Rufus Reid

Groove *and* Pulse

DOUBLE BASS

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About the Course

In this lesson, Rufus Reid takes us on a walkthrough of how groove and pulse are the fundamental tools to make our listeners' bodies gyrate in some way - moving the head, tapping the foot, or even just rocking back and forth. He discusses use of different dynamics, rhythms, phrasing, and strategies for bridging the gap between high and low registers in a musical manner.

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Thank you!

In this lesson, Rufus Reid walks us through groove and pulse. These are the fundamental tools to make our listeners' bodies gyrate in some way: moving the head, tapping the foot, or rocking back and forth.

Pulse

The pulse isn't just the tempo (1, 2, 3, 4) but the larger picture of where we feel — and move to — the "big beats" of the music. Rufus takes us through some strategies to make the bass line come alive.

- Dynamics
- Different rhythms or rhythm changes
- Attention to cadences, showing phrasing towards or away from them.

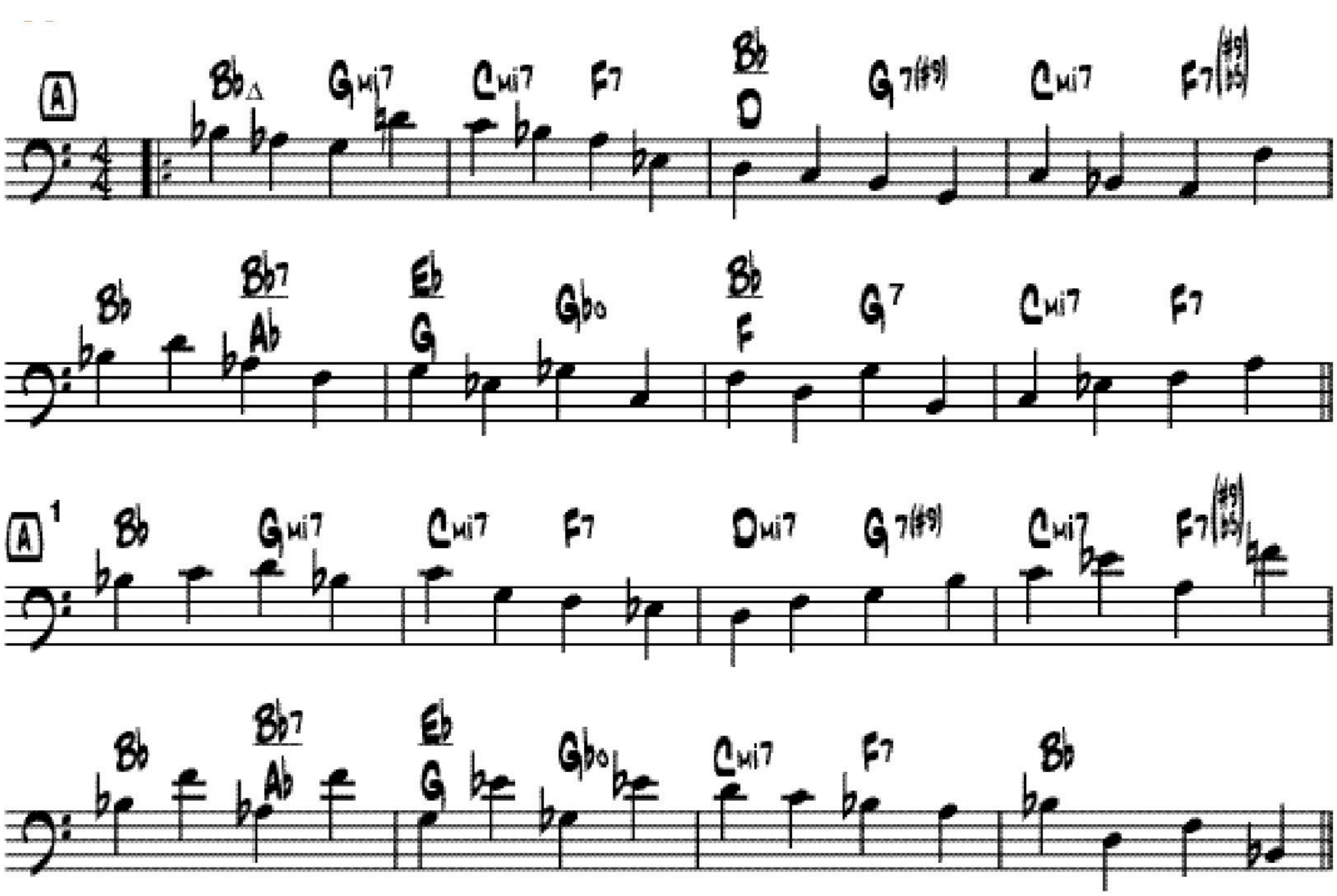
> ***"You don't just get to F, you MOVE to F, with energy."***

That helps the groove have forward motion, not just a static line. We can think of it as having "intention" towards a goal part of the line.

Rhythm Changes in “I Got Rhythm”

This does not sound like a blues tune; it has its own sound. The chord progression is I-vi-ii-V-I. You have to know what this sounds like, away from the bass. Maybe you’ll have to play this 100 times before you fully have this in your head. Once you have the sound, you can make a nice bass line.

- Put the bass down, and write out your bass line with chord symbols over the notes.
- Then pick up your bass and try it out.
- If it doesn’t sound good, use your eraser!
- Change it until it satisfies you.



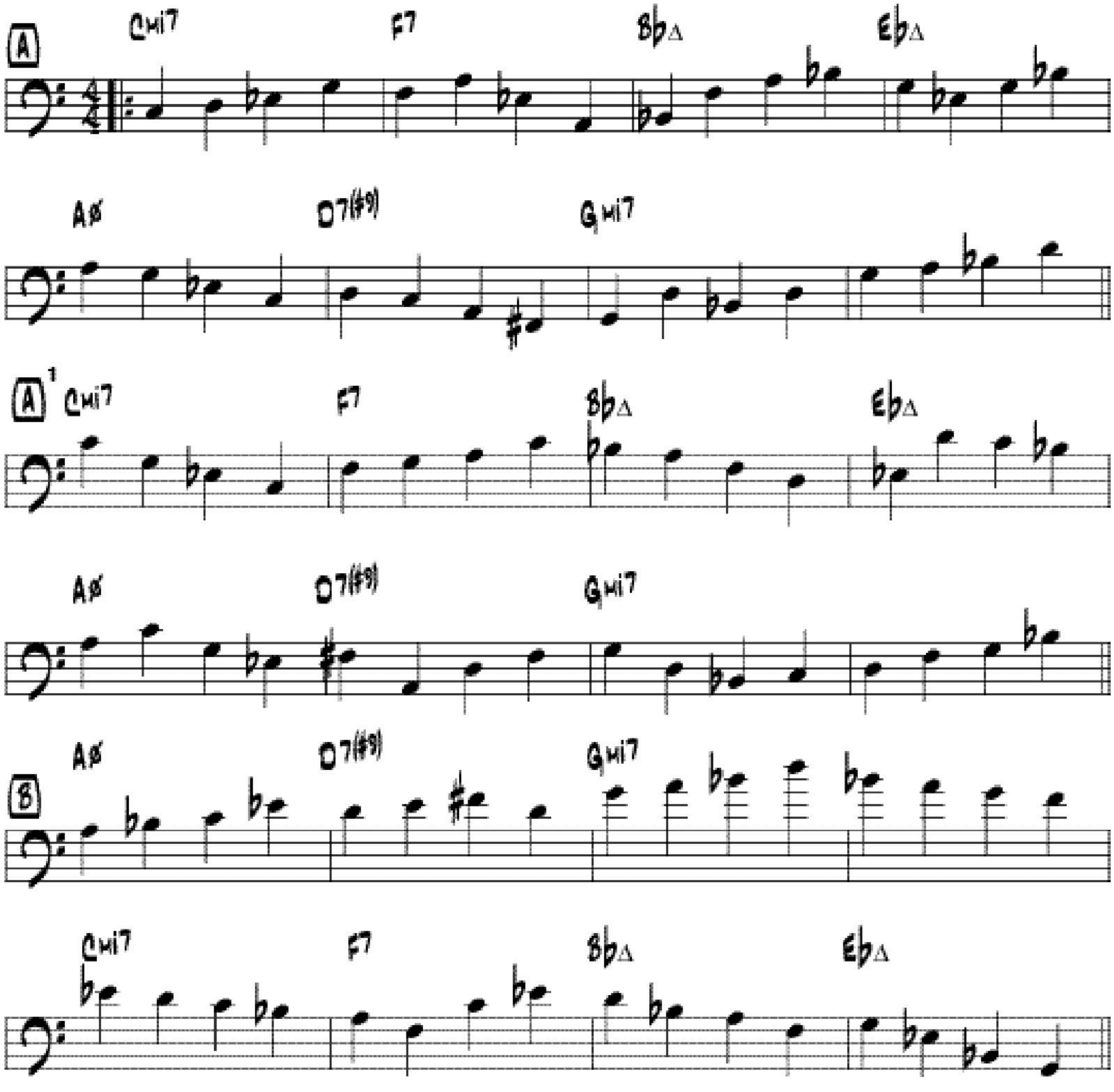
“There is no perfect bass line. If there was such a thing, why would anyone need to study? And why would anybody need to listen to anything? That’s the wonderful thing about playing jazz: it’ll never be perfect.”

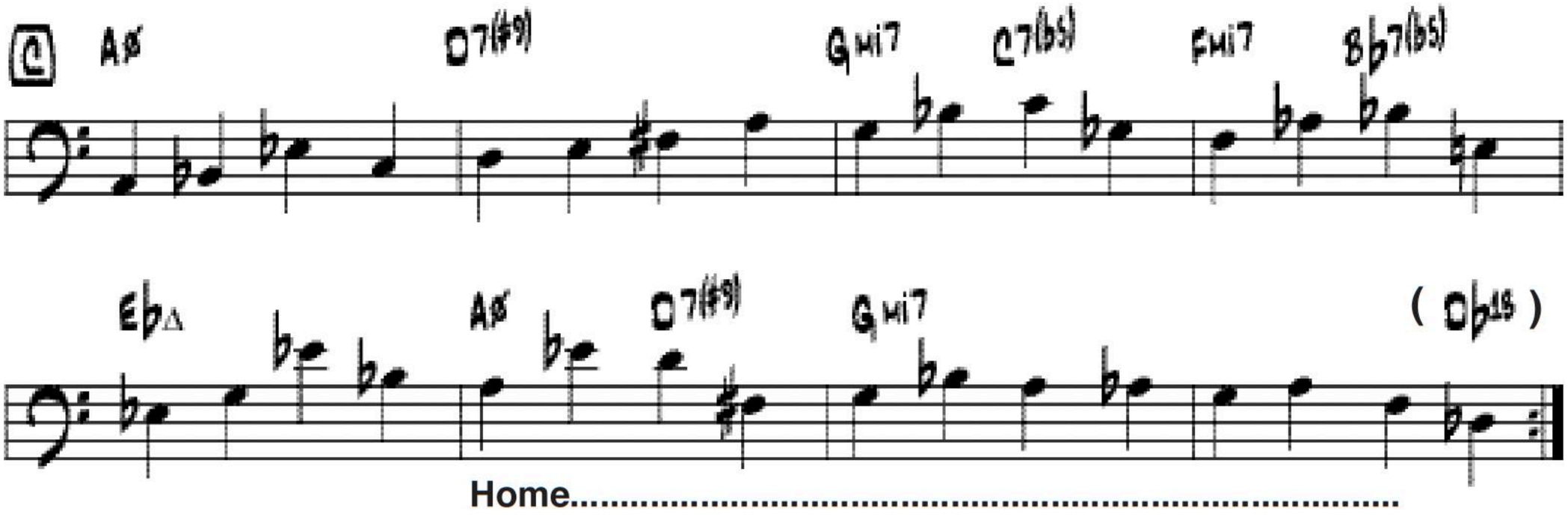
“Autumn Leaves”

This is a classic tune. Rufus takes us through the “big letter” chord changes and builds a bass line.

The structure is:

- A (8 measures);
- A (8 measures);
- B (8 measures);
- C (similar to the A).





The basic structure is a good place to start, then add some simple rhythmical variations. These don't need to be flashy!

- Examples are syncopations, tuplets, or simple anticipations (pushes) of a chord change.

> ***"Understanding the resolutions of chords, that's what we do. We settle the music, and people will come to you. If you have a good pulse and you played these notes that actually do function well with this song, and it's proved because you can do it at the piano, the band will sound better. Guarantee!. But if you don't have a good pulse, people won't want to play with you."***

Tenths for Register Changes

Rufus demonstrates an exercise using tenths (for instance, between the open E and G string) to transition between a low and high register to create a bass line. Rufus simply likes the sound of that interval! Getting used to that sound and the shape of the hand allows you to add that into your bass lines and create a line that can bridge wide registers.

> ***"Whatever songs you like, I need you to sing them, then play them on your bass! Nobody said you couldn't."***