

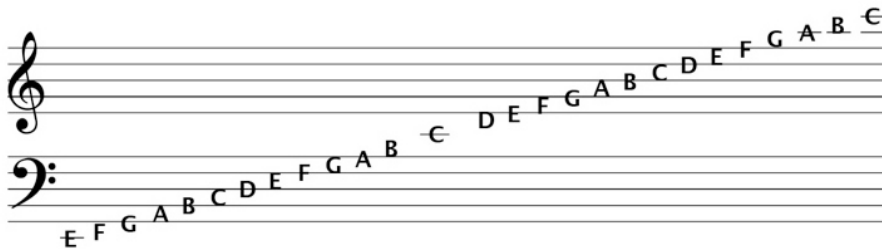
## Learning to read music (knowing the score) since you can already play

Although one can certainly make a lot of music without learning to read musical notation, it will help you to use new resources if you invest the time to learn this – it is not complicated, but rather may be unfamiliar - a new way to communicate.

Many have been turned off to music because they were unable to make the time to get the notation down at the beginning. Many already play and know some theory. Perhaps this describes you. Now that you have the basis for understanding how music works (theory) and have felt the fun of playing, why not take the next step? This will enable you to grow musically, and for instance, to read something that you have perhaps never heard and play it as the composer intended? This approach is geared to low G uke, but can be used for high G also

Tablature (TAB) does have some advantages: it eliminates the conversion from the written note to choosing where to play it, and just shows you where to play it, and a great amount of TAB is readily available for free from web-based sources. However, TAB is limited by the lack of effective communication of note timing, phrasing and overall tempo, so you need to have heard the piece first. This just might be time to get the score in hand and be more of a musician. It's not that hard anyway.

The “grand staff” incorporates both treble and bass clefs with C in the middle.

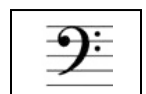


**You will learn  
to read music**

The treble clef is primarily used for tenor, concert and soprano ukulele. The treble clef (G clef) symbol is shaped like a stylized **G** and ends up with the end curled around the second line up - the G note line.



The bass clef (F clef) has 2 dots on either side of the second line down. This is the **F** note line. The low **G** just below this line.



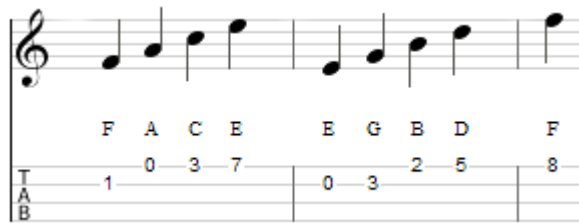
## Learn the notes

Memorizing the notes of the lines and spaces can get you started. You may have seen this before – this is the time you will remember it. Always good to have some “anchor notes”.



The treble clef - has 4 spaces, **F A C E**  
and 5 lines, **E G B D F**  
**Every Good Boy Does Find**

Remember where to find the **C** and the **F**'s

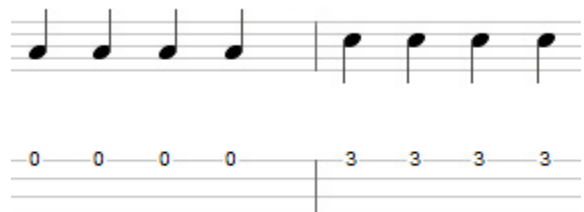


Practice reading and playing the spaces **FACE**  
and the Lines **EGBDF**

Find the **G**, then play both **F**'s and the **C**  
Then find the **D** at the 5<sup>th</sup> fret first string  
Remember your open strings **GCEA**  
**Goats Can Eat Anything** - Play through these



The note between the clefs is middle C (above) Find the middle C on your uke, (open third string) play that 8 times as shown, then the next note is \_\_\_\_ play that 8 times. (E). Play the G's below and finally the A (open 1<sup>st</sup> string) and the C at the 3<sup>rd</sup> fret 1<sup>st</sup> string.



Practice playing C and G just using the score.





**Sharps and flats** are next to the treble clef symbol so you will play those notes as sharp # or flat b and to inform you of the key of the song. Many songs are in key of C -no #'s or b's. One might want to change the key to fit a vocal range or be more playable on a ukulele. Find more on this in the Music Theory and Scales modules. F# is one fret above F but also a fret below G – Gb. (F#=Gb) – its name depends it's use and the key of the piece The correct term is enharmonic = the same note. Sharps you encounter in the score hold for the entire measure where they occur or until a natural sign  $\natural$  is shown - you play the natural note.

Below the treble clef, you may see instruction for the pace of the music – slowly, brightly, etc. Or, you may be given the number of beats or quarter notes per minute as a guide (you could use a metronome.) This can also be a guide to your own interpretation. One other guide to playing given at the beginning is the volume – from the softest – piano **p** (soft) to forte **f** (loud), modified by adding p's or f's to increase or decrease volume. In between the two are mezzo piano **mp** and mezzo forte **mf** – just softer and louder than speaking voice.

### Ledger Lines

There are notes one can play that are higher or lower than the treble clef, so we just add lines, called ledger lines above or below the clef. The two ledger lines above the clef, complete the mnemonic -----



**Every Good Boy Does Find A Chocolate**

We typically do not use the bass clef for tenor or smaller ukuleles, but rather use ledger lines here also. Remember, the note below 2 lines is **G**, the lowest note on a low G ukulele. The A at the second fret, 4<sup>th</sup> string is the second ledger line down. Play the written notes on your uke, starting on the 5<sup>th</sup> fret of the 4<sup>th</sup> string down to open 4<sup>th</sup> string G. Remember that **G** below the second line. The good news is that your knowledge of the treble clef plus the ledger lines will get you through.




### Note lengths – notes indicate their duration based on their appearance

	Whole note		
	Half note	Half the duration of a whole note	
	Quarter note	Half the duration of a half note	
	Eighth note	Half the duration of a quarter note	

Tied notes are connected by a curved line and add to the length – not played twice.

## Time Signatures

Adjacent to the treble clef  is the time signature such as  $\frac{4}{4}$  or  $\frac{3}{4}$  (learn this)  
The **upper** number indicates the number of beats per measure **4 or 3** beats/measure  
The **lower** number indicates what kind of note each beat gets **4** - a quarter note=1 beat  
If not stated, it is assumed to be 4/4 time



The number of beats should "fill" the measure.  
An exception sometimes occurs in the first measure that may be short – called a pickup bar

Clef time measure bar measure bar measure (bars separate measures)



time - see the differences? 3 beats/measure (waltz)

**Rests** - don't play for the amount of time indicated by the rest – also keeps measures even



First measure - quarter note rest, second - half note rest, fourth measure - whole note rest

## Other Navigational Notation Tools



Parts of a song are often repeated. You'll see: a repeat sign (go back to the begin repeat)  
Then again play the music in between these and continue to the end. If you encounter a section that shows a first ending 1. (often before a repeat sign), then you would play the score through the first ending, to the repeat sign, then go back and repeat the section again up to the first ending - skip the first ending, and play the second ending 2. then, continue to the end.

You may also find other navigation indicators at the end of the piece. D.C. for **Da Capo** to the top (beginning), D.S. for **Da Signo** -to the sign (a stylized S  $\text{\textcircled{S}}$  somewhere in the piece where you should go to from the Da Signo. Lastly, you may see **Da Coda (to Coda)** - a coda  $\text{\textcircled{C}}$  is a piece that completes the score, so **Da Coda** means to jump to the indicated piece at the end.

Look over the entire piece for the navigation – is there a repeat? A second ending? A coda? What key is it in? Identify the first note. Find all of the C's – then look for the G's.

Look for the highest and lowest notes in the piece – especially if you intend to sing it – always a good idea to know your range before starting to sing a piece There is a great way to find your vocal range on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lejHKpfHso>).

## Getting the notes memorized – just put in a little time for this and you'll get it

You are now able to identify many notes on the score. In order to practice and get this skill down cold, I would suggest that you make your own set of **flash cards** – you will learn as you make them. Just draw a vertical line down 5 lines on the lined side and use for a staff. Write a note, identify it and turn the card over to name it there. You could write the mnemonic below or another way you remember it. I've also provided a pdf card set under web resources. Then test yourself - the ones you get right, put in a second pile, and go through the first again. Repeat this process 1 day later, 2 weeks later and 4 weeks later. I am sure that you will get this perfected. The process is called spaced repetition – great for retaining new stuff. A web-based practice tool is <https://www.musictheory.net/exercises/note>. Use your anchor notes and mnemonics to read the note being shown. There are also notecard apps for Apple and Android, if you are pencil averse. I made a set on the free Tiny Cards app called Note Minder.

Become totally immersed – no TAB until you have this! Don't just play by ear, except to check that what you are reading makes sense. Look for songs in the key of C - at first – no sharps or flats. Then, venture out into other keys, making sure to play those notes shown as flats or sharps that way. Try some other songs in the key of G (F#) or F (Bb). Later, you could try playing out of a “fake book” and may find some songs that will tie a knot in your tail. They were likely written on a piano, not a uke, in a key that you may be unfamiliar with for now. Challenge yourself. Analyze the similarities to things you already know – this is how we learn. Remember, there is no “talent” to reading music – just a learned skill - a communication tool. You are not too (young, old, cool, hot, hip, jive, uneducatable, tone deaf or anything else) to learn to read music – after all, even I did it eventually!

Following this are some relatively simple pieces with familiar melodies to get you started. “I'll Fly Away” is given in the key of C and G - notice the differences. On a high G tuned uke, one could play only the version in G. You can practice your navigational skills with “Moon River”. Work through these songs first. Then, seek out some sources that have the score only for other pieces that you want to play (The Daily Ukulele book would be a great place to start).

As part of learning to read music, it also helps to write some. Take some melodies that you can play already. You could use the lead sheets section of [ukeeducation.org](http://ukeeducation.org) website as a place to start. Print out some blank score paper – try <http://people.virginia.edu/~pdr4h/musicpaper/> Write out the melody. Just find the first note on our uke and write it on the staff – you could just make every note a quarter note and have 4 per measure so not to worry about the timing for now, or count it out. Find some songs you might have tabbed out and write the score out. Then play the song from your score. You should now be able to play notes from the score. Break the song down - get the first measure, then several measures, a line. Use the score for some songs you already know and practice reading the notes – there are really no secrets and this is really all there is to reading music, so go for it – opens the deep end of the music pool.

Practice writing some notes on the score (omit if you don't read TAB already)

Let's get some practice finding notes on the score that go with the notes you are playing on the fretboard. You will be playing off the score soon enough. I have simplified the rhythm to use only whole, half and quarter notes – every note and rest in each measure should add up to 4 beats. (Remember, whole note=4 beats, quarter note=1 beat) More important to get the notes themselves correct, so not to worry so much about the note values yet.

# Peaceful Easy Feeling

Music by Jack Tempchin

♩ = 60

1 2 3

4 5 6 7

8 9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16 17

Detailed description: This block contains the first 17 measures of the guitar tablature for 'Peaceful Easy Feeling'. The time signature is 4/4. Measure 1 starts with a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a repeat sign. The notes are: 0, 0, 0, 1, 1, 1, 1, 3, 0, 2. Measure 2: 0, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 2. Measure 3: 0, 3, 3, 0, 0, 3, 3, 0, 1, 1, 1, 1, 3, 0. Measure 4: 3, 0, 0, 0, 1, 3, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0, 0. Measure numbers 1 through 17 are indicated above the staff.

1 2 3

4 5 6 7

8 9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16 17

Detailed description: This block contains 17 blank musical staves for the first 17 measures of the song. The first staff has a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a repeat sign. Measure numbers 1 through 17 are indicated above the staves.

Once you have written it out, congratulate yourself on a learning a new skill. Then try to play the song off the score. You can check your work against the version found in the following tunes. These are provided for your note reading practice – wear out those note cards, learn the notes, then try some of these to have some fun with it. Then repeat - in a week...

# You Are My Sunshine

Begins on low G

♩ = 100

Musical score for 'You Are My Sunshine' in 4/4 time, starting on a low G. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 100. The score consists of four staves of music, with measures numbered 1 through 15. The first measure is marked with a dynamic of *mf*. The melody is simple and consists of eighth and quarter notes.

# Morning Has Broken

♩ = 60

Musical score for 'Morning Has Broken' in 3/4 time. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 60. The score consists of four staves of music, with measures numbered 1 through 24. The first measure is marked with a dynamic of *mf*. The melody is simple and consists of quarter and eighth notes.

# Jambalaya

♩ = 110

Musical score for 'Jambalaya' in 4/4 time. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 110. The score consists of three staves of music, with measures numbered 1 through 15. The first measure is marked with a dynamic of *mf*. The melody is more complex, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes, and includes a triplet in measures 12-13.

# I'll Fly Away

♩ = 120

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

*mf*

# I'll Fly Away

Key of G

♩ = 120

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

*mf*

# Peaceful Easy Feeling

Words & Music by Jack Tempchin

♩ = 60

1 2 3

4 5 6 7

8 9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16 17

*mf*



# Lullaby

Music by Johannes Brahms

$\text{♩} = 70$

Musical score for Lullaby by Johannes Brahms. The score is written in treble clef, 3/4 time signature, and begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic. The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 70$ . The piece consists of 16 measures, with measure numbers 1 through 16 indicated above the notes. The melody is simple and gentle, characteristic of a lullaby.

# Ashokan Farewell

Music by Jay Unger

$\text{♩} = 55$

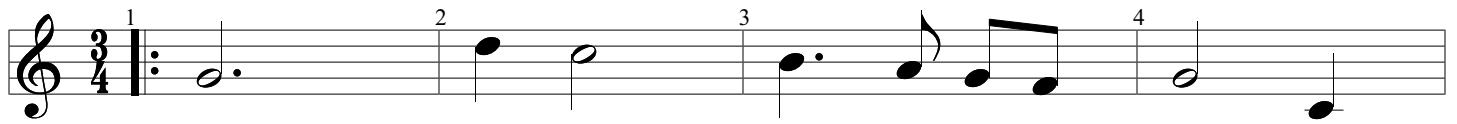
Musical score for Ashokan Farewell by Jay Unger. The score is written in treble clef, 3/4 time signature, and begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = 55$ . The piece consists of 33 measures, with measure numbers 1 through 33 indicated above the notes. The melody is more complex and expressive than the lullaby, featuring a key signature change to one sharp (F#) at measure 27.

# Moon River

Words by Johnny Mercer

Music by Henry Mancini

♩ = 80

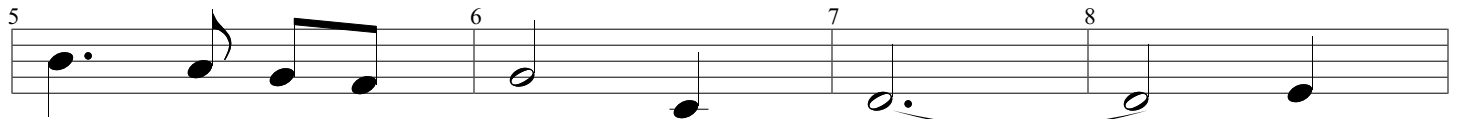


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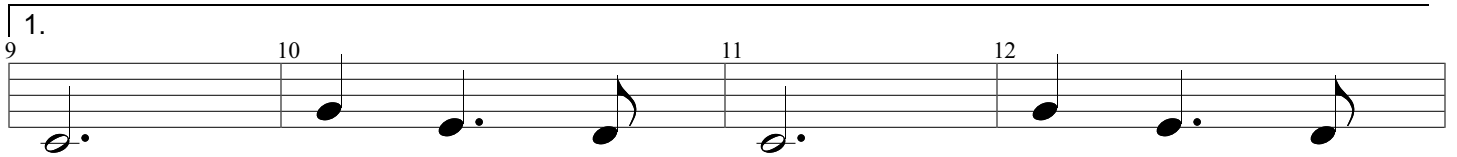
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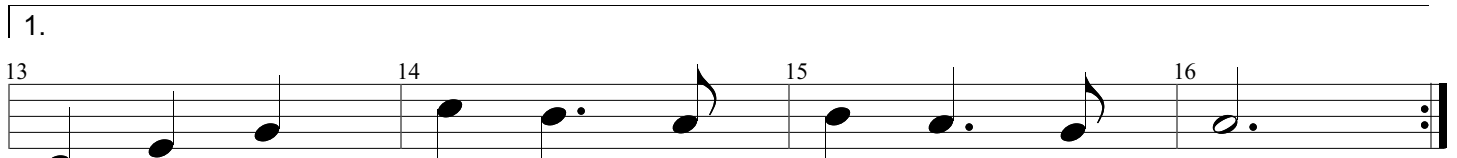
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break

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Where



ev er you're

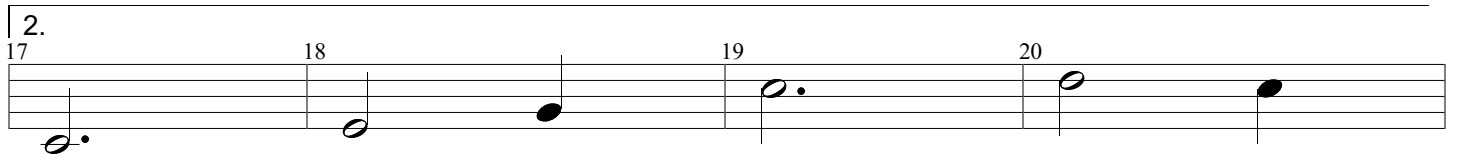
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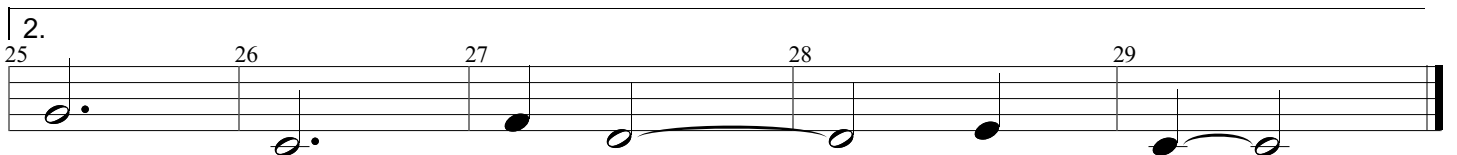


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My huck le ber ry



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