

Welcome to the Masters of Rock Guitar

Taking a look at the stylistic variety of the preceding decades, the task of documenting the development of rock guitar playing seems more than difficult.

The problems begin with choosing the guitarists. Countless players will have to be left out who could be considered most important.

Undoubtedly you'll miss one guitarist or another who in your opinion is an absolute **master of the rock guitar**.

In order to maintain a clear perspective, I've found it necessary to restrict myself to twenty guitar heroes. Even in this book, space is limited, so I've tried to select only those really influential guitarists who've been primary forces in the development of guitar techniques.

So it's been necessary to leave out guitarists like **Frank Zappa, Steve Howe, John McLaughlin, Pete Townshend, George Lynch**, and others, as well as the guitarists from important groups like **The Beatles** and **The Rolling Stones**. Although their playing is inseparably linked to their groundbreaking compositions from a technical standpoint, they're not as revolutionary or innovative as the rest of the "club", those whose playing has been an influence on a large number of other guitarists. The names of the ones I've chosen call to mind certain sounds, concepts and performing techniques that are often demanded of musicians and teachers. ("Play it like **Hendrix/van Halen/Knopfler/Lukather...**" or "Play some of those **Police** chords...") One is seldom asked to play a solo in a **Beatles** style.

The selections here have been made to meet these demands and to serve as a reference work for anyone who is looking for some authentic sounding material. Of course the danger in this sort of undertaking lies in reducing the concept of the book down to a mere compilation of guitar licks. Comprehending a guitarist's style takes more than just having a few licks down. Without the essential background information, such as **personal influences, identifiable elements, harmonic material, sound and discography**, all of which, along with the licks, give a well-rounded picture of each individual guitarist, you can't do justice to the Masters of the Rock Guitar.

Not that I'm promoting a star cult. Four decades of rock history are personified by these twenty "chosen players", with whose help the stylistically variable development of rock guitar playing can be seen in a clear light. For this reason our brief tour of rock history will begin with those definitive representatives of the blues guitar, **B.B. King** and **Albert King**, whose playing still has a lot to offer to the current generation of guitarists. And this, although for many young guitarists (my own age group, by the way) the Era of the Electric Guitar began with **Eddie van Halen**, and names like **Jimi Hendrix** and **Jimmy Page** often bring little more response than a shrug of the shoulders.

Of course the level of technical difficulty increases parallel to the chronological sequence. So "**Masters of Rock Guitar**" not only serves as a reference work, but can also – as an extra, so to speak – be used as a methodically constructed learning aid for beginning and advanced players.

The accompanying CD is over seventy minutes in length. It will not only help you to play the licks, but has also the major advantage over other recordings that each of the guitarists can be selected individually.

However you choose to use this book, I do hope you'll have a lot of fun reading, playing, listening and working.

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THE FATHER OF ROCK N' ROLL

In the film "Hail! Hail! Rock n' Roll", Eric Clapton hit the nail on the head when he said, "If you want to play rock n' roll, you'll end up either playing like **Chuck Berry** or playing something that you learned from him, because there's not much else you can do. Actually, there's nothing else that you can do. Chuck showed us how to do it and that's it."

Chuck Berry was born Charles Edward Anderson Berry in 1926 in St. Louis, Missouri. After various unsuccessful stints at job training and three years in prison, he first started playing guitar in his mid-twenties. In 1955 he moved to Chicago, where he met **Muddy Waters**. On May 21st of that year he recorded his first single: "Maybelline". Within four months, this song had knocked **Bill Haley's** super hit "Rock Around The Clock" out of the number 1 spot on the charts. Other classics like "Johnny B. Goode", "Roll Over Beethoven", and others were soon to follow.

Along with **Elvis Presley**, **Chuck Berry** helped to create a new era, dubbed "Rock n' Roll" by radio disc jockey **Alan Freed**. It was an era which for one thing saw the beginnings of the dismantling of racial segregation in America and which on the other hand became the symbol of the rebellion of the younger generation against the old. And, in order to enable other forms of life to "get the beat", the satellite Voyager 1 contains, among other messages, a recording of **Chuck Berry's** "Johnny B. Goode".



Chuck Berry

PERSONAL INFLUENCES

Although **Chuck Berry** cites guitarists like **Charlie Christian**, **Carl Hogan**, **T-Bone Walker** and **Muddy Waters** as sources of inspiration, it's pretty hard to find more than a few traces of their playing in Berry's unique style.

HARMONIC MATERIAL

Most of **Chuck Berry's** songs are no more than two-and-a-half minutes long and are based on the simple blues form. When playing leads he mainly uses the blues scale, bending the third about a quarter tone to give everything an even bluesier sound.

PERSONAL INFLUENCES

Santana's main influences can be traced back to several different areas. As a guitar player he was influenced greatly by **B.B. King**, **T-Bone Walker** and **Saunders King**. His most prominent modern jazz influences are **Miles Davis** and **John Coltrane**. As far as the "Santana sound" goes, percussionists like **Tito Puente** and **Ray Barretto** are very important.

HARMONIC MATERIAL

Many Santana songs are in minor keys, in the **dorian mode**, to be more exact. They are often based on simple two-chord vamps and get their life from the rhythm section.

An example of a dorian vamp would be this progression:

Am – D⁹ (II– V in G major)

If you play a G major scale over this progression, you'll automatically play the A dorian (the 2nd mode of G major) and the D mixolydian (the 5th mode of G major).

ESSENTIAL STYLISTIC FEATURES

Santana has a marked tendency towards playing numerous ornaments (for example the grace notes and little trills in lick 14) with which he enhances simple melodies. A good example of their application is his mega-hit "Samba Pa Ti". He also employs **unison bends** to make sustained notes sound fatter (as in lick 13).

SOUND

To get close to the **Santana sound**, you definitely have to use an **amp with master volume**, optimally one with two (sequentially activating) pre-amps, which provides maximum sustain while soloing. A **compressor** would also be of help.

For giving the rhythm guitar a bit more punch, a **wah-wah** wouldn't be a bad idea. You should use a guitar with a **set neck**.

LICKS

Here is a blues lick using open strings.. By the way, you can play all the licks in different octaves. So you can also try lick 1 an octave higher, at the 12th fret..

①

Em⁷

P BU P P BU RB P

P BU P P BU RB P

5 3 3 (5) 0 3 0 2 0 2 (4) 2 0 2 2

T A B

This lick is a good string bending exercise.

②

Lick 3 and 4 have similar structures. The difference lies in the nuances.

③

④

Triads are very good for improvising over dominant chords. The major triad a whole step below the tonic sounds especially good (for example, a C major triad over a D major chord).

⑤

Tapping with open strings!

②

This section contains three systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a guitar staff (treble clef) and a bass staff (bass clef). The guitar staff shows notes with stems and flags, with tapping (T), picking (P), and hammering (H) techniques indicated above. The bass staff shows the corresponding fretboard positions with numbers 0, 5, 7, and 12, and includes the word 'simile'. A large diagonal watermark 'Copyright Masters of Rock Samples by AMA Verlag GmbH' is overlaid across the page.

These licks are interesting variations on the tapping technique

③

This section contains two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a guitar staff (treble clef) and a bass staff (bass clef). The guitar staff shows notes with stems and flags, with tapping (T), sliding (SL), picking (P), and hammering (H) techniques indicated above. The bass staff shows the corresponding fretboard positions with numbers 10, 12, 13, 14, and 15, and includes the word 'simile'. A large diagonal watermark 'Copyright Masters of Rock Samples by AMA Verlag GmbH' is overlaid across the page.

CONTROLLED ECSTASY

Steve Lukather is one of those guitarists who always seem to know which guitar part a song needs (or perhaps doesn't need). This is why his services as a studio guitarist have been in constant demand for more than a decade. In addition to his own band **Toto**, in which he also takes over the lead vocals on his own songs, he can be heard on countless productions. Here is a partial list of his credits: Michael Jackson, Paul McCartney, Chicago, Lionel Richie, Boz Scaggs, the Tubes, Earth, Wind and Fire, Eric Clapton, Olivia Newton-John, Cher, George Benson, Christopher Cross, Don Henley, Alice Cooper, Diana Ross and Hall and Oates.

HARMONIC MATERIAL

Steve Lukather primarily employs pentatonic scales, which he sometimes mixes with chromatic notes or, (although relatively seldom), notes from a particular mode. For example, in minor keys he uses the natural sixth and the ninth to bring out the sound of the dorian mode.

PERSONAL INFLUENCES

As main influences Lukather cites Jimi Hendrix and Larry Carlton, as well as Jay Graydon, Jeff Beck, Eric Clapton and Jimmy Wyble.

ESSENTIAL STYLISTIC FEATURES

Although he's also an excellent rhythm guitarist with a strong natural feel for a song, Steve Lukather's reputation is based mainly on his fantastic guitar solos. What stands out in his solo playing is that he intentionally uses two "colors", meaning there are two different approaches which emerge repeatedly:

1. Extremely melodic, singable, vocal-line-oriented solos with a very wide, controlled vibrato, mainly used on ballads.
2. Strongly blues-influenced rock solos, using all the registers of rock guitar. He frequently plays this style on fade outs or on pop songs to put a little grit into an otherwise lame production.



**Steve
Lukather**