



## Lesson Twenty Nine

Gigajam Keyboard School Lesson 029 IKS CKP

### Creating a Keyboard Part

#### Lesson Objectives

- Review course content
- Introduce 12 bar blues.
- Introduce rhythmic variation.

#### The story so far

The lessons in the Gigajam Essential Keyboards course are carefully planned and written to provide the skills required to become a keyboard player in a band. Each lesson concentrates on a specific subject area and guides you through a series of exercises designed to help you progress.

The exercises are all written in standard music notation, with media files to help you figure out exactly what you should be playing – and how to play it.

This doesn't always happen in a band situation. Sometimes you are given a notated part to play. More often, you're likely to be given a chord chart and are expected to make up your own keyboard part. Being able to do this is a valuable skill – it's about being creative and using some of the knowledge you've acquired during the course so far.

It's easy to forget how much you have learned, so here is a brief checklist:

Skills	Attributes
scales	major and minor (transferability, all natural notes)
triads	major and minor including inversions (economy of movement)
rhythm	whole, half, quarter, eighth notes and rests, dotted notes triplets, ties
melody	
arpeggios	
power chords	
intervals/thirds	melodic and harmonic

Any of these skills could be used to help you to create a keyboard part to play in a song. Obviously, you need to be able to understand a chord chart to be able to do all this so let's start with a simple chord chart and look at incorporating some of the many skills you have learned through the course so far. We will build a number of different keyboards parts as we progress through this lesson, starting with our first exercise which uses a 12 bar blues.

## 12 bar blues

Here is a chord chart for a 12 bar blues. It's a very common chord progression for a band to play – guitarists especially like to jam on this. It's called a 12 bar because it has a total of twelve bars. This one is in A.

// A / A / A / A / D / D / A / A / E / D / A / A //

As you can see, there are only three chords in the sequence A, D and E.

The first exercise plays through the 12 bar chord sequence using quarter note triads in the right hand only. Notice the use of inversions.

### Exercise 01 lesson029.iksckp.01



Try to memorise the chord sequence – how many bars is each chord played for.

Now play through the sequence again, this time playing eighth notes instead. The rhythm is the only thing that's changed.

Exercise 02  
lesson029.iksckp.02



1

3

5

7

9

11

Notice how this feels more interesting and drives the music forward more effectively.

Repeat this, with the addition of the left hand playing quarter note root notes.

Exercise 03  
lesson029.iksckp.03



1

3

5

7

9

11

# Rhythmic variation-ties

Adding ties is another way of creating interest by changing the rhythm. Nothing else has changed remember, it's just a rhythmic variation.

**Exercise 04**  
lesson029.iksckp.04



1

3

5

7

9

11

Repeat this, with the addition of the left hand playing quarter note root notes.

**Exercise 05**  
lesson029.ikscpk.05



1

3

5

7

9

11

# Rests

Adding rests breaks up the rhythm a little and creates some space in the music.

**Exercise 06**  
lesson029.iksckp.06



1

3

5

7

9

11

Repeat this, with the addition of the left hand playing quarter note root notes.

**Exercise 07**  
lesson029.iksckp.07



1

3

5

7

9

11

# Dots

Using dotted notes provides us with another variation.

**Exercise 08**  
lesson029.iksckp.08



Repeat this, with the addition of the left hand playing quarter note root notes.

**Exercise 9**  
lesson029.iksckp.09



1

5 7

9

# Combination

Combining two devices is also a possibility – a rest and a tie, for example.

## Exercise 10 lesson029.iksckp.10



1

5 7

9

Repeat this, with the addition of the left hand playing quarter note root notes.

**Exercise 11**  
lesson029.iksckp.11



### Creating a 12 bar - The 1-4-5 sequence

Each of the devices used in this lessons modifies the rhythm just enough to make it interesting, without actually changing anything. The harmony has not been touched whatsoever – the chords are exactly the same throughout, A, D and E. These three chords form the basis of the 12 bar blues.

It is not the chords themselves that make up the 12 bar blues it is their selection from the scale. In the key of A, these chords are taken from the A major scale. If we give each chord a number from the scale then:

- A would be chord number 1,
- D would be chord number 4, and
- E would be chord number 5.

This creates a chord progression known as 1, 4 and 5 and you can apply this sequence to any scale to create a 12 bar sequence.