



DANNY

**"MO"
MORRIS**

**THE BASSIST'S
GUIDE TO THE
RHYTHM
SECTION**

SBL Course Workbook



THE BASSIST'S GUIDE TO THE RHYTHM SECTION

with Danny Morris

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ever wondered what makes a rhythm section great? In this course, Danny "Mo" Morris is at hand to help you take better care of the groove.

Danny will work along keyboardist Dave "Big D" Ramsey and drummer Tom Major to teach you classic songs like "Killer Joe", "Mercy Mercy Mercy", "The Thrill Is Gone", among others.

We have provided you with sample groove lines to accompany the backing tracks, but we encourage you to explore different ideas and develop your own.

The timestamps on the lead sheets correspond with the backing tracks.

LESSON 1

BLUES

THE THRILL IS GONE

BB KING

B MIN

Sample bass line...

2-2 2-2-2 2 2-2 0-1 2-2 2-2-2 2 2-2 2-2-5 6

E MIN **B MIN**

7-7 7-7 5-6 7-7 7-7 7-0 2-2 2-2 0 2-2 2-2 0-4

G MAJ **F#7** **B MIN**

5 5-5-5 2-3 4-4 4-4-4 0-1 2-2 2-2 0-1 2-2 2-2 0-1

x4 B MIN

(01:13)

2-2-2-2-2-2 0-1 2-2-2-0 1-2-2-2-2 2-2-2-2-2-2 0-1 2-2-2-0 1-2-2-2-2 2

x4 B MIN **A MAJ** **E MAJ** **A MAJ** **B MIN** **A MAJ** **E MAJ**

(01:59)

To Coda
(On 4th repeat)

2 0 5-6 7 5 2-2 0-1 2 2-1-0 0-2 0 2-4 0

E MAJ

0

LESSON 1

LESSON SUMMARY - KEY POINTS

- As a bass player, make sure to take care of the root notes.
- Listen to the drummer and lock in with the kick drum.
- If you find yourself over-thinking, take a step back and get a feel for the tune.
- Experiment with different rhythmic ideas. You can do this by switching between various subdivisions (i.e. quarter notes, eighth notes, sixteenth notes, etc.).
- Use visual cues to direct the band.
- Pay attention to note length and dynamics.
- The bass and kick drum are sympathetic to one another, but you don't have to be confined to repeating the same pattern.
- Understand the way a song is structured (i.e. the form).

LESSON 2

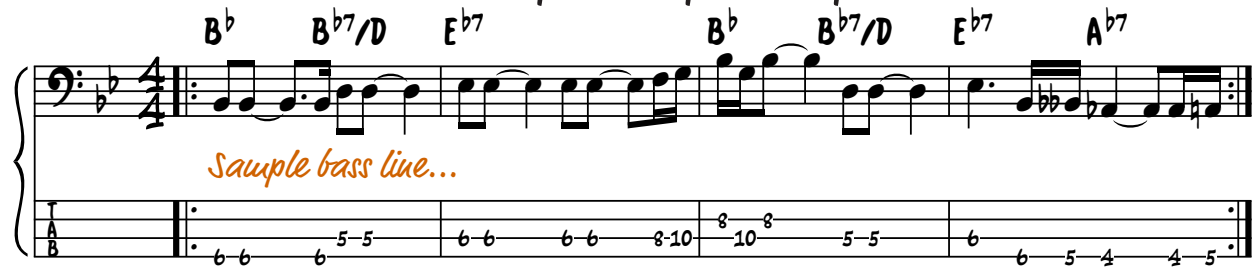
FUNK

MERCY MERCY MERCY

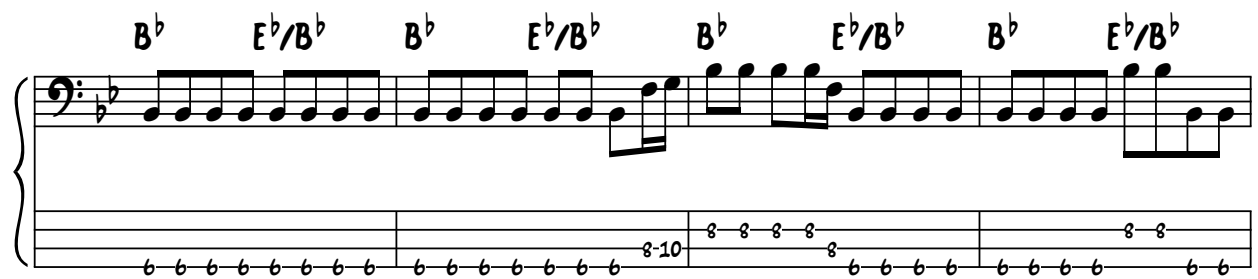
JOE ZAWINUL

Chords: B^b B^b7/D E^b7 B^b B^b7/D E^b7 A^b7

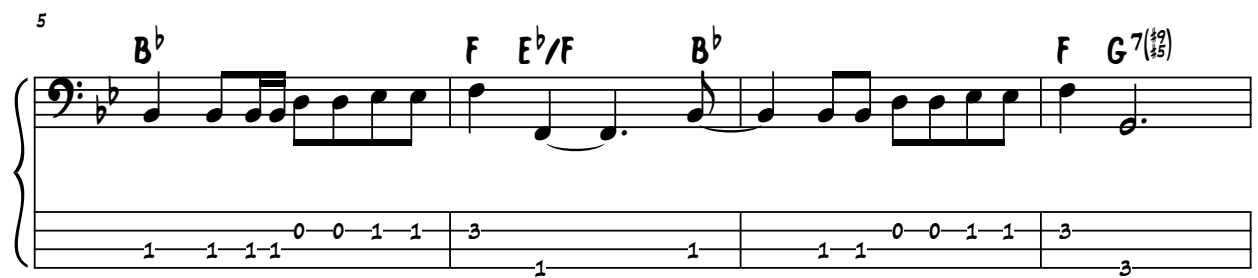
Sample bass line...



Chords: B^b E^b/B^b B^b E^b/B^b B^b E^b/B^b B^b E^b/B^b



Chords: B^b F E^b/F B^b F $G^7(\sharp 9)$



Chords: $C^{MIN}7$ $D^7(\sharp 9)$ G^{MIN} F G^{MIN} F G^{MIN}

D.C. AL FINE



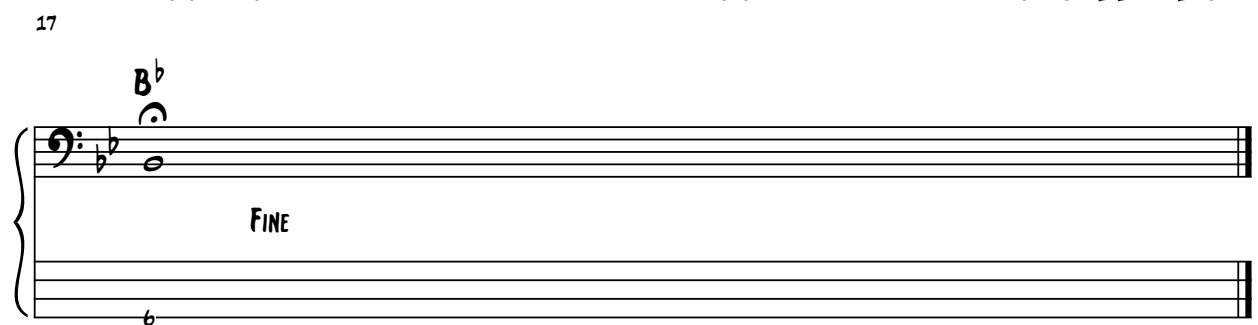
Chords: $x8 B^b7$ E^b7 $x8 B^b7$ $E^7 E^b7$ A^b7

(01:59) (02:46)



Chord: B^b

FINE



LESSON 2

LESSON SUMMARY - KEY POINTS

- You can use chord inversions to change the 'mood' of the song.
- Lock in with the kick drum.
- Mistakes can often lead to a whole new thing.
- Use guide tones to navigate the chord changes.
- Know your fingerboard by notes and intervals.
- "Never lose the groove in order to find a note" - Victor Wooten.
- Play what you hear.

LESSON 3

SHUFFLE BLUES

KILLER JOE

BENNY GOLSON

A

Chords: C⁷ B^{b7} C⁷ B^{b7}

Sample bass line...

A

Chords: C⁷ B^{b7} C⁷ B^{b7}

B

Chords: E^{MIN7} A⁷ E^{bMIN7} A^{b7}

You can also play the Root notes instead of the suggested melodic bass line...

Chords: A⁷ A^{b7} E^{MIN7} A⁷

13

A

Chords: C⁷ B^{b7} C⁷ B^{b7}

17

**Backing track repeats the form (AABA) 2 times...*

LESSON 3

LESSON SUMMARY - KEY POINTS

- Learn the difference between a 'shuffle' feel and a 'straight' feel.
- Experiment with eighth note triplet rhythms.
- Listen to the jazz greats like Paul Chambers, Ray Brown, Scott Lafaro, Ron Carter and Charles Mingus.
- Always listen to your band-mates.
- Understand diatonic harmony: Chords or notes that relate to a certain key signature.
- Place emphasis on the rhythmic direction of the band.
- Control note length and dynamics.
- Use muting techniques to emphasize the pulse.

LESSON 4

BALLAD

THE BORDER SONG / HOLY MOSES

ELTON JOHN

Amin **E⁷/G[#]** **Amin** **E⁷/G[#]** **Amin** **G/B**

Sample bass line...

C **G/B** **C** **E⁷** **E⁷/G[#]**

C **G** **F** **D^{min}** **D^{min}** **C/E**

F **F[#]°** **C/G** **F/G** **C** **C⁷/E** **C** **E⁷**

*To Coda
(On 4th repeat)*

D.C. AL CODA

F/G **C**

FINE

5

9

14

19

LESSON 4

LESSON SUMMARY - KEY POINTS

- Be aware of rhythmic shifts and syncopations.
- Learn to play by ear and not just with the sheet music.
- Create rhythmic space and counterpoint.
- Take creative risks.
- Learn how to play 'double stops' and use them in a musical way.

LESSON 5

R&B

RESPECT

OTIS REDDING

Chords: $\times 3$ G^7 F^7 G^7 F^7 G^7 F^7

Sample bass line...

Measure 1: G^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 3-0-3)
Measure 2: F^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 0-2-3)
Measure 3: G^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 3-0-3)
Measure 4: F^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 0-2-3)
Measure 5: G^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 3-0-3)
Measure 6: F^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 3-0-3)

Chords: C^7 F^7 C^7 F^7

Measure 7: C^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-0-3, Treble: 1-0-1-2-0)
Measure 8: F^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-0-3, Treble: 1-0-1-2-0)
Measure 9: C^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-0-3, Treble: 1-0-1-2-0)
Measure 10: F^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-0-3, Treble: 1-0-1-2-0)

Chords: $F^{\#}MIN^7$ B^7

Measure 11: $F^{\#}MIN^7$ (Bass: 4-4-4-4-4, Treble: 2-2-2-2-2)
Measure 12: $F^{\#}MIN^7$ (Bass: 4-4-4-4-4, Treble: 2-2-2-2-2)
Measure 13: B^7 (Bass: 4-4-4-4-4, Treble: 2-2-2-2-2)
Measure 14: B^7 (Bass: 4-4-4-4-4, Treble: 2-2-2-2-2)

Chords: $F^{\#}MIN^7$ G^7

Measure 15: $F^{\#}MIN^7$ (Bass: 4-4-4-4-4, Treble: 5-5-5-5-5)
Measure 16: $F^{\#}MIN^7$ (Bass: 4-4-4-4-4, Treble: 5-5-5-5-5)
Measure 17: G^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 5-5-5-5-5)
Measure 18: G^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 5-5-5-5-5)

Chords: G^7 F^7 G^7 F^7 G^7 F^7

Measure 19: G^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 3-0-3)
Measure 20: F^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 0-2-3)
Measure 21: G^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 3-0-3)
Measure 22: F^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 0-2-3)
Measure 23: G^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 3-0-3)
Measure 24: F^7 (Bass: 5-5-5-5-5, Treble: 3-0-3)

Chords: $\times 8$ C^7 F^7 C^7 F^7 C^7

[01:36]

Measure 25: C^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-3-6-7, Treble: 8-8-0-0-1-2)
Measure 26: F^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-3-6-7, Treble: 3-3-3-3-6-7)
Measure 27: C^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-3-6-7, Treble: 8-8-0-0-1-2)
Measure 28: F^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-3-6-7, Treble: 3-3-3-3-6-7)
Measure 29: C^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-3-6-7, Treble: 8-8-0-0-1-2)
Measure 30: C^7 (Bass: 3-3-3-3-6-7, Treble: 3-3-3-3-6-7)

LESSON 5

LESSON SUMMARY - KEY POINTS

- A strong relationship between bass and drums is key to every great band.
- Shuffle and swing feels should feel less angular or syncopated.
- Use target notes to embellish your bass fills.
- Build up a repertoire of classic basslines.
- Try adding a 6th to your Root/5th foundation.

LESSON 6

FUNK - JAZZ

DONNA LEE

CHARLIE PARKER

A^b **F⁷** **B^{b7}**

Sample bass line...

Measures 1-4 of the bass line. Measure 1: A^b (B-flat), quarter note. Measure 2: F⁷ (F), quarter note, G^b (F-sharp), eighth note, A^b (B-flat), eighth note. Measure 3: B^{b7} (B-flat), quarter note, A^b (B-flat), quarter note. Measure 4: A^b (B-flat), quarter note, G^b (F-sharp), eighth note, F⁷ (F), eighth note. Fingering: 4, 2-2, 3, 2-2, 1, 3, 5, 3, 4, 4, 3, 3, 3, 2.

B^{bMIN7} **E^{b7}** **A^b** **E^{bMIN7}** **D⁷**

Measures 5-8 of the bass line. Measure 5: B^{bMIN7} (B-flat), quarter note, A^b (B-flat), quarter note. Measure 6: E^{b7} (E-flat), quarter note, D⁷ (D), quarter note. Measure 7: A^b (B-flat), quarter note, G^b (F-sharp), eighth note, A^b (B-flat), eighth note. Measure 8: E^{bMIN7} (E-flat), quarter note, D⁷ (D), quarter note. Fingering: 1, 4, 5, 6, 5, 4, 4, 5, 6, 5.

D^b **D^{bMIN7}** **A^b** **F⁷**

Measures 9-12 of the bass line. Measure 9: D^b (D-flat), quarter note, C^b (B), quarter note. Measure 10: D^{bMIN7} (D-flat), quarter note, C^b (B), quarter note. Measure 11: A^b (B-flat), quarter note, G^b (F-sharp), eighth note, A^b (B-flat), eighth note. Measure 12: F⁷ (F), quarter note, E^b (D-flat), quarter note. Fingering: 4, 6, 5, 4, 4, 3, 5, 3, 3, 0.

B^{b7} **B^{bMIN7}** **E^{b7}**

Measures 13-16 of the bass line. Measure 13: B^{b7} (B-flat), quarter note, A^b (B-flat), quarter note. Measure 14: B^{bMIN7} (B-flat), quarter note, A^b (B-flat), quarter note. Measure 15: E^{b7} (E-flat), quarter note, D⁷ (D), quarter note. Measure 16: E^{b7} (E-flat), quarter note, D⁷ (D), quarter note. Fingering: 1, 1, 3, 3, 5, 3, 3, 3, 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 0.

A^b **F⁷** **B^{b7}**

Measures 17-20 of the bass line. Measure 17: A^b (B-flat), quarter note, G^b (F-sharp), eighth note, A^b (B-flat), eighth note. Measure 18: F⁷ (F), quarter note, E^b (D-flat), quarter note. Measure 19: B^{b7} (B-flat), quarter note, A^b (B-flat), quarter note. Measure 20: B^{b7} (B-flat), quarter note, A^b (B-flat), quarter note. Fingering: 4, 6, 5, 3, 3, 1, 3, 5, 3, 3, 1, 2.

LESSON 6

C⁷ **F^{MIN}** **C⁷(#9)**

21

F^{MIN} **C⁷** **F^{MIN}** **A^b°**

You can play the Root notes instead of the melody...

25

A^b **F⁷** **B^bMIN⁷** **E^b7** **A^b** **F⁷** **B^bMIN⁷** **E^b7**

Repeat song 3 times... Then go to CODA

29

A^b **F⁷** **B^bMIN⁷** **E^b7** **A^b7(#9)**

33

LESSON 6

LESSON SUMMARY - KEY POINTS

- You can take classical jazz tunes like Charlie Parker's "Donna Lee" and play them in different genres.
- Understand the function of the note against the chord.
- Learn melodies.
- Remember that the bass is the lowest voice in the band.