

Gear Review: MusicNomad's Precision Tools

These handy tools are easy enough for the DIY tech but solid enough for a pro.



L-Beam

MusicNomad makes dozens of tools and accessories for musicians and those responsible for caring for our instruments. Judging by the items sent to me for review, the company's ethos seems to be making tools that are easy enough for the DIY tech but solid enough for a pro. I'm definitely in the first camp—a tinkerer who likes to see what I can do on my own before taking a guitar to a tech. Sometimes, this has worked out. Other times . . . well, let's just say I still feel bad about the way I destroyed my Ovation—a guitar with great sentimental value—because I didn't know what the heck I was doing.

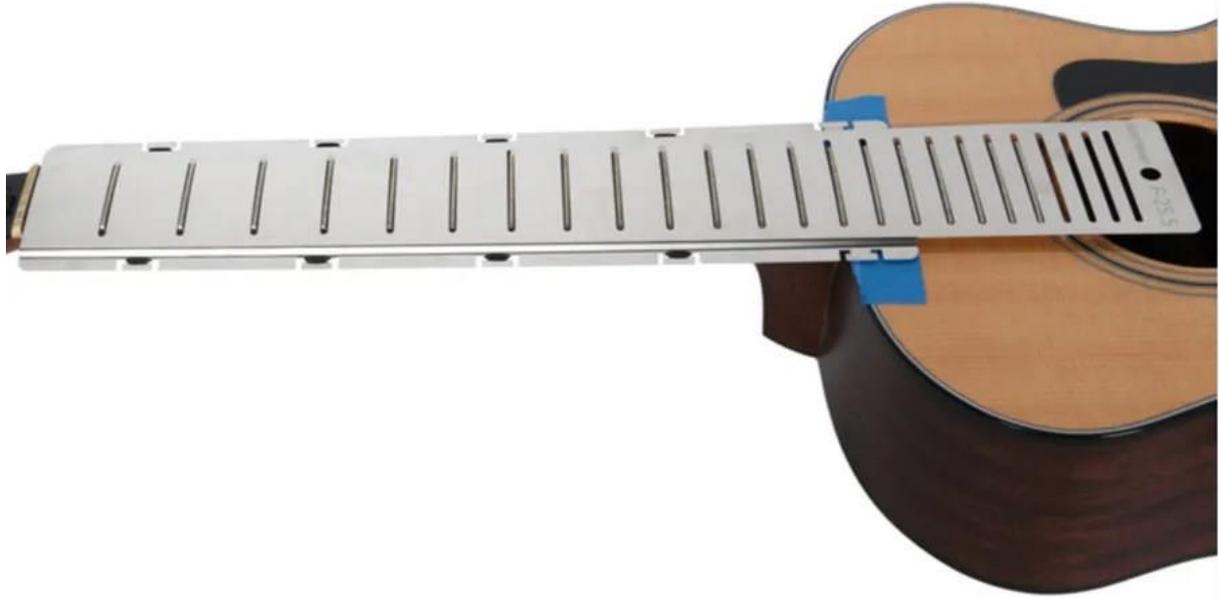


Tri-Beam

I received a small selection of MusicNomad's many available items, including the Tri-Beam 3 'n 1 Dual Notched Straightedge and Precision Straightedge (\$39.99), the Fret Leveler L-Beam (\$34.99–\$74.99, depending on length), and the Fret Shield (\$49.99 for guitar sizes, \$54.99 for bass). All of the items looked and felt well-made. Having borrowed tools from a pro tech friend that frankly confused me (his coaching didn't help), I appreciated how MusicNomad's tools are clearly marked and come with online guidance.

The Tri-Beam Dual Straightedge and the L-Beam both felt hefty and nicely weighted, which gave me a sense of confidence. These and other MusicNomad tools are designed for precision, and the company says its meticulous production process ensures accuracy and prevents flex. The tools I checked out were also ergonomically designed and easy to hold.

The L-Beam comes in three lengths: the seven-inch (18 cm) model I received, as well as 17.6-inch (45 cm) and 24-inch (61 cm) versions. That aforementioned heft is intended to let the weight of the tool do the work. As with the straightedge, MusicNomad paid attention to user-friendly details: the handle is both comfortable and slip-resistant, while the radius-beveled edge helps prevent damage to upper frets. The company states that its top and bottom flat edges are manufactured with an accuracy tolerance of ± 0.00125 inches per foot. The leveler even includes built-in storage and comes with 3M Stikit Gold Abrasive strips.



Fret Shield

The patent-pending Fret Shield is designed to protect the fretboard during fretwork and comes in six different scale sizes (including a 34-inch version for bass). The stainless-steel shield is .008 inches thick (.20 mm) and is precision-manufactured to eliminate any rough edges that could damage wood.

These tools gave me the confidence to tackle a couple of projects that had been sitting untouched since pre-Covid. And while I may not be working on frets every day, the gear I tested made me want to check out MusicNomad's everyday maintenance kits and setup tools. musicnomadcare.com