



THE 2017 ACOUSTIC GUITAR BUYERS GUIDE

Discover the perfect choice for your budget,
experience and playing style

INTRODUCTION

Investing in a good guitar can have a huge impact on you as a player. As you begin your search, you will find a wide range of features, price points and quality.

If you're a first-time guitar buyer, you might feel reluctant to invest in a "nice" guitar, either due to budget constraints or the "I'm Not Worthy Syndrome" — the feeling that your playing level doesn't justify it.

We understand. But the truth is that a beginner will benefit the most from a well-made instrument. Here's why:

- You'll sound better right away, even strumming basic chords
- The playing experience will be easier and more enjoyable
- You'll improve more quickly
- You'll be more inclined to stick with it

Nothing is worse than a guitar that's hard to play and won't stay in tune.

The good news is that quality guitars are available at different price points, and we here at Great Southern Music are ready to help you get the most bang for your buck, which will make a huge difference in your progression.

QUESTIONS TO HELP DEFINE YOUR PLAYER PROFILE

Understanding your own player profile and the style you like to play plays a major role in choosing the perfect guitar. Here's what we'll be trying to figure out for you:

- How will you be playing the guitar?
- What kind of playing "attack" are you most comfortable with?
- Where will you be playing the guitar?
- What style(s) of music will you be playing?

#1. HOW WILL YOU BE PLAYING THE GUITAR: FINGERPICKING, STRUMMING, FLATPICKING, OR A MIX?

This will help you decide whether you want a versatile performer or a guitar that suits a more specialized playing style. If you plan to be doing a mix of each, then look to a solid versatile performer.

Our Favorite Versatile Performers

The ones that can do it all

The Economic Choice



[Fender CC-140SCE Acoustic-Electric Guitar W/Case](#)

399.99

The Next Level Choice



[Taylor 800 Series 814ce Grand Auditorium Acoustic Electric Guitar Natural](#)

3499.99

MSRP: ~~\$4498.00~~ (save 23%)

The Premium Choice



[Taylor Koa Series K24ce Grand Auditorium Acoustic-Electric Guitar Shaded Edge Burst](#)

4399.00

MSRP: ~~\$5658.00~~ (save 23%)

#2. DO YOU HAVE A LIGHT PICKING/STRUMMING ATTACK, A HEAVY ATTACK, OR SOMETHING IN-BETWEEN?

This will help you focus on the right body style to accommodate the amount of energy you'll be applying to the guitar.

Generally speaking, the stronger and louder the sound you're looking for, the bigger the guitar you'll need.

If you have a softer, more delicate attack: You need a guitar that will come alive in your hands without requiring too much attack. In general, smaller-body guitars require less energy to get the top moving and with a light touch will often be louder than a larger body shape. It's a good option for fingerstyle players.

Our Favorite Smaller-Body Guitars

Perfect for softer players

The Economic Choice



[Taylor 100 Series 114ES2 Grand Auditorium Acoustic-Electric Guitar Natural](#)

699.00

MSRP: ~~\$918.00~~ (save 23%)

The Next Level Choice



[Taylor 500 Series 522ce 12-Fret Grand Concert Acoustic-Electric Guitar Shaded Edge Burst](#)

2749.00

MSRP: ~~\$3398.00~~ (save 20%)

The Premium Choice



[Martin 000-28 Eric Clapton Signature Auditorium Acoustic Guitar Natural](#)

3759.00

If you have a heavier picking or strumming attack: Your playing style may overload a smaller guitar body. You'll be better served with a full-bodied guitar that will respond to the high energy that comes from the strong pick attack.

Our Favorite Full-Body Guitars

For high energy

The Economic Choice



[Fender Paramount Series PM-1 Standard Dreadnought NE Acoustic Guitar Natural Fingerboard, Natural](#)

599.99

The Next Level Choice



[Martin Standard Series D-18 Dreadnought Acoustic Guitar Natural](#)

2459.00

MSRP: ~~\$3099.00~~ (save 21%)

The Premium Choice



[Martin Standard Series D-35 Dreadnought Acoustic Guitar](#)

2799.00

MSRP: ~~\$3499.00~~ (save 21%)

If you have a dynamic or hybrid playing style: You're looking for versatility, and a medium-size guitar will usually get you there. You'll be able to get an immediate response when you play lightly and a more powerful sound when you dig in. If you want an even wider dynamic range (one that offers more tonal output), try a bigger body size.

Our Favorite Medium-Body Guitars

For hybrid playing styles

The Economic Choice



[Taylor 214ce 200 Series Deluxe Grand Auditorium Acoustic-Electric Guitar Sunburst](#)

1299.00

MSRP: ~~\$1658.00~~ (save 22%)

The Next Level Choice



[Taylor 400 Series 414ce-R Rosewood Grand Auditorium Acoustic-Electric Guitar Natural](#)

2199.00

MSRP: ~~\$2918.00~~ (save 25%)

The Premium Choice



[Taylor 900 Series 914ce Grand Auditorium Acoustic-Electric Guitar Natural](#)

4999.00

MSRP: ~~\$6498.00~~ (save 24%)

#3. WHERE WILL YOU BE PLAYING THE GUITAR?

If you're looking for a couch strummer or something great for playing around the house, you might want something that's comfortable—probably with a smaller body that's easy to cradle.

Top Guitars for the Couch Strummer

For the casual, "around-the-house" player

The Economic Choice



[Fender CC-60SCE Acoustic-Electric Guitar](#)

299.99

The Next Level Choice



[Taylor GS Mini Mahogany Acoustic Guitar Mahogany](#)

499.00

MSRP: ~~\$658.00~~ (save 25%)

The Premium Choice



[Martin Dreadnought Junior Acoustic Electric Guitar Natural](#)

559.00

MSRP: ~~\$799.00~~ (save 31%)

If you'll be playing with friends and want a good amount of acoustic volume without having to plug in, you'll likely benefit from a bigger body.

Top Guitars for the Casual Player

For playing unplugged with friends and in small venues

The Economic Choice



[Taylor 100 Series 110e Dreadnought Acoustic-Electric Guitar Natural](#)

699.00

MSRP: ~~\$918.00~~ (save 24%)

The Next Level Choice



[Martin CEO-7 00 Grand Concert Acoustic Guitar Sunburst](#)

2629.00

MSRP: ~~\$3299.00~~ (save 21%)

The Premium Choice



[Martin Standard Series D-28 Dreadnought Acoustic Guitar Natural](#)

2629.00

MSRP: ~~\$3299.00~~ (save 21%)

If you plan to play live gigs, you'll definitely want a guitar with a pickup.

Top Guitars for the Live Stage

For playing live gigs

The Economic Choice



[Martin Road Series DRS2
Dreadnought Acoustic-Electric
Guitar Natural](#)

829.00

MSRP: ~~\$1099.00~~ (save 25%)

The Next Level Choice



[Martin Custom Performing
Artist Series GPCPA4 Rosewood
Grand Performance Acoustic
Guitar Natural](#)

1799.00

MSRP: ~~\$2399.00~~ (save 25%)

The Premium Choice



[Taylor 800 Series 814ce
Grand Auditorium Acoustic
Electric Guitar Natural](#)

3499.00

MSRP: ~~\$4498.00~~ (save 23%)

WHAT STYLE(S) OF MUSIC DO YOU WANT TO PLAY?

Think of what type of sound you need to express that style or musical genre. A lively bluegrass picker or someone who plans to strum big, open cowboy chords might want a bigger body that's capable of producing robust bass, volume and projection.

A fingerstyle player might prefer a more responsive and articulate sound and lean toward a smaller body.

Bluegrass/flatpicking: Dreadnought or other medium to large body for maximum volume and projection

Country/Blues fingerpicking: Small to medium body

Acoustic rock strumming: Medium-size body for rich open chords

PLAYER PROFILE: 4 KEY TAKEAWAYS

To summarize what we recommend considering when choosing your next acoustic guitar, here are the 4 key takeaways:

- Your playing technique is an important contributor to your overall sound
- Look for a guitar with a body shape and tonewood combination whose sonic attributes are compatible with your playing style
- If you're a beginner and don't really have a defined playing style, think about the type of music you would like to play
- Your posture and where you pick or strum the guitar relative to the soundhole can influence the brightness or darkness of your guitar tone



HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WANT TO TALK TO ONE OF OUR GUITAR EXPERTS?

We have a whole team of friendly guitar gurus that would love to help you find your next acoustic guitar. It's easy to get in touch!

GIVE US A CALL AT 281-550-4545

Or visit gsmmusic.com/contact

OR SEND US A MESSAGE ON FACEBOOK

Hi! I'm needing some help picking out the right guitar. Would you guys be able to give some advice?



You bet! Is this your first guitar or are you looking to level up?

TUE 12:40PM



Send to Messenger