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The Beauty of Guitar: What You Need to Know to Start Playing this Instrument Today

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The guitar is a truly wonderful instrument to learn how to play. A classic acoustic guitar, after all, sounds fantastic and doesn't need any electronic elements to play. You can then bring it with you on your trips or just play around with it in your living room without any additional setup. Of course, if you want to move on to something heavier and more powerful, you're always free to swap over to an electric guitar once you have the practice and the setup.

That's for the future, however. For now, you'll want to use this guide to help you start playing and performing with a classic acoustic guitar:

Understanding the Instrument's Essential Parts

Take a look at your **acoustic guitar** and become familiar with the different parts. This will help you understand how to play and how to read tab music sheets later on.

- **Body:** The body of the guitar is the hollow belly, which is what really produces the sound you hear.
- **Neck:** The neck is where you will find the frets (the bars that are split up along the neck) and the strings.
- **Headstock:** The head of the guitar. Here, you'll find the tuning pegs. You will need to tune your guitar here to keep in the right octave and to make sure each string sounds correct.
- **Strings:** These vary in weight and produce different sounds when strummed open or closed.
- **Frets:** The frets determine the octave of the note. Holding down a fret when strumming or playing a string changes its sound.

How to Tune Your Guitar

You will **tune your guitar** by turning the pegs on the headstock. As a beginner, you will want to use a tuner, but as you get more familiar with how notes are supposed to sound, you can then start tuning your guitar by ear.

How to Hold Your Guitar

The good news is the guitar is very relaxed when it comes to your posture. You can play it standing, sitting, or even laying down so long as you have full control over the body and neck.

Tips for Playing

Now it's time to start playing. You can do this on your own by watching videos, or you can hire a guitar tutor to help you on a one-to-one basis. Either way, these tips will help you in the beginning:

- **Start Slow:** It takes time to build up the strength in your fingers and the callouses needed to hold down the strings firmly.
- **Start Easy:** Learn the easiest songs so you can start putting technical theory to the test.
- **Practice, Practice, Practice:** Every instrument needs practice to learn. Eventually, you'll be able to learn how to play by ear and picking up new music or jamming along will be a breeze.

Tips for Learning Songs

Once you know how to play different notes and have worked up some natural callouses on your fingers, it's now time to start learning actual songs. The good news is that you can start playing your favorite songs by looking at **guitar notes** rather than full sheet music. This is commonly called tabs, which is short for tablature.

With tabs, you basically just look at where you put your fingers for the chord. You'll then use your knowledge of the song to match the tempo and rhythm. To read tabs, you'll need to know:

- **The Lines:** In tabs, horizontal lines in differing thickness denote which string you play.
- **The Numbers:** Each number corresponds to a different fret, with 0 being open.

In short, tabs help you easily learn how to play popular songs, which can help you stay motivated and loving the craft.

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