

# Blues Crash

## Course



12 EASY steps to get you playing the blues!



\*For a greater explanation of these PDF's (and a load of other stuff) visit the MARK MARXON YOUTube channel for a full video tutorial.

# Blues Crash Course

## Exercise #1 - Basic 12 bar blues in E (root notes only)

Bass Guitar

Bass Guitar

E7

Bass

Bass

5

A7

E7

Bass

Bass

9

B7

A7

E7

B7

# Blues Crash Course

## Exercise #2 - Basic 12 bar blues in E (triads only)

(I)  
E7

Bass Guitar

Bass Guitar

0 4 2 4 0 4 2 4 0 4 2 4 0 4 2 4

(IV)  
A7

(I)  
E7

Bass

Bass

0 4 2 4 0 4 2 4 0 4 2 4 0 4 2 4

(V)  
B7

(IV)  
A7

(I)  
E7

(V)  
B7

Bass

Bass

2 1 4 1 0 4 2 4 0 4 2 4 2 1 4 1

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in E major

E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, D#, E

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

or

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

# Blues Crash Course

## Exercise #3 - Basic 12 bar blues in E (Chord Tones)

(I)  
E7

Bass Guitar

Bass Guitar

(IV)  
A7

(I)  
E7

Bass

Bass

(V)  
B7

(IV)  
A7

(I)  
E7

(V)  
B7

Bass

Bass

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in E major

E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, D#, E

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

or

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

# Blues Crash Course

## Exercise #4 - Basic 12 bar blues in E (Walking up to the next chord) \*or adding chromatics\*

(I)  
E7

Bass Guitar

Bass Guitar

(IV)  
A7

(I)  
E7

Bass

Bass

(V)  
B7

(IV)  
A7

(I)  
E7

(V)  
B7

Bass

Bass

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in E major

E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, D#, E

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

or

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

# Blues Crash Course

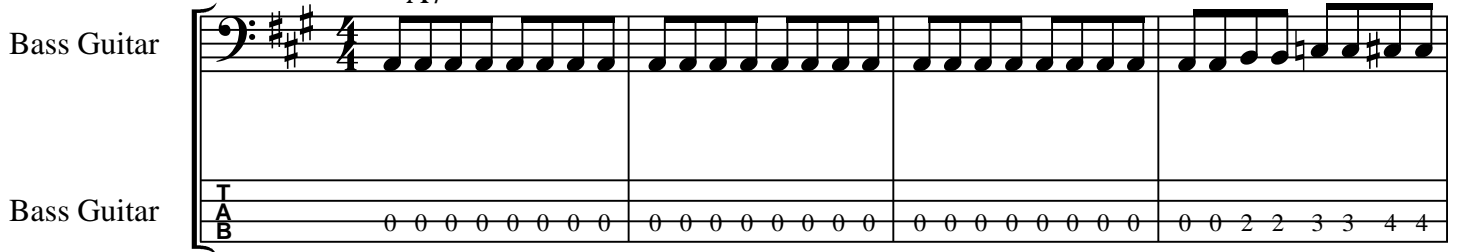
## Exercise #5 - Basic 12 bar blues in A (Shuffle using root notes)

\*Plus adding chromatics\*

SWUNG QUAVERS - 

(I)  
A7

Bass Guitar



Bass Guitar

(IV)  
D7

(I)  
A7

Bass



Bass

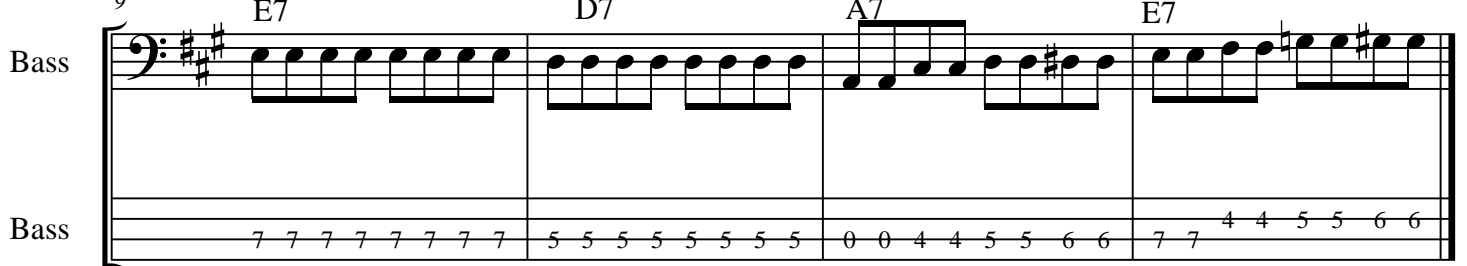
(V)  
E7

(IV)  
D7

(I)  
A7

(V)  
E7

Bass



Bass

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in A major

A, B, C#, D, E, F#, G#, A

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

or

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

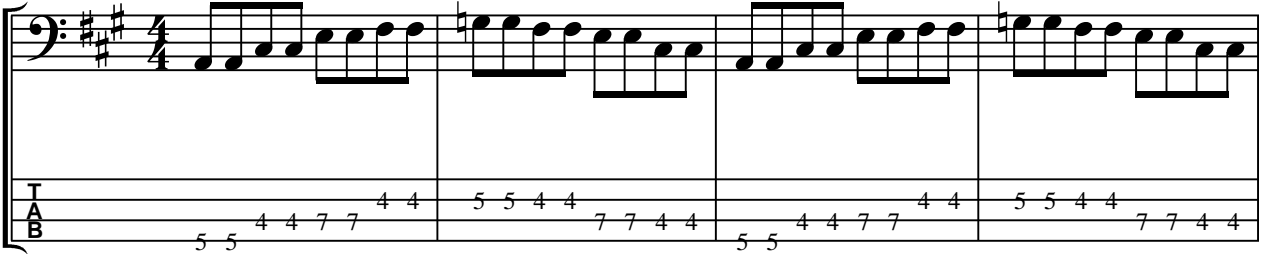
# Blues Crash Course

## Exercise #6 - Basic 12 bar blues in A (Shuffle+ playing chords tones + 6) \*Plus adding chromatics\*

SWUNG QUAVERS - 

Bass Guitar

(I)  
A7

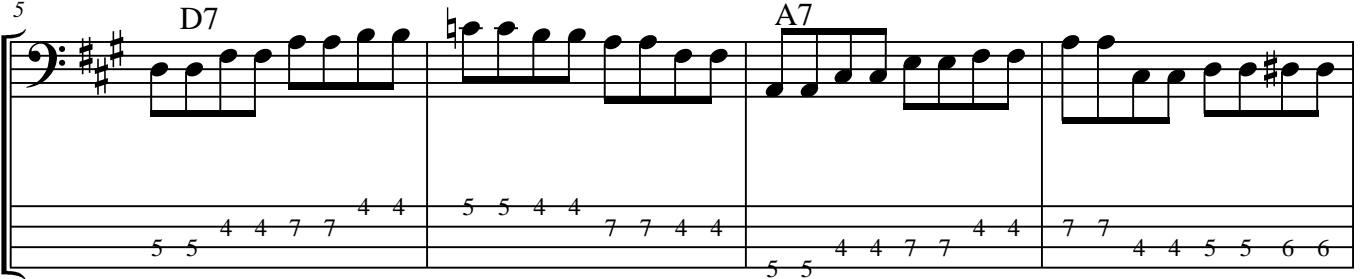


Bass Guitar

Bass

(IV)  
D7

(I)  
A7



Bass

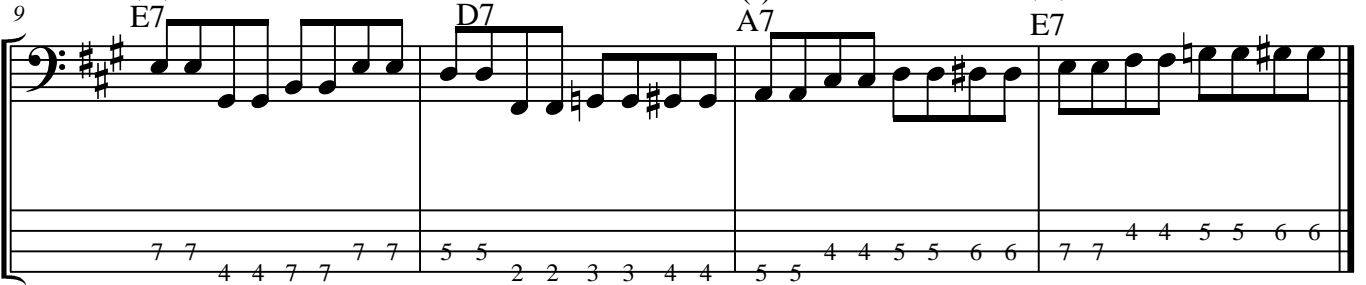
Bass

(V)  
E7

(IV)  
D7

(I)  
A7

(V)  
E7



Bass

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in A major

A, B, C#, D, E, F#, G#, A

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

or

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I



# Blues Crash Course

## Exercise #7 - Jazz blues in F (getting the form)

SWUNG QUAVERS -



(I) F7                      (IV) Bb7                      (I) F7

Bass Guitar

Bass Guitar

(IV) Bb7                      (I) F7                      (vi) Dm

Bass

Bass

(ii) Gm                      (V) C7                      (I) F7                      (vi) Dm                      (ii) Gm                      (V) C7

Bass

Bass

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in F major

F, gm, am, Bb, C7, dm, emb5, F  
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8  
 or  
 I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

# Blues Crash Course

## Exercise #8 - Jazz blues in F (Chord tones and leading notes)

SWUNG QUAVERS -



(I) F7                      (IV) Bb7                      (I) F7

Bass Guitar

Bass Guitar

(IV) Bb7                      (I) F7                      (vi) Dm

Bass

Bass

(ii) Gm                      (V) C7                      (I) F7                      (vi) Dm                      (ii) Gm                      (V) C7

Bass

Bass

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in F major

F, gm, am, Bb, C7, dm, emb5, F

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

or

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

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## Exercise #9 - Jazz blues in F (playing the "turnaround" and #IV dim chord)

SWUNG QUAVERS -



(I) F7                      (IV) Bb7                      (I) F7

Bass Guitar

Bass Guitar

(IV) Bb7                      (#IVdim) Bdim                      (I) F7                      (vi) Dm

Bass

Bass

(ii) Gm                      (V) C7                      (I) F7                      (vi) Dm                      (ii) Gm                      (V) C7

Bass

Bass

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in F major

F, gm, am, Bb, C7, dm, emb5, F  
 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8  
 or  
 I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

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## Exercise #10 - Jazz blues in Bb (Walking two to the bar)

SWUNG QUAVERS -



(I) Bb7                      (IV) Eb7                      (I) Bb7

Bass Guitar

Bass Guitar

(IV) Eb7                      (I) Bb7                      (vi) Gm

Bass

Bass

(ii) Cm                      (V) F7                      (I) Bb7                      (vi) Gm                      (ii) Cm                      (V) F7

Bass

Bass

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in Bb major

Bb, cm, dm, Eb, F7, gm, ab5, Bb

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

or

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

# Blues Crash Course

## Exercise #11 - Jazz blues in Bb (Chord tone, leading tone)

SWUNG QUAVERS -



(I) Bb7                      (IV) Eb7                      (I) Bb7

Bass Guitar

Bass Guitar

(IV) Eb7                      (I) Bb7                      (vi) Gm

Bass

Bass

(ii) Cm                      (V) F7                      (I) Bb7                      (vi) Gm                      (ii) Cm                      (V) F7

Bass

Bass

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in Bb major

Bb, cm, dm, Eb, F7, gm, ab5, Bb

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

or

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

# Blues Crash Course

## Exercise #12 - Soloing (3rds and 7ths used as target notes Exercise) \*some 5ths as well\*

SWUNG QUAVERS -



Chords: (I) Bb7, (IV) Eb7, (I) Bb7

Bass Guitar

Tablature: 0 1 0 3 1 7 3 0

Chords: (IV) Eb7, (I) Bb7, (vi) Gm

Bass

Tablature: 4 5 6 12 13 12 8 8

Chords: (ii) Cm, (V) F7, (I) Bb7, (vi) Gm, (ii) Cm, (V) F7

Bass

Tablature: 6 6 5 3 0 3 1 3

\*Numbering Chords\*

Notes in Bb major

Bb, cm, dm, Eb, F7, gm, ab5, Bb

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

or

I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii, I

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REMEMBER!!

\*One BLUES scale per 12 bar\*

\*If the blues is in E use an E blues scale over any of the changes\*

\*The theory behind a good solo is THE SAME AS A WALKING BASSLINE\*

\*Spell out the chords, use chromatics to arrive at target chord tones\*

\*only the phrasing is now more like a horn player\*

\*Put some grease on it! FEEL IT!! The blues is about expression!! Not the "right notes"\*

## About the author

Mark Marxon has completed a bachelor of music at Newcastle University. He also studied under Steve Hunter (Chic Corea/Kim Lawson Trio/AIM). You can find tutorials from Mark as a guest teacher on the PLAYBASSNOW.COM website. He is a contributor to Bass Musician Magazine as an educator and has also been a guest teacher for Bass Players United. He enjoys being a sought after session player in NSW, Australia both live and in the studio. 2014 saw Mark touring the East Coast of Australia in the Steve Edmonds band. In 2015 The Mark Marxon band will be debuting with Mark as the band leader. Mark endorses FENDER gear. For SKYPE lessons contact [markmarxon@live.com](mailto:markmarxon@live.com).

