



Using a Guitar Humidifier

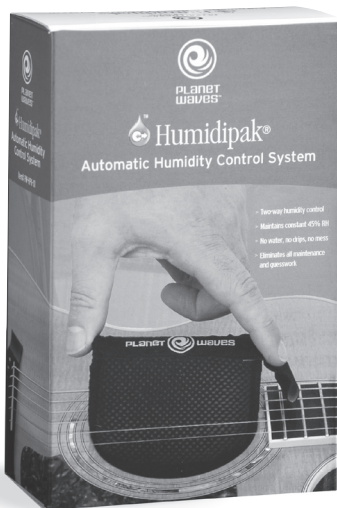
Dry conditions can lead to guitar damage. A guitar humidifier will protect your Taylor and keep it playing and sounding its best.

Taylor guitars are built in a controlled environment where the relative humidity is 47 percent. It is essential to maintain a proper moisture level to prevent adverse effects of dry conditions, such as bad string action and buzzing, protruding fret ends, cracking, top-sinking (see illustration on opposite page), and other damage to your instrument. As always, your guitar case provides essential protection from drying and other environmental effects, but in areas prone to severe dryness and/or cold (such as heated homes), you **MUST** use a guitar-humidifying device.

There are several stringed-instrument humidifiers on the market that are specifically designed to maintain or restore the proper moisture level. These include the vinyl soundhole-cover type; the long, "rubber tube" type; and the Humidipak[®] which we recommend and sell through TaylorWare[®] at taylorguitars.com.

The Humidipak

Using patented technology, the Humidipak features disposable, moisture-filled packets with a breathable membrane that provides two-way humidity control, meaning it can either release or absorb moisture to consistently maintain a predetermined relative humidity (RH) level of 48 percent.



Humidipak[®] by Planet Waves

The Humidipak kit includes three packets and two pouches. The soundhole pouch houses two packets and is draped over the strings, allowing both pouch compartments to descend into the soundhole to maintain the RH of the guitar body. The headstock pouch, which holds the third packet, is placed beneath the headstock in the case to help maintain the neck and fretboard.



No harmful chemicals are used; it's just salt and pure water, and only pure water vapor is allowed in and out of the packet. The packets are designed to be tear- and puncture-resistant, and to be completely resistant to leakage. Depending on climate conditions, they should last from two to six months, after which they can simply be disposed of. It's time for a new set when the packets become solid and the contents can't be moved around with your fingers.

Other Types of Humidifiers

Of the tube types (Dampit, Humitron, etc.), we recommend the larger one, which is approximately one foot in length and 3/4 of an inch in diameter (see illustration on opposite page). Another effective option for dry climates is the Oasis[®] Humidifier, which features a water-tight container with a specially designed fabric for water vapor to pass through. The vinyl soundhole-cover types work well enough, although they have a tendency to trap the majority of the moisture in the body, not releasing enough into the case to benefit the neck.

The tube humidifier often comes with a plastic soundhole cover containing a humidity gauge. To make this humidifier more "user-

friendly," discard the plastic cover and use only the tube itself. Like most humidifiers, the tube type is basically an encased sponge. Hold the tube under cool tap water until the sponge inside is saturated. **Then, wring out the last drop of excess water and dry off the outside of the tube. This is important, because water drippings can damage your instrument.**

Suspend the tube inside the guitar body by wedging it between the G and D strings so that the plastic cap prevents it from falling into the guitar (see illustration on opposite page). This enables the moisture in the tube to humidify the body, the neck, and the case.

How often should I re-wet the humidifier?

That depends on the season and the region in which you live. As a general rule:

- In areas of the country that are very dry, or where cold winters are the norm, or where the relative humidity consistently remains in the 20 to 35 percent range, re-wet your humidifier every five to seven days. (Homes with wood-burning heaters frequently have extremely dry interiors.)
- If your humidity is consistently 20 percent or lower, we recommend using a second humidifier in your guitar case. Place it in the space at the top of the case, not in the compartment.
- If your humidity is consistently in the 35 to 45 percent range, re-wet the Dampit every 10 to 14 days.
- Working musicians who routinely perform in dry regions and winter climates should keep their soundhole humidifier moist all the time, and use a second humidifier as previously mentioned. Instruments that spend a lot of time outside of their cases and/or under hot stage lights require a higher-than-normal amount of humidification.

NOTE:

Typically, a tube-style soundhole humidifier will dry out in two to four days. It is not necessary to re-wet one other than for the reasons cited.

Correct Radius



Bridge in correct position; action proper

Sinking Radius



Bridge sinks down; low action causing strings to buzz

Swollen Radius

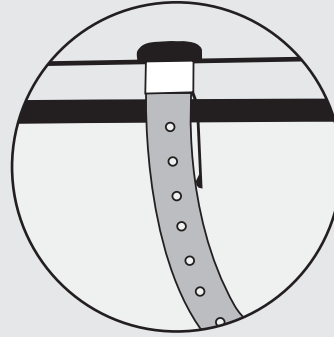


Bridge rises; action high and hard to play

FINAL NOTES ON HUMIDITY CONTROL:

Do not leave a tube-style humidifier lying flat inside the guitar, or it will make too much direct contact with the wood. The illustrations show proper positioning.

To monitor the amount of humidity your guitar is receiving, we recommend the purchase of a digital hygrometer, a device that gauges and provides a read-out of humidity levels. In our experience, analog or needle-style models fall out of calibration easily and can't be trusted. You can find a good digital hygrometer for \$20-\$30 at music stores, Radio Shack, department stores, Amazon.com, or other online retailers. It can be kept in the room where you store your guitars, or, better yet, in a central location inside the guitar case, preferably Velcro'd to the outside of the accessories compartment (facing the heel of the guitar).



Dampit tube-style humidifier suspended between the G and D strings

