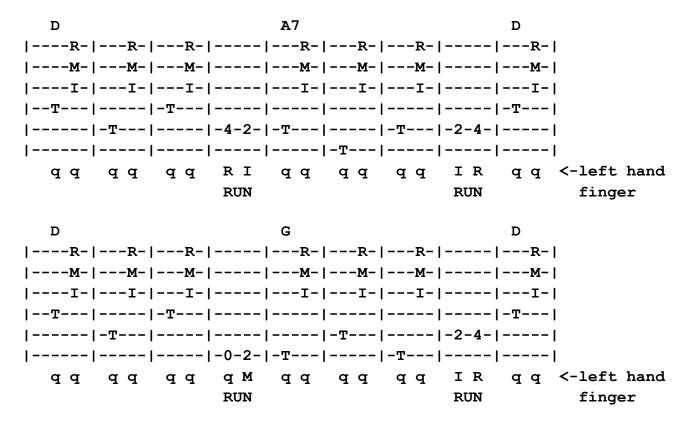# LESSON 10 BASS RUNS

A bass run is a sequence of notes played with the thumb between chord changes. The run leads from one chord to another in a sequence of single notes which often are close to the actual melody of the song. For a given chord change (say D to A7) there is usually only one bass run. Normally the bass run takes one measure of a 2/4 time song or 2 counts of a 3/4 or 4/4 time song. For instance, in 2/4 time, the bass run is two notes on the bass strings substituting for the count 1,2 which comes just before the chord change. In the list below, each line has two bass runs for going from one chord to another and back. The fret and left hand finger to use are shown. The notation is similar to that used to show strums in chapter {9}. The run itself is shown using numbers on the string, indicating which fret of the string to hold with a left hand finger. In addition, below the run, the proper left hand finger to use is shown. Don't forget as you are learning, to pause as needed both before and after bass runs.
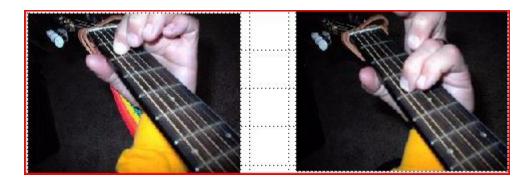
INSERTING BASS RUNS

To insert a bass run place it at the last two beats before the chord changes. In three quarters time, this corresponds to putting the run on (2,3) of a (1,2,3) beat. After the run, on the next (1) beat of (1,2,3) you are on the new chord. In two quarters time, the run replaces the entire (1,2) beat before you switch chords.

KEY OF D BASS RUNS

```
   D                               A7                            D
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-T---|
|------|-T---|-----|-4-2-|-T---|-----|-T---|-2-4-|-----|
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|
   q q   q q   q q   R I   q q   q q   q q   I R   q q   <-left hand
                     RUN                     RUN            finger


   D                               G                             D
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-T---|
|------|-T---|-----|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-2-4-|-----|
|------|-----|-----|-0-2-|-T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|
   q q   q q   q q   q M   q q   q q   q q   I R   q q   <-left hand
                     RUN                     RUN            finger
```

The finger positions are shown in the pictures below.

The runs are used in some songs below. The songs have notation to show where you would do a "THUMB-PLUCK" strum and where you put in the bass run in place of the "THUMB-PLUCK" (in place of the last two beats of the "THUMB-PLUCK-PLUCK" for three quarters time). The bass run is shown as (B R) in place of the "T P" or "P P". The fret, string and left hand finger are also shown. Here are some key of D songs.

SKIP TO MY LOU (2/4, 1, S1F2) (BASS RUNS - with slow strum)

```
     D
     SKIP SKIP SKIP TO MY LOU
T P  T P, T P , T      P ,(B R)
                            4 2    <--string 5

      A7
     SKIP SKIP SKIP TO MY LOU
     T P, T P ,  T     P ,(B R)
                            2 4    <--string 5

      D
     SKIP SKIP SKIP TO MY LOU
     T P, T P , T      P ,(B R)
                            4 2    <--string 5

      A7                 D
     SKIP TO MY LOU MY DARLING
      T     P ,(B   R),T P,T P
                2    4           <--string 5
-----------------------------------------------------------------
```

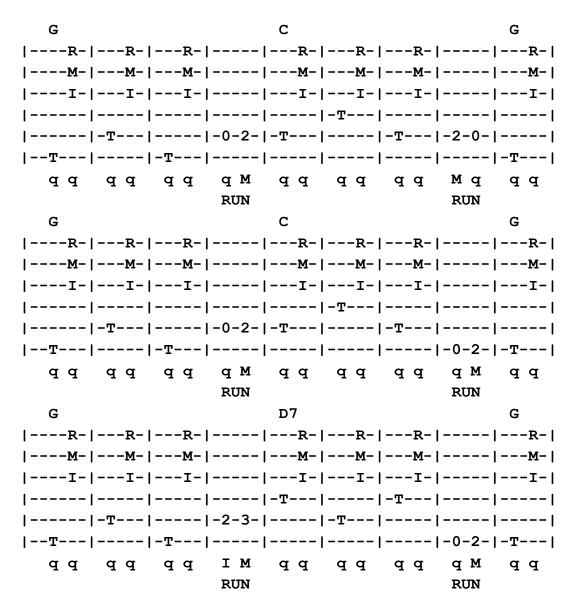## SKIP TO MY LOU (2/4, 1, S1F2) (BASS RUNS - with fast strum)

```
      D
      SKIP SKIP SKIP TO MY LOU
TPTP TPTP,TPTP, TP   T   P ,TP(B R)
                              4 2       <--string 5

       A7
      SKIP SKIP SKIP TO MY LOU
      TPTP,TPTP, TP   T   P ,TP(B R)
                              2 4       <--string 5

       D
      SKIP SKIP SKIP TO MY LOU
      TPTP,TPTP, TP   T   P ,TP(B R)
                              4 2       <--string 5

       A7                  D
      SKIP TO MY LOU MY    DAR- LING
      TP    T   P ,TP (B R),TPTP,TPTP, TPTP, TPTP
                    2 4                <--string 5
```

DOWN IN THE VALLEY (3/4, 1, S5F0) (BASS RUNS)

```
      D                             A7
      DOWN IN THE VAL-LEY,  VALLEY  SO LOW
TPP    T     P   P , TPP,TPP,  T  (B   R),T P P,T P P
                              4    2                  <--string 5
                                             D
      HANG YOUR HEAD OVER,     HEAR THE WIND BLOW
       T     P     P , TPP,TPP , T  (B   R),  T P P,T P P
                              2    4                  <--string 5
```

WHEN THE SAINTS GO MARCHING IN (2/4, 2, S2F3) (BASS RUNS)

```
          D
          O WHEN THE SAINTS GO  MARCH- ING  IN
   T P,T P, T     P, TP,TP,T P, T           P, T P,T P
                                       A7
          O WHEN THE SAINTS GO  MARCHING  IN
       T P, T     P , T P , T P,T P,(B R),T P,T P
                                  4 2 <----------- string 5
                   D                G
          O LORD I WANT TO BE  IN THAT NUMBER
       T P,(B    R)T P,T P,T P,(B  R), T P,T P,T P
            2    4 <-string 5    0  2 <--- string 6
                   D            A7        D
          WHEN THE SAINTS GO  MARCHING   IN
          (B    R), T P, (B R),T P(B R),T P,T P,T...
            2    4        4 2        2 4          <--- string 5
```

KEY OF G BASS RUNS

Note that there are two different runs possible for the run from "C" to "G". Use whichever sounds best to you, or alternate them.

```
     G                                C                                G
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|
|------|-T---|-----|-0-2-|-T---|-----|-T---|-2-0-|-----|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-T---|
   q q   q q   q q   q M   q q   q q   q q   M q   q q
                     RUN                     RUN
     G                                C                                G
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|
|------|-T---|-----|-0-2-|-T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-0-2-|-T---|
   q q   q q   q q   q M   q q   q q   q q   q M   q q
                     RUN                     RUN
     G                                D7                               G
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|------|-----|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|
|------|-T---|-----|-2-3-|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-0-2-|-T---|
   q q   q q   q q   I M   q q   q q   q q   q M   q q
                     RUN                     RUN
```

A song in the key of G is shown below:

THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND (4/4, 2, S3F0) (BASS RUNS)

```
        G                    C                          G
          THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND, THIS LAND IS  MY LAND
T P T P,T   P  (B      R),T P T P,T   P  (B      R),T P T P
             0     2 <-string 5         0     2 <---string 6
                        D7                          G
          FROM CALIFORN - IA TO THE NEW YORK IS - LAND
        T    P  (B R)TP TP, T    P    (B  R),  T P    T P
               2 3 <-string 5        0   2 <-- string 6
                            C                              G
          FROM THE REDWOOD FOR - EST    TO THE GULF STREAM WA - TERS
         T       P    (B  R),  T P  T P,T   P    (B    R) ,  T P  T P,
                 0   2                          2    0     <---string 5
              D7                              G
          THIS LAND WAS MADE FOR YOU AND ME
       T P(B R),   T   P T   P , T  P     (B   R), T P TP T...
          2 3  <-string 5                 0   2         <---string 6
```

KEY OF C BASS RUNS

```
     C                                G7                           C
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|------|-T---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-2-0-|-----|-T---|-----|-0-2-|-T---|
|------|-----|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|
  q q   q q   q q   M q   q q   q q   q q   q M   q q
                    RUN                     RUN
```

```
     C                                F                            C
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|------|-T---|-----|-0-2-|-T---|-----|-T---|-2-0-|-----|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-T---|
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
  q q   q q   q q   q M   q q   q q   q q   M q   q q
                    RUN                     RUN
```

A song in the key of C is shown below:

RED RIVER VALLEY (4/4, 3, S3F0) (BASS RUNS)

```
             C
             FROM THIS VALLEY THEY SAY YOU ARE GOING
TPTP  T P    T    P , T P T     P,T P  T    P , T P  T P


                                                 G7
             WE WILL MISS YOUR BRIGHT EYES AND SWEET SMILE
    T P T    P ,  T P   T     P , T P  (B    R), T P T P
                                         2    0    <--- string 5


                  C           C7         F
             FOR THEY SAY YOU ARE TAKING THE SUNSHINE
     T P  (B    R), T P T    P, T P(B    R), T P T P
          0    2  <-- string 5     0    2      <-- string 4


                  C             G7        C
             THAT HAS BRIGHTENED OUR PATHWAY AWHILE
       T P (B     R), T P  (B     R)  T P(B  R) T P T P,T P...
string 4-> 2     0             2     0 <-St5 0  2    <-- string 5
```

KEY OF A BASS RUNS

```
         A                            D                         A
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|------|-T---|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-2-4-|-----|-T---|-----|-4-2-|-T---|
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
  q q    q q    q q   I R   q q    q q    q q   R I   q q
                     RUN                       RUN
```

```
         A                            E(7)                      A
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|------|-T---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|-T---|
|------|-----|-----|-4-2-|-T---|-----|-T---|-2-4-|-----|
  q q    q q    q q   R I   q q    q q    q q   I R   q q
                     RUN                       RUN
```

A song in the key of A is shown below:

ON TOP OF OLD SMOKEY (3/4, 3, S3F2) (BASS RUNS)

```
                  A              D                            A
              ON TOP OF OLD SMO - KEY       ALL COVERED WITH SNOW
   T P P, T P P,  T (B    R) T P P, T P P T P  P,  T (B     R), T P P
                    2     4                            4     2 <-string 5

                     E7                            A
      I LOST MY TRUE LO -  VER        FROM COURTING TOO SLOW
   T P P, T  (B    R)  T P P,T P P T P  P,   T (B    R), T P P, T P..
              4     2                             2     4   <-- string 6
```
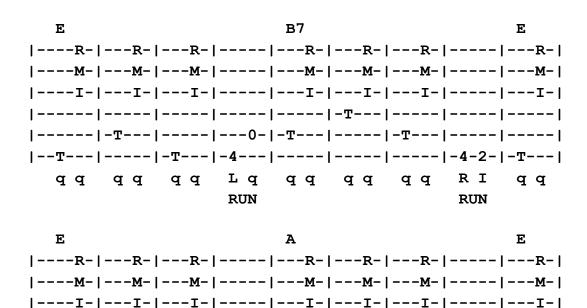
KEY OF E BASS RUNS

```
      E                                          B7                                   E
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|
|------|-T---|-----|---0-|-T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-4---|-----|-----|-----|-4-2-|-T---|
   q q   q q   q q   L q   q q   q q   q q   R I   q q
                    RUN                     RUN


      E                                          A                                    E
|----R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|---R-|---R-|-----|---R-|
|----M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|---M-|---M-|-----|---M-|
|----I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|---I-|---I-|-----|---I-|
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-----|-----|
|------|-T---|-----|-----|-T---|-----|-T---|-----|-----|
|--T---|-----|-T---|-2-4-|-----|-----|-----|-4-2-|-T---|
   q q   q q   q q   I R   q q   q q   q q   R I   q q
                    RUN                     RUN
```

A song in the key of E is shown below:

RIDDLE SONG (3/4, 3, S2F0) (BASS RUNS)

```
                    E                     A                         E
                    I GAVE MY LOVE A  CHER - RY THAT HA -     D NO STONE
        T P P, T P P, T P  P, T(B R) T P P, T P P,  T P P, T(B  R) T P P
                              2 4                            4  2 <-str 6
              B7                     E                           B7
              I GAVE MY LOVE A CHICKEN      THAT HA -     D NO BONE
          T(B R) T P  P, T(B R) T   P P, T P P,  T P P,T(B  R) T P P
string 6/5->  4 0          4 2 <- string 6          4   0 <-str 6/5
                                     E                         B7
              I TOLD MY LOVE A STO -  RY   THAT HA -     D NO END
        T P P, T P  P, T(B R) T P P,T  P P,  T P P,T(B  R) T P P
              string 6 -> 4 2                      4   0 <-str 6/5
```