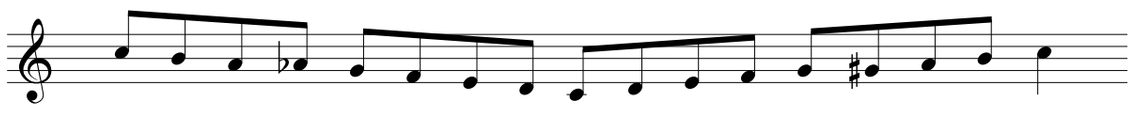
Chapter 1: Major and Dominant Bebop Scales

Bebop scales are chord scales with added chromatic passing tones. They are created by interjecting one or more nondiatonic passing tones into the chord scales. When these passing notes are added to the diatonic chord scale certain notes then stand out in the scale.

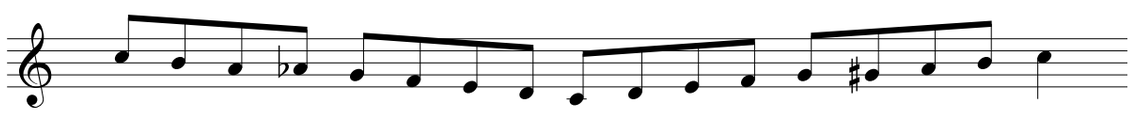
There are several commonly used bebop scales, major and dominant are the most common. The following example spells a C major bop scale.



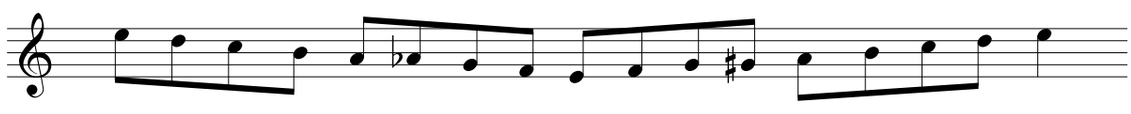
An "A♭" passing tone is added between the fifth and sixth notes of a C major scale. Bop scales can be used as ascending or descending scales although descending is more common. When you play this bop scale, as a result of the extra note, every down beat is a chord tone. The chord tones voice lead the scale making the line sound just like the chord. You should start a major bop scale on root, third, fifth, or sixth to insure this result of voice leading the chord. If you start the scale on second, fourth, ♭6th, or seventh the line will not sound like a major bop scale because the down beats will not spell the chord.

The following examples spell out a C major bop scale descending and then ascending with different starting notes:

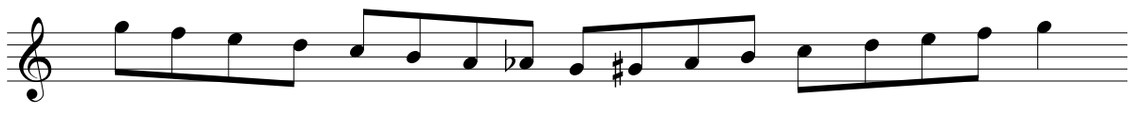
From the root:



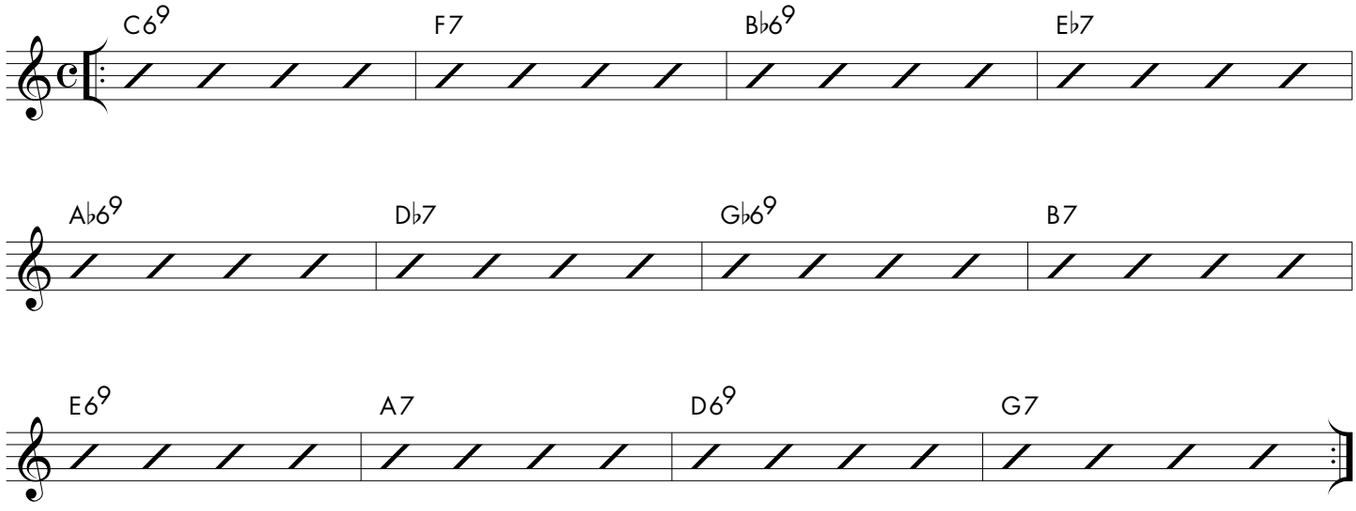
From the 3rd:



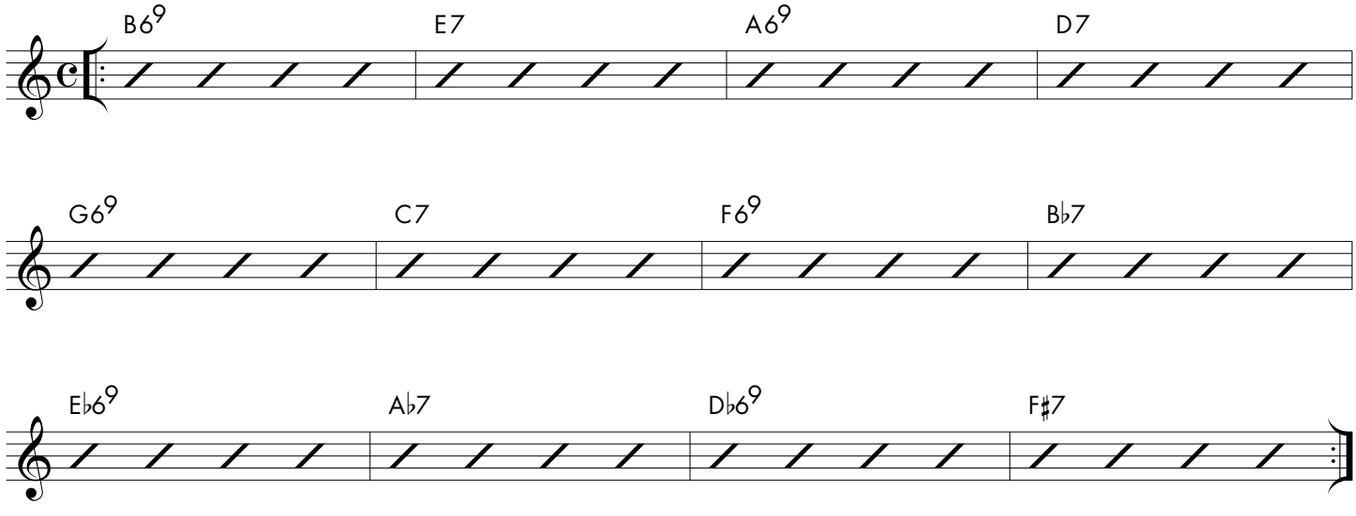
From the 5th:



TRACK 3: PROGRESSION 1A (C INSTRUMENTS)



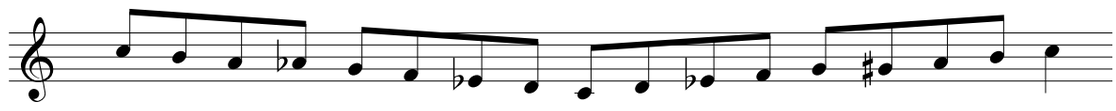
TRACK 4: PROGRESSION 1B (C INSTRUMENTS)



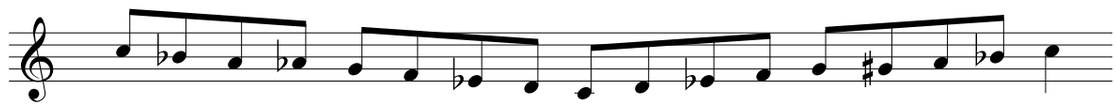
Chapter 2: Tonic Minor and Dom7♭9♭13 Bop Scales

In a minor key the tonic minor 6th chord (I–69) and the V7♭9♭13 chord use the same passing tones as the IΔ and V7 of a major key. For example, as with a CΔ bop scale the tonic minor or C–69 bop scale uses a passing tone between the 5th and 6th notes of the scale. Again you must start the scale on the 1, 3, 5, or 6. There are two options for spelling the tonic minor scale, that is with a major 7th or a ♭7th. On a C–69 chord scale you can use either B natural or B♭ since the 7th is on an upbeat.

C–69 using B natural:

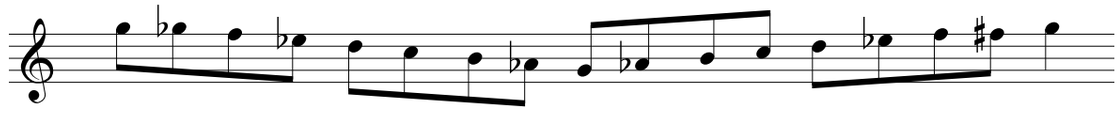


C–69 using B♭:



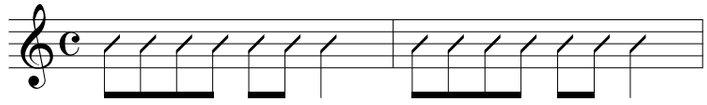
G7♭9♭13 is treated the same as a G7 chord in that the passing tone is between the root and 7th of the scale. Again, start the scale on the 1, 3, 5, or 7.

G7♭9♭13



Chapter 3: Scale Segments – Using 5 or 7 Notes

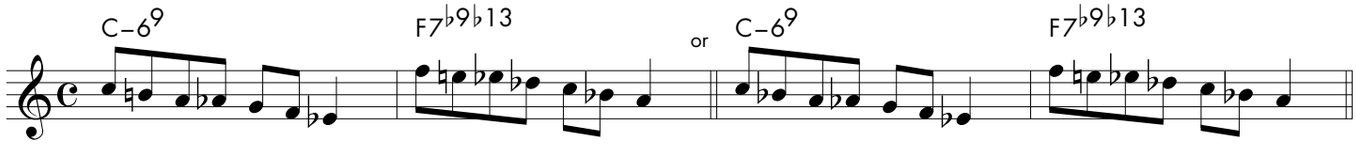
After playing the exercises for chapters 1 and 2, using a whole octave of the bop scale, now go through progressions 1 and 2 and play just seven notes of the scale with the following rhythmic pattern:



Practice with the same specific starting notes for assignments 1 and 2 and then practice using random starting notes. You are starting and ending each scale on a chord tone.

Example:

Root descending with seven notes.

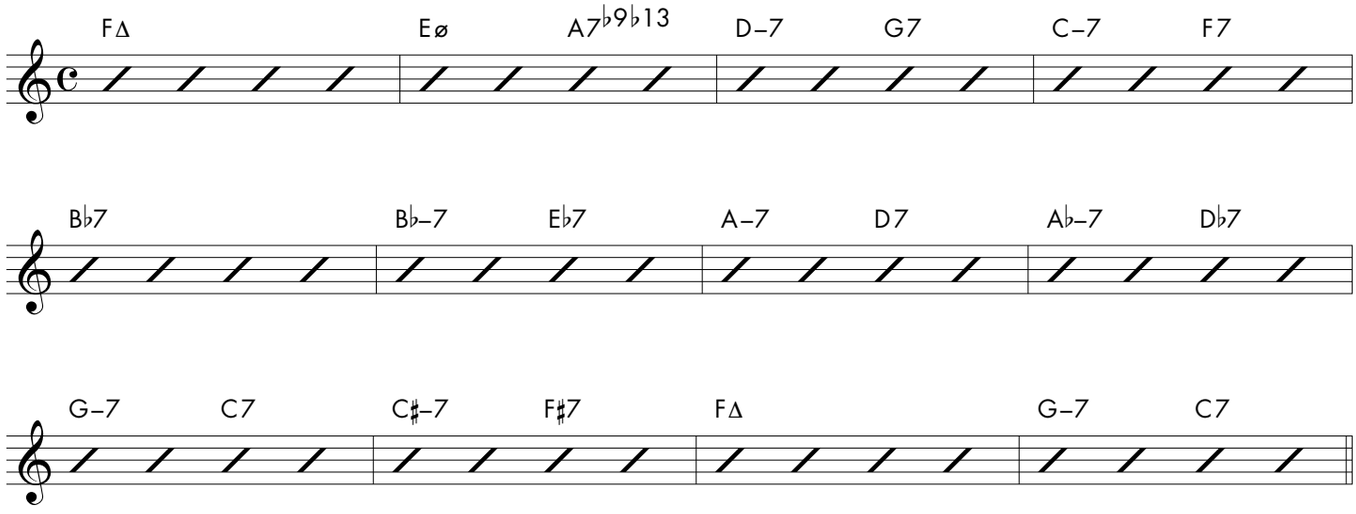


Next play seven notes of each chord scale on the following tune. When there is a II–7 V7 in one bar just use the dominant bebop scale for now. (You can also try just using five notes of the scale) Use all chord tones for starting notes ascending and descending.

1, 3, 5 or 6 for tonic and 1, 3, 5 or 7 for dominant.

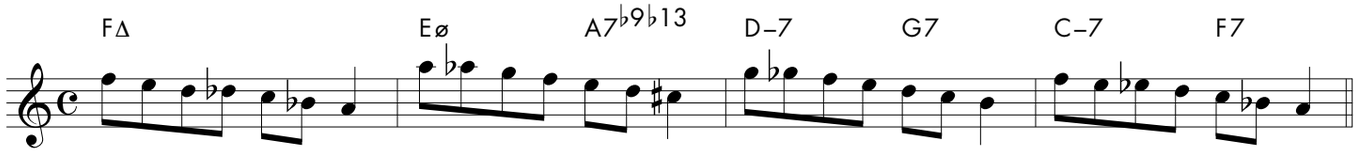
Example: | D–7 G7 | use G7 bop scale for the whole bar.

TRACK 7/8: TUNE 1 *ALICE* (C INSTRUMENTS)

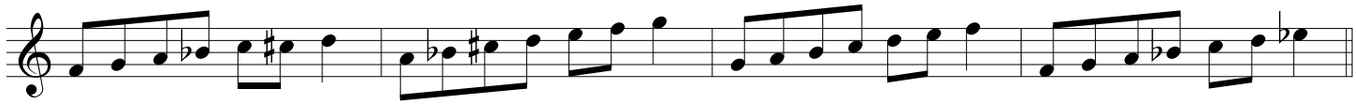


Here are the first four bars of the tune written out with each starting note:

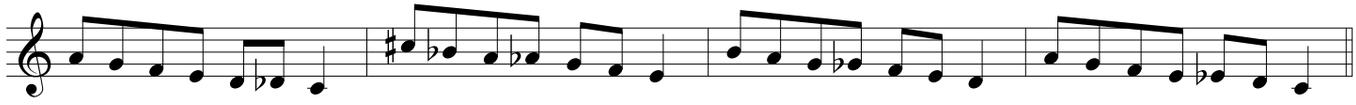
Root descending:



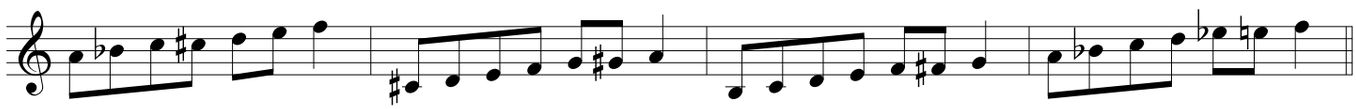
Root ascending:



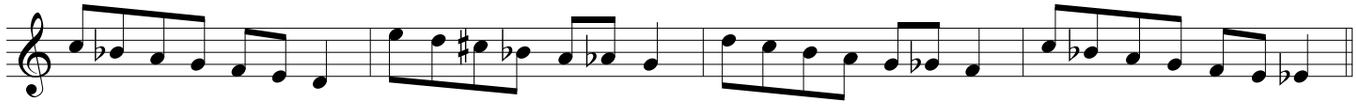
3rd descending:



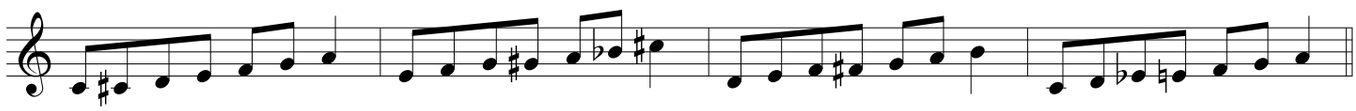
3rd ascending:



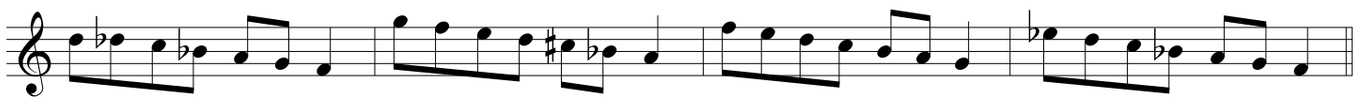
5th descending:



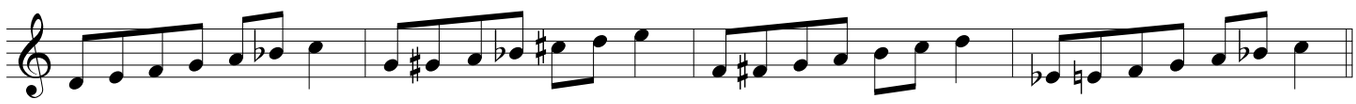
5th ascending:



6th or 7th descending (6 for major, 7 for dominant):



6th or 7th ascending (6 for major, 7 for dominant):

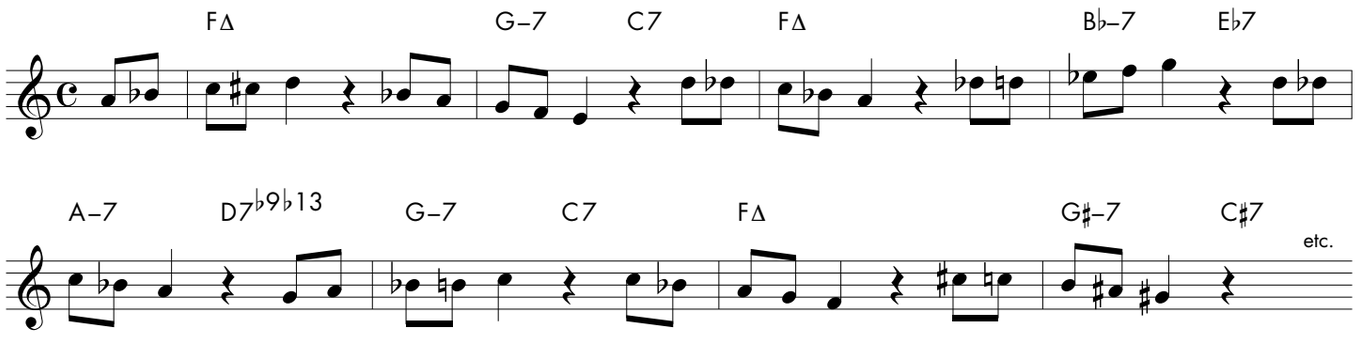


Random choice:

Try using random starting notes one beat early with five notes of every bop scale.

Example:

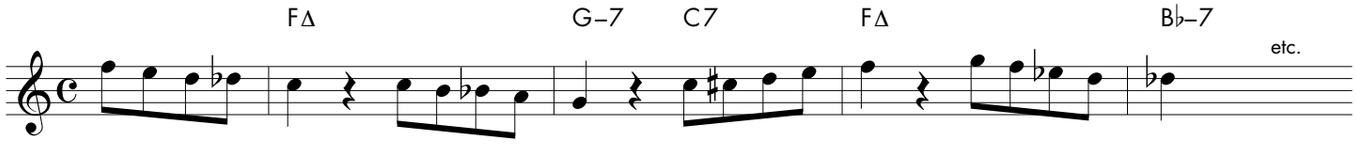
On *Spring Joy* random starting notes



Taking it another step further, try playing five notes of each bop scale two beats early, as in the following example:

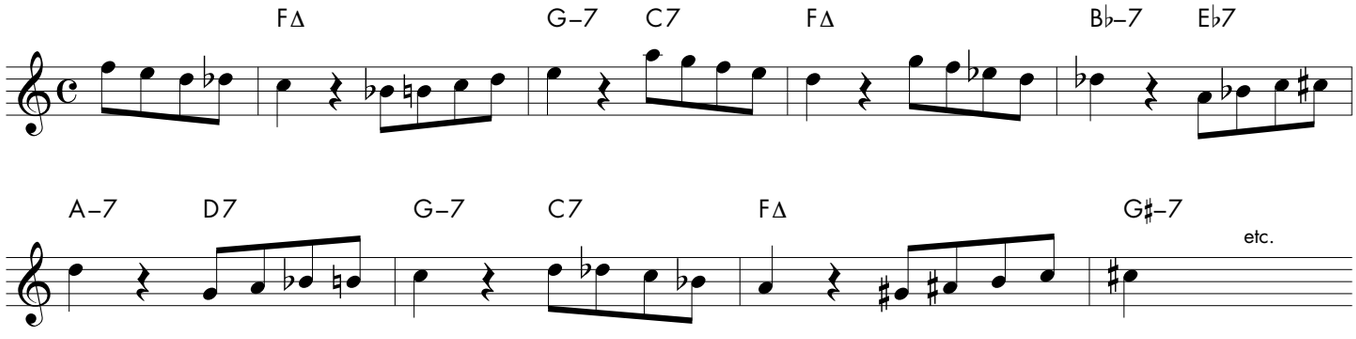
Example:

From the root descending



Now try five notes of the bop scale two beats early with random starting notes.

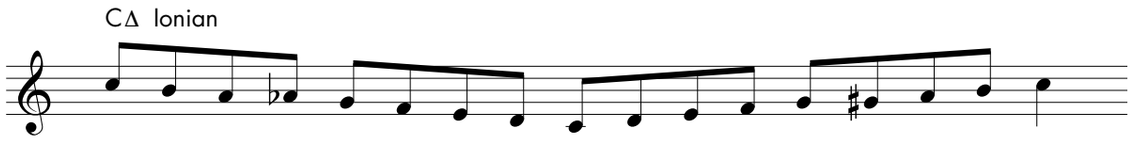
Example:



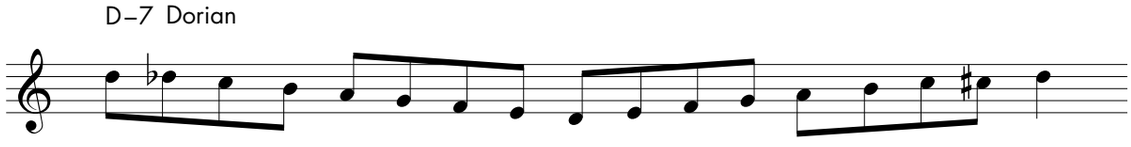
Chapter 5: Bop Scale Modes

To determine some different scales for some of the other chord types here are the bop scale modes.

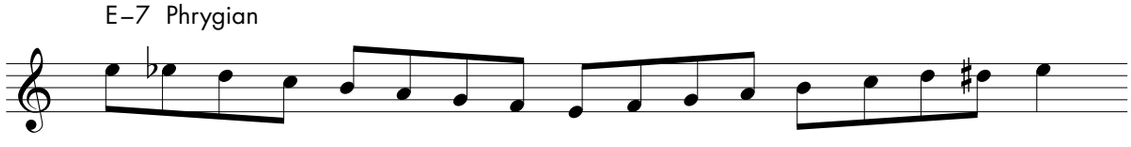
Ionian



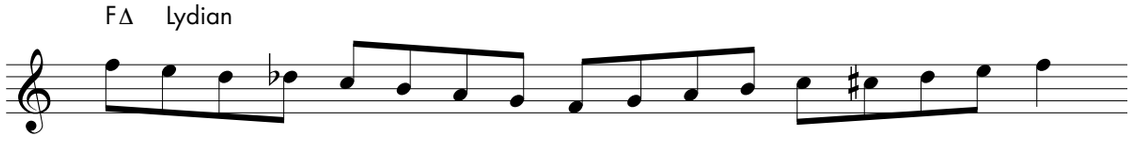
Dorian



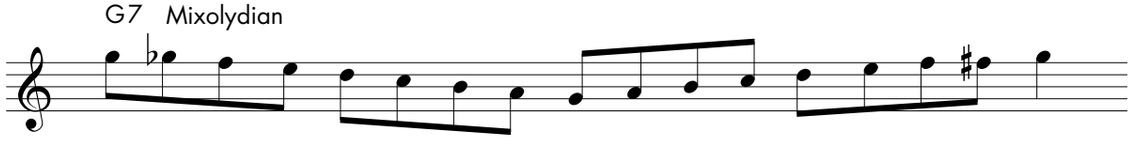
Phrygian



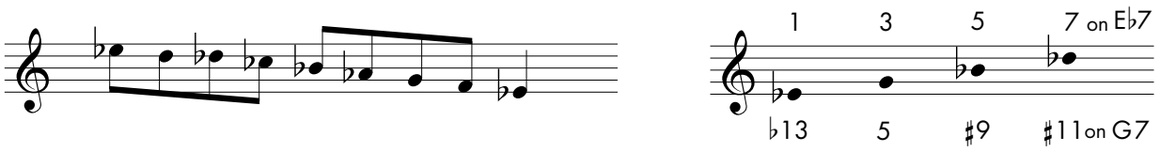
Lydian



Mixolydian

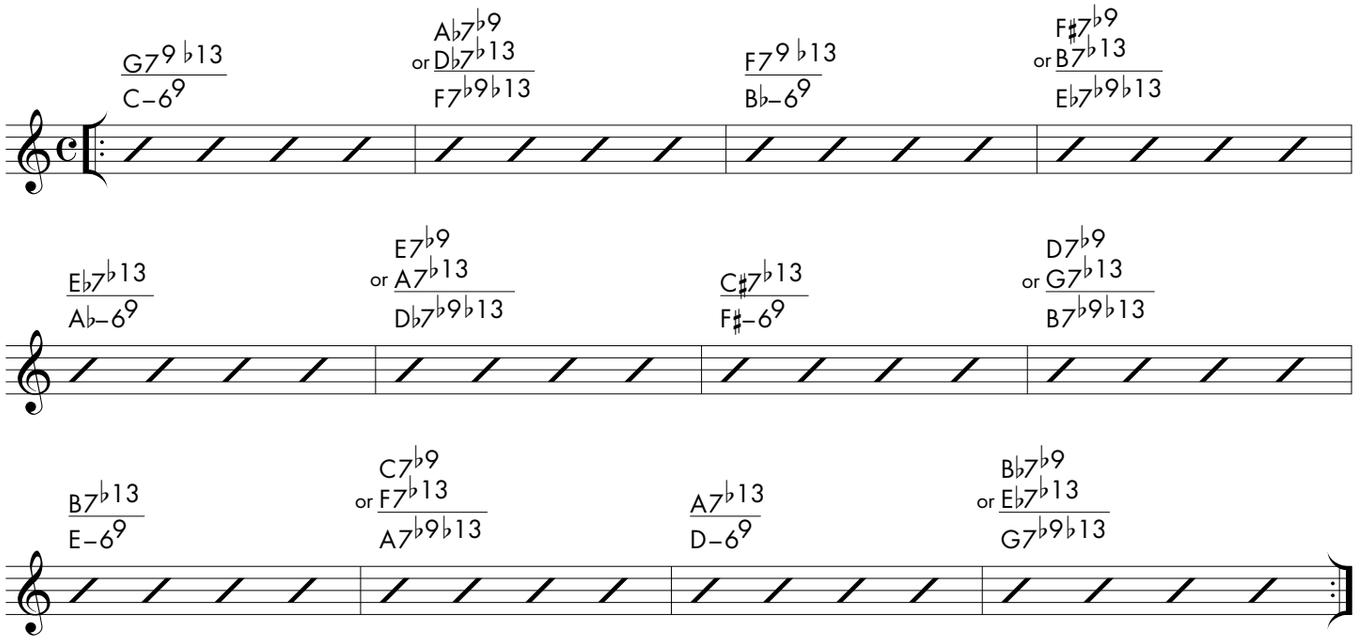


Here is another example: E♭7♭13 bop scale over G7♭9♭13

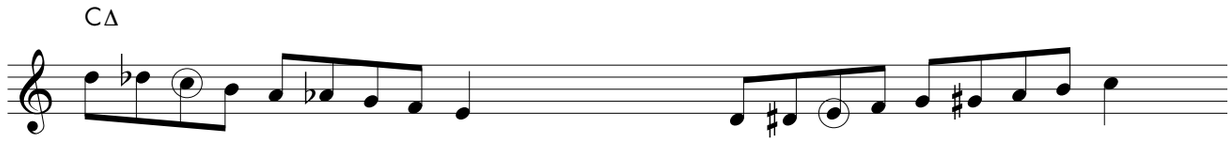


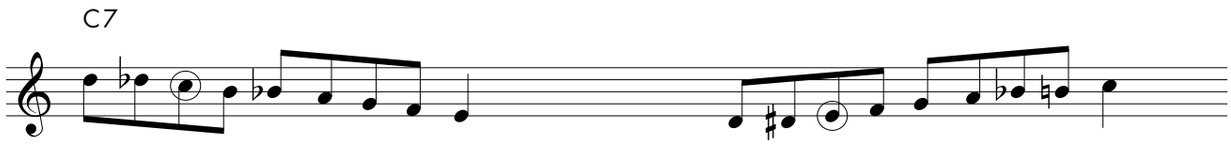
Try playing through the original tonic minor progression II exercise and substitute some of these different scales over the chords:

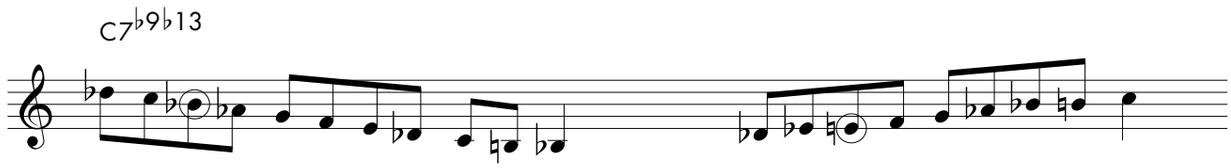
Progression IIA



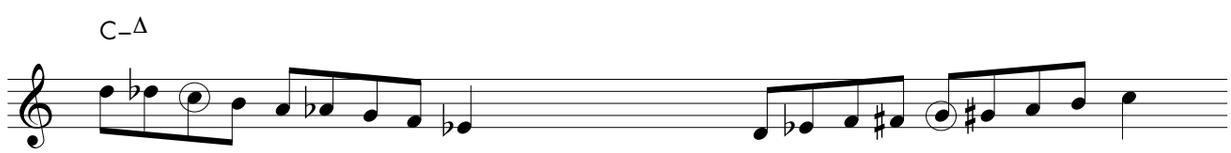
The following examples spell out bebop scales starting on the 9 for different chord types. The circled note indicates where the initial bebop scale begins.







Note that on this last example for C7♭9♭13, when the scale goes over an octave, the major 7th (the note B) is added as usual in the dominant bebop scale. The starting notes, D♭ to C, are scale approaches to the B♭ where the initial scale then begins.

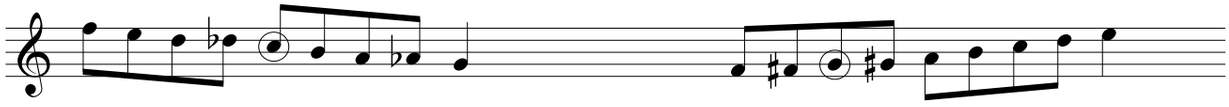


Notice here on the ascending line that the initial bop scale is not started until you reach the fifth of the chord.

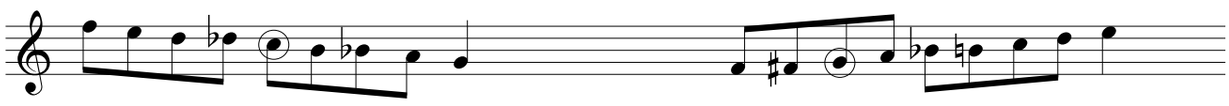
Chapter 8: Bop Scales Starting on the 11th

The following examples show how to start a bop scale on the 11th for the different chord types. As in the preceding chapter the circled note marks the point at which the "initial" bebop scale begins.

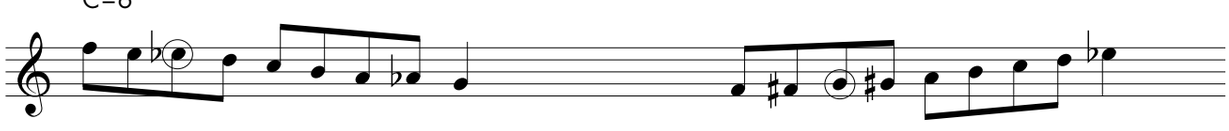
CΔ



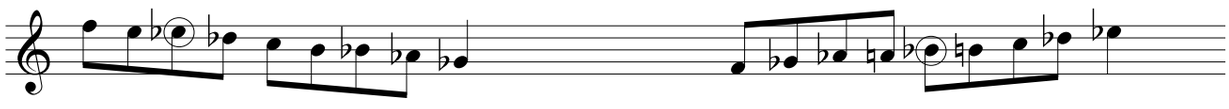
C7



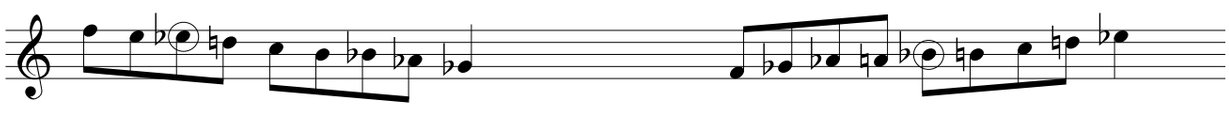
C–6^{9}

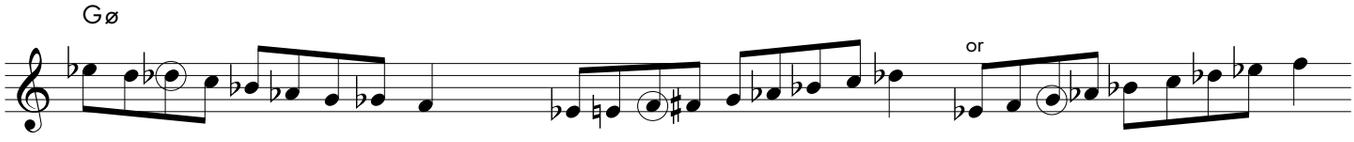


Cø

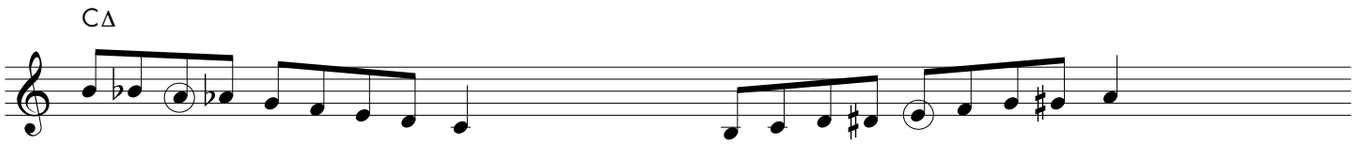


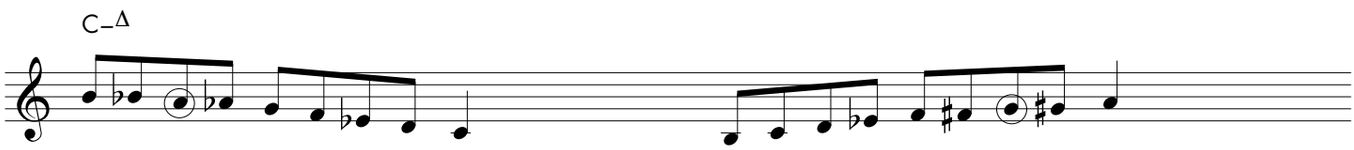
Cø$^{\sharp 2}$





Bop scales starting on 7th for major and tonic minor chords.



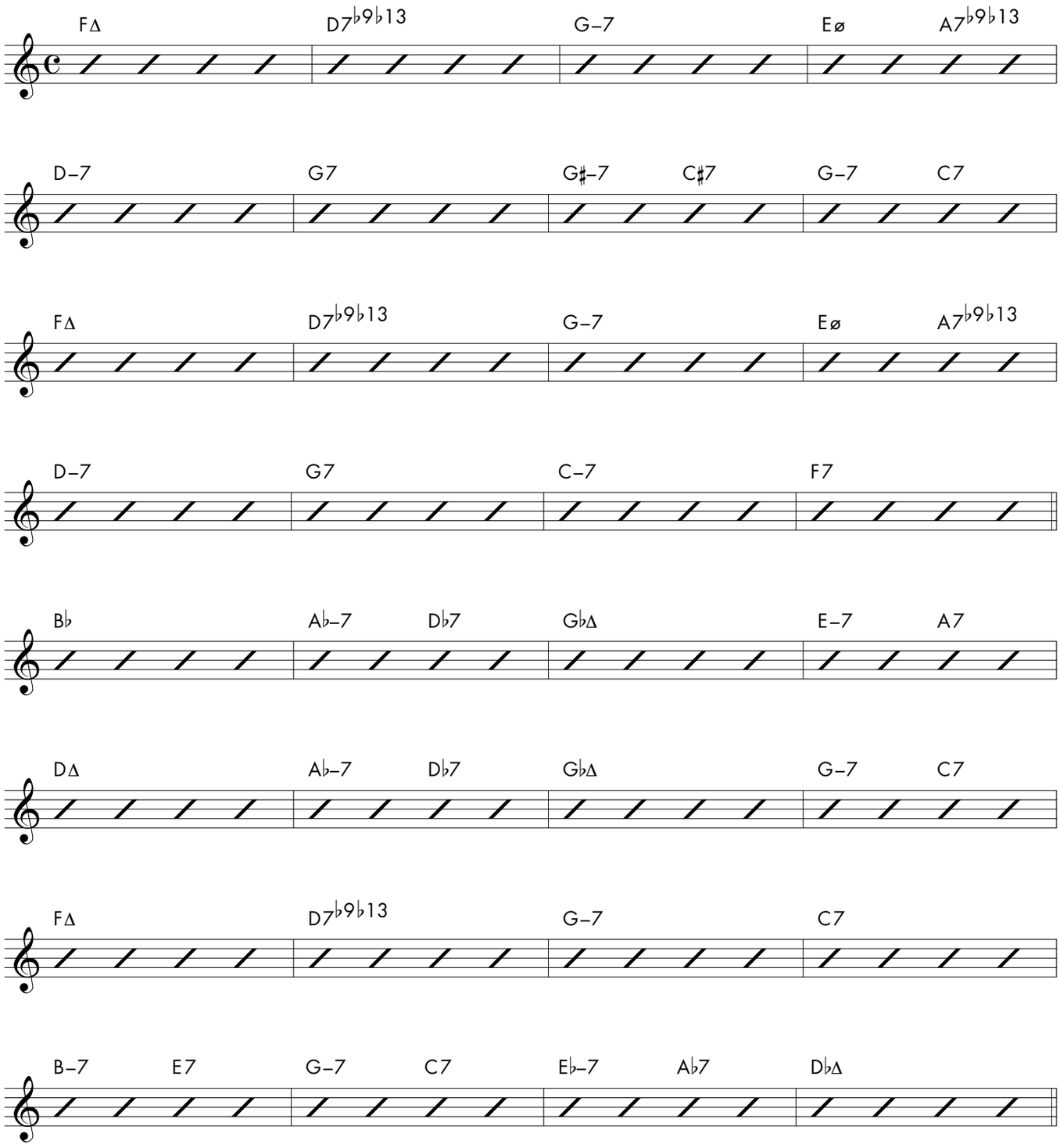


In this last example, ascending from the 7th on tonic minor, notice how long it takes before you can begin the initial bebop scale.

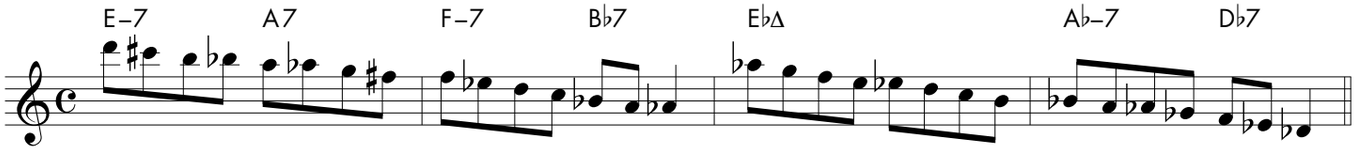
Try starting bop scales on the 13th or ♭13th on the next tune. For major chords start on the 7th to mix it up a bit.

For the next assignment play through tune 7 and start bop scales on every scale degree both descending and ascending. Then play through the tune and make random choices for starting notes.

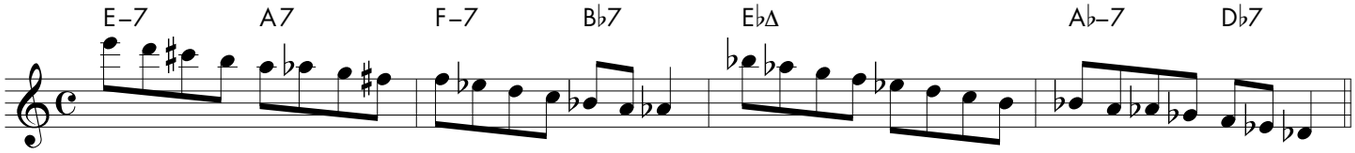
TRACK 18/19: TUNE 7 *HAVE YOU MET MISS MILLER?* (C INSTRUMENTS)



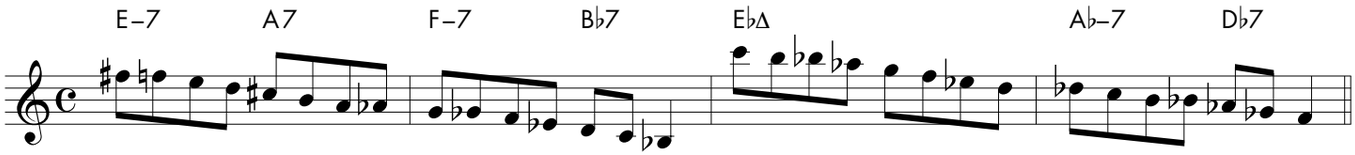
From 4 descending



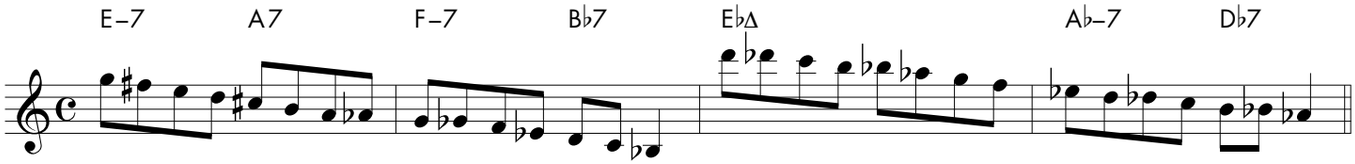
From 5 descending



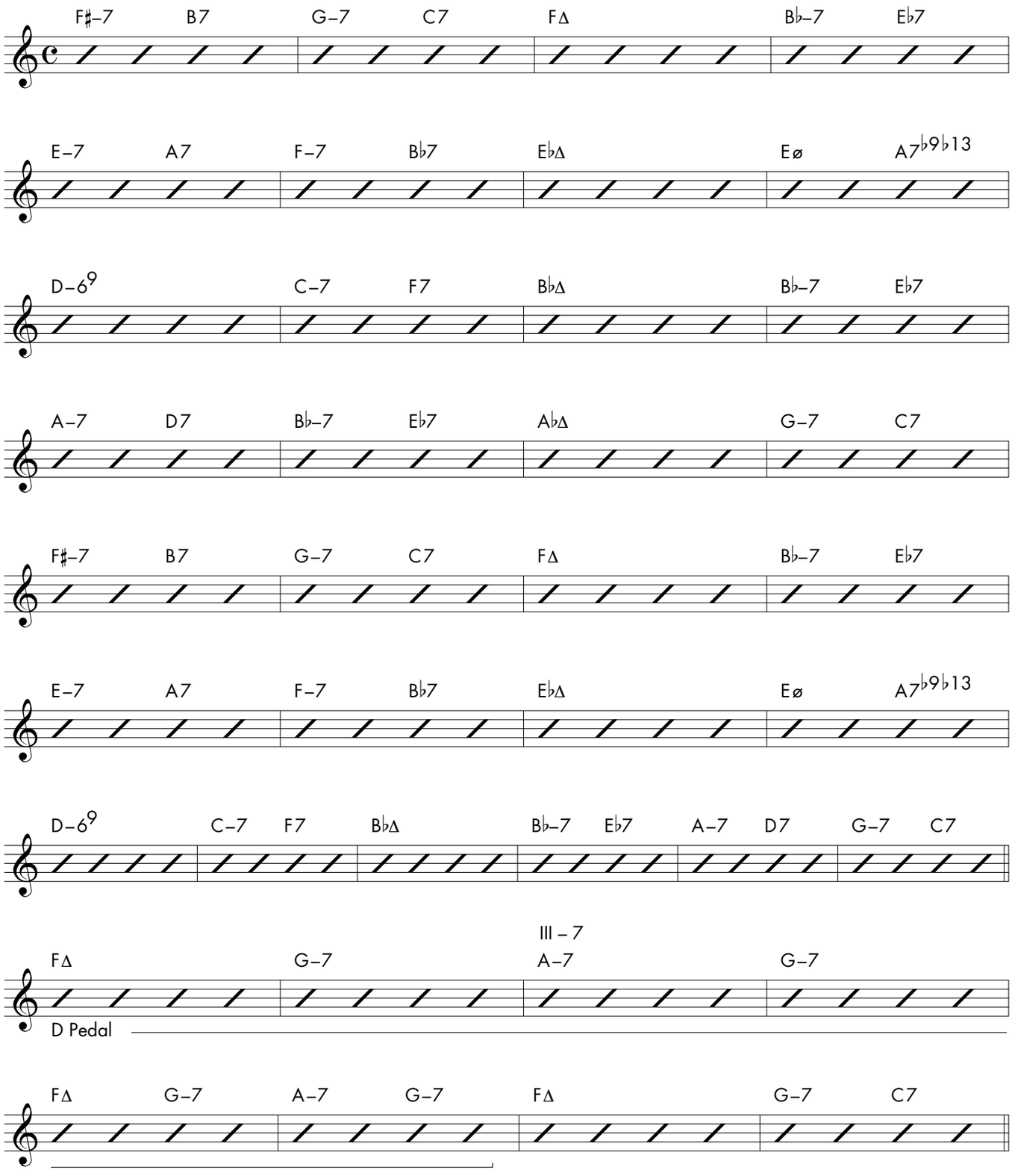
From 6 descending



From 7 descending

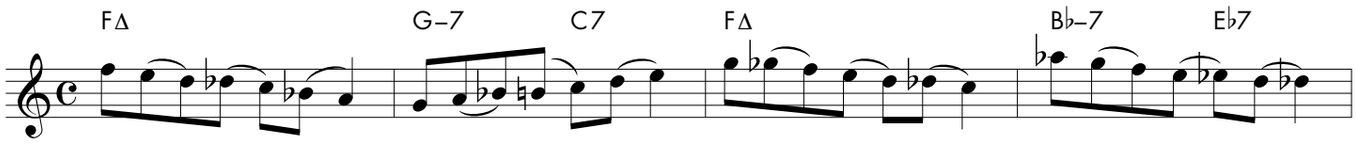


TRACK 20/21: TUNE 8 *GREAT MOMENTS* (B♭ INSTRUMENTS)

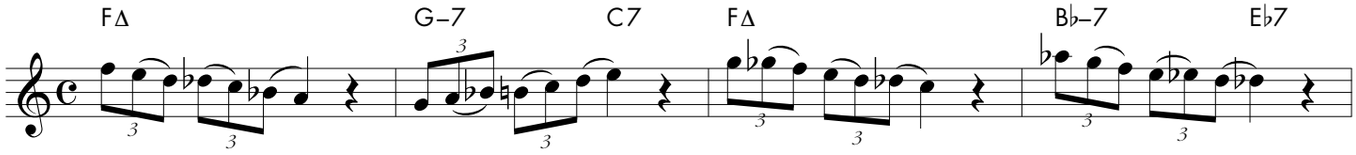


Chapter 11: Rhythmic Variations

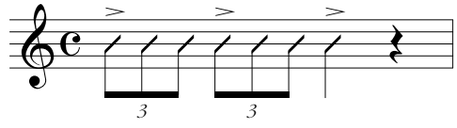
To give a little variety to a rather dry sound try playing the bop sales in triplets but accenting as if they were eighth notes. For example, instead of playing on the first four bars of tune 2 like this;



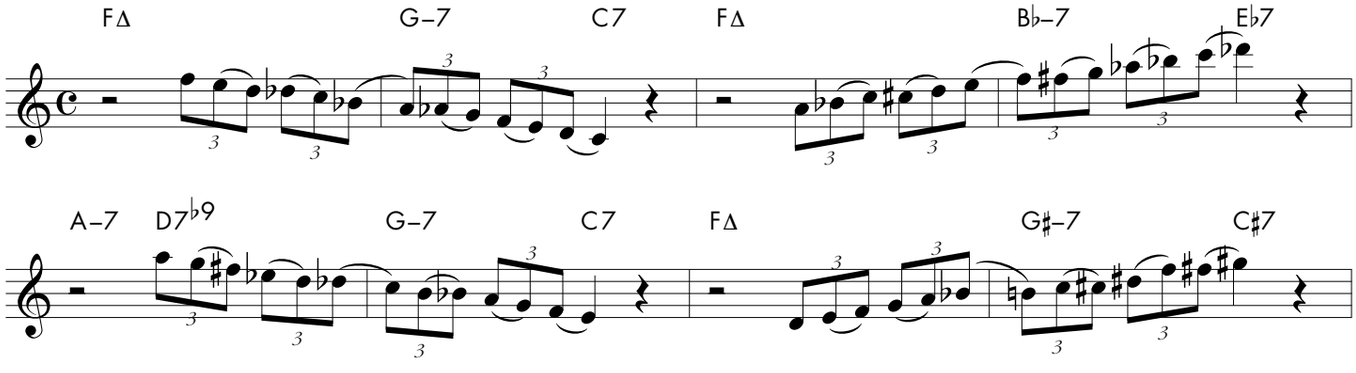
Try playing those notes in triplets, it would look like this;



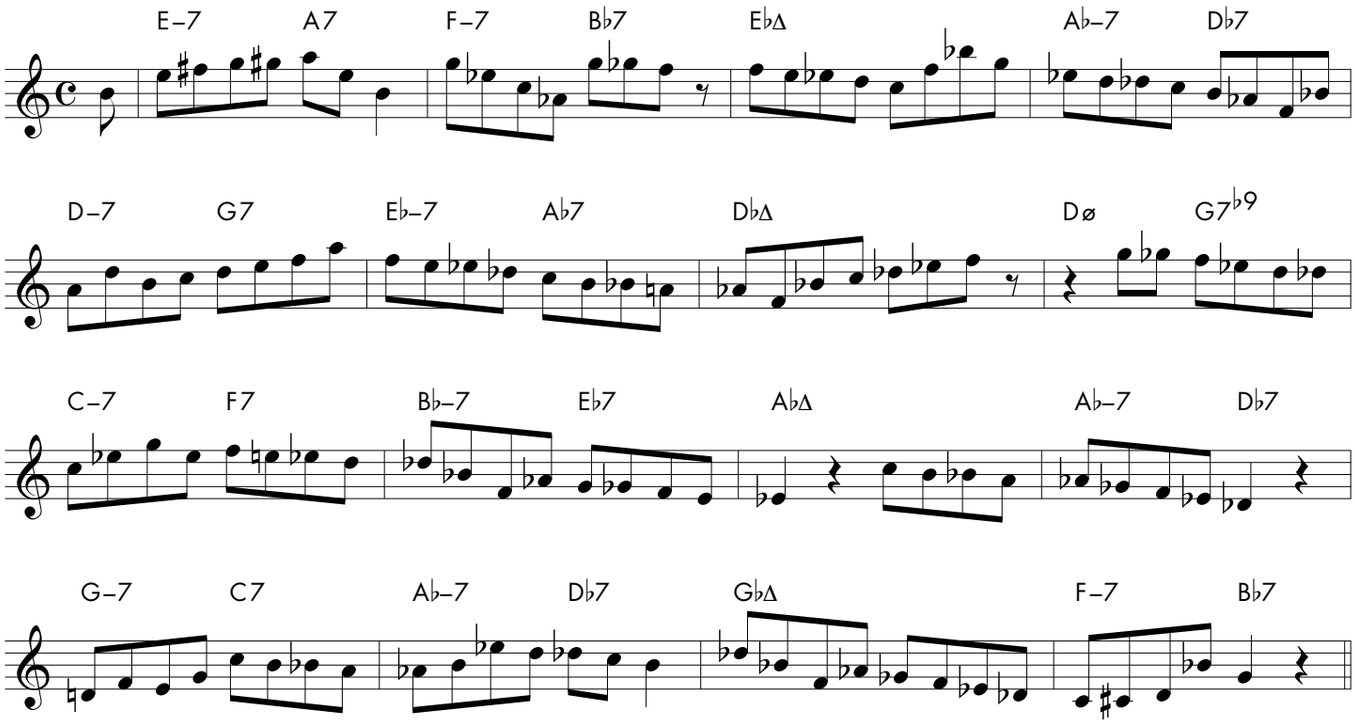
The articulation is the same as if the line were played with eighth notes. If you articulate accenting the first note of every triplet like so, the passing tone will get an undesired accent.



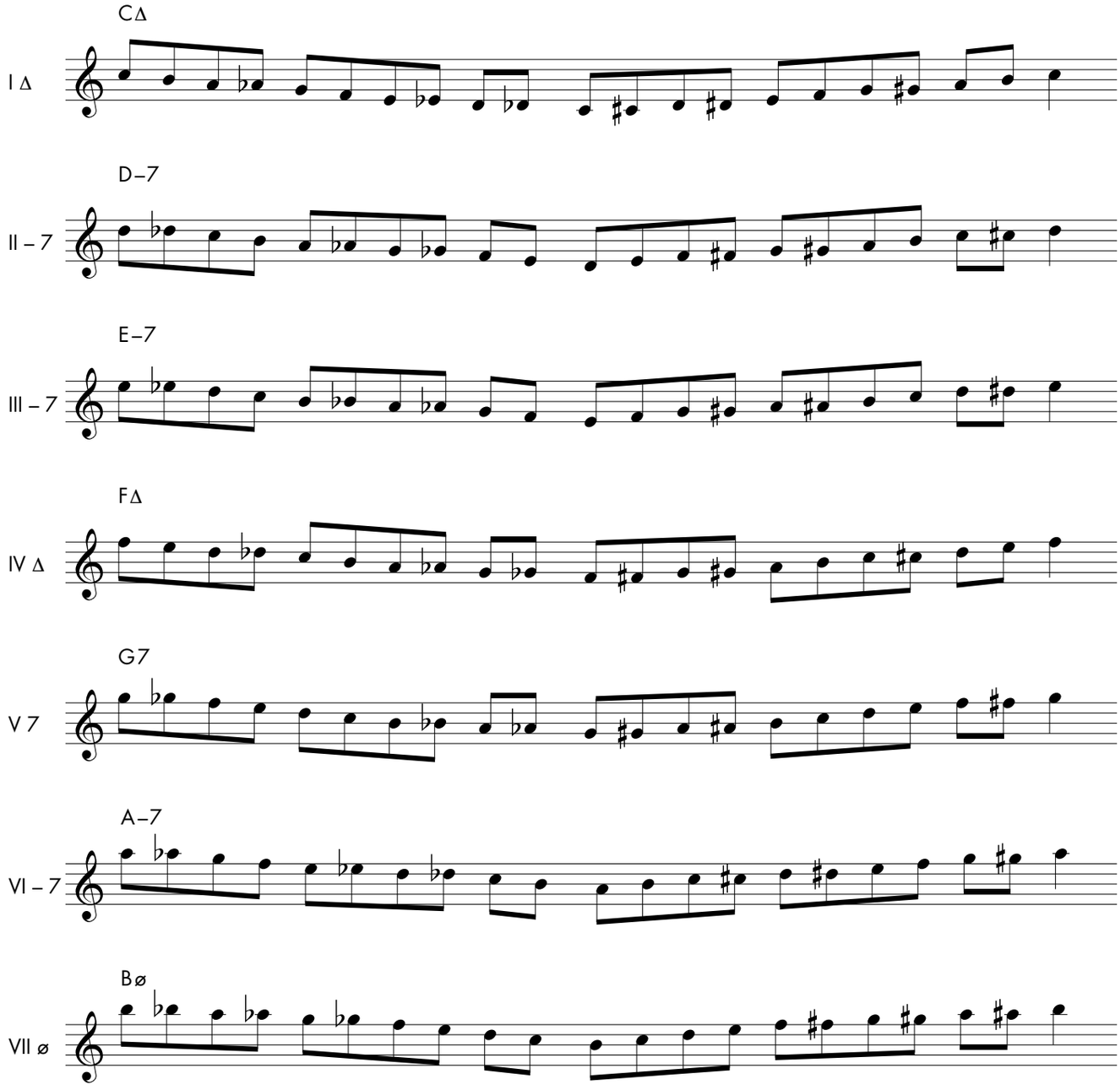
Playing triplets across the bar line also has a great effect. Here is an example on the beginning eight bars of tune 2.



The following is an example of approaching and leaving bop scales with larger intervals:



Chapter 13: Ten-Note Bop Scales

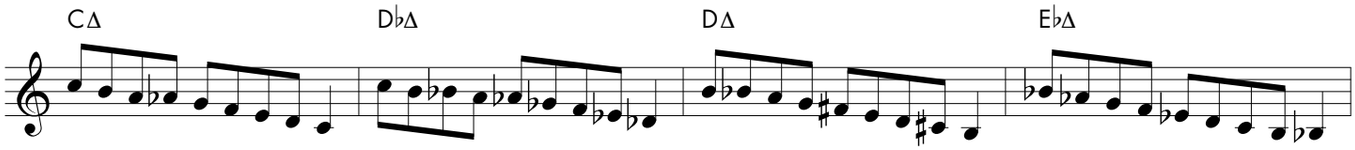


Notice that the down beats for both the IΔ and the IVΔ are 1 - 2 - 3 - 5 and 6. The down beats for the II–7, III–7, and VI–7 are 1 - 3 - 4 - 5 - and 7. The down beats for the V7 are 1 - 2 - 3 - 5 - and 7 and the down beats for the VIIø are 1 - 3 - 5 - 6 and 7. Downbeats are the places where you can start the scale and it sounds harmonically right or consistent with the chord.

Use the following grid to practice descending eight or ten-note major bop scales. Start each scale on the given note. Here are the first four measures for this exercise using the eight-note scale and then the ten-note scale.

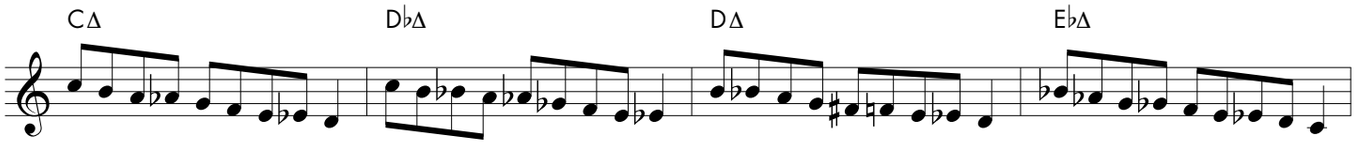
Example:

Eight-note

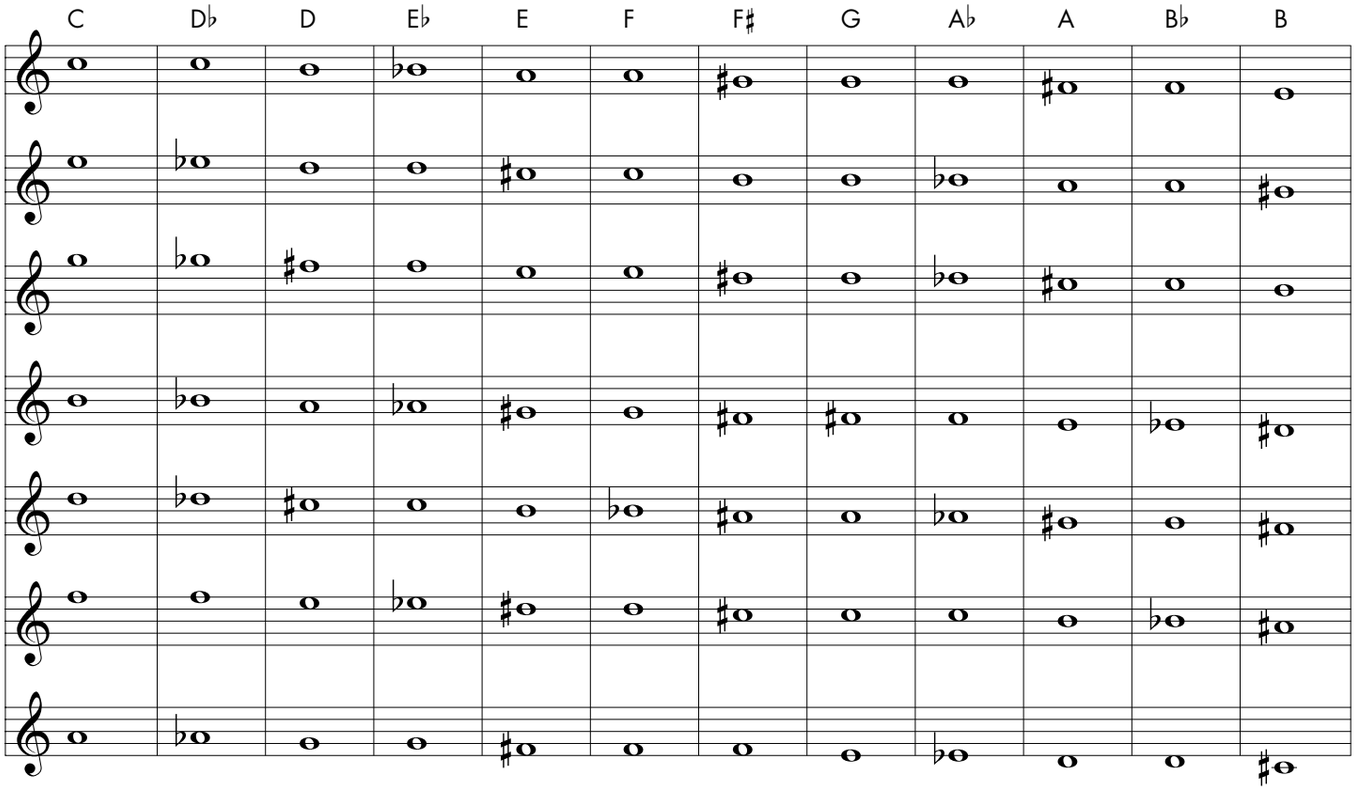


Example:

Ten-note

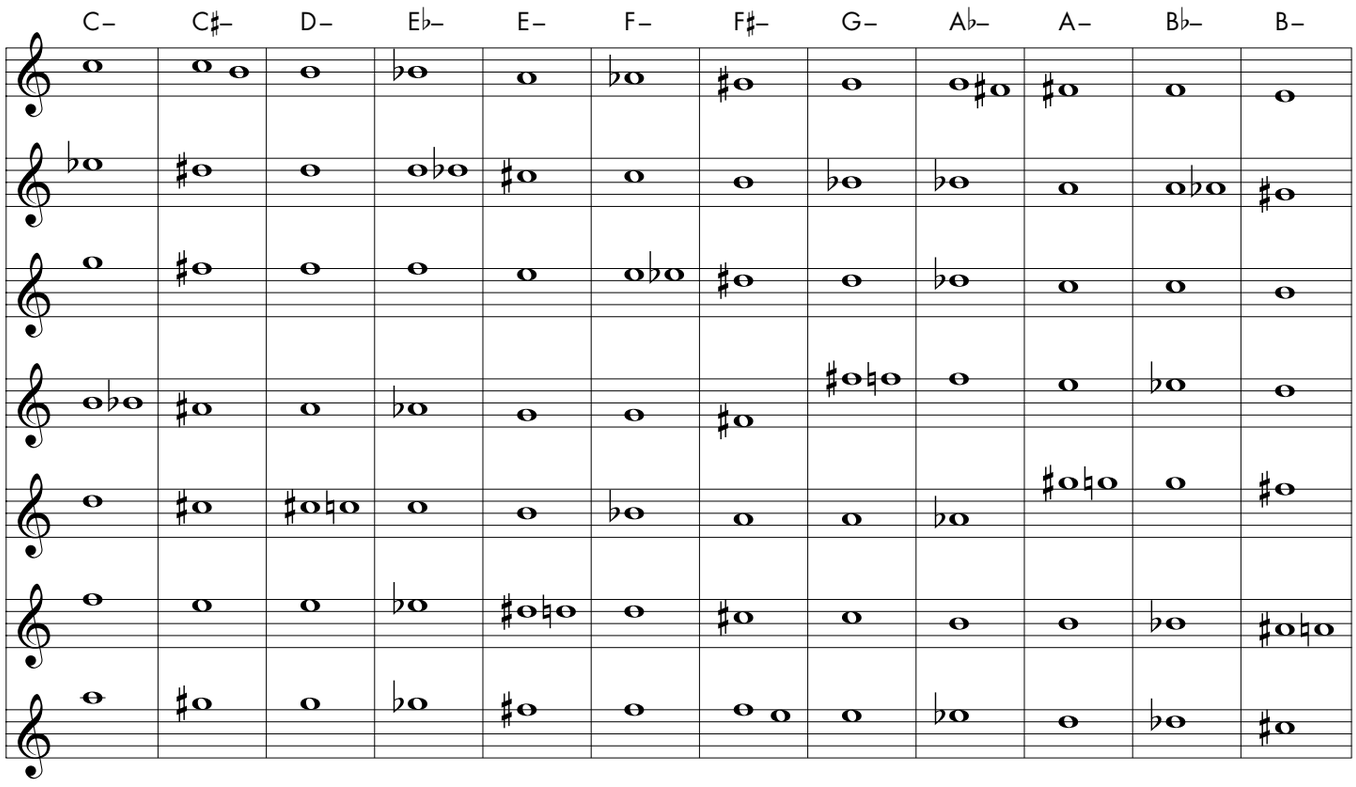


Grid #1 Descending/Major



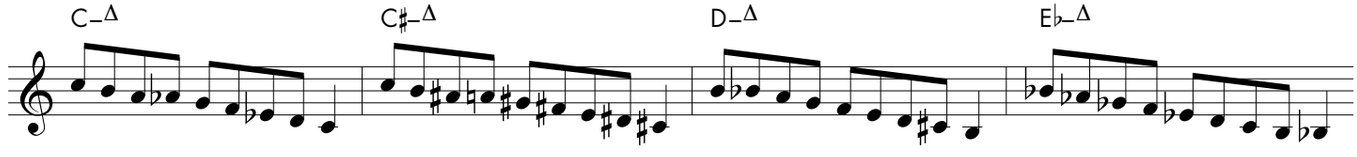
Grid #5 Descending/Minor

Note that when you are given the seventh as the starting note there are two options, major 7th from the tonic minor bop scale or minor 7th from the Dorian bop scale.



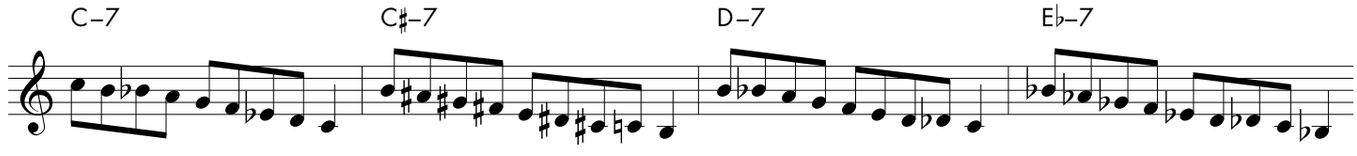
Example:

Eight-note descending tonic minor

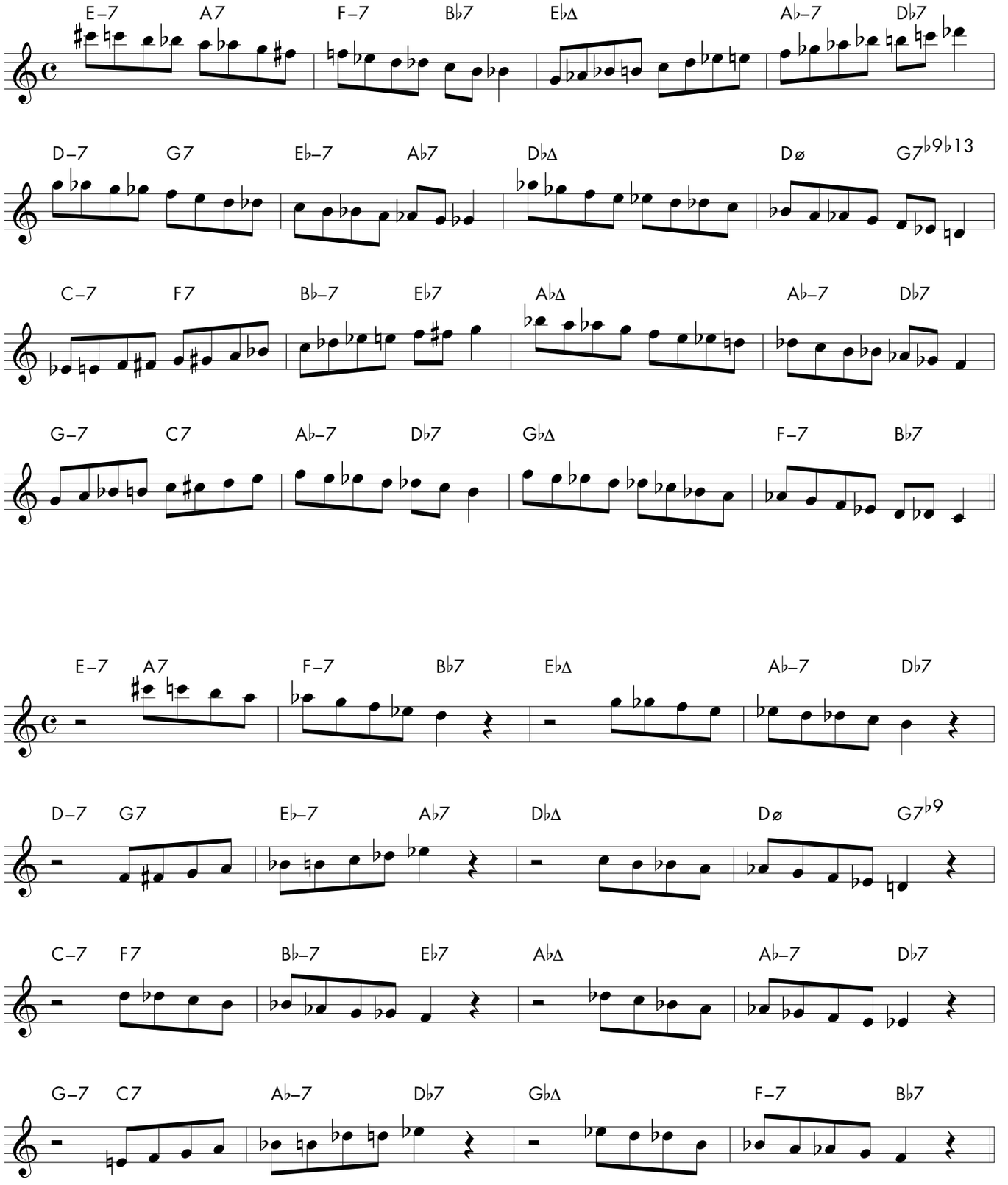


Example:

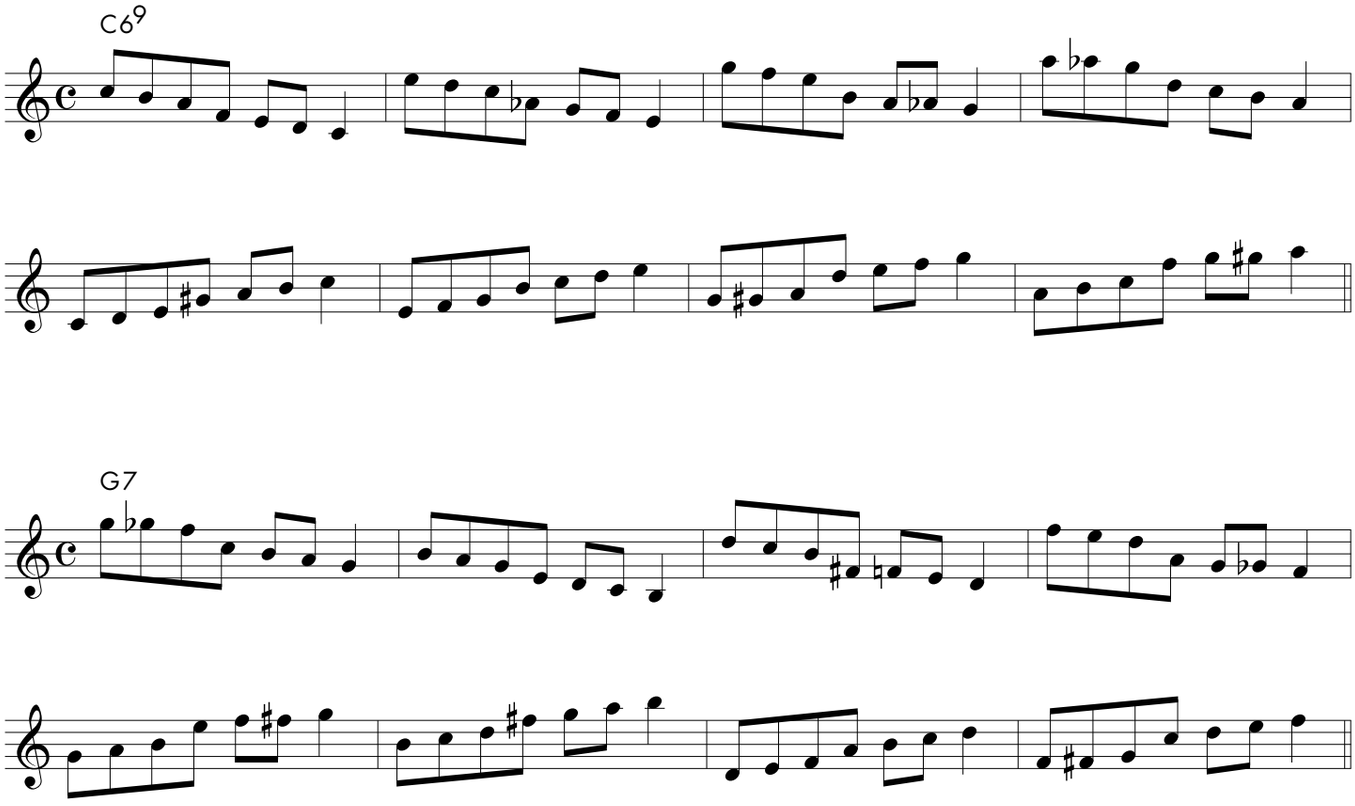
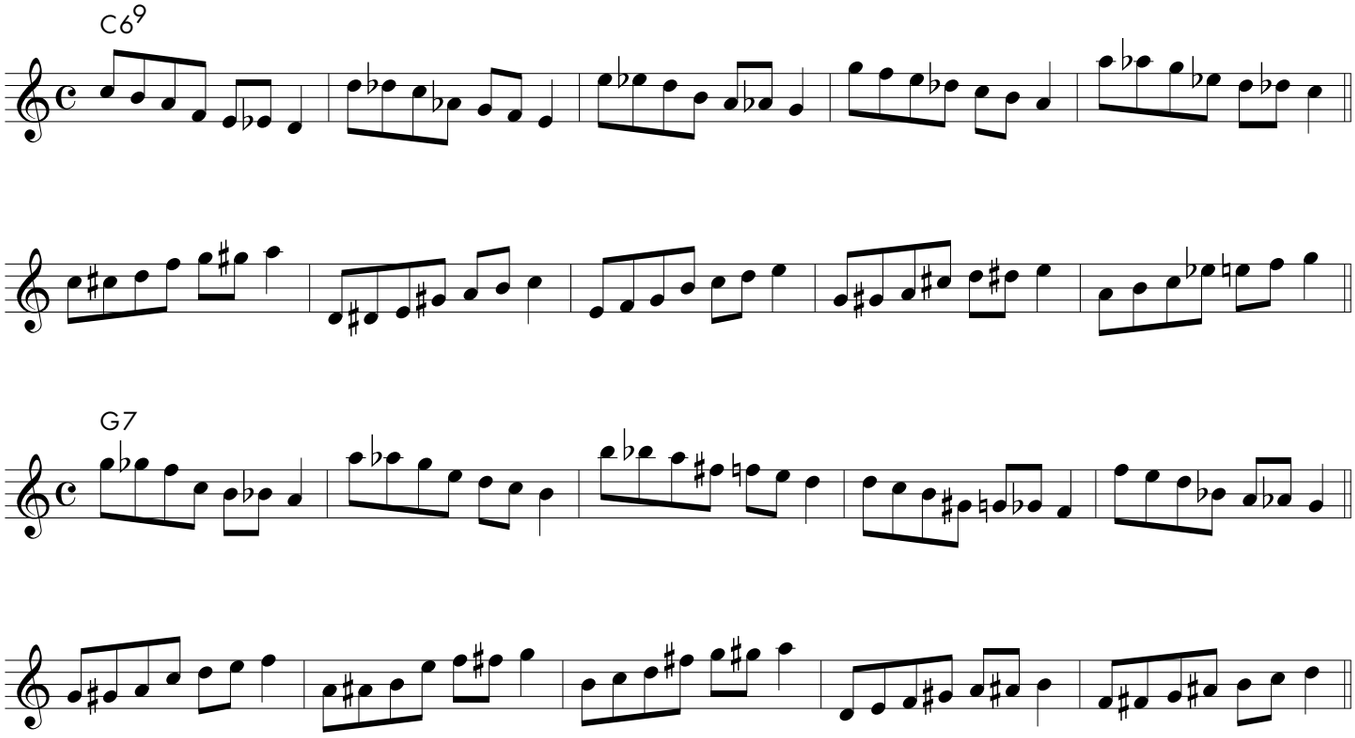
Eight-note descending II–7 or Dorian minor



The following examples show how to play across the bar using the ten-note bop scales:



The following examples use seven notes of the scale and skip notes:



The following examples use ten-note scales with skipping notes: