

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.



Video demonstration

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 that are not being tuned.

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.