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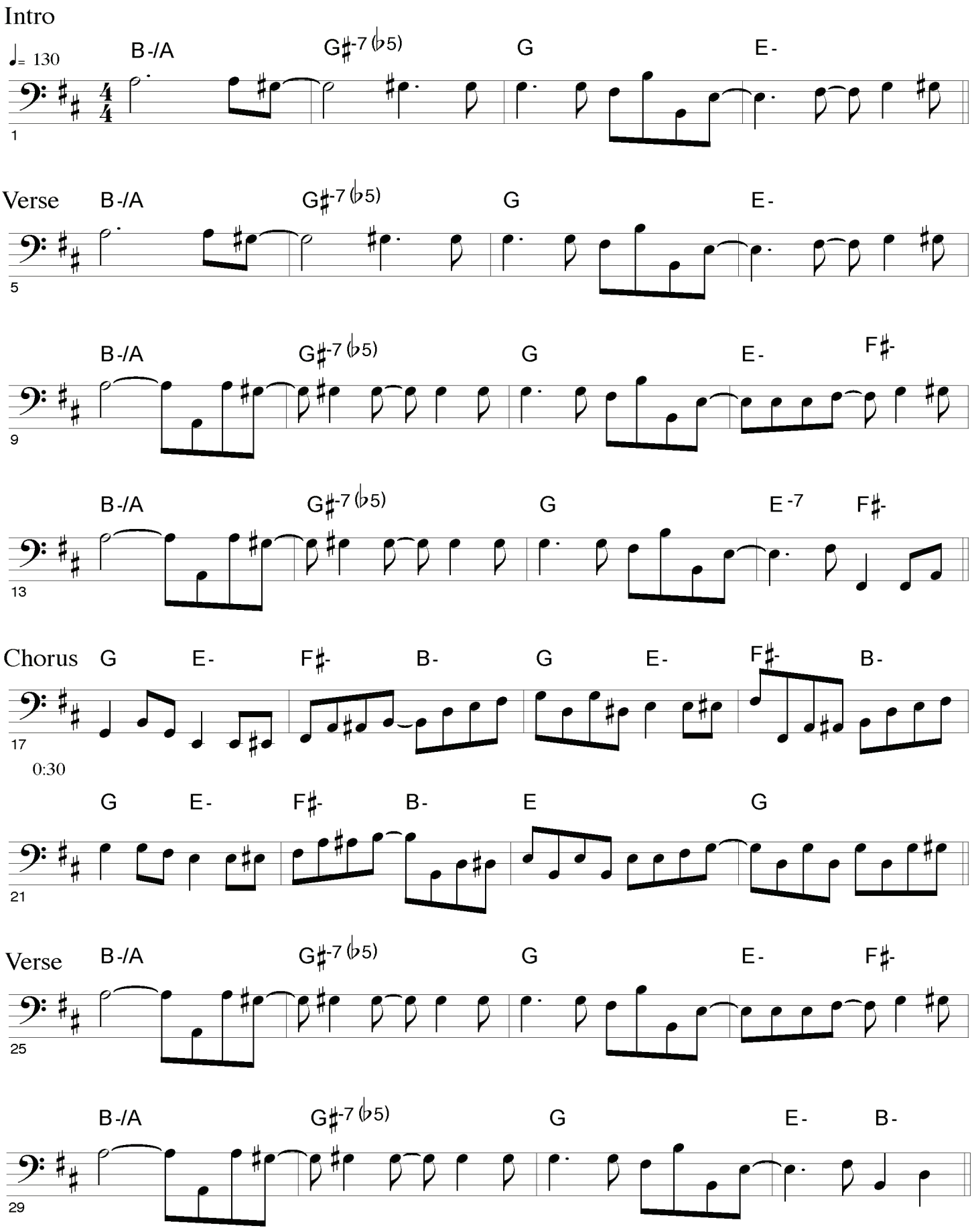
Example 1 - *Ain't No Mountain High Enough*



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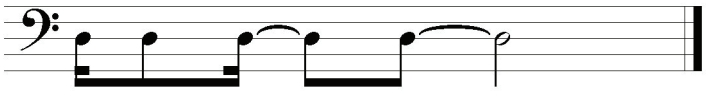
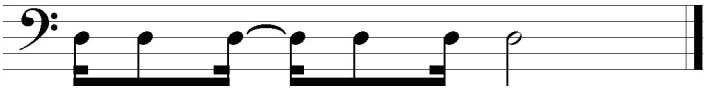
Example 8 - Rhythmic Cell



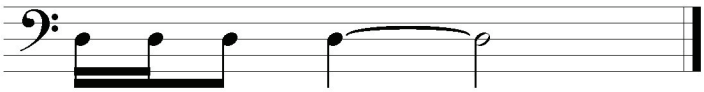
Strive for accuracy. Remember, if you play the correct notes, with good time, and in tune, it will feel and sound great! Practice slowly to learn it correctly, and play perfectly. Then play it many, many times with your metronome and drum machine.

Audio - FREE Download of drum groove: http://www.jimstinnett.com/jimstinnett2014/Jim_Stinnett_Musician/Real_bass_lessons.html

Example 9 - Rhythmic Cell



Example 10 - Rhythmic Cell



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Another physical practice exercise to help develop your Motown sound in your right hand, is to play everything with your first finger only. ONE finger only. This may be quite difficult at first. You will quickly start to hear how this affects your tone and sound production. As with the double bass, which finger(s) you use to pluck the string makes a big difference in sound and feel. Paul Chambers played all his Bebop lines with one finger only. That is one reason his execution of faster lines is unique in sound and feel.

As you work with one finger only, you will discover the importance of raking across the strings. There are some specific, common, motions in Jamerson's licks that demand raking when using one finger only. These licks have a character all their own. You will discover these places as you practice his licks more.

Also listen for those muted notes. The percussive little notes are a vital part of the sound and feel. Don't get hung up on trying to hear every little detail at first. Through repetition, your ears will develop, and you will begin to hear more. There are secrets around the corner that your ears probably can't even hear at this point. Keep repeating and listening, intently.

Video - Real Bass Lessons Youtube - RBL - Technique Tuesday 31 - Jamerson Sound

Lastly, the sound is in our ears. The more you listen, intently, the more the sound and feel will soak into your soul. It has to go in before it can come out.

While there is more music available to everyone today, critical listening is nearly a lost art. Listen with intention and focus. Listen and identify the qualities you hear. Use our checklist to help identify, label, and analyze the sound of Motown Bass. Listen to the rhythms. Imitate the feel. Just like with your voice and speech patterns, you will take on the characteristics of the sounds you hear the most.

In all music, your sound is your identity. There is no second chance at a first impression. Get your sound together. Imitate the masters. Get serious about building that Motown sound. It will take time, perhaps a few years, but I assure you that it is worth it.

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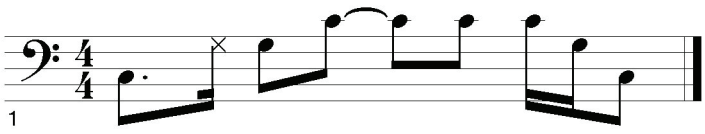
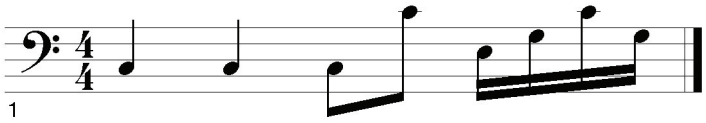
Example 15 - one measure lick



The X note head represents a muted note.

Video - Real Bass Lessons - RBL - Technique Tuesday 31 - Jamerson Sound - Articulation

Example 16 - one measure lick



Don’t rush the sixteenth notes. Hear the subdivisions in your head before you play them. Listen to the drums.

1964 Epiphone Embassy Deluxe
1965 Fender Jazz

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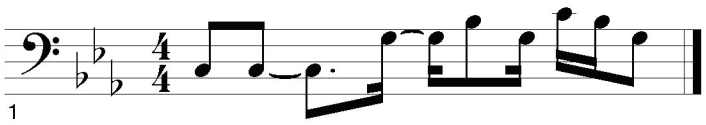
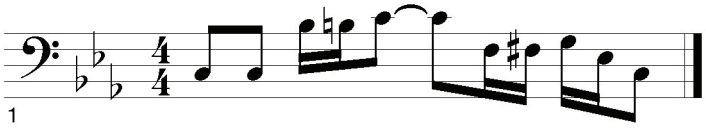
Example 21 - one measure lick



Work these until they just feel GREAT! Then, play them around the cycle of 4ths.

Video - Real Bass Lessons Youtube - RBL - RBL 51 Motown Language - Minor

Example 22 - one measure lick



If you can play one finger per fret, this one will fit right under your fingers.

Notice how the chromatic runs add some bluesy flavor to this line.

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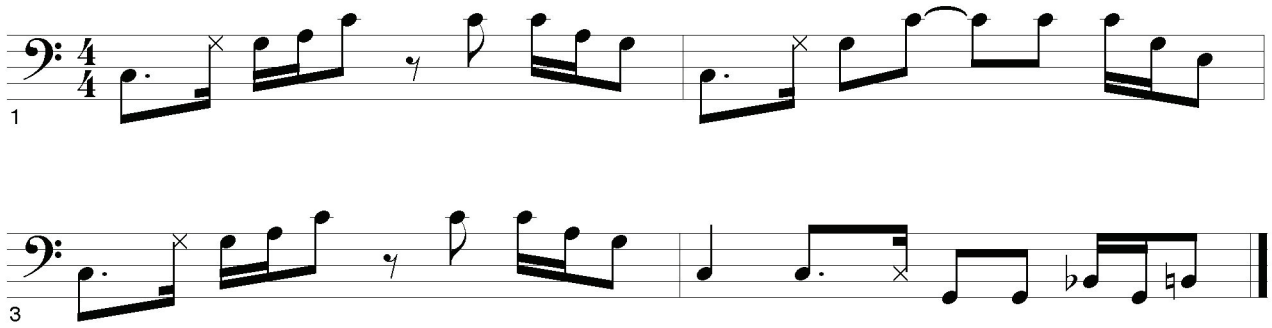
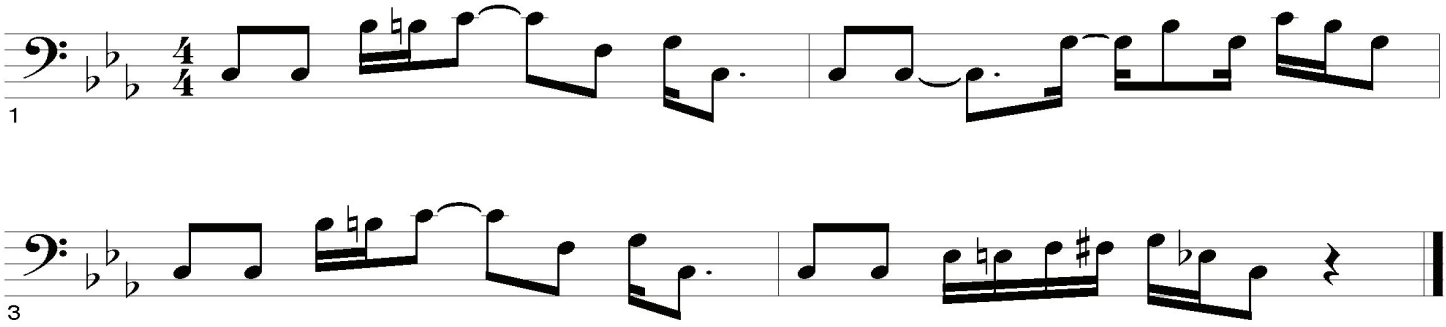
Example 28 - combination lick



Video - Real Bass Lessons YouTube - RBL 47 - Motown - More Jamerson Language

Example 29 - combination lick in minor



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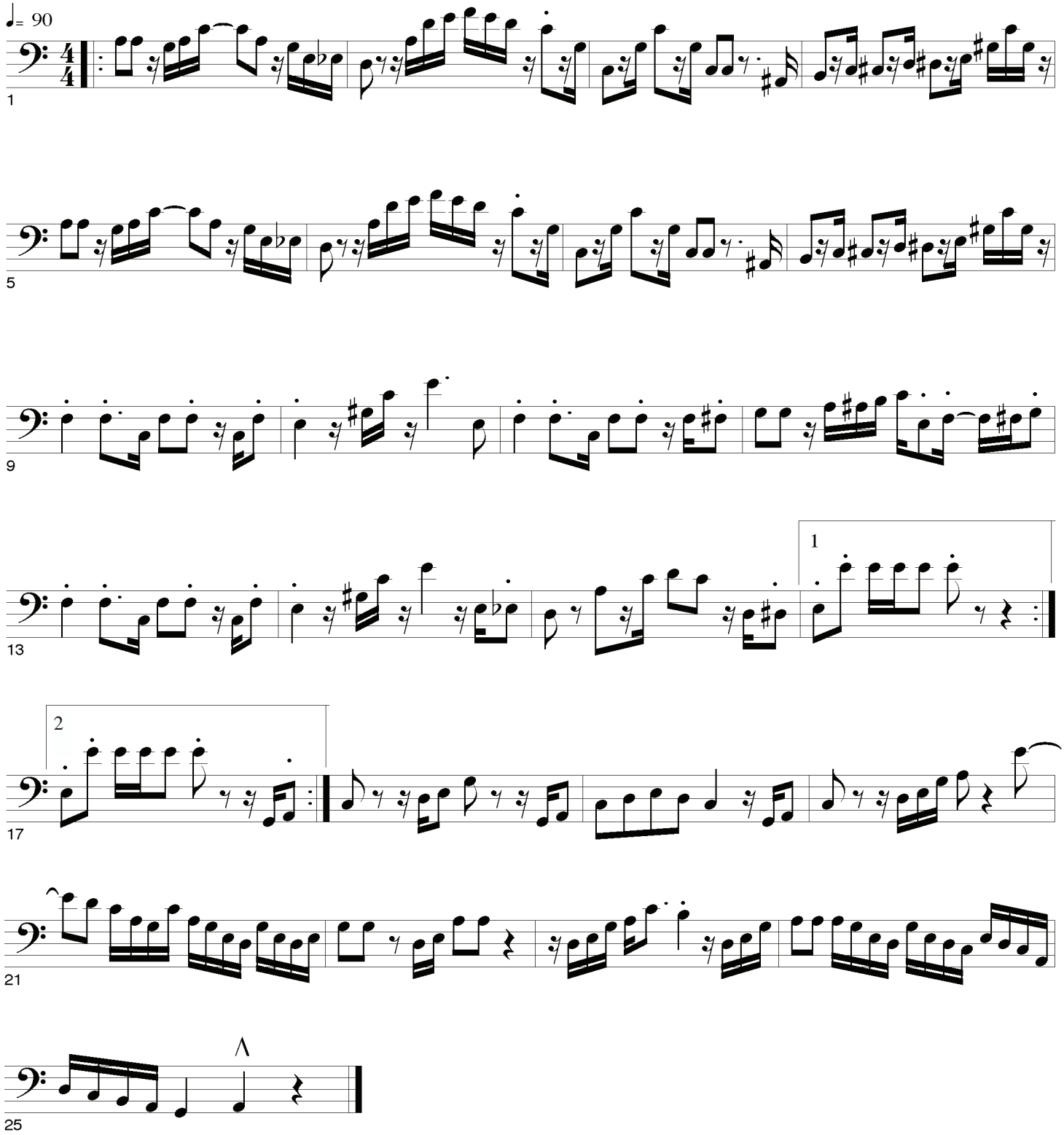
Song 37 - Motown

This one is a little more melodic. After the second ending, it becomes a soli, played with other instruments.



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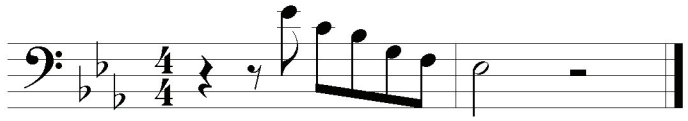
CHAPTER SIX

Fills & Phrasing

All good bass players mark the phrases in a song. This is commonly done by playing a fill at the end of four and eight bar phrases. In the Motown style, the form and phrasing is very clearly heard in the bass line. Each section of the song has a definite cadence style lick that ends the phrase and sets up the beginning of the next section. In Jamerson's playing, these fills are abundant.

Below are examples of phrase marker fills. All of the fills use just the pitches in the pentatonic scale.

Example 43 Fill 1

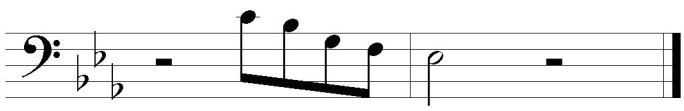


An effective way to practice these short fills is to play a sustained root on beat one and count until the fill starts. Then play the fill, ending on a sustained root. Again, count while holding the root note, and play the fill at the correct time. Example: count 1 2 3 4 and on beat one, play an Eb. While sustaining the note, count and come in on the & of beat two. Finish by holding the Eb note, counting 1 2 3 4, 1 2 & starting the fill again on the & of beat two.

What we want to do is isolate the fill, but practice playing it in time, in a two or four-bar phrase. The fill becomes the marker for the start of a new phrase.

Video - Real Bass Lessons YouTube - Video - Real Bass Lessons 39 - Motown Fills

Example 44 Fill 2



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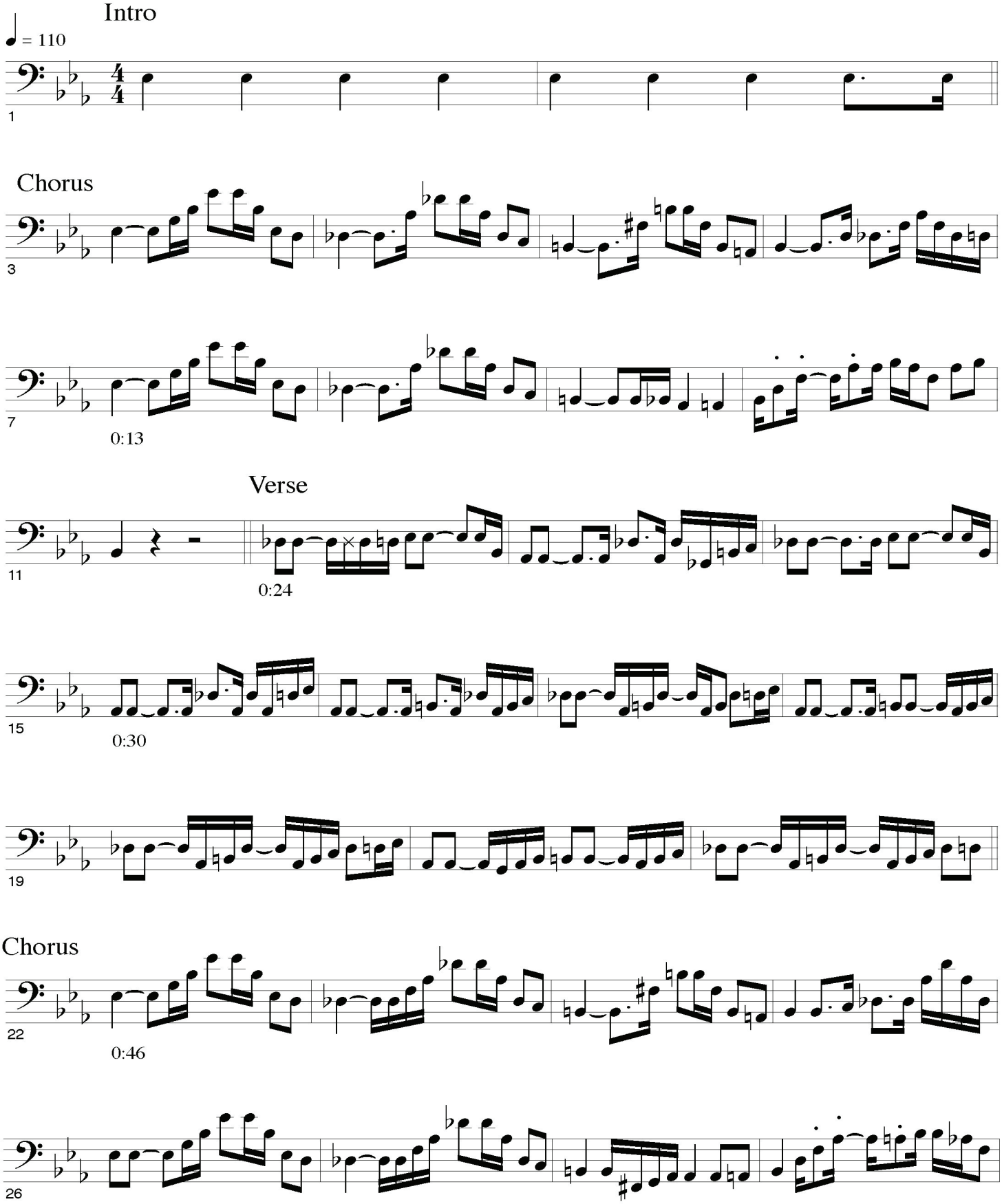
Example 60 - ***Bernadette***

Jamerson's line from the Four Tops, *Essential Collection*



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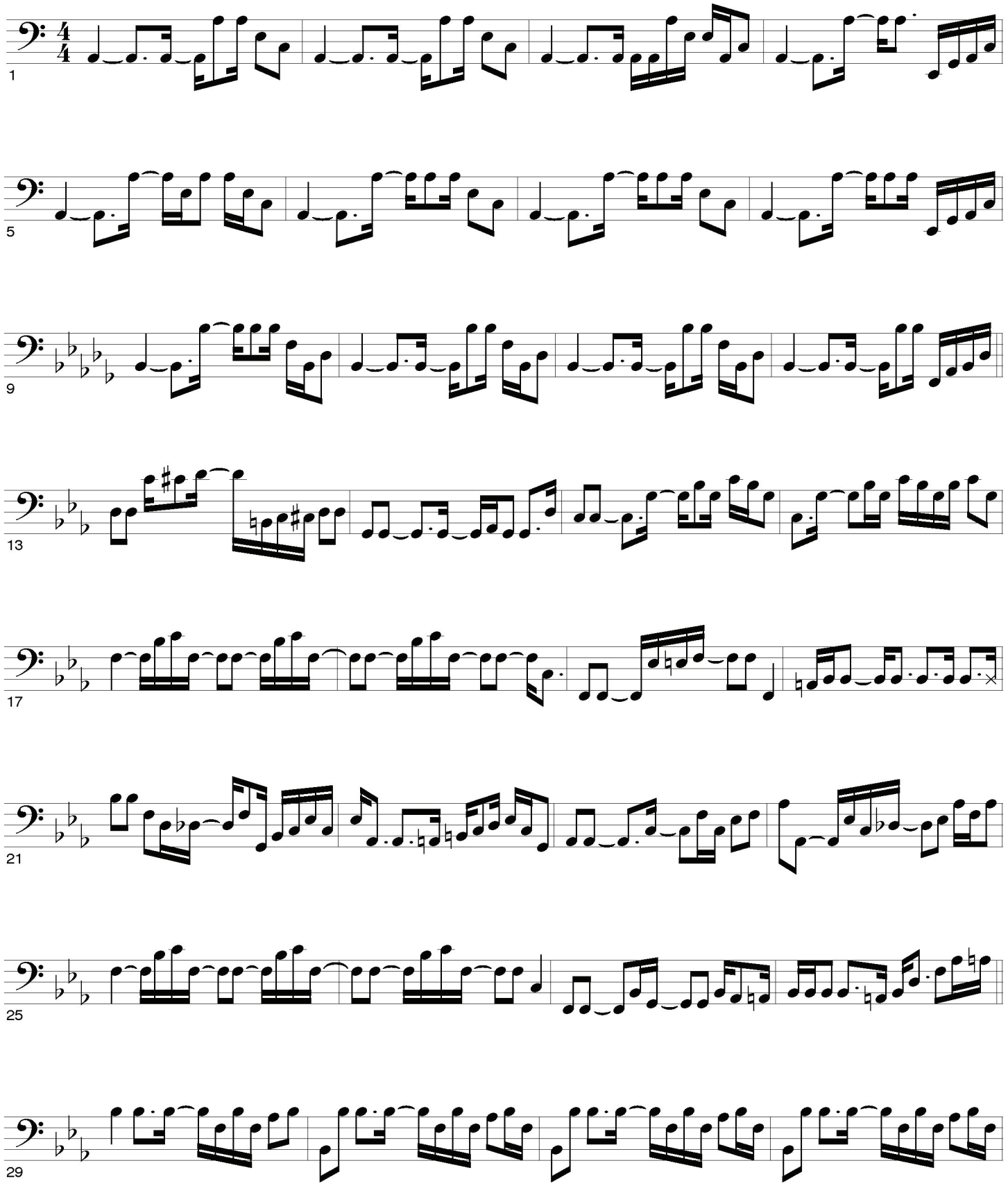
Example 64 - ***What's Happening Brother***

This song is full of killer, minor, Jamerson licks. What a groove and powerful bass line. The phrases, repetition, variation, and building of tension, make this bass line so, so impacting. Study this one thoroughly.



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