

Roberto-Venn School of Luthiery

OFFICIAL WELCOME PACKET

Dear Student:

Congratulations on your acceptance to our school and your decision to study the art of guitar building and repair with us. We teach a comprehensive course at R-V. At a minimum you will be completing one acoustic and one electric guitar. The fundamentals you learn here will provide you with a good background for pursuing job opportunities in the field of lutherie.

FOLLOWING YOUR DREAM

While we cannot guarantee job placement you should know that our primary objective is to provide you with the knowledge and skills necessary for entering the profession of lutherie. Our experience shows us that those students who are self motivated and work hard have a more than excellent chance of finding the kind of job that is fulfilling and offers potential for the future. We take pride in the many graduates who work for large and small guitar making companies, music stores, touring production companies, and many other guitar and stringed instrument related occupations. We're also proud of the many R-V grads who have become entrepreneurs, establishing their own custom guitar making or repair companies. We look forward to assisting you, to see where your journey will take you . . .

YOUR JOURNEY HERE

We would like to take this opportunity to fill you in on some of the things you should know before traveling to Phoenix. **Please read this letter carefully** and call us if you have any questions.

Your class session begins on **Monday, January 12th 2026 at 8 a.m.** (Please note that if you decide to attend our optional 'Tool Seminar' your first day will be Wednesday, January 7th 9 a.m.). Class hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday - Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Fridays.

FINDING A PLACE TO LIVE We have housing information that is available on our website. Please read this to find out about student housing, and a student list of those who have expressed an interest in sharing an apartment or house.

FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY If you have applied for Federal Student Aid you should have received or will receive shortly an "Estimated Award Letter." This letter indicates your eligibility for a Pell Grant and/or Student loans. If you have any questions about your Financial Aid or have not applied but would like to, please ask for me, **Bart Applewhite**, when you call.

QUESTIONS: When you call, you may get any one of us here at R-V. The "us" is the staff and faculty, who you will shortly know on a first name basis. If you haven't already done so, you can learn more about our faculty and school by visiting our website: **www.roberto-venn.com**.

NOTE ABOUT INSURANCE: Roberto-Venn School of Luthiery does not carry accident or health insurance for students. If a student should sustain an injury as a result of careless tool use it is the student's responsibility to have the proper insurance or to pay for any subsequent costs.

FIRST DAY OF CLASS On the first class day (**Monday, January 12th 2026**), bring a notebook and pen with you. Also, feel free to bring your toolbox or any tools you may have as you will be receiving your bench assignment. On the first day of class you also need to bring your first tuition payment and instrument deposit money. The amount due for the first half of tuition is \$6,375 unless you are eligible for financial aid. If you are eligible to receive financial aid you can call Bart to get the correct amount to bring. The amount due for 1st day instrument deposits is \$500.00 per instrument (\$1000.00 total)

******The Total amount that you will need to bring for the first day is \$7,375.00***

STUDENT TOOLS All of the power tools, jigs, molds, and equipment you will need to build your project instruments are provided here at the school. However, there is a list of hand tools, measurement devices, and supplies that we require you to have. These tools will be invaluable to you as you prepare for a career in lutherie. You may purchase these tools and items from us or buy them on your own. A separate page entitled “**Tooling Up**” is enclosed (with an accompanying **Tool List** form) that gives you more details about the tools you will need. After you finish reading this page, please read the page entitled “**Tooling Up**” to figure out which tools you will need and which tools you would like to order from us.

TOOL USE & MAINTENANCE SEMINAR: This 3-day seminar is recommended but optional to all incoming students. You will build a ‘Tele’ guitar body and learn about the various tools you’ll use during the Guitar Making & Repair Course. A course description and registration form is enclosed, or you can register on our website.

DESIGNING YOUR INSTRUMENTS. If you have not yet decided what type of instruments you will build while you are here, now is a good time to start thinking about your options. Though you do not have to make any final decisions until the first week of class, a little planning can be helpful. The choices available for your ‘project’ acoustic and electric guitars will be discussed during the first week of class. Your first electric guitar or bass (project instrument) will be a solid body flat top construction with a bolt on neck. You may design the body style and head stock design for your electric (**as approved by our instructors**). Also note that you may design your head stock design for your acoustic guitar as well as your bridge, pickguard and inlay patterns (you will have the option to design your fretboard inlays for both acoustic and electric guitars). The body styles for your project acoustic steel string guitar will be dreadnought or OM body styles.

We will spend a good deal of time the first few days of class to discuss and explain your building options, as well as the design aspects of your instruments. You are encouraged to begin making rough sketches and drawings of ideas that you may be able to use. Any extra time you spend now on the design process will be very helpful. Please note that we have existing molds and templates for most of the popular body and head stock styles. You may use these designs if you wish. Keep in mind that design ideas are optional. We encourage you to express your own creativity. Remember, however, that the main emphasis of the course is on the basic fundamentals, and learning traditional and industry standards.

You will be selecting wood and accessories during the first eight weeks of class. You will be required to make an instrument materials deposit of \$1,000 (\$500 per project instrument) on the first day of class and \$1,000 at the half way point of the class (these deposits are included in the total for the 1st day and second half payments). Total materials cost may range from \$1,800 - \$2,300 depending on what materials you select for your two project instruments. Historically the average for the two required student project guitars has been right around \$2,000. Final payment on your instruments will be due during the fourth month of the course (Please note that if you have qualified for financial aid, your instruments might be covered from your grant or loan(s)). **Sales tax of 8.6% will be added to all material purchases.**

RV ELECTIVES. In addition to the five month Guitar Making & Repair Course that you are enrolled in, you will have an opportunity to sign up for one or more of the following evening or weekend workshops/classes depending on availability: **Tool Seminar, Tube Amp Construction & Effect Pedal Classes, Pickup Winding Workshop, Road Tech Class, Lap Steel Construction Class and French Polishing Workshop.** Information and a registration form will be sent separately and are available on our website.

We hope that you are as excited about coming here as we are in having you attend. Your class will include students from all over the U.S. and other countries. Much hard work ahead - and good times too.

Sincerely,

Bart Applewhite , Assistant Director
William Eaton, Director

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