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INSIDE

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50 EASY GUITAR LESSONS
BRIAN MAY INTERVIEW

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GUITAR GUIDE**

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FUTURE

VOLUMES

W E L C O M E

TOTAL **ANNUAL 2022** Guitar

Welcome to the Total Guitar Annual 2022, filled with the very best features, interviews, advice and more from the past year. Our 50 Easy Guitar Lessons feature is essential reading for guitar enthusiasts of all levels and styles, bringing you the very best ways to improve your playing and get more from your gear, covering everything from technique and tone to recording and maintenance. There's also a whole host of other brilliant features – discover the greatest rock riffs of all time, the guitars that built rock and learn how to play like some of the genre's greatest guitarists. We've also got exclusive interviews with the legendary Jimmy Page, Brian May and Tom Morello, while we speak to Squid following their first live show since lockdown.

Whatever your skill level, we're also here to help – our tips, tricks and tutorials will give you the confidence to master your guitar and play like the legends. You'll find a wealth of easy-to-follow tab throughout this annual, complete with free downloadable audio and backing tracks. To get started, head over to bit.ly/tga2022audio to download or stream your audio. Enjoy!

「 FUTURE 」

TOTAL ANNUAL 2022 Guitar

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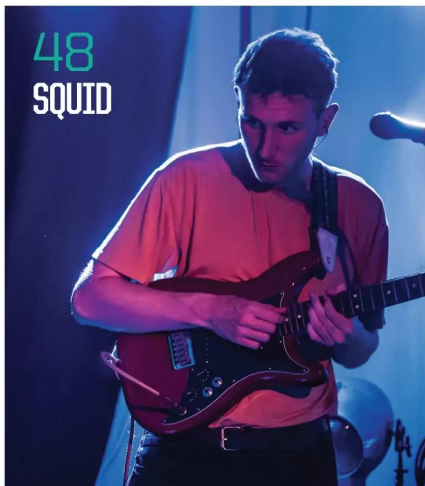
TOTAL Guitar

bookazine series



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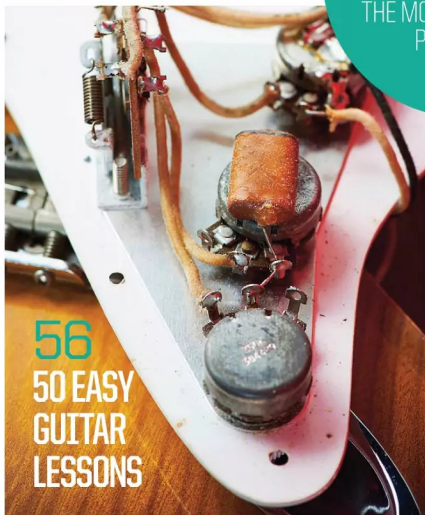


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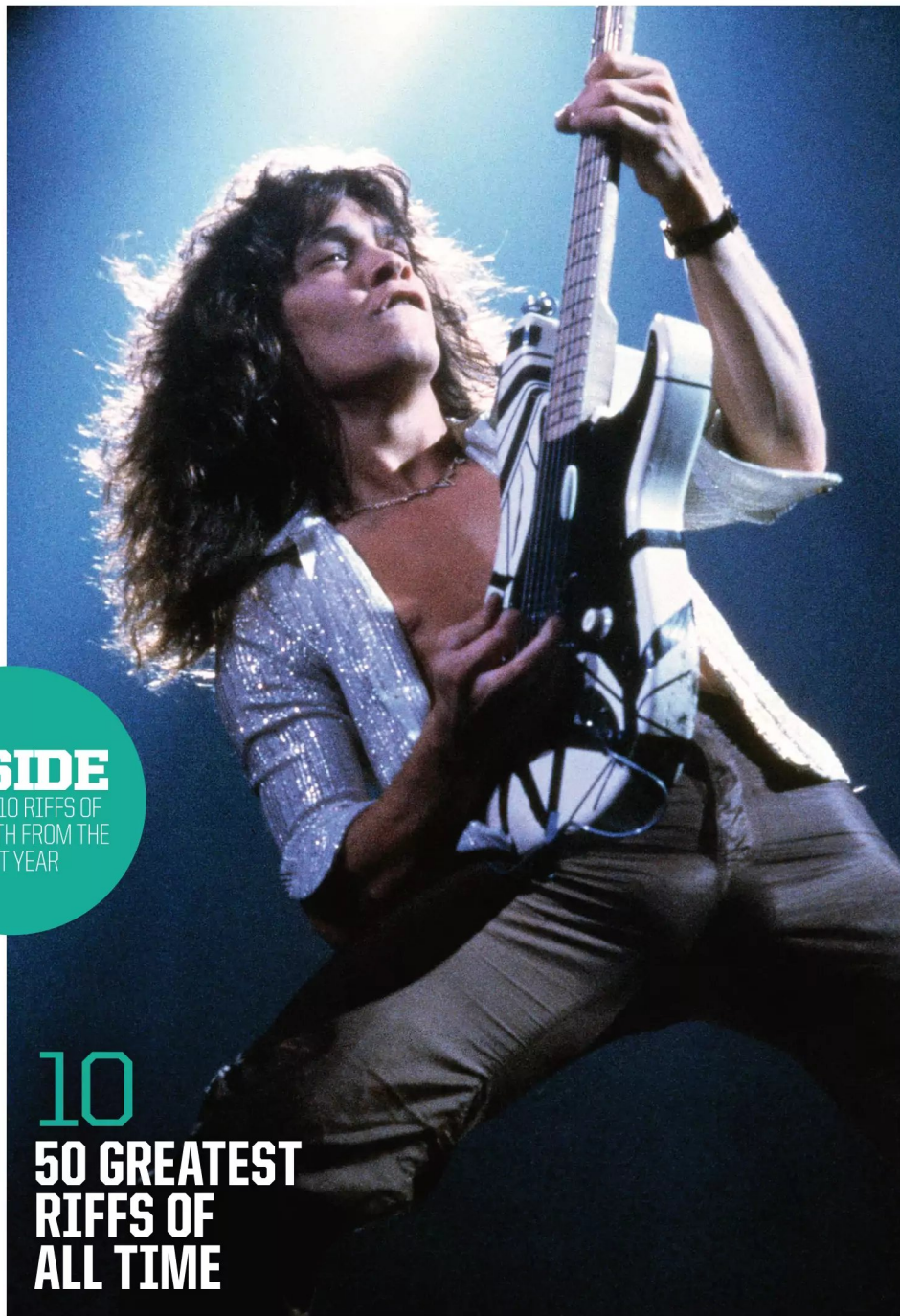
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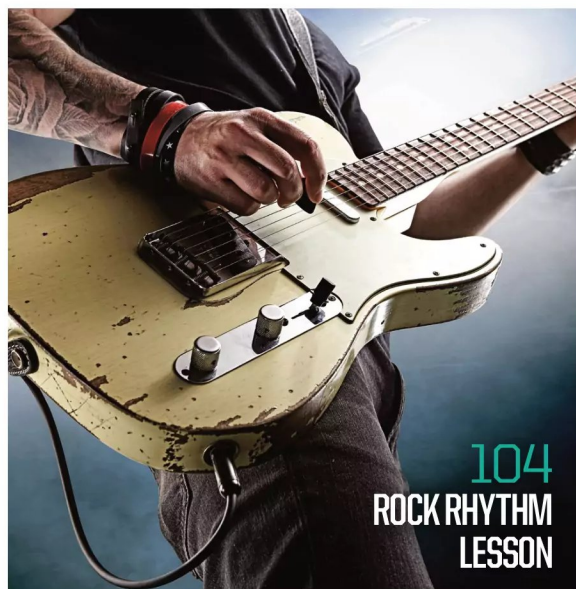


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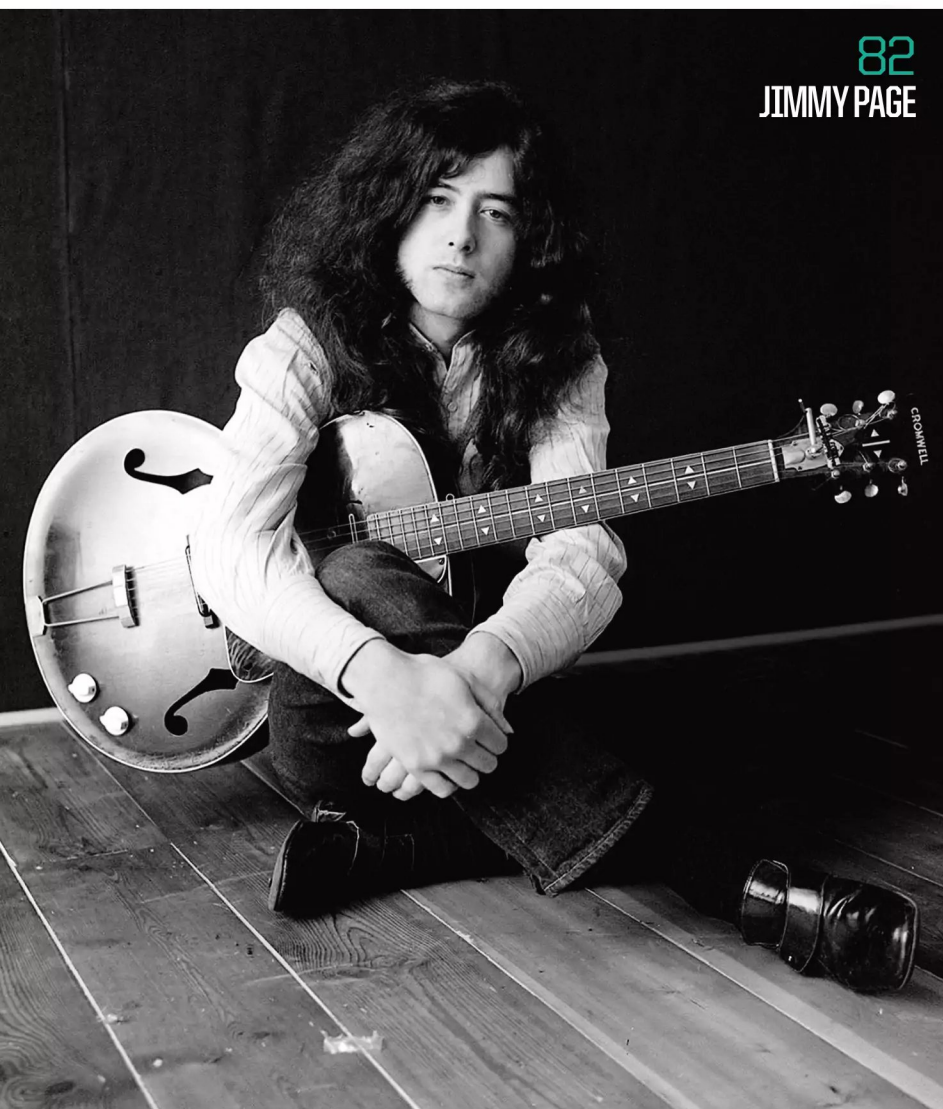




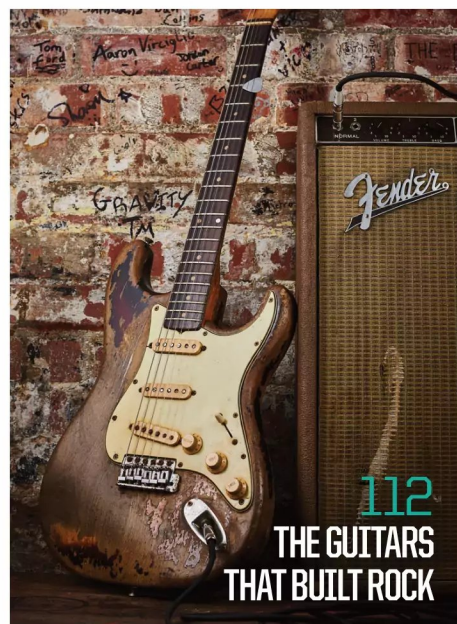
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TAB GUIDE

Get more from TG by understanding our easy-to-follow musical terms and signs

What is tab?

This is where the key signature and time signatures are shown

$\text{♩} = 72$ — This is the beats per minute (BPM)

0:51

2nd string 3rd fret 2nd string 1st fret 3rd string 2nd fret 4th string Open

1 E
2 B
3 G
4 D
5 A
6 E

TAB

CD time (where the part occurs on the original CD)

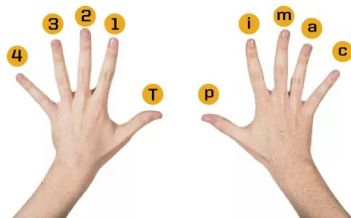
Tab is short for tablature, a notational system used to give detailed information as to where notes should be played on the fretboard. Tab appears underneath conventional music notation as six horizontal lines that represent the strings of the

guitar, from the sixth (thick) string at the bottom to the first (thin) string at the top. On these lines, numbers represent which frets you place your fingers. For example, an A note on the 2nd fret, third string, will be shown as a number '2' on the third line

down on the tab. Unfretted strings are shown with a '0'. The key and time signatures are shown in the notation. TG also includes a timestamp to tell you where in the original track you'll find each example and tempo expressed in beats per minute.

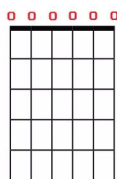
FRET BOXES: CHORDS, SCALES AND CAPO NOTATION

HAND LABELLING



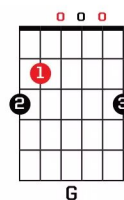
Here are the abbreviations used for each finger. Fretting hand: **1, 2, 3, 4, (T)**
Picking hand: **p (thumb), i (index), m (middle), a (annular), c (little finger)**

NUT AND FRETBOARD



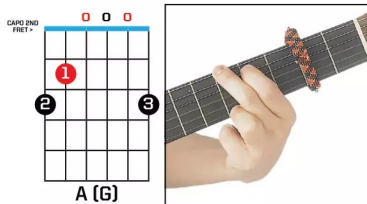
This fretboard diagram represents the guitar's fretboard exactly, as seen in the photo. This design is used for ease of visualising a fretboard scale or chord quickly.

CHORD EXAMPLE



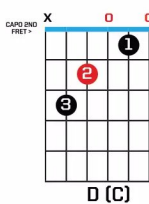
This diagram represents a G chord. The 'o's are open strings, and a circled number is a fretting hand finger. A black 'o' or circled number is the root note (here, G).

CAPO EXAMPLE



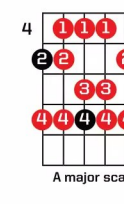
The blue line in the diagram represents a capo - for this A chord, place it at the 2nd fret. Capos change the fret number ordering. Here, the original 5th fret now becomes the 3rd fret, 7th fret now 5th fret, etc.

CAPO NOTATION



Here the chord looks like a C in the tab, but the capo on the 2nd fret raises the pitch to make it a D. The 2nd fret capo'd notes are shown with a 'D' in the tab as if they were open strings.

SCALE EXAMPLE



The fret box diagram illustrates the fret hand fingering for the A major scale using black dots for root notes and red dots for other scale tones. The photo shows part of the scale being played on the fourth string with the first, third and fourth fingers.

GUITAR TECHNIQUES: PICKING

DOWN AND UP-PICKING



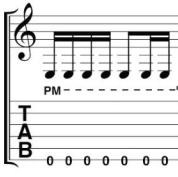
The symbols under the tab tell you the first note is to be down-picked and the second note is to be up-picked.

TREMOLO PICKING



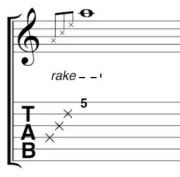
Each of the four notes are to be alternate-picked (down and up-picked) very rapidly and continuously.

PALM MUTING



Palm-mute by resting the edge of your picking hand palm on the strings near the bridge saddles.

PICK RAKE



Drag the pick across the strings shown with a single sweep. This is often used to augment a rake's last note.

APPROPRIATED CHORD



Play the notes of the chord by strumming across the relevant strings in the direction of the arrow head.

THE 50 GREATEST RIFES OF ALL TIME



Illustration: Magic Torch

WHICH IS TRULY THE GREATEST RIFF OF ALL? WELL, **TOTAL GUITAR** IS TACKLING THIS THORNY SUBJECT AND AIMING TO END THE DEBATE ONCE AND FOR ALL. TO DO SO, WE ASKED READERS OF **GUITARWORLD.COM** FOR THEIR HELP AS WE POSTED A POLL TO GAUGE THEIR COLLECTIVE OPINIONS.

TO BEGIN WITH, WE PREPARED A SHORTLIST OF OUR OWN FAVOURITE RIFFS. WELL, SHORT-ISH! EVEN FOLLOWING A STRICT SELF-IMPOSED 'ONE RIFF PER ARTIST' RULE WE WERE ONLY ABLE TO PARE OUR SELECTION DOWN TO 125 RIFFS. THAT MEANT NO *PARANOID*, NOR EVEN *HIGHWAY TO HELL*. ONE RIFF PER BAND. THAT WAS THE RULE.

AND, THOUGH IT WAS POSSIBLE TO OFFER UP ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTIONS, BY AND LARGE, IT SEEMS THE GOOD READERS OF **GUITAR WORLD** AGREED WITH OUR SELECTION.

SO, READ ON AS WE RUN YOU THROUGH 50 OF THE FINEST RIFFS EVER RECORDED. WE'LL TELL YOU THE STORIES AND HEAR FROM SOME OF THE GUITARISTS WHO PLAYED ON THE RECORDINGS.

YOU'LL EVEN LEARN A FEW TRICKS OF THE RIFFING TRADE ALONG THE WAY, TOO.

PLUG IN AND LET'S GET PLAYING!



50 HEIR APPARENT OPETH

(2008)

Prog metal majesty courtesy of Stockholm's finest

We begin our riff rundown with this cut from the Swedish group's death metal years. There's an abundance of mind-boggling riffs on offer, though it's the one that arrives two and a half minutes in which arguably presents Mikael Åkerfeldt's genius at its most sonically destructive. Kicking off with powerchords from the 1st fret to open position, it then alternates between quick-fire descending octave shapes higher up the neck and palm-muted chromatic notes down below – warring with each other in the most spectacular of ways. The solo, played by Fredrik Åkesson, then adds to the chaos, using a dramatic mix of bluesy bends and diminished runs to capitalise on its outside feel.

Photos: Getty Images/Kevin Nixson

49 TICKET TO RIDE THE BEATLES

(1965)

Rickenbacker chime and Indian influence

Released as a single in April 1965, *Ticket To Ride* became the Beatles' seventh consecutive UK number one, and its instantly recognisable opening motif is played with two fingers on a 12-string. The chiming arpeggiated riff is underpinned by repeating A chords and, with the low A drone over the top, hints to the traditional Indian music that would become increasingly influential on the band. Played by Harrison on his Rickenbacker 360/12, the motif has an ethereal, slightly tinny sonic quality. Staggered phrasing – which employs a quarter note triplet at the end – adds to that free-and-easy 60s vibe.

48 ALL RIGHT NOW FREE

(1970)

Paul Kossoff in complete control

Consider us somewhat surprised that Free's 1970 mega-hit only just crept into the Top 50! The opening few seconds – with Paul Kossoff's cranked-up Les Paul keeping a steady pace with Simon Kirke's thumping beat – is one of the most recognisable intros of all time. Kossoff was playing one of his several Les Paul sunbursts on *All Right Now*, plugged into a Marshall stack. As singer Paul Rodgers said: "Koss had such an amazing sound on that opening chord and with his chord structure on the A chord. He had such a long reach and could actually hold the A note on the E string on the 5th fret. He could get a real ripping sound and it had a lot of depth to it."

47 G.O.A.T. POLYPHIA

(2018)

The dazzling sounds and techniques that redefined modern guitar

In recent years, Polyphia guitarists Tim Henson and Scott LePage have established themselves as leaders of the new pack – blending elements of fusion, tech-metal and trap beats into their own mind-melting cocktail of noise. 2018 track *G.O.A.T.* is one of their most popular to date, racking up 50 million plays on YouTube and Spotify combined – its main motif built on a bed of harmonics, 19th and 20th fret taps, bleeding open strings and B natural minor arpeggios. Both players used Ibanez guitars for the recordings, Henson plugged into "only the Fractal and a little bit of BIAS FX" while LePage opted for a more traditional Orange amp and cab.





46 OUTSHINED SOUNDGARDEN

(1991)

Grunge power in 7/4 time

In 1991, the year that Seattle rock ate the world, *Badmotorfinger* was Soundgarden's breakthrough album, and *Outshined* was its most accessible song. The groove of the opener and verse drop D riff is the stuff of stoner rockers' dreams, with single finger bends from guitarists Kim Thayil and Chris Cornell complementing its hook superbly. Quite simply, it's the definition of badass. But true to the band's left-field tendencies, it's in a 7/4 metre. And in grunge's most experimental and inventive band, Thayil's role was pivotal, melding Stooges-style aggression and psychedelic Sabbath slab through his 70s Guild SG-100.



45 NO ONE KNOWS QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE

(2002)

Stoner rock's finest hour

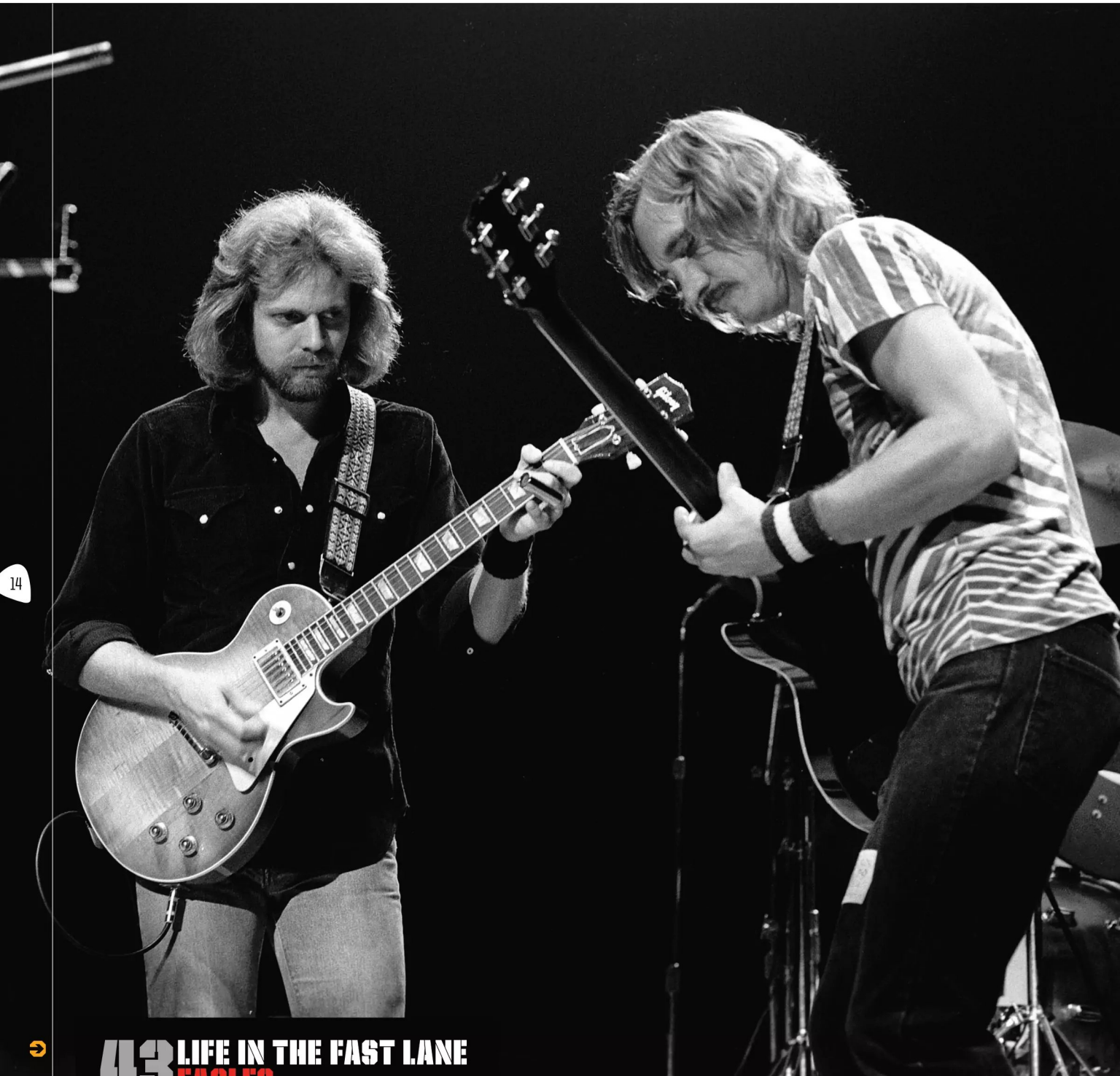
QOTSA's breakout hit has a riff so strong it serves as the de facto chorus. Sure, the "I realise you're mine" part repeats, but watch the crowd at any gig to see that the guitar riff is what everyone's waiting for. Josh Homme took a hipster approach to gear, refusing to touch Marshalls, Voxes, Fenders or Gibsons for the making of *Songs Of The Deaf*. *No One Knows* used three amps together: a solid state Peavey, an Ampeg VT40, and an old Tube Works head. The unique recorded tone was a careful blend of microphones from this idiosyncratic rig.

44 CAN'T STOP RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS

(2002)

A funky masterclass in fret-hand muting

Rock guitarists don't get much funkier than the Chili Peppers' John Frusciante, and the third single from 2002's *By The Way* featured the smash album's most rhythm-heavy riff. A player of vintage Strats and Teles, Frusciante employs a sharp, ballsy single-coil-bridge-pickup tone. The verse's repeated two-note figure, D to E (G string, 5th and 7th fret) represent the flat 7th and root of the E minor key. Frusciante hits the root notes of the chords (Em, D, Bm, C), and keeps it clean with his deceptively complex fret-hand string muting technique. Add in his aggressive and funky right hand, and you've got all the makings of an unstoppable riff...



43 LIFE IN THE FAST LANE EAGLES

(1976)

Country-rockers dive headlong into hard rock

Another monster that started life as a warm-up, *Life In The Fast Lane* was just an exercise for Joe Walsh until it caught his bandmates' ears. The riff works by the sorcery of rhythmic displacement. It's essentially the same idea

played three times with slight variations, but the fourth repeat begins half a beat earlier, creating massive urgency. The Eagles' *Hotel California*-era tones were Fender-driven, and this track carries the raunch of Fender Tweed Deluxes and Champs driven hard. Walsh played a Strat, while Don Felder played his '59 Les Paul – the ultimate tag team of guitarists and instruments.



41 STARGAZER RAINBOW

(1976)

Ritchie Blackmore at his most unstoppable

In this epic track from Rainbow's classic second album *Rising*, there's a walking feel to the main riff thanks to the inclusion of passing tones within its pentatonic framework, with a three-note chromatic run starting on the fifth fret of the fifth string from the minor 7th to the major 7th and then finally the E octave. Around this period guitarist Ritchie Blackmore was mainly using an Olympic White '73 Strat and a sunburst '74, both with scalloped necks, going through a Marshall Major which had been modded for more power and distortion. "This extra output stage basically made the 200-watt into a 280-watt," he once revealed. "So I did have the loudest amp in the world."

42 MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE THE POLICE

(1979)

Their first number one, and to many, the best of The Police

Powered by Summers' signature hooky riff, *Message In A Bottle* distilled the trio's blend of post-punk and white reggae into what he called "a very different-sounding pop song". And while there was always tension between them, Summers knew that this band was the perfect vehicle for his playing. "It was a unique chemistry," he said, "between the guitar, the bassline, the high vocals that Sting had then, and Stewart (Copeland)'s unique drumming. Never to be repeated."



VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

Summers based his riff on his trademark moveable add9 chord shape. Luckily, the shape stays the same throughout the sequence, so once you've mastered the initial stretch your hand shape stays the same as you move into each new position. The watery shimmer comes courtesy of an Electro-Harmonix Electric Mistress flanger and Summers' '63 humbucker-loaded Telecaster.

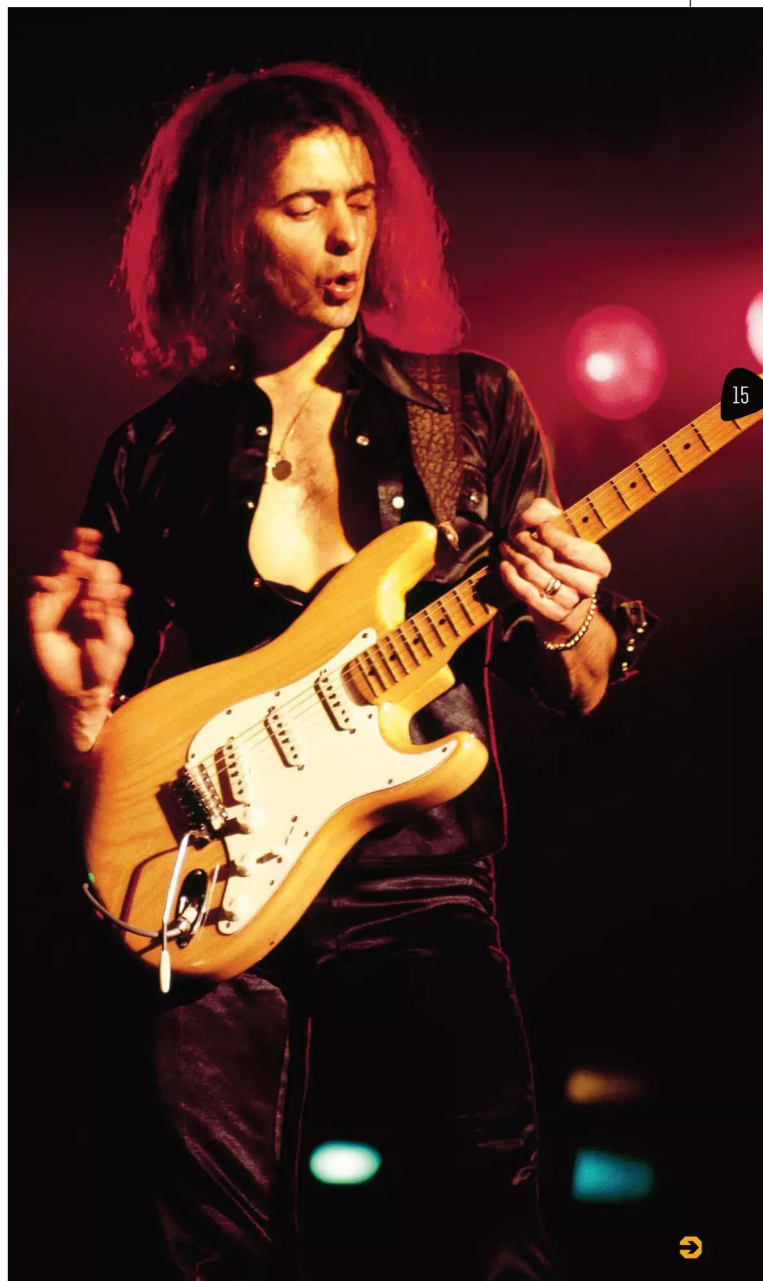
Appears at: 0:00-0:32

Tempo: 150 bpm

Key/scale: C# minor

Main techniques: Finger stretches, sus2 chords, arpeggios

TG TIP These chord shapes are fearsome! Practise higher up the fretboard until you feel comfy with 'em!



RIFFOLOGY THE ANATOMY OF

We analysed the makeup of 20 of our poll's riffs – what can we learn?

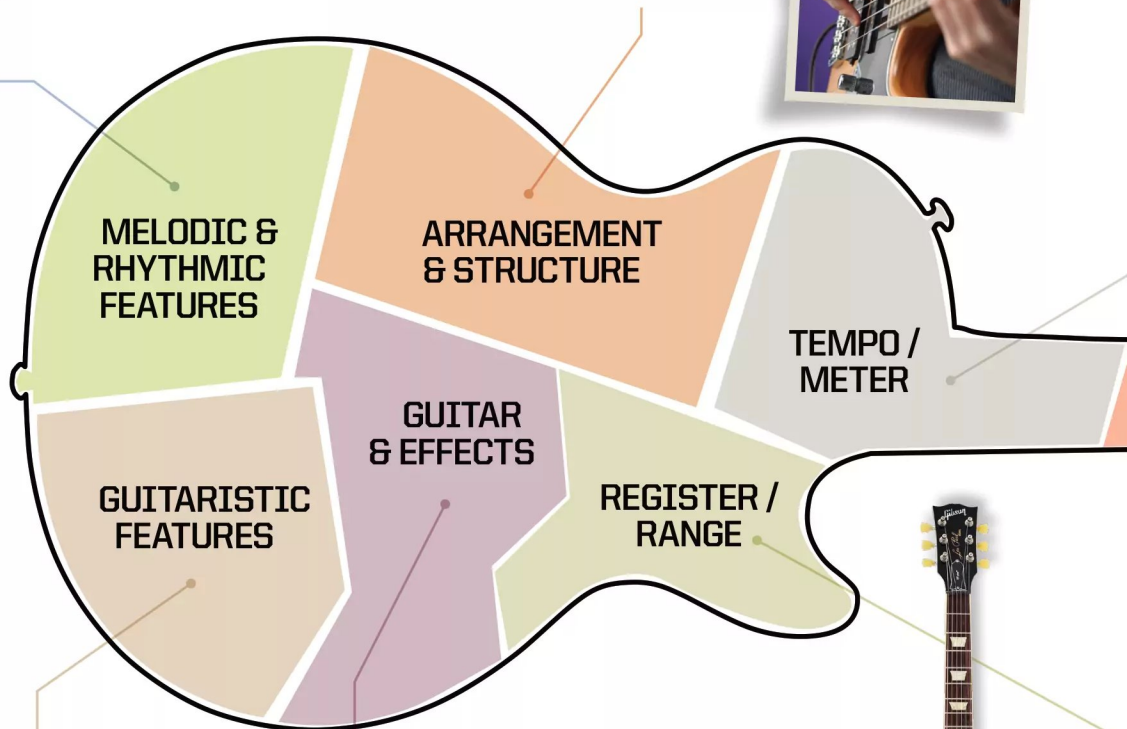
20 RIFFS FROM THE POLL (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER): • *Back In Black* AC/DC • *Do I Wanna Know?* Arctic Monkeys • *Down Down* Status Quo • *Enter Sandman* Metallica • *Johnny B. Goode* Chuck Berry • *Layla* Derek And The Dominos • *Livin' On A Prayer* Bon Jovi • *Money* Pink Floyd • *Money For Nothing* Dire Straits • *Purple Haze* The Jimi Hendrix Experience • *Smells Like Teen Spirit* Nirvana • *Smoke On The Water* Deep Purple • *Sweet Child O' Mine* Guns N' Roses • *The Spirit Of Radio* Rush • *This Charming Man* The Smiths • *Walk This Way* Aerosmith • *Whole Lotta Love* Led Zeppelin • *You Really Got Me* The Kinks • *Rebel Rebel* David Bowie • *20th Century Boy* T. Rex



MELODIC & RHYTHMIC FEATURES

There seems to be a balance between rhythmic interest and melodic complexity in operation here. The most melodically active riffs here (*Sweet Child O' Mine* and *The Spirit Of Radio*) have generally even and simple rhythms. However, the majority of the riffs are less notey and rely on a rhythmic 'hook', such as pushing into a beat early by a quaver (*Down Down*), or incorporate a significant amount of offbeats (aka syncopation), for example, in the answering phrases in *Layla* and *Smoke On The Water*.

ARRANGEMENT & STRUCTURE The most common approach to delivering the epic riff is to just start the song with a solo guitar (maybe doubled or with simple background support) and then have the bass, drums and vocals enter strategically. This approach might be prefaced by an atmospheric (often rhythmically ambiguous) intro (*Livin' On A Prayer*, *Money For Nothing*, *Money*). The essence of most of these riffs is delivered in two bars (or less), and even when it's longer, it usually has a structure (such as A B A C) as in *Layla*, *Smoke On The Water* and *Back In Black*.



GUITARISTIC FEATURES

All of the riffs exemplify phrasing traits of the guitar – and there's little sense they might've been written on other instruments.

Open strings, standard chord shapes, slides, slurs, bends and muted strings are all present. The guitar is allowed to be itself and is celebrated as such.

GUITARS & EFFECTS Les Pauls, and then Strats, are the kings of the riff. Other guitars are used (most notably Telecasters), but even in the 2013 Arctic Monkeys track, it's the classics that deliver. Effects are actually at a minimum – only *Livin' On A Prayer* (talkbox) and *The Spirit Of Radio* (flanger) use effects beyond a (moderate) distortion and modest reverb. Clarity is key, and effects should contribute to, rather than merely ornament, the riff.



THE PERFECT RIFF

TEMPO / METER With the exception of *Money* (7/4), all the riffs are in 4/4, but tempos range from a stately 84 to 85bpm (*Do I Wanna Know?*) to the region of a nifty 170bpm (*Down Down* and *Johnny B. Goode*), with a good portion around the 112bpm mark. The range may seem very wide, but consider that practically all the examples at 112bpm or slower include significant use of semiquavers, and there are hardly any semiquavers to be found above around 116bpm. So there's a sweet spot of rhythmic density – no ballads, no speed metal.



KEY / TUNING

It may come as no surprise that the most common key in the list is the guitar-friendly E. In fact E, E minor, 'neutral' E keys and capo'd keys based on an open E chord made up almost half of the cohort. What was a surprise is that 20 per cent of the riffs are in the not particularly guitar-friendly G minor, so it seems there's something satisfying to play and hear around that 3rd fret.



SCALE / MODE

KEY / TUNING



REGISTER / RANGE

Most of the riffs employ the lowest available root in the scale, and many of them don't travel much further than an octave or so above that note and are centered around roots and 5ths (and pentatonic elements) of the scale, making them eminently singable (at least by a low-voiced male), which might contribute to their ear-worm status. There are exceptions: *Sweet Child O' Mine* and *The Spirit Of Radio* both have a catchiness that doesn't seem to rely on singability.

SCALE / MODE Unsurprisingly, minor pentatonic/blues are the most common scales, making up more than a third. However the more 'sophisticated' Mixolydian, Major and Aeolian collectively account for half, showing that these riffs are certainly not 'all blues'. The most complex scale is in *Enter Sandman*, which hints at both blues scale and Phrygian mode.



So what, if anything, can be learnt from an analysis of the riffs? Well, here are the five (breakable) rules...

RULE #1 Keep it simple and memorable – generally a handful of notes with the musical essence delivered in a couple of bars. If you can't sing it back easily (or at least keep it caught in your head) you've done something wrong.

RULE #2 Include just the right amount of rhythmic interest. Unless the riff is actively melodic (*Sweet Child O' Mine*), you should recognise the riff from its rhythm alone. This means a use of space and a simple but effective rhythmic hook.

RULE #3 If you want a fast tempo, keep the riff at quavers or longer, and at slower tempos make significant use of semiquavers; neither frenzied, nor laboured.

RULE #4 Embrace the idiomatic nature of the guitar (open strings, muting, bends and an interplay of chords and single lines) and use effects sparingly, and only if they add a musical element to the track. Swamping your part with distortion, delays and reverbs can compromise the catchiness of a riff when a raw guitar sound might deliver it more effectively.

RULE #5 Feel free to break any of the rules (including this one). Innovation comes from intuition: learn from the past, but don't let it dictate all your choices. All these riffs are classics precisely because they broke a rule or two...



40 **ALIVE** **PEARL JAM**

(1991)

A must-know riff from the grunge era

Pearl Jam's 1991 album *Ten* quickly became defined as on one of the holy tablets of the grunge era, and its monolithic first hit single set the tone. *Alive*'s unmistakable intro/verse riff was played by the song's writer, guitarist Stone Gossard, on a gain-saturated Les Paul, and it's mainly A- and D-string stuff – easy to play, but with real slacker feel. That first wide interval D to A gets texture from the A being hammered on, not picked, and the second measure's laconic bend from B to C adds a briefly minor bluesy, woozy vibe. Co-guitarist Mike McCready's A and Asus4 chords and Jeff Ament's bassline outline the Mixolydian tonality here.

39 **BORN TO BE WILD** **STEPPENWOLF**

(1968)

"Heavy metal thunder", indeed!

Famously the first song to feature the phrase 'heavy metal' in its lyrics, *Born To Be Wild* was the biker rock anthem that became a classic of the counter-culture via its inclusion in 60s cult movie *Easy Rider*. Written by the enigmatic Mars Bonfire (Dennis to his mum), the track was originally intended to be a folk ballad about life on the open road, but as it was developed with the band, the tempo and gain were increased and a million-selling smash hit was born. Played in E with scratchy distortion, the riff set the tone for a whole genre.

38 **PSYCHOSOCIAL** **SLIPKNOT**

(2008)

The Nine taking their death metal influences to new limits

Tuned down all the way to drop A, decorated with palm-mutings, pauses, pinched harmonics and slides, this single from 2008's *All Hope Is Gone* has earned its place among Slipknot's finest. On its final cycle, the chromatic line at the end doubles in speed, climaxing in tension before the less-syncopated and more direct-hitting verse brings relief.

It's interesting how guitarists Jim Root and Mick Thomson find different ways of playing the same idea, doubling up in places and then switching to harmonies to add weight and dimension, respectively. Root was using his signature Telecasters, fitted with EMG 81/60 pickups, into Orange Rockerverb 100 and a Diezel Herbert, while Thomson relied on his own signature Ibanez guitars and Rivera amps.

37 **SCUTTLE BUTTIN'** **STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN & DOUBLE TROUBLE**

(1984)

Chicken pickin' good...

Inspired by the Lonnie Mack number *Chicken Pickin'*, speed and stamina are key to this iconic Texas blues riff. It's built around a first position blues scale lick in E₇ (which Stevie would always tune down to). Lightning-fast runs are made humanly possible with lots of pull-offs, plucked open strings and fleet-fingered slides. The repeating lick is sandwiched between stabbing I, IV and V chords, and – played on a Strat through a Fender amp – the tone is characteristically twangy and bright. Testament to the riff's ability to make people sit down and shut up, SRV frequently opened his live sets with *Scuttle Buttin'*.

36 **MISSISSIPPI QUEEN** **MOUNTAIN**

(1970)

Iconic tone from the man who inspired Slash

Pete Townshend, Slash, Joe Satriani and Joe Bonamassa are just a few of the guitar heroes who hailed the genius of Mountain's Leslie West. And there was no finer example of West's power than *Mississippi Queen*, the opening track on Mountain's debut album *Climbing!* on which he delivered explosive high-octane riffage and sweet vibrato soloing. Gear-wise, he plugged his trusty sunburst Les Paul Junior into his famous Sunn Coliseum amplifier, which had been designed as a PA system. "I didn't put the volume way up," he said. "I distorted the preamp and put the master volume at four or five, because you wanted to get the tone rather than the volume in the studio."

35 SWEET CHILD O' MINE GUNS N' ROSES

(1987)

From a "cool little riff", a rock classic was born

Every decade has its rock anthem. While the 1970s had *Stairway To Heaven* and the 90s had *Smells Like Teen Spirit*, the most memorable riffathon of the 80s has to be *Sweet Child O' Mine*. It was the US number one hit that confirmed Guns N' Roses as the greatest hard rock act of a generation, propelling debut album *Appetite For Destruction* to multi-platinum status. And while it was rumoured for years that lead guitarist Slash was dismissive of his own ultra-iconic opening riff, that's not the whole story.

As he told TG: "In passing, I did say that it was sort of a joke or something, but initially it was just a cool, neat little riff that I'd come up with. It was an interesting pattern and it was really melodic, but I don't think I would have presented it to the band and said, 'Hey, I've got this idea!' because I just happened to come up with it while we were all hanging around together. Izzy [Stradlin, GN'R's rhythm guitarist] was the first one to start playing behind it, and once that happened Axl [Rose, the band's singer] started making up words, and it took off that way."

As for the guitar Slash played, it could only ever have been a Les Paul – but perhaps not the Les Paul that you'd expect. "I was lucky even to have a guitar for the *Appetite* album," he said. "Originally, when I got to the studio, I had somehow, in a fit of desperation, pawned most of my guitars, so all I had was a BC Rich Warlock and two Jacksons. I'd been playing those guitars live, and they sounded OK in a room full of people, but when I actually went and heard them in the cans they sounded f*ckin' horrible!"

Fortunately, fate intervened in the form of GN'R manager Alan Niven. Slash recalled. "Right before we went in to do the guitar overdubs, Alan gave me a handmade copy of a 1959 Les Paul made by a guy called Kris Derrig. He built a run of between fifty and a hundred immaculate '59 issues, and that was the guitar that I used for the whole record. You could never tell that they weren't Gibsons."



VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

Only the first note of each bar changes here, but *SCOM*'s riff remains a notoriously tricky little finger twister. We recommend learning bar 1 in full before taking a view on your preferred fingering pattern in bars 3 and 5 where the changes occur. Picking-wise, we recommend a pure alternating down-up approach. You won't always be picking in the direction of the next note, but we'd argue it'll help keep your timing in check.

Appears at: 0:00-0:46

Tempo: 112 bpm

Key/scale: D Mixolydian

Main techniques: Alternate picking, arpeggios

TG TIP Keep your eyes/ears on the first note of each bar. It's the only note that changes until the variation in the very last bar of the intro.

➤

34 MAN IN THE BOX ALICE IN CHAINS

(1990)

The Talkbox gets reinvented for the 90s

The big hit from Alice In Chains' debut album *Facelift* could very well be the finest grunge anthem of them all. Guitarist Jerry Cantrell was pairing his 1984 G&L 'Blue Dress' Rampage, fitted with a single JB pickup in the bridge, with a Reinhold Bogner-modded Marshall JCM800 via his Dunlop Heil Talkbox, and dialling in more throaty and metallic sounds than the majority of his Seattle peers – and with stunning results. The main riff, played half a step down as per most of their recordings, sees him chugging on his low E₁ and a minor 7th up on the next string, layered with a Hendrix-y lead line that's doubled by original singer Layne Staley.

33 YOU REALLY GOT ME THE KINKS

(1964)

Ingredients: Two chords and one vandalised amp

A blueprint for countless rock and heavy metal riffs to come, the opener of the Kinks' *You Really Got Me* ricochets ceaselessly between F5 & G5 powerchords. Having slashed the speaker of his little green Elpico amp in a fit of angst, guitarist Dave Davies happened upon the track's signature distorted sound, and in doing so changed the course of rock history. The unforgettably raw riff propelled the track to the top of the UK charts in 1964 and – legend has it – inspired Pete Townsend to write The Who's *I Can't Explain* the following year. Van Halen notably covered it (with added squealies) on their 1978 self-titled debut.

32 THE BOYS ARE BACK IN TOWN THIN LIZZY

(1976)

Twin Les Pauls at full throttle

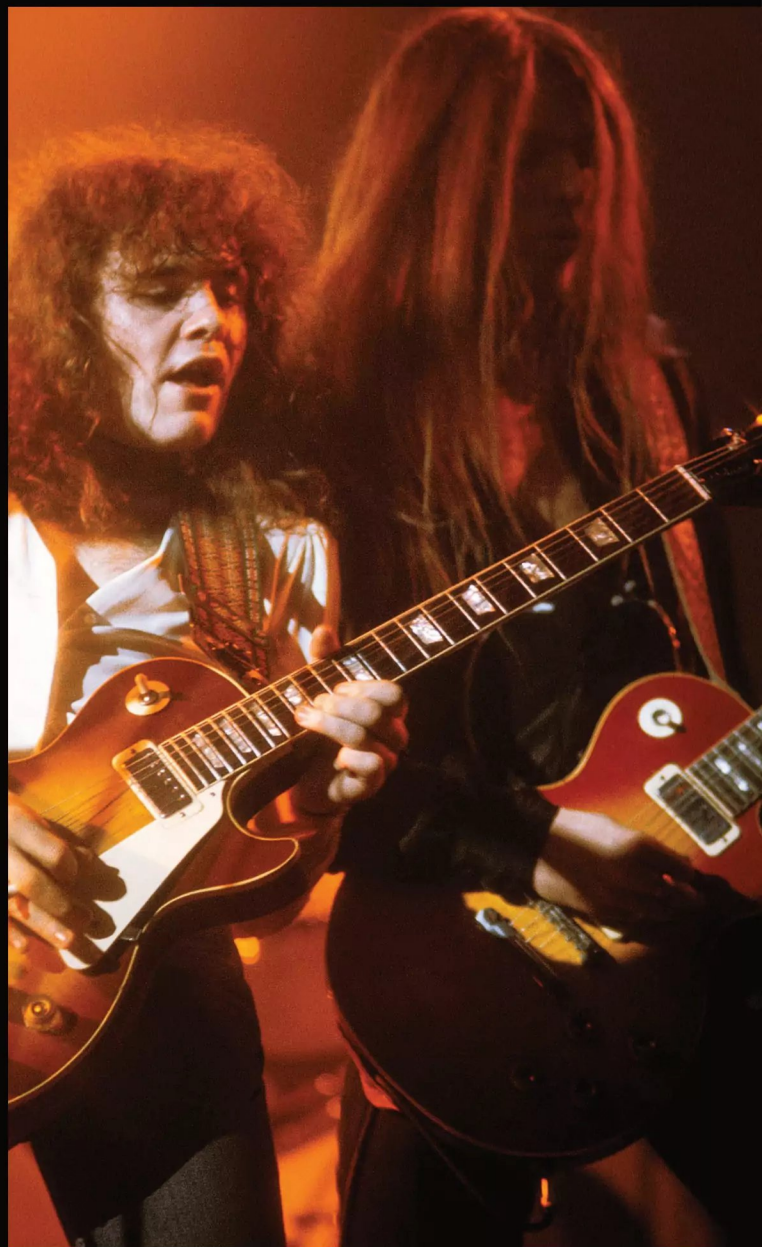
The greatest Lizzy guitar line-up, Scott Gorham and Brian Robertson, hit their zenith on 1976 album *Jailbreak*. *The Boys Are Back In Town* was one of 15 songs considered for the album, and hadn't even made the band's shortlist, so no one was more surprised than them when it produced their US breakthrough hit. The intro riff is just three powerchords, punctuated by Phil Lynott's thundering bass fill, doubled by Scott Gorham. The signature ascending harmonies were added by Robertson, who'd learned theory from his musician parents. The guitar tone is perhaps the definitive Les Paul & Marshall combination, with Gorham employing a mini-humbuckered Deluxe.



VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

The iconic harmony lead lines kick in after the first chorus. Take a close listen and you'll hear Robertson and Gorham sync'ing tightly on both vibrato and the precise length of each note – essential tricks of the twin-lead trade. Much of the line boils down to a six-note phrase: a single note that leads into a triplet, followed by a wide vibrato line and a staccato finishing note. Get this phrase down and you'll have the whole riff together in no time.

Appears at: 1:05-1:18**Tempo:** 162 bpm**Key/scale:** A major**Main techniques:** Harmonised twin-lead, vibrato**TG TIP** Keep the note length and vibrato of both guitars the same and the harmony guitars will sound tight.

31 LATERALUS TOOL

(2001)

What happens when alt-rock and advanced mathematics collide

The title track from Tool's 2001 masterpiece perfectly demonstrates why they are the masters of time, using alternating metres to add pushes and pulls where least expected. The song has ties to the Fibonacci sequence or 'Golden Ratio' found in sacred geometry, from singer

Maynard James Keenan's rhythmic syllables in the verses to the shifts in the signatures themselves. As guitarist Adam Jones explained to TG, the song's main riff came from bassist Justin Chancellor via drummer Danny Carey. "Justin brought in a riff, and Danny saw it had a connection to the Fibonacci, so he started trying to work in elements of it," Jones said. "Then Maynard came in and we started telling him about the sequence." For a heavy song, a heavy subject. "It came from trying to relate to those things in life or nature we all have in common," Jones elaborated. "It's something that people have been studying since the beginning of time... That's why we got more into the idea behind science, metaphysics and the myth of communication." For the recordings, Jones was using his 1979 silverburst Gibson Les Paul Custom and an array of amps including his modded 1976 Marshall JMP Super Bass, a 'blue face' Diezel VH4, and a Sunn Beta Lead through Mesa/Boogie cabinets.



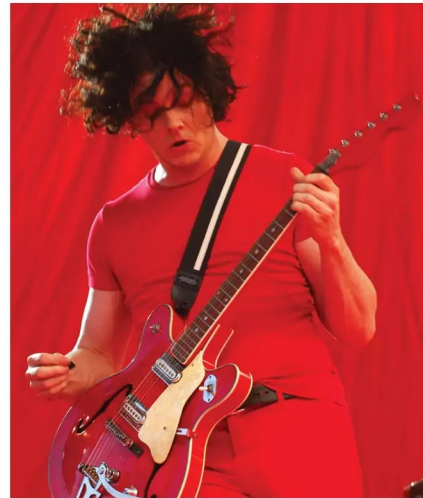


30 SEVEN NATION ARMY THE WHITE STRIPES

(2003)

Garage rock riffing goes stadium-sized

Four albums into The White Stripes' career, Jack White already had considerable form as a blues revivalist with a raw approach to production. But even by his standards, *Seven Nation Army* was minimalist. The song didn't even have a chorus as such. Instead, that now-immortal E minor guitar line (all seven notes of it) was the chorus. A novice could play it on guitar, and many have done. Not that White ever considered *Seven Nation Army* a mere throwaway. As he once revealed: "I thought: 'If I ever got asked to write the next James Bond theme, that would be the riff for it.'"



29 THE SPIRIT OF RADIO RUSH

(1980)

Alex Lifeson tunes in and turns up the widdle...

Drawing on hard rock, blues-rock and reggae, this hit single from 1980's *Permanent Waves* is one of the more accessible and broadly-appealing tracks in the Canadian trio's catalogue. Alex Lifeson's fast, fiddly intro riff is picked, hammered and pulled on the high E and B strings, an E7 figure with an almost Celtic flavour with which he wanted to illustrate radio waves themselves. (The verse's E major chord progression – E, B, G#m, A, B – is altogether more conventional, and playable). Hints for tone: Lifeson was a ES335/355 player back then, with an Electro-Harmonix 'Electric Mistress' flanger and Boss CE-1 Chorus Ensemble on his board.

28 (DON'T FEAR) THE REAPER BLUE OYSTER CULT

(1976)

Death, cowbell and nifty arpeggios. What else do you need?

Blue Öyster Cult's signature hit was a meditation on the acceptance of death (a subject rather undercut 24 years later by Will Ferrell's meme-mungous 'more cowbell' skit on *Saturday Night Live*). Vocalist, songwriter and guitarist Buck Dharma recorded *Reaper*'s main riff in one take on a Gibson ES-175 through a Music Man 410 amp. The repeated A minor arpeggiated figure (A5, G, F6add9, G) is played in first position, that G string ringing open throughout as a high pedal tone. Dharma picks it with alternating up and down strokes, but it can work well fingerstyle or, at a push, downstrokes only. Cowbell optional...

27 BARRACUDA HEART

(1977)

Ancestor of the Iron Maiden gallop

In 1976, Heart supported Nazareth on tour, where they heard Nazareth cover Joni Mitchell's *This Flight Tonight* with a galloping riff. They stole the gallop and added two powerchord stabs to make *Barracuda*. Later, Iron Maiden would make this rhythm essential to 80s metal. Nancy Wilson supplied acoustic guitar. Roger Fisher played the intro on a Strat into a Music Man head, with the song's distinctive flanger effect. When the band kicks in, Howard Leese joined him on a '66 Tele into a Fender Bassman. Both guitarists played loud so they could get sustain with relatively clean guitar sounds.



26 BREAKING THE LAW JUDAS PRIEST

(1980)

A minor offence

Culled from *British Steel*, the definitive Priest album, *Breaking The Law* is a song of hopelessness, a *cri de cœur* at finding oneself discarded by society, out of work and broke. But it also makes an excellent case study in the practical application of the A minor scale. The riff is simply a meditation on that. Guitarists KK Downing and Glenn Tipton used Gibson SGs, Flying Vs and Strats back then, which would be going through a non-master volume Marshall head – most likely a late-70s JMP 50-watt head – with a treble booster in front to give it more bite.

25 WALK THIS WAY AEROSMITH

(1975)

The world's rockiest funk riff

Joe Perry's favourite band were New Orleans funksters The Meters, and Aerosmith covered James Brown's *Mother Popcorn* in concert. But Perry suggested they write their own funk tune so they wouldn't have to rely on covers, and then produced this instant classic at a soundcheck. The original was Aerosmith's second US top 10 hit. It was played on a double-cutaway Les Paul Junior into an Ampeg V2 amp. The career-saving Run DMC remake featured Joe's Strat-style Schecter Traditional. *Walk This Way* is based on a repeating five-note figure. On the repeat, it's played one 16th note later, creating the funk magic.

24 2 MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT IRON MAIDEN

(1984)

Heavy metal's quintessential nuclear protest anthem

Written by singer Bruce Dickinson and guitarist Adrian Smith, the first single from Maiden's fifth album *Powerslave* is undoubtedly one of the band's catchiest songs. The main riff is played using open A-string pedal tones against diads on the D and G strings – taking Ritchie Blackmore's *Smoke On The Water* concept to newer, faster and more metallic extremes. Smith and fellow guitarist Dave Murray were experimenting with Ibanez Roadstars around this time, so it's likely that these were the instruments used for the sessions, fed through the Boss and MXR pedals and Marshall JMP amps seen on the World Slavery Tour of the same year.



23 BEAT IT MICHAEL JACKSON

(1982)

It was Eddie's solo – but Steve Lukather played the riff...

The self-appointed King Of Pop wrote *Beat It* to break into the rock market, with a riff inspired by The Knack's *My Sharona*. For added rock cred, he called in Eddie Van Halen for the solo. But to get that riff just so, Jackson and producer Quincy Jones turned to two seasoned session players, both members of soft rock titans Toto – guitarist Steve Lukather and drummer Jeff Porcaro. As Lukather recalled: "I got together with Michael, working on the riff, getting it in the pocket. From his body language, I could tell he wanted it to feel a certain way.

"I played all the guitar parts on that track except for the solo, and all the bass parts, and Jeff is on drums. Quincy Jones had Michael's pristine lead vocal and Eddie's pristine lead solo on the master track, so all that Jeff and I had to play to was headphone leakage and Michael Jackson playing two and four on a drum case. But Jeff – being the genius that he was – was able to find the pocket and play it. He put the drums down first, in a couple of takes, and I ran with it from there. I put down all the guitar riffs through Marshalls, quadruple-tracked, but when Quincy heard it he said, 'It's great, but it's too heavy, too much. I can't get that on pop radio. You gotta tone it down, use smaller amps.' So I did that."

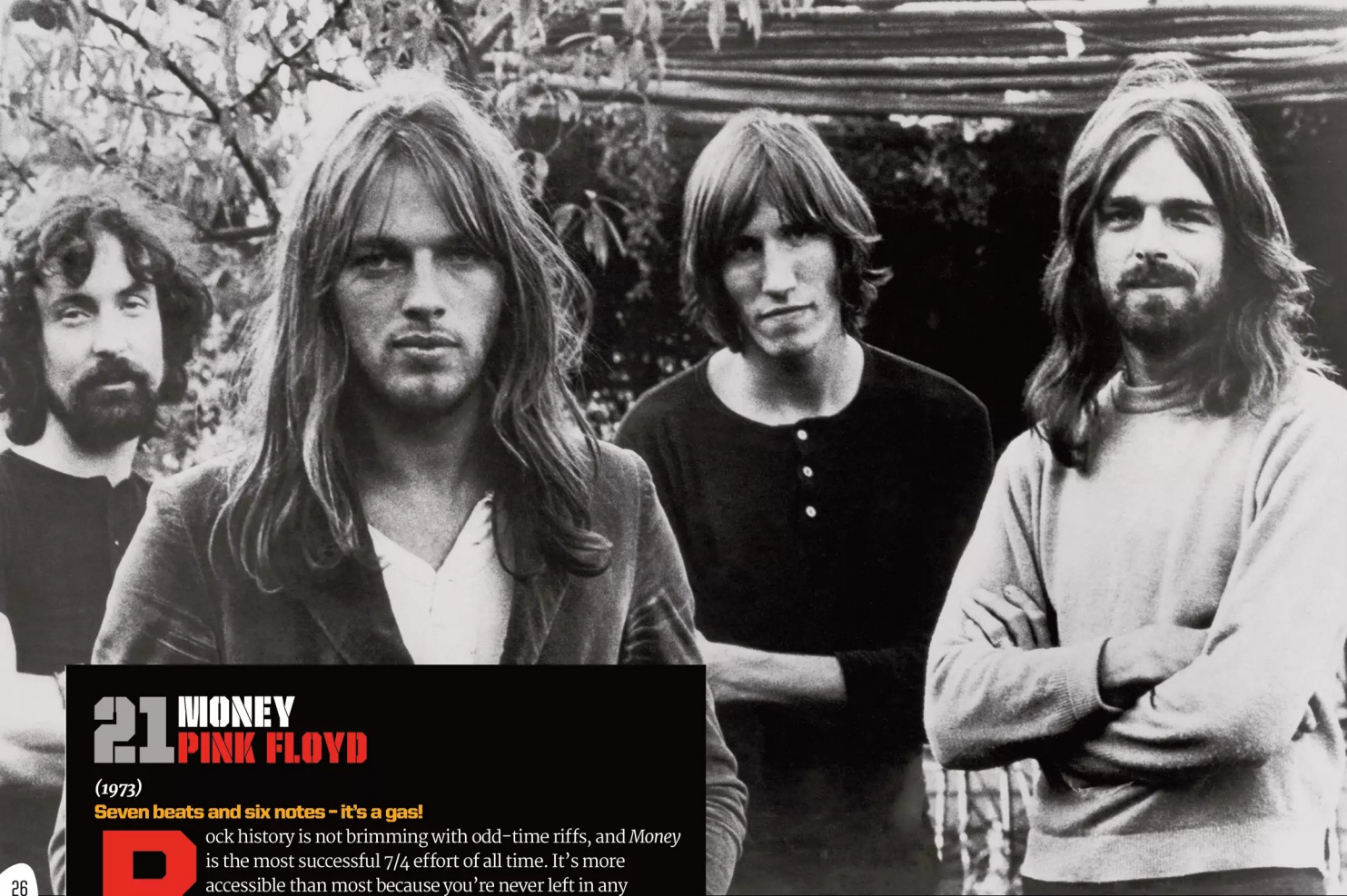
**"QUINCY JONES TOLD ME
THE RIFF WAS GREAT,
BUT THE ORIGINAL
RECORDING WAS TOO
HEAVY FOR RADIO"**

22 ACE OF SPADES MOTORHEAD

(1980)

Play the hand you're dealt

Motörhead's calling card is performed at the visceral tempo of a car chase, its signature riff barrelling towards the helter-skelter open-G5 abandon of the verse with a sense of devil may care fatalism. Scarcely has a bona-fide hit sounded so hostile. *Ace Of Spades* is all syncopated dissonance and tension. Of course, the riff is played at 140 bpm, but it sounds as though it is accelerating. 'Fast' Eddie Clarke tunes down a half-step, dimes a Marshall and uses the extra clarity from his Gibson Les Paul Deluxe's mini-humbuckers to spike the riff with something piquant.



21 **MONEY** **PINK FLOYD**

(1973)

Seven beats and six notes - it's a gas!

Rock history is not brimming with odd-time riffs, and *Money* is the most successful 7/4 effort of all time. It's more accessible than most because you're never left in any doubt where beat 1 falls. Nick Mason's drum groove seems designed to trick you into thinking you're hearing a standard 4/4 pattern: it follows a typical kick-snare pattern for the first six beats, with an extra kick on beat seven that sounds more natural each time it repeats. *Money's* riff is just one bar long and is played the same every time, which keeps it from confusing listeners who aren't steeped in prog.

Roger Waters wrote the riff, and his bass dominates the introduction with Gilmour's guitar double playing second fiddle. The guitar was his legendary black Strat on the bridge pickup, which at the time of recording was still unmodified. Gilmour plugged into an Arbiter Fuzz Face but backed off his volume control for a nearly clean sound - you can hear the grit as he digs into the quarter-tone bend on beat 7 of each riff. His towering Hiwatt amp rig kicked out enough volume that chief engineer Alan Parsons mic'ed the cabinets from a foot and a half away.

Although there isn't much variation in the riff, it builds in excitement thanks to layers of guitar and keyboard overdubs. After four times, Gilmour's tremolo chord stabs kick in, recorded with a Kepex tremolo unit. There's a distorted chord stab on beat 2, helped by a Colorsound Power Boost. Then there are Steve Cropper-style hits in sync with the snare drum on beats 4 and 6. These add to the illusion you're hearing a riff in 4/4, because they sound like a classic soul backbeat part. With all that rhythmic complexity, Waters wisely kept it harmonically simple, sticking to B minor pentatonic. If it were in 4/4, *Money* would be considered a blues song, which shows the blues format's massive potential for innovation.

Money became Floyd's first US hit on release, helping to propel *Dark Side Of The Moon* to its gargantuan success. It dominated the top 10 for so long that US chart compilers Billboard eventually created a separate catalog [sic] chart for older albums so that *Dark Side* would stop eclipsing newer releases. *Money's* enduring success proves that odd time signatures can be accessible and that bass riffs can be just as important as guitar riffs.



VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

This Waters-penned bass riff boils down to just eight notes, all from the B minor pentatonic scale (B D E F# A) and doubled by Gilmour's Strat bridge pickup running through a Colorsound Power Boost. Watch the video to pick up the sequence of notes (the whole thing stays between the 2nd and 5th frets) and take care to keep a steady seven-count to outline the 7/4 rhythm.

Appears at: 0:12-0:40

Tempo: 125 bpm

Key/scale: B minor pentatonic

Main techniques: Pentatonic phrasing, quarter-tone bends, odd time signature

TG TIP The riff is seven beats long, so remember to keep your internal metronome counting from one to seven.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Bluesy hammer-on phrasing
- ✓ Two easy open chords
- ✓ A three-note 'triad' A chord

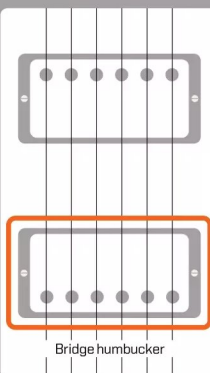


RIFF OF THE MONTH

Find
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lesson at bit.ly/tga2022audio

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL OVERDRIVE



The AC/DC sound is renowned for its simplicity, consisting of Angus' Gibson SG and Malcolm's Gretsch Jet Firebird (now played by Stevie Young) both plugged into 100w Marshall heads. The beauty of the sound is the raw, dry midrange bark that this combination produces. This type of sound demands that you deliver a confident, rock-solid performance, as every nuance of your pick and fingers is directly transmitted into the tone.

AC/DC

Shot In The Dark

45

years since their debut, AC/DC return with this lead single from their forthcoming 17th album, *Power Up*. The song, of course, features Angus Young on guitar, but also Stevie Young, who stepped into his uncle Malcolm's shoes after he retired in 2014.

Based around A, D and G5, *Shot In The Dark* is a classic three-chord trick, but, whereas the

D and G5 chords are played with straight-ahead, no nonsense open shapes, you'll run into the A chord with a bluesy hammer-on phrase. Start by barring across the third and fourth strings, initially at the 7th fret, then at the 5th. Easy enough to begin with, then!

Next comes that hammer-on at the 6th fret – if you played the 5th fret barre with your first finger, your second finger should be in just the right spot. Be sure to follow our

slowed-down performance in the video guide on our website for a clearer idea of how this riff is played.

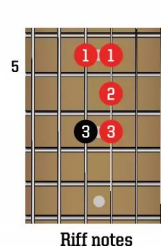
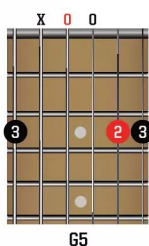
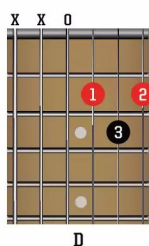
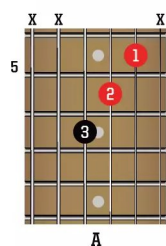
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:00-0:17

Tempo: 115 bpm

Key/scale: A Mixolydian mode

Techniques: Doublestops, hammer-ons, open chords



The riff is based around three chords: an A 'triad' (a three-note shape), an open D and an open G5 chord. The rest of the riff includes two-note barres across the 7th, then 5th frets and a hammer-on at the 6th. Have a go at these shapes before you tackle the riff in full.

FIVE WAYS TO... WRITE A CLASSIC RIFF

The chords and composing tricks that built rock's greatest riffs

Our Top 50 riff list reads like a who's who of the history of rock, with classic acts hitting the heady heights of, well, pretty much the entire Top 50 if we're honest. Newer acts received far fewer votes by comparison. Perhaps it's just a matter of renown; it's just harder for younger bands to

be as well-known as acts who may have been around for 40 or 50 years. Here we're looking how those classic riffs were written. These aren't exactly songwriting secrets. More, common themes and threads. Techniques and musical devices that can be recycled and reimagined when you write your own riffs. You get the idea, so let's get started...



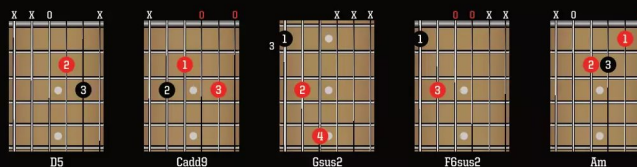
AUDIO FILES

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1 THE ARPEGGIO METHOD

As Heard In: *Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love*, *Sweet Home Alabama*, *Don't Fear The Reaper*, *Message In A Bottle*

Arpeggios feature highly in our top 50, and they're a simple idea: just play a chord one note at a time. Try 'em with a clean sound (as heard in Lynyrd Skynyrd's *Sweet Home Alabama*), or heavy things up with a higher gain tone (as on Van Halen's *Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love*). Palm-muting is a handy way to keep those ringing chord tones under control when you're using distortion.



These shapes are classic fare. We'd say they're pretty easy, but watch out for that Summers style sus2 stretch shape. Sus chords are oft-used in classic rock, so look to find new versions built around these other shapes.

THESE TECHNIQUES AND MUSICAL DEVICES CAN BE RECYCLED AND REIMAGINED WHEN YOU WRITE YOUR OWN RIFFS...

SWEET REAPER

♩ = 120

D⁵ Cadd⁹ G D⁵ Cadd⁹ Gsus² Csus² B^bsus² Play 4 times

PM - - - - - PM - - - - - PM - - - - - let ring - - - - - PM - - - - - PM - - - - - PM - - - - - PM - - - - -

TAB

0 2 3 2 0 3 0 0 3 3 0 0 2 0 2 3 2 0 3 5 7 7/12 10 8 6 8 10

The idea here in our example arpeggio riff is to form the chord shapes with your fretting hand and use your pick to articulate the notes as directed. The notes should ring out together in a sonorous, piano-like effect.

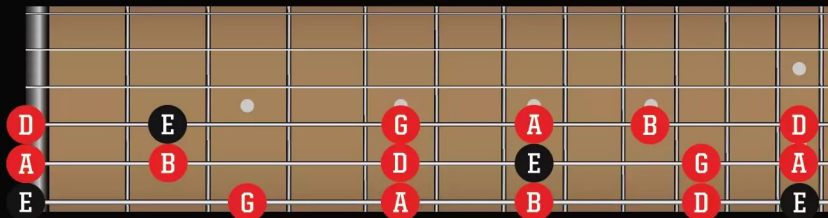
2 THE MINOR PENTATONIC METHOD

As Heard In: *Whole Lotta Love*, *Killing In The Name*, *Life In The Fast Lane*

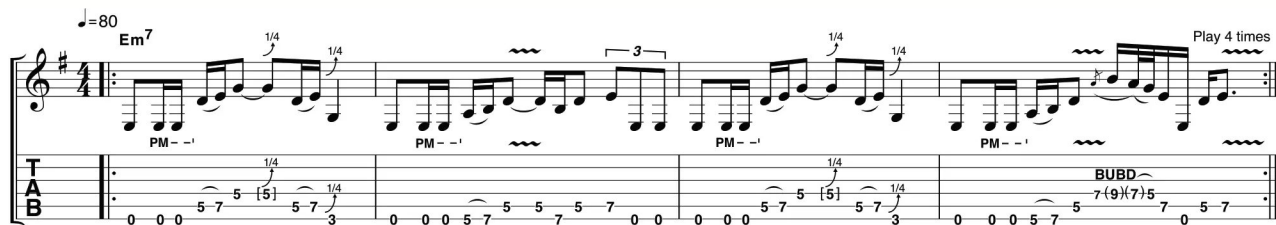
Guaranteed to rock, the E minor pentatonic scale allows you to make plentiful use of the guitar's heaviest note – the bottom E! Of course, pentatonic riffs, unison bassline and heavy drum backbeat was a winning formula as far back as late 60s Cream and Led Zeppelin, but it's still relevant today, with bands like Greta Van Fleet and Royal Blood making it their core creative approach.



We've mapped out the notes of the E minor pentatonic scale for you here. Only on the bass strings, of course! Riffs are in and widdle is out, remember, so keep it low and mean when you write your own riffs.



WHOLE LOTTA RIFF

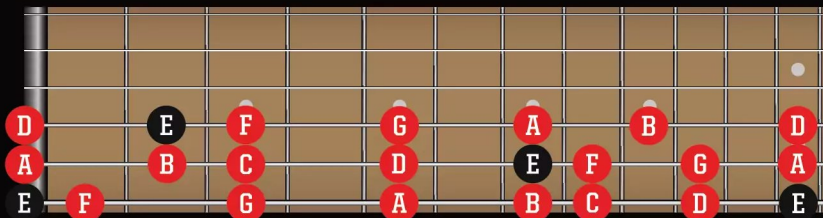


Our idea here should give you a feel for some typical E minor pentatonic phrasing. The 3rd, 5th and 7th frets figure highly, as does the open sixth string. Also look out for those quarter-tone bends.

3 3. OPEN STRING PEDAL TONES

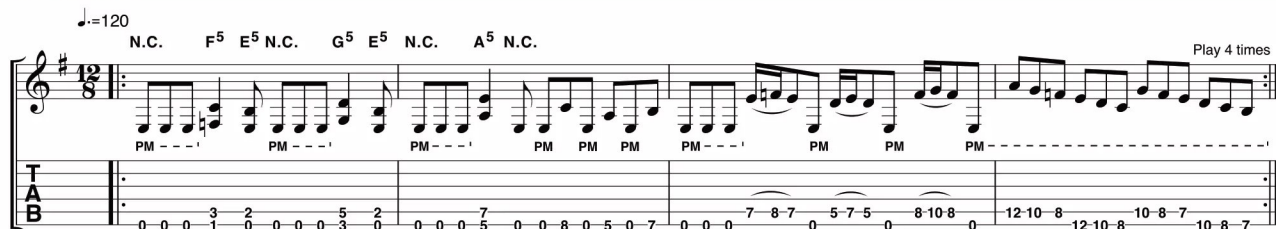
As Heard In: *Symphony Of Destruction*, *Walk*, *Angel Of Death*, *Enter Sandman*, *2 Minutes to Midnight*

The open E pedal note is a core thrash metal sound. Megadeth's Dave Mustaine and Metallica's James Hetfield were at the forefront of developing the 80s British heavy metal sound into new territory with more technicality and speed. Slayer took the ideas to greater extremes and still today, the boundaries of heavy open-string riffs are being pushed, with bands like Meshuggah utilising eight-string guitars to allow for more open string pedal note options and more adventurous sounds.



In music, a pedal is a note which is played repeatedly throughout a musical phrase and a lot of riffs rely on using the open E or A string as an anchor point, particularly in heavy metal. The Phrygian mode shown here will help you get in a metal mood.

THRASH IT OUT



In this example, we start with a Dimebag-meets-Dave Mustaine powerchord riff, followed by some Jeff Hanneman trills and finally some Iron Maiden-inspired scale sequences. All typical riff tricks found in TG's Top 50.

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20 THE ROLLING STONES (I CAN'T GET NO) SATISFACTION

(1965)

Enter the fuzz box...

We begin our top 20 with the man famed as the 'Human Riff'... Keith Richards famously did not have great expectations for *Satisfaction*. In his mind, the riff was a horn part, one idea among many. But often ideas require a little kismet before they blossom. Finding a tone in the studio was not happening, but Ian Stewart, the Stones' pianist at the time, presented Richards with a Maestro FZ-1 Fuzz-Tone, and the riff came alive. Of course, listening to Otis Redding's cover proved that Richards was right all along – it did make an excellent horn part – but *Satisfaction* consecrated the fuzz pedal on record, forever changing rock guitar tone.

19 SWEET HOMIE ALABAMA LYNYRD SKYNYRD

(1974)

Three chords and two fingers to Neil Young

Neil Young had challenged Alabama values in *Southern Man*, and since pistols at dawn were no longer acceptable, Skynyrd replied with this deathless radio-botherer. Even beginners can get their hands round the basic shapes, which has only helped its popularity. The track opens with the distinctive sound of a Strat's bridge and middle pickups (with a non-humcancelling middle pickup, if you're being picky), played by Ed King on a 1973 model, running into a Fender Twin cranked almost to full blast.



VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

It's easy to bluff your way through a roughly similar version of Ed King's classic clean Strat riff. You'll be playing open D5, Cadd9 and G5 chords (easy!) and a simple major pentatonic line (again, not too hard!). These parts are easy to adapt to make them easier to play. For a more authentic rendition, you'll need to focus on picking the exact strings, so as to mirror King's part.

Appears at: 0:03-0:13

Tempo: 95 bpm

Key/scale: D Mixolydian

Main techniques: Open chords, arpeggios, accurate picking

TG TIP: You can lose track of your picking accuracy, as long as you keep those chord changes nailed down!

Photos: Getty Images



18 ANGEL OF DEATH SLAYER

(1986)

Thrash metal's peak

“We were not schooled musicians,” said Slayer guitarist Jeff Hanneman. “But we knew what sounded dark. All you do is go a step up or down till you get it right, and it sounds huge. I recognised that when I hit certain notes

I’d get a certain feeling. This is the way I played it in my head: if it sounds like I’m standing over a body that’s just been stabbed to death, then it’s perfect.”

The darkness and brutality in Slayer’s music was most vividly illustrated in the band’s third album *Reign In Blood*, and in particular its opening track, *Angel Of Death*. Widely recognized as one of the greatest metal albums of all time, *Reign In Blood* is also, for many, the definitive thrash metal album. And what Jeff Hanneman created in *Angel Of Death* was a song as brilliant as it was controversial. The lyrics detailed the atrocities performed by Nazi war criminal Josef Mengele. The music was a high-speed riff onslaught in which Hanneman and fellow guitarist Kerry King were locked in tight.

The equipment the pair used was the classic 1980s metal arsenal, with both men turning to Marshall JCM800s for amplification. The former was

playing a black Jackson Soloist with retrofitted EMG pickups, while King had recently begun an endorsement with BC Rich that lasts to this day. His Warlock and Hanneman’s Soloist were both run through MXR distortion and Dunlop Cry Baby pedals, with onboard effects, such as reverb, added by Rubin at the desk. The song was recorded in E₁, the same as all of *Reign In Blood*’s 10 tracks, with the guitarists performing mesmerisingly fast tremolo picking on all the riffs apart from the iconic groove that anchors the midsection. That particular riff has been hailed as an all-time classic and it’s based on razor-edged downstrokes. “That’s the riff that people get wrong, if they’re gonna get any of them wrong!” King said. “It’s not tricky, it’s just odd notes. It’s not a scale as such, it’s just what Jeff threw together then liked the way it sounded.”

There are actually two riffs to learn in this section, as King explained: “When that riff comes in, it’s one guitar, then when the second guitar comes in we play the same riff. Then, during the second section, we’re playing something different.”

And if *Angel Of Death* feels hard to play, don’t be put off. King had some words of encouragement. “All the riffs are fairly doable,” he confirmed, “especially the one that begins the song. We just go for it. It’s at ‘go-for-it’ speed, ha ha!”

“IF IT SOUNDS LIKE I’M STANDING OVER A BODY THAT’S JUST BEEN STABBED TO DEATH THEN IT’S PERFECT” JEFF HANNEMAN





17 SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT NIRVANA

Punk angst in a radio-rock disguise defines an era

Gearing up to record *Nevermind*, Kurt picked a rig of a MESA/Boogie Studio Preamp, a solid-state Crown Power Base 2 power amp, and a wall of Marshall cabinets. It was the humble Boss DS-1 Distortion, though, that Kurt considered the core of his sound. The moment he stomps on it, eight seconds into *Teen Spirit*, encapsulates Nirvana's whiplash dynamics and their ability to summon a tornado. The sudden volume shifts came via the Pixies, but the riff has been called *More Than A Feeling* for alienated Gen X-ers. The chords are different, but Nirvana's and Boston's biggest hits both use progressions with four chords and similar rhythmic accents. Where */More Than a Feeling/* is pure feelgood, *Teen Spirit* radiates teenage frustration. Kurt's chord choices (F5-B₅-A₅-D₅) are standard, all coming from the key of F minor, but there weren't a lot of pre-Nirvana rock songs to feature those chords in that order. More importantly, he employs the guitarist's trick of briefly strumming the open strings to smooth the transition between chords. That's normally unremarkable because in typical guitar keys like E or A minor all the notes are in tune.

Because *Teen Spirit* is in F minor, those notes are completely discordant, adding a blast of conflict to every bar. Cobain took three guitars into the studio to make *Nevermind*: a Jaguar, a Mustang, and a Strat, all modified with humbuckers. He usually chose the Strat for contemporary live performances of this song, so that's the best guess at what he used to record it. Kurt's vision for *Nevermind* was a raw, punky album and he later described the final production as "far too slick". To achieve the massive tones on record, producer Butch Vig sometimes tricked Cobain into double-tracking parts by pretending earlier takes were lost or not good enough. Nirvana reportedly chose mix engineer Andy Wallace in part because his name appeared bottom of the record company's suggested list. The band assumed this meant he was less corporate than the others, but it was Wallace's earthshaking sonics that made *Teen Spirit* a radio smash. Kurt moaned that the result was closer to Mötley Crüe than punk rock. While rock history records that Nirvana slayed hair metal, in 1991 *Teen Spirit* sat comfortably on MTV alongside the Crüe's current single *Primal Scream*. Kurt may have felt conflicted, but he had undoubtedly created the defining guitar riff of the 90s.

KURT MAY HAVE FELT CONFLICTED ABOUT *TEEN SPIRIT*, BUT HE HAD UNDOUBTEDLY CREATED THE DEFINING RIFF OF THE 90S...

16 KILLING IN THE NAME RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

(1991)

The most iconic drop-D riff of them all?

It's still astonishing, even after all these years, just how little gain Tom Morello was using on RATM's debut. His tones, though slightly overdriven, were clear and punchy – relying more on the melodic and rhythmic content within the music itself to define the overall heaviness. Still to this day, their debut single is among the first anyone will learn in drop-D, typifying how the third and fifth frets on the A-string can be used for minor seventh and octave notes against the low string root. A walking chromatic blues run is thrown in halfway through the second verse, embellishing the idea further. It was Morello's 1982 'Sendero Luminoso' Telecaster handling the bulk of the work and a hot sauce-coloured Gibson Les Paul for overdubs, going through his faithful Marshall JCM 800 and Peavey cab, plus modulation on the opening chords from an Ibanez DFL Flanger.

15 SYMPHONY OF DESTRUCTION MEGADETH

(1992)

Dave Mustaine at his most direct

It may be one of his simplest creations, but the powerful main riff on this 1992 single is one of Dave Mustaine's very best. Adding to the dissonance of the half-step interval between its two opening chords are the silences that follow, and then a palm-muted closing line to further outline its Phrygian feel. A custom-built silver sparkle Jackson King V was Mustaine's 'Number One' during these years, fed into a VHT power amp and either a Bogner or Custom Audio Electronics pre amp. Lead guitarist Marty Friedman, who left the band eight years later, was also using Jackson guitars through the same rackmount gear, as well as a hot-rodded Marshall 50-watt.

14 SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE CREAM

(1967)

Woman tone and a tribute to Hendrix

Sunshine was actually bassist Jack Bruce's riff, inspired by seeing a Jimi Hendrix gig. Clapton simply doubled Bruce's part, adding 7th chord strums on the repeats. It's the ideal riff for learning the blues scale because it hits each note almost in sequence. Clapton used his psychedelic SG known as The Fool, turning off the tone on the neck pickup for the most famous example of his Woman Tone. Given the myth around Clapton, hard info on his amp choice is thin on the ground, but at this time he favoured Marshall JTM-100s, massive KT66 powered amps he ran (naturally) on 10.

13 MONEY FOR NOTHING DIRE STRAITS

(1985)

One of rock's happiest accidents

Aiming for a Billy Gibbons tone on his MTV-breakout hit, Mark Knopfler chose a Les Paul Jr into a Laney 2x12 and rocked back his Morley wah pedal in increments until he found the sweet spot. Producer Neil Dorfsman mic'd it with a single SM57, but as they were about to record, he noticed the mic had fallen out of position and was pointing at the floor. Thus was born the inimitable *Money For Nothing* tone. The notes are fairly standard, fitting largely around G minor pentatonic, but the wah overtones and Knopfler's fingerstyle technique make it completely unique.



12 JOHNNY B. GOODE CHUCK BERRY

(1958)

Rock's fine tradition of plagiarism starts here

Rock 'n' roll had long existed out of sight of white America until Chuck Berry exploded into the mainstream. In fact, Berry's intro to *Johnny B. Goode* was pinched note-for-note from 1946's *Ain't That Just Like A Woman* by Louis Jordan and His Tympany Five. But while Berry may have stolen guitarist Carl Hogan's notes, he played them with such ferocity, adding his signature sliding double-stops, that it became an entirely new sound. Much as Jimmy Page would later utilize blues riffs to invent heavy metal, Berry wrung jump blues into a different beast. Then the Beach Boys stole it again, for *Fun Fun Fun*.



11 LAYLA DEREK AND THE DOMINOS

(1970)

The sound of unrequited love and an amp on 10

In 1967, Clapton fell in love with a woman he couldn't have, George Harrison's wife Patti Boyd, and a guitar he couldn't use – 'Brownie', a 1956 Strat whose sound didn't work with Cream or Blind Faith. On *Layla*, he poured out his emotions for the former through the latter. Plugging Brownie into a Fender Champ gave the tone for *Layla*'s screaming ostinato. The Strat's comparative lack of sustain made Clapton a busier player, ably demonstrated by the fleet hammer-ons in this opening lick. Don't try to pick all the notes – it's harder and it won't sound as good.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Single note riffing
- ✓ Picking consistency
- ✓ One-finger-per-fret shapes

HOW TO

Photo: Getty Images

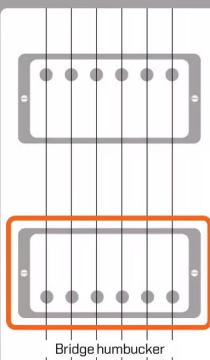


RIFF OF THE MONTH

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GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION



Lee Malia is a long time Marshall Amps user, favouring the JCM800 for his heavy tone (cleans are served by a JTM45). Guitar-wise, he tends towards Gibsons and Epiphones; his signature Epiphone Les Paul Custom features a bridge-position humbucker and a P94 (a humbucker-sized P90) at the neck. Opt for a bridge humbucker for this song. It's a classic setup and most modern high gain amps will give you the attack and sustain you need.

BRING ME THE HORIZON

Parasite Eve

Formed in Sheffield in 2004, Bring Me The Horizon are one of the UK's most successful metal acts, with six albums and two Grammy nominations under their belts.

Inspired by the 1998 survival horror PlayStation game of the same name, *Parasite Eve* has an electronic rock sound with industrial influences from Mick Gordon (of *Doom Eternal* soundtrack fame) in the production style.

The song is said to be part of a string of forthcoming BMTH releases entitled *Post Human*, the first of which is expected later this year.

Guitarist Lee Malia plays the song in C standard tuning (C F B_♭ E_♭ G C) – so every string is tuned two tones down. Start by picking the sixth string while tapping your foot every four notes, making sure your foot and downstroke groove together and land at

exactly the same time. With the basic technique down, take a look at our slowed-down performance in the video on our website.

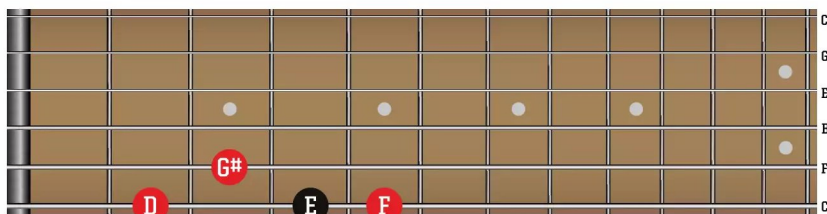
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 3:10–3:18

Tempo: 102 bpm

Key/scale: E Phrygian Dominant

Techniques: Single-note picking, string muting



This riff contains four notes, each one being on a different fret. Since you have four fingers at your disposal, a fun challenge is to play the riff in a one-finger-per-fret fashion, so start by placing each finger on the required frets and notes. When playing the riff try to keep your finger movements as economical and small as possible. It's a great way to develop your technical skills.



10 PURPLE HAZE THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE

(1967)

Hendrix adds a new chord to the lexicon

Before *Purple Haze*, E7#9 was strictly a jazz chord. Only a visionary would consider using it as the tonal centre; conventionally, it was considered too dissonant for mainstream listeners. The Hendrix chord is a cliché now, but then it was a revolution. Hendrix's fearless embrace of dissonance opens the song, with bass and guitar stamping out the devil's interval. The intro sees Jimi finding exciting new lines in the well-worn framework of the minor pentatonic. Then comes *that* chord. His strumming is impossibly funky and the fuzz obscures exactly what he's doing, so almost no one has replicated it. By using his thumb to play the root notes of the G and A barres, he leaves his finger free to add the major 6th to those chords. The gear? Definitely Marshall and Fuzz Face, but there's a persistent legend that Jimi had knackered his only Strat and had to borrow Noel Redding's Telecaster.



VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

After setting the scene with the Devil's interval intro, Hendrix unleashes a fuzz-laden riff that's delivered with such flair and such precision, it went on to inspire just about every guitarist on the planet. Though not *too* difficult to play, it's tricky to learn, running through four pentatonic shapes from the open position to the 9th fret. Still, those bluesy phrases have a definite earworm effect.

Appears at: 0:00-0:23

Tempo: 107 bpm

Key/scale: E minor pentatonic scale

Main techniques: Pentatonic phrasing, quarter-tone bends, vibrato

TG TIP: Target the lowest fret with your first finger, and the highest with your third. Everything in between should feel comfortable.

09 LA GRANGE ZZ TOP

(1973)

The little finger is the key, says Billy G...

The Texan trio's hit album *Tres Hombres* featured this perennial tune. *La Grange* was inspired by Edna's Fashionable Ranch Boarding House, a brothel on the outskirts of that titular Texas town. For the suitably lowdown 'n' dirty riff, Billy Gibbons took a hoary, John Lee Hooker-style I-,III-IV vamp in A (A-C-D), and poured his trademark tone all over it. "That's a 1955 Fender Strat," Gibbons tells TG, "maple neck with a hardtail [fixed bridge], running through a 2x10 Fender Tremolux – a little blonde piggyback amp that happened to be in the studio at the time. The riff's in the key of A, but don't forget to use the little finger on the G string [C note, 5th fret] and pull it slightly up to pitch." Bend that up just shy of C# to get yourself some of the song's bluesy, raunchy feel...



08 WALK PANTERA (1992)

The riff that ushered in a bold new era for metal

Pantera were soundchecking on the *Cowboys From Hell* tour when guitarist Dimebag Darrell started playing what would soon become the most definitive track of their career. His brother Vinnie Paul quickly joined in on drums, later recalling how it had a shuffle rhythm unlike anything they'd written up to that point and nodded back to the siblings' Southern roots, growing up around the music of ZZ Top and Lynyrd Skynyrd 50 kilometres south of Dallas. It was ultimately less thrashy and saw their band embracing more groove-driven doctrines of heaviness – inspiring a whole new wave of sonic aggression. The riff, as simple as it sounds, could easily be one of metal's most misconstrued, often incorrectly tabbed without those crucial first fret bends. And though it doesn't sound hugely wrong when played 'straight', there's a certain magic to how Dimebag wrote it – the slurred increases and decreases in pitch giving the music an almost rubbery and mechanical kind of feel. The descending diads that get thrown in as the idea evolves bring further discordance, rooted around harsher-sounding intervals like the minor sixth and



VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

Often mistakenly played in drop D tuning, *Walk* is actually in D standard (D G C F A D). The riff is closest to the notes of the D Super Locrian or 'altered' scale (D E_b F G_b A_b B_b C). Though often considered to be an advanced jazz scale, it works well in metal, too, thanks to all those menacing minor intervals. The opening section utilises the open sixth string and a semitone bend at the 1st fret. The rests are just as important as the notes, so keep the strings silent by lightly touching them with all four fingers and the side of your pick hand.

Appears at: 0:00-0:36

Tempo: 115 bpm

Key/scale: Super Locrian / chromatic

Main techniques: String bending, powerchords, palm-muting

TG TIP: Keep your signal silent by using a noise gate with a healthy threshold and quick attack and release

tritone, before concluding with some faster palm-muted chugging on the lower frets. At this stage in his career, the guitarist was mainly playing his 1981 Dean ML, instantly recognisable for its lightning bolt paint job and Kiss stickers on the upper fin, and equipped with a high-output Bill Lawrence L 500 XL pickup in the bridge. Dubbed the 'Dean From Hell', he'd actually won the instrument in a guitar contest as a 16 year-old before selling it "to raise money for some wheels" and was later gifted the same ML back, customised with a new custom paint job, Floyd Rose tremolo system and ceramic bridge pickup. The instrument can be seen in the *Walk* video, as well as a brown tobacco-burst ML that was also in the studio for the *Vulgar Display Of Power* sessions. In place of the Randall RG100H heard on *Cowboys From Hell*, and brought back later on 1996's *The Great Southern Trendkill*, Dimebag was plugged into a Randall Century 200 head – again achieving his own signature sound by cranking the gain and scooping the mids on a solid-state amp, rather than anything valve-driven. Solid-state felt more in your face, he once reasoned, noting how his Randalls had no shortage of warmth but also "the chunk and the f*ckin' grind".

THE WALK RIFF, AS SIMPLE AS IT SOUNDS, COULD EASILY BE ONE OF METAL'S MOST MISCONSTRUED...



07 IRON MAN BLACK SABBATH

(1970)

The biggest hook in a legacy littered with them

Tony Iommi's influence on heavy metal and rock in general is one that cannot be overstated. Most players would be proud to have written just one classic riff – the left-handed Black Sabbath six-stringer has penned countless, sometimes several within the same song. Indeed, *Iron Man* has a few of its own to offer, though it's the slow doomy blues of its main riff that singlehandedly delivers on their themes of armageddon and revenge, narrating the plight of a time-travelling robot man forsaken by those he's trying to help. Iommi has often spoken of how his most famous ideas came to him in the moment and on the spot – this American single from their second album *Paranoid* being no different. "I was in a rehearsal room, and Bill started playing this boom, boom, boom," Iommi recently revealed, noting how "in my head I could hear it as a monster" or "someone creeping up on you". The opening drones were played using a behind the nut bends on the open low E, giving his guitar a machine-like growl as Ozzy announces the immortal words 'I am Iron Man' from behind a metal fan. The main riff is in B minor, using powerchords that follow up the pentatonic scale before more dissonant-sounding slides

from the minor 6th to the 5th – all fretted on the thicker strings for a fuller sound and further intensified by drummer Bill Ward's snare hits. It's this juxtaposition, the lethargic opening segment against its busier second half, that demonstrates Sabbath at their most memorable, mutating familiar bluesy roots into something darker and doomier. Like most tracks on *Paranoid*, it was performed on Iommi's left-handed 'Monkey' 1965 Gibson SG Special, which was swapped for the right-handed SG Special heard on Sabbath's debut – the backup guitar that served him well after his Strat gave in. Just before recording album number two in June 1970, now armed with a guitar he didn't have to play upside down, Iommi went to see luthier John Birch for some upgrades, including a new P90-style Simlux neck pickup and a rewind bridge pickup for more power. The signal then went through a modded Dallas Rangemaster treble-booster and into his single-channel Laney LA 100 BL head and matching cabinet. When TG interviewed the Black Sabbath hero in 2010 he explained how the pedal was engaged to "give my sound a bit more oomph" and push the signal going into his Laney, thus attaining the kind of "overdrive I was looking for, which amps in the early days didn't have."

MOST PLAYERS WOULD BE PROUD TO HAVE WRITTEN JUST ONE CLASSIC RIFF. IOMMI HAS PENNED COUNTLESS...

06 ENTER SANDMAN METALLICA

(1991)

A watershed moment in heavy metal history

Some years are watershed moments in musical history, and 1991 was one of them. It was the year that grunge broke and that hair metal was given a shove out of the mainstream. It was also the year that Metallica's self-titled fifth album was released. Forever known as 'The Black Album', it was the record that established the San Francisco quartet as the biggest metal band in the world. And while it yielded five hit singles – *Nothing Else Matters*, *The Unforgiven*, *Sad But True*, *Wherever I May Roam* and *Enter Sandman* – it was the latter that really caught the public's imagination, reaching No 5 in the UK chart.

With its doomy, clean-picked minor key riff, haunting lyrics and massive sound, it was the track that set the template for the rest of *The Black Album*, both in sound and in atmosphere. It was also the first song written for the album, born from a riff that lead guitarist Kirk Hammett brought in. But as drummer Lars Ulrich explained in a *Classic Albums* documentary: "The riff that's on the record and the way it exists today is not really the way Kirk wrote it." Hammett's initial idea was the first five-note refrain morphing straight into the powerchord breakdown. But by chopping and repeating the first clean riff, and doubling it up on the bass, *Enter Sandman* as we know it was born.

"We tried to expand every sound to the max," said producer Bob Rock. "We tried to get the guitars as big as possible, the bass as big as possible, the drums... You know, big and weighty." To this end, Rock insisted on the band playing together in one room, contrary to their previous M.O. "They thought it was a lot of work," Rock told *Mix* magazine, "and they didn't understand it. But this was the only way I knew how to make a record. To me, it was about capturing the feel that they wanted."

Both Hetfield and Hammett are ESP men, and for *The Black Album* sessions Kirk played through Marshall amps with Mesa/Boogie heads. However, the amp that Hetfield put his black ESP Explorer through was a little more complex, as engineer Randy Staub told *Mix*. "We ended up building this huge guitar cabinet for him," Staub said. "I think we had nine or 11 cabinets – some stacked on top of each other, some on the floor – and then we'd get this huge tent around this pile of cabinets curtained because as we were getting James' guitar sound, he kept saying, 'I want it to have more crunch!'"

They got the crunch, the weight, the heaviness. Ultimately, they got the defining metal song of the 90s.

VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

Part of the greatness of Kirk's riff is its harmony, which never quite settles into one key/scale. Early on, it hops between blues scale and Phrygian mode; later between blues scale and Dorian. We'll end the theory talk here, suffice to say this ambiguity is at the core of the riff's sound. Despite the complex harmony, it's an easy riff to play. Just make sure to move up to the 7th fret with your third finger. It'll keep your first and second fingers in prime position just behind on the 5th and 6th frets.

Appears at: 0:55-1:11

Tempo: 124 bpm

Key/scale: Blues scale / Dorian mode

Main techniques: Powerchords, offbeat timing

TG TIP: Use choppy downstrokes for the previous section, but a more fluid picking style when you reach the main riff.





05 AIN'T TALKIN' 'BOUT LOVE VAN HALEN

(1978)

How to turn a basic exercise into a world-conquering anthem

Proving that arpeggio homework can pay off rather handsomely, this early Van Halen track was built around a simple A minor shape, played palm-muted half a step down, and ended up becoming one of their most famous recordings. On the game-changing debut, EVH was using his self-made Frankenstrat, built out of factory reject parts, then fitted with a 1958 Stat tremolo system and a Gibson ES-335 PAF pickup in the bridge. The swirling effect came courtesy of his MXR Phase 90 before the signal was fed into the late 60s Marshall 1959 Super Lead that was used on all the David Lee Roth-era albums.

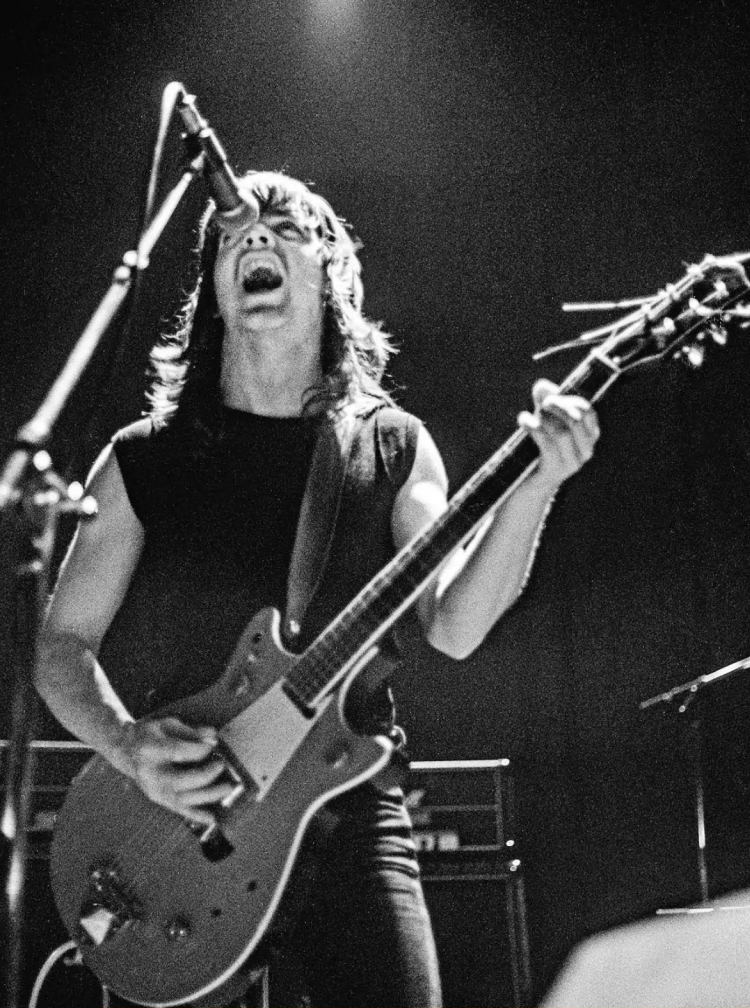
04 SMOKE ON THE WATER DEEP PURPLE

(1972)

The rock classic that almost didn't exist

It has one of the most recognisable and oft-played riffs in rock 'n' roll history – solid, simple and catchy as hell. It's no surprise to see this track at the sharp end of our poll! And yet, as Deep Purple singer Ian Gillan told TG, *Smoke On The Water* might never have been released, because initially the band didn't think of it as anything special. In the winter of 1971, when Purple began work on the *Machine Head* album in Montreux, Switzerland, guitarist Ritchie Blackmore played the riff in their first jam session, and as Gillan recalled: "We didn't make a big deal out of it. It was just another riff. We didn't work on the arrangement – it was a jam." But by the end of the recording sessions they came up short of material, and so, in Gillan's words, "We dug out that jam and put vocals to it." Blackmore played his Strat and was plugged into – as far as Gillan could recall – "a Vox AC30 and/or a Marshall". Over that mighty riff, the singer told the true story of how the Montreux casino – where Purple had been scheduled to record – burned down in a fire that started during a Frank Zappa concert. And with that, a deathless rock classic was created.





VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

Simple is often best, as the Young brothers demonstrate in this huge hit. The opening three chords (E5, D5 and A5) are beginner-friendly shapes. You just have to chop away firmly, keeping the idle strings quiet. The blues scale line that follows needs to be picked cleanly, and you'll need to be prepared to jump back to the E5 chord quickly at the end. For the closing run on the sixth string pick with this pattern: down-up, up-down, down-up, up-down. Angus himself uses all downstrokes here (and you can easily swap to downpicking for that more urgent feel), but the down-up method is a great way to get a feel for the timing.

Appears at: 0:06-0:27

Tempo: 91 bpm

Key/scale: E blues scale

Main techniques: Open position powerchords, blues scale licks, syncopated riffing

TG TIP: This is a riff of three parts. Practise the powerchords, blues scale line and syncopated outro separately at first.

03 BACK IN BLACK AC/DC

(1980)

The biggest riff from rock's biggest album

Malcolm Young had it all planned out from the very start. When the rhythm guitarist formed AC/DC in 1973 with his kid brother Angus on lead, he knew exactly how to make the band's sound as powerful as possible. As Angus recalled: "Malcolm's idea was that two of us were always a unit together. We worked as that one unit and tried to make it one big guitar." And there is no better illustration of this than *Back In Black* – the title track from what became the biggest selling rock album of all time.

It was an album born out of tragedy, following the death of AC/DC's singer Bon Scott in February 1980. But with a new singer, Brian Johnson, the band pulled off the greatest comeback ever seen in rock 'n' roll. And for an album that Angus described as "our tribute to Bon", the title track was hugely symbolic. That funky, earth-shaking riff was one that Angus had first started toying with back in 1979 during the *Highway To Hell* tour, Bon's last with the band.

The album was recorded in just six weeks with producer Mutt Lange, who had cut *Highway To Hell* and would go on to make Def Leppard's monster hit *Hysteria*. Lange's right hand man, engineer Tony Platt, described the recording process to Premier Guitar magazine. "There was a definite focus to record *Back In Black* as basically and as live as possible," Platt said. "So all the songs were tracked with Angus and Malcolm, bass and drums. On a few occasions we may have dropped in a chord or so on a great take."

Angus Young has always favoured a Gibson SG (leaving the standard issue pickups in it), and has always recorded with it. The *Back In Black* sessions were no different. His amps were Marshalls as usual. "Still 100-watt Super Leads," Angus told TG's sister mag *Guitar World*. "The old-style ones, without those preamp things. I remember at the time that was the new thing Marshall was trying to push. They were trying to get people interested in 'em, but I wasn't really interested." As Malcolm recalled it: "I think Angus went to a smaller 50-watt Marshall for his solos. Just for some extra warmth. I was still using my Marshall bass head..."

Despite Angus' massively crunchy guitar tone, he seldom cranked up the overdrive. "The amp is set very clean," he said. "A lot of people who have picked up my guitar and tried it through my amp have been shocked at how clean it is. They think it's a very small sound when they play it and wonder how it sounds so much bigger when I'm playing. I just like enough gain so that it will still cut when you hit a lead lick without getting that sort of false Tonebender-type sound. I like to get a natural sustain from the guitar and amp."

What AC/DC created in *Back In Black* was, according to Def Leppard guitarist Phil Collen, "the ultimate rock song". As Phil said: "It has that sexy groove that hardly any rock band could get close to, amazingly restrained, confident guitars that are pure rock, outrageous drums and a vocal meter that is almost a rap but very rock 'n' roll. And considering the song is based on a blues format, it's extremely original."

**BACK IN BLACK IS,
AS DEF LEPPARD'S PHIL
COLLEN DESCRIBES IT,
THE PERFECT ROCK SONG...**



02 CRAZY TRAIN OZZY OSBOURNE

(1980)

How Randy Rhoads resurrected a lost soul

When he was kicked out of Black Sabbath in 1979, Ozzy Osbourne feared that his days as a rockstar were over. Until, that is, a young American guitarist named Randy Rhoads came into his life. Rhoads, poached from LA band Quiet Riot, would prove the perfect foil for Ozzy's reinvention post-Sabbath. On his debut solo album *Blizzard Of Ozz*, that unique voice was framed in a modern context, in which Rhoads' ferocious neo-classical guitar technique was pivotal. And *Crazy Train* was the key track – an anthem that would forever define Ozzy as a solo artist and Randy as one of the great guitarists of his generation.

Unusually, the *Crazy Train* lick was not in the standard metal keys of A or E, marking the first time a guitarist had written to order for Ozzy's doomy holler. "In Sabbath," he noted, "they'd just write something and say, 'Put a vocal on that'. Randy was the first guy to make it comfortable for me."

Years later, questions would be raised over the authorship of the *Crazy Train* riff. Greg Leon, who played bass alongside Rhoads in Quiet Riot, claimed: "I showed Randy the riff to Steve Miller's *Swingtown*. I said: 'Look what happens when you speed this riff up.' We messed around, and the next thing I know he took it to a whole other level." But this

was disputed by Bob Daisley, the bassist on *Blizzard Of Ozz*. "The signature riff in F# minor from *Crazy Train* was Randy's," Daisley said. "Then I wrote the part for him to solo over, and Ozzy had the vocal melody. The title came because Randy had an effect that was making a psychedelic chugging sound through his amp. Randy and I were train buffs, and I said: 'That sounds like a crazy train.' Ozzy had this saying, 'You're off the rails!', so I used that in the lyrics."

Released as a single in 1980, *Crazy Train* was only a minor hit (peaking at No.49 in the UK). But the song's influence on the guitar scene was inestimable. "I remember the moment I first heard Randy," said Rage Against The Machine guitarist Tom Morello. "I was packed in the back of somebody's mom's hatchback in Libertyville, and *Crazy Train* came on. This blistering riff came at me, followed by an incredible solo, and of course there was Ozzy – I recognised his voice as the guy from Black Sabbath. By the end I was like: 'What just happened?'"

Crazy Train set Ozzy on the path to mega-stardom, and confirmed Randy Rhoads as the most gifted guitar player to emerge since Eddie Van Halen. Tragically, he would not live to fulfil his potential. He died in a plane crash in 1982, after recording one more album with Ozzy, *Diary Of A Madman*. But his influence was profound, and as Tom Morello said in tribute: "Randy was the greatest hard rock guitar player of all time."

**"RANDY RHOADS WAS THE GREATEST HARD ROCK GUITAR
PLAYER OF ALL TIME" TOM MORELLO**

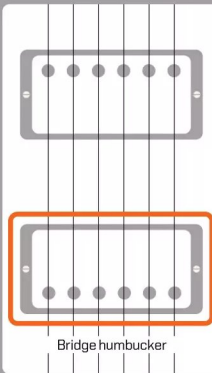
WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Octave shapes
- ✓ String muting
- ✓ Linear scale playing

HOW TO

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION



This riff is played with a saturated, thick drive tone, so set the gain on your amp quite high in order to allow the notes to sustain without fading away. Long-time Gibson player Chris Traynor likely used his Les Paul or Flying V on the record. If you have a humbucker-fitted guitar, the bridge pickup is the perfect choice. Single coil pickups on your guitar? You may need to wind up both the bass and the gain and ease off on the treble.

Find your video lesson at bit.ly/tga2022audio

RIFF OF THE MONTH

BUSH

Flowers On A Grave

Formed in London in 1992 by frontman Gavin Rossdale, Bush achieved multi-platinum success with their debut album, *Sixteen Stone*. Initially classed as grunge, the band returned after a hiatus in the 2000s with a more alt-rock leaning. This year's *Kingdom*, has a metal edge, with Rossdale citing System Of A Down as an influence.

Here, we're looking at the intro riff on the latest single – a part played by guitarist Chris Traynor. The song is in D minor and this octave melody uses the D minor pentatonic scale starting on the 5th fret, fifth string. Map out the notes on the fifth string to guide you; the corresponding octave-up notes are two frets higher on the third string. Easy! Just remember to keep all the idle strings as quiet as you can.

Be sure to follow our slowed-down performance in the video on our website for a clearer idea of how this riff is played

CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:00–0:21

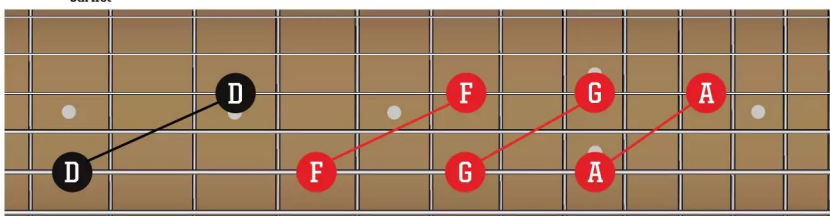
Tempo: 92bpm

Scale: D minor pentatonic scale

Main techniques: Octaves, slides, strumming



5th fret



Use your first finger to play the notes along the fifth string. These notes (D F G A) are the first four notes of D minor pentatonic scale (D F G A C). Skip to the third string, move the pattern up two frets and you'll arrive at the same four notes an octave higher. The idea in this riff is to play both notes of the octave (e.g., low D and high D) at the same time using your first and third or first and fourth fingers.



01 WHOLE LOTTA LOVE LED ZEPPELIN

(1969)

Riff (n.): Repeating guitar pattern by Jimmy Page

In 1969, the year Neil Armstrong first set foot on the moon, Jimmy Page launched his own giant leap for mankind. *Whole Lotta Love*'s guitar figure took just 2.7 seconds to play, but it immediately projected music into another decade. While everyone else was still playing the 60s, Zeppelin were now playing the 70s. Any guitar list – greatest riffs, solos, albums – is guaranteed to start fights, but it's a brave soul who challenges *Whole Lotta Love*'s claim to riff supremacy. It wasn't the first great riff, but it is the defining one. It's why riffs became central to guitar music, the reason bands search for the guitar hook that can propel a whole song – or even a whole career.

In many respects, *Whole Lotta Love* was not new. Some of the lyrics were lifted from *You Need Love* by Muddy Waters (lyricist Willie Dixon successfully sued for credit in 1987), and Robert Plant's vocal owed a lot to Steve Marriott's performance on the Small Faces' cover of that song. The riff, though, was all Page. Without that, it was simply another British version of a blues classic. With the riff, it was the invention of a new genre. Page's lick is so propulsive that it powers both verse and chorus. Almost every other riff on this list takes regular breathers so you don't get sick of it, but Page grinds out his eureka moment non-stop, fully confident no one is losing interest. "I knew it was strong enough to drive the entire song, not just open it up," Page told the *Wall Street Journal*. "We felt the riff was addictive, like a forbidden thing."

In fact, it was so addictive it didn't even need variations. Most iconic riffs are two- or four-bar patterns, alternating between different endings: think of *Back In Black*. There's only one modification to *Whole Lotta Love* in the entire song: for the first two repetitions, Page chugs on the E chord for longer, making a two bar pattern. Once Plant starts singing, the riff slims down to regular one-bar repeats. That's how it remains for the rest of the song, relentless and thrusting.

As you'll know if you've ever suffered through a pub band not-quite-nailing it, sounding like Page is another matter. At the start of each repeat, Jimmy slides into fret 7 on the E string, and then plays fret 5 on the A string. He duplicates that 5th fret note by also playing the open D string, and bends the A string slightly sharp to exaggerate the doubling effect. This touch of genius sounds like two guitarists playing at once.

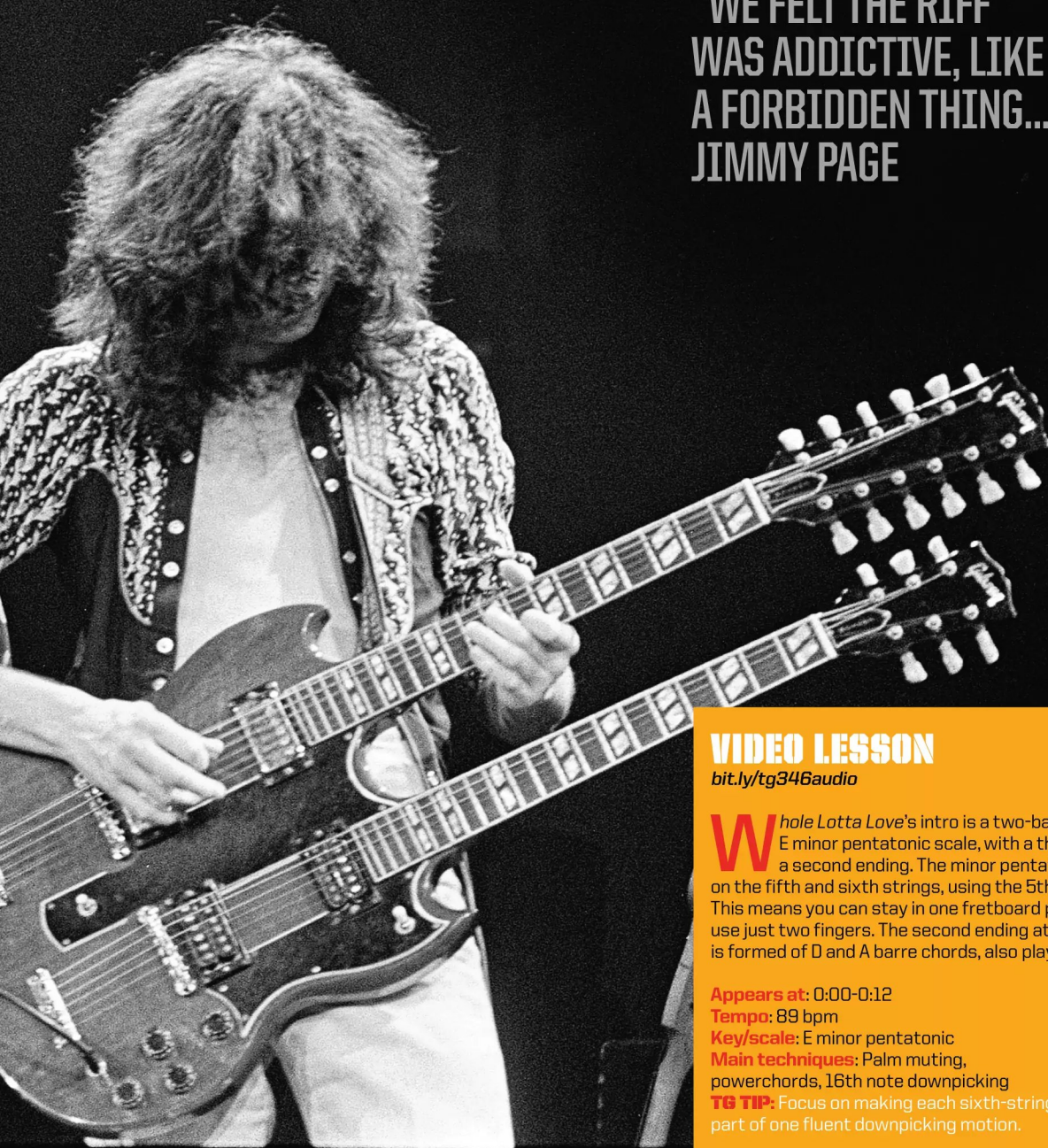
Led Zeppelin II was the album that made the Les Paul the essential hard rock guitar. But although Page also made the 100-watt Marshall the rock star's default choice, he didn't start using it until the album was almost finished. In TG338, Page told us about the amp he used: "When Paul Samwell-Smith left [the Yardbirds] he left his equipment behind – the [Vox] amplifier heads. I know them as Super Beatles... So that's exactly what's on *Whole Lotta Love*." Great... But what the hell is a Super Beatle?

There were several Vox amps officially sold as Super Beatles, starting with the V14. They were 120-watt solid state heads made for the Beatles when their AC30s were no longer loud enough to be heard above screaming Beatlemaniaks. One problem though: there's no evidence Page ever used one. There is, however, a 1969 photo of Page at Olympic Studios, where *Whole Lotta Love* was recorded, with a Vox UL4120. These were also 120-watt Vox heads, used by the Beatles from *Revolver* onwards. In other words, an amp you could reasonably call a 'Super Beatle'. The heads had solid state preamps and valve power stages, and weighed 68lbs. Good luck finding one if you fancy recreating Page's tone: they were only made for a year, and many faulty units were destroyed. Experts estimate there are less than 10 working examples in the world.

Zeppelin refused to release singles in the UK, and they never appeared on *Top Of The Pops*. Instead, the BBC used cover versions of *Whole Lotta Love* to introduce the show. It underscored that Zeppelin were on a higher plane than their would-be rivals. Mortals aspired to appear on *TOTP*; Zeppelin wrote the theme tune.

Whole Lotta Love is what smartphones should play when you ask "What's a riff?" It is the distilled essence of rock guitar: distorted tone, powerchords, string bending, and minor pentatonic notes all squeezed into a single bar of music. It is one of the all time great musical motifs, like Beethoven's 5th, immediately recognisable, strong enough to power an entire movement, and destined to live forever.

**"WE FELT THE RIFF
WAS ADDICTIVE, LIKE
A FORBIDDEN THING..."**
JIMMY PAGE



VIDEO LESSON

bit.ly/tg346audio

Whole Lotta Love's intro is a two-bar riff based in the E minor pentatonic scale, with a third bar of music forming a second ending. The minor pentatonic element is based on the fifth and sixth strings, using the 5th- and 7th-fret notes. This means you can stay in one fretboard position throughout, and use just two fingers. The second ending at the end of the section is formed of D and A barre chords, also played in 5th position.

Appears at: 0:00-0:12

Tempo: 89 bpm

Key/scale: E minor pentatonic

Main techniques: Palm muting, powerchords, 16th note downpicking

TG TIP: Focus on making each sixth-string palm-mute part of one fluent downpicking motion.

Words: Jonny Scaramanga Photos: Kevin Nixon

“The novelty of a post-lockdown music environment is new for everyone. We’re starting to enjoy music again”



In a small town in Wiltshire, something magical is happening. A band is playing a gig! And not just any old band – it's **Squid**, whose new album *Bright Green Field* is arguably the best debut of 2021. Guitarists Louis Borlase and Anton Pearson tell TG how “lucky” and “emotional” they feel to be playing live again, and explain the band’s improvisational ethos: “It’s about putting adventure over precision.”

It is May 26th, 2021, and your fearless TG reporters are in a pub. For an Actual Gig! We could do some maudlin reflection on how that became a newsworthy state of affairs, but we're too hyped about seeing live music. It's been long enough that we'd be happy to see a covers band plod through *Mustang Sally*, so the fact we're seeing Squid, one of the most exciting new bands anywhere, is borderline euphoric.

Squid's return to live performance is this tour of spaces and places that aren't normally on the gigging circuit, and in some cases aren't

normally even music venues. Tonight they're at The Old Road Tavern in Chippenham, Wiltshire. Its name may not be up there with The Marquee or The Cavern, but guitarist and sometimes vocalist Louis Borlase tells us the band are thrilled to play there. Chippenham is drummer/vocalist Ollie Judge's hometown, and the pub gave Squid free use of its music space for writing and rehearsing their just-released debut album, *Bright Green Field*. As the band takes to the stage that night, keyboardist Arthur Leadbetter will announce, with absolute sincerity, "This venue means the world to us."

We're allowed inside after soundcheck, where members of the band are hanging out freely. Borlase is restringing his Burns BL-900 and chats about the differences compared to a Strat. "It's a bit brighter," he says, bringing to mind a swarm of bees. When fellow guitarist Anton Pearson arrives, he explains that this tour is a pleasant way to ease themselves back into gigging. In September they've planned a jaunt around bigger clubs, including





Brighton's Concorde 2 and Nottingham Rock City, and doing that straight after two years' hiatus would've been daunting. "These types of shows are like the ones that we did when we first started out in a way," Anton says. "So there's something that feels quite familiar and natural."

Come showtime, the room is all seated, and the chairs aren't packed as tightly as they could be, but otherwise it's what used to be business as usual. Squid enter without fanfare, launching into a percussion jam. Borlase plays bass, while Pearson creates a multitude of noises from his guitar and manipulating the pitch and speed by changing the delay time on his Boss DD-3. The 35-strong crowd stay in their seats, so it's only when the music stops it becomes clear how well Squid are being received. The cheer that greets them shows that the people in this audience know they're seeing something special, and they're still only so they don't miss anything. Although *Bright Green Field* only came out this month, Squid are largely using this tour to develop new material, so everyone has to be alert.

The second number begins quietly, though with equal passion. But after several minutes, the band suddenly and without warning crank up the intensity until it feels as though the entire audience is being pasted to the back wall. Some credit must go the band's sound engineer: few would suspect this small PA capable of delivering such volume or low end. But somehow Squid have a hidden sixth gear, and at will they can conjure power and ferocity comparable to The Who on *Live At Leeds*.

Anton's main axe is a Fender Mustang, although he occasionally picks up his Fender Lead II. Louis favours his Telecaster, but a shell pink Jazzmaster and the aforementioned Burns make appearances too. Both are using '68 Custom reissue Silverface Fender amps: Anton's is a Vibrolux on the Custom channel, bright switch off, bass and treble both near five. Louis plugs into the low gain input 2 of the vintage channel on his Twin Reverb, with all the EQs at 4. Both amp volumes are at 3,

miles before breakup. Their amp tones are sparkling clean and the effects are off, ready for input from their giant pedalboards. Although they both make regular use of pedals, for both the core tone is a good clean sound as a bed for their ideas. Louis frequently drops his guitar down an entire octave courtesy of the TC Sub n' Up, making thunderous bass-register chords. He also drenches his parts in vibrato, via the Arion Stereo Chorus. Later he'll explain: "I didn't start getting into music from playing the guitar, but through playing piano and keyboard. I've got a bit of an obsession with making the guitar not sound like a guitar, and that's probably where it comes from."

Playing in the drummer's hometown creates an intimate vibe. As the band brings the show to an end, a voice from the back shouts: "Ollie! Ollie! OLLIE!" The voice pauses until everyone has looked up. "One more for yer dad!" Fortunately, Squid are devoid of rock star pretension, so there is no bubble to burst. The crowd cheers and Ollie rolls his eyes, quipping "I don't respond well to blackmail", before counting off the encore. You suspect the band are happy for an excuse to keep playing.

After the show, TG caught up with Louis and Anton to talk about gear and their creative process. "It was quite rowdy, wasn't it?" smiles Anton. "It's a really lovely community there, especially around that pub. It seems like a really important part of the cultural community in that town, which is such a special thing."

The band is, unsurprisingly, thrilled to be back. "It's been long enough that you've forgotten exactly what it is you miss," Louis explains. "When we played the first show we were a little bit lost for words. We just felt very emotional and felt very lucky, and I think we felt a certain relationship between the five of us on stage that we hadn't felt in such a long time."

Louis notes how unusual the setup feels for the audience. "I think it must be quite a strange thing to be listening to music that is very rhythmically oriented and to be aware that you've got to stay put..."

RIGHT

Squid perform live at The Old Road Tavern in Chippenham, Wiltshire

Both the band and the audience are still adjusting to the new normal. As Anton says, "Everybody's re-learning what a performance environment is as a social environment, and how everyone interacts with each other." Louis adds: "It feels like there's a nice equality between what's taking place on stage and the audience because the novelty of a post-lockdown music environment is new for everyone. We're starting to enjoy music again."

Playing a tour of venues that aren't necessarily designed for music is keeping things interesting for the band. In Chippenham, their full rig just about fits onstage, but that hasn't been the case everywhere. "We played a show at the Adelphi in Hull and the stage was so small we weren't able to include the full electronics set up and some more synth-based things," remembers Anton. "We weren't able to play as many instruments. It inevitably makes you approach these songs in a different way with the resources you do have available."

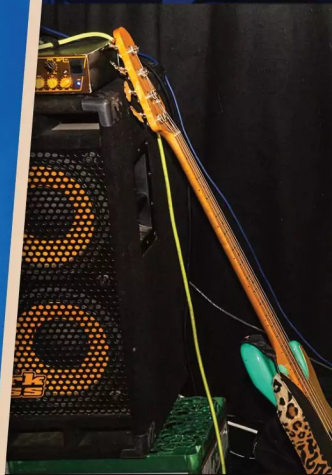
Squid have always developed new material through live performance. Lockdown meant they couldn't complete that process for their newest material. "Once we finished *Bright Green Field* and we were starting to write new stuff it felt like there was something missing," Anton says. "That process has been really important to everything we've done so far." This tour is designed to put that right. It means no two Squid shows are the same, and the material changes night to night. "We're using it as a process not just to write new songs," he explains, "but also to develop ideas. It's a mix of brand new songs, and tracks on the album that we've changed in either subtle ways or big ways."

This approach means that improvisation is always at the core of what Squid does. At any point, a Squid member might realise that one or more of their bandmates have gone off-piste. Anton explains the art: "When you play music, the most important thing you can do is listen. If people want to run with something, you've got to listen, respond and follow them."



"THE WHOLE POINT IS TO BE IMPROVISING, COMMUNICATING, LISTENING TO EVERYBODY ELSE'S PARTS" LOUIS BORLASE







ABOVE
A typical Squid live set, featuring an abundance of onstage improvisation

Louis describes it further: “How much improvisation is happening depends night by night. Certain sets we’ll leave purposeful gaps between songs to improvise, or things will just happen spontaneously. With a new idea the whole point is to be improvising, and to be communicating and listening to everybody else’s parts.”

This focus on improvisation inevitably brings up the j-word: are Squid jazzers? “Jazz is big for all of us,” says Louis. “I think bands like Tortoise that fuse those more song-like elements but have a freedom to improvise, but in a sort of post-rock way, has always been something that’s quite exciting. We avoid thinking about our music in stylistic or genre-based terms, because what excites us is not having too much focus on one idea. But when bands achieve these fusion or prog elements but also keep it very scratchy or very angry, it’s often far more interesting.” Anton agrees: “The important thing for us is just keep focusing on trying to do new and interesting stuff all the time and keep doing things that we find fun rather than worrying about one person comparing us to this or that thing.”

Like fusion players, Squid play liberally with time signatures, dropping into 7/4 and 7/8 during their second Chippenham set. Is this planned, or

just something that happens? “Seven is not too bad. It’s just eight take away one isn’t it,” smiles Anton. “We played 2010 from the album,” Louis picks up. “That wasn’t us setting out to write in 7; it was all bit built around that one rhythm that runs through the track, that just happens to be in 7. For *Chlorine* we did want to think more closely about time signature because it started with some ideas between guitars and programmed drums. When we start with ideas that come from a particular groove or beat on the drum machine, as opposed to when we start with ideas just bass and drums, we think about time signatures in quite different ways.”

Squid have been loosely grouped with Black Country, New Road and black midi, though it is more a shared sense of experimentation that joins them than similar sounds. So do they feel part of an emerging scene? “We think they’re really great bands,” says Anton. “We like them and get on with them, but we’re not hanging out with them all the time. It’s not New York in the 70s with the experimental classical scene, everybody talking about philosophy with each other and exchanging ideas for how to progress music forward.”

“I guess the modern equivalent is seeing one another’s Instagram stories

instead of discussing philosophy,” quips Louis. As Anton puts it: “I think all three of us are really determined to work in ways that each of us find really interesting. I think we’d all be really bad bands if all we listened to was each other, so I don’t think I don’t think they’re spending loads of time listening to Squid, and we’re not spending that much time listening to them either.” Even so, he goes on to describe black midi’s new album *Cavalcade* as “exceptional”.

Louis has a modest take on things: “Another thing we all share in common is I think we’re all surprised how far things have gone. I think all three of those bands that didn’t always imagine that things would go as well as they have.”

As things are wrapping up, the two offer their advice for how to be band with a similar creative outlook to Squid’s: “Listen to anything...” begins Anton. “...And everything,” adds Louis, who says in conclusion: “Enjoy one another, listen to one another all the time. Make sure that everything you’re doing it is enjoyable and you’re not just falling into doing things that you don’t think are really cool or really fun. It’s about putting adventure over precision in terms of importance.”

"I'VE GOT A BIT OF AN OBSESSION WITH MAKING THE GUITAR NOT SOUND LIKE A GUITAR" LOUIS BORLASE



LOUIS' PEDALBOARD

Top row L-R: Boss BD-2, Electro-Harmonix Op-amp Big Muff, MASF Raptio, Arion Stereo Chorus, Blackstar LT Boost, TC Electronic Mini Sub'n'Up, Boss TU-3.

Bottom row: Nux Atlantic, MXR Carbon Copy, Alexander Syntax Error, Line 6 DL4 Delay Modeller.



ANTON'S PEDALBOARD

Top row L-R: Boss DD-3, Muzily Fuzz, DigiTech Whammy, Jim Dunlop Crybaby, Boss TU-3.

Middle: EHX Canyon. **Bottom:** TC Hall of Fame, Dwarcraft Wizard of Pitch, JHS Tidewater, EHX Superego Synth Engine.

Off board: Earthquaker Devices Avalanche Run.

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50

EASY GUITAR LESSONS

JOIN US AS WE PRESENT 50 BITE-SIZED WAYS FOR YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR PLAYING, EXPLORE NEW GUITAR TONES AND GET MORE FROM YOUR GEAR!

We live in a world where we're always looking for shortcuts to help us make the most of the limited time we have. It's no different with the guitar – we all want to take the time to do things the right way, but sometimes you just want to get on and play. After all, the best thing about playing the guitar is the time you spend actually jamming the riffs, songs and solos you love.

So, over the following pages, you'll find 50 lessons to help you do just that – easy, quick shortcuts and simple lessons to help you play better, sound better and get more from your gear. There's something for everyone to learn and hopefully it's all good fun too.

Turn the page and let's get started!



GEAR, TECHNIQUE AND RECORDING LESSONS

Let's kick off with an assortment of easy tips



EQ and compression pedals. Next are distortion/overdrive effects, then boosts, then modulation effects (chorus, flangers, phasers etc). Delay comes next, before reverb at the end. Don't forget, experimentation with effects is half the fun, so don't be afraid to break the rules and see what happens!



LESSON 04 Get more from your multi-effects unit

The mythical four-cable method could give your multi-effects unit extra versatility. All you need is an amp with an effects loop, a multi-effects with send, return and input sockets, and four cables.

1. Plug your guitar into the your effects unit's instrument input.
2. Run a cable from your effect's output to the amp's effects in/return socket.
3. Connect a cable from the amp effects send into the pedal's effects return.
4. Finally, connect the pedal's effects send to the amp's main input.

This will enable you to place effects in the amp's loop as you would with physical pedals. Most modern multi-effects units allow you to choose where the loop occurs in the signal chain, giving you the option to bypass your amp's preamp all together. It might take you an afternoon of fiddling, but the results can be spectacular!

LESSON 05 Overdrive, distortion and fuzz. What's the difference?

This trio increase your gain in different ways. All create distortion, so the lines between them can be blurred – the sound of many pedals genuinely overlaps between the three.

AMPS, PEDALS & EFFECTS

LESSON 01 Set your amp tone up for the stage, not the bedroom

We hate to say it, but all those hours you spent painstakingly tweaking your amp to sound perfect when you're rocking out at home were fun, but they're not necessarily going to help you very much when you come to play in a live environment. To make your amp sing in a gig or practice, you have to think about your place in the mix. So, for simplicity's sake let's say the bass and drums take up the low frequencies, while the cymbals and vocals occupy the highs – where does that leave you? The middle! So, when you're setting your amp's eq at a gig, give the mid control a twist to the right and notice how all of a sudden you hear yourself cutting through!

LESSON 02 Keep your pedals going in emergencies

If you ever find yourself with a dead battery-powered pedal and no time to replace it mid-set, this one's for you. Keep a standard nine-volt battery in your gig bag, along with a nifty battery clip with the right sized power jack on the end (most electronics stores sell them). It's an instant power supply you can buy for a couple of quid!

LESSON 03 Get your pedalboard in the right order

The order you place your pedals in your signal chain has a significant impact on your tone, and, while there are no ultimate rules, there is a generally accepted order that will get the best out of your effects. The start point is wah then

TO MAKE YOUR AMP SING IN A GIG OR IN PRACTICE, THINK ABOUT YOUR PLACE IN THE MIX

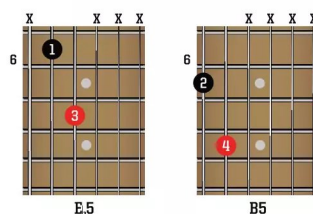
TECHNIQUE

LESSON 07 Practise fast, play better

Whether you're interested in playing fast or not, you can use speed and tempo training to help you learn new music. Here's how it works. All you need is a metronome or drum machine app and your guitar.

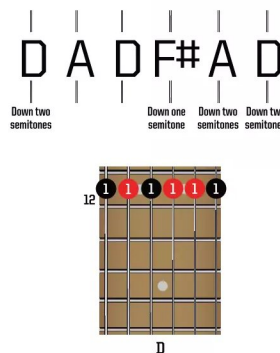
1. Choose a short passage of music to practise.
2. Set your metronome slow enough for you to play the passage without mistakes.
3. Repeat your riff over and over for 60 seconds.
4. Raise the tempo by two or three beats per minute then start again.
5. Keep increasing the tempo, before trying your starting speed again. It should feel easier now.

LESSON 08 Friedman & Mustaine's spider powerchord fingering



Back in Issue 171, Marty Friedman told TG about his 'spider' fingering for powerchords, explaining that this four-fingered approach allows him to play faster, cleaner changes. The first/third finger shape is the obvious fingering, but if you add in a second/fourth finger shape you can cross the strings and cover the fretboard swiftly. Try alternating between the two shapes shown here, paying close attention to the fingering.

LESSON 09 Use open D tuning for one-finger major chords

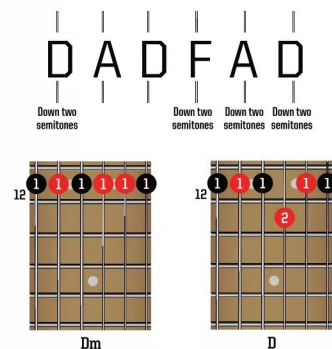


Change your tuning from standard to open D (D A D F# A D) and your guitar's open strings produce the bright sound of a D major chord – that's because the notes of the tuning are the same as the chord's notes. It also means you



can play major chords by barring across all six strings with one finger. Easy! Retune the first, second, third and sixth strings. The other strings are the same as standard.

LESSON 10 Open Dm. Like open D, but easier



Open D has one key drawback: if you're playing one-finger major chords it can be difficult to adapt the shape when a minor chord crops up. The solution? Try open D minor instead – this allows you to play one-finger minor chords that are much easier to adapt to play a major chord. If you're in open D, lower the third string a further semitone to D minor.

Generally, overdrive is mildest and will drive a valve amp into smooth distortion. Most overdrives use gentle 'soft clipping', unlike distortions, which use harsher 'hard clipping' to flatten the waveform's peaks and create increased harmonics with lower dynamic range. And what makes fuzz fuzzy? The clipping threshold is even lower than a distortion pedal – and the resulting wave can be almost totally square. With that comes a series of strange, abrasive harmonics, and in extreme effects an almost synth-like squarewave sound.

LESSON 06 The key to harmoniser mastery

Harmonisers blend your signal with a pitch-shifted interval to imitate dual-guitar lines. Think *The Boys Are Back In Town* and you'll get the idea. Most units operate in similar ways. Simply set the interval you want the pedal to create, and blend the direct and harmonised signals together. However, you'll get more from your harmoniser if you know about key signatures. Let's say you're playing in C major (C D E F G A B) and you set your pedal to harmonise four semitones up. Play a C note, your harmoniser will give you an in-key E. Hooray! Trouble is, you won't always get an in-key note – and that's a problem. The solution? 'Intelligent' harmonisers such as the Boss Harmonist PS-6 can be set to stay in key. Tell it your root note and whether you want major or minor. Job's a goodun!





HOME RECORDING

LESSON 11 Play the same parts in different tunings

Layering multiple takes of the same part and placing them in your mix can make you sound huge, but why not take it a step further? If you're laying down chords, try playing the same part using different inversions, either with alternative shapes, tunings or a capo to increase the depth of your multitracked parts without just creating a wall of the same noise.

LESSON 12 Create a fake acoustic sound

A great way to add depth and texture to your electric guitar recordings is to capture the acoustic sound of your strings. This is less of an 'acoustic' guitar sound than it is percussive, but you'll be able to layer it amongst your tracks to give extra character to your recordings. Just place a condenser mic near the fingerboard.

LESSON 13 Use your pedal as a recording interface

You can spend a lot of money on an audio interface to record with, but before you drop your hard earned, check out your multi-effects pedal! Multi-effects have included USB audio outputs for many years now, and it's the simplest way of getting your guitar signal into your computer. Same goes for modelling amps – just hook it up to your computer, and you're recording for free!

LESSON 14 Tuning trick: more accurate intonation

Due to some very complicated physics, no guitar is ever 100 per cent in tune at every note on the fretboard – and when you tune your guitar at the 5th fret you may find the higher notes on your instrument sound less 'in tune'.

If a song you play is based higher up the neck, try tuning with notes in that range of the fretboard for more accurate intonation. Your tuner picks up the notes whichever fret you're on.

LESSON 15 Tuning trick: a fatter sound

Double-tracking will get you a bigger sound. It's a simple idea. Just record the same part twice and pan hard left and right. So where does tuning come in? Well, try this. Record one part in concert pitch and double-track a second guitar tuned a fraction lower. Pay attention to your tuner, though – we're only talking about four or five hundredths of a semitone here. It's a great way to create a pseudo-chorus effect, great for jangly cleans but perhaps not so good for tight, thrashy, distorted powerchords.

INCREASE THE DEPTH OF YOUR MULTITRACKED PARTS BY PLAYING DIFFERENT INVERSIONS

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Open G tuning
- ✓ G minor pentatonic scale
- ✓ Blues shuffle feel

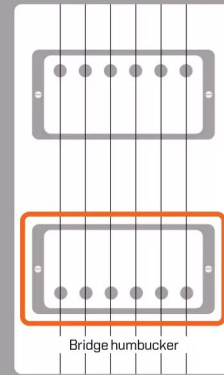


RIFF OF THE MONTH

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GET THE TONE

CHANNEL CLEAR



The guitar tone is a very simple, clean sound with a little light spring reverb. Auerbach recently told TG that he used his 1960 Fender Telecaster through a Fender Tweed Deluxe narrow panel with an Ebo Customs E-verb spring reverb during the *Delta Kream* recording session.

THE BLACK KEYS

Coal Black Mattie

The Black Keys' 10th studio album *Delta Kream* is a collection of covers celebrating the works of early 20th century hill country blues players including Junior Kimbrough, John Lee Hooker and Mississippi Fred McDowell. The riff we're looking at here is from a Ranie Burnette-penned song, though Dan Auerbach's guitar part pays homage to R. L. Burnside's rendition. Indeed, Burnside's

own guitarist Kenny Brown also features on this new recording.

The first thing to be aware of is the shuffle feel – a typical blues groove. To play this rhythm, keep your strumming hand moving constantly down and up, but make your downstrokes last twice as long as your upstrokes. This'll help you get a feel for the overall timing, but of course the note content is a little more varied, so you may need to mix

up the exact picking pattern a little. Be sure to watch our slowed down video performance to see how it's done.

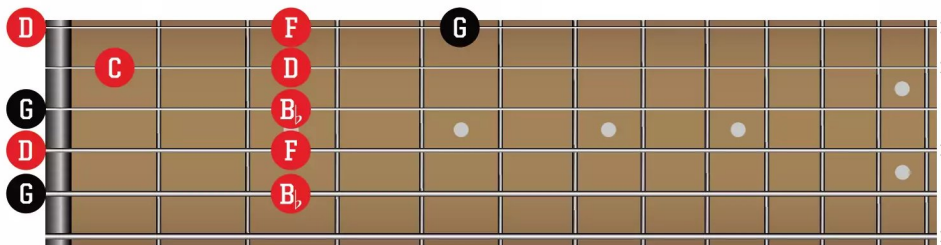
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:09–0:30

Tempo: 92bpm

Key/scale: G minor pentatonic scale

Main techniques: Slides, shuffle feel, pull-offs



This riff is played in open G tuning (DGDGBD), which is achieved by dropping the first, fifth and sixth strings down by two semitones. This tuning is famously used

by Keith Richards, who dispenses with the sixth string all together in Rolling Stones classic *Brown Sugar*. The notes of the riff come from the G minor pentatonic

scale (GB, C D F). If the shape looks unfamiliar, it's because we are in an open tuning, so you'll need to memorise the fingering shown here.

TONE HEROES

Get the secrets behind the sounds as TG dials in 10 of the most iconic guitar tones of all time

PHIL COLLEN

A snapshot of Leppard's axeman playing his Jackson PCI Au Natural

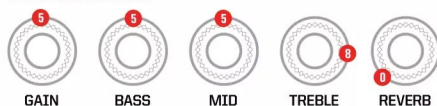


AMPS, PEDALS & EFFECTS

Steely Dan - *Reelin' In The Years*

Elliot Randall attributes the tone on *Reelin'* to his 1963 Fender Strat equipped with a retro-fitted 1969 Gibson humbucker in the neck position, which he played through a cranked 400 watt Ampeg SVT bass amp. Not exactly a traditional rig, and, unsurprisingly, an unusual guitar sound. To get close to Randall's tone, select a neck humbucker and set your amp's EQ on the trebly side. A fuzz pedal may help you get closer to the sizzling highs of that dimed Ampeg.

CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE



Def Leppard - *Photograph*

Phil Collen used his black Ibanez Destroyer alongside Steve Clark who played a Les Paul XR-1 (the forerunner to the Les Paul Studio). Still, these particular guitars aren't essential – just make sure to use a bridge humbucker for the dirty sounds and solos, but switch to the middle position for the sparkling cleans. A dash of compression and chorus will help your cleans cut through and give you some of the classic glossy 80s production sound.

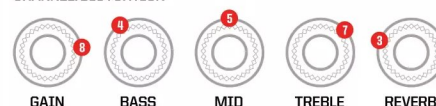
CHANNEL: DISTORTION



Van Halen - *Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love*

The swirly sound in the solos came courtesy of Eddie's MXR Phase 90 pedal (don't mistake this for the left-panned electric sitar!) set to a slow, low-in-the-mix sound. An Echoplex delay was used throughout, set roughly to a dotted eighth note repeat (about 320 ms at 138 bpm). Finally, kick in a flanger at the end of bar 2 of the main riff. Eddie used a Marshall Super Lead amp coupled with an H&H power amp to help create his trademark 'brown sound'. Many modelling amps will have a suitable preset.

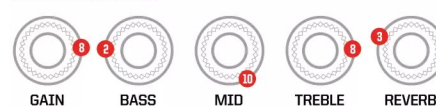
CHANNEL: DISTORTION



ZZ Top - *Gimme All Your Lovin'*

This track was cut using Billy Gibbons' custom Dean Z guitar with a bridge position DiMarzio Super Distortion pickup. The Dean was recorded dry with a Legend 50-watt hybrid unit with valve preamp and transistor power amp. For best results, use a humbucker-equipped guitar, select the drive channel on your amp and keep the treble and mids high and the bass low. If you're using single coils, increase your gain and maybe dial in a little more bass to compensate for the thinner sound of this type of pickup.

CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE



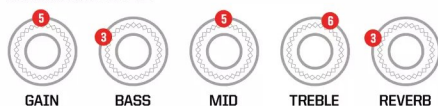
Dire Straits - *Brothers In Arms*

You probably think of a Fender Stratocaster when you think of Mark Knopfler, but he recorded this track with a Gibson Les Paul Standard with neck pickup selected and plugged into a Marshall JTM45 amp. The swells were created using an Ernie Ball volume pedal – a crucial part of the sound! Dial in enough gain on your amp for the loudest licks in the outro solo and back off your guitar volume to reduce

HOW SOON IS NOW? IS REGARDED AS A TREMOLO CLASSIC, BUT IT'S MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT

the distortion on the earlier, cleaner sounding lines. Use a neck position humbucker and a moderate amount of amp gain.

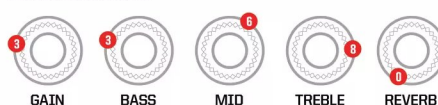
CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE



Queens Of The Stone Age - Little Sister

Live, Josh Homme usually uses a humbucker-equipped Motor Ave BelAire with Ampeg and Greedtone amps. We recommend dialing in a very light overdrive sound on your amp and using a fuzz pedal (Josh likely used his Stone Deaf PDF-1 drive pedal) with the treble set fairly low to get a ballpark tone. Choose a guitar with a humbucker and experiment with bridge and neck positions – you may find the neck gets you closer to Josh’s treble-light tone.

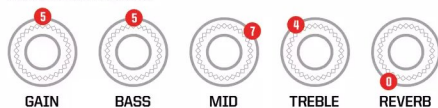
CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE



Led Zeppelin - Communication Breakdown

The whole of Led Zeppelin’s debut album was recorded with Jimmy Page’s Dragon art Fender Telecaster with a Supro Coronado 1690T amp, a Sola Sound Tone Bender overdrive, an Echoplex EP-3 tape delay and a Vox wah-wah. A bridge position single coil pickup on a T-style guitar will get you most of the way, but check out Boss’ new Waza Craft TB-2W Tone Bender pedal for authentic Led Zeppelin fuzz tones.

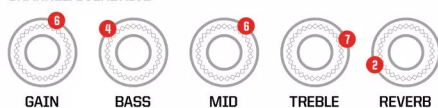
CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE



The Police - Message In A Bottle

In the early days of The Police, Andy Summers played this track on his Fender Telecaster Custom, usually set to its bridge position single-coil pickup through Marshall 1959 Super Lead heads and Marshall cabs. Ideally set your amp quite loud but without much preamp gain. A flanger gives you Andy’s rounded glassy tone (he used an Electro-Harmonix Electric Mistress), and dial in a little compression to increase the sustain.

CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE



ANDY SUMMERS

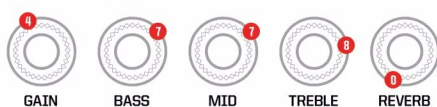
No chorus, but some flanger cleans on Message In A Bottle



Soundgarden - Black Hole Sun

The wobbly-sounding intro line is played using an EBow and a long stereo delay through a Leslie speaker. A rotary speaker emulator is just the ticket to recreate the signature warble. Kim Thayil most likely used his humbucker-equipped Guild S-100. You need clarity on the low arpeggios so dial in plenty of treble on your amp. A Mesa/Boogie-style distortion works well for high-gain sounds. Take care not to use too much gain, though; much of that muddy, ‘grungy’ sound comes from downtuning to drop D, not purely from high gain.

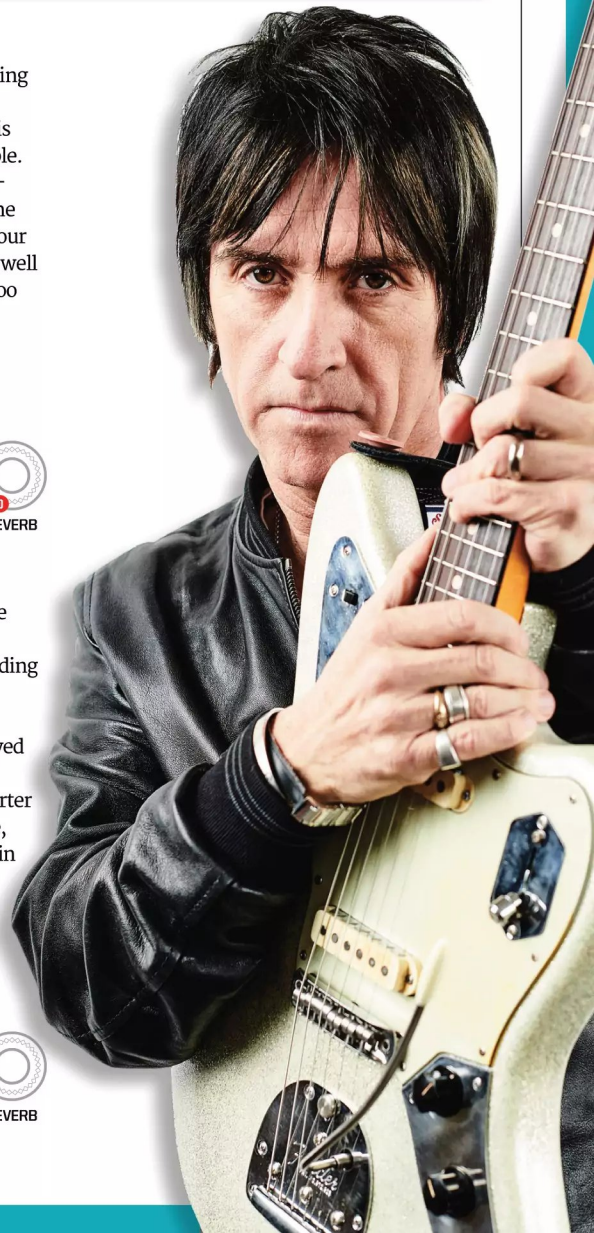
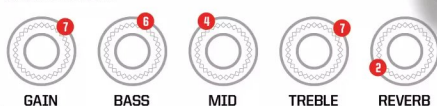
CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE



The Smiths - How Soon Is Now?

Johnny Marr’s crowning achievement in The Smiths soundscapery is often heralded as a tremolo-pedal classic, but the actual recording is far more complex than that. The original track features an Epiphone Casino running through a Fender Twin, which was then played back through four Twins set to the vibrato channel. Johnny Marr and producer John Porter struggled to keep the parts vibrating in time, which resulted in the pair recording the riff in 10-second bursts. Thankfully, nowadays you can get a remarkably similar effect using a square-wave tremolo, with tap tempo to sync it to the track’s bpm.

CHANNEL: CLEAN





MAINTENANCE AND MODIFICATIONS MADE EASY

Your guitar's performance will make or break your sound. Keep the most important parts shipshape with our easy tweaking tips

LESSON 16 Reduce nut friction

If you're finding that a string suffers from erratic or unstable tuning, it might well be because the string is catching in your guitar's nut. Sometimes this can necessitate the nut being filed, or even replaced, but before you get extreme, try lubricating your nut slots. You can buy bespoke nut lubricants to do this of course, but a quicker, easier method is to use a pencil in the nut slot of the problem string – the graphite in the pencil lead should smooth up the travel of the strings on the nut. It'll give you steadier tuning and smoother string bends.

LESSON 17 Improve tuning stability

Did you know that having too much string wrapped around your tuners can cause tuning stability issues, and so can having too little? To reduce the risk of the string slipping when brought up to pitch, aim to have between two to five turns of string on each tuner post: two or three turns for wound strings, four or five turns for the thinner strings.

LESSON 18 Intonate your guitar

Having your intonation set right is vital – playing up at the dusty end will just sound bad! Thankfully, it's a simple enough to do yourself, provided your electric has adjustable saddles. Get your guitar and a tuner, then play a harmonic at the 12th fret. Compare the harmonic's pitch to the note produced when you fret it normally – if it's sharper, move the saddle backwards slightly, if it's flatter, move it



forwards (remember FFF: fret, flat, forward). Repeat for the other strings and you'll be intonated perfectly!

LESSON 19 Make strings last longer

To a greater or lesser degree, we all sweat from our hands when we play guitar, and over time if left untouched, this will corrode your strings into a dull, lifeless mess. So, whenever you finish playing, take a dry cloth and rub down your strings to get rid of any moisture, and notice how your strings now stay bright and zingy for longer.

LESSON 20 Beat signal breakup

Cables are the main offenders here, so your first port of call is to check yours isn't a dud. If you're sure the problem is with your guitar start by checking that the jack socket nut is tight and holding it in place: if not, tighten it up with pliers or a spanner. CruzTools makes the brilliant Guitar Jack And Pot wrench, which will fit every fixing on your guitar. Next, you need to look at the actual jack itself. Assuming your wiring is sound, the problem most likely lies in the terminals. The sprung steel can bend out of position over time, but it needs to be in contact with the tip and barrel of your cable for your signal to flow. Plug the lead in and gently bend



it back into position, so you get a tight fit when plugging in.

LESSON 21 Fix crackly pots

Your guitar's control 'pots' (short for potentiometers) are mechanical, and have a limited lifespan. However, before you change them, it's worth giving them a clean, as dust is often the crackly culprit. You'll need to get into the control cavity and locate the dodgy control. The metal casing for your control is exactly that – the hard work goes on inside, and that's what we need to clean. Take a look at the back of the pot, and you'll notice a small hole. Get a can of compressed air, attach the straw to the nozzle of the spray can and squirt it into the guts of the pot. Give the pot some vigorous turns for 10



HAVING TOO MUCH STRING WRAPPED AROUND YOUR TUNERS CAN CAUSE STABILITY ISSUES



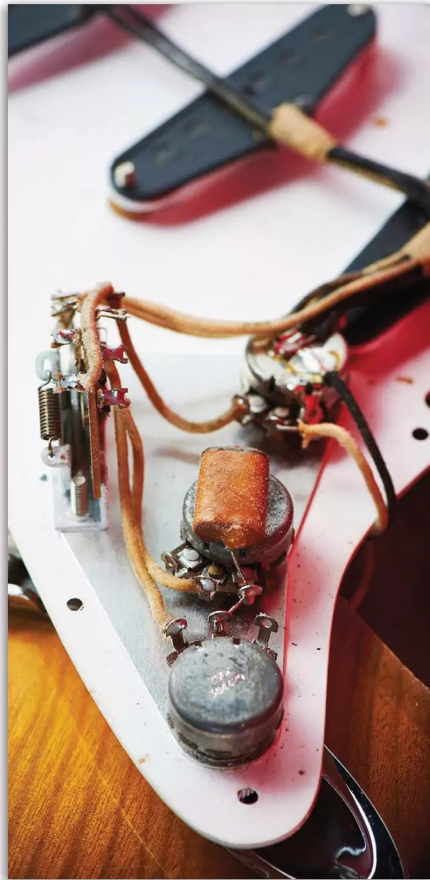
seconds or so, and you'll hopefully find any dust has been dislodged. No luck with compressed air? Try the same process with a can of electrical contact cleaner.

LESSON 22 Make new strings stay in tune

How often have you restrung a guitar only to find that the damn thing won't stay in tune properly? Well, it's because strings need to stretch and settle for a bit. Annoying, but good news – you can speed the process up yourself easily! Starting with the low E string, simply grip the string about half way along its length, and pull it up off the fretboard – not too much, it's not a bow and arrow, just until you feel it get taught – release, and repeat! Do this a few times on all your strings, and you'll find your tuning much more stable.

LESSON 23 Stiffen your controls' motion

There's nothing more frustrating than accidentally knocking your control knob mid-song and mucking up your tone – or worse, cutting it altogether! If your knobs are so easily turned that this is a regular problem, there's an easy fix. Simply remove your control knob and slot a rubber washer or O-ring (available from any DIY shop) over the post. Pop your knob back on and the washer will cause the friction between your guitar's body and the knob, making it much harder to turn. A word of caution – if your guitar has a nitrocellulose finish, the rubber washer



could potentially mark or even damage the finish, so do this at your peril!

LESSON 24 Give your Strat a bridge position tone control

The Stratocaster bridge pickup is an immensely versatile beast, but one that's caged thanks to the lack of a tone control in Leo Fender's original configuration. Thankfully, changing this is a very simple if you're not intimidated by a simple soldering job. First, locate the wire connecting the Strat's second tone pot to the pickup selector switch (it'll be connected to the middle pickup at this point). Unsolder this, and move it one tag towards the middle of the switch and solder it back up.

Done! Want to test it out? Crank up your gain and knock the tone down to about halfway, and you'll find that polite single coil sounds suspiciously like a humbucker!

LESSON 25 Top wrap your Les Paul bridge

Joe Bonamassa is the king of the modern Les Paul, but he also does something unconventional with his bridges. JoBo, like many other LP users, thinks that they sound better with the Tune-o-matic tailpiece screwed all the way down, improving the connection between wood and strings, and in theory making the guitar more resonant. However, doing this creates a steep break angle between the bridge and the tailpiece, making bending harder. The solution is to string the tailpiece 'backwards' as if it's a wraparound bridge – known as 'top wrapping', this decreases the break angle, leading to easier bends and (allegedly) increased resonance. Simple!



HAVING INTONATION SET RIGHT IS VITAL – PLAYING AT THE DUSTY END WILL JUST SOUND BAD!

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Octave shapes
- ✓ Dorian mode riffing
- ✓ Slides

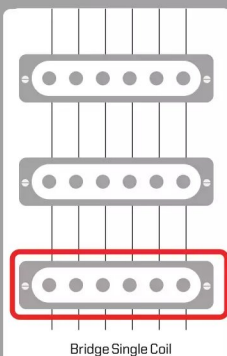


RIFF OF THE MONTH

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GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION



A single-coil-equipped guitar, coupled with a distortion pedal and a valve amp would be the best combination to get close to the alternative, indie sound here. The Wolf Alice setup comprises Fender Telecaster and Jaguar guitars with Fender Hot Rod or Vox AC30 amps for the core sound, plus a whole host of pedals. Joff's pedalboard includes the Empress Effects Distortion and Multidrive pedals, which give him a broad sonic palate.

WOLF ALICE

Smile

Smile is second single release from Wolf Alice's third studio album *Blue Weekend*. Having formed in 2010, the London based indie rockers have achieved worldwide recognition with a Mercury Prize winning 2017 album *Visions Of A Life* and a Grammy nomination for the song *Moaning Lisa Smile*.

The track opens with an in-your-face, heavy single-note riff. Ellie Rowsell and Joff Oddie are

on guitar duties and there are some synth and octave guitars blended into the mix to create a thicker sound. This means you can play the riff as a simple single-note affair using just one finger, or you can add an octave-up note.

Map out the single notes on the sixth string, then add the octaves once you can follow them. Our slowed-down performance in the video on our website will give you a clearer idea of how it is played.

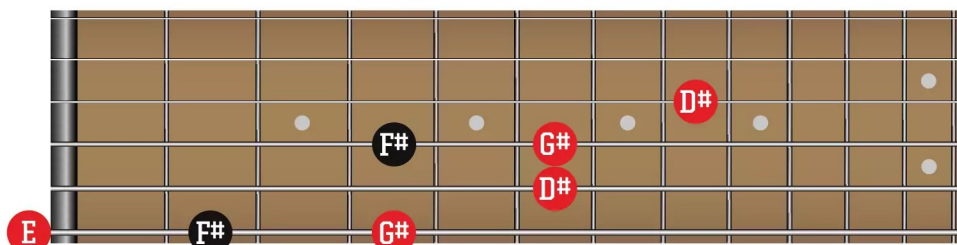
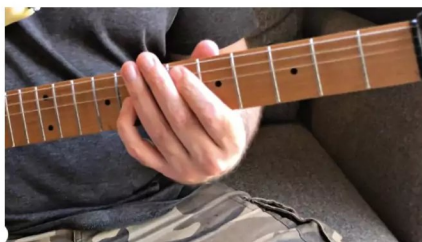
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:13-0:33

Tempo: 94 bpm

Key/scale: F# Dorian mode

Main techniques: Slides, alternate picking, octaves



Smile's riff contains only four notes (F#, G#, D# and E), but you can infer from this and the sweet minor vibe of the song that we are based in the F# Dorian mode (F# G#

A B C# D# E). The major 6th D# is quite a feature of the riff, so this trademark Dorian quality is quite important to the sound. You can play the sixth- and fifth-string

notes with your first finger, and add the octaves with your fourth finger. Notice that the octave of each note is both two frets and two strings higher.

Photo: Getty



EASY RHYTHM GUITAR

CHALLENGE!

Apply all three strumming patterns to all three examples

Strumming is all about steady timing. Usually, you'll be locking in with a groove laid down by the rhythm section, and, of course, you'll be using a mixture of down- and upstrokes. And if you ever find your timing going a bit wayward, well, it's usually offbeat upstrokes that throw players off. Follow our simple tab and audio examples to hone your timing. If we have one tip, it's to keep your strumming hand moving down and up constantly without speeding up or slowing down.

LESSON 26 EASY DOWN-UP STRUMMING

TRACK 7

♩=100

Cadd⁹ Cmaj⁷ Play 4 times

TAB

0 3 3 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 2 0 3 2

□ V □ V □ V □ V

Start with this easy strumming pattern which is played: down, down up, down, down up. The chord change from Cadd9 to Cmaj7 is easy and shouldn't affect your timing at all.

LESSON 27 EASY DOWN-UP STRUMMING

TRACK 8

♩=110

G⁵ C⁵ Play 4 times

TAB

3 5 5 0 5 5 3 5 5 0 5 5 3 5 5 0 5 5

□ V □ V □ V □ V

Here, the first half of the strumming pattern is the same as before but the chord change comes on an offbeat upstroke. Keep a constant down-up motion going to keep your timing tight.

LESSON 28 EASY DOWN-UP STRUMMING

TRACK 9

♩=120

E7^{#9} Play 4 times

TAB

8 7 7 8 7 7 8 7 7 8 7 7 8 7 7 8 7 7

□ V □ V □ V □ V

The first half of this Hendrix-inspired pattern is a straight down-up approach. The second half is played with two upstrokes - not necessarily difficult, but the timing is a bit more of a challenge for most.



THREE WAYS TO USE YOUR VOLUME CONTROL

The volume knob on your guitar is a powerful expression and tone shaping tool. You can use it to gradually fade notes in and as a way to reduce/increase your gain level. Ideally you want to be able to adjust the volume knob on the fly rather than stopping to do it. Depending on your guitar, the volume knob might be placed near to where you pick the strings or it may be further away. Wherever it is, get used to finding it by feel rather than by sight. This'll help make it more automatic.

LESSON 29 NOTE BY NOTE VIOLINING

TRACK 10

$\text{♩} = 60$
Am⁹ Play 4 times

TAB: 5 7 5 7 7

Start with your guitar's volume at zero, then play the note either by picking it or hammering-on with your fretting hand. Once the string is ringing, gradually roll the volume up to create a fade in.

LESSON 30 GRADUAL FADE IN

TRACK 11

$\text{♩} = 80$
E⁵ G⁵ A⁵ Play 4 times

TAB: 2 3 5 5 5 5 7 7 7 7 7 5

This riff incorporates the volume knob on the first chord which is played as a fade in, followed by the G5 and A5 powerchords played at full volume. It's tricky at first, but play it slowly a few times and it should start to flow.

LESSON 31 TWO GAIN SETTINGS

TRACK 12

$\text{♩} = 80$
A⁵ D/A Play 4 times

TAB: 7 5 7 5 5 5

For this riff, you will need a guitar with two pickups, each with their own volume knob, such as a Les Paul Standard. Play the opening chord with the bridge pickup, then switch to the neck pickup set at roughly half volume. It's a great way to switch between two gain settings.

AUDIO FILES
Find your audio files at
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LESSON 32

TARGETING STRING BEND INTERVALS

String bending is a feature of guitar playing that sets it apart from other instruments. An expressive and musical way to move between notes, the more you practise the technique, the more expressive your playing will become. You probably

already use bends in your solos, but following our short example here will help you improve your accuracy for four different intervals. Before you tackle the solo take a look at the tab and practise each bend on its own, aiming to hit the right target note each time.

TRACK 13

♩ = 100 ♩ = ♯♩

First up is a quarter tone – a very slight bend played with the first finger in this case. Next is a semitone bend (a one-fret pitch change). The third finger is probably the best here but practise with your second and fourth fingers too. The tone bend (two frets) comes next followed by a minor 3rd (three frets) in bar 4. Remember, the bigger the bend, the more fingers you'll need to push the string.



LESSON 33

BLUES GUITAR TECHNIQUE CHALLENGE

It's easy to forget that most popular music styles owe a debt to the blues. And it's especially true for the guitar – a staple instrument in early blues, and, more importantly, whose musical development since the 50s has imparted blues phrasing into the heart of rock and metal. Hell, you don't even have

CHALLENGE!

Try playing the 'wrong' licks in the gaps

to like blues, but learning some fundamentals will give you a broader musical base to work from, whatever music you're into. Listen to the audio track we've provided and try out the six blues ideas we've tabbed here. You'll hear each line played twice followed by a two-bar space for you to repeat the riff or lick.

1. Start with this blues shuffle riff on the bass strings. It's a good stretch workout for the fret hand as well as being a test of your sense of groove.

2. This riff is based around the notes of an A chord and is best played with downstrokes throughout. It's an authentic rock 'n' roll and rockabilly riff, too.

3. He might be a rock 'n' roller, but Chuck Berry-style licks have blues at their core. Get to grips with his signature string bend move here.

TRACK 14

♩ = 80 ♩ = ♩ = ♩

A⁵ A⁶ A⁵ A⁶ A⁷

BU 8 (10) 5 5 8 (10) 5 5 8 (10) 5 5 8 (10)

BU 7 (9) 10 (12)

BU BU

4. Two notes played at the same time is called a 'doublestop'. Use your first or third finger to barre across two strings.

5. An extension of the Chuck Berry bend, these unison bends are a great way to make your guitar wail. Hold the second string steady and bend the third.

6. Repeating hammer-ons and pull-offs are a great tool for building tension and driving solos forward. Practise with strict timing but more freely in solos.



FOURTH-FINGER WORKOUT

Guitarists often complain that their pinkie finger feels weak and difficult to control. For most players this crucial digit lags behind the other fingers in terms of strength and dexterity. If this sounds like you then take a look at these exercises

TO TIP!
Don't quit!
Repetition is the key
to progress here

which are designed to improve both your soloing and chord playing. Not feeling it? We hear you, but the improvements you'll see are worth the time. Spend a couple of minutes on these exercises whenever you first plug in to see results without too much grind.

LESSON 34 EASY DOWN-UP STRUMMING

TRACK 15

♩=100

E⁵ E⁶ E⁵ E⁷ E⁵ E⁶ E⁵ Play 4 times

TAB: 9 9 11 9 12 9 11 9

Play the E⁵ with your first and second fingers and use your fourth finger to reach to the 11th and 12th frets. Too much of a stretch? Try playing higher up the fretboard. Or go lower for a challenge.

LESSON 35 CHORD COORDINATION

TRACK 16

♩=90

Em E⁷_{sus}⁴ Em⁷ Esus⁴ Play 4 times

TAB: 7 8 10 7 7 10 10 9 9 9 9 7 7

The challenge in this funky chord exercise is to keep your first, second and third fingers in place, while your fourth finger moves to form each chord. Great for finger independence and accuracy.

LESSON 36 SPIDER EXERCISE

TRACK 17

♩=80

E⁵ 8va Play 4 times

TAB: 15-12-14-15-14-12-15-12-14-15-14-12-15-12-14-12

□ ▽ □ ▽ cont. sim.

Placing your fingers at consecutive frets is the idea behind the classic 'spider exercise' and this is a variation on the theme. Practise slowly, only speeding up gradually. It's just as much a picking exercise.

LESSON 37 USE HAMMER-ONS AND PULL-OFFS

TRACK 18

♩=90

E⁵ 8va Play 4 times

TAB: 15-12-15-12 15-12-15-12 15-12-15-12 15-12-15-12

Playing hammer-ons and pull-offs is a great way to exercise your fretting muscles. You don't need to smash the strings with your hammer-ons; stay loose and let momentum do the work.



THREE WAYS TO WAH

The wah is one of the most fun effect pedals out there and is an extremely powerful tool for shaping the tone as you play.

You can use the effect in lots of musical situations from creating Brian May-style tones, Kirk Hammett-style wails and waka waka-style funk riffs.

CHALLENGE!

Apply all three wah methods to all three licks

LESSON 38 LEAVE IT IN A SWEET SPOT

TRACK 19

♩=100

C Am Play 4 times

TAB: 5 7 5 7 7(9)

For our first example we're engaging the wah and leaving the pedal in one spot to create a tone reminiscent of Brian May. Trust your ear to find the sweet spot - it'll vary depending on your pickups, amp and wah pedal, but it will probably be somewhere near the middle of the pedal's sweep.

LESSON 39 FUNKY ACCENTS

TRACK 20

♩=80

E⁹ Play 4 times

TAB: 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 6 7

cont. sim.

The idea here is to use your wah to accent the chords - just go to 'toes down' position wherever you see a chord in the tab, and to 'heel down' where you see an X. A simpler alternative is to simply rock the pedal evenly in time with the beat. Instant waka waka funk!

LESSON 40 GRADUAL SWEEP

TRACK 21

♩=90

A⁵ Play 4 times

TAB: 7 8 7 5 7 8 7 5 7 8 7 5 8(10)

The idea here is to start with your heel down then slowly and steadily sweep through the arc of the pedal movement as the lick unfolds. If our lick's too much of a challenge, try using the gradual wah ideal with an epic long string bend.



FIVE VIBRATO PHRASES

T6 TIP!

Higher gain tones will help you make your vibrato sustain

The perennial unsung hero of lead guitar, vibrato is the secret sauce that'll take your soloing to the next level. Sure, tone, timing, technique and, er, timbre, amongst other things, all count – but when a solo 'feels' good, it's usually the subtle micro-timing of vibrato that's done the job. And although we're talking about the 'feel factor' here, you can still break vibrato down into its constituent parts and practise it. Essentially it comes down to two elements: how much you vary the pitch and the speed at which you do it.

LESSON 41 HOLD, THEN VIB

TRACK 22

♩=100
Am⁷

Play 4 times

TAB: 7 [7]

Let's start with the basics. Hold the note for one beat, then move your hand from the wrist to lever the string up and down. Experiment with increasing or decreasing the intensity.

LESSON 42 BEND, HOLD, THEN VIB

TRACK 23

♩=100
Am¹¹

Play 4 times

TAB: BU 7 (9) [9]

This is tougher because you're applying vibrato to an already bent string. The trick is to bend up to exactly the same pitch with every pulse of your vibrato movement.

LESSON 44 DAVID GILMOUR STYLE

TRACK 25

♩=80
Am

Play 4 times

TAB: 8 5 8 5 8/10

David Gilmour's vibrato is subtle, classy and quite shallow with only a little pitch change and at a fairly slow rate. This creates a smooth, relaxed feel, perfect for his trademark melodic style.

LESSON 43 BB KING STYLE

TRACK 24

♩=80
D/A Am⁷

Play 4 times

TAB: 7 5 8 5 5 5

With some basics covered, now try BB King's fast, shallow vibrato, shaking your hand to create a fluttering effect. Get this down and you're halfway to being able to play authentic classic blues.

LESSON 45 ZAKK WYLDE STYLE

TRACK 26

♩=80
A⁵

Play 4 times

TAB: 7 5 7 5 7

Zakk Wylde's vibrato is famously wide in pitch and aggressively fast – perfect for high-octane metal. Aim to bend the string a tone or even a minor 3rd for the full Zakk effect.



**CHALLENGE!**

Apply this technique to our Blues Technique Challenge

**LESSON 46****TONE TIP**

Alter your tone simply by changing where on the string you pick. Pick near the fretboard for a warm, round tone. Closer to the bridge gives you a twangy, trebly tone. You probably already know this, but how often do you exploit the effect? Combine near-the-neck picking with a neck pickup and a clean tone and you'll have a warm bell-like sound suitable for jazz. Switch to picking near the bridge for country and surf style twang. Jam along with our one-note audio example to get a feel for it.

TRACK 21

♩ = 80
Em

Play 4 times

TAB



ESSENTIAL CHORD PROGRESSIONS

Chord progressions are the basis of songwriting and also the key to learning the songs that you want to play. Whatever the style, be it rock, pop, folk, metal, and so on, there are plenty of chord sequences which are used time and time again. If you're writing your own music you'll no doubt be looking for flashes of inspiration for

LESSON 47 TRACK 28

THE THREE-CHORD TRICK

E A B

The three-chord trick is commonplace in blues and can also be heard regularly in punk and country music, too. All three chords come from the same key (E major in our backing track) and they're all major chords. You could also experiment and play them as minor chords. It'll have a darker mood that's great for slow ballads.

LESSON 48 TRACK 29

THE 50S PROGRESSION

C A m F G

This sequence was used extensively in the 50s and 60s in songs like *Blue Moon*, *Stand By Me*, *Unchained Melody* and more, earning this run of chords an unofficial moniker of 'the 50s progression'. Although the chords are the same (albeit in different keys), the melodies, tones, tempos, arrangements and rhythms make all these songs feel distinct.

your own brand new chord sequences, but these standards can serve as a great starting point too – just try a sus chord or a major/minor variation to make each progression your own. Here are four classics, complete with simple backing tracks to get you underway.

LESSON 49 TRACK 30

THE POP PROGRESSION

E B C#M A

Though known as the 'pop progression', this sequence is found in various genres – generally when a song demands a driving, uplifting feel. Journey's *Don't Stop Believin'*, Aha's *Take On Me* and Ed Sheeran's *Photograph* are just a few examples. Toto's *Africa* and Lady Gaga's *Pokerface* start the progression on the third chord in the sequence (C#m in the key of E).

LESSON 50 TRACK 31

STARTING ON 'THE FOUR'

C G C D

The notes G, C and D appear as the first, fourth and fifth in a G major scale (G A B C D E F#). In fact, they're a three-chord trick in G. If you've written, say, a verse around G-C-D, a great way to mix it up in a chorus is to start on the fourth chord, instead of a predictable return to the root on the opening chord. We're in the key of G here, but, as with all our progressions, it applies to all keys.

Words Jonny Scaramanga Portrait Daveed Benito

SUPER NOODLES

On the long-awaited new album from punk rock stars **The Offspring**, guitarist **Noodles** has used a ton of gear – new and vintage – while channelling the Ramones, The Who and AC/DC. But even for this battle-hardened punk hero, playing fast downstrokes isn't easy. As he admits to TG: "It hurts!"

Besides Green Day, no band did more to take punk into the mainstream in the 90s than The Offspring, whose breakout hit, 1994's *Smash*, became the world's best-selling album on an independent label. In a career spanning 37 years, the band has now sold more than 40 million records. So perhaps they've earned the right to take it easy. But still,

nine years between albums is not very punk rock, is it?

Guitarist Noodles, talking from the band's Huntington Beach studio where *Let The Bad Times Roll* was recorded, explains the delay. "I think part of it was we didn't want to put anything out until we knew we had something good," he says. The band's enthusiasm for touring also interrupted sessions. "We go our separate ways and then revisit what we got.

Coming back with fresh ears helps. We just love making music, man! We love playing together, love listening to music. All that helps us keep doing what we what we do."

This raw enthusiasm means *Let The Bad Times Roll* sounds like the work of a significantly younger band, not only because they were significantly younger when they began recording it. It sees them working for the third time with producer Bob Rock. Best known for



his work with Metallica and Mötley Crüe, Rock is not an obvious choice of pop-punk producer, but The Offspring bonded with him over his punk roots. “We met with Bob and it just clicked. He really came up in the in the Vancouver punk scene, in the Payolas. He toured and played all over in punk clubs. We love a lot of the same music. He’s just a cool f*ckin’ dude. When Bob was working with some bands back in the day they were like gangs. It’s like the new guy in a jail yard. You walk in and have to take a swing at the biggest guy in the yard to prove yourself. We’re not like that. Hanging out with us is like visiting the Teletubbies!”

While some bands have struggled with Rock’s notorious demands for songs to be rewritten until they are perfect, Noodles and co. had the answer in the form of their own perfectionist, singer Dexter Holland. As Noodles explains: “Dexter has that kind

of mindset. You know, very exacting and everything has to be right. The way Bob puts it with us is: ‘this is going to be great’, which means two things: it means we’re on the right track, but we’re not there yet.”

The road to making things great included a lot of messing around with new gear. “Bob is a guitar player, he’s always got new gadgets. Sometimes it works, or sometimes we spend half a day just jerking around and playing guitar, but we learned some shit and had fun making noises for ourselves. Bob knows so much and he just loves experimenting.”

That experimentation resulted in a small avalanche of guitars appearing on the album – “Les Pauls, Strats, Telecasters, a couple of Gretsches” —but Noodles’ primary weapon is a mid-60s SG Junior, with single P90 pickup. “It just sounds great. It’s the same model Pete Townshend played on *Live At Leeds*. If we’re going for barre chords with some grunge,

that’s the guitar we’ll use. Some single-string riffs will use the Junior, but sometimes we’ll bust out a vintage Gretsch Sparkle Jet. We have a Malcolm Young Gretsch on there somewhere, too.”

The amp selection is even bigger. “For one guitar track we’ll mic three different amps and kind of blend the different sounds. The AC30 will add some stringiness where one of the Marshalls or the Mesas will add the grind to it. For this album we went back and got the Mesas out, a Mark IV and a Mark III. For Marshalls we have a JCM2000, a Plexi, and a JCM800. We have a Diezel, and there’s a Hiwatt in the mix. We also have Kemps and Fractals. We use those if we’re getting some clean chorus-y thing. If you want some kind of dirt on it you gotta go with a real amp and real tubes.”

For live work, though, Noodles is entirely a digital convert. “All the effects are built into

"I JUST LOVE GUITAR FOR GUITAR'S SAKE!"

➔ the Fractal. The main thing is the sound doesn't change from night to night. When you have a big amp, it's always different, sometimes disastrously so, whereas this always stays the same. It may not be the best sound I've ever had, but it's pretty damn good and it never falters."

It's refreshing to hear a guitarist still so enthusiastic after 37 years, and all of Noodles' experiments with gear are in service of songwriting. "I still struggle with delays. How much do I need on every knob? You play with it until it becomes unlistenable, then you dial it back. I'll have a thought, like 'I want this clean guitar with delay to sound like the riff from this Ramones song.' You start experimenting and a lot of times you end up with something completely different. That's where most of our creative stuff happens."

Creativity is one thing, but how the hell does he keep up that constant barrage of downstrokes? "You wanna try *LAPD* off *Ignition*? Oh my god, by the end of that one I'm dying. I think it's just a matter of doing it a bunch until you break through and you can kind of loosen up, and not you're not so tense. I'll spend 10 minutes just as much as I can until it hurts, and then shake it off and play something fun."

Guitar is clearly still Noodles' passion, and he listens to everything. "I just love guitar for guitar's sake. I don't spend a lot of time listening to Steve Vai or Joe Satriani but I have those records and I do appreciate them." If this is unexpected, his choice of practice material may also surprise you. "I'm trying to learn *Raining Blood* by Slayer! It's so fast and it's really kind of a silly song, but it's super fun. I think *Pantera's Cowboys From Hell* will be the next one..."

Photo: Ken Regan

"I'M TRYING TO LEARN RAINING BLOOD BY SLAYER!"



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Interview Chris Bird

Jimmy Page

In an epic interview with TG Editor Chris Bird, Jimmy discusses his evolution as a player, the fine details of his unique style, tone and composition, his famous guitars, and the creative process that went into the holy trinity of Led Zeppelin songs – *Whole Lotta Love*, *Kashmir* and *Stairway To Heaven*...

It is an extraordinary story, and as Jimmy Page puts it, quietly but firmly, only he is qualified to tell it. He has a new book published this month, titled simply *Jimmy Page: The Anthology*. It is what he calls “an autobiography with photographs”, and a “companion volume” to 2010’s *Jimmy Page By Jimmy Page*. The focus is on his music and guitars, his artistry and evolution as a player. But there is also the sense, as he explains it, that Page is setting the record straight, in answer to the many unauthorised biographies of himself and his band Led Zeppelin.

“There’s so much mythology about me,” Page says. “In all those other books, because people don’t have all of the information – they make things up. So at least with my book I could be really authoritative, because I was the one who knew what happened. So, let’s do it. Let’s start telling the stories as they really are.”

Speaking to *Total Guitar* from his home in London, where he has remained since the outset of the global pandemic, Page is in a relaxed mood, happy to talk about every aspect of his life’s work: the groundbreaking music he made, first with The Yardbirds and then with Led Zeppelin; and the tools

of his trade, iconic guitars such as the Black Beauty, and the amps and effects with which he explored new sounds.

Born on January 9th, 1944 in Heston, Middlesex, James Patrick Page began playing guitar at the age of 12. Inspired by pioneering rock’n’roll guitarists including Scotty Moore and James Burton, he performed in various groups while attending art school, before establishing himself as a session player and producer, working on a number of hit records for major artists, among them the Who, The Kinks, Van Morrison and The Rolling Stones.

In 1965, Page joined The Yardbirds, one of the leading bands of the British

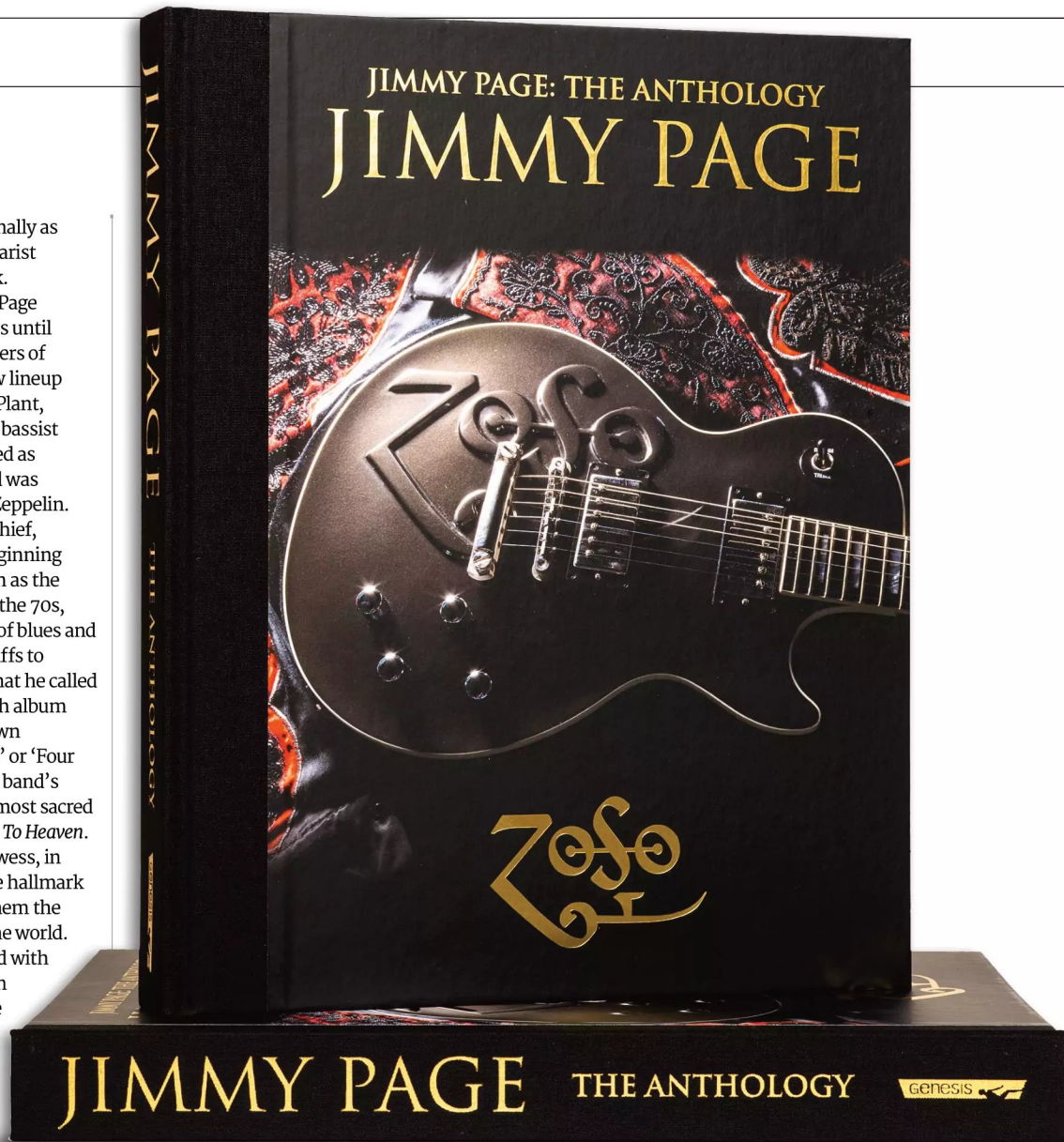


blues-rock explosion – originally as bassist, and later as lead guitarist alongside his friend Jeff Beck. Following Beck's departure, Page continued with The Yardbirds until 1968, when, after two members of the band exited, he put a new lineup together with singer Robert Plant, drummer John Bonham and bassist John Paul Jones. Initially billed as The New Yardbirds, the band was subsequently renamed Led Zeppelin.

With Page as architect in chief, a series of classic albums, beginning in 1969, defined Led Zeppelin as the dominant hard rock band of the 70s, with the guitarist's mastery of blues and folk combining with heavy riffs to achieve a perfect balance, what he called "light and shade". The fourth album – officially untitled, but known variously as 'Led Zeppelin IV' or 'Four Symbols' – was arguably the band's masterpiece, featuring that most sacred of all rock anthems, *Stairway To Heaven*. And on stage the band's prowess, in which improvisation was the hallmark of marathon shows, made them the biggest grossing live act in the world.

Led Zeppelin's reign ended with the death of John Bonham on September 25th, 1980. In the wake of this tragedy, Page made a soundtrack album for the movie *Death Wish II*, and formed a supergroup, The Firm, with ex-Free/Bad Company singer Paul Rodgers.

In 1985, there was the first Zeppelin reunion, for Live Aid, with Page, Plant and Jones backed by two drummers, Phil Collins and Tony Thompson. In 1988 there was *Outrider*, Page's only solo album to date. And in the 90s, another short-lived supergroup, Coverdale-Page, with Whitesnake leader David Coverdale, before Page and Plant reunited, not using the Led Zeppelin name, but performing mostly Zeppelin music on the live album *No Quarter*. The duo then made an album of new songs, *Walking Into Clarksdale*, released in 1998, which still stands as Page's last album of original material. At the turn of the millennium, Page dug back into his past once again by performing Zeppelin classics with one of America's finest rock'n'roll bands, The Black Crowes.



"THE FIRST TIME I PLAYED THE BLACK BEAUTY I HAD A CONNECTION WITH IT"

It was on December 10th, 2007 that Page, Plant, Jones and drummer Jason Bonham, the son of John Bonham, performed as Led Zeppelin for a one-off show at the o2 Arena in London. 20 million people applied for tickets for what was a momentous show, but with Plant unwilling to commit to a full-scale reunion tour, this proved to be Zeppelin's last stand.

In all the years since, Page has busied himself curating the Zeppelin catalogue – a body of work shaped by his genius as a guitarist, writer, arranger and

producer. What he reveals in *Jimmy Page: The Anthology* are the secrets of his art, the inner workings of Led Zeppelin, how he chose and modified the guitars with which he created the band's definitive songs. And in the Total Guitar Interview, he addresses all of that and more...

***Jimmy Page: The Anthology* is a beautiful book, and so full of detail...**

Yes, it was an interesting thing to do, to put in all the information that you couldn't put into the first book.

Anthology gave me the opportunity to do the detail behind the detail of everything pertaining to my career, whether it was the guitars or the costumes or whatever. To be able to get close-up, personal, and even invasive – so you could see the mechanism of things like the string bender, the circuitry, or the fine detail of the costumes. And of course, there are a lot of stories behind the guitars...

One guitar in particular – your 1960 Gibson Les Paul Black Beauty Custom – has an amazing story.

The first time I played it, I had such a connection with it. I thought, 'This is it. After all this searching and going through guitar shops, this is the one.' I got it before I went to art college, so when I started doing studio work as a session player, that's the electric that's used on pretty much all of that work.

You also played it during Led Zeppelin's famous concert at London's Royal Albert Hall in January 1970.

Yes, at the tail end of it when we did some Eddie Cochran stuff. And after the Albert Hall, I thought I'd take it to the States with me on one of the tours and we'd just do all this rock'n'roll stuff at the end, the Eddie Cochran stuff with the Bigsby. So the story is that I take it over there, we're in Minneapolis going to Montreal, and we arrive in Montreal but the guitar doesn't. It disappears in Minneapolis. I realised it was lost or stolen.

And then?

Gibson, under the circumstances of me having played all the studio work on a Gibson Black Beauty, they made a clone of that, a version of it. That was pretty cool. And I had some extra sort of routing in it, because on the original, where you have the up [position on the selector switch] it is the neck [pickup]. The middle [position] isn't the neck and the bridge, it's actually the bridge and the middle pickup. And then the down position is the bridge. So at no point could you get what you'd get on a Standard, which was the neck and bridge pickup together, so I worked out a way of doing that, and I had that built into that particular model, because I thought, well, crikey, you want to do that, you want any combination that you can get. So that was what I had, a Gibson Black Beauty [replica].



LES IS MORE

Page's affinity for the Gibson Les Paul goes back to his days with The Yardbirds

And you played the replica during Zeppelin's 2007 show at the O2.

Yes, that's the guitar that I played at the O2 when we did *For Your Life* (from Zeppelin's 1976 album *Presence*). I thought that would be really cool, that thick sound, because it sounded really good. And then after the O2 [in 2015], my guitar that was stolen turns up. It gets found. Isn't that interesting? And unless you get the story, you just see a Black Beauty and think, oh that's the same one he had before. But there's a whole story about how it

gets lost and I didn't expect it ever to be back in my hands ever again. I thought it was gone.

Are you aware of what happened to it in that time?

I think it was stolen from the airport and it was stuck under somebody's bed, somebody who was in some sort of punk band or something, and nobody wanted to rat on him. I think he died, and once he died things became a bit more apparent as to what had happened, and we got it back.



It's an incredible story.

Well, these things don't reappear, do they? It is a great story insofar as I'm still paying tribute to it, if you like, the one that was lost, even though Gibson made an edition of it. And yeah, then the first one turned up afterwards, and it was amazing, fantastic.

On the subject of replicas, last year Fender released both Custom Shop and production line recreations of your famed Telecaster. Can you tell us a bit about your original instrument?

The thing about that is Jeff Beck gave me a Telecaster, one that he played in The Yardbirds for a while, but I was still doing sessions, and he gave me that as a gift. And once I went into The Yardbirds I was playing that Telecaster. Bit by bit I started to customize it. I put some mirrors on it. I wanted to really make the guitar my own. People had started painting guitars at that point and I thought, well, I'd like to paint mine and really consecrate it, so that guitar is absolutely my own. So I went about painting it [with the Dragon artwork] – all that art school training didn't finally go to waste [laughs]! This was a guitar I was using in The Yardbirds, so when Jeff left I had the one with the mirrors and then I painted it. And that painted guitar goes through from The Yardbirds through *Led Zeppelin*.

The finish on this Telecaster was damaged, wasn't it?

Well, somebody mucked up the painting on it. I needed to repaint it, let's put it that way. Somebody had sort of vandalised it in my absence. So [restoring] it was always something I wanted to do. I had to take it back to the natural wood.

And the guitar was renovated for an exhibition of guitars at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2019.

What happened was that the people from the Met came to my house and they had a blueprint floorplan of how they wanted to do the exhibits and they explained that they wanted the original instruments, and I thought here's the time to actually [restore] it, because that guitar was going from the Yardbirds to 'Zeppelin I', for God's sake. So this is the time to do it. So I got in touch with Fender. I got a graphic artist to help me map it out, so that I could

paint by numbers and then build it up. So that was the way I approached it.

Then, of course, came Fender's reissues...

Then the idea was I'd like to do a run of it, and Fender said they were really interested in doing it. Other people were saying, 'you don't have to do it with Fender', but I thought, no, if it's going to be honest it has to be a Fender thing, they're going to measure it up and get that neck which is a really unusual neck, all manner of different things about it that needed attention paid to it.

You were right to go back to Fender, because their Custom Shop is so good at this...

Oh gosh, yeah. I worked with a guy there called Paul Waller, and he was a dream to work with, such a cool guy. I saw the machinist stamp out the plates that go over the screws that hold the neck to the body of the Telecaster and the Strat. Jesus Christ, it was an amazing place. In a factory, I didn't think that spirit existed anymore, but it jolly well does at Fender. The spirit in there. It's like they know what they're making is something that is going to be really loved by somebody. Not only that, it's going to be like their buddy, if you like. And not only that, that combination of the instrument and the musician – that can make people happy. So they've got the right attitude. It's a really noble thing that they're doing, as opposed to something like making a car part in a factory. It was a great experience.

Les Paul 'Number One' and 'Number Two' are your famous sunburst Standards. What are the differences between them in terms of setup, and more than anything how they feel to you when you're playing them?

The first one has got quite a shallow



ON THE TELE

"I'd like to paint mine and really consecrate it, so that guitar is absolutely my own."

neck, and that's how it was when I had it. I've often wondered if it had been re-finished when I had it, by Joe Walsh, who sold it to me – whether he had re-finished it. He had more than one Les Paul at the time and he'd obviously decided to let this one go. But this was the neck that was on it. On the other one, they all played differently, they weren't consistent on the 50s ones. There's a definite difference in the feel and the tension between the two of them. I'm not so sure whether the neck is quite so shallow on the Number Two, but it's not one of those big clunky ones. And tonally it's different as well. However, that's the one I started to experiment on, so that I could do all various combinations, [coil-tapping] with the push-pull switch.

"JEFF BECK GAVE ME THE TELE HE WAS PLAYING IN THE YARDBIRDS AS A GIFT"

LED ZEPPELIN

Shot here in January 1977 at
Manticore Studios, London



I gather you used two 12-strings, the Fender Electric XII and the Vox Phantom XII, on *Stairway To Heaven*...

That's right. The Vox one, I had that in The Yardbirds, so a lot of the stuff in The Yardbirds – *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor* and all those things – were done on that. And then I got the Fender one a little later. I think I got that when I came back from America the first time I visited. So basically I had two electric 12-strings, and on *Stairway*... I wanted to use both of them, so I'd have one [panned] left and one right. There is a slight difference obviously in the sound of them, so that bit in the fanfare that leads into the solo with all the 12s, that's tracking both the Vox and the Fender. There's a photograph in the book that shows the setup: the two 12-strings and the six-string solo.

And when it came to performing the song live, you turned to the Gibson EDS-1275 doubleneck.

Yes. I thought, what's the guitar, how to do this on stage? And it was just obvious that the only way to do this, with the sort of fragile guitar of the opening style and the more racy sort of pickups for the solo – the doubleneck is the only way I'm going to do it. When I recorded the song I wasn't thinking about how I was going to do it live. So in actual fact, the song demanded the guitar. There was no other way to do it. When you think about it, it was the only way to actually replicate that song, apart from jumping from one guitar to another on stage!

Was that approach repeated on later Zeppelin songs?

Well, I certainly didn't think how I was going to do *Achilles Last Stand* live (laughs). I was just doing it – I was laying on everything that I could think of that would work within the context of whatever the composition was.

Did you miss having the acoustic guitar when performing *Stairway To Heaven*?

Yeah, sort of, but it was okay doing it with the neck pickup on the six-string neck [of the doubleneck]. That was about as good as it was going to get, really. I didn't really miss it. I was just able to take it in another direction in a live situation.

In the live performances of that song, it's not a different



“I HAD TWO 12-STRINGS AND WANTED TO USE THEM BOTH ON *STAIRWAY*...”

arrangement, but a different feel, a different vibe.

Yeah. The textures are going to be different, so the attitude's going to be different. And another thing about the doubleneck... It's after the fourth album that that arrives, so when you get to the next album after that, *Houses Of The Holy*, on that there's what was originally called the 'Overture', but it becomes *The Song Remains The Same* and then *The Rain Song*, and I did those because I figured I would be able to do those on the doubleneck. So I was actually thinking of the doubleneck and being able to have those two numbers the way they appear on the album. I was thinking about how to really be able to use it, rather than just maybe for one or two songs. So it became an active part of the overall show.

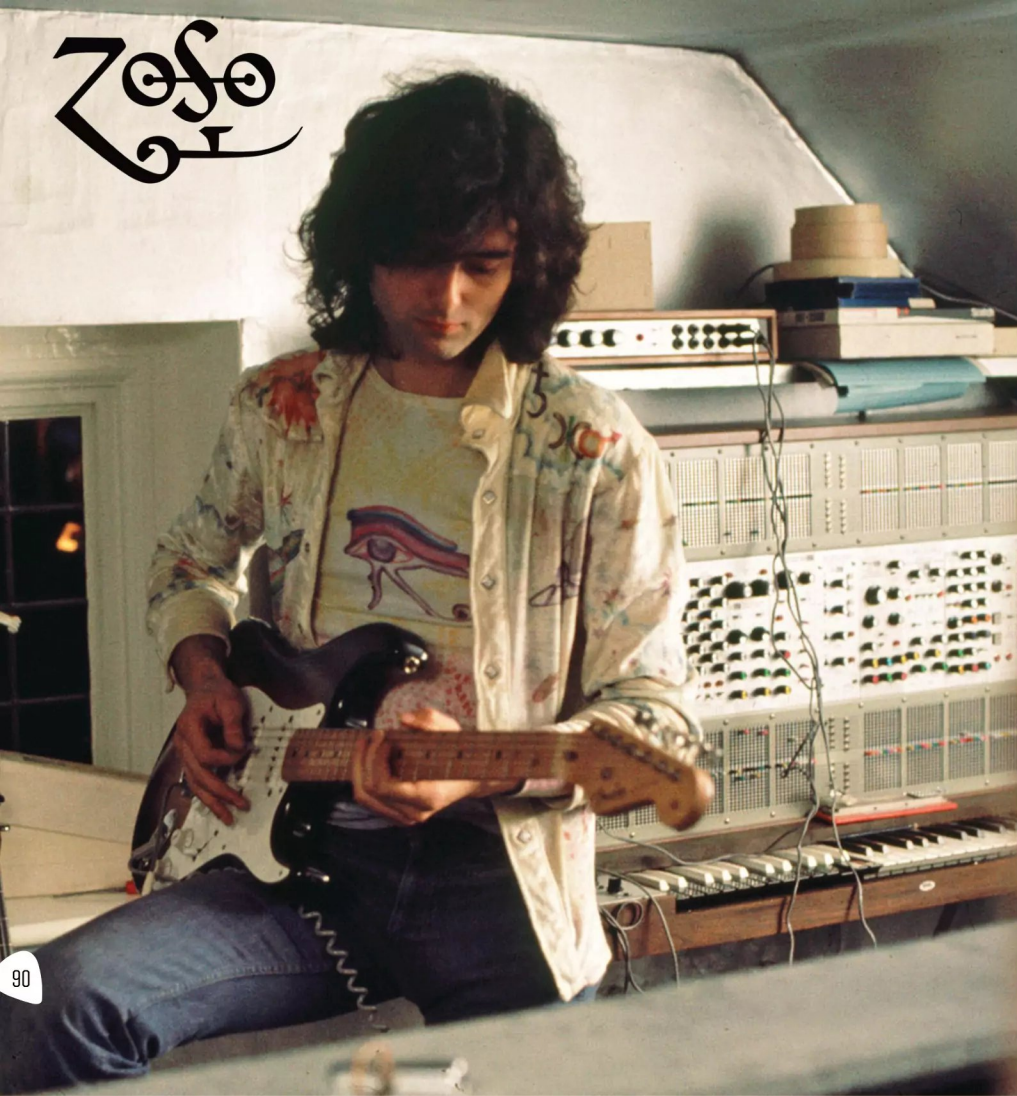
Double-tracking was a huge part of the Zeppelin sound and very influential. When did you first start doing this?

On the first album. Don't hold me to it, but I think you'll find on *Good Times*

Bad Times there's double-tracking on the riff. I'd done double-tracking before as a studio musician, but it was difficult to do it so much with The Yardbirds because Mickie Most was the producer and we were under his umbrella, really.

The first Zeppelin album feels less produced, more in the room, so the double-tracking is less obvious. But by the time you get to 1971 and 'Zeppelin IV', the production is massive. What do you feel was different then in the production sound?

I was acquainted with John Paul Jones' playing as a session player, but John Bonham, with his approach to the drums and the dazzling technique that he had, the overall sound of his drums was unlike anybody that I'd heard before. It was so musical, because he knew how to tune his drums. So I knew instinctively what I wanted to do with Led Zeppelin that was unlike anybody else. I wanted to have the full stereo picture, the placing of the instruments.



Led Zeppelin II were *Whole Lotta Love* and *What Is and What Should Never Be*... It is almost like turning a coin, isn't it? One side to the other as far as textures and moods...

And then with *Led Zeppelin III* – released 50 years ago this month – you had *Immigrant Song*, a powerful statement of intent, and *Since I've Been Loving You*, this huge blues ballad, but also acoustic tracks such as *That's The Way and Tangerine*...

People were saying, 'Oh, Led Zeppelin's gone acoustic'. Well, what happened to your ears on the first album and the second album? Ha ha. It's just variations on a theme, really. There were so many ideas put into the first album, but they were able to grow and be developed. With third album, we had a break from touring and it gave us a chance to work on more of the acoustic stuff.

What are your memories of making that album?

Right at the early stages of rehearsing, when I think it was just John Bonham and myself, I had *Immigrant Song*, *Out On The Tiles*, and also *Friends*. If you say straight away you've got *Friends* and *Immigrant Song*, already it's got the yin and yang. And there's all this other stuff that's going to go in. We'd already played *Since I've Been Loving You* before, that was written just before the third album. So we knew we had that as well. There were all these textures coming up, and I was keen to do *Gallows Pole* because I thought it was quite curious the way that song had started off in England and gone all the way around the States and come back, so then we were going to do it and send it back to the States again as a folk song.

There was a clear progression with each successive album.

Certainly within the written context of what was being presented to people to hear, everything was going to be moving forward. So when it went to the point of the more acoustic style of the third album, you can imagine our record company getting that in and going, 'Where's the *Whole Lotta Love*?' If anyone had said that to me I'd have said, 'Oh that, that's on the second album – this is the third album.' You know how it is with A&R men going, 'Oh, you've got to have a single.' We had singles in America and other places, but I wanted to stay clear of that market

“SINCE I'VE BEEN LOVING YOU... NO ONE HAD GONE THAT EXTRA MILE BEFORE”

And guitar-wise?

The first album was totally based around the Telecaster. And that's what it was – just a Supro [Coronado 1690T] amp, [a Sola Sound Tone Bender] overdrive, an Echoplex [EP-3 tape delay] and a Vox wah-wah. So it's really very minimal and it's not going through different amps, just this one amplifier. So it really goes to show with all the tones just how much there was that you could get out of one guitar. And that's basically what it was that I had. I wasn't using the Black Beauty or anything like that. And as it went on, the second album was clearly going to be all about the Les Paul guitar. But again, it's a large stereo picture of everything that's going on, whether it's panning of things or positioning or

whatever, or where things come in or go out, what's tracked and what isn't tracked.

Things were moving very fast for you and the band at that time.

The first album was done in a very short time. The second album was done while we were on the road in America, although we were coming backwards and forwards to England, so it's got all the energy of touring.

That energy was evident in the big rock numbers such as *Whole Lotta Love* and *Heartbreaker*, but the second album also had subtler songs such as *Thank You and Ramble On*...

The first two songs that I had for

GALLOWS POLE

"I thought it was quite curious the way that song had started off in England and gone all the way around the States and come back."



and keep it as an albums thing. Right in the early stages I demanded – after having done all the Mickie Most stuff – that we didn't want to be a band that was known for singles. It was albums that we were going to be known for. And clearly I wanted to make each album different from the one before.

By focusing purely on albums, you were going against the grain, against conventional wisdom in the music business. Was that difficult for you?

No, it was not, because when the first deal was done it was established right there and then. It was good thing. That way we didn't have people who didn't know what we were doing in the first place – it was probably going above their heads or whatever – trying to get something for the radio. 'Oh, can you record something for the radio?' All bands have heard that sort of nonsense, but fortunately we circumnavigated it by just sticking to what we knew was going to be the right way to do it, to make the music develop properly.

It's evident that you had a clear vision for Led Zeppelin right from the start.

Yes, I did. I really knew what it was that I wanted to do. If you think about it, on the third album there's *Tangerine*, but I wrote *Tangerine* back in The Yardbirds. So I'd waited an amount of time. I didn't stick it on the first album or the second. I waited until it would fit in with the right texture of everything else. It fits great in the third album. So, yeah, I had a bit of a plan [laughs]. And not just for that one number, of course!

If you were back at the time of the third album, how would you describe it?

I didn't really do interviews in those days, to be honest with you, but I would have just explained what it was in the context of the second album having the energy of touring, and this being the other side. Things like *That's The Way* are bloody brilliant, you know? There's just so much good stuff on it, and every number that we recorded was always

STAIRWAY...

"With the fragile guitar of the opening and the more racy sort of pickups for the solo – the doubleneck is the only way I'm going to do it [live]."

different, it always had its own character. If anything started to sound like something else that we'd done before, we'd just stop doing it. We wouldn't be doing recordings that sounded like we'd recorded it before, like a secondary version of something else, like *Whole Lotta Love* Mark Two. We didn't do that. So yeah, I would have brought people's attention to *Since I've Been Loving You*, no doubt about it, because nobody had actually approached blues up that point like that. Everybody was playing blues but nobody had gone that sort of extra mile.

There was a heavy influence of blues on the first album – in *You Shook Me* and of course *Dazed And Confused*, which turned into an epic piece in live performance...

Well, *Dazed And Confused* was basically a vehicle for improvisation. There are various versions of *Dazed And Confused* out there, but what can be told right across the board wherever you hear it, there's a couple of verses and then there's improvisation – from Robert, as well.

So you played it just going wherever the mood took you?

Yes, there are whole areas of things that just come out on the night and then they don't get repeated again. It's quite extraordinary, and it keeps getting longer and longer and longer. But there's a hell of a lot to say in that, because it wasn't just jamming on one chord, it was going through all manner of movements like a classical piece.

How did you set up improvisational moments?

You go into it then you take off and try to come up with whatever you come up with along the way. But there's a way of coming out of it, so then there would be musical signatures so that the band knew we were coming to the end of that piece and... Watch what's coming next! So there were signposts, but in between you could go straight or you could go over the mountains, as far as the improvisation goes. And the improvisation was pretty fresh every night. There were character bits that stayed, for sure, but there was a lot of stuff that got played one night and never got revisited again ever.

***Dazed And Confused* was just one of many epic tracks in the Zeppelin**



catalogue – alongside *Stairway To Heaven*, *Kashmir*, *Achilles Last Stand*...

It was part of the overall thing from the first album. Part of it goes back to what I said about singles. With *Whole Lotta Love*, that was clearly going to be the track that everybody was going to go to, because that riff was so fresh and

to make them singles! I did think that in a mischievous way. But there was another reason to make them longer and longer – there was more to say in them. Then again, it could be argued the other way. *Good Times Bad Times* is really short, as far as minutes and seconds, but there's just so much that goes on in that. It is what it is. Sometimes you have

IS IT CASHMERE?
Jimmy in the blazer worn on *Top Of The Pops* with The Yardbirds

“THE WHOLE LOTTA LOVE RIFF BRINGS A SMILE TO PEOPLE’S FACES”

it still is. If somebody plays that riff it brings a smile to people's faces. It's a really positive thing. But I knew with *Whole Lotta Love* that there weren't going to be any edits. I insisted that they kept the middle section in it, which of course they didn't like, but they had to do it. So I thought, well, if you just keep making the numbers longer and longer... [Laughs] They're not going

shorter statements. Sometimes you need longer to get across what you're doing.

Let's talk about effects. The phaser sounds on *Physical Graffiti*, for example *In My Time Of Dying* and *The Rover*, have me thinking of Van Halen, like you influenced Van Halen. How did you dial those tones in?

A lot of the phasing that was done in the early stages is done with tape machines. So you've got two tape machines running, and then with one you alter the speed so you get the phasing. Basically what it is, in those days, is an analogue effect. And then there was Eventide Clock Works, who came up with phasers, flangers and the Digital Delay Line. I had a really good connection with Eventide, because they were getting the stuff for me out of the factory more or less, so I got them really early on. I got the harmonizer really early as well, and I managed to use that with John Bonham. I had a Mark II Harmonizer with the keyboard, and I used that on *Bonzo's Montreux* [the drummer's showpiece track, first released after Bonham's death on the 1982 album *Coda*]. It made his drums sound like steel drums, and he loved it, he thought it was great. I did have a basic unit, a foot pedal unit, and on/off one, but I still preferred all those old analogue ones as opposed to rack-mounted things. I had a pedalboard that grew and grew, and I was using that at the O2 for example, and that's a Pete Cornish 'board, where he mounted all the stuff that I wanted, which is my old foot pedals into on/off stomp boxes or whatever you call them, into it. I preferred to be able to do it like that, it's something very tactile, and I preferred that to something that's just going to come back like a metronome. No, I prefer to be able to fool around with things, you know? Shape the things on stage. So that's the same with the Theremin and the Echoplex [EP-3 tape delay], I could just really have a real good time with those things.

Treat them as an instrument in their own right...

Yeah, absolutely.

If we can talk about amplification, at what point did you move on to Marshall?

Here's how it goes. You need to take notes or you're going to get lost [laughs]. Basically what happens is, the amplifier on the first [Led Zeppelin] album is the Supro [Coronado 1690T] amplifier, but I got that way back, when I was art school, with Neil Christian And The Crusaders. That had quite a journey to it. It fits great with the Telecaster, but with the Gibson [Les Paul] it was a really overdriven sound, right? And when I started doing studio work, I realised

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Drop B tuning
- ✓ Aeolian mode
- ✓ Slides

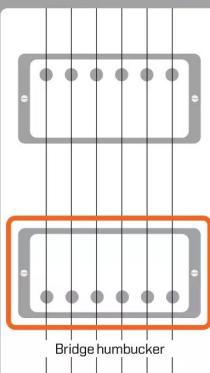
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RIFF OF THE MONTH

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION



Mason Hill's weighty rhythm sound comes courtesy of Marc Montgomery's PRS Singlecut driving a 100-watt PRS Archon amp matched with James Bird's Gibson Les Paul and Budda amps. Just like the rhythm parts, dial in a medium to high gain modern rock bridge humbucker tone for the solo; just keep the midrange high and boost the drive with an overdrive pedal or high-gain amp channel. You'll also need a pitch shifter set to one octave up, but keep the effect low in the mix.

MASON HILL

Against The Wall

Over five years since their self-titled EP dropped, and after a career path temporarily stalled by an unsuccessful record deal, a "quiet 2019" and the global pandemic, Scottish rockers Mason Hill look set to finally hit the big time, as their debut full-length album recently hit number 1 in the UK rock chart. Citing acts like Alter Bridge, Shinedown and Black Stone Cherry as

inspiration, the band wear their influences on their collective sleeves – and we're looking at the album title track here, though, in a change to our riff format, we're taking a look at guitarist James Bird's solo.

It's a typically melodic rock offering played in drop B (B F# B E G# C#) and with a dash of an octave-up pitch shifter effect for a contemporary tone. Be sure to follow our slowed-down performance in the video on

our website for a clearer idea of how the solo is played.

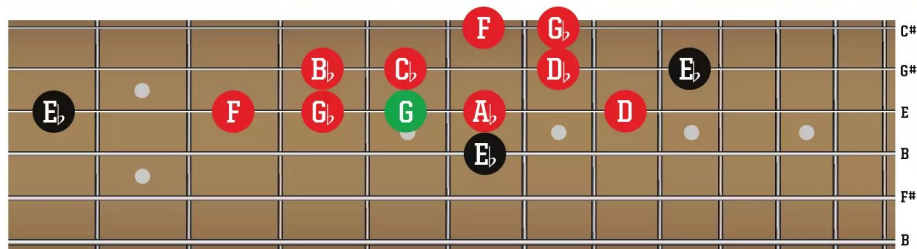
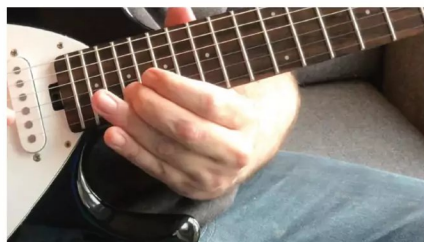
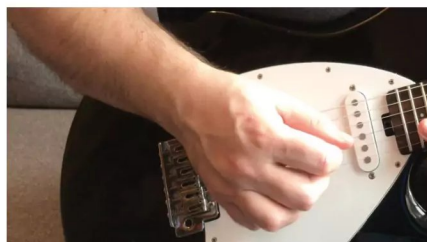
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 2:20–2:35

Tempo: 126 bpm

Key/scale: E_b, natural minor scale

Main techniques: Slides, position shifts, vibrato



Most of James Bird's solo takes place between the 14th and 17th frets in the E_b natural minor scale. Some guitarists find it easier 'think pentatonic' and mentally add in the extra notes – it's worth

learning the scale shape if you can though. Note that the 15th fret G (shown in green) is from E_b major, not minor, so it injects a temporary moment of brightness. Think how much brighter a major

chord is compared to a minor one – this note has the exact same effect. Finally, if you want to play along to the solo in standard tuning, simply play three frets lower down the neck.

that that was a bit too radical for them at the time. So I got what everyone else was getting, so that psychologically it looked right, which was a Burns amplifier, which I had during the studio days. But when Paul Samwell-Smith left the band he left his equipment behind – the [Vox] amplifier heads. I know them as Super Beatles. The way that I heard it about those amplifiers was The Beatles had them because they couldn't hear their instruments over all the screaming, so they wanted louder amplifiers, and Vox duly obliged.

That's the Yardbirds and Led Zeppelin I covered. What were you using during the recording sessions for Led Zeppelin II?

I was using the Super Beatle amps with the [Rickenbacker] Transonic cabinets. So that's exactly what's on *Whole Lotta Love*. So the first album's got the Supro; the second album, as I said, I wanted to the change the whole sound character, so that's what I was using. I was using what was really meaty, and what I was

Was that also the main kit for live or just studio?

Both. For example, *Presence* was done on the Marshall. I guess I had two cabinets at the top, the head and the Les Paul. So that's it. That's a real classic setup, really, the Marshall and the Les Paul. I was treating with that album, certainly on *Achilles Last Stand*, I was trying to get all the tonal aspects of the Les Paul and the Marshalls. That wasn't everybody's kit, to have a Supro amplifier with the Telecaster, inasmuch as I knew I could get a lot out of it. I did the same with that setup on *Presence*.

When did you discover the B-Bender?

The B-Bender came as a result of listening to The Byrds, an album called *Untitled*, and another, *Sweethearts Of The Rodeo*. I really liked Roger McGuinn. His guitar parts were fantastic on those albums. Then I started listening to what was going on around those, I could hear this amazing lead playing that was zipping around in the background, and I thought, 'Oh my

MARSHALL LAW
"I did go to Marshall because if it broke down somewhere you'd be able to find a shop that would have one."

The Danelectro that you used on Kashmir has such an individual sound. When did you first start using that?

Selmers was the big showcase shop, and I don't know how they got away with it, but they sold every brand of guitar in there, Gibsons, Gretsches, Fenders. I don't know how they did it, but they did. Suddenly the Danelectro guitar appeared in there, and (John) Entwistle had got the bass with horns on it, and this salesman was saying they had this guitar, it was only £45 or something, and all the other guitars were getting into the hundreds. I said, let's have a go on it, and it sounded pretty great. Because of course it's hollow bodied, put together with plywood. It sounded phenomenal, and I could afford it, so I thought, 'I'll have this as a sort of second guitar'. I did start to use it a little bit on sessions and there's a photograph of me in one of these big sessions with loads of guitars and I've taken that thing along. I was using it not so much on sessions, because I was using the Les Paul, but yeah, in the Yardbirds I was using it, and putting it into [altered] tunings, and it stayed with me all the way through the Yardbirds straight into Led Zeppelin. It was the backup guitar, because I was only going out there with two guitars really, in '68, '69 I just had just the Telecaster and the Danelectro, until I got the Gibson. So if I broke a string, I'd quickly get it into standard tuning from the DADGAD it was in and then go off. On the bootlegs I can't tell the difference, I can't tell the swap-over, which is quite interesting really. But it was there, it was a true and trusted friend, it was there all the way through. I started to write things on it like *Kashmir* because I was used to playing it in the DADGAD tuning, so *Kashmir* came out on that guitar, and *In My Time Of Dying*. They're both on the same album (*Physical Graffiti*). So clearly I was using it in [altered] tunings.

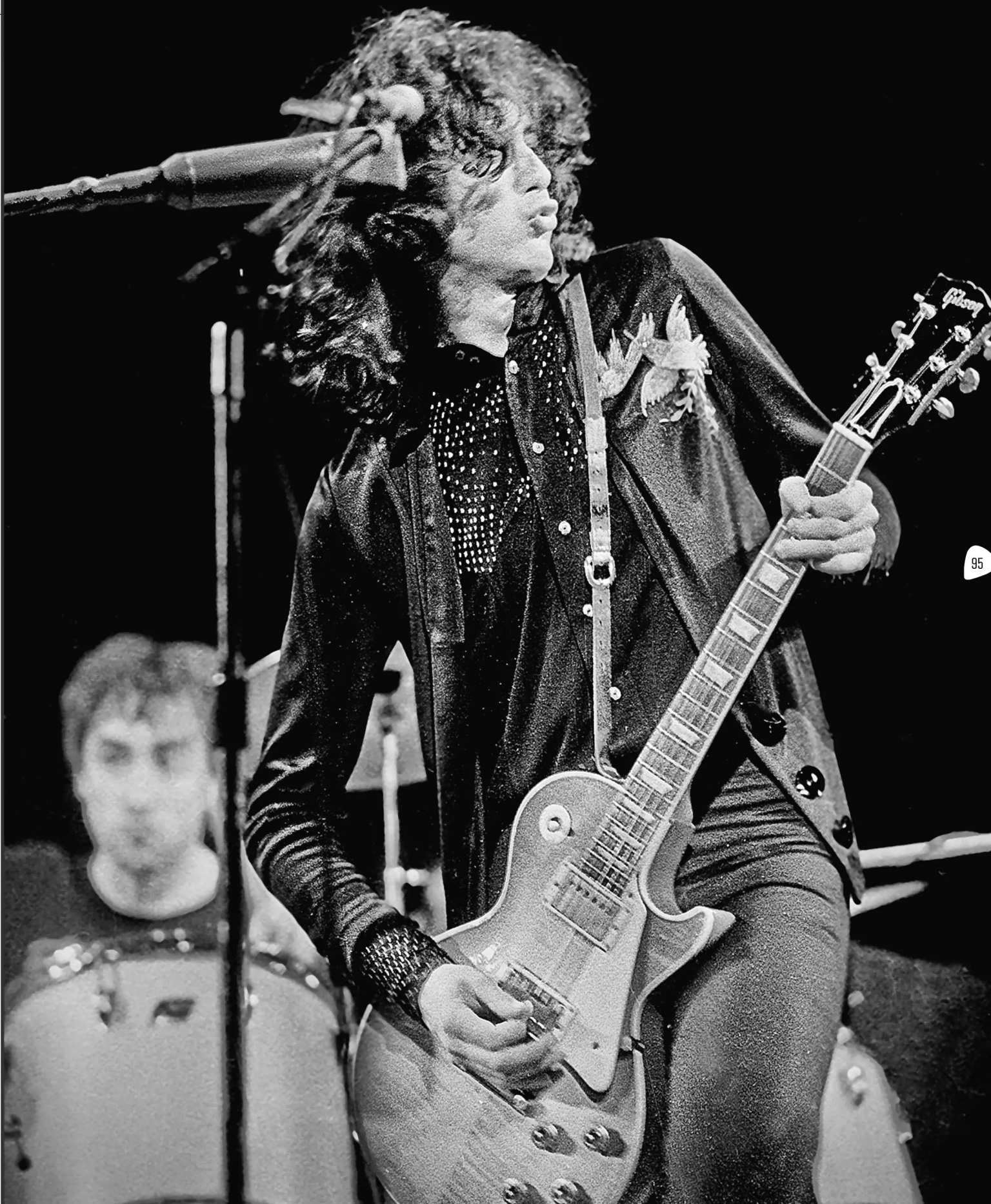
Aside from the tunings, do you think it affected the way you played differently to the Les Paul or the Telecaster?

Yeah, the feel of it is different. But I found it a very user-friendly guitar and I thought the Danelectros were quite consistent. We were talking about Les Pauls being very different, certainly in those 50s ones; '58, '59, they really are.

"PEOPLE USED TO PAY A LOT OF ATTENTION TO THE DANELECTRO"

using on stage, what I'd arrived at once I had the Les Paul Standard. So, by the time we get to 1969, we've got so much work ahead of us, and the road manager is getting really, really nervous about the amplifier going down and not getting a replacement, so they're saying, well, everybody else has got Marshalls, so I went to Hiwatt [Custom 100s] before I went to the Marshalls. But then I did go to Marshall because what they'd said was absolutely true – if it broke down somewhere you'd be able to find a shop that would have one. Once I'd done the second album, yeah, the Marshall is being used by the end of those tracks [recorded] in New York. Yeah, I've got those during that '69 tour. And I would say it has to be Marshalls by then. So maybe *Heartbreaker* was done on a Marshall. And that's how it stayed, with the Marshall cabinet all the way through. Although I did take little side ventures off that, but mainly that [Marshall] was the main kit.

God, how is he doing that?' I was trying to work it out. It was really tricky to be able to do that so fluently. But then I met Albert Lee in Brighton one night when he was playing with Eric Clapton, and when I spoke to him about those Byrds records he said, 'Oh, it's a string-bender'. Albert had one, he showed it to me, and said, 'This is how it's done.' I couldn't see the mechanism inside it, but it worked on the straplock so that if you pushed the guitar down and you put the mechanism into play it would take the string up a tone. I thought, 'I see! That's how it's done.' So then I went about trying to get one. I think he may have given me the contact number for Gene Parsons. That's how that happened, and then I started to use it for Led Zeppelin in 1977, the '77 tour, and then it's all over flipping *In Through The Out Door* (Led Zeppelin's 1979 album). And I used it in *The Firm* as well, as the main sort of guitar.



Of course it's all in how they're built, before they became more scientific about it in the approach. I found them to be relatively consistent, the Danelectros, which is always useful.

It's such an oddball guitar with a Masonite build...

I know. But they've got those great lipstick pickups and the whole thing about it, it's a great little guitar, and it was inexpensive, for heaven's sake. I'll tell you this: when I was the Yardbirds, people used to pay a lot of attention to the fact that I was playing that guitar, and definitely they were paying a lot of attention to it in Led Zeppelin, because what I didn't know, it was in Sears & Roebuck catalogue, it was a catalogue guitar, so it was a really cheap guitar. How can you play that catalogue guitar, which is only tens of dollars as opposed to hundreds? How do you do that? For me it was just something I had all the time and I didn't think of like that because I didn't know.

You've talked a lot about The Yardbirds. When you think back to when you joined that band, you were stepping into some big shoes there, following Clapton and Beck. Were you at all intimidated by their reputations?

It wasn't that so much. Well, yes it was. But when I joined The Yardbirds on bass — coming in for Paul Samwell-Smith — that was serious boots to fill, because I was pretty much in awe of his bass playing. I didn't know anybody else who could play like that. You'd hear these really fast pulsing bass riffs and go, what the hell was that? The energy of those records with Eric, like *Five Live Yardbirds*, you want to check out what Paul Samwell-Smith was doing. And all of a sudden I was trying to emulate it [laughs].

And when you switched to guitar in that band?

Well, I didn't actually play with Eric in The Yardbirds. The only time I did that was on the ARMS tour at the Albert Hall in the 80s, with Jeff and Eric. But Jeff and I were playing in The Yardbirds together. When Chris Dreja was taking over the bass, Jeff and I were doing twin leads and harmonies and all of that. It was pretty interesting, and we had some great stuff going. *Happenings Ten Years*

COMMEMORATING... THE INDUCTION INTO *The* ROCK & ROLL HALL OF FAME



"KASHMIR"

LED ZEPPELIN



The WALDORF - ASTORIA
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Times Ago is probably one of the best things to hear of that, or *Beck's Bolero*. And when Jeff left, bit by bit I got more used to doing it all, and I knew the numbers, so I sort of just took over all of the guitar parts.

Did your experience as a session player help you pick up songs?

Quickly, yeah. With the Yardbirds, I thought they were the most amazing

ROCK AND ROLL
Jimmy has been commemorated into the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame with The Yardbirds and Led Zeppelin.

band, with the work that Eric did with them, and especially the work that Jeff did with them. I mean, he just as far as guitar playing in bands, Jeff just moved the whole thing on, as each release came out. It was just phenomenal, the guitar statements that Jeff did. I was sort of used to playing with Jeff, so I knew the parts when he wasn't there, but then the thing to do was to come up with your own stuff altogether.

Before joining The Yardbirds you worked as a producer for other artists. Did you ever consider doing so again?

During the 70s, I started to get offers coming in, but whatever I had, whether it was the writing or the playing, or the production, I wanted to keep that in Led Zeppelin. And that's what it was. So the only deviation from that was my playing with Roy Harper on *Stormcock* (Harper's classic 1970s album). He and I were playing the two acoustics, and that was really cool. I really admired Roy's work and still do. He's absolutely amazing. I saw him the last time he played at the Palladium in London and it was absolutely extraordinary. It was spine-chilling – the stuff he was coming up with, the new material he'd written. But that was the only area

Rowland on drums, who I'd never come across before, but the bass parts and the drumming on that song are just terrific. Keith routined the song to me, and I just came up with a guitar part as I would if I was playing with my own band. Keith was playing the main riff and I was coming up with things to complement it. I was playing around what he was doing. So that was done in one evening, and then they were going to carry on with it the following day at Island Studio, Island number 2, and I said, 'Well, I'll come along and put the solos on it.' I got there quite early on in the evening, had a couple of passes at the solo, and that was it. Mick (Jagger) was doing his stuff the day after that, so I left after I did my bit. It was fun, but I never thought it would come out. I was knocked out that they put it out,

"RECORDING SCARLET WITH THE STONES; EVERYONE WAS GOING FULL STEAM!"

really where I stepped out of Led Zeppelin, because if I wasn't on the road I was writing for the next album. I was living it and I didn't want to not live it. I didn't want to deviate from it or be producing someone else's album or anything like that. No, any ideas that I had, writing or whatever it was, they would all go to Led Zeppelin.

There is one other notable exception – the song *Scarlet* that you recorded with The Rolling Stones in the early 70s, and which was finally released this year on the reissue of *Goats Head Soup*...

Yeah, which was a bit of a surprise for you all, wasn't it?

It was. What do you remember about recording that track?

Ronnie Wood had a house called the Wick, in Richmond. Pete Townshend lives there now. But it had a studio in the basement when Ronnie was there, a proper full studio, with a playing room and control room where you're looking through the window into the playing area. I was asked over there by Ronnie, who said there was going to be a session with Keith (Richards). So, Keith ran through this song with Rick Grech on bass and a guy called Bruce

because even though it was done back in the 70s, everyone's going full steam on it. Keith's playing great, he always did, and I'm happy with the guitar playing on it, I thought that was cool, so it's nice to have that rather than a Led Zeppelin thing, you know? It's unusual to hear me playing at full acceleration, if you like, outside of Led Zeppelin.

Are you working on any new music at the moment?

Well, under the circumstances of having a lockdown and isolating, I picked up the guitar and made a point of playing the guitar every day. Whereas before the lockdown, it had gotten to the point where I was always complaining that I didn't have enough time to play the guitar because there was all this other stuff that was going on. It's surprising how many things there are, even with Led Zeppelin, so I was not finding enough time to play the guitar as much as I would like. It was there, but not being played. I thought, that's not going to be the case. I'm now going to play it. I don't want to make it sound like I'd locked the guitars away. That wasn't the case. But there were so many things that kept getting in the way of playing – or playing the way that you need to if you're exploring the instrument still.

People would love to hear more music from you, and would love to think that there's something on the way.

Yeah. You mean actually being seen to play?

Yes.

That was the idea before we locked down. But – but – there'll be a time when we'll be able to play, so the thing to do is to think how you'd do it of you did do it, and have some surprises up your sleeve, you know?

I think I'm speaking for the whole guitar world in saying we'd love to hear more from you.

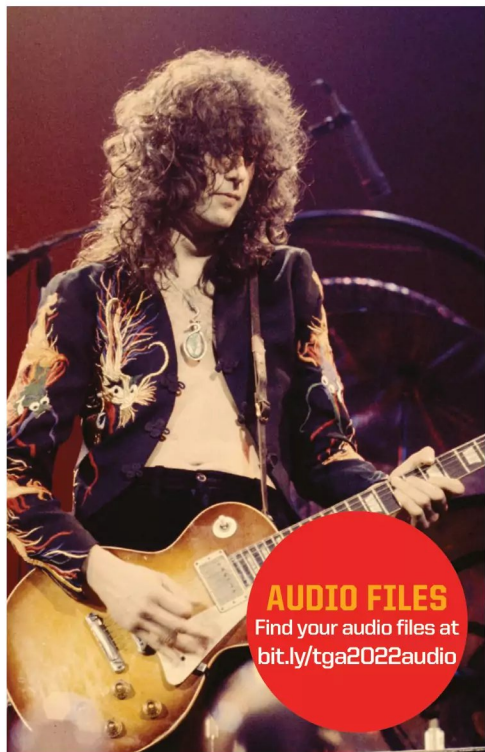
I did think about it. But I thought, I better do some serious practising first [laughs], because it's been a long time since the O2. I hope we'll meet up one day, when I'm doing this mythical show one day!

It would be great to see and hear you play again. But in the meantime, we have this new book of yours. For Led Zeppelin fans, and for guitar players especially, it's a revelation.

I'm pleased you've enjoyed the book, being a guitar nerd like myself. It's a fascinating read, isn't it? Some of those photographs I set up myself, like the doublenecks where they're standing to attention. The guys I worked with on this, they've done a number of books for Fender, guitar books, and for one of the shots I stood the Les Paul on its side. I said, 'Have you ever done a shot like this?' And they said no. I said, 'You've got to be kidding? All the guitar shots you've done? Well, you better fasten your seat belts, then – because you're going to have a lot of unusual shots in this one.'

This was clearly a labour of love for you.

Yeah, we had a great time doing this. And you'll know that if you're a guitarist, you're looking at all the details, looking down the neck and up here and down there and over the back. And I wanted to have that – what you actually see. It's all about the guitarist's perspective.



AUDIO FILES
Find your audio files at
bit.ly/tga2022audio

20 WAYS TO PLAY LIKE PAGE: RIFFING

Master the art of the riff, as inspired by the master of all riffs!

Brian May recently referred to Jimmy Page as “a master of invention”, and we’d have to agree, especially on the subject of riffing. Few, if any, can claim to have laid down quite so many cracking riffs

as Page. *Whole Lotta Love*, *Heartbreaker*, *Kashmir* – we could go on! So, what’s the secret? Well, it’s not so much a secret – just a little required knowledge. From the pentatonic scale to some signature chord shapes, we’ll look at the techniques behind the Led Zeppelin legend’s style.

JIMMY PAGE START WITH PENTATONICS

TRACK 10

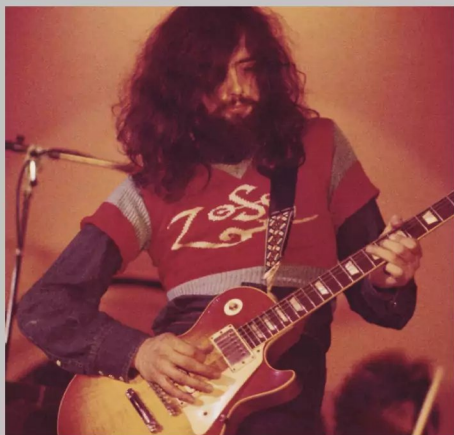
♩ = 80
N.C.

C⁵ N.C.

A⁵ 1/4 1/4 N.C.

TAB: 0-3-4 | 5-5-5-5-5-5-5-0 | 2-3-4-0-0-3-4-5-0 | 5-5-5-5-5-5-5-0 | 2-3-4-0-0-3-4-5-0

Many of Jimmy’s riffs are based in the minor pentatonic scale (*Black Dog*, *Heartbreaker*, *Moby Dick*) and include octave jumps (*Immigrant Song*, *The Wanton Song*). Here we see these two techniques in A minor combined with chromatic passing notes to tie them together.



CLASSIC TONES

TRACK 25

PHYSICAL GRAFFITI-ERA PHASER/OVERDRIVE

A core Les Paul sound with a touch of swirly phaser – just check out *The Rover* and you’ll get the idea. Jimmy was known to use MXR Phase 90 pedals during his time in The Firm. Paired with a Les Paul and a crunchy Marshall amp, it’s an easy tone to dial in.

RIG:

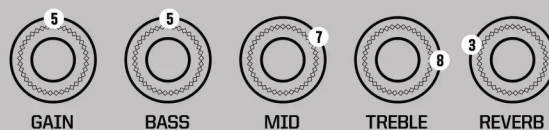
Gibson
Les Paul Standard

Marshall
JMP Super Lead

MXR Script Phase 90

AMP SETTINGS

CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE



TRACK 26

The essential ingredients for a fuzz tone circa *Led Zeppelin* [I] are a single-coil equipped guitar (preferably a Telecaster), a fuzz pedal and fairly clean sounding valve amp. The fuzz will push the highs hard, so wind the treble back on the amp if you need to.

RIG:

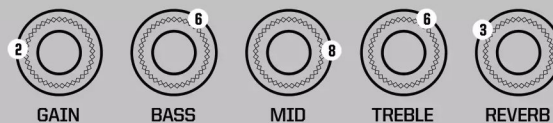
Fender 'Dragon' Telecaster

Sola Sound Tone Bender
Professional Mk II fuzz

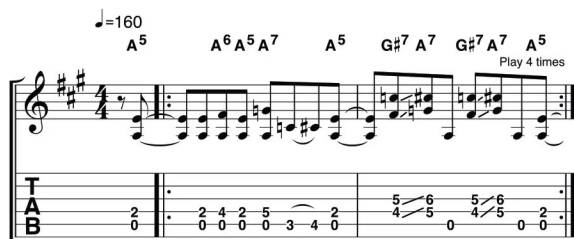
Supro Coronado 1690T

AMP SETTINGS

CHANNEL: CLEAN

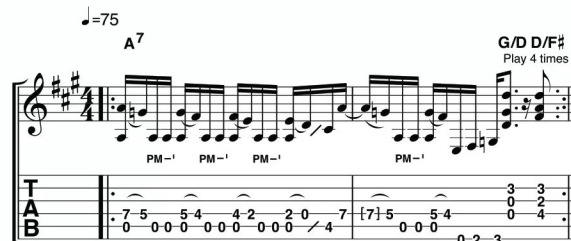


JIMMY PAGE TAKE INFLUENCE FROM EARLY ROCK 'N' ROLL TRACK 11



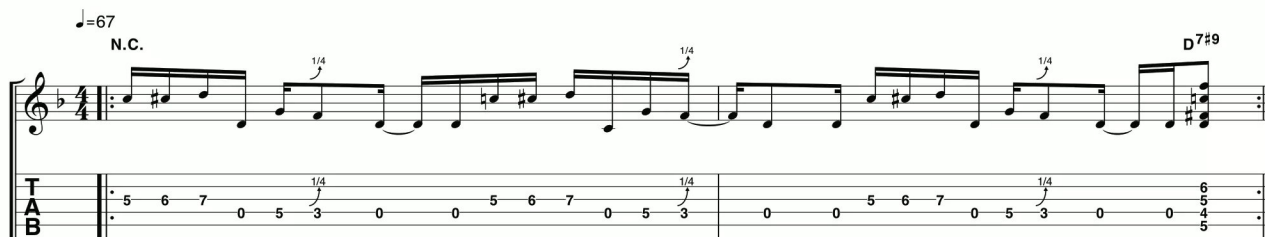
Page's Chuck Berry influence can be heard from *Rock And Roll* to *Boogie With Stu*. Here the classic boogie riff is given a Page-style chordal twist.

JIMMY PAGE PALM-MUTE THE BASS STRINGS TRACK 12



This style of riff as heard in *What Is And What Should Never Be* influenced countless acts from AC/DC to the Foo Fighters - simply keep the fifth string muted and the fourth-string notes clean.

JIMMY PAGE UNSETTLE THE GROOVE



Jimmy employed rhythmic displacement in *Black Dog* and *Kashmir*. 'What's rhythmic displacement', you ask? Well, if your riff is, say, two and a half beats long (as ours is here), it won't sync with the downbeat on every repeat. Our riff starts on beat 1 of bar 1 then repeats half way through beat 3.

TRACK 27

DOWN BY THE SEASIDE-STYLE TREMOLO/DELAY

A deeper cut in the Zeppelin back-catalogue, but *Down By The Seaside* needs all your tonal knowhow to dial it in. It's a deep tremolo effect running through a clean channel. Compression and delay help those chords to sustain.

RIG

Fender Telecaster

Vox AC30

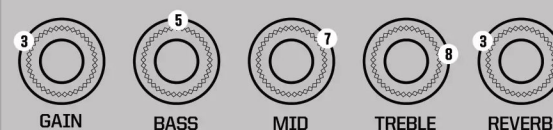
Compressor

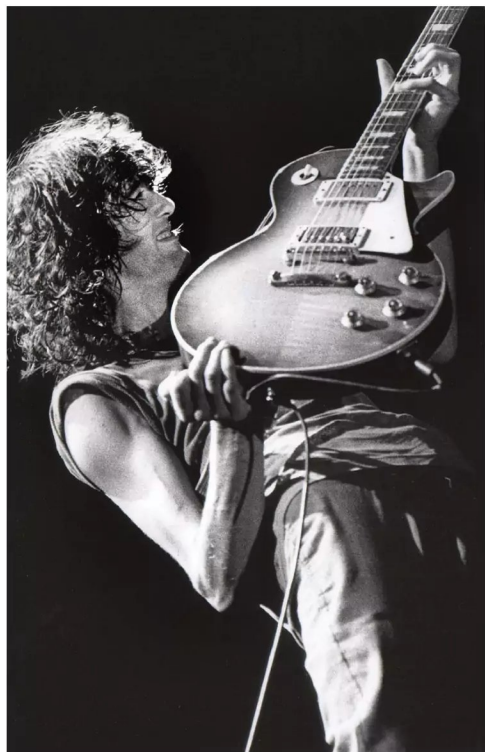
Tape delay
(eighth note repeats)

Tremolo (intensity set at 8 and speed at 8)

AMP SETTINGS

CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE





20 WAYS TO PLAY LIKE PAGE: ALTERED TUNINGS

Want to break free from the limitations of standard tuning? Start here...

Changing the tuning on your guitar is like learning another language. And it's a language Jimmy Page speaks fluently, having explored several altered tunings with Zeppelin. *Moby Dick* is a good place to

start – played in drop D (DGDGBE), it's the easiest non-standard tuning of 'em all. But Jimmy used others too, and though he's famed for using DADGAD (notably on *Kashmir* and *Black Mountain Side*), we should draw your attention to open C6 (CACGCE) and open A (EAEAC#E), too.

ALTERED TUNINGS: OPEN G (DGDGBD)

TRACK 14

♩=110

G G7#11 G G6#11 G D/G G G7#11 G B^b A G B^b5 C⁵ G⁵ G

TAB

1

Used famously in *That's The Way* and *Black Country Woman*, open G is but one of many tunings in the Page playbook. Our example shows some typical Jimmy-style two-note shapes with open strings droning in the background creating, rich and dense harmonies.



CLASSIC TONES

TRACK 28

"TOES DOWN" WAH SOLO TONE

Essentially the same as our 'Zeppelin I'-era sound, but with the benefit of a cranked wah pedal adding another level of drive. Page's model was a UK-built 'grey' Vox wah, with a distinctive sound.

RIG

Fender Telecaster

Sola Sound Tone Bender Professional Mk II fuzz

Supro Coronado 1690T

Fully-cocked Vox wah pedal

AMP SETTINGS

CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE

GAIN BASS MID TREBLE REVERB

ALTERED TUNINGS: DADGAD

TRACK 15

♩=83

D⁵ Dmaj⁷ D⁷sus⁴ D⁷ Dm^b⁶ Dm Dsus² D

let ring throughout

Jimmy's extensive use of DADGAD tuning was inspired by two of his favourite guitarists, Bert Jansch and Davey Graham – check out *Black Mountain Side* and *Kashmir* for Page's most notable examples. Once again, notice how simple shapes and open strings combine here in our example.

ALTERED TUNINGS: OPEN C6 (CACGCE)

TRACK 16

♩=86

C Gadd¹¹/A Csus² C G/A D⁷/C Cm/E^b D⁷ C

let ring throughout

Though there are several potential tunings that can make up a C6 chord, this is Page's preferred one, as used in *Bron-Yr-Aur* and *Friends*. Our passage also uses a variation on the Travis picking method from DADGBD-tuned *Going To California*, so you're getting a whole lotta Page here!

ALTERED TUNINGS: OPEN A (E A E A C# E)

TRACK 17

♩=120

A⁵ C⁵ B⁵ A⁵ D⁵ C⁵ B⁵ A⁵ C⁵ B⁵ A⁵ A

w/slide let ring

Play 4 times

Here we're looking at open A tuning, as used by Jimmy in the slide-guitar classic *In My Time Of Dying* (and by Jack White many years later on *Seven Nation Army*). Place your slide on either your third or fourth finger and keep any fingers behind the slide resting on the strings to prevent excess noise.

CLASSIC TONES

TRACK 29

IN THE EVENING

Some late-Zeppelin material and lots of Jimmy's work with The Firm featured chorus- and delay-soaked guitars – a sign of the times as the 80s arrived. Still, the core Les Paul /Marshall rig remains the same and will get you the basic tone to build on.

RIG:

Gibson Les Paul
Standard

Marshall JMP Super Lead

Chorus pedal
(medium intensity
/ slow regeneration)

Tape delay
(dotted eighth repeats
/ 30% feedback)

AMP SETTINGS

CHANNEL: OVERDRIVE

JIMMY PAGE ROCK 'N' ROLL INFLUENCE

TRACK 21

♩ = 90

Em

BU 12 12 BU 12 12 BU 12 12 BU 12 12 BU 15 (17) 12 12

14(16) 14(16) 14(16) 14(16) 15(17) 14(16) 15 12

1/4 1/4

hold bend - - - ' RP

BD (16) (14) 12 14 12 11 14

Jimmy's Chuck Berry influence shows itself in these typical repeating string bends. The held bend in the second bar however is more of a country-blues innovation that can be heard in the solo on *Stairway To Heaven*. It's a great alternative idea when playing standard minor pentatonic licks.

JIMMY PAGE MORE RHYTHMIC DISPLACEMENT

TRACK 22

♩ = 160

cont. sim.

TAB

BU 12 12 15 12 BU 12 12 15 12 BU 12 12 15 12 BU 12 12 15 12 BU 12 12 15 12 BU

14(16) 14(16) 14(16) 14(16) 14(16) 14(16) 14(16) 14(16)

This is a classic Page-style 'milk the lick' idea that can be transposed and played over any blues track - just rinse and repeat! Notice the rhythmic displacement at play here: the lick is one and a half beats long, so it doesn't simply repeat on the beat every time.

JIMMY PAGE WIDE STRING BENDS

TRACK 23

[illegible]

Jimmy is fond of huge three- or four-semitone bends within the blues scale. You can hear them in songs such as *You Shook Me* and *Whole Lotta Love*—and here in our example, which kicks off with a big bend.

JIMMY PAGE BLUES ROOTS

TRACK 24

As a young man, Jimmy listened to blues legends such as BB King, Buddy Guy, Otis Rush, Freddie King and more - and you'll hear their influences throughout his playing. This lick alone covers much of Jimmy's phrasing ideas on early Led Zeppelin songs like *I Can't Quit You Baby*.



AUDIO FILES
Find your audio files at
bit.ly/tga2022audio

Guitars & Backing Steve Allsworth Photo Adam Gasson

ROCK RHYTHM LESSON

TG takes a look at the rhythm guitar styles of some of the greatest rock guitarists of the last half-century

The conventional idea of what makes a 'great' player is often centred around the expectation of blazing solos and guitar pyrotechnics. Of course, experienced guitarists know there's more to it than that. Think of your favourite players. Whoever they are, even if they're better known for blistering solos, we'd lay odds that

they have razor-sharp rhythm skills to match.

When it comes to rock music, rhythm playing is a particularly broad church. It's not enough to just be a competent strummer. You could be tackling single-note pentatonics, chords and arpeggios of all flavours, countless altered and drop tunings, and rhythms ranging from straight eighths to syncopated math-rock in whacky time signatures. Like we say,

there's a lot of ground for the well-rounded guitarist to cover.

Here, we're taking a look at the styles of some of greatest guitarists of the last 50 or so years. There's plenty to learn from each example – you'll learn how individual players have approached rhythm guitar and you'll also pick up some broader genre-based tips along the way. We'll kick off with a look at a well-used altered tuning...

1 OPEN-G BLUES-ROCKER

TRACK 26

[illegible]

Open G tuning (DGDGBD) is used by everyone from the Rolling Stones to the Black Crowes. The open-strings major chord is great for slide and for first-finger barre chords. Adding your second and third fingers into the mix allows for some great riffs that would be otherwise impossible in standard tuning.

2 HAZY BLUES RIFF

TRACK 27

♩ = 130

Gm

D7#9

TAB

5 1 3 4 5 3 5 3 5(7) (5) 3 5 3 5 1 3 4 5 5 5

Classic Hendrix meets modern blues-rockers, Josh Smith, Philip Sayce and Orianthi here in a syncopated blues riff. The D7#9, though not the full Hendrix shape, is a classic chord that sounds great with overdrive. Combined with simple lead phrases, it extends the sound of the G blues scale without sounding like lead guitar.

3 DADGAD ROCKER

TRACK 28

[illegible]

Although Jimmy Page helped put alternate tunings on the rock map, our DADGAD-tuned riff is more about helping you to visualise the fretboard a little differently. Because all the fingerings you're used to sound different, you can create new ideas just by using your ears and letting your fingers run wild.

4 PUNKY BARRE CHORDS

TRACK 29

♩ = 175

E^b E A G

Play 3 times

TAB

8 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 5 5 5 3 3 3 3

8 9 9 9 9 9 9 9 6 6 6 4 4 4 4

6 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 5 5 5 5

5 5 5 3 3 3 3

The one-semitone 'approach from below' riff in bar 1 is pure punk-rock fare à la Ramones, Sex Pistols, the Clash and so on. The barre chords in bar 2 are more broadly suitable for punk and garage rock - everything from Joan Jett to The Hives. Down-pick in bar 1, then switch to looser strumming in bar 2.

TRACK 30

In the 90s and 00s, acts like Green Day, Sum 41 and Blink-182 brought old-school punk up to date with high-gain tones, polished production and a new slacker/skater vibe. Feel-good chord sequences like the I-V-VI-IV-V (G-D-Em-C-D) in bars 3 and 4 differentiates their output from the more po-faced early punk.

Equating the guitar to a drumkit can help you write riffs. Think of the low strings as the kick, the middle strings as a snare and the high strings as hi-hats or cymbals

TRACK 31

We're unashamedly in the style of the late AC/DC rhythm legend Malcolm Young here, though acts like The Darkness and Greta Van Fleet are also in our sights. The essential riffing elements are offbeat chord changes, a mix of palm-muted and un-muted notes and the two-chord turnaround at the end. Instant 'DC!

TRACK 32

Think of players like Ritchie Blackmore, Lita Ford and K.K. Downing and you'll likely come to an ostinato riff like this. The trick is to wrap your thumb around the neck to fret the low G note without interfering with the fretting of the other chords. Aim for some juicy vibrato on the last diad, using your third and fourth fingers for maximum wiggle.

8 BLIZZARD OF 16THS

TRACK 33

♩=140 N.C. Am⁷ G/A Am⁷ G/A G⁵/A A⁵ Play 4 times

TAB: 0 0 0 0 5 0 0 5 0 0 0 0 5 0 0 5 0 0 8 10 9 7

Ozzy's guitarists (think Randy Rhoads, Jake E. Lee, Zakk Wylde) have recorded countless examples of this type of riff. The rapid-fire 16th notes that underpin the chords need steady palm-muting to keep things tidy but the two- and three-note shapes should ring out clearly.

9 TWO-GUITAR GALLOP

TRACK 34

♩=150 PM PM PM PM PM Play 4 times

TAB: 0 0 0 10 0 0 8 9 0 0 0 10 0 0 8 9 0 0 0 9 10 9 11 12 10 8 9

Bands like Iron Maiden and Heart may have pioneered this galloping rhythm and harmony in 3rds, but modern players like Nita Strauss love the high energy and technical precision, too. We've shown the high harmony notes in our riff as a separate part for a second guitar in red here. Try both parts out!

10 HAIRY METAL LEGATO RIFFING

TRACK 35

♩=240 N.C. Play 4 times

TAB: 3 0 0 5 0 0 0 6 0 0 0 7 0 0 10 0 3 0 0 5 0 0 7 0 7 5 0 7 5 0 7 5 0 7 5 0

80s shredders such as Eddie Van Halen, Steve Vai, Jennifer Batten and Paul Gilbert loved this super-fast swing style. The secret is to focus on your alternate picking. Keep it strict throughout, so when you execute a pull-off you're still making a picking motion. The timing is a challenge at this speed, so slow down while you practise.



TOSIN ABASI

The metronome is king

"Use the metronome for a lot of your practice and start with tempos you can pull off without much strain, and then you increase it from there. I honestly believe the metronome is central to producing good technique. Start doing cycles of five, quintuplets, or triplets in four-note scale fragments. That will displace every fourth note and help you tap into polymetric ideas that you can later use when playing over odd-meter music or when you want your phrasing to run over the bar."

ECTO SAYS

Tosin's idea is to play straight eighth or 16th notes but to try accenting every third or fifth note. You can apply this to rhythm guitar or to lead phrasing

11 COWBOY ARPEGGIOS

TRACK 36

♩=65

Dsus² D Asus² Am Cadd⁹ Gmaj⁷

let ring - - - - - let ring - - - - -

TAB

0 2 3 2 3 2 3 0 1 2 2 0 1 3 0 3 0 3 0 3 2 3 0 3

These are typical sus2 and add9 'campfire chords'. Think of bands like Poison and Guns N' Roses and you'll get the idea. Hammer-ons and pull-offs extend the sound of the basic chords - again, typical stuff. Aim for a 'pick in the direction of the next note' approach and try to keep your pick hand movements as efficient and clean as possible.

12 POWERCHORD ILLUSIONS

TRACK 37

♩=130

F^{#5} E⁵ F⁵ F^{#5} A⁵ F^{#5} B⁵ A⁵ F^{#5} N.C. Play 4 times

BU BD

TAB

4 2 3 4 2 4 4 2 4 4 4 (5) (4) 2 4

Splitting two guitars into separate parts of the powerchord is a great idea that has been favoured by Slash and Mick Mars amongst others. The idea is to use an 'inverted powerchord' - just ditch the bottom root note of each chord. The second guitar can then play this as a single-note riff, with a lot more freedom to expand on the basics.



EDDIE VAN HALEN

Filling The Gaps

"I'm a very rhythmic player, just out of necessity. Because believe it or not, we used to play without a bass player. It was just Alex and I. I also had a tendency to fill every f*cking hole possible, but because I had to because there was no other instrument."

ETC SAYS

Don't feel you need to fill every gap! However, this quote perhaps describes Eddie's love of slash chords in songs like *Running With The Devil*. The slash notes give a sense of a bassline accompanying the chords

13 MUTE-ALLICA

TRACK 38

♩=160

N.C. C⁵ B⁵ N.C. F⁵ N.C. E⁵ N.C. A^{b5} N.C. C⁵ B⁵ N.C. F⁵ N.C. E⁵ N.C. E⁵ N.C.

PM PM PM - - - PM - - - PM - - - PM PM PM - - - PM - - - PM - - -

TAB

5 4 3 0 0 0 0 6 3 2 3 2 5 4 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 5 6 7 5 6 7

Metallica, Megadeth and Slayer were the biggest exponents of this style of thrash metal during the 80s and early 90s. The palm-muted open sixth-string root notes are essential, and the powerchords, including the F5 one fret above the root, are typical fare. Keep your pick hand close to the strings and aim for small, efficient movements.

TUNE-UPS!

Your guide to five essential altered tunings

1 DROP D: DADGBE

AS HEARD ON: LAMB OF GOD - *MEMENTO MORI*
Tune your sixth string down a tone (the same as two frets) to D. Job done!

2 DADGAD

AS HEARD ON: LED ZEPPELIN - *KASHMIR*
A staple in acoustic folk and great for experimentation thanks to its 'neither major nor minor' open-string voicing.

3 SEVEN-STRING STANDARD: BEADGBE

AS HEARD ON: DREAM THEATER - *JUST LET ME BREATHE*
Think of this as standard six-string tuning (EADGBE) with a low B on the seventh string.

4 DROP C: CGCFAD

AS HEARD ON: BIFFY CLYRO - *NORTH OF NO SOUTH*
Identical to drop D, but with every string tuned two semitones lower. Go down another semitone for drop B (B F# B E G# D#).

5 OPEN DADD9:

D A D F# A E
AS HEARD ON: COVET - *SHIBUYA*
D-F#-A-E spells out the notes of a Dadd9 chord, hence the name given to this tuning much loved by Yvette Young.

14 SOUTHERN METAL SYNCOPATION

TRACK 39

♩=110 N.C.

The late, great Dimebag Darrell was famed for his syncopated, brutal riffs. Developing the 80s thrash theme, but at a slower tempo allows for more rhythmic complexity and Dime's trademark sense of groove. Use alternate picking throughout (you'll hit a lot of upstrokes here!) and use your fret hand to keep the idle strings muted.

15 KORN BIZKITS

TRACK 40

♩=105 N.C.

The late-90s seven-string explosion was dominated by Limp Bizkit's Wes Borland and Korn's Munky and Head. If you want that sound, you've gotta tune *low*! Borland favours B F# B E G# C# C#; the Korn pair go as low as ADGCFAD. Try tuning a six-string guitar set to the lowest notes of these tunings; we've opted for BEADGBE here.

16 MATHS HOMEWORK

TRACK 41

♩=120 N.C.

Math-metal is characterised by complex rhythms. Think of our Polyphia/Meshuggah-inspired riff as a variation on 4/4 time, with an extra eighth note added to beat 4. It's tricky to get the feel, so count '1 6 2 6 3 6 4 6 a' to keep time. Practise by playing each 'beamed' group of notes on its own before jamming with our audio track.

17 EMO-TIVE CHORDS

TRACK 42

♩=115

Bm Gsus² Dsus⁴ D D⁵ N.C.

let ring - - -

Whilst drop-D tuning adds heaviness and some easy first-finger barre chord shapes, it can also inspire sweeter sounds. Think early-00s emo and post-grunge and you'll get what we're driving at. It also shows that hard rock doesn't have to be in angsty minor keys. A mix of major, minor and sus chords sounds fresh here in our riff.

18 GRUNGEY FIVES

TRACK 43

♩=160

D D^{9#11} Dmaj^{7add13} D^{7sus2}

This riff is inspired by Jeff Buckley, Radiohead, even Soundgarden - acts that employ a left-field songwriting approach, using odd time, complex chords and non-standard tunings. Here, everything is based around an open D drone, but the key isn't set in stone. The chords move in and out of different modes, giving a slightly psychedelic vibe.

19 GOLDEN RULES

TRACK 44

♩=80

N.C.

Play 4 times

We're taking inspiration from Biffy Clyro and Royal Blood here as we exploit the clarity of single-string riffs and octaves rather than 'denser' powerchords. The octaves can be as melodic as you like, so experiment by moving them around the fretboard. The 16th notes in bar 2 are all about consistency, so use steady alternate picking.

20 PROG AND MATH-ROCK

TRACK 45

♩=120

Capo 2nd fret

Asus^{2/#4} N.C. F^{#7sus4} F^{#add11} N.C.

Play 4 times

Plini and Yvette Young often shun the distorted tones of traditional shred, delivering complex rhythm work that takes up where math metal leaves off. Rich fingerpicked chords with melodic lines and Satriani-esque tapping are essentials. Get to grips with the (relative!) basics in bar 1, with a capo'd chord groove followed by tapping in bar 2.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Hammer-ons and pull-offs
- ✓ Natural minor scale
- ✓ Hand synchronisation

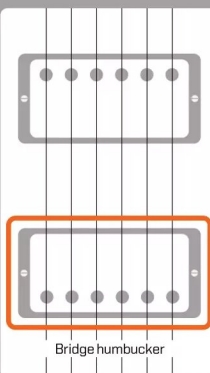


RIFF OF THE MONTH

Find your video lesson at bit.ly/tga2022audio

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION



Joe Duplantier uses Charvel guitars, whereas Christian Andreu opts for Jackson – and both have signature models. A humbucker-equipped guitar is vital for the punch and sustain of the Gojira sound. The Gojira amp of choice is the EVH 5150iii and they also have a dedicated Gojira amp and effect DAW plugin by Neural DSP. For a tight, clear sound, experiment with using slightly less gain to allow the notes to come through and add a Tube Screamer-type overdrive pedal to control the low end.

GOJIRA

Another World

A

Another World was the first single released from Gojira's forthcoming eighth studio album *Fortitude*. Guitarists Joe Duplantier and Christian Andreu are known for their tight, powerful riffing style drawing on influences like Tool, Sepultura and Metallica, and this riff is a blend of hammer-ons, pull-offs and open strings.

The riff is in D standard tuning (DGCADF)

and is played on the fourth and fifth strings. A pair of two-note chords (C minor and B_♭ major diads) form the main part of the riff, but you'll be playing them as hammer-ons and pull-offs to the open strings, not as standard chords. It takes a little practice to build up the timing but it's a simple pattern: downstroke, hammer-on, pull-off, repeat!

Finally, experiment with lightly palm muting the strings at the bridge to control the notes

and keep them at a similar volume. As ever, we've recorded a slow play through in our video for you.

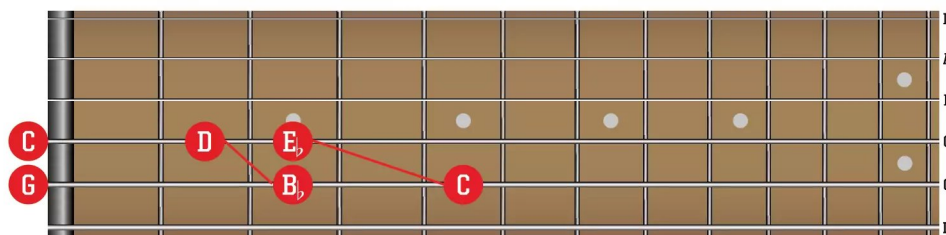
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:00–0:22

Tempo: 85 bpm

Key/scale: C natural minor scale

Main techniques: Hammer-ons, pull-offs, palm-muting



This riff is played in D standard, so you'll need to tune the strings down by a tone to DGCADF from low to high. The entire line is played on the

fourth and fifth strings and can be viewed as two pairs of two-note shapes. The first part of the riff uses the fretted C and E_♭ notes; the

second part uses B_♭ and D. In each case you'll be pulling off from the fretted notes to the open strings.

ROCK



WOOD WORSHIP

Every model has its own distinct personality, but which is your favourite?

THE GUITARS THAT BUILT ROCK

TAKE A LOOK AT THE LANDMARK GUITARS THAT LEFT AN INDELIBLE MARK ON THE HISTORY OF ROCK MUSIC, AND LEARN THE STYLES OF THE GUITARISTS WHO PLAYED THEM...

If there's one thing that unites guitarists, it's our love of our instruments. Yet choosing a guitar is a personal endeavour. We form special bonds with our guitars. The way your favourite guitar's unique configuration of metal and wood 'feels' affects the way you play it. Like we say, it's personal.

The history of rock is littered with such cherished instruments. And the music made with each one just wouldn't be the same played on any other guitar. Here, as we look at over 60 of rock's most revered guitars, we consider just what made them great – and you'll find some tips and lessons along the way. We're starting with two of the most iconic instruments of all: Brian May's Red Special and Eddie Van Halen's Frankenstrat. Plug in, turn the page and let's get started!



EDDIE VAN HALEN: FRANKENSTRAT

Designed, built and modified to revolutionise the guitar

The electric guitar's inventors had little idea what they were unleashing on the world. Leo Fender could not have foreseen the noises Hendrix or Tom Morello would extract from his designs. Eddie Van Halen, though, knew exactly how he was going to use Frankie, making it perhaps the first purpose-built instrument of the rock era.

Eddie had originally played a Les Paul, but switched to a Strat because he loved the tremolo arm. His band, however, hated his Strat tone, and Eddie set about combining the tone of a Gibson with the playability of a Strat. He bought a body from Wayne Charvel for \$50, a factory reject because it had a knot in the wood, and a Mighty Mite neck. The pickup was nicked from the neck position of a Gibson ES-335, while the original tremolo system came from a 1958 Stratocaster – not a valuable guitar at the time. Eddie originally striped it in just black and white, as seen on the cover of debut album, *Van Halen*.

Eddie never did build a guitar with Gibson tone and Fender playability. A humbucker-equipped Strat doesn't sound anything like a Les Paul; it's less fat and has more immediate attack. Serendipitously, this was exactly what Van Halen needed. Frankie's pickup is a legend in itself. Eddie got more sparkle and harmonics than most humbucker players; experts like Bare Knuckle's Tim Mills believe one coil was hotter than the other. Because a Fender bridge is wider than a Gibson's, Eddie angled the pickup to make the polepieces line up with the strings, and this also contributed to the tone. He experimented with DiMarzio Super Distortion pickups, but he is on record saying he didn't like them because they didn't clean up as well.

Eddie made a second Frankenstein, the Bumblebee, but never liked it as much so he revisited Frankie in the early 80s,

adding the iconic red paint as well as the Floyd Rose tremolo he helped develop. The pickup was rewound by Seymour Duncan with more output too. This became the definitive 80s metal design and the inspiration for Superstrats by Charvel, Jackson, Kramer, Ibanez and pretty much anyone who was building shred guitars. Eddie had found ways of keeping a Strat trem useably in tune while divebombing, but the Floyd Rose meant a legion of copyists could use his techniques. Eddie had invented both a new style of playing and the perfect guitar for doing it.

RED SPECIAL

1 BODY

Mahogany veneered oak with blockboard inserts to create the chambers.

2 NECK

Mahogany neck with coated oak fingerboard, 24 frets (plus a zero fret).

3 PICKUPS

Burns Tri-Sonic pickups wired in series then filled with araldite to eliminate feedback.

4 CONTROLS

On/off and phase reverse switches for each pickup, plus master volume and master tone pots (replaced several times).

5 BRIDGE/TREMOLO

Own-design system with homemade roller saddles and tremolo arm, plus motorbike valve springs.



**FRANKENSTRAT****1 BODY**

Charvel factory reject ash S-type shape finished in black, white and red stripes.

2 NECK

Mighty Mite maple neck, with maple fingerboard and 22 jumbo frets.

3 PICKUP

Duncan-wound humbucker, replacing the original potted ES-335 neck pickup.

4 CONTROLS

Er, control, not controls! There's just one volume pot connecting the pickup to the output. The other controls are dummies.

5 BRIDGE/TREMOLO

Floyd Rose locking system, replacing Eddie's original trem from a '58 Strat.

BRIAN MAY: RED SPECIAL

The home-built electric guitar that's fit for a king

Brian May would sound unique even with an off-the-shelf guitar, but his instantly recognisable sound is thanks in no small part to his Red Special.

Brian was just 15 when he began building a guitar with his dad, and they used parts they had available at home. The neck was from a fireplace and the solid core of the otherwise hollow body was from an old oak table. These timbers aren't commonly used in guitar construction (even in later Red Special replicas) and have continually frustrated guitarists' attempts to ape Brian's tone.

So formidable were the Mays' engineering skills that they designed and built their own tremolo system from scratch, a marked improvement on contemporary designs.

Again, they scavenged parts, rocking the tremolo against motorbike valve springs and using a saddle bag support from a bike for the tremolo arm itself, keeping the total cost of parts for the build incredibly low in the process.

Even the original pickups were homemade, with an ingenious design where the pickups were placed in the circuit simply by screwing them into the guitar. Unfortunately they made a scraping sound when bending strings that couldn't be cured, so Brian bought a set of Burns Tri-Sonics. These look similar to Strat pickups, but the tone has much more humbucker fatness, although with less compression and more top end. Brian liked them because they retained clarity on chords while sounding smooth and singing for lead lines.

Brian's switching design is unique and

incredibly versatile. Each pickup has its own on-off switch as well as its own phase switch. Unusually, the pickups are all wired in series, giving a huge, thick tone. Throwing any pickup out of phase gives a thinner, hollower sound. Brian's Vox AC30 amps are always fully cranked with a Rangemaster Treble Booster (which in practice adds gain and upper mid) on full. With the guitar's knobs on maximum, this produces a wall of fuzz that Brian almost never uses. His main sound is the bridge and middle pickups in phase, which depending on the guitar's volume can take you from *Under Pressure* to *Hammer To Fall*. For the wailing lead sounds on *Bohemian Rhapsody*, he uses the middle and neck pickups out of phase. It's a tone almost no one can replicate, not only because of the unique gear but also the outrageous volume required.



Interview Chris Bird Photography Getty Images

"IT WAS A MOMENT OF GREAT JOY, PLAYING WITH THIS GUY..."

IN 1983, TWO OF ROCK'S GREATEST GUITARISTS, **BRIAN MAY** AND **EDDIE VAN HALEN**, JOINED FORCES IN THE **STAR FLEET PROJECT**. NOW, IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH TG EDITOR CHRIS BIRD, BRIAN PAYS TRIBUTE TO HIS LATE FRIEND, AND TELLS THE STORY OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MUSIC THEY MADE TOGETHER...

"H

e was the greatest," Brian May says. "There was no one who could match him, no one who could come close. There will never be another one of him."

It is just a few days after the death of Eddie Van Halen that Brian is speaking to *Total Guitar*, and as he admits: "I haven't really processed it at all. When I think about it I get this kind of physical shock. It's punched a big hole in my heart."

They had known each other a long time, first meeting in the late 70s, when Brian was already a major star with Queen, and Eddie was the new kid on the block; his explosive displays on the first Van Halen album marking him as the most revolutionary figure in guitar playing since Hendrix.

● The two men had much in common, not least their self-built guitars – Brian's 'Red Special' and Eddie's 'Frankenstein'. And in 1983, their close friendship resulted in them teaming up for a remarkable one-off venture – *Star Fleet Project*, a three-track mini-album credited to Brian May & Friends.

As Brian says now: "A couple of days after I heard the news about Eddie, I went back to *Star Fleet*. I started

revisiting all the feelings I had when we were in the studio doing that, and it sort of healed my soul a bit. I thought, 'Yeah, this is what I should be doing at this time.'"

He also explains that *Star Fleet* had been on his mind only a week before his friend passed away. "I was looking at reissuing all my solo albums, and *Star Fleet* obviously is one of them. At some point it would be lovely to revisit it in depth, but at the moment I'm not. It doesn't feel right now.

"To be honest," he says, "I'm confused about what is the best thing to do. I think it needs a little time for the dust to settle. But talking with you about it in *Total Guitar*, I think, is okay..."

Let's start with your first encounter with Eddie. What are your memories of that?

I think of him as a boy back then. He was quite a bit younger than me. It was backstage in Munich when Van Halen were supporting Black Sabbath. I knew a little bit about Van Halen and luckily I got there to see them, because I was there to see Tony [Iommì, Sabbath guitarist], and usually you're late to a show if you're just going to see your mate. But I got there in time to see Van Halen and I was utterly blown away by Eddie. I just thought: I've never seen anything like this in my life. It was almost too much to take in. I remember thinking: I don't want to believe this (laughs). It was similar to watching Jimi Hendrix for the first time.

In the years that followed you became good friends. So how did *Star Fleet Project* come about? Was it always conceived as a vehicle for you and Eddie?

It was not consciously conceived. Or not premeditated. I was living in Los Angeles at the time. Queen had taken a break – we'd sort of had enough of each other for a while. And for some reason I always felt like a different person in LA. I'm naturally quite shy and retiring, but in LA I feel I can call people. And one morning I thought, why don't I call Eddie Van Halen? Maybe we could get together. So I called and Eddie said, 'What do you want to do?' And I said, 'Well, strangely enough, I have an idea in my head...' Because my little boy had been watching this science fiction series and I always thought that the theme tune for it would be a great vehicle for all-out guitar playing. And Eddie said, 'I'm up for it!' So that was the beginning. I said, 'I'll call a few people and we'll get in there...'

And then?

The next call I made was to Alan Gratzner, the drummer from REO Speedwagon, who was my neighbour in LA. I said I'd talked to Ed and wouldn't it be nice if we all got together? Alan was very enthusiastic. He said, 'It'll feel like you're cheating on your wife!' I then called Phil Chen, who was Rod Stewart's bass player for a long time, and Fred

Mandel, who'd been playing keyboards with Queen. And then I booked a studio, The Record Plant, for two days.

So you had the band ready and the studio booked, but how much material did you have to work with?

I'd made a little acoustic demo of the track *Star Fleet*, which I sent to everyone, and then Ed and Phil came to my house to work on it. I'd done this whole arrangement that was a bit complex. In fact I just listened to it because I knew I was going to be talking to you, and it's really complex! I don't know what was in my head, really. But the idea was to go through a lot of changes and then arrive at a big all-out soloing section, and obviously I wanted Ed to solo. I wanted to set him up on a platform

and see what he would do.

So we ran through it a couple of times and Eddie said, 'Yeah, we can do that.' And then we discussed what else we could do. We said, we could be spontaneous – let's jam, let's play blues. And I also had this other track, an original song of mine called *Let Me Out*, which they liked.

Once you were in the studio, what was the vibe like?

We all sat around with big smiles on our faces, going, 'Yay, this is fun!' I think we'd all got to the point where we'd worked hard in the studio with our respective bands and it had almost become a job, you know? Of course we all loved music, but there are moments when you feel pressure in the studio, the album has to be made, deadlines and whatever, and sometimes it gets tense. But this was different – we're all friends, and whatever happens here is a bonus. So it was full of joy.

And you recorded the whole thing in two days?

Well, really it was one day to do the session and the second day to clean it up and sort things out. So it was basically an afternoon. And there was no pressure, but boy, was there adrenaline! It was just so exhilarating, like setting off down a big ski slope at a hundred miles an hour. It was an amazing feeling. I looked around and just smiled and smiled.

With you and Eddie playing self-built guitars, did you compare notes?

Yeah, we did. We talked about what he called 'the brown sound'. He said he'd been very influenced by the way my guitar sounded, the breadth of it and the way it spoke. And he wanted that. He said, 'I wanted that brown sound.' And it's a question of where you put the pickup, at what point under the strings – it's technical talk. Where do you put the pickup? He said none of the guitars he'd used had it in quite the right place, so he moved his pickup. His guitar looks very individual, but the thing that really made it so individual in sound is because he turned where that pickup was – to like a hundredth of an inch – to get the right harmonics to make the brown sound. And he had to have the right amp, of course. So we talked a little bit about that. But to be honest, it was more about, 'What shall we play?'

Did you swap guitars for fun?

Yes, he played my guitar and I played his guitar. And I sounded like me on his guitar and he sounded like him on my guitar (laughs), which reassured us that it's basically all in the fingers at the end of the day. No matter what guitar Eddie picked up, it sounded like him. And I saw him pick up Phil Chen's bass, and he sounded like Eddie Van Halen on Phil Chen's bass! So, yes, it's in the fingers.

How did the *Frankenstein* feel? The tremolo – did it feel alien and unusual to you?

It didn't feel familiar, no, because his tremolo is entirely different to mine, it's loose and flops about. Mine is on the verge of being immobile, and wherever I put it, it stays. So that's very different. I'm sure I could have got used to it after a while, but we just got on with playing basically.

Do you remember what rig Eddie was using?

I just remember he had a big four-by-twelve Marshall cabinet. But I'm not good on gear. That's what I think I saw. And I didn't have much stuff in LA. I think I had a rented AC30 and a treble booster and my guitar. That was it. It was very basic, all thrown together in a few days.

The song *Star Fleet* has some harmony guitars, so there must have been overdubs. But was this mostly a live session?



ABOVE
The *Star Fleet Project* album, credited to Brain May + Friends, released in 1983.



"IT WAS JUST SO EXHILARATING, LIKE SETTING OFF DOWN A BIG SKI SLOPE AT A HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR"

It was a mixture. Most of it was live, but the harmony guitars were overdubbed, and the vocals were overdubbed. I may have done a guide vocal but I definitely sang it afterwards to get it right, because in the moment it was all about the playing. But the stuff you hear Ed doing – the big solo which had been set up – that's an overdub, because I wanted Ed to have a number of goes at it. He'd done the *Beat It* solo and I wanted him to have that kind of feeling about it. I think he did three different ones, all of which were utterly brilliant. Our jaws all dropped. And I remember, at the very end of the soloing section there's a little harmony run-up so we overdubbed that together live, but as an overdub. And that was one of the great moments of my life, I've got to say – because we did it once and we got it right. I mean, I'm not big on chromatic runs or whatever, I'm not a great technician, but we just did it – one, two, three, go! That's a tiny

little moment but a moment of great joy, playing with this guy. I was awestruck by his playing. He's much younger than me, but I couldn't believe what his fingers could do.

It sounds at times as if you're swapping techniques together, like you're paying tribute to each other as you play.

I think there was a bit of that. Ed sort of embarrassed me by saying I was a huge influence on him, and only recently I discovered a recording on the internet of Van Halen playing *Now I'm Here* [a version of the classic Queen song, demoed by Van Halen in 1975]. There's a comment about Ed – that when he solos, he sounds like Eric Clapton. Well, maybe there is a Clapton influence on Ed. I know because he told me. But if you listen to what happens [on the VH version of *Now I'm Here*] when he goes into the solo section, it's already Edward

ABOVE

Eddie (left) and Brian recording *Star Fleet Project* at Record Plant Studios, Los Angeles.

Van Halen, there's no f*cking doubt about it. That's the place to hear how Edward was developing as a guitar player, and it's already awesome.

Now I'm Here is my favourite Queen song.

I think it was Ed's favourite Queen song, too. But to answer your question – yes, I think we both played a little differently because there was the other guy in the room. And certainly on the blues track, *Blues Breaker*, he doesn't do any tapping whatsoever. That's a rarity, and he said to me, 'I'm glad we're doing this, because you're making me go back to my roots. I love playing blues, and I love not doing the Eddie Van Halen stuff, I love not tapping and doing all the fireworks. It's great to get back to just playing from the soul.' So if you listen to that, he does sound much more in the Clapton mould, and we both do. You know, Clapton is a massive hero of

mine, as are the people who influenced Clapton. There's a whole line of influence going back to the original blues players.

And how did you play differently?

There's no way I would try to play like Edward, because I can't (laughs). Nobody can. So partly I wanted to play in a sympathetic way to him, to supply the great rhythms that he could play to. I wanted to be the perfect rhythm guitarist, and I grew up as a rhythm guitarist, so that's natural to me. But when we were trading solos, yes, we were feeding off each other. And we'd never done it before. We'd never played together before, and yet the chemistry is there. In *Blues Breaker* you feel, yeah, we're not just noodling, we are listening to each other and playing off each other, as is the whole band. Alan was really in tune with it, Phil was like a rock, and Fred Mandel was doing lovely sympathetic things on the keys. It really was a session that gelled incredibly well. I don't think I've ever in my life had a session like that.

Before the session, did you take time to hone your blues chops with that track in mind, or were you looking purely for that feeling of spontaneity?

The latter. It was as spontaneous as anything could be. We knew the *Star Fleet* song and, well, I think it shows that we didn't know *Let Me Out* [Laughs], but I was able to mix it so it sounds like we knew roughly what we were doing.

So if and when you reissue *Star Fleet Project*, would you remix it?

I think we would. Things have changed, and certainly my feelings about drum sounds have changed. So yes, we have been talking about doing a new mix for it. We wouldn't mess with any of the playing, obviously. But we'd try to get the sounds a little more in tune with what can be done in 2020.

What studio techniques would you employ for this?

Well, that would be telling! To be honest, it's a question of not doing certain things. There's an awful lot of treatment on that snare, which seemed cool at the time, but I wouldn't do that now. It makes the drums sound detached from everything else. My ear is better now than it was in those days.



"I SOUNDED LIKE ME ON HIS GUITAR AND HE SOUNDED LIKE HIM ON MY GUITAR!"

What did you learn from this project?

I learned about confidence. I learned that I could make a couple of phone calls, organise a session and just go in and play. I thought until that point that I only existed, musically, as a part of Queen. So that was me seeing a door and opening it. I think I became a more interesting performer because of it, maybe a more interesting person as well. It was a good boost for me to think: 'I don't have to just be a member of a band'.

Do you feel that you learned anything from Eddie during this experience?

Not really. I don't think there was time to do that. Maybe unconsciously, but I wasn't aware of that happening. We didn't get into technicalities. We just let it happen by ear, and we were all instinctive players. There were no charts, no hard analysis going on – it's just, 'Here's a skeleton, a template, let's just see what we do when we roll tape' – and it was tape in those days.

I wonder whether Eddie may have learned something from you and the experience of *Star Fleet Project* – because Van Halen's following album 1984 was a bit of a left turn, with Eddie experimenting with synthesizers.

I don't know. I think Edward liked the melodic side of what I did within Queen.

ABOVE

May and EVH at the 1992 MTV Music Video Awards. Nice shirt, Bri...

I can remember having discussions about that. And he wasn't a person to do lots of guitar harmonies like I do, but he liked the colourful side of our arrangements. I just don't know whether that was an influence or not.

The last time you spoke to TG, earlier this year, you said you would have loved to work with Eddie again. Did you have anything specific in mind?

No. I didn't get as far as that. Actually, I'd forgotten I said that to you. It's obviously been in my mind, but I never got down to details.

Had you lost contact with him over the years?

Relationships in our business tend to be a bit patchy. I was quite close to him at one time, and then for a while not. I have a real regret that I didn't stay close in the last few years. So many times I thought, 'I should call him'.

How will you remember him?

He was always smiling. We all know he was a technical prodigy, but what he did, he did with such lightness and humour. He didn't need to take it seriously. Eddie was always generous, always fun. I miss his energy. I'm thankful I had the chance to have moments with him, but I feel so sad that he's not around. All I can say is I miss him. I miss his presence in the world.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

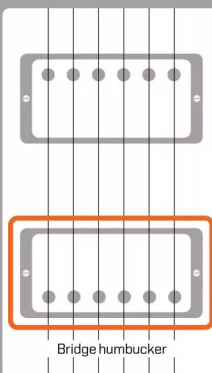
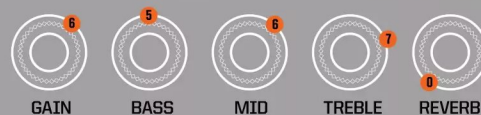
- ✓ A blues-scale based riff
- ✓ Easy one-finger powerchords
- ✓ Drop C# tuning

Find your video lesson at bit.ly/tga2022audio

RIFF OF THE MONTH

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION



Ben Phillips plays Gibson Les Paul and ES-335 guitars, but we suspect he donned his humbucker-equipped Fender Telecaster here. Phillips' Orange amp tone is dry with no effects and a fairly flat, even EQ. Resist the urge to dial in too much gain. The tone should be a fat hard-rock drive, rather than a saturated heavy metal distortion.

THE PRETTY RECKLESS

And So It Went (feat. Tom Morello)

And So It Went features on the latest Pretty Reckless album, *Death By Rock And Roll*. With the song's lyrical themes of civil unrest, the addition of Tom Morello on an unmistakable Whammy pedal-infused solo makes perfect sense, after having a history of political commentary with his band Rage Against the Machine. Morello's influence can also be heard in Ben Phillips' main guitar riff

shown in our video lesson. The ingredients of the classic RATM riff approach are there: big powerchords, a heavy groove, a repetitive hook, all based in the blues scale. And the riff sounds heavier thanks to the guitar's drop C# tuning (C# G# C# F# A# D#) – perfect for the one-finger powerchord shapes played on the bass strings.

We've played slowly through the riff for you in our video, and the diagrams below will help

you get to grips with the chords. Take it slowly at first, particularly during the offbeat change in bar 2 where it's easy to make a mistake.

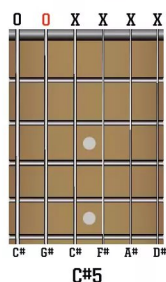
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:25–0:35

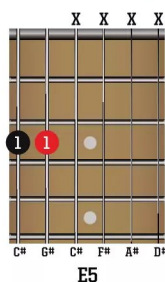
Tempo: 92 bpm

Key/scale: C# blues scale

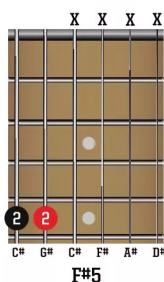
Main techniques: Drop C# tuning, powerchords



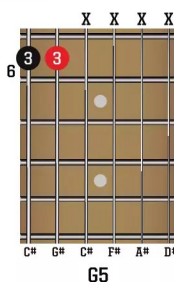
C#5



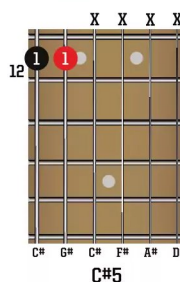
E5



F#5



G5



C#5

Chords don't get much easier than these two-note shapes. There are some percussive muted strikes to contend with too. Muting the strings is easy (just lay

a fretting finger across the strings) but practise slowly and take care with the timing. The mutes are on the first two eighth notes of the riff's third bar. Simple

enough in itself, however, the mutes give a slightly weird sense of de-emphasising beat 1 – usually the strongest beat in the bar.

HOLLOWBODY GUITARS

The roots of the electric guitar

There are two main schools of hollowbody (and semi-hollow) player: those with a connection to jazz/blues roots who need smooth tone, and songwriter-guitarists who like their rounder tone and looser low end. Early electric guitar recordings universally feature hollowbodies because solidbodies hadn't been invented yet. Gibson's ES-150 ruled the roost in

the 30s, but it was a basic design; an acoustic with a pickup, if you like. In the 50s Gibson introduced new models, the ES-330, the ES-350T, the ES-355 and the standard-bearer, the ES-335 with its centre block and hollow wings striking a balance of sustain with less feedback. Gretsch's G6120 and White Falcon appeared around this time and the semi-hollow Rickenbacker 325 got big off the back of the Beatles.



GRETSCH G6120

The start of rock 'n' roll

Chet Atkins was the greatest travis picker, and, when early rock 'n' rollers wanted to fuse country and blues, they found his signature guitar was the perfect weapon. Rockabilly pioneers Duane Eddie and Eddie Cochran used them, inspiring George Harrison to try the Country Gentleman variant. The Filter'trons had more twang than PAFs but more weight than Fender's pickups, and the Bigsby tremolo allowed pseudo-pedal steel effects. Rockabilly cats like Brian Setzer still can't get enough.



GIBSON ES-350T

Johnny B Goode's axe of choice

There is no rock 'n' roll pioneer more influential than Chuck Berry, and the biting, crisp sound on his hits came from the Gibson ES-350. The early records (*Maybelline*, *Roll Over Beethoven*) were on a P90-equipped ES-350TN, and when Gibson introduced humbuckers in 1957 he switched to the ES-350T, producing the likes of *Carol* and *You Never Can Tell*. Johnny B Goode came out in 1957, and nerds still argue over which guitar he used. And 'T'? It stands for thinline. The T model is a slimmed down variant on the earlier (and fatter!) ES-350.



Photo: Getty Images

GIBSON ES-355

The sweetest blues voice ever

BB King's black guitar, Lucille, might be the blues' most famous guitar. Don't get emotional though. BB named most of his guitars Lucille including Gibson ES-335s and ES-345s, and the model he's most associated with, the ES-355. BB found the slim neck and body comfortable. The 355's Varitone switch offered six preset EQ settings; BB favoured position two, which cut the mids at around 1875hz (try it for yourself with an EQ pedal). The semi-acoustic's round top end enhanced BB's vibrato, with a woodier tone than a typical Les Paul. We can't imagine him playing anything else.



GIBSON ES-335

God's guitar

Although Clapton also used an SG and a Firebird with Cream, it was his cherry ES-335 that became known as 'the Cream guitar', appearing on *Badge* and at the band's Albert Hall farewell concert. Eric used it in his next band, Blind Faith, and on solo tracks like *Hard Times*. You can dial in Clapton's 'woman tone' by turning your neck humbucker tone to 0, and blend in the bridge pickup to taste. Other notable ES-335 players include Alvin Lee, Eric Johnson and Larry Carlton.



GIBSON TRINI LOPEZ ES-335

The Foo Fighters formula

Dave Grohl's ES-335 is a Trini Lopez model with a Firebird headstock, whose mass contributes to sustain, and diamond f-holes. When Trini Lopez died in 2020, Grohl posted, "Every album we have ever made, from the first to the latest, was recorded with my red 1967 Trini Lopez signature guitar. It is the sound of our band, and my most prized possession." Grohl's own DG-335 signature model is based on that guitar.



EPIPHONE CASINO

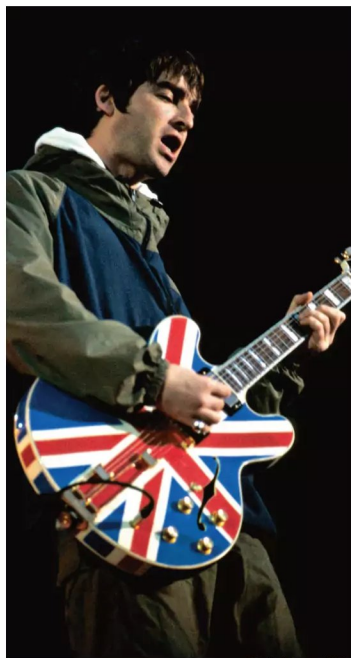
John Lennon's greatest workhorse

As the Beatles' music became more adventurous, the band searched for new sounds. McCartney bought a Casino on the recommendation of John Mayall, using it for *Ticket To Ride*, and Harrison and Lennon followed suit in 1966. It was Lennon who became most associated with the guitar, playing it on *Sergeant Pepper's...* and the *White Album*, before immortalising it at the Beatles' legendary 1969 rooftop gig. Lennon and McCartney both used their Casinos for the rotating solos in *The End*. Other notable users include Noel Gallagher and Johnny Marr, whose Casino is shown here.

EPIPHONE SHERATON

The sound of Britpop going supernova

Motivated by the Beatles' Epiphone obsession, Noel Gallagher got on the semi-acoustic bandwagon. *Definitely Maybe* was recorded with a Riviera, but as the band got bigger Noel reached for two Sheratons, a tobacco sunburst model and the legendary Union Jack guitar unveiled at Glastonbury 1997. Both Sheratons had mini-humbuckers, which have a brighter sound than their full-sized equivalents, helping Noel's barre chords retain clarity.



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GRETSCH WHITE FALCON

All Cult followers need one

Billy Duffy's live tone is one of the most majestic in rock – a Marshall JCM800 and a Vox AC30 with just enough gain, and simple riffs being belted out on his iconic White Falcon. The Falcon had the cut to work with Duffy's earlier tone, washed in chorused delay, and his rawer AC/DC inspired tones on *Sonic Temple*. He had to stuff T-shirts in the body to control feedback, but no other guitar could do the business.

HOLLOWED OUT!

Tame your hollowbody's feedback

Hollowbody guitars are lively beasts by nature. They're louder than their solidbody brethren and this makes them susceptible to feedback at high volume. Try out our tips and beat the noise.

1. GET STUFFED!

Billy Duffy and Jack White stuffed their guitars with foam to tame feedback. Not too hard to do, but it can affect your guitar's tone and sustain.

2. TAPE UP

It ain't pretty and it could damage the finish of your pride and joy, but taping over soundholes may reduce feedback. A bit.

3. PUT YOUR FOOT DOWN!

A noise gate/suppressor pedal such as the Boss NS-2 could help you dial out those squeals. Alternatively, try cutting the feedback frequency with an EQ pedal.

4. TURN DOWN

Feedback is caused by speakers vibrating the strings, which in turn produce more signal and more feedback. Kill your volume, kill your feedback.

5. MOVE

As simple as it sounds. There's always one spot where your guitar feeds back the most. Turn around or move away from your amp.

PLAY LIKE BB KING

TRACK 07

♩=145

A⁷

BU 12- (15) 12-10 13 10 17- [17]

TAB

Take note of the BB style fast finger vibrato here. The big bend from E to G is also a King specialty. The trademark high A note in bar 2 acts as a punctuation point.

PLAY LIKE ERIC CLAPTON

TRACK 08

♩=135

D⁷ A⁷

BU 9/11 10 10 10 12 (13) 10 12 10 8 8 8 8 7/9 9 9 9 7 5 7-7

TAB

Using doublestops (playing two notes together) is a classic rock 'n' roll soloing technique – and it's great for filling out the sound in a power trio like Cream. The trick here is to dig in with your pick and give it plenty of feeling.

PLAY LIKE NOEL GALLAGHER

TRACK 09

♩=100

F#add¹¹ A Badd¹¹

let ring - - - - let ring - let ring -

TAB 4 0 3 4 7 6 9 8 4 7 9 9 7

Selecting both the Sheraton's pickups provides a sweet tone, perfect for light chords and arpeggios. Our example uses F#, A and B barre chords with the first and second strings left to ring for a spacious sound.

THE FULL UNCENSORED STORY OF METAL'S MOST ICONIC BAND

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GIBSON ES-150

Where it all began

When Gibson added a pickup to its L-50 acoustic in 1936, it was the first time most people had ever seen an electric guitar. The acoustic guitar had only ever been a backing instrument in swing orchestras because it wasn't loud enough to take solos. Now Charlie Christian could be heard, and he became a sensation. The ES-150 itself wasn't the very first electric guitar, but it became immortalised as the 'Charlie Christian guitar', who in turn influenced Chuck Berry and Jimi Hendrix. Quite the legacy!

CHARLIE'S PICKUP

The velvety tones of Gibson's blade pickup can still be had today. Lollar build a range of CC-inspired pickups to fit various guitars.



RICKENBACKER 360

The Beatles, bottled

Where there is jangle, there is Rickenbacker, and that goes double for the 12-string model. When the company debuted the 360/12 in 1964, they gave a pair to John Lennon and George Harrison (they already played Ricky 325 and 425 models). It immediately became the sound of 60s pop, appearing with The Who, The Byrds and The Beach Boys. The pickups, bridge, and manufacturing process were entirely bespoke, so there was no alternative for that sound. Beatle heirs like Tom Petty and REM kept it popular.

12-STRING TONE WITHOUT THE HASSLE...

No 12-string? No problem. DigiTech's Mosaic is a fine 12-string copyist in pedal form. Just place it near the start of your signal chain.



BURNS MARVIN 64

An all-British
signature model

Hank Marvin was the UK's first homegrown guitar hero, and inevitably Britain's most notable electric guitar manufacturer of the day brought him on board as an endorsee. Hank, like many guitarists since, wanted a tremolo that stayed in tune. Burns' design balanced on knife edges, like the later Floyd Rose. Each string passed through its own resonating tube for "singing strings". The guitar looked futuristic at the time, but while the Strat has remained timeless the Burns now looks its age.

HANK'S TONE

For a ballpark Hank tone, set up two delays (224 and 336 ms respectively), select a bridge single-coil pickup and use a clean amp channel with just enough gain to give compression and bite.

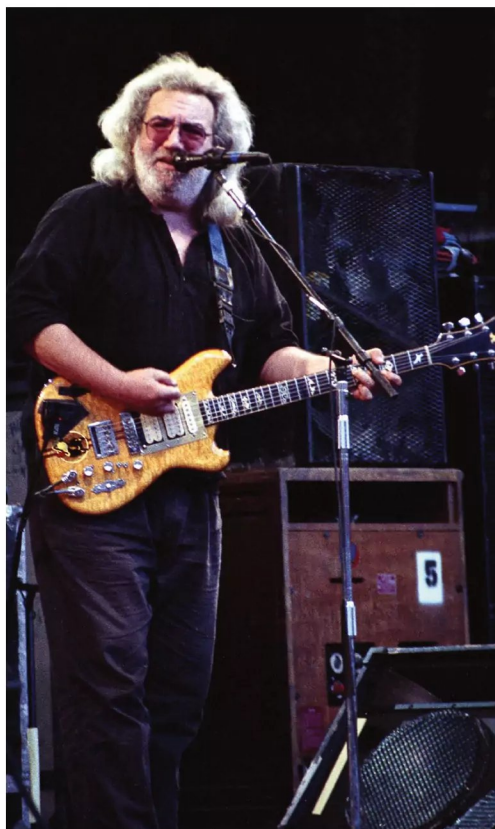
DOUG IRWIN WOLF

The Grateful Dead's
unique axe

An original like Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia needed an eccentric guitar, and Doug Irwin built it for him. Using laminated maple and purpleheart, an incredibly stiff South American wood, Irwin invented an instrument with a new shape, hardware, and controls. An ingenious plate system allowed pickup systems to be dropped in and out, and Garcia settled on an unusual humbucker/humbucker/single-coil arrangement. Two outputs allowed Garcia to run his effects loop separately and switch it from the guitar.

WOLF'S KEY FEATURES

25" scale length, five-way selector switch, twin-output jacks (one routed straight to amp, one through Jerry's pedalboard), Schaller machine heads and bridge, chrome/nickel plated brass hardware.



LES PAULS & SGS

The greatest Gibsons that made history

It's barely comprehensible now, but the early Les Paul Standard was something of a commercial flop, discontinued after barely three years. Some of the most famous Les Pauls, like Clapton's Beano guitar, were bought for a song in the mid 60s when next to no one wanted them. Still, the combination of mahogany, maple, and

Gibson's just-invented PAF humbuckers later proved unbeatable. In 1961, Gibson marketed the SG (Solid Guitar) as a replacement Les Paul model, but Les refused to endorse it. The difference in the guitars' tones is alluded to from their appearance: the deep-bodied, rounder Les Paul has a thicker tone with huge mids, while the SG is comparatively leaner, with a biting top end.



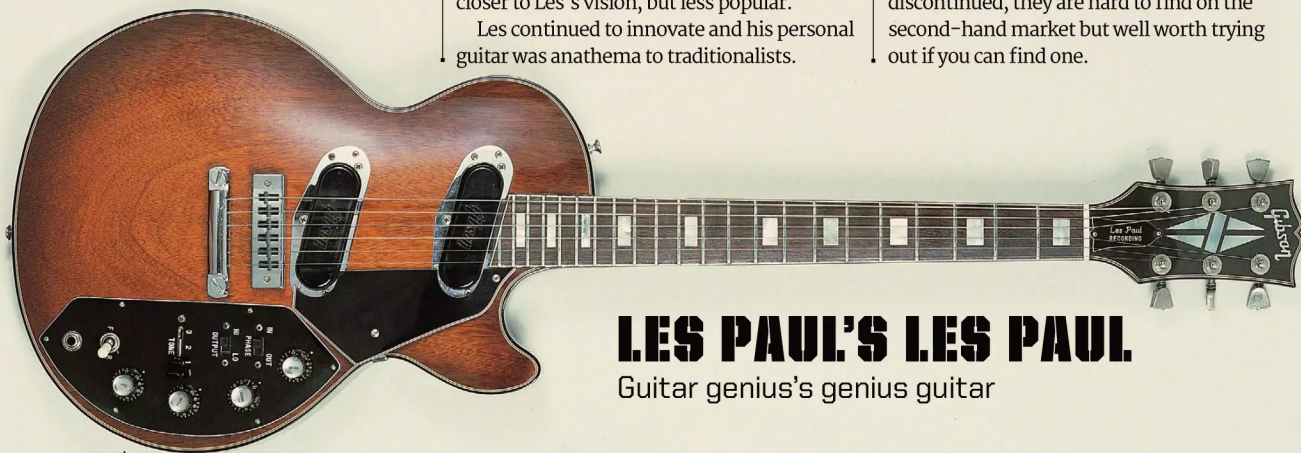
Fans of the Les Paul guitar tend to be ardent purists, always seeking the most authentic recreation of 1959. Ironically, the guitar was designed by one of the most forward-thinking musicians of the 20th century. Les had prototyped his own solidbodies in the 1930s, one out of

a railway sleeper and another, 'the Log', out of a 4x4" board with strings. He was looking to eliminate body resonance entirely to maximise sustain. In practice, the most desirable guitars are those that resonate exactly the right amount, producing long sustain with woody tone. The extremely heavy Les Pauls of the 70s and 80s are closer to Les's vision, but less popular.

Les continued to innovate and his personal guitar was anathema to traditionalists.

Called the Recording Model, it featured low impedance pickups, switchable circuits for recording direct or with an amplifier, and a complex array of knobs including a phase switch and a 'decade' switch that tuned treble harmonics.

In 2014 Gibson released an updated version of Les' original design (pictured here). Now discontinued, they are hard to find on the second-hand market but well worth trying out if you can find one.



LES PAUL'S LES PAUL
Guitar genius's genius guitar



MAGIC AKA GREENY

The Les Paul
of rock royalty

Depending on who you believe, Peter Green's '59 Les Paul's spectacular out-of-phase sound was because either the neck pickup's magnet was installed upside down (luthier Jol Dantzig) or its coils were rewound the wrong way (Bare Knuckle's Tim Mills). However, Greeny's magic was not just the pickups, but its open and airy acoustic tone that translated into a beautiful amplified sound in all positions. Gary Moore owned it for 25 years, before Kirk Hammett reportedly paid \$2 million for it in 2014.



JIMMY PAGE NUMBER ONE

Everyone's number one Les Paul

Joe Perry's tobacco burst was cool, but Number One was the reason Perry – and every other rocker – wanted a Les Paul. Jimmy Page bought the guitar from Joe Walsh, and shaved the neck dangerously thin. Page's tone on *Led Zeppelin II* – Number One into a cranked Marshall Plexi – defined the sound of hard rock. It's been refinished, a phase switch added, and the bridge pickup changed to a 60s model, but it's worth more than any untouched original.

THE GRAIL CUSTOM

A Les Paul for
maximum metal

Les Pauls were rare in metal when Zakk arrived, but he quickly showed how lairy the guitars can get. He traded a Gibson doubleneck for the Grail, which already had EMG pickups. Zakk felt it would be disrespectful to Randy Rhoads to play a white Custom, so he asked for an Alfred Hitchcock vertigo graphic to be applied. The tech painted a bullseye instead, with no time to change it before a photo shoot.

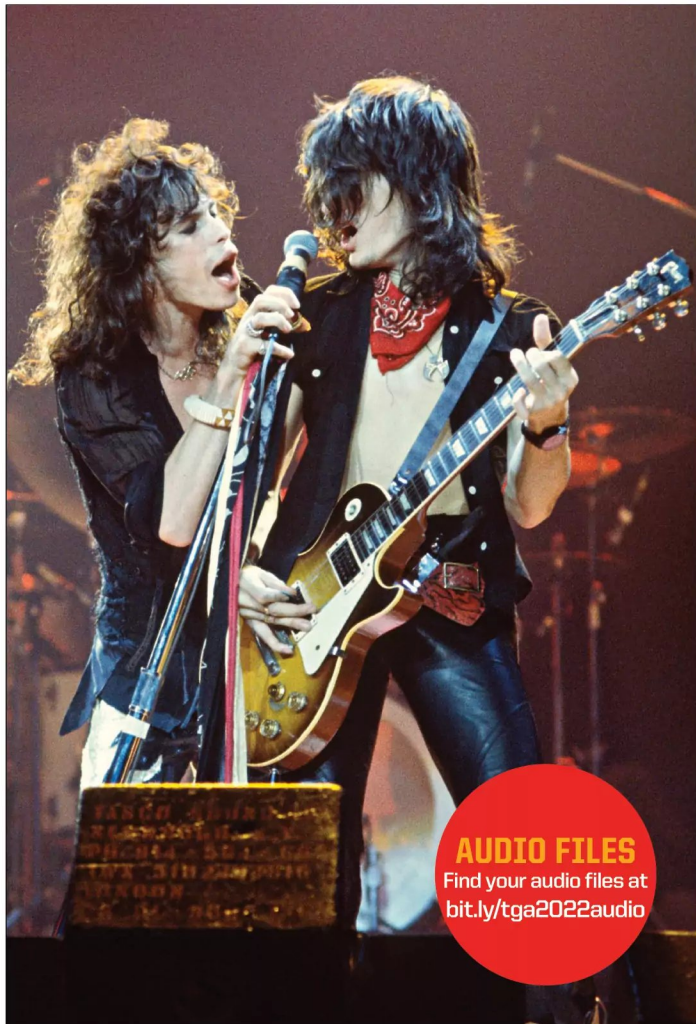


KRIS DERRIG LES PAUL COPY

A copy that revived
Gibson's fortunes

Gibson's popularity took a downturn in the 80s, with some questionable quality control and ridiculously heavy instruments. This boosted demand for good quality replicas, and Kris Derrig made some of the best. Slash had been playing pointy-headstocked Jacksons in G N' R, but when recording they didn't sound gutsy enough, so Guns manager Alan Niven saved the day by finding the Derrig. Visually, the Les Paul separated Slash from hair metal posers, making him heir to Jimmy Page and Joe Perry.





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'59 TOBACCO BURST

The OTHER Les Paul of rock royalty

Rivalling Greeny's provenance is a tobacco burst, number 9-0663, as owned by several renowned players. Joe Perry made it famous, playing it on *Rocks*, *Draw The Line*, and Aerosmith's gargantuan tours. When Joe hit hard times in 1982, the guitar was pawned. It briefly showed up with Eric Johnson before Slash bought it, playing it in the *November Rain* video and on *Use Your Illusion*. Perry begged for it back, and Slash eventually obliged on Joe's 50th birthday.

PLAY LIKE PETER GREEN

TRACK 10

$\text{♩} = 140$
A7

BU 10 (12) 10 8 10 8 10 (12) 8

TAB

We've used an eq boost in the midrange to ape the classic out of phase Greeny Les Paul tone. Think BB King but louder and faster and you'll get the feel of our typical lick.

PLAY LIKE NEIL YOUNG

TRACK 11

$\text{♩} = 130$
E5

TAB

Neil Young's 'Old Black' Les Paul started life as a 1953 Goldtop, eventually refinished and with a Bigsby vibrato added. Our riff uses easy powerchords to help you keep on rocking!

PLAY LIKE SLASH

TRACK 12

$\text{♩} = 130$
G5

let ring - 3 3 2 3 2 3 2

TAB

These arpeggios represent one of the G N' R's classic LP tones: the middle position clean, as heard on *Paradise City* and *Knockin' On Heaven's Door*. An MXR Stereo Chorus is the icing on the cake.

SET UP YOUR LES PAUL OR SG BRIDGE



STEP 1: BRIDGE HEIGHT ADJUSTMENT

Set bridge height by turning the thumbwheel adjuster. At the 12th fret, measure the distance between the sixth string and the fret and aim for 2mm. On the first string, set the clearance to 1.5mm. Do a final check for any string buzz.



STEP 2: INTONATION

Trying a new brand of strings? They may need different intonation settings. Play a harmonic at the 12th fret then compare it to the fretted note at the same fret. If the fretted note is sharp, extend the scale length by moving the saddle farther from the neck. If it's flat, move it the other way.



STEP 3: SET THE TAILPIECE

Thought you were done, eh? The tailpiece bar controls a couple of things: the down tension relating to the collapsing bridge factor and also string tension. Higher bar height means easier string bending. Use a 50p piece to turn it; a flat-head screwdriver can shear the chrome.

ANGUS YOUNG'S SG STANDARD

A high-voltage rock machine

Every AC/DC album has been recorded with an SG, and although Angus doesn't know how old his favourite is, he generally favours late 60s and early 70s models. Not only do the SG cutaways match Angus's *Highway To Hell* devil horns, the tone seems purpose built for his style. Like AC/DC's songs, there is no excess fat on the SG's tone, just a razor edge for delivering precision powerchords. The neck is set out further from the body than most guitars, so Angus's wild vibrato is possible even on the highest frets.

Angus's touring SG, a Walnut model, suffered a broken truss rod in the late 70s, which was repaired with a new neck by Birmingham luthier John Diggins of Jaydee Guitars. After that, AC/DC relied on Jaydee any time one of Angus's guitars got seriously fubared. As AC/DC toured *Back In Black*, Angus sweated so profusely that he rotted the electrics of one SG. It was beyond repair, so Jaydee rebuilt it from scratch, adding the now iconic lightning bolt inlays.

It's the world's most recognisable SG and, thanks to its appearance on every subsequent AC/DC album, the one heard by the most people.

JAYDEE 'OLD BOY' SG

The metal god's number one

After much begging, Tony Iommi eventually persuaded Jaydee's John Diggins to be his guitar tech for a US tour. Diggins thought a spare guitar might be handy, so he built what was to become Tony's most iconic SG. It was also to function as a test bed for pickup designs, and Diggins came up with a number of bespoke designs. His humbuckers were narrower than Gibson's but with huge output, and Tony eventually settled on a bridge pickup with blade polepieces. Iommi had struggled with poor intonation on his SG Specials, so Diggins went for a Schaller Badass bridge. His ebony fingerboard marked a shift towards 24-fret necks for metal, and the crucifix inlays gave Iommi his visual signature.

Completed in two weeks before a tour, the Old Boy flew to America with the lacquer still soft. The paint bubbled and flaked in the US heat, creating the battered, rusty appearance all metal fans recognise. It took some time to find the pickups Iommi liked, but the guitar finally made its recording debut on *Heaven And Hell*. From there it became Tony's number 1, making it arguably the most metal guitar there has ever been.

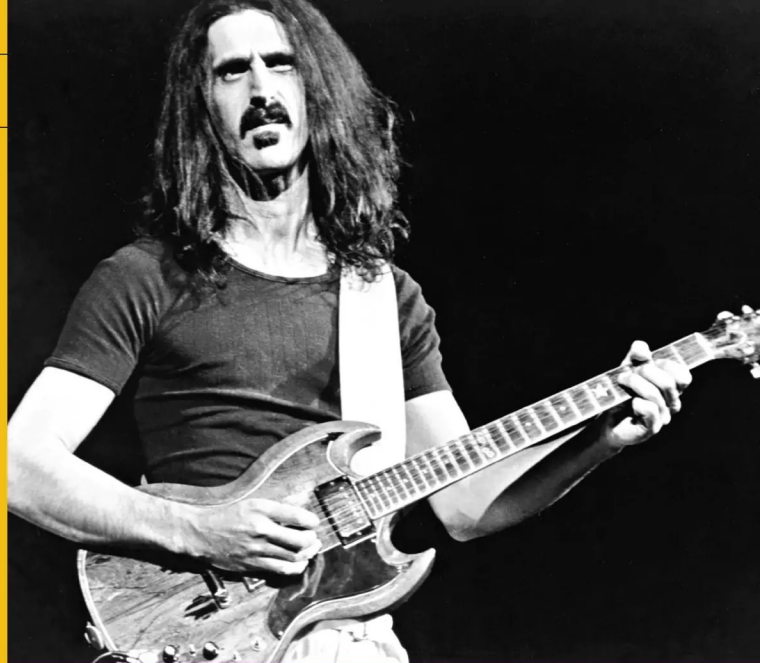




'67 SG STANDARD

An American legend

Robby Krieger played a few SGs with The Doors, but the one you hear at the start of *Roadhouse Blues* is the one to remember – a '67 SG Standard with a vibrola tailpiece. The simple combination of PAFs and mahogany gave the guitars unforgettable bite. SGs also featured on *Light My Fire*, *Love Me Two Times*, and *Love Her Madly*, the most enduring Doors classics, although sometimes Krieger chose a P90-equipped Special for extra bark.



BABY SNAKES SG

Zappa's feedback machine

Frank Zappa's guitars became test beds for his mad scientist modifications, and his son Dweezil has explained his secrets. Frank's main pursuit was controllable feedback, and he fitted his guitars with active EQ circuits offering a huge 18dB boost. At each venue he'd find the feedback resonant frequency, then boost it. You could try a parametric EQ for similar results. The Baby Snakes SG was Zappa's main 70s guitar, with details such as stylish inlays and 23-fret range proving its non-Gibson origins.



1983 SG STANDARD

Bringer of drop-tuned chaos

The SG is a potent weapon for down tuning, despite Gibson's standard fairly short 24.75" scale length. That biting treble means the guitar keeps its clarity. Mastodon's Brent Hinds exploits this ability, regularly tuning his SG to D standard (DGCFA). His favourite is a 1983 model he bought from a member of The Guess Who. As well as its cutting tone and slim neck, Brent has observed that the SG's thin, contoured body makes it ideal for the larger gentleman



'OLD FAITHFUL' LES PAUL SG

Pioneering shred tone

Sometimes dismissed as a Hendrix clone, Frank Marino's Grateful Dead-meets-jazz improvisations featured some serious speed. His wild solos influenced Paul Gilbert, Zakk Wylde and Joe Bonamassa, and his singing SG tone was as significant as his licks. It still has its original PAFs and vibrola tailpiece, but had to be retired from touring by 2007 for its increasing fragility. Marino tried putting Strat pickups in an SG, but removing the necessary wood made the neck fall off.



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SG CUSTOM

Taking gospel-blues to the masses

In 1964, Sister Rosetta Tharpe hit the UK with the Blues And Gospel Train Tour, along with blues legends Muddy Waters and Reverend Gary Davis. The godmother of rock 'n' roll had performed since the 30s, but this time she was televised by the BBC, and seen by Jimmy Page and Mick Jagger. Tharpe wielded a Les Paul Custom – as it was then called – a white three-pickup SG with sideways vibrola. Her blues-gospel fusion was explosive.

PLAY LIKE TONY IOMMI

TRACK 13

♩=125

E⁵ D⁵ E⁵ D⁵ E⁵Em⁷

PM – – | PM – – |

TAB

9 7 9 12 9 12 9 12

7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7

0 0 3 0 0 0 0 0

To get inside Iommi's riffing style you'll be using powerchords that follow the minor pentatonic scale (E minor here). *Iron Man*'s riff uses this scale (E G A B D) starting on B and adding an extra F# note.

PLAY LIKE FRANK ZAPPA

TRACK 14

♩=70

E⁷

8va

BU 15(17) 15 BU 15(17) 15-14-12 12/15 15\12 12\10 10\8

TAB

We've raised the mids here to ape Zappa's tone; a wah pedal in a fixed position does a similar job. We've also used a ring modulator for a random, unruly wobble!

PLAY LIKE BRENT HINDS

TRACK 15

♩=160

N.C. C⁵ D⁵ N.C. C⁵ D⁵ N.C. C⁵ D⁵ N.C. B^{b5}

PM – – | PM – – | PM – – | PM – – |

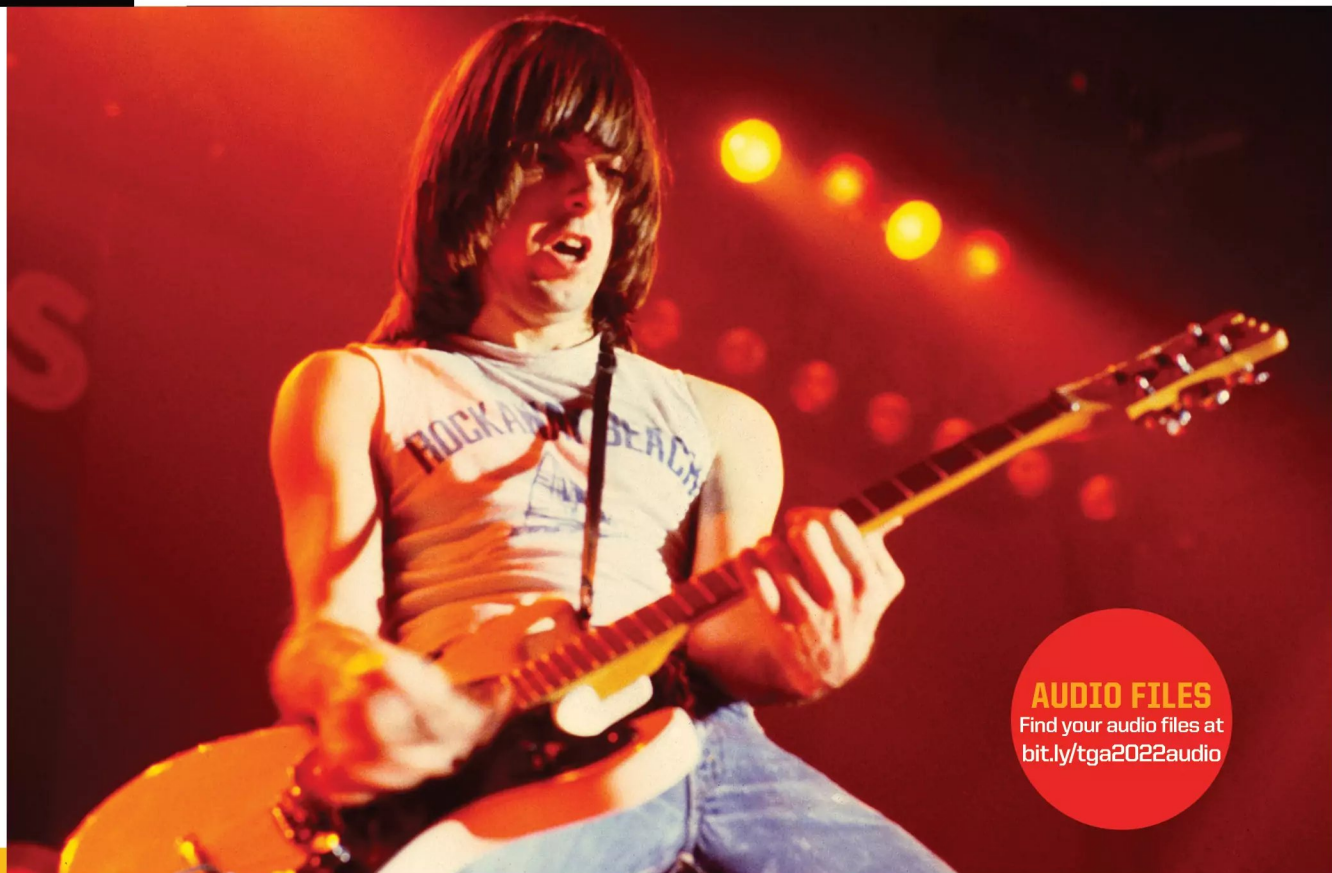
TAB

D A F C G D

7 9 7 9 7 9 5

0 0 5 7 0 0 5 7 0 0 5 7 0 0 3

An SG in D standard tuning is a starting point for Mastodon style tones. Our example combines some palm-muting and sliding powerchords to create a heavy sounding, fun-to-play riff.



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MOSRITE VENTURES II

Raw punk machine

Punk originator, Johnny Ramone played the Mosrite 'slab body' model exclusively: like him, it was not at all mainstream and completely without frippery. He always used the DiMarzio FS-1 bridge pickup, a snarling, angrier Strat model. The neck pickup was just for looks; Johnny eventually had it disconnected. The fixed bridge kept its tuning under Ramone's hail of downstrokes, and that was all Johnny asked of it. Johnny ran everything on 10, but if your own bridge pickup is too thin, try turning down the tone.

PLAY LIKE JOHNNY RAMONE

TRACK 16

$\text{♩} = 180$

A D/A E/B D/A E/B D/A

T	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	9	7	7	7	9	9	7
A	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	9	7	7	7	9	9	7
B	7	7	7	7	5	5	5	7	5	5	5	7	7	5
	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	7	5	5	5	7	7	5

This riff is typical Ramones stuff, with three staple chords (from a I-IV-V progression, theory fans!) outlining the band's rock 'n' roll influences. No down-up strumming here! Stick to downstrokes instead

GIBSON EDS-1275 DOUBLENECK

Not just a gimmick

The ultimate stage prop, the EDS-1275 has rocked stadiums with John McLaughlin, Rush's Alex Lifeson, the Eagles' Don Felder, and Def Leppard's Steve Clark. In part, they all pay tribute to Jimmy Page's iconic live performances of *Stairway To Heaven*, but this guitar would've been forgotten if it were only a gimmick. Both necks on at once create a ghostly sympathetic resonance, the huge body has its own tone, and it enables instant switching from six to 12 strings





DANELECTRO 3021

Jimmy Page's secret weapon

Danelectros were budget guitars, with partly hollow hardboard bodies. Their unique lipstick pickups had a raw, ripping tone that Page loved, especially with DADGAD tuning. He reached for his 3021 on *Kashmir*, *In My Time Of Dying* and *White Summer/Black Mountain Side*, and it was backup for his main squeeze, the Dragon Telecaster, in Zep's early days. Watch Zeppelin at Earl's Court 1975 to see it in anger.

BUDGET BANGER

Sporting cheap masonite and vinyl over more desirable materials and priced under £40 when Page bought his, the 3021 proves budget guitars can be great.

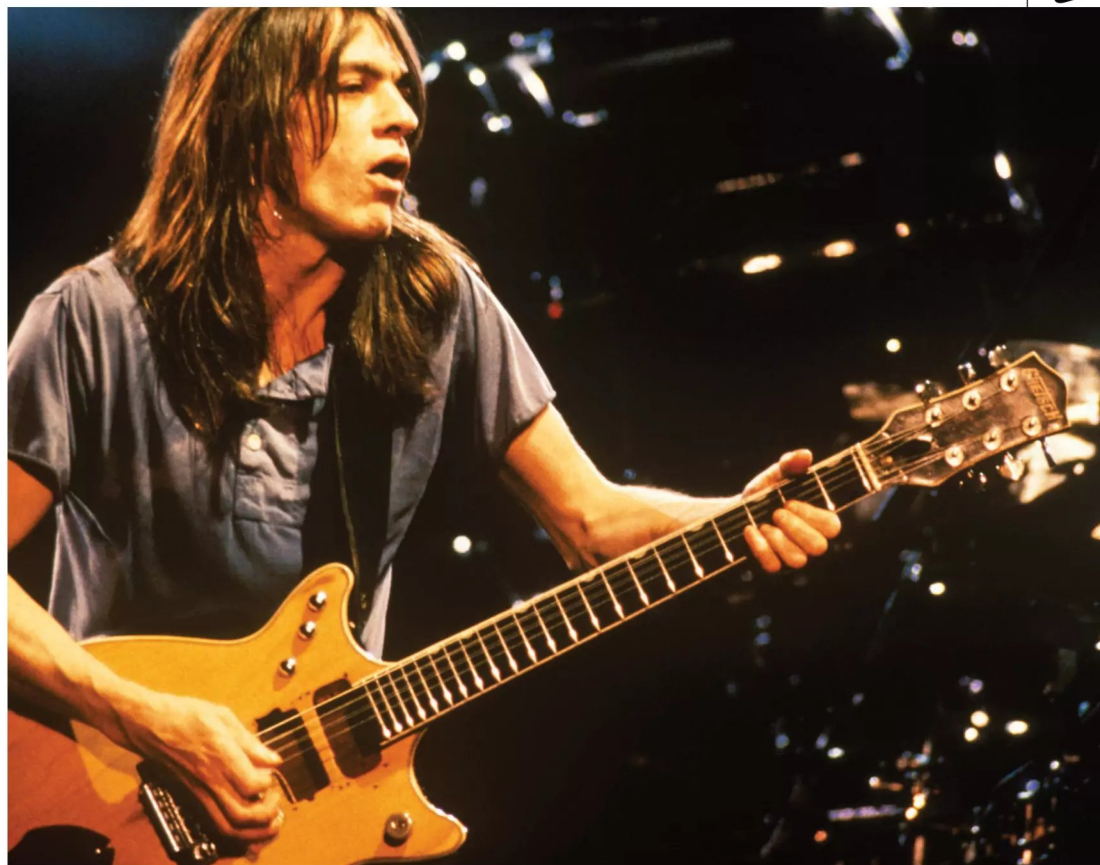
GRETSCH JET FIREBIRD

The sound of AC/DC's biggest riffs

A Gretsch might seem an unlikely choice for hard rock but it provided Malcolm Young with clarity alongside Angus's Gibson muscle. Vibrato tailpieces can flutter when you hit hard – and Malcolm hit *hard* – so he replaced it with a fixed bridge. He only needed the bridge pickup, so the others went in the bin. To sound like Malcolm, try turning the gain down, and then turning it down some more. Dig in with your picking hand until the crunch comes back.

MALCOLM'S SECRET

Planning on nailing Malcolm's rhythm style? Most of his playing is based around easy open chords. The difficult part is nailing his super-tight down-strumming.





OFFSETS & ANGLED GUITARS

The alternative choice of guitar?

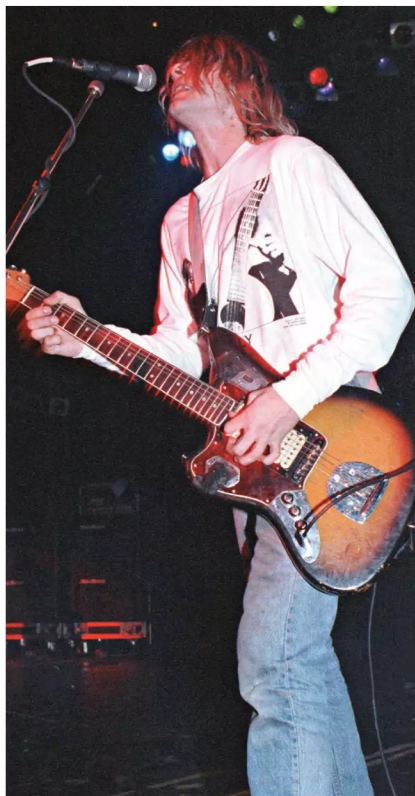
Rock has always welcomed misfits and rebels, and the electric guitar has long obliged with unconventional designs. Astonishingly, the Gibson Flying V and Explorer date to 1958, closer to the start of World War II than the first Metallica album. Offset designs were ahead of their time, waiting for the right music. Some

say Fender's Jaguar and Jazzmaster didn't truly come into their own until the 1990s. As well as unusual looks, these guitars offer individual sounds. Although the Flying V and Explorer share SG hardware, their shapes mean they resonate with their own distinct voices. Fender, meanwhile, designed bespoke pickups for their offset guitars, guaranteeing a devoted fanbase.

FENDER JAGUAR

The definitive grunge guitar

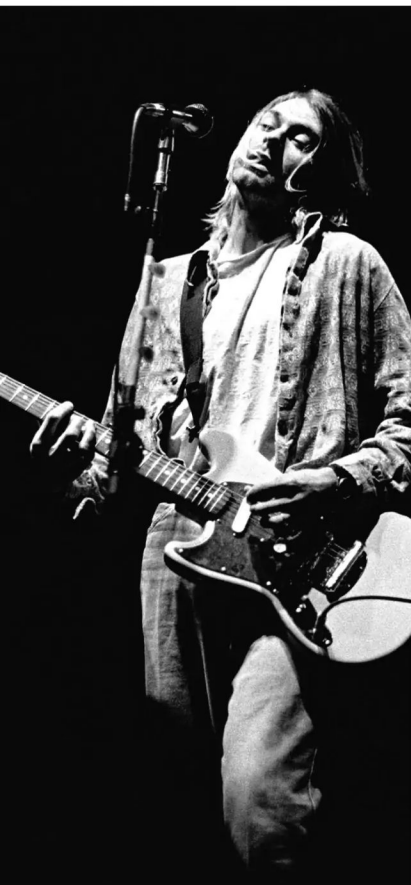
Kurt Cobain bought his 1965 Jaguar through a free ads paper in 1991. It was probably one of the few affordable left-handed guitars available to him, as Jaguars were out of fashion with collectors. In his hands, it became a Jag in shape only; the exclusive Jaguar 'rhythm circuit' controls were disconnected, and the single coil pickups replaced with DiMarzio PAF and Super Distortion models. The guitar sounded huge and powered Nirvana from *Nevermind* onwards.



FENDER JAZZMASTER

For alternative rock connoisseurs

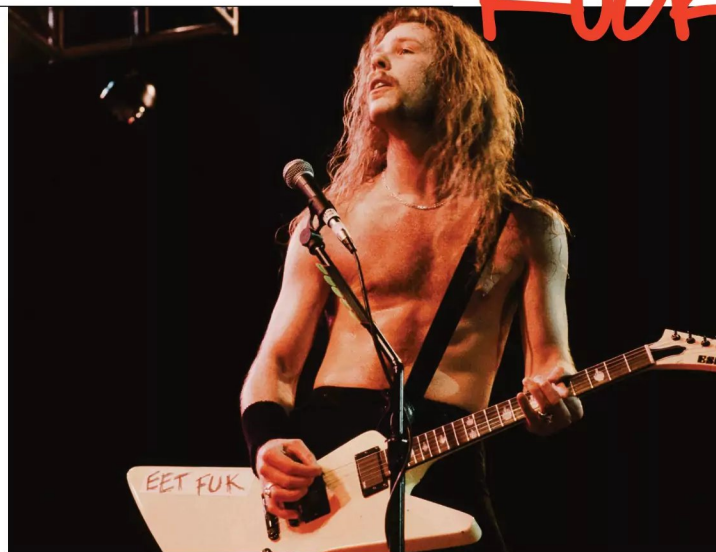
Kurt's Jaguar sent aspiring alt-rockers to pawn shops in pursuit of the Nirvana look, and many discovered that the Jazzmaster's fat, aggressive pickups were ideal for lo-fi rock. The Jazzmaster's alt-rock cred was furthered by associations with Sonic Youth and Dinosaur Jr, who'd used theirs since the 80s, and shoegazers like My Bloody Valentine. They were very conspicuously not neon pink superstrats, and they sounded awesome with fuzz pedals. Job done.



FENDER MUSTANG

Kurt's choice
for *In Utero*

As the *Nevermind* tour concluded, Cobain fancied a change and ordered a bunch of Mustangs. Fender's Custom Shop weren't tooled up for lefty Mustangs, so they gave the job to Scott Zimmerman, a prototype builder for Fender Japan. One of these, a sky blue model known as the Skystang III, became Kurt's favourite guitar from *In Utero* onwards. His tech changed the pickup to a Duncan JB and added a Tune-o-matic bridge, making another grunge legend.



HETFIELD'S 'EET FUK' ESP

Defining the sound and look of thrash

The sticker James Hetfield originally made said "EET FUK SLEEP" in reference to his three favourite activities (playing guitar presumably being fourth), but had to be cut down to fit on the body. ESP built it for James in 1987, replacing his Gibsons, and it was his main guitar through the *Black Album* period. Pivotaly, it marked James's switch to active EMG pickups, which, largely thanks to his and Kirk's endorsement, became the industry standard for extreme metal.



DEAN ML

The only choice
for cowboys
from hell

Flying Vs are quite metal, Explorers are quite metal, and if you combine the two you have an axe fit for Dimebag Darrell. Dime won his ML in 1982 but didn't like it, passing it on to a friend who changed the pickups, added a Floyd Rose, and resprayed it with the legendary lightning bolt finish. When he gave it back in 1987, Dime didn't recognise the guitar, but as Pantera exploded it became his signature model, aka the Dean From Hell.

Photos: Getty Images



GIBSON FIREBIRD

Gibson's Fender
beater

In the early 60s, Gibson's designs looked a bit stuffy next to the Stratocaster, so they hired car designer Ray Dietrich to shake things up. The Firebird had to sound unique too, so it got its own pickups. Contrary to popular belief these were different from the later mini-humbuckers, and a good Firebird sounds more like a Telecaster on steroids than a Les Paul. Johnny Winter discovered this stinging sound was ideal for slide, often using his in open tunings.



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PLAY LIKE JOHNNY WINTER

TRACK 17

♩ = 58
B $\flat$ 7

TAB

Our Johnny Winter-style lick is in 12/8 time, which means the rhythm notation can look a bit more intimidating than it actually is to play. Take it slow and absorb some classic blues vocabulary.

PLAY LIKE MICHAEL SCHENKER

TRACK 18

♩ = 115
C 5 F 5

TAB

Few players are as synonymous with Gibson's Flying V than Scorpions and UFO legend, Michael Schenker. He'd often use a wah pedal for solos, keeping the treadle stationary in his chosen sweet spot to act like a filter and provide Schenker's unique lead tone.



GIBSON FLYING V

Not just for metal

It's hardly surprising the Flying V was commercially unsuccessful in 1958; there's no way a pre-Hendrix world was truly ready for its radical looks. But years before Hendrix made the V into a rock legend, Albert King discovered it was a surprisingly subtle blues guitar. A lefty playing upside down, Albert found the 24.75" scale helped his incredible string bends, and he produced all kinds of delicate tones by balancing the pickups with the Flying V's independent volume controls.

PLAY LIKE THE EDGE

TRACK 19

♩ = 138
Em G D C

w/delay 326ms

TAB

An Explorer player since age 17, The Edge's dotted eighth note delay rhythms are the core of the U2 sound. The trick is to play straight eighth notes - when set up correctly, the delay effect adds notes in between the notes you're playing. Here, at 138 bpm, 326 ms is the correct delay time.

STAND AND DELIVER!

Keep your offset guitar upright with TG's choice of guitar stands



1 HERCULES STANDS GSP39WB PLUS GUITAR HANGER £30

Obviously not a stage-ready solution, but, for home use, this strong and reliable hanger will ensure your offsets stay upright!

2 FENDER UNIVERSAL A-FRAME GUITAR STAND £29

With adjustable arms and extra side support, Fender's universal stand should suit Jazzmasters, Explorers, V shapes and more.



3 HERCULES 695268 PLUS GUITAR STAND £99

It's perhaps not elegant, but its height and multi-guitar suitability make this Hercules a strong contender for your cash.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ Fingerstyle riffing
- ✓ Hammer-ons and pull-offs
- ✓ Drop-D Tuning

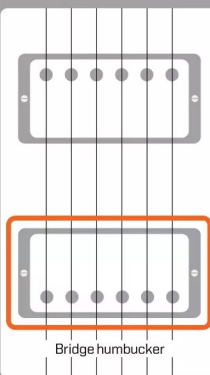


RIFF OF THE MONTH

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GET THE TONE

CHANNEL OVERDRIVE



Jake's main guitar is an original 1961 SG with PAF pickups. His amp of choice is a Marshall Astoria combo which is a modern amp that delivers vintage Marshall tone. We set the gain to five, but try cranking it up higher and rolling off your guitar's own volume. The idea is to maintain an element of the clean guitar sound so the notes cut through. We recommend dialling in a little spring reverb throughout, plus, if you have one at your disposal, a dedicated reverb pedal for the cavernous echo which opens the track and begins to fade at 0:15.

GRETA VAN FLEET

Age Of Machine

Greta Van Fleet's 2018 debut album put them firmly on the rock 'n' roll map with their 70s-inspired brand of blues-rock, and 2021 sees the band follow up with more of the same on sophomore release *The Battle At Garden's Gate*. We're looking at the latest single here.

Guitarist Jake Kiszka plays this subdued, hypnotic riff using fingerstyle to outline an

open Dm chord. The chord uses four strings, so it makes sense to assign a pick-hand finger to each string. Rest your thumb on the fourth string and your first, second and third fingers should fall naturally into place on the three treble strings.

At the end of the riff quickly, jump over to the fifth and sixth strings to play a quick powerchord slide which you can strum with your thumb or first finger.

Follow our slowed-down video performance on our website for a clearer idea of how this riff is played.

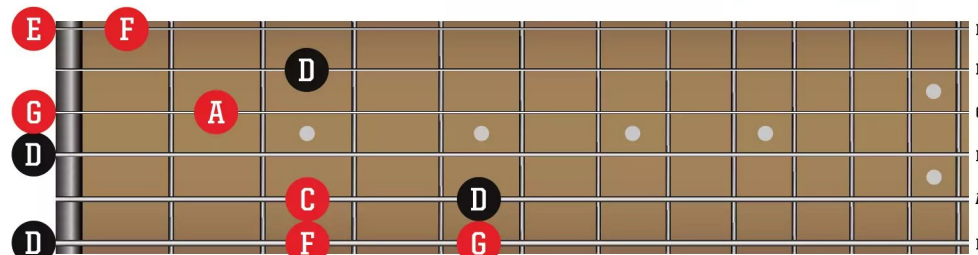
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:00-1:00

Tempo: 64 bpm

Key/scale: D minor

Techniques: Fingerstyle, hammer-ons and pull-offs, drop-D tuning



This scale box shows you the notes you'll be playing. The bulk of Kiszka's riff is played using the highest four strings – essentially an open Dm chord. Get a feel for proceedings by practising lifting off your second

finger and hammering on from the open G string to the 2nd-fret A note. Also try pulling off with your first finger to play F to E on the first string. The two bass strings are used at the end of the riff for the F5 and G5

powerchords which are both played with a first- or third-finger barre. Finally, note that the riff is played in drop D tuning (DADGBE), so make sure to tune your sixth string down a tone.

MANSON GUITARS

Hi-tech wizardry behind the Muse sound

Matt Bellamy is perhaps the only guitarist since Tom Morello to coax radically new sounds from six-string guitars. Where Morello took a novel approach with largely stock instruments, Matt Bellamy has embraced technology to create effects impossible with only a piece of wood and regular pickups. Matt's vision was brought to life by Exeter luthier Hugh Manson and his colleague Tim Stark.

The first Muse Manson was the DeLorean, with an aluminium finish and a ZVex Fuzz Factory built into the guitar. The feedback effects on *Plug In Baby* are the Fuzz Factory, and having the pedal's main controls on the front of the guitar enabled Matt to manipulate the feedback sounds while still playing. A Roland synth pickup could trigger any synth sound imaginable, like the trumpet solo on *Darkshines*.

Subsequent Manson-Muse collaborations have been even more ambitious. The Kaoss Manson incorporates a touchscreen for real time control of almost any effect parameter (see the DJ scratching sounds on *Supermassive Black Hole*) and a Sustainiac pickup (used on the intro to *Invincible*) for infinite control of sustain and feedback. His latest innovation has an Arturia software synth built into the guitar so he can play it live without a laptop.



140



AIRLINE RES-O-GLASS

Jack White's garage rock machine

Not only does the Res-O-Glass make the perfect visual partner in the *Seven Nation Army* video, it has a lo-fi tone that screams garage rock. The big pickups might look like covered humbuckers, but they're actually an unusual single coil design. The body is semi-hollow with fibreglass front and rear sections surrounding a maple core, and the wooden bridge floats above the body. The acoustic tone is boxy and resonant, and wound up it sounds like... The White Stripes.

GET THE SOUND: SEVEN NATION ARMY

As it turns out, Jack didn't use the Res-O-Glass to record his biggest hit - that honour goes to an early-60s Kay K6533 archtop hollowbody with single Kay 'cheese grater' single-coil neck pickup. He used fuzz distortion courtesy of an Electro-Harmonix Big Muff Pi (with the sustain set high and other controls at a little over 50 per cent). The most essential item is a pitch shifter. Jack used a DigiTech Whammy set down one octave.



GRETSCH TWANG MACHINE

Rock 'n' roll rhythm in a box

Bo Diddley helped turn the blues into rock 'n' roll, influencing Buddy Holly, Elvis, and the Beatles. To do it, he built his own guitar with a rectangular body and a pickup he made from parts of an old turntable. Gretsch made the Twang Machine based on his design, and Diddley's eye-catching design encouraged rock 'n' roll's burgeoning showmanship. It also established DeArmond single coil pickups' place in the rock pantheon, and everyone had to have that twang.

Photos: Getty

FIVE SONGS THAT RIPPED THE BO DIDDLEY RHYTHM...

Bo Diddley will always be associated with the signature rhythm of his own self-titled song. And, as it turns out, quite a few other artists have used this rhythm too. Here are five of the best:

1. Duane Eddy - *Cannonball*
2. Johnny Otis - *Wille And The Hand Jive*
3. Guns N' Roses - *Mr. Brownstone*
4. Primal Scream - *Movin' On Up*
5. U2 - *Desire*



PRS SINGLECUT

The choice for modern metal

The PRS Custom 24 offered a best-of-both approach to Fender and Gibson ideas, but back in 2000 the Singlecut saw Smith trying to move closer to classic Les Paul territory. The 25" scale length worked better for heavy riffing than Gibson's 24.75", and PRS' efficient tremolo design meant whammy users could access Les Paul fatness too. As a result, modern rockers like Mark Tremonti and Story of the Year couldn't get enough. Gibson sued but PRS won, only gaining more attention for the Singlecut models.



ACOUSTIC GUITARS

Not just for singers-songwriters...

Rock couldn't happen until the electric guitar was invented. Pickups and amplifiers meant the guitar could be heard with a drum kit, and they made distortion possible. Yet the electric guitar didn't bury the acoustic, and almost every great rock album is full of both. Sometimes they're double-tracked with distorted riffs for depth and clarity, sometimes

they're songwriting workhorses, and sometimes they provide contrast to the onslaught of electrics. Lists of all-time greatest rock songs are dominated by acoustics: *Stairway To Heaven*, *Hotel California*, *Hey Jude*, *Brown Sugar*. Strumming just isn't the same on electrics, and sometimes a mix just needs an acoustic. Here are the acoustic guitars that rock couldn't live without.

GIBSON J-160E

One of the first electro-acoustics

The J-160E was Gibson's first attempt at putting a pickup in a full-size dreadnought, and the musicians of the day immediately saw the need. George Harrison's J-160E is the only guitar which appears on every single Beatles album, and John Lennon's was not far behind. The P90 pickup didn't sound much like a true acoustic, but it was a useful sound that gave the likes of *Norwegian Wood* a fighting chance of being heard live.

Photos: Getty



Knopfler's 1937 National Style O Resonator, shot for *Guitarist* magazine in 2018



NATIONAL STYLE O

The acoustic guitar, louder

Mark Knopfler's 1937 National appears on the cover of *Brothers In Arms* and was used most notably on *Romeo And Juliet* and *Telegraph Road*. Before electric amplifiers, resonator guitars were a solid way to make your guitar louder. The sound is transferred through the bridge to metal cones that project the sound forward. They're not just loud, they also have a distinctively metallic tone that suited both Knopfler's fingerpicking and slide playing by the likes of *Son House*.



This is a later 1971 Sovereign. Page plays a natural finish mid-60s model

HARMONY SOVEREIGN

The guitar that wrote Zeppelin...

Songwriters have always known an acoustic guitar is the perfect vehicle. Jimmy Page bought his spruce-topped Harmony Sovereign H1260 in the mid 60s and loved it so much he wrote the first four Zeppelin albums on it. It was even used to record *Stairway To Heaven* and much of *Led Zeppelin III*. If that's not enough to convince you of its place in rock history, a Sovereign was also Syd Barrett's first guitar.

MARTIN D-18E

MTV Unplugged history maker

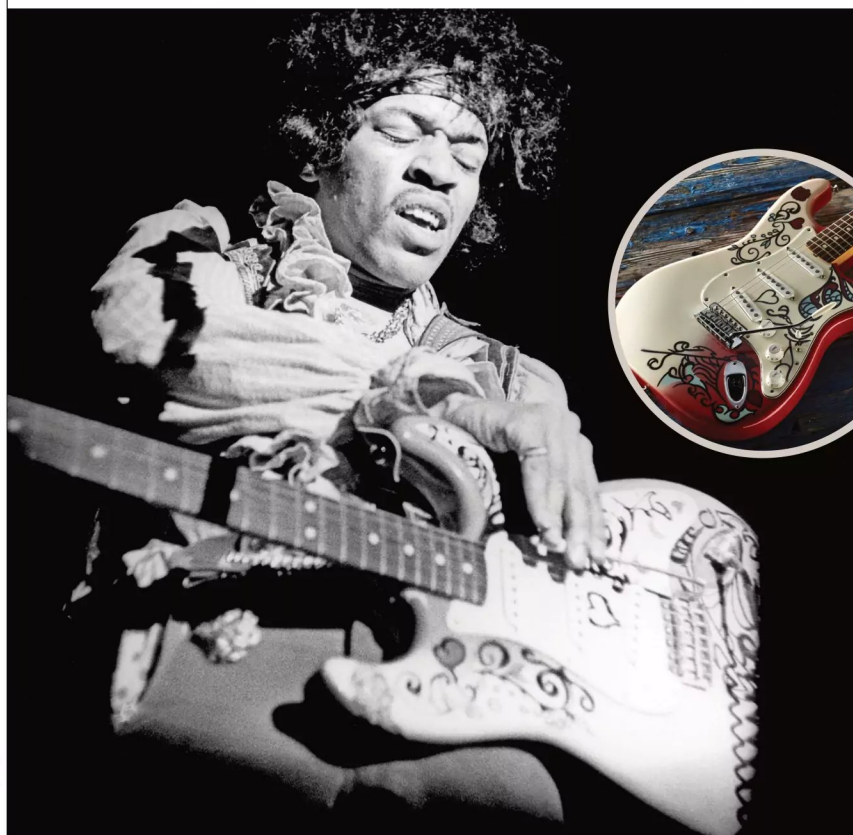
While purists argued whether it was really unplugged if Kurt used a fuzz pedal, the rest of the world was just amazed by Nirvana's *MTV Unplugged In New York*. Kurt wasn't limited by convention or genre, and his D-18e let him straddle the acoustic and electric worlds easily. Factory-fitted with DeArmond pickups popular in early Gretsches, Kurt's D-18e added a Bartolini soundhole pickup for more typical acoustic tones. The guitar in question fetched \$6m at auction in 2020.



FENDER STRATOCASTER

A true American icon

Vintage Strats were not always objects of desire. Clapton bought six in 1970 for a few hundred bucks, and EVH thought nothing of cannibalising a 1958 for the Frankenstrat. It took the likes of Hendrix and Blackmore revealing a Strat's potential for the public to catch on. Strats require some finesse. Jeff Beck proves the tremolo can stay in tune, but a poorly set up one can be a nightmare. Still, the Strat's pickups cut through like little else, the tremolo was radically more efficient than previous designs, and it was light years ahead on playability and comfort. Even now, the Strat is still the benchmark electric guitar.



MONTEREY STRAT

Hendrix changed the world.
This guitar was there...

Strats were not cool when Hendrix rocked up at 1967's Monterey Pop Festival, associated with such achingly white acts as Buddy Holly and the Beach Boys. As he climbed on stage and reinvented the guitar, the Strat's possibilities expanded in infinite directions. In the wrong hands, a Strat was thin and weedy, but Hendrix wrangled an almighty roar. Amateurs struggled with feedback at high volume; Hendrix turned it into music. Hank Marvin used the tremolo arm for tasteful bends; Hendrix was an alien invasion.

Rock 'n' roll was invented by black artists but recent developments had been by white people. Now, here was a black guitarist wrestling back control of rock, dancing through every other genre en route, from BB King blues to Bob Dylan folk via Curtis Mayfield soul. The versatile Strat was equally adept at all of it, keeping pace with Hendrix's constant innovation. Guitarists have searched ever since for the right Strat to give them the Hendrix tone. Ironically, Jimi didn't care at all, destroying his handpainted Fiesta Red Strat at the end of the set in the sure knowledge he could get that sound again. *He* was the Hendrix tone.



THE BLACK STRAT

Pink Floyd's main axe

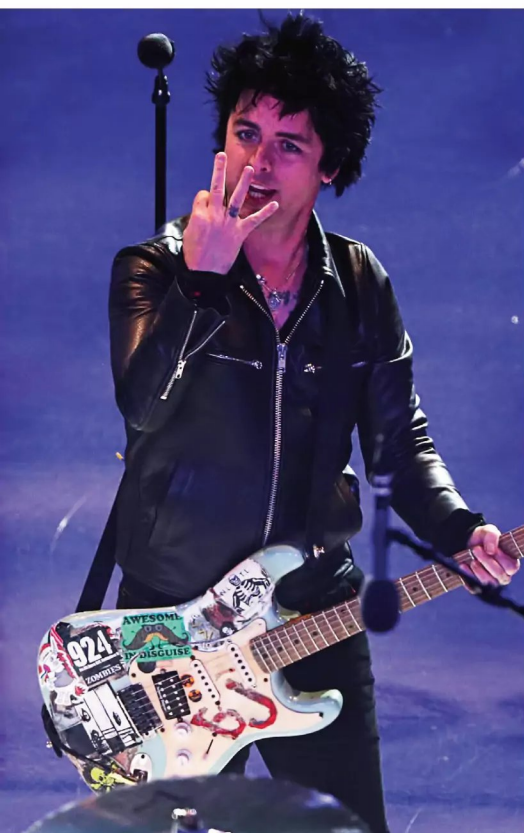
David Gilmour's main guitar from 1970–1986, this is the sound of the *Comfortably Numb* solo. Much messed about, the guitar rocked a Kahler trem and a Gibson PAF at various points, but was returned to something like stock form. Gilmour's shorted tremolo arm allows for more subtle control of vibrato. He overcame the Strat's sometimes weak bridge pickup with overwound alternatives, trying a DiMarzio FS-1 before settling on a custom Seymour Duncan now sold as the SSL-5. It was sold at auction in 2019 for an astonishing £3,975,000.



NUMBER ONE

The sound that everyone wants

Contrary to popular belief, the pickups on Stevie Nicks' Number One (aka the 'First Wife') were not overwound. That massive push to his amp came from huge strings, an unbelievably heavy picking action and unsafe volume levels. Plus a little help from an Ibanez Tube Screamer. Stevie kept the action high (another tone saver) making it probably the least playable guitar on this list. It had jumbo frets not because Stevie preferred them, but because his tech was sick of re-fretting every six months. This has been the benchmark Strat tone for virtually everyone since.



Photos: Getty Images

BLUE

Pop-punk's most recognisable guitar

Collectors recognise that 80s Japanese Strat copies can be superior to their US counterparts, but Billie Joe Armstrong's Fernandes is arguably the most famous in its own right. Like EVH's Frankenstrat, the neck and middle pickups are disconnected and the single bridge humbucker is angled; Billie Joe's tech believes this is crucial to the sound. For most of its life it's rocked a Seymour Duncan JB, but in the 90s Billie Joe tried a Dimebag-style Bill Lawrence pickup.



BLACKIE

A beautiful mongrel

Clapton wanted a Strat, so in 1970 he bought the entire stock from Sho-Bud in Nashville. He gave away three to George Harrison, Pete Townshend and Steve Winwood, leaving himself with three. He liked the black body on the '56 but preferred the '57's V-profile neck. He put them together with the electrics from guitar three, which had two 50s pickups and one from 1970. The resulting guitar was magic, singlehandedly ending Clapton's Gibson phase. In 2004, like Gilmour's Black Strat, Blackie was auctioned off, fetching a cool \$959,000 for charity.



'61 SUNBURST STRATOCASTER

The world's most abused guitar

If Rory Gallagher's Strat had been a child, social workers would have taken it away from him. It was once found in a ditch, and whenever the neck came out of alignment, Rory would wrench it back into place with a sickening crack. There is footage of the Irish great dragging his guitar frontside down across the stage – antics that would damage the neck pickup. Gallagher's Strat is, along with SRV's Number One, the reason why vintage Strats are commonly imagined as having barely any paint left on them. But Gallagher shared Hendrix and SRV's knack for making a Strat sound huge.

PLAY LIKE RITCHIE BLACKMORE

TRACK 20

♩ = 120

G⁵ F⁵ G⁵ D^{b5} G⁵ C⁵ B^{b5} G⁵ B^{b5}

TAB: 0 0 0 3 0 0 6 0 5 3 0 3

Deep Purple and Rainbow guitarist Ritchie Blackmore is best known for playing large-headstock Strats with a dummy middle pickup (and he'd only select the bridge or neck pups, not both) and a scalloped fretboard. Our example uses two-note powerchords played with the fingers for that Blackmore feel.

PLAY LIKE MARK KNOPFLER

TRACK 21

♩ = 140

G D

TAB: BU 12 15 12 12 14 12 12 14 12 14

p i m p p i m p

This lick is pure early Dire Straits-era Knopfler when he would've been playing his '61 Strat set to the bridge and middle pickups together. Our example showcases a classic descending pentatonic run, and the fingerpicking here is very specific, so we have notated it for you.

PLAY LIKE STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN

TRACK 22

♩ = 60

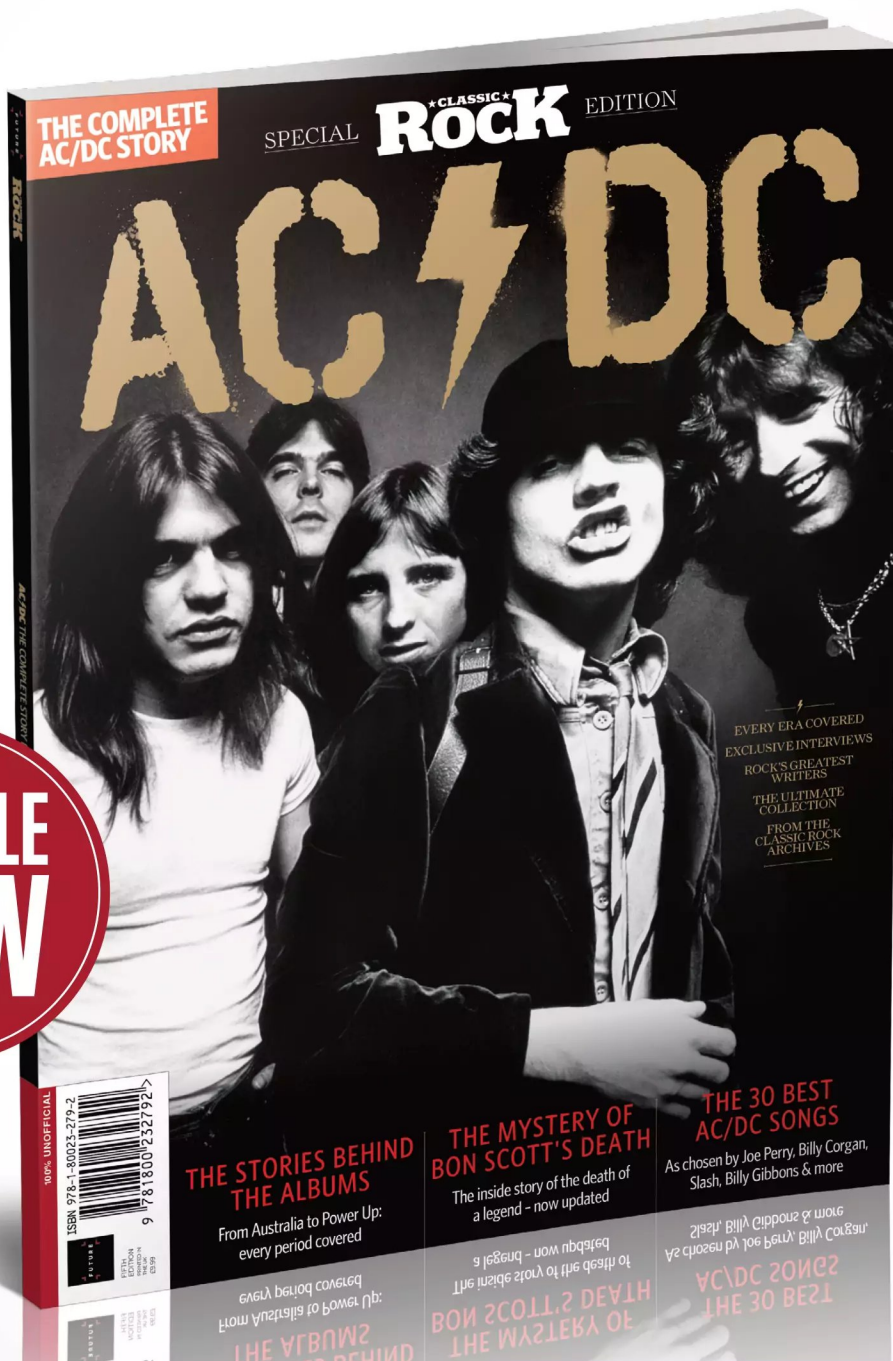
E^{maj}13 A^m13

TAB: 9 9 9 11/12 11 9 5 7 5 7 9 9 (10) (9)

The main concept for our SRV example is a simple chord fingering answered by some Hendrix style embellishments. Both the E^{maj}13 and A^m13 have an open-string root note, which can be left to ring on.

CELEBRATE THE GREATEST ROCK BAND OF ALL TIME

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FENDER TELECASTER

The ultimate workhorse?

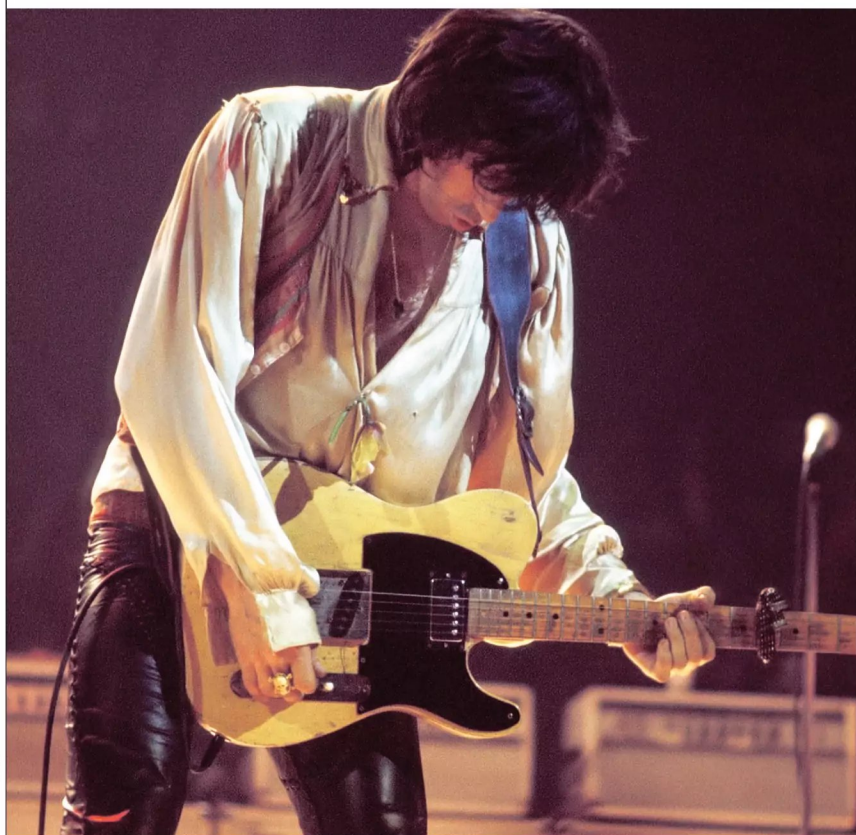
The Telecaster was the first solidbody electric guitar in production, and for many players it's never been improved. Even in stock form, there's still no type of music the Tele can't make a convincing stab at, and no genre where it can't look at home. Country, soul, and indie are its mainstays but Tom Morello, Jim Root and Richie Kotzen show how far it can travel. Leo Fender saw what needed to be done and did it: the Tele offers solid tuning, great sounds, and playability. Its few shortcomings, like the difficult-to-intonate three-saddle 'ashtray' bridge and single-coil pickup hum, can be improved but not without compromising the classic tone. It is the ultimate workhorse guitar.

MICAWBER

Rolling Stones' prolific riff machine

Eric Clapton gave Keith a 1953 butterscotch blonde Telecaster for his 27th birthday – which makes him a pretty good mate in our books. Nicknamed Micawber, it quickly became the Stone's most famous guitar. Keith's tech switched the neck pickup to a Gibson PAF (with magnets turned backwards), and the bridge pickup was changed to a lap steel pickup similar in design to the pickups on the earliest Telecasters. Keith opted for individual saddles for better intonation. Micawber is usually tuned to open G (DGDGBD), but with the lowest string removed, turning up on live versions of *Brown Sugar*, *Honky Tonk Women* and others. Open G was a slide tuning, and Keith developed a unique rhythm style with it. The Tele is one of the few guitars that will give you more the harder you hit it, and this was ideal for his loose approach.

The fact you can find Telecasters in virtually every subgenre is largely thanks to Keith Richards. From Slipknot to indie kids, Zeppelin to country stars, Keef is the one name they all respect. Like its owner, Micawber is still at the top of the rock 'n' roll game long after most of its peers have retired.



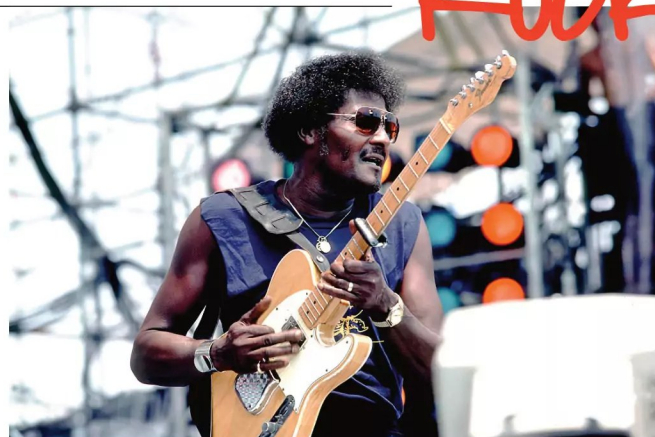
Photos: Getty Images



PAGE'S DRAGON

The original Zeppelin guitar

Jeff Beck was not getting on with his Burns Trisonic, and bagged a blonde Telecaster from his Deltones bandmate John Owen. He used it with the Yardbirds before giving it to Jimmy Page in 1968 as thanks for getting Beck the Yardbirds gig. It became Page's favourite guitar, used for all of Led Zeppelin's debut album and the *Stairway To Heaven* solo. Page first decorated it with circular mirrors (shown left), but later created its most famous incarnation by painting on his own psychedelic dragon design.



'66 TELECASTER CUSTOM

The Iceman's blues weapon

The Master Of The Telecaster Albert Collins (aka The Iceman) had one of the most distinctive voices of blues guitar. Tuning to Open F minor and using an idiosyncratic fingerstyle attack, he maximised the Telecaster's bite. His '66 custom had a Gibson PAF in the neck, but his signature model features a more obtainable Seymour Duncan 59. An overlooked aspect of his tone was his incredibly long cable. Beyond facilitating stage shenanigans, the cable's capacitance rounded off some of the Tele's razor treble.



1983 FENDER TELECASTER

An unpopular guitar touched by grace

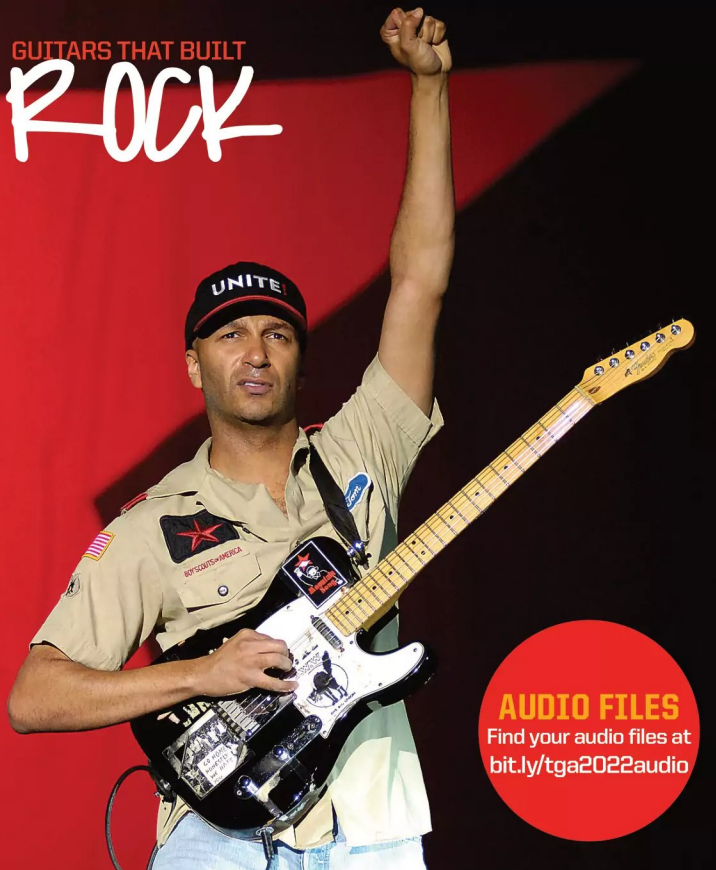
When Jeff Buckley's guitar was stolen in 1991, his friend Janine Nichols lent him her 1983 Telecaster. Early 80s Teles don't have the best reputation. The top-loading bridges have less sustain, and the guitars tend to be heavy and uncooperative. It's unclear if this was an exception or whether it was the genius of Buckley's hands, but Jeff found beautiful tones in it. He and the guitar were inseparable thereafter, and today it is owned by Muse's Matt Bellamy.



FENDER TELECASTER/ESQUIRE HYBRID

From *Born to Run* to *Nebraska*

The guitar Bruce Springsteen bought in 1973 had a neck from a 1957 Esquire, and a body routed for four pickups and four outputs (part of a scam certain session players employed to earn four times union rate for playing four 'tracks'). The resulting guitar was feather light and rang like an acoustic from all the wood removed. Bruce used it in continuously from 1973-2012, and still records with it.



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SENDERO LUMINOSO

The world's greatest drop D weapon

Tom Morello has recorded every drop D riff in his career with one guitar – a stock 1982 Telecaster he got when Tool frontman Maynard James Keenan showed him the tuning in 1991. Where some rockers disconnect their neck pickups, Morello uses his exclusively, describing the resulting riffs as springier and funkier. “I think the heaviness of the riff hasn’t got anything to do with the amount of distortion on the guitar,” he told *MusicRadar*.

TELE-VISION...

The origins of Leo Fender's design

Leo's design was born in 1949, first as an unnamed Tele-shaped prototype yet to become the instrument we all know today. Come 1950 the first evolution of that prototype was on sale. Named the Esquire and featuring the now-classic combo of ash body and maple neck, this single-pickup model was released in small numbers with many suffering reliability problems – primarily, warped necks thanks to the absence of a truss rod. The next variant was the Broadcaster – also from 1950 and now featuring reinforced necks – which set the template for the two-pickup Tele we know today. The change of name came about after legal action was launched by Gretsch who had registered a line of drums under the 'Broadcaster' moniker. Before settling on Telecaster, Fender would release a small number of guitars with no decal (they were marked simply 'Fender'), later unofficially referred to as 'Nocaster's. Telecasters in all but name, these prized early models command huge sums by collectors today.



PLAY LIKE ALBERT COLLINS

TRACK 23

♩ = 58
C7

TAB

A capo, articulate fingerstyle technique and open tunings all contributed to The Iceman's unique phrasing. We've stuck to standard tuning and no capo – but try playing the lick with a capo on the 8th fret for the full effect.

PLAY LIKE KEITH RICHARDS

TRACK 24

♩ = 130
B^b B^bsus⁴ B^b C F⁹/C C F⁹/C

TAB

Our riff showcases some classic Richards-style rhythm guitar ideas and is fun to play. The open G tuning makes this part easy to play and it sounds great with a bridge pickup and a gritty clean tone.

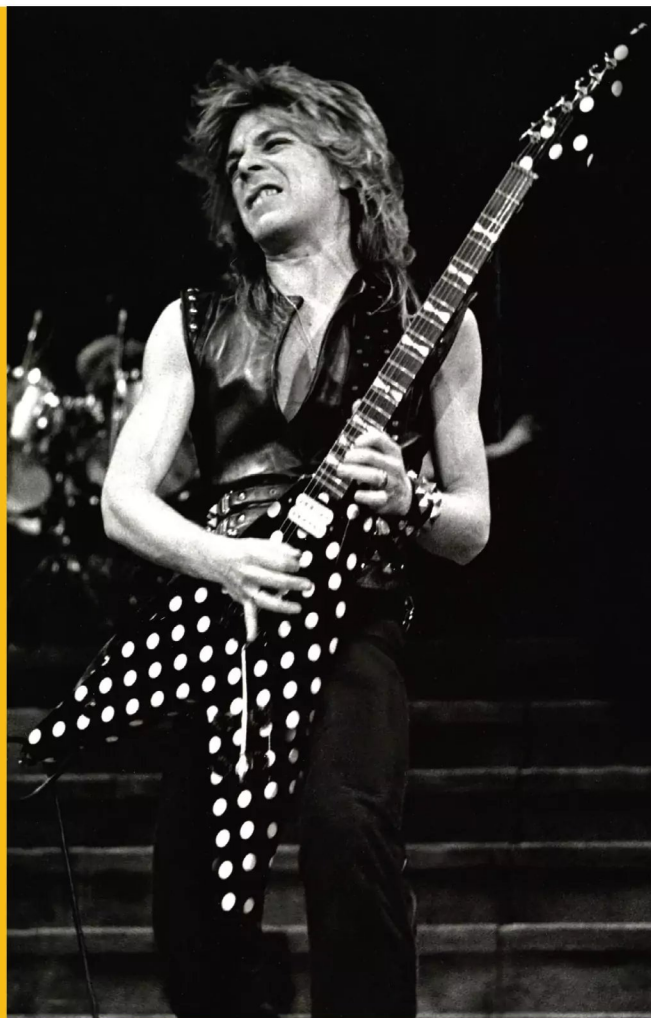
PLAY LIKE ANDY SUMMERS

TRACK 25

♩ = 110
Cadd⁹ Am⁷

TAB

Andy Summers used a 1963 Fender Telecaster on most of the recording sessions for The Police. Our example uses a compressor to sustain ringing open chords. A dash of chorus and delay completes the picture.



KARL SANDOVAL FLYING V

The most memorable Flying V

While slogging round the LA club circuit with Quiet Riot, Randy Rhoads met a young George Lynch and was immediately taken with his custom Flying V. Late-70s proto-shredders all wanted Gibson tone with a Fender tremolo and Strat playability, and Randy was amazed to see these worlds collide in Lynch's guitar. George encouraged Randy to seek out Karl Sandoval, a luthier working in Wayne Charvel's custom shop building guitars with flat fingerboard budget Danelectros – ideal for Randy's style.

Rhoads wanted a Flying V, and Sandoval overlapped the neck and body more than usual to produce an extremely strong neck joint. Randy picked the instantly recognisable polka dot design and DiMarzio PAF and Super Distortion, then the only hot pickup on the market. The body had to be deeper to accommodate the tremolo block. Relative to the slim neck, the Danelectro truss rod was big, and this gave the guitar a metallic attack beefed up by the deep body. Although Randy's main contribution to guitar design was still to come Jackson model, the Sandoval remains a metal legend.



IBANEZ JEM

The modern shred machine, idealised

In the mid 80s, Japanese manufacturers were known for high-quality copies, but their original designs weren't always taken seriously. Collaborating with Steve Vai changed that in a flash. The JEM became the basis for the RG550, the definitive late-80s shred guitar. The neck was paper-thin, built for sweep picking, and the bright finishes could be seen from the back of an arena. The Edge tremolo was arguably even better than a Floyd Rose, and help from DiMarzio put paid to any complaints about Japanese OEM pickups.



CHARVEL SAN DIMAS STYLE 1

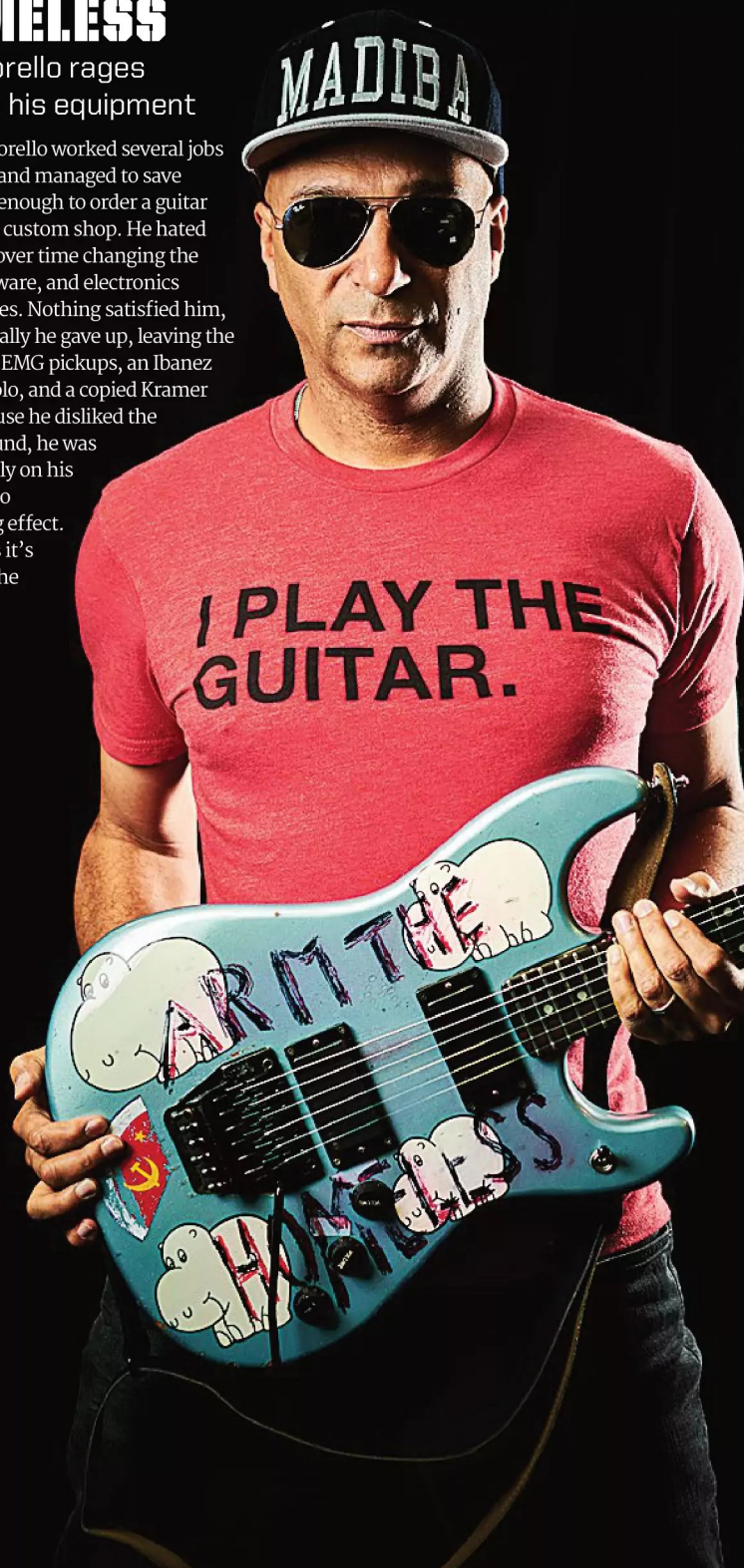
Hair metal's chosen hot rod

Wayne Charvel's California custom shop sold EVH the body for his Frankenstrat, and EVH soon created a market for humbucker-equipped Strats that Charvel was uniquely positioned to fill. Steve Vai played a San Dimas as Jack Butler in the movie *Crossroads* and in David Lee Roth's solo band, confirming Charvel as the brand of choice for Eddie's heirs. Their custom necks with compound radius fingerboards were built to shred, and the LA crew bought them en masse.

ARM THE HOMELESS

Tom Morello rages against his equipment

Morello worked several jobs and managed to save enough to order a guitar from an LA custom shop. He hated the result, over time changing the neck, hardware, and electronics several times. Nothing satisfied him, and eventually he gave up, leaving the guitar with EMG pickups, an Ibanez Edge tremolo, and a copied Kramer neck. Because he disliked the guitar's sound, he was forced to rely on his creativity, to devastating effect. Sometimes it's not about the gear.



WASHBURN N4

Nuno Bettencourt's Extreme axe

Ibanez and Kramer proved you could build a guitar brand by association with big name players, and Washburn struck gold when they enlisted Nuno shortly before *More Than Words* became a worldwide smash. It was the early 90s, hairspray was giving way to grunge and the N4's natural finish looked more contemporary than Charvel and Ibanez's neon flash. Cutting edge shredders demanded flawless top-fret access, and the Stephens Extended Cutaway took this to the extreme with no neck heel whatsoever.

EXTENDED-RANGE GUITARS

When six-strings ain't enough

Like so much else, the seven-string came to rock via jazz, with George Van Eps pioneering the idea in the modern era. As with the six-string, modern guitarists have found creative outlets their inventors never imagined. Korn and Periphery are even further from Van Eps than Zakk Wylde is

from Les Paul. While seven- and eight-strings are obviously useful for drop tunings, they're not just for outrageous chug. They open up chord and arpeggio voicings that aren't available with six strings, and their huge range allows for contrasting light and shade. That makes them popular with some of today's most innovative musicians.



IBANEZ TAM100

For the discerning djentleman

The TAM100 wasn't Ibanez's first eight-string, but in Tosin Abasi the brand found an ambassador who demonstrated its creative potential. Guitarists had tried bass-style slap and pop techniques before, but huge strings and 27" scale meant Abasi could do it with more authority. His stunning applications for tapping and rhythmic displacement made his music even more original, embracing both ends of the guitar's extended range. Abasi silenced critics who thought eight strings were a gimmick.

FOUR EIGHT-STRING CHORDS YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. DJENT-Y CHUG: G5

Use powerchords on the bass strings for prog-metal chug.

2. TWO-PART HARMONY: A7sus4

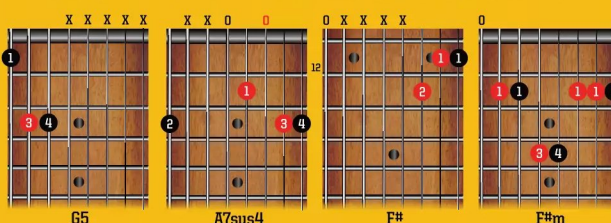
Target the high and low strings for distinct bass and treble parts.

3. PIANO EFFECT: F#

A high-fret chord shape over an open bass string gives piano-like range.

4. ALL-OUT ASSAULT: F#m

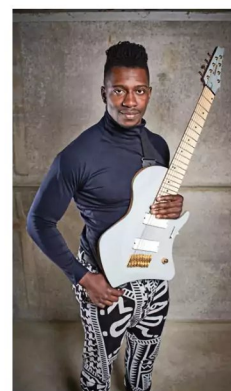
Play all eight-strings for the thickest, densest possible sound.



MODERN DESIGN

The future of guitar innovation

It's too early to say what the classic guitar of the 2020s will be, but headless guitars have made a comeback. These offer superb balance, strong sustain with no headstock to absorb string vibration, and unrivalled tuning stability. To facilitate technical playing, ergonomic body designs and active pickups are common. Check out Yvette Young's Strandberg, Lee McKinney's Kiesel, or Tosin Abasi's own Abasi Concepts to see the frontiers of guitar playing and design.



IBANEZ UNIVERSE

The birth of extended-range metal

Steve Vai got his seven-string prototype just in time for Whitesnake's *Slip Of The Tongue*, using it on every song, as well as on *Passion And Warfare*. Hear it clearly on *Judgement Day*, *The Audience Is Listening*, and *I Would Love To*. Steve made his powerchords crunch harder by barring the low B string, creating a crushing second inversion. Thanks to Vai's influence, the Ibanez Universe became the first mass produced seven-string. Then Korn got a pair, changing metal permanently.

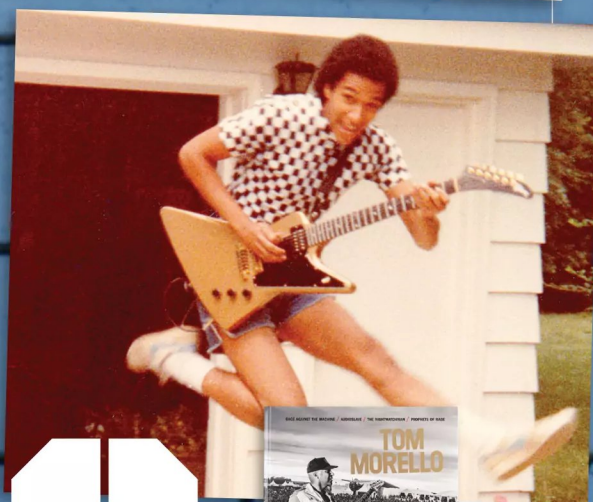
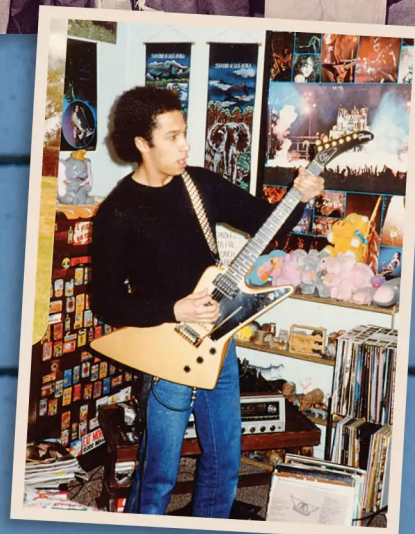
Words Amit Sharma

HIS WORK WITH **RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE**, **AUDIOSLAVE** AND **PROPHETS OF RAGE** HAS MADE HIM ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ROCK GUITARISTS OF HIS GENERATION. AND FOR THE READERS OF TOTAL GUITAR HE HAS A SIMPLE MESSAGE. "IT'S LESSON TIME," **TOM MORELLO** SAYS. "SO WASH YOUR HANDS AND TUNE YOUR GUITAR. BUT IF YOU HAVE TO PICK ONE OR THE OTHER... WASH YOUR HANDS!"

Once you can play something 150 times perfectly, you can move on... "It was a very fateful day when I learned how to alternate pick properly. While I was self-taught, I would occasionally take myself to a guitar shop in Highland Park, Illinois, if I wanted to learn a song – where a hippie stoner teacher would show me my favourite Alice Cooper and Black Sabbath songs that I couldn't figure out on my own. One day he was off sick and so I got sent to a room with the other guitar teacher, who was Michael Angelo Batio... The famous four-necked guy before he was famous! I had one lesson with him. He sat me down and told me to play something. I scrambled my way through some leads, trying to show off and sounding very hackneyed. He said, 'It sounds like you want to play fast but you don't know how!' and I said, 'That's accurate, sir!' So he wrote a series of exercises on one sheet of paper – fundamental picking exercises using quadruplets and triplets in different modes. He forced me to start slow and said once I had mastered the exercise, I could click the metronome up by one and eventually move on. I believed what he told me and it was a lesson that changed my life and led me to be able to play solos like *Take The Power Back* and *#1 Zero* many years later." 🌀



WASTAR



CLASSES



WHATEVER IT TAKES
Morello's autobiography is out now!

PICKING IN THE NAME...

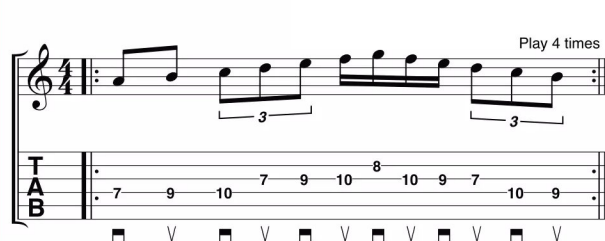
Hone your plectrum skills, Morello style

ALTERNATE PICKING SINGLE NOTES



These kinds of rhythms are the kind Tom trained with. The 16th notes on beat 3 are the fastest part, so choose your picking method carefully on the preceding notes - there are several ways to pick this line!

ALTERNATE PICKING MELODIC LINES



Tom describes using modal lines in his exercises. What's the difference? Well, now you have the challenge of changing picking direction as you cross from string to string. As Tom explains, starting slow is the way to go.

Create an alternate vocabulary of sounds to tell your own story...

"I began playing late, around 17 years old, and I'd never heard of another guitarist who made albums using noises in that way. Except for Robert Johnson, who had to sell his soul to the devil to get good! Given my Catholic upbringing, that wasn't really an option, so I had to put in my ten thousand hours. Most of that time was spent emulating my heroes like Eddie Van Halen and Randy Rhoads, then later on Steve Vai and Yngwie Malmsteen. I realised that if you put in the hours, you can actually get into the same ballpark as those players. But what I didn't have was my own voice on the instrument. It was really in the beginnings of *Rage Against The Machine* where I self-identified as the DJ in the band and stopped looking at the guitar as this hallowed instrument on which there was only one way to get good. Instead, it became a piece of wood, with six wires, a few electronics, a couple of knobs and a toggle switch that could be deconstructed. Anything on that guitar was fair game, from the Allen wrench used to change strings to the guitar jack to even the pickups themselves. I started manipulating the instrument to create my own alternate universe of noise. You might not even need the guitar, like when I hit the cable against my hand going through a wah. Why not circumvent the whole thing!"



Look anywhere and everywhere for inspiration...

"Once I had the blinders off and realised the parameters of rock and roll guitar playing were not just Chuck Berry to Eddie Van Halen, I started practising sounds - whether that was DJ scratching or wild boars rutting at the zoo or the helicopters overhead. Even if I couldn't exactly mimic those sounds, practising non-guitar noises led my playing in an entirely different direction. It felt like that lane was open. There was no one else in it. I started constructing a whole sonic world out of these barnyard animal noises, old war films and Public Enemy records."

Use delay to create an infinite guitar assault...

"It was at that same guitar shop in Highland Park where I purchased a delay pedal.

I remember that feeling when you first plug in that first effects pedal you ever get, cranking all the knobs to maximum to make this wild and insane blizzard-like cacophony... It's so exciting! Then you buy the pedal and come home, dialling in a more subtle sound like a slight slapback or nuance to the mood. I never lost that original feeling. I wanted to carry cranking that shit up to see how wild it could get. On songs like *Revolver*, which has an introduction that I used to call 'The Forest Comes To Life', I had a custom-built Ibanez with this crazy noise-generating pickup in it. I would scroll through these bizarre macaws, squawks and jaguar howls using the delay cranked to maximum. The tapestry was like a forest coming to life! For *Cochise*, that was a really hard slapback delay - for each note you play, there's an instant doubling of it. By tapping a pen or pencil against the strings in rapid succession while muting them and moving the Whammy pedal up and down, I found a sound exactly like the police helicopters circling over Los Angeles."

Train your ear through random improv...

"When I was putting in my 10 or 20,000 hours, I would always use two hours out of the eight hours a day for random improvisation. I would literally take the radio dial and spin it. Whatever station I ended up on, I would try to fit into - whether it was classical, jazz, new

"I WOULD ALWAYS USE TWO HOURS A DAY FOR RANDOM IMPROVISATION"

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TOM'S DJ SCRATCHING TECHNIQUE BROKEN DOWN

WHAT YOU NEED:

- A guitar with independent volume knobs for two pickups
- An amp set up with a mid-rich distortion tone
- Optional: Either a wah wah or an EQ pedal

STEP 1.

Set your tone. You'll need plenty of distortion and a biting midrange. An EQ booster or wah pedal will exaggerate the mids and get you closer to a DJ-style scratch tone.

STEP 2.

On your guitar, set one volume knob to maximum and the other to zero. A Gibson Les Paul in standard two-humbucker spec is ideal.

STEP 3.

In the *Bulls On Parade* solo, Tom scrapes the strings with one hand in a relatively slow movement. The rhythmic effect comes from toggling between the live pickup and the silent one using his other hand.

age, hip-hop or rock and roll. I spent a lot of time jamming along to John Coltrane and Charlie Parker, trying to feel my way into the vibe of those songs without any real jazz training. That's one of my favourite styles of music and it's really helped me in my playing. From Django Reinhardt to Wes Montgomery... They were huge influences on me, which is why the *Settle For Nothing* solo has so many chromatics and tabs out more like a jazz part.

Use the right tool for the job, whatever it may be...

"When we were doing the demos for the first Rage Against The Machine record, we had an engineer called Auburn Burrell and I borrowed his Les Paul for the end part of *Bullet In The Head*, the big outro section. When we were going in to make the record, I had my Telecaster and Arm The Homeless guitar and we each had \$600 to spend on gear. I wanted a Les Paul to double my principle guitars. I saw it on the wall of West LA Music in Santa Monica Boulevard and it was exactly the same colour as Taco Bell hot sauce. The



reason I know that is because Taco Bell was one of the main food staples of the squat I was living in. I thought to myself, 'That guitar looks exactly like the taco sauce we eat all the time!' and that's why I bought it. It was not a particularly expensive guitar and rarely stayed in tune, but it became the main overdub guitar for all my drop-D songs from that day forward – including *Killing In The Name*, the end of *Freedom*, the end of *Take The Power Back* and I used it just the other day on my newest recordings!"

Get to grips with music theory...

"There was a brilliant book called *The Guitar Handbook* which really helped flesh out some music theory for me, especially in terms of knowing what to call the scales I was using. I had figured out 86% of it on my own just from jamming so of course I was very surprised to find out that the feel and scales of different solos actually had names (laughs). For harmonic minor, I would say Randy Rhoads was the principal influence for me. He had one foot firmly planted in this classical minor key, almost violin-like proficiency and another in

"I STARTED MANIPULATING THE INSTRUMENT TO CREATE MY OWN ALTERNATE UNIVERSE OF NOISE"

WEE-YOO, WEE-YOO!

Tom's trademark Whammy pedal setting explained

That *Killing In The Name* solo might sound alien-like, but it's surprisingly simple to dial in the sound with a suitable pitch shifter. Tom uses DigiTech's Whammy pedal set to two octaves up - many multi-fx pedals also have suitable pedal-controlled pitch shifters though. As for actually playing the solo, again, it's not as tough as your ears might have you believe. In the main you'll be playing straightforward D minor pentatonic licks and rocking the Whammy pedal in an eighth note rhythm.



flat-out blues jamming to the nth degree. That always appealed to me."

Embrace your limitations instead of fighting them...

"One thing I've been falsely accused of doing over the years is using a million effects pedals. That's not true. I use four... And one of them, rarely! It's basically the Whammy, the boost to go to 11 when I need to, the delay and the wah - and actually just the other day I released my signature Dunlop Cry Baby, which looks all revolutionary with red stars and sloganeering. It's the exact internal workings of the pedal I bought when I was 18 years old and ended up on every single recording and live show I've ever played. And that's it. Every crazy sound came from those. At first it was a matter of financial expediency. I didn't have the money for pedals. When I got my first record deal in a band called Lockup prior to Rage Against The Machine, I bought some expensive rack gear that I didn't understand how to use. It was very complicated. By the time someone explained how to use it, I felt like it made my guitar sound worse rather than better. I thought, 'Screw it, I'm just going to stick with what I've got!' I enjoy embracing limitations. I've had the same guitar setup, the exact same amplifier and pedals for the entirety of my career. I decided this would be my setup and I wouldn't go crazy with buying new pieces of gear to seek sounds but rather

plumb the depths of my imagination and creativity to take this limited setup and get the maximum I can out of it."

The more you practice, the more you will enjoy practising...

"All I can do is pass along the information and inspiration that was given to me. If you want to get good - you have to practice at least an hour a day every day without fail. All three parts of that are important. It doesn't matter if you are sick or have an exam in the morning, you have to do it without fail. I found when I did that, I noticed my playing improving so much that it encouraged me to practice two hours a day every day without fail. Then four. Then six and eventually eight. Maybe my obsessive compulsive nature helped..."

Learn from and in front of others...

"You have to play with other musicians. That is key to learning and not becoming another YouTube basement shredder. Interacting with others will mean you will grow and learn a lot. Playing live is also very important. Once my punk rock band in Illinois had practised our songs to a tee, we felt very confident. Then we stepped in front of an audience and our combined abilities plummeted about 45% because we were so nervous. There's nothing like live bullets firing to reveal what you can improve upon and provide that connection with the audience - which is the most important thing to create future inspiration."

NOISE CHART 94-95

- ① POWER JACK OPTIONS: PULL JACK OUT WHILE HOLDING JACK TO METAL ON GTR TOUCH FX EXPOSED JACK W/ OTHER HAND TO CHANGE PITCH OF NOISE, ② SIMPLY TOUCH FX EXPOSED JACK RHYTHMICALLY - NO GUITAR AT ALL
- ③ ON CREAMY GTR TOUCH METAL ON AND OFF W/ BASE HAND TO MAKE GRINDING NOISE SUTTER (PATE UNISSED)
- ④ NEW FLAMER SETTING W/ CHUCKS

① Full ② Full

DELAY SETTING: ① ② ③ ④

- ⑤ TOSSE W/ DIGITAL DELAY SLAP BACK ALA TECHNO
- ⑥ TAP PICK ON STRINGS W/ DELAY, MUTE HIGHER UP W/ HAND
- ⑦ USE DETUNER SET TO "DEEP", PLAY CHORD AND DRING UP
- ⑧ TALK BOX TOSSE
- ⑨ TOSSE FEEDBACK AT FRONT OF AMP
- ⑩ SCATCH SCATCH ON GTR. DJ. STYLE
- ⑪ USE METAL ON POWER CHORD TO TOUCH METAL ON GTR.
- ⑫ BEAT ON WOOD OF GTR. AS IF WERE BONGO (W/ DELAY)
- ⑬ USE POWER CHORD W/ FLAMER SETTING TO MAKE WEIRD NOISE OR REAL BONGOS - THEN ADD 2 OCTAVES ↑ AND LET IT HUM
- ⑭ CREAMY GUITAR - KNOCKING ON IT W/ SNARE DRUM DELAY TO MAKE BONGO SOUND PLUS: PDD WHAMMY PEDAL SET TO 2 OCTAVES BUT ONLY SLIGHTLY DEPRESSED

"ONE THING I'VE BEEN FALSELY ACCUSED OF DOING IS USING A MILLION FX PEDALS"

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

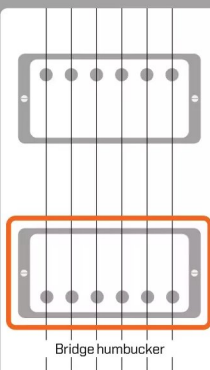
- ✓ Alternate tuning
- ✓ Palm muting
- ✓ Powerchords

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RIFF OF THE MONTH

GET THE TONE

CHANNEL DISTORTION



Adam Christianson uses an LsL Instruments baritone scale guitar fitted with Bareknuckle Ragnarok pickups, while Josh prefers Fishman Fluence pickups with ESP and LTD guitars. Amp-wise, the Architects tone typically comes from Mesa amps like a Mark V or Dual Rectifier. The key to this riff is to keep the low end tight, so a Tube Screamer in front of the amp is the key to this. Add a noise gate to keep the pauses in the riff as clean as possible. Use a heavier set of strings (such as 0.011s or 0.012s) to counter the slacker strings from down-tuning.

ARCHITECTS

Animals

A

nimals is played in C# standard tuning, which means tuning each string down the equivalent of three frets. Guitarists Josh Middleton and Adam

Christianson adopt a heavy palm-muted approach here using mainly downpicking for a consistent attack. Tight alternate picking can work if you ensure your down- and upstrokes sound similar.

The riff alternates between palm-muted chugs on the open C#5aug chord and the various powerchords. It's a good idea to learn the chug rhythms first before adding the other shapes. The first three times are the same, but listen out for a rhythm change on the fourth group of chugs.

The first of the powerchord responses starts with F#5, C#5 and A5. The second time goes C#5, F#5, followed by a low F#5. Following

a repeat of the first line, the fourth and final response uses an open C# minor chord shape and a melodic single-note ending.

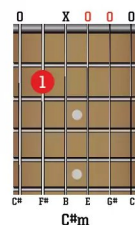
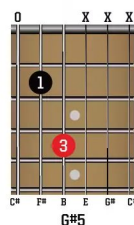
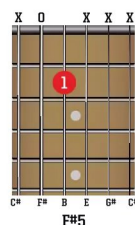
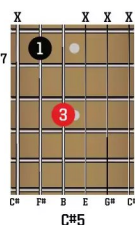
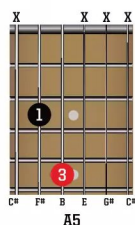
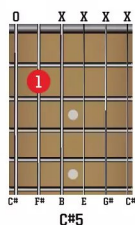
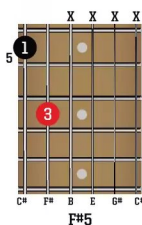
CHEAT SHEET...

Appears at: 0:10–0:30

Tempo: 95 bpm

Key/scale: C# minor

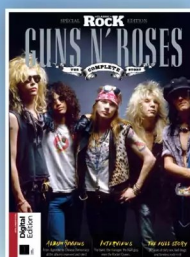
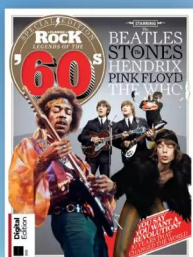
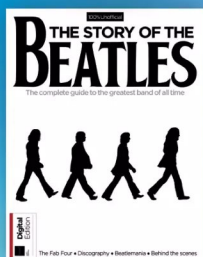
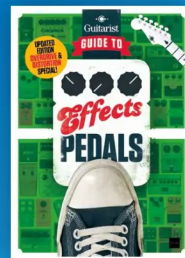
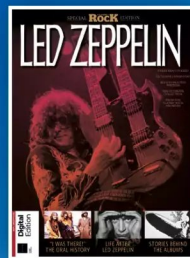
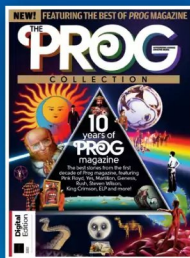
Techniques: Palm muting, downstrokes, powerchords



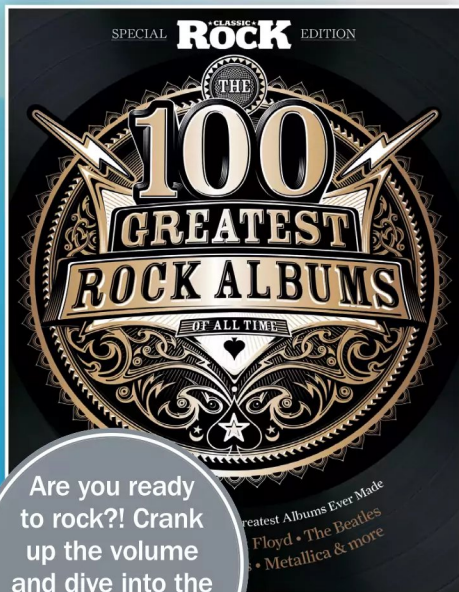
The main palm-muted chugs use the unusual C#5aug chord, which is almost a regular powerchord, but the 5th is moved up a semitone. This makes for a heavy and tense sounding effect. The other chords are regular root/5th powerchords which all belong to the key signature. The riff finishes with an open C#m chord and a brief single-note melody. Remember, for C# standard tuning, you'll need to tune all six strings down by three semitones.



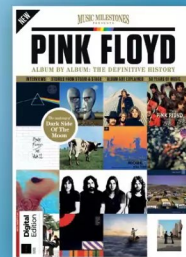
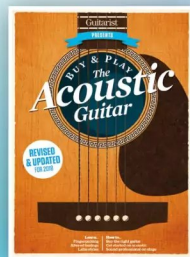
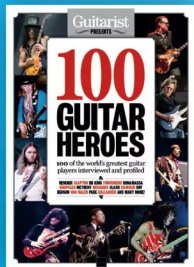
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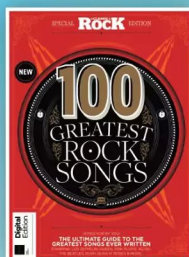
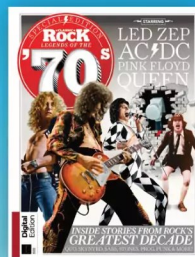
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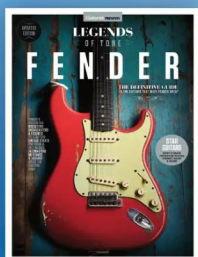
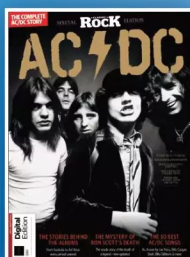
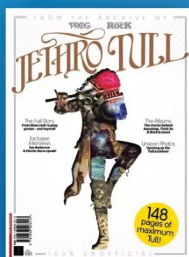
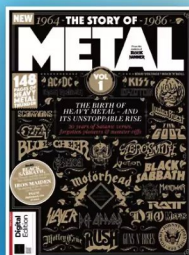


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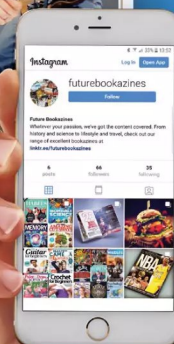
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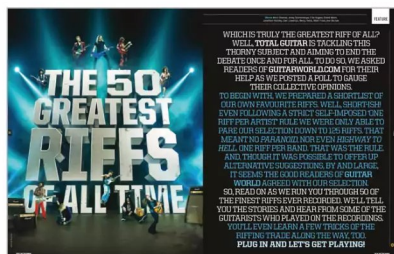
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