

# Inspection Process – Acoustic Guitars

## Acoustic and Classical Guitars

One of our many goals at FirstGuitar is to set you up for success in developing your skills and enjoyment for a lifetime of music making on your acoustic guitar. This is a very unusual procedure especially for guitars at this price point but this allows us to fulfill our goals in helping you to experience every opportunity for success.

### Preliminary Inspection

- Unpack and visually inspect guitar for shipping damage
- Inspect guitar for unacceptable finish blemishes and defects
- Tune guitar to standard pitch.
- Conduct preliminary inspection of action and overall playability

### Season

Each guitar is seasoned in a temperature and humidity controlled environment at standard tuning pitch (upwards to about 120 lbs. of tension) for at least 8 days in order to settle the woods and prepare the instrument for our setup and adjustment process.

### Day 9 Inspection

- Re-tune guitar to standard pitch
- Check tuning machines for proper overall operation
- Check tuning machine screws for proper tightness
- Check ring nut on each tuning machine to make sure they are secure
- Check that strings are properly wound around tuning post to maximize tone and insure less wear on tuning machines
- Check neck joint for cracks or other defects
- Check to see if bridge is securely glued to guitar top with no open gaps

- Tap top and back to listen for possibility of loose braces
- Check inside of guitar with an inspection light and mirror as necessary
- Inspect neck angle with a straight edge
- Inspect bridge and fingerboard height (fingerboard and bridge should be about the same height above the guitar top; a bridge that is too high or too low can indicate a poor neck angle)
- Inspect string height or action at the nut
- Inspect string height or action at the saddle on the bridge
- Inspect truss rod adjustment

### **Adjustments**

- Adjust truss rod for overall playability or action (0.002" @ 8th fret)
- Cut, shape and file bridge saddle to bring overall string height closer to the fingerboard for ease of playing (0.090" @ 12th fret/bass side, 0.070" @ 12th fret/treble)
- Cut string nut slots deeper to adjust the height of each string appropriately above the first fret. This is for ease of playing in first position (0.023" @ 1st fret/bass side, 0.013" @ 1st fret/treble side)
- File nut slot back angle to keep the string from buzzing inside the nut and help insure proper intonation and tone
- Hone frets if they are uneven and affect playability
- Apply fingerboard oil to fingerboard and bridge if the wood appears or feels dry.
- Re-tune guitar to pitch and check overall playability (repeat steps above as necessary)
- Polish

### **Inspection (Prior to shipment)**

- Inspect bridge and fingerboard height
- Inspect string height or action at the nut
- Clean and polish with museum-grade preservation polish

- Detune guitar to lower pitch to prevent damage during shipment. Each string is detuned by an interval of a fourth. This removes enough tension to protect it during shipment, but leaves enough tension to help maintain the accuracy of our adjustments. Detuning each string by one fourth also makes it easier for you to retune to pitch after receiving your guitar. You will find additional details in the insert letter that comes with your instrument.

## Packing

We put a lot of work into our guitars, so we take extra care to pack and ship them in 275 lb. test corrugated boxes with ample packing materials for extra security and safe shipping. Your guitar has the greatest chance to arrive safely and in the best condition possible.

## How we make this guitar better

**Problem:** Not playable out of the box because the strings are too high off the fingerboard.

**Solution:** We rework this guitar to make the strings as close as possible to the fingerboard so it is very easy to play.

**Problem:** Not made of quality woods and can be unstable – very sensitive to temperature and humidity changes.

**Solution:** We season this guitar under normal string tension for a minimum of 8 days before adjusting in order to help stabilize the wood.

**Problem:** The “Zero Fret” can be confusing for the young player.

**Solution:** We color the Zero Fret black to distinguish it from the other frets.

**Problem:** Has cheap tuning machines which can make it difficult to tune.

**Solution:** As with all young children, it is best to have a teacher or parent tune the guitar until your child gains tuning experience over time.

**Problem:** There is no truss rod to adjust the neck

**Solution:** We adjust the bridge. The bridge has screw adjustments to help compensate for any neck movement.

## Notes

### Notes for Parents, Grandparents and Caregivers

If there were a better quality, appropriately sized guitar, then we would not choose this one. This guitar is made of low quality woods and can be difficult to tune.

However, it is reasonably priced and what is available for children ages 4 to 6. You can also be confident that it is easy to play because of our seasoning process and the way we rework the instrument at all the critical playing areas.

This guitar can actually be played by the younger player. They can learn to play notes and simple chords that ring clearly and develop proper playing technique with the guidance of a good teacher. This after all, is what every parent and teacher wants for children who have expressed an interest in playing the guitar. Their education is affected by the playability of the guitar and the materials they have to work with.

### Notes for Guitar Teachers

You will find it very easy to teach children on our guitars because we have seasoned and reworked this guitar at the bridge, saddle and nut.

This guitar will enhance the teaching and learning process because it is so easy for children to produce clear notes with it.

You can spend your time doing what you do best – teaching the joy and excitement of learning how to play an instrument – without the instrument itself being a barrier to learning.

A properly playing instrument will make it easier for you to teach and easier for your students to learn.

## **Specifications**

### **Features**

- Fun and Easy to play for the young Musician
- Easy to Hold
- FirstGuitar has adjusted this guitar to exacting specifications
- This guitar features a “0” Fret which we have further adjusted for extremely easy playability
- Extremely well suited for the success of young players from Ages 4 to 6
- Visually Inspiring for the young player
- Distinctive Appearance
- Open Style Tuning Gears

### **Recommended String Gauge**

No greater than Light Gauge Strings .011 through .052

### **Finish and Construction**

- Natural Gloss Finish
- Sapelle Back & Sides
- Hardwood Fingerboard and Bridge
- Open Tuning Gears

### **Measurements**

- Overall Length.....31”
- Scale Length .....19”
- Fingerboard Radius....0” Flat

- Body Depth .....3"
- Body Length .....13.75"
- Upper Bout .....7.5"
- Lower Bout .....10"
- Waist .....6.5"

All measurements to the nearest 8th inch. Specifications are subject to change without notice.

