arrangement uses drone notes and a moving counter melody that plays partial chords that fit the general chord structure of the song.
- The arrangement employs several techniques that turn the simple melody into a pleasing piece that may be performed solo or with accompaniment.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- The first measure employs The drone technique, the open C (3<sup>rd</sup> string is played along with open and fretted notes on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

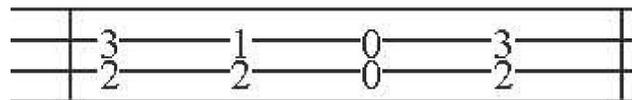
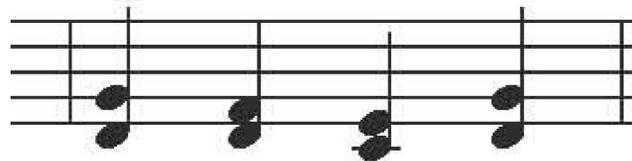
C

The image shows a musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The staff contains four measures of music. Each measure consists of a pair of notes: an open C (3rd string) and another note. The notes in the four measures are: G4 (2nd fret), A4 (3rd fret), B4 (4th fret), and C5 (5th fret). Below the staff is a guitar fretboard diagram for the 3rd string, showing the fret positions for each note: 0 for the open C, 2 for G, 3 for A, 4 for B, and 5 for C.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

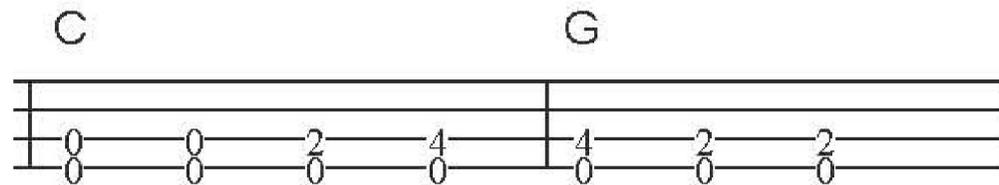
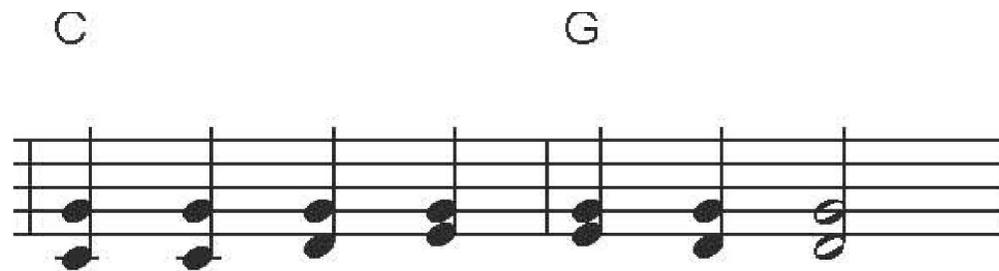
- The second measure uses fretted notes combined with open strings to form partial chords that contain the melody plus a harmony note that fits the key and the chord.

G



# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

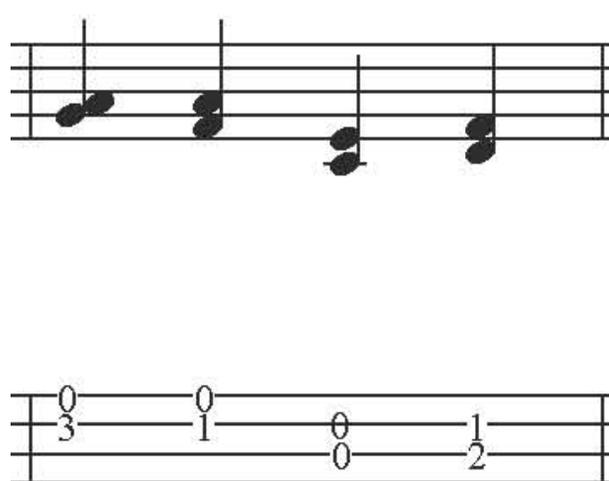
- Measures 3 and 4 use the 4<sup>th</sup> string (G) as a drone while the melody notes are all played on the 3<sup>rd</sup> (C) string.



# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- Measure 5 repeats measure 1.
- Because of the chord change to F, measure 2 uses the open A string as a drone, then uses one open string and one fretted chord to complete the measure.

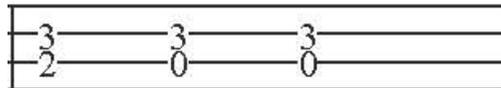
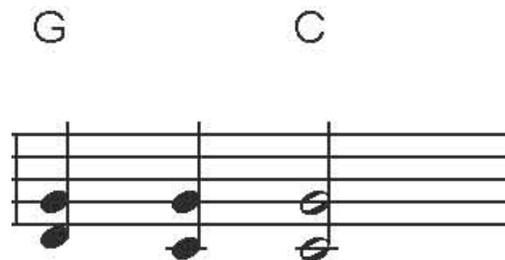
F



The image displays two musical staves. The top staff is a standard five-line staff with four measures of music. Each measure contains a chord: the first measure has three notes on strings 1, 2, and 3; the second measure has two notes on strings 2 and 3; the third measure has two notes on strings 4 and 5; and the fourth measure has three notes on strings 1, 2, and 3. The bottom staff is a fretboard diagram with four measures. The first measure has fret numbers 0 on the 3rd string and 3 on the 2nd string. The second measure has fret numbers 0 on the 2nd string and 1 on the 3rd string. The third measure has fret numbers 0 on both the 2nd and 3rd strings. The fourth measure has fret numbers 1 on the 2nd string and 2 on the 3rd string.

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- Measure 7 repeats measure 3.
- Measure 8 is played as follows using the 2<sup>nd</sup> string 3<sup>rd</sup> fret G note as a drone.



# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

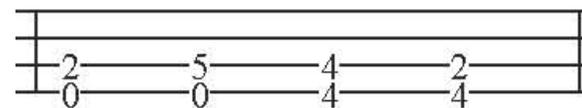
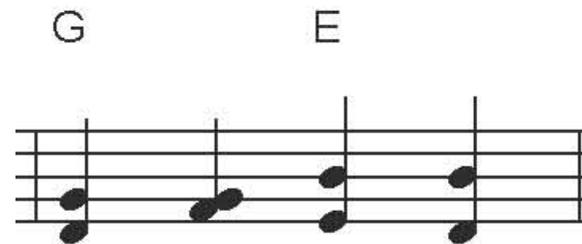
- Measures 9 and 10, because of the chord changes every 2 beats, use the open 4<sup>th</sup> string as a drone note for all beats but measure 9 beat 3.

The image displays musical notation for measures 9 and 10. Measure 9 is divided into two beats, each with a G chord. Measure 10 is divided into two beats, each with a C chord. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 9-measure rest at the beginning. The guitar fingerings are shown below the staff.

Measure	Beat	Chord	Fingering (Strings 1-6)
9	1	G	2, 0, 2, 0, 0, 0
	2	G	2, 0, 2, 0, 0, 0
10	1	C	0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0
	2	C	0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0
	3	G	2, 0, 2, 0, 0, 0
	4	C	0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0

# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- Measure 11 employs slightly trickier fingering to play the last two chords in the measure. I recommend using the second finger on the 4<sup>th</sup> string 4<sup>th</sup> fret and the second and first fingers respectively on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> frets.



# Playing Multi-String Harmonies

- Measures 13 through 16 are a restatement of the theme, identical to measures 5 through 8.
- Practice the measures singly or in pairs to accustom yourself to the 2-string picking technique, then combine them into groups until you can play the entire song.