

ALMOST EASY

(Avenged Sevenfold, 2007)

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Commercially, "Almost Easy" was the biggest hit from Avenged Sevenfold's self-titled album, reaching #3 and #6 on the *Billboard* Mainstream and Modern Rock charts, respectively. The song was released on September 18, 2007, as the album's second pre-release single (the first being "Critical Acclaim"), and, like "Afterlife," was written by the band's drummer, James "The Rev" Sullivan.

The song prominently features both 6/4 and 4/4 time signatures and smoothly transitions from a metallic verse and pre-chorus to the melodic hook of the chorus, which surely contributed to the song's commercial appeal. Like many songs in the band's repertoire, "Almost Easy" contains a shred-inspired guitar solo in which lead guitarist Synyster Gates navigates D minor chord changes, while the time signature changes midstream.

Figure 4—Intro

With all guitars in Drop D tuning, tuned down an additional half step ($D^b-A^b-D^b-G^b-B^b-E^b$), the introduction commences in 6/4 meter, where it remains for the song's first eight measures. Here, Gtr. 1 lays down a simple $D5-C5-G5-B^b5-C5$ power-chord progression (Rhy. Fig. 1), with the root of each chord positioned on either the guitar's fifth or sixth string. Gtr. 2 enters the mix in measure 2, outlining the chord changes with a simple five-note motif that is rooted in the D natural minor scale ($D-E-F-G-A-B^b-C$).

In measure 9, the meter changes to 4/4 and Gtr. 2 drops out, allowing Gtr. 1 to take over for the remaining eight measures of the introduction. This rhythm figure, which sets up the forthcoming verse, features fifth-string power chords moving in intervals of a major 2nd ($E^b5-C^{\sharp}5$), a minor 3rd ($C^{\sharp}5-B^b5$), and a minor 2nd ($C^{\sharp}5-D5$), offset by chugs of an open D5 chord. The two four-measure phrases that comprise this eight-bar rhythm figure are punctuated with 16th-note palm mutes and single-note trills, which, like the intro's melody, are rooted in the D natural minor scale.

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Full Band

Fig. 4

Drop D tuning, down 1/2 step
(low to high) $D^b-A^b-D^b-G^b-B^b-E^b$

Intro
Moderately fast $\text{♩} = 176$

1 D5 C5 G5 B^b5 C5

Gtr. 2 (dist.)

6/13 12 13 (13) 10 16 15 (15) (15) (15) 6/13 12 13 (13) 10 (10)

w/ bar ----- 4

-1/2

Rhy. Fig. 1

Gtr. 1 (dist.)

End Rhy. Fig. 1

T
A
B

T
A
B

*Doubled throughout