Triad Pairs Lesson #1

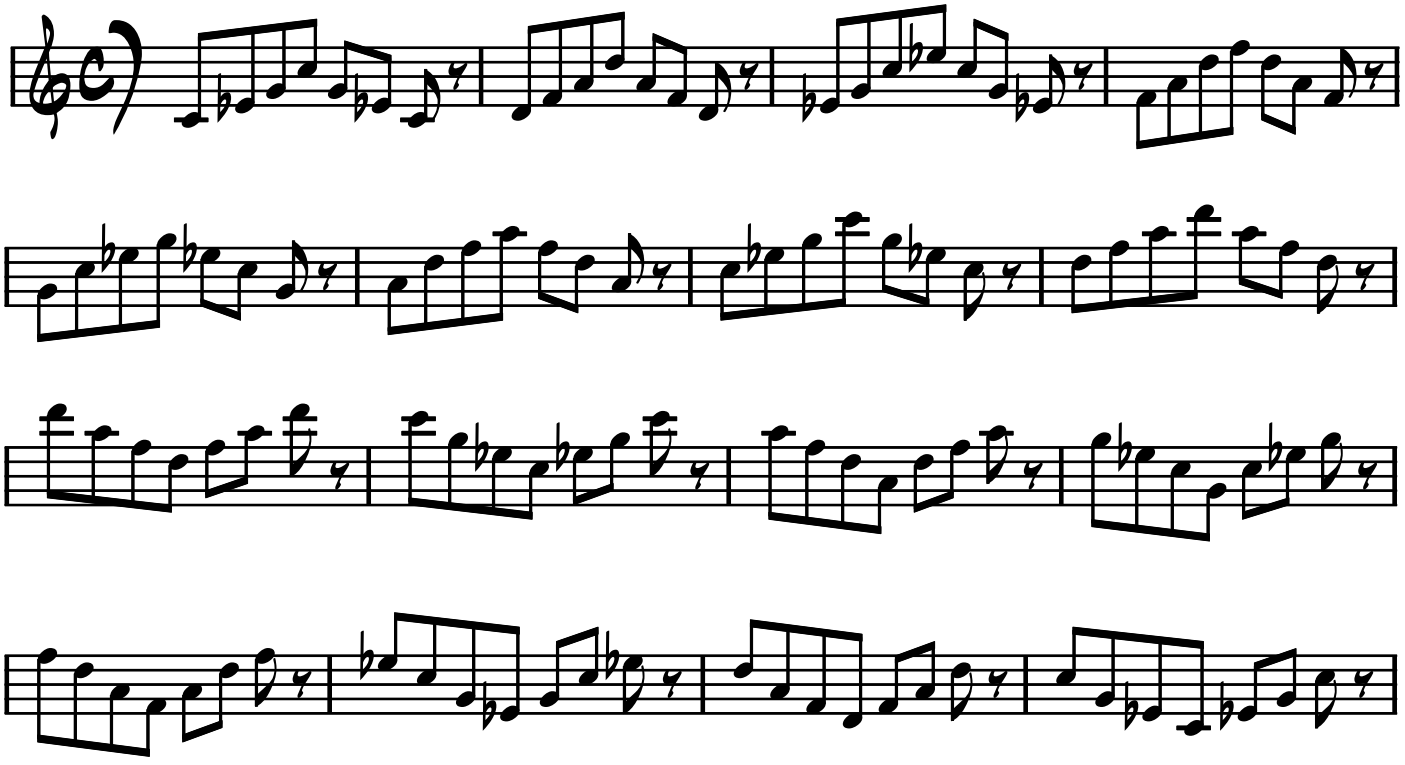
Concert

Using C minor triad and D minor
triad to create improvised melodic material
over the C minor 7th Chord.

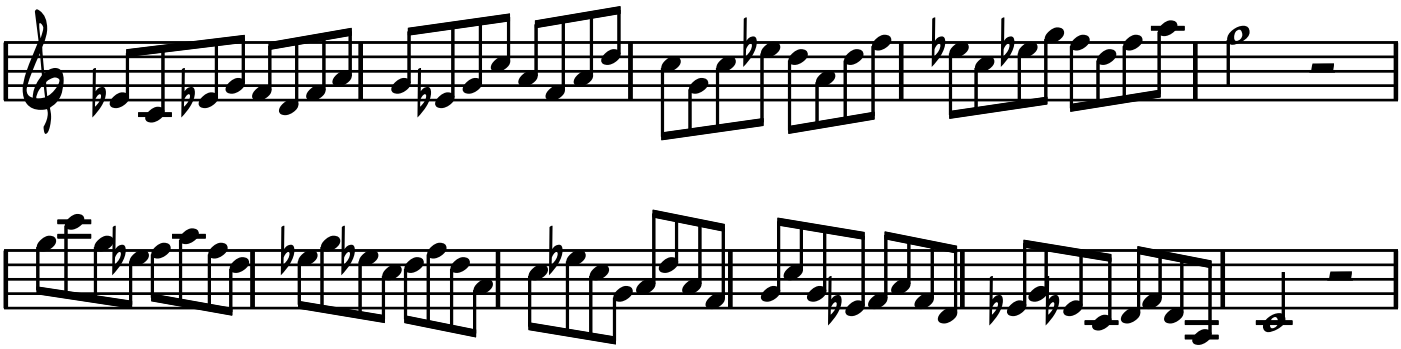
Triad pairs have been used in improvisation for some time. I was first introduced to triad pairs in the 1980's studying with David Baker while attending Indiana University. I learned more about their application under the guidance of George Garzone at Berklee School of Music, and later studying with Larry Koonse at Cal Arts.

First get comfortable with the two triads in each of their inversions in one key, here are two exercises that will help you gain a minimal comfort level.

1. C-7 C minor triad D minor triad C minor triad D minor triad etc..

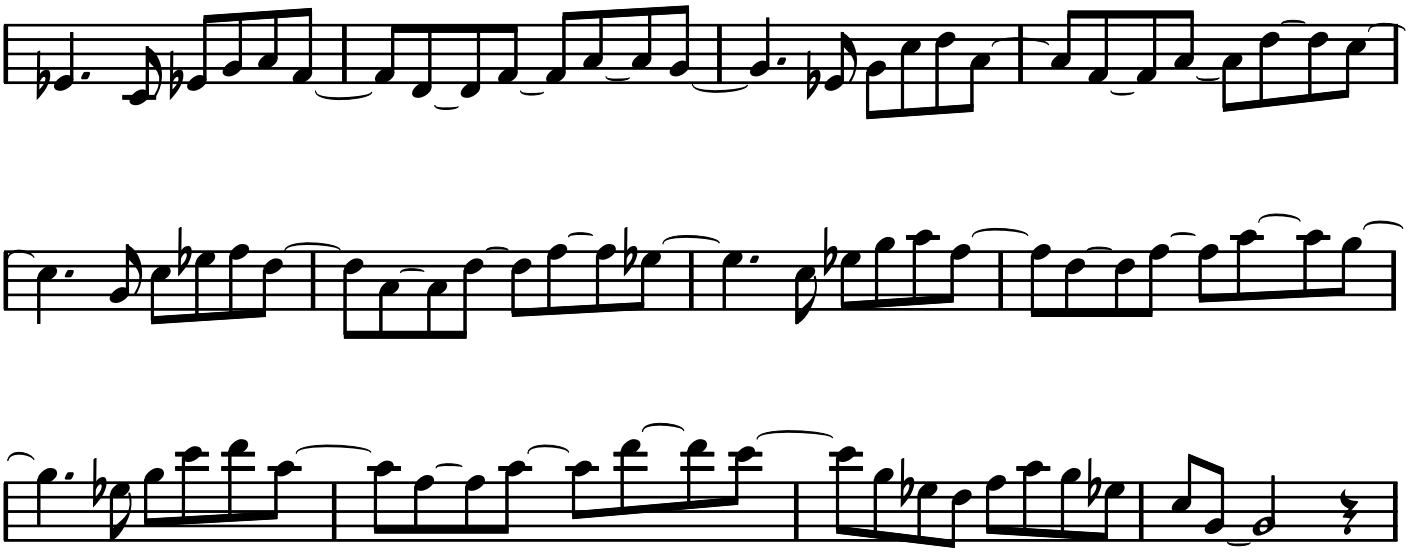


TRIAD PAIRS CONTINUED

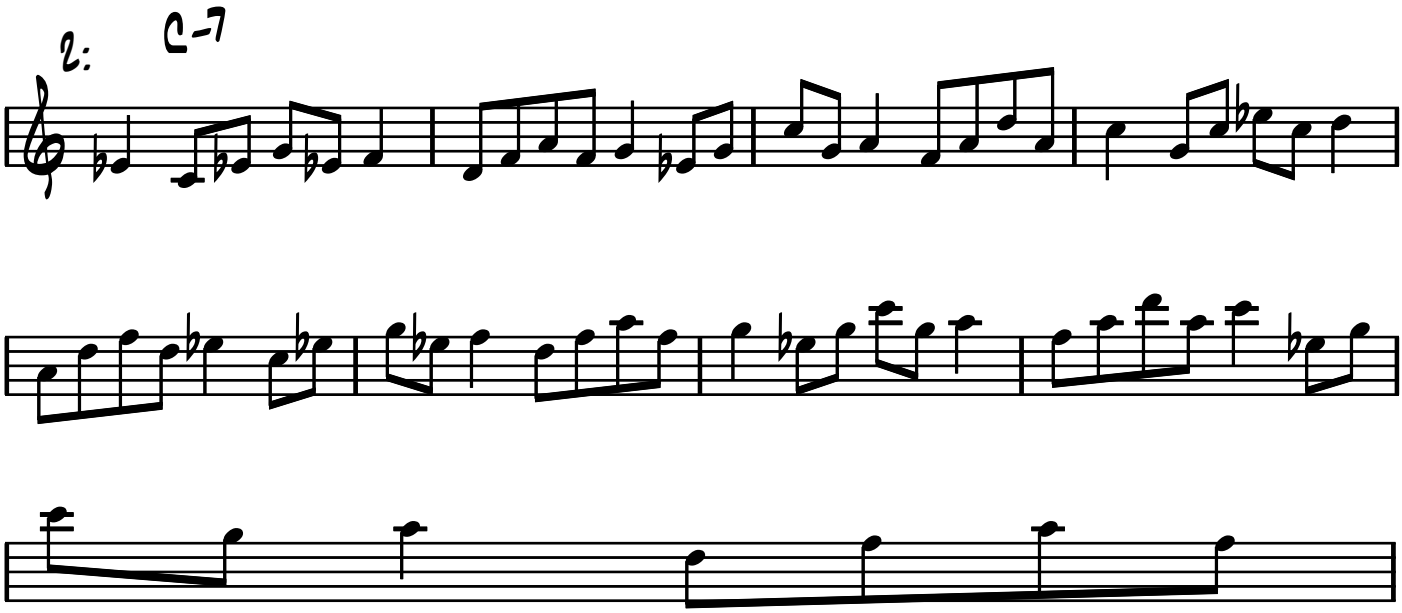


AFTER BECOMING COMFORTABLE WITH THE TWO TRIADS IN THEIR DIFFERENT INVERSIONS OVER THE C MINOR 7TH CHORD, BEGIN TO COME UP WITH STRONGER MELODIC IDEAS BY INTRODUCING RHYTHMIC VARIATIONS INTO THE TWO TRIAD STRUCTURE, MOVE AWAY FROM CONSTANT 8THS NOTES A.S.A.P. HERE ARE TWO SIMPLE EXAMPLES:

C-7

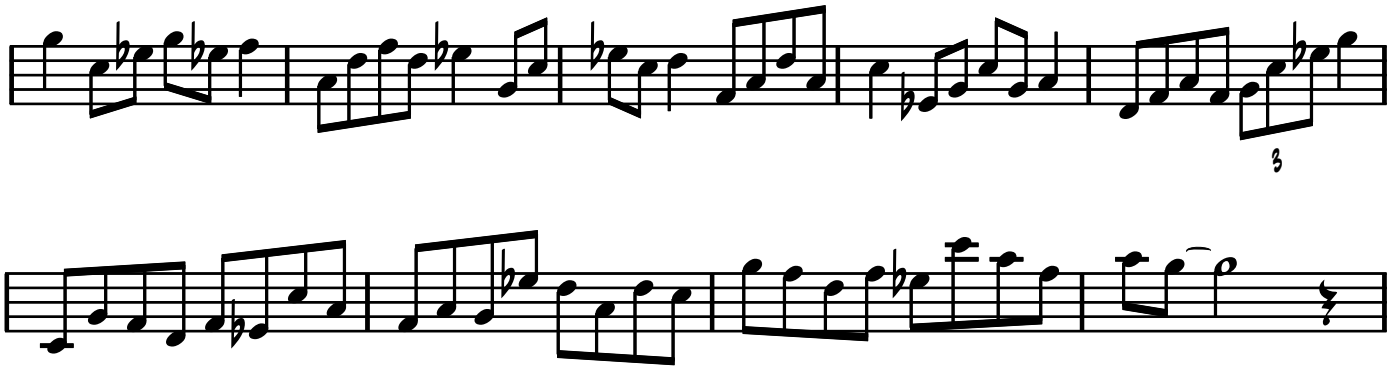


TRIAD PAIRS CONTINUED



KEEP IN MIND THAT YOU CAN COMBINE 1,2,3,4 OR ANY NUMBER OF NOTES FROM EACH OF THE TRIADS TO CREATE A MORE MELODIC AND LESS PREDICTABLE SOUND. HERE ARE 2 EXAMPLES. THE FIRST ONE CREATES A RHYTHMIC GROUPING OF 5 OVER 4/4 TIME (2 NOTES FROM CONCERT C MINOR AND 3 NOTES FROM CONCERT D MINOR).

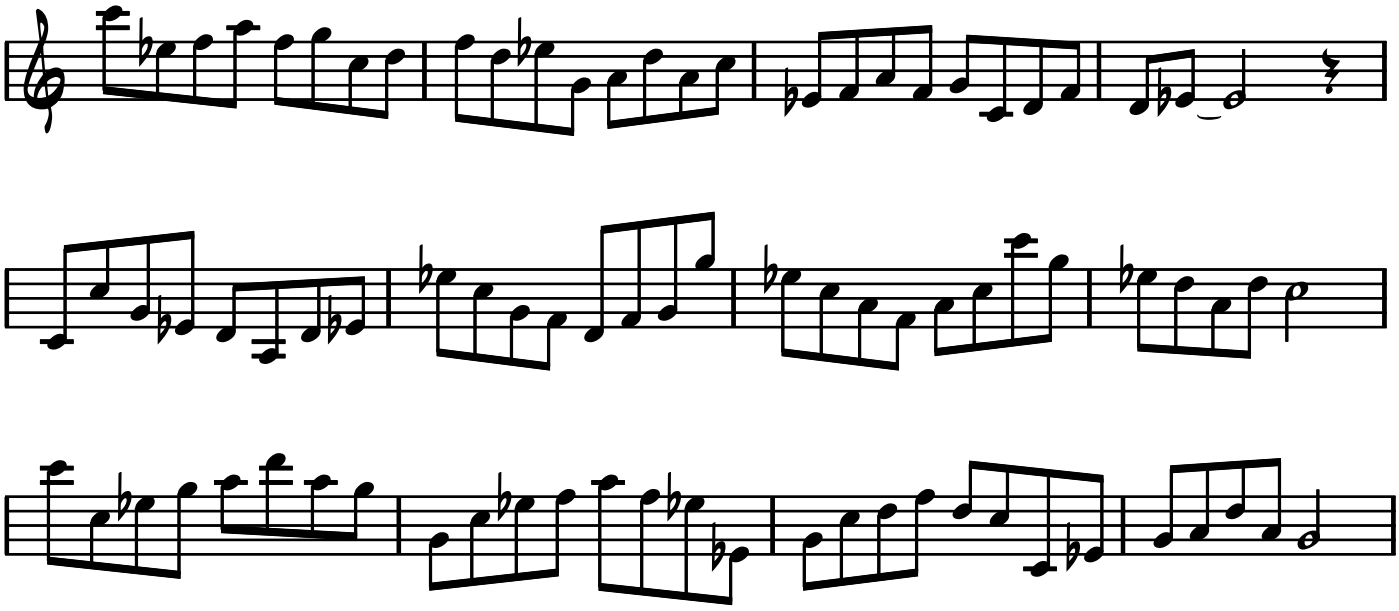
1.



Triad Pairs continued.

This example creates a 7 over 4 rhythm (4 notes from concert C minor and 3 notes from concert D minor). Come up with your own variations.

2.



Next, begin improvising over the C minor 7th chord using the two triads. Vary rhythm and try to create melodies using only the two triads and the notes contained within.

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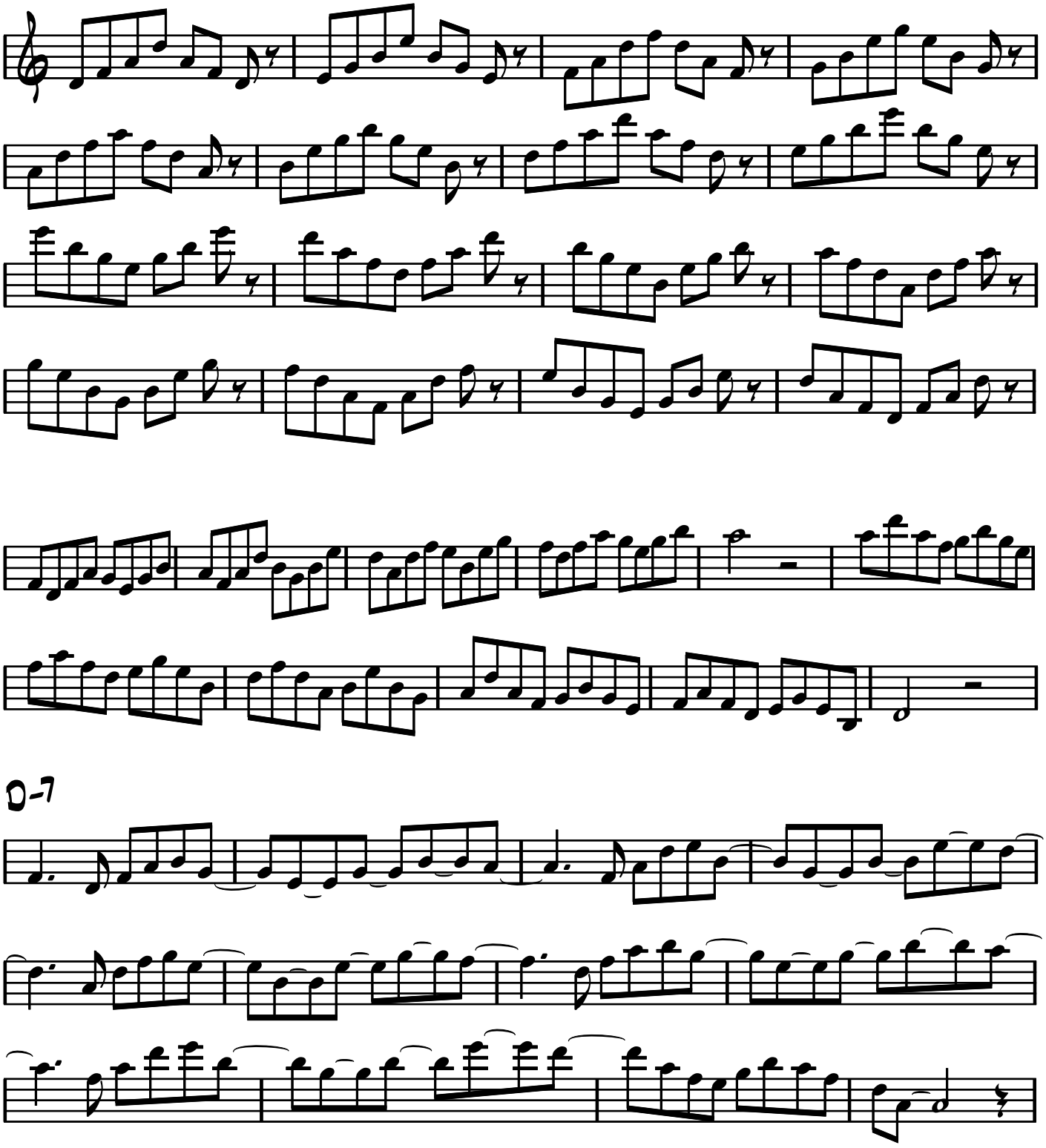
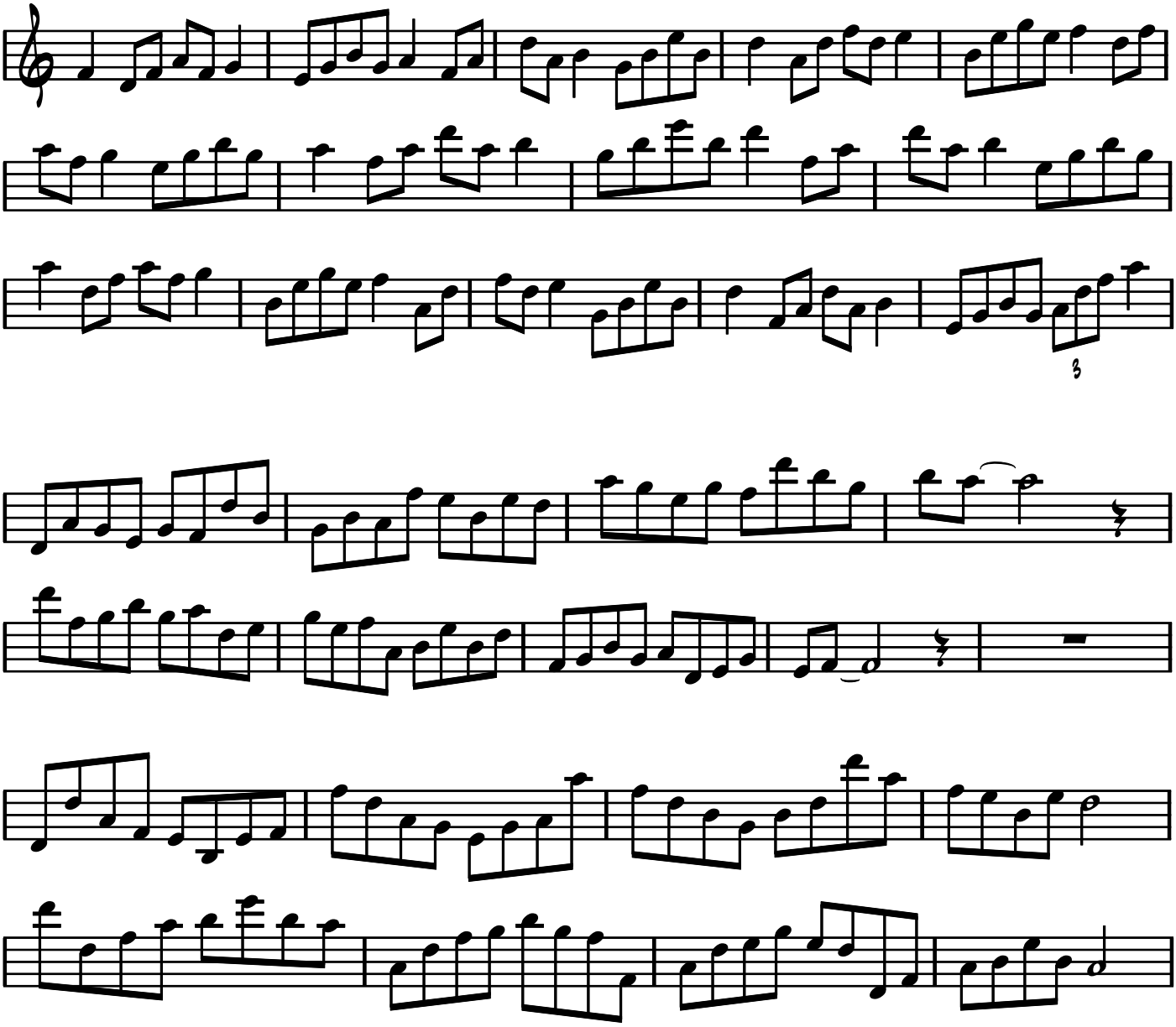
D-7 TENOR SAX/TRUMPET

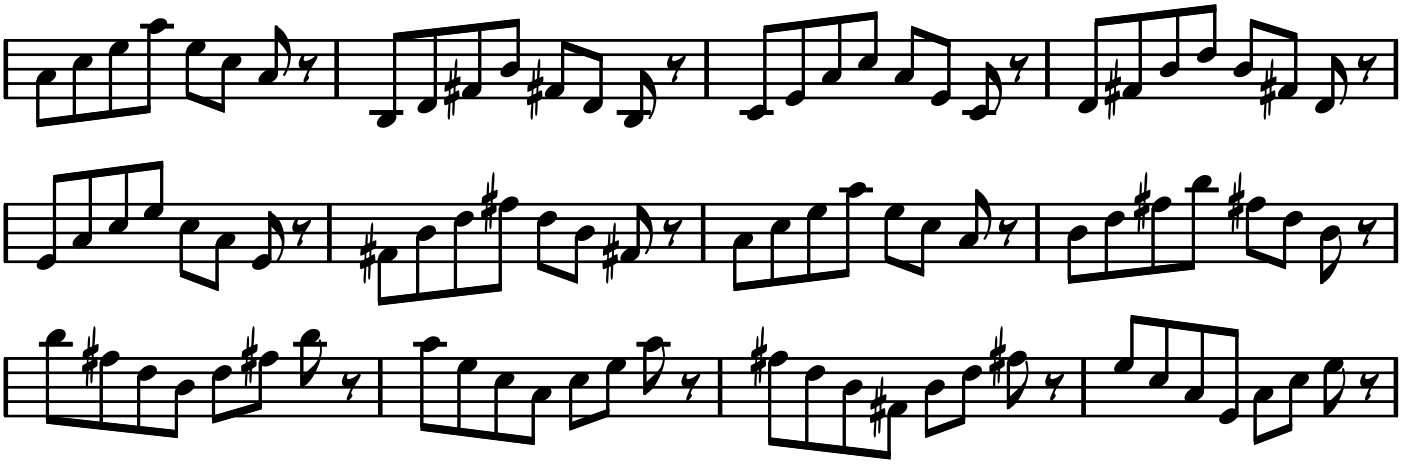


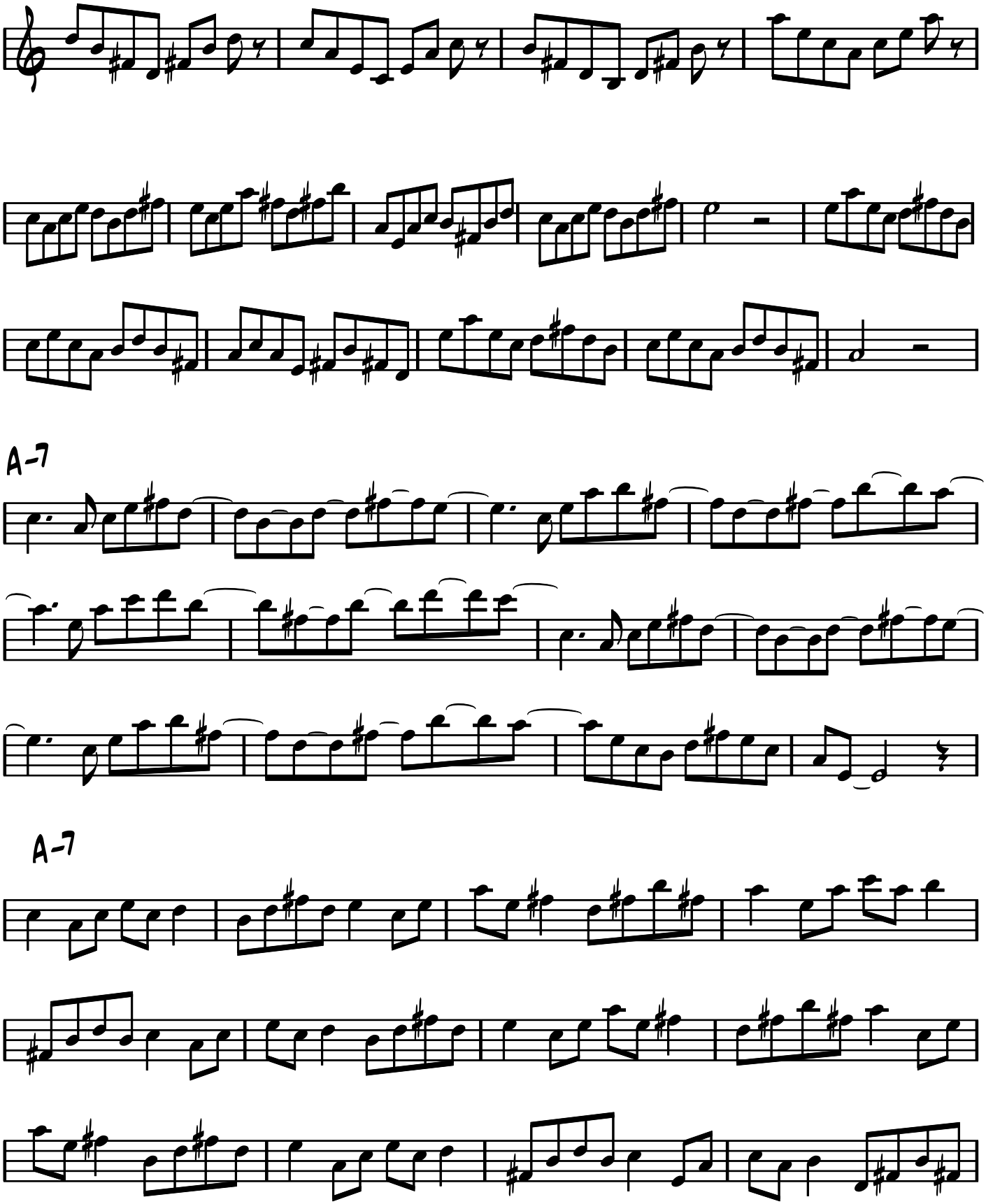
D-7

D-7



A-7 E FLAT ALTO SAX

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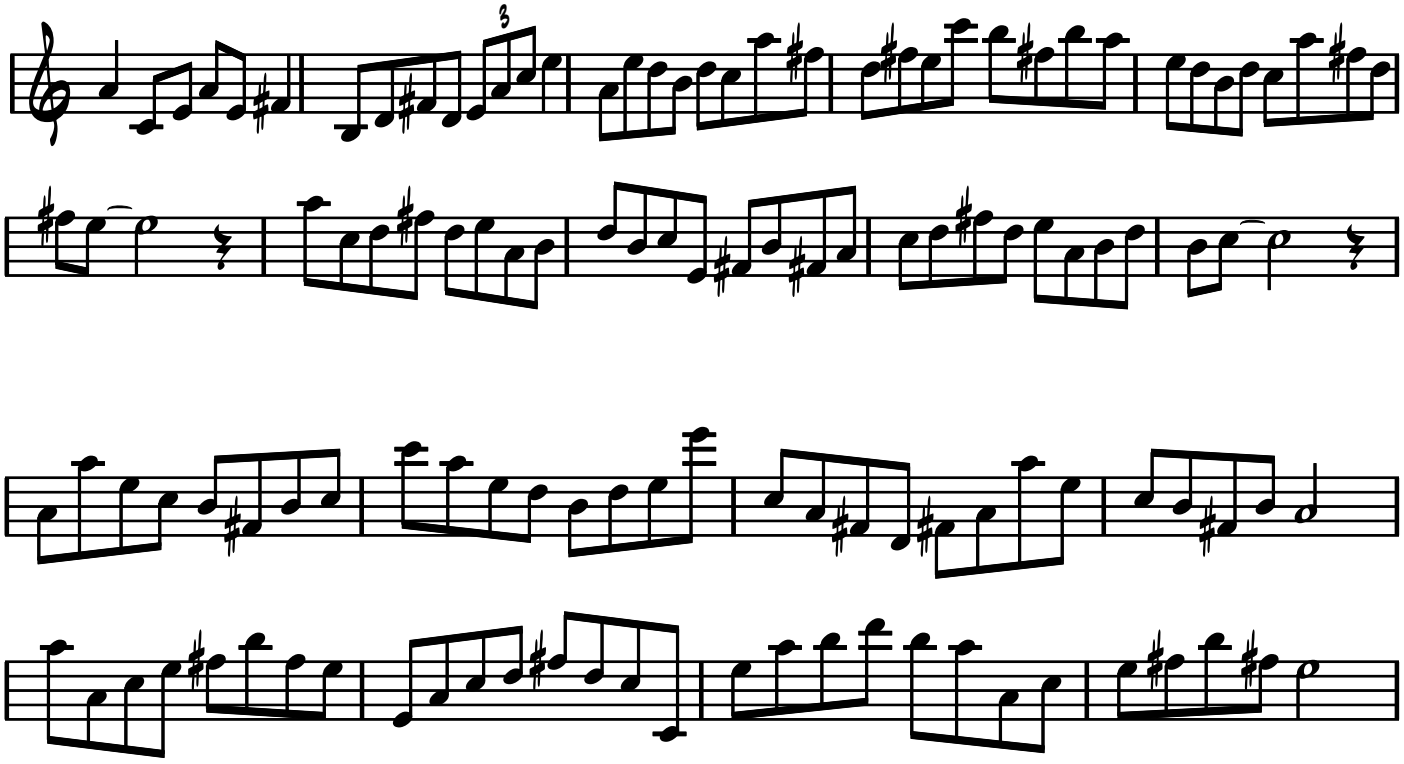

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