

## Beats, Bars and Phrases in music

BP

All music is divided into **beats**, **bars** and **phrases**.

**A phrase** has a regular number of **bars** - 4, 8, 12 or 16 - always a multiple of 4. If a piece of music ends with an incomplete phrase it sounds (and feels) unfinished.

**A bar** has a regular number of **beats**. This is the 'time signature' - 2, 3 or 4 beats. (There are other, more complex, time signatures but they are rarely used in ukulele music).

**A beat** is a regular pulse which can be felt. When you listen to music and tap your foot you are feeling, and keeping time with, the beat.

**2 beats** in a bar is known as MARCH time.

**3 beats** in a bar is known as WALTZ time - also used in C&W and ballads.

**4 beats** in a bar is known as COMMON time - dance, rock, blues, country, funk, pop.

The **beats** in all written music are divided into **bars** by a vertical line - the **bar line** - |. In ukulele music the beats are **slashes** - /.

|//|//|//|//| = **2 beats** to the **bar**

|///|///|///|///| = **3 beats** to the **bar**

|////|////|////|////| = **4 beats** to the **bar**

Playing ukulele music is based on strumming chords. A chord is indicated by its name - **C**, **G7** etc

| **C**/// | **G7**/// | //// | **C**/// | // **G7** / | **C**// **G7** | **C**/// | **G7**// **C** |

The **chord name** counts as **1 beat**.

The indicated chord is strummed until a different chord is indicated.