

Enjoying your new lute

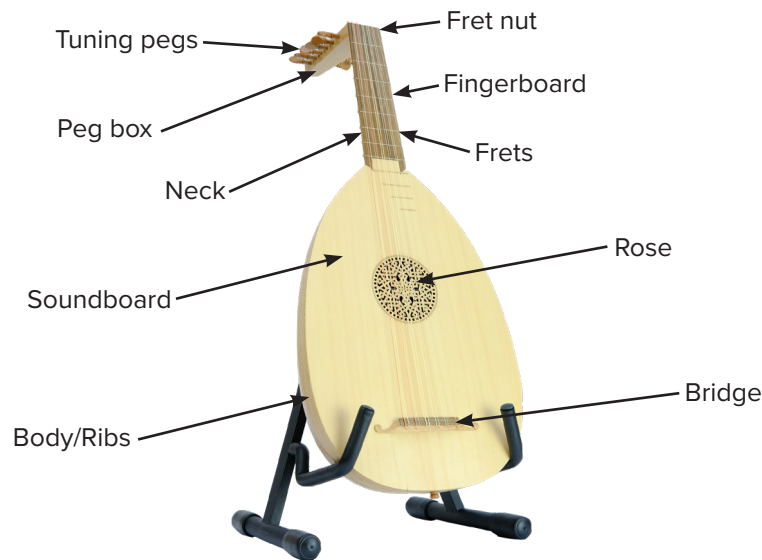
History of the lute

Originating in the orient, the lute takes its name from the Arabic word *al'ud*, meaning 'wood' (or in this case, 'wooden instrument').

With the 8th century Moorish invasion of Spain and the resulting spread of Islamic culture, the lute was introduced to Europe and gained wide acceptance during the Crusades. The medieval lute was played with a quill or plectrum, but by the 15th century the technique of plucking the strings with the fingers was widespread. This resulted in increased melodic and harmonic possibilities for the lute. Lutes played an important role in the development of European music. Before keyboard and bowed instruments came into general use, the lute was the first instrument for which the oldest compositions were written. The 16th and 17th century were considered the lute's 'golden age' and professional lutenists were eagerly sought and handsomely rewarded by the great houses and courts of Europe.

Parts of the lute

The diagram below depicts an EMS Heritage 6 Course Renaissance Lute. The strings are arranged in pairs (called 'courses') except for the highest-pitched string which is a single. The courses are tuned in a combination of unison or octave.



Tuning

We recommend you tune your lute with the aid of a chromatic tuner such as the Korg CA50 and the Korg CM300 clip-on microphone. For those of you who are familiar with the piano, you may prefer to tune your lute to the piano.

HELPFUL TIP

Be careful not to tune your lute too high as too much tension can cause strings to break.

Please see below the standard tunings for 6, 7 and 8 course renaissance lutes.

6 course:

G g C c f f a a d' d' g

7 course:

D d G g C c f f a a d' d' g

8 course:

D d F f G g C c f f a a d' d' g

If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

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