

Woods & Steel



BUILDER'S
-EDITION-
COLLECTION

Letters

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Best Case Scenario

I'm a father of 7, a public school music teacher, and a church worship leader. For my 40th birthday, my family bought me my first good acoustic guitar – I went to House of Guitars in Rochester, New York, and picked out my favorite Taylor. It's been amazing. Two years later, it was a busy day, I was dropping off kids, people were loading and unloading things from the trunk, and as I backed out of the driveway, I could feel that I had backed over something. Turning onto the road, the car dragged the object forward, then ran over it again. It was at that moment the horror struck me that it was, indeed, my Taylor guitar. As I hurriedly jumped into the street to get it, I started thinking about having to wait until my 50th or 60th birthday to replace it. Amazingly, although the case was heavily damaged on the exterior, the guitar inside was UNTOUCHED. Completely fine. I was glad I got a Taylor case and didn't skimp with something cheaper and wimpier. As soon as possible, I purchased a new Taylor case, and my guitar is looking and sounding as great as ever. Everyone always praises your guitars, but I wanted to say thanks for the effort you put into making quality cases!

John Ruth
Covington, Pennsylvania

Ebony Reunion

Bob, your column last issue [Bob-Speak, Vol. 95 / Fall 2019] was tremendous. I, too, have a Buck knife. It was my first hunting knife. I'm 64. There are definitely products that are built

to last, including wooden instruments, although they are more fragile. But the real essence of your article was how you reunited ebony with Buck Knives. That is just outstanding. Thank you for great work and products. I've only been playing for six years, on a GS Mini, my first guitar. And I'm fond of ebony!

Charlie Francisco, DVM

Deluxe Treatment

I'm the proud owner of an 810, 414 Special Edition, GS Mini and a Baby Taylor. I gave my 414 to my son, who is a far better player than me, when he went to college, but I miss it terribly, and my 810 is exacerbating some arm issues, so it seems I need to get another guitar with a smaller body.

I tried out the 814ce DLX last week and fell in love. It is the first V-braced Taylor I've tried, and I can't articulate how great it sounded nor how much it has ruined my life. Normally, when picking up strings at the local Taylor dealer, I'll drop in and spend a little time playing a few guitars (Taylor, Martin, Gibson, etc.), but I never feel like I'm playing a guitar that sounds as good or plays as well as my 810. Each visit is an affirmation that my 2003 810 cannot be improved upon. Dang it, Andy – now I need to get the 814ce DLX! Its sustain, its playability, even the way I can hear it much better than my 810 have made me less satisfied with my present Taylor collection. The armrest is icing on the cake. I do have a question, though.

Is it possible to get the identically appointed guitar with a tobacco sunburst or stained top of some sort, or is that blasphemy? I look at this as my last guitar purchase (I'm not going to play and be further tempted by any of Andy's future models...except maybe the 12-string!), and I've always wanted a guitar that didn't have the typical blonde spruce top. Can it be done? Assuming so, what would my options be, and how much extra should I expect to pay?

Nick Richardson

Ed. Note: We love a good sunburst, too, Nick. You can order an 814ce DLX with a sunburst top for an additional \$200 (USD).

A Sweeter Sound

I was interested in the "Ask Bob" query about the effect on tone the size of the soundhole has. A few months ago, I attached an ES-Go pickup to my GS Mini, and as you are aware, the pickup covers a small part of the soundhole near the neck of the guitar. When playing the guitar acoustically (i.e., not through the pickup or amp), I have noticed the tone is "sweeter" – there is more high end and a slight reduction in bass. I have to say I love this "new" tone, and friends have commented, thinking it was a different guitar. Now that I have read the response regarding the effect of the size of the soundhole on tone, I am happy to learn that I wasn't imagining the change in my guitar sound!

Alan Fimmimore
Surrey, England

Eco Logic

I recently purchased a V-Class 414ce and wanted to let you know that your efforts to build guitars in an ecologically friendly way, especially the efforts to ensure that ebony does not become endangered, were as important as the build quality, playability, tone, etc. When I started looking for a really



nice acoustic guitar, I ran across Bob Taylor's video about the Ebony Project on YouTube. After seeing how environmentally conscientious he is and how he incorporated that as a major part of Taylor Guitars' philosophy (and practice), I decided that the only question was which Taylor guitar I liked best and could afford. The 414ce is outstanding independent of all of this, but I did want Bob to know that his environmental concerns and the fact that he is doing something and not just talking about it were as important as any other consideration. Based on my experience with my 414ce and Bob's commitment to the environment, the next acoustic guitar I buy will be a 400 or 500 Series 12-string.

David B.

Acoustic Workhorse

I am a lifelong guitar player. I started playing when I was 7 and would practice sometimes until I wanted to cry from finger pain. I never had the luxury of an expensive guitar. I tried to make an old Harmony sound like the pros. That never happened.

Years later when I went to college, I befriended a fellow who is still a good friend to this day. Like me, he loved acoustic music, and we would play and sing for hours. He had a Taylor 110. I had never heard something like that. It was amazing to me.

Years later, when I was 28, I went to compete in the Doc Watson Flatpicking Competition at Merlefest, and I asked if he would mind if I played his guitar. I didn't win, but the 110 held its own in a competition full of [other brands]. A couple of the folks came up to me after and asked about my pick and strings, etc. I simply conceded that it was a great guitar. At that point I decided to get my own Taylor 110. I have had it for over eight years now, and I still love that guitar.

Thank you for making such quality guitars. I am already in the market for a higher-level Taylor, but I won't be forgetting about my 110 anytime soon.

Jay Vinson
North Carolina

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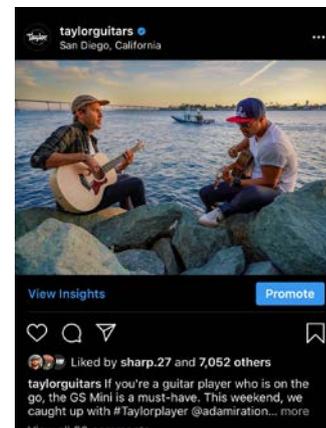
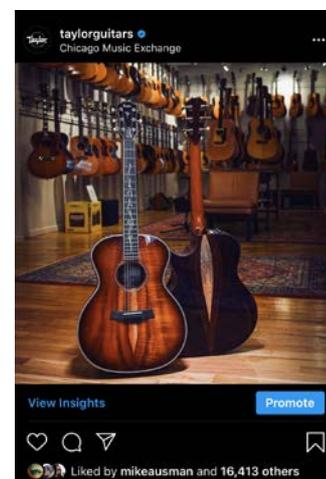
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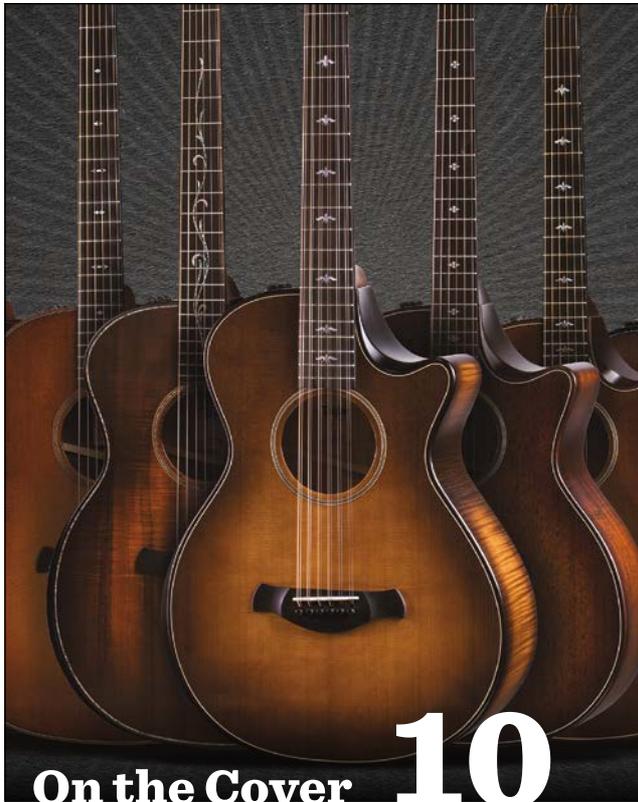
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The Builder's Edition Collection

It started with Andy Powers' quest to make our guitars feel and sound better. Two years and nine guitars later, Andy's Builder's Edition concept has blossomed into a stunning guitar collection that combines our V-Class bracing with premium contouring features. Meet our four newest models.

Builder's Edition 816ce

Our first V-Class Grand Symphony incorporates an innovative soundport cutaway to create an immersive acoustic experience unlike anything you've ever heard.

Builder's Edition 912ce

This rosewood Grand Concert was designed with electric players in mind. The response is fast in feel and sound – clear, clean and powerful.

Builder's Edition 652ce

With its reverse-strung setup and our V-Class voicing, you've never played an acoustic 12-string with tone as meaty and clean as this maple/spruce beauty.

Builder's Edition 324ce

Ever wonder what happens to city trees when they need to be removed? So did we. We're thrilled to introduce a new guitar – and a new initiative – featuring salvaged ash.

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“The notes sound like they're growing as they sustain out.”

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Kurt's Corner

The Global Appeal of Guitars

Traveling all over the world the past decade, I've gained an interesting perspective on different guitar markets as well as different cultures. I've learned firsthand that there is not one "guitar market." Rather, there are millions of people from different cultures with different inspirations who make music playing guitar. Some music transcends borders and boundaries; other music is very local. Our job as instrument makers is to pay attention to the music people are making and to create instruments that will inspire them.

I feel very fortunate to have been able to travel so much with my sales and marketing team, explore so many different cultures, and make so many friends in our industry all over the world. I'd like to share some of my experiences and observations with you.

To continue growing our sales, in 2010 we established our own European direct-to-dealers distribution business with a warehouse and headquarters in Amsterdam. There are many great music stores throughout Europe, most of them independently owned and operated, with a few chain-store operations and one particularly dominant Internet retailer.

Europe shares a lot of the same popular music as America, particularly the U.K. It's a mature guitar market, like the U.S., though the music shop owners tend to be a little younger than those in America.

I'm really happy we chose Amsterdam for our European headquarters. It's a beautiful city to visit and spend time in,

the people are great, and the location is central to business operations throughout Europe.

Until I started traveling throughout Asia and Southwest Asia, I had no idea how large and diverse this region of the world is. South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Kuala Lumpur – all have healthy guitar markets, and many have beautiful retail stores that would rival anything you'd find in America or Europe.

Japan has what I'd consider Asia's most Western-influenced culture, especially Tokyo, and we've sold guitars in Japan for more than 30 years. Japan has a mature guitar market, like in the U.S. and Europe, but younger people, especially women, have been taking up guitar playing and songwriting. Farther south, visiting Australia and New Zealand feels so much like Europe and America. Both countries have well-developed guitar markets, and much of the same British and American music is popular, as well as their local artists. China, however, is a uniquely different story, as the culture is changing so rapidly.

I've been attending the Music China show in Shanghai since 2015, and Taylor has exhibited here for many years. It's grown to be the largest musical instrument trade show in the world, surpassing the NAMM Show in Anaheim, California. This show has been changing dramatically. At the first shows I attended, the guitar companies exhibiting were

largely factories that made private-label guitars for export. Guitars and Western music were a very small part of Chinese culture. As the middle class has developed, however, more Chinese young people have taken up playing the guitar and Western music. In response, most Chinese guitar companies have adapted by establishing their own guitar brands for selling to Chinese consumers and for export to other countries.

Interestingly, acoustic music and acoustic guitars appear to be growing fastest in China. At a recent show I attended, the outdoor stages featured scores of young men and women playing and singing Western music. I heard at least four different young Chinese people playing Ed Sheeran's "Thinking Out Loud." In October, at the most recent show, Taylor had its largest display yet, which was packed with consumers the entire time. It will be interesting to watch this market and see how Western music culture and guitars continue to grow in popularity over the coming years.

So, instead of one global "guitar market," I see the sum of guitar popularity around the globe and across many diverse cultures. I've seen it grow tremendously throughout my career, and I see no evidence that the guitar's popularity will do anything but continue growing well into the future.

– Kurt Listug, CEO

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Bob Speak

Forward Progress

I'm continually delighted with the projects that move along each year here at Taylor Guitars. But we come in each day and think we move as slow as molasses. I just read a great little book that Andy Powers found in an antique store, written about 80 years ago about Henry Ford, and I have to say, there's a guy who plowed ahead. So impressive. Before reading it, I wasn't fully informed about his amazing accomplishments and the speed at which he operated. The world has produced a lot of people like him – Elon Musk and the like. People who start with nothing and really get things done. By comparison, I feel like my feet are stuck in concrete. So, during the end of the year as I look back, it's pleasing to see that we've made some significant progress this year. Let me touch on just a few things that also are written about in more depth in this issue.

Guitars. Even though I have so many interests with Taylor, it is ultimately about guitars. All efforts align to that end. Andy has been hard at work. I'll start by saying that I've attended luthier conventions for decades and read research articles as well. Esoteric ideas of getting more out of a guitar have been discussed in theory with a bit of practice for as long as I can remember. Most of them don't make it to the market, and if they do, they usually fade away as the guitar reverts to its traditional form. I agree with the traditional form of the guitar, which is

really important. However, the function of the guitar leaves a lot to be developed. Our neck system, for instance, is the same form, but a better function. V-Class bracing keeps the form and improves the function. Andy's Builder's Edition guitars modify the form a little, but keep the guitar looking like a guitar while improving its function. One very cool thing that Andy has designed and that we're introducing is a second soundhole on the Grand Symphony. Wait until you hear it, especially as the listener sitting in front of it. Andy's brain works in such a way that he seeks improvements in sound, but can package the depths of his ideas in a form that we can accept. This guitar looks as beautiful as it sounds. You can read all about it in this issue. I'm impressed by how he's able to see in his mind the inner workings of the guitar, and have intuition of how to realign and redesign to meet his objectives. And being a guitar player and lover, he always finds a way to keep the form.

Another in-depth article written by Scott Paul discusses our initial work in what we call urban forests. The new Builder's Edition 324ce is a production model that uses wood from Southern California city streets. Not just any wood, but a wood called Shamel ash that Andy and I both agree is one of the nicest woods we've ever worked with and is perfectly suited for good guitars. Scott discusses how and why this wood has become available and

also reports on the diminishing urban canopy that each and every one of us could help improve. People see the reports of the work we do in far-off forests and wonder how they can help, and I seldom have a good answer for them. It's just too far off, and a single individual can't really help. But nearly anyone can help with the current and future care of our urban trees. I hope you enjoy the article. As time passes, and as we discuss this more, you may be able to view the trees in your yard, neighborhood and city with new eyes and, most importantly, new ideas about how to grow them. This is a topic we'll talk about for a long time. Hopefully forever, because there's so much potential to do good.

In 2019, we planted the most ebony trees that have ever been planted, and 2020 promises to be equal or more. We have thousands of seedlings growing, waiting for the time and place to plant, and we're working on it every day. In Hawaii, we own hundreds of acres that are slated for replanting. March of 2020 is our target for the initial tranche of eight plantings – about 22,000 koa trees for each year, with each planting spread out evenly over the next eight years. I'll tell you next issue if we accomplished that. We might postpone it a year as we've found some last-minute breeding and testing information we want to follow up on, which could make a huge difference in the success of the plantings

2020 Taylor Factory Tours & Vacation Dates

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 or email us: privatetours@taylorguitars.com.

While not physically demanding, the tour does include a fair amount of walking. Due to its technical nature, the tour may not be suitable for small children. The tour lasts approximately one hour and 15 minutes and departs from the Visitor Center 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 17 (Presidents' Day)

Monday, May 25 (Memorial Day)

Monday, June 29- Friday, July 3
(Independence Day/Company Vacation)

in the long term. While I'm raring to go and would love to report that we got so many trees in the ground this March, I know that 50 years hence, an extra year to get better prepared will make a hugely positive difference to the outcome. Stay tuned.

Speaking of tuning...we continually get comments from studio professionals, both players and engineers, that V-Class bracing has made a huge improvement in the music they are able

to play and the ease with which they can record. I love hearing that, it's truly music to my ears!

– Bob Taylor, President

Ask Bob

Jumbo frets, maple necks,
customer focus and strap pin location

I recently purchased a new 614ce, and it is the finest acoustic guitar I have ever owned in both sound and playability. I also play electric guitar, and some years back I decided to upgrade an old Strat with a new neck that has jumbo frets on it. The guitar now takes much less energy to play. The difference was incredible — it went from being an instrument I didn't play very often to one of my go-to axes. Is there some technical reason why jumbo fret wire is not used on acoustic guitars? Is thinner fret wire just a preference of most acoustic players? I have long thought that the first acoustic manufacturer who figured out how to make this work would leave everyone else in the dust.

Warren J. Cox
Oakhurst, California

Warren, thanks for the great comments on the 614ce. Your experience of playing with jumbo frets is shared by some but not most people. The wire we chose fits the normal range of what the bulk of players prefer. Jumbo wire would certainly make you happier, but not everyone. I say that based on experience. So, no, there's no technical reason why we don't use it. Believe me, because we're always trying to leave everyone else in the dust, as you say! We'd be all over it if that would make the difference. I must say that comments like yours do give other players ideas for their own guitars, so thank you for sharing your experience. I'll bet someone here will go out and change frets tomorrow. So, your influence does have effect!

Bob, I was recently in my local guitar store looking at some Academy Series guitars. The sales guys mentioned they had gotten in some new ones. We unboxed one of the them and noticed the new ones have maple necks as opposed to the mahogany or sapele necks on the previous models. This was new to the sales guys and new to me, too. Why do those guitars have maple necks now? By the way, one of them (Academy 12e) with a maple neck



came home with me. I love it! It's not my first Taylor, and it probably won't be my last.

Cindy L. Thomas
Renton, Washington

Thanks for asking, Cindy. Yes, in an effort to reduce the impact of our use of mahogany and sapele in tropical areas, we're switching to Canadian hard rock maple on some high-volume guitars in our line. Not only do we feel like our own use of mahogany had become high, but it becomes more difficult to obtain the highest-quality pieces. You should know that only a percentage of mahogany trees are suitable for guitars. At Taylor, we've built our factory and methods around the idea of being able to use mahogany (or any species) that is not the best of the best. That's

because the world is simply running out of the super-premium wood, especially in the tropics. In order to remedy that, we first work on ways to use the wood the forest gives us by inventing new methods of manufacturing, and second, to reduce the amount of wood we take. This is an absolute must. Maple, being a legitimate neck wood for electric and acoustic guitars, is a great choice. But it's not just the wood alone; it's also the supplier in Canada who's cutting the wood. This supplier is an excellent cutter of maple, who not only cuts perfectly, but honors the wood and knows the health of the supply, and there is a long and deep supply of trees. It's seemingly sustainable, although that's a word we don't like to use. But with their help, we are able to reduce mahogany use and offer wonderful necks on some high-vol-

ume guitars. It's a step in the right direction for maintaining our natural resources. And the guitar turns out better in the end because of the quality of this wood. I'm so pleased you noticed and like it. At our end, it's a huge step in the right direction, living as we do in the world we have, not the world that once was or will be. And by the way, North American forests are maintained very well compared to tropical forests. We should be proud of what Americans and Canadians have been able to do overall. Now we Americans have to help maintain those forests in other countries just as well, which is a tougher challenge because the entire world is in those forests cutting. But we're doing what we can to hold the line and be an example.

I own a Taylor GS Mini and just love it. My question: Are there any negative long-term effects on acoustic guitars when they are hung from wall hanger guitar mounts?

Greg Smith
Cedar Creek, Texas

Greg, do you mean will the neck stretch? Ha-ha, sorry, I couldn't resist. Nope, no long-term effects from hanging. However, keeping a guitar permanently out in the open exposes it to potential humidity extremes. If you maintain normal humidity levels of 40-60 percent, the guitar could hang there forever. A GS Mini, in particular, is pretty tough and holds up nicely.

Recently I had the pleasure of attending a Road Show and was advised that the current thinking is that the wonderful neck you have developed for the Grand Pacific will not be coming to other models. I was just wondering about your reasoning. This isn't meant as a knock on the necks on the other models, as they are incredibly good, but what you have done with the Grand Pacific neck is truly impressive.

Stephen Arrowsmith

Stephen, thanks for those comments. I'll pass them on to Andy, who's the genius behind that model and all its

details. Andy made it a very purposeful neck for the sound that guitar makes. Don't be surprised if over the years Andy makes more and more specific details for models that include matching the neck with the sound.

As someone who has purchased quite a few Taylor guitars, from the Baby Series to the 600 Series, and played a few 700 Series, I've always found myself returning to my first Taylor, a 324e (mahogany top, sapele back and sides), because it spoke to me more than any of the others in my collection at the time. That is, until I picked up the new Grand Pacific 317e and Grand Auditorium 324ce (mahogany top, Tasmanian blackwood back and sides). There is just something about the 300 Series that gets me. They sound the best to me, not to mention the woods used in the 300 Series lineup. I am also a huge supporter in the fight against the extinction of trees, so using sustainable woods is important to me. The Grand Pacific just feels right when I'm playing it. However, I love the rounded edges on the Grand Pacific 517 and 717, along with the different finishes. Do you see Taylor bringing a Builder's Edition into the 300 Series lineup? Also, does Taylor Guitars plan on using ebony fretboards that have those beautiful streaks versus just using them on the higher series?

Andrew Neufeld
Warman, SK, Canada

Andrew, your comments are so on point with our current thinking of guitar design and wood use. You just about wrote a feature article! What could I add that you haven't said, except to say that you're in luck. We're introducing the Builder's Edition 324ce, which not only has all those features you love, and a mahogany top, but the sides and back are made from Urban Ash, harvested from the city streets of Los Angeles. Yes, you heard me right! We've worked hard on this, and we now have a long and steady supply using this incredible wood from these trees that have become a danger, or

We have a motto:

“Treat your customers like they’re important...because they are!”

are dying, or are destroying roadways, buildings, or sidewalks. For years they’ve been taken to the mulch pile, but now you’ll be able to buy your favorite guitar with this wood. Believe me, this is not a trick! It’s one of the best woods Andy and I have ever used for guitars. It comes from the urban forest right here in our area, and new trees are planted when these are removed and even when other species are removed. It’s perfect, really. It gives me hope.

To answer your question about using more colored ebony on lower-end models, yes, we plan to begin using it on more models. We have an entire range to work with. Some of the wood of high color that is produced in our Crelicam mill is spoken for by some good customers of Crelicam, so it seems that using colored wood is catching on, and you’ll be seeing it in more and more brands as well.

Bob, at what point in your journey did you make the decision to have the culture of your company be so customer-focused? Was there a particular moment or awakening? I’m interested in hearing from a company that “gets it”

Roy McKenzie

Roy, when we started off, we realized that the guitar gods had risen before we were in business. There were no new ones coming that we had access to. We came to the party late, so all those famous people who changed the world of music played other brands. We weren’t in on the ground floor, we were nobody, newcomers, and couldn’t point to people to endorse us. We weren’t on record covers, or magazine articles, or television. Nobody knew our name. So, who would be the star of our show? That was the question. The answer was that we’d make the guitar itself, and our

normal, everyday customers, the stars of our show. We focused on telling stories of people who bought a guitar with their hard-earned money and went home and played with their friends or family. And we focused on the guitar and its ever-evolving forms, sharing our enthusiasm with players. Think back and realize that to date you’ve never seen one trade ad for Taylor that showed a celebrity player using one of our guitars. Our focus was on you, here, asking questions and being treated well, even in this magazine. Even when nobody is listening, when you call us and ask for help. We have a motto: “Treat your customers like they’re important...because they are!”

I’ve owned a Taylor Dan Crary Signature Model since 1993. It’s been a great guitar for years, but I admit that the new line has me tempted to replace or augment it with a smaller, more intimate Taylor like a V-Class Grand Concert. One thing that I don’t like about most acoustic guitars is the location of the front strap button on the lower side of the neck. I suspect that the reason the button is located there is that the wood screw holding it on can be threaded into substantial wood on the neck. But from a comfort point of view, it sure would be nice if it could be located on the front upper bout of the body, like it is on a Les Paul solid body. I’m guessing the reason it isn’t there is because the wood is quite thin there. But would it really be an issue to locate a small block of wood on the inside there to allow a wood screw to get good support? Would it hurt the tone? Have others indicated dissatisfaction with the neck location for the button? Is it something that you’ve tried and rejected?

Al Lighton

Al, it’s a good question. The answer goes around and around. For years we made about 90 percent “ce” (cutaway electric) models in our El Cajon factory. Now think about if the strap pin were located where you suggest, which we agree is a good place for it. But now the preamp buttons would be covered by the strap. So that’s a problem, and we’re committed to the preamp controls being there because they look stupid anywhere else. They appear as legitimate hardware on an acoustic, which was really hard to do after an age of plant-on controls as acoustic guitars evolved into acoustic-electric guitars. And by not changing that layout, we can upgrade old guitars into newer pickups. That’s important because it helps save a lifelong guitar from evolving into the category of becoming consumer electronics as pickups improve. I’ll take a moment to say that when we started our company, pickups didn’t exist on acoustics, except with Ovation and Takamine. And I’ll give a shout-out to Takamine for an excellent pickup that’s been a workhorse with players for decades. In fact, when we started, acoustic guitars only had a strap button at the tail end of the guitar. People tied a string on the peghead. As acoustics joined the modern world, we tried to adapt old acoustic tradition to the ever-increasing numbers of plugged-in, standing-up guitar players. Putting the strap pin on the bottom of the heel was the least bad place. I’m sorry, but that’s the truth. It still is the least bad. But if you notice, Andy is starting to put them on the back of the guitar. This may become a less bad place. People love the backs of their acoustics and don’t want them defiled. Still, we have to pick a place. And more people are using the higher end of the acoustic guitar neck these days. When we started, it was scary territory to play above the fifth fret! So, given the constraints I’ve mentioned, I’d venture to say that had you been on our team, you would have chosen that location, too. In fact, when we made the Dan Crary model, we didn’t even put strap pins on all our models. We let the customer choose and have it done themselves. But that wasn’t good either. This is a long answer, right? It’s a dilemma. On an up note, the Dan Crary model has become a bit of a legend and a collector’s item. Don’t sell yours. And you also reminded me that Dan called to catch up a few days ago, and I need to call him back!

I own a 2013 456ce FLTD, a 2013 516e FLTD, a 2014 326ce-K FLTD, a 2014 GS Mini Koa FLTD, and a 2016

320e. I’ve also owned and gifted a 2011 414ce, a 2014 324ce-K FLTD, a 2015 818e HP and a 2017 GS Mini Mahogany. Over time, all have blossomed, shedding some tightness for depth, volume and new tonal flavors. But there is something very, very special about that 516e FLTD. Not only is it aesthetically unique, with the Avian inlays and premium details, but it has so much power and tonal character. What does it? The curly mahogany or the European spruce top? Is it the Adirondack bracing? Is it something in the build? Secret sauce?

I’m not merely curious. One day I want to order a custom Taylor (perhaps all walnut) and want something as similarly intoxicating as that 516e.

Anthony Wanis-St. John
Washington, DC

Wow, Anthony, you sure buy a lot of guitars! But we understand, because many of us here at Taylor are the same. That said, sometimes there’s one that just hits us right in the heart, that speaks to us with the language we want to hear. And I’m telling you honestly that if we knew the language of your ears, and how to address that every time, we’d either be geniuses or stark crazy. There are so many variables, not the least of which is you, my friend. You’re also an important variable in the sound of a guitar. The secret sauce truly *is* a secret. Nobody knows, including us. I can tell by the way you talk about the guitar, which is why I always say, “When you find a guitar you like, buy it.” Then don’t sell it, and don’t think it can be replicated by trying to order one just like it.

On the technical side, trying my best to answer your question, you’d want to order a guitar with the same specs. We’ll never know the weight of those pieces, or their stiffness. But we could do the best to approach it. Then you’d have to play it for the years you’ve played that one. It’s tricky, but we could get close. And you’ll either be delighted or disappointed, and there’s a fine line between those two. If I sounded confident, I’d be lying. I hope you can dig that.

Got a question for Bob Taylor?

Shoot him an email: askbob@taylorguitars.com

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.

I have noticed over the last few years that you are making a lot more cutaways in all or most of your models. I have a Taylor DN4, which sounds great, and a Taylor 150e, which also sounds amazing. Do you intend to go back to non-cutaways like you did a few years ago? I really prefer these, and I know a lot of guitarists do as well. Most of your high-end guitars are cutaways, and these are very nice, but guitarists like me would prefer a non-cutaway when buying at the top end. It is a matter of preference, of course, but I do think Taylor would capture a bigger market if you offered both.

Joe Dunn

Let me tell you a story, Joe. You’ll laugh (I hope). So, for years, 90 percent of the guitars we made here in El Cajon typically were cutaway-electric models because that’s what we felt people wanted. Then people started writing the exact email you just wrote. This was 10 or more years ago. And boy, they chatted about it on the forums, creating a groundswell. The premise was that we’d sell more guitars if we offered non-cutaway guitars without pickups. So, we did. Your DN4 was what would have been a 410ce, but without the ce. (Which, by the way, anyone could have ordered, but they didn’t want to.) We did these for all the shapes and put them in the market, and people bought them! Except for one small detail: The lion’s share of the people who bought them started custom-ordering them with an added cutaway and pickup! I’m not kidding you. Then dealers just starting stocking non-cutaway models with a cutaway added as an option. So, we’re back to where we started. Guitars can be ordered without a cutaway. You’ll be happy to know that the new Grand Pacific does not have a cutaway, and there won’t be an option for one. Just remember that we’ll make you a model you want without a cutaway, but people vote with their wallets, as they say, and they largely vote that Taylors have cutaways.

[Sustainability]



Seeing the Urban Forest for the Trees

Urban forests provide many vital benefits to communities. As part of a new collaboration with a California arborist, Taylor is exploring ways to turn end-of-life urban trees into high-value products that can support the regreening of our urban infrastructure and ease the pressure on forests elsewhere.

By Scott Paul

About two years ago, I found myself in Bob Taylor's office not long after he had read an article mentioning San Diego Urban Timber, a local company that mills, designs and builds functional art from locally salvaged trees. I wasn't surprised that the article caught his eye, as I've heard him wonder aloud several times why, when trees are planted in a city, people don't ever seem to consider choosing a species that might have end-of-life value, or as Bob would say, "a tree that someday someone could make something out of." Bob is a practical guy. And his city tree cradle-to-grave observation was interesting to me. I've spent my entire career working on forest policy issues, but I confess I had never really thought about city trees before. He asked me to look into it, so I did, and soon I began

to feel a little like Alice having stepped through the looking glass.

This article is about my education in what I have come to call the urban forest canopy, and about why Taylor Guitars is increasingly interested in it. More specifically, it's about the importance of this canopy and the need to expand and diversify it. But this article is also about the potential value in the urban wood waste stream. These two themes, I believe, are as interrelated as they are underappreciated.

First, let's define what we're talking about. What is the urban forest canopy? Think about any city, town or suburb with high population density and infrastructure. If you live in such an area, think of the trees on your street, in your backyard, along the highway, at schools or shopping centers, in parks, and in

small wooded areas. The urban canopy is made up of all the trees within it. It might be hard to see a forest for these individual trees, but if you zoom out, they form a canopy, the true value of which is rapidly coming into focus.

The Value of the Urban Forest Canopy

There are an estimated 5.5 billion trees in urban areas in the United States. If a broader definition of "metropolitan area" is used, that estimate increases to well over 70 billion. That's a lot of trees. And there's a growing body of evidence confirming the importance of these trees, ranging from the amount of carbon dioxide they absorb to their role in cooling air temperature through both shade and evaporation, thus quantifiably lowering energy use. The urban forest canopy also significantly improves water quality by mitigating rainfall runoff and flooding, and by blocking strong winds and lowering noise impact. Trees filter air pollution and provide important habitat for songbirds and other wildlife. In addition to these environmental and economic benefits, there is also mounting evidence that city trees provide a plethora of social benefits, including improved mental health and community cohesion.

Did you know that in 2008, for the first time in human history, more people worldwide lived in urban areas than in the countryside? Stop and think about that. For the first time in 66 million years, the majority of our species now lives in an urban environment. And this concentration will only intensify. According to the U.S. Forest Service, from 2010 to 2060, urban areas in the contiguous U.S. are projected to increase by an area larger than the state of Montana. Germany is around the same size as Montana. Maybe it's a good idea to think about how we're shaping our urban environment and re-evaluate our relationship with urban trees. Use Google Earth and zoom up from a few cities anywhere in the world. Focus on just the trees, the green bits. Use your imagination. Their collective importance is staggering.

Trees have been around for some 370 million years, and for almost as long, forests have been the dominant terrestrial ecosystem on Earth. So, perhaps it's not surprising that the explosion of recent academic literature discussing the benefits of urban trees cites the same basic attributes assigned to what we would more traditionally call a forest (e.g., moderating climate, reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide, improving air and water quality, providing habitat, etc.).

I've been to a lot of international environmental conferences over the years,

and until I specifically sought it out, I don't recall any conversation about the value of urban trees. One very notable exception was the recent World Forum on Urban Forests in Mantova, Italy, the first truly global conference on the subject, held by the United Nations. It was like Woodstock for academics and arborists with a few scattered architects and city officials sprinkled in, but no business interests or environmental groups to speak of. It was inspiring, if for no other reason than it took place, but I couldn't find another soul interested in talking about the urban wood waste stream other than David Nowak, Senior Scientist at the U.S. Forest Service, who is perhaps the world's leading expert on the topic. It's fair to say that the U.S. Forest Service was decades ahead of the rest of the world in recognizing the importance of urban trees, but in recent years the rest of the world has started to catch up. Indeed, more people worldwide are paying attention to the role of the urban forest canopy and looking for economically viable strategies for maintaining and enhancing forest-derived benefits.

The Value of the Urban Canopy Waste Stream

In the course of writing this article, there was some discussion about the term "waste stream," as it implies something of no value, similar to the way people call a plant a "weed" if it hasn't been assigned any value. Names matter. But the cold truth is that for hundreds of years, tree trunks, branches and leaves collected when a city tree is taken down have been deemed a waste product, assigned little if any value, and disposed of commonly at taxpayer expense.

Regardless of what it's called, all I know is that, worldwide, city trees are being removed faster than they are replaced. In the U.S., we're losing hundreds of thousands of acres of metropolitan tree cover and millions of trees each year. In fact, between 2009 and 2014, U.S. cities, suburbs and towns lost an estimated 175,000 acres of tree cover each year. In California, where Taylor Guitars is based, there are an estimated 9.1 million street trees, down 30 percent since 1988. With a few notable exceptions, the story is more or less the same all around the world. This, coupled with an enhanced understanding of the environmental and social services trees provide, is why there is suddenly so much attention about greening our urban infrastructure.

Of course, trees are living things, all living things die, and for countless reasons city trees are removed – damage from disease, invasive pests or storms,

for public safety, and construction and development, to name a few. This reality would be no big deal if our overall city canopy wasn't shrinking, if intact forests around the world weren't shrinking. People often protest when a city tree is removed, in part, I believe, because they intrinsically understand that we're losing nature, that the overall trend is moving toward fewer, not more, trees. And while it's clear that expanding the tree canopy cover is imperative, what's also true is that upon removal, these trees are underutilized as a resource. In fact, historically, they were dumped in landfills, chipped or burned. More recently, however, state and municipal regulations and fees have made this approach increasingly impractical, driving up disposal costs – but also driving innovation.

To offset disposal costs, urban waste wood is today commonly turned into firewood, with brush and chips destined for mulch or compost, and increasingly higher-value products such as rough slabs or as lumber. A few municipalities are developing bioenergy, biofuel (e.g. ethanol, butanol, pellets, etc.) and biochar. All are trying to offset removal and disposal costs. If organized more holistically, the urban wood waste stream could better be utilized for a wider variety of higher-value products, creating jobs and income to bolster small business, taking pressure off natural forests elsewhere, and perhaps ultimately feeding back into the grossly under-resourced maintenance of existing trees alongside programs that put new trees in the ground.

David Nowak at the U.S. Forest Service estimates the annual urban tree removals in the U.S. equate to roughly 7.2 billion board feet of lumber, or 16 million cords of firewood. There are, of course, many reasons why the full value of this wood will never be realized. The typical patchwork of municipal agencies with jurisdiction over the resource, transportation costs, the lack of space for sorting and stockpiling, limited local processing capacity, and a lack of consistent inventory add up to what my grandfather would have called a dog's breakfast of quality and species, at least compared to the consistency and uniformity that I can find in the lumber aisle at Home Depot. These issues continue to stymie the creation of an urban wood market beyond anything other than the provincial, but clearly current use and value can be increased. Nowak believes that, despite the obstacles listed, 3 to 4 billion board feet of urban lumber could realistically be produced each year in the U.S. The value by state will vary, as will the types of products produced, but according to the U.S. Forest Service, urban tree wood waste in the U.S. could reasonably generate somewhere

between \$100 million and \$1 billion annually, depending on what product is produced. The minimum value is based on chipping all wood; the higher value is based on converting merchantable wood to logs and non-merchantable wood to chips.

Working with West Coast Arborists

This all brings me back home to Southern California and Taylor Guitars. It turns out that our local arborist is a company called West Coast Arborists, Inc. (WCA), founded by Pat Mahoney, who was walking home from high school one day and took a part-time job working for George the Tree Man, a guy with a

wood recycling initiative dubbed Street Tree Revival.

In short, they had volume, and they were organized. And, as it turns out, WCA also developed their own tree inventory software program, which shows the species of every tree in every city where they work, along with the tree's size, health and any associated maintenance records. This information allows them to forecast what they will be managing for years to come, helps cities with their tree maintenance strategies, and could provide wood buyers like Taylor with a degree of predictability. For me, the only question left was whether they had the right species and quality for acoustic guitars, because when it

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Perhaps Taylor Guitars can be an early test-case for using a previously discarded resource, educating people about the importance of standing trees in our cities, and planting more than a few ourselves.

”

pickup truck and a woodchipper working for the city. When George retired, Pat borrowed some money, bought the pickup truck and wood chipper, and started his own company, just two years before Bob and Kurt borrowed money to purchase the American Dream guitar shop and renamed it Taylor Guitars.

Today, WCA provides professional tree maintenance and management services for nearly 300 public agencies, including cities and counties across California and Arizona, caring for over six million trees. Each year, the company plants between 18,000 to 20,000 new trees, but they also remove trees when requested to do so by a city, taking them to strategically placed log yards across the state to facilitate disposal. Up until about the year 2000, most of that wood was sold for firewood or landfilled, but in an attempt to get ahead of state regulations and offset disposal costs, WCA began separating wood by species as it came in. They began sealing the ends of large logs to prevent cracking, and they bought a Wood-Mizer portable sawmill, launching an urban

comes to wood, no one is more pernickety than instrument makers.

To be clear, Taylor Guitars' interest in this wood is not driven by a desire to produce a limited number of special edition guitars. We want to invest in this direction only if we can integrate a species with a dedicated line of guitars, perhaps used for backs and sides. The fact that we might source local wood from what has traditionally been considered a waste stream is interesting, and I would even argue environmentally and socially responsible. But we're also a business, and we need quality, quantity and predictability to make it work. It needs to be a great guitar.

The moment of truth came the day I took Bob, Andy Powers and a small team from Taylor up to WCA to walk their yard. By this point, I was well-educated in the importance of the urban forest canopy. I also understood the largely untapped potential in the waste stream, but I still wasn't sure if it was plausible for Taylor Guitars to source tonewood from it. It didn't take long before Bob and Andy found several

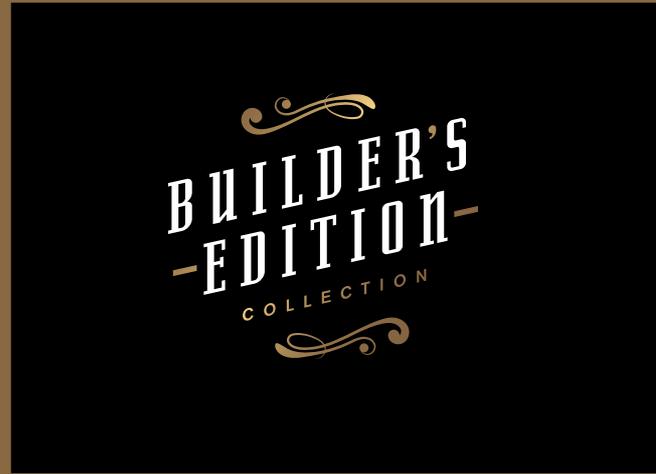
likely prospects. We cut more than a few species and brought them to the factory in El Cajon to be dried, all under Andy's watchful eye.

I can tell you that there are several species that Andy is excited about. And I'm happy to report that at this year's NAMM Show in Anaheim, we released our first-ever guitar made with some of this wood: the Builder's Edition 324ce (see page 17), made with back and sides of Urban Ash™ (also known as evergreen or Shamel ash), sourced from city trees that were planted and grown in Southern California, and cared for by WCA until a municipality asked for them to come down for one reason or the other. The wood was quarter-sawn at a WCA sort yard and brought just down the highway to the Taylor factory in El Cajon, where it was made into some really fine-quality guitars. We feel good about it and hope you can check one out.

In the end, one thing is clear: We need to plant more trees in cities and towns in order to absorb carbon dioxide, cool micro-climates, lower energy use, improve water quality, block strong winds, absorb noise, and provide habitat as well as a range of social benefits, too. We need to expand and diversify the urban canopy. This said, it's important to understand that more trees ultimately mean greater throughput and more trees that will reach end of life in the future. It's simple math, and even today many arborists and city officials are struggling with disposal costs. Figuring out a circular economy that creates jobs and supports the planting, maintenance, disposal and repurposing of urban trees is going to be increasingly important. As one of the first globally branded companies entering this space, perhaps Taylor Guitars can be an early test-case for using a previously discarded resource, educating people about the importance of standing trees in our cities, and planting more than a few ourselves. We'll share more on that soon.

In the meantime, it's interesting to me that the species that Taylor is testing today are a consequence of decisions made in different municipalities across Southern California some 60 years ago – trees planted largely for aesthetic reasons, what was "in fashion" along streets and in parks. There's a lot of good wood in the urban landscape, some suitable for guitars, even more suitable for a variety of other products. Maybe one consideration of what to plant in the future could be something that someone, someday, could make something out of.

Scott Paul is Taylor's Director of Natural Resource Sustainability.



BUILDING A COLLECTION

**With four inspiring new acoustic voices,
design guru Andy Powers continues to broaden
the musical palette of our premium-performance
Builder's Edition family**

BY JIM KIRLIN

Years from now, when guitar scribes detail the contributions of Taylor Guitars to the music world, the birth of V-Class™ bracing in 2018 will surely stand out as a watershed moment in our history. Already, with just two years of traction, the breakthrough voicing architecture from Taylor design architect Andy Powers has transformed the Taylor line in profound ways, as a growing chorus of raves from guitar reviewers and players can attest.

From an even bigger-picture perspective, one of the most promising elements of Andy's V-Class framework is that it provides a powerful and malleable platform for shaping acoustic guitar tone in exciting new ways. Case in point: last year's debut of Andy's Grand Pacific round-shoulder dreadnought, in which V-Class, together with a new body design, introduced a whole new flavor of Taylor sound.

Meanwhile, the flexible V-Class framework has steadily migrated to other parts of the Taylor line. Last year Andy applied it to our compact Grand Concert body style, including our 12-fret and 12-string models, in the process expanding the musical range of a small-body guitar.

This year, two more body shapes, the Grand Symphony and Grand Orchestra, make their debut with V-Class voicing under the hood, which means all of our U.S.-made steel-string acoustic guitars (300 Series and up) now feature a uniquely calibrated version of our sonic engine. Thanks to V-Class, each Taylor body style asserts a more distinctive musical personality than ever before.

Builder's Edition: High-Performance Sound and Feel

Another measure of the game-changing impact of the V-Class framework is how it inspired Andy to create a whole new category of guitar design within the Taylor line, which ultimately took form under the premium banner of Builder's Edition. The vision was to marry V-Class's elevated sonic virtues with equally envelope-pushing

improvements in playing comfort, featuring contouring refinements we had never offered before. At its most elemental level, it was Andy's expression of his notion that there are two ways to improve a guitar: sound and feel. By design, the Builder's Edition concept gave Andy unfettered freedom from the normal constraints of our standard line, and a place to deliver an ultra-premium class of guitars. We like to think of it as his "director's cut" interpretation of a guitar – the kind of guitar he might build for himself in his workshop at home, but also make for anyone else who wants one.

First came the Builder's Edition K14ce, a koa and torrefied spruce stunner that honored the 2018 debut of V-Class by showcasing a level of nuanced woodworking in the contouring of the body, including a beveled cut-away. Next was the uber-player-reflective Builder's Edition 614ce, inspired by both the violin and electric guitar

worlds. In 2019, we marked the launch of the Grand Pacific with the tandem release of mahogany (517) and rosewood (717) Builder's Edition models, followed mid-year by the seductive K24ce, an all-koa counterpart to the original K14ce. (For more on these models, see pages 20-21.)

Four New Models

This year, we're thrilled to introduce four inspiring new Builder's Edition guitars to the mix, expanding the collection to nine in all. The most eye- and ear-catching is Andy's radical redesign of our Grand Symphony, the Builder's Edition 816ce, featuring a new soundport cut-away that unleashes a uniquely immersive acoustic experience. Our first Builder's Edition Grand Concert models include the fast-playing 912ce – the ultimate acoustic guitar for electric players – and the 652ce, a reverse-strung maple 12-string that blends a slightly meatier sound with smooth playing comfort. Anchoring the group is the 324ce, which pairs a mahogany top with a new tonewood offering, Urban Ash™, introducing an exciting new sustainability initiative that supports Andy's vision of sourcing wood from locally available trees. This in turn can support the greening of our cities and towns while reducing the impact on forests elsewhere.

Together, our nine Builder's Edition models comprise a remarkably robust and diverse collection that demonstrates how Andy's design innovation, powered by V-Class bracing, continues to push Taylor in exciting new directions, expanding the frontiers of musical expression for players. And the best part is that he's still just scratching the surface. Over the next few pages, we'll take a deeper dive into our new designs for 2020, followed by a showcase of the other models in the collection.

V-Class Bracing at a Glance

Andy's innovative bracing design creates a more harmonious relationship between the guitar body and the strings, calibrating the transfer of string energy in a way that enables a guitar to produce notes that are stronger, clearer and more consistent across the entire fretboard. Beyond the fundamental improvements in volume, projection and sustain, V-Class also fixes some of the nagging intonation idiosyncrasies that have compromised the musicality of guitars for years.

Opposite page: Artist photos: Micah Sedmak;
Andy Powers photo: Patrick Fore





Builder's Edition 816ce

Body: Partial-Cutaway Grand Symphony

Woods: Indian Rosewood / Lutz Spruce

Premium Performance Features: Soundport cutaway, chamfered body and fretboard edges, 24-7/8" scale length, light-gauge strings, Curve Wing bridge, Gotoh 510 tuners, Silent Satin finish

Musical Personality: A six-string symphony; the acoustic guitar equivalent of an orchestral instrument

Without question the most visually avant-garde model in the collection, the Builder's Edition 816ce marks the debut of V-Class bracing inside our Grand Symphony body – actually, an altered version of the body, now featuring a soundport cutaway. The body modification, Andy says, was the result of thinking about the unique musical personality he wanted the revoiced Grand Symphony to have in relation to Taylor's other V-Class-flavored shapes.

It's worth noting that among the different body size classifications within the Taylor line (think small, medium and large), the Grand Symphony shares the "medium" size category with two other shapes: the Grand Auditorium and Grand Pacific. So, part of the design challenge for Andy was to reimagine the Grand Symphony in a way that would enable it to deliver a truly unique musical experience among its mid-size siblings. He knew he wanted the new version to be truer to its name – more "symphonic," with an airier, more high-fidelity, orchestral sound.

"The Grand Symphony's existing curves naturally lend themselves to an orchestral sound," he says. "When you look at the dimensions, the body doesn't seem dramatically different than a Grand Auditorium, but when you overlay and compare the curves, the Grand Symphony's waist flows into a more broadly curved lower bout. This outline adds a significant amount of air space inside the body. We can compare this to a singer with a large and powerful lung capacity, like Pavarotti. Every note we strike is supported with strong lungs."

Why a Soundport?

To generate the airy, symphonic acoustic properties he wanted, Andy chose to leverage that extra lung capacity in a bold way: by adding a second soundhole to the guitar.

"By adding a second aperture that's a different size than the first one, the resonant frequency of the air that's inside the body gets altered in significant ways, broadening the response," he explains. "Additionally, there is an alteration to the timing of each note's lifecycle. You can think of a note's lifespan, or response curve, as having a beginning, a middle, and ending. Normally, when a note is struck, the initial attack climbs to a steep point, and then immediately drops a little and sustains before it releases and decays away. Our ears respond quickly to that initial peak, and its amplitude, or volume level, plays a role in how loud we perceive the sound. Strengthening this peak by extending it across a longer time further enhances the effect."

By building the second soundhole into the body, Andy could spread the influence of the guitar's air resonance over a wider frequency range of the guitar's register so it wouldn't just emphasize one small handful of notes.

"As a result, when you play up and down the fretboard, the sound stays balanced – you don't have as dramatic a change," he says. "The lung capacity of the guitar is distributed over a larger range of frequency and a longer amount of time, so the sound comes out as very fluid. It strikes us as a strong voice that is both dynamic and filled with a lyrical musical quality."



Location and Angle

If you're an acoustic guitar enthusiast, you've probably either seen or played guitars with a secondary soundport in addition to the main soundhole. It's often located in the side of the guitar that faces up toward the player, with the intent of directing sound toward the player's ear. While this design approach might seem logical, Andy has found that it usually doesn't deliver the effect he wanted for these guitars.

"I've built guitars with secondary soundholes," he says. "I've found that on an X-braced guitar, a secondary port located on the sides can make the guitar difficult to tune, as it alters the resonance characteristics of the body. I'd play notes and evaluate their pitch accuracy with a strobe tuner and find them less consistent than I wanted. It's hard to get the two apertures to work well with each other when they are oriented at right angles to each other."

The difference this time around was Andy's V-Class architecture, which gave him a better foundation to work with, since the intonation would be more accurate. He also thought more about the optimal location and orientation of a second soundport.

“When you strum this guitar, it feels like chords from an orchestra – great big sounds that develop and change colors as they ring.”

"Shifting from a right-angle relationship between the soundholes to a lower angle, with closer physical proximity, could yield the sound propagation I was looking for," he says.

Andy's approach was to build a sloped soundport into the guitar body in the form of what amounts to a partial Florentine cutaway – a scoop in the treble-side shoulder (where a cutaway is typically located) that houses an off-axis, elliptical-shaped aperture. (Viewed from behind, the body has a

full back and looks like a non-cutaway.)

"With this design, we wanted the benefits from the large lung capacity of the GS body, coupled with the full back outline, yet still have the physical benefit of a cutaway," he says. "This provided the means to include the interesting effect of the second aperture and still have the intonation benefit of the V-Class architecture, which allows all the elements of this guitar to be tuned to work in a cohesive way. In concert, all these unique elements add up to a

beautiful-sounding guitar that offers a totally different musical experience than either a Grand Auditorium or a Grand Pacific."

Shorter Scale Length and Lighter Strings

Considering the ample body dimensions and lung capacity of the Grand Symphony, Andy made two other important design choices that might appear counterintuitive: using a shorter 24-7/8-inch scale length and light-gauge strings, both of which are departures from our past Grand Symphony specifications of a 25-1/2-inch scale length and medium-gauge strings.

"Usually, when you see a guitar body around this size, you think of using a longer scale length or larger strings to get higher string tension, which has more inertia to drive the soundboard," he explains. "In this case, building with the V-Class architecture, this guitar can be so responsive that more string tension doesn't necessarily make a more powerful-sounding guitar. The power comes from the efficiency of its body. In fact, while the guitar is plenty strong to accommodate the tension

The soundport cutaway features a beautifully shaped piece of ebony from our Crelicam mill in Cameroon. The tooling to make the installation production-friendly was designed and fabricated by our engineering team



of larger strings, the damping factor of additional tension on the top isn't a benefit in this case – it actually curtails some of the guitar's responsiveness. The ease of playing on the shorter scale and smaller strings is icing on the cake."

The Sound

One of the most striking sonic characteristics of the redesigned Grand Symphony when hearing someone play it is the multi-directional way the sound radiates outward, producing a listening experience with a natural surround-sound, reverb-like effect. As Andy explains, it has to do with the wave propagation aided by the second soundhole.

"Everything works together to set the air surrounding the guitar in motion," he says. "As a result, the sound radiates outward in every direction. The notes sound like they're growing as they sustain out. They start to bloom. When you strum this guitar, it feels like chords from an orchestra – great big sounds that develop and change colors as they ring."

The effect is what enables the Grand Symphony to produce the "symphonic" musical response he wanted.

"This guitar functions more like an orchestral instrument would," he says. "The instruments you see in a symphonic orchestra are producing sound by creating air motion. Whether it's a clarinet or other reed instrument, a woodwind, horn or a violin, instruments are about air motion. In similar ways, this guitar is about pushing air around. Thanks to the V-Class idea and the combination of qualities it permits, we can spread that air motion out to make a different kind of a sound."

Playing Applications

Because the guitar's sound is spread evenly across a broad sonic range, the new Grand Symphony makes a great choice for a solo acoustic player. With its shorter scale length and lighter strings, it creates an inviting handfeel and responds to strumming with a rich, piano-like voice. The Lutz spruce top is set in motion easily, so the guitar punches above its weight in response to a light fingerstyle touch, delivering a full sound. For ensemble playing, it will

fit in well with instruments like fiddle and mandolin, but it might not be the ideal choice in a guitar-centric band with a lot of chord strumming. It will, however, pair well with another guitar that has a focused voice. For singers who tend to have a softer voice, the Grand Symphony will supply a supportive musical bed, adding its own lung capacity.

Andy points out that anyone looking to record the guitar will probably want to experiment with microphone positioning. He recommends setting them up farther away from the guitar in order to better capture more of its sonic image.

"In addition to the typical acoustic guitar microphone positions, I might try two microphones in what would amount to a reverse X-Y pattern, maybe 4-5 feet away from the guitar," he says. "Instead of the X and Y being right next to each other focused in two directions, they could start farther away and be pointed at the guitar. Another approach would be multiple microphones positioned above one another. The point is, there is a lot of acoustic image with this instrument, and alternate capture points will offer a wide variety of colors."

Premium Contouring

Player-centric design features for the rosewood/Lutz spruce Builder's Edition 816ce include chamfered body edges and rolled fretboard edges for a comfortable feel, along with our contoured Curve Wing bridge (a standard feature for all Builder's Edition models), Silent Satin finish, and Gotoh tuners (21:1 gear ratio) with gold buttons.

For the scooped partial cutaway that houses the soundport, Andy chose an unfinished ebony overlay that ties in with the fretboard and wood pickguard. The model also sports a new mother-of-pearl Windansea fretboard/peghead inlay.

A final note on the soundport cutaway: Because the soundport is integral to the sound of the redesigned Grand Symphony, it will now be a standard feature on all Grand Symphony models. But initially, we're only offering one other standard model: the all-koa K26ce.

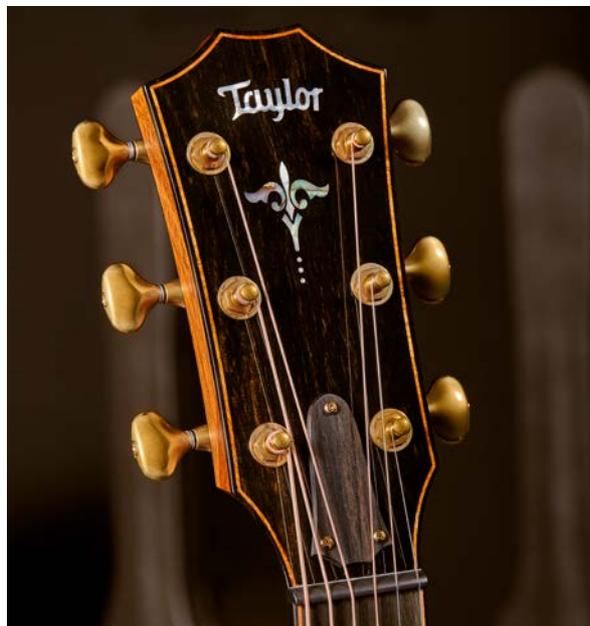
Builder's Edition 912ce

Body: Cutaway Grand Concert

Woods: Indian Rosewood / Lutz Spruce

Premium Performance Features: Beveled armrest, beveled cutaway, chamfered body and fretboard edges, Curve Wing bridge, Gotoh 510 tuners, Silent Satin finish

Musical Personality: A rich, articulate voice that quickly enunciates every nuance of a player's performance across the entire register



Years ago, Bob Taylor blurred the line between the electric and acoustic playing experiences with his sleek, ultra-playable necks. In recent years, Andy Powers has added his own nuanced design strokes to create an even more fluid playing experience, borrowing from the body contouring of the electric world. The Builder's Edition 912ce *really* rolls out the red carpet to electric slingers, packing an array of attractive playing features into a guitar that he envisioned as the quintessential electric player's acoustic guitar.

In fairness, Andy is also borrowing from previous work, because his first two Builder's Edition guitars, a koa/torrefied spruce K14ce and maple/torrefied spruce 614ce, both released in 2018, drew from electric designs, introducing ergonomic features like our contoured cutaway with a finger bevel. But this time around, Andy chose our smaller, slightly shallower Grand Concert body, which delivers our most direct, focused and balanced response.

"The Grand Concert guitars have been known as a first choice for finger-

style players because of their superb balance, a balance I see paralleled when I play an electric guitar," he says. "Every note you play on an electric is powerful, equally clear and clean. That was the idea behind this guitar. I wanted to build a Grand Concert body voice with all of these electric guitar-like comfort and functional cues. In addition to the articulate Grand Concert body, we're mixing in the unique bell-like response of rosewood. Coupled with the upper-register fingerboard access encouraged by the beveled cutaway, this guitar sings up to the highest note."

Many players will say the size of the strings is the first noticeable difference in feel between an electric and acoustic guitar, and while Andy doesn't disagree, he broadens the conversation to include other factors that contribute to the overall handfeel.

"These guitars are set up with very low action, we incorporated the comfortable rolled fretboard edges first introduced on the Grand Pacific, and our 24-7/8-inch scale length is in a comfortable shorter range," he says.



"The strings feel smooth and quick, and there's an immediate responsiveness – as soon as you touch the strings, the guitar jumps to life."

The smaller Grand Concert body also has an inherent high-end register responsiveness to it, where it will exaggerate certain parts of that register and give it a clear, focused sound like an electric guitar.

"Those high notes feel surprisingly powerful in relation to the low notes," he says. "It's a remarkably level response."

Andy also chose a Lutz spruce top, which helps accentuate a stronger attack and fast front-end response.

Another sonic virtue is that the combination of the top, the small body size, and the V-Class bracing create a

well-manicured low end, which translates into clear and shapeable amplified sound.

"If you're playing lead guitar in a band and you need an acoustic guitar, nothing will match the clarity of this model," Andy says. "If you want to play some complex jazz harmony, the focus of this guitar means no extended chord tone will be lost. For fingerstyle playing, every counterpoint line will be present."

The beveled armrest will appeal to electric players used to a shallower, more contoured body, while the beveled cutaway, chamfered body edges, and Curve Wing bridge lend additional player-friendly refinements that enhance the feel.

The aesthetic treatment draws from our 900 Series ornamentation, featuring paua purfling in the top and back, with koa fretboard and peghead trim, a paua abalone rosette with ebony and koa accents, along with a Wild Honey Burst top (a natural top is also available) and a new Bellefleur fretboard/peghead inlay in mother-of-pearl and pink abalone. Additional details include Silent Satin finish, Gotoh Gold tuners, and ES2 electronics.



Builder's Edition 652ce

Body: Cutaway Grand Concert

Woods: Figured Big Leaf Maple / Torrefied Sitka Spruce

Premium Performance Features: Beveled cutaway, beveled armrest, Curve Wing bridge with double-mounted string anchoring, reverse-strung setup, Gotoh 510 tuners, Silent Satin finish

Musical Personality: A balanced 12-string that blends the comfort, precision and utility of an electric guitar into the organic, acoustic musical space

Taylor's heritage of playability can be traced back to Bob Taylor's early 12-string guitars, built with slimmer necks and lower action that made the playing experience mercifully less cumbersome than it previously had been. In recent years, Andy has continued to evolve the 12-string experience forward to make it less of a niche category and offer a more universally inviting musical tool.

By embracing a smaller Grand Concert body, a shorter scale length, and a 12-fret neck configuration, Andy made the 12-string experience even

more comfortable and accessible, and musically, the responsiveness of the smaller body, together with its more focused voice, has made it a fantastic utility instrument for recording and live performance. Last year's addition of V-Class bracing and our double-mounted string anchoring design introduced yet another level of balanced, pitch-friendly sound. (For more on those designs, see our cover story from the Summer 2019 edition.)

The 652ce brings our first 12-string to the Builder's Edition collection, and like the Builder's Edition 912ce, Andy



designed it with electric players in mind. He chose the wood pairing of maple and torrefied spruce because the transparent, player-reflective properties are similar to an electric guitar. Beyond the premium contouring features – beveled armrest and cutaway, chamfered body edges – another unique design feature is that it's reverse-strung, like a 12-string electric guitar. In other words, the position of the fundamental and octave strings is swapped so the fundamental strings sit above the octave course. Tonally, this translates into a meatier sound in which the fundamental note is slightly more prominent, especially since players tend to be more powerful on a downstroke when they're strumming chords. It's a subtle difference, but it reduces a bit of the octave jangle and produces a cleaner sound.

"For an electric 12-string, this stringing method makes a lot of sense," Andy says, "because those tend to be rather bright and jangly to begin with. When you strike the high octave string first, it can become so shimmering that the sound is less usable. This reverse-strung style tames that effect quite a bit. If I'm careful with my picking, there are times when you only hear a whisper of the octave string, creating a subtle but beautifully rich voice."

For players who love to strum those classic Beatles, Byrds or Tom Petty tunes, the 652ce is a great option, and the amplified sound is stage-friendly.

"This offers a very usable amplified 12-string sound because it's so clean and focused," Andy says. "In fact, I can even plug this into an electric guitar amp because of how manicured the string response is."

Appointments include mother-of-pearl Scepter fretboard/peghead inlays, a maple rosette with maple top and back purfling, Gotoh Gold tuners, Silent Satin finish with a Wild Honey Burst around the body and neck, and ES2 electronics.



Builder's Edition 324ce

Body: Cutaway Grand Auditorium

Woods: Urban Ash™ / Mahogany

Premium Performance Features: Beveled cutaway, beveled armrest, chamfered body edges, Curve Wing bridge, Gotoh 510 tuners, Silent Satin finish

Musical Personality: High-performance utility meets musical imagination

When Andy first conceived the idea for Builder's Edition back in 2017, one of the first prototypes he built was actually based on a 300 Series guitar.

"I'd envisioned this to be hardwood-top, high-performance guitar, a real player's guitar," he says. "Something that was 'all business' as a musical tool, with an approachable and understated aesthetic."

V-8, in addition to its clean aesthetic – they created an enduring design that served the drivers of the time and the hot-rodders seeking high-performance cars ever since."

In a more guitar-related context, Andy considers the Builder's Edition 324ce a more refined expression of the same philosophy that guided the design of Taylor's Academy Series.



Sonically, Urban Ash blends elements of mahogany, koa and blackwood.



While the design and release of other Builder's Edition models ultimately preempted this one – in part to align with our staggered rollout of V-Class models from the top of the Taylor line down – Andy is excited to now add a 300 Series guitar to the collection. The idea of less ornamentation reflects his original emphasis on the two most functional attributes of a guitar: feel and sound.

"In concept, I might compare this guitar to the 1932 Ford Roadster," he says. "That wasn't the fanciest or most lavishly ornamented car; it was straightforward and ultra-functional in its era. By focusing on the parts that made it run – the chassis, that first flathead

"Like a hotrod, the concept was to remove anything unnecessary and focus on the intrinsic functioning of that instrument," he says. "When you distill your musical needs, you want a really great-sounding guitar; you want a great-playing guitar. While elaborate decoration is beautiful, it isn't necessary. That was the guiding idea: pare the trimmings down but put all the trick, high-performance woodworking you can in to it."





Introducing Urban Ash

One important ingredient of this guitar is a new tonewood, Urban Ash™, chosen for the back and sides. Also known as evergreen or Shamel ash, it's a wood Andy is excited to use not only for its tonal properties, but also for its potential viability as a tree species that can be responsibly (and locally) sourced in California as part of a new urban forest initiative we're proud to support in partnership with our friends at West Coast Arborists, Inc. (WCA). (For more on urban forests and WCA, see our sidebar.)

"Its ancestors are Mexican evergreen ash," Andy says. "It's known as tropical ash in some places, and was propagated 60-70 years ago because it was considered well-suited for Southern California's climate. In addition to the deliberate planting, these trees proved prolific and spread throughout Riverside, the Inland

Empire, and the LA basin, where they often grow very large."

There are other properties that make Urban Ash a strong contender as a high-grade guitar wood of the future.

"This particular species happens to be great mix of the right weight, density, dimensional stability and drying attributes, and responds well to sawing, sanding and finishing," Andy says. "One of the practical guitar-building benefits is that as these trees grow, especially those near a road, they're pruned for roadway clearance early in life. That means you end up with a round branch- and knot-free trunk, which yields the clean and clear slices we look for to make guitars."

Andy was equally excited about the tonal properties of the prototypes he built using the wood.

"If you close your eyes and listen to a guitar made from it," he says, "you

Sourcing from the Urban Forest

While an "urban forest" might sound like an oxymoron, it's a real term. It refers to the planned and managed tree canopies that form the green infrastructure of communities, including the public landscaping of local neighborhoods, metropolitan areas, and larger regions. City municipalities and public agencies manage the green ecosystems of their respective communities, which includes overseeing the planting and maintenance of trees, along with their removal due to weather or disease damage, public safety concerns, root systems that damage sewer lines or sidewalks, and simply reaching the end of their life cycle. (To learn more about the role of urban forests, be sure to read Scott Paul's Sustainability column on page 8.)

While considerable strategic planning goes into the planting and maintenance of trees as part of the urban design process, it might surprise you to learn that there's been relatively little market development for this timber after trees are removed, outside of local, small-scale artisan woodworking enterprises that produce slabs and other products from salvaged trees.

Over the past two years, Scott Paul, Andy Powers and Bob Taylor have been learning more about urban forest management in an effort to explore whether Taylor could play a role in cultivating a higher-value market for end-of-life wood from our regional backyard of Southern California. That led to a relationship with West Coast Arborists, Inc. (WCA), a company based in Anaheim, California (about 100 miles from Taylor's U.S. factory) that currently provides tree maintenance and management services to over 300 municipalities and other public agencies throughout California – including Taylor's home town of El Cajon – and Arizona.

The company's ability to manage tree inventories across the regions they service is remarkably technologically advanced, thanks to proprietary software that incorporates GPS tracking and other data integration. Currently, they have more than 10 million tree sites inventoried in their computer database, and they have a mobile app that their network of arborists and their clients can use. They also use technology to assess tree health, such as thermal imaging to measure the degree of decay in the trees they maintain.

"It's been great to start working with our local arborists," Andy says. "We're blown away by the foresight and the infrastructure they've developed over the years. They know every tree that's been planted, when they've maintained it, how it's been maintained, its general forecast for removal, everything that's going on for cities throughout California. What they've accomplished is wonderful!"

After a visit to WCA's sort yard in Ontario, California, with Scott Paul and Taylor wood purchaser Chris Cosgrove, Andy and Bob Taylor were able to initially assess the quality of their log inventory and select sample wood, including one of Andy's leading contenders, ash, to build some prototype guitars.

Because of WCA's tracking technology, Andy also was able to get an idea of which species are slated for removal over the next two years, which provides an idea of future supply.

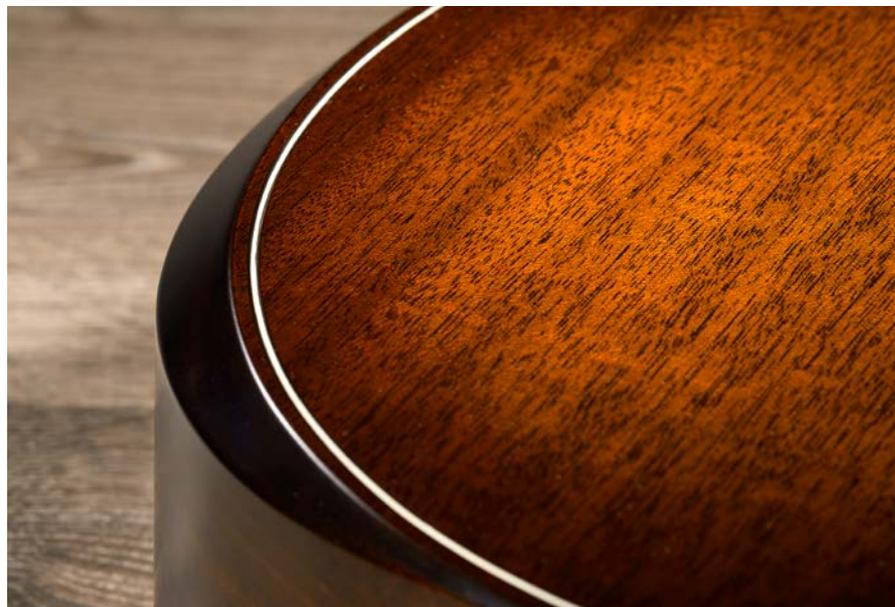
Andy emphasizes that part of Taylor's responsibility as we work to shape a healthy sourcing model for urban forest management is helping people understand what urban forest management is, and that we're not going around prospecting for trees in people's neighborhoods.



"People are sentimental about the trees on their block when they grew up, or in the park nearby," he says. "I know this because I'm one of those people. It's important to remember every tree growing in a city was put there for a reason. They were planted for a windbreak, for shade, for noise absorption, sometimes for the aesthetic value, but usually for a practical reason. The reality is each tree has a definite end-of-life timeframe determined by the city – they will be replaced once they become a liability. As cold as that reality sounds, it's balanced by knowing those removed trees are replaced by new trees planted in their community to ensure the benefit of the urban tree canopy."

Cities also typically have a budget for replacing the trees that they take out, although the reality is that many are resource-challenged. Nonetheless, around the world there's a clear mandate to expand the urban canopy. Members of local communities are also increasingly engaged in grassroots-level planting initiatives.

Though Taylor is still in the early stages of collaborating with WCA, the two companies have a lot in common in terms of their parallel histories in Southern California, their innovative mindsets, and a shared desire to use business as a driver of environmental stewardship. Because of WCA's relationships with hundreds of municipalities, there is great potential to build additional partnerships with public agencies and bring more infrastructure, and more resources, to urban forest initiatives, including re-greening projects in communities throughout our region and beyond.



would be tempted to say you were listening to Honduran mahogany. In almost every physical way I can measure it, it's reminiscent of good mahogany. It tends to be relatively consistent throughout the board. Compared to other ash species used for electric guitars, it's heavier, denser and more resonant than the 'swamp' ash loved by electric guitar makers, but not nearly as heavy or tough as the Northern baseball-bat ash."

The decision to introduce Urban Ash on a premium Builder's Edition guitar underscores Andy's passion both for the performance virtues of the wood itself and the prospect of Taylor shaping a new urban forest sourcing model using locally available resources.

"An initiative like this is another example of our commitment toward better environmental stewardship," he says. "Sure, conservation and replanting are critical aspects in our quest toward a better forest future. In addition, we can take a fresh look around us and adapt designs to use what is currently available and build with it in a responsible way."

Model Details

The pairing of a hardwood mahogany top with ash back and sides, plus our V-Class voicing, translate into an exceptionally versatile guitar. Andy especially likes the hardwood top for live performance environments.

"With its naturally smoothing compression effect, that hardwood top is a

real benefit, especially the way V-Class and the ES2 pickup work," he says.

Ash blends elements of mahogany, koa and blackwood, emphasizing a focused, fundamental-strong voice that will respond well to virtually any type of player.

"While this guitar has a voice all its own, it's designed as a musical collaborator to whatever the musician brings to the guitar," Andy elaborates. "That could be anywhere between a gentle whisper and a roar. This guitar is ready for whatever a musician brings to the strings."

The beveled armrest and contoured cutaway and body edges soften the hard lines all around, while Gotoh Gold tuners add a luxurious feel to the enhanced tuning precision. Aesthetically,

while Andy kept the appointments relatively understated, the Builder's Edition 324ce still makes an impression with its dark mahogany top and rich Dark Roast stain and shaded edgeburst around the entire body and along the neck. Ivoroid purfling around the top and back supplies subtle accents, and Italian acrylic fretboard/peghead inlays in a new Compass pattern help distinguish the guitar from other 300 Series models. **W&S**



ALL IN THE FAMILY

Meet the rest of Andy's player-centric
Builder's Edition models



Builder's Edition K14ce

Body: Cutaway Grand Auditorium

Woods: Koa / Torrefied Spruce

Premium Performance Features: Beveled armrest and body edges, beveled cutaway, Curve Wing bridge, Gotoh 510 tuners, Silent Satin finish (Kona burst back/sides)

Musical Personality: The modern acoustic sweet spot

Andy's Builder's Edition debut established the next-level standards of sound, feel and musical expressiveness he wanted to offer players, earning rave reviews and industry awards in the wake of its release. As one writer assessed, "Like other great guitars, the K14ce somehow disappears in your hands as the direct connection between the player and the music they are making invites voyages into uncharted territory."

Koa paired with torrefied spruce, and voiced with V-Class bracing, serves up a modern, articulate sound with a balanced blend of warmth and clarity. It's great for solo fingerstyle but also behaves well in a band setting. Together with the contouring details, the guitar is designed to be broadly approachable.



Builder's Edition K24ce

Body: Cutaway Grand Auditorium

Woods: All Koa

Premium Performance Features: Beveled cutaway, beveled armrest and body edges, Curve Wing bridge, Gotoh 510 tuners, Silent Satin finish (Kona burst body)

Musical Personality: The high-end performer

The gorgeous koa-top counterpart to the spruce-top K14 delivers a similar playing experience, but the hardwood top dampens some of the ultra-high frequencies. This translates into a slightly warmer, darker response that accentuates koa's sonic sweetness and lyricism. By trimming off a bit of the initial attack, the koa top produces a smooth, balanced response. Together with the clarity and intonation accuracy of V-Class bracing, this guitar will record and amplify well.

The aesthetic beauty of the contoured, all-koa body and other high-end appointments add up to a seductive look and feel, especially with the tasteful Kona burst and paua and koa trim. You'll be inspired by this guitar even when you're not playing it.

Builder's Edition 614ce

Body: Cutaway Grand Auditorium

Woods: Big Leaf Maple / Torrefied Spruce

Premium Performance Features: Beveled cutaway, beveled armrest and body edges, Curve Wing bridge, Gotoh 510 tuners, Silent Satin finish

Musical Personality: The chameleon

Maple's sonic transparency has made it a preferred wood for violins because of its player-reflective qualities. The same holds true with this guitar. Rather than imposing its own sound on the player, it adapts to the player's nuanced attack, which lends itself to genre-bending fun. With V-Class bracing and a torrefied spruce top, the guitar also offers enhanced touch sensitivity and dynamic range. As a result, it delivers a great breadth of musical expression.

That expressiveness is complemented by refined body contouring, which borrows from the sleek curves of the solidbody electric world. Visually, our Wild Honey Burst adds richness and depth that accentuates the beautiful maple figure and rich-grained spruce top.



Builder's Edition 517 / 717

Body: Grand Pacific

Woods:

517: Mahogany / Torrefied Sitka Spruce

717: Rosewood / Torrefied Sitka Spruce

Premium Performance Features: Beveled body edges, compound-carve neck, rolled fretboard edges, rounded, ridgeless heel contour, Curve Wing bridge, Silent Satin finish

Musical Personality:

517: The neo-classic workhorse; **717:** The wise old sage

This tandem release of mahogany and rosewood siblings marked the debut of our Grand Pacific body style, a round-shoulder dreadnought that brought a noticeably different acoustic voice to the Taylor line. Inspired by the warm sonic qualities of the dreadnought sounds from the classic records Andy grew up listening to, he designed a guitar that captured much of that mojo, while also using his V-Class framework to improve other traditional problem areas, such as replacing low-end muddiness with clearer, more musical low-end power.

The mahogany and rosewood editions were intentionally given many of the same playing and aesthetic details with the goal of creating a more level playing field so players could choose purely on the basis of sound. The mahogany 517 produces a dry, fundamental-strong voice that will complement vocals and appeal to singer-songwriters. The rosewood 717 sings with a more saturated, complex voice that will tend to appeal to seasoned pickers. But ultimately, the choice is yours.

To learn more about each model in Taylor's Builder's Edition collection, visit taylorguitars.com, where you'll find an array of content, including videos with Andy Powers and an assortment of Taylor artists. Look for the newest Builder's Edition models in stores starting in February.





THE 2020 TAYLOR GUITAR GUIDE

OUR LATEST GUITAR LINEUP PRESENTS OUR MOST DIVERSE COLLECTION OF INSTRUMENTS EVER

A great guitar is part muse and part tool, creating a harmony of inspiration and performance. Looks, feel and sound converge to forge a unique musical personality, which is why part of the pleasure of playing different guitars is in the personal discoveries we make with each. How a guitar resonates with us – both literally and figuratively – is an essential part of our musical courtship.

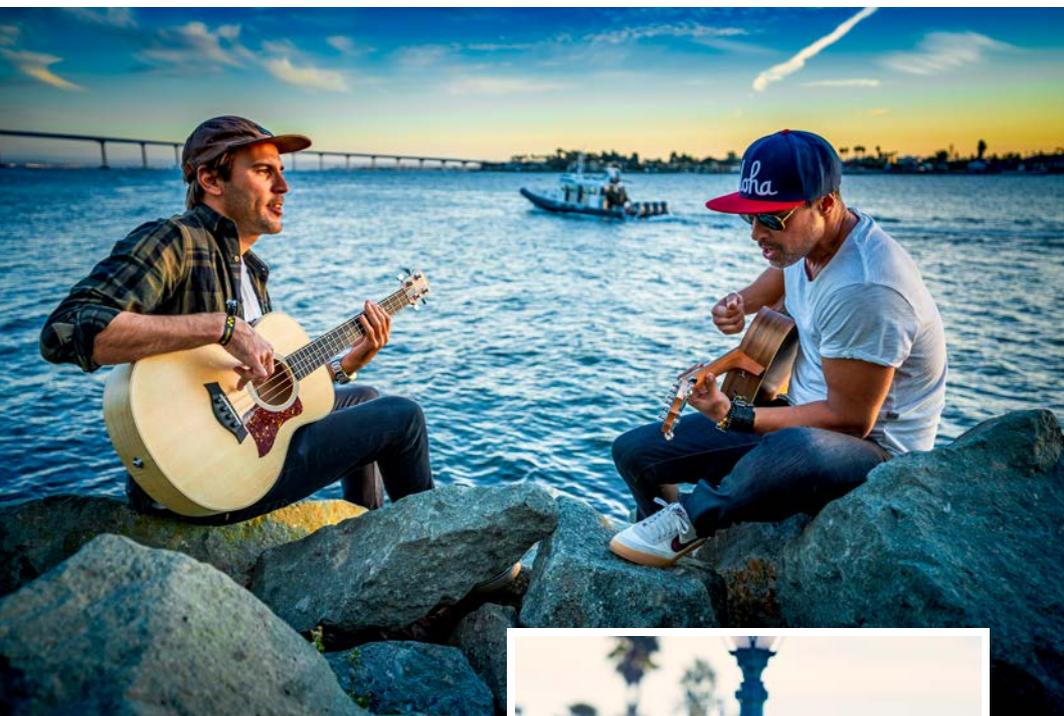
Here at Taylor, we're passionate not only about crafting inspiring instruments, but also about helping people find joy in making music. That's why we'll never stop innovating and refining our guitar designs. It's also why we love helping people find the right guitar – one that will help them express themselves to the fullest and progress on their musical journey.

Our guitar guide will take you on a tour of our 2020 line. Guitars, like people, come in different shapes, sizes and personalities, and our latest collection offers a diverse selection of musical voices, from the Baby Taylor to our Builder's Edition guitars.

In the pages ahead, we'll offer a closer look at two fundamental components of a Taylor acoustic guitar: its body shape and the tonewoods that help flavor its sound. Then we'll present the different series that comprise our line. Each is set apart by a combination of tonewood pairings and aesthetic details, from clean, workmanlike appointments to elaborate ornamentation that showcases our high standards of craftsmanship.

Whether you're a beginner looking for a quality guitar or a longtime player craving fresh inspiration, we're confident you'll find a Taylor guitar that will reward you with many years of music enjoyment.

As always, you'll find more information on all of our models, including photos, descriptions, specifications* and pricing, at [taylorguitars.com](https://www.taylorguitars.com). Also, we'll be kicking off another season of our popular in-store Road Show events starting in March, so be sure to check the Events page on our website for a date and location near you. And if you have specific guitar questions, feel free to contact our Customer Service team; they'll be happy to help you.



Taylor Body Shapes

How to find the right fit –
both in feel and sound

In your search for an acoustic guitar that “fits” you best, body shape is often a good starting point for two reasons: 1) The body’s dimensions, including its curves and depth, define your physical relationship with it when you hold it against your body; and 2) Those dimensions literally help shape its voice.

Feel

The guitar body should feel comfortable against yours, especially with your picking arm draped over it. If you’ll be sitting when you play, take note of how the guitar’s contours feel in relation to your body. The width of the waist, for example, will influence how high the guitar sits on your leg. Some Taylor models include ergonomic features like an armrest, which softens the edge against your picking/strumming arm. Many of our Builder’s Edition models feature other smooth body contouring details. The bottom line: The more comfortable you feel, the better you’ll play and sound.

Sound

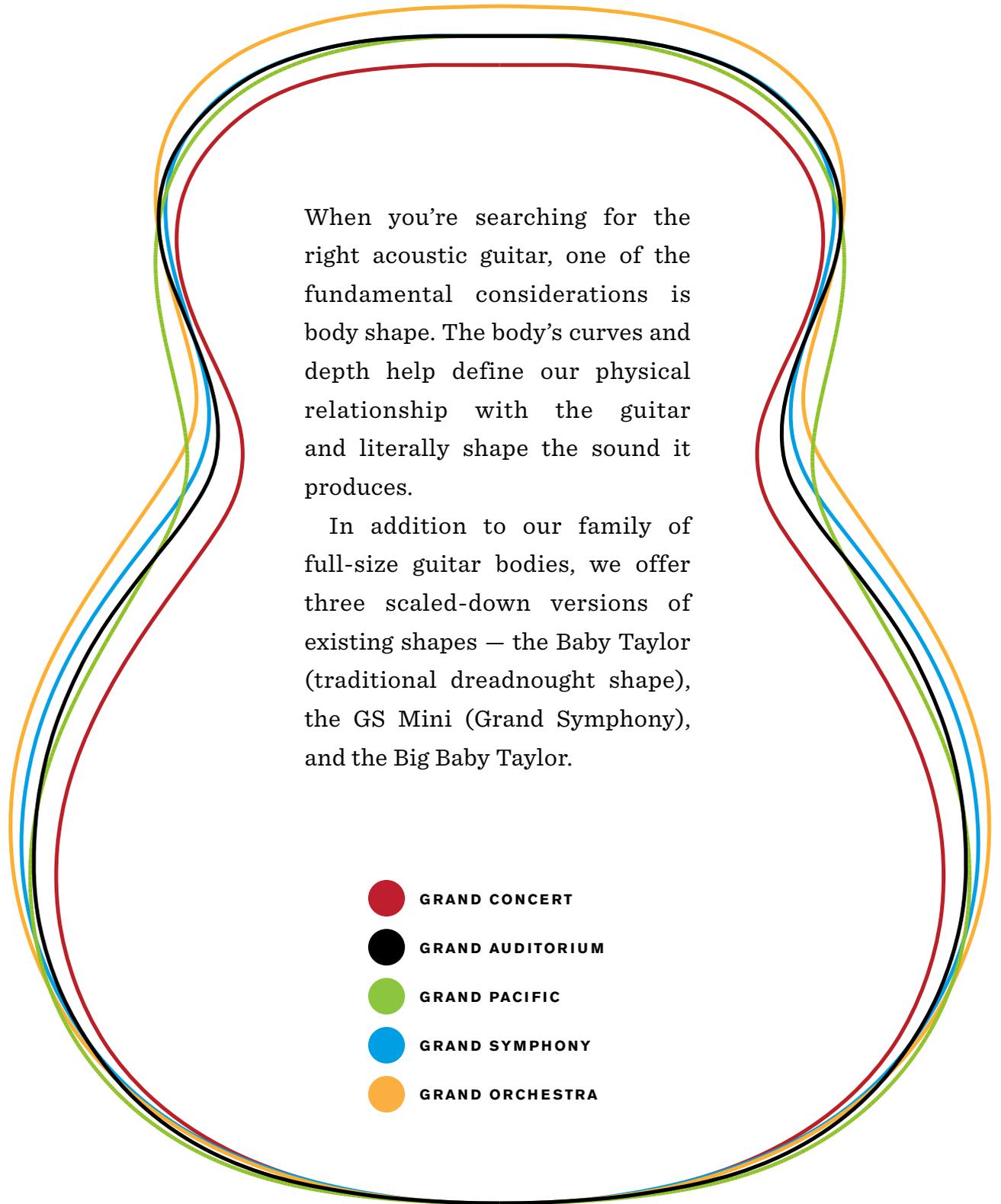
When it comes to producing sound, an acoustic guitar’s body dimensions are important because they define the boundaries of the vibrating top and back, along with the size and shape of the air chamber. Think of the air mass inside a guitar as its lung capacity. The volume of air emphasizes a particular set of frequencies that shift depending on the size of the air chamber. In general, the smaller the air mass (think of our compact Grand Concert body), the more focused the voice. The bigger the air mass (e.g., the larger, deeper-bodied Grand Orchestra), the deeper the low-end response and overall voice will be.

V-Class

Another important contributor to the sound of the guitar body is the internal bracing. With our V-Class bracing architecture, Taylor master guitar designer Andy Powers is able to better control the soundboard’s response to the strings, creating a more orderly, musical sound. With V-Class as a design platform, he has also further tailored it for each different body shape in the Taylor line, which means that each shape now has an even more distinctive musical personality in relation to our other shapes.

When you’re searching for the right acoustic guitar, one of the fundamental considerations is body shape. The body’s curves and depth help define our physical relationship with the guitar and literally shape the sound it produces.

In addition to our family of full-size guitar bodies, we offer three scaled-down versions of existing shapes – the Baby Taylor (traditional dreadnought shape), the GS Mini (Grand Symphony), and the Big Baby Taylor.



Grand Concert

(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 shape blends an intimate feel with an articulate, touch-sensitive response. With V-Class bracing, these guitars sonically punch above their weight, producing more volume and sustain. Our 14-fret models lean toward a more vibrant, high-definition sound, while 12-fret editions feature a slinkier handfeel and produce extra warmth and sweetness.

**Sound:**

- Clear, focused voice with pleasing treble chime and controlled overtones
- 14-Fret: modern and articulate; 12-Fret: warm, sweet tonal character
- Great for recording; fits nicely in a mix

Feel & Fit:

- Compact, slightly shallower body frame feels comfortable and intimate
- 24-7/8" scale length provides a slinkier, more relaxed fretting-hand feel
- Highly touch-sensitive, giving the player a lot of nuanced control

Grand Auditorium

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

Body Length: 20"
Body Width: 16"
Body Depth: 4-5/8"

Our flagship shape remains our most popular for its musical versatility. The quintessential modern workhorse, its notes are vibrant, well-defined, and balanced across the tonal spectrum. It responds well to both fingerstyle and strumming, and it's a reliable tool for recording and live performance.

**Sound:**

- Vibrant voice with articulate, balanced notes
- Impressive projection and sustain thanks to V-Class bracing
- Appealing midrange presence

Feel & Fit:

- Medium size with tapered waist makes it physically comfortable
- Large enough to produce room-filling volume
- Musically versatile, making it a great workhorse guitar

Grand Pacific

(Models end in a 7; e.g., 517)

Body Length: 20"
Body Width: 16"
Body Depth: 4-5/8"

Our round-shoulder dreadnought delivers a different flavor of Taylor tone: a warm, seasoned voice in which notes overlap in a way that's reminiscent of traditional acoustic recordings. V-Class bracing produces clear, low-end power, making this a more musical, usable voice that's as versatile as the Grand Auditorium.

**Sound:**

- Warm, blended sound with round, broad notes
- Clear, full-range power across the entire musical spectrum
- More versatile than other dreadnought-style guitars

Feel & Fit:

- Comfortable for traditional dreadnought players, with Taylor playability
- Offered exclusively as a non-cutaway
- Musically versatile, making it another workhorse option

Grand Symphony

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

Body Length: 20"
Body Width: 16-1/4"
Body Depth: 4-5/8"

Featuring a larger air chamber than the Grand Auditorium, the redesigned Grand Symphony now features V-Class bracing and a soundport cutaway that work together to produce a high-fidelity, symphonic sound. The way the sound radiates creates a more immersive, reverb-like effect with remarkable sustain.

**Sound:**

- Rich, piano-like voice with symphonic musical response
- New soundport cutaway creates expansive, room-filling surround-sound experience
- Notes sound like they're growing as they sustain out

Feel & Fit:

- Larger footprint and lung capacity than the Grand Auditorium
- 24-7/8" scale length and light-gauge strings make it comfortable and responsive
- Expressive instrument for solo acoustic players

Grand Orchestra

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

Body Length: 20-5/8"
Body Width: 16-3/4"
Body Depth: 5"

Newly revoiced with V-Class bracing, our biggest, deepest body shape now has a more powerful voice than ever, yet with remarkable touch sensitivity, giving it stunning dynamic range. The V-Class framework harnesses its huge air capacity to unleash a truly authoritative voice, capable of a deep rumble and rich sustain.

**Sound:**

- Powerful, commanding tone that remains balanced across the tonal spectrum
- Remarkable soft-touch responsiveness for a large guitar
- Huge dynamic range offers a broad, textured palette of musical colors

Feel & Fit:

- Large and deep body but with a wider waist than old-style Jumbos
- Very responsive – doesn't require a heavy attack to activate the top
- Great for players who want a deep, bold voice and like to tune down

Taylor Tonewoods

Choose from an expressive palette of sonic flavors

We have deep respect for the tonewoods we use to craft our instruments. From responsible sourcing to thoughtful design, we strive to honor the natural beauty and musical virtues of each different species. Together they contribute many distinctive sonic flavors to our guitar line.

When it comes to comparing the different acoustic properties of woods, remember that woods are merely ingredients, the sonic seasonings, in a larger recipe, with the guitar maker as the chef.

Other ingredients include the body shape, the bracing, the strings and additional materials and techniques that are deployed to shape an acoustic voice. Arguably the most important ingredient is you, because it's your playing that brings a guitar to life in a particular way.

Thanks to guitar "chef" Andy Powers, V-Class bracing has become a key ingredient in the design of our all-solid-wood guitars (300 Series and up). With V-Class as a platform that can be adapted to bring out the best of a body shape and a tonewood pairing, it's easier than ever to hear the differences between models. Essentially, because of the enhanced in-tuneness of the notes in relation to each other, each tonewood's natural traits are magnified. For instance, rosewood sounds even richer and more detailed, while mahogany's fundamental-strong character is emphasized even further.

The tone profiles that follow are meant to give you a general point of ref-

erence, but ultimately, your preferences for looks, feel and sound will guide you toward the acoustic personality that's right for you.

Solid vs. Layered Woods

One important distinction between the materials we use is whether the tonewood is solid or layered. Solid woods produce the most complex tone, and the sound continues to improve with age. Every model in the Taylor line features a solid-wood soundboard.

Our layered-wood construction (back and sides on our 200 Series and below) consists of a middle core with a thinner layer on each side. Building guitars with layered-wood backs and sides allows us to use our resources efficiently, and we're able to arrange the woods with an alternating grain direction to increase the guitar's stability and resilience.

Back and Side Woods

Hardwoods from deciduous trees are used exclusively for the backs and sides of guitars. Acting as the supportive framework for the instrument, the back and sides contribute rigidity and stability that helps coax greater sustain from the guitar, along with physical traits that emphasize different resonant frequencies. Think of them as natural tone controls for an acoustic guitar, adding bass, midrange and treble along with varying degrees of overtones.



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

Tone Profile:

- Warm, resonant bass range with sparkling treble tones
- Complex overtones with rich sustain
- Scooped midrange, ideal for players who also sing



Hawaiian Koa
Models: Koa Series

Tone Profile:

- Strong midrange presence and an extra splash of top-end brightness
- Ages gracefully – the more it's played, the more koa will open and sweeten over time
- Gorgeous grain lends a striking visual character



Maple
Models: 600 Series

Tone Profile:

- Popular in the world of bowed instruments thanks to its transparent, linear response
- Highly player-reflective; adapts to your unique approach and technique
- V-Class adds more warmth, sustain and dynamic range



Tropical Mahogany
Models: 500 Series

Tone Profile:

- Fundamental-strong focus without many overtones; the note you play is the note you hear
- Dry, woody tone; responds well to a strong attack
- Natural compression smooths out sharp volume edges for a more even response



Ovangkol
Models: 400 Series

Tone Profile:

- A rosewood-esque African tonewood with a broad, balanced tonal spectrum
- Punchy midrange scales up to a shimmering, articulate top end
- Pleasing depth and character from a responsive bass range



Sapele
Models: 300 Series (with spruce tops)

Tone Profile:

- Similar fundamental focus to mahogany, but with slightly more treble sparkle
- Consistent and balanced across the entire tonal spectrum
- Slides in beautifully alongside other instruments



Blackwood
Models: Presentation Series, 300 Series (with mahogany tops)

Tone Profile:

- Extra headroom lends volume without having to dig in too hard
- Dry, clear sound similar to mahogany, with a stronger low-end response
- Versatile and adaptable to a wide range of styles and situations



Urban Ash™
Models: Builder's Edition 324ce

Tone Profile:

- Comparable to mahogany
- Fundamental-focus with direct, dry tone and some natural compression
- Responds well to most playing styles

Top Woods

The wood used for a guitar's soundboard plays a key role in defining the overall tone of the instrument. Typically, we use "soft" woods, which come from coniferous trees. Spruce and cedar are valued for their combination of being lightweight yet strong, possessing an elastic quality that allows them to be set in motion easily. These woods generally produce a wide dynamic range, and contribute their own unique musical flavor to the mix.

In some cases, we use hardwoods such as mahogany or Hawaiian koa as guitar tops. These denser materials require more energy to set in motion, and the vibration tends to move more gradually through them. The result is a kind of natural compression effect that rounds out the guitar's initial attack, producing a focused voice with fewer overtones. These are ideal choices for players who frequently amplify their acoustic guitars.



Western Red Cedar

Tone Profile:

- Less dense than spruce, generating a warmer, more played-in sound
- Additional midrange presence adds complexity
- Especially sensitive to players with a soft touch, but with more dynamic range for strumming from V-Class bracing



Sinker Redwood

Tone Profile:

- Blends the punch of spruce with the warmth of cedar
- Saturated with overtones; notes expand and bloom as they sustain



Hardwood Tops (Koa, Mahogany)

Tone Profile:

- Natural compression yields a controlled "roll-in" effect to a note
- Even, balanced volume response to a varied strumming or picking technique
- **Mahogany tops:** strong fundamental focus with a direct, dry sound without overtones
- **Koa tops:** similar to mahogany with a touch more top-end shimmer and chime



Sitka Spruce

Tone Profile:

- Crisp and articulate, with a broad dynamic range
- Accommodates a wide variety of playing styles and musical genres

Lutz Spruce

Tone Profile:

- Natural hybrid of Sitka and White/Engelmann spruce
- Like old-growth Adirondack spruce, generates extra power and headroom

Adirondack Spruce

Tone Profile:

- Highest volume ceiling of any spruce species
- Can be driven hard without losing clarity

614ce with a torrefied Sitka spruce top

The Taylor Line at a Glance

A snapshot of our series framework and tonewood pairings

All-Solid-Wood Guitars

A guitar made with a top, back and sides of solid wood will produce the most complex sound and continue to improve with age



Presentation Series { **Back/Sides:** Figured Blackwood
Top: Adirondack Spruce or Sinker Redwood

Koa Series { **Back/Sides:** Hawaiian Koa
Top: Hawaiian Koa or Torrefied Sitka Spruce (Builder's Edition)

900 Series { **Back/Sides:** Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce or Lutz Spruce (Builder's Edition)

800 DLX Series { **Back/Sides:** Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce

800 Series { **Back/Sides:** Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce or Lutz Spruce (Builder's Edition)

700 Series { **Back/Sides:** Indian Rosewood
Top: Lutz Spruce or Torrefied Sitka Spruce (Builder's Edition)

600 Series { **Back/Sides:** Figured Big Leaf Maple
Top: Torrefied Sitka Spruce

500 Series { **Back/Sides:** Neo-Tropical Mahogany
Top: Mahogany, Cedar (GC, GA) or Torrefied Sitka Spruce (Builder's Edition)

400 Series { **Back/Sides:** Ovangkol or Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce

300 Series { **Back/Sides:** Sapele (Spruce Top), Blackwood (Mahogany Top) or Urban Ash™ (Builder's Edition)
Top: Sitka Spruce or Mahogany

Layered-Wood Guitars

Guitars crafted with layered-wood back and sides, featuring three layers of wood, paired with a solid-wood top



200 DLX Series { **Back/Sides:** Layered Koa, Rosewood, or Maple
Top: Sitka Spruce or Koa

200 Series { **Back/Sides:** Layered Koa or Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce

100 Series { **Back/Sides:** Layered Walnut
Top: Sitka Spruce

Academy Series { **Back/Sides:** Layered Sapele
Top: Sitka Spruce or Lutz Spruce (Nylon)

GS Mini { **Back/Sides:** Layered Sapele, Koa, Rosewood or Maple
Top: Sitka Spruce, Mahogany or Koa

Baby Series { **Back/Sides:** Layered Walnut or Sapele
Top: Sitka Spruce or Mahogany

Electric Guitars

Hollowbody or Semi-Hollowbody

T5z Series { **Top:** Figured Koa, Figured Maple, Sitka Spruce or Mahogany

T3 Series { **Top:** Layered Figured Maple

Custom Guitars

Create a guitar that stands out as a personal expression of your musical tastes. Choose from a robust menu of custom specifications, including premium-grade tonewoods, appointments and more.

A Guide to Taylor Acoustic Model Numbers

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

814ce

814ce **The first digit** (or letter) identifies the series (e.g., 800 Series). Each series is distinguished by the type of back and side woods and other material/aesthetic appointments used, such as inlays and binding.

814ce **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 softwood like spruce or cedar or a hardwood like mahogany or koa.

6-string Models:

- If the middle digit is **1**, it has a softwood top (e.g., 514ce)
- If the middle digit is **2**, it has a hardwood top (e.g., 524ce)

12-string Models:

- If the middle digit is **5**, it has a softwood top (e.g., 352ce)
- If the middle digit is **6**, it has a hardwood top (e.g., 362ce)

814ce **The third digit** identifies the body shape according to this numbering system:

- 0** = Dreadnought (e.g., 210ce)
- 2** = Grand Concert (e.g., 712ce)
- 4** = Grand Auditorium (e.g., 414ce)
- 6** = Grand Symphony (e.g., 816ce)
- 7** = Grand Pacific (e.g., 517e)
- 8** = Grand Orchestra (e.g., 618e)

814ce **“c”** indicates a model with a cutaway in the body

814ce **“e”** indicates a model with onboard electronics

Other Model Name Indicators

Some Taylor models include additional letters. This can identify several things:

Nylon-string models (e.g., 812ce-N)

Alternative back/side woods within a series
(e.g., 414ce-R = rosewood; 214ce-K = koa)

Color treatments (e.g., 214ce-SB = Sunburst;
517 WHB = Wild Honey Burst; 214ce-BLK = Black)



Presentation Series

Our marriage of exquisite tonewoods and sublime craftsmanship has positioned our Presentation Series at the top of the Taylor line. For 2020, master-grade figured Tasmanian blackwood is matched with a top of stunning sinker redwood or Adirondack spruce, with V-Class bracing coaxing extra power and sonic nuance from each instrument. This year we've distilled our body shape choices to the Grand Auditorium and Grand Concert (including a 12-fret edition). Fine details include a radiused ebony armrest, ebony binding, vibrant paua inlays and edge trim, and shaded edgeburst back and sides that illuminate blackwood's rich visual character. Together, the fusion of refined voicing and thoughtful aesthetic strokes make this series truly worthy of its heirloom status.



PS12ce



PS14ce

PS12ce 12-Fret

Specifications

Back/Sides: Figured Blackwood
Top: Adirondack Spruce or Sinker Redwood
Finish: Gloss 6.0
Rosette: Single-Ring Paua with Bound Soundhole
Fretboard Inlay: Paua Nouveau
Binding: West African Ebony
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Ebony Radius Armrest, Paua Trim (Top, Fretboard Extension, Armrest), Ebony Backstrap, Peghead/Bridge Inlays, Abalone Dot Bridge Pins, Gold Gotoh 510 Tuners (14-Fret Models)

Available Models

PS12ce
 PS12ce 12-Fret
 PS14ce

Koa Series

The Koa Series honors the beauty of Hawaii in a fitting way: by seducing our senses with gorgeously figured koa that's voiced to sing sweetly. Most models feature a koa top, which dampens some of the ultra-high frequencies, yielding a slightly warmer sound while still preserving the top-end chime. With our V-Class bracing inside, the clarity and consistency across the tonal spectrum make these ideal for recording or the stage. The series also plays host to the Builder's Edition K14ce and K24ce, offering the choice of a torrefied spruce or koa top, along with a suite of smoothly contoured features. Each guitar is artfully appointed to complement koa's unique beauty, ranging from the natural elegance of maple trim on standard models to sparkling paua abalone on Builder's Edition guitars. And don't miss the new K26ce, featuring our redesigned Grand Symphony body with a soundport cutaway.



K26ce

Specifications

Back/Sides: Hawaiian Koa

Top: Hawaiian Koa

Finish: Gloss 6.0 with Shaded Edgeburst
(Entire Guitar)

Rosette: Single Ring Maple with Koa/Black Purfling

Fretboard Inlay: Maple Spring Vine

Binding: Pale Non-Figured Maple

Electronics: Expression System 2

Premium Features: Gold Gotoh 510 Tuners
(12-Fret models: Nickel Slot-head Tuners with
Ebony Buttons), Black/Koa/Maple Top Purfling,
Maple Peghead/Fretboard Purfling

Builder's Edition K14ce / K24ce

Back/Sides: Hawaiian Koa

Top: Torrefied Sitka Spruce or Koa (K24ce)

Finish (Body): Silent Satin with
Kona Burst (Back/Sides/Koa Top)

Rosette: Paua with Koa Purfling

Fretboard Inlay: Paua Spring Vine

Binding: West African Ebony (Fretboard/Peghead/Heel Cap)

Electronics: Expression System 2

Premium Features: Beveled Armrest/Cutaway,
Chamfered Body Edges, Kona Burst Neck, Koa/Paua
Inset Purfling (Top/Back), Koa Fretboard/Peghead
Purfling, Curve Wing Bridge, Gotoh Gold Tuners

Available Models

K22ce

K22ce 12-Fret

Builder's Edition K14ce

Builder's Edition K24ce

K24ce

K26ce

Builder's Edition
K24ceBuilder's Edition
K14ce

900 Series

Our 900 Series showcases a harmony of tonal sophistication and aesthetic refinement. The venerable rosewood/spruce pairing produces a warm, full-spectrum tone with a slightly scooped midrange that leaves room for vocals and other instruments while delivering the articulation you'd expect from a Sitka spruce-topped guitar. V-Class bracing enhances rosewood's signature overtones, allowing every note and chord to bloom into an even richer and more resonant bouquet of sound. Luxurious appointments include a radiused ebony armrest, ebony binding with koa and paua trim, abalone and mother-of-pearl Ascension inlays, and Gotoh 510 tuners. New for 2020, the Grand Concert Builder's Edition 912ce incorporates a beveled armrest and cutaway, plus other refined playing features that make this one of our most responsive guitars ever.



912ce
12-Fret



Builder's Edition 912ce

Specifications

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce
Finish: Gloss 3.5
Rosette: Single-Ring Paua with Bound Soundhole
Fretboard Inlay: Abalone/Mother-of-Pearl Ascension
Binding: West African Ebony with Koa Purfling
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Ebony Radius Armrest, Paua/Koa Trim (Top, Back, Sides, Fretboard Extension, Fretboard, Peghead, Armrest), Ebony Backstrap, Gold Gotoh 510 Tuners (12-Fret Models: Nickel Slot-head Tuners with Ebony Buttons)

Builder's Edition 912ce

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Lutz Spruce
Finish: Silent Satin with Wild Honey Burst or Natural Top
Rosette: Paua Single Ring with Koa/Ebony Purfling
Fretboard Inlay: Mother-of-Pearl and Pink Abalone Bellefleur
Binding: West African Ebony with Koa Purfling
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Beveled Armrest/Cutaway, Chamfered Body Edges, Rolled Fretboard Edges, Paua Purfling (Top and Back), Koa Fretboard/Peghead Purfling, Bound Soundhole, Ebony Backstrap, Curve Wing Bridge, Gold Gotoh 510 Tuners

Available Models

912ce
 Builder's Edition 912ce
 Builder's Edition 912ce WHB
 912ce 12-Fret
 914ce



814ce DLX

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: Rosewood/Maple Radius Armrest, Rosewood Pickguard, Rosewood Top Trim, Chrome Gotoh 510 Tuners (12-Fret Models: Nickel Slot-head Tuners with Ebony Buttons)

800 DLX Series

As its name suggests, our 800 Deluxe Series adds another level of refinement to the quintessential series in the Taylor line over our 45-year history. Rosewood and spruce are musical soulmates, and here, we've sweetened the romance by adding a pair of premium performance-enhancing features. A radius-style rosewood armrest rounds off the edge of the body, making the playing experience as smooth as possible for your strumming arm. Gotoh 510 tuners (on 14-fret models) deliver a 21:1 gear ratio and offer finely calibrated pitch control. Together with the intonation accuracy of our V-Class bracing and our ultra-playable necks, these guitars will elevate your expressive range whatever your skill level. Appointments include maple binding with rosewood edge trim, a genuine rosewood pickguard, gloss finish, and Element fretboard inlays in mother-of-pearl.

Available Models

812ce 12-Fret DLX

812ce DLX

814ce DLX



814ce DLX

812ce DLX
12-Fret

800 Series

Honed over decades by Bob Taylor and now Andy Powers, the 800 Series is home to the flagship 814ce and an array of sleek, versatile models. Sitting in the sweet spot where innovative design meets workhorse functionality, the series combines the time-honored warmth and resonance of Indian rosewood with Sitka spruce's top-end sparkle and shimmer. The mesmerizing tonal output remains clear and balanced whether you're playing room-filling cowboy chords or delicate fingerpicked melodies. V-Class bracing adds a new dimension of musicality, boosting volume and sustain while enhancing the much-loved tonal fidelity of the rosewood/spruce pairing. With the newest edition to the series, the Builder's Edition Grand Symphony 816ce, a soundport cutaway helps unleash an immersive high-fidelity sound.



Builder's Edition 816ce

Specifications

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Sitka Spruce
Finish: Gloss 4.5
Rosette: Single-Ring Abalone with Bound Soundhole
Fretboard Inlay: Mother-of-Pearl Element or Mother-of-Pearl/Ivory Mission (GO)
Binding: Pale Non-Figured Maple
Electronics: Expression System 2 or ES-N (Nylon)
Premium Features: Rosewood Top Trim, Smoked Nickel (GA, GC) or Nickel (GO) Tuners (12-Fret Models: Nickel Slot-head Tuners with Ebony Buttons), Rosewood Pickguard

Builder's Edition 816ce

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Lutz Spruce
Finish: Silent Satin
Rosette: Abalone Single Ring with Bound Soundhole
Fretboard Inlay: Mother-of-Pearl Windansea
Binding: Pale Non-Figured Maple
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Soundport Cutaway, Chamfered Body and Fretboard Edges, Bound Soundhole, Rosewood Top Purfling, Curve Wing Bridge, Gold Gotoh 510 Tuners

Available Models

812ce
 812ce-N
 812ce 12-Fret
 814ce
 814ce-N
 Builder's Edition 816ce
 818e



700 Series

With our 700 Series, we give players another uniquely appealing rosewood voice by pairing it with Lutz spruce. Similar to old-growth Adirondack spruce, Lutz offers a quick response with extra headroom, delivering inspiring dynamic range – fingerstyle players will love how easily the top is set in motion, while players with a strong attack will marvel at the sonic horsepower. Together with V-Class bracing, these guitars will feel incredibly alive in a player's hands, bringing extra clarity to the lush overtones that make Indian rosewood an all-star wood. Koa binding, a Douglas fir and maple rosette and top edge trim, and a weathered brown pickguard add organic visual details, with the option of a Western Sunburst top. Meanwhile, the Grand Pacific Builder's Edition 717 incorporates a torrefied Sitka spruce top and an array of premium playing features.

Available Models

712ce, 712ce-N, 712e 12-Fret,
712ce 12-Fret, 714ce, 714ce-N,
Builder's Edition 717
Builder's Edition 717e
Builder's Edition 717 WHB
Builder's Edition 717e WHB
JMSM



Builder's Edition 717e



714ce

Specifications

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Lutz Spruce
Finish: Gloss 6.0/Optional Western Sunburst Top
Rosette: Three-Ring Herringbone w/ Douglas Fir/Maple/Black
Fretboard Inlay: Green Abalone Reflections
Binding: Non-Figured Koa
Electronics: Expression System 2 or ES-N (Nylon)
Premium Features: Douglas Fir/Maple/Black Top Edge Trim, Weathered Brown Pickguard

Builder's Edition 717 / 717e

Back/Sides: Indian Rosewood
Top: Torrefied Sitka Spruce
Finish: Silent Satin (Natural or Wild Honey Burst Top)
Rosette: Sapele/Maple Single Ring
Fretboard Inlay: Mother-of-Pearl Arrowheads
Binding: Sapele (Body), West African Ebony (Fretboard)
Electronics: Expression System 2 (717e)
Premium Features: Compound Carve Neck Profile, Chamfered Body Edges, Rolled Fretboard Edges, Curve Wing Bridge, Taylor Nickel Tuners, Western Floral Deluxe Hardshell Case

600 Series

Maple's player-reflective tonal properties and striking visual character set the 600 Series apart from the crowd. Known for its focused, transparent sound, it's the chameleon of tonewoods, channeling the style of the player in a way that gives it genre-bending versatility. Torrefied Sitka spruce tops each model, yielding extra power, sustain and touch sensitivity thanks to V-Class bracing. Visually, our Brown Sugar stain highlights maple's lustrous figure and offers a nod to the rich complexion of the maple-body violin family. The series also sports two Builder's Edition models with torrefied spruce tops and body contouring inspired by electric guitars – the 614ce, which features a Wild Honey Burst, and the 12-string 652ce, designed with a reverse-strung setup that delivers an exceptionally clean, focused sound. All told, our 600 Series guitars will follow players along any musical path they choose.



Builder's Edition 614ce WHB

Specifications

Back/Sides: Figured Big Leaf Maple
Top: Torrefied Sitka Spruce
Finish: Gloss 4.5 with Brown Sugar Stain
Rosette: Single-Ring Paua with Bound Soundhole
Fretboard Inlay: Grained Ivoroid Wings or Mother-of-Pearl/Ivoroid Mission (GO)
Binding: West African Ebony or Maple (GO)
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Ebony Backstrap with Grained Ivoroid Wings Inlay, Grained Ivoroid Purfling (Body/Peghead), Striped Ebony Pickguard

Builder's Edition 614ce / 614ce WHB

Back/Sides: Figured Big Leaf Maple
Top: Torrefied Sitka Spruce
Finish: Silent Satin with Wild Honey Burst
 Back/Sides/Neck & Optional Top
Rosette: Single Ring Maple
Fretboard Inlay: Mother-of-Pearl Scepter
Binding: West African Ebony (Fretboard Only)
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Beveled Armrest/Cutaway, Chamfered Body Edges, Maple Top Purfling, Curve Wing Bridge, Gold Gotoh 510 Tuners

Builder's Edition 652ce

Back/Sides: Figured Big Leaf Maple
Top: Torrefied Sitka Spruce
Finish: Silent Satin with Wild Honey Burst
 Back/Sides/Neck & Optional Top
Rosette: Maple Single Ring
Fretboard Inlay: Mother-of-Pearl Scepter
Binding: West African Ebony (Fretboard Only)
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Reverse-Strung Setup, Beveled Armrest/Cutaway, Chamfered Body Edges, Maple Top Purfling, Curve Wing Bridge, Gold Gotoh 510 Tuners

Available Models

612ce
 612ce 12-Fret
 Builder's Edition 652ce
 Builder's Edition 652ce WHB
 614ce
 Builder's Edition 614ce
 Builder's Edition 614ce WHB
 618e



514ce

Specifications

Back/Sides: Neo-Tropical Mahogany
Top: Neo-Tropical Mahogany or Western Red Cedar
Finish: Gloss 6.0 (Mahogany-Top Models: Shaded Edgeburst)
Rosette: Single-Ring Faux Tortoiseshell & Grained Ivoroid
Fretboard Inlay: Grained Ivoroid Century
Binding: Faux Tortoiseshell
Electronics: Expression System 2

Builder's Edition 517 / 517e

Back/Sides: Neo-Tropical Mahogany
Top: Torrefied Sitka Spruce
Finish: Silent Satin w/ Blackwood Stain (Natural or Wild Honey Burst top)
Rosette: Sapele/Maple Single Ring
Fretboard Inlay: Grained Ivoroid Arrowheads
Binding: Sapele (Body), West African Ebony (Fretboard)
Electronics: Expression System 2 (517e)
Premium Features: Compound Carve Neck Profile, Chamfered Body Edges, Rolled Fretboard Edges, Curve Wing Bridge, Taylor Nickel Tuners, Western Floral Deluxe Hardshell Case

Available Models

512ce
 512ce 12-Fret
 522ce
 522e 12-Fret
 522ce 12-Fret
 552ce
 562ce
 514ce
 524ce
 Builder's Edition 517
 Builder's Edition 517e
 Builder's Edition 517 WHB
 Builder's Edition 517e WHB

500 Series

With its dry, woody characteristics, the mahogany featured in our 500 Series could be described like a fine wine. The tonewood's fundamental-strong character helps it behave well in a mix – the note you play is the note you hear, with fewer overtones than a wood like rosewood. That sonic focus makes these guitars great tools for recording. Soundboard options include mahogany, which evens out a player's attack, and cedar, known for its warmth and soft-touch responsiveness. Last year's addition to the series, the Grand Pacific 517, has quickly become a favorite among artists, offering a warm and seasoned flavor of Taylor tone. The series also includes several 12-fret models, including the all-mahogany 12-string 562ce. With V-Class bracing under the hood of each model, the unique sonic traits are more distinctive than ever.

Builder's Edition
517e

400 Series

African ovangkol or Indian rosewood? We love them both, so we'll let you decide. For years, our 400 Series has given players workhorse reliability and performance versatility in virtually any situation, from the lively mix of a 5-piece rock band to the lone spotlight of an open-mic night. Both rosewood and ovangkol cover a broad tonal spectrum, with rosewood especially emphasizing deep lows and sparkling highs, while ovangkol responds with pleasing midrange punch. In both cases, our V-Class bracing brings more power and clarity to the overall sound, giving players a more expressive musical tool. Choose from Grand Auditorium and Grand Concert body styles. Clean appointments include crisp white binding, fretboard inlays in Italian acrylic, a faux tortoiseshell pickguard, and a gloss-finish body.



414ce-R

Specifications

Back/Sides: African Ovangkol or Indian Rosewood

Top: Sitka Spruce

Finish: Gloss 6.0

Rosette: Three-Ring White

Fretboard Inlay: Italian Acrylic Small Diamonds (Ovangkol) or Renaissance (Rosewood Models)

Binding: White

Electronics: Expression System 2

Available Models

412e-R

412ce

412ce-R

414ce

414ce-R



412ce

412ce

300 Series

Our 300 Series provides an inviting entry point for players craving the musical rewards of the all-solid-wood acoustic experience. Between the voicing virtues of V-Class bracing and the rich selection of model options, there's something for everyone here. Wood pairings include sapele topped with spruce or Tasmanian blackwood with mahogany. Grand Concert models include 12-fret, 12-string and nylon-string options. Our Grand Pacific now comes in two forms, the spruce-top 317 and our new mahogany-top 327. Players looking for something extra special owe it themselves to test-drive our new Builder's Edition 324ce, which features Urban Ash™ paired with mahogany and incorporates smooth contouring features that make this guitar supremely comfortable to play.

Available Models

312ce	314ce
312ce-N	324e
312ce 12-Fret	324ce
322e	Builder's Edition 324ce
322ce	317
322e 12-Fret	317e
322ce 12-Fret	327
352ce	327e
362ce	
314	



Specifications

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

Builder's Edition 324ce

Back/Sides: Urban Ash™
Top: Neo-Tropical Mahogany
Finish: Silent Satin with Dark Roast Stain/Shaded Edgeburst
Rosette: Single Ring Italian Acrylic
Fretboard Inlay: Italian Acrylic Compass
Binding: West African Ebony (Fretboard Only)
Electronics: Expression System 2
Premium Features: Beveled Armrest/Cutaway, Chamfered Body Edges, Grained Ivoroid Top Purfling, Curve Wing Bridge, Antique Gold Gotoh 510 Tuners

200 Series

Standard | Plus | DLX

The 200 Series has long been home to versatile, pro-level guitars for players seeking a reliable performance tool or a quality guitar to power their musical growth. This year you'll find an expanded palette of inspiring options to choose from, with three different tiers represented under the broad umbrella of the series. Our standard 200 Series features a choice of layered rosewood or koa paired with solid spruce. The new 200 Plus Series features layered rosewood and solid spruce, a gloss finish, Taylor 18:1 Nickel tuners, and our new AeroCase™, which blends all the protective features of a hardshell case with material construction that's one-third the weight. Our 200 Deluxe models boast several color options (black, red, sunburst), plus a pair of Hawaiian koa editions, including the all-koa 224ce-K DLX. All Deluxe models include a gloss-finish body and a deluxe hardshell case.



214ce Plus

Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Koa, Rosewood or Maple

Top: Hawaiian Koa or Sitka Spruce

Finish: Matte or Gloss 6.0 (Plus and DLX models)

Rosette: Three-Ring White or Single-Ring Italian Acrylic (DLX models)

Fretboard Inlay: Italian Acrylic 4mm Dots or Italian Acrylic Small Diamonds (DLX models)

Binding: White, Black or Cream

Electronics: Expression System 2 or ES-N (Nylon)

Premium Features: Plus Models: Taylor Nickel Tuners, AeroCase; Deluxe Models: Deluxe Hardshell Case

Available Models

210ce
214ce
214ce-K
214ce-N
254ce
210ce Plus
214ce Plus
214ce DLX
214ce-BLK DLX
214ce-RED DLX
250ce-BLK DLX
214ce-SB DLX
214ce-K DLX
224ce-K DLX



100 Series

Players on the hunt for a full-size acoustic with signature Taylor tone and playability and a budget-friendly price tag will love what our 100 Series has to offer. Handsome layered walnut back and sides are matched with a solid Sitka spruce top, serving up an impressive mix of clear, vibrant tone and sonic balance from top to bottom. The slightly narrower 1-11/16-inch nut width (also featured on our 200 Series) offers an inviting playing experience for first-timers and those with smaller hands. This year we've distilled the series to three non-cutaway models: the Grand Auditorium 114e, the Dreadnought 110e, and our popular 12-string Dread, the 150e. Each features our onboard ES2 electronics and comes with a durable padded gig bag for easy portability.



114e

Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Walnut

Top: Sitka Spruce

Finish: Matte

Rosette: Three-Ring White

Fretboard Inlay: Italian Acrylic 4mm Dots

Binding: Black

Electronics: Expression System 2

Available Models

110e

114e

150e



150e

Academy Series

Many people take up the guitar, only to give up. The common culprit: a sub-par guitar. Our Academy Series was designed to inspire new players by making the playing experience as comfortable as possible, equally rewarding in sound, and affordable to boot. The neck is slim and easy to navigate. A beveled armrest makes picking and strumming easier. A solid spruce top helps the guitar sing with pleasing volume, clarity and sustain. Choose from the Grand Concert Academy 12, the Dreadnought Academy 10, and the nylon-string Academy 12-N. Each model is offered with optional ES-B electronics and a built-in tuner, and comes with a sturdy lightweight gig bag. Whether you're just starting out or looking for a Taylor on a budget, the Academy Series delivers everything you need in an incredibly accessible form.



Academy 10e



Academy 10e

Academy 12e

Specifications

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

Available Models

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



Kaleo Wassman (center) from the reggae band Pepper soaks up the sunset on an all-koa GS Mini with Adam Taylor (maple GS Mini bass) from the band Iration. Photo: Michael Rodriguez

GS Mini Series

There may be no better-known Taylor guitar in the world than the GS Mini. Curvy yet comfortably compact, our scaled-down acoustic has a 23.5-inch scale length that makes every note and chord more accessible, yet it belies its size with a commanding voice that's powerful enough to hit the mark in the studio and on stage. This year we've grown the family to include new wood options – choose from layered sapele, rosewood and koa models, along with a new premium-edition GS Mini-e Koa Plus, featuring a shaded edgeburst, ES2 electronics, Taylor 18:1 tuners, and our new AeroCase.

Meanwhile, more and more players are discovering our GS Mini Bass, which makes playing acoustic bass fun and accessible to everyone from kids to seasoned pros. The shorter scale length and specially formulated strings blend a slinky feel with warm and smooth bass tones. Onboard electronics complete the package, making this little bass a great option for songwriting, home recording or jam sessions with friends. Wood choices include solid spruce with beautifully figured layered maple back and sides, and new for 2020, an all-koa edition, sporting a solid koa top with layered koa back and sides.

Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Koa, Rosewood, Sapele or Maple (GS Mini Bass)

Top: Hawaiian Koa, Sitka Spruce or Neo-Tropical Mahogany

Finish: Matte

Rosette: Three-Ring White

Fretboard Inlay: Italian Acrylic 4mm Dots

Binding: Black/White/Black Top Purfling

Electronics: ES-B

Premium Features: GS Mini-e Koa Plus: Shaded Edgeburst Koa Top, ES2 Electronics, AeroCase™

Available Models

GS Mini Mahogany
 GS Mini Rosewood
 GS Mini-e Rosewood
 GS Mini-e Koa
 GS Mini-e Koa Plus
 GS Mini-e Bass Maple
 GS Mini-e Bass Koa



Baby Series

Before the Baby Taylor, it was tough to find a travel-size guitar that produced a truly musical acoustic tone. These days, our three-quarter-size mini-dreadnought is an industry icon, having opened the door to the fun of playing guitar for countless folks. It makes an ideal launchpad for new players, thanks to its compact frame and smooth feel, and it's perfect for practice sessions at home or on the road. This year, our spruce-top models are paired with layered walnut back and sides, or choose a mahogany top with layered sapele. If you're looking for something closer to full size, try the Big Baby, a Dreadnought with slightly shallower body that blends playing comfort with a full-size acoustic voice. Whether you're looking for a starter guitar or a six-string sidekick as you travel the world, the Baby Series has you covered.



BT1, Big Baby Taylor

Specifications

Back/Sides: Layered Walnut (Spruce Top) or Sapele (Mahogany Top)

Top: Sitka Spruce or Neo-Tropical Mahogany

Finish: Matte

Rosette: Single-Ring Black

Fretboard Inlay: Italian Acrylic 4mm Dots

Binding: None

Electronics: ES-B

Available Models

BT1
BT2
TS-BT
BT1e
BT2e
TS-BTe
BBT
BBT-e



T5z/ T3

T5z

Our trailblazing T5z design packs a sweeping range of amplified sounds into a sleek hollowbody electric/acoustic form, giving players a versatile performance tool. Three proprietary pickups – a bridge humbucker, a hidden neck humbucker, and an acoustic body sensor – controlled by five-way switching dial up an array of tonal flavors, from clean acoustic sounds to searing rock 'n' roll leads. A slim Taylor neck, jumbo frets, and 12-inch fretboard radius set you up to comfortably explore the guitar's full spectrum of sounds. Choose from more than a dozen models, including Standard, Custom, Pro, Classic and Classic Deluxe editions, in a range of striking colors and wood choices, along with a pair of 12-strings.

T5z Pickup Positions

Position 1: Neck humbucker and body sensor (closest to neck)

Position 2: Neck humbucker only

Position 3: Bridge humbucker

Position 4: Neck and bridge humbuckers in parallel

Position 5: Neck and bridge in series

T3

Reminiscent of classic archtop electrics, the T3 offers our modern take on the semi-hollowbody experience, powered by our high-definition humbuckers (or vintage alnico pickups) and other Taylor design strokes. Three-way switching and coil-splitting controls let you shape your sound, while a sleek chrome roller bridge maintains tuning stability. Choose from a stoptail bridge or, on the T3/B, a Bigsby tremolo tailpiece that delivers smooth pitch-bending control. Each guitar is topped with gorgeous figured maple dressed in a choice of several eye-catching color treatments. Detailed with crisp white binding and a rich gloss finish, the T3 is both a sight and sound to behold.



T5z Custom-K 12

Specifications

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

T5z Series

Body: Sapele

Top: Figured Koa (Custom), Figured Maple (Pro), Sitka Spruce (Standard), Neo-Tropical Mahogany (Classic)

Finish: Gloss with Selected Color, Satin (Classic)

Fretboard Inlay: Italian Acrylic Small Diamonds or Spires (Custom & Pro)

Electronics: Three-Pickup System with Five-Way Switching

T3 Series

Body: Sapele

Top: Layered Figured Maple

Finish: Gloss with Selected Color

Fretboard Inlay: Mother-of-Pearl 4mm Dots

Electronics: Taylor HD Humbuckers with Coil-Splitting (Optional: Vintage Alnicos)

Available Models

T5z Classic
 T5z Classic-12
 T5z Classic DLX
 T5z Custom-C
 T5z Custom-K
 T5z Custom-K 12
 T5z Pro
 T5z Standard
 T3
 T3B

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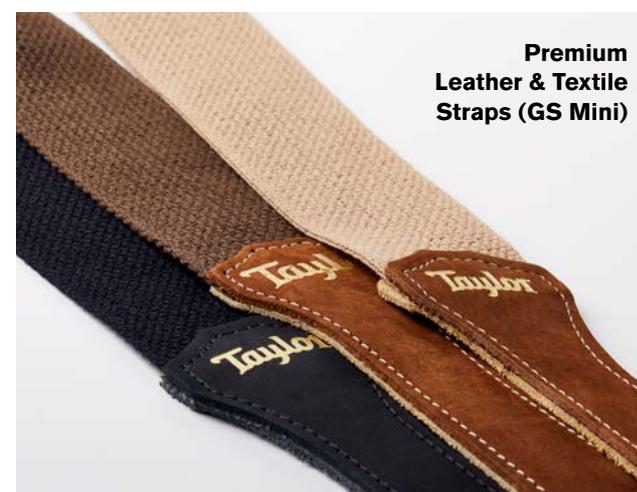
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Straps (GS Mini)



Premium
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Straps (Academy)



Aged Logo Thermal

Long sleeve 60/40 cotton/poly waffle thermal with gray Taylor logo on front with contrast stitching. Slimmer fit (sizing up recommended). (Black #20224; S-XXL, \$35.00)



Men's Cap

One size fits all. (Black #00378, \$24.99)

Original Trucker Hat

One size fits all. (Black/Khaki #00390, \$20.00)



Men's Basic Black Aged Logo T

Show off your Taylor pride with this simple, classic logo T-shirt in black. Made from 100% pre-shrunk cotton. (Black #15856; S-XXXL, \$24.99)



Taylor Premium Bar Stool

30" high, made with premium foam-reinforced vinyl.
Made in USA. (Black #70203, \$249.99)



Taylor Standard Bar Stool

24" high. Imported. Available spring 2020.
(Brown #70202, \$99.99)



DarkTone® Guitar Picks

A new assortment of Taylor guitar picks expands your acoustic palette with materials that produce greater warmth and sparkle. Available in several shape, color and thickness options. Made in USA.



Thermex Ultra Blue Swirl

Taylor Premium 351 Thermex Ultra Picks draw a blend of warmth and sparkle from your guitar. Blue Swirl, 6-Pack (1.0mm shown, #80726, \$11.99)



Thermex Ultra Ruby Swirl

Taylor Premium 351 Thermex Ultra Picks produce increased warmth and top-end shimmer. Ruby Swirl, 6-Pack (1.25mm shown, #70711, \$11.99)



Premium Ivoroid

Taylor Premium 351 Ivoroid Picks produce a rich midrange response and increased warmth. 6-Pack (1.21mm shown, #70720, \$11.99)



Thermex Pro Tortoise Shell

Taylor Premium 351 Thermex Pro Picks offer the richest, warmest tone you can get from a guitar pick. Tortoise Shell, 6-Pack (1.5mm shown, #80759, \$11.99)



Taylex Smoke Grey

Taylor Premium 351 Taylex Picks produce a punchy midrange with a smooth low end. Smoke Grey, 6-Pack (1.25mm shown, #70714, \$11.99)



Thermex Ultra Black Onyx

Taylor Premium 351 Thermex Ultra Picks offer a warm tone with additional clarity. Black Onyx, 6-Pack (1.0mm shown, #80716, \$11.99)



Thermex Ultra Abalone

Taylor Premium 351 Thermex Ultra Picks boost your guitar's articulation and warmth. Abalone, 6-Pack (1.0mm shown, #80738, \$11.99)

Guitar Stands

New and improved Taylor floor guitar stand in Danish beechwood with inert rubber pads to protect your guitar's finish. Some assembly required. Imported. (#TDS-02, \$69.99)



New compact folding guitar stand condenses fast for easy transportation and setup. Imported. (#TCFGS-A, \$39.99)



Mahogany guitar stand featuring a laser-etched Taylor logo, a rich oil finish, and inert rubber pads to protect your guitar's finish. Made in USA. (#TDS-01, \$199.99)



Guitar Care Products

Our guitar-friendly care products will help you polish, clean and condition your guitar to keep it in great shape. Our new Satin Finish Guitar Cleaner is the first of its kind, and the ultimate product to preserve the original satin sheen. The wax-free formula removes residue from finger oils without leaving silicone or waxy residue. Our new Premium Guitar Polish enhances the luster of your high-gloss guitar. Our Fretboard Conditioner cleans and nourishes your fretboard, leaving it looking new, playing great, and feeling smooth. We also have two new polish cloths – a suede microfiber version that folds up small to fit in your case compartment, and our premium plush microfiber towel.

Visit taylorguitars.com/taylorware to browse our complete line of Taylor apparel, guitar care products, parts and accessories, gift cards, and more.

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Blonde on Blonde

Say hello to our reimagined maple/spruce 618e, one of two Grand Orchestra models now voiced with our tone-enhancing V-Class™ architecture and updated with fresh appointments. We've adapted the V-Class framework to harness the body's large air capacity, unleashing a deeper, more powerful sound than ever, yet with incredible touch sensitivity and impeccable intonation. Thoughtful aesthetic touches include our subtle new Antique Blonde color shading, a new Mission inlay pattern inspired by the facades of California's Spanish missions, and maple binding accented with koa and ivoroid top trim. Look for the guitar, along with its rosewood sibling, the V-Class 818e, at Taylor dealers starting in March.