TBZ Monthly

A new monthly content service from Brad Edwards
Volume 2, No. 9. ~ September 2023

Welcome!
Here is the next issue. Thank you to everyone who has subscribed so far. I'm always looking for ways to connect with trombonists and I love having the opportunity to share with people in a way I hope will provide benefit. If you are getting this pdf without having subscribed and would like to subscribe to future issues, simply follow this link.

Chances are this little digital publication will evolve over time. If there's something you'd like to see included, please reach out to me: brad.edwards6251@gmail.com. (IG: @brad_edwards_trombone)

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4. A Free Book Sample
5. A Playing Tip
6. Thoughts on Teaching and Performing
7. A Random Thought
8. Extra: Sing Buzz Play - All Keys

Enjoy!

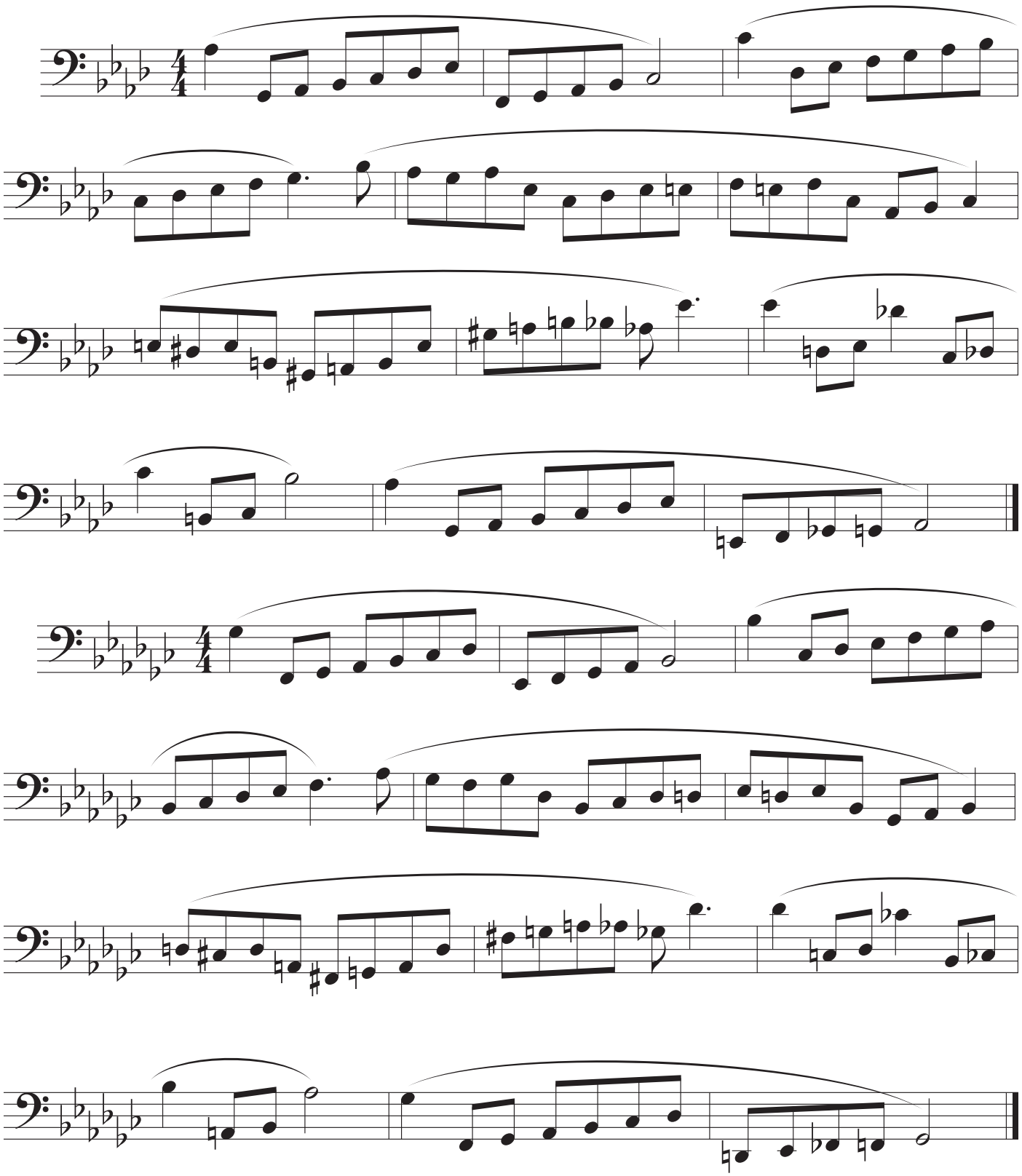
Brad Edwards
Trombone Professor, Arizona State University
School of Music Dance and Theater
Websites:
Trombone Zone
Hornbone Press
Free Audition Solos
ASU Bones

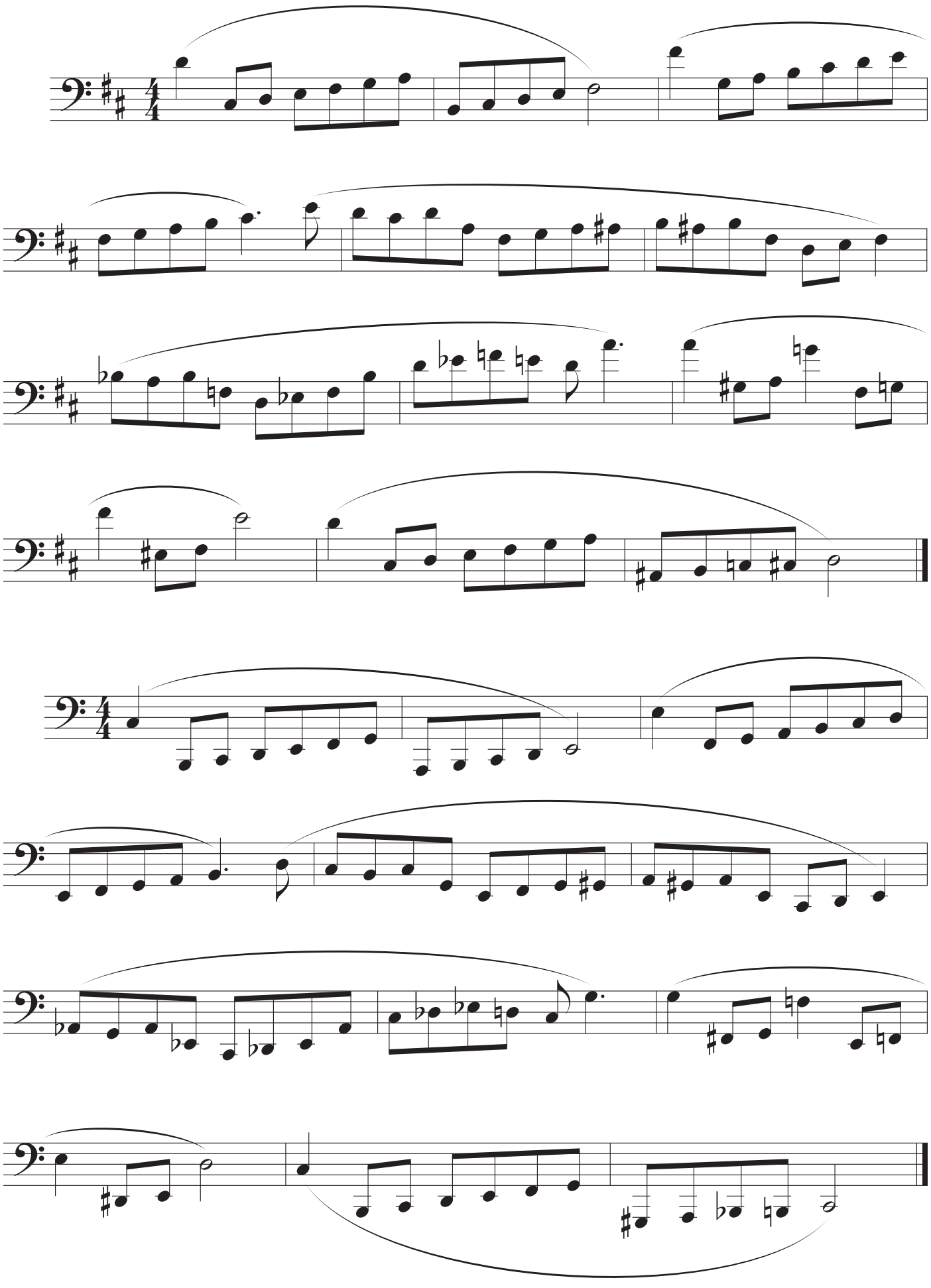
TBZ MONTHLY

September 2023

A Pretty Good Melody

I wanted to play around with some 'dissonant' intervals and throw in one odd key shift.
I'll let you decide tempo and dynamics.



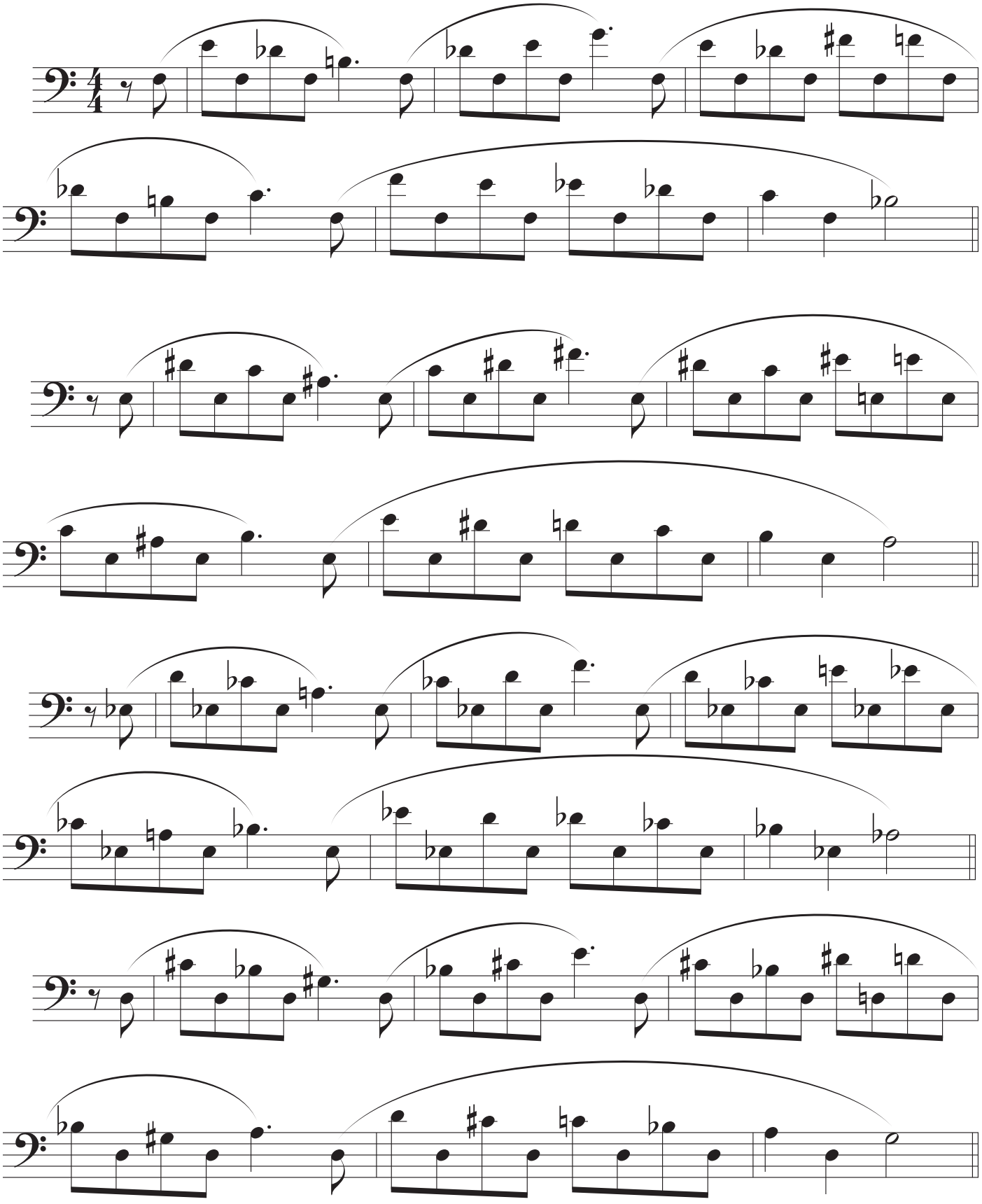


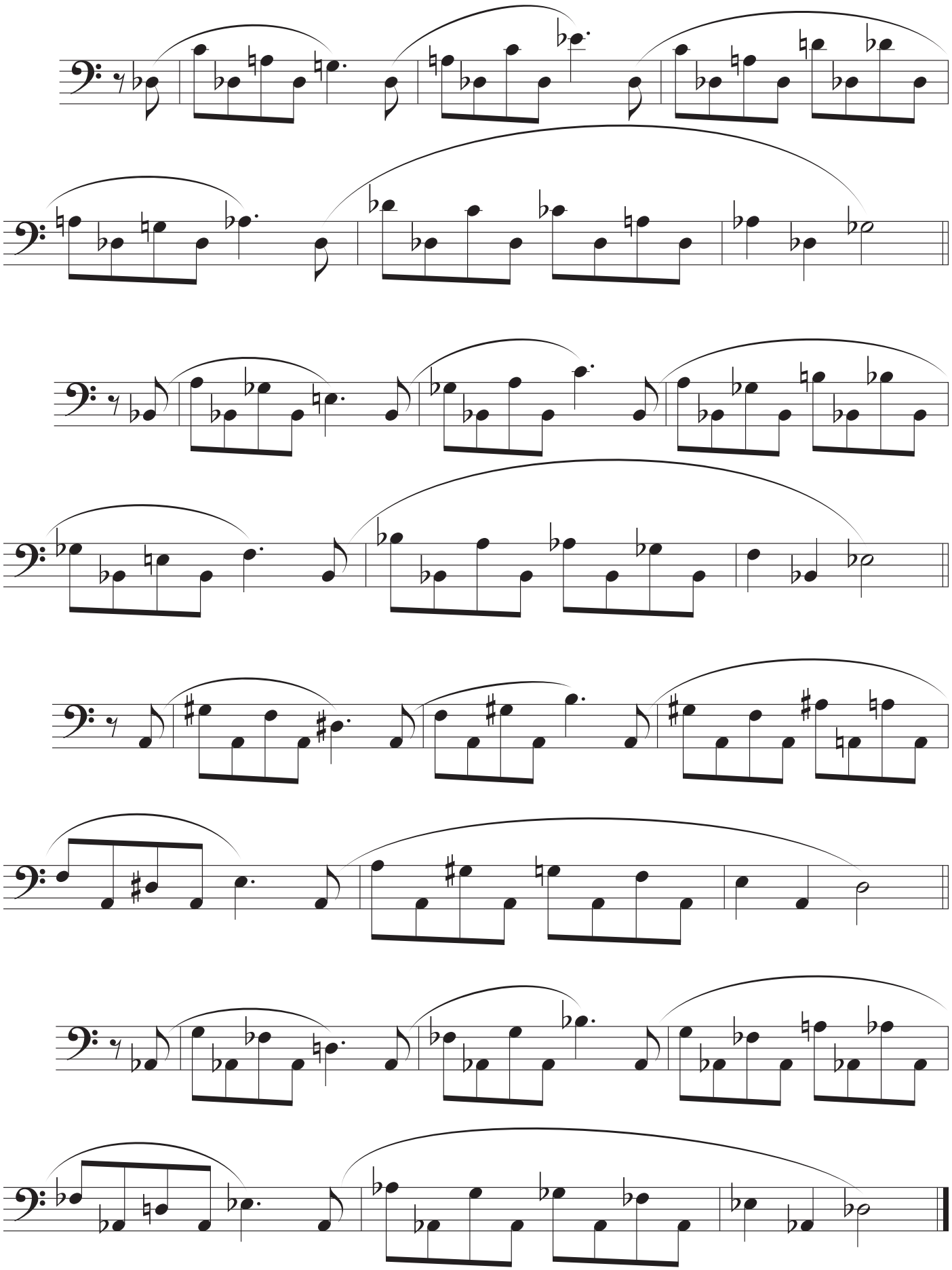
TBZ MONTHLY

A Useful (?) Lip Slur

September 2023

The goal was dissonant intervals. Too dissonant? Too ugly? Maybe. But, hey, it ends tonally!

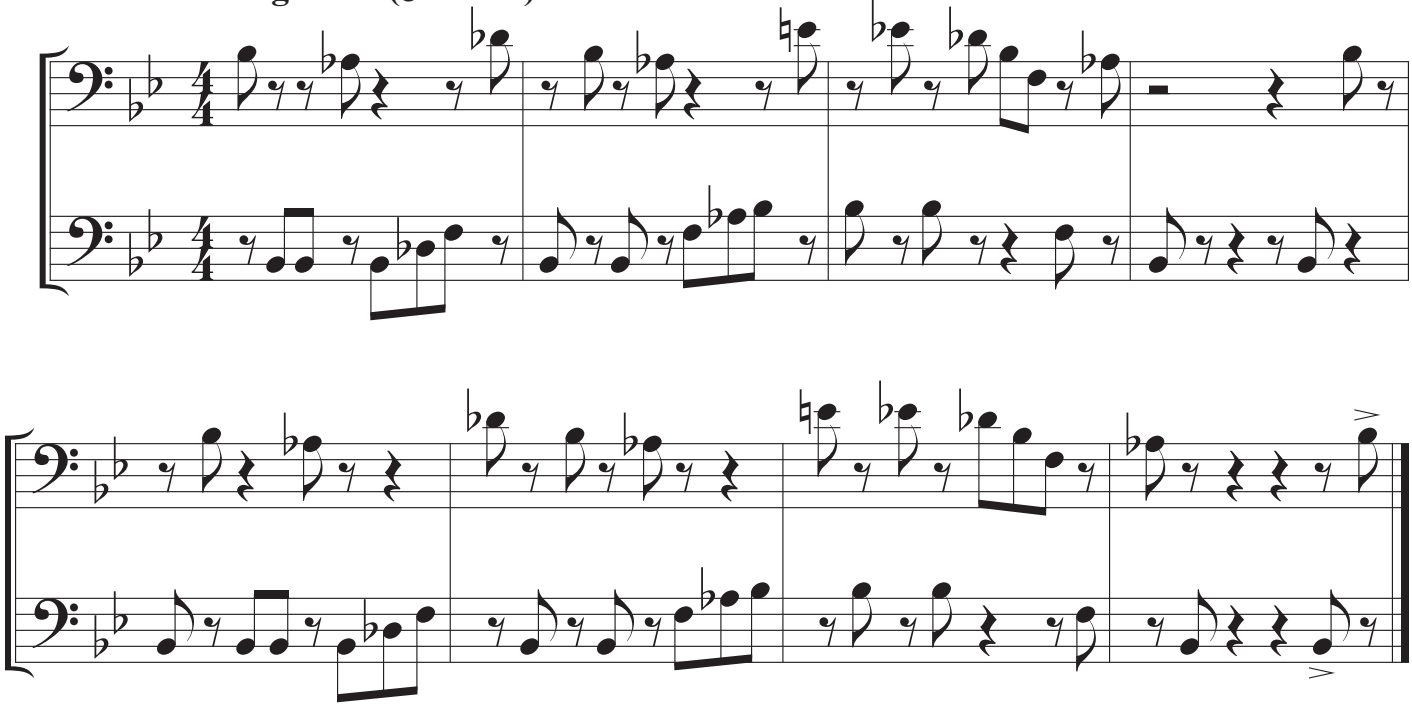




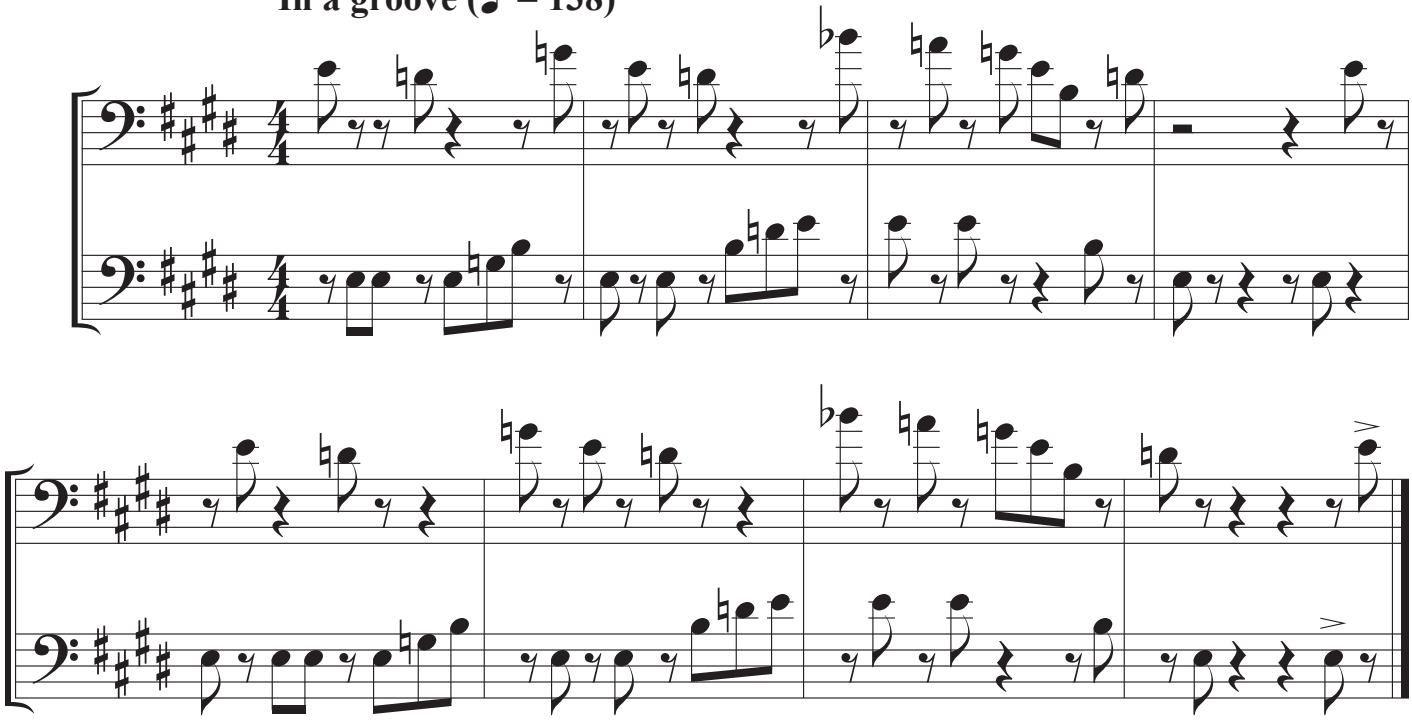
Technique / Rhythm Builders

Together, the two parts fit together like a jigsaw puzzle. The musical term for this might be *hocket*. Also, notice that the second half of each one is the same rhythm displaced by an 8th note! This could be a fun (?) duet.

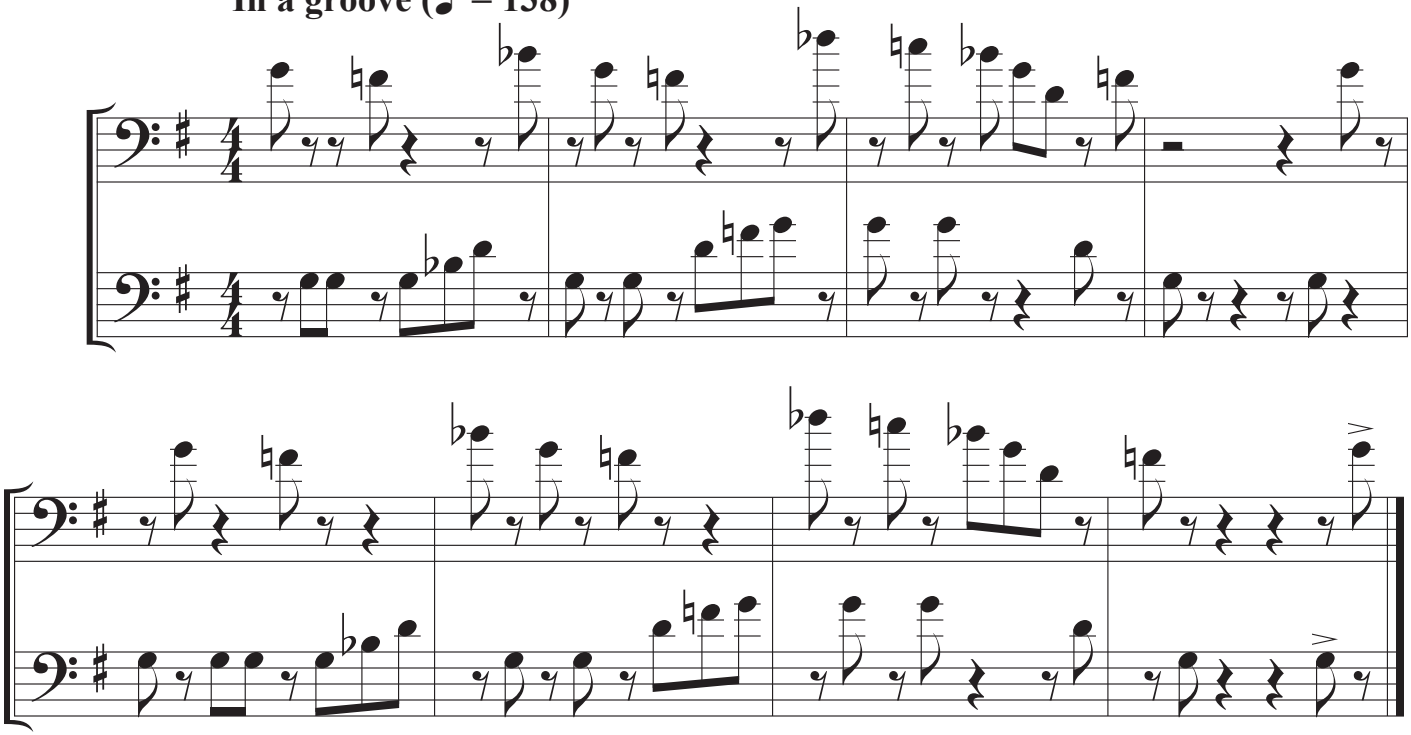
In a groove (♩ = 138)



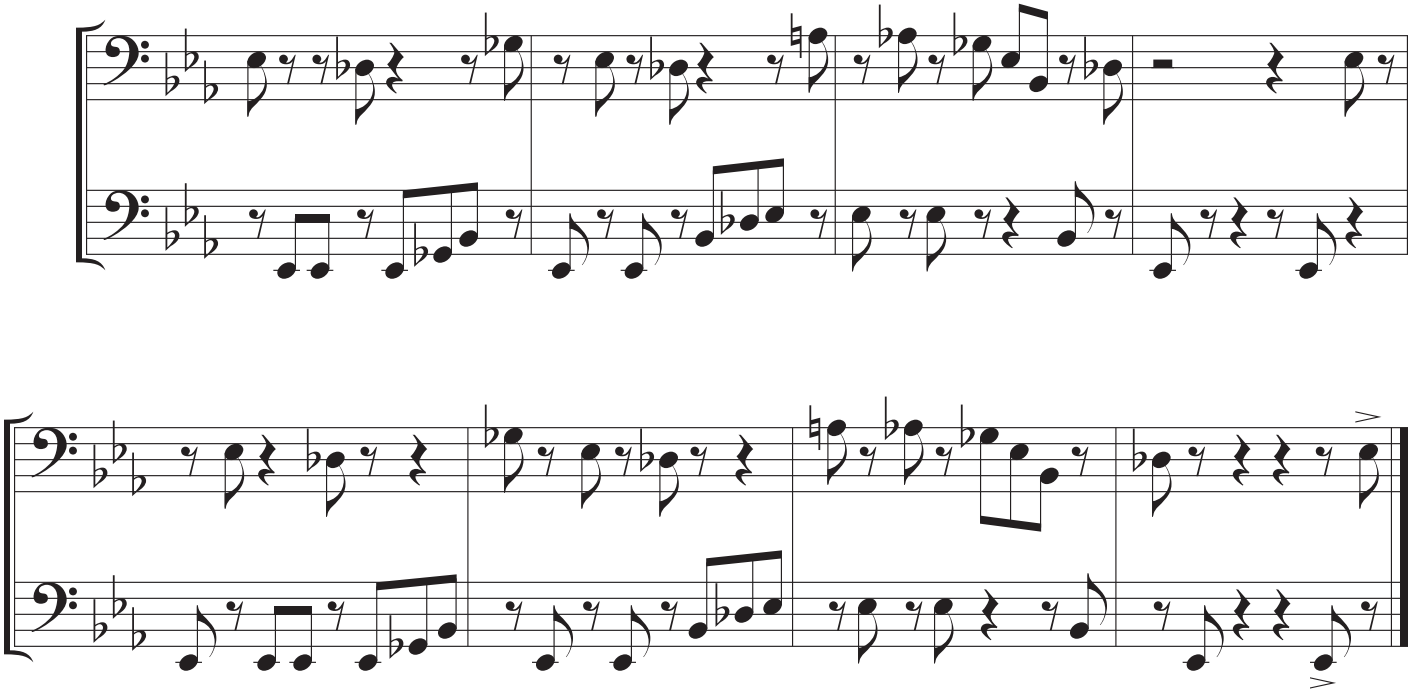
In a groove (♩ = 138)



In a groove (♩ = 138)



In a groove (♩ = 138)



Free book sample: The Melodious Trombone: Besides Bordogni

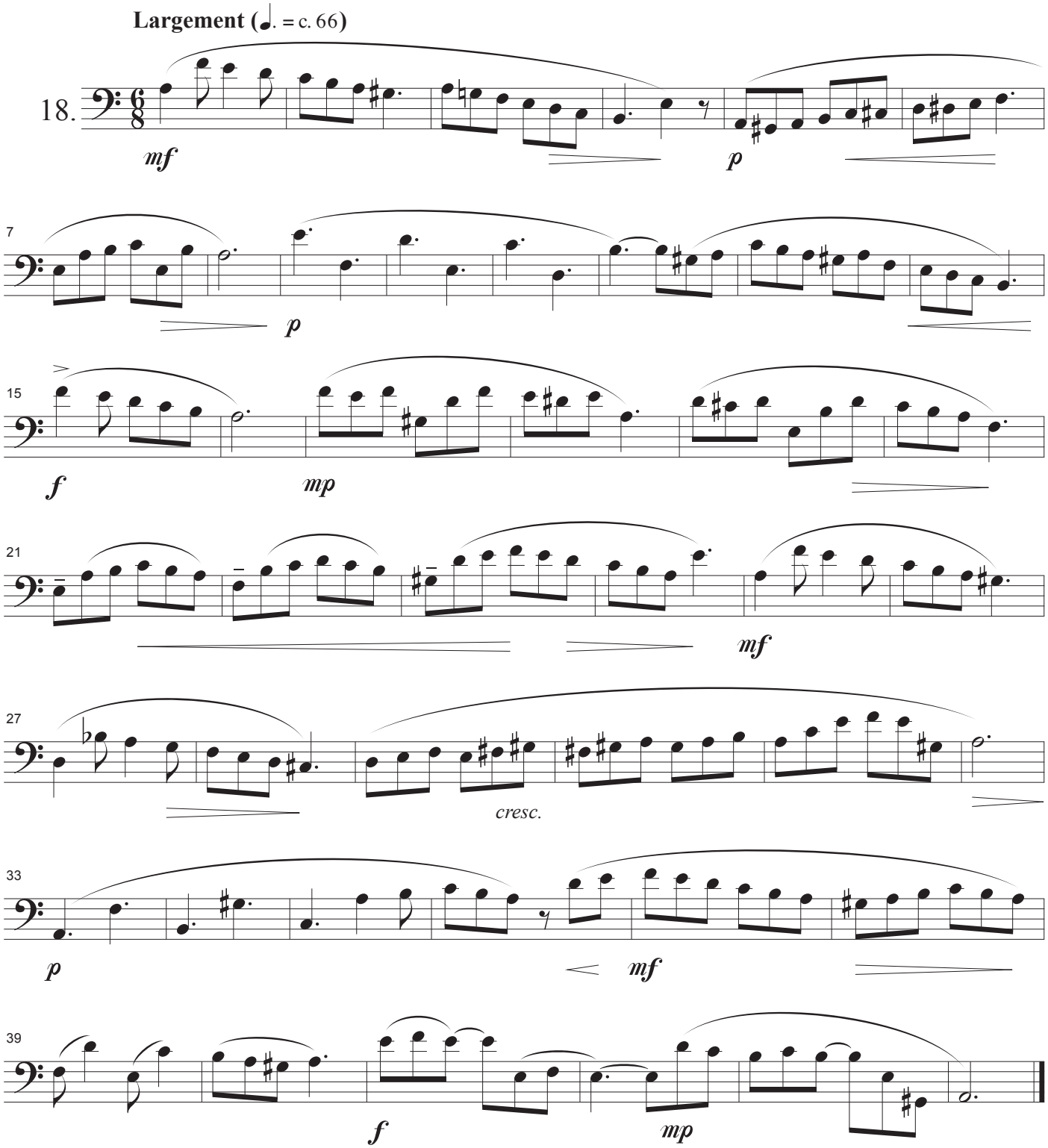
Yes, I know I did a sample from this book a couple months ago when it first came out. I'm so darn excited about it that I can't help but share again!

60 original études, each with a duet part. This sample is #18 and its corresponding duet part.

A couple notes:

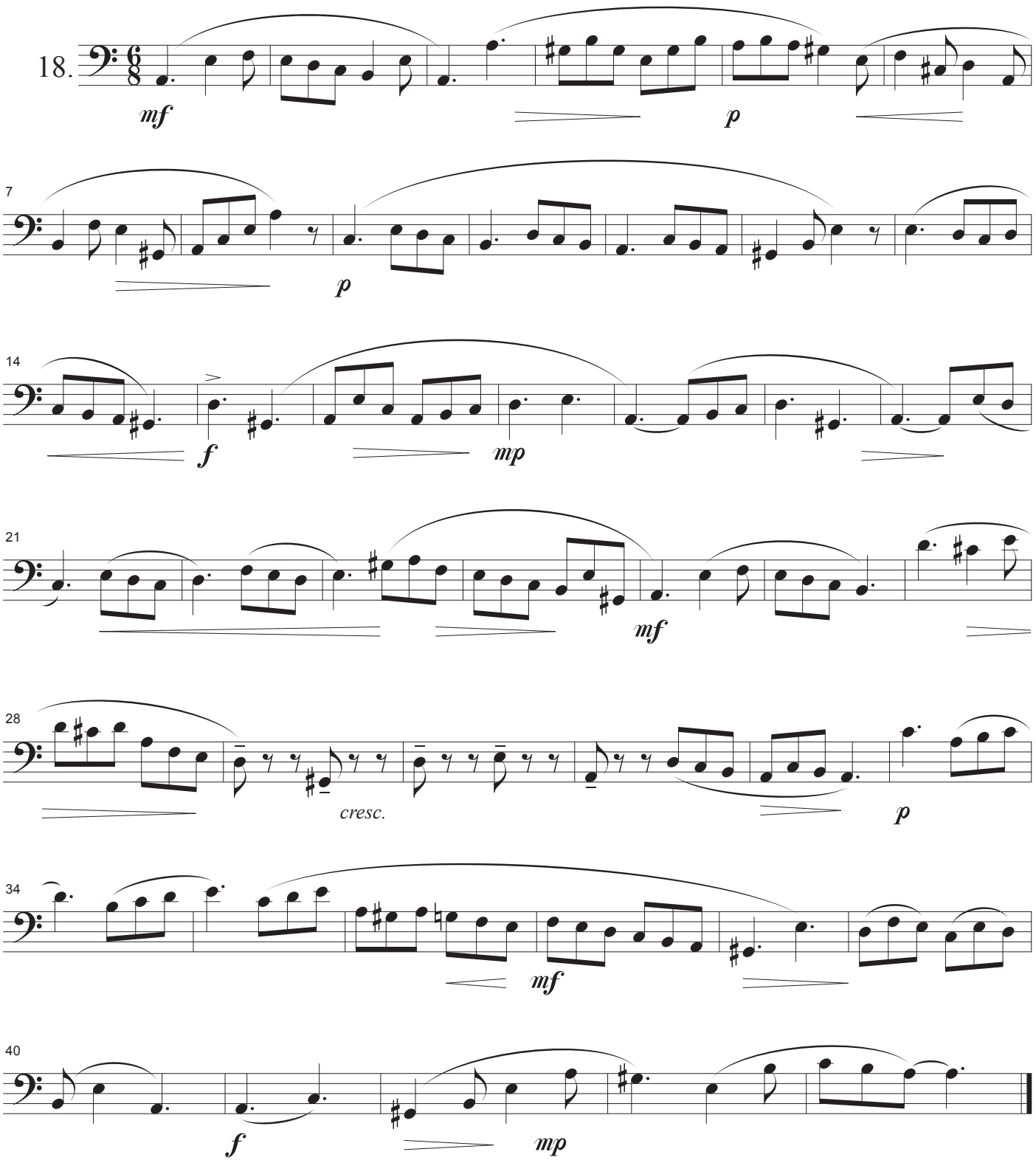
- I've long wanted to write a set of lyrical études that could complement the venerable Bordogni book without seeming redundant.
- They definitely start out at the "before-Bordogni" level and end up in "beyond-Bordogni" territory.
- One detail worth noting: the first 20 études don't go above F4, making it quite natural to transpose them to tenor clef. In the remaining 40, I add range systematically.
- The two appendices transpose selected pieces into higher and lower ranges.
- All 60 études have a duet part

Enjoy!



Largement = slowly

Largement (♩. = c. 66)



Largement = slowly

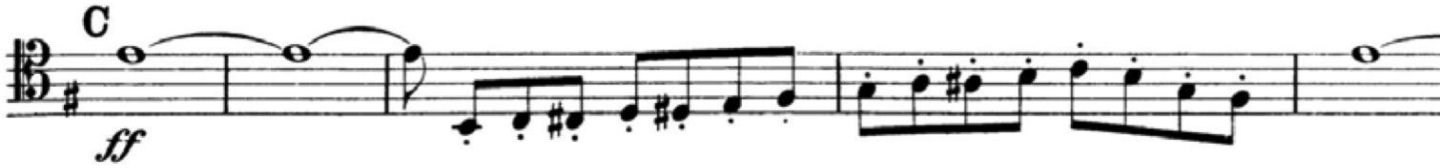
Playing Tip:
"An idle mind is the devil's playground."

This is an old proverb which, I'm guessing, meant: kids with nothing to do will get into trouble. Today, I'm going to repurpose this proverb to talk about rhythm.

"Most counting mistakes happen when we have nothing to do."

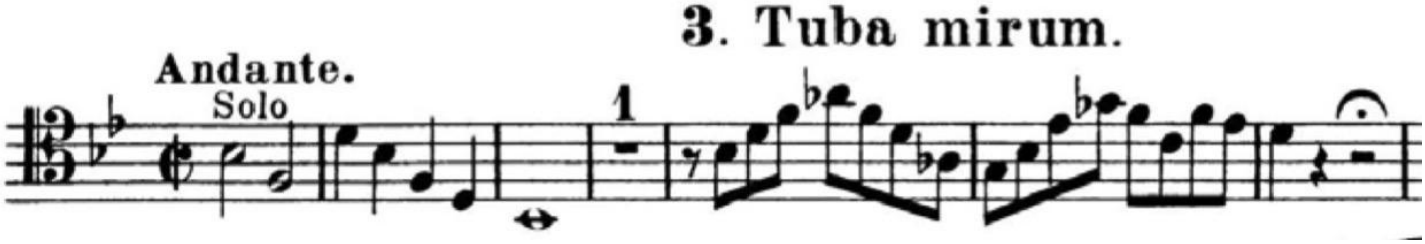
When do we have nothing to do? Simple: **long notes and rests**. In the world of orchestral excerpts, let's consider these two pitfalls.

Long Notes (Rossini - William Tell Overture, "Storm scene")



In the first example, performers often don't start the run at the right moment, starting too early or too late. The dangerous "idle mind" moment is during the long note.

Rests (Mozart - Requiem, "Tuba Mirum")



At first glance, the second example appears to have one "idle mind" trap in the form of the rest, causing performers to enter early or late on the arpeggio. However, I think this is a combination of two traps. I suspect many people miscount the whole note (maybe because air is running out), releasing it early. They might follow this early release with a correct duration of the rest but the overall effect is the same: the arpeggio arrives too soon!

I used to keep a blog. The posts are still up there but I haven't taken the time to bring them over to my current website. It's called the Trombonezone Blog and has posts dating between 2005 and 2014. I know it currently states Arizona State University even though the posts predate my time at ASU.

In 2007, I was a participant at the Alessi Seminar in New Mexico. While we weren't allowed to record the master class sessions, I did furiously take notes and type up daily summaries. This post dates from Aug 1st, 2007:

Mr. Alessi told a story about how, during juries, Warren Deck's tuba students always played with such impeccable rhythm. He asked Warren how they did this and Warren described this technique: "**Attack and response**."

Basically, he demonstrated by singing different passages and, during any sustained notes, snapping his fingers exactly in the time of the subdivision. Deck described those sustained notes as "dead spots" during which rhythmic accuracy can falter. By snapping the fingers, you maintain a clear sense of pulse and subdivision.

In other words, give your mind something to do to fill in those sustained notes (and, I assume, rests).

In short:

As you sing the excerpt,
use rhythmic snapping to fill in the spots
where you may fall into the "idle mind" trap.

On Teaching and Playing:

I spend (too much) time thinking about how to begin a lesson. My high school trombone teacher, Dr. Henry Schmidt, was a Remington student so our lessons always began with the Emory Remington warm-up. He used this as a vehicle to remind me of good fundamentals. During the long tones he would add a harmony part, sometimes with curious tonal modulations. I was always interested to see what he would do. This kept me interested and musically engaged.

All through my teaching career,
those words have hovered in my mind:
interested and musically engaged

Over the years, I have tried different strategies at the beginning of lessons. I think one's focus should always be on producing a musical sound. It is so easy to daydream when repeating the same thing day after day.

Of course this begs the question: should a student be warming up in the beginning of a lesson? My answer: it depends. I always hope that the first notes of the lesson should **not** be a student's first notes of the day. However, scheduling challenges sometimes mean that a student is running straight to their lesson from a block of classes. Even if they warmed up earlier that morning, they need some introductory playing to get started. Also younger students need more guidance so that the warm-up promotes good fundamentals.

Last year, I started a lot of lessons with a sing/buzz/play activity using my book *Simply Singing for Winds.* This wasn't too bad but I often hit a roadblock of a key signature that didn't really fit their vocal range. So, right away, I might have them buzz and sing the melody in tenor clef down an octave (or normal tenor clef for female voices). That was fine but I always wanted a smooth transition straight from the singing/buzzing to the playing. If there is hesitation in actually reading the music in a clef, tension creeps in and the tone immediately suffers.

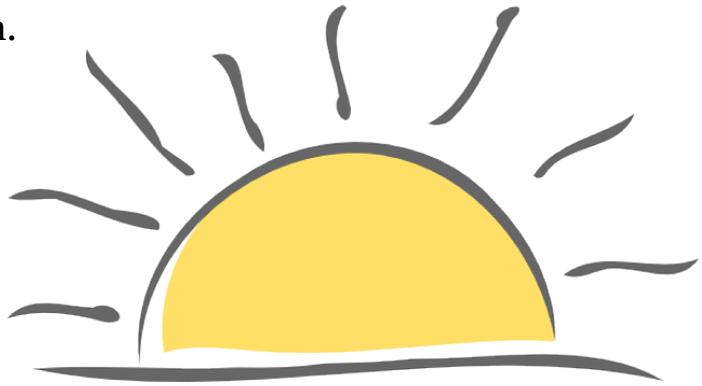
In the August issue of TBZ Monthly, my free book sample was a set of tone imitation duets from the *First Habits* warm-up book. I also like this idea but haven't used it as much with college students. Maybe it's a better fit for younger players.

In many lessons I have used a call & response approach with the "Five Notes Down" portion of the First Habits warm-up. I play, the students echoes back. Sometimes I present slight variations on the pattern which the student must imitate. This is useful in bringing mental focus to the present moment.

This Fall semester, I'm going to try using Sing Buzz Play - All Keys (included on my website and at the end of this PDF. My hope is that this can be a multipurpose tool:

1. Get students singing right away.
2. Connect singing to mouthpiece buzzing.
3. Promote a beautiful tone and a musical approach.
4. Improve "key sense" - facility with playing melodic patterns in every key.
5. Invite creativity.

However, at all times we must be wary of uncertainty which introduces tension and probably hurts tone quality. It's a tricky balance but, done well, it can yield a **great beginning** to a lesson.



A Random Thought: Termites!

Sneaky little buggers! They work their way into the wood of your home and chew away! When I moved to Arizona, I was naive enough to think that the dry desert climate meant no termites. Nope. If anything, they are worse here than in South Carolina.

Two days ago, in my garage I saw a termite mud tube - a little tunnel they built to move about. In fact, here's a picture of that very mud tube.

I've called our exterminator to have the garage treated. Hopefully he will rain down death upon these little bastards. OK, I know that isn't a very Buddhist mindset. You know, respect all living things and all of that.

I actually did an internet search on "what do Buddhists do with termites?" I was amused by one answer on a Reddit forum. And I quote:

You can pray on their behalf that they will evolve to a human quickly.
Then proceed to get rid of them with an exterminator.
If you allow them to eat your house, you will not have a home, and you will not be able to do your dharma work which is very important.
Have compassion for animals, and also have the balance to protect your mission in life.
May the termites quickly be blessed to become humans and provide the world with peace and joy after the end of their lives.

(ok, whatever)

But, what does this have to do with trombone? This being a trombone newsletter (with no actual news) you know I have to bring it back to trombone.

Simple, really: sometimes we are working up a recital or an audition. We devote so much time to preparing the repertoire that we let our fundamentals slide.

Those little bad habits (termites) begin to tunnel into our overall playing structure (house). Suddenly, attacks aren't so clean. High notes thin out. Jumps from high to low don't sound good.

Why?

Termites!

So, maybe keep up with those fundamentals, ok?

Extra: Sing Buzz Play - all keys

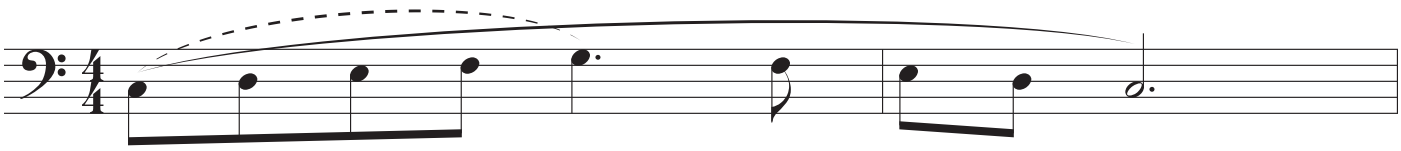
This is a feature I added to my website in early August. Many of us know the importance of connecting your ear to your instrument. Here is a graded sequence of 20 musical gestures with precise instructions. I believe if you practice these regularly, your hearing awareness and key sense will improve.

Enjoy!

Sing, Buzz, Play - all keys

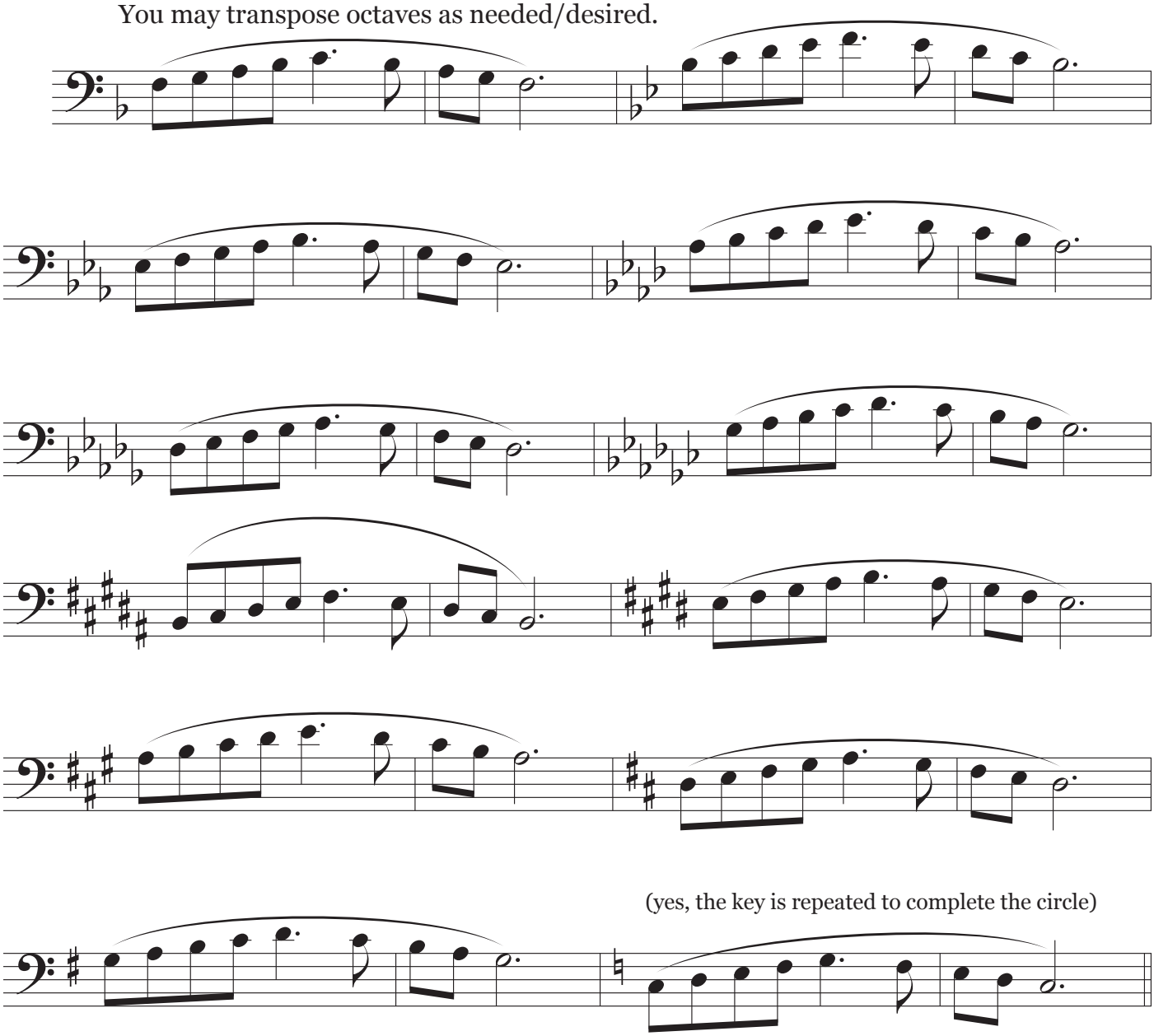
Brad Edwards
Version: 8/7/23

1. Sing (use 'ah'). 2. Buzz (gliss between notes).
3. Sing the dotted slur (use 'ah,'). 4. Play (no tongue)



5. Sing the the notes under the dotted slur while moving your slide (or fingering).
6. Play through the (descending) circle of fifths (no tongue)

You may transpose octaves as needed/desired.



(yes, the key is repeated to complete the circle)

7. (Optional) Tack on a creative ending of about two measures.

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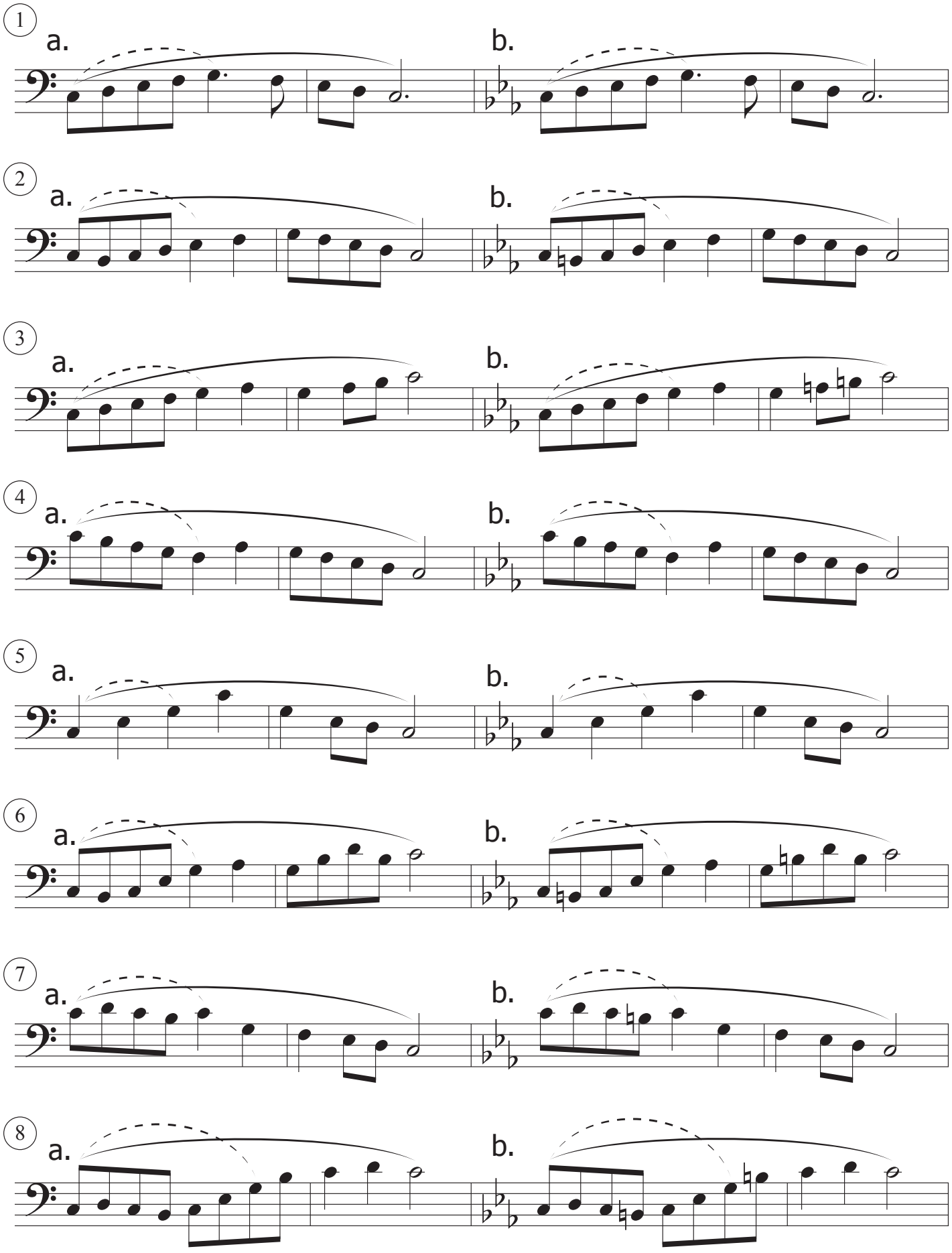
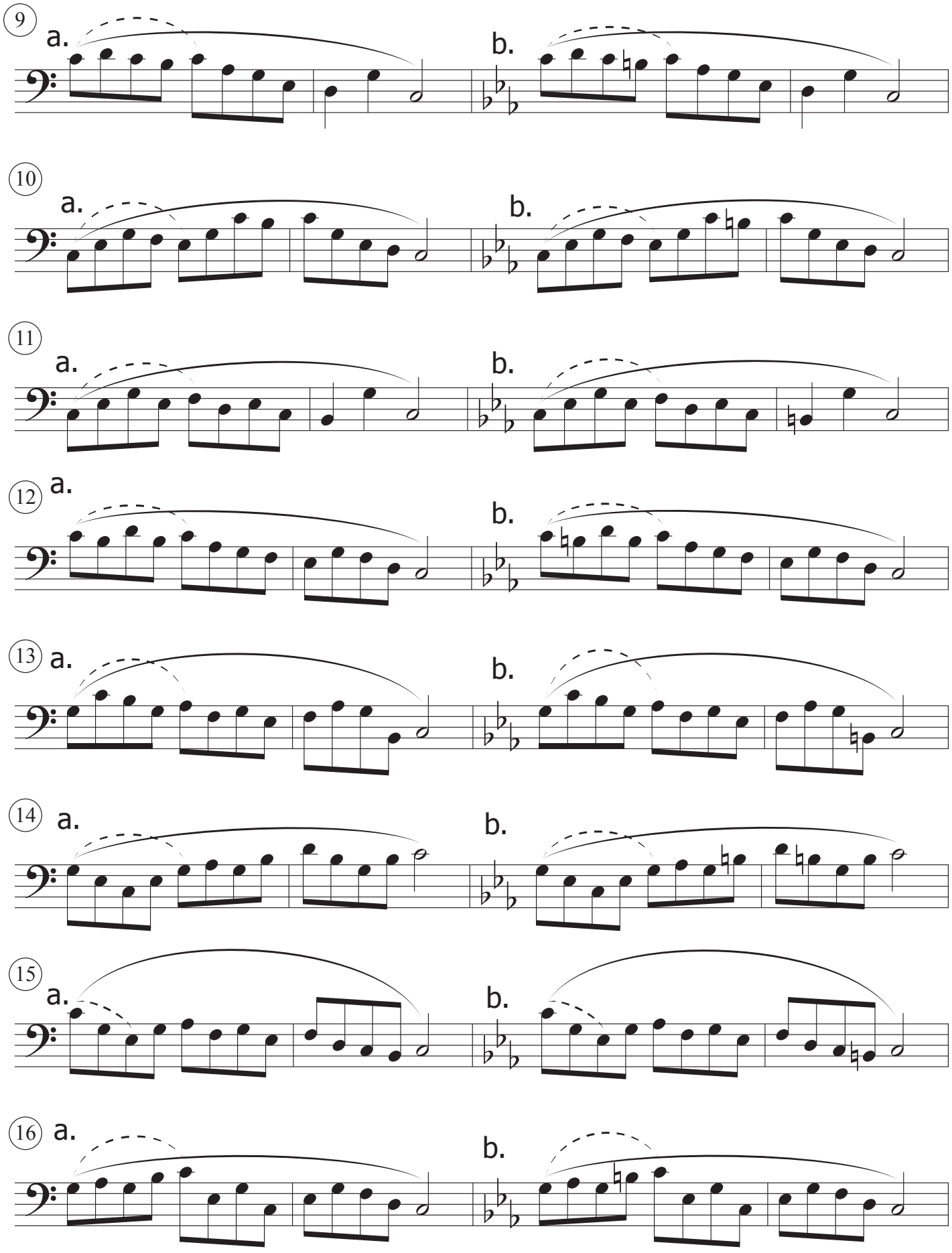
Sing, Buzz, Play - all keys

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a.
b.
10
a.
b.
11
a.
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12
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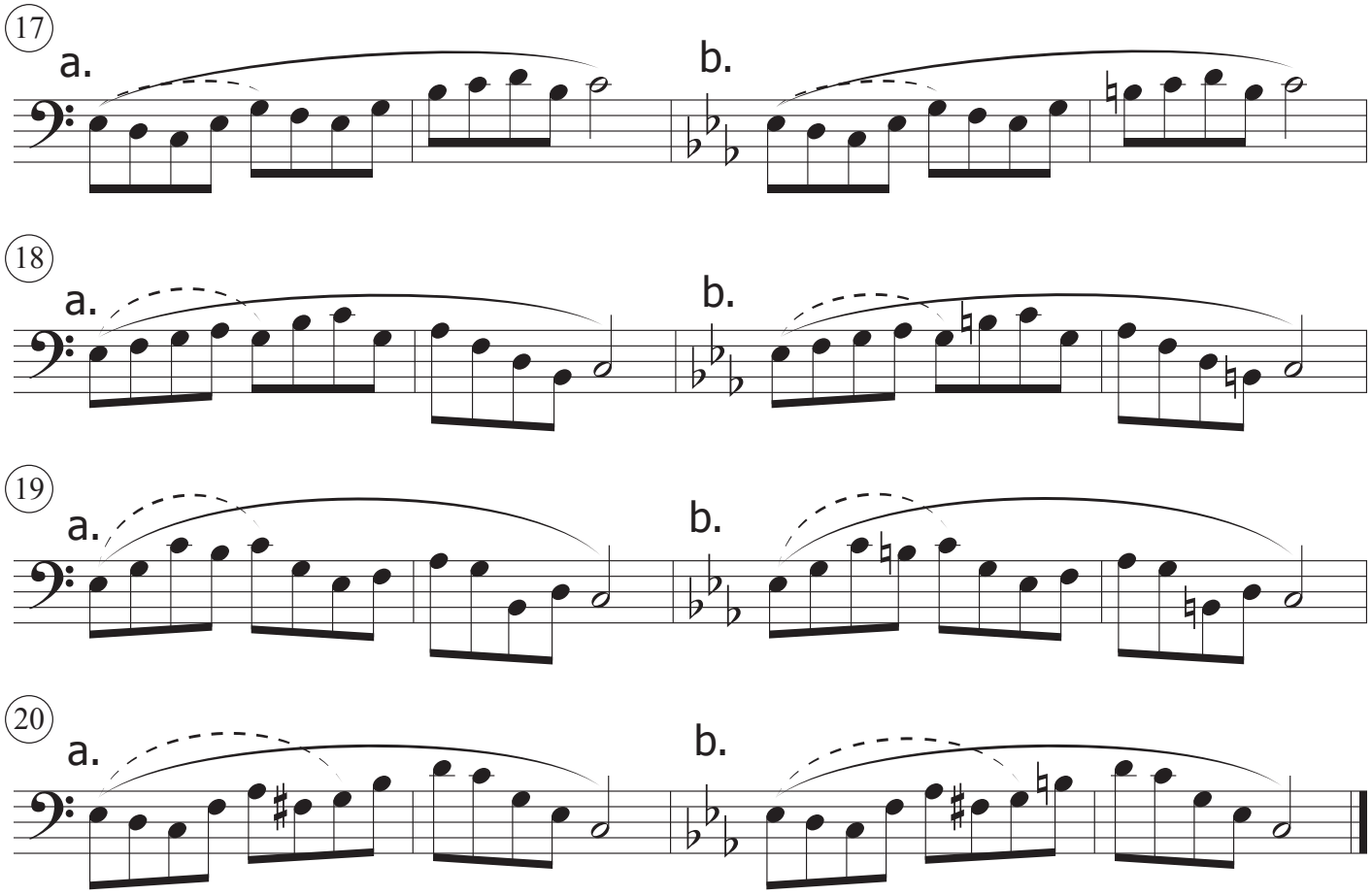
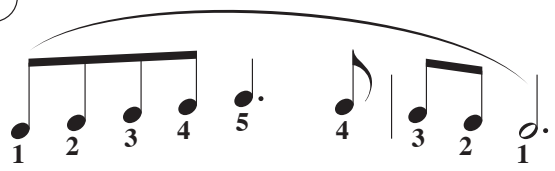
b.
16
a.
b.


17
a.
b.
18
a.
b.
19
a.
b.
20
a.
b.

Here are the same patterns without staff lines. Numbers represent scale degrees.
Remember to do in **both major and minor** (using melodic minor).

1



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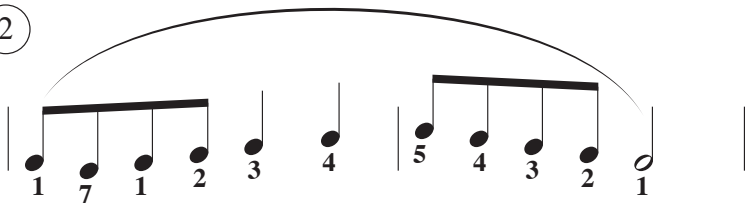

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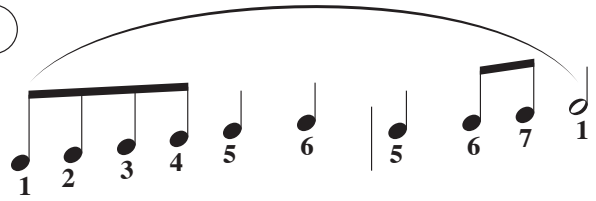

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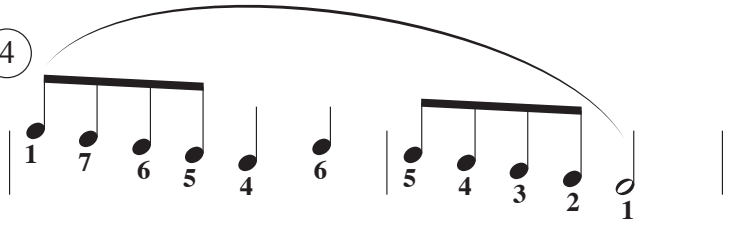

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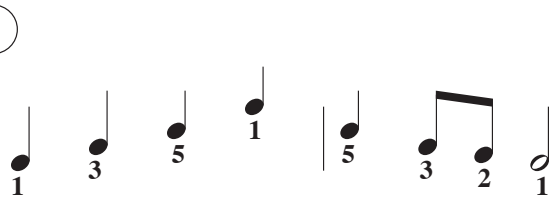

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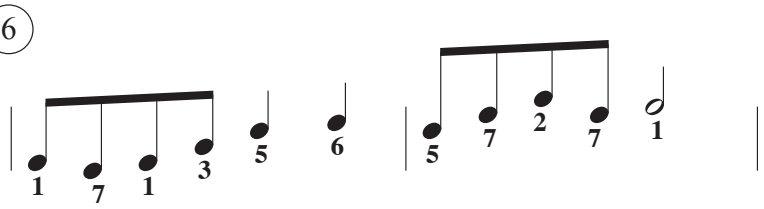

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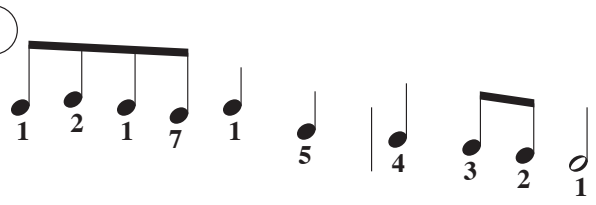

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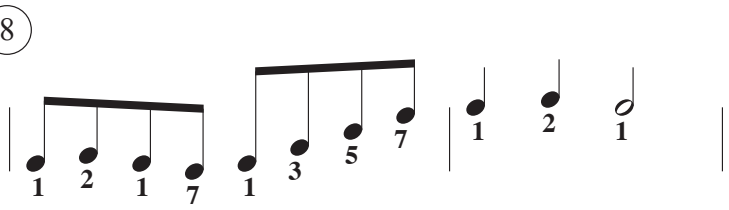

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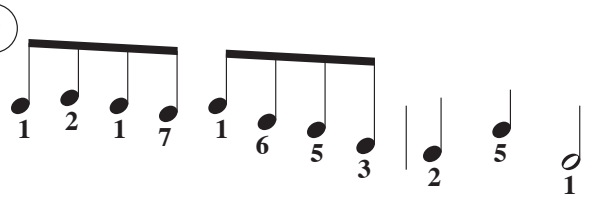

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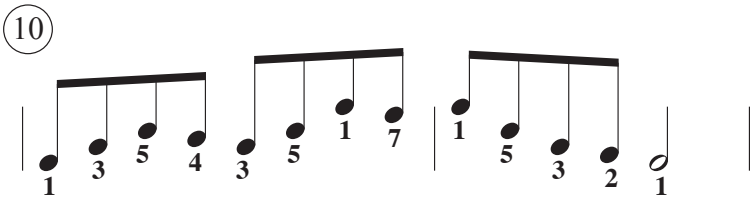

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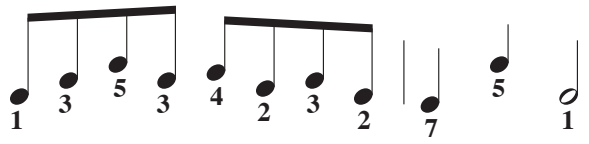

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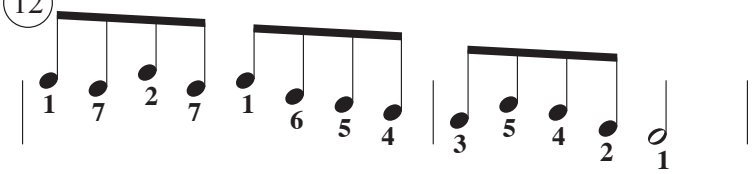

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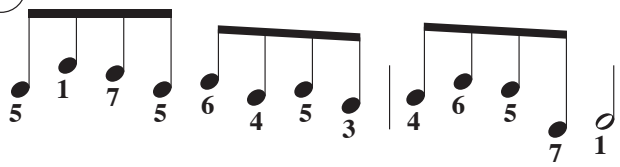

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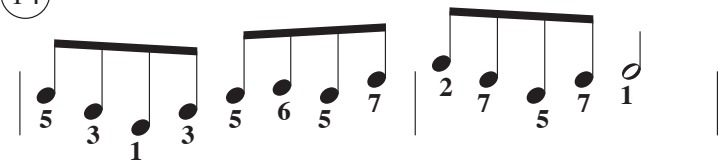

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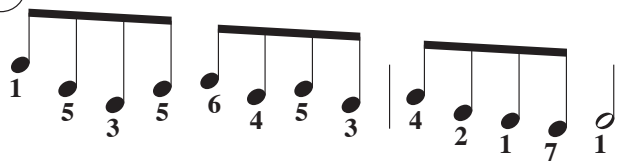

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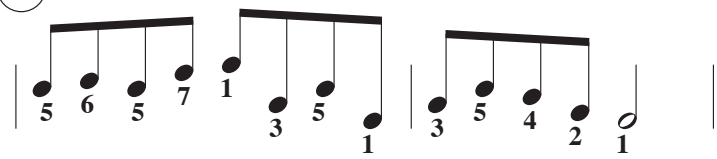

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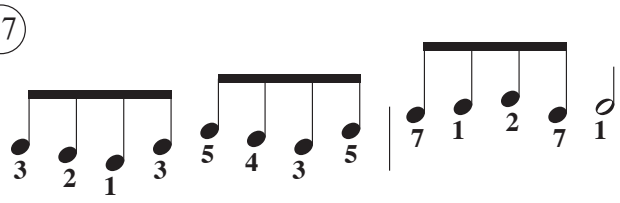

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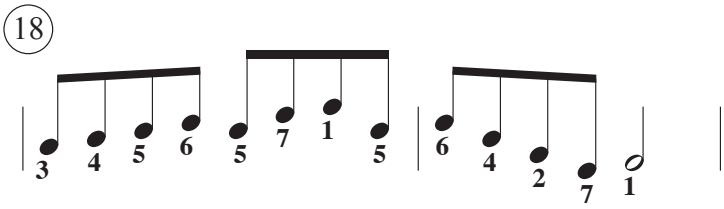

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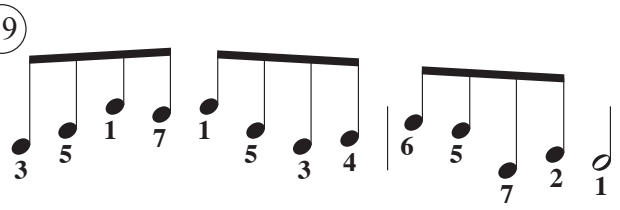
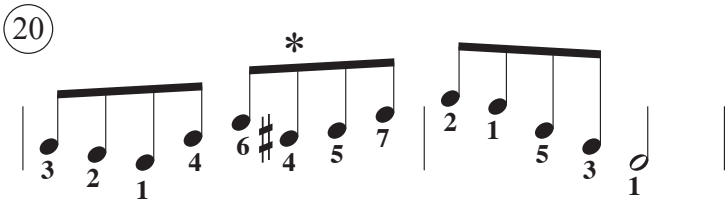


20



* raise degree 4 a half step here