

# 7 common mistakes when buying a beginner guitar

## 1. Getting the wrong sound – Classical, Acoustic or Electric?

You have 3 basic choices of sound when you buy a guitar – Nylon String Classical, Steel String Acoustic and Electric. A lot of people believe that the best choice is to start on an Acoustic Guitar and build up to an Electric Guitar. However, I think it's really about getting the sound that you want. If you like AC/DC, Green Day, or say the Foo Fighters, you really need an Electric Guitar to get the sound you want. If you like Jack Johnson, Ben Harper or Taylor Swift, An acoustic could be a good choice. Nylon string guitars sound great for flamenco music, classical music and a lot of traditional music. But they aren't a great choice for pop music. Having said this, if it's for a child under 12 we normally do recommend a nylon string as it's easier for them to press the strings down. Young boys can be little better than young girls as this, so if you have a rough and tumble boy he might be able to handle steel strings earlier than a young girl.

If you're not sure what type of guitar is best for you, then just think of the music that you like to listen to the most, and call or email us. We will give you a personalized recommendation.

## 2. Getting the wrong size

This is something that a lot of people get wrong. Electric Guitars are much smaller than Steel string acoustic guitars and Nylon String classical guitars, they can basically be used by most people, but you do need to consider the extra weight. An Electric guitar can weigh 5-6 Kg which can be difficult for children to handle. So we would normally recommend that girls be at least 13 years before they try an Electric, but boys can be younger (sometimes as young as 10). Now every child is different, and some girls are quite capable so if your child is quite strong then by all means go for an electric

We carry a broad range of sizes in our entry level range. The correct size is most accurately determined by the player's height, Age and in some cases Gender. If you can tell us these three details we can give you a personal recommendation.

### **Electric Guitars**

12+ Would generally suit a full size

8-12 should use a  $\frac{3}{4}$  size – For younger children it's important to consider if they are strong enough to press down the metal strings, if they don't have access to an Electric guitar to check you might want to consider a nylon string.

### **Acoustic Guitars**

Adult (Taller than 175cm) Jumbo (Like our model [JUMB](#))

15 Years + (taller than 165cm) – Dreadnought – (like our model [LSP](#))

12-15 Years old (125cm-165cm) [LSPS](#) – this is a smaller size we have specifically designed for smaller players – a great choice for women

10-14 years old (120cm-140cm) – OM size guitar (EG our model [LSPOM](#))

8-10 Years Old (100cm-120cm) –  $\frac{3}{4}$  (EG our model [LSP34](#))

### **Classical Guitars (Nylon String Guitars)**

[2-5 Years Old \(75-100cm tall\) - 1/4 size](#)

[5-8 Years Old \(100-125cm\) 1/2 Size](#)

[8-12 Years Old \(125-165cm\) 3/4 Size](#)

[12 years + \(165cm +\) 4/4 Size](#)

Full size (Note – if you have smaller hands I would recommend the  $\frac{3}{4}$  size – A classical guitar neck is the widest neck of any guitar and can be difficult to play for people with smaller hands)

## **3. Buying a guitar with strings that are too high and hard to play**

String action is one of the critical things for getting an easy to play guitar. The easiest way to understand this is that it's just the measurement of the gap from the bottom of the string, to the top of the fret and it's measured at the 12<sup>th</sup> fret.

For a beginner we recommend

Electric Guitars 2-2.3mm

Acoustic Guitars 2-2.7mm

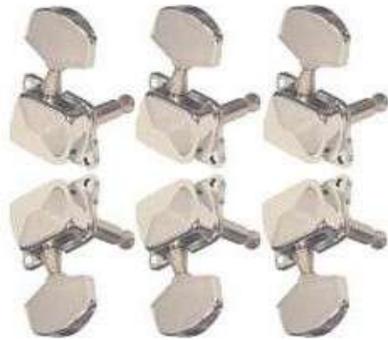
Nylon String Guitars 3-3.6mm

A common issue with most entry level nylon string guitars is that the necks are usually made in a very traditional manner using a section of metal bar a few mm thick to keep the neck straight (you can't see this bar it is built into the neck).

We started finding that this type of construction leads to the neck bending (or bowing) until after about 6 months. Because of this we have changed the design of our classical guitars to use a truss rod. A truss rod is a much stronger example of the bar above but its main advantage is that it's adjustable. So if in the future your neck begins to bend it can easily be adjusted. Unfortunately with the traditional method there is not an easy way to adjust it back to normal.

## **4. Getting stuck with bad machine heads guitar that don't stay in tune**

Here is an example of a basic covered machine head



These are made out of gears and pressed metal, it used to be the only way to make machine heads (so a lot of vintage guitars use this type) while it can look cool and retro, this vintage style tuners are often very hard to tune and to keep in tune.

Now there is a modern way to get a much better guitar – the die-cast machine head



A die-cast machine head is made from a mould and is smoother and more accurate than a covered machine head

## 5. Buying a brand name and thinking you will be getting a better guitar.

Most brand name guitars are great at the higher levels, but in entry level guitars in our experience you don't get a great deal.

In entry level guitars name brands are usually forced to make their guitars with cheaper materials, there is a simple reason for this. Most name brand guitars have a brand owner (sometimes an American company). That company buys from a factory in China, and then in Australia they will have a distributor who will sell to a retailer (your local music store). It's pretty easy to see why they can be forced to use cheaper materials as there is a lot of price pressure to get a guitar to a low enough price. Artist Guitars is different as it's our own range of guitars (Designed in Australia) bought in from our trusted factory to your directly.

## 6. Buying a guitar without any support materials

When most people buy their first guitar they can be a little confused about what to do. A guitar can be a confusing purchase and most guitars don't even come with a manual explaining how to use them. That becomes a problem because most people then have to search for the information (which can be hard to find).

Unfortunately it's during this critical time that a lot of people get discouraged and can even give up on playing.

The first 6 months of learning guitar are critical, statistics show that if someone can still be playing at 6 months they will be much more likely to go on to play guitar for life, so the first 6 months are actually the most important time.

## 7. Paying for features you just don't need

At the beginner level, you need a good quality instrument, but having a more expensive instrument generally doesn't make your playing any easier. Higher level instruments are designed for high level players who want the ultimate in sound.

As a beginner most people are not very sure of the sound, style or type of guitar that they would ultimately like to play, but after playing for 6 months or so I'm sure you will know a lot more about guitars and when it comes time to choose your next guitar it will be an easy choice.

The key features a beginner needs is a guitar that is well set-up and easy to play, but you don't really need to spend too much money on getting a better quality of sound. Higher level guitars will only sound better when your playing has progressed to the level that you can play quite well.

Most beginners find that during the process of learning (after a year or so) you will figure out your own sound. You will naturally be drawn to music that features guitar in it, and great guitar parts. So what usually happens is that your own musical tastes will change and with this change the type of instrument that suits your sound the best will also change. So when you're ready to take the next step, you will have a much better idea of what you really want.

So in summary

## **The 7 key mistakes when buying a beginner guitar are :**

1. Getting the wrong sound
2. Getting the wrong size
3. Buying a guitar with strings that are too high and hard to play
4. Getting stuck with bad machine heads guitar that don't stay in tune
5. Buying a brand name and thinking you will be getting a better guitar.
6. Buying a guitar without any support materials
7. Paying for features you just don't need

Thanks for reading our report, to give you even more content check our pages below

[Join our newsletter](#) (ssssh - there is a secret sign-up discount if you sign up today)

[Demo's & Tutorials on our YouTube channel](#)

[Our facebook page](#) for updates and specials and more

[Check out our website](#)

I hope this short summary has helped, if you need any assistance please email [sales@artistguitars.com.au](mailto:sales@artistguitars.com.au) or call us on 1300 489 816

© Artist Guitars 2012