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'STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN (SOLO)'

Dire Straits
'TUNNEL OF LOVE'

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LEARN TO PLAY

11 MARILYN MANSON
   Sweet Dreams (Are Made Of This)

38 MR BIG
   Daddy, Brother, Lover, Little Boy
   (The Drill Song)

69 LED ZEPPELIN
   Stairway To Heaven

84 AC/DC
   Have A Drink On Me

96 CREAM
   Crossroads

102 AVENGED SEVENFOLD
   Bat Country

108 FOO FIGHTERS
   Best Of You

114 DIRE STRAITS
   Tunnel Of Love

121 RICHARD ASHCROFT
   Break The Night With Colour

TUTORIALS

118 NOVICE
   Rock ‘n’ roll Part Two: we take a
   further look at how to use
doublestops in your playing. Also,
   learn to play Richard Ashcroft’s
   Break The Night With Colour

124 IN-DEPTH
   Want to pass your Grade 12? Let TG
   show you how...

126 BLUES DUES
   Rhythm ideas: this month we
   take a look at chordal riffs and
   how they make a difference to
   your rhythm playing

129 BRIAN SETZER
   The rockabilly daddio shows you
   how to use a Bigsby tremolo!

131 PAUL GILBERT'S
   SCHOOL OF SHRED
   Our resident guitar school
   master kicks some ass in Part One
   of tackling pentatonic patterns

133 WES BORLAND
   So your playing is coming along
   nicely but now you want to start
   writing your own riffs? Well take
   note, as our latest TG columnist
   Wes Borland gives you essential
   tips on writing riffs

96 CREAM
   Crossroads – with full
   backing track!
#148 MAY 2006

CONTENTS

MONITOR
08 Slash
10 Brian May and GN'R
10 METALLICA: A HEADBANGERS JOURNEY
11 Marilyn Manson
11 Patterson Hood, Drive-By Truckers
12 20 Tracks To Download
12 Michael Amott, Arch Enemy
14 Alex Lora
15 Bring Me The Horizon
15 be your own PET
16 Max Cavalera, Soulfly
18 5 Essential Extras
21 Converse Allstars competition
24 Nail It!
25 Dial-A-Lick
25 Challenge Charlie
26 Techniques Of The Rich
26 And Famous
28 Albums

FEATURES
36 COVER FEATURE
100 HOTTEST SOLOS
Could you name your favourite solo ever and justify why it deserves to be at the top? Imagine how we felt when faced with coming up with 100 solos! TG friends Slash, Mark Tremonti and John 5 also climbed aboard to give you their Top Fives. Forget any other "Greatest Solos" charts you've read - TG means business.

72 HUNTING FOR TONE?
Remember when top producer Andy Sneap emailed TG to say that many bands he's worked with have featured in the mag, talking about their sound? Well, how he's spilt the beans on exactly how those sounds were created...

78 TRAIL BLAZERS:
BACK IN BLACK - AC/DC
When frontman Bon Scott was found dead of alcohol poisoning, in Feb 1980, the death knell sounded for AC/DC as a whole. What did they do? They went back into the studio and recorded the album of their career, of course

GEAR
135 Gear intro
136 DigiTech EX-7 Expression Factory
140 Round-up: gig bags
142 Lag Roxane electric guitars
145 Krank Distortus Maximus
146 Round-up: half-stacks
149 Stagg G-Force electric guitar

REGULARS
32 Letters
92 Subscriptions
150 Ed's Shed
154 TG crossword

72 HUNTING FOR TONE?
Struggling to get a killer heavy sound? Top metal producer Andy Sneap shows you how!

78 AC/DC
Back In Black - the comeback album of the century

145 Calling all guitar gladiators! It's time to unleash hell with Krank's new Distortus Maximus pedal
PLAY THE ORIGINAL, OR PLAY A WANNABE.

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Slash snapped in action at the grand opening of Hard Rock Cafe, Times Square NYC.
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MATTHEW TUCK BULLET FOR MY VALENTINE

RANDY RHoads RR5 SHOWN IN WHITE WITH BLACK PINSTRIPES

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SOLOS ROCK!

It was November 1994. I'd spent the last month trying to nail the solo for Pink Floyd's "Time", coopered up in my freezing, double glazing-less room. Then I finally cracked it – tracking every single note of David Gilmour's slippery, glorious lead. "Eu-fucking-rekai! The excitement of that moment has never left me. Shove on a Velvet Revolver track and I'll soon be air guitar ing along to Slash's licks.

Sure, riffs and chords are rock's meat and potatoes, but it would be a bland board of fare without the sauce that lead guitar provides. With that in mind (and for the first time in TG's history), we've laid on a feast of the hottest solos since rock began: 100 unforgettable leads from the likes of Slash, Gilmour and er, some geezer called Jimmy Page (see p.36). Has your favourite solo made the list? Do you disagree with our choices? Should we be the subject of some kind of rock fatwa? Email your thoughts to totalguitar@futurenet.co.uk. We'll print the best in next month's Letters page. Until then, I hope you enjoy learning this solo's likes of Led Zeppelin, Avenge Sevenfold and Eric Clapton as much as we did. **Stephen Lawson, Editor**

---

**ANDY SNAPP**

**WHO?** Grammy-winning metal producer and engineer, and the subject of our insightful Hunting For Tone feature on p.72

**FAVOURITE SOLO:** "Revolution Mother Earth" by Randy Rhoads. It builds massively, has great structure, great melody and a style that was so unique to Randy. In fact, that song is definitive Rhodes for me.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Andy got into production while playing guitar in 1980s thrashers Sabbat. The band released three albums and broke up in 1991.

---

**CLARE DAVIES**

**WHO?** TG's tireless Commissioning & Production Editor not only keeps the mag in check, but also had time to write this month's riffastic "Sail" on AC/DC's Back In Black (see p.79)

**FAVOURITE SOLO:** "Sweet California" because it’s a song about drugs! Only kidding. Because it's amazingly fluid and beautiful, and the thought of being able to play something so accomplished is inspiring.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Claire once had a telephone conversation with Aerosmith's Joe Perry whilst doing her washing up, proving that household chores can be fun!

---

**JAMES JONES**

**WHO?** TG's expert Music Editor who labours to the point of double vision every month to bring you the freshest and most varied selection of guitar tab possible!

**FAVOURITE SOLO:** "I Could Have Lied by the Red Chili Peppers. There's just so much emotion. John Frusciante sounds like he's bleeding on it.

**DID YOU KNOW?** A huge American football fan, James used to play in a team with Nick The Greek from Lock Stock And Two Smoking Barrels. "He was surprisingly quick for his size," nods James.

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MONITOR
NEWS ★ INTERVIEWS ★ PREVIEWS ★ HOW TOs

CROWD PLEASERS...

THOSE ABOUT TO ROCK 14
THEIR LEAD SINGER'S AN EX-DRUG DEALER, THEY'VE GOT A GUITARIST CALLED ANGEL AND SCOTTISH KIDS BEAT THEM UP, HELLO AIDEN!

LIKE A VIRGIN 22
ALKALINE TRIO'S MATT SKEBBA DOESN'T SCARE EASY, BUT STICK HIM ON A MOUNTAIN WITH TWO COUNTRY SINGERS AND HE'LL SHIT HIS PANTS!

SOUNDCHECK 18
WANT IT DIRTY, FUZZED-UP AND PULSATING? THEN GET YOUR MITTS AROUND THE KADEN FLUTTERTONE AND FLAMINGO FUZZ PEDALS

TG EXCLUSIVE: SLASH ON NEW VR ALBUM!
SLASH HAS GIVEN TOTAL GUITAR AN EXCLUSIVE INSIGHT INTO THE NEXT VELVET REVOLVER ALBUM, CURRENTLY BEING RECORDED IN L.A.

S

elf's Revolver's Guitar God confirmed the band have begun pre-production on the follow-up to their hard-rockin' debut, 2004's awesome Contraband. Slash revealed he's mellowing with age and that it has added a new level to his playing on the forthcoming record, due out later this year.

"We've been doing demos for the new Velvet Revolver album and I'm really happy with what the guitar solo is at," he said. "It's a kind of magic about that manic urgency you have in the early days, when you're uneducated and unschooled and just going for broke as a guitar player, but as time goes on you like to be able to still do that but also a little more relaxed about what you're actually playing. And I think I've got to that point now, at least within the genre that I'm in."

Slash made a name for himself as Guns N' Roses' hard-partying, whiskey-toting axeman in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but has since mellowed and believes it has improved his guitar playing. "I can play what I'm hearing in my head more seamlessly than what I used to," he told Total Guitar.

Velvet Revolver, featuring former Guns N' Roses' Duff McKagan (bass) and Matt Sorum (drums), and former Stone Temple Pilots' vocalist Scott Weiland, were due to enter the studio in the second week of March. "We haven't started recording yet, but everybody's been putting down ideas," revealed Slash. "I've got about 12 or 13 songs that I'm real happy with."
METAL: A HEADBANGERS JOURNEY

A NEW DOCUMENTARY RELEASED IN THE RUN-UP TO DOWNLOAD 2006 CHARTS THE HISTORY OF HEAVY METAL MUSIC

Filmed and directed by metal fan Sam Dunn, METAL is the definitive study of heavy metal - roots, genres, players and future. Some of metal's greatest guitarists and figures are interviewed: Tom Morello, Bruce Dickinson, Lemmy, Alice Cooper, Rob Zombie, Tony Iommi, Vinnie Neil of Mötley Crüe, Slipknot, Korn, Slayer and Ronnie James Dio among others.

The film visits heavy metal landmarks such as LA's Sunset Strip, the streets of Birmingham (not as preposterous as it sounds, considering Black Sabbath hail from Brum) and the forests of Norway as Dunn explores metal's obsession with sex, religion, violence and death. Part social document, part celebration of a misunderstood art form, this documentary is a chance for metal fans to speak out on a culture that's more complex than it seems. METAL: A HEADBANGERS JOURNEY is released on 28 April.

BRIAN MAY GUESTS ON GN'R TRACK

QUEEN GUITARIST BRIAN MAY COULD FEATURE ON GUNS N' ROSES COMEBACK CHINESE DEMOCRACY

May posted a statement on his official website in response to reports that he had, some years ago, contributed to a Guns N' Roses track called "Catcher In The Rye." He confirms he does appear on the track, but it's not yet clear if the song will actually appear on Chinese Democracy.

"Ah yes... Catcher In The Rye is a great track," said May. "I was surprised to find a mix of it in my inbox this week, a year after all these years. I wonder who leaked this stuff? Yes, my guitar is there, nice and crisply recorded. It was a blast doing the sessions. I've sat on whatever I have known about these songs out of respect for Axl. I like the track a lot... and it still sounds very fresh. The thing that hits you first is that incredible, incredible voice. We've been missing it for far too long. Axl is magic."

STANDBY

HOT NEW GUITAR ALBUMS COMING YOUR WAY...

- TOOL: 10,000 DAYS
  - PEARL JAM: PEARL JAM
  - SNOW PATROL: EYES OPEN

US prog-peddlers Tool have completed the follow-up to 2001's Lateralus in a typically tight-lipped fashion. Expect a "natural progression" in their hard rock sound. Drummer Danny Carey said: "Some of the tunes are pretty heavy. It's still gonna be weird time signatures and all that stuff."

According to Pearl Jam frontman Eddie Vedder, this eighth album from the grunge veterans is "easily the best stuff we've done but also some of the hardest stuff. It's very aggressive, especially when you turn it loud." The first single from the record, "Worldwide Suicide," is doing the rounds on US radio now.

The follow-up to 2004's Final Straw will be a "bigger and bolder" version of their breakthrough album, says Gary Lightbody. "It is much bigger when it's meant to be bigger, but as fragile as eggs when it's meant to be too." One track sees Lightbody duetting with folkstress Martha Wainwright.

OUTPUT!

"ARE YOU ADEQUATELY PREPARED TO ROCK? TURN TO THE TEENAGER GIRL NEXT TO YOU AND MOSH HER TRAINING BRA" GUITARIST Adam D The crowd inviting to rather dodgy levels on Killswitch Engage's live DVD.
Marilyn Manson: not what sweet dreams are made of

You have to move a little to play the second bar, which incorporates a slide on the 5th string. We recommend you use your third finger for this. Don't forget to stay in time!

**DO YOU DO REQUESTS?**

The World's Guitar Players on the Stuff That Matters

**Patterson Hood**

Drive-By Truckers

What was the first riff, song or solo you learned on the guitar?

"Pink Floyd's 'Wish You Were Here,' I think. I was about 14-years-old. Though I probably learned a couple of songs on bass guitar first, like Neil Young's 'Cortez the Killer' and Ted Nugent's 'Cat Scratch Fever.'"

Who are your all time favourite guitarists?

"Living. As I would probably say (fickle suprema) Richard Thompson. Dead it would be Dwayne Allman and Jimi Hendrix. I guess I have some pretty mainstream / classic tastes. When I was a teenager and first learning guitar, David Gilmour was a big deal to me. I still really love his sense of melody."

Is there a riff or a lick that you wish you'd written?

"Not that I can think of. Maybe a bass part or two from those classic '60s Motown or Stax recordings. I would say a couple of my dad's bass parts [David Hood of the legendary '60s Muscle Shoals soul rhythm section], but then he wouldn't have written them!"

What was your most embarrassing on-stage moment?

"I'm not sure if I've ever been embarrassed on-stage...just offstage."
20 TRACKS TO DOWNLOAD THIS MONTH
APRIL’S ESSENTIAL GUITAR-TRACKS

1 BEAST AND THE HARLOT
AVENGED SEVENFOLD
Symphoric Gates; good with women, great with blindingly fast chromatics. Bastard

2 EVERY MOTHER’S SON
LYNYRD SKYNYRD
Timeless southern rock track from the re-release of Gimme Back My Bullets

3 BURN
ALKALINE TRIO
The soaring melodies are enough to send you straight to music heaven

4 THE SUFFERING
COHEED & CAMBRIA
Our favourite prog rockers are touring the States with A7X. How cool is that?

5 DICK IN DIXIE
HANK III
Hank’s new album, Straight To Hell, is country for rockers who don’t like country music

6 GOING UNDERGROUND
THE JAM
25 years before Preston & Chantelle, Weller perfected the three-minute mod anthem

7 RIP VAN WINKLE
WITCH
Monolithic stoner rock featuring Dinosaur Jr guitarist J Mascis... on the drums!

8 F.C.P.R.E.M.I.X.
THE FALL OF TROY
Prog-metal meets grunge, New version of their debut album track with killer riffs

9 PROMISED LAND
CHUCK BERRY
The new ‘best of... Rockin’ And Rollin’,’ proves just how cool this influential guitarist was

10 GIMME SOME LOVE
GRAHAM COXON
Hectic punk rocker from Cozy’s ace new album Love Travels At Illegal Speeds

11 PLANET CARAVAN
BLACK SABBATH
What that bloke from the butter advert used to do for a living. Happy days...

12 GIRL JUST DIED
THE CRIMEA
Easy, listening but infectious indie-rock with loud guitars. John Peel-approved

13 THE KILL
30 SECONDS TO MARS
New single from actor bloke Jared Leto and his band, all spacey and Feeder-like

14 SWITCHBLADE
MAD DOGS ‘N’ GLORY
London-based, ‘no messin’ old school rock ‘n’ roll the way it should be

15 BOUND TO VIOLENCE
HATEBREED
“Violence begets violence/pain begets pain” – a cue to hit the pit at Download

16 ALCOHOL
BRAD PAISLEY
He may wear a hat, but Paisley’s guitar playing will tear your face off!

17 NEEDLES AND PINS
THE SEARCHERS
Classic pop track taken from Merseybeat – The Story Of The 1960s Liverpool Sound

18 STRAIGHT HATE
BLOOD SIMPLE
Brutal riffs and bludgeonimg drums from the opening track of a cracking debut

19 WANT YOU TO STAY
MAXIMO PARK
Latest single from one of the UK’s finest indie guitar bands

20 OSTIA
SEPULTURA
A sizzling Brazilian riff, enough to blast away those lingering winter blues

WHAT’S ON MY IPOD
MICHAEL AMOTT (ARCH ENEMY)

The Antichrist
SLAYER
Semtex Revolution
CORONER
Dismantling The Priest
BLACK SABBATH
Bullets And Blades
WARGASM
Diamond Dreamer
PICTURE
Jacob’s Ladder
RUSH
Born
NEVERMORE
Assault Attack
MIGUEL SCHENKER GROUP
Smuggler
DAMMAJ
Terror Squad
ARTILLERY
Forbidden Reality
ASSASSIN
No Remorse
METALLICA
Power Lover
THE RODS
Ashes To Ashes
LIMEIGHT
Alcatraz
NAZARETH
Tarot Woman
RAINBOW
Blackout
SCORPIONS
Saturn’s Girl
DEATH ROW
Looking Down The Cross
MEGABETH
Juggernaut
FRANK MARINO

12 | TOTAL GUITAR | MAY 2006
“FOR ME TO SOUND LIKE ‘ME’ I HAVE TO HAVE A MARSHALL— THAT’S JUST THE WAY IT IS.”
INTERVIEW

AIDEN

BRINGING GOTH TO SEATTLE AND SNAPPING AT THE HEELS OF MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE...

GUITARISTS: JAKE W1, ANGEL2

INTRO

“Do they sound like...”

Goth punk beesy-boppers with a penchant for eyeliner, tattoos and songs about love, addiction and death. Singer WIL used to be a drug dealer, spent time in prison and drunk up the murderers’ sprees whilst drummer Jake D and guitarist Angel have only just graduated from high school. Talk about polar extremes! Their own definition of “horror rock” doesn’t quite encompass their AFI-influenced hardcore riffs and lavish pop hooks akin to the finest moments of My Chemical Romance.

Yeah, but the band are only just out of Pampers. Shouldn’t they be in bed by now?

Evidently not. For the youngest member of the band, pint-sized fret-melter Angel (who was a hip-hop devotee before the dulcet tones of NOFX turned him onto punk music), it is a time to relish the more lenient drinking ages of Europe’s fine cities. “I’ve been hooked on snakelike and black ever since the first time I came to the UK,” he says. “You get drunk without even noticing! We were drinking with Bullet For My Valentine. I drank a bunch of snakebites and a few shots of Jäger, which I actually hated. I passed out in the back lounge of the bus whilst the other guys were hanging out. I remember waking up and pulling all over the seats. Someone grabbed a garage can for me, but I pumped up their arm!”

Nice! So the band are from Seattle, they probably grew up on grunge, right?

Wrong. Not every Seattle resident embraces the city’s dirges-drenched musical legacy. These pale-faced scoundrels jumped aboard the pop-punk wagon, says Jake W. “I got an acoustic guitar for Christmas when I was 16. I sat in my room attempting to play Blink-182 songs until I got an electric guitar and started learning to play powerchords. The powerchord is where it’s at! My first punk rock show was an NF show and it was incredible. I imagined how amazing it would be if that was my job.”

Don’t goth bands have seriously weird fans? Do they have any stories?

“Um, there was one kid in Scotland who asked me if he could kick me in the shin,” says Angel rather sheepishly. “I just looked at him and said ‘Yeah, OK, as long as you don’t kick it too hard,’ but he kicked me really fucking hard.” (CB)

THE LOWDOWN

FOR FANS OF: My Chemical Romance, Free First Time Last

KEY ARTIST: Jake W

Feat. Dene, Donge

Hutchery head, orange cabs, Bass Noise Suppressor pedals (Angel)

Natalie Paul Custard Gibson Les Paul Studio, Mesa/Boogie Rectifier head, Mesa/Boogie cabs, Stenheilier wireless, Kong rack-mounted tuners, Ross Noise Suppressor pedals

OUT NOW: Nightmare Anatomy (Victoria Records)

INTERESTING FACT: All five members of Aiden have matching band tattoos on their wrists, which form the centrepiece to their pre-gig huddle

MORE INFO: www.aiden.org
BE YOUR OWN PET

INTERVIEW

YOUNG PUPS SET TO BRING OUT THE ANIMAL IN YOU...

GUITARISTS: Jonas Stein

How are they and what do they sound like?

A gang of frighteningly cool teenagers from Nashville fronted by blonde bombshell Jemima Pearl. Guitarist Jonas Stein was listening to Led Zeppelin, Bob Marley and Motley Crue when he was 11 years old, but it’s his love of classic punk that shapes his own PET’s visceral garage blasts.

They’ll do themselves an injury playing that stuff...

Too late! Jonas already bears the scars of a ferocious right-hand technique, but naturally, he’s too young to care. “The harder and faster I play the more fun I’m having,” he claims. “My thumb muscles cramp up after shows, I’ll drop a pick and have to use my fingers in place, I just bleed. I’m healing some scabs on my hands right now!”

Shouldn’t they be playing country music like everyone else seems to be in Nashville?

No cotton-pickin’ way, reckons Jonas. “Most people in Nashville trying to do country moved in from out of town because they think it’s easier to start a country music career here. I think we’re representing the real sound out of Nashville. There are crowds that listen to ‘radio country’ because they don’t know any better. I don’t consider it to be anything other than shitty pop.”

“If I drop a pick and use my fingers, I bleed. I’m healing some scabs right now!” — Jonas Stein

We heard the band set up their own label?

You heard right. It’s called Infinity Cat (www.infinitycat.com) and it was set up by drummer Jamin together with his brother and father a few years ago. “One of the first releases was a split album between one of my old bands and one of Jamin’s old bands,” Jonas explains. They’ve now released music by over a dozen artists. “Hopefully we’re bringing a lot of attention to the label,” he adds.

Finally, is that a Wayne’s World guitar Jonas is playing?

Totally, dude! Made for the band in the early 90s, and based on a 1962 Strat, the Squier Wayne’s World Strat is something of a rarity. They only made 1,000 of them,” he smiles, “and I have two of them. They have a Wayne’s World emblem plate on the back, which is pretty cool.” Er, quite. Party on, dude! (PA)

THE LOWDOWN

FOR FANS OF: Dillinger Escape Plan, Bleeding Through

KEY KITS: Dillion guitar, Roland FR-1x, Toshiba Prestige, Pono 50/50 HUI amps, Rocktron Hush Noise Reducer, Boss pedals

OUT NOW: This is What The Edge Of Your Seat Was Made For (EP)/Infinity Cat/Big World Records

INTERESTING FACTS: Jamin and Jonas used to do medieval battle re-enactments in a local park using padded weapons. Jonas still has the weapons!

MORE INFO: www.beyourownpet.net

THE LOWDOWN

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MORE INFO: www.beyourownpet.net

MAY 2006 | TOTAL GUITAR | 15
Max Cavalera reclus in a Bristol hotel room on the latter leg of Soulfly's UK tour in support of fifth album Dark Ages, watching Liverpool play Chelsea. He looks bemused as TG thuds our Rockbox down in front of him.

"I brought all my CDs on this tour, like 400 of them," says Max still looking at our stereo, "and the airport guy was like, 'You need an iPod, man!'

Max is of the old school, no doubt; whilst in Sepultura he battled it out with Slayer for the title of 1990s Kings of Thrash. But how did he fair when up against TG's Rockbox? Time for kick-off!

**Clutch**

1000211001 (2005)

"Those keyboards sound like Deep Purple. Oh, it's Clutch! Neil Fallon's voice is easy to guess. This sounds like their new stuff. I have Blast Tyrant – an incredible album. I'm a huge fan of their first EP. I used to jam with them when we were on tour together. Get this: It was Sepultura, Clutch, Fugazi, and Fear Factory!"

**Arctic Monkeys**

**When The Sun Goes Down** (2005)

"I have no idea. He sounds like he's from the UK. It's not really my gig. I listen to a lot of weird shit, but it doesn't remind me of anything I'd listen to. It's kind of 1060s era English music, like The Kinks. I only know them because of Van Halen's cover of You Really Got Me. The first heavy metal riff!"

**Pearl Jam**

**Bleed (1993)**

"Sounds like ZZ Top or Ted Nugent. I never really got into Pearl Jam. I was more into Soundgarden, really cool Sabbath type shit. Eddie Vedder is a cool guy. I got drunk one night and puked on him! Then 10 minutes later I asked him to sign a shirt for my sister. I also broke a whiskey bottle on the tour manager's head and later found out he was the guy from Echo And The Bunnymen. It was an evil night."

**Slayer**

**Spell The Blood (1988)**

"Sounds like King Diamond. Oh, it's Slayer! It's not your typical Slayer start; that acoustic intro, Reign In Blood was pure speed, which is cool, but this has a real vibe to it. It's more evil, interesting. I think they did a video for this in Egypt at the same time Sepultura did a video for Territory in Israel. There was a rivalry between us then, but both videos were cool."

**Radiohead**

**Everything In Its Right Place** (2000)

"Sounds like Massive Attack or something. Radiohead? I've never really heard their stuff – I didn't think it was this cool. I dig it. I always wanted to do a whole album backwards. I recorded a bunch of songs on a four track and played them all backwards and it worked. So I don't need to write any more albums, man, I'm just gonna reissue our back catalogue backwards!" (NC)
ONLY A FOOL WOULDN'T CALL!

BILLY MARTIN SE

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What about your backline?

"Studio, I use the Diezel VH4 head. I never use the same head for clean and distortion - I use a splitter or A/B switch and have separate clean and distorted amps. I have a couple of Selmer Zodiac Twins (a Twin 30 and Twin 50), and an Ampeg B-15 with a guitar input that's good for clean stuff. "Live, I don't care as much about sound as reliability. I use Mesa/Boogie Triple Rectifiers, a Mesa/Boogie cabinet and a Roland JC-120 Jazz Chorus combo."

Are you an effects junkie?

"I like tape delays - I use an Echoplex and a Roland Space Echo. There's also an extreme wah pedal called The Parachute. I use it to create some nauseating sounds!"

Strings - make and gauge?

"I use Ernie Ball .011 to .052"

Pick or fingers?

"I have my own picks printed that say 'Dumb Stupid Pick.' They're really heavy, like 1 mm thick."

Which track has the ultimate example of your sound?

"I'm really happy with the guitar sounds on the new Black Light Burns record. We experimented using my Yamaha guitar with some cheap Japanese guitars mixed in."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

If you've been following the legal battle between the Gibson Guitar Corporation and Paul Reed Smith Guitars (which saw the latter forced to temporarilysuspend production of the Singlecut model), you'll be aware that it's now settled. In PRS' favour last year, Gibson claimed PRS Singlecut design infringed their copyright and that consumers may be confused between PRS Singlecut and Gibson's own single-cutaway Les Paul model. After much consideration, the court disagreed and PRS resumed production of their Singlecut range. The guitars now include the Korean-made SE model... like the existing SE models, the new Singlecut features a mahogany body with a maple top. It also features a 'Wide Fat' neck with a 22 fret rosewood fingerboard dressed with some tasteful inlay designs. Hardware includes the classic PRS stop tailpiece, a pair of PRS-designed humbuckers, a three-way pickup selector switch and volume/tone controls. The Singlecut also has the same features as the SE model, but with PRSbranded hardware. The SE model has a tritium-finished £499. And you get a pickup upgrade thrown in, too; for stockists give Headline Music a call on 01202 878033 or visit PRS online at www.prsguitars.com.

John Hornby Skewer have unveiled their new Vintage Icon Series guitars. Designed to look like they've been gigged, the models feature distressed finishes and aged Wilkinson hardware. The Venetian cutaway bolt on neck guitar (C000) is available in Fireglo Red and Woodstock White, while the single cutaway bolt on neck Y000CE5 comes in cherry sunburst and honeyburst for £799. Contact JHS: 01932 868381 or visit www.jhs.co.uk.

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A PAIR OF TG CUSTOMISED CONVERSE ALL STARS!

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Velvet Revolver guitar god Slash swears by his Converse All Stars. Green Day's pint-sized frontman/guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong wouldn't look the same firing off his punk-tinted vitriol with anything other than All Stars on his feet. Even the Ramones' tattered and bruised image would not be so iconic if it were not for their black leather jackets, drainpipes and trainers - more often than not Converse. And don't get us started on The Strokes' obsession with the revered footwear brand...

As much as a staple of the rock 'n' roll image as a Gibson Les Paul guitar, Converse All Stars have been around since 1917 and were originally produced in just one colour: black. And that none-more-rock colour is the very same we have chosen as the backdrop for our customised kick-ass Chuck Taylor All Stars.

We've gone at these All Stars with guns (or should that be pencils) blazing to bring you the most rock 'n' roll footwear in the universe. Just check out our evil TG skull 'n' crossbones and rock flames! No-one else in the world has the same design as these Total Guitar customised Chuck Taylor All Stars, and only 10 of you lucky readers will each be able to take home one pair to scuff-up in mosh pits, drag on the back of your skateboard or just doss around in to make your mates jealous!

To be in with a chance of winning a pair you must enter the competition below and correctly answer the following question:

Which of the following sports was Chuck H Taylor famous for?

A. Baseball
B. American Football
C. Basketball

Send your answers on a postcard to ALL STARS COMP, Total Guitar, Future, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 1BW by 1st May 2006. Don't forget to include your address and phone number!

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Winners will be notified by telephone. Multiple entries are allowed. The editor's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into. Entrants must not be an employee, agent or subcontractor of the promoters, or a relative of these persons. The promoter is Future Publishing Ltd, Meadow Court, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 1BN. Company No: 07008885. No purchase necessary. There is no alternative to the prizes stated. Winners' names will not be published.
GET BACK!

GUITAR LAND HAPPENINGS, THIS MONTH IN 1976...

THE GIG
On 1 April, AC/DC played their first gig in the UK at Hammersmith's Red Cow venue. According to legend, the initial crowd of 55 people increased tenfold by the time the band played their second set of the evening; the word spreading around London by some nearby public telephones. The UK music press was less enthusiastic and dismissed the group as an Australian novelty act, at the same time lumping their stripped-down sound and fag you attitude with the UK punk phenomenon. Later that year, Rolling Stone magazine reviewed High Voltage, a UK/US release comprising the best of AC/DC's first two Australian albums, and deemed both the record and the band an "all-time low" for rock music.

THE ALBUM
Across the Pond, a genuine punk classic was released on Sire records; the Ramones' eponymous debut. Like AC/DC, the

ALSO THIS MONTH...
1 April: The Buzzcocks played their first gig at Bolton Institute Of Technology.
4 April: The Sex Pistols played the first night of a residency at the Paradiso, London. Rotten told Sounds: "I hate shit. I hate hippies and what they stand for. I hate long hair."
10 April: English guitarist Peter Frampton went to No 1 in the US album charts with his live album, Frampton Comes Alive.

Ramones stripped rock back to its core of loud, aggressively played guitars. Unlike the 'Young brothers' gang, New York's bow tie bards and leather sporting punks did so with a melodic bent. The Ramones' pop-injected punk rock laid the groundwork for bands like Green Day, Sum 41 and Blink-182 (as demonstrated in last month's Trail Blazer.) Yet their influence spread further, as the

"In 1976 Rolling Stone reviewed High Voltage and declared AC/DC an all-time low for rock music"

2004 tribute album We're A Happy Family featuring RHCP, U2 and Rob Zombie proved.

THE ROCK STAR ANTIC
OK, he's not a guitarist but we thought Keith Moon's notorious hit jinks of 30 April, 1976 were worth retelling. The Who's infamous, impsish drummer paid nine cabbies to park their cabs at either end of a New York street. The parked cars created a blockade preventing pedestrians or vehicles from entering the road his hotel was situated on. This seemingly random act of lunacy could be read as a sign of Moon's philandering; apparently he wanted the street cleared so he could empty the contents of his hotel room from his window, safe in the knowledge that the only thing harmed would be a television set or perhaps a Corby trouser press. Moon's rap sheet of alleged misdemeanours included planting fireworks in toilet bowls, driving a Rolls Royce into a swimming pool and dressing up in Nazi regalia to wind up his neighbour Steve McQueen.

LIKE A VIRGIN
HOW GUITARISTS LOST THEIR ROCK CHERRIES

MATT SKIBA
ALKALINE TRIO

The first record I bought...
"The first record I bought was Van Halen's 1984. I bought it on cassette!"

My first gig...
"I was dragged along to watch this country band called The Judds. My parents took me to that gig when I was really young. I think it was the first time I smoked marijuana. It was in the Ozarks mountains, Missouri. My Grandmother lived there. I wasn't scared, but I'd be terrifed to go to that show now. My first proper rock show was Public Image Limited and Iggy Pop at Lulu in 1988 in Chicago. When I was 11-years-old."

Keith Moon always polite to the double glazing telephonists man

Johnny Rotten: "I hate hippies!"

Keith Moon always polite to the double glazing telephonists man

Keith Moon always polite to the double glazing telephonists man
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1. Always remember why you are playing a gig. Gigs are to promote your music and your band's identity to an audience of your fans and people you want to be your fans.

2. Pay to one person as you would to 10,000. Never presume an audience is too small to be worth performing to because that one person could be an influential journalist or label scout.

3. Communication is key. Most audiences want to feel part of a gig, so talk to them in between songs and look audience members in the eye when performing.

4. If your drummer or singer makes a mistake, ignore it and move on. If you pull the 'my-drummer's-a-twat' face the whole crowd will know it was a mistake.

5. Most gigs goers remember the beginning and end of a gig, so plan your set accordingly. Put any ballads in the middle of your set and allow enough songs afterwards to whip the crowd into a frenzy.

6. Revel in being a support band. Supporting a bigger band than yourselves is an opportunity to blow them off the stage and nick all their fans!

7. Be 'larger than life' onstage. You're actually further away from much of the audience than you realise when onstage. For more examples of larger than life stage personas, you should check out any live footage of artists such as Alice Cooper, Kiss and Ozzy Osbourne.

8. Make every gig an event. You can do this by adding extra things to your gig such as fire breathing jugglers, exotic dancers or a rocket launcher strapped to the neck of your guitarist! You know the sort of thing...

9. Think twice about doing an encore because it could back fire on you. Getting called back by the crowd is a great moment, but if they really want to see you again they should come to your next gig.

10. Ultimately, you want every one who didn't come to your gig to hear from others that they missed out. With so many other great bands out there doing what you're doing, it's important you stand head and shoulders above the crowd. Go for it.
**Dial-A-Lick**

**H**ere's the deal: we've laddered a lick and we want you to play that lick in your own style, down the phone to us. You don’t have to be able to read music. As long as the notes in the lick are played in the order we print them, you can play it however you like. Before you shoot, “But I'm not good enough," think again. Here at TG we are not impressed by speed alone. We want to hear some attitude. Slash, Angus Young and Jimmy Page aren’t the fastest players in the world but we love the way they rock, so don’t be discouraged. Let your personality come through in your playing— that’s the real key to winning.

**WIN THIS!**

All you have to do is call the number below, leave your name and number then play the lick. Make your own amp is set up and near the phone so you don’t want to waste valuable time messin’ about with your settings. Congratulations to last month’s winner Robin Parkinson who has won a Boss TU-30 Tuner & Metronome and is featured on the TG CD. To enter Dial-A-Lick call 0907 400 4348. Calls cost 50p per minute and should last no more than two minutes. Entries will be judged after the closing date of 16/04/06.

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**Tuitional Reviews**

**THE SMITHS**

The Singles Collection

£16.95

www.musicinteractive.com

This book is a huge treat for fans of the fantastic Johnny Marr. His deceptively difficult guitar parts have long confounded and frustrated his loyal followers. This book features matching transcriptions to 19 of their finest singles, including "Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now". The majority of the parts are tabbed here to give you a good insight into Marr's clever orchestrations and playing style. This is a must have for any serious guitarist and fan of The Smiths.

**Rating:** ******

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**Challenge Charlie!**

Some people will do anything to be on TV! Assemble... Mr Griffetti...

William Blake once said; "Great things are done when men and mountains meet." To encourage those wise words... Oh, bollocks to that. We don't keep up high-minded lark any longer! Every month Charlie will accept a challenge from you, the TG reader, and face that challenge in video form on your own! Send your challenge to totalguitar@futurenet.co.uk and check out this month's DVD for Charlie's latest mission.

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**TIPS FROM THE STARS**

**Scott Ian**

**Anthrax**

**Tip Name:** Down picking

"When I first started developing my sound and style I would sit at home in front of the TV, when I had nothing else to do, and just down pick. People always ask me where my picking speed comes from? It's because that's all I used to do all day long — down picking and practising riffs. But it should be fun at the same time. Practice a lot, but if you're not having fun then you should stop doing it. There's no point otherwise."
Legato refers to performing a number of notes using one pick stroke and a combination of hammer-ons and pull-offs, re-picking when you change string.

Place your fourth finger on the 7th fret of the first string, your second finger on the fifth fret of the same string. Finally, place your index finger on the note G6 (4th fret). Now, pick the 7th fret note. Generate our next note, the 5th fret, by pulling-off with your 4th finger in a downwards flicking motion. Repeat this between your second and first fingers, pulling-off to sound G4.

Once your G6 sounds clearly, hammer-on with your fourth finger onto our start note G. Use speed and downwards pressure to increase the impact of the string hitting the fret, which will ‘energize’ this note. Once balanced in volume, loop our three-note sequence round and round. (JW)

**RANDY RHOADS**

Randy Rhoads style legato

Ozzy Osbourne guitarist Randy Rhoads was famous for his expert use of neighbour-tone trills (approaching any given note from a chord from the semitone below) and three-note-per-string legato runs. This lick, based on the scale of E Dorian and the chord tones of E minor, exemplifies why many still consider him to be Ozzy’s all-time ultimate guitarist.

**DIMEBAG DARRELL**

Dimebag style legato

Mix one part Rhoads, an equal amount EVH, a sprinkling of Kiss plus a generous amount of Texan swagger and you get legato king Dimebag Darrell. This example takes the three-note-per-string idea one stage further by adding some wide stretches and a wide bend. Make sure you warm up before this one and keep your thumb low on the back of the neck.

**JOE SATRIANI**

Joe Satriani style legato

Joe Satriani likens ideas such as this one to the sensation of rolling a ball of mercury around in the palm of his hand! When trying this lick, emphasise each 16th note accent. Often, this accented note won’t correspond with a picked note. If you’re new to this technique have patience because obtaining the fluency of Satriani requires stamina and disciplined practice.
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ALBUMS
THIS MONTH'S RELEASES... REVIEWED BY GUITARISTS

VENOM
Metal Black
(Gastle/Sanctuary)

Who they? Black metal overlords - Venom are the ones who more or less started it all - adored by Foo Fighters' Dave Grohl among others. If songs about Satan, death and all things dark and brooding are your thing, you'll love it. Probably best known for wearing bear skin underpants whilst singing for 20 minutes about a war between heaven and hell.

Any good? Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes, and it's heavier than a vat full of dark matter being sucked into a black hole at the arse-end of space. For anyone familiar with the Venom of old, this is a complete up-to-date version of the band that stands horns and shoulders above many of today's metal pretenders. Guitarist 'Myke' provides the metal-standard pinched harmonics on 'Burn In Hell', 'House of Pain' and Pantera clone 'Blasod Dead'. The juggernaut riffs on 'Antechrist and Maleficarum' and quite possibly the heaviest intro ever on 'Sleep When I'm Dead' are his too. Just make sure your foundations (and neighbours) can take the resultant explosion of noise!

Must hear: The crushing hardcore/ thrash rhythms of album closer Metal Black with the never-more-truer statements "This ain't no music for light-hearted folk" and "A celebration of everything loud, this is the music to incite a crowd.

Why buy? Because it's time to re-discover real man's metal and jump around like a loon in those aforementioned fur pants. An elegant return for Cronos and his cronies...

Nick Cracknell
TG RATING: 4
FOR FANS OF: Anthrax, Slayer, Celtic Frost
ALSO TRY: Probst Probst

LACUNA COIL
Karmagade
(Century Media)

Who they? From the land of spaghetti, the Renaissance and Di Matteo (namely, Italy) comes gothic-metal seduct Lacuna Coil. As Century Media's biggest selling band of all time big things are expected, and if you haven't had dirty thoughts about raven-haired chanteuse Christina Scabbia as she wantonly steams up the pages of the rock press you must be mad. Or a Lib Dem MP.

Any good? Lacuna have spent years diligently crafting the perfect sound, melding groovy distorted guitar riffs and sublime acoustic excursions around Scabbia's heavenly vocals. But here they've fallen somewhat short of their own high mark. Their last effort Comolillo (2002) was truly electrifying and demonstrated an indisputable understanding of heavy guitar melody. Rightly, it brought them shit loads of attention and stints at some of the world's biggest metal festivals. Perhaps chal it up to Scabbia dating Slipknot guitarist Jim Root, but they now seem hell-bent on resurrecting nu-metal. Karmacade is much heavier than previous albums, and they've consequently sacrificed much of the melody that made those so rewarding. But they still shit all over most of the other female-fronted metal bands out there.

Must hear: Dynamic first single 'Our Truth' and the massive 'Frigide' stand out as highlights, and Marilyn Manson would do well to note how a real band covers Depeche Mode on 'Enjoy This Silence'.

Why buy? While Karmacade doesn't rank alongside their awesome back catalogue (check out 2001's sensational Unleashed Memories), we reckon 2006 will be LC's year.

Phil Ascott
TG RATING: 9
FOR FANS OF: Evanescence, Paradise Lost, Within Temptation

THE VINES
Vision Valley
(Heavenly/EMI)

Who they? Young Australians who were curreed with the 'next big thing' tag in 2002 upon the release of their debut album Highly Evolved. Sadly, by 2004 singer/guitarist Craig Nicholls' on-stage behaviour had become erratic, and after ditching a photographer and yelping uncontrollably at a gig in Sydney, fears for his mental stability grew. Those fears were vindicated when Nicholls was diagnosed with Aspergers Syndrome (a form of autism), seemingly putting an end to the band. However, having responded well to treatment, Nichols and co return with album number three.

Any good? Only if your idea of fun is guessing which band The Vines will pastiche next. If so, stop reading now and we'll spoil it for you. Opener 'Anykind' finds The Vines deep in Jane's Addiction territory. Going Home would fit nicely on The Verve's 'Urban Hymns', the title track is Green Day's 'Boulevard Of Broken Dreams' with the passion and politics, whilst rip-off merchants The Dandy Warhols get ripped off themselves on Moth's 'Comin'. Worse still, Nicholls has absolutely nothing to say, resorting instead to cheap sloganeering on 'Futurereader' (groan) and 'Ruck, Ruck, no'. Vision Valley? Vision lost more like.

James Unks
TG RATING: 4
FOR FANS OF: Stevie Wonder, Jon Butler, Jack Johnson

SEPULTURA
Dante XXI
(Spit)

Who they? Your favourite Brazilian band, who in days gone by featured a certain Max Cavalera in their ranks. This is their fourth album without him and after a couple of dodgy efforts they seem to have found their feet again.

Any good? In Andreas Kisser, the Seps still have one of metal's most underated players and the riffs remain big enough to crush any endangered beetles.

Nick Cracknell
TG RATING: 6
FOR FANS OF: Evanescence, Paradise Lost, Within Temptation

BEN HARPER
Both Sides Of The Gun
(Virgin)

Who he? Harper is something of a underground hero, blending myriad styles to create his own compelling sound. This is a double album; the first disc could be considered 'electric', and while the second is full of delicate acoustic tunes and fantastic vocals.

Any good? While this is an acoustic/electric double album, Mr Harper is far from 'doing a Foo'. The electric offering is still pretty laid back with light gain added to some cool riffs. The acoustic half is beautifully understated, with some great fingerpicking moments and gorgeous vocals. You will need real stamina to get through both discs in one go as there isn't quite enough variety to keep you interested.

Must hear: Disc one's 'Better Way'. This is a cool slide solo. Both Sides Of The Gun and Black Rain are as bad as its gets! On disc two 'Never Leave Lonely Alone' is sublime.

Why buy? Cos you like soulful, funky acoustic rock with just a bit of bite.

Phil Ascott
TG RATING: 7
FOR FANS OF: O2, The Police, The Jam

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scrampering for cover in the undergrowth. Forget your samba, rhumba, lambada and other dances ending in 'a', songs like City Of Dis and Ostar are made of the kind of stuff that pops your neck from your spine, then snaps it back in before you've even noticed. There's even sporadic instances of heavy metal cello, Apocalyptic style!

**Must hear:** False for its uncanny ability to transport you back to the halcyon days of Roots Bloody Roots, a golden era of metal where Eddy莫 was just a mis-spelt puppet.

**Why buy?** Because you yearn for the days when the mosh pits were owned by sweaty, half-naked men, and not kids with nail varnish and empty rus-sacs.

Dave Parrtridge

---

**TG RATING:** 7

**For fans of:** Deftones, Vision of Disorder

**DAVE MATTHEWS BAND**

Stand Up (2010)

Who they are? Massive in the US, while in the UK only small communities of cave dwellers are aware of South African Dave Matthews' intricate but surprisingly catchy acoustic-based music.

**Any good?** There are some who feel that Dave Matthews Band have been on the decline since 1998's Before These Crowded Streets. While that may be a little harsh, there is no denying the fact that the variety seems to be missing from this release. There is no Ranopuzel or Tripin' Billies to kick-start Matthews' more mellow moments. On the plus side the gentle tracks are great and flawlessly played. Stand Up may not bowl you over, but the sheer virtuosity of the musicians in this band is something to aspire to.

**Must hear:** Dopehead. The opener Dreamgirl is excellent and Hello Again has a great groove. Both are vintage moments, which would belong on any of the band's best albums.

**Why buy?** Because you love John Butler and Jack Johnson's acoustic rock - basically, anyone who can meld musicianship with great tunes.

James Ulling

---

**MUDHONEY**

Under A Billion Suns (Sub Pop)

Who they are? It's almost impossible not to mention Sub Pop or grunge when discussing Mudhoney. But that's not a bad thing - after all, this veteran Seattle group popularised vintage stombspokes and second-hand guitars - and re-introduced the world to garage rock when most were busy squeezing into Spandex and spraying their hair. After a brief affiliation with a major label, Mudhoney issue their second release upon returning to their original home, Sub Pop.

**Any good?** It's not as jaw-droppingly brilliant as Superfuzz Blindfuzz, but Under A Billion Suns is another solid effort. While Mudhoney haven't abandoned their fuzzy guitars, horns are used once more (as on their previous album) - reminiscent of the Stooges' Funhouse.

**Must hear:** Empty Shells is classic Mudhoney - heavy on riffs and attitude.

Ed Mitchell

---

**CHUCK BERRY**

Reelin' And Rockin' (Universal)

**Who he?** You must be joking! You've never heard of Chuck Berry? The man who invented the duck walk, wrote Johnny B. Goode, was jailed for armed robbery and accused of transporting an underage girl across State lines for sexual purposes? Like, hello! Chuck Berry was

---

**HOW TO BUY: GREEN DAY WORDS: HENRY YATES**

**MUST OWN:**

**AMERICAN IDIOT** (2004)

*GREEN DAY* American Idiot

Green Day's seventh album gave them an escape route from the predicament of being the wrong side of 30 and still playing in a cartoon punk band. Much has been made of the 'concept' that runs through American Idiot, but really its appeal hinges on the resurrection of Billie Joe Armstrong's music (particularly on Holiday, Jesus Of Suburbia and Whatsername) and the abiding sense that this formerly lobotomised band suddenly had something to say. Two years since its release, the album sounds just as fresh and the singles keep on coming.

**THEN BUY:**

**DOOKIE** (1994)

Written when B&J was more interested in masturbation than Iraq, Dookie took the mucky contents of the teenage mind and spread them over a catalogue of three-chord anthems. The cartoon tag started here, but so did the accusations of genius.

**INSOMNIAC** (1995)

Green Day's punishing tour schedule and the fallout from Dookie were the catalysts for this blockbuster of albums. Insomniac wasn't appreciated upon its 1995 release, but now we're a little older, older tracks like Stick With Me and No Pride deserve reappraisal.


**BE CAREFUL:**

**39/SMOOTH** (1989)

Considering they wrote it as children, a* children, criticizing Green Day's debut album is like taking the piss out of a nursery school art exhibition. It's slimy and sloppy, but there are hints of potential if you squint hard enough.

**SHENANIGANS** (2002)

Not a shocker by any means (TG's partial to the Ramones' cover Outside), but there are better uses for your NCM voucher than this rag-bag of b-sides. Offers all the sound and fury of a 'proper' Green Day album - but none of the soul.
the original rock 'n' roll badass, dude, and a pretty influential guitar player! Any 'goodies'? Ah yes, very clever. It's damn 'goodie', actually. All the obvious hits are here – Johnny Bo. Goode. Roll Over Beethoven and Rock & Roll Music – but with over 50 tracks there are plenty of less well-known gems to be found. The one constant is Berry's distinctive lead, full of brush doublestops that influenced everyone from Angus Young to Slash.

Must hear: Skip the obvious tracks (except Hayleyellen, which rocks) – you're bound to have heard them all before. Promised Land is proto-southern rock at its gresay best, while Big is the kind of blues tune The Rolling Stones would have gladly handed over their merchandising rights for in the 60s.

Why buy? Your guitar playing is plagued by weedy single-note licks. Buy this, a cop a little of Berry's doublestop groove and we guarantee you'll rock harder and sleazier than ever before.

**TG RATING:**

8  
For fans of: Bo Diddley, The Yardbirds, The Rolling Stones

---

**STEREOPHONICS**

*Live From Dakota (VC)*

Who they are? Leather-clad Welsh trio at the harder end of soft rock, who, despite being fronted by a diminutive Fonzi-allike with a bird's name, have penned some of the classic British guitar songs of the last 10 years. This is a double live disc recorded on a world tour supporting 2005's *Language, Sex, Violence, Other?* Any good? The thing about the *Phonics* is that they're a great guitar band on record, but beyond seeing how the songs are actually played there ain't much to be gained from their live sets. It all sounds exactly the same as when you stick a studio album in your CD player. Plus, while most of their early and most recent singles are on here Kelly & Co have inexplicably chosen to omit two of their best songs, *Pick A Part That's New and Have A Nice Day*. It's all just too Inoffensive.

Must hear: The best tracks are the hits, not surprisingly. With riff-heavy songs

**TG RATING:**

5  
For fans of: Oasis, Muther Love Bone

---

**ENGERICA**

*There Are No Happy Endings (Sanctuary)*

Who they are? Essex hard rock trio featuring David Gardner, recent graduate of the Jake Goody school of literary genius, on guitar and vocals. Any good? Engerica are nothing but energetic, but get beyond the first two awesome tracks and the wrought iron guitars and skin shredding riffs are substituted with cringe-worthy lyrics and lacklustre musicianship. Style issues are immediately clear as the band march with trepidation into System Of A Down territory despite lacking the creativity and lyrical depth of the aforementioned band.

Must hear: Reasons To Be Fearful, a frantic punkation that sets a sadly unfulfilled but impressive stair for the rest of the album, and track two, The Smell, a pummeller with a Faith No More vibe.

Why buy? Because you reckon you'd enjoy some of the worst lyrics to accompany guitars since the Bloodhound Gang, or you're a devotee follower of new alternative bands from the UK.

**TG RATING:**

3  
For fans of: System Of A Down, Refaben

---

**BEST OF THE REST**

**BO DIDDLEY**

*The Story Of Bo Diddley* (Universal)

If your Bo Diddley collection currently amounts toiddly-squat, this two-CD package will bring you right up to speed. You get 54 tracks of prime Bo, including his finest moment *Who Do You Love*: "I got a brand new chimney made on top, made out of a human skull." Yeah, baby!

**TG RATING:**

8  
For fans of: Chuck Berry, Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds

---

**THE SWORD**

*The Sword* (Kemado)

Keep an eye out for galloping Texan noise-punks The Sword, as TG reckons they're gonna explode soon. Touted in the States as metal's next big thing, The Sword sound like a herd of blon running off a cliff. And having raided Inmilk's closet they're bringing their enormous TG riffs, Sabbath-esque vocals and thundering 80s thrash-groove over here.

**TG RATING:**

10  
For fans of: Iron Maiden, The Melvins, Kyuss

---

**KENESHA**

*Prototype* (Household Name Records)

After a four-year gap, Bristol's ska-punk stallings have returned a more mature and rockier version of their former selves. Whether you like the disco-tinged *Second Skin*, the Terrorvision done Killing Angus or the Rivera sounds of *Songs About Robots And Plastic Clouds* there's something for every fan of two-tone.

**TG RATING:**

9  
For fans of: Reel Big Fish, The Specials

---

**MASTODON**

*Call Of* The Mastodon (*Relapse*)

Essentially the first nine songs they ever wrote back in 2000, this extended re-release showcases why Mastodon are the most original heavy band of the last 10 years. You can feel history in the making at the first signs of them wielding trad metal, thrash, prog and jazz. Even this early in their career Mastodon stood head and tank above their competitors.

**TG RATING:**

9  
For fans of: Bush, Metallic, Neurosis

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**PRINCE**

*3121* (Angel Air)

*Angels And Airways* (Rough Trade)

*Yeah Yeah Yeahs* (Interscope)

*Show Your Bones* (Matador)

---

**THE BEST GUITAR ALBUMS OF THE PAST THREE MONTHS**

**GRAHAM COXON**

*Love Travels At Illegal Speeds (MCM)*

"I unequivocally his best solo album yet... finally fulfills the promise of greatness that Coxon has hinted at since going solo."  

**TG RATING:**

9

---

**MOGWAI**

*Mr Beast (PIAS)*

"One of the most pioneering and consistent British rock acts of recent years has unleashed another beast. If you can't 'em, join 'em."  

**TG RATING:**

8

---

**ARTIC MONKEYS**

*What Ever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not* (domino)

"A hilarious portrait of the new phenomenon. They're talented, loud and British. You should be proud!"  

**TG RATING:**

9

---

**NEXToMONTH**

**PRINCE**

*3121* (Angel Air)

*Angels And Airways* (Rough Trade)

*Yeah Yeah Yeahs* (Interscope)

*Show Your Bones* (Matador)
Earning respect since 1991.

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Permutation of Dines's comments on The Darkness (issue 147) I felt action had to be taken. I get the impression our friend isn't an advocate of the band. This doesn't bother me. What I do object to is the suggestion that their music is only enjoyed by "half-breeds and half-wits". I like The Darkness, and as far as I'm aware, I am neither a half-breed nor a half-wit. Whilst I would be the first to admit that Justin has an ego the size of a country, a questionable fashion sense and an unhealthy obsession with knob jobs, there is no denying that the man is handy with a guitar. As for the comments about the music they produce, the influences are there. Take for example sound a bit like AC/DC or Queen? My father, who is 64, listens to them for precisely this reason, maintaining that any band aspiring to sound like Freddie & Co can't be all that bad. They're just having a laugh and providing a little light entertainment.

When The Darkness first set out they said they were a joke band and didn't want people to take them too seriously. Just take this advice, my good fellow: get yourself a beer, sit down and play with your newly acquired SFX-01 pedal. Maybe I'll keep you quiet for a while.

Steve Mann, Beatt, email.

Wyde, looked across and saw the mark you gave him and I've got to say, what a load of rubbish! Bob? He deserves at least an A, if not an A+, because he's the most interesting guitarist player I've ever heard.

Nathan Gav, via email.

Love the mag, but I gotta wonder what the fuck you were smoking when you wrote the Ultimate Guitar Miscellany book that came with the April issue. When did BB King and Mark Knopfler become left-handed guitarists? Knopfler, I can kind of understand you just making a simple mistake. But BB? Jesus Christ! No guitar playing for you for a week. Bad boys! Bad! Mully, Shizuka, Japan.

TF replies: Actually, in the Knapp and BB are both left-handed. They just happen to play guitar as most right-handed guitarists would (i.e., fretting with the left hand and strumming/picking with the right). So there!

WOT, NO CULT?

I've been a fan of The Cult for a few years now. Unfortunately, I'm too young to have had the privilege of seeing them live. What really shocks me about this band is the lack of recognition they clearly have. Are they never mentioned in the same breath as the accepted great British bands? Why are their albums never mentioned for the skill they deserve? And why oh why aren't they trying to persuade us to hit the UK in their next tour now they're reuniting?

Kris, Wrexham, Shedd.

TF replies: It just so happens, we've tabbed the riff from The Cult's 'L'm A Devil' as part of this month's Guitar Racer on p.78. Enjoy.

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Second in excellent review (issue 3, Total Guitar). This video will teach you how to construct your own solo's, you will even be able to play over advanced blues chord progressions.

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Discolored course (6 tapes shown). runs taken from all styles - Rock - Jazz - Blues - Country. Essential for all guitarists.

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An advanced course in emerging rock with blues. A study of this style is essential for all lead guitarists - many of the 70s/80s riffs are rock blues riffs on them.

9. LEAD SOLOING

A detailed course in Constructing Lead Guitar Solos. Dlrobbs of ideas - tricks of the trade, along with the best ways to approach writing solos.

10. ROCK RIFFS

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100 HOTTEST SOLOS

Here, for the first time in TG's 11 year history, we proudly present our favourite solos of all time. If you don't agree with our choices there's also selections from some of the world's best guitarists, plus tips on how to write your own killer solos. Ready? Let's burn!

Words: Phil Ascott, Joe Barnes, Simon Bradley, Nick Cracknell, James Gill, Stephen Lawson, Neville Marten, Ed Mitchell, Jason Sidwell, James Unger, Henry Yates
100 Hottest Solos

Track: Cemetery Gates
Artist: Pantera
Who played it: Dimebag Darrell
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: Dimebag's talent was to make you think first, then listen. Often it was as simple as playing a bunch of random notes on his solos. Maybe he was just too good of an improviser... The breakdown on Cemetery Gates provides a prime example.

Did it come: Cowboys From Hell (1991)
Did you know? Cemetery Gates was actually nominated for a 1998 Grammy Award for Best Metal Performance despite the fact that it was released in 1991.

Did you know? The Crowes were bailed by Melody Maker as 'The Most Rock 'N Roll Rock 'N Roll Band in the world'.

97 Tracks: Strange Town
Artist: The Jam
Who played it? Paul Weller
Genre: Punk

UK chart position: 15

Why it rocks: Not even his idol Pete Townsend of The Who could coax a searing lead sound from a Rickenbacker guitar quite like Paul Weller. On Strange Town, Weller attacks his guitar with wild string bends and serious vibrato. There's some great feedback on this track too, provided by Weller's amp. Seriously fucking cool...

Find it on: Snap! (2005)

96 Tracks: Killing In The Name
Artist: Rage Against The Machine
Who played it: Tom Morello
Genre: Rock

UK chart position: 25

Why it rocks: Few could believe that Morello was entirely self-taught, though the rule-breaking originality found here lacks up his chimes. There is no better example of Morello's innovative approach to technology than Killing In The Name Off its cosmic workout: auto-filter/ pitch-bend pedals and a customised guitar helped to make Morello's short sweet solo sound more like a fire alarm from outta space than a guitar solo.

Find it on: Rage Against The Machine (1992)

95 Tracks: Door Of No Return
Artist: Stevelyn
Who played it: Kelly Jones
Genre: Indie/Alternative

UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: A heavy-sounding Steve Perry influence provided the inspiration for the lick. Jones' solo perfectly distills the experience of being ripped up by a hard wind in a desert storm. Flaring up quicker than a thundream by night, this fiery track was the first song from the band's new, assured sound of a masterclass in tremolo picking.

Find it on: Language, Sex, Violence, Other (2005)

94 Tracks: Race With The Devil
Artist: Gene Vincent and The Blue Caps
Who played it? Cliff Gallup
Genre: Rock

UK chart position: 28

Why it rocks: The man was on fire! Gallup practically invented modern rockabilly guitar. When Jeff Beck recorded Crazy Legs, his tribute album to Gene Vincent, he played Gallup's guitar solo note-for-note. As Jeff said, 'Cliff Gallup's solos are so beautifully formed with a beginning, middle and end that they're like small miracles.'

Find it on: The Steamhammer, Eulal (1997)

93 Tracks: Smooth
Artist: Santana
Who played it: Carlos Santana
Genre: Rock

UK chart position: 3

Why it rocks: Like a Salsa melting on a hot summer's day, Carlos uses tasteful phrases to perfectly complement Matchbox 20's singer Rob Thomas' sultry vocals. It doesn't matter that the original phrase was released countless other times on the album; it's still great.

Find it on: Supernatural (1999)

Did you know? Carlos once claimed exclusively to Total Guitar that his music can make a woman's nipples go hard!

THE UNOFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE GUITAR SOLO

1928 Gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt's hand is badly burned in a car crash fire. Incredibly, despite losing the use of two fingers, his injury doesn't affect his virtuoso guitar playing and he becomes one of the finest soloists of all time. Influenced Charlie Christian and Les Paul, and Tom Morello, apparently.

1925 10-year-old Royce Morganfield attaches a metal slide to the side of his Shakey guitar, the south side, Mississippi. He picks out his first guitar solos using a penknife as a slide. Already nickname 'Huddy Writers' by his grandmother, he will one day pioneer electric slide guitar when he leaves the south for Chicago.

1939 Los Paul gives Shred guitar its commercial debut on Green Onions (by the band tour Me), the first single to feature multi-tracked guitars. In addition to the eight Layed guitar parts, clever old Les played on the one that had it. And it was all recorded in the world's first home recording studio.

1947 Jazz guitarist Charlie Christian changes the role of guitar forever. Before Charlie, the guitar was viewed by bandleaders as strictly rhythm. In Charlie's hands it became a lead instrument for the first time. His work with Goodman Sextet and others influenced every jazz guitarist that followed.
WARNING!

POWER TOOLS SHOULD ONLY BE USED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF AN ADULT. LUCKILY, ADULTS LOVE PLAYING WITH THEM.

DADDY, BROTHER, LOVER, LITTLE BOY (THE DRILL SONG)

Writings and Music by Eric Martin, Seth Sherman, Pat Terry, Ande Peters and Paul Gilbert

92
Track: Daddy, Brother, Lover, Little Boy (The Drill Song)
Artists: Mr Big
Who played it: Paul Gilbert
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: This features some of Paul's most impressive picking, with some blazing 16th note lines clocking in at 180bpm.
When he's finished, the piece is topped off by the lights, as Paul and Billy Sheehan perform harmonized lines using drills with picks on the end. Wow!!

End it on: Lean into It (1991)
Did you know? Mr Big were sponsored by Japanese power tool manufacturer Makita on their Lean into It tour. In return, the band wrote an exclusive piece using their drills for playing in Makita's factory!

MR BIG: Daddy, Brother, Lover, Little Boy (The Drill Song) — Solo

[Tablature and notation for the solo section of the song]
It's without doubt the band's most air guitar-rific moment!
Find it on: The Bends (1995)
Did you know? Frontman Thom Yorke claims he wrote 'Fitter in competition with Jonny Greenwood to see who could fit the most chords into a song.

Why it rocks: Greenwood is an extremely passionate guitarist who has developed Repetitive Strain Injury in his arm because of his aggressive style — and nowhere is this style better illustrated than on the crescendo-heavy, octave-driven solo sequence at the end of Just.

91
Track: Just
Artist: Radiohead
Who played it: Jonny Greenwood
Genre: Indie/Rock
UK chart position: 19

90
Track: Sharp Dressed Man
Artist: ZZ Top
Who played it: Billy Gibbons
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 22

89
Track: Dooa Love Again
Artist: Van Halen
Who played it: Edward Van Halen
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart

88
Track: Double Crossing Time
Artist: John Mayall's Blues Breakers
Who played it: Eric Clapton
Genre: Blues
UK chart position: Did not chart

87
Track: Motorcycle Emptiness
Artist: Manic Street Preachers
Who played it: James Dean Bradfield

Paul gives an in-depth guide to playing this solo on the CD-ROM. Make sure you follow his advice - he knows what he's talking about!
100 HOTTEST SOLOS

MY TOP FIVE SOLOS!

86
Track: Angel Of Death
Artist: Slayer
Who played it: Jeff Hanneman
Source: Metal
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: You wouldn't expect a band labelled as speed metal to cut corners, and Slayer never disappoint. There is nothing remotely hinting at beauty or extended melodic nuance on the solo to Angel Of Death. Instead, it's just a mass of rancour and dissonance. Slayer never gave a crap about music theory or tried to fit a solo to a scale. Thank God.

Find it on: Reign In Blood (1986)
Did you know? Angel of Death is based on Josef Mengele, the Nazi doctor who committed horrifying experiments on prisoners of the concentration camps.

85
Track: Freak Scene
Artist: Dinosaur Jr
Who played it: J Mascis
Source: Indie/Alt
UK chart position: n/a

Why it rocks: When, J Mascis draws "just don't let me fuck up, will you," at 2:27, he's clearly not referring to his solo technique. His lead fingersprints — a rip-roaring mix of extreme bends, serrated clacks, open string minis and syncopated rhythms — are all over this classic track, making it practically impossible to reproduce. And believe us, we've tried! (See T1415)

Find it on: Bug (1988)
Did you know? Mascis was originally a drummer. He returns to his first instrument for a new side-project, Witch, whose debut album is released soon.

84
Track: Brothers In Arms
Artist: Dire Straits
Who played it: Mark Knopfler
Genre: Rock

UK chart position: 1

Why it rocks: Knopfler's sweet licks on this track are so tasteful you could chew on them all week and never feel numeous. Likewise, the solo is deeply melodic with Mark ringing every last drop of emotion from his 1984 Gibson Les Paul through the clever use of a simple volume pedal.

Find it on: Brothers In Arms (1985)
Did you know? Before forming Dire Straits, Knopfler worked as a lector at Loughor College in Essex.

83
Track: The Importance Of Being Idle
Artist: Oasis
Who played it: Noel Gallagher
Genre: Indie/Alt
UK chart position: 1

Why it rocks: Having approached many of his previous solos with all the finesse of a drunk unblocking a sink, Gallagher Senior revealed a rare lightness of touch on this psychedelic masterpiece from last year's Don't Believe The Truth. In keeping with the central themes of loafing and drop abuse, 1:36 sees the Oasis man launch into a series of hypnotic bends, evoking the sensation of waking up sunburnt on a park bench after a whole afternoon on the skids.

Find it on: Don't Believe The Truth (2005)
Did you know? Unsurprisingly, Noel Gallagher doesn't like anyone who plays faster than Jimmy Page.
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82
Track: November Rain
Artist: Guns N’ Roses
Who played it: Slash
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: 8

Why it rocks: When the band was at its peak, Guns N’ Roses was a force to be reckoned with. Their sound was raw and unpolished, but it was effective, especially in live performances. As the band grew more successful, however, they became more restrained and began to put less emphasis on their live shows. This song is one of the best that they ever did.

80
Track: Over The Mountain
Artist: Ozzy Osbourne
Who played it: Randy Rhoads
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: Ozzy Osbourne is best known for his solo career, but his work with Black Sabbath is also very impressive. This song, Over The Mountain, is one of the best from the band’s later albums. It features some excellent guitar work from Randy Rhoads, who was one of the best guitarists of the 1980s.

79
Track: Master Of Puppets
Artist: Metallica
Who played it: James Hetfield/Kirk Hammett
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: Metallica is one of the best bands of all time, and their album Master Of Puppets is one of their best. This song features some excellent guitar work from both Hetfield and Hammett, who are both considered to be some of the best guitarists of all time.

78
Track: Man In A Box
Artist: Alice In Chains
Who played it: Jerry Cantrell
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: Alice In Chains is one of the best bands of the 1990s, and this song is one of their best. It features some excellent guitar work from Cantrell, who is considered to be one of the best guitarists of all time. The song is also very catchy, and it is a lot of fun to listen to.

77
Track: Pride And Joy
Artist: Stevie Ray Vaughan and Double Trouble
Who played it: Stevie Ray Vaughan
Genre: Blues
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: Stevie Ray Vaughan was one of the best blues guitarists of all time, and this song is one of his best. It features some excellent guitar work from Vaughan, who is considered to be one of the best guitarists of all time. The song is also very catchy, and it is a lot of fun to listen to.

81
Track: Goodbye To Love
Artist: The Carpenters
Who played it: Tony Peluso
Genre: Pop
UK chart position: 9

Why it rocks: Tony Peluso creates the perfect spicy foil for Karen Carpenter’s sugary vocal and provides the precedent for all rock-style guitar solos in wavy ballads. Peluso’s tone may be a bit fuzzy, but check out that outro solo where he nails every chord perfectly. Forget what you think about The Carpenters, this is a giant of a solo! Find it on: The Singles: 1969-1983 (2000)

Did you know? Not all Carpenters’ fans liked Peluso’s solo, as Richard Carpenter explained: “Tony’s solo is one of the best in recording history, but it did provoke some hate mail from people who claimed we had sold out and gone HARD ROCK!”

42 | TOTAL GUITAR | MAY 2006

The Kinks inadvertently influence a generation of American garage rock bands when they release “You Really Got Me.” The solo played by guitarist Dave Davies is a blast of pure energy and abandon. It’s been claimed Jimmy Page, then a session guitarist, played the solo. He didn’t, he handled the rhythm part.

1964

1965

1966

1967

Jim Hendrix blows blues guitar solos into the stratosphere with Purple Haze and Hey Joe. His performances in London clubs are a wake-up call to the British guitar heroes of the day like Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Pete Townshend. Hendrix also single-handedly makes the Fender Stratocaster popular once again.

42 | TOTAL GUITAR | MAY 2006
Find it on: Layla And Other Assorted Love Songs (1971)
Did you know? Eric Clapton became hooked on heroin during the recording of Layla And Other Assorted Love Songs.

**72**
Track: Highway Star
Artist: Ritchie Blackmore
Who played it: Ritchie Blackmore
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: This is the solo where Ritchie rolled up his sleeves and shredded for gold (well, 1970s level shred, pre-Malsteen) on the first string in a unison figure with keyboardist Jan Low. Jaws dropped at the time in awe at his sheer stamina and bravado!

Find it on: Machinehead (1972)
Did you know? Although Ritchie liked to improvise his solos in the studio, the melodic opening on this solo was actually planned note for note beforehand.

**71**
Track: Smells Like Teen Spirit
Artist: Nirvana
Who played it: Kurt Cobain
Genre: Indie/Alt
UK chart position: 7
Why it rocks: Tortured genius Kurt Cobain managed to lay waste to a decade of widdling with Nirvana's second album in 1991. His brief solo on Teen Spirit is a near-masterpiece of restraint. You keep expecting him to take off into upper-register runs, instead he remains note-faithful to the melody throughout the eight bar phrase, driving an already painfully catchy melody even deeper into your brain. Find it on: Nevermind (1991)
Did you know? Teen Spirit was produced by Garbage drummer Butch Vig.

**70**
Track: Need Your Love So Bad
Artist: Fleetwood Mac
Who played it: Peter Green
Genre: Blues
UK chart position: 51
Why it rocks: Sensitive, tasteful, perfect playing characterises this track from the early Mac. Green is in BB King mode as he plants juicy major and minor pentatonic notes over a classic chord sequence. Green's tone comes courtesy of his 1959 Gibson Les Paul with its pickups accidentally wired out of phase that distinctive nodal tone.
Find it on: The Very Best Of Fleetwood Mac (2002)
Did you know? Peter Green was a big champion of a young Gary Moore and looked in his band Skil Row to support Fleetwood Mac. Peter sold the band Tour Love So Bad to Gary and it's often used when Guitarist wants to recreate this signature tune.

**69**
Track: You Really Got Me
Artist: The Kinks
Who played it: Dave Davies
Genre: Pop
UK chart position: 1
Why it rocks: Rumours abound that this and other great Kinks solos were played by then session guitarist Jimmy Page, but this is not the case. Dave Davies' brilliant outburst on this groundbreaking track is typical of his own individual style, which is cut from earlier blues guitarists and, of course, the inimitable Chuck Berry.

Find it on: The Kinks (1964)
Did you know? Dave Davies' first amp was an eight-watt Elpico that he christened 'the farbox'. In order to make his new Vox AC30 'fart', he pierced its speaker cones with a knitting needle (or a knife, depending on which brother's story you believe).

**76**
Track: Symphony Of Destruction
Artist: Megadeth
Who played it: Marty Friedman
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: 15
Why it rocks: The riffing is all Dave Mustaine, but the solo is pure Marty Friedman. Not an easy soloist to categorise (or emulate) but this is possibly Marty's most trademark solo complete with exotic Kimoi scale passages. This is a five-note scale (a pentatonic) that sounds unusual due to the note intervals (1, 2, 3, 5, 6). Don't worry, though, he rocks out at the end with some metal Chuck Berry pentatonic bends!

Find it on: Countdown To Extinction (1992)
Did you know? Marty Friedman is a massive fan of Japanese pop music and has worked with Japanese star Nanase Aikawa.

**75**
Track: Hey Joe
Artist: The Jimi Hendrix Experience
Who played it: Jimi Hendrix
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 6
Why it rocks: Despite being one of literally hundreds of versions and findings Hendrix on comparatively restrained form, his rendition of the Billy Roberts classic is still a potent calling card. Wonderfully expressive and with tone to die for; it's no surprise that it's still highly regarded today.

Find it on: Are You Experienced? (1967)
Did you know? It could have been so different; Hendrix was nicknamed Buster when he was toddler, and was given a ukulele before he got his first guitar.

**74**
Track: Money
Artist: Pink Floyd
Who played it: David Gilmour
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: One of the less psychedelic offerings from Dark Side Of The Moon, Gilmour's stinging blues licks are the perfect companion to the funky main riff. The usual ethereal reverbs swathed stylings take a back seat as Gilmour cuts loose to give Money's lengthy lead break a raw sound.

Find it on: Dark Side Of The Moon (1973)
Did you know? According to Internet glee, not only do Dark Side Of The Moon and The Wall synch up as alternative soundtracks to the films The Wizard Of Oz and Alice In Wonderland, but the release of Pink Floyd albums has also coincided with economic disaster on the stock markets. Coincidence?

**73**
Track: Layla
Artist: Derek And The Dominos
Who played it: Eric Clapton/Dann Allman
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 4
Why it rocks: If you're one of those people who thinks this solo is a timeless rabble (hey, those people do exist), just slip Goldfinger into your DVD player. Director Martin Scorsese chose the second half of Layla for the scenes where dead gangsters start turning up in Cadillacs and garbage trucks. Hey, Clapton is cool after all.

**AHRIE LISTER (ILL NINO)**
1 RANDY RHoads (Ozzy Osbourne)
Nikki Sixx says: "Randy Rhoads was a very melodic guitar player. I loved all his solos but I think I loved this one so much because it was the first solo I had ever learned to play myself."
2 DAVID Gilmour (Pink Floyd)
Comfortably Numb: "This solo is what I think of when I think of the definition of the word 'tasty'."
3 JIMI Hendrix
"The Star Spangled Banner" I don't think there was ever a better musical expression of political opposition then when Jimi played the US national anthem live, in front of thousands of people, in protest to the Vietnam war. Especially when he mimicked the 'bombs burst in air' part.
4 Van Halen - Eisenhood "Always a favourite of mine, Eddie was a pioneer of tone and technique who influenced a whole generation."
5 Yngwie Malmsteen
"Alcatrazz" Eddy "By far the tastiest Yngwie solo. This was before he started mutating with the guitar."

**Peter Green**
his playing's sensitive and tasteful... unlike his arcs...
WORST SOLOS
TG NAMES AND SHAMES THE TOP FIVE WORST SOLOS OF ALL TIME!

1. WARRANT
   "Cherry Pie"
   Poison guitarist CC DeVille guest stars on this glam
   shocker. Surely guests are supposed to make a
   song better?

2. U2
   "Sunday Bloody Sunday"
   The usually wonderful U2 spews out of tune
   notes that sound like a seagull being beaten
   with bagpipes.

3. BLUER
   "Country Sad Ballad Man"
   "Oh Graham... if you don't like solos, why don't
   you just leave them out?"

4. AUDIOSLAVE
   "Drown"
   "Sucks to be numbered 1."
   When recording the solos for this album
   Morello was unaware which track would be
   played. Most of the time it was great. This one
   definitely wasn't.

5. RHCP
   "Can't Fight Nature"
   Fruscante usually creates guitar moments of
   wonder. This one sounds as though it was
   played through a dodgy practice amp.

68. Track: "And Your Bird Can Sing"
   Artist: The Beatles
   Who played it: George Harrison and Paul
   McCartney
   Genre: Pop
   UK chart position: Did not chart
   Why it rocks: Whether or not this was the
   first dual lead guitar solo or not, the fact that it
   was played using overdubbed guitars (possibly
   Paul's Epiphone Casino and George's red SG)
   gives it a genuinely groundbreaking 'modern'
   sound. Harmonised in F around the open
   E position, it was a complex piece of work for
   its day.
   Find it on: Revolver (1966)
   Did you know? John Lennon claimed that,
   apart from "Diga Diga Doo" (featured on Let It Be),
   "And Your Bird Can Sing" was the worst thing he
   ever wrote!

67. Track: "Believe In A Thing Called Love"
   Artist: The Darkness
   Who played it: Justin and Dan Hawkins
   Genre: Rock
   UK chart position: 2
   Why it rocks: The Darkness have single-
   handedly resurrected glam rock in the UK
   (despite for oneselfs whether that's a good
   thing), but they can fucking play! Just check
   out the video to this song in which they defeat
   a giant octopus with lightning rays coming off
   their guitars during the pyrotechnic solo.
   Find it on: Permission To Land (2003)
   Did you know? In October 2005, a week
   before the album was officially released,
   Justin Hawkins paid £350 for a copy of One
   Way Ticket To Hell... And Back on eBay. The
   band helped track the seller down due to the
   unique track code and Hawkins claimed:
   "I'd rather be seen to get a bargain than be
   seen to go down!"

66. Track: "Moon Man"
   Artist: Television
   Who played it: Richard Lloyd/Tom Verlaine
   Genre: Indie/Alt
   UK chart position: 30
   Why it rocks: Richard Lloyd's opening solo
   is more rock blues biased with distorted D
   and major blues scale 16th note passages. In contrast, Tom Verlaine opts for
   slower pentatonic and melodic phrases, pedal drones and sweet doubletracks.
   Find it on: Marquee Moon (1977)
   Did you know? With two guitarists in the
   band you'd think soloing duties should be
   shared evenly, right? Not so here. Lloyd's solo
   lasts eight bars while Verlaine pushes his luck
   with 100 or so bars...

65. Track: "Don't Cry"
   Artist: Dave Lee Roth
   Who played it: Steve Vai
   Genre: Rock
   UK chart position: Did not chart
   Why it rocks: What an amazing idea! Put the
   best frontman in the world together with the
   hottest guitarist on the circuit! In amongst the
   jangling pan noises and some dated synth, Vai's
   unmistakable guitar slides up and down the
   neck like a naked dancer on a pole.
   Find it on: Eat 'Em And Smile (1986)
   Did you know? Rumour has it that it was
   Roth's idea to name his ex-band Van Halen.

64. Track: "Whole Lotta Love"
   Artist: Led Zeppelin
   Who played it: Jimmy Page
   Genre: Rock
   UK chart position: 21
   Why it rocks: Do you really need to ask? Just
   one of many Zep epics, this bone-crunching
   riff is preceded by a freeform Threnodin and
   moaning solo (the orgasmic kind mind you,
   not a load of complaining). Rarely played the
   same way twice, and stretched out past the
   15-minute mark live, Whole Lotta Love set the
   standard for hard rock and metal to follow.
   Find it on: Led Zeppelin II (1969)
   Did you know: Despite being a big fan, Page
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H A Harman International Company
unsurprisingly still refuses to let Ward Al
Yankovic create a polka medley of Zep hits.

63
Track: Cause We've Ended As Lovers
Artist: Jeff Beck
Who played it: Jeff Beck
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: This minor key Stevie Wonder instrumental begins with Jeff using the 'vibratoing' effect on his Strat, 'swelling' the notes using the guitar's volume control. In typically inventive style Beck wrenches the notes from his guitar, pulling and bending strings, switching pickups and adding reverbs. A tradehow demonstrator's favourite!
Find it on: Blow By Blow (1975)
Did you know? Stevie Wonder had promised Beck his track Superstition, but Motown Records felt it was just too good to give away. Stevie recorded it on his album Talking Book and donated this track by way of recompense.

62
Track: Like a Hurricane
Artist: Neil Young
Who played it: Neil Young
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: The impassioned Like a Hurricane remains the standout track from Young's patchy American Stars 'N' Bars album. Although slightly rambling in structure, this track finds Young in fine form carving out a fiery solo that ranks alongside the efforts of other guitar heroes of the era.
Find it on: Decade (1978)
Did you know? Among other things, Neil Young has a passion for collecting model trains. Nice.

61
Track: Light My Fire
Artist: The Doors
Who played it: Robbie Krieger
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 48
Why it rocks: Time flies when you're taking drugs, meaning that Krieger was able to improvise for almost three minutes on Light My Fire without anybody raising an eyebrow. Bends, slides and lightning-fast hammer-ons are all thrown into the mix on this snake-bitten classic - before Jim Morrison regains consciousness and chips in with another raucous verse.
Find it on: The Doors (1967)
Did you know? Krieger is one of the few guitarists to play with his fingers instead of a plectrum.

Eddie Van Halen's solo tour de force: Eruption introduces guitarists to the joys of finger-tapping and slinky guitar. Soon everyone's copying his style, albeit without Eddie's blessing: "When I used to stuff I invented, I was telling a story, while I felt that the people who were imitating me were telling a joke."

After the excesses of the late eighties, Kurt Cobain's Smells Like Teen Spirit solo, a twisted repetition of the track's melody line, was revolutionary in its simplicity. Instead of playing as many notes as possible, sing-able solos were back on the agenda.

Yngwie Malmsteen unleashes the full fury of Rising Force: Malmsteen's brand of neo-classical wailing takes the guitar world by storm with sweep picking, scalloped fingerboards and exceptionally tight trousers becoming must-haves for the best part of the late 1980s, and he's still going strong today, bless him.

Sing-able solos, pah! No what we need are solos that sound more like a car falling off a cliff with it's alarm blaring. Enter Tony Iommi, whose radical approach in Rage Against The Machine was loved and hated in equal amounts.
DON'T JUST CONTENT YOURSELF WITH PLAYING OTHER GUITARISTS' SOLOS: TG SHOWS YOU HOW TO CREATE MEANINGFUL SOLOS AND AVOID MINDLESS WANK

WORDS: James Unger

SLASH

HAVING WRITTEN FOUR OF OUR TOP 100 GUITAR SOLOS, Slash is no stranger to the guitar solo. When asked what makes a cool solo...

1. There are no rules to writing a great solo.
2. "I always thought that a great guitar solo had some kind of melody, soul or energy to it and communicated some kind of emotion from the guitarist."

A contrast

One you have played your theme, you need to look for a second section to contrast with the first. To get a contrast, you can consider one of a few things.

1. Change register - move either higher or lower on the guitar.
2. If your solo theme used long sustained notes, you should try to move to faster phrases or vice versa.
3. Change the feel of your playing. If your opening phrases have a classical metal feel, try taking a bluesy angle. Dimebag Darrell would always use Texas blues ideas among his more stock metal licks. Maybe a country lick or two is the way to contrast your rock ‘n’ roll ideas?

During his time with Ozzy Osbourne, Zakk Wylde was not afraid of mixing Southern rock ideas with his full on fast picked lines. Hey, it’s good enough for those two.

4. Turn an effect, like wah or a whammy pedal, on or off.
5. Combine all of the above, or add your own ideas. The point is that you should make your solo varied.

EXAMPLE 2b: Writing a theme

EXAMPLE 2c: Creating a contrast
Re-state the theme

At this point, you could bring back your theme. This is a great way to keep your solo memorable and still move it forward. Whether you do this depends on if you have enough time in your solo (you don’t want to bore people, remember). Example 3 shows our solo continuing on but with the theme an octave higher and with a harmony added. In this case, re-stating the theme is a great way to end the solo.

A musical orgasm

The main reason the guitar solo is so popular is because it’s exciting! Once you have set the listener up with the first part of your solo and teased them with the variation and contrast sections, hit them with a devastating climax. Just listen to our No 1 solo, Stairway To Heaven. The final phrase sounds as though the guitar is about to explode.

Although this is a good opportunity to show everybody what you can do on your guitar, the solo's climax doesn’t have to be a shred-fest. You just have to make sure that you raise the intensity level to finish off the solo at a good pace. This is a new solo in the key of B minor. It starts with the same principles as before (a theme and a contrast), but finishes with a tremolo picked flurry that ends on a screaming high note.

No rules!

Of course, not all solos are written in this way. If they were music would be boring, but this is a good place to start.

You can, of course, mix up the formula. Example 5 is a solo that starts with an insane burst (a sort of 'opening climax,' if you will) to pull the listener in. Then there’s a two-hand tapped contrast that’s also fairly hectic but equally impressive. These sections are followed by an epic theme that, like the previous solos, has variations. This is all topped off with a classical-style arpeggio for a super cool climax.

(continued from p.47) Do you have a favorite scale? "All things considered, my solos are based around blues stuff 'cos that's what turned me on as a kid. Even though there’s a million different patterns and scales out there to choose from, I always use blues stuff. Some of the passing tones I use in that structure vary, but I don't know what the names of those scales are. I don't really think in that sort of schooled way. It's more about the rock 'n' roll.

Are you soloing better now than in the 80's? "I think I have a better grasp of what I'm doing now. I don't sit down and think about it. I play a lot and I'd like to think I'm always progressing. I definitely feel more comfortable with a guitar now, as far as doing something meaningful when a solo comes along. In the old days I remember not having a full picture of what I was doing. So I like to think I'm now able to execute what I was doing back then, but take it up another step."

Can you name some solos that have influenced you? "When I was growing up it was the solo for Loser Child by Aerosmith that was the killer for me. The solo on Whole Lotta Love is a classic arrangement. But then Hendrix is still one of the premier guys for being original with that awesome rock 'n' roll sound. His selection of notes was so unorthodox. The solo on Baker Street by Gerry Rafferty isn't as technical, but it has energy. A great solo is something created by not overthinking it but by just letting it happen. George Harrison was one of the most underrated guitar players for doing that. There was a certain character to his playing—it was all about the texture and choice of notes."

48 | TOTAL GUITAR | MAY 2006
59
Track: That's All Right
Artist: Elvis Presley
Who played it: Scotty Moore
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 3
Why it rocks: These guys were making history. Scotty Moore was a country guitarist who was in the right place at the right time. Applying his tonny tone to Memphis track 'That's All Right', he played a shimmering riffs on his hollow-body guitar. Moore recorded the first ever rockabilly guitar solo in Memphis' Sun Studios.

Did you know? Sun Studios, the birthplace of rock 'n' roll, is still a working studio in Memphis. You can record in the evening when the tourists have gone home.

58
Track: One
Artist: Metallica
Who played it: Kirk Hammett
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: 13
Why it rocks: Kirk Hammett really gets a chance to show off his versatility with some clean-topped triplets in the solo before hitting the latter section with full force for some fast Tipton/Rogers-eseque tapping, and finishing off with some equally quick Chuck Berry style bends.
Find it on: ...And Justice For All (1988)
Did you know? The first time James Hetfield auditioned Lars Ulrich, he thought he was the worst drummer he'd ever heard.

57
Track: We Are The Pigs
Artist: Suede
Who played it: Bernard Butler
Genre: Indie/Alt
UK chart position: 18
Why it rocks: Butler barely stops soloing during this punk-themed ode to urban squalor, but it's the thrilling moment at 2:10 when Brett Anderson mixing away from the microphone and the Suede guitarist begins a dizzying slide up the fretboard - that prompts the most reverence amongst doomed young men in black eyeliner.
Find it on: Dog Man Star (1994)
Did you know? Butler was recruited via an ad in NME specifying a 'non-musical' guitarist.

56
Track: Black Hole Sun
Artist: Soundgarden
Who played it: Kim Thayil
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 12
Why it rocks: The track that spearheaded Soundgarden's brief commercial breakthrough was a Beatles-inspired journey into psychedelia, with half-Indian guitarist Kim Thayil replacing his heavy riffs with Middle Eastern accents and a minute-long, warped solo straight from his own uncompromising textbook. And a million fans mimed, "What the Fck?"
Find it on: Superunknown (1994)
Did you know? Thayil played guitar on two songs for Dave Grohl's metal side-project PROBOT.

55
Track: Megalodon
Artist: Frank Zappa
Who played it: Eddie Hazel
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: With a title that refers to his staggering drug intake and apparently a peculiar mode of thinking that involves 'revelling in the freedom of funk,' Megalodon is a sprawling 10-minute improvised epic. The result of producer George Clinton telling him to play the saddest thing he could think of through his guitar, it is undoubtedly Eddie Hazel's finest moment.
Find it on: Megalodon (1971)
Did you know? Before his untimely death in 1992, Eddie Hazel was all set to form a power trio with Jimi Hendrix's old Band Of Gypsies bandmates Buddy Miles and Billy Cox.

54
Track: Sweet Little Angel
Artist: BB King
Who played it: BB King
Genre: Blues
UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: Although not the father of electric blues guitar - that accolade must go to the great T-Bone Walker - BB King refined it into the art form we know today. On Sweet Little Angel, BB pulls out all the stops to create a glorious backdrop to his heartfelt vocal performance.
Find it on: Original Greatest Hits (2005)
Did you know? BB King almost never plays and sings at the same time. When he's singing his arm hangs loosely by his side until it's time to play a fill or solo. Lazy bugger.

53
Track: Three Days
Artist: Jimmy Page
Who played it: Dave Navarro
Genre: Indie/Alt
UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: It seems unfair that Mr Page should have to rely on a follow-up to his previous T-Rex release - and even then you'd be positively green after hearing this 11-minute tour de force. Navarro's stunning two-minute solo at 4:43 would be enough on its own to merit Top 10 status, but it's the ripping finale that seals it.
Find it on: In a Silent Way (1990)
Did you know? Navarro's mother was murdered in March 1983 by a jealous ex-boyfriend, while Navarro was visiting his father. The killer was caught years later after Navarro appeared on the TV show America's Most Wanted.

52
Track: Fall To Pieces
Artist: Velvet Revolver
Who played it: Slash
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: 32
Why it rocks: Fans who missed Slash's emotive leads on GN'R tracks like November Rain rejoiced when they heard his stunning solo on this Velvet Revolver ballad. The fact is Slash is a better player now than in his GN'R days - check out the meticulous structure of this solo and his pitch-perfect string bends.
Find it on: Contraband (2004)
Did you know? The arpeggiated riff in Fall To Pieces' chorus is a direct descendant of his famous intro for Sweet Child O'Mine.

51
Track: All Along The Watchtower
Artist: Jimi Hendrix
Who played it: Jimi Hendrix
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 5
Why it rocks: Bob Dylan may have written one of the most brilliant songs ever, but Jimi Hendrix perfected it in words of expression, groove and rocking attitude. Who could fail to have palpitations as Hendrix's Strat screams to a crescendo in that amazing solo? Find it on Electric Ladyland (1969)
Did you know? Dylan says Hendrix's version is so much that when he performs it live he often plays it Hendrix-style rather than his own.
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50
Track: Surfing With The Alien
Artist: Joe Satriani
Who played it: Joe Satriani
Genre: Shred
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: A high-speed, paced driving rhythm backed by some of the most remarkable guitarwork heard at this point. Effects often hide stability but Satriani put them to work, making his obvious skill even more visible. Power, delay and distortion go to work on a trillion of harmonics and that classic million-notes-a-second part. After Not Of This Earth, Surfing With The Alien's more accessible sound put Switch on the map.

Find it on: Surfing With The Alien (1987)

Did you know? Satch only picked up the guitar at the age of 14; he initially wanted to be a drummer.

49
Track: Phantom Of The Opera
Artist: Iron Maiden
Who played it: Dave Murray & Dennis Stratton
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: As a track always likely to be saddled with its infamous appearance on the soundtrack of a Lucio Daidolo advert (way back in the early 1980s), Phantom... is also one of Maiden's most complex songs, veering from out and out metal to softly, softly within a few bars. Learn the superb opening twin-guitar break and you're already a better player.

Find it on: Iron Maiden (1980)

Did you know? Adrian Smith replaced the hapless Stratton after the latter's penchant for country rockers The Eagles caught the ears of Maiden's management.

48
Track: I Am The Resurrection
Artist: The Stone Roses
Who played it: John Squire
Genre: Indie Alt
UK chart position: #3

Why it rocks: This eight-minute indie dancefloor filler announced the arrival of a new guitar hero. Squire's potpourri of arpeggiant chords, fleet-fingered loose pentatonics and bluesy Zep-style phrasing provided a breath of fresh air at a time when guitar indulgences were rare. "It wasn't fashionable," Squire later admitted, "but I remember thinking at the time, 'I'm not happy to be a rank amateur. I want to improve.'"

Find it on: The Stone Roses (1989)

Did you know? It was Squire's idea for the band to trash the FM-Tracker (the band's first label) offices in 1990. They were arrested and charged £3,600 each for the damages.

47
Track: Folsom Prison Blues
Artist: Johnny Cash
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: Johnny Cash's early recordings on Sun Records were a hot fusion of country and rock 'n roll. Folsom Prison Blues is a prime example, with its train ride rhythms and memorable guitar solo that's the epitome of 'less is more'. Luther Perkins was by no means the slickest country picker, but he made up for his limited ability with attitude - about a ton of the stuff.

Find it on: Johnny Cash With His Hot And Blue Guitar (1957)

Did you know? Johnny Cash achieved that distinctive percussion effect on his early records by placing a dollar bill between his guitar strings then strumming.

46
Track: Time
Artist: Pink Floyd
Who played it: David Gilmour
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: David Gilmour's brilliance as a lead guitarist had only appeared in flashes since he replaced original Pink Floyd picker Syd Barrett in 1968. The fourth track on 1973's Dark Side Of The Moon was his chance to show off his nifty blues chops. So he did, with devastating effect.

Find it on: Dark Side Of The Moon (1973)


45
Track: Jump
Artist: Van Halen
Who played it: Eddie Van Halen
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: #2

Why it rocks: Often criticised for not really fitting in with the flow of the song, Jump's solo is still a corker by anyone's standards. Featuring the classic EVH scales and two-hand tapping, it satuated even the most fervent critics of Eddie's decision to defec to keyboards for the intro riff.


Did you know? The lads only settled on Diamond Dave's idea of using Van Halen as a band name after rejecting the slightly less snappy moniker of Rat Salade.

44
Track: The Final Countdown
Artist: Europe
Who played it: John Norum
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: #1

Why it rocks: John Norum's solo mixes furious arpeggios with metal blues licks to sound as catchy as hell. But you know what? None of us at TG have seen a cover band play the arpeggios right yet!

Find it on: The Final Countdown (1986)

Did you know? John Norum is back in the newly reformed Europe demonstrating that Gary Moore blues licks and Yngwie Malmsteen arpeggio shredding does indeed make one badass guitarist.

43
Track: Killer Queen
Artist: Queen
Who played it: Brian May
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: #2

Why it rocks: Freddie Mercury's lyrics on Killer Queen were as camp as a Rio carnival, and they demanded a solo to match. May starts off with a series of manly bends, but by 1:40 he's outdoing Freddie himself, with an upper-fret phrase that minces around the room, pushes its lips and claps both hands to its cheeks (metaphorically).

Find it on: Sheer Heart Attack (1974)

Did you know? Sheer Heart Attack was only recorded at the time because Brian May had contracted hepatitis in New York and was too ill to tour.
42
Track: Supersonic
Artist: Oasis
Who played it: Noel Gallagher
Genre: Indie/Rock
UK chart position: 31

Why it rocks: A live favourite from their Britpop-inducing debut, Supersonic contains Noel Gallagher’s most rockin’ solo to date – a derivative though it may be. A huge fan of the simple pentatonic, the Man-choker throws in some well-timed bends proving you don’t have to be a wizard on the strings to write an awesome solo!

Find it on: Definitely Maybe (1994)
Did you know? Oasis, named after a leisure centre in Swindon, evolved from an earlier band called Rain who took their name from a 1966 Beatles B-side.

41
Track: Back In Black
Artist: AC/DC
Who played it: Angus Young
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 38

Why it rocks: The planets aligned for the Back In Black album, wrought out of tragedy, of course, but boosts some of rock’s greatest songs. (See this month’s Trailblazer for the full story) Here Angus demonstrates that traditional blues has its place at the forefront of rock and he allows the ultra-tight riff to break in and out of the solo intro before letting fly in all his glory.

Find it on: Back In Black (1980)
Did you know? The single was the band’s first simultaneous Top 40 hit on both sides of the Atlantic and, to date, the album has sold over 19 million copies in the US alone.

40
Track: While My Guitar Gently Weeps
Artist: The Beatles
Who played it: Eric Clapton
Genre: Pop
UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: This fabulous solo shows another facet of Clapton’s playing: the ability to fit it in as a session guitarist on someone else’s song. Clapton uses slowly let-down three-fret bends laced with heavy vibrato to evoke the weeping guitar of George’s lyrics. As with so many solos on this list, you can sing it from start to finish.

Angus Young helps Brian Johnson hit the high notes.
37 Track: Whiskey In The Jar Artist: Thin Lizzy Who played it: Eric Bell Genre: Rock UK chart position: 6
Why it rocks: Rock legends Thin Lizzy are famed for their twin-guitar attack but started out as a three-piece with just Bell on guitar. Their first hit was a hard-rockin’ version of this old traditional Irish song (later covered by Metallica) featuring a harmonised main riff and this kickass solo.
Find it on: Vagabonds Of The Western World (1973)
Did you know? Bell and Lizzy frontman Phil Lynott earned six pounds a night performing as a duo in Dublin folk clubs to survive until they could get a record deal.

36 Track: Stray Cat Strut Artist: Stray Cats Who played it: Brian Setzer Genre: Rock UK chart position: 11
Why it rocks: Brian Setzer took the techniques of rockabilly pioneers like Scotty Moore and Cliff Gallup and added his own snotty New York punk attitude. Brian was only in his early 20s when he recorded Stray Cat Strut, but he was already well on his way to establishing himself as the greatest rockabilly guitarist player ever.
Find it on: Rockabilly Boulevard (2012)
Did you know? Brian bought his famous Stray Cat Gretsch 6120 guitar in the late 1970s as a box of bits. The price was a mere $100. Bargain!

35 Track: I Could Have Lied Artist: Red Hot Chili Peppers Who played it: John Frusciante Genre: Rock UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: Proving you don’t need speed to write a flawless solo, Frusciante’s solo on I Could Have Lied smashes into the lilting acoustic backdrop like a charging rhino. It’s sparse and minimalist, but the feel with which he plays is crystal clear as you hear him slamming the strings on the recording.
Find it on: By The Way (1991)
Did you know? Frusciante’s pedalboard for the Californication tour consisted of just five effects pedals.

34 Track: People Are Strange Artist: The Doors Who played it: Robbie Krieger Genre: Rock UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: just try playing it! This solo is not easy to get right. Although Robbie Krieger was most at home playing bottleneck and drop D tunings on sprawling epics like The End, the solo in People Are Strange proves that he could cut the mustard in a three-minute pop song as well.
Find it on: Strange Days (1967)
Did you know? Robbie Krieger is an incredible flamenco guitarist. Just listen to The Doors’ Spanish Caravan for proof of his acoustic talents.
The legend lives on...
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33
Track: Another Girl, Another Planet
Artist: The Cars
Who played it: Jon Bon Jovi
Genre: Pop
UK chart position: 57
Why it rocks: The Cars' guitar sound is both distinctive and highly effective, combining power chords, rich harmonies, and a sense of power and intensity. The guitar work on this track is particularly memorable.

28
Track: Smoke On The Water
Artist: Deep Purple
Who played it: Ritchie Blackmore
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 21
Why it rocks: This iconic opening riff is one of the most recognizable in rock history. Its simplicity and power make it a timeless classic.

27
Track: Let's Go Crazy
Artist: Prince And The Revolution
Who played it: Prince
Genre: Pop
UK chart position: 7
Why it rocks: Prince's guitar work on this track is dynamic and energetic, perfectly complementing the song's upbeat tempo.

26
Track: Alive
Artist: Pearl Jam
Who played it: Mike McCready
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 16
Why it rocks: This track features aggressive guitar riffs and a high-energy feel, reflecting the band's intense performance style.

25
Track: Texas Flood
Artist: Stevie Ray Vaughan
Who played it: Stevie Ray Vaughan
Genre: Blues
UK chart position: 17
Why it rocks: Stevie Ray Vaughan's guitar style is characterized by his bluesy flavor and his ability to play with both power and finesse, as heard on this classic track.

29
Track: Sultans Of Swing
Artist: Dire Straits
Why it rocks: Mark Knopfler's guitar playing on this track is a masterclass in bluesy lead licks and intricate fingerwork. The blend of acoustic and electric guitars creates a rich sound that is both catchy and sophisticated.

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Artist: The Cars
Who played it: Jon Bon Jovi
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Artist: Deep Purple
Who played it: Ritchie Blackmore
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 21
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Track: Let's Go Crazy
Artist: Prince And The Revolution
Who played it: Prince
Genre: Pop
UK chart position: 7
Why it rocks: Prince's guitar work on this track is dynamic and energetic, perfectly complementing the song's upbeat tempo.

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Artist: Pearl Jam
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SYNYSTER GATES

"HOW I WROTE THE SOLO TO..."

"..."BAT COUNTRY"

"I wanted it to be different from the rest of the song and create a kind of dark mood. I started with the vocal melody and then I wanted the solo to build up. I was just fucking around chromatically and it worked. Then I wanted it to drop down to nothing on the arpeggios, so it was just the guitars on their own. After the harmony part I wanted it to build to a big climax at the end. I think it worked!"

Did you know? Zak's mother knows him by the rather more sedate name of Jeffery Philip Wieland.

24

Track: "Get The Funk Out"
Artist: Extreme
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 19

Why it rocks: Nuno Bettencourt's solo is chock full of modern rock techniques and balances shred and melody with aplomb. The infamous arpeggio tapping section has its roots in EVH's "Eruption" triplet tapping technique but sounds way cooler. And it's actually a lot harder, too!

Find it on: "Pornograffiti" (1991)

Did you know? Nuno Bettencourt was kept busy pre and post "Pornograffiti" playing and recording with Dweezil Zappa ("Confessions," 1991), Janet Jackson ( overdubs to the rock riff on the single version of "Black Cat," 1998) and funk metal blasting on Robert Palmer's album, "Happy" (1994).

23

Track: "No More Tears"
Artist: Ozzy Osbourne
Who played it: Zak Wyde
Genre: Metal

UK chart position: 22

Why it rocks: Many aficionados of the Double-O consider this to be Zak Wyde's best solo on what's also probably his most accomplished contribution to any album as a whole. What's certain is that it proves the man's sheer skill, with soulful bluesy licks echoing the sprinkled keyboards before he shreds as only Mr Wyde seems to be able to these days.

Find it on: "No More Tears" (1991)

22

Track: "Floods"
Artist: Pantera
Who played it: Dimebag Darrell
Genre: Metal

UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: Dime's legacy as one of the best metal guitarists of all time lives on in tracks like Floods. Nowhere is this unique soloing style for which he was worshipped better illustrated. Just when you think the track is over, he builds up from nowhere to play the listener with a series of teeth-clenching random squeals.

Find it on: "The Great Southern Trendkill" (1996)

Did you know? Dimebag was banned from entering state guitar competitions in his home Texas at the age of 16 because he had won too many times.

21

Track: "Paranoid Android"
Artist: Radiohead
Who played it: Jonny Greenwood
Genre: Indie/Alternative

UK chart position: 3

Why it rocks: Thom Yorke's sprawling opus was hardly a blank canvas for soloing, but Jonny Greenwood kicked off the shackles at 3:04 (launching into a warp-speed display of treble pickup and 6:02 when he makes his guitar sound like a Farley being drowned).

Find it on: "OK Computer" (1997)

Did you know? Greenwood's aggressive technique forces him to wear an arm brace when playing live.

20

Track: "Gunshy To The Head Of Trepidation"
Artist: Trivium
Who played it: Matt Heafy/Casey Beaufait
Genre: Metal

UK chart position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: 2005 was a heck of a year for Florida metallers Trivium. They went from playing backstreet bars in Tallahassee to arenas in Japan and were the incredible honour of being TG's first ever Band Of The Year. It was all thanks to the old-school thrash of their second album, "Ascendancy," the highlight of which was the finger-blasting twin-guitar solo workout of guitarists Matt Heafy and Casey Beaufait on the weakly titled Gunshy To The Head Of Trepidation. Borrowing the harmonising techniques of early Metallica, Iron Maiden and Megadeth they fused it with their own progressive stylings and instantly became metal's most exciting new band.

Find it on: "Ascendancy" (2005)

Did you know? Matt Heafy won the Best Metal Guitarist Award at the Orlando Metal Awards in 2002 when he was just 16.

19

Track: "Fresh Bird"
Artist: Lynyrd Skynyrd
Who played it: Allen Collins
Genre: Rock

UK chart position: 31

Why it rocks: It's gritty, off-the-cuff and meaner than a Jacksonville jailbird. Yet the extended jam that ends Lynyrd Skynyrd's signature song almost never happened. Until the recording sessions for Skynyrd's debut album "Pronounced Leb-nerd Skin-nerd," the band...
had just two guitarists: Gary Rossington and Allen Collins. However, when bassist Leon Wilkeson left he was replaced by a bass player who was already dabbled with six-string. His name was Ed King and he made such an impression on the band that he was asked to stay on as third guitarist when Wilkeson decided to rejoin the group. Thank God he did – we wouldn't want that glorious finale to be a success story.

Find it on: Pronounced Leb-werd Skin-nerd (1973)

Did you know? Skynyrd's guitarist used to physically fight over who would play the solos on each of their songs.

**18**

**Track:** Johnny B Goode

**Artist:** Chuck Berry

**Who played it:** Chuck Berry

**Genre:** Pop

**UK chart position:** 8

**Did you know?** Chuck Berry was the guitar star of his day and Johnny B Goode the twinking jewel in his crown. Chuck's double-stop intro became his trademark, and within which would now be seen as relatively simple solos you can find some sophisticated note choices. Berry's big influence was blues guitar T-Bone Walker, from whom he not only learned those classic licks with added major 3rd, 6th and 9th intervals, but also the use of hollow-bodied Gibson guitars and the famous 'duck walk.' Solos like those on Johnny B Goode and Roll Over Beethoven defined an entire genre, influencing guitarists from Keith Richards to Angus Young.

Find it on: Gold (2005)

Did you know? Legend has it that having been messed about as a young black musician in the racially unenlightened 1950s, America, once he became famous Berry refused to play a show unless he had the cash firmly in his hand.

**17**

**Track:** Know Your Enemy

**Artist:** Rage Against The Machine

**Who played it:** Tom Morello

**Genre:** Metal

**UK chart position:** Not chart

**Did you know?** When the band were about to go on tour, the lead singer was shot with a gun and it was thought that they would not be able to perform. However, they managed to rehearse and perform on the tour, despite the lead singer's injuries.

**16**

**Track:** Wanted Dead Or Alive

**Artist:** Bon Jovi

**Who played it:** Richie Sambora

**Genre:** Rock

**UK chart position:** 13

**Did you know?** The song was inspired by a real-life event where the singer and his band were stopped by police and had to prove they were not wanted. The event became a source of inspiration for the song.

**15**

**Track:** Tunnel of Love

**Artist:** Dire Straits

**Who played it:** Mark Knopfler

**Genre:** Rock

**UK chart position:** 51

**Did you know?** Mark Knopfler is a renowned guitar player and songwriter, known for his distinctive style and often praised for his ability to play intricate solos.

**14**

**Track:** Growing Old

**Artist:** The Darkness

**Who played it:** Justin Hawkins / Jon Hawkins

**Genre:** Rock

**UK chart position:** 11

**Did you know?** The Darkness is a British rock band formed in 2000. They are known for their energetic live shows and catchy pop-rock anthems.

**13**

**Track:** Bat Country

**Artist:** Avenged Sevenfold

**Who played it:** Synyster Gates

**Genre:** Metal

**UK chart position:** 63

**Did you know?** Synyster Gates is known for his fast and intricate playing style, often incorporating complex riffs and solos in his performances.

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**Gary Rossington:**

**Did you know?** Guitarist Gary Rossington is the son of Brian Haner Sr., who is also a musician and songwriter and appears on the album.
100 HOTTEST SOLOS

12
Track: Something
Artist: The Beatles
Who played it: George Harrison
Genre: Pop
UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: George Harrison's genius lay in his ability to supply the perfect solo for the song. Never flashy, Harrison's speciality was the song within a song' style of solo that typifies his outing on one of the rare Harrison tunes that Lennon and McCartney allowed as a single. Although not technically difficult, "Something"s solo features tricky bends and fretboard positions that don't fall instantly under the fingers. Notice how the solo finishes by reiterating the song's opening lick. Here's how shreddemaster and TG columnist Paul Gilbert describes something: "This is my favourite 'feel' solo ever. George Harrison did a masterful job playing those notes, and they are STUNNING notes."
Did it win: Abbey Road (1969)
Did you know? George Harrison introduced the idea for Something singer-songwriter James Taylor. Harrison created his song's opening line from the title of Taylor's own song, Something In The Way She Moves.

11
Track: Comfortably Numb
Artist: Pink Floyd
Who played it: David Gilmour
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart
Why it rocks: Comfortably Numb, offers two of the best slow-dos ever. David Gilmour's expression and accentuation of the few notes of the solo is the key here. With little overdubbing, the first solo's tone is served with lashings of phaser and reverb to give it the kind of epic and emotional charge it requires. The second longer solo has more crunch and follows a more brooding path, with Gilmour's otherworldly scratching and scraping, muting and harmonics giving the impression your ear's right next to his hand.
Find it on: The Wall (1979)
Did you know? The pupils from the 1979 fourth year music class at Islington Green School, London, secretly recorded vocals for The Wall after their teacher was approached by the band's management.

10
Track: Bohemian Rhapsody
Artist: Queen

KELLY JONES
Sterophonics
1 Led Zeppelin
Whole Lotta Love
"The first vinyl I got given by my brother and I remember how exciting the album was even when I was 9 years old. The anticipation of waiting for that solo to come after the breakdown is what makes it one of the best solos ever recorded. It's like foreplay, sex and then bang!"
2 Kyuzyo Shimura
Freestarish "It's the most classic guitar solo there ever was. Again, 85 due to the wait, gradually building to this fuckin' amazing train that's gonna kick your door and kill your family."
3 The Eagles
Hotel California "One of the best story songs ever written. When the last words ``you can check out anytime you like, but you can never leave'' hit you, ya like ashes, then the solo takes it home. Anticipation, once again."
4 AC/DC
Night Prowler "It's quite a dark song, mild tempo and lift guitar repeats its style in the solo. Angus does this one thing that's hard to put into words, but it really marks the spot. I love it."
5 The Black Crowes
Shake Your Money Maker "The whole Southern Harmony album is difficult to beat for vibe. The solo has amazing tone and feel and takes you to the heart and soul and captures the sentiment of the song's lyrics."

Who played it: Brian May
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 1
Why it rocks: This is the perfect example of what a guitar solo should be: an integral part of the song. Freddie Mercury described the writing process of Bohemian Rhapsody as simply putting three different ideas together, but such was this golden period of the band's creativity that May, not exactly a spontaneous player at the best of times, knew exactly what he was going to play during the solo section before actually recording it. As easy to hum as the "In this the real world" intro, the excellent key change at the climax ushered in the now legendary 180 overdub operatic section as if it had grown there.
Find it on: A Night At The Opera (1975)
Did you know? The master tape, now in May's safe keeping, is covered in doodles courtesy of Mercury. It'd be worth a fortune on eBay...

9
Track: All Right Now
Artist: Free
Who played it: Paul Kossoff
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 1
Why it rocks: It's all about the climax. Every great guitar solo should have a beginning, a middle and an end, and the classically trained Paul Kossoff understood this. The solo opens with a hammer-on-from the open third string to the second fret and builds gradually up the fretboard from there. The whole solo is played on the top three strings and the majority of it on the top two. Could you be any creative and memorable with such a restricted palette? Kossoff echoes the solo's repetitive triplet lick at his Les Paul's 17th fret for a stunning crescendo to one of rock's greatest ever solos.
Find it on: Fire And Water (1970)
Did you know? Paul Kossoff worked as a guitar salesman for Selmer's in Charing Cross Road at the same time as another budding six-stringer, Mahavishnu Orchestra's John McLaughlin!
8 Track: Crazy Train
Artist: Ozzy Osbourne
Who played it: Randy Rhoades
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: 49

Why it rocks: The unusual key for a metal riff—the main part, including a full note scale, is in A major—immediately piqued the ear, especially coming straight after the seriously aggressive intro courtesy of the (ultimately tragic) Californian guitarist. The wonderfully swirling nature of Randy's style is perfectly illustrated here, as is his masterful technique. Find it on: Blizzard Of Oz (1980)

Did you know? Mrs Sharon Osbourne is alleged to have seduced young Randy back in the day. Shudder...

6 Track: Voodoo Child (Slight Return)
Artist: The Jimi Hendrix Experience
Who played it: Jimi Hendrix
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 1

Why it rocks: It took just a decade for guitar playing to morph from Buzzy Holly to this, the most astounding few minutes of fretboard flash the world had ever heard. From the opening wah-wah phrases to the fade-out, the whole song is a guitar solo with Hendrix's languid vocals interspersing a series of wild, overdriven excursions that covered every area of the neck. Based on a classic Muddy Waters blues lick, the main, open-position refrain sounds doubly powerful on a guitar tuned down to Eb. Although Jimi sticks mostly entirely to the minor pentatonic scale, it's hard to imagine a more dynamic, exciting and inspiring piece of guitar playing. Remarkable! Find it on: Electric Ladyland (1968)

Did you know? Hendrix never had a UK No 1 during his lifetime, but with the sound of the coffin lid still reverberating Voodoo Child hit the shops and, despite the BBC's reluctance to play what they viewed as a cacophony of atonal rubbish, Jimi hit the top spot just two months after his death.

LEARN THIS SOLO! on page 55
5
Track: Enter Sandman
Artist: Metallica
Who played it: Kirk Hammett
Genre: Metal
UK chart position: 5
Why it rocks: After the bashed production and ultra-complexed song structures of ...And Justice for All Metallica realized they had taken the progressive elements of their music as far as they could. The Black Album was recorded while bands like Nirvana were changing the hard rock industry with their stripped-back approach to guitar playing, presenting an ideal opportunity for the world's largest metal band to streamline their sound. Enter Sandman is a perfect example of the band harnessing the power of long development, much more melodic and immediate than anything they did previously with its crashing guitars, catchy riff and even a sing-along chorus Kirk Hammett lends heavily on his side, alternating between straight quarter and eighth notes with some lightning fast bends and pull-offs to build up tension before subsiding in a descending lick using alternate picking. The last bend is held and then gradually released with simultaneous Headhunter-style tremolo bar dips. Whilst not the most challenging of Metallica solos it's still got bags of attitude and for that reason countless metal guitarists in today's environment cite it as the first solo they ever learned on the guitar.
Find it on: Metallica (1991)
Did you know? Hammett worked on Burger King to raise enough money to buy his first Marshall amp.

4
Track: Hotel California
Artist: The Eagles
Who played it: Don Felder and Joe Walsh
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: 8
Why it rocks: If this isn't the most perfectly constructed piece of guitar work this side of Floyd's Comfortably Numb then we don't know what is! From the moment Felder's soaring Gibson kicks things off to the organic harmony ostro that's so tight you couldn't fit a Ritz between the players, every passage is packed with nuggets of six-string gold. Both guitarists are kings of the shlinky lick, so it's no surprise that Felder and Walsh push each other through a series of finger-twisting contortions featuring three-fret bends, super-sweet vibrato and intertwining 'together' moments that keep the listener enthralled. Listen closely and you can hear where the Felder Les Paul gives way to Walsh's Telecaster before taking centre stage yet again later on. Although originally a Don Felder song, Walsh arranged Hotel California's solo. "I'm very proud of it, I thought up the lead parts and was 75-80 per cent responsible for their arrangement," says Joe. "But if Felder hadn't been there, kicking me in the butt, I wouldn't have played like that." As with every truly great guitar solo, you can sing every note. This is guitar playing at its very best.
Find it on: Hotel California (1976)
Did you know? Hotel California was originally written and recorded in the key of E minor before Don Henley decided it would suit his voice better in B minor. So Felder capo'd his 12-string at the 7th fret and the rest is history!
“How I Wrote the Solo to... ’Paradise City’

It’s probably my favourite Guns song ‘cos it encompasses everything Guns N’ Roses were about. Solving with Guns was usually a very spontaneous writing process, when we wrote it and played it live it just came naturally. The solo on Paradise just kinda wrote itself. That jam at the end could probably have been about 15 minutes long if we’d wanted, but when I wrote the solo we set out for what felt right without making it too long or overindulgent. We didn’t talk about it; I think we were doing pre-production on it right before we went into the studio. I have no real memory of it being honest. We could have gone in there and just jammed it through and that’s how it went on tape, I don’t know!”
MARK TRENCHMOUNT
(Alter Bridge)

1. Steve Vai
   "Tender Surrender"
   Steve Vai is quite possibly my favorite living guitar player. Tender Surrender is in my opinion Vai’s greatest masterpiece. It took many frustrating weeks to learn but was worth every second. I came out the other side a much better player."
   2. Pink Floyd
   "Comfortably Numb"
   "David Gilmour’s solo in Comfortably Numb has to be one of the most loved solos of all time. Every serious guitar player I’ve ever known has learned and mastered it. Gilmour’s note selection and feel are absolutely flawless."
   3. Jeff Beck
   "Brush with the Blues"
   "The moment I heard Brush with the Blues I was an instant Jeff Beck fan. Without a pick or effects, Beck delivered an instrumental with some of the most creative and dynamic ideas I had ever heard. Jeff Beck is the king of phrasing."
   4. Gary Moore
   "Purimense"
   "A great balance of shred and just purely passionate playing. Gary Moore’s speed when playing common pentatonic ideas is amazing but just as impressive is the feel he has when playing the slower phrases."
   5. Stevie Ray Vaughan
   "Lone Star Man"
   "Rarely do I enjoy a cover song as much as or more than the original. However, SRV’s rendition of Lone Star Man has, in this day, some of the most heartfelt guitar playing I’ve ever heard."

Breath: Eruption
Artist: Van Halen
Who played: Edward Van Halen
Genre: Rock
UK chart position: Did not chart

2. Wish you were here
   Mark Chapman
   "I wrote the solo to..." 'Eruption'"

Why it rocks: The number of genre-defining guitar moments can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and Eruption filled position four, the gap between the first time anyone heard Jimi Hendrix and the riff from Smells Like Teen Spirit. Van Halen had been repping up all-night keggers and rock venues around Sunset Strip for many years before their eponymous debut changed things forever, and young Eddie already possessed a serious reputation. In fact, he used to turn his back to the audience during live shows simply to keep his technique a secret from the myriad of air-head wannabes who ultimately wound up in inferior bands of the genre. At the time, nobody had heard a guitar like it, neither the huge tone (thanks to a 1967 SLP Marshall head) nor the amazing tapping technique showcased during the tune.

There is documented proof of players such as Brian May, Jeff Beck and ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons tapping prior to Ed, but such was the Dutchman's twist on the idea that the globe's imagination was captured and Van Halen, led by the longer-than-life David Lee Roth, were set for superstardom. Although the solos from the likes of 'If I'm Your Woman' and 'I'm The Only One' are arguably more accomplished, it will always be Eruption that defines both the man and his strapless guitars. Everyone was influenced by Edward Van Halen and, if pinched harmonics, tapping, whammy bar pyrotechnics and the like figure in your style to any degree, so are you?

Find it on: Van Halen (1978)

Did you know? Eddie ran through the solo a few times and producer Ted Templeman simply spliced two separate sections together for the finished product.

"For me, the best solo ever has got to be Eruption. Not only 'cos of the dive-bombers, tapping, harmonics and two handed tapping, but because of the effect this had on me as a youngster. I was around 10-years-old when my dad brought this record home and the second I heard this solo I knew what I wanted to do for a living. Thank Eddie, and not just for this solo either - just pick any Van Halen album!"
Tracks: Stairway To Heaven
Artist: Led Zeppelin
Who played it: Jimmy Page
Genre: Rock
UK Chart Position: Did not chart

Why it rocks: Because it's perfect, that's why! From the moment Jimmy Page plays the opening run on his Telecaster (not a Les Paul in sight) right through to the seamless note that completes it, this is guitar perfection. The solo is a masterpiece of composition. Rather than wander aimlessly on the guitar, Page creates a 'song within a song'.

The opening phrase set the scene with Page adding extra power to the pentatonic scale to follow the song's initial chord progression. There's no holding your head here, the first part of the solo slightly moves the middle register of the guitar, leaving Page plenty of scope to raise the bar later on.

Next, the mighty one moves up the neck and crams as many notes into one beat as he possibly can. He plays this awkward phrase a total of 19 times. Why? Well, the chords underneath are changing, which means the sound of the notes has a slightly different shade each time the accompaniment changes. What a clever boy he is!

After that little trick, your average guitarist would have finished up and started scanning the room for possible looking 'chicks' to spend the night with, but Page continues on and plays a game of question and answer with a haunting overdubbed guitar (I know the bit 'I'm no lover'). He then completes this 'song within a song' with a final flurry of a descending run on a high bend. This re-introduces Plant's haunting track that takes us through to 3 minutes of the song.

The most impressive thing about this solo is that it was improvised! That's right. Mr. Page walked into the studio one morning and said, 'Right, I think I'll record the solo to 'Stairway' today. I haven't got anything planned, so just run the tape and I'll see what I come up with!' Apparently, locked up in a dirty Zeppelin van is an alternative take of the solo that has never seen the light of day and probably never will. While there's certainly a degree of mystery involved here, it's not really going to be better than the one we know and love now, is it?

Ultimately, there's simply not a solo more deserving of TG's Hall of Fame No 1 spot. So do yourself a favour. TG readers, buy it, download it, dig it out from your parents' vinyl collection and revel in how great it is. Find it on: Led Zeppelin IV (1971)

Did you know? Jimmy Page played guitar on Tom Jones' 1965 chart-topper It's Not Unusual.
Jimmy Page mostly uses the first and third fingers for the first half of this solo, which means his fret hand can comfortably shift around the shape that these two fingers occupy.

The first bend in bar 3 is dictated largely by the bend in previous bar, so be careful here. Normally the bend in bar 2 would use the third finger, but you need this for the next bar, so use the second finger.

In bar 9 Page uses a repeated lick, which can be a bit confusing. Concentrate on hitting the 13th fret C on each beat. You may find that a downstroke on the 34th fret A followed by an upstroke on the C will help in terms of speed, allowing you to use a handy outside picking approach.

Bars 16 and 18 involve some large 3 and 4 fret bends, so due care should be taken to fully support the third finger. The final bar provides an exciting climax to the solo. Barre the first finger over the 17th fret and use outside picking (upstroke on the 20th fret C and downstroke on the 17th fret E), allowing you to play quicker.
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HUNTING FOR TONE?

Ever wonder how your favourite bands get their records to sound so good? TG tracked down Trivium and Killswitch Engage producer Andy Sneap to learn the tricks of the trade...

Words: Nick Cracknell, Pictures: Jody Sessions
The only possible downside to being Andy Sneap is the odd headache and occasional case of bleeding ears. Not much to put up with, considering he has one of the coolest jobs in the music industry.

When it’s time for a band to head into the studio, it’s to the Grammy award-winning producer, mastering and mixing engineer that the biggest metal labels in the world invariably turn. The renowned studio sensi has worked on some of the most ear-shattering records of the last decade, from Killswitch Engage’s End Of Heartache and Opeth’s classic Deliverance, to TG Band Of The Year Trivium’s awesome breakthrough record Ascendancy.

Sneap started getting into production while playing guitar with 1980s thrashers Jabat. The band broke up in 1991, but by that time they had released three albums and worked with a number of producers.

“It was a good learning curve for me, and provided a foot in the door and step into the production world,” he says. “Although I didn’t really know what I was doing, I found I was getting better results on my 8-track reel-to-reel than I was when trusting some of the more experienced guys. That’s not to say they didn’t know what they were doing, it’s just that I’d become so focussed on tone, equipment and the sound of recordings that I understood the faster, more extreme side of things should sound.”

While engineering in a Nottingham studio, Sneap began to build his own 24-track studio with digital ADAT recorders and working on small projects for the likes of extreme metal label Earache. Then, in 1996, he was asked to help out on Machine Head’s second album The More Things Change in LA and things quickly started to look up.

“I made a lot of contacts and returned to the US about 20 times within the next few years, producing and mixing bands like Exodus, Testament, Nevermore, 36 Crazymatics and some local European bands such as Kreator, Opeth and Arch Enemy. It got to a point a couple of years back that I was out of the country almost six months of the year. So, it seemed a logical step to build a studio close to home that was set up specially for this type of music.”

So when TG wanted to get a behind the scenes look at what really goes into recording a top metal studio album, Andy Sneap seemed the perfect choice to guide us through the process. From mic positioning to essential logging techniques, vital home recording tips and nailing that perfect tone, Sneap shares his invaluable experience from behind the mixing desk at Backstage Productions, his custom built HQ in deepest Derbyshire.

Keep it Simple!

“I get so many emails from people who think I’ve got some hidden secret or technique,” says Andy, “but it’s one of the first things I learnt when I started production: keep it simple. If it sounds good at the source, it should sound good with a mic on it. I throw the faders up on some of the stuff I get sent to mix and it’s like, ‘What the hell were they thinking?’. So now when I’m asked to mix an album I insist on a clean DI [Direct Inject: plugging straight into the mixing board with no effects] for every guitar track recorded so that I can re-amp them if necessary.”

Don’t Take the Mic...

“I tried many different microphones and combinations over the years, but I still keep coming back to the good old Shure SM57. It seems to work well on just about everything. If you’re recording at home and can make a bit of noise, get yourself an SM57. Not the beta version, just the standard SM57.

“People always ask about amps, too. Admittedly, there are a few favourites in my arsenal. The Mesa/Boogie Rectifier always sounds great, as does the original Peavey 5150, which I find has a great linear mid range. I’m also a huge fan of Marshall JCM800s, of which I have four: a standard 30 and 100-watt single channel, a dual 100-watt modelled to 6550s, and one that I picked up that was modelled by Chandler and has an extra gain stage that sounds killer. I use that amp on Caliban’s Opposite From Within and Opeth’s live DVD Langestrautions. “I just got the Krank Revolution 1, which I’ve used with the Mesa/Boogie on Nevermore’s last album This Godless Endeavour — it really added some aggression to the mix. Last, but by no means least, I have the Krankenstein, which is my new favourite toy. I used it for the new Arch Enemy DVD and it’s incredible.”
CABS ARE CRUCIAL

"People don't realize how much the cabinet affects the tone. I'm favouring my Mesa/Boogie cab with Celestion Vintage 30 speakers these days, but I didn't make that decision without listening to some of the other cabs I have here. I find the tuning of the band can very much determine the speaker. For instance, on Exodus' 'Temple of the Beast' we used Gary's Todd Langner modified 4x12 Celestion-loaded cabs, close mic'd with one SM57. I've found the closer to 440 standard tuning the better those standard 1960 cabs sound, but with the current trend of tuning down if you are going lower than C4 you should try Greenbacks or Vintage 30s."

RE-AMPING

"Re-amping is great if you're recording at home or recording a live album. It's also a great safety net if you're well into a session, tired and second guessing your guitar tone. You basically record a clean DI guitar as well as your mic'd sound and then later, with the aid of a re-amp box (a reverse DI that turns the signal back from low to hi impedance), you feed it back into your amp and dial in the tone. This works great on live records if you have to 'fix' anything, as you feed both the original DI and your new DI into the same set-up. It also gets rid of all stage noise. Also, if you're recording through something similar to a POD at home, record a DI and 'hang' it back through a decent amp when you can make some noise. The first time I heard of it was when John Cammereri, who engineered Joe Satriani and some early classic thrash albums, used it. John has now manufactured the re-amp box and there are a few others, such as Little Labs, making similar devices. It's a very useful bit of kit, especially if you're on a tight budget and not 100 per cent happy with the tone you're recording."

MIC POSITIONING

"This mic'ing thing is not a myth! I remember one guy at an in-store guitar demo saying, 'You never listen to a guitar cab with your ear next to it, so why put the mic there?' Well, because you want to transfer the openness and precision of that sound, the tight low end and all-important mid-range crunch you can only get by close mic'ing. Once you've got a tone you're happy with, start with your mic right at the centre of the cone, an inch or so back from the grill cloth, pointed straight on. Then check how it sounds. If it needs adjusting move the mic, but don't move it too much - maybe a centimetre at a time off the centre. If it's too bright and fizzy on the top end, move it off centre just slightly and try tracking two guitars roughly then sit them in the mix. Make sure those lows aren't too boomy and the mid-range is good and linear, because it's all about the crunch. Also, do a rough recording of the same riff through each speaker in the cab - you'll be amazed at how different each cone sounds. I usually end up with the edge of the mic meeting the edge of the centre of the cone, but whatever you do don't put a square of tape round the mic to mark it. I did it with Machine Head, much to my embarrassment. It made that much difference to the tone we thought we'd blown the speaker."

TUBES ARE TOP

"Tubescreamer... you gotta love 'em. I have three. I was working with Roland Grapow, the ex-Helloween/Masterplan guitarist, and we did a shootout with two original Ibanez and Mason Tubescreamer. The Mason won hands down. They are a great way of tightening up a tone without killing it. If you're finding your low end fluffy, try a Tubescreamer or a Boss Metal Zone with little gain in front of your normal tone. I've been geeky with mine and replaced the chip with the original JRC4558D, which smooths the top end and high mids. Don't use it as a distortion pedal, use your amp for the gain and the pedal as a tuner. It works!"
HUNTING FOR TONE

Making Tracks
TG outlines three great ways to record music at home...

If you’re Andy Sneap, recording at home is not glamorous. It generally takes place in your spare room, next to a pile of laundry, with your girlfriend sticking her head in periodically to ask how long you’ll be. ‘The Ripside is that it’s also the fastest, cheapest and best way to get your songs out there. And in 2006, the bedroom recording artiste has more options than ever...

Portastudios
The concept of a tape-based portastudio may seem hopelessly outdated, but as a first step this age-old format has its advantages. As well as being cheap and portable, the standalone nature (ie, you don’t need a laptop) of a cassette portastudio makes it the quickest way to capture a riff when inspiration strikes. Most have four tracks, allowing you to record guitar, bass, vocals and drum solos and then mix the result. The drawbacks are obvious. Tape isn’t exactly user-friendly because the quality drops when you “layer” too many tracks and there are no built-in drum patterns. Good units include the Tascam MF-P01 (£99).

Digital Multitracks
A digital recording will give you fewer headaches, more tracks and better editing options. They often feature built-in effects and preset beats, and allow you to build up complex songs without the quality dropping away. Nowadays, many digital recorders (like Korg’s D4, £249) double as amp modelling units, so you can tailor your sound before recording it. Others (like Tascam’s 2488, £999) have a built-in CD burner.

Laptops
Recording with a laptop isn’t rock ‘n’ roll. Get past that and you’ll be stunned by the control and versatility offered by modern software. Alongside products like Cubase, TG has recently been impressed by the amp models and intuitive format of Line 6’s RifTrac (€109), while a great alternative is the TonePort UX1 (€102). Don’t get hung up on the “geek” factor, though. You still need a guitar in your hands to use these packages, and they’re rarely that complicated. (WY)

FINDING YOUR TONE

One trick I find invaluable is multi-band compression, especially when tracking multiple guitars. Those lower mids can get boomy, so I’ve been using the Waves C4 Compressor on just those, bypassing the other three channels and clamping down the problematic 120-230hz region. Remember: the bass player does have a place in the mix. Try filtering from around 60-80hz down on the guitar, there’s not much down there that’s needed. Also on the subject of filtering, be careful with anything over 10-12k. Watch that frizz, especially with PODs, it will get in the way of your cymbals before you realise what’s happening.

‘Don’t put a square of tape round the mic to mark it. I did it with Machine Head, much to my embarrassment. It made that much difference to the tone we thought we’d blown the speaker!’

You can get some great results from recording on a Mac or PC with software such as ProTools, DP, Cubase or Nuendo. Home recording has come a long way since the days of chrome cassettes, but it was messing around while wearing headphones and trying to get my playing right that taught me that the old saying ‘tone is in the hands’ is true. Eric Peterson from Testament is a prime example. He’s a great old school player, he totally has it down with the way he digs into the strings. You can hear it acoustically when he plays - the way he frets and the way the note rings true. He goes straight into a Mesa/Boogie, with not as much gain as you might think, and he almost pulls the tone from his guitar. If you can play through something like a JCM800 and sound good, you’ll sound great through something more forgiving, like an Engl or Peavey. Also, don’t hide behind a wall of distortion with no mid-range. One common fault is to suck all the mid out into a real scooped sound, especially with the more processed units as a lot of their presets seem set this way. It’s great fun to play through but not so good to record with, and your playing will suffer because you can’t hear what you’re doing.

DROP THE PRESSURE

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Passionate about music
AC/DC — BACK IN BLACK


WORDS: CLAIRE DAVIES; PICTURES: ROBERT ELLIS/REPHOTO

FACT FILE

BACK IN BLACK

RECORDED AT: Compass Point Studios, Nassau, The Bahamas
PRODUCED: Robert "Mutt" Lange
RELEASED: 25 July 1980
HIGHEST UK CHART POSITION: 1
HIGHEST DL CHART POSITION: 1

A 2005 was the year we lost Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas author Hunter S Thompson, football legend George Best and Pat Simmons – the voice of the speaking clock. It was the year when England brought home The Ashes, Tony Blair got elected for a third successive term and Liam Gallagher called Coldplay's Chris Martin a "plant pot." 2005 also marked the 25 year anniversary of one of the greatest, most shi-t-kicking rock albums of all time: AC/DC's seminal Back In Black. Revered as a lesson in guitar dynamics, Back In Black has become a cornerstone of rock music. Paul Mahon, guitarist with British rock newcomers The Answer explains why. "Back In Black is a landmark album because all 10 tracks are sheer unadulterated rock 'n' roll power. It has set the benchmark for modern rock." Released in America on July 21, 1980, and in the UK on 31 July, Back In Black stormed the charts upon its release and has sold over 21 million copies in the States alone. On a worldwide scale, Back In Black has shifted more than 42 million copies. AC/DC's lead guitarist, Angus Young, told TG's sister magazine Classic Rock: "Those figures are incredible. Mind-boggling. All we've ever done is record stuff we hope our fans will like." Mind-boggling as it may seem to Angus, Aerosmith's Steven Tyler is in no doubt as to why AC/DC have earned such humongous album sales. "AC/DC are the litmus test of what rock does," said Tyler. "Does [the music you listen to] make you chunch your fists when you sing along? Does it scare your parents and piss off the neighbours? If it doesn’t, then it isn't AC/DC."

"Back In Black has become a yardstick by which we judge most other rock music." — Johnny Rocker, Roadstar

A AC/DC were formed in Australia, in 1973, by rhythm guitarist Malcolm Young. Born in Glasgow on 6 January 1953, Malcolm was the middle child of the Young clan (oldest child George played rhythm for 1960s group The Easybeats and co-produced AC/DC hits Parachute and High Voltage). When the family immigrated to Australia in the early 1960s, Malcolm initially found work as a machine repairman in a bra factory, Influenced by 1950s rockers such as Chuck Berry and 1960s blues-based bands like The Yardbirds, Malcolm soon developed an intoxicating rhythm style that has since shaped the playing of many guitarists. "Malcolm's rhythm playing had a great influence on me," says Paul Mahon. "He's the greatest rhythm player ever. His playing is tight, dirty and bally – exactly the way rock 'n' roll guitar should be." Malcolm has often been overshadowed by his younger brother's guitar genius, as ScottIan told TG: "Some think AC/DC are all about Angus, but Malcolm's their secret weapon. He's writes all the riffs." Steve Lomax, frontman/guitarist with Tokyo Dragons is quick to praise the Young brothers. "The way they compliment each other is surreal; Malcolm and his Gretsch Firebird laying down the riffs and Angus wailing on his Gibson SG with a lead sound to die for." Born on 31 March, 1955, Angus Young's energy is boundless — something his friends have tried to match through drink and drugs, but Angus has never needed to. "If I drink, I'll be off. The other members of AC/DC have to drink to come up to my level." Whether you've seen AC/DC in concert or watched live footage of them,
“Back In Black has some great Angus Young solos on it. Most notably the title track. Angus’ wildfire solo on that song influenced me loads – just listen to his phrasing and bends!” – Paul Mahon, The Answer
Their fifth studio album in six years, *Highway To Hell* achieved gold status in the US and reached No 8 in the UK during the summer of its release.

Fired up by the success of *Highway* and spurred on by the media clout of new manager Peter Mensch (responsible for developing Aerosmith's career and later representing Metallica), AC/DC hit the road with NWOBHM bands such as Judas Priest and Def Leppard. The guys finally ended their *Highway* tour with six shows at London's Hammersmith Odeon (the Apollo), in December 1979, along with some rescheduled gigs in Southampton and Newcastle the following January.

Everything seemed to be falling into place for AC/DC. Fame appeared to be dealing them a winning hand and universal stardom was just a guitar lick away. Angus and Malcolm had been meeting up in London's E-Zee Hire rehearsal rooms to work on songs for what would become *Back In Black*. The pair had plenty of ideas sketched down; the result of time spent on the road. Singer Bon Scott was also said to be jotting down lyrics, though the brothers deny his lyrical input on *Back In Black*.

After a few sessions pummelling out riffs and another session spent with Scorpions bandleader Klaus Meine, the trio pounded out a rough version of what would eventually become *Have A Drink On Me*. At the end of their session, Scott arranged another rehearsal with the brothers before leaving the studio. That was the last time they ever saw him alive.

Singer Bon Scott was only in AC/DC for five years before he died at the age of 33, on Feb 19 1980, after being found in the passenger seat of a Renault car owned by Alistair Kinane (a friend of Bon's ex-girlfriend Margaret "Silver" Smith, a notorious heroin user). The coroner at King's College hospital, London, concluded the AC/DC frontman had died from acute alcoholic poisoning, but the exact details of Bon's death have been debated for over two decades. Biographers, journalists, friends and musicians have all waded in with their version of events.

Whatever the true story, AC/DC were shaken to the core by the death of their friend and bandmate. While the British press was aghast in tribute to Bon, the band were inconsolable as they flew to Fremantle (West Australia) to attend the funeral of Ronald Belford Scott.

Despite Bon's family encouraging the Young brothers to keep the band going, Malcolm and Angus weren't ready for creating music, let alone a follow-up to their biggest album to date. "We were heartbroken," Angus told *Classic Rock*: "We knew the world had lost a big talent, but we had lost much more. We had lost a close friend. We didn't know what to do with ourselves."

The thought of auditioning singers seemed impossible to the band, especially when Peter Mensch approached them with a list of singers' names on the plane back to the UK after Bon's funeral. "Replacing Bon Scott as AC/DC's frontman meant filling some pretty big boots," says Tokyo Dragon's Steve Lomax, "but it was made easier because every one of *Back In Black's* 10 tracks turned out to be absolute dynamite."

As the days ground by in March, the brothers forced themselves to start writing again. "Angus told *Classic Rock*: "When we got back to London after the funeral we didn't get together too much. But after a couple of weeks Malcolm called and said: 'Instead of the two of us just sitting around moping, why don't we do some work? At least that'll keep us together.'"

Back in the rehearsal studio where they'd sat with Bon just weeks earlier, Malcolm and Angus closed themselves off from everyone. Slowly the songs that would shape *Back In Black* started to come together, but Angus was unsure whether the task of carrying on without Bon and writing a follow-up to *Highway* was a bridge too far. Despite this, giving up wasn't an option. "Malcolm and I started the band and I guess we didn't want it to end," said Angus. Eventually they couldn't bear to tour and say, 'That's it, we're not doing it anymore.'"

Unable to put it off any longer, AC/DC had to find a new frontman. Out of the singers who auditioned (among them The Easybeats' Steve Wright, Fat Lip's Allen Fryer and Marc Scarsone of Krokus), it was an unlikely contender named Brian Johnson who stepped up to the plate and delivered.

Johnson, who'd been a one-hit wonder Geordie, got the call from AC/DC to come to London. For his audition he let rip with *Whole Lotta Rose* and Ike and Tina Turner's *Nutbush City Limits*. Exactly how much time elapsed between the audition and him officially joining the band is unknown, but Johnson, along with the rest of AC/DC,

"You have to remember that Bon loved a good party. When someone dies people hold a wake, a celebration of a person's life. Bon didn't dwell on the meaning of life too much. He just lived for the moment." — Angus Young, AC/DC

Angus and Brian: Johnson was a tower of strength for the grieving AC/DC...
Sp...
By Tony Platt

Playing tribute to former frontman Bon Scott, Back In Black's cover and title were suitably sombre. Even more fitting was the sound of album opener 'Hells Bells' — the rolling of a huge bronze bell.

Not so sombre were the band's surroundings when recording. Tony Platt, studio engineer on Back In Black, said: "Dark rooms and low key studios are good for making rock music. I was concerned that a Caribbean environment might not be best!"

But the island didn't turn out to be the distracting paradise Platt had feared, as singer Brian Johnson recalled, "It was pissing down, there was flooding and the electricity went out." In fact, AC/DC had arrived during a full in a storm that ravaged the island for the next three days and inspired 'Hells Bells' opening lines: "I'm the rolling thunders, the pouring rain/ I'm coming on like a hurricane."

AC/DC had the songs in place before leaving the UK, with the exception of Rock & Roll Ain't Noise Pollution, written by the brothers in The Bahamas. "We felt we were a track short," said Angus, "and spent a few days writing in between guitar overdubs and other things."

Even though Lange was producing, the album was very much a band affair, said Platt: "Angus and Malcolm would come up with the bare bones of songs. They crafted most of it, then it was a matter of taking it to the next level."

A lesson in well orchestrated rock, Back In Black is all about taking it back to basics. "What Must and I wanted to do was make it sound as though they were all in the same room," said Platt. "It's all about naturalness — there's nothing synthetic sounding about it."

Once the knell of the opening track is over, Back In Black takes us on a different journey with tracks such as Shoot To Thrill and You Shook Me. All Night Long offering themselves up to become rock party favourites the world over.

You Shook Me is straight out of the Bon Scott school of songwriting. With lead lyrics that can only be matched by the lyrical leers of Giant's The Dog, A Bone and Let Me Put My Love Into You, You Shook Me is a mini rock masterpiece on an album that fires with all cylinders. "I first heard You Shook Me in my dad's car," says Towers Of London axeman The Rev. "It wasn't long before I'd nicked the album and studied every lick note for note. Back In Black got me through a lot of tough days at school. I would lie on the grass at lunch, lose myself in their music and dream of playing Donington."

The Rev wasn't the only guitarist influenced by AC/DC to debut at Donington last summer. Roadster's Johnny Rocker also pays his dues to AC/DC. "They're the single biggest influence on our band — just check out Roadstar on our first EP. As for Back In Black, it has become a yard stick by which we judge most other rock music."

The guitar playing on Back In Black is all about balls-to-the-wall attitude. Despite not being lauded for writing immense solos, Angus' lead guitar work on the album is still impressive. "Back In Black has some great Angus solos on it," says Paul Motson, "most notably on Let Me Put My Love Into You and the title track. Angus' wildfire solos like the one on Back In Black influenced me loads — just listen to his phrasing and bends! He taught me the importance of cranking a Marshall to 11."

Back In Black's title track is perhaps the most commercial of AC/DC's songs, whether they intended it to be or not. Angus' repeating descending riff and Malcolm's rhythm guitar barrage work seamlessly over drummer Phil Rudd's rock-solid beat and bassist Cliff Williams' heavy bass. Because it's the title track of an album dedicated to Bon Scott, one of rock's most hard-hitting and fast-living frontmen, it's appropriate that the track is a tumultuous driving force; a towering rock monster of a song. Angus told Classic Rock: "You have to remember that Bon loved a good party. When someone dies people often hold a wake, a celebration of a person's life. But Bon didn't dwell on the meaning of life too much. He lived for the moment."

AC/DC finished off Back In Black in about six weeks, then flew back to the UK to await the press and public's reaction. Five months after frontman died, and what seemed like an inevitable downfall, the band had scrapped themselves up off the floor and released the album of their career. Against insurmountable odds AC/DC were back. And they were bigger and better than ever before.
AC/DC

HAVE A DRINK ON ME

IT'S BEEN 25 YEARS SINCE BACK IN BLACK, BOASTING OUR FEATURED TRACK, WAS FIRST RELEASED. SO RAISE YOUR GLASS AND TOAST AC/DC'S SEMINAL ROCK ALBUM

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BOTH SOLO SECTIONS USE SOME ADVANCED STRING-BENDING TECHNIQUES. THE FAST CHUCK BERRY STYLE LICK IN BAR 9 OF THE FIRST SOLO IS A GREAT EXAMPLE TO LOOK AT IN DEPTH. IF PLAYED INCORRECTLY, THIS LICK CAN EASILY MAKE YOU SOUND LIKE AN AMATEUR. A COMMON PROBLEM IS TO LET THE BEND BACK DOWN BEFORE YOU PLAY THE NEXT NOTE. WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IS RELEASE THE BEND AT THE EXACT SAME TIME YOU PLAY THE NEXT NOTE – NOT BEFORE OR AFTER.

TO HELP WITH STABILITY, SUPPORT YOUR THIRD FINGER WITH YOUR SECOND ON THE FRET BELOW (6TH FRET), BUT REMEMBER THIS NEEDS TO COME OFF AT THE SAME TIME AS YOUR THIRD. ANOTHER COMMON PROBLEM IS CREATING UNWANTED NOISE AS YOU TRAVEL FROM THE BEND TO THE FRETTED NOTE. SIMULTANEOUSLY PUSH YOUR FIRST FINGER AGAINST THE THIRD STRING TO NICE IT AS WELL AS FRETTING THE 5TH FRET B STRING. ALSO, TRY NOT TO FICK YOUR SECOND AND THIRD FINGERS AS YOU COME OFF THE BEND. WITH PRACTICE YOU SHOULD SEE YOUR BENDS BECOME MORE CONTROLLED AND LESS NOISY.

ANGUS IS OFTEN SEEN AS A PLATFORM TO FASTER, MORE TECHNICAL ROCK MATERIAL AS HE SUCCESSFULLY BRIDGES THE GAP BETWEEN BLUES AND VINTAGE ROCK 'N' ROLL. SO MAKE THE MOST OF THIS!

STEVIE ALLSWORTH

GETTING THE SOUND

The tones of Angus and Malcolm Young are quite different. Angus uses a Gibson SG with a Marshall JTM 45 amp through vintage 4 x 12 cabs, while Malcolm uses a 1963 Gretsch Firebird with a Marshall JTM 100 amp through vintage cabs. Angus generally has a dirtier sound, but their punch is achieved through sheer volume than amp gain. To achieve this, use your guitar's bridge humbucker, select a moderately overdriven tone, boost the bass frequencies slightly and dig in hard with your plectrum. Fortunately, most of AC/DC's original recordings have their two guitars paired hard left and right, so it's quite easy to distinguish between the two.

NOVICE WATCH

Descending Slides

The opening MTS is reminiscent of classic Delta blues. Lee Hooker offers a bluing slide based on the first two shapes of the A minor pentatonic scale. Unlike the initial slide up, the downward slide and pull-off can be demanding for beginners because it doesn't feel natural. Try sliding into the D note instead, increasing the pressure of your third finger as you reach the 5th fret (also, don't let your third finger drop).

AC/DC: Have A Drink On Me – Intro

TRACK 13
The hammer-on chord (bar 4), although similar to classic BB King and Eric Clapton riffs, uses the D string instead of the B string to give a bluesy A7 sound. Bar the end part of your first finger and lift it slightly at the first joint to avoid pressing down on the remaining top two strings. Apply a similar technique for the D/A chord, barring your third finger.

The general dynamic of the whole band comes down a notch during the verses of this song, so don’t play as hard. Try not to accentuate the open A string notes but instead focus on the melody notes of the D string. The reason for this is because the bass plays a descending line that could clash with the guitar part. Open out for the strummed chords in the second half. These should be played alternately, unlike the rest which are all downstrokes.
AC/DC: Have A Drink On Me – chorus (cont’d)

The only slight difference here compared to the intro is the second time ending.

AC/DC: Have A Drink On Me – interlude

Note that even though these chords look the same as the verse, there’s no palm-muting. As such, this interlude will generally sound louder and help you to differentiate it from the verse section that follows.

AC/DC: Have A Drink On Me – solo
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AC/DC: Have A Drink On Me – solo (cont’d)

The end of bar 4 is a great example of how Angus moves seamlessly from E minor to E major pentatonic. Take note of the frequent use of G sharps and G naturals, which create some cool blues tension. The faster sections (notably bars 3 and 9) are the trickiest, so it’s worth slowing these down so that you can tackle the frequent alternate picking.

AC/DC: Have A Drink On Me – breakdown

This section repeats the intro idea with the exception of the open A at the end of the bar. The main lick in bars 9-10 is fantastic for improving your strength, stamina and overall playing ability since it uses several major (and fairly tricky) techniques within a small space.

AC/DC: Have A Drink On Me – bridge

Typical of the three chord tricks AC/DC are renowned for, this section provides a climax to the breakdown. Don’t be overly concerned with the final chord (beat 4+) as you’ll probably change to the next chord at this point. Any noise you make at this stage won’t be noticed as long as you hit the new chord bang on the beginning of the new bar.
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For the sake of clarity, we have transcribed bars 5 onwards as a 'freetime' ending. The rhythms are slightly haphazard here so don't worry about getting it absolutely perfect. Remember, this is a gratuitous rock ending after all. Tricky points to note are the wide two tone bends. These need to be third finger bends supported by your first and second fingers if you're going to get anywhere near the 17th fret.
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Matthew Followill: the Kings Of Leon guitarist loves his open chords

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Many classic riffs and chord sequences have been created by using shifting open chords. Check out The Kings Of Leon's 'The Bucket', Blue in' Free by Wishbone Ash or 'Worm' by Yes. Shifting chords up the neck is nothing new (just play an open E chord, move it up one fret, play it again and you'll create an awesome Spanish sound), but it's something that works well on the guitar and is worth adding to your catalogue of techniques.

PHIL CAPONE

EXAMPLE 1: Chord sequence 1

Keep the 'D shape' intact as you move it down the neck by simply releasing the pressure of your fretting hand and thinking of the strings as 'guide rails'. Downstrokes should be used throughout.

EXAMPLE 2: Chord sequence 2

This is a tried and tested example of an open E shape shifting chromatically (fret by fret) down the neck. Try using sweep picking (pick down when ascending and pick up when descending), but make sure you pick the notes evenly.

EXAMPLE 3: Chord sequence 3

The A shapes in the first two bars are easier to play using a partial barre, but make sure you don't include the first string (you can avoid including it by angling your finger away from the fretboard at its first joint). Try using your first finger for the A chord and your third finger for the C/A and D/A chords.
LEARN TO PLAY

BOASTING THE CREAM OF OUR 100 HOTTEST SOLOS FEATURE, THIS MONTH’S LEARN TO PLAY INCLUDES OUR NO. 1 SOLO, ZEP’S STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN, ATX’S BAT COUNTRY AND DIRE STRAITS’ TUNNEL OF LOVE. NEED MORE? THEN CHECK OUT OUR ALL-STAR GUEST LESSONS!

Every month we pack your TG CD full to the brim. There’s so much stuff on there we have to practically jump up and down on it to cram it all in! With so much on the TG CD we can’t help but wonder, are you taking full advantage of everything that’s on offer?

This month, for example, we’ve got two videos from Paul Gilbert. The first one is a cool pentatonic lick (part of Paul’s regular School Of Shred), and the second is something he recorded at home especially for our 100 Hottest Solos feature. While you shouldn’t mess around with your dad’s Black & Decker drill, the first part of the solo is a great exercise at any speed.

In addition, Brian Setzer shows you how to make the most of a Bigsby tremolo, dispelling the myth that they’re next to useless.

You should also check out how Wes Borland writes killer riffs. This is a rare opportunity to understand the writing process of a top guitarist, and indispensable for anyone who writes their own material.

We also have our Blues Dues column and Novice section, which should be watched by everyone, or if only to fine-tune basic techniques. So don’t stick the CD on your shelf, stick it in your computer and get rocking.

James Utting - Music Editor

WHAT IS TAB?

Tab is short for tablature, which is a notational system used to give more detailed information as to where the notes should be played on the fretboard than traditional music notation can provide.

Tab appears underneath conventional music notation as six horizontal lines that represent the six strings of the guitar, from the sixth (thickest) string at the bottom to the first (thinnest) string at the top. On these six lines, numbers represent the required frets. For example, an A note on the 2nd fret, third string, will be shown as a number 2 written on the third line down on the tab chart. Likewise, if the first string is to be played unfretted, '0' will be written on the highest string. Providing fret and string numbers is tab's main role, but it also provides more performance detail. As guitar playing has evolved, so has the tab notation standards allowing for precise representation of techniques like hammer-ons, pull-offs, whammy bar dives and two-hand tapping.

NOTATION AND TAB DIAGRAM

The note pitch and their rhythmic values are shown in the music notation. Here we have the notes B, C and another D played as crochets (quarter notes). Where they occur on the fretboard is shown in the tab.

CONTENTS

p68  Led Zeppelin Stairway To Heaven
p84  AC/DC Have A Drink On Me
p96  Cream Crossroads
p102  Avenged Sevenfold Bat Country
p108  Foo Fighters Best Of You
p114  Dire Straits Tunnel Of Love
p118  NOVICE
p124  IN-DEPTH
p126  Blues Dues
p129  Brian Setzer Guest Lesson
p131  Paul Gilbert’s School Of Shred
p133  Wes Borland Guest Lesson
CROSSROADS

IF IT'S BENDS YOU WANT, YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE! TG UNCOVERS SOME OF THE MOST UNCONVENTIONAL STRING-PULLING IN ROCK HISTORY...

'CROSSROADS'

WORDS AND MUSIC BY ROBERT JOHNSON
LESTER B. H'E A. JOHNSON
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'CROSSROADS' was recorded in 1968 before Eric Clapton discovered the Fender Stratocaster now synonymous with his name. The techniques employed in the solos (two in total, which we've split into 12 bar sections, 1a, 1b etc.) on this track were rare at the time and included pre-bends, huge bends, palm muting, wider than average vibrato and an unconventional double-bend moment.

The main riff, with its staccato phrasing – and jazz-influenced drummer Ginger Baker steadfastly refusing to play the on-beats (check out the bizarre placement of the bass drum in the verses!!) – is pretty funky, even before the genre had been popularised.

Through the opening solo (1a), note the use of both minor and major pentatonic scales and the neat way that Clapton throws in the open first string during bar 6.

Bars 5 and 7 of solo 1b contain some doublestop bends (sometimes referred to as 'screams'). Use your first finger on the first string and your third finger to bend the second string. Your first finger must stay perfectly anchored to avoid bending the string out of tune.

The 'screams' at the start of solo 2a need even more control, as it's easy to accidentally over-bend the third string and pull the second string sharp. By the time you get to solo 2b the tension is really building, and when you get to that massive four-fret bend in bar 5 we defy you to not feel excited by it!

The double bends in bars 1 and 2 of the final solo (2c) are outrageous! After some experimentation we decided the only way to execute this is by using your third finger flattened across both strings and bending up (towards your face). It's not comfortable, admittedly, but bending downwards doesn't give the same effect.

KIT MORGAN

GETTING THE SOUND

In 1968 there was no master volume option on amps, so distortion was created by overdriving valves to their limits. Be careful not to overload the gain on a modern amp. Use a guitar with humbuckers if possible, as they give a much fatter sound than singlecoils. On the TG CD we used a 1967 Gibson 335 with the pickup selector in the middle position and the tone control for the neck pickup turned down to '2'. With a P90, use the Brit Blues amp type and a little compression to add more drive to the sound.

NOVICE WATCH

PULL-OFFS/HAMMER-ONS

The main riff that runs throughout the verses in Crossroads features pull-offs and hammer-ons right from bar 1. For a pull-off you're actually plucking the strings with your fretting hand. Play the note then at the moment you want the next note to sound, pluck the string by moving your finger downwards while being careful not to bend the note. With hammer-ons, firmly bring your finger down onto the string to make contact with the fingerboard without picking the note.
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AVENGED SEVENFOLD

BAT COUNTRY

A7X guitarist Synyster Gates and Zacky Vengeance stormed into our 100 HOTTEST SOLOS feature at No 13, proving just how hard they can solo.

California's Avenged Sevenfold have taken their rightful place as one of the most interesting guitar bands to emerge from the metal scene over the past few years. That's exactly why they blasted their way into TC's 100 Hottest Solos, beating the likes of Pantera and RHCP, and the solo featured on "Bat Country" is what got them there.

City of Evil, released in 2005, contains more guitar-drenched wizardry than Gandalf could shake his stick at; all wrapped up in a bundle of great catchy songs with every influence from the Misfits to Iron Maiden name checked.

"Bat Country's" riffs are straight ahead and to the point, featuring plenty of driving 16th notes. There's also some brilliant lead guitar work courtesy of guitarists Zacky Vengeance and Synyster Gates. Gates isn't afraid to show off his chops, which he honed from studying at the Guitar Institute of Technology.

The song's solo in particular is a melting pot of ideas and techniques, showcasing everything from Gates' Zakk Wylde style vibrato to the fast Paul Gilbert-esque alternate picking and tapped bends reminiscent of TJ Helmerich (one of Gates' teachers at GIT). You'll have to dissect this solo into manageable chunks and give each section your undivided attention with a metronome before attempting to join it all together.

Avenged Sevenfold have also revitalised the use of harmony guitar parts, using a less conventional non-linear approach (ie, not just diatonic thirds). We've transcribed both guitars during the harmonised sections so that you can compare the two. However, if you want to play along to the backing track you will have to play the top guitar line, which can be heard in the right speaker.

Getting the Sound

The A7X sound, although modern, doesn't rely on masses of distortion, so back off the gain a touch - tone is more important here. The boys use Mesa/Boogie amplification and Schecter and Gibson guitars, respectively, fitted with humbuckers. We used a Line 6 POD X3 set to the amp preset.

Vibrato

Vibrato will transform the way you sound and will help you to be more expressive with your playing. Think of vibrato as a series of quick bends and releases on the note you're playing. Keep your fingers locked in position and rotate your forearm to bend the string while using the side of your first finger knuckle as a pivot against the undercuts of the neck. Experiment by using shallow, then wider bends in order to unlock your full expressive potential.

Novice Watch

This song is in dropped D tuning, so the powerchords on the lowest two strings are played by barring across with one finger. You don't have to move your hand around too much for this - just move your first finger for the F5, your third finger for the G5 and your fourth finger for the A5.

AVENGED SEVENFOLD: "Bat Country" - Intro

TRACK 17

This song is in dropped D tuning, so the powerchords on the lowest two strings are played by barring across with one finger. You don't have to move your hand around too much for this - just move your first finger for the F5, your third finger for the G5 and your fourth finger for the A5.

BACKING - TRACK 18

102 | TOTAL GUITAR | MAY 2006
These are the same powerchords as featured in the intro, but this time they are played in a descending sequence. There is a pushed eighth note feel for all but the first chord, i.e., the chords fall on the upbeat rather than the downbeat.

This time we play the root notes only in a 16th note alternate picking style. Count: 1 e & a, 2 e & a, 3 e & a, 4 e & a to help you stay within the 16th note framework. Your downstrokes should match the 1 and '8' part of the beat, while the upstrokes coincide with the e and a.

A continuation of the verse here, so keep those 16th notes coming! This time, though, there are some note variations. Accenting the downbeat with a slightly heavier downstroke will help with your timing, too.

More powerchords here, but this time with a more broken rhythm. Watch out for unwanted string noise in the spaces. Some gentle muting with your fretting hand should eradicate this.
You should now switch over to a clean sound. Be careful to fret the notes cleanly, keeping your fingers slightly arched to steer clear of open strings. Keep an eye on your picking, too, ensuring that you’re plucking the correct strings. You may have to slow this down at first to gain accuracy.
This solo is a real bag of tricks. Of particular interest here are the tapped bends in bars 8 and 10. First bend the string with your fretting hand, then apply the tap with the middle finger of your picking hand (this will enable you to keep hold of your pick between your thumb and index finger). Hold the tapped note down while your fretting hand applies the vibrato and releases the bend. Practice this sequence slowly at first until it seems natural.
The first two bars of the solo are quite challenging because the A7X boys tend to use alternate picking, which is tricky when jumping from string to string. This is worth practicing daily with a metronome in order to build up confidence and maintain good timing. For the rest of the section, pay close attention to nuances such as the slides and vibrato. Nailing those is the secret to both parts blending together.

Here we’ve tabbed the lead guitar you can hear over the third verse of the song. First up, we have some unison bends: hold down the desired note with your index finger then play a tone lower than the note on the adjacent string with your third finger. Next, bend the lower note up a tone so that the two notes meet. Next is a two guitar harmony part, which we’ve tabbed on one staff. To play along with the backing track, play the top line only.

After all that guitar mayhem you’re back to some nice easy powerchords. Concentrate on standing with your feet at least two shoulder widths apart. Trust us, it’s very important for this type of section!
Bat Country’s outro is reminiscent of classic Metallica. It’s a re-interpretation of the clean Interlude, this time with distorted guitar. As this part is mainly comprised of arpeggiated chords, the knack here is to keep the idle strings quiet. Lightly palm muting with the heel of your picking hand should do the job nicely.

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FOO FIGHTERS

BEST OF YOU

THINKING LIKE A DRUMMER WILL SUPERCHARGE YOUR RHYTHM PLAYING, AND DAVE GROHL IS THE MAN TO SHOW YOU

The Best Of You is taken from the electric side of the Foo's recent double album, In Your Honor, released last year. Dual guitar duty is taken up by Dave Grohl and Chris Shiflett who add their own characteristic voicings and tone to their respective guitar parts.

Rhythm is probably the most important feature on this track as the drums, bass and guitars all mirror the same theme throughout. Grohl holds a unique viewpoint on the way he plays his parts. "I look at the guitar like it's a drum set," says the Foo's guitarist. "The low E is the kick, the A and D the snare. I ring the G like it's a high-hat and use the high strings like cymbals to accentuate a change." In this way you can visualize the strumming pattern like a drum part.

Listen carefully to the drum part because it will help you achieve the unusual 1 2 3, 1 2 3 pattern, which is played when the drums enter with snare and floor tom. This is crucial to your understanding of the track as a whole and will help with how your pick hand strums the strings (see Novice Watch, right).

Also noticeable is how the dynamics of the track move from gentle to aggressive and back again, for which you need to be in complete control of dynamics and volume. Grohl backs off the volume for the clean parts in the intro, although switching your amp from distortion to clean will be easier. The sound is more rewarding the first way, however, as using a distortion with the volume backed off gives a cleanish sound, which breaks up slightly and has more warmth to it.

— STEVE ALLSWORTH

Although Grohl favours his Gibson Firebird Studio for live gigs, he recorded this track with either his red Trini Lopez or a Gibson Les Paul. Shiflett is a big Gibson fan and probably used an SG or a P-90. The main distortion sound is generated from a Mesa/Boogie, possibly a Road King or Dual Rectifier. Therefore, your sound needs to be a modern valve distortion with the bridge humbucker selected. If you can't afford the $4,000 price tag of a Mesa/Boogie, don't overdo the distortion. These amps tend to let all the strings ring through with clarity even with high distortion levels, whereas cheaper amps will just sound muddy on the strummed chords. Ideally, the clean sounds should be with your guitar's volume backed off slightly.

PLAYING ACCENTS

The small arrow signs over certain chords indicate that they should be accentuated. There are three in the first bar of Example 1. This means that you should play them slightly louder and with more stress compared to the other chords. Notice how the accented chords have more strings played to give them emphasis.

GUITAR TABS AND MUSICAL NOTATION: THE ALTMAN

FOO FIGHTERS: Best Of You – intro

TRACK 19

Not available in this format.
Strum all these chords with downstrokes to maintain an even sound, pushing a bit harder through the strings with your arm for the accented chords. Use your first, third and fourth fingers for the C#m7 chord to help you keep your fourth finger on the B for the Asus2 and Bsus4 chords. This way you’re using minimal finger movement and making the whole thing easier.

The main difference to the intro is the order of the chords. The accents and feel are exactly the same. For the final chord bring the volume up towards the end of the bar in order to play the next figure.

You’ll notice this is the same as the intro, only this time with distortion. It’s more aggressive, though, so you can afford to strum a bit louder.

This chorus features the same chords as before but this time they are all full. These can either be played with downstrokes or alternate strumming, but they must be played evenly throughout (the trademark Foo Fighters F#7add11 chord at the end would suggest alternate strumming).
The tremolo markings in the first eight bars (double line) essentially mean that you should play the indicated notes as fast as possible repeatedly. Keep in mind your sense of timing as the notes change at specific points in the bar. It's useful to simply play the notes without any tremolo to get used to the timing at first. When you use the technique, try not to get too distracted by what your picking hand is doing.

As with previous examples, play these powerchords and octaves with downstrokes to maintain an even sound.

This example should be played in an alternate strumming style. If you try and use downstrokes it will sound stiff and uneven. As with the intro/chorus riffs, keep your first and fourth fingers on at all times for fluidity between chords.
This is one of Shiflett’s melody parts, which follows the chords in the harmony. Your first and fourth fingers work best for these octaves, although your third finger will work just as well. Make sure you flatten your first finger slightly to mute all the open strings.

Grähl leaves the best riff right until the end of this track. Notice how the guitar part relates very closely to the drums with your fret-hand mutes creating a rhythmic sound. The triplet mutes in the penultimate bar are quite tricky to master at first, so try this bar on its own to get the feel. Remember that it corresponds exactly with the snare rhythm, so use this as a reference point.

Shiflett plays a C7 octave chord that has a slide to nowhere (slide your finger from the fretted note to a random position further down the fretboard). Notice that the mutes have a slightly different rhythm to guitars 1 & 2, so be careful not to follow the same pattern.
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In which legendary band did Foo Fighters
guitarist Dave Grohl formerly play drums?

a) Pink Floyd
b) Nirvana
c) Radiohead

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"TUNNEL OF LOVE"

WORDS AND MUSIC BY
MARK KNOPFLER
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Behind Mark Knopfler's understated style lies a mastery of the instrument he rarely displays. His unusual picking technique (thumb and index finger only) gives him an enormous control over dynamics, so even the simplest phrase can be made to sound interesting by his hand.

Much of Knopfler's solo is based around the F major pentatonic shape at the tenth fret, which you can think of as D minor pentatonic if you're more used to blues style licks. F major and D minor share the same key signature, so all your Dm blues licks will work for F major.

When you're familiar with the licks, note how laid back (almost behind the beat, in fact) they are when played by Knopfler, despite the hand cranking up the volume and tempo behind him.

In bars 24-26 there are some distinct pedal steel sounding bends, so to get the effect the bends need to sound mechanical. The start note should be held almost for its full duration before a swift bend up to the target note. Use your second finger for the bend and your fourth finger on the note on the second string, which must not bend at all.

The arpeggios in the second half of bar 45 and into bar 46 are based on the relevant chord shapes. C major (much like a root position 'C' shape but at the twelfth fret), and F major, for which you should visualize an 'E' shaped barre chord at the thirteenth fret.

In bar 50 there is a trademark Knopfler lick. Use your first finger on the thirteenth fret to cover both the first and second strings, and your fourth finger for the pull-offs. If you use a pick, start on a downstroke, pull-off, downstroke on the second string and upstroke on the first string. The pattern just cycles around whichever notes you choose for the pull-offs.

Kit Morgan

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DIRE STRAITS: Tunnel Of Love - solo

TRACK 21 »

[Graphical representation of the guitar tab for the solo of "Tunnel Of Love"]
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This is Part 2 of our look at doublestpos (two notes played at once). This time you will be using all four fingers to play them.

Make sure you flatten your fingers to make a solid contact with the strings. You must also ensure that you strike both strings with your pick. To do this you will need to strum into the guitar, otherwise you will miss the highest (thinnest) of the two strings.

Don’t avoid using all four fingers – this won’t get you anywhere. Take your time and eventually you won’t even have to think about using your fourth finger.

Example 2 is the same sequence of chords covered last month, but this time you’re going to play the chords in a ‘closed position’ (without open strings). This is a bit more challenging as you will have to stretch the chords. If you find the tabbed section too difficult, follow the instructions on the video to move the progression higher and make it easier for you to play.

You can hear lots of variations of this idea in the music of Led Zeppelin, Guns N’ Roses, Aerosmith and – gulp! – Status Quo. Above all, work on your own variations, as this is a great way to start writing your own riffs.

JAMES UINGS

JARGON BUSTER

NEVER BE CONFUSED BY MUSICAL TERMS EVER AGAIN!

CHORD
Three or more notes played together.

ARPEGGIO
The notes of a chord played individually.

SCALE
Usually five or seven notes played one after the other.

BAR/BAR LINES
Music is divided into groups of beats (usually four) indicated by vertical lines in the notation.

PULSE
All music has a pulse – what you tap your foot to (the beat).

SYNCOPTIC
A part that accentuates beats that aren’t the main pulse of the song.

QUAVERS
Usually two notes are played for every beat in the music.

SEMiquavers
Usually four notes are played for every beat in the music.

LEGATO
Means ‘smoothly’ and often refers to hammer-ons, pull-offs and slides.

STACCATO
Means ‘short and detached,’ which involves quickly stopping the strings ringing in some way.

INTERVAL
The distance between two notes.

OCTAVE
Two notes with the same letter name played eight scale degrees apart (C D E F G A B C).

SEMITONE
An interval equal to one fret on the guitar.

TONE
This means an interval equal to two frets on the guitar.

EXAMPLE 1: Rock ‘n’ roll doublestpos

Make sure you strike both strings throughout this example. Don’t shy away from using your fourth finger in bar 3.

BACKING TRACK — MP3

WATCH THIS VIDEO LESSON ON YOUR CD-ROM!
RHYTHM

EXAMPLE 2: Rock "n" roll rhythm

If this example is too much of a stretch, move the pattern higher up the neck (towards the bridge) to make it easier. Keep all the notes the same length.

EASY SCALE

Kirk Hammett uses the blues scale on more recent Metallica albums

THE BLUES SCALE
A QUICK AND EASY WAY TO SPICE UP YOUR MINOR PENTATONICS

You should have learned everything in the Don’t Leave Home Without ‘Em part of TG’s Novice section. If you haven’t, go and learn them NOW!

If you have done your homework, then you have learned the minor pentatonic scale and are now ready to look at the blues scale. The blues scale has one note different from the minor pentatonic scale. If you play the two scales you be able to tell which note it is. This note is a wrong sounding note, often called a ‘blue’ note. When you solo, you must skip quickly over the blue note to create a cool bluesy sound. Look out for a more detailed look at the blues scale in TG152.

The blues scale

You should play this scale slowly and evenly at first. Make sure you use alternate picking in order to play this scale as fluently as possible.
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BREAK THE NIGHT WITH COLOUR

FIND OUT HOW TO PLAY THE EX-VERVE MAN'S LATEST SINGLE AND IMPRESS YOUR MATES NEXT TIME SOMEBODY WHIPS OUT AN ACOUSTIC GUITAR AT A PARTY

C

oldplay's frontman/guitarist Chris Martin recently described Richard Ashcroft as "the best singer in the world". Since the demise of The Verve in 1999, Ashcroft has certainly been keeping himself busy. *Break The Night With Colour* is his seventh single release to date, and is taken from his third solo album *Keys To The World*.

Although *Break The Night With Colour* features piano as the intro, we've tabbed an exclusive TG guitar arrangement of the intro/verse sequence for you to attempt. The chords transfer to guitar extremely well and are great for practising your ballad strumming technique. Not only that, but you can play this tune on an electric (clean sound only, please!) or acoustic guitar (we reckon this part sounds best strummed, but it could also be played fingerstyle if you prefer).

Transferring piano parts to guitar is a cool technique that can breathe new life into a tried and tested chord sequence while giving you fresh ideas for your rhythm playing.

**PHIL CAPONE**

---

**RICHARD ASHCROFT: Break The Night With Colour – intro/verse**

```
C
F/C
G/B
```

Playing chords before bass notes is much trickier on guitar than on piano, so make your chord changes as smooth as possible. Keeping any fingers in place when changing chords will make a big difference (e.g., don't move your first and second fingers when changing from Dm to F).

---

**TRACK 23**
THE CHORDS

VERSE 1

Dm  F/C  C
Fools they think I do not know
G/B

The road I'm taking
Dm  F/C
If you meet me on the way
G/B

Hesitating
Dm  F/C  C  G/B  Dm  F/C  C  G/B
That is just because I know which way I will choose

VERSE 2

The corridors of discontent
That I've been travelling
All alone in search for truth
The world's so fright'ning
Nothing's going right today
Cos nothing ever does

CHORUS

Am  G  F  C  G/B
Oo - ooh, I don't wanna know your secrets
Am  G  F  C  G/B
Oo - ooh, they lie heavy on my head
Am  G  F  C  G/B
Oo - ooh, let's break the night with colour
Am  G  F  C  G/B
Ti-me, for me to move ahead

INTERLUDE

Dm  F/C  C  G/B  \(x2\)

VERSE 3

Monday morning coming down
Like understanding
Mama thinks you are the ground
Looking so frightening
Nothing's going right today
Cos nothing ever does

CHORUS 2

Oo-oh, I don't wanna know your secrets
Oo-oh, they lie heavy on my head
It's time, for me to break my cover
Time for me to move ahead

INTERLUDE 2

Dm  F/C  C  G/B  \(x2\)

Am  G
You've been givin' it up
F  C  G/B
You will come again
Am  G
You've been givin' it up
F  C  G/B
You will come again

CHORUS 3

Oo-oh, I don't wanna know your secrets
Oo-oh, they lie heavy on my head
Oo-oh, let's break the night with colour
It's ti-me for us to move ahead

I said, oo-oh, I don't wanna know your secrets
Oo-oh, they lie heavy on my head
It's ti-me, let's break the night with colour
It's time for me to move ahead
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WHAT'S IN THE GRADE

The core sections of the exam are improvising a lead guitar solo and playing through a chord chart fluently. The foundations of lead and rhythm playing, scales and chords are tested at the start of the exam. Each exam finishes with the examiner asking a few spoken questions to test your knowledge of the instrument (eg, naming notes on the fingerboard and identifying parts of the guitar) and then testing your 'ear for music' through some aural assessments (eg, recognising chord types and repeating rhythms andlicks).

The scales you need to know for a Grade One examination are: E minor, E blues, G pentatonic major, A major and A pentatonic minor (Example 1). As well as playing the scales accurately, they should be played even and clear. The examiner will then request a selection of major, minor, major 7th and dominant 7th chords (Example 2) and will check that they are played accurately and clearly.

RHYTHM AND LEAD

Next, the examiner will show you a chord progression. Play through the progression, making up your own rhythm (Example 3). After this the examiner will play through a different chord progression whilst you improve some lead guitar over it, using one of the set scales. An example of a 'full marks' solo is also shown (Example 4). Don't worry if you can't devise a solo of this standard, as only 65 per cent is needed to pass the exam. We have provided a backing track (MP3) so that you can practise your own improvisations using the E blues scale. Next month we will look at Grade Two.

TONY SKINNER

EXAMPLE 1: RGT Grade One scales

All scales should be played ascending and descending without stopping and without repeating the top note.

BACKING TRACK – MP3
EXAMPLE 2: RGT Grade One chords

Here's a selection of the chords you need to know for the RGT Grade One exam (these are used in Fig 3 below). The full list of chords set for the exam is: A C D E G Am Dm Em A7 B7 D7 E7 Amaj7 Cmaj7 Dmaj7

EXAMPLE 3: RGT Grade One example rhythm chart

This is exactly the type of chord chart you will be given in the RGT Grade One exam. You need to play the chords accurately and fluently, adding an effective rhythm pattern. Follow the dynamic markings by strumming harder or softer as indicated (*p* = soft, **f** = loud).

EXAMPLE 4: Example solo

This solo uses the E blues scale. Notice that there's no requirement to use bends, vibrato or slurs at this grade, although you can add them if you wish.
his month we’re continuing our blues rhythm studies by focusing on chords and chord embellishment ideas. Breaking away from some of the more clichéd blues rhythm approaches can be quite difficult, so hopefully this month’s selection should help you to break out and incorporate some cool voicings and chordal riffs into your blues playing.

This month we have called on the likes of Robben Ford, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Curtis Mayfield, and Jimi Hendrix for inspiration. Even though we still use our faithful friend the I, IV, V in a few examples, we’ve tried to include some slightly more involved progressions that have an old school R&B/soul vibe to them.

As with last month’s examples, it’s possible to transpose these riffs into any chosen key and we would advise you to do this soon in order to start freeing up the neck.

This month’s feature will present the novice guitar player with a few new chord types and a few awkward fingerings, so make sure you spend some time getting these new chords to sound clean and clear.

**JAMIE HUMPHRIES**

**RIFF 1**

This is a pretty straightforward I, IV, V style riff that includes a couple of jazz sounding chords, courtesy of both SRV and Robben Ford. Although the first bar is pretty straightforward, the second bar includes a slightly tricky sliding figure based around the D6 and D9 chord. This figure transposes up a tone for the third bar.

**RIFF 2**

This example uses ideas from Curtis Mayfield and Jimi Hendrix. It’s based around a II, IV, V, I progression in D major. Take care with the doublestop lick in the first bar, plus the rather awkward G/A chord fingerings. Make sure you hold the root of the chord with your third finger.
RIFF 3

This is another soul-inspired rift that uses chords VI, III, IV, and I of the G major harmonised scale. This is a great example of how to fragment chords by simply performing the root on the sixth string and the chords as triads on the top three strings. Make sure you perform the triad with a tight staccato feel.

RIFF 4

This is straight out of the Jimi Hendrix school of playing. This rift uses chords VI, II, and III from the key of G major but also includes the chromatic passing chord of Bm7. Pay attention to the doublestop lines and make sure your fretting figures are clean. Also, take care with the doublestop lick in bar 3, which includes a pretty wide stretch holding the 5th fret of the fourth string and the 9th fret of the fifth string. Make sure the 5th fret D is audible throughout.

RIFF 5

Once again, we call on Hendrix for inspiration. This rift puts an interesting twist on a standard I, IV, V in A major by including the tight staccato feel of an R&B rift with some bluesy doublestop figures. Bars 3-4 include a cool way of performing inversions based around the A barre chord shape.
many people consider the Bigsby tremolo setup to be inferior to more modern systems that make use of a locking top nut to stabilise tuning.

However, as Brian shows you, the Bigsby tremolo bar is capable of making subtle changes to a guitar’s pitch, producing a rather understated sound. Similar movements on a Floyd Rose-type setup would yield much bigger changes in pitch, making them more difficult to control.

Although Brian splits his ideas up on the video, we’ve compiled them into one example so you can see how they work in the context of a 12-bar blues.

There are three main techniques that you need to cover here. First up, we have the quick dips in bars 1–4, then the chord vibrato found in bar 8 and finally the extreme ‘fairground’ effect in the final two bars. You should start off by isolating each idea until you feel comfortable before moving on.

Don’t worry if you don’t have a Bigsby fitted to your guitar, you can still play Brian’s ideas. You’ll need to make much less drastic movements with the bar, but it should produce the same results.

As always, use these ideas and incorporate them into the context of your own playing.

---

We’ve arranged Brian’s examples into a 12-bar pattern to give you an idea of what he had in mind for these licks. The first slides in bar 10 (A13, A13, A13) can be replaced by whammy bar bends if preferred, as Brian demonstrates just after this example.
ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF PAUL’S PLAYING IS HIS USE OF PATTERNS. THIS IS OFTEN CRUCIAL WHEN IT COMES TO PLAYING REALLY FAST PASSAGES OF MUSIC, AS HE CAN EASILY SHIFT THE SAME IDEA ALL AROUND THE NECK.

TO BEGIN WITH, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE THE FAMILIAR AM PENTATONIC SCALE LURKING BENEATH PAUL’S LICK; IF NOT, FAMILIARISE YOURSELF WITH THE SCALE AND GET PRACTISING! THE PATTERN ITSELF IS EIGHT NOTES IN LENGTH, AND IS ESSENTIALLY REPEATED IN THE SAME MANNER ACROSS THE REMAINING STRINGS. ALL PAUL DOES IS TAKE THE BASIC PATTERN AND MOVE IT UP ONE STRING. YOUR ONLY JOB THEN IS TO COMPENSATE FOR THE SHAPE OF THE SCALE AND ADJUST YOUR FINGERS ACCORDINGLY.

IT CAN BE HELPFUL TO THINK OF THE PATTERN IN TWO PARTS. SINCE THE FIRST THREE NOTES INVOLVE A HAMMER-ON MANOEUVRE AND THE NEXT FIVE USE PULL-OFFS, IT’S USEFUL TO SPLIT THESE APART AND PRACTISE THEM ON THEIR OWN. ONE THING THAT IS STRIKING ABOUT PAUL’S PLAYING IS HOW MUCH HE USES THE FOURTH FINGER WHERE MOST MORTALS WOULD USE THE THIRD. YOU SHOULD TRY AND AVOID WIMPING OUT OF USING YOUR FOURTH FINGER AS IT’LL PAY OFF IN THE LONG RUN. THE FIRST PATTERN IS PARTICULARLY USEFUL FOR STRENGTHENING THE FOURTH FINGER, AS IT IS THE PART PLAYED ON THE FIRST AND SECOND STRINGS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.PaulGilbert.com.

EXAMPLE 1: LICK 2

ON YOUR CD-ROM

It’s quite easy to start thinking in triplets, as the first three notes are grouped in a suggestive manner. This is wrong, however, and you should take the time not only to concentrate on each note phrase, but to maintain a pulse with your foot. Notice in the video how Paul often nods his head on each beat. This can really help you to find the strong beats (ie, the slide in the next bar) when you are playing odd groupings of notes.

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any people struggle with writing killer riffs, so who better to ask for advice than one of the industry’s best? The tabbed example below follows the thought process behind most of Wes’ Limp Bizkit catalogue. As you can see, it’s totally organic in that it starts off with a simple idea that gradually develops into something bigger. Wes often lays down a simple drum pattern/groove (either with a live drummer or a drum machine), and essentially improvises rhythmic ideas over the top.

As he mentions on the CD-ROM, it’s much like a painter daubing brush strokes on a canvas, meaning it doesn’t have to be perfect but there might be something that’s worth coming back to later on. It’s essential that when trying this technique you record the whole process so that you can listen back to it and pick out any good ideas.

Technically, the tricky areas are primarily with the whammy bar gurgles. Notice how the bar needs to be in a 180-degree position (facing away from the body) so that your pick hand can come across and flick it. This is a much more intuitive motion for your hands (rather than the standard bar position), but still requires good hand co-ordination.

For more information visit www.wesborland.net.

From bar 6 Wes introduces some characteristic slides to nowhere (slide your finger from the fretted note to a random position further down the fretboard). Releasing your finger towards the top of the slide will give you more of a rhythmic sound as opposed to a normal slide, which will sound more fluid.
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We hope you enjoyed the NAMM report in last month’s TG. You should know by now that we love that show. For one thing, it’s a great way to bring you the news of this year’s hottest gear before it even hits our shores. Plus, it’s a cracking shot in the sunshine for us. Everyone’s a winner! And much of the gear you saw in that report is scheduled to appear in the Gear pages of Total Guitar – we can’t wait until it gets here.

When we were at the show, DigiTech invited us to listen to their new EX-7 Expression Factory pedal. As usual with DigiTech we were well impressed with the demonstration and made them promise that we’d get our hands on the first unit to be shipped to the UK. As good as their word, we returned from Los Angeles to find the EX-7 on our desk. You’ll find a full report on this superb pedal when you turn the page. You’ll also find the first ever UK review of the Krank Distortus Maximus pedal in this issue. The guys at Krank gave us the third unit ever made, and we reckon you’re gonna want one of these mighty fuzz boxes for yourself. The Distortus Maximus and our ESP Eclipse guitar are now inseparable.

This year we’ve lined up some killer Gear exclusives for you. Of course, we can’t spill the beans just yet. So you’ll have to keep reading Europe’s best-selling guitar magazine to find out...

Ed Mitchell – Reviews Editor

---

**TG RATINGS**

- **Superb: A Total Guitar Best Buy**
- **An excellent product**
- **Above average, worthwhile kit**
- **Think hard before parting with cash**
- **Don’t even consider it**

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**GEAR CONTENTS**

- p136 DigiTech EX-7 Expression Factory pedal
- p140 Round-up: gig bags
- p142 LAG Roxane electric guitars
- p145 Krank Distortus Maximus pedal
- p146 Round-up: half stacks
- p149 Stagg G-Force electric guitar
- p150 Ed’s Shed

Turn to p145 for our exclusive review of Krank’s new pedal.

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**REVIEWS**

TG’s gear section gives a rating for all the products reviewed. This is designed to give you the clearest idea of how a product performs on our test bench. Opinions may vary on any given product, so we also record demos of review gear on the CD to let you make up your own mind.

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**BEST BUY**

The Total Guitar Best Buy award (look out for the logo) is awarded to any piece of gear that scores five out of five. To get this award the item must have scored highly in construction, features, playability, sound and value for money.
DIGITECH EX-7 EXPRESSION FACTORY

WANT SEVEN CLASSIC EXPRESSION EFFECTS IN ONE PEDAL? THEN STEP ON IT... WORDS: HENRY YATES

THE SIZZLE

You can always spot the guitarist who has too many effects pedals. He's the one who gets through six packets of Duracell each week. You know... the guy who trips over his spaghetti junction of cables whenever he's on stage. And he never has his share for the petrol, because he's spunked all his money on a genuine 1960s Fuzz Face.

Such a guitarist wouldn't look twice at DigiTech's EX-7 Expression Factory. He'd probably think that the way this modelling unit squeezes seven of rock's most desirable pedal-controlled effects into one metal brick was ridiculously convenient. He'd probably scoff at its claims of authentic vintage tone, and sneer at its low price.

He'd be talking out of his arse. With most modern guitarists having neither the money nor the patience to assemble a pedalboard of standalone effects, the value and convenience offered by 'all-in-one' modelling has never looked more attractive. And with DigiTech growing more ambitious with each new pedal, Total Guitar was expecting nothing less than fireworks from this latest offering.

WHAT'S IT GOT?

There are already plenty of modelling units that replicate vintage pedals. The point is, many of them recreate the kind of stompboxes that you switch on and off with a tap of the foot (like distortion), or else provide a lame auto-wah that gives you no control. By contrast, the EX-7 specialises in effects that are 'shaped' in real-time by the guitarist. This isn't just about nailing the tone of the originals. It's also about capturing the feel.

DigiTech know exactly which pedals will get us excited, and they've packed them all into the EX-7. First up is a model based on the Jim Dunlop Cry Baby wah (undoubtedly the most popular 'wacka-chacka' of all time). Then there's the Vox Clyde McCoy wah. Keep twisting the 'Model' dial and you'll find DigiTech's XP300 Space Station Synth Swell (a bonkers 'orchestra' pedal that you'll never find in the classifieds, even if you could afford it) and Whammy pedal (the choice of everyone from Tom Morello to Metallica). Finally, we give you the Unicord Uni-Vibe (the daddy of chorus pedals), the Leslie 147 Rotary Speaker (modelled on Leslie rotating speakers from the 1960s) and the A/A Flanger. Check out the Magnificent Seven box on p.136 for more details.

Given the EX-7's modest price tag and lack of buttons, you might be forgiven for thinking that's your lot. Don't bank on it. Alongside the seven effects models, the EX-7 also offers recreations of seven legendary distortion stompboxes, each linked to a cabinet simulation. They're organised into sets, with the Cry Baby twirled to a DOD Overdrive/preamplifier, the Clyde McCoy to a ProCo Rat, the Whammy to a Boss Metal Zone (and a Johnson 4x12 cab), the Uni-Vibe to an Electro-Harmonix Big Muff (again, the 4x12 Marshall), the Leslie to an Ibanez TS-9 and the A/A Flanger to a Boss DS-1 (and Johnson 4x12). The knob count is misleading too. It might look like the EX-7 has a meagre three controls (plus the aforementioned 'Model' dial), but each of these is actually divided into two sections – with the 'tip' of the knob controlling parameters for the effects models, and the 'ring' changing the properties of the distortion. Nor is the expression pedal all it seems. As you'd expect, rocking it back and forth controls effect parameters. What isn't so obvious is that there are additional toe and heel buttons (activated by stomping firmly at either end of the pedal) that offer instant access to effects in the heat of the moment. That's the exciting stuff dealt with. Inevitably, the EX-7 also has a number of more 'adult' trimmings that TG didn't pay much attention to – like the Flexible Output...
WHAT'S THE DAMAGE?

It's not until you sit down with a calculator and a copy of Trade It that you realise just how economical the EX-7 is. Even skimming over the fact that half the pedals modelled by this unit (such as the X300, the Leslie and the A/DA Flanger) are no longer in production – and therefore priceless – the amount of cash you'd need to get the remainder onto a pedalboard is staggering.

Let's start with the Dunlop Cry Baby, a reissued version of which will sting you for £110. Not too bad, but then it's over to the Vox showroom to cough up £149 for the reissued Clyde McCoy. Next up are the DigiTech Whammy (M4V) and Metal Master – yours for £209 and £89 respectively. By this point, you may be feeling the pinch, but you'll still need to spend £39 on the DS-1 and £69 for the Metal Zone. Getting the Big Muff in your gigbag will take a not-inconsiderable £48, while the Ibanez TS-9 costs £98. Finally, you'll need to head to the Jim Dunlop website to pick up a Univibe UV1 for £299.

To get all these effects – plus the cab sims and the pedals that no longer exist – in the compact form of the DigiTech EX-7, you'll pay a mere £229. To assemble them on a pedalboard – in reissue form, and minus all the best ones – you'll pay over a grand.

The EX-7 offers a choice of seven classic expression effects – from the Dunlop Cry Baby to the DigiTech Whammy

Unlike other expression pedals, such as wah or volume, the EX-7 has toe and heel (picture) switches for selecting effects in a split second

DIGITECH EX-7 EXPRESSION FACTORY GEAR

The expression pedal controls effect parameters – but also features 'toe' and 'heel' buttons for easy access to effects

BUILT TO LAST?

DigiTech's artist roster takes in some of the hairiest (and heaviest) guitarists in the world of heavy metal. That's undeniably the reason why the Expression Factory is such a beefy little bastard. It's built from rugged cast-metal, weighs a chunky 3.38lbs and, thanks to its rubber base, it won't skid across your stage like a stone across the surface of a frozen lake.

HANDS ON

We're not knocking units like the POD, but there's a real immediacy about the EX-7's design that will suit anyone taking their fretting fior steps into the world of modelling. DigiTech have struck a great balance here, with enough options to keep the dabblers happy, but not so many that it feels like a science lesson. The manual takes less time to read than a cereal box, and you should have the basics down in about 20 minutes.

Having connected one end of the EX-7 to our trusty Marshall and the other to our Telecaster, TG decided to set the ball rolling by running through the seven effects models and seeing what flicked our switch. The 'Model' control was duly turned to the '4' position and the pedal pushed fully forward to activate the toe button. Nothing. We tried again, this time pushing harder on the front of the pedal. Still nothing. It was only when we stood up and concentrated our entire bulk on it that the LED finally turned green, and the distinctive tone of the Cry Baby quacked forth from the amp. There's an important lesson to be learnt here – don't use this pedal when you're sitting down. We should explain here that pedals with a rocking footplate (or treddle, as it's known in the trade) often take a little more effort than regular stompboxes to switch on and off. This prevents you from switching the effect off accidentally when you're wiggling your foot excruciatingly during a solo.

There's no faulting the tones on offer here. Like the proverbial child in the sweetshop, TG was soon gorging ourselves on the various models and pinning down our favourites. Of the seven, we reckon the most useful is probably the Cry Baby. It's totally authentic, with a gloriously funky swell that will lend real personality to the most prosaic of solos, and a massive Kirk Hammett-style punch when you rock back onto the heel button to bring in the DOD overdrive.
THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN
TG INTRODUCES THE LEGENDARY PEDALS THAT INSPIRED THE DIGITECH EX-7

1. DUNLOP CRY BABY
Thanks to the wacke-chack of Clapton and Hendrix, wah boomed in popularity at the end of the 1960s. The Cry Baby's ascent to the top of the pile was largely due to its Italian-made Fasel inductor, giving it a thicker tone and lush harmonics. Modern versions use optical sensors instead of the Fasel, but it's the original that's modelled here.

2. VOX CLYDE MCCOY
The world's first wah pedal was born in 1956, when Vox started tinkering with the mid-range boost circuit used in their amps. Originally intended to mimic the sound of a muted trumpet—hence the endorsement of brass hero McCoy—the pedal instead found its way into Clapton's gigbag.

3. DIGITECH XP300
It's been discontinued for years, but this gonzo Digitech pedal deserved better. With effects including resonators, ring modulators, an auto-whammy and reverse effects, the original XP300 was a true original. You can't even find them on eBay.

4. DIGITECH WHAMMY
It's only been around for a decade, but the Whammy feels like a modern classic. There have been four different versions since the release of the WH-1, but most of this pedal's most famous users (like Tom Morello and Munky of Korn) maintain the original is the best.

5. UNICORD UNI-VIBE
Created in the late 60s and promptly immortalised by Hendrix on the Star-Spangled Banner, the Uni-Vibe was essentially a four-stage phase shifter with a vibrato option. Chorus would later become a dirty word, but here it was dark and sophisticated.

6. LESLIE 147 ROTARY SPEAKER
Looking not unlike a chest of drawers, this 1960s monster featured a speaker with a segmented drum spinning under it to disperse the sound. Organ players were the first to pick up on its unique tone, but guitarists soon got in on the act.

7. A/DA FLANGER
Introduced in 1977, the A/DA Flanger combined a 35-to-1 sweep range and built-in compressor to create its dramatic jet-engine roar.

That's our favourite—now let's rank the remaining six. The Clyde McCoy wah would have to be our second choice. It's got a subtly different flavour to the Cry Baby—more bitting and 'squelchy'—and combines with the ProCo Rat model to provide the ultimate setting for solos. We're also giving Digitech's own Whammy a place on the podium. Between the massive array of pitch-shifting settings (anything from Octave Up to Reverse 2nd Down) and the unbeatable control of the expression pedal, this is your ticket to flawless divesbombs and smooth harmonic shifts. Equally bonkers is the XP300—our fourth favourite. Perhaps this model is best described as sounding like a troupe of Benedictine monks doing Gregorian chants in outer space. It's atmospheric and other-worldly; swelling and spiralling like an orchestra as you work the pedal, and turning nasty when you bring in the default Metal Master distortion model.

The final three sounds will appeal to the real vintage buffs. The Uni-Vibe wobbles along nicely, and although we don't see the metal crowd using this setting much, classic rock fans will love it. The Leslie Speaker simulator is one for the mods. Pick out the intro to Paul Weller's 'Changing Man' with the Leslie churning away and you'll never want to switch it off. And the A/DA Flanger? It's not to everyone's taste but it's great for old school Van Halen riffs. Just don't overdo it.

While TG loved the overall performance of the EX-7, it's worth mentioning a couple of minor gripes. For instance, it's possible to override the default settings and 'pair' any distortion model with any effect model, but not to have distortion on its own (ie, without also having a modulation effect). And while the toe and heel buttons work well, it also seemed strange that when you add distortion—then turn it back off—the EX-7 reverts to 'bypass' (ie, instead of returning to the modulation effect). But don't let us put you off with such trifles—this unit kicks serious ass.

THE BOTTOM LINE
All guitarists should have at least one decent expression pedal in their arsenal. This isn't just an indulgence. As everyone from Clapton to Hendrix would agree, the ability to control the ebb and flow of effects like wah brings a personality to your playing that wouldn't be there if you were just using your hands. The only question is whether the EX-7 Expression Factory is the one.

The answer is a resounding yes. If you're a no-nonsense rock who uses a bit of wah and a lot of distortion, you might not think you need the versatility offered by the EX-7. But then, seeing as a standalone wah and distortion pedal would cost the same as this unit, it doesn't make more sense to go down this route and get the extra models too? And if you're an FX junkie who changes his tone more often than he changes his socks, it should be fairly obvious that you'll love this. Versatility is one thing, but it's the quality of the tone that really did it for TG. Not only do all the models sound like they should, but they respond authentically too—bringing real dynamics and mood into the mix. Isn't it time you put your foot down?

FOR: Cracking level of authenticity and extensive options
AGAINST: You can't use the distortions on their own

TG RATING ★★★★★
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WORDS: ED MITCHELL

CASE STUDY

THE THREE SIMPLE RULES OF GUITAR LOGISTICS

1. The first rule of transporting a guitar is to use a case or gigbag. Sound obvious, unless you're one of those people who carry their guitar on their shoulder, unplugged. We're not judging you! That might look cool like Bon Jovi videos made, but in Bristol city centre you're just going to look like a twat...

2. Remember that a gigbag doesn't offer as much protection as a hard case. That means you have to be extra careful. Your new worries include lift doors, low ceilings, old people, shopping trolleys and, of course, dogs.

3. If you've been wondering about the cost of your guitar in a case or gigbag, follow this simple rule when you go out. When you take your guitar from a case to warm environment, or vice versa, leave your guitar in its case for at least an hour before you take it out. Do this and you won't get a warped neck or frettin cracks.

1. AAA 20MM Padded Bag £19.95
   Access All Areas is the same company that brought you Freshman guitars, so it makes sense that they also make good quality covers and gigbags. Prices start at £6.95 for a basic cover, but the 20MM is the starter price padded bag in this range.

2. RockBag Cross-Walker £39-£42
   This water resistant padded bag features a cool detachable backpack. There's an additional neck pocket for extra storage, twin padded backpack straps and a separate shoulder strap. The Cross-Walker is available for acoustic, bass and classical guitars.

3. AAA 30MM Padded Bag £29.95
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5. RockBag Professional Leather Premium £130
   Look like a proper rock star with this top quality leather bag. The interior is lined with black velvet and additional padding to protect your guitar's machineheads and lower strap button.

6. Kinsman KPV3 Premium Electric V-Style Bag £39
   V-shaped guitars look awesome, but their hard cases can be a pain to carry about. Leave that wardrobe you call a case at home and sling your pointy pride and joy over your shoulder in this padded Kinsman bag.

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LAG RM200 & RF200 GUITARS

TG GETS TO GRIPS WITH TWO CURVY FRENCH MODELS NAMED ROXANE. OOH LA LA... WORDS: HENRY YATES

The British have a massive chip on their shoulders when it comes to the French. We're jealous of their fancy food and their cosmopolitan way of life. We're sick of being told what amazing lovers they are (especially by our own girlfriends), and tired of watching them cruise around on mopeds quoting Jean Paul Sartre. Maybe the French are more sophisticated than us. C'est la vie.

The one shred of dignity the British had left was that we rock harder than our Gallic cousins. We gave them the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Vox amp and the Burns guitar. In return, they gave us Johnny Hallyday and lots of garlic. This, at least, was something we could wave in their faces when they beat us at football. Now, with the arrival of LAG on these shores, our one trump card is in danger of being snatched away.

LAG aren't a new company. The reason you probably haven't heard of them is because they're just starting to blossom. Having haggled hand-crafted guitars to the French aristocracy for the last 25 years, Michel Charvaria's firm are now doing so well that they've bagged the ex-president of Gibson Europe, introduced the entry-level Prêt à Porter line, and decided to take on the world.

Britain is the third country to get LAG distribution, and TG is one of the first guitar magazines to give the new RM200 and RF200 a proper review. We promise to be fair, frank and not too xenophobic.

ROXANE RM200WRD

T

G doesn't use the expression 'ooh la la' very often, but it seems appropriate in the case of the Roxane RM200WRD. It's hard to believe that LAG has this model pegged as a budget choice. It's just too sophisticated; too damn classy to spend its life in a grubby student hall of residence. Mind you, let's not forget that this stunner could only be described as 'budget' within the context of the LAG product list (where a Master Series model will cost you over a grand).

The RM200 doesn't look quite like anything else. Sure, there might be shades of the ES-335 and SG in the twin cutaways, but enough imagination has gone into the styling to keep things fresh and interesting. It's not overly butch (the headstock is too dainty for that), but neither are we in Dalí Rock. Flowers and butterflies territory (just check out those beefy EMG HZ humbuckers). Instead, the RM200 has a vibe all of its own, from the wine red finish (how French is that?) to the recasing of the control knobs and input jack.

While the more expensive Master Series is produced in France, the RM200 has been put together in China under the watchful eye of French technicians. Whatever you think of its tone and aesthetics, you can't knock the security measures LAG have included. Alongside a neat body with a tidy finish, TG was encouraged by the presence of a two-way trussrod (giving increased stability) and a set neck with a reinforcement bar. There's also a volute (giving the headstock more solidity), a tune-o-matic bridge and a 'bear drop' string-thru-body tailpiece.

The RM200's solid mahogany body and maple neck are a winning combination of tonewoods, and it's refreshing to see Indian ebony used as the fingerboard material (instead of the standard rosewood). The electronics also show how seriously LAG takes their Prêt à Porter line. While some companies equip their entry-level models with the most boring pickups they can find, the RM200 has a bruising pair of EMG HZ humbuckers. There are even two separate coil taps, allowing you to split one or both of the pickups to bring in some singlecoil bite.

The quality of the RM200's neck was the first reason why TG fell for this guitar – it's a treat for technique and offers great access – but tone was what sealed the deal. There's a great acoustic quality to the RM200's clean sound that makes it perfect for Pete Townsend-style jangling, and this is complemented by a warm and rounded overdriven voice courtesy of the EMG pickups. Pull on the volume knobs, meanwhile, and you'll split the coils, making everything sharp, bright and cutting... What's the French for 'we bloody love it'?  

فور: Great tone and build – plus real attention to detail

AGAINST: Traditionalists might find the finish too space-age

TG RATING 🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟
ROXANE RF200TOS

LAG describes the Roxane RF200TOS as a ‘true diva’, and we kind see their point. Frankly, this sultry beauty looks like the kind of axe that might demand fresh lilies in its dressing room and refuse to ‘do’ stairs. As the more costly of the two Roxanes, we’re also hoping it’s got a decent pair of lungs on it.

Call us old-fashioned, but TG likes its guitars to look like they’re made of wood. Little surprise then, that we dropped the RM200 like a hot potato as soon as the RF200 emerged from its box. There’s no doubt that this model is the more traditional cosmetic package. While the RM200 looks younger and funkier, this is the one you’d see in a guitar reference book; the one that Eric Clapton would choose. Admittedly, the body styling is virtually identical to the RM200, with the same gentle cutaways and hourglass figure, but there’s no denying the psychological advantage of that flamed maple top.

Finished in a gorgeous tobacco sunburst and contoured to perfection, it gives the RF200 a real PRS vibe, and should lend a unique flavour to the tone.

As it’s made in the same Chinese factory as the RM200, you’d expect the RF200 to offer similarly lofty standards of build quality. There’s very little to criticise, with a great level of construction that would be flawless were it not for the slight untidiness around the input jack and recessed control dials. The tuners find and hold pitch impeccably; the tune-o-matic bridge and stop bar tailpiece are solid and dependable; the neck and body are as smooth and buffed as an Edwardian tea chest. The ebony fingerboard is a fast and luxurious player, meanwhile, and the frets themselves slip under the fingers with ease.

With the same pickup configuration and coil split option, there’s nothing to choose between the two Roxanes in terms of electronics. What does make a major difference (again) is that flamed maple top. Not only does this cause the RF200 to weigh considerably more than its sibling – it’s actually a bit of a back-breaker – but it also makes its presence felt when you plug in.

The tonal difference between the RM200 and RF200 was never going to be as extreme as comparing a Strat to a Les Paul. Both these models are warm and buttery, with powerful attack when you push the EMG humbuckers hard and an enviable snap when you split the coils. That said, we did feel the RF200’s sound was defined by an underlying power and sustain that took the weediest of riffs and puffed out their chests. The ultimate setting is probably at the bridge position with the distortion cranked up halfway – this gets rid of any lard and leaves you with an unbeatable sneer – but we didn’t manage to throw anything at this guitar that it didn’t bat straight back at us.

FOR: Classic vintage looks and tone
AGAINST: It costs another £100

TG RATING

CONCLUSION

To paraphrase Sting, you don’t have to put on the red light when it comes to either of these Roxanes. In fact, whether you prefer the futuristic styling of the RM200 or the vintage charm of the RF200, TG would give you the green light with no hesitation. Both these guitars have great build, a level of performance that will cater for anyone’s technique, and masterful tone that can be tweaked for any occasion. We’d love to pretend the French can’t build axes for toffee but faced with two examples this good, it seems pointless to argue. Vive la France!
RM100M
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THE SIZZLE

Whenever it is in the Krank organisation that comes up with product names, we salute you. Distortus Maximus is the best name for a distortion pedal that we’ve heard since the classic double entendre that is the Electro-Harmonix Big Muff Jr. Not only does Distortus Maximus sound cool, and a little bit scary, it also gives us the perfect excuse to fill this review with quotes from Gladiator. Of course, we’ll do our best to resist.

Our Distortus Maximus (serial number 003 – see above) was presented to TG at the Winter NAMM show in January by Krank’s sales dude Tyler King. “If you love the amp, then you’re really gonna like the pedal,” said Tyler. “Hmmm, we’ll see,” replied a sceptical TG. “We’re not usually doubting Thomas’s, but we looked at the Krank Revolution Series One stack towering over us and then at the little box in our hands and wondered if we could match the stack’s awesome sound with a stompbox. Let’s step on it and see...

WHAT’S IT GOT?

Like that other famous Maximus, the Krank is a hard bastard, obviously designed to take a sound pummelling without ever showing any signs of weakness. The tough metal casing has one of those chunky old school footswitch buttons that are as tough as the Incredible Hulk’s nipples. The brushed aluminum control knobs have black dot position markers and non-slip grips, and look like they came off a 70s record player. Sticking with the controls for a minute, there are five in total: master, gain, treble, midrange and bass. If you’ve got an amplifier then we’ll avoid a potentially embarrassing egg-sucking scenario, and just say that these controls do the same job as the ones on your amp. And if you don’t have an amp, buy one! You’ll need one to use this pedal anyhow. By the way, nestled among the control knobs is a little LED that will let you know whether the pedal is switched on or off. Although we have a feeling that the skull-rattling sound coming from your amp might be a pretty good clue.

Round the back of the pedal, there’s a simple input for your guitar and an output for running a cable to your amp or the next pedal in your pedalboard. Between the two sockets, you’ll see a 9-volt DC adapter input for running the pedal on mains power. It will run on batteries – one of those PP3 9-volt jobs – but you’ll have to unscrew the baseplate of the Distortus Maximus to replace one that’s gone tits up. Come on, Krank dudes, sort it out! In this day and age we demand a battery hatch.

BUILT TO LAST?

You wouldn’t want it to hit you on the head. Like we said, this is a tough pedal and there’s little chance you’ll do it any harm even if you gig a lot. It might even come handy during a stage invasion because the Distortus Maximus has a Fair clic of weight to it. Don’t get us wrong, you don’t need Arnie’s biceps to lift it, but that extra weight will stop it sliding across the stage when you unintentionally kick it during a show. The little rubber feet help too.

WHO’S IT FOR?

Fans of Dimagbag, Shadows Fall, Arch Enemy, etc. lovers of lo-fi guitar, basically

INFORMATION

ORIGIN: USA
TYPE: Solid state
distortion stompbox
CONTROLS: Master volume, gain, bass, midrange and treble
SOCKETS: Guitar input, output, and power adapter
ADDITIONAL FEATURES: Dry/off footswitch, LED status indicator
POWER: Single 9V 9-volt battery or 9-volt DC power adapter
CONTACT: Supertone Great Britain (010) 435 6799
WEB www.kranthamps.com

ALTERNATIVELY

DigiTech BRX
Hot Head – £19
Rototron Delay – £99

HANDS ON

Remember that scene in Gladiator when Maximus describes the world as ‘brutal and dark and cruel’? Well, the big hairy lug could’ve been talking about this pedal. There are subtle override style tones to be had from this pedal, but that’s hardly the point.

We came to rock. You’ll no doubt remember “The Distortus Maximus offers a great range of tones, but is its best punishing eardrums” the fun we had with a pair of Krank stacks – the Revolution Series One and Dimagbag Krankenstein – not too long ago. Well, the Distortus Maximus took us back to those halcyon days. It has the old school rock charm of the Revolution, but whack up that gain and you can get those Dimagbag sounds that many other pedals can’t deliver. We do miss the trouser-flapping bottom end that we got from the Krank 4x12 cabs, but even through our 60-watt combo we managed to put an evil grin on our faces. Distortion pedals don’t get any better than this.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Are you not entertained? Yes, we bloody well are! This pedal kicks serious ass. Dimagbag fans will sleep with it; others won’t be able to play without it. The Distortus Maximus offers a great range of tones – including some vintage rock sounds – but it’s at its best punishing eardrums. As its Gladiator namesake once said, “I am required to kill, so I kill. That is enough.” We couldn’t have put it better ourselves.

FOR: It f**cking rocks!
AGAINST: Two words: battery access

TG RATING: ★★★★★★★
ROUND-UP

HALF STACKS

NEED A BIG AMP THAT WILL GET YOU HEARD ONSTAGE? WE'VE GOT STACKS...

WORDS: ED MITCHELL

1. **MARSHALL MF330 MODE FOUR** £655
   - This monster is packing a mighty 350-watts! Standing next to a Mode Four cranked to 11 is like being strapped underneath a jumbo jet during take-off. It sounds incredible and offers a range of classic and modern rock tones to boot. The matching MF-400A cabinet costs £540.

2. **LINE 6 SPIDER II HD75** £169
   - The Spider II HD75 is a 75-watt modelling amp with four amp models: Clean, Crunch, Metal, and Insane. It has four programmable channels, six digital effects ( Phaser, chorus/ flanger, tremolo, sweep echo, tape echo and reverb), and a LOUDBRIDGE input. The Spider II CAB cabinet costs £499.

3. **VOX AD100VTH** £269
   - Nothing says vintage cool like a Vox. This modelling amp head has 11 classic British and US amp sounds, 12 effects (compression, delay, auto-wah, etc.) and 100 watts of power. The matching V612BK closed-back cabinet, loaded with four custom designed 12-inch speakers, costs £229.

4. **CARLSBRO GLX150** £399
   - The GLX150 is a 150-watt twin channel guitar head featuring a three-band EQ on both channels. You also get a reverb, which is handy for some added depth, an FX loop and a footswitch for channel switching. The Carlsbro GLX150 also comes with a matching 4x12 cabinet.

5. **PEAVEY JSX JOE SATRIANI SIGNATURE HEAD** £1,299
   - 120-watts of all-valve tone backed up with three footswitchable channels and the option of using £350 or £650s power amp valves. A matching JSX cabinet isn't available in the UK yet, so we've paired the head up with Peavey's Triple XXX cab (£565).

6. **KUSTOM QUAD JR 100DFX** £499
   - The Kustom Quad JR 100DFX is a 100-watt, two-channel beast in an easily portable package. Each channel is packing a three-band EQ, plus you get eight onboard digital effects to play with. A matching 4x12 cabinet loaded with four Celestion speakers is included in the price.

FOR STOCKISTS CONTACT:

**CARLSBRO:** Carlsbro Direct 0844 888 9080 / www.carlsbro.com

**MARSHALL:** Marshall 01908 379411 / www.marshallamps.com

**KUSTOM:** John Hurley Stevens 01332 296 540 / www.kustom.co.uk

**PEAVEY:** Peavey 01536 661234 / www.peavey-eu.com

LINE 6: Local 01327 333500 / www.line6.com
STACK FACTS!

JUST WHO INVENTED THE GUITAR AMPLIFIER STACK?

Although Jimi Hendrix partly popularized the Marshall stack, its origins date back further. In the late 1960s, it was the Who's Pete Townshend and John Entwistle who were responsible for the development of the iconic tower of power. In fact, the pair persuaded Marshall engineer Dudley Cawen and Ken Bran to design the first 100-watt Marshall heads. The Who's never-ending quest for power was fuelled by a battle for volume between guitarists Townshend and Entwistle, plus the fact that they could hear the crowd talking over the sound of their 50-watt Fender and Marshall amps! They also had to compete with their drummer Keith Moon, who often needed an amp with plenty of bells. As a result, in 1965 The Who bought their first four 100-watt Marshall heads ever made.

Even before the band took delivery of their 100-watt heads, they were running existing amps through pairs of Marshall 4×12 cabinets (at this point sitting side by side). Entwistle was the first to do this, but Townshend took the idea a step further when he piled one cabinet on top of the other and the stack was born. Not only did stacking them save space on small stages, it looked cool and helped Townshend develop another of his 60s trademarks: feedback.

Townshend said: “I started to get these feedback effects that I really liked. When I put the speakers on the floor it wouldn’t happen, so I put the speakers on a chair and then decided to stack them so that I could induce feedback.”
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STAGG G-FORCE GEAR

WHAT DO YOU GET IF YOU CROSS AN ELECTRIC WITH A FORMULA ONE RACING CAR? WORDS: HENRY YATES

Don’t bother with a catalytic converter, those exhaust pipes are merely for show.

A pair of Chinese made humbuckers supply the G-Force’s tone, which is always warm and full.

The bolt-on maple neck offers a good level of comfort and decent access to the teeny frets...

The G-Force’s body takes inspiration from the Gibson Flying V, making it a cool choice for gigs but hopeless for seated practice.

£189

STAGG G-FORCE

WHAT DO YOU GET IF YOU CROSS AN ELECTRIC WITH A FORMULA ONE RACING CAR? WORDS: HENRY YATES

THE SIZZLE

Sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll have always been top of any guitarist’s list of favourite things. If we were to expand on this list, however, then fast cars would probably be in fourth place – just ahead of LA mansions and arctic tigers in diamond collars. With that in mind, there’s a certain logic behind Stagg’s decision to base their latest design on a Formula One racing car.

It’s unlikely that Gretsch or Rickenbacker would risk their reputation by placing their logo on the headstock of the G-Force. Stagg have no such hang-ups. This company has a monster reputation in the entry-level sector, thanks to their habit of combining competitive prices with solid build and characterful tone. In the hands of anyone else the novelty factor and bargain price of the G-Force would set TG’s alarm bells ringing. But because of Stagg’s involvement we’re hopeful of a podium finish.

WHAT’S IT GOT?

Let’s start with the one feature that is unique to the G-Force. That’s right, we’re talking about the exhaust pipes! While they don’t belch flames (and don’t give you carbon monoxide poisoning if you play this guitar in a confined space), these four metal pipes combine with the chequered flag graphics and pickups to make the G-Force stand out from the overcrowded market.

High on the excitement of the racing car format, it took TG a moment to notice that the G-Force is loosely based on the styling of the Gibson Flying V. To be fair, this is more about inspiration than imitation. While the G-Force has the same iconic body shape, there are significant differences in terms of the headstock (it’s a flush ‘paddleboat’ item, rather than the triangular wedge that graces the Gibson version), the strap pin locations and the placing of the dials (on the original Flying V these are spread along the lower bout). What this axe does have in common with the Flying V is that you will need to be a total extravert to play it.

Don’t start pining for active EMG pickups, though, because it’s never going to happen for under £200. Instead, you have two Chinese-made humbuckers that supposedly offer the same kind of punchy tone as the DiMarzio Invader. There’s a volume control for each humbucker, along with a three-way pickup selector.

“In an industry that often forgets rock ‘n’ roll is supposed to be fun, the Stagg G-Force is a beacon of immaturity”

BUILT TO LAST?

You wouldn’t expect mahogany at this price, and it’s no surprise to see the G-Force making use of alder (for the body), maple (for the bolt-on neck) and rosewood (for the fingerboard). This is a decent selection of tonewoods for the price – alder is known for its even tone while maple is generally bright and sparkling – and TG was impressed at how well it was put together.

True, the exhaust pipes do wobble a little. And there was a fleeting moment of excitement when we thought the volume control had a push/pull coil split, only to realise that the dial had just come off in our hands. But when it comes to the stuff that matters, it’s all good news. The G-Force’s bolt-on neck is sunk securely into its body, while the flush angle of the headstock should help prevent the neck damage that was so common on original Flying V guitars.

It’s all wrapped up with a solid configuration of a tune-o-matic and stop bar.

HANDS ON

It should come as no surprise to learn that the G-Force is hopeless for seated practice. By all means try putting a strap on it, or even using one of those classical footrests, but it won’t stop this guitar from sliding off your lap. Rising reluctantly to our feet, TG was pleased to find that the body balances surprisingly well, giving you great command over the fingerboard and the scope for more than just upright posing (although it’s great for that, too).

In terms of tone, we’d describe the G-Force as a good all-rounder rather than a specialist in one field. Stripped of effects, we felt there was a great warm and wooly ambience to be had from its twin humbuckers, while piling on a crisp modern distortion also felt convincing. Whatever you do with the tone control or pickup selector, there’s an abiding thickness to this guitar’s voice that feels powerful. But it doesn’t always cut through, forcing TG to increase the treble on our amp to compensate. That aside, this is a good raw tone that shouldn’t put anyone off.

THE BOTTOM LINE

In an industry that often forgets rock ‘n’ roll is supposed to be fun, the Stagg G-Force is a beacon of immaturity. It hasn’t got the most memorable tone we’ve ever heard, but it’s more than punching its weight for the price and offsets its dumb-ass cosmetics with a deadly serious level of build and comfort. Perfect for small boys of all ages.

FOR: Memorable looks, plus quality build and comfort
AGAINST: Not the most characterful tone we’ve heard...

TG RATING: ★★★★☆
ED'S SHED

PRO SETUP AND MAINTENANCE TIPS FROM TG'S REVIEWS EDITOR

HOW TO LOWER ACTION AND EASE TENSION

Q I have an Epiphone SG. The only problem I have with it is the action, which is quite high and the strings feel 'tense' (I've used thinner strings and it didn't help much). Can you take me through the stages of lowering the action and easing the tension of the strings - the easy way - without causing any tuning problems or irreversible damage to my guitar?

Kholil Daswant, via email

A Khalil, you should be able to get a comfortable action on an Epiphone SG with little difficulty. Before we begin, though, it's worth remembering that you need a certain amount of string tension to keep your guitar in tune and to promote sustain. The necks on SG style guitars can flex a fair bit. If an open string, grab the headstock and give it a gentle wobble. You should hear the note wavering. A well adjusted neck setup with a set of .010 gauge (or higher) strings are essential to keep your guitar at the correct pitch.

Once you get your guitar up to scratch you'll still have to put in the hours developing the strength in your fretting hand so that you can handle higher gauge strings. Remember one of TG's favourite old sayings: the higher the string gauge the better the guitar's sound and sustain. To do this job, get yourself a set of strings (we recommend .010 gauge), string cutters, a string winder, a guitar tuner, flathead and Philips screwdrivers and the correct size adjusting tool for your guitar's truss rod. Oh, and a two piece piece. Now, let's boogie...

1. Remove the old strings and give your guitar a thorough clean. Pay special attention to the fingerboard. Fit the new strings, tune them up and give them a good stretch. Repeat the process until the tuning is stable.

2. Have a look to see if the neck needs to be adjusted. Look down the fingerboard from the headstock end. If the neck has a dip in the middle, adjust the trussrod gently with your Allen key in a clockwise motion.

*Always check for string buzz through your amp on a clean sound. Your guitar may buzz acoustically, but if you can't hear it through your amp then it's fine.

3. If your action is high, it's unlikely that you will have an over-bend in the neck. But if you do, loosen the truss rod in an anti-clockwise direction until the fingerboard looks straight. Now, retune your guitar.

4. Adjusting the neck should have improved your guitar's action, but you'll still need to lower the bridge. Using a flathead screwdriver, lower the two bridge posts gradually until you get a low bypass-free action. Retune your guitar again.

5. By now you should have a good playing action. If the string tension is still a bit strong, try raising the stop tailpiece. This reduces the angle of the strings across the bridge and should lower the tension. You can use your two piece piece here!
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ACROSS
8 REM went Automatic For The (6)
9 Band created after the split of Dokken in the 1980s (5,3)
10 Black Sabbath album from 1981 (3,5)
11 Device that converts string vibrations into a signal (4,2)
12 The 2001 Cake song from the Fashion Nugget album (8)
13 Velvet Underground record featuring Sweet Jane (6)
14 First single from Audioslave’s debut album (7)
17 Ace guitar player from Kiss (7)
20 Person who pens lyrics (6)
22 The decade that brought us Van Halen and Bon Jovi (8)
25 Spool backwards through a 26 across (6)
26 You used to buy your albums on these other than vinyl and CD (8)
27 See 4 Down
28 Huge hit for Alanis Morissette in 1996 (6)

DOWN
1 Classic Shadows track (8)
2 Drink Norman Greenbaum found in the sky? (6)
3 80s new wave band with a smash hit featured in Top Gun (6)
4/27 Black Label Society record with Ozzy guitarist Zakk Wylye (7,8)
5 Mark, the legendary Dire Straits frontman (8)
6 Joe Strummer band formed to rival The Sex Pistols (3,5)
7 Magnitude that goes up to 11 for Spinal Tap (6)
15 James, the Metallica rhythm guitarist (8)
16 Guns N' Roses guitarist Izzy (8)
18 Guitar that gave ‘Six’ a Gay Bar hit (8)
19 Class operator offers drink to glamorous US singer (7)
21 Mr Gabriels, who played with David Bowie in Tin Machine (6)
23 The talk is they were hot dancers! (6)
24 Cable music channel (3,3)

Complete TG’s prize crossword and you could win this great-looking Washburn NZ guitar based on Nuno Bettencourt’s signature axe! Once you have completed the puzzle, rearrange the highlighted squares to spell out a recent NKE award winner. Text T6148 followed by a space and this name to 80889 by 26/04/06 for your chance to win!

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RODRIGO Y GABRIELA!
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*Contents subject to change
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