



CREATIVE TAPPING

FOR ELECTRIC BASS

CHARLES BERTHOUD

COURSE BOOK

SCOTTSBASSLESSONS.COM

02

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FOR ELECTRIC BASS

CHARLES
BERTHOUD

02

Introduction

Welcome back to *Creative Tapping for Electric Bass* with Charles Berthoud. This is the second part in our series, which focuses on some of the tapping techniques pioneered by the likes of Billy Sheehan, Stu Hamm and Victor Wooten. It's a technique that requires you to use both hands independently; to tap notes directly on the fretboard to create harmonically and rhythmically more adventurous lines.

The aim of this course is to build on some of the ideas covered in Part 1, as well as provide you with additional exercises to help skyrocket your technique. In Part 1, you will have taken your first steps. Now it's time to build on that foundation and put some of these new ideas into practice.

Meet Charles Berthoud



Charles Berthoud (pronounced BEAR-too), has enjoyed a rapid ascent to bass stardom largely thanks to the success of his YouTube channel (Charles currently has more than 1,000,000 subscribers, 40,000 TikTok followers and 107,000 following him on Instagram). But it's not all about stats on social media; his virtuosic bass chops and his battles with fellow YouTuber Davie504 continue to push the role of the bass forward.

A graduate from the Berklee College of Music, Charles uses contemporary techniques to play astonishingly fast, almost flamenco-like passages on the bass. His range of playing techniques is astounding, including his mastery of two-handed tapping. As a sideman, solo artist and session player, he's opened for the likes of Daughtry, Goo Goo Dolls and Plain White T's. He's also recorded with platinum producers such as Dreamlife (Snoop Dogg), and composed music for the Warner/Chappell Production Music library, which led to his music appearing on Univision and Fusion TV.

Lesson 01

The 'Raindrops' Exercise

The aim of this first lesson is to get you warmed up with some basic technique while also incorporating some musical ideas into your practice. We're starting with a Cmaj7 shape – outlining the root, 3rd, 5th and 7th chord tones – that Charles moves around the cycle of fourths. Charles uses a variety of hammer-on and pull-off techniques to sound one or more notes, which are indicated by slurs (curved lines) above or below the notes.

Basic Technique

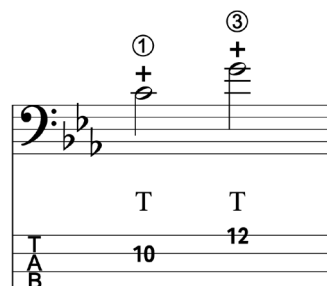
In the following exercise, the top voice on the stave (with upward pointing stems) is playing the melodic line while the lower voice (with downward pointing stems) plays the root. Both parts are combined into one stave to make things easier to read. After tapping a note, use a 'pull-off' to sound a note that is already fretted further down on the same string. Try to let notes ring into one another where possible.

It's also worth noting that a relatively low action, accurate tuning and a new set of strings would be beneficial as you begin to work through this course.

Tapping Notation

Tap the indicated fret with a plucking hand finger to sound the note (indicated by a 'T' above the tab number or a '+' above the notation).

Numbers that appear in circles above the notation indicate which finger to use to execute the tap.



LESSON 1 (continued)

Video - 01:46

Cmaj7

Fmaj7

Bbmaj7

3

5

continued →

LESSON 1 (continued)

[illegible]

Abmaj7

9

let ring

T 12 5 10 6 10 6 10 6 12 5 10 6 10 6 10 6 12 5 10 6 10 6 10 6 12

A B

4

Dbmaj7

11

let ring

T 17 10 15 11 15 11 15 11 17 10 15 11 15 11 15 11 | 17 10 15 11 15 11 15 11 17

continued $\rightarrow$

LESSON 1 (continued)

F#maj7

13

let ring

T 10 3 8 4 8 4 10 3 8 4 8 4 10

Bmaj7

15

let ring

T 15 8 13 9 13 9 13 9 15 8 13 9 13 9 15

Ema7

17

let ring

T 20 13 18 14 18 14 20 13 18 14 18 14 20

continued →

LESSON 1 (continued)

Amaj7

19

let ring

T 13 6 11 7 11 7 13 6 11 7 11 7 13

Dmaj7

21

let ring

T 18 11 16 12 16 12 18 11 16 12 16 12 18

Gmaj7 **Cmaj7**

23

let ring

T 11 4 9 5 9 5 11 4 9 5 9 5 11

Lesson 02

Dominant 7th Chords

Lesson 02 builds on the same tapping pattern as the previous lesson. Note that we're still using the fretting hand to tap the root and 5th, while the plucking hand plays the other chord tones to voice a dominant 7th chord. Remember to keep the thumb of your plucking hand anchored at the top of the fingerboard as you play all of these lines.

Playing Chords

By fretting the same major chord shape with your fretting hand and tapping a healthy mix of chord tones higher on the neck (which are then pulled off to sound the notes below), the overall quality of the dominant 7th chord should be clearly audible. As with the previous lesson, we're going to move this pattern around the cycle of fourths and play it at varying tempos.

LESSON 2 (continued)

Video - 01:01

C7

let ring

F7

let ring

Bb7

let ring

continued →

LESSON 2 (continued)

E $\flat$ 7

7

let ring

T 18 12 17 13 16 13 17 13 18 12 17 13 16 13 17 13 18

A $\flat$ 7

9

let ring

T 11 5 10 6 9 6 10 6 11 5 10 6 9 6 10 6 11

D $\flat$ 7

11

let ring

T 16 10 15 11 14 11 15 11 16 10 15 11 14 11 15 11 16

continued →

LESSON 2 (continued)

F#7

13

let ring

T 9 3 8 4 7 4 9 3 8 4 7 4 8 4 9

B7

15

let ring

T 14 8 13 9 12 9 13 9 14 8 13 9 12 9 13 9 14

E7

17

let ring

T 19 13 18 14 17 14 18 14 19 13 18 14 17 14 18 14 19

continued →

LESSON 2 (continued)

A7

19

let ring

T 12 6 11 7 10 7 11 7 12 6 11 7 10 7 11 7 12

D7

21

let ring

T 17 11 16 12 15 12 16 12 17 11 16 12 15 12 16 12 17

G7 **C7**

23

let ring

T 10 4 9 5 8 5 10 4 9 5 8 5 10 4 9 5 10

Lesson 03

16th Note Rhythms

By now you should be feeling increasingly comfortable with the mechanics involved in these techniques and patterns. If you are still struggling then work slowly back through from the beginning, breaking down each example. Lesson 03 adds a new 16th note rhythm into the mix.

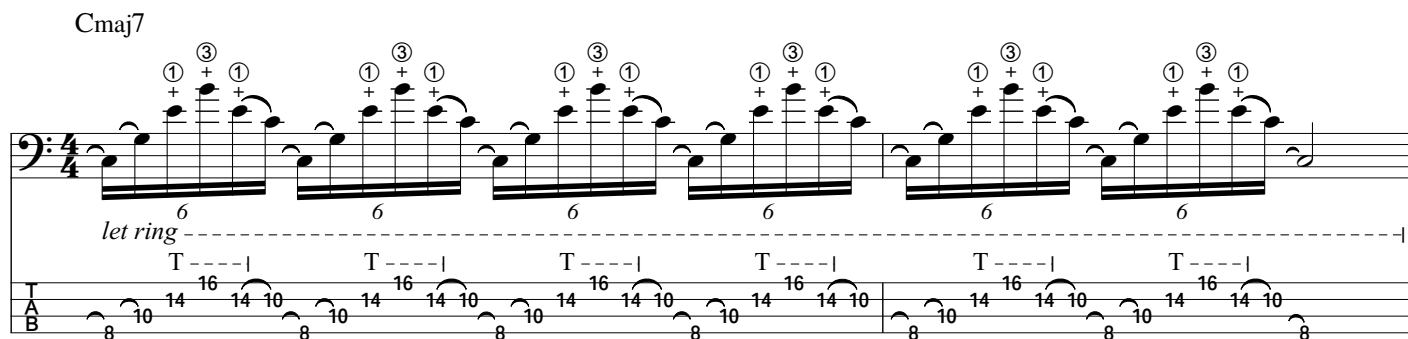
16th note triplets & sextuplets

A triplet is a group of three notes played in the same space as two notes of the same rhythmic value. A sextuplet is essentially double that. In this example, Charles revisits the Cmaj7 pattern from Lesson 01, but introduces a new level of rhythmic complexity. Consider using a metronome to ensure that all notes are the same length.

LESSON 3 (continued)

Video - 01:33

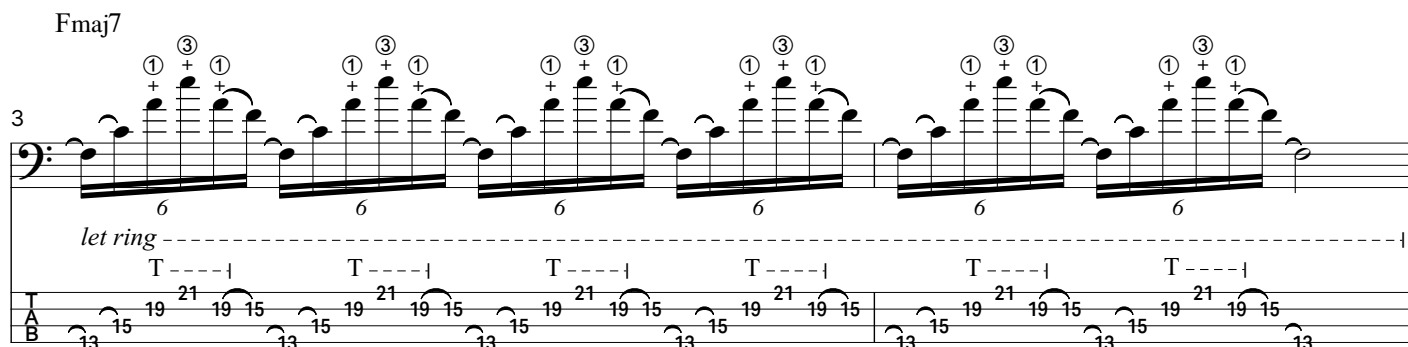
Cmaj7



let ring

T 6

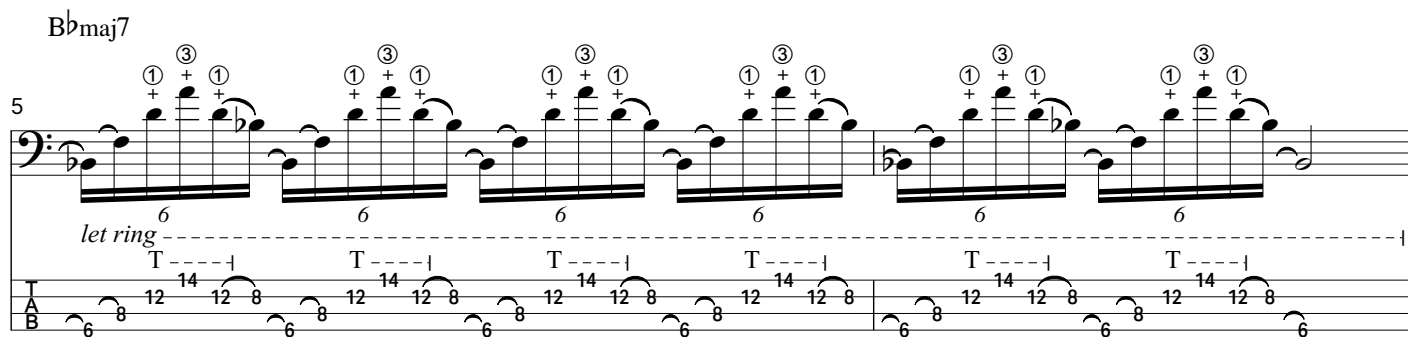
Fmaj7



let ring

T 6

Bbmaj7



let ring

T 6

continued →

LESSON 3 (continued)

E^bmaj7

7

let ring

11 13 17 19 17 13 11

A^bmaj7

9

let ring

4 6 10 12 10 6 4

D^bmaj7

11

let ring

9 11 15 17 15 11 9

continued →

LESSON 3 (continued)

F#maj7

13

let ring 6

T 8 10 8 4

Bmaj7

15

let ring 6

T 13 15 13 9

Emaj7

17

let ring 6

T 18 20 18 14

continued →

LESSON 3 (continued)

Amaj7

19

let ring 6

T 11 13 11 7

5 7

[illegible]

Gmaj7 Cmaj7

23

let ring

T

Lesson 04

Speed Building (Major)

In Lesson 04, Charles breaks down a technique that he uses to tap out diatonic arpeggios in his own compositions. It's a great way to build stamina and speed while also practicing your music theory. Be sure to focus on your technique and use any available fingers to mute strings that are not being played.

Major Triads

In the following example, we're going to tap the root, 3rd, 5th, octave and 10th (a 10th is an octave plus a major 3rd above the root) of a major triad and then descend. The root, 3rd and 10th are tapped with the fretting hand, while the 5th and octave are tapped with the plucking hand.

LESSON 4 (continued)

Video - 01:43

C

T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---|

8 7 10 10 9 10 10 7 8 7 10 10 9 10 10 7 8

F

T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---|

13 12 15 15 14 15 15 12 13 12 15 15 14 15 15 12 13

B $\flat$

T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---|

6 5 8 8 7 8 8 5 6 5 8 8 7 8 8 5 6

continued →

LESSON 4 (continued)

E $\flat$

7

Tapping exercise notation (fret numbers): 11 10 13 12 13 10 11 10 13 12 13 10 11 10 13 12 13 10 11

A $\flat$

9

Tapping exercise notation (fret numbers): 4 3 6 6 5 6 6 3 4 3 6 6 5 6 6 3 4 3 6 6 5 6 6 3 4

D $\flat$

11

Tapping exercise notation (fret numbers): 9 8 11 11 10 11 11 8 9 8 11 11 10 11 11 8 9 8 11 11 10 11 11 8 9

continued →

LESSON 4 (continued)

F#

13

Tapping exercise for F# (measures 13-14). The exercise consists of two measures, each containing six tapping patterns. Each pattern is marked with 'T' and a fret number. The fret numbers are: 2, 1, 4, 4, 3, 4, 4, 1, 2, 1, 4, 4, 3, 4, 4, 1.

B

15

Tapping exercise for B (measures 15-16). The exercise consists of two measures, each containing six tapping patterns. Each pattern is marked with 'T' and a fret number. The fret numbers are: 7, 6, 9, 9, 8, 9, 9, 6, 7, 6, 9, 9, 8, 9, 9, 6.

E

17

Tapping exercise for E (measures 17-18). The exercise consists of two measures, each containing six tapping patterns. Each pattern is marked with 'T' and a fret number. The fret numbers are: 12, 11, 14, 14, 13, 14, 14, 11, 12, 11, 14, 14, 13, 14, 14, 11.

continued →

LESSON 4 (continued)

A

19

Tapping exercise A, measures 19-20. The exercise is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The top staff shows the melodic line with fingerings 1 and 2, and plus signs indicating tapping. The bottom staff shows the fretting hand with fingerings 5, 4, 7, 7, 6, 7, 7, 4, 5, 4, 7, 7, 6, 7, 7, 4, 5. Tapping points are marked with 'T' and dashed lines above the fret numbers.

D

21

Tapping exercise D, measures 21-22. The exercise is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The top staff shows the melodic line with fingerings 1 and 2, and plus signs indicating tapping. The bottom staff shows the fretting hand with fingerings 10, 9, 12, 12, 11, 12, 12, 9, 10, 9, 12, 12, 11, 12, 12, 9, 10. Tapping points are marked with 'T' and dashed lines above the fret numbers.

G **C**

23

Tapping exercise G, measures 23-24. The exercise is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The top staff shows the melodic line with fingerings 1 and 2, and plus signs indicating tapping. The bottom staff shows the fretting hand with fingerings 3, 2, 5, 5, 4, 5, 5, 2, 3, 2, 5, 5, 4, 5, 5, 2, 3. Tapping points are marked with 'T' and dashed lines above the fret numbers.

Lesson 05

Speed Building (Minor)

The next step is to repeat the same arpeggio shape, but this time using a minor triad. It's important to investigate different ways to voice chords using this technique. Using the common chord voicing that we've covered so far, you should now be able to experiment by playing them in more than one position.

Minor Triads

A minor 3rd can be a tricky interval to tap using this technique. Try using the first and third fingers: the third finger plays the C (root) on the E-string, and the first finger taps the C (octave) on the A-string.

LESSON 5 (continued)

Video - 01:05

Fm

3

T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---| T ---|

13 11 15 15 13 15 15 11 13 11 15 15 13 15 15 11 13 11 15 15 13 15 15 11 13

Bbm

5

The musical score is for the song 'The Sound of Silence' in the key of Bbm. It features a bass line and a guitar line. The bass line is written in a single staff with a bass clef. It starts with a 5 and has fingerings 1, 2, 2, 1, 1, 2, 2, 1, 1, 2, 2, 1, 1, 2, 2, 1, 1. The guitar line is written in a single staff with a treble clef. It starts with a barre (B) and has fret numbers 6, 4, 8, 8, 6, 8, 8, 4, 6, 4, 8, 8, 6, 4, 8, 8, 4, 6. The score is divided into two measures by a vertical line. The first measure contains the first 16 notes, and the second measure contains the remaining 16 notes. The key signature is Bbm, indicated by two flat symbols (Bb and m). The time signature is not explicitly shown but is 4/4 based on the context of the song.

continued →

LESSON 5 (continued)

E $\flat$ m

7

Tapping exercise notation (fret numbers): 11 9 13 13 11 13 13 9 11 9 13 13 11 13 13 9 11 13 13 9 11

A $\flat$ m

9

Tapping exercise notation (fret numbers): 4 2 6 6 4 6 6 2 4 2 6 6 4 6 6 2 4 2 6 6 4 6 6 2 4

D $\flat$ m

11

Tapping exercise notation (fret numbers): 9 7 11 11 9 11 11 7 9 7 11 11 9 11 11 7 9 7 11 11 9 11 11 7 9

continued →

LESSON 5 (continued)

F#m

13

Tapping exercise for F#m. The exercise consists of two measures, each containing six eighth notes. The notes are: F#4 (14), A4 (12), C#5 (16), D5 (16), B4 (14), and A4 (12). The sequence is repeated twice. Fingerings 1 and 2 are indicated above the notes, with plus signs indicating tapping. The bottom staff shows the fret numbers and tapping symbols (T) above the notes.

Bm

15

Tapping exercise for Bm. The exercise consists of two measures, each containing six eighth notes. The notes are: B3 (7), G3 (5), A3 (9), B3 (9), F#3 (7), and G3 (5). The sequence is repeated twice. Fingerings 1 and 2 are indicated above the notes, with plus signs indicating tapping. The bottom staff shows the fret numbers and tapping symbols (T) above the notes.

Em

17

Tapping exercise for Em. The exercise consists of two measures, each containing six eighth notes. The notes are: E4 (12), C#4 (10), D#4 (14), E4 (14), B3 (12), and C#4 (10). The sequence is repeated twice. Fingerings 1 and 2 are indicated above the notes, with plus signs indicating tapping. The bottom staff shows the fret numbers and tapping symbols (T) above the notes.

continued →

LESSON 5 (continued)

Am

19

Tapping exercise for Am chord, measures 19-20. The exercise consists of a sequence of eighth notes on the top staff, with fingerings 1 and 2 indicated. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fret numbers for the tapping exercise: 5, 3, 7, 7, 5, 3, 7, 7, 5, 3, 7, 7, 5, 3, 7, 7, 5, 3.

Dm

21

Tapping exercise for Dm chord, measures 21-22. The exercise consists of a sequence of eighth notes on the top staff, with fingerings 1 and 2 indicated. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fret numbers for the tapping exercise: 10, 8, 12, 12, 10, 12, 12, 8, 10, 8, 12, 12, 10, 12, 12, 8, 10, 8, 12, 12, 10, 12, 12, 8, 10.

Gm Cm

23

Tapping exercise for Gm and Cm chords, measures 23-24. The exercise consists of a sequence of eighth notes on the top staff, with fingerings 1 and 2 indicated. The bottom staff shows the corresponding fret numbers for the tapping exercise: 15, 13, 17, 17, 15, 17, 17, 13, 15, 13, 17, 17, 15, 17, 17, 13, 15, 17, 17, 13, 15, 17, 17, 13, 15, 8.

Lesson 06

Tapping Through a Major Scale

In this lesson, both hands start by playing a one octave C major scale together. This will be tough for your third and fourth fingers, which will be weaker on your plucking hand. This may not be a particularly musical exercise, but it's essential in developing your coordination and strength.

Major Scale

Be patient: this is a difficult exercise. Work on one hand at a time and only combine them when you feel ready. Aim for consistency in your tone and focus on maintaining an even volume across each finger.

LESSON 6 (continued)

Video - 02:12

The image displays three musical exercises for electric bass, each in 4/4 time. Each exercise consists of a sequence of notes with fingerings (1-4) and a corresponding tapping sequence (T) indicated by a dashed line.

Exercise 1: C Major

Notes: C4 (2), C4 (4), C4 (1), C4 (2), C4 (4), C4 (1), C4 (3), C4 (4), C4 (3), C4 (1), C4 (4), C4 (2), C4 (1), C4 (4), C4 (2).

Tapping sequence: 15, 17, 14, 15, 17, 14, 16, 17, 16, 14, 17, 15, 14, 17, 15.

Exercise 2: F Major

Notes: F3 (2), F3 (4), F3 (1), F3 (2), F3 (4), F3 (1), F3 (3), F3 (4), F3 (3), F3 (1), F3 (4), F3 (2), F3 (1), F3 (4), F3 (2).

Tapping sequence: 20, 22, 19, 20, 22, 19, 21, 22, 21, 19, 22, 20, 19, 22, 20.

Exercise 3: Bb Major

Notes: Bb3 (2), Bb3 (4), Bb3 (1), Bb3 (2), Bb3 (4), Bb3 (1), Bb3 (3), Bb3 (4), Bb3 (3), Bb3 (1), Bb3 (4), Bb3 (2), Bb3 (1), Bb3 (4), Bb3 (2).

Tapping sequence: 13, 15, 12, 13, 15, 12, 14, 15, 14, 12, 15, 13, 12, 15, 13.

continued →

LESSON 6 (continued)

E $\flat$

7

T

A B

18 20 17 18 20 17 19 20 19 17 20 18 17 20 18

11 13 10 11 13 10 12 13 12 10 13 11 10 13 11

A $\flat$

9

T

A B

11 13 10 11 13 10 12 13 12 10 13 11 10 13 11

4 6 3 4 6 3 5 6 5 3 6 4 3 6 4

D $\flat$

11

T

A B

16 18 15 16 18 15 17 18 17 15 18 16 15 18 16

9 11 8 9 11 8 10 11 10 8 11 9 8 11 9

continued →

LESSON 6 (continued)

F#

13

T

B

15

T

E

17

T

continued →

LESSON 6 (continued)

A

19

T

12 14 11 12 14 11 13 14 13 11 14 12 11 14 12

D

21

T

17 19 16 17 19 16 18 19 18 16 19 17 16 19 17

G

23

T

10 12 9 10 12 9 11 12 11 9 12 10 9 12 10

C

8

Lesson 07

Tapping Through a Minor Scale

Lesson 07 is another scale-based exercise that's designed to encourage development in all of your fingers. In this lesson, both hands start with a C minor scale, which is then moved through the cycle of fourths.

Minor Scale

Each note on each string should be played with equal volume. This will be most challenging on the G and D strings and with the weaker fingers. For additional practice, learn to play these scales across two octaves and alternate your hands rather than playing together, wherever possible.

LESSON 7 (continued)

Video - 01:22

Cm

① ③ ④ ① ③ ④ ① ③ ① ④ ③ ① ④ ③ ①

T

15 17 18 15 17 18 15 17 15 18 17 15 18 17 15

Fm

① ③ ④ ① ③ ④ ① ③ ① ④ ③ ① ④ ③ ①

3

T

20 22 23 20 22 23 20 22 10 23 22 20 23 22 20

Bbm

① ③ ④ ① ③ ④ ① ③ ① ④ ③ ① ④ ③ ①

5

T

13 15 16 13 15 16 13 15 13 16 15 13 16 15 13

continued →

LESSON 7 (continued)

E^bm

7

T

A B

18 20 21 18 20 21 18 20 18 21 20 18 21 20 18

A^bm

9

T

A B

11 13 14 11 13 14 11 13 11 14 13 11 14 13 11

C[#]m

11

T

A B

16 18 19 16 18 19 16 18 16 19 18 16 19 18 16

continued →

LESSON 7 (continued)

F#m

13

T

9 11 12 9 11 12 9 11 9 12 11 9

Bm

15

T

14 16 17 14 16 17 14 16 17 16 14 17

Em

17

T

19 21 22 19 21 22 19 21 19 22 21 19

continued →

LESSON 7 (continued)

Am

19

T

12 14 15 12 14 15 12 14 12 15 14 12

Dm

21

T

17 19 20 17 19 20 17 19 17 20 19 17

Gm Cm

23

T

10 12 13 10 12 13 10 12 10 13 12 10 13 12 10 8

Lesson 08

Study Piece

This final lesson is a great example of how you can make music using some of the techniques that we've looked at in this course. Although the composition sounds quite challenging and features some intricate interplay between the two hands, it's actually relatively straightforward to perform. Good luck - it will sound great once you have it together!

Study Piece

Remember to learn each part independently before combining them - this should help you understand how each section is connected. The trick is to play it in a way that does not sound overly mechanical.

LESSON 8 (continued)

Video - 00:35

Em D C B *Play 3 times*

3 Am B

rit.

5 Cmaj7

let ring

The musical score consists of three systems of bass guitar notation. Each system includes a standard staff with notes, fingerings, and a tapping staff with 'T' marks and fret numbers. The first system covers chords Em, D, C, and B, with a 'Play 3 times' instruction. The second system covers Am and B, with a 'rit.' (ritardando) instruction. The third system covers Cmaj7, with a 'let ring' instruction. Fingering numbers 1-3 are shown above notes, and fret numbers are shown below the tapping staff.

continued →

LESSON 8 (continued)

7

Em7 Dadd4

let ring

T 19 12 17 14 17 14 19 12 17 14 17 14 17 14

A 12 17 14 17 14 17 14 17 14

B 12 17 14 17 14 17 14 17 14

9

Cmaj7

let ring

T 16 9 14 10 14 10 16 9 14 10 14 10 14 10 14 10 16

A 8 14 10 14 10 14 10 14 10 14 10 14 10 14 10 14

B 8 14 10 14 10 14 10 14 10 14 10 14 10 14 10 14

11

B7 Em7

let ring

T 14 8 13 9 12 9 13 9 14 8 13 9 12 9 13 9 14

A 7 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9

B 7 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9 12 9

rit.

let ring

T 12 14 17 19

A 12 14 17 19

B 12 14 17 19

Course Summary

Throughout the first two parts of this series we have looked at some of the popular variations of the tapping technique, all of which should offer you considerable scope for coming up with your own ideas. The important thing is to have fun with it. Once you feel confident with the technique, try to come up with as many different exercises and permutations as you can possibly think up.

Be patient: as we have discovered in this course, tapping is very different from conventional bass techniques, but once you are comfortable playing some of these patterns you'll find the subsequent lessons even easier to learn. The next part of this series contains even more challenging pieces for you to get stuck into.

