This is a SET-UP, lol 😊 - just for fun.

Still consider yourself a 'Beginner'? 🤔

Play through the following Chord Sheet, left to right, top to bottom, 4 times.

FIRST time - 4 strums per chord
SECOND time - 3 strums per chord
THIRD time - 2 strums per chord
FOURTH time - 1 strum per chord... end with A and no (G7).

Set your own tempo and try NOT to 'break your stride' or look at your chord-forming fingers. Your eventual GOAL would be to play through this Chord Sheet at 1-2 strums per second.

If you can play through the chord sheet without breaking your stride/tempo, especially at 1-2 strums per second, you should definitely NOT label yourself a 'Beginner'.

Hand someone a properly-tuned ukulele and ask them to play through the chord sheet. If they can do it at an even tempo without interruption, you wouldn't call them a 'Beginner', would you? 😊

CHORD SHEET:

C Am F G7 C F C A7
D Bm G A7 D G D C7
F Dm Bb C7 F Bb F D7
G Em C D7 G C G E7
A F#m D E7 A D A (G7) (return to top & reduce # of strums by 1) /

last time (1 or 2 strums) end with A, and no (G7)

Enjoy and Keep Uke'in',

Last edited by Uncle Rod Higuchi; 03-29-2012
I’m sharing this ‘test’ for two reasons:

1 - to encourage ukulele players who may still think that they haven’t been making any progress in their attempt to learn to play the ukulele, and...

2 - to provide beginners/newbies with something to practice, accomplish, and master.

I want to challenge some of you who aren't giving yourself enough credit for the progress you've already made in your uke playing. If you can play through the 'test' at a moderate pace at 2 strums per chord, you should promote yourself to 'intermediate' at least. You've earned it. : )

Take your time with regard to the tempo. It's better to be able to get through the test slowly rather than put too much pressure on yourself by trying to rush through it. Like Francis Albert (Sinatra) said, "Nice and easy does it every time."

If you want more practice sheets with more/different chords, please click on my Boot Camp link below the picture of the ‘Uncle Rod ukulele’ in my signature.

By the way, there is no such thing as ‘Cheating’ when it comes to playing the ukulele. By that I mean, "whatever works for you, is a valid way to play the uke". The locals have a beautiful saying, "if can, can. If no can, no can"... so try another way that works for you.

We watch others play the uke to learn from them, ‘technique’ usually. But the bottom line is what it sounds like. Beautiful (read proper or correct) technique that sounds bad is not good ukulele music. Poor technique that sounds beautiful... and who cares?

Remember the FIRST 'rule' of playing the ukulele – 'It must be fun!' or something like that.

If you are having difficulty, don't be too hard on yourself. Please be assured that eventually you'll experience that "Ah-Ha" moment when it all comes together. And that moment is right around the corner, esp if you're practicing regularly if not daily.

Think about this, if we had handed you a uke a few months ago - What would you have done with it? But NOW, hey, you can actually PLAY it. That's real progress!

'Beginner', 'Intermediate', even 'Advanced' are NOT clear-cut 'levels'. We throw them about and may use them to try to categorize ourselves or even others. But, like beauty, it's really in the eye (or in this case - ear?) of the beholder/be-hearer!

Remember, this ‘SET-UP’ is just for fun... but with a little bit of challenge to make it more interesting. If you're having fun with it... Great! If not, pass.

Congratulations to any and all of you who are able to work through the "SET UP"!

In lieu of a 'Certificate of Achievement’, go out and feed your UAS! (but only if you can afford to do so). O-oh, did I just become an ‘enabler’?
Just in case you’re curious, **anyone** can create their own 'test' using any of the **keys** (first chord in each line).

What you'll need to do is to find the ‘x7th’ chord (based on the 5\(^{th}\) note of the Major scale of the key you want to modulate/transition to). That is, if you’re playing in any key other than the key of C and you want to modulate to the key of C, find the 5\(^{th}\) note of the Major scale for the **key of C** (c-d-e-f-g) which is a ‘G’ and make it a ‘7th’ chord (G7). This G7 will naturally lead to chords in the key of C. Again, if you’re in a different key (from the key of C) and want to form a more natural transition/modulation to the key of C, then use a G7, and it will help you move right into the key of C. Clear as mud? See the legend below.

You will want to play a G7 before going to the key of C. In the same way, ...
C7 will lead in to the key of F
E7 will lead in to the key of A
A7 will lead in to the key of D
D7 will lead in to the key of G

If you follow these guidelines you can mix up the order of keys, just remember the ‘x7th’ chord (formed by using the 5\(^{th}\) note of the next key’s Major scale) that leads most naturally to the chords of the next key.

Please encourage your ukulele-playing friends to give this **Self-Examination Tool** a try. And please direct them to the **Boot Camp** for a fuller, and more comprehensive, challenge. (**Boot Camp** and **FREE Songbook** links are below my signature above)

**NOTE on Uncle Rod’s Ukulele Boot Camp:** Like Military ‘Boot Camp’ it can seem like hard work and drudgery at times (maybe all the time), but its design is to ‘get you into shape’ for things to come. Follow up with the **FREE Songbook** to see the 'system' as it is applied to learning new songs. If you want to use the 'system' or 'method' to help you learn a song, just create your own 'Practice Sheets' using the chords of the song you want to learn and you’ll be playing your favorite songs in no time!

Keep uke’in’, : )