

Excerpt from Way Of The Sidewinder author Joey Fender

Musical Integrity:

The most effective ways to enter the musical pantheon:

I - IV - V The "One-Four-Five"

The basic ingredient of music is needed before expression of sound can be found.

- 1) Pulse - primal drums, the beat; (the heartbeat is rhythm)
- 2) The Pocket - a place for the notes to assemble together.
- 3) Platform - a springboard for the emotions and story; (solos)
- 4) Feelings - to convey emotion, connecting with the listener.

Overthinking music disrupts the true flow.

The Artistic Intangible:

Human expression using technology as a tool to unleash sound:

We use tools to express ourselves through sound, i.e. PA system, acoustic and electric guitars, amplifiers, the bass, drums, piano, harmonica, and vocals. Anything can be used to create music. Even something as easy as a clap or snap is valid. The vocals are important as they can tell a story, literally.

THE CHART  
OUR PERIODIC TABLE OF BLUES

	I	IV	V
KEY	E	A	B
	F	A#	C
	F#	B	C#
	G	C	D
	G#	C#	D#
	A	D	E
	A#	D#	F
	B	E	F#
	C	F	G
	C#	F#	G#
	D	G	A
	D#	G#	A#
OCTAVE	E	A	B

## The Notes:

We combine the major and minor scales to create one scale for all rhythm, melodies, and solos! Being both beautiful and intense at the same time. This brings us to DYNAMICS.

For every note or scale you run, make sure you can go fast and/or slow, loud and/or soft, plus combinations. Example: fast/loud, and slow/quiet or loud/slow or fast/quiet. Everything in between becomes valid.

Remember, the only wrong notes are the ones played with hesitation.

In “rock-o-la” blues we start to combine notes and scales:

Make It “Feel” (Calming Notes):

Key of “A”

The I is “A” the IV is “D” and the V is “E”

Major scale – a/b/c#/d/e/f#/g/a

Key of “E”

The I is “E” the IV is “A” and the V is “B”

Major scale – e/f/a b /a/b/c#/e b /e

Make It “Mean” (Tension Notes):

Key of “A” minor pentatonic – a-c-d-e-g-a

Key of “E” minor pentatonic – e-g-a-b-d-e

The “Rock-o-la” scale we combine “Feel” and “Mean”:

Key of “A”

A/b/c/c#/d/d#/e/f#/g/g#/a

Key of “E”

E/f#/g/a/a#/b/c/c#/d/d#/e

### The roller-coaster effect:

I found that the major notes make me feel relaxed and the minor ones bring tension. The opposite is also true. "How?" you ask. Simple. The magic of music! And also on delivery! The artist who can create calm/chaos could also define silent/crash. These are examples of dynamics in music. It is all in your delivery!

A wonderful way of delivering is through 'note bending'. I believe this is the proverbial grey area that defines each individual artist, the way one chooses to go between notes, (see transitions). Which notes go where? That is for you to choose. It will define you as a purveyor of sonic manipulation. Now that is some serious rock-o-la!!!!

I strongly recommend floating around the notes that vibrate the most. The notes you can feel, because if you can feel them the listener will too! You also have to release that vibrating tension and give the sound some breathing room, hence the transition notes.

### Notes between the notes:

The blues notes. This is the place to create melody, dynamics, and tension to tell your story. If you pick one note from the chart, one with say, the most vibration, now play its IV and V, which is your favorite note? Base your song on that note. Now make it a chord and give it a tempo. Don't strike the chord every time. Hit it and hold it. The space between hits and changes is where the real magic is.

Sometimes the absence of sound is more important than too many notes. It is about movement, how you move to the next chord or note, and the movement in the vibrating strings.

It only takes two notes to make a chord, the I and the V.

You could use the I and the IV but the V would be different.

Example: "E" and "B" these make an "E" I

"A" and "E" is your "A" IV

"B" and "f#" is your "B" V

Now take the f# note, bend the *blues* out of it, and feel those blues!

Don't let any of this confuse you. It is simply just an example written on paper. The chart and all the numbers are just a way of spawning new ideas about music. It is not the rule. Music is subject to interpretation from the individual.

## TRANSITIONS - An Introduction:

Bend, bend, and bend. Can you bend a note up or down to another note, bending from one to another, while hitting all the notes in between and also with good pitch? Of course you can!

Learning to bend is "*the gift*". It is this technique that creates precision. Tight precise ascension or descending of notes is divine.

Let's discuss "the ladder" versus "the penny whistle". Climbing up a scale is a little like walking up steps of a ladder, one wrung at a time, then back down again, up, down. It is very robotic. As you go up, the notes get higher, down, lower. Step-1, step-2, step-3, so on and so forth. If the actual steps are the notes, then the space between the steps is where the blues lies. We want to feel the movement of each step without stopping, the seamless transition from note to note without touching steps/notes. Only touching the void in between, "*The Ghost Notes*" are climbing up a ladder without touching the steps, like floating on air. Imagine blowing into a penny whistle, *Doowhip*. Sliding a note through the air and making the pitch raise and lower to whatever notes you desire. This is AIR we are talking about, air manipulation, and sound manipulation, through air movement. Brilliant!

Now, when you grab a note and run a scale, don't stop on the step of the ladder, jump and clear all the steps in one fell swoop. But don't stop there, go to the top, hold the note, and bring it back down. When you learn to bend a note up and down the scale then you have mastered the penny whistle.

Now if you want to possess a trick that builds tension and releases it all in one, then vibrato is what to work on. VIBRATO - is a note that flutters with vibration, and its pitch rises up and down rapidly. Give sincerity to every stroke note, kick, and focus. Take it one note at a time. Make sure that note is maximized. Slow it down; make it "feel."

## TRANSITIONS Part II - Slide Part I:

The slide guitar's amount of different tunings is impressive, and each will have its very own voice. The little spirit known as 'intonation' will haunt you for many nights.

Imagine standing on a wire. The more you shake, the closer you are to falling. When you find your 'balance', you can walk effortlessly back and forth. This is the concept of slide guitar.

Let us start with a common tuning, the open "G"

From the "A" 440 (standard guitar tuning)

Tune your low "E" down to "D"

Tune your "A" down to "G"

Leave your "D"

Leave your "G"

Leave your "B"

Tune your high "E" to "D"

This can be done by ear, but there is no shame in using a tuner.

Pitch and perfect notes become your obsession; to find them it is important to hear the new sounds of the open "G" and try all your old chord voicing's to see what they do. Some of them will deliver a fresh tonal dissonance. After experimenting with the chords you know, find some you don't. Or try the ol' barre straight down fret number five, this is your four -IV- "C"

If you move up to fret number seven, this is your Five -V- / "D"

Moving up the frets to our octave, fret number twelve, back to

One -I- / "G"

And the open strings are your one -I- / "G" This will be a constant; no matter what tuning you find. This will still be true.

Open is the -I

Fifth fret is the -IV

Seventh fret is the -VI

If the notes don't sound right when utilizing a slide, remember this: float the slide above the fret, not in front or behind, right smack dab on top of the fret. If it is buzzing, then you are pushing too hard. Float the note, above the fret and use your other fingers to dampen the notes or sounds you don't want. Muting the notes behind the slide can make it sound a little drier.

Now try to find your 'harmonics' they are everywhere on the neck depending on your abilities in harmonic finesse. Explore, explore!

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