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Review of WowWee Paper Jamz: RoboCommunity

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RS Media Development Kit: <http://rsmediadevkit.sourceforge.net>

July 9, 2010 5:23 PM

I can't wait to see them in action by an member of R/C.

GWJex To Hack and make mods on robots is a life style and comes natural and not by choice. If a robot has a screw to open it then it must be opened!

GWJex TiAC Member

July 9, 2010 10:26 PM

It's processing (the first video), have also recorded a guitar lessons video and one on how to change the guitar sound using Mixcraft 5 and VST plugins! BTW, I picked up another one (The Stratocaster I think it is - Comes with "What I Like About You" as one of the songs). I got the second one for two reasons. One to see if it's sound is different from the Flying V (it's identical in sound), and also to take apart and maybe hack at some point. ;) Seems the guitars are all identical except the design and songs that go with them.

So there'll be at least 3 videos on this from me. And that's something since I was not at all enthusiastic about this product! LOL But overall, I really actually like it!

Also in the video, the intro/ending music was done with the guitar! I plugged it into the PC (into the line-in) and used Maxcraft 5, a VST plugin and some loops that come with Mixcraft. It's not the greatest, but hey, it shows a little of what you can actually do with it!

More coming up soon!

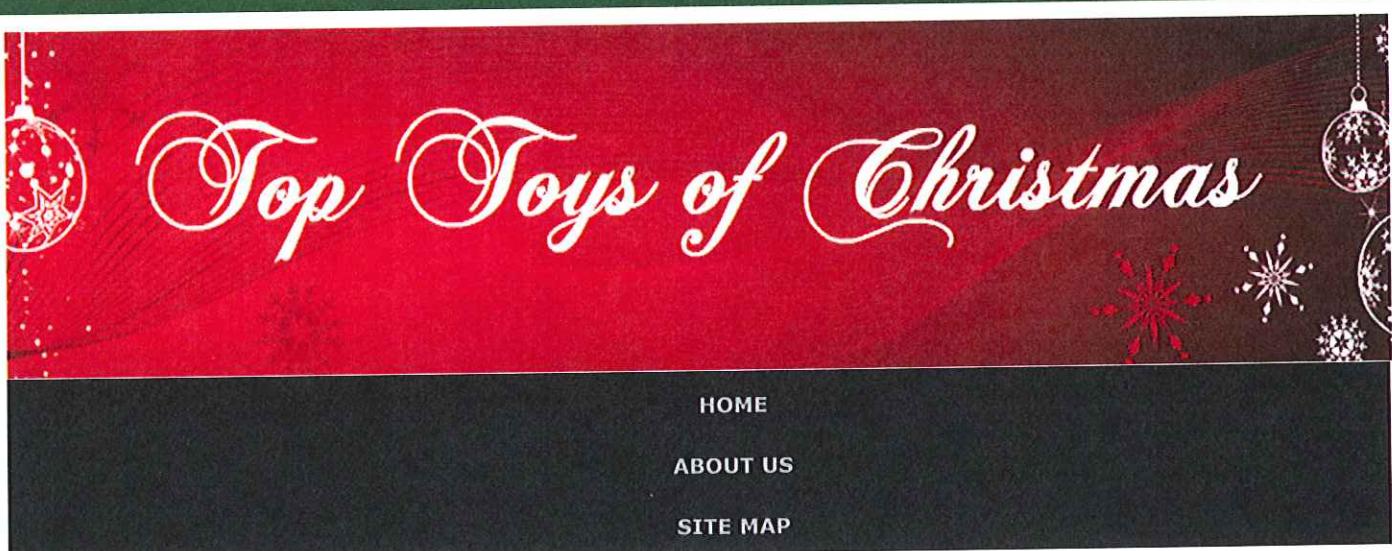
== Tools for the Robot Hacker ==

Project: Garcifer: <http://byrcbin.net/robotics/garcifer>

RS Media Development Kit: <http://rsmediadevkit.sourceforge.net>

July 9, 2010 11:02 PM

My youngest got a Paper Jamz guitar for her birthday last week. Now that I'm more aware of what it can do I might sneak a closer peek....:-)



Paper Jamz Guitar

Do you have a young guitar rock star-to-be on your gift list? The Paper Jamz guitar from WowWee may just be one of the cleverest uses of technology yet to come down the yellow brick road for introducing your aspiring guitar rocker to the great fun of actually making music. Put down that air guitar and look at this toy.



The basics:

The Paper Jamz guitars are very thin electric guitar-shaped toys that are designed to look like famous electric guitars. Although they have no strings they produce sounds through a built-in speaker that are reasonably close to those of actual electric guitars. They have circuitry embedded in the colorful outer surfaces that the makers call "Active Graphics" and the tech guys call "capacitive technology" that respond to the touch of the player and produce the called-for sound. There are 6 different looks in each "series." Each one comes with 3 pre-programmed songs that are just the beginning of the whole experience.

The manufacturer says this toy is appropriate for children 8 and up, although we have seen reviews of parents giving it to 7-year-olds, who loved it immensely. There are also reviews from adults who also thought it was great fun.

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What's to Like?

The looks: The outsides are designed to attract attention and look quite a bit like famous electric guitars. Even the controls are placed appropriately. For example, among the Series 1 Paper Jamz guitars, there are 6 styles. Style 1 resembles the Gibson "Les Paul" model, style 2 resembles the immortal Fender "Stratocaster," style 3 resembles the Fender "Telecaster," style 4 resembles the Flying V, style 5 resembles the Gibson "Explorer," and style 6 resembles the Gibson "SG." When no one is playing it, the guitar will look great on the wall. Although these are intended for the younger set, they are not too small. Videos of full grown people playing them show they are close in size to the full size models they resemble.

What they do: There are four basic things the Paper Jamz guitars can do, called "modes" by the maker.

Each Paper Jamz guitar comes with three songs that are related to its "style" design. If your player just wants to get a taste of what it would be like to be strumming a guitar as part of the groups that produced a huge hit, then the "Play" mode lets the player just strum along with the song being played. If the player quits strumming, then the song stops. So your aspiring musician sees the importance of keeping up.

Your player can turn on the "Karaoke" mode, meaning the lyrics are turned off. Your aspiring singer can practice singing or let others provide the vocals. Another possibility is to write and sing original lyrics to the songs. So your aspiring songwriter has a chance to hone creative skills.

Your player can turn on the "Rhythm" mode. In this mode, the music keeps the rhythm set by the player, within reason. If the player strums too fast or too slow, the song will be garbled. This is an important lesson for any beginning musician.

Last and, most important, is the "Freestyle" mode. The embedded songs are turned off. The player can play a large variety of chords at any rhythm and sing any lyrics that s/he would like. Since there are no metal strings to hold down, the hurt fingers of beginning electronic guitarists are avoided. Your young musician will have an easy time creating the sounds that express his/her musical mood and have so much fun doing it!

The price: One of these Paper Jamz guitars retails for about \$25.00. Compared to an actual electric guitar, this is very inexpensive. Learning some of the essential things about playing and creating rock songs on this inexpensive toy would be a good way to see if a person was truly interested in the effort required to play an electric guitar well. You could look at it as sort of a pilot project.

You can buy some acoustic guitars for about the same price, but, of course, you will also need extra strings and lesson materials, so the price will actually be higher. The type of music you play, the sounds produced, and the techniques involved in playing acoustic guitars are quite different from those of electric guitars so it would be good to find out what the musical goal of the player is before you buy one or the other.

Features: The Paper Jamz guitars feature "Active Graphics" technology that responds to the touch of the player. No breakable, painful strings or tuning are involved.

Each one has a built-in speaker with adjustable volume. There is also an earphone jack that can, mercifully, protect others from the sound of the new player's practices. It also serves as an amplifier jack whenever that would be a good idea.

What's not to like?

Some reviewers objected to the inclusion of only 3 songs on each guitar. The point with

A Loopz Game

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this toy is to have fun using those songs as ways to learn musicianship and how to produce your own songs. If you want a lot of songs just to listen to, then maybe an MP3 player would be a good bet, along side your air guitar.

When you play chords in the Freestyle mode, you can not play individual strings. Your finger position on the frets will determine which chord is played, sort of like the bar chord style. This makes it much easier to play chords for the beginner but, ultimately, a guitar player really does have to hold down actual strings.

You will need to provide 3 AAA batteries of your own. Also, the strap is a nice accompaniment but you have to buy it separately.

Bottom Line

Great toy for the youngster who shows an interest in playing rock guitar!

- Tags: 2010, boy christmas toys, Guitar, Jamz, Paper

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Product Features

- Paper Jamz Instant Rock Star Series 1
- Guitar Green Black **Explorer** Style Rock 5

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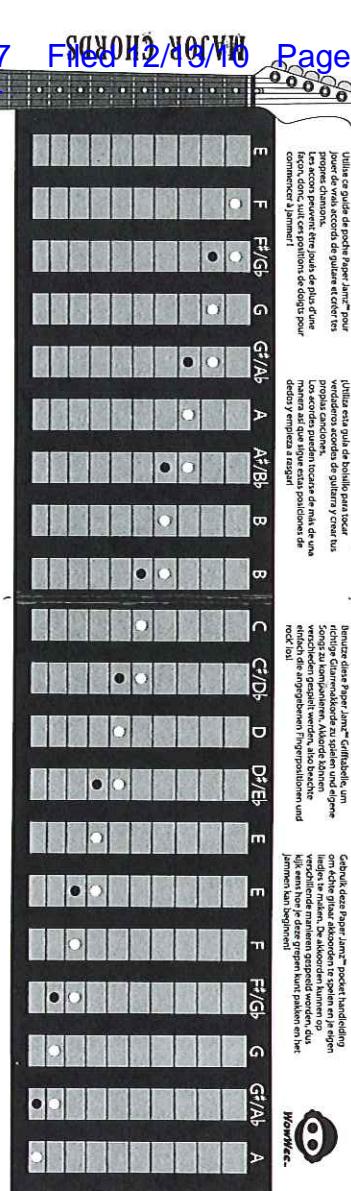
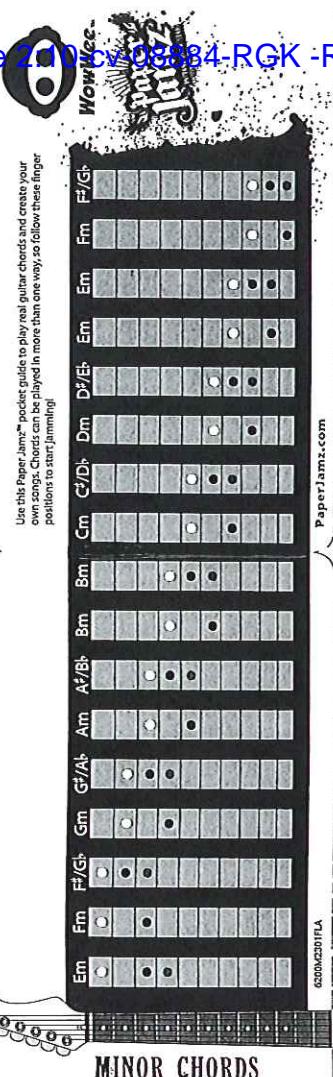
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