

CUSTOMSFORGE'S

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue #19

ABOUT US

CustomsForge is a website created in 2014 by the Rocksmith community to make their own songs, communicate more easily and enjoy the game all together

Currently we have more than 40,000 charts made by the community, and have more than 300,000 members.

We welcome thousands more each month

WELCOME

Welcome to CustomsForge's monthly newsletter, where you can find the latest news about CF and Rocksmith 2014 Remastered.

Time to improve

This is your chance to improve. The timing couldn't be better: You are stuck at home with your guitar, most of your work/study related responsibilities have been put on hold and you need a way to relax from everything that's going on. Whether you are a beginner or an intermediate player, this list should help you unwind and come out of this quarantine as a better player.

Beginner/Intermediate songs

Jarvis Cocker – Angela
Pixies – Where Is My Mind?
Red Hot Chilli Peppers – Californication
Radiohead – Creep
The Misfits – Hybrid Moments
ACDC– Thunderstruck
The Clash – Guns of Brixton
Nirvana – Territorial Pissings
Lars Frederiksen & The Bastards –Vietnam
Avril Lavigne – Complicated
Green Day – Wake Me Up When September Ends
Pink Floyd – Wish You Were Here
Clutch – Crucial Velocity
Metallica –Orion
Bob Dylan – Knocking on Heaven's Door
Santana – Smooth
Aerosmith – Dream On
Bon Jovi – You Give Love A Bad Name
Heart – Barracuda
Black Sabbath – War Pigs
Flyleaf – All Around Me
Weezer – Buddy Holly
Alice In Chain – Man In The Box
System Of A Down – Hypnotize
Rage Against The Machine – Born Of A Broken Man



Rocksmith 2014 Remastered logo



Scam aimed at beginners. Don't fall for any gadget that promises to make everything easier!

Skill

How do you judge a guitarist's skill? That's a question people all around the world ask themselves when it comes to choosing bandmates, getting into contests or just improving. Today we'll find out if you are a beginner or intermediate guitarist.

What's skill?

Before we begin, let's explain one thing: **Technical proficiency doesn't necessarily amount to skill.** Sweep picking is generally a good indicator that a guitarist has a deep knowledge of its instrument. However; sweep picking doesn't imply that person knows how to play in the same tempo as its band, lets song flash out naturally instead of filling them up with solos or is a proper musician. **A skilled guitarist is one that knows a (more or less wide) set of techniques and can properly apply them to songs.**

Part 1: Strumming and alternate picking

At some point, you have probably been that guy who thinks everything just sounds better if you downstroke it. While this doesn't necessarily mean a lack of expertise (tell that to James Hetfield), **having a solid understanding of strumming techniques is essential for playing songs easily.** Syncopation comes hand in hand with this technique and one way to

“Technical proficiency doesn't necessarily amount to skill”

check if you have dominated it is to see if you can play this common pattern: ↓ ↑↑ ↑↑ (and repeat). **Note that choosing to downstroke is not of itself a bad idea** (see The Misfits for reference), **but not knowing strumming patterns is not a good sign.**

Controlling this should help you with alternate picking, a skill necessary for anyone who likes to do some tremolo from time to time and wants some stamina. It gives you speed and takes away tension from your wrist!

Part 2: Chords

Playing power chords is easy **and** fun and moving them around the fretboard should make you more precise. On that same note, **playing bar chords** is something most beginners can't do properly. This is simply because their fingers are not accustomed to those shapes and it is quite challenging getting a hold of them. However; **being able to not only play them, but moving and changing smoothly between them and the fundamental chords is the mark of an intermediate player** (or soon to be).

Speaking of fundamental chords: In order to break free from those “play 50 songs with 3 simple chords!” videos –which are aimed at beginners- **you'll need to memorize them** and (again) be able to change smoothly between them. Smoothly means you don't need more than a second to change shapes. These chords are: G Major, C Major, D Major, F Major, E Major, A Major, E Minor and A Minor.



Can you tell what this is? Any musician should know

Part 3: Tunings

I know why you only play in Drop D. Not only does it give a strong punch to your songs, it can help you fill in for the rhythm guitarist when there isn't one! Thankfully, you have already mastered all the information I gave about chords in the section before so **we know for a fact you aren't avoiding all that trouble by playing chords only with your index finger.**

Part 4: Timing

This goes without saying, but **playing on time is key for any kind of performance. Pick up your metronome and start playing a 4/4 rhythm, then change to 6/8 and then 12/8.** Having a basic understanding of these three rhythms will help you greatly in playing most songs and set a foundation for making songs and playing with other people. After all, no one likes to be that guy who can't keep up with the tempo –unless you are playing math rock.

Part 5: Music Theory

While in theory you don't need it, it makes everything much easier. Take notes, for example: While you can figure out where each tone goes, isn't it much easier to just learn the blues scale so you can know where the next note is? It also helps you improvise more easily and gives you a better understanding of keys and how they work.

Having said that, here are some things you should know:

- **The name of the notes on the low E and A strings.**
- **The names of chords.**
- **How to play (at least) the blues scale.**
- **How to distinguish between minor and major chords.**
- **The names of the strings in standard tuning.**
- **If the fifth fret and the next open string sound the same, then both of them are in tune (except for the G to B string).**

Part 6: Lead guitar

This section is dedicated to lead guitarists because all the considerations apply to rhythm and lead alike and most

of them to bass players as well. However, there are some techniques which are some techniques which are more important for lead guitarists than their partners.

Hammer-ons and pull-offs are a well-known acquaintance of soloists and are easily the most important skill one could need for playing with flow. Not only do they allow you to articulate your playing style into licks, they allow some impressive shredding when done correctly and, in general, improve one's speed and dexterity.

Bends, slides, vibrato, palm mutes and alternative muting are your allies as well. Mix them with hammer-ons and pull-offs and **you will be able to make your guitar sing.** Remember that they will require a good understanding of how dynamics work, but it will pay off when you realise that you can transform a boring riff into a soulful one just by following your instincts. A good example would be the main riff in "Walk" by *Pantera*. 0-1-0 is not a very interesting combination, but by adding that bend, Dimebag managed to create a catchy and legendary riff.

Part 7: What are you?

Now that you are aware of what will make you a better musician, two questions arise:

What are you? As a wild guess, **assuming you control at least half of these techniques would mean you are either an intermediate guitarist or are close to being one. Another good way of checking your skill is playing easy songs and seeing if you can handle them well.** "Knocking in Heaven's Door" is adequate for this purpose.

But most importantly, what are you going to do? Knowledge on itself is not useful –aside from personal satisfaction. You need to understand that most of what we consider today as "the greatest guitarists to ever live" were intermediates. Look at *The Ramones*: While using only downstrokes and power chords most of the times, they managed to create a unique sound which people still remember to this day. **The mark of a good musician is whether or not they can play songs organically, and not simply be a living MIDI controller.**

Bibliography:

Experience as a guitar teacher



CustomForge's profile picture in all social media accounts.

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Patreon: CustomsForge

Discord: <http://discord.gg/CF>

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New merch:

<http://bit.ly/MerchCF>



Charter's tip of the month: "Remember the "Control A, Control L, [[trick" in EoF to ensure that notes do not run into each other"

– JamesPrestonUK

Website Updates

If you see a dead link, make sure to report it! Please remember that the website depends on donations so donate once in a while, any amount helps!

Moderators & Server Admin

We are looking for some moderators and a server admin, if you are suited for these positions then follow the link at the bottom of the page.

CFSongManager

Did you know CustomsForgeSongManager is a tool to (amongst many, many other things) repair older CDLC files and add Dynamic Difficulty to CDLC that may still be missing it?

PATREONS

An extra special shoutout to all of those who supports us with a couple bucks every month. You may not realize it but your kindness helps us more than you can imagine.

Thank you for reading CustomsForge's monthly newsletter. Keep on rockin'!

WANT TO JOIN? APPLY TODAY: <http://bit.ly/applytoCF>