

Certified  
Craftsman  
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25 Years

## Humidity and the Guitar

People are unaware of the affect of humidity or lack of humidity on the guitar. Regularly, I e-mail this information to my customers about keeping the acoustic guitar in good shape and maintaining the set-up/action by keeping the instrument at the required 50% humidity.

### **This is what I usually send people for maintenance of the acoustic guitars moisture.**

The reason for maintaining a 50% humidity is because when a guitar dries out, the sound board dips down and reduces the action height. If the guitar takes on water, the soundboard will belly and raise the action. So, setting up a guitar without it being humidified is like hitting a moving target. Guitars are made in a surrounding of 50% humidity and this is why it is important to maintain this. The guitar breaths from the inside where the wood is not sealed.

I had a chap bring in an £8000 Martin in January 2018, I set-up the guitar straight from the shop in Denmark Street, London. 3 months later he said "I can't play it, the strings are on the deck." I invited him back and shimmed the saddle to the correct height again and sent him away to re-hydrate the guitar.

In June he phones and complains that the guitar now has a 'high action'. Again I invite him back and take out the shims and give him back the guitar with the action set to where I put it originally in January. I said that if he had not said anything, the guitar would have developed splits in the top. He replied, "funny thing is I have 6 guitars at home all with splits in – is that how they got like it?" Go Figure.

With reference to the humidity, you will need some kind of way of knowing the moisture content of the case the guitar is kept in. The instrument is called a Hygrometer. These are quite cheap from £3 to £15 to buy and I have one in each of my cases. If you look up testing the hygrometer, there are ways shown on UTube, generally they are reasonably accurate.

It came to light that the company Boveda, Inc in the USA won a patent for their achievement in designing a liquid pouch that was able to give out moisture when needed and also extract it, if too wet. Previous, the only method was to fill a sponge and wring it out and hope that the water was enough to prevent the inside from becoming too dry. This system did nothing if you lived in a very wet humid climate. In fact it made things a whole lot worse, inducing water into the guitar. The end result was a severe bellying of the soundboard and a very high action. This deformity is only resolved by a very expensive neck re-set.



**Above: This is the old way of soaking a sponge and wringing it out and then fitting it to the guitar.**

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The company **Boveda, Inc** now sell their product for guitars through D'Addario under the name of **HUMIDIPAK**.

### HUMIDIPAK MAINTAIN - Automatic Humidity Control System - see Below.



A balanced system of controlling humidity is supplied by D'Addario Planet Waves. - Best if you are keeping it in a guitar case. The D'Addario planet waves system can be see here - information below as at 17th June 2023 :

<https://www.daddario.com/products/accessories/humidification/automatic-humidipak/humidipak-maintain/>

**Please be careful when buying because there is a Restoration Pack that forces the guitar up to 72% humidity when you actually want the Maintenance Pack at about 50%**

### D'Addario Retail Prices 17th June 2023:

PW-HPK-01	
<b>AUTOMATIC HUMIDITY CONTROL SYSTEM</b>	<b>£35.90</b>
PW-HPRP-03	
<b>REPLACEMENT 3-PACK</b>	<b>£23.90</b>

D'Addario Humidipak is the only maintenance-free, two-way humidity control system for guitar. It automatically maintains the optimal 45%-50% relative humidity level within your instrument case, eliminating the guesswork and potential mess related to refilling a humidifier.

### Room Humidity

If you have many acoustic guitars on a wall, the best way is going to require a sealed room with a dedicated humidifier and a hygrometer to check the output and surrounding humidity.