

The Origins of Yamaha Guitars

Stories Behind Our First Instruments Part 1

SINCE 1966

How Yamaha Guitars Began A Story of Innovation and Ambition

1966: The Start of Yamaha Guitar Journey

In 1966, Yamaha's first acoustic guitars—the **FG-180** and **FG-150**—were launched. Rather than emulating overseas brands, Yamaha focused on creating something original. These models later grew into the iconic FG Series, which has continued for 60 years and counting.



In 1965, Yamaha's then-president Genichi Kawakami laid the foundation for Yamaha Guitars with two clear directives. The first was, **'If Yamaha is entering the guitar business, then we must aim to be the best in the world.'** The second was, **'Our mission is to create original guitars of lasting quality.'** His words set in motion a major initiative in guitar development. Yamaha quickly established the Guitar Research Division, bringing together skilled woodworkers and specialists from its piano production team. Prototyping facilities were built, and the company began its full-scale global endeavor.

That same year, Yamaha also launched its first electric guitars, the **SG-2** and **SG-3**, the **SB-2** electric bass, and the **No.250** and **No.500** guitar amplifiers.



In addition, Spanish master luthier Eduardo Ferrer visited Hamamatsu to teach traditional classical guitar-building techniques. This collaboration led to the handcrafted GC Series in 1967, establishing a strong foundation for Yamaha's global ambitions.



1966 was a landmark year for Yamaha, with the debut of its first acoustic guitars and electric guitars, along with basses and amplifiers, firmly establishing its place in the global guitar market.

In the next article, we'll take a closer look at Yamaha's very first acoustic and electric guitar.

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60th anniversary website

