

GEAR

REVIEW

FENDER NASHVILLE TELE



FENDER DELUXE NASHVILLE TELECASTER

£679

Meet the affordable studio tool that might just be the best-playing Telecaster yet

THE Nashville Telecaster pays tribute to Leo Fender's first-born's dominance of the studio session scene in Music City, Tennessee, with a guitar that promises both classic Tele and Strat sounds. Beyond the regular alder body and slim C profile bolt-on maple neck you'd expect to find when grappling with a Telecaster, you'll encounter some interesting upgrades. The bridge and neck pickups are Tele items, while the middle single coil is a Strat model. All belong to Fender's Vintage Noiseless range and come wired to a master volume, master tone and a five-way pickup

saddles for great sustain, and a set of rock solid locking tuners. If you prefer the snappier tone of a maple 'board, that's available, too, but the finish options are different.

Single-coil pickups can generate a lot of unwanted noise, otherwise known as 60-cycle hum. That's not a huge concern on stage or in rehearsals, but it can cause problems in the studio. The Vintage Noiseless pups live up to their name by cutting out the hum without sacrificing the classic single-coil tones. The bridge has bags of Tele twang on clean and roars when distorted – like a mash-up of Johnny Cash and early

This great little guitar wears many hats, not just a Stetson

selector blade switch. More on all that stuff in a moment.

What's not so obvious is that Fender has pimped the Nashville Tele's playability with a 305mm (12-inch) fingerboard radius. To explain, Leo Fender spec'd the Tele with a 184mm (7.25-inch) radius. This works well for chords, but requires a medium to high action to bend strings above the 12th fret without choking out. Most modern Teles feature a 241mm (9.5-inch) radius, which allows for buzz and choke-free bending. So, the bigger the number, the flatter the 'board, and the easier the action and string-bending. Our Nashville's whopping 12-inch radius is the same as a Les Paul. The result is a low action that doesn't grumble when you dig in anywhere.

Before we plug in, we should point out some other details, including 22 medium tall frets, a contoured neck heel for easy top end access, solid block bridge

Jimmy Page. The neck position has a warmth and depth that's uncannily like a big hollow jazz guitar, while the middle Strat pickup works great for crunchy rhythm work – but it's the two 'in-between' Jimi Hendrix/Stevie Ray Vaughan sounds that'll get the juices flowing. This Tele will nail *Little Wing* with more bottom-end grunt than any Stratocaster.

The message is clear. Regardless of its geographically specific name, don't be tempted to typecast the Nashville Tele as exclusively for the country set. Tonally, this great little guitar wears many hats, not just a Stetson.

Ed Mitchell

SUMMARY	FEATURES				
	SOUND QUALITY				
	VALUE FOR MONEY				
	BUILD QUALITY				
	PLAYABILITY				
OVERALL RATING		★★★★★			



SOLID TUNING

THAT ageless Tele headstock provides a home for a set of modern locking machineheads with vintage-style buttons. Telecasters are famed for holding their tuning, so this one is as stable as you can get

PLAYABILITY

THE Nashville Tele comes spec'd with 22 narrow tall frets and a 12-inch radius 'board that offers a low action with absolutely no buzzing or choking when you bend the strings

HYBRID

THE Nashville adds colour to its classic Tele tonal palette with an additional middle Strat pickup. This allows access to those iconic *Little Wing* tones

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Alder
NECK: Maple, bolt-on
SCALE: 25.5"
FINGERBOARD: Rosewood, 305mm (12") radius
FRETS: 22 narrow tall
PICKUPS: 3x Fender Vintage Noiseless single coils
CONTROLS: 1x volume, 1x tone, 5-way pickup blade selector
HARDWARE: Chrome six-saddle bridge, nickel die-cast locking machineheads
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Fiesta Red (shown), Daphne Blue (w/ rosewood 'board), White Blonde, 2-Colour Sunburst (w/ maple 'board)
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