

## Video Game Review: Activision Gets Poppy With Catchy ‘Band Hero’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on November 13, 2009 - 1:36pm

- [Activision](#) [2]
- [Band Hero](#) [3]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [4]
- [DJ Hero](#) [5]
- [Guitar Hero 5](#) [6]
- [Guitar Hero Metallica](#) [7]
- [Guitar Hero Van Halen](#) [8]
- [Guitar Hero World Tour](#) [9]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [10]
- [No Dou](#) [11]
- [PlayStation 3](#) [12]
- [PS3](#) [13]
- [Rock Band](#) [14]
- [Taylor Swift](#) [15]
- [Video Game Review](#) [16]
- [Wii](#) [17]
- [Xbox 360](#) [18]

CHICAGO – No one can accuse Activision and Neversoft of allowing their music game franchise to get stale. In fact, some might argue that they have flooded the market with too many similar products including “Guitar Hero: Metallica,” “Guitar Hero: Smash Hits,” “Guitar Hero 5,” “DJ Hero,” and, now, “Band Hero” in just this year alone (with “Guitar Hero: Van Halen” dropping before Christmas as well).



Video Game Rating: **3.5/5.0**

So, how does “Band Hero” distinguish itself from the other titles? It doesn’t really. This is a more-of-the-same proposition, a somewhat-themed expansion set for what you know and love about the “Guitar Hero” games. At times, it feels like a bit of a wasted opportunity, but the title is ultimately a well-crafted, family-oriented installment of this crowded franchise and it should deliver what buyers are looking for this holiday season.



Band Hero

Photo credit: Activision/Neversoft

The concept behind “Band Hero” is simple - take every element of “Guitar Hero 5” and simply change the playlist to a more family-friendly, pop-centric selection of songs. Nearly every song in “Band Hero” is one that you have heard hundreds of times on the radio and it’s the “sing-along” aspect of these selections that artistically drive the game. Let’s face it, if you’re having a bunch of people over to play music games, “Metallica” and “Van Halen” might be a tough sell, but there’s a little bit of something for everyone in “Band Hero”.



Band Hero

Photo credit: Activision/Neversoft

With the Taylor Swift commercials for “Band Hero” (she has three songs in the game - “Love Story,” “Picture to Burn,” “You Belong With Me” - and is a playable character), I kind of assumed that the title would be purely for the tweens and marvelled at the publicity onslaught of Kanye West’s favorite target with a gig hosting “Saturday Night Live,” winning Entertainer of the Year at the Country Music Awards, and this game all in the same few weeks. Luckily, it’s not all “mall music” in “Band Hero”. Yes, people might have a tough time going from “The Unforgiven” in “Metallica” to some of the more sugary sweet tunes in “Band Hero” (including work by Jesse McCartney, Corinne Bailey Rae, and Spice Girls) but there’s a little bit of something for everyone in the game.

For example, while the tweens may freak out at getting to play Ms. Swift, older fans will enjoy belting ’80s tunes like “Rio” by Duran Duran, “Every Rose Has Its Thorn” by Poison, “I Want You To Want Me” by Cheap Trick, “Honky Tonk Women” by the Rolling Stones, and “Love is a Battlefield” by Pat Benatar. I’m glad the developers pulled from different eras of pop music instead of just playing to fans of current hits.



Band Hero

Photo credit: Activision/Neversoft

As for taking the stage as your favorite artist, Ms. Swift isn’t alone in “Band Hero”. Adam Levine of Maroon 5 and all of the member of No Doubt make appearances and are ultimately playable. As for tunes, the former contributes “She Will Be Loved” and the latter “Don’t Speak” and “Just a Girl”.

As for new modes, there’s only one - “Sing-Along Mode,” which allows for multiple singers on one song in sort of a party karaoke mode. Players can also play with any combination of instruments that they want. Want 4 singers? Go for it. The game was clearly designed to appeal most to young players hanging with their friends or family parties and not diehards looking for a more realistic music simulation.

Players will also be able to download songs and import favorites from “Guitar Hero: World Tour” and “Guitar Hero 5”.

I have to admit to wondering at times why Activision and Neversoft released this title so quickly on the heels of “Guitar Hero 5”. The structure of each game - the gameplay, graphics, career mode, menus even - is so similar that fans may feel a bit ripped off to have paid \$60 for what is essentially the same title with different songs so quickly after opening their wallet the first time.

Consequently, “Band Hero” doesn’t feel like a complete game in its own right - but it’s a really catchy expansion pack.

*‘Band Hero’ was released by Activision and developed by Neversoft. It is rated T (Teen). The version reviewed was for the PS3, but the title is also available for the XBox 360, Wii, and PS2. It was released on November 3rd, 2009.*



[19]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [20]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

[brian@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com) [19]**Source URL (retrieved on Apr 25 2024 - 2:25pm):**<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/9257/video-game-review-activision-gets-poppy-with-catchy-band-hero>**Links:**

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/activision>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/band-hero>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dj-hero>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/guitar-hero-5>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/guitar-hero-metallica-0>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/guitar-hero-van-halen-0>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/guitar-hero-world-tour-0>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/no-dou>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/playstation-3>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ps3>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/rock-band>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/taylor-swift>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/video-game-review>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/wii-0>
- [18] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/xbox-360>
- [19] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [20] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>