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## Fretboard Toolbox-Blues Guitar Edition



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# Chord Jig Explained

(Chord Jig shown is from the E Major page)



**The Basics-**

**How are different chords built?** A chord is simply a group of notes played at the same time. The box that says “Chord Type” shows you which columns to use to make various chords, and these columns show you which notes you’ll need to build a desired chord. This box shows you that Major chords are made from notes in the 1, 3, and 5 columns of the Chord Jig. These have “happier” sounds. For example, E Major chords are made of the notes E, G#, and B, **which can be played in any order, and each note can be repeated in a chord multiple times.** As long as you are only playing those three notes, then you’re playing an E Major chord! 7 or “dominant7” chords, such as A7, are extremely common in blues music! To play an A7 chord, a.k.a. Adom7, notice that you’ll need the notes from the 1, 3, 5, and b7 (read “flat-7”) columns. So, if you can cover different frets so that you’re only playing the notes A, C#, E, and G, then you’re playing an A7. It’s pretty easy once you get the hang of it! Though not as common in traditional blues music, it’s worth noting that minor chords are just like Major chords, except they are made of notes from the 1, b3 (read “flat-3”), and 5 columns, and they tend to have “sadder” sounds. To play an A minor chord, you’ll use the notes A, C, and E, etc. . For even more chord types, see the Chord Toolbox on pp. 17-18.

**Why do certain chords always sound good together?** Major scales (do-re-mi...) sound good to our ears. Column “1” of any key’s Chord Jig shows you the Major scale for that key. The Major scale for E Major, for example, is made of the notes E, F#, G#, A, B, C#, and D#. **Notice that each note of the Major scale can be turned into its own chord.** Taking the 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> notes from that E Major scale (E, A, and B notes), and turning each of those notes into its own chord (E Major, A Major, and B Major- the I, IV, and V chords), makes up THE THREE CHORDS that are the backbone of countless blues progressions. **This Fretboard Toolbox will teach you the I, IV, and V chords in every Major key. Knowing these three chords in every key lets you figure out blues songs on the fly, which is a BLAST!**

**Beyond Basics-**

**Can these chord rules be broken?** Once you know the chords that “go together” within a key, see what happens when you break the rules! Turn to your E Major page, and check out the chord progressions in the “Some E Major Rock Progressions” box. In these rock chord progression boxes, **all of the chords that “break the rules” are shown in bold.** These chord progressions have really dark sounds when played alone, but when you solo with them using the minor pentatonic scale ( the notes in white boxes), then you can REALLY start getting some cool sounds!

**FOR THEORY-HEADS ONLY!- Where do the strange chord progressions come from in the rock progressions boxes?** Minor pentatonic scales take the root note, (an “E” note in the key of E Major), and then include the b3 (read “flat-3”), 4, 5, and b7 notes. (The E minor pentatonic scale is made of the notes E, G, A, B, and D). **All of the rock progressions that are in the “Rock Progressions” boxes are made by playing combinations of those notes as chords!** This is why playing **bIII** (G Major) and **bVII** (D Major) chords, *especially with the E minor pentatonic scale*, sounds so cool. Try these chords in different keys with their minor pentatonic scales for fun, dark rock sounds!

Chord Names and Roman Numerals: Major / relative minor	Use notes from these columns to build any chords I-vii° from the key E Major.										
	1	(2)	b3	3	(4)	b5	5	(6) bb7	b7	7	
E MAJOR (E) I	E			G#			B			D	
F# minor (F#m) ii	F#		A				C#			E	
G# minor (G#m) iii	G#		B				D#			F#	
A MAJOR (A) IV	A			C#			E			G	
B MAJOR (B) V	B			D#			F#			A	
C# minor (C#m) vi	C#		E				G#			B	
D# diminished (D#dim) vii°	D#		F#			A			C	C#	

## Chord Jig

Chord Type	Use notes from columns
Major-----	1,3,5
7, dom7-----	1,3,5,b7
Major7, Maj7-----	1,3,5,7
minor-----	1,b3,5
min7, m7-----	1,b3,5,b7
dim-----	1,b3,b5
½ dim, °, m7b5---	1,b3,b5,b7
dim7, °7-----	1,b3,b5,bb7



# Fretboard Layout Explained



## The Basics-

**How is a guitar fretboard laid out?** The notes to the left of the nut (see diagram) are the notes of each open (unfretted) string. The top string (#6) is tuned to "E", and the bottom string (#1) to "E" as well, just higher pitched. Fret numbers are labeled at the top- so you can see that the note on the 3rd fret of the 6-string is a "G". You can find any note on the fretboard by looking at both the fret and string numbers!

**Why learn notes all over the fretboard?** Instructors often talk about the importance of learning your fretboard all up and down the neck. This is often a point of frustration for people learning an instrument, because even if you memorize the notes all over the fretboard, you often still don't know *why* you needed to learn all of those notes. However, if you understand that G Major chords are built from the notes G, B, and D, AND KNOW THAT THOSE NOTES CAN BE PLAYED IN ANY ORDER, then you can build chords all over your fretboard! Use this book along with some chord charts to start seeing why **any given chord can be played in so many different ways all over the fretboard.**

## Beyond Basics-

**Why are some notes missing on the Pentatonic Jig of each page?** The Pentatonic Jig shows the notes of any key's Major pentatonic scale, and that key's **minor** pentatonic scale. The notes of any key's Major pentatonic are underlined on the Pentatonic Jig, and that key's minor pentatonic notes are in white boxes. If you look at the E Major page, then you'll see the underlined notes, the Major pentatonic notes, are E, F#, G#, B, and C#. The notes in white boxes, the minor pentatonic notes, are E, G, A, B, and D. **Note that the E and B notes underlined, and in white boxes, because they are part of both pentatonic scales.** Since not all notes of the Major scale are shown, you may need to find a note such as F# that is not shown on the Pentatonic Jig. Just use this Fretboard Layout to find any note that you can't find on the Pentatonic Jig of the key you're playing in.

**What's a good way to memorize my entire fretboard?** There are 12 notes found multiple times each all over the fretboard, which makes memorizing the entire fretboard (even just up to the twelfth fret) a daunting task. You can simplify the task of fretboard memorization greatly if you start by memorizing the location of just the C, D, E, G, and A notes, on each string, all the way to the twelfth fret. If you look at the Pentatonic Jig on the C Major, E minor page of your Fretboard Toolbox, then you can see that the five notes listed above are all contained in white boxes. (These notes are the five notes of the C Major and E minor pentatonic scales). Memorize the locations of these five notes, all over your fretboard, paying close attention to how many frets are found between each of them. **Once you can find these five notes everywhere, then every other note you could play is just one fret to the left or right of a note you already know!** Notes with a sharp (#) are higher pitched than corresponding notes without a sharp- "A#" notes are higher pitched than "A" notes. Conversely, flat notes (b) are lower pitched- an "Ab" note is lower pitched than an "A" note. So if you're looking at the "A" note on the 2nd fret of the 3-string, then you can see that the "Ab" note is just to the left (1st fret), and the "A#" note is just to the right (3rd fret). If you look at the "G" note played open (no frets) on the same 3-string, you'll see that if you play a "G#" note (on the 1st fret) instead of a "G", this puts you on the same fret as the "Ab" note. **This is why single frets can have two note names on them!** Again, if you memorize the notes C, D, E, G, and A on your fretboard, using your C Major/A minor Pentatonic Jig to help, then no other note is any farther than next door to a note you already know well! (NOTE: The B, C, E, and F notes are larger than their counterparts, even though they are essentially the same note, just to make this at least slightly easier to read). ☺

Fret #:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1	E Fb	F E#	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B Cb	C B#	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E Fb	F E#	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A
2	B Cb	C B#	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E Fb	F E#	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B Cb	C B#	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E Fb
3	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B Cb	C B#	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E Fb	F E#	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B Cb	C B#
4	D	D# Eb	E Fb	F E#	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B Cb	C B#	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E Fb	F E#	F# Gb	G
5	A	A# Bb	B Cb	C B#	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E Fb	F E#	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B Cb	C B#	C# Db	D
6	E Fb	F E#	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B Cb	C B#	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E Fb	F E#	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A



# Pentatonic Jig Explained

(Pentatonic Jig shown is from the E Major page)



### The Basics-

**How does the Pentatonic Jig help me build chords?** Just pick the notes for the chord you want using the Chord Jig, and then find those notes grouped close enough to play together on the Pentatonic Jig. e.g. The E Major Chord Jig shows you that E Major chords (made of notes from the 1, 3, and 5 columns) are played using the notes E, G#, and B. The most traditional E Major chord is usually played with an “E” note played open (no frets, since it’s already a note you want) on the 6- string, a “B” note on the 2nd fret of the 5- string, another “E” note played on the 2nd fret of the 4- string, a “G#” note played on the 1st fret of the 3- string, the “B” note played open the 2- string, and another “E” note played open on the 1- string. To turn that E Major into an E7 (Edominant 7) chord (made of notes from the 1, 3, 5, and b7 columns), you can see that you just need to add a “D” note to the E Major chord you played above. You can do this by taking off the finger covering the “E” note on the 4- string (thus revealing a “D” note), or you can play the same E Major position above and then add the “D” note from the 3rd fret of the 2-string. Although each variation has a slightly different sound, both are E7 chords. **You can build any chord you want in this same way!** Chords are much easier to learn when you know *why* you’re using certain frets, and not simply memorizing positions that have no meaning. This is exactly why I created the Fretboard Toolbox method!

**How does the Pentatonic Jig help me solo?** The beauty of blues soloing is that it has an inherent tension, since the blues pentatonic is a **minor** pentatonic played over a **Major** chord progression. Have a friend play one of the chord progressions from the “Simple 12 Bar Blues in E” or “Quick-change 12 Bar Blues in E” boxes from the E Major page, and use the notes found in white boxes on the Pentatonic Jig from the E Major page for soloing. Add the “blues note”, the note symbolized by an asterisk (\*) on your Pentatonic Jig, and listen to the cool, bluesy sound you get! Practice moving around these white boxes up and down the neck, and you’ll soon discover tons of licks!

### Beyond Basics-

**How can the Pentatonic Jig be used with various rock progressions?** This time, have a friend play through some of the progressions from the “Some E Major Rock Progressions” box of the E Major page, and then play with the E minor pentatonic (using the notes in white boxes again) and listen to how great the solos you can make with this scale sound, played over these rock progressions. The trick to getting these cool, dark sounds, is to combine **Major chord progressions with minor pentatonic solos!**

**Why does the Pentatonic Jig contain both Major and minor pentatonic scales?** When you really get proficient soloing with the white boxes, you’ll soon want to add more flavor to your solos. The reason that lots of blues artists get such diverse sounds from their solos is that they often will **mix** the Major and minor pentatonic scales. Remember, to play the minor pentatonic, you just use the notes in white boxes, and keep coming back to the note in the Blues Pentatonic Roots boxes (adding the “blues note” when desired). **However, if you play just the notes that are underlined, then you can play the Major pentatonic scale for that key.** If you mix the underlined notes with the notes in the white boxes, you’ll be playing these two scales together and getting all kinds of new sounds! You’ll notice that the notes in the white boxes (minor pentatonic notes) give solos a dark, bluesy sound and the notes that are underlined (Major pentatonic notes) give solos a happier sound that some describe as giving the song a “country” sound. Master each alone **and together!**

Fret #:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
1	<u>E</u>	F#	G	<u>G#</u>	A	*	B		<u>C#</u>	D		<u>E</u>		F#	G	<u>G#</u>	A	
2	B	<u>C#</u>	D		<u>E</u>		F#	G	<u>G#</u>	A	*	B		<u>C#</u>	D		<u>E</u>	
3	G	<u>G#</u>	A	*	B		<u>C#</u>	D		<u>E</u>		F#	G	<u>G#</u>	A	*	B	
4	D		<u>E</u>		F#	G	<u>G#</u>	A	*	B		<u>C#</u>	D		<u>E</u>		F#	G
5	A	*	B		<u>C#</u>	D		<u>E</u>		F#	G	<u>G#</u>	A	*	B		<u>C#</u>	D
6	<u>E</u>	F#	G	<u>G#</u>	A	*	B		<u>C#</u>	D		<u>E</u>		F#	G	<u>G#</u>	A	

Blues Pentatonic Roots: For songs in E Major

Blues note (b5 = flat V)

\*