



WHAT IS GIBSON?



Gibson Brands, Inc. (formerly Gibson Guitar Corp.) is an American manufacturer of guitars, other musical instruments, and consumer and professional electronics now based in Nashville, Tennessee. The company was formerly known as Gibson Guitar Corp. and renamed Gibson Brands, Inc. on June 11, 2013. Gibson sells guitars under a variety of brand names and builds one of the world's most iconic guitars, the Gibson Les Paul. Many Gibson instruments are highly collectible. Gibson was at the forefront of innovation in acoustic guitars, especially in the big band era of the 1930s; the Gibson Super 400 was widely imitated. In 1952, Gibson introduced its first solid-body electric guitar, the Les Paul which became its most popular guitar to date—designed by Ted McCarty and Les Paul.






In addition to guitars, Gibson offers consumer electronics through its subsidiaries Gibson Innovations (Philips brand), TEAC Corporation (Teac and Esoteric brands), Onkyo Corporation (Onkyo and Pioneer brands), Cerwin Vega and Stanton, as well as professional audio equipment from KRK Systems also pianos from their wholly owned subsidiary Baldwin Piano and music software from Cakewalk.




THE HISTORY OF GIBSON

Orville Gibson founded the company in 1902 as "The Gibson Mandolin-Guitar Mfg. Co., Ltd." in Kalamazoo, Michigan to make mandolin-family instruments. Gibson invented archtop guitars by constructing the same type of carved, arched tops used on violins. By the 1930s, the company was also making flattop acoustic guitars, as well as one of the first commercially available hollow-body electric guitars, used and popularized by Charlie Christian. In 1944, Gibson was bought by Chicago Musical Instruments (CMI) which was acquired in 1969 by Panama-based conglomerate, Ecuadorian Company Limited (E.C.L.) that changed its name in the same year to Norlin Corporation. Gibson was owned by the Norlin corporation from 1969 to 1986. In 1986, the company was acquired by its present owners. Gibson is a privately held corporation owned by its chief executive officer Henry Juszkiewicz and its president David H. Berryman.




In 1944 Gibson was purchased by Chicago Musical Instruments. The ES-175 was introduced in 1949. Gibson hired Ted McCarty in 1948, who became President in 1950. He led an expansion of the guitar line with new guitars such as the "Les Paul" guitar introduced in 1952 and designed by Les Paul, a popular musician in the 1950s and also a pioneer in music technology. The Les Paul was offered in Custom, Standard, Special, and Junior models. In the mid-50s, the Thinline series was produced, which included a line of thinner guitars like the Byrdland. The first Byrdlands were slim, custom built, L-5 models for guitarists Billy Byrd and Hank Garland. Later, a shorter neck was added.



GUITAR TECH

Although it is well known for its guitars, Gibson's largest business is in fact electronics. Gibson offers consumer audio equipment devices through its subsidiaries Gibson Innovations (Philips brand), Onkyo Corporation (Onkyo and Pioneer brands), TEAC Corporation (Teac and Esoteric brands), Cerwin Vega and Stanton, as well as professional audio equipment from KRK Systems and TEAC Corporation/TASCAM and music software from Cakewalk.



Gibson makes authorized copies of its most successful guitar designs. They are less expensive than those bearing the Gibson name. A former competitor, Epiphone was purchased by Gibson and now makes competitively priced Gibson models, such as the Les Paul and SG, sold under the Epiphone brand, while continuing to make Epiphone-specific models like the Sheraton and Casino. In Japan, Orville by Gibson once made Gibson designs sold in that country. Gibson has sought legal action against those that make and sell guitars Gibson believes are too similar to their own. The Gibson "self-tuning guitar", also known as a "robot model", an option on some newer Les Paul, SG, Flying V and Explorer instruments, will tune itself in little more than two seconds using robotics technology developed by Tronical GmbH. Under the tradename Min-ETune, this device became standard on several models in 2014.