



FENDER PM-1 ALL-MAHOGANY NE

£509

The Big F adjusts its sights on the acoustic market with this mahogany strummer

When it launched its Paramount acoustic series last year, Fender sent a message that it was reiterating its commitment to acoustics: solid-wood builds, bespoke preamp systems... we were pleased to see them, and as we open the hardcase to this all mahogany addition, hopes are high.

Well, it's not an electro. And so far only those original spruce-topped mahogany models (£599) offer the cheapest option of plugging in with the range. But what the PM-1 lacks in immediate gigability, it makes up for in looks. It's part of a trio of models completed by the PM-2 parlour

There are traits we hope for from mahogany build acoustics: note definition, muscular and mids and rounded lows that create a clear and confident voice.

They're all here. It's lively with it too – especially when we A/B it with our similarly spec'd Sigma for comparison – with some welcome air to its projection that brings sustain to picked in the mids. It's a voice that leans towards folk Americana but for any players who want a rootsy, woodier tonality rather than orchestrated shimmering chords, this will inspire.

Fender hasn't added mahogany to the Paramount line for cosmetic purposes. The PM-1 has a clear identity and voice that's one of the

IT'S A VOICE THAT LEANS TOWARDS FOLKY AMERICANA

and PM-3 Triple O cutaway. The look is clearly vintage-inspired, but it's been nailed better than a lot of the competition in this price bracket. The pronounced grain and understated appointments strike an alluring balance. We're especially taken with the checkerboard purfling around the top and down the back stripe.

For a mahogany dreadnought with solid back and sides, the PM-1 is surprisingly light at a touch over 3lbs, and picking it up for a strum it soon seems like that equates to resonance – we can feel those low frequencies vibrating. The flatness of the C-shape neck profile may not be to everyone's tastes but we soon feel at home here and it will certainly please a fair few Fender electric players, and the low action underlines a positive experience.

most enjoyable acoustics we've played this year. It's so impressive that it's disappointing Fender hasn't at least offered an option of an electro because we'd love to hear what it can offer for gigging players. Still, this is a tidy solid wood build with a quality hardcase at under £500 on the street, so the price is right. And it's another convincing statement from Fender – a legendary brand that isn't always go-to on the acoustic shopping list for players but who is now setting out a very convincing case of why it should be.

Rob Laing

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

1 TUNERS
Nickel open-back tuners add to the overall vintage stylings that keep on the right side of understated

2 NUT OR BRIDGE
It's good to see Fender's commitment to higher end hardware here; a real bone nut, compensated saddle and ebony bridge pins could both play a part in the PM-1's resonance

3 SOUNDHOLE
The scalloped X-bracing inside the PM-1 is said to enhance note definition and sustain – and we can attest that we found both

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Dreadnought acoustic
TOP: Mahogany
BACK & SIDES: Solid mahogany
NECK: Mahogany
SCALE: 643 mm (25.3")
FRETS: 20 vintage style
TUNERS: Nickel open back
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Open-pore mahogany
CONTACT: Fender GBI 01342 331700
www.fender.com

