

Holding and Positioning the guitar

When holding the guitar ensure that you're sitting in an upright position with your shoulders even and relaxed. It is best if the guitar neck is slightly raised. Some players like to use a footstool to raise the leg that the guitar body is sitting on. There are two ways a foot stool can be used. One is to place the guitar on the left (neck side) which is known as the classical position used by classical guitarists and the other is the contemporary position with the guitar on the right (body) leg.



The other alternative is to play standing using a strap to hold the guitar in place. Strap height can vary from player to player. However it is best to ensure that the guitar is not so low that it makes strumming and holding your left (fretting) hand under the neck too difficult. As a general rule a good height is anywhere from your waist to your chest.



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The next position to be aware of is the placement of the left (fretting) hand. Make sure that the wrist is relatively straight and the thumb is pointing upwards either behind the neck or over the top. For certain chords the thumb behind the neck will be required while for other chords it is OK for the thumb to go over the top. Just ensure that the thumb does not point sideways towards the headstock as this will limit the movement of your fingers and lead to bad playing habits causing problems in the long run.

Correct



Correct



Wrong



Holding the pick

The final piece of the puzzle is holding the guitar pick. To do this first make a fist shape with your right (picking) hand. Then relax the fingers in the fist slightly placing the pick on top of the first joint of the forefinger. The thumb is then lowered on top of pick with a firm grip. Apart from learning how to hold the guitar properly there are a few other essentials to go over before we begin playing music on the guitar.

