

Basic Ukulele Strum Patterns

(\sqcap = down strum \vee = up strum)

1.

1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&
\sqcap		\sqcap		\sqcap			

The most basic pattern - all down strokes. Use this when you are first learning a song, or for the simplest of songs in 4/4 time.

2.

1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&
\sqcap		\sqcap	\vee	\sqcap		\sqcap	\vee

This is what I call the 'standard' or basic strum. You can use this in lots of uke songs, particularly folk and island songs. You can play it with a straight feel for rock & pop songs, or with a swing feel for island and folk tunes. For island tunes, add extra emphasis (accent) on beats 2 & 4.

3.

1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&
\sqcap		\sqcap	\vee		\vee	\sqcap	\vee

The Calypso strum. The syncopation in this strum may take a while to master. Once you have it a new world of rhythm opens up. E.g. Jamaica Farewell, Island in the Sun (any traditional West Indian song).

N.B. This same pattern can be used for many Rock and Pop songs when used with a rock beat. Many 60's and 70's pop songs work well with this strum.

4.

1	&	2	&	3	&
\sqcap		\sqcap	\vee	\sqcap	

Basic 3/4 song pattern. You can use this for 3/4 ballads like Mull of Kintyre, Botany Bay and many more.