



# KUBAS

Kent Ukulele & Banjulele Appreciation Society



## PICKING STRINGS

Picking is a technique that helps to add expression and highlights the individual notes that a chord is constructed from. It helps to enhance a rhythm in a song. The first step to picking is to understand the “Time Signature” of the song. Refer to the “KUBAS Strumming Guide” on more information on time signatures.

There are two common methods of picking the strings with your right hand. These are as follows:

### Method One

String	Digit
4 <sup>th</sup> (G)	Thumb
3 <sup>rd</sup> (C)	Index finger
2 <sup>nd</sup> (E)	Middle finger
1 <sup>st</sup> (A)	Ring finger

### Method Two

String	Digit
4 <sup>th</sup> (G)	Thumb
3 <sup>rd</sup> (C)	Thumb
2 <sup>nd</sup> (E)	Index finger
1 <sup>st</sup> (A)	Middle finger



Refer to the photograph showing the position of the thumb and fingers of the right hand relating to “Method One” in the table above.

The thumb must be positioned ahead of the rest of the fingers that are naturally curled inwards towards the strings. Generally the little finger is not used to pick the strings and can be placed on the ukulele to help steady the hand when using method two. Try both methods to see which one is more comfortable.

Start slowly and understand what strings are picked and in what order. Once the sequence of the strings is mastered then you can start to increase the speed. By varying the speed on certain strings you can create a syncopated rhythm. By amending the picking order of the strings this can create another rhythm as well.

Listen to the rhythm and how the song is sung. Try to emulate this in picking. Examples of KUBAS songs that are suited for picking are:

Aint She Sweet	Any Dream Will Do
By the Light of the Silvery Moon	Fly Me To The Moon
Hotel California	House of the Rising Sun
My Way	Somewhere Over the Rainbow

Try picking to the above songs with a beat from a metronome to help. You can download a metronome as an “App” to your tablet or phone.

## Exercises

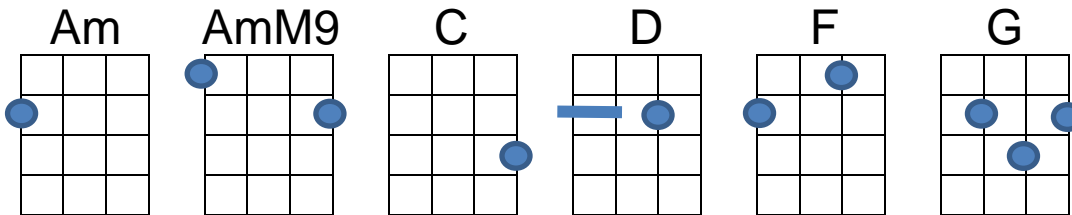
### Stairway to Heaven

You Tube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9ioyEvdggk>

A good song to learn to pick to is “**Stairway to Heaven**” by Led Zeplin.

Remember the strings are numbered G=4<sup>th</sup> : C=3<sup>rd</sup> : E=2<sup>nd</sup> : A=1<sup>st</sup>. An easy way to remember the string numbers is to imagine the strings as a block of flats with the “A” string nearest the floor being the 1<sup>st</sup> floor or 1<sup>st</sup> string, “E” string being the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor or 2<sup>nd</sup> string etc.

Below are the chords and the string numbers:



The basic picking of the strings is as below per chord:

(1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> together) – (2<sup>nd</sup>) – (3<sup>rd</sup>) – (1<sup>st</sup>)

Note: (\*G\*Am) & (\*D) = Single pick of all strings together.

#### Intro:

(Am) (AmM9) (C) (D) (F) (F) (\*G\*Am\*Am) x2

(C) (D) (F) (Am) (C) (G) (\*D\*D\*D) x2

#### *Chords and lyrics to the first verse:*

There's a (Am) lady who's (AmM9) sure all that (C) glitters is (D) gold,  
 And she's (F) buying a stairway to (G) hea(Am)ven,  
 When she (Am) gets there she (AmM9) knows if the (C) stores are all (D) closed,  
 With a (F) word she can get what she (G) came (Am) for,  
 (C) Ooh (D) ooh (F) ooh (Am) ooh,  
 And she's (C) buying a (G) stairway to (D) heaven.

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### House of the Rising Sun

Intro: (Am) (C) (D) (F) (Am) (E7) (Am) (E7)

The basic picking of the strings is as below per chord:

(1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> together) – (2<sup>nd</sup>) – (3<sup>rd</sup>) – (1<sup>st</sup>) – (2<sup>nd</sup>) – (3<sup>rd</sup>)

### Canon in “C” by Pachelbel

You Tube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPiK2coUUGY>

Chords: (C) (G) (Am) (Em) (F) (C) (F) (G)

The basic picking of the strings is as below per chord:

(1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> together) – (2<sup>nd</sup>) – (3<sup>rd</sup>) – (1<sup>st</sup>)