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BASS GRADE 1

BASS

GRADE 1

9 Tracks for GRADE 1

The Original ROCKSCHOOL ~ EST. 1991 ~



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Songs from

NIRVANA, ED SHEERAN, BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS, BOSTON, PIXIES, SMOKEY ROBINSON & THE MIRACLES

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rockschool®

BASS

Grade 1

Performance pieces, technical exercises, supporting tests
and guidance for Rockschool contemporary music examinations

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTIONS & INFORMATION

1 Title Page
2 Acknowledgements
3 Table of Contents
4 Welcome to Rockschool Bass Grade 1

PERFORMANCE PIECES – HIT TUNES

7 'Where Is My Mind?' ..... Pixies
11 'Come as You Are' ..... Nirvana
15 'The Tracks of My Tears' ..... Smokey Robinson & The Miracles
19 'Bad Habits' ..... Ed Sheeran
23 'Three Little Birds' ..... Bob Marley and the Wailers
27 'More Than a Feeling' ..... Boston

PERFORMANCE PIECES – ROCKSCHOOL ORIGINALS

31 'Ignite'
32 'Downtown Detroit'
34 'As Night Falls'

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

36 Scales, Arpeggios & Riff

SUPPORTING TESTS

38 Sight Reading
39 Improvisation & Interpretation
40 Ear Tests
41 General Musicianship Questions

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

42 Marking Schemes
43 Entering RSL Exams
44 Bass Notation Explained

Welcome to Rockschool Bass Grade 1

Welcome to the Rockschool Bass Syllabus 2024. This syllabus is designed to support musicians in their progression from Debut to Grade 8 through an engaging and rigorous pathway, covering all the genres, stylistic elements, techniques and musical skills required for success as a contemporary musician.

All candidates should read the accompanying syllabus guide when using this grade book. This can be downloaded from the RSL website: ***www.rslawards.com***

Rockschool Exams

At each grade you have the option of taking one of two different types of examination:

- **Grade Exam**

  A grade exam is made up of the following components:

Grade Exam Overview		**Available Marks**
Performance Pieces	*Piece 1*	20
	Piece 2	20
	Piece 3	20
Technical Exercises	*Scales*, *Arpeggios (guitar and bass)*, *Rudiments (drums)* and *Technical Studies*	15
Supporting Tests	**(Debut)** *Sight Reading* **only** **(Grades 1–5)** Choice of *Sight Reading* **or** *Improvisation & Interpretation* **(Grades 6–8)** *Quick Study Piece* **only**	10
	(All grades) *Ear Tests*	10
	(All grades) *General Musicianship Questions* (5 questions)	5
	TOTAL	**100**

- **Performance Certificate**

  For a Performance Certificate you are required to perform five performance pieces only.

Performance Certificate Overview		**Available Marks**
Performance Pieces	*Piece 1*	20
	Piece 2	20
	Piece 3	20
	Piece 4	20
	Piece 5	20
	TOTAL	**100**

There are various face to face and digital exam options available. Please visit ***www.rslawards.com/graded-music-exams*** for further information.

Book Contents

All elements required to participate in a Rockschool exam can be found in this grade book. These are as follows:

Performance Pieces

Nine specially commissioned pieces, arranged and benchmarked for each grade:

- Three new Rockschool pieces ('Rockschool Originals') composed exclusively for the syllabus, and written to explore the stylistic features and techniques that encompass a variety of contemporary music styles.
- Six 'Hit Tune' arrangements of songs in popular music styles, arranged for the grade. Each of these is preceded by a Fact File, containing a short biography and photo of the artist, along with recommended listening information.

Technical Exercises

Exercises should be prepared within the indicated parameters and tempo (or tempo range). Pay careful attention to text in this section, some exercise options are chosen by the candidate, others are chosen by the examiner.

Supporting Tests

There are three types of supporting tests in the exam, listed below. For these tests, you will be required to show a variety of musical skills in response to a previously unseen example shown to you by the examiner. Examples of each type of test are given in the book.

- *Sight Reading* (Debut)
  Sight Reading **or** *Improvisation & Interpretation* (Grades 1–5)
  Quick Study Piece (Grades 6–8)
  These tests focus on candidates following a score or lead sheet presented by the examiner. At Grades 1–5, you may choose either a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. At Grades 4 and 5 the Sight Reading tests contain a small degree of improvisation, and the Improvisation & Interpretation tests contain a small degree of sight reading. At Grades 6–8 you must perform a mandatory Quick Study Piece which contains a combination of sight reading and improvisation and interpretation skills.

- *Ear Tests*
  These tests focus on candidates being able to recall rhythmic and melodic examples, and (at certain grades) identify an example from a score.

- *General Musicianship Questions*
  In this last section you will be asked five questions by the examiner, relating to your choice of piece performed in the exam. Details of these questions can be found in this grade book.

General Information

You will find information on exam procedures, including online examination entry, marking schemes, information on Free Choice Pieces and guidance around interpretation and improvisation.

All candidates should read the accompanying syllabus guide when using this grade book. This can be downloaded from the RSL website: ***www.rslawards.com***

Audio

In hardcopy books, all accompanying audio can be downloaded using the unique download code and URL found on the title page (page 1) of the book. In digital editions the audio is included in the download.

Shared Repertoire

RSL's Shared Repertoire are songs featured across each grade level in our guitar, bass, and drums syllabuses. They provide candidates with the opportunity to play our music with other musicians of a similar level in a live band setting, using our benchmarked repertoire to make music together.

Look for the  symbol at the top of the page to see which songs are Shared Repertoire.

Fingering/Sticking Annotation

Any fingering (guitar and bass) or sticking (drums) annotation is given as a guide only, and will not be assessed.

Interpretation

The assumed starting point in an exam is that notation will be performed as written. However, it is fine to alter the written notation, personalising the content by way of interpretation. In this event, it is important to ensure that such adaptation is technically of equivalent demand and stylistically appropriate. It is important to ensure the interpreted bars do not amount to (or run the risk of appearing to be) a simplification of the written part. Any simplification will be reflected in the marks.

Notes:

- If interpreting, ensure this is not so wide-ranging that the performance loses the basis of the original. Up to 50% would be considered the maximum permitted amount.
- Where pieces contain performance indications to, e.g., solo, *ad lib.*, improvise, develop, etc., these are stipulated opportunities to also develop personalised content. Candidates are strongly recommended to take advantage of these opportunities.
- Interpretation can include a small degree of physical adaptation to suit the candidate. For example, where hand stretches do not facilitate the required notated parts.
- For the avoidance of doubt in the exam, we recommend candidates inform the examiner at the beginning of the exam where, and to what extent, any parts have been interpreted.
- If in doubt you can submit any adaptation enquiries to ***info@rslawards.com***

E-book Upgrade

Upgrade your learning experience! The interactive e-book gives you the ability to jam along with, slow down and loop tricky passages of your favourite pieces, whilst receiving automated instantaneous feedback* so you can achieve your goals with confidence. Visit ***www.rslawards.com/downloads*** for further details.

** Instantaneous feedback currently available for guitar and bass only.*

Inspiring sounds from Rockschool and IK Multimedia

Rockschool has partnered with IK Multimedia to bring you a range of guitar and bass tones, that match perfectly with your book. In fact, we have created tones that match every song, across all nine graded books in this edition of the Guitar and Bass syllabus. The tones are available for the AmpliTube software, ToneX pedals and iRig interfaces. This means you can take great sounds with you wherever you go. You can even access them with your smartphone or tablet.

The best bit...? All the presets are free to download. You can even use the free version of AmpliTube to access the tones.

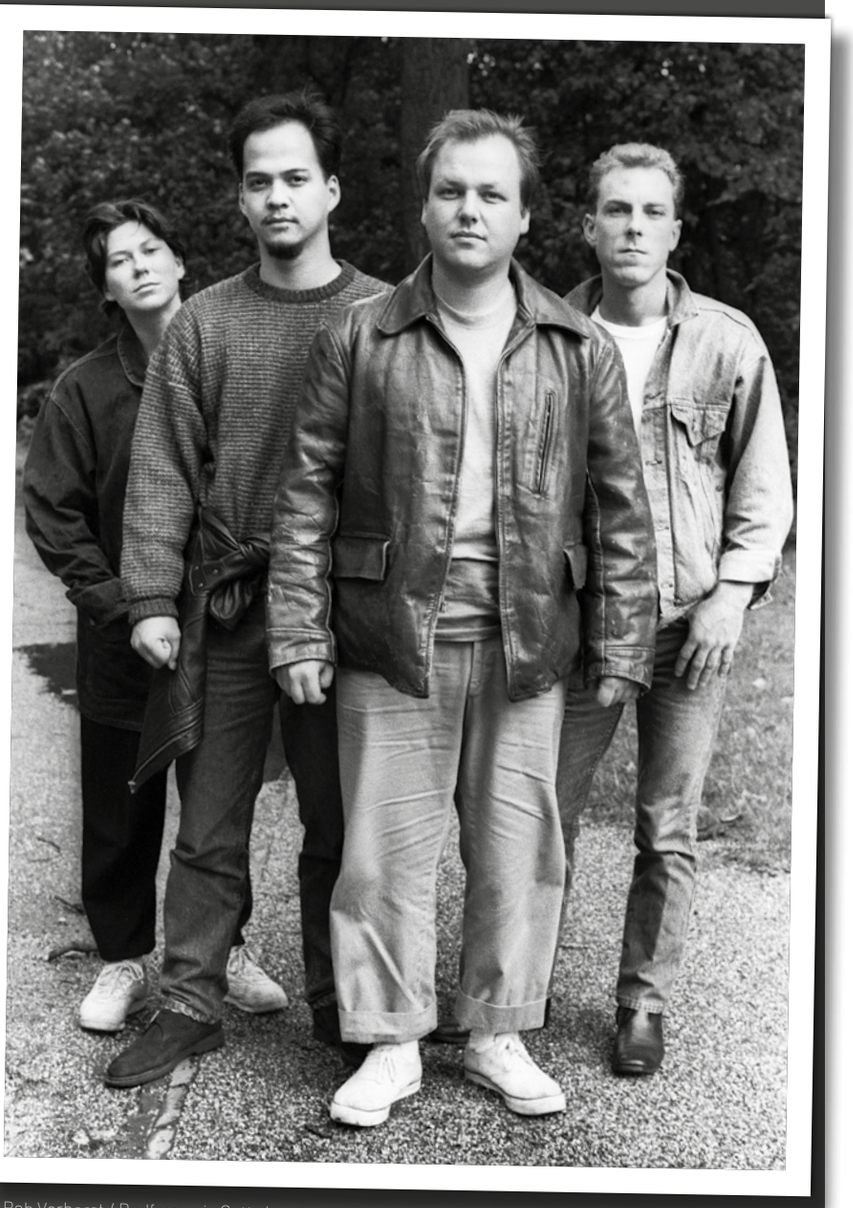
Visit ***www.rslawards.com/ikmultimedia*** to get started or scan the QR code below.

Where Is My Mind?

Artist: Pixies
Source: *Surfer Rosa* (Album, 1988)
Genre: Alternative Rock

From their certified gold album *Surfer Rosa*, the laid-back guitar riff combined with offbeat and quirky vocal stylings all contribute to the unique character of Pixies' signature song 'Where Is My Mind?'. It has also been used on soundtracks of several movies and TV series, most notably the 1999 award-winning movie *Fight Club*.

Pixies got their big break after signing to 4AD, with the two albums that followed, *Surfer Rosa* and *Doolittle*, achieving wide critical acclaim. These records are revered by many musicians within the indie scene, being cited as an influence for bands such as Nirvana, Arcade Fire and Radiohead. Pixies helped define the sound that would become known as indie and alternative rock. Combining a creative and eclectic blend of musical influences that could at times be punk-like and noisy, they still retained their melodic pop sensibilities. The group temporarily disbanded after releasing several studio albums in 1993, but reunited in 2004 with a new lineup. They continue to release music to this day, most recently their 2022 album *Doggerel*.



Rob Verhorst / Redferns *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Nirvana *Nevermind* (1991)
The notorious 'quiet verse, loud chorus' formula that is applicable to many of Nirvana's songs is said to have been partly inspired by Pixies. The famed *Nevermind* is packed with memorable grunge classics and catchy hooks, that has cemented Nirvana's legacy as one of rock's most important acts.
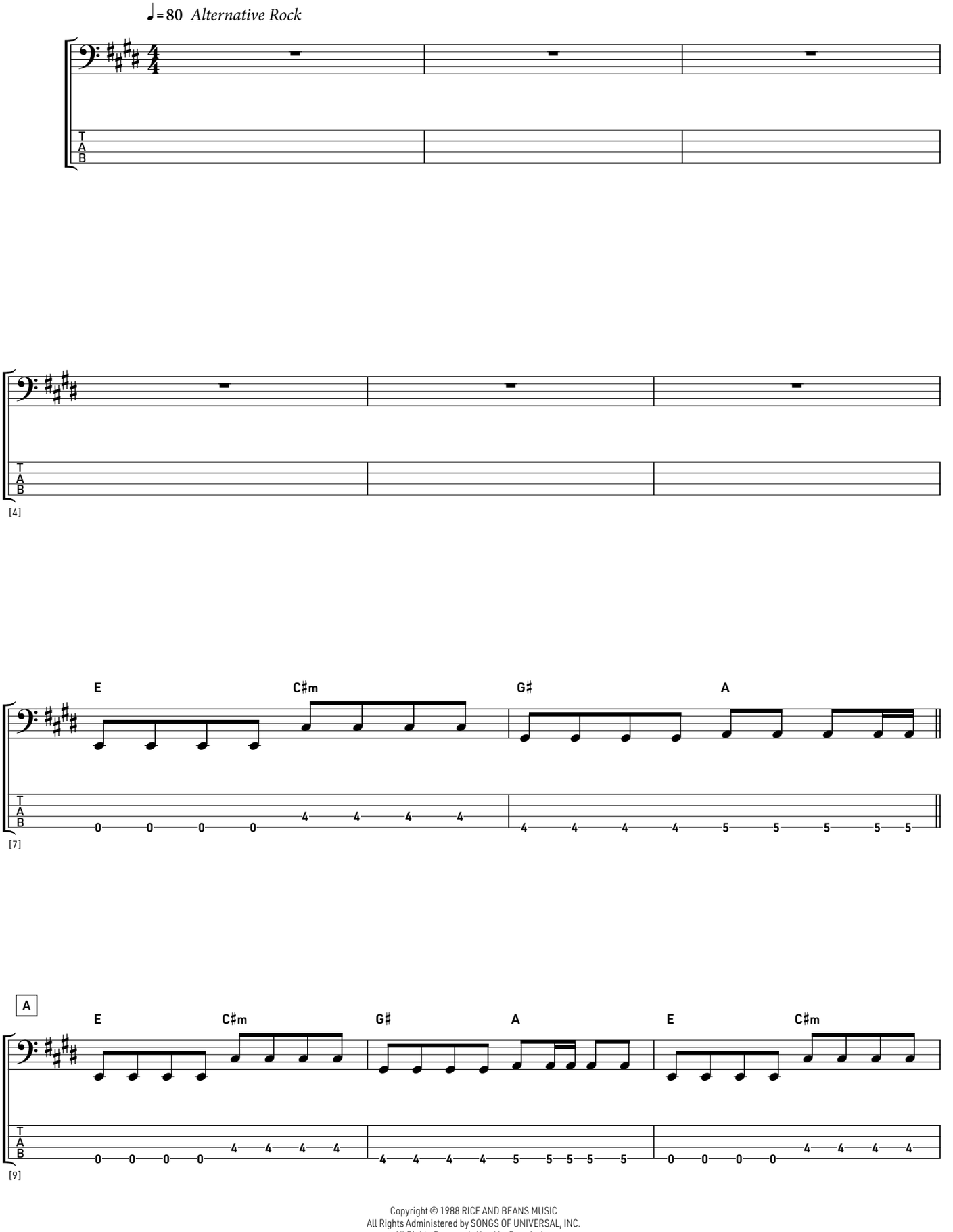


Weezer *Weezer* (1994)
Often nicknamed *The Blue Album*, Weezer's debut helped establish the group as a formidable force in alternative rock music. Featuring hits such as 'Buddy Holly' and 'Say It Ain't So', upon release this seminal record quickly established them as one of rock's rising stars.

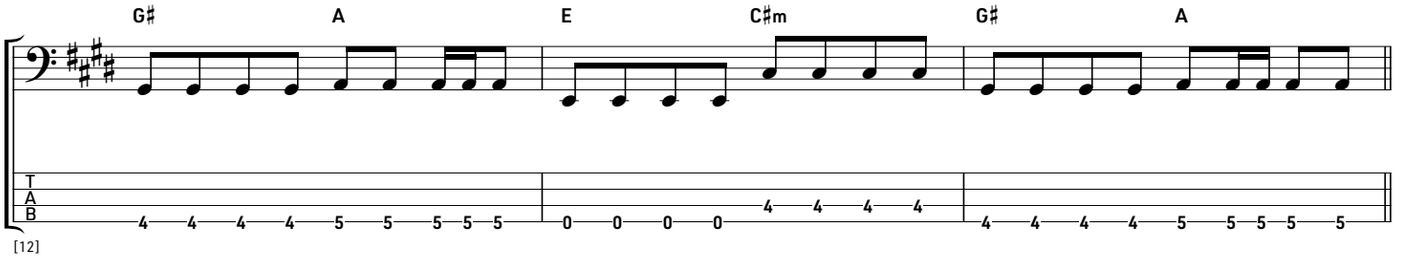
Where Is My Mind?

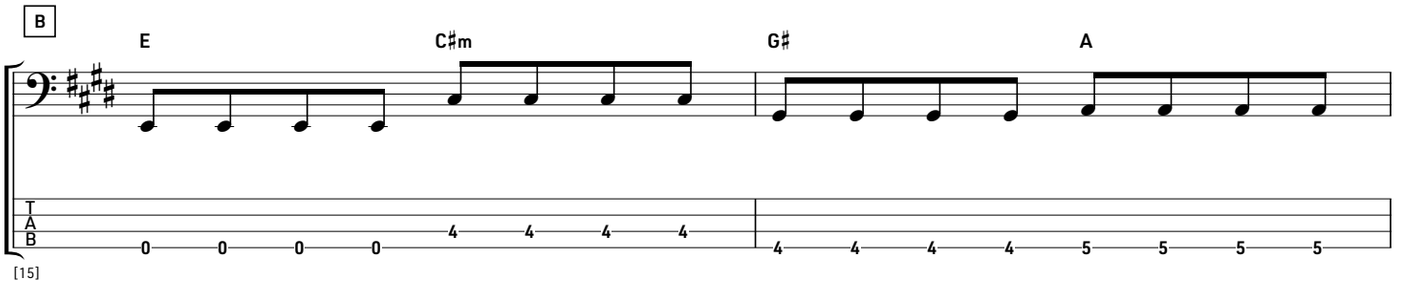
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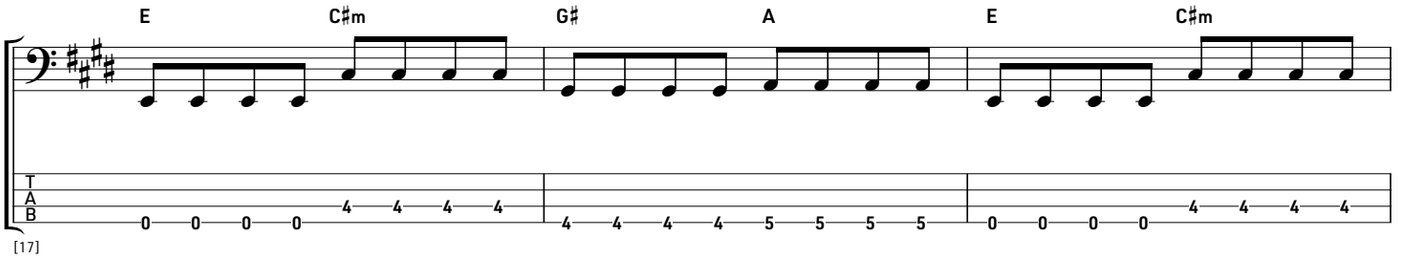
Pixies

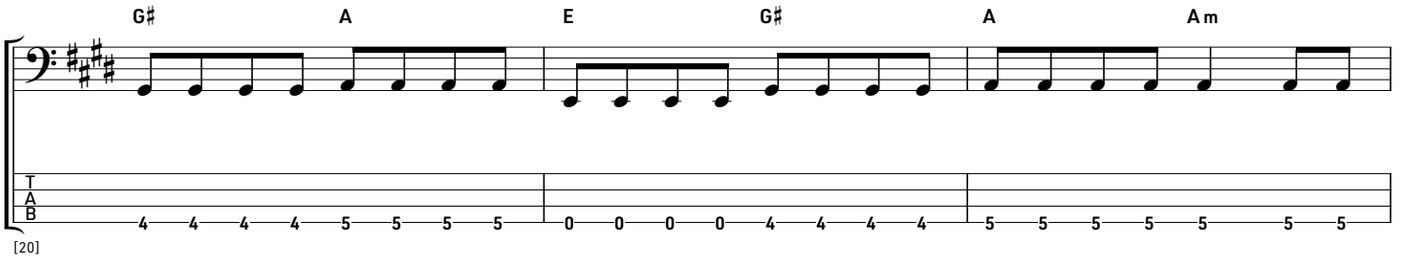


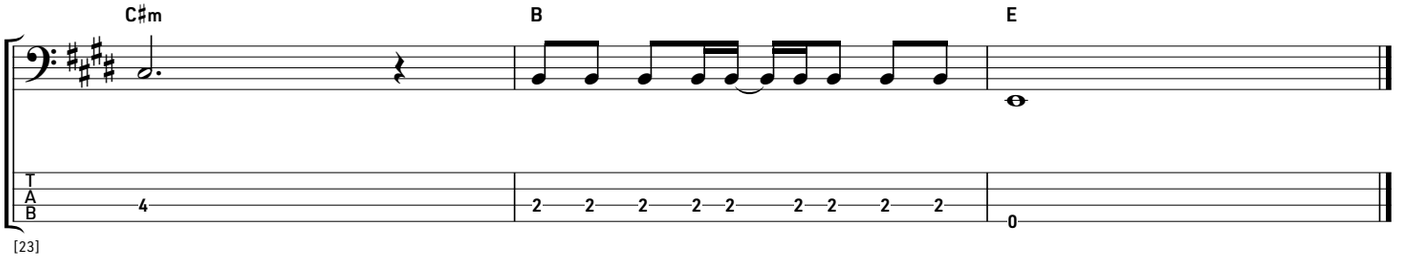
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G♯ A E C♯m G♯ A
T A B
4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 5 0 0 0 0 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 5
[12]


B
E C♯m G♯ A
T A B
0 0 0 0 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5
[15]


E C♯m G♯ A E C♯m
T A B
0 0 0 0 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 0 0 0 0 4 4 4 4
[17]


G♯ A E G♯ A A m
T A B
4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 0 0 0 0 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5
[20]

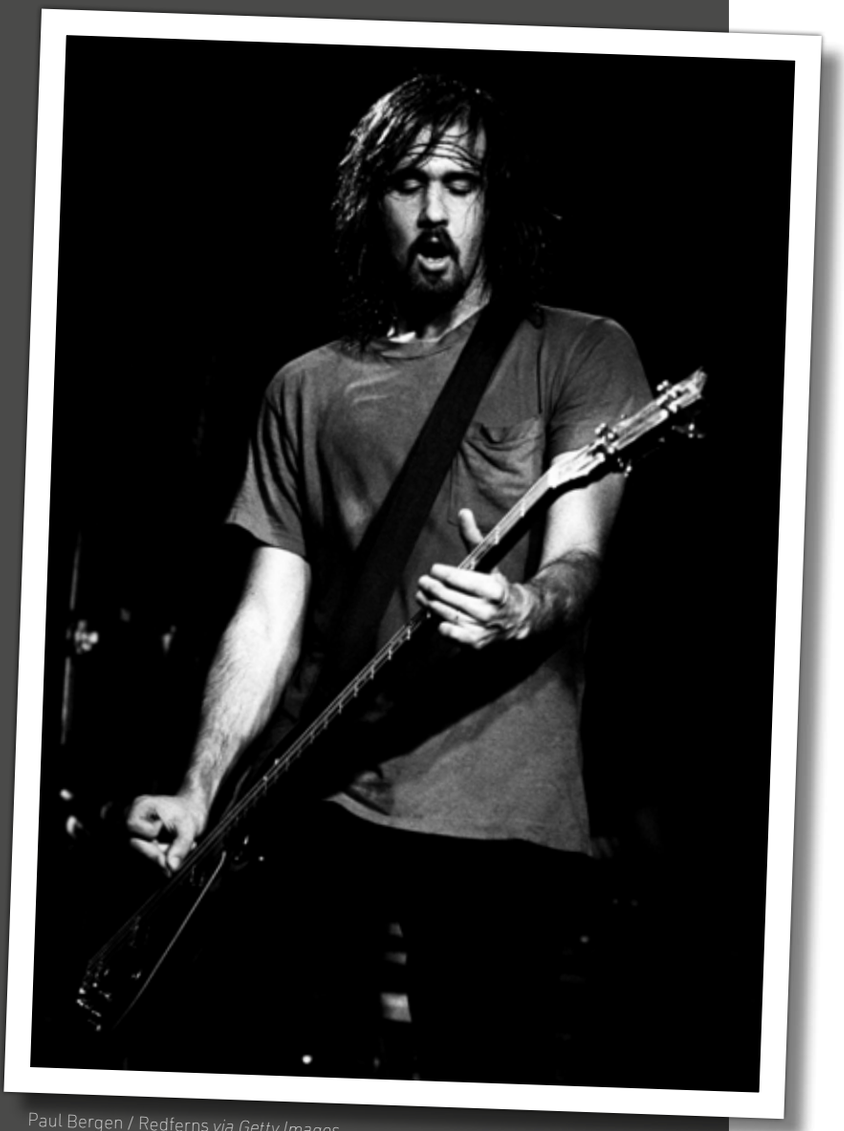

C♯m B E
T A B
4 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 0
[23]

Come as You Are

Artist: Nirvana
Source: *Nevermind* (Album, 1991)
Genre: Grunge

Choosing a worthy follower to the phenomenally successful 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' was never going to be easy, and opting for the slower, more melancholic 'Come as You Are' was considered a divisive choice, not least due to the song's similarity to Killing Jokes' track 'Eighties'. However, it proved a wise decision, with the song charting in the top 10 in multiple countries.

Nirvana was an American grunge band that formed in 1987. Consisting of guitarist frontman Kurt Cobain and bassist Krist Novoselic to begin with, it wasn't until Dave Grohl (current lead singer of Foo Fighters) joined them on drums in 1990 that the final lineup was established. After building a reputation in the Seattle underground grunge scene of the late '80s, they caught the attention of major label DGC Records and released their 1991 album *Nevermind*. It unexpectedly achieved enormous global success, with the band's counterculture image and raw, unpolished sound seemingly resonating with disillusioned youths worldwide. Often hailed as the "flagship band" of Generation X, Nirvana played a key part in the rise of the grunge aesthetic that exists to this day. Cobain's tragic death in 1994 shook the world of music to its core and signalled an immediate end to the band. Like The Beatles before them, Nirvana are one of a select few artists to have legitimately altered the course of music history and impacted upon western culture at large.



Paul Bergen / Redferns *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Pixies *Doolittle* (1989)
Pixies' sophomore album *Doolittle* highlights many of the band's strengths. The raw and noisy production combined with creative and varied musical influences resulted in an album that remains highly regarded in alt and indie rock circles.
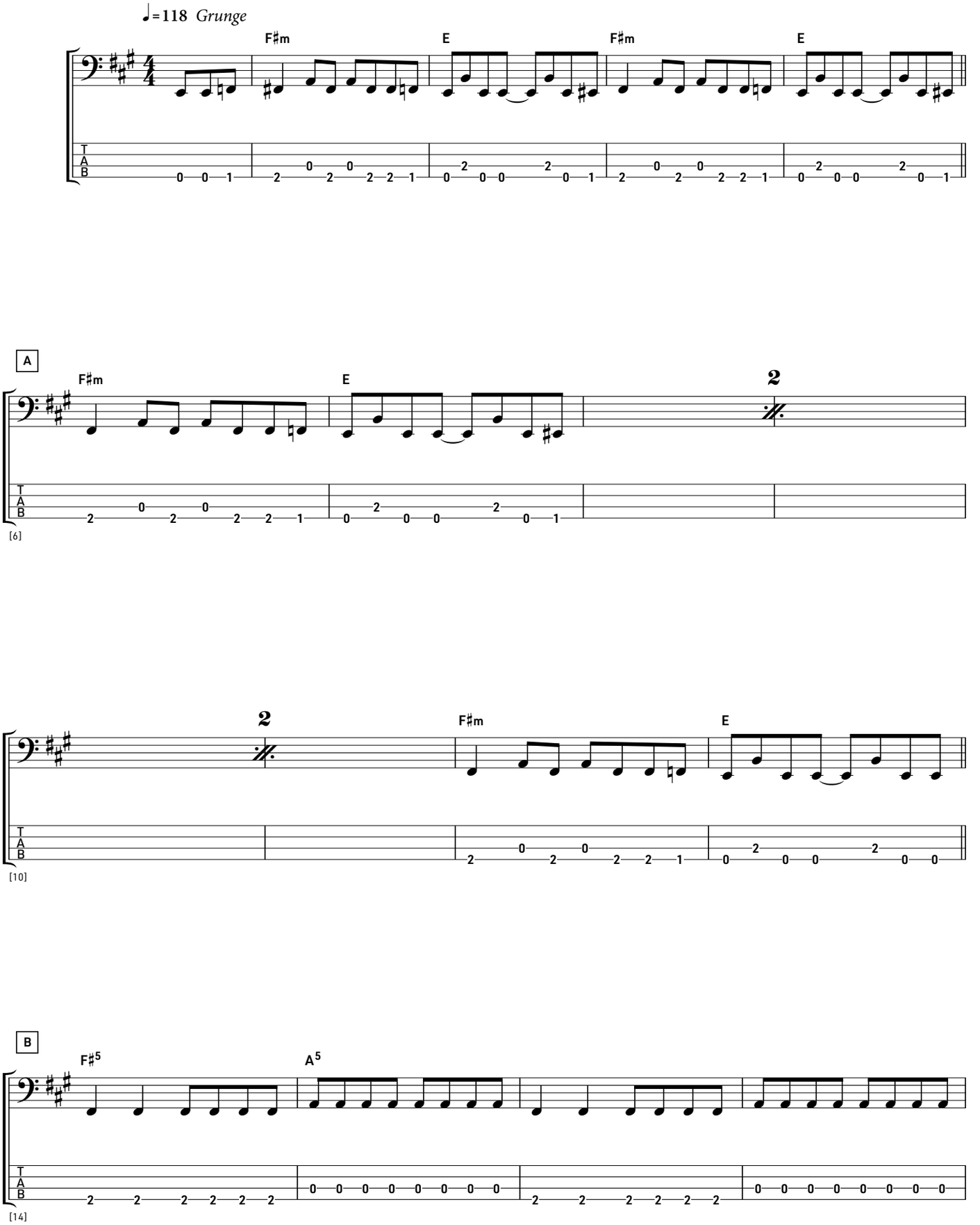


Smashing Pumpkins *Siamese Dream* (1993)
Another record that encapsulates '90s rock music, *Siamese Dream* boasts a loud and fuzzy guitar sound often heard in grunge and shoegaze music. Highlights from the album include rock hits 'Today' and 'Cherub Rock'.

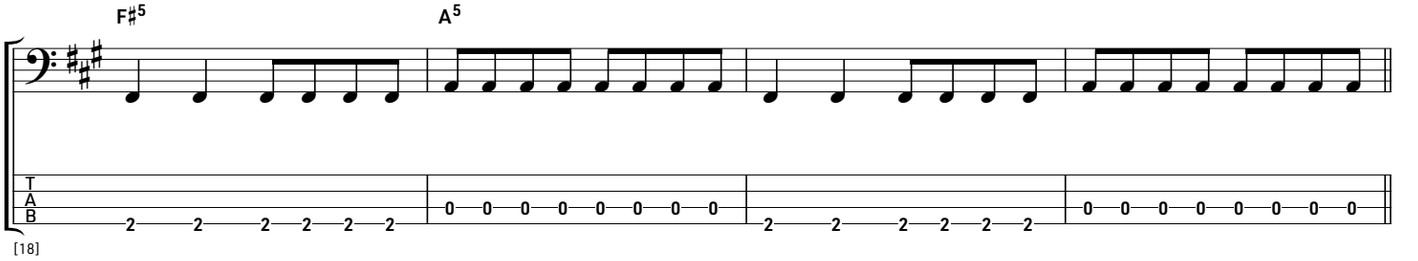
Come as You Are

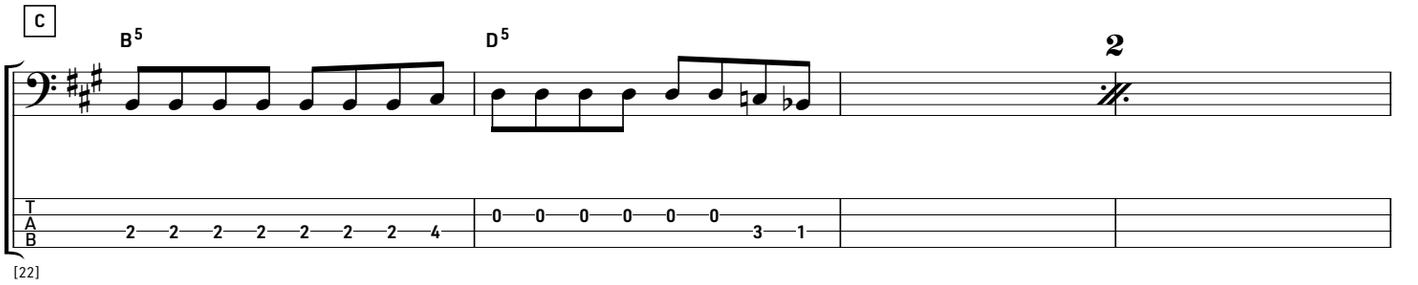
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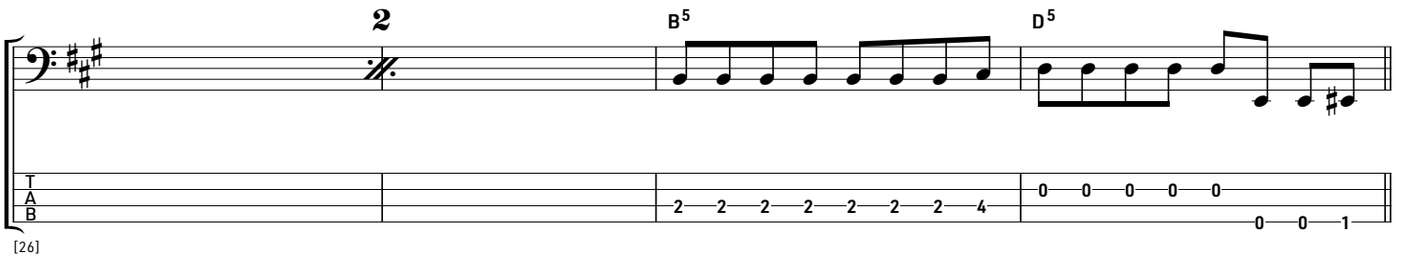
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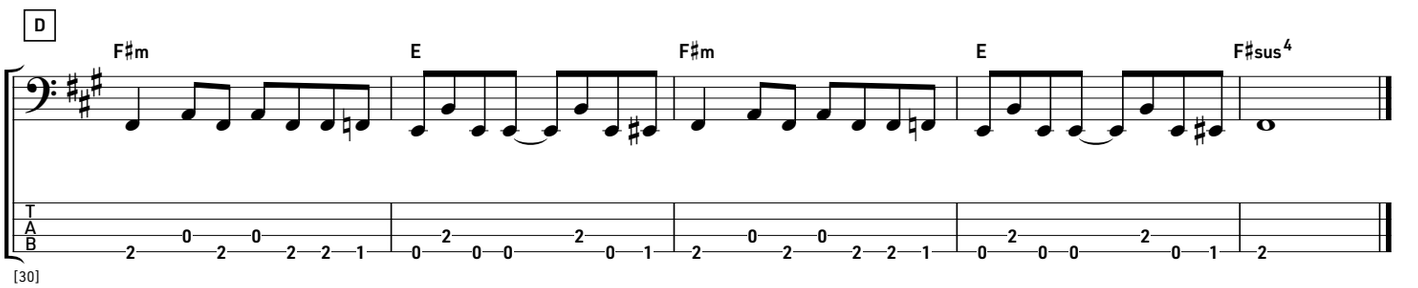


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F♯5
A5
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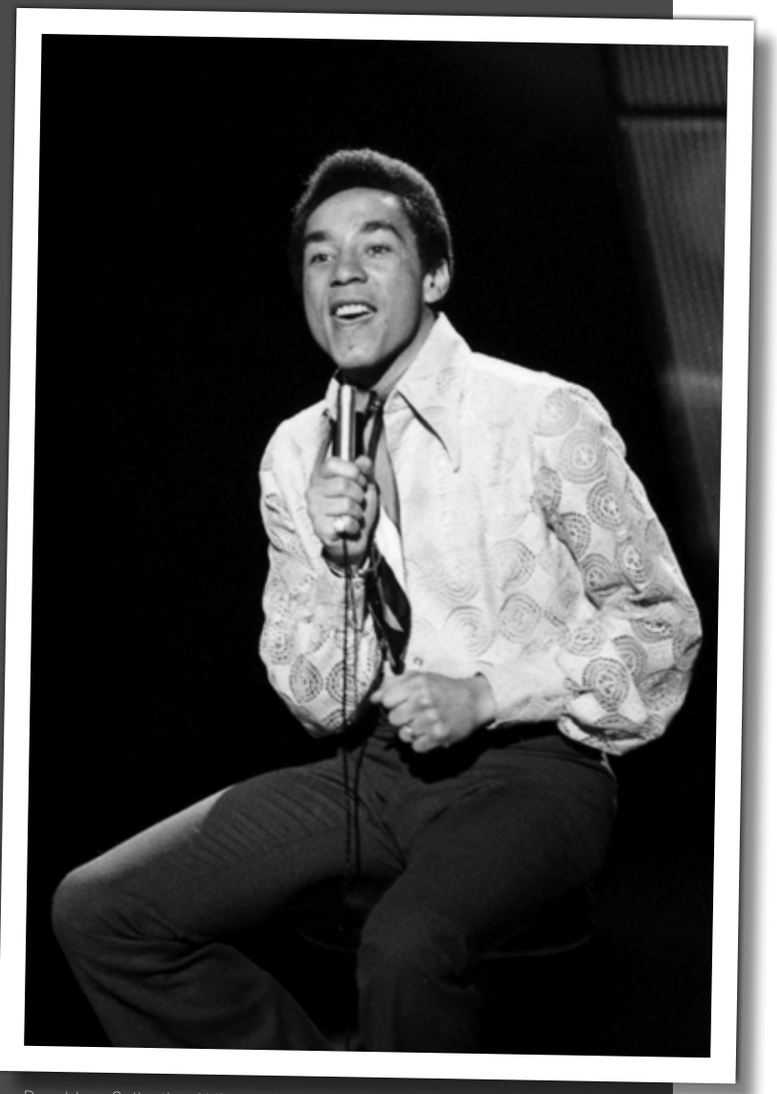
The Tracks of My Tears

Artist: Smokey Robinson & The Miracles
Source: *Going to a Go-Go* (Album, 1965)
Genre: Soul/R&B

From the late '50s onwards, the US record label Motown has been closely associated with some of the most commercially successful soul and R&B songs released in the 20th century. From Marvin Gaye to Stevie Wonder, the label achieved over 70 top-ten records in the '60s alone. One of the era-defining records released during this period was 'The Tracks of My Tears' by Smokey Robinson & The Miracles, which builds from a simple guitar hook to soulful vocal harmonies and lush orchestration. Whilst only reaching number 16 in the Billboard Hot 100 after release, the song remained popular with radio audiences. Seven decades later, the track's status as a soul classic is secure, having received numerous accolades, including an induction into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2007. Notable cover versions by Linda Ronstadt and Aretha Franklin further add to its legacy.

Formed by a group of school friends in 1955, Detroit-based The Miracles went on to release over 50 charting hits throughout their career. Highlights include 'Love Machine', 'Ooo Baby Baby' and 'You've Really Got a Hold on Me' (a song later covered by The Beatles).

The songwriting prowess of vocalist Smokey Robinson led to a highly acclaimed career after his departure from the group, penning hits for many Motown acts and himself as a soloist. Both Robinson and the group The Miracles have been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.



Donaldson Collection / Michael Ochs Archives *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Marvin Gaye & Tammi Terrell *United* (1967)
Soul legends Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell collaborated on several occasions during the '60s. The flagship motown standard 'Ain't No Mountain High Enough', written by songwriting geniuses Ashford and Simpson, is featured in full on *United*.
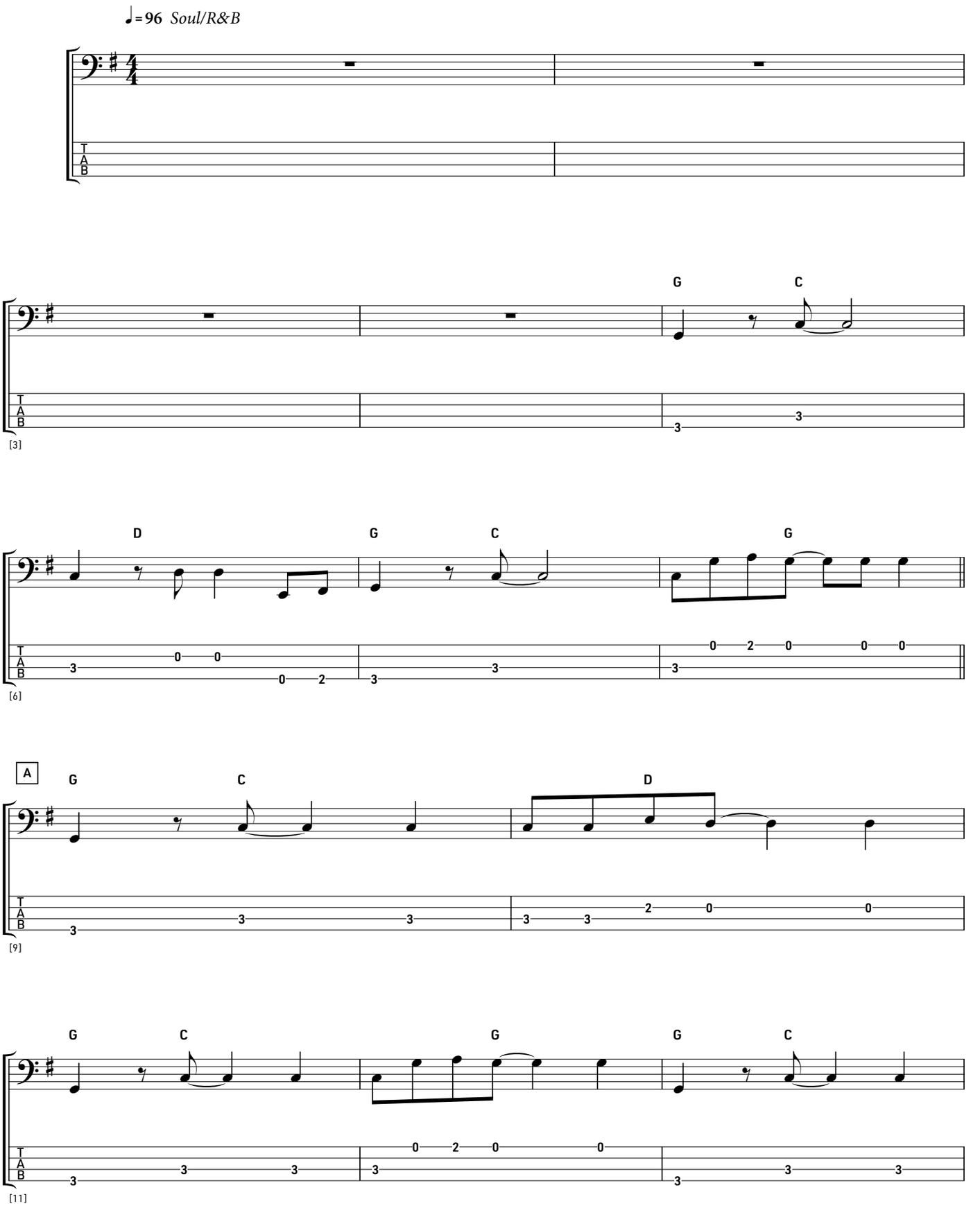


Four Tops *Second Album* (1965)
Much like their peers The Miracles, Four Tops were heavyweights of the motown era, scoring two massive number 1 hits. *Second Album* contains other hit singles, opening with 'I Can't Help Myself'. Smokey Robinson went on to be a songwriter for Four Tops in the '70s.

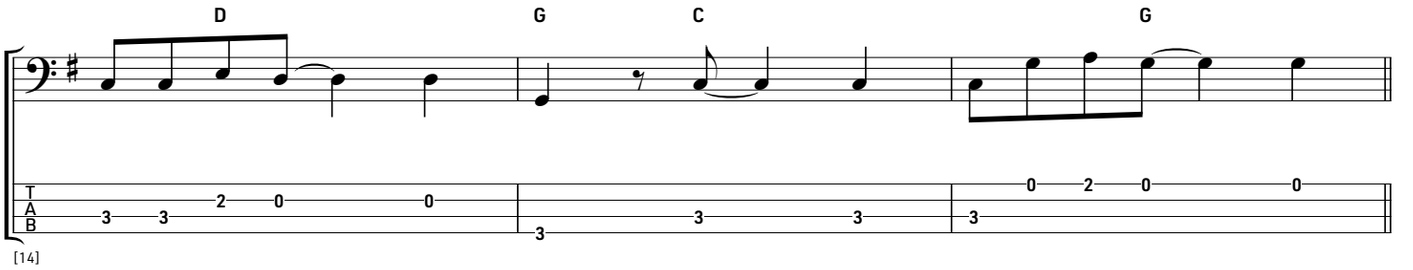
The Tracks of My Tears

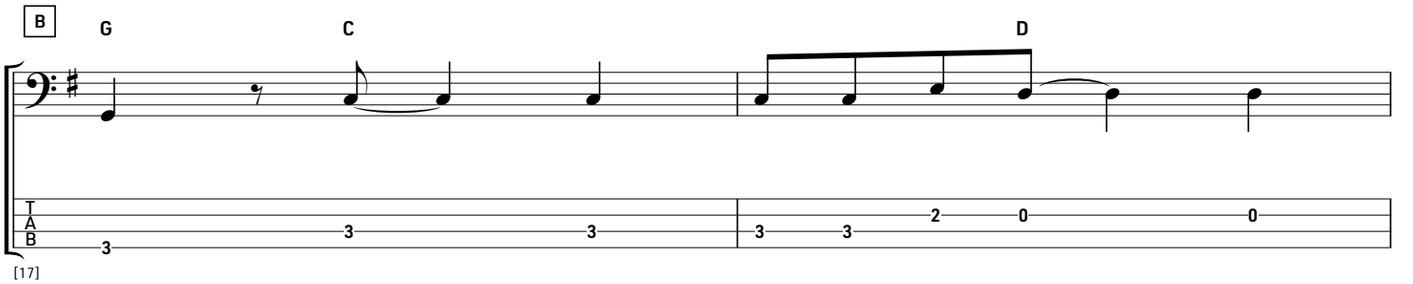
Words and Music by Smokey Robinson,
Warren Moore and Marvin Tarplin

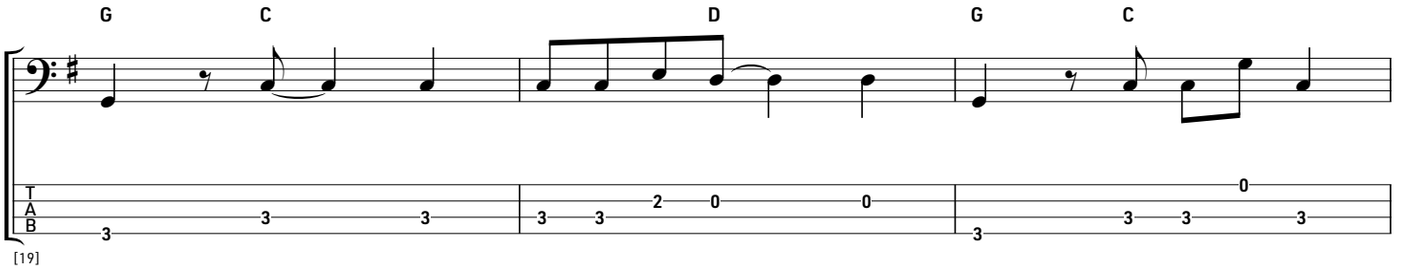
Smokey Robinson & The Miracles

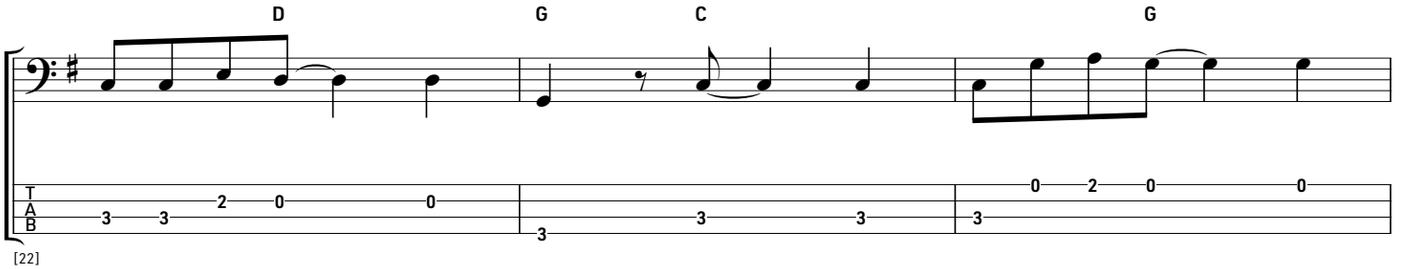


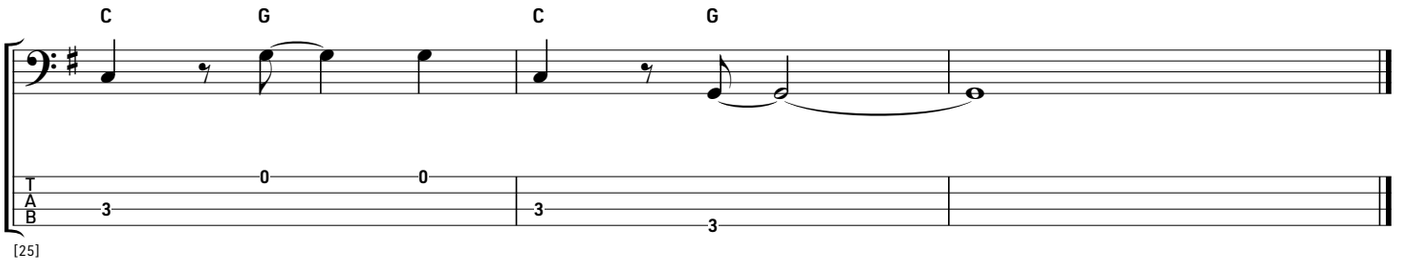
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Bad Habits

Artist: Ed Sheeran
Source: = (Album, 2021)
Genre: Dance-Pop

Following on from the aftermath of the COVID lockdown, Ed Sheeran wanted to write a danceable and uplifting track that could be played in clubs and parties. The outcome of this was his 2021 single 'Bad Habits'. A far cry from his earlier acoustic pop ballads, it took inspiration more from the worlds of synth and dance music. The song was released as part of his fourth studio album = and has been covered and remixed by a few notable musicians, perhaps most surprising of whom is British metal band Bring Me the Horizon, who went on to perform their cover alongside Sheeran himself at the 2022 BRIT Awards.

The red-headed modern pop icon Ed Sheeran has consistently released a string of popular songs since his breakthrough hit 'The A Team' in the early 2010s. His series of albums named after various math symbols have achieved commercial success globally, with over 150 million record sales to date. Sheeran has also received a plethora of awards, including four Grammy Awards.

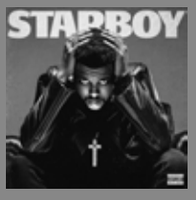


Dave J Hogan / Getty Images Entertainment *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Harry Styles *Harry's House* (2022)
The former One Direction singer-turned-soloist Harry Styles has taken great inspiration from '70s and '80s pop music to create a distinctive "Harry" style (pun intended!). His third studio album *Harry's House* includes his long-running number one 'As It Was'.
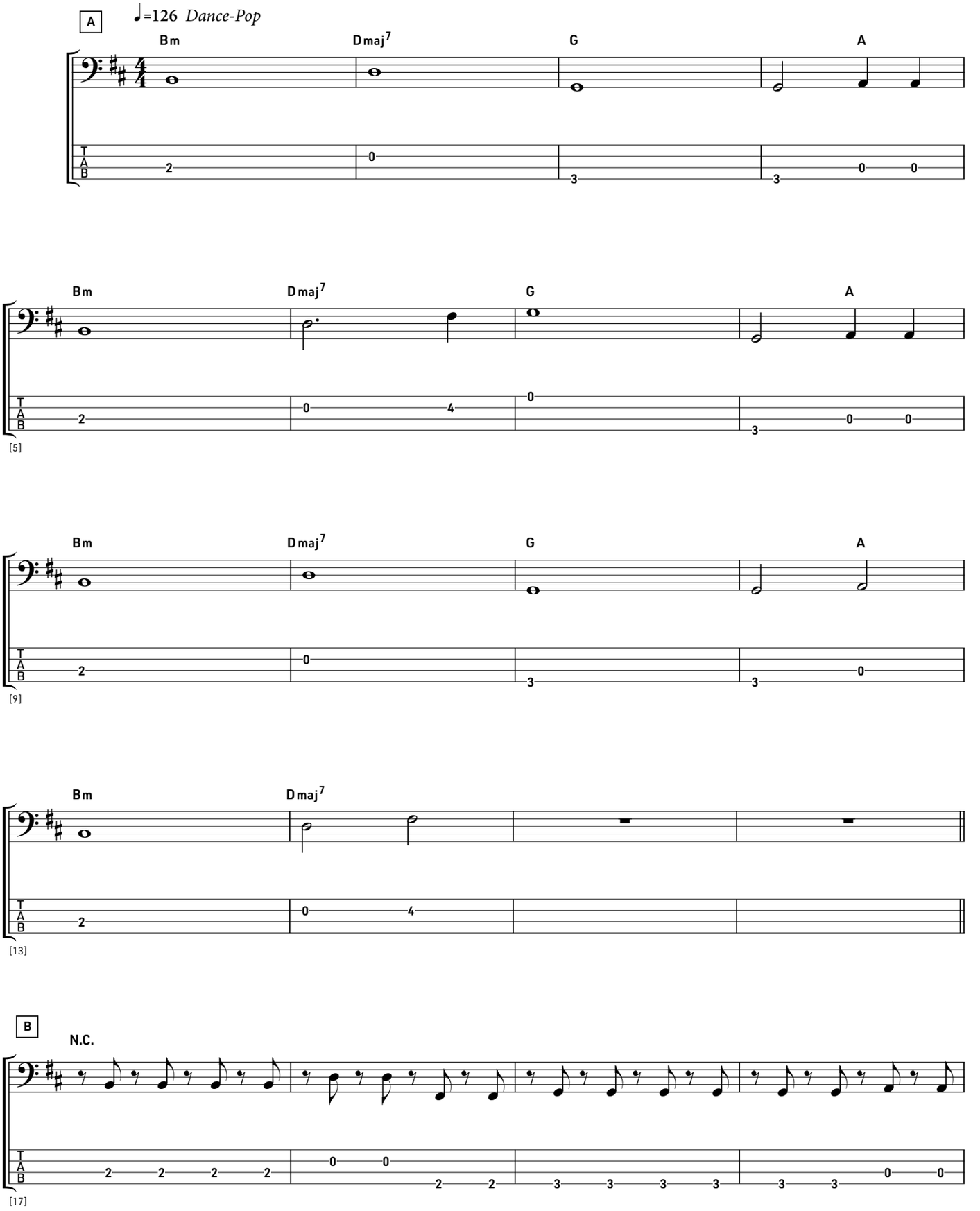


The Weeknd *Starboy* (2016)
Several music journalists have suggested 'Bad Habits' has strong echoes of music by Canadian singer The Weeknd, who takes great influence from synth pop and '80s style R&B, both of which Sheeran has incorporated more and more into his songwriting in recent years.

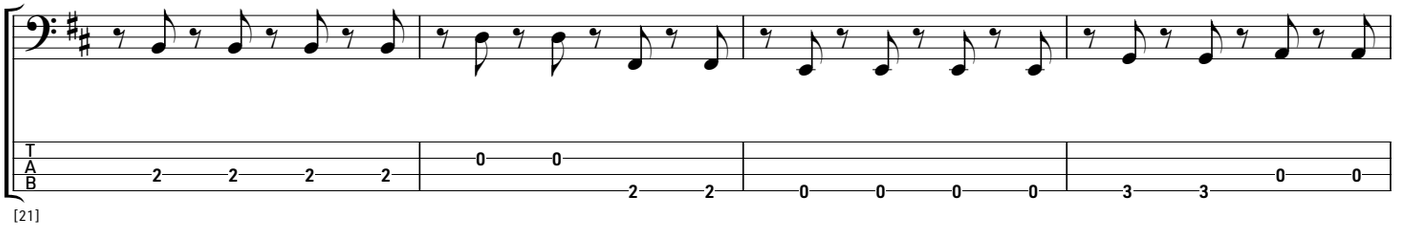
Bad Habits

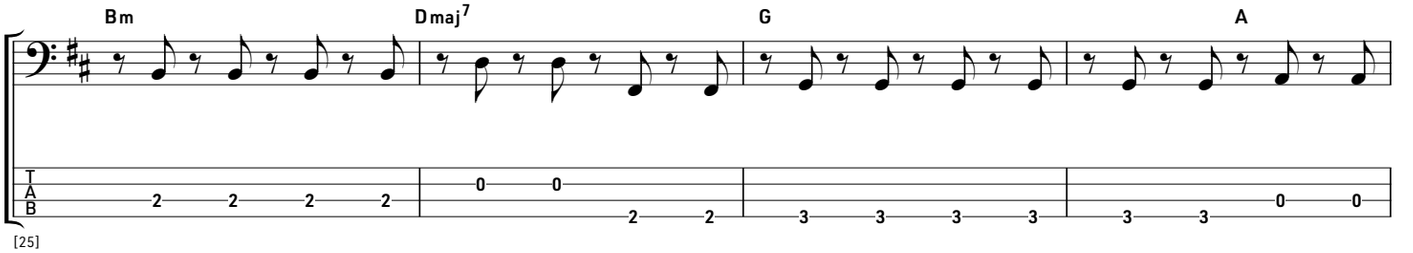
Words and Music by Ed Sheeran,
Johnny McDaid and Fred Gibson

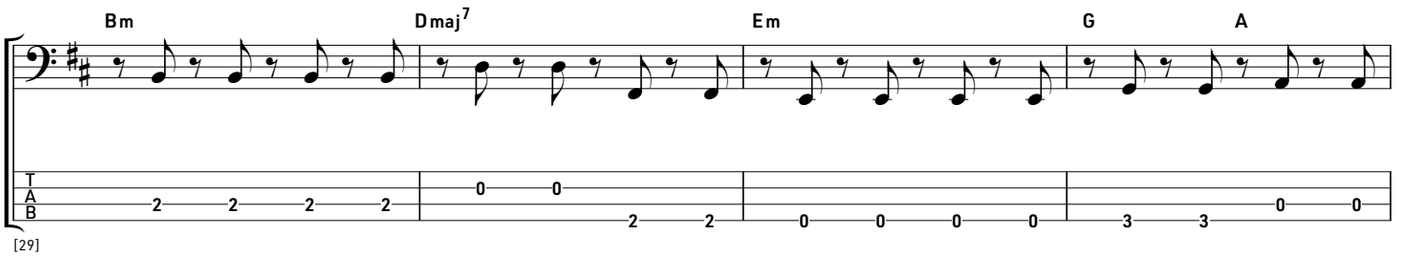
Ed Sheeran

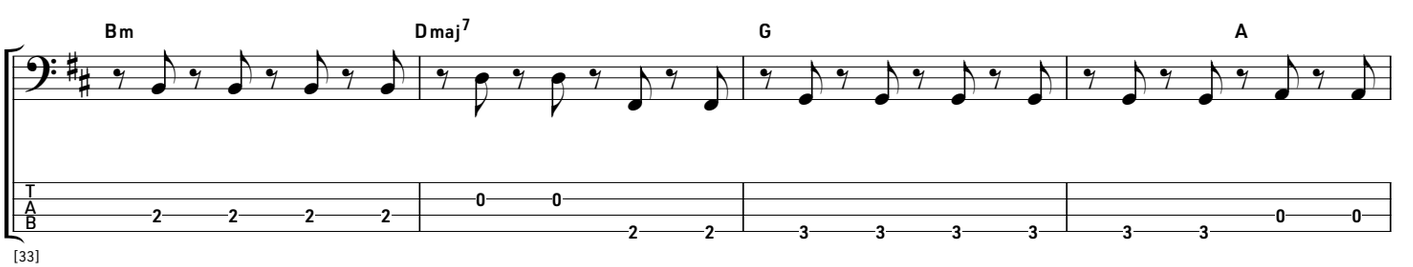


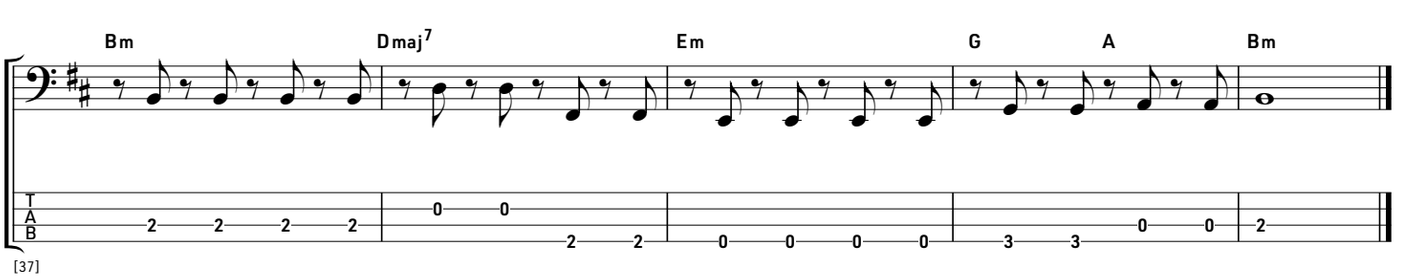
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[21]


Bm
Dmaj7
G
A
[25]


Bm
Dmaj7
Em
G
A
[29]


Bm
Dmaj7
G
A
[33]

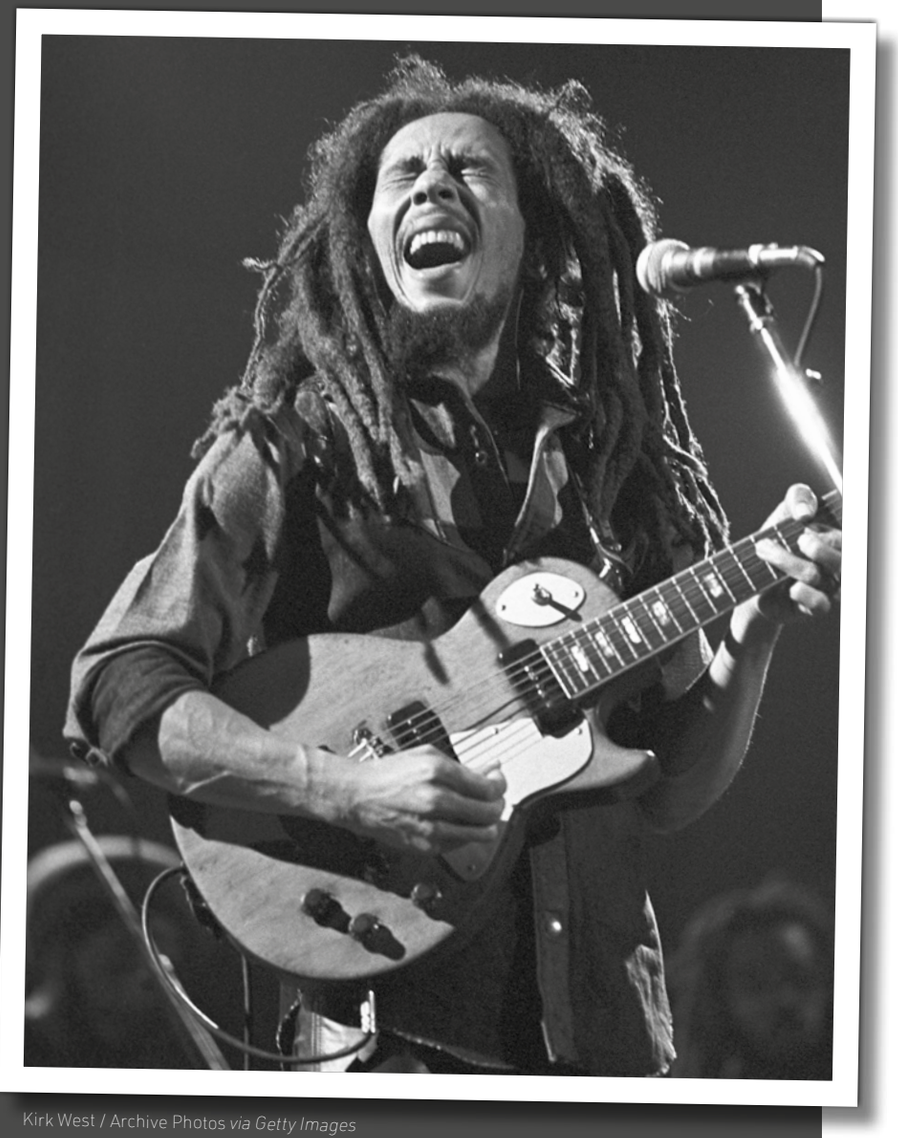

Bm
Dmaj7
Em
G
A
Bm
[37]

Three Little Birds

Artist: Bob Marley and the Wailers
Source: *Exodus* (Album, 1977)
Genre: Reggae

With its laidback character and simple, uplifting message "every little thing is gonna be alright", 'Three Little Birds' became one of Bob Marley and the Wailers' most recognised songs from the critically acclaimed album *Exodus*. The popularity of 'Three Little Birds' led to several cover versions, including renditions by Maroon 5 and Sean Paul; the latter featuring Bob Marley's son Ziggy Marley and being included in the soundtrack to 2004 animated movie *Shark Tale*.

A Jamaican legend, Bob Marley was (and still is) the most significant and influential figure within reggae. During his relatively brief career, cut short by his tragic death aged 36, he successfully exposed the reggae movement to an international audience, both as a soloist and with his group The Wailers. Songs like 'No Woman, No Cry', 'I Shot the Sheriff' and 'Redemption Song' spawned a new generation of reggae fans the world over. Since his passing, Marley has rightly been lauded for his contribution to music, receiving a wide range of awards, including induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (1994) and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (2001).



Kirk West / Archive Photos *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



UB40 *Labour of Love* (1983)
British group UB40 became a household name thanks to their string of chart-topping reggae inspired hits that helped keep the genre popular during the '80s. 'Red Red Wine', one of their signature hits, can be found on *Labour of Love*.
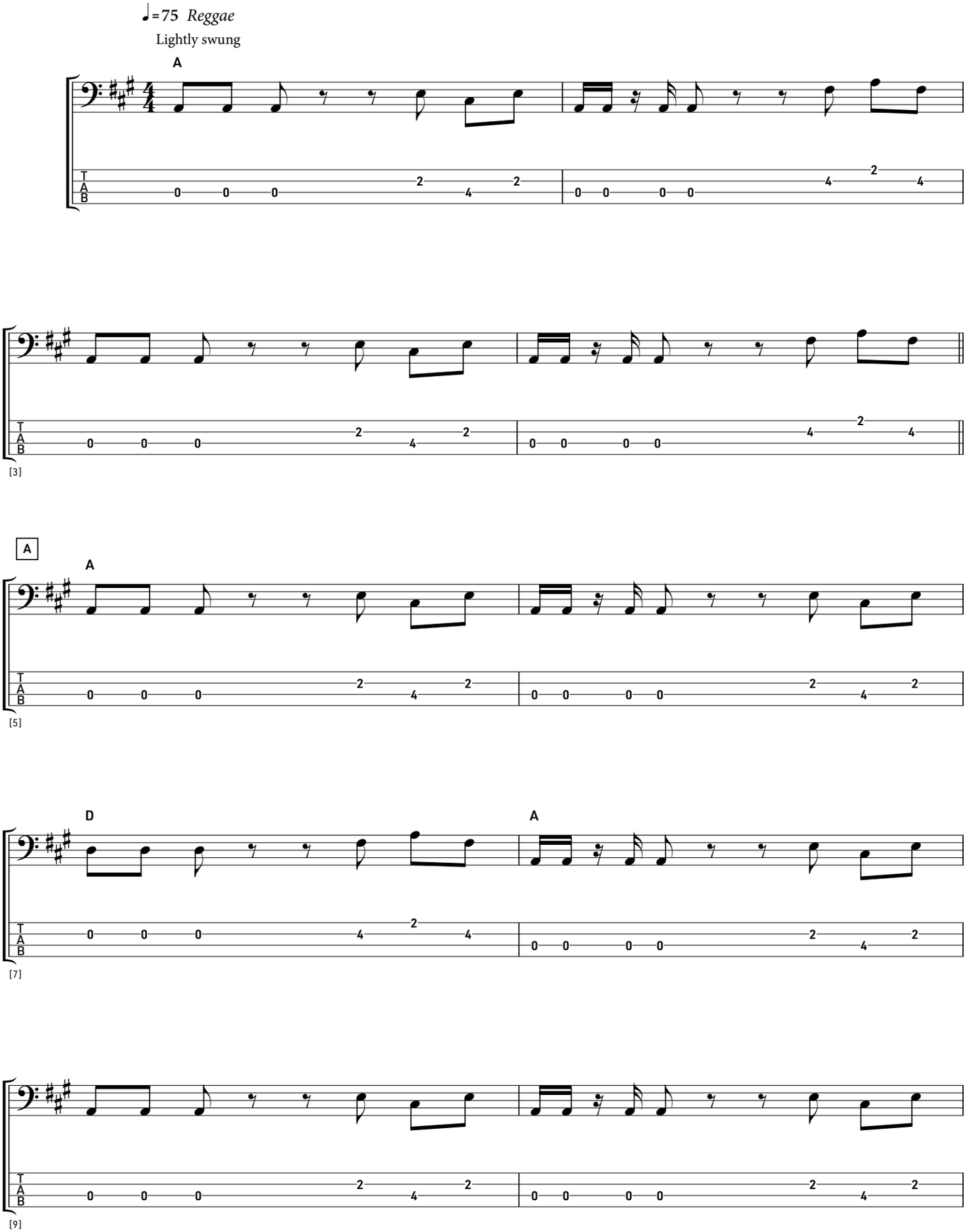


Peter Tosh *Mama Africa* (1983)
A contemporary of Bob Marley and former member of The Wailers, Peter Tosh has a sizeable discography. *Mama Africa* presents many accessible and popular tunes, such as 'Johnny B. Goode', and became his highest charting album in the US.

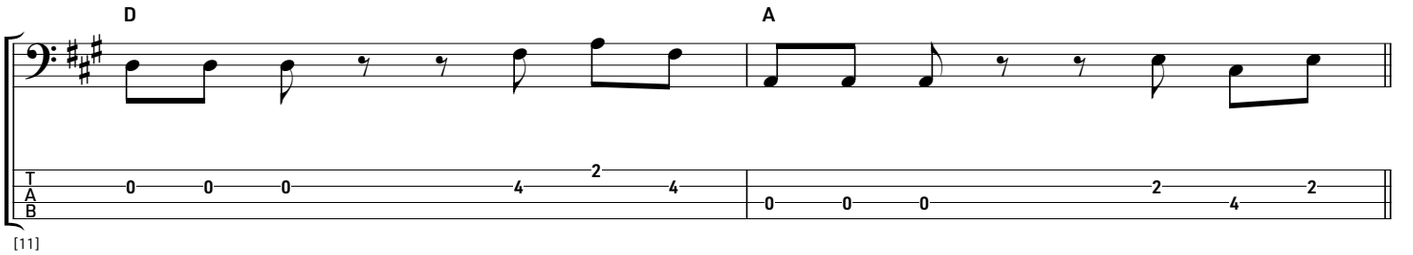
Three Little Birds

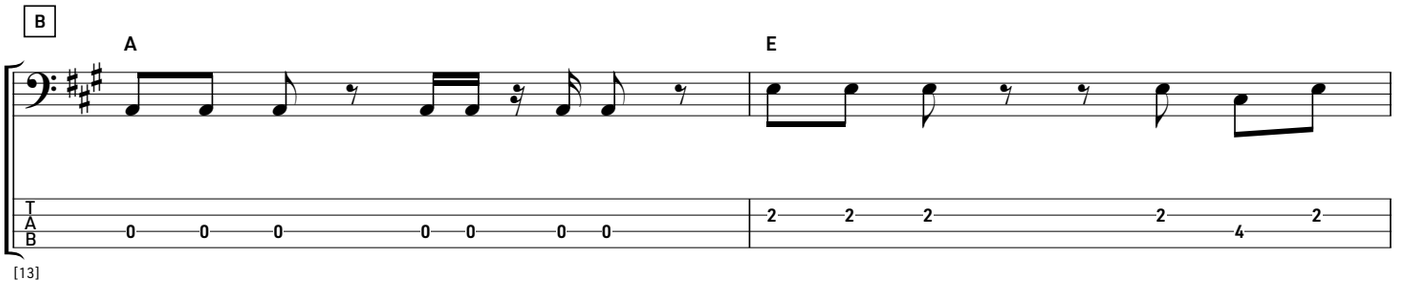
Words and Music by Bob Marley

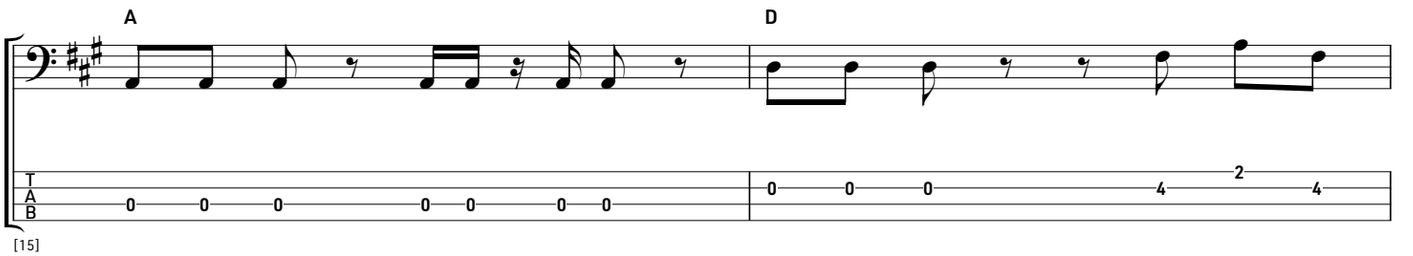
Bob Marley and the Wailers

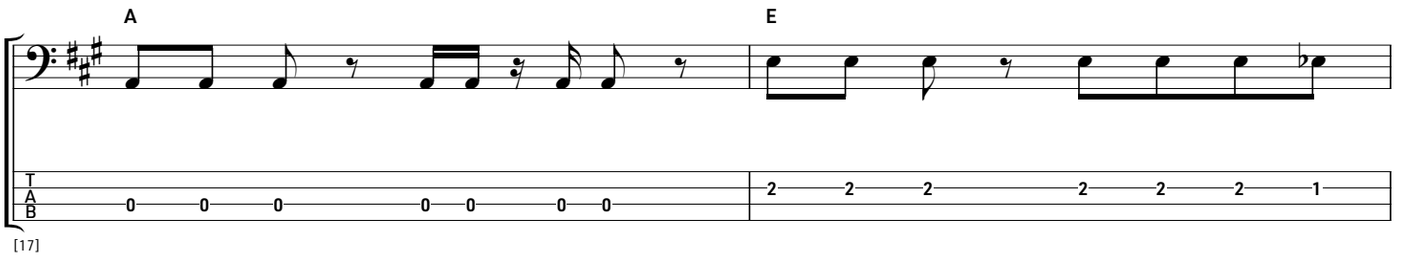


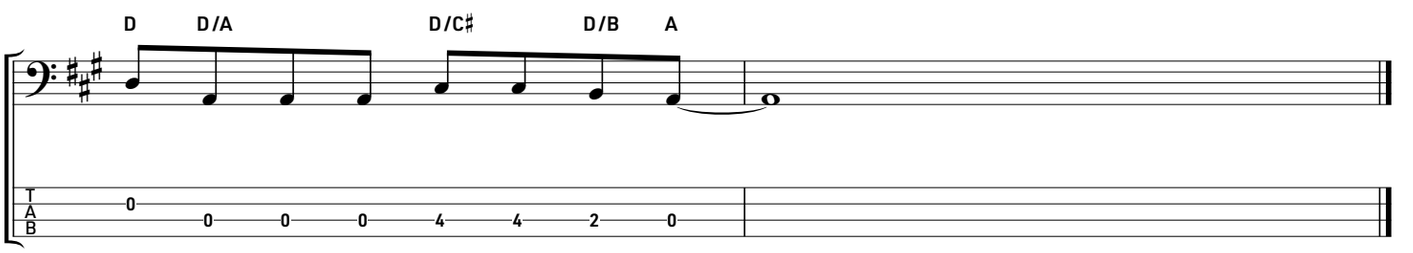
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D
A
[11]


B
A
E
[13]


A
D
[15]


A
E
[17]

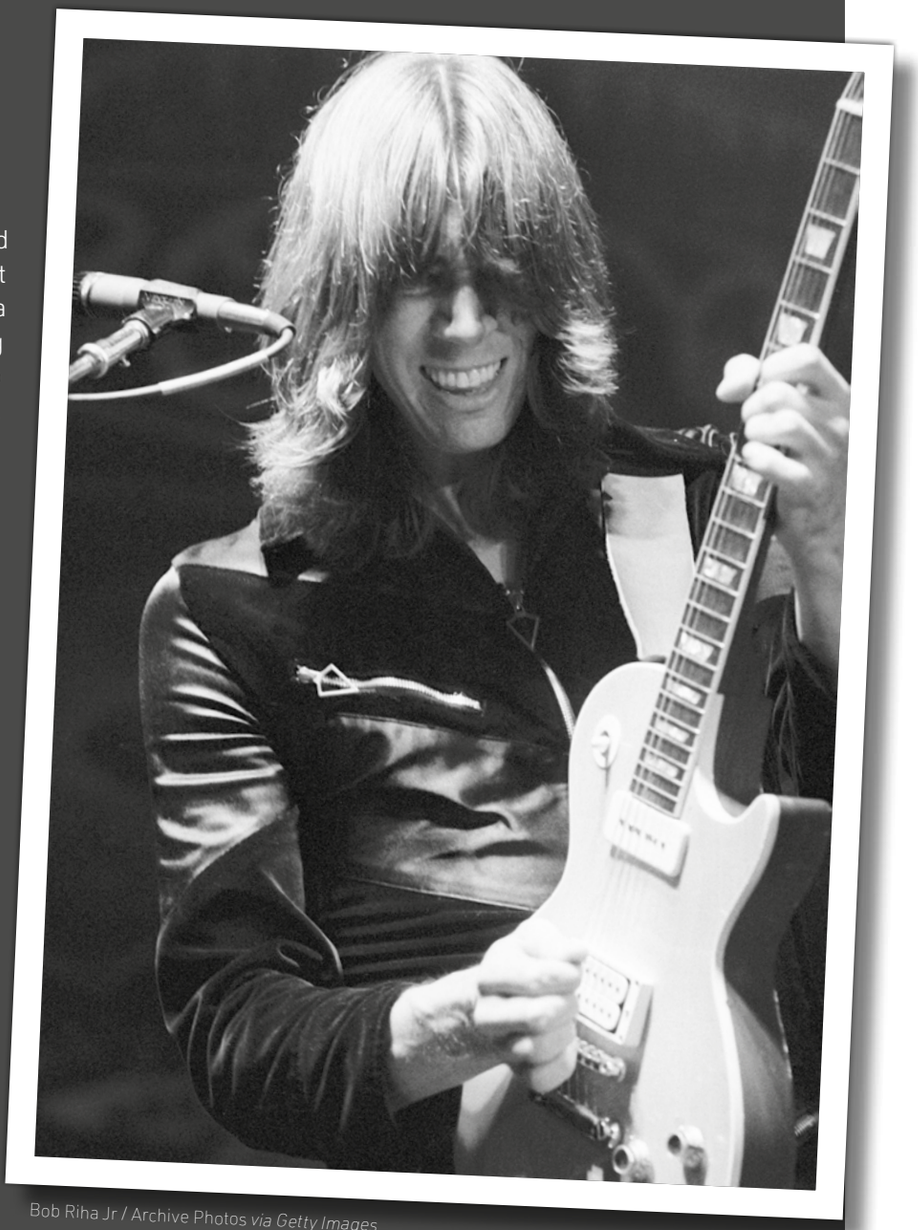

D
D/A
D/C♯
D/B
A
[19]

More Than a Feeling

Artist: Boston
Source: *Boston* (Album, 1976)
Genre: AOR

'More Than a Feeling' served as the lead single from Boston's eponymous debut album. Released in 1976, the record was a massive success, becoming the best-selling LP in the US at the time and served to skyrocket the band's career into overdrive. The song peaked at number 5 on the Billboard Hot 100 and has become a defining song of the '70s thanks to its anthemic chorus and iconic guitar riff.

US band Boston's musical sound is often associated with the accessible and highly polished pop, prog and classical-influenced hard rock of the '70s and '80s. Contemporaries included bands such as Journey, Foreigner and Survivor, known for their melodic rock or AOR (Adult Oriented Rock). Having recurring imagery of spaceships on their album covers, Boston went on to release several commercially successful records throughout the '70s, '80s and '90s. Original lead singer Brad Delp, with his distinctive vocal tone, sadly died in 2007, but current members of Boston continued to tour and release new music, with founding member Tom Scholz claiming that a seventh studio album is currently in the works.



Bob Riha Jr / Archive Photos *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Journey *Escape* (1981)
The rock anthems Journey wrote during the '70s and '80s continue to exhibit remarkable staying power. More than 40 years after release, the uplifting hit 'Don't Stop Believing' still gets frequent airplay and streams, as well as inclusion in numerous movies and series.
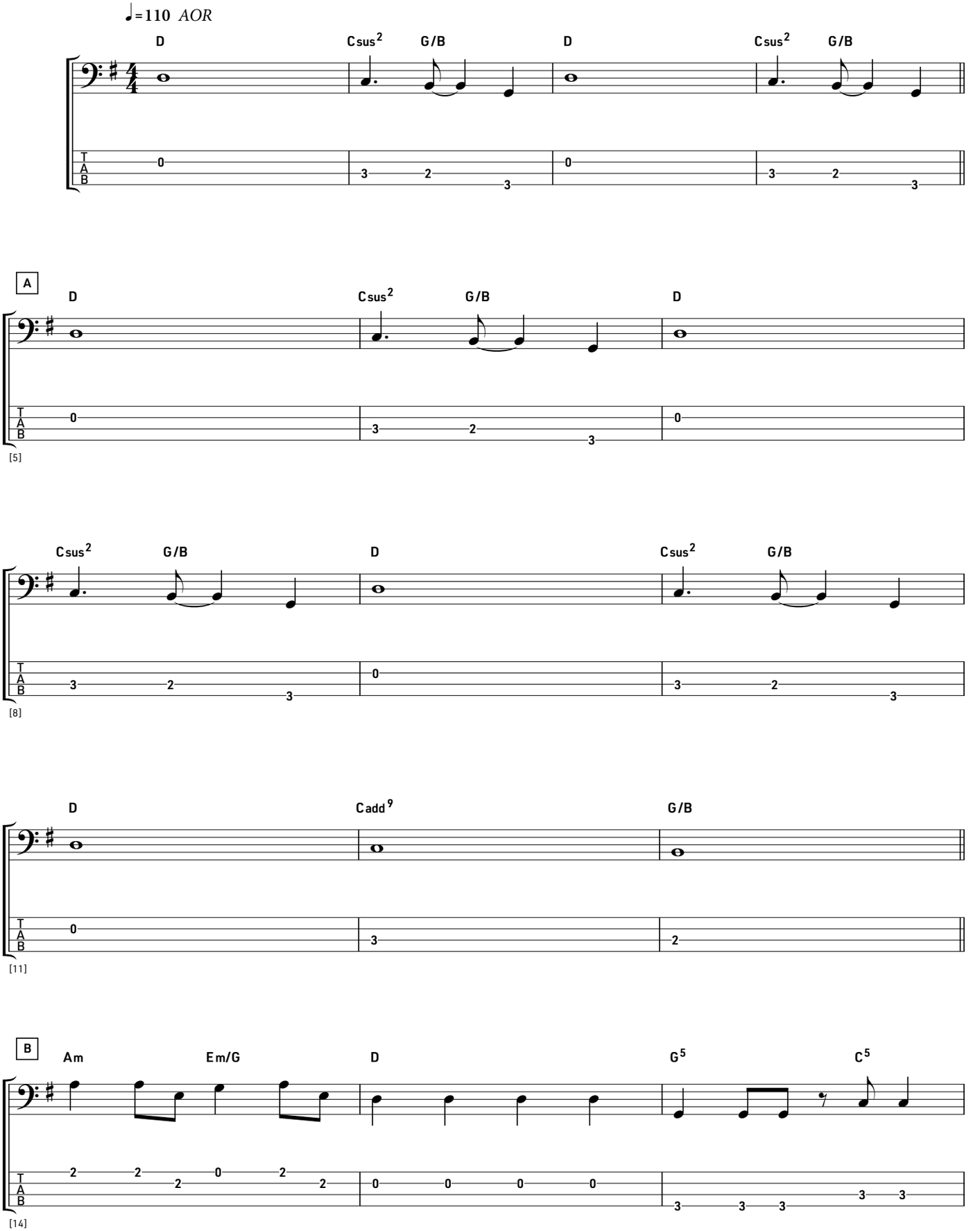


Foreigner *Foreigner* (1977)
One of the world's best-selling rock acts, British American band Foreigner's eponymous debut presents a variety of classic-rock style hits, with Lou Gramm's powerhouse vocals in full flow on 'Cold as Ice' and 'Feels Like the First Time'.

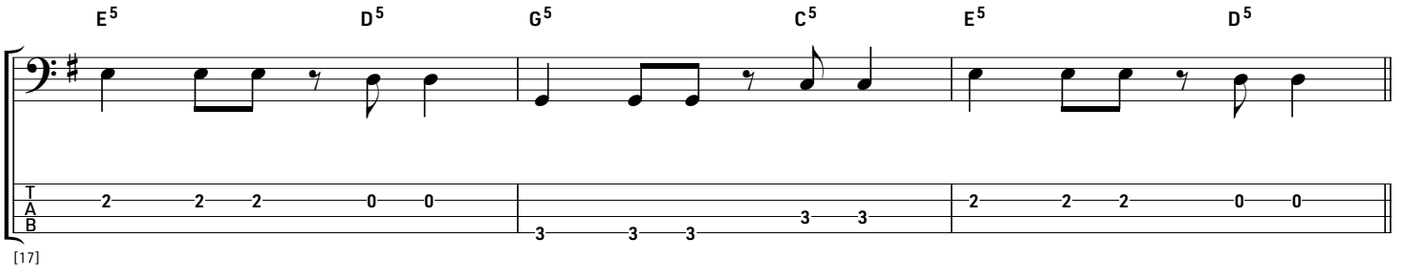
More Than a Feeling

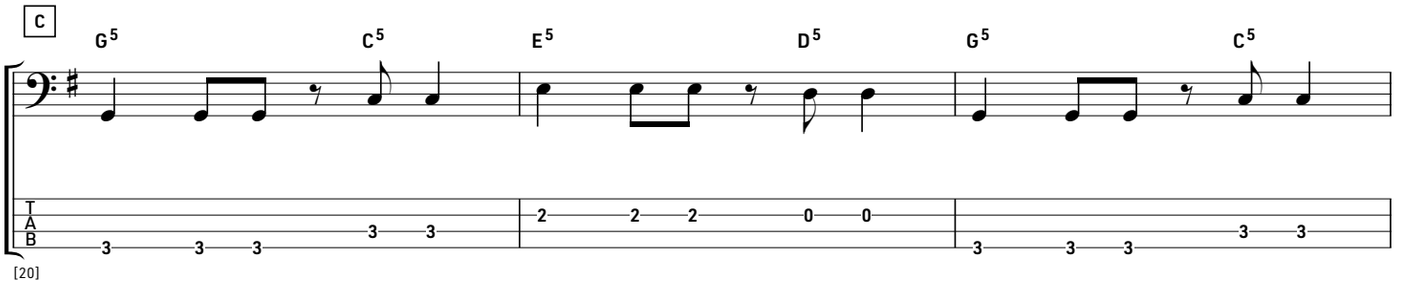
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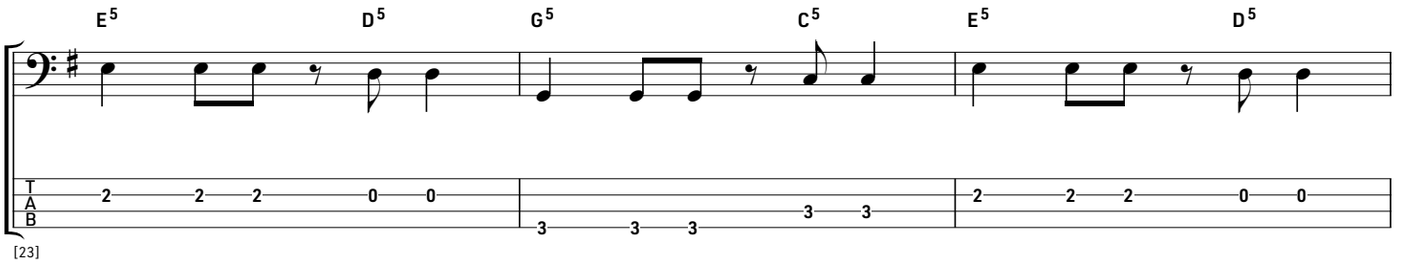
Boston

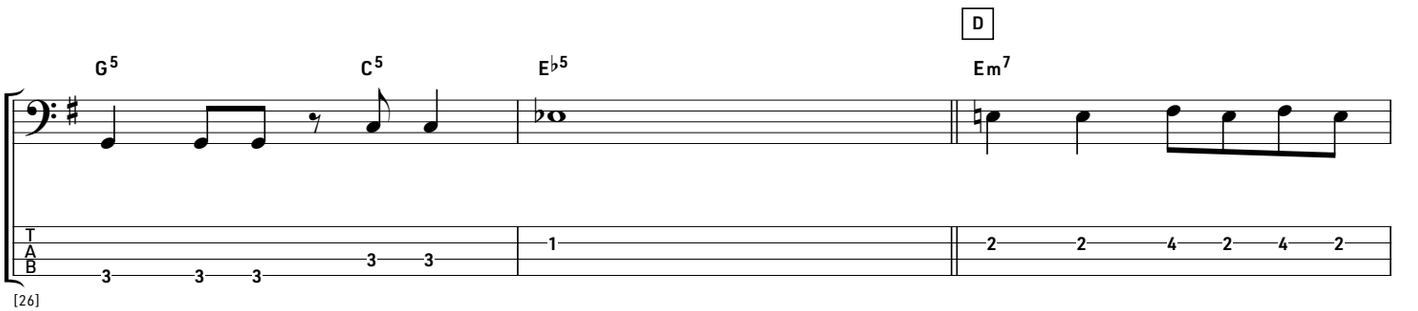


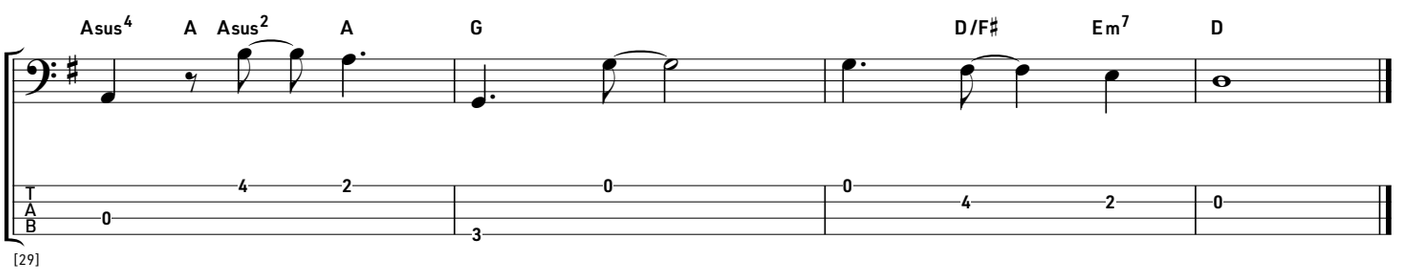
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E5 D5 G5 C5 E5 D5
[17]


C
G5 C5 E5 D5 G5 C5
[20]


E5 D5 G5 C5 E5 D5
[23]


G5 C5 E♭5
D
Em7
[26]


Asus4 A Asus2 A G D/F♯ Em7 D
[29]

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From the very beginning in 1991, Rockschool has been commissioning world-leading professionals to compose original pieces for our contemporary music grade exams. *Rockschool Originals* provide musicians with a diverse, innovative, and engaging selection of repertoire for use in their exams. These carefully benchmarked works explore a wide variety of genres, and introduce players to stylistic elements and techniques that are typical of that genre.

Ignite

'Ignite' is a hard-hitting alternative rock song, taking its influence from artists of the '90s and early 2000s such as Audioslave and the Red Hot Chilli Peppers. This era saw a return to the mainstream for rock bands, who had been sidelined in favour of more pop/electronic music. Making use of the classic "four on the floor" drum beat and riffs shared between guitar and bass, the song also explores "funkier" harmonies in the backing parts, which became common practice in this genre.



Recommended Listening **Red Hot Chili Peppers** *Californication* (1999)
The funk alt rock band Red Hot Chili Pepper's seventh studio album was a turning point in the band's career, containing songs such as 'Californication' and 'Scar Tissues' that were less in-your-face and had a more laid-back approach, being accessible while retaining their signature funk-inspired sound.

Downtown Detroit

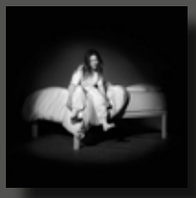
An off-shoot of soul music, motown rose to prominence throughout the '60s, owing to its greater pop appeal and "danceability". Like most pop music of the time, it borrowed heavily from blues music, with heavy use of 7th chords in the harmony, but set itself apart with unique drum beats that featured a lot of snare hits, as seen here with the "double-hit" on beat 2.



Recommended Listening **The Temptations** *The Temptations Sing Smokey* (1965)
There was a wide range of classic soul and R&B released under Motown records. The Temptations were one of their flagship music groups in the '60s. 'My Girl', with its smooth and soulful vocal harmonies, became one of Motown's best-known singles.
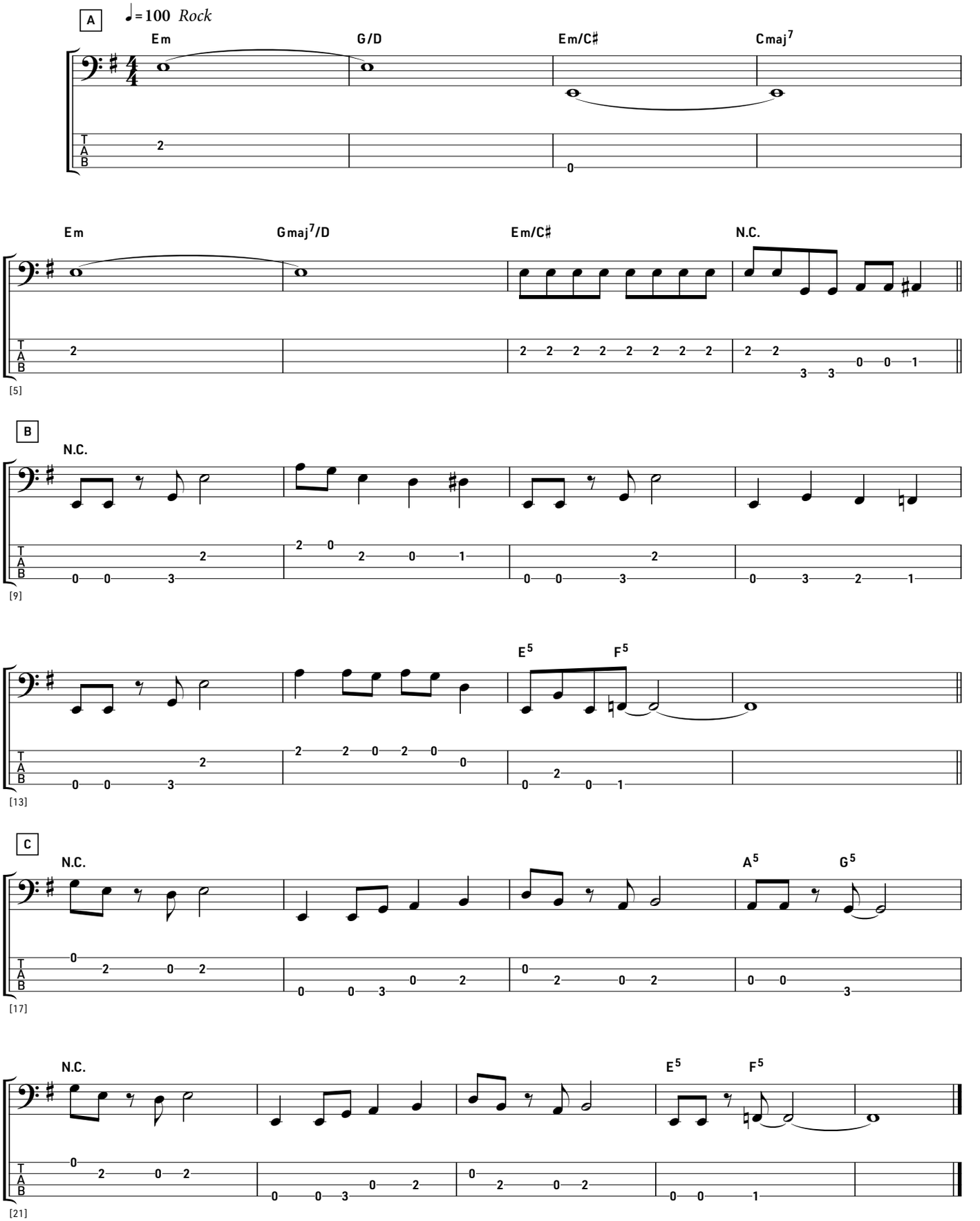
As Night Falls

Trap is a subgenre of hip hop that originated in the USA in the early '90s. It became instantly recognisable owing to its use of electronic effects and synthesised drums, which often featured complicated hi-hat patterns, as heard here in 'As Night Falls'. The instrumental parts in trap are often sparse and minimalist, leaving space for the singer to be more prominent, with their lyrics clearly audible.



Recommended Listening **Billie Eilish** *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?* (2019)
Billie Eilish's distinct whispered vocals and unique musical style has led to her gaining a large and diverse fanbase. Her debut album contains a range of songs with influences from electronic, pop and hip hop music to create a darker and moody pop sound.
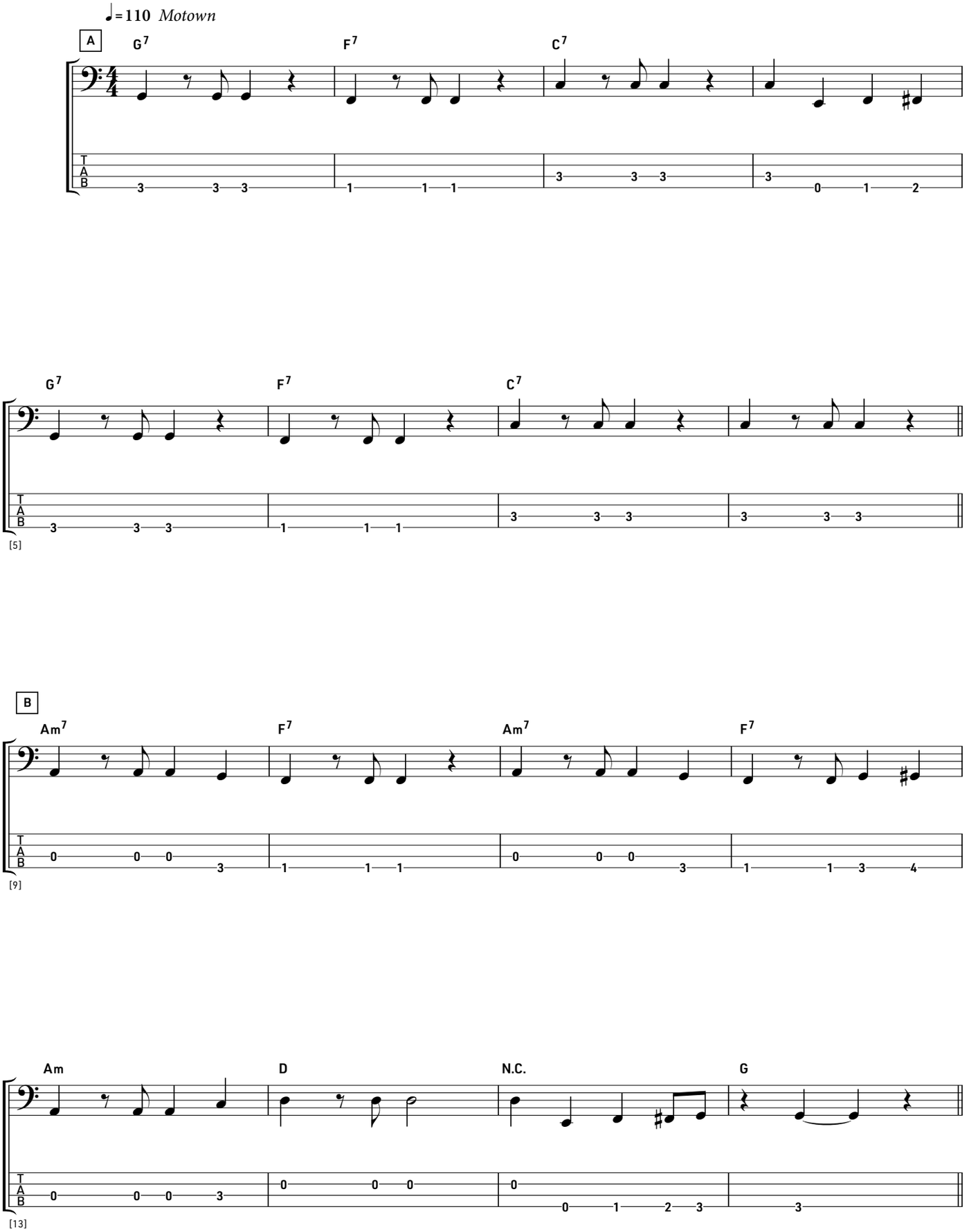
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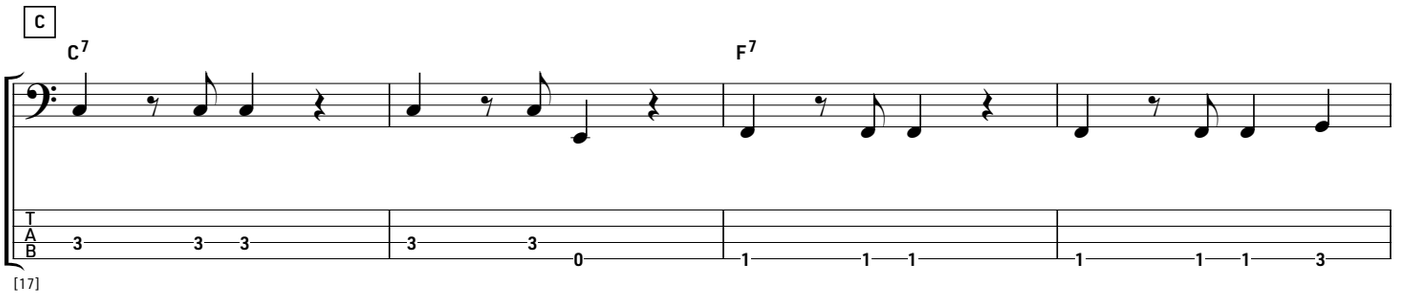
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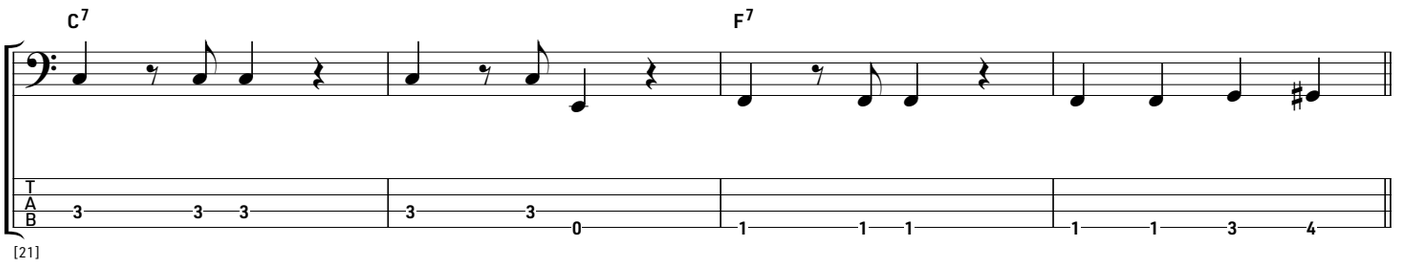
Downtown Detroit

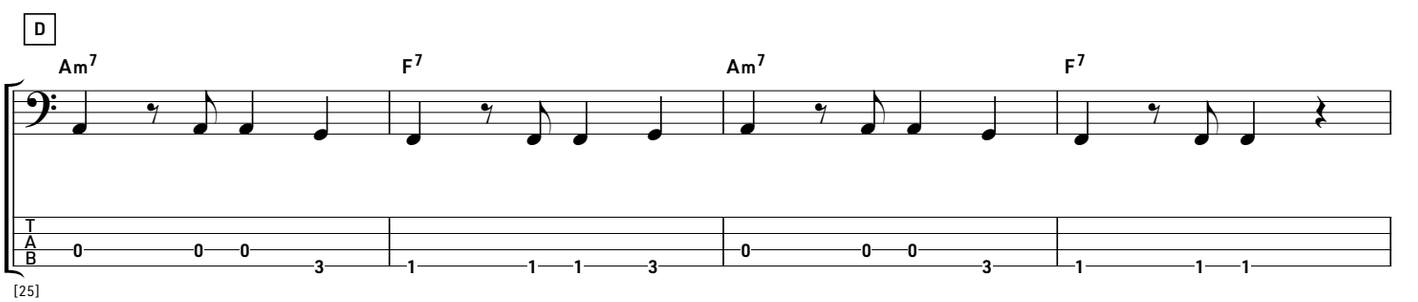
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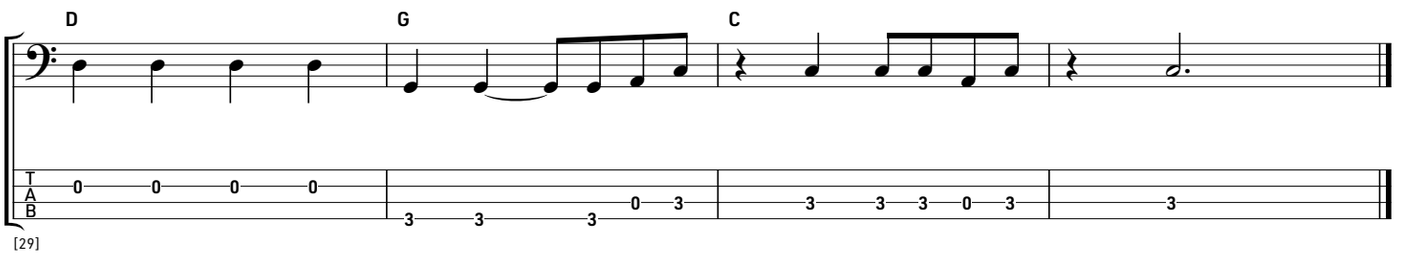


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C
C7
F7
[17]
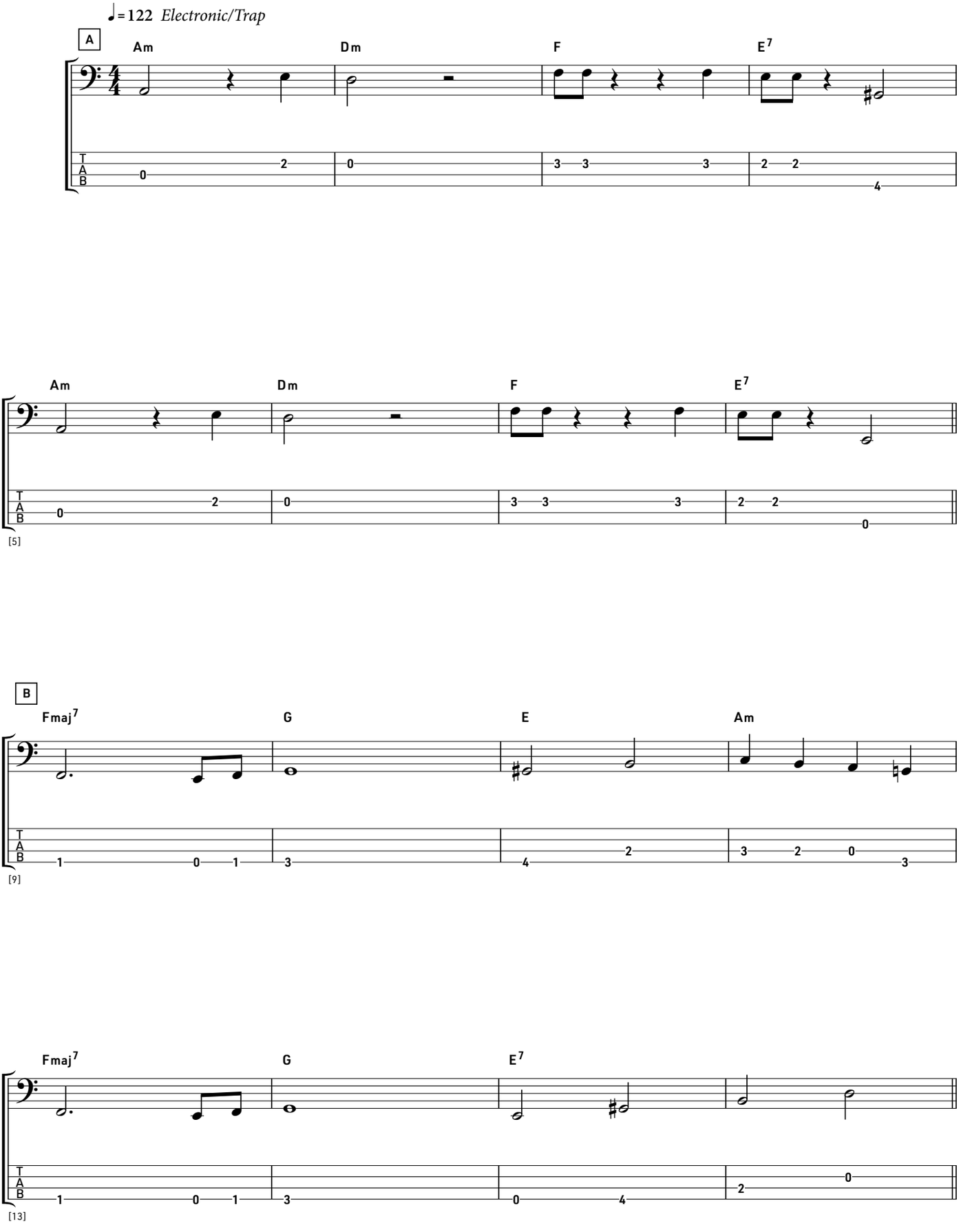

C7
F7
[21]


D
Am7
F7
Am7
F7
[25]

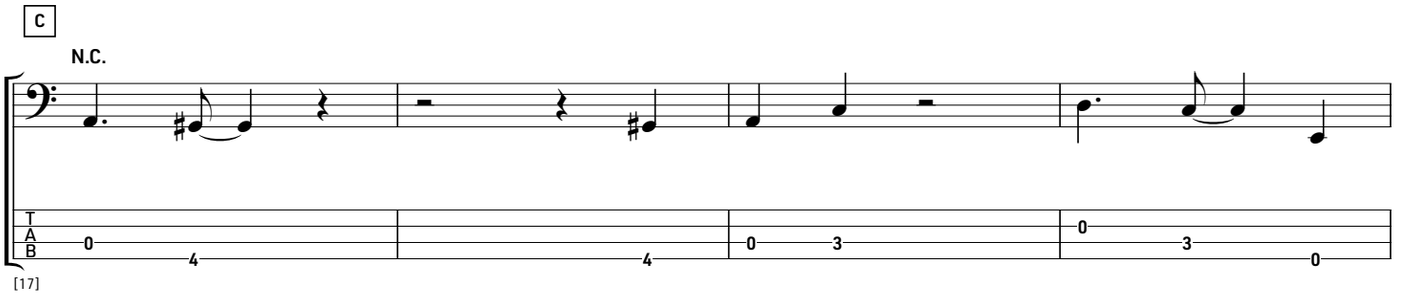

D
G
C
[29]

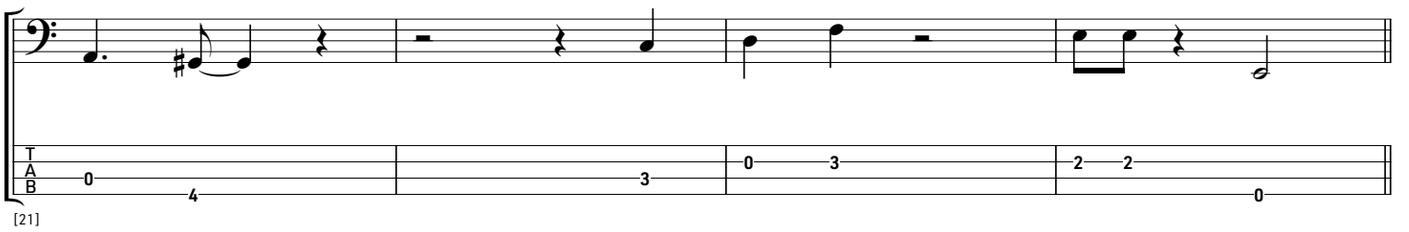
As Night Falls

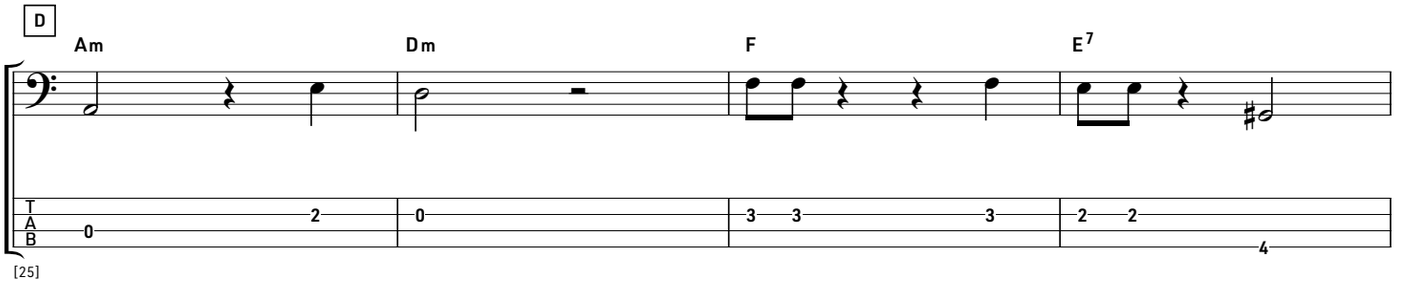
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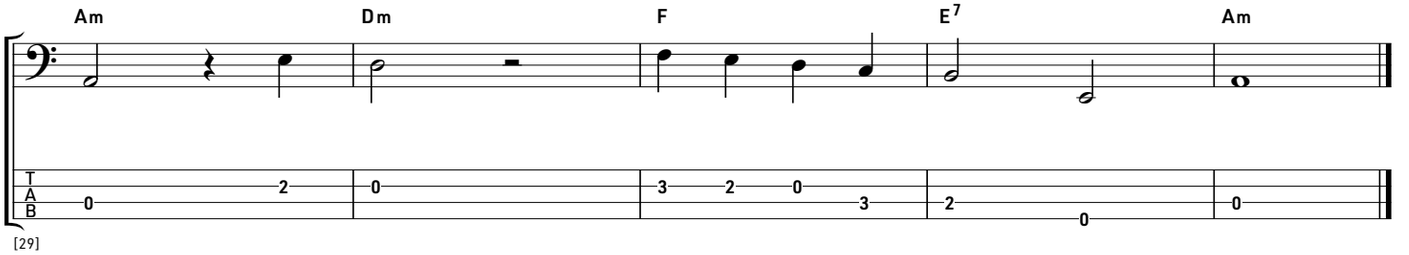


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C
N.C.
[17]


[21]


D
Am
Dm
F
E7
[25]


Am
Dm
F
E7
Am
[29]

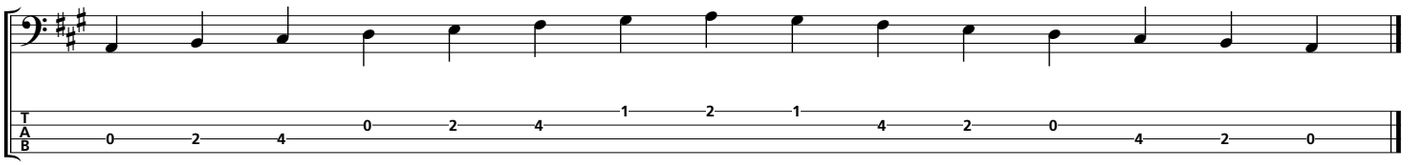
Technical Exercises

In this section the examiner will ask you to play a selection of exercises drawn from each of the three groups shown below. Groups A and B contain examples of the scales and arpeggios you can use when playing the pieces. In Group C you will be asked to prepare the bassline riff exercise and play it to the backing track in the exam. You do not need to memorise the exercises (and can use the book in the exam) but the examiner will be looking for the speed of your response. The examiner will also give credit for the level of your musicality.

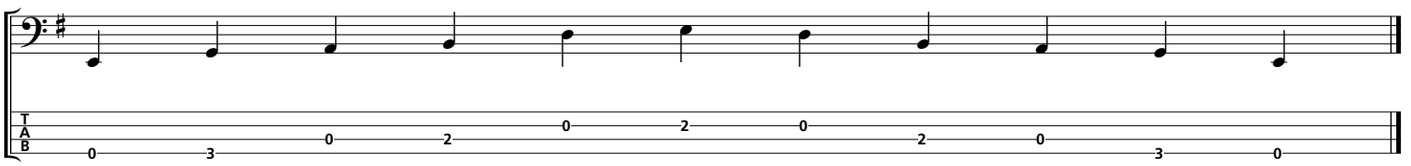
Groups A and B should be prepared on the starting notes of E, A and G. Before you start the section you will be asked whether you would like to play the exercises along with the click or hear a single bar of click before you commence the test. The tempo is ♩ = 70.

Group A: Scales

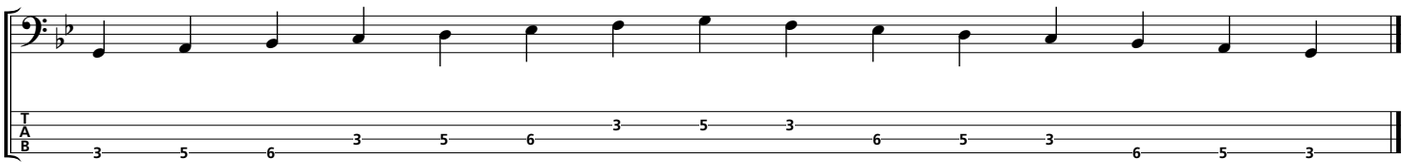
1. Major scale (A major scale shown)



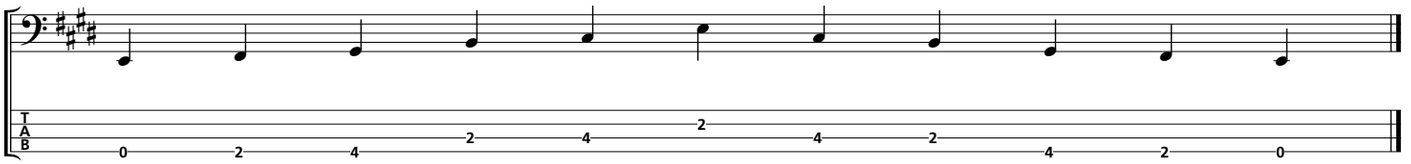
2. Minor pentatonic scale (E minor pentatonic scale shown)



3. Natural minor scale (G natural minor scale shown)



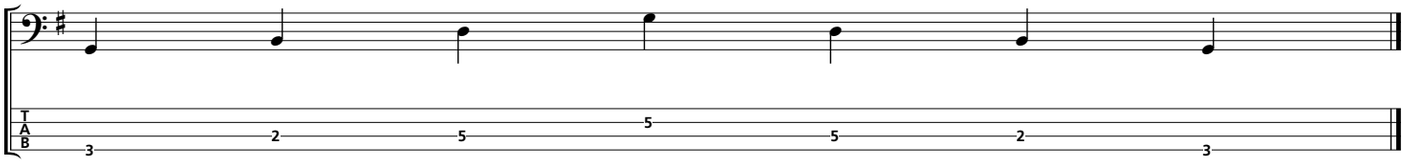
4. Major pentatonic scale (E major pentatonic scale shown)



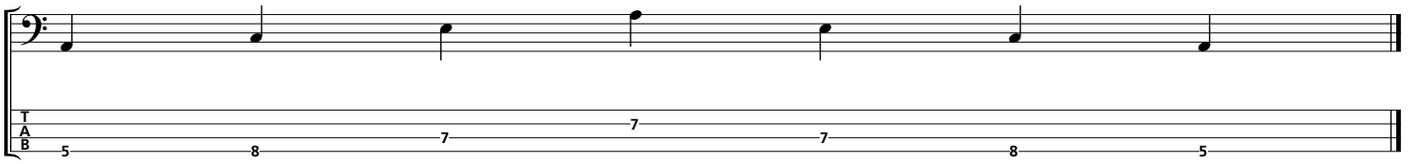
Group B: Arpeggios

One octave and should be played both ascending and descending

1. Major arpeggio (G major arpeggio shown)

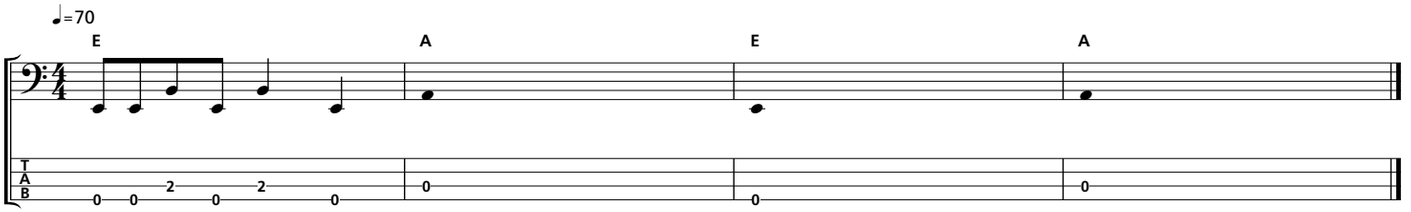


2. Minor arpeggio (A minor arpeggio shown)



Group C: Riff

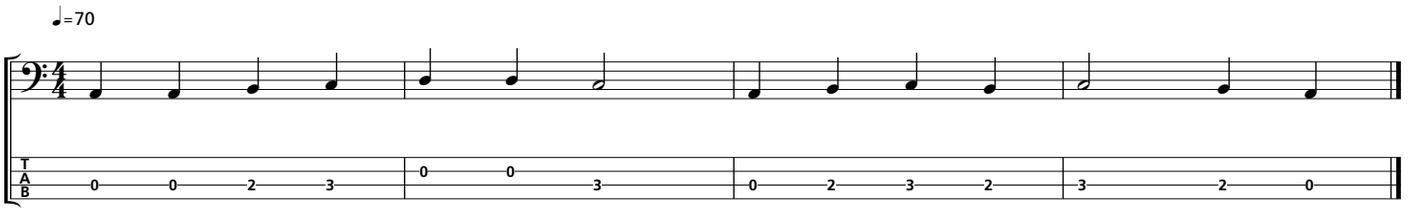
In the exam you will be asked to play the following riff to a backing track. The riff shown in bar 1 should be played in the same shape in bars 2–4. The root note of the pattern to be played is shown in the music in each of the subsequent three bars. The tempo is ♩ = 70.



Sight Reading

In the exam, you have a choice between either a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. The examiner will ask you which one you wish to choose before commencing. Once you have decided you cannot change your mind.

You will be asked to prepare a Sight Reading test which will be given to you by the examiner. The test is a four bar melody in the key of A minor. The examiner will allow you 90 seconds to prepare it and will set the tempo for you. The tempo is ♩ = 70.



Improvisation & Interpretation

In the exam, you have a choice between either a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. The examiner will ask you which one you wish to choose before commencing. Once you have decided you cannot change your mind.

You will be asked to play an improvised bassline to a backing track of four bars in the keys of either C major or A minor. You have 30 seconds to prepare then you will be allowed to practise during the first playing of the backing track before playing it to the examiner on the second playing of the backing track. This test is continuous with a one bar count-in at the beginning and after the practice session. The tempo is ♩= 70–80.



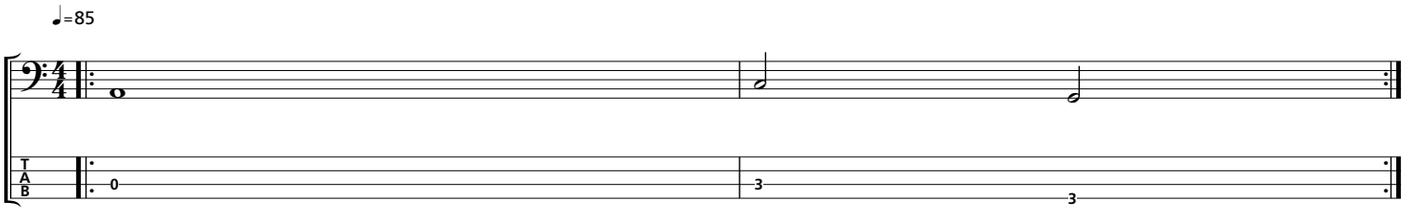
Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test to you twice. You will find one example of each type of test printed below.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play you three notes in sequence. You will identify whether the notes are higher or lower (up or down) in sequence. You will hear the test twice.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by a one bar vocal count-in. The tempo is ♩= 85.

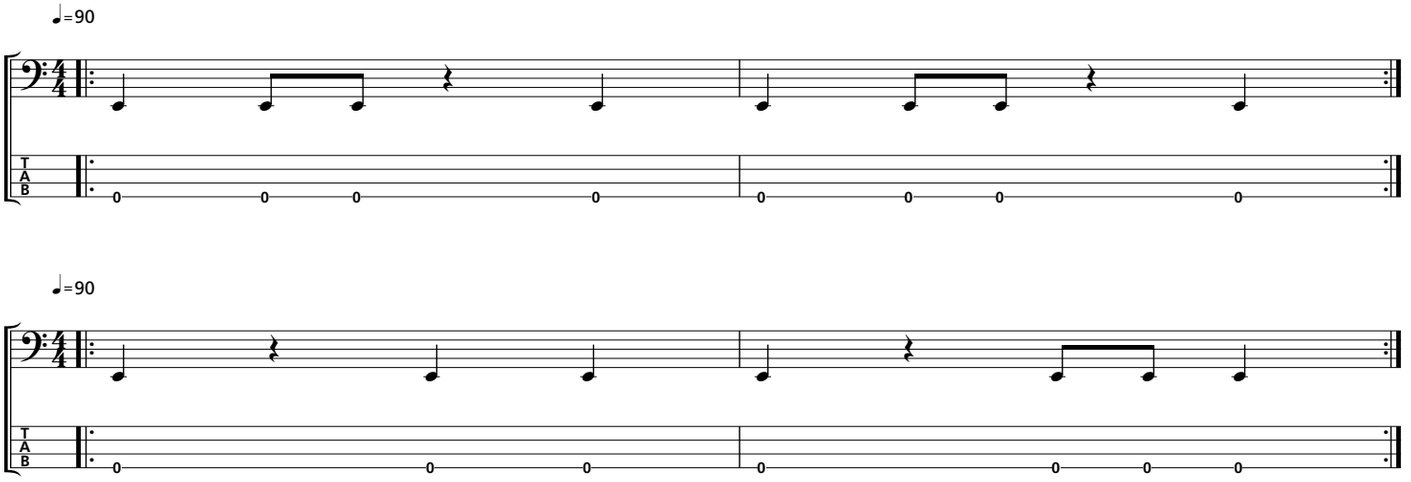


Candidate may answer either: "higher/lower" or "up/down".

Test 2: Rhythmic Recall

The examiner will play you a two bar rhythm played to a drum backing on the E string. You will hear the test twice. You will be asked to play the rhythm back. You will then be asked to identify the rhythm from two printed examples shown to you.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by a one bar count-in. There will be a short gap for you to practise. Next you will hear a vocal count-in and you will then play the rhythm to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩= 90.



General Musicianship Questions

In this part of the exam you will be asked five questions. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge and the fifth question asked will be about your instrument.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask you four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music that you have played in the exam. You will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Grade 1 the questions relating to your chosen performance piece will be drawn from the following:

- The bass clef
- The time signature
- Whole, half, quarter and eighth note values
- The difference between a major and minor chord

Instrument Knowledge

The examiner will also ask you one question regarding your instrument.

In Grade 1 you will be asked to identify:

- The following parts of your bass – neck, fretboard, body, tuning-pegs, pick-ups and bridge
- One main bass make other than that of the bass you are playing
- Names of the open strings

Further Information

Tips on how to approach this part of this exam can be found in the *Syllabus Guide* for bass on the Rockschool website: ***www.rslawards.com***

Marking Schemes

Grade Exams | Debut to Grade 8

ELEMENT	PASS	MERIT	DISTINCTION
Performance Piece 1	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 2	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 3	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Technical Exercises	9–10 out of 15	11–12 out of 15	13 + out of 15
Sight Reading ***or*** Improvisation & Interpretation	6 out of 10	7–8 out of 10	9 + out of 10
Ear Tests	6 out of 10	7–8 out of 10	9 + out of 10
General Musicianship Questions	3 out of 5	4 out of 5	5 out of 5
TOTAL MARKS	**60%+**	**74%+**	**90%+**

Performance Certificates | Debut to Grade 8

ELEMENT	PASS	MERIT	DISTINCTION
Performance Piece 1	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 2	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 3	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 4	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 5	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
TOTAL MARKS	**60%+**	**75%+**	**90%+**

Entering RSL Exams

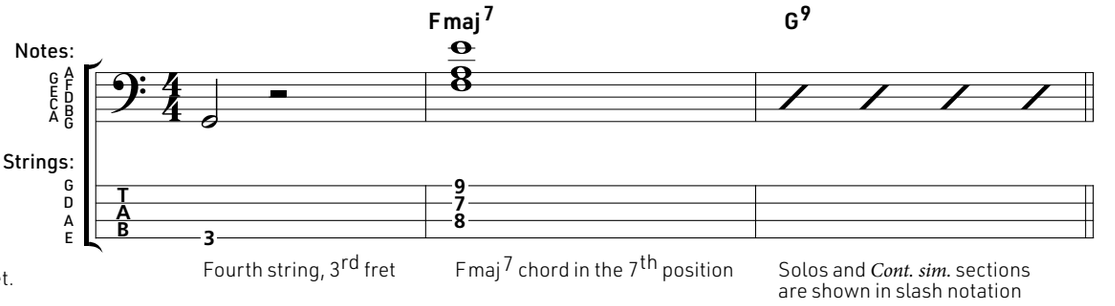
Entering a Rockschool exam is easy, just go online and follow our simple six step process. All details for entering online, dates, fees, regulations and Free Choice pieces can be found at *www.rslawards.com*

- All candidates should ensure they bring their own grade syllabus book to the exam or have proof of digital purchase ready to show the examiner.
- All Grade 6–8 candidates must ensure that they bring valid photo ID to their exam.

Bass Notation Explained

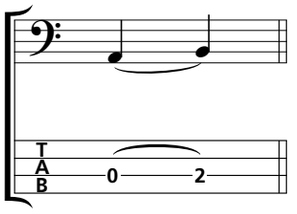
THE MUSICAL STAVE shows pitches and rhythms and is divided by lines into bars. Pitches are named after the first seven letters of the alphabet.

TABLATURE graphically represents the guitar fingerboard. Each horizontal line represents a string and each number represents a fret.

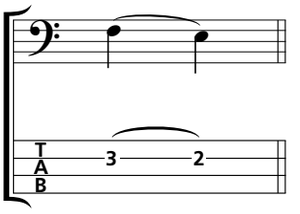


Definitions For Special Bass Guitar Notation

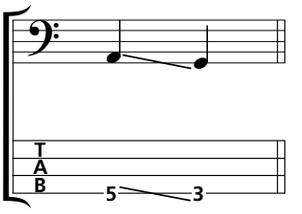
HAMMER-ON: Pick the lower note then sound the higher note by fretting it without picking.



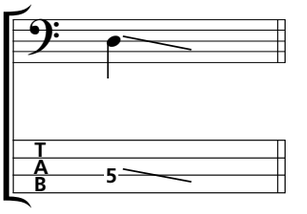
PULL-OFF: Pick the higher note then sound the lower note by lifting your finger without picking.



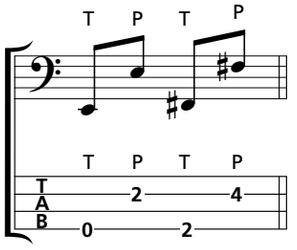
SLIDE: Pick the first note and slide to the next. If the line connects (as below) the second note is not repicked.



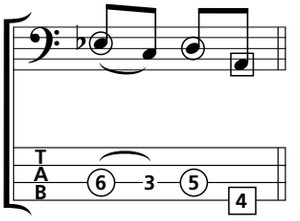
GLISSANDO: Slide off of a note at the end of its rhythmic value. The note that follows is repicked.



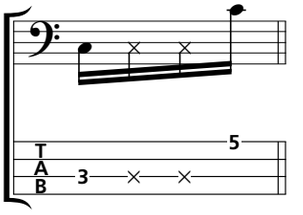
SLAP STYLE: Slap bass technique is indicated through the letters T (thumb) and P (pull).



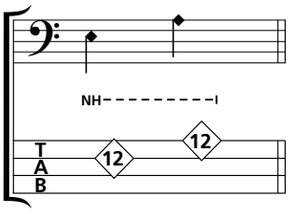
TAPPING: Sound note by tapping the string – circles denote a picking hand tap, squares a fretting hand tap.



DEAD (GHOST) NOTES: Pick the string while the note is muted by your fretting hand.



NATURAL HARMONICS: Lightly touch the string above the indicated fret then pick to sound a harmonic.





(accent) ▪ Accentuate note (play it louder).



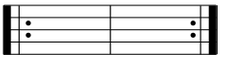
(staccato) ▪ Shorten time value of note.



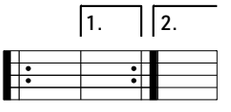
▪ Fermata (Pause)

D.𝄋. al Coda ▪ Go back to the sign (𝄋), then play until the bar marked **To Coda** 𝌆 then skip to the section marked 𝌆 **Coda**.

D.C. al Fine ▪ Go back to the beginning of the song and play until the bar marked ***Fine*** (end).



▪ Repeat the bars between the repeat signs.



▪ When a repeated section has different endings, play the first ending only the first time and the second ending only the second time.

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BASS



BASS GRADE 1

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