

by Jamey Aebersold

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NOTE: Any codas ( $\oplus$ ) that appear will be played only once on the recording at the end of the <u>last</u> recorded chorus.

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#### INTRODUCTION

This play-a-long contains MINOR BLUES in all twelve keys. Songs in minor keys have traditionally been favorites of jazz musicians. The blues has been around since the inception of jazz and to put the two together to form "minor blues" was a natural marriage. It's helpful to think of the blues progression as being three 4-bar phrases; A beginning, a middle, and an end. Some feel it is easier to think of melodies in minor keys than in major. You may want to try and compose your completely new melodies to these background tracks or transpose one of my melodies to a different key (different recorded background).

I wrote most of these melodies while in an American Airlines airplane at 35,000 feet up in the air going 500 miles an hour on my way back from Sao Paulo, Brasil in the Spring of 1993. I would listen to a little of the recorded track on my cassette recorder and start singing along with it to myself. When I found an idea I liked, (sometimes it would be the first idea), I would write the notes and chords in my music book. I would then visualize the keyboard (the black and white notes) in my mind while I wrote the notes. With practice, it's a lot easier than you might think.

The final track doesn't have a melody. It is a review of all the 12 keys (one chorus per key) and ascends each chorus by half-steps (chromatically).

I've included both the blues scale and the minor pentatonic scale for each song/key in hopes this will help the novice improvisor quickly get to the "sound" of the minor blues. These two scales are very similar: both contain the minor 7th chord (root, 3rd, 5th and 7th of the tonic minor scale). They are actually identical except for the #4 which occurs in the blues scale and not in the minor pentatonic. The #4 is the *Blue Note* in the blues scale.

The SOLOS section of each song lists the scales written in whole notes from the root to the ninth note of the scale. The chord tones are the darkened notes (root, 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th). The fourth measure of the solo section lists the altered dominant scale (also called diminished-whole-tone) and I've put a b9 above the last note of the scale to let you know it is the flatted ninth of that scale (even though the chord/scale symbol has a +9). When you write or play a scale or chord from the root to the ninth the b9 comes before the +9. The diminished-whole-tone scale has both a b9 and a +9. See the Scale Syllabus in this book and look at the page called Dominant Seventh Tree of Scale Choices for other scale sounds that will work.

The half-diminished scale which appears in the ninth measure has an added note in parenthesis (). That note is what we call the sharp two (raised second note of the scale). There are two half-diminished scales (see Scale Syllabus). One uses as its second tone a note ½ step above the root and the other scale (half-dim. #2) uses as its second tone the note which is a whole step (two half-steps) above the root. This may seem a little complex but it's really not. The rule seems to be: "If you want to emphasize the second note (also called the 9th) of a half-dim. scale,(for instance a held note or the top note of a phrase or chord), play the tone which is a whole-step above the root (called the #2). If you are just running a diatonic, scale-wise passage either note will work." You'll have to experiment with using both the regular 2nd and the raised 2nd (#2) to get the feel of how they sound in the context of the minor blues.

In measures 4, 10 and 12 there appear dominant 7th chord/scales. In each case they resolve up a perfect fourth to the next chord/scale. Whenever a dominant 7th resolves naturally (up a perfect fourth interval) you can embellish or substitute other scales during that measure. The page called Dominant Seventh Tree of Scale Choices outlines all the other scales that jazz players have substituted throughout the years. I recommend playing these measures as I have them listed on the pages first. Then, as you become familiar with the sound and feel of the diminished-whole-tone scale try a different scale such as the diminished scale or the whole-tone scale. It usually takes several weeks of playing and improvising with them before you will feel comfortable.

What you are doing is adding to your list of available choices. If you listen to jazz recordings, you will eventually HEAR these substitute dominants EVERYWHERE. Believe me, they are there and have been there for decades. Your ears (and mind) just didn't know what it was hearing.

The last four measures contain what we call a Two-Five-One (ii-V7-i) in a minor key....a half-dim. scale moving to an altered dominant scale which then moves on to the tonic minor chord/scale. Some people like to blanket these measures with one scale - the tonic harmonic minor scale. For instance: in the tonic key of C minor blues you could play the C Harmonic Minor scale over the last four bars. This is something you can experiment with. The scale in the key of C minor is: C D Eb F G Ab B C.

### **INTRODUCTION TO SCALE SYLLABUS**

Each chord/scale symbol (C7, C $\rightarrow$ , C $\Delta$ +4, etc.) represents a series of tones which the improvisor can use when improvising or soloing. Scales and chords are the backbone of our music and the better you equip yourself, the more fun you will have playing music. These series of tones have traditionally been called scales.

I list the scales in the Scale Syllabus in the same key (C) so you can have a frame of reference and can compare their similarities and differences. You are urged to write and practice them in all twelve keys.

Be sure to listen to David Liebman soloing on all of these scales in the **Scale Syllabus – Volume 26**. It can really help one's ears to hear what these scales actually sound like with saxophone and piano. His transcribed solos are also available in **David Liebman's** *Scale Syllabus Solos*.

This Scale Syllabus is intended to give the improvisor a variety of scale choices which may be used over any chord – major, minor, dominant 7th, half-diminished and diminished. Western music, especially jazz and pop, uses major, dominant 7th, dorian minor scales and chords and the Blues scale more than any other. Scales and chords used less often are the half-diminished and diminished. If we agree on these five chord/scale families as being the most predominant, then we can set them up as categories and list substitute scales beneath each heading. See next page...

Each category begins with the scale most clearly resembling the chord/scale symbol given to the left. The scales are arranged according to the degree of dissonance they produce in relation to the basic chord/scale sound. Scales near the top of each category will sound mild or consonant and scale choices further down the list will become increasingly tense or dissonant. Players are urged to start with the scales at the top and with practice and experimentation gradually work their way down the list to the more dissonant or tension producing scales. You should work with a new scale sound on your instrument until your ears and fingers become comfortable with all the tones in the scale. Also try singing the scale with your voice. Improvise with your voice over the scale you are learning and then play on your instrument what your voice sang.

Music is made of tension and release. Scale tones produce tension or they produce relaxation. Improvisors' ability to control the amount and frequency of tension and release will in large measure determine whether they are successful in communicating to the listener. **Remember** – you, the player are also a listener!

Any of the various practice procedures and patterns listed in Volumes 1, 2, 3, 21 or 24 can be applied to the learning and assimilation of any of the scale choices listed in this Scale Syllabus. Needless to say, any scale you want to learn should be transposed and practiced in all twelve keys. The column on whole and half step construction I have listed for each scale on the syllabus should prove helpful when transposing a scale to any of the twelve keys.

Pages 60 & 61 contain the most used scales written in all keys. Page 40 has the blues scales.

If you are writing chord symbols for keyboard or guitar you will have to be more explicit in your notation. You may want a certain note of the scale to be voiced in the melody and my Scale Syllabus doesn't tell you things like that.

For additional information on scale substitution, I recommend Scales for Jazz Improvisation by Dan Haerle, Jazz Improvisation by David Baker, Patterns for Jazz and Complete Method for Jazz Improvisation by Jerry Coker, the Repository of Scales & Melodic Patterns by Yusef Lateef and the Lydian Chromatic Concept by George Russell. These books are available from Jazz Aids, P.O.Box 1244, New Albany, In. 47151-1244 U.S.A. or possibly at your local music store.

Several play-a-long sets offer you an opportunity to practice the various scales in all twelve keys. They are: Vol. 24 – Major & Minor; Vol. 21 – Gettin' It Together; Vol. 16 – Turnarounds, Cycles & II/V7's; Vol. 42 – Blues In All Keys and Vol. 47 – "Rhythm" In All Keys.

#### **SCALE SYLLABUS**

LEGEND: H = Half Step, V	$N = \text{Whole Step.}  \Delta = \text{Major 7th;}  + \text{ or}$	# = raise H; b or - = lower	H; $\emptyset = \text{Half-diminished}; -3$	= 3H (Minor Third)
CHORD/SCALE SYMBOL  C C7 C- CØ CATEGORIES C°	•	WHOLE & HALF STEP CONSTRUCTION WWHWWHW WHWWHW WHWWWHW HWWHWWWH HWWHWWH	SCALE IN KEY OF C C D E F G A B C C D E F G A B b C C D E b F G A B b C	BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C CEGBD CEGBbD CEbGBbD CEbGBbB
1.MAJOR SCALE CHOICES C $\Delta$ (Can be written C) C $\Delta + 4$ C $\Delta$ C $\Delta$ b6 C $\Delta + 5$ , +4 C C	SCALE NAME  Major (don't emphasize the 4th) Major Pentatonic Lydian (major scale with +4) Bebop (Major) Harmonic Major Lydian Augmented Augmented 6th Mode of Harmonic Minor Diminished (begin with H step) Blues Scale	W & H CONSTRUCTION  W W H W W W H  W W -3 W -3  W W W H W W H  W W H W H H W H  W W H W H	SCALE IN KEY OF C  C D E F G A B C  C D E G A C  C D E F G A B C  C D E F G G# A B C  C D E F G Ab B C  C D E F G Ab B C  C D E F G Ab B C  C D# E G Ab B C  C D# E F G A B C  C Db D# E F G A B C  C Db D# E F G A B C  C Eb F F G B b C	BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C CEGBD CEGBD CEGBD CEGBD CEGBD CEGBD CEGBD CEGBD CEGBD
2.DOMINANT 7th SCALE CHOICES C7 C7 C7 C7 b9 C7+4 C7b6 C7+ (has #4 & #5) C7b9(also has #9 & #4) C7+9(also has b9, #4, #5) C7 DOMINANT 7th SUSPENDED 4th	SCALE NAME  Dominant 7th Major Pentatonic Bebop (Dominant) Spanish or Jewish scale Lydian Dominant Hindu Whole Tone(6 tone scale) Diminished(begin with H step) Diminished Whole Tone Blues Scale	W&H CONSTRUCTION WWHWWHW WW-3W-3 WWHWWHHH H-3HWHWW WWWHWHW WWWWWWWW WWHWHW WWWWWWW WWWWWW	SCALE IN KEY OF C  C D E F G A Bb C C D E G A C C D E F G A Bb B C C D E F G A Bb C C D E F G A Bb C C D E F G A Bb C C D E F G A B Bb C C D E F G A B B C C D E F G B B C C D D D F E F G B B C C D B D F E F G B B C C D B D F E F G B B C C E B F F G B B C	BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C CEG Bb D (D#)
C7 sus 4 MAY BE C7 sus 4 WRITTEN C7 sus 4 G-/C	Dom. 7th scale but don't emphasize the third Major Pentatonic built on b7 Bebop Scale	W W H W W H W W W -3 W -3 W W H W W H H H	CDEFGABbC BbCDFGBb CDEFGABbBC	CFGBbD CFGBbD CFGBbD
3.MINOR SCALE	SCALE NAME	W & H CONSTRUCTION	SCALE IN KEY OF C	
CHOICES* C- or C-7 C- or C-7 C- or C-7 C-Δ (maj. 7th) C- or C-6 or C-Δ C- or C-7 C-Δ (b6 & maj. 7th) C- or C-7 C- or C-7 C- or C-7 C- or C-b9b6 C- or C-b6	Minor(Dorian) Pentatonic(Minor Pentatonic) Bebop (Minor) Melodic Minor(ascending) Bebop Minor No. 2 Blues Scale Harmonic Minor Diminished(begin with W step) Phrygian Pure or Natural Minor, Aeolian	W H W W W H W -3 W W -3 W W H H H W W H W W H W W W H H W H -3 W H H -3 W W H W W H -3 H W H W W H W H W H H W W W H W W W H W W H W W	C D Eb F G A Bb C C Eb F G Bb C C D Eb E F G A Bb C C D Eb F G A B C C D Eb F G AB C C D Eb F G Bb C C D Eb F G AB C C D Eb F F AB C C D Eb F G Ab B C C D Eb F G Ab Bb C C D Eb F G Ab Bb C C D Eb F G Ab Bb C	IN KEY OF C CEb G Bb D CEb G Bb D CEb G B D
4.HALF DIMINISHED SCALE CHOICES	SCALE NAME	W & H CONSTRUCTION	SCALE IN KEY OF C	BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C
CØ CØ#2 (CØ9) CØ(with or without #2)	Half Diminished(Locrian) Half Diminished #2(Locrian #2) Bebop Scale	HWWHWWW WHWHWWW HWWHHHWW	C Db Eb F Gb Ab Bb C C D Eb F Gb Ab Bb C C Db Eb F Gb G Ab Bb C	C Eb Gb Bb C Eb Gb Bb D C Eb Gb Bb
5.DIMINISHED SCALE CHOICES	SCALE NAME	W & H CONSTRUCTION	SCALE IN KEY OF C	BASIC CHORD IN KEY OF C
C°	Diminished(8 tone scale)	WHWHWHWH	C D Eb F Gb Ab A B C	

NOTE: The above chord symbol guide is my system of notation. I feel it best represents the sounds I hear in jazz. The player should be aware that each chord symbol represents a series of tones called a scale. Even though a C7+9 would appear to have only a raised 9th, it also has a b9, +4 & +5. The entire C7+9 scale would look like: Root, b9, +9, 3rd, +4, +5, b7 & root (C, Db, D#, E, F#, G#, Bb, C). My chord symbol abbreviation is C7+9 and the name of this scale is Diminished Whole Tone sometimes called Super Locrian or Altered Scale. C7b9 appears to have only one altered tone (b9) but actually has three: b9, +9 and +4. The entire scale looks like this: Root, b9, +9, 3rd, +4, 5th, 6th, b7 & root (C, Db, D#, E, F#, G, A, Bb, C). This is called a Diminished scale and my chord symbol abbreviation is C7b9.

All scales under the Dominant 7th category are scales that embellish the basic Dominant 7th sound. Some scales provide much more tension than the basic dominant 7th sound and require practice and patience to grasp the essence of their meaning. I encourage you to work with the first side of Volume 3 "The II–V7–I Progression" since it emphasizes Diminished and Diminished Whole Tone scales and chords. \*– In category #3, MINOR SCALE CHOICES, the PURE MINOR scale choice is not used very often. I have found the order of preference to be Dorian, Bebop, Melodic, Blues, Pentatonic, and then any of the remaining Minor scale choices.

### THE DOMINANT 7th TREE of SCALE CHOICES

The two most important notes in any scale are the 3rd and 7th. They tell the listener what the quality is and indicate the harmonic motion. The 3rd tells us if it's major or minor. The 7th tells whether the sound is stable (doesn't want to move to another chord) or if it wants to move on to a chord of resolution. Dominants typically want to resolve to a chord up a perfect 4th (C7 wants to resolve to F, F-, F7 etc.). The root or tonic is taken for granted. If it wasn't there we wouldn't be able to identify the sound.

Any of these scales (qualities/sounds/sonorities) may be played when a dominant 7th chord/scale RESOLVES to a chord/scale whose ROOT lies a perfect 4th (5 half-steps) above the root of the dominant 7th chord.

EXAMPLE: || C7 | C7 | F | F | Ab7 | Ab7 | Db- | Db- || Embellish these measures: C7 and Ab7

The altered tones are in **bold type.** Those tones usually resolve by *half-step* to a scale or chord tone. This amounts to **tension then release**. It's a natural occurrence in music. The <u>3rds's and 7th's</u> are underlined.

#### **Scales**

- 1. DOM.7th = C7 = CD E FGA Bb C This is the basic dominant 7th sound. Be careful how you treat the 4th tone. Use it as a passing tone.
- 2. **BEBOP** = C7 = CD E F G A Bb B C Play B natural as a passing tone. It should always appear on an upbeat, never on the downbeat.
- 3. LYDIAN DOM. = C7#4 = C D E F# G A Bb C The #4 was/is a favorite note. It used to be called a b5.
- 4. WHOLE-TONE = C7+ = CD E F G Bb C This scale only has 6 tones. It is a symetrical scale used often in cartoon music and by DeBussy and Ravel.
- 5. DIMINISHED = C7b9 = C Db Eb E F# G A Bb C

  This scale has 8 different tones. It is symetrical and is also used in cartoon music.

  Michael Brecker is a master of this scale sound.
- 6. DIM. WHOLE-TONE = C7+9 = C Db Eb E F# G# Bb C This scale has four altered tones which help create tension.
- 7. SPANISH or JEWISH SCALE = C7 (b9) = C Db E F G Ab Bb C This scale is used often when playing in a minor key. It's the same as F harmonic minor.
- 8. CHROMATIC SCALE = C7 = C Db D Eb E F F# G G# A Bb B C (the Musical Alphabet)

Experiment with these scales over the **Cycle of Dominant 7th Chords** track on the recording. The proper use of these various scales is part of what makes jazz so appealing. Endless variety in the hands of a master makes beautiful music. Don't be afraid to try these sounds. It may take some time for your ears to become accustomed to the sound **and** the fingerings. *Patterns for Jazz* lists jazz phrases based on many of the scales above.

### MINOR BLUES VOICINGS

Voice leading is very important, both when comping and/or soloing. Smooth voice leading helps disguise chord movement and helps the listener center-in on the melody being played. Most pianists find several voicings they like for the various qualities (major, minor, dominant 7th & half-Dim.) and use them over and over throughout their life. Some voicings will be <u>one hand</u> and others require <u>two hands</u>. You need to learn some of each in order to be fluent and confident.

Below I am listing various voicings to each of the chords presented in the C Minor Blues. Use these as examples and then move them to minor blues in other keys. You may want to write numbers beside the voicings (what note of the scale this is) in order to move smoothly to another key.

Most all voicings may be approached by a similar voicing a half-step from below or above.









### 1. C Minor Blues Who Said That?

### PLAY 11 CHORUSES ( ) = 100



## 2. C# Minor Blues South Of The Border



PLAY 18 CHORUSES (J) = 186









## 3. D Minor Blues Rufus Did It



# 4. Eb Minor Blues Special Delivery



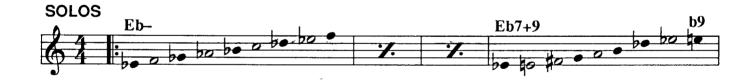
PLAY 16 CHORUSES (J) = 144



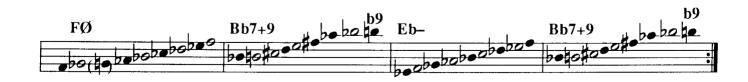














### 5. E Minor Blues **Speed Trap**

PLAY 10 CHORUSES ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) = 126



F#()

B7+9

B7+9

B7+9

B7+9

B7+9

B7+9

B7+9

### 6. F Minor Blues Four On The Floor



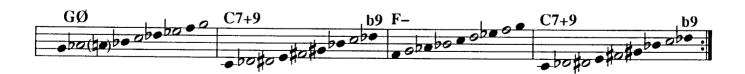












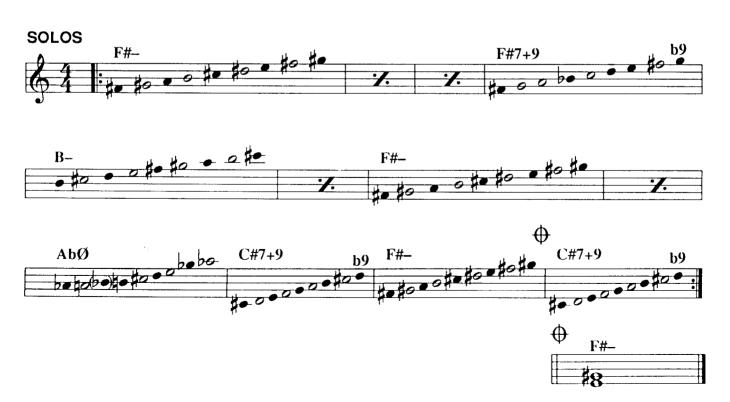


## 7. F# Minor Blues Fourths?

#### **PLAY 15 CHORUSES (J)** = 116







# 8. G Minor Blues Up And Down







# 9. Ab Minor Blues Speakerphone



## 10. A Minor Blues A Search For Who?







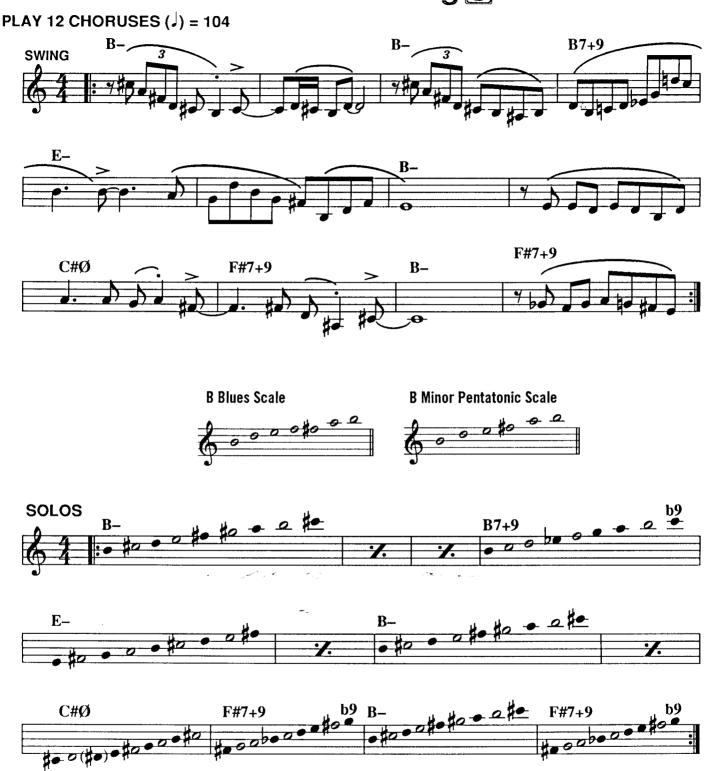
# 11. Bb Minor Blues Syncopated Plus

PLAY 14 CHORUSES () = 126



# 12. B Minor Blues No Smoking







### 13. Wrap It Up

### (One Chorus In Each Key, Ascending Chromatically)

PLAY 12 CHORUSES (2) = 96

