

How To Excel in a Rock Band

Author: Tony Williams The desire to be the best guitarist, fastest bass player, or loudest drummer in a rock band is a common ambition, although none of these qualities are necessary to become successful. So where does this competitive nature come from? I suspect it is derived from the great players who inspired us in the first place.

Take as an example, my friend the Legend Ned K who had a unique method of learning to play the guitar. He combined his lessons with a love of skydiving! The young Ned would jump out of the back of a plane alongside his guitar coach (of which there were many), and during the frenetic ride back to earth the lesson would take place. Naturally, there wasn't much time to learn everything before pulling the ripcord, and as a result; Ned K remains one of the fastest guitar players alive today!

It has been said though, that everybody these days plays guitar. So one way to get the gig is to learn an instrument that is less common and regularly in demand - like drums for example. But despite ambitions, to excel at any endeavour will take plenty of practice and a lot of hard work, and it is this hard work which is often overlooked.

Take as a further example of rugged determination a drumming friend of mine...

At the age of twelve, Keefy got a job parking cars at his local car showroom in a well to do part of Wirral. One day, stirred by the rhythms coming from a beat-up Ford Anglia's big end, he jumped out of the car leaving it where it was and immediately rushed home to resurrect his grandad's World War 2 drum kit which had been stowed away years earlier in the loft.

After mastering the rudiments on the ancient kit, Keefy decided he wanted to be a noted drummer and began a punishing practice regime in which he would play for hours on steel bin lids armed with a pair of lump hammers. Keefy says this was the secret to building the strength that allows him to play VERY LOUDLY!

Naturally, when he returned to the World War 2 kit it didn't last very long. In fact, several kits later, it became apparent that something rather special was needed to endure the punishment metered out by the newly christened "Bad Boy" Keefy.

The invention of rack-mounted drums was the answer to Keefy's prayers (until then he hadn't been able to finish a gig without destroying his kit), and with a few modifications, plus the addition of some scaffolding poles, Bad Boy Keefy was ready to rock and roll! The point is that no matter what your chosen instrument, it will take a great deal of practice and determination. And to become a cut above the rest often takes some lateral thinking and perhaps a different approach to the norm.

You may be wondering if any of this is true or simply a figment of my imagination? Well, you decide...

About the Author

Tony Williams is a musician, writer, and self-confessed eBay fanatic. He is also the webmaster of [MuZiCk! - The irreverent rock music lexicon](#), and [Rich Pickings - your online guitar advisory service](#).

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