

"Six Bluesy Shuffles | Rhythm Guitar Lesson

Hello friends,

In today's lesson we will expand our knowledge of blues guitar with some common shuffle riffs. We will apply these techniques to the chords in a standard 1.4.5 blues progression in the key of A (Amaj, Dmaj, Emaj.) Students tend to struggle with the timing of these riffs, so be sure to study my demonstration via the video link above. Let's get started!

What is a 1.4.5 Chord Progression in Amaj?

A blues chord progression built from the first, fourth and fifth notes of a major scale. Each note of the major scale is a root note for the chords that belong in that key. This is very useful information for songwriters, because it tells them which chords work together.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

The A Major Scale: A, B, C#, D, E, F#, G#, A

Rhythm Technique:

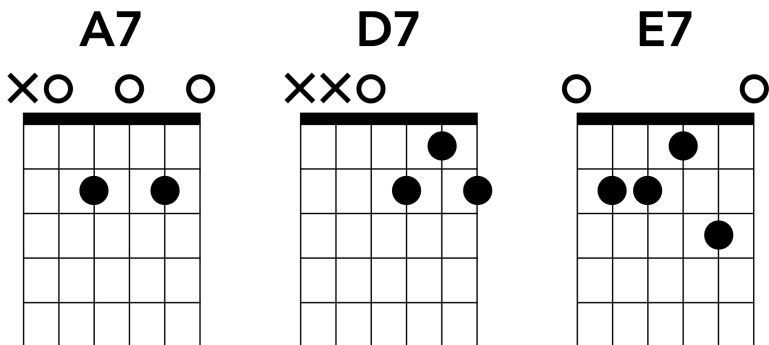
Now that you know the origins of this progression, let's learn two common variations of the 12 bar blues progression using dominant 7th chord shapes. Once you have these progressions memorized, you can apply the shuffle riffs on page three.

12 Bar Blues - Key of A

A7 //// | //// | //// | //// | D7 //// | //// | A7 //// | //// | E7 //// | D7 //// | A7 //// | // E7 // :

Variation #2 - Includes a Dmaj (the 4 chord) on measure 2.

A7 //// | D7 //// | A7 //// | //// | D7 //// | //// | A7 //// | //// | E7 //// | D7 //// | A7 //// | // E7 // :





1) The Standard Shuffle

Here is the most basic form of the blues shuffle over the entire 12 bar blues (variation #1):

Over A (4x)	Over D (2x)	Over A (2x)	Over E (1x)
E -----	-----	-----	-----
B -----	-----	-----	-----
G -----	-2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4-	-----	-----
D -2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4-	-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-	-2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4-	-----
A -0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-	-----	-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-	-2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4-
E -----	-----	-----	-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Over D (1x)	Over A (1x)	Split Measure A-E
E -----	-----	-----
B -----	-----	-----
G -2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4-	-----	-----
D -0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-	-2-2-4-4-2-2-4-4-	-2-2-4-4- -----
A -----	-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-	-0-0-0-0-2-2-4-4-
E -----	-----	-----
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

2) The Extended Shuffle

Now let's try a common variation for each chord:

Over A	Over D	Over E
E -----	-----	-----
B -----	-----	-----
G -----	-2-2-4-4-5-5-4-4-	-----
D -2-2-4-4-5-5-4-4-	-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-	-----
A -0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-	-----	-2-2-4-4-5-5-4-4-
E -----	-----	-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

3) The "Brownie Shuffle"

Here's a cool variation I picked up from Brownie McGhee's "Born and Livin' with the Blues:"

Over A	Over D	Over E
E -----	-----	-----
B -----	-----	-----
G -----	-2-2-4-4-2-2-5-4-	-----
D -2-2-4-4-2-2-5-4-	-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-	-----
A -0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-	-----	-2-2-4-4-2-2-5-4-
E -----	-----	-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &





4) The "Country Shuffle"

This variation features a hammer from the minor to major third:

Over A	Over D	Over E
E -----	E -----	E -----
B -----	B -----	B -----
G -----	G -----	G -----
D -----	D -----	D -----
A -----	A -----	A -----
E -----	E -----	E -----
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & a	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & a	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & a

5) The "Stevie Shuffle"

Here's a cool variation I picked up from SRV's "Life By The Drop:"

Over A	Over D	Over E
E -----	E -----	E -----
B -----	B -----	B -----
G -----	G -----	G -----
D -----	D -----	D -----
A -----	A -----	A -----
E -----	E -----	E -----
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & a	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & a	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & a



6) The "Boogie-Woogie Shuffle"

This variation to the country shuffle covers two measures and works best over the A chord, but could also be used when playing in the key of E:

Over A	(D)
E -----	E -----
B -----	B -----
G -----	G -----
D -----	D -----
A -----	A -----
E -----	E -----
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Over E	(A)
E -----	E -----
B -----	B -----
G -----	G -----
D -----	D -----
A -----	A -----
E -----	E -----
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &	1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &