

Jerry Donahue's Telemaster Guitar

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About The Book

Jerry Donahue reigns over one of the most unique and unmistakably individual guitar styles today. His uncanny technique, melding country, bluegrass, Celtic, folk and rock 'n' roll together into one genre, mirrors his various influences. Not one to rest complacent, he continuously explores and even surpasses his own boundaries and achievements. His recordings with numerous diverse groups such as Fairport Convention, Joan Armatrading and Gerry Rafferty, to name just a few, lay testament to Jerry's skill as an accompanist. His sound and guitar technique are instantly identifiable. After two solo releases he still charts unexplored territory as a member of THE HELLECASTERS with John Jorgenson and Will Ray. This book dispels the mystery of Jerry's style and should inspire you to adopt some of his guitarisms into your own vocabulary.



Jerry Donahue with Signature Stratocaster®

Behind The Nut Bends

The techniques in this book involve a lot of string bending. Aside from the regular across the fingerboard bends, you will also develop individual string bends from behind the nut. In order to do this properly use light gauge stainless-steel strings (.09-.42, the lighter the better). It is best to use a guitar without a fixed locking nut. The headstock of the guitar must be of the Fender variety—angled headstocks don't allow enough distance between the string and the wood for bending. Telecaster-style headstocks seem to work best for this technique, allowing enough distance to bend a minor, or even a major, 3rd.

⑤ Example 3A

Start with a simple bend using open strings and practice going up in 1/2 step increments, like this E minor to E major. Do this gradually until your left-hand fingers are comfortable enough to perform without pain or difficulty.

Musical notation for Example 3A. The top staff is in 4/4 time, showing a half note E4 (open string) followed by a half note E4 with a sharp sign (E5), indicating a half-step bend. A dashed line labeled "hold" spans the duration of the second note. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with two strings (T and B) shown, both starting at fret 0. A bracket labeled "1/2" indicates the half-step bend.

⑥ Example 3B

Here is a whole step bend into A major using two strings. Try the strings one at a time to hear the intended pitch, and then sound them together. Add some vibrato for a nice finish.

Musical notation for Example 3B. The top staff is in 4/4 time, showing a half note A4 (open string) followed by a half note A4 with two sharp signs (A5), indicating a whole-step bend. A dashed line labeled "grad. bend" spans the duration of the second note. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature with two strings (T and B) shown, both starting at fret 0. A bracket labeled "1/2" indicates the whole-step bend. Wavy lines above the notes indicate vibrato.

The Beak

This tune from TELECASTING is chock full of the techniques we have covered including string bends, double-stops and, of course, "behind the nut" bends. Though Jerry effortlessly meanders through the tune in one take, stay tuned as he plays and examines each phrase measure by measure. Take each line slowly and follow the fingerings carefully. However, experiment with your own approach to the lines as well.

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Moderate country ♩ = 114

Intro:
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