

# Herb Ellis **JAZZ** Guitar Method

## **SWING BLUES**

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# UNIT ONE: THE SHAPES

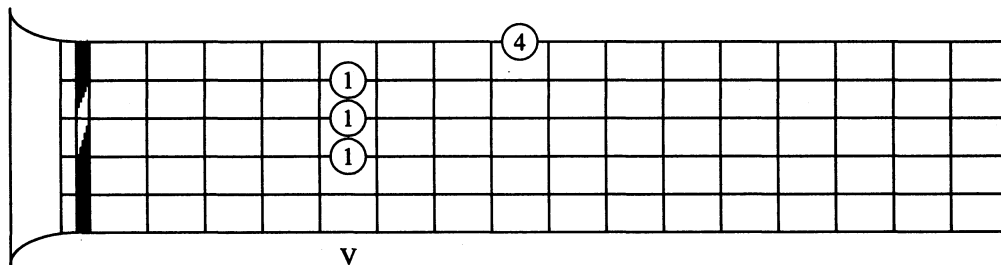
The "Shape System" relates melodic ideas to basic chord shapes instead of relating them to endless scale patterns, modes and arpeggios. This convenient and simple approach saves the player from the drudgery of practicing scales in all positions, including all of the unnecessary, awkward and impractical fingerings. In addition to being an efficient use of practice time, this system allows the player to sound more natural and musical instead of sounding like somebody playing scales.

All five shapes are "movable" which means that they can be played in any key by changing their position on the fret board. The keys and positions that were used in the following diagrams were chosen to relate to some of the musical examples in the book.

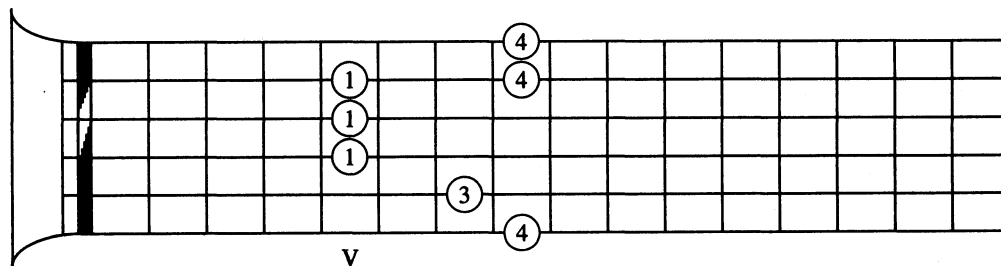
## SHAPE 1

Shape 1 is shown as a C chord at the fifth fret. The following diagrams are of Shape 1 followed by its corresponding major scale and arpeggio, and its corresponding dominant 7th scale and arpeggio. Your goal is to be able to instantly *visualize* these shapes as references for your lines. This does not mean that you have to play these scales or arpeggios fast to make them work for you.

### C Major Chord



### C Major Arpeggio



R 3 5 R 3 5 R 5 3 R 5 3 R

T  
A  
B 8 7 5 5 8 8 5 5 5 7 8

## UNIT TWO: BLUES IN C

Do not jump ahead to the following chapters until you have thoroughly analyzed this progression and can play it smoothly. Avoid the common mistake that many inexperienced guitarists make of underestimating the value of the accompaniment as an effective source for building solos. Until you have a strong understanding and feel for the chord progression, you will needlessly struggle to come up with strong solos for it.

It is important to point out that accompanying other soloists properly is a valuable skill that will expand your performance and work opportunities. What player doesn't like to be associated with musicians that compliment his or her own playing? If you are a great soloist but lack the ability to comp effectively, you are not going to impress or motivate many players to call you again.

Start comping the examples in this book using a traditional swing feel. You can accomplish this by playing downstrokes, right on the beat, staccato (disconnected) and accenting the second and fourth beat. A common mistake is to chop off the chord too soon. To avoid this, turn your amp volume down and let the chord ring for at least half a beat.

### Basic Changes

The diagram illustrates the basic changes for the Blues in C progression, showing guitar chord diagrams and corresponding musical notation for three rows of chords.

**Row 1:**

- Chord 1: C7 (8fr) - Fingering: 1 2 3
- Chord 2: F7 (7fr) - Fingering: 0 2 1 3
- Chord 3: C7 (8fr) - Fingering: 1 2 3

**Row 2:**

- Chord 1: F7 (7fr) - Fingering: 0 2 1 3
- Chord 2: C7 (8fr) - Fingering: 1 2 3

**Row 3:**

- Chord 1: G7 (9fr) - Fingering: 2 1 3
- Chord 2: F7 (7fr) - Fingering: 0 2 1 3
- Chord 3: C7 (8fr) - Fingering: 1 2 3
- Chord 4: F7 (7fr) - Fingering: 0 2 1 3
- Chord 5: C7 (8fr) - Fingering: 1 2 3
- Chord 6: G7 (9fr) - Fingering: 2 1 3

### HARMONIC ANALYSIS

*Blues in C* is a standard 12 bar blues progression. The first four bar phrase primarily revolves around the I chord (C7) with the IV chord (F7) on the 2nd measure to provide some extra movement.

Bars 5 and 6 break away further from the C7 with two measures of the IV chord (F7), and then returning to C7.