

THE RIGHT GUITAR FOR DIFFERENT MUSIC STYLES

by White House of Music



White House of Music: Your Local Guitar Shop

Blog Summary

- Acoustic, acoustic-electric, and electric guitars each offer distinct tones and volume options depending on whether you're playing solo, in a band, or a specific genre.
- Body style and pickups shape your tone. Hollow, semi-hollow, and solid electric bodies plus single-coil, humbucker, and active pickups influence how a guitar sounds in blues, rock, jazz, and beyond.
- Steel-string acoustics, classical/Spanish nylon-string guitars, flamenco models, and even bass guitars each support particular playing styles and musical goals.

Why Do Guitarists Often Own More Than One Guitar?

There are many reasons a guitarist might own more than one guitar. Guitars come in a variety of colors, styles, and configurations. Guitars have personality. The same make and model can have a different feel and sound so playing the one you want beforehand is paramount. Also, guitar players tend to play many different styles of music. If you want to play classical, a Spanish style guitar fits the bill. If you want to play

the blues, you might be looking for a steel string acoustic or electric guitar and amp.

Let's dive in and get to know some of the different types of guitars available through White House of Music.

Acoustic, Acoustic-electric, and Electric Guitars

Here's a brief look at the three most popular guitar types.

Acoustic

Acoustic guitars can offer more standalone volume than their acoustic-electric and electric counterparts. What does that mean? It means you don't need to plug it in to get a nice full sound. Acoustic guitars are great for playing around the campfire or picking up for a quick practice session. Acoustic guitars can be mic'ed to amplify their sound, but you want to avoid feedback (a humming sound that can be very unpleasant). This can be a problem with amplifying an acoustic guitar. And of course, you'll need to purchase a microphone.

Acoustic-electric

Acoustic-electric guitars are great when you need more volume. Offering a wide variety of different shapes, styles, and body thickness options, acoustic-electric guitars can be plugged into an amplifier or soundboard. There's no need to purchase or set up a microphone for this type of guitar. They're excellent for playing in a band or for an impromptu jam session.

Electric

From heavy metal to blues performances, electric guitar players can plug in and crank up their guitars with less worry about unpleasant feedback. Perfect for playing with a band. When it comes to electric guitars, the guitar amplifier is just as important as the guitar itself. The Fender Mustang GT40 and GT100 guitar amplifiers come with sounds built-in, so you can experiment with or dial in the sound of your choice.

Electric Guitar Body Styles

The electric guitar comes in a variety of different body styles including hollow, semi-hollow, and solid body options. The body of an electric guitar helps shape the sound of the instrument.

Hollow and Semi-hollow Body Electric Guitars

Hollow and semi-hollow body guitars feature a sound box (a hollow body) with at least one pickup. The pickup takes the sound generated from the strings and transforms it into an electrical signal. The rounder, fuller tone of a hollow or semi-hollow body guitar makes them a perfect choice for blues and jazz guitarists.

White House of Music carries both hollow body and semi-hollow body electric guitars:

AF75OLM: Ibanez Hollow Body Olive Metallic

AM53SRF: Ibanez Semi-Hollow Red Flat Burst

AS53TF: Ibanez Semi-Hollow Tobacco Flat

Pictured is an Ibanez Hollow Body in Olive Metallic.

Solid Body Electric Guitars

Solid body construction is a popular and common electric guitar body design. Popular models like the Ibanez RG series and Fender Squier incorporate solid bodies into their design. The body of the guitar is solid wood and not hollowed out like a hollow body or semi-hollow body electric. This type of guitar allows for increased sustain and can play at higher volumes without feedback. Solid body electric guitars are popular with rock and metal guitarists because of their ability to play at louder volumes. This allows players to create a more distorted or crunchy tone.

White House of Music carries solid body electric guitars from Ibanez, Fender, and Yamaha:

RG421EXBKF Ibanez Black Flat

[PAC212VQMTBS Yamaha Tobacco Sunburst](#)

Pictured is an Ibanez RG421EX Black Flat Solid Body Electric Guitar.

Selecting the Right Electric Guitar Pickups

Pickups take the vibrations of the guitar's strings, change them into an electrical signal, and transmit them through a cable to an amplifier. Amplifier selection is extremely important when playing an electric guitar. The pickup serves as the audio input while the amplifier serves as the output.

Single-coil Pickups

Single-coil pickups are popular with musicians for their clean tones and overdriven sounds. These tones could be described as glassy or having more twang. Typically, these pickups are not used in hard rock or other genres requiring a heavily distorted tone. They can produce too much hum and buzz for louder applications.

Humbucker Pickups

Great for heavier “Led Zeppelin” style tones, Humbucker pickups reduce hum at high volume levels. Guitarists using these pickups can crank the volume and get a chunky distorted tone without the buzz of a single coil. Humbuckers are not just for distortion. They tend to produce a thicker and warmer tone than single-coil pickups. This type of tone is popular with many blues and jazz styles. However, the true test is with the ears of the player. Come in and try out both.

Certain guitar models have both a single-coil and a Humbucker-style pickup. The guitarist can switch between the different pickups depending on what style of music they are playing.

The guitars below are all available through White House of Music. Which one will you play?

Guitars with both Humbuckers and single-coil pickups:

GRX55BVRD: Ibanez Vivid Red

The Ibanez GRX55B in Vivid Red is a White House of Music fan favorite.

Guitars featuring Humbuckers:

RGA42FMDEF: Ibanez Dragon Eye Burst Flat

You're guaranteed to get a thick, warm tone with this semi-hollow body guitar featuring two Humbucker pickups:

[AS73AA: Ibanez Artcore Antique Amber](#)

Ibanez Dragon Eye Burst Flat Guitars feature a Flamed Maple top and a Meranti body.

Active Pickups

Another option is the active pickup. Unlike their passive pickup counterparts (the single-coil and Humbucker), active pickups require their own battery to function. They have a preamp built-in to help shape the sound going into the amplifier. The active pickup also provides a louder signal.

Different Guitar Designs

Steel String Guitars

An excellent choice for folk and bluegrass musicians, steel string guitars offer more volume and harder string tension. This can make these guitars a bit harder on the fingers, requiring stronger hands to play without discomfort. Most steel string guitarists play with a pick or both pick and fingers, although finger style play is becoming increasingly popular. Dreadnaught, Parlor, Lap Steel, and Resonators are common types of steel string guitars.

Dreadnaught Acoustic Guitars

Dreadnaughts are a larger-size acoustic guitar well-suited for singing and playing. Considered the standard guitar of bluegrass music, the larger body provides the Dreadnaught with a bold and rich tone. Dreadnaught guitars can be immediately identified by their square shoulders and bottom.

Dreadnaught guitars available at White House of Music include:

[DX1AE Martin Dreadnaught Acoustic Guitar](#)

[D-18 Martin Dreadnaught Acoustic Guitar](#)

Martin D-18 Dreadnaught Guitars incorporate classic design aesthetic and a timeless sound.

Parlor Size Acoustic Guitars

Parlor guitars offer a mid-range tone, historic sound, and a smaller size. They're popular among old-school blues, folk, and fingerstyle players.

Example of parlor size guitar carried at White House of Music:

[CSF1MVN Yamaha Parlor Guitar CSF1M Vintage Natural](#)

Resonators

Another excellent option for slide guitarists, the resonance offered by these guitars lends itself to cool overtones and a unique sound. The spun metal cone takes the place of the wood top when conducting vibrations. These guitars are popular in louder bluegrass and blues roles. Some models feature a square neck designed to be played like a lap steel guitar, while others are designed to be played like a conventional guitar.

Nylon String Acoustic Guitars

Nylon string guitars work great for classical and flamenco music. Hybrid nylon string guitars work well for someone wanting to add a nylon sound to a more rock 'n' roll style. The hybrid is a more standard acoustic guitar design with nylon strings instead of steel strings. In my favorite part of the blog, find out what makes the Spanish and Flamenco guitar stand out from the crowd.

Spanish Style Guitars or Classical Guitars

The traditional Spanish style guitar is meant for playing pieces from the renaissance, baroque, romantic, and modern time periods. Playing this type of music on the guitar takes years to master and usually requires a guitar of a higher quality. A wider neck provides room for more intricate playing. Players can end up playing the melody, harmony, and bass lines all at once. Reading music and memorizing pieces is also paramount for this type of music.

Some high-quality Spanish guitars available through White House of Music are listed below. Note: The C5 Cordoba classical guitar is a high-quality instrument for beginners to intermediate players.

[C5 Cordoba Classical Guitar](#)

[C45CO Cordoba Classical Guitar Cocobolo](#)

Each Cordoba C5 guitar is handmade in the classic Spanish style.

Flamenco Guitars

Another type of nylon string guitar is the flamenco guitar. These guitars offer a fast action (low string height to the neck) and can produce some buzzing due to the low string height. The flamenco guitar has a more percussive sound and is designed to cut through with more "attack."

Bass Guitars

Electric bass guitars typically feature solid-body construction with 4 steel strings (although hollow body and 5-6 string options also exist). While most bass guitar designs are electric, White House of Music also carries an acoustic-electric Ibanez model as well.

GSR200SMNGT: Ibanez Bass Natural Gray Burst

Check out this eye-popping Ibanez bass model featuring their Natural Gray Burst finish.



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Play it. Protect it. Learn it. **Love it.**



Any Other Guitar Questions?

There are many things to consider when selecting your new guitar. Stop by White House of Music and check out our selection of Martin, Ibanez, Yamaha, and Fender guitars. [Contact us](#) to schedule a guitar experience or ask about [model availability](#) today!