

Two Lanikai ukuleles are leaning against a rustic wooden chair. The ukuleles have light-colored wooden bodies with a fine, wavy grain pattern and dark reddish-brown necks and fretboards. The fretboards are marked with white dots. The soundholes are circular with a dark wood ring. The bridge is made of dark wood with white stitching. The heads are light wood with the 'LANIKAI' logo and wavy lines. The background is a textured, greyish-green wall. The floor is covered with a woven mat and some dried leaves.

# LANIKAI

UKULELE CARE GUIDE

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR PURCHASE OF A LANIKAI UKULELE.

Lanikai uses premium woods, specialized build methods, many design features and brand name components to create beautiful, dependable and player friendly ukuleles that provide excellent tone and performance for players of all levels and musical styles.

**ENJOY YOUR LANIKAI!**

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## UKULELE ANATOMY

- |                |                       |                         |
|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. HEADSTOCK   | 9. NECK BINDING       | 17. BRIDGE              |
| 2. TUNERS      | 10. TOP               | 18. SADDLE              |
| 3. NUT         | 11. UPPER BOUT        | 19. SOUNDHOLE           |
| 4. STRINGS     | 12. WAIST             | 20. PICKUP CONTROLS     |
| 5. FINGERBOARD | 13. LOWER BOUT        | 21. BATTERY/OUTPUT JACK |
| 6. FRET WIRE   | 14. STRAP BUTTONS (2) | 22. POSITION MARKERS    |
| 7. INLAY       | 15. BODY BINDING      | 23. CUTAWAY             |
| 8. NECK        | 16. ROSETTE           |                         |



# TUNING YOUR UKULELE

There are several ways to tune a ukulele. The first step is knowing the tuning notes. High G-C-E-A are the standard notes for soprano, concert and tenor sizes. Baritones are tuned like the highest four strings of a guitar or D-G-B-E (low to high). Bass ukuleles are are tuned like a bass guitar or E-A-D-G (low to high). There are other varied tunings possible but to get started, these are the most common.

The easiest method is to use an electronic tuner. Most are chromatic (all notes), but many now have a specific ukulele setting that makes it easier for beginners to identify notes. There are also several tuner apps available.

Some Lanikai models with pickups are equipped with a Fishman® Kula style pre-amp that features a built-in tuner.











Another approach is to tune by ear. You can match the string pitches for your particular ukulele style to an app, piano or guitar.

It is also possible to tune a ukulele to itself. Methods and instructions can be found online but be advised this way of tuning does not ensure your ukulele is in standard tuning. Be advised that tuning the ukulele to itself is the least preferred tuning method since it may result in tuning too high or too low for the instrument.

# TUNING YOUR UKULELE

## UKULELE TUNINGS

Notes top to bottom holding  
ukulele in playing position

<b>4 STRING</b> SOPRANO, CONCERT, TENOR (COMMON, HIGH G)	<b>WRITTEN/SOUNDS</b> 
<b>5 STRING</b> TENOR	<b>WRITTEN/SOUNDS</b> 
<b>6 STRING</b> TENOR	<b>WRITTEN/SOUNDS</b> 
<b>8 STRING</b> TENOR	<b>WRITTEN/SOUNDS</b> 
<b>4 STRING</b> BARITONE	<b>WRITTEN</b>  <b>SOUNDS</b> 
<b>6 STRING</b> GUITELELE	<b>WRITTEN</b>  <b>SOUNDS</b> 
<b>4 STRING</b> BASS	<b>WRITTEN</b>  <b>SOUNDS</b> 

# STRETCHING THE STRINGS

## GETTING NEW STRINGS TO SETTLE

It is a good idea to keep your ukulele tuned to standard tuning for the ukulele type (i.e. soprano, concert, tenor, multi-strings, baritone or bass). Keeping it in tune helps the strings stretch, settle in and it helps the neck adjust to the standard tuning tension.

Be advised, new ukulele strings need to **STRETCH**! Ukulele strings are nylon and in some cases, they have metal outer windings but still with a nylon core. Nylon is very elastic at first and needs to stretch and settle in. This is normal with ukulele strings so they will need several tunings initially.

Once tuned, gently pull on each string out from the ukulele at the sound hole and in front of the fingerboard several times. This helps strings stretch out and settle. Then retune and repeat the stretching process. After several stretches and tunes, eventually, the strings will settle in and require only a light tuning touch up before playing.



From the factory, Lanikai uses **D'Addario** and **Aquila** strings for optimal tone, projection and intonation.

Most Lanikai models utilize the **D'Addario EJ88** series strings, and for our bass ukuleles we suggest the **D'Addario EXPPBB190GS** strings.

For our LU series, we use **Aquila** strings and our Guitaleles use the **96c** set.

# PLAYING THE UKULELE

The ukulele is a great instrument for beginners to advanced players. The nylon strings are easy on beginners' fingertips and the warm tones make it pleasant to listen to as a solo instrument, in a group or as a voice accompaniment. The ukulele is very popular because it is easy to play, and one can easily improve with a little practice. It can also be taken to new levels by advanced players. At any level, the ukulele is a great way to express your musicality.

**LanikaiUkuleles.com** has a free downloadable chord chart to get you started, but there are many lessons and tutorials available online from many sources. Your local music store likely has a teacher and books, or you likely already have a friend who plays who can show you some chords.

Strumming the ukulele is primarily done with the index finger (sometimes other fingers are used and sometimes even fingerpicking is done). The downward strum should be across from the sound hole or just slightly forward toward the end of the fingerboard.

The downward strum of the index finger produces a bright crisp tone because of the fingernail. The upward strum uses the pad of the finger, so it creates a softer more muted tone. The sound combination of downward and upward strums gives the ukulele a varied but pleasing tone.

Several types of strums are possible on a ukulele. Go online to view tutorial videos, find a teacher or jam with friends to experiment with different strumming that works for you.

## PICKS

Using the fingertips is the standard method for picking or strumming the ukulele. However, some players feel more comfortable with a pick. To keep from breaking strings, avoid using harsh hard guitar picks on the soft nylon ukulele strings. There are several styles of softer picks usually made of felt that work well for ukulele. These felt picks will give you a warm smooth tone and will be gentle on the nylon strings.



# TREATING, CLEANING AND POLISHING

To keep your ukulele in the best condition, sometimes it is necessary to clean and polish it as well as treat the fingerboard and bridge. Typically, for glossy or satin finishes (body or neck) simply use a soft cloth. Old T-shirts and sweatshirts are excellent choices for polish cloths since they typically do not have any buttons or harsh stitching that can scratch the ukulele.

Satin finishes require less polishing. A satin ukulele should be wiped down after playing, but keep the polish to a minimum.

For a glossy ukulele, you may want to polish it often. Whenever you polish a glossy uke, use instrument polish that is specially formulated for delicate string instrument finishes. Guitar polishes are formulated for the same style polyurethane finish and easily available online or at local music stores.

**DO NOT** use any furniture polishes, waxes, anything that contains silicone or harsh chemicals such as a window cleaner or bleach that can damage the ukulele finish.

Notice that the fingerboard and bridge of your ukulele have no finish. This is called “open pore” which means the wood is open or exposed with no finish closing the pores. Treating the fingerboard and bridge should be done once or twice a year depending on the climate you live in.

For treating the fingerboard and bridge you can use a very light coat of lemon oil, mineral oil (available at home improvement stores) or bore oil (used on wood clarinets – available at music retailers). A light coat of any of these safe, mild oils on the bridge and fingerboard will restore the wood’s luster, rehydrate it and give it a gentle protective coating to help keep it safe from the elements.



# UKULELE CONSTRUCTION STYLES

There are three main styles of ukulele construction: Laminated, solid top with laminated back and sides and all solid. Depending on the particular use of the ukulele, each construction type has specific advantages and associated care suggestions.

**LAMINATED** Laminated wood ukuleles are the most popular type of ukulele. They have a pleasing sound, are available across a range of prices and offer durability. The wood of a laminated ukulele is in several layers with crisscrossed grains. There is a decorative veneer layer on top to finish it off. The laminated wood ukulele is very durable and resilient to splitting or cracking. However, like any string instrument, temperature and climate extremes should be avoided.

**SOLID TOP** On a Solid Top ukulele, the top wood is solid or one piece of wood, but it is book-matched, meaning it is split down the middle and opened like a book, which results in grain patterns that mirror one other from one side of the top to the other. The back and sides of a solid top ukulele are laminated or layered wood. The solid top naturally gives the ukulele a more rounded tone and more projection or volume. Solid wood is more susceptible to temperature extremes and humidity changes, so it requires a little extra care. In dry climates, a humidifier is suggested to keep the top wood in good condition and not too dry. To avoid splits or cracks in a solid top ukulele, keep it in a comfortable controlled climate with adequate humidity (between 40% and 60%).

**ALL SOLID** An all solid ukulele means the top, back and sides are all made of solid wood pieces. However, the top, back and sides typically utilize book-matched wood, meaning it is split down the middle and opened like a book. Usually on the top and back you can see the mirrored grain patterns on the left and right. In addition, Lanikai bookmatches the ukulele's sides, too.

All solid wood ukuleles tend to cost more, but feature a well-developed tone and good projection, making them preferred by many players. While they have an excellent acoustic tone, all solid ukuleles are the most delicate and susceptible to temperature extremes and humidity changes. In dry climates or during dry winter seasons use a humidifier to keep the wood in good condition. It is important that all solid ukuleles are properly stored to avoid potential problems. To avoid splits and cracks in an all solid ukulele, store in a comfortable, controlled climate that is properly humidified (between 40% and 60%).

# TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY

**A COMFORTABLE UKULELE:** Whether you have a laminated, solid top or all solid ukulele, the most important factor for proper care of your Lanikai is to keep it in a comfortable climate.

Generally, it is best to store your Lanikai in a temperature range of 70° to 77° Fahrenheit and in 40% to 60% humidity. These are the temperature and humidity conditions are ideal, but obviously conditions change in different rooms or when outside etc, but as a general rule, try to keep your ukulele within these conditions.

## TEMPERATURE: AVOID ANY EXTREME (TOO HOT OR COLD)

**Extreme temperatures can alter the set up and playability of the ukulele.**

### DO NOT:

- DO NOT expose to extreme temperatures. Heat and cold directly affects the glue and can damage the bracing, joints and even split the wood or the seams.
- DO NOT expose to direct sunlight for extended time.
- DO NOT store or place ukulele directly in front of hot/cold air ducts.
- DO NOT store or place directly in front of functioning fire place or space heater etc.
- DO NOT leave in the trunk or in a hot/cold car for extended time.
- If your ukulele has been exposed to cold temperatures, let it gradually warm up inside the case slowly to guard against the possibility of the wood or finish cracking.

## HUMIDITY: AVOID ANY EXTREME (TOO MOIST OR DRY)

- Be advised that while they sound sweet, full and project well, solid top and All Solid wood ukuleles are sensitive to too little humidity.
- Try to keep your ukulele in 40% to 60% humidity whenever possible.
- If the air does not have enough humidity (too dry) it could cause the wood to crack.
- Do not place your ukulele next to a source of dry heat, especially during dry winter months.

## TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY (CONT.)

- Too much humidity or moisture in the air could cause the wood to expand, which could ultimately cause structural issues.
- Another indication of too much humidity is the neck might bow which causes the string action to raise slightly and affect the playability.
- There are several types of instrument humidifiers on the market for solid top and all solid ukuleles. Some humidifiers attach directly to the ukulele itself in the sound hole. Case humidifiers are stored in internal case compartments and there are room humidifiers for home or studio use. You can select from a variety of styles of ukulele and case humidifiers online or at your local music store.



## OVERALL

To better control the environment around your ukulele, store it in a case with a humidifier inside the case if you prefer, since it is easier to control the temperature and humidity in smaller spaces.

If you prefer to display your ukulele on a wall hanger or floor stand, be aware of the temperature and overall humidity in the room and make sure it is not in direct sunlight or in front of heating or cooling ducts.

# STORAGE AND TRAVELING

When storing a ukulele for a short period of time, it is not necessary to loosen the strings. However, if you plan on not playing it for an extended time (a few months or longer) loosen the strings to ease the constant neck tension.

Before storing your ukulele, we strongly suggest thoroughly wiping down all hardware and polishing the ukulele with instrument polish to remove any chemicals or skin oils that may react with the ukulele while in storage.

If you don't play your ukulele for an extended time, keep it in a case or gig bag in a comfortable climate as covered earlier in this booklet.

If traveling in a car, keep the ukulele in the back seat, rather than the trunk, since there is less chance of damage and it is temperature controlled. But as covered earlier, do not leave the instrument in a hot or cold car.

If traveling by plane, most ukuleles should be small enough to qualify as a carry-on and should fit in an overhead bin. Do not "check" your ukulele without adequate flight case protection and packing.

When traveling, remember to provide the best protection possible for your instrument and utilize the best case and bag options available to you. Lanikai offers several bag and case choices for purchase. Visit any authorized Lanikai dealer for more details.

HWC  
Hardwood Case



FC  
Foam Case

# STRING CARE AND WHEN TO CHANGE

Strings are usually a personal preference. Most players prefer a light to medium light gauge string, but there are many styles and types - each with a subtle difference in feel and tone. There is no right or wrong string gauge or brand, but Lanikai utilizes D'Addario® and Aquila® brand strings from the factory.

After each practice or performance, thoroughly wipe down the strings to remove skin oils and/or sweat with a soft dry cloth. This habit will prolong the life of your strings. However, depending on how much you play, the life of your strings will eventually fade.

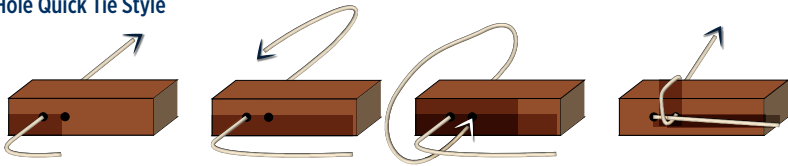
You may start to notice a dull or flat tone, sustain becoming shorter, or even notes that sound out of tune on some chords but not on others. These are all signs that your strings should be changed.

## HOW TO CHANGE YOUR STRINGS

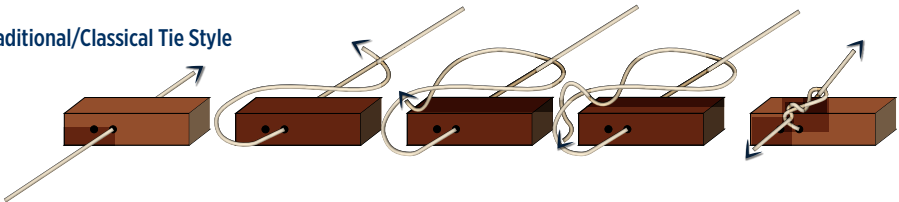
Lanikai 4 string (soprano, concert and tenor) ukuleles utilize an easy 8-hole quick tie style bridge. The advantages of the 8-hole bridge are: improved projection, less excess string to stretch, faster time to change and a cleaner look.

If you prefer the traditional tie-on string style on a bridge, that method is also available by simply using the bottom set of 4 holes as shown below. Lanikai offers both options to suit your preferred style.

### Lanikai 8-Hole Quick Tie Style



### Traditional/Classical Tie Style



For Lanikai multi-string ukuleles such as 5, 6, 8 strings and guitaleles the traditional tie-on method is utilized. Our bass ukuleles use traditional large-scale bridge pins to secure the string ends.



# STRING ACTION

The “action” on a ukulele refers to the height of the strings off of the fingerboard. A higher action decreases the playability and action that is too low can result in buzzing from the strings touching the frets.

Each Lanikai is set up with optimum action before it is sent out, but if you prefer a lower action, we recommend taking it to where you purchased it or to an experienced repair person who can adjust the action to your playing preference.

The humidity and temperatures in your area may slightly affect the action. It may take a while for your ukulele to adjust and settle into its new surroundings. Monitor it and have it professionally adjusted if needed. This is a standard part of string instrument care and maintenance.



# LANIKAI TRUSS RODS

Due to the relatively low tension of nylon strings most ukuleles (soprano, concert and tenors), do not use truss rods in the necks. However, for some specialty models such as guitaleles, baritones and bass ukuleles, the increased string tension and the longer neck, can mean a small adjustment in the truss rod is sometimes needed.

A truss rod is a metal rod in the neck under the fingerboard in many types of string instruments. A truss rod helps keep the neck straight. If you are unsure what needs to be done do not attempt to adjust the truss rod. Take the instrument to a professional. All Lanikai baritone ukuleles, guitaleles and bass ukuleles have an adjustable truss rod. We adjust each for optimum playability but climate, humidity changes, different string gauges can occasionally require a truss rod adjustment.

To play properly, string instruments need a slight bow (relief) in the neck to allow the strings to clear each fret. However, if the bow increases too much or reverses to a back bow (warp), the playability is affected. A truss rod corrects a string instrument's neck curvature slightly. On the models mentioned above, Lanikai uses a standard 4mm hex wrench adjustment located just inside the sound hole.

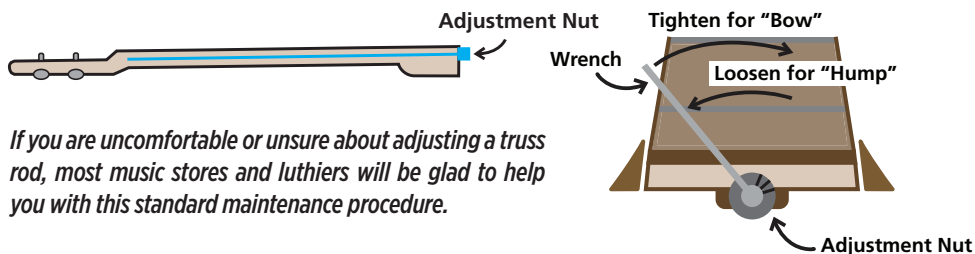
**1) Bow** – (neck over-bending) - A bowed neck occurs when the neck has too much relief or curvature affecting playability.

**2) Warp** (neck hump backward) - Warp occurs when the neck has a hump and in some cases causes strings to “fret out” or buzz when played.

Adjusting a truss rod is not difficult, but it should be done with **CAUTION**. Start with only a quarter turn of the truss rod nut and allow time for the neck to adjust. (Apply another quarter turn if needed). If the truss rod is tightened or loosened too much, the problem can be over-corrected and potentially create a worse problem.

**1) Bow** - Turning the truss rod nut to the right (clockwise) will straighten the neck and take out bow. But remember there should be a slight bow for proper playability.

**2) Warp** - Loosening the truss rod or turning it slightly to the left (counterclockwise) will relax the neck and remove the hump.



# ACOUSTIC OR ELECTRIC

Lanikai offers a wide range of ukulele styles, colors, as well as acoustic and electric models. Our variety of acoustic models deliver a warm to bright tone with full projection. However, for those wanting to record or perform, our pickup models offer an active output with EQ and volume controls for easy ¼" output to amplifiers, DI boxes or mixers.

On electric models, the battery is activated when the cable is plugged in or if the tuner is activated. To prolong battery life, disconnect the cable from the ukulele when not in use and make sure if equipped with a tuner, that it is in the off position. With normal use, the battery should last around a year, slightly less if use is increased.

## REPLACING A BATTERY ON ELECTRIC LANIKAI UKULELES

Lanikai full body electric ukuleles and bass ukuleles use a Fishman® pre-amp with a tuner. These systems require a standard 9-volt battery. An Alkaline 9 volt is suggested for the best results. The 9-volt battery is simply replaced by opening the door by the output jack. To extend the battery life, disconnect the cable from the ukulele when not in use and confirm the tuner is in the off position.



FULL-BODY ELECTRIC  
BATTERY COMPARTMENT



THINLINE ELECTRIC  
BATTERY COMPARTMENT

Lanikai thin-line electric models use a standard disc or coin cell battery model CR2032 Lithium Battery 3V. The battery simply slides into a tray near the output jack as shown. For the longest battery life, unplug when not in use.

(Note: Actual battery brands may differ in products. For best performance results in full body instruments, Alkaline 9 volt batteries are suggested.)

Thanks again for choosing Lanikai. Enjoy your ukulele and share your music with the world. We hope you will choose another of our instruments when you are ready to add to your ukulele collection. Please suggest a Lanikai to family and friends!



Real Ukuleles for Real Musicians.

Be sure to follow us online at  
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