Styles & Genres



American Music: Blues 2: More 12-Bar Blues

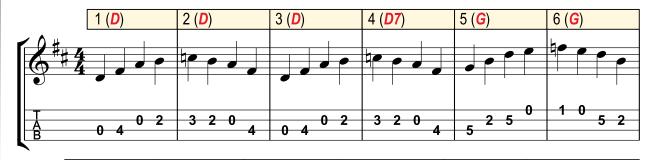
12-BAR BLUES *is* fairly easy to play - basically 3 chords and an easily learned formula.

An additional element that can be added is *melody* - a tune which fits over the chord sequence of the formula. There are tips and

tricks in doing this, involving things like flattened thirds and sevenths, but a simple introduction will be a lot more accessible.

The following melody is a typical one which you might hear in twelve-bar blues.

Simple Twelve Bar Blues Melody





Creating Blues Songs

Twelve-bar blues songs are quite easy to write if you observe some simple rules.

- 1 There are three lines in the song, each of which corresponds to the three lines of chords (four bars to each line).
- 2 The first can be anything you like, but if you wished some inspiration, you could start with "Woke up this morning..." a clichéd beginning to many a blues song and add something that happened.
- 3 The second line is simply a repeat of the first line.
- 4 The third line can be anything you like, as long as the last word rhymes with the last word of the first line.
- 5. Follow the same pattern for the rest of the song that's it!

Here's an example:

Mandolin Blues (Nigel Gatherer)

D D D7

Woke up this morning, what did I have to lose?

G G D D

Woke up this morning, what did I have to lose?

A7 G D A7

Turned myself around and, I was playing the blues.



Examples:
Bronchial Chili Cavendish
Peg-Leg Melon Baxter
Fat Lemon Pinkerton
Bald Pepper Anderson

12-Bar Blues 2