

Equipment

Here is a list of equipment you need for this class, as well as some recommendations.

You will need:

Acoustic Steel String Guitar

Guitar Pick – No flex, usually thicker than 1mm

Capo – Any will do, but capos with adjustable tension are preferred

Tuner – Any tuner is fine.

Recommendations

Guitar Picks: Any style plastic pick thicker than 1mm will work. There are many picks made of various materials that may be thinner but might still work. Really, you want a pick that has no flex. I use [Wegen Picks](#), which are expensive (around \$7.50) but I like their shape and their consistency. There are also many boutique picks such as [Red Bear Picks](#) and [BlueChip Picks](#) that are quite expensive (BlueChips are \$35+ each). I have never liked metal picks or wooden picks, and my guess is that you will not be happy with their tone either, but they do exist.

Lester Flatt, Carter Stanley, Maybelle Carter, and others used a thumb-pick or thumb-pick/finger-pick combination to play bluegrass rhythm guitar, so there is some precedent for that. When choosing a thumb pick, find one with a comfortable loop that fits over your thumb snugly, but does not pinch. Again, you want a pick without flex. Most players who use this technique use metal finger picks.

Capos: Any style capo is fine, but capos with adjustable tension are better. Clamp capos that use springs to keep tension tend to pull a guitar out of tune more than other capos, and they can also leave indentations in the neck of a guitar over time. There are many capos that feature adjustable tension such as [Shubb capos](#), [Planet Waves NS](#) and [Paige Capos](#). Shubb capos are a clamp style capo that is quick to change, but it has a tension screw that allows control over the pressure applied to the strings. Planet Waves capos are lightweight and feature variable tension, but they are a bit slower to change. Paige style capos grip the whole neck and apply pressure to the strings the most evenly, but they are the slowest to change. You can also leave them on some guitars and just slide them out of the way above the nut of the guitar.

Tuners: Any tuner will do. Most smartphones have wonderful microphones installed these days. Consequently, many phone app tuners work well. However, using a phone on stage or in a jam can be awkward. There are many clip-on tuners that just attach to the peghead of your instrument. However, many tuners rattle when you play, and they can leave indentations and scratches on the peghead of your guitar, so you might not want to leave it clipped on your instrument. It depends on the tuner. There are many expensive options that have various features, such as no rattle, lightweight, strobe tuning, etc. I use my phone (specifically the Cleartune app), or a clip-on [Snark tuner](#) most of the time, though I do have some nice [Peterson clip-on tuners](#).