



# VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION GUIDE

**Workshop:** *Intro to the Ukulele*

**Teaching Artist:** Kevin Smith

Learn the parts of the ukulele, how to play a C chord, and the significance of the instrument in Hawaiian culture. You will also be introduced to the musical compositions of Queen Lili'uokalani, the last queen of Hawaii.



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## OBJECTIVES:

### You will learn:

- The names of the ukulele's parts, including the body, strings, sound hole, bridge, neck, frets, fretboard, head, and tuners
- How to hold the ukulele
- The names of the ukulele's strings
- How to strum the ukulele with a steady rhythm using different fingers
- How to play the C major chord
- The history of the ukulele in Hawaiian culture
- About the musical compositions of Queen Lili'uokalani

## MATERIALS:

- Ukulele



# DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING Methods

**Instruction is provided in text and video formats, available in both Spanish and English.**

You may also work by printing this art-making guide.

**YouTube can automatically create closed captions.**

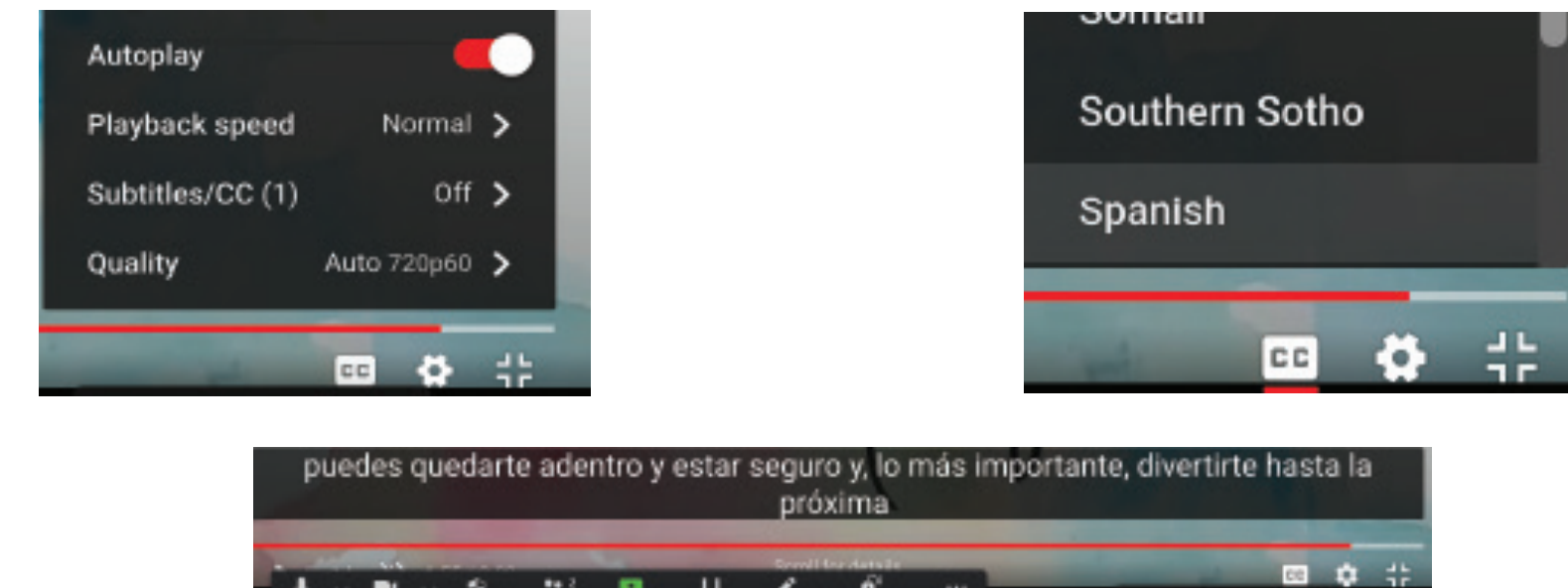


Click the [CC] button near the lower right corner of the viewer frame.

**Please note: captions are generated by algorithms, so their quality may vary.**

**Workshop Duration: 25-45 Minutes | ALL LEVELS**

A variety of language subtitles are available for each video.



- **Hand-over-hand instruction can be successful in this workshop.**

- **If you need assistance, a partner may act as either a right- or left-hand proxy for you.**

- **Explore alternative ways of holding the instrument.** For example: if you have limited thumb mobility, you may strum chords with any other finger that feels comfortable.



## BACKGROUND/RESOURCES

You will be introduced to these artists, art histories, movements and/or concepts:

**C chord:** A major chord that is made up of three notes (or a triad): C, E, and G. It is the “home base” chord on the ukulele.

**Queen Lili’uokalani:** The last monarch of Hawaii before colonization. She was one of the most influential ukulele composers, writing over 165 songs. Most notably, she wrote “Aloha OE,” which was featured in Disney’s “Lilo and Stitch.”

**Ukulele:** Visually similar to a guitar, a small stringed instrument popularized in Hawaii in the 1800s. It was seen as an important tool for developing Hawaiian culture, opposing that of the white colonists’. The parts of the ukulele include the **body**, the **strings**, the **sound hole**, the **bridge**, the **neck**, the **frets**, the **fretboard**, the **head**, and the **tuners**.



# INSTRUCTION:



Hi there! Today, I'm going to introduce you to the **ukulele**. We're going to start off with some history, then, we'll learn terms for the parts of the ukulele. After that, we'll start playing!

## History of the Ukulele



The ukulele became popular in Hawaii in the 1800s, and was seen as a tool for developing Hawaiian culture in opposition to the culture of white colonists.



The last monarch of Hawaii, **Queen Lili'uokalani**, was one of the island's most influential composers.



She wrote over 165 songs! The most popular of these songs was "Aloha OE," which was featured in Disney's 2002 movie "Lilo and Stitch."



Okay! We're going to start with the largest part of the ukulele. This whole area is called the **body**.



One of the most noticeable things on the ukulele body is this hole. This is called the **sound hole**.



# INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



Now, back here where the **strings** are connected to the body, this is called the **bridge**.



As we move up, we come to the **neck**. This is the next major part of the ukulele. And on the neck, we find our **frets**.



**Frets** are the little bars that go across what is called the **fingerboard** or **fretboard**. Each one of these frets is what's going to get us a different note.



As we continue to move up, we get to the **head**. The head is where you'll find the **tuners**, which we'll get into at another time. Those help change the note of each string.



Now let's hold the instrument. Hug the ukulele's body against your body, using your forearm.



Place the instrument about two-thirds of the way up your arm, towards your elbow. Then just hug it.

# INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



Make sure that your hand is closer to the neck, as opposed to being directly over the sound hole. This will give us a nicer tone when you strum.



You have a few options for your left hand. A lot of people will put their thumb on the back of the neck, so that their hand is free to swing out from underneath, and their fingers are able to curve towards the fretboard.



If that's comfortable for you, go for it! If not, I am going to show you another option.



Put the neck on this part of your hand, letting it rest there.



Your fingers should still be able to come up from underneath, and be able to swing towards the fretboard. This is the way that I usually hold the ukulele.



Now, we're ready to play! Go ahead, using your thumb or your index finger or whatever is most comfortable, and pluck each string.





# INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



Each string has its own name and note associated with it. Starting from the top and going down, we've got G, C, E, and A.



Now, we're going to find the A string. We're also going to find the third fret. You can just count each one.



That's where we're going to put a finger down. You can pick any finger that is comfortable for you. I am going to use my ring finger.



I'm going to put my finger on the string right next to that third fret, but not directly on top of it. That's where you're going to get the best sound.

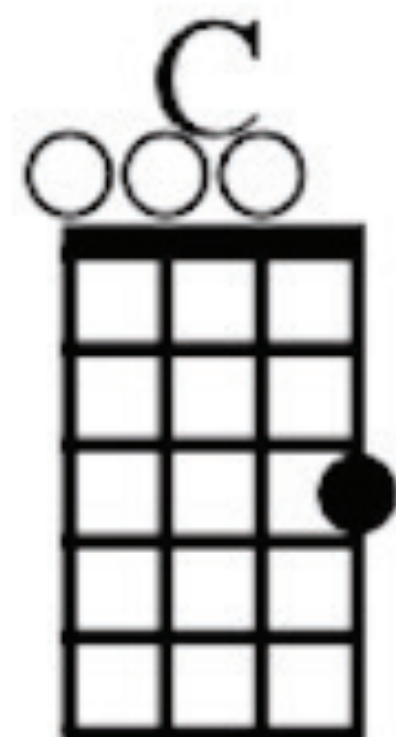


I'm putting my finger there, and I'm squeezing it. Now, if everything is correct, we're going to hear different notes when we pluck that A string.



Now, we're going to strum each string. So, again, take whichever finger is most comfortable for you, and strum from top to bottom in one quick motion. I'll use my index finger.

# INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



What you just played is called the **C chord**. It's home base for the ukulele. You'll be playing a lot of C chords.



Now, go ahead and keep strumming. Try to keep a steady beat. There you go!

Enjoy!



Thanks again for making music with me today. I hope you had fun, and that we get to do it again soon. Until then, keep on playing!

# LEARNING STANDARDS

This workshop is aligned to the following state and national anchor standards. It can be differentiated for learners at every grade level. (For arts performance standard alignments at specific grade levels, feel free to email [programs@snowcityarts.org](mailto:programs@snowcityarts.org).)

## ILLINOIS ARTS LEARNING STANDARDS

### Anchor Standards: Creating

- **CR1.** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- **CR2.** Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

### Anchor Standards: Performing, Presenting, Producing

- **PR6.** Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

### English Language Arts: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards

#### Language

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6.** Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

#### Standards for Mathematical Practice

- **SMP.4.** Model with mathematics.
- **SMP.7.** Look for and make use of structure.





If you are interested in **receiving school credit** for the work you have completed in this workshop or if you would like to **have your artwork displayed** in a Snow City Arts exhibition space or virtual gallery, please visit <https://snowcityarts.org/consent-releases/>

**Contact us at [programs@snowcityarts.org](mailto:programs@snowcityarts.org)** if you have questions, would like to offer feedback, or would like to continue working with us virtually.





**Workshop Duration: 25-45 Minutes | ALL LEVELS**



# snow city arts

1653 W Congress Pkwy

Chicago, IL 60612

**Phone:** (312) 942-6991

**Fax:** (312) 942-6859

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