

Rock Band Song List

When I first started implementing my rock program at Montague Consolidated School, the most frustrating and time consuming task was finding school appropriate songs that fit the skill level of the musicians in the band. This list is compiled from seven years of teaching rock bands at my school and over the next few years will grow to include many more songs. Also, this list acts as a grading system for rock band music. Think of the concert band grading system as it relates to the skill level and experience of the musicians in the band but instead of B100 to B600, we have Easy, Medium, and Difficult. I am hoping that this list will provide you with a place to begin or a place to advance your rock bands at your schools.

EASY includes basic chords, scales and concepts as well as some easy solos. **BEGINNER TO LIMITED KNOWLEDGE LEVEL** (Limited knowledge: players who have had some lessons and know most of the basic chords and started learning some power chords and barre chords but are still somewhat uncomfortable with them)

MEDIUM includes basic chords as well as barre chords, picking patterns and some intermediate level solos. **LIMITED KNOWLEDGE TO INTERMEDIATE LEVEL**. Note: will be a challenge for limited knowledge players.

ADVANCED/DIFFICULT includes all basic chords and/or all barre chord forms as well as intermediate to advanced arpeggiation, intermediate to advanced solos and some advanced picking and finger picking patterns or metres. **INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED LEVEL** note: will be a good challenge for any intermediate players.

The list includes the song name, artist name, chords and skills learned from the song. This list is mostly catered to guitar players, but unless otherwise stated, one can assume that the keyboard, bass, drums and vocals are pretty straightforward. (ei – straight up rock beat variation, root note bass and/or basic piano chords that more or less follow the guitar and easy vocal melodies). Also, it is important to know that the chords listed are not necessarily in order. They are simply a list of the chords in the song.

YouTube is a great resource for this if you are uncomfortable with learning by ear. Also, you will be surprised what the students can learn from YouTube without your help if you are uncomfortable with playing these instruments.

EASY

- **Enter Sandman** by Metallica – (Power chords) can be done without power chords 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.
- **Never Tear Us Apart** by INXS (mostly keyboard: C/A, Csus4/F, Dm, F, G, triplet feel, guitar is minimal. Chance for minor pentatonic or blues solo)
- **Counting Stars** by One Republic (Capo 4, Am, C, G, F)
- **Berlin Wall** by Town Heroes (Capo 2, drop D tuning easy power chords) the drums 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)
- **Keep Holding On** by Avril Lavigne (G [with added 5th], G/F#, Em add b7, Csus2, Am, C, Em) Note: This one will make more sense when you listen to it.
- **Should I Stay or Should I Go** by The Clash (D, G, A7, G/F, drums may find this difficult in chorus)
- **Proud Mary** by CCR (C, A, F, G, D, Bm) Strumming pattern might be a bit of a challenge at first.
- **Nothing Else Matters** by Metallica (Em, C, D, G, B, power chords, picking patterns) note: I would begin without picking
- **Eye of the Tiger** by Survivor (Power chords: C, Bb, G, Ab, easy barring, fits female voices nicely, keyboard has the following progression in the verse: Cm, Ab, Bb Cmsus2 all in root position)
- **Stompa** by Serena Ryder (C, G, Am, Em, A7, B7) 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 is fine.
- **One** by U2 (C, F, Am, G, easy one string picking)
- **Blitzkrieg Bop** by The Ramones (Power chords, I-IV-V-I progression, could be quick for the drummer) Key of A.
- **Good Riddance** by Greenday (G, Csus2, Dsus4, Em addb7)
- **You Really Got Me** by The Kinks (Power chords: F, G, A, C, D) note: I rarely include the guitar solo when teaching this one and if I do it is simple improvisation on G minor pentatonic
- **All Day and All of the Night** by The Kinks (Power chords: F, G, Bb, A, C, D) note: Good one for improvising on G blues
- **Takin' Care of Business** by BTO (Blues, Power chords: C, Bb, F, F Pentatonic/Blues scales)
- **House of the Rising Sun** by The Animals (Am, C, D, F, E7, Am Pentatonic/Blues scales) note: 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# half barre, Am 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 F chord formation)
- **Yellow** by Coldplay (Capo, A, F#m, E, Dsus2, string bends)
- **Rock You Like a Hurricane** by The Scorpions – Without solos (Power chords: E, G, A, B, C, D, palm muting)
- **Lean on Me** by Bill Withers (C, F, G7, very easy for all instruments, a little low for singers, easy root position chords in parallel motion for the keyboard)
- **Come Together** by The Beatles (B, A and G power chords for guitars. 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)
- **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)
- **Boulevard of Broken Dreams** by Greenday (make sure you change swear word to messed and use only an edited version. Contact me for it. Capo 1, Em, G, D, A, C, easy guitar solo, could be a bit low for some singers.)
- **When I Come Around** by Greenday (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. I have an edited version of this.)
- **Astronaut** by Simple Plan (Dm, G, F, Am, C. Basic strumming patterns)
- **Down on the Corner** by CCR (C, F, G and some challenging strumming patterns, lead guitar has an easy pentatonic melody throughout the song)
- **Free Falling** by Tom Petty (Capo 1 E, Asus2, Bsus4)

MEDIUM

- **Happy Together** by The Turtles (Capo 2, Picking, Em, C, D, G, B, fifth string major barre chords)
- **It's My Life** by Bon Jovi (Power Chords) Lots of changes 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) Note: 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, power chords will suffice) Keyboards are featured at the beginning and play an Em to G pattern in the verses.
- **Kryptonite** by 3 Doors Down (Bm, G, Asus2, picking patterns, a challenge for drummers)

- **Don't Stop Believin'** by Journey (E major scale solo, picking, drummers could find this song a challenge to keep steady, fits female voices quite nicely, bass line can be a challenge for a limited knowledge player. Keyboard part can be done with one hand as long as the bass part is strong. Had 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) note: 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, 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 limited knowledge 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)
- **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 time 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, challenging strumming pattern for a limited knowledge player. Keyboards have: Em, D, C and a bit of easy solo riff work at the beginning middle and end. Drummers have a few 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 major 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: Advanced arpeggiation, 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 and bass 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) Note: we performed this without the extended solo sections for guitar and keyboard.

ADVANCED/DIFFICULT

- **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.
- **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)
- **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, barring, 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, major7 and minor7 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 time changes and some of the drumming is quite advanced in places)

Christmas

- **Christmas Love** by Billy Idol (Easy - G, C, D, A7, D7, Em, simple picking patterns)
- **Run Run Rudolph** (Easy - Power chords, Blues)
- **Christmas All Over Again** by Tom Petty (Difficult – A, F#m, Bm, E, Gm, Barre Chords)
- **Takin' Care of Christmas** by BTO (Easy – Power chords, Blues)