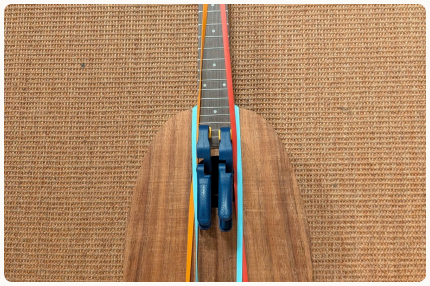
STUDENT HANDOUT · SESSION 8

Body cleanup & neck fit

Goal: establish a repeatable dry fit between the finished body and the supplied neck/fingerboard, using the instructor's dowel jig.

Class: 3 hr | Home: about 2 hr | Dry fit before finish



A fitted neck aligned to the body centerline.

WORK SEQUENCE

1. **Clean the body.** Level plate overhangs and seams without rounding the top/back edges or the neck face.
2. **Re-establish centerlines.** Mark the body, neck, fingerboard, and bridge centerlines where they remain visible during fitting.
3. **Inspect supplied parts.** Confirm neck/fingerboard identity, scale, fret count, nut end, heel face, and intended orientation.
4. **Fit the heel to the body.** The heel must seat without rocking. For this ukulele, the neck-joint face is 90 degrees to the soundboard plane.
5. **Use the dowel jig.** Clamp the jig exactly as demonstrated. Drill only after a buddy and instructor verify depth stops and orientation.
6. **Dry assemble.** Install dowels without glue and check neck centerline, fingerboard projection, side-to-side tilt, and heel contact.
7. **Locate the bridge provisionally.** Use the full-scale plan and actual neck/fingerboard. Mark references only; final location follows the finish.

STOP & ASK

Before drilling any dowel hole, before changing the heel surface, and before gluing the fingerboard or neck.

ALIGNMENT CHECKS

- [ ] Neck centerline continues through body centerline.
- [ ] Heel sits fully against the neck face.
- [ ] Neck has no unintended roll or yaw.
- [ ] Straightedge projection agrees with the bridge/setup plan.
- [ ] Fingerboard lands cleanly on the soundboard.
- [ ] Dowel holes have correct depth and no breakout risk.

HOMEWORK

- Finish approved body and neck sanding.
- Do not alter joint surfaces without rechecking alignment.
- Label and bag dowels and hardware.
- Update neck, fingerboard, joint, and hardware fields.

RECORD BEFORE DISASSEMBLY

Photograph the dry fit and note any shim, heel adjustment, or alignment correction that must survive finishing.