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MINOR-KEY SHUFFLE

In this lesson, we'll continue to explore the $\frac{12}{8}$ feel but in the context of a *minor-key shuffle* (a shuffle with chords based on a minor key rather than a major key). The $\frac{12}{8}$ feel is used in a lot of slow- to medium-tempo minor blues tunes. Subdividing the beat into eighth-note triplets helps propel the music forward and keeps a slow tempo from dragging or rushing. Also in this lesson, we'll talk about sliding into chord changes from below, the essence of the shuffle, $\frac{12}{8}$ fingerstyle feel, and $\frac{12}{8}$ strumming patterns with chord fills. Finally, we'll put it all together in a 12-bar blues progression in A Minor.

Sliding into Chords

You can always get to a chord by sliding into it. We often forget this simple idea but shouldn't, because it sounds great and is a big part of the blues. For example, in the following A Minor blues progression, we'll slide into the A Minor chord from the chord a half step below, A \flat Minor. In addition, we'll slide into the Dmin7 chord from D \flat min7. Check out the diagrams for these chords below.

Ex. 10

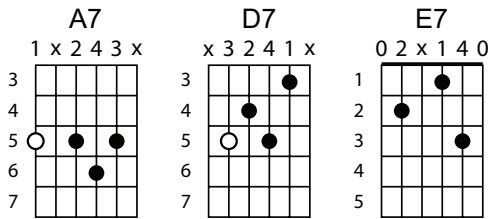
A\flatmin7 2 x 3 3 3 x	Amin7 2 x 3 3 3 x	D\flatmin7 x 1 x 2 4 3	Dmin7 x 1 x 2 4 3

Now, let's play the example.

Ex. 11

Four to the Floor in A

Following is another 8-bar form played with a *four-to-the-floor* strumming pattern, where all the strums are played as quarter notes. For a cool rhythmic effect, release pressure from your left-hand fingers after each strum. To get this technique down, be sure to watch the video.



Ex. 20

A7 D7

5 A7 E7 A7 E7

In the Style of "Key to the Highway"

Now, we'll do a variation of the 8-bar form that's in the style of the Skip James tune "Key to the Highway." Check out the cool chord fills in measures 2 and 4. Plus, in the last measure, there's a great interval phrase that should be played using *hybrid picking*, where the bottom notes are sounded with a pick and the upper notes are plucked with a right-hand finger. Let's play the example.

Ex. 21

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

H

T 8 9 7 (7) 7 7 7

A 7 9 7 (7) 7 8 8

B 2 2 4 4 2 2 3 4 7

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

H

T 6 7 5 (5) 5 5 5

A 2 2 4 4 2 2 3 4 5 6 7 6 (6) 6 6 6

B 0 0 0 0 0 0 3 4 5 7 5 (5) 5 5 5