

# The Blues Collection



## Blues 3: The Blues Scale

**T**HE BLUES SCALE grew out of the American Blues traditions, but became popular in jazz and rock as well for its improvisational qualities. Here is a way of building up these skills.

### From D Major to Blues Scale in D

On the left is the D major scale. First, let's cut down the number of notes: discard the 2nd and the 6th notes of the scale (the E and the B).

Now flatten the 3rd and the 7th: the F# becomes an F natural, the C# becomes a C natural. To flatten a note on the mandolin you just move down one fret towards the nut. That's the start of our blues technique.

### Add Two More Keys

Now we'll apply the same steps to the G scale:

And to the A scale:



Now we're going to start using the three blues scales, but remember, this is an exercise rather than the easy solution to soloing. Take a twelve bar blues chord structure, and when the chord played is D, "noodle" on the D blues scale. In other words, randomly play notes in the scale, but stick only to these notes. When the chord changes to G, switch to the G blues scale. When the chord changes to A7, switch to the A blues scale. Rinse and repeat.

### Your Twelve-Bar Blues Solo

① <b>D</b> 1, 2, 3, 4	② <b>D</b> 1, 2, 3, 4	③ <b>D</b> 1, 2, 3, 4	④ <b>D<sup>7</sup></b> 1, 2, 3, 4
⑤ <b>G</b> 1, 2, 3, 4	⑥ <b>G</b> 1, 2, 3, 4	⑦ <b>D</b> 1, 2, 3, 4	⑧ <b>D</b> 1, 2, 3, 4
⑨ <b>A<sup>7</sup></b> 1, 2, 3, 4	⑩ <b>G</b> 1, 2, 3, 4	⑪ <b>D</b> 1, 2, 3, 4	⑫ <b>D</b> 1, 2, 3, 4