

Let's plug the chords into this 12-bar progression... The first thing we need to know is which chords?

The I (one), IV (four), and V (five)! "What's that mean?"

First off, as written above, we will be using the Roman numerals to denote chords. "Ok". So, Where does that **I**, **IV**, and **V** come from? Well...

There is this thing called The Major Scale (diatonic). What's that? Well, if you have ever heard or sung any scale, this is the one [Supp.#6 Theory] (In Spanish, or Italian)

Do-----Re-----Mi-----Fa-----So-----La-----Ti-----Do
(sounds like)

Doe-----Ray-----Me-----Fah-----So-----Lah-----Tee-----Doe
(Now we assign each degree of this scale a number)

One-----Two-----Three---Four-----Five-----Six-----Seven---Eight

Without getting too heavy into the theory, let me write out a few different keys for you, starting with the key of C. (These are the notes in the scale)

C-----D-----E-----F-----G-----A-----B-----C

These notes will become the chord roots.

(for chords we use the Roman numerals)

I-----II-----III-----IV-----V-----VI-----VII-----VIII

C is the **I** chord, F is the **IV** chord, and G is the **V**, (in the key of C).
(This is all the theory about this scale we need for this lesson.)

Here are a few more of the keys that are most commonly used.....

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
A	(B)	(C#)	D	E	(F#)	(G#)	(A)
G	(A)	(B)	C	D	(E)	(F#)	(G)
D	(E)	(F#)	G	A	(B)	(C#)	(D)
E	(F#)	(G#)	A	B	(C#)	(D#)	(E)
F	(G)	(A)	Bb	C	(D)	(E)	(F)

So, we know that the **I** chord, in the key of A, is an **A** chord, the **IV** chord is **D**, the **V** chord is **E**, etc... If you don't know what those signs (#, b) next to the letters mean, you will have to refer to [Supplement #6- Theory] . But for now this should be enough to get started plugging chords into the 12-bar chord progression.

Ok-now let's plug them in..

Let's start with the key of A. (That's "blues in A") We know from the last page that the **I**, **IV** and **V** chords in the key of A are **A**, **D**, and **E**. So these are the three chords we will be using. (in a standard 12-bar)

<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>
<p>IV(D)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>IV(D)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>
<p>V(E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>IV(D)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>V (E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>

So, we have the first four "bars" (measures), played using the **I** chord---**A**.
 Then two measures using the **IV** chord-**D**. Then two more measures of **I**---**A**
 Then one Bar each, **V** chord-**E**, **IV** chord-**D**, **I** chord-**A**, then **V** chord-**E**.
 (We always end the song back on the **I** chord!)

If you were at a jam session and someone got up and said "blues in A" or "12-bar in A", these would be the chords you would follow. (There are plenty of exceptions.) If you were learning a standard blues song by say Robert Johnson, or B.B. King, or almost any of the traditional blues players, (and the song was in the key of A) these would be the "changes", or the chord progression you would start your thinking in. Again, believe me, this is the foundation for literally thousands of songs! This is true for very slow blues, medium tempo shuffles, very fast boogies---"Delta", "Chicago", "Texas"-- "Rockin", "Rock-a-Billy", "Swinging"---,Whatever! Acoustic, electric, slide,--

The 12-bar above is "blues in A". Let's see how this looks in other keys...

Again, we use this number system in order to plug into all the different keys.

You need to get a handle on the **I- IV** and **V** chords in different keys.

Let's look at the basic 12-bar again in some different keys! (first **A** again)

<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>
<p>IV(D)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>IV(D)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>
<p>V(E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>IV(D)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I (A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>V (E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>

Now, Key of E...

<p>I(E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>
<p>IV(A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>IV(A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>
<p>V(B)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>IV(A)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(E)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>V(B)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>

Now let's try key of C

<p>I(C)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(C)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(C)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(C)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>
<p>IV(F)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>IV(F)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(C)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(C)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>
<p>V(G)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>IV(F)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>I(C)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>	<p>V(G)</p> <p> / / / / </p> <p>one two three four</p>

That said, there are a few variations to this model 12-bar

Let's take a look at the two most common places these occur...

Variations to this model 12-bar

Some people will call this "a quick four" or "a quick change". It is very common! For this common variation we listen to that second measure. With the model we used in those last examples you just "hang on the I" (stay on the A chord). But about half the time there is a IV chord there! (in this case D) So... 12-bar "in A" again...

	IV(D) Here instead		
I (A)	I (A)	I (A)	I (A)
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /
one two three four	one two three four	one two three four	one two three four
IV(D)	IV(D)	I (A)	I (A)
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /
one two three four	one two three four	one two three four	one two three four
V(E)	IV(D)	I (A)	V (E)
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /
one two three four	one two three four	one two three four	one two three four

Now "in E"...

	I(E) or		
I(E)	IV(A)	I(E)	I(E)
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /
one two three four	one two three four	one two three four	one two three four
IV(A)	IV(A)	I(E)	I(E)
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /
one two three four	one two three four	one two three four	one two three four
V(B)	IV(A)	I(E)	V(B)
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /
one two three four	one two three four	one two three four	one two three four

Then 12-bar "in C"...(with that quick four.)

	I(C) or		
I(C)	IV(F)	I(C)	I(C)
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /
one two three four	one two three four	one two three four	one two three four
IV(F)	IV(F)	I(C)	I(C)
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /
one two three four	one two three four	one two three four	one two three four
V(G)	IV(F)	I(C)	V(G)
/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /	/ / / /
one two three four	one two three four	one two three four	one two three four

These 12-bar chord progressions just keep repeating over and over....
Let's look at one more very important variation! The turnaround.

The Turnaround (The last two measures)

It is the last two measures of the progression, (11th and 12th). These last two measures are often called the turnaround. Here are the four most common variations. You will eventually be able to hear them simply because you are aware of them. (I repeat this information in the lessons.)

I (A) / / / / one two three four	IV (D) or I (A) / / / / one two three four	I (A) / / / / one two three four	I (A) / / / / one two three four
IV (D) / / / / one two three four	IV (D) / / / / one two three four	I (A) / / / / one two three four	I (A) / / / / one two three four
V (E) / / / / one two three four	IV (D) / / / / one two three four	Last two measures _____ The "turn-around" _____	

#1- Play the I chord (A) for one bar, then V chord (E) in the last bar

#2- Play the I chord (A) for one bar, the last bar is divided between the I (A) and the V (E)

#3- Each of the last two measures are divided up with each chord getting two beats each

#4- Stay on the I chord (A) in both measures (actually, no turn-around at all)

I (A) / / / / one two three four	V(E) / / / / one two three four
I (A) / / / / one two three four	I (A) V(E) / / / / one two three four
I (A) IV (D) / / / / one two three four	I (A) V (E) / / / / one two three four
I (A) / / / / one two three four	I (A) / / / / one two three four

*These turnarounds are covered in
Lessons #17 and #24.*

There you will find some notes plugged in!