

## About This Product

Thank you for buying this book. My hope is that you will be able to learn many of the techniques, both from a rhythmic and soloing standpoint, that make blues piano playing so *infectious*.

Since 1995, “100 Ultimate Blues Riffs for Piano/Keyboards”, a book that I authored for intermediate to advanced students and musicians has been very successful so I decided to author a book based on that book which would appeal to beginner to intermediate students who have an interest in learning to play Blues piano.

### What is a Riff?

A “riff” is generally referred to as a short melodic or rhythmic phrase that is often repeated to form the framework of a song especially in Blues, Rock, Jazz and Latin styles. The 100 riffs in this book cover a multitude of musical ideas and by learning each one of them and applying them you will build up a large vocabulary that can be used in numerous styles of music. Blues songs are made up of repetitive melodic phrases and rhythmic patterns that are strung together, it is just like learning a language whereby you first learn words which are then joined together to form a phrase and which in turn form a sentence. etc.

The Blues is the basis of most contemporary styles of music whether it is Pop, Jazz, Rhythm & Blues, Gospel etc. so I have divided the book into 5 different sections. **Basic Blues Riffs** 1-33, **R&B influenced Blues Riffs** 34-67, **Boogie-Woogie Riffs** 68-78, **Rock influenced Blues Riffs** 79-93 **Gospel Riffs** 94-100.

The audio CD that accompanies this book contains each example recorded twice, the first time has the piano left and right hand parts playing along with the drums, the second time just has a bass line along with the drums so that you can practice the piano part. Each example has a 4 beat count in.

For students that would like to improve their ear training skills, you may want to listen to the left and right hand parts and try to duplicate what is played without looking at the music notation. I personally find that I am able to memorize music much quicker when I pick music out by ear than from learning and memorizing from the music notation. Obviously the book can be used to locate the notes that you are unable to find by listening to the CD. I would suggest learning each hand separately at a slow tempo making sure that the rhythm is accurate and then once the riff is mastered, play along with the audio track on the CD.

I am available to teach music students about Blues piano playing anywhere in the world using a high speed internet, webcam and skype or windows live messenger, you can contact me at [adgordon@adgproductions.com](mailto:adgordon@adgproductions.com) for more info. and also watch a youtube video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4n8ioFVgpJw>

There are two important aspects to know about when playing Blues songs and they are the “**12 bar Blues chord progression**” and “**The Blues Scale**”.

The 12 Bar Blues progression is 12 measures in length and once the end of the 12<sup>th</sup>. measure is reached the progression starts over again and keeps repeating until the end of the song.

## 12 Bar Blues Progression in the Key of C

1 C<sup>7</sup> I                      2 C<sup>7</sup> I or F<sup>7</sup> IV                      3 C<sup>7</sup>                      4 C<sup>7</sup>

5 F<sup>7</sup> IV                      6 F<sup>7</sup>                      7 C<sup>7</sup> I                      8 C<sup>7</sup>

9 G<sup>7</sup> V                      10 F<sup>7</sup> IV                      11 C<sup>7</sup> I                      12 G<sup>7</sup> V

As can be seen from the above example of the chord progression in the key of C major, the first four measures consists of the C7 (I) chord, followed by two measures of the F7 (IV) chord, two measures of C7 (I), then one measure each of G7 (V), F7 (IV) and C7 (I) before finishing the progression with the G7 (V) chord which leads perfectly back to the beginning of the progression, repeating the cycle. The roman numerals (I), (IV) & (V) help in showing where the chords lie within the C major scale. Since we are in the key of C, C7 would be the (I) chord: F7, four notes up from C would be the (IV) chord and G7, five notes up from C7 would be the (V) chord. Using the roman numerals helps us to be able to transpose the chord progression into other keys much easier than the chord names as well as understanding the harmony of the music. Since we know that the progression consists of the (I), (IV) and (V) chords, if we wanted to play the progression in the key of F, then the chords would be F7 (I) chord, Bb7 (IV) chord and C7 (V) chord. Make sure that you thoroughly understand and memorize this basic chord progression as there are literally thousands of songs using this chord progression. There are many variations on this basic Blues progression such as playing the F7 (IV) chord in the second measure as shown in the above example. The Blues scale is used most often when playing the Blues and it consists of a 7 note scale with the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> notes of the major scale flattened by half a step, (see below).

## The Blues Scale In the Key of C major

I                      bIII                      IV                      bV                      V                      bVII                      VIII

The Blues scale should be practiced in as many keys as possible just as you would your major and minor scales. When playing in a certain key, the Blues scale for that key is used throughout the whole 12 bar progression even though the chords are changing through the (I), (IV) and (V) chords.

CD track 5  
Swing Rhythm

# Blues Riff 5

Composed & Arranged by  
Andrew D. Gordon

♩ = 60

C7 B $\flat$ 7

F7 B $\flat$ 7 F7 G $\flat$ 7 F7

CD track 6  
Swing Rhythm

# Blues Riff 6

♩ = 90

G7 C7

G7 C7