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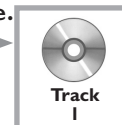
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A compact disc is available for this book.

This disc can make learning the examples in this book easier and more enjoyable.

This symbol will appear at the beginning of every example or song: →

**Use the CD to make sure that you are capturing the feel of the examples,
interpreting the rhythms correctly, and so on.**



**The track number below the symbol corresponds directly to the example or
song you want to hear. Track 1 will help you tune to the CD.**

Have fun!

CHAPTER 1

Tone and Balance

Wellness is important.

Take good care of yourself.

As goes your mind and body, so goes your guitar playing....

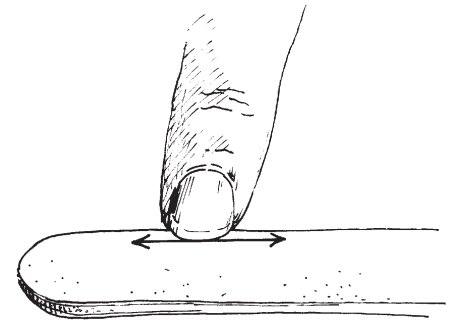
FINGERNAIL CARE

Playing with fingernails is optional. Using fingernails however, expands your tonal possibilities. You can vary your tone from mellow to crisp by simply adjusting your hand position so that either more skin, or more fingernail, contacts the string.

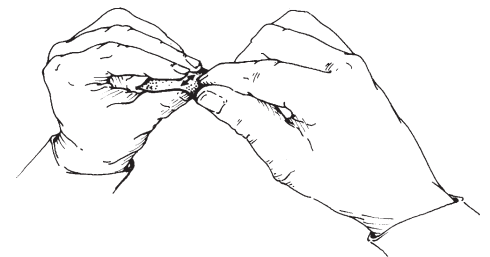
The nails need to be shaped so that they glide smoothly across the strings without snagging on any rough edges. The actual shape is a matter of individual preference, so you will need to experiment to find out what works best for you. Use the following tools, in the following order, to shape and polish your fingernails:

- Fingernail file (the more expensive the better)
- 600 grain sandpaper (or finer)
- Cheesecloth

The sandpaper and cheesecloth are available at most hardware stores. You may keep all of your supplies organized by storing them in a box or pouch. Use the fingernail file to shape the nails by lightly rubbing the file under the edge of the nail. Use the sandpaper to remove the roughness left by the file. Hold the right hand still and move the paper back and forth with the left hand as shown in the illustration on the right. Finish by rubbing the bottom and top of the edge with the cheese cloth, making the nail glassy smooth.



Shape the nail by moving a file back and forth over the edge.



Remove the roughness with sandpaper and then buff with cheesecloth.

THE FREE STROKE

The free stroke is the most commonly used stroke for fingerpicking.

Action:

In order to produce a full tone, the string should be pressed downward and inward before being released. The plucking finger moves up and into the palm and does not touch the adjacent string before continuing its motion. This stroke requires a curled finger position.

