

HINTS & TIPS

Born To Hand Jive

This song by **Sha Na Na** was featured in the film *Grease*, which has one of the most popular movie soundtracks of all time. The 'hand jive' is a 50s' dance which involves clapping, thigh slapping and other hand moves, which normally follow the percussion line of the song.

- This funky rhythm part is essentially based on the 12-bar blues structure. Aim to maintain constant down-up  motion in the right hand, so that all rhythms are created by either missing the strings or left-hand damping. To achieve this, simply release left-hand pressure so that the stroke produces a percussive effect rather than a chord.
- The solo provides your opportunity to improvise; some distortion/boost may be used here, perhaps with other effects such as wah-wah. Various scales will work over this blues structure: try A major pentatonic, A minor pentatonic and the A blues scale.

Exo-Politics

This song is from the album *Black Holes And Revelations*, the general theme of which centres on dystopian politics and the possibility of alien invasions on Earth. **Muse** front-man Matt Bellamy says "It is about a trade agreement between the US government and extraterrestrials, about the use of new technologies." Bear all that in mind whilst playing the song!

- A medium to heavy distortion sound is suitable for this song, as long as this does not render the full chords in the pre-chorus and chorus too messy. Some boost or further distortion may be applied for the solo.
- The guitar line doubles the bass line in the verse; the *staccatos* here should be consistently articulated without undue accenting, and the bends should be in tune (so that the exact pitch of the target note is reached).
- The solo includes some sudden position shifts which will need to be practised for maximum confidence.

Hard To Explain

This was the first single to be released from New York indie band **The Strokes**, and also featured on their debut album *Is This It*. In one year (2001) the band went from recording their demo in a basement to headlining the UK's massive Reading Festival and being tagged as 'the saviours of rock and roll'. *Is This It* was hailed as an instant classic.

- Slight overdrive will work well for this song.

- The repetitive  lines need to be rhythmically accurate and consistent in volume and tone. The melodic lines (e.g. from bar 9) should be played as single notes (no notes ringing on) and light vibrato may be applied to the  here.
- From bar 39 be careful not to overpower the rest of the mix; the compression inherent in a distortion sound should help with this.

Know Your Enemy

Taken from the rock-opera album *21st Century Breakdown*, **Green Day** singer Billy Joe Armstrong wanted this song to be "A rallying song. It's about liberating yourself from the rubbish you see on TV."

- A fairly heavy distortion effect is appropriate, perhaps using chorus and/or reverb to create a 'produced' guitar sound.
- Some volume/distortion boost may be required for the solo. The bridge pickup will probably provide the most suitable sound, enabling the guitar to cut through and leaving space for the bass guitar part.

Lucky

The penultimate song on the classic **Radiohead** album *Ok Computer*, 'Lucky' was actually written for *The Help Album*, which was a charity compilation organised by War Child to benefit children affected by the Bosnian War.

- A basically clean, slightly warm tone will work best for the rhythm-guitar part here (neck or middle pickup position); you may wish to try effects including chorus and *tremolo*.
- The most important thing at this tempo is not to rush, so the part sounds relaxed yet rhythmically tight.
- For the lead work (bars 17-22 and 33-40) some overdrive/boost may be applied, with wah-wah (or other filter effect) to taste.

Midnight Rider

This widely covered song was originally written by **The Allman Brothers Band** as an album track. It quickly became a live favourite and was later covered by artists such as Joe Cocker, Willie Nelson, Patti Smith and many more.

- The guitar part mixes chordal (rhythm) ideas and single-note melodic work. You may wish to find a light crunch sound that works throughout (with a high enough volume setting so that playing harder actually results in greater volume for the lead work), or volume boost/channel switching may be used, at least for the solo.

TASTE IT

Words and Music by Iain Archer and Jake Kennedy

♩ = 224 Indie Rock (Country 2 feel) 2 bars count-in

Intro

A⁵

mf

Fill

Verse I

5

— my head with the fu - ture, — fill — my eyes with the sky. — The whole

9

E A⁵

— of my life get - tin' left be - hind but I've nev - er felt more a - live. —

13

High — speed con - ver - sa -