

A recap...

If you have a guitar with a pair of pickups, armed with the information from my website, logic tells us that there are SIX possible combinations of pickups (tones) to choose from: bridge or neck alone; both parallel, both series; both parallel/out of phase or both series/out of phase. Any Les Paul, SG, or other two-pickup guitar can be modified with a few switches to give you these six tones, as opposed to the "stock" three offered by the unmodified guitar. If you have a pair of humbuckers, you can ALSO add a coil-shunt or two and really fine-tune your tone for over twenty possible combos - it's the Jimmy Page mod, déjà vu all over again!

Getting practical...

Teles readily take advantage of some of this info with the use of the Fender 4-way or the four-pole/five-throw SuperSwitch, allowing you to select from four or five of the six possible combinations from two (single-coil) pickups, yet retaining a "stock" look.

Three-pickup Strats offer even more possible combinations, and some of the series and series/out of phase tones can be really amazing. Using my rotary switches, you'll still look stock... NO NEW HOLES! Yup, here it is - the plug for the **FAT-O-Caster!** Hey, it's MY website, after all...

Do you really need ONE guitar that does "everything?"

Here's the rub: even if you DID do every possible mod, some of the different combos would sound similar to each other, and some will just sound horrible. I usually recommend that you select from your favorite tones and try to accomplish just those combinations, rather than everything possible. Ergonomics comes into play here - too many switches make for a confusing instrument. Remember, you should be able to get to the tones quickly and reliably under the pressure of switching between a rhythm sound and lead/solo voice in less than a bar or two of music, on stage, LIVE, for these mods to really be useful.

Then, for me, there's this: even if I load up a Strat with a pair of humbuckers, I'm still playing a Strat. I just can't escape the mindset of what the body style is, no matter WHAT tones I'm getting out of it. And yes, I DO think that HOW I play is influenced by WHAT I'm playing on...

To mod, or not to mod - that IS the question!

EB