

CHAPTER 11: GREEZY

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

OVERVIEW

"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.

THE FORM

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

SCALE PALETTE

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)

THE 12/8 FEEL

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.

TRIAD PAIR VOCABULARY

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.

THE THREE CHORUSES

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:

```
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

PRACTICE ROUTINE

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

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

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

COMMON PITFALLS

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

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)

SELF-EVALUATION

- [] 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** →
