

## How to Hold the Tenor Banjo

Hold the instrument on the right thigh, allowing the upper edge of the rim to rest lightly against the body. The right forearm should rest on the top edge of the rim about three inches above the tail piece. This helps to hold the instrument in the proper position and at the same time permits the right hand and wrist to be free when using the pick (known as the plectrum) on the strings with any or all of the various strokes which are explained in this book.

The left hand supports the neck of the banjo between the first joint of the thumb and the forefinger. Press the thumb slightly against the fingerboard, always keeping the hand relaxed. Hard pressure of the fingers against the strings will have a tendency to retard the free movement of the fingers on the fingerboard. Never allow the neck of the instrument to sink into the hollow of the hand; instead, curve the fingers over the fingerboard to allow their tips only to touch the strings.

The pick is held between the thumb and first finger of the right hand; the pick resting on the ball of the thumb and grasped with just enough pressure to make the hold firm. When the pick strikes the strings, allow the pick sufficient freedom of the fingers rather than to clasp it tightly with the expectation that it will bend.

It is advisable to use a soft pick, particularly so when the player is a beginner. As the student makes progress in his knowledge of the banjo and can play with ease, a stiffer pick will be found advantageous.

As the right wrist plays a very important part in the rendition of banjo music, it is highly essential that the beginner or even the experienced player should pay particular attention to cultivating its proper use. Arch the wrist about two inches above the strings which will permit the pick to be held in an easy and comfortable manner. This will do much in avoiding the clicking and scratchy sound which often results from an improper position of the wrist.

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