

MUSC-21600: The Art of Rock Music
Prof. Freeze

Purple Haze (1967)

The Jimi Hendrix Experience

LISTEN FOR

- Texture of distorted guitar sound and heavy bass
- Centrality of guitar solos
- Instrumental bridge that recalls introduction
- Psychedelic lyrics

CREATION

Songwriters Jimi Hendrix

Album *Are You Experienced?*

Label Reprise 0597; Track 604001 (UK)

Musicians Electric guitars, bass, drums, lead vocal, spoken voices

Producer Chas Chandler

Recording De Lane Lea, Olympic Studios (London); January–February 1967; stereo

Charts Pop 65 (UK 3); Album 5 (UK 2)

MUSIC

Genre Psychedelic rock

Form Simple verse, with contrasting instrumental bridge

Key E minor

Meter 4/4

LISTENING GUIDE

Time	Form	Lyric Cue	Listen For
0:00	Intro (14)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bars 1–2 introduce the famous dissonant (tritone-based), angular riff in the guitar and bass; march-like groove. • Bars 3–10 feature blues-based melodic phrases on guitar. • Distorted guitar and heavy bass that will become typical texture of heavy metal. • Bars 11–14 set up the chord progression that the verse will be based on.
0:32	Verse 1 (9)	"Purple haze all in my brain"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocal enters. • Call and response between the vocal and lead guitar at the end of the verse.
0:52	Verse 2 (12)	"Purple haze all around"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As before, until the final three bars, which lead into the guitar solo.
1:12	Instr. Bridge (8+8)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guitar solo. While based on the blues, the solo also invokes sitar-like lines. • Speaking voices in the background. • The introduction's melody returns, relaunching the tune.
1:35			
1:53	Verse 3 (9)	"Purple haze all in my eyes"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As before.
2:21	Coda (17+fade)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music is drawn from the instrumental bridge.

"Purple Haze" (The Jimi Hendrix Experience, 1967)

LYRICS

Purple haze all in my brain,
Lately things just don't seem the same.
Actin' funny but I don't know why,
'scuse me while I kiss the sky.

Purple haze all around,
Don't know if I'm comin' up or down.
Am I happy or in misery?
Whatever it is, that girl put a spell on me.

Help me,
Help me,
Oh no, no!

Yeah!
Purple haze all in my eyes,
Don't know if it's day or night,
You got me blowin', blowin' my mind,
Is it tomorrow, or just the end of time?

No!
Help me,
Ahh, yeah, purple haze, yeah!
Oh no, no,
Oh, help me,
Tell me, baby, tell me,
I can't go on like this,
You're makin' me blow my mind, mama,
Oh no, no,
No, it's painful baby.

SOURCES

- John Covach and Andrew Flory, *What's That Sound*, 4th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015), 276–77.
- http://jimihendrix.wikia.com/wiki/Purple_Haze.