Walking Bass Lines Basics

- Start by just playing roots
    - Full-value quarter notes, slight emphasis on beats 2 and 4
- Approach the next chord with leading tones:
    - Half or whole step above or below root of the next chord
    - OR V of new chord, such as playing C to lead to F7
- Move in step-wise motion using chord or related scale notes
    - Use chord notes on beats 1 and 3, and use scale or leading tones on beats 2 and 4.

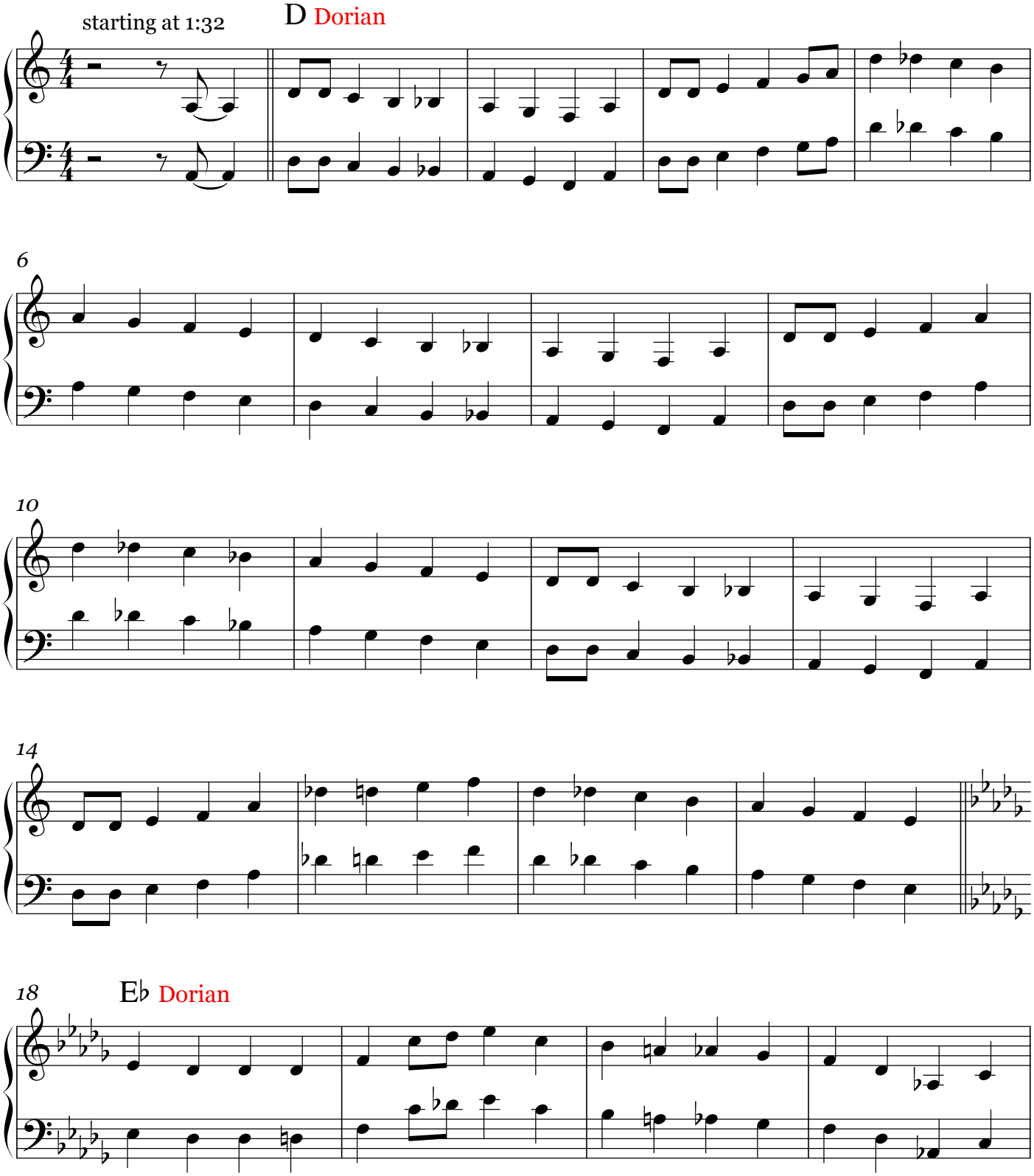
Once you are comfortable with the above, try these:

- Follow leaps of a 5th or more with stepwise motion in the opposite direction.
- Double-up on notes in measure to create a Basie-esque feel.
- Avoid playing melody notes as the same time as the melody

More advanced…

- Pedal on one note to create tension, and then release with step-wise motion
- Try approaching 3rd of new chord, with leading tones. Try approaching the 5th?
- Add some 8th note embellishments and leaps (useful if you are near the edge of your instrument range)
- Try to catch anticipations with the melody or the soloist
- Switch between a 2-feel, using 1s and 5s, and the walking 4-feel

So What
Paul Chambers' walking bass line



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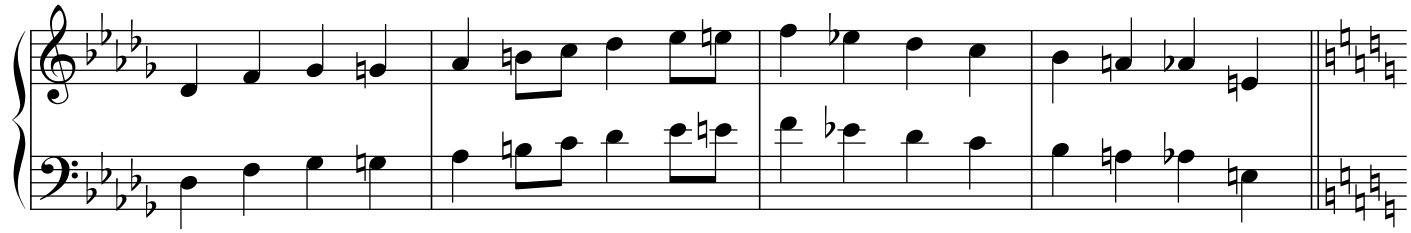
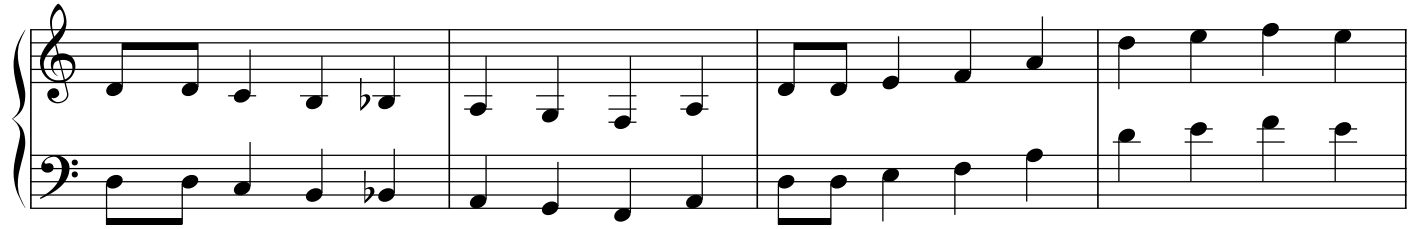


26 D Dorian



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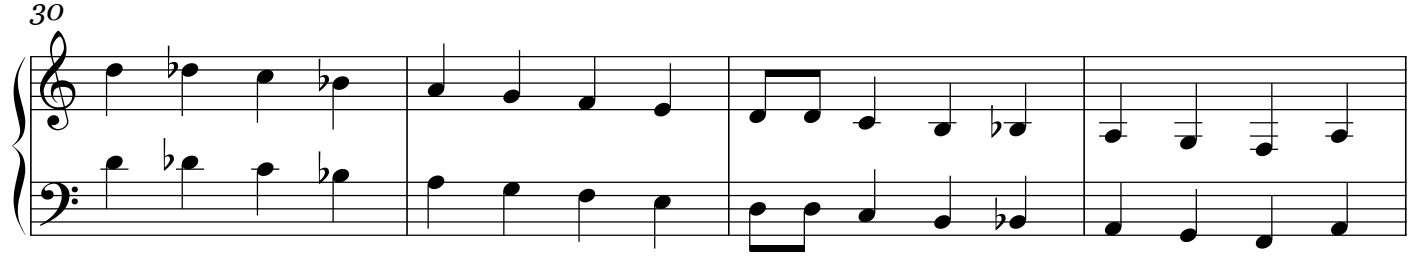

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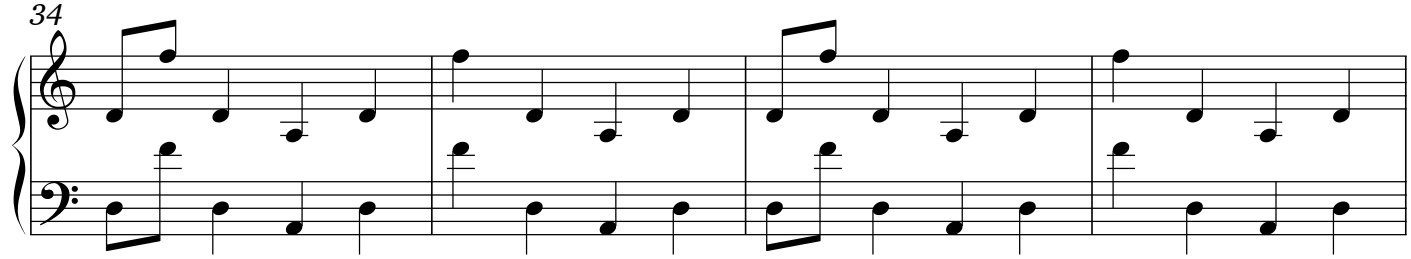

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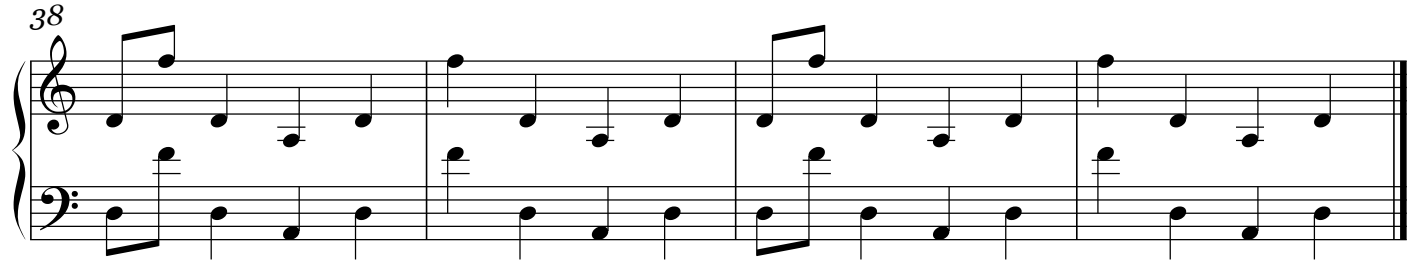
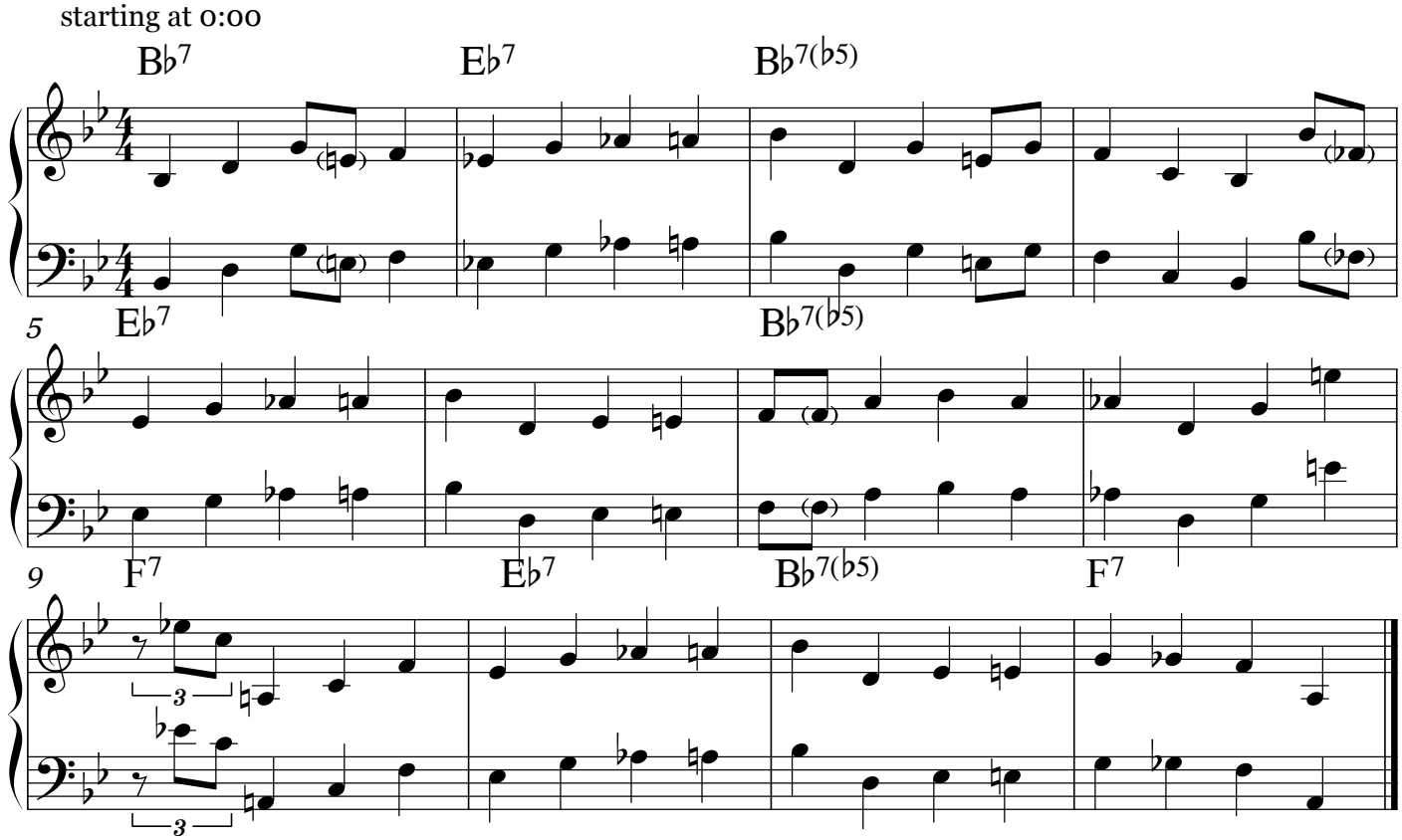
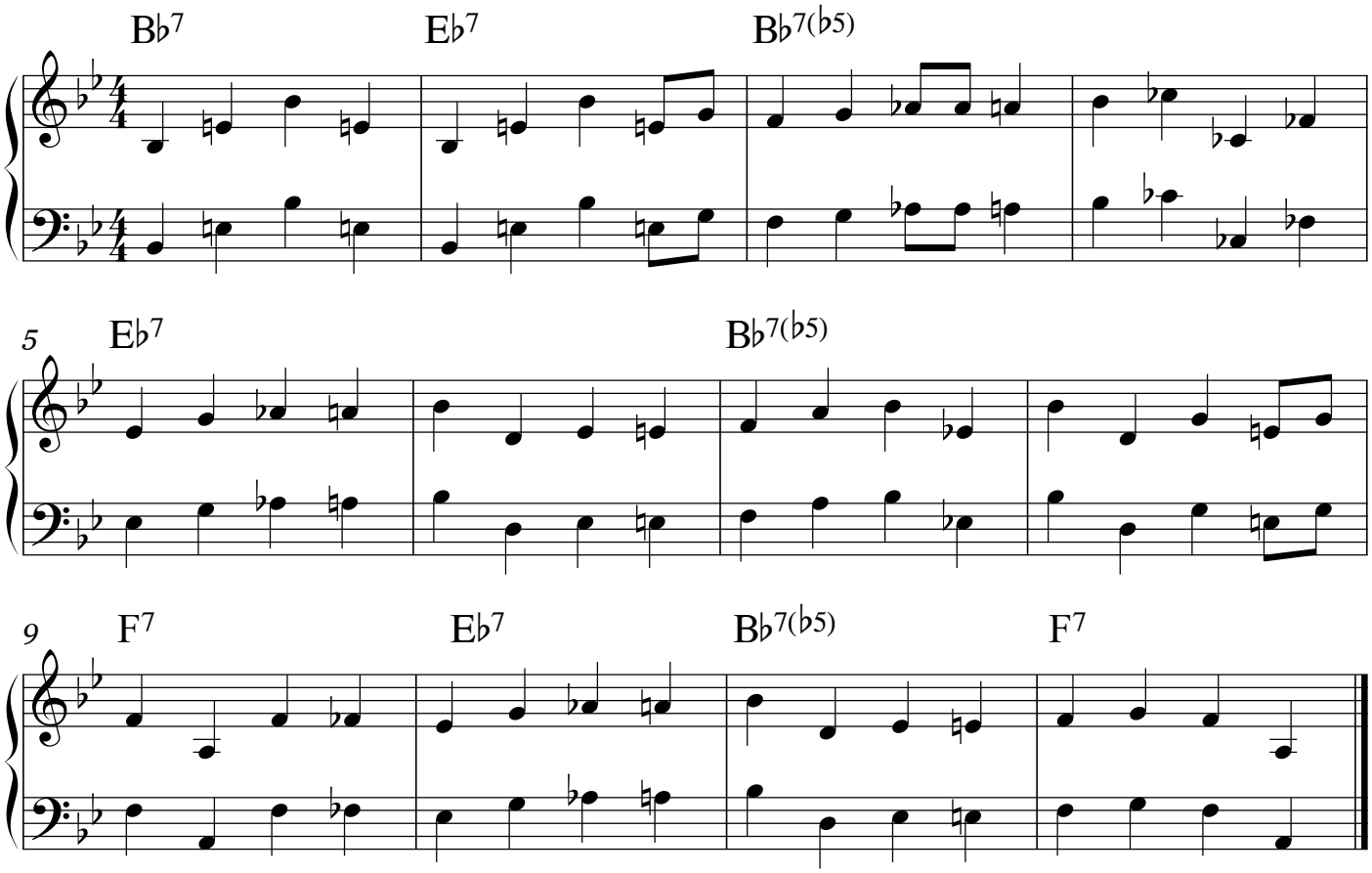


Blues Seven - Ron Carter Bass Line part 1



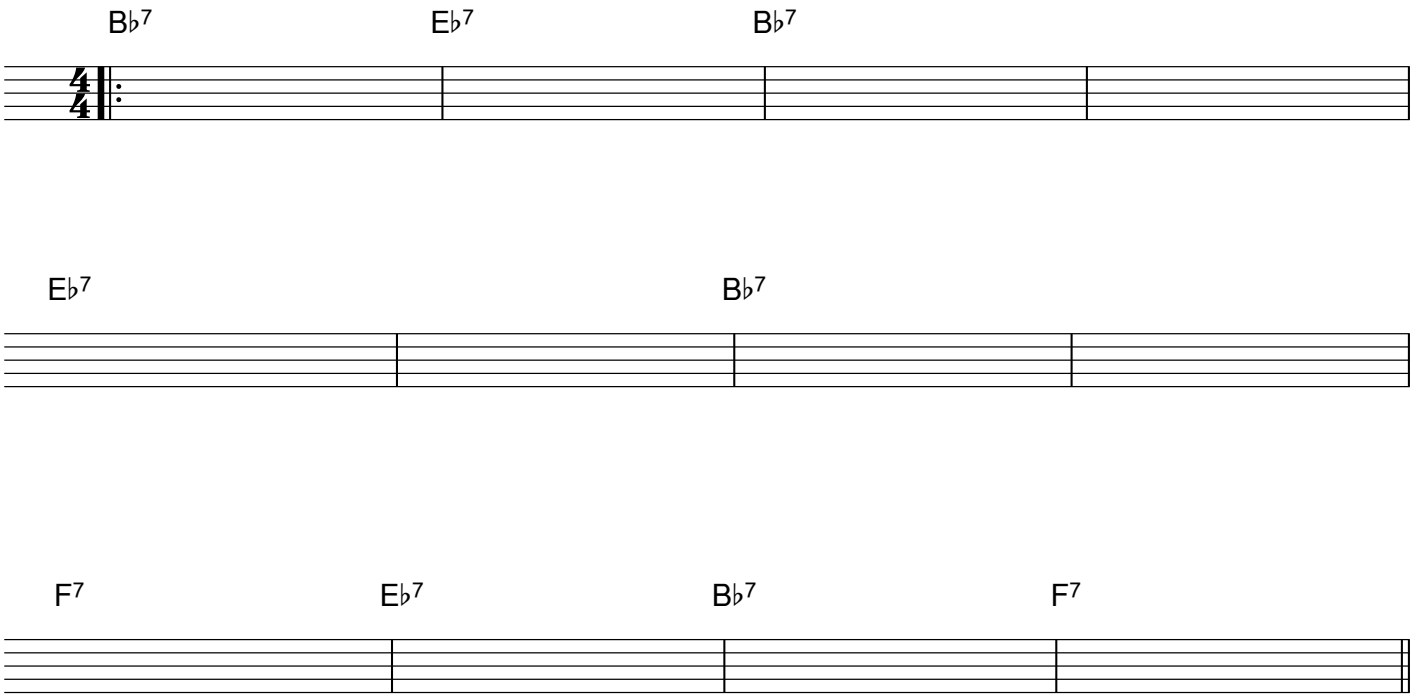
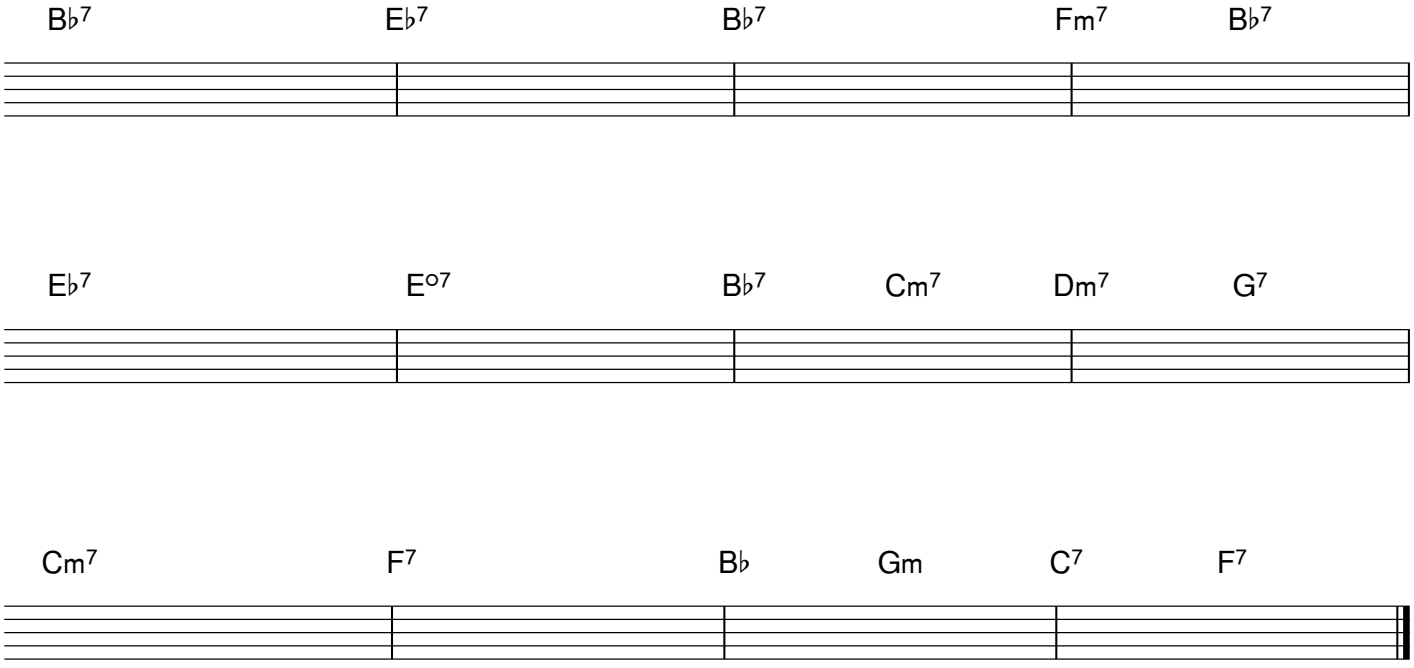
Blues Seven - Ron Carter Bass Line part 2

starting at 2:49



Try creating your own bass line

Bb Blues - simple



Bb Blues - more complex