

Left-hand Default Position

Several general guidelines exist for developing left-hand technique. Though many, many other guidelines and opinions exist, these can serve a starting point for discussion by the student and instructor.

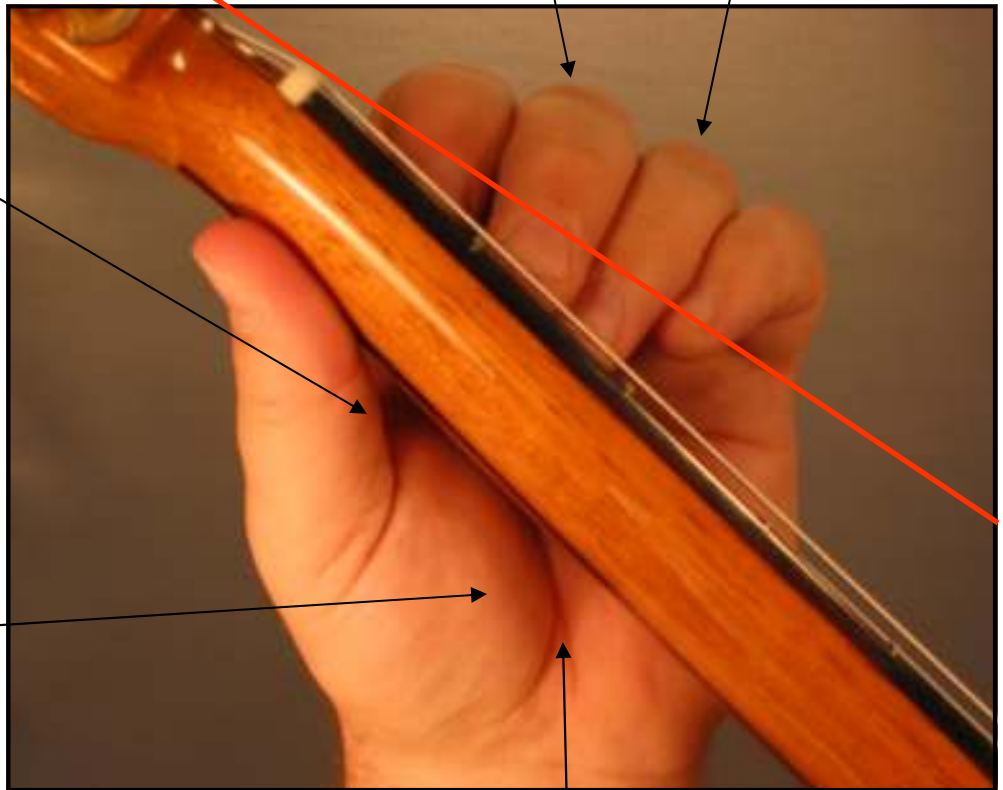
For the early lessons, keep the palm of the left-hand parallel to the guitar neck. This neutral "un-rotated" position is the default position for the left hand. While rotating away from the default position for some notes is common, return to the default parallel presentation once the need for an adjustment has passed. The knuckle of the little finger can be slightly elevated from the plane of the finger-board.

Keep your fingers curled, especially the tip joints.

It is best to place the finger just behind (to the left) of the fret wire.

Place your thumb in the center of the guitar neck behind the first finger. The thumb should not flex. Do not press too hard; it adds unnecessary stress and can cause the guitar to play out of tune. Use just enough thumb pressure to "counterpoise" the fingers.

Let the weight of the entire arm assist you in keeping the left hand secure after placing your fingers on the finger-board.



Keep the left wrist in line with the forearm. Side-to-side "adduction" of the wrist should be omitted. Some wrist arch is needed to play the lower strings, but should be kept to a comfortable minimum.