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Eric Clapton

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Clapton's 12 Bars

UNIT 3 • **LESSON 12** << PREVIOUS NEXT >>

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The 12 Bar

In the first lesson of this unit, we will talk about the 12 bar blues, and how Cream tended to approach it with this more rock style. The first thing to cover is the main chord progression, which is based in the key of A blues, and goes like this:

A7	A7	A7	A7
D7	D7	A7	A7
E7	D7	A7	A7

This is the classic I, IV, V style blues progression. Please be sure to take our [Blues Courses or pathway](#) to get a firmer grip on this concept, if you don't understand it already.

Want to learn the 12 bar?

If the 12 bar blues is still pretty foreign to you, then it would be worth working through the Electric Blues Essentials Level 1 at some point after this course.



Electric Blues Essentials Level 1

UNIT 1

Silly Beer

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UNIT 2

Minor

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UNIT 3

Clapton's 12 Bars

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In this section we take a break from the lead to look at a classic 12 bar style rhythm, up beat and hard! We look at the 12 bar structure, especially with quick blues tracks and build it up from the basic shuffle.

Lessons:

- The 12 Bar
- The Riff
- The IV Chord
- The Final Parts!
- Variations

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So at face value, it's a pretty standard 12 bar format! The I chord for 4 bars, then the IV chord for 2 bars, then the I chord for another 2 bars, then the V chord for a bar, then the IV chord for a bar, then the I chord again. The key things to note here are the first 4 chords are all the same, and the turnaround is extremely simple!



“

The reason we have a simple (or non-existent) turnaround in the rock blues stuff is partly to do with the speed we're playing, plus also the riff element, which we'll see more of in the next lesson.

Dan

”



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