

# Expression System<sup>®</sup> 2: Frequently Asked Questions



**Below are some common questions you might hear from customers, along with some guiding thoughts to help you respond.**

## **“Which version of the ES is better — magnetic or ES2?”**

**Both are great pickup options, so it comes down to personal preference.** At Taylor, we think of the two as simply being different. When we’ve compared them in a live setting at Taylor Road Shows, more people tend to favor the ES2. It has a higher output level and produces slightly more focus and front-edge cut, which pushes

the sound of the guitar forward in a mix. Aside from personal preferences, there are practical benefits of the ES2: The output level will be more in line with other types of pickups, and it tends to be slightly more plug-and-play friendly for players and sound technicians for real-world applications. (Note: We encourage store sales staff to do your own A/B comparison.)

## **“Is the ES2’s preamp different than that of the magnetic ES?”**

Yes, in fact Taylor spent as much time on the ES2’s preamp design as the pickup itself. The unique sound architecture gives the amplified tone a cleaner and more dynamic plugged-in sound.

## **“With the ES2, I’m hearing the sound of the pick and my fingers moving on the strings more.”**

**It’s the nature of the ES2’s ability to capture more acoustic detail, especially the front edge of the sound.** What someone is hearing is what’s actually happening when they play the guitar; the pickup is just capturing and amplifying it. If you unplug the guitar and listen to its natural response, that same pick and string noise will be there. Customers who notice this might be used to the sound of Taylor’s magnetic ES; those acoustic details may not come through as prominently. One analogy is that it’s like the difference between two different high-quality studio mikes. If you’ve been recording with a Shure SM57 all your life and then someone puts a Neumann U87 in front of the guitar, the sound characteristics are different. Often people just need a little time for their ears to adapt to something new. Chances are, after a week or two, they’ll acclimate to, and enjoy, the ES2 sound.

## **“Do you have any amp/PA recommendations?”**

**The ES2 design is broadly compatible with an array of different amp and PA options, so it comes down to personal preference, playing application, and, of course, budget.** A couple of thoughts from Taylor pickup developer David Hosler: “Remember that features don’t necessarily mean better, and that spending a bit more will get them into something better just like it does with guitars. Most amps under \$500 are all pretty much the same. I still believe that powered monitor or PA-style systems are worth the investment, and people should be encouraged to not shy away from them.”

## **“I prefer the magnetic ES. Can I get that on a guitar in the 500 Series and up?”**

Yes, any model in Taylor’s acoustic/electric 500 Series or higher can be ordered with the magnetic ES as a standard model option with no upcharge. And Taylor is not currently offering ES2 retrofits for existing Taylor models.