

Here's the General Formula for the **Twelve Bar Blues**. The bars are numbered across the top, and they are divided into 3 lines of 4 bars each. *Each number represents one bar of music:*

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
1	1	1	1	4	4	1	1	5	5	1	1

And here's a flashier variation, probably the more common of the two:

1	4	1	1	4	4	1	1	5	4	1	5
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Here's the translation of those numbers into the chords in the **Key of A**, favoring **E7** over **E**. Since each letter equals one bar, strum that chord 4 times. That's 16 straight strums on **A** to start:

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
A	A	A	A	D	D	A	A	E7	E7	A	A

That is one long stretch of **A** chord in the 1st line! Here's the flashier version (you're welcome):

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
A	D	A	A	D	D	A	A	E7	D	A	E7

That's a nice switch to the **D** chord in the 2nd bar; breaks up the monotony. The 2nd line is the same, but then the climactic 3rd line brightens up with **4 chord changes**. Stunning. Now let's retain the more interesting chord sequence and make them *all* Seventh chords:

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
A7	D7	A7	A7	D7	D7	A7	A7	E7	D7	A7	E7

Well, it's definitely more interesting with the edgy Seventh chords, but it might sound even more interesting if we were to apply them more sparingly (less is more?):

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
A	D7	A	A7	D	D7	A	A7	E7	D7	A	E7