solutions must be sought which everyone can accept / James Saunders (2018)

solutions must be sought which everyone can accept (2018)

In *solutions must be sought which everyone can accept,* a large group of players continually form new sub-groups until a stable situation has been found. Players decide whether to move to a new sub-group or remain in their current sub-group with the aim of helping achieve consensus. The nature of such a state is negotiated non-verbally by the players as a group based on the implications of individuals' actions. Players may utilise a range of strategies, causing the group to find different forms of balance amongst moments of disruption.

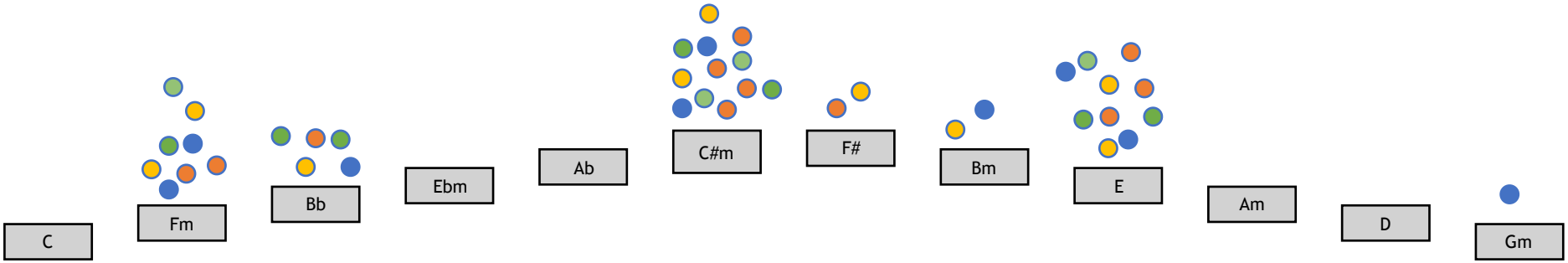
The title comes from a 1945 text by Dutch educator Kees Boeke in which he defines sociocracy as 'a real community-democracy, an organisation of the community by the community itself.' The piece tests how a group of musicians might find a way to organise themselves without explicit leadership.

duration: flexible, but at least 8 minutes
large ensemble, at least 40 players – any pitched instruments

solutions must be sought which everyone can accept was commissioned by Netzwerk Neue Musik through the ad libitum prize. It was first performed by the Jugendblasorchester Musikschule Heidenheim on 1 July 2018 at Lokschuppen, Heidenheim.

performance setup

There are 12 music stands, each with one of the 12 score pages placed on it. The pages should be at least A3 size and the stands positioned so that players nearer the back of each sub-group can see it. A single line of stands across the front of the stage area is preferred (see below for an example). If other arrangements are necessitated by the space, the movement of players between sub-groups and their affiliation to a sub-group should be clear.



Each score page shows the triad played by the sub-group. The staves include transpositions for most instruments, and players should read the appropriate notated pitches for their instrument. The triads are notated in treble and bass clef, but octave transpositions will be used as indicated in the performance instructions below.

performance instructions

The aim for the players is to form two or more equally-sized sub-groups, or a single group, and to reach a consensus that such a state has been reached.
The *group* is all the players considered together, and a *sub-group* is a smaller number of players located at a particular stand.

All players begin by individually choosing a stand and walking to be near it so they can see the music and are clearly part of a single sub-group. (The diagram above shows an example of the distribution of players, but any distribution is possible).

1. sub-group actions

One player in a sub-group plays a short pitch from the sub-group's triad.
This can be played in either a very high or very low register, relative to the instrument's range.
It may be played at any dynamic level.

The other players in the sub-group (if there are any) then play a short pitch chosen from the sub-group's triad as soon as possible after the first player, so that a brief flurry of pitches emerges.
The pitches played can be any chosen from the triad, but should be in the same high or low register as that chosen by the first player.
The dynamic is also set by the first player, so if the first pitch is loud, all subsequent pitches in that sequence should also be loud, and so on.

After all players in the sub-group have responded to the first player in this way, they wait briefly before initiating another sequence.
Any player in a sub-group may initiate a new sequence.

A new sequence should be initiated when none of the other sub-groups are playing. This may result in some overlap when more than one sub-group chooses to begin a new sequence at the same time however. New sequences may be initiated almost immediately after the previous one finishes, or with a longer gap between sequences.

2. movement between sub-groups

Any player can move to a new sub-group at any time.
A player wishing to move sub-group walks to the new sub-group and joins in with their sequences.

Players may only move to a larger sub-group, except if they are already in the largest sub-group.
Players in the largest sub-group may only move either to the smallest sub-group or start a new sub-group at an empty stand.

Sub-group size can be measured instinctively, or by counting.
If two or more sub-groups are of the same size, players may choose which to move to in accordance with the rules above.

3. ending

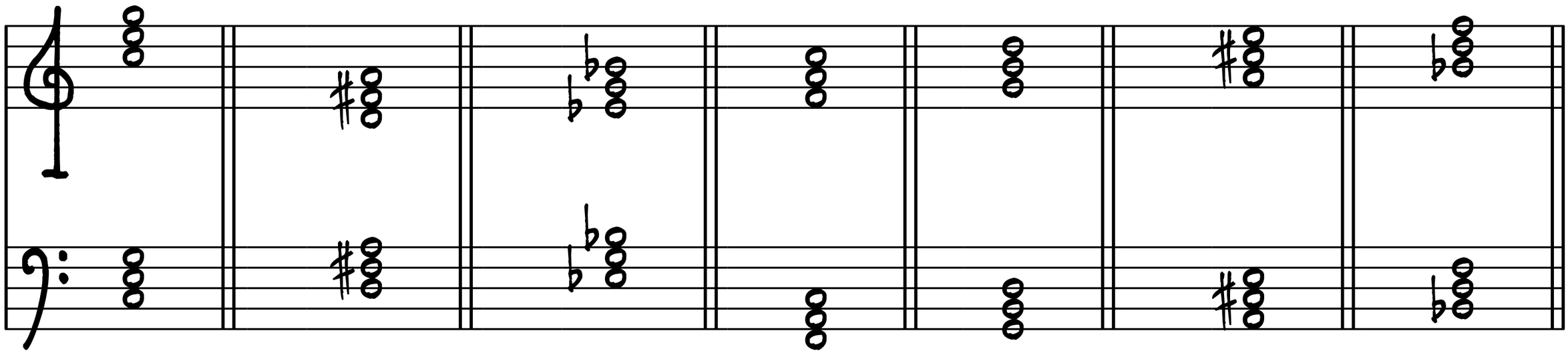
The piece ends when the group is split into two or more equally-sized sub-groups, or forms a single group.

It is up to the group to determine when this state has been reached, but this should be established non-verbally through the activity of realising the piece rather than through prior discussion and planning.

Some players may choose to move sub-groups when other players are satisfied that equal groups have been formed.
In this situation, the piece continues until all players have reached consensus.

C

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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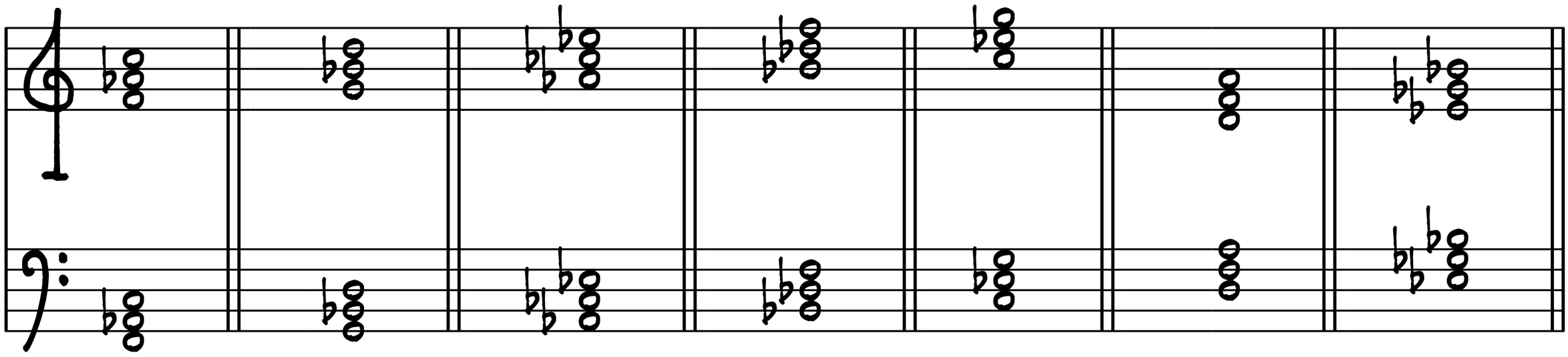
Fm

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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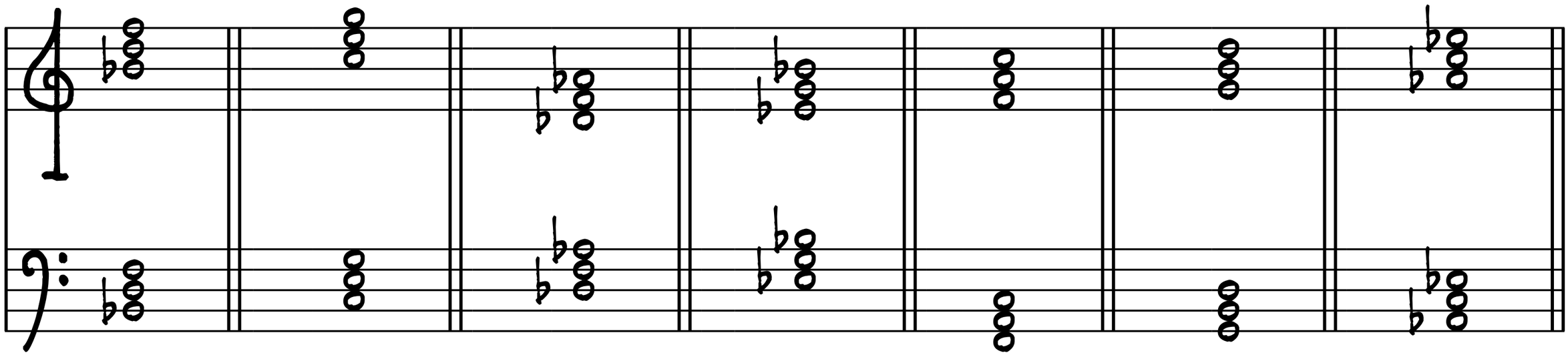
Bb

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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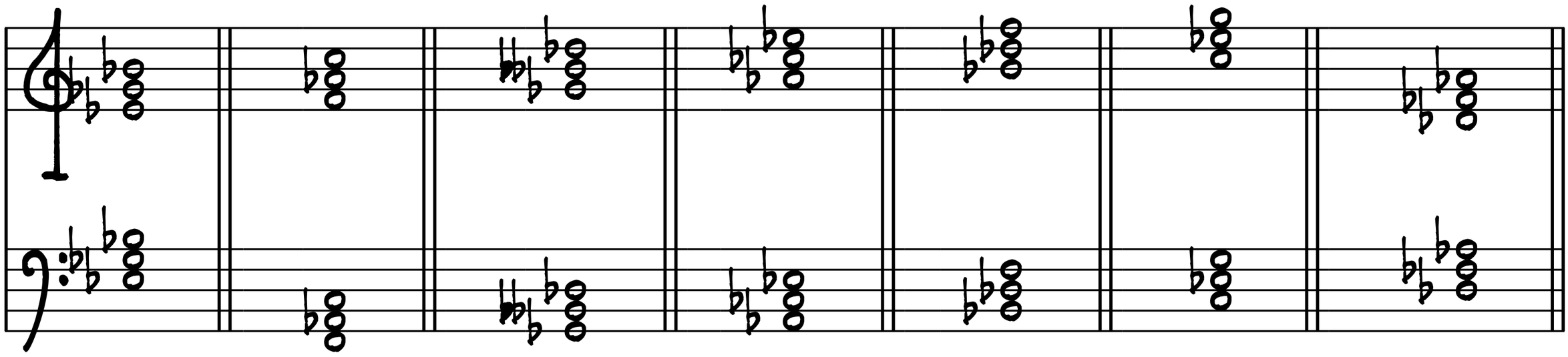
Ebm

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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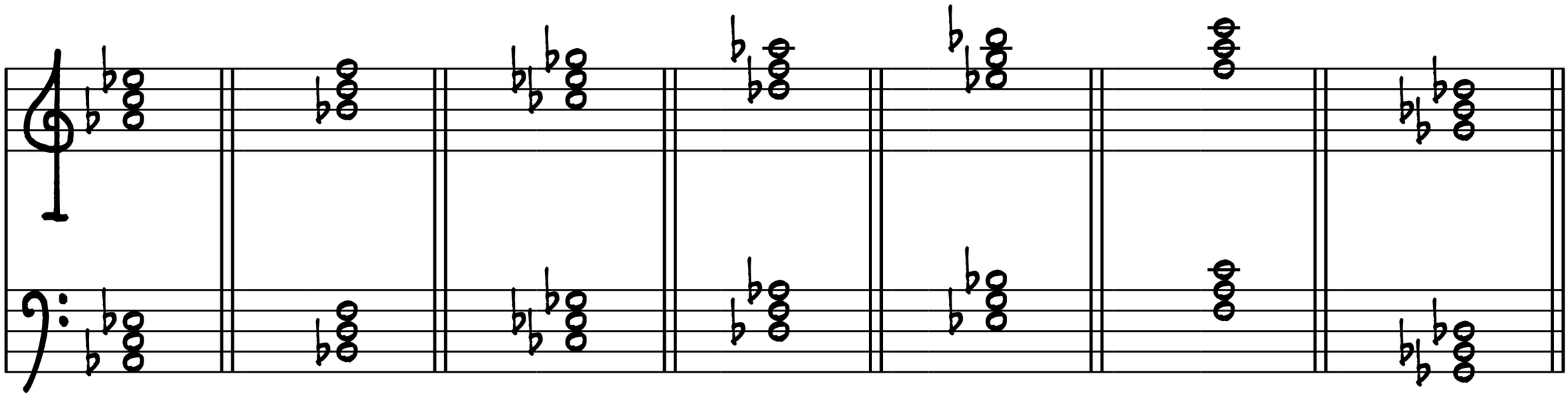
Ab

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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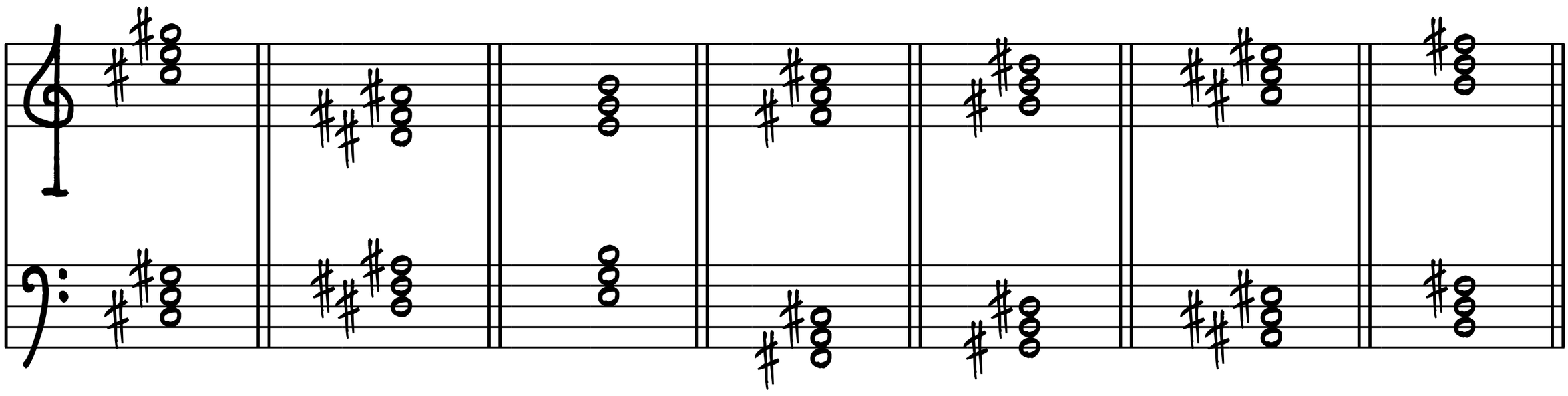
C#m

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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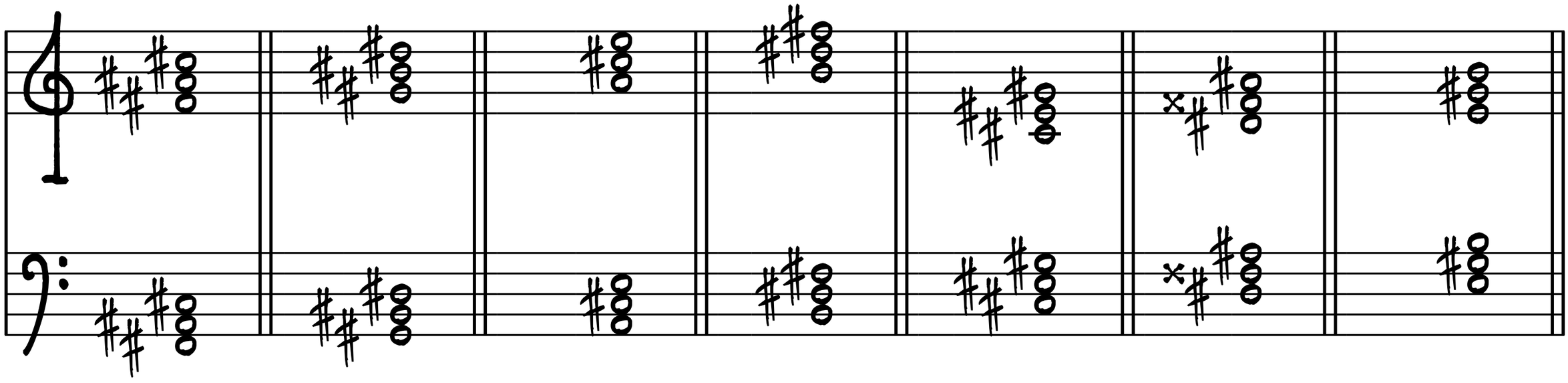
F#

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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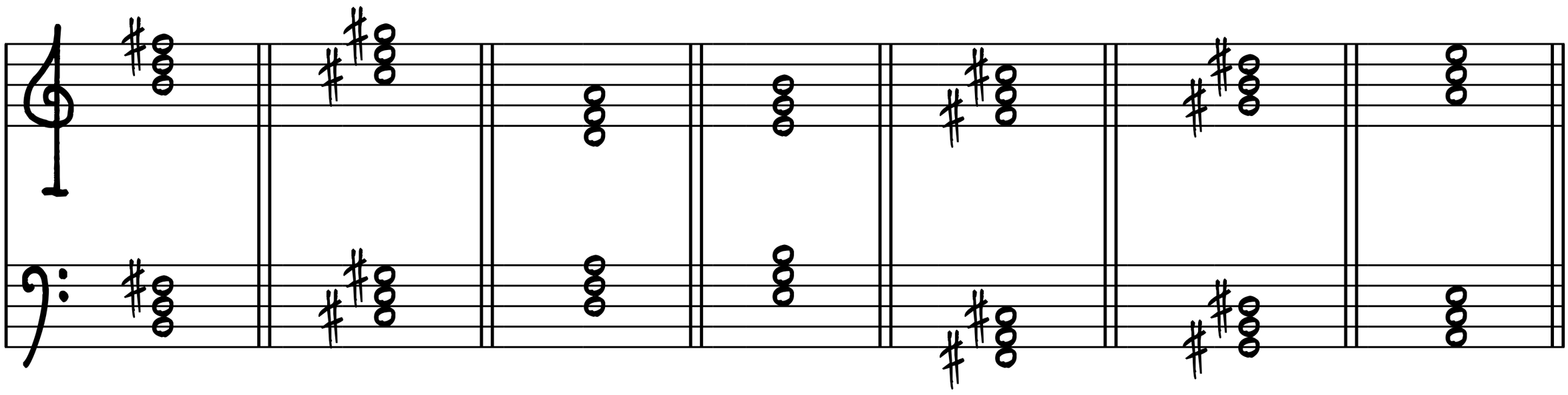
Bm

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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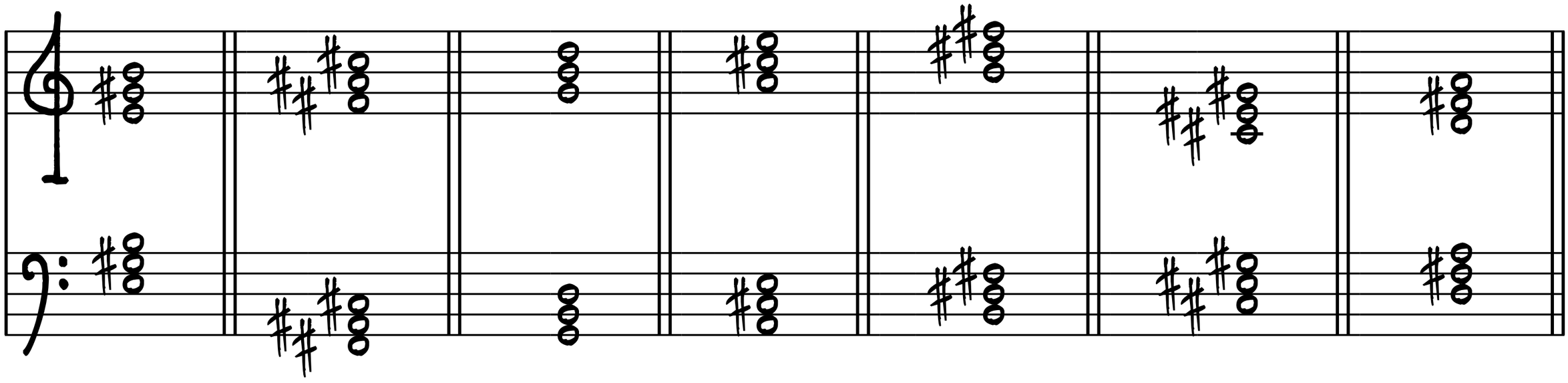
E

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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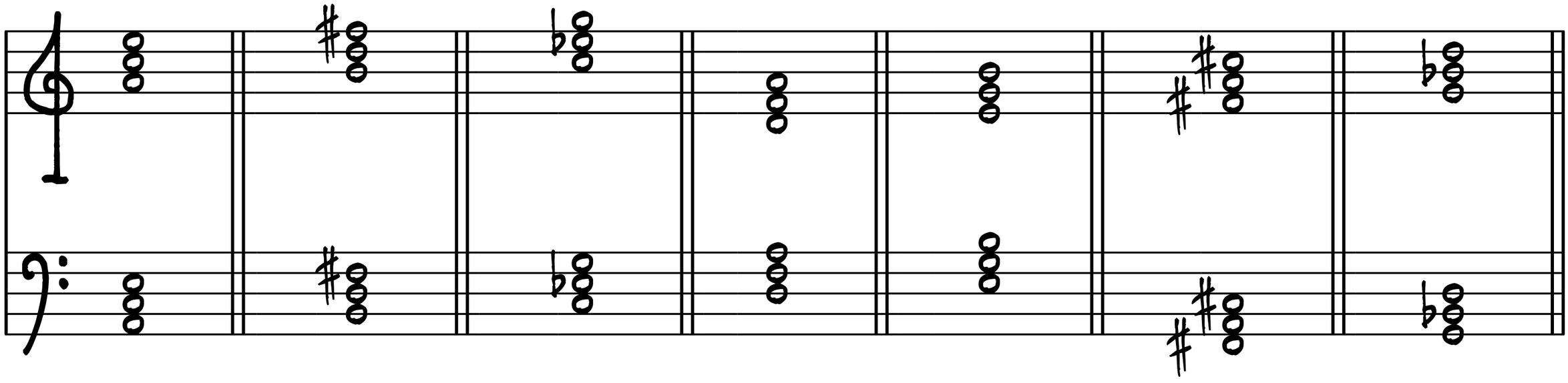
Am

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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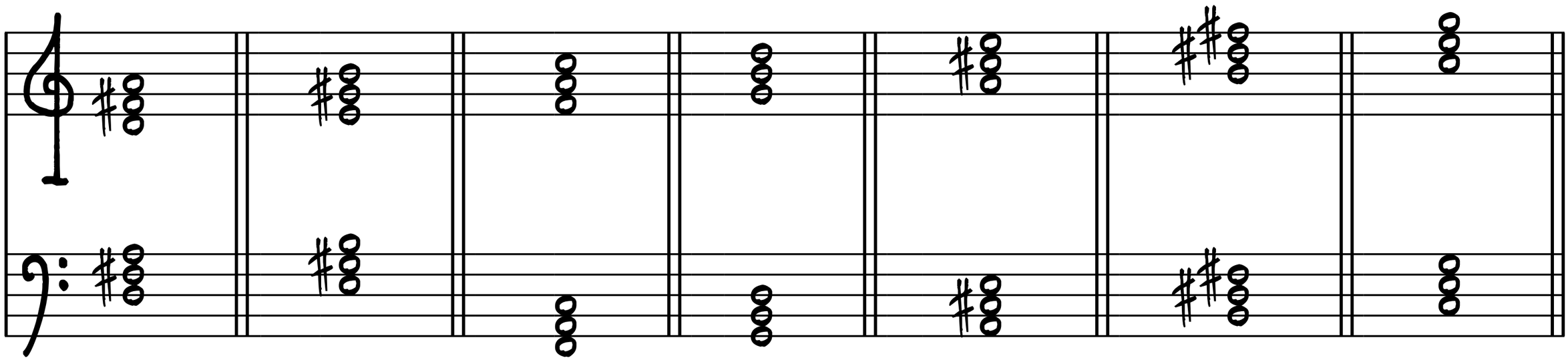
D

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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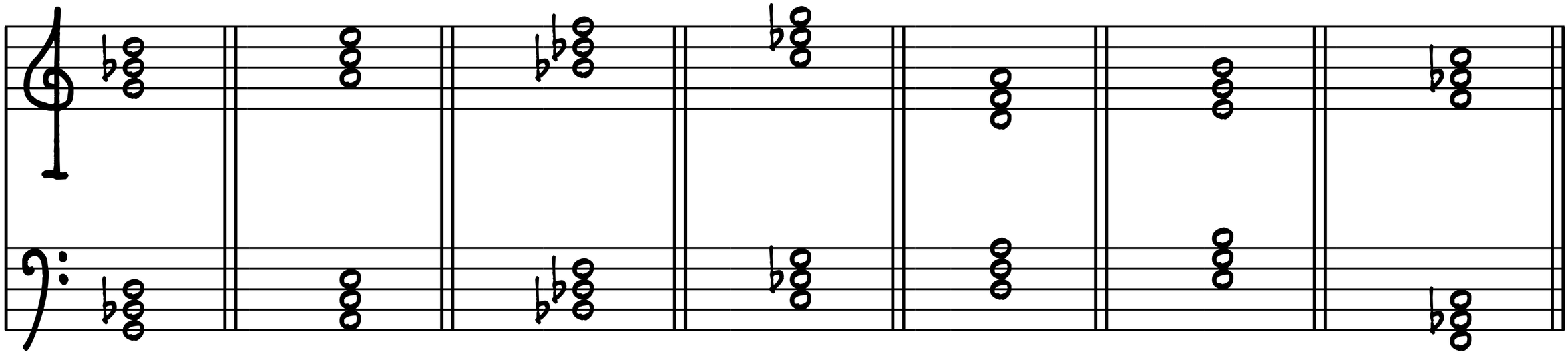
Gm

C *Bb* *A* *G* *F* *Eb* *D*



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