

## Buying New Strings for Your Guitar 3/17

Here are some FAQ's concerning what you need to think about in terms of paying for new strings:

### **1. How often should we change strings?**

Strings need to be changed an absolute minimum twice a year. Professional performers change them WAY more frequently. It is a good idea to think of changing strings at least at the beginning of each of the Fall and Winter/Spring sessions.

### **2. Should we buy them locally, or order just bass strings online?**

There is nothing wrong with buying strings locally, but treble strings last for a long time, and you can get away with changing your strings more often by just changing the bass strings. As far as I know, you cannot just buy bass sets locally. At the website Strings By Mail (see links below), you can buy several sets at a time.

For a price comparison, the strings I use are the D'Addario Normal Tension strings. Locally they cost, with tax, right at \$8. At this site you can order two sets (the minimum requirement for the year!) for \$4.99 each. This order adds up as

Two sets of basses =	\$9.98
Shipping =	\$3.99
Total =	\$13.97 as opposed to \$16 getting them locally.

Of course it is more cost effective if you order more sets, maybe by going in with someone else. You will need to set up an account, but that is easily done. The advantages of ordering these by mail are its a little cheaper, it avoids a trip to the store where they may not be in stock, and you don't have to deal with extra treble strings that you don't really need.

### **3. So what strings should I buy?**

For buying strings online I suggest Strings By Mail:

<http://www.stringsbymail.com/store/classical-guitar-strings-1/?zenid=g2oouv4ldr20ul83a49lij6k1>

This link will bring you to their page with all of their available strings.

If you'd like to experiment, the Hannabach and Labella Fractional Sized strings at this website come highly recommended, but only come in full sets. I suggest the following brands which offer bass sets. The size of your guitar, brand and the direct link to order is given below (be sure to select the bass set, not the full set):

a. For full sized guitars, I suggest the D'Addario Normal Tension strings.

<http://www.stringsbymail.com/store/classical-guitar-strings-1/daddario-strings-41/pro-arte-103/ej45-normal-148/>

b. For 3/4 and 1/2 sized guitars, I suggest the D'Addario Hard Tension strings  
<http://www.stringsbymail.com/store/classical-guitar-strings-1/daddario-strings-41/pro-arte-103/ej46-hard-151/>

c. For 1/4 sized guitars, I suggest Savarez Corum 500 High Tension  
<http://www.stringsbymail.com/store/classical-guitar-strings-1/savarez-strings-62/500-corum-series-143/500aj-high-279/>

#### **4. How do I change the strings?**

I have a diagram in the parent resources that explains how to do this. I am also very willing to change the strings for you, one at a time, one string per week, so that you can see the process several times. It takes several days for the strings to stretch out, and during that time you are constantly retuning the new string - another reason to do one new string per week, rather than all at once, unless you are good at tuning!

#### **5. Additional information for teachers:**

String sets with a "wound G" rather than a solid monofilament G are preferred by many teachers for the very smallest guitars. Here are several options to experiment with:

##### 1. Hannabach Kinder Guitar Saite.

[https://www.stringsbymail.com/search/results.html?inc\\_subcat=1&search\\_in\\_description=1&categories\\_id=&keyword=Hannabach+Kinder+&x=0&y=0](https://www.stringsbymail.com/search/results.html?inc_subcat=1&search_in_description=1&categories_id=&keyword=Hannabach+Kinder+&x=0&y=0)

##### 2. LaBella fractional size strings:

[https://www.stringsbymail.com/search/results.html?inc\\_subcat=1&search\\_in\\_description=1&categories\\_id=&keyword=LaBella+fractional+size+strings&x=0&y=0](https://www.stringsbymail.com/search/results.html?inc_subcat=1&search_in_description=1&categories_id=&keyword=LaBella+fractional+size+strings&x=0&y=0)

One creative solution for the very smallest guitars (and the various kinds of guitar-ukuleles) which sometime play out of tune with standard guitar strings is to buy a set of low-tension strings, put the B on as a first string, and tune it to E; G becomes B, D becomes G, etc. An additional E string can be used for the 6th string.