

7.7.7 Flatwound strings

The bass strings of the electric guitar are wound to reduce flexural rigidity and inharmonicity (Chapter 1.2). If the fingers glide over the grooves of the wrap spinning during play, characteristic scratching or sliding noises are generated. These noises may be perceived as typical, or as annoying, or both. To offer a choice, flatwound strings are available that are not wound with round wire, but with wire of the cross-sectional shape of a flat band, this allowing for an almost smooth string surface. The winding produced in this way is often two-ply: the inner wrapping is done with round wire, the outer with the band-shape (Fig. 7.84).

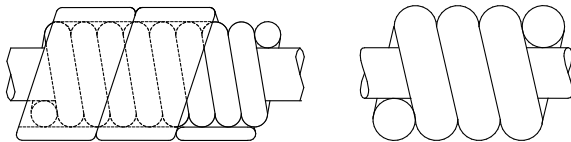


Fig. 7.84: Flatwound (left), roundwound (right).

The decay time measured with a flatwound string set is shown in Fig. 7.85. Except for the G-string (wound with merely one layer of round wire in this set), a stronger treble damping is evident. This increased damping is due to larger internal friction losses within the string build. In addition to the reduction of the gripping noise, the flat winding therefore also causes a loss of brilliance, as it would be found in a similar way in old roundwound strings.

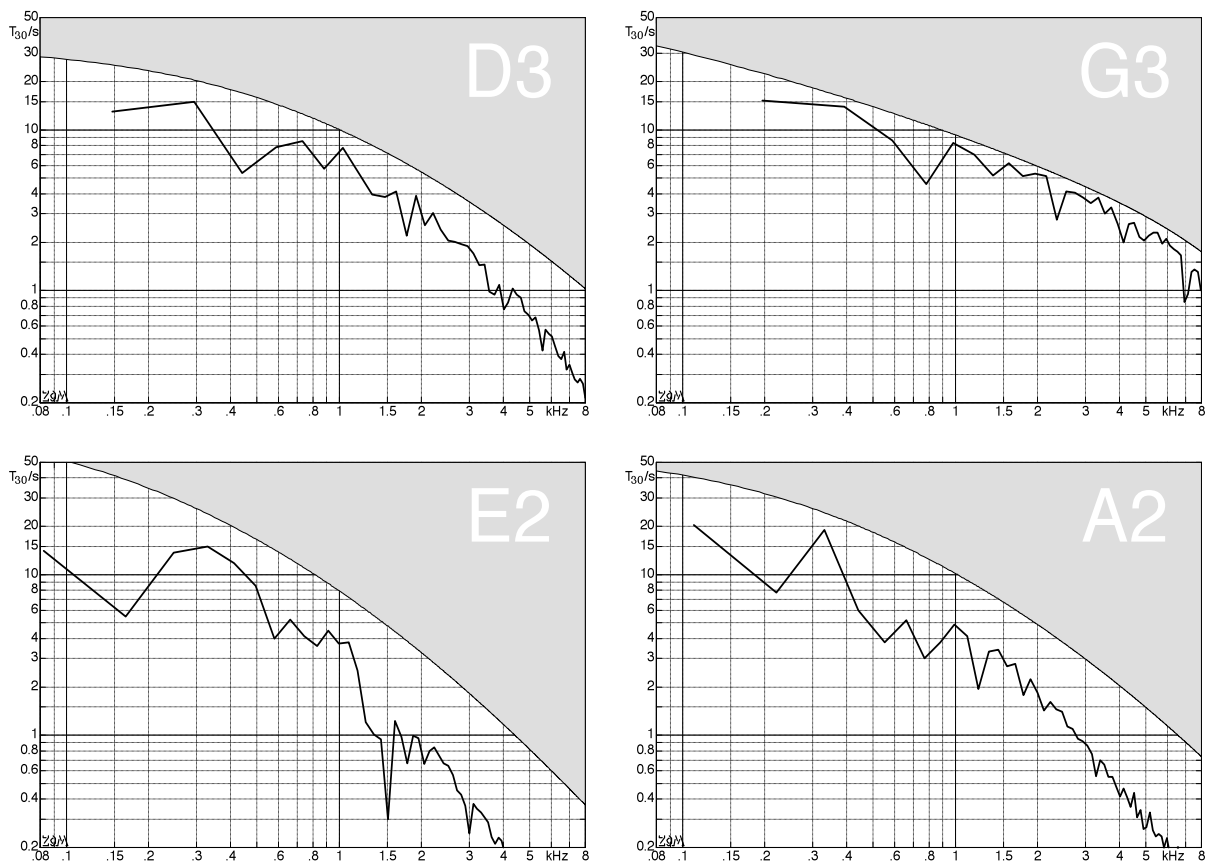


Fig. 7.85: USA Stratocaster, fresh flatwound set (22/30/40/50). G3 = round-wound.