Daily Practice Routine 2020

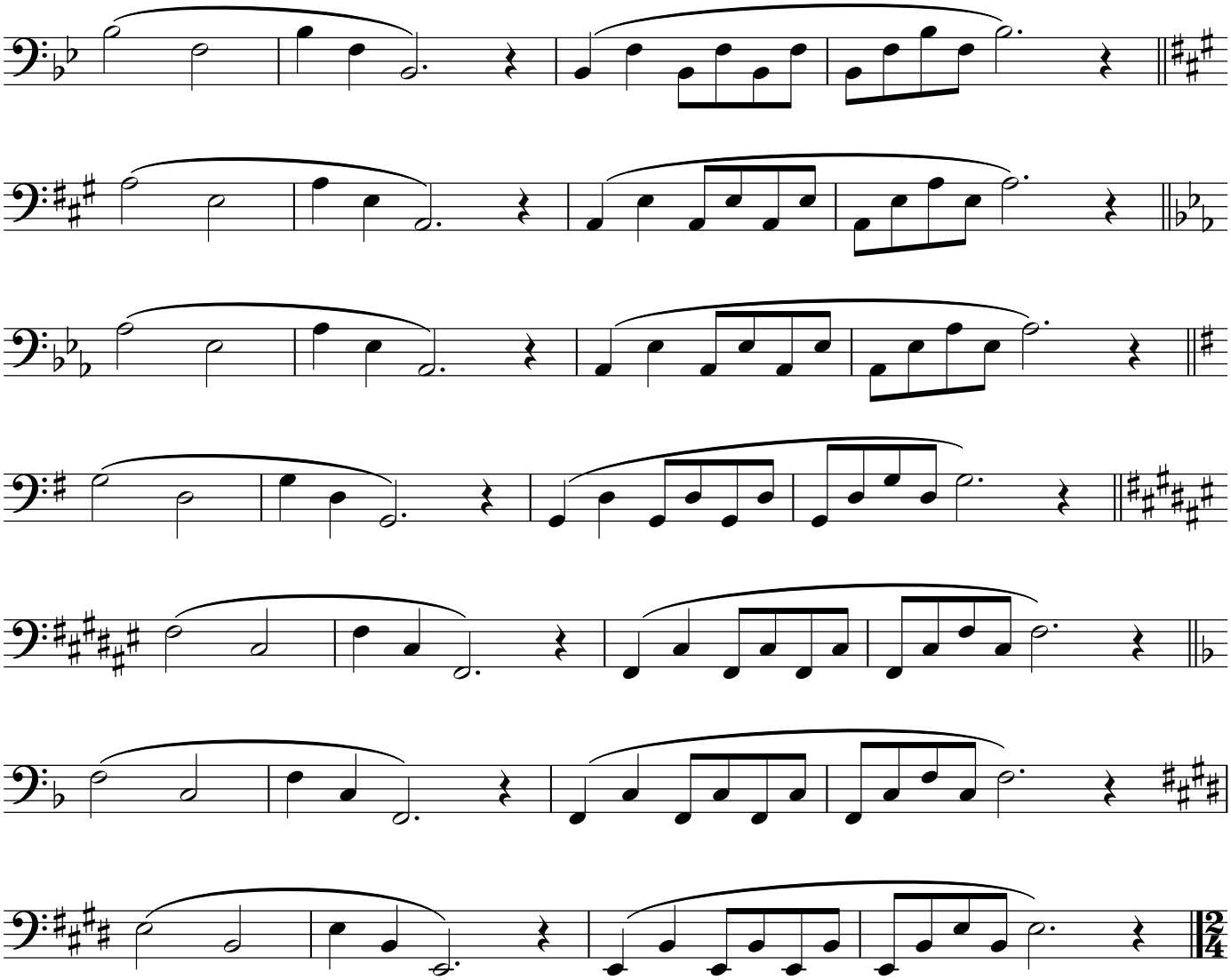
David Binder

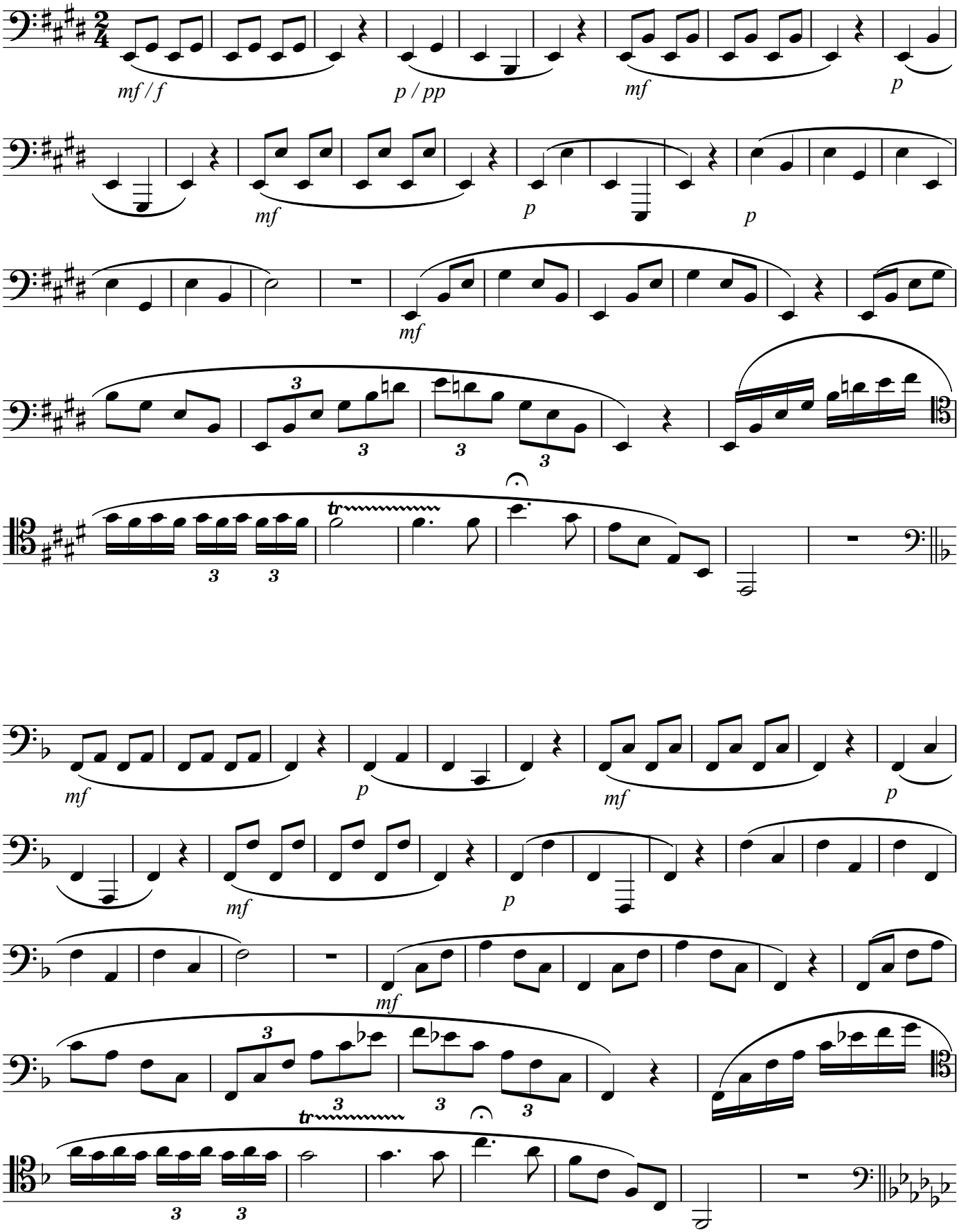
These exercises comprise the first part of my normal practice day. I don't think of it as a "warm up." I feel warmed up after only a few minutes of simple buzzing and middle register light tonguing. After making sure my chops feel relatively normal, I then begin this routine.

I believe that a regular daily practice routine is the best recipe for consistent, incremental improvement. I have built these exercises around my own playing goals, namely connecting the extreme high and low registers with an even sound and efficient approach. In designing your own daily routine, think of concrete playing goals and conceive of exercises that focus on those areas.

These exercises together are quite strenuous, so make sure you feel comfortably warmed up before starting this routine. Any marked rests can and should be expanded to give yourself frequent breaks (for example, if 2 beats of rest are indicated at the end of an exercise, feel free to rest 8 beats or more, until you feel relaxed and tension free).

♩ = 60 - 70, keep the same tempo throughout this entire routine

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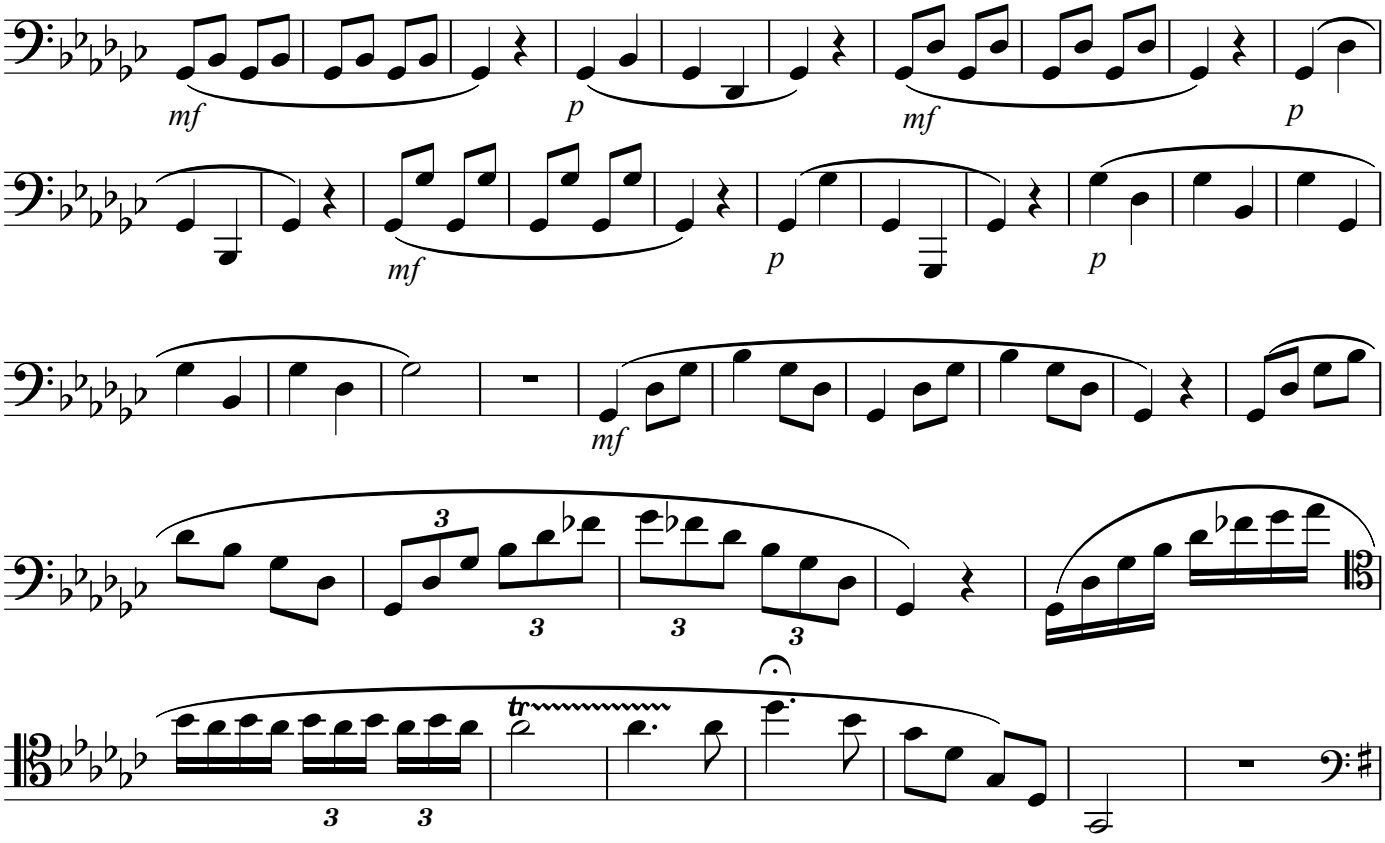
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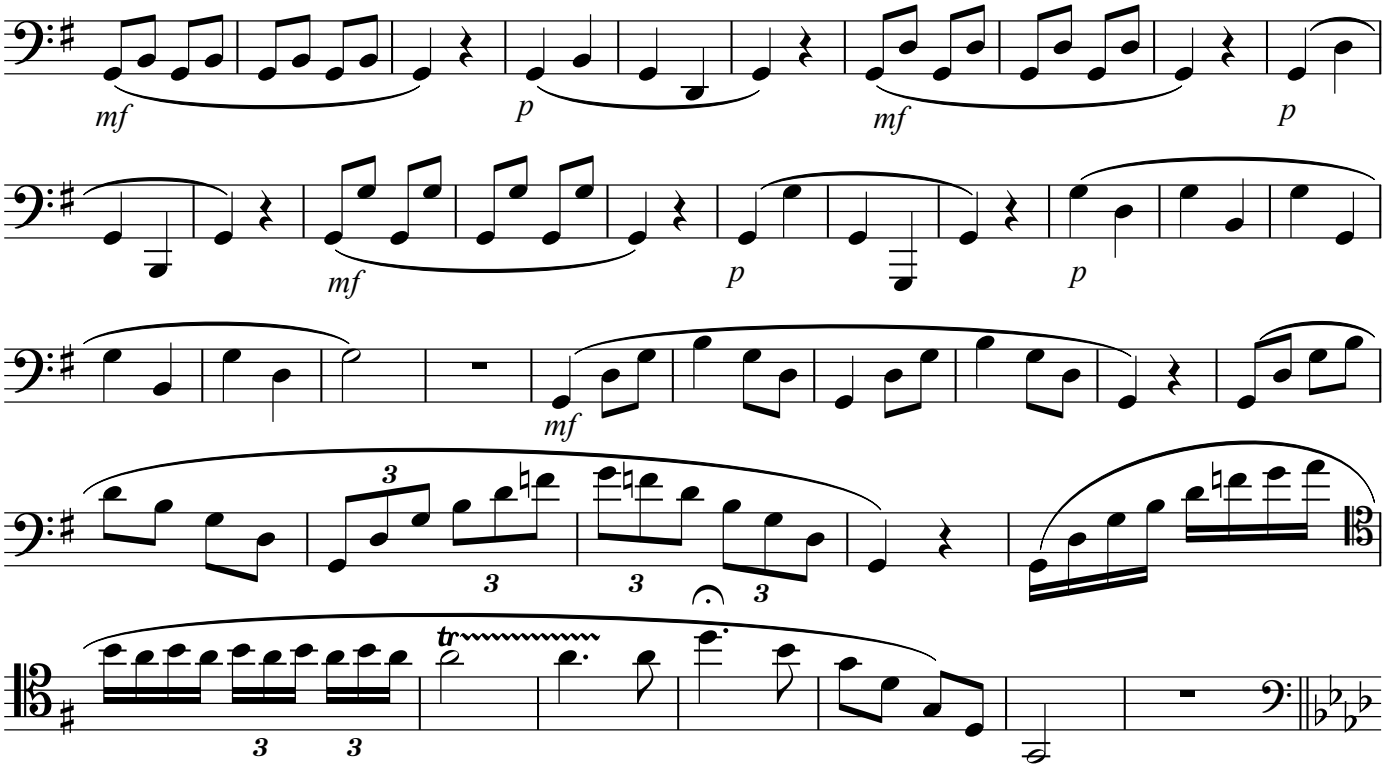
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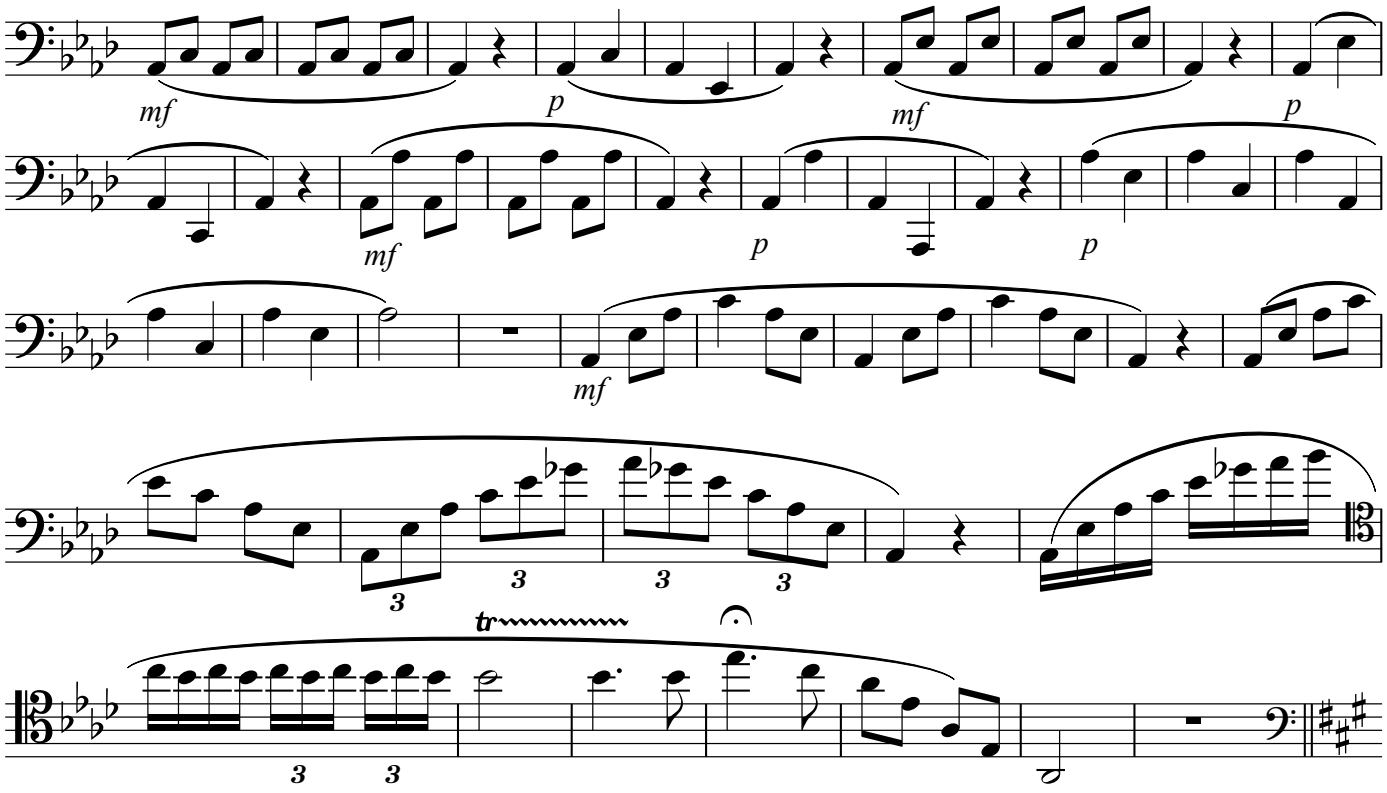
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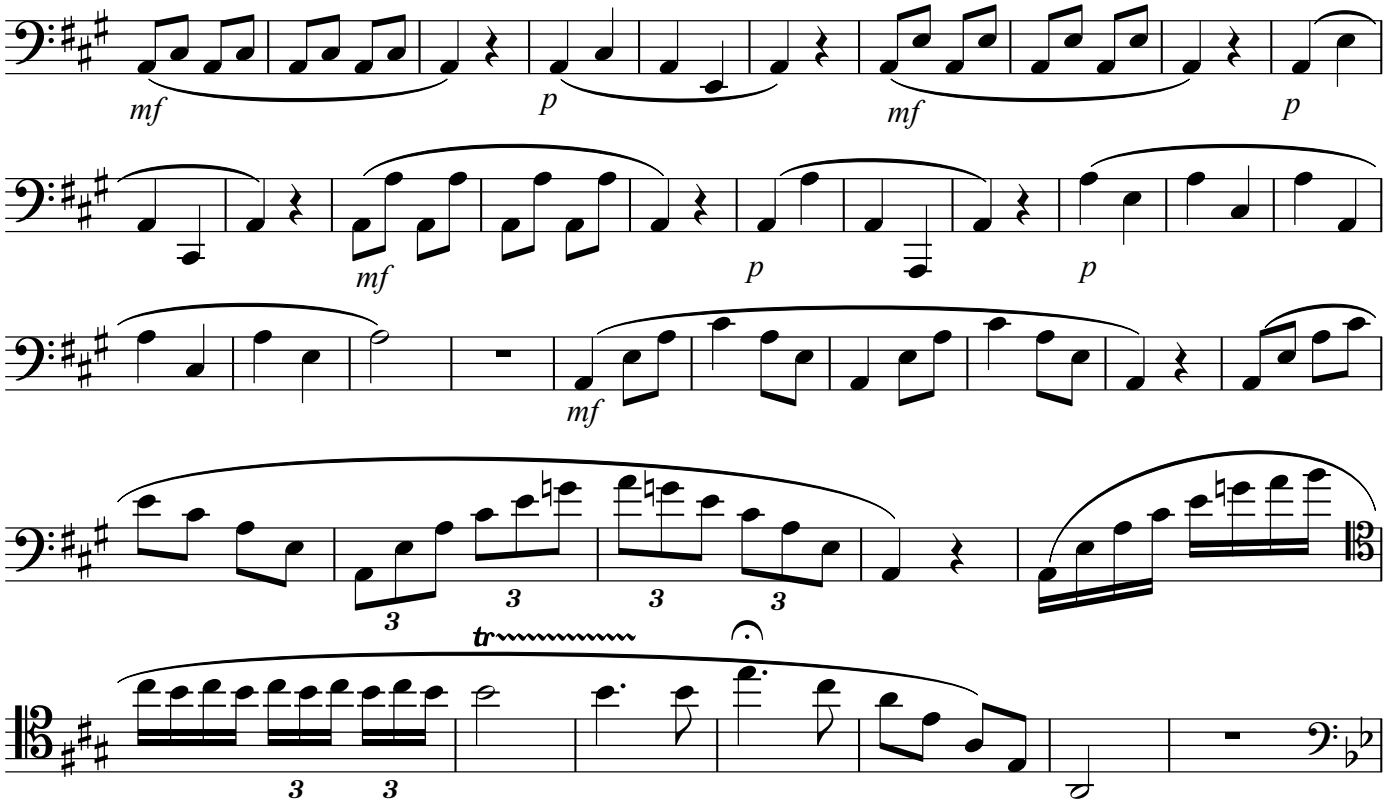
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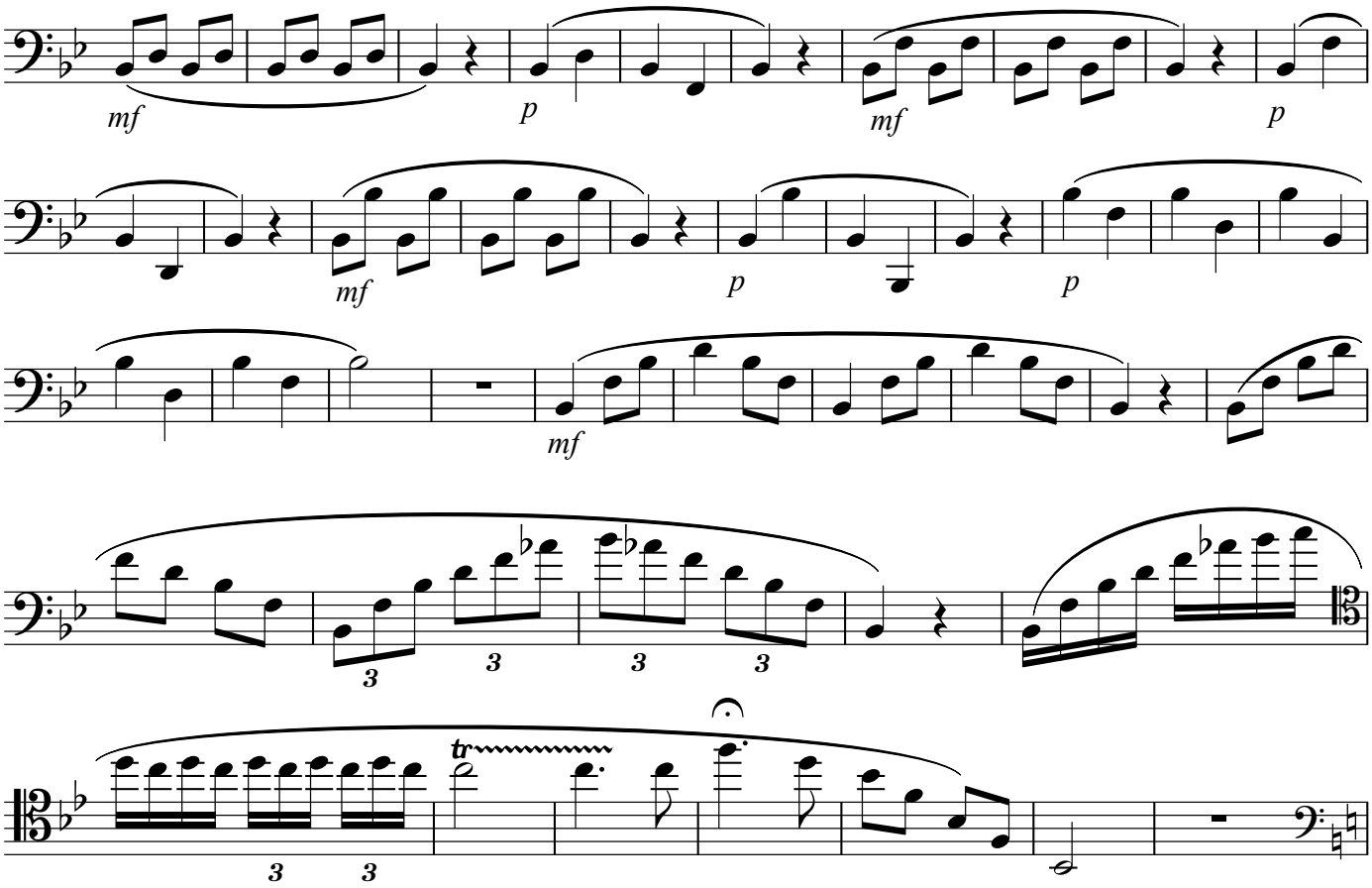
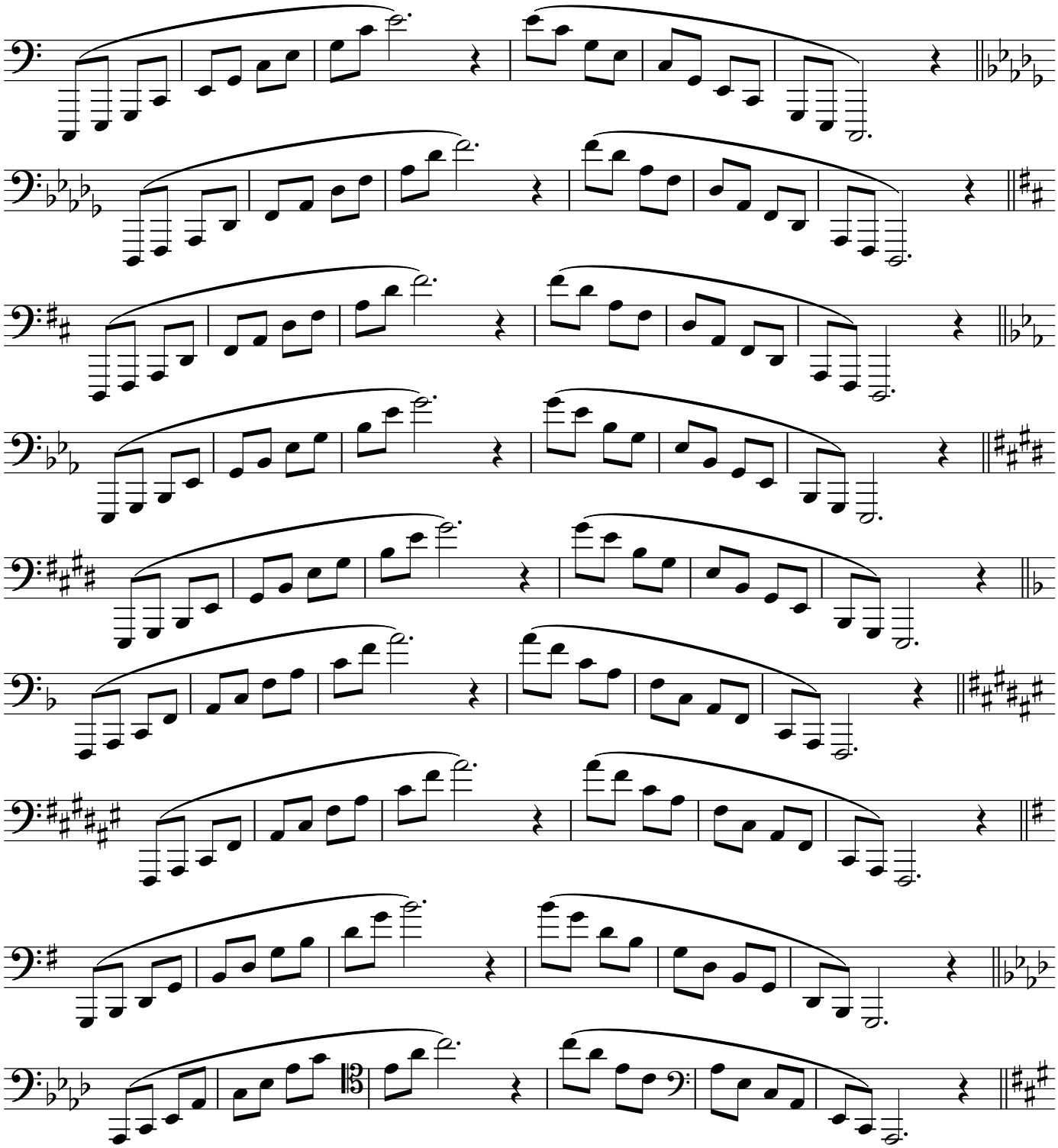


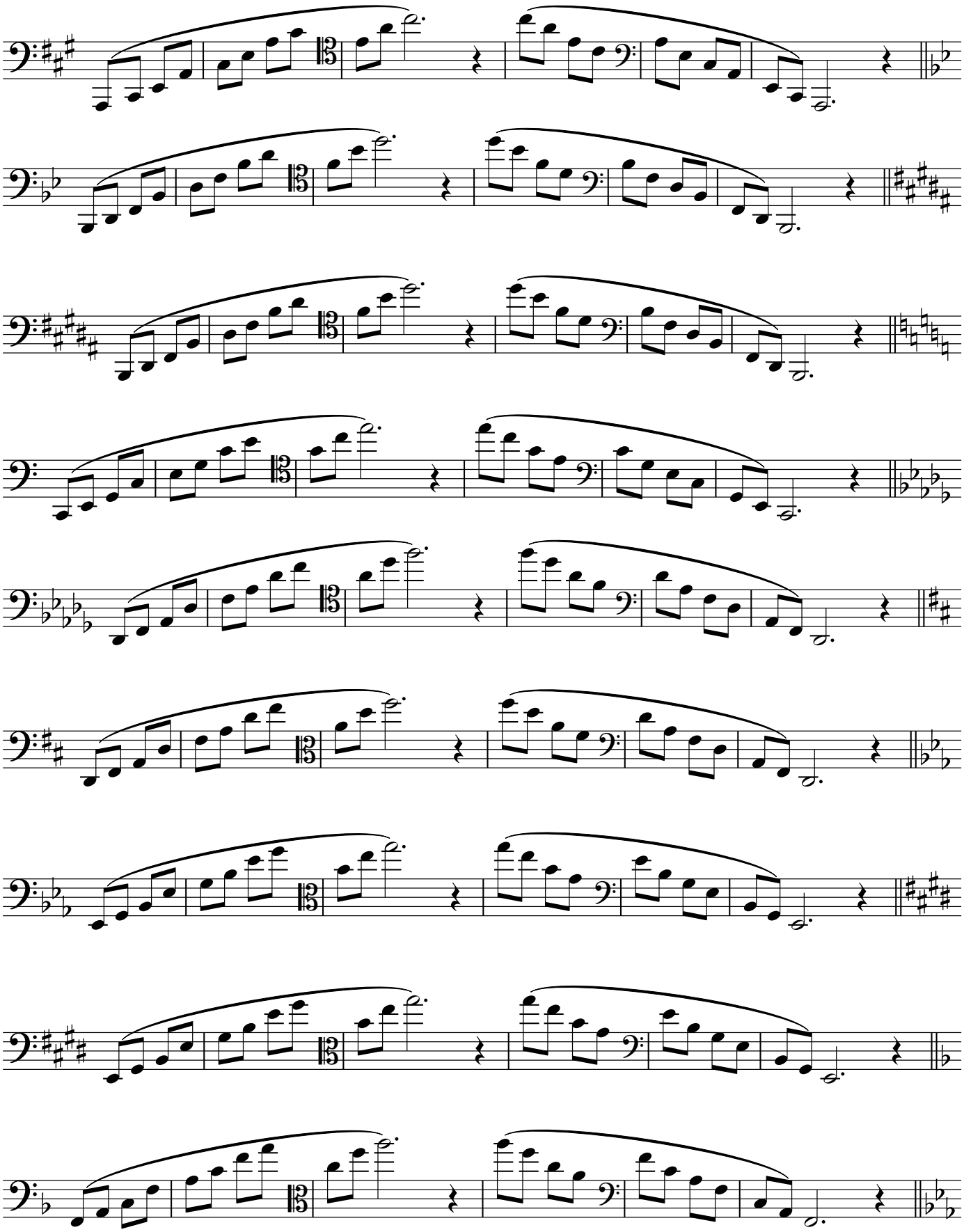
Although this sequence is precisely notated, I often play it rhythmically freely.
The marked trill and fermata notes can be completely out of time.

While playing from the low to high registers, make sure to feel the sweeping connection of your airstream, going from wide and full in the low register to narrow and fast in the high register.

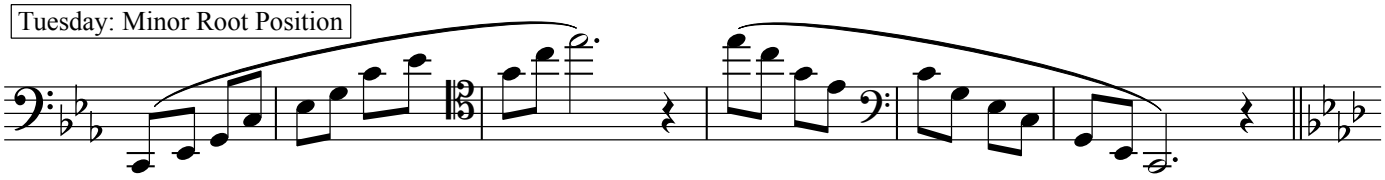
In this next arpeggio excerise, cycle through the following chart to play either major or minor, and among root, first, and second inversion. Root position major is completely written out, and one example for each other sequence starting on C is written to demonstrate each day of the week's version.

|Monday|	**|Tuesday|**	**|Wednesday|**	**|Thursday|**	**|Friday|**	**|Saturday|**	**|Sunday|**
Maj root	Min root	Maj first	Min first	Maj second	Min second	Diminished

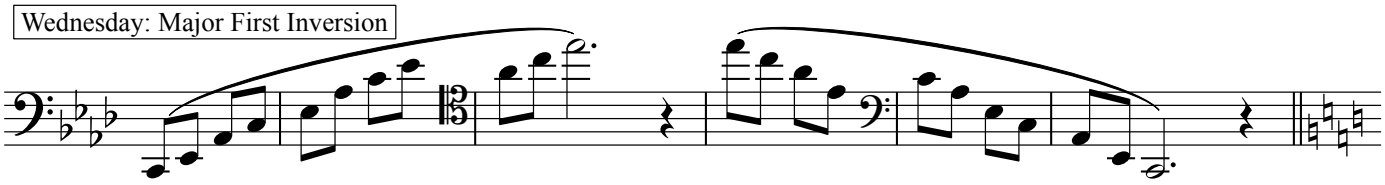




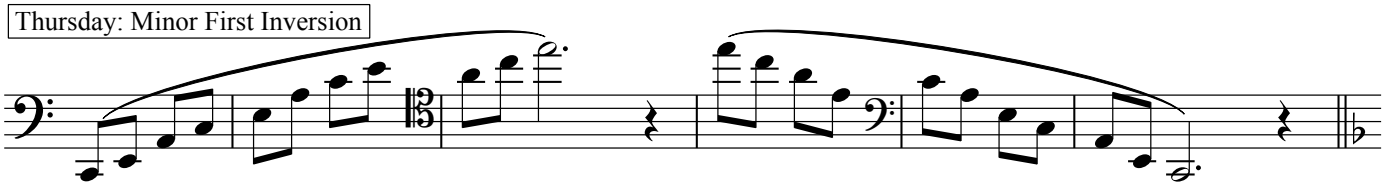
Tuesday: Minor Root Position



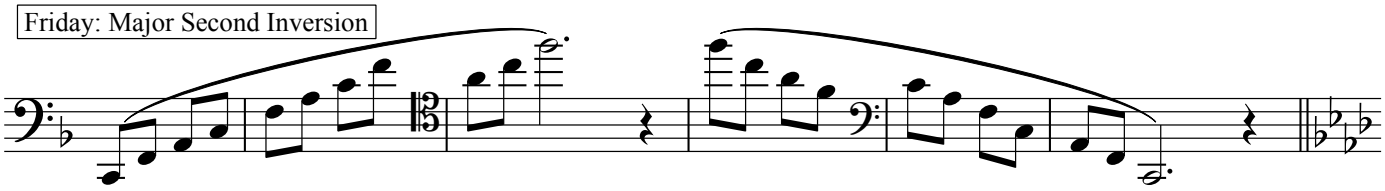
Wednesday: Major First Inversion



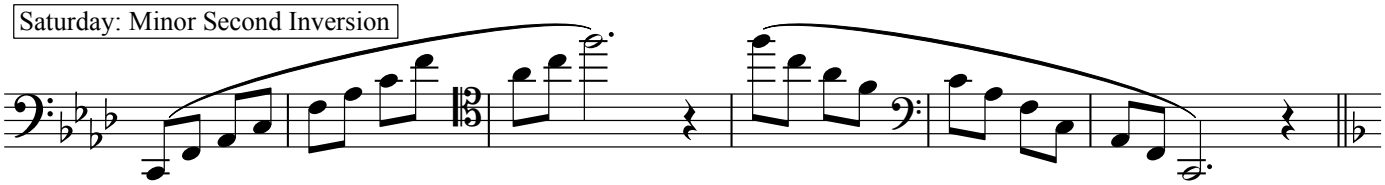
Thursday: Minor First Inversion



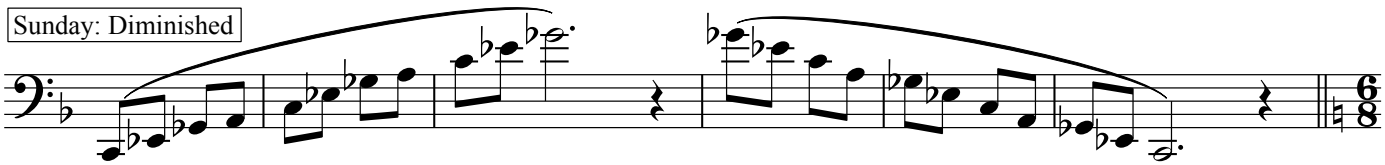
Friday: Major Second Inversion



Saturday: Minor Second Inversion



Sunday: Diminished



These examples are written starting on trigger C for legibilty. Each day you should begin on Pedal C and continue chromatically up to the extreme high register, aiming for a few notes higher than where you feel comfortable.

In your practice, occasionally hold the top note as a fermata, finding ease and efficiency in the high register.

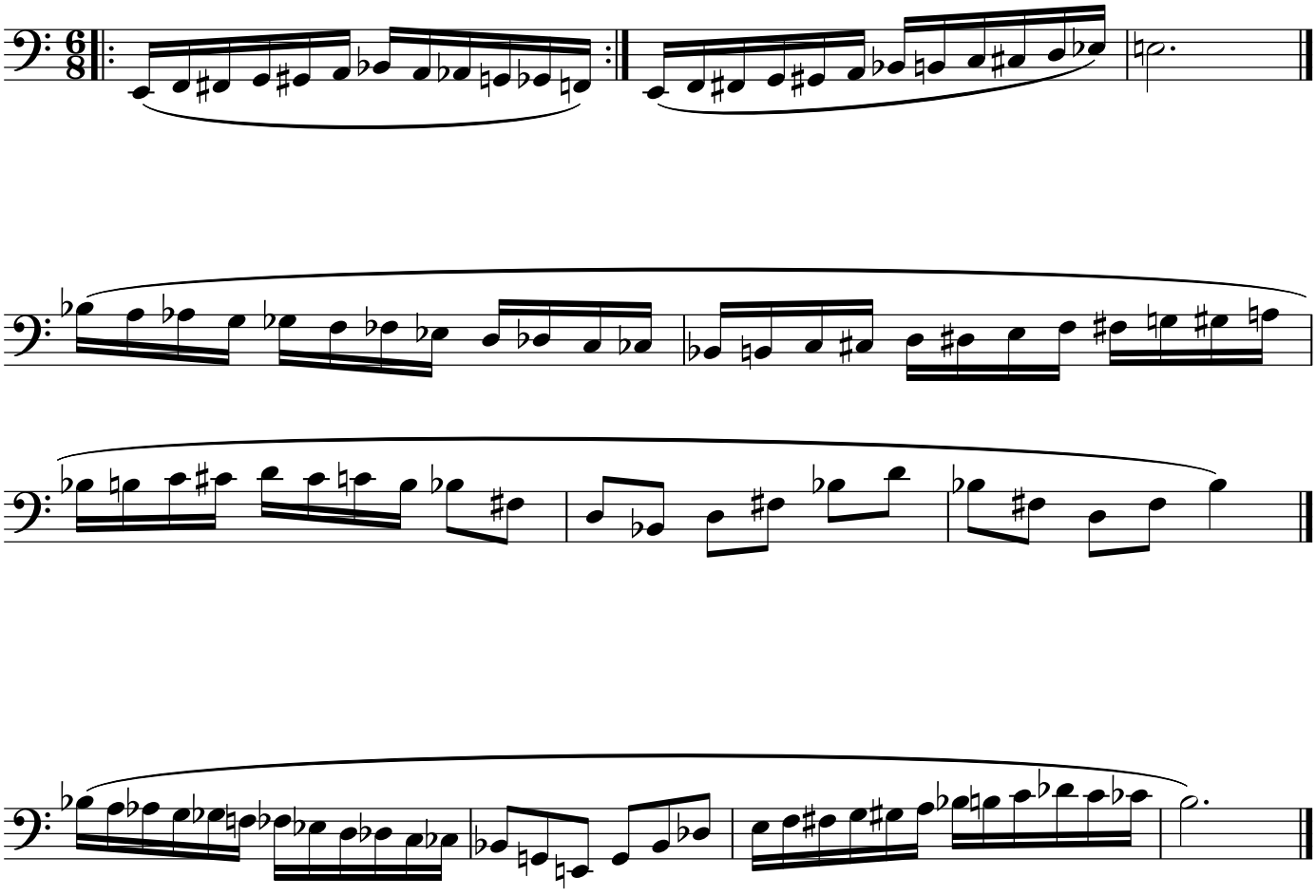
Regular exposure to the extreme low and high registers will help you to gain confidence and stability.

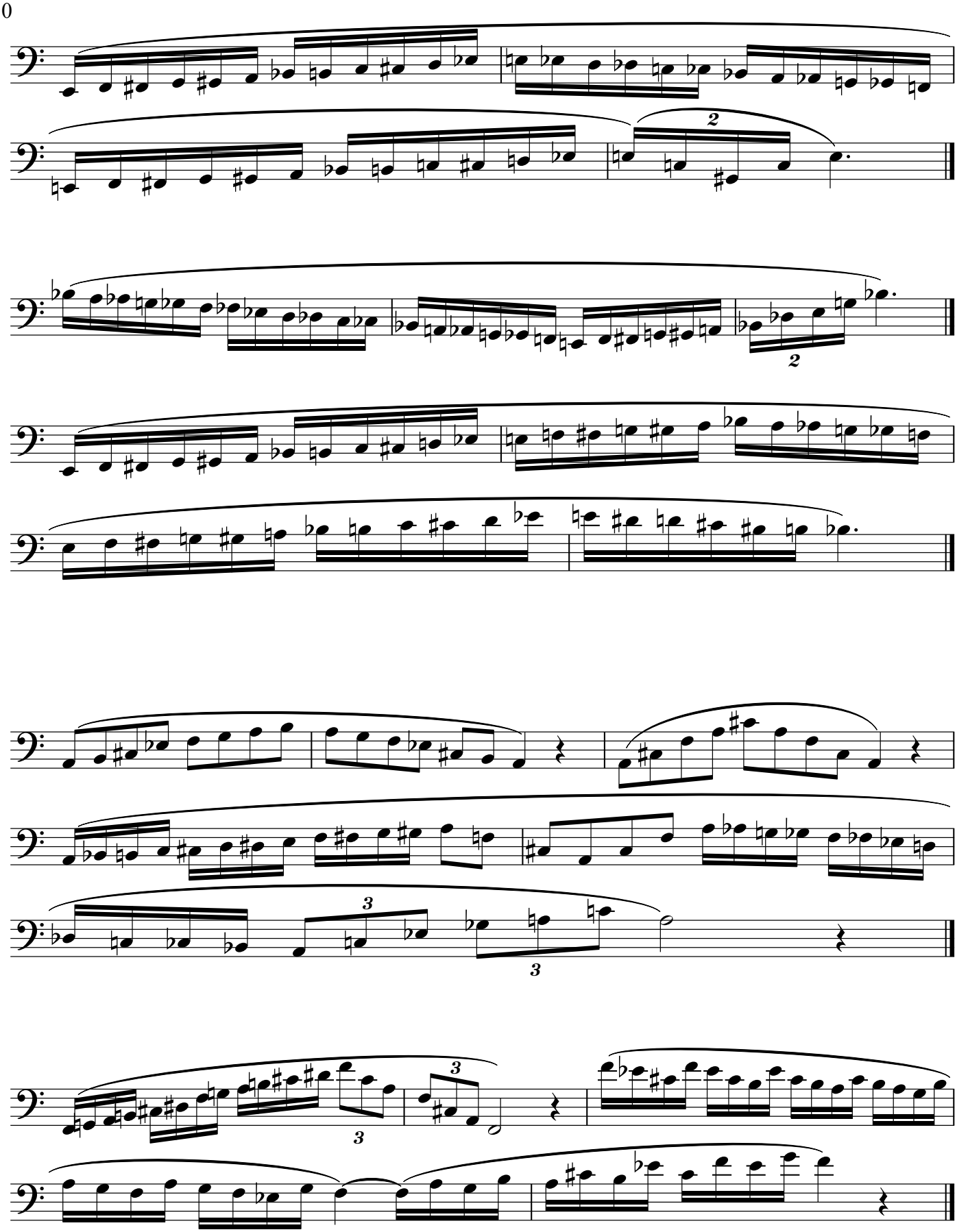
Chromatic and Whole-Tone Scales

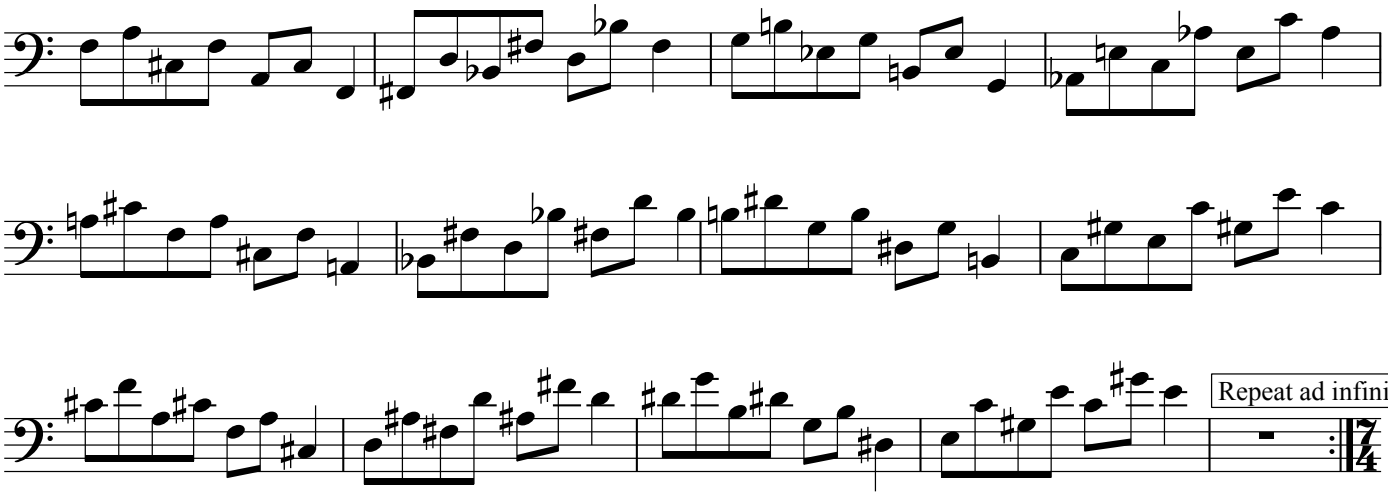
I love noodling with chromatic and whole-tone scales for a several reasons. I can sweep between the extreme registers very smoothly, focusing on the connection of registers, similar to most of the other exercises in this routine. I also like to concentrate on perfect slide arm coordination.

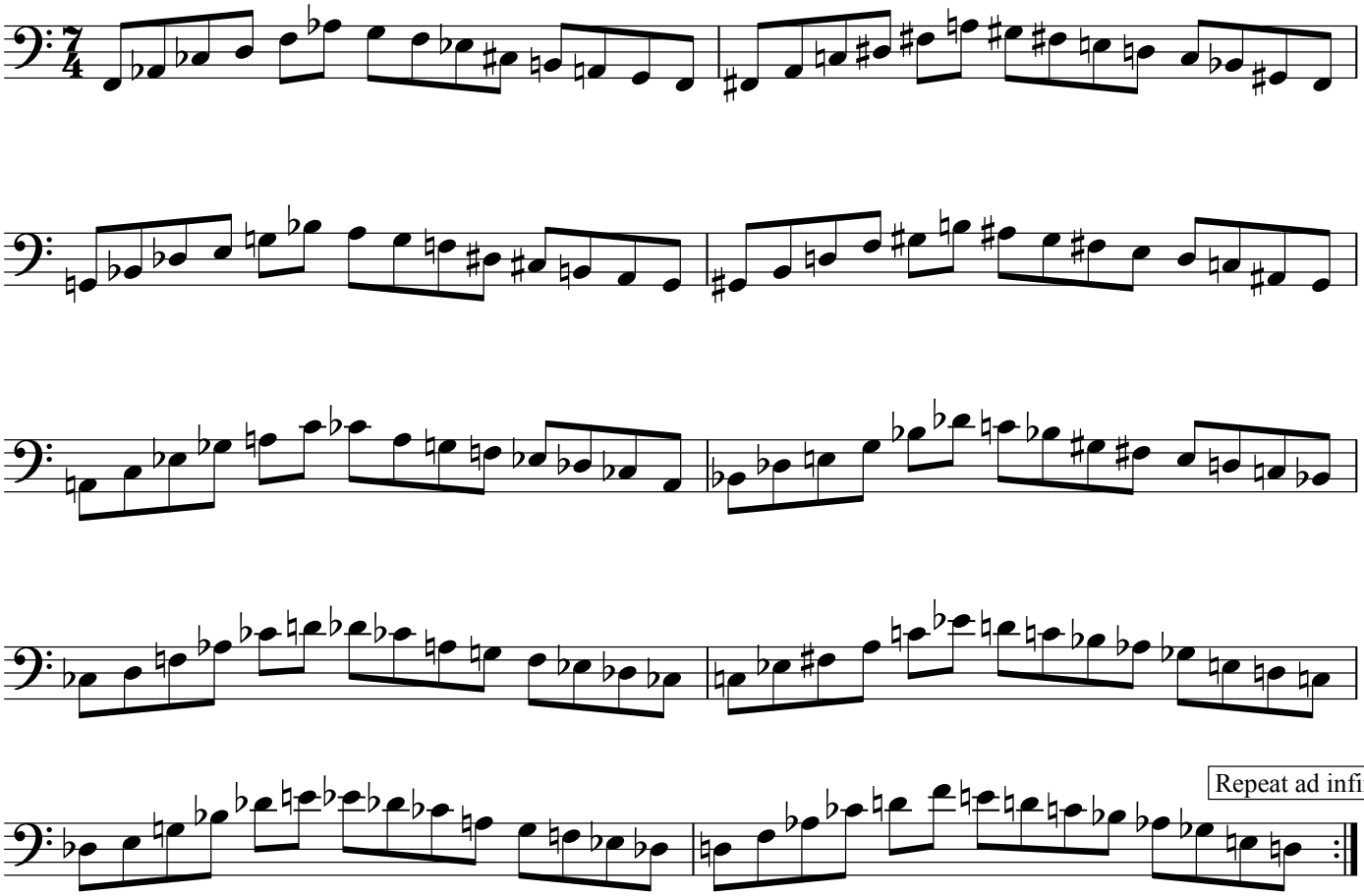
Most "trombone" exercises are tonal, meaning we intuitively hear a strong tonic. For example, any exercise where you stick your slide in one position and lip slur across partials is centered in the key of the fundamental of that position. I believe we brass players can sometimes get stuck in hearing and conceptualizing lip slurs as they sit on the bugles of our instrument. In order to retrain my ears and chops, I play lots and lots of chromatic and whole tone scales where the key is more ambiguous and pair those scales with diminished and augmented arpeggi. A full theory discussion is beyond the scope of this routine, but you should be able to notice that both the diminished and augmented arpeggio are symmetrical, i.e. every interval between any two adjacent notes is the same, either a minor or major third. This obfuscates the tonal center, allowing me to practice very fluidly and more easily into the high and low registers. The other symmetrical scale is the octatonic (both whole-half and half-whole), also known as the diminished scale. I did not include it here for the sake of time and space, but I practice that scale similarly to chromatic and whole-tone.

The following exercises are transcriptions of some improvisatory noodling that is indicative of how I like to finish my daily routine. Only one iteration is notated, but I transpose each sequence as high and low as I can go. I highly encourage you to come up with your own patterns and engrain the sound of these scales without reading sheet music.






Repeat ad infinitum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