

Acoustic Guitar Body Types

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www.guitarchordsshop.com features good quality solid acoustic guitars, guitars are different as to tone, appearance and configuration. Each series has a particular focus so that a suitable instrument can be

found for each preference.

Here, in this mini guide to acoustic guitar body types, we'll aim to show you some of the key differences in size, shape, sound and suitability between the major variations of guitar. We'll look at the history of

some of the better known body types, and make recommendations according to the sound you're going for and the style in which you play. So whether you're a wispy finger-picker or a hearty strummer, we'll

explain some of the more intricate details of acoustic guitar body shapes.

Dreadnought

It makes sense to start with the most famous, the poster-boy of the acoustic guitar world. It's the first thing non-players imagine when they think of an acoustic guitar and, sure enough, it's one of the most

versatile instruments you can pick up. By versatile, we mean it is just as much at home in a variety of musical settings and genres, from rock to folk, indie to punk.

The original dreadnought shape was launched by CF Martin, one of the big names in acoustic guitars, and was named after an old English warship. It features rounded shoulders, and the neck typically joins the

body around the 14th fret. The dreadnought strikes the most even balance between volume, size and ease of playing, and for this reason it has been used by just about every big-named player you can think

of. There are literally hundreds of potential models we could show you, including a wide range from Martin themselves. But, as an example, we've chosen to share this rather attractive number called the Gibson

Songwriter Deluxe. This guitar is a great demonstration of the top end of the price range, and features a host of show-stopping additions like the gold hardware and mother of pearl ringed sound hole. Gibson

has great pedigree in the world of acoustic guitars – more on that later – and the Songwriter Deluxe is a great yardstick against which other dreadnoughts can be measured.

Also worth an honourable mention is the iconic Gibson Hummingbird, a square-shoulder dreadnought named after the bird which Gibson best felt described its unique qualities. The Hummingbird is one of those

unique things in that it's an acoustic guitar which eschewed the industry-standard natural wood finish of around 98% of its peers in favour of a cheery sunburst finish more commonly seen on Gibson's now

famous electric guitars like the Les Paul and ES 335.

Parlour

At the other end of the size extreme sits a shape called the parlour. Parlour acoustics are among the smallest in body size you can buy – not counting the modern 'baby' guitars – and are typically favoured by

players of more low-key, less brash musical styles like folk and indie. Once again, the guitar's distinctive shrunken body shape is another invention from the CF Martin guitar house, with the guitar's neck typically

joining the body around the 12th fret.

The guitar's 'shoulders' – where the body meets the neck joint – will usually be slightly more sloped than you'd see in a classic dreadnought acoustic, while the base of the body will also be narrower than larger

sized guitars. All of which makes for a more comfortable and less physically intrusive playing experience. Another obvious benefit of this is the portability of parlour guitars. Their relatively smaller form factor

means they lend themselves well to being slung in a case and carted off to gigs with less hassle than, for example, a jumbo-sized acoustic.

In terms of precedent, one of the best known users of a parlour acoustic is Ian Anderson, frontman of eccentric British prog-rockers Jethro Tull. Here the smaller sized guitar enabled Mr Anderson to sling it off his

shoulders, often mid song, to embark on a flute solo or child-scaring facial contortion marathon. So, if that's your goal, a parlour is the guitar for you.

A great example of a modern parlour guitar is the Farida M2-E, which (aside from being exceptionally well made) offers the classic smaller body size, superb choice of tone woods and an on-board electronics

system meaning it's just at home in a small pub gig as it is in a stadium.

Jumbo

Once again we traverse the extremities of guitar body sizes; from the sleek parlour shapes to the rather obviously named jumbo sized acoustics. If dreadnoughts are the poster-boys, and parlours the waif-like

supermodels, then jumbo acoustics are the plus-size, brash, loud ones who just want to have fun. You'll probably have seen jumbo-sized acoustics in the hands of Noel Gallagher or Bob Dylan, and the benefits

here are measured in sheer volume. With all that extra wood, there's more room for the sound to reverberate around the body, resulting in a big, bold sound which simply can't be recreated from a smaller

bodied guitar.

The original jumbo acoustic, the Gibson J2000, was first released in 1937. Players, particularly rhythm, quickly took to it on account of its deep bass sound which provided the perfect complement for the more

twiddly lead styles which could be achieved from other shapes. Put simply, jumbos play well with others.

While Gibson are the creators of the original J2000 jumbo-sized acoustics, the company's reasonably priced sister company Epiphone do a range of acoustics which are perfect for players looking to dip their toes

in the water. The Epiphone EJ2000 is identical in dimensions and appearance to its more costly sibling, yet offers the perfect entry guitar for budding rhythm players.

Round-shoulder Dreadnought

Now we've moved away from the three 'main' shapes of steel-strung acoustics, we start looking at the off-shoots and variants which exist to give players even more options and opportunity to find the guitar

which is exactly right for them. First among them is probably still well-known and identifiable in itself; the round-shoulder dreadnought. Again, these are largely Gibson-led creations, and include among their

ranks the famous j 45 style famously employed by the Beatles and Noel Gallagher.

It's hard to look beyond the original and classic Gibson j 45 when it comes to recommending this particular shape. Players love the j 45 on account of its sweet, warm tone with beautiful singing high notes and

defined mid range. Upon release it quickly acquired the moniker 'the workhorse' on account of its durability and guarantee of quality. Nothing that's happened since has diminished that.

Auditorium

Another Martin creation, the 000 shape guitar is almost the perfect halfway house between a dreadnought and a parlour. Its classic hourglass figure meant it sat comfortably on the knee, endearing it to players

of folk and other fingerpicking-heavy styles of music. The shape ensured it had the perfect balance between playing and comfort, and was often seen on the lap of no less a player than Eric Clapton. However it

wasn't averse to a bit of heavy strumming when the occasion called, and its large bottom end ensured it could keep pace when playing with others.

A great example of the Auditorium shape can be found in the Martin 000X1AE, which in Martin-terms is an affordable piece of superior guitar heritage.

Grand Auditorium

It seems strange that we've come so far into an article about acoustic guitars without mentioning the 'other' big name in this world; Taylor. The American company has been duking it out with Martin since 1974

for the title of top dog in the world of acoustic guitars, and has come up with a few unique iterations of its own along the way. Nowadays, you could point to the GS Mini and Big Baby as examples of Taylor

leading the way in acoustic guitar innovation, but back in the day it was the Grand Auditorium style which really put them on the map.

Designed to be the greatest all-rounder, the Grand Auditorium shape was the perfect blend of size, shape, volume and comfort, and its modern-day incarnation has seen the likes of the biggest pop star on the

planet these days, Taylor Swift pick one up. People forget that before mega-stardom, Taylor was a respected country artist, and it was on a Taylor Grand Auditorium that she plied her trade.

Classical Guitars

Another famous guitar shape, although we'd wager on account of it being many players' 'first' guitar. We've all seen them. The nylon-strung small scale acoustics which many of us gain access to at an early age.

The, as you progress, you learn that these particular guitars aren't sent to test our commitment to the cause, but that in the right hands these can be amazingly intricate, highly technical instruments which have

a wonderful sound and genre all of their own.

Classical guitars are Spanish in origin, hence the typical Flamenco style associated with them, and are usually smaller than their steel-strung counterparts to enable the very particular playing style adopted by

the 'real' players, ie headstock pointing to the sky, body wedged in between knee and chest.

A great example of classical guitars, above and beyond the cheaper versions you may be familiar with, is the Merida Trajan range. Playing one of these guitars will perhaps shock you, if a cheapo version is all you

've seen of the nylon-string world, and for that alone they're well worth checking out.

Small body

We round off this list with a relatively modern innovation in the world of acoustic guitars; the 'baby' acoustic. As usual, Martin and Taylor have led the way with these particular guitars, which are effectively

shrunk down dreadnoughts which focus heavily on their portability and the wide range of musical scenarios in which they can be used. Martin had dabbled in this world before, with its rather odd looking

Backpacker, but it was with the LX1 – and Taylor's subsequent Baby Taylor – that the world began to take note.

Seeing one in the hands of Ed Sheeran was a huge shot in the arm for the small-body acoustic market, and now players are picking these up as good-quality, usable guitars which are equally at home in the

living room as they are on the stage. The Martin LX1E is perhaps the best known and best respected small body acoustic, and can hold its own tonally against many of its regular-sized peers.

So there we have it. Acoustic guitars are not just slabs of wood, one much the same as the other. Each has its own characteristics. Some will major on comfort, while others go flat-out down the path of pure

volume. Whatever it is you're looking for, Dawson's has the whole gamut of acoustic guitar body sizes, and can help you choose the style that's right for you.

GuitarChordsShop specialises in building many types of solid acoustic guitars using only the finest materials. Each guitar has a unique sound depending on the woods used. Each guitar is completely hand made,

with hand scalloped bracing and the bridges are cut and shaped individually and fitted with bone saddle for a very lively sound.

We can make every type guitar body shape acoustic guitars, like

Auditorium, Dreadnought, Jumbo, Small Jumbo, Concert, Orchestra etc.. Choose any type that YOU like, we'll make a fine guitar for you to create the best guitar songs, to get more information from www.guitarchordsshop.com info@guitarsofchina.com