



At a glance

Squier Bullet Strat HSS

BODY: Basswood
NECK: Maple
FINGERBOARD: Rosewood
FRETS: 21
SCALE: 25½"
PICKUPS: 2x singlecoil Strat pickups, 1x humbucker
CONTROLS: Master volume, 2x tone, 5-way switch,
HARDWARE: Chrome
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Arctic White (pictured), Black, Brown Sunburst
CONTACT: Fender GBI 01342 331700
WEB: www.squierguitars.com

£129

The five-way selector switch grants you access to a tonal variety that suits even the pickiest of palates

Neck ■ The endlessly playable C shape neck feels like home in no time

Heritage ■ Squier's designs are cut from the same cloth as a 'real' Fender

Pickups ■ After more power? Simply flick the selector switch to the humbucker and hang on tight

Squier Bullet Strat HSS

The entry-level beauty with that authentic Fender bite

You can't mistake a Strat: it's slinky, a bit sexy, and in the right hands can do filthy things. It's no wonder it still tops the must-have list for many first-timers and folk with burgeoning collections. Squier is the go-to brand for authentic Fender style on a budget, and the company has delivered a beefed up, highly affordable Strat for the masses with the Bullet Strat HSS.

Available in Black, Brown Sunburst or (as seen here) a delicious Arctic White, the finish is generally of a high standard – apart from a slight bit of untidiness around the neck on TG's example – making the Bullet HSS a tasty piece of eye candy. Move your attention to that iconic headstock and you'll find a set of reliable machineheads that keep tuning steady. The comfortable neck feels like an old friend, with nicely sized vintage-style frets that are well finished and free of any palm shredding imperfections, while those factory fitted .009 gauge strings cry out for big bends and funky fills.

Head further down the body and the pickup configuration is really where the Bullet HSS comes into its own. The five-way selector switch grants you access to a smorgasbord of tonal variety to suit even the pickiest of

palates. If you like things clean, you'll find plenty of that instantly recognisable Strat twang. Team the bridge humbucker with even the slightest touch of overdrive and the Bullet morphs into a dirty, growling heartbreaker with the sort of bite that's hard to find among the competition. Sure, the likes of the Yamaha Pacifica or certain Vintage models offer a similar HSS layout, but you'll need to flash plenty more cash to take those home.

Having this humbucker in the bridge adds an extra dimension to the standard singlecoil Strat setup, meaning pick-heavy rockers and palm-muting punks will feel right at home alongside distinguished pickers or first-time strummers.

Conclusion: Guitar shops' walls are lined with Strat-a-like models, but only Squier has the right to reach for the original blueprint. For under £150, there may well be a glut of options on the market, but few guitars at this price point can offer the sort of quality the Bullet exudes. It's a classy proposition, then, and one that's produced to exacting standards. This incredibly versatile – and affordable – guitar proves you don't need a rock star's bank balance to achieve rock star tone.

Rob Power

SUMMARY

For: Bursting with authentic Fender Strat tone

Against: No left-handed option

★★★★★

TG says... The perfect introduction to Stratsville



The bridge humbucker in this Squier brings you rocket fuel on a budget