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**Blues Improvisation Complete
C Treble**

Jeff Harrington

Section 5

Blues Scale Solos Based on the Root
and the Sixth Degree

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SECTION FIVE

BLUES SCALE SOLOS BASED ON THE ROOT AND THE SIXTH DEGREE

Since we can use two different blues scales (one based on the root, the other on the sixth) on any 12-bar blues, why not use them both together, alternating back and forth between the two? In fact, this is common practice among professional musicians. It gives you the opportunity to choose, at any given moment, whether to use the bright, major-sounding sixth degree scale or the dark, bluesier, root-based scale.

The following are model solos that use both of these scales. They are designed to be played consecutively, so the last bar in each chorus may contain the pickups to the next chorus.

1. Begin around mm 90. Wind players should first tongue everything and then play with the written articulation.
2. Gradually increase your speed to mm 120.
3. Try writing your own solos. Follow the tips for writing with these scales.

Tips for Writing and Improvising Using the Blues Scales Based on the Root and Sixth Degree

The main thing to remember when writing or improvising with both scales is to keep them separate and intact. We want the characteristics of each scale to come through. If we blend them together, the resulting scale won't sound like either. In fact, it won't even sound like a blues scale.

As you gain experience, depending on which sound you wish to hear, you will instinctively choose one scale over another. However, in the meantime, practice the following exercises:

1. Alternate choruses. First chorus: improvise with the blues scale based on the sixth. Second chorus: improvise with the blues scale based on the root, and so on.
2. Now alternate every four bars. First four bars: sixth scale. Second four bars: root scale. Third four bars: back to sixth scale. Then reverse the order.
3. Try switching scales every two bars.
4. For a practically endless variety of solos, try combining the Blues Scale Solos Based on the Root with the Blues Scale Solos Based on the Sixth Degree. For example, take the C Blues Scale Solos on C Blues and the A Blues Scale Solos on C Blues and try alternating lines from each. You could play the first line of the A Blues Scale Solo Number 1, followed by the second line of the C Blues Scale Solo Number 1, and so on. Some combinations will sound better than others, so experiment until you find the best ones. Remember: When improvising or writing, don't skip around too much! For further suggestions, refer back to Tips for Writing and Improvising with the Blues Scale Over a 12-Bar Blues on page 41.

Improvising With Both the Blues Scale Based on the Root and the Sixth Degree

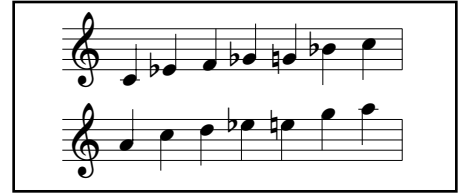
You are ready to improvise when you can do the following on the blues scales based on the root and sixth of any one key:

1. Play the Blues Scale Exercises by memory at mm 100.
2. Play the Blues Scale Solos Based on the Root and the Sixth Degree with the CD (without any mistakes).
3. Hear the downbeat (1) of each measure.
4. Hear the 12-bar form.
5. Hear the beginning of each four-bar phrase.

For improvisation, follow these steps with the CD:

1. Begin by playing the solos.
2. Improvise using the two blues scales. Imitate the sound of the written solos. Follow the tips for improvising with these two scales.

C and A Blues Scale Solos on C Blues



1 13

1

1 C7 F7 C7 C7alt

5 F7 CMaj7 D-7 E-7 Eb-7

9 D-7 G7 C7 Eb7 Ab7 G7

2

13 C7 F7 C7 C7alt

17 F7 CMaj7 D-7 E-7 Eb-7

21 D-7 G7 C7 Eb7 Ab7 G7

3

25 C7 F7 C7 C7alt

29 F7 CMaj7 D-7 E-7 Eb7

33 D-7 G7 C7 Eb7 Ab7 G7

4

37 C7 F7 C7 C7alt

41 F7 CMaj7 D-7 E-7 Eb-7

45 D-7 G7 C7 Eb7 Ab7 G7

F and D Blues Scale Solos on F Blues

2 14



1

1 F7 Bb7 A F7 3 B7

5 Bb7 F7 3 A-7(b5) D7

9 G7 F#7 A F7 3 D7 G7 C7

13 F7 3 Bb7 F7 Bb7 B7

17 Bb7 A F7 A-7(b5) D7

21 G7 F#7 F7 D7 G7 C7

25 F7 Bb7 F7 B7

29 Bb7 F7 A-7(b5) D7

33 G7 F#7 F7 D7 G7 C7

37 F7 3 Bb7 A F7 B7 A

41 Bb7 F7 A-7(b5) 3 D7

45 G7 F#7 F7 D7 G7 C7

B \flat and G Blues Scale Solos on B \flat Blues

3 15

1

2

3

4

E^b and C Blues Scale Solos on E^b Blues

4 16

1

2

3

4