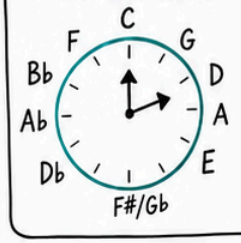
USING THE CIRCLE OF FIFTHS WITH THE UKULELE

1 WHAT THE CIRCLE OF FIFTHS IS

A MAP OF KEYS, CHORD RELATIONSHIPS, AND HARMONY.

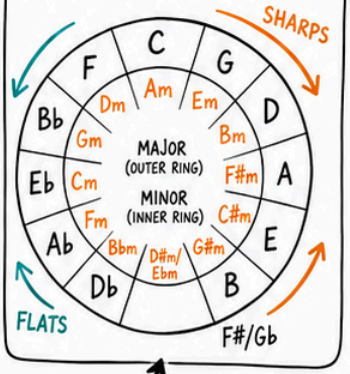
- CLOCKWISE = UP A 5TH
- COUNTERCLOCKWISE = UP A 4TH
- NEIGHBORING KEYS ARE CLOSELY RELATED
- HELPS YOU SEE WHICH CHORDS WORK TOGETHER



2 KEY INSIGHTS

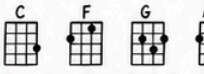
- MOST SONGS USE CHORDS FROM ONE KEY
- THE I-IV-V CHORDS ARE YOUR CORE TOOLKIT
- RELATIVE MINORS LIVE NEXT TO THEIR MAJOR FAMILY
- THE CIRCLE MAKES TRANSPOSING EASIER
- PATTERNS MATTER MORE THAN MEMORIZING EVERYTHING

3 THE FULL CIRCLE

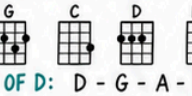


4 UKULELE CORE CHORD FAMILIES

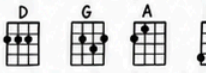
KEY OF C: C - F - G - Am



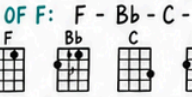
KEY OF G: G - C - D - Em



KEY OF D: D - G - A - Bm



KEY OF F: F - Bb - C - Dm



THESE 4 CHORDS UNLOCK MANY SONGS.

5 HOW TO USE IT

1. FIND THE SONG KEY
2. LOCATE IT ON THE CIRCLE
3. IDENTIFY I, IV, V
4. ADD vi FOR THE RELATIVE MINOR
5. PICK UKULELE CHORD SHAPES
6. STRUM, SING, OR IMPROVISE

6 I - IV - V FORMULA

THE MOST COMMON HARMONIC BACKBONE IN POP, FOLK, GOSPEL, AND BLUES.

IN C: C - F - G

IN G: G - C - D

IN D: D - G - A

1 → 4 → 5

7 RELATIVE MINORS

EVERY MAJOR KEY HAS A PARTNER MINOR USING THE SAME NOTES.

C ⟷ Am

G ⟷ Em

F ⟷ Dm

D ⟷ Bm

USE THIS TO ADD MOOD AND VARIETY.

8 TRANSPOSING MADE SIMPLE

MOVE A SONG TO A NEW KEY WHILE KEEPING THE SAME NUMBER PATTERN.

ORIGINAL IN C:

C - Am - F - G = I - vi - IV - V

TRANSPOSED TO G:

G - Em - C - D = I - vi - IV - V

KEEP THE NUMBER PATTERN; CHANGE THE KEY.

9 COMMON UKULELE USES

- SONGWRITING — CHOOSE STRONG PROGRESSIONS
- JAMMING — STAY IN THE RIGHT KEY
- SING-ALONGS — TRANSPOSE FOR YOUR VOICE
- IMPROVISING — TARGET FAMILY CHORDS
- MEMORIZATION — SEE PATTERNS FASTER

10 PRACTICE FRAMEWORKS

ONE KEY PER WEEK	PLAY AROUND THE CIRCLE	STRUM I-IV-V-vi IN 4 KEYS
SING ROOT NOTES	MATCH CHORDS TO SONGS	WRITE 3 PROGRESSIONS

11 COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

- MEMORIZING WITHOUT APPLYING
- IGNORING THE SONG KEY
- CONFUSING MAJOR AND MINOR
- TRYING TO LEARN ALL 12 KEYS AT ONCE
- FORGETTING TO LISTEN
- ONLY STUDYING, NEVER PLAYING

CHAOS → CLARITY

12 ACTIONABLE TAKEAWAYS

1. START WITH C, F, AND G
2. LEARN I-IV-V-vi IN 4 FRIENDLY KEYS
3. USE THE CIRCLE TO TRANSPOSE SONGS
4. PRACTICE MAJOR + RELATIVE MINOR PAIRS
5. THINK IN PATTERNS, NOT ISOLATED CHORDS

HOW TO MEASURE PROGRESS

KEYS LEARNED	CHORD FAMILIES MASTERED	SONGS TRANSPOSED	CONFIDENCE SCORE
__/12 KEYS	__/4 FAMILIES	__/10 SONGS	__/10

THE CIRCLE OF FIFTHS HELPS YOU SEE MUSIC AS A SYSTEM — SO YOU CAN PLAY SMARTER, TRANSPOSE FASTER, AND CONNECT CHORDS WITH CONFIDENCE.

