

Guitalele

A **guitalele** (sometimes spelled **guitarlele** or **guilele**), also called a **kīkū**,^{[1][2]} is a guitar-ukulele hybrid, that is, "a 1/4 size" guitar, a cross between a classical guitar and a tenor or baritone ukulele.^[3] The guitalele combines the portability of a ukulele, due to its small size, with the six single strings and resultant chord possibilities of a classical guitar. It may include a built-in microphone that permits playing the guitalele either as an acoustic guitar or connected to an amplifier. The guitalele is variously marketed (and used) as a travel guitar or children's guitar. It is essentially a modern iteration of the Quint guitar.^[4]

A guitalele is the size of a ukulele, and is commonly played like a guitar transposed up to "A" (that is, up a 4th, or like a guitar with a capo on the fifth fret). This gives it tuning of ADGCEA, with the top four strings tuned like a low G ukulele.^[5] This is the same as the tuning of the requinto guitar, although the latter are typically larger than a guitalele, and as the most common tuning for the guitarrón mexicano, albeit at a higher octave.

Several guitar and ukulele manufacturers market guitaleles, including Yamaha Corporation's GL-1 Guitalele,^{[6][7]} Cordoba's Guilele^[8] and Mini,^[9] Koaloha's D-VI 6-string tenor ukulele,^[10] Mele's Guitarlele,^[11] Kanilea's GL6 Guitarlele^[12] and Islander GL6,^[13] Luna's 6-string baritone ukulele,^[14] the Yudelele, the Lichty Kīkū,^[1] the Kinnard Kīkū,^[2] and the Gretsch guitar-ukulele.^[15]

Some manufacturers' (e.g., Luna) use of the term "6-string ukulele" (or the like) in describing their six-string, six-course guitaleles can lead to confusion with the common six-string, four-course ukuleles that are typically referred to by the same name.^[16] These four-course "6-string ukuleles" are usually strung with a single G string, a closely spaced course of two (often octave-tuned) C strings, a single E string and a closely spaced course of two (often unison-tuned) A strings. This means that chord formation is more akin to a traditional four-string ukulele, while the Guitalele's is more akin to a six-string guitar.

Terminology

The name Guitalele is a new denomination for an old idea, maybe due to the fewer types of guitar-like instruments found in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, or maybe due to commercial reasons. However, we can find several instruments with the same tuning, shape and size as guitalele in the Spanish, Portuguese and Latinoamerican folk music, such as the guitarrico aragonés from Spain and the requinto carranguero from Colombia.

Because of this, some people argue that it would be more correct to consider the guitalele a kind of Requinto.

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Other names Guitarlele, Guilele, Kīkū'

Classification String instrument

Related instruments

- Classical guitar Tenor ukulele Requinto



A guitalele or guitarlele

Notes

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11. Mele Spruce Top Guitarlele (<http://www.meleukulele.com/shopexd.asp?id=554>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20150214163721/http://www.meleukulele.com/shopexd.asp?id=554>) 2015-02-14 at the *Wayback Machine*, Mele Ukulele (accessed 9 July 2013).
12. Kanilea Guitarlele (http://kanileaukulele.com/custom_guitarele.php) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20130713064102/http://kanileaukulele.com/custom_guitarele.php) 2013-07-13 at the *Wayback Machine*, Kanilea Ukulele (accessed 9 July 2013).
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14. Tattoo 6-string baritone ukulele (<http://www.lunaguitars.com/acousticproduct/uketattoo6string.php>), Luna Guitars (accessed 18 May 2014).
15. Gretsch G9126 Guitar-Ukulele (<http://www.gretschguitars.com/products/index.php?partno=2730046321>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20150509145047/http://www.gretschguitars.com/products/index.php?partno=2730046321>) 2015-05-09 at the *Wayback Machine*, Gretsch Guitars (access 15 May 2015).
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