

STRUCTURE

BASS LINES

- ALBERTI BASS

Broken chords played by the left hand outlining harmonies whilst the right hand plays the melody. Typically, the notes are presented in the order *lowest, highest, middle, highest*. The broken chord pattern helps to create a smooth, sustained, flowing sound on the piano. It can also be heard as an accomp. pattern on other instruments.

Classical composers such as Haydn and Mozart used this technique extensively.

Allegro



Mozart's Piano sonata KV 545, movement 1

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata KV 545. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' and the dynamics include 'p' (piano). The left hand plays a continuous Alberti bass pattern, which is a broken chord sequence (C4-E4-G4-A4) in C major. The right hand plays a melody with various ornaments and trills.

It gets its name from the 18th Century Italian composer, Domenico Alberti, who used it in many of his compositions.

Allegro



This image is a close-up of the first few measures of the first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata KV 545. It clearly shows the 'Allegro' tempo and the 'mf' (mezzo-forte) dynamics. The left hand's Alberti bass pattern is prominent, consisting of a steady sequence of eighth notes: C4, E4, G4, A4.

Andante.

Mozart's Piano sonata KV 545, movement 2



The image shows the beginning of the second movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata KV 545. The tempo is marked 'Andante.' and the dynamics include 'p dolce' (piano dolce) and 'legato'. The left hand continues with the Alberti bass pattern, while the right hand plays a more melodic line.

Adagio.

Mozart's String Quartet KV 172, movement 2



This image shows the beginning of the second movement of Mozart's String Quartet KV 172. The tempo is marked 'Adagio.' and the dynamics include 'f' (forte). The left hand plays a continuous Alberti bass pattern, while the right hand plays a melody. The score is for a string quartet, so it includes staves for two violins, two violas, and two cellos/basses.

STRUCTURE

BASS LINES

- PEDAL**

PEDAL, is short for 'PEDAL POINT@. It is a note which is held on or is repeated continuously in the BASS while the harmony changes above.

e.g. opening of Also Sprach Zarathustra
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIPWOOOFbwcQ>

e.g. Raindrop Prelude - Chopin

24 **Sostenuto**
 28 *sotto voce*
cresc.

The image shows a musical score for the Raindrop Prelude by Chopin. It features two systems of music. The first system, starting at measure 24, is marked 'Sostenuto' and 'p' (piano). The second system, starting at measure 28, is marked 'sotto voce' and 'cresc.' (crescendo). The bass line in both systems shows a continuous, repeated note, which is the pedal point.

e.g. Bach Prelude in C major

C7 (C-E-G-Bb) F/C (F-A-C) Dm7/C (D-F-A-C)
 G7 (G-B-D-F) C (C-E-G)
 ped. pt.
 ped. pt.
 pedal point (in bass) is now a non-chord tone

The image shows a musical score for the Bach Prelude in C major. It features two systems of music. The first system, starting at measure 1, shows the bass line with a continuous, repeated note (C) which is the pedal point. The second system, starting at measure 2, shows the bass line with a continuous, repeated note (C) which is the pedal point. The text 'C pedal (in bass) starts as consonant note (in the chord)' is written below the first system. The text 'pedal point (in bass) is now a non-chord tone' is written below the second system.

STRUCTURE

BASS LINES

- **INVERTED PEDAL**

An **INVERTED PEDAL** is a pedal (ie a note that is held on or sounded continuously) in the TOP PART instead of the bass

e.g. 1st movt Mozart Jupiter Symphony

The image displays a page of musical notation for the first movement of Mozart's Jupiter Symphony. The score is written for a full orchestra, with multiple staves for woodwinds, strings, and brass. Three specific areas are highlighted with colored boxes to illustrate the concept of an inverted pedal:

- Top Red Box:** Located in the upper right section of the page, this box highlights a sustained, high-pitched note in the woodwind or brass part, which serves as the inverted pedal point.
- Bottom Red Box:** Located in the lower left section, this box highlights another sustained, high-pitched note in a different instrument part, also functioning as an inverted pedal.
- Blue Box:** Located in the lower middle section, this box highlights a complex, rhythmic passage in the bass line, which is the traditional pedal point.

e.g. *The Wizard and I* (Wicked)

e.g. *With or Without You* (U2)

STRUCTURE

BASS LINES

- **GROUND BASS**

This is a theme in the bass which is repeated many times while the upper parts are varied.

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This is a theme in the bass which is repeated many times while the upper parts are varied.

e.g. Monteverdi *Zefiro torna*

Listen to the music and fill two concepts for each category in the grid below:

	CONCEPT 1	CONCEPT 2
MELODY/HARMONY		
RHYTHM/TEMPO		
TEXTURE/ STRUCTURE		
TIMBRE		

e.g. Little Brown Jug – NB this is an example of SWING music



e.g. Time Lapse – Michael Nyman

STRUCTURE

BASS LINES

- WALKING BASS

A moving bass line with notes usually of the same value. It often moves by step, but not always so. Features heavily in jazz/swing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGQN8vdwVrl>

e.g. In the Mood – this is an example of SWING music

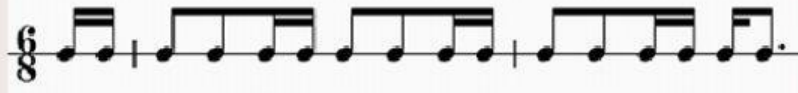
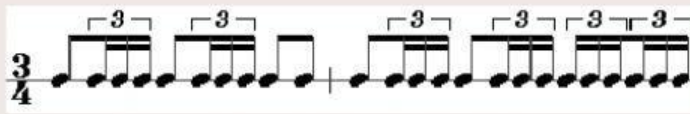


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Td73Lhq8npc>

- **OSTINATO** (*Rhythmic & Melodic*)

a short musical pattern repeated many times.

It can be purely **rhythmic** e.g. Ravel's Bolero , Holst – Mars, Pirates of the Caribbean



or it can be **melodic**.

e.g. Carillon – Bizet – Here the 3 note ostinato represents the pealing of bells



e.g. Carol of the Bells



- **RIFF**

A Riff is a repeated phrase usually found in jazz and popular music. It is similar to an ostinato.

e.g. Smoke on the Water – Deep Purple



e.g. Listen to Black Sabbath's "The Iron Man



e.g.. Listen to Day tripper – The Beatles



QUIZ

For each of the following excerpts, choose the correct bass line or structural device from the following concepts:

ALBERTI BASS
GROUND BASS

INVERTED PEDAL
WALKING BASS

PEDAL
OSTINATO

RIFF

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.