

# Find Your Fit

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



# hello!

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

### 5 things that set Taylor experience apart

- 1 Manufacturing Innovation**

Taylor's world-class factory has reset the standard for modern-day precision craftsmanship to create the best possible playing experience. Our blend of proprietary production technology with impeccable attention to detail has led to unparalleled consistency in the build quality of our guitars.
- 2 Playable Necks**

Our guitar necks are widely considered the most playable in the industry, thanks to our patented design and sleek, comfortable neck profile. Our neck assembly process allows us to precisely control every neck angle's accuracy to .002 inch and makes it easy to make micro-adjustments if necessary. No other acoustic guitar company can match our ability to consistently set a neck for an optimal playing experience.
- 3 Great Tone**

Our guitars are known for having clear, balanced voice across the tonal spectrum. Our manufacturing precision has also allowed us to push the envelope with tone-enhancing design ideas and materials to give players an inspiring array of tonal flavors and a more musically rich playing experience.
- 4 Service & Support**

Our commitment to a great customer experience includes personalized customer service wherever you may be along your guitar-playing journey, whether you need help choosing a guitar or taking care of it. From our friendly and knowledgeable staff to our network of repair technicians, we want to provide you with a lifetime of great Taylor service.
- 5 Sustainability Leadership**

Our commitment to safeguarding the future of the natural resources we use has led to many pioneering initiatives around the world, from co-ownership and management of Crelicam, an ebony mill in Cameroon, to innovative mahogany-sourcing partnerships with remote forest communities, to investment in the propagation of wood species such as maple and koa for future generations. We want Taylor customers to feel assured that when they purchase a Taylor guitar, they are supporting the highest levels of ethical, eco-conscious business.

# finding your fit

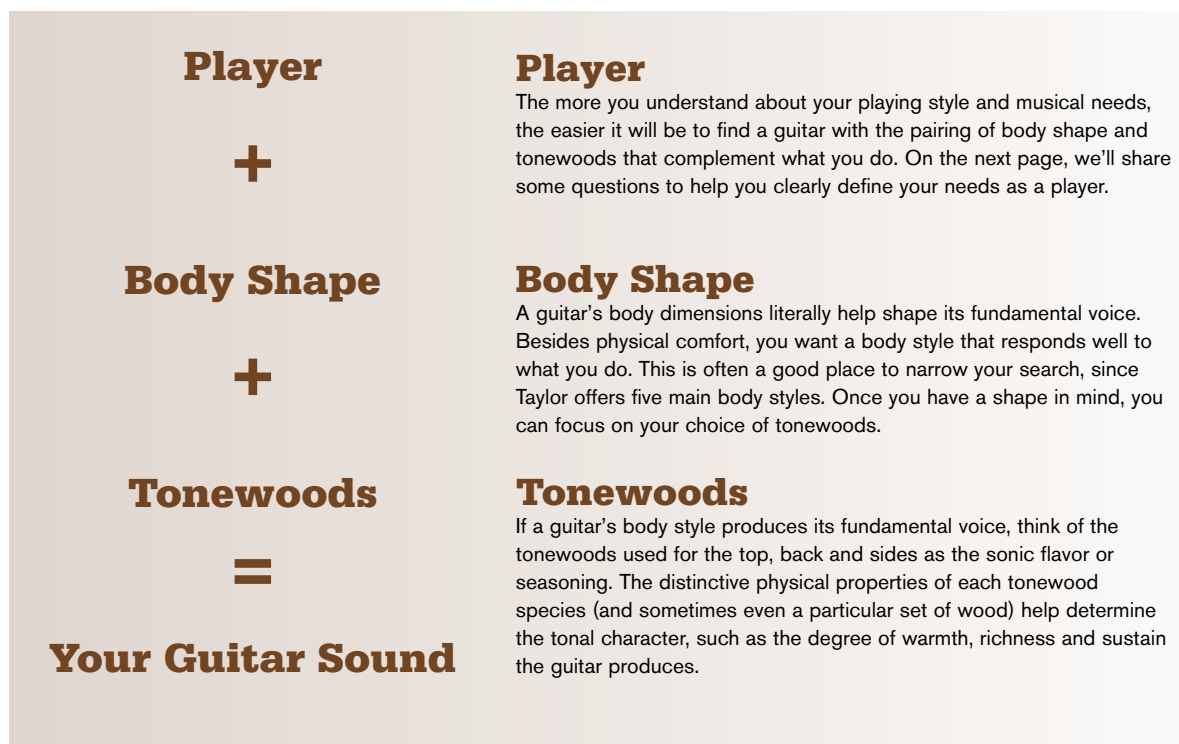
## How to choose a Taylor that's right for you

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:

- 1 Physical Fit:** A guitar should be physically comfortable to hold and play.
- 2 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:



**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. We've added a couple of lines next to each in case you want to jot down some thoughts.



## 1 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.

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## 2 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.

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## 3 Do you have a light, medium or heavy 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.

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## 4 What style(s) of music do you want to play?

A bluegrass picker might want a bigger body like a Dreadnought or a Grand Orchestra for maximum volume and projection, while a country fingerpicker might want something smaller like a Grand Concert or Grand Auditorium. An acoustic rocker who wants to strum rich open chords might prefer a medium-size guitar like a Grand Symphony or a big Grand Orchestra.

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**5 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 overtone. Mahogany yields a focused midrange presence. Our new maple guitars are rich and responsive. A cedar top produces warmth that really shines with fingerstyle 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.

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**6 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.

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**7 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?

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**8 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.

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**9 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.

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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

**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
- Gigging singer-songwriters looking for a deep and rich tonal palette
- 12-string players (many Taylor 12-string models feature the GS shape)



## MEDIUM BODY

**DN** **Dreadnought**  
(Models end in a 0; e.g., 810)

### Sound Profile

- Taylor's refined take on a traditional shape and sound
- Wider waist causes the body to sit higher in the player's lap
- A robust "modern vintage" voice
- Low-end power, snappy mids

### Good Fit For:

- Traditional flatpickers and strummers with a strong attack
- People who crave the traditional look and feel of a wider-waist guitar
- Pickers and strummers who want a strong low end and throaty midrange
- Bluegrass music



## 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.



## THE CLASSICS

These claim a rich heritage in the guitar world

### 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

### 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



Indian  
Rosewood



Maple



Tropical  
Mahogany



## THE EXOTICS

Admired for striking looks and their musical properties

### 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

### Macassar Ebony

**Models:** Presentation Series

#### Tone Profile

- Dense hardwood produces a clear, focused sound with good projection and volume
- Strong bass and lower mids, clear highs, and a scooped midrange like rosewood
- Rich overtones complement slower, softer playing
- Also responds well to aggressive playing
- It can sound bright or dark, depending on the technique of the player or pick choice

## THE MODERN ALTERNATIVES

Lesser known tonewoods but with familiar tone profiles

### 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:** 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

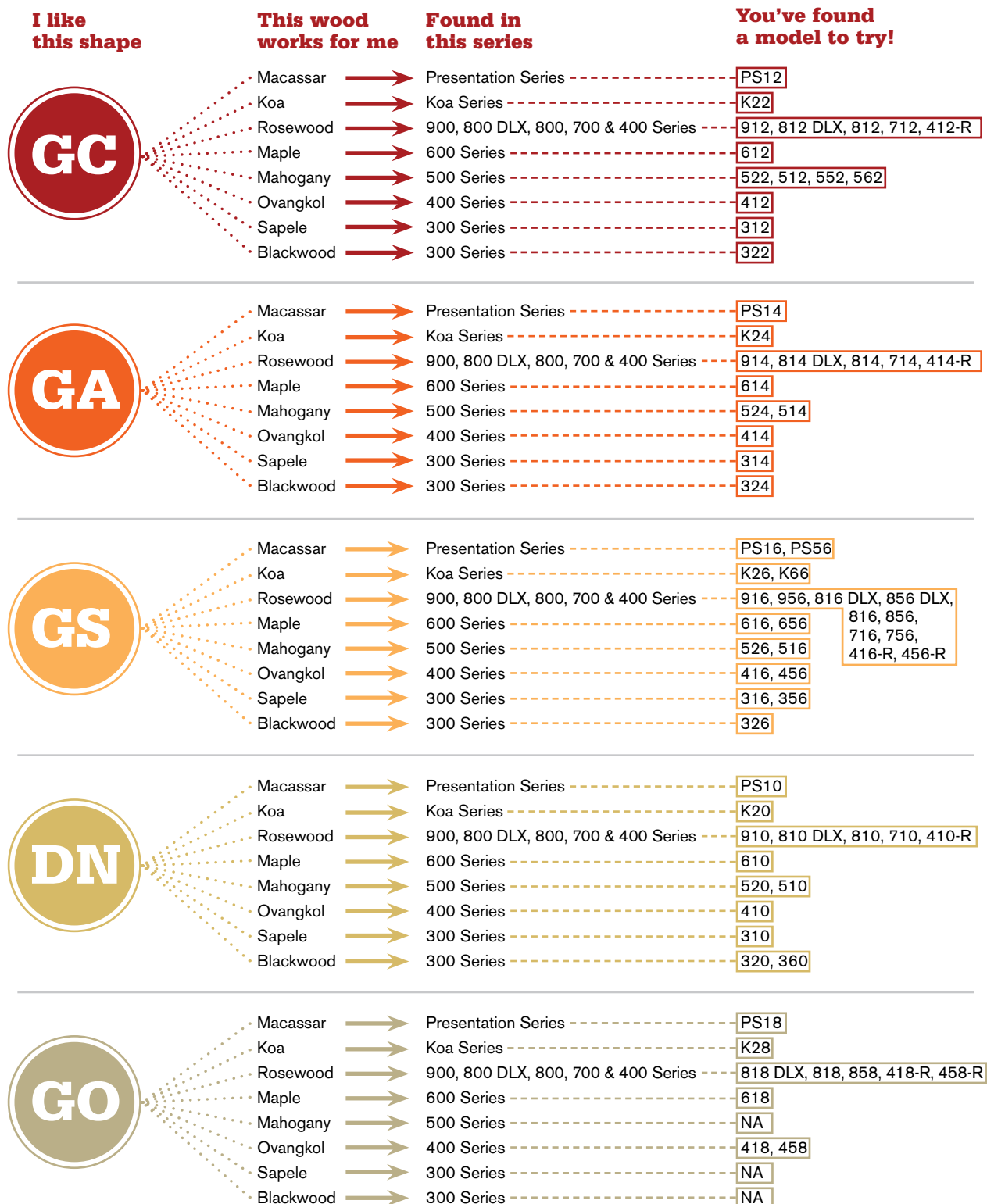
Our latest pickup design, the patented Expression System 2 (ES2), brings a major advancement in piezo pickup technology by capturing more of a guitar's dynamic properties thanks to an innovative behind-the-saddle design. The ES2 is now a standard feature on most of our steel-string acoustic/electric models. 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). 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).

