



Happy
BLUESMAN

Week 5
Blues College
Practice Plan

CAGED Practice (10 / 15 / 20 mins)

The first section of our routine this week will remain the same, to help you continue consolidating your dominant 7th CAGED shapes, and the way these cross over with scales and arpeggios.

These are the chords and scales that you will use all of the time in your blues playing, and so developing a deep level of confidence playing them all over the fretboard will do so much to help you bring them to life in your playing.

To build this confidence, keep pairing the dominant 7th chords together with scales and also arpeggios, if you know them.

So play a C7 chord, and then the shape of the C major pentatonic scale that crosses over in the same position of the fretboard. Then move up to the next voicing of C7 and repeat the process.

If you also know your dominant 7th arpeggios, then you can add these in at each stage too, playing the chord, scale and arpeggio in each position.

Start to switch things up here so that you're also doing this following the chords of A7, G7 and E7 etc.

Add a metronome into the mix and you'll be building your rhythmic accuracy in this section of your practice, too!

Riff building (10 / 15 / 20 mins)

In this section of your routine I'd like you to practice building your own blues riffs, following the ideas I cover in the lessons.

This will help you to develop greater confidence with the swing rhythm, and build your ability to outline a 12 bar blues progression without using chords.

If this is new to you, then take your time working on the rhythmic side of things, moving between straight and swing time to appreciate the difference, and from there building a riff that has a swing rhythm.

Once you have that riff, practice it over the backing track to "Damn Right I've Got The Blues", playing it over the full 12 bar progression.

If you feel more confident, move beyond this to mix riffs, chords and licks and create a more decorated rhythm part. Start outside of the backing track until you've established your initial ideas, and then add the backing track in when you feel ready to do so.

In both cases, mix your riffs up once every few days. Try a different grouping of notes, switch to play the major pentatonic instead of the minor pentatonic (or vice versa) and play around with different rhythms.

This will help to keep your practice fresh and engaging, and will really build your rhythmic skills too!

The Damn Right Challenge (10 / 15 / 20 mins)

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It's performance time!

Bring all of these rhythmic techniques and embellishments to life over "Damn Right I've Got The Blues".

Compared with the previous section of the routine, the idea here is to put this into a performance that you would play at a local jam night.

In other words, it's not about mixing up your riffs or ideas as much as you can to build confidence with them, it's about creating a riff that you can alter and embellish consistently over the track.

This section also gives you a great opportunity to practice your lead playing. Work on bringing the minor pentatonic scale to life with those high intensity techniques, and practice moving all over the fretboard, as Buddy Guy does in the real track.

Don't worry about speed or allow yourself to get "bullied" by the track, and instead just focus on the intensity of your playing, really digging in and bringing every note to life.

Continue with the "sandwich" approach we have been focusing on during the programme - playing your riff for a few rounds through the chord progression, before soloing, and then dropping back into the rhythm part.