

## Geoff's Blues

# Hendrix Lead

Apart from being a rock legend, Hendrix was probably one of the best blues players of his generation. **GT** raids his treasure trove of eminently learnable licks!

Lesson by Geoff Whitehorn



Trading licks with Jimi's spirit: Geoff gets plugged into the Hendrix hoodoo

**GTCD**  
**TRACK 02**

❖ **Jimi**  
Hendrix's most famous slice of blues magic was undoubtedly 'Red House', where he could unleash all his blues fire in the course of a single song. A slow blues, 'Red House' would be inserted into a set if Jimi wanted to musically 'pause for breath' during a performance. Numerous live versions are available on CD.

### ❖ **double a riff**

Literally play a riff along with yourself, at the same pitch, higher, lower or in harmony.

It's a tempting thought that one day people are going to run out of things to say about Jimi Hendrix! But as each new generation of guitar players is captivated by the man's style and general phenomenon (and who can blame them?), I would guess that we're still years away from anything like that happening.

You'll remember that last month we looked at a sort of Hendrix rhythm part to a blues – a mixture of riffs and chords. This time, we're going to look at some of Jimi's characteristic blues lead work.

For this lesson, I've tried to play every Hendrix blues cliché I can remember over the backing track we looked at last month. Jimi would often **double a riff** an octave higher on record and that's exactly how I've kicked off on this month's GT CD. Once we get into the solo ideas, check out the string bending; Jimi would often 'overbend' a note to great effect.

Overbending is very much a blues thing – listen to players like Buddy Guy and you'll see what I mean. It doesn't suggest a lack of technique or control, quite the reverse. Listen to how emotive that extra push beyond the note can be. Actually, there's quite a bit more to be said on the subject of the Hendrix bending technique while we're here...

Another thing I've included in the solo is Jimi's trademark 'siren' bend, which has been copied by just about every guitar player since! It's as if he was mimicking the Metropolitan Police two-tone siren, with the Doppler Effect thrown in for good measure. To pull this one off to good effect, you really have to be in control of the strings, otherwise it

will just sound like a nasty accident. Look carefully at the tab, take things slowly and get those sirens wailing!

Still on the subject of bending, make sure that you take note of the way Jimi used to 'let down' a bent note after playing it. Nobody seems to do it quite like him and so it's definitely an area worthy of study. Take note, too, of those unison bends! These are done by playing a note on one string and bending the string below it up to the same pitch. For obvious reasons, this little trick is usually done on either the top E and B or B and G strings. Look at the tab and check out the GT CD for further clues!

Jimi's vibrato is another thing which

seems to have been totally unique. The closest we mere mortals can get to it is to vib quite wide – but stay in control at all times.

As far as Jimi's tone is concerned, you'll certainly be in the right area if you play a Strat through Marshall amps. Jimi

would use all the pick-up selections on his guitar, although it may be true that you'll see the pick-up selector in the neck position for much of the time. Jimi would also use a fuzz pedal between the guitar and amp and was renowned for using eardrum-ripping levels of volume in concert (this was in the days before master volume amps, though – don't go and hurt yourself for the sake of authenticity!). And remember, setting your guitar alight might look cool, but it's not something your insurance company will understand! ❖



The one and only: Hendrix carves his name on the 60s

Elliott Landy/Redferns





## Geoff Whitehorn

❖ By day he's holed up in his studio, concocting a monthly blues column to delight GT readers; by night, he's busy

touring the world and recording with The Paul Rodgers Band. In the past couple of years Geoff has also played live with The

Who (at Madison Square Gardens) and recorded with ex-Pink Floyd bass player Roger Waters... Is there no end to this geezer's talents?

### CHORUS I

GT TAB

MU S CO S CO CO CO CO CO S

1 E7#9

CO S CO CO CO CO CO CO S CO S CO CO CO CO

3 A7#9

CO S H CO S CO CO CO CO CO S

6 E7#9

CO CO CO CO CO CO S CO CO CO CO CO

9 B7#9 E7#9

### CHORUS II

CO MU—I BU RPB partial LD PBU S H PO CO

12 B7#9 E7#9





15

gliss

vib

gliss

gliss

vib

gliss

S

slow BU

LD PO PO S S BSS

S BU LD PO

7 9 (9) 12 (16) (16) 12 9 12 12 9 (9) 8 9 (9) 10 (12) 10 8

A7#9

18

vib

vib

vib

gliss

gliss

gliss

S PO

BSS

PO

S BSS

S MU S

10 8 9 7 9 7 5 7 5 (5) 7 5 3 0 7 5 (12) 7 5 7

E7#9

21

vib

gliss

3

vib

gliss

3

BU S

S BU LD

PO S PO

7 (9) 4 7 (7) 7 7 7 9 (9) 9 9 12 (15) (15) 12 9 12 12 9 (9) 9 7 9 7 5 7

B7#9

E7#9

24

CHORUS III

6

3

3

3

H PO H PO H BD

slow LD

BU

RPB/let ring/gradual LD

14 (15) 14 (16) (15) (16) (15) (16) (15) (16) 14 (15)

B7#9

E7#9

27

3

vib

(catch B string)

LD

BU

PO

BU

PBU LD

BU

PO

14 (15) 14 (15) 14 12 (12) 14 (16) 12 12 15 12 12 15 (17) (17) (15) (17) 15 (15) 12 15 (17) (17) 12 15 12

A7#9





30

(catch G string) BU PBU LD BU LD PO BU PO BU BSS PO S S

15 (17) (17) (14) (15) 14 12 14 (16) 14 12 14 12 14 12 14 13 12 10 14 12

E7#9

33

BU BU BU BU LD PO BU

12 (12) 15 (15) 17 (17) 15 17 (19) (19) 17 15 17 12 15 12 14 (15) 14 12

B7#9

36

CHORUS IV

BU MU S CO S CO CO CO CO CO S

15 (17) 8 8 7 7 6 7 7 9 7 9 7 5 7 8 7 9 7 8 (8) 9

B7#9 E7#9 Em7

39

CO S CO CO CO CO CO CO S

8 8 7 7 6 7 7 9 7 9 7 5 7 8 7 9 7 8 (8) 9 13 13 12 12 11 12 14 12 14 12 10

E7#9 Em7 A7#9

42

CO S H CO S CO CO CO CO CO S

12 12 13 13 12 12 14 12 14 13 (13) 12 8 8 7 7 6 7 7 9 7 9 7 5 7 8 7 9 7 8 (8) 9

Am7 E7#9 Em7





45

*vib* *gliss*

CO S CO CO CO CO

E 15 15  
B 14 14  
G 13 13  
D 14 14  
A  
E

B7#9

E 8 8  
B 7 7  
G 6 6  
D 7 7  
A 9 9  
E 7 9

E7#9

## TURNAROUND

48

*gliss* *vib* *gliss* *vib* *gliss*

CO S CO S CO CO CO CO

E 7 7  
B 8 8  
G 7 7  
D  
A  
E

Em7

E 15 15  
B 14 14  
G 13 13  
D 14 14  
A  
E

B7#9

E 15 15  
B 14 14  
G 13 13  
D 14 14  
A  
E

E7#9

51

*vib* *gliss* *vib* *gliss* *vib* *gliss*

CO S CO CO CO CO

E 8 8  
B 7 7  
G 6 6  
D 7 7  
A  
E

E7#9

E 7 7  
B 8 8  
G 7 7  
D  
A  
E

Em7

E 15 15  
B 14 14  
G 13 13  
D 14 14  
A  
E

B7#9

54

*vib* *gliss* *gliss*

CO S CO CO CO CO

E 15 15  
B 14 14  
G 13 13  
D 14 14  
A  
E

E7#9

E 8 8  
B 7 7  
G 6 6  
D 7 7  
A  
E

E7#9

57

*vib* *gliss* *rubato* *vib* *gliss*

S BU PO BSS PO BU LD PO PO S

E 9  
B 15 (17)  
G 12  
D 15 12  
A 14  
E 12

E 12  
B 15 12  
G 14  
D 12  
A 15 12  
E 14 (16) 14 12

E 14 12  
B 14 13  
G 12  
D 10  
A  
E