



Classic and Vintage Series - What's the difference?

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Introduction

Following the success of our feature on the differences between a Mexican Standard Strat® and an American Series Strat®, we follow up with a look into the differences between two guitars from our two 'Vintage' series.

Historic Models

The Classic Series, manufactured in Mexico, includes such greats as the 50's, 60's and 70's Stratocaster® guitars, the '69 and '72 Thinline Tele® and the '72 Tele® Custom. The American Vintage Series, meanwhile features memorable classics such as the Jaguar®, Jazzmaster®, '52 Tele®, '57 Strat® and '62 Strat®. Both series offer true remakes of some of the most influential and timeless Fender® guitars in the history of rock'n' roll.

We have decided to use two "fifties" models - The 50's Classic Series Stratocaster® and the

American Vintage Series '57 Stratocaster®.

Necks and Bodies

Both of the guitars' bodies are made from alder and both have vintage routing within. True to the originals, both guitars have a "V" shape 1-piece maple neck with vintage frets and a standard vintage truss rod within.

Well, so far there's no change! But take a closer look at the necks, however, and you will see that the '57 Stratocaster® has rolled edges and hand shaping. Basically, this means that the sides of the fingerboard/neck have been "smoothed off" by hand to allow greater playing comfort. (As in the American and the American Deluxe Series). The 50's Strat® features a plainer neck finish (which is closer to how some of the originals would have been).

The fretwork on the 50's Classic Series Strat® is Standard, whereas the American vintage '57 Strat® has special fret treatment. Whilst both models boast original features like a vintage butterfly string tree and "Spaghetti" Fender logo, the vintage machine heads are from different manufacturers. The 50's Classic Strat® has Ping machine heads while the '57 Strat®'s machine heads are manufactured by Gotoh.

Pickups and Switching

The pickups on the 50's Classic Strat® are equipped with Standard Alnico 5 magnets and a plastic bobbin wound with polysol wire. The pickups from the '57 Strat® on the other hand, have Special Alnico 5 magnets with bevelled edges and a fibre bobbin wound with original FormVarT. (Formvar is a film insulation composed of modified polyvinyl acetal resins).

The switching on the 50's (Mexican) Strat® is 5-way, whereas the U.S-made '57 Strat® has a 3-way switch, but with optional 5-way switch included. The details on the '57 Strat® reach deep with genuine vintage cloth-covered wiring, whereas the 50's Strat® has standard wiring.

Other Features

The bridge on a 50's Strat® is an imported Deluxe Vintage bridge by Ping as opposed to an American-made vintage bridge, manufactured by Fender®. Both guitars feature 1-ply white pickguards and aged white plastic knobs. The 50's Strat® has a polyester finish against the pricier nitro-cellulose lacquer of the U.S '57 Strat®.

Finishing Touches

The 50's Strat® is finished, assembled, tuned and tested in the state-of-the-art plant in Ensenada, Mexico. The '57 Strat's processes are all carried out 100 miles north at the Fender® factory in Corona, California.

Accessories

And lastly, the American Vintage '57 Strat® comes with a vintage leather Strap, Vintage cable, polish cloth, vintage bridge cover and switch kit with instructions. The 50's Classic Strat® comes only with a gig bag.

Now you've read about it, why not try one? Pop into your local Fender® Authorised dealer and test 'em out yourself!