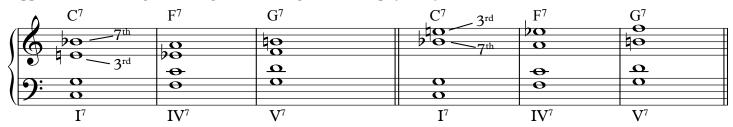
MU 156 (Feurzeig) Play & Sing: 12-bar blues

The minimal upper register vocing for most chords is 3rd and 7th, which form the basis of so-called "rootless" voicings. For adjacent chords with roots a fifth or a step apart, this allows for parallel stepwise motion in both upper voices, which gives strong voice leading and is also physically convenient.



Practice the 12-bar blues progression using one of the two sets of voicings. Count in 4 and keep good time, using a metronome. Precise rhythm is a key element of the blues.

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The roman numerals below the staff show common variants. You can mix and match any of the alternatives.

Next, try this simple LH pattern to add rhythm and texture. Always play in strict time.



Practice "the" blues scale until it is familiar (at least to your RH). Experiment with fingerings. Think of it as a set of pitches to choose from, not something you ought to play as a melody. Go beyond the octave. For example, many characteristic licks use the 5th and 7th below the tonic along with the tonic and thrid above.



Minimum requirements and extras for the play and sing:

You may do the Blues Play & Sing in any key.

- 2) LH plays roots on key downbeats (bars 1, 5, 7, 9, 11) and keeps a steady quarter-note beat. Rhythm is key! extra: Include the seventh in the pattern, or go beyond that to play a walking bass or more intricate pattern.
- 3) Sing along using (primarily) the blues scale. Minimum: simple characteristic licks. Remember to include sufficient space (rests) and don't let the singing pull you out of time. extra: Compose a rhyming text. Feel free to sing the blues about MU 156 or other academic woes. Remember, in many societies the ruling class tolerates musicians singing what cannot be said.

So long as you cover all elements (bass line, chords, singing), you may do this on guitar instead of piano.