

Tuning and Changing Strings

By Bill Swick

Tuning

Probably the most asked questions by guitar teachers currently is how to teach students how to tune a guitar. If this were a “normal” year, my recommendation is to NEVER teach tuning at the beginning of the year. In my classroom, beginners are not to ever touch the tuning pegs. This saves a lot of time and repair of broken strings. When beginners start turning the tuning pegs, strings are bound to break.

Under the circumstances where students are at home and the teacher cannot tune the guitars, it may be necessary to spend time teaching tuning. The absolutely easiest way is to learn to tune with an electronic tuner. When electronic tuners first came out, they were priced around \$50 each. Today, every phone has a free app with a guitar tuner. So which ones are the best?

Here are two that come highly recommended by a number of teachers. The first one is GuitarTuna. This is highly rated free app. Another free app is ProGuitar. It is not as popular as GuitarTuna, but it is also highly rated. Both of these tuners may be found in the app store on most any phone.

If working on a Chromebook, laptop or desktop, here is a link to another tuner designed for using on a computer. [Click here](#)

Here is a YouTube video that you may share with your students on how to tune a guitar using an electronic tuner. [Click here](#)

Changing Strings

The question is when do you teach students how to change or replace strings? My answer is NEVER, or right after I teach them how to tune a guitar. Once students start tuning the guitar, the next immediate skill needed is how to replace strings.

There are numerous YouTube videos available on how to change strings. The first video is replacing nylon strings. This video by Cordoba is the shortest I could find and perhaps the best. Here is the link. [Click here](#)

Replacing strings on an acoustic, steel-string guitar is a little different. Here is a video that last less than three minutes demonstrating how to change a single string. [Click here](#)

For a few more details, here is a video produced by D'Addario changing a full set of steel strings. This video is less than five minutes. [Click here](#)