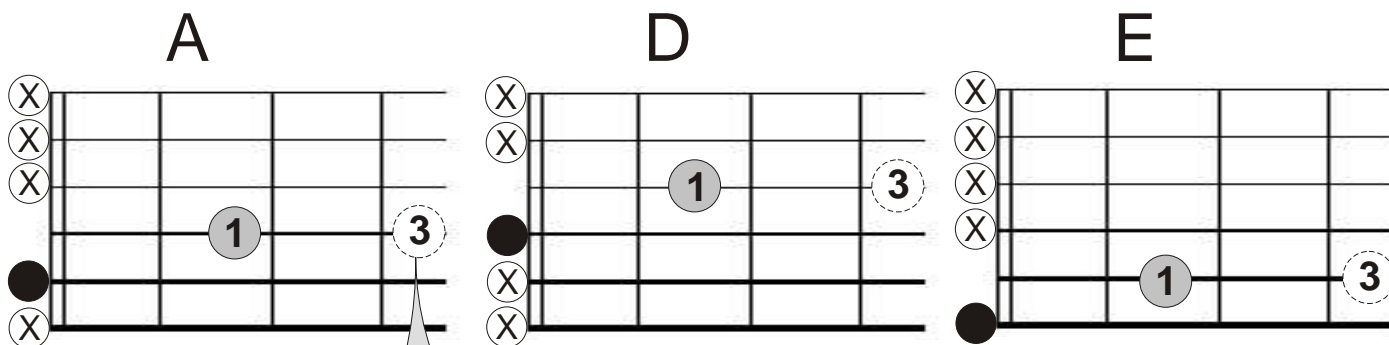
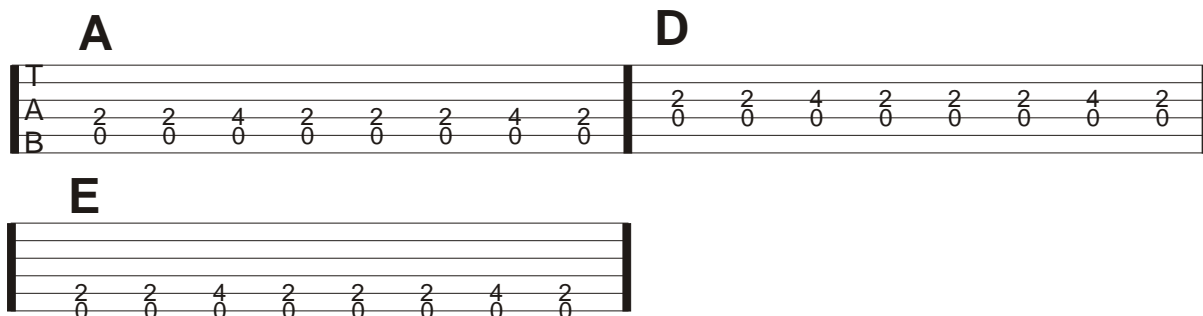
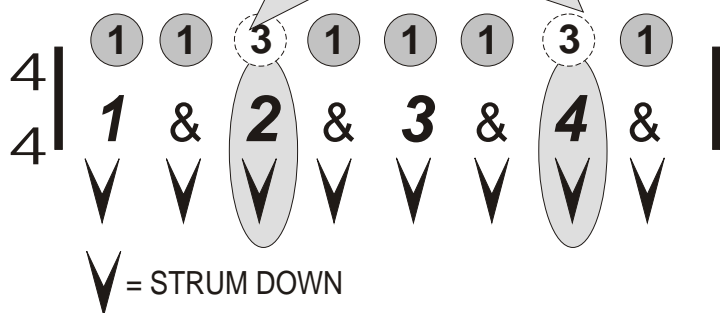


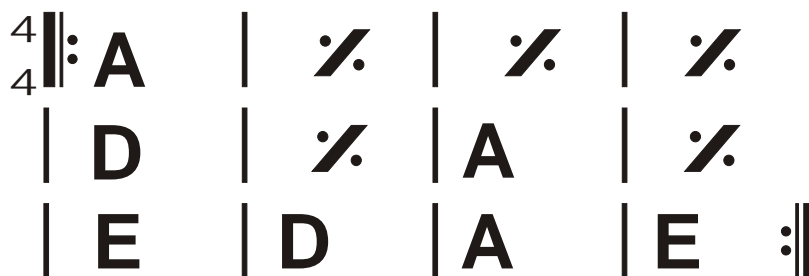
# 12 Bar Blues



On the picture to the left you can see that the rhythm is all straight forward ( strumming down in eighth notes ). But on the second and fourth beat place your finger 3rd two frets higher than your 1st finger. This gives some variation to the rhythm and also gives it that classic blues sound.



The chord progression below is made up of twelve bars of music. This is where the name 12 Bar Blues comes from. There is four bars of "A" then two bars of "D" then two bars of "A" again and then so on. The rhythm pattern above is played over one bar only, so you can see that you only place your 3rd finger down twice in one bar of this rhythm. To play this pattern through you have to get the rhythm flowing smoothly. Practice this for a while before you try to play the chord progression below. Once you have this smoothly play the 1st four bars of a below, if it is a bit hard to count four bars accurately count the amount of times your 3rd finger goes down. If the 3rd finger is placed down two times in one bar, then it will be placed down eight times in four bars. You can do this with the rest of the chords as well.



# Theory Behind a 12 Bar Blues

To find out the theory behind the 12 bar blues first we have to understand how a major scale is constructed in tones and semitones. Remember there are eight notes in one octave of a major scale. The 1st to 2nd notes are a tone apart, 2nd to 3rd is a tone as well. You should have read this when reading through the section on major scales.

## C Major Scale

The diagram shows the C Major Scale on a guitar fretboard and as a sequence of notes with intervals. The fretboard shows the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th frets. The notes are C (1st), D (2nd), E (3rd), F (4th), G (5th), A (6th), B (7th), and C (8th). The intervals are shown as 1 - 2 (T), 2 - 3 (T), 3 - 4 (S), 4 - 5 (T), 5 - 6 (T), 6 - 7 (T), and 7 - 8 (S). Arrows point from the fretboard to the note sequence.

1st to 2nd = 1 Tone apart.

If we are playing a 12 bar blues progression in the key of "C", we have to first look at the notes of a C major scale, (C D E F G A B C). The 1st note of the C major scale is C (this is the root note), the 2nd note of the scale is D then the 3rd is E, this continues on until you get to the 8th note of the scale, this is known as the octave.

The diagram shows the C Major Scale on a guitar fretboard and as a sequence of notes with intervals. The fretboard shows the 1st, 4th, and 5th frets. The notes are C (1st), D (2nd), E (3rd), F (4th), G (5th), A (6th), B (7th), and C (8th). The intervals are shown as 1 - 2 (T), 2 - 3 (T), 3 - 4 (S), 4 - 5 (T), 5 - 6 (T), 6 - 7 (T), and 7 - 8 (S). The 1st, 4th, and 5th notes are highlighted with grey boxes.

To find the 3 chords that we use in a 12 bar blues progression, we will be using the key of C major. We look at the 1st, 4th & 5th notes of the scale to see what chords will be used in this progression. So as we can see above, in the key of C major the three chords we will be using will be C Major, F Major & G Major. The next process is to play these chords in the right order. Below there is a group of numbers placed in twelve bars of music, (this is where the name 12 bar blues comes from). In the 1st four bars of music there is the number 1, this represents the 1st note of the scale (which in the key of C the 1st note of the scale is obviously C). This means you play the C major chord for four bars. Then you can see on the next two bars there is the number 4, this is your fourth note of the scale, (in the key of C major this is F). You play the F major chord for two bars, then just follow the chord progression through to the end.

In most cases when chord patterns are shown as numbers of a scale, roman numerals are usually used. As shown below the scale is now in the key of G major and the 1st, 4th & 5th notes are G, C & D. These will be the three chords used in a 12 Bar Blues in the key of G.

4/4	1	1	1	1
	4	4	1	1
	5	4	1	5

The diagram shows the G Major Scale on a guitar fretboard and as a sequence of notes with intervals. The fretboard shows the 1st, 4th, and 5th frets. The notes are G (1st), A (2nd), B (3rd), C (4th), D (5th), E (6th), F# (7th), and G (8th). The intervals are shown as 1 - 2 (T), 2 - 3 (T), 3 - 4 (S), 4 - 5 (T), 5 - 6 (T), 6 - 7 (T), and 7 - 8 (S). The 1st, 4th, and 5th notes are highlighted with grey boxes.

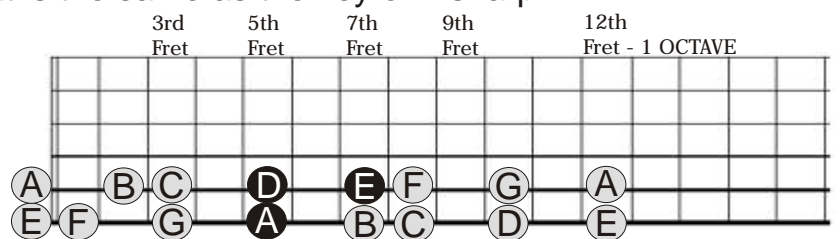
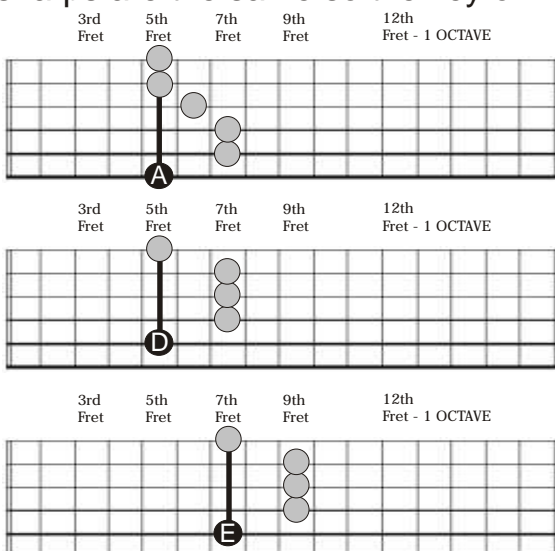
4/4	I	I	I	I
	IV	IV	I	I
	V	IV	I	V

# 12 Bar Blues Chord Progressions

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	
KEY OF C MAJOR	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF C MAJOR ARE, C MAJOR, F MAJOR & G MAJOR.
KEY OF G MAJOR	G	A	B	C	D	E	F#	G	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF G MAJOR ARE, G MAJOR, MAJOR & D MAJOR.
KEY OF D MAJOR	D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF D MAJOR ARE, D MAJOR, G MAJOR & A MAJOR.
KEY OF A MAJOR	A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G#	A	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF A MAJOR ARE, A MAJOR, D MAJOR & E MAJOR.
KEY OF E MAJOR	E	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF E MAJOR ARE, E MAJOR, A MAJOR & B MAJOR.
KEY OF B MAJOR	B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF B MAJOR ARE, B MAJOR, E MAJOR & F MAJOR.

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	
KEY OF F MAJOR	F	G	A	Bb	C	D	E	F	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF F MAJOR ARE, F MAJOR, B MAJOR & C MAJOR.
KEY OF Bb MAJOR	Bb	C	D	Eb	F	G	A	Bb	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF B MAJOR ARE, B MAJOR, E MAJOR & F MAJOR.
KEY OF Eb MAJOR	Eb	F	G	Ab	Bb	C	D	Eb	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF E MAJOR ARE, E MAJOR, A MAJOR & B MAJOR.
KEY OF Ab MAJOR	Ab	Bb	C	Db	Eb	F	G	Ab	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF A MAJOR ARE, A MAJOR, D MAJOR & E MAJOR.
KEY OF Db MAJOR	Db	Eb	F	Gb	Ab	Bb	C	Db	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF D MAJOR ARE, D MAJOR, G MAJOR & A MAJOR.
KEY OF Gb MAJOR	Gb	Ab	Bb	Cb	D	E	F	Gb	THE THREE CHORDS USED IN A 12 BAR BLUES IN THE KEY OF G MAJOR ARE, G MAJOR, C MAJOR & D MAJOR.

On the page above shows all the different keys you can have, don't forget that flats and sharps are the same so the key of B flat is the same as the key of A sharp.



You can see when playing a 12 bar blues in bar chords, how easy it is to remember which chords to play. The three root notes are in a sort of shape. Which looks like an L on its side. Some people use shapes on the guitar to help them remember songs, chord patterns and solos. If you want you can do the same. Remember you can use this shape to move up or down the fretboard, the shape will stay