

# “Vitamin E Blues”



Composed & Arranged by Adam Rafferty

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Photo Credit: Dave Coba

## “Vitamin E Blues” Lesson

Greetings friends! I am traveling on tour right now from Cologne, Germany to Lucerne, Switzerland via train – so I finally have downtime! Since I have my laptop, I figured I’d create a fun tablature lesson for you as the sun sets outside my window.



Have coffee and laptop - will travel...

“Vitamin E Blues” is an original boogie-woogie style 12 bar blues in E. It’s got a spiffy “walking bass” part, so if you are curious how to incorporate basslines into your arrangements, it’s a good one to start with.

The inspiration for this song was Tommy Emmanuel’s version of “Guitar Boogie”. Upon several listenings to his versions on Youtube, I saw he had a swingin’ E blues with several choruses of planned material – with some jamming in the middle. Rather than learning his tune, I wanted to go for my own take on a similar idea.

In practicing and performing this one, it is really more like a “big band arrangement” than a guitar arrangement. I used a similar idea of plotting out the music so that I am not “just jamming” on a blues. That has it’s place, but for concerts you should have a plan!

I had quite a few “criteria” for my blues that was yet to be created, but I knew I wanted it to be a very familiar sounding tune that people could relate to. I wanted a foot-stomping, friendly blues that people could clap their hands to and smile.

The full length blues has several variations, but what I have given you here is what I think of as “the head” or the main tune. There is plenty here to learn, and I’ll put other choruses in subsequent lessons for you, I promise!

Most guitar arrangements or lessons simply “throw the tabs” out there for you to deal with – and have very little or no explanation of the idea behind the music. I guess because I really love teaching (and understanding) I have broken down the process of playing several voices at the same time for you.

If you take the time to understand the “turnaround” you will actually find it easier to play on the guitar! Using you brains is highly recommended...

## The “Vitamin E” Turnaround

Let’s start at the end of the song, and work our way back to the beginning, okay?

The gem of this blues is this neat little “turnaround” that happens at the end of every chorus throughout the song. It “ties” all the choruses together, making it cohesive. In other words , it’s the “hook”, and by the end of the tune the listener can practically hear it coming.

Here’s how the turnaround was born:

### **Example 1 – The Bass Line**

I heard a bassline going up in steps. It “outlines” the changes of F#-7 to B7. If that sounds complicated, don’t worry, just read on. A melody line moving in stepwise motion (like a scale) really sounds like a line as it is walking up or down. Basslines moving in stepwise motion are very effective.

7 EXAMPLE 1

## Example 2 – The Melody Against the Bass Line

I tried to then imagine if I were in a band and the bass player was playing the bass line, what might I play as a melody? I heard this melody based on the blues – having no idea whether or not it would work.

EXAMPLE 2

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## Example 3 – Putting the Melody & Bass Together

This is important to know– if you are hearing MELODY LINES, and they are strong (if you can sing them and they feel natural, that means they are strong) they'll most likely sound good going against eachother.

Another important point – since the bassline was walking UP, I went listening for a melody that went in the OPPOSITE direction.

In counterpoint (the craft of combining melodies), this is called CONTRARY MOTION - so when one line goes up and the other goes down, the independence of the lines is heard more easily and generally sounds pleasing.

Here are the 2 lines together, you'll note that I had to adjust fingerings and use open strings to play both at the same time.

Before playing it though, I did have to plot this out on paper – so the process was to hear, write, then map it out and THEN see if I could play it.

EXAMPLE 3

A. GTR.

A. GTR.

Hint – if you are arranging a pop tune, try writing the melody & bass down, then seeing if you can play them both. Go slowly and be patient!

### Example 4- Fleshing it Out

Essentially at this point I looked for an inner voice to flesh out a “3 note chord” sound. What’s cool about this is that the music starts sounding like “chords” that magically work themselves out and resolve properly – but now the secret is out!

Don’t be fooled - I started with LINES and made them into CHORDS.

EXAMPLE 4

ACOUSTIC GUITAR

ACOUSTIC GUITAR

## Example 5 – Adding Syncopation for the Groove

In performance, “correct music” is not enough. I am still fooling around as we speak with different syncopations of the upper part so that I can keep the “groove” in the bass going, maybe with some drum / slap type sounds.

This makes what is on the tablature look much more complicated, but all I am doing is moving the rhythm around a little.

If I play all the upper parts on the beat, it is trickier to play groovy stuff, at least in this song.

I played it more “straight” on my “GRATITUDE” CD, but after playing many gigs – I saw that I needed more groove in this part. You need not play it exactly like this – but here is how I play it.

2

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EXAMPLE 5

A. GTR.

A. GTR.

## And Now...Last but not Least...The Beginning Of The Song!

In actual performance, I'll start by playing only the bass part for the first chorus of the 12 bar blues.

You can do this easily – just don't play the rhythmic figures of the high E & B strings. As well, I'll only play the bassline of the turnaround as shown in Example 1 – so it is like a Bass & Drum intro.

That helps tune the listeners ears into the bass, so when the next “layer” comes, the separation of the parts is heard even more clearly.



For the second chorus of 12 bar blues, I'll play the boogie woogie bass part and add the high E & B strings. Think of these upper parts like trumpets in the big band.

You'll want to focus on getting the rhythms of the steady bass and the syncopated "trumpet parts" to lock up and groove. The independence of the 2 parts makes it feel like a solid musical idea.

I found that with the right hand it is easiest to use M & A – middle & ring finger a la Jerry Reed. Don't ask me why it feels better than index & middle, but it does.

I am writing this lesson before recording a video – so please be on the lookout for an online video soon.

### **How to Make it Your Own...**

Just about any E Blues idea you have can fit in this framework. Got something you like to play? Play it over the first 10 bars where all the E7 & A7 are happening, and then pop the turnaround at the end.

As I get new ideas, I always try new things in the middle of the tune...kind of a "modular" approach.

I encourage you to experiment and have fun! Always keep that groove going strong to keep the people (and yourself) happy! Never let a clever idea cloud the groove, and you'll be ok!

Enjoy! I can't wait to hear what you come up with as you play this one.

Warmest Regards,

Adam



# VITAMIN E BLUES

ADAM RAFFERTY

♩ = 90

ACOUSTIC GUITAR

ACOUSTIC GUITAR

A. GTR.

A. GTR.

A. GTR.

A. GTR.

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# Additional Programs and Products To Help You Reach Your Potential

“Thank you so much for all the help you have given me this year and all the years before. You are the greatest. I have been gigging more than ever lately (jazz gigs), and my playing wouldn’t be nearly what it is without the all the things you have taught me. I look forward to learning more in the future and enjoying a wonderful friendship as well. .

Take care, - Kurt “

# “How To Solo Over II-V-I Changes” DVD Video



## Jazz Guitar Made Simple.

Take a 90 minute lesson with one of the top jazz & blues guitarists on the scene today! Boost your bebop vocabulary **quickly and easily**.

In his friendly and patient teaching style, Adam Rafferty shows you 14 of his favorite II-V-I lines slowly, note for note. No music reading required!

You'll see clearly how jazz lines fit against chord changes. Split screen views allow clear views of right and left hand techniques.

## Here's What YOU'LL GET:

- 14 II-V-I Lines
- harmonic vs non-harmonic tones
- tips on picking speed and technique
- soloing over minor II-V-I
- how to get the lines into your real-life playing
- how lines fit on tunes like “Satin Doll” (examples given)
- wes montgomery octave style

A comprehensive booklet with all the tablature, fingerings and examples from this Jazz Guitar Instructional DVD can be downloaded as a FREE pdf file.

“Adam,

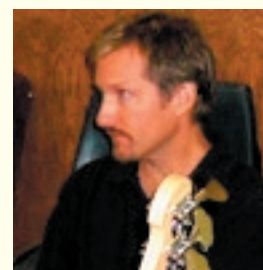
Just got the video today, and just finished watching it all the way through. Fantastic!! I can't get over how good it is! Very professional look, polished, easy to follow, etc., etc.. It really inspired me to pick up the guitar and play along.

The close-up on the hands and inset of picking is great, and makes it all very easy to follow. I watched while you spoon fed the lines to me and it worked perfectly. No problem keeping up with what was happening. Has that relaxed feel like you are there in the same room.

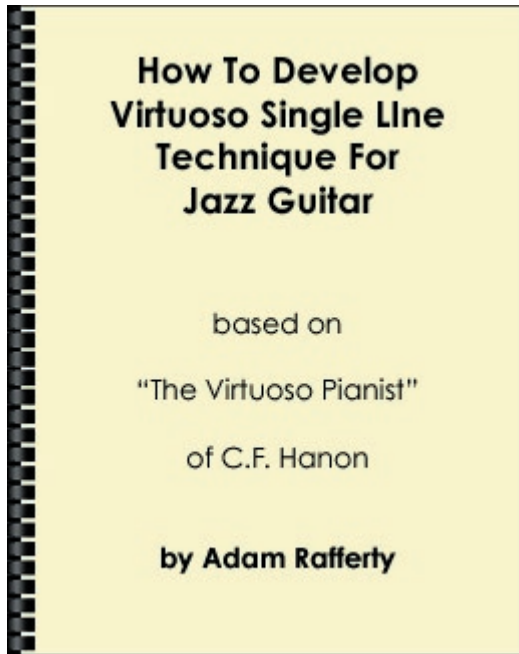
It is really cool the way you play the lines with different feels. The ad lib stuff (here's something Wes would do, how to play 3/4, etc.) was great. I could go on and on, but the bottom line is this a really great video!!!

This is as good as any video in my collection, if not the best. I can't wait to start really working on these lines. I have a gig tonight, and feel really inspired to play, and try to apply these lines and the feel. I would absolutely recommend this video to friends. Thanks so much - I'll get a lot of use out of it. Like I said before, can't wait to spend so more time working through the material. Thanks, -Kurt”

Kurt Bittner, Sacramento CA



# How You Can Develop Virtuoso Picking Technique Quickly and Easily...



Have you been wanting to improve your guitar technique but just didn't know how to go about it?

Do you find yourself "digging in" too hard and getting stuck in the middle of fast passages?

Do you ever feel unsure of the proper fingerings that enable you to execute a musical idea?

Well, jazz guitarist Adam Rafferty has completely solved these problems for you along with many others encountered by most guitarists playing today.

Your Problem is Solved...

Adam's amazing new manual called "How to Develop Virtuoso Single Line Technique for Jazz Guitar" with exercises and diagrams including complete fingerings will provide you with a daily 15 minute routine enabling you to develop a "touch" that will have you gliding through lightning fast solo passages easier than you could ever imagine!

And what's more this easy to follow, step by step approach is so simple that even a child could do it!

"Dear Adam,

With the time I spent working on Exercise one, it has already paid off. I have been going through the Hanon exercises and working on just playing at fast tempos.

I am seeing some excellent progress in my playing. Last Saturday night I played a gig with my regular top 40 (oldies top 40) band and not only did I feel that I was more relaxed on the up tempos pieces but that my playing in general was more relaxed.

**Speed wasn't an issue that night.**

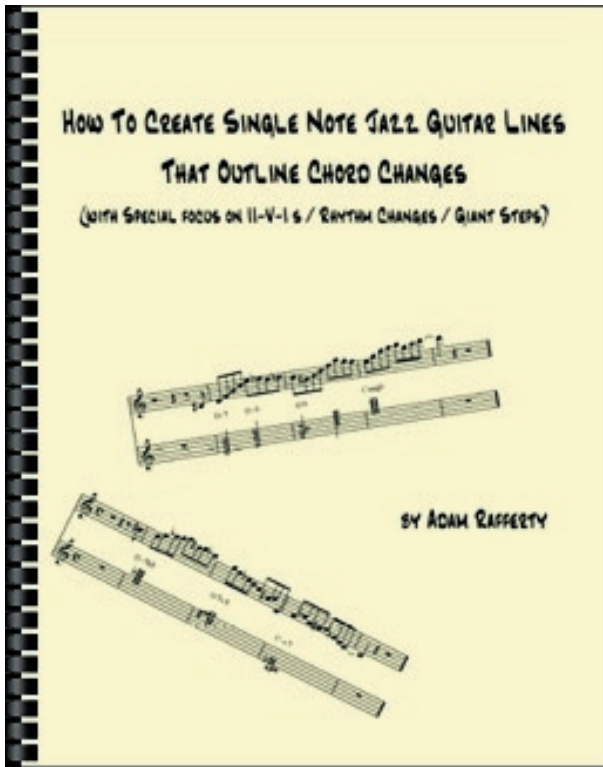
If I had been the only one to notice it would have been good but the whole band really commented. The Bass player, who is very critical, commented that it was like I was 'On Fire'.

I know that I will keep it up and it will really pay off. I work a 50 hour a week job and have a family so I get in a little over an hour a day on average practicing and this is now part of my routine."

Frank Markovich (Guitarist)  
Belmont, CA



# “How To Create Single Note Jazz Guitar Lines That Outline Chord Changes”



Do YOU want to expand YOUR jazz vocabulary?  
Do YOU want to play solo lines over “tricky changes” with ease and fluidity?  
Do YOU want to play music YOUR OWN WAY, rather than through imitation?  
Do YOU want to feel more confident in various playing situations?  
Do YOU want to be able to digest new tunes more Quickly and Easily?  
Do YOU want to feel comfortable when you “jam” with new people?  
Do YOU want to have a “jump start” on tunes like “Giant Steps” and “Rhythm Changes?”

This in-depth manual shows you how to build your own creative melodies on II-V-I changes, and even shows you how to **cut through “Rhythm Changes” and “Giant Steps” like a hot knife through butter!**

## Here’s What You’ll Get:

You’ll get a 104 + page spiral bound book (lays flat on your music stand)  
You’ll get 2 CD Roms - with 189 of the books musical examples - you can hear them at the touch of a button!  
You’ll get a step by step method, included with Homework assignments at the end of each chapter  
You’ll get example solos with full explanations for Coltrane’s “Giant Steps”  
You’ll get example solos with full explanations for “Rhythm Changes”  
You’ll get several II-V-I lines in both major and minor keys  
You’ll get practice chord progressions to “plug your lines” into  
You’ll get to see how pianistic, choir like harmonies fits on guitar  
You’ll get loads of personal insights throughout the course  
You’ll get solid practice techniques - so that you can get the most out of even a short practice session  
You’ll get a full-blown explanation of when to use notes outside the harmony vs. notes inside the harmony in creating solo lines  
You’ll get “absorbion techniques” which “force” you ears, eyes, fingers and brain to absorb new harmonic material - at warp speed!

“Adam, Thank you for another great workshop and an AWESOME new Book on how to ‘create single lines that outline chord changes’!

I really admire your abilities not only as a guitar player but as a teacher. You just get to the guys. You seem to have no insecurities about any of it and you are so encouraging.

I’ve been working on the new book and can already see something happening. My Dad, who was a great piano player, told me before he died “really, everything you need is in here.” Of course I never understood how to get piano concepts onto the guitar.



It is so great that you put it together in a usable form for guitar guys. I think you are really on to something. Thank you for unlocking some new, awesome territory for me. You are the best Adam, thank you.

Your faithful student,  
Lewis”

Lewis Mock, Colorado Springs

**Order Now! Click link below...**

**<http://www.adamrafferty.com/store>**



ADAM RAFFERTY

Gratitude

Crescent Ridge Publishing (2008)

Let me just start out my review with the following statement: Any artist who can take two absurdly overplayed (on the radio) songs like “Sir Duke” and “I Wish”(both penned by Stevie Wonder) and not just reinvigorate them but make me want to play them over and over gets an automatic “A” in my grade book. You have to be ultra-talented to freshen up THOSE two songs. On his album Gratitude, Adam Rafferty manages this feat with just his lone acoustic guitar. Here’s a disc already in the running for best acoustic instrumental offering of 2008. Man, this is a tasty recording, yessiree Bob! As Rachel Ray might opine, “Yummalicious!”

Blending six originals with the aforementioned two Wonder covers, as well as songs by Dr. Lonnie Smith, two Beatle covers, the Bill Withers’ staple “Ain’t No Sunshine,” and two more Stevie Wonder numbers, Rafferty cruises through the fourteen cuts with absurd self-assuredness, displaying so much talent and so many playing techniques that I’m embarrassed to say I’ve never heard of the guy until now. I call myself a music reviewer – ha!

Speaking of the various cover songs, Rafferty OWNS these puppies! His “Ain’t No Sunshine” flat out CUTS Withers’ version...it’s bluesy yet plaintive and evocative in a soft somber way. Lennon and McCartney’s “She’s Leaving Home” takes on a whole new life with Rafferty’s folksy rendition, as he strips away the Beatles’ arrangement and reduces the song’s melody to just his gently yet adroitly plucked and strummed guitar. And don’t even get me started on how in the hell this man can take a song like Stevie Wonder’s “Superstition” and with just his guitar render it as a smokin’ slice of jazzy funk.

Now we come to his original tunes. “Simplicity” opens the album with a spot on blend of somber new age-istic melodic textures and mood with sprightly fingerstyle playing. “Machine Gun” (no, he didn’t cover The Commodores’ big hit, but I’ll bet he could’ve!) catches fire almost immediately with blazing picking and fingering as well as dramatic bursts of rhythm guitar chords. This guy’s fingers can fly, folks, yet never once did it sound pretentious or show-offy. Uh uh! He just flat out likes to play like a madman!

Anyone who has read my reviews knows how much I like laid back rural-esque acoustic guitar tunes, custom-tailored as a soundtrack for traversing back country highways in my Midwestern travels. Rafferty also excels with those kind of numbers such as the sprightly yet subdued treatment he gives Wonders’ “Overjoyed,” the gentle rolling melody of “America” (comparing favorably with Ken Bonfield) or the somber mixture of blues and folk on the mournful “Jill’s Song” (featuring a heart-rending refrain). Mr. Rafferty can also get down to bidness as he does aplenty on the deliciously toe-tapping “Vitamin E Blues” or his cover of Dr. Lonnie Smith’s “Play It Back” which is enhanced by the addition of some neat scat-meets-George Benson-ish vocalizings as well as some of the artist’s most technically startling finger and fret work. If this song doesn’t make you want to get down and party with this guy, you better check your pulse - or just retreat to a cave.

If I sound giddy with excitement it’s because I am. It’s just a stone solid kick to have an album drop into my hands from a heretofore unknown (to me) artist and discover someone so damn talented. No doubt I’m late to the “Adam Rafferty kicks ass” party and for that I’m truly sorry, but at least I got here. Lastly, if you can read the artist’s heartfelt liner notes about the origins of this album and remain untouched, well, you must be the kind of person who also thinks “Ah, it’s just another sunset.” Gratitude is one of the best acoustic guitar albums I’ve

heard in a long time and that statement takes a lot of CDs into account. When I play it, I'm grateful to be alive and I can't think of higher praise than that. Obviously, highly recommended!

Rating: Excellent

Bill Binkelman

Music Reviewer

New Age Reporter



*From the Laptop of Adam Rafferty*

Greetings Fellow Guitar Player!

It gives me great pleasure and joy to teach you the guitar and musical concepts and secrets I have learned over the years.

I have been very lucky to have the opportunity to study and play with some of the greatest musicians on the planet, from classical music to blues to jazz, and I look forward to passing as much on to you as I can.

Two things that my great teachers taught me are that 1) there are no shortcuts, but 2) it's easy when you get the right information!

I made a "pact" with myself anytime I'd feel the "elation and delight" of unraveling musical mysteries, that I'd pass the knowledge on as best I can. This is the process of how music and learning evolve. Each generation builds on the information from the previous one and this continually raises the standard of excellence.

I also made a pact that I'd be a teacher (for you) that the "proof would be in the pudding". I.E. - you'd want to learn from me because you actually love the music you hear come out of my fingers!

No matter what anyone's level of talent is, we all need teachers and people who have seen things we haven't, and basically "been around the block" more than we ourselves have.

Your excellence matters to me. Your level of joy and creativity matters to me. Your happiness matters to me! And I thank you for entrusting me to share my knowledge with you.

I am here to coach you, teach you, kick your butt and show you how excellent you can be. Feel free to call or email me anytime for lessons, coaching, questions or just to say "Hi!" As well, if you have any questions about any of my online lessons or guitar educational products, call me.

I am here to help YOU realize your true excellence on the guitar, in music and in life!

With Warmest Regards,

Adam Rafferty