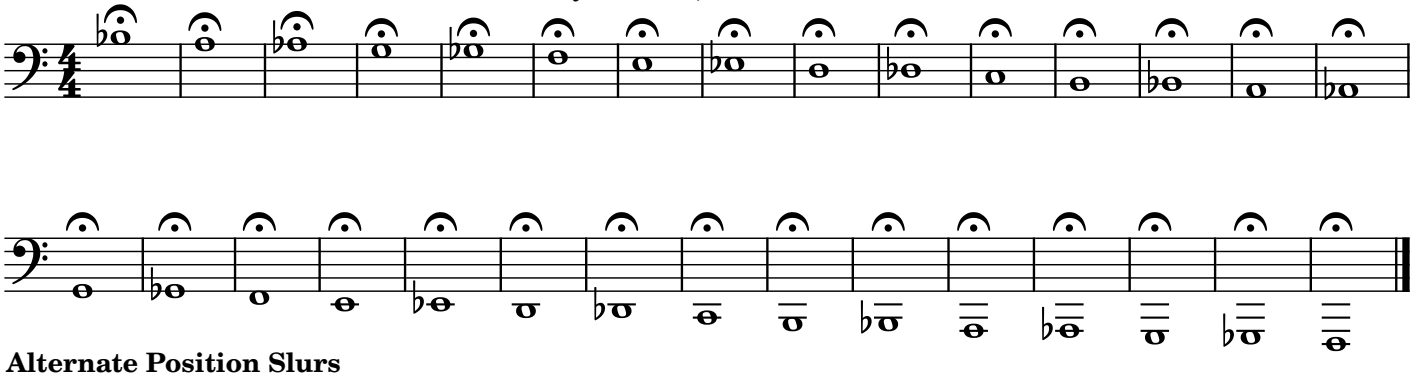
Bass Trombone Warm-up

G-half flat (Bollinger) Tuning

Derek Gullett
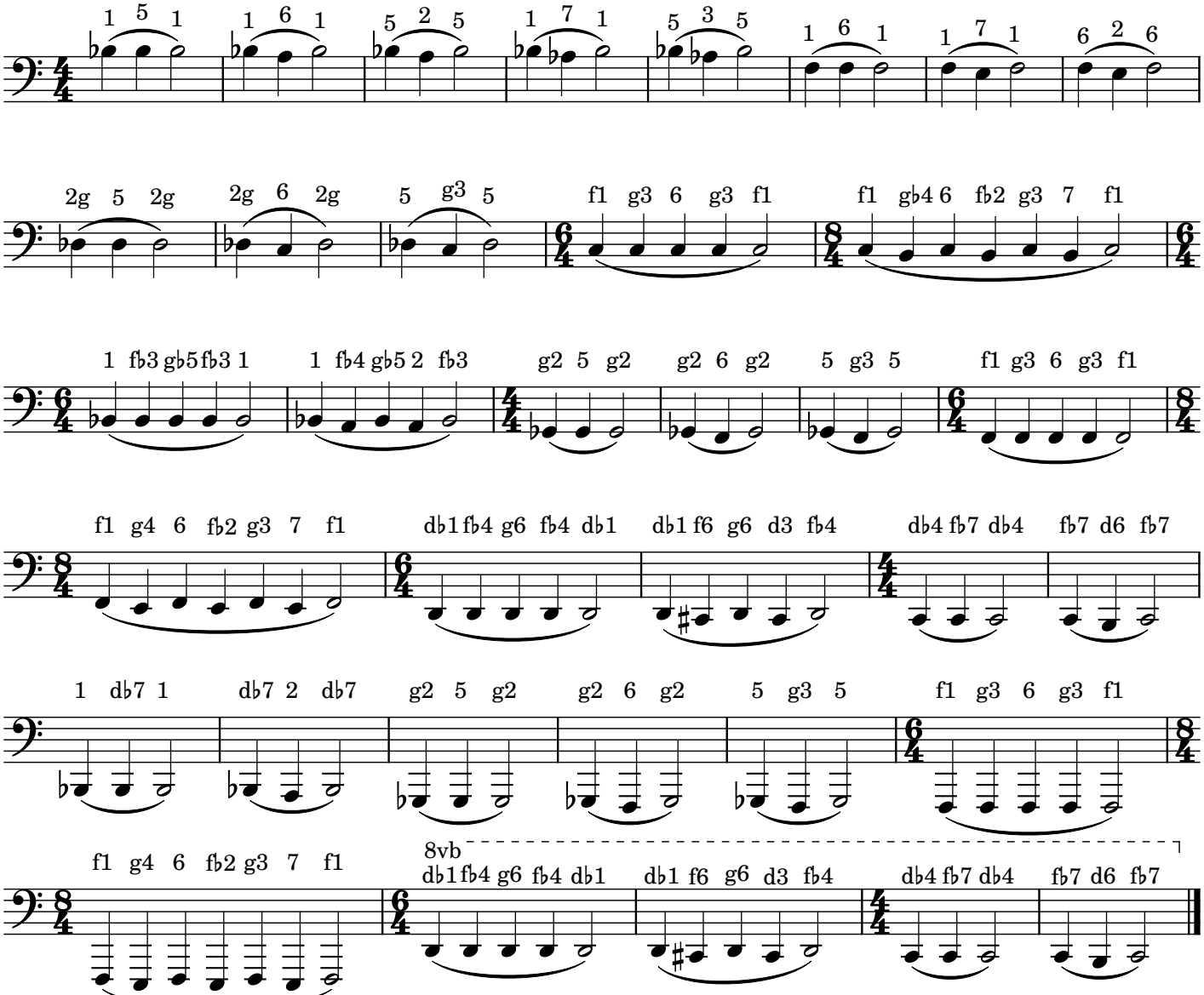
Long Tones

Make sure these are LONG. Use these to find your ideal, centered sound.



Alternate Position Slurs

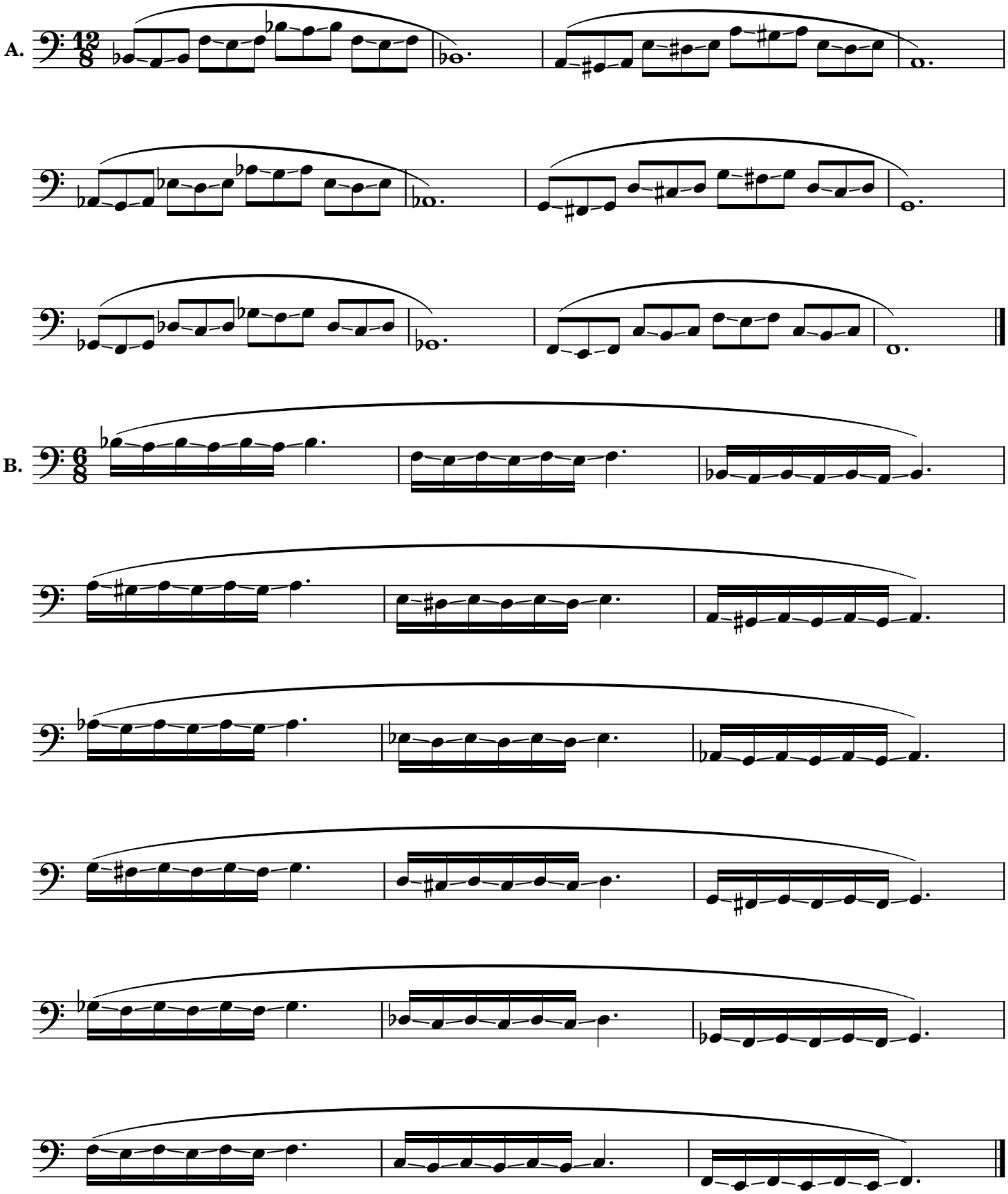
Strive for smoothness in both the air and embouchure. Make these sound like a slow, same-partial slur.
Be sure to have intonation match on same notes in different positions.

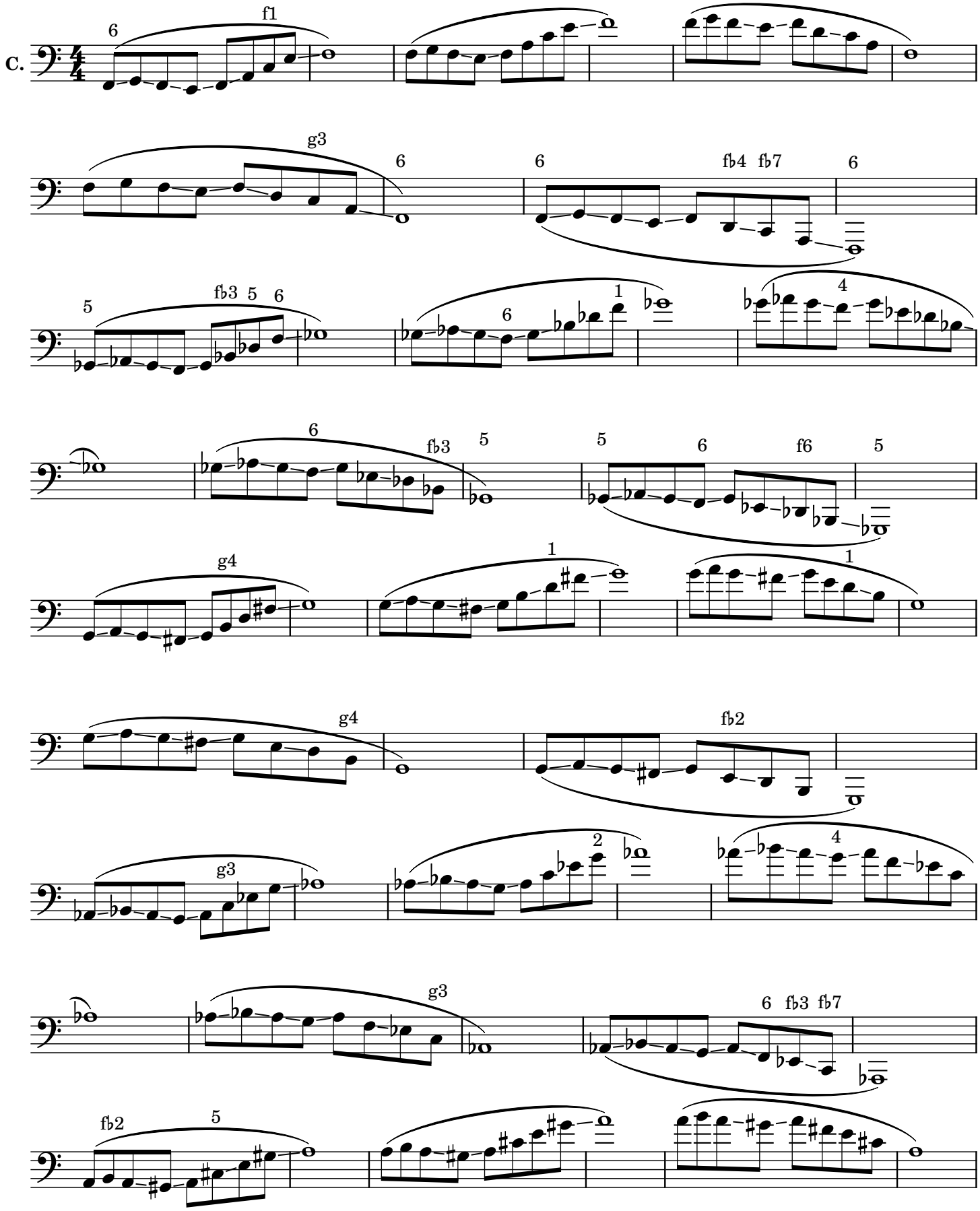


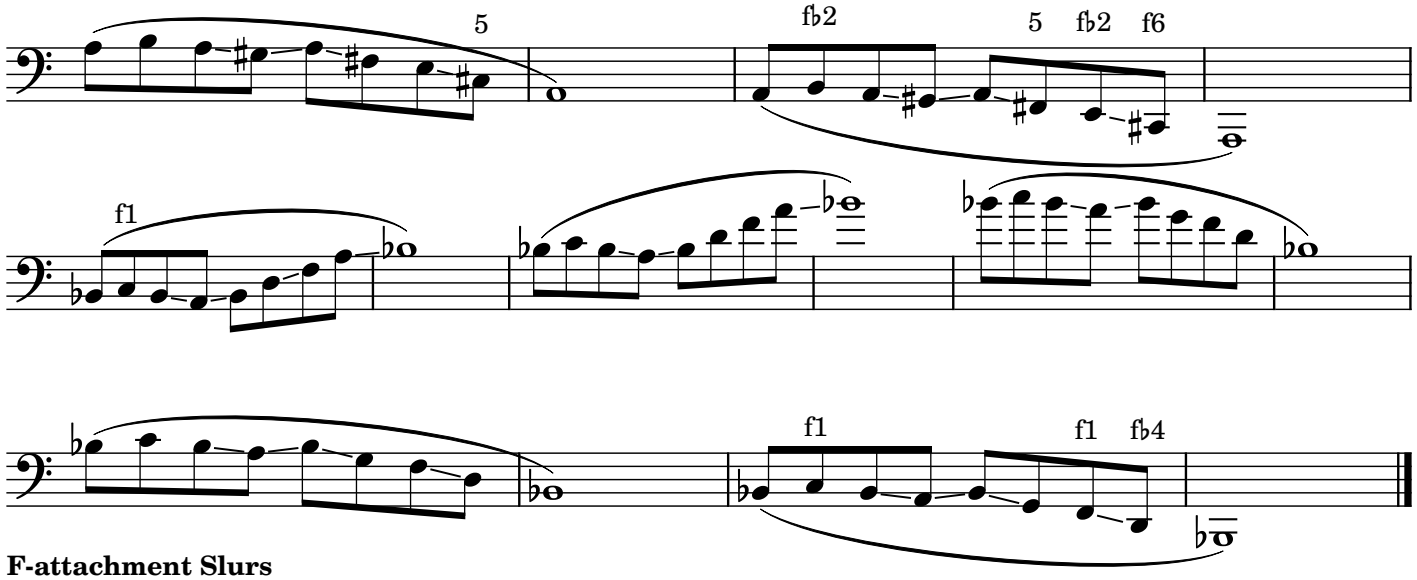
2

Glissandi

Play at a moderate tempo. Strive for a totally smooth and seamless airstream.
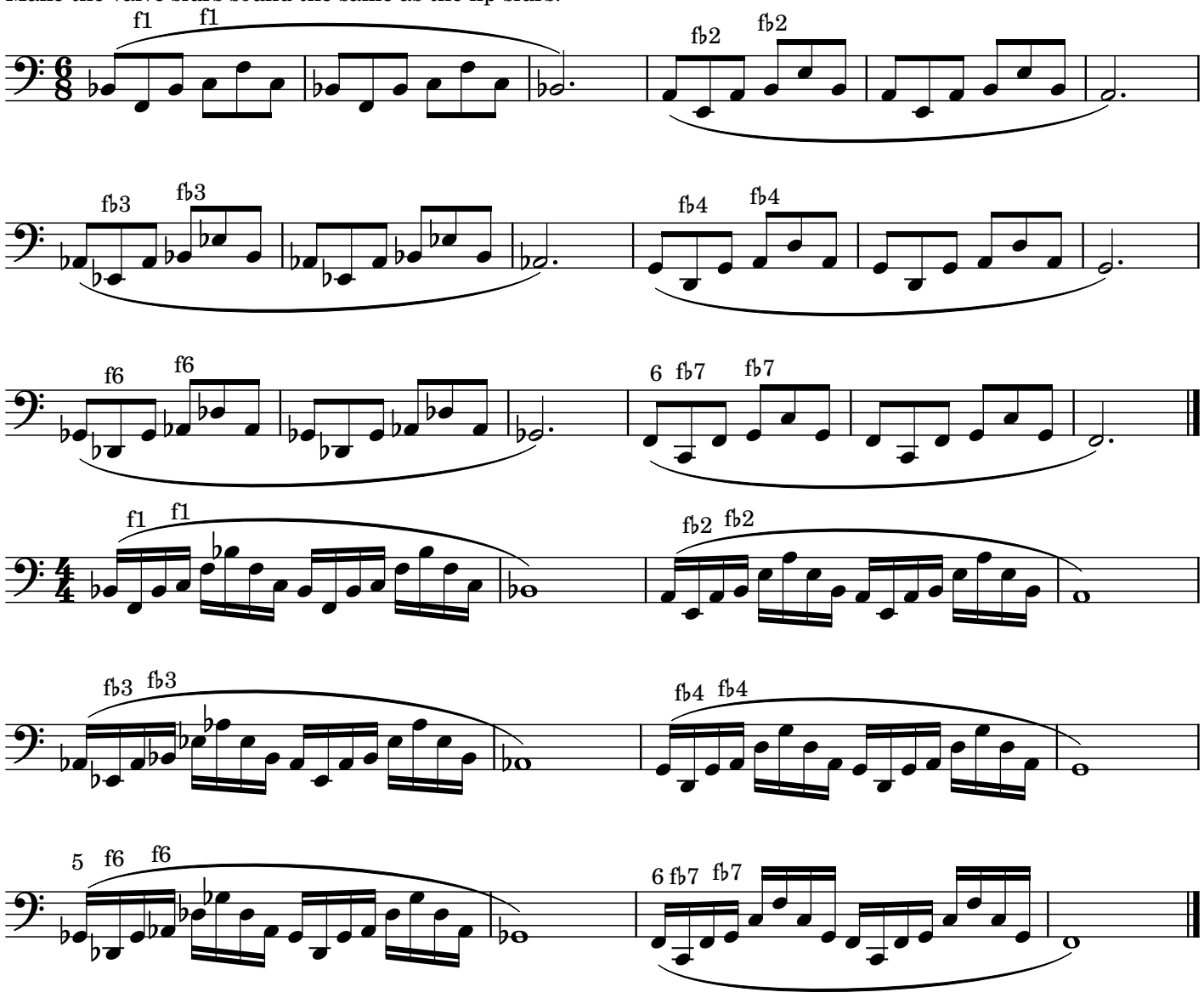



C.
6
f1
g3
6
6
fb4 fb7
6
5
fb3 5 6
1
4
6
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6 fb3 fb7
fb2
5



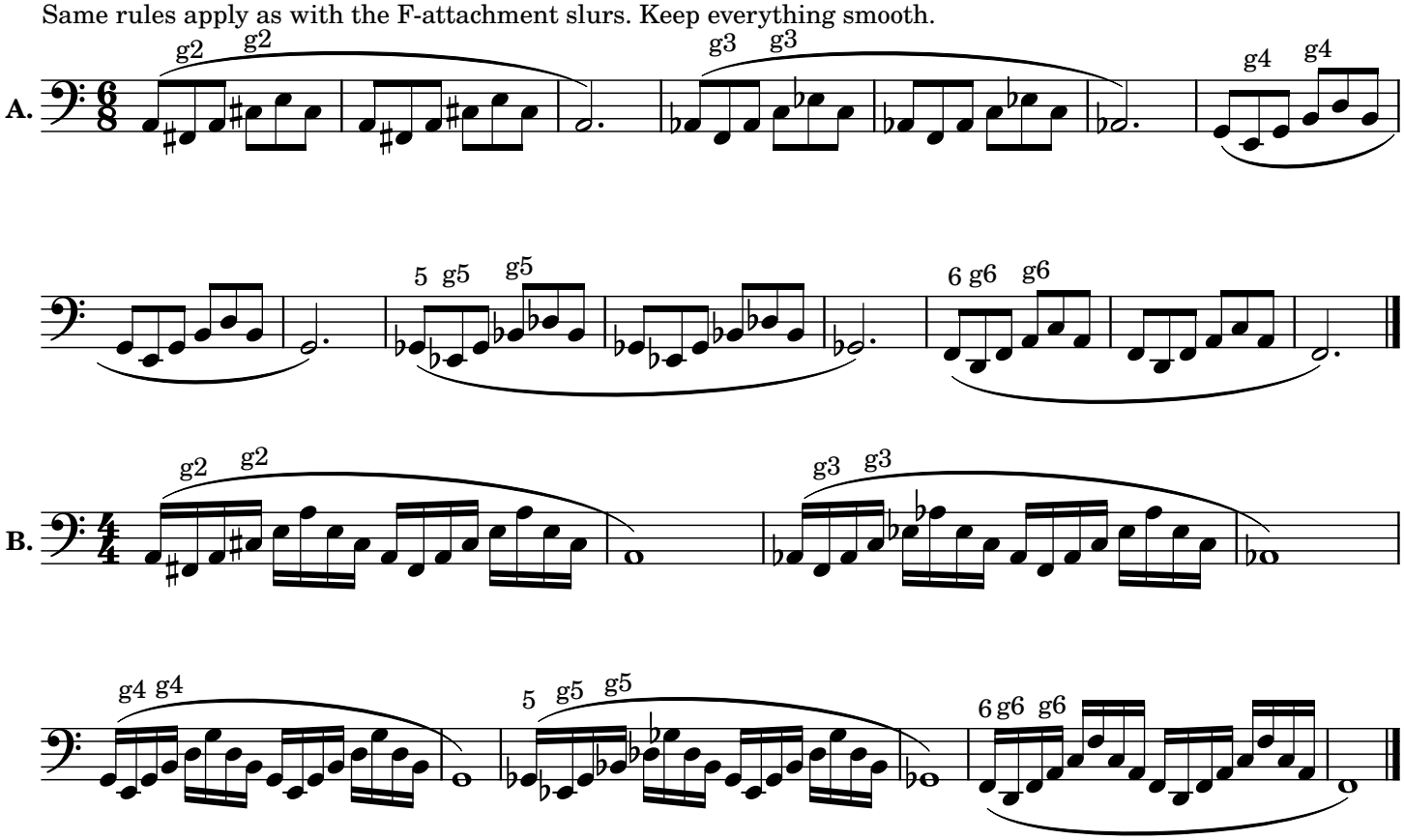
F-attachment Slurs

Play at a moderately fast tempo. Keep in mind a smooth transition in and out of the valve.
Make the valve slurs sound the same as the lip slurs.
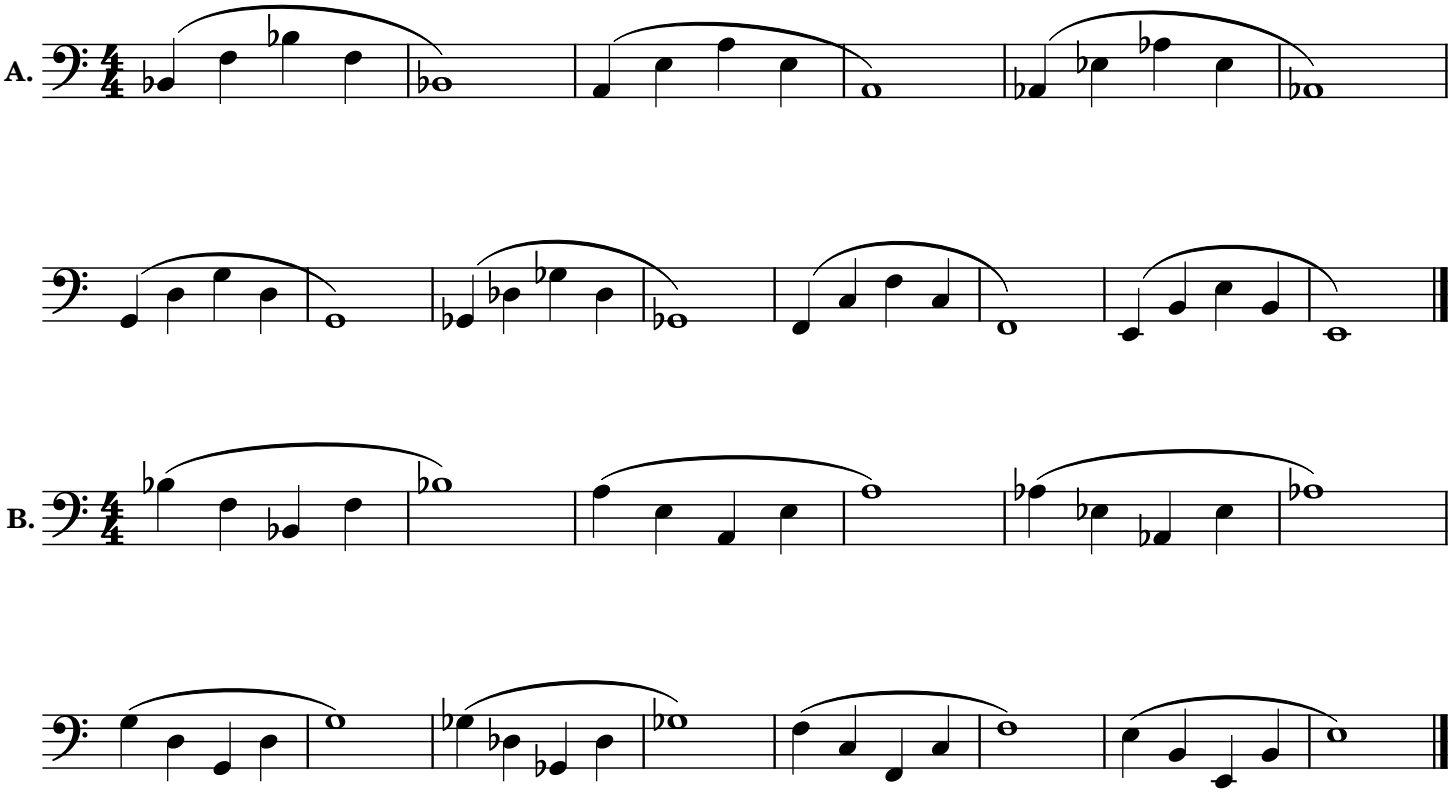


G-half flat-attachment Slurs
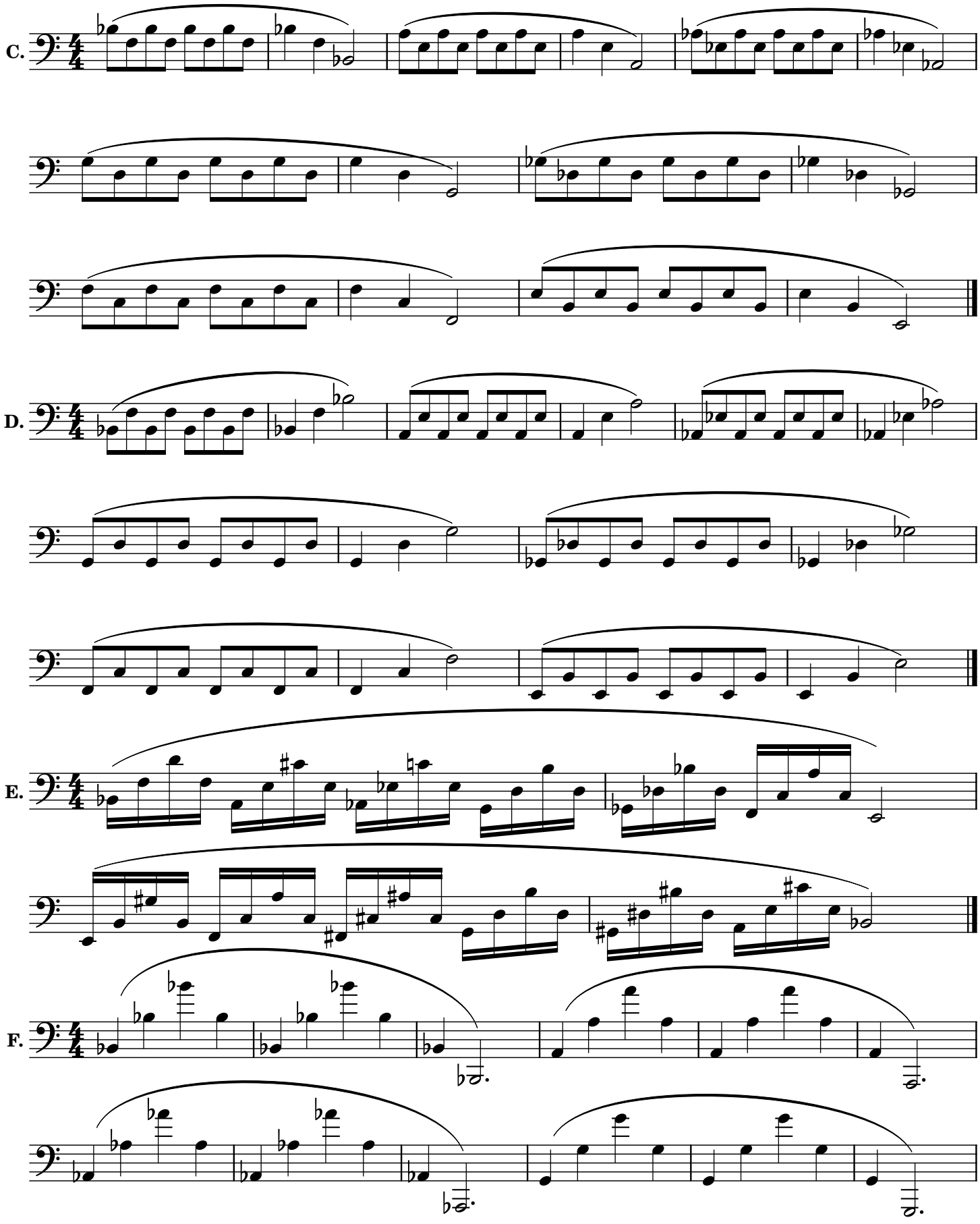
Same rules apply as with the F-attachment slurs. Keep everything smooth.

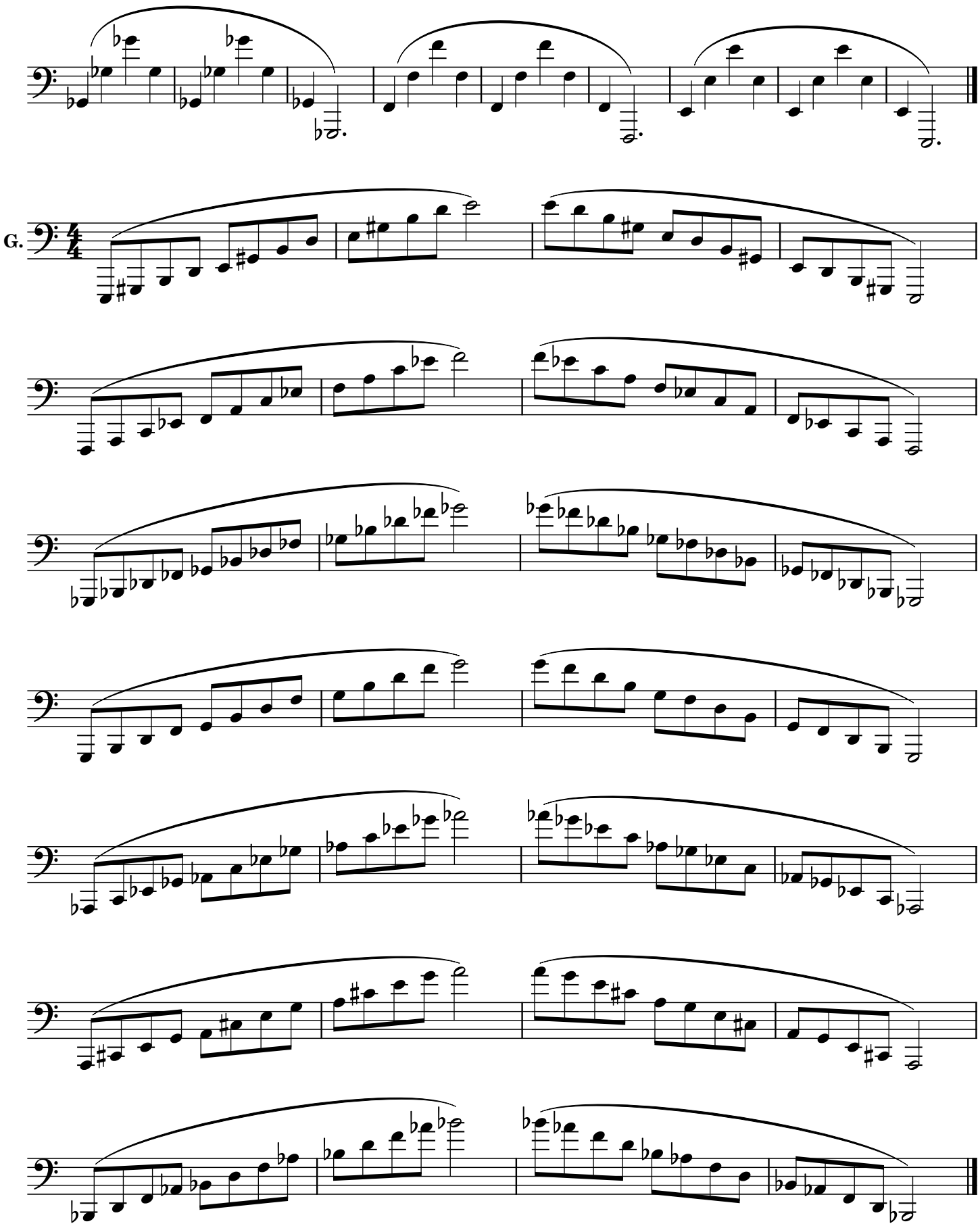


Basic Slurs

Play at a slow tempo (exercises E and G can be quicker). Ride the airstream into immediate sound.
Aim for minimal embouchure movement and rely on the air to change notes.



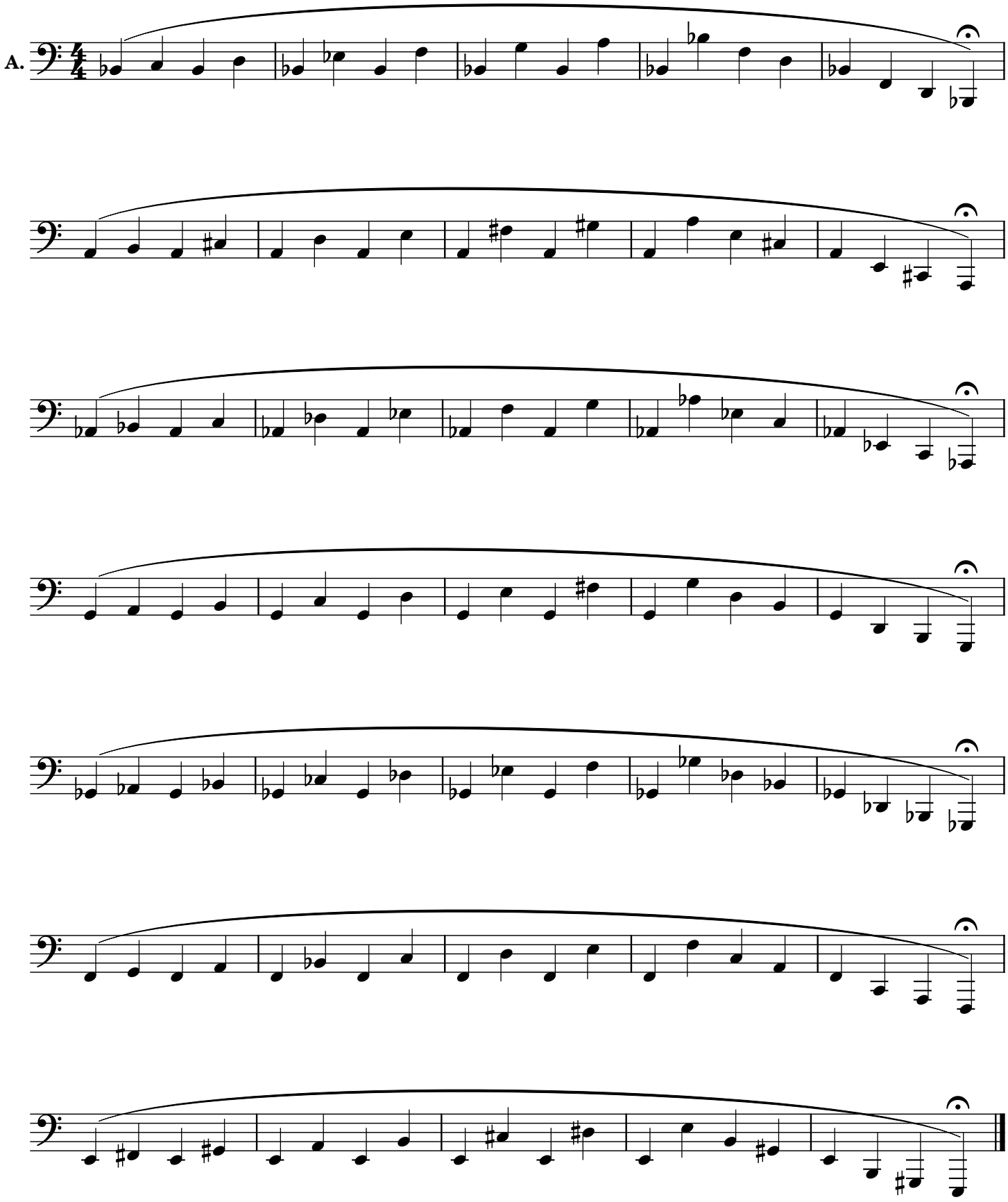

C.
D.
E.
F.
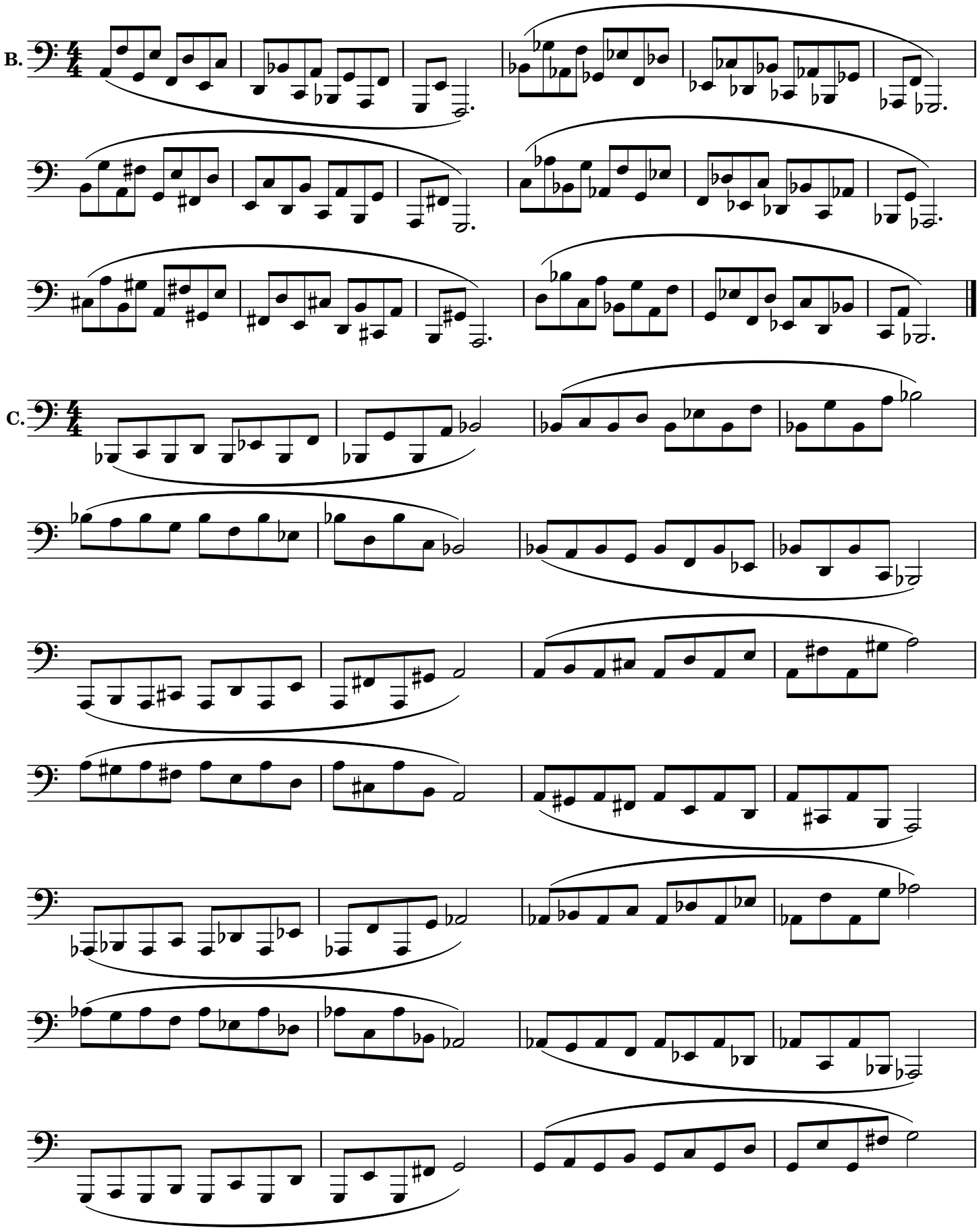

G.
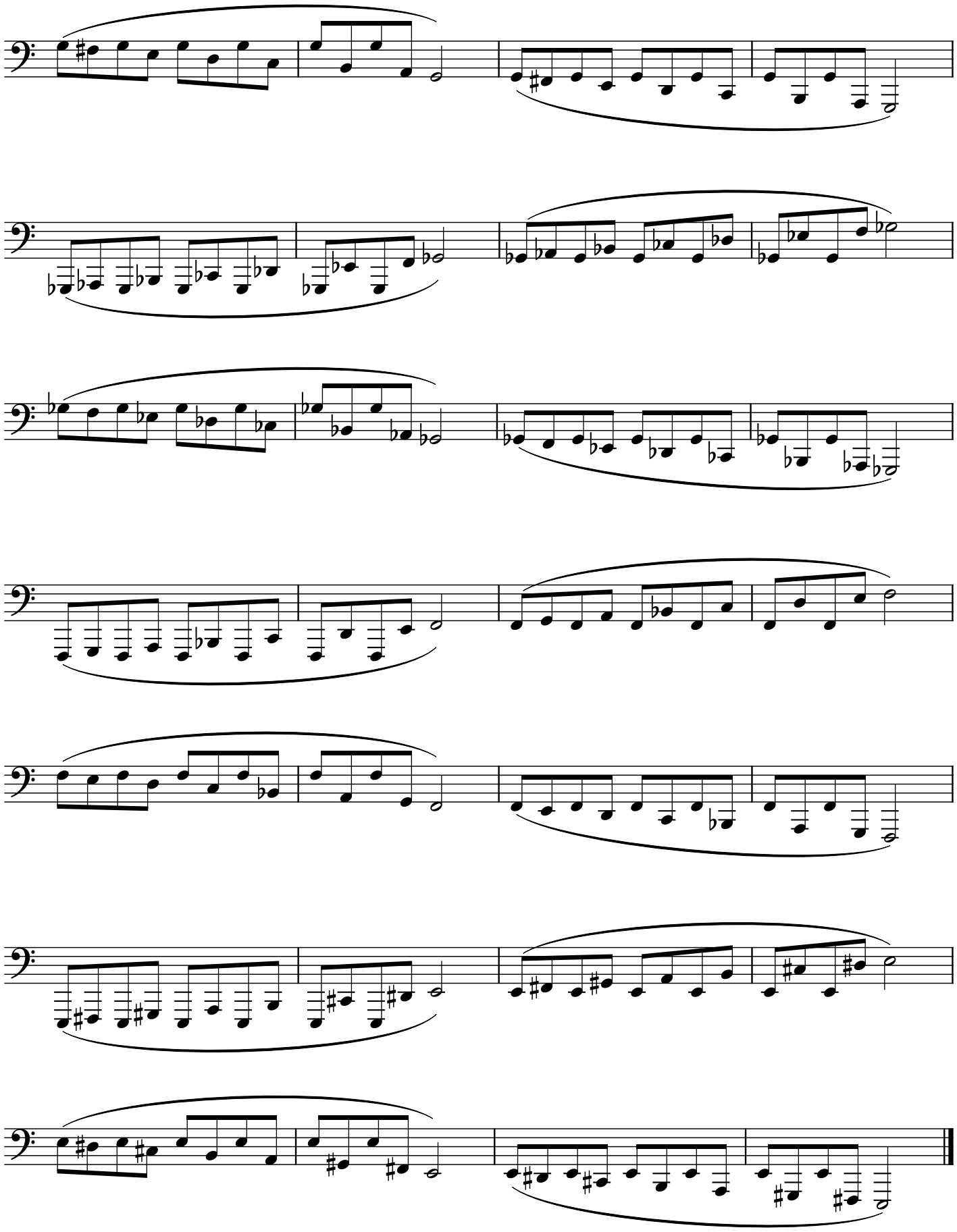
8

Intervallic Slurs

Also play at a slow tempo (exercise C can be quicker). Same rules apply as in the basic slurs.
For larger intervals, use the lower note as a point to jump off of.

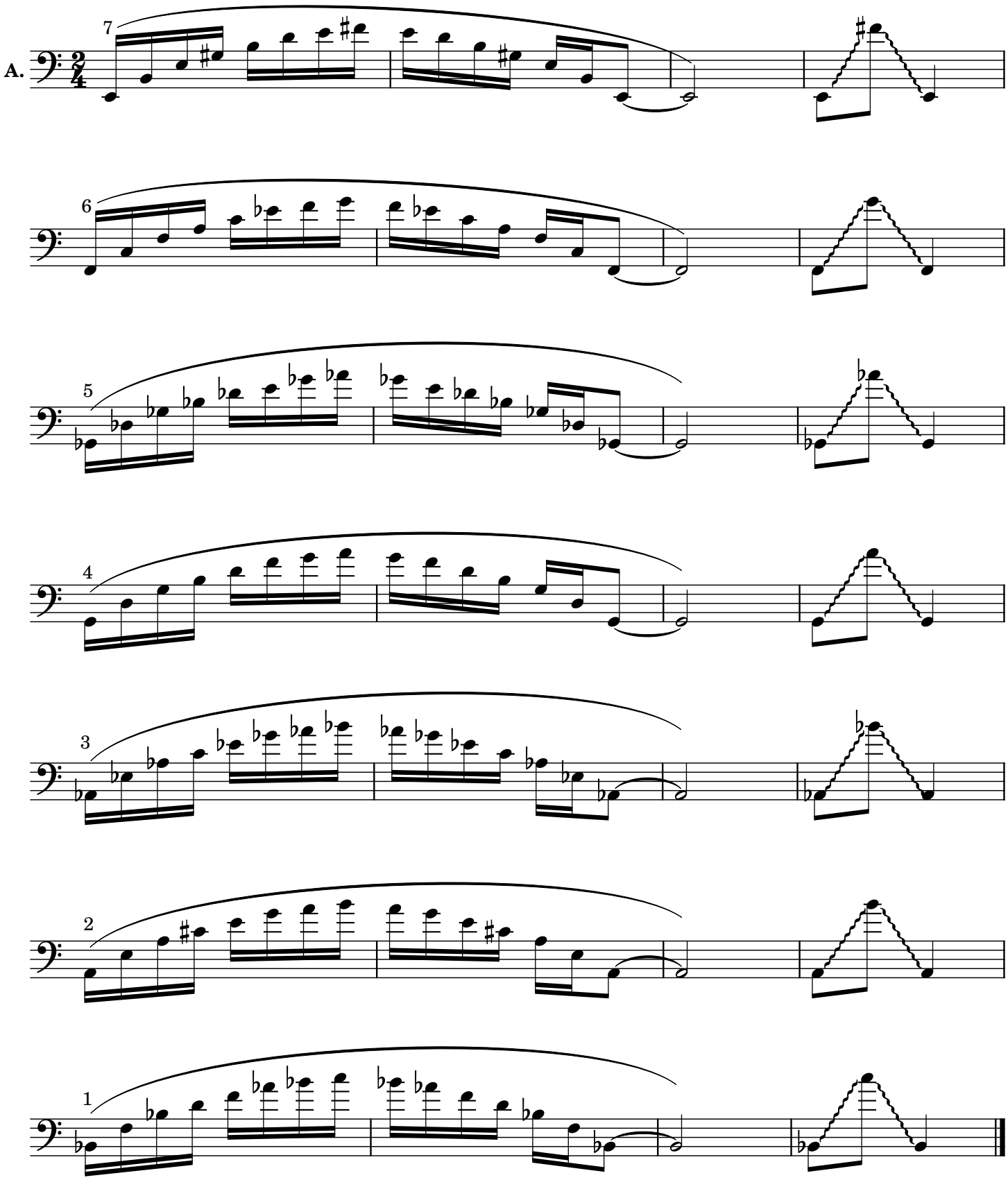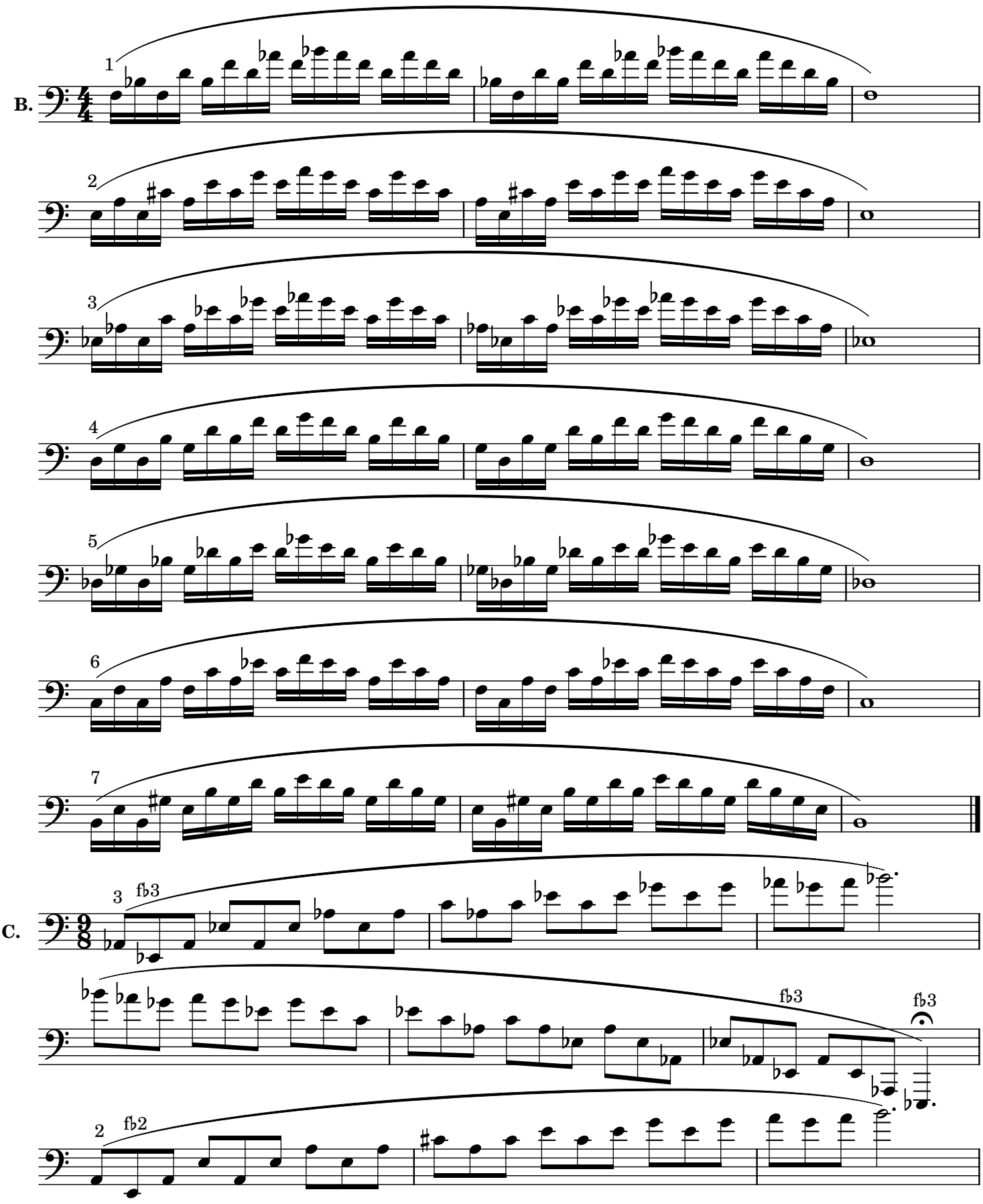



B.
C.
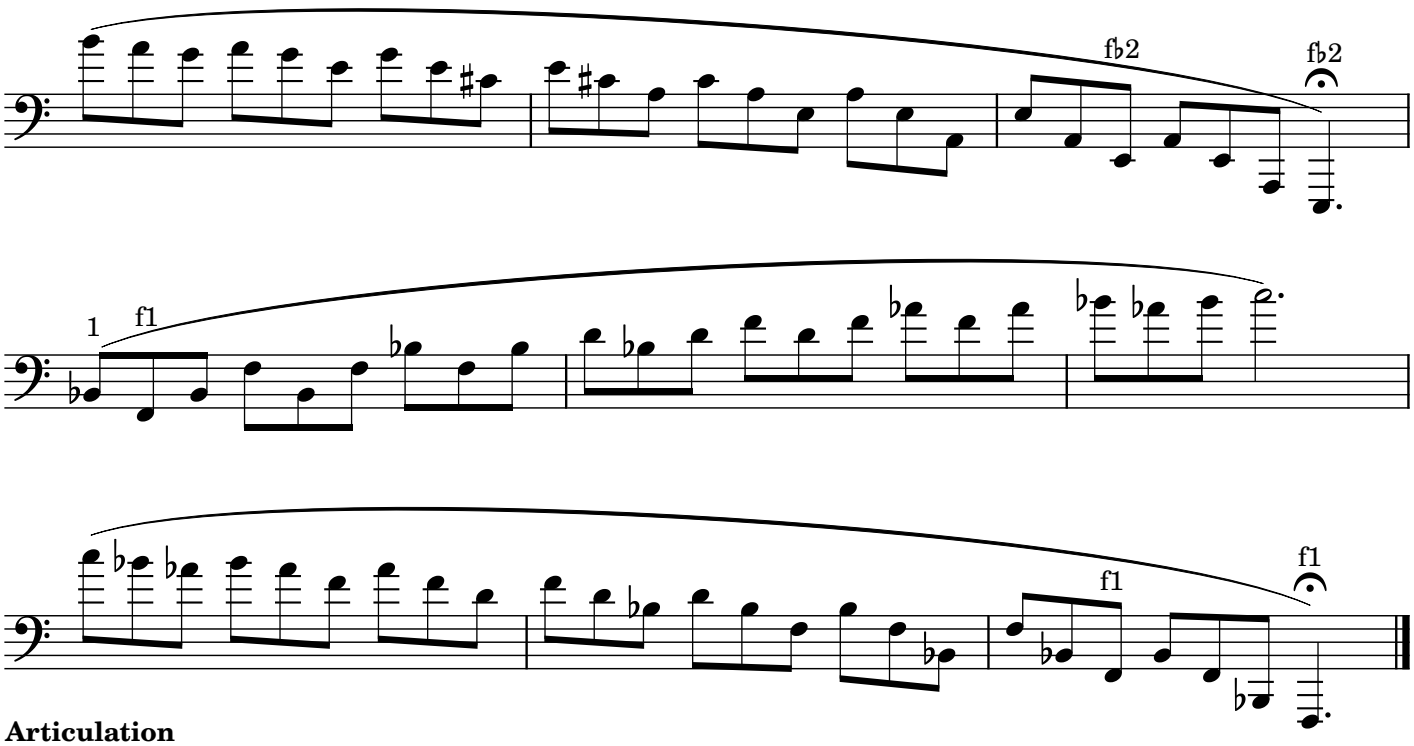


Flexibility

Play only as fast as the exercises remain clean and comfortable. Maintain minimal embouchure movement and continue to ride the airstream, using the starting point as the base for the top.
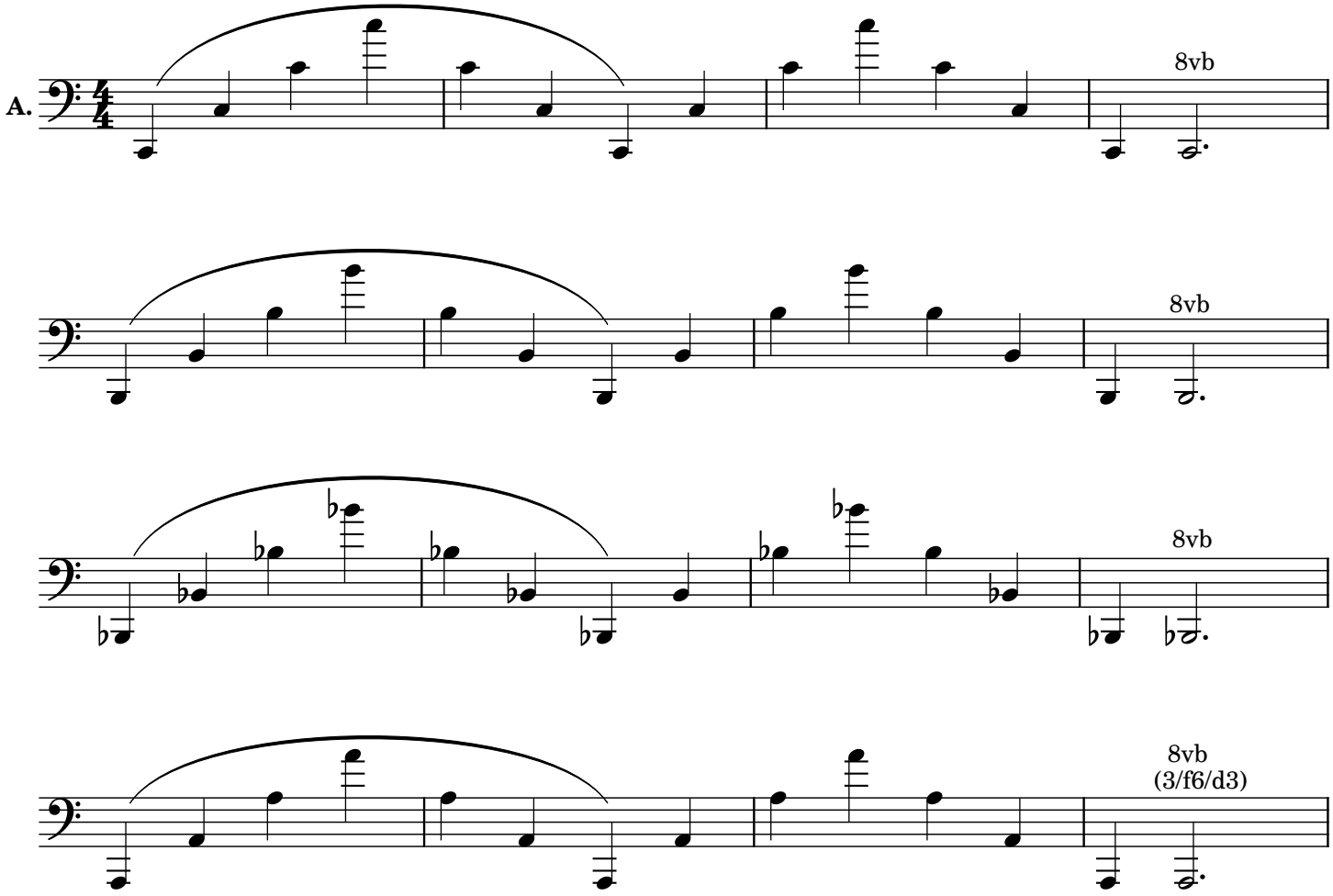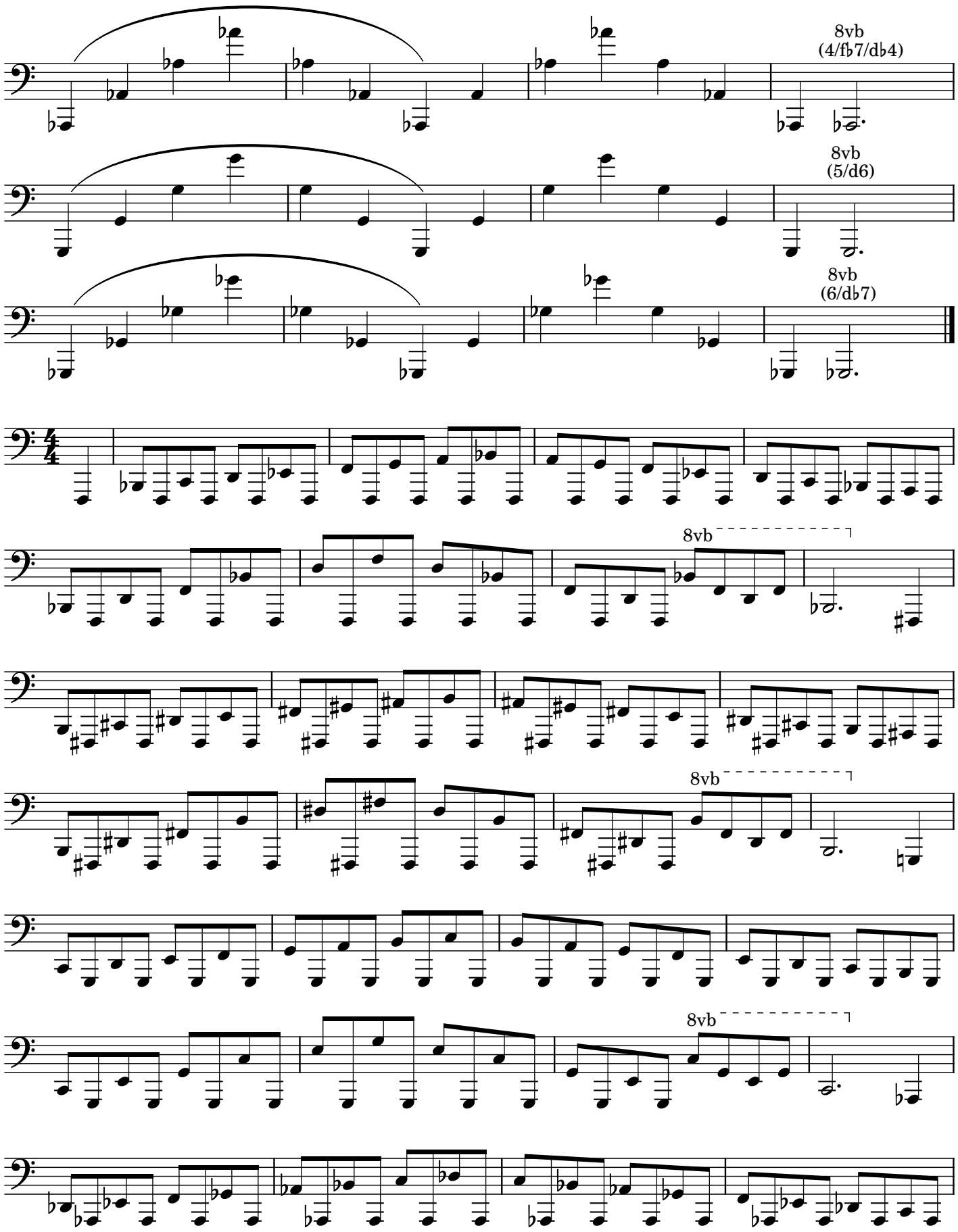



B.
1
2
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4
5
6
7
C.
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fb3
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fb3
2
fb2
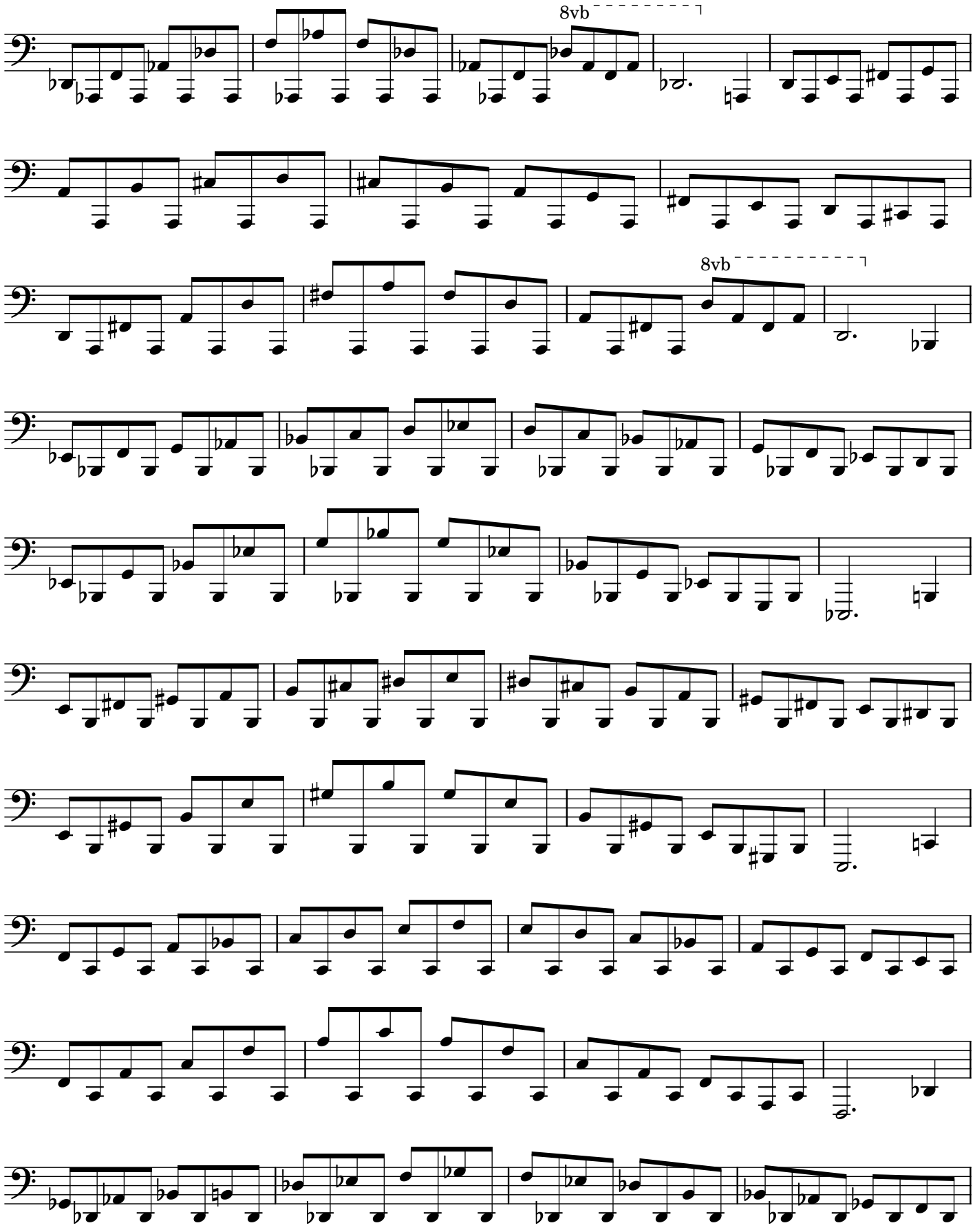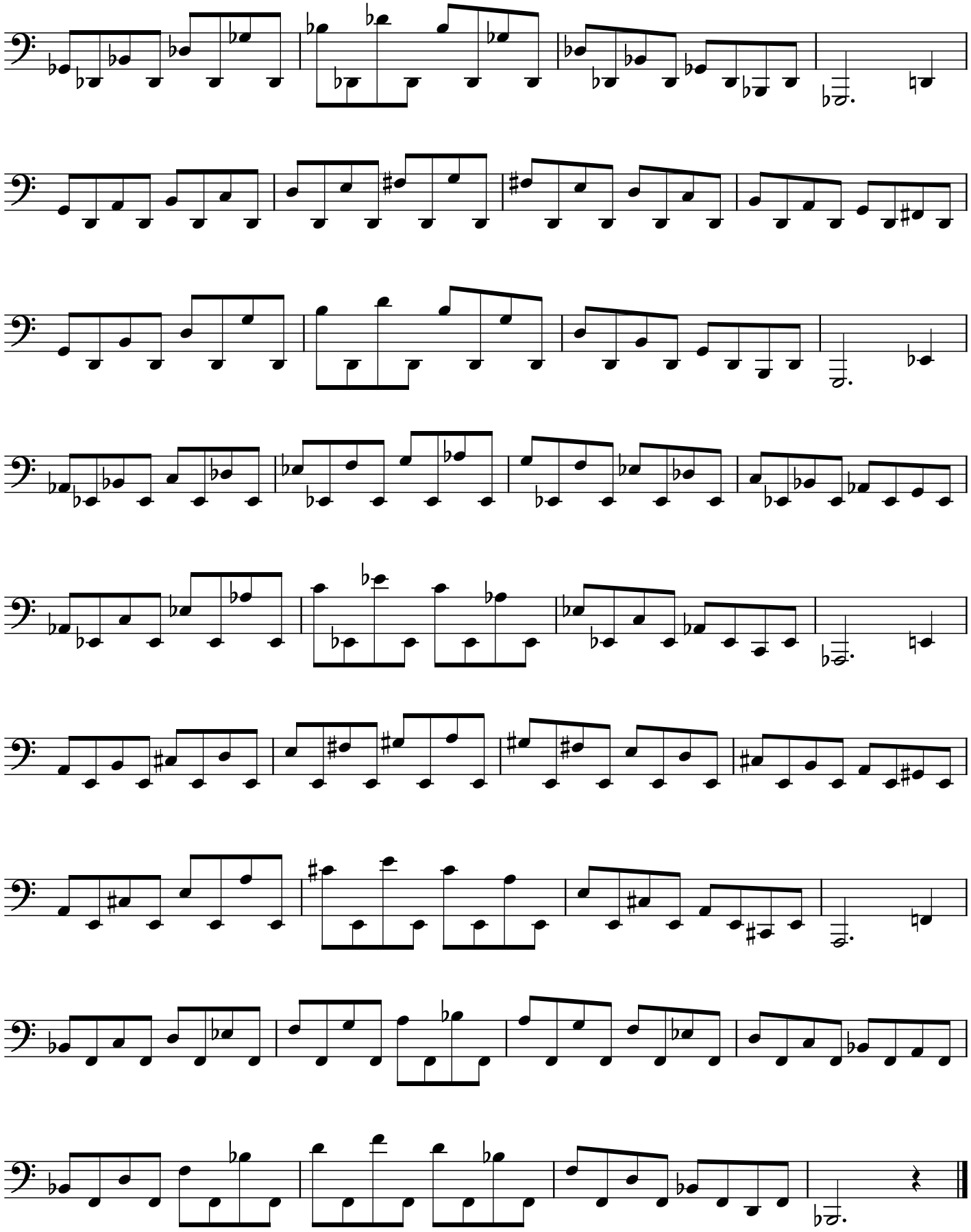


Articulation

Play at a moderately slow tempo. Same rules with air still apply. Strive for an even response in all registers.
When starting notes, only let the tongue momentarily shape the airstream (the tongue does not start notes, air does).
Although the tongue is becoming more active and shaping notes now, still use legato air as the basis for everything.




8vb
(4/f♭7/d♭4)
8vb
(5/d6)
8vb
(6/d♭7)
B.
8vb
8vb
8vb

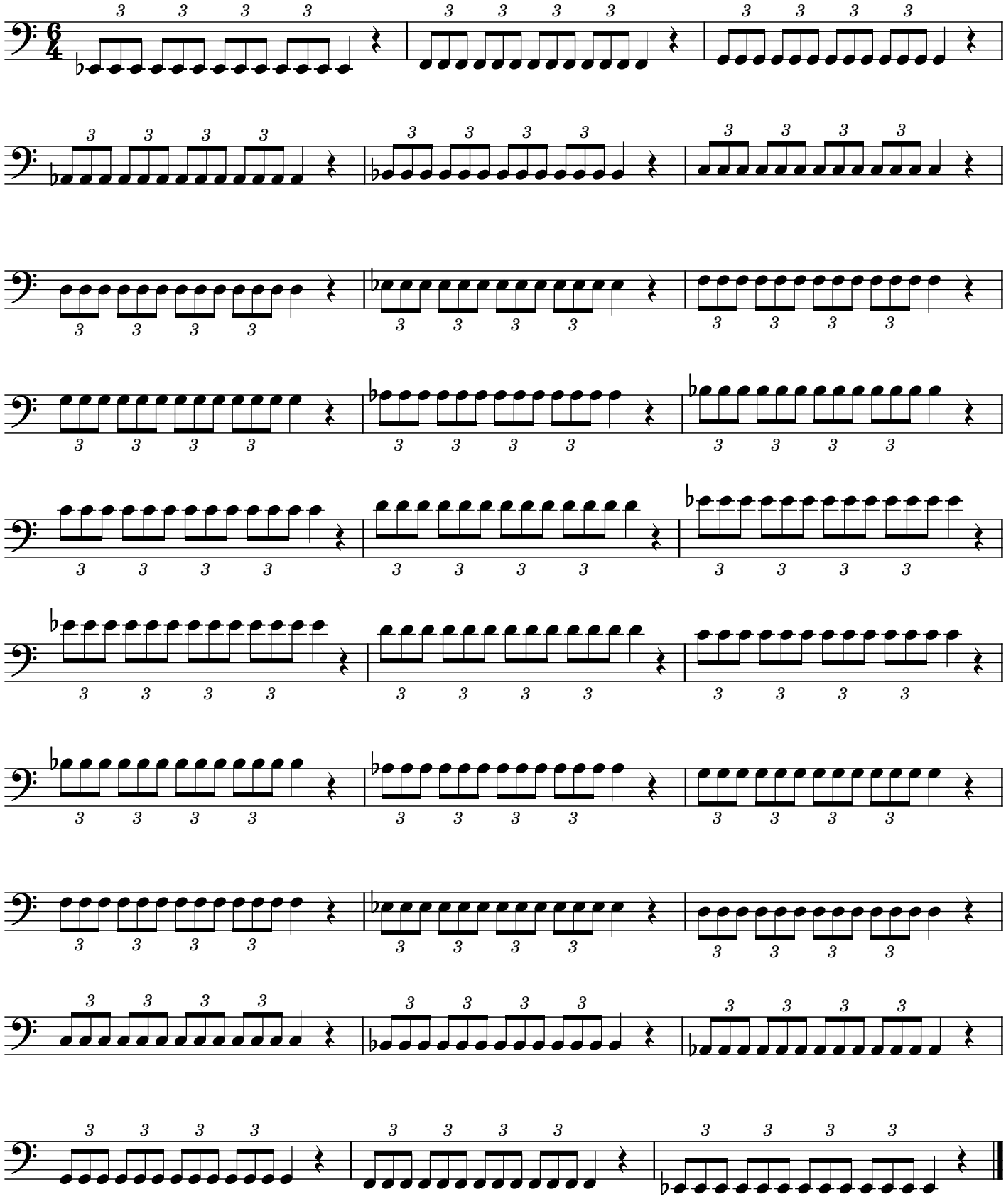

8vb
8vb

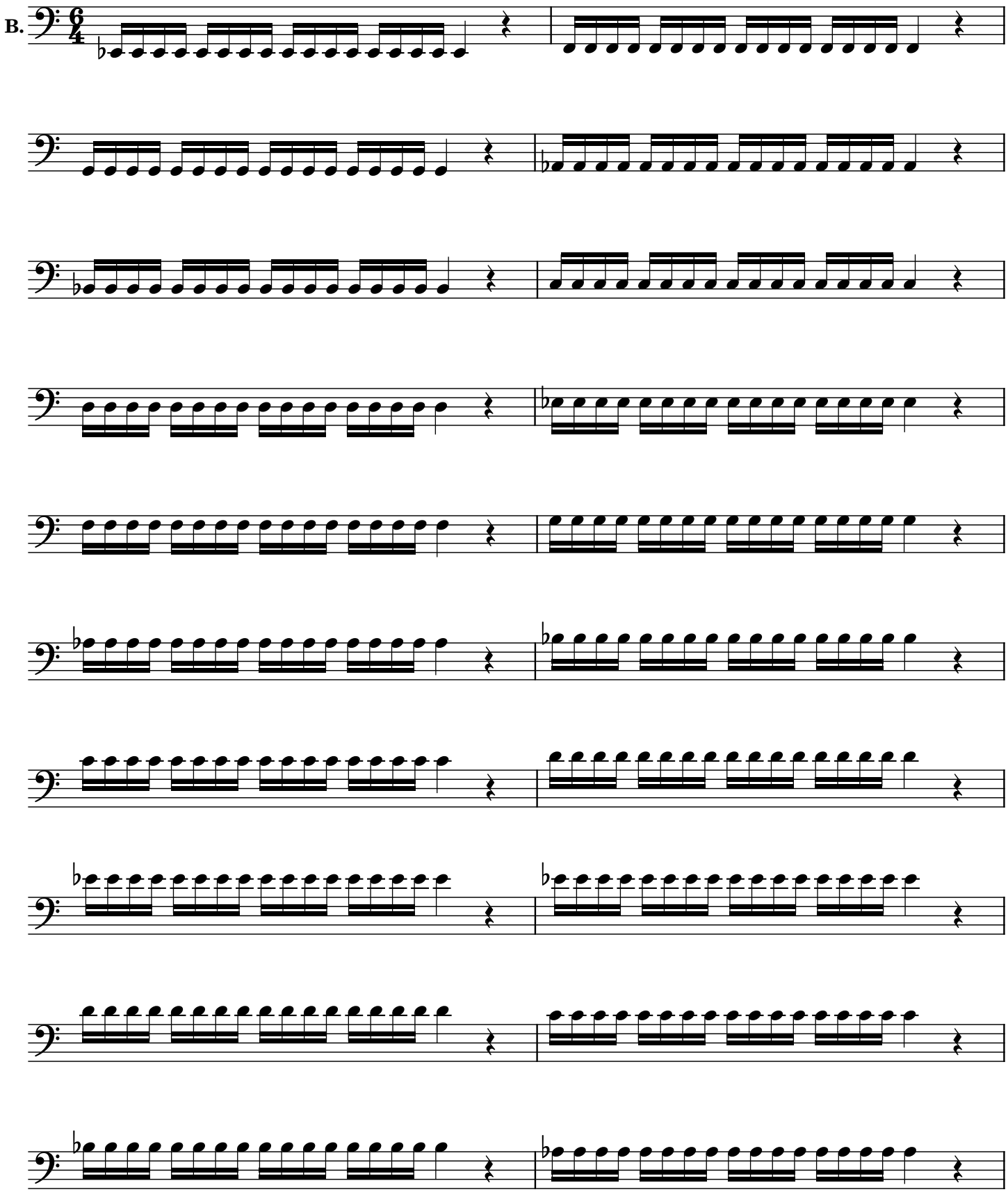


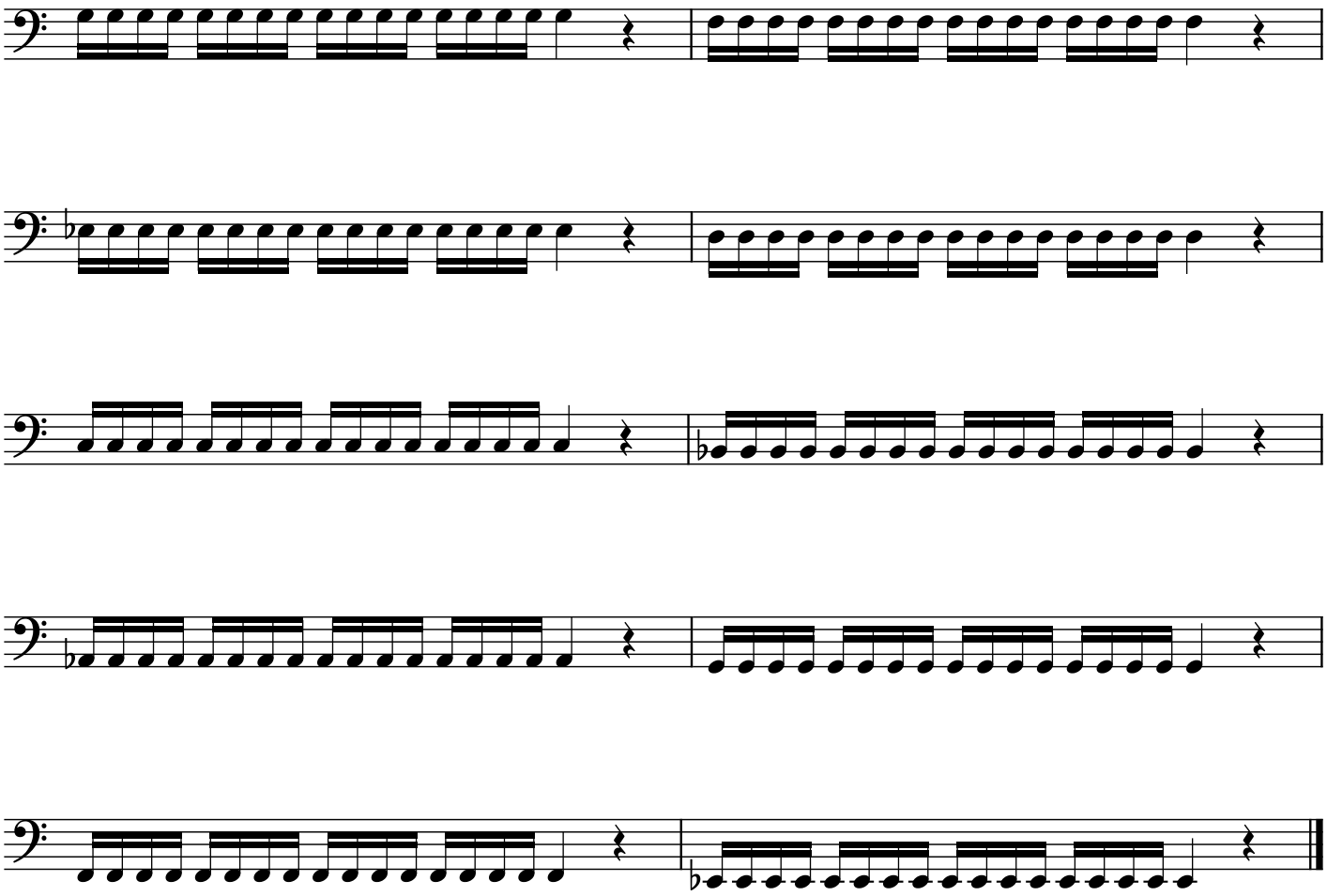
Multiple Tonguing

Make sure both syllables match in both response and articulation quality. The faster the tempo, the lighter the syllables need to be. Allow the airstream to let the notes speak.

A.




B.



Notes:
Notice that none of the exercises have a printed dynamic marking. This is because all exercises can and should be played at all volumes within a full, healthy dynamic range (especially long tones). Experiment with new dynamics on different exercises each day. Tempo markings are also not provided, only written instructions. Picking a tempo within the written guidelines and setting it to a metronome for each exercise is nonetheless recommended.

Also notice that the note A0 is marked to be played in third position, sixth position with the F-attachment, or third position with both valves, A♭0 is marked to be played in fourth position, a lowered seventh position with both valves, or a lowered fourth position with both valves, G0 is marked to be played in fifth position or sixth position with both valves, and G♭0 is marked to be played in sixth position or a lowered seventh position with both valves (all in parentheses). These notes are false tones and do not exist on the instrument naturally. Instead, they are based on two weaker versions of the harmonic series built off of G♭1 below B♭1 (D♭1 below F1 in the F-attachment and B-half flat0 below D-half sharp1 in both valves) and B0 below B♭1. These exist due to the acoustic properties of the trombone. Other brass instruments will have different weaker versions of the harmonic series available. All of these notes are positioned below the note they are being lipped down from by a major third (G♭1 (D♭1 in the F-attachment and B-half flat0 in both valves)) or a major seventh (B0). No extra slide adjustments should be necessary. The G♭1 (and F-attachment D♭1 and both valved B-half flat0) series is pushed down to its limit in these exercises at G♭0, though the B0 series can be pushed to as low as B-1 by going beyond sixth position and incorporating both valves (creating a G♭0 series below F1 in the F-attachment, a G-half sharp0 series below G-half flat1 in the G-half flat-attachment, and an E-half flat0 series below D-half sharp1 in both valves).

These exercises double as both a warm-up and basic practice routine for fundamentals. This, however, does not replace the value found in actual method and etude books such as those by Arban, Schlossberg, Marsteller, etc. If short on time, choose one or two exercises to play from each major section. I also do this before performances, auditions, and rehearsals in order to remain unfatigued for any heavier playing that may follow.