

# Discover the Secrets to Mastering Blues Harmonica in 3rd Position

Have you ever listened to a blues harmonica solo and wondered how the musician creates such soulful sounds? Well, you're in luck! In this complete blues harmonica lesson, we will dive deep into the fascinating world of harmonica playing in the 3rd position. Get ready to unlock the secrets to playing mesmerizing blues melodies that will captivate any audience!

## to 3rd Position

Before we dive into the lesson, let's briefly understand what 3rd position means in harmonica playing. When you play in the 3rd position, you are essentially using the harmonica's cross-harp technique, which involves playing in a key different than the harmonica's natural key.

The 3rd position is often associated with blues music due to its ability to produce soulful and bending notes that define the genre. It provides a rich tonal palette that allows harmonica players to express their emotions with incredible intensity and depth.



## Exploring 3rd Position, Level 2: Complete Blues Harmonica Lesson Series by Ron L. Deal (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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Print length : 41 pages

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## **Choosing the Right Harmonica**

Now that you grasp the basics of 3rd position playing, it's time to select the perfect harmonica for the job. Since we are focusing on blues music, a harmonica in the key of A is highly recommended. The key of A harmonica will allow you to create the distinct bluesy sounds often associated with this genre.

Remember to choose a harmonica from a reputable company known for their quality craftsmanship. Whether you prefer diatonic or chromatic harmonicas, ensure that the instrument is responsive and capable of producing rich, expressive tones.

## **Mastering Bending Techniques**

To truly excel in blues harmonica playing using the 3rd position, mastering bending techniques is crucial. Bending notes adds that unique bluesy touch to your playing, allowing you to convey raw emotions and create a sound that stands out.

Start by practicing single bends on various notes, gradually working your way up to mastering double bends and even triple bends. Keep in mind that bending notes requires careful control of your air flow and embouchure, so don't get discouraged if it takes some time to get the hang of it. With persistence and practice, you will eventually be able to flawlessly execute those soulful bends.

## **Exploring Blues Scales**

Blues harmonica playing thrives on the use of blues scales. Mastering these scales will equip you with the necessary tools to create captivating melodic lines that define the blues genre.

Start by familiarizing yourself with the basic blues scale patterns and practice playing them in different keys. Once you feel comfortable, experiment with sliding between notes and incorporating bends to add that distinctive blues flavor to your melodies.

## **Developing Vibrato Techniques**

Vibrato is an essential technique that adds depth and character to your harmonica playing. It involves gently oscillating the pitch of a note, creating a trembling effect that enhances the emotional impact of your performance.

Practice implementing various vibrato techniques, such as throat vibrato, hand vibrato, or tongue block vibrato, to find the one that complements your style the best. Remember to start slowly and gradually increase the speed as you develop control and finesse.

## **The Importance of Phrasing**

Lastly, when playing blues harmonica in the 3rd position, it's crucial to focus on phrasing. Phrasing refers to the way you articulate and connect your musical ideas, giving your playing a unique and identifiable voice.

Listen to recordings of renowned blues harmonica players and study their phrasing techniques. Pay attention to how they breathe between phrases and prioritize the placement of accents and bends. By incorporating these elements into your playing, you'll be able to create captivating melodies that truly resonate with listeners.

## **Putting It All Together**

Now that you've learned the fundamentals of playing blues harmonica in the 3rd position, it's time to put everything into practice. Start by jamming along with your

favorite blues tracks, allowing yourself to explore and improvise. As you gain confidence and proficiency, consider joining a local blues jam session or forming a band to fully immerse yourself in the blues harmonica experience.

Remember, learning the harmonica is a journey that requires dedication and practice. Don't be discouraged by initial challenges; with perseverance, you will undoubtedly reach new levels of proficiency and unlock the transformative power of blues harmonica in the 3rd position.



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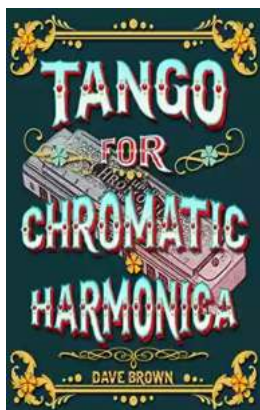
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The "Exploring" series of books within the Harmonica Masterclass Lesson Series walks you through each of the most commonly played positions on the ten hole diatonic harmonica. This book and recording for 3rd position focuses on the basic principles of what makes 3rd Position work, scales that help maneuverability and speed within 3rd Position, and interactive jamming with David Barrett and the David Barrett Blues Band. This volume contains the most extensive catalog of 3rd Position blues licks and phrases ever written. You will not only learn the common minor form of soloing in 3rd Position, but the less well-known major soloing like that of the great George "Harmonica" Smith. If you are looking to dig deep into the usage of advanced tongue blocking techniques, this will also be a great study for you; many of the songs in this set use tongue blocking and as a focal point. If

you are also looking to get into blues chromatic playing, this book is a great primer. Playing blues chromatic is identical in movement, technique, and breath patterns to 3rd Position playing on the diatonic. Written in notation and harmonica tablature. Includes access to online audio.



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