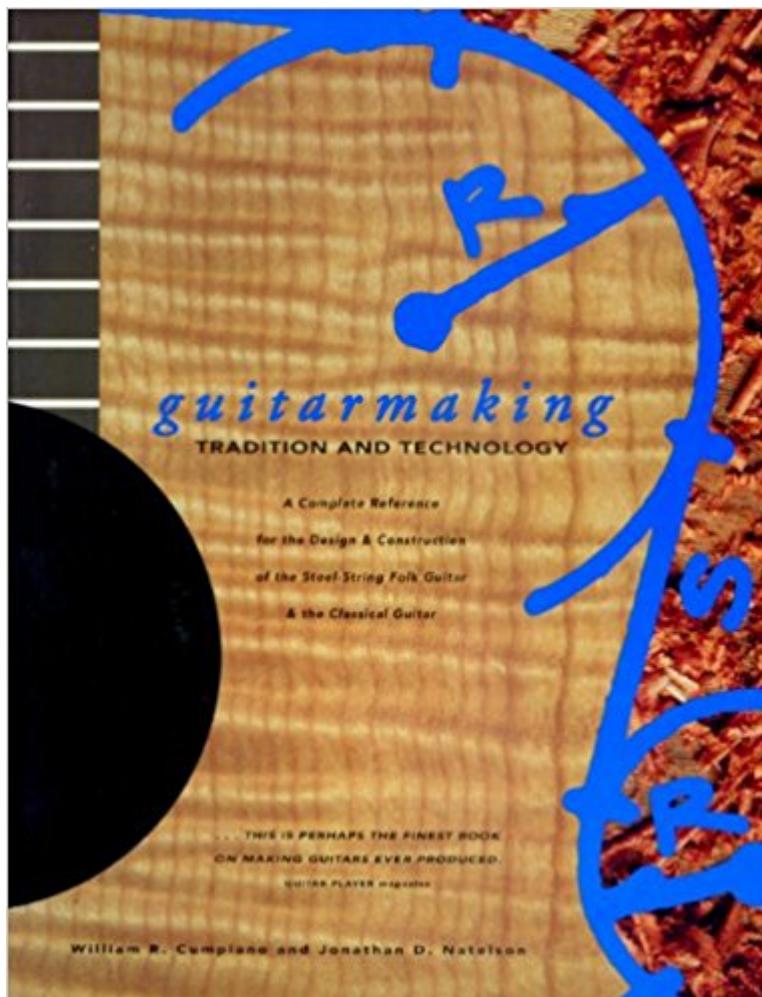


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# GUITARMAKING (Guitar Reference)



## Synopsis

(Music Sales America). A complete reference for the design and construction of the steel-string folk guitar and the classical guitar.

## Book Information

Series: Guitar Reference

Paperback: 388 pages

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## Customer Reviews

Jonathan D. Natelson builds and repairs classical guitars and is a national supplier of tone woods for constructing stringed instruments. He lives in Philadelphia. William R. Cumpiano is a master guitarmaker and teacher of instrument building and repair in Amherst, Massachusetts, serving professional musicians across the country.

Purchased this to see what it takes to build a guitar. Amateur woodworking is a hobby and I decided to dabble with being a luthier on top of it. This book is an easy read and easily understood without requiring an engineering degree. Fairly easy to construct a guitar using this book and make a nicer instrument than a cigar box guitar with the finished product. If you have the tools on hand (hand or power tools either one) the steps in this book make it fairly simple to construct a decent to nice instrument depending on your abilities and talent. My first attempt wasn't the best but they're getting progressively better. I would recommend pine or a "cheap" wood so you're not out too much if you mess up rather than a figured wood or veneer for your first attempt...speaking from experience!

As I make the leap from building Mountain Dulcimers and Cigar Box Guitars to full-sized guitars and ukuleles, this book has filled in a good number of gaps. The whole book is packed with helpful tips, tools, and techniques, and of particular interest to me were the sections on the how's and why's of soundboard bracing, and a thorough discussion on side bending. Not necessarily for the newcomer to a wood shop, but definitely recommended for anyone serious about building an acoustic guitar. In a field where every detail affects the eventual outcome, this book will keep you on the path to your artful best.

I'm on my first classical guitar build. I first read

<http://www..com/Classical-Guitar-Making-Approach-Traditional/dp/1402720602> by John Bogdanovich. It's a great book too, but tends to focus on how to do things with power tools, some of which are inaccessible to earthlings like me. This book focuses more on doing things with hand tools. I think any aspiring luthier/hobbyist making guitars should buy both books and take what you need and leave the rest!

I also have Alex Willis's book on guitar making, and am using his full size plans and instructions. For some task in Willis's book that I consider are not the best or easiest ways to accomplish, I consult the *Guitar Making: Tradition and Technology* book to see possible other ways. It is very complete and I'm sure you could build your first guitar based on this book alone, but make sure to check out William Cumpiano's website, as there has been some revisions and a couple incorrect numbers that I'm surprised have not been corrected in print. Also he's developed an easier and better way to join the neck so check that out if this is the only book you plan on purchasing! All in all, aside from the lack of plans, this book is very thorough. So thorough infact that I had to skip the whole first chapter describing woods properties and talking about sandpaper and abrasives. And I thought to myself, 'If you aren't familiar with that type of stuff perhaps you shouldn't be building a guitar!'

William Cumpiano and Jonathan Natelson's book on building an acoustic Steel String guitar and Classical guitars is by no means dated (unless you consider the time it was published). Nowhere have I found information on building guitars as complete as in this fine publication. *Guitarmaking: Tradition and Technology* is very well written and what was true then still holds true to this day! Other books (and I have them all) come nowhere near the level of instruction that you will find in this book. Some will show you how to do a particular task but the Cumpiano and Natelson book tells you why! Please know that one can spend a small fortune on unnecessary tools and books setting up a

shop. Most tools for acoustic guitar building have remained the same in all these years so endless updates is unnecessary. William Cumpiano has updates at his website for those who are interested. When one of my students ask me what should be the first book to buy? I tell them they can't do any better in the fundamental knowledge gained from *Guitarmaking: Tradition and Technology*

Excellent instruction book, not for the beginner at woodworking, but then neither is a guitar project. But if you have successfully completed some other projects and want to get into your very own guitar, this book is very complete. I found answers to all the questions I had. And detailed instructions for steps that I wouldn't have thought were as complicated or critical to final performance. And by detailed I mean that the complicated steps were very well explained. I had checked this out from the public library twice before I bought it; I will be referring to it frequently on my first build this summer, and hopefully many more.

If aspiring to be an advanced craftsman, you must read this 25 year old tome. If not the type to break away from dead still, it will still impress your more ambitious friends having it on the "coffee table". He covers both steel string & "classical" (plastic gut string) types. GLT

I'm 65 and I'm getting ready for a different kind of relationship with guitars. I'd like to become a luthier; a very good luthier. As such there's no such thing as enough knowledge. This series is well written and the information is well presented. As it is among the first of its kind I've ever owned I can't say it's the best, BUT I would recommend it to anyone who is on my path or just wants to refine their own instrument(s).

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