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ALL RIGHT NOW **A HUNGER IN YOUR HAUNT** **MORE THAN WORDS** **SWORD FROM THE STONE**

*Video riff

*Rockschool version

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MASTODON

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50 THE BEATLES *Greatest Guitar Songs*

**A HARD
DAY'S
NIGHT**

THE MYTHIC
CHORD
EXPLAINED!

**HELTER
SKELTER**

THE BEATLES
TURN IT
UP TO 11



**THE MAGIC OF
CARLOS
SANTANA**

"LET THE SPIRIT TAKE
OVER YOUR FINGERS"

A man with short dark hair and a beard is sitting on a black stool, playing a red and yellow electric guitar. He is wearing a dark jacket over a white t-shirt and blue jeans with a tear at the knee. The background is a bright, out-of-focus interior space with large windows. The text "MEET YOUR OTHER HALF" is overlaid in large white letters.

MEET YOUR OTHER HALF



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Welcome...



This month it dawned on me that some of my earliest memories are of Beatles music. Specifically, me in my bedroom aged maybe five, with a selection of cassettes (copied by my dad from his vinyl originals, I believe) that I played over and over on my older brother's tape recorder. Thinking about it now, I must've been listening to The Beatles before I even really knew other music existed, let alone that these were some of the most influential recordings of all time.

Today the cassettes are long gone but the world's favourite Liverpoolians have been on near repeat play on TG's Spotify playlists this month, as the release of the long-awaited three-part documentary series *Get Back* has got us fired up for the Fab Four once more. To coincide with the new series, we present The 50 Greatest Beatles Guitar Songs, as voted by you in a recent poll on GuitarWorld.com. Our feature includes in-depth analysis of every song in the poll's Top 50 and a brief look at some lost treasures unearthed on the newly-released super-deluxe edition of the band's final album *Let It Be*. We also profile the band's iconic guitars and amps, and you can learn their trademark songwriting techniques in our three-page lesson.

Finally, you'll notice there's no CD attached to the magazine this month. Sadly, due to increasing costs of production it's no longer viable to offer a CD. However, we still continue to produce the same great audio and video content you know and love – and it's all available online to download or stream. Turn the page for more info.

Enjoy the issue, and I'll see you again next month.

Chris

Chris Bird Editor

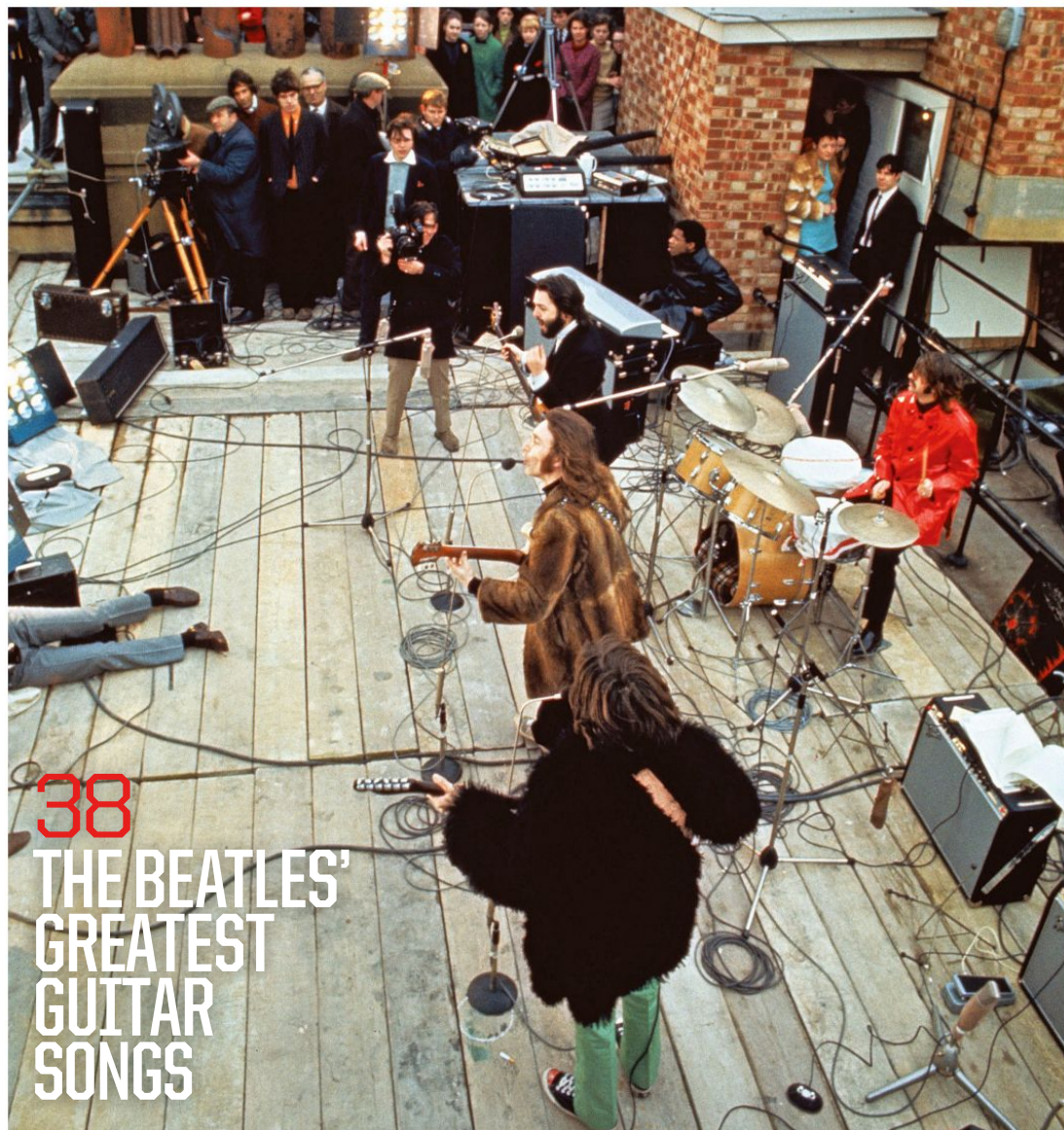
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Type this link into a web browser on any computer, smartphone or tablet and you'll be directed to TG's website at guitarworld.com. Here you'll find all the audio and video for the issue, available to download or stream.

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COME AS YOU ARE

From left:
Krist Novoselic,
Dave Grohl and
Kurt Cobain



Words Stan Bull Photos Chris Cuffaro

POWER TRIO

It starts simply enough. A clean, isolated four-powerchord riff demands full attention before the most iconic drum fill of all time turns the song on its head with one of the finest examples of alt-rock's quiet/loud dynamic. Few albums have ever begun with such a powerful statement of intent as the once-unknown Seattle band Nirvana accomplished with *Smells Like Teen Spirit*, though neither the band or their label DGC were quite prepared for the world-conquering success of the group's second album *Nevermind*.

While *Teen Spirit* is often considered the crown jewel of Nirvana's career – a song that allowed them to sell 300,000 copies a week of *Nevermind* in early 1992 – it's far from the only highlight on an album that, 30 years later, is rightly considered among the greatest LPs in all of rock history.

The success of follow-up singles *Come As You Are*, *Lithium* and *In Bloom* saw Nirvana become the poster boys for a new generation that were disenchanted by the hair metal movement of the 80s. A return to punk ethos, combined with the fuzzed-out sound of the Pixies and the inclusion of Beatles-esque harmonies made *Nevermind* shark bait for both angry Gen X teens and radio stations alike.

Meanwhile, subtle acoustic numbers *Polly* and *Something In The Way* revealed a deeper complexity to Kurt's songwriting, hinting at the tortured artist he would soon become. Today, *Nevermind* has sold over 30 million copies worldwide.

With producer Butch Vig at the helm, *Nevermind*'s gigantic wall of sound was created from overdubbing duplicate guitar tracks, much to the reluctance of Cobain. Unhappy with Vig's initial mixes, producer Andy Wallace was brought in following his work on Slayer's *Seasons In The Abyss* to achieve an all-round heavier sound.

Recording in LA's iconic Sound City Studios, Kurt's rig included his left-handed Fender Jaguar and Mustang models, a Mesa/Boogie preamp, a Crown power amp and several Marshall 4x12 cabs. For pedals, Cobain favoured his Boss DS-1 distortion and an EHX Small Clone chorus, which can be notably heard on the intro of *Come As You Are* and *Teen Spirit*'s surprisingly melodic solo. According to Vig, an EHX Big Muff fuzz pedal and a Fender Bassman amp were also used for the darker sound of *Lithium*.

For the album's 30th anniversary, Polydor have announced a massive reissue including an eight-LP set that includes four full concert recordings from 1991–92 and a new 7" of *Endless, Nameless, Even In His Youth* and *Aneurysm*.

SCENE

YOUR NEWS IN GUITARS



GUITAR

“REALLY, IT’S JUST ONE EXTRA STRING...”

DREAM THEATER’S JOHN PETRUCCI ON HIS NEW EIGHT-STRING GUITAR AND THE CHALLENGE OF PLAYING IT

The last few years have been incredibly prolific for John Petrucci. He’s built his own studio, recorded his second solo album and reunited with Liquid Tension

Experiment to release their first new music in two decades. And now he’s back with Dream Theater, whose latest album *A View From The Top Of The World* features his brand-new eight-string signature...

How did you go about designing this eight-string Majesty?

It’s been several years in the making. I guess the biggest challenge for both myself and Ernie Ball Music Man was that I’d never played an eight-string guitar and they’d never built one! The first thing that I did was ask any eight-string buddies, players like Tosin Abasi and the Periphery guys, about what they’d been looking for in their instruments. Some of the things that came up were multiple scale lengths, having a fixed bridge and fanned frets. I came to realise that these were the staple elements to do this right. Obviously DiMarzio had to develop eight-string pickups as well. Then we started wondering whether this would be a brand new guitar in design or would it be an eight-string version of one of my existing guitars. And we chose the latter, to create a new Majesty. We did experiment a little with a JP-15, a bolt-on version, but the Majesty looked slicker.

What were the biggest challenges with making it?

One problem we had – because we weren’t making the body larger even though the neck was wider – was making sure there was access to the higher frets. Because things can get in the way when the neck is that wide, like the bottom horn. We experimented with a very slight adjustment to the shape of the guitar, which no-one has actually noticed so far! It’s a tiny change to the bottom contour to allow for the larger neck. I’d actually wanted one for [2019 Dream Theater album] *Distance Over Time*

but it wasn’t ready. So we really pushed it forward to make it happen this time. Fortunately, I was able to get a prototype back in January. We’d written all the songs except for *Awaken The Master*... It was just waiting for that eight-string!

You’re well-versed in the art of the seven-string, which must have helped.

The biggest thing is that it’s a Majesty, so it did

feel familiar to me – that’s the main guitar I’ve played over my career. The shape is familiar while the neck is curved and thin, even though it had to be wider. And yeah, I’m very used to seven-strings, so really it’s just one extra string, which is tuned a 4th down meaning all my scale shapes transpose easily. It’s not like this bizarre tuning you have to figure out. Being able to instantly identify my scales and arpeggio shapes was very helpful. The hardest thing was chords – learning how to voice my ideas using those lower notes. While it feels super comfortable and easy to play, there is a certain amount of extra energy and pressure required from both hands because you have two really thick lower strings. You have to put a little more work into it. I noticed that I was using different muscles in my arm, just a little bit. After playing for an extended period of time, I’d feel this fatigue in my left hand after holding a wide neck like that. But it’s such a comfortable guitar to play – it’s a Majesty! Those things are like race cars that let you do what you need to do.

Did you need to change your rig or settings much to accommodate for the extra low-end?

We did, not too much, but we did dial a few things back. I recorded with the normal settings and one day our engineer told me he’d spent some time re-amping my performance through another one of my signature amps that he’d tweaked. He’d done something with the midrange and low end. Immediately I felt that it sounded better. Eight-strings have a lot of low-end information and my sound tends to be pretty thick, so carving some mids and lows using a powerful graphic EQ really helped the guitar sit better. I know [mixer] Andy Sneap also had a completely different approach for the guitar sound on that song. There were no drastic moves, it still sounds like me, but we EQ’d it to make sure it spoke properly and all that low-end information wasn’t getting lost or ending up muddy or flubby.

Amit Sharma





GUITAR

KING POWER!

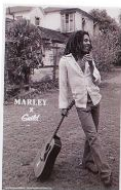
Epiphone has finally unveiled its new version of BB King's hallowed Lucille – after Epiphone artist Emily Wolfe premiered the guitar on Instagram back in February.

Now, as you might know, BB actually owned a number of ebony Gibsons including ES-335s, ES-355s and Blueshawk, and he gave the name Lucille to every one of his main guitars after 1949. However, this model is based on the most common: a Gibson ES-335. Unlike regular 335s though, BB favoured his tops without F-holes, which arguably helps to cut down on feedback. So, what we have here

is a five-ply, maple-bodied semi-acoustic. Running through the centre of the body is a maple centre block, and the neck is also cut from maple too. The rosewood fingerboard is 22 fret, with the classic Gibson 24.75" scale length, and as well as the gold hardware (including Grover RotoMatic tuners and an Epiphone LockTone Tune-O-Matic bridge with fine-tuners), the Lucille's Gloss Black finish, block inlays, double-bound body and bound headstock and scratchplate certainly give this guitar an air of class.

It's not all about the looks, though, as there are some interesting things going

on electronically, too. The pickups are Alnico Pro humbuckers, controlled by the usual two-volume/two-tone/three-way switch we'd expect. But Epiphone has also hooked up a six-position VariTone switch as per BB's. This rotary control brings some preset filters into the mix, like having a stepped tone control that you can recall at the flick of a switch. Finally, the Lucille has regular mono and stereo outputs in case you want to run it into two amps, just like BB did. It's available now priced at £799. Keep an eye out for a full review next month!
www.epiphone.com



GUITAR

RASTAMAN VIBRATION

Reggae perhaps isn't a genre known for its guitar heroics, but when you choose to pay tribute to one of the most popular artists of all time (of any genre), one is probably all you need. That's exactly what Guild has done with its new A-20 Marley. Based on the Guild Madeira A-20 acoustic which Bob used to write many of his hits, this dreadnought features a solid spruce top, mahogany back and sides, mahogany neck and 25.5" scale Pau Ferro Fingerboard. The Guild logo lovingly recreates the 70s script vibe of Bob's Guild, and the great man's signature is etched into the scratchplate. It comes with a deluxe gig bag, and case candy including a booklet detailing the history of Bob's own Guild, custom picks and a classy-looking poster of Bob and his guitar for £359.
www.guildguitars.com



PEDAL

PITCH CHANGING WIZARDRY!

Electro-Harmonix has no shortage of classics in its catalogue, but never ones to rest on their laurels, it's unveiled its brand new Intelligent Harmony Machine. The IHM is an altogether more complex pedal, rounding-out the pitch-shifting abilities of its Pitchfork and POG2 pedals by offering diatonic, single-note harmonies in whatever key you like, plus a range of two-note harmonies to give your inner Eagle three-part harmony intervals when combined with your dry signal. As well as this, there's polyphonic pitch-shifting on offer, meaning you can play chords into the IHM, and the momentary switch mode allows for instant bursts of whammy-like pitch changing wizardry. We're expecting it to cost around the £170 mark.

www.ehx.com



PEDALS

2 BECOME 1

What's an easy way to make a pedal twice as good? Build two of them into one! Fender's new Dual/Dual versions of its popular Marine Layer Reverb and Pugilist Distortion pedals do just that, but there's some added spice sprinkled in too. As well as giving you two

of everything (that's two lots of switchable Hall, Room and Shimmer 'verbs), along with twice the control set, Fender has added an infinite sustain circuit to the Dual Marine Layer Reverb (£199). Likewise, the Dual Pugilist Distortion (£179) gives you two distortion channels with gain, level and

tone for each - plus a master high/low EQ and blend control. But what's more, is the ability to select how the two interact via a Mute/ Series/Bypass toggle, allowing for stacking and blending. Both pedals are available now.

www.fender.com
Stuart Williams



Words Stuart Williams Photography Dilly Curtis

X-MARKS THE SPOT

IK Multimedia merges the power of software
with the convenience of hardware



W

e've never had it so good when it comes to getting great sounds via plugins and modelling in the studio, and IK Multimedia has been at the forefront

of this tech since it first launched AmpliTube around two decades ago.

But now, the software giant that also brought us the means to play our guitar through our phones has turned its attention to the floor, with four new multi-mode pedals that incorporate its stellar modelling technology in a pedalboard-friendly format.

The X-Gear range includes Drive (including fuzz and distortions), Vibe (modulation effects), Time (delays) and Space (reverbs), all with a 100 per cent analogue dry-through signal path, and switchable true/soft bypass settings.

Each colour-coded pedal contains 16 algorithms from within its category, offering up an arsenal of classic and contemporary effects organised into 50 presets. These can be tweaked via the hardware controls - made easier by the built-in display - and then saved to one of 300 user memories. To make editing even easier, IK has created the X-Gear Librarian software, meaning that you can craft your patches via a computer, then fly them straight into the pedals using the on-board USB connection (which also doubles as a studio-grade USB audio interface, obviously!).

Connection-wise, you've got stereo inputs and outputs, plus the Drive pedal features cab sims in case you want to follow the current trend of going direct, and there's MIDI, too.

UP CLOSE



X-citing sounds

Each pedal includes 16 of IK Multimedia's new high-end FX algorithms, along with 50 presets and 300 user memories.



X-Drive

The X-Drive pedal continues the pedalboard rig trend with five cab sims for going direct to a PA.



USB-equipped

As well as a collection of high-end effects, the X-Gear pedals have USB editing functionality, and can serve as your audio interface for recording straight into a computer.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ D standard tuning
- ✓ Offbeat rhythms
- ✓ 6/8 time signature



RIFF OF THE MONTH

BIFFY CLYRO

A Hunger In Your Haunt

Barely a year since Biffy Clyro's eighth record *A Celebration Of Endings* dropped, *The Myth Of The Happily Ever After*, a sister album to last year's release, has arrived featuring this month's riff. Consider us excited!

A Hunger In Your Haunt is in 6/8 time. Counting '1 & 2 & a' will help you feel the timing, as guitarist Simon Neil's single-note riff follows this 'triplet feel' tightly. Take care as you reach

the third powerchord stab though. While the first two stabs land predictably on beats 1 and 2, the third falls on the first '&' of the bar. And though the fourth stab is conveniently on the 2 again, if the third stab upset your rhythm, it's easy to fluff the timing here too. Practising slowly really is your best option – particularly as there's a fiddly scale shape to factor in too. Watch our slowed down video demo so you can nail the rhythm of the riff.

CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at 0:00–0:16

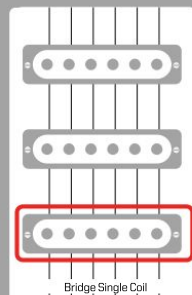
Tempo 120bpm

Key/scale D minor

Main techniques Picking, pull-offs, open strings

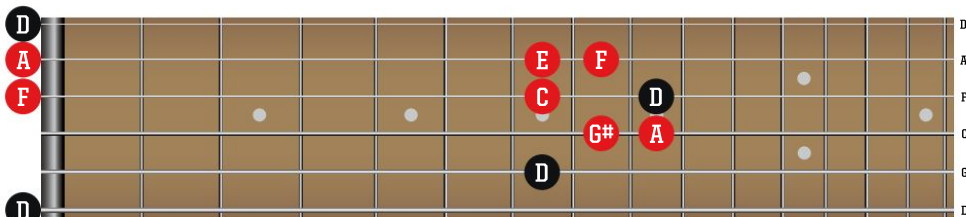
GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION



Bridge Single Coil

Simon is well known for using Fender Stratocasters and a combination of Fender and Marshall amps to create a rich, heavy, biting tone – a single coil pickup in the bridge position is a key part of recreating that bite. Experiment with enough gain to create a heavy sound, but back it off slightly to allow the notes to sound clear. *AHIYH* is played in D standard tuning (DGCFA D from low to high), which means all six strings are tuned down by two semitones (i.e., two frets). A heavier set of strings would be a good choice for tuning stability.



The fretted notes are all found between the 7th and 9th frets – so there are no fretboard-wide position shifts to manage here. That being said, it's a fiddly riff, with all four fingers coming into play as

you navigate Simon Neil's offbeat timing. Before you get started we recommend familiarising yourself with this scale shape and the powerchord contained within it (using the D, A and D notes).

PHOTO: Courtesy of Guns N' Roses



GRETSCH
**OUTLAW
ORIGINAL**

**GUNS N' ROSES
RICHARD FORTUS
SIGNATURE FALCON™**



GRETSCHGUITARS.COM

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GETTING STARTED WITH...

ALTERNATE PICKING

Improve your lead guitar skills with a technique that's used by indie kids, shredders and blues hounds alike

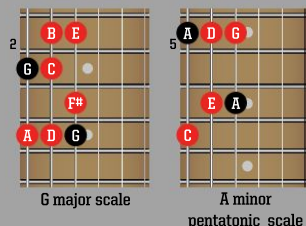
WRIST, FOREARM OR ELBOW?

Which body parts should you move for your picking motion? You can find amazing guitarists who pick primarily with their wrist (Yngwie Malmsteen), forearm rotation (Paul Gilbert), and elbow (Michael Angelo Batio) – though, like we say, alternate picking isn't exclusive to virtuoso shred. Regardless of the music you're into, try to be mindful that you're not tensing up, as this can lead to pain and injury. As long as you feel relaxed and sound good, any of these motions (or a combination of them) are valid.

PICKING SCALES

Double-pick scale notes to improve your technique

Usually with scales you'll play each note once, then move on to the next one. A great way to hone your picking skills is to pick each note two or four times instead. For example, in G major you'd play G G, A A, B B, and so on.



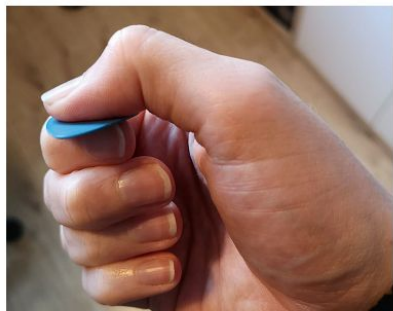
New guitarists tend to pick every note in the same direction. Most favour downstrokes, though a few gravitate to upstrokes. Still, seeing as your pick has to travel in the opposite direction to get back to where it started, you may as well pluck another note on the way. That way you can play twice as many notes with the same amount of movement. Known as alternate picking, this technique is how shredders and bluegrass

flatpickers get their speed – but it's a core part of soloing, whatever style you play.

We recommend getting started by repeatedly picking one single note. Aim for a motion that feels comfortable, sounds good, and where every note is roughly the same volume. With these basics covered, read on and we'll help you take your playing to the next level with a handy scale exercise, some technique tips and a pair of inspiring musical ideas for you to try out.

TECHNIQUE CHECK...

Get your pick in prime position to make those licks easier



1 TRIGGER GRIP

Finding a comfortable grip is essential. For a 'trigger' grip, place the pick on the side of your index finger. Drop your thumb on top to hold it in place.



2 PAD GRIP

A variation on the trigger grip, here the pick is pinched between the pads of thumb and forefinger.



3 PAD-SIDE GRIP

Kind of halfway between pad and trigger, the pick is on an angle. Use whichever of these methods feels most comfortable and in control.



4 THREE-FINGER OR MIDDLE FINGER

It's fine to use thumb and two fingers (like James Hetfield, shown here) or thumb and middle finger (like Eddie Van Halen).

1 OUTSIDE-STYLE ALTERNATE PICKING

TRACK: [BIT.LY/TG352AUDIO](https://bit.ly/tg352audio)

♩ = 80

D⁵ G⁵ B⁵ G⁵

T
B

etc.

This melodic rock lick will help you get used to swapping between strings using the 'outside' method (a downstroke on the lower-pitch string, then an upstroke on the higher one). It just means you're approaching each string from its 'outer' edge.

2 INSIDE-STYLE ALTERNATE PICKING

TRACK: [BIT.LY/TG352AUDIO](https://bit.ly/tg352audio)

♩ = 65

A⁵ G⁵ A⁵ F⁵ G⁵ A⁵

TAB: 9 7 9 7 10 7 10 7 7 5 7 5 9 7 9 7 | 5 7 5 7 7 7 7 4 5 4 5 7

♭ ♮ ♭ ♮ etc.

More melodic rock lead playing here in our 'inside' picking lick - so this time your pick approaches the strings from in between them. Make sure you are using strict down-up-down-up picking. It's a key part of the alternate picking technique.

INTERVIEW



Words Amit Sharma

"WE'RE DIRTY NEANDERTHALS PLAYING HEAVY METAL, BUT THERE'S A DEEP SIDE TO MASTODON"

With an unorthodox two-guitar attack and a mountain of gear, a band in mourning created a monumental double album. How **Mastodon** dug deep: by guitarist **Bill Kelliher**

When it comes to earth-conquering riffage and head-crushing psychedelic warfare, Mastodon are seasoned masters of their trade. From the sludgy brutality heard on 2002 debut *Remission* to their more progressive exploits in recent years, they've continually conjured a perfect storm of leftfield tunings and time signatures and harmonies that stun. Similar things can be said of the 15 tracks that make up the band's new double album *Hushed & Grim*, which features some truly inspired fretwork from Bill Kelliher and Brent Hinds.

As ever, it's the interplay between the two guitarists that separates Mastodon from their peers. And this time it feels like they've capitalised on their twin-guitar assault to the absolute fullest.

Speaking with TG from his home in Atlanta, Bill Kelliher talks about the mountain of gear used on the new recordings and explains how, after losing long-time friend and manager Nick John, the quartet turned the grief of into a colossal work of art...

There's a lot to take in over 15 sprawling tracks. How do you even begin to envisage music with that much detail?

It's like an onion, with a lot of layers. Every time you listen to it there will be something new. With the past couple of records I've really been diving deep with the material I'm scraping out. As I'm getting older, I've become better at getting out the crazy ideas going around in my head. It's very therapeutic to get them out into a tangible space, like on a record, so they can get out of my head! For example, with *Sultan's Curse* [from 2017 album *Emperor Of Sand*], I had one of the riffs from many years before, but I could never finish the song. I get

INTERVIEW



anxiety about riffs because I know they are great but sometimes I might not have found a place for them. It's cathartic to get it out.

Some of the music on the new album was written after the death of your manager Nick John. How has making music helped you in this time?

Whenever I pick up a guitar, it helps shift my focus. It's almost like a reset button. Whenever I'm having a bad day, I can get lost in guitar riffs. And there's something about those chugga chugga riffs... When life makes you want to scream and cry at the top of your lungs, like, 'F*ck!', I can grab the guitar and it will do that for me. Those sick and sad riffs make it all better. And because all these riffs come from such a personal and deep place, our fans can associate with them, too. It's medicinal. They turn to Mastodon like it's in their medicine cabinet like paracetamol. Their friend might not be around

any more, they might have lost a parent, and they can stick on *Emperor Of Sand*, getting real deep and sad listening to Brent's solos, which are so emotional and touching. Even though on the outside we're these four dirty neanderthal rockers from Atlanta playing heavy metal, there's a realness there. There's a deep side to Mastodon, especially as we go through more and more of life's trials and tribulations: loss, more loss and death.

What kind of guitars did you have with you in the studio?

There was a bunch of my ESP Sparrowhawks with all sorts of different pickups. I just designed a new one with Mojotone called the Hellbender not long ago, so I used that a lot. It should be coming out soon. Most of my main rhythm tracks were played on a black Sparrowhawk I like to call The Rib-Eye, which has a tortoise shell pickguard.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Bill during the making of *Hushed & Grim*

It looks like a piece of steak is stuck on it. I would use some Les Pauls here and there for certain parts, just for different tones. One of my secret weapons in the studio is a Ron Wood ESP. It's a Telecaster with a humbucker and it's the best-sounding Tele ever, so warm and still twangy. I used that a lot because I knew anytime I needed that sound, it would always work better than anything else. There was also a black 2007 Les Paul that I got in London from Gibson. I liked it so much I told them, 'You're not getting this back!' It was on loan for a tour and it was way too nice not to keep.

We've seen you posting about your Banker Customs online. Did they get used as well?

Yeah, they're made by a guy called Matt Hughes, and they are some of the best in the world. He made me a solid gold Explorer that sounds absolutely

"ONE OF MY SECRET WEAPONS IN THE STUDIO IS A RON WOOD ESP - SO WARM AND TWANGY!" **BILL KELLIHER**

phenomenal. He also made me a double cutaway Pelham Blue Johnny Thunders-style guitar that I f*ckin' love, so I used that. I have a First Act nine-string that I used. There's an ESP called the Royal Shiva which hasn't come out yet but it's pretty much an exact replica of my First Act nine-string. It's super thick at the neck and weighs about 13 pounds... It's the f*ckin' heaviest guitar ever! I've been playing it live and it was in the studio, with a set of my Hellbender pickups. Brent used his Banker guitars quite a lot. He also had a Flying V with a Bigsby tremolo... I don't know how it stayed in tune, but it did!

As for the rest of the rig, would it be safe to assume your signature Friedman amps and some of Brent's Diezels and Marshalls were involved?

Brent used his old JMPs a lot and had a Diezel hooked up as well. I think both of us were running three heads at all times for our dirty sounds, it would be a mixture. For me, it was channel two of my Friedman Butterslax. Channel three is great, but I've been leaning a little more to the beefier yet less distorted tones. It's like AC/DC but with a little more oomph. I think when you're going through all those wires and preamps, plus the interfaces and the board, it gets more and more distorted. I tried to lay off that stuff a little bit on the way in. I was using the Butterslax as well as a JJ-100 head, the Jerry Cantrell signature which sounds insane. And then Friedman sent me a BE-100 Deluxe with the three channels. That thing was a monster, it sounded even better than my Butterslax! You can't find them anymore because the factory caught on fire, there was the pandemic and parts were hard to find. I just had to buy it! I also used a Marshall JCM800 with an MXR Sugar Drive in front of it, which sounded awesome. I have about 500 pedals in my studio and we plugged all of them in. The Sugar Drive sounded better than everything else, including Tube Screamers, which are the industry standard. It really sang in front of that Marshall.

It sounds like you really went on a tone hunt with this album, then!

The problem I have with most amps is that the clean is Beach Boys clean! It cuts your head off like glass and there's no sustain. That's not me, I can't play through that. The channels sound

totally different to each other. So I'm more into using the distorted channel and then turning the gain all the way back. I own a few 800s. I travel a lot so tend to find them on Craigslist and buy them from people. They all sound different, even before you get into switching tubes and everything. This one in particular I am never going to sell because it sounds so great. It lives in my studio and bands that come in to record use it all the time. It just has this great tone. That's what I used for the heavy stuff. For the cleans, I had a Fender Vibro-King that had three 10-inch speakers, plus built-in tremolo and reverb. I actually bought it from Duane Denison from The Jesus Lizard and Tomahawk. He's a friend of mine and I saw he put it up for sale on Facebook for \$700. I text him immediately saying, 'Bro, take that down, I will buy it without trying it out!' Firstly, because he's one of the greatest guitar players alive. And secondly, because I knew it would sound great. I hadn't owned any Fenders prior to that. It had the nicest country twang to it.

Well, you've been dialling in those kinds of sounds more and more over the years...

Yeah, while we were recording *Emperor Of Sand*, there were a plethora of amps there. There was a section in Roots Remain that sounded evil and I needed that clinky, twangy Fender tone. I looked around the room to find the ugliest amp and found a Sears Silvertone with the big fat knobs. It looked like a cardboard box and the head slots into the back of the amp, with sliders to stop it falling out, like something from an old German submarine. As soon as I heard it, I knew I had to own one. I tracked one down a few years ago. The natural reverb is so good. I think it was made around the mid-60s or early 70s. I used that for clean stuff as well. I tend to use a lot of tremolo, reverbs, octavers, pitchshifters and delay. I don't think we used the same pedal twice, we'd just keep trying more and more out until we found the right one. There was a blue Boss pitchshifter that I haven't used much before which had a million different settings. There was one which does this weird slow divebomb bend, and that got used on *Gobblers Of Dregs*...

On which it sounds like you're using a drop A octave tuning, which is clearly an old favourite!



"I'M NOT A JAM GUY - BUT HE IS"

How Bill Kelliher and Brent Hinds achieve perfect balance

Mastodon's guitarists have their own unique take on the instrument, at times operating from worlds apart and still somehow managing to meet in the middle. "I'm more on the beat and trying to be as tight as possible," explains Bill Kelliher. "A lot of the times when Brent writes stuff, like *Capillarian Crest*, he goes off on this chicken picking bonanza in the middle! I can't play that, it would take me a year to learn. That's why I end up playing something different. Brent will say there are no bad notes on the fretboard, you just gotta stretch it until you get to the right one. And I hear him do that all the time, he'll hit something way below and just bend until it's there. He's got such a good feel for that, he's very improvised. I need to rehearse and get my sh*t in order before I can play. I'm not a jam guy, getting up on stage and improvising solos. I've done it before but that's not my happy place, while he is all about that."

Peace And Tranquility - one of the more finger-twisting tracks on the new album - took time and careful consideration before its dual harmonies were finalised. As Kelliher admits: "The beginning is crazy and took ages to figure out. I have to watch both hands with Brent because he uses his fingers, so I end up videoing him and then slowing it down at home. At first I was going to play something a little more grounded underneath. I couldn't avoid his part for that song, though! It's long and has about six thousand notes. I started getting anxious because I had no idea what to do. Eventually I came up with a harmony that's different every time, making it sound even more wild."



HEAVY FRIENDS

Mastodon's guest stars: Kim Thayil and Marcus King

Soundgarden legend Kim Thayil plays on *Had It All* from the new Mastodon album, and as Bill Kelliher says: "I've always looked up to Kim. He started coming to our gigs in Seattle and we became friends. I knew there would be a lot of room for him to solo on *Had It All*. He wanted to get it right and asked, 'Do you need something like this or that?' I wanted to send him the whole album so he could get a feel for the sadness and emotion. I said to him, 'You guys lost Chris [Cornell], just channel that!' because that's what the song is about. Losing our manager, someone who we were very close to. Kim did a great job, his solos are out there and nobody plays like him."

There's also a guest appearance from Marcus King on *The Beast*, thanks to the rising blues star's friendship with Brent Hinds and their epic pentatonic jams both on and off the stage. "Brent's been playing with Marcus a lot on the side, doing shows and covers," says Kelliher. "He's a young up-and-coming blues guitarist and to my ears, they sound very similar. Marcus did a stab at a couple of solos on the record and I couldn't really tell who was playing!"

➔

That one is drop A, for sure. I wrote the first half of that song years ago. It hadn't changed much. When we were touring in Europe with Scott Kelly, I had it finished – with bass and guitar tracks down next to Brann's drums, just 'cause I do demos all the time. It kinda changes gears and goes into a cleaner, poppier thing at the end. Then we brought it to Brent, who had another idea to add in. His solo at the end is smoking!

Which of the riffs are you most proud of?

One of my favourites is *Eyes Of The Serpents*, which is something I wrote early on. I was in this weird headspace where I was hitting my head against the wall and felt I couldn't write anything. So I tuned my strings differently – to drop C but with my first string tuned to C and my second string tuned to A₁. It had this weird sound to it where I could ring different strings out. I kept finding new cool things with it, with almost this cowboy kinda vibe on the opening riff, especially with the tremolo and reverb. It sounded Spaghetti Western-ish. Its working title was 'The Fabulous World Of Bill Kelliher's Boots!' Right near the end of the song, five minutes in, there's this chug part that I'm really proud of. I've never really written anything like it. Brann actually said, 'James Hetfield would like that riff!' and I didn't know if he was making

fun of me [laughs]. It's a great riff in between some cool vocal patterns, Thin Lizzy harmonies plus a killer solo from Brent.

The way you employ those clashing notes for dissonance, quite often using open strings, is what brings a lot of that extra depth to the riffs.

We love our dissonance, for sure! Almost everything I write has an open note somewhere. It's like putting a bell on the end of your riffs. Especially when you're tuned down to A, you hit the low string and then pop the high octave... It just sings, like putting an exclamation point at the end of your riff. Bong! It's an interesting effect because the low string will wobble but the high string will stay tight and in tune. You get this weird dissonance doing things like that, even if it's the same note an octave up. That's one of our signature things, as well as using notes that are a half step away to get this awkward and gritty sound... It's like chewing down on some aluminium foil. It makes you pull that weird face and freak out. That's what I'm trying to recreate on the guitar. I will search until I find these little exclamation points I can throw in. There's always something that will work, depending on what mood you're going for... In our case, it's usually sad and evil!

BAR BAND

From left: Brann Dailor, Troy Sanders, Brent Hinds, Bill Kelliher

"THE PROBLEM I HAVE WITH MOST AMPS IS THAT THE CLEAN IS BEACH BOYS CLEAN! THAT'S NOT ME" **BILL KELLIHER**



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“THE CONCEPT OF RHYTHM GUITAR HAS BEEN LOST IN MODERN METAL.”

The new album from **Trivium** is a master-class in complex riffing and balls-out shredding. Guitarists **Matt Heafy** and **Corey Beaulieu** reveal how it was created – with what they call ‘organic improvisation’...

Trivium guitarists Matt Heafy and Corey Beaulieu are no strangers to finger-twisting riffs that snake around the fretboard and lightning fast leads used to great effect. But on the Florida quartet’s tenth album, *In The Court Of The Dragon*, they’re really going for gold. The album is widely acclaimed as the finest work of

their career. It’s also by far their shreddiest to date. And for that, Matt pays tribute to his fellow guitarist...

“The stuff that Corey’s playing on this record is insane,” Matt says. “When I first heard the solo for the title track I was wondering how the hell he played it! He’s incredibly talented. We’ve always told him to go nuts and he’s always kinda held back, I don’t know why. But he decided to let go... And he’s a monster on this record. That’s why I felt even more comfortable playing ‘dad rock’ solos with more doublestop bends and pentatonics!”

Corey explains it very simply: “These songs had the foundation for some crazy sh*t, so I figured I’d go balls out! On other records, I might have stayed away from really fast runs because it would be seen as easier to go there instead of being more melodic. But this time, a lot of parts wouldn’t have made sense without some shred! So I just said, ‘Alright, fire me up!’ *The Shadow Of The Abattoir* is probably the most intense solo... There’s a lot of picking in that one!”

“I’ve used a lot of the techniques on our previous records, like diminished arpeggios, but in smaller bursts. But this album was done in a different way. Though there wasn’t

anything technique-wise in terms of tricks up my sleeve to try, the solos were all written at home by myself, which made a difference. And then I tracked 70 per cent of the solos in a couple of hours at the studio. The songs just seemed to call for some shred... So I let them have it!”

For the recording of *In The Court Of The Dragon*, the band worked again with producer Josh Wilbur at the recording facility inside Florida’s Full Sail University, where the guitarists stuck with a fairly simplified signal path for the sessions. The list of gear used was “pretty bare” according to Corey – who cites an EVH 5150 III Stealth as the main weapon for the record, along with his signature Jackson King V and Matt’s signature Epiphone Les Paul. For a lot of the melodies and solos, Corey used a Soldano SLO-100, reasoning “it wasn’t cheap so I had to use it somewhere”. The only pedals involved were an MXR 10 Band EQ, an Airis Cloud Drive for a mid-boost, a Boss NS-2 noise gate, a DigiTech Whammy and a Maxon OD808 on certain solos. For extra colouration during his leads, Corey

also utilised the Sound Toys MicroShift plug-in, which he describes as the “secret sauce” he’s been using for the last decade or so, adding the same kind of effect the Eventide H3000 was famous for in the 80s.

“This time we went back to quad-tracking,” adds Matt. “Some we’ve done left and right each, but this one had two left and two right, like we did on *Ember To Inferno*, *Ascendancy*, *Shogun* and *In Waves*. The 5150 was fed into a Mesa cab with V30s that belonged to Josh. Amazingly, he just used a single SM57. All delay, reverb, phaser or wah was added afterwards.”

While gear is important, Matt also appreciates how much tone can come from the player’s hands alone. Heavy metal should be played with aggression, regardless of what instruments you use, the size of your pedalboard or how much gain you have on tap. There’s a lot to be said for attitude...

“We talk about tone all the time,” he says. “We’re all chasing tone. I’ve got this insane collection of gear, but so much of the tone comes from my attack. I’m not saying people



➤ have to play uneconomically or with overexertion, but on this record you can really hear how hard I'm picking. That's why I like using the Evertune bridge, because it allows me to hit and bend harder. You really hear the attack just through my guitar unplugged."

That sense of power extends through the 10 tracks that make up *In The Court Of The Dragon*. Even the rhythm parts at its very core are incredibly detailed and layered, involving some wide stretches, quick climbs and fast gallops. Truth be told, some of the riffs are as challenging as the leads themselves...

"I appreciate you saying that," Matt smiles, explaining that while there's no shortage of unbelievable shredders out there in the world right now, rhythm is still often overlooked. "Every time you open Instagram there's some new super freak who can do the craziest stuff that most of us cannot do. But I feel like the concept of rhythm guitar has been lost a little bit, especially in modern metal. I think *A Crisis Of Revelation* will be a difficult one for people to learn. It involves this weird style of picking I learned from Chuck Schuldiner from Death and Daniel Mongrain of Martyr. They were the first to use this bizarre technique that wasn't just alternate or down-picking. It's down, down and then down, up, down – sounding like dun-dun-dadadun. While making our debut, [producer] Jason Suecof told us that if we learned every song from Martyr's *Warp Zone*, we'd become the best players in the world. Daniel Mongrain is one of the greatest, he's classically trained in jazz, so he sounds like Marty Friedman and Allan Holdsworth mixed together. I didn't invent it, but I'm one of the few players to use it."

Similarly, for Corey, it was also a case of playing to his strengths – particularly when it comes to machine gun alternate picking and effortlessly smooth sweeping. He'd never been much of a legato player, he reasons, pointing back his teenage years spent riffing along to Metallica, Slayer and Megadeth in his bedroom. When he discovered death metal not long after, he noticed the musicians were taking burst picking to Olympic extremes.

"When I first started, my teacher gave me a lot of exercises – simple stuff but all about accuracy," he recalls. "And I still use them. I will sit there before a show and play scales to warm up, starting slow to get everything synched

up. I might just take two strings and play a pattern over and over again. You can use them to gauge how loose your fingers are and get them moving pretty quickly. I got into sweeping through Michael Angelo Batio's *Speed Kills* video. I never liked the arpeggios where you have to barre a finger and roll it up and down, so I don't use those much. For three-string sweeps I tend to pick each string on the way down but coming back I'll just hammer on. It lessens the motion and gives me time to get back to the starting point. I think Matt does it too, it's our weird little arpeggio hack, but it works because it doesn't sound like you're missing any notes."

Returning to the question of how his band managed to surpass all expectation this time round, delivering something far grander than what you'd normally expect from a metal group on album number ten, Matt uses the term "organic improvisation" as the main distinguishable writing tool for this record. It was a more collaborative effort than the typical Trivium album, with both guitarists – as well as bassist Paolo Gregoletto – splicing their riffs together

from the same room, instead of demoing separately.

"We wanted to capture lightning in the bottle rather than plan too much," Matt explains. "There were no constraints, limitations or boundaries. We went back to the mindset of four people putting together their first band and making their first batch of songs. But it's not nostalgia. All that mattered, selfishly, was do we love it? Trying new things for genuine reasons is fine, but trying to grab some other fanbase doesn't work. We call it the fictitious boardroom fans – 'we need these people into our band!' – like it's a sharehold or something. That's when things fall apart and come off the rails..."

He stops for a second and laughs.

"You know, when I hear the phrase 'organic improvisation', I picture jam rock riffs, raw recordings, Orange amps and single-coil pickups. But when you have four religious practitioners of their instruments – who are also four students of all the sub-genres of metal – walk in and improvise after they've been staying on peak training form, you get the results of this record."



PICKUP POWER

How active pickups help define Trivium's wall of noise

Both Matt Heafy and Corey Beaulieu rely on high-output active pickups for their thick and saturated metallic tones – though, interestingly, made by two different companies. Having sworn by the EMG B1/B5 set for many years, Matt now sticks with Fishman Fluence Moderns, and has some exciting plans afoot with the brand...

"I love the Moderns," he admits. "I'm about to release my own custom set, which has the active, passive and an extra split-coil mode. I don't use splits or taps in Trivium but I am obsessed with those tones. They work so well with Corey's Seymour Duncan Blackouts. His have less mids and more highs, while mine are more mid-forward. Having the two together gave us the ferocity we wanted. We actually tried quad tracking using only my Epiphones with Fishmans and it sounded good, but almost too perfect, like we were missing something."

"The Blackouts I use have a ridiculously high output," adds Corey. "I feel like they might have a little more low end and more of a dark sound, which works really well because Matt's sound is more middle-rangey and has that cut. That's why they work so well together, living in different places in the EQ range that don't quite step on each other as much."



**"THE SONGS
CALLED FOR
SOME SHRED...
SO I LET THEM
HAVE IT!"**
COREY BEAULIEU



Carlos Santana

Interview Jonathan Horsley Portraits Jay Blakesberg/Maryanne Bilham

AS ONE OF THE MOST CELEBRATED GUITARISTS ON THE PLANET FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS, HIS EPIC CAREER IS ALSO A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY. “SOME PEOPLE PRACTISE CHORDS OR THEORY,” SANTANA SAYS. “I PRACTISE MAKING MELODY BECOME ETERNAL...”

People often speak about left and right-hand technique, but for Carlos Santana, playing the guitar is an act of mind, body and soul. He made his bones in the San Francisco music scene of the late 60s, his cresting genius consecrated with a legendary afternoon performance at Woodstock, whereupon he leaned into the psychedelic dimensions of an ill-timed acid trip to deliver a jaw-dropping set, bejewelled by a helter-skelter jam during *Soul Sacrifice* that opened up rock's third eye to musical possibilities beyond blues-inspired sounds.

You can spot his guitar playing within seconds, that warm, quasi-horn tones of saturated overdrive, the conversational phrasing and instinctive modulation between major and minor. And yet it somehow accommodates all who collaborate with him, as proven on his new album *Blessings And Miracles*, a Zoom-facilitated all-star jam featuring Chick Corea, Steve Winwood, Kirk Hammett and more – a trick he pulled off to brilliant effect back in 1999 with the multi-million selling *Supernatural*.

African rhythms, Spanish guitar, Miles Davis and John McLaughlin, Hendrix and Beethoven – for Carlos, it is all one continuum. A true artist, he says, takes inspiration from it all. “As a musician, you have the nutrients and ingredients of many things in one note. In one note, you hear infinity's breath.”

He might speak in spiritual allegories but the inference is clear.

If you can put your heart and soul into one note you can do it with all of them.

Collaboration is a spiritual thing; the best can play with anyone

When I was in the studio, in 1972, with John McLaughlin doing *Love Devotion Surrender*, it dawned on me that he trusted me, and he saw something in me that I was trying

to see in myself. He saw something in me that Miles Davis saw in him. And so what that element is, is that there is a spirit in you that can complement anything that gets in front of you. It seems that the intangible becomes the tangible around me. Divine intelligence orchestrates all these musicians, artists and writers to bring to me incredible songs. As crazy as it sounds, it's true. About 60 per cent or more of the artists on my album I have yet to meet in person, so a lot of meetings were done on Zoom.

Learn to take inspiration from all art, not just music

Some people might scratch their heads and say, ‘What the hell’s he talking about!?’ But the best music that I ever heard is outside of time. Whether it is Beethoven or whether





it is Jimi Hendrix or John Coltrane, time and gravity disappear when you hear that frequency, sound and vibration from those musicians. And you can't practise that. You can only get out of the way and let the spirit take over your fingers and your mind, and articulate a language of light.

Look beyond the guitar

While everybody was experimenting with pedals I was getting closer to Aretha Franklin. I was playing my guitar to [Aretha's classic album] *Lady Soul*, or Mahalia Jackson, or Billie Holiday, or Dionne Warwick. I wanted it to sound like a female. I wanted my guitar to sound like the voice of my favourite singers; Nina Simone, Etta James, or Tina Turner.

"MILES DAVIS TOLD ME TO GET A WAH WAH PEDAL!"

Do what Miles Davis tells you

One day, I was in an elevator with Miles Davis, and he said, 'Hey, do you got a wah wah yet?' 'No, I don't play a wah wah.' He says, 'I got one!' I say, 'You've got a wah wah pedal?' 'That's right! You gotta get a f*ckin' wah wah!' Miles is the one who told me to get a wah pedal.

Chase melodies if you want to your music to last

That comes from following and learning African music, call and response – y'know, like church music. 'No, no, no, somebody say Amen... Amen! Hallelujah!' So, yes, I learned to respect the singer, never to step on the phrasing of the vocals. While some people practise what they want to practise, which is either chords or theory, or harmony, I practise making melody become eternal, y'know, because when you go home after a concert, what you are going to remember is how that melody made you feel.

Talent borrows, genius steals

There are times when I hear my brother Sting quote Spartacus: 'Do-dee-do/



do-dee-do/dee-dee-do-dee-do-dee...' And that's because the theme from *Spartacus* is very, very haunting. Great musicians quote other melodies that make time stand still.

Free your mind and the rest will follow

I grew up in San Francisco around ground zero for consciousness revolution! Which was Jerry Garcia, the Grateful Dead, Quicksilver Messenger Service, and a lot of bands like that. Me being a child, a teenager growing up in San Francisco, I also discovered Mongo Santamaria, Miles Davis, Bola Sete. The way that Michael Bloomfield and Jerry Garcia articulated East-West by Paul Butterfield, this was like hippie music, like *The Doors*. It was like discovering Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan, and blending it with John Lee Hooker. And so I thought, this is fascinating! This is like alchemy – combining John Lee Hooker with John Coltrane? What a concept! Discovering Spanish music, or discovering Segovia, Paco de Lucía, and many more of course, there is something very masculine about Spanish music. It is very masculine! Which, for me, is a perfect blend because I grew up listening to Aretha and Dionne Warwick, and so the perfect blend of feminine and masculine is very sexy!

Not everyone can play at high volume

I was looking for a sustain like Peter Green on *Supernatural*. I was looking for a voice. Again, it always comes down to a voice. I have only heard one person outside of Jimi Hendrix that could play with that volume with Marshalls. Cream was there. Led Zeppelin was there. Jeff Beck was there. But with respect to all my brothers, only Jimi Hendrix and Stevie Ray found another way of articulating with this galactic sound! It's not easy to sculpt beauty at that volume. It's kind of like John Coltrane, when he starts scaring people, with sheets of sounds. Sometimes, it's almost like it's too much for your brain to take in. That's why they say, 'It blew your mind.' That's where that came from. Jimi Hendrix blew everybody's mind.

Find a guitar that works for you

Paul Reed Smith convinced me that he was on the crest of creating something. At that time, there was only two, maybe three guitars that I liked – Gibson, Fender, and I never, with all respect,



DORIAN THE EXPLORER

A good example of what Carlos Santana means when he alludes to Bruce Lee and being like water is the ability to inhabit different musical styles at the same time, taking a magical mystery tour through electric blues, through Latin and jazz styles. One way he does that is augmenting traditional blues and rock pentatonic scales with the Dorian mode, and using this to inform his chord progressions and solos. You can hear how he uses this in action on his signature cover of Tito Puente's *Oye Como Va* and *Evil Ways*. Santana will often use a I-IV minor to major chord progression; for instance, in A minor, he might play an Amin7 then follow it with a D major. Indeed, grab your guitar and alternate between those two chords and you'll start to make sense. Or as Carlos says, the spirit will take over your fingers, and will hopefully do the rest.

ALL I EVER WANTED: CARLOS SANTANA'S GEAR

Carlos Santana's rig is pretty simple and yet pretty much impossible to replicate. Even if we had the money, there's no guarantee we could find the amplifiers, because he runs his signature PRS into some bona-fide unicorn amps – a Dumble Overdrive Reverb, Bludotone Universal Tone heads, not to mention his original Mesa/Boogie. Typically, there's not much on his pedalboard, maybe a Real McCoy Custom RMC4 wah pedal – in case Miles is checking in on him on from on high – and a custom line driver from Pete Cornish. It's all about the sustain. How can we replicate this?

Well, the guitar is not too much of a problem. The PRS SE Carlos Santana is widely available for around 700 bucks, and it is superb. Amp-wise, we'd say get an affordable tube amp such as a Laney Cub-Super12 (we're talking £399 street!) and stick a boost or overdrive pedal such as a Fender Santa Ana (£149) in front of it until you have just enough saturation for that warm, trombone-like sustain. Don't forget a decent tuner. Santana is meticulous about his, and uses Peterson Strobe tuners.

got into the Gretsch guitar sound. It was a little too – whatever it was – for me. I didn't feel like I wanted to create melodies with that. It was easier for me to articulate with Gibson and Fender. Paul convinced me that he was creating another element, that it was a different voice, and God bless his tenacity to pursue something with such passion because he became, right there, in the middle of those three – Gibson, Fender, Paul Reed Smith, [then] Gretsch. There are other guitars, such as Yamahas, but the top three are Gibson, Fender and Paul Reed Smith.

Bruce Lee was right – you've got to be like water

The more you focus on your spirituality, the easier it is for you to complement anything that gets in front of you. I don't want to be anything but water, like Bruce Lee said, because water quenches the thirst and it goes with everything. Sooner or later, you've got to drink water. You can drink whisky, bourbon, Scotch, tequila, but sooner or later you've gotta drink water. Water is pure and is life. Living water is spirituality, so I focused since the beginning, with John McLaughlin, we both focused on spiritual discipline. It is more exciting to become happy and forever young with purity and innocence, pursuing *The Doors* and Coltrane and John Lee Hooker. If you stay like that then you will achieve your goal to be eternally relevant.

Use the energy in the room

Tension is always a good thing, especially when you create vibrant energy. Vibrant energy gets rid of boringness, and predictability. Only boring people are bored. All the people who are bored are boring people. People I know are never bored because they are always striving and searching for a new way to enter the unknown.

To thine own self be true

What I have learned is that I am always teaching what I need to learn, and what I need to learn is always honesty, be truthful, be sincere, be authentic, be individual, and play music to bring hope and courage. Anybody can learn from books, scales and chords and all kinds of things, but the thing you cannot teach is something that you have already but you have to learn how to bring it out. It's like John Lee Hooker said, 'It's in you and it has to come out!'

Words Jonny Scaramanga Portrait Hollie Fernando

“WE’D JUST HIT OUR GUITARS SOMETIMES. ACTUALLY HIT THEM!”

Wet Leg are creating a buzz with filthy songs and a novel approach to playing

Wet Leg’s Hester Chambers laughs when she is reminded of a recent headline in the NME: “Wet Leg: ‘We Want to be recognised as guitar heroes’”. It’s funny, she says, because she and Rhian Teasdale – the other half of Wet Leg – are pretty much the

exact opposite of the guitar hero archetype.

“I’m not really sure how that got to be the headline because we’d actually talked about how neither Rhian nor I are confident guitarists in the slightest!” she begins self-effacingly. “I don’t expect to get to the status of guitar hero. I think it might have come more from the fact that we love guitar music. It definitely sparked something in us seeing bands like Big Thief, and just listening to The Strokes and Kings Of Leon growing up. But it’s really fun to let go of our insecurities. We can say, ‘we’re not like those people, we’re not technical but we can still write songs and play gigs.’”

Wet Leg have caught a buzz with *Chaise Longue* and *Wet Dream*, two singles with fuzzy guitars, post-punk energy, and Rhian’s deadpan delivery of some truly filthy lyrics. The project has the refreshing energy of musicians just discovering the joy of guitar, and that’s because, well, they were.

“Something that really blows my mind is that before Wet Leg, Rhian didn’t know how to play guitar,” smiles Hester. “She’s excellent at writing songs on a piano but had never done it on a guitar. She was like, ‘I’m gonna write on guitar’



and it just kind of happened. She's got a really beautiful way of playing and writing. She's not restricted, not like, 'Oh, I need to learn these chords so I can make this song.' She just kind of plays around."

The two met at college ten years ago, and Rhian recruited Hester to play guitar for her solo project. "I guess Rhian was the reason I'm getting through my imposter syndrome," Hester continues. "Doing music at school and college, it felt like quite a boy-dominated thing. There weren't many girls playing guitar and I sort of felt like I was somewhere I shouldn't be."

Hester found her feet on guitar by learning her favourite songs, inspired by the example of other guitar-playing women: "Laura Marling! When I was 15 or 16 she was everything. She makes it look really easy and writes the most beautiful songs. Anna Calvi is the goal for me, if I could play guitar like her... More recently I like Adrienne Lenker from Big Thief; I love the way she writes and plays."

Wet Leg were formed to have fun, and but they quickly created a niche. "We didn't set ourselves any boundaries," Hester says. "We took songs that we'd been playing in a folk way and put them in a full band context. We'd just hit our guitars sometimes. Actually hit them! If you're wearing rings, you can tap your rings over the pickups and they make all these overtones. Finding our sound was a bit of an accident. Before we wrote *Chaise Longue* we had a few songs that we'd jammed together, with a trashier garage rock sound. When we got management we were a bit surprised that they were like, 'Chaise Longue is so great, this is what we should roll with to introduce Wet Leg'. From the beginning we didn't want

to put any boundaries on the music that we were making, so even though it felt quite like a different trajectory, we can still explore."

Although Hester felt unsure about gear in her school days, she's now got an interesting selection of vintage gear. Her favourite guitar is a Hofner Galaxie, a space age three-pickup monster that looks like the spawn of a Strat and a Jaguar. "I recorded with an [EHX] Soul Food overdrive and my Keeley Loomer fuzz/reverb. The main tone is some fuzz from the Loomer with the Soul Food for the sort of scratchy lead line. For *Chaise Longue*, I was playing a Danelectro U2. For *Wet Dream*, I was playing the Hofner that I bought in lockdown. It's so gorgeous - it's got like nails in it holding it together, and stuck on gems."

"Rhian bought a beautiful surf green Jazzmaster that's her main guitar, and she puts that through a Supro combo. I used to have a Fender Deluxe but it was very big so I swapped out for a Vox AC10. It was a hard decision because I loved the Fender's spring reverb, but the AC10 sounds warmer."

Having generated massive interest with their first two singles, Wet Leg are now looking forward to their first album release. But there's no guarantee it'll sound like what's gone before. "From the beginning we said no boundaries," Hester says. "So if Rhian writes a beautiful ballad, it's still Wet Leg. It can be whatever we want it to be."

"FROM THE BEGINNING WE SAID NO BOUNDARIES"

HESTER
CHAMBERS



Six decades after the first SG left the Gibson factory, we study the styles of ten of the greatest players to ever pick up this iconic axe

60 years ago, Gibson introduced the SG as a new alternative to the company's Les Paul models. Early examples still bore the Les Paul signature, until Les himself expressed a disdain for its radical design and the instrument was renamed SG (short for Solid Guitar). The SG is a thinner, narrower and lighter guitar than the Les Paul, with easier access to the higher frets, and, though long sitting in the shadows of its esteemed sibling, the SG has inspired an army of loyal users – and it's a versatile beast...

While legendary rockers like AC/DC's Angus Young and Black Sabbath's Tony Iommi chose it for its stinging leads and powerful rhythm tones, the SG is equally comfortable filling out The Roots' layered hip-hop tracks courtesy of Captain Kirk Douglas and helping Brittany Howard provide soulful grooves for Alabama Shakes.

It goes without saying that you don't need an SG to play these examples. Any humbucker-equipped guitar will be fine. Alternatively, if your guitar has single coils, roll off a little treble, boost the bass, and experiment with neck and middle pickup positions.

1 ANGUS YOUNG

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/TG352](https://bit.ly/TG352)

♩ = 132

A⁵ G D/F#

BU 15(17) [17] 15(17) 13 14 12 13 12 13 15(17) 15 13 14

1

This lick is typical of how SG-lifer Angus Young would play over a song's final chorus. We've used screaming bends combined with rhythmic doublestops that complement the rhythm guitar. Be sure to employ trademark Angus-style fast, wide vibrato for an authentic AC/DC sound.

2 SISTER ROSETTA THARPE

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/TG352](https://bit.ly/TG352)

♩ = 125

E⁷ A⁷ E⁷

7 9 9 9 9 9 7 8 9 12 12 15 12 14 12 3 3 0 2 0 2 0

Rosetta spent a lot of her time hammering an acoustic guitar and this transferred to her super-aggressive SG playing. Her leads often follow the songs' chord progressions closely, using chromatic notes to lead into chord tones. Remember, fretting the right notes is only half the battle – hit every note hard!

3 BRITTANY HOWARD

TRACKS: **BIT.LY/TG352**

[illegible]

Alabama Shakes' Brittany Howard runs her SG through an Orange amp to produce a beautiful, warm tone which is perfect for her soul-inspired chordal embellishments. Make sure you play on your fingertips to ensure the notes ring into each other.

4 TONY IOMMI

TRACKS: **BIT.LY/TG352**

♩ = 95

B⁵ D⁵ C^{♯5} A⁵ B⁵ D⁵ C^{♯5} E⁵ B⁵ D⁵ C^{♯5} A⁵ B⁵ E^m

TAB

9 9 12 11 7 9 9 12 11 14 9 9 12 11 7 9 9 12 12 12 12

Godfather of metal Tony Iommi gets his trademark riffing sound by relying heavily on the fifth and sixth strings. Because he rarely moves to the lighter-gauge strings, this creates a thick, consistent sound. You'll need to move quickly, so lock your fingers in the powerchord shape and move your hand while holding your fingers in place.

5 BRENT HINDS

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/TG352](https://bit.ly/TG352)

A diehard Gibson fan, Brent Hinds has been smashing out riffs on Les Pauls, Flying Vs and, of course, SGs for over 20 years with influential prog metallers, Mastodon. We're using one of the band's preferred tunings, D standard (DGCFA#D) here. Aim for a consistent attack throughout and use all downstrokes if you can.

6 ROBBY KRIEGER

TRACKS: **BIT.LY/TG352**

♩=110

Em A Em A Em A Em A

BU BD 14-15-14-12 15 BU BD 14-15-14-12 14-14-11-12-14 11-12-14 12 14-15-17 14-15-14 17

The Doors' fingerpicking, SG-wielding guitarist is difficult to sum up in a single example. Throughout his career he's drawn from styles as wide ranging as blues and flamenco. This example shows how he blends classic blues licks with jazzier legato lines. Pick with your thumb and index finger in true Krieger style.



7 JAKE KISZKA

TRACKS: BIT.LV/T6352

♩=80
N.C.

TAB: 0 0 7 5 7 5 5 7 0 3 0 0 7 5 7 0 0 7 5 7

Jake Kiska's biting, classic rock-influenced riffing shows off the SG's raw power. The key to this riff is to ensure you cut the staccato notes (the ones with dots over/under them) short. Play close attention to the audio track to make sure you nail the phrasing.

8 CAPTAIN KIRK DOUGLAS

TRACKS: BIT.LV/T6352

♩=85
Bm⁷ Em⁷

TAB: 7

'Captain' Kirk Douglas is the resident SG expert for hip-hop heavyweights, The Roots. The guitar doesn't sit up front often on their tracks, but when it does you can hear Douglas driving things along with staccato chords like those in our example. To get the choppy sound, release pressure on the strings just after you hit the chord.

9 DEREK TRUCKS

TRACKS: BIT.LV/T6352

♩=110
E⁷ A⁷ E⁷

TAB: 17 17 17 17 15 17 17 15 17 12 14 17

Derek Trucks' masterful slide guitar work is so expressive you could be forgiven for thinking you were listening to a vocalist. His unique sound comes from the way he approaches and embellishes notes with quick movements to mimic the way a singer would approach a melody. We've tabbed the lick as we've played it, but the fluid sound of slide guitar invites experimentation.

10 ERIC CLAPTON

TRACKS: BIT.LV/T6352

♩=130
A⁷

TAB: 7 9 9 8 10 10 8 10 8 9 7 5 7 5 7 5 6 5 7 7 5

Clapton has used Fender Strats almost exclusively for over 50 years, but earlier in his career, most notably with Cream, SGs were a mainstay of his arsenal – and a key part of his patented 'Woman Tone'. Play our example with a light picking attack. Try not to create accents in the hammer-ons and pull-offs by hammering on too hard or pulling-off too aggressively.



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Photos: Ethan Russell

50 THE BEATLES

Greatest Guitar Songs

No band has inspired more people to play guitar than The Beatles – the greatest, biggest and most influential band of all time. And so – to coincide with the long-awaited premiere of the three-part documentary series *Get Back* – TG presents The 50 Greatest Beatles Guitar Songs, as voted by you in a recent poll on GuitarWorld.com.

There were so many to choose from. *I Feel Fine*, with its groundbreaking use of feedback. *A Hard Day's Night*, with that mythic opening chord. *Helter Skelter*, when the Fab Four turned it up to 11. *Blackbird*, one of the most perfect acoustic songs ever recorded. And *Something*, the classic ballad that marked George Harrison as a songwriter to rival John Lennon and Paul McCartney, and in which George delivered what was arguably the greatest solo he ever played.

The top 50 countdown features in-depth analysis of every song from TG writers Grant Moon, Ellie Rogers and our former Editor Tim Tucker, a writer, musician and respected authority on The Beatles as host of the podcast *My Favourite Beatles Song*, which celebrates the music of the Fab Four with distinguished guests.

On page 54, Tim also reveals 10 Great Beatles Guitar Moments You've Never Heard Before – lost treasures unearthed on the newly-released super-deluxe edition of the band's final album *Let It Be*.

And while the pioneering quartet took us all on a Magical Mystery Tour, we take you on a magical gear tour in our profile of the now-iconic guitars and amps used by the band.

Finally, we'll show you exactly how the band wrote some of those incredible songs as we look at some of the chords, changes and harmonic techniques they employed. Turn the page, and let's get started! ➔



Tim Tucker is a writer, musician and host of the podcast 'My Favourite Beatles Song', which celebrates the music of the Beatles with distinguished guests: www.myfavouritebeatlessong.com



50 THE BEATLES

Greatest Guitar Songs



50 HELP!

Swift picking arpeggio action

After an explosive chorus-intro, we get a speedily-picked arpeggio run, played by George Harrison, that pulls us into the lead song from the Beatles' second film. He uses a combination of fretted and open strings on a Gretsch Tennessean to provide the distinctive guitar hook in one of the band's most deceptively upbeat songs. Lennon later explained the lyrics as a genuine cry for help, brought on by the pressures of Beatlemania, but the driving arrangement and upbeat delivery makes the finished recording a joyful pop/rock experience. Harrison's lead is backed by Lennon's 12-string rhythm part, played on a recently acquired Framus Hootenanny 5/024.

49 BIRTHDAY

Monster old-school rock and roll riffage

An old-school rocker inspired by Little Richard that Paul McCartney wrote in one recording session for the White Album, before the other Beatles had even arrived. With Paul on piano duties, George Harrison takes the bass role, leaving John Lennon to provide a rare lead guitar performance on a Beatles record. Most notable for its epic

FIVE OF US

From left: Ringo Starr, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, John Lennon and Yoko Ono

blues-rock riff and unison bass and lead guitar run, this is the sound of an experienced band creating joy in the studio.

48 I AM THE WALRUS

A soundscape worthy of Picasso

An astonishing recording that ex-Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr called 'like Hieronymus Bosch set to music.' The song's combination of queasy strings, grungy electric piano and twisted lyrics showcases the band at the height of their psychedelic period. But underpinning the sound effects and semi-nonsense lyrics is a startlingly adventurous song structure. Fundamentally in the key of A, it draws chords from the parallel minor key, being made up of nothing but major chords with roots on all seven white keys on the piano. Harrison plays his psychedelically painted Fender Strat, while McCartney's Rickenbacker 4001S bass provides the low end.

47 YOU'VE GOT TO HIDE YOUR LOVE AWAY

The Fabs get folk

Bob Dylan made a massive impression on the Beatles, and his influence can be felt in this, the first all-acoustic song the band recorded, with Lennon on his 12-string Framus and Harrison playing his Gibson J-160E. The modal-

flavoured 12/8 tune uses a G 'pedal' note on the 3rd fret of the top string, throughout the sequence of first position open chords. This folky drone yields interesting chord voicings, such as the Dsus4 and Fadd9, that give the song its distinctive character (and most likely influenced Noel Gallagher on Oasis classics *Whatever* and *Wonderwall*). The first Beatle recording to use an outside musician, flautist Johnnie Scott.

46 I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND

The song that launched the Beatles in the United States

I Want To Hold Your Hand's impact was huge, prompting future rock superstars such as Bruce Springsteen, Tom Petty and Todd Rundgren to buy guitars and form bands. The opening C to D salvo pre-empted the power pop format to come and introduces the ingenious harmonies of the verse. The song's chord sequence, which Bob Dylan called 'outrageous' for the time, gallops from G major to D to Em, peaking with an exhilarating high on B7 under the falsetto 'haaaand', inspiring hysterical screaming from the girls in the audience. Throw in the tender shift in key, via a Dm7 chord under the line, 'And when I touch you...', and you've got the blueprint for Beatlemania.

45 I'VE GOT A FEELING

Paul and John merge guitar riffs one last time

The Beatles *Get Back* project (which turned into the *Let It Be* album), was conceived as an exercise in recapturing the band in live performance. In *I've Got A Feeling*, the opening rolling guitar pattern, a combination of two entirely different songs by Lennon and McCartney over the same sequence, hangs on a bluesy groove swinging from A to D over an A bass pedal note. John and George's guitars provide the captivating rhythmic interplay, with overdriven blues runs and grungy rhythm work filling out the picture. Billy Preston supports on electric organ, making this one of the funkiest fab tracks on one of their last live recordings.

44 HAPPINESS IS A WARM GUN

A cryptic journey through the history of rock

The most complex song the Beatles ever conceived took forty-five takes to get right. In under three minutes it runs a gamut of rock and roll guitar styles, musical genres and time signatures: there are sections in 4/4, 3/8, 6/16 and 4/8. The song opens with a gentle folky fingerpicking meditation over extended minor chords. ('She's not a girl who misses much...'), shifts into a 3/8 modal passage ('I need a fix...') and an ambitious multi-metre polyrhythmic groove ('Mother Superior jump the gun...'), before wrapping up in a throwback C-major Doo Wop passage ('Happiness is a warm gun...').

Get Back, later becoming Let It Be, was conceived as an exercise in recapturing the band in a live performance



STARR QUALITY
Ringo's song Octopus's Garden was elevated by a "perfectly poised" solo from George

43 OCTOPUS'S GARDEN

Ringo's only self-penned song with the Beatles

George Harrison gave some uncredited creative support to Ringo by helping to flesh his idea out and round it off, while providing a charming and uplifting guitar performance on the finished recording from *Abbey Road*. At the heart of this joyful children's singalong is a classic Four-Chord Trick (E C#m A B), embellished by Harrison's accomplished country and western intro and interpolated solo phrases. The song pivots beautifully up from the key of E major to A major for George's perfectly poised solo, in his best Chet Atkins style, probably delivered on his Fender Rosewood Telecaster using the neck pickup.

42 PENNY LANE

The perfect chord sequence

It may seem surprising to find a recording that features barely audible guitar parts so high up on the list of TG readers' favourite Beatles tracks. But this lively pop tune, with its startling interjections of the everyday and surreal, is a brilliant showcase for McCartney's songwriting chops. Staccato piano chords outline a seemingly innocent I-vi-ii-V Doo Wop chord progression in B, before pivoting masterfully into B minor for the second half of the verse ('Of every head he's had the pleasure to know'). Even more majestically, the chorus shifts to the key of A via another pivot on an E chord.

41 LUCY IN THE SKY WITH DIAMONDS

A fantasy trip down the rabbit hole

Another great example of how the Beatles forged unique magic from harmony, melody and lavish instrumentation. Its sonic palette includes a Lowry organ set to a bell-like celeste sound, guitars amplified through rotating Leslie speakers and Harrison's droning sitar, all underpinned by Paul McCartney's descending Rickenbacker bass line. Harmonically, the song shifts through various key centres and time signatures, from its 3/4 verse in A major and B, major, to the rousing 4/4 chorus in G major. The resulting kaleidoscope of sound and lyrics is both hypnotic and catchy, dreamy and uplifting. And Lennon maintained it had nothing to do with the LSD its title spelled out.

40 SGT. PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND (REPRISE)

The concept album gets loud

An upbeat reprise of the first song and title track of the 1967 album, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (Reprise)* has a faster tempo and heavier instrumentation than its counterpart. Both Harrison and Lennon opted for more distorted guitar sounds using cranked Vox amps, and Harrison became far more liberal with his jaunty, fill-in licks. The concept of the alter-ego band allowed The Beatles to take a few creative risks and on the reprise of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, Harrison's playing in particular is quite uncharacteristic, with a brasher, bolder feel than he would typically employ.

39 MICHELLE

The Beatles en Français

Written in a Chet Atkins fingerpicking style with a bohemian French feel, *Michelle* was cited by Paul McCartney as one of his very first songs he ever wrote on his Zenith Archtop acoustic guitar - although the composition wasn't completed until November 1965. The song contains a chord that McCartney picked-up from jazz guitarist Jim Gretty, which he's variously referred to as "one great ham-fisted chord", "F something" and "F Demented". He's referring to a B₇#9, which he likely thought of as an altered F as the song was shifted up from its original key for recording, with a capo at the 5th fret.

38 DRIVE MY CAR

Paul takes the driving seat

The iconic opening lick to *Drive My Car* is the first thing we hear on 1965's *Rubber Soul*. The track features a funky Motown style guitar riff - a nod to soul legend Otis Redding - played by George on his 1961 Sonic Blue Fender Stratocaster, and doubled by Paul on bass. Paul, however, didn't stick to bass and vocals on this song, and also overdubbed its punchy, slide-enhanced guitar solo. He had figured out this part before even arriving at the studio, leaving George relegated to rhythm duties, and John with nothing but a tambourine to shake!

37 AND I LOVE HER

"It's got nice chords in it!"

In his biography *Many Years From Now*, Paul McCartney describes *And I Love Her* as "the first ballad I impressed myself with. It's got nice chords in it". The majority of the song shifts back and forth between E and its relative minor C#m, before changing key to F just before the solo. Here, Harrison delivers a delicate, Spanish-inspired solo, which, unlike many solos, reaches its conclusion at the low end of the fretboard on the guitar's lowest string. Lennon uses a Gibson J-160E for his bright, percussive rhythm work, while the warm tones of Harrison's José Ramírez classical guitar provides the perfect complement.



LONDON, 1964
George Harrison (playing a Gretsch 6119 Tennessean) and John Lennon (with his black Rickenbacker 325) during The Beatles' performance for TV show *Shindig!*

36 ALL MY LOVING

Macca goes country

Propelled along by a furiously strummed triplet rhythm part performed by Lennon, *All My Loving* is a miniature powerhouse of a song at just over two minutes long. A highlight of their 1963 LP *With The Beatles* - and the track which famously opened their debut Ed Sullivan Show performance - *All My Loving* was never actually released as a single in the UK or USA. McCartney had originally envisioned it as a country and western song, and Harrison's short, twangy guitar break gives a stylistic nod to Nashville players. The part was likely recorded on his Gretsch 'Chet Atkins' Country Gentleman guitar.

35 RAIN

Their best B-side?

One of the great unsung Beatles classics, *Rain* was released as the flip side to the *Paperback Writer* single. Both songs were recorded during the sessions for *Revolver*, in which the group experimented increasingly with studio technology and psychoactive drugs. Set in the key of G major, the rhythm track for *Rain* was recorded at a fast tempo in G# before being slowed down to reveal the darker,

looser and more psychedelic tone that characterises the arpeggiated guitar hook. Another key feature of *Rain* is Lennon's backwards vocal, which may have inspired the legendary backwards guitar solo of *I'm Only Sleeping*, recorded during the same session.

34 **HEY JUDE** A truly epic anthem, with guitars subtly deployed

Hey Jude was the first single released on The Beatles' Apple record label in 1968. Penned by McCartney to comfort Lennon's young son Julian in the wake of his parents' break-up, its title evolved from 'Hey Jules'. It reaches a length of over seven minutes without a guitar solo. In fact, guitars play a fairly minor role on the track, with John's strummed acoustic being the most audible contribution. George had planned to answer the vocal lines with corresponding licks, but this was vetoed by Paul, and George spent much of the session watching from the control room, making only discreet appearances on the song.

33 **DON'T LET ME DOWN** Harrison channels Hendrix

Playing the iconic Rosewood Telecaster he'd been gifted by Fender in 1968, George Harrison opened *Don't Let Me Down* with his instantly recognisable Hendrix-esque lick in E. Written by Lennon as a plea to Yoko Ono, *Don't Let Me Down* was recorded during the band's *Let It Be* sessions and released as the B-side to *Get Back*. Harrison's delicate playing counterbalances Lennon's impassioned vocal and steady, unaccented strumming pattern that powers the track. The band famously performed the song at their Apple HQ rooftop gig in January 1969, but the studio version is where you'll find the fully-formed iteration of Harrison's brilliant accompanying part.

32 **BACK IN THE U.S.S.R** The tongue-in-cheek *White Album* opener

Based on a parody of Chuck Berry's *Back in the USA*, and packed with musical puns, the playfulness of *Back In The U.S.S.R* masks the turbulent conditions under which it was made. The 'White Album' sessions were rife with tensions, and the track was recorded without Ringo, who'd temporarily quit in protest at McCartney's criticism of his drumming. Over the chorus, the lead guitar line is overdubbed at two octaves, while the famous jet plane sample rumbles in and out. Harrison's solo is characterised by wailing bends, and McCartney gets a look-in on lead too, contributing a high-pitched, single-note solo over the final verse.

31 **I SAW HER STANDING THERE** Album one, track one...

The opening track on *Please Please Me*, the band's 1963 debut album, *I Saw Her Standing There* is propelled into action by an energetic count-in from Paul McCartney – a feature that was left in as record producer George Martin wanted to create the effect of a live performance. The tune then launches into a driving groove with John strumming 7th chords and George's jaunty lead licks filling-in the gaps between vocals. The appearance of a full-length guitar solo is notable as solos of any kind are relatively scarce in The Beatles' early releases. Its jerky improvisational feel again lends the track a 'live' energy.



All My Loving
is a miniature
powerhouse of
a song at just over
two minutes long

30 SHE SAID SHE SAID

Trippy mid-60s acid rock

John Lennon recalled writing *She Said She Said* after an LSD trip during a break in touring. The song's Mixolydian-flavoured main chords (B $\flat$, 7, A $\flat$, 7, E $\flat$, in the verse) are played on ringing, multi-tracked electrics and with a scorching, distorted lead riff from Harrison. You could play this with a capo on the 1st fret then with standard A7 shape on the 3rd fret for the B $\flat$, 7, but to better simulate that twanging tone try tuning to E $\flat$, standard instead, then playing the song as if in B. Played on the B and E strings, lead lines such as B $\flat$, C, D, E $\flat$, D, E $\flat$, F, B $\flat$, really sing...

29 ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

Lennon's incantatory hippie piece

A weary-sounding Lennon played the acoustic and lead guitars on this key track from 1970 swan song *Let It Be*. Listen to 2003 reboot *Let It Be... Naked* for a clear idea of the song's lovely, slightly listless chords before producer Phil Spector got his hands on them, slowed them down (thus detuning them from D to D $\flat$) and soaking the whole thing in cosmic choir. Lennon reportedly recorded this on his then-new Martin D-28 acoustic guitar, which sounds gorgeous and mellow as he picks around the intro chords D, D/A, G, Dmaj7, F $\sharp$ sus4, Aadd9, before one of the most irresistibly simple, meditative progressions in the Fabs' canon.

28 STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREVER

A psychedelic classic

From the opening strains of McCartney's sweet/creepy Mellotron flutes, this trippy Lennon classic is ripe with sounds of the 60s psychedelic scene. Lennon's voice recording - slowed down slightly for the tune's key of nearly-B $\flat$ major - sounds woozily disembodied, and Harrison adds the exotic tones of the swarmandala, a high-pitched Indian harp. The guitar work here is subtle amid the experimental tapestry of strings, brass and effects, apart from the slides into the title line, and the loud, sitar-like electric bends at 2 mins 57 secs (down from G to F, then to B $\flat$). Hammered-on D/E $\flat$, trills then imply B $\flat$ /B $\flat$, sus4, as the song floats out (and back in again).

27 NOWHERE MAN

Harrison and Lennon together in the 'magic' solo

A short, sweet songwriting masterclass from the *Rubber Soul* album, *Nowhere Man* comprises folksy, E major chords (E, B, A, E, F $\sharp$ m, Am, E), a child-like melody with mature vocal harmonies and a guitar solo that is sheer magic. Harrison and Lennon reportedly recorded it in unison, on their matching Sonic Blue Fender Strats. Over the verse they play a trebly melody with a harmonic logic matching that of the vocal line - accentuating the vital chord tones (notably C, the minor third of that borrowed, Beatlesy A minor), sliding down from B to the low open E, and crowning that with a natural E harmonic (high E string, fifth fret). Absolute perfection.



WE CAN WORK IT OUT

John and Paul, with Ringo and Yoko, during the last days of The Beatles

26 A HARD DAY'S NIGHT

That chord!

The title track to the Fabs' 1964 album and hit film surely has the most famous, most analysed opening chord in rock 'n' roll history. Harrison himself once said it's an Fadd9 (frets 1-X-3-2-1-3) with McCartney playing a D on bass, and that's how the band played it live (listen to *Live At The BBC* and *Live At The Hollywood Bowl*). Other scholars say the chord on the studio recording is played with a G on the sixth string (3-X-3-2-1-3), making it an Fadd9/G. Adding to Harrison's jangling Rickenbacker 360-12 12-string electric, George Martin plays G and D notes on piano. G7sus4 (3-5-3-5-3-3) is a similar chord, bringing in the D note absent from the Fadd9/G (though omitting its A) and can sound more authentic.

25 IN MY LIFE

So very Beatlesy...

From *Rubber Soul*, Lennon's fond remembrance of his early life in Liverpool is set to a fittingly beautiful, harmony-rich melody. As its writer strums rhythm, Harrison plays the song's lovely, simple guitar hook - C $\sharp$, A, C $\sharp$, D, E, G $\sharp$ - on a clean, clear electric guitar (possibly his Gretsch Country Gentleman or Gibson ES-345). The verse - A, E, F $\sharp$ m, A7, D, Dm, A - features that very-Beatlesy major to minor change on the song's IV chord, the D. George Martin's nimble, double speed electric piano break is a quirky twist to a classic song,



home key of G. In the verse, note how one electric guitar hits the high, first-inversion triads of the central G, A, C, G chords in time with Ringo's snare; another fleshes out the tapestry with arpeggios around the chords' lower, 7th voicings. McCartney took an active role in the guitars here - that bendy, bluesy lead part's attributed to him.

22 LET IT BE

In Paul's beautiful song, George's perfect solo

With the title track to the band's final album, McCartney hit a hymn-like tone that still resonates with audiences across the world. The main piano chords - C, G, Am, F, C, G, F, C, E, Dm, C - make for a classic church/gospel progression, and at the 1 min 57 sec mark Harrison comes in with a characteristically melodic instrumental, a complement to Macca's vocal. Use A minor pentatonic shapes to replicate his phrasing here (A being the relative minor of the song's tonic key, C major). Producer Phil Spector selected a jagged, fuzzy Harrison solo for the album, but the single edit features an earlier, more mellow take the guitarist recorded through a Leslie speaker.

21 REVOLUTION 1

A protest song, played cool

The first song recorded for 'The Beatles' sprawling, self-titled 1968 LP (aka 'The White Album'), *Revolution 1* sees Lennon set out his thoughts on peaceful political uprising against a lolling A/D shuffle, with an intuitive pre-chorus of Bm, E, Bm, G, A, F#, E. Its writer lays down the mellow, singalong acoustic guitars, adding a pleasing laid-back lick on the E7 turnarounds too. Harrison contributes cool, diad slides on distorted electric and some sporadic bluesy lead flurries. Brass, piano and McCartney's wandering bass add to the groove of the song that spawned the much heavier single version *Revolution*, and influential sound experiment *Revolution 9*.

one that expresses more in two and a half minutes than many artists muster in a lifetime. A great addition to your repertoire.

24 DEAR PRUDENCE

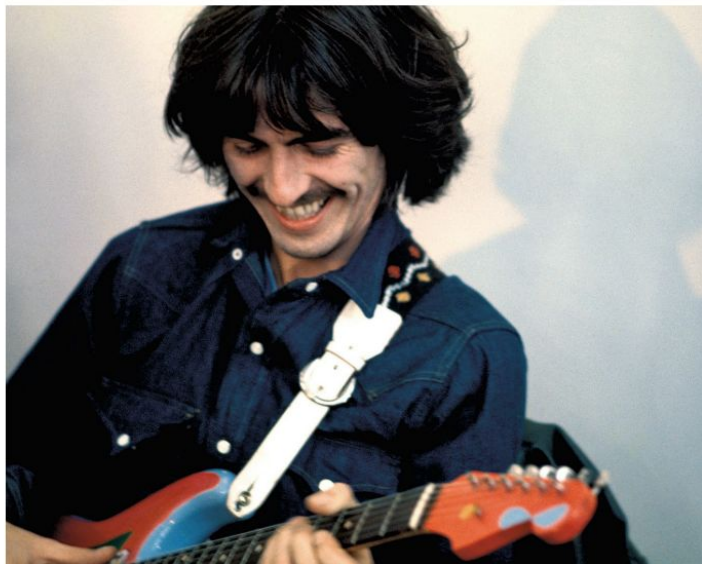
Peak Lennon

John's mesmerising song from 'The White Album' was reportedly inspired by actress Mia Farrow's younger sister Prudence, who wouldn't 'come out to play' from her hut for three weeks during a meditation retreat in India. Tuning his Epiphone Casino to drop-D and using a picking pattern he learned from folk star Donovan, Lennon plays the insistent main progression - a D major diad (D/F#) under the lower descending line of D, C, B, B, . McCartney's clever bass accentuates that while also anchored on the song's tonic D, and from the mid section, Harrison's SG supplies fizzing blues licks, building a triumphant, ascending melodic line into the song's climax.

23 SGT. PEPPER'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND

Introducing the album that changed everything

Sgt. Pepper marked the moment when the long-player became an art form unto itself, with Epiphone Casinos and Harrison's Gibson SG essential components of its sound. The curtain goes up with this vaudevillean title track, the Fabs kicking off in A before modulating to the song's



50 THE BEATLES

Greatest Guitar
Songs

DIG IT

The Beatles' final public performance from the rooftop of Apple Corps HQ at 3 Savile Row, London, on January 30, 1969

20 YER BLUES

A far-from-straightforward blues song

In tune with the late-60s blues boom, the Beatles delivered this slice of raunchy hard rock on the 'White Album'. Harrison and Lennon play entwined overdriven riffs and licks, with subtle shifts in time signature from 12/8 to 8/8 to 4/4 providing the twists that make this more than just a 'straight 12-bar'. For this recording, Lennon thrashed his Epiphone Casino ES-230-TD, going full grunge mode in the rhythmic guitar solo. Harrison played his famous 'Lucy', a goldtop Gibson Les Paul repainted red, which had circulated amongst various rock stars before being given to him by Eric Clapton in 1968.

19 GET BACK

Maximum R&B from a 'tight little band'

The Beatles settle into a smooth rhythm and blues shuffle for one of the highlights of the *Let It Be* period. John Lennon adopted lead guitar duties after Harrison briefly quit the band during tense filmed rehearsals. He plays some of his most subtly effective guitar parts, including the pentatonic answering phrases during the verses, and tasty partial chords at the seventh and ninth frets throughout the chorus. Lennon's guitar solo is a marvel of soulful economy, with its mournful bends and stuttering picking pattern. The song was immortalised in the famous rooftop concert that was their last public performance.

18 YESTERDAY

The song that came in a dream

Voted 'The Song of the Century' by BBC Radio 2 in 1999, *Yesterday* has been covered more often than any other song in history, with over 2,200 versions recorded. Paul McCartney is the only Beatle on the recording, playing his acoustic guitar backed by a string quartet. It's an early example of McCartney's unique picking technique, using his thumb for the bass note and 'sort of flicking the high strings' (see also: *Blackbird* on p49). The recording is in F major, but McCartney tuned down his Epiphone Texan FT-79 acoustic a whole tone, so he could play it in G.

17 A DAY IN THE LIFE

Profound lyrical expression plus visionary musical expansion

The grand finale to *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* begins quietly, with Lennon strumming open G, Bm, Em, and C chords on his Gibson J-160E acoustic. But what a journey it takes us on, from the tragic death of a politician, through a devastating world war, to the banality of everyday human existence. The guitar plays a supportive role throughout, as the orchestra spirals into McCartney's piano-led mid-section, before tugging us back into a last verse and that devastating final E major chord played on three pianos at full sustain. For many, this is the band's finest moment.



16 I FEEL FINE

Another Beatles first: feedback!

John Lennon was inordinately proud that this was the world's first recording to feature guitar feedback, initiated by Paul's bass note and the resulting resonance from Lennon's guitar. The finger-contorting guitar riff drives the song, played in unison by Lennon on his Gibson J-160E (an acoustic with onboard pickup) and Harrison on his Gretsch Tennessean. Using a rhythmic pattern inspired by Bobby Parker's *Watch Your Step*, it adds 9ths and 6ths to the basic 12-bar sequence, driving this joyful rocker through a unique blend of blues changes, latin beats and pop melody. Harrison's four-bar solo is a masterclass in understatement.

15 TICKET TO RIDE

McCartney's lead guitar debut

One of The Beatles' first 'drone' songs is characterised by its chiming guitar riff on an open A chord, with an added 9th achieved by alternating the open B string. The riff is played by George Harrison on his 1963 Rickenbacker 12-string, invoking the jingle-jangle guitar sound made prominent in the mid-60s by the Byrds (who had themselves been inspired by the 12-string outro to *A Hard Day's Night*). This is also the first Beatles record where the guitar solo is played by Paul McCartney rather than George Harrison. McCartney overdubbed his distinctive bluesy licks in the bridges and outro, using his recently acquired Epiphone Casino.

14 PAPERBACK WRITER

The Beatles invent the Monkees

Recorded during early sessions for the *Revolver* album, the Beatles' 12th British single saw another turning point in their sound. The guitar riffs were now heavier and more distorted – compare the overdrive of *Paperback Writer* to the straighter sound on *Day Tripper* just a year earlier. McCartney plays bass and lead guitar, using his Epiphone Casino for the guitar riff and his Rickenbacker 4001S for the beefed-up bass, which was boosted to new levels thanks to innovative new recording techniques introduced by engineer Geoff Emerick. The sound and feel, and a mishearing of the lyrics, directly inspired the Monkees' first single, *Last Train To Clarksville*.

13 COME TOGETHER

Groovin' up slowly

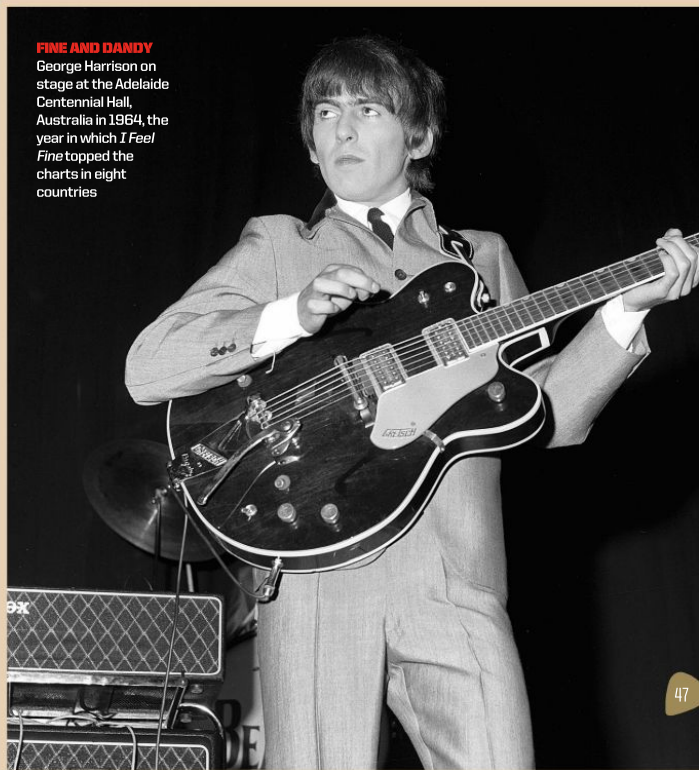
Originally conceived as a political campaign song for hippy guru Timothy Leary, *Come Together* has its roots in Chuck Berry, both in its borrowed opening lyrics, as well as Lennon's classic rock 'n' roll rhythm guitar pattern. The swampy D minor blues groove goes at a deceptively slow pace, with the emphasis on 16th notes from Ringo's drum pattern giving it a more upbeat vibe. The feel is enhanced by the interweaving of Lennon's and Harrison's rhythm guitars, along with McCartney's fluid upper register bass and overdubbed electric piano. Listen out for Harrison's sweet tone on the song's harmonised lead guitar solo and outro licks.

12 HEY BULLDOG

The quintessential Beatles rock 'n' roll song

A monster piano/bass/guitar riff drives this punchy rock number, recorded at the tail end of The Beatles' blissed out psychedelic period. McCartney delivers a bouncing improvised bass line, while Harrison produces one of his best

FINE AND DANDY
George Harrison on stage at the Adelaide Centennial Hall, Australia in 1964, the year in which *I Feel Fine* topped the charts in eight countries



Over a bouncing bassline, *Hey Bulldog* features one of Harrison's best rock solos for The Beatles

rock solos for the Beatles, using his 1964 Gibson SG at full blast. In his book *Here, There and Everywhere*, Chief Engineer Geoff Emerick recalled of this session, '[Harrison's] amp was turned up really loud, and he used one of his new fuzz boxes, which made his guitar absolutely scream.'

11 NORWEGIAN WOOD (THIS BIRD HAS FLOWN)

A story song with a twist

A standout on the *Rubber Soul* album, this is one of Lennon's most obviously Bob Dylan-inspired songs, written and recorded at a time when folk and rock were rubbing up against each other and creating sparks. The main theme is a descending phrase in triple time, using notes from the Mixolydian mode. Lennon plays with a capo on the 2nd fret of his Gibson J-160E, using the open D chord shape to craft its melodic contours. George Harrison harmonises with a sitar, for the first time on a pop record. The parallel minor in the bridge makes for a lovely contrast in texture.

Photos: Getty Images



10 THE END

The grand, three-guitarist finale

The last significant song on the last recorded Beatles album, it's clear that the band was fully aware of its imminent demise. Capping the majestic medley that dominates the latter half of *Abbey Road*, it's notable for two key musical landmarks: Ringo's one and only drum solo on a Beatles record, followed by the three guitar-playing Beatles trading licks. Over an A7 to D7 raw blues groove, McCartney, Harrison and Lennon take 2-bar solos in turn, cycling around three times. They agreed to record the whole performance live, lined up next to each other in the same room, and after an hour's rehearsal, nailed it in one take. According to Engineer Geoff Emerick, "John, Paul and George looked like they had gone back in time, like they were kids again, playing together for the sheer enjoyment of it." A fitting end to the recorded output of the greatest band of all time.

GOOD NIGHT
The Beatles play live together for the last time, January 30, 1969

09 I WANT YOU (SHE'S SO HEAVY)

Rock power and Lennon's best solo

The most overtly 'rock' song the Beatles recorded consists of two contrasting musical sections. The 6/8 intro features John Lennon's picked arpeggios in D minor, accompanied by some sweet lead guitar from George, culminating in an ambiguous Aaug7 chord. For the verse ('I want you...'), it switches into 4/4 for a 26-bar blues sequence in A minor, a laid-back progression that features Lennon supporting his vocal with some tasteful lead guitar phrases, à la George Benson. After a transition over an E7,9 chord ('driving me mad...'), the song returns to the intro theme for its refrain ('She's so heavy'), which gets increasingly heavier and doom-laden on each repetition, especially in the cacophonous outro, on which Harrison and Lennon piled multiple guitar overdubs. McCartney's bass and Ringo's drums get more exuberant as the song progresses, while Lennon's guitar solo over the verse chord sequence is one of his best on record.

After an hour of rehearsing *The End's* guitar solos, John, Paul and George nailed it in one take

08 TAXMAN

The 'Hendrix chord' – before Hendrix!

The opening track of the *Revolver* album is a crisp 12-bar written by George Harrison. It's notable for its crunchy D7#9 chord stabs, dubbed the 'Gretty chord' by McCartney as they learned the shape from Jim Gretty at the Liverpool pool where they bought their instruments. A year after this recording, Jimi Hendrix would use the same chord shape on *Purple Haze*, leading many to call it the 'Hendrix chord'. Paul McCartney makes a supreme contribution to this song in one of his most memorable bass riffs, played on his Rickenbacker 4001S and recorded using innovative new studio microphone techniques. Remarkably, Paul McCartney also played the guitar solo on his Epiphone Casino, after Harrison had struggled to get the right feel for it. The savage attack and Indian-influenced melodic patterns make this one of the great left-field guitar solos of the period, and a high point on one of the Beatles' greatest albums.



07 BLACKBIRD

An acoustic guitar standard

This solo performance by Paul McCartney is the ultimate showcase for his unique finger-picking style (see also: *Yesterday*, p46). With nothing but acoustic guitar, foot taps and birdsong sound effects, it represents a rare moment of peace during the tense sessions for the 'White Album'. Featuring harmonies outlined in parallel 10ths, rather than fully formed chords, the starting point was a half-remembered Bach composition, *Bourrée In E Minor*, which McCartney and George Harrison learned as a party piece in their early years. From those origins McCartney crafts a song of tranquil beauty, coloured by passing slash chords, diminished intervals and sus4s. Paul has since elaborated on the lyrics' metaphor of self-awakening, revealing its core theme of black citizens' emancipation during the civil rights movement in the southern states of America. For the recording, Paul played his new right-handed Martin D-28 acoustic, strung upside down so he could play it left-handed.

BEATLES FOR SALE

Performing on *Top Of The Pops* in London on June 16, 1966

06 HELTER SKELTER

The Beatles turn it up to 11

An explicit reaction to the emerging heavy blues rock format of Cream, Hendrix and Led Zeppelin, this aural onslaught is the Beatles' most incendiary performance. The original version of the song was a slow minor blues dirge, as heard on the edited outtake on *Anthology 3*. But a faster, heavier, thrasher arrangement was instigated by McCartney, in response to a story in the music press claiming The Who had recorded the most raucous rock 'n' roll song ever. The band go full beast mode, with McCartney on lead guitar, Harrison playing rhythm, and Lennon on a Fender VI bass. It kicks off with McCartney's vicious 16th-note riff, the rest of the band crashing in 6 bars later, with nods to Hendrix's *Foxy Lady* in the unison guitar/bass runs. McCartney's and Harrison's frantic guitar lines, Lennon's thumping bass and Ringo's thundering drums anticipate heavy metal, punk and grunge in the years to come.

Photo: Getty Images



PICK YOUR OWN

McCartney's *Blackbird* illustrates his unique finger-picking style

05 DAY TRIPPER

A withering attack on 'weekend hippies'

The most recognisable guitar line by the Beatles, and possibly any rock band, is also their most melodically and rhythmically interesting. John Lennon is the main songwriter, telling *Playboy* in 1980 he was responsible for 'the lick, the guitar break and the whole bit.' But it was Harrison who played the double tracked main riff that dominates the recording, possibly on his Gretsch Country Gentleman, with McCartney doubling up on his Hofner bass. In terms of the chord sequence, from the start it appears to be setting up a straightforward blues progression in E, but then takes fascinating diversions, twisting through the secondary dominant chords F#7, G#7 and C#7 during the chorus. It finally reaches the true dominant B7 for an extended guitar solo in the bridge, raising the dramatic tension to new heights before the reintroduction of the main riff back in E. The vocal melody is more sophisticated than most blues, too, with the 'Got a good reason...' starting on an A note over an E7 chord, and then harmonised with a 9th two bars later, making it a tricky song to sing (try it!). Be sure to check out Jimi Hendrix's soulful cover version on the *BBC Sessions* album.

04 SOMETHING

George Harrison's greatest guitar solo

George Harrison was the Beatles' lead guitarist from the beginning, but as the youngest in the band it took a while for him to reach full maturity as a songwriter and musician (he was just 26 when he started recording *Something*). This song is the moment it all came together, landing him his first single A side with the band, and going on to become the second most covered Beatles song after *Yesterday*. The pining lead guitar line that opens the song turns on an exquisite phrase, climbing chromatically from A to C, leading into the sighing chord sequence of the verse: C Maj7 C7 F and on into A minor. One of the song's most magical moments is when a variation on the intro guitar lick jumps a semitone higher to C#, to take us into the soulfully uplifting bridge in A major ('You're asking me will my love grow...'). The guitar solo over the full eight bars of the verse is a perfectly crafted melody in its own right, as memorable as any guitar line he played during his Beatles' career. Paul McCartney's bass part is a delightful improvisation of bustling lines and melodic invention, although Harrison himself was concerned it was 'too busy'.

03 HERE COMES THE SUN

An acoustic delight

One of two standout songs by George Harrison on Abbey Road, *Here Comes The Sun* was conceived on close friend Eric Clapton's acoustic guitar in Clapton's garden. The song took shape when Harrison 'sagged off' from depressing legal meetings with the Beatles during the lead up to the band's split. Played using a capo at the 7th fret and configured around the open D chord shape (transposed to



A by the capo), the straightforward open A, D, E chord sequence in the verse shines with sunny optimism. The song gets a further lift during the chorus, with the surprise arrival of the foreign B major chord (on the second repetition of 'Here comes the sun, and I say...'), and the triplet feel arpeggios that follow ('It's alright...'). The bridge section extends the complex rhythm pattern further, dropping in 4ths through C, G, D, A, E, with accompanying time signature shifts in 3/8, 5/8, 4/4 and 2/4, inspired by George's passion for polyrhythmic Indian music. When the Beatles catalogue was introduced to streaming services in the 2010s, this was their most streamed song, a final validation for the dark horse who had been overshadowed by his bandmates throughout his career.

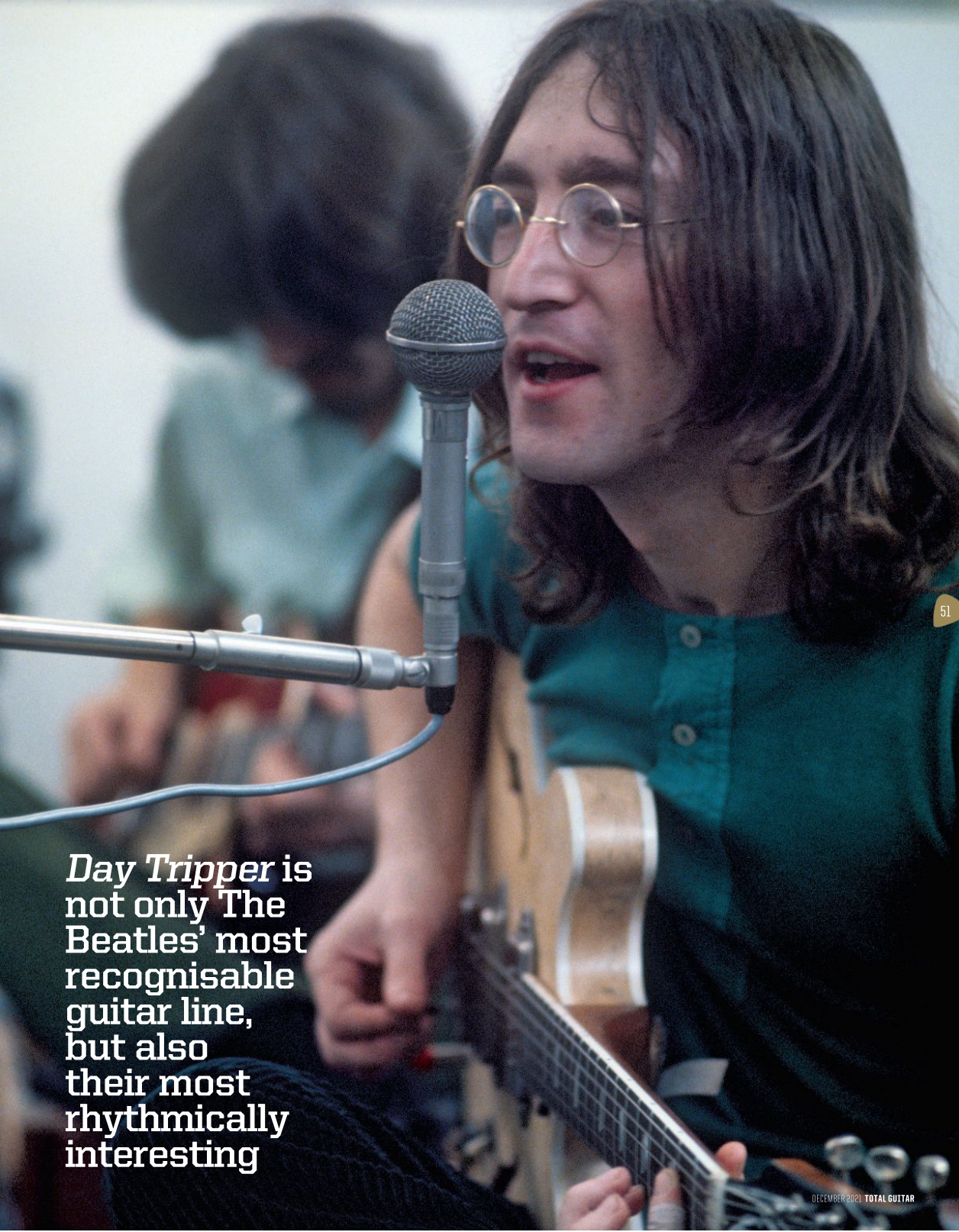
02 AND YOUR BIRD CAN SING

The birth of twin lead guitars

George Harrison and Paul McCartney deliver one of the earliest examples of twin harmonised lead guitars in rock, paving the way for the likes of The Eagles and Thin Lizzy in the 1970s. The intricately worked out scale-like passages, harmonised on their Epiphone Casinos in intervals of 3rds, 4ths, 5ths and 6ths, and backed by McCartney's semi-walking bass line, provide a kind of baroque cycle motif at the heart of the song. Hints of Celtic and Indian motifs add to the colour. The first half of this guitar melody launches the whole band into the intro in E major, while the full 8-bar passage is revealed during the bridge and repeated in the outro. The iconic ending of the song has the twin guitar line land on an unresolved A major chord, a 4th above the tonic chord, with McCartney's bass hammer-ons leaving the listener hanging (Paul Weller's band The Jam reference the same effect in the climax to their 1979 hit single *Going Underground*). For a fascinating insight into the band's creative process, check out the original Byrds-like arrangement, with Harrison's Rickenbacker 12-string backing, on *Anthology 2* (spoiled, or perhaps enhanced, by Lennon and McCartney's hysterical laughter throughout the take).

BEATLEMANIA!

Paul and John on the set of *The Ed Sullivan Show* in New York on February 9, 1964. The Beatles' performance was witnessed by 73 million people



Day Tripper is not only The Beatles' most recognisable guitar line, but also their most rhythmically interesting

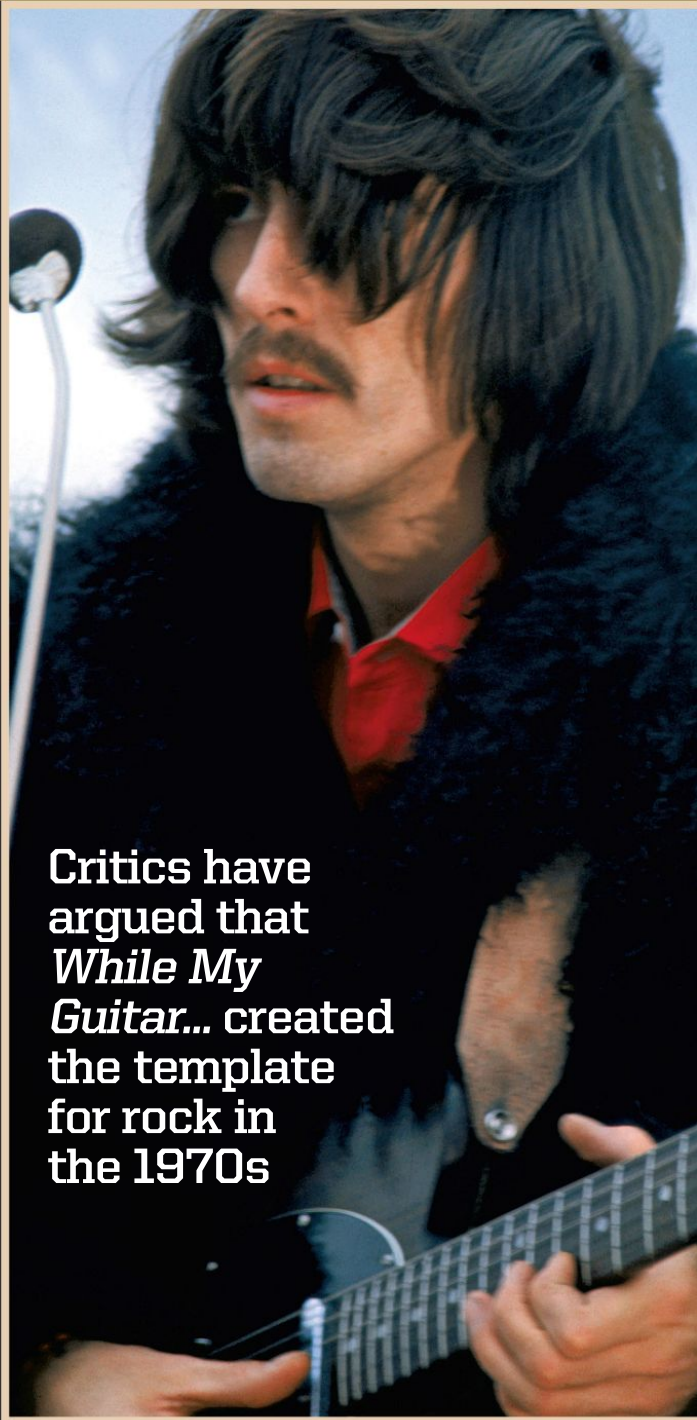


TRANSCENDENTAL
George Harrison,
author of "the
quintessential
guitarist's song"

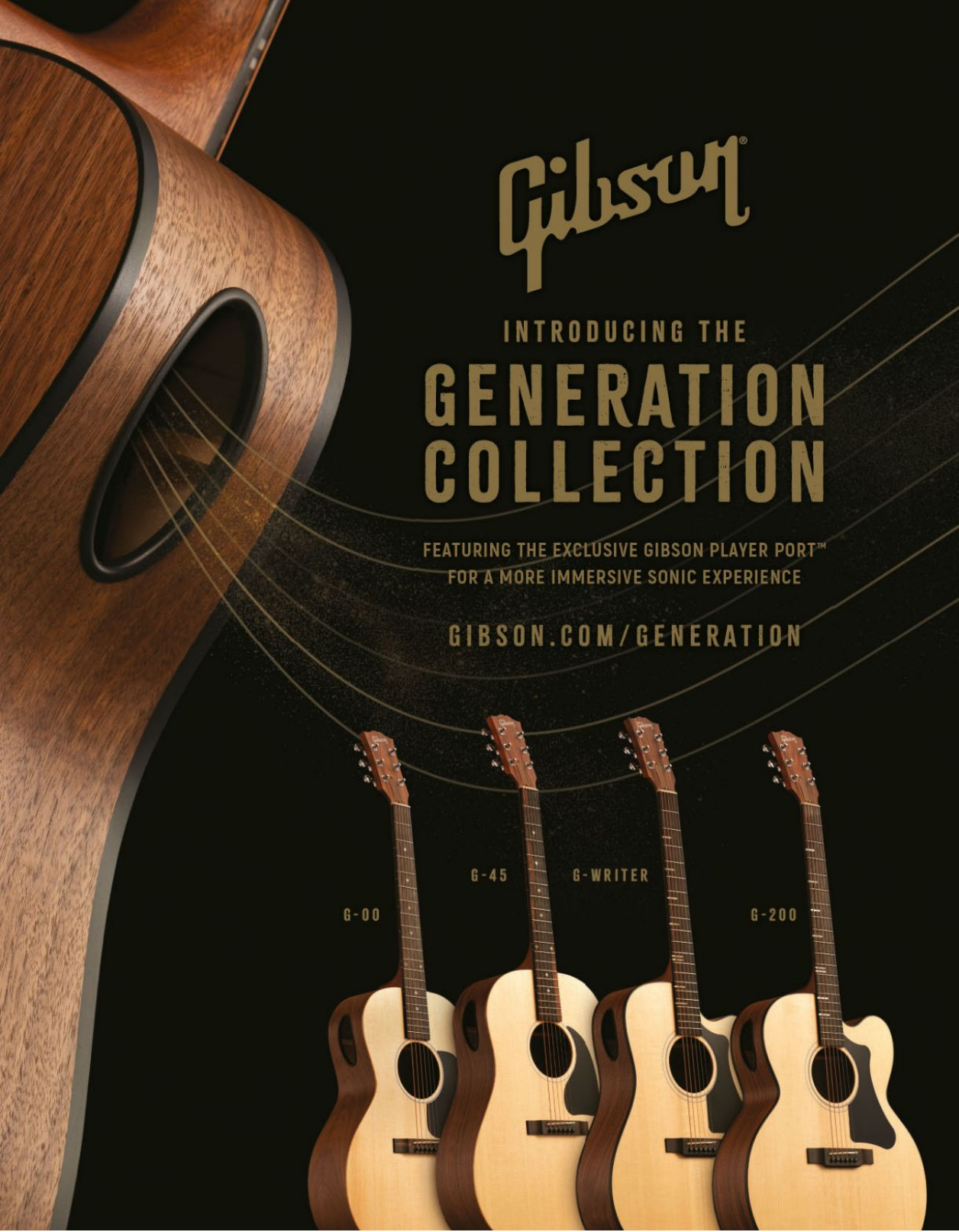
01 WHILE MY GUITAR GENTLY WEEPS

Eric Clapton ignites a jaded Fab Four

Like most of George Harrison's output for The Beatles, the song that provided one of the high points on the 'White Album' took a long time to reach its final form. During the album's gestation, Harrison was convinced that John and Paul were keener to get their own songs down than work on his contributions, and consequently his lack of confidence was at its lowest ebb. He was convinced of the song's value, though, and invited his friend, blues virtuoso Eric Clapton, to join them in the studio and work on it, correctly anticipating that the presence of such a well-respected musician would charge the atmosphere. Clapton recorded with the band live, with Harrison on acoustic guitar, McCartney on piano, John Lennon on bass and Ringo Starr on drums after his brief departure from the band. The resulting takes were nothing less than magical. Clapton delivers his sweetly forlorn guitar licks and rhythmic accompaniment from the intro onwards, coaxing a plaintive performance out of 'Lucy', the red Les Paul he'd given to Harrison earlier in the year. The verse features an ineluctable descending bassline of A, G, F#, F under an A minor chord; the slow tempo brought to life by the restless harmonic movement. The bridge section ('I don't know why...') lifts the song to another level through a shift to the parallel A major tonality. It's Clapton's melodic solo over the instrumental verse section that steals the show, though. With a delicious tone and perfect phrasing, Clapton captures the essence of the song's main theme, a yearning for universal love and harmony. Despite the flawless performance, Clapton was concerned it didn't sound 'Beatley' enough, and Automatic Double Tracking effects were added to give it more of the sound he was looking for. The legacy of the song has transcended its context, with some critics claiming it created the template for rock in the 1970s. The song continued to be a part of George Harrison's live sets throughout his career, including his live concerts in Japan with Eric Clapton in 1991. It's now firmly established as the quintessential guitarist's song, as evinced by the number of inspirational solos played in the many cover versions recorded. And going back to the source, Harrison's original acoustic demo, enhanced by George Martin's strings for the *Love* album, is a testament to the range of its enduring appeal.



Critics have argued that *While My Guitar... Weeps* created the template for rock in the 1970s



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Words Tim Tucker

10 GREAT BEATLES GUITAR MOMENTS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD BEFORE

Wild slide guitar, flamenco-inspired rhythm, raw 12-bar blues and more - the inner workings of The Beatles revealed

The new Super Deluxe edition of The Beatles' final album *Let It Be* kicks off a bonanza of unseen and unheard material, including a brand new stereo mix of the original album, 27 previously unreleased session recordings, a four-track *Let It Be* EP, and the never

released 14-track *Get Back* mix by engineer Glyn Johns from May 1969. Alongside this treasure trove comes the 3-part documentary *The Beatles: Get Back*, directed by Peter Jackson, and a tie-in hardback book. Here, we pick ten great previously unreleased moments from the box set that shed new light on the guitar music of the greatest band of all time.



Can You Dig It? (Jam)

On the original *Let It Be* album, we got a 51-second snippet of a Beatles jam called *Dig It*, more of an audio link than a song. This had been cut from a 15-minute improvisation which the band revisited later, presumably intending to develop it into something more. Here we get another two minutes from a different day's recording. Now called *Can You Dig It?*, the track includes more lyrics and some wild slide guitar playing by John Lennon.

Please Please Me... Again (Rehearsal)

The original plan for the project had been for the Beatles to 'get back' to their old way of recording, with live performances and no overdubs. Perhaps that's what prompts an impromptu slowed down piano-led rendition of *Please Please Me*, the band's first number one single, with George Harrison experimenting with lead guitar accompaniment. Like many ideas that came up during the sessions, this didn't lead to anything, but it's a tantalising glimpse of a revisited Beatles classic.

Something (Rehearsal)

Lead guitarist George Harrison's greatest love song appeared on the *Abbey Road* album, recorded later in 1969. Now we get further insight into the band's compositional process, with some studio chat revealing Harrison working on the song. Stuck on a line in the lyrics, he appeals to his more experienced songwriting bandmates: 'I can't think what she attracted me like.' 'Cauliflower' and 'pomegranate' are briefly considered, but fortunately he later came up with the much improved 'no other lover' and a classic was born.

Let It Be (Take 28)

When the world first heard this classic Beatles ballad, the band's last official single in March 1970, it featured a good solo by George Harrison. Good, but not great. In fact, Harrison recorded a few different versions of the solo, and it was a superior lead guitar break that graced the album version released in May 1970. The boxset features both these versions, along with previously unreleased takes. Take 28 has more

attack than the single version, offering another perspective on George's note choices and solo construction.

One After 909 (Take 3)

This spirited rocker is another resurrected early song, originally written by Lennon in his teens, before the Beatles were formed. On this rehearsal take, Billy Preston kicks up a storm on acoustic piano, while George Harrison experiments with his guitar sound and figures out his lines, playing more of a supporting role. It's less energetic in pace than the rooftop version that made the album release, but there are some inspirational guitar flourishes and a raunchy one-note burst in the break.

She Came In Through The Bathroom Window (Rehearsal)

An early rehearsal of this unfinished song, which never made it to the *Let It Be* album but turned up as part of the epic medley on the latter half of the *Abbey Road* album. The tempo is slower than the version we know and love. John plays electric piano, while George plays the chord sequence using his Fender Telecaster through Leslie Speaker, before switching on his wah-wah and experimenting with some tasteful lead licks.

I Me Mine (Rehearsal)

The first of two George Harrison compositions on *Let It Be* was recorded in 1970, but the boxset reveals the moment he first introduced it to the group during rehearsals a year earlier. The 3/4 accompaniment was developed by George after hearing Kaiser-Waltz by Johann Strauss II on the soundtrack to a television show. At this stage, he'd yet

BE HERE NOW
The 2021 Deluxe
Edition of *Let It Be*

to develop the punchy rock 'n' roll bridge in 4/4, instead playing a more flamenco-inspired rhythm guitar passage between the verses.

Octopus's Garden (Rehearsal)

Ringo plays the band his idea for a new song, going through the basic four-chord sequence, with just one verse written at this point. Then we hear George Harrison work up some ideas for developing it further, ideas which never made it to the final recording on *Abbey Road*. It's clear George Harrison helped finish the song, but he graciously gave Ringo the sole songwriting credit when the track appeared fully formed a year later.

For You Blue (Take 4)

George Harrison's first ever 12-bar blues composition is revealed in a wonderfully raw early take. In this version, Harrison plays with more attack on the acoustic guitar intro, using a capo at the 5th fret on his Gibson J-200. For the first time on a group recording, John Lennon plays some lively improvised variations on slide guitar, using a Hofner Hawaiian Standard lap-steel tuned to D7.

Teddy Boy (Rehearsal)

An early run-through of a song that didn't get taken any further by the band, and ended up being reworked by McCartney for his first post-Beatles solo album. While McCartney later claimed the band didn't seem interested, we get to hear some of the lead guitar ideas being developed by George Harrison over Paul's acoustic chords. It's a fascinating insight into how they developed ideas together, and hints at the direction the song might have taken had the Beatles continued to work on it.

These songs act as fascinating insights into how The Beatles developed ideas together



Words Jonny Scaramanga

MAGICAL GEAR TOUR

The Beatles revolutionised popular music. Here are the main guitars and amps they used to do it...

When The Beatles were defining the sound of guitar music, the rules hadn't been written. Today, bands will choose a Vox amp or Gretsch guitar because it's the sound of The Beatles, but the Fab Four didn't have those preconceptions. McCartney got his violin bass because he could afford it, and the band's gigging amps were whatever was loud enough.

Because there were no rules, there was no fear of experimentation. They tried solid state amps and plugging guitars straight into the desk, both of which guitar purists now would call

a recipe for 'bad' tone. Perhaps the lesson is that gear matters less than imagination. Maybe it's not that this gear sounds objectively great, but that it reminds us of the great music the Beatles made with it.

The instruments and amps on this list are sure to transport you straight to Beatle nostalgia, but the young mop tops were more interested in innovation. They didn't insist on using the 'best' gear, either. Some of these models were budget items, and others had sonic limitations the Beatles chose to emphasise.

Point is, you could make great music on these classics, or you could pick your own instruments to turn into classics.

Rickenbacker 325 Solid top

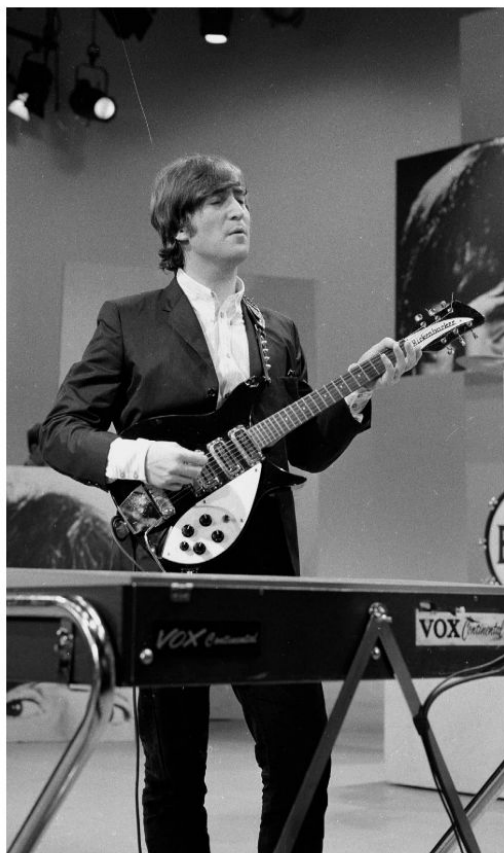
Lennon had been using his 1958 325 since the Beatles' earliest days, and by 1964 it was seriously roadworn. Rickenbacker built him a replacement just in time for the Beatles' second *Ed Sullivan Show* appearance. 70 million people saw Lennon playing his new guitar that night, and it saw further action in the movies *A Hard Day's Night* and *Help*, and at the legendary Shea Stadium show.

It was retired at the end of 1965 because a badly repaired headstock break had left the tuning unstable, but those two years were enough

to make it Lennon's most recognisable guitar.

Lennon's 325s were unusual for their black paint and solid tops. Just five were made like this in 1964; the others had soundholes and a Fireglow red finish. The other features were standard: hollow maple body, maple neck, bubinga fingerboard with short 20.75" scale, with five controls including a blend knob.

Modern alternative: On a budget, try a *Fazley*; those with huge wallets can get the Rickenbacker 350V63 *Liverpool Jetglo*.



70 million people saw Lennon playing his new Rickenbacker on *The Ed Sullivan Show*



Vox AC30

While we think of the AC30 as an indispensable classic, 1960s acts chose it for a more pragmatic reason: it was the only loud amp available. Fenders were expensive US imports, and Marshall didn't yet exist. The AC30 quickly made itself central to the Beatle sound, however.

Early AC30s didn't have the famous 'top boost' feature, which adds an extra gain stage as well as treble. This feature became standard in 1963, but at least one of Harrison's earlier AC30s was modified with a retrofitted top boost circuit because he liked the more cutting tone. The AC30's versatility made it ideal for the Beatles' experimentation. It sounded great clean, dirty, and for those beautiful in-between edge of breakup sounds. It co-operated happily with fuzz pedals when required. Early models did have a regrettable tendency to occasionally blow up when run hard, but the cathode bias meant you could replace output valves without a major service.

Modern alternative: Vox's own Cambridge 50 amp includes digital models of the AC30 normal and top boost channels. Or try an AC30 hand-wired reissue.

Vox AC100

The ever larger amps that followed the Vox AC30 were generally attempts to recreate the same tone at levels that could compete with hordes of screaming fans. The crisp, cleanish tones on Beatle albums show their amps weren't maxed out, but live even a dimmed AC30 had no chance against Beatlemania. At those levels, an AC30 also distorts more than you want for most Beatles songs.

After the AC30 came the AC50, which replaced the EL84 output valves with two EL34s. They sounded great if you could hear them, which unfortunately wasn't often at a Beatles gig. Another 20 watts only offered a modest lift in perceived volume. Next came the AC100, along with a much bigger speaker cab, featuring 4x12 inch speakers and, unusually, two Goodmans horns for the upper frequencies. These enormous amps appeared behind the Beatles at Shea Stadium, where they were still buried by screaming.

Modern alternative: With modern PAs and monitoring, there aren't many situations where an AC30 isn't loud enough. The Vox MSB25 Mini Superbeetle offers the AC100 look at a more manageable size.



Even the enormous AC100 4x12 cabs used at Shea Stadium were buried by Beatlemania screaming



Rickenbacker 360-12

Business had picked up for Rickenbacker thanks to John Lennon's use of the 325, so when the company invented the 360 12-string, president Francis C. Hall was smart enough to offer the prototype to the Beatles. Lennon thought it would be better for Harrison, who received it in February '64 just in time for the band's first US tour. It wasn't like the Beatles needed something new to set their sound apart, but they got it anyway.

In most 12-string guitars, the thinner octave strings sit at the top of each pair so they are plucked first on a downstroke. Rickenbacker reversed this pairing for a subtly different sound. The Ricky was ahead of its time in many ways: the top fret access was unrivalled, and the compact headstock design was ingenious. Fender and Gibson immediately launched rivals, but the 360-12 – which dominated *A Hard Day's Night* – was already the definitive electric 12-string sound.

Modern alternative: Ibanez's Artcore AS7312 is a reasonably priced electric 12-string, while Rickenbacker make the 360-12 to this day.

Hofner Violin bass

Paul McCartney faced the same problem as Hendrix: a shortage of quality left-handed instruments. Macca's solution was to play this symmetrical bass which looked almost the same upside down. It also fitted his £30 budget. The fact it sounded good was a fortunate by-product. Despite dalliances with a Rickenbacker 4001S, McCartney stuck with the Hofner for the Beatles' whole career and beyond, making it the single most famous Beatle instrument.

The hollow body had laminated maple back and sides and a spruce top, and post-1964 models had two humbucking pickups. Compared to modern basses, the tone is a warm thud with not much attack or ring, closer to a double bass than a Fender Precision. It sat perfectly in the mixes for Beatles records, sounding solid and leaving plenty of space for the guitars. McCartney loved the light weight, too. "It actually alters your playing," he enthused. "You play a lot faster, very easily."

Modern alternative: No need for an alternative here – Hofner continues to make a range of violin basses, from the budget Ignition series up to higher-specced 'Artist' replicas.



Pedals...

Four Fab solutions for Beatles tones

Pedals were new in the Beatles' era, so they weren't big pedal users. That said, their appetite for experimentation meant they were quick to try the newest gear. Unfortunately, there aren't clear records of exactly what was used where. Still these three pedals will dish up authentic tones:

Electro-Harmonix Satisfaction Fuzz (£49)

The Maestro Fuzztone was the first fuzz pedal on the market. Better known for powering The Rolling Stones' *Satisfaction*, it also provided the Fab Four with their first fuzz foray. McCartney used a Sola Sound Mk 1 Tone Bender, a variation on the same circuit, on *Think For Yourself*. The EHX will give you the same vibe.

Ernie Ball VP Series Volume Pedals (£143-£275)

On *Yes It Is*, George Harrison used a volume pedal. Well, he tried to. After failing to co-ordinate playing guitar and operating the pedal at the same time, Lennon stepped up to rock the pedal for him. Try Ernie Ball's VP series.



Strymon Lex (£299)

George Harrison got into the sound of Leslie rotating speaker cabinets for *Let It Be*. Not a pedal, these created vibrato by physically rotating the cabinet's speaker cone. Happily for your wallet and back, the sound is now available in pedal form. The Strymon is much sought-after, or, alternatively, try TC Electronic's Vibeclon Rotary pedal for a simpler, more affordable option.

Electro-Harmonix Ravish Sitar (\$264.20)

Norwegian Wood saw George Harrison reportedly becoming the first Western musician to play an Indian instrument on a commercial release, influencing a host of other musicians in the process. Get the tone the easy way with EHX's emulator pedal.



Guitar THE BEATLES Gear



Gretsch Country Gentleman

Despite bearing Chet Atkins' signature, George Harrison made his Gretsch Country Gentleman very much his own. Harrison played a Gretsch Duo Jet through the band's early days, and when the money started to come in, he bought a Country Gentleman and a Tennessean. It was the Country Gent he played on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, instantly swelling Gretsch's order book to a six-month waiting list. Like Lennon's 325, it didn't last long, getting smashed when it fell off the Beatles' van in December 1965. The Country Gentleman appeared most notably on *She Loves You*, as well as every Beatles album from '63 to '65, and two *Live At The BBC* sessions.

The twin Filter'Trons are ideal for rock 'n' roll, and George used it for covers of Chuck Berry and Little Richard tunes. With Bigsby trem, two mechanically operated mutes for damping the strings, and a laminated maple hollow body, the Country Gent was a weighty beast with tone to match.

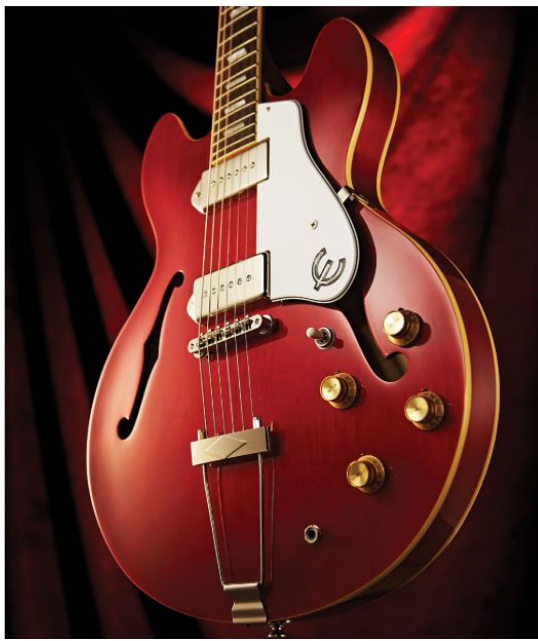
Modern alternative: The reasonably priced Gretsch G5622T Electromatic captures much of the vibe, while a reissue model will cost you a little more but deliver just a little bit

Epiphone Casino

If the black Rickenbacker 325 epitomises the young Fab Four, the Epiphone Casino is the image of late-period Beatles. McCartney started the trend, buying his at the end of '64; Harrison and Lennon bought theirs in 1966. McCartney used his pretty much whenever he played electric guitar with the Beatles, including his lead breaks in *Ticket To Ride* and *Taxman*. But it was Lennon who became most associated with the guitar, playing it on the *Let It Be* film.

Lennon and Harrison sanded the paint off their sunburst models in 1968 at the recommendation of Donovan Leitch, who persuaded them this allowed the guitars to 'breathe' and sound better. The Casino was a close relative of Gibson's all-hollow ES-330. Its P90 pickups offered a bit more attitude and clarity than the Gibson's humbuckers, making it perfect for both pop jangle and rock 'n' roll.

Modern alternative: Pickup a current Epiphone Casino for £549, or Epiphone's boutique USA Collection version for £2,399.





Fender Rosewood Telecaster

After the Country Gentleman, it took George a while to settle on a new favourite guitar. His sonic blue Strat and '57 Les Paul both gave sterling service, but the all rosewood Tele seen at the 1969 rooftop gig is the defining image of late-60s Harrison. The warm tone of rosewood helped to balance the Telecaster's natural bite, and it complemented the tone of Lennon's Casino perfectly.

Harrison's prototype body actually had a thin layer of maple sandwiched between two blocks of rosewood, creating a seriously heavy instrument. Production versions were later chambered with gloss finishes, but George's was solid with a satin finish. It was all over *Let It Be* and *Abbey Road*. The LP version of *Let It Be* features George playing his Les Paul, while the single version was the Tele, offering an interesting glimpse into how much different instruments changed his tone.

Modern equivalent: The Squier Classic Vibe 60s Telecaster will get you in the ballpark. Fender occasionally make limited reissues; the last one (2018) cost £2,289.

Gibson J-160E

The first production acoustic guitar with a pickup would have been significant even without the Beatles' endorsement.

The magnetic single coil pickup didn't give an authentic acoustic tone but it did sound good, and both Lennon and Harrison used them extensively. In fact, this might be the single most recorded guitar in the Beatles' catalogue, McCartney's violin bass notwithstanding. The hollow body and large soundhole also made it ripe for feedback, exploited at the start of *I Feel Fine*. George largely abandoned his after 1965, but Lennon carried on recording with his right up to *The Ballad Of John And Yoko*. It was also the guitar he had with him for his infamous 1969 'bed in' with Yoko in Amsterdam.

The J-160E was in some ways a budget model, made of plywood, and ladder-braced. This didn't affect the plugged-in tone too drastically but did make it robust for touring.

Modern alternative: Your best bet is to fit a magnetic soundhole pickup to an acoustic guitar, such as the Seymour Duncan Woody or DiMarzio Black Angel.





CHORD SECRETS OF THE BEATLES

We delve into the wonderful world of Beatles harmony with a look at the trademark shapes and progressions of the Fab Four

All three guitarists in The Beatles were fine players, but their impressive individual musicianship and unrivalled writing prowess is often overshadowed by the sheer enormity of the group's success.

Here, the aim of our lesson is to apply some of the tried and tested harmonic concepts used by John Lennon, Paul McCartney and George Harrison during their eight-year run at the top. That means we're

focusing on chords, progressions and songwriting methods. With a catalogue so iconic and influential it's fair to say that studying and learning some of the band's nuts and bolts will benefit your overall musicianship. More importantly, much of what you'll learn here was so influential that it's been absorbed into the canon of rock music – so it applies to almost any style of music. We've recorded 10 contrasting progressions to showcase some of the chords and changes that give the Beatles their trademark sound.

MELODY IN CHORD CHANGES

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 88

A Amaj7 A7 Dmaj7 Dm

This first Beatles-y example features a melodic trick called 'voice leading' that'll lead your ear as the chords change. The A note in the opening chord descends a semitone with each change, going from A to G# then G when you reach the A7 chord. The run continues with an F# note in the Dmaj7 and an F in the Dm.

DISSONANT SOUNDS

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 88

Bm7b5 E7b9 Am9

These chords are dissonant in their nature, but they provide a great basis for a change to the mellower sounding Am9 root chord. Listen to *I Want You (She's So Heavy)* to hear some similar sounds, including a variation on this E7b9 shape.

BARRE CHORDS

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 132

D Bm A7sus4

TAB

These generic barre chord types are at the core of many of the Fab Four's rhythm parts. They're standard shapes used everywhere from *Hey Jude* to *Help*. The closing chord evokes the opener from *A Hard Day's Night*.

ROCK 'N' ROLL 6 DOMINANT 7THS

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 132

A7 G7 A7

TAB

Taking our inspiration from *I Saw Her Standing There*, you'll see how bar 1 is a traditional rock 'n' roll style riff (similar to Lennon's part in *ISHST*) and the chords in bar 2 are akin to Harrison's chords.

BEATLES VS HENDRIX

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 132

A7 G7 A7 G7 A7#9

TAB

The 7#9 chord was of course a favourite of Jimi Hendrix, but Beatles classics like *Taxman* and *Step Inside Love* feature it too. The A7 and G7 chords can be played with a fretting-hand thumb for the bass notes.

MINOR VOICE LEADING

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 88

Am Am(maj7) Am7 Am6

TAB

Remember voice leading? Well, here is a minor version of the concept we looked at right at the start. This idea is well used in many songs by a huge variety of artists and is handy for providing interest when several bars of a minor chord are required.





MODAL INTERCHANGE

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 132

Chords: A, F#m, D, Dm

Tab: T 5 5 5 5 9 9 9 9 9 9 7 7 7 7 6; A 5 5 5 5 10 10 10 10 10 10 7 7 7 7 7; B 7 7 7 7 11 11 11 11 11 11 7 7 7 7 5

Modal interchange is a fancy name for changing chord types on one root note. Here the D major chord changes to D minor, which provides both a surprise and a cool tension. Another well-used alternative is a minor chord progression that finishes on a surprise major chord (e.g., Am-Dm-Em-A).

MAJOR CHORD RUN (ASCENDING)

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 88

Chords: A, Aaug, A6, A7, Dmaj7

Tab: T 0 0 0 0 6 6 6 6 0 0 0 0 0 0 5; A 0 0 0 0 6 6 6 6 7 7 7 7 8 8 7; B 0 0 0 0 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 5

Just as we created a descending melody in a major-chord run in Example 1, we can also create ascending movement. Here the augmented chord sounds most effective, it's mild dissonance pulling you into the next chord change.

CHROMATIC CHORDS

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 88

Chords: A, C#m, C, D

Tab: T 5 5 5 5 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 7 7 7; A 5 5 5 5 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 7 7 7; B 7 7 7 7 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 7 7 5

The use of chromatic chords is a great way to introduce fresh sounds into tried and tested chord progressions. Here C#m is followed by an unexpected and not-in-key C major chord.

DIMINISHED CHORDS

TRACKS: [BIT.LY/T6352](https://bit.ly/T6352)

♩ = 88

Chords: A, Adim7, B, B

Tab: T 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 6 6 6 6 3 3 3; A 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 6 6 6 6 3 3 3; B 5 5 5 5 4 4 4 4 6 6 6 6 3 3 3

The diminished 7 (a favourite of George Harrison) is great for creating smooth transitions between chords a tone or semitone apart. Here the A, moves to the B, via Adim7 – that's a semitone from A, to A, then a tone from A to B, .



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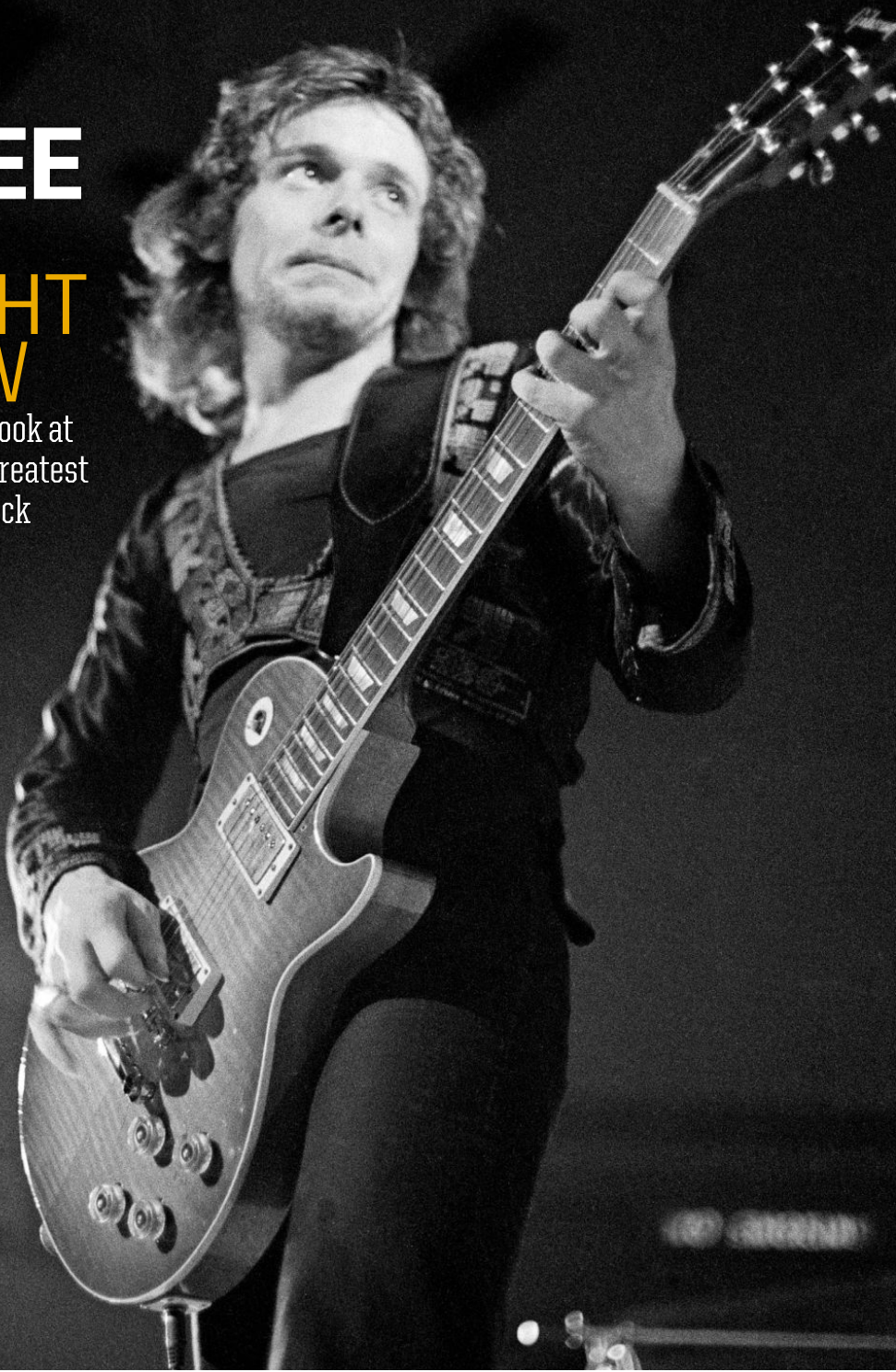


ARABLE

th•mann

FREE ALL RIGHT NOW

TG takes a look at
one of the greatest
feel-good rock
anthems of
all time



The opening few seconds of Free's 1970 mega-hit *All Right Now* – with Paul Kossoff's cranked Les Paul and Marshall amp keeping a steady pace with drummer Simon Kirke's thumping beat – have to go down as one of the most recognisable intros of all time. Budding air guitarists, wedding-disco grans and serious rock aficionados all love the song with passionate, equal measure, and today it continues to be found on radio playlists and cover band setlists alike.

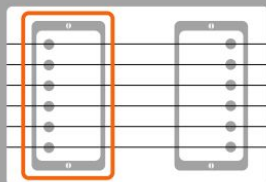
Though the riffs are iconic, it's guitarist Paul Kossoff's solo that'll take most of your practice time. Those fast pentatonic licks represent the biggest technical challenge, in particular the first one, which kicks off on an offbeat – miss the initial note and you can write that bar of music off all together! However, it's Kossoff's touch and vibrato that really take time to develop. Generally his vibrato was fast and wide, but listen out also for his signature vibrato string bends, too.

GET THE SOUND

Everything you need to know before playing 'All Right Now'

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL OVERDRIVE

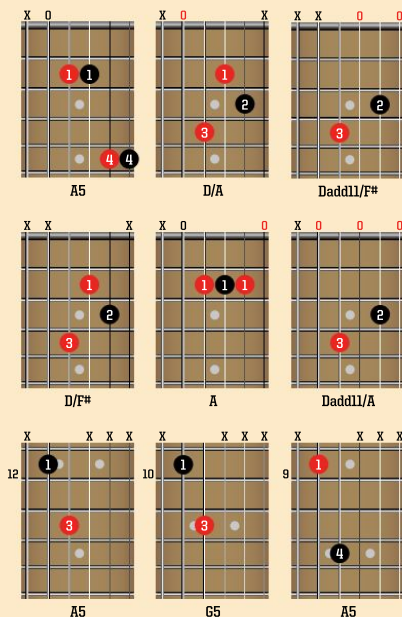


Select a bridge position humbucker. If your guitar has single coils, you'll need to try and EQ out some of the top end.

Paul Kossoff used his 'Stripped Top' 'Burst 1959 Gibson Les Paul for many live performances of *All Right Now* – and it's thought this is the guitar he used to record the song. He's best known for plugging into Marshall JTM45/100 and Super Lead amps. To dial in a similar classic Gibson/Marshall tone, set an overdrive channel on your amp so that the bass, midrange and treble are in roughly the mid position. Depending on your amp you may need to boost the bass and treble a touch. Don't boost too much, though; there is still a dominant midrange in Kossoff's tone. The guitar sound on the original 1970 version is as dry as a bone with no effects or reverb, but the 1991 remixed re-release features a touch of studio reverb.

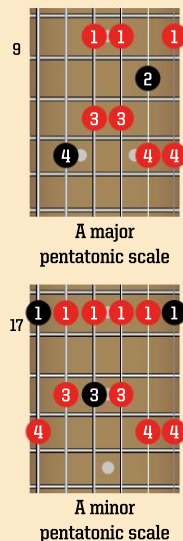
CHORDS

Some of these chords may be unfamiliar to you. Play the open position A and A5 chords with one finger across all the strings. This will allow you to play the D/A by adding your second and third fingers to the shape. Keep your first finger close to the 2nd fret when you play the Dadd9/11/A so you can change back quickly to the A.



SCALES

The A major pentatonic (A B C# E F#) and the A minor pentatonic (A C D E G) scales feature throughout the solo, most notably in the two fast 16th note licks. The major pentatonic scale has a brighter, 'happier' tone than the darker, moodier minor version. Listen to how Kossoff exploits this to create a sense of contrast in the solo.





FULL TRACK + BACKING (BIT.LV/TG352AUDIO)
This song comes with a full demo track and a backing track (minus guitar). Enter the above link into your web browser of choice, press play and jam along, guitarlike style!

FREE / ALL RIGHT NOW

FREE ALL RIGHT NOW Chorus

TRACKS: [BIT.LV/TG352AUDIO](https://bit.ly/tg352audio)

0:48

1

5

Mastering this simple part requires good timing and the ability to play with conviction and authority. In particular, take care to nail the timing of the last offbeat chord in bars 1 and 3. In bar 3, make sure that you play the first chord for half as long as the second chord.

FREE ALL RIGHT NOW Solo

TRACKS: [BIT.LV/TG352AUDIO](https://bit.ly/tg352audio)

2:10

1

4

7

10

G D/F# A G D/F#

let ring - - - - -

5 BU BD 7/10

2/4 4 (5) (4) 2

13

A G D/F# A

10 9 11 10 9 11 10 9 11 10 12 (14) [14]

16

G D/F# A G D/F#

9 11 10 9 11 10 9 11 10 12 (14) (14) (13) 12 (14) (12) 10 11 10

19

A G D/F# A

(10) (12) 0 (14) (12) 10 11 10 (10) (12)

22

G D/F# A G D/F#

0 (14) (12) 10 11 10 17 20 17 20 17 20 17 20 17 20

FREE ALL RIGHT NOW Solo (cont'd)

TRACKS: BIT.LV/T6352AUDIO

Tablature for the first system of the solo. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system covers measures 25 to 27. Chords indicated above the staff are A (8th fret), G, D/F# (9th fret), and A. The guitar part features a mix of single notes and double notes (BU, BD) with various fret numbers (17, 20, 22) and a wavy line indicating vibrato. The bass part is mostly silent, with some double notes (BU, BD) indicated.

Tablature for the second system of the solo. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The second system covers measures 28 to 30. Chords indicated above the staff are G (8th fret), D/F# (9th fret), A, G, and D/F# (9th fret). The guitar part continues with single notes and double notes (BU, BD) with various fret numbers (17, 20, 22) and a wavy line indicating vibrato. The bass part is mostly silent, with some double notes (BU, BD) indicated.

Tablature for the third system of the solo. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The third system covers measures 31 to 33. Chords indicated above the staff are A (8th fret), G, D/F# (9th fret), and E. The guitar part continues with single notes and double notes (BU, BD) with various fret numbers (17, 20, 22) and a wavy line indicating vibrato. The bass part is mostly silent, with some double notes (BU, BD) indicated.

Here, Kossoff gives the perfect example of how to construct a solo that grows in intensity. He starts low down with simple, long-held notes accentuated with his trademark vibrato. He gradually moves higher up the neck, plays a few fast pentatonic licks and finishes with a screaming bend at the 20th fret.

FREE ALL RIGHT NOW Outro

TRACKS: BIT.LV/T6352AUDIO

Tablature for the outro. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 3:17. The guitar part features a mix of single notes and double notes (BU, BD) with various fret numbers (12, 14) and a wavy line indicating vibrato. The bass part is mostly silent, with some double notes (BU, BD) indicated. The tempo is marked 3:17. The guitar part features a mix of single notes and double notes (BU, BD) with various fret numbers (12, 14) and a wavy line indicating vibrato. The bass part is mostly silent, with some double notes (BU, BD) indicated.

This outro is a repeat of the chorus lick so the same rules apply. The track fades out here, so you may prefer to improvise your own ending.

EXTREME MORE THAN WORDS

The Boston rockers take the funk out in favour of acoustic balladry. We take a look at Rockscool's Grade Six arrangement

Released as the third single from Extreme's 1990 album *Pornograffiti*, *More Than Words* saw the band depart from their usual funk-metal style for a stripped-back acoustic and vocal harmony approach. Nuno Bettencourt's dazzling acoustic guitar work is characterised by two features: syncopated offbeat chords and muted strikes. To capture these, try to get to a point where your picking hand technique flows automatically – it needs to be loose enough so you can pluck the strings

cleanly, whilst keeping the rhythmic momentum. The chords can usually be played using one shape at a time, with the picking hand 'breaking' these into smaller fragments. In bar 1 for example, you will only need one G chord shape, and by following the tab you will see that the picking hand pattern creates the variety, including a G/B inversion before shifting to Cadd9 and a new chord shape. Watch out for the specific dynamics of bars 15–18, as these deliberately underpin the emotion in the vocal.





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EXTREME MORE THAN WORDS

TRACKS: BIT.LV/T6352AUDIO

♩ = 92

G⁵ G/B Cadd⁹ Am⁷ C D G⁵

1

G/B Cadd⁹ Am⁷ C D G⁵

5



FULL TRACK + BACKING (BIT.LV/TG352AUDIO)
This song comes with a full demo track and a backing track (minus guitar). Enter the above link into your web browser of choice, press play and jam along, guitar-like style!

EXTREME / MORE THAN WORDS

EXTREME MORE THAN WORDS

TRACKS: BIT.LV/TG352AUDIO

Chords: G/B, Cadd⁹, Am⁷, C, D, Em

9

Chords: Em, Am⁷, D⁷, G⁵, D/F#, Em

13

Chords: Am⁷, D⁷, G⁷, C

17

† percussive hits on Gtr. body

Chords: Cm, G⁵, Em⁷

21

Chords: Am⁷, D⁷, Cdim/D, G⁵, G/B, G⁵, G/B

25

Colla voce

Chords: D/F#, Em, Em/B, Bm7, C, C/B, Am7

29

Chords: D7, G5, G/B, G5, G/B

33

Chords: Dadd9/F#, Em, Bm7, C, C/B, Am7

37

Chords: D, G5, G/B, Cadd9, Am7

41

Chords: C, D, G5, G/B, Cadd9, Am7

45

EXTREME MORE THAN WORDS

TRACKS: BIT.LV/T6352AUDIO

49

Chords: C, D, G⁵, G/B, Cadd⁹

52

Chords: Am⁷, C, D, G⁵

55

Chords: Cadd⁹, Am⁷, C

58

Chords: D, G⁵, Dadd⁹/F[#], Dmadd⁹/F

62

Rall.

Chords: Esus⁴, Am⁷, D⁵, Am⁷, D, G

Nuno adds excitement to these chord changes with little rhythmic flourishes. Check out the triplet in bar 57 – this can be achieved whilst fretting the full Am7 chord and ‘rolling’ through the strings with your picking fingers.

OPEN-MIC SONGBOOK

PASSENGER SWORD FROM THE STONE

Mike Rosenberg takes you on a ride up to the dusty end of the fretboard with this capo'd corker

Passenger, aka Mike Rosenberg released the album *Songs For The Drunk And Broken Hearted* to widespread acclaim earlier in 2021. The opening track that we're covering here has a number of remixes, but we're looking at the original album version. Whilst there's a 'gingerbread mix' that was co-produced with Ed Sheeran (you can hear the classic pop hallmarks of Sheeran's style in the production and arrangement) the guitars take the

back seat. The album version features strummed acoustic chords with the capo at the 8th fret. This does mean access is a little tighter than usual (though a narrower capo will give your fingers more fretting room) but the transposed chords sound great higher up the neck. There's also a purely acoustic version that Mike released as part of a standalone project, so it's worth checking out his fingerstyle technique on this, as it's how he usually performs it live.



CHORDS

Sword From The Stone is a relatively simple strum-along with just a handful of chord shapes, but it's worth bearing in mind that the 8th-fret capo places the song in C minor. The chord names in brackets will help guide you. They denote the names of the shapes if you were playing them in open position – which is how most of us remember the shapes.



Cm
(Em)



E_b
(G)



B_b
(D)



Fm7
(Am7)



B_b,sus4
(Dsus4)



A_b
(C)

SWORD FROM THE STONE

Words and Music by Michael David Rosenberg
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FULL TRACK + BACKING (BIT.LY/TG352AUDIO)
This song comes with a full demo track and a backing track (minus guitar). Enter the above link into your web browser of choice, press play and jam along, guitar-like style!

SONGSHEET

Sword From The Stone

Intro

Cm E_b B_b Fm7
Cm E_b B_b

Verse 1

A_b E_b
Well how ya doing, darling?
B_b E_b
How you getting on?
A_b E_b
Any horses running
B_b Cm B_b
Worth betting on?
A_b E_b
How's the weather down there?
B_b E_b A_b
I hope you're keeping warm

Verse 2

A_b E_b
How you feeling, sweetheart?
B_b E_b
Are you moving on?
A_b E_b
Are you sleeping okay?
B_b Cm B_b
Or do the nights go on and on?
A_b E_b
I hope you're eating well
B_b E_b A_b
I hope you're staying strong

Chorus

Cm E_b B_b
'Cos I'm fine, then I'm not
Fm7 Cm
I'm spinning round and I can't stop
E_b B_b
I can't do this alone
Cm E_b B_b
Time flies and it's so slow
Fm7 Cm
I'm up and down like a yoyo
E_b B_b
I can't do it on my own
A_b
And I've tried and I can't pull
The sword from the stone

A_b E_b
And both the cats say hi
B_b E_b A_b
I know they miss you too

Repeat chorus

Solo

Cm E_b B_b Fm7
Cm E_b B_b x2

Repeat chorus

Interlude

Cm E_b B_b Fm7
Cm E_b B_b

Verse 3

A_b E_b
How are your mum and dad?
B_b E_b
How's your brother too?
A_b E_b
My folks are holding up
B_b Cm B_b
My sister's pulling through

PASSENGER SWORD FROM THE STONE Intro

TRACK: BIT.LY/TG352AUDIO

♩ = 80

Capo 8th fret

Cm (Em) E_b (G) B_b (D) Fm7 (Am7)

Cm (Em) E_b (G) B_b (D) B_b sus⁴ (D sus⁴) B_b (D)

Keep your pick hand moving in constant 16th-note motion for these strummed chords in order to maintain rhythmic consistency and accuracy. Try bringing the thumb over the neck to help mute the idle open strings on the D shape chords.

THE GAS STATION

REAL WORLD REVIEWS OF THE
BEST NEW GEAR

Welcome to the GAS (Gear Acquisition Syndrome*) Station! Every issue, TG scours the market for the hottest new gear and brings you transparent reviews that you can trust. From the smallest of accessories that make your life easier, to big investments, such as brand new guitars, amps and effects pedals – if it's worth your attention, you'll find it here!

HOW WE TEST

CURATION

Our product selection is driven by our love of gear. We select the most exciting products on the market every month to bring you opinions you can trust.

FACE-VALUE REVIEWS

We're not gear snobs here at *Total Guitar*. We judge it on whether it looks good, sounds good and plays well – not by the name on the headstock.

*WHAT IS GAS?

Gear Acquisition Syndrome is the guitar-player's never-ending urge to acquire new gear, irrespective of whether they actually need it. Don't pretend you don't have it – we all do!

NO SNAKE OIL

You won't find us getting hung up on hokey mythology or nonsense marketing speak: we aim to bring you bullsh*t-free opinions on the gear you're interested in.

WE CAN'T BE BOUGHT

TG review scores are a true reflection of our experts' opinion on the product they've been testing. You'll never find a rating in our mag that has been bought and paid for.

REAL WORLD REVIEWS

We test every product under the conditions that they were designed for. For example, if an amp is designed to be played loud, rest assured that we'll have tested it at rehearsal/gig volumes!

BEST BUY AWARD

TG Best Buy Awards are reserved for stand-out products that earn a five-star rating. This is the best, most exciting new gear that you need to check out



BEST FOR...

Different guitarists have different needs. This badge highlights a particular strength that a product has in a TG Test or Group Test, so you can choose what's best for you



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Rock solid state?

94 MOOER R7 X2 REVERB

The mini-pedal trailblazers double up for this feature-packed compact 'verb



SUPERB, A BEST BUY



EXCELLENT



ABOVE AVERAGE KIT



SOME ISSUES



POOR



01



03



05



02



04

START ME UP!

Five awesome new products to get your gear engine revving this month...

BOSS RC-600 LOOP STATION

1 Alongside the tabletop-based 505 mkII, Boss is expanding its flagship floor Looping Station at the end of the year. It's a unit so full of features it could be a one-stop tone shop for some players. Including: six stereo phrase tracks and nine assignable footswitches to controls them; 49 Input FX and 53 Track FX types; over 200 built-in rhythms in styles ranging from pop, rock, latin, jazz, acoustic and electronica. **Available December, £527** www.boss.info

HARLEY BENTON MINISTOMP EFFECTS

2 If you're eyeing up that small space you have left on the pedalboard for something, the prices of Harley Benton's new mini pedal range might be just the excuse you need to fill it. At just 20mA, they won't take a toll on your power supply either. There's 27 models in all covering all manner of effect types, and many of the fuzz, overdrives and distortions are based on popular circuits – Rodent pedal, anyone? **From £16.80** www.thomann.de

ELECTRO-HARMONIX NANO DELUXE MEMORY MAN

3 An iconic delay pedal scaled down for your pedalboard? Always great news. But EHX has managed to add in Rate and Depth controls for the chorus and vibrato modes – even better! The NYC company has even extended the maximum delay time available to 550ms. Other controls are Blend, Feedback, Delay and Level, plus there's a Tails Switch for fade outs after you switch off. **£188** www.ehx.com

UNIVERSAL AUDIO VOLT

4 UA are a brand we associate with premium quality with the prices to match but the new Volt range of USB interfaces is a marked change on the latter. The inspiration is the mic/line preamp in UA's 610 tube console; tube emulation circuitry designed to let you dial in a "rich, full sound on vocals and instruments". Pay more and you can move up to the Volt 76 models, adding an analogue circuit based on UA's 1176 compressor. **From £120** www.uaudio.com

EPHIPPONE JOE BONAMASSA 'LAZARUS' 1959 LES PAUL STANDARD

5 A £799 model based on the guitar the bluesman helped bring back from the dead (it had been refinished in red) with features including 50s-style wiring, Mallory capacitors and Gibson USA BurstBuckers that keep the PAF dream alive. "We wanted to make a model that was accessible to everyone at a price point that you could buy it and go out and gig with it; it looks and feels like the original guitar," says Bonamassa. **£799** www.epiphone.com



AT A GLANCE

CONTROLS: Gain 1, Gain 2, Level 1, Level 2, Clean / Crunch, Crunch / Overdrive (Overdrive 1 and Overdrive 2 on Dual Distortion), Bass, Middle Treble, ISF, Cab Rig presets 1/2/3, Channel 1 and Channel 2 footswitches

FEATURES: 1/4-inch Output and Cab Rig output, 1/4-inch Input, 1/4-inch Send and Return effects loop, USB Audio

POWER SUPPLY: 9-volt power supply (minimum 500mA) included

DIMENSIONS: HxWxD: 46 x 147 x 112mm

1 DUAL OVERDRIVE CLEAN VOICE

If you're using the Dual Overdrive with an amp, we can't imagine you needing the clean voice on the Dual Overdrive as it won't offer enough headroom.

2 CAB RIG OUTPUT

You can choose to bypass the Cab Rig simulation by using the alternative output. Plug your headphones into the Cab Rig output for the full experience.

3 DUAL DISTORTION OD1/ OD2

OD1 and OD2 offer more gain than the Crunch and Distortion of the Dual Overdrive - and it'll be too much for some. But if you're here for metal, this is the one to buy.

BLACKSTAR DEPT. 10 DUAL DRIVE AND DUAL DISTORTION

£249
EACH



A truly expanded valve preamp experience in a pedal?



Valve preamp pedals are not a new concept – and Blackstar should know. It was there at the vanguard with its HT range back in the year of its launch in 2007. The company's late co-founder and technical director Bruce Keir playing a key role in the design and development of pedals that harnessed valve technology in a compact, floor-based enclosure. It's a testament to his legacy that the company has named its new range after the team tasked with continuing the innovative work Keir helped start; Department 10.

The elephant in the room is that the appeal of valve preamp pedals

class valve-based amplification, but here they're pairing that engineering reputation with their more recently developed cab modelling technology. The Dept 10 Dual Drive and Dual Distortion represents a meeting of those worlds; each running at more than 200V internally like a full valve amp and packing an ECC83 triode, and yet powered by a 9V power supply. Both offer three crunch and overdrive voices alongside clean, across two switchable channels. Alongside an effects loop and an XLR-out and USB, players can choose one of two outputs depending on whether they want to use the Cab Sim

FOR TONES, THESE ARE TWO OF THE BEST RELEASES OF 2021

has been relatively niche in the guitar world. Perhaps because so few have been truly valve-driven like these pedals are. While the development and popularity of digital effects and boutique overdrives have exploded, along with cab and amp modelling units. But are the stakes getting higher? Floor-based amps are on the rise; both digital and analogue. Flexibility and mobility for guitar rigs are more important than ever and these kind of units can deliver practice, recording and gigging solutions without a traditional 'amp' in sight. Blackstar might have timed their return to the format perfectly.

We know from the last 14 years that Blackstar can deliver world

class valve-based amplification, but here they're pairing that engineering reputation with their more recently developed cab modelling technology. The Dept 10 Dual Drive and Dual Distortion represents a meeting of those worlds; each running at more than 200V internally like a full valve amp and packing an ECC83 triode, and yet powered by a 9V power supply. Both offer three crunch and overdrive voices alongside clean, across two switchable channels. Alongside an effects loop and an XLR-out and USB, players can choose one of two outputs depending on whether they want to use the Cab Sim

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We tested both pedals as part of a pedalboard using the effects loop through a solid state combo's clean channel, but also into a full range, flat response powered cab and recording directly with a DAW via an interface. That says a lot about the versatility these pedals offer out of the box.



Power Player

Preparing your pedalboard

We think that both these pedals come into their own on a pedalboard, utilising the FX loop for time-based pedals, and the XLR out to go to the mixing board at gigs. But you could even use it in your amp's FX loop.

It's startling to hear these pedals runs at 200VDC internally like Blackstar's valve amps, via an internal boost circuit, despite using a 9V power supply. Unlike the original HT pedals that needed a 22V supply.

But take heed, because although pedal power supplies aren't the most exciting topic, investment is vital. Blackstar provide a power supply but if you want to add it to your own it has to be able to power a 9V pedal at 500mA. Not all pedal power supplies offer this but the higher quality examples out there do.

Though it's accurate to describe the Dual Overdrive as an all-rounder and the Dual Distortion delivering for heavier needs, it undersells the wide range of gain tones both deliver. The DO can do heavy on the second channel and there's some hugely satisfying lighter crunch tones to be had from the DD's Channel 1 Crunch voice.

Blackstar have given you some effective, user-friendly tools to control your gain. The Infinite Shape Feature control will be familiar to existing Blackstar owners; a single knob that shifts between the extremes of a UK and



American-style amp sound. This directly affects the frequency peak of the mid control. We found the independent gain and levels were relatively simple to balance when it comes to crunch and distortion.

The sheer range of gain and dynamic response here may put your existing drive pedals on notice; a great showcase of Blackstar to newcomers and a highly usable gain station for players. Both pedals are a timely reminder that there is something special about quality valve-driven gain when it comes to clarity and definition for our guitar sounds.

The Dual Distortion is the one more likely to turn heads; it can do huge scooped slabs of metal, searing lead and tight percussive chunk on Channel 2. But for the classic side of rock, it will be simply too spicy in the gain department for some so the Dual Overdrive offers Swiss Army Knife musicality. Consider your needs and choose accordingly.

We're pleased to report how well both perform at home levels and placing all the control on your pedalboard encourages a hands-on approach to tweaking. But it's the

Cab Rig DI features that makes the asking price here an especially sweet spot. Both pedals sound at their brightest and most harmonically detailed when using Blackstar's onboard Cab Rig technology. Three onboard models to switch between and the ability to edit and upload your own with a huge range of parameters – from virtual power amp valves to mics, room character and EQ – thanks to the company's Architect software.

It's a showcase of valve technology and modelling working together as a versatile solution for players, with a superb range of valve tones that we found transferred equally well to stage and studio. Blackstar have delivered a world class and accessible package here. For usability, value and quality of tones, these are two of the best gear releases of 2021.

Rob Laing

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★★★★★
	SOUND QUALITY	★★★★★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
	BUILD QUALITY	★★★★★
	USABILITY	★★★★★
OVERALL RATING		★★★★★

ALSO TRY...

ORANGE TERROR STAMP £129

Blackstar has no direct competition in terms of a two-channel, multi-voice fully valve-driven preamp with editable cab simulation but this is worth investigation in the pedal amp market with a blend of Micro Terror and Micro Dark amps into a valve preamp/solid state power amp hybrid 20-watt package.

VICTORY V4 PREAMPS £379

Victory now offer four different preamp pedals with The Kraken, The Sheriff, The Jack and The Copper. Powered by three CV4014 valves and a single EC900, they're a full valve two-channel preamp experience but there's no cab simulation options and the included 12V DC, 800mA power adaptor is required for those valves.

WALRUS AUDIO MAKO SERIES ACS1 £365

No valves here, but the ACS1 offers a choice of onboard cab sims and uploaded IRs with multiple amp voices, delivering impressive results amplified and in recording. Its trump card is its ability to combine two of its three amp sims at once in stereo. However, it doesn't offer the gain range of Blackstar's pedals.

LIONHEART MADE IN THE UK



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Words Rob Laing Photography Phil Barker

FENDER PLAYER TELECASTER AND STRATOCASTER PLUS

Fender's Mexican series steps up with a premium line featuring expanded tones and bold finishes. Are they worth the upgrade?

Fender's refreshes and new lines come thick and fast; you need to give serious thought about buying a new Strat or Tele because the choice is now expansive; over 50 Strat and 40 Tele models – the differences between them often significant. Now there's more; the Player Plus represents an upgrade to the hugely popular Player Series (the contemporary Mexican 'standard'). These are not a replacement but an additional range with higher spec to help justify the price.

With hum-cancelling pickups, expanded control circuits, locking tuners, block steel saddles for improved sustain and 12-inch fingerboard radius, these specs are significant. A Mexican-made take on the Ultra or even more recent American Professional II? What is clear is just how far the Tele and Strat continue to evolve – beyond body shape, there's nothing vintage about these models.

There's no rosewood or ebony here, pau ferro is still the order of the day and that won't be changing for the foreseeable. Anyone looking for classic Fender finishes will find 3-colour Sunburst and Tobacco Burst, alongside Butterscotch Blonde, Silverburst across the models that encompass the Nashville Tele and HSS Strat. But elsewhere, as has been the case with new releases in recent years, the Player Plus is making offers fresh finishes to complement the contemporary spec. We've chosen to home in on one here alongside a twist on an old favourite; Tequila Sunrise is certainly a conversation starter, but our Aged Candy Apple Red Tele is more of a dramatic departure than its name suggests; a classy metallic copper/red affair.

Like the Ultra model, and unlike the standard Player series, the Tele features a rib-cage contour; an evolution we're very much fans of, especially for seated playing comfort. The standard Players feature a 9.5 radius, but the transition to a flatter, modern 12-inch enables lower action – possibly too low for some – and rolled fingerboard edges (also new to a Player model) with satin finish on both models. While it may seem a small detail, the rolled edges really do make these necks feel more played-in under the thumb.

The Modern 'C' profile feels slim and the combination makes these both fantastically playable out of their gig bags, but if you're used to vintage Fender radius it'll take some time to evaluate if it's for you. It certainly feels better for expressive bends to us, and, for Gibson owners, it could be a definite selling point. The nut here is slightly wider than the standard Player series, for subtly wider string spacing.

Another group both these models could appeal to is modders; take off the scratchplate and you'll find the Tele body is nicely routed for a middle single coil (à la Nashville Tele) and a neck humbucker, while the Strat can accommodate any number of configurations – new scratchplate



The Fender Player Plus Stratocaster features a 2-point tremolo and noiseless pickups

permitting – with its HSH routing. Despite the routing both come in at what we feel are pretty standard weights at 7.8lbs for the Tele, and 8 for the Strat.

As it stands, there's plenty of tones to be found here from both models; the Strat's push-pull second tone control activates what's known as the '7 mod' extra sounds in addition to the familiar five-way selector; adding the neck pickup in positions one and two. The Tele's push-pull tone control runs both pickups in series.

SOUNDS

We all have a preconception of the Tele and Strat sound. Fender's art has often been gently evolving and exploring the tonal hallmarks that have had such an impact on guitar music for decades. The Noiseless pickups here get the balance right for us; no hum to be found – these are technically humbuckers – and for the Tele twang and muscle that feels like it can confidently handle a very wide territory of guitar playing.

And it can; that low action enhances the percussive steely spank and hollow poke for riffs on the bridge and neck pickup respectively. We loved playing shimmering chords in the middle position with some light tremolo but there's so much character here, you don't need to layer on effects to spend hours exploring it.

The volume's sensitive treble-bleed circuit, that features on both guitars, enables effective gain control without descending into murky EQ. The onboard controls can be your gateway to tone-shaping but pull the tone pot and the pickups are activated in series for some low end beef / vegetarian alternative. Think of it as a boost,

but you can't just flip the selector to change voices as all positions activate it, which needs to be accounted for; it has to be pushed back first.

While the Tele's grip-friendly knurled knobs make this easy, the Strat's aged white plastic push-pull knob is more difficult to engage mid-song – in contrast to the easy grip Soft Touch knobs Fender fit to the Ultra model. A cost compromise we can't accept here. We often found ourselves struggling to get purchase and having to pull up from the bottom. It's the only retrofit we'd make here; the Soft Touch knobs are available to buy on the Fender store in packs of three. But we shouldn't have to.

Nevertheless, it unlocks wonderful things; the neck and bridge combination for position one especially comes into its own when driven and if you've dismissed Strats in the past, the added low end counts for a lot with the bridge tone control in play to explore further. These pickups are certainly not hot for a Strat compared to past experiences but there's a broad palette to be enjoyed. And the clarity of the neck here remains a huge selling point for the Strat, as it proves on the Tele too.

The volume rolls off the Strat's treble sensitively for rounding out the bridge highs and offering a progressively thicker tone. With overdrive the combination with the tone controls is hugely effective for dialling in gain and EQ without touching a pedal. But add the extra ingredients and Stevie, Jimi, Nile, Frusciante, Knopfler, Mayer, Edge, Gilmour... Their tones are all here waiting for you.

Both guitars are so playable, without the side distraction of cycle hum, they allow us freedom and focus on their sonic potential. On that note, the tuning stability we encounter is top notch – and for the Strat with its 2-point vibrato that's exactly what we want to hear. While the sculpted neck heel of the Ultra and Pro II is absent here, it's not a problem we've ever lingered on with traditional models that offer good access as they are.

STEVIE, JIMI, NILE, FRUSCIANTE, KNOPFLER, MAYER, EDGE, GILMOUR... THEIR TONES ARE ALL HERE WAITING FOR YOU

£939

FENDER PLAYER
TELECASTER
PLUS

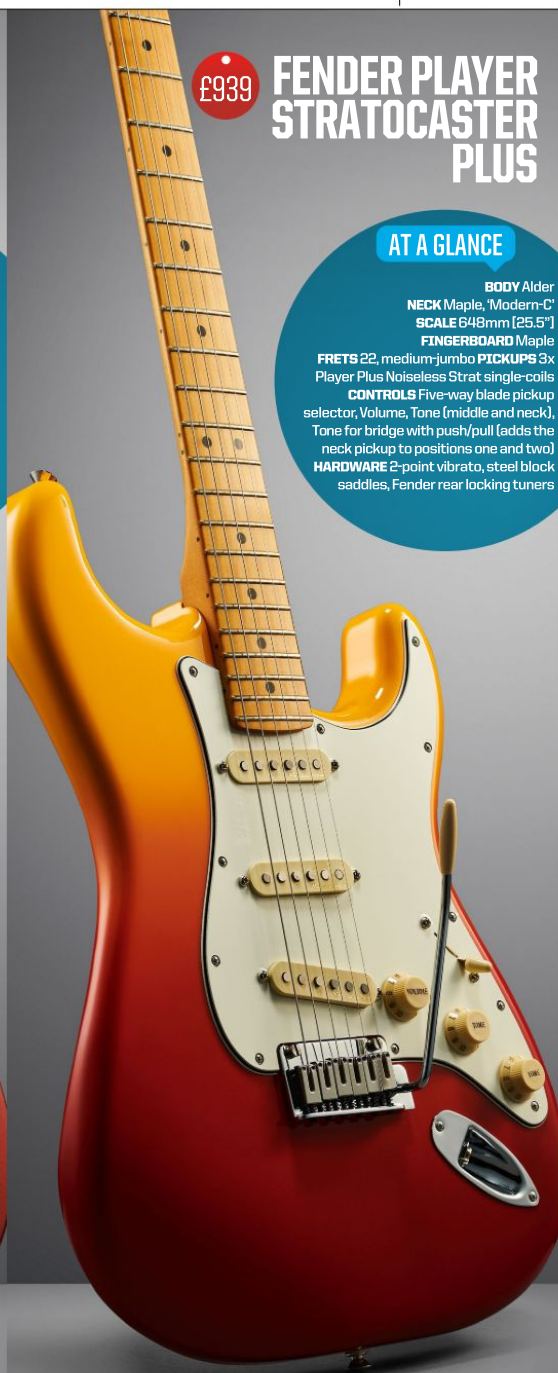
AT A GLANCE

BODY Alder**NECK** Maple, 'Modern-C'**SCALE** 648mm (25.5")**FINGERBOARD** Maple**FRETS** 22, medium jumbo**PICKUPS** 2x Fender Noiseless single coil-sized humbuckers**CONTROLS** 3-position lever pickup selector, master volume and master tone**HARDWARE** Strings-through-body and chrome-plated bridge and six steel block saddles, Fender rear locking tuners

£939

FENDER PLAYER
STRATOCASTER
PLUS

AT A GLANCE

BODY Alder**NECK** Maple, 'Modern-C'**SCALE** 648mm (25.5")**FINGERBOARD** Maple**FRETS** 22, medium-jumbo**PICKUPS** 3x Player Plus Noiseless Strat single-coils**CONTROLS** Five-way blade pickup selector, Volume, Tone (middle and neck), Tone for bridge with push/pull (adds the neck pickup to positions one and two)**HARDWARE** 2-point vibrato, steel block saddles, Fender rear locking tuners

FINAL VERDICT

Which of our Player Plusses is best for you?

Both the Ultra and American Pro II Series have helped to usher in the expanded idea of Fender's classic models; where features such as enhanced circuits and Noiseless pickups aren't special edition features but becoming... Dare we say it, cornerstones?

That's really something for a brand that has to tread carefully between updates and tradition. These features feel like very strong options in the catalogues for all

kinds of players priced out by the Pro II and Ultra guitars.

While the enhancements here are significant for playability and tone, it would be nice to see some modernity elsewhere; Fender's 'Deluxe' gig bag included with these guitars isn't really fit for the name now. We'd like to see a case with enhanced internal and shoulder strap padding from the brand now at this price point.

These guitars certainly deserve the protection; long-term investments that will deliver timeless tones. The wiring options alone take the already versatile Tele and Strat blueprint into new spaces for a Mexican model, and it's probably the Player Plus Tele that benefits the most because it's such an easily accessible boost that will become second nature. But either of these superb instruments can cover the ground to become your workhorse guitar.

FENDER PLAYER STRATOCASTER PLUS



SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	PLAYABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

FENDER PLAYER TELECASTER PLUS



SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	PLAYABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★



OUR GENERATION

*Drones play Rotosound electric guitar strings:
the sound of British punk rock since 1977*



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£599



ORANGE SUPER CRUSH 100 COMBO

Rock solid state?

You have to love Orange. Firmly seated in the rock 'n' roll pantheon of Great British amp builders alongside Marshall and Vox they remain a family-run business after all these years. The roots of Orange were laid down in London's West End during the late 60s when CEO Cliff Cooper set up his secondhand musical instrument store, the Orange Shop. Regular punters would hang out, play some cool guitars, and check out Cliff's amps – including a young Peter Green, whose band Fleetwood Mac helped launch Orange amplifiers.

Orange put their own stamp on guitar tone when they released the legendary 'Pics Only' amps in the early 70s (the name refers to the now iconic road sign-inspired graphics on the control panel). These seminal Pics Only amplifiers have remained a reference point for Orange ever since. Indeed, the firm's "king of the jungle" Rockerverb valve amps capture their classic midrange crunch very nicely (and some!).

Keenly aware the flagship Rockerverbs may be out of many people's price range, however,

Orange have developed a high-quality solid state alternative – the Super Crush 100 – using a valve-like two-channel JFET preamp design in tandem with the popular Pedal Baby 100 class A/B power amp circuit.

The Rockerverb and Super Crush 100 amps are similar in several ways. While both of these two-channel designs feature onboard reverb and an effects loop they also sport the same control knobs. The control panel of the Super Crush 100 is divided up into three distinct sections: Clean Channel, Dirty Channel, and Master.

The unit's single instrument input is located adjacent to the Volume control of the Clean Channel, which also features Bass and Treble knobs. Ditto the Dirty Channel, albeit with Gain and Middle knobs also. Switching between the two channels is achieved either by flicking a two-way switch on the control panel or via a latching footswitch such as the Orange FS-1 (not included).

The two-knob Master section simply features Volume and Reverb controls. As above, the

Reverb can be turned on and off using a footswitch. The onboard reverb is the only digital element to an otherwise all-analogue amplifier which has been designed to sound as valve-like as possible. Orange have gone for vintage-style realism here and you can most certainly dial into good, old-fashioned Pics Only territory using the Dirty Channel Gain and Middle controls. But that's only part of the story.

There is so much more to the Super Crush 100 than 70s-style overdrive. Far from being a one trick pony it does the full gamut of essential electric guitar tones very well from sparkling cleans to crushing distortion. Quiet in operation, tons of headroom, and with more than enough volume to serve most player's needs the Super Crush 100 is a highly versatile amp for both stage and studio.

Rod Brakes

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
	SOUND QUALITY	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
	BUILD QUALITY	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
	USABILITY	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
	OVERALL RATING	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★

1 GAIN & BOOST

The valve-like single-ended JFET preamp design comprises independent Clean and Dirty channels (foot/panel switch controlled).

2 SPEAKER

Orange have fitted this amp with a single 12-inch G12K-150 – Celestion's "monster of rock".

3 EQ

The Clean and Dirty channels feature separate Treble and Bass knobs while the latter also boasts a Middle EQ control.

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Solid state 100-watt combo amp

OUTPUT: 2-channel JFET preamp, 100-watt class A/B power amp

CONTROLS: Clean Channel: Volume, Bass, Treble; Dirty Channel: Gain, Bass, Middle, Treble, Volume; Master: Reverb, Volume; Dirty/Clean Channel switch; Open/Closed Cab. Back switch (analogue D.I.)

SOCKETS: Single input; balanced (XLR) D.I.; FX Loop Send/Return; Clean/Dirty Channel & Reverb on/off footswitches; speaker output (8 ohms)

WEIGHT: 18.1kg

DIMENSIONS: [HxWxD] 450 x 550 x 290mm

FINISH: Orange or Black vinyl; basketweave grill cloth front

ALSO AVAILABLE: Super Crush 100 Head (£429)

CONTACT: Orange, www.orangeamps.com



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Words Grant Moon Photo Ed Townsend

JOHNNY HEALEY (JOHN)

Lots of two-piece bands fall into the trap of being quite bluesy,” says Johnny Healey of the amusingly named John, “whereas we’ve always had a punk, hardcore influence. I don’t want to just play power chords – I want to play nice, pretty chords with sevenths in and stuff, but with loads of overdrive, and really fast!”

His duo with drummer/vocalist John Newton, John are a force to be reckoned with. The pair met at college in London and bonded over bands they loved – Metz, Ceremony, Protomartyr, Earth, Isis, Fugazi – and soon started making noise in a room. John’s 2017 debut album *God Speed In The National Limit* and follow-up

Out Here On The Fringes were powerful illustrations of their massive garage-y racket, while their arty twist endeared them to those hip types at BBC 6Music and *The Guardian*.

They’ve supported Idles and McLusky, and appeared at this year’s Green Man and End Of The Road festivals. To get an idea of their power, search YouTube for their pummeling set on Seattle’s KEXP Radio. Their superb new third album, *Nocturnal Manoeuvres*, brings together all the experience they’ve earned, with moments of atmosphere and nuance that make you forget there’s just two guys here.

As a kid, Healey was a wannabe shredder into Vai, Satriani and Gilbert, before discovering Deftones, Rocket From The

Crypt, Drive Like Jehu, and falling under the spell of John Reis’s ferocious strumming hand. “I prefer that style of playing,” says Healey. “At the beginning in John we played constantly – this constant rhythm between guitar, drums and John’s singing – because we didn’t know the different tricks we’ve learned along the way.

“Later, I’d use a Micro POG [octave] pedal, and send the Dry Out to my effects and into my guitar amp. Then I’d send the Effects Out through a kill switch and into a bass amp. With my foot on the kill switch I could play just guitar; with my foot off, the bass would come in. So I was creating dynamic between guitar and bass – loud and massive in some parts, quieter in others.”

Healey’s intense technique demands heavy strings – 11s to 56s – and he tunes them to E standard, but also to drop-D, -C, -B and even drop-A. His go-to guitar is a ‘TV-white’ 1960s double-cut Gibson Les Paul Special, armed with a Bare Knuckle Warpig at the bridge. Healey – a guitar repairman by day – has modified this and all his other instruments: “I rewire them so the signal goes from bridge pickup to volume to jack. With the simplest wiring you get the most out of the pickup as there’s nothing in the way.

“I’m going for simplicity,” he adds. “If I make a mistake live, no one is there to back me up. If anything goes wrong, everything stops. It’s like we’re playing for our lives most nights.”



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