

*Artist*<sup>®</sup>  
GUITARS

**AS DIY KIT  
MANUAL**



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# INTRODUCTION

Thank you for buying this guitar kit. All the wood, hardware and electrical components of the guitar are contained in this package. Please read the following instructions for assembly and finishing.

The kit contains three boxes: one for the neck, one for the body, and another containing all hardware and electronics.

Hardware/Electronics List:

- 6x Tuners, 6x Nuts, 6x Washers, 6x Screws
- 1x Loaded Pickguard (Pickups Pre-Installed), 11x Screws
- 1x Bridge, 1x Tremolo Arm, 2x Allen Wrenches, 6x Screws
- 1x Output Jack, 2x Screws
- 1x String Set, 2x Strap Buttons, 2x Washers, 2x Screws, 2x String Trees, 2x String Tree Shafts, 2x Screws
- 1x Back plate, 1x Claw, 3x Strings, 1x Neck Plate, 2x Large Screws, 6x Smalls Screws
- 5x Spare Screws

Where possible, connections have been labelled to make assembly easier.

## BODY

The first consideration to be made before assembling is to choose the preferred finish of the guitar body.

The roasted poplar body of this kit is unfinished and unsealed, allowing you to apply any finish you like. A wide variety of finishes can be procured from DIY, timber and automotive outlets in aerosol cans making finishing straight forward without requiring specialist skills. The use of a dust mask is essential when spraying.

The first step is to check the fit of the body to the neck joint. The guitar is machined from high-grade tone-woods to ensure optimum alignment. But all woods have a natural propensity to change shape very slightly over time. If the fit is too tight, a gentle adjustment using a sharp chisel or sand paper may be required. Please remember that the coating of lacquer will make the neck fit a little more tightly into the cutout.

Before coating the body, ensure that all surfaces are clean and free of dirt and dust. Conduct all coating processes in a well-aired, dust-free environment. Slow and patient progress is the key to a good quality of the body finish and it is recommended to test the colour and technique on a spare piece of wood first.

A hole is drilled in the neck cutout so that it can be suspended by a hook for spraying and drying or alternatively, a spare length of wood can be screwed in place of the neck in the cutout as a handle.

Spray on the edges of the body first and allow the coat to become touch dry. Once the edges are dry, continue on the rear and then the front of the body. Gradual and smooth passes will ensure an even coat. If there are any imperfections, allow for to become fully dry and then sand out with fine grade (e.g. 800 + grit) before re-spraying. Apply three or more coats for full coverage.

Finally, after allowing two to three days of drying to fully cure the finish, buff or polish the body as required to give the desired level of gloss. Take care not to buff too vigorously as this may remove the finish.

## NECK FINISH

The neck of the guitar is supplied sealed with a light coat of matte lacquer and is ready to use. If preferred, the neck can be finished with a colour or gloss lacquer. If so, do the following.

The rosewood finger board does not need coating with lacquer, so it is important to mask off the exposed rose-wood and frets prior to spraying. Ensure all parts to be sprayed are free from dirt and dust and that the environment is dust-free and well-aired. The use of a dust mask is essential when spraying.

Choose a good quality, clear or lightly tinted wood lacquer aerosol for the neck and begin at the front and sides of the headstock. Start with a gradual, even pass to apply a thin coat, allow drying (to be touchable) and repeat this two or three times. Take care not to apply too much, which may cause runs. If this happens, sand down the area and re-apply evenly.

After the head stock has become dry, turn the neck over and lay it down on its fingerboard. Repeat the above process for the rest of the exposed maple.

Allow two to three days for the lacquer to fully harden and then, if desired, polish the lacquered surfaces to get a suitable shine.

## ASSEMBLING OF TUNERS

Before attaching the neck to the body, fit the tuning machine-heads to the headstock by inserting the thread through the pre-drilled holes and setting a washer and bush over it. Screw down the bush onto the thread until it fits tightly to the touch and then adjust the rear of the machine-head so that the tuning button sits vertically above the top edge of the headstock.



Fix the retaining screw through the loop on the rear of the gear housing into the pilot hole to hold the tuner in position. Then tighten the nut on the front face of the tuner until it is firm by using a spanner of the correct size. Repeat this for the remaining five tuners and then fit the two string trees with the one with the taller spacers nearer to the top nut.



## NECK

With the body placed face up on a protective surface, position the neck into the neck cutout until it is fully inserted.



Turn the assembly over and position the neck plate (with its black protective seal) over the four bolt holes at the rear of the body and drive in the four long screws through the neck plate, body and pilot holes in the neck until all fits tightly.



## BRIDGE ASSEMBLY

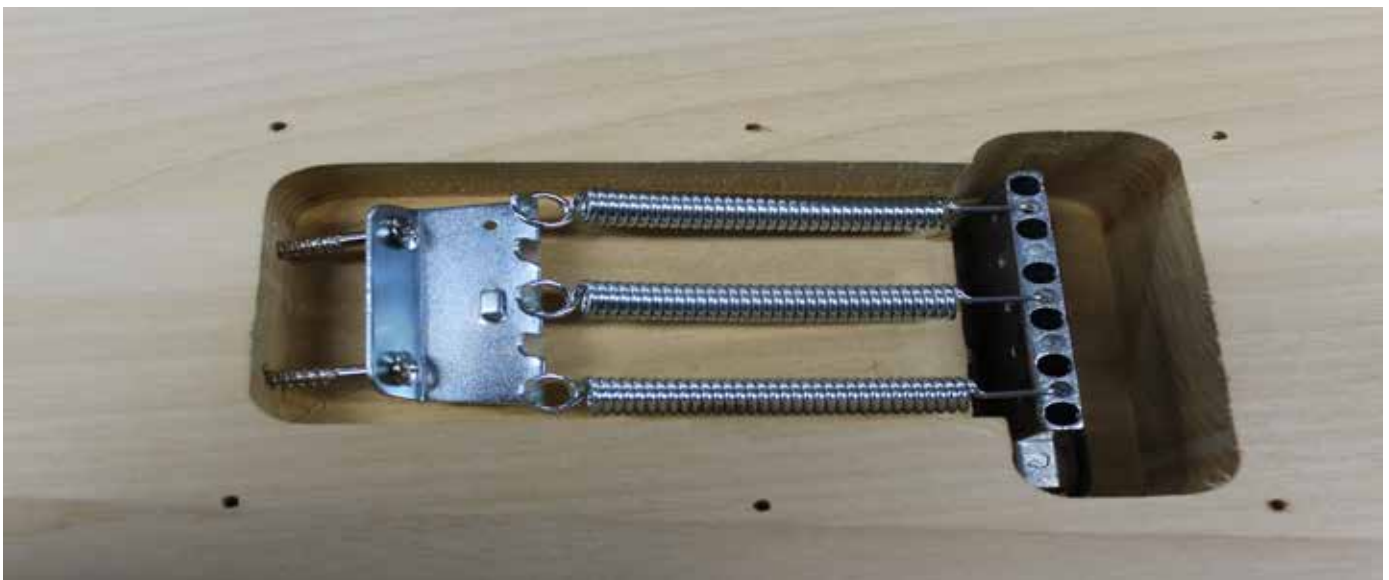
Position the body face-up on a soft surface. Take the bridge and set it into the right section toward the rear of the body, allowing the sustain block (the metal block underneath the bridge) to hang into the hole through the body.

Ensure that the sustain block is positioned in the centre of the hole and lines up the six screw holes that have been pre-drilled and secure it with the six screws provided – not too tightly – allowing the bridge to rock back and forth.



Turn the guitar over and screw the spring claw part-way into the pre-drilled holes at the forward edge of the rear body cavity.

Attach the loops of the three springs provided to the claw and the straight hook ends to the small holes in the sustain block. Continue to tighten the claw towards the neck until some tension is applied to the bridge.

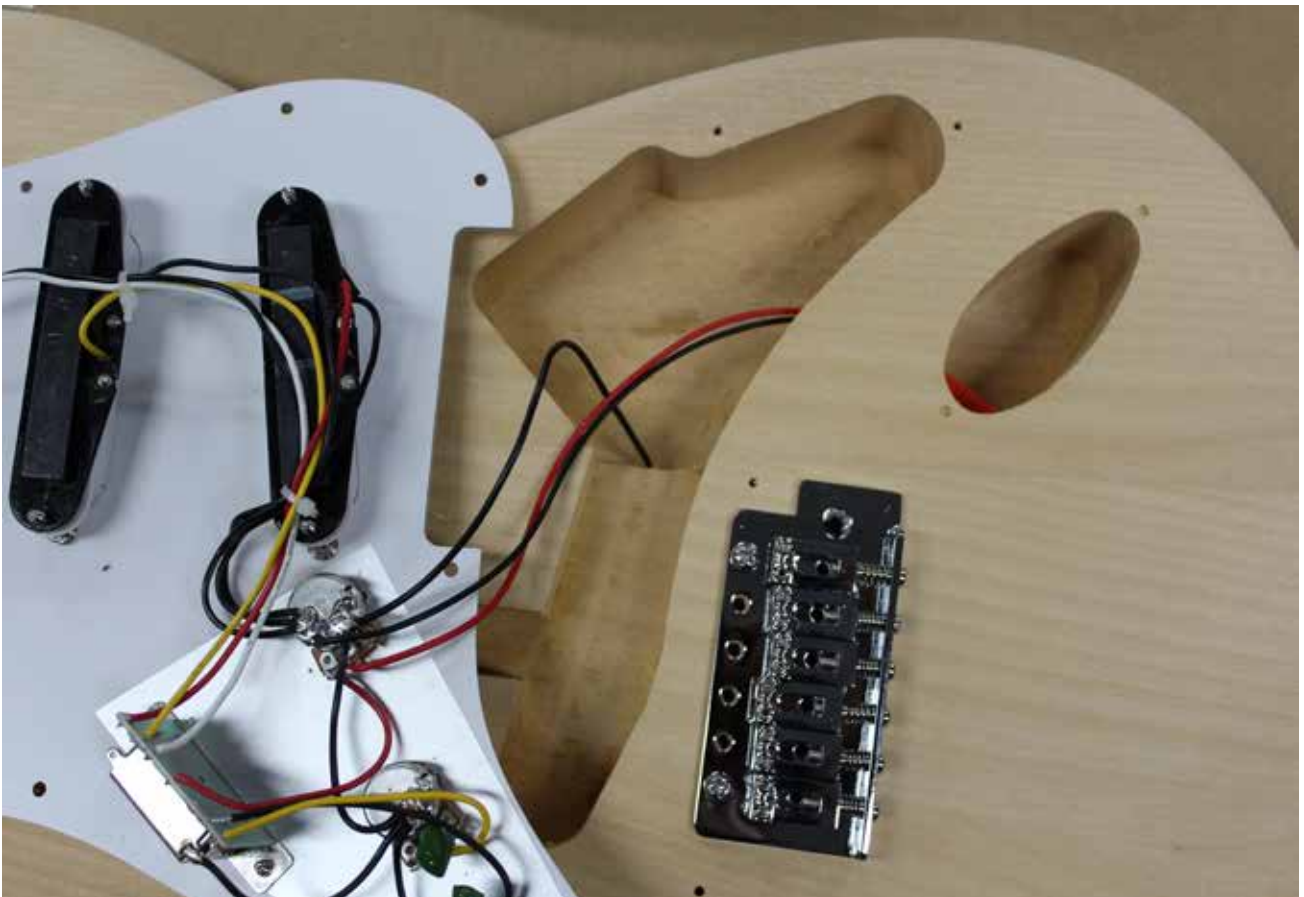




# WIRING

The pickups and controls are pre-assembled on the pickguard and simply need to be connected to the output jack socket and earth. Wiring is implemented as plug-in modules, soldering is not required.

There are two loose cables in the wiring assembly. One cable has a connector and the other one has no connector. Thread the cable without connector (the string grounding cable) through the hole leading to the spring claw. Hook it on the claw, put the springs on the claw and properly fix the bare cable end. String grounding reduces noise (hum). Gently thread the twin connector lead through the hole behind the tone control cavity to the separate routing for the jack socket plate.





Now position the pickguard over the front of the body in a way that the pickups and all the wiring sit neatly in the routed cavities. Ensure that the edge of the pickguard sits snugly at the end of the neck and straight to the bridge assembly. Secure the pickguard with the small dome-head screws provided into the pre-drilled pilot holes.

Connect the connector wire to the connector on the jack socket (they only fit one way round), then fit the jack socket plate and secure it with dome-head screws.



The plastic rear body plate can now be fitted to cover the spring cavity. Secure the plate with dome-head screws into the pre-drilled holes.



## STRAP BUTTONS



Screw the strap buttons into the pre-drilled holes at the bottom edge of the body and at the tip of the upper horn of the body.

## SETTING UP

Fitting strings to the guitar is achieved by threading from the rear, through the sustain block to the front, emerging through the relevant saddle on the bridge. Start with the thickest string bottom E in the uppermost position on the bridge.



Ensure that the string sits smoothly on its saddle and keep taut whilst winding a couple of turns on the relevant tuner. Thread through the string post and bend the string back on itself to anchor it in place. Apply a little tension from the tuner and move onto the next string. Repeat the above process for all six strings.

Bringing all the strings up to pitch gradually is better achieved with a digital guitar tuner or pitch pipes as a reference. Please be aware that the tension of the strings may take some time to settle and re-tuning a few times might be necessary. Stretching each string gently after reaching the pitch will help to take up slack.



The neck is fitted with a truss rod which may need adjusting. When the strings are tuned up, they will try to pull away from the neck, which may mean that the action becomes too high. If this happens, use the larger of the two hex keys provided to gradually tighten the truss rod – a half turn is usually enough and may not take effect immediately – allow the adjustments to settle each time – do not be tempted to over-tighten the truss rod. Sighting along the neck should show a very slight concave tendency which is called “relief” and too straight a neck may lead to “fret buzzing”. Some strings may need to be raised or lowered individually to give the correct action and this can be adjusted using the smaller of the two hex keys provided.



Once the desired action is achieved, all that remains is to set the vibrato tension and intonation. After tuning up all the strings, the spring claw may need tightening (or slackening) in the rear cavity to make the vibrato system “float” (note: some players prefer that the bridge lies completely flat against the body).

To setup intonation you just have to gently touch a string, right above the twelfth fret and then pick the string. The resulting chime-like sound is a harmonic (12th fret harmonic). This harmonic should have the same pitch as when the string is pressed at the twelfth fret. If the pitch of the two notes differs, adjust the saddle for this string back or forth on the bridge. Listen carefully and adjust gently until the two notes match, to achieve correct intonation. Repeat this procedure on all strings until the harmonics and the fretted notes sound the same.

Please also remember that overtime, slight adjustments may need to be made and different gauges of strings will need compensating for in the setup.

The pickup height can now be adjusted for best performance and can be balanced by adjusting the screws at the top and bottom of each pickup. As a general rule, hold down the strings at the 22nd fret and adjust so that the strings are at least 2 mm clear of the pickup. Any pickups that are noticeably louder than others can be made quieter by adjusting them further away from the strings.

For future adjustments, keep these instructions as a reference and enjoy your custom made guitar.