

# YAMAHA PACIFICA 611HFM £579

Yamaha brings professional-quality tones to the masses with this hot-rodded Pacifica. And it's purple!



**BEFORE** 1990, beginners' guitars were a bit rubbish. If you couldn't afford a bona-fide Gibson, Fender or another one of the big boys, you were lumbered with a plank with pickups. But in that magical year Yamaha gave us the Pacifica, and a generation learned to play on a guitar that looked good, sounded great and performed just about well enough to play those first sweaty gigs with.

Fast forward 22 years and Yamaha has also made a strong pitch for the mid-range market

**“As good as instruments costing twice as much”**

with the 611HFM, loading it with Seymour Duncan pickups, Grover locking tuners and other high-end appointments that ooze quality.

The Trans Purple body, with its cheeky maple veneer, draws us in like a magpie to a shiny thing, but we're not so wild about the yellow tint on the neck, which is a flattish C-shape. The frets are on the thin side of medium, and the fretboard edges are as smooth as a baby's bottom (albeit a rosewood one). We also appreciate the fixed Wilkinson bridge, with individual Graph Tech string saddles, and the Graph Tech Black Tusq nut. For the uninitiated, Tusq is a compound that's naturally slippery, so there's less friction where the string meets the guitar, meaning more stable tuning and fewer string breakages.

The biggest difference to the more humble entry-level guitars in the Pacifica 112 range is the

pickups. These are a pair of Seymour Duncans, a P90 in the neck and a humbucker with coil-tap switch at the bridge, so it will do a passable impersonation of a singlecoil, too. Reading the specs list it's clear that these are aimed at classic rock and blues rock players.

Our favourite sound has to be the P90 on its own. These pickups are usually described as having a soupy sound, and this one is so thick you can practically taste the lumps of oxtail floating in it. With the gain on your amp turned down and the volume turned up so your tone is just about to break up, the P90 gives you a sweet bayou sound that fans of Creedence or Lynyrd Skynyrd will go crazy for.

Move the pickup selector into the middle position and pull the tone control to bring the coil-split into play and you get a fantastic hollowed-out Strat sound that sounds completely convincing, and great with a clean amp sound. As noted, the humbucker is pitched on the lighter side of classic rock, and that alder body is pretty light, so it won't give you the sound of Slash: this is all about clarity rather than crunch, and dirties up into a nice Kings Of Leon-esque rock tone.

It's to Yamaha's credit that all the sounds packed into this guitar are good enough to use at your next gig. It blows the competition at this price range out of the water, and is easily as good as instruments costing twice as much. All this, plus a retro 90s logo on the headstock – what more could you ask for?

Andrew Gregory

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

### AT A GLANCE

**BODY:** Alder  
**NECK:** Maple  
**FINGERBOARD:** Rosewood  
**FRETS:** 22 medium  
**SCALE:** 25 1/2"  
**PICKUPS:** Seymour Duncan SP90-1 (neck) and Seymour Duncan TB-14 Custom V humbucker (bridge)  
**CONTROLS:** 1x volume, 1x tone (with coil split for bridge humbucker), three-way pickup selector switch  
**HARDWARE:** Hardtail bridge with Graph Tech saddles, chrome Grover locking tuners  
**LEFT-HANDED:** No  
**FINISH:** Black, Light Amber Burst, Root Beer, Trans Black, Trans Purple (shown)  
**CONTACT:** Yamaha Music (UK) Ltd  
 0844 811 1116 <http://uk.yamaha.com>

### 1 TUNERS

**WE LOVE** Grover locking tuners. They keep tuning stable, look good and make it super-quick to change strings onstage at the Dog and Duck

### 2 PICKUPS

**A BRACE** of Seymour Duncans keeps the tones coming on the 611HFM. You'll be amazed how many sounds you can wring out of it

### 3 BRIDGE

**GRAPH** Tech saddles in the hard-tail bridge and a Graph Tech nut keep the sounds crisp and should mean fewer broken strings

