

Personal Luthier Setup Guide

About: This guide outlines guitar setup procedures, presents suggested tolerances, and records key measurements, which demonstrate post-setup improvements to playability and musicality.

Contact: For additional support or guitar-specific guidance, contact Personal Luthier at PersonalLuthier.com. Please note the disclaimer at the bottom of this guide.

Step 1: Tune the guitar and record baseline measurements. Use the guitar's intended tuning (i.e.: standard, drop-d, open G, etc.) and record starting values for setup measurements in the table below.

Instrument:		Date:	
Measurement	Start	With New Strings	Final
Relief			
Nut Action			
String Action (12 th fret)			
Intonation			
Pickup Height			
Tremolo Position (above top)			

Step 2: Remove strings. For tremolo or movable bridges, preserve or mark original position.

Step 3: Clean and polish the guitar using an appropriate product for the guitar's finish. Buff frets with 0000 steel wool, and oil bare fretboards (i.e.: rosewood, etc.) or polish finished fretboards.

Step 4: Tighten/service hardware and note any damage. Repair anything that prohibits a setup.

Step 5: Restring the guitar. Ensure strings have three wraps around standard tuning machine posts; locking tuners do not require windings, though a wrap may help. Record the setup measurements above.

Step 6: Adjust the following parameters, where applicable, according to tuning, string gauge, and playing style. Tune and check setup measurements after each major adjustment.

Tremolo Bridge: set rear edge $\frac{2}{32}$ " above top, or yielding $\frac{1}{2}$ step of upward pitch bending.

Relief: between top of 7th fret and bottom of outer strings, straighten neck, 0.007 " is common.

Nut Action: between 1st fret and string when 3rd fret is depressed, 0.003 "– 0.005 " treble to bass.

String Action: between top of 12th fret and bottom of each string, $\frac{2}{32}$ "– $\frac{5}{64}$ " treble to bass.

Intonation: measured at 12th fret (the octave), checked at 5th and 7th. Where possible, adjust intonation by moving saddle(s) away from the neck for sharp octaves and toward it for flat ones.

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Pickup Height: measured from top of pole pieces to bottom of string when fretted at last fret, 2/32"–5/64" is common, treble side of bridge pickup may be raised 1/64" above the rest.

Step 8: Play every note on each string to confirm playability, musicality, and absence of buzzes and other noises. Record final measurements, clean/polish any fingerprints or other marks from guitar.

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