

FREE Guitar Lesson Series

Workbook

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- Paul Bright -

www.BeginnerGuitaristAcademy.com

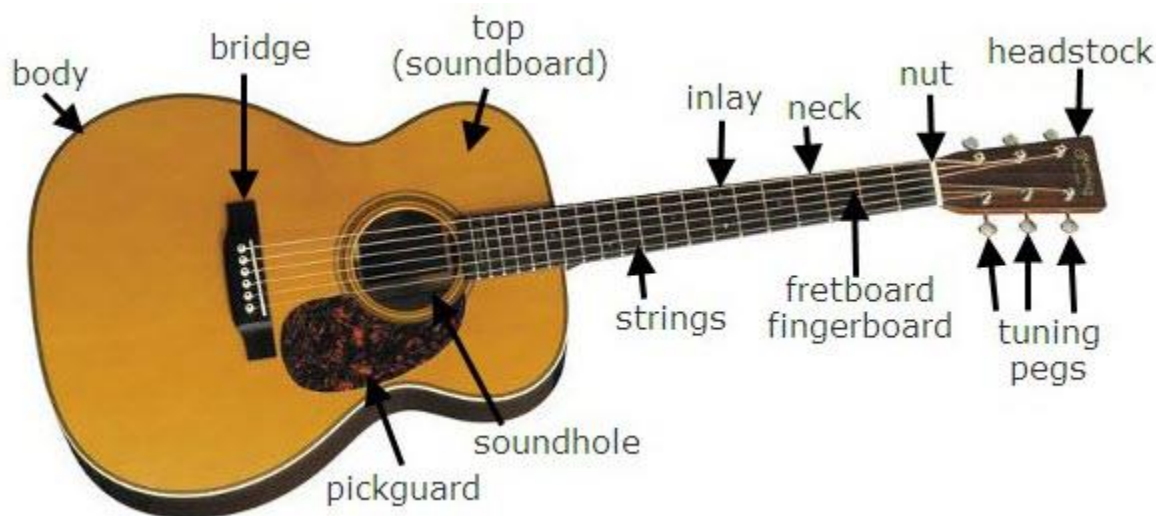
The Guitar

What is a Guitar?

According to Wikipedia, “The guitar is a plucked string instrument, usually played with fingers or a pick. The guitar consists of a body with a rigid neck to which the strings, generally six in number, are attached. Guitars are traditionally constructed of various woods and strung with animal gut or, more recently, with either nylon or steel strings. Some modern guitars are made of polycarbonate materials. Guitars are made and repaired by luthiers. There are two primary families of guitars: acoustic and electric.”

The Parts of the Acoustic Guitar

In this section we'll be learning the essential parts of the guitar, which unfortunately is sometimes taken for granted by some guitarists. Here goes:



The main parts of the guitar are the Head/Headstock, the Neck, and the Body. Here's a brief description of the other parts of the guitar:

- **Tuning pegs / Tuners** – These are wound clockwise or counter – clockwise which either loosen or tighten the strings in order to change the pitch of the string. Used to basically tune the guitar.
- **Nut** – The white plastic or sometimes a bone strip at the top of the neck and right below the headstock. It is basically the starting point of the string that produces sound.
- **Fretwires** – The metal “humps” on the guitar neck parallel to the nut
- **Fretboard/fingerboard** – The face of the neck where the fret wires are embedded.
- **Frets** – The spaces between the fret wires
- **Inlay/Position Markers** – These are dots on the frets to indicate the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, 12th, 15th and 17th frets on the guitar to make it easier to the player
- **Soundhole** – An opening on the body of the guitar in order to project and produce sound
- **Pickguard** – A piece of plastic to protect the guitar from damage from the pick
- **Bridge** – Anchors the strings to the body of the guitar

There are other parts that aren't mentioned here, but these are just the basics that you need to get yourself familiarized with.

The Parts of the Electric Guitar

Here are the basics for Parts of your Electric Guitar.

Strings

Electric guitars usually have steel strings, whereas acoustics sometimes have Nylon. Strings can also be made out of other materials such as Bronze. The strings vibrating at different lengths when they are played is what makes the Guitar produce different notes- but I should that hope you already know that from High School Physics lessons!

Pick Ups/ Humbuckers

Electric Guitars have “pick-ups” which literally: “pick up” the vibrations of the strings and send them through your lead and into your amplifier. Some Guitars use a type of pick-up called: “Humbuckers” which basically use 2 coils instead of 1 to pick up the sound. It’s all very Science-ey; but essentially it helps to gets rid of unwanted humming noises.

Jack/ Jack Lead

A “Jack” or “Jack Output” is the hole in the guitar where you plug in your “Jack Lead”. The Jack Lead literally carries the sound signals to the amplifier.

Neck/ Fretboard

The neck/ fretboard is where the strings lie. They can be made out of many different types of wood.

Frets/ Fret-Markings

Frets are the different sections of the Neck that producer different notes. For example playing the 3rd fret of the A string in Standard Tuning would produce a C note, whereas playing the 5th fret instead would produce a D note. “Fret-Markings” or “Fret Inlays” or “Fret Dots” (they have a lot of names) are there to help to guide the player around the Fretboard. In the diagram they are at frets 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 15, 17, 19 and 21. This is pretty standard.

Tone/ Volume Dials/ Selector Switches

Electric guitars have dials for controlling the volume and tone; so you might want it quiet and bass-y, or loud and treble-y (Metallica Style). They also have a: “Pick-up selector switch”, so you can select which pick-up you want to use.

Tremolo/ Whammy Bar

Some electric guitars also have a “Tremolo Arm” or “Whammy Bar”, and if you’ve ever played Guitar Hero then you’ll know all about these. A Whammy Bar is basically a lever than you quick push up and down to make your notes/chords “bend” up and down in pitch, creating a “wobbling” note effect. They are also used commonly in guitar solos to make them sound even more awesome.

Bridge

The Bridge is where the strings join on to the body of the guitar. Some types of Guitar have “Intonation Adjustments” to fine-tune the strings.

Tuning Pegs/ Headstock

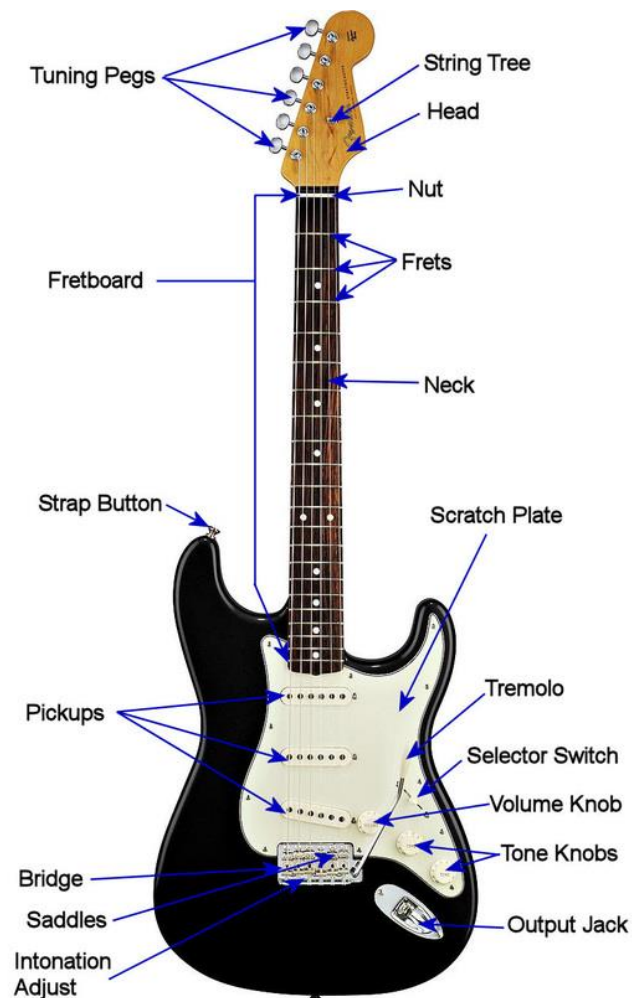
The Tuning Pegs are the Pegs on the Headstock (top/ head) of the Guitar. They are used for primarily tuning the strings, and the strings usually wrap tightly around them at the top.

Nut

The Nut is the bar-thing (I don't know how else to describe it) that the strings pass over between the neck and the headstock of the Guitar. Why it's called a Nut is beyond me but there you go!

Strap Button

A strap button is simply the part of the Guitar where your strap attaches to it. There will be one on the headstock/neck somewhere and one on the body somewhere.



How To Hold The Guitar

Here we will be studying how to properly hold the guitar to maximize learning and lessen the strains of having bad posture. Whether you are sitting or standing, there is really no need to exert stress when holding the guitar... that is if you are doing it right.

There are three ways you can hold the guitar.

1. The casual method:



The casual method is the easiest one where the guitar sits on your right leg comfortably and the guitar is close to your body. Make sure it doesn't slide down and keep your back straight as well. Don't hunch. The casual method is great for a more loosened-up practice session on the guitar.

2. The Classical Method:



This method needs you to use a footstool because you are going to place your left foot on the footstool and let the guitar rest on your left leg. This position gives you more access to the guitar neck as you play advanced riffs or do guitar solos.

3. The Standing Up Method:



To do this, you are going to need a guitar strap to hold the guitar in place. You have to find the most comfortable position as to where the body of the guitar is in line with, either higher or lower. Don't position it too low though because that will make it difficult to access the guitar neck.

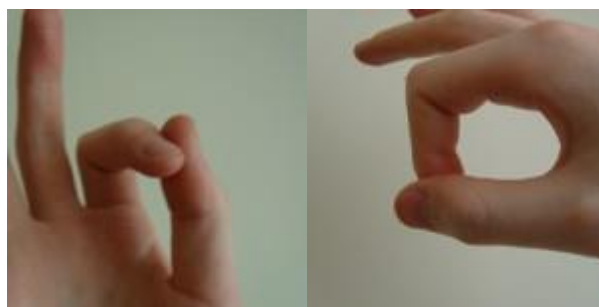
The Guitar Pick

This teeny tiny accessory may be small, yet it plays a very significant role in your guitar playing.

It will help produce a better sound from your guitar, and will lessen the stress on your strumming hand. Though some people prefer just to use their fingers, it is still important to know how to use this, just in case you might need it someday.

To properly hold the pick, you must remember that you shouldn't hold it too firmly so that it can flex easily over the strings as you strum.

You need to hold the pick between the tips of your fingers. Here's how to do it: You need to form your fingers this way...



Then place the pick in between the index fingers and the thumb like this:



The thumb will give the support of the base of the pick while the index fingers to the tip part of the pick. So that's basically how to hold a pick or a plectrum.

How To Tune Your Guitar

Now that you have learned a little bit about the guitar, you are now ready to learn about how to tune it. The best way to do this is with a guitar tuner.

A guitar tuner, in very basic terms, is a device that will help you to tune your guitar quickly and accurately. They come in all shapes and sizes, but they all basically perform the same function, and that is to get your guitar strings back in tune. Different brands of guitar tuners may also vary in their price – some may be more expensive than others, but there is nothing wrong with getting yourself a cheaper one first as long as you are able to use it properly and you have a gauge for telling if your guitar strings are in tune or not.

Guitar tuners are very useful in situations where you can't really tune your guitar by ear. For example, you are playing a gig at a bar, and it's very noisy, tuning your guitar by ear is not really an option now, is it? It would be difficult to get your guitar in tune if you can't even hear it properly in the first place. It's also very useful if you do not have the time to spare to tune a guitar by ear, such as impromptu performances. Because guitar tuners take much less time and effort than tuning by ear, this method is generally preferred in fast-paced situations or in noisy environments.

How does it work?

A guitar tuner will help you get in tune by the reference needle that will point out if your string is either flat, sharp, or in tune. This needle will indicate if the string you are tuning is either too low (meaning it is flat), or it is too high (sharp). Aside from the needle, guitar tuners are equipped with LED display lights – usually in red and green, wherein the green light indicates being in tune, while the red lights will indicate a sharp or flat.

Standard tuning for guitar strings – which means that the strings are set in EADGBE tuning – uses A 440Hz as its standard measure for being in tune. For you to be able to tell if your string is in tune or not, it will have to be pointing to this frequency.

Tuners for acoustic guitars have a built-in microphone, so that it is able to pick up the sound created. The downside with this is that you will have to find a really quiet spot where you can tune your guitar, otherwise, the tuner will pick up other noises in different frequencies, which will make tuning hard for you. For electric and electro-acoustic guitars, on the other hand, there are tuners that have input and output (like the Qwick Tune QT-1), wherein you can simply plug your guitar into, and then plug the amplifier into the output socket. This is very useful when you are tuning during gigs or jam sessions, because when the guitar is plugged into the tuner, it does not pick up any other sound which might tend to mess up the tuning process. Exogenic guitar tuners, such as the Q12E, have the capability of "blocking out" other noise and other unwanted noise signals, which makes tuning in a noisy environment much easier.

Where do I get one?

A guitar tuner is very easy to find. You can always go to your local music shops, and inquire about guitar tuners, and for sure, they will present you with more than one kind available. Otherwise, you can always go to online stores such as www.amazon.com and browse through their available products.

What type of tuner do you recommend that I get?

There are different types of tuners available on the market out there, and it would be best to familiarize ourselves with at least some so that you can get a fair gauge of what would work best for you. Each brand, of course, will

basically offer the same function of tuning your guitar, but there will be slight variations in the other features that may be available.

Some additional features on guitar tuners are the metronome (the Korg TM40 has one), which is something very useful to help you keep your rhythm especially when you are playing alone; the pitch pipes (Qwick Tune QT11 is the brand that offers this) which plays the note you want to tune in a long, continuous tone. When a note is out of tune, there will be conflicting “vibrations” from the pitch pipe and the guitar string, but this disappears once you get your string in tune. Another useful feature that comes with some guitar tuners is the tuning peg winder (Planet Waves has this), which helps you wrap new strings on your guitar much faster than by doing it by hand.

It would be best to get to know some of the things about guitar tuners, first, so that when you go buy one, you will know what to look for.

Analog and Digital Tuners

What’s the difference between an analog and a digital tuner? Analog tuners have needles that respond to the guitar string’s pitch. Digital tuners have the same function, too, except that some guitarists may argue that analog tuners are much more accurate than digital ones because with a digital tuner, there are only a fixed number of positions the needle could point to (because of the whole 10 programming thing going on with computers), unlike with analog tuners, where the needle is basically “free” to point to any range on the screen so even the slightest indication of being out of tune will be detected.

Various designs

Guitar tuners come in the clip-on kind, and the foot-pedal variation. The clip on guitar tuners are clipped onto the guitar, usually at the head stock, and it picks up the vibrations made when you play a string. Foot pedal tuners (just like Korg), just like the name suggests, are larger – they have a larger screen, and it has a stomp button, which will allow you to tune up on stage.



The Snark Sn-1 is a great guitar tuner which be purchased for about \$10 on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/Snark-Sn-1-Guitar-Tuner-Blue)

Usually, Korg is the most recommended brand to get when it comes to guitar tuners. It has many different kinds of tuners available, ranging from the cheap ones (they can go for as low as \$8 on amazon.com) to the more expensive ones (\$90-100). Other reliable brands are Qwick Tune, Behringer, Boss, and Snark. The prices of these all range from the values given. You don’t really need to get yourself a very expensive guitar tuner, as long as it does what it is supposed to do, then you should be all set.

How to tune your guitar using a tuner

Now that you know the basics on guitar tuners, we can now proceed to learning how to tune your guitar using this device. Before we proceed on tuning, however, you must first know the guitar strings and their names. Starting from the top, the thickest string on your guitar, is the sixth string. It is also known as the E string. The one below that, the fifth string, is the A string. The fourth string is D, the third is G, the second is B, and the first string is E. The E of the first string is the high E, while the one on the sixth string is the low E.

Tuning an acoustic guitar

If you are using an acoustic guitar, it is important for you to do your tuning in a quiet place so that the guitar tuner will not pick up other noises that could interfere with the tuning. When you have found your quiet spot, turn on the tuner, and then pick the string you wish to tune, and see where the tuner's needle points, if the note is sharp or flat. Observe also the lights on the tuner as you make adjustments on the string. When the needle points at 0, and when the light is steady at green, then you have your string in tune.

Tuning an electric guitar

For electric guitars, it is more convenient to use the plug-in type of tuners, especially when you are jamming with others. Plug-in tuners, as mentioned earlier, are the type that have input and output, so you can just plug your guitar into it, and plug the amplifier on the output. This way, outside sounds do not interfere with your tuning. Once you have plugged the guitar into the tuner, and you have connected the tuner to the amplifier, you can tune your strings pretty much the same way as with the process for the acoustic guitar.

Tips

With any piece of electronic equipment, it is essential for you to read the manual first in order to familiarize yourself with how the equipment works, how to properly care for it, and other important things to know. The same goes for your guitar tuner. If you are getting one, make sure you don't get too excited that you use it without even bothering to read the manual.

If you are using an acoustic guitar, and your tuner is the type that has a built-in microphone, it is best to go to a quiet spot and tune your guitar there, so that there won't be added noise to add to that of the sound produced by the guitar strings.

Take good care of your guitar tuner – make sure it does not get wet, or exposed to too much heat and moisture, because these things will affect your equipment. As much as possible, too, keep your guitar tuner clean and away from potentially damaging things – soda, food, and other things that might slip your mind in the excitement.