

## Alternative Wiring Schematic for 3 Pickup Gibson or Epiphone NIGHTHAWK

This is an alternative wiring for the Nighthawk. It involves modifications to the guitar which you shouldn't attempt if you don't know what you are doing, or if you want to keep it to original specs. I found the existing Epi Nighthawk wiring not very useful. It under-utilised the guitar's potential, and included some horrible sounds. This modification gave me access to better and more useable sounds. I wanted standard strat style wiring, as well as Les Paul Bridge-Neck parallel settings. I was shocked when I saw how poor the Epi five-way switch was. Replaced it with a Dimarzio strat switch. Also, rather than taking all the earth wires back to the volume pot, they've just soldered them together into a big blob, without any insulation. I assume the Gibson was done better. The middle and bridge PUPS of the Epi are OBL which suggest they are Lawrence, but they are not. Bill Lawrence describes them on his website as cheap Korean PUPS. I hated the noise coming from the single coil PUP, and replaced it with a spare Lace Chrome Dome that I had, which sounds great. The neck mini humbucker sounds and looks identical to the ones I heard on two Gibson Nighthawks, which leads me to suspect that it is the same M-Series Pup. Whatever, it is absolutely superb, and the guitar is worth having just to play the neck PUP. I'm considering replacing the OBL bridge PUP, though its not too bad. I don't know what the gizmo is stacked on top of the tone pot (a dummy coil perhaps?), and it isn't wired into my configuration.

I replaced the coil-tap switch with a three-way rotary switch that has three poles for each of four outputs. The aluminium shaft of the switch was the same diameter as a volume or tone pot, but I had to trim the length with a fine hacksaw blade, and polish with a file. I bored out the existing hole very carefully and slowly with a sharp metal drill bit by hand (just twist it with your bare hand. I wouldn't use a power or hand-drill), and had to chisel 2 or 3 millimetres of timber (just the chisel in my hand, no mallet or hammer) inside the wiring cavity of the guitar for the thread to accept the nut on the face of the guitar. I then sourced an Epi/Gibson Amber coloured bell-knob, identical to the ones on the volume and tone pots. The wiring is a little complicated, and you'll need some patience. You probably shouldn't attempt this if you can't figure the wiring logic out. Also consult standard strat wiring diagrams if you get stuck on the five-way switch. If someone can suggest a simpler way to wire this up, than please let people know. Sorry about the primitive state of my wiring diagram. The three-way rotary switch and five-way Strat switch give the following pickup combinations:

1. Standard Stratocaster Single-Single-Single five-way selection
2. Hum-Single-Hum with Stratocaster five-way selection
3. Four variations of parallel bridge and neck pickups

The combinations are set out in the following table:

**Five-way selector position**

		1	2	3	4	5
<b>3-Way Rotary switch</b>	<b>Pos 1</b>	Neck SC	Neck SC / Middle	Middle	Middle / Bridge SC	Bridge SC
	<b>Pos 2</b>	Neck HB	Neck HB / Middle	Middle	Middle / Bridge HB	Bridge HB
	<b>Pos 3</b>	Neck/HB Bridge/HB	Neck/HB Bridge/Single	Neck/HB Bridge/Single	Neck/Single Bridge/Single	Neck/Single Bridge/HB

Good Luck,

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## Nighthawk: Alternative Wiring.

