



## VAD-06 Features & Specs:

- Select solid spruce top with scalloped X-bracing
- Hand-inlaid 3-ring soundhole rosette
- 6-ply top binding
- African mahogany back and sides
- African mahogany neck with rosewood heel cap
- Select East Indian rosewood fingerboard and bridge
- Traditional dot inlay in prewar-style staggered sizes
- Compensated saddle
- Distinctive Voyage-air pickguard in black
- Proprietary Voyage-air captured nut
- Patented Voyage-air folding neck-hinge system
- 25.5" scale length
- Traditional 1-11/16" nut width
- Chrome-plated die-cast Schaller-style tuners with removable metal buttons
- Thinly applied, protective high-gloss natural finish
- String with D'Addario 12-54 Phosphor Bronze strings
- Deluxe Voyager carrying case included

**Songwriter Series VAD-06 Dreadnought**  
581695 ..... **\$749<sup>00</sup>**

**Songwriter-Series VAOM-06 Orchestra**  
581696 ..... **\$749<sup>00</sup>**

**Premier Series VAD-1 Dreadnought**  
151691 ..... **\$1349<sup>00</sup>**

**Premier Series VAD-2**  
581692 ..... **\$1599<sup>00</sup>**

**Premier Series VAOM-1C Orchestra**  
581693 ..... **\$1439<sup>00</sup>**

**Premier Series VAOM-2C Orchestra**  
581694 ..... **\$1695<sup>00</sup>**



# Hands-On Review

## Songwriter Series VAD-06 Dreadnought

### A different breed of travel guitar

By Mike Fitch, Musician's Friend Staff Writer

Creating an acoustic guitar that's both truly satisfying to play and compact enough to be an easy traveling companion has until now proved to be a daunting challenge for guitar makers. Voyage-air Guitar has come up with an innovative approach to the problem, designing guitars so pleasurable to play that it's easy to forget you're playing a guitar that folds up for travel. It's perhaps more accurate to say that Voyage-air makes high-end guitars with the added advantage of innovative folding necks that allow them to be carried in a compact backpack that fits in an overhead compartment or under your seat.

Up until now air travel with an acoustic guitar has meant either buying the instrument its own seat, checking it as baggage in a bulky ATA travel case, or settling for one of the short-scale guitars marketed specifically as travel instruments. These mini-instruments are great for keeping your chops in shape, but they don't compare in projection or volume to a full-sized dreadnought or orchestral guitar; hence they are typically only used as practice instruments. They are woefully inadequate for jamming or performance use with musicians using full-sized instruments.

Enter world-class luthier and recognized guitar icon (the guys at Martin call him that) Harvey Leach, who was approached by a client requesting a full-sized, professional-grade acoustic guitar that would break down into a compact package for travel. After experimenting with detachable necks, Leach finally hit on an ingenious solution—a hinged joint that allows the neck to fold up without having to remove the strings. It's a logical extension of the bolt-on neck, with the specialized hinge and knurled bolt providing a rock-solid connection to the guitar's rosewood heel plate. Voyage-air Guitar now offers six instruments with this patented folding technology in a range of body styles and woods, including dreadnought, orchestral, and cutaway models. For this review I was sent the VAD-06, a spruce and mahogany dreadnought—one of the new and affordable Songwriter Series guitars that took home the "Best In Show" award at the 2009 Winter NAMM music industry tradeshow.

### Know when to fold 'em

I unzipped the sturdy backpack-style case, taking note of the straps that keep the guitar neck in place when folded and the thick padding that protects the guitar's durable, high-gloss finish. I lifted the guitar out, admiring the broad expanse of solid Sitka spruce top and the tight grain of the mahogany back and sides. Unfolding the guitar for playing was intuitive and simple. It takes only seconds to move the

neck into playing position and secure it with the threaded bolt that doubles as a strap button. Folding it back up is just as intuitive. Voyage-air has an excellent video demonstrating the process on its website.

I tuned the guitar up and strummed some chords. Full, deep sound filled the room, ranging from rich, piano-like lows and mids to sparkling high notes. The African mahogany neck's slim profile was easy to get my hand around, and the ebony fingerboard with large frets made for pleasurable fingerpicking, with the hinged joint between the 13th and 14th frets all but imperceptible to the touch. Again, playing my VAD-06 was a lot like playing other high-end acoustics—such as my favorite Martin mahogany dread.

Another surprise came when I unfolded it the next day to find it still remarkably in tune, requiring just a few minor tweaks! I found it was fun to see the astonished looks on people's faces when I unfolded it and started playing in tune.

### Supporting cast

Along with their very high-quality folding hinge mechanism that comes with a lifetime guarantee, a number of other features help make these guitars world-class performers. A "captured nut" design has enclosed channels in place of the usual slots to keep the strings in place when the guitar is folded down. A fret in the zero position establishes the sound range of the open strings, a feature of many gypsy and European guitar designs resulting in near-perfect intonation. The compensated saddle lets you adjust the string action, if you like, though the default string height felt quite comfortable to me. Forward-shifted, scalloped X-bracing is used in the body to enhance resonance and sustain.

A simple dark back strip; three-ring, white rosette inlay work; flared black pickguard; and six-ply white top binding accent the attractive look of the woods without overstatement. The streamlined, compact headstock design is reminiscent of an electric guitar and provides a comfortable balance. Truss rod access is easy, and die-cast chrome tuners provide sure, accurate tuning.

### A portable tone-fest

The VAD-06 definitely won me over, but don't just take my word for it. Top singer-songwriters including Brad Paisley, fingerpicker extraordinaire Thom Bresh, Chris Wallen, Lisa Carver, and others are big fans of Voyage-air guitars. Easier air travel is just one of the advantages offered by these instruments. Many have commented on the ease and convenience of the backpack case that lets you keep your hands free and eliminates the hand-strain of lugging around a conventional heavy guitar case. The Voyage-air's advantages aren't limited to air travel. Players are finding them ideal for taking on foot, motorcycle, bicycle, and even on horseback! Now you can take a guitar with you on all your travels with no compromise in playability or tone.

*Musician's Friend carries the entire selection of Voyage-air guitars! Order yours today with the confidence of our dual 45-day low price and satisfaction guarantees.*