



# Find Your Fit

The quick guide to finding the Taylor guitar that's right for you

QUALITY  
**Taylor**  
GUITARS

# We're Here to Help

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At Taylor Guitars, we're not just passionate about making great guitars. We also love helping players find the right guitar for their needs. That's why we've created this guide. As you explore different model options in our guitar line, here are a couple of thoughts to keep in mind.

## Choosing a guitar is a subjective process. Enjoy it.

While our advice is meant to help you in your search, everyone's relationship with a guitar is unique. The connection we make is part visual, part tactile, and part sonic, and we each hear and respond to sound in unique ways. Finding the "right" guitar is a courtship of sorts. You might find your match after weeks of test-driving or in one glorious strum. However it happens, take your time, have fun, and trust your feelings. If you do, the right guitar has a way of finding you.

## Taylor guitars are more alike than different.

Although this guide will help differentiate between models in the Taylor line – based on the pairing of different body shapes and tonewoods – all Taylor guitars share an underlying family resemblance when it comes to the fundamental qualities of a great guitar: they stay in tune, the necks are comfortable to play, and the tone is clear and balanced. Although your search might boil down to specific details, the bottom line is that with any Taylor model, you can always count on an enjoyable all-around playing experience.

## The Taylor Difference

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5 things that set the Taylor experience apart

### 1 Precision Craftsmanship

We've set the standard for modern-day craftsmanship to create the best possible playing experience. Our blend of innovative manufacturing technology with impeccable hand-craftsmanship has led to unmatched quality and consistency in the production of our guitars.

### 2 Tone-Enhancing Innovation

Our relentless drive to refine the sound of our guitars has led to groundbreaking designs like our award-winning V-Class™ bracing. This powerful tone-shaping platform allows us to create a wide range of musically inspiring acoustic flavors.

### 3 Playable Necks

Taylor guitar necks are the most playable in the industry, thanks to our patented neck joint design and sleek neck profile. Our precise neck/body assembly process allows every neck angle to be set with extreme accuracy and easily maintained throughout the life of the guitar.

### 4 Sustainability Leadership

We are deeply committed to safeguarding the future of the natural resources we use. This has led us to pioneer many eco-sustainability initiatives around the world. When you purchase a Taylor guitar, you are supporting the highest levels of ethical, eco-conscious business.

### 5 Service & Support

Wherever you may be on your guitar-playing journey, we strive to provide a great Taylor experience, whether you need help choosing a guitar or taking care of it. From our friendly staff to our expert repair technicians, you can count on a lifetime of superb Taylor service.

## Finding Your Fit

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How to choose a Taylor that's right for you

With a broad range of Taylor options to choose from, an inspiring guitar is within reach of every type of player. Here are two basic ways to think about finding a guitar that "fits" you:

### Physical Fit:

A guitar should be physically comfortable to hold and play.

### Musical Fit:

A guitar's sonic attributes should complement your playing style.



## Balancing the Tone Equation

Here's a simple "tone equation" we use to help people find the right guitar. It highlights the three main ingredients that contribute to a guitar's tonal personality:

**Player +  
Body Shape +  
Tonewoods =  
Your Guitar Sound**

### Player

The more you understand about your playing style and musical needs, the easier it will be to find a guitar with the pairing of body shape and tonewoods that complement what you do. On the next page, we'll share some questions to help you clearly define your needs as a player.

### Body Shape

A guitar's body dimensions literally help shape its fundamental voice. Besides physical comfort, you want a body style that responds well to what you do. This is often a good place to narrow your search, since Taylor offers five main body styles. Once you have a shape in mind, you can focus on your choice of tonewoods.

### Tonewoods

If a guitar's body style produces its fundamental voice, think of the tonewoods used for the top, back and sides as the sonic flavor or seasoning. The distinctive physical properties of each tonewood species (and sometimes even a particular set of wood) help determine the tonal character, such as the degree of warmth, richness and sustain the guitar produces.

## Let's get started

**Ahead we'll break down each component of the tone equation, starting with you.**



# step 1: Player Profile

The more you know about your needs and preferences as a player the better. If you're a beginner and don't have a defined playing style, that's OK. Think about your musical interests and goals and what you want out of a guitar. Here are some questions to help you.

## **Will you be strumming, flatpicking, fingerpicking? A mix?**

This will help you decide whether you need a versatile performer or a guitar that suits a more specialized function. If you're a novice and don't have a clearly defined playing style, leaning toward versatility will give you the most latitude to explore different techniques and musical genres. But if you already own one or more guitars or have a specific musical application in mind, you can be more focused in your search.

## **Where will you be playing the guitar?**

If you're looking for a couch strummer or portable option, you might want something that's smaller and more physically comfortable. If you'll be playing somewhere that demands a good amount of natural volume and projection without having to plug in the guitar, you'll likely benefit from a bigger body. If you plan to play live gigs, worship services, or open mic nights, you'll want a guitar with a pickup.

## **Do you have a light, medium or heavy picking/strumming attack, and how dynamic a range do you want?**

This will help you choose the right body style to accommodate the amount of energy you'll be applying to the guitar. If you're a strong strummer and play a smaller guitar, you're more likely to overdrive the top.

## **Are there certain tonal properties you have in mind, such as volume, richness, low-end response, warmth, etc.?**

If so, this will help steer you toward an appropriate shape/tonewood pairing. Rosewood has a deep low end and high end with a rich overtones. Mahogany yields a focused mid-range presence. Our maple guitars are rich and responsive. A cedar top produces warmth that really shines with finger-style playing. If you don't really know what you want, that's OK. Just sample some different wood options and pay attention to what connects with you.

## **Will you be playing more often by yourself or with other players/instruments?**

If you'll be playing by yourself, you might want a guitar that provides a broader sonic palette to give yourself a wider range of tonal colors to explore. If you'll be playing with others, you might want a guitar with a smaller sonic footprint in order to be heard more clearly in the instrument mix.

## **Will you be singing with your guitar?**

If so, you'll want your guitar's tonal personality to complement your voice. You might consider visiting a music store at a time when you feel comfortable singing with the guitar or having access to an isolated room where you can pair your voice with each instrument. If you're more of an instrumental player, does the guitar offer a pleasing tonal palette for you to express yourself?

## **Do you plan to play chords or solos higher up the neck (toward the body)?**

If so, a cutaway model is probably a good option.

## **Do you plan to do any live performing or recording?**

If you want to plug in, you should choose a guitar with an onboard pickup. If you plan to record, think about the instrument mix that might be involved. If there will be multiple tracks, you might lean toward a smaller body guitar, since it will tend to take up less sonic space in the mix. If you plan to play solo acoustic guitar, maybe you want a bigger, more luxurious voice to explore.

next step:

**Choosing a  
body shape**





## step 2: Body Shape

Taylor offers five full-size body shapes that range from small and intimate to big and powerful. Each body's unique dimensions help define its fundamental voice. In general, a smaller-size guitar will yield a more controlled voice, often with a bit more upper-end chime, while a bigger size translates into a louder voice, often with more low-end depth.

As you sample different body styles, consider how each guitar's physical dimensions feel against your body when you hold it. If you play sitting down, how does the guitar feel with your picking arm draped over the lower bout? Consider how the curves, the waist, and the body depth fit you when you play. Chances are, the more comfortable you feel, the more naturally you'll play.

### SMALL BODY

**GC** **Grand Concert**  
(Models end in a 2; e.g., 812)

#### Sound Profile:

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

#### Good Fit For:

- Fingerstyle players and light strummers
- Players who find small bodies more physically comfortable
- People with small hands, hand ailments, and others looking to reduce stress on their fretting hand
- Recording applications



### MEDIUM BODY

**GA** **Grand Auditorium**  
(Models end in a 4; e.g., 814)

#### Sound Profile

- Taylor's most popular and versatile body shape
- Balanced blend of warmth, clarity and sustain
- Well-defined midrange
- Responds well to many music styles

#### Good Fit For:

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



### MEDIUM BODY

**GP** **Grand Pacific**  
(Models end in a 7; e.g., 717)

#### Sound Profile

- Versatile round-shoulder dreadnought
- Notes are broad and round, creating a warm, blended sound
- Low-end power without muddiness

#### Good Fit For:

- Players who favor a traditional shape or sound
- Players who find the classic Taylor sound too bright
- Singer-songwriters and others who want a versatile guitar



## Other Body Features to Consider

### Cutaway vs. Non-Cutaway

A cutaway has a negligible impact on a guitar's sound (that part of the guitar doesn't generate a lot of resonance), so you're not really sacrificing tonal output. What it gives you is access to more upper-register notes. For some it's simply an aesthetic decision. Either way, it's your call.

### Armrest

This feature adds extra comfort for your picking/strumming arm, allowing you to play in a more relaxed way. We offer different types of armrests, ranging from beautifully detailed treatments on the 800 Deluxe Series and higher to a basic version on our modestly priced Academy Series.

## MEDIUM BODY

### **GS** Grand Symphony (Models end in a 6; e.g., 816)

#### Sound Profile

- Slightly bigger than the Grand Auditorium with more tonal output
- Very dynamic: rich, powerful voice that also responds to a light touch
- Piano-like bass, meaty midrange, strong treble shimmer

#### Good Fit For:

- Dynamic strummers and pickers
- People who crave more tonal horsepower than the Grand Auditorium
- Giggling singer-songwriters looking for a deep and rich tonal palette
- 12-string players (many Taylor 12-string models feature the GS shape)



## LARGE BODY

### **GO** Grand Orchestra (GO) (Models end in an 8; e.g., 818)

#### Sound Profile

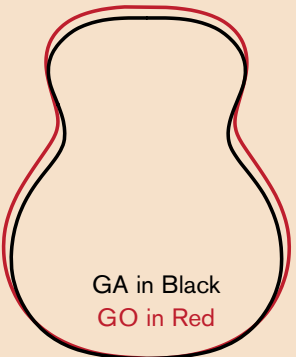
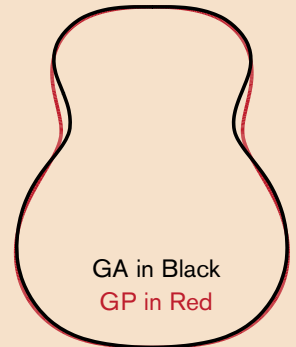
- Taylor's biggest, deepest body shape
- Taylor's richest, most complex voice
- Incredibly balanced for a big-bodied acoustic guitar
- Specially braced to also respond to a light touch

#### Good Fit For:

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



## Body Shapes Relative To The Grand Auditorium (GA)



next step:

**Choosing tonewoods**



## step 3: Tonewoods

A guitar's tonewoods supply the core ingredients that help flavor its sound. But other nuanced techniques of a guitar maker (like internal bracing) also help season it. That's one reason why trying to describe the tonal properties of woods can be limiting. Another reason is you the player. Your playing style, the type of pick you use, and the brand and gauge of strings you choose are among the other factors that influence the sound of a guitar.

Try this: Find the Taylor body shape that you like best, and then play different models with that same shape but different woods. Pay attention to whichever one inspires you the most, whether you can explain why or you just feel it. And if the visual aesthetic of the wood is part of the inspiration, embrace it.

## BACK AND SIDE WOODS

### Indian Rosewood

**Models:** 400, 700, 800, 800 DLX, 900 Series

#### Tone Profile

- Sweeping frequency range has made it one of the most popular tonewoods
- Deep lows assert a throaty growl, sparkling highs ring out with bell-like, high-fidelity clarity
- Slightly scooped midrange
- Full-range acoustic voice with complex overtones and extended sustain
- Yields the strongest bass response among the tonewoods commonly used for guitars

### Maple

**Models:** 600 Series

#### Tone Profile

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

### Neo-Tropical Mahogany

**Models:** 500 Series

#### Tone Profile

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





## Paniolo® Hawaiian Koa

**Models:** Koa Series

### Tone Profile

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

## SOUNDBOARD WOODS

The soundboard plays a key role in generating a guitar's sound. "Soft" woods such as spruce or cedar (coniferous trees) are used most often. They are lightweight yet strong, especially when quartersawn, with an elasticity that allows them to be set in motion easily by the player. Typically they produce broad dynamic range and pleasing overtones.

Hardwood tops like koa or mahogany are slightly denser and heavier. As a result, sound doesn't move as quickly through them – it's dispersed a bit more gradually. This translates into a natural compression effect that smoothes out the attack, producing a more focused voice with fewer overtones. A hardwood-top guitar often behaves well in amplified performance settings.

## Ovangkol

**Models:** 400 Series

### Tone Profile

- An African relative of rosewood that shares many of rosewood's tonal properties, including a wide spectrum from lows to highs
- Slightly fuller midrange than rosewood and a bright treble response resembling koa
- Bass response adds a pleasing depth to the overall tone

## Sapele

**Models:** 300 Series (with spruce tops)

### Tone Profile

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

## Blackwood

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

### Tone Profile

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



# Layered Wood Options

All-wood laminates blend affordability and durability

**Models: 100/200/200 Deluxe Series, Academy Series, GS Mini, Baby Taylor**

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

Our construction features three layers of wood: a middle core of poplar with a veneer on each side. The process allows us to bend an arch into the back of the guitar for added strength, and together with the layered approach produces a durable guitar that travels well. Taylor's layered wood options include layered sapele, rosewood, koa and walnut. All layered wood Taylor guitars feature a solid-wood soundboard, which means the sound of the guitar will improve as it ages.



# Plugging In

Taylor electronics serve up reliable amplified acoustic tone

Years ago, our passion for great acoustic tone led us into the realm of pickup design. With more players wanting the option to plug in, quality amplified acoustic tone became an important extension of a guitar's voice, so we pushed the envelope to develop our own onboard pickup system to capture the natural tonal nuances of both our guitars and players. For working musicians especially, having a reliable pickup is an essential part of their livelihood, and we wanted to offer something that was worthy of the highest caliber working pros around.

## The Expression System<sup>®</sup> 2

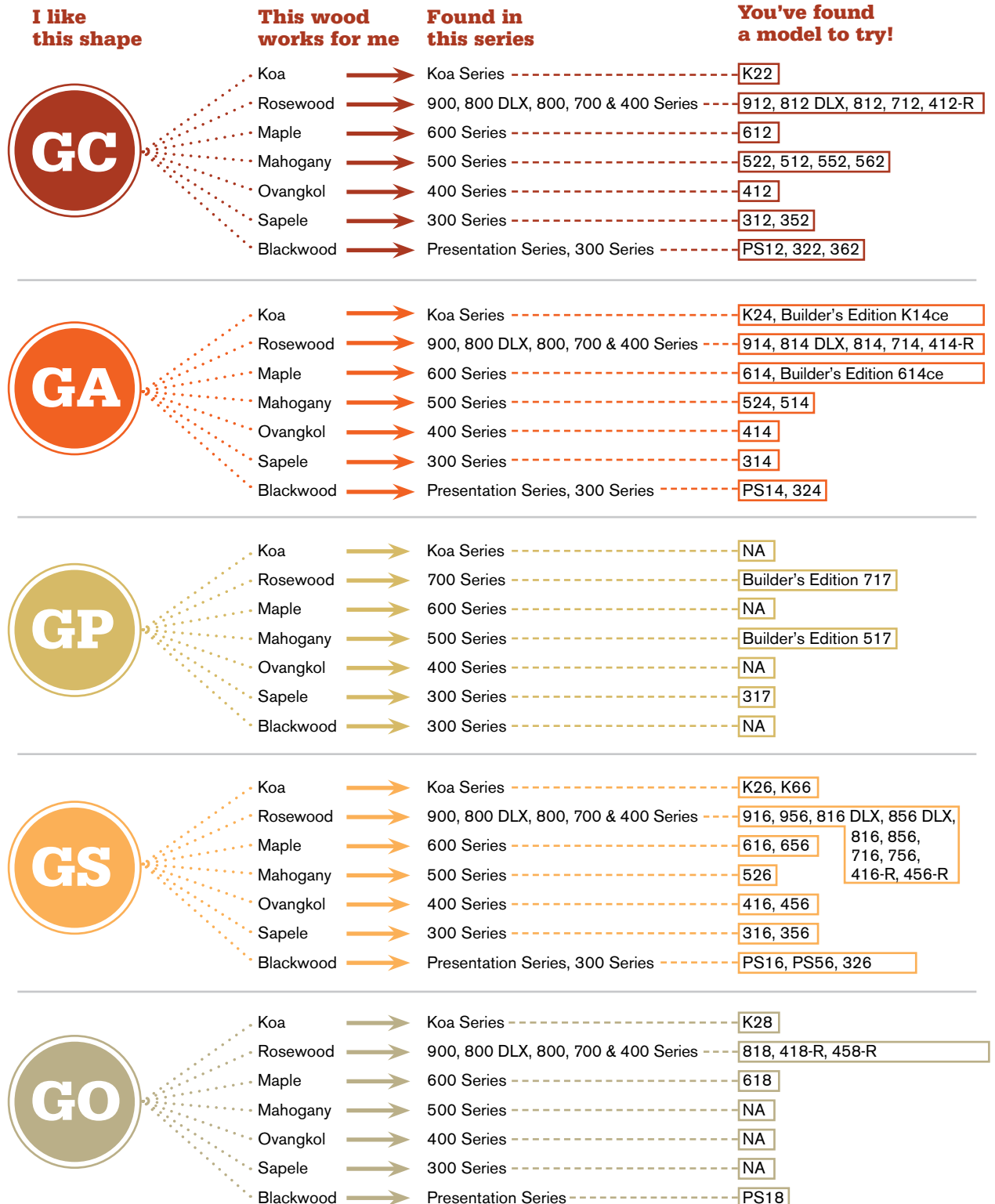
Our latest pickup design, the patented Expression System 2 (ES2), brings a major advancement in piezo pickup technology by capturing more of a guitar's dynamic properties thanks to an innovative behind-the-saddle design. The ES2 is now a standard feature on steel-string acoustic/electric models starting with the 100 Series. Whenever you're ready to plug in, you can count on your Taylor pickup to help you sound your best.



# Now, Find Your Taylor

Once you've chosen a shape and tonewood pairing that interests you, you're ready for a test-drive! The chart below offers a good starting point for identifying specific Taylor models featuring an all-solid-wood construction within the Taylor line. Wood pairings are organized by series, with each series featuring a unique pack-

age of appointments such as inlays, binding, and other aesthetic details. Models that have a cutaway will include a "c" in the name, and those that come with acoustic electronics will have an "e" on the end (e.g., 814ce). The base models are shown below. You'll find a comprehensive list of Taylor models at [taylorguitars.com](http://taylorguitars.com).





## About Taylor

Taylor Guitars was founded in 1974 in Lemon Grove, California, by Bob Taylor and Kurt Listug. Thanks to Taylor's pioneering use of modern tools and technology to refine the guitar-making process, the company has set new quality standards for playability and tone and established Taylor as the industry's leading acoustic guitar manufacturer. We're headquartered in El Cajon, California (in San Diego's East County). We offer a guided factory tour weekdays at 1 p.m. and invite you to come experience our operation firsthand. For directions and other details, visit [taylorguitars.com](http://taylorguitars.com).

