

## Guitars



HE SIX STRINGS OF A GUITAR ENCOMPASS FOUR OCTAVES — MORE THAN HALF THE RANGE OF A GRAND PIANO. THEY CAN ALL BE PLAYED AT ONCE, giving the “little orchestra” its characteristic luxuriance of harmony. A guitar combines deep resonance and a pure singing tone — not bad for an instrument that’s three feet long and weighs under four pounds.

When I take a new guitar out of the case, I start inspecting at the neck and work my way down through the body and end up at the bridge and end pin. The neck’s alignment and stability are critical.

Alvarez necks are all solid Nato mahogany — dense and stable for a long warp-free life. They’re cut on a bias to reverse the woodgrain and prevent twisting. The neck must be rigidly attached to the body; I look for a good solid heel on the neck where it joins the body. It should be dovetailed into a block inside the guitar body, rather than bolted. All Alvarez guitars are dovetailed.

Left: 5008 Florentine classical guitar. Sound hole is made by a unique engraving process. Has same amount of open air space as conventional sound hole for optimum projection. Stained solid spruce top, rosewood fingerboard.

### 12 PLACES TO CHECK FOR GUITAR QUALITY:

1. Neck attachment.
2. Neck adjustability.
3. Fingerboard.
4. Frets.
5. Head.
6. Tuning machines.
7. Spruce Top.
8. Sound hole inlays.
9. Interior workmanship.
10. Bindings on edges.
11. Bridge.
12. Overall appearance.

