



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

1 (D)	2 (D)	3 (D)	4 (D7)	5 (G)	6 (G)
7 (D)	8 (D)	9 (A7)	10 (G)	11 (D)	12 (A7)

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	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.		

YOUR BLUES NAME

1. Choose an affliction 	2. Choose a fruit or vegetable 	3. Pick the surname of a teacher at your school
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Examples:
Bronchial Chili Cavendish
Peg-Leg Melon Baxter
Fat Lemon Pinkerton
Bald Pepper Anderson