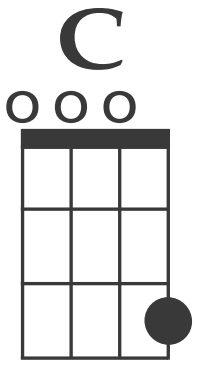


The C Chord

Now that we believe the Little Beastie to be in tune, it's time to play a **chord**.

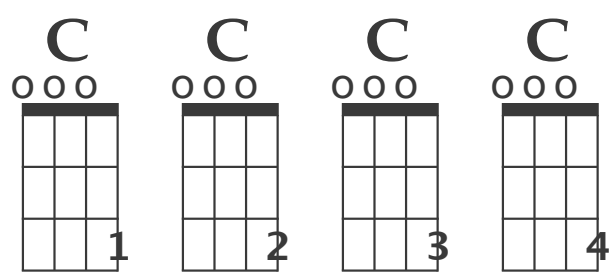
A chord is a combination of two or more notes that are played at the same time. Sometimes they blend together harmoniously, as **consonant chords**, and sometimes they blend together *less* harmoniously, as **dissonant chords**. And of course there is a whole range of chords from the most consonant to the most dissonant, and what may sound consonant to you may sound dissonant to me.



The **C** chord is the Red Giant of the ukulele chord universe. It's by far the most common chord, and is among the easiest to play. Think of the **C** chord as playing the lead role in a blockbuster musical supported by a cast of thousands. Additional major, minor and walk-on characters will appear, and some kind of plot will develop along the way.

The **C** chord diagram shows that *some finger* is holding the 1st string at the 3rd fret, and that the 2nd, 3rd and 4th strings are left to ring open; witness the little "O's" above the nut. (There is no musical distinction between fretted and unfretted notes within a chord. Notes be notes.)

Ah, but now, **which finger?** Well, we could designate the same one always, for the sake of consistency. But you might as well realize from the very start: **The Ukulele Is Options**. You have (I hope) 4 fingers, and any one of them could handle the **C** chord fingering. So..... The question arises: *What other chords are you likely to visit?* Which fingers might you want to keep **free** to expedite the change to the **next** chord. We have exactly 4 options (just use a downward motion of the thumb to set those strings a-ringing):



.....where:

- 1 is the **1st** finger (index finger, forefinger)
- 2 is the **2nd** finger (middle finger, long finger)
- 3 is the **3rd** finger (ring finger)
- 4 is the **4th** finger (pinky finger)

In the **C Chord Family**, which we are about to explore, it's best to go with either the 3rd or 4th finger. The 3rd finger is the stronger of the two, so it's a good default fingering. Then again, the 4th finger allows easier access to the chords that usually show up in the same songs as **C**, such as **F**, **G**, **G7**, **Am** and **Em**. Try both.