GENERAL

bad moon rising ukulele strumming pattern

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Introduction

When you hear **“Bad Moon Rising”** by Creedence Clearwater Revival, the iconic guitar riff, the driving rhythm, and the unmistakable vocal line immediately come to mind. For ukulele players, the song offers a fun challenge: translating a classic rock staple into a breezy, tuneful piece that fits the bright, plucky sound of the ukulele. Whether you’re a beginner eager to add a new track to your repertoire or an intermediate player looking to sharpen your strumming technique, mastering the **bad moon rising ukulele strumming pattern** is a rewarding endeavor.

In this guide we’ll walk through the chord progression, the essential strumming pattern, and practical tips to keep your rhythm steady. We’ll also touch on common pitfalls, how to add your own flair, and where to find further resources. By the end, you’ll be ready to strum along with the band, impress friends at gatherings, and enjoy the satisfying sound of the ukulele in a classic rock context.

Understanding the Song’s Structure

Before diving into the ukulele chords, let’s break down the song’s basic form. “Bad Moon Rising” follows a classic verse chorus structure that repeats throughout the track. The main sections are:

- Intro
- Verse 1
- Pre Chorus
- Chorus
- Verse 2
- Pre Chorus
- Chorus
- Bridge
- Final Chorus

Each section shares the same chord progression, making it easier to memorize once you’ve learned the pattern. The key of the original recording is **A minor**, but many ukulele players transpose the song to **E minor** or **B minor** for easier chord shapes. Below you’ll find chord charts for both the original key and a common transposition.

Chord Overview

Original Key (A minor)

In the key of A minor, the chords used are:

1. A minor (Am) – 0002
2. D major (D) – 2220
3. E major (E) – 4433
4. F major (F) – 1333

These open chords are straightforward for beginners. The progression for the verses and chorus is:

Am – D – Am – D (verse) and **Am – D – Am – D** (chorus)

Common Transposition (E minor)

Transposing to E minor places the chords in a more comfortable position for many ukulele players, especially those who prefer a single bar chord shape. The chords become:

1. E minor (Em) – 0220
2. A major (A) – 2100
3. B major (B) – 4322
4. C major (C) – 0003

Progression: **Em – A – Em – A**. The feel is identical; you just shift the root note up a perfect fourth.

Why the Strumming Pattern Matters

The heart of “Bad Moon Rising” lies in its steady, punchy rhythm. On the guitar, the original track uses a tight, syncopated strum that drives the melody. Translating that to the ukulele requires a pattern that captures the groove while staying true to the instrument’s bright timbre. A well executed strumming pattern not only keeps the song moving but also showcases your rhythmic control.

Below we’ll detail a classic strumming pattern that works for both the original and transposed keys. We’ll also explain how to adjust the pattern for dynamic changes in the song.

Mastering the Core Strumming Pattern

Pattern Overview

The primary strumming pattern for “Bad Moon Rising” on the ukulele is a four beat rhythm that emphasizes the backbeat. In notation, it looks like this:

Down – Down Up – Up Down Up

When counting in 4/4 time, the beats correspond to:

1. Beat 1: Down (D)
2. Beat 2: Down (D) + Up (U)
3. Beat 3: Up (U) + Down (D)
4. Beat 4: Up (U)

In practice, the pattern feels like a relaxed, rhythmic pulse that keeps the song moving forward. Below is a step by step guide to executing it.

Step by Step Execution

1. Hold the ukulele in the standard playing position. Your left hand should be positioned on the fretboard, while your right hand holds the pick or uses your thumb and index finger for a natural strum.
2. Beat 1 – Down: Start with a clean downstroke, striking the strings from the top (G) to the bottom (A). Keep the motion smooth and controlled.
3. Beat 2 – Down Up: Immediately follow the downstroke with a quick upstroke. The upstroke should be gentle, sweeping from the bottom (A) back to the top (G). This creates a subtle syncopation.
4. Beat 3 – Up Down Up: On the third beat, perform an upstroke, then a downstroke, and finish with another upstroke. This triple stroke adds rhythmic interest and mirrors the guitar’s percussive feel.
5. Beat 4 – Up: Finish the measure with a single, relaxed upstroke. This gives the pattern a natural cadence before repeating.
6. Repeat for each chord change. The pattern remains consistent throughout the verses, choruses, and bridge.

Tips for Smooth Transitions

- Keep your hand relaxed. Tension in the right hand can cause uneven strums.
- Use a metronome. Start at a slow tempo (e.g., 80 BPM) and gradually increase until you can keep up with the original pace (around 104 BPM).
- Focus on timing. Count aloud or silently to maintain a steady pulse.
- Practice with a backing track. Many online resources offer “Bad Moon Rising” backing tracks in various keys.

Adapting the Pattern for Dynamic Sections

While the core pattern stays the same, the song’s dynamic shifts demand subtle changes in emphasis. Here’s how to adjust the strumming for different parts:

Verse

During the verses, keep the strumming light and steady. Emphasize the downstrokes on beats 1 and 3 to maintain a laid back feel.

Pre Chorus and Chorus

In the pre chorus, increase the volume slightly by adding a slight accent to the downstroke on beat 2. For the chorus, let the strum become a bit more forceful, especially on the first downstroke, to drive the hook “Don"t go around tonight.”

Bridge

The bridge introduces a more melodic line. Here, you can play a softer strum or even switch to a single downstroke per chord to highlight the vocal line.

Common Mistakes and How to Fix Them

1. Over strumming. Beginners often try to play every single string. Instead, focus on the chord’s root and third, letting the other strings ring out naturally.
2. Uneven tempo. A shaky rhythm ruins the groove. Use a metronome or play along with a track to keep steady.
3. Incorrect chord voicings. Double check the chord shapes, especially when transposing to a new key. A wrong finger placement can produce a muddy sound.
4. Ignoring dynamics. Playing the entire song at the same volume feels flat. Add subtle crescendos during the chorus and decrescendos in the bridge.

Advanced Variations to Spice Up Your Play

Once you’re comfortable with the basic pattern, consider adding these variations:

1. Palm Muting

Lightly rest the edge of your right hand on the strings just above the bridge. This creates a muted, percussive effect that can mimic the guitar’s rhythm section.

2. Fingerstyle Interludes

During the bridge, switch to a fingerstyle approach. Pluck the G and C strings in a syncopated pattern to create a gentle, melodic backdrop.

3. Syncopated Accents

On beats 2 and 4, add a subtle accent by striking the strings harder or adding a quick hammer on or pull off. This

gives the strum a more dynamic feel.

4. Use of Dotted Rhythms

Try a dotted rhythm on the downstroke of beat 1: play a long downstroke followed by a short upstroke. This adds a jazzy twist while maintaining the song's groove.

Practice Routine for the "Bad Moon Rising" Ukulele Strumming Pattern

Consistency is key. Here's a structured practice routine you can follow each day:

1. Warm up (5 minutes). Play simple open chords and basic strumming to loosen up.
2. Chord progression practice (10 minutes). Play the Am–D–Am–D progression at a slow tempo, focusing on smooth chord changes.
3. Strumming pattern drill (10 minutes). Strum the pattern without chords, counting beats and ensuring timing.
4. Combined practice (15 minutes). Play the chord progression with the strumming pattern. Start slow, gradually increasing tempo.
5. Song run through (5 minutes). Play the entire song from intro to final chorus, paying attention to dynamics.
6. Cool down (5 minutes). Stretch your hands and play a few favorite songs.

Resources for Further Learning

- Video Tutorials: Search "Bad Moon Rising ukulele tutorial" on YouTube. Many creators provide step by step chord charts and strum guides.
- Chord Chart Apps: Apps like "Chordify" or "Ultimate Guitar" let you load the song and see chord progressions in real time.
- Backing Tracks: Websites such as Looperman or Songsterr offer free backing tracks in various keys.
- Metronome Apps: Use Pro Metronome or Metronome Beats to keep tempo steady.
- Ukulele Communities: Join forums like Ukulele Underground or subreddits such as r/ukulele for tips and feedback.

Conclusion

Learning the **bad moon rising ukulele strumming pattern**is more than just a technical exercise; it's a chance to bring a classic rock anthem into the warm, plucky world of the ukulele. By mastering the chord progression, honing your strumming rhythm, and adding subtle dynamic touches, you'll create a rendition that feels both authentic and uniquely your own. Remember to practice consistently, stay patient, and enjoy every strum as you bring the song to life on your instrument.

So grab your ukulele, set your metronome to 104 BPM, and let

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