

Starting a Ukulele Program in Your Classroom Part 6 of 6

What Ukulele Accessories Do I Need?

by [Sam Marchuk](#) | Sep 14, 2018 | [Ukulele](#)



Tuners

I recommend using a digital clip-on tuner for fast, precise tuning. Although it would be ideal to have a tuner for each student, you should plan to have at least 3-4 for your classroom if you are on a limited budget. It is a good idea to have a few extras on hand in case any go missing. Also, batteries can go bad or if you have more than one person to help fine tune the instruments.

Snark SN-6 Ukulele Tuner

The [Snark SN-6](#) is a widely-used tuner due to its large clamp and an easy to read color LED screen. Because the vibration sensor is specially calibrated for the tonal range of ukulele it is also fully chromatic. Moreover this allows it to be used for just about any application.

Kala Klipz Tuners

Another option is [Kala's Klipz](#) series of clip-on models, available in several colors!

D'Addario Planet Wave NS Mini Headstock Tuner

The [D'Addario Planet Wave NS Mini Headstock](#) chromatic tuner is extremely compact with fewer moving parts. This makes it more durable. Not to mention, it has a fast and accurate sensor with a color screen.

Recommendation: Extra Batteries

I recommend picking up replacement CR2032 watch-style batteries used in many digital tuners to ensure your instruments are always in tune. This [D'Addario 4-pack of batteries](#) will give you the backup power you need to always stay perfectly tuned!

Replacement Strings

The [Aquila Nylgut](#) strings that come pre-installed on most ukuleles are quite durable. These strings are not as easily susceptible to break as steel or nylon-wound guitar strings. You can expect to get about 2-3 years out of a set of the Aquila Nylgut strings. However, the general rule is to replace them when you see or feel visible signs of discoloration or wear. Examples of this are fraying or variances in string diameter. Furthermore, you may wish to have several sets on hand just in case a string on one of your classroom ukuleles breaks. While there are many other options available, it is easier to keep the same type of strings for all of your classroom ukuleles. Be sure to match the size of the strings to the size of your ukulele. For example, the 354171 Aquila Soprano Uke string set is the correct length and is gauged specifically for soprano ukuleles. Not to mention, more sizes and options are also available.

[Soprano Ukulele Strings](#)

[Concert Ukulele Strings](#)

[Tenor Ukulele Strings](#)

Ukulele Capo

Your students will be learning the fundamentals of playing ukulele starting in the first position and will not use a capo. However, you may opt to use the ukulele to accompany yourself or your class. A capo is a useful device to assist you in easily changing the key of a song to match your preferred vocal range. Here is a [ukulele capo from On-Stage](#) that will work well for your classroom.

Ukulele Felt Picks

Most ukulele players do not use a pick because the soft nylon strings are easy on the fingers while strumming. Likewise, other advanced techniques, such as finger picking, and strum rolls, would be restricted while holding a pick. However, some players may opt to use a pick for strumming and playing individual notes. A felt pick is recommended (over a plastic pick) as the semi-rigid material mimics the feel and sound of a finger used while strumming.

[On-Stage UPK300 Felt Ukulele Picks, 3-Pack](#)

[Dunlop 8012 Hard Felt Ukulele Pics, 12-Pack](#)

Ukulele Humidifier

Most of us live in areas with changing seasons and fluctuations in temperature and humidity. You will want to keep your instruments stored in a place you would find comfortable. Room temperature, out of reach from direct sunlight, and away from heating/cooling vents. For extremely dry regions or during the cold-weather winter season, the lack of moisture in the air can dry out wood instruments. This can result in cracking or damage.

Most student model ukuleles are manufactured using resilient plywood or laminate wood construction, which is less susceptible to damage from dryness as each layer sandwiched with the grain perpendicular to the one adjacent. (More expensive instruments typically feature solid wood construction where the grain is along a single plane and more likely to react to the humidity

changes.) Therefore, it is recommended to store instruments in a climate-controlled room that has a building, room, or individual instrument humidifier. [This model humidifier will work with any size, individual ukulele.](#)

Storage Options

From gig bags, racks, and movable storage carts, there are a lot of great options for your classroom! To learn more about storage options for your ukulele, check out [Part 5: How Should I Store My Ukulele?](#)

Ukulele Stands

A folding stand for use with a single instrument will give you easy access anytime so you can maximize your practice time. Here are a few of our recommended options:

[On-Stage GS5000 Fold-Flat Small Instrument Stand](#)

[On-Stage GS6000B Folding Uke Instrument Stand](#)

Straps

A strap can be extremely useful for ensuring your ukulele is always in the right playing position. It is also an essential tool for performing while standing and for teachers to free up their hands in front of a classroom.

Kala K-STP-BK Nylon Ukulele Strap

The most reliable way to use a strap with a ukulele is with strap buttons. Most ukuleles do not include strap buttons, and these should be installed from your local guitar shop or luthier. This will ensure the ukulele is not damaged and void the manufacturer warranty. Kala offers a strap that is lightweight and has a tailored fit for use with ukuleles.

On-Stage GSA70B Ukulele Strap

Another option is to use a [hook-style strap](#) which has a loop end to wear around your neck and connects to the hooks onto the lower part of the sound hole. This method will keep the ukulele at the proper playing position and will free up your hands as long as your right forearm is resting on the ukulele body. The hook-style strap will not allow you to go completely hands-free but does not require the installation of strap buttons.

Summary

Many of these ukulele accessories will help you in maintaining and organizing your instruments so you can always look and sound your best. This 6-part series covers most of the basics you need to consider when beginning a ukulele program. Contact me or one of our educational consultants for more ideas and to see what we can do to bring ukulele into your classroom!

Happy Strumming!