

Wood & Steel

Introducing The Academy Series

Advanced guitar design
made affordable

The 2017 Guitar Guide

Explore the expanded Taylor lineup

The GS Mini Bass

Four-string fun for everyone

The 800 Deluxe Series

New armrest, bracing & more

QUALITY
Taylor
GUITARS

Letters

We'd like to hear from you.

Send your e-mails to: pr@taylorguitars.com



Joyful Replacement

Thank you, Bob and Andy, for your wonderful response to my dilemma of a replacement for my stolen 555 12-string ["Ask Bob," Fall 2016]. After careful consideration, sampling, and helpful advice from Skip at A# Music in Renton, Washington, I decided to go for the 566ce (all-mahogany GS body 12-string). The playability is incredible, smooth, exact and effortless. The sound picks up where the 562 tapers off. It has full bass, it booms, and it's quiet when needed. What a joy to play. Thank you again for your response, guitar building, and everything you have done to improve the industry.

James J. Carreño

Mary Saunders

Test-Driving Trip

I am a short woman with short arms and not a flat belly. I decided I'd like a 12-fret guitar because I thought the size would suit me. I went to the Taylor Road Show in Cincinnati. I was able to sort of try the one mahogany [12-fret] they brought, but trying to muscle a guitar away from the men in the room was tough! Also, the Taylor folks had only the one wood in the 12-fret. I started my search. The guitar was not to be found in my area.

Last July my husband and I went to the Chet Atkins Society Appreciation Society Convention in Nashville, Tennessee, where I saw Tim and Myles Thompson playing. Tim was playing a guitar that looked like what I wanted. It was 11 p.m. when they got off stage, and I asked him about his guitar. He enthusiastically told me about it and asked if I'd like to try it. I declined because it was so late at night. Tim

sat me down and told me, "It's never too late to try a guitar!" He took out his guitar and put it in my lap. The size and sound were great. We talked about woods. Tim strongly recommended the rosewood. I'd liked the mahogany, but wanted to try out the different woods at the same time. More searching.

We ended up making a trip to Sweetwater in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Sweetwater had many 12-fret guitars in many different woods. I tried many brands and woods, narrowed my search, had lunch, and tried again. Greg Baum was the Sweetwater representative helping me. He had some rosewood Taylors sent over from the warehouse for me to try. I loved the first one he handed me, and then he handed me a second one. I was dumb-founded that two similar guitars could sound so different. That second guitar is mine. I am thrilled with my new Taylor [12-fret] 812ce!

I am fortunate to have been the recipient of Tim Thompson's generosity in sharing his guitar and expertise with me. I am also fortunate to be able to make a day trip to Sweetwater to make comparisons that just aren't possible anywhere else. It's a shame my experience isn't available for everyone.

Eco-centric

I just want to tell you that I really am impressed by your kind of no-nonsense, hands-on eco-friendliness I can infer by reading *Wood&Steel*. I really like your intelligent and long-term approach to the subject both in Cameroon and in the U.S. People like you and your partner make the world a better place both through innovative products and a strong moral compass, combined with a positive vision of the future.

Hans Karlsborn
Helsingborg, Sweden

Feeling Pumped

[Ed. Note: This note came in via Ask Bob.]

Bob, you responded to my question about a mahogany top on a rosewood body in the Winter 2015 edition of *Wood&Steel* with a recommendation that I check out the new 810 or 814ce

instead. I was a little surprised but have never been steered wrong by you or your team, so I decided to check out both models. While doing so I picked up one of the new 614ce models in my area, which I found at one of your best regional source partners – Melodee Music in Sterling, Virginia. I've always been one of those "I don't much care for maple-bodied guitars" kinda guys, but I was curious after seeing what Andy Powers had written about the new series and watching several of your online videos about the re-engineering of the 600 Series.

An engineer by trade, I've spent a reasonable amount of time trying to understand guitar building and was captivated by the new back bracing, so I had to try it out. It took all of 10 minutes to realize I simply couldn't live without this guitar! Not only was this one of the prettiest pieces of maple I've seen, but the fit and finish were flawless and the appointments amazing. I had to have this guitar!

After a week of playing it daily, I'm still in awe. I don't know whether your team has measured the movement of the back with Andy's new bracing system, but I swear I can feel it "pumping" against my chest when I play – providing both an unbelievable level of feedback to the player as well as the remarkable tone and volume already described on your website. I've compared the physical sensation of this guitar to each of my other six Taylor guitars (I added a K66ce since we last corresponded), and there's simply no comparison – the 614ce provides much more physical feedback than anything else I've played – it's like having a wonderfully resonant bellows in your hands.

I'll never be one to draw a crowd with my playing, and I'm OK with that. I play for my own enjoyment, and the physical response from the guitar is a huge part of that. I have to say that Andy has created one of, probably *the*, most tactile and physically responsive instrument I've ever experienced! The 810 and 814ce are still out there waiting, but for now I have my hands happily full with this 614ce.

Thanks once more for a wonderful playing and ownership experience, and yet another reason to declare my

appreciation of and loyalty to the Taylor brand.

Greg Clare

P.S. My wife would really appreciate it if you guys would stop turning out new and increasingly compelling guitars...but I know you won't do that, right?

We Aim to Please

This past summer my family and I traveled from Europe to the States to tour around California. Due to my love of guitars, in particular my Taylor 414ce, we had planned to visit your factory in El Cajon. My wife and kids understand how much I love playing guitar and that the 414 is the best thing I have ever purchased. Upon arriving in San Diego and planning our days there, I made the mistake of scheduling our visit to the factory on a Friday. The day before our planned visit I checked your website for the factory address and realized, to my horror, that factory visits are only from Monday to Thursday. We had traveled all that way and were not going to get to see it!

Out of desperation I telephoned the factory and explained our predicament. The receptionist was incredibly understanding and told us to come anyway. Upon arrival we were taken into the showroom and told we could play any of the guitars that were there. After a few minutes one of your staff came and informed us that she would give us a quick tour of the factory (even though on Fridays there are no tours) since we had traveled so far. She took us all around the factory, explaining the whole process from start to finish, and answered all of our questions. I was amazed at how well we were treated and just wanted to thank everyone at Taylor for a great afternoon that we thought we would never have. You certainly know how to treat your customers.

My only complaint: Having tried the T3 electric guitar, I now have to save up as I simply have to have one!

Graham Doyle

[Ed. Note: We're happy to report that as of January of 2017, we've added Friday tours back to our official schedule.]

social circles

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Facebook: @taylorguitars

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Youtube: taylorguitars

Google+: taylorguitars

Music Aficionado: taylorguitars



On The Cover

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Designed to bring an inviting Taylor experience within reach of more players, these new guitars promise to make a great first – and lasting – impression.

COVER PHOTO: CAMERON FROM OUR MARKETING TEAM WITH A GRAND CONCERT ACADEMY 12 FROM OUR NEW ACADEMY SERIES



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Learn more about the unique sonic properties of the tonewoods we use, and why two different tonewoods are often paired on an acoustic guitar.

The Taylor Line at a Glance

A snapshot of the different series that comprise the Taylor line.

The Taylor Line By Series

A closer look at the different wood pairings and aesthetic appointments that distinguish each series we offer.



KURT'S CORNER

Little Things Done Well

In the early years of Taylor Guitars, we really struggled to survive. From month to month, we worked hard to keep from getting further behind and sinking further into debt. Establishing our little business was much harder than we envisioned it should be. We often thought there must be “one big thing” we were missing that if discovered and remedied would turn things around and put us on the path to prosperity.

Naturally, that wasn't the case, and through the course of our early years

area to establish or improve in order to bring more of our destiny under our control. I think how well any company does this is a key factor in how well they succeed compared to their competition. This is very similar to a sports team: how well a team executes all aspects of their game has everything to do with whether they win or lose.

Why do I bring this up? I recently did an analysis of acoustic guitar sales in America, comparing brand-by-brand retail revenue growth in months five years apart. In comparing these peri-

it wouldn't be accurate to assume that we experienced the vast majority of the growth simply because people chose a Taylor over other brands. It's possible that we simply functioned better as an organization. It's possible that we did a more thorough job of performing the functions a successful guitar company needs.

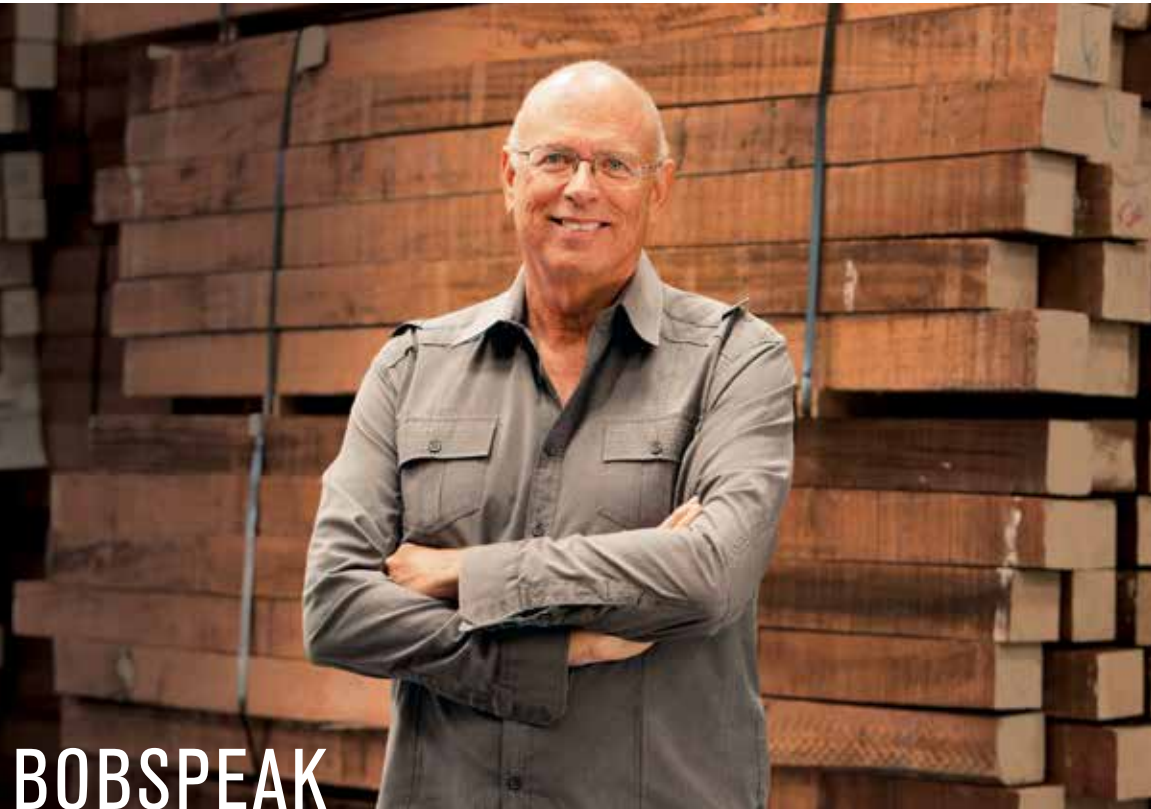
I notice in my travels that the most successful companies I visit have a sense that they are masters of their own fate; their success is within their control. They know it's a myriad of little things done well that add up to their success. And no matter what their size, they realize that a company always has the resources at hand to take their next step. That's really the “art” of it: to creatively employ existing resources to advance the company. The answer to a problem is rarely found outside the company; it usually comes from within.

Life is good with us. We're looking forward to the future. We accomplished amazing work throughout the company in 2016, which positions us really well for 2017 and beyond. We've developed exciting new products that you'll read about in this issue, which we predict will be huge industry hits.

I hope life is treating you well, and I wish you a prosperous 2017.

– Kurt Listug, CEO

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BOBSPEAK

Woodwork Review

As I write this column to kick off 2017, I'm flying home from Cameroon, my fifth trip there this year. I talk about this work often because it's one of the most rewarding and exotic things I've ever done as well as one of the most frustrating and difficult. We've changed the nature of our ebony business, named Crelicam (a partnership of Madinter and Taylor Guitars), and those changes have doubled our cost to produce a cubic meter of guitar wood, and yet the guitar and violin parts we produce are still only worth what the market price sets, so our final ebony is worth less than our cost to produce it. The extra cost has gone to legality in the forest, within the governments, and creating better living standards for our employees, and so you can see how reward and failure co-exist for us. The rewarding part is the new life our 65 employees have, brought on by our care and investment in them. They've become middle class, work in a beautiful and safe factory, have hope for the future, and advance their skills each day. It's a love-fest, and incredibly rewarding. We have also started the ebony breeding and planting program that we funded through the Congo Basin Institute, an affiliate between the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture and the Center for Tropical Research at UCLA. This program is colossal. More to come on that topic at a later date. The depressing part is that things change slowly, wood is wasted as a result of

how the government requires it to be harvested, and we lose money daily as we compete in a market that is primarily price-driven. We have ideas to work our way into a strong and profitable position, which we continually work on. When I'm in Cameroon I go through the whole range of emotions, from the elation of seeing extremely poor people advance their station and share in our guitar industry for the first time, all the way to sitting down, head hung in defeat, and saying to myself, "I don't know what to do." I've had many moments like this.

Meanwhile, the work we're doing in Hawaii with Pacific Rim Tonewoods, under our joint company name Paniolo Tonewoods, is gaining steam and achieving success. It's an easier place to operate, and we're proud to say that we were instrumental in getting 10,000 koa trees planted this year as well as making guitars from some planted koa trees that had a hard life with very little potential for any value. But we found value in those trees, and many of you own guitars made from them as I write. The breeding is going well; we're very pleased. Hawaii has great potential. We partnered with the wonderful, forward-thinking Haleakala Ranch in Maui and caused quite a little stir of curiosity and positive reactions. Planting koa is looking interesting to others now too!

Wood legality and sustainability are in my thoughts daily. For this reason I've asked a friend and colleague of

mine, Scott Paul, to join our staff at Taylor Guitars as Director of Natural Resource Sustainability. It's time to once again get in for more, and Scott is just the person to help us. I first met Scott in Alaska with the Music Wood project, headed by Scott, who at the time was the Forest Campaign Director for Greenpeace. If you go to iTunes or Netflix you'll find a documentary titled *Musicwood*, and you'll see both me and Scott in that movie. You'll get a good feel for who he is and what he's about. Scott spent 14 years at Greenpeace, is well connected, super smart, and respected. Scott and I both want to ensure that natural resources are used properly and sustainably and that honest people can do honest work. This will be a challenge, as so much poor and dishonest forest work has been done in the past that it's hard for policy makers to envision what we have in mind. So we'll work with that goal and look for good results in the years to come.

I'm using up my time and space here to talk about wood because it needs to be talked about, but we also have some killer guitar making going on here at Taylor. Just wait 'til you lay your hands on our new Academy Series guitars! Wow, are they impressive. Andy did great work in conceiving and designing these guitars. I'm so proud of them because it carries on our tradition of advancing the guitar even while

I'm away trying to figure out the future of wood. When you play these guitars you get the full pleasure of playing an expensive guitar in terms of feel and sound. Yet they're very affordable, and they take advantage of the production abilities we have at Taylor in order to bring a great guitar to players who don't wish to spend a lot on a guitar, whether they're a beginner or not. We don't all always have money to spend on things we desire. This guitar really helps that situation.

At the other end, we are introducing the 800 Deluxe Series. Andy designed a very cool armrest for this guitar that sets it apart from its 800 Series siblings, but it still keeps the price in breathable air for most guitar players.

We're excited for 2017. All of us here have meaningful work and projects ahead of us, as well as eager and pleasant customers to engage with. Who could ask for anything more?

– Bob Taylor, President



2017 Taylor Factory Tours & Vacation Dates

Please note that we've modified our tour schedule for 2017 and are once again offering tours on Fridays. A free, guided tour of the factory is given every Monday through Friday at 1 p.m. (excluding holidays). No advance reservations are necessary. Simply check-in at the reception desk in our Visitor Center, located in the lobby of our main building, before 1 p.m. We ask that large groups (more than 10) call us in advance at (619) 258-1207.

While not physically demanding, the tour does include a fair amount of walking. Due to the technical nature, the tour may not be suitable for small children. The tour lasts approximately one hour and 15 minutes and departs from the main building at 1980 Gillespie Way in El Cajon, California.

Please take note of the weekday exceptions below. For more information, including directions to the factory, please visit taylorguitars.com/contact.

We look forward to seeing you!

Factory Closures

Monday, February 20
(Presidents' Day)

Monday, May 29
(Memorial Day)

Monday, July 3- Friday, July 7
(Independence Day/Company Vacation)

Ask Bob

Bearclaw spruce, thermal modification, and pickguard adhesion

I recently bought a 410e-R. It's the third Taylor I own (along with an 816ce and a 714ce). As a longtime Taylor player, there were many things about the guitar that I found familiar, including the neck, electronics and overall "feel." There was also one thing I was completely unfamiliar with – the Sitka spruce top has a number of marks that resemble scratches or tattoos. When I asked the salesperson, he said it was "bearclaw" spruce. What is bearclaw spruce? Will it age similarly to clear Sitka spruce, and why does it show up so infrequently?

Michael Thiel

Michael, bearclaw is just a squiggle in the growing pattern of the tree. In the same way a person has a freckle or curly hair, or your dog Spot has a black patch on his eye, trees also have genetics, and this grain waviness is such an example. People have pondered the beauty vs. blemish, and even the sound of bearclaw for many years, but the bottom line is that it's just a genetic wave in the woodgrain. Most of us like it and think it's rather attractive. The reason it's called bearclaw is because when the bark is removed from the tree and you inspect the layer of wood just below the bark, it appears as though a grizzly bear has clawed and crotched the tree, showing the vertical lines in the tree. And then when the wood is cut into a guitar top, it's viewed from a different angle and appears on the guitar as you see it on yours.

I am a proud owner of five Taylor guitars (GS Mini, 214ce-N, 214ce-K DLX, 524e and redesigned 612e 12-Fret). I have been very impressed with what I've read and heard about the redesigned 700 Series and am planning to purchase another Taylor guitar. I am seriously looking at getting a 716ce, with the short-scale neck option, as I find it more comfortable to play with the slightly looser string tension. I don't play professionally, but I very often get together with friends to play music. Would you recommend hav-

ing the short-scale neck on a Grand Symphony body? Any input on the pros and cons would be greatly appreciated.

Patrick Honolulu, HI

Yes, of course, Patrick! Anything easier to play for you is the perfect option, and it works well on our 16-size Grand Symphony body just fine. The guitar will sound robust, and I think your friends will approve. I see you have a nice variety in your collection. This will add to your tonal possibilities, probably being the loudest guitar you own, and when you add the closer fret spacing and looser tension you'll have a winner. I can't think of a downside to your decision.

Looking at the specifications of the GS Mini in a recent issue of Wood&Steel, I noticed that what is referred to as "layered sapele" is in fact poplar in between two thin layers of sapele (presumably for aesthetic reasons). I have never heard of poplar as a tonewood and wondered if you could elaborate on this choice.

Mathieu Toronto, Canada

Mathieu, poplar is a nice center to the 3-piece layer. It's American, easily grown, workable and affordable. As a tonewood it has what it takes in order to sound good. When gluing and pressing three layers together, that pack of wood becomes strong and dependable. A side effect to that is that no matter which wood you choose (as long as it's good quality wood), any three species will add up to a similar result. In other words, three layers of rosewood would sound like three layers of sapele, which also sounds like three layers of sapele/poplar/sapele. When the wood is one solid piece, like in the 300 Series and above, the tonal characteristics of each wood are more evident. In the end, as you point out, the outside layers are for reasons of beauty and aesthetics, which is a fine reason.

Bob, I was watching some of your factory videos on YouTube and have a couple questions. Are the acoustic sidebending machines you have available on the market anywhere? Also how many CNC machines do you have in the shop?

Kirk Barnes

Kirk, thanks for watching. Factories are my favorite thing, and I spend a lot of time looking at how things are made myself. Our sidebending machines are not available to anyone else. We make the machines we need for ourselves and have years worth of work yet to accomplish. It's also incredibly expensive, so offering them for sale is nothing we're keen to do. As far as CNC machines go, I think we have about 60-some CNC 3-axis mills, half a dozen CNC routers, maybe nine lasers and about 10 robots that do different tasks – some for polishing finish, some for spraying finish, and some to make our ES2 pickups.

I know Taylor and other guitar builders are getting into torrefied tops these days. I have a basic understanding of the process and the results (I actually own a torrefied-top guitar from another builder and can really hear the tonal improvements). Would it ever make sense to torrefy the back and sides of the guitar as well? After all, they naturally age along with the top, which undoubtedly contributes to the desirable, vintage tone of an older guitar. If not, I suspect it's because torrefied wood would be nearly impossible to bend. If that's the case, could the pieces be heated after the bending process is complete?

John Bowman Madison, WI

It's a big topic, John, and I'm going to change the term from "torrefied" to "thermally modified," or thermal modification (TM) for this answer, because that's what it is. That said, there are quite a few ways that we use TM when we process our wood. All Taylor tops for the past 20 years have been baked



Bob, what do you think of bubinga as a guitar tonewood? Have you ever used it in any of your guitars?

Brian

Brian, maybe I've used more variety of wood than many guitar makers over the years, but I've never made a guitar with bubinga other than a small run of Baby Taylors with bubinga veneer back in 2001. One of the reasons is, frankly, the look. It has a large-scale grain pattern that looks good on a table but typically isn't small enough to fit into the boundaries of a guitar back and look interesting to me. Now, it's almost too late since bubinga was just uplisted on CITES, making it pretty hard to use legally. When I work at the ebony factory in Cameroon I'm exposed to a lot of bubinga at a nearby furniture shop. I had started thinking about making a huge table, but alas, I'll leave it alone now.

in an oven set at 350 degrees for a short enough time to set all the pitch and drive out most of the bound moisture. That is just a light form of TM. All of our ebony fretboards get a similar treatment. A side placed on a side bender is baked pretty well, and most of our backs are placed in a hot oven too. But we like to leave the color the same as if we hadn't baked them. Our 600 Series tops stay in the oven much longer in order to bake them to a new color, which also changes the nature of the wood and helps simulate aging. I say simulate because the natural thing that happens to wood over time is different than the forced thing that happens quickly in an oven. Sometimes we TM mahogany that has unruly grain because we're able to tame it with an oven. So, we have a lot of experience using heat on wood, and in our opinion it's not a get-rich-quick scheme for making better guitars. Time does a better job. Meanwhile, up in Concrete, Washington, our colleagues at Pacific Rim Tonewoods are doing in-depth scientific research using worldwide experts on TM for spruce and have devised methods to test a wood's ability to resonate. We provide ear testing when they reach a point of question. Richard Hoover at Santa Cruz Guitar Company made an anniversary guitar from TM maple and spruce that was exquisite and one of the most wonderful guitars I've ever held. But to do this on a wholesale level for all the wood in one guitar is a quest with no destination in my opinion. Where would it get us? And there was a lot more to Richard's magnificent guitar than that TM wood, I'll tell you that. Everyone will be talking about this topic for the next 20 years, so don't think this is the final answer, or that everyone will agree with me. And PRT's research and abilities to produce good spruce tops will likely change the game sometime in the future.

I am so impressed with Taylor's efforts to source domestic tonewoods in an effort to keep the wood supplies sustainable. I wondered about another domestic tonewood: walnut. Is this a wood that is plentiful, easily sourced, and a viable alternative to other exotic tonewoods like sapele or ovankol? What is the tone profile of walnut, and is it a desirable wood to use?

Bob S

It's a great wood, Bob, and though you might not know it, we've made thousands of walnut guitars over the years. To get out cheap with my answer about

its sound, I'll just say that tonally it falls between rosewood and mahogany. In terms of appearance, beautiful walnut is beautiful, but plain walnut is plain, and therein lies the rub. There is a lot of walnut available, but very little that's beautiful enough for guitars. However, we look hard for it, and you'll probably continue to see it more. By the way, I'm happy to hear that you're aware of and agree with our efforts to source woods that are domestic. Maple and koa are wonderful domestic woods, and I think there may be more to come.

My 1993 410 was made when the 400 Series had mahogany sides and back, and sports a beautiful, very functional bridge that requires no pins. Could you tell us a little bit about the bridge and your company's development of it?

John Mason San Diego, CA

Certainly, John! At that time, we wanted to introduce an all-solid-wood guitar for under a thousand dollars. So I started dreaming up the 400 Series. One of the sticking points was the labor involved in the final assembly department in doing all the hand work to the normal pin bridge. All the holes had to be drilled, reamed, slotted, and sanded by hand. By then we were in our fourth year of using a CNC mill, and I thought I could make a bridge that had no handwork at all, and transfer that time to the machine, which needed more work to make it pay for itself anyway. Thus, your bridge, off the machine with no additional work needed since it doesn't get drilled though the top. It was as simple as that. In time we solved the handwork issue in other ways and changed back to the more traditional bridge.

In 2015 I injured my left wrist and could not play my guitars for a while. I bought a Baby Taylor because it was a great guitar to help me get back to playing after my injury. The neck was much smaller than my Martin J40, and I was amazed at the sound. I have been playing guitar for over 50 years, and I guess with a combination of age and wear and tear on my wrist, it's just not coming along like I suspected it would. Playing straight chords in the first three frets is fine, but playing barre chords is my problem, as I find it very difficult to fret all the strings to produce a full sound. I am thinking of replacing my Martin J40 with a Taylor because of its neck design, but I

need a guitar that will give me a similar sound. The Martin has mahogany sides and back and a spruce top.

Cec

Cec, I don't know if your J40 is a special edition – I think it's traditionally been a rosewood model– but either way, I'm going to recommend that you try a Taylor rosewood/spruce 814ce. It has a similar size and comes with a cutaway and ES2 pickup. This guitar model also won "Best in Show" at the Summer NAMM Show in 2014. You'll love the sound. The standard neck is 1-3/4" at the nut, but still very slim, and I think you'd like the comfort. However, you can order it with the narrower 1-11/16" neck width as a model option if you like, which is the same as your Baby Taylor. I think you'd enjoy it.



characteristic after being played for 15-20 minutes: the sound is much warmer, open and refined. I attribute some of that to simply "warming up" as a player, but I was wondering if there was another explanation that involves the actual physical characteristics of wood and the body of the guitar "breathing" and acting as an amplifier. Do the vibrations created by playing contribute in any way to the improvement in sound that I am hearing?

Ron Jasperse

Ron, that's a tough question. I don't really know, but I suspect it's a little of both. I've met famous recording artists in the classical world who keep their recording guitar in a safe and then take it out a month before recording to wake it up! Really? OK. I'm a believer. But I can't tell you where or how that happens. It's beyond me, and anything I say would just be more or less what I think but don't know. I suggest you just enjoy it, because it is enjoyable, and that, my friend, is a fact!

I visited the Taylor factory in El Cajon last week. Great facility, very modern. When we got to the point where we saw the finished tops without the bridge, I noticed that there was no finish on the top where the bridge was to be mounted. That made sense to glue the bridge directly to the wood. But I also noticed that there was finish where the pickguard would be mounted. I've heard that some of your competitors have had quality problems where pickguards were glued to the finish instead of the wood, such as the pickguard curling away from the body over time. Have you ever considered treating the area under the pickguard like the area under the bridge and not applying finish there?

Scott Michigan

Scott, that's very observant of you. No, not in a million years would I consider gluing a pickguard directly to the wood, and you already answered most of the

question as to the reason yourself. In addition to that, the pickguard often cracked those tops as well. This is a practice that almost nobody follows anymore. I think everyone learned the lesson well. It's better to put it on top of the finish.

I am currently the proud owner of six Taylors: three GS Minis, a DN3, a 150e and a 616. I was watching a video featuring Andy Powers, and he did something that made me laugh, because I've been caught by my wife doing the same thing. After playing for a bit, he casually lifted the guitar towards his face and gave the soundhole a little sniff. It's a wonderful aroma, and each of my guitars has a different scent. It reminds me of spending time out in my garage doing woodworking projects with my wife and son and my late father and late father-in-law. For some reason, I've noticed the scent more in Taylors than in other guitars, and just chalk it up to the quality of wood and craftsmanship. So my question is: have you ever been guilty of the "Soundhole Sniff"?

Mike Freed

Mike, I'm guilty of the Soundhole Sniff and the Soundhole Peer. I've looked into and smelled more guitars than I can count. There's something good going on inside there, and you may as well take a whiff.



Our guitars look, feel, sound and even smell great. (Please don't taste your guitar.)

Got a question for Bob Taylor?

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If you have a specific repair or service concern, please call our Customer Service department at (800) 943-6782, and we'll take care of you.

A ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Our new Academy Series makes a full-size, full-featured Taylor guitar more accessible than ever before

By Jim Kirlin

Trace the arc of Taylor's evolution over the past four-plus decades and you'll easily spot a resounding theme: our passion for improving the guitar-playing experience.

It began with Bob Taylor's sleek, uber-playable necks, and under his steady stewardship, we've applied innovative thinking and high-tech finesse to continually refine the feel and sound of our guitars. We've calibrated them to respond more readily to a player's touch. We've voiced them to sound clear, full, and balanced. We've designed them to be easy to maintain for a lifetime. As a result, the Taylor line has blossomed into a broad range of musical flavors that appeal to the different playing styles and applications of players.

The past few years have been especially prolific. The nuanced work of Andy Powers, together with the industrial magic of our production team, has fueled the systematic redesign of virtually every series in our guitar line.

Yet despite these ongoing efforts, there's been a lingering sense among Andy and our product development team that we need to do more to support the development of the entry-level guitar player.

The truth is that while the guitar continues to ride a huge wave of popularity around the world, most beginning players don't stick with it. And as a company that's passionate about exposing more players to the pleasures of making music, we simply hate to see people throw in the towel before they have a chance to get their groove on.

C O N T I N U E D



(L-R): Fabio from our Supply Chain Management team with a Dreadnought Academy 10e and his wife Angela from our Electronics department with a Grand Concert Academy 12e

Arguably the biggest reason that new players give up is the quality of the instrument (or lack thereof). Think back to your own introduction to an acoustic guitar. Forming those first chords was hard enough. Add a guitar with high action, bad intonation or cruddy sound to the mix, and the odds of sticking with it aren't good. Andy empathizes with novice players and the challenges they often face at the front end of their guitar-playing journey.

"Ironically, in many respects a player who is just beginning deserves the best-playing guitar," he says. "An experienced player can make almost anything work; they'll simply appreciate a good guitar more. But when you're starting out, you really need everything going for you."

Most newcomers to the instrument – and parents buying for their kids – are understandably reluctant to pony up for a more expensive, "nice" brand of guitar without knowing whether the interest will last. So the approach tends to be: start with an inexpensive, "good-enough" guitar, and if things progress, upgrade to something better. But all too often this ends in hand-wringing frustration, where would-be music-makers walk away from the instrument blaming themselves for not having enough musical talent or physical dexterity, when in fact the real culprit all along was the guitar.

That's where Andy focused his attention – investing in the next generation of players by designing an introductory Taylor guitar that's more inviting, more forgiving, more comfortable, and ultimately, more musically sustainable.

Defining the Ideal First Guitar

As Andy turned his attention to the needs of the entry-level player, he started by listing all the qualities he felt the ideal learning guitar should offer. The overall goal was to develop an instrument that would offer enough immediate gratification to encourage a beginner to keep playing. He shared the gist of his original notes, with the qualities listed in his order of design importance below. These formed the basic design parameters for what would become Taylor's new Academy Series.

> The Playing Experience

Easy to hold and play. The body needed to be comfortable and lightweight. The guitar needed to be as easy to strum and fret as possible. This was translated into a guitar with a shorter scale length, light strings, low action and a narrow neck. Nylon strings were a consideration because of the lighter string tension.



An armrest adds to the playing comfort

An armrest was another possibility.

Rewarding sound. Some guitars are capable of producing great sound but require the skilled touch of an experienced player to draw it out. This guitar had to yield a good sound easily in the hands of a beginner.

> Practical Considerations

Not too precious. Durable. Minimal. A guitar that's too precious can be intimidating for a novice to play and care for. This guitar needed to feature simple design elements and be constructed so it doesn't need a lot of maintenance. **Not too expensive.** It had to be affordable enough for a beginner to be willing to buy it.

> Musical Applications

Broad appeal. It had to be a guitar, or series of guitars, that was appealing to enough people to cover a range of music preferences. There had to be options for playing with a pick, fingers, and possibly nylon strings.

Minimalist Inspiration

As Andy began to flesh out his ideas, he felt it was important to give the guitar a different musical identity from the "travel guitar" heritage of the Baby Taylor and GS Mini instrument family. While those models have also proved to be highly popular and affordable options for entry-level players, the distinction is that they were designed with scaled-down dimensions because one of the design goals was to make something compact and portable. In this case, Andy didn't want performance to be limited by the scaled-down dimensions of a travel guitar. He also wanted it to have our patented

neck for performance longevity. But he also knew that in order to accomplish some of the other design objectives he'd mapped out, he would need to approach the design from a minimalist perspective, strip it down to its core essentials, and leverage Taylor's production capability with greater efficiency in mind. To borrow from the classic industrial design credo, form needed to follow function. Along the way he drew inspiration from the design approaches of Leo Fender and others.

"The whole premise behind the Telecaster when Leo Fender designed and built it was to get more guitar from the simplest ingredients of design and material," Andy points out. "It's simple, yet functions very well for a musician. That same philosophy applies to the design of these Academy Series guitars. The intention was to give players the 'most' acoustic guitar from solely the essential elements of design and material."

Andy was also influenced by the pioneering design philosophy of Charles and Ray Eames, whose iconic furniture designs helped define the Mid-Century Modern aesthetic.

"They were known for saying, 'We want to make the best for the most for the least,'" he shares. "This very idea summarizes what we hoped to achieve with these guitars." He also saw a parallel between the Eames and Taylor approaches in terms of how both integrated the industrial design and production processes into a harmonious relationship.

Taking Shape

For his body style, Andy began with the classic Dreadnought, in part because it's a widely recognized guitar shape that makes a good strumming



The 3-ring Baltic birch rosette

and flatpicking guitar. He borrowed the slightly smaller 15/16-size footprint of the Big Baby for comfort, but opted for a body that was three-quarters of an inch deeper to give the guitar a fuller voice with more low-end response. He stayed with the wood pairing of a solid spruce top and layered sapele back and sides. The neck is a fully engineered version of Taylor's patented design, allowing for precise calibration of the neck angle and smooth serviceability throughout the guitar's life. To enhance the handfeel and overall playability for entry-level players, he chose a 24-7/8-inch scale length with a 1-11/16-inch nut width. He also refined the guitar's top

"It's important to give a beginning player the most comfortable, gratifying experience to make a welcoming first impression," he says. "If the guitar is comfortable, plays well, and has a pleasing sound, then a player will have an easier time staying with the instrument."

The obvious challenge was to design an armrest that could be produced efficiently enough to be affordable to make and sell.

"We can do some amazing industrialized work here at Taylor," he says. "In this case, the guitar's minimalist design made a comfortable, beginner's armrest possible to manufacture as we removed

“It’s important to give a beginning player the most comfortable, gratifying experience to make a welcoming first impression.”

— Andy Powers

bracing and other internal architecture to optimize the volume and projection.

Adding an Armrest

While the idea of an ergonomic armrest clearly fits Andy's original design parameters in terms of enhancing the playing comfort to help the beginner, it might seem an unlikely option given its typically labor-intensive nature. Although normally reserved as an ultra-premium feature of Taylor's top-end models, Andy developed a greatly simplified version, produced with function in mind and without the more detailed elements of hand craftsmanship or high-end aesthetics reserved for our other premium versions.

together as a whole without compromising musical function.

"On the other hand, there's nothing here that doesn't need to be here," he adds. "As a result, we ended up with a guitar that is tremendously functional. It plays wonderfully and sounds remarkably good."

In terms of positioning it within the line to make it affordable to the entry-level player, the guitar will be priced below our 100 Series. The street price will start at \$499 in the U.S.

"These guitars offer a lot more to players than the price should allow," Andy says. "They're precision musical tools at their core."

A Grand Concert and Nylon-String Too

The desire to appeal to a wide range of playing styles also led Andy to complement the Dreadnought with two additional models that would together comprise a cohesive family of distinctive instruments, yet without branching out into too many model choices. Both are Grand Concerts; one is a 12-fret nylon-string. Of the two steel-string models, the Dreadnought is designed for flat-picking and strumming. The Grand Concert is intended as a fingerstyle guitar with the added benefit of a more compact body size for extra playing comfort. The nylon-string, in Andy's opinion, is an important model for a couple of reasons.

"In this price range, a good nylon-string guitar is even harder to find than a steel-string guitar, yet worldwide, it is often the favored form of our instrument," he explains. "The nylon-string guitar we're making is great on its own, not merely for its price tag. Its unique mix of musical goodness and low cost give it a passport to travel into other parts of the world, where musical preferences demand nylon strings."

Musical preferences aside, Andy says, the super-light string tension of nylon strings is even easier on one's fingertips than steel strings.

"This makes a great choice for kids or players not yet used to pressing metal wire against their fingers."

The model also offers an affordable and high-quality option to established players who don't use a nylon-string guitar as their primary acoustic but who want to explore its distinctive acoustic palette.

Each Academy Series model will be identified by the series name followed by the same numbering/lettering system we use elsewhere within the Taylor line to designate the shape and whether it includes onboard electronics ("e"). Dreadnought models are the

Academy 10 and Academy 10e; Grand Concert models are the Academy 12 and Academy 12e; nylon-string Grand Concert models are the Academy 12-N and Academy 12e-N. The optional pickup is our ES-B, which incorporates piezo elements from our Expression System® 2. It's powered by an onboard preamp that features tone and volume controls along with a built-in digital chromatic tuner with an LED display for tuning and low battery indication.

Initial Reactions

Last fall, senior members of Taylor's sales and marketing teams visited an assortment of Taylor dealers across the U.S., Europe and Asia to preview the guitars from the Academy Series. The favorable responses suggest that the series answers a need in their respective communities.

Paul Tobias from Tobias Music in Downers Grove, Illinois, runs a large guitar lesson program at his store and thought it would be a dual success for students and Taylor.

"The Academy Series will open the door to Taylor Guitars a little sooner for our students," he shared. "It's an outstanding value for a guitar of this quality."

Keith McGee, from American Musical Supply, in Oakland, New Jersey, called the series "impressive and memorable."

"It's a perfect guitar to take to college, or just pick away on your couch."

Dan Bordonaro from Chicago Music Exchange experienced a case of Taylor déjà vu.

"I vividly remember a GS Mini being placed in my hands for the first time 2010," he said. "I think I just had the same feeling again."

Joe Ravita, proprietor of Empire Music in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, had great things to say about the Grand Concert Academy 12.

"It's the highest quality guitar I have ever seen in its class," he said. "It delivers amazing comfort, tone and playability."

Reflecting on the series and the positive early reactions, Andy notes that while the Academy Series might have been conceived to appeal to beginners, the rewarding nature of the playing experience will surely translate into even broader appeal.

"These same playing benefits can be enjoyed by seasoned players who simply aren't in a position to devote serious financial resources on an instrument," he says. "I don't think lack of funds should be allowed to prevent them from making music."

Andy does have another bit of advice for beginners on a budget, besides considering an Academy Series guitar.

"One important part of making an instrument 'stick' is playing music with others," he says. "If a person can learn to play a few songs with their friends, the likelihood of them staying with the instrument goes up exponentially."

The rollout of the Academy Series will begin with the release of the Dreadnought Academy 10/Academy 10e starting in March, followed by the tandem release of the Grand Concert Academy 12/Academy 12e and Academy 12-N/Academy 12e-N the following month. For more on the series, including complete specifications, videos and more, visit taylorguitars.com. **W&S**



Small Wonder

The idea of a small-scale bass seemed far-fetched until a pair of Taylor design breakthroughs changed everything. Meet the irresistible new GS Mini Bass.

By Jim Kirlin

It started on a lark.

A few years ago, Taylor's Jesus Jurado, a longtime fabricator on our product development team, was musing with colleague David Judd about the idea of making a bass version of the GS Mini.

"We thought it would be something any guitar player would like to have around the house," Judd recalls.

One day the two playfully pitched the idea to Andy Powers, egging him on to make one.

"Andy happened to have some ukulele bass strings," Judd says, "so I modded the poor thing to work as a bass. The strings couldn't take the extra tension from the longer scale length of the Mini and broke, so I put on a set of electric bass strings and an ES2 pickup. It didn't sound great, but it was at least good enough to get Andy's juices flowing."

As someone who has played bass in different professional settings over the years, Andy thought the idea of a GS Mini bass was a fun conversation starter, but as a seasoned guitar maker, he was skeptical that it could actually work with such a short scale length.

"I've always had a thing for short-scale basses," he shares. "But often they can't make accurate bass frequency notes very well due to the quirks of their short string length. They're fun to play but have some limitations."

For reference, the scale length of a standard bass guitar is usually between 32 and 35 inches. The average scale length of a short-scale bass is about 30 inches. The Mini's string length is 23-1/2 inches.

"Changing a guitar's scale length a half an inch from 25-1/2 inches to 25 inches is a big deal," Andy says. "Compared to the standard scale length of a bass guitar, the GS Mini is about 10 inches shorter. It's almost not the same instrument at that point."

Putting a regular bass string on the GS Mini and tuning it up, Andy says, would never produce a usable note. An electronic tuner wouldn't even recognize the resulting vibration as a note. (For a quick primer on string theory and the basic physics of string vibration, see our sidebar on page 14.)

Nonetheless, the idea stuck with Andy ("I really wanted it to exist," he says), so he began to explore what it would take to make a bass frequency note work with a string length that short. The idea all along, he says, was to work within the basic structural parameters of the existing GS Mini form, for a few reasons.

"I wanted to see if it was possible to build a small, ergonomically friendly bass instrument that lived outside the borders of a typical bass guitar," he explains. "The hope was to make a bass comfortable and approachable to a guitar player who's used to a smaller instrument, to a child, or to a seasoned bass player looking for something sized for the couch or tour bus with a different feel and voice. From a manufacturing perspective, there were practical benefits to sharing existing tooling infrastructure with the GS Mini to allow us to make it and have it be affordable."

Developing New Strings

Off and on for a good year or so Andy experimented with different weights of string, different core sizes, and other variables to determine if he could get a string to make accurate notes with the GS Mini's scale length, but to no avail. Then he had an epiphany based on some classical guitar prototypes he'd been building.

"I realized I'd been going about it the wrong way," he says. "It needed to be a nylon string, because the way they are constructed gives them a completely different set of characteristics than steel strings."

Andy reached out to our development friends at D'Addario, whose strings we use on our nylon-string acoustics, and explained what he was trying to do. Together they walked through all the approaches Andy had already tried.

"They brought in their expertise in making nylon strings for other kinds of instruments," Andy says. "It's pretty amazing because they make strings for every kind of string instrument you could name, in just about every kind of material and method. In the end we were able to come up with something that worked really well, which is basically a nylon-core string overwound with a traditional phosphor bronze wrap wire. That combination worked great. Without these strings, I'm not sure this instrument would have been possible."

The custom string set was developed exclusively for what would become the GS Mini Bass. (For more on the strings, see our sidebar on page 15.)

A New Bridge Pin Design

With the important string issue resolved, Andy turned his attention to another major design challenge: how to

continued



Our patented dual-prong bridge pin design enables secure string anchoring and a more gradual bend over the saddle to optimize the overall performance and sound

properly secure the strings below the bridge and get a good sound.

“With a traditional guitar bridge pin, the string has to come up out of the bridge through a little groove and make an acute bend over the saddle,” he says. “Bass strings are quite large and have a tough time making the bend because the string has such a different stretch factor on the inside of the bend compared to the outside – the strings would deform so much that they would no longer make a correct note. To make the bend more gradual, the bridge would need to be so bulky that it physically wouldn’t sound or work well anymore. Not to mention that it would look ugly and disproportionate on a small instrument.”

After exploring other ideas, Andy devised a new bridge pin design that Taylor has since patented.

“It looks like an old-fashioned clothes-pin,” he says, holding one up for closer examination to show how the pin splits into two prongs (see photos above).

The dual-prong design accomplishes several things that lead to a better sounding, better-functioning instrument. First, the ball of each string is anchored on the opposite side of the pin (rather than the side closer to the soundhole), which allows the string to pass in between the prongs.

“This extra clearance allows a more gradual bend over the saddle,” Andy says.

Second, a wedging action is created when the string is tuned up that forces the two prongs apart, tightening the pin into its hole.

“The pin essentially becomes self-locking,” Andy explains. “Rather than the typical method of holding your thumb

on the bridge pin so it doesn’t go flying out as you tune the string, this new design automatically pulls the pin into the bridge. For restringing, once you loosen the tension on the string, the pin gets looser – it self-releases. As a result, stringing up this guitar will be easier both here in the factory and for the player.”

Together, the gradual bend over the saddle and more secure string anchoring help the instrument sound its best.

Voicing and Other Refinements

With the bridge pin issue resolved, Andy was able to focus on voicing the rest of the instrument, which, by comparison, was relatively easy.

“It’s funny, the two things that held this instrument back for so long were what seem like afterthought details of

The Physics of String Vibration & Tone

On stringed musical instruments, a string that’s plucked creates two different types of motions, or waves, which occur simultaneously:

Transverse: This is the circular pattern that makes a string look blurry when you pluck it. It produces the note that we hear.

Longitudinal: This travels back and forth along the length of a string about 10 times faster than the transverse wave. Once a string has been set in motion, this is where most of its kinetic energy lives.

A big challenge as an instrument builder, Andy says, is to calibrate those two motions so they get along rather than conflict with each other. Otherwise, the string can’t ever have a predictable motion. As a result, it won’t make a recognizable pitch.

There are four ways to calibrate those motions to be compatible:

- 1) Scale length: the vibrating length of the string from nut to bridge
- 2) The weight of the string
- 3) The pitch the string is tuned to
- 4) How much tension that string will exert once it’s been tightened a certain amount at a certain length

The basic reason why strings, whether on a piano, violin or guitar, get wound over with a second piece of wire or two other pieces of wire, is to change the stiffness and weight independently, as Andy explains.

“If you wind a wire in a helix, it doesn’t have much stiffness to it,” he says. “If you look at the low E string of a guitar, the tension is controlled by the core – the plain music wire that sits as the center of the string. The string’s weight is increased by wrapping a second wire, often of a different metal alloy, around the core. This changes the weight without appreciably changing the string’s stiffness. That’s why the lowest notes on pianos and other instruments are always overwound, sometimes with multiple windings. Pianos take it a step further in altering the scale length of each string in order to make the two wave motions get along with each other.”

strings and bridge pins,” he says. “But good instruments need all of the components to be working in a cohesive way.”

Though the internal architecture of the Mini’s body was modified to optimize the voicing of the bass frequencies, Andy says it wasn’t a radical change.

“One of the interesting thoughts that guide an instrument’s design is looking at the body as a mechanical amplifier,” he elaborates. “When it’s a fundamentally good amplifier, it responds remarkably well over a large range of frequencies. As long as the structural considerations don’t change dramatically, you can make something work for a wide range of sounds.”

One of the final design elements to be worked out was the tuners. A couple of the early prototypes featured tradi-

tional bass tuning machines, but once it was time for aesthetic refinement, our development team worked closely with one of our tuner suppliers to produce something that was more proportionate for the scale of the GS Mini.

“They have the big post that allows a bass string to work well, but put into a small enough package that you don’t have these giant knobs and extra weight throwing off the visual and physical balance of the bass,” Andy says.

The bass will come equipped with Taylor’s ES-B pickup, which features an onboard preamp with tone and volume controls and a built-in digital chromatic tuner with an LED display for tuning and low battery indication. Andy says the tuner provided one of the measures of success for the design.

“One of the criteria I was using all along was whether or not a tuner could

recognize the notes,” he says. “Once we got into the fidelity range where a tuner recognized the pitches, we knew the note had a predictable enough motion to be musical!”

The bass will also come with a customized GS Mini Bass hard bag, which features the bass’s stylized logo treatment on the outside. The hard bag incorporates the same design features as the original GS Mini hard bag, blending protective structure and lightweight portability, with external and internal storage pockets and sewn-in adjustable backpack straps.

The Playing Experience

Considering the massive popularity of the original GS Mini guitar since its release in 2010, the ability to offer players an equally portable and accessible bass sibling – especially given a bass’s typically larger, more prohibitive size – was gratifying for Andy and the design team to bring to production. For starters, it falls in line with Taylor’s heritage of innovation, of pushing instrument design into fresh and inspiring new musical territory. And there’s really no other instrument quite like this on the market. Naturally, with its compact design and slinkier feel, it won’t perform like a conventional bass, nor is it really intended to. It’s made for guitar players like many of us, and like Jesus Jurado and David Judd from our product development team, who thought it would be fun to have an acoustic bass around the house. And

that’s what makes it cool – it invites more people to explore the instrument.

“If bass isn’t your primary instrument but you want an acoustic bass on hand for writing, for recording some demos, or to have when your friends come over to jam, this is the bass you want,” Andy says. “Anybody can play it. You don’t need calluses on your fingers. It’s physically easier than a guitar. The short string length and the nylon core strings make it so comfortable to play that even a kid or a beginner could walk up to it and not be intimidated. It’s easy enough that my 6-year-old son can press these notes down and play.”

Like its 6-string Mini siblings, the bass is lightweight and portable enough to fit in a plane’s overhead compartment for globe-trekking adventures. And never again will bass players be left empty-handed around a campfire.

As a small-bodied, short-scale instrument, the slinky string response probably won’t be ideally suited for slapping or a heavy attack. But as a bass instrument with a unique feel and good sound, Andy thinks it has a lot to offer.

“It’s no substitute for an upright bass, but there is no other instrument quite like this,” he says. “For a touring bass player doing vocal warm-ups on the band bus, the bassist often has to fake their bass lines on a guitar since not many have an amp to plug their electric bass into. In other scenarios, this instrument does a good job of serv-

ing a bassist who simply doesn’t want to haul a big instrument around.”

As Bob Taylor has said, people love the fact that Taylor continues to make products of discovery. When we introduced the Baby Taylor, we didn’t know how many different ways people would end up using it. We’ve seen the same thing happen with the GS Mini. And there’s a good chance it will happen with the bass too, sparking fresh musical ideas as players interact with it.

David Judd, one of the original instigators of the design, is certainly happy with the way the bass turned out.

“It’s a lot of fun to play,” he says. “It’s hard to put it down.”

For Andy, he sees the bass as a kindred spirit of our new Academy Series design philosophy.

“These are all physically and economically approachable instruments that have a lot of musical goodness built in,” he says. “They’re wonderful gateway instruments that encourage people to make playing music part of their lifestyle. With this bass, I would love to see a whole bunch of kids say, ‘I want to be a bass player.’ We need more of you!”

Look for the GS Mini Bass at authorized Taylor dealers starting in February. For complete specs, photos, video content and more, visit taylorguitars.com. **W&S**



The GS Mini Bass at a Glance

- Back/Sides:** Layered Sapele
- Top:** Solid Sitka Spruce
- Fretboard/Bridge:** Genuine Ebony
- Scale Length:** 23-1/2 Inches
- Nut Width:** 1-11/16 Inches
- Strings:** D’Addario GS Mini Bass Custom Light with EXP Coating
- Bridge Pins:** Polycarbonate Dual Prong
- Finish:** Matte
- Electronics:** ES-B
- Case:** GS Mini Bass Hard Bag

String Quartet

The GS Mini Bass is strung with a Custom Light string set (.037-.050-.062-.090”) developed by D’Addario exclusively for the instrument. The strings feature a multifilament core wound with D’Addario’s EXP-coated phosphor bronze wrap wire for a long-lasting tone and projection. Because of the bass’s unique design specs, these are the only strings that will work with the bass. Andy says the strings contribute to great intonation and should look fresh and sound consistently good for a long time, without much appreciable change as they age.

The strings will be available through authorized Taylor dealers and our online TaylorWare store at taylorguitars.com. Restringing the bass is easy thanks to Taylor’s patented bridge pins.



Super



L-R: 814ce DLX, 812ce 12-Fret DLX, 810e DLX

Our freshly minted 800 Deluxe Series sports a new radius armrest plus a pair of premium performance upgrades

By Jim Kirlin

One of the thrills of our innovation-minded culture here at Taylor is the freedom to refine our guitar line whenever inspiration strikes. What's more, a new design will often create a ripple effect across the line. A tone-enhancing update deployed on one guitar series might later migrate to others, or spark a fresh design altogether. Between our passion for improving the playing experience and our robust manufacturing capability, we're able to keep the line steadily evolving in dynamic ways that we hope will captivate players.

That was certainly the case with the extensive redesign of our flagship 800 Series back in 2014. A quick recap: Launched in celebration of Taylor's 40th anniversary year, the series rebirth saw the emergence of Andy Powers as our next-generation master guitar designer. The project honored our definitive guitar series – featuring our perennial top-selling Grand Auditorium 814ce – in true Taylor fashion: by striving to make it even better. Andy and Bob Taylor worked closely together throughout the process. Andy recalibrated the design nuances of virtually every material ingredient, revoicing each body style in a slightly different way to express its unique musical identity to the fullest. Bob helped guide the tooling and manufacturing development processes needed to bring Andy's designs to production. As a result, we were able to raise the bar on a series that had already become a touchstone for the modern acoustic guitar in terms of playability, sound, and all-around performance.

Among the raft of tone-enhancing musical refinements: top and back thicknesses that were optimized for each particular body style; customized internal architecture to help articulate the musical personality of both the body style and the player; the application of protein glues and ultra-thin finish to make the guitar more sonically alive; and the debut of our breakthrough Expression System® 2 pickup to amplify the tone in a more natural way.

The response to the new guitars was, and continues to be, wildly effusive. Glowing praise has poured in from reviewers, dealers, music pros, and recreational players alike. Perhaps even better, Andy's design ideas became a broader catalyst for our dramatic revoicing of other guitars, including the maple 600 Series, followed by the rosewood 900 Series, and more recently, a redesign of the 500 and 700 Series. In fact, as we noted in our story on the

new 700s in our summer 2016 issue, nearly every series in the Taylor line has undergone some sort of significant design update in the wake of our 800 Series. What could be next? Plenty, as the other stories in this issue attest. In this case, it was the creation of a new rosewood spinoff series.

The 800 Deluxe is Born

Musically, our 800 and 900 Series guitars are kindred spirits, sharing the same tonewood pairings, internal voicing architecture, and other material specifications like ultra-thin finish. The distinctions of the uber-premium 900 Series include a more lavish appointment package, Gotoh 510 tuners, and an artful slice of Taylor craftsmanship: an ergonomic beveled armrest borrowed from Taylor's even more ornate Presentation Series. As our core product development group discussed the next area of creative focus within the Taylor line with members of our sales, marketing and production teams, the idea of another class of premium guitars that lived between the 800s and 900s was hatched. Andy had already been working on a different type of armrest design that had the potential to be slightly less labor-intensive to craft in production than the beveled armrest. Our sales department was also seeing a rise in orders from Taylor dealers for 800 Series models with our upgraded Player's Package option, which includes tops braced with Adirondack spruce and Gotoh 510 tuning machines. After more discussion, the concept of the 800 Deluxe Series was born. Andy made a couple of prototypes, and before long, a super-charged version of our 800 Series had taken shape. Think of it as the child of 800 and 900 Series parents.

Introducing the Radius Armrest

From Bob Taylor's earliest guitars, we've always placed a strong design emphasis on improving the physical feel of the playing experience to help players express themselves in the most natural way possible. A sleek neck and comfortably low action have long been hallmarks of a Taylor neck's playing profile. A beveled armrest, introduced as an ultra-premium feature in recent years, continued the theme, bringing greater comfort to one's picking arm. As we explained in our story on the redesigned 900 Series (Summer 2015, Vol. 82), crafting the beveled armrest requires special training, tooling, and additional time.

"It's a practice in patience," Andy elaborates. "It requires the utmost attention to detail, as we are essentially teasing all these components – tiny purfling pieces, compound glue surfaces, and bent veneers – into a perfectly blended piece of wood sculpture. And it demands flawless sanding at the end, with the risk of potentially ruining all the work that came before it. Despite the huge effort, the results are worth it."

The feature has resonated with players for both aesthetic and practical reasons. Guitarist John Petrucci of the progressive rock/metal band Dream

One of the common questions we hear from customers about an armrest is whether it changes the sound of the guitar. The short answer is yes, but as Andy explains, it's not so much because it changes the inherent voicing of the instrument in a substantial way. It's more the product of changing the physical orientation between the player and the guitar.

"It optimizes the relationship between the musician and their instrument," he says. "We're never listening to merely the hands of the player or the voice of the guitar. We're hearing the relationship

ratio requires more turns but feels easier.)

Model Availability

The initial rollout of the 800 Deluxe Series this year will feature three models offered in limited quantities: the Dreadnought 810e DLX, the Grand Concert 812ce 12-Fret DLX, and the Grand Auditorium 814ce DLX. Dreadnought players are bound to appreciate the sleek feel of the armrest, especially since the body's wider waist naturally causes the guitar to sit higher in a player's lap and push



The rounded contouring of the rosewood radius-style armrest

Theater, whose main acoustic as of late has been a 916ce, says that as someone who plays a lot of electric guitar, the armrest on his acoustic makes for a smoother transition from his normal arm position on a much shallower electric guitar body. (See our interview with John last issue.) For longtime guitar players who begin to contend with shoulder issues as they get older, an armrest offers the benefit of added comfort by easing the stress on one's strumming arm.

For the 800 Deluxe models, Andy introduced a new armrest design with a radius profile. Compared to the sloped chamfer of the beveled armrest on the 900 and Presentation Series, the radius features a slightly narrower and rounder softening of the edge in the lower bout area. The armrest itself incorporates a rosewood insert to echo the rosewood-centric aesthetic of the series. The insert is shaped into a sleek contour whose tapered ends transition into the maple binding.

between the two. So, by making this a more ergonomic guitar, we improve the overall musical performance because it puts a more comfortable, appealing guitar into the hands of a musician, which allows for more relaxed playing. Essentially, it encourages a better performance from the player. *That's* the way it changes the guitar's voice."

Adirondack Spruce Bracing and Gotoh Tuners

Other premium upgrades applied to the 800 Deluxe models include Adirondack spruce bracing, which effectively turbo-charges the tonal output to produce more dynamic range, and chrome Gotoh 510 tuners. The sleek contouring of the Gotohs creates a luxurious tactile sensation, while the 21:1 gear ratio (compared to 18:1 with our standard tuners) brings a smoother feel with finer tuning control. (The gear ratio refers to how many times the tuner button must be turned for the tuning post to make one full revolution. A 21:1

the lower bout (and potentially one's picking arm) higher as a result. With the Adirondack spruce bracing and other voicing nuances, players with a strong attack will love the extra dynamic range and the bold top-end response. The 814ce DLX also benefits from the Addie bracing turbo boost, especially together with the added midrange warmth the bracing coaxes from the shape. The 812ce 12-Fret DLX blends incredible playing comfort – the result of the compact 12-fret design, slinky handfeel, and the armrest – with a tonal response that's impressively bold, warm and punchy for the Grand Concert body.

Look for our 800 Deluxe models at authorized Taylor dealers. For more details, including complete specifications, visit taylorguitars.com. **W&S**

The 2017 Guitar Guide

Meet our new guitar lineup, and learn more about finding the guitar that fits you best

Welcome to our 2017 guitar guide. Whether you're discovering our guitars for the first time or you're a longtime Taylor owner, we invite you to explore our latest collection of guitars on these pages, and in person at your favorite music store. As always, we hope to be a source of musical inspiration for you.

This year's Taylor guitar line serves up more variety than ever, thanks in part to our new Academy and 800 Deluxe Series, while our fun new GS Mini Bass ventures into a different instrument category altogether. We've also brought fresh refinements to our 100 and 200 Series. And don't forget other new offerings that we debuted over the course of 2016: our re-engineered rosewood 700 Series and mahogany 500 Series, the addition of Tasmanian blackwood to our 300 Series and Indian rosewood to our 400s, plus new 12-fret and 12-string models that are captivating players in fresh ways.

Our guide will help you navigate the Taylor line and give you a handle on the qualities that differentiate the models we offer. We'll start with our five body styles and explain the unique musical attributes of each. We'll break down the distinctive tonal "flavors" of each tonewood we use. Then we'll walk you through our guitar line, which is organized by series. Beyond the musical nuances of each, you'll get a good sense of their different aesthetic personalities.

Ultimately, we'd like to think that we offer a guitar for every type of player. And we love helping people find the guitar that fits their musical needs and their personal preferences. Because when you find that guitar, inspiration is never far away.

The fun part is getting out to play different models. Our dealers are happy to help. Go spend some time at your local music store and play. Or come see us at an in-store Road Show or Find Your Fit event. Or give us a call. We'll help you find the Taylor guitar of your dreams.



A Guide to Taylor Acoustic Model Numbers

The majority of Taylor's acoustic guitars are offered in three model variations:

- **Cutaway body with onboard electronics** (e.g., 516ce)
- **Non-cutaway body with onboard electronics** (e.g., 516e)
- **Non-cutaway body with no onboard electronics** (e.g., 516)

Most models are organized by series, featuring the 100 through 900 Series along with our Academy (A), Presentation (PS) and Koa (K) Series. Here's how our numbering system works:

516ce

• **The first digit** (or letter) identifies the Series. Most guitar models within each series share the same back and side woods and appointment package.

• **The second digit** designates two things: first, whether the guitar is a 6-string or a 12-string, and second, whether the top features a softer tonewood like spruce or cedar, or a hardwood like mahogany or koa. The middle number "1" or "2" designates a 6-string guitar with a softwood (1) or hardwood (2) top.
For example: 516ce = 6-string with a spruce top; 526ce = 6-string with a mahogany top

The middle number "5" or "6" designates a 12-string guitar with either a soft (5) or hardwood (6) top. In this case: 556ce = 12-string with a spruce top; 566ce = 12-string with a mahogany top

• **The third digit** identifies the body shape according to this numbering system:
0 = Dreadnought (e.g., 510ce)
2 = Grand Concert (e.g., 512ce)
4 = Grand Auditorium (e.g., 514ce)
6 = Grand Symphony (e.g., 516ce)
8 = Grand Orchestra (e.g., 518ce)

Indicates a model with a cutaway •.....

Indicates a model with onboard electronics •.....

Taylor nylon-string models are integrated into the Academy-800 Series and are designated by the letter "N" at the end of the model name. For example, a nylon-string Grand Auditorium with a cutaway and electronics within the 500 Series is a 514ce-N.

Taylor Body Shapes



Choose from five body styles to shape your sound

First things first: An acoustic guitar should be physically comfortable to play. The more comfortable it feels, the more relaxed *you'll* feel when you play. The good news is that every guitar we make features an easy-playing Taylor neck. As you consider our five body styles, think about both the physical fit and musical fit. Physically, how do the contours of each body feel against you with your arms in playing position? If you play sitting down, the width of the waist will influence how high the guitar sits in your lap. The size of the lower bout will impact the position of your pick arm. The body depth may also affect your playing comfort.

In terms of musical fit, remember that in general, the bigger the guitar “box,” the bigger, deeper and louder the voice. A smaller, shallower body, like the Grand Concert, tends to produce a more controlled voice with less bass, fewer overtones and a bit more top-end chime. Think about what you want out of the guitar musically, considering your playing style and the musical context in which you plan to play. If you'll be playing live or recording with other instruments, consider how the guitar will fit into the mix. And remember, if you'll be plugging in, you'll have the ability to control your volume electronically, so you won't necessarily need a guitar with the loudest natural voice.



SMALL

Grand Concert (GC)

(Models end in a 2; e.g., 812)

Body Length: 19-1/2" **Body Width:** 15" **Body Depth:** 4-3/8"
Our smallest full-size body features a slightly shallower body depth and shorter scale length than other body styles. The Grand Concert is also the featured body style for our 12-fret guitars.

Playing Profile:

- Articulate voice with top-end chime and controlled overtones
- Intimate size is lap/couch friendly
- 24-7/8-inch neck reduces string tension for a slinkier feel
- Fits well in a mix with other instruments

Good Fit For:

- Fingerstyle players and light strummers
- Players who find small bodies more comfortable
- Anyone looking to reduce stress on their fretting hand
- Recording applications



MEDIUM

Grand Auditorium (GA)

(Models end in a 4; e.g., 814)

Body Length: 20" **Body Width:** 16" **Body Depth:** 4-5/8"
This Taylor original helped define the modern acoustic guitar sound and remains our most popular shape. If you want a great all-purpose guitar, the Grand Auditorium delivers pleasing versatility.

Playing Profile

- Balanced blend of warmth, clarity and sustain
- Well-defined midrange
- Accommodates fingerpicking and light medium strumming
- Responds well to many music styles

Good Fit For:

- Novices and generalists who want a multi-purpose guitar
- Recording and live performance
- Singer-songwriters and musicians fronting a band
- Almost anyone other than aggressive pickers/strummers



Grand Symphony (GS)

(Models end in a 6; e.g., 816)

Body Length: 20" **Body Width:** 16-1/4" **Body Depth:** 4-5/8"
The Grand Symphony features a slightly bigger footprint than the Grand Auditorium. This translates into a louder voice with deeper lows and thicker trebles, making it a lively picker and strummer.

Playing Profile

- Robust low end, strong volume when strumming or flatpicking
- Very dynamic: rich, powerful voice that also responds to a light touch
- Piano-like bass, meaty midrange, strong treble shimmer

Good Fit For:

- Dynamic strummers and pickers
- People who crave more tonal horsepower than the Grand Auditorium
- Gigging singer-songwriters looking for a deep and rich tonal palette



Dreadnought (DN)

(Models end in a 0; e.g., 810)

Body Length: 20" **Body Width:** 16" **Body Depth:** 4-5/8"
Our modern version of one of the most traditional acoustic guitar shapes blends its trademark low-end power with a snappy midrange and brilliant treble notes, producing a pleasing balance of power and articulation.

Playing Profile

- Wider waist causes the body to sit higher in the player's lap
- A robust “modern vintage” voice
- Low-end power, snappy mids, punchy treble

Good Fit For:

- Traditional flatpickers and strummers with a strong attack
- People who crave the traditional look and feel of a wider-waist guitar
- Pickers and strummers who want a strong low end and throaty midrange
- Bluegrass music



LARGE

Grand Orchestra (GO)

(Models end in an 8; e.g., 818)

Body Length: 20-5/8" **Body Width:** 16-3/4" **Body Depth:** 5"
The Grand Orchestra unleashes Taylor's boldest, richest voice. With a bigger footprint and a deeper body than the Grand Symphony, it yields a stronger, more complex tone with impressive sustain and balance. It's also responsive to a light touch.

Playing Profile

- Our biggest, deepest body shape
- Big, complex voice with impressive sustain
- Incredibly balanced for a big-bodied acoustic guitar
- Responsiveness to a light touch gives it broad dynamic range

Good Fit For:

- Players who want the richest, most powerful acoustic voice
- Players who like a voluptuous, Jumbo-size guitar
- Solo performers looking for an expansive palette of sonic colors and texture

Body Shapes Relative to the Grand Auditorium (GA)



Other Body Style Attributes

Cutaway vs. Noncutaway

People often ask whether a cutaway diminishes the overall tonal output. The truth is not by much. The taper of the guitar's waist will actually have more of an impact. Our opinion is that the access you gain to those upper register notes far exceeds the minimal tone differences. Beyond that, it's really just a matter of aesthetic preference.

12-Fret vs. 14-Fret

This describes the neck-to-body configuration and will affect both the feel and tonal response of the guitar. Our 12-fret necks are two frets shorter and meet the guitar body at the 12th fret rather than the 14th. This creates a more compact relationship. All of our standard 12-fret models are coupled with our smaller Grand Concert body, which also features a slightly shorter 24-7/8-inch scale length, enhancing the playing comfort with a slinky handfeel. The interesting part is that the 12-fret's bridge is shifted closer to the center of the lower bout – a more flexible spot on the soundboard – which helps produce more warmth and midrange power. This blend of comfort and extra tonal output for a small body has made our 12-frets an increasingly popular option among players.

Armrest

Our new 800 Deluxe and Academy Series guitar feature armrests, joining our 900 and Presentation Series. From a practical perspective, an armrest adds playing comfort for a player's strumming arm. As with our cutaway, people wonder whether it changes a guitar's sound. As Andy Powers explains in our story on the 800 Deluxe Series, any change is less a direct result of the armrest itself, and more the result of the *player* creating a better sound because it allows for a more relaxed playing experience.

Taylor Tonewoods

Choose from an enticing array of wood pairings

It's fun to play and compare guitars with different tonewood pairings. Each wood's unique sonic properties come to life as the strings are set in motion and the woods amplify and "flavor" the vibration. From a guitar-making perspective, the body woods that we select are strategically paired in order to produce a pleasing acoustic sound. Essentially the idea is to create the right relationship between flexibility and rigidity. That's why the wood used for the soundboard is frequently different from the wood that forms the back and sides. The flexibility of the top helps generate volume, while the rigidity of the back and sides helps produce sustain.

Think of the soundboard as a speaker cone for the strings. Vibrating strings set the soundboard in motion, and that flexing movement in turn sets the air inside the guitar body in motion. Spruce and cedar are often favored for soundboards because as coniferous trees, they grow in a way that makes them light but strong, with springy properties. As soundboards they can be set in motion easily.

The back and sides are like a speaker cabinet, and the woods used for those tend to provide more rigidity, which contributes to sustain. These are usually deciduous trees (trees that drop leaves), which grow with more consistent density, making them harder and less elastic than a wood like spruce.

Ultimately, when we describe the general tonal properties of woods, it's really just that – a generalization – because of all the other factors that contribute to a guitar's personality. The body shape, the internal bracing, other voicing nuances, and of course, you the player, all have a hand in expressing the musical personality of an instrument. All we have to do is decide which wood pairing inspires us and works best for our musical needs.

Solid vs. Layered Woods

A guitar made with a top, back and sides of solid wood will produce the most complex sound and continue to improve with age. Our all-solid-wood guitars start with the 300 Series. We also make several series of guitars crafted with layered wood back and sides, featuring three layers of wood, paired with a solid wood top. These include the Academy, 100, 200 and 200 Deluxe Series, along with the GS Mini and Baby Taylor.

Crafting guitars with backs and sides of layered, or laminated, woods allows us to conserve tonewood resources (a veneer log will produce eight times the yield of a log that's sawn for solid-wood guitar sets) and offer players a resilient, beautiful, affordable and great-sounding instrument.

Our construction features three layers of wood: a middle core of poplar with a veneer on each side. The process allows us to bend an arch into the back of the guitar for added strength, and together with the layered approach produces a durable guitar that travels well. Our layered wood options currently include sapele, rosewood, walnut and koa. Because all layered wood Taylor guitars feature a solid wood soundboard, their sound will improve as they age. We've moved away from using the term "laminated" to avoid confusion with other laminate products in the marketplace made from synthetic, non-wood materials.

Back and Side Woods



THE CLASSICS
Known for their rich musical heritage

Indian Rosewood
Models: 400, 700, 800, 900 Series

- Tone Profile**
- Full-spectrum acoustic voice with complex overtones and extended sustain
 - Deep lows assert a throaty growl, sparkling highs ring out with bell-like clarity
 - Slightly scooped mids
 - Responds well to a variety of playing styles



Maple
Models: 600 Series

- Tone Profile**
- Long revered in the bowed instrument world for its linear, transparent response; very reflective of the player
 - Traditionally known in the guitar world for having a bright, focused tone, quick attack, and fast note decay
 - Revoiced for the 600 Series in 2015 to yield more warmth, complexity, volume, sustain and responsiveness, while retaining maple's naturally clear, linear qualities



Tropical Mahogany
Models: 500 Series

- Tone Profile**
- Meaty midrange featuring a strong fundamental focus without adding a lot of ringing overtones
 - Responds well to players with a strong attack who like dry, earthy, low-fi sounds
 - Natural compression creates a volume ceiling that smoothes out loose strumming technique
 - Clear and direct tonal character makes it a great option for playing with other instruments



THE EXOTICS
Admired for their unique beauty and distinctive musical properties

Hawaiian Koa
Models: Koa Series

- Tone Profile**
- Fairly dense tropical hardwood with a strong midrange focus similar to mahogany, plus extra top-end brightness and chime
 - The more a koa guitar is played and has a chance to open up – especially an all-koa guitar – the more its midrange overtones add warmth and sweetness to its voice



Macassar Ebony
Models: Presentation Series

- Tone Profile**
- Dense hardwood producing a clear, focused sound with good projection and volume
 - Strong bass and lower mids, clear highs, and a scooped midrange like rosewood
 - Rich overtones complement slower, softer playing
 - Also responds well to aggressive playing
 - It can sound bright or dark depending on the technique of the player or pick choice

THE MODERN ALTERNATIVES
Less widespread, but with excellent tonal properties

Ovangkol
Models: 400 Series

- Tone Profile**
- An African relative of rosewood that shares many of its tonal properties, including a broad tonal spectrum
 - Full midrange and a bright treble response resembling koa
 - Bass response adds pleasing depth to the overall tone
 - Fits a versatile mix of music styles

Sapele
Models: 300 Series (paired with spruce tops)

- Tone Profile**
- Comparable to mahogany with a slightly brighter sound featuring more top-end shimmer
 - Consistent and balanced output across the tonal spectrum
 - Responds well to a variety of playing styles and fits nicely into an instrument mix

Blackwood
Models: 300 Series (paired with mahogany tops)

- Tone Profile**
- Strong volume and midrange focus – dry and clear yet warm, like mahogany and koa
 - Pleasing top-end shimmer and richness similar to rosewood
 - Its all-around musicality suits a variety of body sizes and musical styles

Soundboard Woods



Sitka Spruce
Models: Many Taylor models

- The most prevalent soundboard of the modern era
- Its blend of stiffness and elasticity translates into broad dynamic range, with crisp articulation
- Accommodates a wide range of playing styles



Lutz Spruce
Models: Academy 12-N, 510, 516, 700 Series

- Naturally occurring hybrid of Sitka and White/Engelmann spruce
- Blends tonal characteristics of Sitka with Adirondack spruce to produce extra power, richness and volume



Western Red Cedar
Models: 512/514 steel- & nylon-string models, JMSM

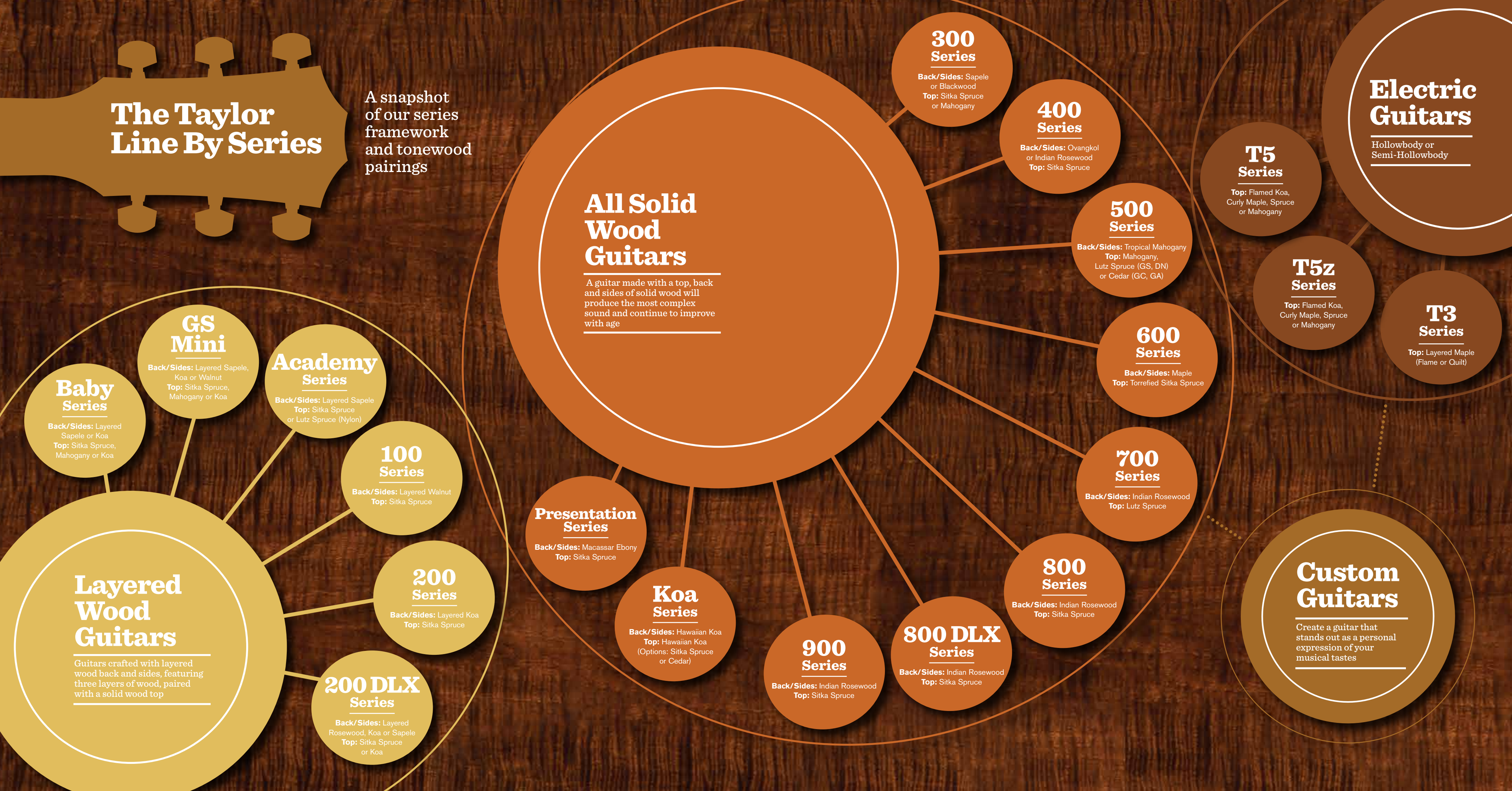
- Less dense than spruce, producing a warm, played-in sound
- Midrange bloom adds complexity to the tone
- Responds best to a lighter touch



Hardwood Tops (Koa, Mahogany)
Models: Koa Series (Koa), 500 Series, 300 Series (Mahogany)

- Produce a natural compression, yielding more of a controlled, "roll-in" effect to a note
- The compression evens out a lively attack for a more linear response
- Mahogany top: strong fundamentals, clear and direct focus
- Koa top: Similar to mahogany with extra top end shimmer and chime





Presentation Series

Each guitar crafted for our Presentation Series embodies our finest standards of material selection, aesthetic detail, and woodworking artistry. Our work channels the spirit of ornate instrument inlay work established by master craftsmen centuries ago, reinterpreted for the contemporary guitar lover. We start with magnificent sets of Macassar ebony, selected for their rich visual character, and pair them with premium-grade Sitka spruce tops featuring straight, tight grain, uninterrupted by a pickguard. The sleek beveled ebony armrest is outlined in sparkling paua abalone trim, and its vibrant colors also adorn the fretboard, bridge and soundhole. Beyond their musical appeal, these instruments stand out as a celebration of aesthetic beauty and the natural ingredients that inspire them.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Macassar Ebony
Top: Sitka Spruce
Finish (Body): Gloss 6.0
Rosette: Single Ring Paua
Fretboard Inlay: Paua Nouveau
Binding: Ebony
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Ebony Armrest, Paua Trim (Top, Back, Sides, Fretboard Extension, Fretboard, Peghead, Armrest), Macassar Ebony Backstrap, Peghead/Bridge Inlays, Abalone Dot Bridge Pins, Gotoh 510 Tuners

Available Models

PS10ce, PS12ce,
PS12ce 12-Fret,
PS14ce, PS16ce,
PS56ce, PS18e

Koa Series

Like their Hawaiian homeland, our Koa Series guitars immediately arouse the senses with their stunning visual beauty. So much so that each of our standard models incorporates an all-koa body featuring a koa soundboard that testifies to the wood’s seductive character. A shaded edgeburst and a suite of all-wood appointments honor that natural beauty. Details include a maple rosette with matching maple top trim and our flowing Island Vine fretboard inlay, in which strategically placed plumeria flowers serve as elegant position markers. A full-gloss body highlights the unique grain structure and figuring in each set of wood. You’ll be inspired before you ever pick up one of these guitars. And once you do, their sonic appeal will continue to bloom over time.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Hawaiian Koa
Top: Hawaiian Koa (Options: Sitka Spruce or Cedar)
Finish (Body): Gloss 6.0 with Shaded Edgeburst (Entire Guitar)
Rosette: Single Ring Maple
Fretboard Inlay: Blackwood/Maple Island Vine
Binding: Ebony
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Maple Top Trim, Peghead Inlay

Available Models

K22ce, K22ce 12-Fret,
K24ce, K26ce,
K28e



PS14ce



Front and back of a K24ce

900 Series

Our most sophisticated class of rosewood guitars delights in inspiring players by engaging multiple senses. It starts with luxurious aesthetic details, painstakingly executed by hand by our skilled craftspeople. The visual harmony of wood and paua abalone trim is matched by the feel of the hand-sculpted ebony armrest, designed to enhance your playing comfort. Tonally, these guitars elevate the natural complexity of rosewood with the same bundle of voicing enhancements first introduced on our 800 Series, turning a single strummed chord into a richly resonating acoustic chorus. Together, the many refinements brought to our 900s celebrate the pleasures of the high-end guitar experience in look, feel and sound.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce
Finish (Body): Gloss 3.5
Rosette: Single Ring Paua with Koa/Ebony Purfling
Fretboard Inlay: Abalone/Pearl Ascension
Binding: Ebony
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Custom-Calibrated Wood Thicknesses/Bracing for Each Shape, Protein Glue (Bracing), Side Braces, Ebony Armrest, Paua/Koa Trim (Top, Back, Sides, Fretboard Extension, Fretboard, Peghead, Armrest), Ebony Backstrap, Gotoh 510 Tuners

Available Models

910ce, 912ce,
912e 12-Fret,
912ce 12-Fret,
914ce, 916ce,
956ce

800 Deluxe Series

One of two new series to debut this year, our rosewood/spruce 800 Deluxe models boast all the tone-enhancing design elements of our popular 800 Series, plus a trio of ultra-premium features that manage to refine the feel, sound and performance even further. Our new radius armrest literally takes the edge off the playing experience, easing the physical stress on your strumming or picking arm. Adirondack spruce bracing supercharges the tonal response to create a more dynamic voice. Gotoh 510 tuners supply a higher a 21:1 gear ratio to give you finely calibrated tuning control. The result is an overall level of responsiveness that makes these guitars incredibly expressive, no matter what your playing level. Choose from Grand Auditorium, Dreadnought, and 12-fret Grand Concert models.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce
Finish (Body): Gloss 3.5
Rosette: Single Ring Abalone Edged with Rosewood
Fretboard Inlay: Pearl Element
Binding: Pale Non-Figured Maple
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Adirondack Spruce Bracing, Custom-Calibrated Wood Thicknesses/Bracing for Each Shape, Protein Glues (Bracing), Rosewood/Maple Radius Armrest, Side Braces, Rosewood Pickguard, Rosewood Top Trim, Gotoh 510 Tuners

Available Models

810e DLX,
812ce 12-Fret DLX,
814ce DLX



L-R: 910e, 914ce



814ce DLX

800 Series

The essence of the Taylor playing experience lives within our flagship 800 Series. Not only do these models trace back to the start of Bob Taylor’s guitar-making journey, but they embody our philosophy of continuous refinement, serving as the catalyst for master designer Andy Powers’ next-generation redesign efforts, which explored every material ingredient of our guitars to enhance their performance. Wood and finish thicknesses, internal voicing, glues and other nuances were all optimized to be as responsive to the player as possible, making the playing experience feel almost effortless. The results deliver much more than the sum of their individual parts, with each different model asserting its own musical personality – and that of the player – more clearly than ever. Our 800s will always honor both our heritage and our spirit of design innovation.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce
Finish (Body): Gloss 3.5
Rosette: Single Ring Abalone Edged with Rosewood
Fretboard Inlay: Pearl Element
Binding: Pale Non-Figured Maple
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Custom-Calibrated Wood Thicknesses/Bracing for Each Shape, Protein Glues (Bracing), Side Braces, Rosewood Pickguard, Rosewood Top Trim

Available Models

810e, 810ce,
812ce, 812e 12-Fret,
812ce 12-Fret,
812ce-N, 814e,
814ce, 814ce-N,
816ce, 856ce,
818e, 818ce*,
858e

*Florentine Cutaway

700 Series

Each rosewood series in the Taylor line offers something unique, both tonally and aesthetically. The 2016 mid-year retooling of our 700 Series introduced Lutz spruce tops, a bracing update, and a refreshed look to include warm, wood-rich details and an optional Western sunburst top, created exclusively for the series. Riding the wave of our ongoing 12-fret revival is the 712e 12-Fret, which blends playing comfort, a richly detailed tonal response, and irresistible neo-vintage appeal on the sunburst-top edition. And with the dynamic response of the Lutz tops, these models respond exceptionally well to a lively attack. Together with our Performance bracing and ES2 electronics, they also make an excellent option for live performance.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Lutz Spruce
Finish (Body): Gloss 6.0/Optional Western Sunburst Top
Rosette: 3-Ring Herringbone with Douglas Fir/Maple/Black
Fretboard Inlay: Green Abalone Reflections
Binding: Non-Figured Koa
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Performance Bracing with Protein Glue, Douglas Fir/Maple/Black Top Edge Trim, Weathered Brown Pickguard

Available Models

710e, 712ce,
712e 12-Fret,
712ce 12-Fret,
714ce, 714ce-N,
716ce, 756ce



Above: Singer-songwriter Aquile (aquilemusic.com) performing with an 814ce and his band at San Diego’s Park & Rec venue in December 2016 (parkandrecsd.com); Right: front and back of an 858e



L-R: 712e 12-Fret (Western sunburst top), 714ce

600 Series

We love maple for many reasons. It's a sustainably managed domestic tonewood, its player-reflective musical properties have made it a staple of the stringed instrument world for centuries, and the beautiful flamed sets we choose for our 600 Series take on a rich, cello-like appearance thanks to the infusion of our hand-rubbed Brown Sugar stain. To make things even better, the voicing refinements we recently introduced add a warmer, deeper dimension that complements maple's crisp articulation and projection. Exclusive to this series, our torrefied spruce tops give the guitars a played-in sound with pleasing responsiveness. Beyond the ever-popular Grand Auditorium 614ce, try the 612ce 12-Fret, and if you like a deep, powerful voice, the 6-string Grand Orchestra 618e and 12-string Grand Symphony 656ce deliver in a big way.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Maple
Top: Torrefied Sitka Spruce
Finish (Body): Gloss 3.5 with Hand-Rubbed Brown Sugar Stain (Back/Sides/Neck)
Rosette: Paua Edged with Ebony/Grained Ivoroid
Fretboard Inlay: Grained Ivoroid Wings
Binding: Ebony
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features/Appointments: Custom-Calibrated Wood Thicknesses/Bracing by Shape, Torrefied Top, Protein Glues (Bracing), Ebony Backstrap with Grained Ivoroid Wings Inlay, Side Braces, Grained Ivoroid Purfling (Body, Peghead), Striped Ebony Pickguard

Available Models

610e, 612ce,
612e 12-Fret,
612ce 12-Fret,
614e, 614ce,
616ce, 656ce,
618e, 618ce*

*Florentine Cutaway

500 Series

In 2016 we transformed our mahogany 500 Series, introducing Performance bracing, adding fresh soundboard options, and revealing unique design touches to give players a wealth of inspiring musical tools. Fingerstyle players will love the warmth and responsiveness of our cedar-top Grand Concert and Grand Auditorium models. Others will gravitate toward our all-mahogany offerings, which blend the rootsy aesthetic of a shaded edgeburst top with mahogany's warm, naturally compressed sound. Still others will embrace the sonic horsepower of a Lutz spruce top. The breakout hit, our small-body 12-fret/12-string 562ce, has wowed reviewers and players alike by making the 12-string experience more accessible than ever. We even tweaked our Dreadnought models, giving them a slightly shorter scale length, slotted headstock, and V-carve neck to offer a more inviting handfeel. Our mahogany family has never offered a more dynamic array of options.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Tropical Mahogany
Top: Mahogany, Lutz Spruce (GS, DN), or Cedar (GC, GA)
Finish (Body): Gloss 6.0 with Shaded Edgeburst (Mahogany-Top Models)
Rosette: Faux Tortoise Shell/Grained Ivoroid
Fretboard Inlay: Grained Ivoroid Century
Binding: Faux Tortoise Shell
Electronics: Expression System 2

Available Models

510e, 520e,
522ce, 522e 12-Fret,
522ce 12-Fret,
552ce 12-Fret,
562ce 12-Fret,
514ce, 524ce,
516ce, 526ce



L-R: 618e, 614ce



Left (L-R): Front of a slot head 510e, back of a 522e 12-Fret;
Above: Joseph from the Neck department with a 12-string 562ce 12-Fret

400 Series

Last summer we welcomed Indian rosewood to our 400 Series, and players have been thrilled to find another path to explore an established guitar tonewood with such a rich musical heritage. Meanwhile, the African ovangkol we've featured on our 400s for years continues to resonate with players on the strength of its rosewood-like properties, midrange presence, and other unique sonic characteristics. Which is better? That's for you to decide. Whichever way you lean, you can count on a full-spectrum musical range that suits all of our body styles and makes a great guitar for any music application. An all-gloss body highlights the variegation that makes each set of rosewood or ovangkol truly unique.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Ovangkol or Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce
Finish (Body): Gloss 6.0
Rosette: 3-Ring White
Fretboard Inlay: 4mm Italian Acrylic Dots
Binding: White
Electronics: Expression System 2

Available Models

410e-R, 410ce,
412e-R, 412ce,
412ce-R, 414e-R,
414ce, 416ce,
416ce-R, 456ce,
456ce-R, 418e,
418e-R, 418ce-R*,
458e, 458e-R

*Florentine Cutaway

300 Series

The gateway to the pleasures of the all-solid-wood playing experience is a double door thanks to a choice of two different wood pairings: sapele back and sides with a Sitka spruce top, and Tasmanian blackwood matched with mahogany. The latter conjures a vintage aesthetic thanks to the shaded edgeburst, satin-finish mahogany top, while sonically it responds with impressive dynamic range, featuring strong mids and pleasing top-end sparkle. Popular models include the Grand Concert 322e 12-Fret and Grand Symphony 326ce. Of the spruce-top models, try the 314ce. Unique offerings within the series include our slightly shorter-scale (24-7/8-inch) 6-string Dreadnoughts, while the 12-string Dreadnought 360e pumps out a potent low end that supports the double-course shimmer.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Sapele (Spruce Top) or Blackwood (Mahogany Top)
Top: Sitka Spruce or Mahogany
Finish (Back/Sides): Satin 5.0
Finish (Top): Mahogany: Satin 5.0/Shaded Edgeburst; Spruce: Gloss 6.0
Rosette: 3-Ring Black
Fretboard Inlay: Italian Acrylic Small Diamonds
Binding: Black
Electronics: Expression System 2

Available Models

310, 310e,
310ce, 320e,
360e, 312ce,
312e 12-Fret,
312ce 12-Fret,
312ce-N, 322e,
322ce, 322e 12-Fret,
322ce 12-Fret, 314,
314ce, 314ce-N,
324, 324e,
324ce, 316ce,
326ce, 356ce



L-R: Ovangkol/spruce 414ce, rosewood/spruce 410e-R



L-R: Sapele/spruce 314ce, blackwood/mahogany 322e 12-Fret

200 Deluxe Series

No series offers more aesthetic diversity than our 200 Deluxe collection. This year we've added another enticing tonewood pairing with our all-koa Grand Auditorium 224ce and Dreadnought 220ce. Both match layered koa back and sides with solid, shaded edgeburst koa tops. The overall look is vintage organic beauty, with the help of a black pickguard and black binding that complement the edgeburst and the ebony fretboard and bridge from our mill in Cameroon. Other layered wood back and side options include rosewood and sapele, with color choices of a sunburst spruce top (with rosewood) or an all-black Grand Auditorium. The series also features our only Grand Auditorium 12-string, the 254ce-DLX. All models sport a rich full-gloss body and optional ES2 electronics, and include a Taylor hardshell case.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Rosewood, Koa or Sapele
Top: Sitka Spruce or Koa
Finish (Body): Gloss 6.0 (Shaded Edgeburst on Koa Tops)
Rosette: Single Ring Italian Acrylic
Fretboard Inlay: Italian Acrylic Small Diamonds
Binding: Black, White or Cream (214ce-K DLX)
Electronics: Expression System 2

Available Models

210 DLX, 210e DLX,
210ce DLX, 220ce-K DLX,
214 DLX, 214e DLX,
214ce DLX, 214ce-K DLX,
214ce-BLK DLX, 214ce-SB DLX,
224ce-K DLX, 254ce DLX

200 Series

In the spirit of ongoing Taylor refinement, this year our 200 Series reveals both an aesthetic and voicing update. Now you'll find layered koa back and sides on our two models, while the solid Sitka spruce tops debut a freshly calibrated bracing scheme that pumps out a louder, bigger sound. We've kept the model selection simple, with cutaway Grand Auditorium steel-string and nylon-string models, each of which features onboard Taylor acoustic electronics. Clean appointments include white binding, Italian acrylic dot inlays, a faux tortoise shell pickguard, an ebony peghead overlay, and satin-finish back and sides with a glossy top. Both models ship in our lightweight hardshell gig bag for easy transport.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Koa
Top: Sitka Spruce
Finish (Body): Satin 5.0 Back/Sides; Gloss 6.0 Top
Rosette: 3-Ring White
Fretboard Inlay: 4mm Italian Acrylic Dots
Binding: White
Electronics: Expression System 2 or ES-N (Nylon)

Available Models

214ce, 214ce-N



L-R: 224ce-K DLX, 210e DLX



L-R: Front and back of a 214ce-N;
Above: Steven from Human Resources with a 214ce

100 Series

Like our 200 Series, the 100 Series unveils a new look and sound for 2017, featuring handsome layered walnut back and sides plus similar internal bracing refinements that boost the overall tonal output. The slim-profile Taylor neck features a slightly narrower 1-11/16-inch nut width, a thin matte finish allows the guitar to resonate freely, and the onboard ES2 pickup outfits the guitar for natural-sounding amplified tone. Players looking for an affordable 12-string to add to their guitar toolbox should try the 150e, an industry bestseller in its category. Standard appointments include black binding, a black pickguard, and Italian acrylic dot fretboard inlays. All models ship in a Taylor gig bag.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Walnut
Top: Sitka Spruce
Finish (Body): Matte 2.0
Rosette: 3-Ring White
Fretboard Inlay: 4mm Italian Acrylic Dots
Binding: Black
Electronics: Expression System 2

Available Models

110e, 110ce,
150e, 114e,
114ce, 114ce-N

Academy Series

We know from experience how much an easy-playing guitar will help players progress. That's why we designed our new Academy Series. We've cleared a path to the most inviting guitar experience an entry-level player or anyone on a budget could ask for, from a comfortable feel to pleasing tone to performance reliability, all at an affordable price. Our patented Taylor neck ensures that the guitar's intonation will ring true for years to come, and the combination of a narrower 1-11/16-inch nut width, 24-7/8-inch scale length, and light gauge strings serves up a buttery string feel that fingers will love. And on the guitar body, an armrest improves the playing comfort. Dollar for dollar, these guitars deliver arguably the best playing experience a customer could ask for. Choose from the Dreadnought Academy 10, Grand Concert Academy 12, or nylon-string Grand Concert Academy 12-N, with optional Taylor ES-B electronics that include a built-in tuner.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Sapele
Top: Sitka Spruce or Lutz Spruce (Nylon)
Finish (Body): Matte 2.0
Rosette: 3-Ring Baltic Birch
Fretboard Inlay: 4mm Italian Acrylic Dots
Binding: None
Electronics: ES-B

Available Models

Academy 10, Academy 10e,
Academy 12, Academy 12e,
Academy 12-N, Academy 12e-N



L-R: 12-string 150e, layered walnut back on a 110e, 114ce



L-R: Academy 10e, nylon-string Academy 12e-N, Academy 12e

GS Mini / GS Mini Bass

Once in a while a guitar comes along that just feels right in every way. Our beloved GS Mini is one of those guitars. Since its arrival in 2010, it's taken on a life of its own by captivating players with the perfect mix of qualities to make it feel fun and accessible – a comfortably scaled-down size, a full-bodied voice, and easy playability – all without feeling too precious for the real world. Choose from several model options, including an all-koa edition and, new for 2017, an edition with layered walnut back and sides that replaces our former layered rosewood model. The most exciting addition to the family is the new GS Mini Bass, a bundle of four-string fun that puts the acoustic bass playing experience within reach of everyone.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Sapele, Koa or Walnut
Top: Sitka Spruce, Mahogany or Koa
Finish (Body): Matte 2.0
Rosette: 3-Ring White
Fretboard Inlay: 4mm Italian Acrylic Dots
Binding: None
Electronics: Pre-Fitted for ES-Go or Expression System 2 (Models with Onboard Electronics), ES-B (GS Mini Bass)

Available Models

GS Mini, GS Mini Mahogany,
GS Mini-e Mahogany, GS Mini-e Walnut,
GS Mini-e Koa, GS Mini-e Bass

Baby Series

It's a testament to the enduring appeal of our beloved Baby Taylor that more than 20 years after its debut, it remains a staple of the Taylor line. Our mini Dreadnought helped legitimize the idea of a travel guitar as a real musical instrument, and over the years tens of thousands of kids have kicked off their guitar-playing journeys with a Baby in their hands. The Baby family has since grown to include a mahogany-top edition, a Taylor Swift signature model, and our full-scale (15/16-size) Big Baby, which features a slightly slimmer body depth for extra comfort and portability. Models are also offered with an optional ES-B onboard pickup and preamp, which includes a convenient built-in tuner, low-battery indicator, and tone and volume controls.

Series Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Sapele or Koa
Top: Sitka Spruce, Mahogany or Koa
Finish (Body): Matte 2.0
Rosette: Single-Ring Black (Screen-Printed Custom for TSBT)
Fretboard Inlay: 4mm Italian Acrylic Dots
Binding: None
Electronics: ES-B

Available Models

BT1, BT1-e,
BT2 (Mahogany Top),
BT2-e, BTe-Koa,
TSBT (Taylor Swift Model),
TSBT-e, BBT (Big Baby)



L-R: Eric from Sales on a GS Mini Bass jamming with Kristian from Inside Sales on a GS Mini-e Mahogany



L-R: Taylor Swift Baby Taylor, BT2 (mahogany top), BT1-e (spruce top)

T5 / T5z / T3

T5 and T5z
Our innovative electric guitar designs have always sought to give players something truly different to add to their arsenal. It began with our versatile hollowbody hybrid T5, which linked the electric and acoustic worlds in an unprecedented way with proprietary acoustic and electric pickups, five-way switching, a tantalizing mix of amplified tonal flavors, and dual compatibility with electric and acoustic amps (or both with an A/B/Y box). Its compact sibling, the T5z, favors the electric player with a 12-inch fretboard radius and jumbo frets to make string bends easier. Both the T5 and T5z feature four model options, with soundboard choices of flamed koa, curly maple, spruce or mahogany, and with corresponding appointment packages and color options. Two 12-string T5z models are also available.

T3
The semi-hollowbody T3 and T3/B take the genre-hopping musical range of the semi-hollow sound to another level. Distinctive features include high-definition humbuckers (or optional vintage alnicos), three-way switching, coil-splitting that transforms the humbuckers into single coil pickups, and other unique tone-shaping capability. Our sleek chrome roller bridge maintains tuning stability, and tailpiece options include a stoptail (T3) or Bigsby vibrato tailpiece (T3/B). The figured maple top, white binding, and different color/ burst options add several shades of style that pop beneath the body's gleaming hardware.

To see our full range of top options, color finishes and other appointments for each series, visit taylorguitars.com.

Custom

Owning a custom Taylor guitar is like having your own personal signature model. Our Custom program gives you access to our most current selection of tonewoods, including premium-grade sets, along with an array of neck options, appointments, color finishes and other nuanced details. It's an invitation to create a guitar that stands out as a personal expression of your unique musical tastes.

The program makes it easy to design your guitar and place your order through an authorized Taylor dealer, many of whom have visited the Taylor factory to select woods and design their own custom models. They'll be happy to help you. And if you have any questions

about wood pairings or other specs, just call us and we'll gladly recommend some options to suit your playing and aesthetic preferences.

Our custom categories cover all of our standard acoustic shapes, along with baritone, 12-fret, nylon-string, T5 and T3 options. And remember, a custom guitar doesn't have to be elaborately detailed; it can be as simple as you like. Best of all, once you place your order, you'll be enjoying your custom guitar in less than eight weeks.

For a current list of custom categories, plus a complete list of standard model options within the existing Taylor line, refer to our price list at taylorguitars.com. For

aesthetic inspiration, see our custom guitar photo gallery on our website. Or talk to one of our factory experts at a Taylor Road Show or Find Your Fit event. They have extensive experience designing custom guitars, and can help you hone your options into a blueprint for your dream Taylor.

If you live in the U.S. or Canada and have questions about our Custom program, contact your preferred dealer or call us at 1-800-943-6782. For customers outside North America, contact your local Taylor dealer or international distributor in your country.



L-R: Jordan from the Milling department on a T5z Pro with our Denim blue top (now a standard color option) and Becky from Inside Sales on a 12-string T5z-12 Classic (mahogany top); T3/B with Honey Sunburst top shown on stand



L-R: Front and back of a custom Grand Auditorium featuring A-grade Hawaiian koa back/sides, cedar top, Florentine cutaway, custom shaded edgeburst body, bloodwood binding/backstrip, and white top purfling



Tools of Whimsy

History reminds us that making music is good for our well-being

Over the last 10 years, my wife and I have talked a great deal about a concept we’ve come to describe with the word “whimsy.” I’ve watched artists, writers, painters, musicians, and other makers and doers among us who build their lifestyles around what this word signifies. Some might describe the idea in terms of delightful inefficiency, playful irrever-

ence, or inclusion of the unnecessary. Yes, it’s all of those. It’s the desire to include creativity and fun in our endeavors. But I think there’s more to the idea than just this.

Some of the oldest artifacts archeologists have found are primitive utensils – mortar and pestles for grinding up grains or tree nuts – arrow and spear points, and the remains of

encampments. These things don’t come as a surprise; they’re bits of evidence that tell of the core necessities of staying alive. What might seem odd, however, is that primitive musical instruments have also been found among these ancient essentials. If I imagine myself living thousands of years ago, it seems hard to believe that my list of priorities would be to first find

some food to eat, a cave to protect myself from being eaten by a big creature, and then make a flute to play some songs by the fire.

But perhaps it shouldn’t be. Music has always been a form of communication and expression, as well as the decoration of passing time. Perhaps those distant ancestors played songs and told stories huddled around a campfire in order to keep each other from being afraid of the wild creatures roaming in the dark. Perhaps they also discovered that music can offset the mundane aspects of life. Art and music make life beautiful in addition

lies what may be its most profound beauty. The guitar has the ability to make a person’s life better. More specifically, I think a person’s well-being is enhanced when they have the ability to express themselves in a musical language. It’s as though engaging in the music-making experience gives us entry into a world of whimsy, where we can safely say what we want to say, and wrestle with what ails us with creativity and playful irreverence. We can make sense of what we see. Playing music can be the way joy is expressed when words don’t fully explain or contain it. Equally important, playing music allows

The guitar’s voice is capable of expressing thoughts and feelings in ways that words fail.

to being a form of communication. Deep within the human spirit we find creativity – the appreciation and desire for beauty – and somehow we know there is an inherent good when we find true beauty. This beautiful good is the antidote for the drab and mundane. When it is welcomed, its warmth casts new light and causes a shift in perspective. I like to think of the shift as one from staying alive to *being* alive.

For me and presumably for others, the guitar and its music provide a much-needed dose of this beauty every day. We get to revel in the physical beauty of the instrument as an object: the richness and color contrasts of its woods, the multi-dimensional shimmer of a spruce top. There is the visual delicacy of inlays placed just so, and the allure of the instrument’s figure. There is the aroma that wafts from the raw interior surface of the timbers, a remnant of the exotic locations where the woods formerly lived as trees. We feel the sensation of strings simultaneously taut and lithe against our fingertips and hear the harmonious sound of tones complementing each other, affirming each other’s beauty. The guitar is without question a multi-sensory piece of artwork.

Then there is the music it creates. It’s difficult for me to fully take in the vastness of the guitar’s repertoire over centuries, as it reaches from the time-honed works penned by titans of music’s history to the simple yet meaningful tunes strummed by a student. The guitar’s voice is capable of expressing thoughts and feelings in ways that words fail. It inspires, weeps and empathizes; it calms, excites and explains; it moves us. I believe therein

us to share our stories as a way to keep from being afraid of the wild creatures roaming in the dark.

For me, playing guitar has been the entry ticket into this world of wonder. After all, a guitar is a perfect balance of beauty and practicality. It’s simple and portable. It’s a curvy hollow box with strings stretched over it. Yet it is so elegant that the great composer Frederic Chopin once declared, “Nothing is more beautiful than a guitar, save perhaps two.”

These are the reasons I’m so deeply thrilled for us to introduce our new Academy Series guitars, as well as our little bass. These instruments are full of whimsy and beauty in their simplicity. They’re approachable, maybe even humble to some. Yet they offer an entry ticket into the musical world where one might not have existed before. My hope as both a guitar maker and player is they’ll take on a life of their own in the hands of musicians all over the world who use them to tell their stories and make their music. I hope they provide inspiration and a needed outlet for all that we feel and see in life. Finally, I hope they do their part in honoring the trees they are made from, and the musicians they’ll serve.

– Andy Powers
Master Guitar Designer

Taylor Notes

Rosewood Update: New International Trade Regulations Take Effect

New CITES regulations for the commercial trade of *Dalbergia* rosewood took effect in January. Here’s what it means for you.



Some of you may be aware of recently enacted regulations that impact the international commercial trade of rosewood. We wanted to share the latest information and what it means for buyers, sellers and owners of rosewood guitars.

At a conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa from September 24 through October 4, 2016, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) adopted a major regulation that heightens the worldwide protection of all rosewood species under the genus *Dalbergia*. This impacts guitars and other products made with *Dalbergia* rosewood, which includes East Indian rosewood, Honduran rosewood, and cocobolo (*Dalbergia retusa*). The new regulations also apply to three species of bubinga. All *Dalbergia* rosewood species other than Brazilian rosewood (*Dalbergia nigra*) will be regulated under CITES, Appendix II. (Brazilian rosewood is protected by even stricter CITES regulations under Appendix I.) The new rosewood regulations officially took effect January 2, 2017.

What the Regulations Mean

As of January 2, 2017, import or export permits are required for commercial trade across international borders of

Dalbergia in all its forms. This includes raw materials, parts, and guitars with any *Dalbergia* part. For a guitar, this refers not only to a guitar featuring rosewood back and sides, but one that contains any *Dalbergia* rosewood components (such as binding, a peghead overlay, pickguard, or other rosewood appointments). Import/export permits will be needed for anyone who buys or sells internationally (whether a wood supplier, manufacturer, dealer, distributor, or consumer). The CITES Management Authority in the U.S., the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has stated that this regulation is neither a ban nor a boycott of domestic trade in *Dalbergia* products.

For Taylor and other manufacturers, it means that any international shipment containing *Dalbergia* rosewood that arrived in the U.S. on or after the effective listing date of January 2 must include a CITES certificate from the country it was shipped from. Typically, wood harvested prior to its listing date is considered “Pre-Convention” and may have a certificate reflecting such status.

Once the shipment arrives in the U.S. with proper CITES documentation, it can be sold and transferred without requiring additional permits as long as it stays within domestic borders. This means U.S. Taylor dealers can freely sell Taylor rosewood products domesti-

cally. Rules in the European Union (EU) are similar, allowing *Dalbergia* guitars that have been imported legally into the EU to be sold and transferred without additional permits as long as they stay within the EU and certain EU Territories. Any guitars we export to our European headquarters in Amsterdam will include all required CITES documentation.

What This Means for Guitar Owners

For the vast majority of individual owners of guitars made with *Dalbergia* rosewood, the new CITES regulations won’t impact you at all. It would only be if you were to buy or sell a guitar with *Dalbergia* rosewood internationally, in which case the guitar would need proper CITES documentation for it to be sold legally. One example would be if you live in the U.S. and want to sell your rosewood 814ce to someone living in Canada. Before you could ship the guitar, you would have to apply for a re-export certificate from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, pay an application fee, wait to receive the certificate, and then include it with the guitar when you ship it. (You can download the form from the Fish and Wildlife website: www.fws.gov). Keep in mind that it could take a couple of months to receive the certificate, so, given the time and logistics,

you might be better off selling the guitar domestically. It’s recommended that prior to any international transaction you contact the CITES authorities in the destination country to confirm CITES import regulations, as they can differ country by country.

Weight Exemption for Traveling with Your Rosewood Guitar

The CITES regulations aren’t meant to be overly restrictive to individual owners of rosewood products like guitars, so one helpful provision is an exemption for non-commercial shipments of *Dalbergia* products that weigh 10kg (about 22 pounds) or less. So, for example, if you’re a musician planning to travel internationally with your rosewood Taylor guitar, or ship it, you won’t need

a permit because the guitar weighs less than 10kg. (It’s only the weight of the guitar that matters, not the guitar and case.) Just be aware that if you wanted to travel with or ship multiple rosewood Taylor guitars, you might exceed the 10kg threshold. This would require you to get a permit. One important clarification: This exemption does *not* cover Brazilian rosewood. That requires a re-export permit because of its higher level of CITES protection.

We’ll keep you updated of any significant new developments. In the meantime, we’ve set up an information page at taylorguitars.com with the latest information and resources, along with links to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other organizations.

What is CITES?

It’s an international agreement between governments that was established in 1975 to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival in the wild. A total of 183 countries have signed the CITES treaty (including the U.S.), and are referred to as “Parties” to CITES. Every three years, those countries hold voting meetings, called conventions, to discuss and make changes to the lists of species and the regulations that are designed to protect them. The species covered by CITES are listed in three Appendices, according to the degree of protection they need. You can learn more about CITES at www.cites.org.

Why did Dalbergia garner the attention of the CITES Parties?

Law enforcement has recently found *Dalbergia* to be a major target of illegal activity – accounting for up to 35 percent of the value of worldwide seizures of illegally trafficked wild animals and plants. Taylor Guitars supports this CITES regulation because greater enforcement should mean better protection for the diversity and health of the species. We fully support new processes and procedures that will document Taylor’s compliance with the regulations and new permits.

Who issues the CITES permits required for commercial trade?

When a species is regulated by CITES, each Party (country) designates a Management Authority to administer and enforce the CITES requirements. In the U.S., CITES is administered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The U.S. Management Authority is the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS). You can find a list of Management Authorities for each country at <https://cites.org>. We’ll include a link on our rosewood/CITES page at taylorguitars.com.

TaylorWare

CLOTHING / GEAR / PARTS / GIFTS

Protect Your Taylor with the TaylorSense Smart Battery Box and Mobile App

Our breakthrough health monitoring system puts the vital signs of your guitar into the palm of your hand

We love helping customers maintain their guitars, so we're excited to introduce a new guitar care tool called TaylorSense, which makes it easier than ever to track the condition of a Taylor guitar. TaylorSense features an easy-to-install smart battery box that replaces the battery box on Taylor guitars equipped with a pickup powered by a 9V battery. The smart battery box houses sensors that monitor your guitar's:

- **Humidity**
- **Battery Life**
- **Temperature**
- **Physical Impact**



Your guitar's health data is pushed from the TaylorSense battery box to our free Taylor Guitars iOS App via low-energy Bluetooth anytime you're within range. Shaped by our extensive service expertise, TaylorSense is also calibrated to send you timely alerts when your guitar needs care, along with simple "how-to-fix" videos from our service team. The free Taylor Guitars App also includes a mobile suite of useful tools including FourTrack, a multitrack recorder, a guitar tuner, and more.

TaylorSense is currently sold through our online TaylorWare store. To learn more, visit www.taylorsense.com

taylorsense
SMART BATTERY BOX + MOBILE APP



Caps

Taylor Trucker Cap

Plastic snap adjustable backstrap.
(Black #00388, Olive #00389, \$20.00)



Men's Cap

One size fits all.
(Black #00378, \$25.00)



Contrast Cap

Snap back, flat bill. One size fits all.
(Charcoal #00381, \$25.00)



Taylor Double Neck T

Fashion Fit. Lightweight 100% cotton.
(Black #1581; S-XL, \$24.00; XXL-XXXL, \$26.00)

Jeff, senior systems administrator on our IT team, is a tech wizard who keeps the communication flowing smoothly across all of our network platforms. He sports our new Double Neck T.

Guitar Care



Taylor Guitar Polish

Spray-on cleaning polish that is easily and safely wiped away. 4 fl. oz.
(#80901, \$12.00)



The D'Addario Two-Way Humidification System*

The complete kit includes two pouches and three packets (#80356, \$30.00). Replacement packets (3) also available (#80357, \$20.00).

Men's Long Sleeve Baseball T

Standard fit. 52/48 cotton/poly. Contrast raglan long sleeves with cuff sleeve trim. Gold Taylor logo on front; gold/orange "Taylor 74" on back. (Brown #2021; S-XL, \$35.00; XXL, \$37.00)

Chris, our marketing coordinator, helps orchestrate the hundreds of Road Shows and other events we present each year. He's shown here in our sporty Long-Sleeve Baseball T.



Taylor

Guitar Straps

Choose from a wide selection of Taylor straps. Visit taylorware.com for complete descriptions and specs.



Gift Ideas



Taylor Bar Stool

30" high.
(Black #70200, \$99.00)

24" high.
(Brown #70202, \$99.00)



Taylor Key Chain/Pick Holder

Leather key chain featuring an interior pocket to hold picks.
(Brown #71033, \$18.00)



Guitar Stand

Sapele/Mahogany. Accommodates all Taylor models. (#70100, \$70.00; assembly required)



Travel Guitar Stand

Sapele, lightweight. Accommodates all Taylor models. (#70198, \$59.00)



Black Composite Travel Guitar Stand

Accommodates all Taylor models. (#70180, \$39.00)



Ultex® Picks

Six picks per pack by gauge
(#80794, .73 mm, #80795, 1.0 mm or #80796 1.14 mm; \$5.00).

Primetone Picks™

Three picks per pack by gauge.
(#80797, .88 mm, #80798, 1.0 mm or #80799 1.3 mm, \$8.50).

Variety Pack (shown)

Six assorted picks per pack, featuring one of each gauge. Ultex (.73 mm, 1.0 mm, 1.14 mm) and Primetone (.88 mm, 1.0 mm, 1.3 mm). (#80790, \$10.00)

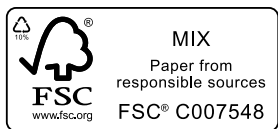


TaylorWare
CLOTHING / GEAR / PARTS / GIFTS

1 - 8 0 0 - 4 9 4 - 9 6 0 0

Visit taylorguitars.com/taylorware to see the full line.

To see the complete TaylorWare line with full product descriptions, visit taylorguitars.com/taylorware



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The FSC® is a non-profit organization that supports environmentally friendly,
socially responsible and economically viable management of the world's forests.*



Dark Side of the Moon

A stunning bookmatched set of Mun ebony (also known as moon ebony) from our tonewood reserves brings rich, exotic character to the back of this custom 12-fret Grand Concert. Whether your tastes lean toward the aesthetic harmony of woods accented with fine appointments or the creation of a musical instrument whose feel and sound best fit your musical needs, we'll be happy to craft a guitar for you through our Custom program. To learn more about designing your dream guitar, talk to your local Taylor dealer or visit taylorguitars.com.