



AFRO-CUBAN

Essential Rhythms

Oscar Stagnaro

COURSE BOOK

SCOTTSBASSLESSONS.COM

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Introduction

In this course, we're going to take a look at the history of Latin and Cuban music. We're going to break down some of the dominant styles like the son montuno, the cha-cha-chá and the songo. You'll see how the bass interacts with the percussion and we'll take a closer look at some of the rhythms and techniques that play such an integral part in the Latin music scene.

By the time we're done, you'll have a deeper appreciation for what Latin music is, and more importantly, how you can incorporate some of these ideas, techniques and rhythmic concepts into your own bass lines.

You'll also have access to two exclusive performances from Oscar's trio, recorded at Bunker Studio in Brooklyn.

Oscar Stagnaro



An integral part of Paquito D’Rivera’s band for many years, Oscar Stagnaro has been a Professor at the Berklee College of Music in Boston since 1988. He’s been largely responsible for the school’s development of Latin education, instituting several courses on Latin and world bass styles. Oscar is also the co-author of the ‘Latin Bass Book’ published by Sher Music, and has accrued four Grammy Awards with a total of six nominations.

For this course Oscar will be joined by percussionist Paulo Stagnaro. Paulo has a resumé that includes performances with Sting, Paul Simon, James Taylor, Paquito D’Rivera and Angelique Kidjo. He has also been a part of Ricky Martin’s touring band since 2014, garnering his second Grammy Award in 2015 for the album *A Quien Quiera Escuchar*.

Lesson 01

The Cinquillo, Clave & Son Montuno

Getting Started

In the opening lesson, Oscar utilises a one-six-two-five chord progression in the key of C major (C-Am-Dm-G). The numbers refer to which scale degree will act as the root of each chord; typically these are written as Roman numerals (I-VI-II-V).

The image displays two musical staves, each with a bass clef, illustrating chord progressions in C major. The first staff shows a one-six-two-five progression with seven chords: C (I), Dm (II), Em (III), F (IV), G (V), Am (VI), and B° (VII). The second staff shows a four-chord progression: C (I), Am (VI), Dm (II), and G (V). Each chord is represented by a vertical line on the staff indicating the root, with a cluster of dots above it representing the chord's notes. The Roman numerals are placed below the staff, and the chord names are placed above the staff.

Oscar goes on to demonstrate different rhythmic patterns (including cinquillo, tresillo and son montuno)¹. He demonstrates their connection to the clave, the subtle changes that define each rhythm, how they can resolve and how to add to the rhythmic variation of the line.

¹: Check Appendix, pages 41-43 for more background information on the individual rhythmic patterns.

LESSON 1 (continued)

Example 01 Cinquillo (2-3 Danzón)

In Example 01, Oscar introduces the *cinquillo* rhythm, which is an important pattern that's found throughout Latin music. Oscar starts with a typical two bar count-off, but 'two' is actually on beat three. This is a half-time count for the first bar, which is then followed by a standard count.

Pay close attention to the way Oscar taps his foot in time (Oscar maintains a half-time feel throughout while Scott taps on every quarter-note).

Video - 01:12

TAB 6-String Bass

C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

T																			
A		5	3		2	5		3		7	7	5		5	3	5		5	
B																			

6 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

T																			
A		3		7	7	7	5		5	5	5	5		3	7	7	5	7	
B																			

10 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

T																			
A		3		7	5		5	3	5	5	5		3	7	7	5		5	5
B																			

14 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T																			
A		3		7	5		5	7	5	5	5		3	7	7		5	5	7
B																			

LESSON 1 (continued)

Example 02 Cinquillo (3-2 Clave)

In Example 02, Paulo plays a güiro instead of the congas, which helps to highlight the rhythm of the cinquillo. The underlying clave pattern is the 3-2 clave.

Try clapping it first and focussing on the accents. For the first bar, the claps should land on beats one, the 'and' of two, and four. Claps in the second bar fall on beats two and three.

Look out for the chromatic eighth-note triplets in bar 6, which add rhythmic variation to the line.

Video - 04:25

TAB 6-String Bass

5

C Am Dm G C Am Dm G C

TAB

3 7 7 5 5 3 4 5 5 4 3 7 7 7 5 5 3 2 5 2 5 3

LESSON 1 (continued)

Example 03 Cinquillo (2-3 clave)

In Example 03, the clave pattern is reversed to a 2-3 clave, which Oscar then embellishes with a cinquillo rhythm in the second bar. We start with four quarter notes, but the underlying accents of the clave land on beats two and three. In the second bar, we see the cinquillo rhythm with the accented tresillo at its core.

As with the previous example, try clapping the 2-3 clave pattern **first**.

Video - 05:04

TAB 6-String Bass

C Am Dm G C Am Dm G

T															
A	3	7	7	5	5	3	5	5	5	3	5	7	7	5	3
B															

C Am Dm G C Am Dm G C

T															
A	3	5	7	7	6	5	5	5	3	3	5	3	/7	5	7
B															

LESSON 1 (continued)

Example 04 Son

In Example 04, Oscar demonstrates how to rhythmically develop a bass line by using different inflections based around the son rhythm. He begins with a simple half-note (and then quarter-note) rhythm, before arriving at a habanera (tango) rhythm in bar 9. Roots and fifths are still a mainstay in Oscar's bass line with the exception of a minor 3rd (F) on the Dm chord. At this point, all of the root notes are still played on strong down beats.

In bar 17, Oscar introduces a syncopation by tying the 'and' of two into beat three. This is the *tresillo rhythm*, which Oscar jokingly refers to as the Cuban triplet. In turn, this rhythm pushes the next chord from the down beat of beat three to the 'and' of two. Oscar also introduces anticipations, which tie some of the fourth beats into the following bar, obscuring beat one. This is where beat four starts to become an accented chord change while beat one becomes less prominent.

In bar 31, Oscar reintroduces elements of the habanera rhythm by leaving out some of the ties between the 'and' of two and beat three. This is occasionally embellished by an eighth-note on the 'and' of one, followed by the habanera, which creates a melodic line consisting of three consecutive eighth-notes.

Video - 11:03

TAB 6-String Bass

	C	Am	Dm	G	C	Am	Dm	G
Staff								
T								
A	3	7	7	5	5	5	3	7
B								

	C	Am	Dm	G	C	Am	Dm	G
Staff								
T								
A	3	7	7	5	5	5	3	7
B								

continued →

LESSON 1 (Ex. 04 continued)

9 C Am Dm G C Am Dm G

Measures 9-12 of the bass line. Measure 9: C4 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). Measure 10: D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Measure 11: C4 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). Measure 12: D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter).

T	3				5				7				7			
A					5				3				5			
B					5				5				5			

13 C Am Dm G C Am Dm G

Measures 13-16 of the bass line. Measure 13: C4 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). Measure 14: D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Measure 15: C4 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). Measure 16: D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter).

T	3				5				7				7			
A					5				7				5			
B					5				5				5			

17 C Am Dm G C Am Dm G

Measures 17-20 of the bass line. Measure 17: C4 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). Measure 18: D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Measure 19: C4 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). Measure 20: D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter).

T	3				5				7				7			
A					5				5				5			
B					5				5				5			

21 C Am Dm G C Am Dm G

Measures 21-24 of the bass line. Measure 21: C4 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). Measure 22: D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Measure 23: C4 (quarter), G3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). Measure 24: D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter).

T	3				7				7				7			
A					5				5				5			
B					5				5				5			

continued →

LESSON 1 (Ex. 04 continued)

25 C Am Dm G C Am Dm G C

T
A
B

3	7	5	5	3	7	7	5	5	3
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

29 Am Dm G C Am Dm G

T
A
B

(3)	7	7	5	5	5	3	5	7	5	5	5
-----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

33 C Am Dm G C Am Dm G

T
A
B

3	7	5	5	7	5	3	7	5	5	7	5	5
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

37 C Am Dm G C Am Dm G C

T
A
B

3	5	7	5	X	5	3	7	7	5	5	5	3	5	3
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

continued →

LESSON 1 (Ex. 04 continued)

41

Am Dm G C

T
A
B

(3) 7 5 5 5 3 3

Accents

The correct place for the accent in the tresillo, aka the 'cuban triplet', is on the second note (the 'and' of two).

Video - 12:30

TAB 6-String Bass

[illegible]

When there is an anticipation on beat four, then the accent is placed there.

The image shows a musical score for the song "The Sound of Silence" by Simon & Garfunkel. The top staff is a bass line in 4/4 time, featuring a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The chords indicated above the staff are C, Am, Dm, and G. The Dm chord is circled in red, and the note D (the root of the chord) is marked with an accent (>). The bottom staff is a guitar tab for the bass line, showing the fret numbers 3, 5, 5, 5, and 5.

LESSON 1 (continued)

Example 05 Son Montuno

In this next example, Oscar and Paulo perform a son montuno. The son montuno was born in Santiago de Cuba and combines a mixture of African rhythms with popular styles of music from Spain.

It has a similar rhythm to the son, but can accommodate a wider range of ideas. It's the ideal context for your new-found rhythm skills.

Video - 15:56

TAB 6-String Bass

C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

TAB 6-String Bass

5 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

TAB 6-String Bass

9 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

TAB 6-String Bass

continued →

LESSON 1 (Ex. 05 continued)

13 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T
A
B 3 7 7 5 5 5 5 5 3 7 7 7 5 3 5 3

17 Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T
A
B (3) 7 7 5 7 5 3 3 7 7 5 3 5 2 5 3

21 Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T
A
B 3 7 7 5 3 5 3 5 6 7 5 5 3 5 3

25 Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T
A
B 6 7 5 7 7 5 5 3 7 7 5 5 3 5 5 5 3

29 Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T
A
B 6 7 5 7 5 3 3 7 7 5 3 5 2 2 3

Lesson 02

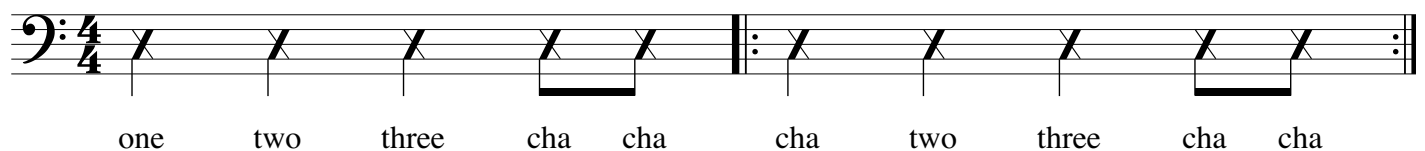
Cha-cha-chá

The *cha-cha-chá* is a style of Cuban dance music that initially developed from the *danzón* in the early 1950s, replacing the mambo as the popular dance of the day.

It is characterized by an accented 'four-and' rhythm that's often played by the conga drum placing the 'cha-cha-chá' on beat four (where the dance steps begin) and over the bar line into beat one.

In Lesson 02, Oscar explains the fundamental rhythmic pattern and demonstrates how you can add variations to a typical cha-cha-chá bass line.

Basic cha-cha-chá rhythm



LESSON 2 (continued)

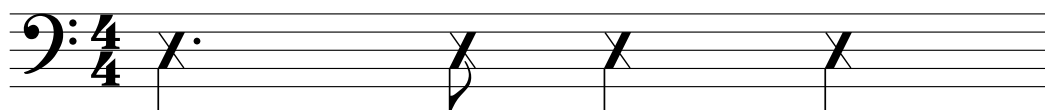
Example 01 Cha-cha-chá

In Example 01, Oscar demonstrates how to introduce and develop a typical cha-cha-chá bass pattern.

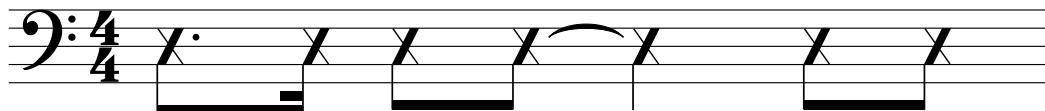
You'll hear examples of habanera, tresillo and son afro rhythms played throughout, together with syncopations and chromatic passing notes. Oscar settles on a cha-cha-chá bass line in bar 9, which closes with the 'and' of four.

Below are the three rhythmic patterns also found in Example 01.

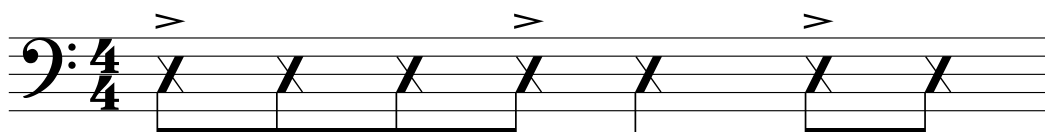
Habanera



Son Afro



Cha-cha-chá with accented tresillo.



continued →

LESSON 2 (Ex. 01 continued)

Video - 02:09

TAB 6-String Bass

C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

5 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

9 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

13 C Am Dm G7 C Dm G7

continued →

LESSON 2 (Ex. 01 continued)

17 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T A B

5 6 7 5 5 7 5 5 5 5 7 7 5 5 3 3

21 Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

T A B

(3) 5 5 7 5 5 5 7 7 5 5 5 3 2 7 5 3 5 5

25 C Am Dm G7 C

T A B

3 7 7 5 3 4 4 5 3 3 3

LESSON 2 (continued)

Example 02 Blues Changes

The basic pattern of the cha-cha-chá groove has some essential elements that can also be applied to broader musical forms.

In this example, Oscar transfers some of the key rhythmic concepts of the cha-cha-chá to a 12-bar blues in the key of B flat.

Video - 05:49

TAB 6-String Bass

The musical notation is in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major (two flats). The bass line consists of 12 measures. The chords are Bb7 (measures 1-4), Eb7 (measures 5-8), and F7 (measures 9-12). The 6-string bass tab is provided below the notation, showing fingerings and fret numbers.

Measure 1: Bb7. Bass line: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), Bb2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Tab: 6 (fret 6, 4th string), 7 (fret 7, 4th string), 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string).

Measure 2: Bb7. Bass line: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), Bb2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Tab: 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string), 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 6 (fret 6, 4th string).

Measure 3: Bb7. Bass line: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), Bb2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Tab: 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string), 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 6 (fret 6, 4th string).

Measure 4: Bb7. Bass line: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), Bb2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Tab: 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string), 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 6 (fret 6, 4th string).

Measure 5: Eb7. Bass line: F2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), Ab2 (quarter), F2 (quarter). Tab: 5 (fret 5, 3rd string), 6 (fret 6, 3rd string), 8 (fret 8, 3rd string), 6 (fret 6, 3rd string).

Measure 6: Eb7. Bass line: F2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), Ab2 (quarter), F2 (quarter). Tab: 8 (fret 8, 3rd string), 10 (fret 10, 3rd string), 8 (fret 8, 3rd string), 6 (fret 6, 3rd string).

Measure 7: Eb7. Bass line: F2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), Ab2 (quarter), F2 (quarter). Tab: 8 (fret 8, 3rd string), 10 (fret 10, 3rd string), 8 (fret 8, 3rd string), 6 (fret 6, 3rd string).

Measure 8: Eb7. Bass line: F2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), Ab2 (quarter), F2 (quarter). Tab: 8 (fret 8, 3rd string), 10 (fret 10, 3rd string), 8 (fret 8, 3rd string), 6 (fret 6, 3rd string).

Measure 9: F7. Bass line: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), Bb2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Tab: 10 (fret 10, 4th string), 9 (fret 9, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string), 9 (fret 9, 4th string).

Measure 10: Bb7. Bass line: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), Bb2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Tab: 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string), 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string).

Measure 11: Bb7. Bass line: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), Bb2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Tab: 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string), 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string).

Measure 12: Bb7. Bass line: G2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), Bb2 (quarter), A2 (quarter). Tab: 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string), 8 (fret 8, 4th string), 10 (fret 10, 4th string).

LESSON 2 (continued)

Example 03 Cha-cha-chá in C Major

In Example 3, Oscar demonstrates another variation of a cha-cha-chá bass line in the key of C Major. Note the chromatic lines that connect the root notes, and the eventual shift to a minor sound.

Video - 06:31

TAB 6-String Bass

The musical notation and guitar tabs for the cha-cha-chá bass line in C Major are as follows:

First System (Measures 1-4):

Staff: Bass clef, 4/4 time. Notes: C2 (half), D2 (quarter), E2 (quarter), F2 (quarter), G2 (half), A2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), C3 (half).

Tab: T (T), A (A), B (B). Fret numbers: 3, 3, 4, 5, 5, 3, 4, 5, 5, 4, 3, 5, 6, 7, 6, 5, 7, 6, 5, 5.

Second System (Measures 5-8):

Staff: Bass clef, 4/4 time. Notes: C3 (half), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F3 (quarter), G3 (half), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), C4 (half).

Tab: T (T), A (A), B (B). Fret numbers: (5), 5, 3, 5, 3, 5, 3, 5, 5, 6, 5, 6, 5, 5, 5.

Third System (Measures 9-12):

Staff: Bass clef, 4/4 time. Notes: C4 (half), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), G4 (half), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (half).

Tab: T (T), A (A), B (B). Fret numbers: 3, 3, 5, 6, 5, 3, 6, 5, 4, 5, 5, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10, 3.

continued →

LESSON 2 (Ex. 03 continued)

13

17

Example 04 Cha-cha-chá in F Major

In the final example of Lesson 02, Oscar plays a cha-cha-chá pattern in the key of F major. The bass plays a two-bar ostinato anchored around the same cha-cha-chá beat.

Keep a steady constant rhythm and retain the accented tumbao bass line.

Video - 07:26

TAB 6-String Bass

F Dm Gm C7 F Dm Gm C7

5 F Dm Gm C7 F Dm Gm C7

continued →

LESSON 2 (Ex. 04 continued)

9 F Dm Gm C7 F Dm Gm C7

T 3 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 | 3 5 5 5 | 5 5 5 5 3 3

A 3 3 | 3 3 | 3 3 | 3 3

B 3 3 | 3 3 | 3 3 | 3 3

13 F Dm Gm C7 F Dm Gm C7

T 3 7 7 5 5 | 3 5 2 5 5 | 3 2 3 5 5 5 5 | 3 5 5 5

A 3 7 7 5 5 | 3 5 2 5 5 | 3 2 3 5 5 5 5 | 3 5 5 5

B 3 7 7 5 5 | 3 5 2 5 5 | 3 2 3 5 5 5 5 | 3 5 5 5

17 F Dm Gm C7 F Dm Gm C7

T 3 2 5 5 5 | 3 5 3 3 | 2 5 5 5 | 3 5 5 5

A 3 2 5 5 5 | 3 5 3 3 | 2 5 5 5 | 3 5 5 5

B 3 2 5 5 5 | 3 5 3 3 | 2 5 5 5 | 3 5 5 5

21 F Dm Gm C7 F Dm C7 F

T 3 2 5 5 5 | 5 3 5 5 5 | 3 2 5 3 3 3 | 3 2 3 4 5 1 2 | 3 1 1 1

A 3 2 5 5 5 | 5 3 5 5 5 | 3 2 5 3 3 3 | 3 2 3 4 5 1 2 | 3 1 1 1

B 3 2 5 5 5 | 5 3 5 5 5 | 3 2 5 3 3 3 | 3 2 3 4 5 1 2 | 3 1 1 1

Lesson 03

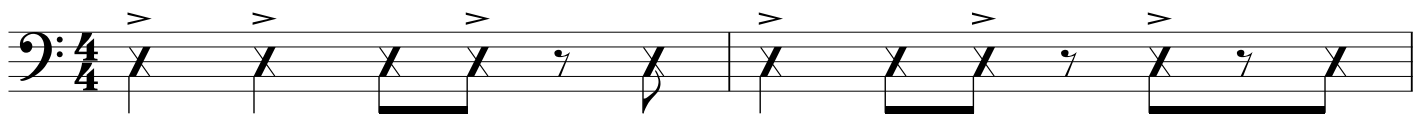
The Songo

The story of the rumba-influenced songo begins with Juan Formell, bass player and leader of the Cuban group *Los Van Van*. Blas Egües was the first drummer in Los Van Van, but it was the band's second drummer, José Luis Quintana (also known as 'Changuito') who made a major breakthrough by developing the songo.

The songo pattern is essentially a funkified rumba. It's a two-bar groove (if counted in 2) that lines up with the traditional 2/3 clave. Songo also simplifies another essential Latin rhythm called the *cáscara*, which is the rhythmic glue for many Afro-Cuban grooves.

In this lesson, Oscar breaks down some typical songo bass lines, so you can get this essential rhythm under your fingers.

Accented cáscara pattern



LESSON 3 (continued)

Example 01 Cáscara

In example 01, Oscar plays a tresillo rhythm in the bass while also highlighting the cáscara rhythm. Like the clave, the cáscara is a constant rhythmic pattern that was typically played on the side of the timbales.

Video - 00:50

TAB 6-String Bass

5

Da, da, da, da, ka, da, ta, da, da, ka, da, da, da, da, ka, da, ta, da, da, ka,

Here's how the cáscara lines up with the 2/3 clave.

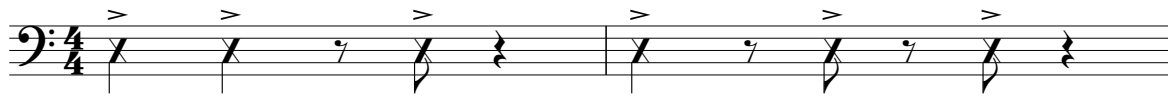
cáscara

2-3 clave

continued →

LESSON 3 (Ex. 01 continued)

Songo cáscara



Example 02 Cáscara and 2-3 Clave

In example 02, Oscar demonstrates a 2/3 clave pattern before switching back to the *cáscara*, illustrating the close connection between the two.

Spend some time getting this together before trying the upcoming songo pattern.

Video - 02:05

TAB 6-String Bass

Da, da, da, da, da. Da, da, da, da, da.

TAB 3 5 5 3 3 (3) 5 5 3 3

[illegible]

LESSON 3 (continued)

Example 03 Songo

Our next pattern is the songo. Learning a few variations of songo will really heighten your ability to subdivide and enhance your overall time feel.

You'll have more freedom to play around the clave and add more syncopation to your bass playing.

Video - 03:32

TAB 6-String Bass

C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7

TAB 6-String Bass

5 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

TAB 6-String Bass

9 C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

TAB 6-String Bass

continued →

LESSON 3 (Ex. 03 continued)

13

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

Tablature for measures 13-16:

Measure	13	14	15	16
T	7	7	5	5
A				
B				

17

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

Tablature for measures 17-20:

Measure	17	18	19	20
T	3	7	7	5
A				
B				

21

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

Tablature for measures 21-24:

Measure	21	22	23	24
T	7	7	5	5
A				
B				

25

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

Tablature for measures 25-28:

Measure	25	26	27	28
T	(3)	7	7	5
A				
B				

continued →

LESSON 3 (Ex. 03 continued)

29

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T	(3)	7	5	5	0	1	2	3	3	3	2	3	5	5	5	5	5
A																	
B																	

33

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T	7	7	5	5	5	5	5	5	7	7	5	5	7	6	5	0	3	3
A																		
B																		

37

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T	3	4	5	5	3	5	5	3	3	6	9	7	5	5	3	5	3	3
A																		
B																		

41

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

T	5	7	7	5	5	3	5	5	3	3	7	7	5	5	3	3	2	3	5	5	3	3
A																						
B																						

continued →

LESSON 3 (Ex. 03 continued)

45

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

TAB

7	7	5	5	5	5	2	2	3	7	7	5	5	5	3	5	3	3
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

49

Am Dm G7 C

TAB

(3)	7	7	5	5	5	3	3	3	3
-----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Example 04 Son changüi

Changüí is the predecessor of son cubano and salsa, a style of music specifically from the region of Guantanamo, Cuba.

In this example, Oscar demonstrates the necessary building blocks that you'll need to get started with a steady rhythmic changüi bass line.

Video - 05:33

TAB 6-String Bass

C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

TAB

3	3	7	5	5	5	3	3	7	5	5	5	5	3	3
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

continued →

LESSON 3 (Ex. 04 continued)

5 Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

Measure 5: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth rest, eighth note G, quarter note F, quarter note E, quarter note D. Chords: Am, Dm.
Measure 6: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: G7, C.
Measure 7: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: Am, Dm.
Measure 8: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: G7, C.

T															
A															
B		7		5	5		3		3	3		7		7	5 5

9 Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

Measure 9: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: Am, Dm.
Measure 10: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: G7, C.
Measure 11: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: Am, Dm.
Measure 12: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: G7, C.

T															
A															
B		5		5	5	5	5		5		3	3		7	5 5

13 Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

Measure 13: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: Am, Dm.
Measure 14: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: G7, C.
Measure 15: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: Am, Dm.
Measure 16: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: G7, C.

T															
A															
B		7		5		5	5		5		5	3	3		7

17 Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

Measure 17: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: Am, Dm.
Measure 18: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: G7, C.
Measure 19: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: Am, Dm.
Measure 20: Bass line with a quarter rest, eighth note G, eighth note F, quarter note E, quarter note D, quarter note C. Chords: G7, C.

T															
A															
B		7		7		5	5		3		5		3		3

continued →

LESSON 3 (Ex. 04 continued)

21

Am Dm G C Am Dm G7 C

25

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

CHANGÜI CLAVE IN 6/8

At 06:22, Paulo illustrates a slightly different feel that he describes as a changüi clave in 6/8. The accents, first shown as hand claps, fall on beats 3 and 5.

Video - 06:22

TAB 6-String Bass

C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

LESSON 3 (continued)

Example 05 Songo

Oscar and Paulo close with another songo-inspired performance in Example 05. Things get a little more advanced, so be sure you are comfortable with the rhythmic patterns taught up to this point.

Video - 07:07

TAB 6-String Bass

Example 05 Songo Tab 6-String Bass

Chords: C, Am, Dm, G7, C, Am, Dm, G7, C, Am, Dm, G7, C, Am, Dm, G7, C

5

9

The musical notation for Example 05 Songo is presented in three systems, each with a bass staff and a guitar staff. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The chords are C, Am, Dm, G7, and C. The bass lines are written in a 6-string bass format, and the guitar tabs are written in a 6-string guitar format. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and ties. The measure numbers 5 and 9 are indicated at the start of the second and third systems, respectively.

continued →

LESSON 3 (Ex. 05 continued)

13

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

TAB

8 9	5	3 5	5 5 3 3	5 3 5 3 5 5	3 2 2 5 3 3
-----	---	-----	---------	-------------	-------------

17

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

TAB

7 7	5 5	5 5 3 3	7 5 7 5	3 4 5	5 2 3
-----	-----	---------	---------	-------	-------

21

Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

TAB

5 6 7 7	5 5	7 7 5	5 3 3	5 7 7 5 5	3 5 5 3 3
---------	-----	-------	-------	-----------	-----------

25

C Am Dm G7 C Am Dm G7 C

TAB

7 7 7 7 7	5 5 3 3 3 3	7 7 7 5 3	5 3 5 3 3 3
-----------	-------------	-----------	-------------

29

Am Dm G7 C Am G7 C

TAB

6 7 7 7 5 7	5 5 3 5 3 3	7 7 7 5 5	5 2 3 1 1
-------------	-------------	-----------	-----------

Lesson 04

Capullito De Aleli and Percussive Bass Parts

Capullito De Aleli

Oscar and Paulo begin Lesson 04 with a performance of *Capullito De Aleli* by Puerto Rican composer Rafael Hernández.

In this lesson, we'll get to grips with Oscar's interpretation of the tune. We'll start with the melody and then look at some of the techniques he uses to add more percussive elements to his bass part.

LESSON 4 (continued)

Example 01 The Melody

In example 01, Oscar outlines the melody of Capullito De Aleli. As bass players, learning the melody to any tune can be a fast track way to really expanding your creativity.

Here's how Oscar interprets the vocal melody on bass.

Video - 06:21

TAB 6-String Bass

The image displays a musical score for a 6-string bass, consisting of four systems of notation. Each system includes a standard musical staff with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 4/4 time signature, and a corresponding bass tablature below it. The tablature uses numbers 1-12 to represent frets on the strings. The melody is written in a single voice on the bass staff, with various rhythmic values and articulations like slurs and accents. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fourth system.

System 1: Musical staff shows a melody starting on B-flat. Tablature: 8 5 6 | 7 8 5 8 7 | 8 5 7 | 8 8 10 10 8 | 8 5 6

System 2: Musical staff continues the melody. Tablature: 7 8 5 8 7 | 10 11 12 12 12 | 10 10 7 7 10 | 9 10 11

System 3: Musical staff continues the melody. Tablature: 12 12 12 12 12 | 13 12 10 | 8 10 7 8 10 | 8 10 8

System 4: Musical staff concludes the melody. Tablature: 7 10 5 7 | 8 7 5 | 8 5 6 7 8 8 8 | 8

LESSON 4 (continued)

Example 02 Adding Texture

In example 2, Oscar adds embellishing bass notes as well as a final ear-catching B^b6/9 chord made up of a fretted B-flat and sustained harmonics on the 12-fret of the upper two strings.

Video - 06:47

TAB 6-String Bass

Measures 1-4 of the bass line. The notation shows a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats. The TAB for measures 1-4 is as follows:

T	8	5	6	7	8	5	8	7	8	10	7	8	8	10	10	8	8	5	6
A																			
B																			

Measures 5-8 of the bass line. The notation shows a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats. The TAB for measures 5-8 is as follows:

T	7	8	7	5	8	7	/ 12	12	12	12	10	10	6	7	10	10	9	10	11
A																			
B																			

Measures 9-12 of the bass line. The notation shows a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats. The TAB for measures 9-12 is as follows:

T	12	12	12	12	12	10	13	12	10	8	10	7	8	10	8	10	8
A																	
B	10																

Measures 13-16 of the bass line. The notation shows a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats. The TAB for measures 13-16 is as follows:

T	7	10	7	7	5	8	5	0	7	8	0	6	6	8	5	6	7	8	13	12	12
A																					
B																					

Harm. --|
let ring -----|

LESSON 4 (continued)

Example 03 Putting it together

In example 03, Oscar uses a variety of techniques to create more percussive sounds. These techniques range from tapping the strings with the first or second finger of his right hand to a more conventional 'slap and pop' technique.

In this instance, the letter 'T' represents a percussive hit with the side of the thumb while the letter 'P' is a plucked 'pop.' Oscar's left-hand bass notes keep a constant eighth-note flow throughout.

Video - 10:56

TAB 6-String Bass

8va

*T

TAB

6 8 10 10 8 10 8 8 6

*T = Tap right-hand finger at approx. the 23rd fret.

8va

loco

**T P T P T P T

TAB

(6) 8 10 10 8 10 8 8 6

**T = Thumb, P = Pop

continued →

LESSON 4 (Ex. 03 continued)

9

P T----- P T----- P T P T P----- T P T----- P----- T P T-----

T
A
B (6) 8 10 10 8 10 8 8 6

***i = 1st finger, m = 2nd finger.

13

i m P----- T P T----- i m P----- T P T----- P----- T T T P----- P

T
A
B (6) 10 10 8 10 10 8 8 6 6

T T T T

17

T i m P----- P T P

T
A
B 10 10 10 10 9 8 6 6

T T----- P T T

LESSON 4 (continued)

Chord Voicings

In the following example, Oscar demonstrates his two- and three-note chordal voicings.

Video - 07:51

TAB 6-String Bass

Chord voicings: F7, B♭maj7, Dm7, G7, C7, Cm7

5

Chord voicings: F7, B♭maj7, B°7, Cm7

9

Chord voicings: F7, B♭maj7, Dm7, G7, C°7, Cm7

Summary

In this course, we've focussed on some of the essential rhythmic concepts and techniques that define key Latin bass styles. What we have tried to do in each lesson is capture the essence of what each style is about, but it's merely a beginning from which to start. Many of these concepts are common in several types of Latin music, albeit with minor changes, so learn to identify the main features and practice improvising within each of them.

Many Afro-Cuban styles also have differing bass traditions. Some anticipate every first beat, some use triplet lines across an even quaver rhythm, while others sit squarely on beats one, three and four. It is traditional for the bass to play harmonically simple lines, consisting largely of roots and fifths that anchor the rhythm section and allow the soloists greater freedom with the melody.

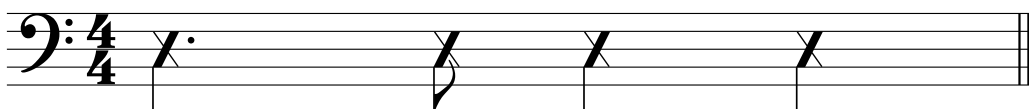
It's important to remember that whatever style you are playing, the purpose of this music is to make people dance. Try to prioritise rhythmic content and feel above overly complex lines. Once you have absorbed a series of patterns, alternative variations will start to come to mind. This is where it starts to get interesting, and the more comfortable you feel with these essential rhythmical ideas, the more solid your Latin music chops will become.

Appendix

Terminology

Contradanza Contradanza is the early form of Afro-Cuban music from which many of the dances and musical styles evolved. It is derived from the English country dance, which influenced French and Spanish music and ultimately found its way to Cuba where it mixed with African rhythms and became one of Cuba's most important musical genres.

Habanera (Tango) The tango evolved from the contradanza and is a song form based on the the dramatic dance of the same name. Characterized by a rhythmic cell pattern of beat one, the 'and' of two, and beats three and four; 1 - '& of 2' - 3 - 4. The tango rhythmic cell later evolved into the tresillo. This musical style developed in the mid to late-1800s and into the early-1900s, where it became immensely popular and spread throughout the world. Later to identify the rhythm as specifically Cuban the term habanera was used.



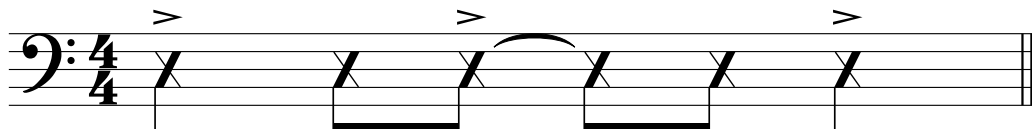
Tresillo One of the main featured rhythms found in Afro-Cuban music is the tresillo. Tresillo refers to a pattern of three that starts on the down beat of one, followed by the 'and' of two and finally the down beat of four. The tresillo is a variation of the habanera in simply tying the accented 'and' of two over into beat three. Oscar refers to the tresillo as the "cuban triplet".



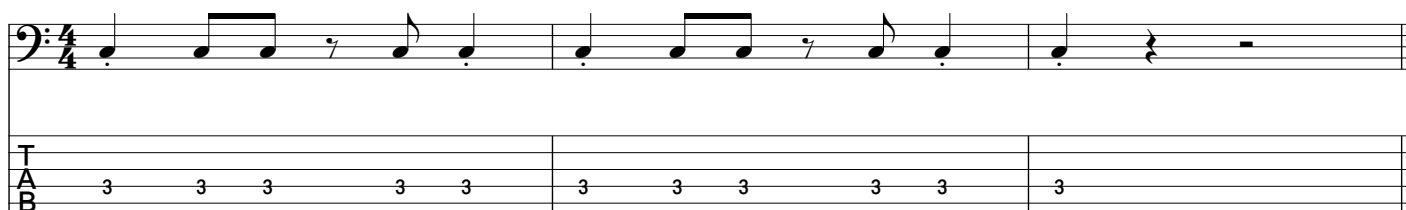
continued →

Cinquillo

In the early nineteenth century, the Haitians brought a variation of the contradanza with them called the cocoyé. The cocoyé featured a five beat rhythm that became known in Cuba as the cinquillo, which is an embellished tresillo (shown as accents).

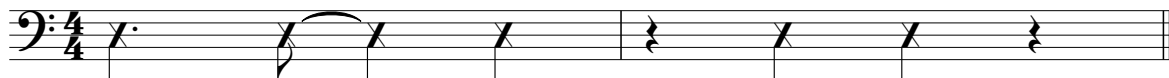


Oscar demonstrates the cinquillo rhythm on the bass, keeping the notes short.

**The Clave**

The clave, or son clave, is a rhythmic pattern consisting of two measures, one of which contains the tresillo and the other is made up of two accents on the downbeat of beats two and three. If the tresillo is in the first measure it is referred to as a 3/2 clave. If the tresillo is in the second measure it is a 2/3 clave.

The rhythmic pattern originates from the instrument known as claves, which evolved from wooden pegs used to hold ships together. The shipyards of Havana were littered with these wooden pegs known as clavijas, and it didn't take long before it was discovered that striking two of them together produced a percussive sound. These became the claves, which were perfect for keeping a constant pattern throughout the music, which became known as the clave.

3-2 Clave**2-3 Clave**

continued →

Son	The word 'son' is derived from sonar, which means to sound or to make sound. In Cuban music it is a synthesis of Bantu (African) rhythms and call and response singing melded with Spanish folk language and guitars. The beginnings of the Cuban son most likely dates to the mid to late nineteenth century.
Son Montuno	Arsenio Rodriguez was a blind band leader who developed the son montuno, which was a son sub-genre that featured a trumpet-driven rhythm group, percussive piano solos, heavy cowbell and conga drums.
Montuno	Montuno, meaning 'from the mountain', is a repeated syncopated ostinato accompaniment consisting of arpeggios and chords that often features chromatic passing notes in the lower voice. The addition of the conga drum would heavily accent beats two and four causing the bass to become anticipated on beat four to bring out the rhythmic drama for the dancers.

Key Figures in Latin Music covered in this book

Israel 'Cachao' Lopez	Born in Havana in 1918, Israel 'Cachao' Lopez was a major force in Cuban music. His percussive rhythms and fluid melodies would inspire a generation of American jazz, soul and funk. Lauded as the inventor of the mambo rhythm and a salsa pioneer, his 1938 composition <i>Buena Vista Social Club</i> would provide the name for the multi-million selling veteran Cuban Band. The 1994 documentary <i>Cachao... Como Su Ritmo No Hay Dos</i> (Cachao... Like His Rhythm There Is No Other) allowed Cachao to tell his life story.
Juan Formell	The <i>Orquesta Revé</i> was a group led by Elio Revé who hired Cuban bassist Juan Formell in 1968 as his bassist and musical director. During this period, Formell altered the traditional changüi, which became a precursor to songo. In 1969, Formell formed the group <i>Los Van Van</i> , and along with percussionist Changuito Quintana created the musical post-revolutionary genre known as songo.
Rafael Hernández	Rafael Hernández was born in 1892 and began his musical studies at the age of 12. He went on to perform with the Cocolia Orquesta followed by the Municipal Band of San Juan under the leadership of Manuel Tizol Marquez. During World War I, he was recruited into the military band of the 369th Infantry Regiment by James Reese Europe, a seminal bandleader and ragtime musician of the time. After the war, Hernández moved to New York City where he began composing the catalog of songs that he would become famous for.

Conga Patterns

Basic Pattern

Lesson 04 - 12:45

The left-hand is the lower note while the right-hand is the higher note. The letter 'H' in the notation means to play with the heel of the hand. The letter 'F' is to play with the fingers. The letter 'S' means to slap, and the letter 'O' means to hit with the open hand and let ring.

R.H. H F S F H F O O H F S F H F O O

L.H.

2/3 Clave

Lesson 04 - 13:01

This final example shows the relationship between the basic conga pattern and the 2/3 clave.

To play the 3/2 clave just switch the conga pattern.

R.H. H F S F H F O O H F S F H F O

L.H.

2-3 clave

