



Looking After Your Guitar

There are 2 good reasons for looking after your guitar:

To keep it looking good and to maintain it in best possible playing condition. A great deal of care and attention goes into making your guitar and whether you are a gigging musician or bedroom player it makes sense to take care of your investment. (This is written for an electric guitar but most apply to acoustics too)

Here's a few suggestions for caring for your guitar:

1. Clean and/or polish the top, sides and back of your guitar regularly - depending on finish. You can use good quality furniture polish to apply to your guitar, or you can buy any number of guitar polishes. A regular clean and polish regimen will keep your guitar looking good, the beauty of the woods will be enhanced, and its value preserved.
2. At least once a year, get your local guitar tech to check and set up your guitar. The truss rod and bridge need adjusting regularly, along with fret maintenance and electrical checks. These need specialist knowledge and tools to get right
3. Wipe down the neck with a dry cloth after every use to protect your fret board and to prolong string life. Sweat, oils, dirt and grime can accumulate very quickly, and if you wipe the fret board frequently, you can make dressing the frets a much simpler task. You will also prolong string life by removing some of the elements that cause strings to deteriorate
4. Never expose your instrument to excessive heat or cold for prolonged periods of time. Heat and sunlight can cause damage to the finish and age the woods. Cold weather can cause damage to binding, inlays and the neck. Guitars need a cool, dry even environment, so try to keep your guitar in that type of setting.
5. Regularly check and tighten all screws, strap-buttons and tuners. This can prevent rattling and keep all the hardware secure.
6. Dress the frets every time you change strings. A lot of dirt, grime and oils from your hands can build up on the fret board. This isn't good for the strings and affects the sound. Try a soft-bristled toothbrush and a little soapy water, wipe the fret dry, and then apply lemon oil to nourish the fretboard.
7. Protect your guitar from humidity when it's in the case by keeping a sachet of silica gel in the case.
8. Regularly clean pickup covers, bridge, and tuning buttons and other metal parts of your guitar with a good metal cleaning compound. Chrome and nickel corrode and tarnish easily,



9. Buy a stand! The best investment you will ever make. Never leave your guitar propped up against the wall or your amplifier - I've seen too many instruments damaged beyond repair. You'll also play it more often if its ready to be picked and played
10. Don't wear a belt, buttons, zips etc while you're playing. They cause scratches, dings and scrapes to the back of your guitar
11. Lastly and most importantly PLAY your guitar. Playing your guitar every day is the best way to keep your guitar in tip-top shape. A neglected guitar can quickly deteriorate, a cherished guitar can be a lifelong companion.

