

# How To Play Blues At A Jam Session.



You Are Here

## STOP 1: RHYTHMS & CHORDS

- \* Common Blues Chord Shapes
- \* The 12 Bar Blues Form
- \* Common Blues Rhythm/Strumming Pattern
- \* Blues Intro (to start the song)
- \* Blues Ending (to end the song)

## STOP 2: SOLOING

- \* What Note And Beat To Start Your Solo On
- \* Minor Blues Scale, Box 1
- \* The 4 Note Solo Pattern (Box 2)
- \* Lead Techniques (Bends, Hammer-Ons, Pull-Offs)
- \* Licks!

## STOP 3: PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

- \* Stringing together your Intro, Rhythm, Solo, And Ending
- \* Using Licks Or Single Notes As Fills Between Vocal Lines

You have reached  
your destination!

# How To Play Songs At A Blues Jam – Roadmap (Part 2)

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Hopefully you got the hang of the rhythm from the last stop on our little “road trip...”

For this part, we’ll tackle the fun stuff – soloing!

## You’ll need to know these things:

1. What note to start your solo on
2. When to start your solo (what beat)
3. The minor blues scale (box 1 pattern)
4. The 4 Note Solo/House/Box 2 pattern (you’ll see what I mean when we get there)
5. When you can use bends and other techniques
6. Licks... you gotta have something to say before you can say anything.

*This is super important* – I’m going to give you a bunch of rules throughout this little road trip, and they can all be broken and will be broken regularly.

What I’m going for are things that are *guaranteed to work*. Not things that work sometimes but not others. As you get more experience you’ll have the knowledge to handle things that only work sometimes. Right now, you want to be assured that whatever you play isn’t going to crash and burn.

## What note to start your solo on...

Simple... the tonic, or root of the I chord. (Remember, this is guaranteed to work. It’s far from the only option.)

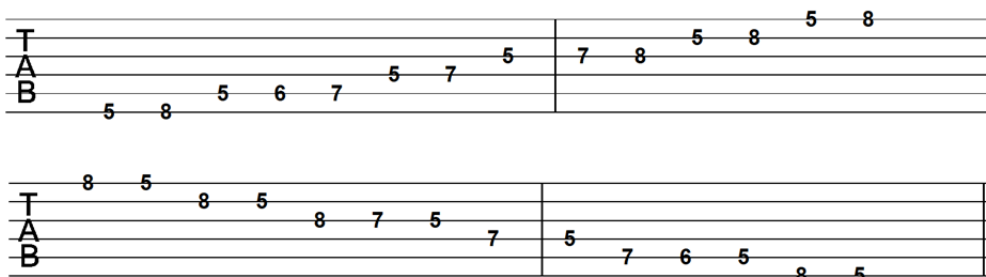
## When to start your solo...

The hardest thing to get a new soloist to do is wait to get started... but you really need to.

Coming in on beat just generally doesn’t work well. It’s just not the sound you’re looking for. Wait for beat 2 and start there and you’ll never be wrong. (Again, we’re going for a guarantee.)

## The A minor blues scale (box 1)...

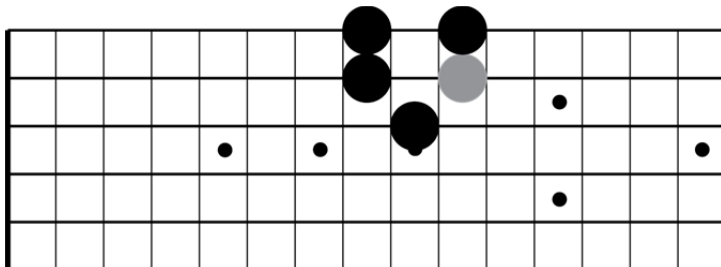
If you choose the root on the 1<sup>st</sup> string, this is the scale that goes with it:



## The "House" Pattern...

If you choose the root on the 2<sup>nd</sup> string, then the "house" pattern (also just 1 note more than the 4 Note Solo box and it's the top end of box 2) is a great choice.

Here's what it looks like on the fretboard with the root shown. Put your 3<sup>rd</sup> finger on that root and it all falls into place.



## When you can use bends, hammer-ons, etc...

Most of these things come from notes within the boxes that, when bent, go to another note of the scale 1 whole step away.

For example, in box 1:

- The 8<sup>th</sup> fret of the 1<sup>st</sup> string
- The 8<sup>th</sup> fret of the 2<sup>nd</sup> string
- The 7<sup>th</sup> fret of the 3<sup>rd</sup> string

And for the box 2 pattern, it's the 10<sup>th</sup> fret on the top string.

## Licks!

What follows is the whole solo I played and I've labeled each lick. You'll notice I took them out of order from how I demonstrated them... that's on purpose to show you that you can probably mix and match these into several solos that will all sound unique despite having the same licks in them.

Jam Track starts from the V to give time to get ready...

Musical notation for the first system, showing a treble clef staff with a key signature of two sharps and a 4/4 time signature. The staff contains four measures of whole rests. Below the staff are three empty bass clef staves labeled T, A, and B.

Musical notation for the second system, featuring Lick 1 and Lick 3. The treble staff shows melodic lines with accents and slurs. The bass staff shows fret numbers (5, 8, 5, 7, 5, 5, 8, 8, 5, 8, 10, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 10, 10, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8) and "full" markings with arrows.

Musical notation for the third system, featuring Lick 2 and Lick 4. The treble staff shows melodic lines with slurs. The bass staff shows fret numbers (5, 5, 8, 5, 7, 8, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 7, 5, 10, 10, 8, 10) and a "full" marking.

Musical notation for the fourth system, featuring Lick 5. The treble staff shows melodic lines with slurs. The bass staff shows fret numbers (10, 10, 8, 10, 9, 8, 10, 8, 10, 8) and a "full" marking.