Introduction

The SHBC Jam is very popular and frequently attracts some very talented and experienced musicians. More often than not, the music produced in a very ad-hoc manner, is sensational. But this can be intimidating for less experienced players. The club genuinely does want musicians of all levels to feel comfortable to get up and enjoy the experience of performing with others and to a crowd.

The purpose of this songbook is to provide a reference of blues songs that are either standards or reasonably well known. The idea is to use this songbook at home to learn, or at least familiarise yourself with, the songs. You might use it in a jam as an aide for structure &/or lyrics.

The key and tempo in the following charts are based on the original recordings. You may need to transpose to a more suitable key for the singer. If musical notation is used in a chart, it’s just a guide. The notes will probably be correct. The measure may not.

*How to be part of the Jam at SHBC*

SHBC jam rules are published on the Gigs page of the website. Be familiar with them, but the most important thing is to get there early and speak to the Jam Coordinator. They will be lining up the jam sessions ready for a 3pm start and they’ll probably be playing in the first jam. If you arrive towards the end of the jam, or even halfway through, the Jam Coordinator will always try and fit you in, but the jam finishes by 5:30pm so you may miss out.

There are a few useful tips and techniques for having a great jamming experience. You’ll find these at the end of this songbook.

Have fun!

P.S. If you find any errors or omissions in any charts, please let us know by email at [info@sleepyhollowbluesclub.org.au](mailto:info@sleepyhollowbluesclub.org.au)

Last Updated: Tuesday, 8 April 2025

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# Baby What You Want Me to Do

***Jimmy Reed*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0LfVtLsIxU)] [Original key: **E**. Tempo: **94**] [TOP](#_top)

**[Intro]**

A sheet of music with a row of music notes

Description automatically generated



E E E E

You've got me

**[Verse 1]**

E E E E

runnin' You've got me hidin’ You've got me run, hide, hide, run anyway you wanna let it

A A E E

roll. Yeah yeah yeah. You've got me

B B E E B

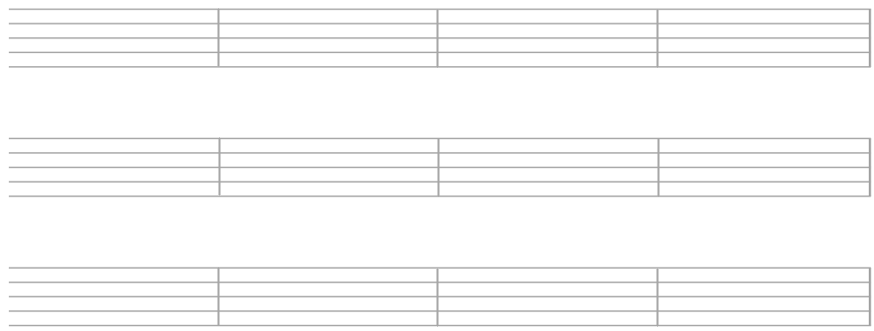
doin’ what you want me Baby why you wanna let go

**[Verse 2]**

I'm goin' up, I'm goin' down  
I'm goin' up, down, down, up anyway ya wanna let it roll.

Yeah, yeah, yeah  
You've got me doin' what you want me  
A-baby why'd you wanna let go

**[SOLO]**



E E E E

A A E E

B A E E B

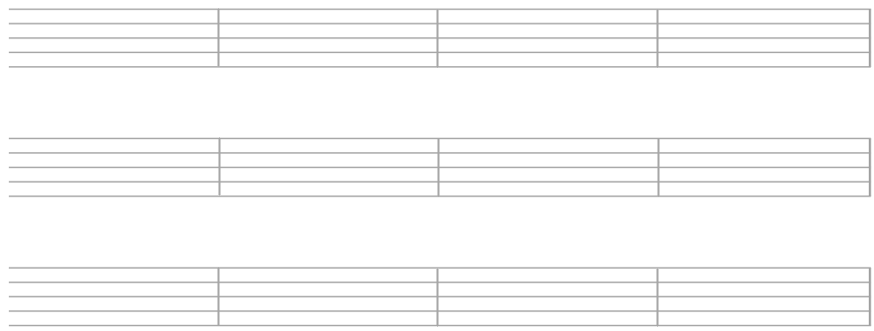
**[Verse 3]**

You've got me peepin', You've got me hidin'  
You've got me peep, hide, hide, peep ,anyway you wanna let it roll  
Yeah, yeah, yeah  
You've got me doin' what you want me  
So baby, why ya wanna let go

# Blues With a Feeling

***Little Walter*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxGOoTHUT3A)] [Key: **A**. Tempo: **75**] [TOP](#_top)

Quick Change 12-bar blues

 A D A A

Blues with a feelin' That's what I have today Blues

D D A A

with a feelin' That's what I have today I'm gonna

E D A A E

find my baby. If it takes all night and day

**[SOLO]**

**[Verse 2]**

A group of black music notes

Description automatically generatedWhat a lonesome feelin'. When you’re by yourself  
What a lonesome feelin'. When you’re by yourself  
When the one that you're lovin'. Have gone away livin'

**[Verse 3]**

A black music note on a black background

Description automatically generatedA black music note on a black background

Description automatically generatedA black music note on a black background

Description automatically generatedA black music note on a black background

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Description automatically generatedA black music note on a black background

Description automatically generatedA black music note on a black background

Description automatically generatedA white sheet music with black lines

Description automatically generated A A A A

Girl you know I love you baby. I wanted the reason why. You only left me baby, Then you left me here to cry. Blues

D D A A

with a feelin', That's what I have today I’m gonna

 E D

find my baby. If it takes all night and day

# Boom Boom

***John Lee Hooker*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72p9TTkoymY)] [Key: **E**. Tempo: **170**] [TOP](#_top)

**[Verse 1]**

Boom, boom, boom, boom

I'm gonna shoot you right down

Right off your feet

Take you home with me

Put you in my house

Boom, boom, boom, boom

Mmmm hmmm

Mm hm hm hm

**[Verse 2]**

I love to see you walk

Up and down the floor

When you talking to me

That baby talk

I like it like that

You talk like that

You knock me dead

Right off my feet

A haw haw haw haw

Whoa!

**[SOLO]**

**[Verse 3]**

Once you walk that walk

And talk that talk

And whisper in my ear

Tell me that you love me

I love that talk

That baby talk

You knock me dead

Right off my feet

A haw haw haw haw

Yeah, yeah!

# Bright Lights Big City

***Jimmy Reed*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5gTmNKrj9s)] [Key: **A**. Tempo: **92**] [TOP](#_top)

Standard 12-bar

Bright light, big city, gone to my baby's head  
Whoa, bright light, a big city, gone to my baby's head  
I tried to tell the woman, but she don't believe a word I said

It's all right, pretty baby, (gonna) need my help someday  
Whoa, it's all right, pretty baby, gonna need my help someday  
You're gonna wish you had to listened to some of those things I said

Go ahead, pretty baby, honey, knock yourself out  
Oh go ahead, pretty baby, honey, knock yourself out  
I still love you baby, 'cause you don't know what it's all about

Bright light, a big city, they went to my baby's head  
Oh, the bright light, the big city, they went to my baby's head

# Dust My Broom

***Elmore James*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jcGY7NbaQw)] [Key: **D**. Tempo: **100**] [TOP](#_top)

I'm gettin' up soon in the mornin'  
I believe I'll dust my broom  
I'm gettin' up soon in the mornin'  
I believe I'll dust my broom  
Out with the best gal I'm lovin'  
Now my friends can get in my room

I'm gonna write a letter, telephone every town I know  
I'm gonna write a letter, telephone every town I know  
If I don't find her in Mississippi  
She be in East Monroe I know

And I don't want no woman  
Want every downtown man she meets  
No I don't want no woman  
Want every downtown man she meets  
Man, she's a no good honey  
They shouldn't allow her on the street, yeah

I believe, I believe my time ain't long  
I believe, I believe my time ain't long  
I ain't gonna leave my baby  
And break up my happy home

# Got My Mojo Working

***Muddy Waters*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SBmury81Ws)] [Key: **E**. Tempo: **113**] [TOP](#_top)

Got my mojo working, but it just won't work on you  
Got my mojo working, but it just won't work on you  
I want to love you so bad, I don't know what to do

Going down to Louisiana to get me a mojo hand  
Going down to Louisiana to get me a mojo hand  
I'm gonna have all you women under my command

Got my mojo working  
Got my mojo working  
Got my mojo working  
Got my mojo working  
Got my mojo working, but it just won't work on you

I got a gypsy woman givin' me advice  
I got a gypsy woman givin' me advice  
I got a whole lottsa tricks keepin' her around

# Help Me

***Sonny Boy Williamson*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASlVJaaJo54)] [Key: **Fm**. Tempo: **115**] [TOP](#_top)

You got to help me  
I can't do it all by myself  
You got to help me, baby  
I can't do it all by myself  
You know if you don't help me darling  
I'll have to find myself somebody else

I may have to wash  
May have to sew  
I may have to cook  
I might mop the floor but you help me babe

You know if you don't help me darling  
I'll find myself somebody else

When I walk, you walk with me  
When I talk, you talk to me  
Oh baby, I can't do it all by myself  
You know if you don't help me darling I'll have to  
Find myself somebody else  
Help me, help me darlin'

Bring my nightshirt  
Put on your morning gown  
Oh, bring me my nightshirt  
Put on your morning gown  
Darlin' I know we stripped bare  
But I don't feel like lying down  
Oh yeah

# Hoochie Coochie Man

***Muddy Waters*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lz2uycb0DFE)] [Key: **A**. Tempo: **72**] [TOP](#_top)

Gypsy woman told my mother  
Before I was born  
You got a boy child's comin'  
He's gonna be a son of a gun  
He gonna make pretty womens  
Jump and shout  
Then the world wanna know  
What this all about

But you know I'm him  
Everybody knows I'm him  
Well you know I'm the hoochie coochie man  
Everybody knows I'm him

I got a black cat bone  
I got a mojo too  
I got the Johnny Concheroo  
I'm gonna mess with you  
I'm gonna make you girls  
Lead me by my hand  
Then the world will know  
That I'm the hoochie coochie man

You know I'm him  
Everybody knows I'm him  
Oh you know I'm the hoochie coochie man  
Everybody knows I'm him

On the seventh hour  
On the seventh day  
On the seventh month  
The seven doctors say  
"He was born for good luck  
And that you'll see  
I got seven hundred dollars  
Don't you mess with me"

But you know I'm him  
Everybody knows I'm him  
Well you know I'm the hoochie coochie man  
The whole wide world knows him

# Hound Dog

***Big Mama Thornton*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoHDrzw-RPg)] [Key: **E**. Tempo: **74**] [TOP](#_top)

*Originally recorded in Eb*

Standard 12-bar

[Chorus]

You ain't nothing but a hound dog  
Been snoopin' 'round my door  
Ain't nothing but a hound dog  
Been snoopin' 'round my door  
You can wag your tail  
But I ain't gonna feed you no more

[Verse 1]

Told you were high class  
I could see through that  
Told me you were high class  
But I could see through that  
Daddy I know  
You ain't no real cool cat

CHORUS

SOLO

[Verse 2]

Made me feel so blue  
Made me weep and moan  
Made me feel so blue  
Honey, you made me weep and moan  
You ain't looking for a woman  
All you're lookin' is for a home

CHORUS

# I'd Rather Go Blind

***Etta James*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bcus42ihkTI)] [Key: **A**. Tempo: **54**] [TOP](#_top)

Something told me it was over  
When I saw you and her talkin'  
Something deep down in my soul said, 'Cry, girl'  
When I saw you and that girl walkin' around

Whoo, I would rather, I would rather go blind, boy  
Then to see you walk away from me, child, no

Whoo, so you see, I love you so much  
That I don't wanna watch you leave me, baby  
Most of all, I just don't, I just don't wanna be free, no

Whoo, whoo, I was just, I was just, I was just  
Sittin here thinkin', of your kiss and your warm embrace, yeah  
When the reflection in the glass that I held to my lips now, baby  
Revealed the tears that was on my face, yeah

Whoo and baby, baby, I'd rather, I'd rather be blind, boy  
Then to see you walk away, see you walk away from me, yeah  
Whoo, baby, baby, baby, I'd rather be blind...

# Key to the Highway

***Derek and The Dominos*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlhzajhLVY8)] [Key: **A**. Tempo: **84**] [TOP](#_top)

I got the key to the highway  
Billed out and bound to go  
Gonna leave here running   
Walking is much too slow

I'm going back to the border   
Baby, where I'm better known  
Because you haven't done nothing, baby  
But drove a good man from home

When the moon peeks over the mountains  
Lil girl, I'll be on my way  
I'm gonna roam this highway  
Until the break of day

So give me one more kiss, darling  
Just before I go  
'Cause when I leave this time, little girl  
I won't be back no more, no more

I got the key (I got the key) to the highway (to the highway)  
Billed out and bound to go (I gotta go, I gotta go)  
I'm gonna leave here running (mhm)  
Walking is much too slow

# Little Red Rooster

***Howlin’ Wolf*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Vr-DR5HdKw)] [Key: **E**. Tempo: y] [TOP](#_top)

***The Rolling Stones*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lr0q0zlrZXM)]

I am the little red rooster  
Too lazy to crow for day  
I am the little red rooster  
Too lazy to crow for day

Keep everything in the farm yard upset in every way

The dogs begin to bark and hounds begin to howl  
Dogs begin to bark and hounds begin to howl  
Watch out strange cat people  
Little red rooster's on the prowl

If you see my little red rooster  
Please drive him home  
If you see my little red rooster  
Please drive him home

I had no peace in the farm yard  
Since my little red rooster's been gone

# Mess of Blues

***Elvis Presley*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lRIi6F7o-ek)] [Key: **C**. Tempo: **117**] [TOP](#_top)

***Status Quo*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wvOrJYaG1kg)]

***Jeff Healey*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ie01Tui1ATw)]

I just got your letter baby  
Too bad you can't come home  
I swear I'm goin' crazy  
Sittin' here all alone  
Since you're gone I got a mess of blues

I ain't slept a wink since sunday  
I can't eat a thing all day  
Every day is just blue monday  
Since you've been away  
Since you're gone I got a mess of blues

Whoops there goes a teardrop  
Rollin' down my face  
If you cry when you're in love  
Sure ain't no disgrace

I gotta get myself together  
Before I lose my mind  
I'm gonna catch the next train goin'  
And leave my blues behind  
Since you're gone I got a mess of blues

Whoops there goes a teardrop  
Rollin' down my face  
If you cry when you're in love  
Sure ain't no disgrace

I gotta get myself together  
Before I lose my mind  
I'm gonna catch the next train goin'  
And leave my blues behind  
Since you're gone I got a mess of blues  
Since you're gone I got a mess of blues  
Since you're gone I got a mess of blues

# My Babe

***Little Walter*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eLTZjTUOCno)] [Key: **F**. Tempo: **160**] [TOP](#_top)

My baby don't stand no cheatin', my babe

Oh, yeah, she don't stand no cheatin', my babe

Oh, yeah she don't stand no cheatin'

She don't stand none of that midnight creepin'

My babe, true little baby, my babe

My babe, I know she love me, my babe

Oh, yes, I know she love me, my babe

Oh, yes, I know she love me

She don't do nothin' but kiss and hug me

My babe, true little baby, my babe

My baby don't stand no cheatin', my babe

Oh, no, she don't stand no cheatin', my babe

Oh, no, she don't stand no cheatin'

Everything she do she do so pleasin'

My babe, true little baby, my babe

My baby don't stand no foolin', my babe

Oh, yeah, she don't stand no foolin', my babe

Oh, yeah, she don't stand no foolin'

When she's hot there ain't no coolin'

My babe, true little baby, my babe (She's my baby)

She's my baby (True little baby)

She's my baby (True little baby)

She's my baby (True little baby)

She's my baby (True little baby)

She's my baby

# Pride and Joy

***Stevie Ray Vaughan*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3MTGhRC82s)] [Key: **E**. Tempo: **120**] [TOP](#_top)

*Originally recorded in Eb*

Well you've heard about love givin' sight to the blind

My baby's lovin' cause the sun to shine

She's my sweet little thang, she's my pride and joy

She's my sweet little baby, I'm her little lover boy

Yeah I love my baby, heart and soul

Love like ours won't never grow old

She's my sweet little thang, she's my pride and joy

She's my sweet little baby, I'm her little lover boy

Yeah I love my lady, she's long and lean

You mess with her, you'll see a man get mean

She's my sweet little thang, she's my pride and joy

She's my sweet little baby, I'm her little lover boy

Well I love my baby, like the finest wine

Stick with her until the end of time

She's my sweet little thang, she's my pride and joy

She's my sweet little baby, I'm her little lover boy

Yeah I love my baby, my heart and soul

Love like ours won't never grow old

She's my sweet little thang, she's my pride and joy

She's my sweet little baby, I'm her little lover boy

# Red House

***Jimi Hendrix*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_whI9m0SFys)] [Key: **Bb**. Tempo: **65**] [TOP](#_top)

There's a red house over yonder

That's where my baby stays

Lord, there's a red house over yonder

Lord, that's where my baby stays

I ain't been home to see my baby

In 99 and one half days

Wait a minute, something's wrong here

The key won't unlock this door

Wait a minute, something's wrong

Lord, have mercy, this key won't unlock this door

Something's goin' wrong here

I have a bad, bad feeling

That my baby don't live here no more

That's alright, I still got my guitar

Look out now

Well, I might as well go back over yonder

Way back up on the hill

(I got something to do)

Lord, I might as well go back over yonder

Way back yonder cross the hill

'Cause if my baby don't love me no more

I know her sister will

# Rock Me Baby

***B.B. King*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKaWBiVLbYs)] [Key: **A**. Tempo: **84**] [TOP](#_top)

Rock me, baby

Rock me all night long

Rock me, baby

Honey, rock me all night long

I want you to rock me, baby

Like my back ain't got no bone

Roll me, baby

Like you roll a wagon wheel

Roll me, baby

Like you roll a wagon wheel

I want you to roll me, baby

You don't know how that makes me feel

Honey

Honey, rock me slow

Rock me, baby

I want you to rock me slow

I want you to rock me, darling

'Til I want no more

# She's Tuff

***The Fabulous Thunderbirds*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywzPSNHqCTM)] [Key: **E**. Tempo: **111**] [TOP](#_top)

[Verse 1]

**E7**

You oughta see my baby when she walk down the street

Upsettin' everybody she meet

She's twenty-three in the waist, thirty-eight in the hips

She got long black wavy hair and ruby-red lips

[Chorus]

**A7**

Oh she's tuff

**E7**

Oooo, she's tuff

**B7 A7**

My baby's tuff, she ruff and tuff

**E7 A7 Bb7 B7**

And that's tuff enuff

[Verse 2]

**E7**

She walk past a clock

The clock won't tell time

She walk through the college

Professor lose his mind

**CHORUS**

[Verse 3]

**E7**

The president said to my baby: "come here, sweetheart"

You can stop a world war even before it start

We know the enemy won't pull the trigger

When they walk out on the front line and they see your fine figure

**CHORUS**

# Smokestack Lightning

***Howlin’ Wolf*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMUt8KdDtTY)] [Key: **E**. Tempo: **145**] [TOP](#_top)

Whoa, smokestack lightnin'

Shinin' just like gold

Why don't you hear me cryin'?

A-whoo-hoo, a-whoo-hoo, whoo

Whoa-oh, tell me, baby

What's the matter here?

Why don't you hear me cryin'?

Whoo-hoo, whoo-hoo, whoo

Whoa-oh, tell me, baby

Where did you stay last night?

Why don't you hear me cryin'?

Whoo-hoo, whoo-hoo, whoo

Whoa-oh, stop your train

Let a poor boy ride

Why don't you hear me cryin'?

Whoo-hoo, whoo-hoo, whoo

Whoa-oh, fare-you-well

Never see a you no more

Why don't you hear me cryin'?

Whoo-hoo, whoo-hoo, whoo

Whoa-oh, who been here baby since

I, I been gone a little bitty boy?

Girl, be on

A-whoo-hoo, whoo-hoo, whoo

# Stormy Monday

***T-Bone Walker*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xifoTGRBhg0)] [Key: **G**. Tempo: **66**] [TOP](#_top)

***Allman Brothers Band*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBZFdh6QnL8)]

[Verse 1]

**G7 C9 G7 Ab7 G7**

They call it stormy Monday, but Tuesday's just as bad

**C9 G7 Am7 Bm7 Bb7**

They call it stormy Monday, but Tuesday's just as bad

**Am7 Abm7 Am7 Cm7 G7 C9 G7 D7**

Lord and Wednesday's worse, Thursday's oh so sad

[Verse 2]

The eagle flies on Friday, Saturday I go out to play

The eagle flies on Friday, Saturday I go out to play

Sunday I go to church, I get down to pray

[Verse 3]

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy on me

Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy on me

You know I tryin', tryin' to find my baby

Please send her on home to me

# Sunshine of Your Love

***Cream*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_u1eu6Lpds)] [Key: **D**. Tempo: **116**] [TOP](#_top)

[Verse 1]

It's getting near dawn

When lights close their tired eyes

I'll soon be with you my love

Give you my dawn surprise

I'll be with you darling soon

I'll be with you when the stars start falling

I've been waiting so long

To be where I'm going

In the sunshine of your love

[Verse 2]

I'm with you my love

The light's shining through on you

Yes, I'm with you my love

It's the morning and just we two

I'll stay with you darling now

I'll stay with you 'til my seas are dried up

CHORUS

VERSE 2

I've been waiting so long

I've been waiting so long

I've been waiting so long

To be where I'm going

In the sunshine of your love

# Sweet Home Chicago

***Robert Johnson*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSJHPDLrXtM)] [Key: **F**. Tempo: **102**] [TOP](#_top)

***The Blues Brothers*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euJ22UqLD5Y)]

Come on

Oh baby don't you wanna go

Come on

Oh baby don't you wanna go

Back to that same old place

Sweet home Chicago

Come on

Baby don't you wanna go

Hidehey

Baby dont you wanna go

Back to that same old place

Oh sweet home Chicago

Well, one and one is two

Six and two is eight

Come on baby don't ya make me late

Hidehey

Baby dont you wanna go

Back to that same old place

Sweet home Chicago

Come on

Baby don't you wanna go

Back to that same old place

Sweet home Chicago

Six and three is nine

Nine and nine is eighteen

Look there brother baby and see what Ive seen

Hidehey

Baby don't you wanna go

Back to that same old place

Sweet home Chicago

Oh come on

Baby don't you wanna go

Come on

Baby don't you wanna go

Back to that same old place

Sweet home Chicago

# Thrill is Gone

***B.B. King*** [[youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpC69qIe02E)] [Key: **Bm**. Tempo: **88**] [TOP](#_top)

The thrill is gone

The thrill is gone away

The thrill is gone, baby

The thrill is gone away

You know you done me wrong, baby

And you'll be sorry someday

The thrill is gone

It's gone away from me

The thrill is gone, baby

The thrill is gone away from me

Although, I'll still live on

But so lonely I'll be

The thrill is gone

It's gone away for good

All the thrill is gone

Baby, it's gone away for good

Someday I know I'll be open-armed baby

Just like I know, I know I should

You know, I'm free, free now, baby

I'm free from your spell

Oh, free, free, free now, baby

I'm free from your spell

And now that it's all over

All that I can do is wish you well

# Appendix – Jam Tips

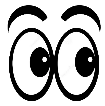
A close-up of an ear

Description automatically generated**LISTEN**: The ***MOST IMPORTANT*** part of playing with other musicians is listening.

You need to listen to the person leading the song for chord changes and stops, etc. The chord structure might be different to what you heard in the quick rundown before the start. You should be listening to each other player and find your part in the mix – one note, played at the right time, is often more impactful than a flashy solo.

If you’re playing guitar, do something different to the other guitar player(s)… Play chords in a different position (open vs barre). Strum vs picking.

L i s t e n f o r s p a c e and leave it there, or try and create it.

**LOOK**: There’s a lot to look at. Your instrument, the audience, the other players. Most importantly, the leader for this song. They will be directing the flow of the song and providing cues. The singer (if different from the leader) might also provide cues. Here are some cues to look for:

* Moving towards the mic – I’m about to sing.
* Moving away from the mic – time for a solo. Look for the next cue.
* Pointing or nodding to another player – it’s their (your) turn to solo.
* **STOPS**. There are a lot of ways to signal a stop.
  + If the singer is leading the song, they usually have a spare hand and you’ll get a clear signal. Typically, a fist held up then pulled down.
  + If a guitarist is leading the song, you might see the guitar neck held up then pulled down.
  + Some song leaders like to be subtle, and they will just turn their head and look at you (or even just roughly in your direction). It’s an ambiguous signal but it means that pretty soon they want you to do something different o what you’re doing now. Assume a stop is coming. But get ready to repeat a turnaround.
* A finger pointing at something

  Description automatically generatedHand palm down – break it down – play quietly.
* Hand palm up – bring it up – play louder.
* Making a circle with finger – play the turnaround.
* Patting or pointing to their head – go back to the start (the top). If the song had a particular intro, this signal usually means play that again as the outro. Otherwise, it means play the first verse again.
* Hand slicing across neck – stop playing – use this if the song started wrong and needs to be restarted. It happens.

The other cue you will sometimes get is when the song leader wants to stay on the root chord – the “one”. You might hear them say “stay on the one” or they might put one finger in the air. If this happens, the next cue is likely to be when they want you to move off the “one”. Most likely to the “four” or the “five”, or play the turnaround.

If you are leading a song, work out who wants a solo first. When it’s their turn to solo, give them time to get ready – let them know it’s coming up when the turnaround starts. A look or a nod in their direction is enough.

**VOLUME**: A category all on its own. Great songs have dynamics – the light and shade that creates expression and emotion. Don’t play everything at 10. Give the song some room to breathe.

If you can’t hear a vocal or another instrument, or your own, the first thing to try is to move. Even just half a metre can make a huge difference to what you’re hearing on stage. Everything is usually miked up so you can always ask the sound engineer to put more (or less) of something in your monitor.

**LEADING A SONG**: If you picked the song, you’re the leader. You will need to explain your song to everyone else in the jam. Chord progression, tempo, feel, that bit in the middle. Who wants (or doesn’t want) a solo. The turnaround at the end (if there is one). Keep your song choice simple or bring charts if you want to tackle something more complex. Also, SHBC is a blues club, so your song(s) *should* be in the blues genre.

Gather the jammers and explain the song:

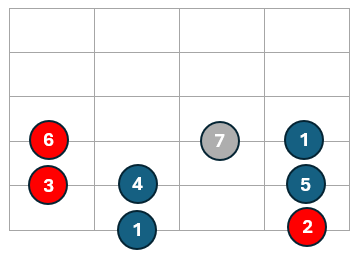
1. **Song Name:** This might be enough information for some players.
2. **Key:** In a loud environment, especially with hearing-impaired musos, make it clear. For example, “D for Dog”, or use the NATO alphabet.
   * **A**lpha, **B**ravo, **C**harlie, **D**elta, **E**cho, **F**oxtrot, **G**olf
3. **Chord progression:** Break it into parts – intro, verse, chorus, solo, end.
4. **Tempo:** The easiest way to communicate this is to clap at the tempo and feel you want.
5. **Count it in:** Or let the drummer count it in. Or just start playing.

*TIP: It can be really helpful to play or sing part of the song so other musicians get a feel for the rhythm and tempo.*

# Appendix – 12 Bar Blues Progressions

When it comes to playing the blues, there are three standard chord progressions to look out (or listen) for. There doesn’t seem to be a standard naming of these progressions, but if a song just cycles through one of these progressions from start to finish, it’s easier to refer to a progression name than to chart it.

We use I, IV, V notation which is just the first, fourth and fifth notes in a scale. The I, IV, V are always major chords and the ii, iii, vi are always minor chords. So if you’re playing in the key of A and the song leader says the turnaround is 6, 2, 5, 1, you know that’s F#m, Bm, E, A.



#### Standard 12 Bar Blues

I I I I

IV IV I I

V IV I V

#### Quick Change 12 Bar Blues

The Quick Change is all about that change to the IV chord in bar 2.

I IV I I

IV IV I I

V IV I V

#### Slow Change (or No Turnaround) 12 Bar Blues

I IV I I

IV IV I I

V V I I

# Appendix – Circle of Fifths

The Circle of Fifths is a great practice tool. If you sit down to practice and you’re not sure what to do or where to start, try going around the circle (in either direction). Or pick any quadrant and find chord progressions that sound good.

The outer circle shows key signatures. For any note on the outer (**major**) circle, the IV chord is on the left and the V chord is on the right. In the inner (**minor**) circle, the vi chord is below the I, with the ii on the left and the iii on the right.

A blues turnaround in A would typically go from E to D (ie V to IV). But you can go anticlockwise (playing 7ths instead of minors) with C#7 > F#7 > B7 > A (ie. iii > vi > ii > I).

The ring between the inner and outer circles shows the number of sharps or flats in the key signature. C major and A minor have no sharps or flats. G major has one sharp, etc.

