

KENTUCKY KM-170

PRICE: £199 **CONTACT:** GREMLIN MUSICAL INSTRUMENT CO, 01273 491333, WWW.GREMLINMUSIC.CO.UK

From traditional country and bluegrass to the likes of Rod Stewart and Led Zeppelin, the mandolin has intrigued many a six-string picker over the years. This affordable Chinese-made mando from bluegrass specialists Kentucky follows the rounded shape of the Gibson 'A-style' mandolin.

It has an oval soundhole (as opposed to a pair of f-holes) and the one-piece maple neck joins the body at the 10th fret. The KM-170 has a solid spruce top, with laminated maple used for the back and sides. Cream plastic binding adorns the body and fingerboard, and the whole thing is finished in dark burgundy red (black, honey and amber finishes are also available). All of the hardware is nickel-plated and the wooden bridge is height-adjustable. A set of traditional

open-geared Gotoh tuners occupies the headstock.

A pick is essential to producing any sort of volume with a mandolin, and strumming the strings of the KM-170 delivers a bright, natural tone that should cut through the mix in any acoustic setting. The 'A-style' shape is traditionally more associated with folk and Irish styles, but this instrument will handle bluegrass just as happily. So if your fingers are lean and nimble enough and you can see yourself playing along to 'Maggie May', then the KM-170 could be right up your street.

GBRATING
★★★★★

Give your fingers a different kind of work-out

