

BLUE MONK (BLUES IN Bb)

THELONIOUS MONK
(LESSON BY BEN PORTNER)

We are now going to move on to playing a blues in the key of Bb. Blue monk is a well known standard and Bb is a common key that is used for blues. We will approach learning this piece the same way we did for C Jam Blues and Bag's groove. We will start with the chords in root position and then move to rootless voicings. As always it is important that the student listen to the recording multiple times before attempting to play the piece. We are going to play the piece an octave higher so as not to get in the way of the learning the voicings

Bb7 Eb7 Bb7

D Eb E F G Ab A Bb F G F E Eb F C# D

BbDFAb EbGBbDb BbDFAb

Bb7 Eb7 E°7 Bb7

4 C# C G Ab A Bb Bb B C C# F G F E Eb F C# D

BbDFAb EbGBbDb EGBbDb BbDFAb

Bb7 Cm7 F7 Bb7 Bb7

8 F F F F F F G F E Eb F C# D F G F E Eb F C# D

BbDFAb CEbGBb FACEb BbDFAb BbDFAb

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Practice the melody with the chords until you feel comfortable playing with a metronome or recording.
Since improvisation makes up most of the composition let's go over the scales to use on each chord.
If you struggle with the mixolydian or dorian scales, go back to the previous lessons to work on these scales separately

Bb⁷

Bb7 Bb mixolydian scale

13 Bb C D Eb F G Ab Bb

BbDFAb

Eb 7 Eb mixolydian scale

Eb⁷

21 Eb F G Ab Bb C Db Eb

EbGBbDb

E^{o7}

E diminished uses E whole half diminished scale

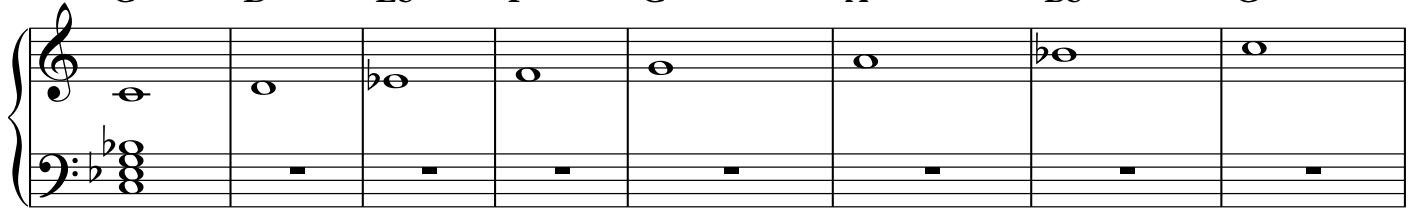
29 E F# G A Bb C Db Eb E

EGBbDb

Cm⁷

C minor 7th C dorian scale

38 C D Eb F G A Bb C

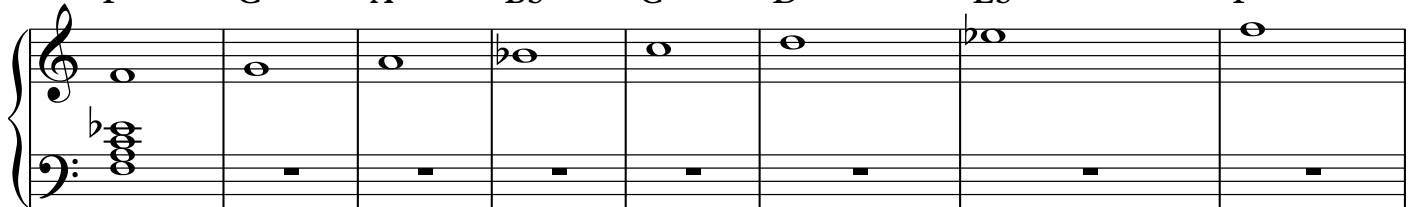


CEbGBb

F⁷

F7 uses F mixolydian scale

46 F G A Bb C D Eb F




FACEb

Now let's take a look at the Bb minor pentatonic and Bb blues scale.
These scales work tremendously when improvising over a blues.

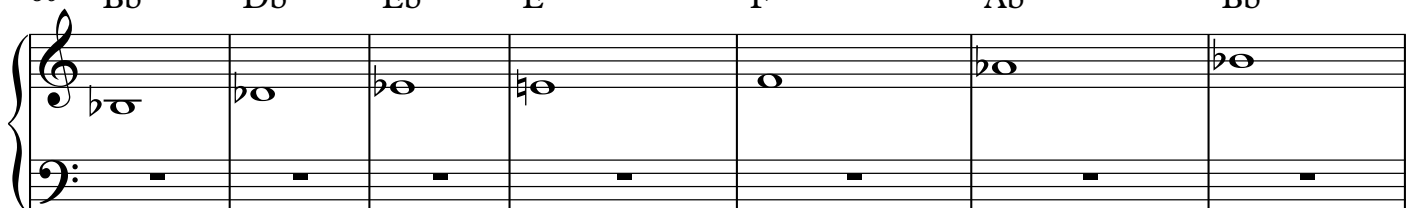
Bb minor pentatonic

54 Bb Db Eb F Ab Bb



Bb blues scale

60 Bb Db Eb E F Ab Bb



Now that you've gotten used to the root position voicings let's take a look at some better sounding rootless voicings to use over each chord.

B \flat 7

67 AbCDG DGAbC AbDG FB \flat E \flat B \flat E \flat Ab GAbCD GAb FAbCD DFA \flat C

E \flat 7

76 D \flat FGC GCD \flat F E \flat GC E \flat AbD \flat B \flat E \flat Ab CDb FGB \flat D \flat D \flat FGB \flat GB \flat D \flat F

Lastly we'll practice the 2-5-1 leading back to the tonic. For more 2-5-1 choices please go back to the 2-5-1 voicing exercise.

85 Cm⁷ F⁷ Cm⁷ F⁷
EbGB \flat D EbGAD B \flat DE \flat G ADE \flat G

After practicing these voicings in the left hand, now try playing the melody along with the rootless voicings. Once you are comfortable playing the melody and voicings, practice soloing over the form using the scales discussed earlier. It is recommended that the student listen to and transcribe solos of master players to work on vocabulary, rhythm and phrasing.

89

B \flat 7 Eb7 B \flat 7 B \flat 7

D Eb E F G Ab A B \flat F G F E Eb F C# D C# C

DGAbC DbFGC DGAbC DGAbC

93

E \flat 7 E \flat 7 B \flat 7 B \flat 7 Cm7

G Ab A B \flat B \flat B C C# F G F E Eb F C# D F F F F F

DbFGC EGB \flat Db DGAbC DGAbC EbGB \flat D

98

F7 B \flat 7 B \flat 7

F G F E Eb F C# D F G F E Eb F C# D

EbGAD DGAbC DGAbC

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