



Becoming Your Best Rock Coach: How to Start a Rock Group at Your School

The 2020 International Music Education Summit

Presenter: *Steve Giddings*

Website: www.stevesmusicroom.com

Minimal equipment that you need to successfully teach and perform with rock bands:

What most schools already have:

- **A PA system with 5 to 8 channels**
- **2 to 3 microphones with cables**
- **Keyboard**
- **Keyboard amp**

Other equipment you will need:

- **At least one drum kit**
 - You can buy a beginner model kit for \$500.00 and maybe even cheaper if you look around.
- **At least one guitar amp and one guitar**
 - Look at the Mustang series of fender amps. They come in a range of sizes and are very versatile and well priced.
 - For guitars look at the Squier line of Fender guitars. My school has 2 classic vibes. They are decently priced and pretty good quality for what you get.
 - Some students will likely already have a guitar and an amp if money is tight.
- **A bass and bass amp**
 - Students typically don't own a bass from my experience.
 - Keyboard amps can double as a bass amp. If you have one with multiple inputs that would be an asset.
 - If worse comes to worse you can put the bass directly through the PA.
- **3 to 5 patch cables**

Resources

- **On YouTube: martyzsongs**
 - This channel contains a collection of guitar lessons that are very well paced and extremely accurate. It is a go to place for learning guitar parts. I also refer a lot of my more independent learners to martyzsongs.
- **iPhone and iPad app: Songsterr**
 - This app is a collection of guitar tabs for pretty much any song in existence. It is sometimes inaccurate but it is a great resource to help get started or to figure out a tricky bit. I use it mostly for figuring out guitar solos.
- **Website: UltimateGuitar.com**
 - Has tabs, lyrics and chords to help you through learning a song. Not always accurate but pretty close a lot of the time. Lots of very useful functionalities like 'Transpose' and 'Autoscroll.'
- **Your ear**
 - It is amazing how good our ears actually are as trustworthy resources.
- **PC Software: Band in a Box**
 - This piece of software is designed for improvising. You input the chord progression and everyone can solo over it.
- **Website: Steve's Music Room (www.stevesmusicroom.com)**
 - My website contains a ton of stuff that can help you get your band off the ground.
- **Website: Musical Futures (www.musicalfutures.org)**
 - This website is from Lucy Green's work on how popular musicians learn. Musical Futures is a program being implemented in many UK schools and now some schools in Canada.
- **Rock Coach: A Practical Guide for Teaching Rock Bands in Schools by Steve Giddings**
 - This is my book on teaching rock bands in schools and it ranges from Elementary to High School learners. You can find it on Amazon in Print and Kindle formats.
- **Website: Little Kids Rock (www.littlekidsrock.org)**
 - This is an amazing website devoted to teachers and students of the Modern Band movement. There is a curriculum guide, songs, parts, and lessons all for free.

Auditions

Here are what my audition rubrics look like:

GUITAR AUDITION CHART - Auditioner's Name _____

Song Prepared: Y or N if so, what?

Chords: C Am Em G A E F

Playback:

Barre Chords: Y or N

Power Chords Y or N

Playback:

Scale Patterns: Minor Pentatonic

Blues

Major

Minor

Playback:

Notes:

VOCAL AUDITION CHART – Auditioner's Name _____

Tuning

Tone Projection

Pitch Retention

Beginning Level			
Some Skill			
Demonstrates Skill			
Outstanding Skill			

Song name:

Notes:

Song List

Very Easy/Beginner

This level includes songs that have two or three, sometimes four chords only or a basic, repetitive riff for all instruments. They may also be primarily power chords but can be easily simplified by playing only the root notes. Drums will play a basic rock groove or blues variation or will work with a basic rock groove or basic blues groove. Sections of songs may be a little more of a challenge but, for the most part, are attainable or will still work with that section removed:

- **Never Tear Us Apart** by INXS (mostly keyboard: C/A, C^{sus4}/F, Dm, F, G) triplet feel, guitar is minimal. Chance for minor pentatonic or blues solo.
- **Best Day of My Life** by The American Authors (D, G) with easy guitar riff in the chorus. Beginning banjo riff can be omitted. This song has a very short Bm chord it it but can be omitted and still work.
- **Should I Stay or Should I Go** by The Clash (D, G, A⁷, G/F). Drums may find this difficult in chorus.
- **Stompa** by Serena Ryder (C, G, Am, Em, A⁷, B⁷ in bridge only). Easy riff based song in Em. Bridge is easy but may be difficult to remember because there is no obvious pattern. Bass drum part in the drums could be a challenge for a beginner drummer. However, a straight 4/4 rock groove is fine.
- **Blitzkrieg Bop** by The Ramones (power chords, I-IV-V-I progression). Could be quick for the drummers. Key of A
- **Songbird** by Oasis (G, Em).
- **Good Riddance** by Green Day (G [with added 5th], C^{sus2}, D^{sus4}, Em^{add7}). The chord progression will make much more sense when you listen to it.
- **All Day and All of the Night** by The Kinks (power chords: F, G, B, A, C, D). Good one for improvising on G blues.
- **Lean on Me** by Bill Withers (C, F, G⁷). Very easy for all instruments, can be a little low for singers. Easy root position chords in parallel motion for the keyboard. Riff based.
- **You Really Got Me** by The Kinks (power chords: F, G, A, C, D). This song presents a great opportunity to improvise in G minor pentatonic.
- **Eye of the Tiger** by Survivor (power chords: C, Bb, G, A, easy barring). Can be easily simplified, fits female voices nicely, keyboard has the following progression in the verse: Cm, Ab, Bb, Cm^{sus2} all in root position.
- **Last Kiss** by Pearl Jam (G, Em, C, D). This can be done with or without the strumming pattern.

- **SONGS THAT ARE DIFFICULT BUT CAN BE EASILY SIMPLIFIED**
- **Sweet Home Alabama** by Lynyrd Skynyrd (D, C, G, one F chord). Without picking patterns or solos this is very easy to play.
- **Sweet Child o' Mine** by Guns n' Roses (D, C, G). No down-tuning, no solos and this song can be easily played.

Easy/Some Experience

This level includes basic chords, scales and concepts as well as some easy solos. Players who have had some lessons or experience, or are a quick learn and know the *Main 7* chords would be able to handle most of these songs. They may have started learning some power chords and barre chords but are still somewhat uncomfortable with them. Drums may have basic fills or an easy groove variation:

- **Believer** by Imagine Dragons (Bb, Gb, A, power chords). The 'bouncy' guitar part throughout the song can be a challenge for a guitar player. If your guitar players are struggling with it at first, have your keyboard player do it. There are some neat choir sounds in this one that can be done on a good-sounding keyboard or electronic piano. Drums are very easy in this one.
- **Zombie** by The Cranberries (Em, CM⁷, G, D). Repetitive chord progression. A pretty easy guitar solo in the pre-verses. Might be a bit low for some of your younger singers but can easily be transposed.
- **Song 2** by Blur (drop D power chords, one-finger power chords). Repetitive riff-based pattern throughout. Changes once in the chorus.
- **Enter Sandman** by Metallica (power chords). Can be done with first finger only and it still works. Some simple palm muting. Drumming can be complex at beginning but for the most part pretty straight forward. Remove whispered section of lyrics in the bridge.
- **Berlin Wall** by Town Heroes (capo 2, drop D tuning easy one-finger power chords). The drummers will love this one. A bit of a challenge in the bass drum but they love it once they get the hang of it.
- **If Today Was Your Last Day** by Nickelback (capo 1, easy barring, Bm, D, A, E, G)
- **Keep Holding On** by Avril Lavigne (G [with added 5th], G/F#, Em^{add 7}, C^{sus2}, Am, C, Em). This one will make more sense when you listen to it.
- **Titanium** as performed by Madilyn Bailey (capo 3, C, G, Am, F, Em). Originally for piano and voice but works really well with guitar and voice.
- **I Love Rock and Roll** by Joan Jett (power chords E, A, B, G. I-IV-V-I progression). Drums are really easy but there is a small turnaround in the chorus. Take out last verse lyrics and replace with first.
- **Proud Mary** by CCR (C, A, F, G, D, Bm). Strumming pattern might be a bit of a challenge at first.
- **Riptide** by Vance Joy (capo 1, Am, C, G, F). Solo before the bridge can be a bit of a challenge but the song will work well without it.
- **Christmas Love** by Billy Idol (G, C, D, A⁷, D⁷, Em, simple picking patterns).
- **Nothing Else Matters** by Metallica (Em, C, D, G, B, power chords, picking patterns) NOTE: I would begin without picking—just strumming.
- **One** by U2 (C, F, Am, G, easy one string picking).
- **Takin' Care of Business** by BTO (blues, power chords: C, Bb, F, F pentatonic/blues scales).
- **Takin' Care of Christmas** by BTO (power chords, blues).
- **House of the Rising Sun** by The Animals (Am, C, D, F, E⁷, A minor pentatonic/blues scales) The progression can be a bit confusing.
- **Wish You Were Here** by Pink Floyd (G, Am, D, C, G, pentatonic scale).
- **What You Need** by INXS (F# easy/half barre, Am easy/half barre, B power chord, F# power chord). Great easy synthesizer solo. Easy guitar picking in bridge. Drum patterns change slightly in each section.

- **Island in the Sun** by Weezer (easy barring, Em, G, D, Am, C). Guitar players should be comfortable with the moveable four-string F chord shape.
- **Yellow** by Coldplay (capo 1, A, A^{sus4}, F#m, E, D, D^{sus2}, string bends).
- **Come Together** by The Beatles (B, A, and G power chords). Bass is a challenge throughout but repeats. The guitar solo can be turned into a keyboard solo and is very simple. Drums have a triplet fill at the beginning that comes up again near the middle of the song.
- **Boulevard of Broken Dreams** by Green Day (capo 1, Em, G, D, A, C, easy guitar solo). Make sure you change swear word to “messed” and use only an edited version. This is very easy to alter in any sound editing program. All you need to do is select the word and reverse it. Could be a bit low for some singers.
- **When I Come Around** by Green Day (power chords, F#, C#, D# [optional 5th string minor barre], B [optional 5th string major], I–V–vi–IV, G#, A#, B power chords). Make sure to take out the second verse and use the first verse twice. Also easy to alter on a sound editing program.
- **Astronaut** by Simple Plan (Dm, G, F, Am, C, basic strumming patterns).
- **Down on the Corner** by CCR (C, F, G). Lead guitar has an easy pentatonic melody throughout the song.
- **Free Falling** by Tom Petty (capo 1, E, A^{sus2}, B^{sus4}).

Medium/More Experience

This level includes basic chords as well as barre chords, picking patterns and some intermediate level solos. Basic drum grooves will work for the majority of these songs but will not work for a few of these if you want to keep the integrity of the song. There will be a mix of basic and more advanced keyboard parts.

This level encompasses a wide range of players and may include learners who are beginners or have some experience but are progressing quickly or need a good challenge. Use your discretion with this.

- **Hall of Fame** by The Script (capo 3, Em, C, G, D). This song has a repetitive chord progression throughout. The piano part can be a bit of a challenge to pull off properly but it can be simplified.
- **Everything You've Done Wrong** by Sloan (C#m, B, A^{sus2}, Em, A, D, G, G/F#, D⁷). The opening is barre chords. This is a great tune for opening up some solos. Am pentatonic and Em pentatonic work really well as solo material. Trumpet parts can be performed on keyboards.
- **Happy Together** by The Turtles (capo 2, Em, C, D, G, B, fifth string major barre chords).
- **It's My Life** by Bon Jovi (power chords C, Ab, Db, Bb, B, Eb, bridge has F, C, Bb). This can be played without the solo and still work.
- **Old Time Rock and Roll** by Bob Seger (basic blues pattern I–IV and V chords). Key of F#. Might be a bit of a hand stretch for your beginners. A great one to solo with F# minor pentatonic or blues.
- **Buddy Holly** by Weezer (power chords with lots of changes and jumps, down tuning by half step to play the bridge). I use Audacity to transpose this up by one half step instead of down-tuning the guitars. That way it is in the key of A.

- **Living on a Prayer** by Bon Jovi (C, D, Em, G). Off beat patterns, quarter note triplets, solo can be simplified, key change up a minor third but power chords will suffice. Keyboards are featured at the beginning and play an Em to G pattern in the verses.
- **Ghostbusters** by Ray Parker Jr. (A, E, B, power chords: B, A, G#, E). There are some awkward off beats in the guitar parts. What makes this the most difficult is the keyboard part. A good keyboard player should be able to handle it.
- **Kryptonite** by 3 Doors Down (Bm, G, A^{sus2}). Repetitive guitar picking pattern. A challenge for drummers.
- **Don't Stop Believin'** by Journey (power chords: B, E, C#, A). Drummers could find this song a challenge to keep steady, fits female voices quite nicely, bass line can be a challenge. Keyboard part can be done with right hand only as long as the bass part is strong. Have an additional keyboard player in charge of some of the other parts if your keyboard player can't reach the octaves.
- **Sweet Home Alabama** by Lynyrd Skynyrd: Without solos (D, C, G). Picking patterns, blues. Without picking patterns this song is much easier.
- **What About Love** by Heart (Dm, Bb, F, C). 5th string major barre chords, power chords, solo picking, a bit of scale work on the keyboard.
- **Let Her Go** by Passenger (Em, C, G, Bm, D). Changes are quick and the two progressions are similar enough to be a bit confusing.
- **21 Guns** by Green Day (Dm, Bb, F, C). 5th string major barre chords, power chords, solo picking.
- **The Final Countdown** by Europe: without solos (power chords: F#, D, B, E, F, A, G#). Palm muting, a good challenge for the keyboard player. Works without power chords but there are a lot of changes in the guitar part. Key of F#m.
- **The Boys in the Bright White Sports Car** by Trooper (all power chords: Bb, Ab, Db, Eb). Some of the strumming patterns can be difficult for some guitar players. Intermediate to advanced guitarists could play the solos in this song. They are based mostly on the blues and minor pentatonic box patterns. Could be a great opportunity for improvised solos too.
- **Times like These** by Foo Fighters (Am, C, Em, D as well as E, D and C power chords). Intermediate solo picking. The big challenge in this song is the drums and the metre changes. There are many places where the time switches to 7/4 and then to 8/4 and back again. You need strong drummers for this tune.
- **Separate Ways** by Journey (power chords: E, D, C, B). Palm muting, easy harmonics. Keyboards have Em, D, C and a bit of easy solo riff work at the beginning middle and end. Drummers have a couple solos, a good chance for them to improvise.
- **I Wanna Rock** by Twisted Sister (power chords, A, G, D, E). Strumming pattern could be a challenge for limited knowledge player. Some intermediate level drum fills.
- **Summer of '69** by Bryan Adams (D and A power chords as well as A, D, G, F, Bb, C, and Bm). 5th string major and minor barre chords. Switches are pretty quick at times.
- **Clocks** by Coldplay (capo 1, D, Em, Am, G, F). 8/8 grouped as 3+3+2, keyboards have some advanced arpeggiation with Eb, Bbm, Fm, dual keyboard. Drummers will be challenged to keep steady and follow the 3+3+2 pattern.
- **Juke Box Hero** by Foreigner (power chords, D, E, B, G). Bridge can be a bit of a challenge. Vocals can be quite a challenge to pull off properly. Some more advanced drumming in areas (ie: switching feel).
- **Jump** by Van Halen. Guitars follow the bass line throughout this song. This is a keyboard feature and may present a challenge for a beginner keyboardist. Some of the drumming is quite advanced in places. Charts for this are easy to find. We performed this without the extended solo sections for guitar and keyboard.

Difficult/Lots of Experience

This section includes all basic chords and/or all barre chord forms as well as medium to advanced arpeggiation, medium to advanced solos and some advanced picking and finger picking patterns or metres. This level will be a good challenge for any groups within your higher-end *Medium* category:

- **Purple Haze** by Jimmy Hendrix (E^{7(#9)}, G, A). This song has some challenging guitar licks along with the opening solo part. The E^{7(#9)} chord is also known as the *Hendrix Chord* because it was a favourite of his.
- **Fix You** by Coldplay (capo 2, C, C/B, Am, F, G). Guitar part is fairly minimal and simple. What makes this one difficult are the keyboard parts, some of the drumming and the vocal harmonies at the end. This will be easier with two keyboard players.
- **Sweet Child o' Mine** by Guns n' Roses (down tuning, D, C, G). Intermediate to advanced arpeggiation, picking patterns, power chords, bends, solo picking, some advanced bass lines.
- **Christmas All Over Again** by Tom Petty (A, F#m, Bm, E, Gm, barre chords).
- **Take on Me** by A-Ha (Bm, E, A, D, A/C#, F#m, G). 6th and 5th string barre chords. A challenge for your singers and keyboard players.
- **Stairway to Heaven** by Led Zeppelin (finger picking, Am, C, G, D, FM⁷). Barreing, challenging for all instruments and voices.
- **Dream On** by Aerosmith (finger picking, bends, some advanced solo picking).
- **Blackbird** by The Beatles (finger picking). In G.
- **Oh! Darling** by The Beatles (E+, A, E, F#m, A⁷, D, F⁷, Bm⁷, Bb⁷). 5th and 6th string major, minor, major 7 and minor 7 barre forms, blues and triplet feel for drums and keyboard, arpeggiation, picking patterns, a challenge for your guitar players. The bass line is quite a challenge as well.
- **Barracuda** by Heart (power chords). Palm muting, simple to complex metre changes. 4/4 to 5/4 and 4/4 to 3/4. Drums and guitars have the biggest challenge with all the metre changes and some of the drumming is quite advanced in places.

Rhythms are notated along with the tablature.

Go to www.guitarnick.com
lots of free guitar tabs & video lessons



Yesterday

Lennon and McCartney

Arranged & tabledited by
Nicola Mandorino (2010)

F G Bb F F Em A7 Dm

Bb C F C Dm G Bb F 1. **A**
Em 7/4

Dm C Bb C F Em7/4 A Dm C Bb

C F 2. **G Bb F**
Dm

Detailed description: This block contains four systems of guitar tablature for the song 'Yesterday'. Each system consists of a six-line staff with fret numbers (0-3) and rhythmic notation (vertical stems with flags). Fingerings are indicated by circled numbers 1-4. Chord names are placed above the staff. The first system covers measures 1-4, the second system covers measures 5-8, the third system covers measures 9-12, and the fourth system covers measures 13-16. A double bar line is present at the end of the fourth system.

No rhythms or notes - just tabs. You have to know how the song goes to play this. Unfortunately, it is the most common type you will see on the internet. This is the tab for Blitzkrieg Bop by The Ramones.

```
E -----  
B -----  
G -----  
D -----7-9-----7-9-----7-9--  
A 7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-5-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-5-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-5-7--  
E 5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----
```

```
E -----  
B -----  
G -----  
D -----7-7-7-7-----7-9-----  
A 7-7-7-7-5-5-5-5-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-5-7-----  
E 5-5-5-5-----5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----
```

```
E -----  
B -----  
G -----  
D -----7-9-----7-9-----7-9--  
A -7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-5-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-5-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-5-7--  
E -5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----
```

```
E -----  
B -----  
G -----  
D -7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-----7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-----  
A -5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--  
E -----5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----
```

```
E -----  
B -----  
G -----  
D -7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-----9-9-9-9-9-9-9-9-9--  
A -5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-9-9-9-9-9-9-9-9-9-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--  
E -----5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7-----
```