



12 Bar Blues in A: Lesson 6

By Christopher Schlegel

In this Tutorial Series we are going to learning how to play a 12 Bar Blues in A!

Now we have all of our positions in place for our 12 bar blues progression. The idea here is to have one basic pattern and type of motion to use for every single part of our song. All we need to do is move that same pattern to different sets of strings.

The reason this progression is called "12 bar blues" is because there are 12 "bars" or measures - or 12 counts of 1-2-3-4. The basic pattern is presented here:

A - I (one chord) 4 measures
D - IV (four chord) 2 measures
A - I (one chord) 2 measures
E - V (five chord) 2 measures
A - I (one chord) 1 measures
E - V (five chord) 1 measures

All this adds up to 12 total measures. There are of course other ways to do it. You can make up your own or alter it to fit any blues song you want to imitate. The only important point is that all the people playing together have previously agreed upon what pattern or progression (or order and total measures of chords) to use in order to play together!

Here's the whole thing in a Straight Eighth Rhythm. Happy blues playing!

12 Bar Blues In A

Straight 1/8th Notes!

A major - I chord

1 2 3 4

T
A
B

2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4 | 2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4 | 2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4 | 2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 | 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 | 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 | 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

D major - IV chord

A major - I chord

5 6 7 8

T
A
B

2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4 | 2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4 | 2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4 | 2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 | 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 | 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 | 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

E major - V chord

A major - I chord

E major - V chord

9 10 11 12

T
A
B

2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4 | 2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4 | 2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4 | 2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 | 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 | 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 | 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0