

"I Feel Fine"

The Beatles

Rumor has it that after dreaming up this infectious riff, an exuberant and overly enthusiastic John Lennon attempted to insert it into each and every song on the album in progress (*Beatles For Sale*). Quite understandably, the other three Beatles quickly vetoed the idea, but, thankfully, not before it made it onto the 1964 classic, "I Feel Fine."

PIONEERS OF FEEDBACK

Although the debate rages on, many musicologists agree that "I Feel Fine" is the first pop recording to feature intentional feedback. The historic moment happened at the onset of the tune when Paul McCartney struck a muted low-A note on his bass, causing the open A string of John Lennon's acoustic/electric guitar to roar in sympathetic feedback. A convincing way to emulate this sound on an electric guitar is to pluck a palm-muted open-A string, then kick on a fuzz pedal while you simultaneously strike the string again without the muting.

LENNON'S RIFF

After the famous "feedback" intro, Lennon gleefully launches into his pet riff. Based on a set of sixth-string-rooted barre chords (D7, C7, and G7), it makes its way down the fretboard in two-bar increments. The trick to playing this riff is to barre across the strings at the 10th fret with your index finger. Once you get the first two measures [Fig. 1] under your fingers, you've got the rest of the riff nailed. Just transpose all of the same fingerings down to the eighth fret for the C7 moves, and finally down to the third fret for the G7 section.

FIG. 1

BEATLES TEAMWORK

In the last two measures of the intro, George Harrison doubles Lennon's G7 riff. Then, at the top of the verse, they separate to play two different parts: Harrison forges ahead with variations on the main riff, while Lennon switches to a syncopated eighth-note groove fueled by the chord voicings depicted in the chord frames at the top of the transcription's first page. Notice that Lennon then joins Harrison for the G7 riff in the last two measures of the verse. He treats the bridge section much like he does the verse, while Harrison toggles between arpeggio figures and chord interjections.

HARRISON'S SOLO

George Harrison is well known for his memorably melodic guitar solos, and the one in "I Feel Fine" proves no exception. Set in G Dorian (G-A-B-C-D-E-F), it's played for the most part along the G and B string set. Check out Fig. 2 for some suggested fingerings. In bar 5, he heralds the return to the main riff with a slight variation of the opening measures.

FIG. 2

DIAL TONE

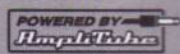
What They Used: John Lennon used his famous Gibson J-160E acoustic/electric guitar. It's interesting to note that while the guitar is equipped with a pickup, he rarely plugged this guitar into an amplifier for recordings; it was usually miked. George Harrison played his Gretsch Chet Atkins Tennesseean, most likely plugged into a Vox AC30 combo amplifier.

How to Get the Sound: Although Lennon's amplified J-160 provides a unique sound, you can duplicate it with either a solid-body or a semi-hollowbody electric. Use the neck pickup and dial in a bright tone on the clean channel of a tube combo amp. Accentuate the treble and middle settings, but go easy on the bass. Harrison's tone on the solo is decidedly more "twangy." You'll probably want to switch to the bridge pickup for this passage.



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I Feel Fine

Words and Music by John Lennon and Paul McCartney
from The Beatles - *Beatles '65*

Transcribed by Bill LaFleur

G7 3fr 131241
D7 10fr 131211
D 10fr 134211
C 8fr 134211
G 134211
Bm 13421
C^{open} 32 1
D^{open} 132
Am 231

Intro
Moderately fast ♩ = 180
**A5

*Gtr. 1 (acous./elec.)

p
w/ slight dist. & reverb

f
†fdbk.

T
A
B

*Gibson J-160E played by John Lennon.
**Chord symbols reflect implied harmony.
***Open A string rings sympathetically from bass striking a low A note.
Pitch: C[♯]
†Fdbk. caused by sympathetic ringing of open A string.

D7 **C7**

let ring throughout

G7

††Gtrs. 1 & 2

(Gtr. 1, cont. in slashes)

††Gtr. 2 (elec.) - Gretsch Tennessean played by George Harrison;
w/ slight dist., played *mf*. Composite arrangement

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I FEEL FINE

Verse

*G7

Gtr. 1
mp

1. Ba - by's good to me, — you know, — she's hap - py as — can be, — you know, — she said —
2., 4. Ba - by says she's mine, — you know, — she tells — me all — the time, — you know, — she said —

Gtr. 2
Rhy. Fig. 1

*See top of first page of song for chord diagrams pertaining to rhythm slashes.

D7

D

C

G

®

3fr

(cont. in notation)

so. }
so. }

I'm in love with her — and I — feel —

End Rhy. Fig. 1

1. | 2.

G7

fine.

*Gtrs. 1 & 2

(Gtr. 1, cont. in slashes)

*Composite arrangement

Bridge

G Bm C D open

Gtr. 1

I'm so glad that she's my lit-tle girl. (Oo, oo.)

Gtr. 2

G Bm Am D open

She's so glad, she's tel-lin' all the world 3., 5. that her ba-

(Oo, oo.)

Verse

Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1

G7

by buys her things you know, he buys her dia-mond rings you know, she said

Gtr. 2

To Coda

D7 D C

so. She's in love with me and I feel

I FEEL FINE

G7

fine. Mm.

*Gtr. 3 (elec.)

mf
w/ slight dist.

*George Harrison

**Gtrs. 1 & 2

**Composite arrangement

Guitar Solo

Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (1st 6 meas.)

Gtr. 2 tacet

G7

Gtr. 3

D7

Interlude

Gtr. 3 tacet

D7

C7

Gtr. 3

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 1
divisi

I FEEL FINE

D.S. al Coda
(take 2nd ending)

G7

*Gtrs. 1 & 2

*Composite arrangement

Coda

G7

fine.

She's in love with me —

D C

**Gtrs. 1 & 2

**Composite arrangement

G7

— and I — feel — fine. Mm. —

Rhy. Fig. 2

End Rhy. Fig. 2

Outro

Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 2 (till fade)
G7

Begin fade

Fade out

Mm. —

Gtr. 2