

HOLDING THE GUITAR

Playing positions vary somewhat with the type of guitar, style of music performed, and the right-hand technique being used. There are, however, some basic similarities that are important to observe if you are to develop a good left- and right-hand technique. Study each of the following descriptions.

Sitting Position

Place the waist of the guitar on the right thigh. Tilt the guitar slightly toward you. Keep the neck of the guitar at a 15 degree angle to the floor. Rest the forearm on the edge of the guitar at a point just above the bridge base. Bring the left hand up to the neck of the guitar. The wrist should be kept straight except when playing chords. When you play chords, arch the wrist slightly toward the floor. Never rest the left forearm on your knee or leg, fig. 1.



fig. 1 *Sitting position*

Classical Position

A footstool, fig. 2, is used in the classical position to elevate the left knee to a point where it is higher than the hip. Sit forward in your chair and keep the spine straight. Slumping requires more energy than sitting straight. Pull the right leg back under the chair and balance yourself on the ball of your foot. Place the guitar on the left thigh. The guitar will also touch the inside right thigh, the chest, and the right forearm, fig. 3 and 4.



fig. 2 *Footstool*

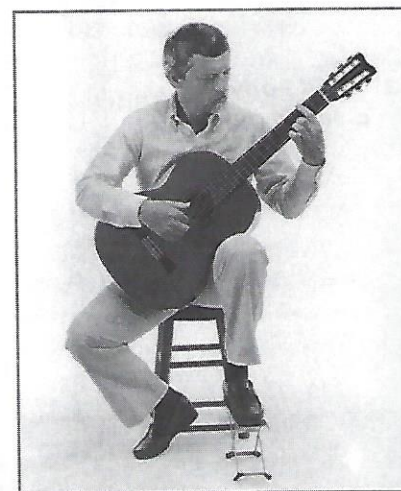


fig. 3 *Classical position*

Standing Position

A strap is used to hold the guitar when you are standing. Some guitarists even prefer to use a strap when they are sitting. Acoustic guitar straps are generally attached to a pin on the end of the guitar and the head of the guitar just above the nut, fig. 5. Electric guitars usually have a strap button mounted on the body of the guitar plus the end pin, fig. 6.

