

FREE BIRD *Lynyrd Skynyrd*

WORDS AND MUSIC BY Allen Collins and Ronnie Van Zant TRANSCRIBED BY Chris Amelar and Dale Turner

G 21 4
D/F# T 132
Em 12
F 134211
C 32 1
D 132
G^{III} 1342
B^b5 134 6fr
C5 134 8fr
G5 134
B^b 1342 6fr
C^{VIII} 1342 8fr
B5 134 7fr
A5 134 5fr

A Intro (0:00)
Slow Rock ♩ = 59

1
Gtr. 1 (acous.)
mf
G D/F# Em F C D
Gtr. 2 (slightly distorted elec. w/phase shifter) *mf*

* Notes in italics are played by organ.

5
Gtr. 2
Rhy. Fig. 1
let ring throughout

Gtr. 1
 Bass
f
 D G D/F# Em

8
Gtr. 2
end Rhy. Fig. 1
fingerstyle
Gtr. 3 (distorted elec. w/slides)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see meas. 5)
G D/F# Em

Gtr. 1
 Rhy. Fig. 2
 Bass
 Substitute first 3 meas. of Bass Fig. 2 second time Bass Fig. 1
 **doubled
 †Gtr. 2 is loosely doubled throughout.

B Verses

G
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2
17 Gtr. 3

Bass Fig. 2

As heard on Lynyrd Skynyrd's MCA recording *Pronounced Leh-Nerd Skin-Nerd*

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11 F C D

* Play notes in italics 2nd time.

end Bass Fig. 1

13 G D/F# Em

Add cue notes 2nd time.

Bass repeats Bass Fig. 1 simile (see meas. 9)

5 F C D

end Rhy. Fig. 2

B Verses (1:06, 3:09)

1. If I leave here tomorrow
 2. Bye bye babe It's been sweet love yeah yeah

G D/F# Em
 Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 twice simile (see meas. 9)
 Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 four times (see meas. 5)
 Gtr. 3

grad. slide

Bass Fig. 2

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would you still remember me
though this feeling I can't change

19 F C D

For I must be traveling on now 'cause there's too many places I've got to see
But please don't take it so badly 'cause the lord knows I'm to blame

21 G D/F# Em F C

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 two and three quarter times simile (see meas. 17)

(1., 2.) If I stay here with you girl

24 D G D/F# Em

things just couldn't be the same

'Cause I'm as free as a bird

27 F C D G D/F#

now

and this bird you cannot change

Oh

30 Em F C D

Fill 1 (3:53)
Gtr. 3 D

Bass Fill 1 (2:09)

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C Interlude (4:43)
Faster ♩ = 149

41 G¹¹ Lord B^b5 I can't change C5 Won't you

fly G5 high B^b5 free C5 bird

45 Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

yeah

D Guitar Solo (4:56)

G¹¹ B^b5
Gtrs. 4 and 5 play Fill 4
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 4 four times simile (see meas. 41)

48

Gtrs. 4 and 5

Bass Fig. 4

C5

let ring

51

end Bass Fig. 4

Fill 4 (4:54)
Gtrs. 4 and 5 (distorted elec.)

TAB

4/4

f

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54 Gtrs. 4 and 5 *let ring* G^{II} $B\flat 5$

Bass plays Bass Fig. 4 twice simile (see meas. 49)

56 $C5$ *let ring*

58 G^{III} $B\flat 5$

**See performance notes.*

60 $C5$

(5:22) *Gtr. 4 plays Fill 5 (see next page)*

62 G^{II} $B\flat$ Gtrs. 4 and 5

Gtrs. 1 and 2 *Rhy. Fig. 5*

Bass *Bass Fig. 5*

64 C^{VII}

end Rhy. Fig. 5

end Bass Fig. 5

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82 G^{II} $B\flat 5$

Bass plays Bass Fig. 6 twice simile (see meas. 78)

84 $C5$ G^{II} $B\flat 5$

Gtr. 4 plays Fill 7
Gtr. 5

87 $C5$

let ring

89 G^{II} $B\flat 5$ $C5$ $N.C.$

let ring

90 G^{II} $B\flat 5$ $C5$ $N.C.$

Bass

94 G^{II} $B\flat 5$ $C5$ $N.C.$

Fill 7 (5.59)

94 $C5$ G^{II} $B\flat 5$

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98 G^{II} *Gtr. 4 plays Fill 8* $B\flat 5$ $C5$ *Gtrs. 4 and 5* N.C. $1\frac{1}{2}$ $1\frac{1}{2}$ *lull*

102 G^{II} $B\flat 5$ $C5$ *Gtr. 4 plays Fill 9* N.C. *Gtr. 5*

106 G^{II} $B\flat 5$ *Gtrs. 4 and 5* *Bass plays Bass Fill 2*

Gtrs. 1 and 2 *Rhy. Fig. 7*

Bass *Bass Fig. 8*

108 $C5$ C^{VII} *end Rhy. Fig. 7* *end Bass Fig. 8*

Fill 8 (6:19)

G^{II} $B\flat 5$ *lull*

Gtr. 4

Fill 9 (6:29)

$C5$ *grad. bend* N.C. $1\frac{1}{2}$

Gtr. 4

Bass Fill 2 (6:29)

$C5$ N.C.

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110 G^{II} $B\flat 5$
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 7 three times (see meas. 106)
Gtrs. 4 and 5

Bass plays Bass Fig. 8 three times (see meas. 106)

112 $C5$ C^{VII}

114 G^{II} $B\flat 5$

**See performance notes.*

116 $C5$ C^{VII}

(B:57) G^{II} $B\flat 5$ $C5$
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 4 four times simile (see meas. 41)
Gtrs. 4 and 5

Bass
Bass Fig. 9 *end Bass Fig. 9*

122 G^{II} $B\flat 5$ $C5$
Gtr. 5
Gtr. 4

Bass plays Bass Fig. 9 three times simile (see meas. 118)

125 G^{II} $B\flat 5$

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128 *C5* *G^{III}* *Bb5*

131 *C5*

(7:22) *G^{III}* *Bb*

134 *Gtr. 5*

Gtr. 4

Gtrs. 1 and 2
Rhy. Fig. 8

Bass
Bass Fig. 10

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136 **C^{viii}**

grad. bend full

end Rhy. Fig. 8

end Bass Fig. 10

Gⁱⁱⁱ **B^b** **C^{viii}**

Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 8 five times (see meas. 134)
 Gtr. 3 plays Riff A twelve times

138 Gtr. 5

Gtr. 4

Bass plays Bass Fig. 10 two and a half times (see meas. 134)

142 **Gⁱⁱⁱ** **B^b** **C^{viii}**

Riff A (7-29)
 Gtr. 3 (without slide)

TAB

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4/4
15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15
12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12 12
mf
    
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145 G^{II} B^b

Musical notation for measures 145-147. The top staff shows guitar 5 and guitar 4 parts with various fret numbers and 'full' markings. The bottom staff shows the bass line with a 'let ring' instruction.

148 C^{VII} G^{II} (7,47)

Gtr. 5 full full full full full full full full full full full full full

Gtr. 4 full full full full full full

Bass let ring

Musical notation for measures 148-150. The top staff shows guitar 5 and guitar 4 parts with various fret numbers and 'full' markings. The middle staff shows guitar 4 with 'full' markings. The bottom staff shows the bass line with a 'let ring' instruction.

151 B^b C^{VII}

Gtrs. 4 and 5 full full full full full full full full full full full full full full full full full

Bass let ring

Musical notation for measures 151-153. The top staff shows guitar 5 and guitar 4 parts with various fret numbers and 'full' markings. The bottom staff shows the bass line with a 'let ring' instruction.

154 G^{II} B^b C^{VII}

full full full full full full full full full full full full full full full full full

let ring

Musical notation for measures 154-156. The top staff shows guitar 5 and guitar 4 parts with various fret numbers and 'full' markings. The bottom staff shows the bass line with a 'let ring' instruction.

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157

Gtrs. 4 and 5

(R.O.O) G^{III} B^b

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass

160

C^{VIII} G^{III}

163

B^b C^{VII}

166

(8:13) G⁵ 1/2 B^b5 1/2 C⁵ 1/4 simile 1/4 1/4 B^b 1/2

Rhy. Fig. 9

Bass Fig. 11

end Rhy. Fig. 9

end Bass Fig. 11

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170 *Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 9 two and three quarter times (see meas. 166)*

G5 Bb5 C5

Bass plays Bass Fig. 11 two and three quarter times simile (see meas. 166)

173 *Gtr. 5*

Bb G5 Bb5 C5

Gtr. 4

176

Bb G5 Bb5

179 *Gtr. 5*

C5 B5 Bb5 A5

Gtr. 4

Gtrs. 1 and 2

Bass plays Bass Fill 3

Bass Fill 3 (8:37)

(C5) (B5) (Bb5) (A5)

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(8:39)
G^{II}
182 Gtr. 5

B^b

Musical score for measures 182-185. It features four staves: Gtr. 5, Gtr. 4, Gtrs. 1 and 2, and Bass. The key signature is B^b. Measure 182 starts with a G^{II} chord. The notation includes various fret numbers (12, 14, 15) and techniques such as bends (marked 'fult') and slurs. The Gtr. 4 staff has wavy lines above it. The Gtrs. 1 and 2 staff shows rhythmic patterns with 'X' marks. The Bass staff has a simple line with some notes.

184 C^{VIII}

Musical score for measures 184-187. It features four staves: Gtr. 5, Gtr. 4, Gtrs. 1 and 2, and Bass. The key signature is B^b. Measure 184 starts with a C^{VIII} chord. The notation includes various fret numbers (12, 14, 15) and techniques such as bends (marked 'fult') and slurs. The Gtr. 4 staff has wavy lines above it. The Gtrs. 1 and 2 staff shows rhythmic patterns with 'X' marks. The Bass staff has a simple line with some notes. The section ends with 'end Rhy. Fig. 10'.

Fade Out

B^b

186 G^{III} B^b C^{VIII}
Gtrs. 1 and 2 repeat Rhy. Fig. 10 until fade

Musical score for measures 186-189. It features four staves: Gtr. 5, Gtr. 4, Gtrs. 1 and 2, and Bass. The key signature is B^b. Measure 186 starts with a G^{III} chord. The notation includes various fret numbers (14, 12, 13, 15, 12, 10, 14) and techniques such as bends (marked 'fult') and slurs. The Gtr. 4 staff has wavy lines above it. The Gtrs. 1 and 2 staff shows rhythmic patterns with 'X' marks. The Bass staff has a simple line with some notes. The section ends with 'Bass repeats previous four meas. simile until fade'.

Bass repeats previous four meas. simile until fade



How to Play This Month's Songs

Jimmy Eat World "The Middle"

To recreate the "skipping CD" effect featured in the intro to "The Middle," you and another guitarist will need to do what Jimmy Eat World guitarists Jim Adkins and Tom Linton do: to lock in together so tightly with palm-muted downstrokes that you sound like one instrument. To that end, try to match your tones and volume levels and tap your feet together on each beat to synchronize your picking.

Interestingly, the guitar solo in the middle of the song (section D) is constructed around a simple major scale, as opposed to the more typical blues or pentatonic pattern. This approach works well with basic I-V-IV progressions, such as the one this song is based on. The entire lead guitar part (including those cool hammer-on/pull-off combinations in measures 41 and 45) is rooted in the D major scale (D E F# G A B C# D), played in a variety of positions. This approach works so well because each note in the scale "agrees" with the A, D and G chords the solo is played against. **FIGURE 1** is another example of this type of chord-scale compatibility.

The Beatles "Something"

George Harrison's brilliantly understated lead guitar work is featured prominently in "Something." The song's signature riff (first appearing in measures 1 and 2) contains a pre-bend/release figure on the second beat. As the name implies, a pre-bend is a note that is bent before being plucked; the tricky part is making sure it's in tune when you pick it (which is kind of hard to do since you haven't heard the note yet!). **FIGURE 2** is an exercise that help get you accustomed to both half-step and full-step pre-bends while letting you hear how they're used in the context of a lead riff. We marked the pre-bends with asterisks to help you zone in on them. With practice, your ears and fingers will enable you to remember just how far you'll need to bend the string to get the note you want.

"Something" is in the key of C, and doesn't feature any chords that could be considered "open" (yet Harrison avoids "open" chord grips that use open strings) and instead constructs his rhythm guitar part by utilizing the middle area of the fretboard, much like a jazz guitarist would. It could be argued that this makes things unnecessarily difficult;

after all, why play a Cmaj7 or a G with "closed" grips (**FIGURE 3a**) when you can more easily play them "open" (**FIGURE 3b**)? There are several possible reasons, such as the difference in tone, or the close proximity to other chords you want to go to. The most common advantage of this approach is probably that the movable "closed" voicings allow for easier key transpositions. For example, you can't take an open-position G chord (such as the one shown in **FIGURE 3b**) and modulate up a half step to Ab by simply shifting your hand position up one fret. You can do this by playing the completely fretted G voicing shown in **FIGURE 3a** and moving the entire grip up one fret.

Lynyrd Skynyrd "Free Bird"

Skynyrd guitarist Gary Rossington, on his signature slide part (Guitar 3) featured throughout the intro and verses of "Free Bird": "Back then, we couldn't play slide without it clinkin' against the frets, so we took a screwdriver and wedged it between the strings and the fretboard up by the nut to raise the action. My SG looked like a steel guitar by the time I got done with it." To facilitate performance of this immortal slide part in the studio, Rossington also claims to have tuned his guitar's B string down to G and doubled the G-string notes on both strings, probably to avoid hitting errant notes on other strings with the slide.

If you're going to perform this song live, I recommend that you (a) do not stuff a screwdriver under your strings and (b) leave the B string tuned normally; this way you can play the rest of the song, not just the slide parts. Performing the slide licks fingerstyle (as opposed to using a pick) should help make it a little easier to mute idle strings that may be unintentionally sounded by the slide. Rossington makes it a point to play "behind the beat," "dragging" into each slide to make the line "sing." Okay, enough foreplay. Let's get to the solo.

As if doing it once weren't enough, the late Allen Collins double-tracked his scorching lead guitar solo to give it more "beef," straying from playing in perfect unison with the initial track only occasionally. In doing this he managed to create, over the course of four minutes, a virtual bible of licks quoted by rock guitarists everywhere over the last 30 years. Beginning at section D (measure 49),

Collins plays a simple melodic line utilizing the movable minor pentatonic shape illustrated in **FIGURE 4**. From measures 58 through 61, the rhythms get a bit "crammed"; think of this as just a simple minor pentatonic lick (**FIGURE 5**) played as fast and frenzied as possible. This type of crammed phrasing happens a second time, during measures 70-72; this section is essentially the lick shown in **FIGURE 6** played extremely quickly. Finally, there's one more crammed lick in measures 115-117, which sounds even more compelling and powerful because of the stop-time figure being played by the band. This passage can be simplified into the riffs depicted in **FIGURE 7**. Each instance of this furious, out-of-time phrasing sounds like all hell breaking loose, thanks to the "guitar-duel" illusion of two guitarists playing the patterns in these figures as fast as humanly possible.

A side note about the odd rhythms and ratios first seen in measures 70-72: when a melody is meant to be interpreted freely, an arranger may opt to approximate its rhythm and place the phrase in question in a bracket with a ratio (as seen underneath these three measures). The number to the left of the colon indicates the number of notes in the phrase; the number on the right shows how many beats the phrase covers. A 15:4 ratio, as shown in measure 70, means 15 evenly spaced notes played over the duration of four beats. Likewise, an 11:2 marking indicates 11 notes played over the course of two beats.

Nickelback "Too Bad"

The verse riff of Nickelback's "Too Bad" (see meas. 3-7) features simultaneous hammer-ons and picking, such as on the first beats of measures 4 and 5.

Guitar 3 enters at measure 30 (leading into the second verse) playing pre-bends. As mentioned earlier in "Something," make sure each pre-bend is in tune and release the bends slowly for maximum soulfulness.

During the guitar solo (section D), notice how the rhythm part (played by Guitar 2) consists of sparse, single-note lines instead of chunky power chords. This allows Guitars 3 and 4 (lead) to have more sonic space while lending authority or "balls" to the bass guitar by loosely doubling it an octave higher. And don't let the simplicity of it fool you; it's