Blues

Blues is the name given to both a musical form and a music genre created within African-American communities in the Deep South of the United States at the end of the 19th Century. This music originated from spirituals, work songs that slaves would sing, shouts and chants. Earlier forms of music, including Ragtime, also influenced the birth of the blues.

Many styles of music were developed from blues, primarily Jazz and Swing. Country music, Boogie Woogie, Gospel and Rock and Roll, all which appeared beginning in the 1940's, also utilize many of the same chord progressions and harmonic structure as the blues.

In blues music, singers typically improvise melodies based on the chords in the song. Instrumentalists also play improvised solos in the blues. Therefore, each time a song is performed, it is slightly different, based on the choices made by the individual performers.

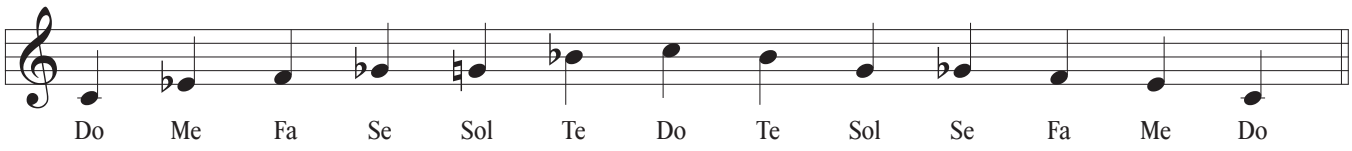
Blues, in musical form, consists of chord progressions, of which the twelve-bar blues chord progression is most common. The 12-bar structure is 12 measures in 4/4 time signature, usually with three different chords played over the measures. An easy example of a 12-bar blues pattern in the key of C Major would be:

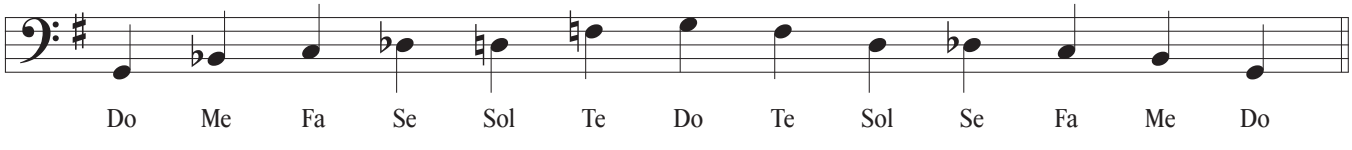
C (3 bars) F (3 bars) G (3 bars) C (3 bars)

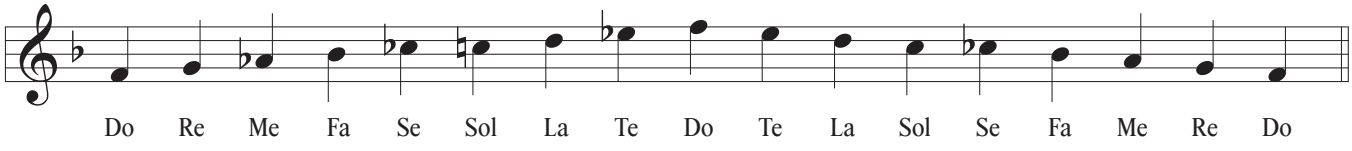
The chords in blues consist mostly of harmonic seventh chords, while the melodies are based on the blues scale.

Blues Scales

In a Blues scale, the third, fifth and seventh notes are lowered, and the 2nd and 6th notes are most commonly omitted. Look at the examples below.



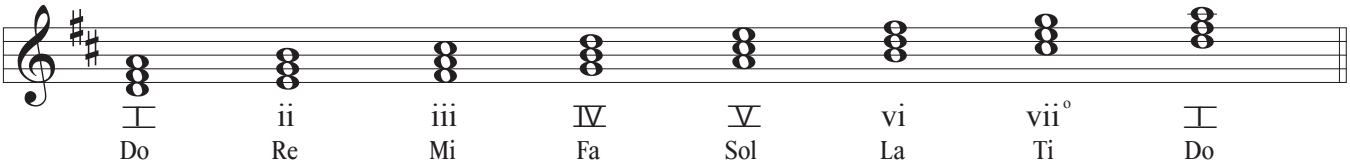




(The above scale is still a blues scale, but containing the 2nd and 6th notes. Remember, what makes it a blues scale is that the 3rd, 5th and 7th notes are lowered.)

Lesson 7: Primary & Secondary Triads

In music, the triads in a scale are identified, or numbered with Roman Numerals. The Major triads are given upper case Roman Numerals and the minor triads are given lower case Roman Numerals.
The example below shows the D Major triads with their corresponding Roman Numeral numbers.



Primary Triads: I IV & V

The I chord is called the **Tonic.**
The IV chord is called the **Subdominant.**
The V chord is called the **Dominant.**

Secondary Triads: ii, iii, vi and vii°

The ii chord is called the **Supertonic.**
The iii chord is called the **Mediant.**
The vi chord is called the **Submediant.**
The vii° chord is called the **Leading Tone.**

Here is a chart of the triads, solfege and Roman Numerals in the Major Scale.

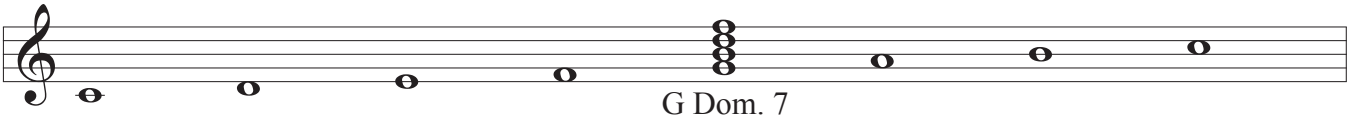
Primary	Secondary	Secondary	Primary	Primary	Secondary	Secondary	Primary
Tonic	Supertonic	Mediant	Subdominant	Dominant	Submediant	Leading Tone	Tonic
Do	Re	Mi	Fa	Sol	La	Ti	Do
I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii°	I

When analyzing music, you will have to identify the chords in any order in which they appear. If a chord is in Root position, look at the bottom note to see the root, or name, of the chord. Then, determine what the triad is based on the key of the piece. You can create a chart like the one above to help you determine what the Roman numeral would be for each triad.

If a triad is in an inversion, determine what the root of the chord is, either by defining the inversion, or looking at the notes in the triad. Once you find which triad has all 3 notes, you will know the root of that triad.

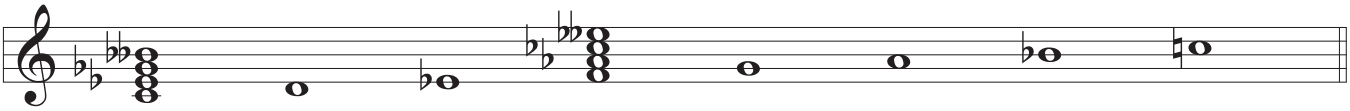
Dominant 7th Chords versus diminished 7th Chords

The big difference between Dominant 7th chords and diminished 7th chords is a Dominant 7th chord begins on the 5th note (Dominant) of the scale, while a diminished 7th chord can begin on any note of the scale.



G Dom. 7

This is a Dominant 7th chord, which is built on the **5th** note of the scale.

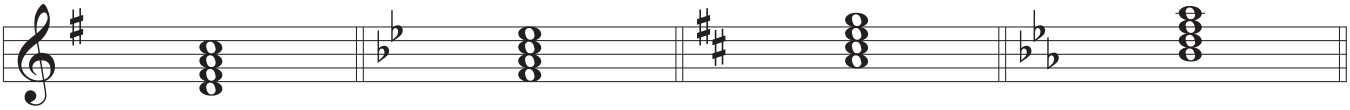


c dim. 7 f dim. 7

These are both diminished 7th chords. Diminished 7th chords can be built on **any** note of the scale.

Below are examples of 7th chords in the keys of G, B♭, D & E♭ Major. The first examples are all Dominant 7th chords, the second examples are all diminished 7th chords.

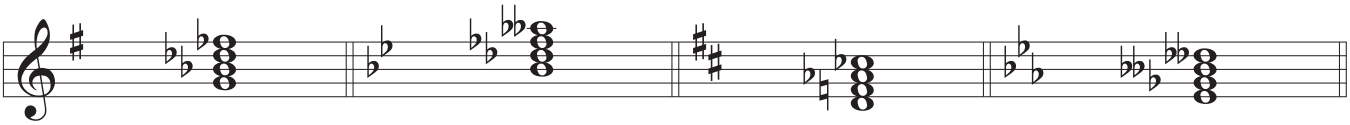
DOMINANT 7TH CHORDS



D Dom. 7th F Dom. 7th A Dom. 7th B♭ Dom. 7th

The root of each of the above chords is the 5th note of the Major scale. For example, the first measure is in the key of G Major and D is the 5th note of the G scale.

DIMINISHED 7TH CHORDS



g dim. 7th b♭ dim. 7th d dim. 7th e♭ dim. 7th

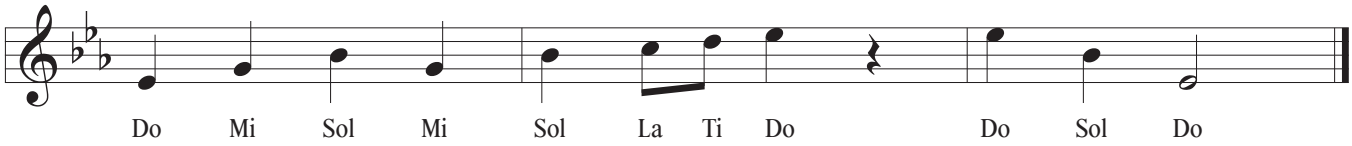
The root of each of the above chords is the first note of the Major scale. For example, the first measure is in the key of G major and G is the first note of the G scale.

Lesson 13: Transposition

As singers, our instrument and range (tessitura) are constantly changing. The biggest changes take place between the ages of 11-16, but our voice continues to grow and develop as we age. Because of this, we have to be able to sing in appropriate keys for our voice. The process of changing a song from one key to another is called Transposition. Transposing a song is sometimes necessary so we can sing comfortably and sound our best. Most importantly, we need to be able to transpose ourselves, especially if an accompanist or pianist is not available to help.

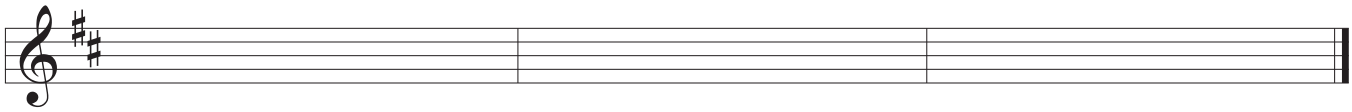
In order to find out if the key of a song is suitable for your voice, find the highest and lowest notes in the song. If those notes are out of your range, or if the song just feels difficult to sing, then you should transpose the song higher or lower to fit your voice.

Look at the example of transposition and follow the steps.

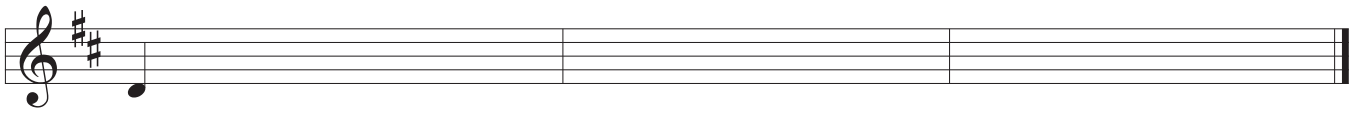


Let's look at the process to transpose this melody down a half step, to the key of D Major.

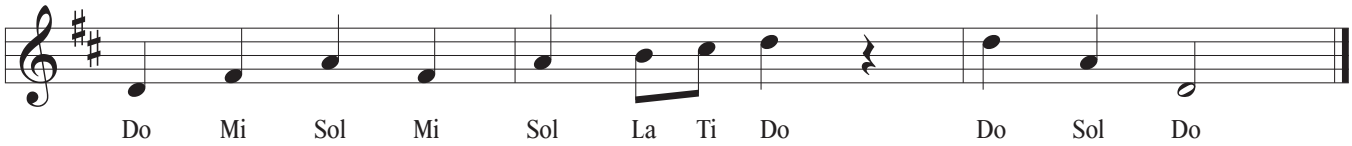
Step 1: Add the key signature for D Major.



Step 2: Look at the starting note in the original example in the key of E♭ Major. It starts on E♭ which is "Do." For the transposed example, place a quarter note D on the staff (D is "Do" in the key of D Major).



Step 3: Look at the intervals in the original example, and continue to transpose.



Review: Lesson 16

1. Check the English word that contains the same sound as the given IPA symbol.

ʃ	___Shoe ___Say	æ	___Fat ___Paint	ŋ	___Ring ___Not
j	___Yet ___Just	ə	___Feet ___Around	h	___Hat ___Shine
ʤ	___Does ___Jester	e	___Fate ___Pet	ɲ	___Never ___Canyon
aɪ	___Rice ___Late	ɪ	___Pit __ Bite	o	___Over ___Cot
ɑ	___Mat ___Father	i	___Fee ___Hit	ʦ	___Bats ___Tang

2. Connect each IPA symbol with the correct lip position & tongue position.

LIPS POSITION	IPA SYMBOL	TONGUE POSITION
Relaxed	ɨ	Low Tongue
Open "hook" sound with tall lips, shaped like "oh"	ʏ	Center of tongue high
Relaxed	ø	High
Rounded Say "Ee" with "Oo" lips	ɛ	Sides touching teeth in middle of mouth

3. Check the correct IPA spelling for each of the given English words.

Oven	___ovan ___ʌvən	Yet	___ jɛt ___ yet	Fat	___fæt ___fait
Flee	___fli ___flɛ	Moose	___moss ___mus	Around	___uhraund ___əraʊnd
Flower	___flaʊər ___flawir	Let	___lɛt ___let	Just	___ʤʌst ___yʌst
Sing	___sinj ___sɪŋ	Bother	___bɑðər ___buaðer	Shut	___ʃʌt ___chʌt
Onion	___ʌnjən ___ɔnjən	Mit	___mit ___mɪt	Boat	___baut ___boʊt

Lesson 17: Italian, Latin, Spanish, German & French Diction

When you first learn a song in a foreign language, Italian and Latin are two of the easier languages to pronounce. Below are some rules for speaking/singing words in Italian and Latin that can help you learn how to prounounce the text in your songs.
It's also a great idea to use a translation app or website to hear someone pronounce the foreign language text as well.

Italian/Latin Diction

As with any language, practicing speaking this language with an Italian accent will help with pronunciation. IPA is included in parentheses after each Italian/Latin word.

Remember: No diphthongs!
•*Core* (kore) is pronounced Core-A, but without the E sound at the end of A.
Another example is *Mio* (mˈio) is pronounced Mee-oh but without the oo sound and the end of O.

•I's are pronounced like E's. (ie) *Ma'mi* (mami) is pronounced Mamee

•All R's are rolled or flipped. If you cannot roll your R's, try something similar to a D. *Caro* (karo) would sound similar to *Cah-doh*, then add a little less pressure to the roof of your mouth. Your tongue touches the top of your hard palate behind your top front teeth for the first letter.
**Two great practice exercises to learn how to roll your tongue is to say "Podda tea" over and over again, or try saying"Tah-dah" over and over again.

•A "C" followed by an E or I is pronounced as a "CH." (ie) *Facil* (fatʃil) is pronounced Facheel.
Also *Dolce* (doltʃe) is pronounced Dole-cheh.
•A "CH" combo is pronounced as a K. (ie) *Chiaro* (kjaro) is pronounced Kee-ah-ro.

•When a word has a double consonant, you stop on the first consonant then continue. The best example of this is the word "*Pizza*" (piddza). It's not pronounced PEEZA, it's pronounced PEETSA.
Also *Quella* (kwella) is Kwell-lah.

•A "G" if it's before an e or an i is a soft g. (ie) *gentil* (dʒentil) is pronounced jenteel, *Giardi* (dʒardi) is pronounced Jar-dee. Notice the "i" is silent when it falls between G and another vowel. The same rule applies when an "i" falls between C and another vowel as in "*ciao.*" ch-ow
•A "G" followed by an "L" is silent. (ie) *scegliera* (ʃeʎʎera) is pronounced shay-lee-err-ah.
•A G followed by an H is pronounced as a Hard G…*Lunghezza* (luŋgettsa) is pronounced Loon-get-tsa.

•*Que* (kwe) is pronounced Kway.
•*Che* (ke) is pronounced Kay.

•An S followed by a C is pronounced as an SH. (ie) *s'angoscia* (ssaŋgoʃʃa) is san-go-shah.
•If an S is followed by a CH it's pronounced as SK. (ie) *scherzosa* (skertsoza) is scare-tso-za.
•A single S between two vowels is pronounced as a Z. (ie) *ascosa* (askoza) is pronounced ah-sko-za.
•An SC before e or i is pronounced as an SH. (ie) *scegliera* (ʃeʎʎera) is pronounced shay-lee-err-ah.

•An H at the beginning of a word is silent. (ie) *Hanno* (anno) is pronounced Ahn-no.

•A Z is pronounced like TS. (ie) *Danza* (dantsa) is pronounced Dawn-tsa.

•An "A" is pronounced as an "AH"

Lesson 21: Baroque Period Harmonic Analysis

In this section, you will look at and analyze excerpts of pieces from the Baroque period of music. Harmonic analysis includes understanding the notes, key signatures, harmonies, chord structure, expressions, ornamentation, and so on. You will also need to have a firm grasp of music history and the composers from this era, so that you understand how music from this era was written, and how it differs from music in other periods.

Prior to the Baroque period was the **Renaissance Period: 1425-1600**. Characteristics from the period are similar to the Baroque period. Noted composers from the Renaissance Period are: Josquin Des Prez (1440-1521), Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643), and Orlando de Lassus (1530-1594).

Baroque Period: 1600-1750 "Baroque" means highly ornate & extravagant.

Composers from This Period include

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750-Germany), George Frideric Handel (1685-1759-Germany), Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725-Italy), and Henry Purcell (1659-1695-England).

Compositional Techniques

Music from this period was written with a technique called **counterpoint** (music consisting of two or more lines that sound simultaneously). The term counterpoint actually means "note against note." Many composers followed rules that were listed in Fux's book "The Study of Counterpoint."

Another technique that was used was **figured bass**. Above a bass line, there were symbols indicating what intervals and/or chords to play/sing. Performers often **improvised** on the melody above the figured bass, especially on phrases or verses that were repeated. This was much like jazz improvisation today, where the musician learned **"rules"** of improvisation and then tried it, never singing the song the same way twice.

Styles & Instruments

There were several stylistic developments including **opera**, **oratorio**, concertato style, establishment of tonic-dominant (tonality), and national styles of vocal and instrumental music including Italian, French, and German.

Many composers in this period wrote music for the **church**, **Royalty**, or **wealthy patrons**.

Singers would often sing with a **small, straight tone with very little vibrato**. The singer would "show-off" his/her voice by singing the **ornaments** that were almost always present in the music and by **improvising with melismatic phrases** such as runs and arpeggios for dramatic effect. The text was usually repetitive, because it was not regarded as highly as the music itself. This is the opposite of vocal pieces in the Romantic period, where the text often told a story that the music enhanced.

Instruments from this period include the **Harpsichord**, **clavichord**, (pianos weren't invented yet), **lute**, **string instruments**, **organ**, and various other **chamber instruments**.

It is highly recommended that you study Levels 1-9 of these books before completing this section. It would be good to make flash cards of the main concepts, terms, and music history/composer facts before you begin as well. Good luck!

O sleep, why dost thou leave me?

from *Semele*

George Frederic Handel

Largo