

PRACTICE TIPS

Frequent, focused practice allows you to improve steadily, learn new music and have increasingly more fun playing your instrument.

How you practice is an art in itself.

The key is to establish a regular practice routine. Find the time of day that works best for you, and stick to it. You can write it in your calendar, set a reminder on your phone, or even have an accountability partner.

Set up a tidy, comfortable, well-lit practice space. I recommend a music stand to hold your music at eye level, and a stand for your ukulele so it's easily accessible.

Good posture helps with focus and allows you to practice longer.

Have a plan. A simple practice log with the chords, strumming patterns, songs or scales you're working on will help keep you on track.

SLOW DOWN! It can be challenging to practice slowly, but doing so has many benefits. You will strengthen your sense of time, develop smooth, efficient motions and deepen your focus and listening. Counting out loud can help you maintain a slow tempo.

Remember everyone learns and improves at a different pace. Be patient. Don't just focus on the results. Learn to enjoy the *process* of practicing.

Work on music you love. Don't hesitate to look up the chords to any song that interests you. You may be surprised how many you're able to play!

Chords from both ukulele and guitar sites will work, such as **ukulele-tabs.com** and **ultimate-guitar.com**.

Work directly with recordings. Listen to the songs you're practicing to find the starting note, hear the strumming pattern, or just get the tune in your mind.

You can also play along to your favorite songs. This will be challenging at first. On YouTube, you can click the settings gear on any video, and adjust the playback speed to **0.75** to make certain songs easier to follow. Playing along to music will have a huge impact on your sense of rhythm and ability to listen.

Don't *just* practice chords and songs. Scales, melodies and rhythm are all important aspects of music and will help you become a well-rounded musician. They will help develop your ear, dexterity, precision and coordination.

My **7 Ukulele Scales** YouTube video is a great resource for practicing scales and rhythm.

Mix it up. If you feel you're stuck in a rut, practice in new ways. The above suggestions are a great place to start. My **5 New Ways to Practice** video goes more in depth.

Learning an instrument is a lifetime endeavor. As with anything, consistency and mindful effort will yield beautiful results.

Enjoy the journey.

