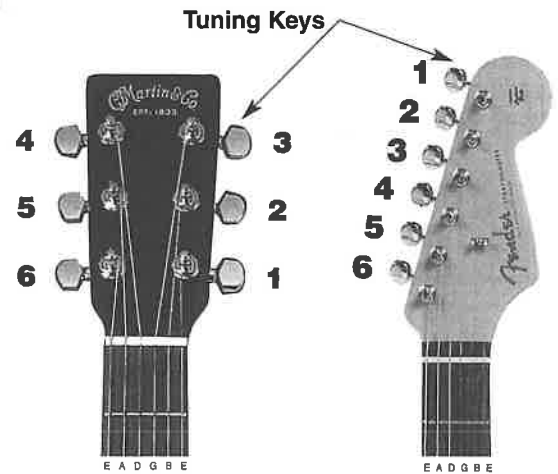


TUNING

When you are tuning your guitar, you will adjust the pitch (highness or lowness of sound) of each string by turning the corresponding tuning key. Tightening a string raises the pitch and loosening it lowers the pitch.

The strings are numbered 1 through 6 beginning with the thinnest string, the one closest to your knee. Follow the instructions below to tune each string in sequence, beginning with the sixth string.



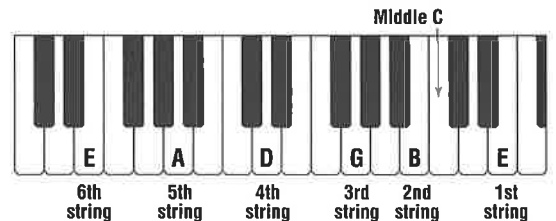
TUNING WITH AN ELECTRONIC TUNER

An electronic tuner "reads" the pitch of a sound and tells you whether or not the pitch is correct. Until your ear is well trained in hearing pitches, this can be a much more accurate way to tune. There are many different types of tuners available, and each one will come with more detailed instructions for its use.



TUNING TO A KEYBOARD

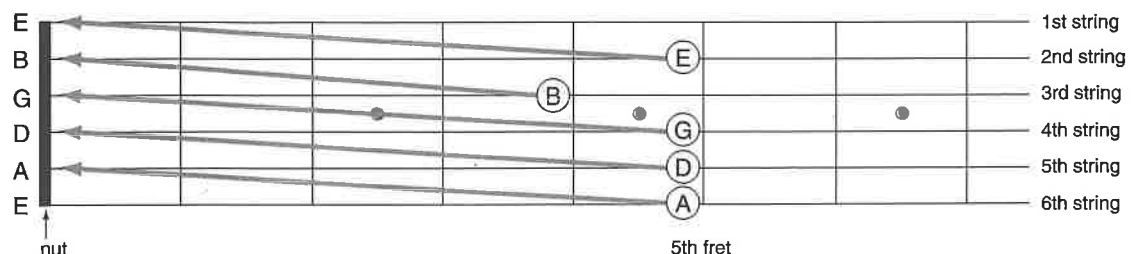
If you have a piano or electric keyboard nearby, play the correct key (see diagram) and slowly turn the corresponding tuning key until the sound of the string matches the sound of the keyboard.



ANOTHER WAY TO TUNE

To check or correct your tuning when no pitch source is available, follow these steps:

- Assume that the sixth string is tuned correctly to E.
- Press the sixth string at the 5th fret. This is the pitch A to which you tune your open fifth string. Play the depressed sixth string and the fifth string with your thumb. When the two sounds match, you are in tune.
- Press the fifth string at the 5th fret and tune the open fourth string to it. Follow the same procedure that you did on the fifth and sixth strings.
- Press the fourth string at the 5th fret and tune the open third string to it.
- To tune the second string, press the third string at the 4th fret and tune the open second string to it.
- Press the second string at the 5th fret and tune the first string to it.



This is called **relative tuning** because the strings are tuned relative to one another.

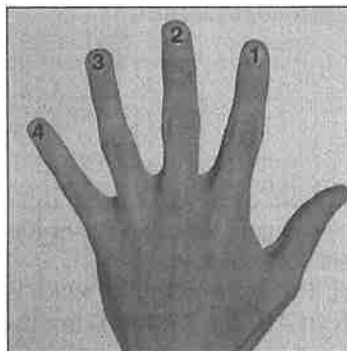
PLAYING POSITION

There are several ways to hold the guitar comfortably. On the left is a typical seated position, and on the right is the standing position. Make sure you practice sitting and standing. Observe the following general guidelines in forming your playing posture:

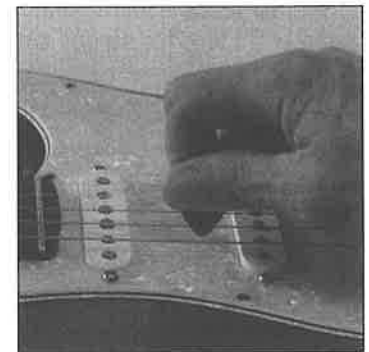
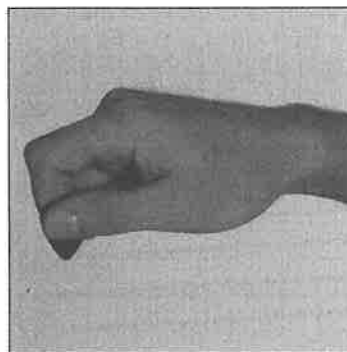
- Position your body, arms, and legs in such a way that you avoid tension.
- If you feel tension creeping into your playing, you probably need to reassess your position.
- Tilt the neck upwards—never down.
- Keep the body of the guitar as vertical as possible. Avoid slanting the top of the guitar so that you can see better. Balance your weight evenly from left to right. Sit straight (but not rigid).



Left-hand fingers are numbered 1 through 4 (Pianists: Note that the thumb is not number 1.) Place the thumb in back of the neck roughly opposite the 2nd finger. Avoid gripping the neck like a baseball bat with the palm touching the back of the neck.



These photos show the position for holding a pick and the right-hand position in relationship to the strings. Strive for finger efficiency and relaxation in your playing.



Replacing a string on a steel string acoustic guitar

- i. If string is not broken, remove all tension by unwinding the corresponding peg
 1. If string is broken, remove each part individually as the tension has already been released
- ii. Remove old string by uncoiling it from the peg
- iii. Remove bridge pin (if there is one) and remove string from the pin hole
- iv. Select corresponding string from set and uncoil
- v. Place loop and the end of the string into the pin hole and replace pin
- vi. Stretch string the length of the guitar and neck making sure that it is aligned with the proper notches in the bridge and nut
- vii. Thread tip of string through the hole in the machine head/tuning peg and begin to tighten string
- viii. The excess string should be bent and clipped with a wire cutter to avoid injury and to assist in tuning

Name _____

Read the paragraph, and then answer the questions. Also, for homework, find the underlined words in a dictionary and write the definitions on the back of this sheet.

If American vernacular music has an archetypal instrument it is certainly the guitar. Though figures like Benjamin Franklin played a guitar-like instrument, and genteel ladies like Andrew Jackson's wife Rachel played a gut-stringed "parlor guitar," the instrument didn't really achieve widespread use in the country until the twentieth century. As early as the 1600s, Spanish settlers had brought to the New World a European style guitar with five sets of double strings. By 1800 the six string instrument known today had evolved in southern Europe and was brought over from places like Italy and France. The instrument was popular enough by 1816 that the first instruction book was published. Most of these guitars were smaller than modern models and were strung with gut strings and plucked with the fingers. Though they were seldom known in the mountains or with the white working class of the South, a study of ex-slave narratives reveals a number of memories of guitar-playing by blacks in pre-Civil War times, almost all of them located in the Mississippi River delta, in what is now Louisiana. There is little documentation as to how these guitars were played, but the location is significant: it would later be the center for the classic delta blues.

1. When did the guitar achieve widespread popularity in America? _____

2. When were the earliest forms of guitars found in the Americas, and who brought them here? _____

3. What did the earliest guitars in America look like?

4. The largest number of guitar-related narratives before the Civil War were located in _____.

5. Why is this significant? _____

http://www.pbs.org/americanrootsmusic/pbs_arm_ii_guitar.html