

Reading on the Ukulele

Alternate Notation

TAB and Chord Grids - "C" Tuning (g C E A or G C E A)

Reading Music is the ability to reproduce music from written notation. It includes five phases: note recognition, alternate note locations, rhythm recognition, fingering considerations, communication terminology and interpretations. (*From Wikipedia*)

Alternate Notation - TAB, short for tablature is very common alternate music notation used in the guitar world. Tablature has a history in lute music of past centuries and has found it way in to the guitar world of today and has been used as an alternate notation for ukulele.

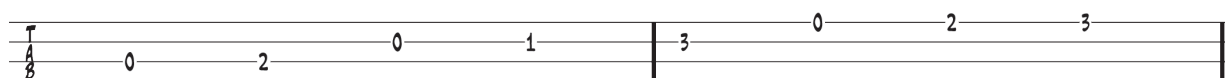
TAB is not very common for other instruments. **TAB is used mostly by beginning students** without the time or desire to read standard music notation. It is widely used in the mainstream guitar media. TAB is typically presented along side standard music notation although a few guitar magazines have drop the standard music notation part.

From the five phases of reading music TAB typically only shows the note location. It shows what string and fret to play the note on. Some TAB also shows the rhythmic duration of the note. Fingering considerations are typically left up to the player as in standard music notation, but can be shown.

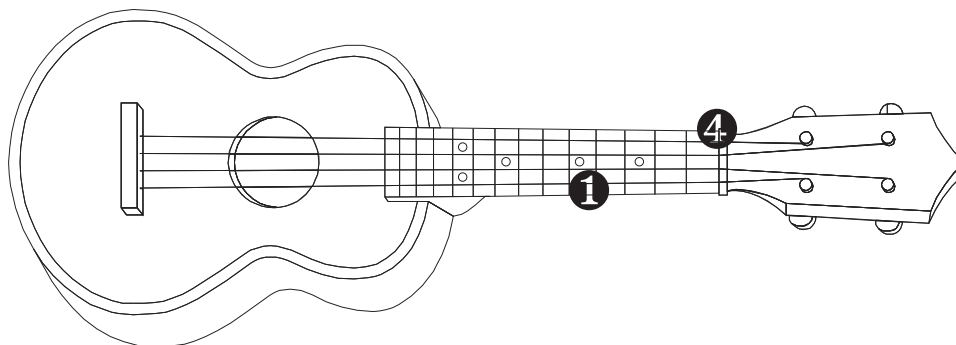
TAB can not show the contour and rhythmic density of music.

*See the **UkuleleLesson - Reading Basics** for information on learning the basics of music notation.*

TAB



The four lines of TAB (*shown above*) represent the four strings of the ukulele, with string ④ on the bottom and string ① on the top. String ① is the string closest to the floor.

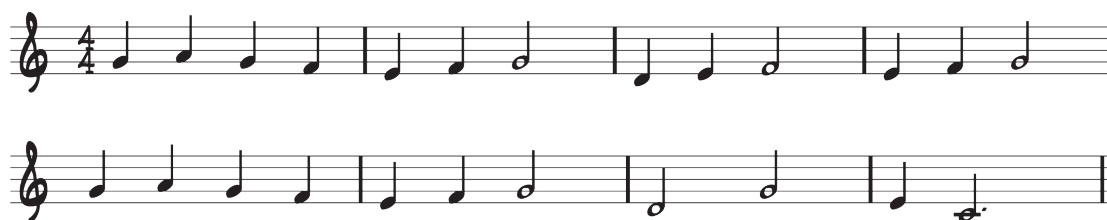




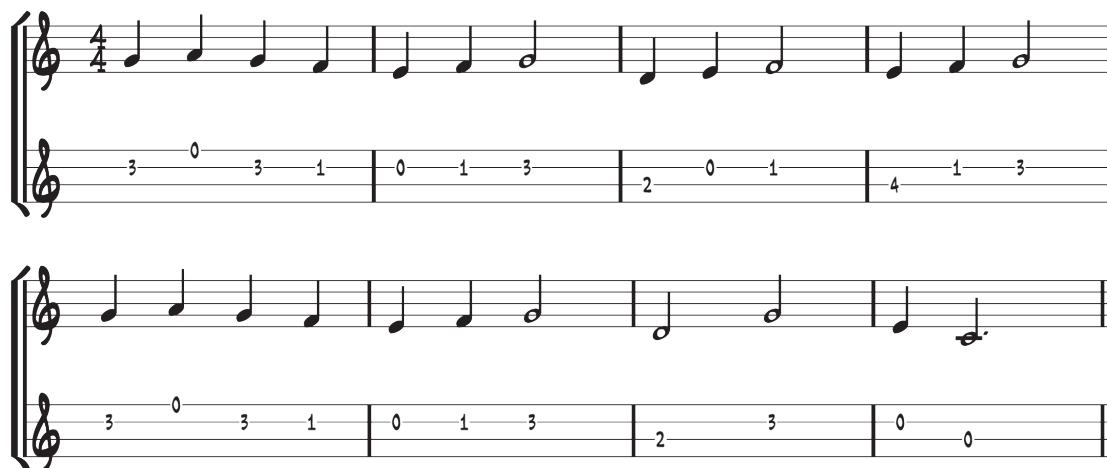
The above example is the C major scale from the **UkuleleLesson** *Reading for the Ukulele, Melody - First Position, Part 1*. This TAB shows the rhythm as well.

Here is the melody of the song London Bridge.

London Bridge

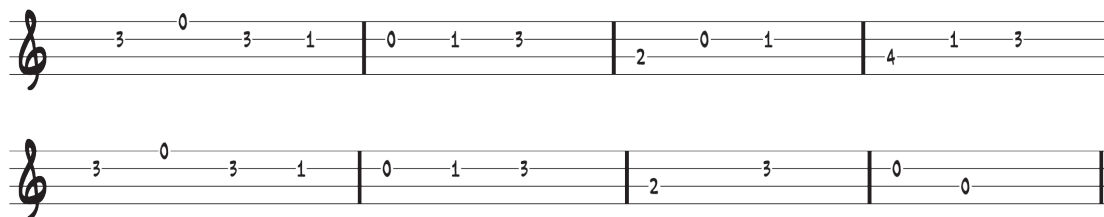


Here it is with TAB and standard music notation.





Here it is with TAB only.

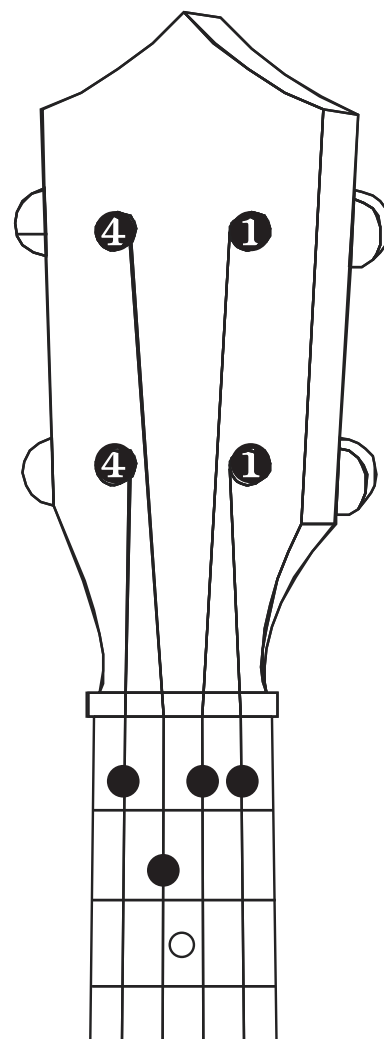
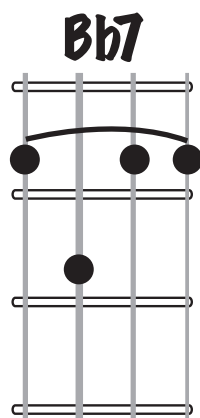


Chord Grids

Chord Grids have been in use since the introduction of printed sheet music in the early twentieth century. It was first used for ukulele as that was the popular instrument of the time. As the guitar became popular guitar chord grids replaced the ukulele chord grids.

Chord grids show one possible voicing to play for a chord. Chord grids only show note location and possibly fingering. These grids typically show only easy to play chords that a beginner would be able to play in open or first position.

Here is chord grid showing a Bb7 chord at fret (1).





Here is some music from a **UkuleleLesson** on *Endings*.

Chord diagrams and musical notation for the ending:

Chords: E^b , E^b/D^b , A^b/C , A^b_M/C^b , B^b , $E^b6/9$

Musical notation: Standard staff notation with a treble clef, key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes chords and a melodic line. A TAB line is provided below the staff, showing the fret numbers: 1, 3, 5, 6.

This shows standard music notation, chords grids and TAB.

