

Strum Fix Plus Installation Instructions



Revision 7: March 26, 2011

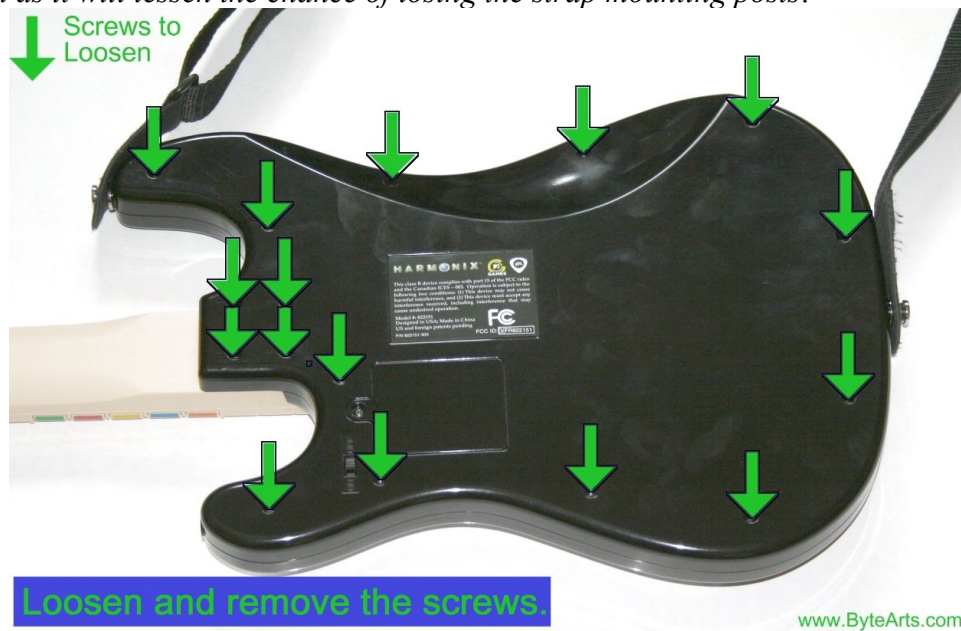
Thank you for purchasing the Strum Fix Plus. I hope you find that it not only fixes your guitar, but makes it better than the original. I recommend you read through the instructions first so you get an idea of what you need to do.

Tools Required

- Small Phillips screwdriver
- Small flat-bladed screwdriver
- Wire cutters (or scissors)
- Wire strippers (or a knife)

Step 1. Remove The Back Of The Guitar

Place the guitar on a flat surface, face side down. You may want to put a cushion or pillow underneath it to stabilize it, since the whammy bar sticks out and can get in the way. *I recommend keeping the strap attached as it will lessen the chance of losing the strap mounting posts.*



Using a Phillips screwdriver (the one with an end shaped like a “X”), carefully unscrew (by turning counter-clockwise) all the screws around the outside edge of the guitar body as well as the 4 screws by the neck (these 4 are pretty long). On most guitars, there are 16 screws, but some guitar models may have only 14. The screws are different lengths, so if you remove them from their holes, try to keep track of which screw goes where, although don't worry too much, it's not that big a deal as you can pretty easily figure which screw fits where.

Once all the screws are loose, carefully lift the back cover off the guitar – you may have wiggle it a bit to get all the screws to let go. Typically one or two screws will “hang on” and not let you remove the cover – try using your screwdriver to unscrew each screw a little bit while lifting the back cover, once all the screws are loose, the two halves of the guitar should come apart easily. You should NOT have to use force to get the guitar apart.

WIRELESS GUITARS

If you have a wireless guitar, then there is a wire which goes from the battery compartment on the back cover to a circuit board – be careful not to yank on this wire! You can leave the wire attached and set the back cover down nearby, or detach the wire from the circuit board by pulling gently on the connector where it attaches to the “motherboard”. If you do remove it, note the orientation of the wires. You will need to replace the connector exactly as it was – you may want to take a photo of it before you remove it.

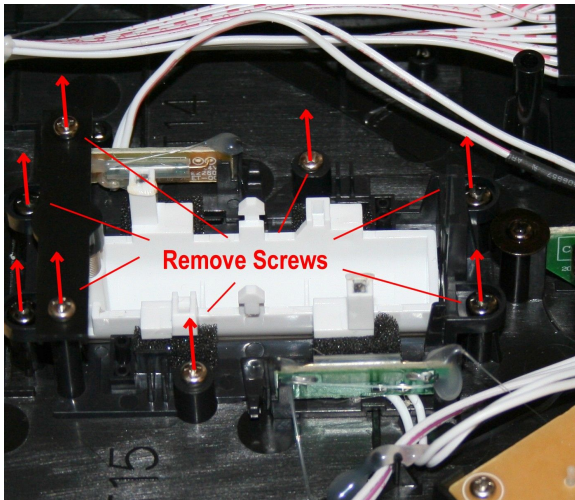


Guitar with back cover removed (the Strum Fix is already installed in this photo).

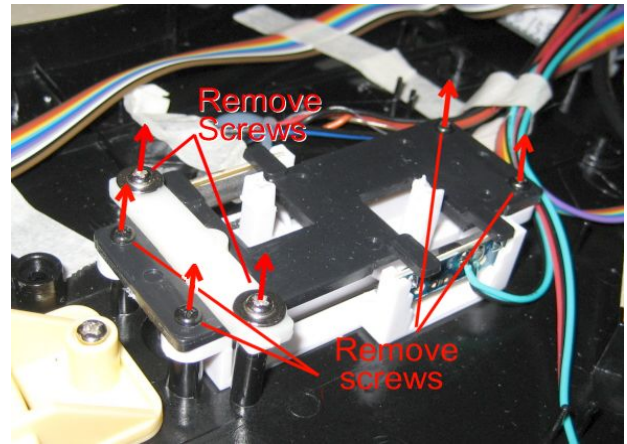
There are also two posts which are used to attach the guitar strap – pay attention to where they fit in the guitar body. Try to keep them in place if you can. If they do fall out, just make sure to replace them when reassembling the guitar. The shorter post goes in the end of the guitar body (furthest from the neck).

Step 3. Remove The Old Strummer Assembly

Before installing the Strum Fix Plus you need to remove the original strummer assembly. There are many variations of Rock Band guitar strummers (at least 4 different versions have been produced, commonly referred to as “generation” 1 thru 4), but the procedure for removing them is the same. Look at the photos below for the one that most closely matches your guitar and remove the screws as shown. **Keep the screws – you will need some of them later to install the Strum Fix Plus.**

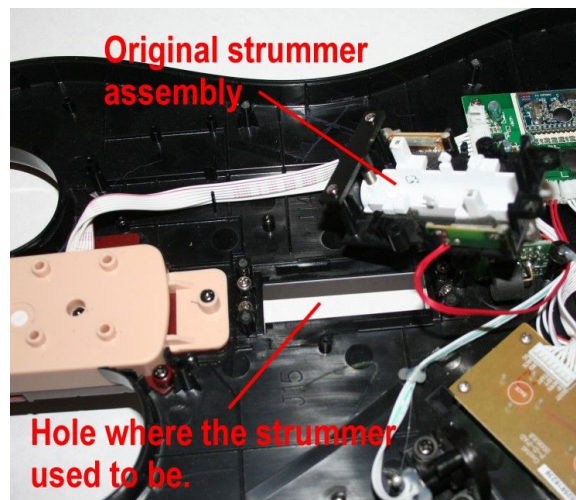


Generation 1-3 Strummer removal



Generation 4 Strummer Removal

Some guitars may not have all the screws shown in the photos. After the screws are removed, carefully lift the old strummer assembly up out of the guitar – the wires to the old strum switches will still be attached, so just place the old strummer next the hole where it used to be (see below) as we check-fit the Strum Fix Plus.

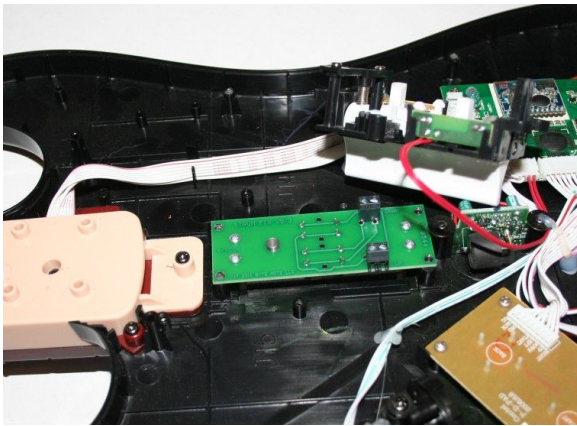


Original Strummer Removed

Step 4. [Optional] Check-Fit The Strum Fix Plus Assembly In The Guitar

Most people can skip this step if they want, but if you have any doubts about whether the Strum Fix Plus is going to fit now's the time to try it out.

Place the Strum Fix Plus in the guitar as shown here and make sure that the four holes in the circuit board line up with the four pegs on the guitar body. If everything fits okay, then proceed with the next step. If there are problems, make sure you have removed all of the old strummer assembly – some pieces may be “hot glued” in place and require that you carefully pry them out.



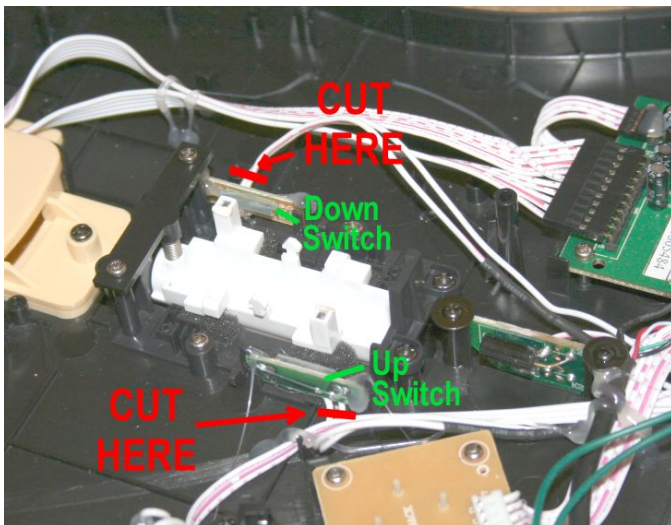
Strum Fix Plus set in place

If you want, go ahead and install a 1 or 2 screws in the corner holes of the Strum Fix Plus circuit board and gently tighten them – you can then reach under the guitar and see how the new strummer feels (it's awesome, right?).

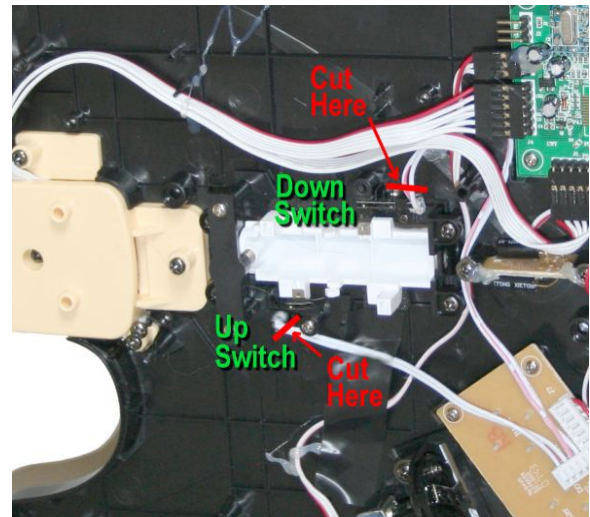
Step 5. Cut The Wires To The Old Switches

This is where we violate the warranty on the guitar! It feels great, doesn't it? You are now a “hacker” (the good kind).

Carefully cut the wires to the old switches – cut them off fairly close to the old switches so the remaining wire is as long as possible. There are many different types of switches that have been used in the Rock Band guitars (see the photos below for some examples). Once you have cut the wires, you can set the old strummer assembly aside, you don't need it anymore!

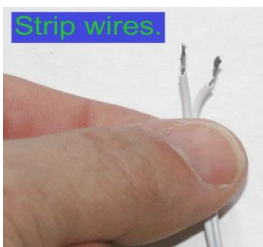


Magnetic Switches (used in Generation 3 and 4)



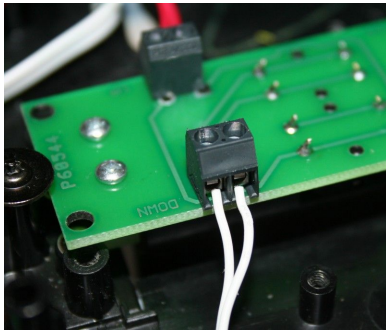
Leaf Switches (Generation 1)

Step 6. Prepare The Wires



Next strip the insulation off the loose ends of the wires you just cut. You need to remove the insulation from approximately the last ¼ inch (or about 5mm). If you don't have wire strippers, use a dull knife to lightly score the insulation and pull it off (you want to cut just the insulation and not the wires). It's a good idea to twist the ends of each wire a little so there are no loose strands of wire sticking out.

Step 7. Connect Wires To The Strum Fix Plus Circuit Board



Wires installed in connector

Connect the wires to the Strum Fix Plus circuit board by inserting the wires into the connectors and secure them by tightening the screws. **Do not over tighten the screws on the wire connectors** – they just need to be snug, not gorilla-proof! You may need to use a small flat-bladed “jewelers” or “eyeglass” screwdriver, as the screws are small. Make sure that the “UP” wires go to the “UP” connector, and do the same for the “DOWN” (unless you like to play standing on your head, in which case, go ahead and swap them). It doesn't matter which slot you put a wire into on a given connector.

Try pulling gently on the wires to make sure they are securely connected – it's better to find a loose connection now, rather than after it is all installed.

Step 8. Secure The Strum Fix Plus Circuit Board In Place

Install four screws (one in each corner) of the circuit board as shown below. Use the screws you took out in Step 3 (you did keep them, right?). **Do NOT overtighten the screws or you may strip the plastic.** *It's tempting to use an electric screwdriver, but I really don't recommend it.* The screws just need to be snug. On some guitars, the plastic may have already been stripped when the guitar was assembled at the factory, so don't worry too much – as long as at least two of the four screws are holding (one on each end), the strummer should work fine. (I have some guitars that I've been using like this for years).

Step 9. Replace The Back Cover

Take your time on this step – don't be in a hurry and everything will be okay!

WIRELESS GUITARS

If you have a wireless guitar and you detached the battery wire, then re-attach it now, being careful to replace the connector to its original position. Nothing like putting a guitar all back together only to find out you forgot to hook up the battery wire!

ALL GUITARS

Make sure the guitar strap mounting posts are in place and then carefully realign the back cover on the guitar.

You may need to wiggle some of the screws to get them to go into their holes. Be patient and don't force anything. When everything is properly aligned the two halves should fit together easily. Next, gently tighten the screws, being careful to not strip the plastic. A useful trick is to first turn the screw counter-clockwise about a half turn to get it properly seated, and then go ahead and turn it clockwise to tighten it. *I recommend that you DO NOT use an electric screwdriver, as it will strip the plastic very easily!*

Step 10. Test The Guitar

Connect the guitar to your game console and rock out! It may take a while for you to get used to the new feel of the strum bar. It takes very little force to activate the switches and you should be able to play with a very light touch on the strum bar. If the strum bar is not working, then there is probably a wire which is not connected properly – remove the back cover and double-check the connections. You may have to strip the ends of the wire a little bit more. If the UP and DOWN are reversed you will need to swap the wires.

Step 11. ROCK ON!

If you have any problems, comments or questions please let us know by dropping us a line at guitar@ByteArts.com. Thank you!