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| Green Belt: Level 4 Guitar Lessons | | | | | | | | |
| The Essence and Importance of Flow |
| Your Attention Channels | | |
| Simple Sample Blues Licks | | | | |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Remember our guitar-friendly blues scale in the guitar-friendly key of A? Here it is again for your review.  http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/scales/Scale-A-Minor-Blues.gif  Here are a collection of short blues licks in Am. The licks are played as short clips on an acoustic guitar at about 3/4 speed so you can hear really well what's going on. Try each lick on your own guitar, and pay attention to the bends, slides, hammer-ons, pull-offs, double-stops, chops and rolls that are very common in blues.  Most of the licks are played in the 5th position (1st finger on the 5th fret) but some of the licks slide up to the 7th position on the upper notes, and down to the 3rd position or even the open position on the lower licks. These positions are very comfortable.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Blues Licks in A minor | | | | [Lick 1](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm01.mp3) | [Lick 2](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm02.mp3) | [Lick 3](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm03.mp3) | | [Lick 4](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm04.mp3) | [Lick 5](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm05.mp3) | [Lick 6](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm06.mp3) | | [Lick 7](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm07.mp3) | [Lick 8](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm08.mp3) | [Lick 9](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm09.mp3) | | [Lick 10](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm10.mp3) | [Lick 11](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm11.mp3) | [Lick 12](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm12.mp3) | | [Lick 13](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm13.mp3) | [Lick 14](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm14.mp3) | [Lick 15](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm15.mp3) | | [Lick 16](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm16.mp3) | [Lick 17](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm17.mp3) | [Lick 18](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm18.mp3) | | [Lick 19](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm19.mp3) | [Lick 20](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm20.mp3) | [Lick 21](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm21.mp3) | | [Lick 22](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm22.mp3) | [Lick 23](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm23.mp3) | [Lick 24](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/BluesLickAm24.mp3) |   Remember that in blues, it's all about the groove and the feeling. Practice each of these licks until you can do it smoothly and with soul. Mix and match them, then make up some of your own. | | | | | |
| Blues Rhythm Patterns | | | | | | |
| This lesson deals with rhythm patterns common to playing in the blues form. Notice that we say blues*form*, not blues *style*. This is because a green belt should study and understand the blues form, and develop their own styles on top of this form. Straight Quarter Beat This beat is extremely common for drum and base lines, but when the guitar also plods along at 4/4 on top of the drums and base, it can get a little uninteresting. For this reason, try to use 4/4 for the guitar part only when intentionally trying to create a feeling of a march, or something like it. Another way to keep the overall song sounding interesting is to play 4/4 for part of the song, and switch to another beat during other parts of the song for contrast.  http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Rhythm-Straight-Quarter.gif Straight Half Beat This beat is a little more unusual than the 4/4 beat, and feels more like a funeral march than a regular march. Try this beat on top of some of your blues progressions, and find opportunities to use it. Sometimes it works with minor blues progresions.  http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Rhythm-Straight-Half.gif Straight Eighth Beat Straight eighths is common in rock styles, and propels the music forward a little more strongly than quarter beats. Many of the ZZ Top's rock-style repertoire is in straight eighth notes.  http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Rhythm-Straight-Eighth.gif Upbeat Eighth Beat Ah, now we start departing from the feeling that we are piggybacking entirely on the down beat of the drums and bass. Not only does playing the upbeat provide a nice fill to counterbalance the drums and bass lines, using an upstroke with your pick on the upbeat gives a different overall sound to the chord than a downstroke would. Upbeat eighth-note rhythm maintains a strict swing feel.  http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Rhythm-Upbeat-Eighth.gif Eighth Triplets Eighth triplets really means playing three notes in the time it takes to play two eighth notes. That's 12 notes per bar. Most often this rhythm is played with alternating down and upstrokes. This rhythm has a very compelling forward motion to it, and is the basis for the shuffle, which we'll present next.  http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Rhythm-Triplets.gif Shuffle The shuffle is based on a triplet *feel*. It is done by omitting the middle stroke of each triplet. The result is a distinctive "loping" feel with a strong forward motion. The hand motion is almost always down on the first beat, and up on the next. The feeling is a kind of circular motion, like the piston on a steam locomotive.  http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Rhythm-Shuffle2.gif Shuffle Variation This is another way to notate a shuffle, but the sound is also subtly different, as the down stroke is allowed to ring slightly longer (technically an eighth and a half), and the upstroke is very short (technically a sixteenth note). The "loping" feel is enhanced.  http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Rhythm-Shuffle.gif Exercises: We highly recommend that you master all of these rhythm patterns, learning their feel and when and how to use them. Remember that in order to be a great blues lead player, you must first master a strong sense of rhythm.  Play your entire blues repertoire in each of these rhythm patterns, and note how it changes the overall feel. As you play your blues repertoire in all of the above rhythm patterns, mentally note the effect of each, and how you would use each in your own playing. | | | | | | |
| Blues Tunes Need Lyrics | | | | | | |
| Blues tunes without lyrics are not really blues tunes. Think of B.B. King, Eric Clapton, Johnny Winter, Robert Cray, Robert Johnson, Bonnie Raitt, Stevie Ray Vaughan. They are all *singer players*. The best thing about the predictability of the 12-bar blues structure, is that it is a comfortable framework for both the performer and the listener to tell or listen to a story. Everyone has the blues from time to time, so why not play and sing about how you felt when your old dog died, or your car wouldn't start when you needed it most, or your no good, lyin', cheatin', two-timin' flame decided to burn elsewhere.  Lest we become guitar players who never venture to utter a syllable of song, the green belt study and practice gets us out of this rut, develops our abilities to multi-task, and play with emotion. The best part is you don't have to have a great voice to sing the blues (although it helps). The Form Follows the Lyrics Lyrics are so important to the blues, that they often are written first, then the form is fitted to the lyrics, whether 12-bar or 8-bar. Also, the subject being sung about often determines the chord selection. Some Lame Lyric Examples: (You can do better!) Here's a common source of the blues for too many of us:  I went downtown to look for a job Yeah, I went downtown lookin' for a job Well, I looked and hunted the whole day long And now I sit on this corner and sob...  Ain'tno work in this little town No, there ain't no work in this little town Well, from dawn till dusk I look And you ask why I frown...  Another example of a love gone wrong: (Remember that singing your feelings is more therapeutic than landing in jail!)  I called her up, but she won't answer the phone I called her up, but she won't answer the phone I walked by and saw the light on But she won't answer the phone...  How about something a little more upbeat: (The blues form doesn't always need to be about bad things, you know)  I got my paycheck today, and there was a little extra I'm goin' out tonight, and it's you I'm sitting next ta I'll pick you up at eight, don't be late, Come on, come on baby, baby don't make me wait, Come on little darlin', help me spend that little extra... Exercises: Sing and play the blues. We repeat, *sing* and play the blues. Develop your sense of timing, point and counterpoint harmonic fills, and learn to judge whether 7th chords, 9th chords or straight triads give the best overall color to the lyrics.  Take the lame lyrics above, and add the music. Through trial and error, pick the form, rhythm patterns and the chord progressions that work best to your ear.  Write some lyrics of your own. Tell your own story and embellish it to make it as sad, ironic, funny, or outrageous as you possibly can. | | | | | | |
| Modified Blues Scale | | | | | | |
| This modified blues scale has two passing tones that make it doubly blues sounding and give additional variety and color to the usual blues scale. This is a favorite of Steve Morse, and many of the better Nashville players. | | | | | | |
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| Minor Blues Scale |
| The minor blues scale is based on the minor pentatonic scale, except that there is a chromatic augmented 4th/flatted 5th note added, changing it from pentatonic (five-note) to a six-note blues scales. This scales retains the "guitar-friendly fingering patterns of pentatonic scales, and is used interchangeably with pentatonic scales in rock music, or other applications, where a lick is to take on a bluesy feel.  The example below is in the keys of A minor, the most common key in blues, owing to the easy chords and easy playability in the 5th position. As usual, the white dots are the root note in each scale, and the maroon notes are those that are the distinguishing note. The blue notes are those that connect the minor scale to the parallel root in the major scale. Minor Blues Scale The minor blues scale is the surest choice when singing the blues because of the role of the minor 3rd in setting the sad tone for the overall melody. The flatted 5th most commonly serves as a passing note in chromatic runs between the perfect 4th and perfect 5th, adding a little color and tension and release.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Attributes | Values | | Scale Formula | 1-b3-4-b5-5-b7 | | Major or Minor | Minor | | Distinguishing Degree | b5 | | Good over Chords | m , m7 , m6 | | Good with Progressions | Im-bVII-bVI , Im-IVm , Im-Vm , Im-bIII-bVII |   A Minor Blues Scale |
| Major Blues Scale |
| The major blues scale is based on the major pentatonic scale, except that there is a chromatic minor 3rd note added between the major 2nd and major 3rd, changing it from pentatonic (five-note) to a six-note blues scale. The major blues scale retains the "guitar-friendly fingering patterns of major pentatonic scale, and is used interchangeably with its pentatonic counterpart in rock music, country and bluegrass, where a lick is to take on a bluesy feel.  The example below are in the parallel keys of C major. The white dots are the root note in each scale, and the maroon notes are those that are the distinguishing note. The blue notes are those that connect the minor scale to the parallel root in the major scale. Major Blues Scale The major blues scale is used in most applications where the major pentatonic would fit, but has the added element of both the major and minor 3rd in the scale.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Attributes | Values | | Scale Formula | 1-2-b3-3-5-6 | | Major or Minor | Major | | Distinguishing Degree | b3 | | Good over Chords | M , M7 , M6 | | Good with Progressions | I-IV-V , II-V-I , I-VI-IV-V , I-III-IV-I , I-IV-I , I-V-I |   C Major Blues Scale |
| Minor Blues |
| Blues played in a minor key has a very solemn, dark, heavy feel and the progressions that every green belt should have in their repertoire, just for those occasions when no other form of music can adequately tell the story. Minor blues can be played in the 12 or 8-bar forms. |
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| Major 8-Bar Blues |
| The hugely common 8-bar blues form follows the blues I - IV - V form, although not the same blues feel as the 12-bar blues. Still, after 8 measures, there is a strong sense of verse completion. This lesson will help you learn the structure and how to use it in your own playing. |
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| Major 12-Bar Blues |
| 12-bar blues refers to the 12-measure structure that defines a verse in a blues tune. The chord progressions played over the top are very familiar and predictable, which even an alien could identify with in a few minutes. What's so great about this predictability, is that it allows the player and the listener to breathe variety into the tune through licks, chord coloring and voicing, rhythmic variations and other musical dynamics, such as volume and tone. Think of the structure of the blues as the circular Yin, and all the angular patterns played atop the circular chord progressions as Yang.  The other really great thing about the blues is that it's all about playing with feeling. Once you learn the basic framework, you can play for days on end, and you never have to read music!. Major Blues Chord Progressions The Roman numerals at the top of the chapter will be explained in more depth at the blue belt level, but you should know that these represent chords in the harmonic scale. This is what the 12-bar blues chord progressions looks like in the most common major keys for blues:   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | FeelDegree | I | I | I | I | IV | IV | I | I | V | IV | I | V\* | | Rock/Pop | A | A | A | A | D | D | A | A | E | D | A | E7 | | Bluesy | A7 | A7 | A7 | A7 | D7 | D7 | A7 | A7 | E7 | D7 | A7 | E7 | | Jazzy | A6 | A6 | A6 | A6 | D9 | D9 | A6 | A6 | E9 | D9 | A6 | E9 | | Smooth Jazz | AM7 | AM7 | AM7 | AM7 | DM7 | DM7 | AM7 | AM7 | E7 | DM7 | AM7 | E7 | | Funkee | E7#9 | E7#9 | E7#9 | E7#9 | A7 | A7 | E7#9 | E7#9 | B7#9 | A7 | E7#9 | B7#9 |   \* The last measure uses a V chord, which is also referred to as the "turnaround" chord, which points the audience in a circle back to the I chord, or the beginning of the progression. This repeats for every verse in the song, and when the song is over, the final chord is a I chord, or back to the tonic. Quick-Change 12-Bar Blues "Quick-change" is a variation to the 12-bar blues that has the same basic structure as 12-bar blues, except in the second measure the IV chord is substituted for the I chord.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | FeelDegree | I | *IV* | I | I | IV | IV | I | I | V | IV | I | V\* | | Rock/Pop | A | D | A | A | D | D | A | A | E | D | A | E7 |  Exercises: Play the chord progressions listed in the tables above from left to right. Play them using various rhythm patterns. Play them in open and moveable chord positions you learned in the earlier belt level lessons.  Make sure you *always* practice the blues with feeling. Focus on the rhythm, and clean chord changes. If you are playing the blues correctly, there should always be a little sweat on your palms and on your forehead. |
| Moveable 6th Chords |
| This lesson discusses the 6th chord, and shows some of the most common forms, all of them with the root on the bottom. The Formula The 6th chord is technically a four-tone chord, a major triad with a major 6th added a top. The formula is root - major 3rd - perfect 5th - major 6th. Because of the major 3rd, the chord has an overall major flavor, and because of the major 6th, there is a moderate tension that wants to be resolved to the perfect 5th. How to Use 6th Chords 6th chords are a good choice in blues, jazz and popular progressions, where a I or IV chord might be used. 6th chords also sound delightful in progressions with 7th chords and 9th chords. A 6th chord is also a very popular ending chord, when you want the 6th note to ring in the mind of the listener long after the song is over.  The chord shapes below are moveable, which means that you can play them all over the fretboard. Learn them all by memory and by ear. The different voicings are quite pleasing in their own right. This is because some of the voicings are inverted, or might even omit the 3rd or the 5th.  In all the chords, the root is the lowest note, so you can know the name of the chord by knowing the lowest note.  �   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Root on 6th String | Root on 5th String | Root on 4th String | | http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Chord-6-R6-E.gif | http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Chord-6-R5-A.gif | http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Chord-6-R4-D.gif | | Root on 6th String | Root on 5th String | Root on 4th String | | http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Chord-6-R6-J.gif | http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Chord-6-R5-J.gif | http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Chord-6-R4-D.gif | | Root on 6th String | Root on 5th String | Root on 4th String | | http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Chord-6-R6-G.gif | http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Chord-6-R5-C.gif | http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/chords/Chord-6-R4-F.gif |  Exercises: For a mental exercise, pick the chords apart so that you can identify the 3rd, the 5th and the 6th degrees relative to the root. This will make it easier to remember the chords, and also hear the subtle differences in the voicings. Note that the chords that are constructed in the order of root - 3rd - 5th - 6th are the hardest to finger. This is typical of chords with more tones than 3. Rearranging the order of the tones for easier fingering becomes the rule, rather than the exception.  Learn the shapes and play them in combinations with each other, concentrate on changing to and from these chords comfortable and noiselessly.   * A6 - Ab6 - G6 - Ab6 - A6 * G6 - C6 - G6 - Am7 - G6 * C6 - Am - C6 - Am * A6 - EM7 - G6 - DM7 * A - AM7 - A7 - A6 - D - DM7 - D7 - D6   Try to play the same 6th chords in all possible voicings.Try some progressions of your own! |
| 7th Chords: More Stacked 3rds |
| Again, remember that music is not in the notes, it's in the space between notes. Any combination of three major or minor 3rds stacked atop one another makes what we hear as some kind of 7th chord.  In all the sections below, there are two sets of chords, the first shows the notes in sequential order from the root or 1st degree to the 7th degree, which constitutes quite a stretch on the guitar, but it is important to help develop the qualities of the chords in the ear. The second set of chords in each section are a little tighter on the guitar neck, because we rearrange the order of the degrees, but the chord quality is the same overall, even though the voicing is different. Memorize both by sound and by position! Major 7th Chord The formula for a major 7th chord is 1 - M3 - 5 - M7, which is really a major 3rd interval with a minor 3rd then another major 3rd stacked on top. The function of the major 7th chord in the harmonic scale is a I or IV chord.  ------ ------ ------ |||O|| |||||| |||||| ------ ------ ------ ||O||| |||OO| |||||O ------ ------ ------ |||||| |||||| ||||O| ------ ------ ------ |O|||| ||O||| |||O|| ------ ------ ------ O||||| |O|||| ||O||| ------ ------ ------  1357xx x1357x xx1357  Here are guitar-friendly versions of the same chords.  ------ ------ ------ O|||OO |o|||O ||O||| ------ ------ ------ ||OO|| |||O|| |||||| ------ ------ ------ |O|||| ||O|O| |||OOO ------ ------ ------  157351 x15735 xx1573 Dominant 7th Chord The formula for a dominant 7th chord is 1 - M3 - 5 - m7, which is really a major 3rd interval with two minor 3rds stacked on top. The function of the dominant 7th chord in the harmonic scale is a V chord.  ------ ------ ------ |||O|| |||||| |||||| ------ ------ ------ |||||| ||||O| |||||O ------ ------ ------ ||O||| |||O|| |||||| ------ ------ ------ |||||| |||||| ||||O| ------ ------ ------ |O|||| ||O||| |||O|| ------ ------ ------ O||||| |O|||| ||O||| ------ ------ ------  1357xx x1357x xx1357  Here are guitar-friendly versions of the same chords.  ------ ------ ------ O|O|OO |O|O|O ||O||| ------ ------ ------ |||O|| |||||| ||||O| ------ ------ ------ |O|||| ||O|O| |||O|O ------ ------ ------  157351 x15735 xx1573 Minor 7th Chord The formula for a minor 7th chord is 1 - m3 - 5 - m7, which is really a minor 3rd interval with a major 3rd followed by another minor 3rd stacked on top. The function of the minor 7th chord in the harmonic scale is a II, III or VI chord.  ------ ------ ------ |||O|| |||||| |||||| ------ ------ ------ |||||| ||||O| |||||O ------ ------ ------ ||O||| |||O|| |||||| ------ ------ ------ |O|||| ||O||| |||OO| ------ ------ ------ |||||| |||||| |||||| ------ ------ ------ O||||| |O|||| ||O||| ------ ------ ------  1357xx x1357x xx1357  Here are guitar-friendly versions of the same chords.  ------ ------ ------ O|OOOO |O|O|O ||O||| ------ ------ ------ |||||| ||||O| ||||OO ------ ------ ------ |O|||| ||o||| |||O|| ------ ------ ------  157351 x15735 xx1573 Half Diminished 7th Chord The formula for a half-diminished 7th chord is 1 - m3 - b5 - m7, which is really a minor 3rd interval with a major 3rd followed by minor 3rd stacked on top. The function of the half-diminished 7th chord in the harmonic scale is a VII chord.  ------ ------ ------ |||O|| |||||| |||||| ------ ------ ------ ||O||| |||OO| |||||O ------ ------ ------ |||||| |||||| ||||O| ------ ------ ------ |O|||| ||O||| |||O|| ------ ------ ------ |||||| |||||| |||||| ------ ------ ------ O||||| |O|||| ||O||| ------ ------ ------  1357xx x1357x xx1357  Here are guitar-friendly versions of the same chords.  ------ ------ ------ O|OOOO |O|O|O ||o||| ------ ------ ------ |o|||| ||O|O| |||OOO ------ ------ ------ |||||| |||||| |||||| ------ ------ ------  157351 x15735 xx1573 Diminished 7th Chord The formula for a minor 7th chord is 1 - m3 - b5 - bb7, which is really 3 minor 3rds intervals stacked atop one another. The diminished 7th chord is not part of the harmonic scale, but it is an interesting chord because of its symmetry. This means that no matter how you stack it, the quality of the sound is the same. Try playing the chord up and down the neck 3 frets apart, and you'll probably recognize it from some classical pieces.  ------ ------ ------ |||O|| |||||| |||||| ------ ------ ------ |||||| ||||O| |||||O ------ ------ ------ ||O||| |||O|| |||||| ------ ------ ------ |||||| |||||| ||||O| ------ ------ ------ |O|||| ||O||| |||O|| ------ ------ ------ |||||| |||||| |||||| ------ ------ ------ O||||| |O|||| ||O||| ------ ------ ------  1357xx x1357x xx1357  Here are guitar-friendly versions of the same chords.  ------ ------ ------ ||O||| |||O|| |||||| ------ ------ ------ O||O|| |o|||| ||O|O| ------ ------ ------ |O|||| ||O|O| |||O|O ------ ------ ------  1573xx x1573x xx1573 |
| Want to Turbocharge your Guitar Learning Abilities? |
| Blues Scales |
| Blues scales are based on pentatonic major and minor scales, except that there is a chromatic note added, changing them from pentatonic (five-note) six-note blues scales, named for their invention by and heavy use in Blues music. These scales retain the "guitar-friendly fingering patterns of pentatonic scales, and are used interchangeably with pentatonic scales in rock music, or other applications, where a lick is to take on a bluesy feel.  The examples below are in the parallel keys of C major and A minor, which means that both scales share the same notes but have different starting and ending points. As usual, the white dots are the root note in each scale, and the maroon notes are those that are the distinguishing note. The blue notes are those that connect the minor scale to the parallel root in the major scale. Major Blues Scale The major blues scale is used in most applications where the major pentatonic would fit, but has the added element of both the major and minor 3rd in the scale. The minor 3rd can be used either in chromatic runs between the major 2nd and major 3rd, or as a way of shifting the lick between a major and minor feel. This shifting can can have a dramatic swinging effect between a happy and sad mood in the same piece.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Attributes | Values | | �Scale Formula | �1-2-b3-3-5-6 | | �Major or Minor | �Major | | �Distinguishing Degree | �b3 | | �Good over Chords | �M , M7 , M6 | | �Good with Progressions | �I-IV-V , II-V-I , I-VI-IV-V , I-III-IV-I , I-IV-I , I-V-I |   C Major Blues Scale Minor Blues Scale The minor blues scale is the surest choice when singing the blues because of the role of the minor 3rd in setting the sad tone for the overall melody. The flatted most commonly serves as a passing note in chromatic runs between the perfect 4th and perfect 5th, adding a little color and tension and release.   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Attributes | Values | | �Scale Formula | �1-b3-4-b5-5-b7 | | �Major or Minor | �Minor | | �Distinguishing Degree | �b5 | | �Good over Chords | �m , m7 , m6 | | �Good with Progressions | �Im-bVII-bVI , Im-IVm , Im-Vm , Im-bIII-bVII |   A Minor Blues Scale |
| Tritone: The Devil's Interval |
| There is a particularly troublesome interval in the chromatic scale to become acquainted with. Here are a few factoids.   * The Tritone interval is so called, because it is exactly half the number of frets between the bottom and top notes of an octave. The three tones played together are form the tritone sound. Because the overtones in a tritone do not reinforce the overtones in the fundamental tone, the ear has a difficult time discerning whether to move up or down to find the home base. The devil's tone can cause aural vertigo, if overused. * The devil's tone was not permitted in any medieval church music, being viewed as the antithesis to the so-called perfect intervals. * Being a dissonant interval, the tritone is seldom dwelt on for long in music, but is often used in modern music as a passing interval in two-part harmonies.   Here again is a friendly reminder not to be too anxious to learn all the other intervals at once. Think of intervals as "vitamin I", which you need to take every day in small doses, but which you should take every day.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Interval Name | Number of Half Steps | Frequency Ratio | Consonant / Dissonant | Other Names, Symbols | Inverted Interval Name | Name of Interval in Second Octave | | �Perfect Unison | �0 | �1 | �Consonant | �P1 | �Perfect Unison | �Perfect Octave | | �Augmented 4th /  �Diminished 5th | �6 | �32:45 | �Dissonant | �d5, b5, A4, #4, Tritone | �Diminished 5th /  �Augmented 4th | �Augmented 11th /  �Diminished 12th | | �Perfect Octave | �12 | �1:2 | �Consonant | �P8 | �Perfect Octave | �Perfect 15th |  Tritone Interval Spelling This chart shows the spelling of all intervals upward and downward from any starting point. This is important to know when composing music, because if you know the name of one note, then by hearing the interval, you will know the name of the next note you hear by ear.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | P1 | A4/D5 | P8 | | �Ab | �D/Ebb | �Ab | | �A | �D#/Eb | �A | | �A# | �D##/E | �A# | | �Bb | �E/Fb | �Bb | | �B | �E#/F | �B | | �C | �F#/Gb | �C | | �C# | �F##/G | �C# | | �Db | �G/Abb | �Db | | �D | �G#/Ab | �D | | �D# | �G##/A | �D# | | �Eb | �A/Bbb | �Eb | | �E | �A#/Bb | �E | | �F | �B/Cb | �F | | �F# | �B#/C | �F# | | �Gb | �C/Dbb | �Gb | | �G | �C#/Db | �G | | �G# | �D##/D | �G# |   Notice that some of the tritone spellings have double sharps (##) or double flats (bb) in them. This is because in standard music notation, note names must fit within key signatures, to keep the repeating of written sharps and flats to a minimum. Names of notes are given by counting the natural or fundamental notes, up or down, then adding the accidentals (# or b) on top at the end. In the case of Ab, counting up three naturals gives us B > C > D, which happens to be an augmented 4th, so we stop there. For a diminished 5th, in the case of Ab counting up 4 naturals gives us B > C > D > E, but the pitch is too high, so when we drop two frets lower, it is really a D pitch, but we call it an Ebb to respect the spelling of the 5th. The Devil's Tone: Augmented 4ths/Diminished 5ths The Augmented 4th or Diminished 5th interval sounds so strange to our ears, that even though it exists, it is only used sparingly. When it is summoned forth, it can have a surprising or stunning effect on the listener, causing the audience to lose their musical bearing, if only for a moment. It does this because the mind cannot easily perceive which direction they are going relative to home. If dwelt on too long, can erase the notion of home base from the listener's mind. The effect is musical vertigo.  �   |  | | --- | | [http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/images/intervals/Int-A4d5.JPG](http://www.blackbeltguitar.com/sound/Int-A4.mid) |  Exercises: When training your ear, remember: You cannot force your ear to learn. It must happen easily and naturally, and through relaxed repetition over time, rather than cramming all at once. When we try to force the ear to learn, the ear rebels, and closes. Here are some tips to encourage your ear to open up.   * Practice the intervals no more than 10 minutes each day. * Practice intervals at the beginning of your practice session, when your ear is most open and relaxed. * Start out by learning the intervals on your instrument, not someone elses. * Learn the intervals in the order presented in this lesson. * Play the intervals both on the same string and on different strings. Play them up and down the fretboard, both in order and randomly. * Sing the note names of each interval as you play it. Sing and play each interval both up and down. * Play one note in the interval and sing the other. Do this up and down. * Play and sing each interval both melodically (one note at a time)and harmonically (two notes at a time). * If your ear gets tired, move onto other things and come back to it fresh tomorrow. |
| Set Management: A Must-Have in Performing |
| Ongoing Growth: Horizontally and Vertically |
| Musical Vitamins for Guitar Players |
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