



Building a Foundation

By David Barrett, Mel Bay's HarmonicaSessions® eZine

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Let's start the New Year off with a whole bunch of playing! This issue we'll study a blues harmonica instrumental titled "HS Blues" I wrote specifically for this series of articles.

This issue's version of the song sets the basis of our study—no bending (except for the basic dip) or tongue block exclusive techniques. For the new players out there this will be a great study song for you. For the players that have been playing for a while, learning this version will help you to appreciate the changes that I'm going to make in upcoming versions.

In the next issue I'll incorporate heavy use of tongue blocking techniques (man it was hard for me to not use slaps on this first recording!) for you to hear and understand where choices are made to utilize tongue block sounds.

The third version of this instrumental will focus on heavy use of bending—again, to hear and understand where choices are made to utilize bending.

Our final version of the song will incorporate both bending and tongue blocking. This will also be an interesting adventure... where will tongue blocking win over bending... where will bending win over tongue blocking... and where will they work together to make a passage that much more exciting!

A final side note... this song was written to sound good without much technique. It'll be fun to hear how *more* use of technique can make the sound even better.

You'll need a G harmonica for this song (band is in the key of D). I've provided an MP3 track of me playing the song as well as the jam track (which comes from Blues Harmonica Jam Tracks & Soloing Concepts #2).

Good luck and have fun!

About the Author David Barrett

<http://www.harmonicamasterclass.com/david.htm>

HS Blues - Version 1

By David Barrett for HarmonicaSessions.com

Key: D (G Harmonica in 2nd Position) / Groove: Shuffle / Start: From the I (One Chord)

Transcribed by David Barrett

I 1st Chorus - A B/A C Chorus Form (Head)

3 3 3 3 3 3+ 3 3 3 3 3 3+ 3+ 3 4 6+ 3+ 3 4

IV I

6+ 3 3 3 3 3 3+ 1 1 4 1 4

V IV I V

4+ 3+ 3 4 6+ 3+ 3 4 2

I 2nd Chorus - A B/A C Chorus Form

1 1 1 2+ 2 1 1 1 1 2+ 3+

IV I

2+ 2+ 2+ 3+ 3+ 2+ 1 1 1 2+ 3+ 3 4

V IV I V

3 4 5+ 3 2 2+ 3+ 3+ 2+ 3+ 3+ 1 1 1 2+

I 3rd Chorus - A B/A1 C Chorus Form

3+ 3+ 3 4 3 1 2+ 3+ 3+ 3 4 3 3 4

IV I

5+ 5+ 6+ 5+ 4 5+ 1 2+ 3+ 3+ 3 4 5 5+

V IV I V

5
4

5+
4+

4
3

4
3

5+
4+

4
3

3

I 4th Chorus - ABC Chorus Form

4

5+ 5+ 4 3 4

5+ 6+

IV I

7 6 6+ 5+ 4

5+ 4 3 4

V IV I V

5+ 5+ 4 3 4

5+ 5+ 4 3 6+

5 6 5 5+ 5 4 4+ 4 5 4 4 5

I 5th Chorus - A B/A C Chorus Form

6+ 6+ 4 6+ 5 4 3

3 4 6+ 6+ 4 6+ 5 4 3

3 2 1

IV I

1+ 1+ 1+ 4+ 2 4+

3+ 3 4 6+ 6+ 4 6+ 5 4 3

4

V IV I V

6 7 6 6+ 5+ 4+

4 3 4 3+ 3+ 3+ 2+ 3+ 3 3 3 3 3

I 6th Chorus - A B/A C Chorus Form (Head)

3+ 3 3 3 3 3+

3+ 3 4 6+ 3+ 3 4

IV

6+ 3 3 3 3 3 3+

1 1 4 1 4

V IV I

4+ 3+ 3 4 6+ 3+ 3 4 2 4 4 3

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