

Key concepts

- 'The Blues' is a genre of music from the deep south of America. It began with Black African slaves singing to pass the time when they were working and felt blue (sad).
- It was originally sung by one person, accompanied by somebody playing a guitar or banjo.
- A lot of Blues music is worked around twelve chords, played in a specific order. This is known as 'The Twelve Bar Blues', eg:
The chord of C which has the notes CEG in it
The chord of F (FAC)
The chord of G (GBD)
- The 'Blues Scale' is a set of notes used to play along to Twelve Bar Blues.
- 'bent notes' are often used in Blues music.
- The hash symbol (#) is used to denote a flat note.

Key Vocabulary

chord	More than one note played at once
Bent note	Notes with a variation in pitch
banjo	A stringed instrument with a thin, circular membrane
Flat note	Lower in pitch
structure	The arrangement of different sections within the whole piece.
dynamics	How loud or soft the music is (volume)
bar	A segment of time corresponding to a specific number of beats

Famous Blues Artists



McKinley Morganfield, known professionally as **Muddy Waters**, was an American blues singer-songwriter and musician who is often cited as the "father of modern Chicago blues".



Chester Arthur Burnett, known as **Howlin' Wolf**, was a Chicago blues singer, guitarist, and harmonica player. Originally from Mississippi, he moved to Chicago in adulthood.

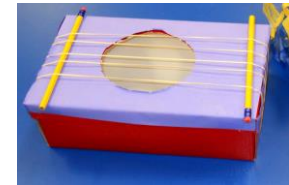


Robert Leroy Johnson was an American blues singer, songwriter and musician. He was born in Hazlehurst, Mississippi in 1911.

Things to do at home – Bending a Note

'Bent notes' are notes where there is a variation in pitch. They are heard a lot in Indian music. They are most obvious on a guitar where you can actually see the string being moved (bent) to change the note.

Have a go at making one of these.



You will need an empty tissue or shoe box, two pencils and some elastic bands. Pluck the Bands to make a sound. Now try bending it and see if the sound changes.