

Stewart Guitar Company: Stow-Away™ Travel Guitar

PLEASE READ ALL NOTES AND INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE USING

Notes:

1. THE THUMBSCREWS USED TO ATTACH THE NECK TO THE GUITAR BODY ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE USED TO PULL THE NECK DOWN INTO THE PLAYING POSITION. If you do not remove the small gap between the neck and body by pushing down on the neck and holding it down while tightening the thumbscrews, the strings will be very high off of the fretboard and you will not be able to play the guitar. As you tighten the thumbscrews, push and release the neck 2 or 3 times to ensure all the space between the neck plate and guitar connector is removed. Tighten the thumbscrews firmly but do not over tighten them and never use pliers or any other tool to tighten them. All movement between the neck plate and connector must be removed or the string action will be too high to play.
2. The Stow-Away is shipped with 3 different sized hex keys (Allen wrenches), 0.050", 2.5mm, and 4mm. These 3 hex keys are located in a small plastic bag in the side pocket of the travel bag. Please keep these hex keys with your guitar.
 - a. The small key (0.050" English not metric) is used for adjusting the string height by raising or lowering the saddles on the bridge.
 - b. The middle size hex key (2.5mm) is used when replacing the strings. It fits the setscrews in the headpiece at the end of the neck (where the headstock is usually located.) Each string is locked down with a setscrew and they must be loosened when changing the strings. It is recommended that you do not remove the setscrews from the headpiece when changing the strings, only loosen them.
 - c. The third hex key (4mm) is used for adjusting the truss rod in the neck. The Stow-Away is shipped with 0.010" gage strings and the truss rod is adjusted for this gage. If you change to a lighter or heavier gage string, you may need to adjust the truss rod slightly. Never adjust the truss rod more than 1/10 of a turn at any one time.

Assembly

1. Lay the guitar on your lap with the pickups facing up and the neck pocket on your left.
2. Gently push against the headpiece with your right hand (thumb) while sliding the neck out of the body with your left hand. The neck and strings should slide out of the storage cavity with little effort. (It's also helpful to pull the strings while pulling the neck out.)
3. There is a steel plate attached to the heel of the neck with eight screws. This steel plate extends past the end of the wood approximately 1/4" (actually the wood is cut away.) Position the neck so the steel plate is facing down and the rosewood fretboard is facing up. Position the end of the rosewood fretboard so the overhang is just on top of the pickguard and the maple wood of the neck is in the neck pocket.

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4. Check the bridge saddles just to make sure they are not twisted (rarely happens), ensure that the strings are in the nut slots, and slowly lower the neck into the normal playing position. Continue to hold the end of the fretboard with your finger while lowering the neck. This will ensure that the extended part of the steel plate on the neck goes into the groove at the very back of the steel connector mounted on the guitar body. (The connector actually wraps around the neck pocket area of the guitar body.) The strings will slowly tighten and when the neck is pushed all the way down, the latch at the end of the connector will “grab” the neck plate and hold it in place. When the latch engages the neck plate, you will hear a “click”. Now the neck is temporarily attached and held in place while you tighten the thumbscrews.
5. Position the guitar so the pickups are against your body and push the headpiece end of the neck away from you. This will lower the neck again and close the gap between the neck and the guitar body so you can easily turn the thumbscrews. **THE THUMBSCREWS ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE USED TO PULL THE NECK DOWN INTO THE PLAYING POSITION.** If you do not remove the gap between the neck and body by pushing down on the neck and holding it down while tightening the thumbscrews, the strings will be very high off of the fretboard and you will not be able to play the guitar. As you tighten the thumbscrews, push and release the neck 2 or 3 times to ensure all the space between the neck plate and guitar connector is removed. Tighten the thumbscrews firmly but do not over tighten them and never use pliers or any other tool to tighten them. All movement between the neck plate and connector must be removed or the string action will be too high to play.
6. With the neck in place it's ready to play. Usually the strings are sharp in pitch when you first attach the neck so some fine tuning may be required. To tune the Stow-Away hold the guitar in the normal playing position and turn the string tuner barrel nuts with your right hand until the desired pitch is obtained.

Disassembly

1. To disassemble the guitar, turn it over so the pickups are facing towards you. Make sure the latch is free and in position to hold the neck plate. While pushing against the nut (to relieve the pressure on the thumbscrews), turn the thumbscrews counter clockwise until they are loose. If one of the thumbscrews seems too tight to loosen, retighten the others a little and then loosen the tight thumbscrew.
2. Once the thumbscrews are loose, the latch on the connector will still be holding the neck plate in position. For safety purposes the latch cannot be pushed in to release the neck until you relieve the tension on the latch. Push against the nut again and then push the bottom of the latch and slowly let the strings pull the neck up out of the latched position. If the tension is off the latch, the latch is easy to push in.

Do not push hard against the bottom of the latch to release the neck. Releasing the latch improperly could cause injury or damage the guitar. Pushing against the latch without releasing the tension on the neck will eventually cause the latch to wear down and not firmly hold the neck plate.

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3. After the neck is off, hold the strings against the fingerboard and slide the neck and strings into the storage cavity in the back of the guitar. The fingerboard should face up or toward the front of the guitar.
4. Slide the guitar into the provided travel bag for the transport or storage. The Stow-Away is shipped with the pickguard assembly facing the storage pocket on the side

Changing Strings on the Stow-Away

Any brand of strings can be used as long as they are single ball type. The guitar is set up for 0.010 gage strings. Always lay the guitar on a padded surface to prevent scratching the finish.

Caution

The Stow-Away is shipped with the ends of the strings cut flush with the end of the headpiece. The string ends are then pushed up into the slots on the end of the headpiece so no sharp string ends are exposed.

When you change the strings, please follow this same procedure. The string ends are very sharp and will puncture your skin if left exposed. Use the supplied wooden stick to push the end of the strings up into the slots in the end of the headpiece for each string after replacement.

Removing the old strings:

1. Remove the neck from the guitar and lay the neck alongside the body about 6 to 8 inches away. Lay a towel or something soft over the body. Using the middle sized hex socket (Allen wrench), loosen all six setscrews in the headpiece located on the end of the neck. It's not necessary to remove the setscrews from the headpiece, just turn them counter clockwise 2 or 3 turns. Pull the strings free from the headpiece.
2. Turn the guitar body over (pickguard down). Turn the barrel nuts on the tuner counter clockwise until the string ball end holders are fully extended and the ball ends of the strings are clear of the tuner body. The space at the end of the tuners is small so it may help to use the short end of the small Allen wrench or a paper clip to lift the ends of the strings out of the string holders.
3. Gently pull all 6 strings out of the guitar body from the back of the guitar and discard them.

Installing new strings:

1. Do NOT re-attach the neck to the guitar at this time. Turn the guitar body over so the pickguard is facing up.
2. Separate the new strings and lay them within easy reach.

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3. Turn the guitar up on the edge with the back facing towards you and the large E string on top.
4. Starting with the large E string, insert each string into the appropriate hole in the back of the body and push it up through the appropriate saddle. From the top of the guitar pull the string up until the ball end of the string can be inserted in the ball end holder of the tuner. Turn the barrel nut for that string clockwise until the ball of the string is partially covered by the tuner and cannot accidentally come out. Do NOT turn the barrel nut until the ball is completely covered by the tuner but only enough so the string is held securely. Install the remaining strings. After all 6 strings are installed double-check the ball ends of the strings to ensure they cannot accidentally come free from the tuner.
5. Turn the guitar over with the pickguard up and the neck pocket to the left. Reattach the neck but do not tighten the thumbscrews. The “clip” on the end of the connector will hold the neck in place. Raise the headpiece end of the neck by placing a rolled up towel or anything 5-6 inches thick. Starting with the large E string, slide the end of the string under the setscrew in the headpiece. Insert the long end of the Allen wrench into the setscrew and use the short end when tightening the setscrew. (Using the short end of the Allen wrench will prevent over tightening the setscrews, which may damage the threads in the brass headpiece or cut the string. Never use anything except your fingers to turn the Allen wrench when tightening the setscrew.) The setscrews do not have to be extremely tight but the string must be centered under it. Pull the string tight with your left hand and tighten the setscrew clockwise to lock the string down. It's very important that you ensure that the string is centered under the setscrew or the string will slip and it will not stay in tune.
6. After all 6 strings are locked down and with the guitar still laying flat with pickguard up, begin turning the barrel nuts on the tuner to raise the pitch of the strings. After all 6 strings are approximately tuned to pitch, tighten the thumbscrews on the connector and finish tuning the strings. As with any new strings, they will stretch some so retuning will be necessary until they stabilize.
7. Cut the end of each string off flush with the headpiece. Push any remaining exposed string ends up into the slots on the headpiece to prevent sticking the sharp end of the string into your fingers.