

Guitar Strap Security

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I was playing with Velvet Road on stage at the old Harbourside Brasserie years ago and I had the acoustic guitar on. I tend to move a lot and the crowd was getting into it, when the strap slipped off!! Luckily, I was able to catch and hold it with my elbow until the song ended. Unlike the electrics which had strap locks on them I didn't know what to do to secure the strap to an acoustic, until someone told me the old Grolsch beer bottle washer trick. So, what are the various ways now to secure your guitar so it doesn't go flying mid song?

1. Grolsch beer bottle washers: This is a time honoured and cheap method as they are basically free, as long as you don't mind consuming a few beers. It's the little red washer that holds the glass beer top on the bottle securely. Once the beer has been consumed remove the donut shaped washer, give it a wash, then slip it over the strap button after you've attached the strap. Its what I use on the Maton Em225c I usually play. They are great but being rubber can eventually beak as they wear out. You can buy packets of them as replacements for the beer bottles on eBay if you are averse to having a couple of beers.



2. Rubber Strap Blocks: These are similar to the beer washers but are made especially for the guitar. Ernie Ball has Strap Blocks Rubber, Guitar Strap Locks in a Set of 4 - (2 Black, 2 Red), plus a few other guitar companies. You can also get them on eBay with no name. I've seen these price from \$5 to \$10 depending on type and store.

3. Silicon Strap Blocks: These are relatively new and come from Fender. Made from silicon and not rubber they are supposed to be longer wearing. I have a couple on my Fender Acoustasonic, so we'll see how they go. The Revelation Cable Company (RCC) also make Silicon Strap Blocks, but of a squarish shape. I've seen these price from \$5 to \$10 depending on type and store.



4. Strap Loks, or Lok Straps: These are made from hard plastic and have a swivelling mechanism that locks the strap onto the strap button. There are a few companies that produce them, like Jim Dunlop, but I've read mixed reviews. D'Addario also make Dual-Lock Strap Locks, which could be more secure. I've seen these price from \$5 to \$10 depending on type and store.



5. Locking Straps: There are many ways to catch a fox, just as there are many ways to secure your guitar. These are actual straps with a locking mechanism built in. Once again, I have never tried these and have no real opinion. Once again, they'd be an easy addition to your guitar. These can be quite expensive, costing over \$100AUD (<http://www.voxshowroom.com/northcoast/strings/lockit.html>) or Planet Waves 50PLL00 Planet Lock Leather Guitar Straps which retail for about \$50 AUD, etc.



Most of the above are quite cheap, or free in the case of the Grolsch ones, and you don't have to change anything on the guitar. The next ones are ones where you have to remove the actual strap button and replace it with a locking button. I actually use these on all my electrics and the only reason I went for the strap blocks on the Acoustasonic is due to a difference in screw size which could affect the guitar. They also mean you have to permanently change the strap as well to fit the other end of the locking mechanism. I have had one of these come off on stage when the nut that holds the lock on the strap flew off. Luckily the rest of the post stayed there until I got home and reattached the nut. Plus, the nuts can be difficult to put on leather straps. Still, they are usually quite effective in preventing your valuable guitar from nose diving into the floor.

6. Strap Locks: My favourites are by Schaller, or Fender, as they have a U-shaped mechanism which holds the strap onto the strap button. For my mind that's more secure, as I have used other types where the lock has slipped out. However, some people may favour other types, they all basically have the new strap button that locks onto the strap mechanism. Ernie Ball makes a type, Fender makes other types, as does Jim Dunlop, and many others. This site had some good reviews about strap locks: <https://www.latimes.com/bestcover/best-guitar-strap-locks>. I've seen strap locks vary in price between about \$25 to \$50, depending on the type and where you buy them.



If you keep looking on the internet, I'm sure you would find other examples of mechanisms to secure your guitar to your strap. However, similar to the iconic '80s Aussie ad for Holeproof undies said, "One day you're gonna get caught with your pants down", I'm going to paraphrase as "One day you're gonna get caught with your guitar down" if you don't start securing it now. And it could be a lot more expensive than mere embarrassment for a cracked neck, etc. As John Chesher is heard to say after playing his song "Protection" – "Don't leave home without it!"