Forming a Tonal Center

Tonality in Western Music

How do we establish 1 of the 12 notes in western music as the most important note or tonal center?

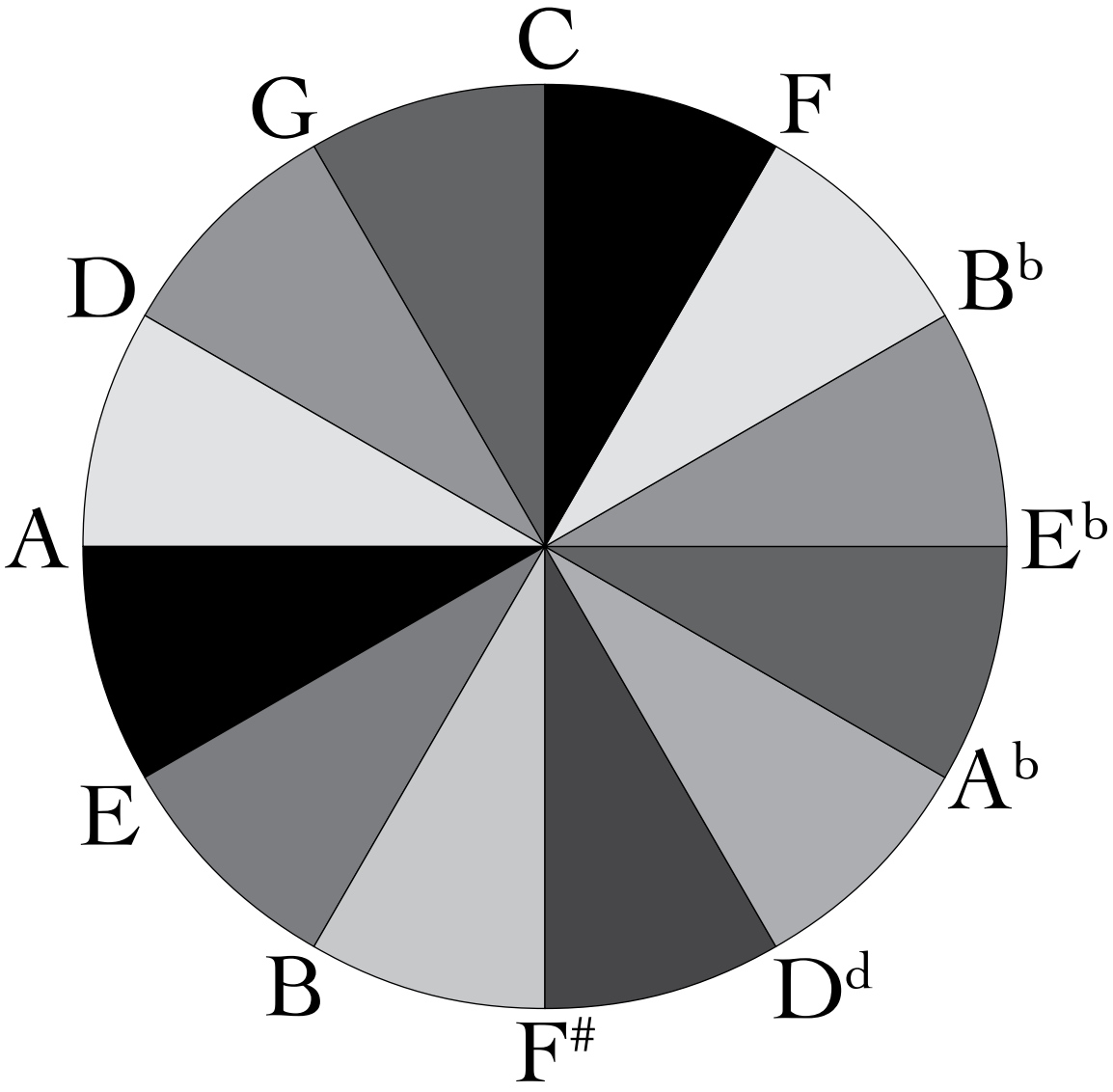
Here is the way it happens!

The 12 notes in music can be equally divided

When the pitch goes higher, the interval of a 4th is the result →

← When the pitch goes down, the interval of a 5th is the result

C F Bb Eb Ab Db F# B E A D G



The Importance of Rhythm in Tonality

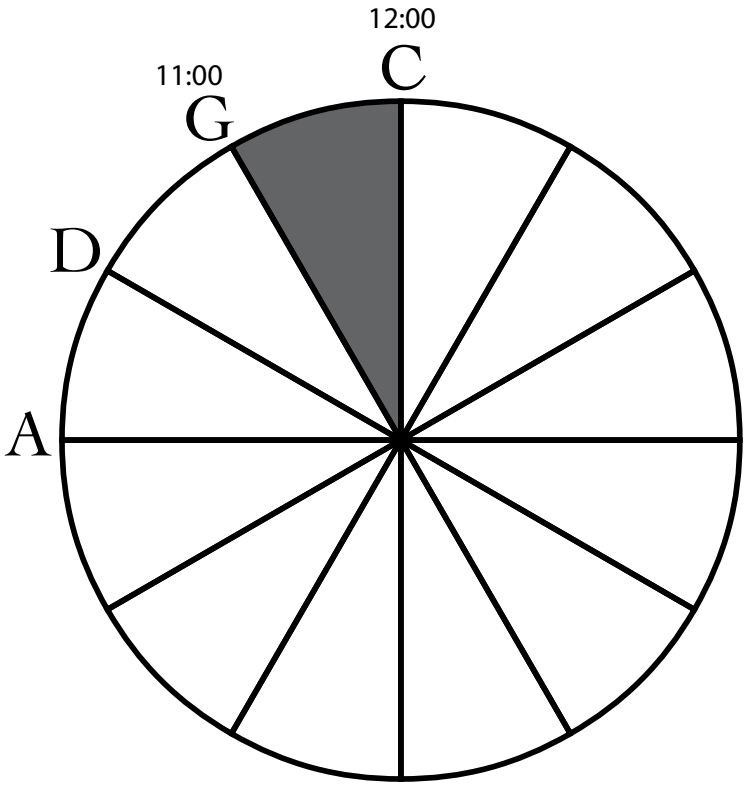
"Beats are sounds that occur in time and space."

If they occur in regular intervals they create a pulse. This pulse is called a BEAT... it can be slow or fast. A steady beat creates natural accents that result in the formation of rhythm patterns, measures and all types of basic song forms.

"There are 2 kinds of beats"

UP BEATS **DOWN BEATS**

If the note at 11:00 on the circle is played on the up beat, followed by a note at 12:00 on the down beat, the note at 12:00 sounds like the most important note or a TONAL CENTER when it is repeated.



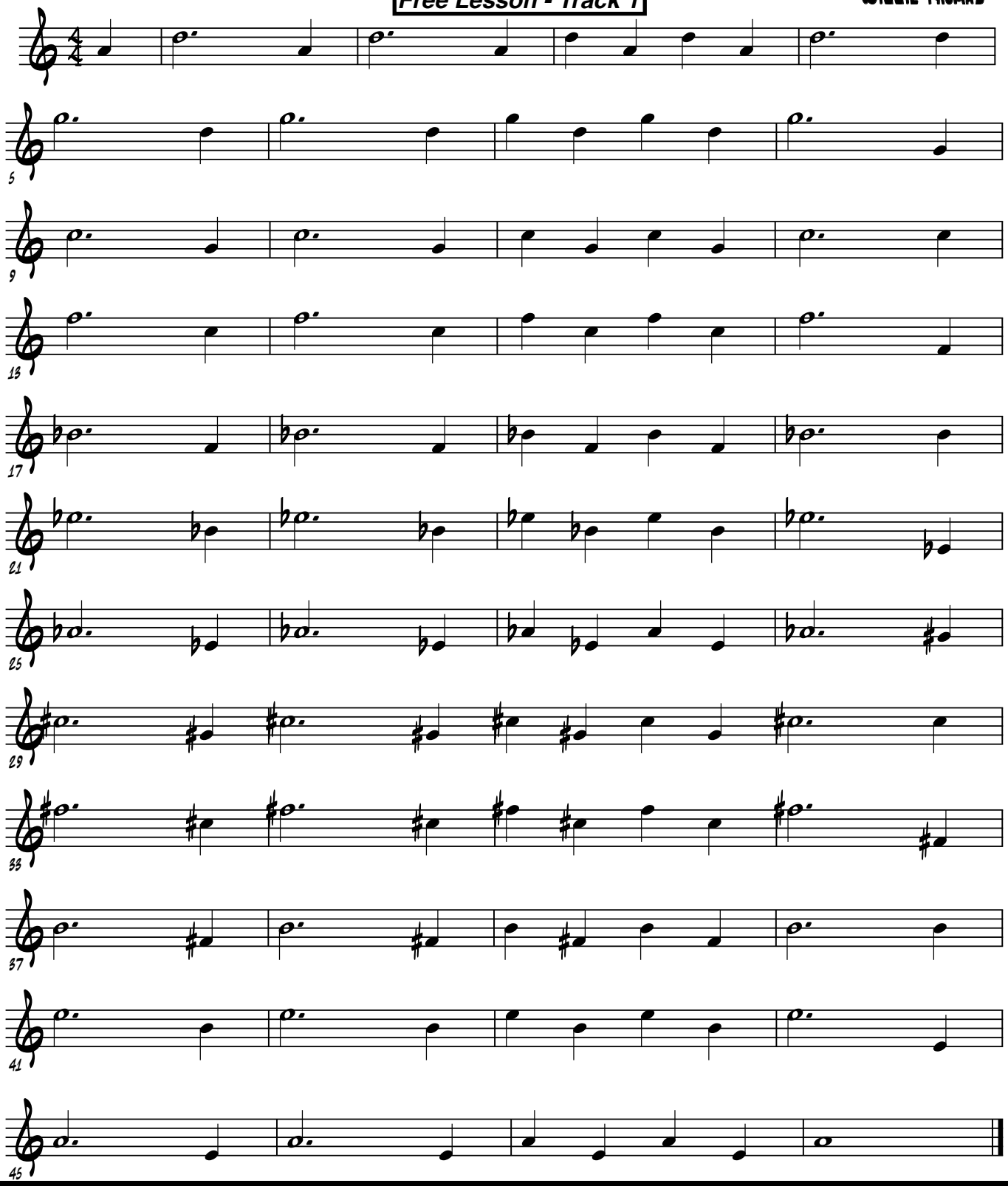
This page shows you how to...
...play the roots and 5ths of Tonal Center around the Circle of 4ths/5ths without mistakes.
...improvise creatively around the Dominant 7th circle using a variety of rhythms with roots and 5ths.

Establishing Tonal Centers Around Circle of Fourths

B Flat Instruments

Free Lesson - Track 1

Willie Thomas



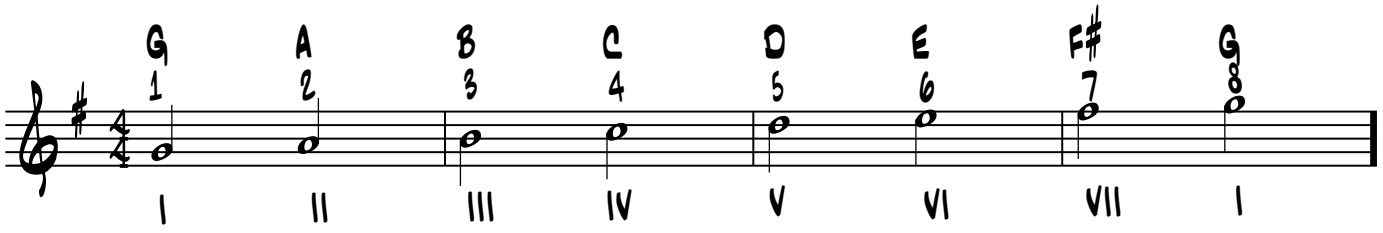
This page will show you...
...how to form a major scale.
...how Roman numerals are used to identiy chords and their function in a scale.
...how to form and number a Dominant 7th scale.

G Major Scale

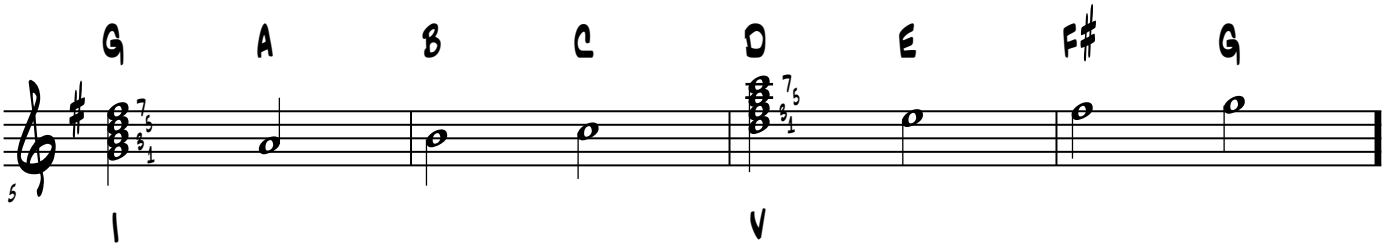
B Flat Instruments

Willie Thomas

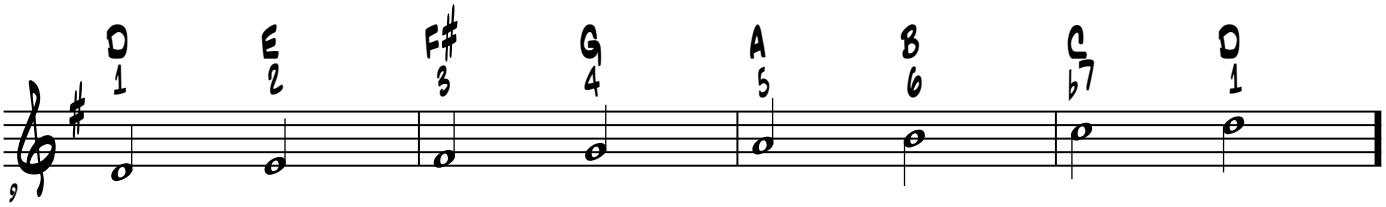
1. Letters of the Alphabet, Arabic numbers and Roman numerals are used to name notes



2. Chords may be formed on any note of a scale by playing every other note at the same time



3. The C Dominant Seventh scale is renumbered



Some Facts About the Blues Form

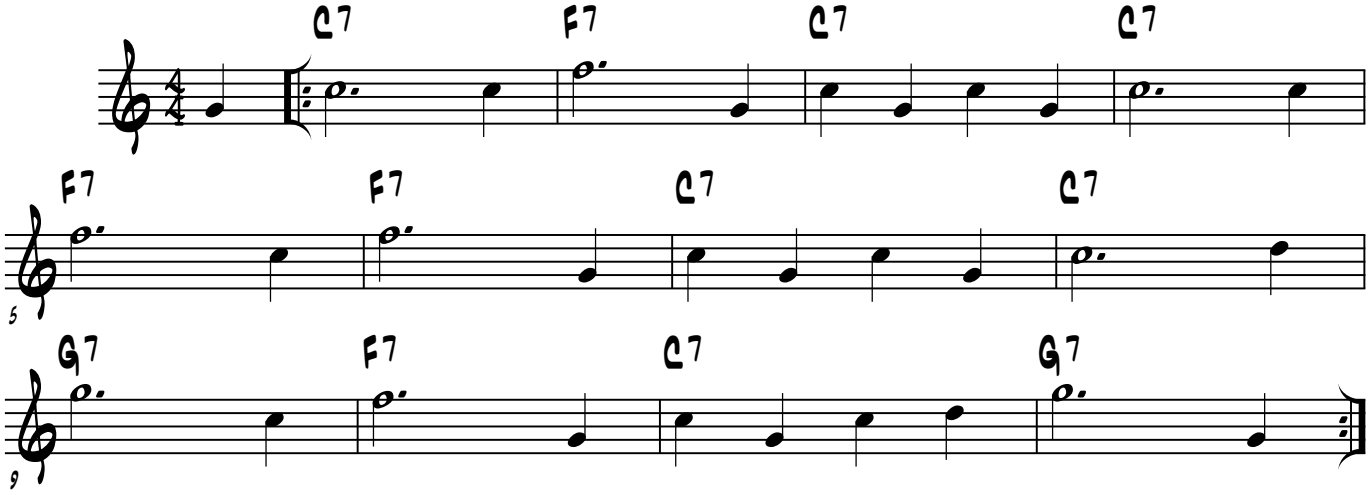
- The Blues is 12 bars long
- The Blues is a 3 part song A-B-C
- The I7-IV7-V7 are basic blues chords
- The Blues Pentatonic scale is basic traditional blues vocabulary
- When repeating the blues form, the V7 is usually used in the final measure
- Slashes show the number of beats a chord is played in a measure.

Basic B Flat Blues

Free Lesson - Track 2

Thomas

B Flat Instruments - Treble Clef



Minor Scale ... Blues Pentatonic

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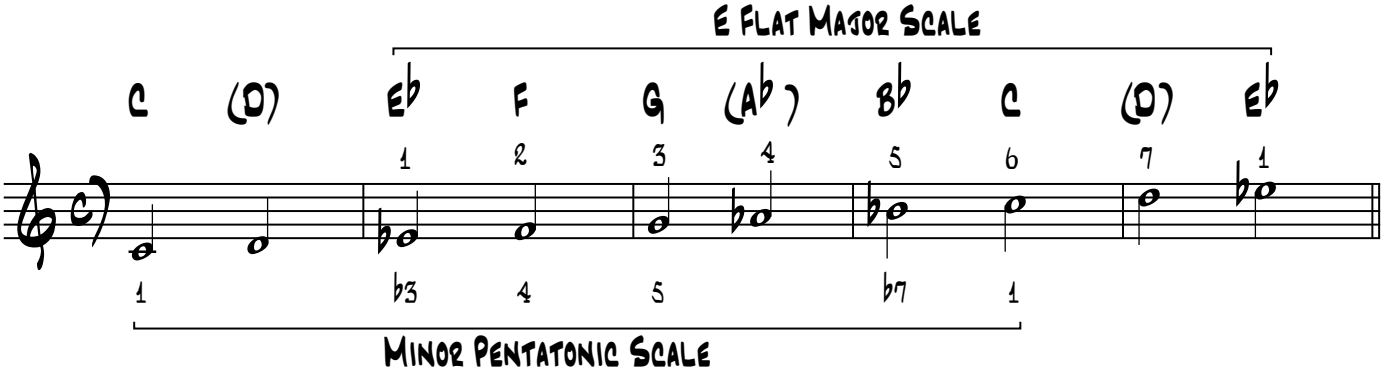
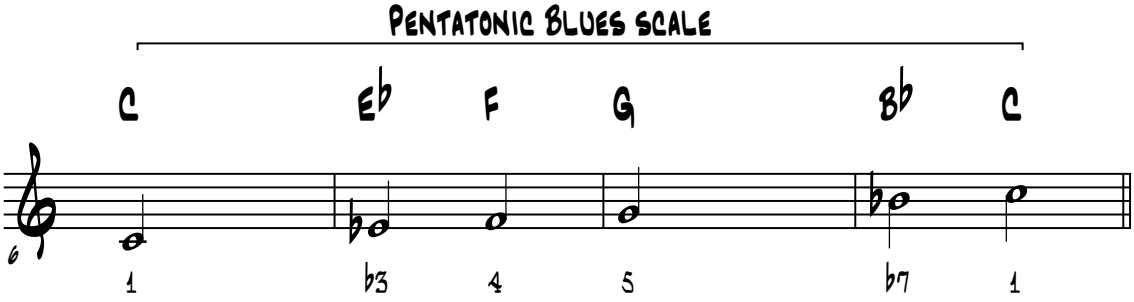
B Flat Instruments

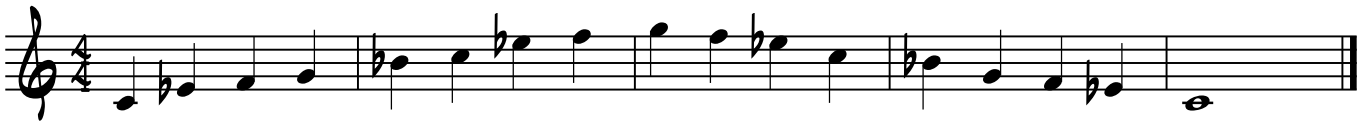




Basic Blues Scale
in Concert B Flat

B Flat Instruments

Free Lesson - Track 2



Yo Dude Blues

Free Lesson - Track 2

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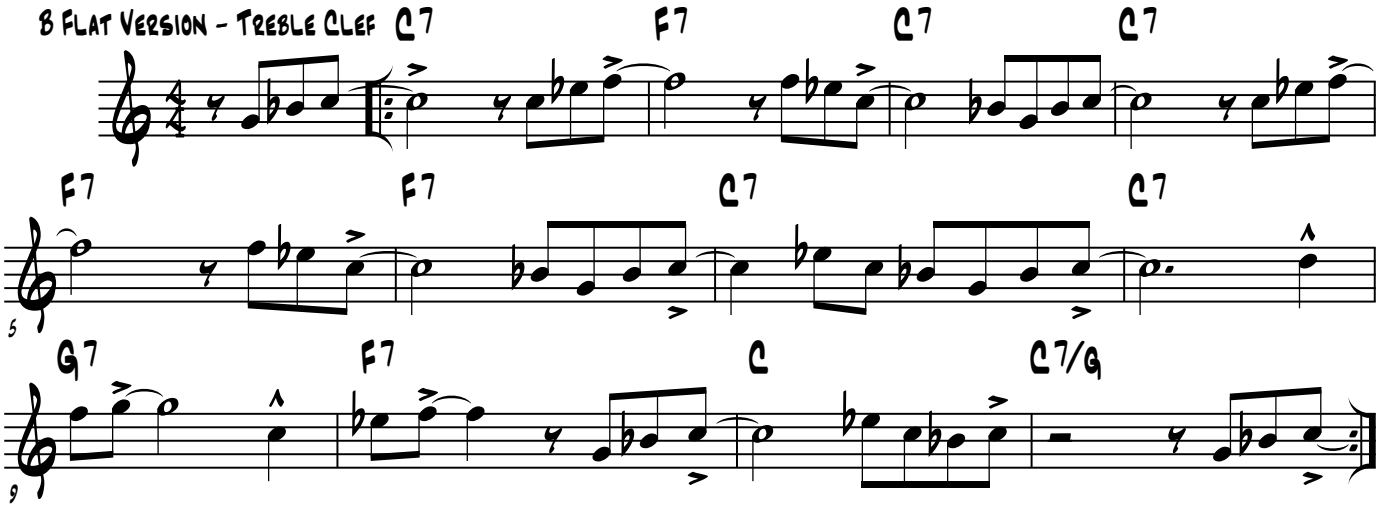
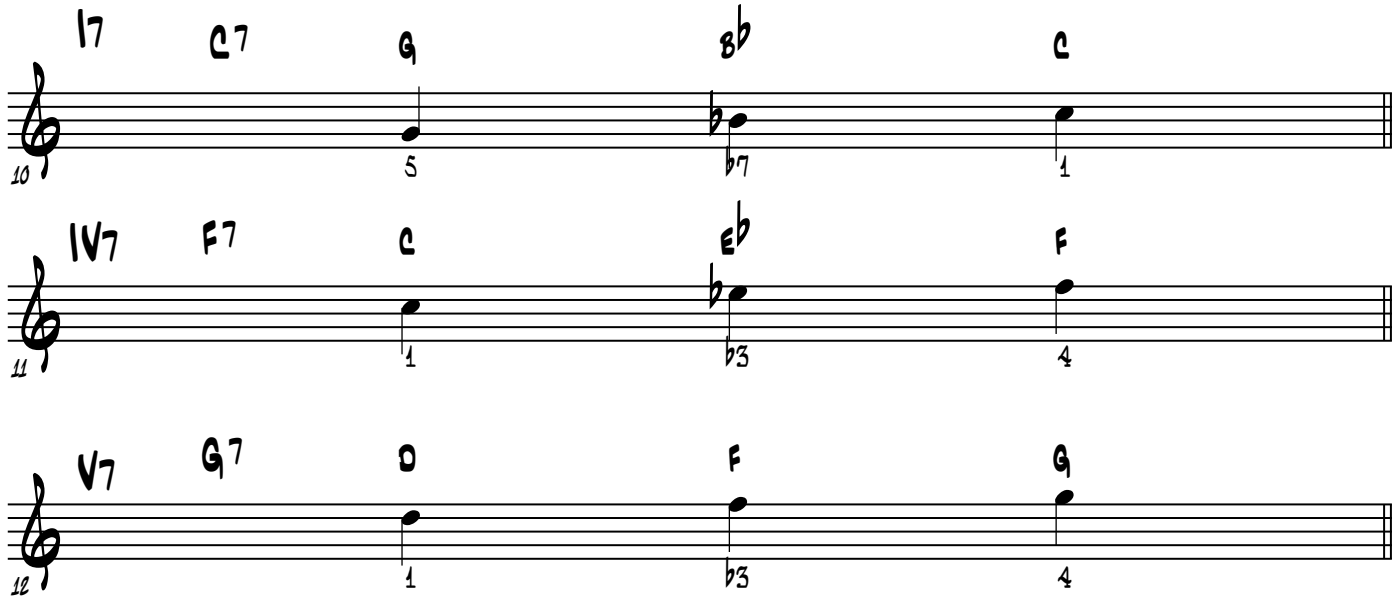


Blues Patterns Formed on Tonal Centers



Forming Pentatonic Pairs

B Flat Instruments

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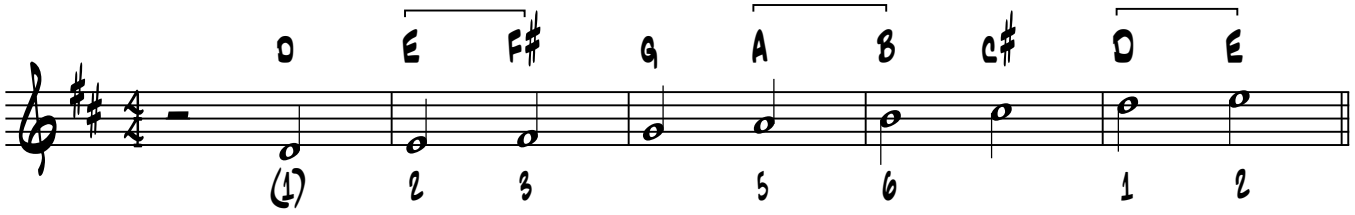
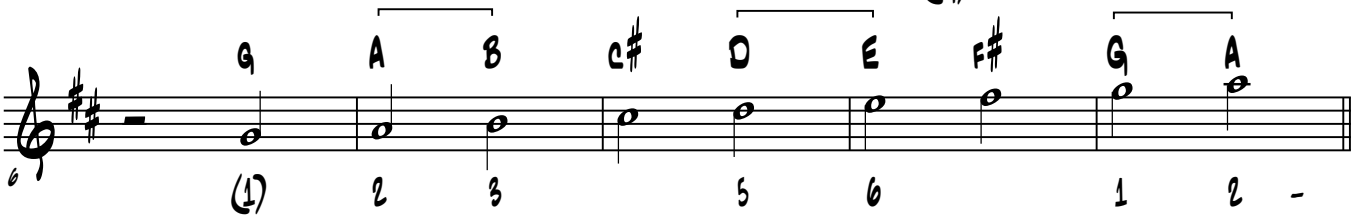
Three Major Pentatonic Scales can be formed in every major scale.

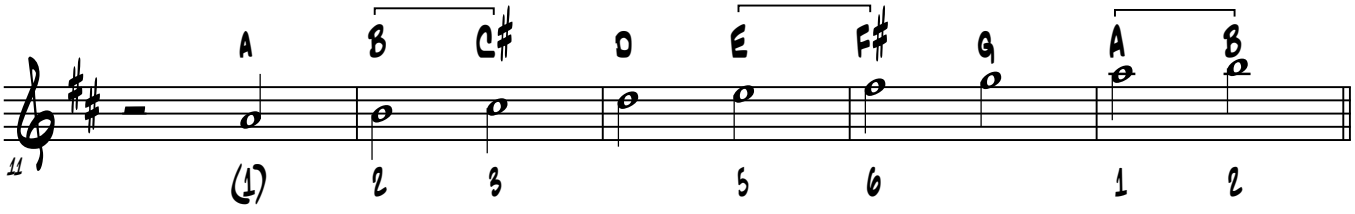
- Major Pentatonic scale formed on the Tonic Major Scale (D)



- Major Pentatonic scale formed on the Lydian or 4th Scale step (G)



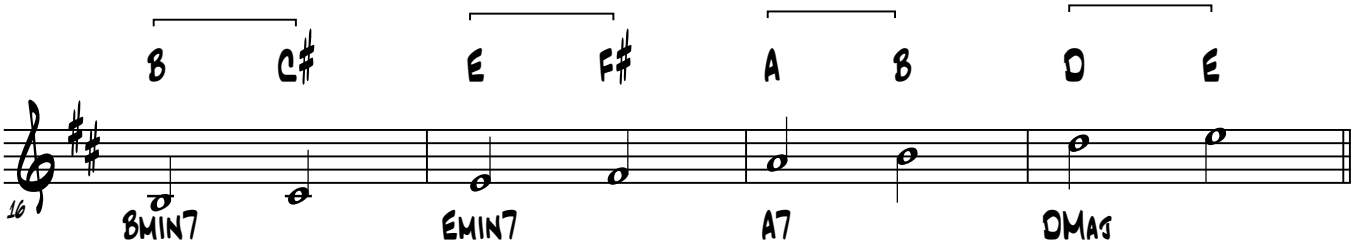
- Major Pentatonic Scale formed on the Mixolydian or 5th (dominant) Scale step (A)



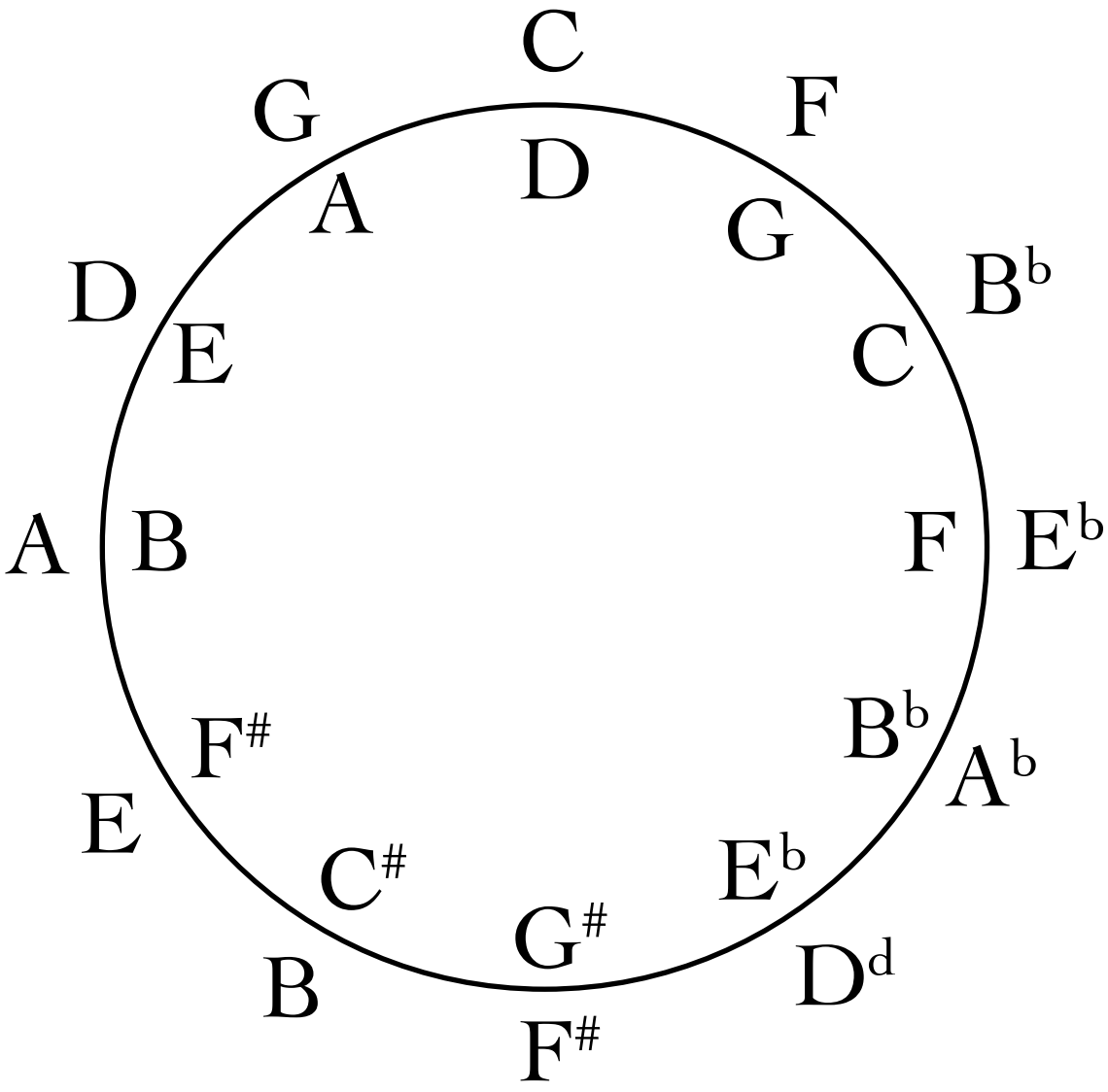
Major Pentatonic Scales started on the 2nd scale step create Pentatonic Pairs that can be connected around the circle of 4ths

G Maj Pentatonic.....A B D E G A
D Maj Pentatonic.....E F# A B D E
A Maj Pentatonic..... B E E F# A B

Pentatonic Pairs create melody chains that connect series of diatonic chord changes



Use the circle to help you visualize the formation of a MELODY CHAIN as the pentatonic pairs move around the circle of 4ths.



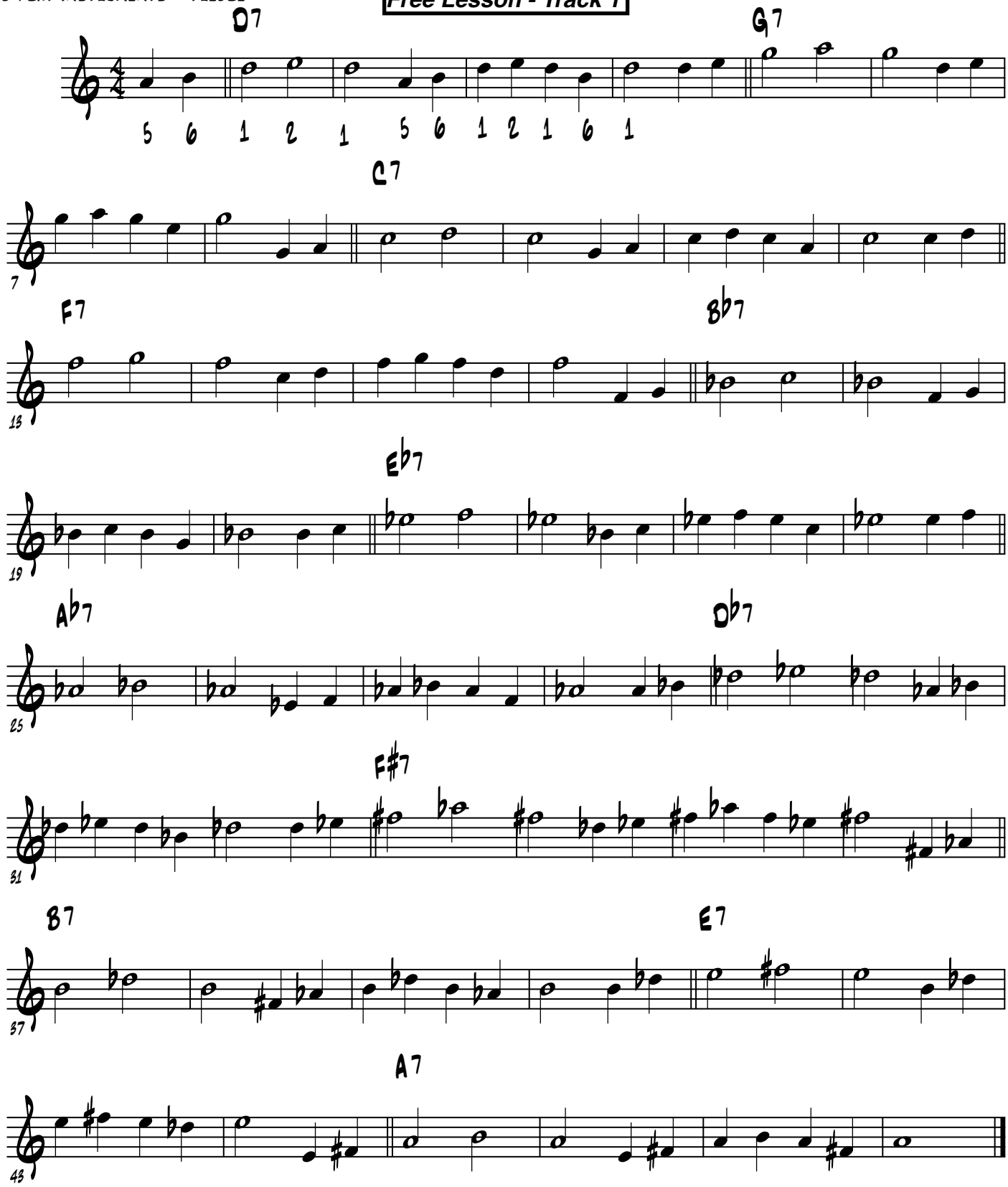
Pentatonic Pairs Around the Circle of Fourths

Pentatonic Pairs Around Circle of Dominant 7ths

B Flat Instruments - Treble

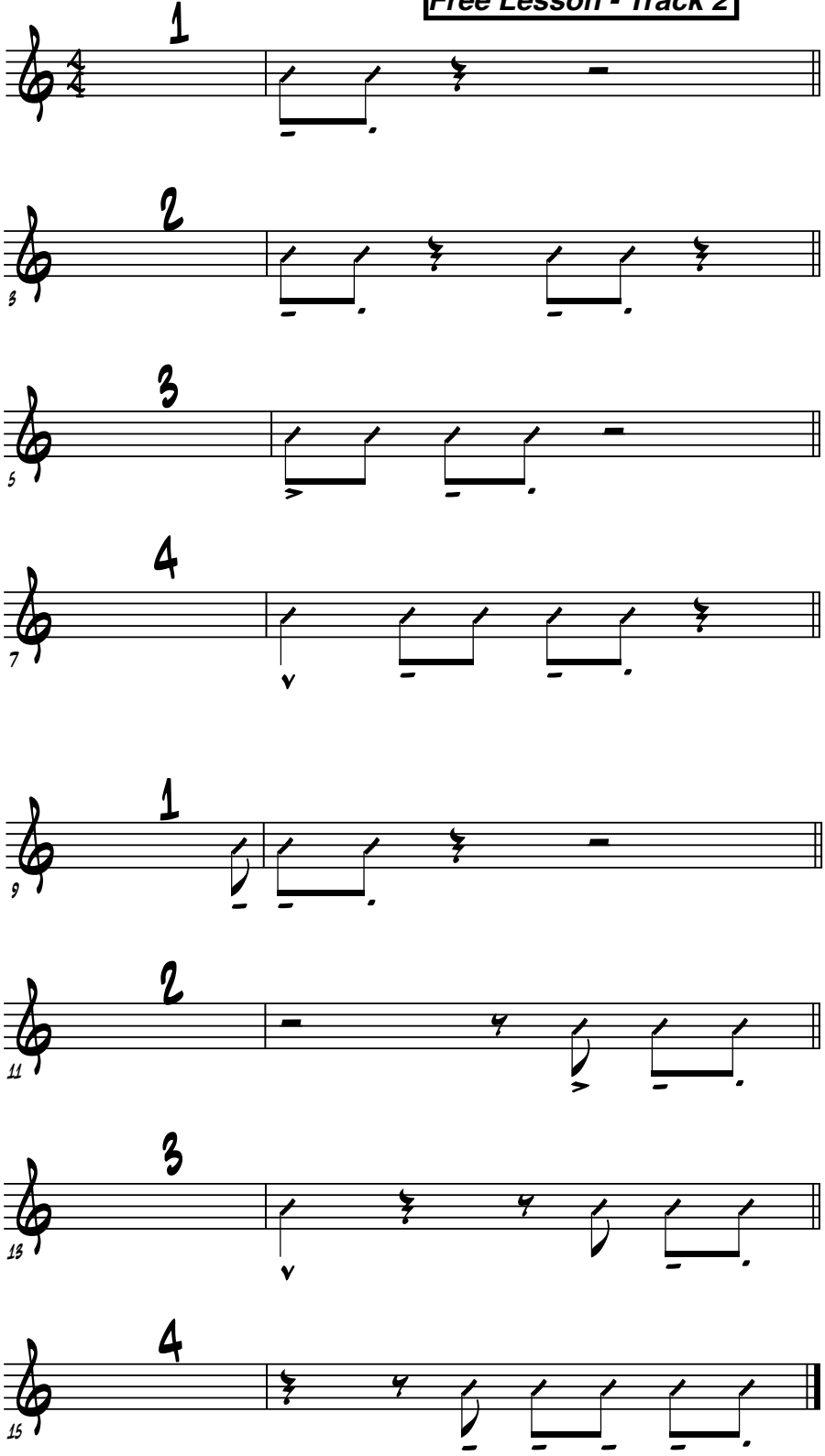
Free Lesson - Track 1

Thomas



Use your FREE LESSON vocabulary now to develop jazz patterns in the blues and around the dominant circle with fixed rhythms.

Rhythm Drill

Free Lesson - Track 2

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