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BASS GRADE 8

BASS

GRADE 8

9 Tracks for GRADE 8

The Original ROCKSCHOOL ~ EST. 1991 ~



R&L

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Songs from

RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS, RUSH, HIATUS KAIYOTE, CHICK COREA, DAVID SANBORN, VULFPECK

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rockschool®

BASS

Grade 8

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

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Welcome to Rockschool Bass Grade 8

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.

Spain

Artist: Chick Corea
Source: *Light as a Feather* (Album, 1973)
Genre: Jazz Fusion

'Spain' is an instrumental jazz fusion piece written by composer and pianist Chick Corea. It is arguably Corea's most recognisable work and is now considered a jazz standard. The piece takes its inspiration from the famous 'Concierto de Aranjuez' by Joaquín Rodrigo, with the slow opening of the full-length version being a direct quote from the second movement. The original composition featured on the album *Light as a Feather*, the second studio album to be released by Chick Corea and his band Return to Forever.

Born Armando Anthony Corea in 1941, Chick's father was a jazz trumpeter and leader of a Dixieland band in the '30s and '40s. He introduced his son to the piano at the age of four, and by eight, Chick was proficient. He had also begun learning the drums, which led to him developing his unique "percussive" approach to playing the piano, giving his music a strong rhythmical quality.

Corea began his music career in the '60s, with several tours and the release of his first studio album *Tones for Joan's Bones*. Throughout his career he has released an incredible 81 studio albums, participated in countless collaborations and remains a prominent figure in the world of jazz, even after his untimely passing in 2021.



Clayton Call / Redferns *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Return to Forever ft. Chick Corea *Where Have I Known You Before* (1974)
This synth-heavy, jazz fusion album from Return to Forever marked a shift in Corea's musical output from avant-garde jazz to a more accessible sound. It was also the mainstream debut of then 19-year-old Al Di Meola, who is now considered one of the finest living jazz guitarists.
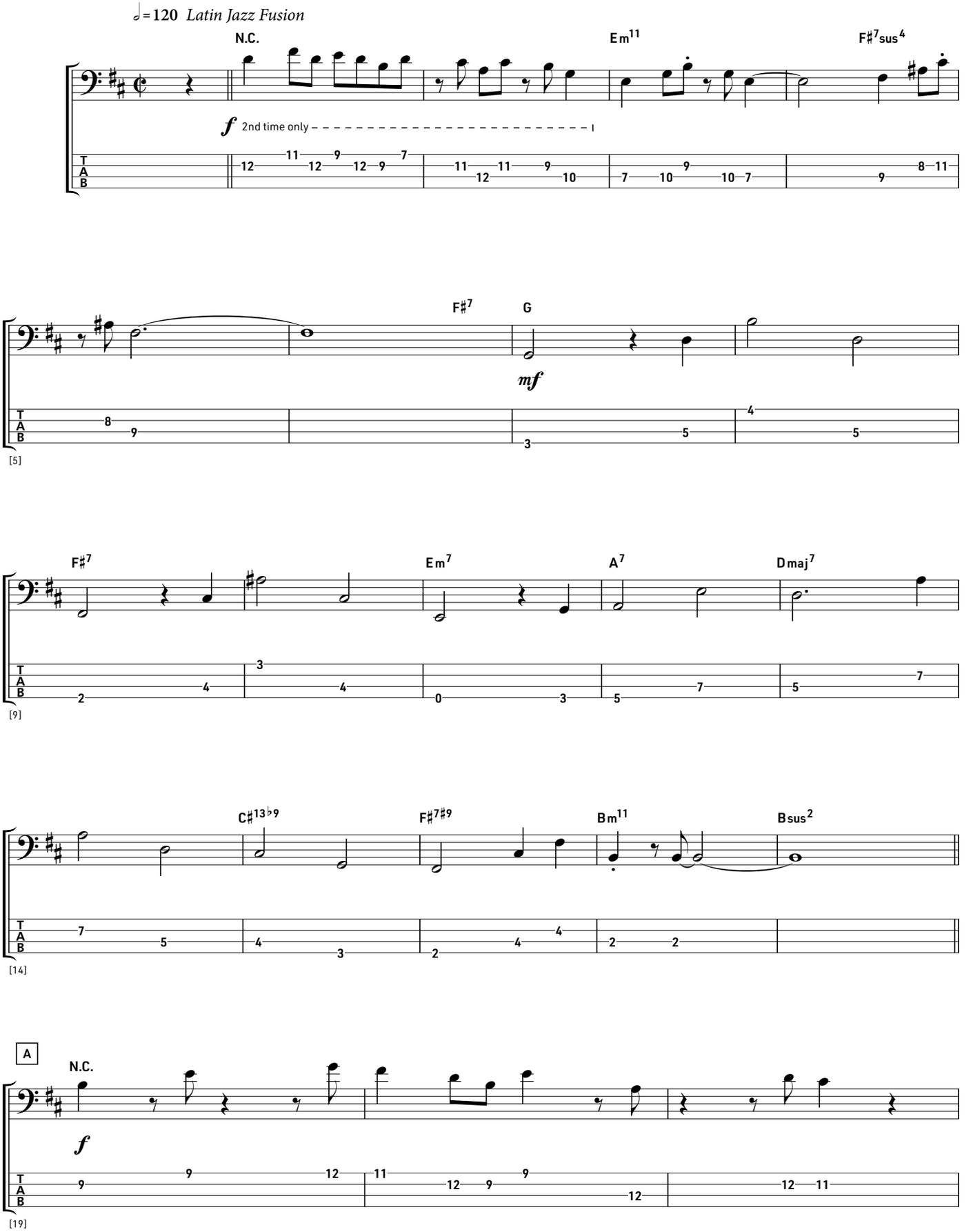


Weather Report *Heavy Weather* (1977)
Weather Report's critically acclaimed *Heavy Weather* had a distinct voice within the jazz fusion canon, blending elements of traditional jazz with funk and rock. Their most commercially successful record, it features the iconic jazz standard 'Birdland'.
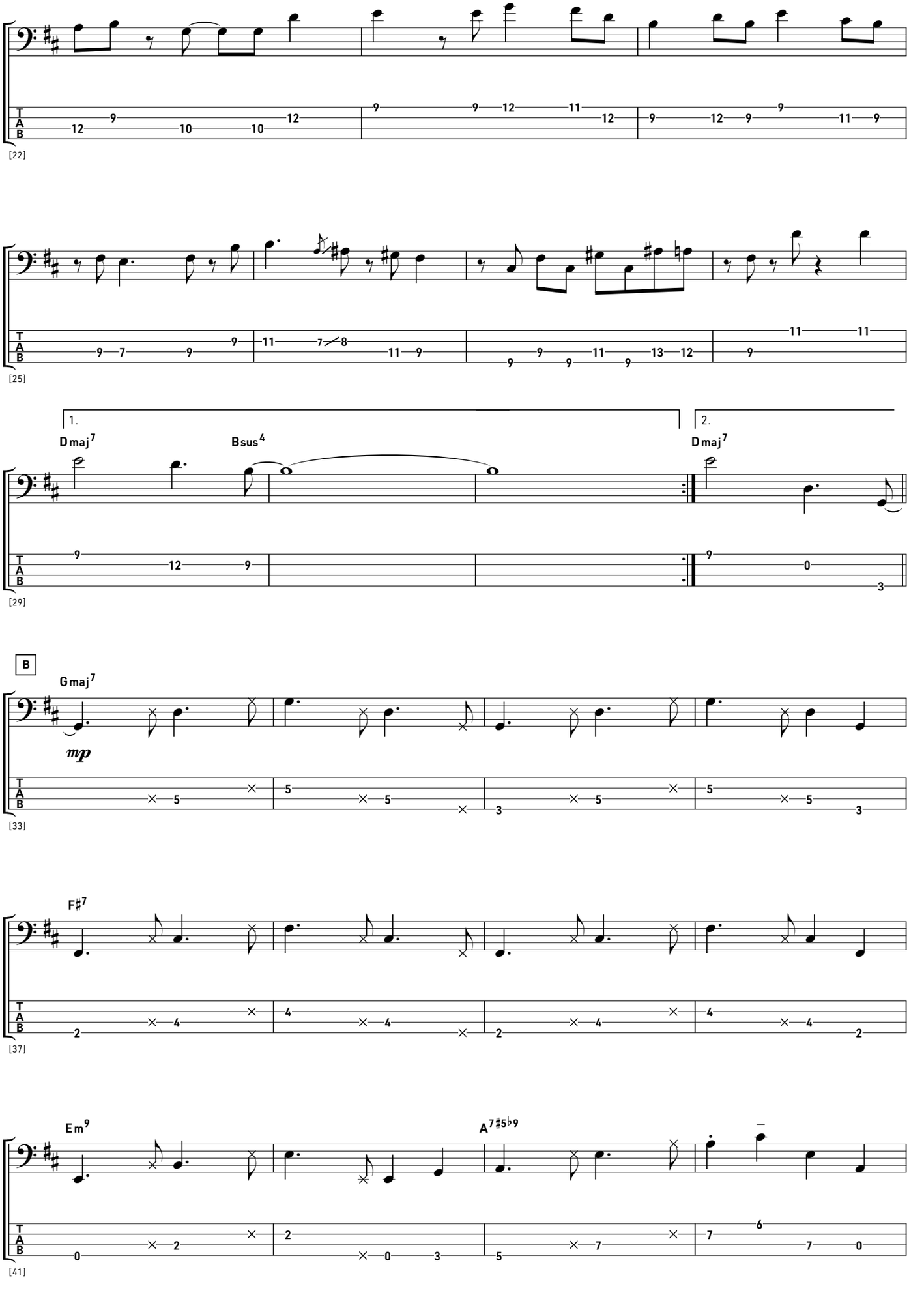
Spain
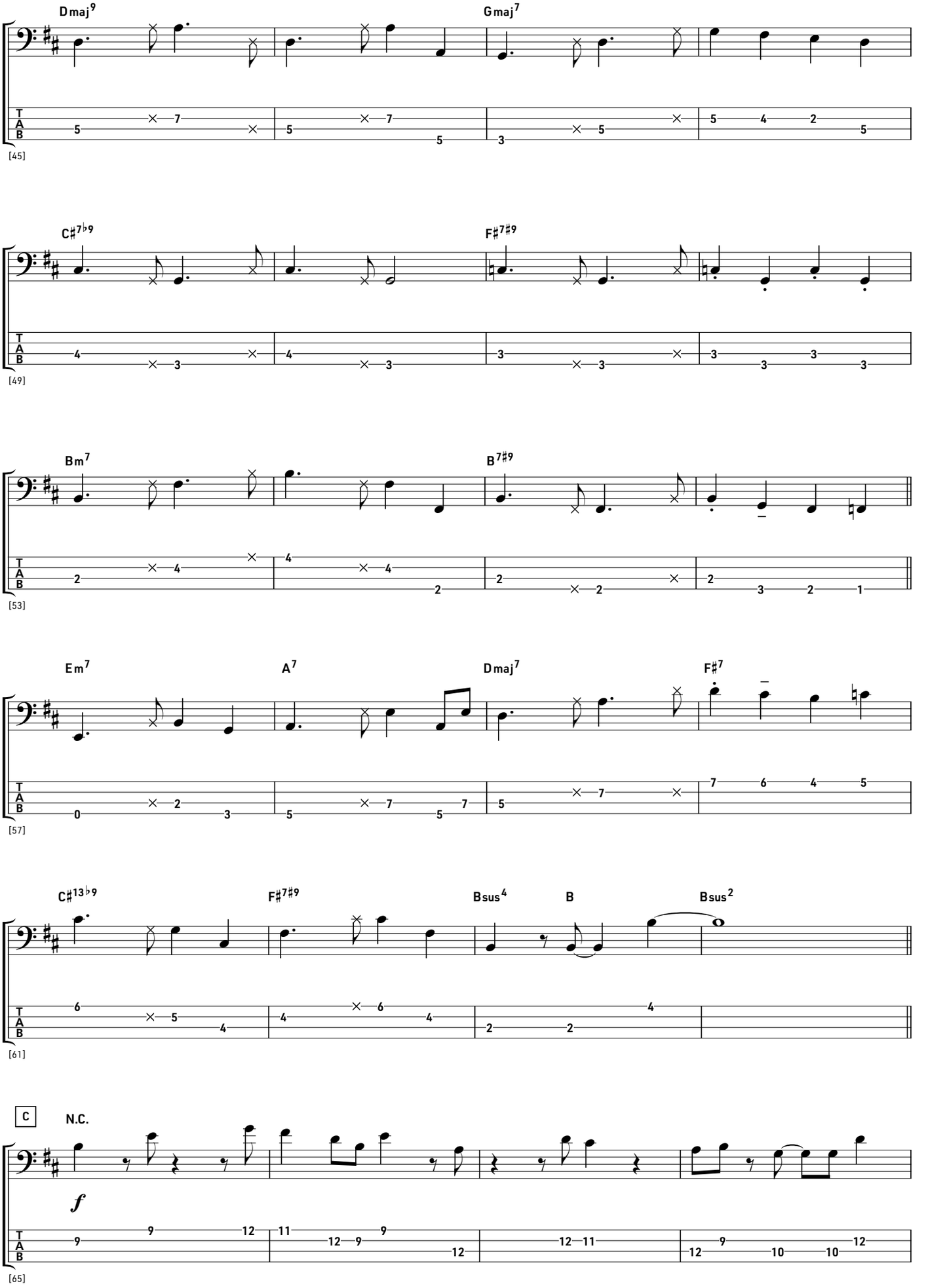
By Chick Corea

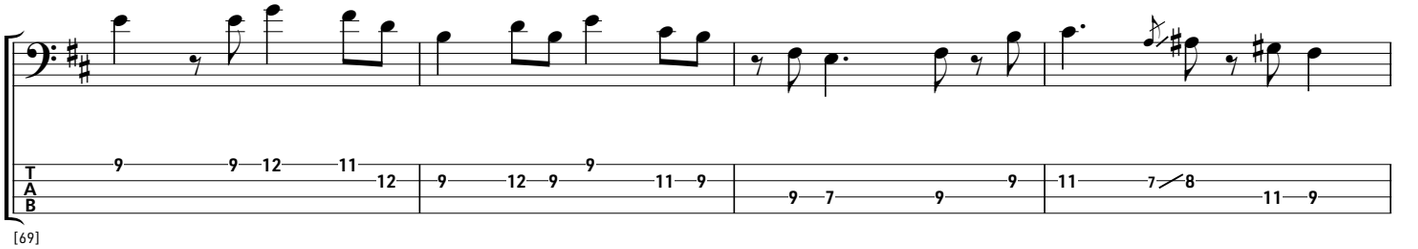
Chick Corea

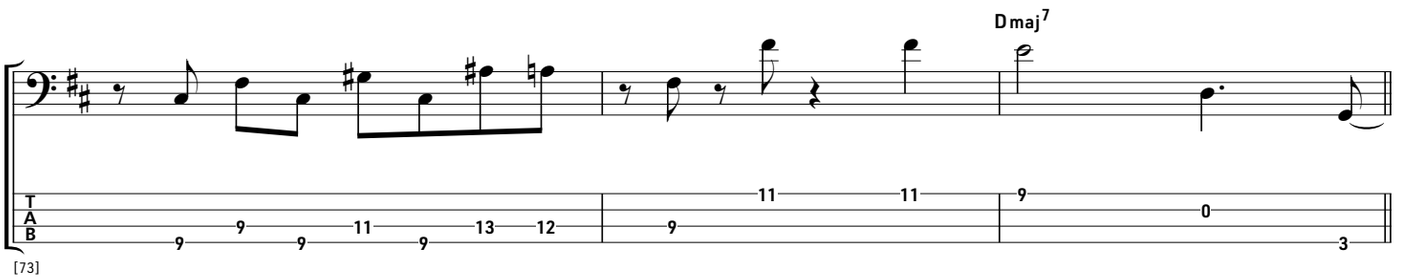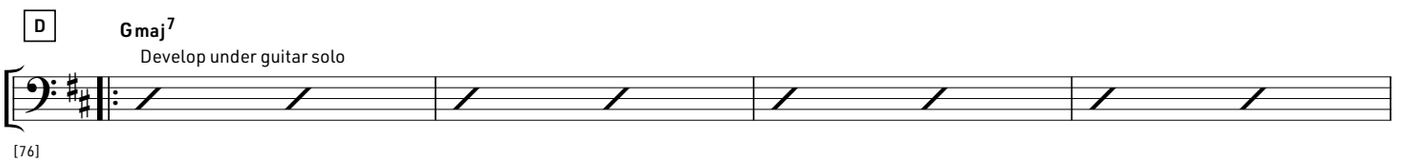


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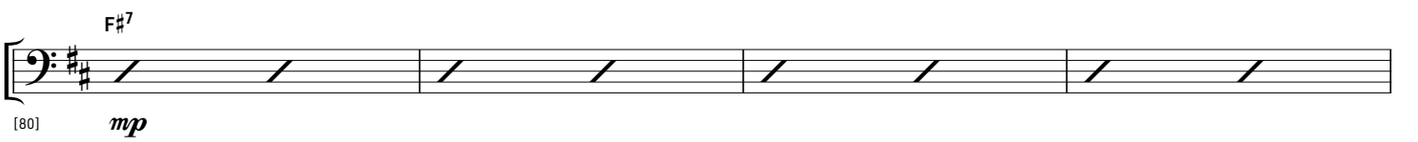

[22]
[25]
1.
2.
Dmaj7
Bsus4
Dmaj7
[29]
B
Gmaj7
mp
[33]
F♯7
[37]
Em9
A7♯5♭9
[41]
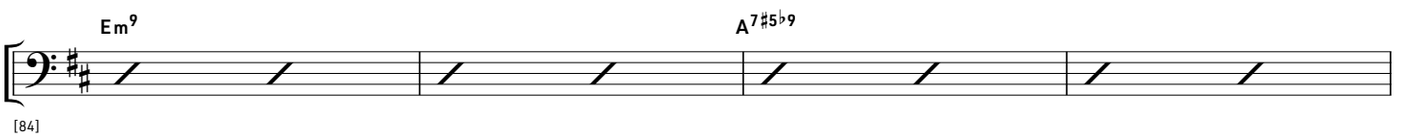

Dmaj9
Gmaj7
[45]
C♯7♭9
F♯7♯9
[49]
Bm7
B7♯9
[53]
Em7
A7
Dmaj7
F♯7
[57]
C♯13♭9
F♯7♯9
Bsus4
B
Bsus2
[61]
C
N.C.
f
[65]
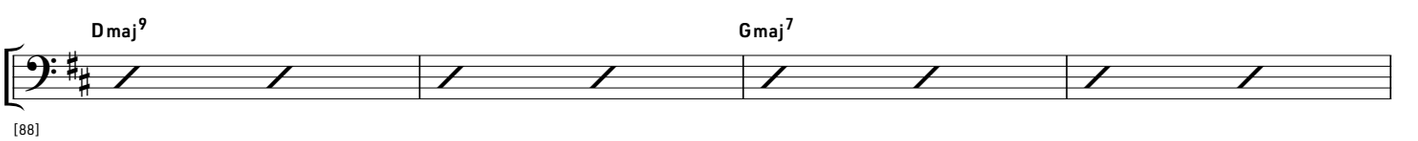

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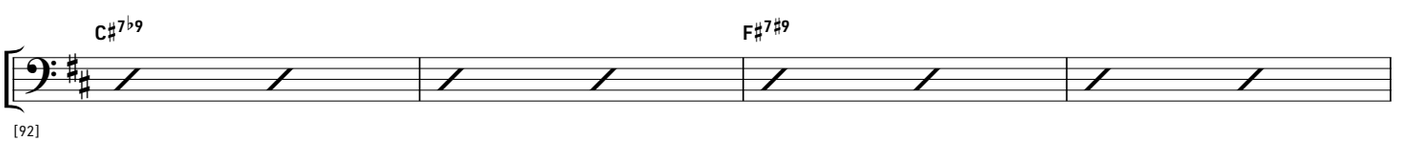

Dmaj7
[73]

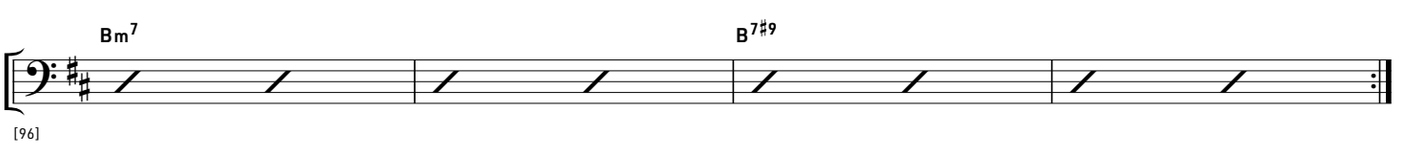

D
Gmaj7
Develop under guitar solo
[76]


F♯7
[80]
mp
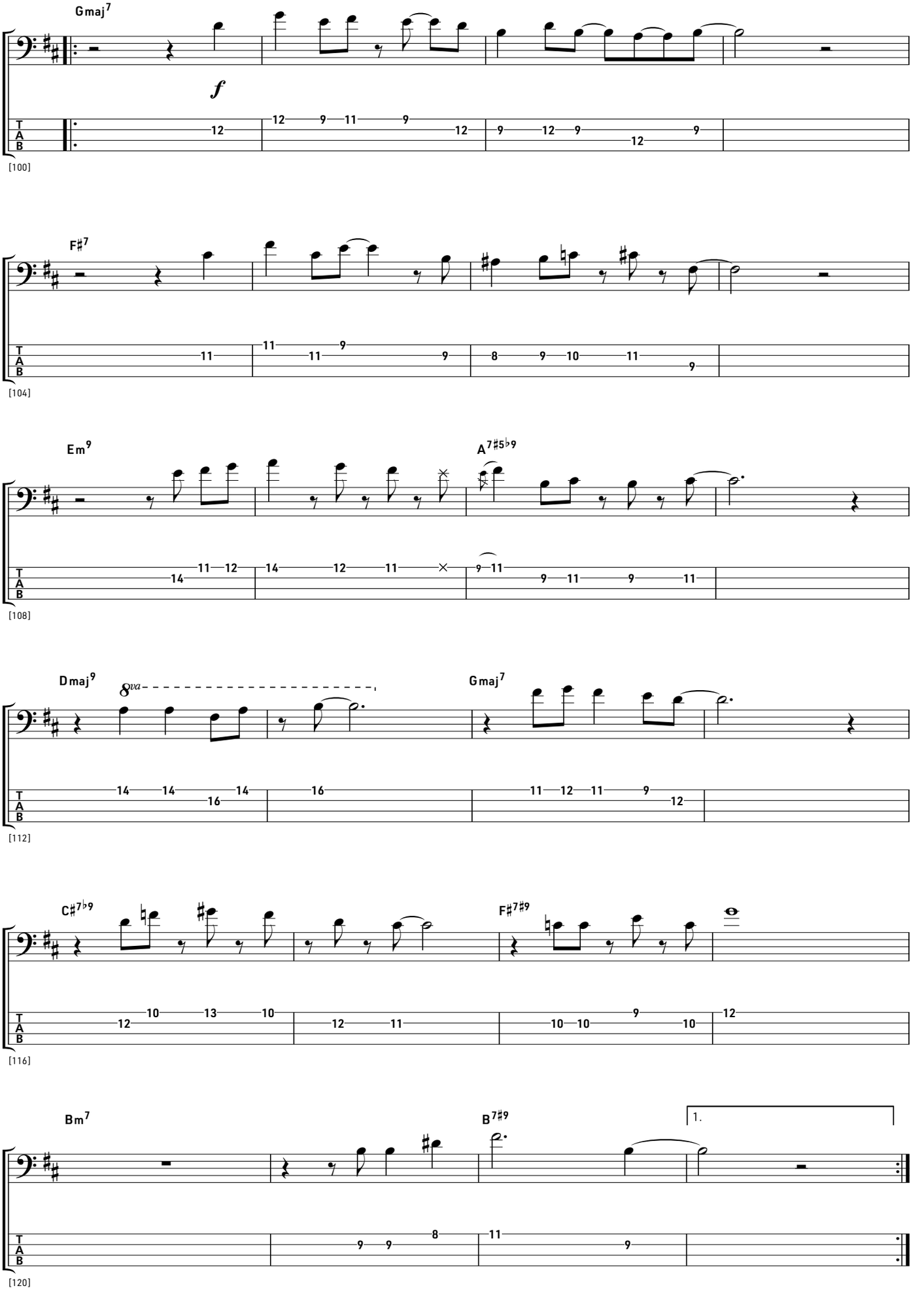

Em9
A7♯5♭9
[84]

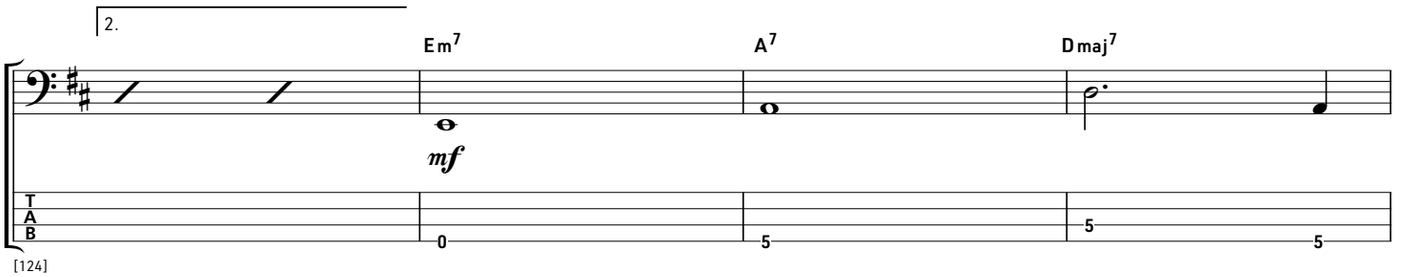

Dmaj9
Gmaj7
[88]


C♯7♭9
F♯7♯9
[92]

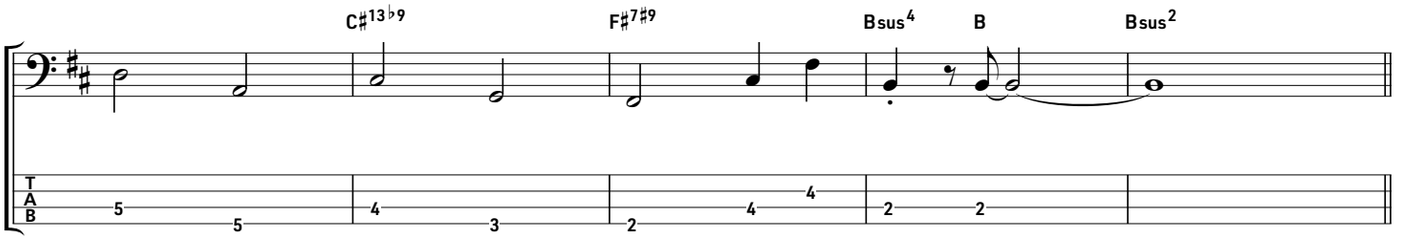

Bm7
B7♯9
[96]

Bass Solo (2nd time only, 24 bars)

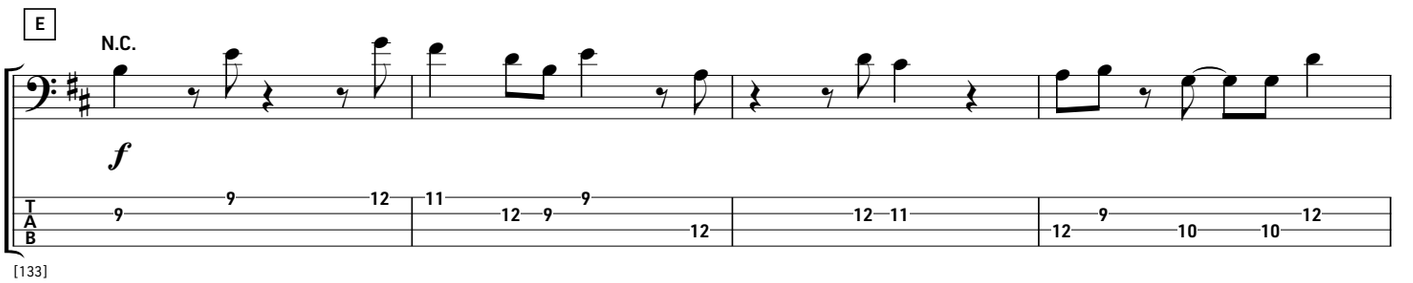




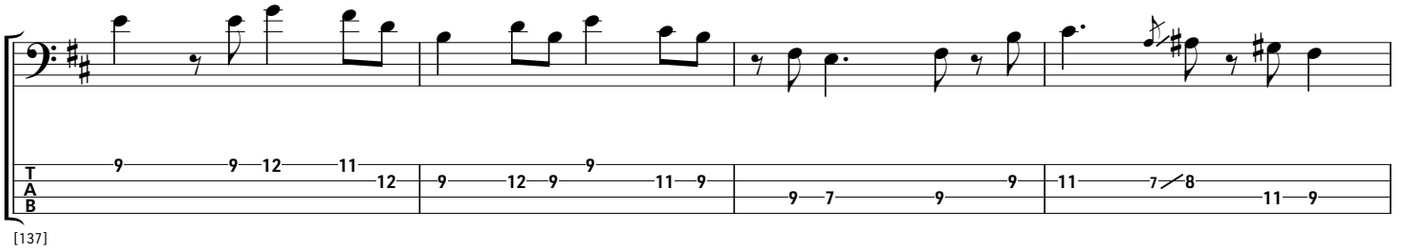
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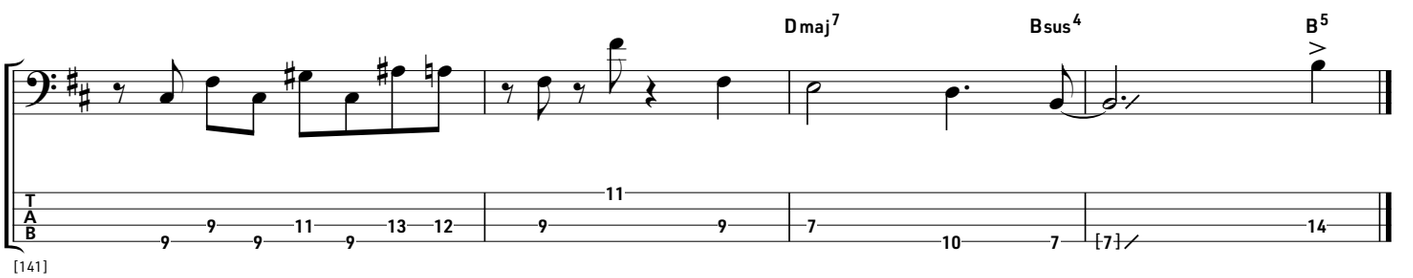
[128]



[133]



[137]



[141]

Breathing Underwater

Artist: Hiatus Kaiyote
Source: *Choose Your Weapon* (Album, 2015)
Genre: Neo-Soul

'Breathing Underwater' is a song by neo-soul quartet Hiatus Kaiyote, that features on their 2015 studio album *Choose Your Weapon*. The song was met with critical acclaim upon release, and although the album didn't chart in the UK, it was much more successful in the band's home nation of Australia, debuting at number 22 on the Australian Albums chart. In 2016, 'Breathing Underwater' received a nomination for Best R&B Performance at the 58th Grammy Awards ceremony.

The Melbourne-based Hiatus Kaiyote formed in the early 2010s after bassist Paul Bender heard vocalist Nai Palm perform live, later bringing in Perrin Moss and Simon Mavin for their first gig in 2011. The group are influenced by several genres including jazz, soul, R&B, progressive rock, funk and samba, resulting in their distinctive and futuristic neo-soul sound. Since the band's formation, they have released three studio albums and continue to perform and tour across the world.

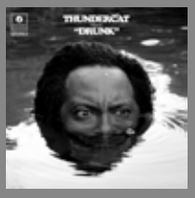


Michael Buckner / Wireimage *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Erykah Badu *Mama's Gun* (2000)
The acclaimed *Mama's Gun* epitomised the 2000s neo-soul sound. Blending funk, jazz, R&B and hip hop elements, it includes iconic songs such as 'Bag Lady' and 'Didn't Cha Know' and features a star-studded list of producers including J Dilla and Questlove.



Thundercat *Drunk* (2017)
Thundercat's 2017 album *Drunk* shows his own unique and eccentric musical voice, with a collection of songs that can sound both groovy and trippy at the same time. This is encapsulated in the unique, head-nodding hit single 'Them Changes'.

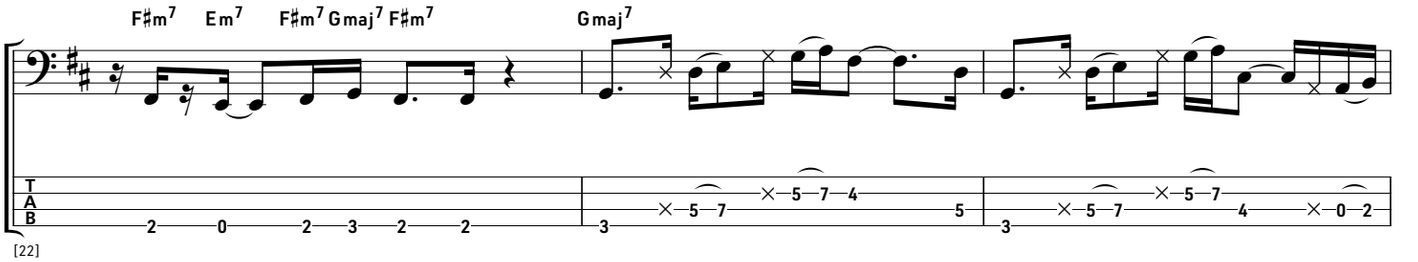
Breathing Underwater

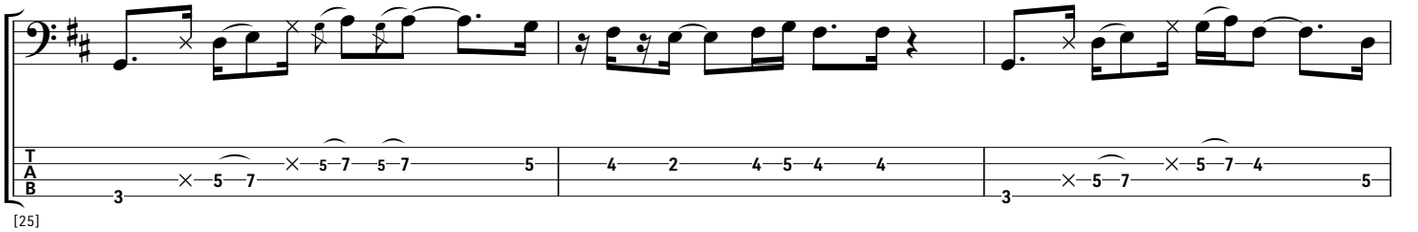
Words and Music by Paul Bender, Simon Mavin,
Perrin Moss and Naomi Saalfield
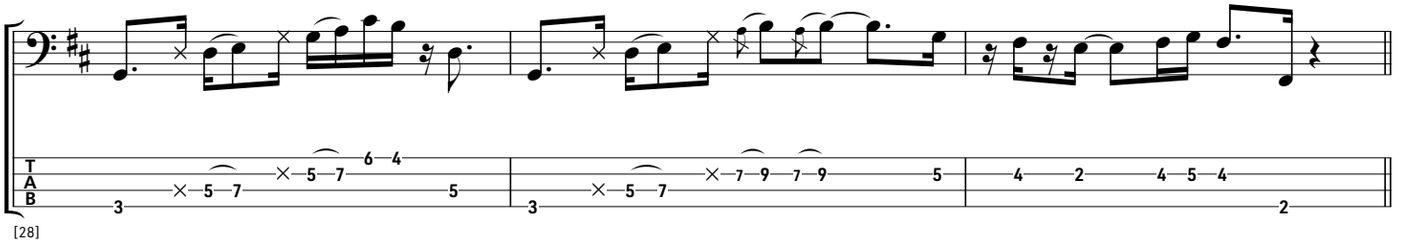
Hiatus Kaiyote

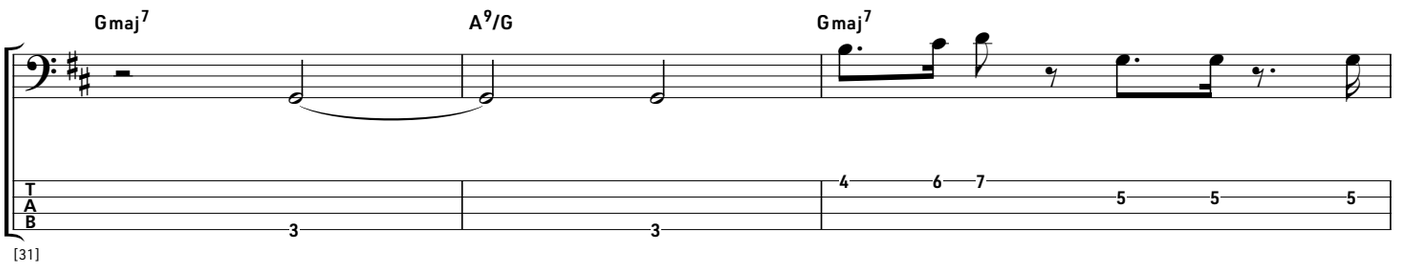


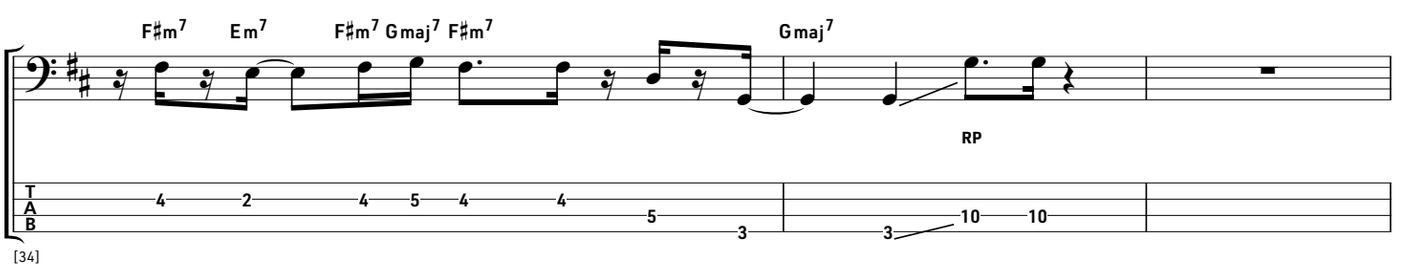
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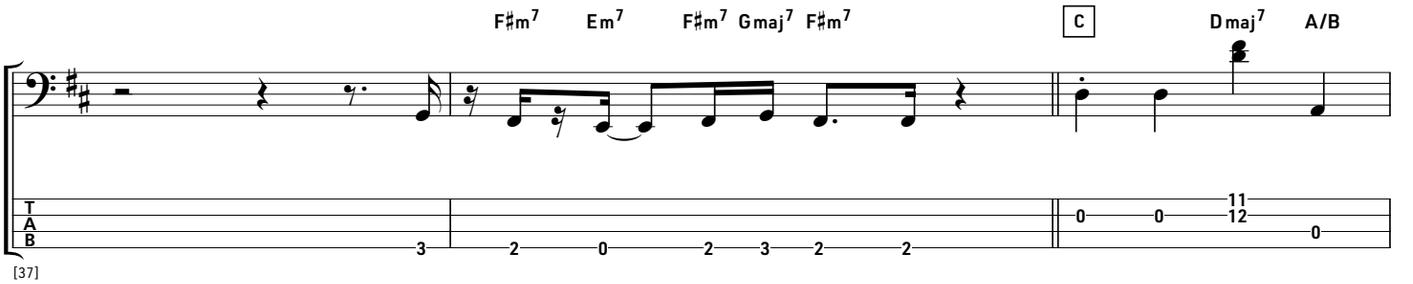

F♯m7 Em7 F♯m7 Gmaj7 F♯m7
Gmaj7
[22]

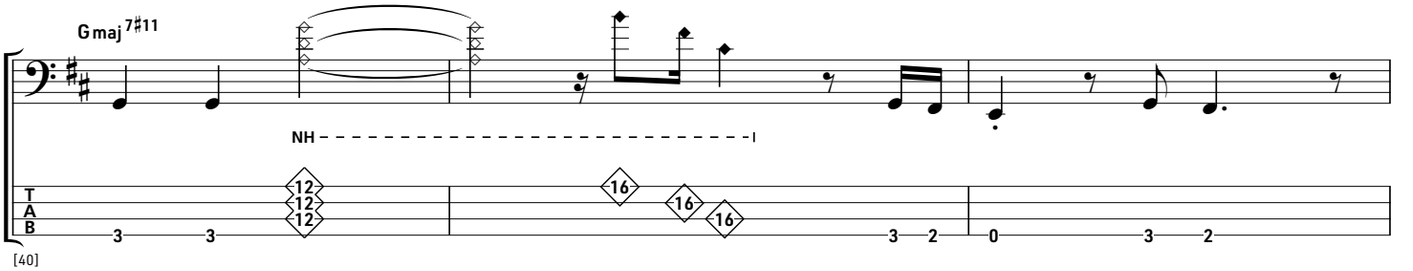

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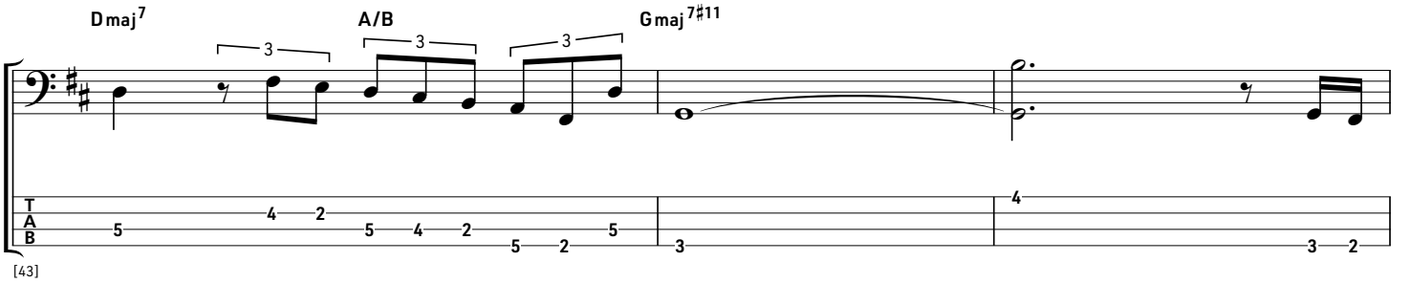

[28]

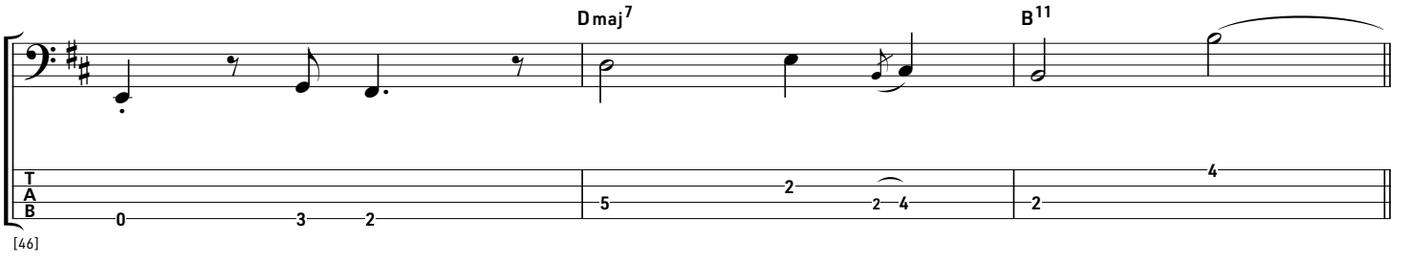

Gmaj7
A9/G
Gmaj7
[31]

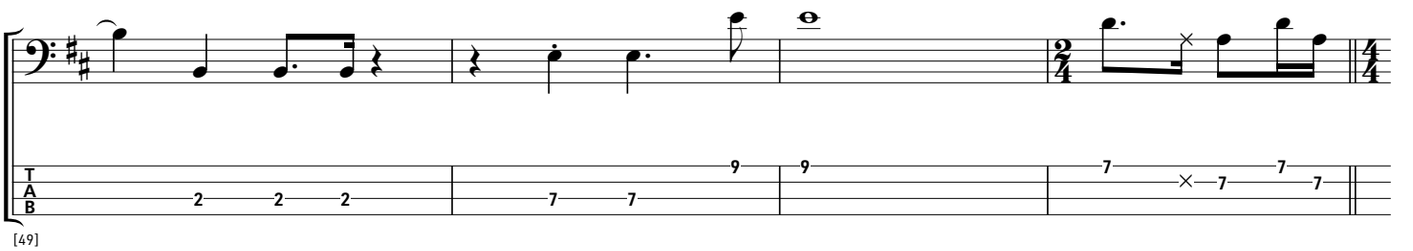

F♯m7 Em7 F♯m7 Gmaj7 F♯m7
Gmaj7
RP
[34]
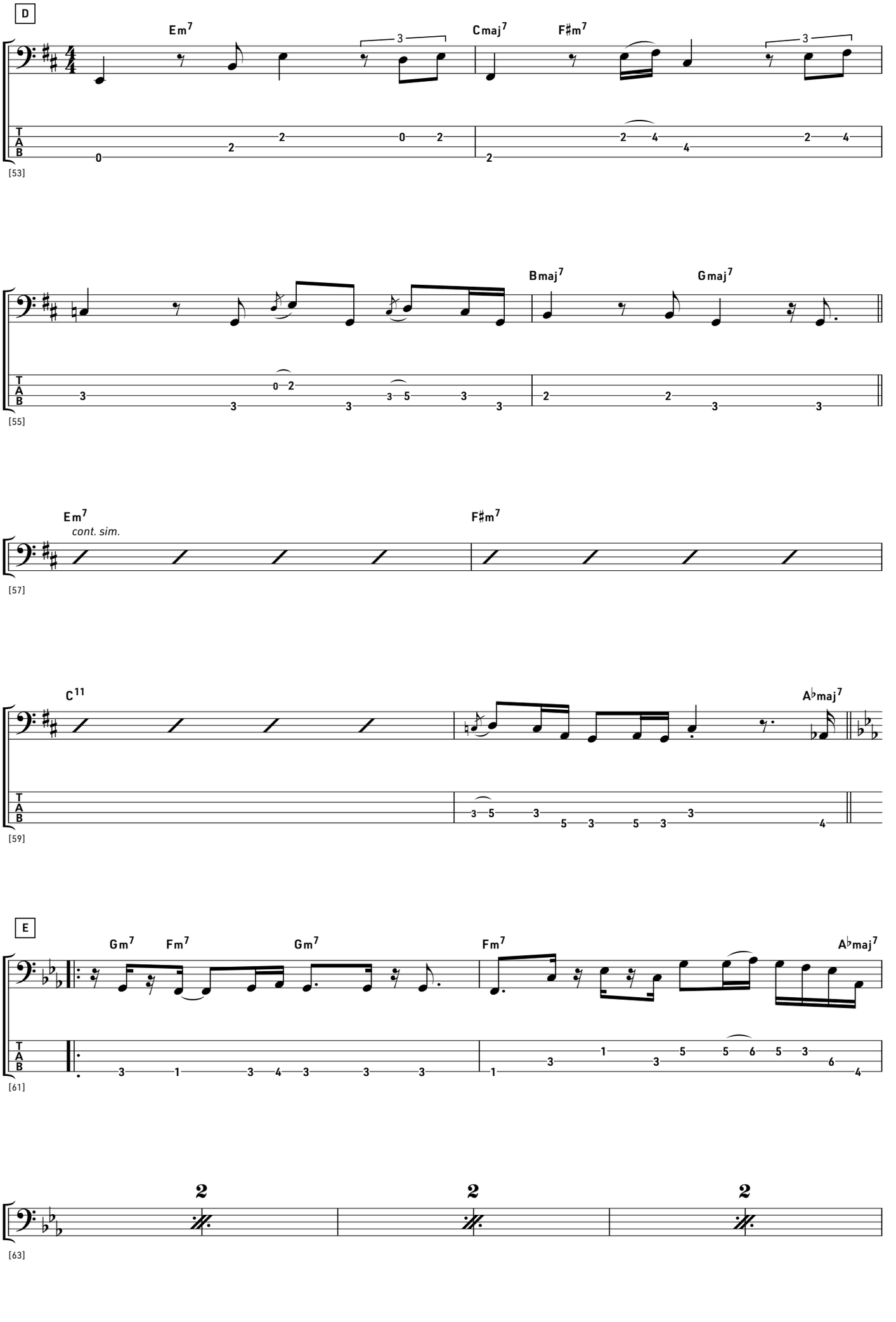

F♯m7 Em7 F♯m7 Gmaj7 F♯m7
C
Dmaj7 A/B
T
A
B
[37]
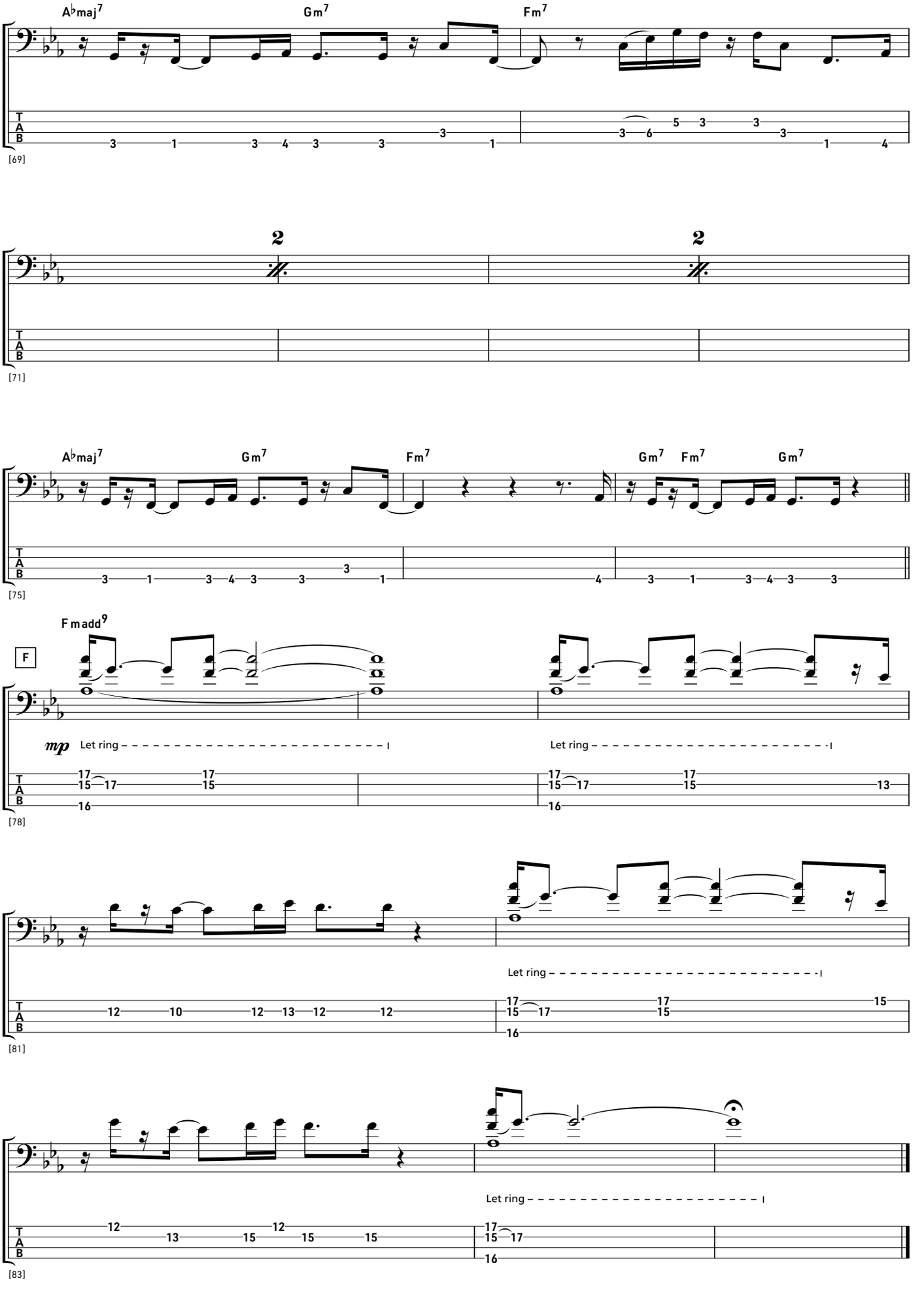

Gmaj7♯11
NH
T
A
B
[40]


Dmaj7 A/B Gmaj7♯11
T
A
B
[43]


Dmaj7 B11
T
A
B
[46]


T
A
B
[49]


D
Em7
Cmaj7
F♯m7
[53]
Bmaj7
Gmaj7
[55]
Em7
cont. sim.
F♯m7
[57]
C11
A♭maj7
[59]
E
Gm7
Fm7
Gm7
Fm7
A♭maj7
[61]
2
2
2
[63]

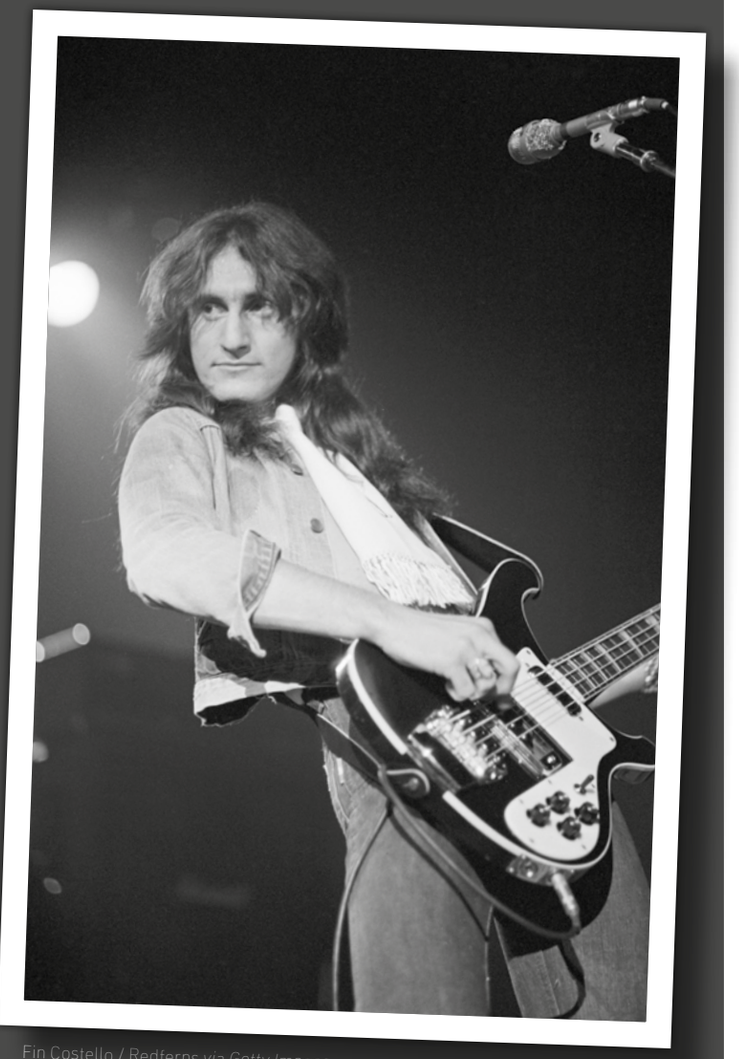

A♭maj7
Gm7
Fm7
[69]
2
2
[71]
A♭maj7
Gm7
Fm7
Gm7
Fm7
Gm7
[75]
Fmadd9
F
mp
Let ring
Let ring
[78]
Let ring
[81]
Let ring
[83]

Anthem

Artist: Rush
Source: *Fly by Night* (Album, 1975)
Genre: Progressive Rock / Hard Rock

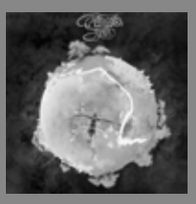
Their second album (released only a year after their eponymous debut) *Fly by Night* shows a remarkable evolution in sound and songwriting approach in such a short period, adopting a much more progressive and challenging tone. This was thanks in no small part to the arrival of new drummer Neil Peart, who demonstrated remarkable skill and innovation on the kit. Peart's influence on the band extended beyond the drums however, as he became the primary lyricist for the band, allowing Geddy Lee (bass) and Alex Lifeson (guitar) to focus on composing the music.

After what was a near 50-year career, Canadian band Rush established themselves as one of the figureheads and pioneers of progressive rock. They became known for their unique compositional and songwriting style; their songs exploring varied themes entrenched in philosophy and fantasy. These include multipart prog epics like '2112', instrumentals such as 'YYZ' and the '80s classic rock staple 'Tom Sawyer'. The trio are each individually revered as virtuosos on their instruments, with Peart and Lee being icons of rock drums and bass respectively. Rush continued to produce music and tour, despite several breaks, until disbanding in 2015. The band released 19 studio albums and were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2013, something many people regarded as being long overdue by that point.



Fin Costello / Redferns *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Yes *Fragile* (1971)
Yes were one of the flagship groups of progressive rock as it was gaining traction in the '70s. Their structurally intricate songs with tight technical playing blended many influences to create a thematically and musically complex rock sound with keyboards aplenty! *Fragile* includes the rhythm-driven single 'Roundabout'.
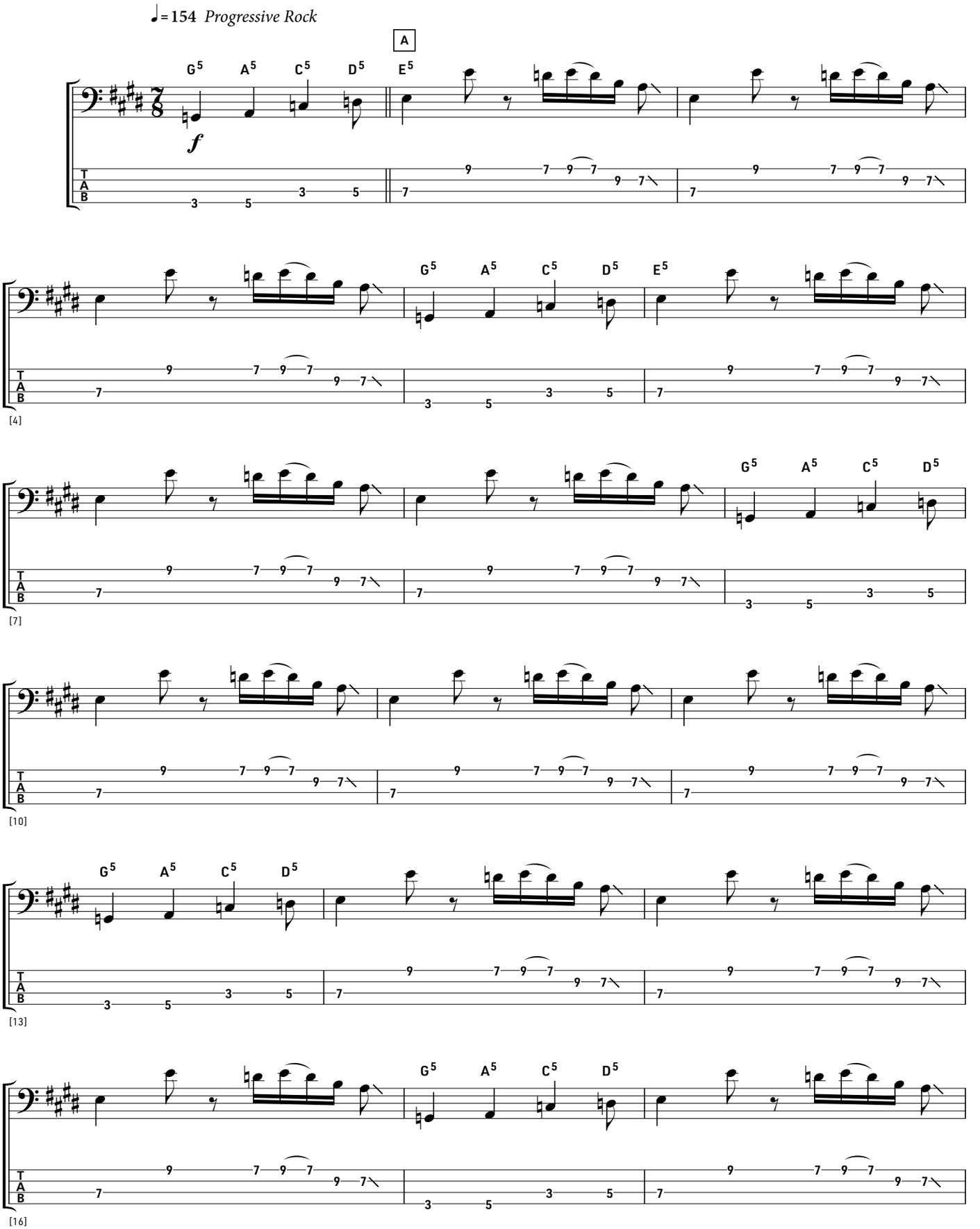


Led Zeppelin *II* (1969)
The second and untitled studio album by British hard rock pioneers Led Zeppelin helped establish the foundations of hard rock and heavy metal. With Jimmy Page's monster riffs and Robert Plant's pure and powerful voice, the album opens with the iconic hit 'Whole Lotta Love'.
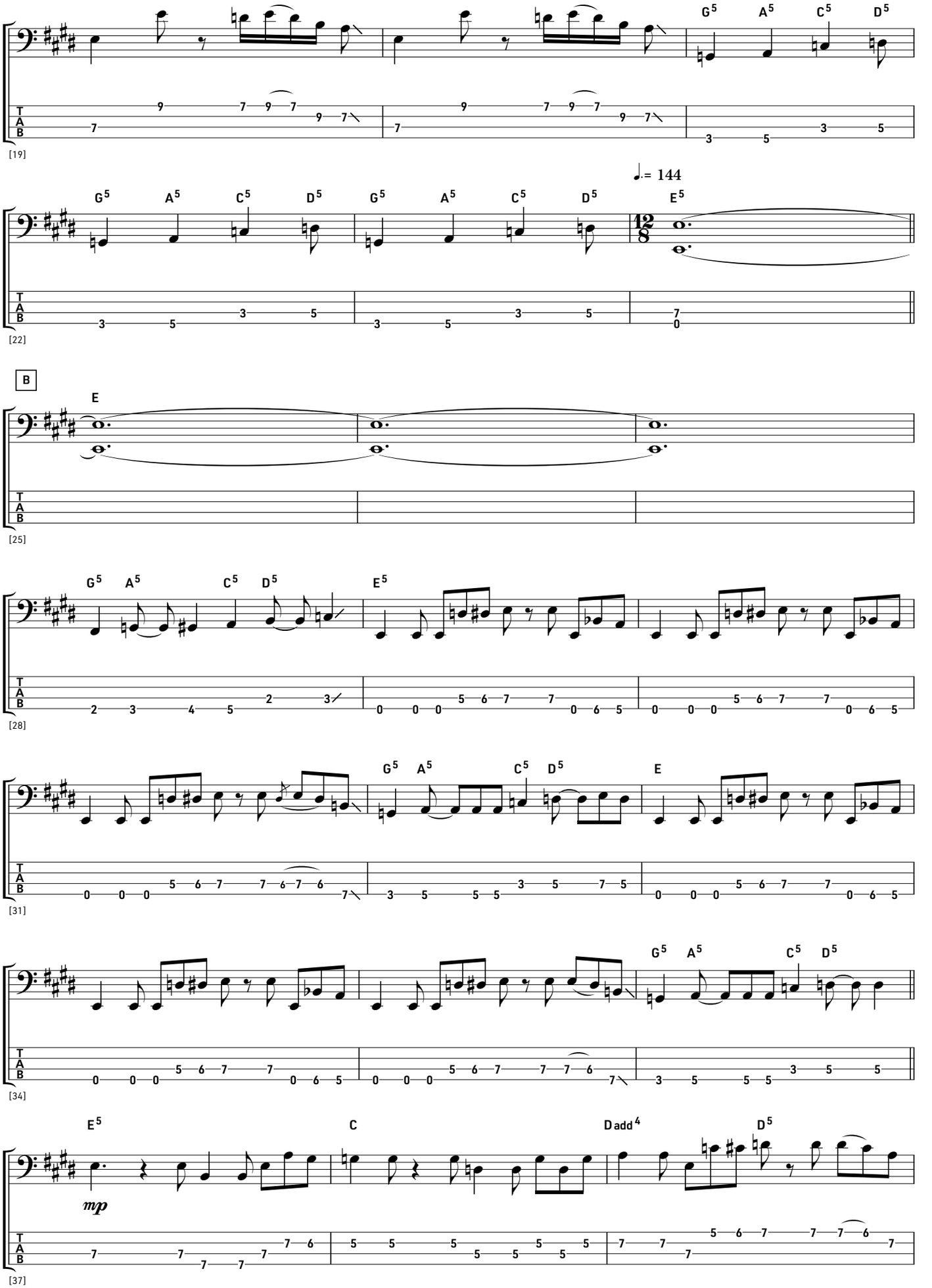
Anthem
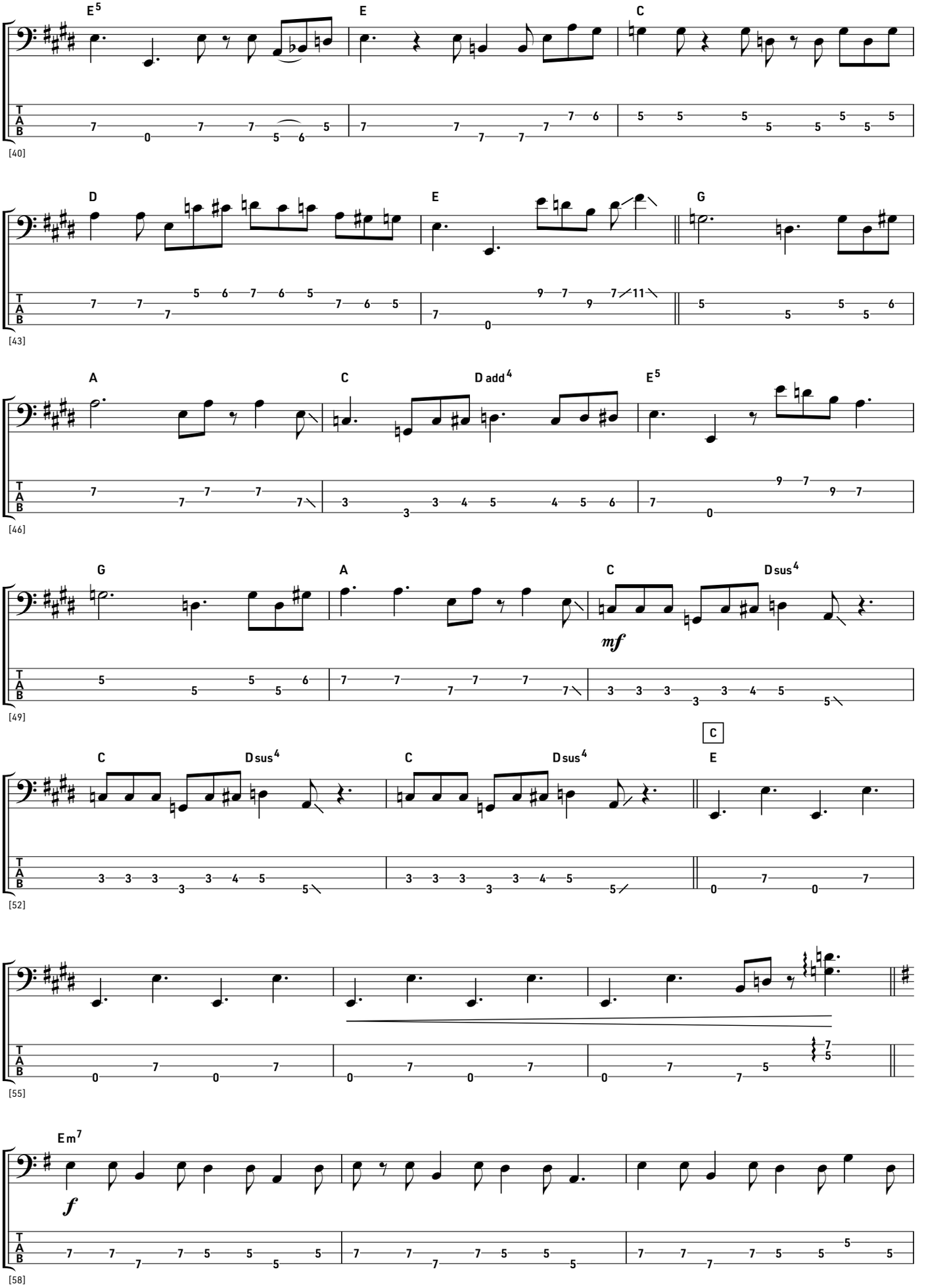
Words and Music by Alex Lifeson,
Geddy Lee and Neil Peart
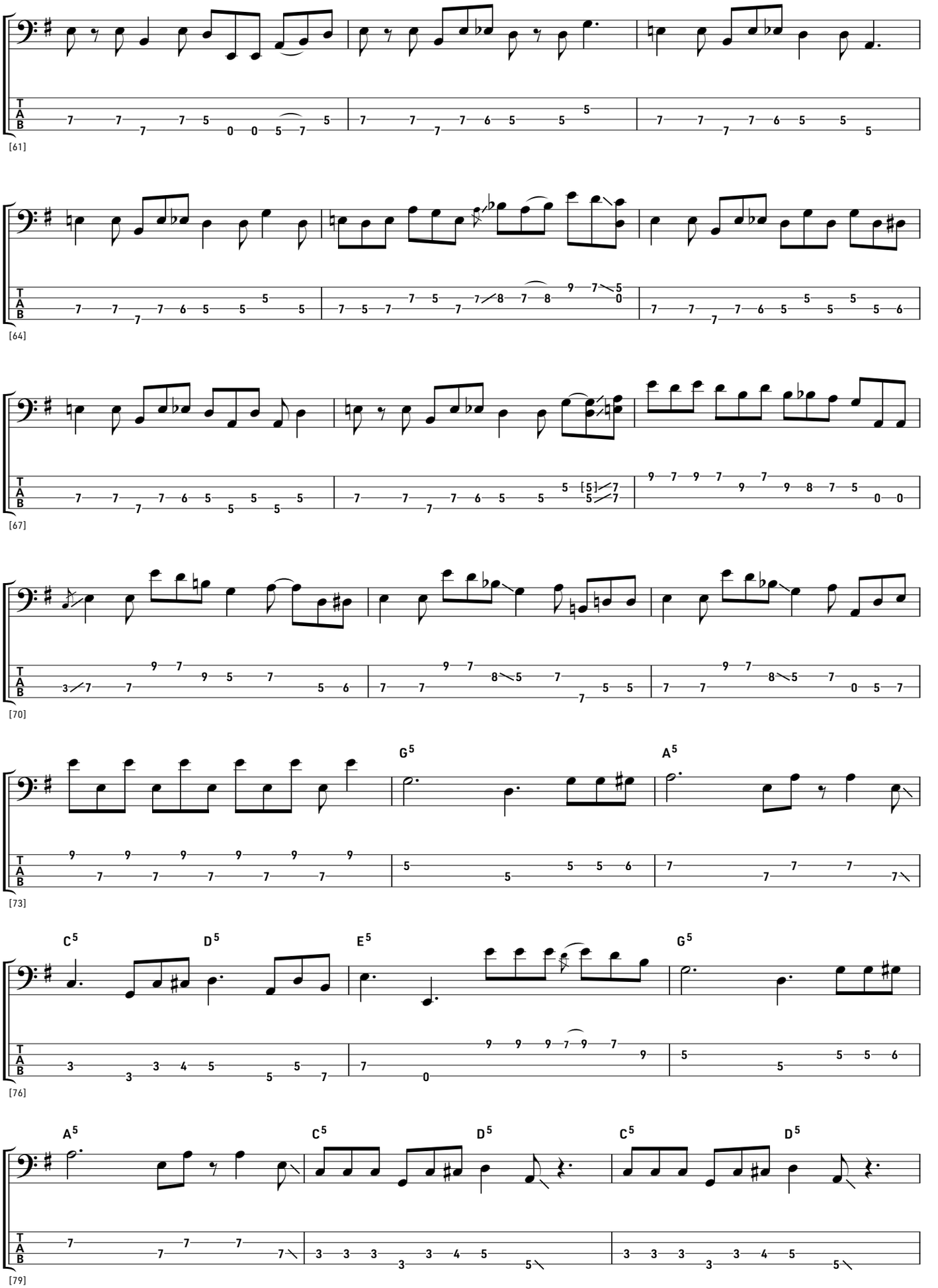
Rush
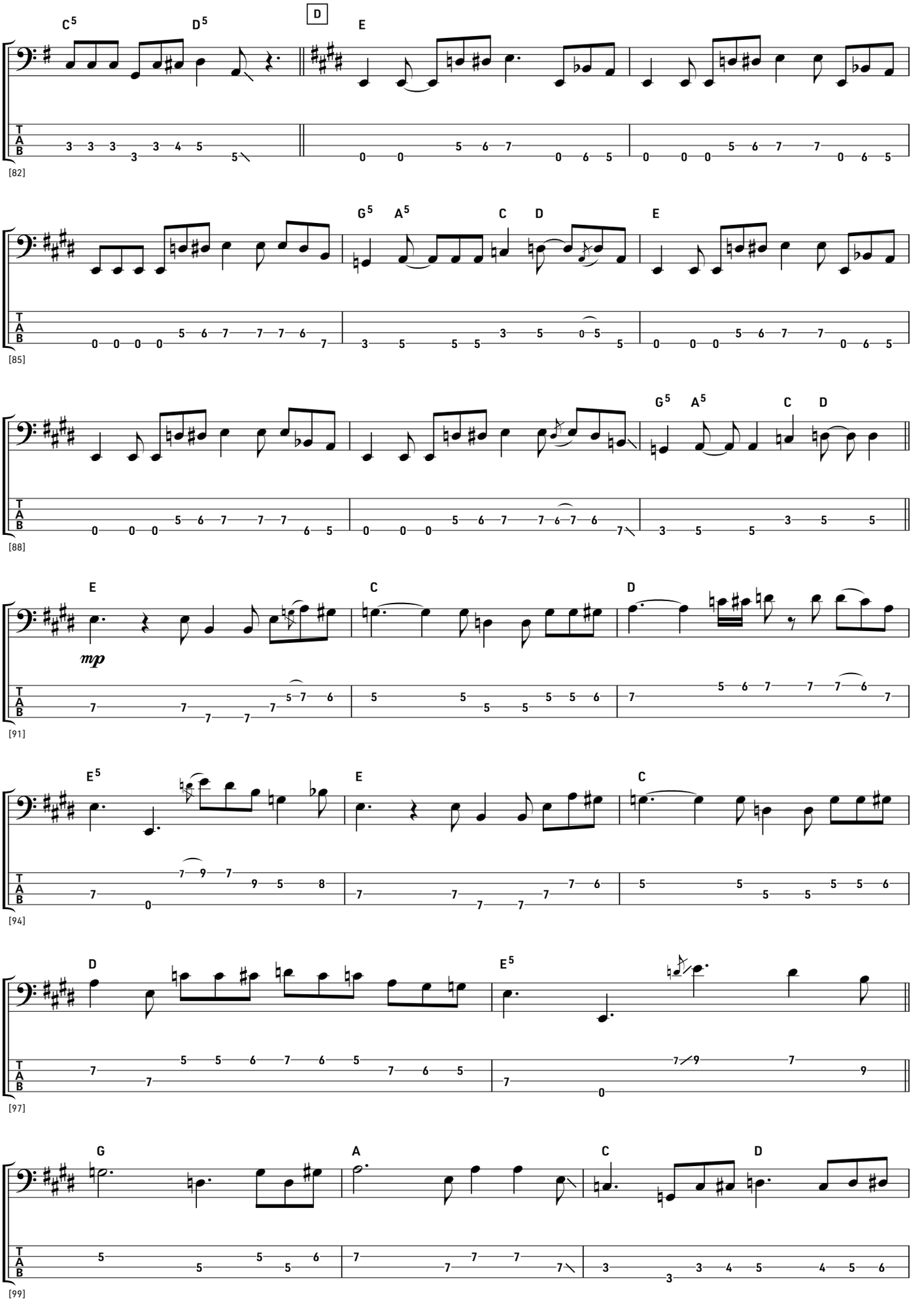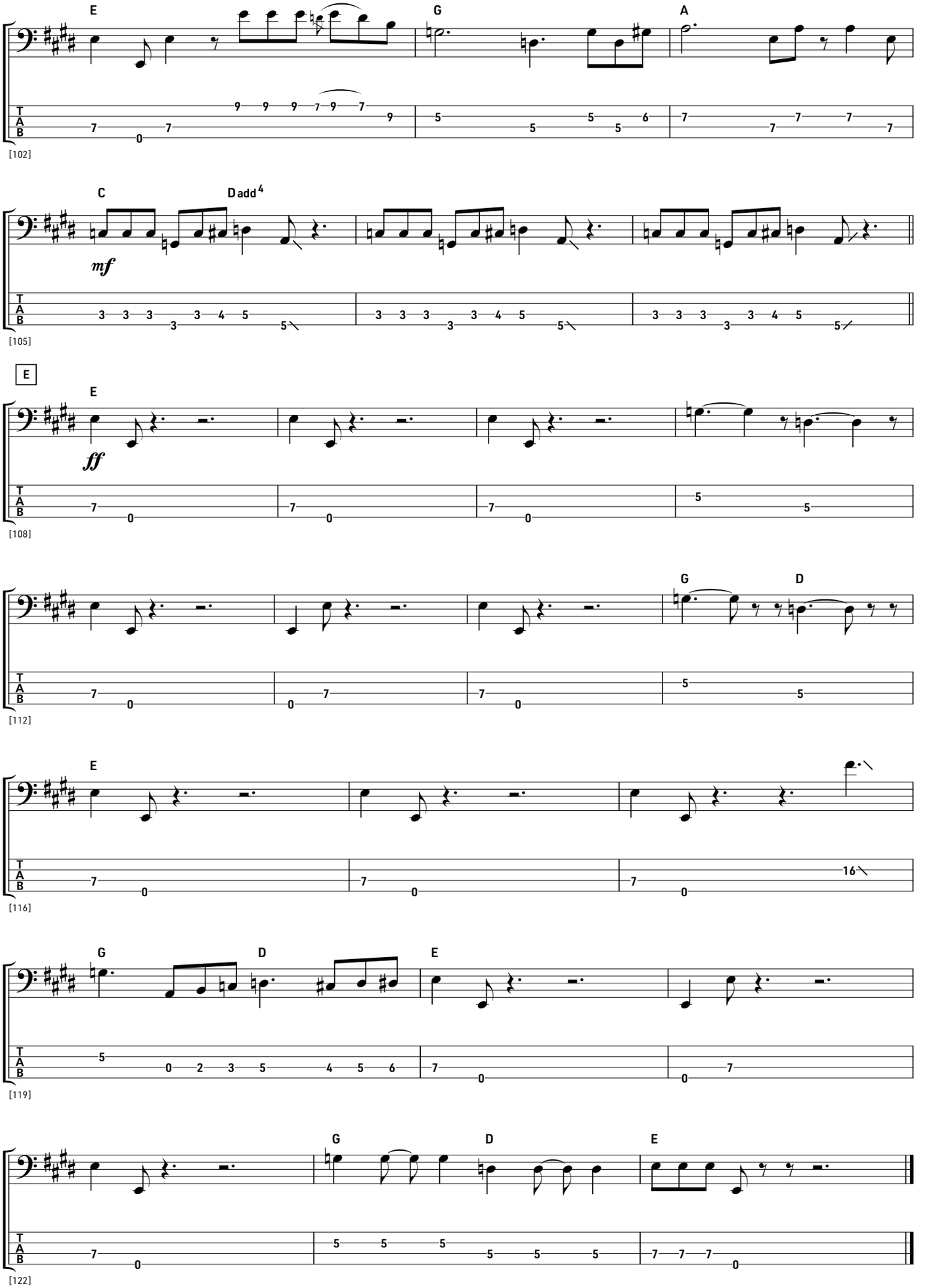


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G5 A5 C5 D5
[19]
♩.= 144
G5 A5 C5 D5 G5 A5 C5 D5 E5
[22]
B
E
[25]
G5 A5 C5 D5 E5
[28]
G5 A5 C5 D5 E
[31]
G5 A5 C5 D5
[34]
E5 C Dadd4 D5
mp
[37]


E5
E
C
[40]
D
E
G
[43]
A
C
Dadd4
E5
[46]
G
A
C
Dsus4
mf
[49]
C
Dsus4
C
Dsus4
C
E
[52]
[55]
Em7
f
[58]


[61]
[64]
[67]
[70]
G5
A5
[73]
C5
D5
E5
G5
[76]
A5
C5
D5
C5
D5
[79]


C5
D5
D
E
[82]
G5
A5
C
D
E
[85]
G5
A5
C
D
[88]
E
C
D
mp
[91]
E5
E
C
[94]
D
E5
[97]
G
A
C
D
[99]

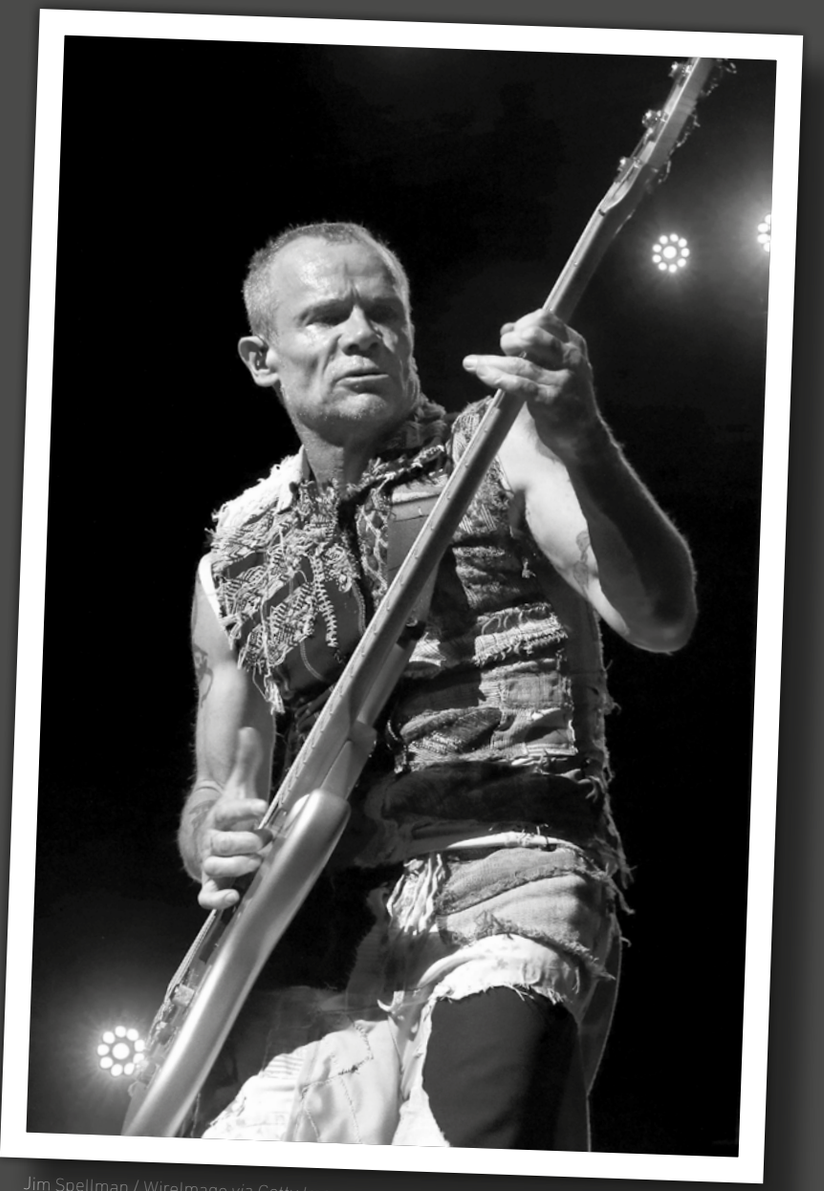

E
G
A
[102]
C
Dadd4
mf
[105]
E
E
ff
[108]
G
D
[112]
E
16
[116]
G
D
E
[119]
G
D
E
[122]

Higher Ground

Artist: Red Hot Chili Peppers
Source: *Mother's Milk* (Album, 1989)
Genre: Alternative Rock / Funk Rock

Stevie Wonder's 'Higher Ground' was a big commercial success upon its release in 1972, charting at number 4 on the Billboard Hot 100. For their cover, Red Hot Chili Peppers injected a strong dose of their signature funk metal sound, choosing the song as the lead single for their 1989 album *Mother's Milk*. Their version has been used in film and media on several occasions, including the movie *The Karate Kid* and the TV series *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*.

After their formation in 1982, Red Hot Chili Peppers quickly gained a large and dedicated fanbase, thanks to a then unique blend of funk, rap and heavy rock. They had their first international breakthrough with their fourth album *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*, which became a staple of '90s rock with songs such as 'Under the Bridge' and 'Give It Away'. *Californication* was a worldwide sensation and established them as a commercial success with a softer and more introspective sound, whilst maintaining elements of their funk rock roots. The band has thus far released 13 studio albums, won six Grammy Awards and been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.



Jim Spellman / Wirelmage *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Rage Against the Machine *Renegades* (2000)
An assortment of covers from a wide range of genres from punk rock to hip hop, rap metal group Rage Against the Machine reinvents these songs with their own take, including the hit cover of Afrika Bambaataa's 'Renegades of Funk'.
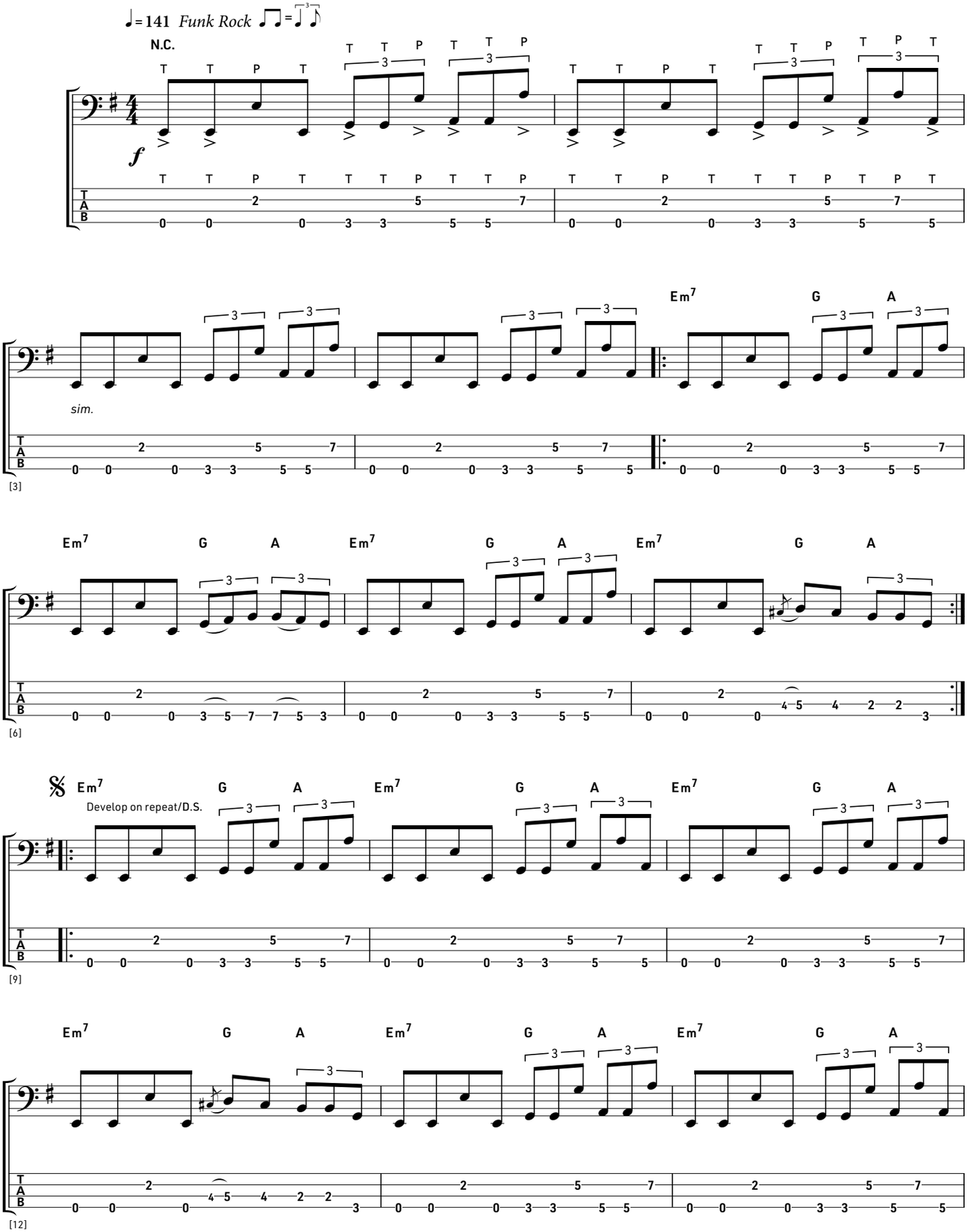


Faith No More *Angel Dust* (1992)
Funk and rap elements were a prominent part of many alt rock bands' sound in the '90s. Fronted by the charismatic Mike Patton, Faith No More's best-selling album has a slew of funk-infused riffs with unique vocals and a hint of experimentation.
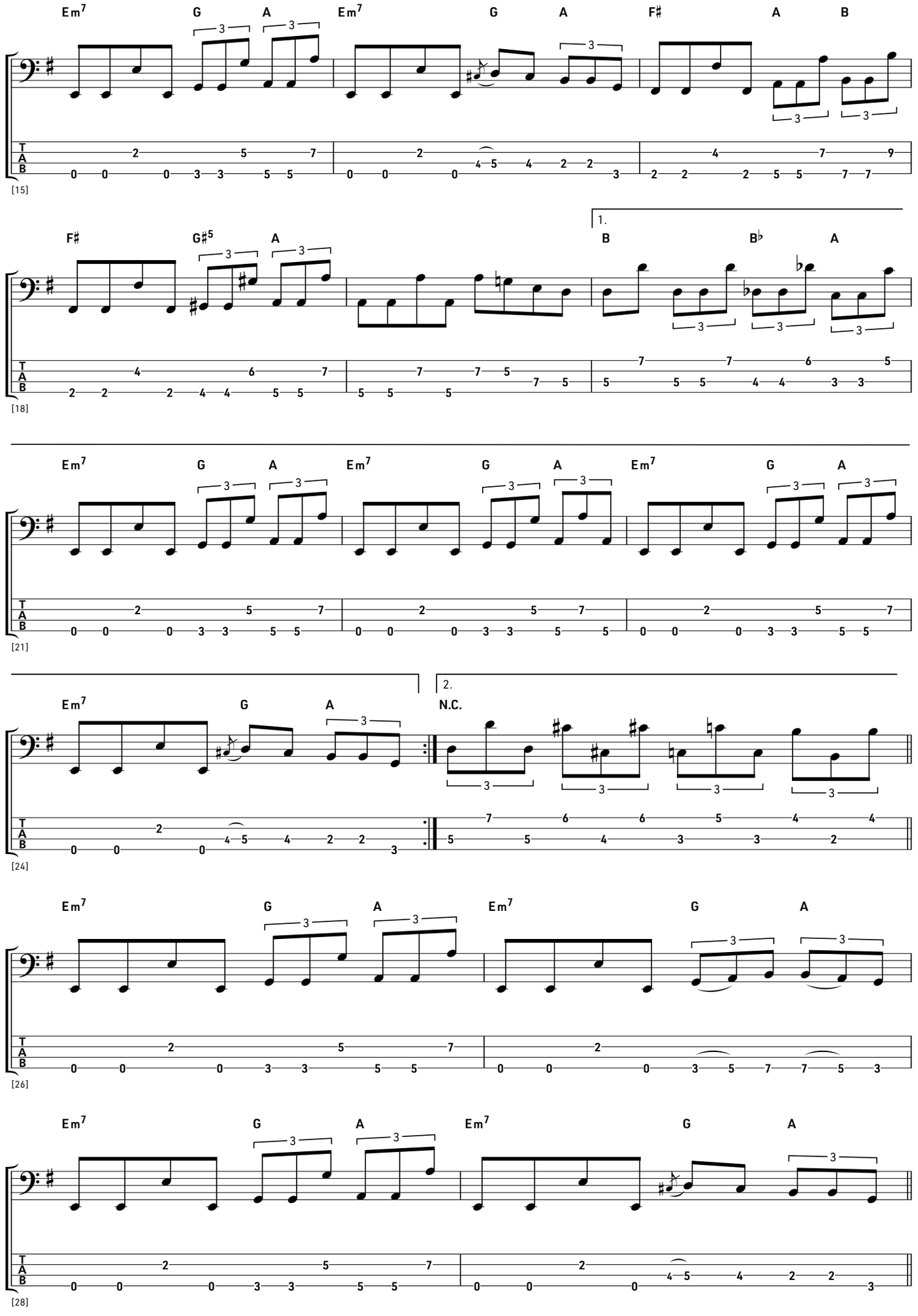
Higher Ground

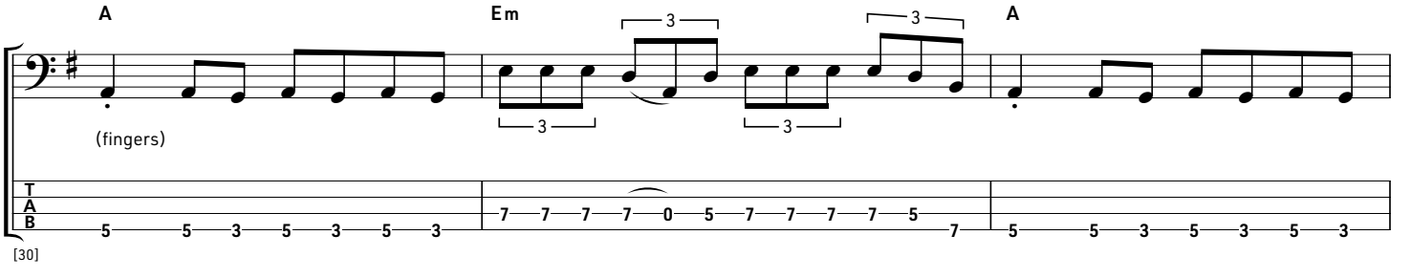
Words and Music by Stevie Wonder

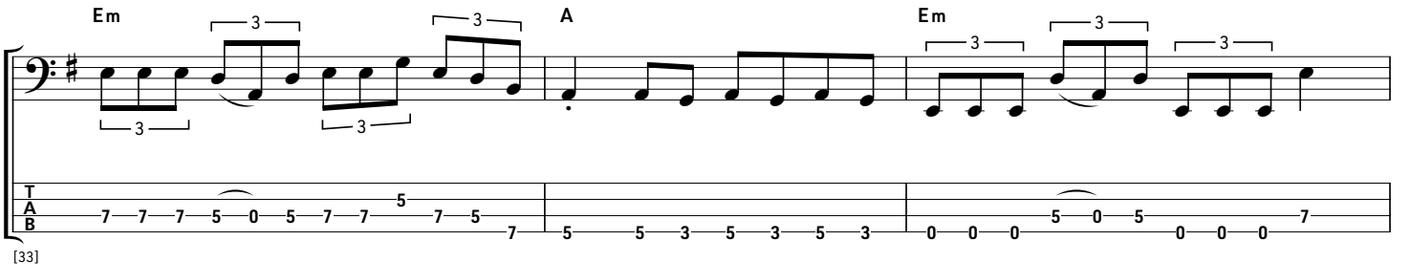
Red Hot Chili Peppers

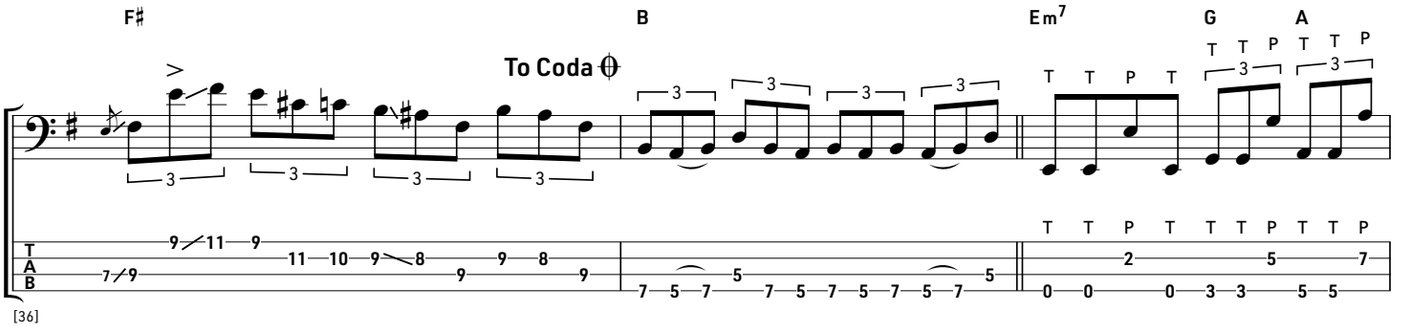


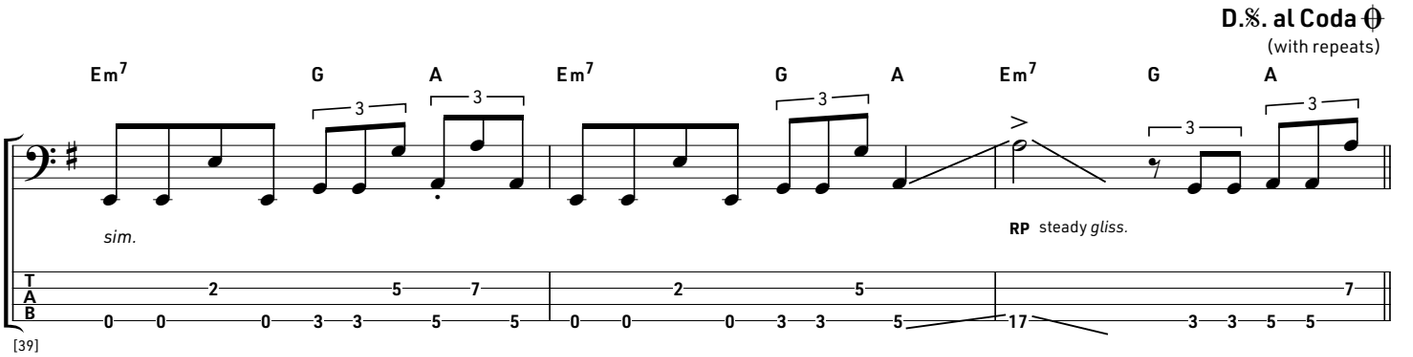
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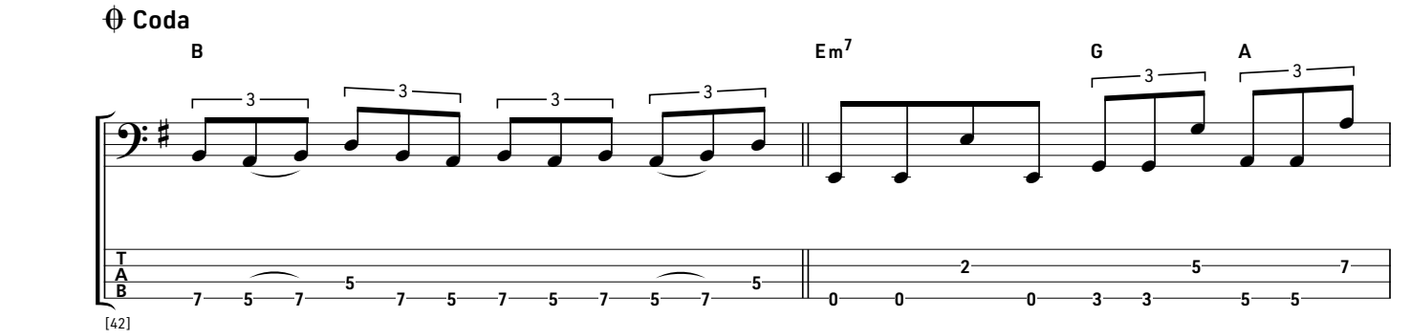

Em7 G A Em7 G A F♯ A B
[15]
F♯ G♯5 A 1. B B♭ A
[18]
Em7 G A Em7 G A Em7 G A
[21]
Em7 G A 2. N.C.
[24]
Em7 G A Em7 G A
[26]
Em7 G A Em7 G A
[28]

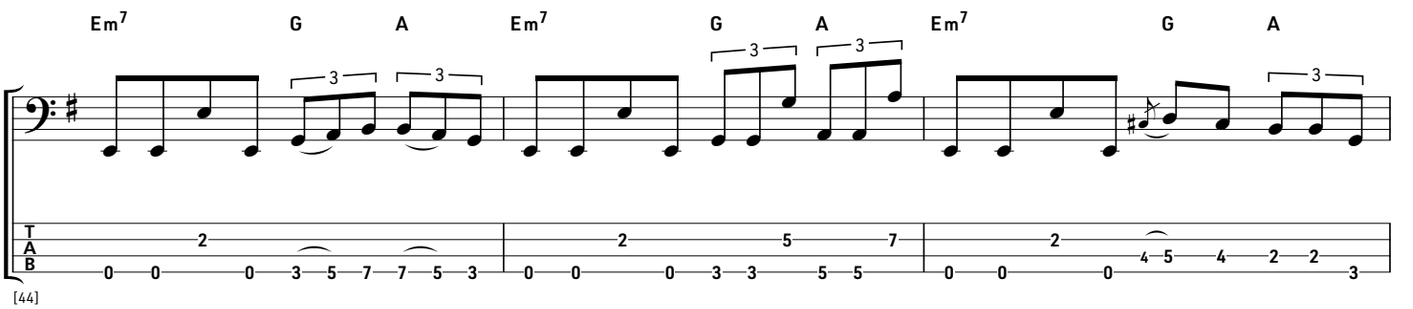

A
Em
A
(fingers)
[30]

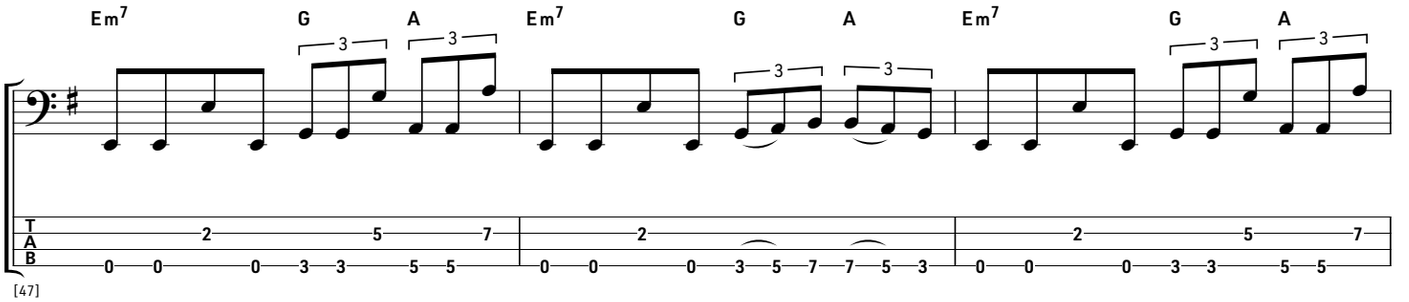

Em
A
Em
[33]

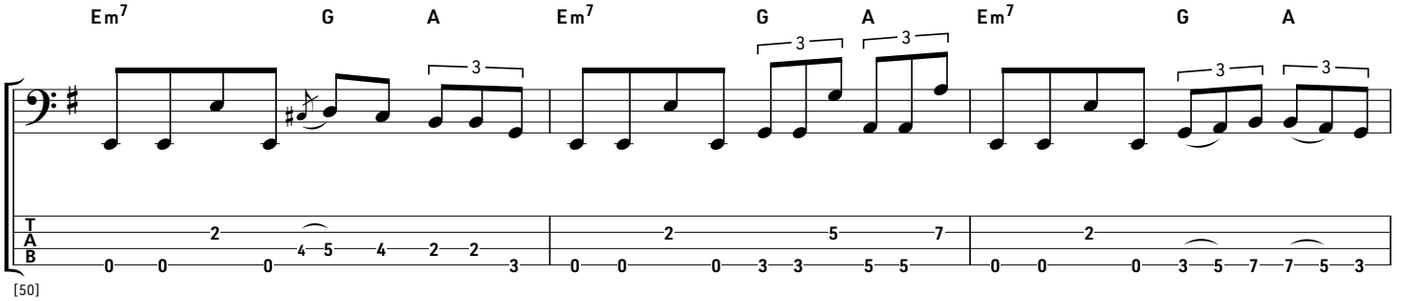

F♯
B
Em7
G
A
To Coda
[36]

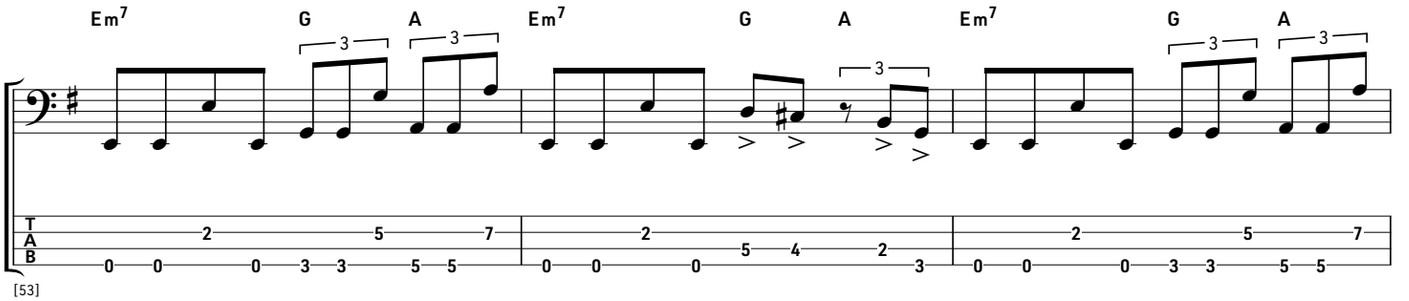

D.𝄋. al Coda
(with repeats)
Em7
G
A
sim.
RP steady gliss.
[39]

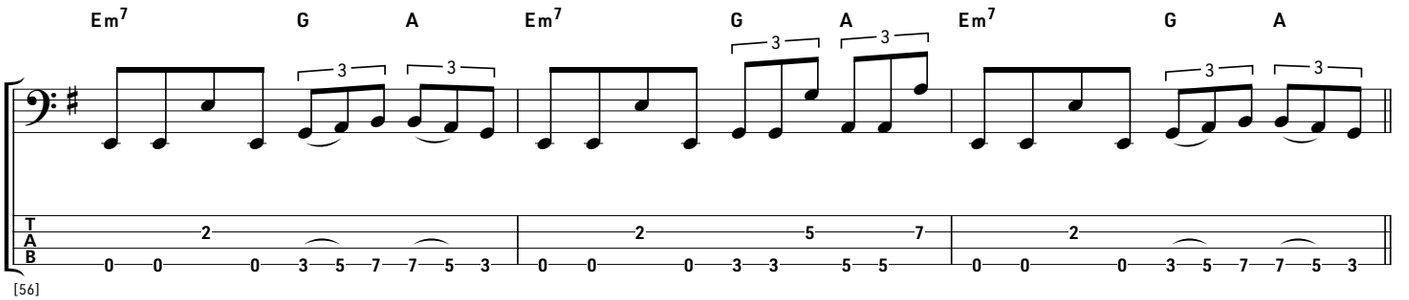

Coda
B
Em7
G
A
[42]

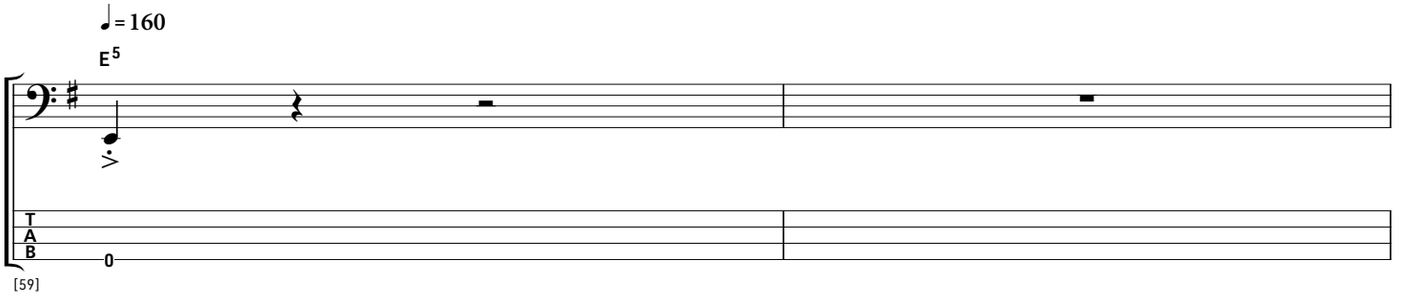

Em7
G
A
[44]

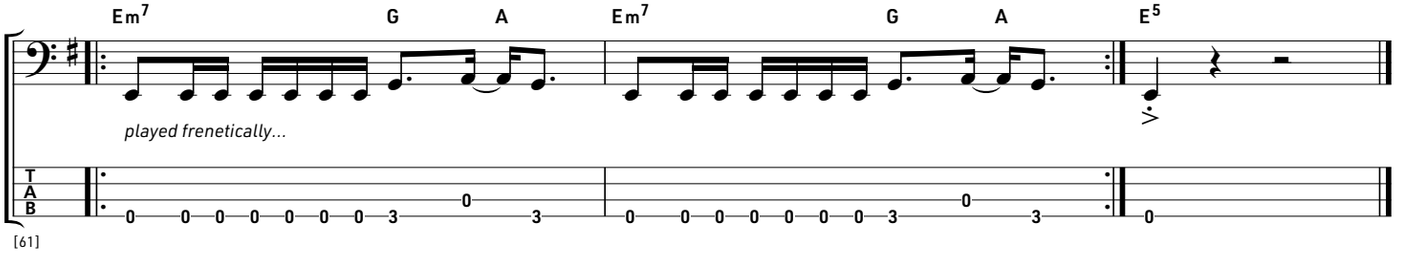

Em7 G A Em7 G A Em7 G A
[47]


Em7 G A Em7 G A Em7 G A
[50]


Em7 G A Em7 G A Em7 G A
[53]


Em7 G A Em7 G A Em7 G A
[56]


♩= 160
E5
[59]

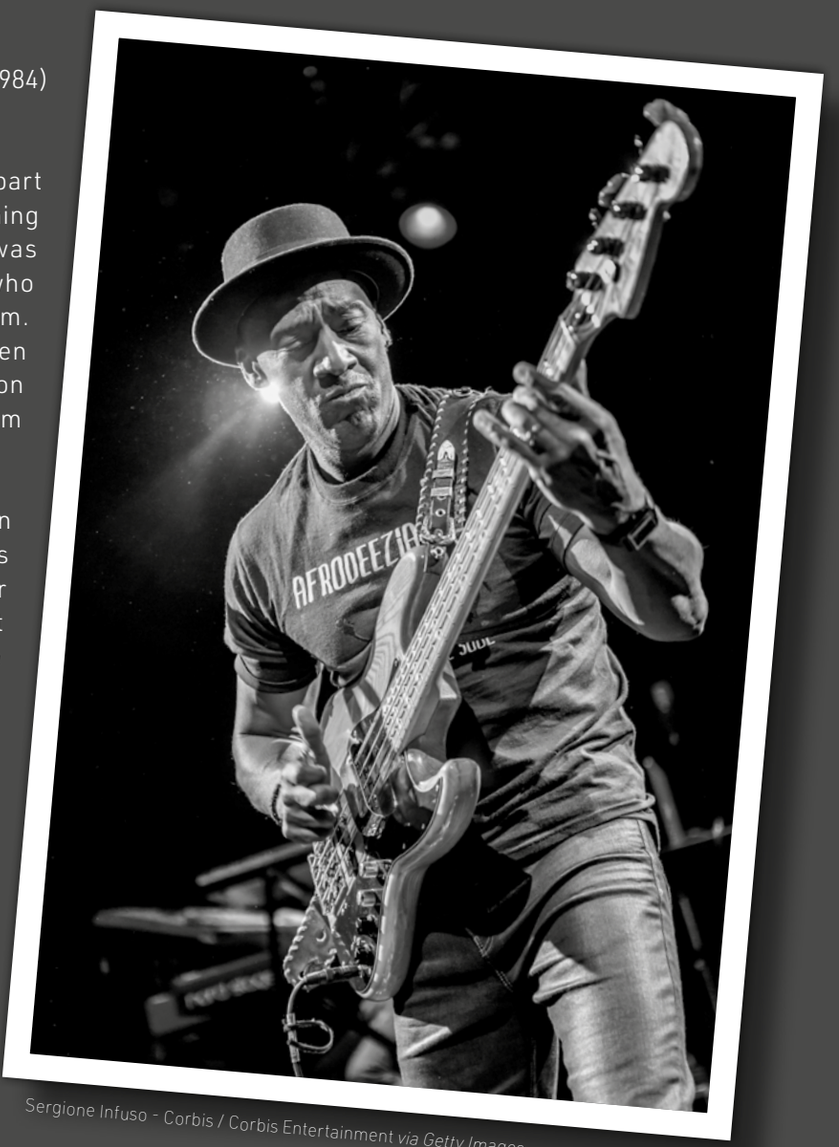

Em7 G A Em7 G A E5
played frenetically...
[61]

Run for Cover

Artist: David Sanborn
Source: *Straight to the Heart* (Live Album, 1984)
Genre: Smooth Jazz / Funk

'Run for Cover' was first released as part of David Sanborn's Grammy Award-winning smooth jazz album *Voyeur*. The song was written by jazz bassist Marcus Miller, who collaborated with Sanborn on the album. Live versions of the song have also been very popular with fans, notably the version released as part of Sanborn's live album *Straight to the Heart*.

Having started his career as a session musician and producer/arranger, Marcus Miller's work as a songwriter, composer and bassist is highly revered, in part thanks to his collaborations with a wide range of legendary artists in the jazz and R&B world. He has played on hundreds of recordings, including those of Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, Michael Jackson and Beyoncé. He also worked closely with R&B musician Luther Vandross, co-writing several of his hit songs in the '80s including 'Power of Love/Love Power' and 'I Really Didn't Mean It'. In addition, he has also found success as a solo funk/R&B artist, a film composer, and playing alongside Eric Clapton in the supergroup Legends.



Sergione Infuso - Corbis / Corbis Entertainment *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Miles Davis *Tutu* (1986)
Primarily produced and arranged by Marcus Miller, Davis's funk-leaning jazz album *Tutu* had an accessible and smooth style. It further influenced the direction of mainstream pop jazz, while still retaining a level of musical intricacy common in jazz music.
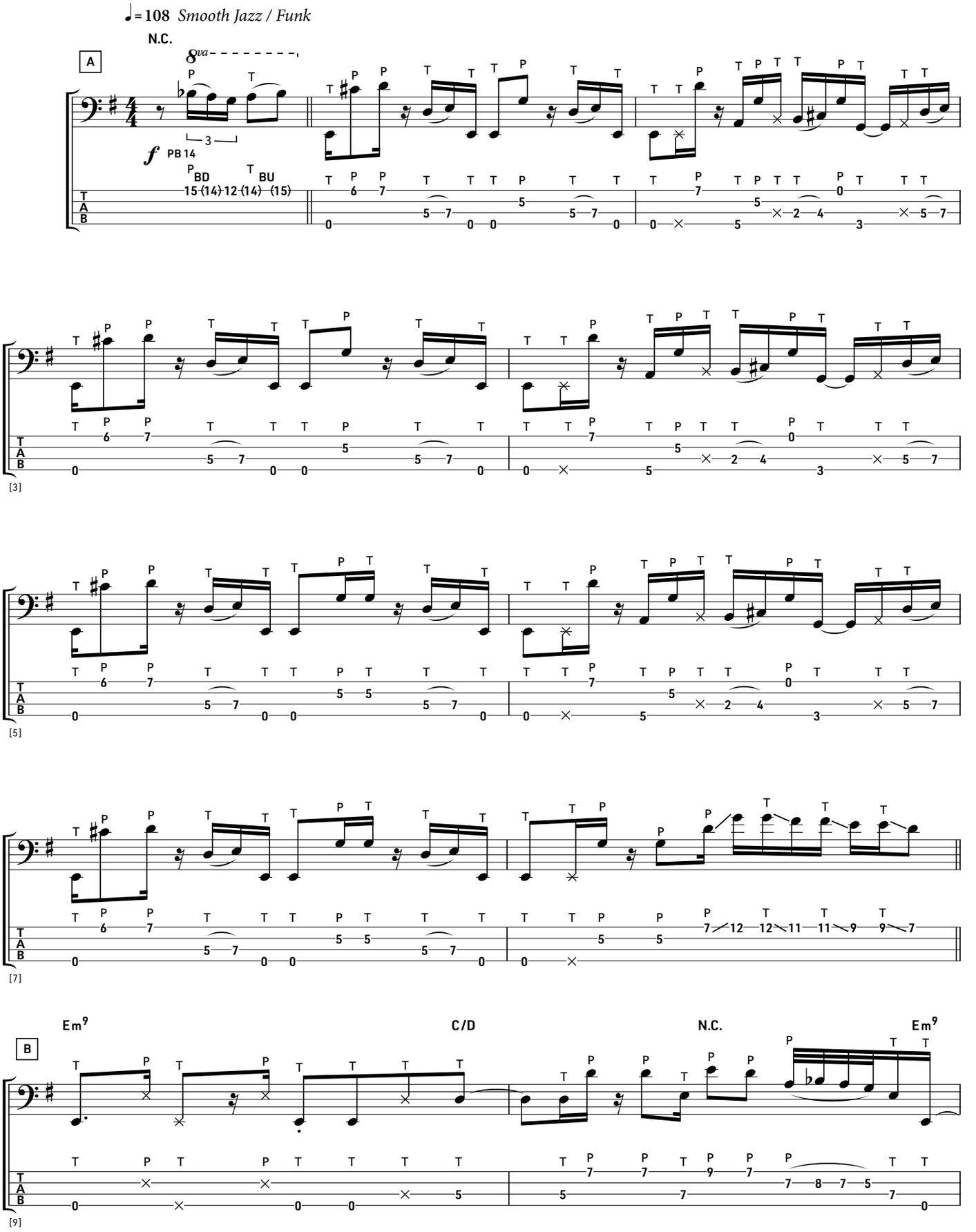


Luther Vandross *Never Too Much* (1981)
Another Marcus Miller collaborator, Vandross's solo debut in the '80s kickstarted a highly successful discography, with a solid set of smooth R&B love songs accentuated with a variety of memorable basslines.
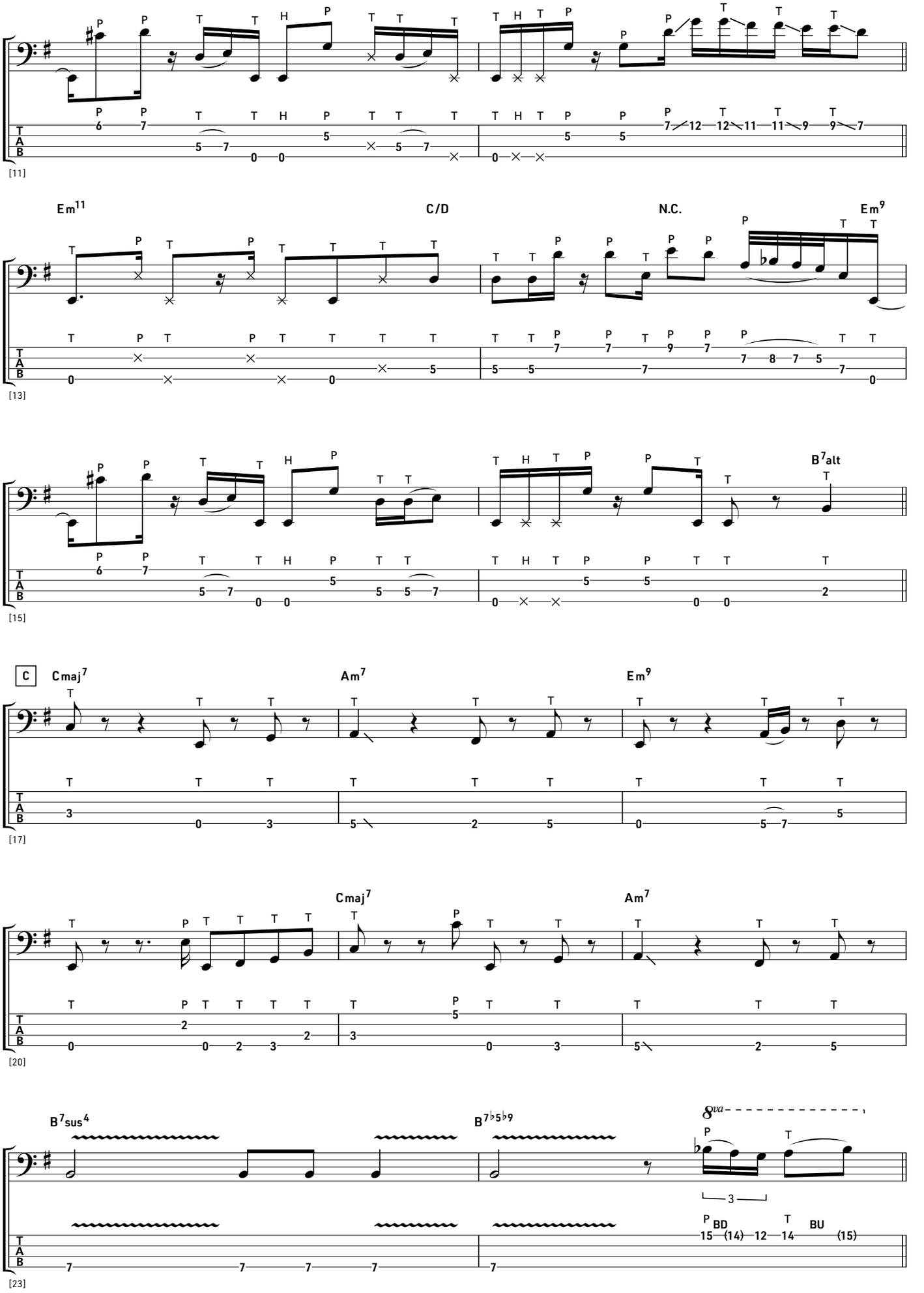
Run for Cover
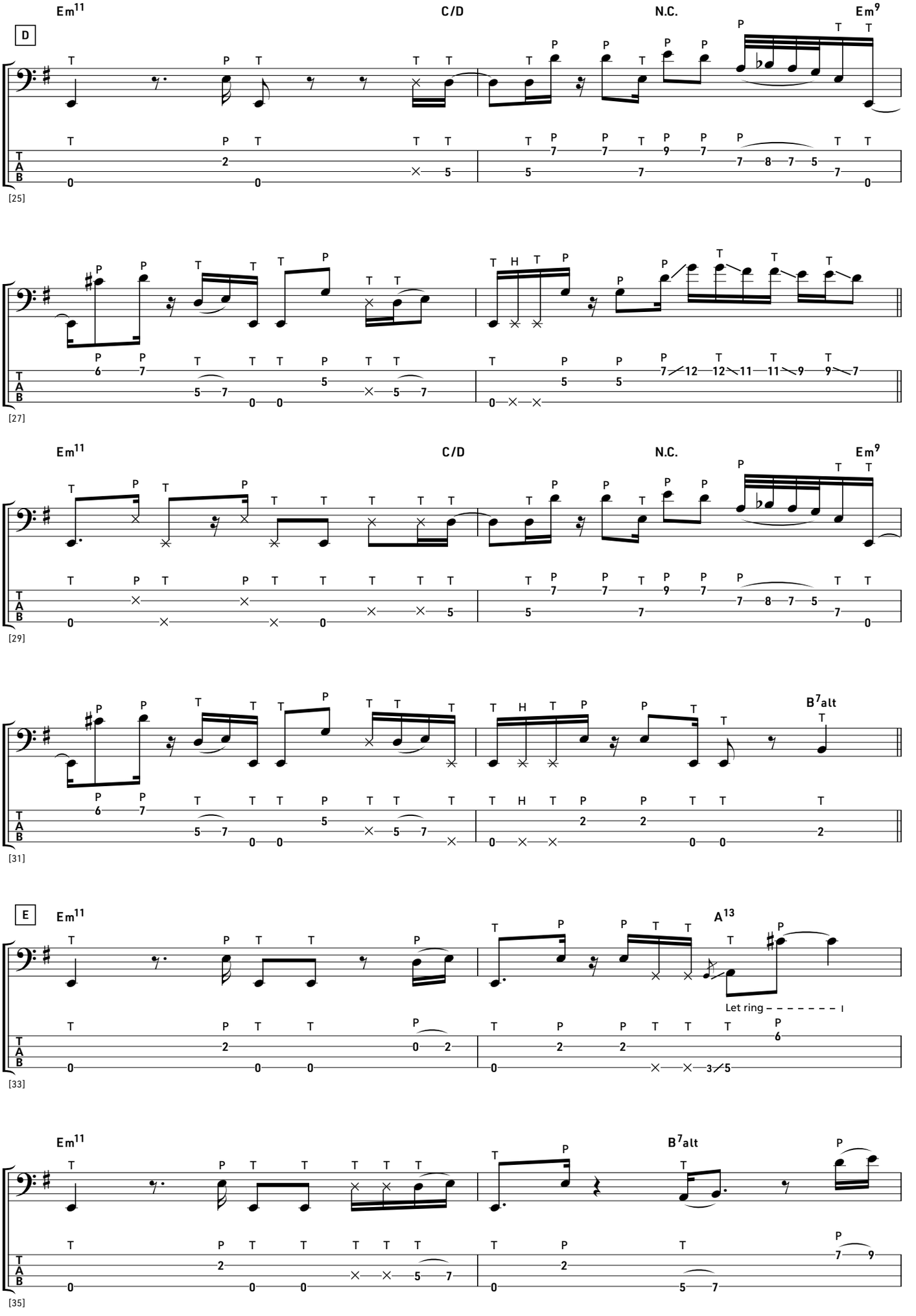
Words and Music by Marcus Miller
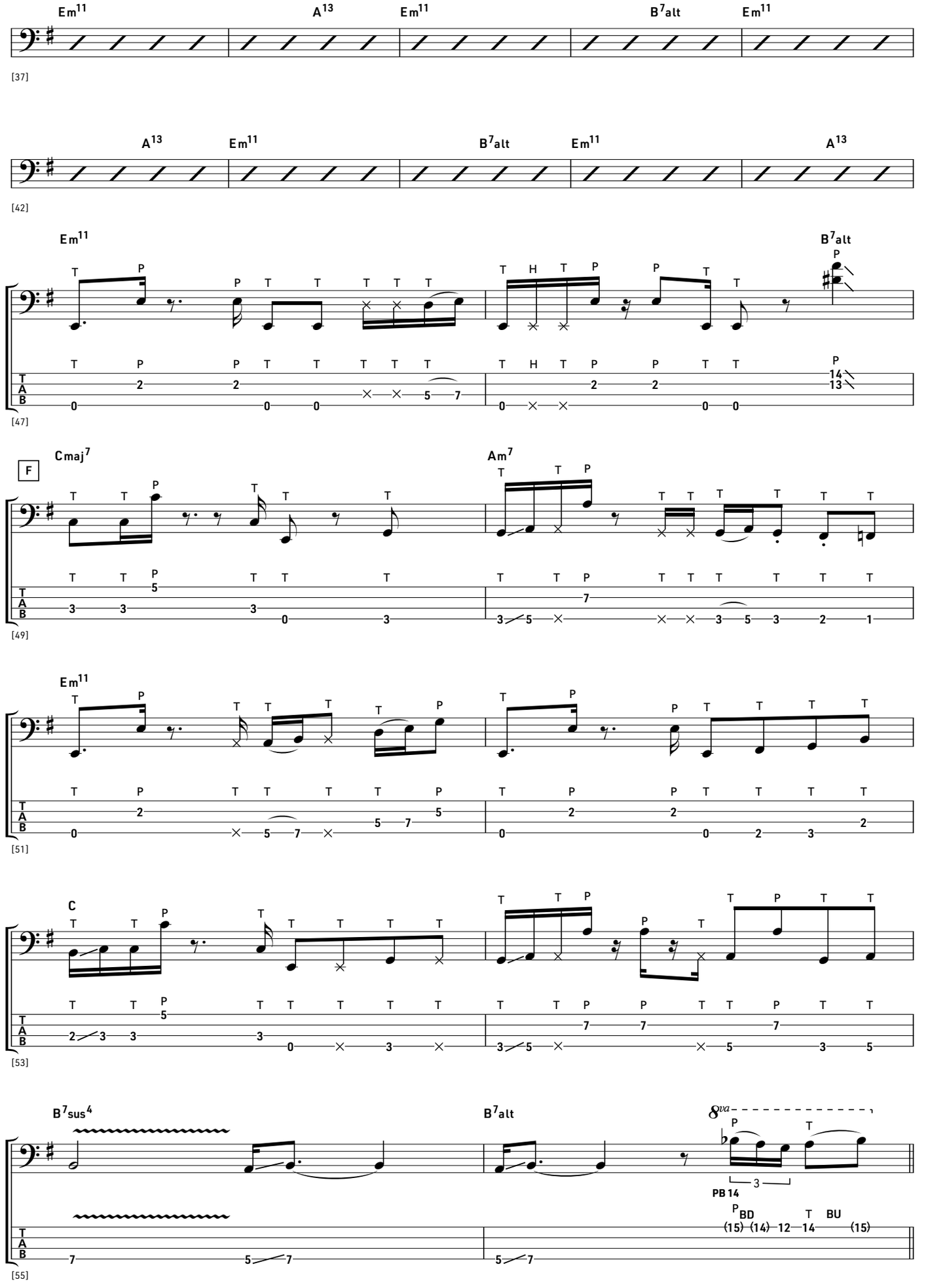
David Sanborn
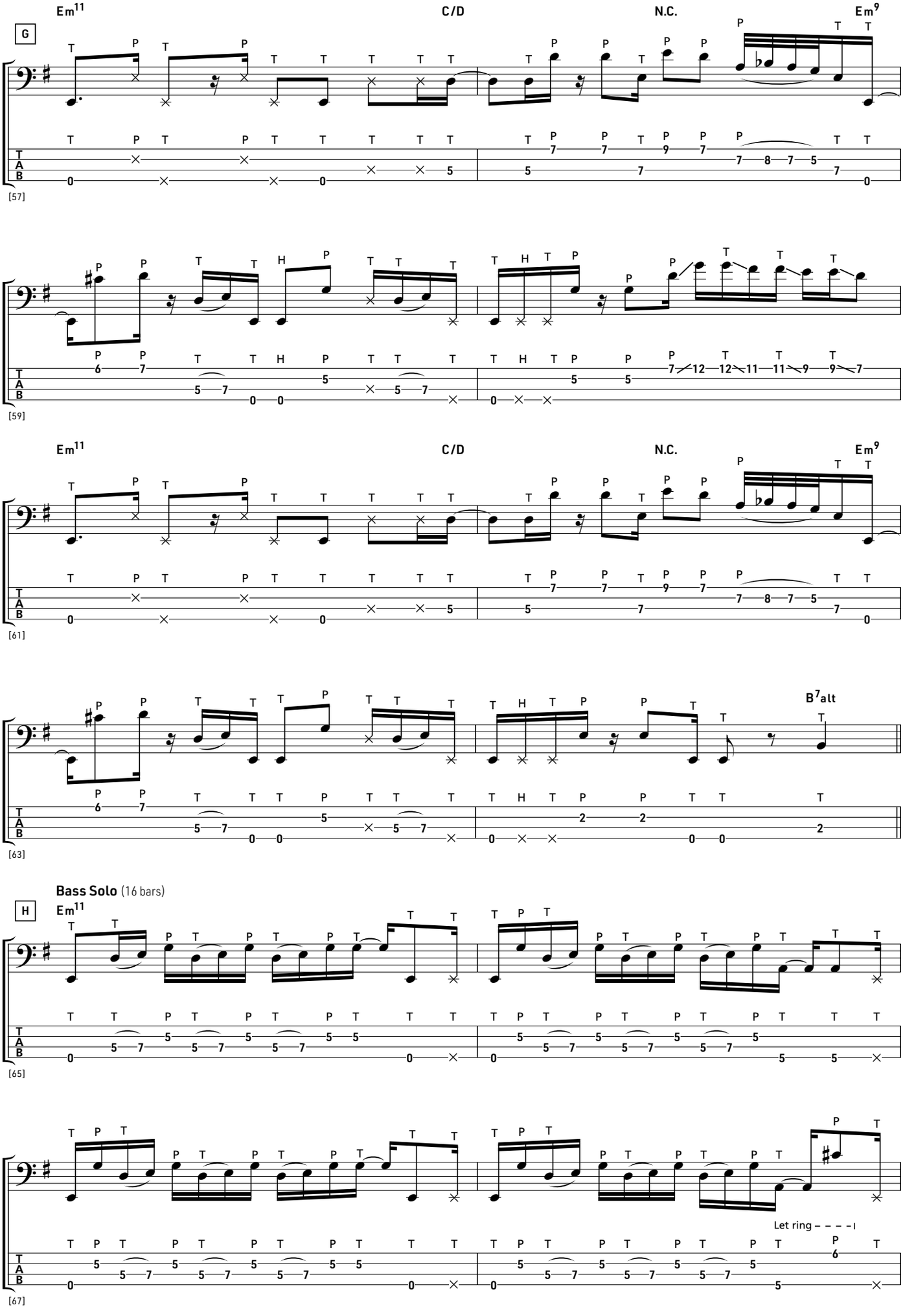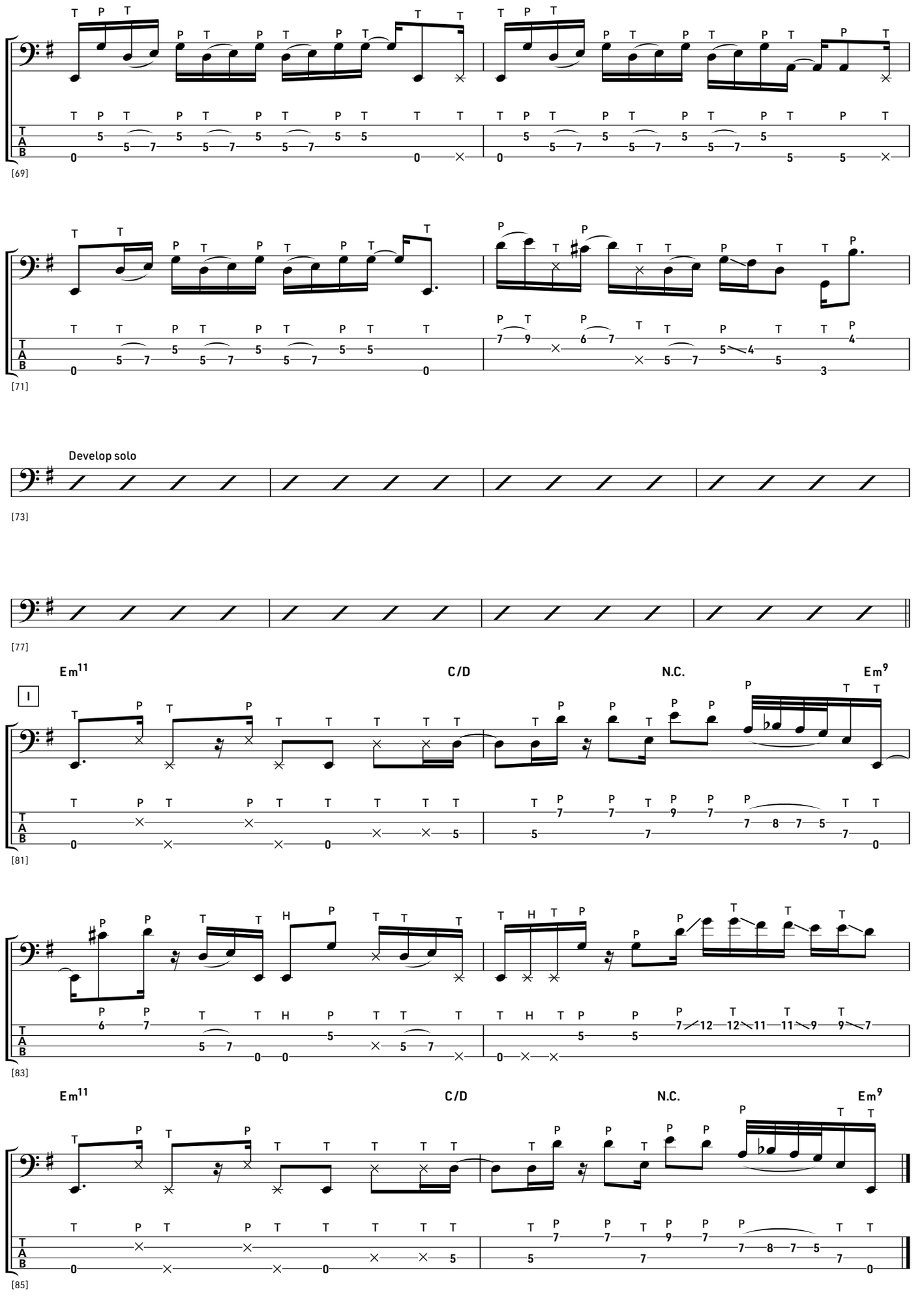


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[11]
Em11
C/D
N.C.
Em9
[13]
B7alt
[15]
C
Cmaj7
Am7
Em9
[17]
Cmaj7
Am7
[20]
B7sus4
B7♭5♭9
8va
BD
BU
[23]


D
Em11
C/D
N.C.
Em9
[25]
[27]
Em11
C/D
N.C.
Em9
[29]
B7alt
[31]
E
Em11
A13
Let ring
[33]
Em11
B7alt
[35]


Em11
A13
Em11
B7alt
Em11
[37]
A13
Em11
B7alt
Em11
A13
[42]
Em11
B7alt
[47]
F
Cmaj7
Am7
[49]
Em11
[51]
C
[53]
B7sus4
B7alt
8va
PB 14
BD
BU
[55]


Em11
C/D
N.C.
Em9
G
[57]
[59]
Em11
C/D
N.C.
Em9
[61]
B7alt
[63]
Bass Solo (16 bars)
H
Em11
[65]
Let ring
[67]

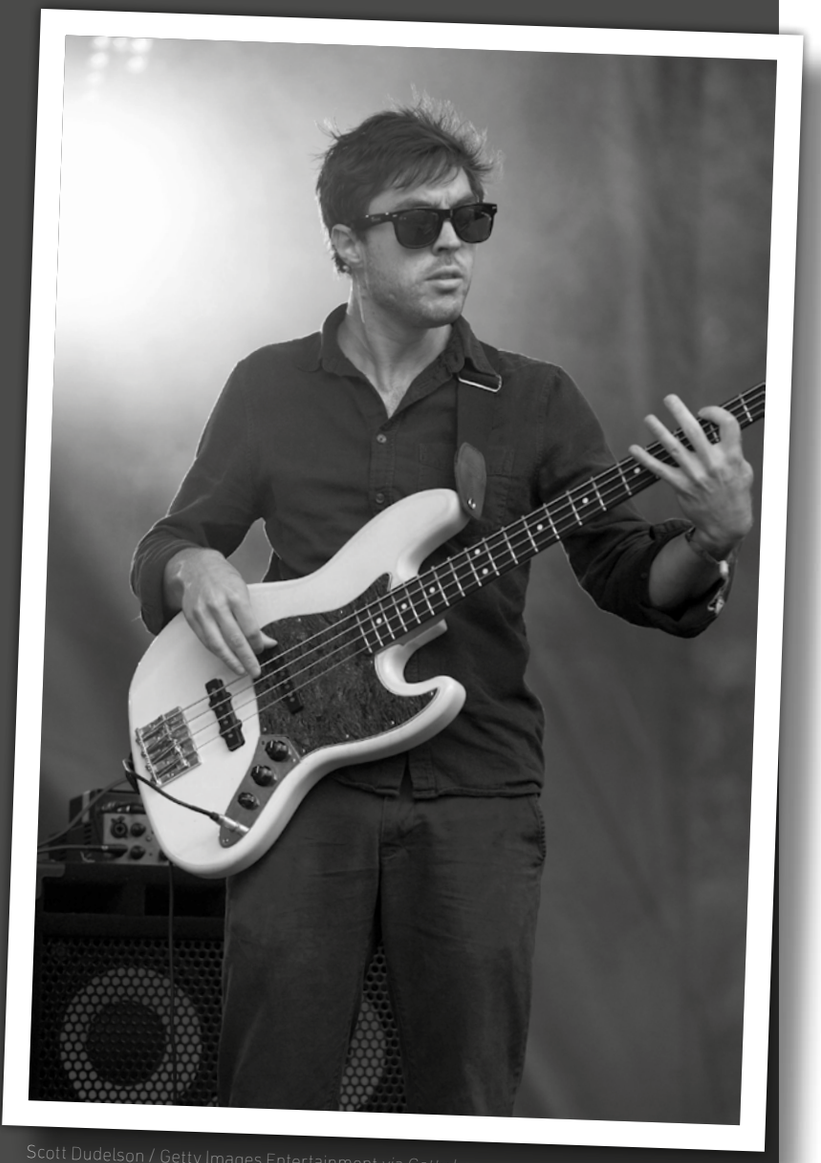

[69]
[71]
Develop solo
[73]
[77]
Em11
C/D
N.C.
Em9
I
[81]
[83]
Em11
C/D
N.C.
Em9
[85]

Dean Town

Artist: Vulfpeck
Source: *The Beautiful Game* (Album, 2016)
Genre: Jazz-Funk

With its driving funky rhythm, 'Dean Town' demonstrates the upbeat and straightforward style of funk that is popular with fans of Vulfpeck. So much so, a common feature of their live shows is the crowd singing along flawlessly to Joe Dart's complex, fast-moving bassline.

American funk outfit Vulfpeck was founded in 2011 by a group of musicians attending University of Michigan. The band wished to channel the sound of '60s session musicians to create the sound of a live rhythm section and have gained a reputation for their impressive live performances and humorous stage presence. In 2019, they achieved the impressive feat of selling out Madison Square Garden without the help of a record label or manager. Vulfpeck have released ten studio albums, with their most recent released in 2022. The band have released an array of funky and rhythmic music, including lively and complex instrumentals alongside catchy and singable soul and R&B-inspired songs. Their success is largely due to their innovative social media campaigns and unique approach to YouTube videos.



Scott Dudelson / Getty Images Entertainment *via Getty Images*

Recommended Listening



Herbie Hancock *Head Hunters* (1973)
The album *Head Hunters* brought Herbie Hancock's fusion sound to a wider, mainstream audience, adding a healthy dose of rock and funk influence, with a characteristic bassline heard on 'Chameleon'.
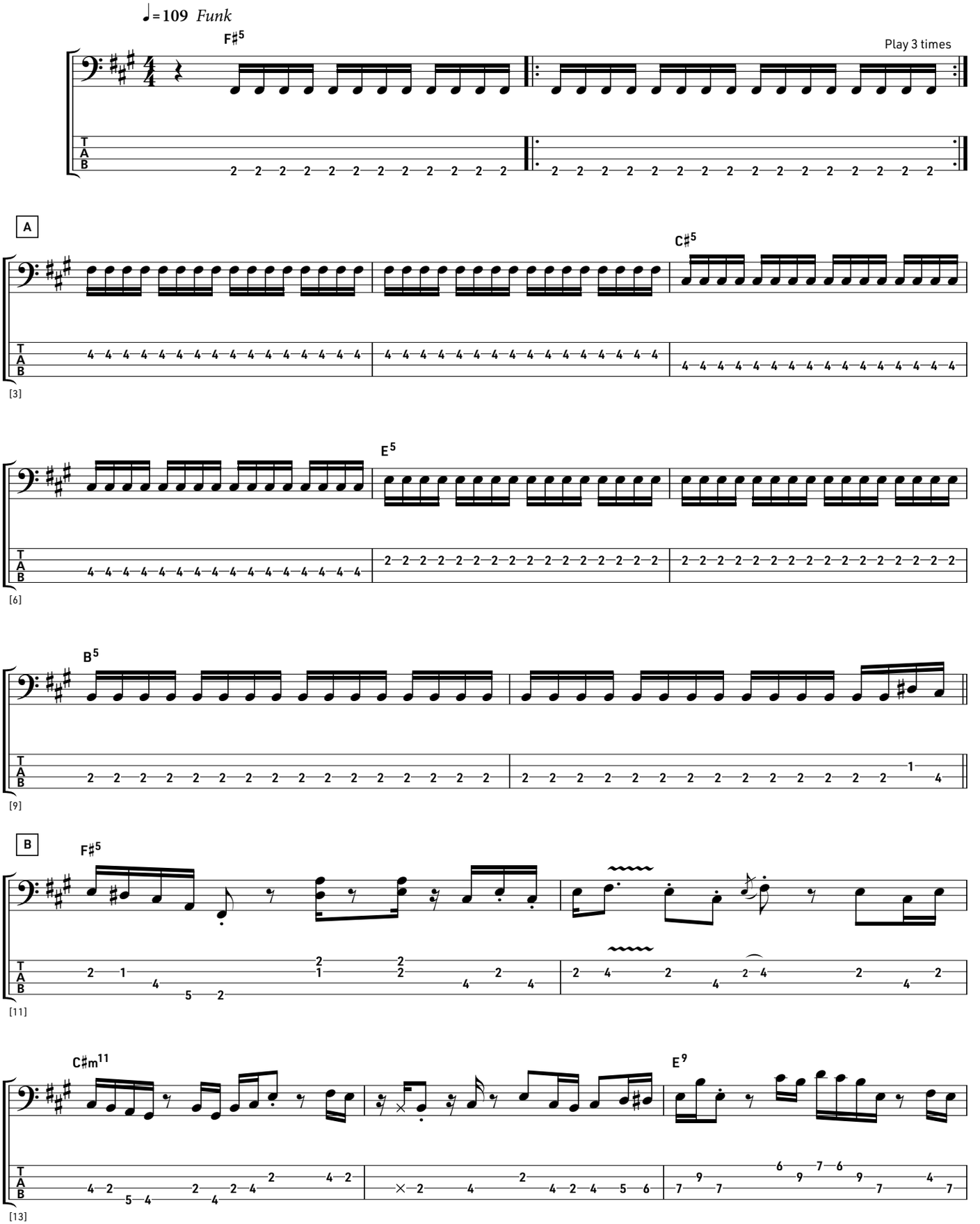


Thundercat *The Golden Age of the Apocalypse* (2011)
Versatile and highly-acclaimed bassist Thundercat has worked in a wide range of music styles from thrash metal to hip hop. As a solo musician, he flaunts his impressive bass playing with his soulful grooves on his unique 6-string bass guitar.
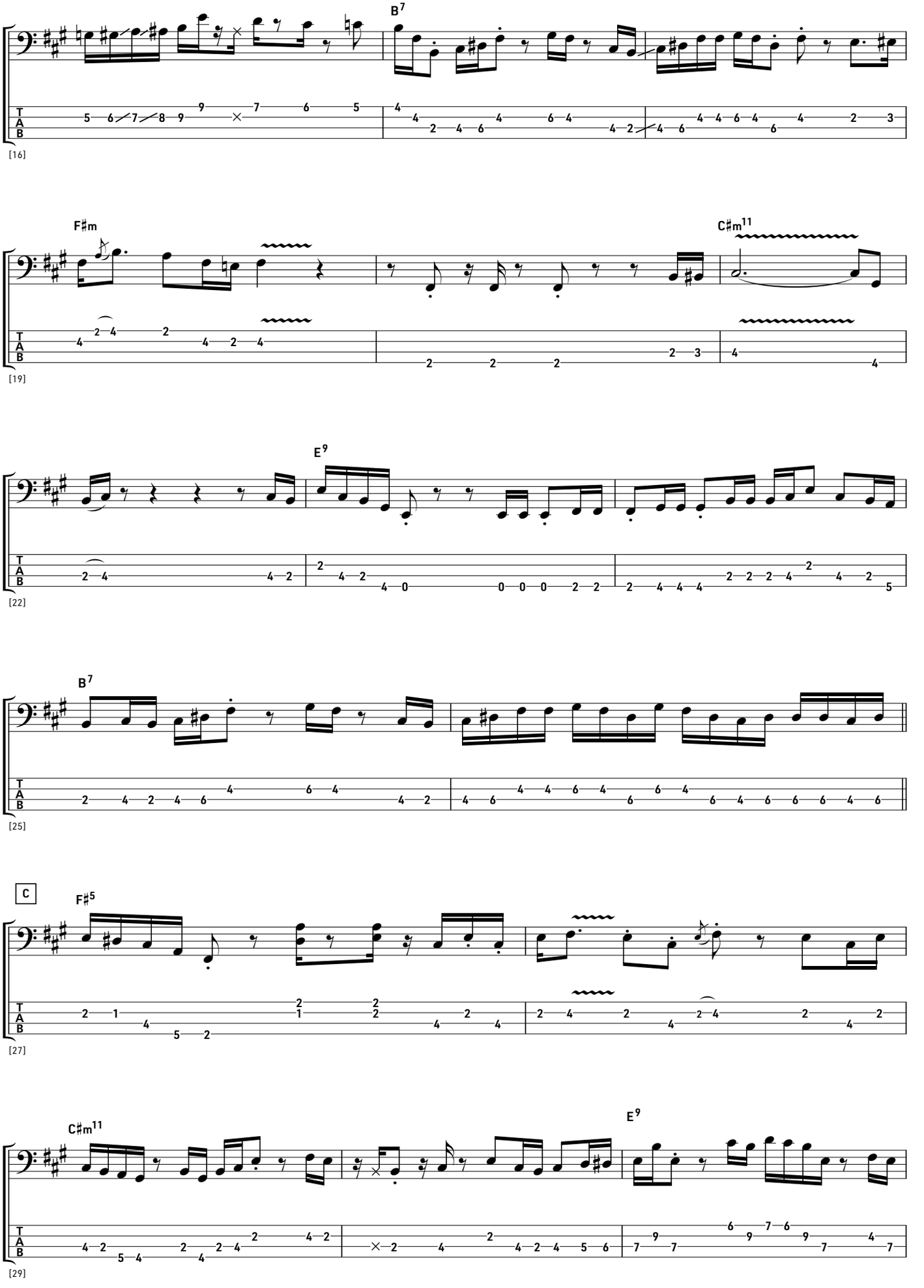
Dean Town

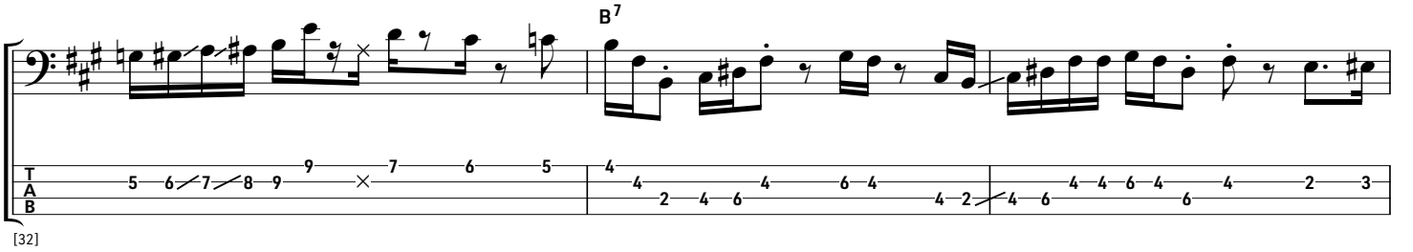
By Jack Stratton
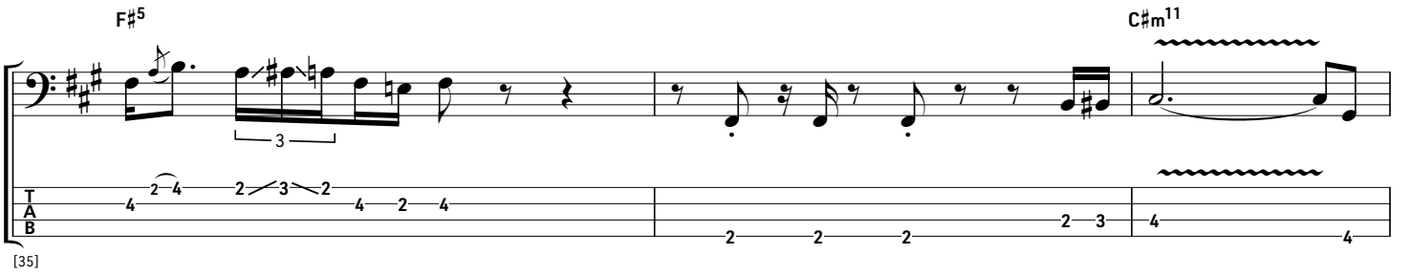
Vulfpeck

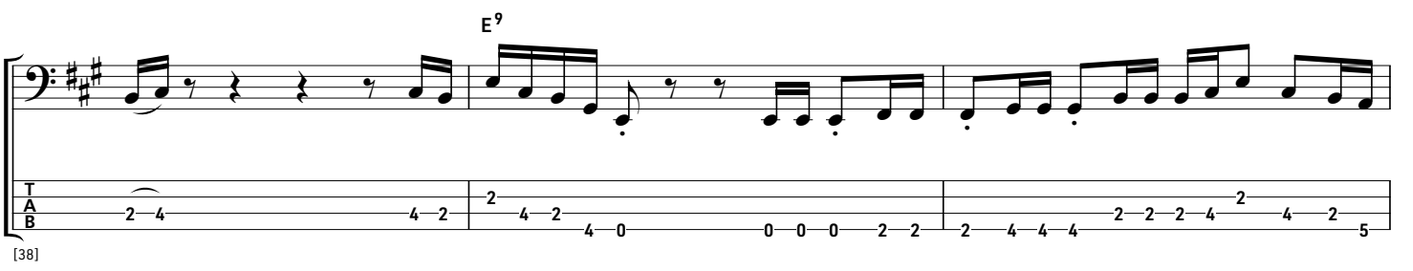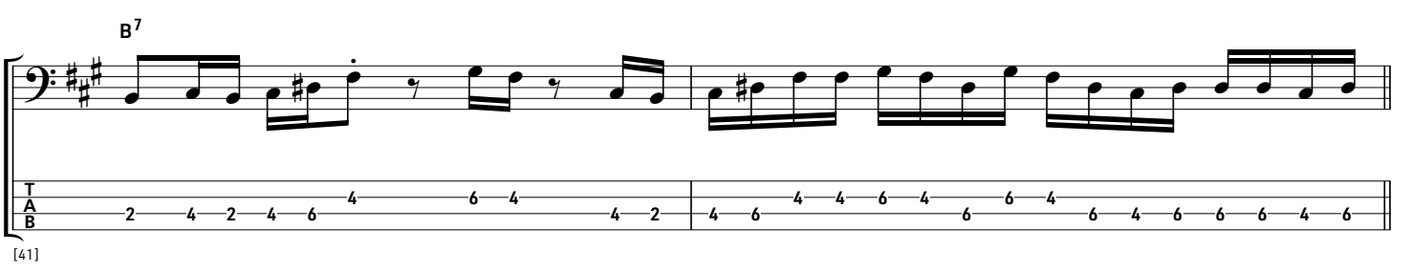


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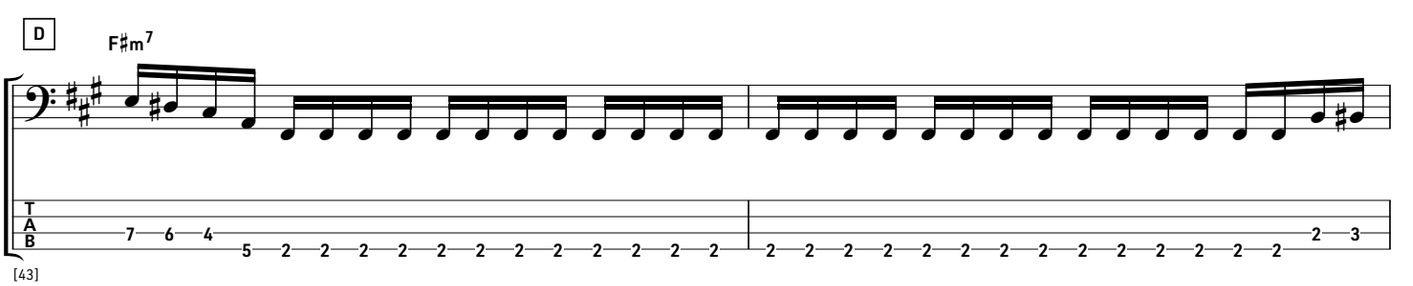

B7
[16]
F♯m
C♯m11
[19]
E9
[22]
B7
[25]
C
F♯5
[27]
C♯m11
E9
[29]

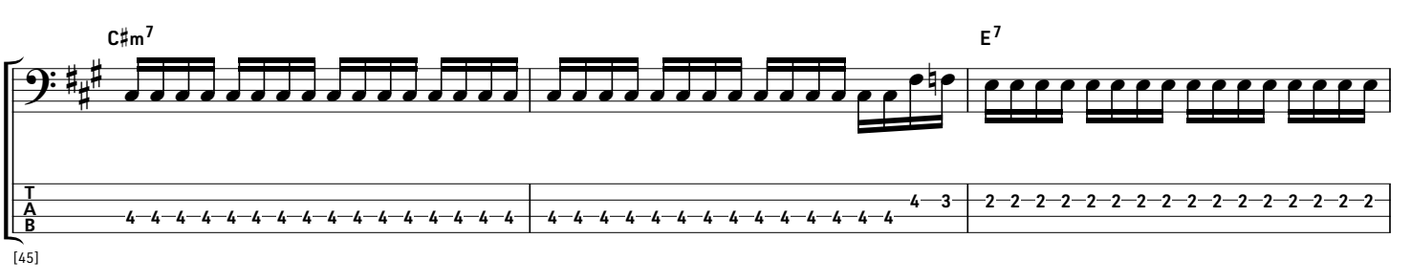

B7
[32]
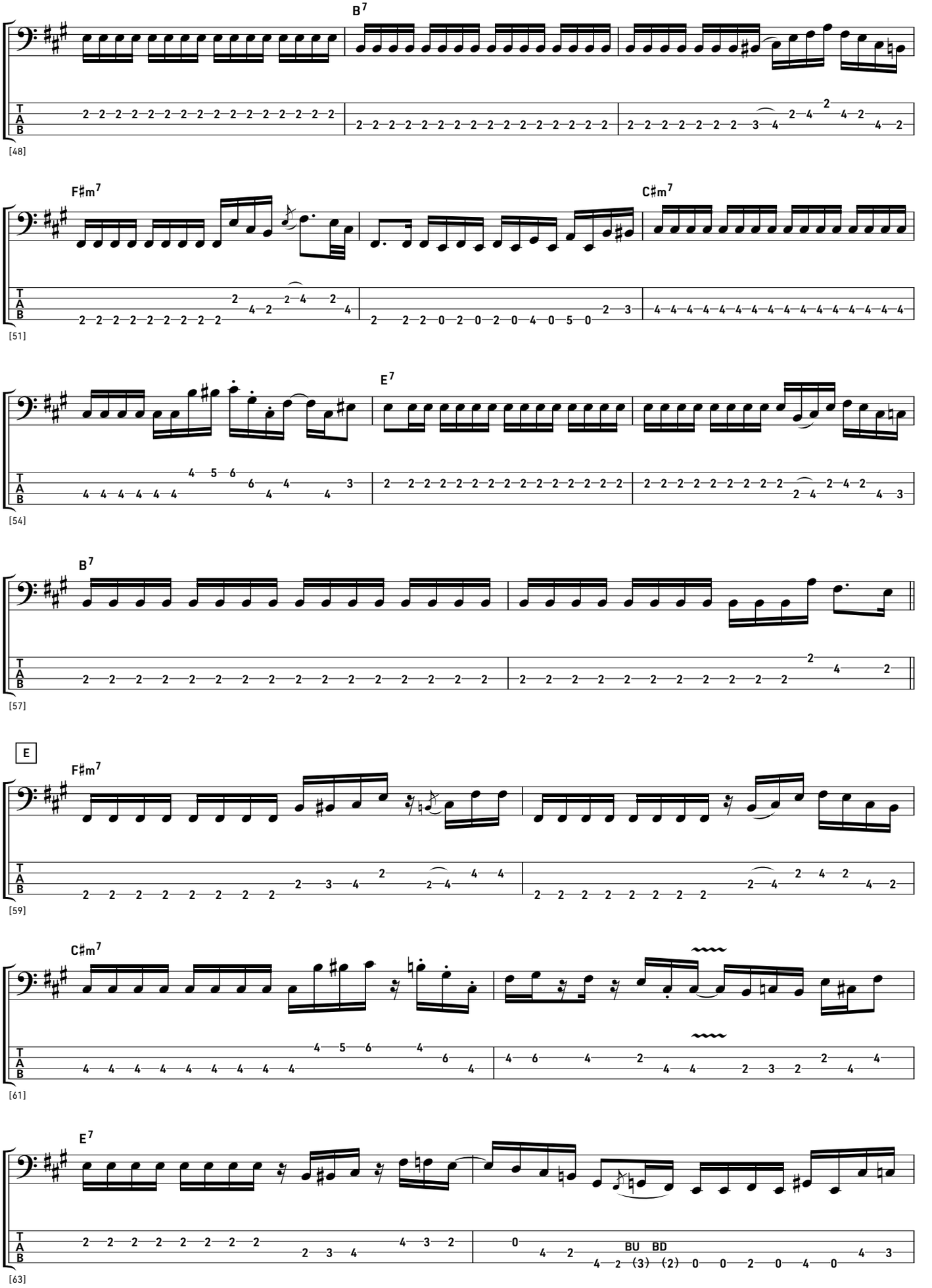

F♯5
C♯m11
[35]
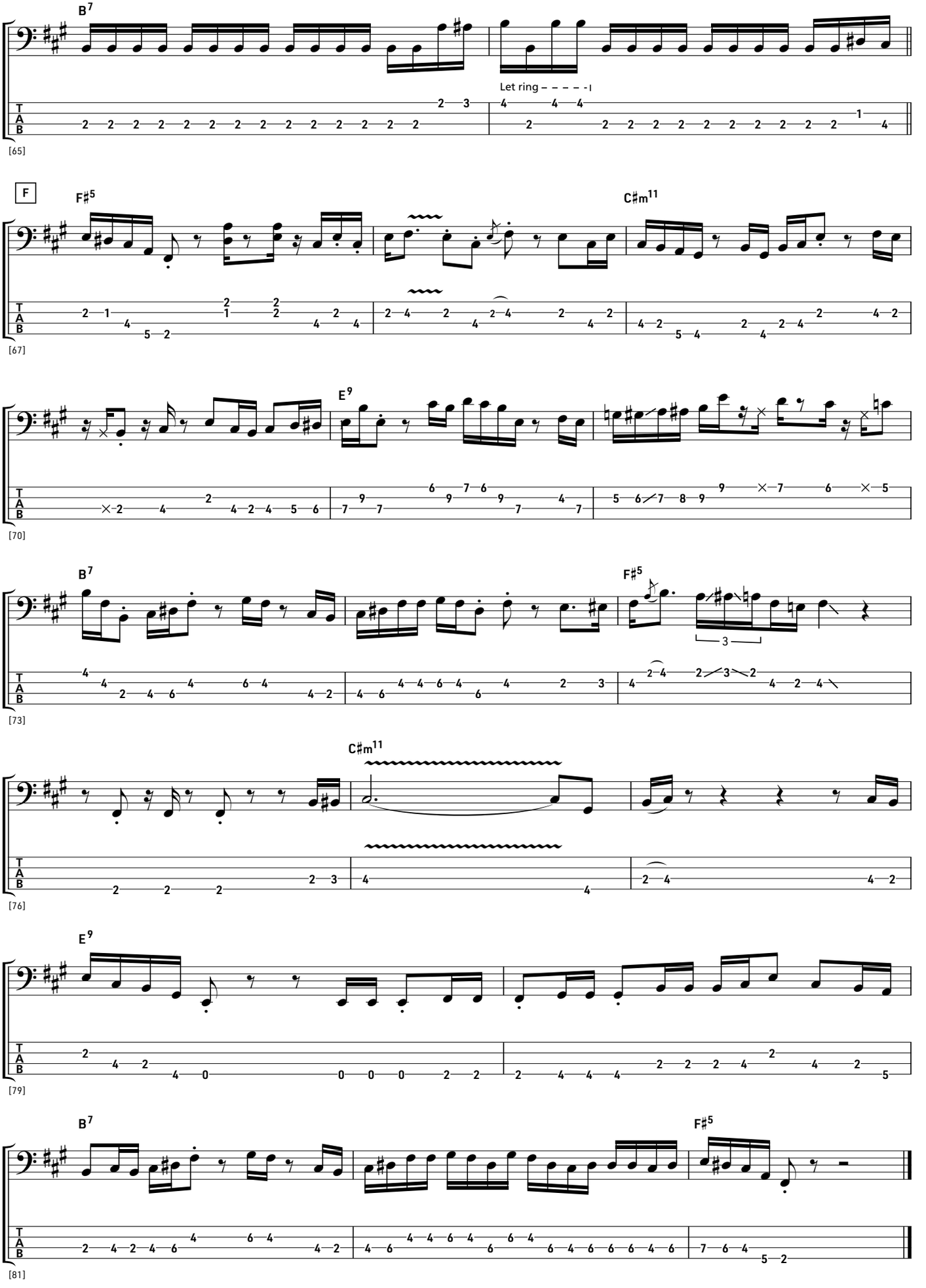

E9
[38]


B7
[41]


D
F♯m7
[43]


C♯m7
E7
[45]


B7
[48]
F♯m7
C♯m7
[51]
E7
[54]
B7
[57]
E
F♯m7
[59]
C♯m7
[61]
E7
BU BD
[63]


B7
Let ring
[65]
F
F♯5
C♯m11
[67]
E9
[70]
B7
F♯5
[73]
C♯m11
[76]
E9
[79]
B7
F♯5
[81]

rockschool® *Originals*

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.

Copenhagen

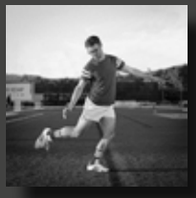
'Copenhagen' takes its stylistic lead from ensembles like the Esbjörn Svensson Trio and Pat Metheny Group. It fuses the complex harmonies and rhythms of jazz with other elements taken from rock and pop, making it more accessible to a wider audience. This jazz fusion style is particularly popular with contemporary guitarists, with virtuosos such as Guthrie Govan and Frank Gambale being notable exponents of the genre.



Recommended Listening **Pat Metheny** *Bright Size Life* (1976)
The debut release from jazz guitarist Pat Metheny featured bass guitar legend Jaco Pastorius and drummer Bob Moses. It is a model example of the jazz fusion output of record label ECM, with its polished and sombre sound. Metheny pushed the boundaries of jazz by incorporating new technology, allowing him to expand the sonic capabilities of the jazz guitar.

The Switch

Paying tribute to contemporary funk acts such as Vulfpeck and Cory Wong, 'The Switch' features intricate, syncopated rhythms, extended harmonies and even a few metric modulations for good measure. As with the output of today's funk artists, 'The Switch' takes significant influence from earlier exponents of the genre, including James Brown and Chic.



Recommended Listening **Vulfpeck** *The Beautiful Game* (2016)
The upbeat and crisp funk style of Vulfpeck gained great popularity in the 2010s and shows no sign of slowing down. On *The Beautiful Game*, the group showcase their versatility and ability to incorporate numerous other genres, such as pop, soul and R&B.

Four by Twelve
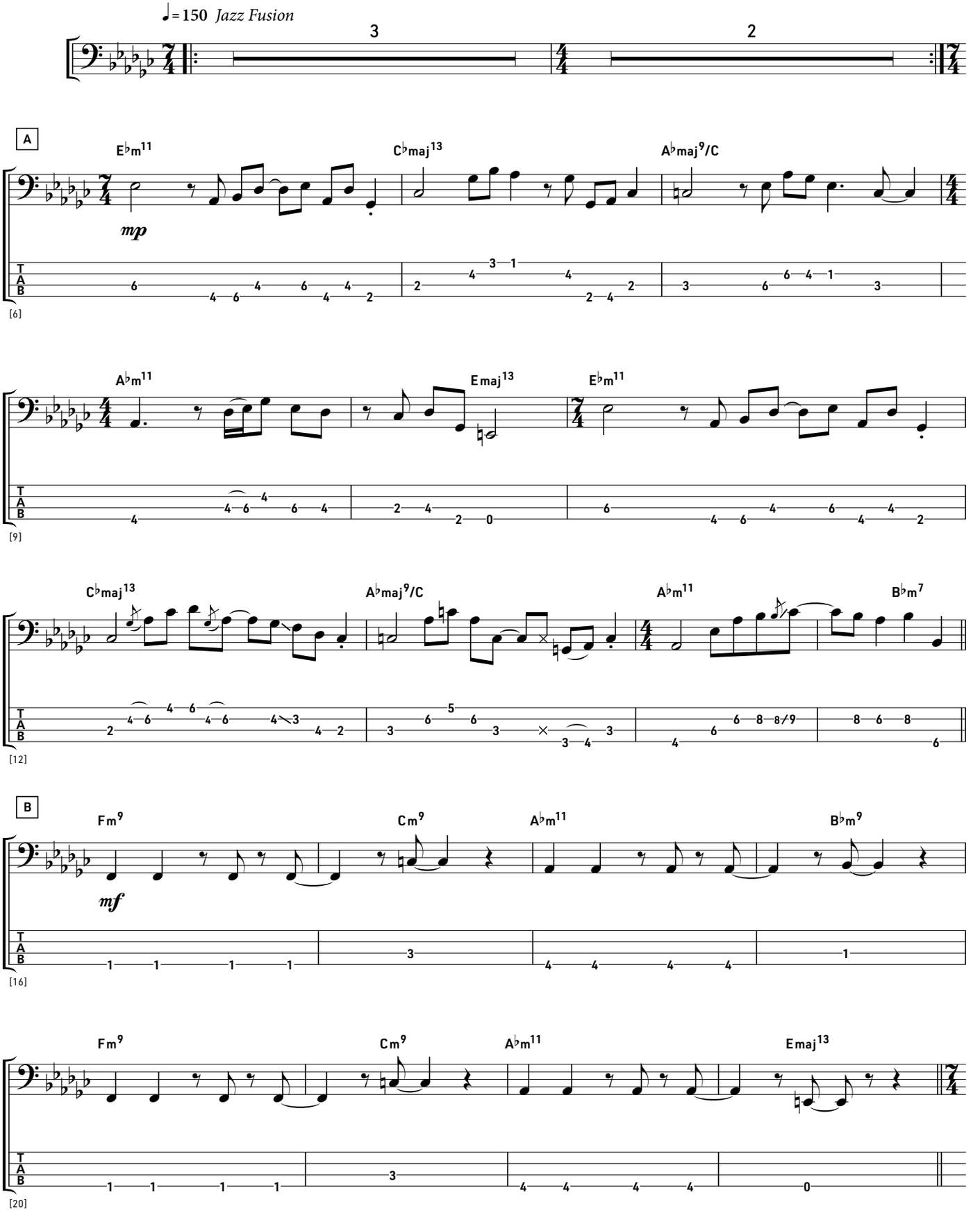
'Four by Twelve' is a unique blend of genres, which are themselves a fusion of other genres; namely industrial metal and progressive rock. The dissonant and aggressive sound suggests acts like Nine Inch Nails and Tool, whereas the complex rhythms and technically detailed parts are reminiscent of Dream Theater and Animals as Leaders. This song requires a strong command of a range of techniques and is a solid test of concentration and stamina!
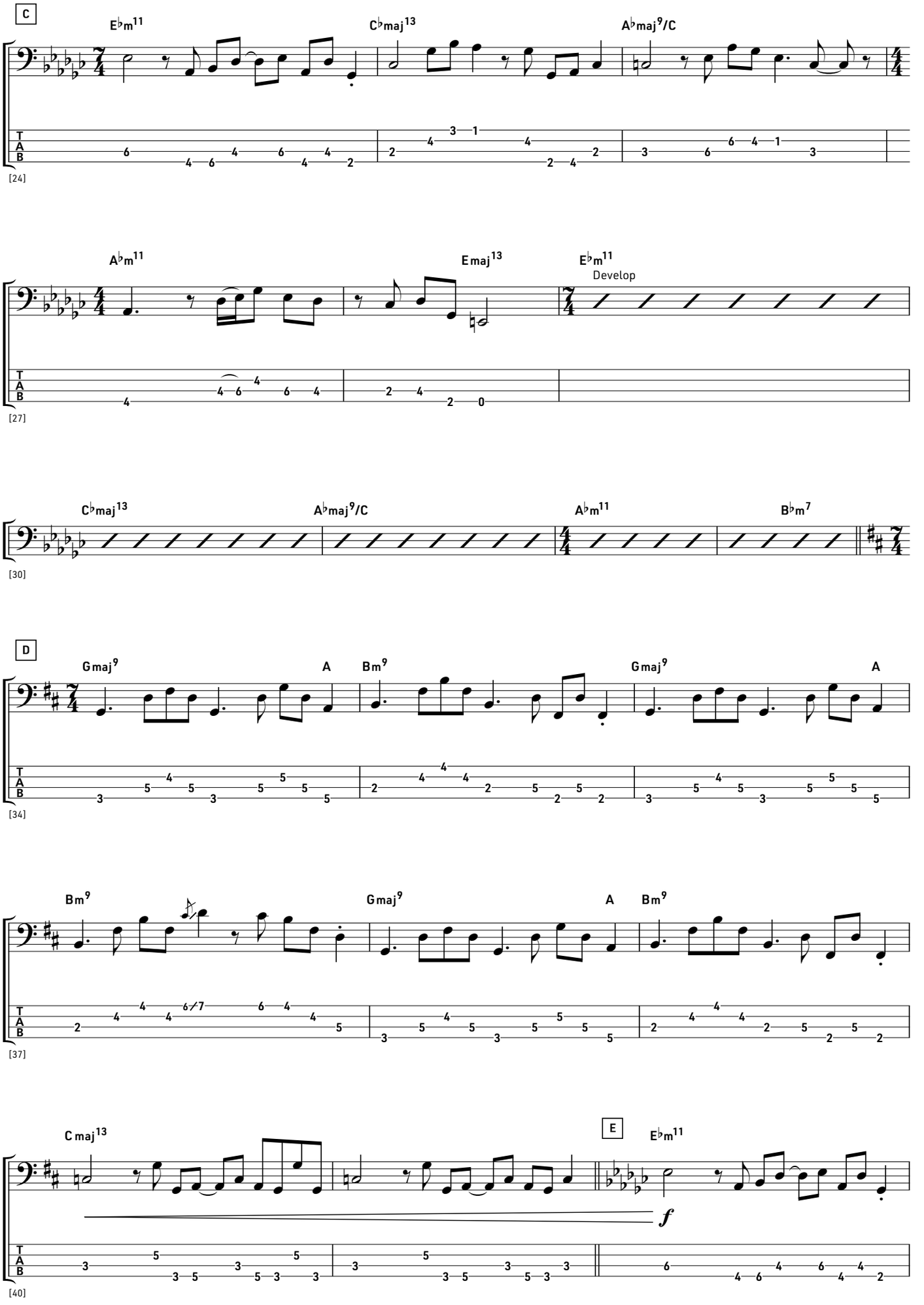


Recommended Listening **Nine Inch Nails** *The Downward Spiral* (1994)
The rise of the industrial counterculture scene in the '80s made way for rock music which utilised drum machines, synths and samples. Trent Reznor's work under the alias Nine Inch Nails became one of the trademark acts of this genre, creating harsh and aggressive soundscapes, contrasted against melancholic, thought-provoking songwriting.

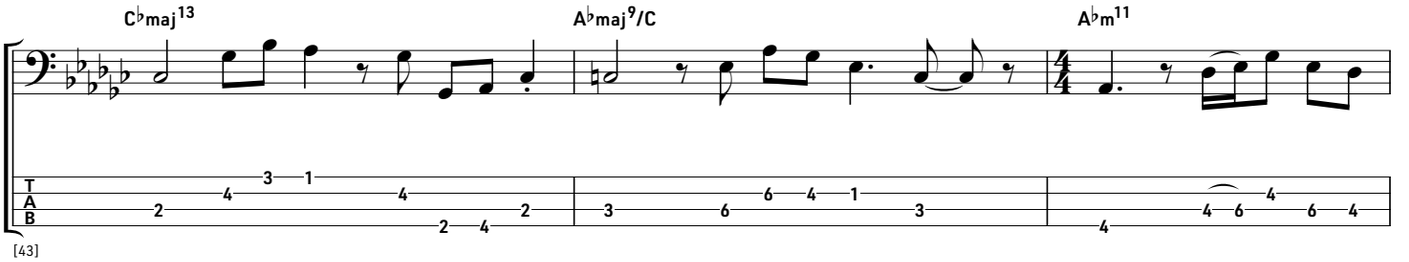
Copenhagen
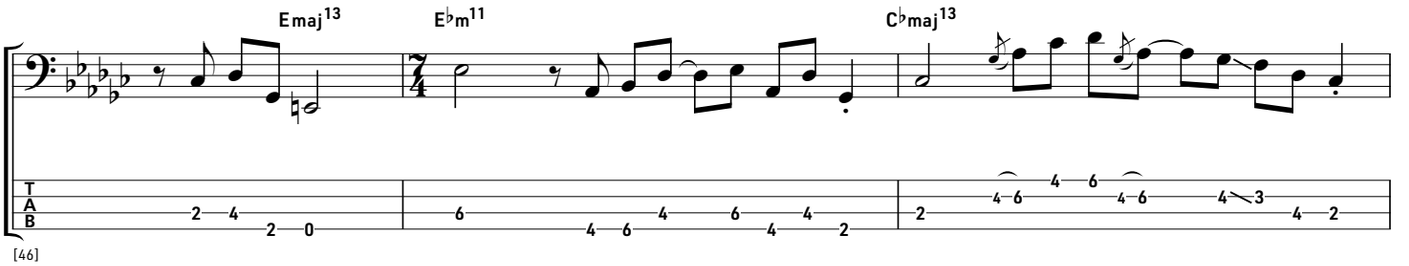
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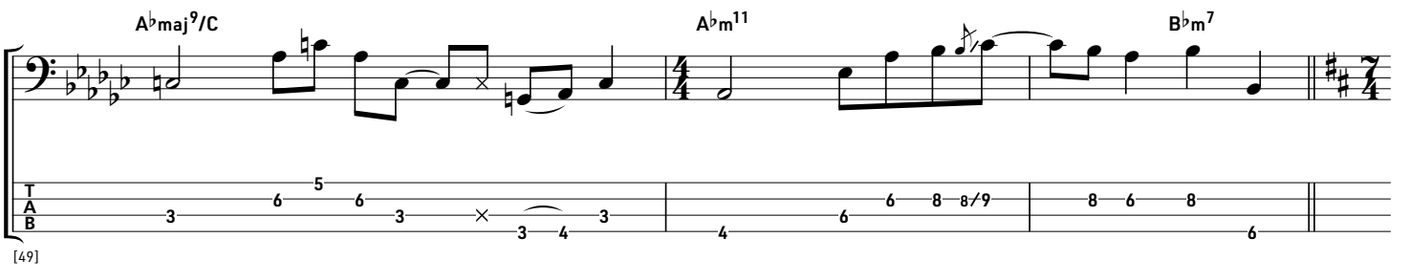


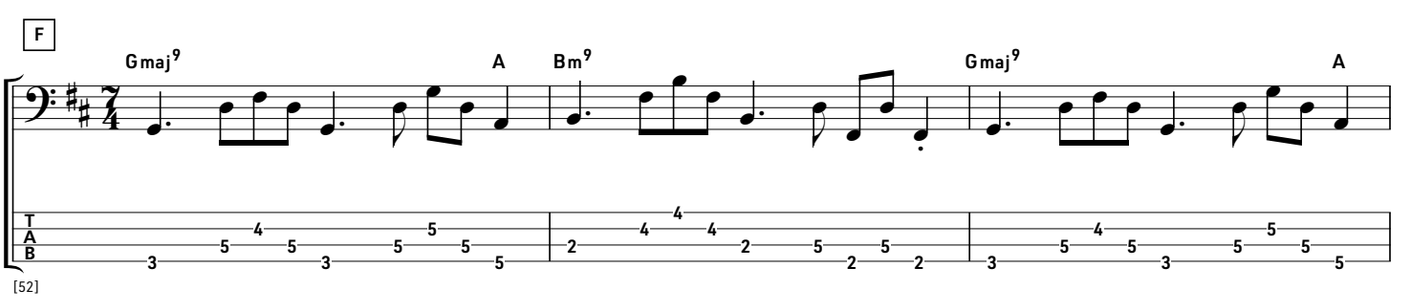
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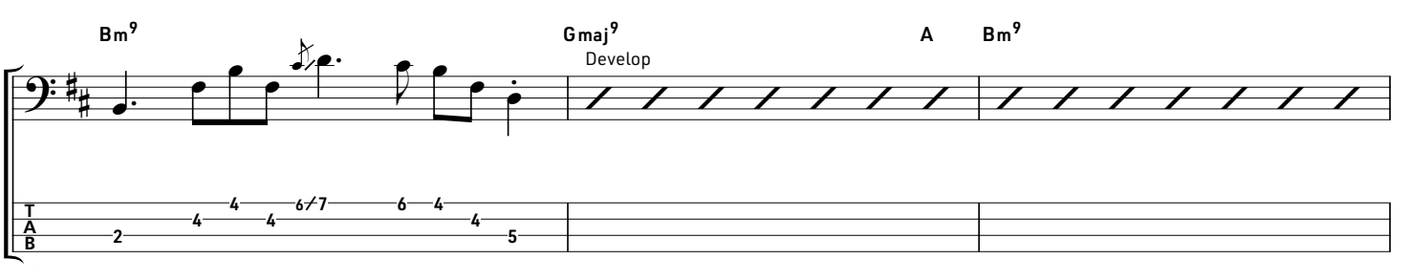

C
E♭m11
C♭maj13
A♭maj9/C
[24]
A♭m11
Emaj13
E♭m11
Develop
[27]
C♭maj13
A♭maj9/C
A♭m11
B♭m7
[30]
D
Gmaj9
A
Bm9
Gmaj9
A
[34]
Bm9
Gmaj9
A
Bm9
[37]
Cmaj13
E
E♭m11
f
[40]


C♭maj13
A♭maj9/C
A♭m11
[43]
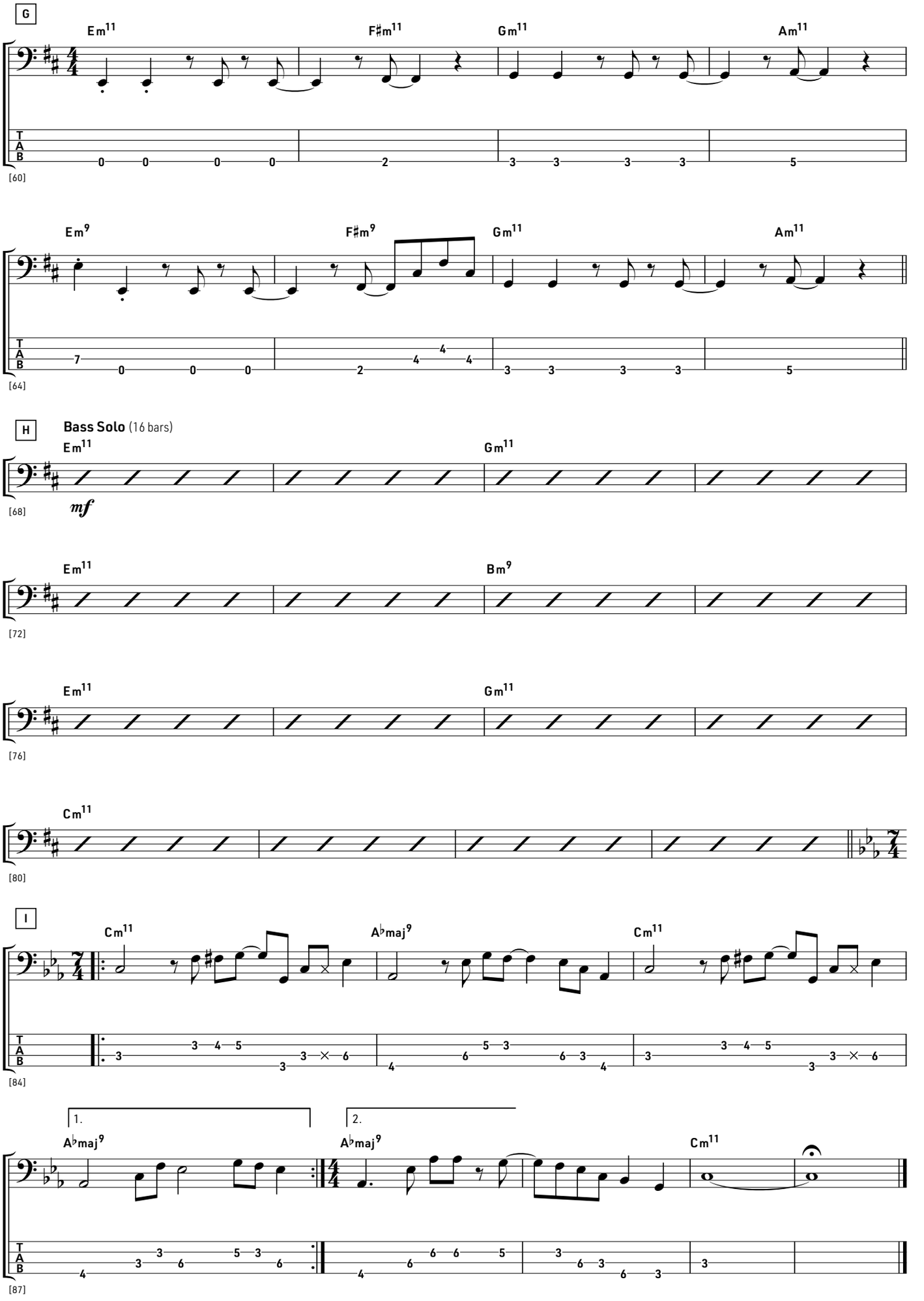

Emaj13
E♭m11
C♭maj13
[46]


A♭maj9/C
A♭m11
B♭m7
[49]
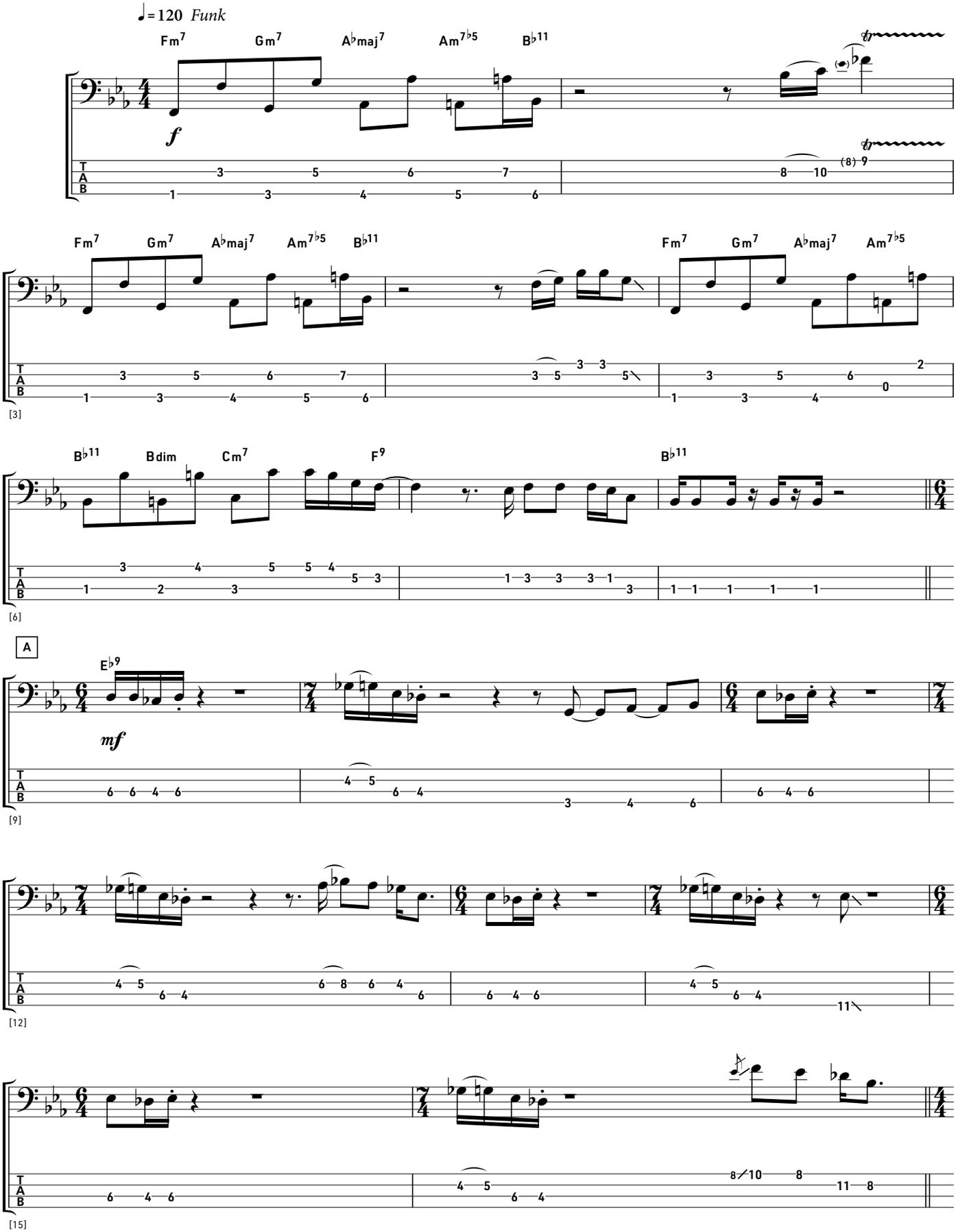

F
Gmaj9
A
Bm9
Gmaj9
A
[52]


Bm9
Gmaj9
Develop
A
Bm9
[55]
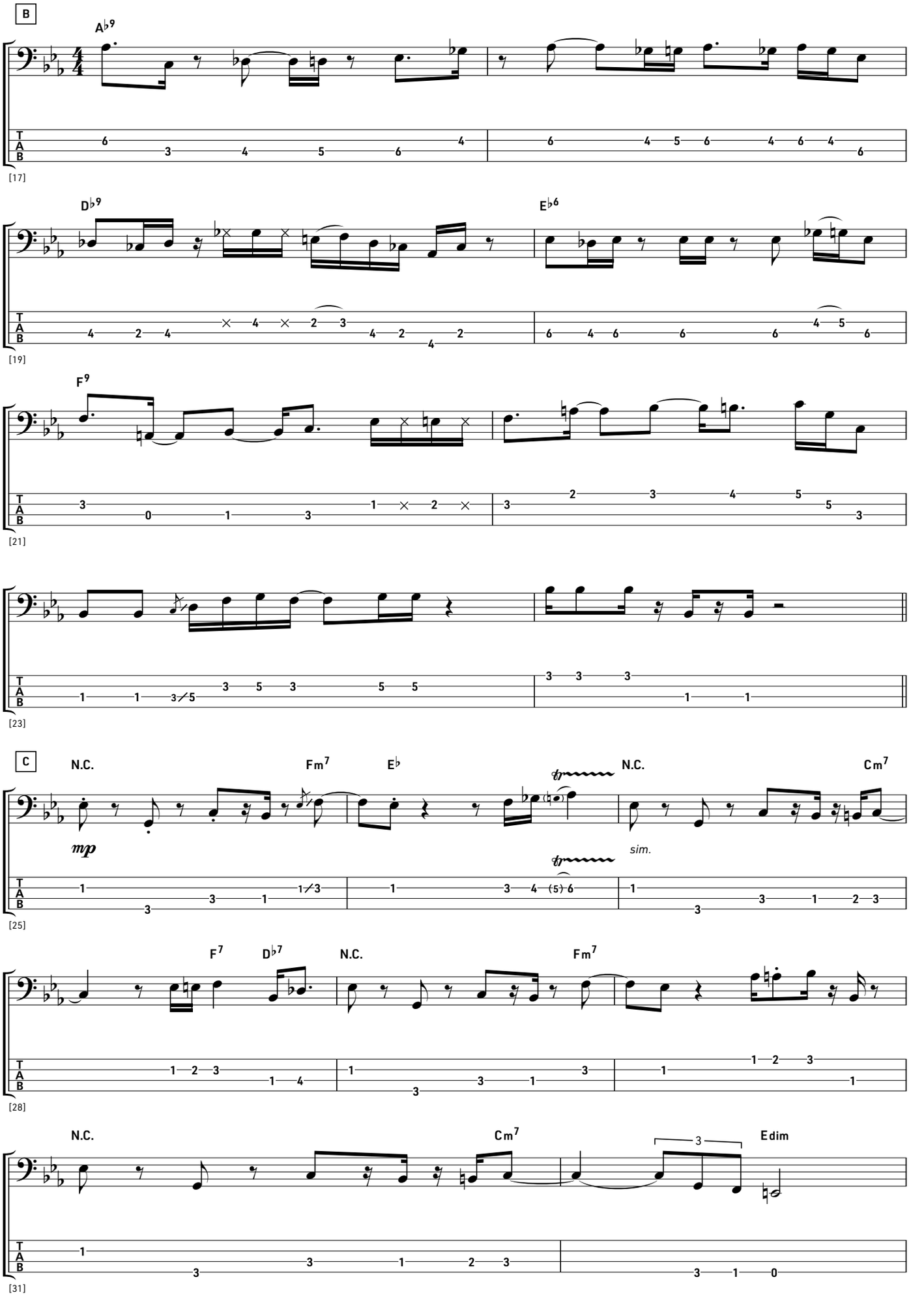

Cmaj13
[58]
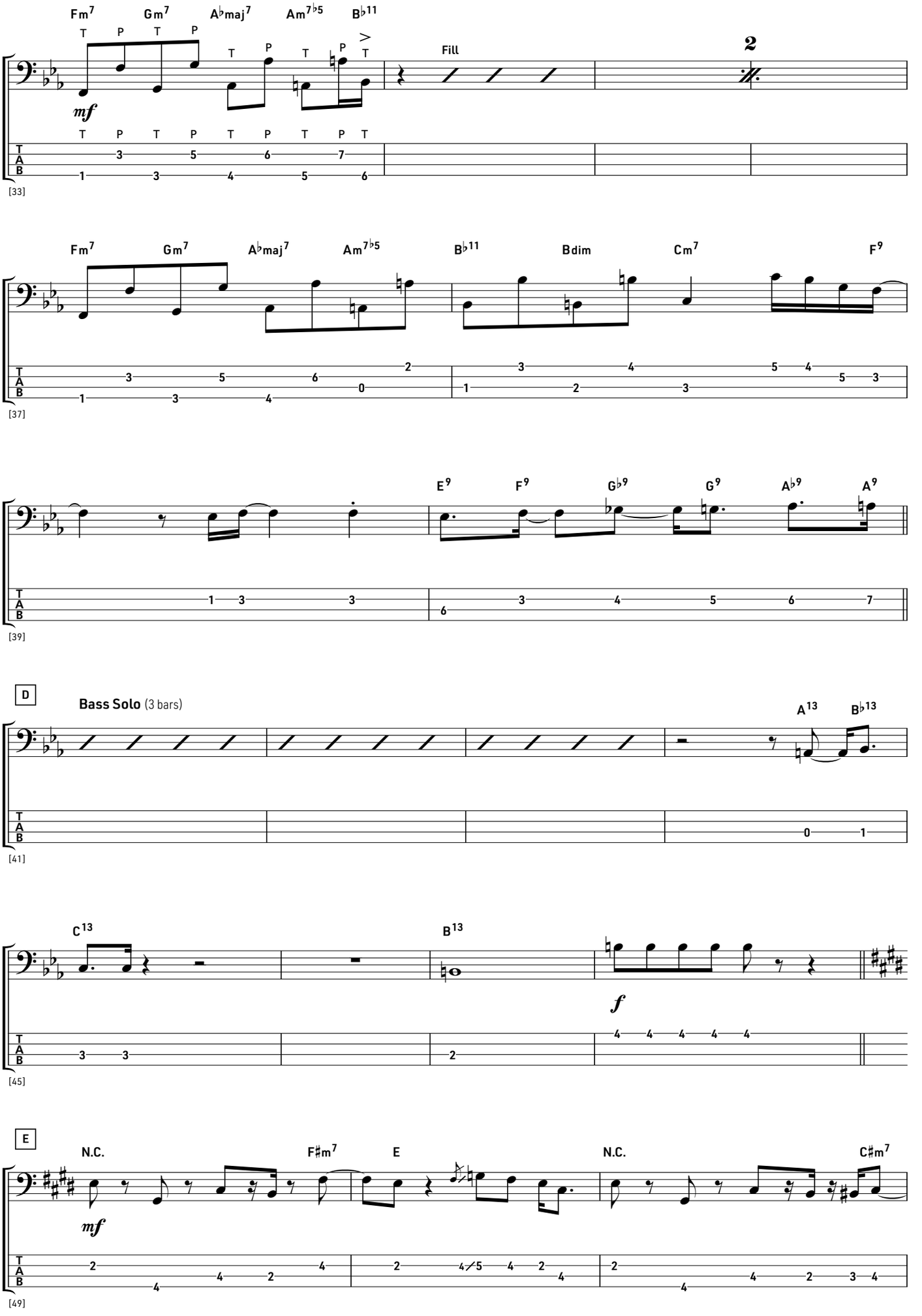

G
Em11
F♯m11
Gm11
Am11
[60]
Em9
F♯m9
Gm11
Am11
[64]
H
Bass Solo (16 bars)
Em11
Gm11
[68]
mf
Em11
Bm9
[72]
Em11
Gm11
[76]
Cm11
[80]
I
Cm11
A♭maj9
Cm11
[84]
1.
2.
A♭maj9
A♭maj9
Cm11
[87]
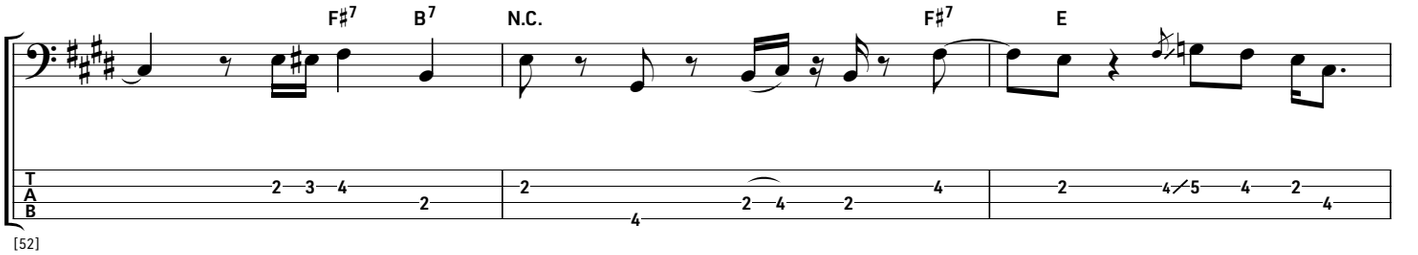
Rockschool Original

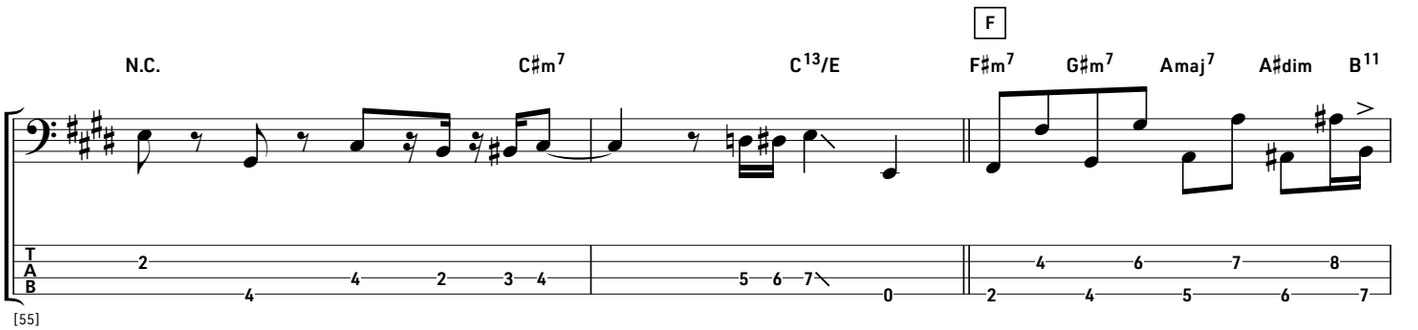


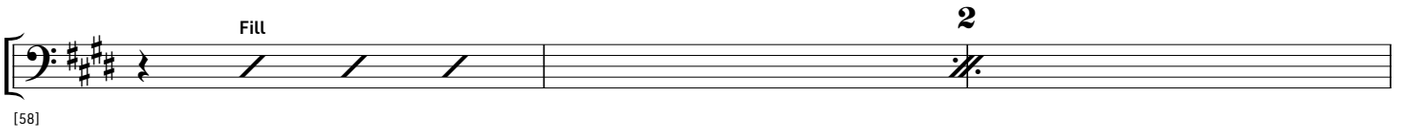
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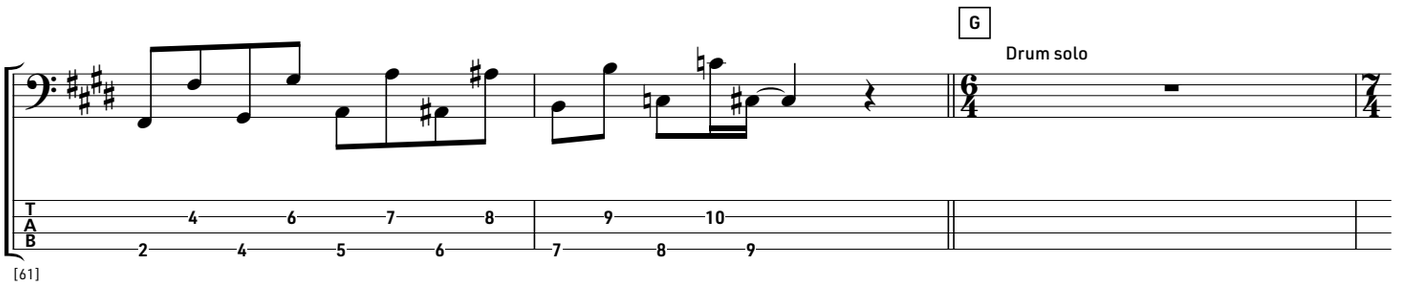

B
A♭9
[17]
D♭9
E♭6
[19]
F9
[21]
[23]
C
N.C.
Fm7
E♭
N.C.
Cm7
mp
sim.
[25]
F7
D♭7
N.C.
Fm7
[28]
N.C.
Cm7
3
Edim
[31]


Fm7 Gm7 A♭maj7 Am7♭5 B♭11
T P T P T P T P T
mf
Fill
2
[33]
Fm7 Gm7 A♭maj7 Am7♭5 B♭11 Bdim Cm7 F9
[37]
E9 F9 G♭9 G9 A♭9 A9
[39]
D
Bass Solo (3 bars)
A13 B♭13
[41]
C13 B13
f
[45]
E
N.C. F♯m7 E N.C. C♯m7
mf
[49]

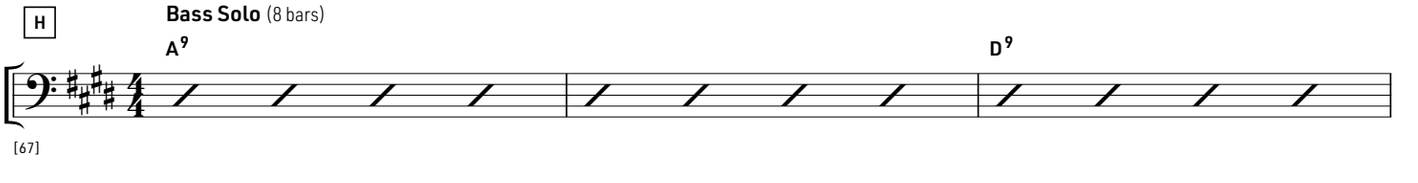

F♯7
B7
N.C.
F♯7
E
[52]


N.C.
C♯m7
C13/E
F
F♯m7
G♯m7
Amaj7
A♯dim
B11
[55]

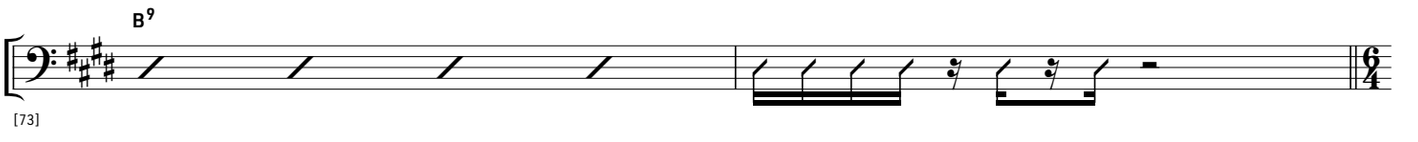

Fill
2
[58]
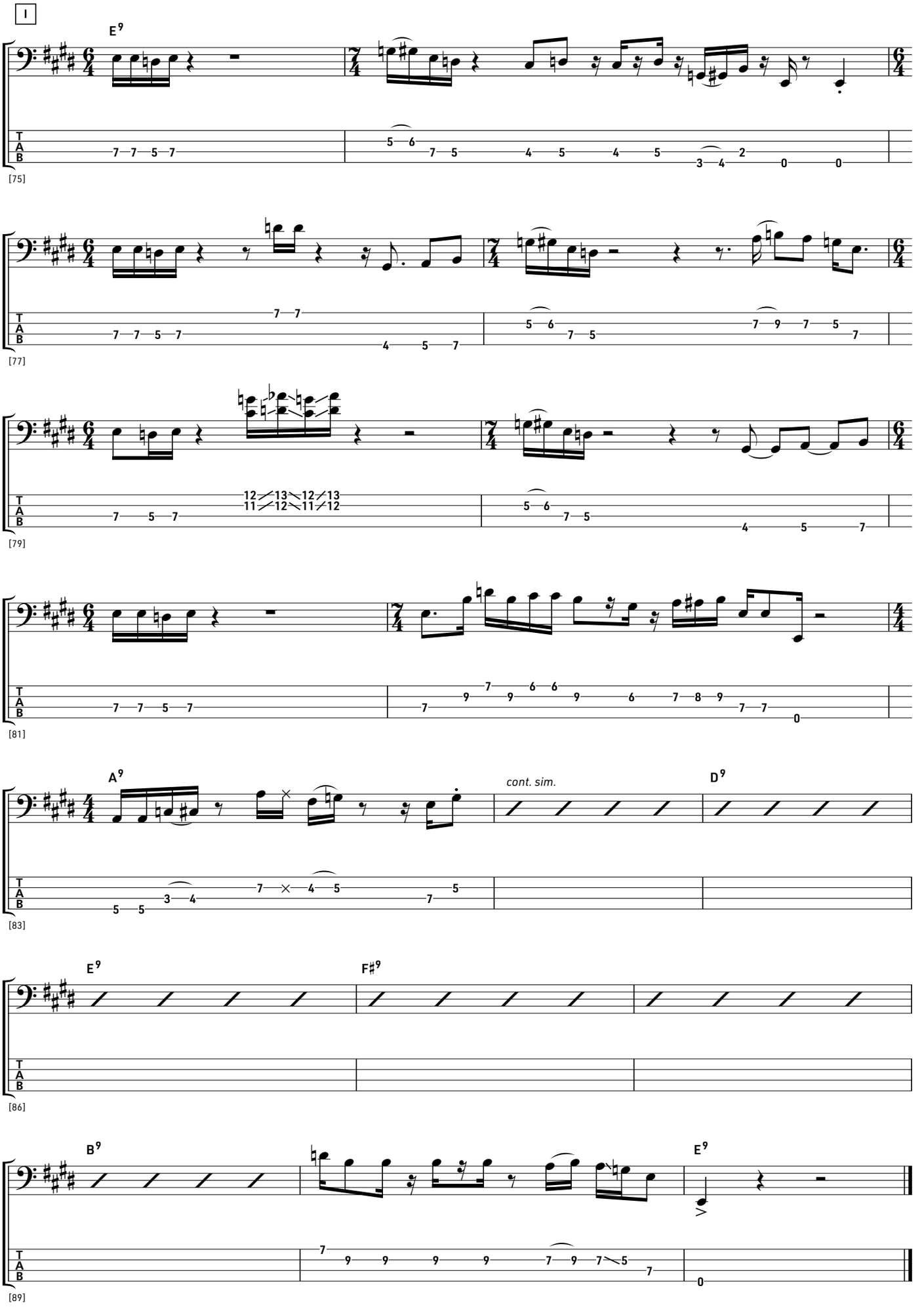

G
Drum solo
[61]


[64]
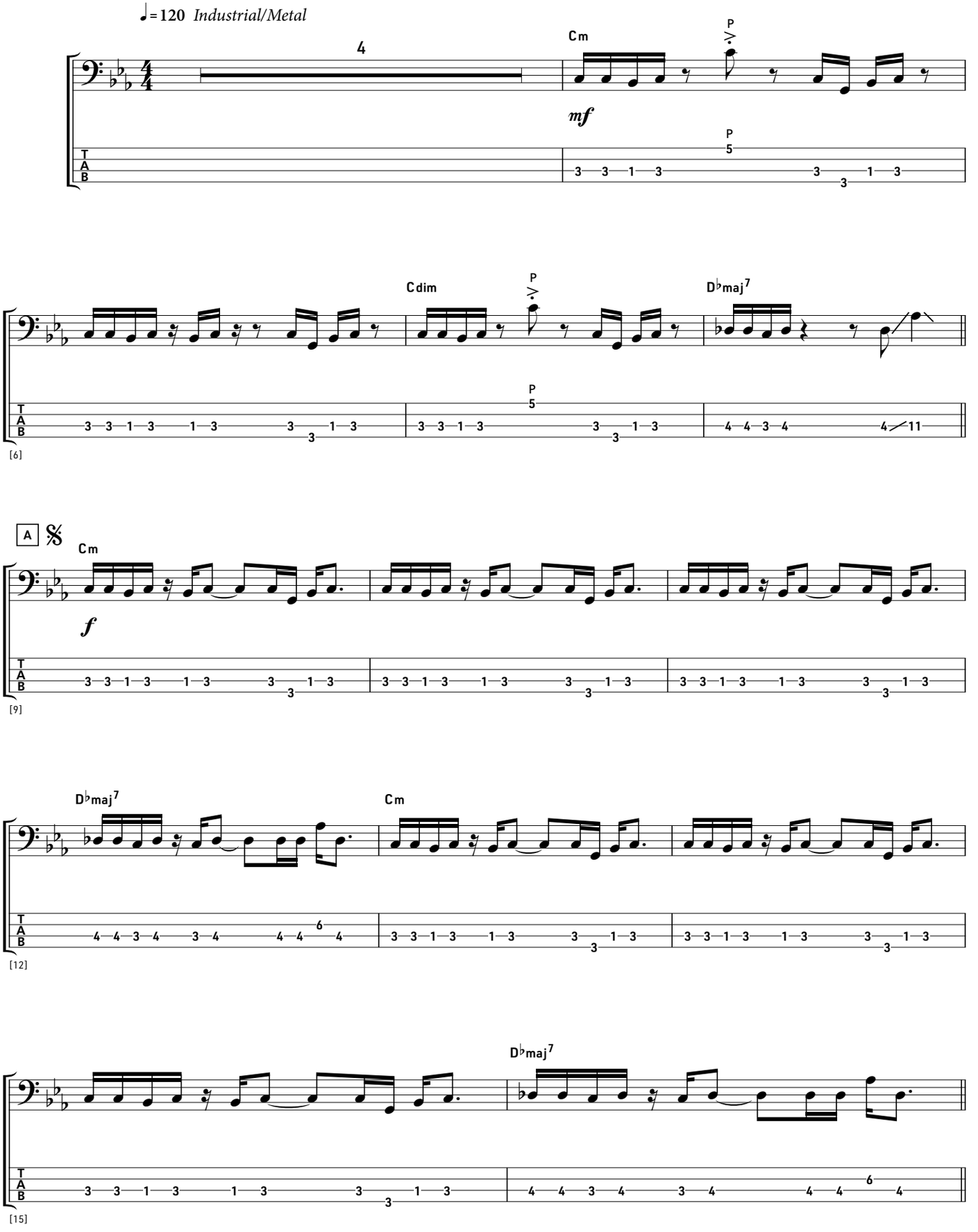

H
Bass Solo (8 bars)
A9
D9
[67]


E9
F♯9
[70]
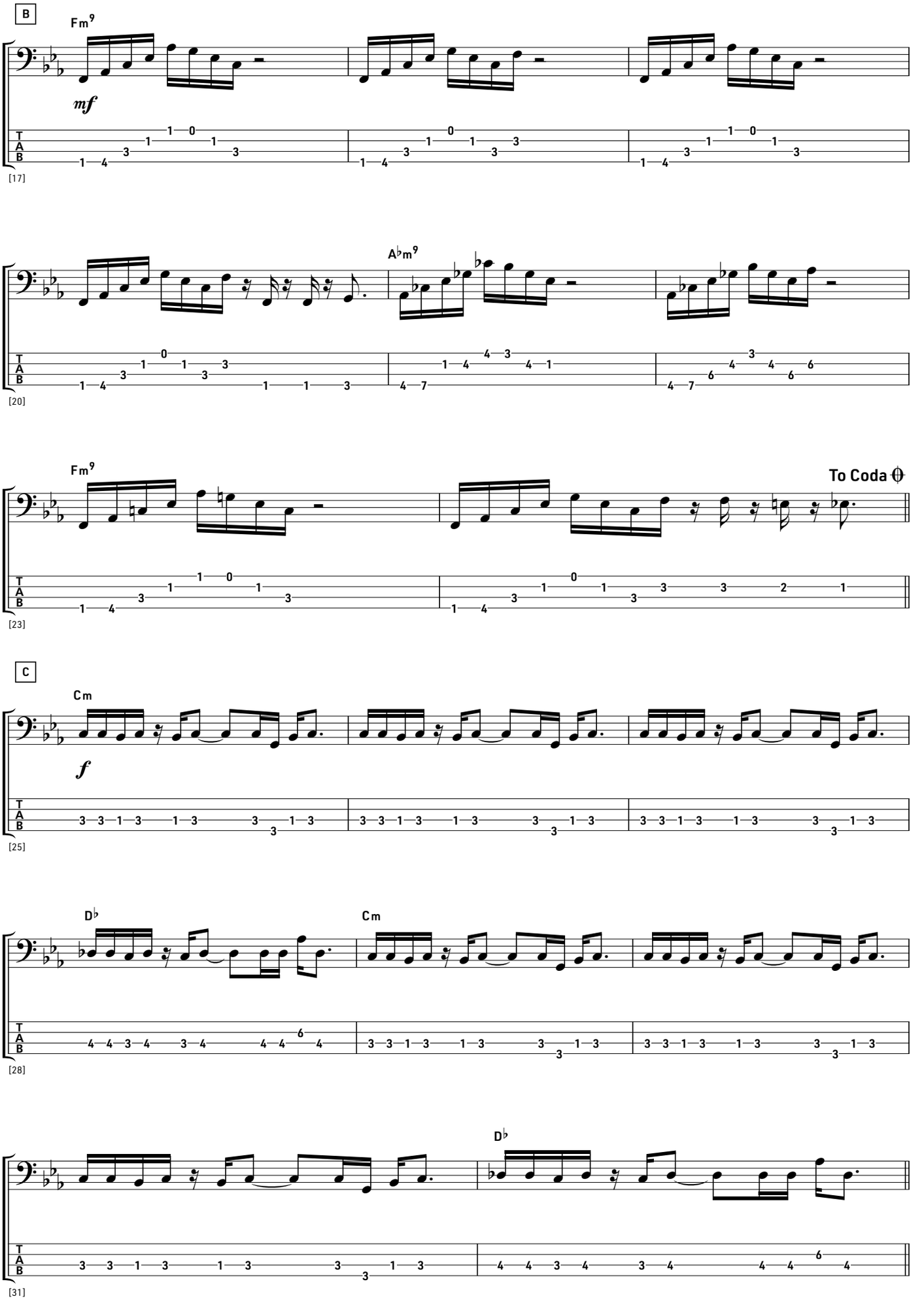

B9
[73]
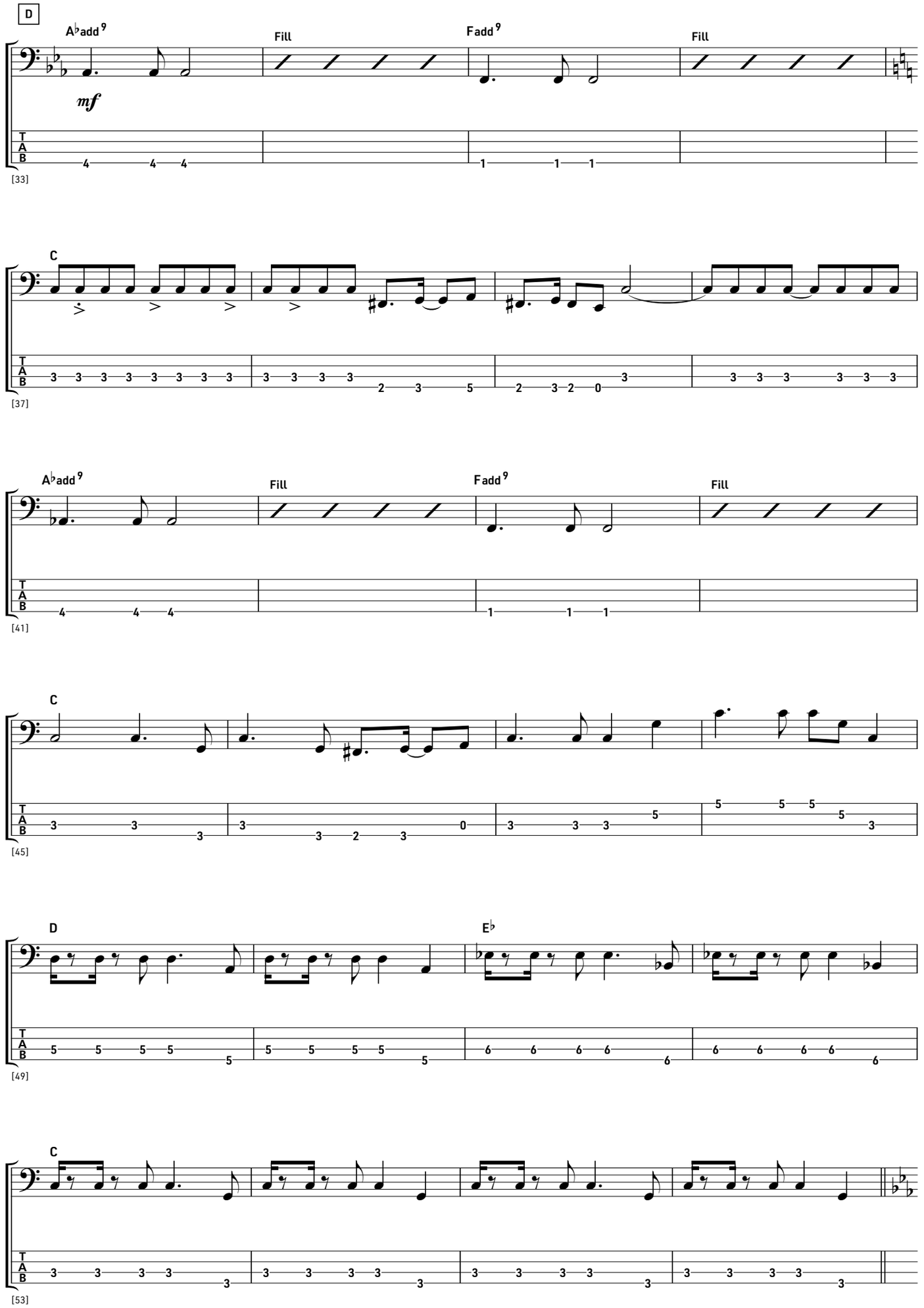

I
E9
[75]
[77]
[79]
[81]
A9
cont. sim.
D9
[83]
E9
F♯9
[86]
B9
E9
[89]
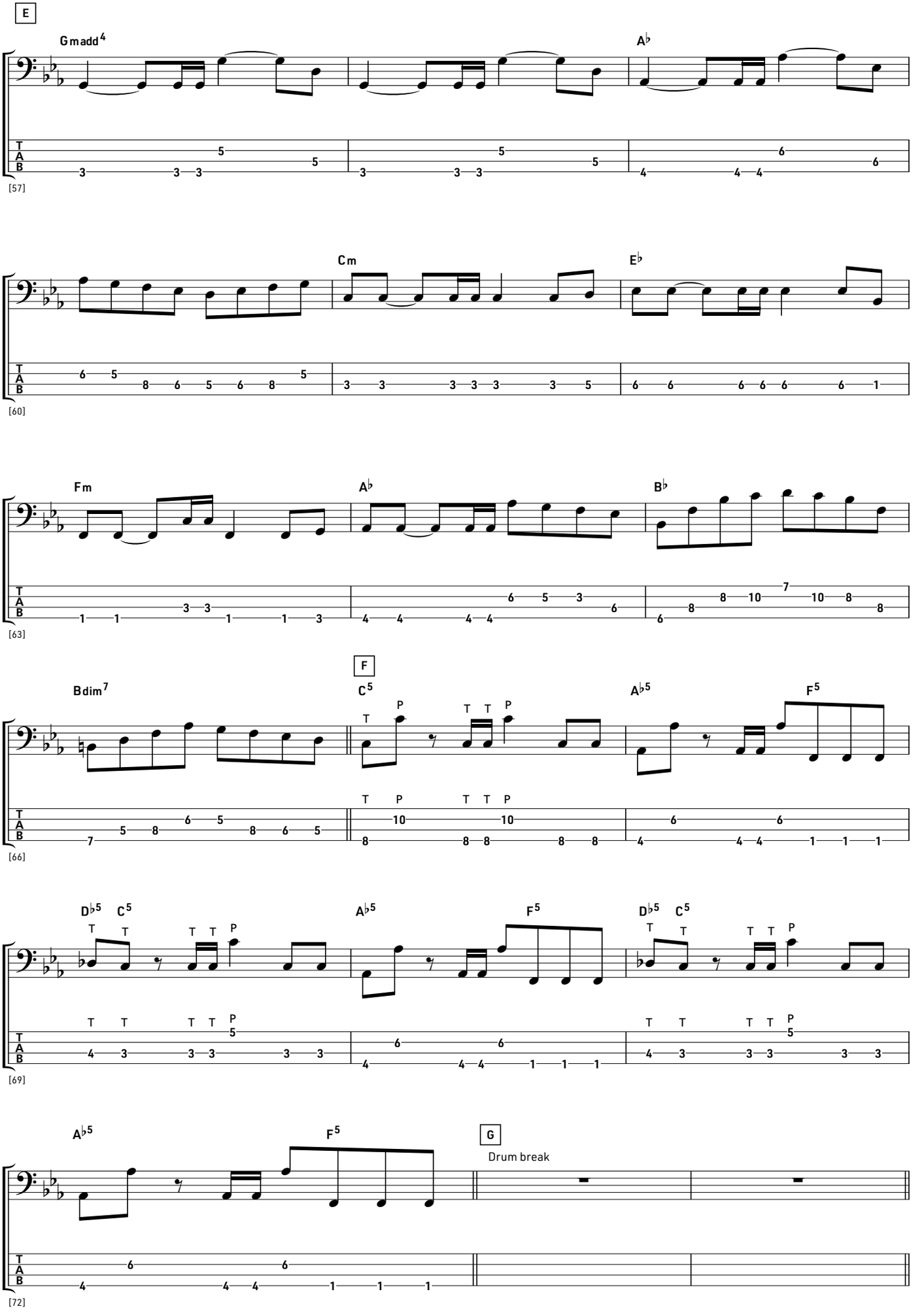
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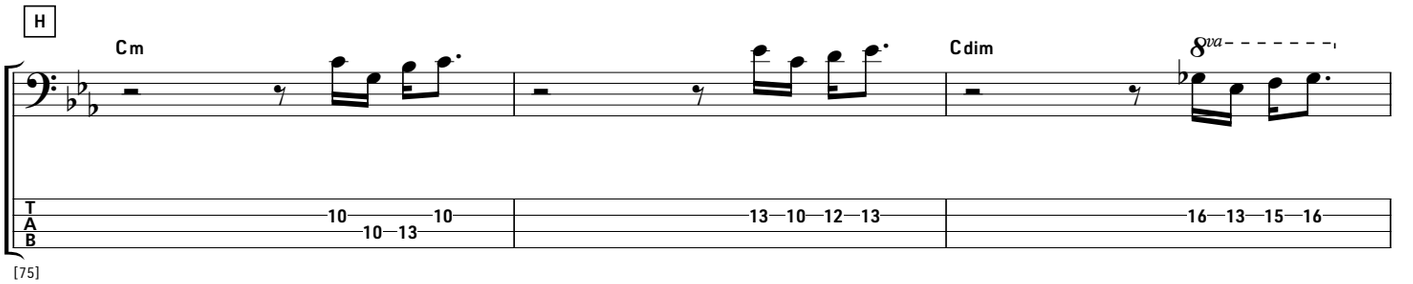


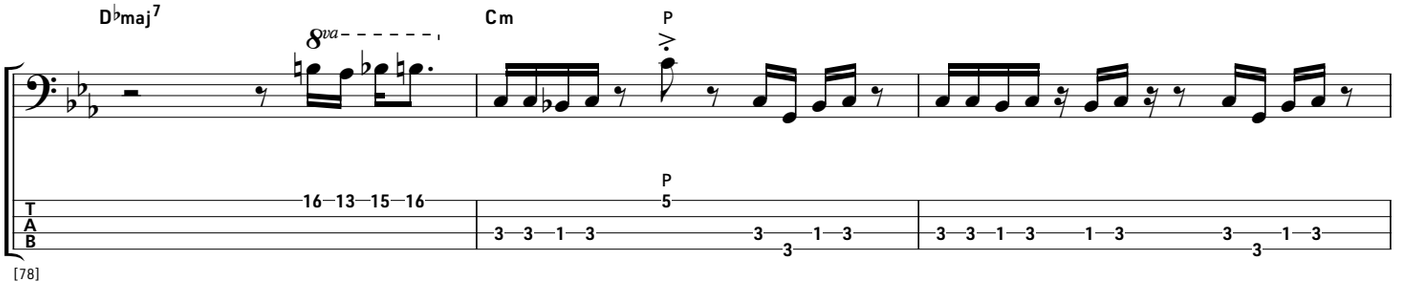
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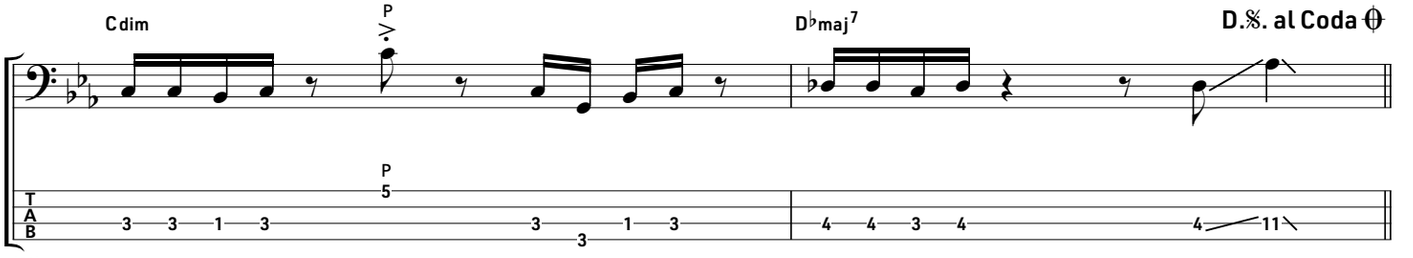

B
Fm9
mf
[17]
Ab m9
[20]
Fm9
To Coda
[23]
C
Cm
f
[25]
Db
Cm
[28]
Db
[31]

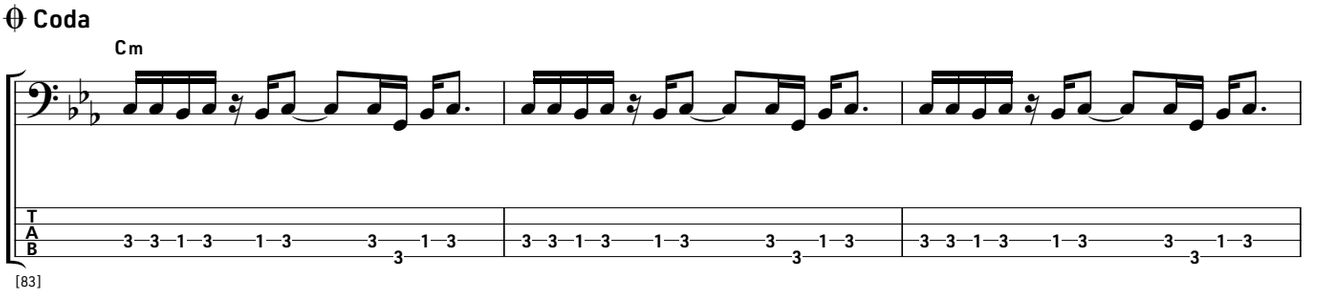

D
A♭add9
Fill
Fadd9
Fill
mf
T
A
B
[33]
C
[37]
A♭add9
Fill
Fadd9
Fill
[41]
C
[45]
D
E♭
[49]
C
[53]

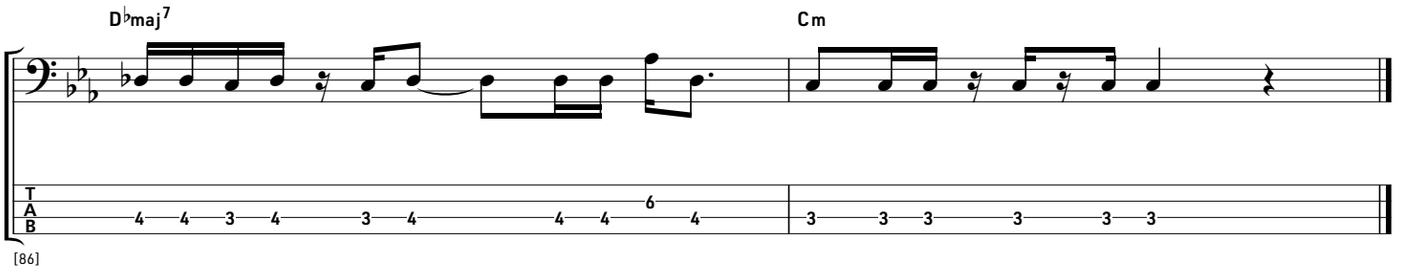

E
Gmadd4
A♭
[57]
Cm
E♭
[60]
Fm
A♭
B♭
[63]
F
Bdim7
C5
A♭5
F5
[66]
D♭5
C5
A♭5
F5
D♭5
C5
[69]
A♭5
F5
G
Drum break
[72]


H
Cm
Cdim
8va
T
A
B
10 10 10 13
13 10 12 13
16 13 15 16
[75]


D♭maj7
8va
Cm
P
T
A
B
16 13 15 16
3 3 1 3
5
[78]


Cdim
P
D♭maj7
D.S. al Coda
T
A
B
3 3 1 3
5
4 4 3 4
11
[81]


Coda
Cm
T
A
B
3 3 1 3 1 3 3 1 3
[83]


D♭maj7
Cm
T
A
B
4 4 3 4 3 4 4 4 6 4
3 3 3 3 3 3
[86]

Technical Exercises

In this section the examiner will ask you to play a selection of exercises drawn from each of the five groups shown below. Groups A and B contain examples of the modes and scales you can use when playing the pieces. Groups C and D contain examples of the arpeggios and chords. In Group E you will be asked to prepare *one* stylistic study from the three printed. The choice of stylistic study will determine the style of the Quick Study Piece.

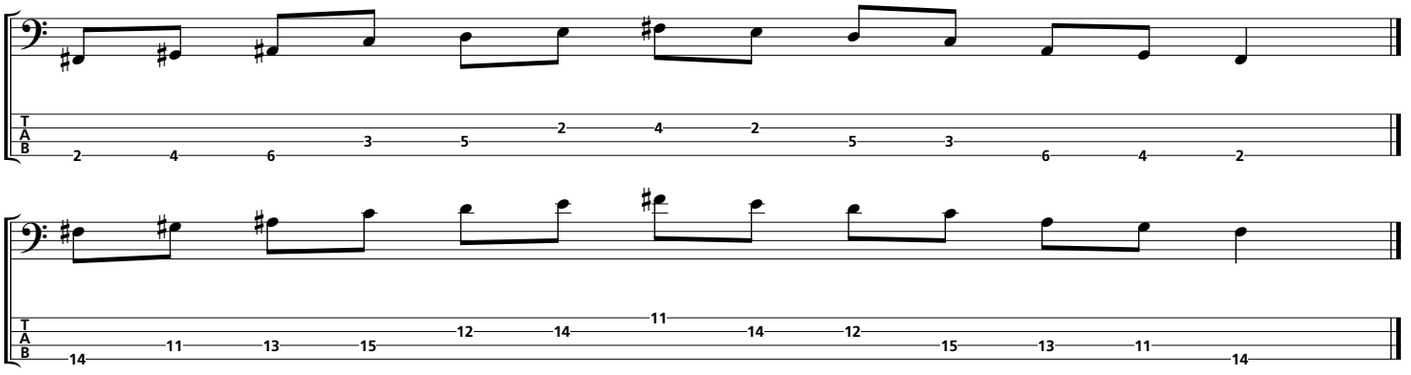
You do not need to memorise the exercises (and can use the book in the exam) but the examiner will be looking for the speed of your response. The examiner will also give credit for the level of your musicality.

Groups A, B, C and D should be prepared on the starting notes indicated. 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 ♩ = 100.

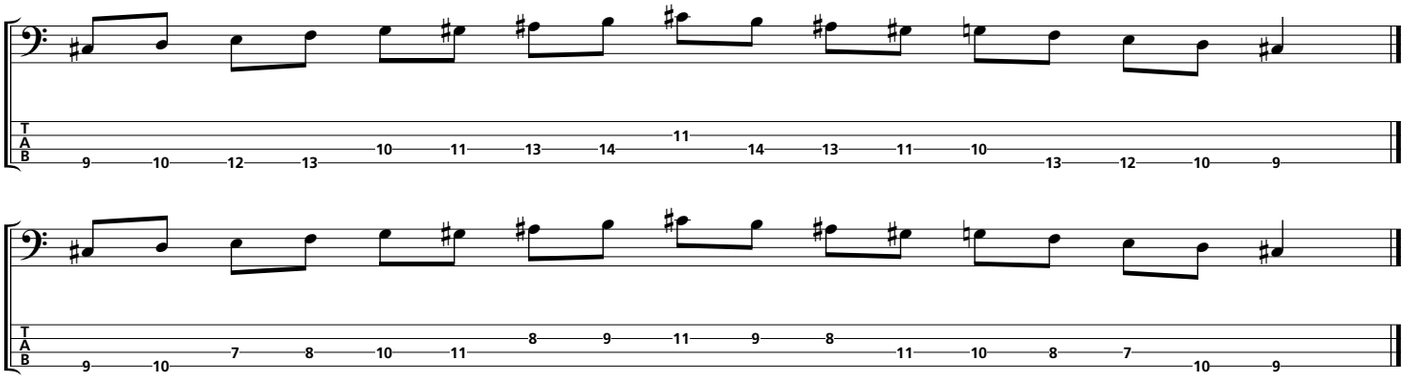
Group A: Scales

One octave to be prepared from the starting notes of F♯/G♭, G, C♯/D♭ and G♯/A♭ on the E string

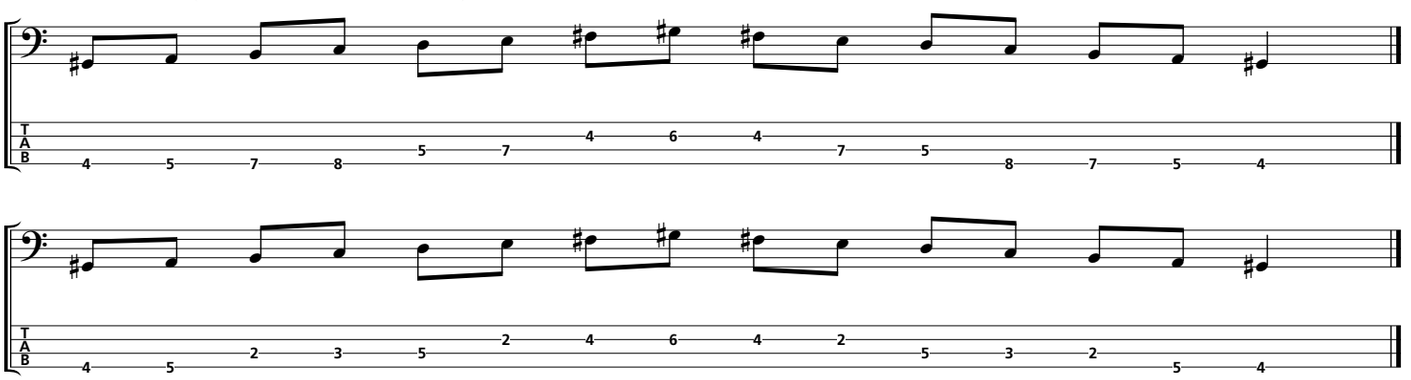
1. Whole tone scale (F♯ whole tone scale shown)



2. Diminished scale (C♯ diminished scale shown)



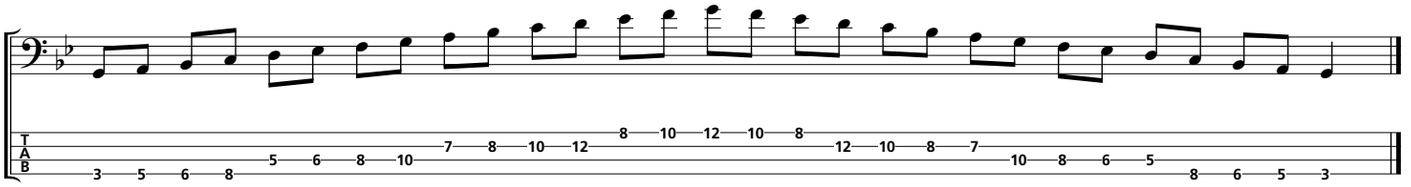
3. Altered scale (G♯ altered scale shown)



Group B: Scales

Two octaves. To be prepared from the starting note of G

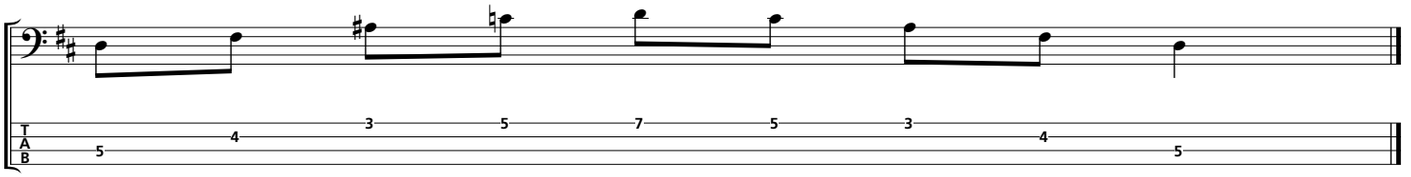
1. Natural minor scale (G natural minor scale shown)
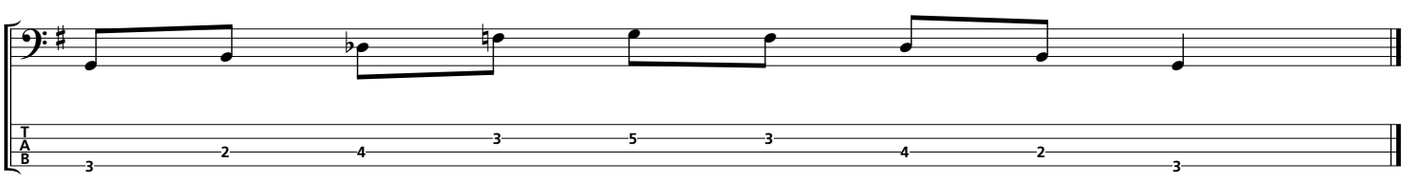


Group C: Arpeggios

To be prepared from the starting notes of D and G
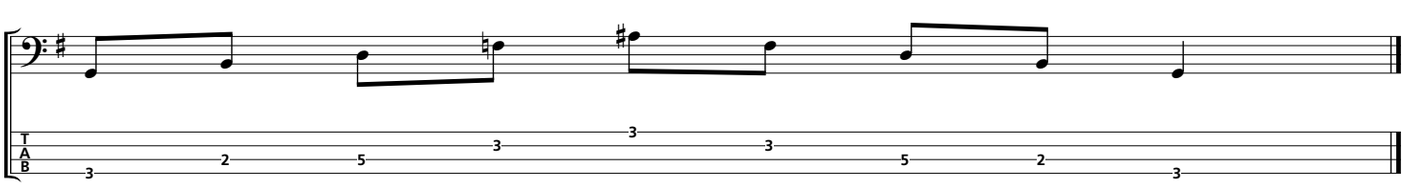
1. Dominant $^{7\sharp5}$ arpeggio (D dominant $^{7\sharp5}$ arpeggio shown)



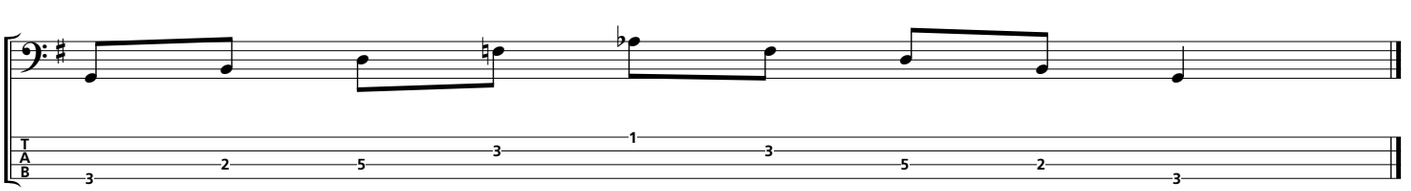
2. Dominant $^{7\flat5}$ arpeggio (G dominant $^{7\flat5}$ arpeggio shown)



3. Dominant $^{7\sharp9}$ arpeggio (G dominant $^{7\sharp9}$ arpeggio shown)



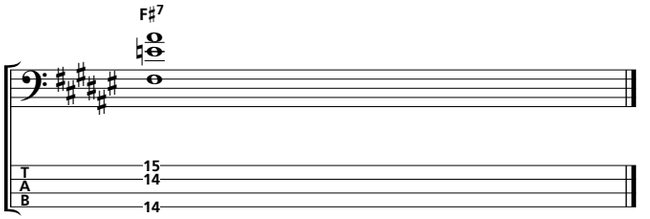
4. Dominant $^{7\flat9}$ arpeggio (G dominant $^{7\flat9}$ arpeggio shown)



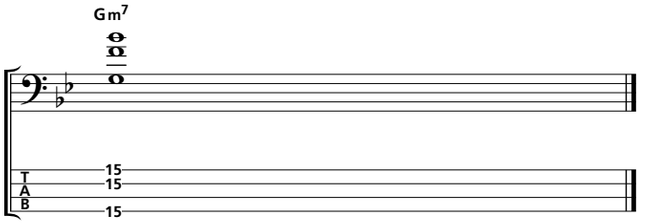
Group D: Chords

High register chords. To be prepared from the starting notes of F♯, G, D♭ and A♭

1. Dominant ^{7} (F♯ dominant ^{7} chord shown)



2. Minor ^{7} (G minor ^{7} chord shown)
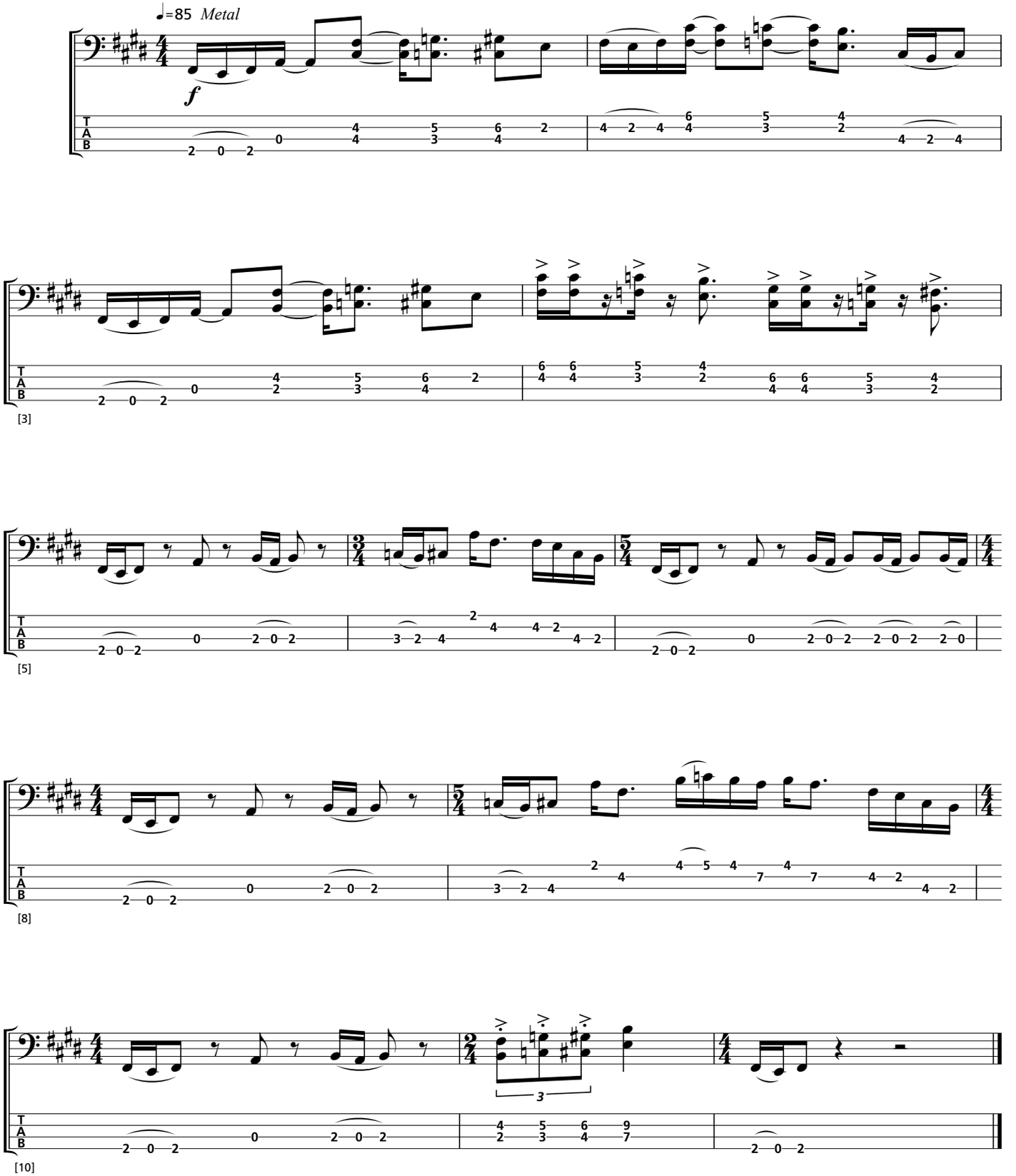


3. Major ^{7} (D♭ major ^{7} chord shown)
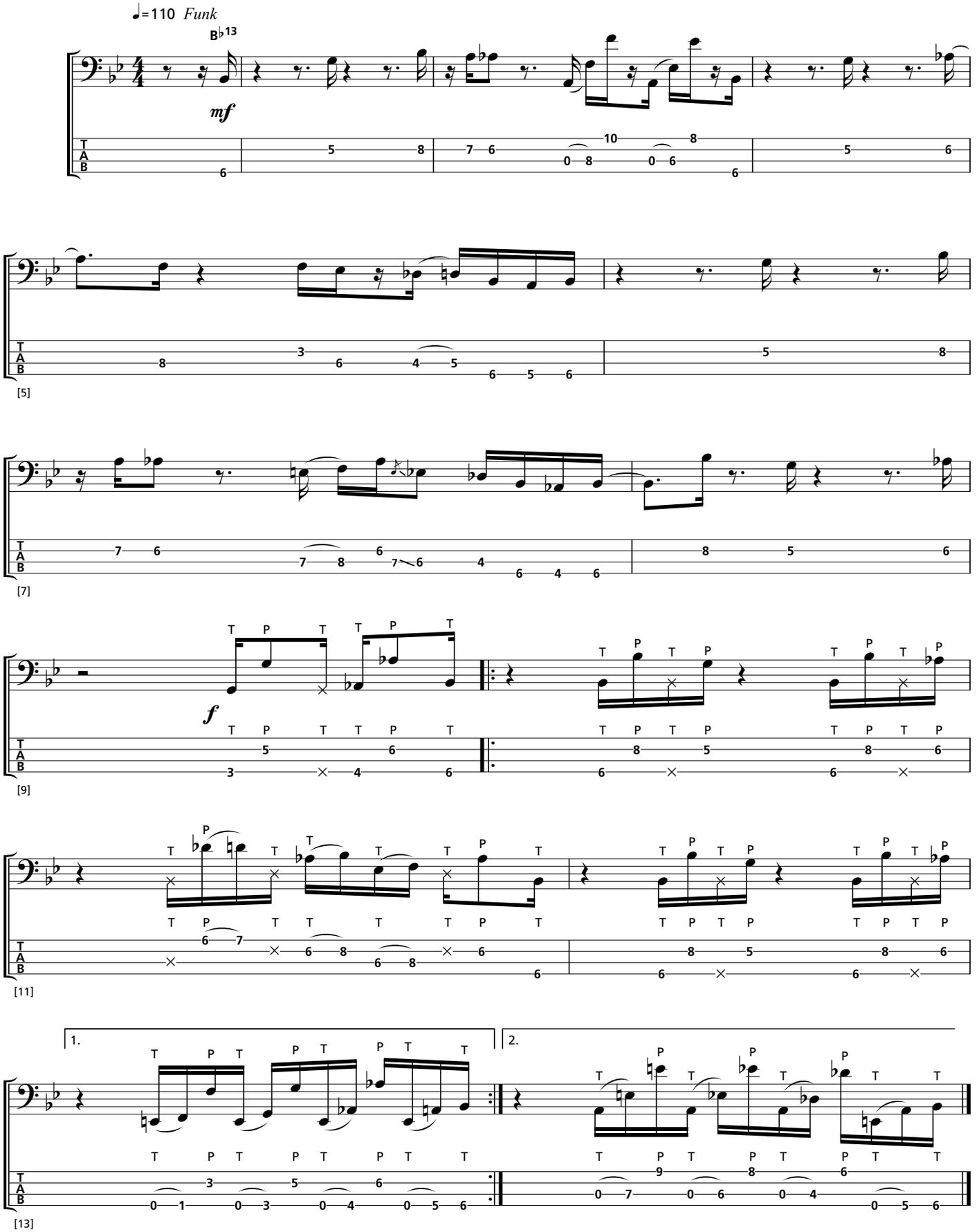


Group E: Stylistic Studies

You will prepare a technical study from one group of styles from the list below. Your choice of style will determine the style of the Quick Study Piece.
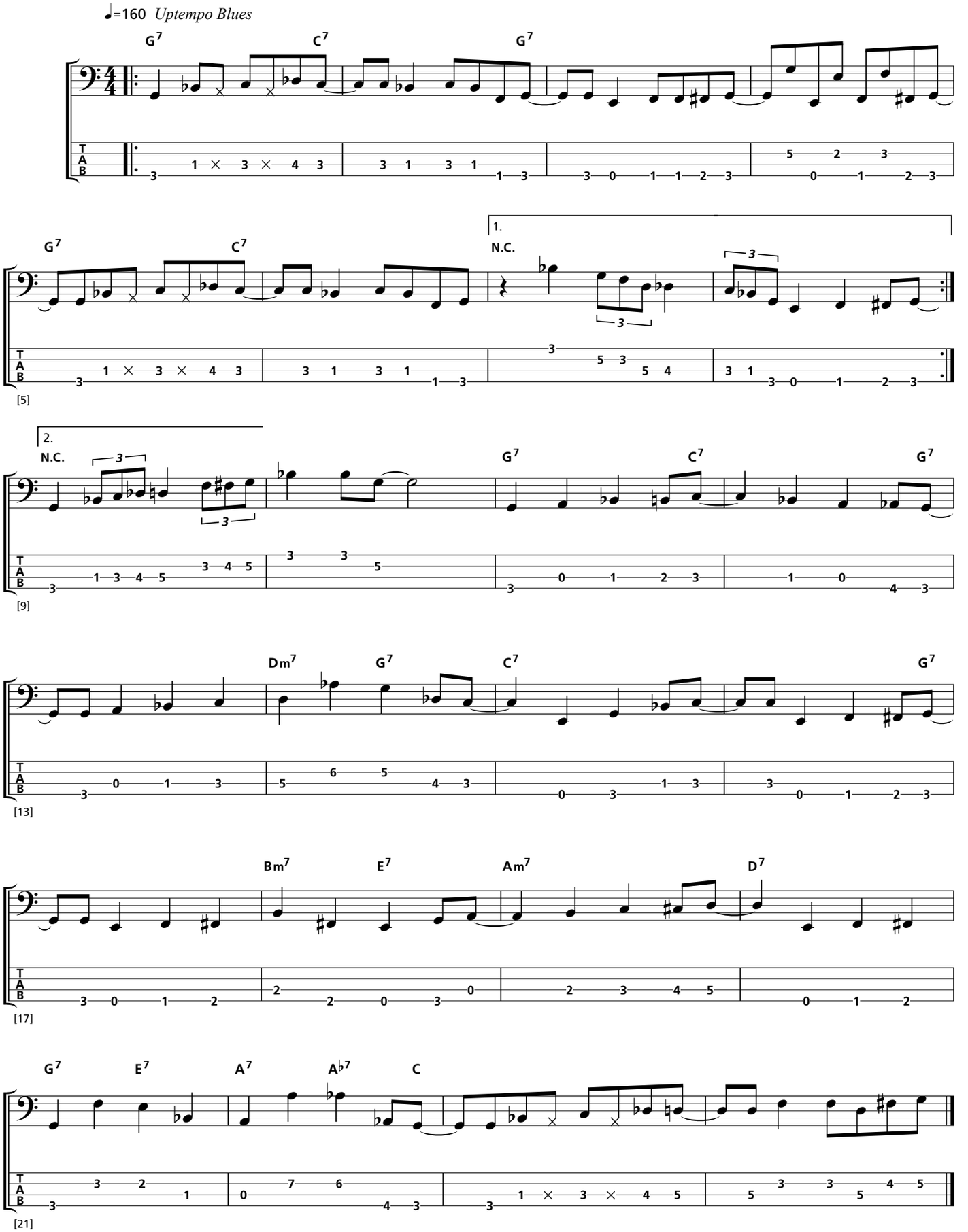
1. Rock/Metal: odd time grooves and powerchords



2. Funk: syncopation and slap bass technique
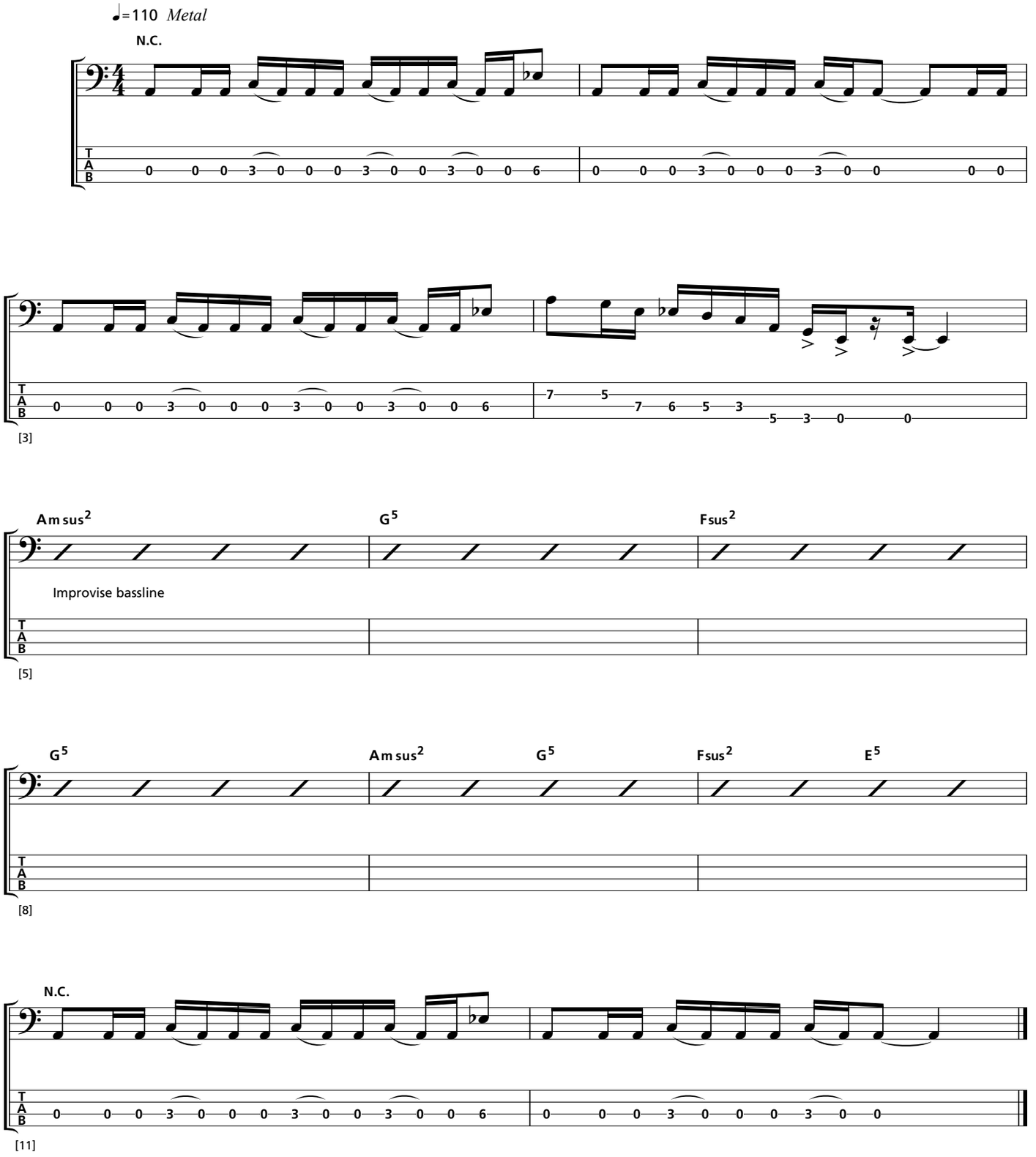


3. Jazz/Latin/Blues: uptempo fingerstyle technique and walking basslines
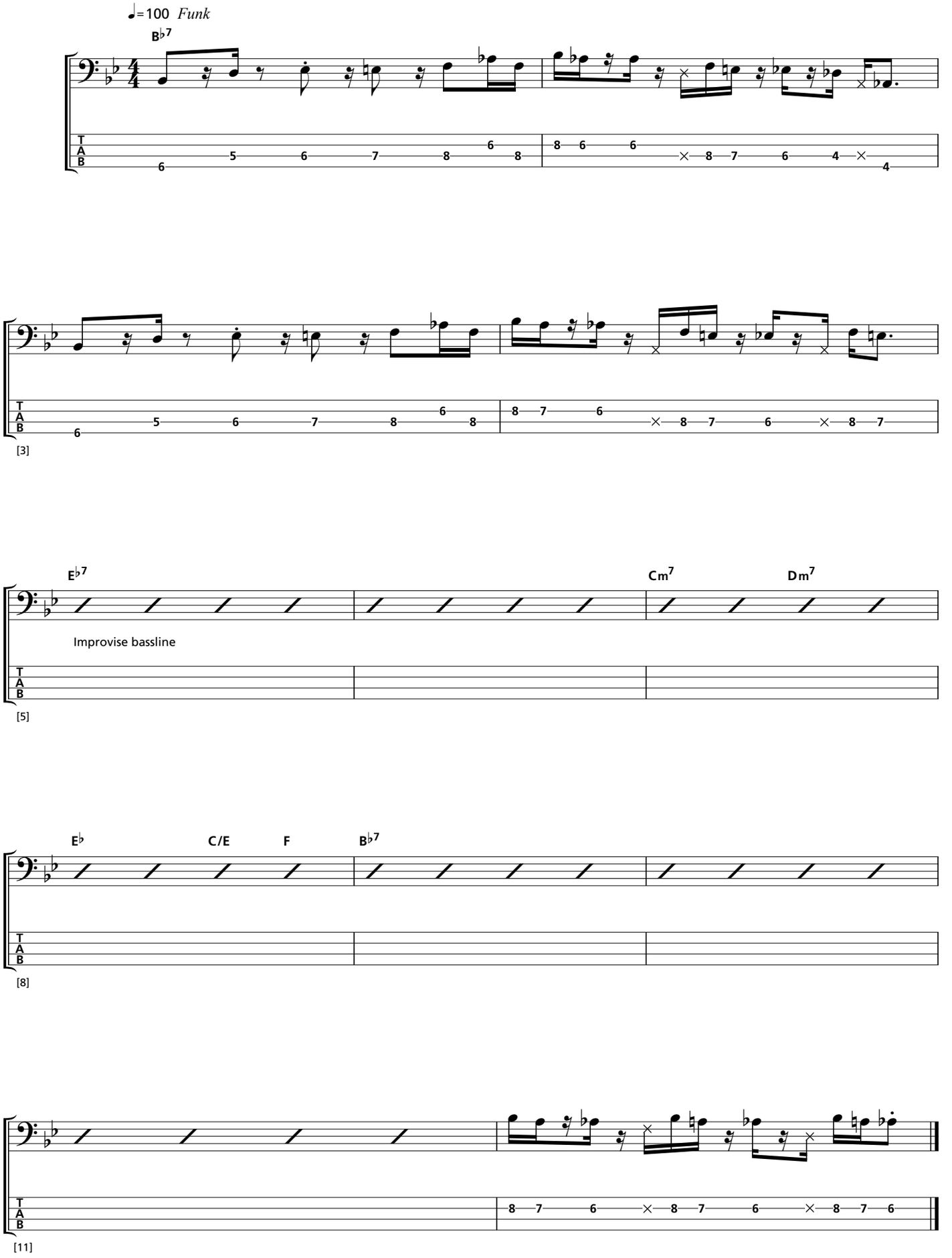


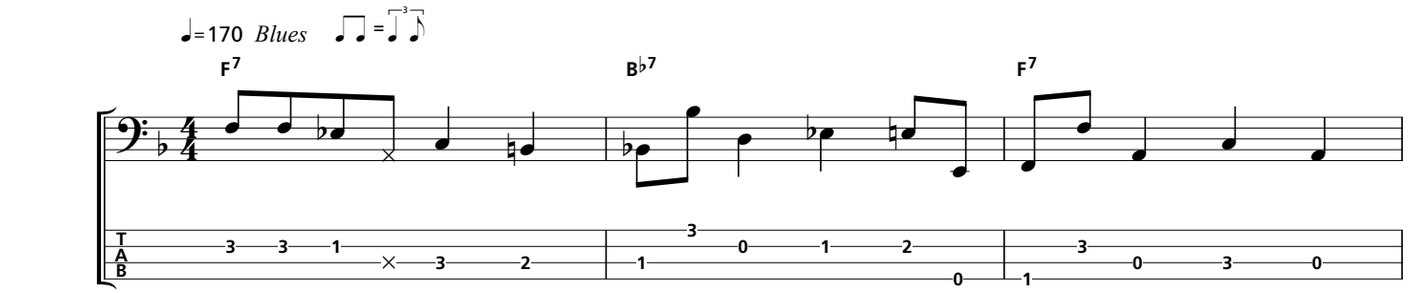
Quick Study Piece

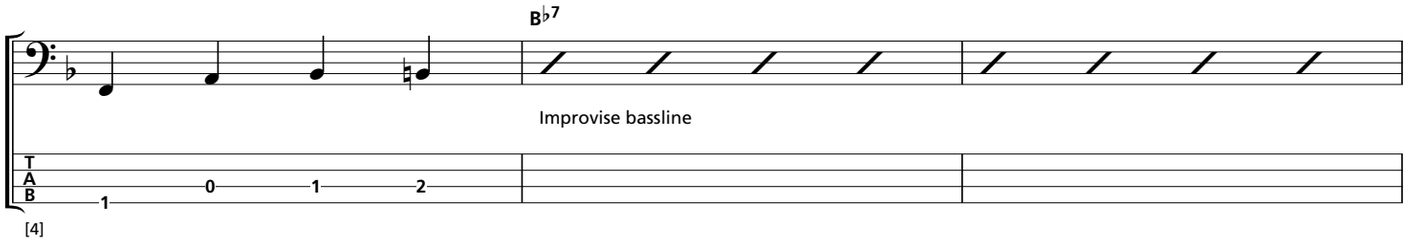
At this grade you will be asked to prepare and play a short Quick Study Piece (QSP). Printed below are three examples of the type of QSP you are likely to receive in the exam. You will be shown the test and played the track with the *notated parts played*. Any bars that require improvisation will not be demonstrated. You will then have three minutes to study the test. The backing track will be played twice more. You will be allowed to practise during the first playing of the backing track, with the notated parts now absent, before playing it to the examiner on the second playing of the backing track.

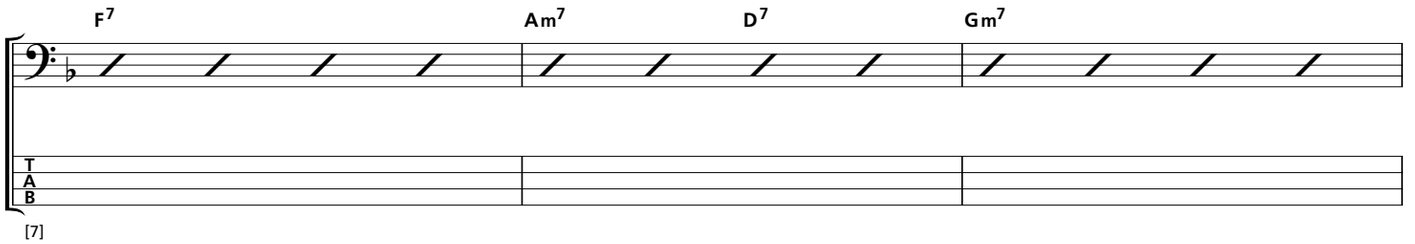
The style of your QSP is determined by the stylistic study you selected in the technical exercise section. The QSP is in the form of a lead sheet and it is up to you to create your own interpretation of the music in the parts marked for improvisation.

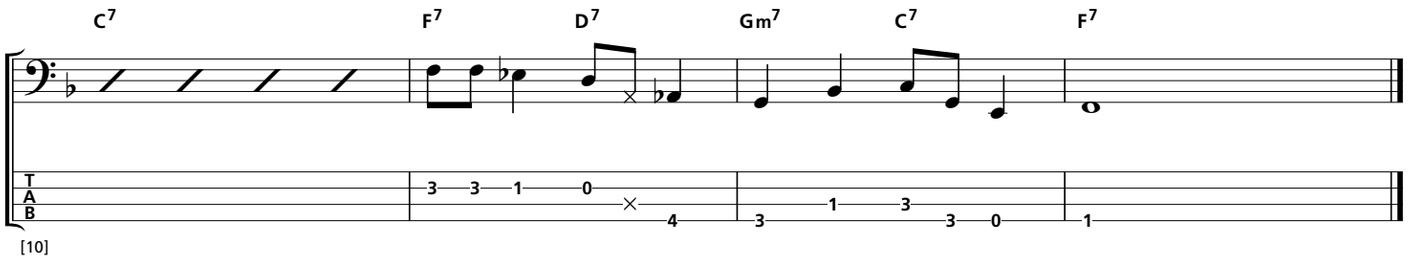



♩=100 Funk
B♭7
E♭7
Cm7
Dm7
Improvise bassline
E♭
C/E
F
B♭7
[3]
[5]
[8]
[11]


♩=170 Blues
F7
B♭7
F7


B♭7
Improvise bassline
[4]


F7
Am7
D7
Gm7
[7]


C7
F7
D7
Gm7
C7
F7
[10]
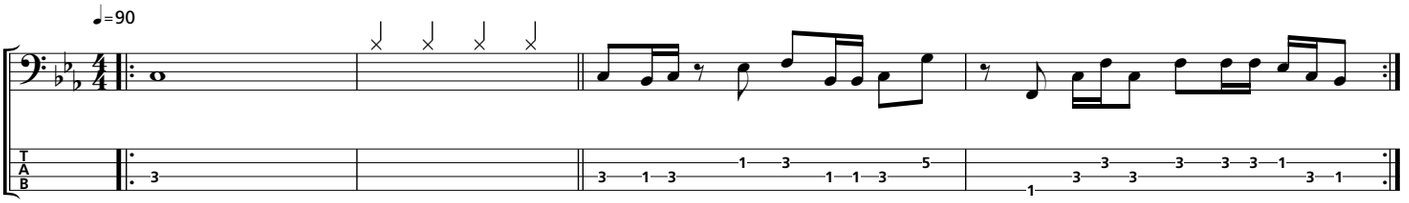
Ear Tests

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 a two bar melody with a drum backing using one of the following scales: B natural minor, B major pentatonic or C minor pentatonic. The first note of the melody will be the root note and the first interval will be descending. You will play the melody back on your instrument. You will hear the test twice.

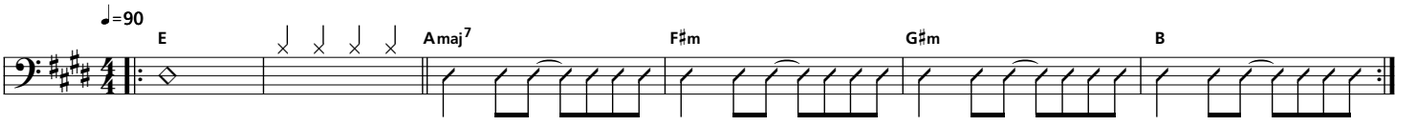
Each time the test is played the sequence is: count-in, root note, count-in, melody. There will be a short gap for you to practise after you have heard the test for the second time. You will hear the count-in and root note for the third time followed by a vocal count-in and you will then play the melody to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩= 90.



Test 2: Harmonic Recall

The examiner will play you a tonic chord followed by a two bar chord sequence in the key of E major played to a drum backing. The sequence will use the I, ii, iii, IV, V and vi chords. The I and IV chords can be either major or major ^{7} chords. You will be asked to play the root notes of the chord sequence to the drum backing in the rhythm shown in the example below. You will then be asked to identify the sequence you have played to the examiner, including any chord extensions. This rhythm will be used in all examples of this test given in the exam. You will hear the test twice.

Each time the test is played the sequence is: count-in, tonic, count-in, chords. There will be a short gap for you to practise after you have heard the test for the second time. You will hear the count-in and tonic for the third time followed by a vocal count-in and you will then play the root notes to the drum backing. You should then identify the chords including any chord extensions. 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 this grade you will be asked to identify and demonstrate your answers on your instrument as directed by the examiner. The scale question at the end of the list of subjects is mandatory.

In Grade 8 you will be asked:

- The names of pitches
- Any expressive musical marking found in the piece
- Any dynamic marking found in the piece
- The types of scale that can be used appropriately in the solo section of the piece you have played and its relation to the underlying harmony of the piece

Instrument Knowledge

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

In Grade 8 you will be asked to explain and demonstrate:

- The function of the volume and tone controls on your bass
- Where to find the same pitch on two different strings
- The set up for the tone required for the piece you have played on the amp
- How to achieve changes in tone in a song

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

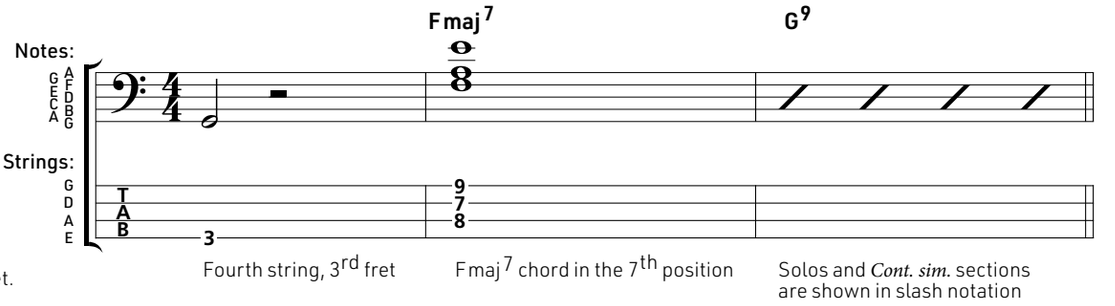
Entering a Rockschool exam is easy, just go online and follow our simple six step process. All details for entering online, dates, fees, regulations and Free Choice pieces can be found at *www.rslawards.com*

- 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

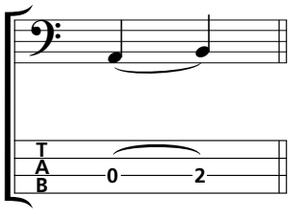
THE MUSICAL STAVE shows pitches and rhythms and is divided by lines into bars. Pitches are named after the first seven letters of the alphabet.

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

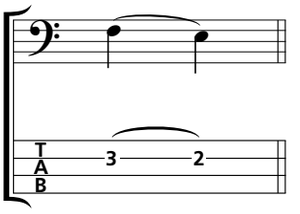


Definitions For Special Bass Guitar Notation

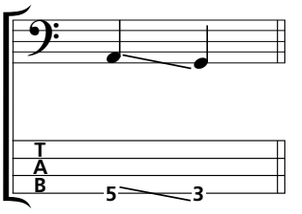
HAMMER-ON: Pick the lower note then sound the higher note by fretting it without picking.



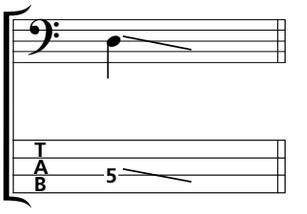
PULL-OFF: Pick the higher note then sound the lower note by lifting your finger without picking.



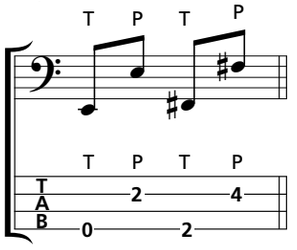
SLIDE: Pick the first note and slide to the next. If the line connects (as below) the second note is not repicked.



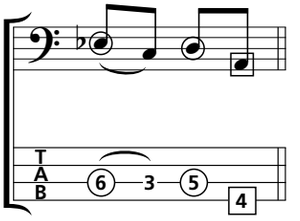
GLISSANDO: Slide off of a note at the end of its rhythmic value. The note that follows is repicked.



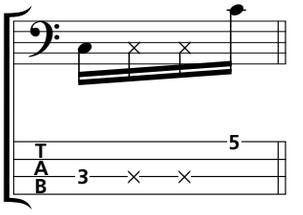
SLAP STYLE: Slap bass technique is indicated through the letters T (thumb) and P (pull).



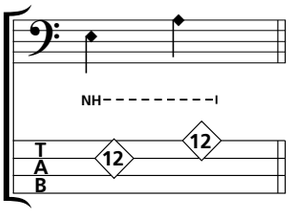
TAPPING: Sound note by tapping the string – circles denote a picking hand tap, squares a fretting hand tap.



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).



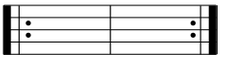
(staccato) ▪ Shorten time value of note.



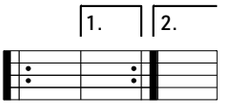
▪ Fermata (Pause)

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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'Anthem' by **Rush**
'Breathing Underwater' by **Hiatus Kaiyote**
'Spain' by **Chick Corea**
'Run for Cover' by **David Sanborn**
'Dean Town' by **Vulfpeck**
+ 3 Rockschool Originals

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- Technical Guidance: Performance and preparation guidance on every track
- Downloadable Audio: Audio recordings of all performance pieces
- Technical Exercises and Example Tests: All the scales and tests that you need for the Rockschool exam, plus exemplar tests for the unseen elements

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