

Joe Bonamassa

Epic Doublestop Bend

"This is a great way to start a blues if you're with your jamming buddies, and maybe they say, 'Hey, you kick it off'. Try this little lick out for size - it's great for starting a blues, because you get these ominous kind of half-bends within the chord. It's a lot of fun if you can get your hands trained to anticipate the changes and bend down. And the real trick with that is making sure that the intonation's right, because if you don't get that right it just sounds like you're making a lot of mistakes!"

Ex 1a

Ex 1a musical notation. The first system shows a 12-measure blues lick in G major. The top staff is the melody, and the bottom staff is the guitar fretboard. Chords are G7, G7, and G7. Techniques include BU (bend up), PB8 (partial bend 8th fret), and BD (bend down). The second system shows a 4-measure progression with chords Ab6, G6, G7, Eb9, D9, and G7 1/4. Techniques include 1/4 bends and various fretting patterns.

Joe demonstrates a cool way of adding thickness to bluesy doublestops by using a wider interval. The minor 3rd (top note) is pushed up to the major 3rd, creating a partial major chord, and the rest of the lick uses a G blues scale (G Bb C Db D F). This would work well on the last four bars of a 12-bar blues.

Ex 1b

Ex 1b musical notation. The first system shows a 12-measure blues lick in C major. The top staff is the melody, and the bottom staff is the guitar fretboard. Chords are BU, BU, PB13, BU, BU, BU, and BU. Techniques include BU (bend up), PB13 (partial bend 13th fret), and BD (bend down). The second system shows a 4-measure progression with chords C7, Eb7, and D7. Techniques include 1/4 bends and various fretting patterns.

In this example, Joe applies the same doublestop technique to all three chords from the I-IV-V progression. Also, note the Eb chord leading down into the D at the end and the Ab chord at the start... the neighbouring chromatic chord is used for temporary tension.