

# Progressive Rock

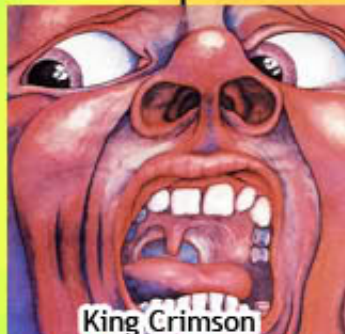
Progressive Rock is an attempt to musically orgasm as many times as possible during a 15-minute song.



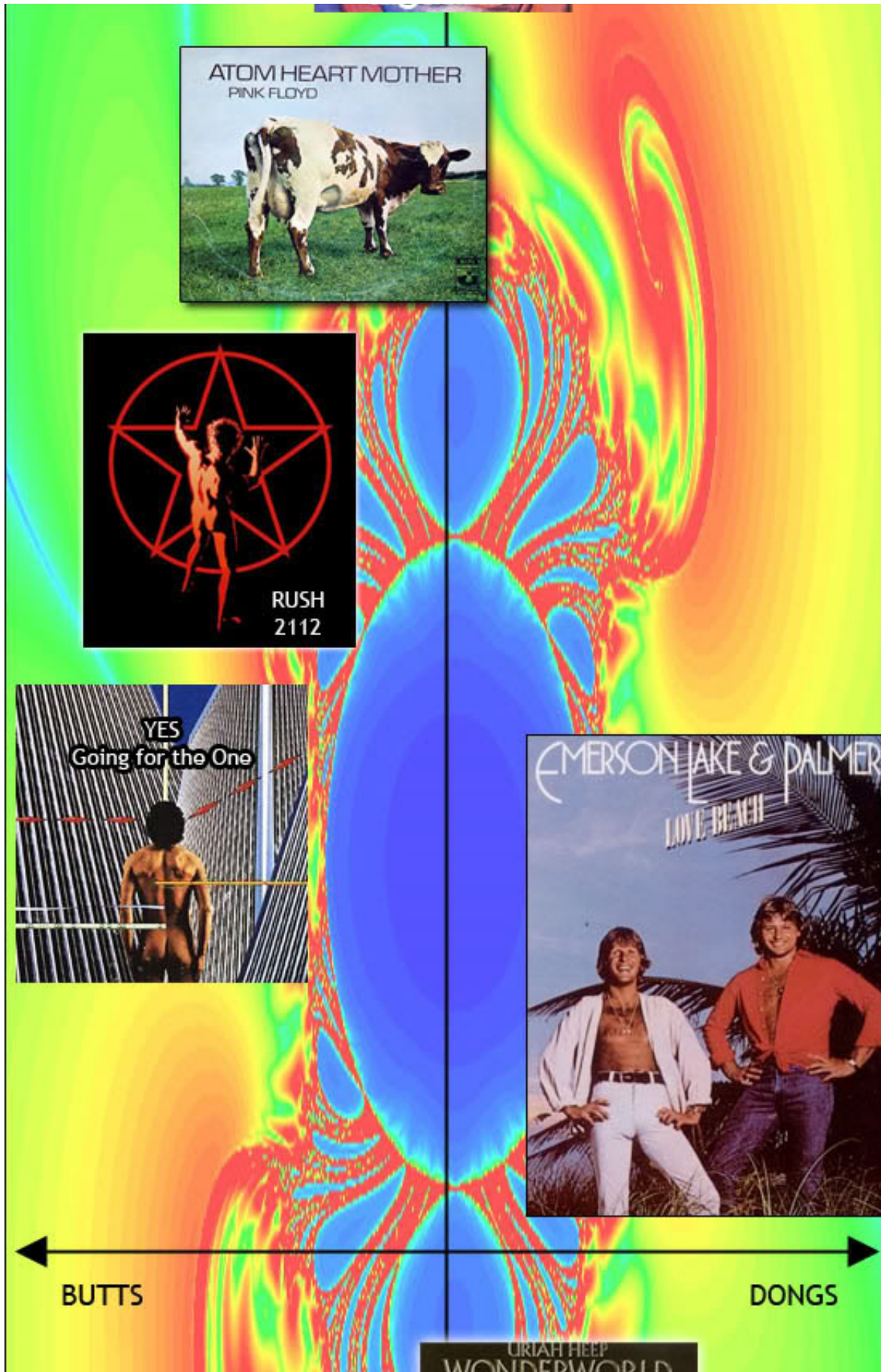


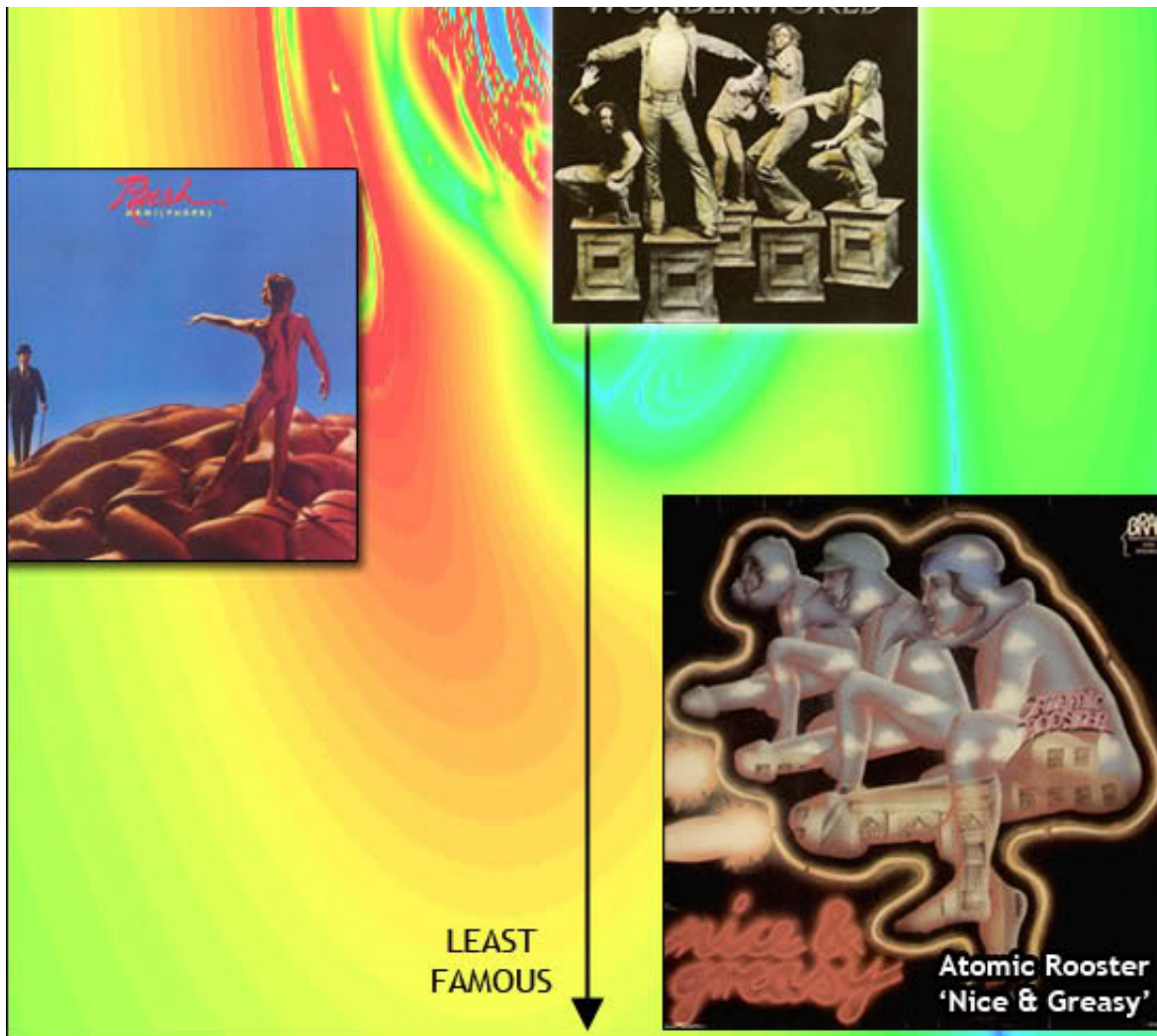
Two iPod touch devices are shown, one black and one silver, stacked vertically. Both devices display the iOS interface, showing a home screen with a grid of app icons (Music, Videos, Photos, Podcasts, iTunes, Settings, Store, App Store) and a status bar at the top. The black device is positioned slightly behind the silver one.

**MOST FAMOUS**









## Just The Facts

1. Progressive rock is categorized by a sacking of traditional song structure, complex rhythms, odd time signatures and a sense of inherent superiority over other rock genres
2. Because of this, it's pretty much never been popular
3. It is the only rock genre in which the term "flute solo" has any meaning

## Everything You Need to Know About Progressive Rock

There is no clear definition of progressive rock, as it is not bounded by convention, structure, tradition or common sense. Progressive rock is like

the anti-socialite of music; there are no rules or restrictions.

However, progressive rock bands have typically featured:

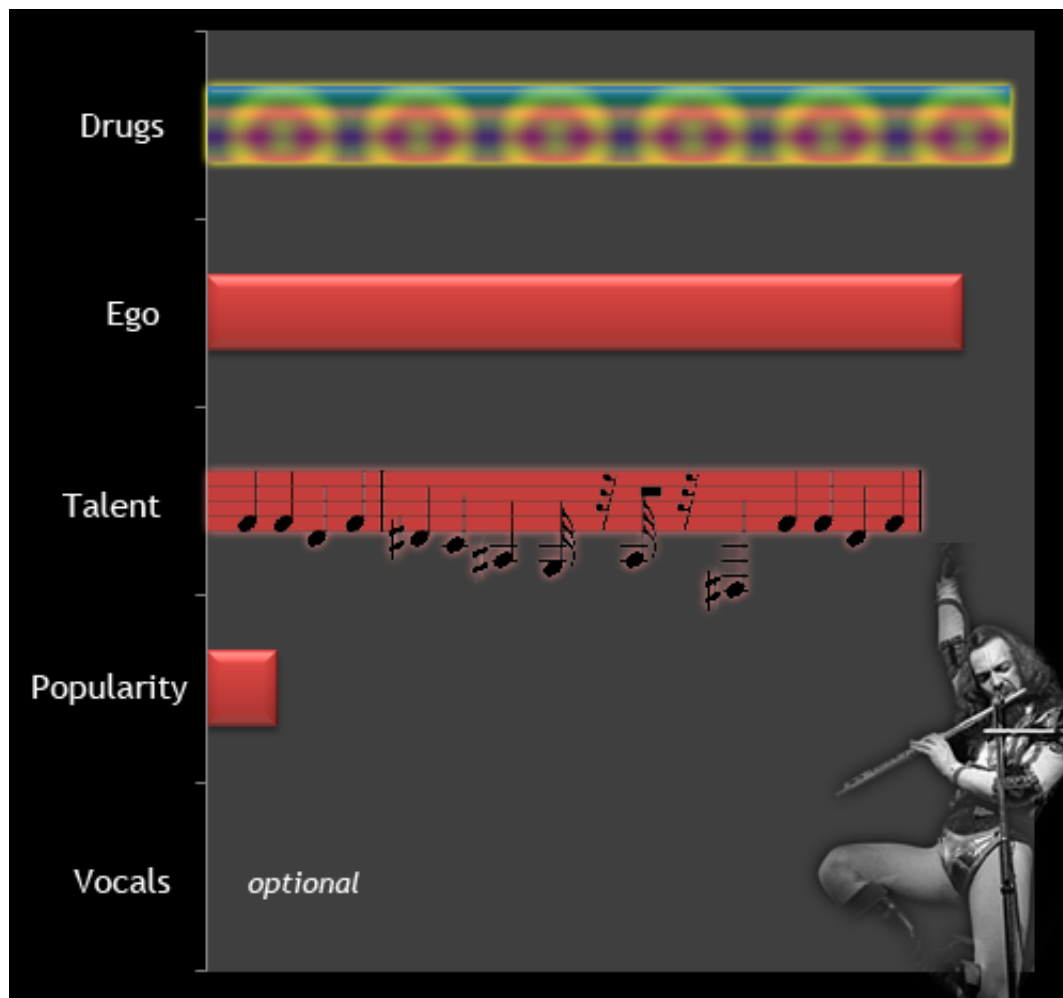
Extremely skilled guitarists, drummers, bassists and keyboardists

Okay singers

Huge egos

*Tons* of drugspiration

No sense of when to stop a song



A typical prog band.

Basically, progressive rock is anything-goes rock music. If you feel like adding a 30-second audio clip of some farm animals orgasming in the

middle of your song, that's a-ok by progressive standards. Hell, it's even encouraged. Literally anything you can record a sound of is welcome in progressive rock.

Except autotune.



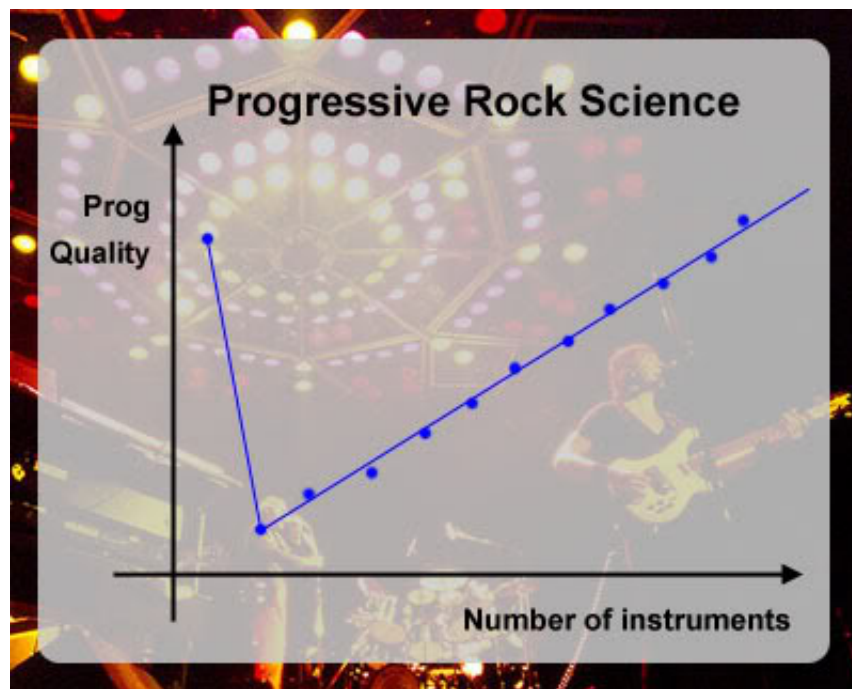
## Instrumentals

Instrumentals are a common feature of progressive rock. In some cases, the instrumental is a showcasing of [pure, raw talent](#). In other cases, the artists have just thrown up their hands and said, "fuck it. We're going to yodel for a few minutes."



Yeah. You better believe that just happened.

If you ever get trapped into a discussion with a prog-rocker and have no idea what's happening, just remember this rule of thumb: A good barometer of progressive rock quality is the number of instruments used at any one time.



## Concept Albums

The concept album is a staple of progressive rock. Examples range from Pink Floyd's *Animals* (about the evils of capitalism) to Rush's *2112* (about the virtues of capitalism), and Uriah Heep's *Demons and Wizards* (elves and shit).



Jethro Tull's famous concept album, *Thick As A Brick*, consisted of a solitary track lasting for 43 minutes. (Although technically they had to split it across two sides because it was too damn long.)

## The Evolution of Prog (In Pants)

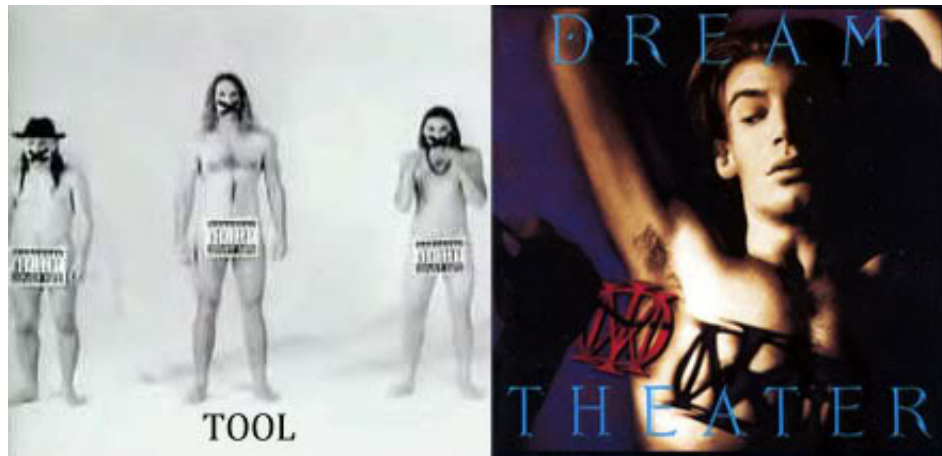
Classic progressive rock is an era defined predominantly by its artists' pants.



**Pictured:** Some of the most talented musicians of all time. We promise.



Conversely, modern progressive rock is characterised by a distinct lack of pants.



### Classic Progressive Rock



Progressive rock band, Yes, pictured being better musicians than you.

Classic progressive rock bands emerged in the late 60s and 70s, marking the only period in human history in which progressive rock was commercially viable. If only because everyone was on LSD.

Progressive rock fans were impressed by the genre's fusion of jazz-like technical proficiency and classic rock sensibilities. The most famous example was Pink Floyd, under whose shadow all other prog bands live.

**Key Bands** - Pink Floyd, Rush, Genesis, King Crimson

Tom Sawyer by Rush

Modern Progressive Rock



Progressive rock band, *Opeth*, seen being better looking than you.

Modern progressive rock is more diversified, with many offshoots of the core "progressive" motif. Progressiveness can now be attached to death metal bands (Opeth), thrash metal (Dream Theater, Pain of Salvation), orchestras (Apocalyptica, Symphony X) and even retard metal (Rammstein).

Modern progressive rock bands took on heavily stylized and niche-filling sounds, as opposed to classic progressive rock, where all the bands basically sounded like they were high.

**Key Bands** - Dream Theater, Porcupine Tree, Opeth, Queensryche.

Blackest Eyes by Porcupine Tree

# How to Form Your Own Prog Band

## 1. Experimentation

While most rock bands experiment during practice, prog bands are encouraged to do this on their records. When making a prog album, feel free to go beserk in the studio.

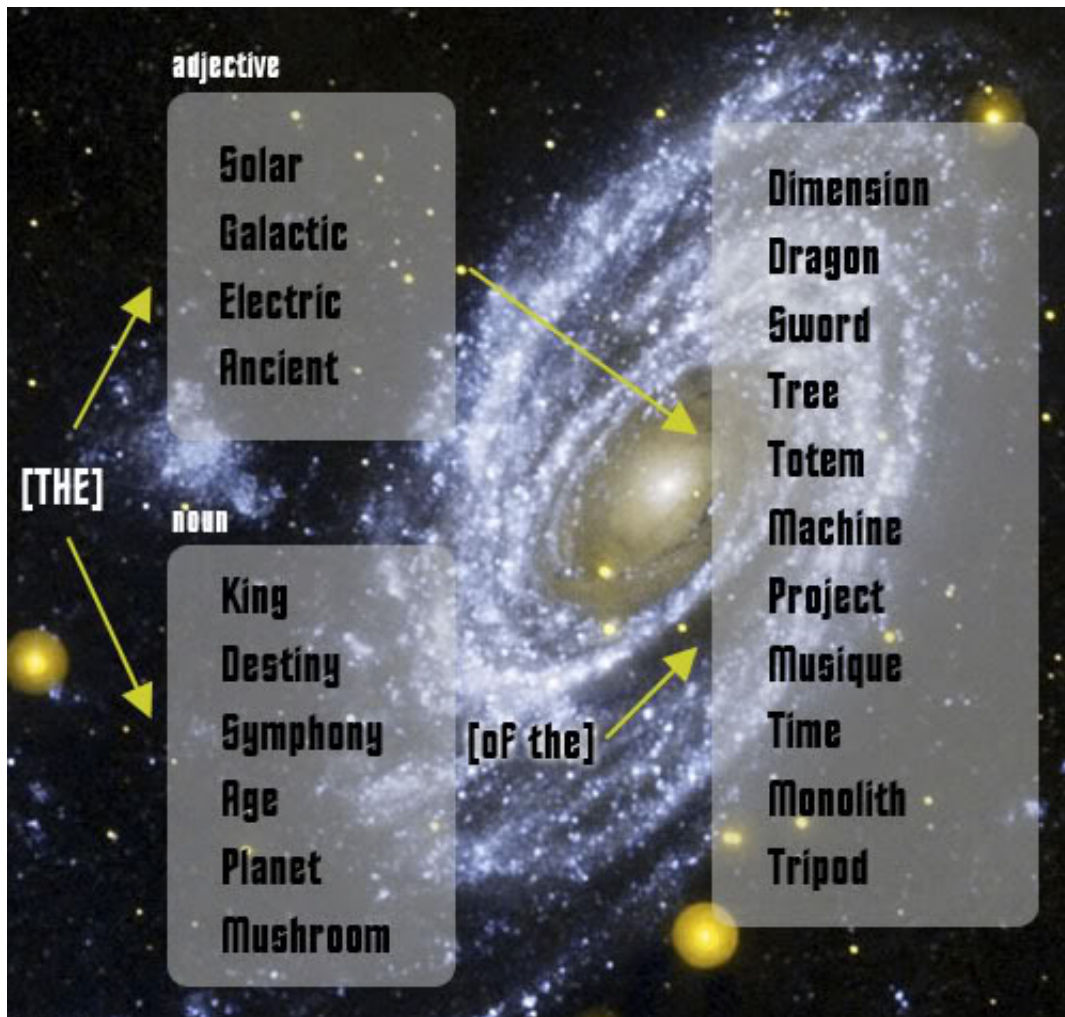
Of course, you won't actually sell any albums. But at least you won't end up like this:

Above: The [Nicolas Cage](#) of music.

*Two. Different. Songs.*

## 2. Choosing A Band Name





## How to choose a prog band name

You really have two options when choosing a prog band name. You can either go with something "simple but random", like Yes, Rush and Camel (may we suggest "Spinach", "Taco" or "Hat"?); or you can use a complex title if it is sufficiently outlandish.

The second route is riskier, but the payoff is enormous if you nail it. Enthusiasts love to quote their favourite obscure bands, and the zanier the better. ("Oh, you haven't heard of *Mr Bungle*? Next you're going to tell me you aren't a fan of *Van Der Graaf Generator*."

Some suggestions to get you started:

Interstellar Spinach  
The Epic Taco Project  
Hat Dimension

Vintage examples are [The Mars Volta](#) and [Porcupine Tree](#). In fact, *The Vintage Examples* would probably work, too.

### 3. Merge Your Songs

Okay, so you have a record. Ten songs, four minutes apiece.

Library Artist Average Joe				
Album		Title	Length	Rating
<b>The Sensible Album</b>				
	The Sensible Album	1 Typical	3:48	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
	Average Joe	2 Mundane	4:08	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
	Rock	3 Down to Earth	4:05	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
	2009	4 Run of the Mill	4:03	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
		5 Plain	4:00	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
		6 A Standard Affair	3:58	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
		7 Rational and Level Headed	3:51	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
		8 Conformity (Let's Do It)	4:09	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
		9 Dongs. But in a Normal Way	4:00	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆
		10 Unremarkable	3:55	★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

Before.

You may need to tweak some of the titles and insert an instrumental track to amp up your "wackiness", but the most important thing you'll need to do is merge those tracks into three or four longer songs.

Don't worry, the songs don't actually need to sound similar, just make sure that they flow into one another. (May we suggest the accompaniment of a flute, viola, trumpet or tambourine to ease the transition?).

The final product will look something like this:



After. Also, your band is now called *Mushroom Sword*.

You will now be referring to these songs as 'sections'.

Congratulations! You have attained prog rock success. You will now spend the next 30 years hiding from an impossibly devoted cult following while living in your mother's basement.

Follow the co-author of this topic on Twitter: [@alexfurlin](https://twitter.com/alexfurlin)