

# How To Play Fingerstyle Blues, Even If You're "All Thumbs" When It Comes To Fingerpicking


## Fingerstyle Blues Quadrant

<b>Accompaniment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bass (shuffle, pedal)</li><li>• Walking Bass</li><li>• Chords (open, bar, triads, other)</li><li>• Travis Picking</li></ul>	<b>Lines:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Riffs/Licks</li><li>• Melodies</li><li>• Turnarounds</li><li>• 3rds/6ths</li></ul>
<b>Arrangement/Composition:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intro/Ending</li><li>• Form (12 bar/8 bar etc)</li><li>• Form variations</li><li>• Phrasing Patterns</li></ul>	<b>Style:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Swing</li><li>• Straight</li><li>• Slow Blues</li><li>• Delta</li><li>• Jazz</li><li>• Gospel</li></ul>


## 12 Bar Blues Variations

Standard Blues:


E7



A7 E7




B7 A7 E7 B7




Quick Change Blues:


E7 A7 E7



A7 E7



B7 E7



## Jazz Blues:

Three staves of musical notation, each containing four measures of whole notes. The chords for each measure are as follows:

- Staff 1: E7, A7, E7, (empty)
- Staff 2: A7, (empty), E7, C#7
- Staff 3: F#m7, B7, E7, C#7, F#m7, B7

### Concept 1: Bass

#### Bass Approach 1: Boogie Woogie

Three staves of guitar tablature, each containing four measures of eighth notes. The chords for each measure are as follows:

- Staff 1: E7
- Staff 2: A7, E7
- Staff 3: B7, A7, E7, B7

## Bass Approach 2: Walking Bass

**E7**

TAB

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

0 4 2 4 | 2 4 2 4 | 0 4 2 4 | 5 4 2 4

**A7** **E7**

TAB

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

0 4 2 4 | 2 4 2 4 | 0 4 2 4 | 2 4 0 1

**B7** **A7** **E7** **B7**

TAB

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

2 6 4 6 | 0 4 5 6 | 7 5 4 3 | 2 0 4 2

## Bass Approach 3: Syncopated Bass

**E7**

TAB

2 2 2 2 | 2 2 2 2 | 2 2 2 2 | 2 2 2 2

0 4 2 4 | 4 2 2 4 | 0 4 2 4 | 4 2 2 4

**A7** **E7**

TAB

2 2 2 2 | 2 2 2 2 | 2 2 2 2 | 2 2 2 2

0 4 2 4 | 4 2 2 4 | 0 4 2 4 | 4 2 2 4

F#m7                      B7                      E7                      B7

TAB

2 2 4 4 0 0 1 1    2 2 0 0 4 4 2 2    0 0 5 5 4 4 3 3    2 2 0 0 4 4 2 2

Example Template: Bass

E7	Walking Bass		
A7	Walking Bass		E7
B7	A7	E7	B7
Open Chords		Walking Bass	

E7

TAB

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0    2 4 2 4 0 4 2 4    0 4 2 4 5 4 2 4    0 0 0 0

A7                      E7

TAB

0 0 0 0 2 4 2 4    0 4 2 4 2 4 0 1    0 0 0 0

B7                      A7                      E7

TAB

Template: Bass


## Concept 2: Chords

Chord Approach 1: Shuffle

E5

TAB

A5

E5

TAB

B7 C7 B7 E5

TAB

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 | 3 3 3 3 2 2 2 2 | 2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4 | 2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4

1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 | 2 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 | 3 3 3 3 2 2 2 2 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Shuffle Variation:

E5

TAB

0 0 4 0 5 0 2 0 | 0 0 4 0 5 0 4 2

0 0 4 0 5 0 2 0 | 0 0 4 0 5 0 4 2

0 0 4 0 5 0 2 0 | 0 0 4 0 5 0 4 2

Chord Approach 2: 3, 2, 1

E7

TAB

4 3 4 | 4 3 4 | 4 3 4 | 4 3 4

3 2 3 | 3 2 3 | 3 2 3 | 3 2 3

4 3 4 | 4 3 4 | 4 3 4 | 4 3 4

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

A7 E7

TAB

5 4 5 | 5 4 5 | 4 3 4 | 4 3 4

5 4 5 | 5 4 5 | 3 2 3 | 3 2 3

6 5 6 | 6 5 6 | 4 3 4 | 4 3 4

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

B7 A7 E7 B7

TAB

2 0 2 | 3 2 0 | 0 0 3 | 2 0 2

0 0 2 | 2 2 2 | 1 1 1 | 0 0 2

2 2 2 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | 2 2 2

2 2 2 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | 2 2 2

## Chord Approach 3: 6th's

E7

TAB notation for E7 chord approach 3: 6th's. The notation shows a sequence of notes on the guitar strings: 1 2 4 2 1 on the high strings and 2 0 4 0 5 0 4 2 on the low strings, with a 0 on the open string.

A7

E7

TAB notation for A7 and E7 chord approaches. The notation shows a sequence of notes on the guitar strings: 2 3 5 3 on the high strings and 2 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 on the low strings, with a 0 on the open string.

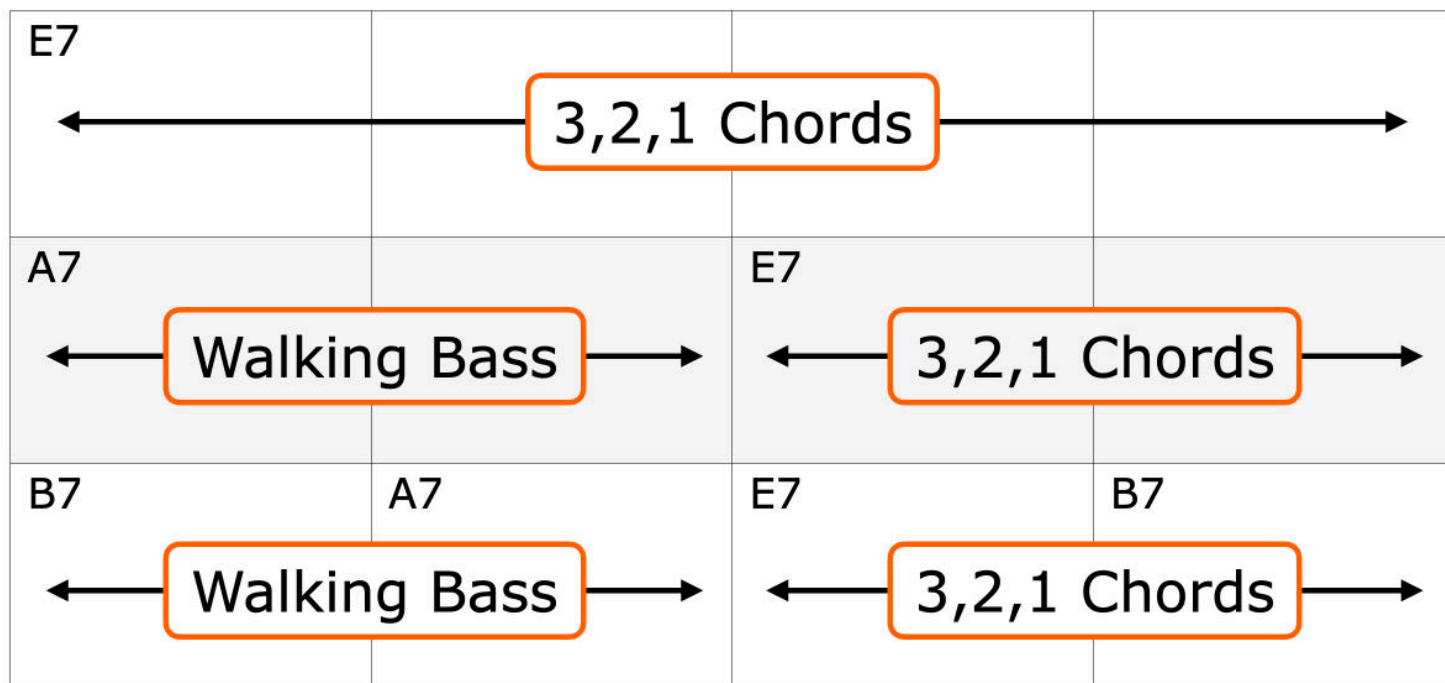
B7

A7

E7

TAB notation for B7, A7, and E7 chord approaches. The notation shows a sequence of notes on the guitar strings: 3/4 3 2 on the high strings and 3/4 3 2 on the low strings, with a 0 on the open string.

## Example Template: Bass/Chords





E7

TAB

A7 E7

TAB

B7 A7 E7

TAB

Template: Bass/Chords


### Concept 3: Riffs/Melody

#### E Blues Riffs:

(i)

TAB notation for E Blues Riff (i). The first measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a triplet of notes (3, 0, 3) with a 1/4 note value, then a triplet of notes (3, 2, 0), and finally a single note (2). The second measure contains a triplet of notes (3, 3, 3) with a 1/4 note value, followed by a triplet of notes (3, 3, 3) with a 1/4 note value, then a triplet of notes (3, 3, 3) with a 1/4 note value, and finally a triplet of notes (2, 0, 2). The notation is labeled with 'T', 'A', and 'B' on the left.

(ii)

(iii)

TAB notation for E Blues Riff (iii). The first measure contains a quarter rest, followed by a triplet of notes (3, 0, 3) with a 1/4 note value, then a triplet of notes (3, 0, 3) with a 1/4 note value, and finally a triplet of notes (4, 2, 0). The second measure contains a triplet of notes (3, 0, 3) with a 1/4 note value, followed by a triplet of notes (4, 2, 0) with a 1/4 note value, and finally a triplet of notes (2, 0, 2). The notation is labeled with 'T', 'A', and 'B' on the left.

(iv)

(v)

TAB notation for E Blues Riff (v). The first measure contains a triplet of notes (0, 0, 0) with a 3/5 note value, followed by a triplet of notes (0, 5, 3) with a 3/5 note value, and finally a triplet of notes (4, 2, 0). The second measure contains a triplet of notes (0, 2, 3) with a 3/5 note value, followed by a triplet of notes (0, 0, 3) with a 3/5 note value, and finally a triplet of notes (0, 3, 2) with a 3/5 note value. The notation is labeled with 'T', 'A', and 'B' on the left.

(vi)

(vii)

TAB notation for E Blues Riff (vii). The first measure contains a triplet of notes (5, 6, 5) with a 3/5 note value, followed by a triplet of notes (5, 3, 5) with a 3/5 note value, and finally a triplet of notes (5, 3, 4) with a 3/5 note value. The second measure contains a triplet of notes (3, 5, 3) with a 3/5 note value, followed by a triplet of notes (3, 5, 3) with a 3/5 note value, and finally a triplet of notes (3, 5, 3) with a 3/5 note value. The notation is labeled with 'T', 'A', and 'B' on the left.

(viii)

TAB notation for E Blues Riff (viii). The first measure contains a triplet of notes (0, 2, 2) with a 3/5 note value, followed by a triplet of notes (2, 3, 2) with a 3/5 note value, and finally a triplet of notes (2, 0, 2) with a 3/5 note value. The second measure contains a triplet of notes (2, 0, 2) with a 3/5 note value, followed by a triplet of notes (2, 0, 2) with a 3/5 note value, and finally a triplet of notes (2, 0, 2) with a 3/5 note value. The notation is labeled with 'T', 'A', and 'B' on the left.

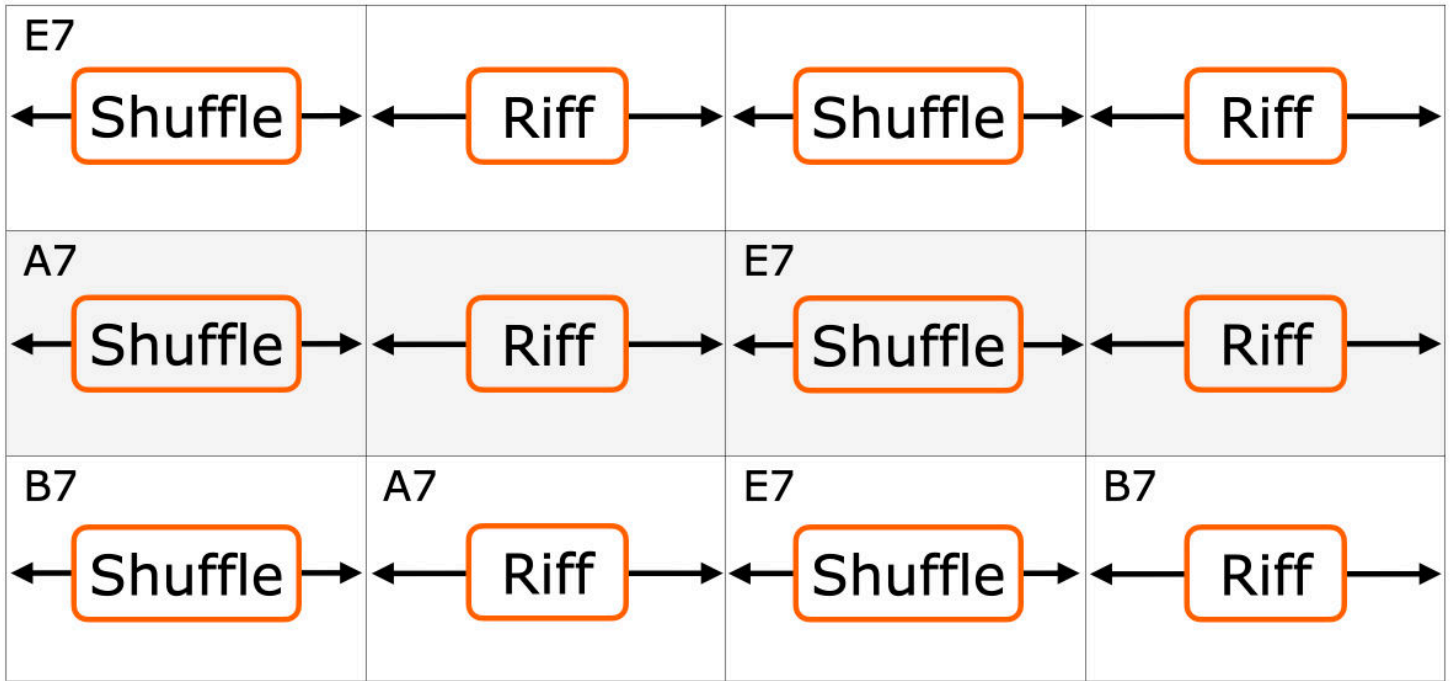
## Outlining Harmony:

TAB notation for Outlining Harmony. The piece is divided into three measures, each with a chord label above it: E7, A7, and B7. Each measure contains a sequence of notes on the top string (1st fret) and the bottom string (open). The notes are grouped by slurs and have fingerings indicated. The E7 measure has a 1/4 note on the top string (3) and a 1/4 note on the bottom string (0). The A7 measure has a 1/4 note on the top string (3) and a 1/4 note on the bottom string (0). The B7 measure has a 1/4 note on the top string (2) and a 1/4 note on the bottom string (0). The notes are: E7 (3, 0, 3, 0, 3, 2, 0, 2), A7 (3, 0, 3, 0, 3, 2, 0, 2), B7 (2, 0, 3, 0, 3, 2, 0, 2).

## Outlining/Implying Harmony:

TAB notation for Outlining/Implying Harmony. The piece is divided into three measures, each with a chord label above it: E7, A7, and B7. Each measure contains a sequence of notes on the top string (1st fret) and the bottom string (open). The notes are grouped by slurs and have fingerings indicated. The E7 measure has a 1/4 note on the top string (3) and a 1/4 note on the bottom string (0). The A7 measure has a 1/4 note on the top string (3) and a 1/4 note on the bottom string (0). The B7 measure has a 1/4 note on the top string (2) and a 1/4 note on the bottom string (0). The notes are: E7 (3, 0, 3, 0, 3, 2, 0, 2), A7 (3, 0, 3, 0, 3, 2, 0, 2), B7 (2, 0, 3, 0, 3, 2, 0, 2).

### Example Template: Riff 1



**E5**

TAB

2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

2 0

3 0

4 2 0

2 2 0

2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

2 0

3 0

4 2 0

2 2 0

**A5**

TAB

2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

2 0

3 0

3 0

2 4 3

3 0

2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

2 0

3 0

3 0

3 2 0

2 2 0

### Example Template: Riff 2

[illegible]

The image displays two staves of guitar tablature for the song "I Wanna Dance with Somebody" by Whitney Houston. Each staff consists of a standard musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a corresponding guitar tablature staff below it. The tablature uses numbers 0-4 to represent frets. Chord names (A7, E7, B7) are placed above the musical staff to indicate the harmonic context. Musical notation includes beams for eighth notes, slurs for phrases, and a 1/4 note marker above a specific note in the second staff. The first staff contains measures 1 through 4, and the second staff contains measures 5 through 8. The tablature is written in a clear, black-and-white format, suitable for a music book or sheet music.

## Template: Riffs/Melodies


# Turnarounds:

(i)

(ii)

Tablature for (i) and (ii):

(i) E7 B7 E7 C7B7

(ii) E7 C7B7 B7

(iii)

(iv)

Tablature for (iii) and (iv):

(iii) E7 C7B7 E7 B7

(iv) E7 C7B7 B7

(v)

(vi)

Tablature for (v) and (vi):

(v) E7 C7B7 E7 B7

(vi) E7 C7B7 B7

(vii)

(viii)

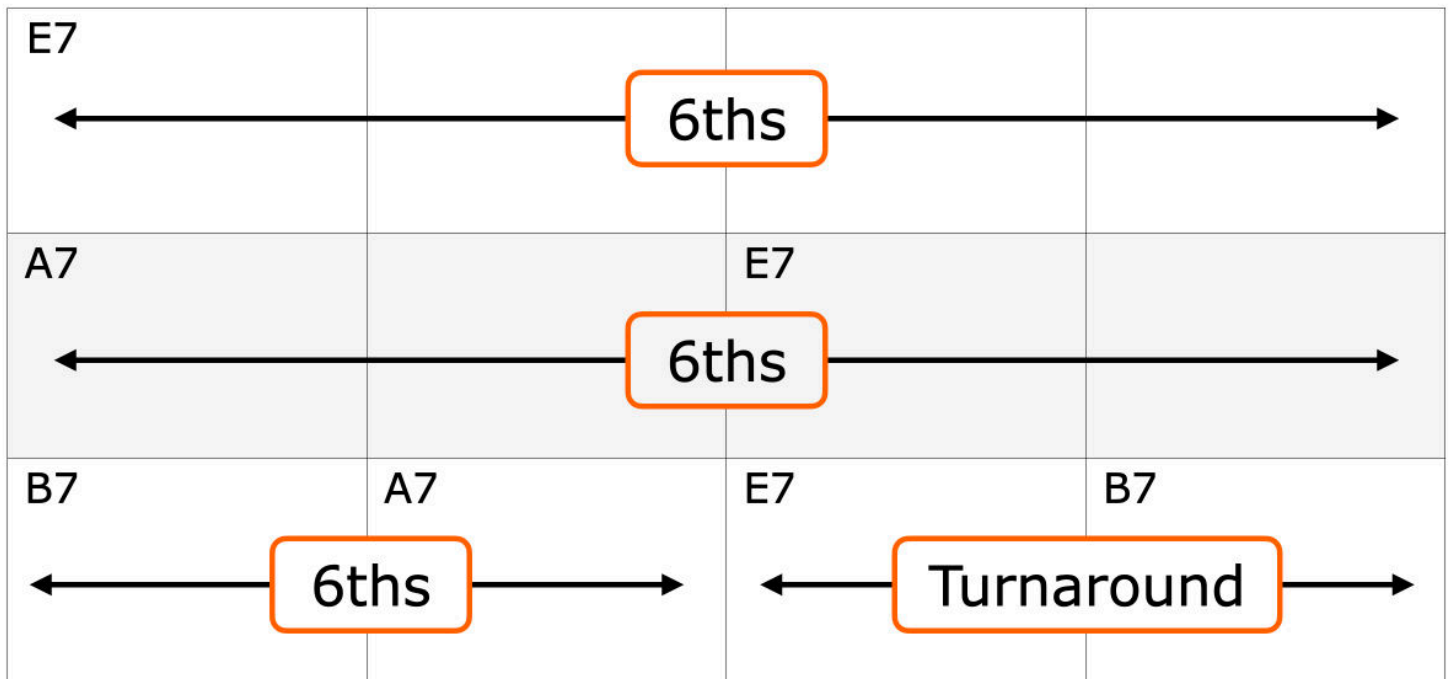
Tablature for (vii) and (viii):

(vii) E7 B7 E7 B7

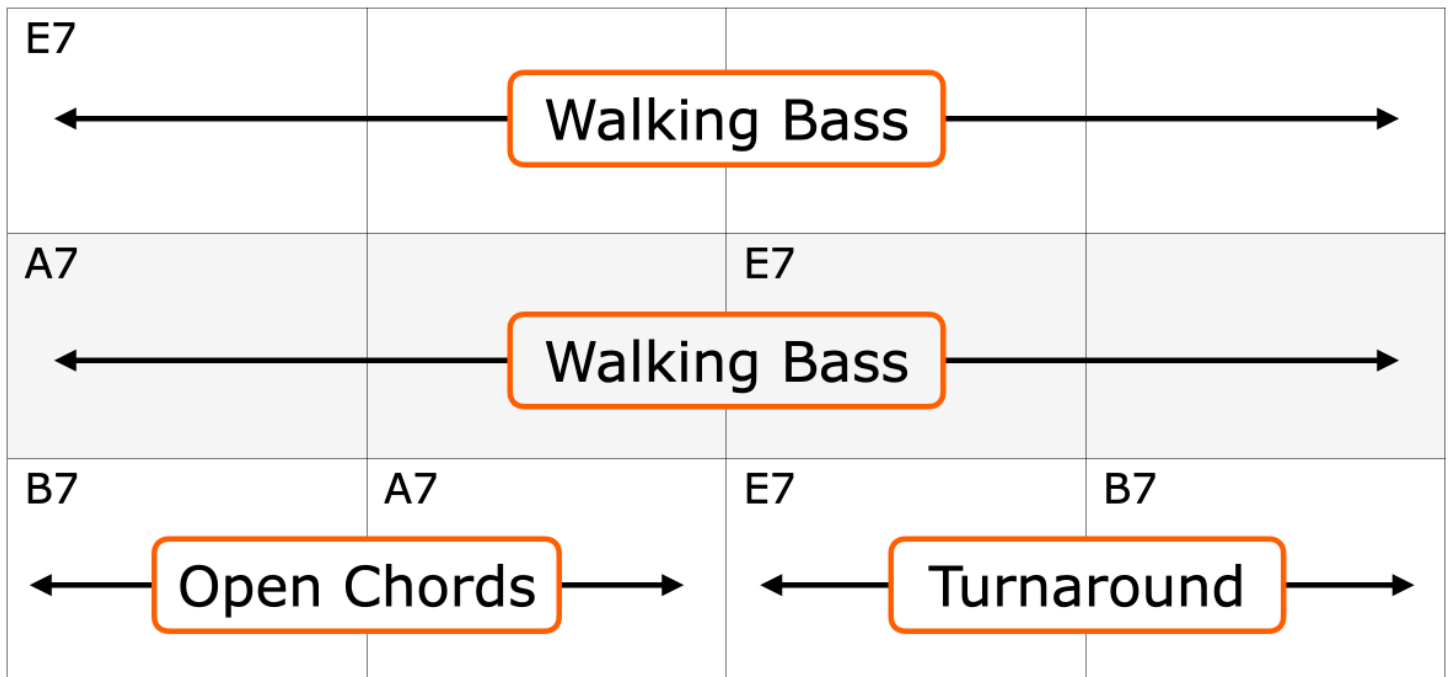
(viii) E7 B7 E7 B7

## Example Template: Bass/Chord/Riff

### Chorus 1:

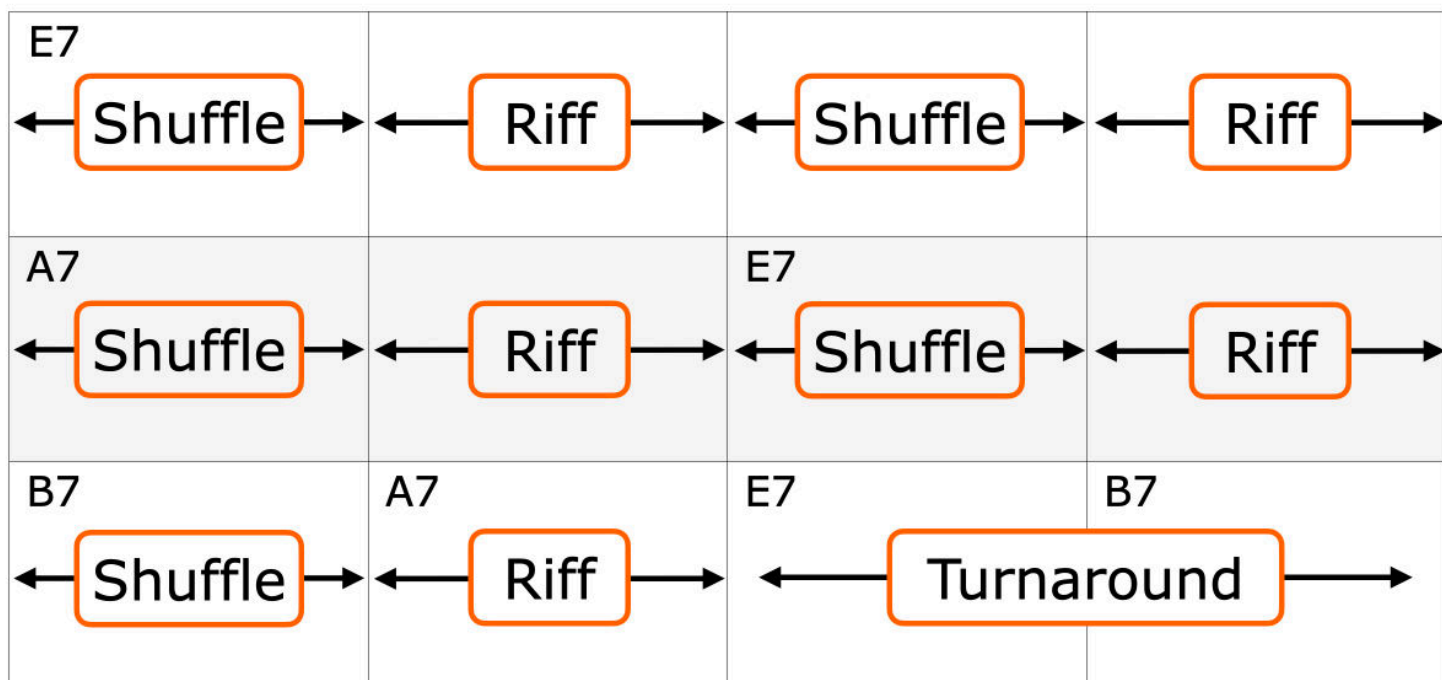


### Chorus 2:





### Chorus 3:



### Chorus 1:

**E7**

TAB 1 2 4 2 1 | 0 2 4 2 | 1 2 4 2 1 | 0 2 4 2

2 4 5 4 2 | 0 4 5 4 0 | 2 4 5 4 2 | 4 5 4 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

**A7** **E7**

TAB 2 3 5 3 | 2 3 5 3 | 1 2 4 2 1 | 0 2 4 2

2 4 5 4 | 2 4 5 4 | 2 4 5 4 2 | 4 5 4 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

**B7** **A7** **E7** **B7**

TAB 3/4 3 2 | 2/3 2 0 | 4 0 2 2 1 | 0 2 0

3/4 3 2 | 3/4 2 0 | /4 3 3 2 2 1 | 1 0 1 2 1 2

2 2 2 0 0 0 0 0 0 4 3 3 2 2 1 0 2 0

/4 0 1 2 1 2

3 3 3

## Chorus 2:

**E7**

TAB

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

0 4 2 4 | 2 4 2 4 | 0 4 2 4 | 5 4 2 4

**A7** **E7**

TAB

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

0 4 2 4 | 2 4 2 4 | 0 4 2 4 | 2 4 0 1

**B7** **A7** **E7** **B7**

TAB

2 2 0 3 2 2 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 3 0 4 2 0 2 0 | 0 0 2 0

2 2 2 2 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 4 3 4 2 0 2 1 | 0 1 0 1 2 1

3 3 3

## Chorus 3:

**E5**

TAB

2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4 | 2 0 3 0 3 0 4 2 0 2 | 2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4 | 2 0 3 0 3 0 4 2 0 2

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 3 0 3 0 4 2 0 2 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 3 0 3 0 4 2 0 2

3 3 3

**A5** **E5**

TAB

2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4 | 2 0 3 0 3 0 4 2 0 2 | 2 2 4 4 2 2 4 4 | 2 0 3 0 3 0 4 2 0 2

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 3 0 3 0 4 2 0 2 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 3 0 3 0 4 2 0 2

3 3 3

B7                      A7                      E7                      F9   E9

T  
A  
B

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2  
 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1  
 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

3 0 3 0  
 3 2 0 2  
 0 3 0 3

12 12 12 12  
 12 12 11 11 10 10  
 0 12 12 11 11 10 10

8 7 8 7 9 8 7 6  
 8 7 7 6 9 8 7 6  
 0 0 0 0

3 3 3 3

Template: Bass/Chord/Riff

Chorus 1:


Chorus 2:


Chorus 3:
