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The Difference Between A Lead Guitar And A Rhythm Guitar

By Gray Rollins

Lead guitar and Rhythm guitar. You've heard about both, but aren't quite sure of the difference between the two. That's understandable, as most beginners (myself included when I was at that stage) are confused by all of the different terms used to describe guitar related things. In this lesson, we'll go over both the Lead and Rhythm guitar.

The Lead guitar

To put it simply, the Lead guitarist in a band is the one who plays melodies, single notes (and not as many chords), riffs and solos.

Lead guitarists are responsible for providing the most noticeable guitar sound of the song. As a result, lead guitarists must master several more techniques than rhythm guitarists must. These techniques include the basics such as hammer-ons, pull-offs, bends and slides, plus more advanced techniques like arpeggios and trills.

Lead guitarists are, essentially, in the spotlight. They have to be very skilled, as if they mess up, it'll be pretty noticeable to those listening. They also must be able to improvise—they must be able to come up with catchy riffs, solid solos and good melodies. It takes a lot of practice and knowledge to become a skilled Lead guitarist.

The Rhythm guitar

You're probably thinking by now that the Rhythm guitar is much easier to play than the Lead guitar is. That isn't an accurate statement, though. Rhythm guitarists, too, must master several things that Lead guitarists really don't have to.

Rhythm guitarists are responsible for the timing (rhythm) of the music. They must play the chords that hold the music together. Without a good Rhythm guitarist, the music as a whole suffers no matter how good the Lead guitarist is.

Rhythm guitarists must master the ability to switch quickly and efficiently between chords. They must also be able to strum well and must master the basic hammer-on, pull-off, slide, and bend techniques.

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Rhythm guitarists must also make sure that what they are playing is in sync with what the drummer and bassist are playing

While Rhythm guitarists play an integral role in the music, they are often overlooked. This is because the Lead guitarist's playing (which is usually amped louder so that it can be heard over the drums and Rhythm guitar) often overshadows what the Rhythm guitarist does.

Which should I learn to play?

The most skilled guitarists, in my opinion, are those who have the ability to play both Lead and Rhythm guitar. For that reason, it is worth mastering both styles of guitar. That is to say, it is a terrific idea to master not just the techniques associated with Lead guitar(all the basics plus trills, arpeggios and other advanced techniques) but also those associated with Rhythm guitar(the basics plus quick chord switching, good strumming and good timing). Those guitarists who have mastered both techniques are highly skilled musicians.

Gray Rollins is a featured writer for Guitars Land. If you're interested in learning more about guitars, visit <http://www.guitarsland.com/leadguitar/> and <http://www.guitarsland.com/electric/>

How To Play Blues Guitar Instantly

By Yuki Shoji

Playing guitar can be an ordinary feat to most people. Any person, with the right ear for music, can learn any instrument in a matter of hours. On the other hand, learning how to play blues guitar is almost a form of dexterity that not everyone can master. Blues music has been the foundation of many other genres of music such as Jazz, R&B and even Rock and Roll. The style of music is so captivating that it almost sounds complicated as well. Here are a few facts in order for you to learn how to play blues guitar:

The Technique

The technique in order to play blues guitar comes from the skill in picking. Although essentially, the scales make the music when playing the instrument, it is imperative to construct the picking technique before scales can be played. The guitar can then be played as a Rhythm Blues Guitar or a Lead Blues Guitar. There has to be suppleness in the fingers of the player in order to get the rhythm right.

Knowing the Difference

For the Rhythm Blues Guitar, the chord progression is founded on the twelve bar blues structure. When you play blues guitar, more often than not, the interval cords that are in progression are the I, IV and V, but other cords may also be played so long as the tonality is present in the rhythm. The Lead Blues Guitar, conversely, is more popular in terms of the measure of its expressiveness. It primarily focuses on the technical skills of vibrato and bending. The pick's basic motion is up and down, alternating in every turn.

In an example by James Ham, if there is a basic riff with the notes A,C,D,A,E one after another, the A would be played with a downward picking motion while the C would be played directly after the A with an upward motion. This is playing two notes in one motion. You can also try playing a 12-bar chord progression in different keys, in the same way as when you play a rhythm blues guitar in pentatonic scale. Try practicing this rhythm pattern continuously until you get the hang of the beat.

Getting Props

There are also several audio samples of blues records available online. Most of which can be downloaded for free. These samples may be played in both slow and full speed, helping you learn to pace your rhythm during mastering your picking technique. Although agility is integral when you play blues guitar, you must also concentrate on the accuracy of each note that you play and focus on your scales. Fluid rhythm and chord progression are fundamental in making blues music. You can also get a book that offers superb guitar licks that can help you practice.

Expression

As you play blues guitar, or any instrument at that, it is always important to practice. It is in practicing that we master our art and our passion. You can also sing along as you strum the guitar, after all, the blues music is all about expression.

Want to learn how to play blues guitar? It's simple to learn and sounds amazing. You can instantly learn to play blues guitar by following the simple steps and information at <http://www.playbluesguitar.org>

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