



WARM UP ROUTINES

OF THE WORLD'S
BEST GUITARISTS



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THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR DAY!

There's nothing better than a new day; a clean slate with endless possibilities! You're super motivated to pick up your guitar and dive right into your practice. All that stands in the way is that boring warm up routine...

While for most of us warming up can seem like a necessary chore, those initial moments you spend with the guitar in your hands are arguably the most important part of your day. It is in your warm up session when you set the tone for the rest of your practice session and the entire day. As guitarists ourselves, we were curious how the greatest guitarists in the world approach this crucial moment in the day. What follows are the responses from some of our favorite guitarists including Pepe Romero, Eliot Fisk, Thomas Viloteau, and more!



CHRIS GARWOOD

Co-founder | [tonebase](#)



PEPE ROMERO

Member of "The Royal Family of Guitar"

BEGIN YOUR ROUTINE AWAY FROM THE GUITAR

If anyone knows how to prepare their body for a successful day of practice as well as a long life of playing the guitar, it's Maestro Pepe! He likes to begin his warm up routine by waking up the body away from the guitar, starting with the shoulders and neck and work his way down to the hands.

Try starting your routine with a few sets of light shrugs and arm circles to make sure the entire guitar playing mechanism is loose and ready. Afterwards, do a few sets of finger "bicycles." This is done by holding onto all but one or two fingers, and drawing slow circles with the fingers. Do this in both hands.

[SEE PEPE'S "BICYCLE" EXERCISE IN ACTION! >](#)



TARIQ HARB

'Barrios WorldWideWeb' Competition Winner

ENGAGE YOUR BRAIN!

Of course, one aspect of warming up is making sure the muscles in your hands are flexible and literally "warm." However, another equally important muscle to prepare for practice is the brain! Warming up from a neurological perspective and not just mindlessly running through exercises prepares your brain for a full day of working on your repertoire.

Instead of allowing muscle memory to take over the next time you're practicing your scales, actively think about each note you are playing. Try even looking for a new, innovative way of playing the exercises you've been doing the same way for years!

[LEARN TARIQ'S "4 PILLARS OF WARMING UP" >](#)



TENGYUE (TY) ZHANG

2017 GFA Competition Winner

THE BEST EXERCISES ARE OFTEN SIMPLE

TY is well-known for the incredible virtuosity that helped him win the prestigious GFA Competition in 2017. However, every morning when he first picks up the guitar, he starts from the beginning with a piece he has been playing since he was 7 years old...
Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.

By starting with such a simple piece, TY is able to immediately establish control of every single movement. Having a consistent starting point also puts him in the right head space from the very first note he plays. What was the first piece you learned and how can you create simple exercises out of it?

[SEE HOW TY USES 'TWINKLE' TO PRACTICE VIBRATO >](#)



THOMAS VILOTEAU

2006 GFA Competition Winner

GET CREATIVE WITH YOUR EXERCISES

One of Thomas's favorite warm up exercises is rasgueados. But not only in the right hand... in the left as well! If you've never tried this, it's extremely effective for developing finger independence and extensor muscle strength. It's also something you will never find in a technique book!

Try looking at your current list of exercises and see how you can spice them up to keep your warm up sessions interesting and effective.

[WATCH THOMAS'S FULL LESSON ON "WARMING UP" >](#)



ELIOT FISK

"The Last Direct Pupil of Andres Segovia"

USE YOUR REPERTOIRE FOR INSPIRATION

Another effective way of coming up with new exercises to add to your warm up routine is looking to your repertoire for inspiration.

We all have passages that we've been working on for weeks or even months at a time. Identify the exact element of the passage that is giving you trouble and create an exercise out of it that you can add to your warm up routine. In addition to spicing up your usual routine, this allows you to dedicate more time to warming up because it doubles as time spent working on your repertoire!

[ELIOT CREATES AN EXERCISE FROM HIS OWN REPERTOIRE >](#)