

= Guitar Hero : Van Halen =

Guitar Hero : Van Halen is the third and final band @-@ specific music rhythm game in the Guitar Hero series . As with the previous games Guitar Hero : Aerosmith and Guitar Hero : Metallica , the game features 25 songs from Van Halen along with 19 additional songs from selected artists that have been inspired by the group . The game was released in retail for the PlayStation 2 , PlayStation 3 , Xbox 360 , and Wii systems on December 22 , 2009 , in North America , and in February 2010 for PAL regions . However , as part of a promotion with Guitar Hero 5 , the game was shipped to Guitar Hero 5 purchasers in North America prior to its retail release . The game was developed by Neversoft with Underground Development assisting Neversoft on developing the Xbox 360 port and published by Activision .

The game has received mostly negative reviews from critics , most of which consider the game 's quality to be greatly inferior to its predecessor , Guitar Hero : Metallica and other games of the series . The reviewers criticized the lack of former Van Halen members , Sammy Hagar , Michael Anthony and Gary Cherone , the limited tracks selected from Van Halen 's discography , the selection of other tracks included in the game , and the general lack of features introduced in the previous band @-@ centric games and Guitar Hero 5 .

= = Gameplay = =

Guitar Hero : Van Halen is similar to the preceding band @-@ centric game , Guitar Hero : Metallica , featuring support for four players in a single band on lead and bass guitar , drums , and vocals . The game is based off the engine originating from Guitar Hero World Tour , and thus does not feature the additions that are present in Guitar Hero 5 , such as drop @-@ in / drop @-@ out play .

Only the current members of the band ? Eddie Van Halen , David Lee Roth , Alex Van Halen and Wolfgang Van Halen ? are playable avatars in the game for the Van Halen songs ; former band members Sammy Hagar , Gary Cherone and Michael Anthony are not included . The band appear as they did in 2009 but , by completing challenges in the game , players can unlock their older appearances from the " spandex era [?] with the big hair and tight pants " . Despite not being alive during this period of the band 's history , Wolfgang Van Halen 's avatar has a retro outfit copied from the dice @-@ shirt @-@ and @-@ patchwork @-@ jeans getup worn by his father in the video for " Panama " .

A demo of the game was released to Xbox Live on December 9 , 2009 , featuring two Van Halen songs , " Eruption " and " Panama " , along with Weezer 's " Dope Nose " and Killswitch Engage 's " The End of Heartache " .

= = Development = =

While the game was formally announced by Activision on May 7 , 2009 , several sources reported a month earlier that Van Halen was in development . USK , the German software ratings board , posted a content rating for a Van Halen @-@ based game in the series . GameStop temporarily listed the game for pre @-@ order during the month of April . A list of Xbox 360 Achievements was posted to the Internet in early May .

Throughout September 2009 , people who purchased or preordered Guitar Hero 5 in the US were given a code which they could redeem to receive a free copy of Guitar Hero : Van Halen prior to its retail release . These copies began arriving to customers in early October for PlayStation 2 , Xbox 360 , and Wii players , while the PlayStation 3 version was delayed due to a printing error . The game came in a cardboard sleeve with cover art indicating that it was for promotional use .

= = Soundtrack = =

Like the other band @-@ centric Guitar Hero games , Guitar Hero : Van Halen includes 25 songs

from the band Van Halen , including 3 guitar solos by Eddie Van Halen , in addition to 19 guest acts . The Van Halen songs in the game are taken during the time when David Lee Roth was in the band , and do not include any works during the period that Sammy Hagar and Gary Cherone were band members ; Activision 's head of music licensing , Tim Riley , notes that the lack of such material was not due to any demands or requests made by David Lee Roth . Riley also stated that most of the guest acts were selected by Wolfgang Van Halen , at the suggestion of Roth . The following songs are included in the game :

^ + Song contains both a single and double bass drums chart . ^ a Song is a guitar solo by Eddie Van Halen .

= = Reception = =

Early reviews of the promotional version of the game received by redeeming a code that came with Guitar Hero 5 were critical of the game . IGN 's Erik Brudvig rated the game 4 @. @ 9 / 10 , citing problems with the lack of relevance of Van Halen relative to the culture of the 2000s , including having their avatars based on their current appearances rather than that of their 80s heyday , the lack of songs from Sammy Hagar 's period in the band , and the lack of features since introduced with Guitar Hero 5 . Brudvig ultimately stated that those who got the game free through the Guitar Hero 5 promotion " got what they paid for " . Robert Workman of Game Daily was less critical of the title , but still noted that the game lacked features , including some mention of Hagar and Gary Cherone and songs from their period with the band , and felt that the title was below the quality of Guitar Hero : Metallica . Both Brudvig and Workman commented positively on the sound recordings and the note tracking of the Van Halen songs .

Guitar Hero : Van Halen reviews following its release were similarly negative . Ben Kuchera of Ars Technica considered the game 's limited coverage of the band 's history to be " a sadly revisionist and dishonest take " , and felt that the non @-@ Van Halen songs clashed with the band 's own material . Kuchera further pointed to Activision 's distribution strategy for the game , stating that he felt that giving the game away free with Guitar Hero 5 showed that Activision did not have confidence in the game . Philip Horton of The Telegraph was critical of the game 's song selection , the band 's modern appearance , and the lack of any additional extras compared with either the previous band @-@ centric games or Guitar Hero 5 , and described it as " the weakest offering in the series to date " . Kate Carter of The Guardian commented that the game is " neither one thing or the other " , as it neither succeeds at bringing anything new to the Guitar Hero series nor fully pays tribute to Van Halen . Computer and Video Games ' review complained about the " shoddy character models " and described it as " the laziest Guitar Hero yet " , and Nathan Meunier of GamePro said that while the Van Halen songs were good and challenging , the remaining tracks did not fit the theme of the game , and that " the lackluster presentation makes the game feel more like a glorified track pack than a true homage " .

Guitar Hero : Van Halen sold fewer than 75 @, @ 000 units across all platforms in North America from December 22 to 31 , 2009 , according to NPD Group . As of April 2010 , the game has sold fewer than 250 @, @ 000 copies worldwide , with only 95 @, @ 000 units sold in North America . These numbers do not include copies of the game distributed in conjunction with Guitar Hero 5 .