

Buying your first ukulele

When buying a ukulele you have to make a few choices.

The first choice is how much money you are willing to spend. You can get cheap ones for something like \$30, but they don't sound good and aren't so good to play. You will get much more joy from the instrument if you go for better quality. I recommend spending at least \$100, and up to \$200-300 - but that's still super cheap for a musical instrument, and it is money well spent. Beyond the \$200-ish mark, it's the law of diminishing returns.

Avoid cheap novelty ukuleles: They are often hard to tune, don't stay in tune, are out of tune as you go up the neck, have too high or low action, which makes them harder to play, and potentially buzzy. And most importantly, they don't sound good, without the lovely overtones and sustain that a better ukulele will have.

The second choice is what size uke to buy - from smallest to biggest Soprano, Concert or Tenor. They each sound and feel different. There are also Baritone ukes (and basses!), but they are tuned differently, so they are not recommended for beginners. I suggest you go to a shop that sells lots of ukes and try the different sizes, as well as brands. It depends on the feel you like, and possibly the size/shape of your fingers. If you spend \$100+ you are unlikely to get a bad uke, and you may like the sound and feel of one particular one. We all have different tastes. Trust your instincts.

The next choice may be the brand. But if you've been trying some in shops, that may not be relevant. I'm fond of Kala (can't really go wrong with any Kala!), Flight, Enya & Mahalo are also good ... there's a myriad of brands.

The best online shop for Australians is the Ukulele Trading Company
<https://ukuleletradingcoaustralia.com.au> - But it's best to try one in a real shop.

You can check out Facebook Marketplace, etc for bargains, but it's best to have an idea what you want first.

Here's a useful guide to buying ukes with lots more info:
<https://www.ukulelemate.com.au/pages/buyers-guide>