

Paul Gilbert's Gearbox

Guitars

Four Ibanez PGMFRM1 Fireman models—one in korina, a red version, and a light-blue one nicknamed "Kikusui Sake," all with new DiMarzio hum-cancelling single-coils ("I used them for most of the album . . . I'm not sure what they are called yet, but they sound killer"), plywood Ibanez PGM800 prototype

Amps

Marshall 2266c Vintage Modern 50-watt 2x12 combo, Marshall 2061X head, vintage Fender Princeton Reverb (for the surf sound on "Batter Up"), THD Hot Plate, Randall Isolation cab with 12" Celestion

Pedals

Majik Box Venom Boost, Majik Box prototype fuzz, HomeBrew Electronics UFO, HomeBrew THC, HomeBrew CPR, HomeBrew Detox EQ, Cry Baby 535Q wah, script-logo MXR Phase 90, Ibanez Paul Gilbert Signature AF2 Airplane Flanger, Hughes & Kettner Rotosphere

Strings and Picks

Ernie Ball RPS strings (.010-.046), Dunlop Tortex .60 mm picks

Miscellaneous

Bullet coiled cable (guitar to pedalboard), straight DiMarzio cable (pedalboard to amp), Voodoo Lab Pedal Power 2 Plus, Shure SM57 and Royer ribbon mics, two AMEK System 9098 mic preamps, Direct Sound Extreme Isolation EX-29 headphones

FEATURE



thing that needs work: Timing and endings. How to play in time, with a tempo, and how to end a solo so the listener knows that the solo ends *right here*. We're all guitar players and we all struggle with the same challenges, so I can't help but turn the critical eye back on myself and try to improve my own timing and endings. This is why I love to teach—I learn more than anyone!

What's the biggest misconception you think guitarists on the whole have about "shredders"?

I don't know when that term will stop giving me the creeps. Somehow it makes me think of a person trying to pick as fast as they possibly can, with their left hand out of sync, lots of delay to cover up the flaws, total disregard for the song's tempo, and vibrato done out of obligation rather than love of the sound. This is the grumpy old man in me. "You kids—get out of my yard!" I hope it's my misconception and that shred will come to mean guitar virtuosity that rivals the legacy of Itzhak Perlman, Glenn Gould, and Oscar Peterson. Anyway, regardless of what terms people might use, I hope that guitarists who play fast will invest enough love and practice to make their playing world-class, listenable, and super shreddifying. And then do some spine-tingling vibrato followed by three big notes that say "The solo ends *right here*." It's a worthy goal. 🎸

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