

Ukulele movable chord shapes

by Mike Pope

This booklet teaches you how to form hundreds of chords on the ukulele based on just a couple of dozen shapes. If you've spent any time practicing the uke, you already know many of the shapes you can use to create new chords.

The booklet is for concert ukulele (not baritone) using the most common tuning (G–C–E–A).

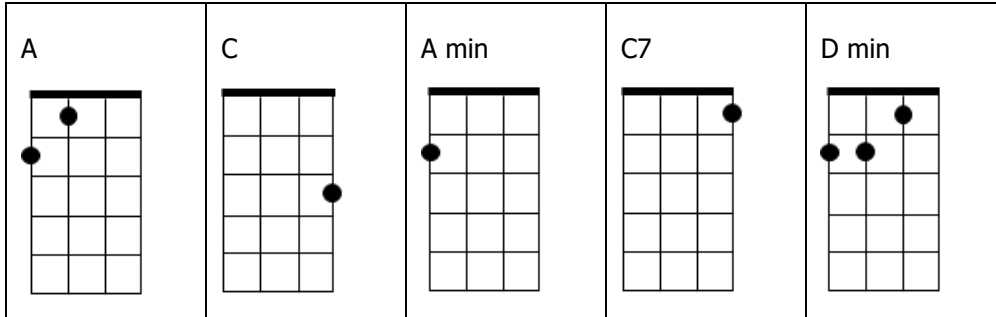
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Seattle, Washington
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Introduction: Open and movable chords

When you begin on the ukulele, you learn a collection of "open chords"—chords where you cover 1 or 2 or 3 strings on different frets, leaving the rest of the strings open. For example:



Soon, however, you need more than these: B^b, E, F[#]7, G[#] min, diminished chords, augmented chords, and many more. In fact, you can form more than 800 chords on the ukulele, and only a small number of those can be played as open chords. 800 (or more) is a daunting number. But it's not nearly so daunting when you realize that there are really only a couple of dozen chord *shapes*.

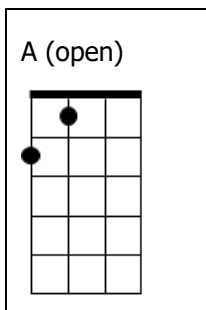
How to move an open shape

For example, take that open A chord that everyone learns first, the one that uses 2 strings. Try this: form the A chord shape using your middle and ring fingers¹. (Don't use your index finger at all.)



An open A chord using the middle and ring fingers

Schematically, you're making the following chord:



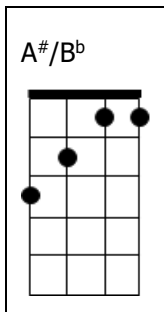
¹ There are different ways to number fingers, so to avoid confusion, I won't use numbers at all.

Slide your fingers up 1 fret². Then using your index finger, cover the 2 strings that were open for the A chord. In other words, make the A chord shape, but move it up 1 fret. You've just formed an A[#] (a.k.a. B^b) chord.³ Like this:



Moving the open A chord up 1 fret and covering the two open strings.

Schematically, you're doing this:



Both chords have the same shape. In the A chord, you're pressing down (covering) 2 strings. The other 2 strings are open. Technically, the open strings are also being "covered," although in this case it's by the solid bar at the very top of the fretboard, known as the *nut*:



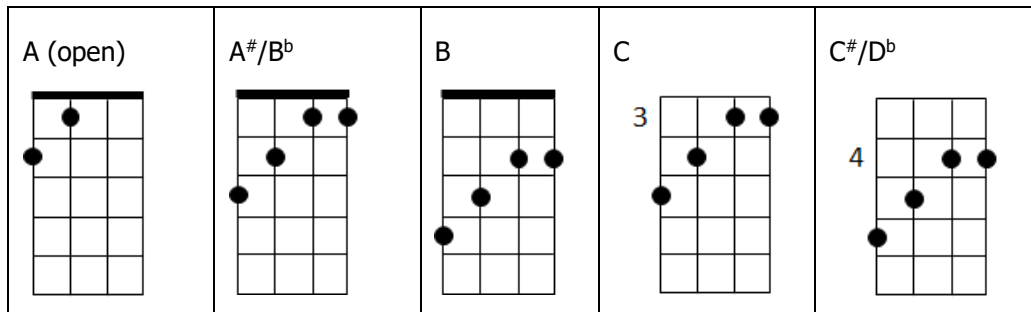
The nut at the top of the fretboard

² "Up" means toward the sound hold. "Down" means toward the tuning pegs.

³ For technical reasons, sharp notes have equivalent (or [enharmonic](#)) flat notes. For example, A[#] is equivalent to B^b; C[#] is the same as D^b; G[#] is the same as A^b. When you look up sharp or flat chords (for example, C[#]), the same shape will be listed as both a flat and a sharp (C[#]/D^b).

In the chord diagrams I use here, the nut is represented by a heavier line across the top.

If you move the A shape up from A[#]/B^b to the next fret, you make a B chord. If you move up yet another fret, you make a C chord. If you move up yet another fret, you get C[#], and so on. Like this:



The important point is that as you move up the fretboard, the shape of the chord stays the same, but you're making different chords, walking up the scale. In effect, you're moving the nut up. (This is exactly what a [capo](#) does for you, but a capo is fixed.)

Notice that in the last couple of diagrams, the nut is no longer explicitly represented in the diagram. Instead, you see a fret number to the left. This is a shortcut to help you find the right place on the fretboard, since it's inefficient to show 12 (or more) frets for every chord.

As you see, from one shape (A Major open) you can make 12 major chords by simply moving the shape up the fretboard. Wasn't that easy?

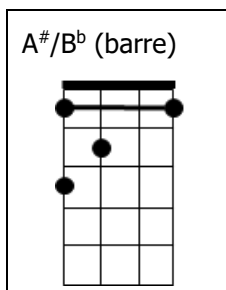
Using barre chords to make shapes

Another way to cover the open strings in the A shape is by forming a *barre chord*, where you put your index finger across the entire open fret.⁴ Like this:

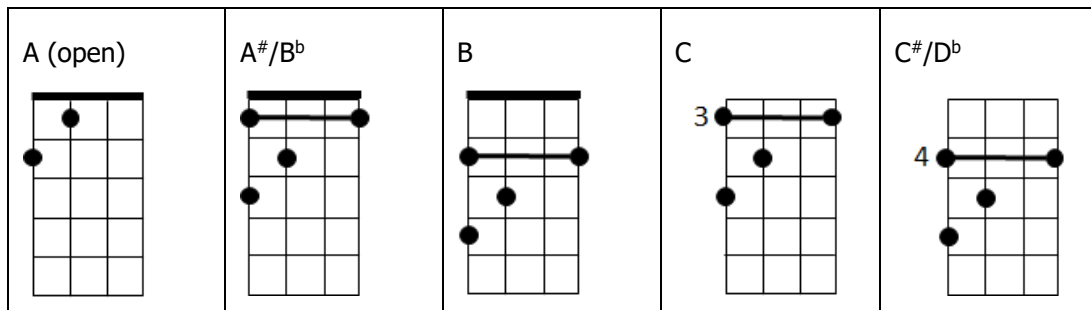


Moving the open A chord up 1 fret and using a barre to cover the open strings.

Schematically, you're doing this:

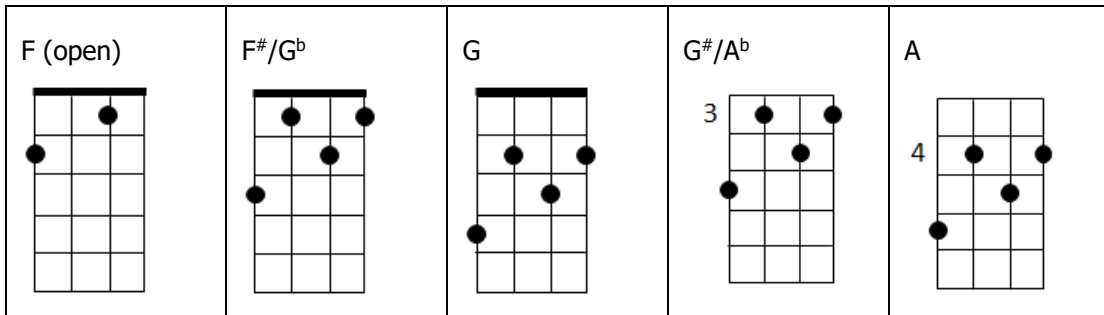


Here are the same chords based on the A shape, except as barre chords:

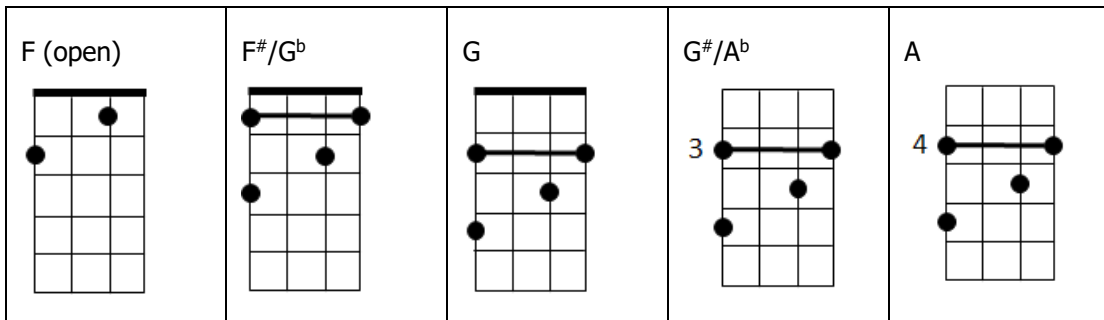


So that's the A chord shape. You can do the same thing with almost all of the open chords. The following examples show how you can move the open F shape:

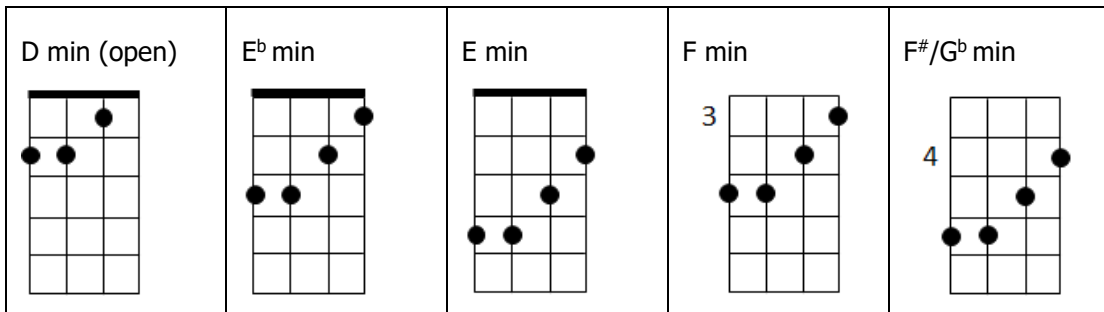
⁴ It's hard at first to make a barre chord. Don't barre across the middle of the fret; try scooting your finger up close to the fret. Also try rolling your finger a little. Also, practice helps.



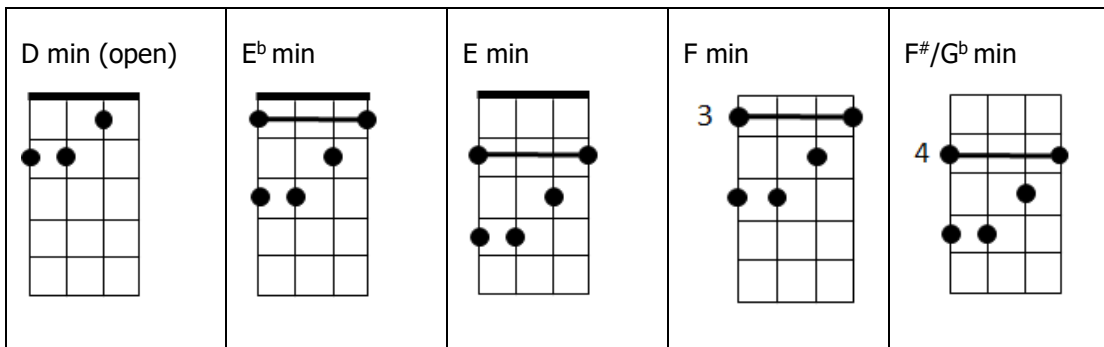
Here are the same chords based on the F shape, except as barre chords:



Here's an example of moving the D minor shape:



Here's an example of moving the D minor shape as barre chords:

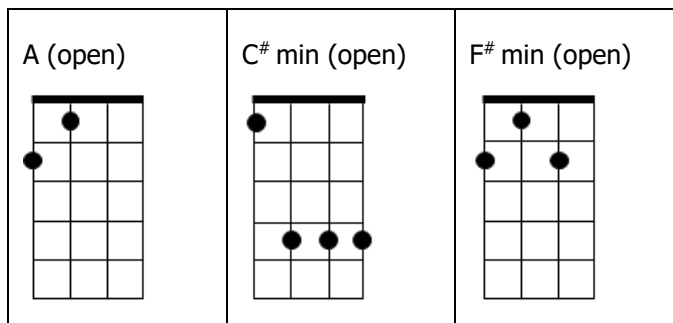


As I said, you can do this with almost all of the open chords. This booklet provides you with a dictionary of the basic shapes for major chords, minor chords, 7th chords, and so, which you can then move around on the fretboard.

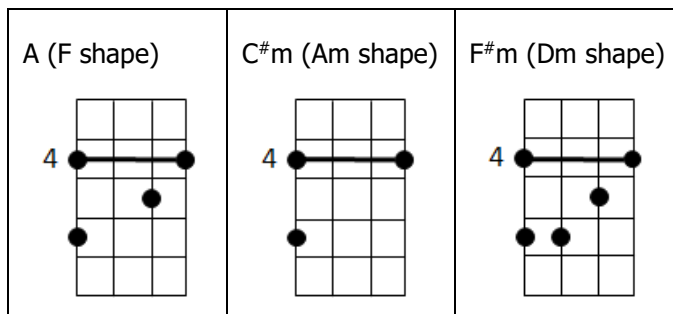
Why learn multiple shapes for each chord?

If you look closely at the previous examples, you'll notice that by moving the F open chord shape up 4 frets, you can form an A chord. This means you have a second way to make an A chord: as an open chord, and by using the F shape. Why is this useful? After all, you already know an A chord. Why do you need a second way? It turns out that forming an A chord at the fourth fret can sometimes be easier than trying to move all of your fingers to make a new chord.

For example, I'm currently learning the Beatles song "Something," where the bridge has the sequence A–C[#] min–F[#] min–A. Here's one way to play those chords:



That's a lot of moving around! So here's a second way:



In this second case, I'm using chords that are all based on the fourth fret, using a barre. Notice that I have to make only small movements in my fingers to hit all the chords.

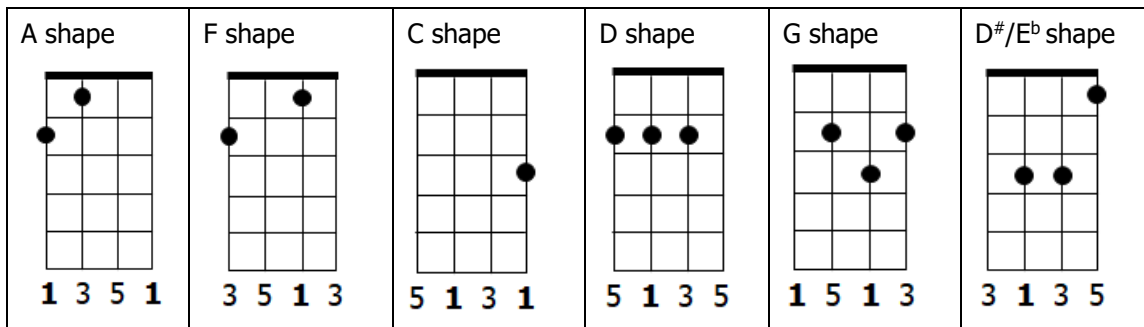
So sometimes you use alternate chord shapes because it makes it easier to move between chords. Alternate chords also offer different sounds ("voicings") for the same chord—the alternate chords are formed with a different bottom or top note, or with repeated notes. That can sometimes give you just the right sound for the sequence of chords that you're producing. For the song "Something," for example, using the shapes on the fourth fret actually sounds better than using chords that are all over the fretboard.

Legend

The pages that follow contain a dictionary of chord shapes. Each page represents a class of chord: major, minor, 7th, minor 7th, major 7th, etc.

The open shapes

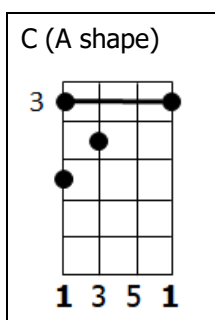
The basic open chord shapes are listed across the top. For example, these are the 6 shapes for a major chord. To put it another way, if you want to play a major chord, you'll need one of these shapes.



The numbers

The numbers below the strings tell you what note of the chord you're playing. For example, if you play an open A chord, from the top string (the one closest to your head) to the bottom string (the one closest to your feet)⁵ you're playing notes 1–3–5–1 of an A scale, which translates to A–C[#]–E–A.

If you move the A shape up so that you're using a barre across the third fret, you're playing a C chord based on an A shape:



The chord tones are still 1–3–5–1, but because you're playing a C chord, the notes are C–E–G–C.

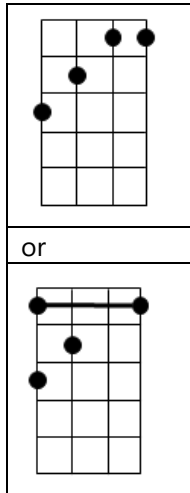
You might not care about which chord notes you're playing, but it can be handy to know where the root of a chord is. (Notice that for different shapes, the root is on different strings, sometimes even on 2

⁵ For righties and for lefties with the strings reversed. If you play lefty with a right-hand uke, everything here is reversed.

strings.) When you get into more exotic chords—7ths or augmented or 9th chords—it's helpful to know which note out of the 4 that you're playing is giving the chord its special flavor.

The movable shapes

Underneath the schematic of the open chord you see two other diagrams. For example, under the open A major shape, you find these:



These diagrams show you the actual movable shape. By making this shape and moving it up and down the fretboard, you can make many different chords.

As you can see, there are two versions of the movable chord. The first one shows you how to form the chord using four fingers. The second one shows you how to form the movable chord as a barre chord. Either version gives you the same chord. You can use the version of the shape (4 fingers or barre chord) that's easier for you to make.

The top fret number

Below all of the shapes is a box with fret numbers. For example, on the page for major chords, the first shape is A, and there's a box below that shape that looks like this:

Top fret @
1 A [#] /B ^b
2 B
3 C
4 C [#] /D ^b
5 D
6 D [#] /E ^b
7 E
8 F
9 F [#] /G ^b
10 G
11 G [#] /A ^b
12 A

The numbers and notes are a shorthand way to tell you what chord you're playing based on the highest fret that you're covering. In this case (A shape, major chords), the box tells you that:

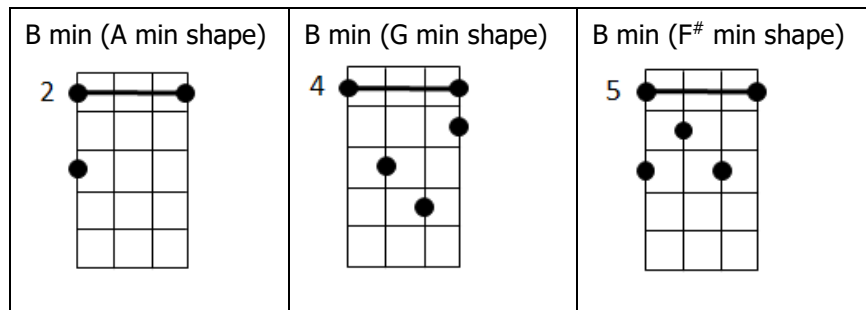
- If you play the A major shape with a barre on the 1st fret, you're playing an A[#]/B^b.
- If you play the A major shape with a barre on the 5th fret, you're playing a D.
- If you play the A major shape with a barre on the 8th fret, you're playing an F.

Tips for learning chord shapes

- Practice open chords by using your middle, ring, and pinky fingers, leaving your index finger free. That gives you the index finger to make barre chords or otherwise help you cover a fourth string and slide a chord shape up or down the fretboard.
- Practice by forming an open chord, and then moving that chord up the fretboard (closing it with fingers or a barre) one fret at a time. Say the name of each chord as you're playing it. This helps you get a sense of where you can form different chords. (I do this for just one shape at a time to try to learn that shape really well.)
- Learn multiple chord shapes for the chords you use often—A, C, F, G, D, E, etc. With a little practice, you'll know that you can form a C major as an open chord, using an A shape on the third fret, or using a G shape on the fifth fret, or using an F shape on the seventh fret, and so on.
- When you encounter a chord you don't know (and if you're not trying to keep up with a group you're playing with), try to figure out how you can form the chord based on what you already *do* know. (This is really the point of learning movable shapes.) For example, suppose you want to play a B^b chord. You already know an A chord; just slide that chord up one fret. Presto, B^b.

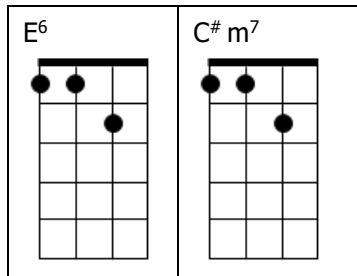
At first is a slow process, and it can be frustrating compared to just looking up the chord. But it will help cement the idea of movable chords, and it does get faster. Eventually.

- Whenever you *do* look up a chord, any chord, try to deduce what its basic shape is. For example, imagine that you look up B min, and your chart tells you that you can form the chord these ways:



After studying movable chord shapes, you'll recognize that these are, respectively, an A minor shape, a G minor shape, and an F[#] minor shape, just at different places on the fretboard. Once you start seeing the shapes, you'll see that you don't have to memorize hundreds of chords—just a few dozen basic shapes.

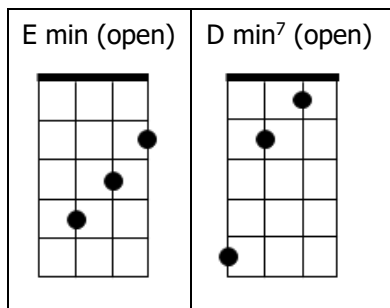
- Be aware that the same shape might represent different chords. For example, the following shape is both an E^6 and a $C^\# \text{ min}^7$:



In fact, if you play all open strings, you can be playing C^6 or $A \text{ min}^7$ or $F \text{ maj}^9$. The interpretation of the chord depends on its musical context—what key you're playing in and what comes before and after.

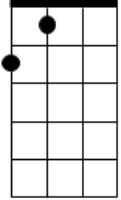
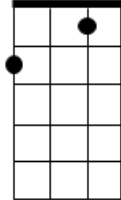
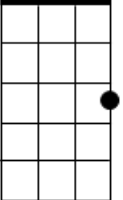
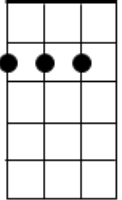
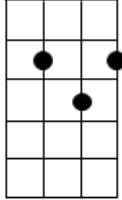
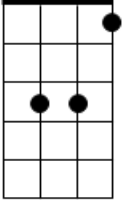
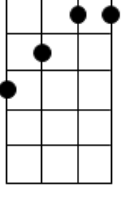
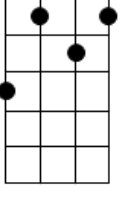
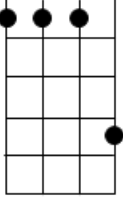
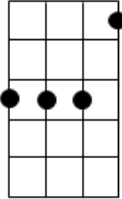
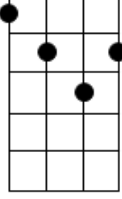
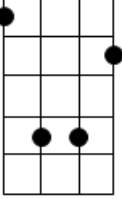
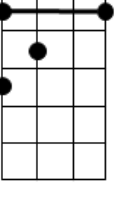
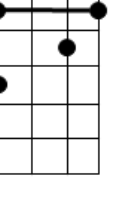
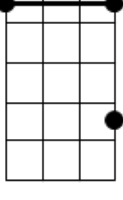
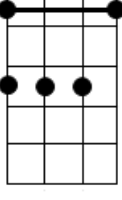
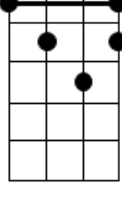
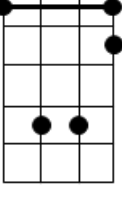
Disclaimer

I don't show every possible way to make every chord; I focused on the chords I've needed myself. For example, I didn't include 3-string chords. And because this is about movable chords, I left out chords that are not movable without uncomfortable contortion. Here are a couple of examples:



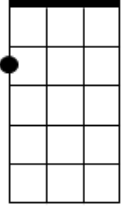
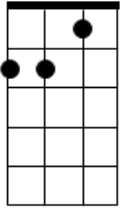
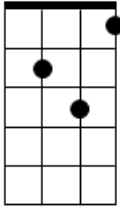
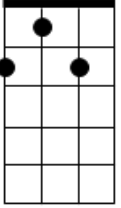
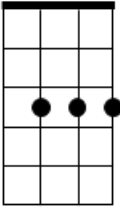
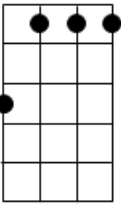
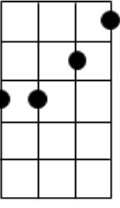
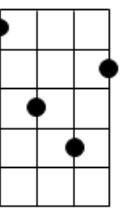
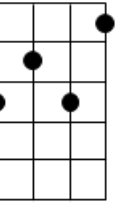
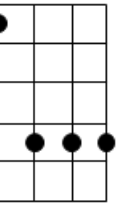
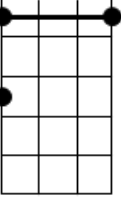
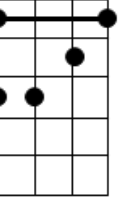
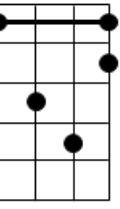
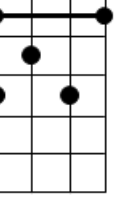
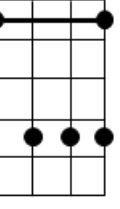
Major chord shapes (1–3–5)

The major chord is the default chord—the open chords you first learn on ukulele are all major chords. If someone tells you to play an A chord or F chord, they mean a major chord.

A shape	F shape	C shape	D shape	G shape	D#/E ^b shape
 1 3 5 1	 3 5 1 3	 5 1 3 1	 5 1 3 5	 1 5 1 3	 3 1 3 5
					
or	or	or	or	or	or
					
Top fret @ 1 B ^b 2 B 3 C 4 C [#] /D ^b 5 D 6 D [#] /E ^b 7 E 8 F 9 F [#] /G ^b 10 G 11 G [#] /A ^b 12 A	Top fret @ 1 F [#] /G ^b 2 G 3 G [#] /A ^b 4 A 5 A [#] /B ^b 6 B 7 C 8 C [#] /D ^b 9 D 10 D [#] /E ^b 11 E 12 F	Top fret @ 1 C [#] /D ^b 2 D 3 D [#] /E ^b 4 E 5 F 6 F [#] /G ^b 7 G 8 G [#] /A ^b 9 A 10 A [#] /B ^b 11 B 12 C	Top fret @ 1 D [#] /E ^b 2 E 3 F 4 F [#] /G ^b 5 G 6 G [#] /A ^b 7 A 8 A [#] /B ^b 9 B 10 C 11 C [#] /D ^b 12 D	Top fret @ 1 G [#] /A ^b 2 A 3 A [#] /B ^b 4 B 5 C 6 C [#] /D ^b 7 D 8 D [#] /E ^b 9 E 10 F 11 F [#] /G ^b 12 G	Top fret @ 1 E 2 F 3 F [#] /G ^b 4 G 5 G [#] /A ^b 6 A 7 A [#] /B ^b 8 B 9 C 10 C [#] /D ^b 11 D 12 D [#] /E ^b

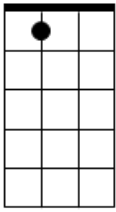
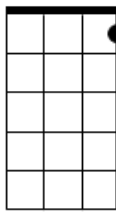
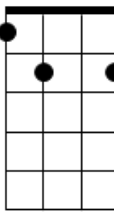
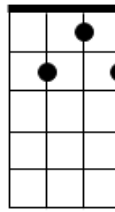
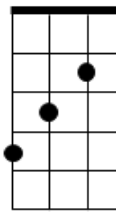
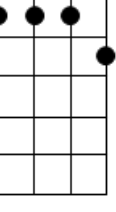
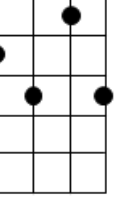
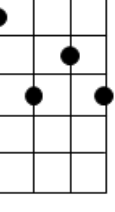
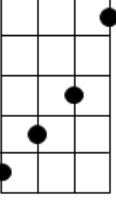
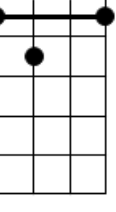
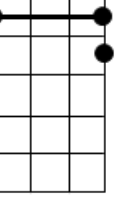
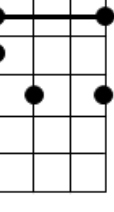
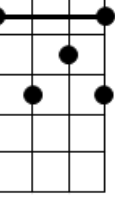
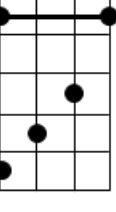
Minor (m) chord shapes (1-3^b-5)

A minor chord is characterized by a flatted 3rd interval, which is what makes it sound "sad." The shapes of the minor chords are the same as the major shapes, but you move the 3rd of the chord down 1 fret.

A min shape	D min shape	G min shape	F# min shape	C min shape
				
1 3 5 1	5 1 3 5	1 5 1 3	3 5 1 3	5 3 5 1
				
or	or	or	or	or
				
Top fret @	Top fret @	Top fret @	Top fret @	Top fret @
1 B ^b	1 D [#] /E ^b	1 G [#] /A ^b	1 G	1 C [#] /D ^b
2 B	2 E	2 A	2 G [#] /A ^b	2 D
3 C	3 F	3 A [#] /B ^b	3 A	3 D [#] /E ^b
4 C [#] /D ^b	4 F [#] /G ^b	4 B	4 A [#] /B ^b	4 E
5 D	5 G	5 C	5 B	5 F
6 D [#] /E ^b	6 G [#] /A ^b	6 C [#] /D ^b	6 C	6 F [#] /G ^b
7 E	7 A	7 D	7 C [#] /D ^b	7 G
8 F	8 A [#] /B ^b	8 D [#] /E ^b	8 D	8 G [#] /A ^b
9 F [#] /G ^b	9 B	9 E	9 D [#] /E ^b	9 A
10 G	10 C	10 F	10 E	10 A [#] /B ^b
11 G [#] /A ^b	11 C [#] /D ^b	11 F [#] /G ^b	11 F	11 B
12 A	12 D	12 G	12 F [#] /G ^b	12 C

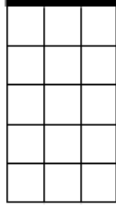
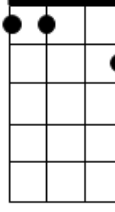
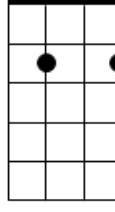
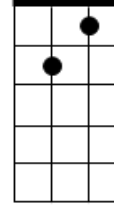
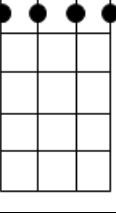
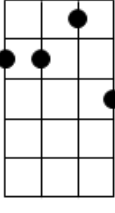
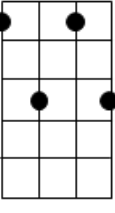
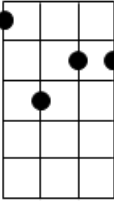
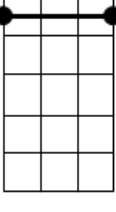
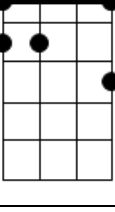
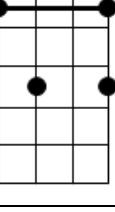
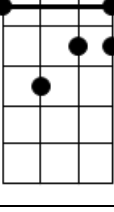
Dominant 7th (7) chord shapes (1-3-5-7^b)

If something is marked as a 7th chord, they mean a dominant 7th. A dominant 7th chord is a major chord that adds a flatted 7th to the basic 1-3-5 triad.

A ⁷ shape	C ⁷ shape	E ⁷ shape	G ⁷ shape	B ⁷ shape
 7 3 5 1	 5 1 3 7	 3 7 1 5	 1 5 7 3	 1 3 5 7
(no non-barre version)				
	or	or	or	or
				
Top fret @ 1 B ^b 2 B 3 C 4 C [#] /D ^b 5 D 6 D [#] /E ^b 7 E 8 F 9 F [#] /G ^b 10 G 11 G [#] /A ^b 12 A	Top fret @ 1 C [#] /D ^b 2 D 3 D [#] /E ^b 4 E 5 F 6 F [#] /G ^b 7 G 8 G [#] /A ^b 9 A 10 A [#] /B ^b 11 B 12 C	Top fret @ 1 F 2 F [#] /G ^b 3 G 4 G [#] /A ^b 5 A 6 A [#] /B ^b 7 B 8 C 9 C [#] /D ^b 10 D 11 D [#] /E ^b 12 E	Top fret @ 1 G [#] /A ^b 2 A 3 A [#] /B ^b 4 B 5 C 6 C [#] /D ^b 7 D 8 D [#] /E ^b 9 E 10 F 11 F [#] /G ^b 12 G	Top fret @ 1 C 2 C [#] /D ^b 3 D 4 D [#] /E ^b 5 E 6 F 7 F [#] /G ^b 8 G 9 G [#] /A ^b 10 A 11 A [#] /B ^b 12 B

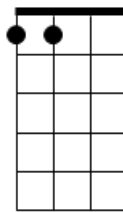
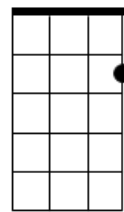
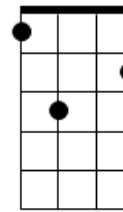
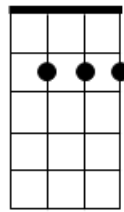
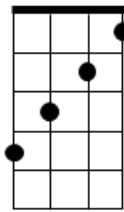
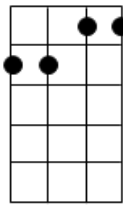
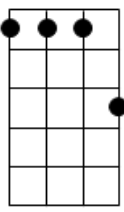
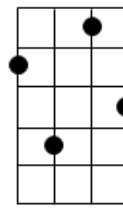
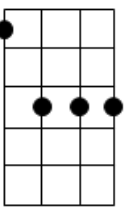
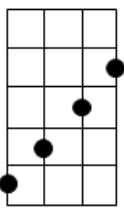
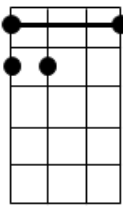
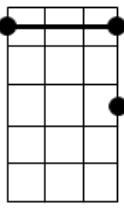
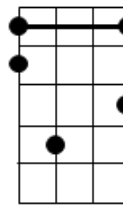
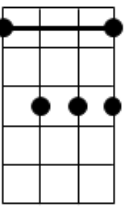
Minor 7th (m⁷) chord shapes (1–3^b–5–7^b)

A minor 7th is like a dominant 7th (a.k.a. 7th), but there's a flatted third in the chord.

A m ⁷ shape	C [#] m ⁷ shape	E m ⁷ shape	G m ⁷ shape
			
			
or	or	or	or
			
Top fret @ 1 B ^b 2 B 3 C 4 C [#] /D ^b 5 D 6 D [#] /E ^b 7 E 8 F 9 F [#] /G ^b 10 G 11 G [#] /A ^b 12 A	Top fret @ 1 C [#] /D ^b 2 D 3 D [#] /E ^b 4 E 5 F 6 F [#] /G ^b 7 G 8 G [#] /A ^b 9 A 10 A [#] /B ^b 11 B 12 C	Top fret @ 1 F 2 F [#] /G ^b 3 G 4 G [#] /A ^b 5 A 6 A [#] /B ^b 7 B 8 C 9 C [#] /D ^b 10 D 11 D [#] /E ^b 12 E	Top fret @ 1 G [#] /A ^b 2 A 3 A [#] /B ^b 4 B 5 C 6 C [#] /D ^b 7 D 8 D [#] /E ^b 9 E 10 F 11 F [#] /G ^b 12 G

Major 7th (Δ) chord shapes (1–3–5–7)

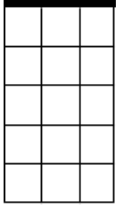
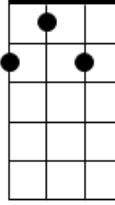
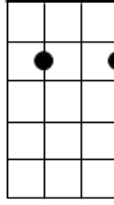
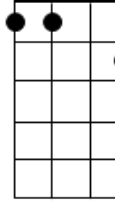
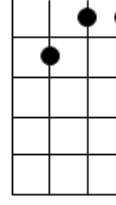
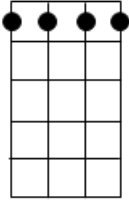
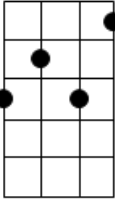
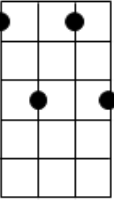
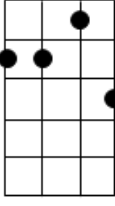
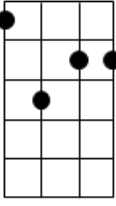
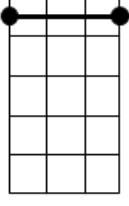
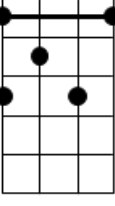
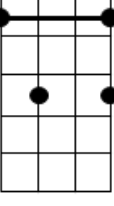
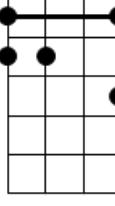
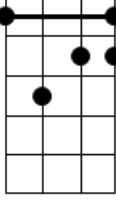
A major 7th is like the dominant 7th (a.k.a. a 7th chord), but the 7th interval is not flatted. This gives the chord a distinctive sound that's quite different from a dominant 7th. It also makes the shapes a bit easier to learn—the shapes are just one note (fret) different from the dominant 7th shapes.

A Δ shape	C Δ shape	E Δ shape	G Δ shape	B Δ shape
 7 3 5 1	 5 1 3 7	 3 7 1 5	 1 5 7 3	 1 3 5 7
				
or	or	or	or	
				(no barre version)
Top fret @ 1 B ^b 2 B 3 C 4 C [#] /D ^b 5 D 6 D [#] /E ^b 7 E 8 F 9 F [#] /G ^b 10 G 11 G [#] /A ^b 12 A	Top fret @ 1 C [#] /D ^b 2 D 3 D [#] /E ^b 4 E 5 F 6 F [#] /G ^b 7 G 8 G [#] /A ^b 9 A 10 A [#] /B ^b 11 B 12 C	Top fret @ 1 F 2 F [#] /G ^b 3 G 4 G [#] /A ^b 5 A 6 A [#] /B ^b 7 B 8 C 9 C [#] /D ^b 10 D 11 D [#] /E ^b 12 E	Top fret @ 1 G [#] /A ^b 2 A 3 A [#] /B ^b 4 B 5 C 6 C [#] /D ^b 7 D 8 D [#] /E ^b 9 E 10 F 11 F [#] /G ^b 12 G	Top fret @ ⁶ 1 B 2 C 3 C [#] /D ^b 4 D 5 D [#] /E ^b 6 E 7 F 8 F [#] /G ^b 9 G 10 G [#] /A ^b 11 A 12 A [#] /B ^b

⁶ In this case, the top fret is the one you have your pinky on.

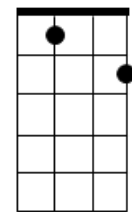
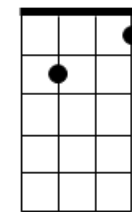
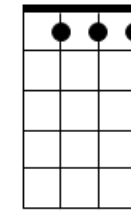
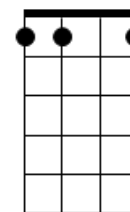
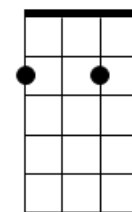
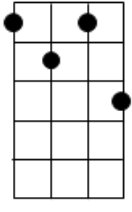
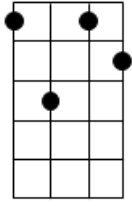
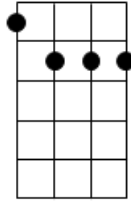
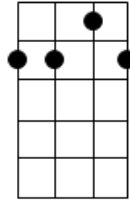
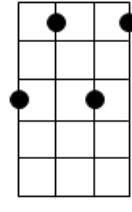
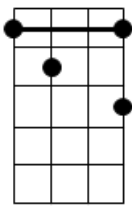
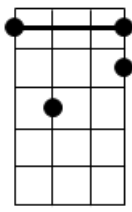
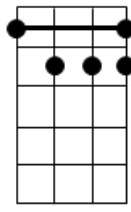
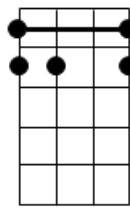
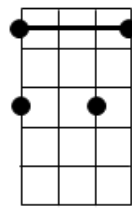
Major 6 (⁶) chord shapes (1-3-5-6)

A 6th chord adds a 6th interval to the basic 1-3-5 major triad.

C ⁶ shape	A ⁶ shape	G ⁶ shape	E ⁶ shape	B ^{b6} shape
 5 1 3 6	 1 3 6 1	 1 5 6 3	 3 6 1 5	 6 3 5 1
				
or	or	or	or	or
				
Top fret @ 1 C#/D ^b 2 D 3 D#/E ^b 4 E 5 F 6 F#/G ^b 7 G 8 G#/A ^b 9 A 10 A#/B ^b 11 B 12 C	Top fret @ 1 B ^b 2 B 3 C 4 C#/D ^b 5 D 6 D#/E ^b 7 E 8 F 9 F#/G ^b 10 G 11 G#/A ^b 12 A	Top fret @ 1 G#/A ^b 2 A 3 A#/B ^b 4 B 5 C 6 C#/D ^b 7 D 8 D#/E ^b 9 E 10 F 11 F#/G ^b 12 G	Top fret @ 1 F 2 F#/G ^b 3 G 4 G#/A ^b 5 A 6 A#/B ^b 7 B 8 C 9 C#/D ^b 10 D 11 D#/E ^b 12 E	Top fret @ 1 B 2 C 3 C#/D ^b 4 D 5 D#/E ^b 6 E 7 F 8 F#/G ^b 9 G 10 G#/A ^b 11 A 12 A#/B ^b

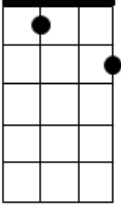
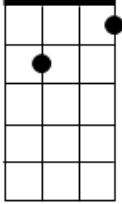
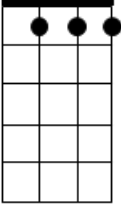
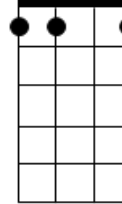
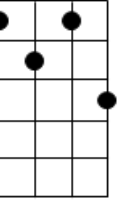
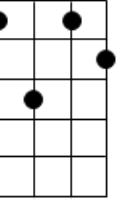
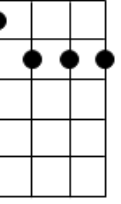
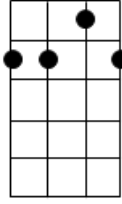
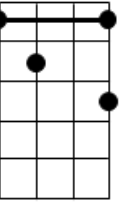
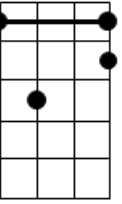
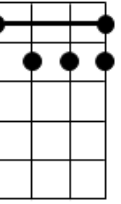
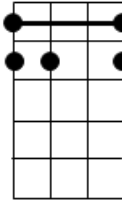
Minor 6 (m⁶) chord shapes (1-3^b-5-6)

A minor 6th chord adds a 6th interval to the basic 1-3^b-5 minor triad.

Em ⁶ shape	Gm ⁶ shape	B ^b m ⁶ shape	C [#] m ⁶ shape	Am ⁶ shape
				
3 6 1 5	1 5 6 3	6 3 5 1	5 1 3 6	1 3 6 1
				
or	or	or	or	or
				
Top fret @	Top fret @	Top fret @	Top fret @	Top fret @
1 F 2 F [#] /G ^b 3 G 4 G [#] /A ^b 5 A 6 B ^b 7 B 8 C 9 C [#] /D ^b 10 D 11 D [#] /E ^b 12 E	1 G [#] /A ^b 2 A 3 A [#] /B ^b 4 B 5 C 6 C [#] /D ^b 7 D 8 D [#] /E ^b 9 E 10 F 11 F [#] /G ^b 12 G	1 B 2 C 3 C [#] /D ^b 4 D 5 D [#] /E ^b 6 E 7 F 8 F [#] /G ^b 9 G 10 G [#] /A ^b 11 A 12 A [#] /B ^b	1 D 2 D [#] /E ^b 3 E 4 F 5 F [#] /G ^b 6 G 7 G [#] /A ^b 8 A 9 A [#] /B ^b 10 B 11 C 12 C [#] /D ^b	1 A [#] /B ^b 2 B 3 C 4 C [#] /D ^b 5 D 6 D [#] /E ^b 7 E 8 F 9 F [#] /G ^b 10 G 11 G [#] /A ^b 12 A

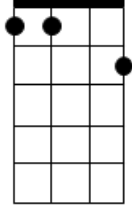
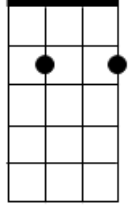
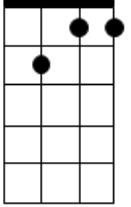
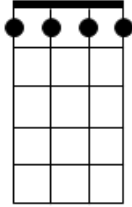
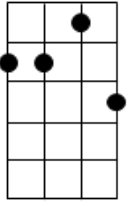
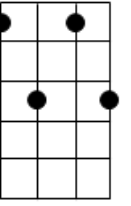
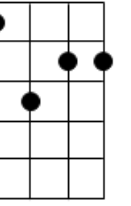
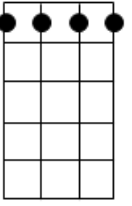
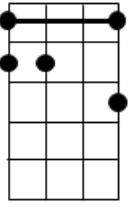
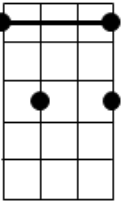
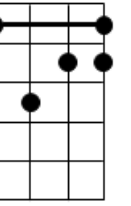
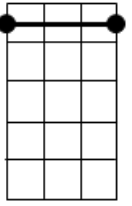
Dominant 9 (9) chord shapes (1-3-5-7^b-9)

Dominant 9th chords, also just called 9th chords, add a 9th interval to the major triad (1-3-5) and have a flatted 7th note. (The 9th interval is 1 note beyond the end of the scale.) Because there are only 4 strings on the ukulele, you can't play the full 9th chord of 5 notes. So in these chord shapes, there's no root (no 1 note).

A ⁹ shape	C ⁹ shape	E ^{b9} shape	F ^{#9} shape
			
7 3 5 9	5 9 3 7	3 7 9 5	9 5 7 3
			
or	or	or	or
			
Top fret @ 1 A [#] /B ^b 2 B 3 C 4 C [#] /D ^b 5 D 6 D [#] /E ^b 7 E 8 F 9 F [#] /G ^b 10 G 11 G [#] /A ^b 12 A	Top fret @ 1 C [#] /D ^b 2 D 3 D [#] /E ^b 4 E 5 F 6 F [#] /G ^b 7 G 8 G [#] /A ^b 9 A 10 A [#] /B ^b 11 B 12 C	Top fret @ 1 E 2 F 3 F [#] /G ^b 4 G 5 G [#] /A ^b 6 A 7 A [#] /B ^b 8 B 9 C 10 C [#] /D ^b 11 D 12 D [#] /E ^b	Top fret @ 1 G 2 G [#] /A ^b 3 A 4 A [#] /B ^b 5 B 6 C 7 C [#] /D ^b 8 D 9 D [#] /E ^b 10 E 11 F 12 F [#] /G ^b

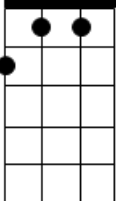
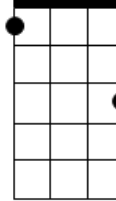
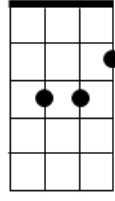
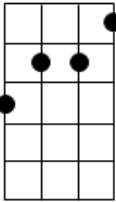
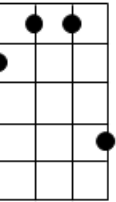
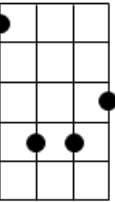
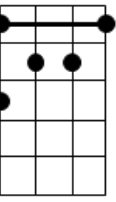
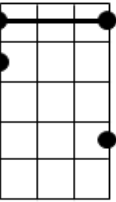
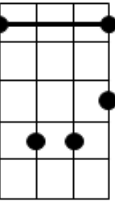
Major 9 (maj⁹) chord shapes (1–3–5–7–9)

Major 9th chords are like dominant 9th chords, but the 7th note isn't flatted. Therefore, the 7th note is a half-step (1 fret) higher than in the equivalent dominant 9th. As with dominant 9ths, there's no root (1 note) in these chords.

A maj ⁹ shape	C maj ⁹ shape	E ^b maj ⁹ shape	F [#] maj ⁹ shape
			
7 3 5 9	5 9 3 7	3 7 9 5	9 5 7 3
			
or	or	or	or
			
Top fret @	Top fret @	Top fret @	Top fret @
1 A [#] /B ^b 2 B 3 C 4 C [#] /D ^b 5 D 6 D [#] /E ^b 7 E 8 F 9 F [#] /G ^b 10 G 11 G [#] /A ^b 12 A	1 C [#] /D ^b 2 D 3 D [#] /E ^b 4 E 5 F 6 F [#] /G ^b 7 G 8 G [#] /A ^b 9 A 10 A [#] /B ^b 11 B 12 C	1 E 2 F 3 F [#] /G ^b 4 G 5 G [#] /A ^b 6 A 7 A [#] /B ^b 8 B 9 C 10 C [#] /D ^b 11 D 12 D [#] /E ^b	1 G 2 G [#] /A ^b 3 A 4 A [#] /B ^b 5 B 6 C 7 C [#] /D ^b 8 D 9 D [#] /E ^b 10 E 11 F 12 F [#] /G ^b

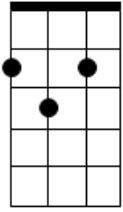
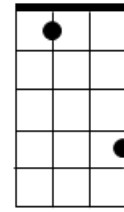
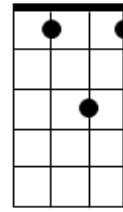
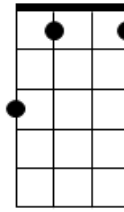
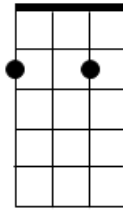
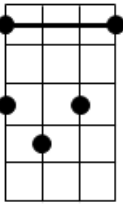
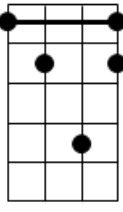
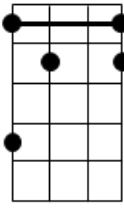
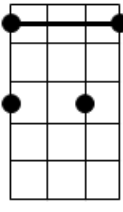
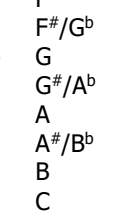
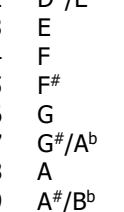
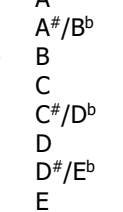

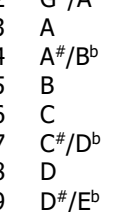
Augmented (+) chord shapes (1–3–5#)

Augmented chords are a stack of 2 major thirds. As a result, the same shape can represent different inversions of the same chord. For example, if you play an F augmented shape, you're also playing an A augmented and a C# augmented chord.

F ⁺ /A ⁺ /C ^{#+} shape  F ⁺ 3 5 1 5 A ⁺ 1 3 5 1 C ^{#+} 5 1 3 5	C ⁺ /E ⁺ /G ^{#+} shape  C ⁺ 5 1 3 1 E ⁺ 3 5 1 5 G ^{#+} 1 3 5 3	E ^{b+} /G ⁺ /B ⁺ shape  E ^{b+} 3 1 3 5 G ⁺ 1 5 1 3 B ⁺ 5 3 5 1
		
<p>or</p>	<p>or</p>	<p>or</p>
		
<p>Top fret @</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 F[#], B^b, D 2 G, B, E^b 3 G[#], C, E 4 A, C[#], F 5 A[#]/B^b, D, F[#] 6 B, E^b, G 7 C, E, G[#] 8 C[#], F, A 9 D, F[#], B^b 10 E^b, G, B 11 E, G[#], C 12 F, A, C[#] 	<p>Top fret @</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 C[#], F, A 2 D, F[#], B^b 3 E^b, G, B 4 E, G[#], C 5 F, A, C[#] 6 F[#], B^b, D 7 G, B, E^b 8 G[#], C, E 9 A, C[#], F 10 B^b, D, F[#] 11 B, E^b, G 12 C, E, G[#] 	<p>Top fret @</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 E, G[#], C 2 F, A, C[#] 3 F[#], A[#], D 4 G, B, E^b 5 G[#], C, E 6 A, C[#], F 7 A[#]/B^b, D, F[#] 8 B, E^b, G 9 C, E, G[#] 10 C[#], F, A 11 D, F[#], B^b 12 E^b, G, B

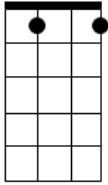
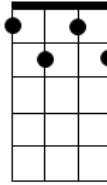
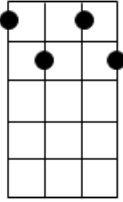
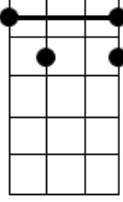
Diminished ($^{\circ}$) chord shapes (1-3^b-5^b)

Diminished chords are a stack of 2 minor thirds.

E ^b shape	C [#] shape	G ^o shape	B ^b shape	F [#] shape
 <p>5 1 3 5</p>	 <p>5 1 3 1</p>	 <p>1 5 1 3</p>	 <p>1 3 5 1</p>	 <p>3 5 1 3</p>
	<p>(no non-barre shape)</p>			
<p>or</p> 	<p>or</p> 	<p>or</p> 	<p>or</p> 	<p>or</p> 
<p>Top fret @</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 E 2 F 3 F[#]/G^b 4 G 5 G[#]/A^b 6 A 7 A[#]/B^b 8 B 9 C 10 C[#] 11 D 12 D[#]/E^b 	<p>Top fret @</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 D 2 D[#]/E^b 3 E 4 F 5 F[#] 6 G 7 G[#]/A^b 8 A 9 A[#]/B^b 10 B 11 C 12 C[#] 	<p>Top fret @</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 G[#]/A^b 2 A 3 A[#]/B^b 4 B 5 C 6 C[#]/D^b 7 D 8 D[#]/E^b 9 E 10 F 11 F[#]/G^b 12 G 	<p>Top fret @</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 B 2 C 3 C[#]/D^b 4 D 5 D[#]/E^b 6 E 7 F 8 F[#]/G^b 9 G 10 G[#]/A^b 11 A 12 A[#]/B^b 	<p>Top fret @</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 G 2 G[#]/A^b 3 A 4 A[#]/B^b 5 B 6 C 7 C[#]/D^b 8 D 9 D[#]/E^b 10 E 11 F 12 F[#]/G^b

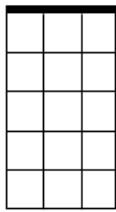
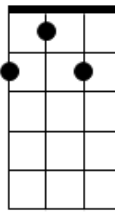
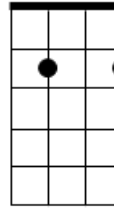
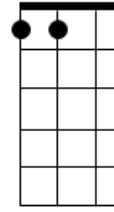
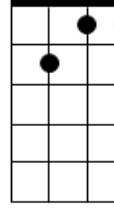
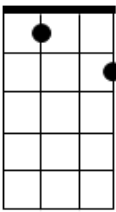
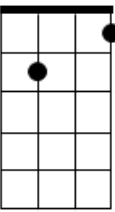
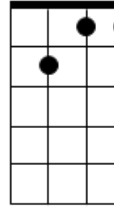
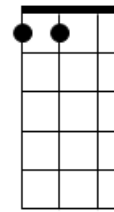
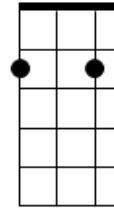
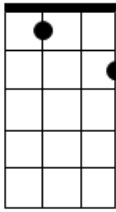
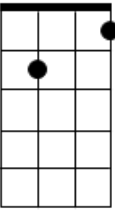
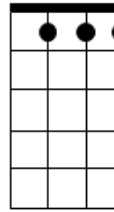
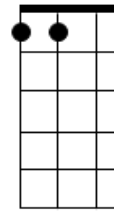
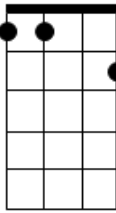
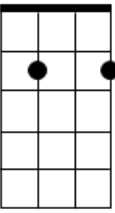
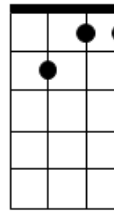
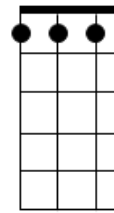
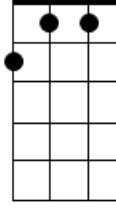
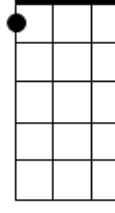
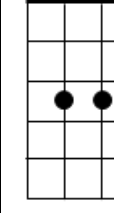
Diminished 7 (^o7) chord shapes (1-3^b-5^b-6)

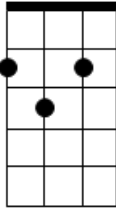
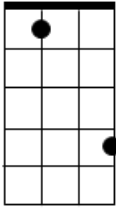
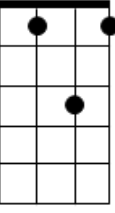
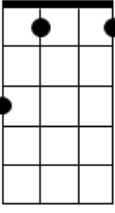
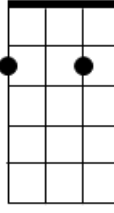
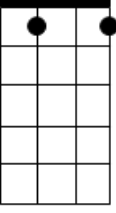
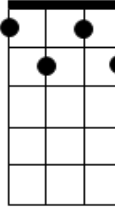
A diminished 7th chord is like a diminished chord, but it adds a another minor third to the mix (a diminished 7th, which is a 6th). There's basically only 1 shape; as with augmented chords, the same shape can represent different inversions of the same chord. For convenience, this chart shows it as 2 shapes.

B ^b /D ^b /E/G ^o 7 shape	B/D/F/A ^{bo} 7 shape
 <p> B^{b+} 6 3 5 1 D^{b+} 5 1 3 6 E⁺ 3 6 1 5 G⁺ 1 5 6 3 </p>	 <p> B⁺ 6 3 5 1 D⁺ 5 1 3 6 F⁺ 3 6 1 5 A^{b+} 1 5 6 3 </p>
	
	or
	
	<p>Top fret @</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 B, D, F, A^b 2 C, E, F[#], A 3 C[#], E, G, A[#] 4 D, F, G[#], B 5 D[#], F[#], A, C 6 E, G, A[#], C[#] 7 F, A^b, B, D 8 F[#], A, C, D[#] 9 G, A[#], C[#], E 10 G[#], B, D, F 11 A, C, D[#], F[#] 12 A[#], C[#], E, G

Shapes quick reference

Maj	<p>A shape</p>	<p>F shape</p>	<p>C shape</p>	<p>D shape</p>	<p>G shape</p>	<p>D#/E^b shape</p>
min	<p>A^m shape</p>	<p>D^m shape</p>	<p>G^m shape</p>	<p>F^{#m} shape</p>	<p>C^m shape</p>	
7th (7)	<p>A⁷ shape</p>	<p>C⁷ shape</p>	<p>E⁷ shape</p>	<p>G⁷ shape</p>	<p>B⁷ shape</p>	
min 7 (m7)	<p>A^{m7} shape</p>	<p>C^{#m7} shape</p>	<p>E^{m7} shape</p>	<p>G^{m7} shape</p>		
Maj 7th (Δ)	<p>A^Δ shape</p>	<p>C^Δ shape</p>	<p>E^Δ shape</p>	<p>G^Δ shape</p>	<p>B^Δ shape</p>	

Maj 6 (6)	C ⁶ shape 	A ⁶ shape 	G ⁶ shape 	E ⁶ shape 	B ⁶ shape 
min 6 (m6)	E m ⁶ shape 	G m ⁶ shape 	B ^b m ⁶ shape 	C# m ⁶ shape 	A m ⁶ shape 
Dom 9 (9)	A ⁹ shape 	C ⁹ shape 	E ^{b9} shape 	F# ⁹ shape 	
Maj 9 (maj9)	A maj ⁹ shape 	C maj ⁹ shape 	E ^b maj ⁹ shape 	F# maj ⁹ shape 	
aug (+)	F ⁺ /A ⁺ /C# ⁺ shape 	C ⁺ /E ⁺ /G# ⁺ shape 	E ^{b+} /G ⁺ /B ⁺ shape 		

dim (°)	E ^b shape 	C [#] shape 	G [°] shape 	B ^b shape 	F [#] shape 	
	dim 7 (°7)	B ^b /D ^b /E/G ^{°7} shape 	B/D/F/A ^{b°7} shape 			

Credits

People who have studied guitar might know the theory of chord shapes under the name CAGED (for the 5 basic chord shapes on guitar). I learned a little about chord shapes by starting on guitar. But most of what I've learned about ukulele chord shapes I've learned from two sources:

- John Leder of the Seattle Ukulele Player's Association (SUPA). His class on Beatles tunes was a revelation to me about chord theory on the uke.
- The book [*Treasury of Ukulele Chords*](#) by Roy Sakuma. The clear, comprehensive, well-organized chord charts in that book have been my constant companions as I've been learning chords.

Contact me

If you see mistakes or have suggestions, feel free to let me know at mike@mikepope.com.

To get the PDF version of this file, visit:

<http://www.mikepope.com/ukulele>

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