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About the Video

A companion video, hosted by author Steve Trovato, is included with this book and can be streamed online or downloaded. See page 1 for instructions for accessing the video. The video features clear demonstrations of the lessons and music examples in this book. Watch it while following along with the book for the best learning experience. The camera icon to the left indicates there is a video lesson to accompany that section in the book.



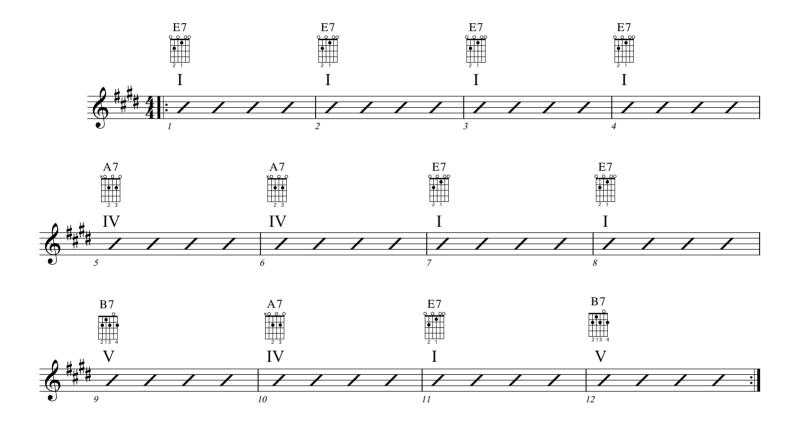
About the Audio

Companion audio is also accessible online. The lead guitar licks and solos are demonstrated so that you can tell how the examples should sound. Also included are full-band demonstration tracks as well as play-along tracks that you can use to practice your lead guitar playing. The speaker icon to the left indicates there is an audio track to accompany the example in the book.

Blues Form

The most common form of the blues is the *12-bar blues*, which is 12 measures (or bars) in length and mainly uses just three chords. These chords are built on the first (I), fourth (IV), and fifth (V) degrees of the major scale. Measures 1–4 are the one (I) chord, measures 5–6 are the four (IV) chord, and measures 7–8 go back to the one (I) chord. Measures 9–12 consist of the five (V) chord in measure 9, the four (IV) in measure 10, the one (I) chord in measure 11, and the five (V) chord in measure 12; this is also known as the *turnaround*. A turnaround is a short musical statement that points the listener back to the beginning. The chords are all usually dominant seventh chords unless the key is minor.

Although there are other blues forms, the 12-bar form is by far the most common. This book will cover various stylistic techniques within the 12-bar context. Here is an example of a 12-bar blues in E.



Blues Rhythm

The blues is frequently performed in a variety of tempos, keys, and rhythms. The feels fall primarily within four categories: 1) The shuffle (or swing), 2) the straight eighth-note feel, 3) the mambo, and 4) the slow blues $\frac{12}{8}$ feel. Most other blues feels are variations or permutations of these four basic rhythms.

Blues Phrasing

Phrasing is perhaps the most important aspect of blues guitar playing. The scales will tell you which notes to play, while phrasing will determine when and how to play them. Phrasing is the element of music that makes it sound like a given style. Rhythmic and melodic phrasing are essential to playing blues guitar because they outline, or describe, the underlying feel.

Example 8: Icy Road



This one sounds great but is a little tricky. Since it requires many *double-stop* slides, it's important to keep your fingers together. (Double stops are simply two notes played simultaneously.) Don't leave a finger behind when you make the slide. Notice that the example begins on beat 2.



Ways to Make This Example Sound Great

- Don't grip the fretted notes too tightly—this will help keep a steady rhythm
- Keep your right hand moving in time to the pulse of the rhythm, helping to ensure accurate timing
- Don't allow your fingers to pull apart during the slides
- Use the middle or bridge pickup

Example 4: The New Shoes Blues



This one is like playing two parts at the same time! It features single notes and a chord "stab" on beat 2. The bass guitar part would double the single-note part.



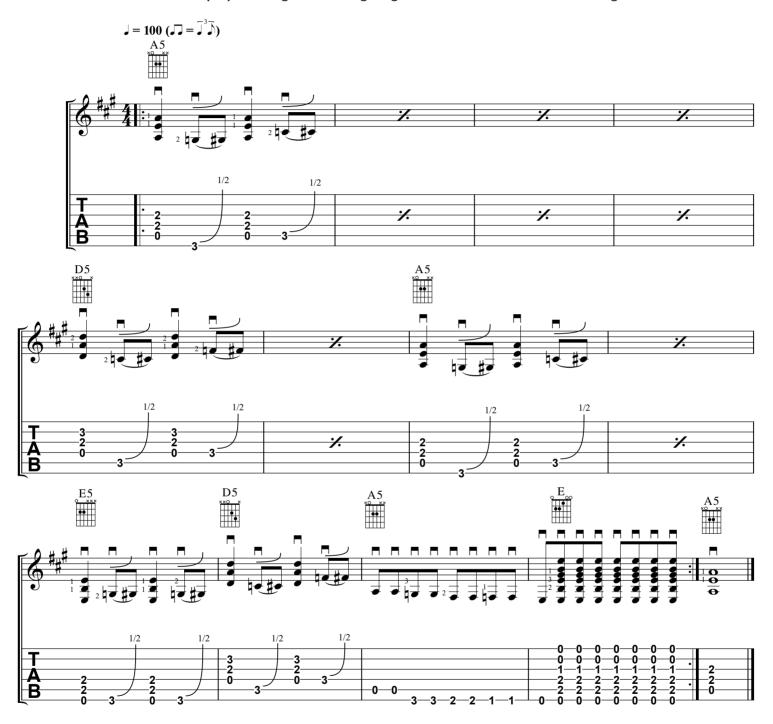
Ways to Make This Example Sound Great

- Use a clean or slightly overdriven tone
- Allow both the single notes and the chords to ring as long as possible
- Snap your wrist when you play the chord to be sure the rhythm is accurate and tight
- Have the bass player double the single notes but not the chords

Example 9: Zample Pample



This is a classic must-know blues-rock rhythm reminiscent of Gary Moore or ZZ Top. It's played in the open position and combines single notes and power chords. Add a slight bend to the fretted single notes. The turnaround at the end is played using descending single notes on the 5th and 6th strings.



Ways to Make This Example Sound Great

- Play with a nasty distortion
- Add a slight bend to each of the fretted single notes
- · Play using all downstrokes
- Keep the tempo of the rhythm steady and even
- Have the bass player double the rhythm if you are playing in a band

SECTION Blues Lead Guitar

Introduction to Blues Lead Guitar

In Section One, we covered some of the most popular blues rhythm styles, now let's learn how to solo over those styles. Developing your own lead guitar voice is an exciting endeavor for all blues guitarists. You'll gain many insights from learning to play transcribed solos and then applying those concepts and techniques to create your own blues solos.

Section Two is highlighted by 18 full-length solos in the styles of blues greats such as Stevie Ray Vaughan, Albert Collins, Eric Clapton, B. B. King, Jimi Hendrix, and Albert King. These solos are presented in various feels, tempos, and keys, and are written in both TAB and standard music notation. You'll be playing over some of the most popular blues rhythm styles, including:

- Medium blues shuffle (in the style of Stevie Ray Vaughan)
- Straight eighth blues-rock (in the style of Chuck Berry)
- Blues-rock shuffle (in the style of Eric Clapton)
- Uptown/jump blues (in the style of B. B. King)
- Slow blues (in the style of Jimi Hendrix)
- Mambo blues (in the style of Albert King)

Section Two begins with a handy reference guide, or refresher, for basic blues lead guitar techniques like bending, slides, pull-offs, hammer-ons, vibrato, trills, the blues rake, and double stops. Though some of this was covered in Section One, we'll examine it here from a lead guitar perspective. Additionally, all the scale patterns necessary to play blues lead guitar are included: the minor pentatonic, major pentatonic, and blues scale. The rest of the section covers individual blues licks and phrases as well as full-length solos in the styles of some of the world's greatest blues guitarists. The ideas and concepts presented in the solos and licks will give you a plethora of ideas to create your own solos. Plus, every solo is performed and broken down on the companion video.

