

Note: We always spell out tunings from the 4th string to the 1st.

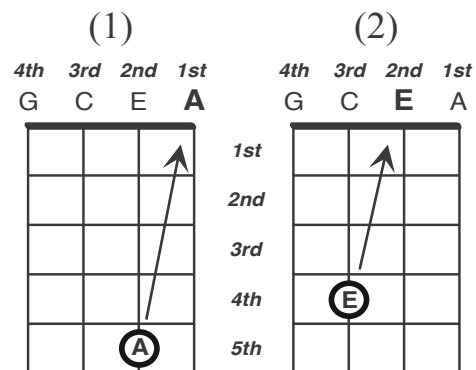
There's an old song called **My Dog Has Fleas** (you can find it online), and the first 4 notes that accompany those first 4 words correspond to the open notes on the 4th, 3rd, 2nd and 1st strings.

This tuning is an example of a **Re-entrant Tuning**. I can't quite make out the connection between the term "re-entrant" and this non-linear tuning of the strings. Anyway, the tuning for the ukulele is: **G - C - E - A**, from 4th to 1st string. The C note (Middle C) that occupies the open 3rd string, is the lowest-pitched note on the instrument. You can go to Wikipedia, search on **My Dog Has Fleas**, and hear an audio track of it.

Not a dog lover? How about: *We aim to please. You took my cheese. He's on his knees. They're Cantonese. I don't like peas.*

Back to **RELATIVE TUNING**. This diagram gives you a bird's-eye view. It's a **Fretboard Diagram**, where the dark line on top depicts the **nut** and the vertical lines are the 4 **strings**, **G - C - E - A** (4th through 1st).

The horizontal lines are **fretwires**, and we call the spaces between them the **frets**. This diagram shows the first 5 frets going up the neck.



We grab an A note from somewhere, tune the 1st string as close to it as we can, then tune the other 3 strings "relative" to that one.

The A note needn't be exact as long as you follow the recipe:

(1) Play the open 1st string. Place any finger at the **5th fret** of the **2nd string**, and tune the **2nd string** until it matches the pitch of the 1st string. Start turning the *2nd-string knob*, to close the gap (if there is one) between the two pitches, and listen for a **beating** sound that will start to slow down and finally disappear when the notes reach **unison**: *Wa-wa-waa-waaa-waaaaaaa*.

(2) Play the open **2nd string**. Place a finger at the **4th fret** of the **3rd string**, and tune the **3rd string** until it matches the pitch of the open 2nd string. (3) Now play the open **4th string**. Place a finger at the **3rd fret** of the **2nd string**, and tune the open **4th string** until it matches the pitch of the fretted **2nd string**. (4) Go buy an electronic tuner anyway, because they have blinky lights.

