

**From:** Chip  
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**Subject:** Marshall mod for you - high gain.....

I've noticed lately some renewed interest in high-gain mods for Marshalls and similar homebrews. For what it's worth, here's something I've been doing for 10+ years - no additional tubes/holes required. The result is a very heavy sound, with a fat, percussive bottom end. Great for heavily palm-muted riffs, etc.

I've never gotten around to drawing this up, but if you are familiar with a typical Marshall MV preamp, this should make sense to you:

Input jack to first stage - 34k resistance (the two stock 68k's in parallel), or a 33k will do.

First stage cathode - 3.3k bypassed with 330mfd.

Out from first stage, through .022 into a 1 meg pot. Bypass the pot with a .001 cap. Out from pot through 470k bypassed with a 570p cap, on to second stage.

Second stage cathode - 2.7k bypassed by .68mfd (you'll notice this is the stock 1st stage values - you can save some time/trouble by just switching the wires on the first two stages).

Out from 2nd stage, through .022, into 1 meg pot (use one of the now extraneous input jack holes). Bypass pot with a .005. Out from pot through a 470k bypassed with a 500p, on to third stage.

Third stage cathode - 3.3k bypassed by a 330mfd.

Change tone circuit cap from 500p to 250p.

Everything else - leave as stock.

Notes -

-one could certainly argue that the 330mfd cathode caps could be smaller. This is probably true, but this value works well so I've never bothered to try.

-the two "gain" or "preamp" knobs should be set in the 5-6 range to hit the sweet spot. Turning them all the way up results in flab/fuzz. You could replace one with fixed resistors, but I have found that tweaking the two pots in the 5-6 range allows for a good tonal variation (due to the bypass caps) that helps when switching between different sounding guitars, etc., so I put them both on the front panel.

-this mod is intended for head/closed back cab. I doubt if it would sound at all the same with an open back combo. Also, FWIW, I especially like Celestion G12M-70's for high-gain sounds (the high-end roll-off of these speakers shaves the fuzz). Greenbacks, for example, sound like crap in comparison (for this application). YMMV.

-Amps with EL34's or 6550's both sound very good. The 6550's sound "heavier".

-I believe this is very close to the mods performed by Frank Levi in the late 80's. I first started tinkering with amps at that time, and dissected amps done by Levi, Soldano, Lee Jackson, etc.... so, nothing original here!

Hope this is useful to some of you.

-Chip

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