

# **MATON: AUSTRALIA'S GUITAR**

**LARGE PRINT GUIDE**

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All guitar, amp and headstock photographs by Wadih Hanna

*Maton: Australia's Guitar*

Large print guide

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# Maton: Australia's Guitar

Since 1946, Australian company Maton has produced string instruments of exceptional quality, using handmade methods and discovering new tone woods from locally sourced timber. This attention to detail has allowed the business to thrive in a guitar market dominated by big American companies. Maton guitars have been the instruments of choice for international and Australian musicians alike, including Tommy Emmanuel, Missy Higgins, Gordi, Archie Roach, Keith Urban, Josh Homme (Queens of the Stone Age), George Harrison (The Beatles) and Keith Richards (The Rolling Stones).

The Wadih Hanna personal collection features Maton's extensive range of guitars and amplifiers from over 70 years of craftsmanship and innovation.

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## The Wadih Hanna collection

Instrument and art collector Wadih Hanna has been an avid guitar player since he was 12. His passion for Maton instruments began when his wife Lucy gifted him a Maton EM325C acoustic guitar for their wedding engagement.

Meticulously researched, the Wadih Hanna personal collection is a comprehensive documentation of Maton instruments over 70 years by a consummate guitar curator.

## **Bill May, founder of Maton**

Bill May was born in Victoria, Australia, in 1915. His experience living through the economic crisis of the Great Depression during the 1930s taught him about scarcity and innovating. In the early 1940s, May left his job as a woodwork teacher and set about making string instruments. He took out a bank loan to buy timber and converted the front-end bearings of his car into a bandsaw. By 1946, Maton Musical Instruments Company was born.

### **The first Maton guitar made by Bill May, 1946**

### **Tools used by Bill May for making instruments, 1930s–70s**

Lent by Maton Guitars

### **Sectioned acoustic guitar, 1978**

Lent by Wadih Hanna

## **Tommy Emmanuel's first guitar**

Australian guitar legend Tommy Emmanuel practised playing on his father's Maton Mastersound MS500 at the age of six. Over the decades, Emmanuel developed a percussive finger-style of playing the acoustic guitar, influenced by jazz, country, blues, bluegrass and folk. He is regarded as one of the world's greatest guitar performers.

### **Maton Mastersound MS500 electric guitar, Tommy Emmanuel's first guitar, 1960**

Lent by Maton Guitars

## **Harry Vanda's Maton Sapphire**

Musicians Harry Vanda and George Young formed the Australian rock band The Easybeats in 1964. The two shared their Maton guitars, including an acoustic FG150 and a Slenderline DC545. In fact, it was Vanda's Maton Sapphire 302/6 on which many of their songs, such as their big hit 'Friday on My Mind' (1966), were written.

### **Maton Sapphire guitar, 1964–66**

Gift of Harry Vanda, 1999

### **The Easybeats bass player Dick Diamonde's ARIA Hall of Fame Award, 2005**

Gift of Dick Diamonde, 2006

### **Sheet music for 'Friday on My Mind' by The Easybeats, 1967**

### **The Easybeats songbook, 1965**

Purchased 1993

# The beginning

In the early 1940s, Bill May quit his job as a teacher and started a guitar manufacturing and repair company in Melbourne. Due to its growing success, May invited his brother Reg, a wood machinist, to join the business. They made their first commercially available instruments in 1946, under the name Maton Musical Instruments Company. Maton comes from the surname 'May', and the word 'tone'. Now referred to as Maton Guitars or Maton, the company has remained a family-owned business.

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**1. Archtop GA1**  
Prototype for the Goldtone line 1946  
The first Maton guitar.

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**3. Acoustic Premier**  
1954  
The first Premier model.

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**6. X Flat Top**  
1946



**2. Electric E1**  
1946  
The first Maton electric guitar, made for American jazz musician Jack Wilson.



**4. Acoustic G210**  
Goldline 1946

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**5. Acoustic M300**  
Mayfair Royal 1940s

# Uniquely Maton

Unlike many other manufacturers, Maton has never been concerned about making copies of established American guitars. Instead, the company focuses on creating original instruments using high-quality Australian wood. These include the strikingly unique Fyrbyrd Shark Bite, Ibis and Flamingo, and Maton's signature Mastersound series known for its innovative design and versatility.

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**7. Electric MS503**  
Mastersound 1998

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**10. Electric FB620**  
Fyrbyrd 1964

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**13. Electric FB620**  
Fyrbyrd Shark Bite 1962  
A six-string model with three pickup selections.

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**8. Electric F555**  
Flamingo 1963

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**11. Acoustic Resonator**  
1995  
The only one ever made.

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**14. Electric 373**  
Ibis 1963

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**9. Electric MS2000DLX**  
2000

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**12. Electric F555**  
Flamingo 1963  
A rare original factory colour.

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**15. Electric MS500**  
50th Mastersound 2008  
A reissue of the 1958 MS500 celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Mastersound.



**16. Electric FB650**  
Fyrbyrd 1965

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**17. Electric 373**  
Ibis 1964

A rare example featuring a Fyrbyrd-style headstock at the neck of the guitar.

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**18. Electric MS500**  
Mastersound 1999

The 1000th MS500, custom made by a Maton employee.

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**19. Electric WSG/6**  
Wildcat 1975



**20. Electric S1**  
Wedgtail 1968

The first Wedgtail ever produced.

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**21. Electric WSG/6**  
Wildcat 1974

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**22. Electric FB1220**  
Fyrbyrd 1965

A custom model.

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**23. Electric WX**  
Wedgtail 1972

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**24. Electric FB620**  
Fyrbyrd Shark Bite 1962



**25. Electric FB1220**  
Fyrbyrd 1965

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**26. Electric**  
Flaming Arrow 2005

One of only two of its kind, played and signed by Australian guitarist Tommy Emmanuel.

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**27. Electric WSG/6**  
Wildcat 1976

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**28. Electric FB620**  
Fyrbyrd 1963





**29. Electric Big Ben  
guitar**  
1959

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**30. Electric MS502**  
Mastersound 2002  
The very first MS502  
made.

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**31. Electric MS500TE**  
Tommy Emmanuel  
Signature Mastersound  
2000

# Archtop

This type of guitar features an arch at the top of the instrument. Much like cellos and violas, the archtop receives its acoustic energy or sound from the way the strings are mounted at the tail end of the instrument. When played, the archtop guitar produces a tone that is woody in depth, round and even.

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**32. Electric EG240**  
Supreme 1962

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**35. Electric EG90 151**  
Starline 1960

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**38. Electric EG2C**  
Maxim 1967  
A one-off model.

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**33. Electric DC545**  
Double Cut 1964

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**36. Electric DC1500**  
Double Cut, date  
unknown  
Owned by Australian  
country music artist  
Alan Hawking.

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**39. Electric DC545**  
Double Cut 1964  
This jungle green colour  
is a signature finish on  
Maton electric guitars.

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**34. Electric SE90**  
Starline 1954  
The first electric  
production from Maton.

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**37. Electric EG240**  
Supreme 1961

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**40. Electric DC545**  
1967

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# Jazz

Jazz guitarists favour archtop, hollow-body guitars with a floating bridge that allows for a wider range of different sounds and tones. The combination of the broad sound-box, electric pickups and amplification provides the ideal backdrop for jazz chord voicings and improvised solos. Australian jazz great George Golla is a dedicated Maton player, and his signature Maton model is featured here.

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**41. Electric 505**  
Apollo 1972

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**44. Electric EG45A**  
Premier 1960

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**42. Electric 505**  
Apollo 1969

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**45. Electric J45/1**  
Jazzman 1970

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**43. Acoustic/Electric M5**  
1981

Designed with jazz musician and teacher Barry Morton, this was the first one produced.



**46. Electric GG22**  
George Golla Starline  
1967

Named after George Golla, designed for the professional jazz player.

# Country and western

This music genre is characterised by ballads or dance tunes featuring the use of string instruments, such as electric, acoustic and lap steel guitars. Many Australian country and western music artists play Matons, including distinguished guitarist Lindsay Butler – whose signature models are on display – John Williamson, Keith Urban, Paul Kelly, Dave Graney, Archie Roach, Missy Higgins and John Butler.

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**47. Acoustic HG25**  
Professional 1950

Made for Alan Hawking of Australian country music band The Hawking Brothers.

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**50. Acoustic CW100**  
1961



**53. Lap steel ES50/6**  
1968

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**48. Acoustic OL60**  
Overlander 1974



**51. Acoustic HG12**  
Electric 1950

Owned by Russell Hawking of The Hawking Brothers.

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**54. Lap steel ES100/16**  
1970

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**49. Acoustic MS111C**  
The Messiah, Florentine Cutaway 1982



**52. Acoustic HG100**  
About 1950



**55. Lap steel ES50/6**  
1960



**56. Lap steel ES50/6**  
1959

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**57. Electric FB86**  
Lindsay Butler  
Tamworth Guitar 1988

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**58. Electric, Country  
Gold Star**  
Lindsay Butler Signature  
Model 1981

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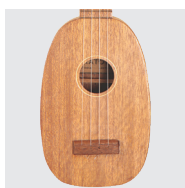


**59. Acoustic MS1**  
The Messiah 1977

# Ukuleles

The national instrument of Hawaii, the ukulele resembles a small guitar that varies in size and construction. Maton first made ukuleles in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and has again recently picked up production. Maton ukuleles are produced from Australian tone woods, including Victorian blackwood and Queensland maple neck, which create rich and full sounds.

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**60. Style No. 1P**  
1969

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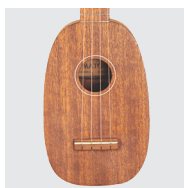
**63. Style No. 2**  
1969

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**61. Style No. 1**  
1969

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**64. Style No. 1P**  
1971

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**62. Style No. 3**  
1971



**65. Style No. 4**  
1971

## Folk and classical

Folk and classical guitars are the closest modern relatives to the origins of the guitar from early 1500s Spain. Maton's folk and classical guitars were two of the company's longest running lines. The Folk Guitar line sold more than 8000 over ten years, while the classical guitar models C50, on display, and C25 were in production for 30 years.

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**66. Acoustic F10**  
Folk Guitar 1973

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**69. Acoustic C50**  
Classical 1982

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**67. Acoustic F10**  
Folk Guitar 1970

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**70. Acoustic F10**  
Folk Guitar 1960s

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**68. Acoustic with pickup FG100/6**  
Folk Guitar 1972



**71. Acoustic C45**  
Classical 1971

# Bass guitars

Electric bass guitars became popular in the 1950s because they were small, light and easy to play. Maton bass guitars are among the most diverse and original in the world and have a following of devoted users, including bass master Clive Harrison, Australian blues band The Chain's Barry O'Sullivan, Garry Beers from INXS and Brian Richie from Violent Femmes.

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**72. Electric BB66**  
Big Ben 1959

The Big Ben is the first bass guitar to be commercially manufactured in Australia.

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**75. Electric BB66**  
Big Ben Twin 1963

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**79. Electric**  
Baroque Bass 1969

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**76. Electric FB71**  
Fyrbyrd Bass 1971

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**80. Electric 473**  
Ibis 1963–65

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**73. Electric**  
Baroque Bass 1968

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**77. Electric**  
Barry Sullivan BS Bass  
1975

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**81. Electric**  
El Toro Bass 1972

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**74. Electric FB71**  
Fyrbyrd Bass 1974

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**78. Electric L101**  
Lute Bass 1968

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**82. Electric BG222**  
Beatsound 1966





**83. Electric 473**  
Ibis 1964

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**84. Electric 402/4D**  
Sapphire Deluxe 1970

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**85. Electric MGB4 FL**  
1985

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**86. Acoustic/Electric B60**  
Bindarra 1977

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**87. Electric JB4**  
Jumbuck Bass 1978



**88. Electric MS1100**  
Mastersound 1965  
The first of the Maton hollow-body basses.

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**89. Electric V400**  
Vampyr 1964  
Rare bass guitar with six strings.

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**90. Electric B250**  
Goldline Bass 1973

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**91. Electric MS1100**  
Mastersound 1966  
A rare left-handed model set up to be played right-handed.



**92. Electric WSB/4**  
Wildcat 1975

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**93. Electric MB33**  
Magnetone Bass 1967

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**94. Electric JB4 FL**  
Jumbuck Bass 1981

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**95. Electric MGB5**  
1988  
A very rare five-string Maton bass, one of only eight in the world.

# Rock 'n' roll

Influenced by jazz, blues, country and soul, rock 'n' roll music focuses on the guitar and the range of dynamic sounds it creates. Over the years Maton has innovated and custom-designed electric guitars, attracting some of the world's most interesting rock guitarists, such as Ray Davies from The Kinks, Josh Homme from Queens of the Stone Age and Brody Dalle from The Distillers.

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**96. Electric 725**  
Leaderman 1966

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**99. Electric EG75**  
Supersolid 1960

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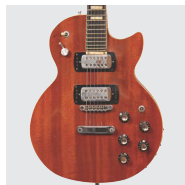
**102. Electric MS500S**  
Mastersound 1957

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**97. Electric G250**  
1973

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**100. Electric PM1**  
Phil Manning  
Custom Stereo 1974

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**103. Electric TB36**  
Magnetone 1967

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**98. Electric SC500**  
Scorpion 1985



**101. Electric L202**  
Lute 1968



**104. Electric 725**  
Leaderman 1964-66



**105. Electric 750**  
Goldline 1961

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**106. Electric MS500M**  
Mastersound 1959–60

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**107. Electric 302/6**  
Sapphire Deluxe 1971

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**108. Electric 750**  
Goldline 1963  
With a very rare gold finish.

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**109. Electric L202**  
Lute 1967



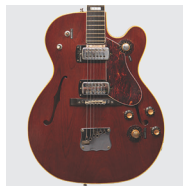
**110. Electric**  
El Toro 1978

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**111. Electric EG75**  
Supersolid 1959  
A rare single pickup version of this range.

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**112. Electric GE500**  
Goldline Electric 1971

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**113. Electric BS66**  
Beatsound 1969  
Inspired by John Lennon and George Harrison's use of the Rickenbacker 325 during Beatlemania in the 1960s.



**114. Electric MS500**  
Mastersound 1961  
The last of the original Mastersound range.

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**115. Electric**  
El Toro 1968

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**116. Electric AX5**  
1974

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**117. Acoustic/electric EMD12**  
2007  
Designed for Australian rock musician Diesel.



**118. Electric G250**  
1974

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**123. Electric FB86**  
1988

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**127. Electric MX15**  
Pro 2 1987

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**119. Electric JBX6**  
1978

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**124. Acoustic/electric ALC50**  
Albert Lee Signature  
1990  
Named after English  
guitarist Albert Lee.

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**128. Electric T2**  
Tasman 1981  
Manufactured in Japan  
to Maton's design.

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**120. Electric MS500M**  
Mastersound 1960

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**125. Electric MX15**  
Pro 2 1988

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**129. ELECTRIC FB70**  
1968

This model is the rarest  
of all the Fyrbyrds.

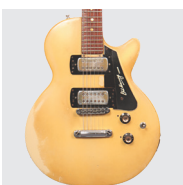


**121. Electric JB6**  
1983

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**126. Electric MX15**  
Pro 2 1988



**122. Electric PM2**  
Phil Manning Standard  
1976

# Amplifiers

Maton began manufacturing amplifiers in the early 1950s so that each of their guitars were sold with one. The company continued making them until the 1970s, including a professional range. Primarily tube amplifiers, which use vacuum tubes to boost the power of a signal, Maton amps are beautiful remnants of great Australian design.

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**Challenge**  
1950s

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**AM3**  
Mastersound 1959

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**Guitar/bass amplifier  
STB75**  
Super Twin 1972

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**Stradivarius Special**  
1955

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**OPAL T30**  
Solid State 1960s

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**Starline T506**  
Professional 1966

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**AM1**  
Mastersound 1958



**AM3**  
Mastersound 1959



**Diamond Series Pasha**  
Early 1960s



**Super Twin Head T100**  
1971

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**V606**  
Professional 1960s



**V202**  
Vibrasound, late 1960s

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**HM10**  
Hi Mark Tremolux 1961

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**AM1, sold with Starline  
SE90 guitar**  
1954

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**V606**  
Professional 1960s