

Translation of what's in the grey box:

EverTune

The American Company EverTune was founded by musician and physicist Cosmos Lyles, who also had the initial idea about the constant tension system. His partner is Paul Dowd who initially was a paid consultant of Cosmos but bought into his idea from the start and was since then responsible to realize the mechanical solution.

The heart of the system is 6 springs, which hold the strings and which by functioning like an automobile suspension ensure the same tension the whole time, regardless whether the string is influenced by mechanical or atmospheric influences (e.g. heat).

When first stringing, the strings are brought to tension with the tuning pegs at the head stock. The tuning pegs are tightened until the saddles move forward. The saddles are now floating. When the saddles are floating, the fine tuning is realized with the help of an allen-screw which is adjusted at the saddle. This adjusts the tension of the spring and thus tunes the string.

If one now pulls/bends the strings, the pitch stays the same as the springs are equalizing the tension and keeping it constant. To enable vibrato and bending, the EverTune comes equipped with a front stop that de-couples the spring from the string when bending and enables the spring again when the bend is finished. To enable this, the saddle is positioned very close to the stop using the tuning pegs at the headstock. When first turning the tuning pegs at the headstock and plucking the string, the pitch of the note stays constant (as the springs are still compensating), but the saddle moves closer and closer to the stop. Right before the saddle hits the stop is when one stops turning the tuning pegs, now it is in position to bend. Now when one bends, the stop is activated and the spring is de-activated, so the pitch of the string bends normally.

The stop can also be found audibly: one turns the tuning pegs until the pitch of the string goes high (the stop is activated), and then one turns the tuning peg one quarter turn back in the opposite direction. Now the saddle is in position to bend. After dealing with the system for a short while you will be able to judge the perfect setting for your individual style.

A frequently asked question: What's the difference between an ET and a Gibson Robot Guitar? Easy – With a robot you have to request the auto-tuning, with a ET this is done automatically and perpetually.

Of course Drop-D Tuning and down-tuning of the instrument is possible as well. This is done by adjusting the spring-tensions at the bridge and is therefore not done by the tuning pegs at the head stock. More infos on www.evertune.com

Main article:

VGS means “vision in guitars” – This manufacturers’ program contains a wide range of products but the model radioactive TD special is a new product that combines modern hardware and technical development in one vision.

The Swedish guitarist Tommy Denander developed this musicians’ dream together with VGS – a guitar that completely tunes itself (after initial tuning by the musician) without any engine, only by mechanical means. To get there you need two components – a True Temperament fingerboard is assembled in Sweden and an Evertune Bridge is added. The instrument also contains Schaller hardware and EMG pickups.

Initial impression:

Initially you will not believe this is possible – the frets seem far too twisted in a strange way –

but after a few barre chords you will be so pleasantly surprised that you won't realize them anymore at all. Incredibly the strings always go back into their initial position whatever you do with them. The mechanical Evertune bridge always adjusts itself again, even after a day's break. Simply perfect. In case you tear a string, all the others stay tuned as well and when changing a string, you only have to get close to the correct tuning and the rest is done automatically. Miracles? No it is simply a logical mechanism but we will explain the details later.

Construction:

The instrument is pretty much the same as the one Tommy Denander introduced back in spring 2010 – only the Evertune bridge is added as a complete set on top of the guitar. On the backside of the guitar there is some space for each of the 6 springs to control the individual strings tuning. The strings are placed – similarly as a Strat – on top of the bridge and through the body and fixed with the ballends. Tommy Denander is a fan of Steve Lukather and therefore the guitar contains his EMG pickup set, 2 singlecoils, a humbucker, a five-way switch and a battery for power supply. Ex factory the VGS carries a Schaller Straplock, various allen-keys and the EverTune system.

In Practice/Reality:

Useability: after having played for a short time on the instrument, you will not realize any difference to a conventional guitar.

Service: you will ask yourself how to deal with the frets once they are showing signs of heavy usage after a certain amount of time – the frets can be ground like the old ones so there should be absolutely no issue – only once completely polished off you will have to use the manufacturer's service offering to renew them.

Fixing possibilities:

The Evertune bridge offers a wide range of customized tuning opportunities. Whether you do not need string-bending at all, whether you play a lot with bendings, play a lot of finger-vibrato on the bass strings, there is a solution. And even the bass strings can be adjusted individually. There are plenty of possibilities for each individual preference.

Sound:

The guitar has a modern and versatile sound – the two innovations only slightly influence this. The frets claim a long sustain and clean ending of the notes. The Evertune bridge is doing what we already know from the Strats – it condenses/compresses the note slightly, the attack is not as hard as with a fixed bridge but the sustain is more musical. All in all this creates a percussive although softly ending note which is even better as the intonation is exceptionally clean/perfect.

Resume:

Take a good manufacturer from Europe, best Schaller and EMG hardware, a Swedish true temperament fingerboard and add an Evertune Bridge – then let Tommy Denander finetune all of these components - the result is the VGS Radioactive TD special an instrument that is perfect in useability, sound, always in tune and perfectly intonated. If this were a restaurant it would rate a three-star Michelin – we rate it simply: GREAT!