

JAM SESSION™ WORKSHOP HANDOUT

Solo Survival Using Only THREE Notes

(For When Chord Changes Feel Overwhelming)

Goal

Help musicians survive a solo **without knowing complex theory or every chord change**.

When things feel confusing on stage, this method keeps your solo musical, safe, and stylistically right for blues and rock.

The Three-Note Survival Rule (Blues & Rock Version)

In most blues and rock situations, you can safely solo using only:

1 — The Root

♭3 — The Flatted Third

♭7 — The Flatted Seventh

These notes create the familiar blues and rock sound heard in countless solos.

If you hit these notes with good rhythm and phrasing, your solo works.

Example: Key of G

Function	Note
1 (Root)	G
♭3	Bb
♭7	F

A safe blues solo can use only:

G - Bb - F

No fast scale runs required.

Guitar Survival Version

Guitar players already know these sounds from:

- Blues box patterns • Minor pentatonic shapes • Blues scale positions

Tip: Play small rhythmic phrases using notes from your pentatonic box instead of long scale runs.

Blues tones + rhythm = convincing solo.

How to Practice

1. Pick a jam key.
2. Find the Root, $\flat 3$, and $\flat 7$.
3. Play short rhythmic phrases using only those notes.
4. Add bends, slides, vibrato, and rhythm variation.

Focus on groove and feel, not speed.

Why This Works

Blues and rock harmony often mix major and minor sounds.

The $\flat 3$ and $\flat 7$ give that gritty, soulful color that fits over dominant and blues progressions.

Listeners hear emotion and phrasing instead of scale exercises.

Jam Session Survival Upgrade

After this feels comfortable, add:

- The 4th for blues tension • The 5th for resolution • The passing $\flat 5$ (blue note)

Build slowly — great solos are often simple and rhythmic.

Golden Rule

If lost during a solo:

Land on the root and lock back into the groove.

Good rhythm fixes most note choices.

JAM SESSION™

Connecting Musicians & Community