

Douglas Niedt's

GUITAR TECHNIQUE TIP OF THE MONTH

Yes, it's "Doug's Dirty Little Secrets"



(Doug subtitled his Tech Tip as "Doug's Dirty Little Secrets" after reading someone's posted message on a guitar web forum. The writer asserted that professional virtuoso guitarists all had secrets they kept to themselves and wouldn't tell anyone else, so no one would play as well as them!)



SIGN UP FOR THE GUITAR TECHNIQUE TIP OF THE MONTH

The "Guitar Technique Tip of the Month" is available in newsletter form, which can be emailed to you every month. FREE, no muss no fuss. No more checking to see if the new tip is out each month. VERY convenient. [Sign Up For Douglas Niedt's Guitar Technique Tip of the Month](#)

ALSO, [Sign up to Receive Announcements](#) of New CDs, Videos, and Books By Guitarist Douglas Niedt



[BE SURE TO VISIT DOUG'S "SECRET VAULT"](#)

of Dirty Little Secrets.

It contains ALL of Doug's Previous
Guitar Technique Tips of the Month

An Underused but Valuable Body Part

By Douglas Niedt

Copyright Douglas Niedt, All Rights Reserved. This article may be reprinted, but please be considerate and give credit to Douglas Niedt.

You are on DouglasNiedt.com

When we play the guitar we are very aware of the movements and actions of our hands and fingers. But there is one part of the body that can make a huge difference in the success of execution of a difficult shift, stretch, or chord change. Yes my friends, it is that unsung hero of guitar-dom--the left elbow. For a scientific/anatomical discussion of the importance and role of the left elbow in playing the guitar, I would highly recommend Charles Duncan's fine book, *The Art of Classical Guitar Playing* (the chapter on the left hand).

But for this tip of the month let's keep it short and to the point. If you are having trouble with a shift or especially a chord change or difficult reach, try it with the elbow "winging" out and to the left. Then try the opposite with two variations--tuck the elbow tightly into your side and forward, then tightly into your side and pushed somewhat to the rear. I have been amazed that after struggling with a chord change for weeks that I could suddenly do it accurately with far less effort if I tried one of these three variations in left elbow position. (I must mention that Duncan in the aforementioned book and others actually recommend against these positions. But I find that they really do work in many situations.)

For this technique to work, YOU MUST REMEMBER THESE POINTS:

1. If a new elbow position works for a particular chord change, shift, or stretch, your elbow must be in that position BEFORE the chord change, shift, or stretch.
2. If you wait until the last moment, changing the elbow position will cause more harm than good.
3. Be certain to return the elbow to its normal position as soon as possible after the difficult spot.

4. For the technique to work in the context of performing the piece, the change of elbow position and recovery must be memorized and anticipated as clearly as you memorize and anticipate the notes.

So, try applying a little "elbow grease" to your playing this month! (I'm so sorry but I just couldn't resist using that line.)

You are on DouglasNiedt.com



SIGN UP FOR THE GUITAR TECHNIQUE TIP OF THE MONTH

The "Guitar Technique Tip of the Month" is available in newsletter form, which can be emailed to you every month. FREE, no muss no fuss. No more checking to see if the new tip is out each month. VERY convenient. [Sign Up For Douglas Niedt's Guitar Technique Tip of the Month](#). We promise you will NOT be sent anything else. This is just the Tech Tip.

ALSO, [Sign up to Receive Announcements](#) of New CDs, Videos, and Books By Guitarist Douglas Niedt



BE SURE TO VISIT DOUG'S "SECRET VAULT"

Doug's Dirty Little Secrets.

It contains ALL of Doug's Previous Guitar Technique Tips of the Month