

Bass Runs, Thirds, Tenths, and Contrary Motion

Dr. Glen Newton, July 13, 2004

Goals

Strengthen the listener's appreciation of the chord progression by the use of bass runs.

Help other instrumentalists anticipate the next chord in unfamiliar songs.

Bass Runs

Bass runs with 4 beats per measure

No change in chord:

Up a 4th or down a 5th:

Up a 5th or down a 4th:

Up a major 3rd:

Down a minor 3rd:

When you have several choices, pick the one that fits best with the melody. *Example: Blue Water Line, measures 5 and 13. The last note of the melody in bar 5 is a C, which clashes with a B in the bass, but the last note of the melody in bar 13 is an A (in a descending line), which is okay with the B in the bass.*

When the melody stays on one note, create interest with a bass run. *Example: Blue Water Line, measure 22 and other places.*

Choose the bass notes to make a smooth ascending or descending line. *Example: Blue Water Line, measure 9, F# is a better choice than D for the bass note.*

Bass runs with 3 beats per measure

No change in chord:

Down a 5th:

Others: Same as with 4 beats, but omit 2nd beat.

Runs in Thirds and Tenths

A tenth is just a third plus an octave.

Thirds: Tenths: Coordinate with the string bass player!

Contrary Motion

Try to make the bass run go the opposite direction from the melody. Play two lines on the guitar going in opposite directions. *Examples: Blue Water Line, measures 6, 12, 14, 22, and 26.*

Blue Water Line

accompaniment by Glen Newton
7/13/04

Guitar

The score is written for guitar and voice. It consists of six systems, each with a vocal line and a guitar line. The guitar line includes chord diagrams and tablature. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is common time (C). The piece begins with a guitar introduction of 6 measures, followed by a vocal line starting at measure 7. The guitar accompaniment continues throughout, with various chords and techniques like triplets and bends indicated. The piece concludes with a double bar line at measure 36.

7 C C C7 F C

Gtr. 7 C D7 G7 C C7

13 F C C F G7 C

Gtr. 13 F C C F G7 C

19 C C

Gtr. 19 C C

25 D7 G7 C C7 F C

Gtr. 25 D7 G7 C C7 F C

31 C Am7 Dm7 G7 C^{1.} C^{2.}

Gtr. 31 C Am7 Dm7 G7 C^{1.} C^{2.}

Blue Water Line

illustration of bass runs with
thirds, tenths, and contrary motion

accompaniment by Glen Newton
7/13/04

Guitar

The sheet music is organized into six systems, each consisting of a treble clef staff and a guitar tablature staff. The music is in 4/4 time and features various chords and bass line patterns. The first system (measures 1-6) includes chords C, C7, F, and C. The second system (measures 7-12) includes D7, G7, and C7. The third system (measures 13-18) includes F, C, G7, and C. The fourth system (measures 19-24) is primarily C. The fifth system (measures 25-30) includes D7, G7, C, C7, F, and C. The sixth system (measures 31-36) includes C, Am7, Dm7, G7, and two endings for C (C1 and C2).

Chord symbols: C, C7, F, D7, G7, Am7, Dm7, C1, C2.

Measure numbers: 1, 7, 13, 19, 25, 31.