

The FAT-O for Fatties User's Manual & Guide

*(installation instructions for Fender Lone Star, Texas Special, Deluxe Fat Strats,
or most Fat Strat-clones factory-built using the SuperSwitch)*

NOTE! NOT FOR THE AMERICAN DELUXE FAT STRAT

What it is:

The **FAT-O-Caster** is a three position ROTARY switch that expands the potential pickup combinations available in your Stratocaster or other "S-type" guitar. It installs where one of your old tone controls was. The **FAT-O-Caster** does NOT replace your 5-way pickup selector switch - your 5-way still works just like it always did. The **FAT-O-Caster** works in conjunction WITH the 5-way to give you new combinations. You lose a tone control, but gain a lot of tones!

The traditional Strat 5-way selector gives you only 5 parallel combinations, and no series connections. With the **FAT-O-Caster**, you can get seven parallel combinations, PLUS a couple of series settings, for a total of **NINE** different pickup combinations.

That's a lot of tones! **BEST OF ALL, NO NEW HOLES!** Just put your old tone knob back on the **FAT-O-Caster** switch, and your Strat looks completely stock!

These models of the Fat Strat come from Fender with a four-pole, five-throw, 24 lug SuperSwitch. It's a bit intimidating to look at, but if you read through the instructions and look at the drawings, and identify all the leads you will be moving BEFORE YOU START, you can do it!

INSTALLATION:

Take off your pickguard.

To wire your lower tone as a "master" tone (like a Telecaster):

1. Remove the lead from the **center** tone control at the neck pup's lug on the five-way.
2. Remove the ground leads that go from the back of the **center** tone pot to the vol pot and lower tone pot, and remove the **center** tone pot from the pickguard.
3. Move the lower tone control's lead from the mid pup's lug on the five-way over to the neck./bridge common (output) lug on the five-way (see drawing two).
4. Move the lead that goes from a common lug of 5-way to the back of the volume pot (ground) to the input lug of the volume pot (see drawing two).
5. Run an insulated ground wire from the back of the volume pot to the back of your new master tone pot, with enough slack to go around the FAT-O.

Mount the FAT-O-Caster Switch in the place of the center tone pot.

You will notice that the switch is NOT perfectly round, more egg-shaped - align it so that it's widest parts "point" to the other two controls.

WIRING THE **FAT-O-Caster** Switch:

STEP ONE - the shunt leads:

Identify the bridge pup's **SHUNT LEADS**. The Fender bridge humbucker usually has four leads: red, green, black, and white. On a Lone Star or Texas Special, you will typically find the red and white wires together on a single lug. On a Deluxe Fat Strat, it will be the black and white leads together. These are the shunt leads (see drawing three).

Remove the shunt leads from the 5-way pup selector, and solder them to the middle ring of lugs on the FAT-O-Caster switch, being certain to get them on lug "1" (the one with the string through it) (see drawings three).

For non-Fender brands of pickups, please refer to your pickup's manufacturer's information to determine the color code of the shunt leads. For Seymour Duncan, it is typically the red and white leads. For DiMarzio, it is typically black and white leads.

STEP TWO - the other "inner lug":

Unsolder the **middle pup's negative (GROUND)** lead from where it is currently in your guitar - usually the back of the volume pot. Solder it to the next center lug, clockwise, on the FAT-O (see drawing four).

NOTE: Sometimes there is not enough wire on the ground leads to make it to the FAT-O, so just add on a little "tail" to the lead to get there. Be sure you insulate the solder joint on this "tail" to prevent contact with the pots or any other grounded surface in the control cavity – black electrical tape will do...

STEP THREE - the FAT-O's pre-wired leads:

Solder the leads from the FAT-O to the circuit as follows (see drawing four):

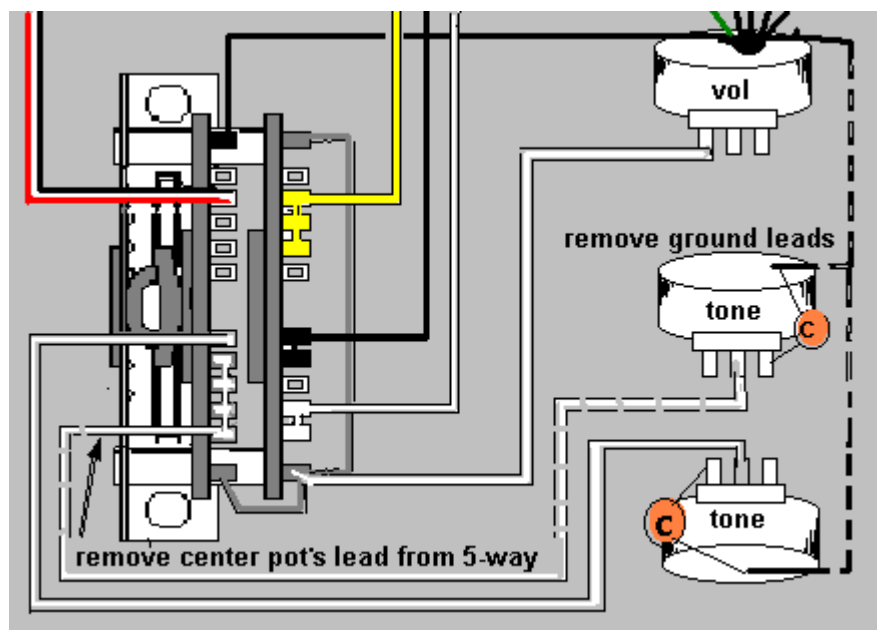
The **RED** lead is soldered to lug on the 5-way where you removed the coil-shunts, and jumpered over to the last lug on that pole. The lead from the common lug for that pole is moved from the back of the volume pot (ground) to the input of the volume pot. Please see drawing.

The **BLACK** lead is added to the neck pup's lug on the 5-way. It's the wire that will allow the ground (or "negative") lead of the middle pup to go back through the neck pup for the "Series" settings, and allows the neck pup's hot lead to go to the 5-way switch's output for the "Neck Always On" setting.

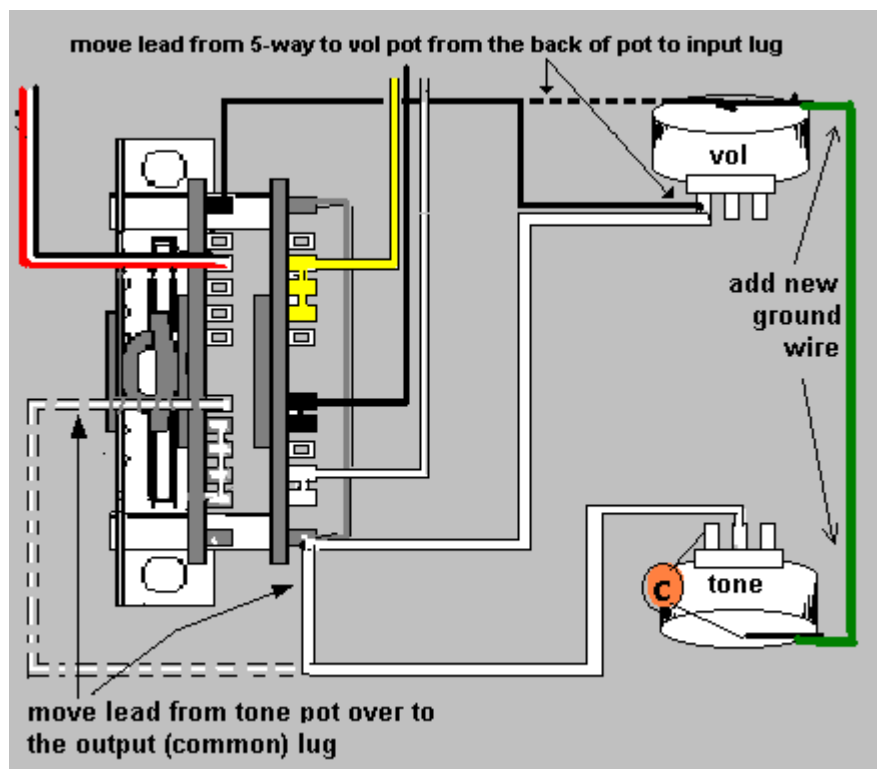
The **BARE** wire is soldered to (any) ground.

Put your pickguard back on, and you're ready to rip!

INSTALLATION PICTORIAL: Remove the lead from the **center** tone control at the five-way. Remove the ground leads that go from the back of the **center** tone pot to the vol pot and lower tone pot. **Remove the center tone pot from the pickguard.**



Move the lead from the common lug on the 5-way that goes to the back of the volume pot to the input lug on the volume pot. **Move** the lower tone control's lead on the five-way over to the common (output) lug on the five-way. Run an insulated ground wire from the back of the volume pot to the back of your new master tone pot, with enough slack to go around the FAT-O.



Mount the FAT-O-Caster Switch in the place of the center tone pot.

move coil shunt leads from 5-way to FAT-O

How it works:

To reference the rest of these instructions,

we'll say that the pickup selections on the 5-way are numbered like this:

(1) = neck; (2) = neck and middle; (3) = middle; (4) = middle and bridge; (5) = bridge.

Basically, The FAT-O-Caster re-routes the leads of the pickups to different places in the guitar's circuitry. Each of the three "clicks" connects the pickups' leads to a specific point in the guitar's wiring to get the desired combination of pickups and series/parallel wiring. These "clicks" - I call them "NOTCHES" - are named for how they route the pickups into the circuit.

The NOTCHES:

NOTCH ONE (tone knob on "10") is "Bridge Humbucker"

It is selected when you have the knob turned completely CLOCKWISE. The **FAT-O-Caster** leaves the bridge pup a humbucker in both of its positions on the 5-way pup selector – you get your stock Strat tones, but with a humbucker in the bridge spot.

NOTCH TWO (tone knob on "9") is "Bridge Single Coil"

It is the first "click" as you turn the knob COUNTER-CLOCKWISE. The **FAT-O-Caster** shunts the bridge pup to a single-coil in both of its positions on the 5-way pup selector – you get stock Strat "single-coil" tones.

NOTCH THREE (tone knob at "8") is "Neck on with Bridge"

This jumpers the NECK to the bridge end of the to the 5-way , so it is "ON" with the bridge pup. It also routes the bridge's shunt leads so that **the bridge pickup is always single-coil in this notch**. As you work the your Strat's 5-way pup selector switch, from neck to bridge, you will hear:

- (1) Neck
- (2) Neck and Middle pups
- (3) Middle
- (4) **Neck, Middle and Bridge**
- (5) **Neck and Bridge**

Those LAST two tones are the tones most EVERY Strat player sez they wish they had!

NOTCH FOUR (tone knob at "7") is "Mid SERIES Neck"

In this notch, **the bridge pup stays a humbucker**.

- (1) and (2), you hear the Neck alone
- (3) **Middle and Neck pup in SERIES – your pseudo “front humbucker”**
- (4) **both of your “humbuckers” parallel, like a Gibson**
- (5) plain ol’ bridge humbucker.

Please e-mail me with any questions, comments, or suggestions: EB@deaf-eddie.net

FAT-O for Fatties TONE CHART

<i>NOTCH NAME (across)</i>	<i>Bridge Humbucker (10)</i>	<i>Bridge Single Coil (9)</i>	<i>Neck with Bridge (8)</i>	<i>Mid SERIES Neck (7)</i>
5-way (down)				
(1) neck	n	n	n	n
(2) middle+neck	m+n	m+n	m+n	n
(3) middle	m	m	m	M*N
(4) bridge+middle	B(h)+M	b(s)+m	B(s)+M+N	B(h)+(M*N)
(5) bridge	b(h)	B(s)	B(s)+N	b(h)

The **FAT-O** changes the way pickups are wired into the circuit.

The NAMES of the NOTCHES describe HOW the pickups are wired...

KEY:

+ = wired parallel

* = wired in series

(h) = humbucker

(s) = single coil (shunt)

lower case letters = "stock" Fat Strat tones

UPPER CASE BOLD = new **FAT-O** tones