Tissimo

LISTEN
The line alone, then with chords
tissimo.co/worksheets/walking-bass-chord-tone-and-approach

Walking Bass: Chord Tone on 1, Approach Note on 4

A **walking bass** line plays one note on every beat: four quarter notes in each bar of 4/4. Two beats steer it. **Beat 1** lands on the chord, and **beat 4** leans into the next one.

1 · WHAT EACH BEAT DOES

BEAT 1
Chord tone
Land on the chord. Start with the **root (R)**: in an F7 bar, play F.

BEAT 2
Chord tone or scale tone
Walk on: a chord tone (R 3 5 7) or a scale tone (2 4 6).

BEAT 3
Chord tone or scale tone
Keep walking, and head toward the next chord.

BEAT 4
Approach note
One **half step (H)** or **whole step (W)** from the next bar's beat 1.

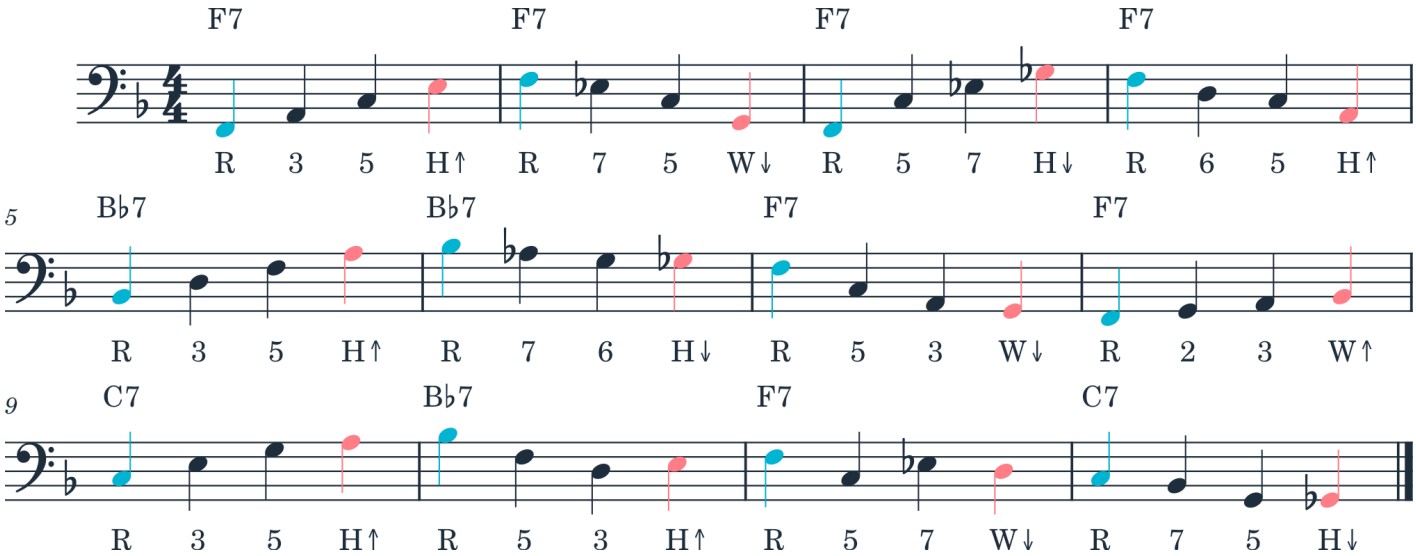
2 · CHORD TONES AND APPROACH NOTES IN THE F BLUES

The arrow shows how the line moves into beat 1: ↑ it steps up from below, ↓ it steps down from above. Into a root, a half step is a **chromatic** approach: it can be a note outside the chord, like G♭ before F. A whole step is a **scale** approach: below the root sits the chord's own 7th, above it the 2nd. For beat 4, read the row of the **next** bar's chord.

Chord	Chord tones R 3 5 7	Scale tones 2 4 6	Aim at its root	Chromatic approach: half step		Scale approach: whole step	
				H↑ from below	H↓ from above	W↑ from below	W↓ from above
F7	F A C E♭	G B♭ D	F	**E**	**G♭**	**E♭**	**G**
B♭7	B♭ D F A♭	C E♭ G	B♭	**A**	**B♮**	**A♭**	**C**
C7	C E G B♭	D F A	C	**B♮**	**D♭**	**B♭**	**D**

3 · ONE CHORUS OF F BLUES, EVERY NOTE LABELED

Twelve bars, an original line. Every beat 1 is the root, and every beat 4 is one step from the next beat 1. Bar 12 leads back to the F of bar 1. Beat 4 in this chorus: **H↑** 5 · **H↓** 3 · **W↑** 1 · **W↓** 3.



Bass parts are written one octave above the sound (bass guitar and double bass). On piano, play the line as written, left hand.

Try it Play bar 1 as F, A, C and change only beat 4. Each of E (**H↑**), G♭ (**H↓**), E♭ (**W↑**), G (**W↓**) leads into the F of bar 2. Then practice the rule with Exercise 216.

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