

# Rock Of (Under) Ages Music games take centerstage

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## PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC **Guitar Hero(s)** [\$140]

We love that Guitar Hero has seen such success. The first time we reported on the game, it was firmly gripped in the hot little hands of gaming geeks and/or serious music aficionados—and a certain other local publication who recently covered it was busy throwing our staff members out of their events. (Thanks, Houston Clamp!) But all that has changed. A video game has truly transcended the “young, male adolescent” paradigm when Regis Philbin is playing it live on national television. [guitarhero.com](http://guitarhero.com)



“IF YOU WERE  
SINGING LIKE  
THIS 2000 YEARS  
AGO, PEOPLE  
WOULD HAVE  
STONED YOU.”  
—SIMON COWELL

## GROUPIE LOVE **Rock Band** [\$170]

We didn't believe it was possible to ratchet up the awesomeness of Guitar Hero any further, and as a result, we were slow to warm up to Rock Band. We now sheepishly admit to being very, very wrong about that stance. Rock Band actually picks up where Guitar Hero left off and adds a bass, drums and vocals to the mix. The result is a synergy between players that was missing in prior music games.

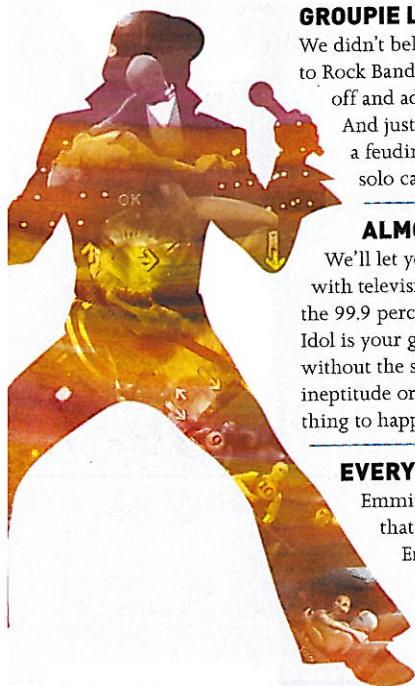
And just two hours after creating our band, “Banjopocalypse,” we morphed from a group of chuckling, less-than-sober friends into a feuding Oasis-esque troupe of malcontents—with the evening capped off by our guitarist leaving the band and embarking on a solo career. [rockband.com](http://rockband.com)

## ALMOST FAMOUS **Karaoke Revolution: American Idol Encore** [\$70]

We'll let you in on a secret: We absolutely hate “American Idol.” Not only does it encapsulate everything that's wrong with television, it manages to highlight the rampant suck-ulence in the music industry as well. But if you're among the 99.9 percent of America who can't seem to get enough of this pop pap, Karaoke Revolution: American Idol is your game. Paula and Randy are here, and, of course, no “American Idol” would be complete without the smarmy, elitist visage of Simon—who will either cast a withering glare at your vocal ineptitude or declare you to be the winner of a trip to Hollywood as if it were the greatest thing to happen to the human race since mitosis. [konami.com](http://konami.com)

## EVERYBODY GET FOOTLOOSE **Dancing With The Stars** [\$50]

Emmitt Smith might not be the greatest sports announcer, but man, can that guy dance. And now you, too, can test your mambo might, alongside Emmitt, Marie Osmond, Mario “A.C. Slater” Lopez and countless other celebrity powerhouses in Dancing with the Stars for the Wii. Tap a toe on the sensor pads while swinging the Wii Nunchuk and remote control, and score 30s on such bleeding-edge dances like the “Mashed Potato.” We can only assume “Soulja Boy” will be released in the next expansion—“Krumping with the Stars.” [wii.com](http://wii.com)



## eLINK MUSIC MEDIA TO TURN ON OR TUNE OUT

### MUSIC MAGS

#### BEST

**Fader** Because they are *Fader Paste* They've got sampler cds, it's well-written and designed, and it has a mix of new independent and older acts.

**URB** They're ahead of the industry when it comes to underground music. Great editorial content and even better design have made them a West Coast favorite for years. Big on indie bands and hip hop, they cover groups like The Rapture, Jurassic 5, Outkast, etc.

**Rolling Stone** No list would be complete without the original. They're the reason music mags exist. Though they've been known to blow a cover feature or two (Zac Efron, anyone?), they still lead the industry in content.

**NME, Harp, Filter, DIW, Magnet** (Mostly) intelligent music journalism for (mostly) intelligent, informed music fans

#### WORST

**Blender** They went from humorous to tabloid—fast. Don't even get us started on their music reviews.

**Spin** What once was a credible and cutting-edge magazine is now a sad, floundering industry puppet.

### MUSIC SITES

#### BEST

**XXL Mag** It's updated often with solid content including blogs, music vids, etc.

**KEXP** Live streaming radio for free, live SXSW coverage this year

**Stereogum** Simple layout, easy reading. These guys were one of the first to discover Clap Your Hands Say Yeah among others—and continue to be the first in breaking indie rock news.

**Pandora** Design your own radio stations, mix them and share with friends—for free. Awesometown.

**Pitchfork** They're the be-all and end-all for hipsters and music elitists. Starting off as a website that promoted primarily indie rock—and being annoying about it—they've broadened their horizons in the past few years. However, their haughtiness too-often seeps through into their writing.

#### WORST

**Lets Beef** It's a rap battle site for white kids who like to wear flat-brimmed hats and say “nigga” via webcam.

**MySpace** It has a horribly annoying design, and the autoplay feature makes our ears bleed.

### MUSIC BLOGS

#### BEST

**fluxblog** It's updated every day with mp3s that you otherwise would have never heard of before.

### Culture Bully, S/FJ, GorillaVsBear.net

They're in it for the love of the music. Culture Bully (and The Hood Internet) are a great source for smash-ups, while Sasha is the anti-Pitchfork in that he loves blowing up conventional indie rock “wisdom.” GorillaVsBear is at the forefront of new music and always has an interesting take on what's hip.

**Houstoncalling.net** Because it's David's blog, and it's pretty darn good if ya need a daily Hoostank buzz.

#### WORST

**Music.einnews.com** Just an example of many music industry news sites that feed the masses with tabloid-style updates of their favorite artists' successes or failures. If you can't wait for instant news on your regular music site, set this url on your favorites toolbar and hit refresh all friggin' day.