

Vibrato Arm Tension

The vibrato system fitted to this guitar features a unique tension adjustment.

This allows you to set the vibrato arm to your preferred height and swing tension.

Generally the vibrato arm tension is factory set loose.

Instructions

1. Insert the vibrato arm in to the arm hole located on the front of the vibrato.

2. Carefully push down on the arm to raise the back of the vibrato upward, exposing the small grub screw located under the vibrato plate.

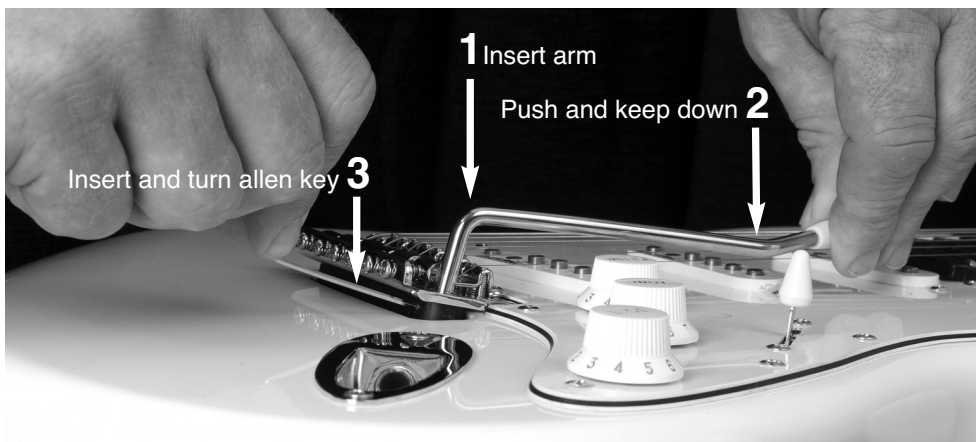
3. Keeping the vibrato **raised**, turn the grub screw with a 1.5mm allen key clockwise to tighten, anti-clockwise to loosen.

Do not overtighten the grub screw or unscrew it from the unit.



IMPORTANT

Be careful not to lower the vibrato while the allen key is in position, you could damage the finish of the instrument and this would not be covered by the warranty.



Guidance notes

for setting up a 'traditional' multi screw floating vibrato system.

Before we start, a little history...tremolo or vibrato?

Well of course the guitar playing world tends to refer to this kind of guitar bridge as a 'Tremolo'. Here, we say 'Vibrato'. Why?

Well, 'Tremolo', an Italian standard musical term refers to a modulated variation in amplitude (volume), whereas 'Vibrato', another Italian standard musical term, refers to modulated variations in pitch (the note).

Clearly what we refer to colloquially as a 'Tremolo bridge' does not alter amplitude (volume), but alters pitch (note).

Way back in the day, when these devices were first put on guitars by Paul Bigsby in the late 1940's he correctly referred to them as 'Vibratos', as they changed the pitch of the strings when operated. A bit later on, confusion was introduced when bridges which produced changes in pitch (note), were erroneously referred to as 'Tremolos'. That confusion was made worse when guitar amplifiers began to come on the market which had what were referred to as 'Vibrato' effects circuits, which were actually modulating amplitude (volume), i.e. 'Tremolo'.

Confused; hope not.

Simple really, we fit Vibrato Bridges, 'cos they change the pitch (note[s]) of the strings when operated and that's 'Vibrato'.

So, to the set-up.

With a standard set of 9-42's, (our recommended string gauges) at set up, bring the strings up to concert pitch, stretch them out to full playing tension a couple of times, then ensure the guitar is fully at concert pitch (the note).

Do the above, whatever the string gauges being used.

Depending upon where the vibrato springs have been tensioned, the bridge will be wherever it ends up, anywhere from flat against the body, to way too high!

Take the vibrato cavity back plate off of the guitar, and leave just the two outer springs in place, and adjust the tension of the vibrato springs until the vibrato base plate is only just flat against the body.

We fit and recommend two springs as standard, 'cos that's what our experience, in conjunction with the set up procedure outlined above, has proven works the best.

Two springs, also gives the smoothest vibrato operation.

Use of three springs is a personal choice, which will only require an appropriate tension adjustment.

Now adjust the six vibrato baseplate securing screws until they just bite (touch) the top surface of the vibrato bridge base plate, then back them all off between a quarter to a half of a turn.

At this point, it is important that the vibrato base plate is still flat against the body, held there by the tension of the vibrato springs.

Now take hold of the vibrato cavity cover plate, dip the vibrato, and place the vibrato cavity back plate flat under the vibrato, between the underneath of the back edge of the vibrato base plate, and the guitar body, and slowly let the bar go.

The vibrato base plate will grip the cover plate.

You may want to place a piece of thin paper, or fabric between the body and the underside of the vibrato cavity cover to avoid damaging the finish of the guitar

Now, slowly back off the vibrato spring tension, one turn at a time, alternating between the two springs (or three if you insist!), until the vibrato cavity cover plate falls out, (be careful that you don't let the cover plate scratch the back of the guitar as it departs!).

The vibrato should now be perfectly adjusted to the standard Wilkinson®/Fret-King®/Vintage® vibrato set up, and the vibrato should be in perfect balance and equilibrium with the string tension. It will be a true floating vibrato, with approximately a minor third of pull up, referenced to the 12th fret harmonic on the 3rd (G) string, and a near to slack string negative action, so you'll have terrific, accurate, stable 'return to zero' pitch.

If all else fails, please seek the guidance and assistance of a competent luthier!