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# Introduction



Rigk Sauer

## From the author

Welcome to “The Ukulele Solo Recipe”. My name is Rigk Sauer and I was born in 1964. My first instrument was the electric organ, which I took up in 1975. After experimenting with other instruments and different styles of music, I eventually settled on playing piano in the boogie-woogie style.

In 2000, my wife Barbara thought we should take guitar lessons, but I refused because I felt there were already too many guitar players in this world. Around that time, we saw a TV show with Stefan Raab, who is a famous German uke player. I thought the uke was much cooler than guitar, and so we both started playing it. I bought my first uke, a Brüko soprano, and since that day, I almost always carry a uke with me wherever I go.

After playing for a while I began to get ideas for new ukulele designs, so I founded RISA Musical Instruments in December 2001 to turn those ideas into reality. One of the first instruments I designed was the Uke-Solid, which became a very popular electric ukulele.

Not long after taking up the uke, I visited several ukulele festivals in the USA, attended many workshops, and met lots of fine players. I wanted to learn more about ukulele solo techniques, especially the chord soloing of musicians like Lyle Ritz. But all I heard in the workshops was, “practice, practice, practice” with very little information of where to begin. In one workshop, Lyle told us to “noodle around as much as you can.” At that moment, I made the decision to share my “ukulele noodling experience” with others, because the step from standard strumming to solo styles is the most difficult.

This book shares my experience in learning ukulele solo techniques. It was written for the common soprano C-tuning (GCEA with high G), but the fingerings will work on concertos, and tenors, as well. However, be open-minded and experiment with other tunings to get most out of the ukulele.

I limited all arrangements to 13 frets, because this is what you still can play on a standard 12 fret uke by pressing your finger on the fretboard where the 13th fret is supposed to be.

I like to thank my wife Barbara for all her support during this project. Not only did she put up with my all-night writing sessions, she is also responsible for the layout and design of this book.

Thanks to Michael Simmons and Andreas David for their support and assistance.



## About the editor

Michael Simmons is the co-editor of the *Ukulele Occasional*. He started playing electric guitar in punk bands as a teenager before being converted to acoustic music by a rabid Django Reinhardt fan. He spent 15 years working at Gryphon Stringed Instruments in Palo Alto, California, where he learned a great deal about the construction and history of ukuleles, guitars, mandolins, and banjos. Simmons is the review editor at *Fiddler Magazine* and is a frequent contributor to the magazines *Acoustic Guitar* and *Guitarmaker*. He contributed entries on the Santa Cruz Guitar Company, Selmer, and Taylor to *Acoustic Guitars: The Illustrated Encyclopedia* and he's the author of *Taylor Guitars: 30 Years of a New American Classic* and the co-author of *Akustische Gitarren : Alles über Konstruktion und Historie*.

# How to read this book

This book is written for ukulele players who already have some experience with the instrument. Basics like holding, strumming, picking and tuning the ukulele are not covered.

You should also be familiar with chord charts and tablature. An understanding of standard notation and transposition would also be helpful. If you need to refresh your knowledge in these areas, check out the appendix starting on page 68.

At the beginning of each song you will find a brief discussion of the playing techniques as well as arranging hints. The following four symbols are used throughout the book to introduce new topics:

## 1. New song icon

Introduces new song.



### Song title

## 2. Information icon

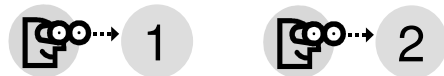
General information about the song, including fingering tips and musical analysis.



General information.

## 3. Step icons

Some arrangements are explained in complete, step-by-step detail. Following each step will help you understand the thinking behind the musical choices.



Step 1

Step 2

## 4. Keep-in-mind icon

General tips & tricks, which can also be used on other arrangements are shown in a grey box under the keep-in-mind-icon.



General tips & tricks for your solo arrangements.

Listen to the corresponding CD track before you work on a song. Follow each step and play the examples and alternative arrangements to understand how the final song was arranged. It will help you to create your own arrangements.

Once you understood the different methods of arranging, you can start to arrange your own favorite songs. You can use the appendix as a reminder of the various arranging techniques.

If you only want to play the songs in this book, and you are not interested in writing own song arrangements, then you can immediately jump to the final arrangements. The final song arrangement, which was also used to record the CD is indicated by a CD-Track # under the song name.

# St. Louis Blues

CD-Track 8

Music by William C. Handy  
Arrangement by Rigk Sauer

The musical score is presented in a system with three systems of music. The top system is labeled "Intro" and begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The guitar part is written on a six-line staff with fret numbers (1-5) and triplets (3) above the notes. The piano part is written on a five-line staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb). Above the guitar staff, two chord diagrams are shown: Fm (1-24) and Bbm (3 1 1 1). The second system starts at measure 4 and continues the guitar and piano parts. Above the guitar staff, two chord diagrams for C are shown. The third system starts at measure 7 and continues the guitar and piano parts. Above the guitar staff, eight chord diagrams are shown: C7, C7M, C, C, Fm, G7, C, and C7. The guitar part includes various fret numbers and triplets throughout the piece.