

Day 1



Tuning Your Kantele

You don't need to know how to tune a piano in order to learn how to play one. However, you do need to know how to tune your kantele before you can play it, so each string makes the right sound.



Tuning a kantele isn't easy for a musician who's just starting to learn how to play. Using an electronic tuner will help. Electronic tuners use a moving needle, a blinking light or a digital readout to tell you what note you're producing when you pluck a string. You can purchase one at most music stores for around \$30 - \$100.



A tuning hammer is a special type of wrench that fits over the top of a tuning peg.

In addition to an electronic tuner, you need a tuning hammer, also known as a tuning key or a tuning wrench. Your tuning hammer helps you change the sound produced by each string. Let's try it out!

Pluck the longest string on your kantele. Now place the tuning hammer over the peg to which that string is attached. Turn the tuning peg counter clockwise just a little bit, then pluck the string again. What do you hear? The note sounds lower because you loosened the string. Now turn the turning peg clockwise. The note will sound higher when you tighten the string.



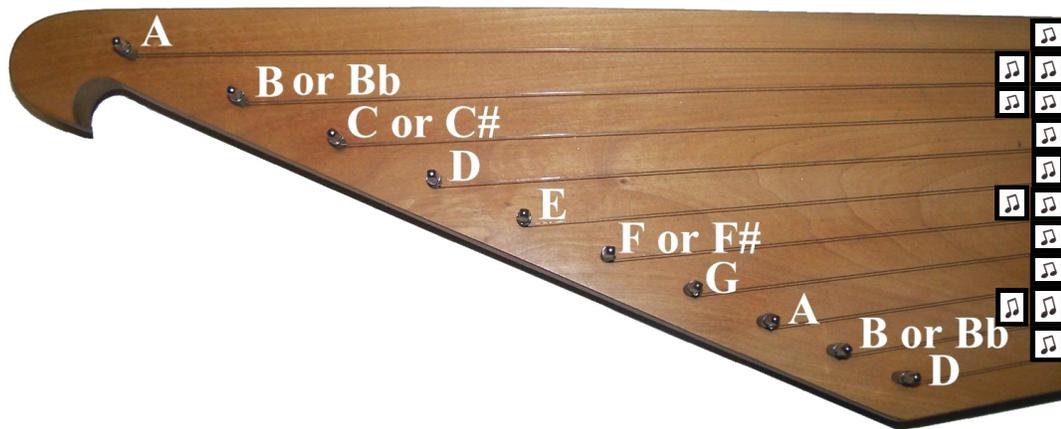
Warning! Be careful when you're using your tuning hammer. If you tighten a string too much, it might break. Only use small motions like those shown in this video.

How to use an electronic tuner: Turn on your tuner. Pluck the longest string of your kantele, then look at your tuner to see if the string is tuned properly. If it is, the letter displayed in the upper, right-hand corner will be a “D” if you’re playing a 5 string kantele, and it will be an “A” if you’re playing a 10 string kantele. In addition, the needle on your tuner will sit in the middle, on zero. If the needle is to the left of the zero, the note you’re playing is too low. Tighten the string by turning the tuning peg clockwise. If the needle is to the right of zero, the note you’re playing is too high. Loosen the string by turning the tuning peg counter-clockwise.

Electronic tuners can be very sensitive to other sounds in the room. To help prevent interference, place your tuner close to your kantele, or even put it on top of the strings.

When tuning an instrument for the first time, it's best to do it over several days because new strings stretch, causing your kantele to go out of tune.

Kanteles can be tuned many ways. For the lessons in this book, you will tune your kantele strings to play the following notes, depending on the song you are playing.



If you don't have an electronic tuner, you can tune your kantele by ear by matching the sound you produce on each string to the sound files included here. If the note you play sounds lower than the note on the sound file, tighten the string by turning the tuning peg clockwise. If the note you play sounds higher than the note on the sound file, loosen the string by turning the tuning peg counter clockwise.