

### TIPS FOR NEW PLAYERS

Always hold the ukulele close to your body, gently tucked under your strumming arm. Sit up straight and allow the strumming hand to roll gently over the strings.

Most players use either a thumb or nail of the forefinger to strum down. You can use the thumb or pad of the forefinger to strum up. Practice the movement and try to maintain a regular steady rhythm.

When holding a chord, remember to use the **tips of your fingers** – don't grip too hard. If the chord sounds buzzy or 'dead', then press the string a little more firmly.

Always start a new song slowly. You can speed up later when you are comfortable with the chords!



### TUNING YOUR UKULELE

There are various tools to help you keep your ukulele in tune.

- Clip on tuners are easy to use.
- There are online tools that you can use. Try: <https://ukebuddy.com/ukulele-tuner>
- You can also tune a ukulele to itself. Experiment by finding the same note on different strings.

If you're having difficulty tuning, use <https://ukebuddy.com/ukulele-tuner> to listen to the correct pitch and adjust the string a little to work out whether you need to tune the string up or down.

### CHOOSING A UKULELE

When learning to play any instrument, your playing will improve if you practice regularly at home.

When choosing a new ukulele, there are a few considerations:

- Select an instrument with **geared** tuning pegs (avoid 'friction' style pegs, which are tricky to tune up).
- Choose an instrument that has **good quality strings**, such as Aquila Nylgut. This will give a more comfortable playing experience, as well as a better sound.
- Most new players start playing a **Soprano** size ukulele.
- It is worth considering investing in a **clip-on tuner**. A new instrument tends to go out of tune frequently at first, until the strings are 'played in'. A clip-on tuner makes tuning the instrument much easier.
- Left-handed players will need to have the instrument strung for left-handed playing. If buying from a music shop, ask them if they will do this for you.



Ukuleles are widely available from music shops and online retailers for a range of prices. The school uses Octopus Soprano ukuleles which are available on-line for around £20. Clip on tuners can be purchased from around £5.

Please ask Mrs Clarke if you have any questions.

