IELTS COURSE

Matching Sentences Questions Strategy Practice

Guitar Storage And Maintenance

Properly maintaining a valuable guitar keeps it valuable. Guitars can take a lot of abuse, especially if you play live shows and tour, and even if it pretty much "sounds the same", lack of maintenance may suddenly render the instrument unplayable. You don't need to carefully examine a guitar every day, but occasional check-ups keep it sounding good and ready to play.

The easiest way to take care of your guitar is to store it properly. The more expensive the guitar, the better your storage should be. It is generally accepted that the air humidity should be neither too high nor too low, thus somewhere in the 45-55% range, and the temperature of the area should be about 65-75 °F (18-24 °C). These two factors are the biggest threat to an instrument, because changes in moisture and temperature can cause permanent warping of the neck and other critical parts. For guitars made out of solid wood, it is advisable to use a humidifier to prevent cracks and damage from weather change. On the other hand, guitars made out of multi-layered (plywood) wood, typically in budget guitars, can withstand relatively more humidity and temperature changes. Keeping the guitar in a case away from direct sunlight can help with increasing the life of the guitar.

The surest way to keep your guitar in good shape is to remember this simple rule: Do not expose the guitar to any climate condition that you would not want to be exposed to. If you keep this in mind, your instrument will likely last years and years.

Avoid large or rapid changes in humidity. Like your body, the guitar gets used to the climate it is in, and suddenly changing it causes stress. Humidity is the most dangerous thing that attacks an instrument, because when wood gets wet, the cell walls become softer and it is more easily bent. Often, the strings themselves are enough to bend the neck. Also, if the humidity stays very low, then the wood will crack and the structure will weaken.

Temperature on its own is less damaging to the guitar. Wood is generally tolerant to changes in temperature, and for the most part it expands and contracts together. Extreme temperatures or rapid temperature changes, however, can cause serious damage, especially when combined with extreme humidity. Changes in temperature also affect strings, especially

LIVEWORKSHEETS

nylon strings. A significant change in temperature typically detunes the strings. Other areas to watch for temperature-related damage are any glued joins, like where the neck meets the body, or the fretboard attaches to the neck.

Never expose your instrument to extreme temperatures for a long time. For instance, leaving your guitar in a car in the summer all day, or leaving it outside overnight are sure ways to completely destroy your instrument. Also keep the guitar out of direct sunlight as much as possible, because it makes the wood more brittle and can change the color of the instrument.

Keeping your instrument strung and in tune is another good way to make sure that you don't harm your instrument. Strings put tension on the neck. Excessive tension may make the neck bow if the guitar isn't kept in tune.

In terms of maintenance, it is important to consider that the body often takes the most abuse, simply because it is the biggest target. To help keep a fine instrument in good condition, wipe it down with a soft cloth after playing. Don't use water-based furniture sprays. You can buy specially treated cloths and sprays for guitars at almost any music store. Dirt, sweat, and often small nicks and scrapes can just be cleaned up with a cloth and a little bit of warm water. Murphy's Oil Soap can be used to clean the whole guitar. Wipe the strings with a clean cloth. Some guitarists advocate wiping the strings with warm water, but be sure to protect the fingerboard from moisture. Consider wiping your guitar strings off every time you play because oils and dirt left on your strings make them asymmetrical—as opposed to evenly cylindrical vibrating bodies. They may even wear out a bit faster. A soft, natural fiber or microfiber cloth works the best and is safest for the finish. Clean the frets as you do the rest of the guitar. If necessary, carefully use 0.001 steel wool to get grime off the fingerboard next to the frets. You can also gently go over the frets to take off any minor nicks.

If you have a stained or lacquered body, you can treat it with a little bit of furniture polish. However, if you have a guitar with an untreated body, be extremely careful with polish. For these types, it is better to find some sort of cleaning oil or wax, since they help prevent hair-line cracks from developing. After cleaning, the body must be absolutely dry, because if the wood gets over-moistened, the tone of the guitar will begin to degrade.

Questions 1-10
*Complete each sentence with the correct ending **A-O** from the box below.*
***NB** not all letters will be used.*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. One advantage of the correct maintenance of a guitar is that

2. Even though the sound a guitar makes may not deteriorate,

3. The most serious dangers to a guitar are

4. If the material the guitar is made out of is a multi-layered wood,

5. The reason that humidity poses such a risk to guitars is that

6. One typical effect that arises from exposing a guitar to a large temperature variation is that

7. A guitar can become discolored by

8. If a guitar is not regularly tuned,

9. If the strings of the instrument are cleaned using water,

10. Neglecting to thoroughly clean the strings of a guitar after each time it is played can lead to

A. being left in direct sunlight.

B. cracks and climate change.

C. humidity and temperature.

D. it can be abused more often.

E. its neck can become damaged.

F. not maintaining the instrument can mean that it will be impossible to play it.

G. spraying it with Murphy's Oil Soap.

H. the guitar doesn't lose its value.

I. the body will vibrate rapidly.

J. the fingerboard should be protected from getting wet.

K. the strings of the instrument become detuned.

L. them becoming asymmetrical.

M. then it is likely to be an expensive instrument.

N. then the instrument will suffer less from changes in humidity and temperature than one made of solid wood.

O. wet wood bends easily.

IELTS COURSE

LIVEWORKSHEETS