

Class Guitar Procedures

Students will learn how to properly take care of the guitar including:

1. First day procedures.
2. How to carry the guitar
3. What to do with the guitar when the teacher is talking.
4. Where to put the guitar when it is not being played.

Guitar Handling Procedures

On the very first day, students will obviously be excited to get the guitars and start rocking - and they should, but there are some things you should let them know first.

Go over the parts of the guitar, the major landmarks are: the bridge, the nut, and the frets. If you're facing the students when you move your hand to the left it's different than their left. Be sure to say: "move to towards the bridge" or "to the 2nd fret". Get them used to using the guitars landmarks.

Be sure to remind them not to touch the tuners. They can touch any other part of the guitar except the tuners. Let them know they can make the guitar sound bad or break a string if they don't know what they are doing. You might choose to tell students that if you see them touching the tuners, they must put their guitar up for the day. When students decide to "tune" the guitars before they know how, at the worst you'll be tuning a class set of guitars every day, or at worst, you'll have a lot of broken strings. Ask the class if they have guitars at home, then ask who has ever broken a string when turning the tuners, (either themselves, or a cousin, friend, little brother, etc.) Chances are at least a quarter will have had a broken string.

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Getting Guitars Back to Students Seats

Guitars are fun to play, but sometimes students forget they're musical instruments and not toys. If you've got multiple classes, you certainly don't want damaged guitars that are rendered unplayable. The biggest potential for damage is when guitars are traveling from their storage space to the students seat.

When carrying the guitar have students place 2 hands on the neck. close to the body and carry the guitar right in front of them. That way if they don't bump into anything the guitar wont bump into anything. If students are walking around with the guitar in playing position, there is potential for the neck to hit something, and break.

If you have your class divided into rows, let the class go row by row, remind students to walk down the rows, not push in between chairs. Sometimes students will try to take the shortest path between two points.

What Do You Do When You're Not Playing the Guitars?

There are times when you must talk to the students and you need their attention. Have them put their guitars "to sleep". Simply place the guitar face down on their lap. Watch for little hands going underneath to try and play with the strings.

Where do you put the guitar when you're not playing it? Let's say a student needs to put a guitar down but it's not practical to go back and put it away. Have them lay it on the floor, not lean it against a chair or a wall. Don't have them put it on a chair either. The potential for damage is much greater if the guitar falls. You'll probably have a guitar fall off a chair or whatever it's leaning on, before it gets stepped on.

Additional Tips:

Minimize the time students sit without playing. Let's face it, most teachers have limited time and you have to use every second. Have a warmup video or song they can play along with while they are getting their guitars and coming back to their seat.

Encourage the students to always have one hand on their guitar at all times, this

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helps prevent falls, try not to let them balance their guitar on their lap or knees without a hand on it.

If you're using a strap, be especially sure to keep a hand on the guitar, sometimes straps slip off.

Don't let students pick up a guitar by the strap! That increases the potential the strap will slip off the strap button, and if they're holding only the strap and not the guitar... You get the picture.

If students drop their picks in the guitar, tell them to play with their fingers. You'll spend all your time getting picks out of the guitar otherwise - you can get them out after class.

Don't let student turn the guitar upside down and shake it to get a pick out, chances are they could bump it against a chair, another student or something else.

If the student are sitting close together in rows, then the guitar neck of one student may get in the way of another student. Have the students turn their body so that their knees are facing to the right. That way the guitar neck will point somewhat out in front.