

Bebop Composition



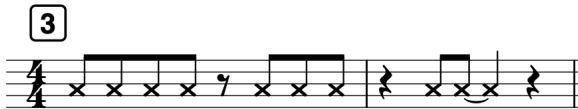
[Download in
PDF/MSZ format](#)

Write a composition for solo instrument and rhythm section in a bebop style. Comparable tunes are “Salt Peanuts” (Gillespie/Clark) and “Passport” (Parker).

- 1. Form:** Your piece will be in 32-bar AABA form: an A section of 8 bars (repeated), an 8-bar B section, followed by an 8-bar A section (implied, but not written out).
- 2. Lead sheet:** write the melody on a single, unaccompanied treble staff, and write chord symbols above it.
- 3. Motive and rhythm**
 - **Option a:** Choose one of the four rhythmic motives (see Page 2) to develop in your melody. Almost all of your melody should be variations on this rhythm, though you may compose a new rhythm at the cadence.
 - **Option b:** If you choose not to use one of these motives, take care that your tune is still motive-driven and uses characteristic swing rhythms.
- 4. Harmony**
 - a. The initial A sections follow the template given in the Composing with ii-V-I worksheet.
 - b. For the B section, use a cycle of secondary dominants: $V^7/vi - V^7/ii - V^7/V - V^7$. (This is called a “Sears Roebuck bridge.”) That’s four harmonies, so each chord will last two measures.
 - c. After you’ve composed your basic harmonies, incorporate alternative harmonizations, and indicate them in parenthesis above your original lead sheet symbols. Please incorporate:
 - a. one CTo7 in the A section, embellishing a tonic chord
 - b. one mixture chord in the A section, replacing a ii chord
 - c. two tritone substitutions in the B section, replacing every other chord in the B section
- 5. Voicing example:** To demonstrate fluency in chord symbols and voicings, provide a basic realization of your chord symbols, including ninths and thirteenths. Copy your original (unembellished) chord symbols on your voicing example. Write for piano, using simple whole/half notes, with one note in the left hand and three/four notes in the right hand.

Rhythmic motives

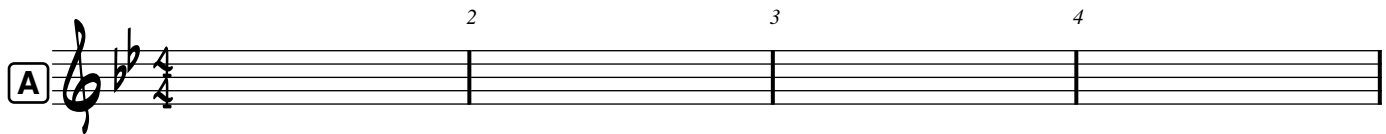
Choose one of the four two-bar rhythmic motives below to use as the basis for your composition. If you choose not to use one of these motives, you must still ensure that your piece is rhythmically unified!



Bebop Composition - Part 1 Lead Sheet

Name: _____

A




2 3 4

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb) and a 4/4 time signature. The staff is divided into four measures, labeled 2, 3, and 4 above the bars. The first measure is labeled 'A' in a box to the left.

Write a four-measure-long progression to establish tonic, using one chord per bar.

5



6 7 8

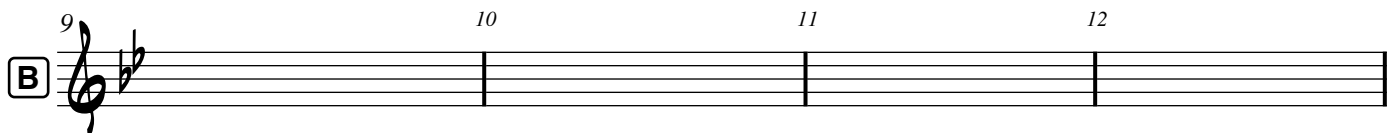
A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb) and a 4/4 time signature. The staff is divided into four measures, labeled 5, 6, 7, and 8 above the bars.

use the chord from m. 4 to smoothly transition into a ii-V in a new key

write another ii-V in yet another new key

ii-V in tonic, followed by a whole bar of tonic.

B

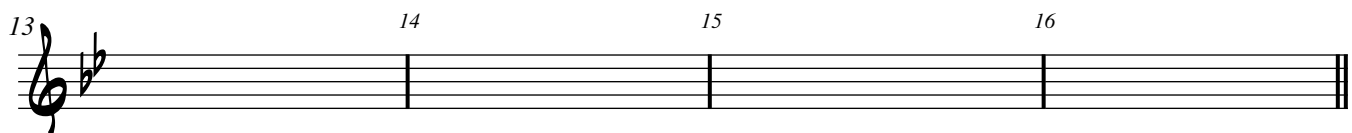


9 10 11 12

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb) and a 4/4 time signature. The staff is divided into four measures, labeled 9, 10, 11, and 12 above the bars. The first measure is labeled 'B' in a box to the left.

begin cycle of secondary dominants (see instructions for more info)

13



14 15 16

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb) and a 4/4 time signature. The staff is divided into four measures, labeled 13, 14, 15, and 16 above the bars.

...ending on V7

Next, write a melody that meshes well with the harmonies, and that uses a rhythmic motive from Page 2.

After choosing your basic chords, indicate some alternative harmonizations by writing them in parentheses above the original lead sheet symbols, including the following:

- one CT^{o7} in the A section, embellishing a tonic chord
- one mixture chord in the A section, replacing a ii chord
- two tritone substitutions in the B section, replacing every other chord in the B section

Bebop Composition - Part 2

Voicing Example

- Above the staff, copy your lead sheet symbols from your Part 1 lead sheet (the basic ones, without alternative harmonizations).
- Then, in the staves, write a stylistic, smooth voicing of the chord symbols. You should incorporate extensions (9ths and 13ths) in most of your harmonies.
- Use three or four notes in the right hand, and one in the left.

A

2 3 4 5 6 7 8

B

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16