



# To the New Owner

by Emmett Chapman



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*This new eight-stringed “bass guitar” was co-designed by Ned Steinberger and myself to provide a dual role instrument for those musicians who desire to play all methods on one fretboard - picking, plucking, strumming, and the two-handed tapping Stick method.*

**PLAYING ACTION** — As with all Stick models, this instrument is fully adjustable without removal of any components or detuning of strings. String-to-fret action can be set higher at the bridge and nut to provide a heavier touch, allowing bass and guitar players to “dig in” more. Or the action can be set very low for tapping, as on The Stick. The precision fretwork is there (a straight board with an even plane of crowned and leveled fret tips) and will accommodate the same Stick low action and light touch.

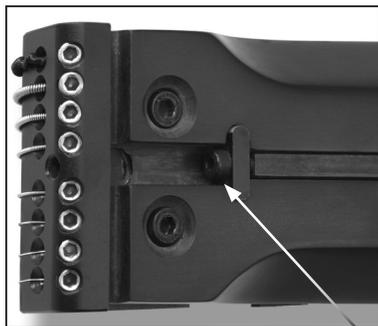
Best kept secret: With the action set low for two-handed tapping as it comes from my setup table, you get a combined advantage. Not only does the low setup optimize tapping to its maximum ease, it also allows all conventional bass guitar and guitar techniques, as long as your right hand lightens up a bit in its picking/plucking role. In the process, all volumes become equal, regardless of techniques used, and you gain total control of dynamics and expression. This allows seamless transition from tapping to traditional playing methods on this dual role instrument.

Some players will want to compromise on low action of the lower bass strings and set the individual bridge heights a bit higher, thereby duplicating the feel of their bass or guitar. Nevertheless, I set them up on the premise that lower action and lighter touch is better, especially for combined techniques with uniform gain. Unless ordered otherwise, these guitar basses leave my workshop with a “Stick” setup as well as the basic neck and fret work that enables this setup.

SIDE-SADDLE BRIDGE SCREWS



SLIDING SADDLE BLOCKS



TRUSS ADJUSTMENT SCREW

## ADJUSTABLE COMPONENTS

— Ned’s novel side-saddle set screws at both bridge and nut allow easy adjustment of the action. This can be done by infinite gradation with an accompanying hex wrench. Normal right hand picking and plucking techniques should be done with a somewhat lighter touch unless the strings are set a half or whole turn higher at the bridge, in which case the instrument will feel more like a guitar or bass guitar.

— Sliding saddle blocks at the bridge provide quick adjustment of individual string intonation. A hex wrench tightens the blocks down without detuning strings.

— A Stick type truss rod (Pat. No. 4,953,435) is exposed flush with the rear neck surface for quick, convenient adjustment of counter-tension to the pull of the strings.

**ADJUSTABLE COMPONENTS** (continued)

— A set of hex wrenches is provided for adjustments of bridge, nut and truss rod, also for tightening the control knobs and tuners.

— A spring loaded damper (Pat. No. 6,452,077 B1) at the first fret space can be disengaged for open string play. To lower the damper away from the strings, just grasp the ends with thumb and finger from behind the neck, pulling it down and sliding it toward the nut and into locked position.

**FEATURES**

— Four active EMG “Front Tele” stacked double-coil pickups produce pure single coil timbres at all frequencies without hum and buzz. They are height adjustable and because of their low magnetism, can be set close to the strings for maximum volume and sweet sound (especially in the very high melody register).

— Three switches allow all possible pickup combinations. Across the strings you can select stereo (2 groups of 4 strings), or mono (all 8 strings) through the bass output of the stereo or mono cable (tip of the plug). Along each set of 4 strings you can select 3 positions for the pickup pairs underlying each string group - bridge pickup, neck pickup or both. Each pair has bass and treble boosts and cuts, as well as volume controls.

— Caliper like tuners on the bridge at the tail end.

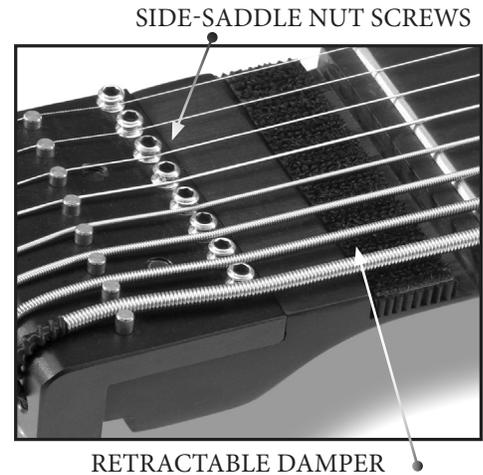
— A flat, tapered fingerboard with strings more widely spaced toward the bridge.

— Small fret Rails® vertically constrained in their slide-in grooves.

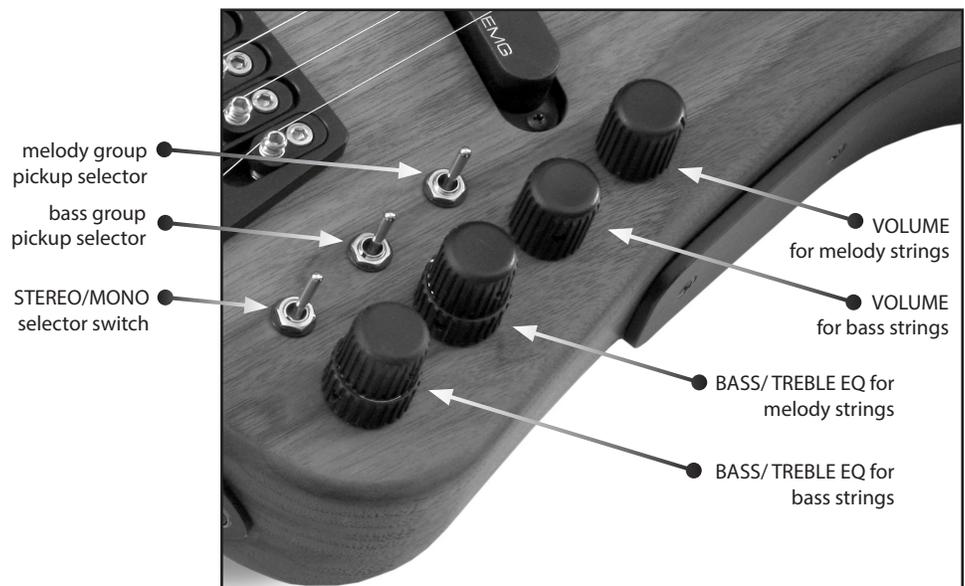
— White pearl inlaid dots in the normal guitar pattern.

— A knee rest for seated play.

— Hard and soft cases of durable construction.



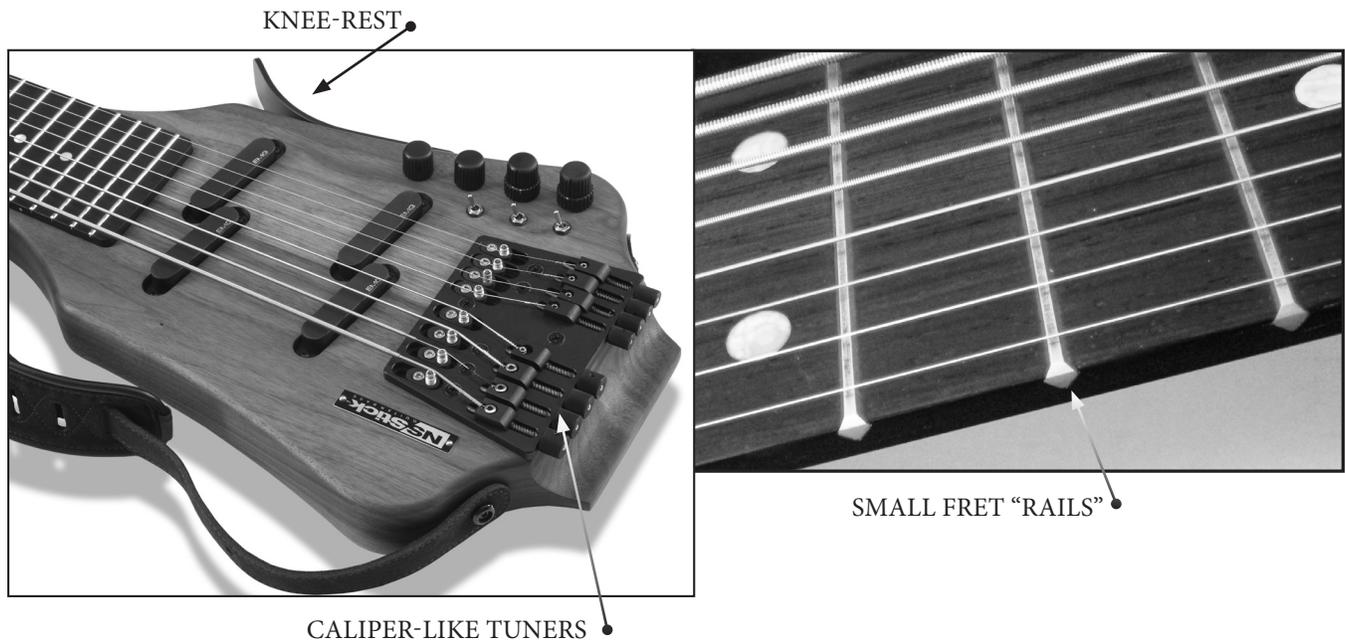
**ELECTRONICS**



**DESIGN** — This instrument embodies a novel combination of innovations by Ned Steinberger and myself. The small, distinctively shaped body is bottom heavy for balance, and together with the headless neck allows this guitar bass to be comfortably held in a more vertical position for two-handed tapping. A conventional bass guitar strap enables easy sliding of the instrument to a more horizontal picking and plucking position, or to an approximate 45 degree angle for a combination of techniques.

The body is of ash, maple, walnut or mahogany, either in natural hand rubbed Danish oil finish or in lacquered colors at an extra charge. The bolt-on headless neck is of laminate construction in dark wenge or medium tan bamboo. Scale length (bridge to nut) is 34 inches, same as most bass guitars.

The hardware is in matching flat black, with black anodized bridge, nut, truss rod, knee rest, tuners and strap attachment bar. Pickups, knobs and strap are also black.



**TUNINGS & CONCEPT** — The eight strings can be tuned uniformly in fourths from very low bass B at the normal bass guitar position. The following list shows position, pitch and gauge of the eight strings, the highest melody string being the “1st”:

Melody: 1st-Bb-.011”, 2nd-F-.014, 3rd-C-.020”, 4th-G-.030”;

Bass: 5th-D-.044”, 6th-A-.065”, 7th-E-.087”, 8th-B-.128”.

Some NS/Sticks are ordered with a guitar relationship at the high end, the guitar’s major third interval falling between 2nd and 3rd strings (same string gauges as above):

Melody: 1st-A, 2nd-E, 3rd-C and 4th-G      Bass: 5th-D, 6th-A, 7th-E and 8th-B

Or, the major 3rd can fall between 3rd and 4th strings for a high E to low E relationship down an octave from guitar but with added 4ths above and below (same string gauges):

Melody: 1st-A, 2nd-E, 3rd-B and 4th-G      Bass: 5th-D, 6th-A, 7th-E and 8th-B

Since all components are adjustable on this instrument, any tuning can be set up with no extra custom work or charges. This includes Stick type 4ths-with-5ths tunings.

**TUNINGS & CONCEPT (continued)** — The string spacing at the bridge adds an interesting concept to the grouping of strings. Although there are only 8 strings, the lowest pitched 5 are uniformly spaced wider as on bass guitar, including the 2 middle strings (4th and 5th strings) which cross from bass to melody pickups. In mono mode, this arrangement provides consistent right hand spacing and sound, as on any 5-string bass guitar. The 4 highest pitched strings have a guitar spacing at the bridge.

With the guitar tuning there is another concept at work. The highest 6 strings are tuned in the guitar relationship, but down a perfect fifth in pitch (a highest melody A instead of guitar's highest E). Also, the lowest 6 strings are tuned exactly as on a 6-string bass guitar, from the very low B up to C.

**STRING MAINTENANCE** — When replacing strings, please observe these steps:

- Detune the string until the saddle screw block at the bridge has moved all the way inward (toward the pickups).
- Loosen the set screw behind the nut that locks the string into place, using the accessory hex wrench, and remove the string.
- Insert the ball end of a new string into the block's "keyhole" cavity at the bridge. Then thread the string's tail end back around through the end of the nut. Firmly pull the string tail from the rear while tightening the nut's locking set screw.
- Snip off the string's tail about a 1/4 inch beyond where it exits behind the nut.
- Align the string (now at medium loose tension) on proper sides of the "side saddle" screws at bridge and nut. Make sure that the string is properly seated in the saddles.
- Tune the string to pitch. The spring on the tuning mechanism should not be fully compressed when you're done, and the saddle block should lie somewhere in the middle of its range of travel.

I recommend that you clean the strings each time you're done playing. Run the nails of your thumb and finger up and down the entire length of each string to remove accumulated gunk. This prevents rust and corrosion, keeping the tone bright, rich and in tune for about four to five months.

A basic light touch will do wonders for the strings, for your fingers and your music, enhancing speed and expression, also providing a large reserve in volume dynamics. The strings should be tapped lightly and held down gently, not pressed against the wood. Light touch is best achieved when the string action is set very low to the fretboard. You can still "whap" selected notes for dynamic emphasis.

**BATTERIES** — The active electronics are clean and dynamic, powered by two 9-volt batteries. Battery life is approximately one year of normal use. Remember to unplug the instrument when not in use, as the jack is a switching jack that activates the batteries. To replace the batteries just remove the backplate.

**GUARANTEE** — The NS/Stick is guaranteed against defects in manufacture and materials for one year from the date of purchase by customer (not transferable). The repair center is Stick Enterprises at the address above. Shipping charges to and from the repair center are borne by the customer. Please return the lower portion of the enclosed guarantee card within ten days from your date of purchase.

I hope this new instrument will be interesting and rewarding to you. Our rewards will be in the music you play and record using your new "NS/Stick" bass guitar.

Keep in Touch, Emmett.

*"NS/Stick" is a trademark of Ned Steinberger and Stick Enterprises, Inc.. "Rails" and "Stick" are federally registered trademarks of Stick Enterprises, Inc.*

BATTERY ACCESS



**Stick Enterprises, Inc.**

6011 Woodlake Ave., Woodland Hills, CA, 91367, USA • [www.stick.com](http://www.stick.com) • 818-884-2001 • [emmett@stick.com](mailto:emmett@stick.com)