

# CIGAR-BOX UKULELE KIT



## PARTS LIST:

Cigar Box  
Pre-cut String Board  
Set of 4 Strings  
4 Zither Pins  
1 Clock Key  
Plastic Nut  
Plastic Bridge  
20 Flat Toothpicks  
Flatpick  
2 Wood Screws, 3/4"  
2 Cup Washers  
Assembly Instructions

## MUSICMAKER'S KITS, INC.

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## TOOLS & SUPPLIES YOU WILL NEED:

Elmer's Wood Glue  
Damp Rag  
Pencil  
Sanding Block (100 grit)  
Wire Cutter  
Hammer  
Screwdriver  
Drill

# Ukulele Fret Chart

NUT

1st fret
2nd fret
3rd fret
4th fret
5th fret
6th fret
7th fret
8th fret
9th fret
10th fret
11th fret
12th fret
13th fret
14th fret
15th fret
16th fret
17th fret

## THE STRING BOARD

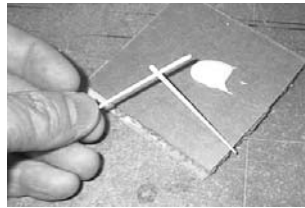
Time required for assembling the string board (steps 1-8):  
approximately 30 minutes

1. Use the Pattern Sheet at left to determine the location of each fret. Fold the pattern sheet as shown, and tape one end to the string board, lining it up with the slot for the nut (near the angled peg head).

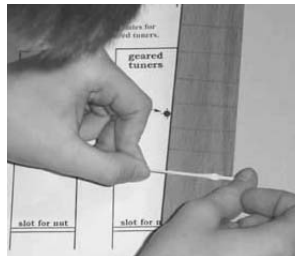
2. Use a pencil to mark the wood for each fret position. Just make short accurate marks on each side of the pattern sheet. Your frets will be glued across the width of the board, connecting these marks.

3. Use small amounts of Elmer's Wood Glue to fasten the toothpick frets on the top surface of the string board connecting each pair of marks.

We like to squirt a small puddle of glue onto a scrap of paper or cardboard and use one toothpick as an applicator for spreading glue evenly onto each toothpick fret.



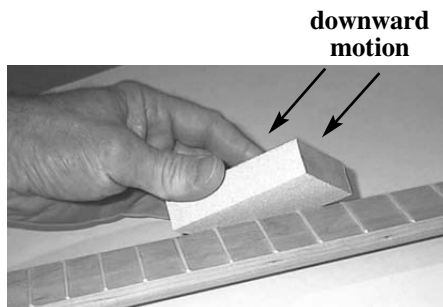
Spread the glue onto the widest surface of the toothpick. Be sure to avoid any "dry" spots. You will glue the flat surface of the toothpick to the string board. Let the thin end hang over the edge of the board, as shown.



4. When all the toothpick frets are in place (or if you take a break part-way through the process), turn the string board over on a flat table and put a heavy weight on it to press the toothpicks evenly against the board. Allow at least 15 minutes for the toothpicks to dry.



5. When dry, hold your thumb on top of a fret and break off the excess length of the toothpick by pushing down, not lifting up. Do this for each fret.



6. **GENTLY** sand the frets flush with the edge of the stick. This is best done with a flat sanding block or stick. Be sure to work the sandpaper downward only. You don't want to lift the frets off.

Use the same downward strokes to bevel the ends of the frets a little, as shown, by holding the sanding block at an angle. Test the feel of the string board by sliding your hand along the edges. Everything should feel nice and smooth.

cut paper pattern

nut

P  
A  
T  
T  
E  
R  
N  
  
S  
H  
E  
E  
T

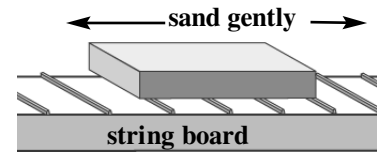
Mark wood carefully on both sides of pattern.

Tape both ends to keep pattern from moving.

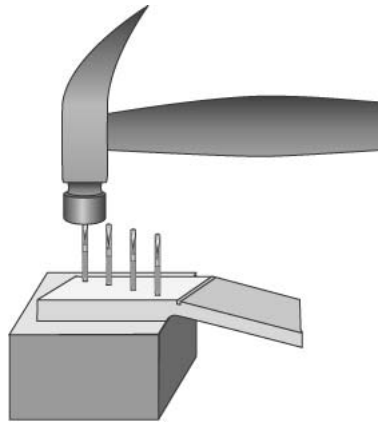
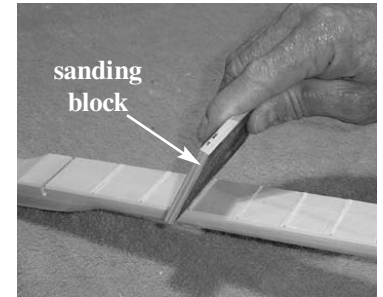
bridge



7. Dressing the frets: It is important to have all the frets level across the tops. Use your sanding block to GENTLY sand the tops of the frets, just enough to make sure they all get touched by the sandpaper. Take care not to break any frets off, or sand them down to nothing!



8. Once the frets are level, we like to sand the edges of each fret to remove the sharpness. This makes the guitar more comfortable to play. Just a light sanding at an angle will do the job nicely.



9. Install the zither pins either by pounding with a hammer or by screwing in with the tuning key, driving them down until they begin to show out the bottom of the wood.

If pounding, it is best to work on the floor, using a large wood block for a pad. Be sure to keep the angled peghead flat on the work surface -- otherwise you might break it off.

ONE MORE HINT: It is helpful to orient the tiny holes in the tuning pins so they face the ends of the string board. This will make stringing go faster.

10. Install the plastic nut and bridge into the slots provided in the string board. No glue required. These plastic parts are identical, but they must be oriented correctly.

Notice that the string grooves are cut in the plastic at a slope. These grooves should slope down toward each end of the string board. That way, the strings will make final contact with the plastic at the point facing the playing area.

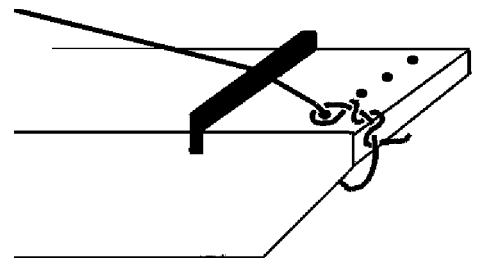


## STRINGING AND TUNING

11. Now you can begin stringing. Check the tuning chart and string package for the proper order of strings.

Tie one end of each string to the tail end of the string board as shown. This is a very simple process of threading the end of the string around the loop two or three times so that the string does not slip when pulled.

If the string slips under tension, you could add a simple overhand knot at the end to prevent the end from pulling around the loop.



NOTE: If you wish to string the instrument for left-handed playing, you will simply reverse the string order.

12. Thread the other end of the string through the correct tuning pin and use the clock key to turn the tuning pin clockwise to wind the string up to pitch. Nylon is stretchy, so it will require multiple tunings before the instrument will stabilize.

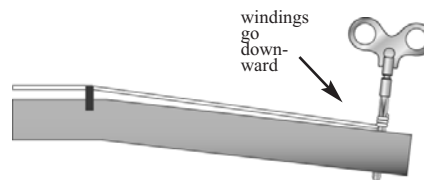
If you need tuning assistance, check our free on-line keyboard sounds at [www.harokit.com/freetuner](http://www.harokit.com/freetuner). You can click on each note of the keyboard to hear the pitch (C4 is Middle C).

NOTE: The tuning pins screw downward into the wood as you turn them. If you happen to break a string, be sure to “unscrew” the tuning pin to raise it back up before installing the replacement string.

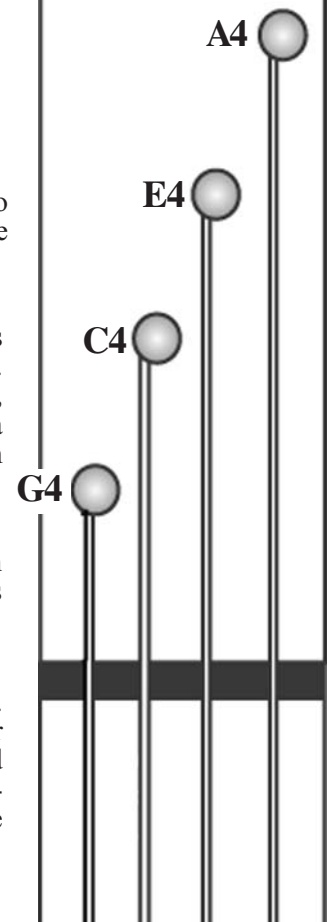
13. We like to attach the string board to the cigar box lid using two screws and cup washers from the inside of the box. The question often arises about where to attach to a cigar box lid. We like to avoid covering nice artwork (as shown on a couple samples on the cover photo), but sometimes the instrument just looks better with the neck centered on the box. So this is a judgment call on your part. The benefit of attaching the neck with screws is that you can always move it to a different position or another box in the future.

When you decide where to mount the neck, use some double-side tape to hold the wood in place as you open the lid and drive the screws into the wood. You should drill small pilot holes (3/32” drill) for the screws to avoid splitting the wood.

**OPTIONS:** Each cigar box is different. Some have clasps to hold the lid shut, others don't. You can just hold the box shut with a rubber band, or you can look for some sort of hasp or latch at the hardware store. Gluing a ribbon from the box to the lid is a nice touch -- we used superglue to hold each end of the ribbon to the wood. A 48” piece of nylon webbing or sturdy ribbon makes a perfect strap. Use superglue or a short screw to fasten the strap to the box.



## Ukulele Tuning



OPEN BOXES

Mounting screws with cup washers



CLOSED BOXES

Add a strap if you like!