

PARKER FLY TREMOLO

How to make your Fly tremolo stay in perfect tune in Floating Mode, with any use and abuse

A guide by Marco Pregolato, proud owner of a beautiful 2008 Pearl White Fly Mojo

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1. INTRODUCTION

Some Fly owners (including me) noticed some cents going here and there after using the tremolo bar in Balanced Mode. This was sounding weird, for a guitar which looks, plays and sounds like a dream (and weighs like a feather).

Perhaps the manual isn't clear enough or users aren't understanding it fully, but here's a very easy way to ensure perfect tuning stability for the Fly tremolo in Balanced mode.

2. THE PROCEDURE

STEP 0 – Setup (nut,bridge, balance wheel...) and lubricant

Before doing anything, be sure that your Fly is setup correctly.

The nut has to be filed by a luthier for the gauge of strings you're using (or strings will bind and get out of tune), the spring must match the gauge of strings (a 9 spring for .09 strings, a 10 spring for .10, etc...), the bridge must be setup to work in Balanced mode with the correct amount of Balance Wheel tension. Refer to the Parker Manual for this.

In case they are a bit rough, I suggest having the saddles checked too by the luthier, at the same of time in which he files the nut.

I recommend the use of some lubricant in the nut grooves and on the saddles contact point with the strings to reduce friction. Nut Sauce, Graphitall, graphite... all will do the work. I use string lubricant as well, as I have noticed that it helps.

You should examine all the pivot and contact points for friction modifying problems such as burrs, corrosion, wear marks and rough bearings.

STEP 1 – Strings stretch and contact points

First, ensure that the Step-Stop is in FIXED mode.

Second stretch every string for all its length. Repeat if necessary, especially with new strings. It is very important to have properly stretched strings, or they won't hold tune.

Then, only if the strings are new (it is otherwise unnecessary), enhance the strings contact points,

pressing them with fingers at the tuners to sweeten their ingress angle, and doing the same around the nut grooves and before the saddles to favor the contact points with these 2 elements.

STEP 2 – Tuning helping with the bar

With the Step-Stop still in the FIXED position, tune the guitar in this particular way. That is, tune each string singularly as you would normally, BUT, every time the strings is at pitch, do a quick, full-range dive with the bar. Check if the string is still in tune, if they are not, tune up and whammy again. Repeat the process for all the strings, until they all stay in perfect tune after a quick bar dip.

STEP 3 – Move the Step-Stop and check

Now it's time to move the Step-Stop to BALANCED mode. Should the strings get out of tune after you moved the Step-Stop, adjust the tension with the Balanced wheel. Loosen it if the strings are sharp, and tighten it if they are flat, until you find them back into perfect tune. DO NOT touch the tuners!

Now, do a quick full-range whammy. Should the strings get out of tune, adjust the tension with the Balanced wheel in the same way. Again, DO NOT touch the tuners!

As a check, you may switch back to Fixed mode, and then back again to Balanced, and see if the strings stay in tune with a quick dive-bomb. If not, repeat the sequence described above.

DONE! Welcome to the Fly world :)

By now, your guitar will stay in tune no matter what. Should it get very slightly out of tune, do a quick bar dive, and it will come back in perfect tune. Enjoy!

A small additional note (by Drew Lankford):

The tremolo should not move once the Step-stop is removed. I mean, when you remove the tremolo stop, the tremolo shouldn't move. It should remain perfectly flat. If it moves, the tremolo's spring balance wheel should be adjusted.

3. RECAP & CONCLUSION

The procedure is straight forward. After being sure that your guitar is setup ok, stretch the strings, favor the contact points, tune every string with a quick whammy and then switch ti balanced mode.

I use 9-42 strings, and it works perfect with this gauge. Obviously, the bigger, the better... but I don't like thick strings. This small guide will allow every Parker Fly owner to use its Fly Tremolo like a locking tremolo, without the hassles of this kind of bridges.

For any mistake, improvements, suggestions, comments, questions.... feel free to contact me at:

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I hope that you enjoy my effort.

24th august 2009

Marco Pregolato

Special thanks to Simon Lock, Alex Ortner and Drew Lankford for their assistance and supervision.