

# CHAPTER 11: GREEZY

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**Style:** Blues Shuffle | **Key:** G Major | **Tempo:** 100 BPM | **Time:** 12/8

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## OVERVIEW

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*"Traditional shuffle with modern diminished substitutions."*

Greezy is the greasiest tune in the collection—a down-home blues shuffle in 12/8 with modern harmonic twists. The diminished substitutions add unexpected color while keeping the deep blues feel intact.

**Playing Tip:** Lock with the imaginary drummer's triplet feel. Feel the grease.

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## THE FORM

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12-bar blues with diminished substitutions:

G7	C7	G7	G7 G#dim7
C7	C#dim7	G7	E7
Am7	D7#9	G7 E7	Am7 D7

### Key Harmonic Features

1. **12/8 shuffle:** Triplet subdivision throughout
2. **Diminished connectors:** G#dim7 and C#dim7 as chromatic passing chords

3. **#9 dominants:** D7#9 for the classic blues "crunch"

4. **Quick changes:** Bars 4, 11, 12 have two chords each

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## SCALE PALETTE

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Chord	Primary Scale	Blues Option
G7	G Mixolydian	G Blues
C7	C Mixolydian	C Blues
G#dim7	G# Half-Whole Diminished	—
C#dim7	C# Half-Whole Diminished	—
E7	E Mixolydian	E Blues
D7#9	D Half-Whole Diminished	D Blues

### The Blues Scale Kingdom

Over the whole form, you can use **G Blues** (G-Bb-C-Db-D-F) as a "master scale": - Works over G7, C7, D7 - Creates delicious tension over E7 - Even works over diminished chords (with adjustment)

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## THE 12/8 FEEL

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### Understanding 12/8

12/8 means **12 eighth notes per bar**, grouped in **four groups of three**:

1 2 3   4 5 6   7 8 9   10 11 12
1 . .   2 . .   3 . .   4 . .

Each beat has a triplet subdivision built in.

## The Shuffle vs. 12/8

- **Shuffle:** 4/4 with swung eighths (triplet interpretation)
- **12/8:** Triplets are explicitly written

They sound similar, but 12/8 is more "greasy"—the triplets are heavier.

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## TRIAD PAIR VOCABULARY

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Chord	Stable	Color	Blues Sound
G7	G Major	F Major	Mixolydian
G7	Bb Minor	G Major	Blues minor/major
C7	C Major	Bb Major	Mixolydian
D7#9	D Major	Eb Major	The crunch

## The "Greezy Pair"

Over G7, alternate: - **G Major** (G-B-D) = bright - **Bb Minor** (Bb-Db-F) = dark, bluesy (contains b3, b5, b7 of G)

This major/minor ambiguity is the essence of blues.

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# THE THREE CHORUSES

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## Chorus 1: Classic Blues (Version A)

**Concept:** Traditional blues vocabulary with triplet phrasing

- Start phrases on beat 2 or 4
- Bends on the b3, 4, and b7
- Call and response structure
- Leave space for the "church"

### Classic Licks:

```
(in G Blues)
e|-----3-3-|
B|---3-5-3-----3---|
G|-----5-3-5-----|
D|--5-----|
```

## Chorus 2: Diminished Connections (Version B)

**Concept:** Use diminished arpeggios as chromatic connectors

- Over G#dim7: G#-B-D-F arpeggio (connects G7 to Am7 sound)
- Over C#dim7: C#-E-G-Bb arpeggio (connects C7 to D7 sound)
- Diminished arpeggios resolve by half-step

### Diminished Pattern:

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G#dim7: G#-B-D-F (down) resolving to G or A
C#dim7: C#-E-G-Bb (down) resolving to D
```

## Chorus 3: Two-Voice Blues (Version C)

**Concept:** Bass line against melody, blues style

**Texture: - Bass:** Root notes on beats 1 and 3 (in triplet grouping) - **Melody:** Blues licks on the off-beats

This creates a "one-man-band" effect, common in solo blues guitar.

## VOICING REFERENCE

### Blues Voicings

G7: 3-x-3-4-3-x (shell)  
 3-5-3-4-3-3 (full barre)  
 C7: x-3-2-3-1-x  
 8-x-8-9-8-x (same shape as G7)  
 D7#9: x-5-4-5-4-x (the Hendrix chord)  
 E7: 0-2-0-1-0-0 (open position)

### Diminished Voicings

G#dim7: 4-x-3-4-3-x  
 C#dim7: x-4-5-3-5-x

### Blues Shuffle Comping Pattern

G7	G7	
3-x-x-4-3-x	3-x-x-5-3-x	(alternating 5th and 6th)

## TECHNIQUE: THE SHUFFLE FEEL

### Right Hand

- **Downstrokes on beats 1, 2, 3, 4** (the big beats)

- **Upstrokes on the triplet "3"** (the swing)
- Think: **DOWN-down-UP, DOWN-down-UP**

## Left Hand

- **Muting:** Control unwanted strings
- **Grace notes:** Quick hammer-ons/pull-offs for grease
- **Bends:** Slow, vocal bends are essential

## The "Pocket"

Play slightly **behind** the beat: - Don't rush - Let the groove breathe - The bass player and drummer are your reference

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## PRACTICE ROUTINE

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### Week 1: The Feel

- [ ] Practice the 12/8 pattern with a metronome
- [ ] Work on the shuffle comping pattern
- [ ] Feel the triplets in your body (tap foot, nod head)

### Week 2: Blues Vocabulary

- [ ] Transcribe classic blues licks (BB King, Freddie King)
- [ ] Apply to the Greezy changes
- [ ] Work on Version A

### Week 3: Diminished

- [ ] Master diminished arpeggios from any root
- [ ] Practice using them as chromatic connectors

- [ ] Develop Version B

## Week 4: Two-Voice

- [ ] Isolate bass line
- [ ] Isolate melody
- [ ] Combine slowly
- [ ] Work on Version C

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## LISTENING RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. **BB King** — *Live at the Regal* (the master)
2. **Freddie King** — *Getting Ready* (Texas shuffle)
3. **Albert King** — *Born Under a Bad Sign* (slow grease)
4. **Stevie Ray Vaughan** — *Texas Flood* (modern blues)
5. **Robben Ford** — *Talk to Your Daughter* (jazz-blues)

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## tone tips

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For the blues shuffle sound: - **Guitar**: Anything with humbuckers (or single-coils with attitude) - **Amp**: Just breaking up, but not fully distorted - **No effects**: Maybe a touch of reverb - **Fingers**: Dig in with the pick; don't be polite

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## COMMON PITFALLS

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1. **Rushing the shuffle**: Stay behind the beat
2. **Ignoring the diminished**: These are the "modern" touches—use them

3. **Too many notes:** Blues is about feel, not quantity
  4. **Stiff bends:** Bends should be slow, vocal, expressive
  5. **Losing the triplet:** Every beat is divided in three—feel it
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## THE "GREEZY" CONCEPT

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The title is intentional slang: - **Greasy:** Smooth, slippery, funky - **Easy:** Relaxed, in the pocket - **Greezy:** The combination—effortless funk

When playing this tune, imagine you're cooking: - Low heat (don't rush) - Good ingredients (strong vocabulary) - Let it simmer (space between phrases)

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## SELF-EVALUATION

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- [ ] Is my shuffle feel solid and relaxed?
  - [ ] Do I use the diminished chords as connectors?
  - [ ] Are my bends in tune and expressive?
  - [ ] Can I play bass and melody simultaneously?
  - [ ] Does it feel "greezy"?
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← **Nefertiti's Shadow** | **Next: Hexagon** →

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