



Musical Embers
~ UKULELE & SONGWRITING ~

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SING & STRUM with Kitty Stewart

Getting your voice and strumming hand working together

Singing and strumming are two independent timing tasks. Until one becomes automatic, they compete for your attention. Build the strum first, then layer the voice on top.

"If your strum hand has to think, your voice can't."

4 TECHNIQUES

1. Anchor Beat

Pick one strum you always return to e.g. a down-stroke on beat 1.
If you lose the pattern, find your way back to your anchor rather than freezing.

3. Drill the Chord Sequence

Strum through a song's chord sequence with no singing – memorise it, say each chord name out loud – until your hand doesn't need your eyes to find it. Then try humming the tune over it.

2. Talk-Strum

Strum a simple pattern while reciting something you know by heart (days of the week, your address). Get the hand moving on autopilot before adding music.

4. Simplify to Rebuild

Add singing back one layer at a time:
Down strum on beat 1 → D-D → D-DU → the full pattern etc.
Only add the next layer once the last one feels secure with your voice on top.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

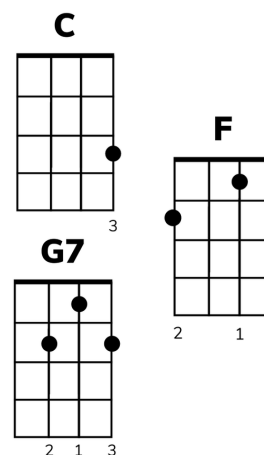
Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday to you

C G7
G7 C
C F
G7 C/

D-DU



D-DU-UDU



The Golden Rule

Separate the skills before you combine them – get the strum running on autopilot first, then let your voice join in.

Strum alone → Talk-strum together → Learn the chord sequence
Simplify to rebuild → Add the lyrics → Bring it up to speed