



HOW TO JAM

A Road-map To Playing The Blues At A Jam

by Griff Hamlin

How To JamTM

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Thank you to my wife, Laura, and my family for your continued support and patience. Also, a special thanks to all of my students, past and present, who continue to push me in discovering new and better ways to teach. Thank you to all of my customers and fans of my music, without you, none of this would be possible.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Hello, my name is Griff Hamlin. I have been a professional guitarist and guitar teacher for over 30 years. I have taught hundreds, if not over a thousand students how to play the guitar. Most of those students had never picked up the instrument even once before starting lessons.

In addition, I have been a performing musician since the age of 15, and have performed as many as 200 concerts per year at some points of my career. I've been fortunate enough to tour all over the world including Poland and Eastern Europe, Turkey, Italy, Korea, and of course all over the United States.

With various bands, I've released 3 albums over the last 20 years, the most recent of which landed at #1 on the iTunes Blues chart, and #9 on the Billboard Blues Album Chart.

As for my academic background, I studied music at the prestigious USC Thornton School of Music, and I have taken private lessons from some of the best guitarists in the world. I continue to try and improve and practice every day. I get enormous joy from playing the guitar and making music, and I hope you will too.

I currently reside in Texas with my wife and son. I teach and perform regularly every chance I get. You can find out more about me, and what's going on with me currently, by visiting my website at <https://www.griffhamlin.com>.

Or, my band website at <https://www.ghsbbb.com>.

I also have additional instructional courses available.

Visit <https://bluesguitarunleashed.com>.

Click on "Course Catalog" for more information.



COURSE INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Welcome! In this book, “How To Jam,” you’ll learn the fundamentals of playing the blues so that you could easily get up and jam on a long list of standard blues songs.

Whether you’re new to the blues and looking to quickly have something effective to play, or just overwhelmed by mountains of theory...

This book will give you a handful of tried-and-true riffs and approaches that will work over almost any standard blues song (of which there are thousands!)

Now, this is not for a brand new guitar player, and I will assume that you can already play some chords and if you can already play a song or 2 that will help, but it is not necessary at all.

In other words, you don’t have to be great already, just have some facility on your guitar.



Before we get too carried away, allow me to introduce myself, my name is Griff Hamlin. I’ve been a professional guitar teacher and performer now for over 30 years.

And as a performing musician, one of my absolute favorite things to do is to get up on stage with some people I barely know and just play some blues. There is simply nothing like it!

And I’ve been fortunate enough to have helped tens of thousands of other guitar players around the world (many who were probably where you are right now) share in that excitement and thrill.

Now what’s cool about the blues is that we have a lot of standard songs, often just called “standards.” You probably know of several off the top of your head:

1. ***Pride And Joy***
2. ***Stormy Monday***
3. ***The Thrill Is Gone***
4. ***Sweet Home Chicago***
5. ***Key To The Highway***
6. ***Dust My Broom***
7. ***Crossroads***

And the list goes on and on.

What most of those tunes have in common is the 12 bar blues form...

That 12 bar form means that if you know the key to the song (A-G,) and you know the feel (slow blues, shuffle blues, straight feel,) then you really know all you need to know to play the blues!

I know, it sounds pretty simple when I put it like that... and the good news is, it really is that simple.

What I've found over the years performing and sitting in with other bands or at jams, is that I have a tendency to use just a handful of ideas, riffs if you want to call them that...

Those few riffs and ideas work all the time, and they sound great. So while they aren't the only options, they are, by far, the best place to start...

Because even when you learn more, you'll find yourself coming back to these foundational ideas time after time.

So to make this simple, in order to play the blues you're going to need 3 things:

- 1. A rhythm idea to play over the 12 bar form.**
- 2. A way to take a solo when it's your turn (don't worry, it can – and probably should – be simple.)**
- 3. A way to start the song, end the song, and fit together the other pieces in the middle.**

So let's get started with the first stop on our "road trip" through the blues – the rhythm.

How To Play Blues At A Jam Session.

You Are Here

STOP 1: RHYTHMS & CHORDS

- * Common Blues Chord Shapes
- * The 12 Bar Blues Form
- * Common Blues Rhythm/Strumming Pattern
- * Blues Intro (to start the song)
- * Blues Ending (to end the song)

STOP 2: SOLOING

- * What Note And Beat To Start Your Solo On
- * Minor Blues Scale, Box 1
- * The 4 Note Solo Pattern (Box 2)
- * Lead Techniques (Bends, Hammer-Ons, Pull-Offs)
- * Licks!

STOP 3: PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

- * Stringing together your Intro, Rhythm, Solo, And Ending
- * Using Licks Or Single Notes As Fills Between Vocal Lines

**You have reached
your destination!**



**STOP
ONE**

STOP 1

Rhythm And Chords

Where I see a lot of folks get lost with blues rhythm is they try to make it a lot more difficult than it is by getting wrapped up in the theory of how the 12 bar blues form works, and then trying to add some chords, and then later trying to figure out how to play it all...

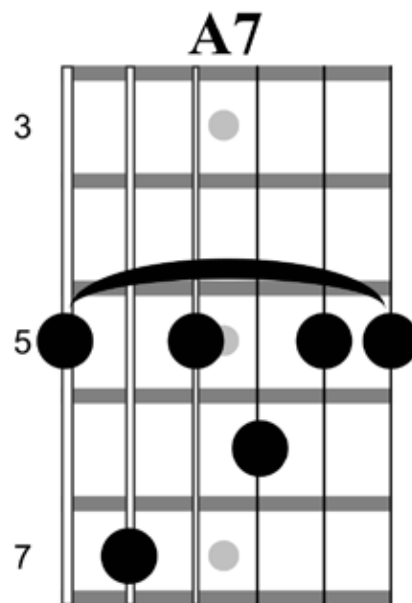
Unfortunately, that just breeds confusion, so we're going to break it down into three simple things:

1 – Blues Chords

Blues revolves around 7th chords. Officially they are called dominant 7th to distinguish them from major 7th or minor 7th which are considerably different both in sound and also in usage.

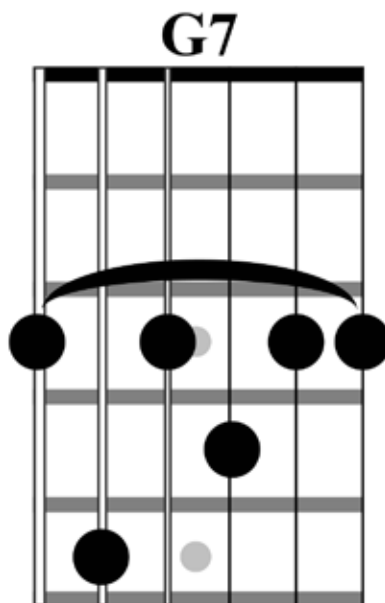
You want to use moveable chord shapes (chords without open strings) whenever you can so that you can change keys by simply moving up or down some number of frets.

The first, and most common, shape is sometimes called an “E” shape because in open position it's an E7. I call it a “root on the 6th string” shape as well.



Notice that the root note is the note on the 6th string, so this chord moves up and down the fretboard, and whatever note you're on, that's the chord you're on.

If you move it down 2 frets, it becomes G7:

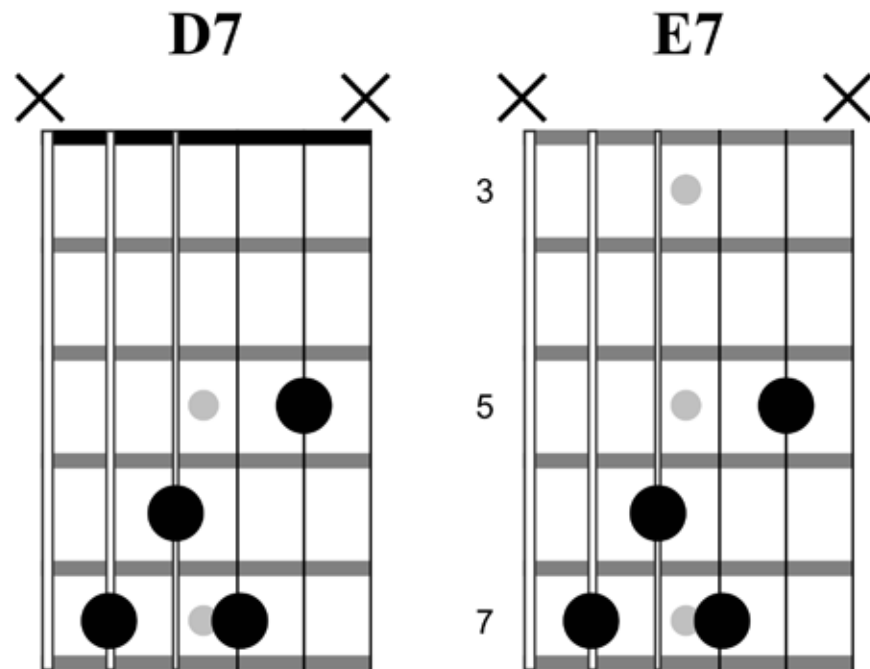


If these types of chords are familiar to you, this probably makes perfect sense. But if you've never seen moveable chord shapes before, I hope you can see how powerful these are.

DON'T PANIC!

If you can't play all of the notes in a barre chord and make them sound, it's no problem! In fact, you'll rarely, if ever, need or want all of the notes. But, that's still to come...

Now that you have a chord option for a root on the 6th string note, you'll want a "root on the 5th string" shape that is also moveable. There are a couple of options, but I'm going to use one of my personal favorites that you may not have seen before for the D7 and the E7 (notice how, in both cases, the root note is on the 5th string and we are not playing the 1st or 6th string.)



And just as the chords with their roots on the 6th string, these chord shapes are moveable, and can be used for any 7th chord simply by moving them around.

Now that you've got some chords under your fingers (at least a little, remember, it's okay if you can't play the whole thing and I'll get to that very soon.)

2 – A Strumming Pattern

Obviously, you have to strum the chords somehow... you can't just hold them, right?

So, let's look at the simplest pattern that always works...

But, wait!

Remember I said you don't have to play the whole chord? This is where you might have to change your thinking a little...

When you play by yourself, or you accompany a singer, and you're not in a band settings, it makes sense to play complete chords. Those nice big open G, E, and C chords have a great ring with full lows and nice high notes.

But playing in a band is different, you have to blend in with bass, maybe another guitar, possibly keyboards, and likely either a singer, or some other instrument taking a solo.

So your job is not to stand out, but to fill up. If you're playing along with a band and doing it well, you almost can't even hear yourself unless you stop playing!

The best way to do that, is to limit yourself to the middle strings with your chords.

In other words, I rarely play more than 3 strings, the 2nd through the 4th strings, and often only play only the 3rd and 4th strings out of a chord!

So if we take our A7 chord from before, and play the simplest rhythm – which is good, remember, because we want to fill up, not stand out – we get something like this:

On the very first hit, you can see I wrote out the whole chord, but I would only strike those middle 2 notes. That makes this both really easy, and really effective. Also, if I do the same thing for a D7 and E7 chord, you see something interesting emerge:

In case you don't see it right away, notice that in order to go from A7 to D7, those 2 notes simply move down 1 fret. And to go from A7 to E7, they simply shift up 1 fret. That really is all there is to it.

The great thing about this rhythm, which I call, “chicks,” because it sounds like “... chick... chick...,” is that I’ve taught it to a newbie guitar player at a live workshop, and that same player was up on a stage less than an hour later playing with a band and fitting right in...

For some folks, though, you might want something with a little more movement, so here is what I consider to be the “comping” (rhythm) pattern for blues... I tend to go to it by default and it shows up in every single show I play, night after night...

Diagram illustrating a guitar comping pattern for A7 in 4/4 time. The notation shows a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The pattern consists of four measures, each containing a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth rest, then a quarter note. The notes are A2 (open), C#3 (first fret), E3 (open), and A2 (open). The pattern is labeled A7. Below the staff is a tablature section with three lines: T (Treble), A (A), and B (B). The fret numbers are 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5.

And with the D7 and E7:

Diagram illustrating guitar comping patterns for D7 and E7 in 4/4 time. The notation shows a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The pattern consists of four measures, each containing a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth rest, then a quarter note. The notes are D2 (open), F#3 (first fret), A2 (open), and D2 (open). The pattern is labeled D7. The second pattern is for E7, with notes E2 (open), G#3 (second fret), B2 (open), and E2 (open). Below the staff is a tablature section with three lines: T (Treble), A (A), and B (B). The fret numbers are 5, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4.

Feel free to use either pattern, or even go back and forth between them in the same song. If it sounds good to you, go with it.

Now that we have some chords, and we have a “comping pattern,” (a way to strum them) we need to know which chords we’re going to be playing.

For that, we get to rely on the best thing about the blues...

3 – The 12 Bar Blues Form

A 12 bar blues is 12 measures long (a bar is another name for a musical measure,) and consists of 3 chords called the I chord, IV chord, and V chord. To explain this concept further, we have to step away from the blues for a minute.

The concept of a I chord, IV chord, and V chord is simple, but it comes from a major scale, not a blues scale...

Simply put, if you build a chord off of the first note in the major scale, it's called a I chord. Similarly, if you build a chord off of the 4th note in the major scale, it's called the IV chord, and if you build a chord off of the 5th note in the major scale, it's called the V chord. But I said I wasn't going to get in the "theory weeds," and I'm not... let me show you how to find the 3 chords for any blues song, the I IV and V, using your guitar quickly and easily...

I chord: Find the note on the 6th string that matches the key you're in. In the key of A, you would find the A on the 5th fret of the 6th string. If you were in C, it would be the 8th fret, G would be the 3rd, etc.

IV chord: Use the same fret as the I chord, but on the 5th string. In the key of A, the IV chord would be D on the 5th fret of the 5th string. In C, it would be the F on the 5th string, etc.

V chord: Go up 2 frets from the IV chord. In the key of A, the V chord is E on the 7th fret of the 5th string. For C, go up from the F to a G on the 10th fret, 5th string.

This trick will work for any key, but I'll make it even easier. Here's a chart of every key with its corresponding IV and V chords...

Key	A	B ^b	B	C	C [#]	D	E ^b	E	F	F [#]	G	A ^b
I Chord	A	B ^b	B	C	C [#]	D	E ^b	E	F	F [#]	G	A ^b
IV Chord	D	E ^b	E	F	F [#]	G	A ^b	A	B ^b	B	C	D ^b
V Chord	E	F	F [#]	G	G [#]	A	B ^b	B	C	C [#]	D	E ^b

For the 12 bars, here's what to remember:

Bars 1 – 4 use the I chord.

Bars 5 and 6 use the IV chord.

Bars 7 and 8 return to the I chord.

Bars 9 and 10 are the V chord, and IV chord, respectively.

Bars 11 and 12 are called the turnaround. The simplest turnaround is to use the I chord for both bars 11 and 12. It is common, however, to play the V chord for bar 12.

The most common variation of this pattern is called a Quick Change Blues, where bar 2 uses the IV chord and all other bars are the same. It's perfectly reasonable to ask about variations of the 12 bar blues form on a jam... so if you aren't sure, just ask if it's a quick change, and if they'll be going to the V on the last bar.

So now, if you know the key, you know the chords, and you can choose which rhythm you want to use. You also know to use little chord shapes so as to leave room for the other instruments.

We just have to take care of a couple of little details now, and you'll be ready to jam!

How To Start The Song...

There are 2 most common ways to start a blues song, "from the top," and "from the V."

Taking it "from the top" just means you start right off at the top of the 12 bar blues form.

Taking it "from the V" means you start on bar 9 of the form at the V chord. Then you go through to the end of the form and continue "from the top."

How To End The Song...

One of the easiest and most common endings is commonly called a "Basie" Ending (or some people call it an "Ellington" ending but I've always heard the former.) It comes at the last 2 bars of the form the last time through and goes a little something like this in the key of A:



The Whole Enchilada...

If we put that all together, using the “chicks” rhythm pattern, starting “from the V,” and hitting the V on the last bar, with no quick change, we’d get something like this:

First system of music notation. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music is divided into four measures, each with a chord label above it: D7, A7, E7, and A7. The notes are: D7 (F#, A, C#), A7 (A, C#, E, G), E7 (E, G, B, D), and A7 (A, C#, E, G). The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers for the strings: T (Treble), A (4th), and B (5th).

Measure	Chord	T	A	B
1	D7	5	4	5
2	A7	6	5	6
3	E7	7	6	7
4	A7	6	5	6

Second system of music notation. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music is divided into five measures, each with a chord label above it: D7, A7, D7, A7, and A7. The notes are: D7 (F#, A, C#), A7 (A, C#, E, G), D7 (F#, A, C#), A7 (A, C#, E, G), and A7 (A, C#, E, G). The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers for the strings: T (Treble), A (4th), and B (5th).

Measure	Chord	T	A	B
1	D7	6	5	6
2	A7	6	5	6
3	D7	5	4	5
4	A7	5	4	5
5	A7	6	5	6

Third system of music notation. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music is divided into four measures, each with a chord label above it: E7, D7, E7, and D7. The notes are: E7 (E, G, B, D), D7 (F#, A, C#), E7 (E, G, B, D), and D7 (F#, A, C#). The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers for the strings: T (Treble), A (4th), and B (5th).

Measure	Chord	T	A	B
1	E7	6	5	6
2	D7	7	6	7
3	E7	5	4	5
4	D7	5	4	5

Fourth system of music notation. The staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music is divided into two measures, each with a chord label above it: A7 and A7. The notes are: A7 (A, C#, E, G) and A7 (A, C#, E, G). The tablature below the staff shows the fret numbers for the strings: T (Treble), A (4th), and B (5th).

Measure	Chord	T	A	B
1	A7	5	4	5
2	A7	7	4	6

Now, I made that “song” short because it’s for practice. In a normal blues song, you would repeat the 12 bar pattern as often as you needed to. Once for each vocal “verse,” and once for each solo “chorus.”

If you choose “the comping pattern” for your rhythm, it might look more like this:

The image displays three systems of musical notation for guitar, each representing a 4-measure blues comping pattern in E major. Each system consists of a treble staff and a bass staff, with a bracket on the left. The treble staff includes a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The first system starts with a triplet of eighth notes (F#, A, C#) followed by a quarter rest, then continues with chords. The bass staff shows the corresponding fretting for the Treble (T), Alto (A), and Bass (B) positions.

System 1: Chords are E7, D7, A7, and E7. The bass staff fretting is: (T, 7, 6), (7, 6), (5, 4), (5, 4), (6, 5), (6, 5), (7, 6), (7, 6).

System 2: Chord is A7. The bass staff fretting is: (6, 5), (6, 5), (6, 5), (6, 5), (6, 5), (6, 5), (6, 5), (6, 5).

System 3: Chords are D7 and A7. The bass staff fretting is: (5, 4), (5, 4), (5, 4), (5, 4), (6, 5), (6, 5), (6, 5), (6, 5).

First system of music notation, featuring a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The system consists of four measures, each with a chord symbol above the staff: E7, D7, A7, and E7. The bass staff shows the corresponding fretboard positions for the T (Treble), A (Anchor), and B (Bass) strings, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-7.

Second system of music notation, featuring a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The system consists of four measures, each with a chord symbol above the staff: A7, A7, A7, and A7. The bass staff shows the corresponding fretboard positions for the T (Treble), A (Anchor), and B (Bass) strings, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-7.

Third system of music notation, featuring a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The system consists of four measures, each with a chord symbol above the staff: D7, D7, A7, and A7. The bass staff shows the corresponding fretboard positions for the T (Treble), A (Anchor), and B (Bass) strings, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-7.

Fourth system of music notation, featuring a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The system consists of four measures, each with a chord symbol above the staff: E7, D7, A7, and A7. The bass staff shows the corresponding fretboard positions for the T (Treble), A (Anchor), and B (Bass) strings, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-7.



STOP TWO

STOP 2

Blues Soloing

Blues soloing is undoubtedly the most misunderstood thing – EVER!

Fancy guitar teachers everywhere like to make it seem so mysterious and difficult... and it just ain't like that.

Sure, you can make it hard, and you can do some pretty terrifying things if you want to... but that won't necessarily make it sound any better... it'll just make it harder.

Now I'll admit freely that I LOVE soloing... shoot, to me the words are just placeholders between solos. And I hope that after you've seen just how easy it can be, you'll feel the same way because it's a real blast.

You'll need to know these things:

- 1. *What note to start your solo on***
- 2. *When to start your solo (SUPER IMPORTANT)***
- 3. *A pattern for playing the minor pentatonic scale***

This is super important – I'm going to give you a bunch of rules throughout this little road trip, and they can, and will be, broken regularly.

What I'm going for are things that are guaranteed to work. Not things that work sometimes but not others. As you get more experience you'll have the knowledge to handle things that only work sometimes. Right now, you want to be assured that whatever you play isn't going to crash and burn.

Let's start with the bare minimum things you need to know to solo:

1 - What note to start your solo on...

Simple... the tonic, or root of the I chord. (Remember, this is guaranteed to work. It's far from the only option.)

As an aside, think of your tonic, or root note (the same note as the key), as your anchor. In fact, I sometimes call it exactly that. You will want to play around that note, but revisit it regularly.

2- When to start your solo...

The hardest thing to get a new soloist to do is wait to get started, but you really need to.

Coming in on the very first beat just generally doesn't work well. It's just not the sound you're looking for. Wait for beat 2 and start there and you'll never be wrong. (Again, we're going for a guarantee.)

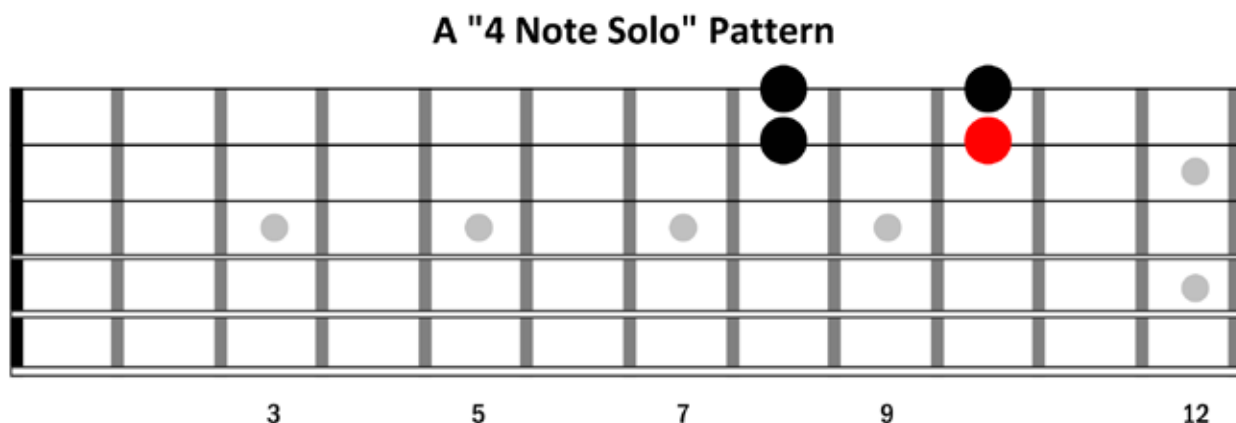
For some bonus cool points, start on an upbeat (the "and" or "uh" between downbeats, which are numbered.)

3 – A Way To Play The Minor Pentatonic Scale

The scale that always works over a blues is called the minor pentatonic scale. You don't have to know why, and you don't have to know any other options at this point...

What you need to keep in mind is that, of all the blues players you listen to, and all the great blues solos you've heard, probably 95% of the notes you know and love come from this scale. So if you're not getting sounds out of it that you like, more notes is not going to help.

If you're brand new to soloing, or you have been soloing but you don't like what you hear, then the best pattern to start with is what I call the 4 Note Solo pattern (so named because of a famous video I did on YouTube called "The 4 Note Solo.")



Notice that the root note (A) is played with the 3rd finger on the 10th fret of the 2nd string (the red dot). The additional notes are the 8th fret on the 2nd string, and the 8th and 10th frets on the 1st string... 4 notes.

You can play any of these notes, at any time, over any of the chords of a blues in A. If you have a blues in G, just move the pattern down 2 frets to G. If you have a blues in C, move the notes up 3 frets to C, and so on.

Once you know where you're supposed to be, and it's time for your solo, just pick some notes and go for it!

Some of your ideas you'll love, and some you won't, but over time you'll learn which ones you love and you'll tend to focus on those. Right now the goal is just to play, and if you try to memorize a solo and play it note for note, I can all but promise that will fail at the first mistake you make under pressure.

Instead, keep in mind a few rules of thumb that tend to make solos sound better, and do your best to just "wing it":

- 1. Remember about starting on beat 1 (DON'T!)**
- 2. Treat your guitar like a horn, where you have to breathe to play it. Play a few notes, then take a breath and let a few beats go by, then repeat that process. This creates short phrases, which are much easier to deal with.**
- 3. Try not to play the same note more than once in a row, for now. It's a common sign of an inexperienced player.**
- 4. When your few note phrase is over, make sure to stop the last note and don't just let it hang.**
- 5. Try to avoid using the same rhythm all the time. It's easy to just play 1/8th notes all the time and have no variety, but that gets old, fast. Variety of rhythms is everything when you solo.**

When you start to feel a bit more comfortable with the 4 Note Solo pattern, I like to add one note down on the 3rd string... this sort of makes it look like an upside down house on the page, so I call it the "House Pattern."

This pattern, and the 4 Note Solo pattern, are more than enough notes to play some really great blues solos. What makes your solos sound musical is the rhythmic variety, not the number of notes you have available. So these patterns can take you a long way.

You might hear people talk about "the 5 boxes" of the pentatonic scale, and those are 5 more patterns that you can learn for that scale. If you know all 5 of the patterns, and how they connect, you can play the scale across the entire fretboard using every possible note.

In some ways, that's a solution looking for a problem... so be aware that while some folks might suggest you first learn all 5 boxes before you try to solo, that's a lot to bite off, especially if you're new to soloing...

Furthermore, it tends to lead to "option paralysis," where you'll likely just look at the fretboard, not knowing where to start. If that's you now, go back to the 4 Note Solo pattern and begin again there... your boxes will still be waiting for you when you're ready for them.

One last thing, keep in mind that you can bend the top note (the 10th fret of the 1st string) of the 4 Note Solo/House pattern up a full step for some extra cool sounds.

Technically speaking, you can bend any note to the same pitch as any other note, but that top note is the only one that is really easy to execute in that pattern.

How long should you solo?

In a band setting, do what's customary. If you notice most people take just one chorus (1 pass through the 12 bar blues progression,) then just do one...

However, in my experience, 2 choruses is the most common length of a solo.

When you're done soloing, simply go back to playing rhythm using whatever pattern you chose from before the solo... easy!

Now, obviously I want you to spend time experimenting and coming up with your own sounds using the 4 note solo pattern...

But here's a solo I played that you can use to get some ideas on how to get started. It can be helpful to learn complete solos like this one, but don't forget to know where the notes come from...

Even the best laid plans often get sidetracked, and your solo will be no exception to that rule. When you make a mistake or if you get flustered, remember you can always go back to your 4 Note Solo pattern and just "wing it," until your solo is over.

It may not be what you intended, but you won't hit any wrong notes and your audience doesn't know what you meant to play, only what they hear!

First system of musical notation for guitar, featuring a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure contains a triplet of eighth notes (F#, A, C#) followed by a quarter rest, with an A⁷ chord symbol above. The subsequent measures contain eighth and quarter notes. The bass staff shows fret numbers: 10, 8, 10, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8.

Second system of musical notation for guitar. The treble staff continues with eighth and quarter notes, including D⁷ and A⁷ chord symbols. The bass staff shows fret numbers: 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 10, 8, 10, 10, 8, 10, 10, 8, 10, 8. Arrows labeled "full" point to specific fret numbers.

Third system of musical notation for guitar. The treble staff continues with eighth and quarter notes, including E⁷, D⁷, A⁷, and E⁷ chord symbols. The bass staff shows fret numbers: 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8. Arrows labeled "full" point to specific fret numbers, and a triplet of eighth notes is indicated in the final measure.



**STOP
THREE**

STOP 3

Putting It All Together

On this, our last stop of the tour, we'll tie it all together, vary it a little, and stretch it out to accommodate either a vocalist or another soloist.

To do that, we're just going to mash all the pieces together! Now, in the real world, use your ear to guide you...

I'm going to have the first chorus be "chicks," while the "comping pattern" will play the next one, assuming that the first 2 passes through the 12 bar blues form will be either a vocal or someone else soloing.

You may prefer the sound of the "chicks," and may choose to use it all the time. Or vice versa, you may prefer the "comping pattern," and may prefer to use it all the time...

Either option is acceptable.

In this example, it's "from the V, key of A in a shuffle, with no quick change and a V chord at the end of the form."

For the first 4 bars, the "from the V," part, I'm going to use the comping pattern, then go into "chicks," as I mentioned for the first vocal verse. I'm doing this simply to create some variation, and you can use whichever rhythm pattern you like, whenever it sounds good to you.

There should not be anything new here... just play what you played from the last 2 stops and you're good to go.

Here's how I would play it all the way through:

The musical score is written for guitar in E major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems, each with a treble clef staff and a tablature staff. The first system includes a triplet notation at the beginning. The second system continues the sequence. The third and fourth systems complete the progression. Chord changes are indicated by letters above the staff, and specific fret numbers are shown on the tablature lines.

System 1: Chords: E⁷, D⁷, A⁷, E⁷.
Tablature: E⁷ (7 6, 7 6), D⁷ (5 4, 5 4), A⁷ (6 5, 6 5), E⁷ (7 6, 7 6).

System 2: Chord: A⁷.
Tablature: A⁷ (6 5, 6 5, 6 5, 6 5).

System 3: Chords: D⁷, A⁷, E⁷.
Tablature: D⁷ (5 4, 5 4), A⁷ (6 5, 6 5), E⁷ (6 5, 6 5, 7 6, 7 6).

System 4: Chords: D⁷, A⁷, E⁷, A⁷.
Tablature: D⁷ (5 4, 5 4), A⁷ (6 5, 6 5), E⁷ (7 6, 7 6), A⁷ (6 5, 6 5).

D⁷



First system of musical notation. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It contains four measures of music, each with a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth rest, then a quarter note. The notes are D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, and D5. The bottom staff is a three-part guitar tablature with lines for Treble (T), Alto (A), and Bass (B). The first two measures show a 6-5 pattern on the A and B strings. The last two measures show a 5-4 pattern on the A and B strings.

A⁷ **E⁷**



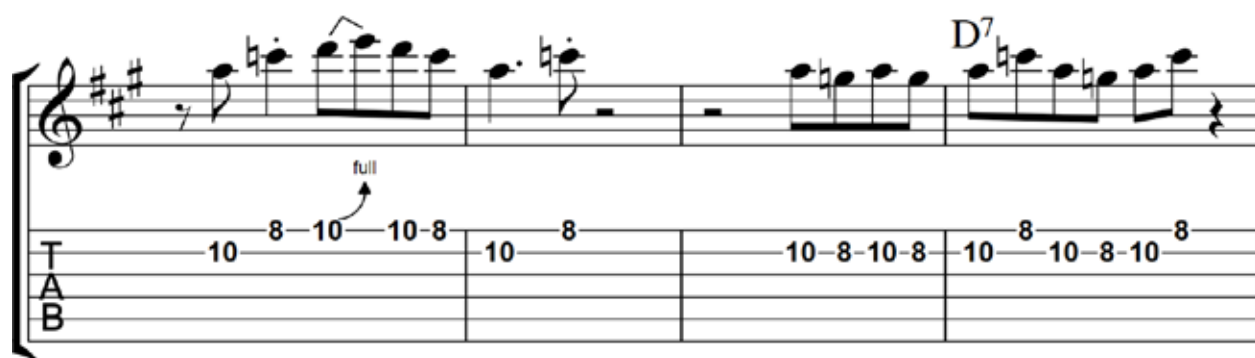
Second system of musical notation. The top staff continues the D7 progression for the first three measures, then changes to A7 and E7 for the last measure. The notes for A7 are A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G#5, and A6. The notes for E7 are E4, F#4, G#4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, and E5. The bottom staff shows the corresponding guitar tablature: 5-4 for A7 and 7-6 for E7.

D⁷ **A⁷** **E⁷** **A⁷**



Third system of musical notation. The top staff continues the D7, A7, and E7 progression for the first three measures, then changes to A7 for the last measure. The notes for A7 are A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G#5, and A6. The notes for E7 are E4, F#4, G#4, A4, B4, C#5, D5, and E5. The bottom staff shows the corresponding guitar tablature: 5-4 for D7, 6-5 for A7, 7-6 for E7, and 10-8-10 for A7.

D⁷



Fourth system of musical notation. The top staff continues the D7 progression for the first three measures, then changes to D7 for the last measure. The notes for D7 are D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C#5, and D5. The bottom staff shows the corresponding guitar tablature: 10-8-10-8 for D7, with a 'full' note indicated by an arrow pointing to the 10th fret on the A string.

First system of guitar notation (treble and bass staves) for a piece in A major. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The first staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, including slurs and accents. The second staff is a tablature line with fret numbers (10, 10, 8, 10, 10, 8, 10, 10, 8, 10, 10) and fretting instructions (full, full, full, full, full). Chord symbols A⁷ and E⁷ are placed above the staff.

Second system of guitar notation. The first staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, including slurs and accents. The second staff is a tablature line with fret numbers (10, 10, 10, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8) and fretting instructions (full, full, full, full, full). Chord symbols D⁷, A⁷, and E⁷ are placed above the staff.

Third system of guitar notation. The first staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, including slurs and accents. The second staff is a tablature line with fret numbers (6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5). Chord symbol A⁷ is placed above the staff.

The first staff shows a guitar riff for D7 and A7 chords. The notes are: D7 (F#4, A4, B4), A7 (C#4, E4, F#4). The fingerings are: 5 4, 5 4, 6 5, 6 5.

The second staff shows a guitar riff for E7, D7, and A7 chords. The notes are: E7 (G#4, B4, C#5), D7 (F#4, A4, B4), A7 (C#4, E4, F#4). The fingerings are: 7 6, 7 6, 5 4, 5 4, 5 4, 5 6, 7 4, 6 7, 5 5.

Now once you start adding in some words, you need to remember that the blues is based around “call and response.”

That means that the vocal line is really the “call,” and usually some instrument has to be the response. And since it’s just you playing, you get to do that.

So when the vocal finishes a line, feel free to throw in a few notes of your own to fill in the space before the next vocal line – that’s the response.

There’s no right answer here, sometimes a “lick” as simple as stinging the root note sound fantastic and fits right in. Sometimes you have more space and you’ll feel like you need to add a bit more...

The blues is about you and what you’re feeling, so don’t let anyone tell you it ain’t right if you’re feeling it.

Here's What To Do Next...

I hope you enjoyed this book as much as I enjoyed putting it together for you. Playing the blues with friends and family is something that has brought an enormous amount of joy to my life over the years and I hope it will do the same for you.

And if you got some value from this and you'd like to learn more, you'll probably want to check out my top selling Blues Guitar Unleashed course.



Blues Guitar Unleashed covers everything you'll need to jam with any blues band, anywhere, at any time.

You'll learn classic and modern blues rhythms, lead patterns and techniques, and how to solo over any blues that comes your way.

Just visit <https://BluesGuitarUnleashed.com> and click the "Course Catalog" link at the top to see all of the premium courses that are available. They all come with my iron-clad guarantee so you have nothing to lose.

If you have any questions, or need to contact us for customer service, please email helpdesk@bluesguitarunleashed.com.