

# Chart Interpretation

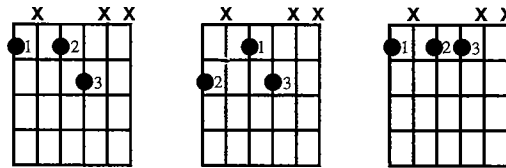
Rhythm guitar parts usually reflect one of two extremes. In the first, common to big band scores, a chart's chords are presented in too much detail, the result of attempting to indicate an arrangement's overall harmonic scheme. In this case, the guitar only needs to play the basics. In other words, when faced with changes that include extensions and alterations, simplify them. In most instances, chords usually should be reduced to 7ths and simpler.

Sometimes, however, a chart provides only a harmonic skeleton. In this case, it is usually appropriate to add passing chords, many of which are to be found in the following examples. The key is listening to the bass player, whose stylistic influences will suggest not only the degree to which you can add passing chords, but also indicate their nature. A final bit of advice: To help maintain a cohesive sense of time in the rhythm section, focus your ears on the drummer's hi-hat, which emphasizes beats two and four.

## Basic Blues Chord Routes

Rhythm guitar should be fun to play and involve an element of creativity. At the same time, it should fit into the musical surroundings. With a good knowledge of three-note chords and progressions, you should ultimately be able to spontaneously thread together effective, flexible, logical patterns that constitute a kind of rhythm-oriented improvisation. But to do that, you have to start with the basics.

**B♭ Blues.** This complete 12-bar chorus, in the key of B♭, is the first example of a blues progression played with three-note chords. Only three different fingerings are used for the entire 12 bars:



Although this simple treatment utilizes no passing chords, it can be effective if a bit monotonous. Focus on the articulation of your attack, maintaining the proper feel, and developing rock-solid time. Also pay attention to how guide fingers ease moving from one chord to the next. (First, play the initial B♭7 chord with fingers 1, 2 and 3 and limit yourself to using only those fingers for the rest of the piece; notice that your 3rd finger can remain on the third string throughout. Next, use fingers 2, 3, and 4, keeping 4 on the third string throughout.)



### "Twelve For Three"

♩ = 120

**B♭7**                      **E♭7**                      **B♭7**                      **E♭7**

T	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	6
A	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5
B	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

B $\flat$ 7      G7      Cm7      F7      B $\flat$ 7      G7      Cm7 F7

	7 7 7 7	10 10 10 10	8 8 8 8	8 8 8 8	7 7 10 10	8 8 8 8
T	6 6 6 6	9 9 9 9	8 8 8 8	8 8 8 8	6 6 9 9	8 8 7 7
A	6 6 6 6	10 10 10 10	8 8 8 8	8 8 8 8	6 6 10 10	8 8 8 8
B	6 6 6 6	10 10 10 10	8 8 8 8	8 8 8 8	6 6 10 10	8 8 8 8

This next pattern begins the same as the preceding one, but takes an alternative route to VI7 (G7). (Note the second-inversion Cm7 in bars 9 and 12.) While three-note chords confined to strings six, four, and three are limited in terms of providing strong starting and ending points for progressions—in this case, a typical blues—there are many ways they can be connected and routed when substitutes and passing chords are added to the equation, as you will soon see. Again, work with more than one fingering and apply the guide concept.

### "Blues Basis"

♩ = 176      B $\flat$ 7      E $\flat$ 7      B $\flat$ 7      E $\flat$ 7

	7 7 7 7	6 6 6 6	7 7 7 7	6 6 6 6
T	6 6 6 6	5 5 5 5	6 6 6 6	5 5 5 5
A	6 6 6 6	6 6 6 6	6 6 6 6	6 6 6 6
B	6 6 6 6	6 6 6 6	6 6 6 6	6 6 6 6

B $\flat$ 7      G7      Cm7      F7      B $\flat$ 7      G7      Cm7 F7

	7 7 7 7	4 4 4 4	3 3 3 3	2 2 2 2	7 7 4 4	3 3 2 2
T	6 6 6 6	3 3 3 3	1 1 1 1	1 1 1 1	6 6 3 3	1 1 1 1
A	6 6 6 6	3 3 3 3	3 3 3 3	1 1 1 1	6 6 3 3	3 3 1 1
B	6 6 6 6	3 3 3 3	3 3 3 3	1 1 1 1	6 6 3 3	3 3 1 1

**F Blues.** This next chorus and pattern introduces the key of F and represents a new fingerboard starting point. (Whereas the previous examples began with a root-position dominant 7th, now you

begin with a dominant 7th in second inversion.) Notice how the pattern works its way down to F7 at the first fret; from there, the turnaround ascends, resolving back to second-inversion F7.



### "Work Down Blues"

♩ = 176

**F7** **B♭7** **F7** **B♭7**

T	8 8 8 8	7 7 7 7	8 8 8 8		7 7 7 7		
A	7 7 7 7	6 6 6 6	7 7 7 7		6 6 6 6		
B	8 8 8 8	6 6 6 6	8 8 8 8		6 6 6 6		

T	8 8 8 8	5 5 5 5	3 3 3 3	3 3 3 3	2 2 5 5	3 3 3 3	
A	7 7 7 7	4 4 4 4	3 3 3 3	2 2 2 2	1 1 4 4	3 3 2 2	
B	8 8 8 8	5 5 5 5	3 3 3 3	3 3 3 3	1 1 5 5	3 3 3 3	

Here's another sequence that begins with second-inversion F7, but this time an alternate route is taken to VI7 (D7):

### "Route 2 Blues"

♩ = 120

**F7** **B♭7** **F7** **B♭7**

T	8 8 8 8	7 7 7 7	8 8 8 8		7 7 7 7		
A	7 7 7 7	6 6 6 6	7 7 7 7		6 6 6 6		
B	8 8 8 8	6 6 6 6	8 8 8 8		6 6 6 6		

T	8 8 8 8	11 11 11 11	10 10 10 10	9 9 9 9	8 8 11 11	10 10 9 9	
A	7 7 7 7	10 10 10 10	8 8 8 8	8 8 8 8	7 7 10 10	8 8 8 8	
B	8 8 8 8	10 10 10 10	10 10 10 10	8 8 8 8	8 8 10 10	10 10 8 8	