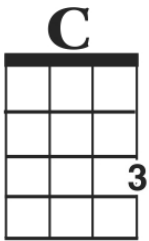


Left Hand Chording

The left hand is responsible for fingering the chords and finding the right notes to play.

What is a chord? A chord is a collection of several notes that sound good when played together. We will strum all the strings with the right hand, while holding down various strings with our left hand to make different chords. Sometimes you will only fret (hold down) one string, but you will still strum all the strings.

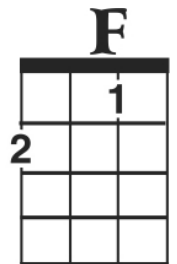


Our first chord is C. Place your ring finger on the 1st string at the 3rd fret, following the diagram to the left.

The diagram on the left shows a ukulele neck pointing straight up. On the diagram the strings are always the vertical lines, with the 1st string on the right. The horizontal lines are the frets, which are the metal bars on your uke neck. You always play just behind the fret (toward the headstock), not on top of it. So, if you are playing at the 3rd fret, your finger will be just behind that 3rd metal bar. The number shows which finger to use (1=index, 2=middle, 3=ring, 4=pinky).

Strum all the strings while holding down that note. This is the C chord. Make sure your finger is arched so that it curves, and your finger tip is pushing the string down. Your thumb should be behind the neck providing counter pressure to your finger.

Let's play our second chord, F: Two fingers this time. Your index finger plays the 2nd string at the 1st fret and your middle finger plays the 4th string at the 2nd fret. A little more challenging now because there are two fingers involved.



Important: Whenever you play a chord using two or more fingers, it's vital that all your fingers land on the strings at exactly the same time. This is the most efficient way to play chords and will make a big difference in your ability to play chords quickly. **The way to practice this is to go to a chord and then lift up your fingers about a half an inch. Then, practice landing on the strings all-at-the-same-time.** If you do this every time you practice, you will learn to make your chords the correct way.

