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## Comparing 6 String And 12 String Guitars

By Gray Rollins

6-string or 12-string Acoustic guitar, which should you get? Both have pros and cons, and both are excellent instruments, depending on what you're looking to accomplish on guitar and how much you are willing to spend. In this article, we'll go over both guitars, which will hopefully help you make an educated decision on which to purchase.

The Main Difference Between Both Guitars:

The major difference, of course, is the number of strings. On a 6-string Acoustic guitar in standard tuning, there is one low e, one a, one d, one g, one b and one high e string, in that order. A 12-string acoustic has two low e, two a, two d, two g, two b, and two high e strings, all in that order. 12-string guitars have the ability to be tuned in two different tunings, while 6-string guitars don't. On the other hand, 12-string guitars also have a lot more tension on their necks, and as a result, their necks tend to warp after only a few years of playing.

Which should I pick?

That's a good question, and it depends on a few different things, all of which are discussed here:

The Advantages of a 6-String

To start with, 6-string guitars are much easier to learn than 12-strings are. This is because of the number of strings and how close together they are on the 12-string. It is nearly impossible to perform certain guitar techniques (like bends) on the 12-string guitar, and significantly harder to tune the guitar and change strings. Also, string picking is complicated by the number of strings. Thus, 6-string guitars are really ideal for those looking to play lead Acoustic guitar, that is, those who want to play a lot of individual notes (not just chords) and use guitar techniques like bends/slides/hammer-ons/pull-offs etc. Beginners will also have an easier time learning to play guitar on a 6-string than on a 12-string, for the reasons mentioned above.

The Advantages of a 12-string

Despite what was said in the last paragraph, there are quite a few advantages to 12-string guitars.

12-string guitars produce a very rich, bright sound. This is because they have twice the number of strings as a 6-string does. Chords strummed on a 12-string guitar will sound a lot richer (better) than those strummed on a 6-string. Additionally, the 12-string guitar gives you the option of using two different tunings. You can't do that on the 6-string. Beginners can learn to play 12-string guitars, but it will take a bit more practice to master than the 6-string. However, if you can master a 12-string, a 6-string guitar will be very easy to play.

What to keep in mind

Most musicians who use 12-string guitars use the 6-string guitar as their primary instrument. They usually pull out the 12-string when a song calls for a big, bright rhythm sound. So, if the songs you want to play feature mainly chords (and the songs call for a very rich sound) then a 12-string would be a good purchase, even if you are a beginner. The learning curve on a 12-string would obviously be steeper, but it would still be doable and worth it. If, however, you are looking to play songs with chords and individual notes, or simply want an instrument that isn't as complex and difficult to learn, a 6-string guitar is your best bet. You might also want to consider cost. Good 12-string guitars are usually \$100-\$200 more than good 6-string guitars. If you're on a budget, you'll probably want to pick the 6-string guitar.

Gray Rollins is a featured writer for Guitars Land.  To learn more about 6 and 12 string guitars, visit <http://www.guitarsland.com/12stringvs6string/>.  To learn about how to choose a guitar, visit <http://www.guitarsland.com/howtobuyacoustic/>

## Easy Ways to Tune Your Guitar

By Paul Gian

The easiest way to tune your guitar is by relative tuning. Relative tuning is comparing the sound and pitch of adjacent strings. The string with the higher pitch is tuned to match the sound of the lower string. In this method, there is the assumption that the lower string is tuned properly. If you use this method, you will have to tune the sixth string with a tuning fork or piano. More details on this will be provided later.

The process starts with the tuning of the sixth string. When the sixth string has been tuned, you need to press the sixth string at the fifth fret and pick the string. Next, tune the fifth string so that it matches that sound. The sound of the fifth string should match the sixth string's fifth fret. If you find that the sound does not match, turn the tuning peg for that fifth string and change the pitch. Don't do anything to the sixth string.

If the sound of the string is too low, tighten the string. If the sound of the string is too high, loosen the string. Be sure that the fifth string is tuned in comparison to the sixth string because the fifth string has to be properly tuned in order to tune the fourth string. After that, the fourth string needs to be in tune in order to tune the third string and it continues from there. If there is a tuning mistake on any of the strings, the sound of the whole instrument will be thrown off. If you have a piano at your disposal and you are familiar with the notes, you can tune your instrument by matching the sound of the strings with the matching notes on the piano.

To begin, find the E note of the piano and then play the sixth string or E note on your guitar. Turn the tuning peg so that the sixth string on your guitar sounds like the E on the keyboard. Do this with all the strings on the guitar.

An electronic keyboard can help tune your guitar as well. Keyboards give you clear, precise, and loud pitch that makes it easy to tune your instrument. This method of tuning is a great choice for beginning guitarists who have access to a keyboard or for guitar players who will be working with someone who plays the keyboard.

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