Mastering Scales

Compiled by Julius Pranevičius

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Preface

Mastering scales is an important part of becoming a horn player. Scales are also a foundation of the daily practice throughout one's career.

This collection of exercises has two purposes.

First, it guides an aspiring horn player through all the major and minor (harmonic) keys. Mastering scales will lay a solid foundation for working with other practice routines. Clarke, Singer and Standley and other routines will be more accessible.

Poor ability to play the full range of tonalities will stand in the way of performing some pieces with ease. For example, a shaky B Major (H-Dur) will be an issue when learning Weber's Concertino. Working through this collection will help to cover any possible gaps.

Second, you can use the book as a tool for daily practice at any point of the career. The book will lead you through all the tonalities and cover a range of variations.

Pathways through the book

There are many pathways to you can take through this book. Start with one key each day. Get familiar with the exercises and the way they are built up. Take breaks between exercises.

Once you are familiar with the exercises, you can start jumping between the groups. You will notice that exercises 1 to 3, or 6 to 8, or 17 to 19 follow the same idea. The diagram on the opposite page illustrates how you can move around the book.

You can also take one group of exercises and play them in in all the keys.

How do you move between keys? You can work through book in the order the keys are presented. But you can use different patterns. For example, Circle of Fifths (up or down) or "A Christmas Tree" (moving up and down by increasing intervals).

Playing through all the exercises of one key might serve as a warm-up session. 3-4 different keys will be a decent foundation of daily practice needs.

Guiding principles

You will notice that the exercises are divided into groups. Each group builds up gradually. This way you will learn an important practice technique. First, master the small, simple bits and then put them together in larger structures.

Taking small breaks between each step will give time to focus on important skills. Pay particular attention to taking full breaths and audiation.

By audiation I refer to imaging the sounds you are going to play before you play them. Frédéric Duvernoy has described the idea like this:

Every sound that is made on the horn must be produced in advance within the imagination. It is therefore very necessary to foresee the difference between one interval and another. If the perception of our imagination is false, our sounds become so also.

Audiation is a process of constant anticipation of future sound. It is an integral part of the playing technique. I encourage you to imagine several notes ahead. Try "hearing" the full chords, or how a cluster of several notes sounds. Develop the feeling of "being in a key".

Reading music from the sheet uses your mental power and leaves less "space" for audiation. Play the exercises by memory and use the book to for an occasional glimpse of what comes next.

On Variations and patterns

The amount of variation in playing scales is endless. The size of this book demonstrates the issue. It is unfeasible to present every possible variation in every key.

For this collection, I wanted to present some exercises with variations in every key. I hope this will help to move beyond the most "comfortable" keys.

Here are some variations I have included

- basic articulation patters
- note groupings (eights, triplets etc.)

- different octaves (most keys work in 3 different octaves)
- adding breaks
- adding repetitions

I have not included:

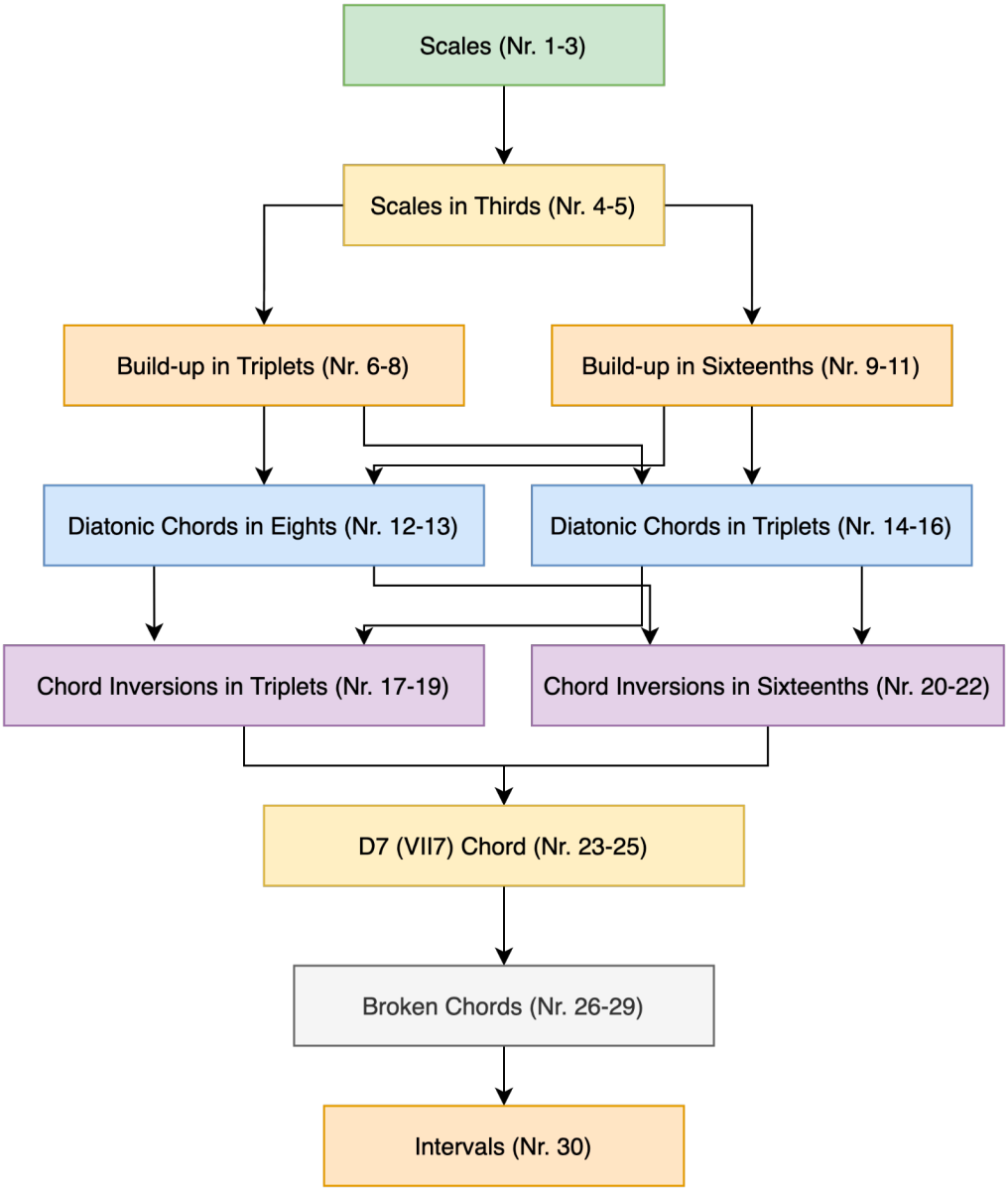
- tempo variations (very slow, very fast)
- dynamics (from pp to ff)
- type of tonguing (staccato, >, fp, sfz, etc)
- rhythmic patterns and accentuations
- character (light, heavy, singing, etc)
- note shapes (blocks of sound, bell-like etc)

I encourage you to add some of these variations, once you are familiar with the basic exercises. You can repeat each small step and make variations on each repetition. Combine different variations.

Good luck!

Julius Pranevičius

August 2021



C-Dur - C Major

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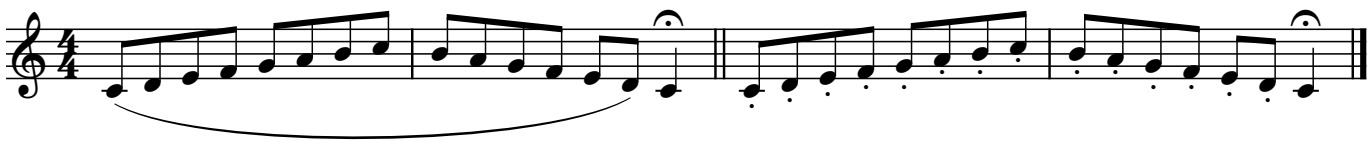

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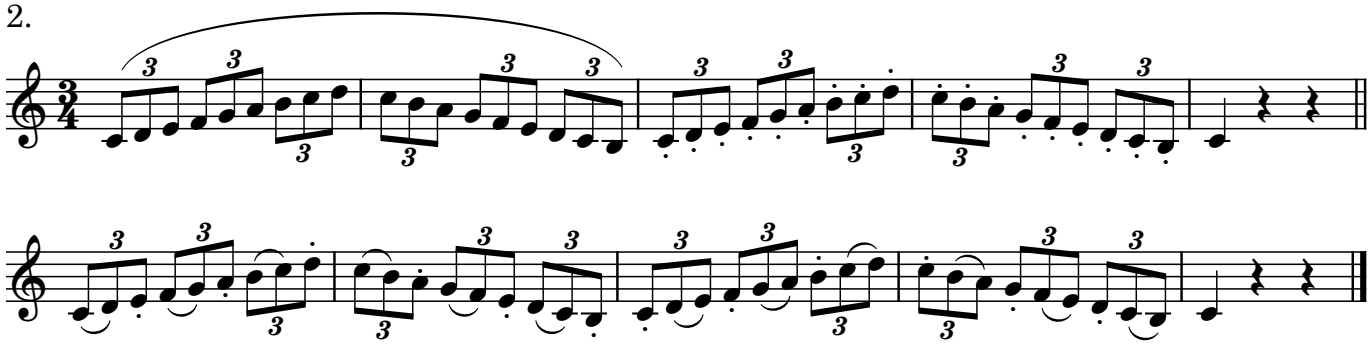

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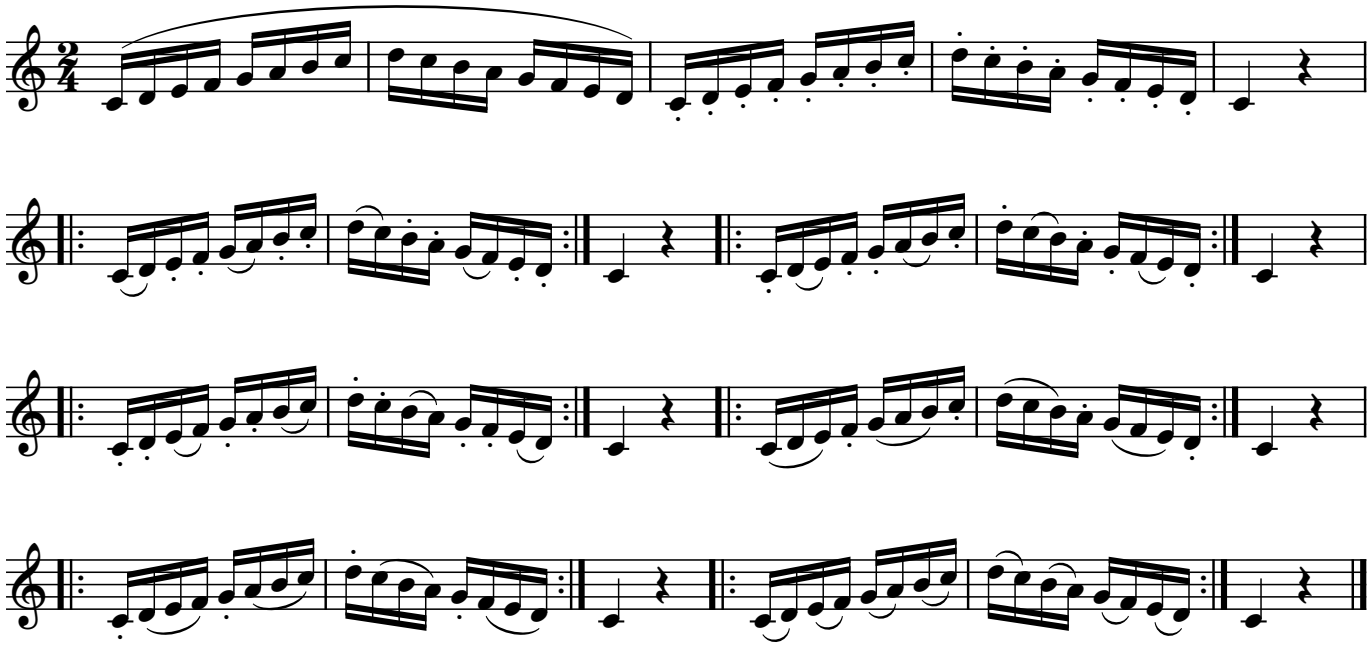

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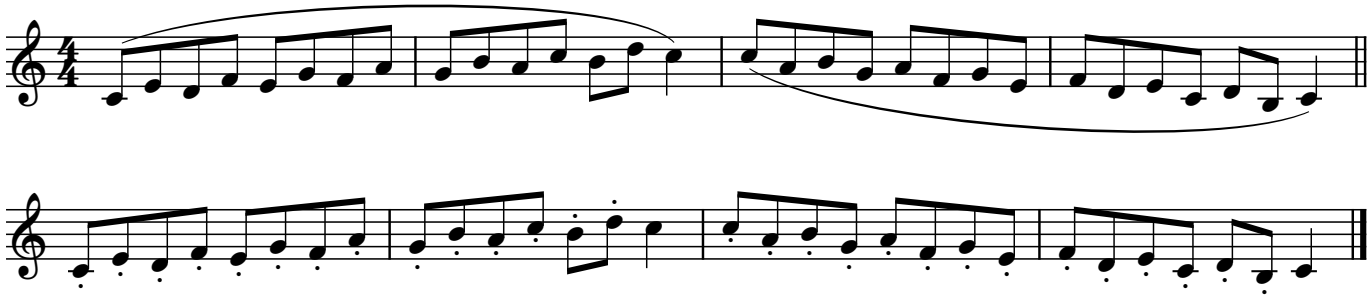

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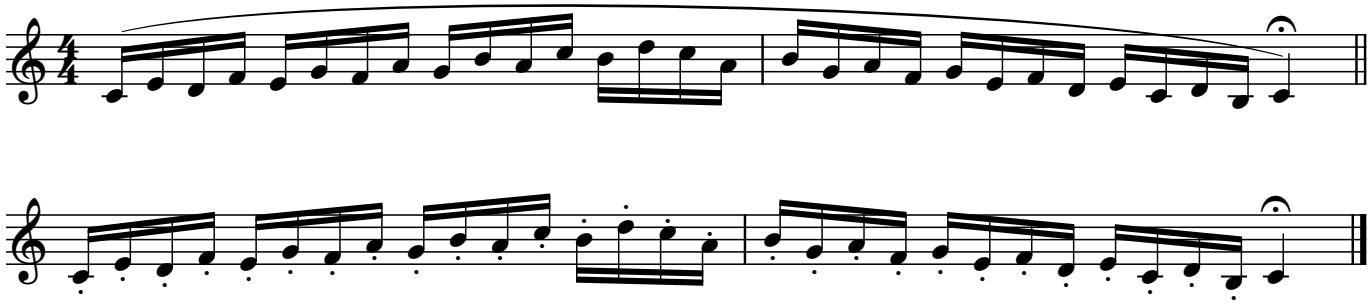

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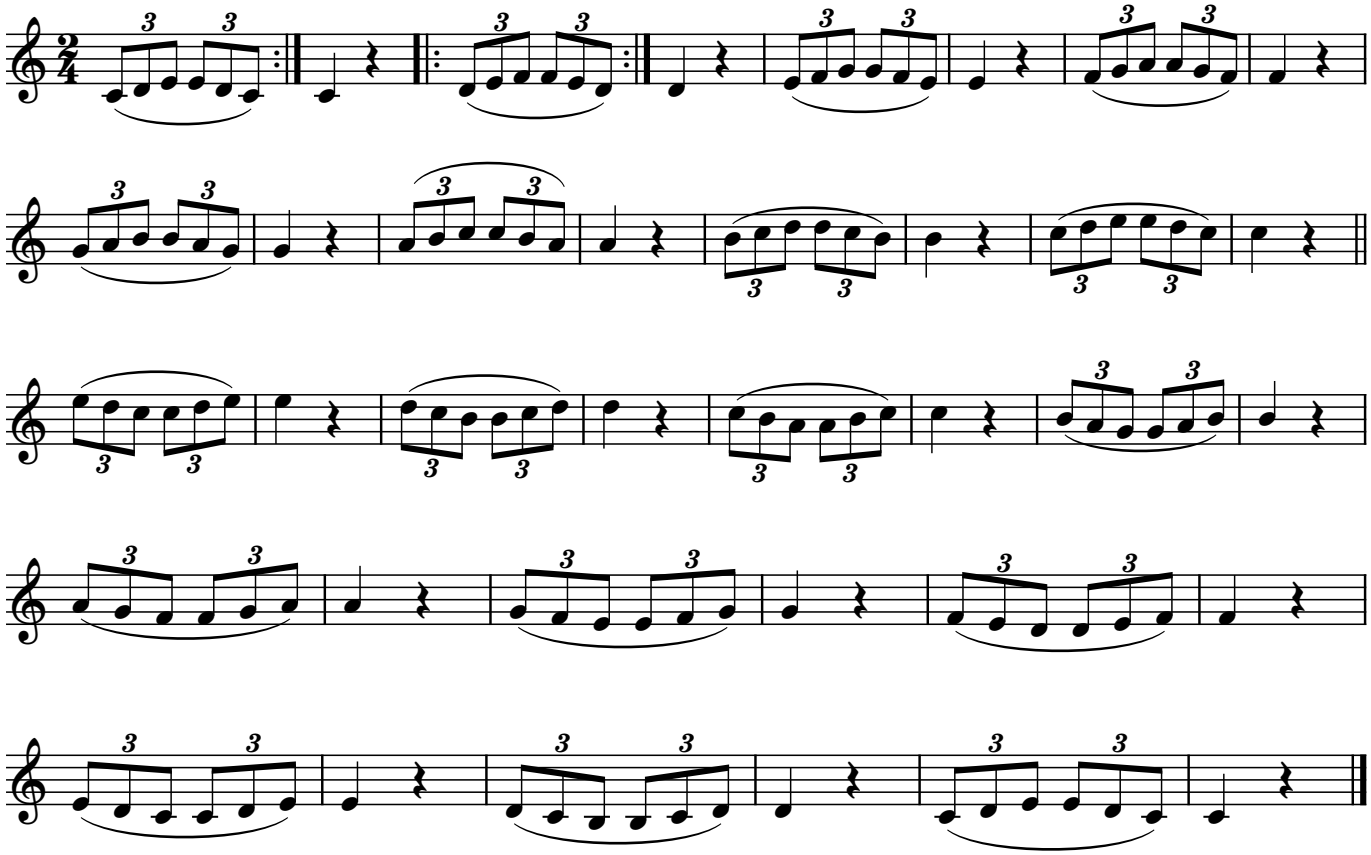

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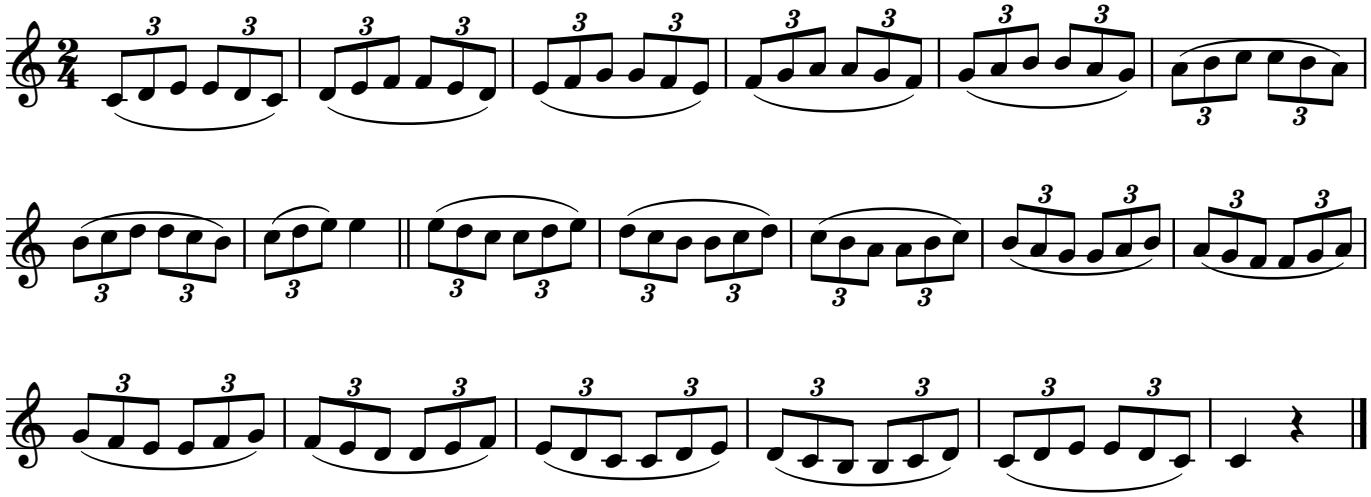

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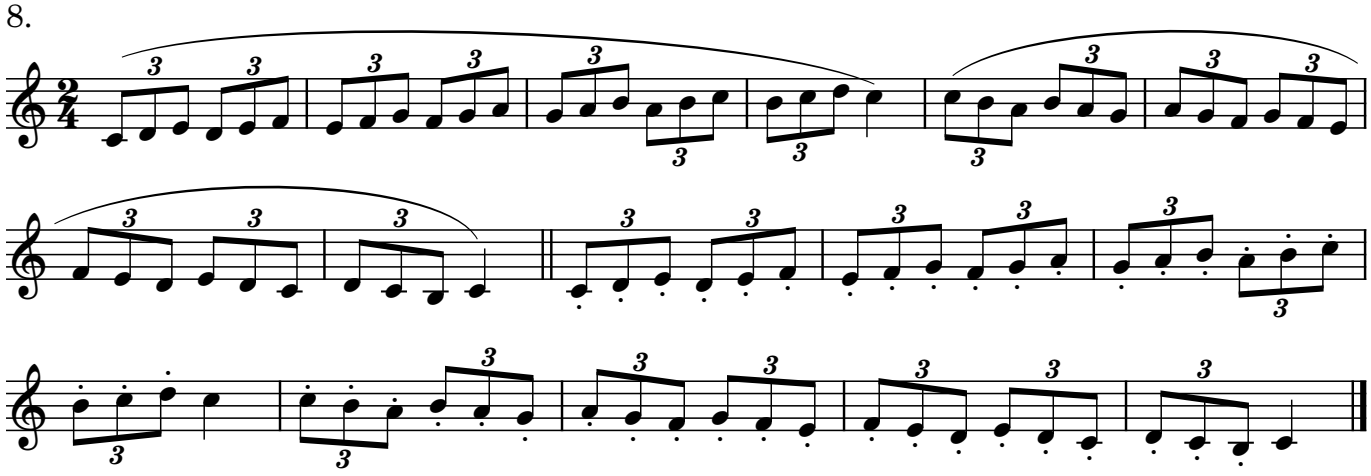

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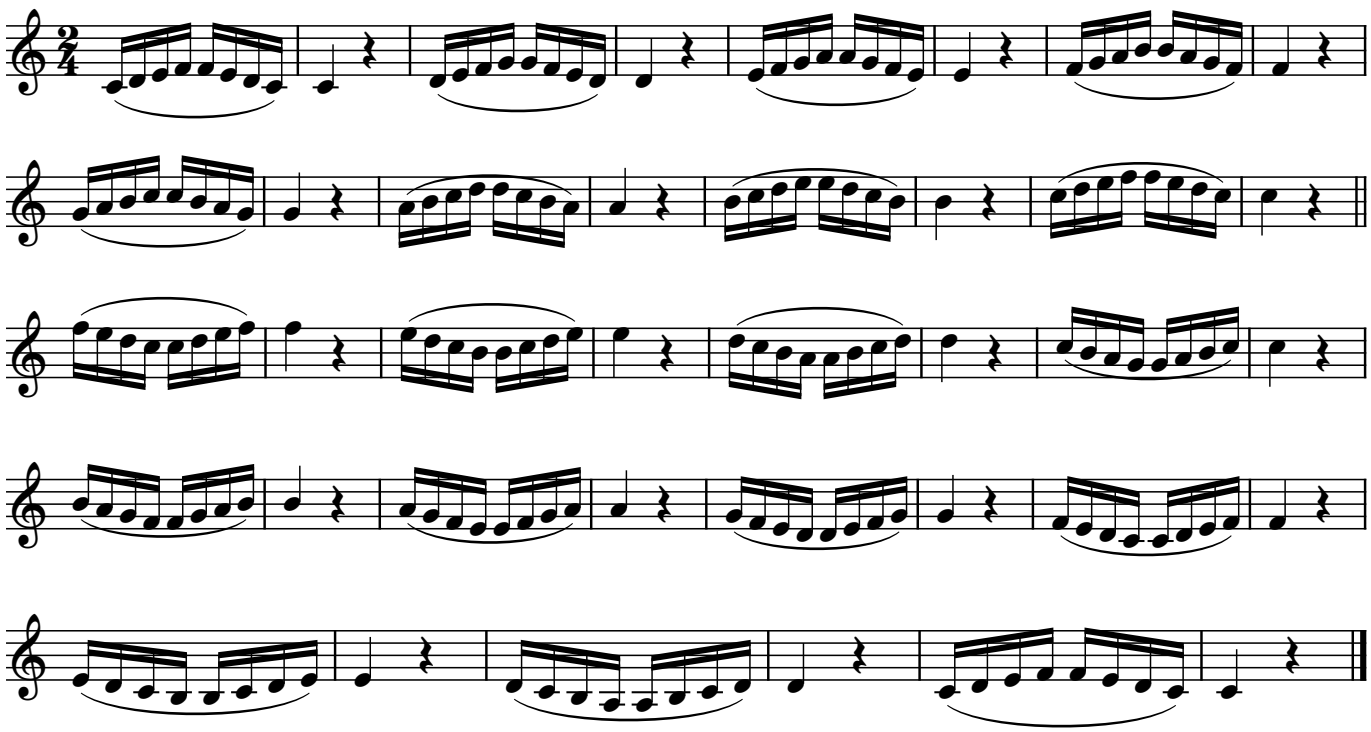

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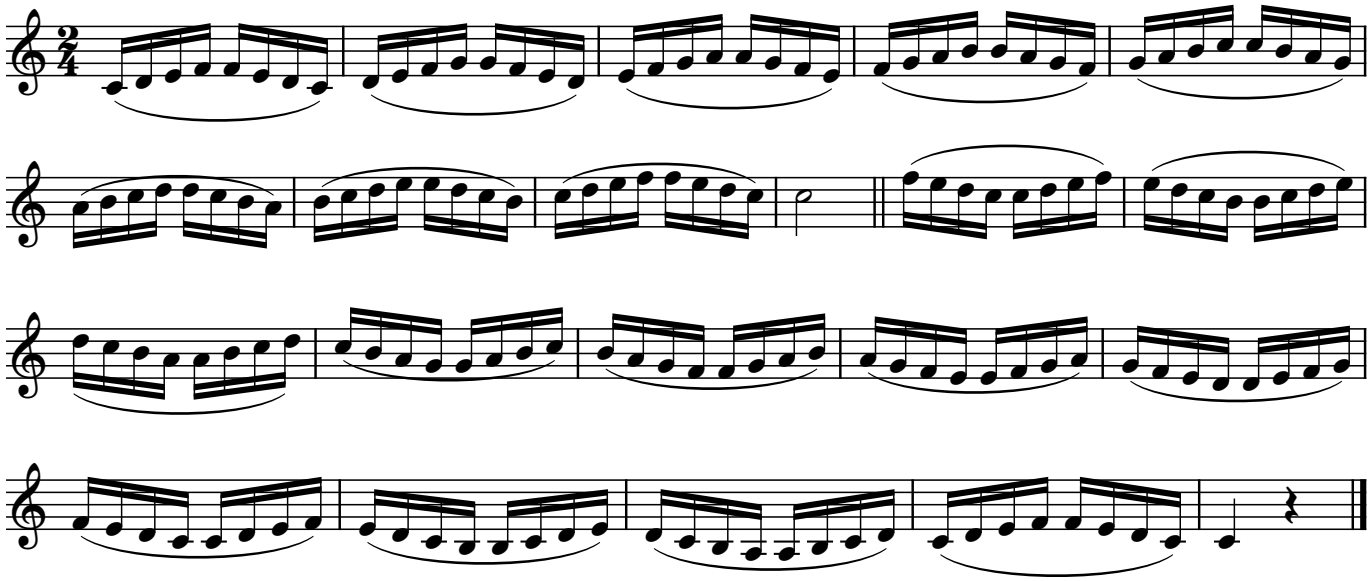

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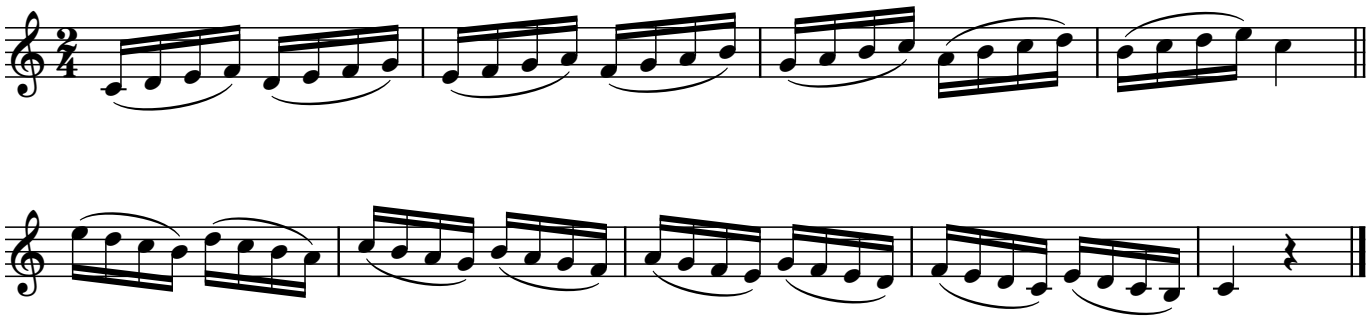

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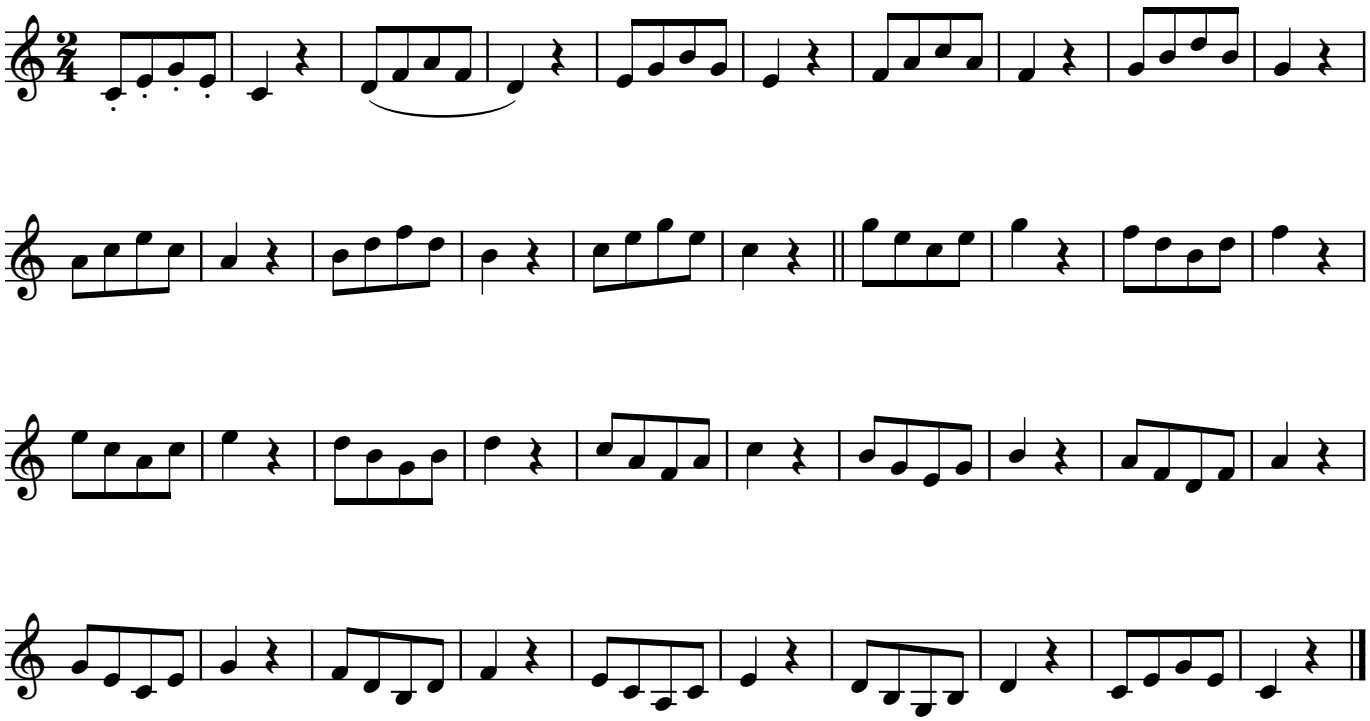

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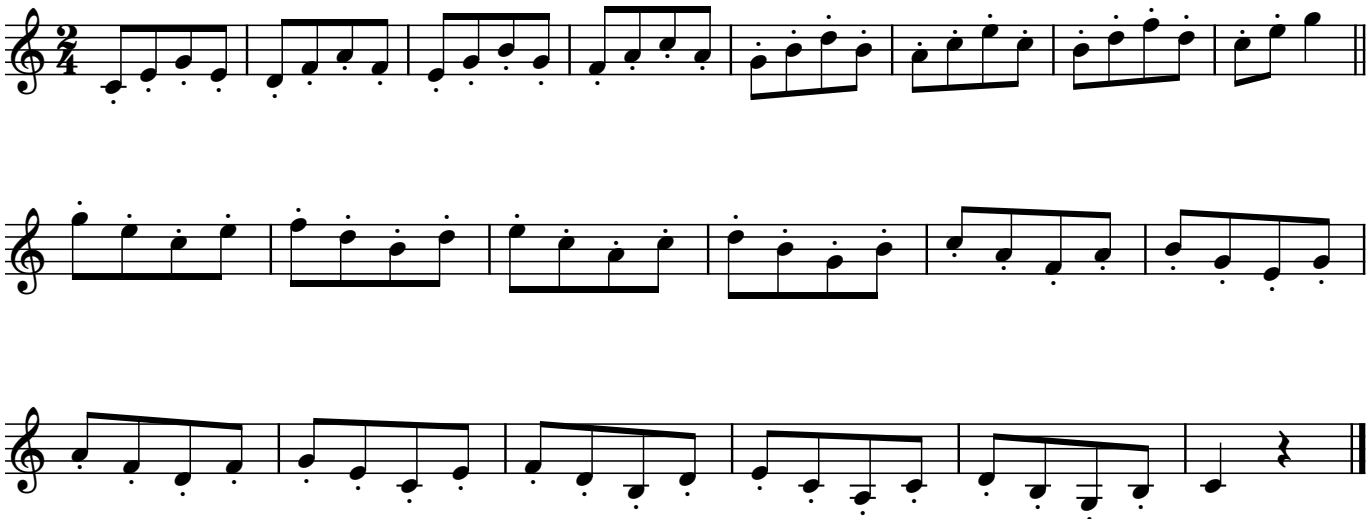

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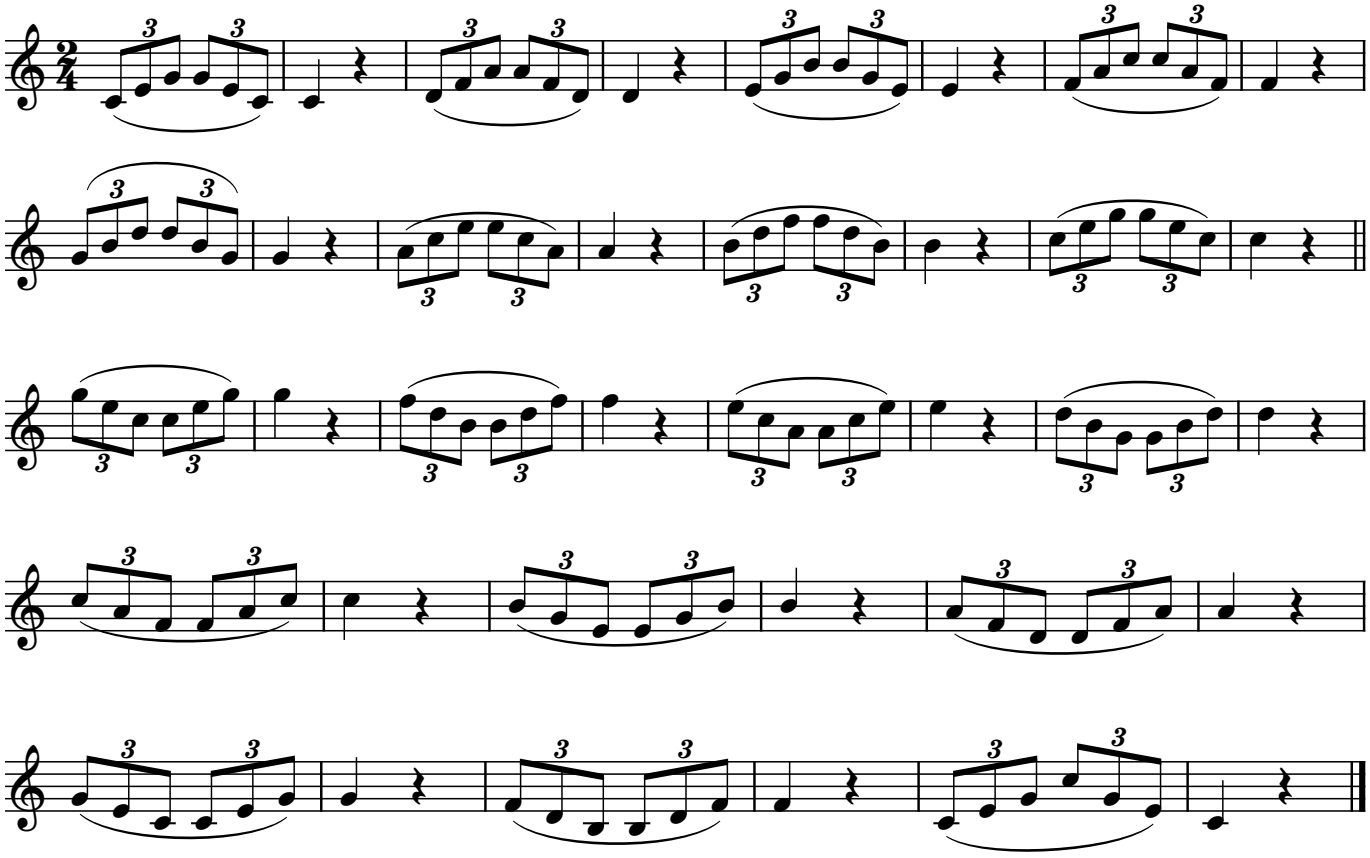

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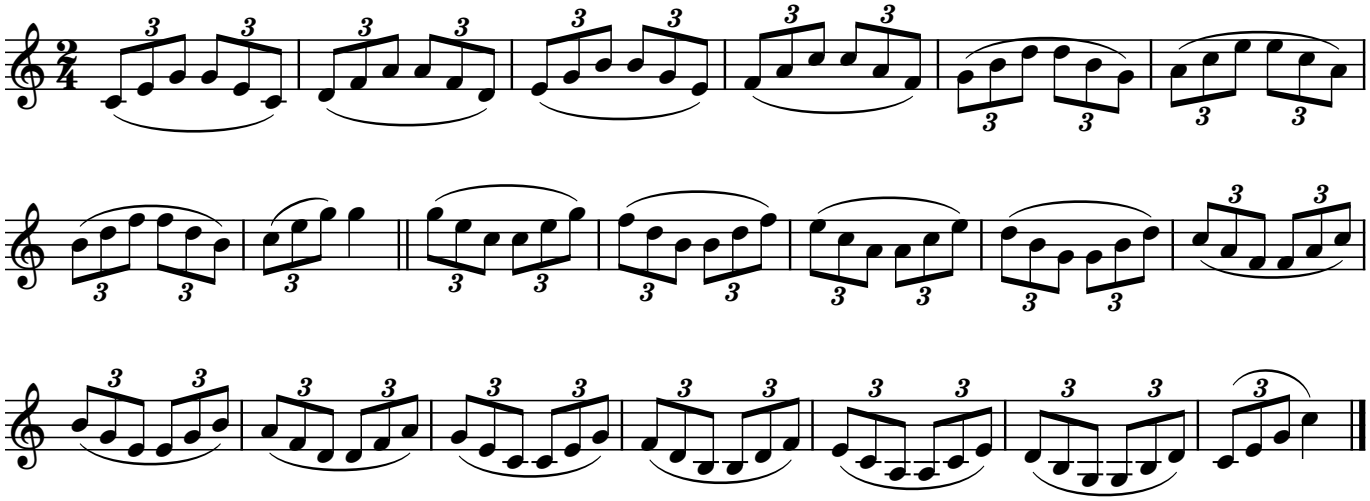

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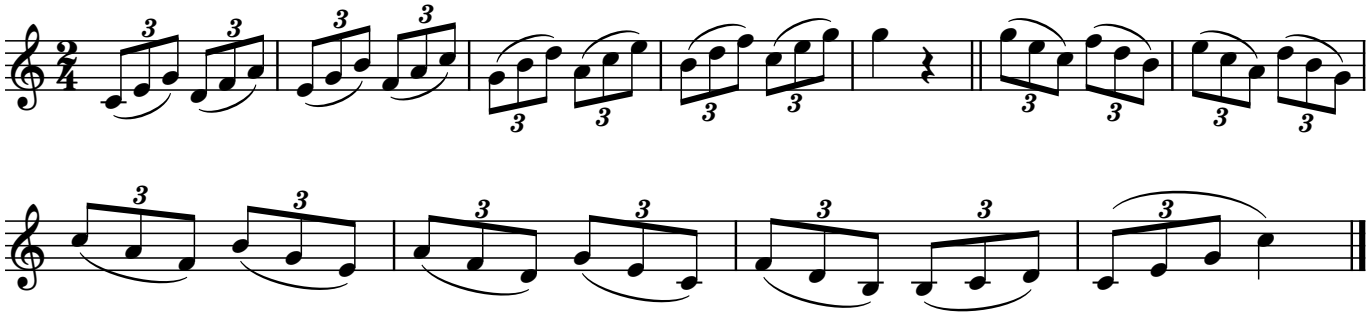

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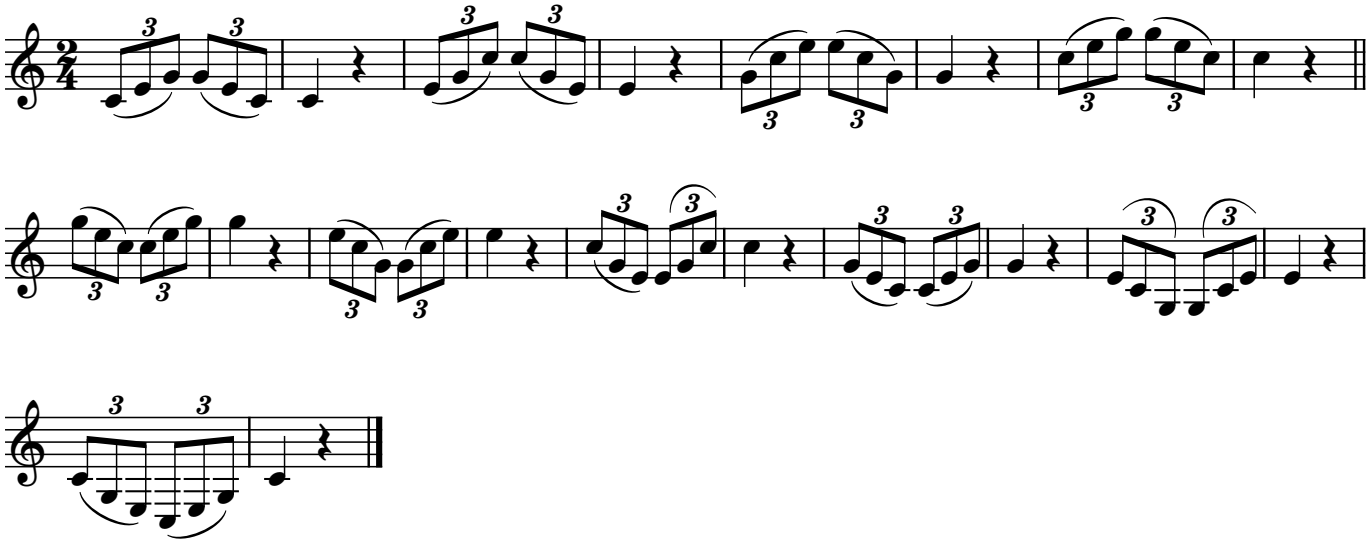

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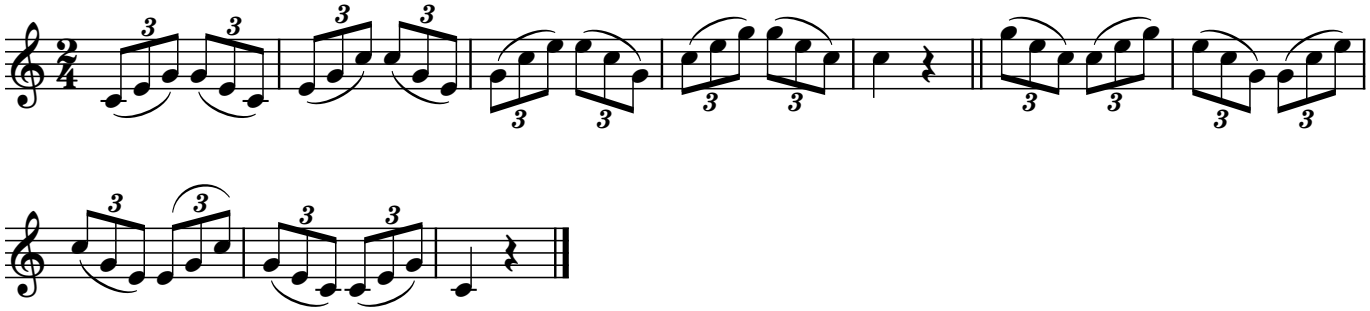

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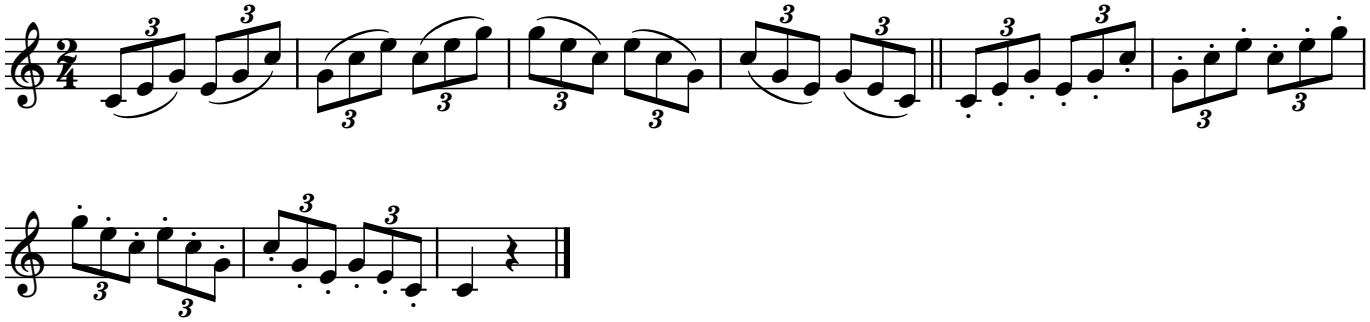

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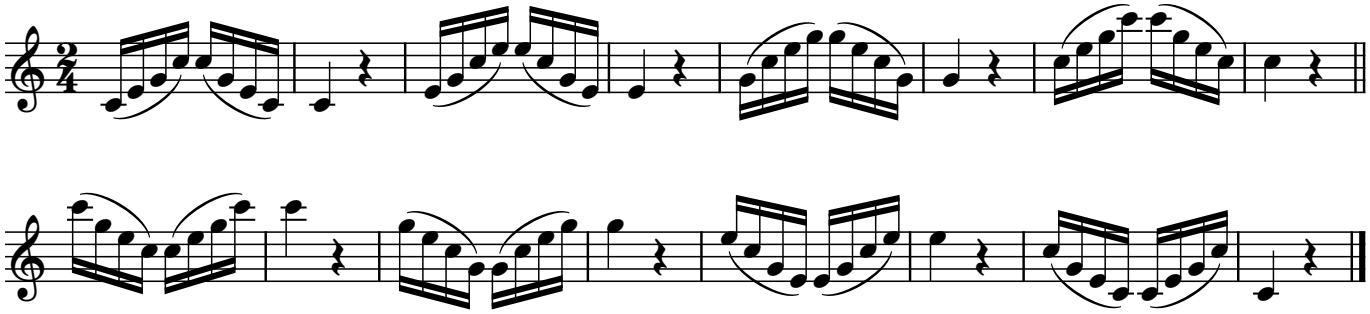

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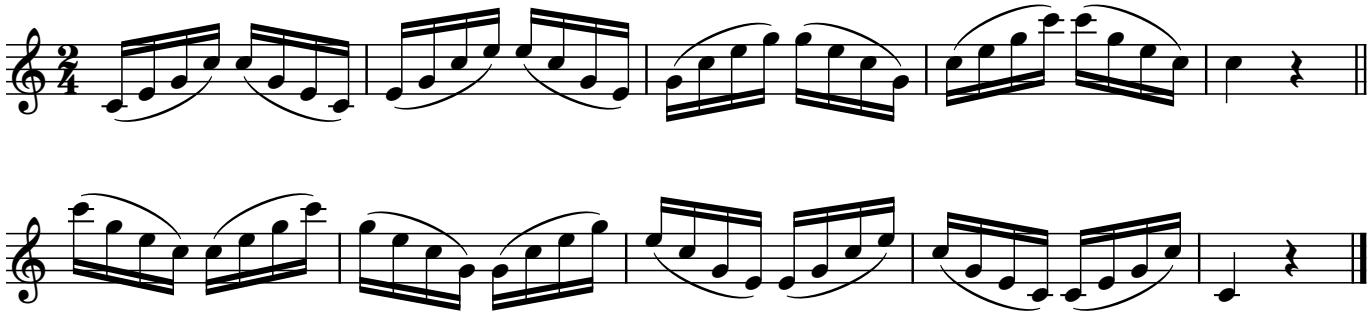

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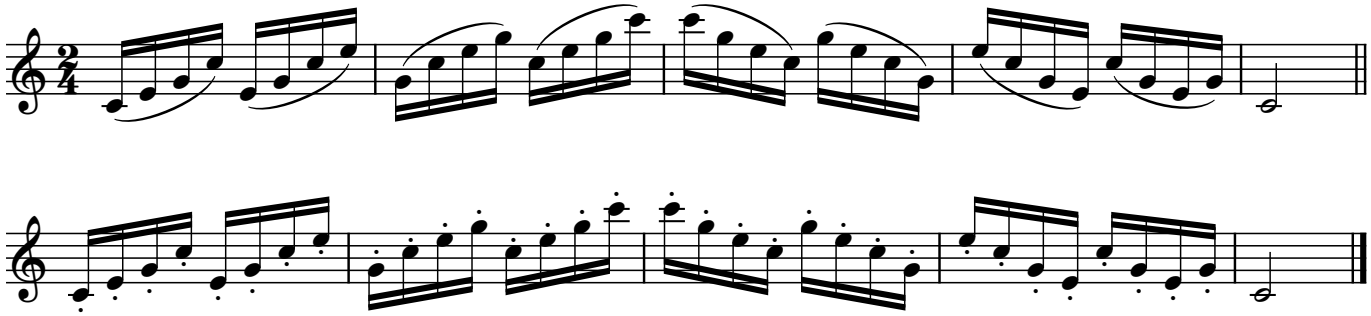

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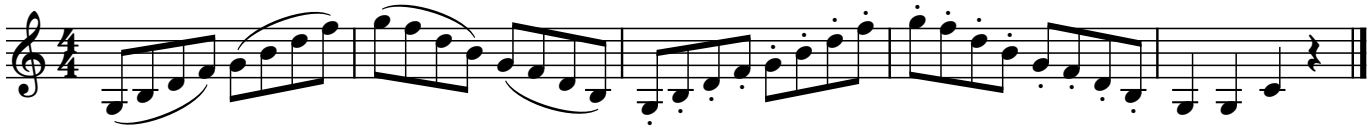

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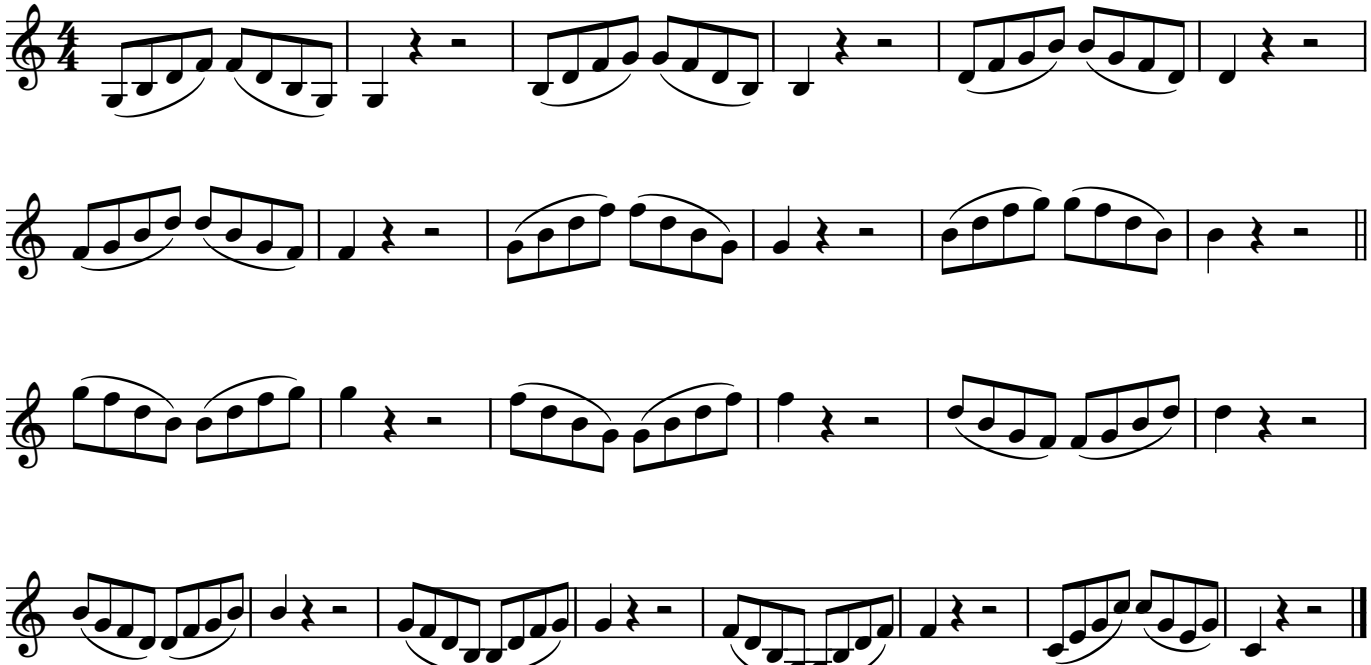

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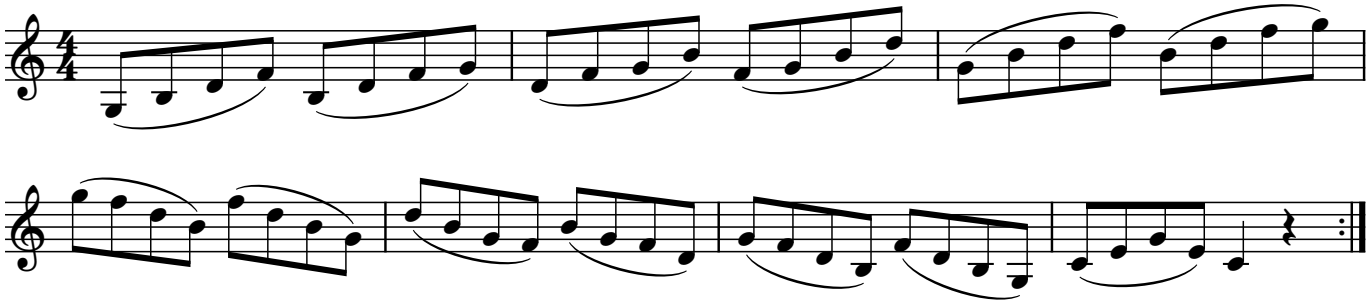

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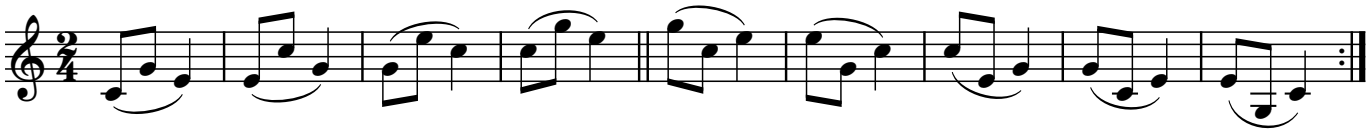

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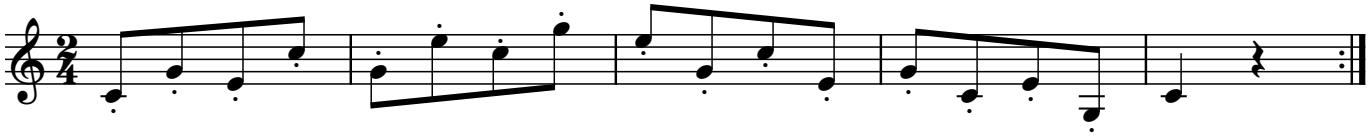

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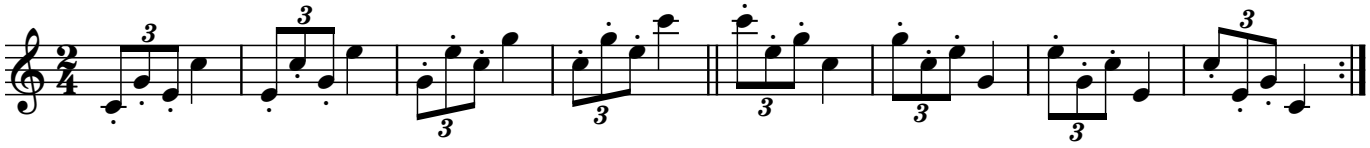

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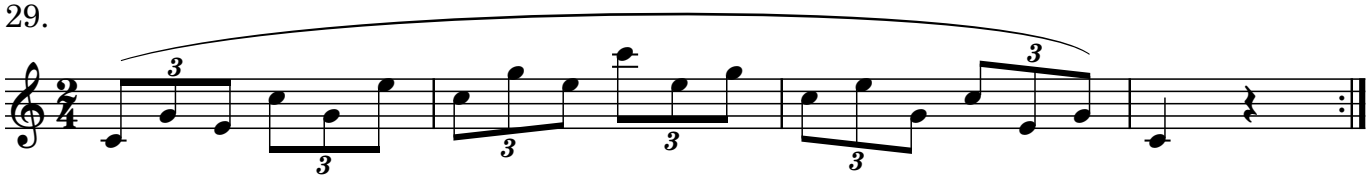

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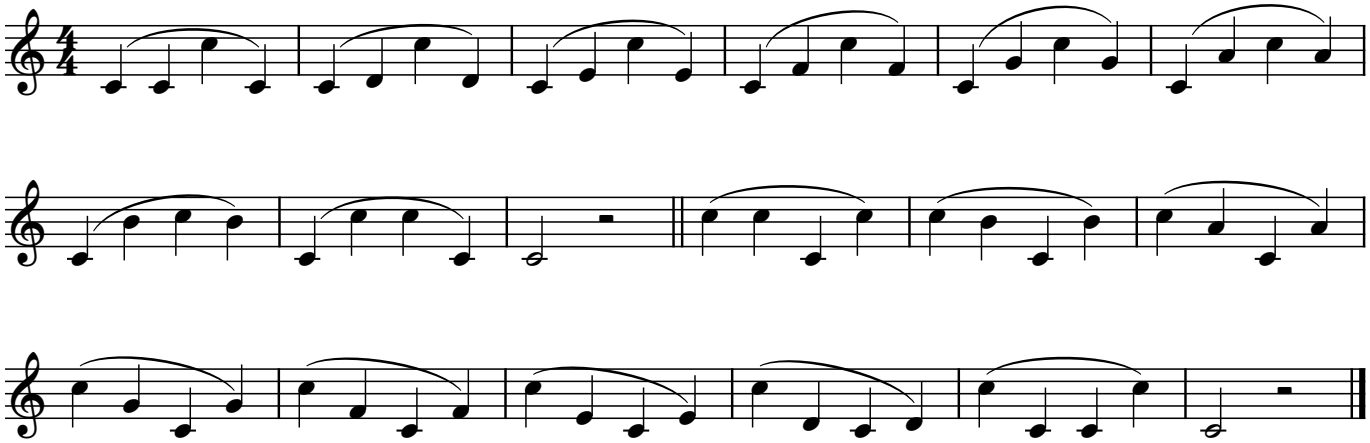

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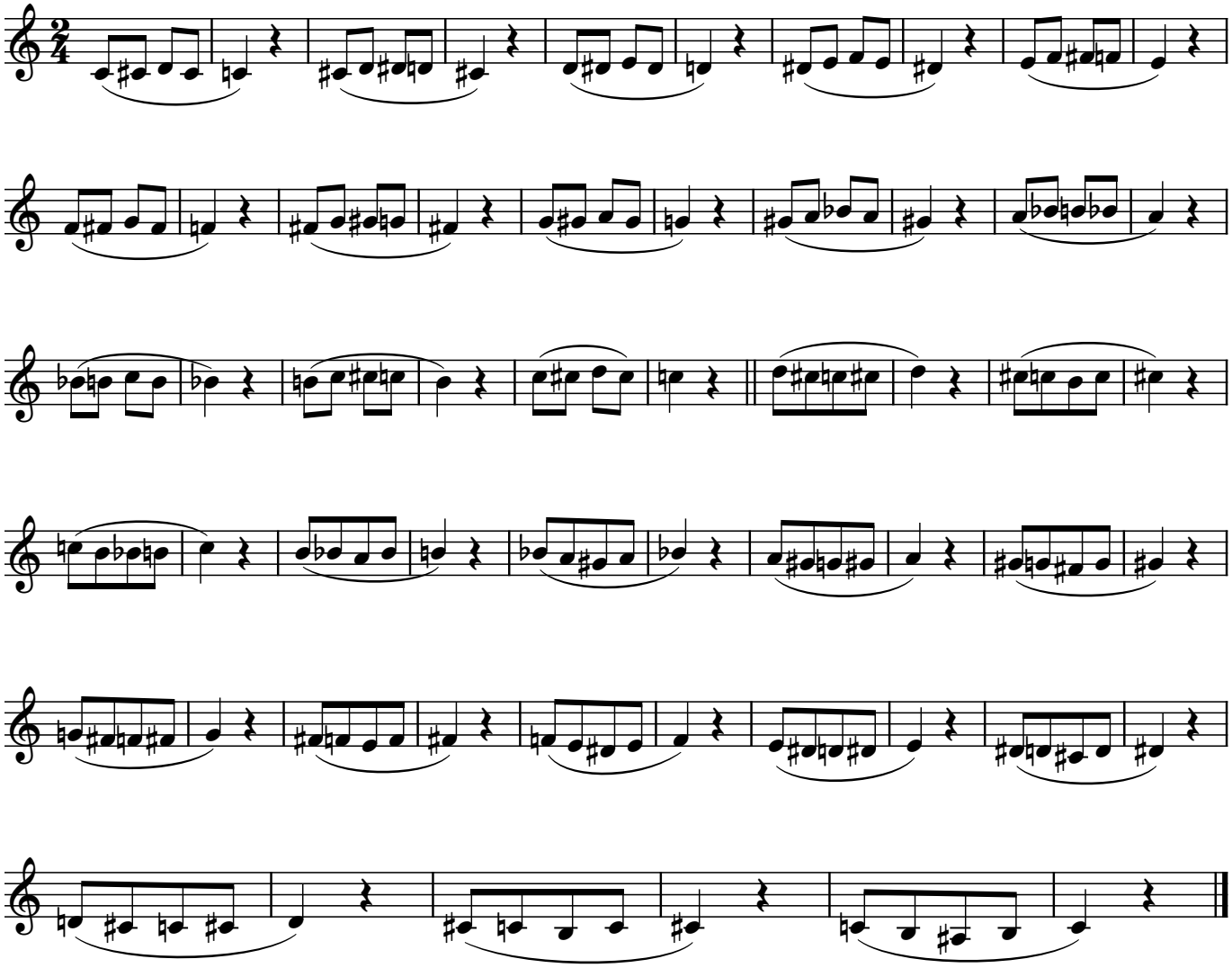
C Chromatic



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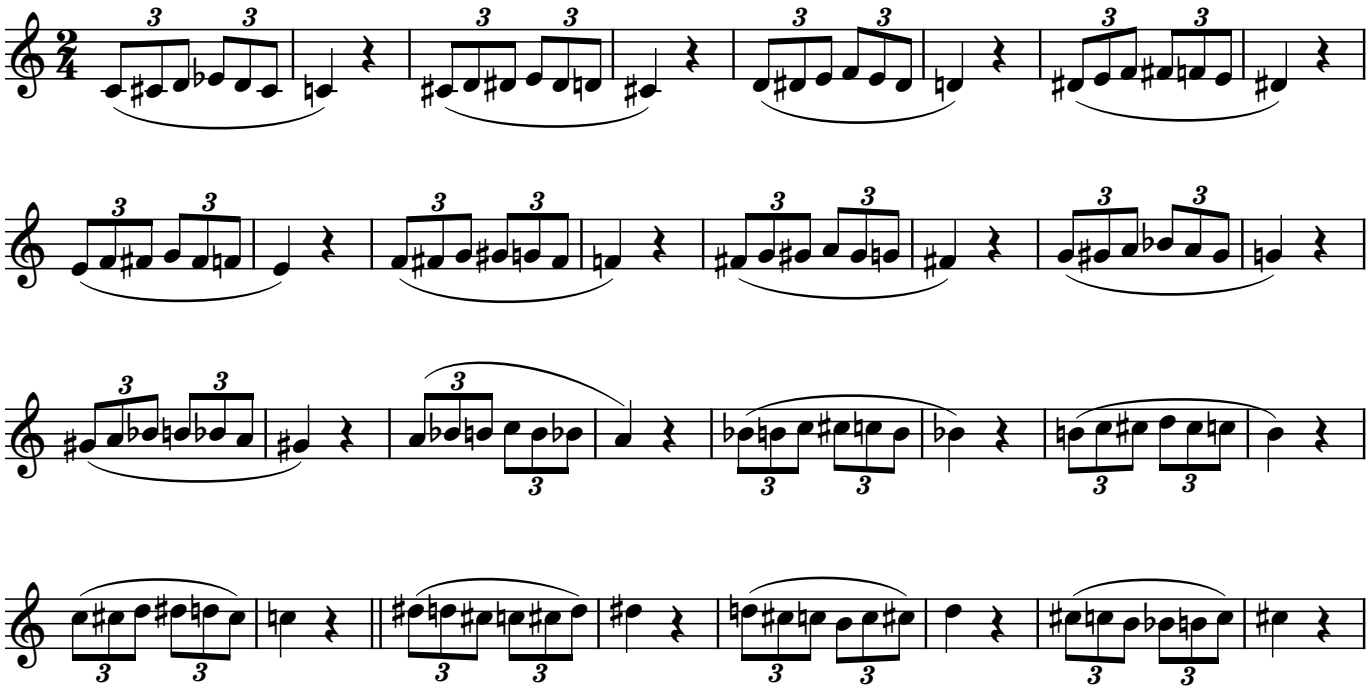

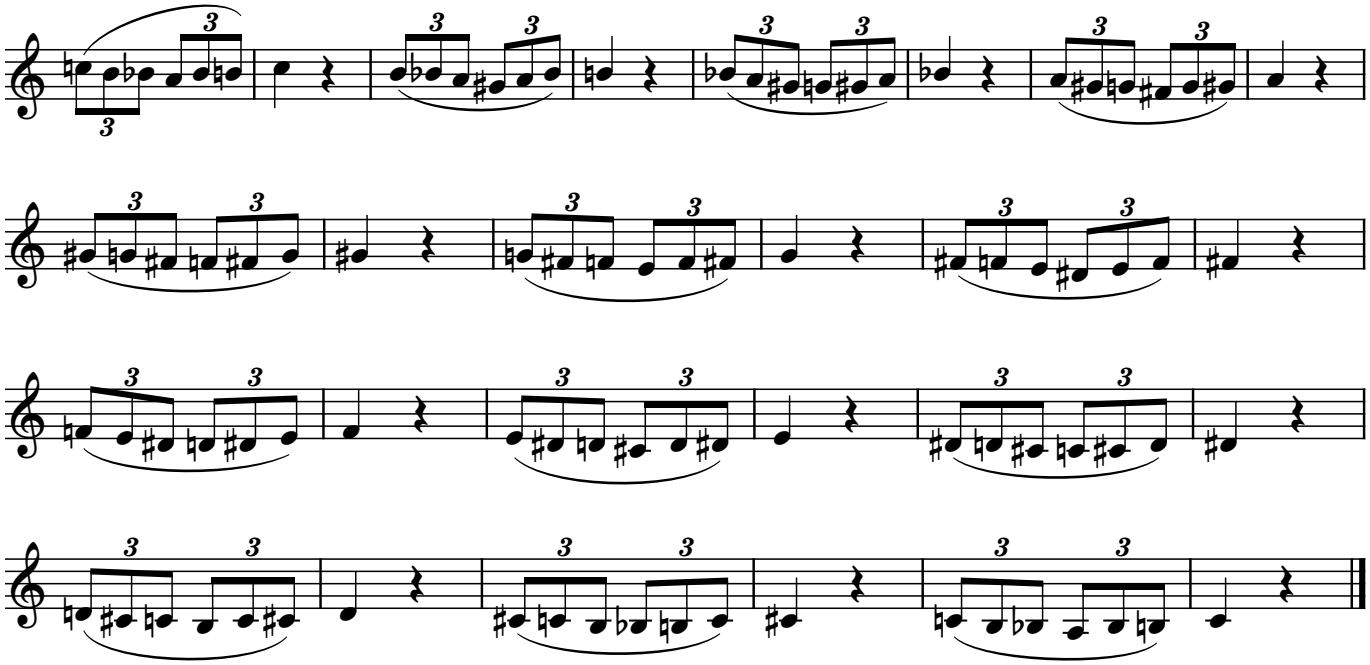

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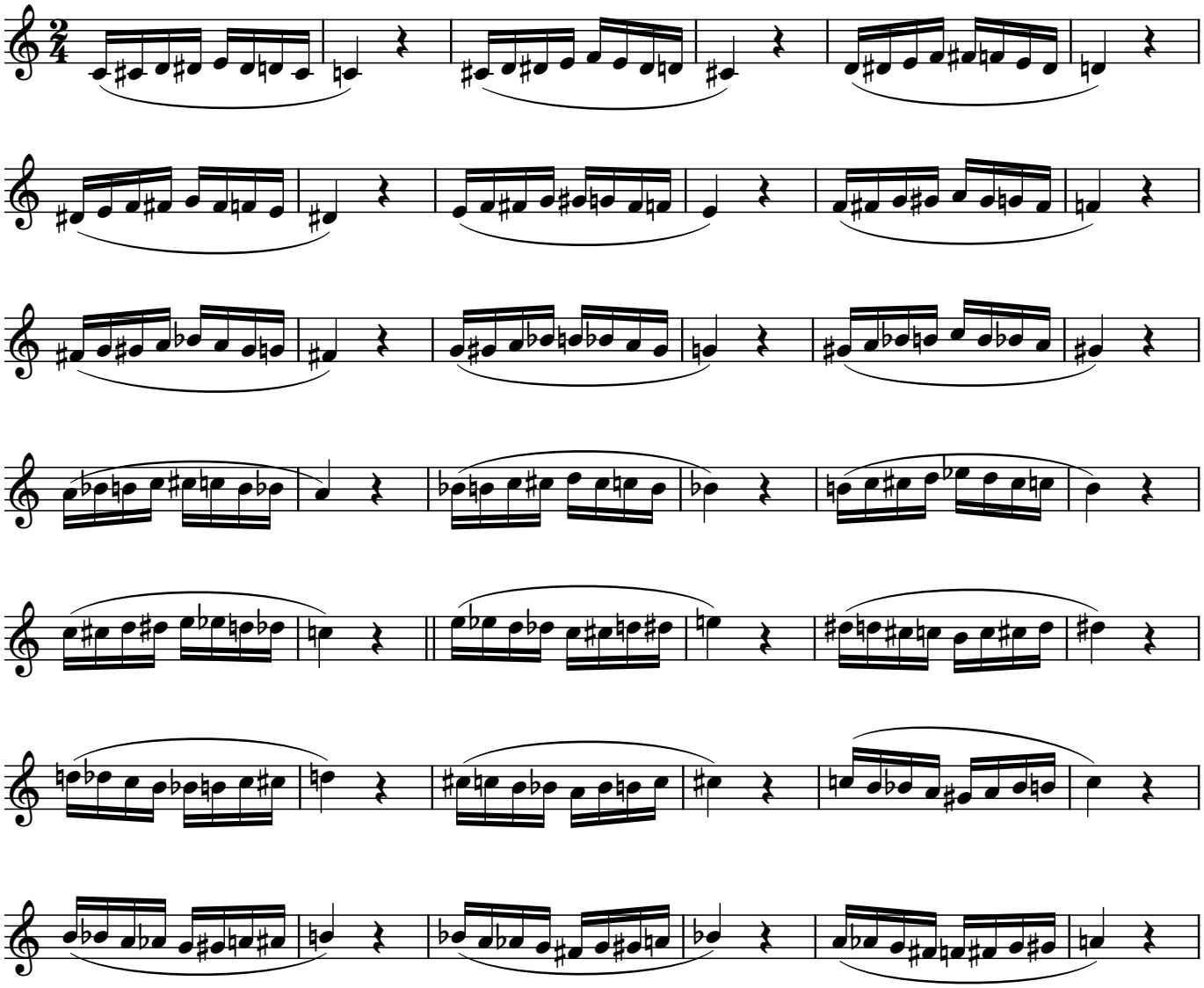

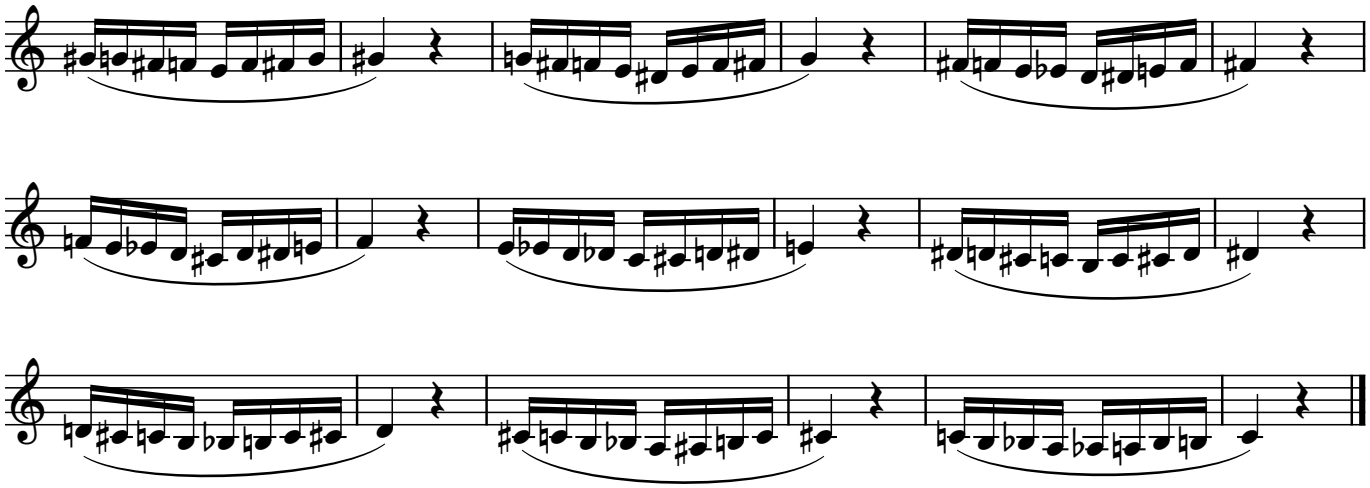

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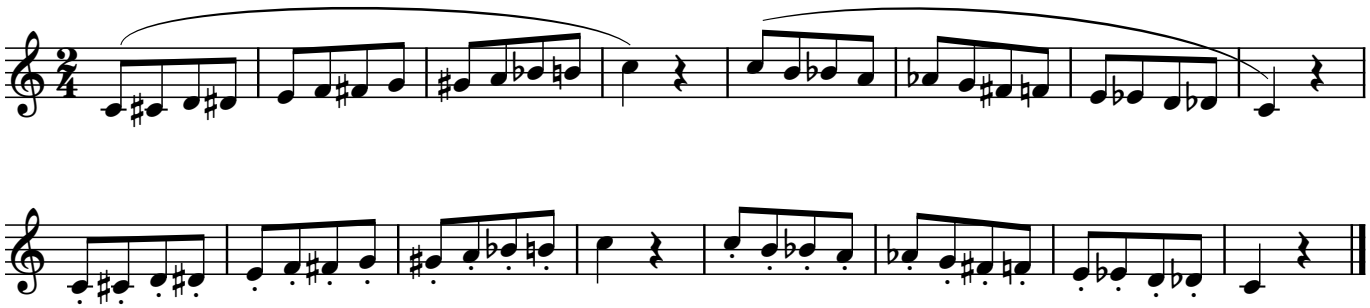

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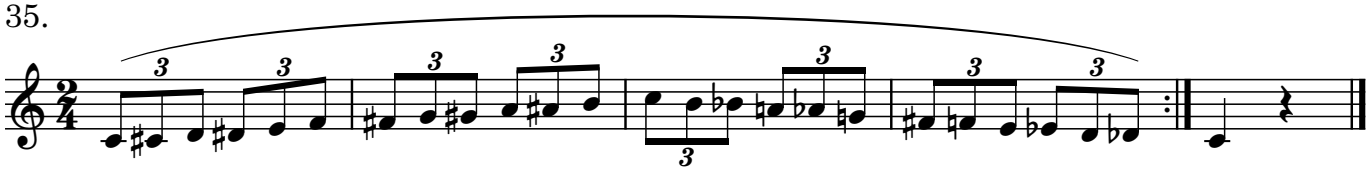

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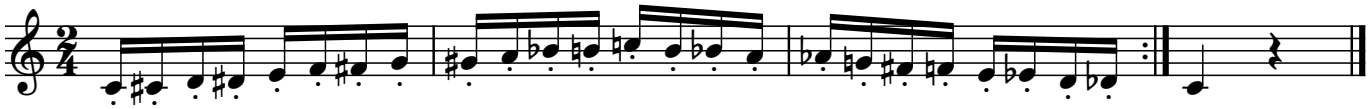

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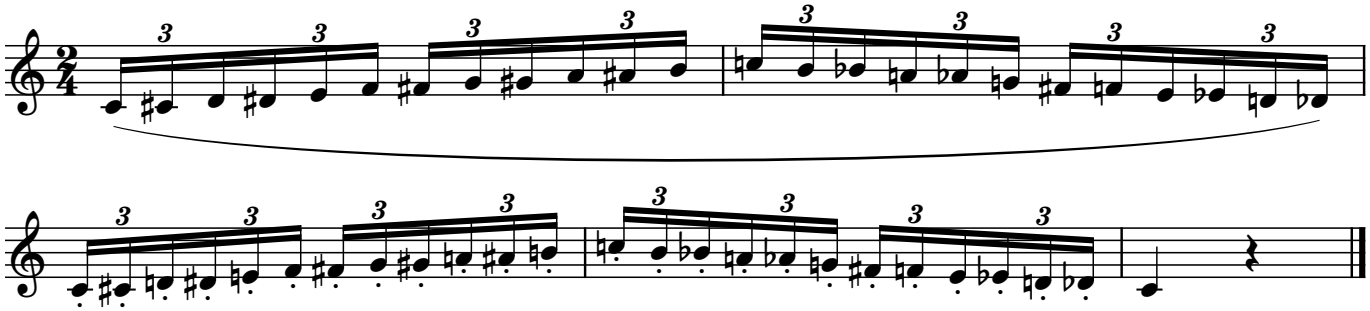

c-moll - c minor

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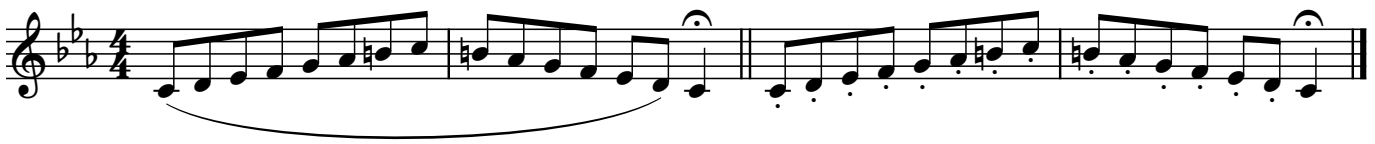

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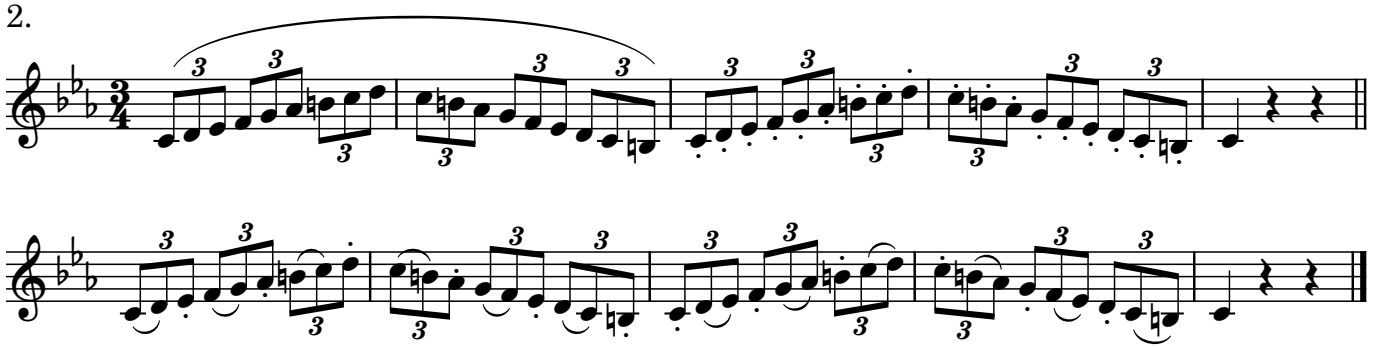

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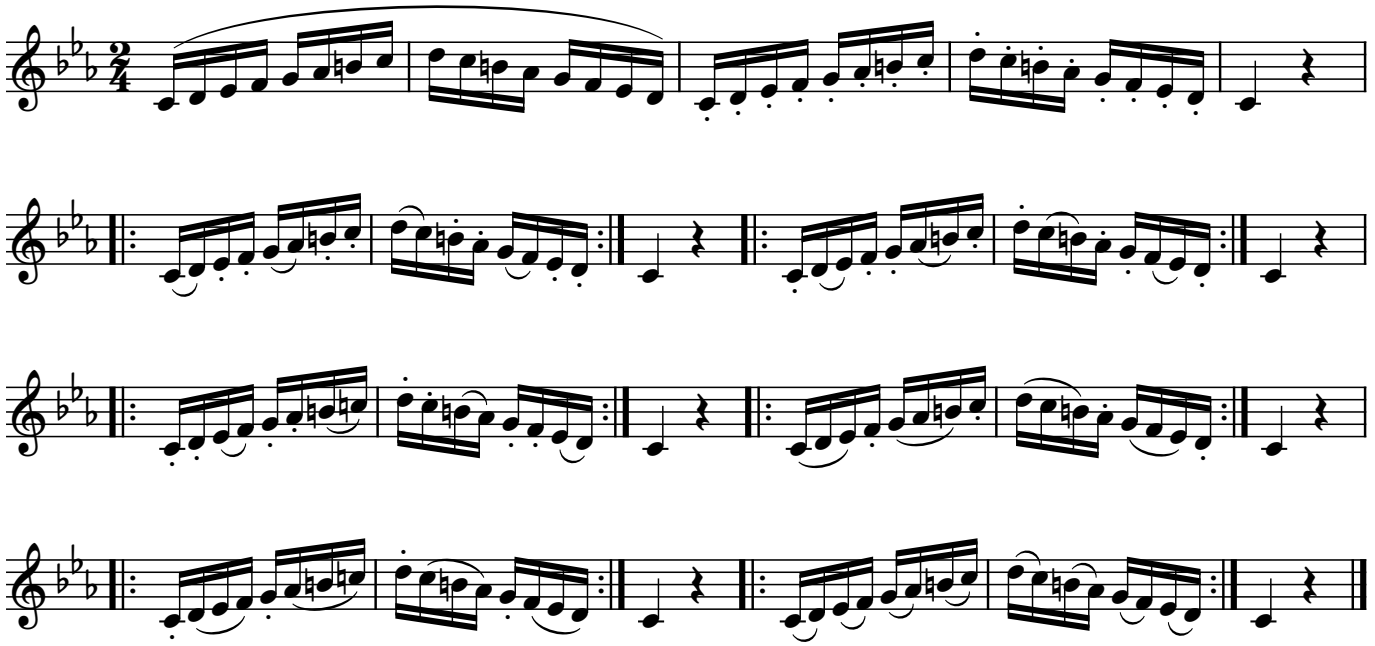

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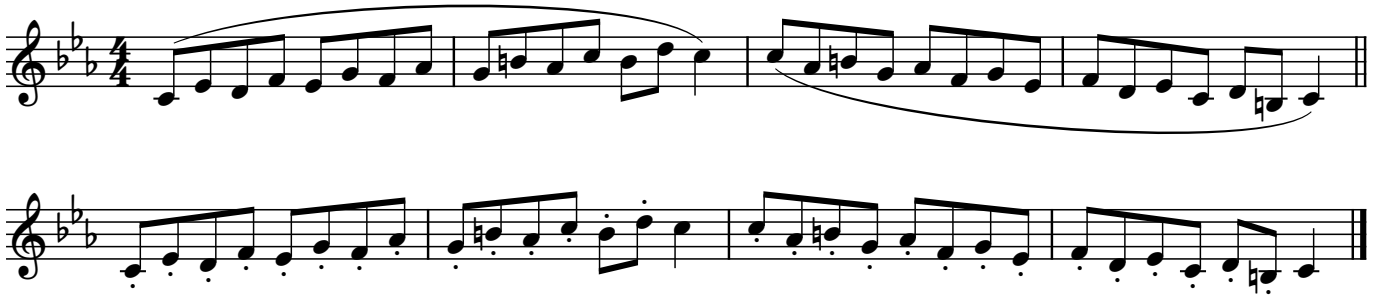

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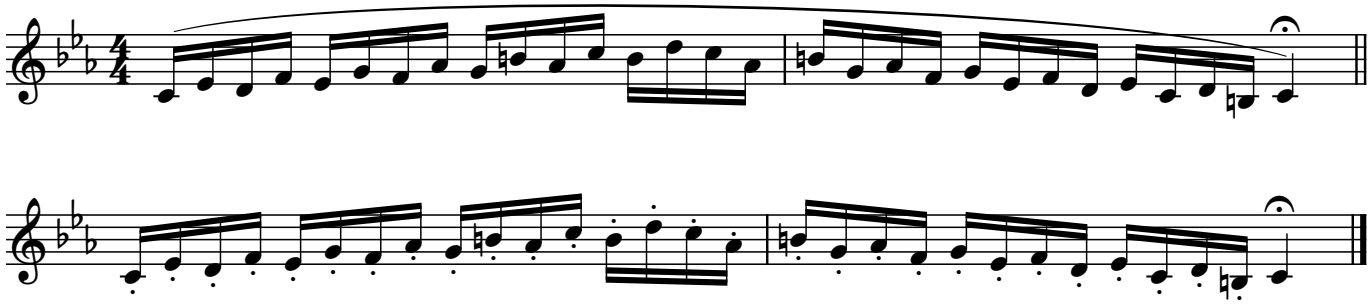

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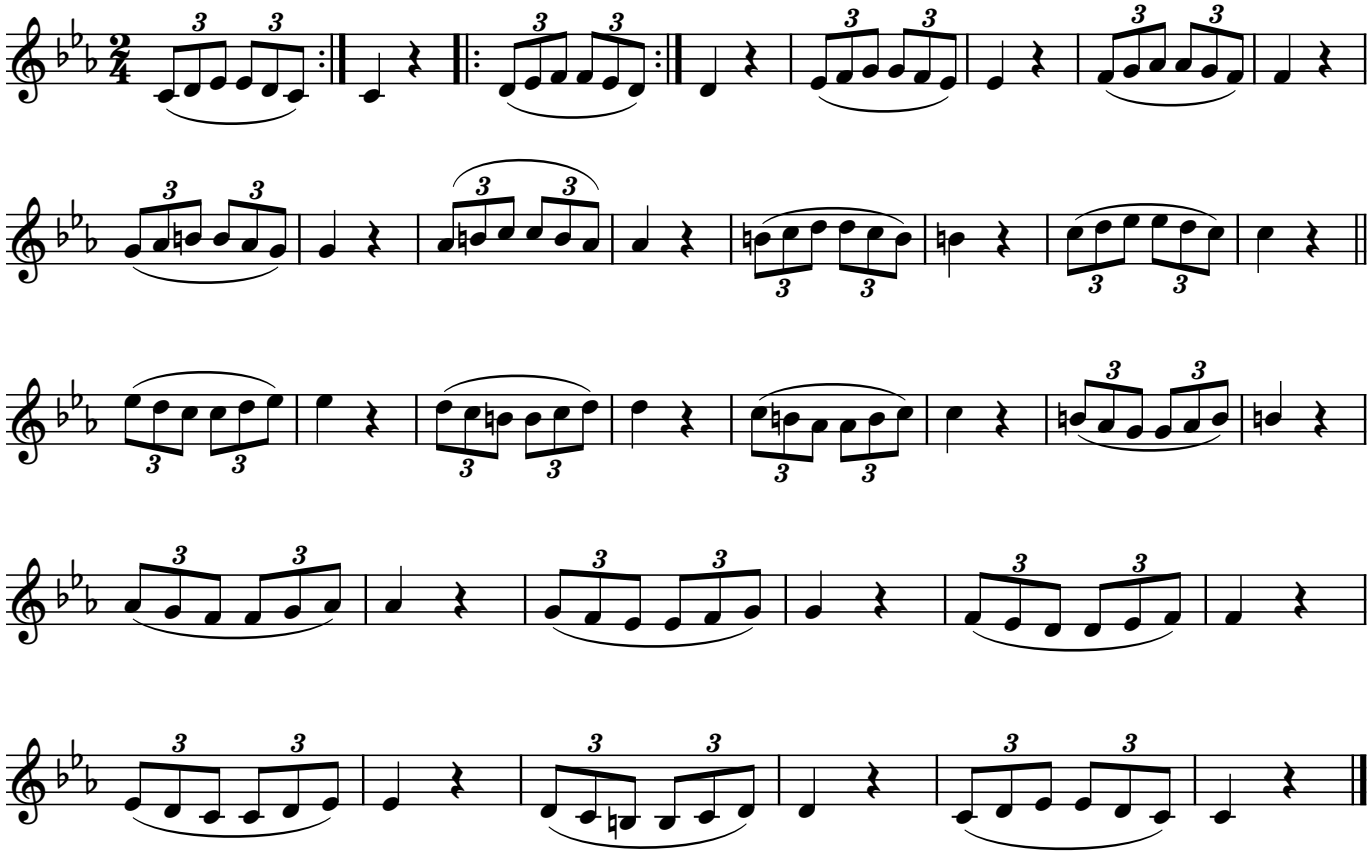

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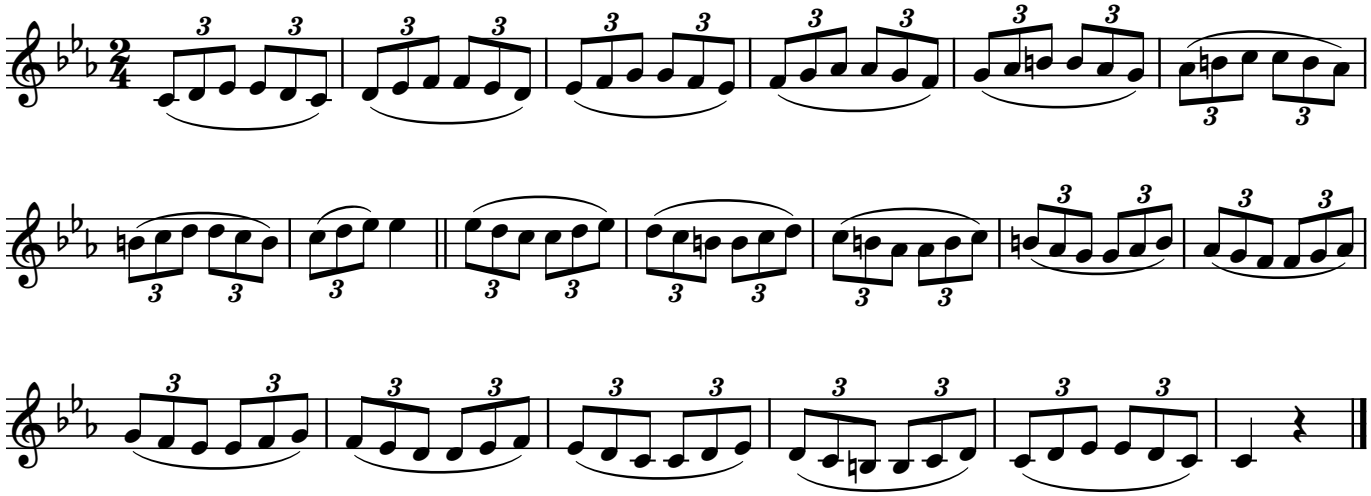

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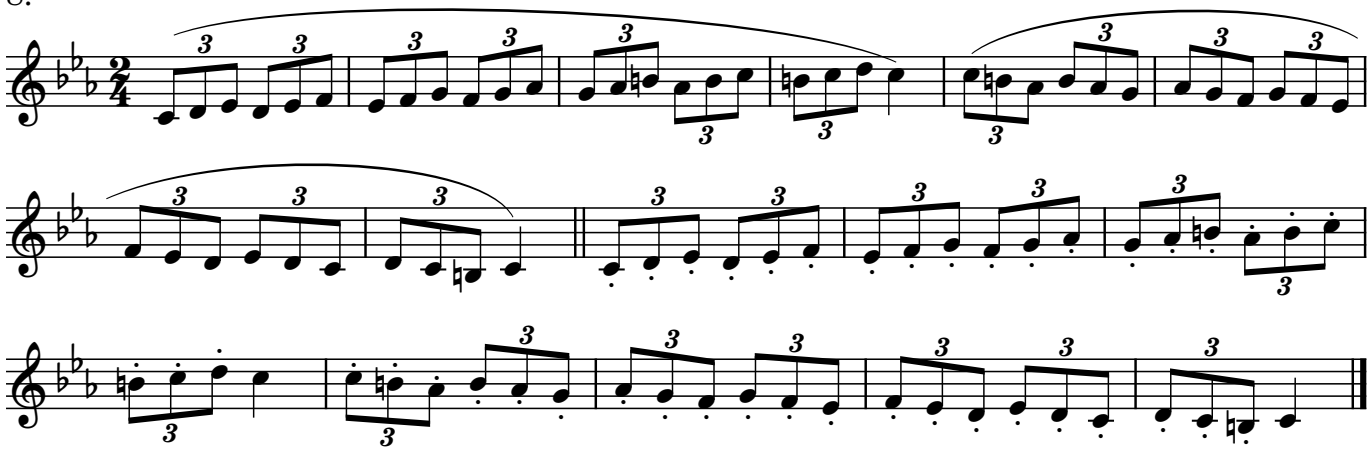

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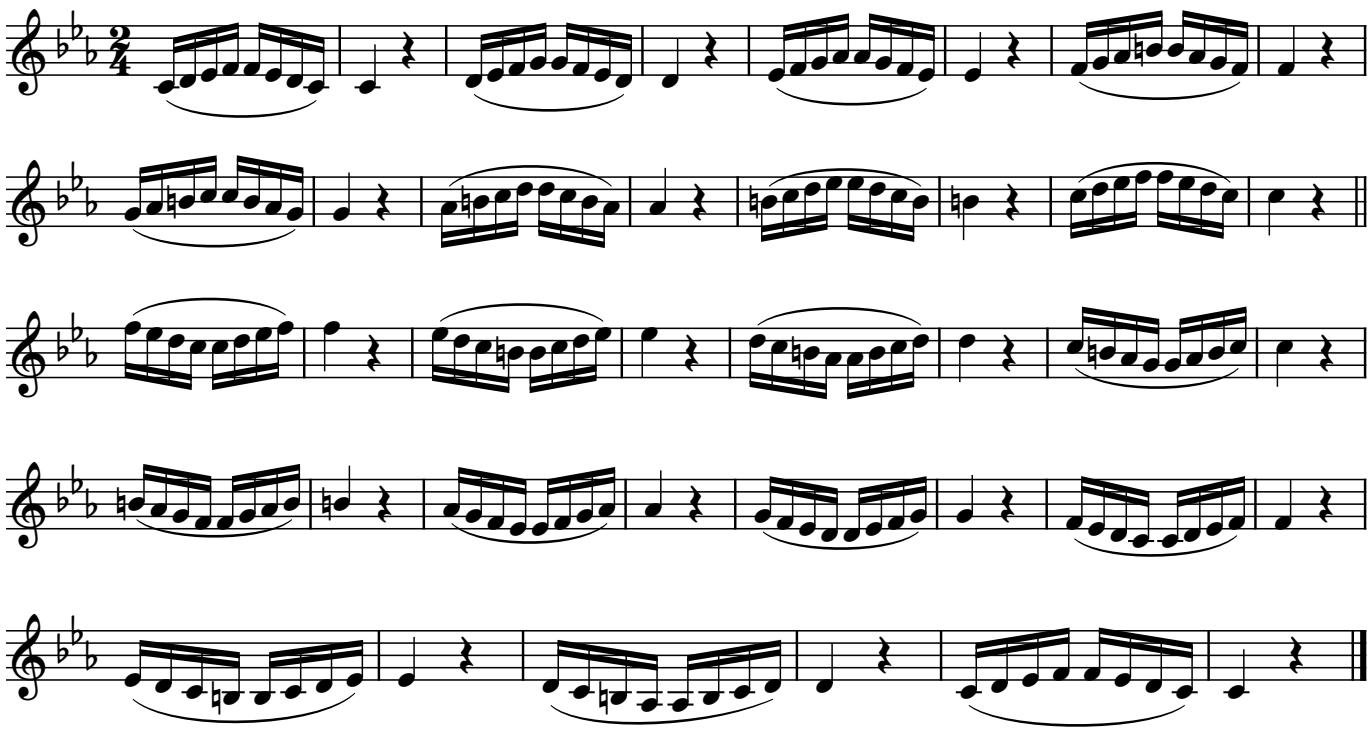

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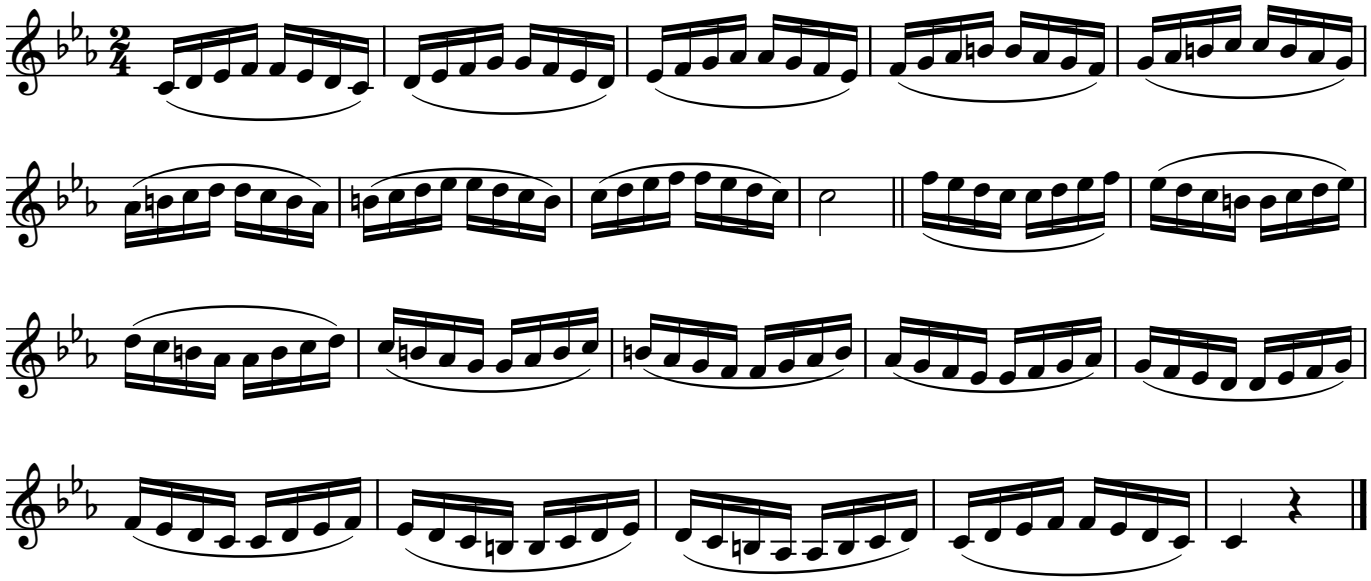

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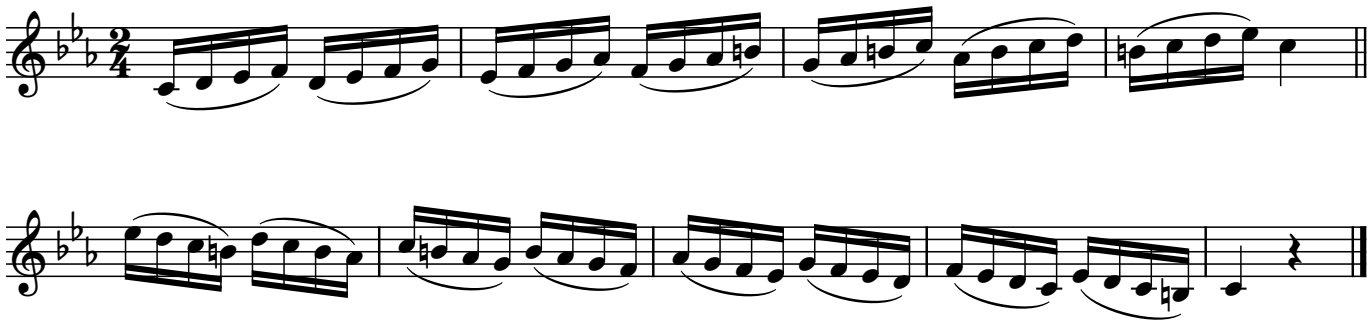

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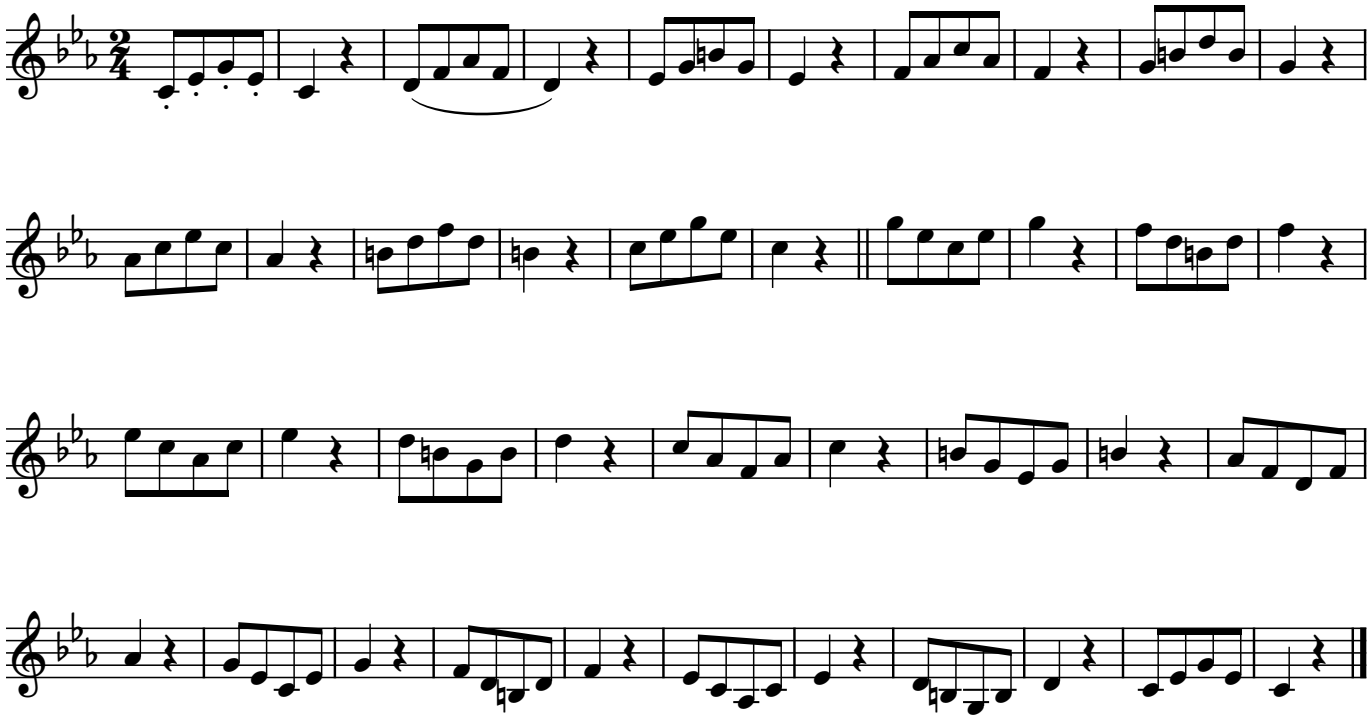

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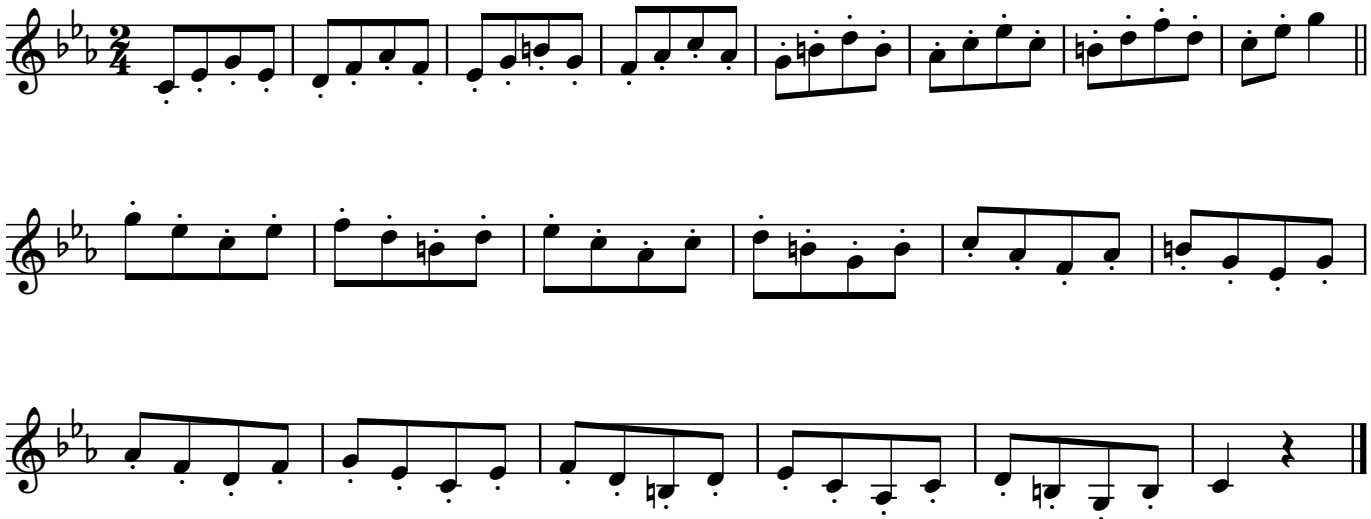

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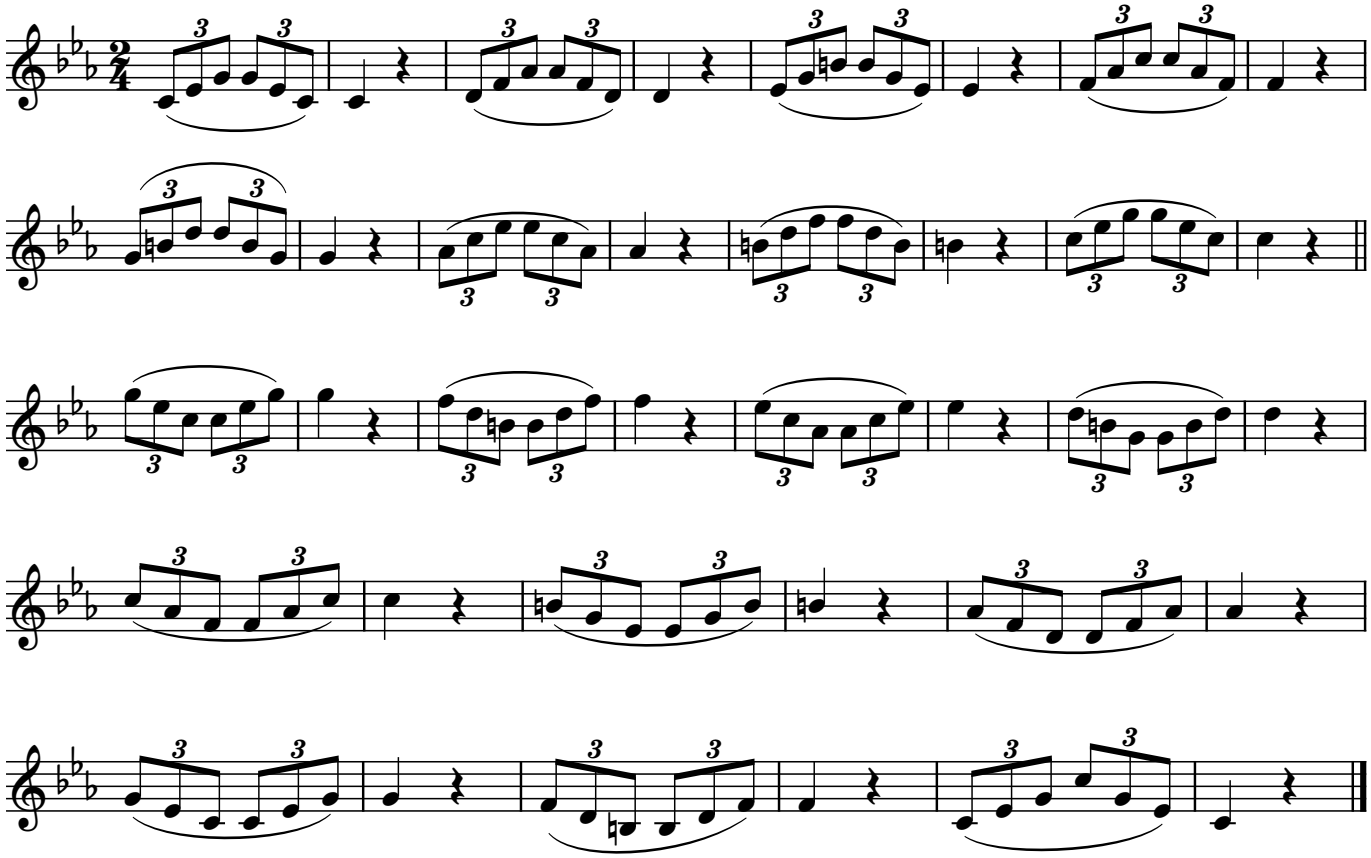

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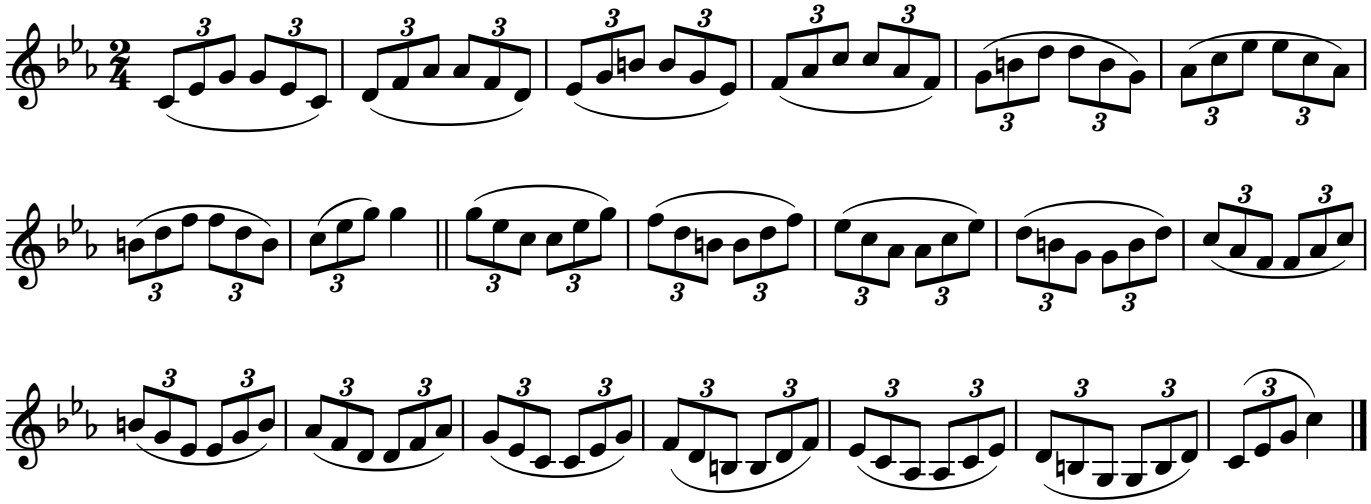

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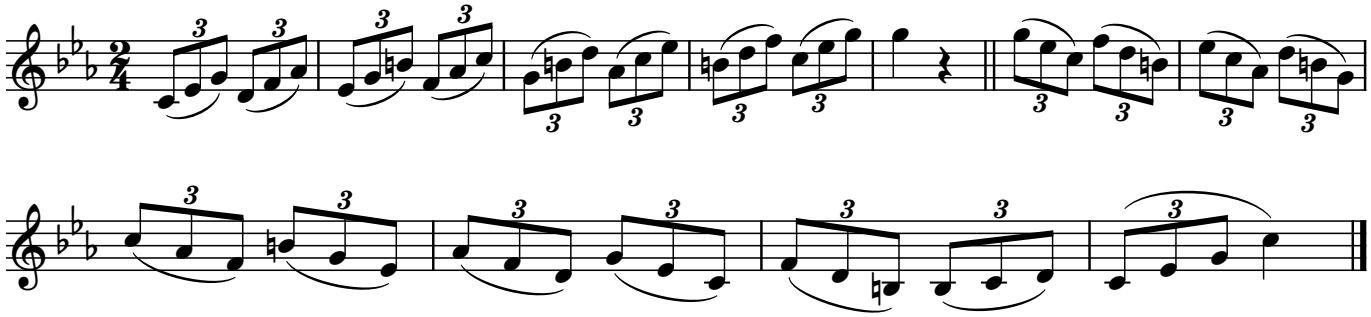

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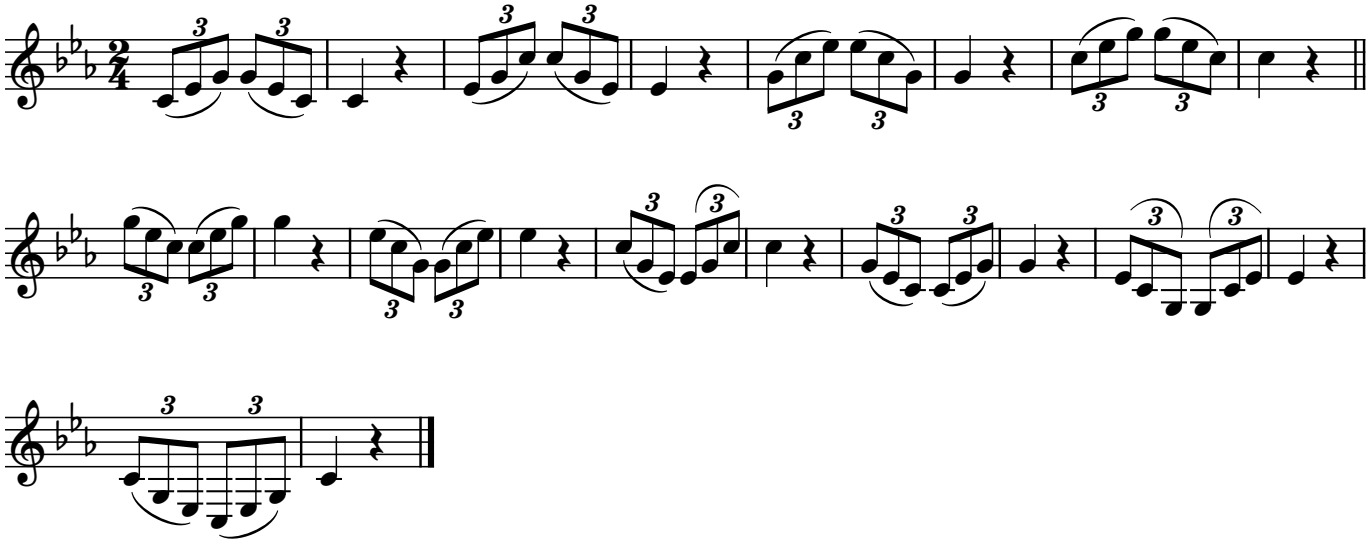

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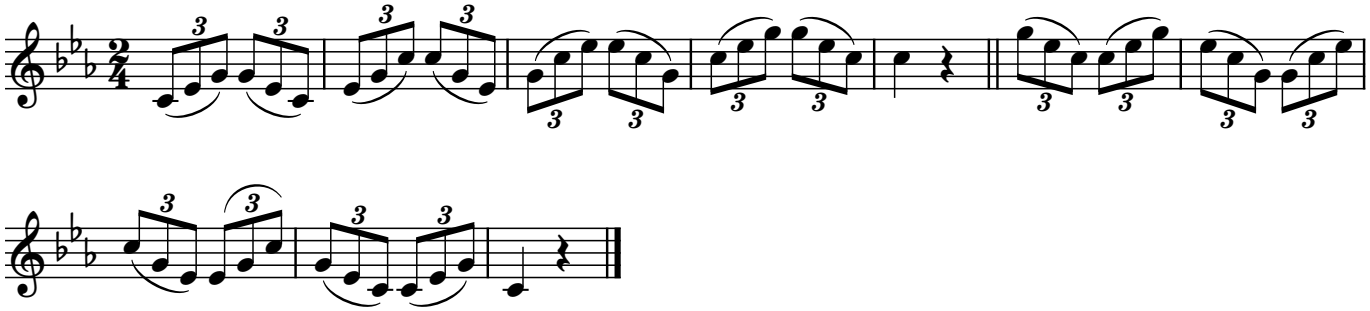

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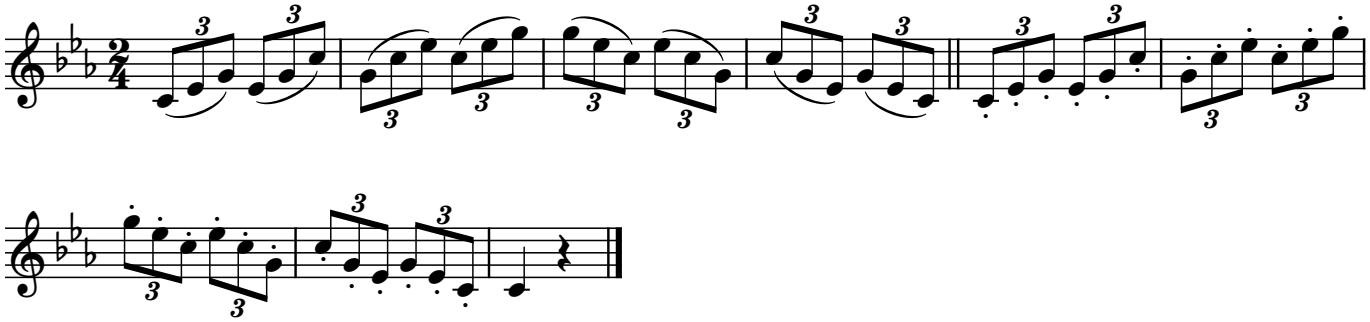

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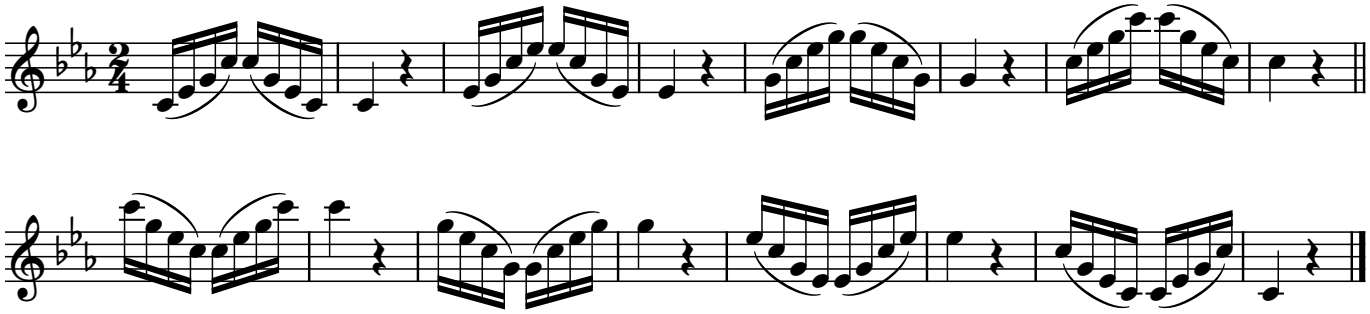

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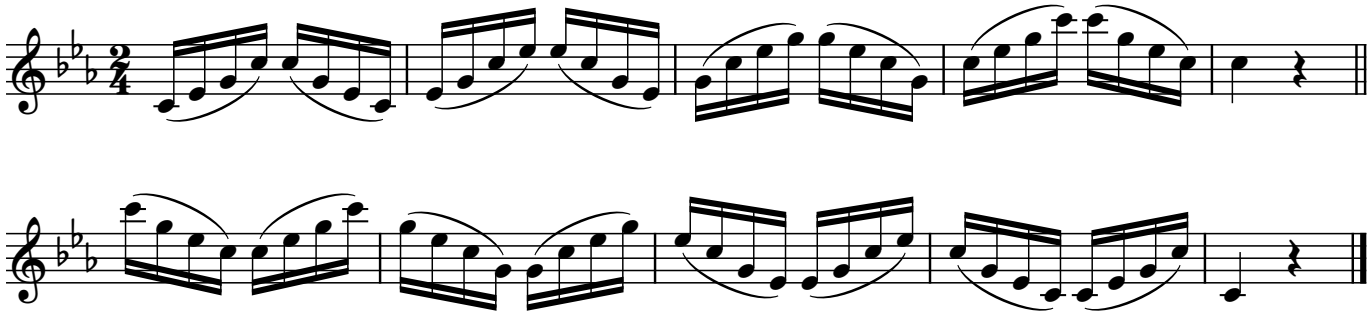

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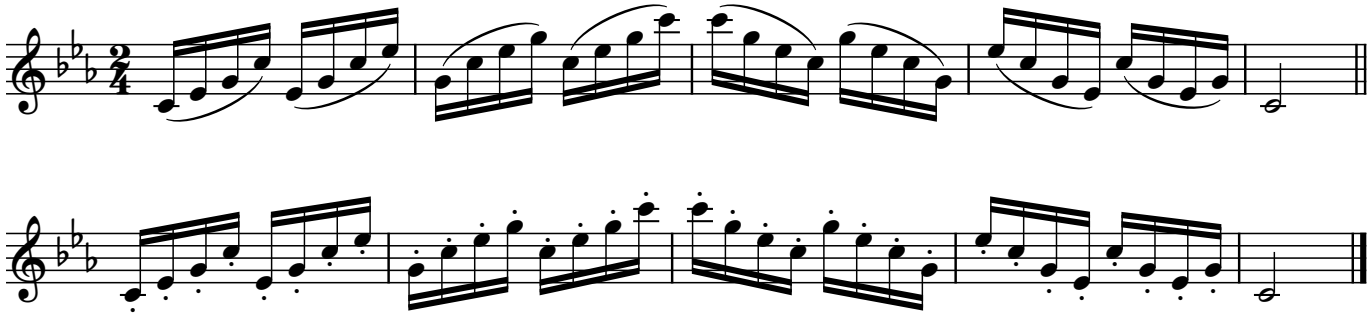

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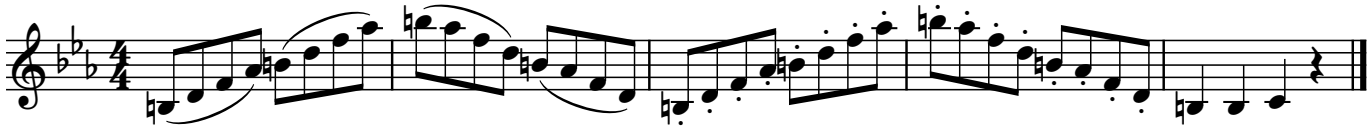

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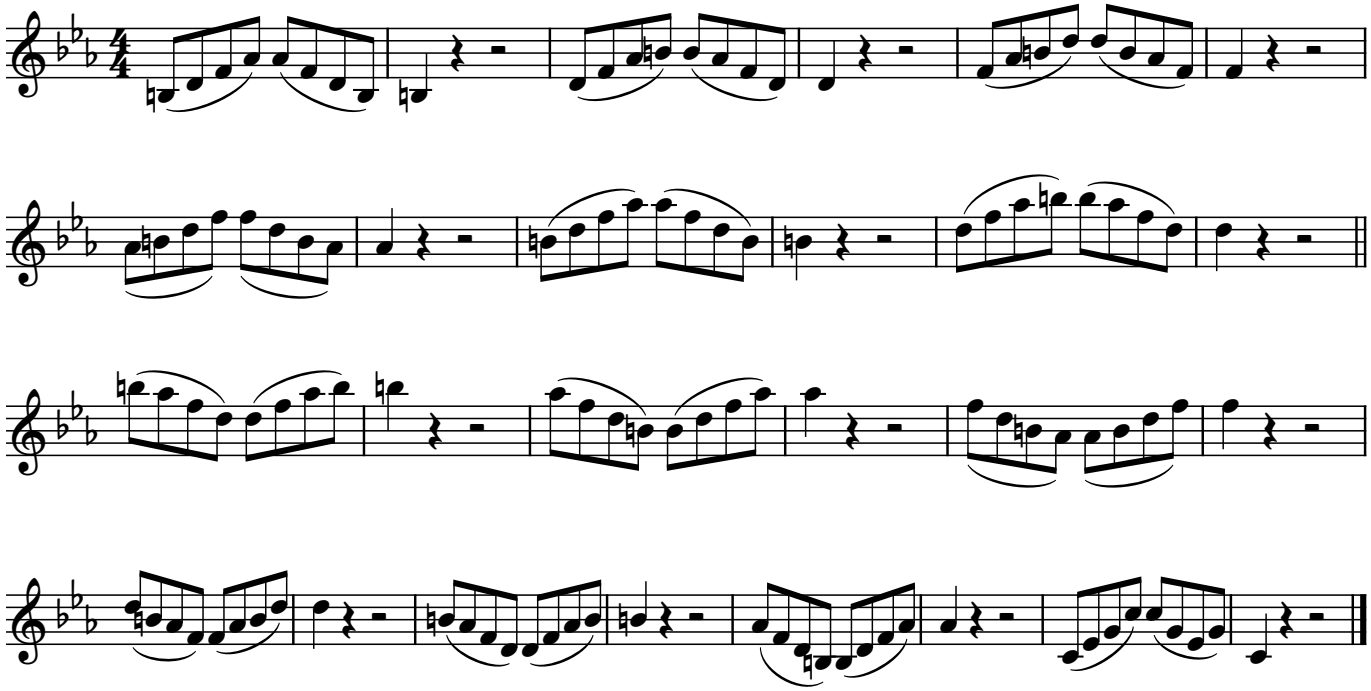

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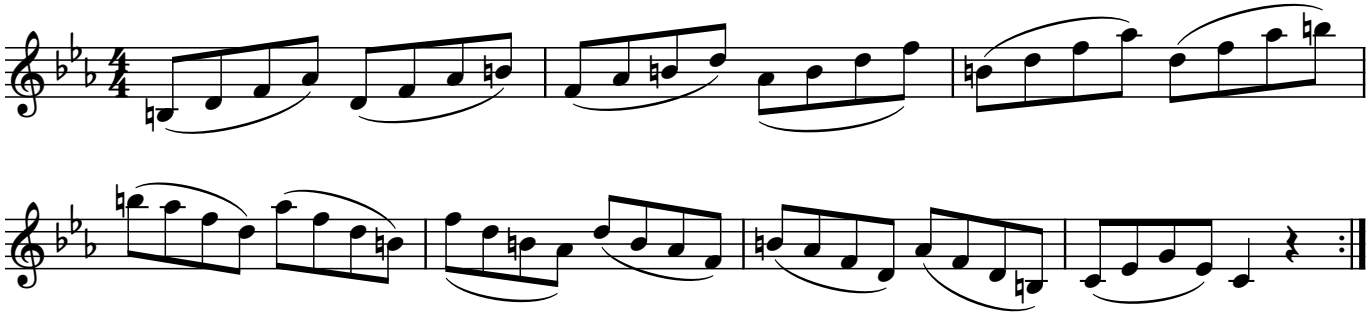

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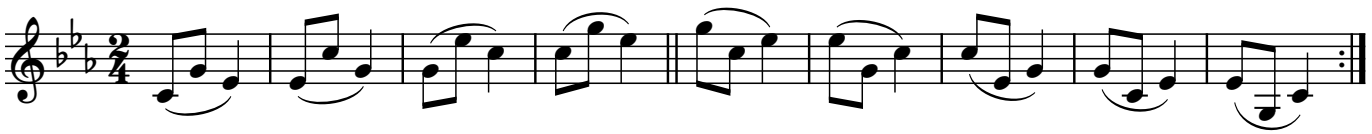

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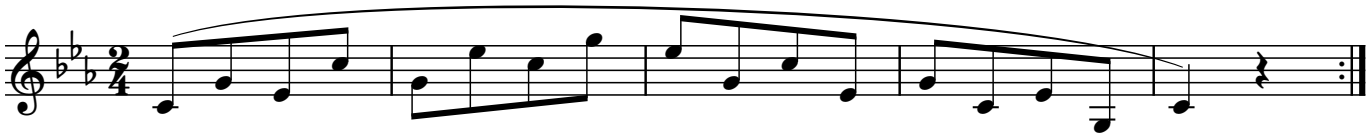

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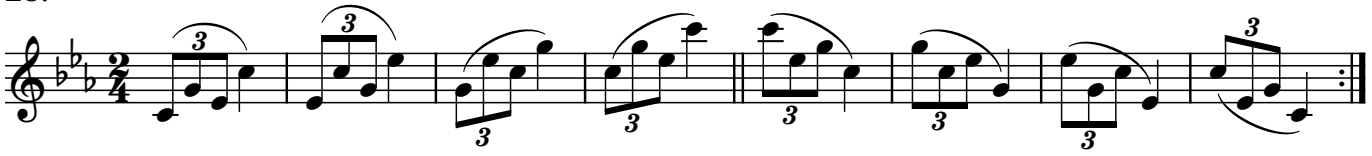

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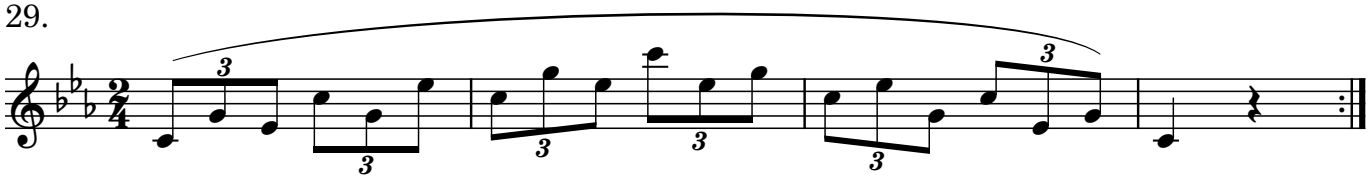

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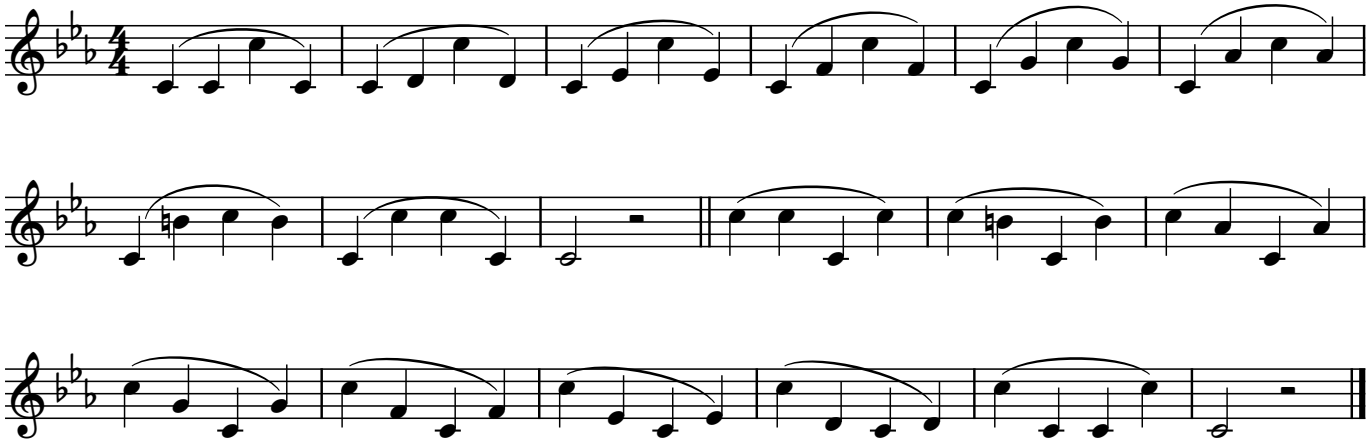

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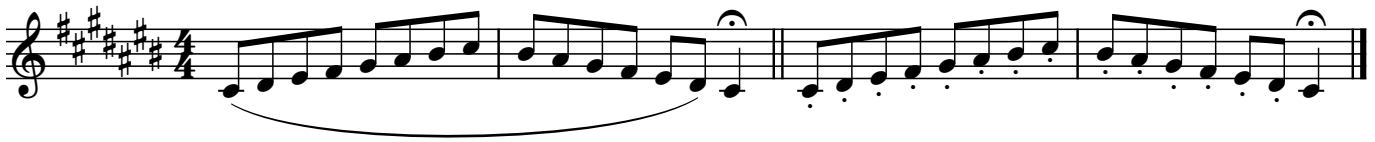

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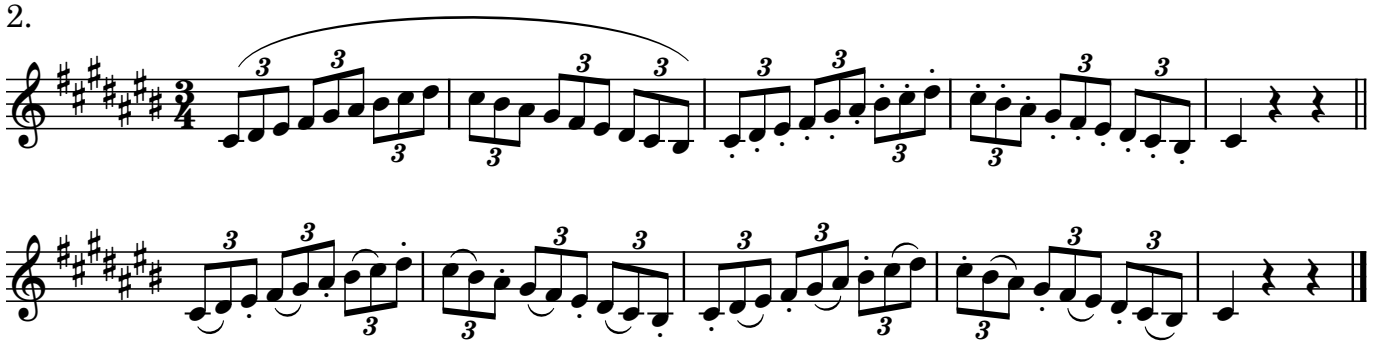

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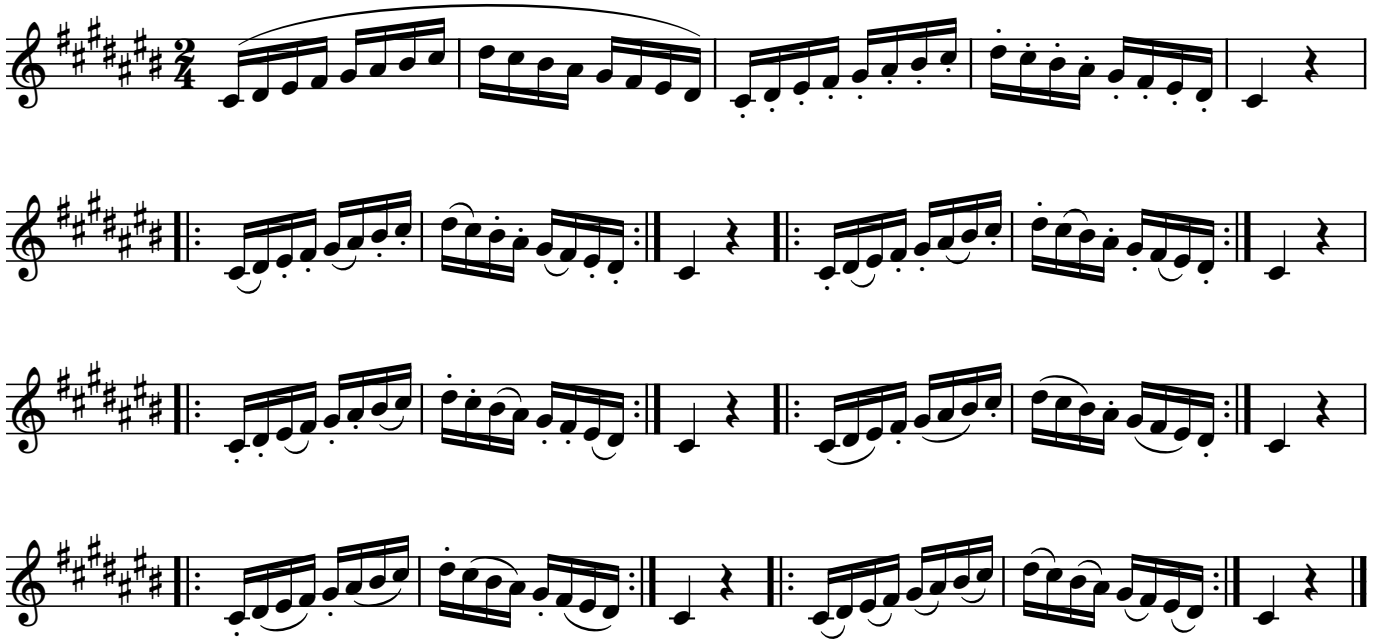

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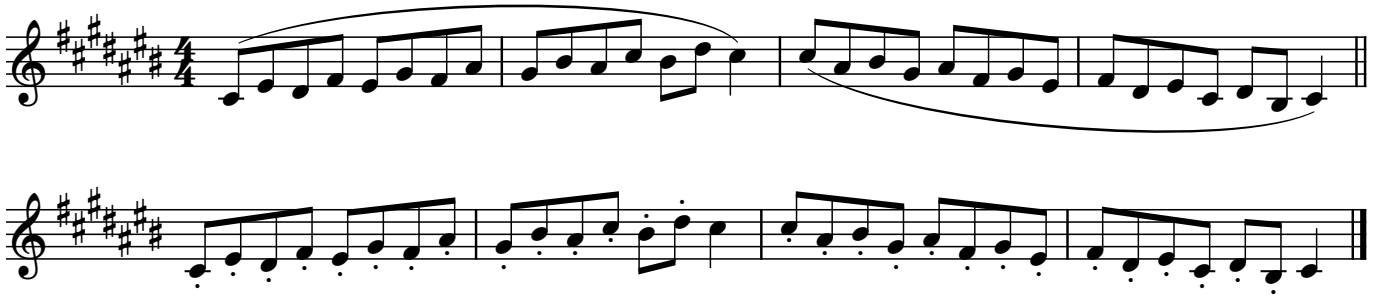

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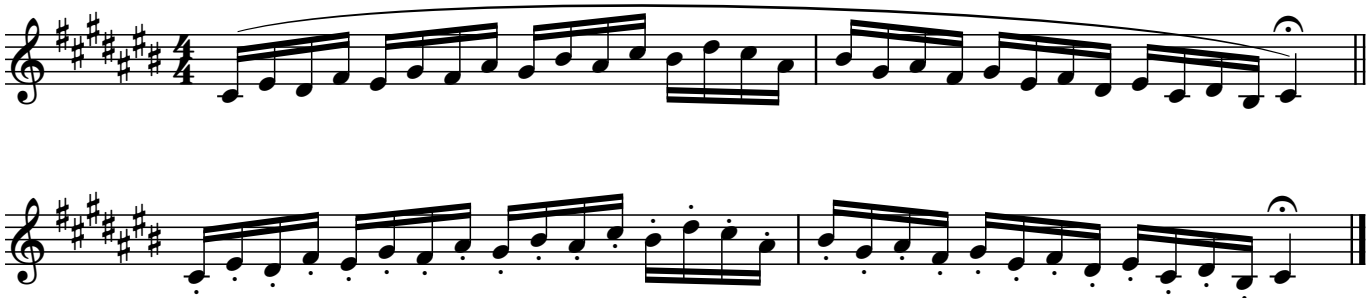

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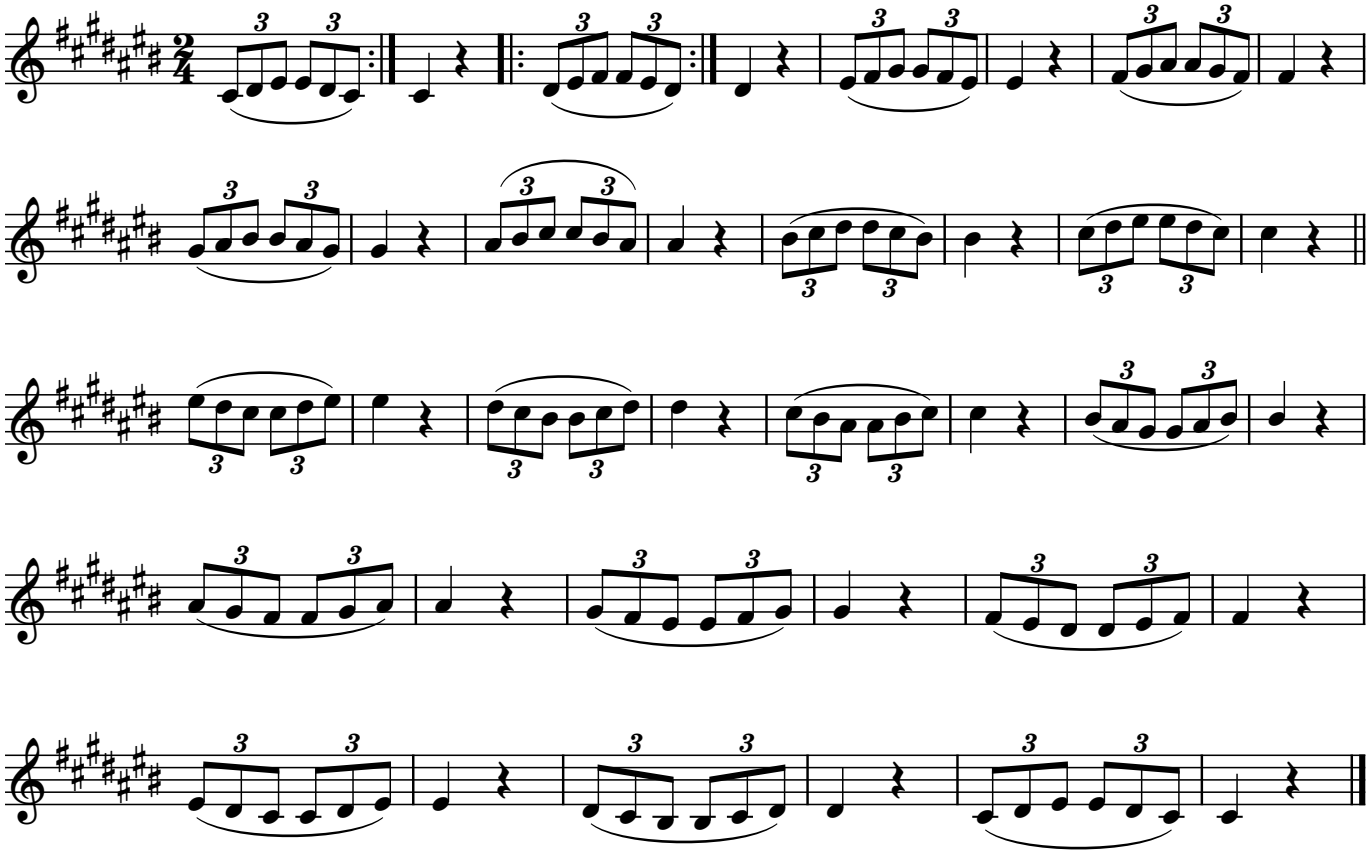

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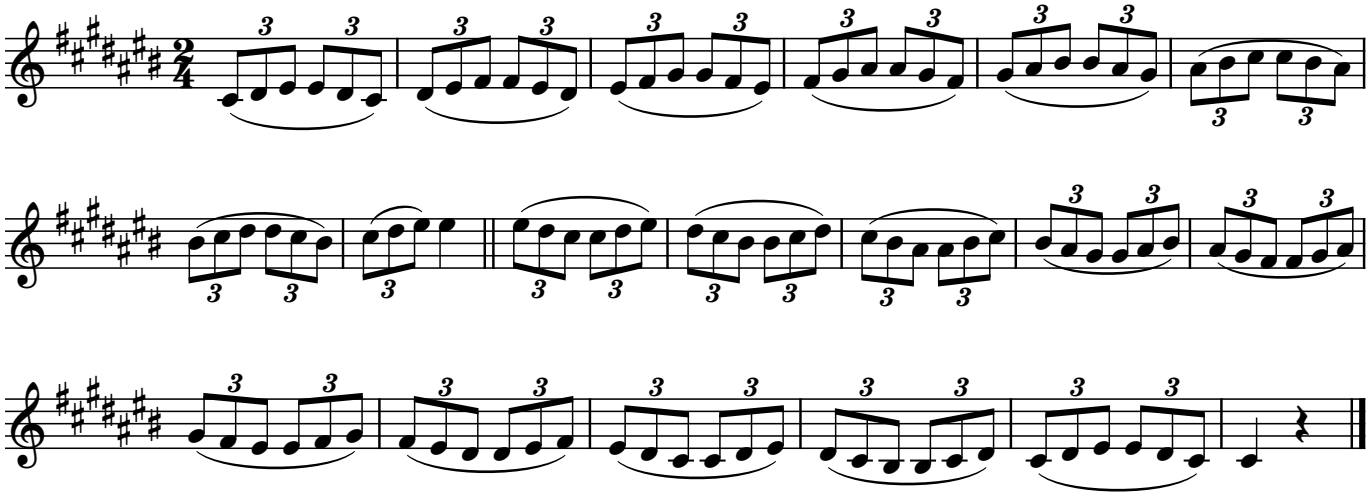

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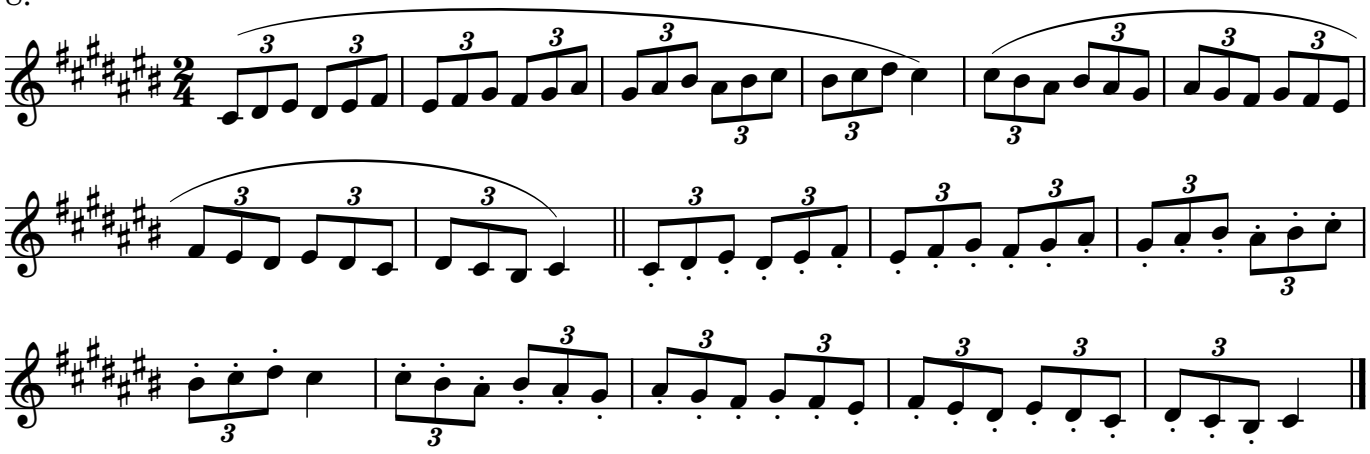

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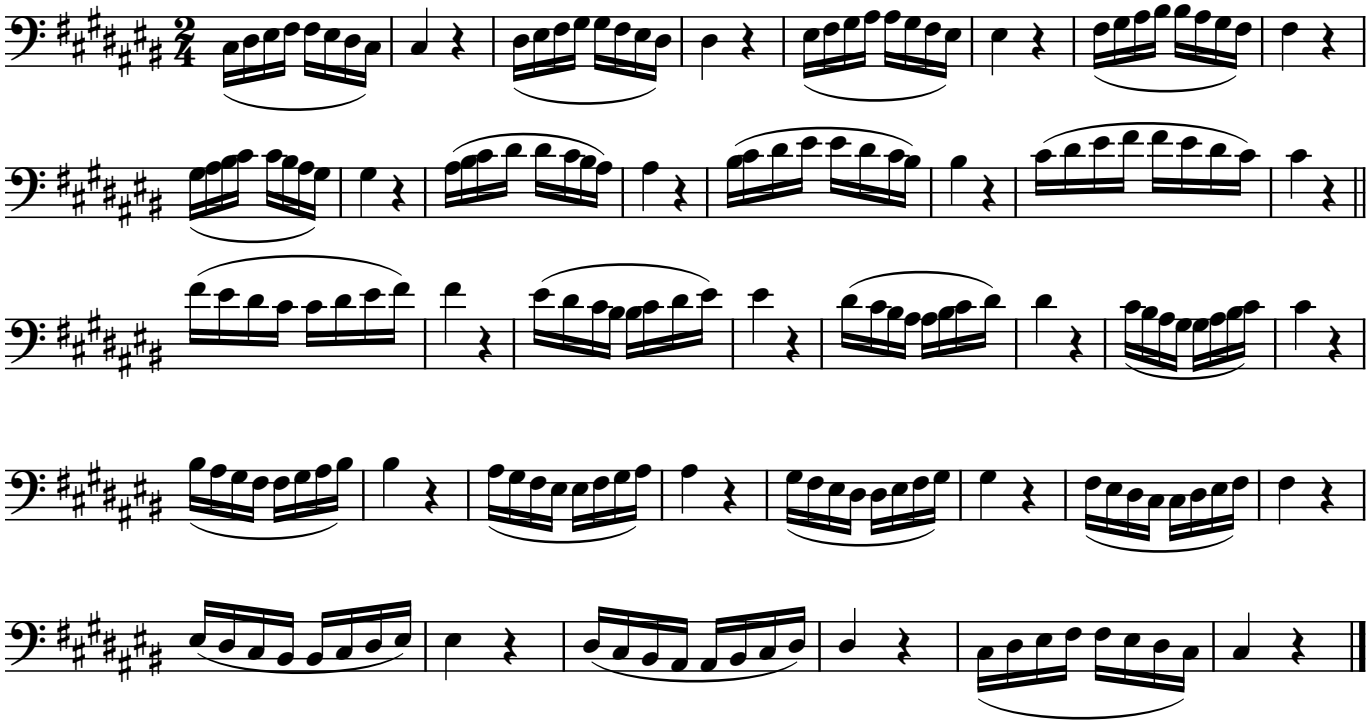

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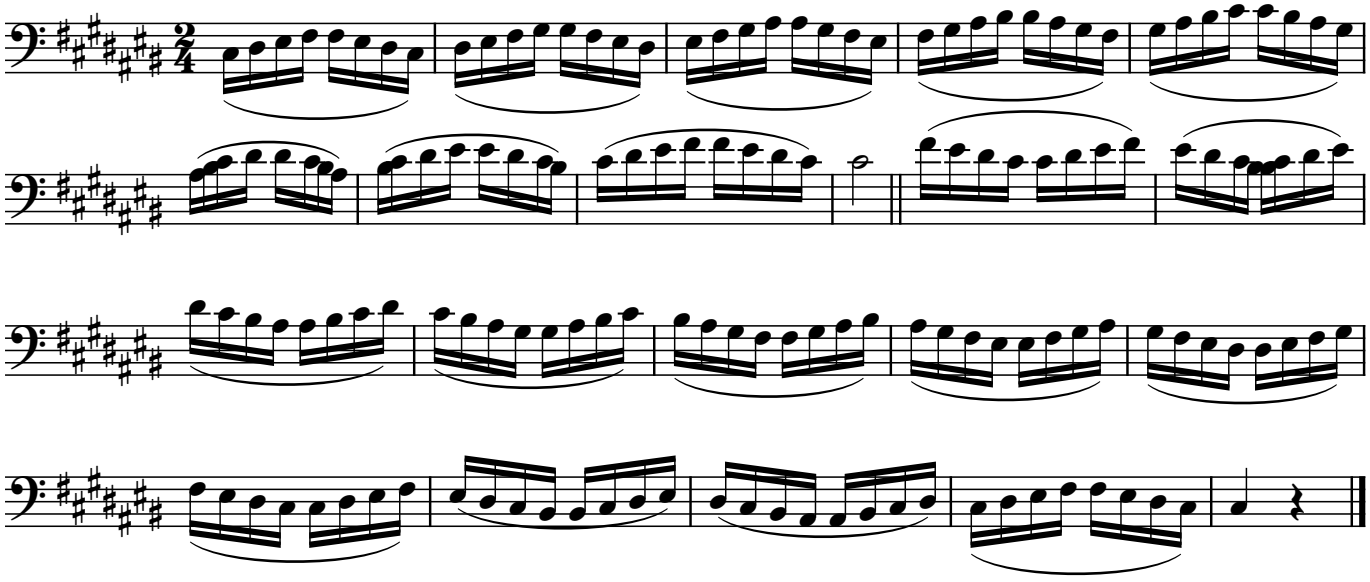

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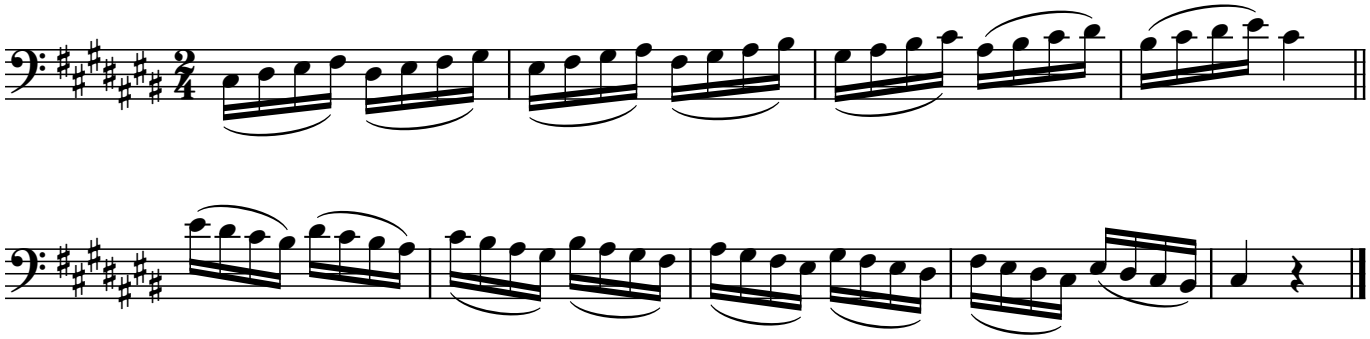

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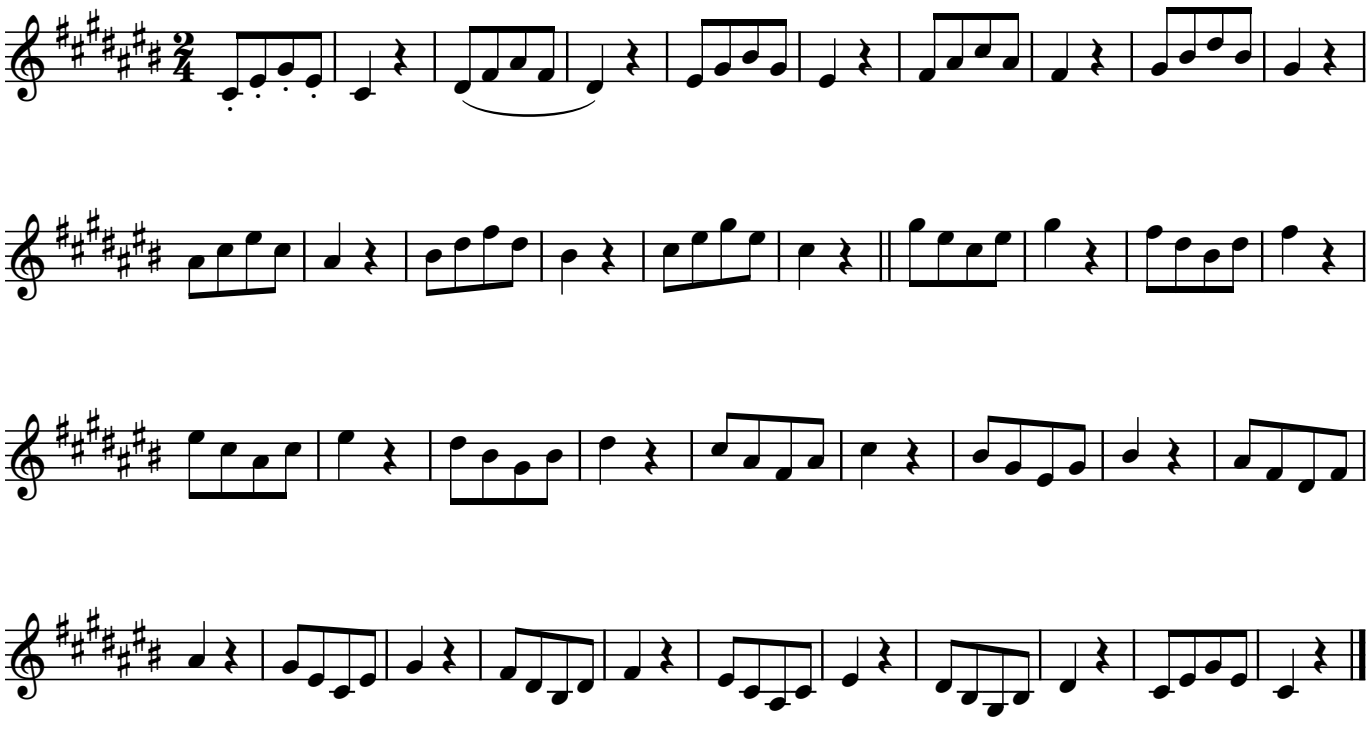

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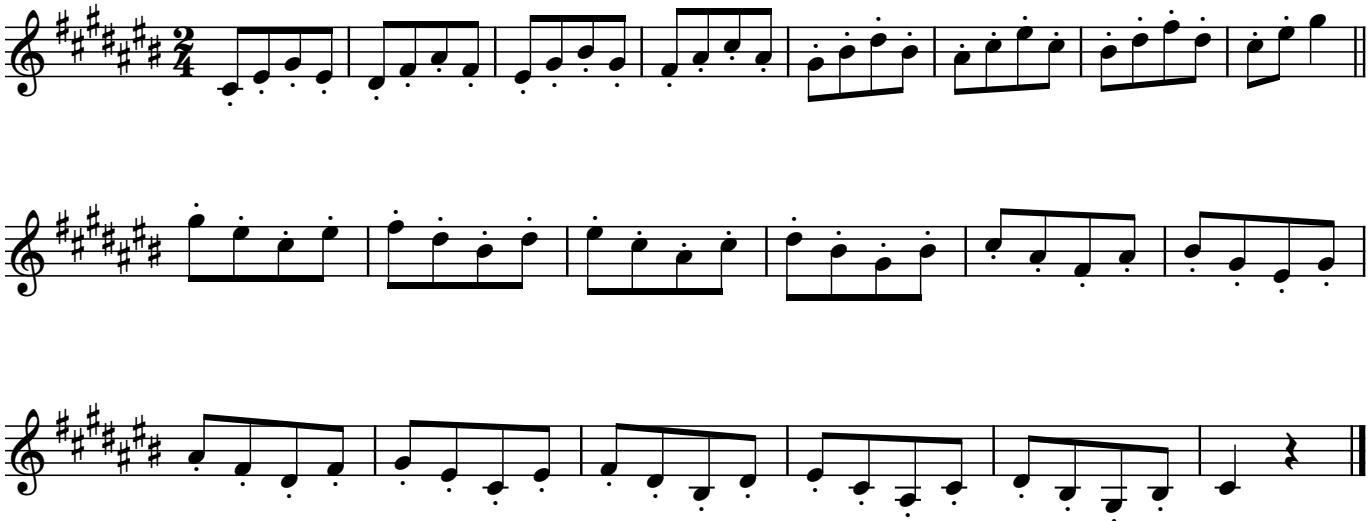

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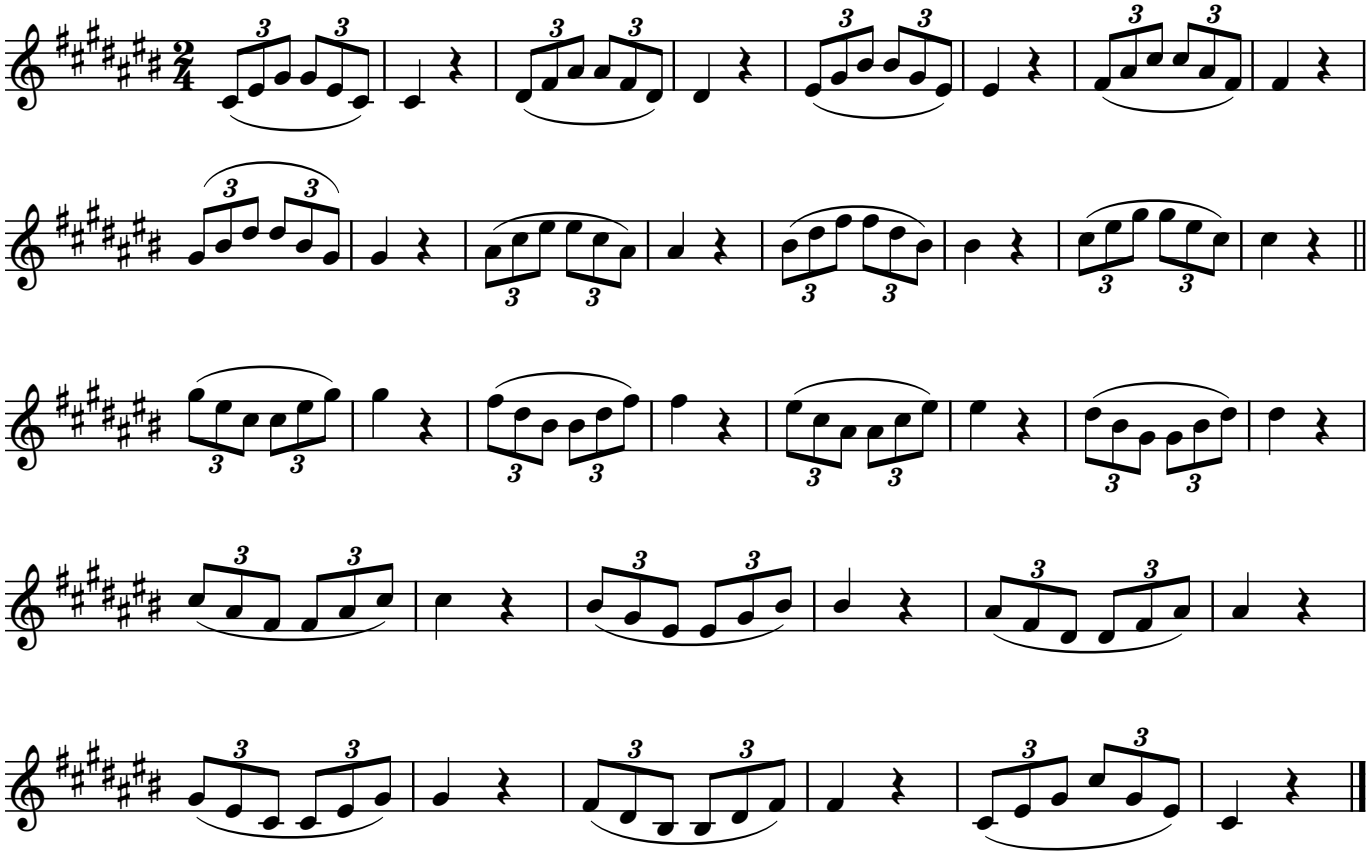

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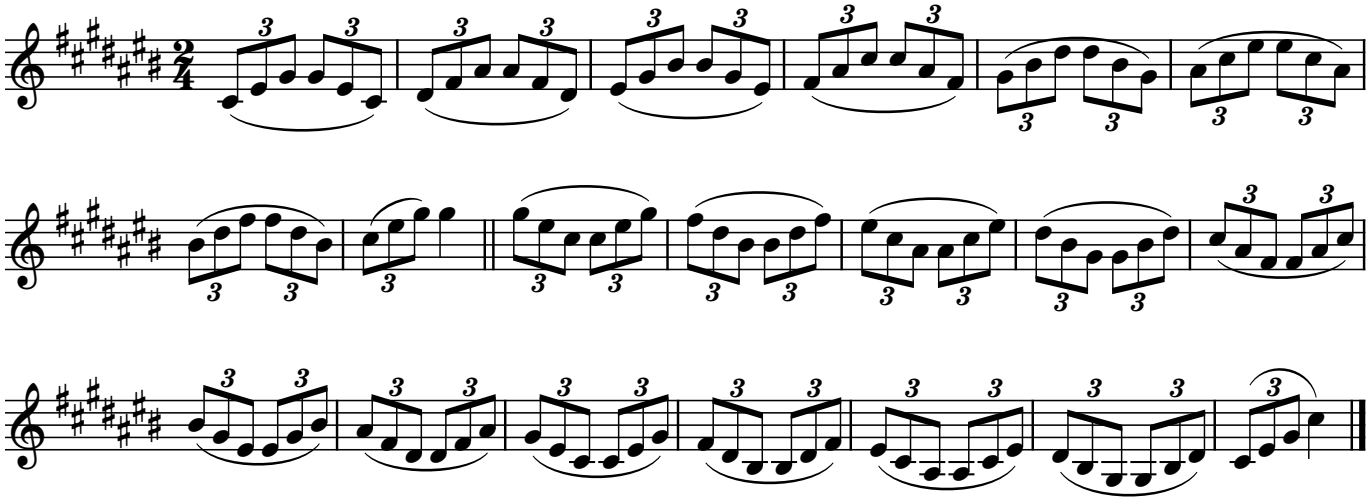

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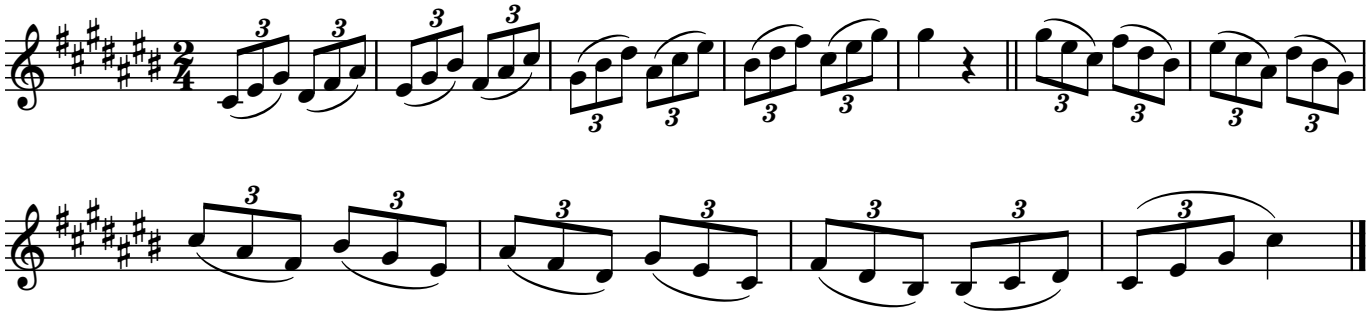

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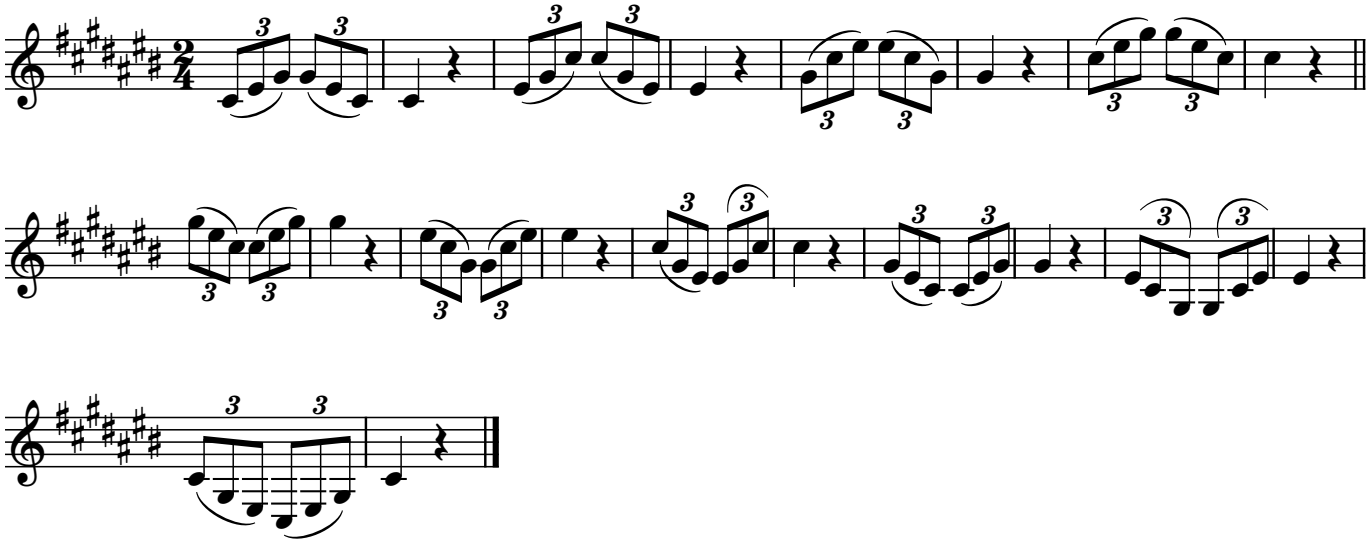

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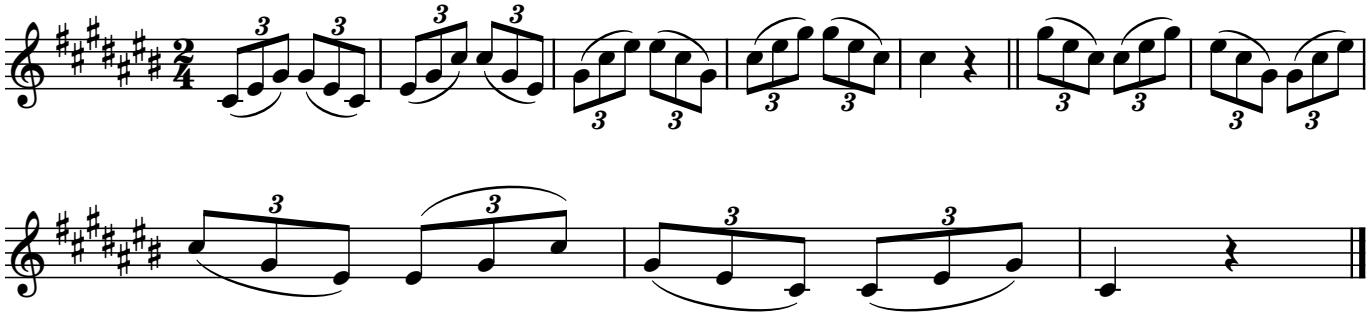

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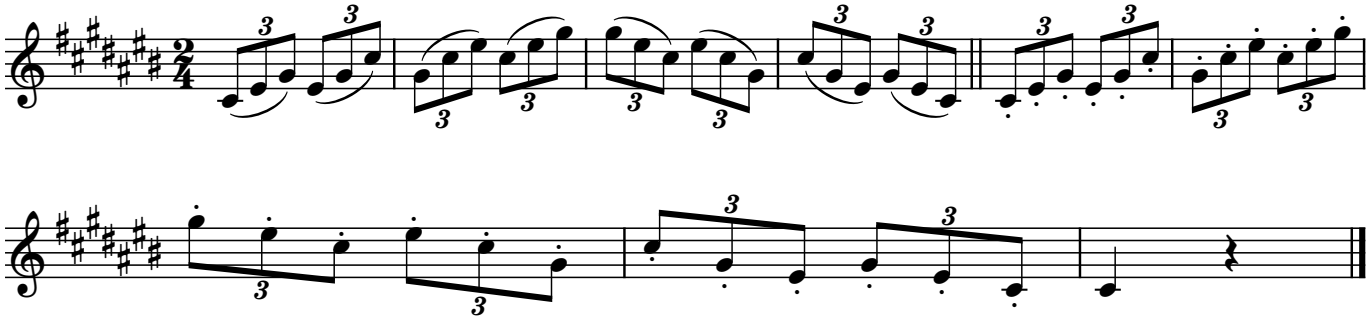

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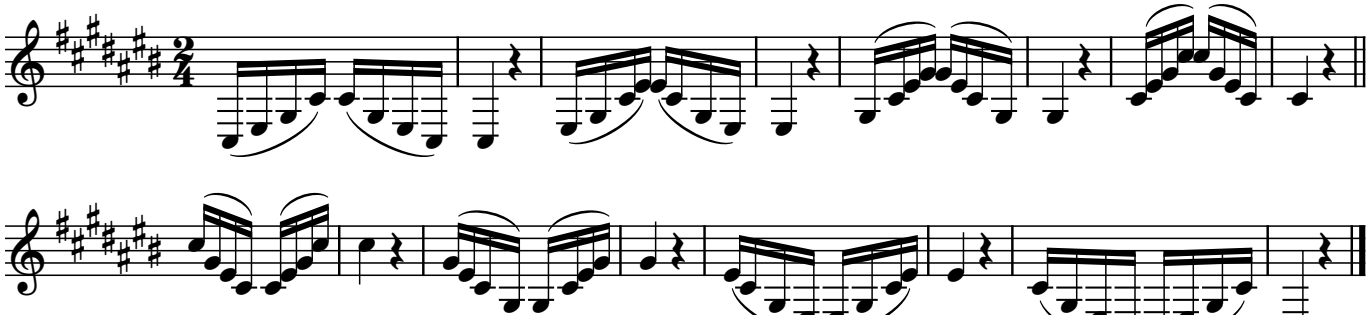

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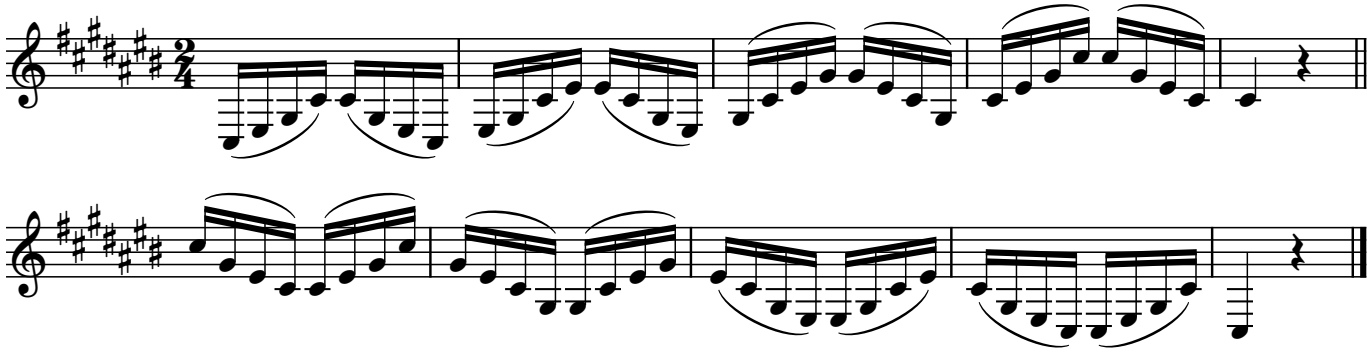

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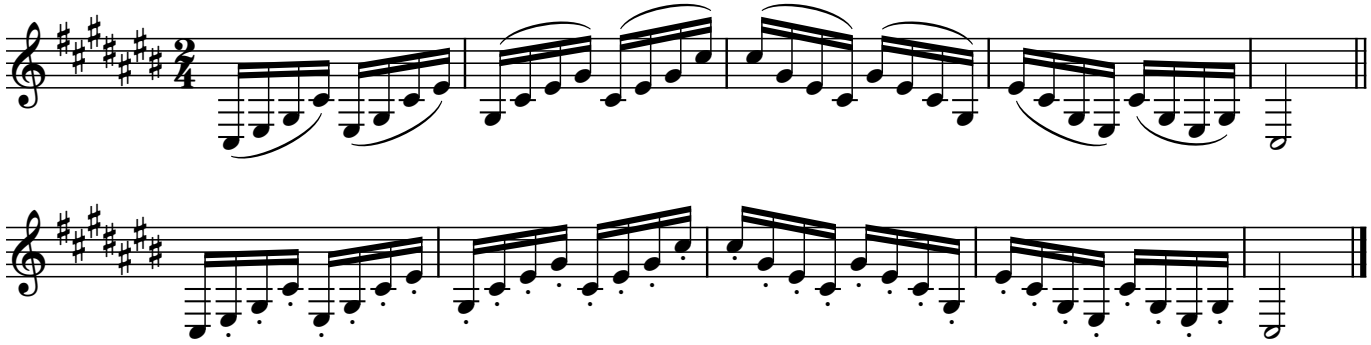

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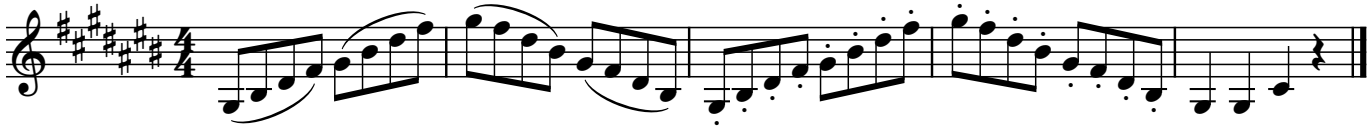

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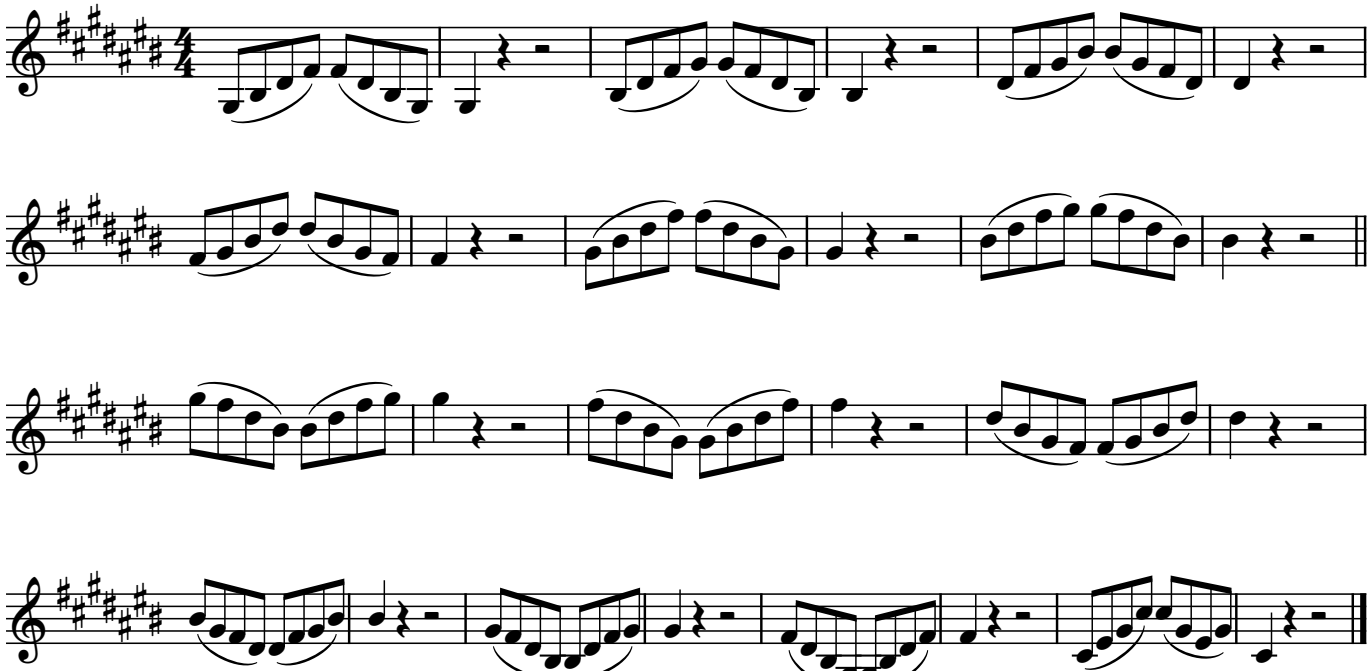

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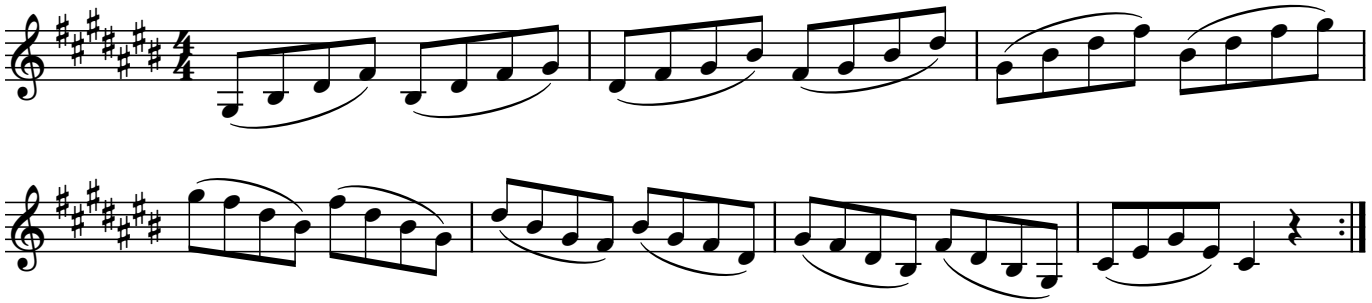

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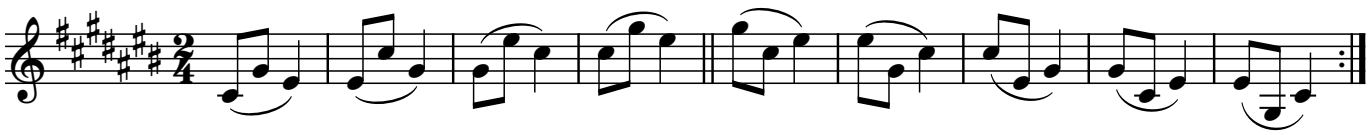

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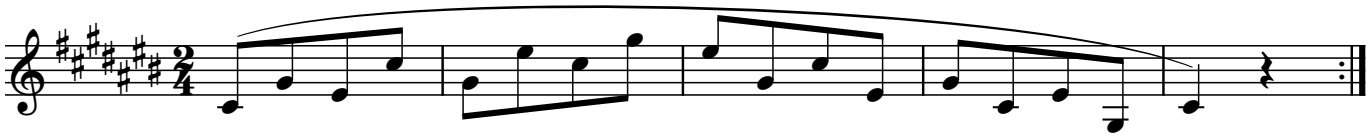

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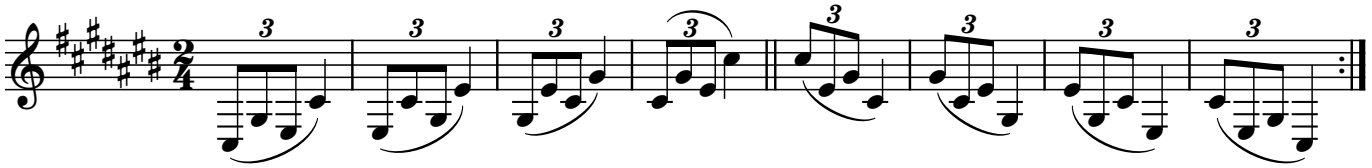

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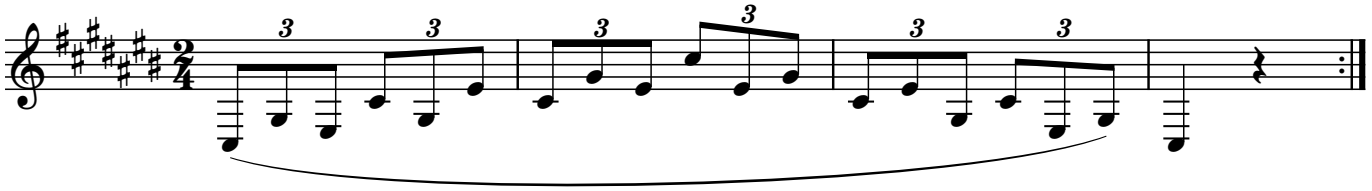

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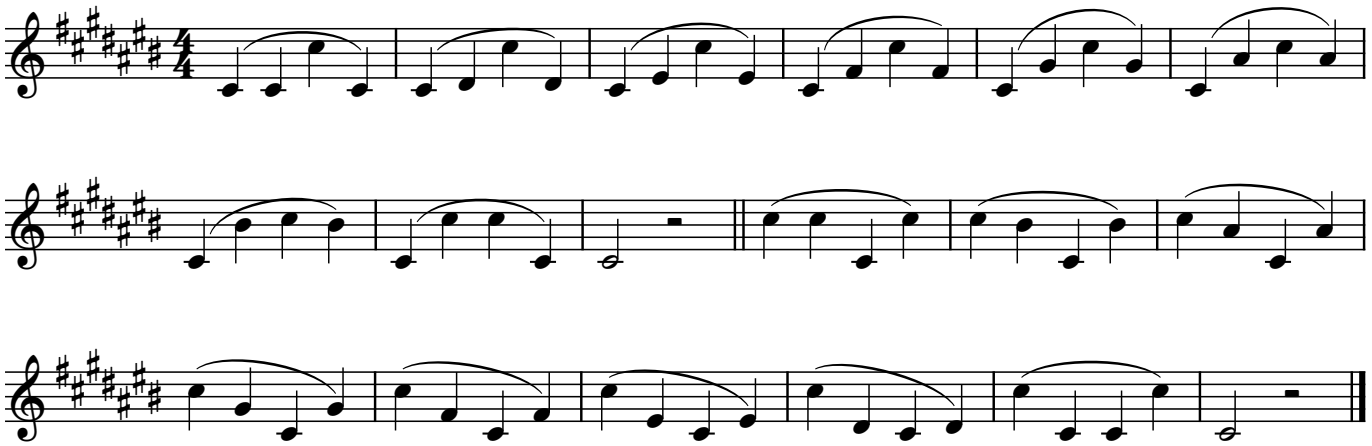

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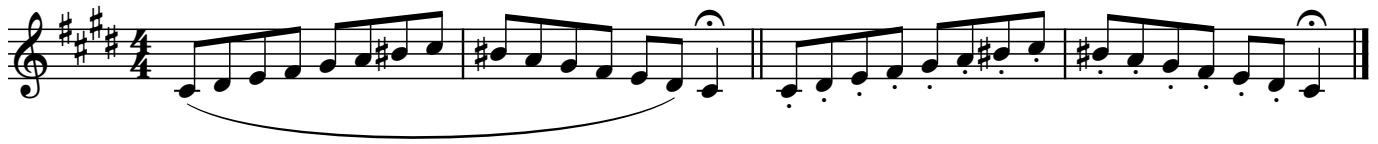

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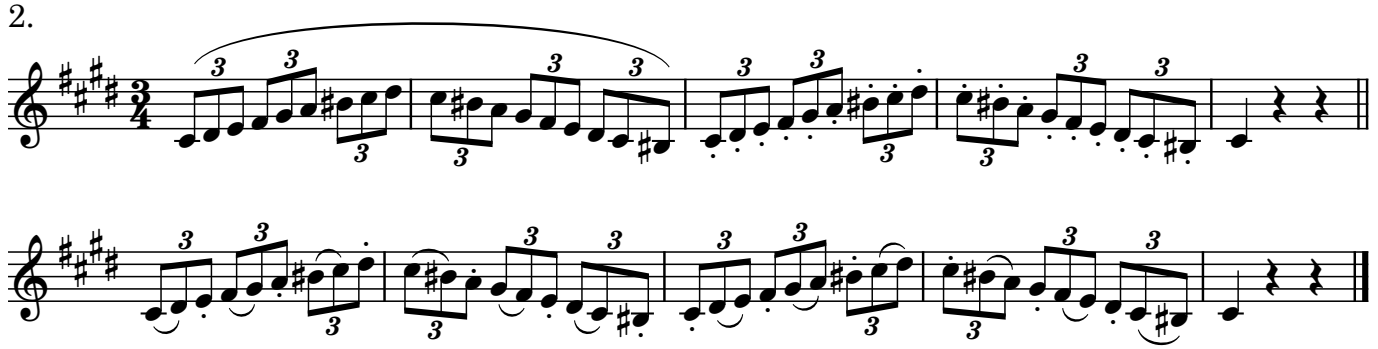

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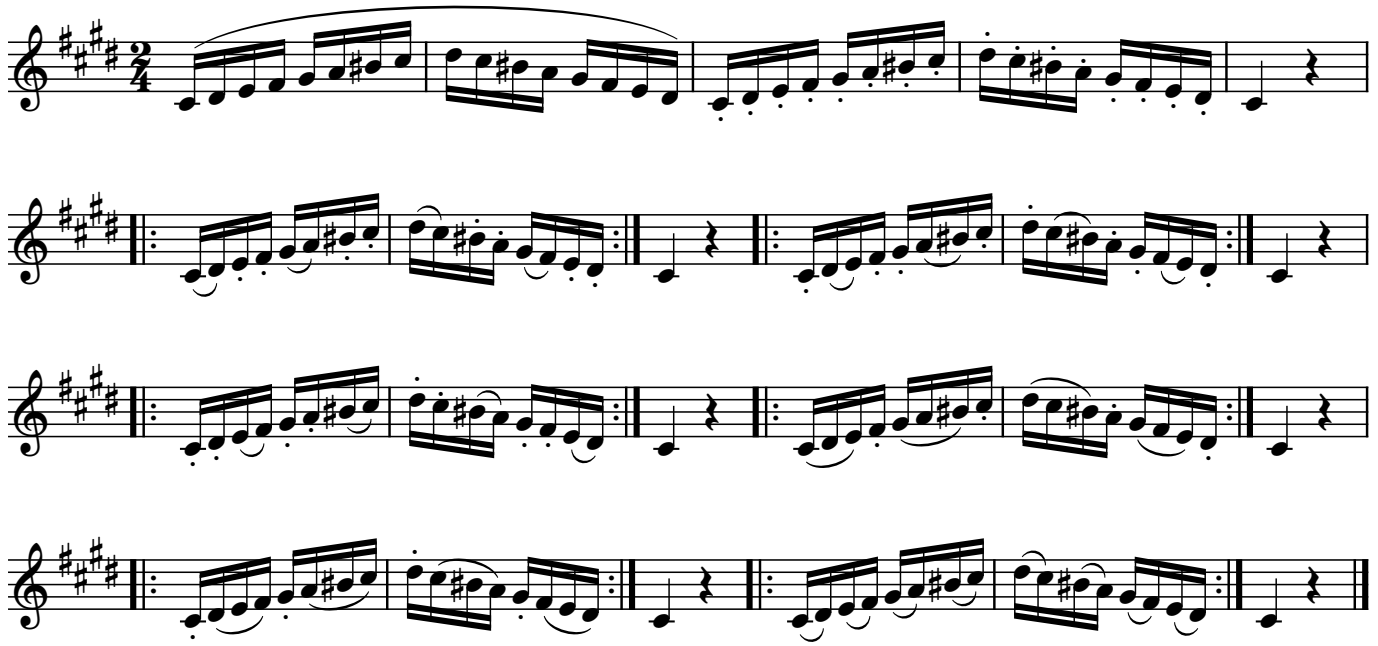

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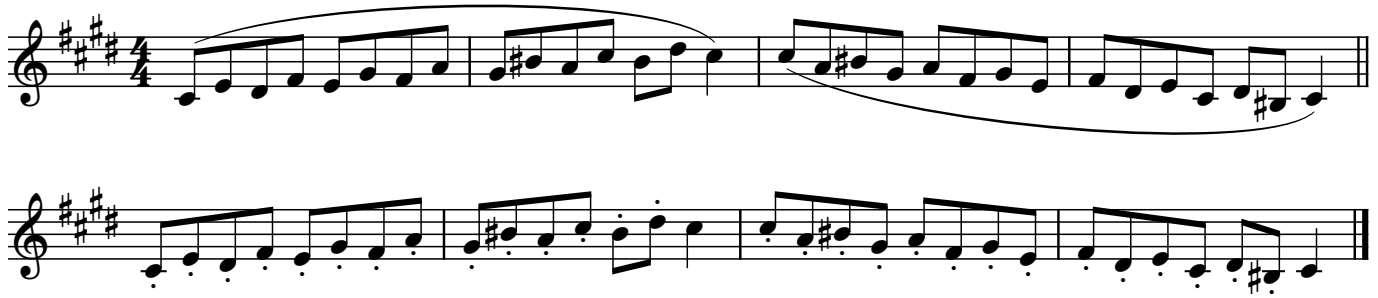

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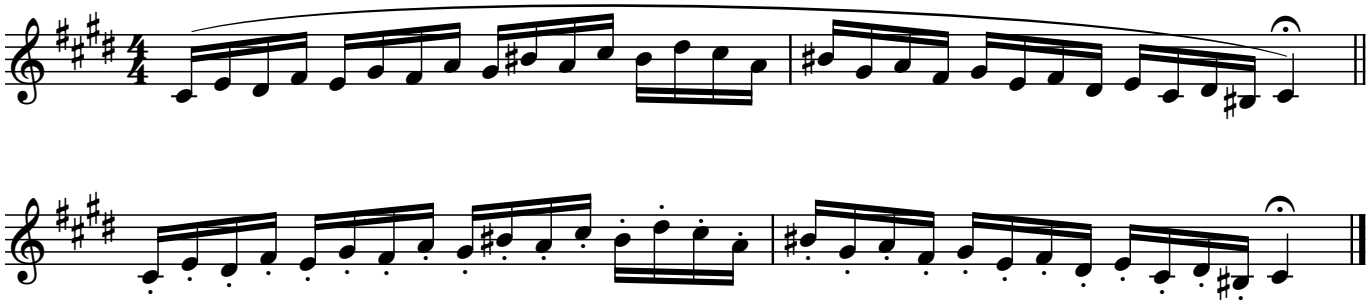

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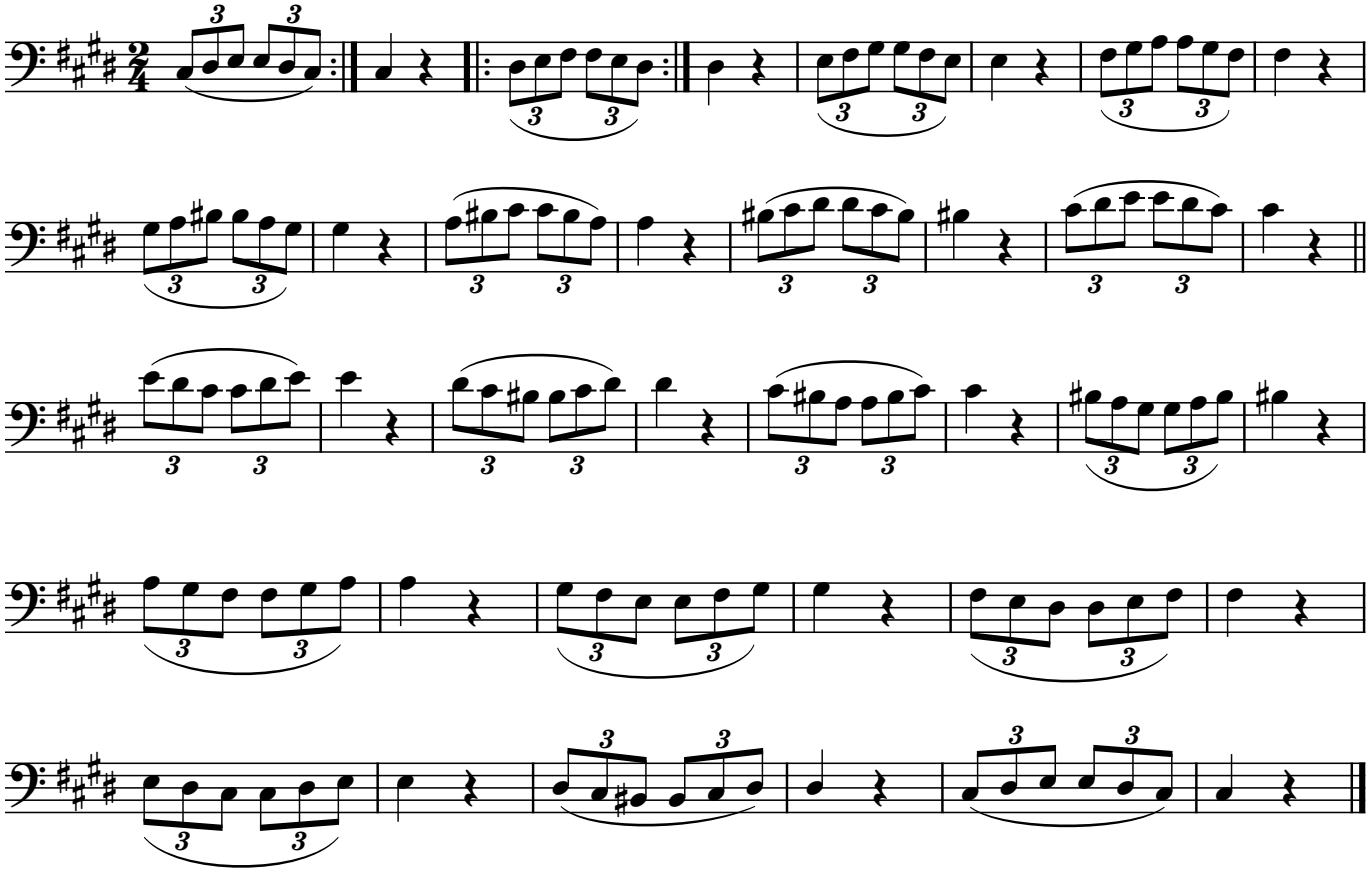

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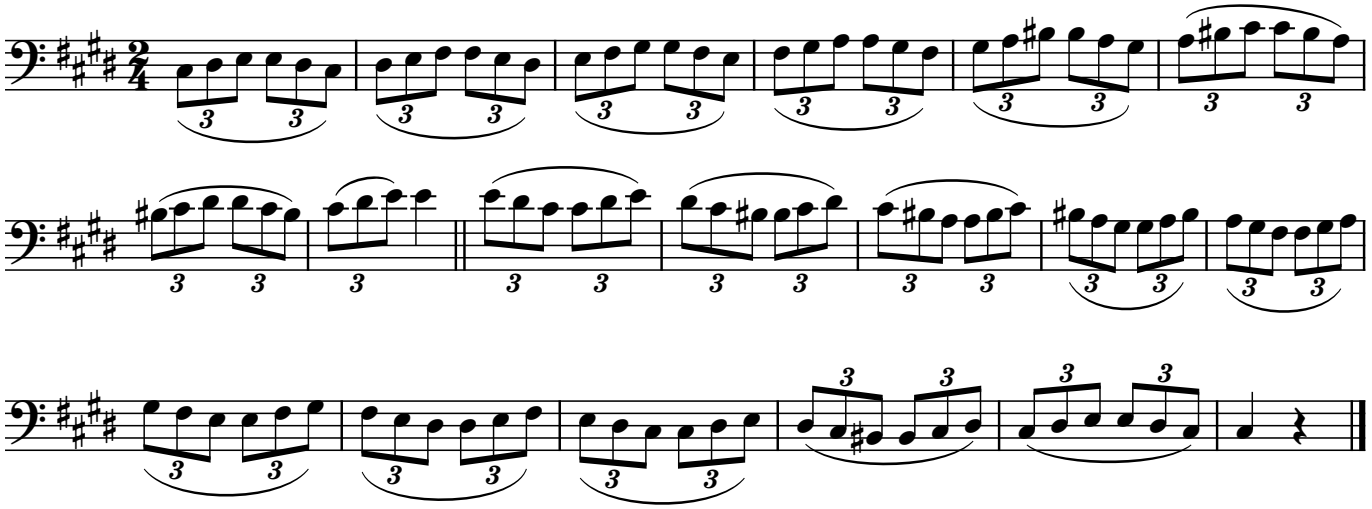

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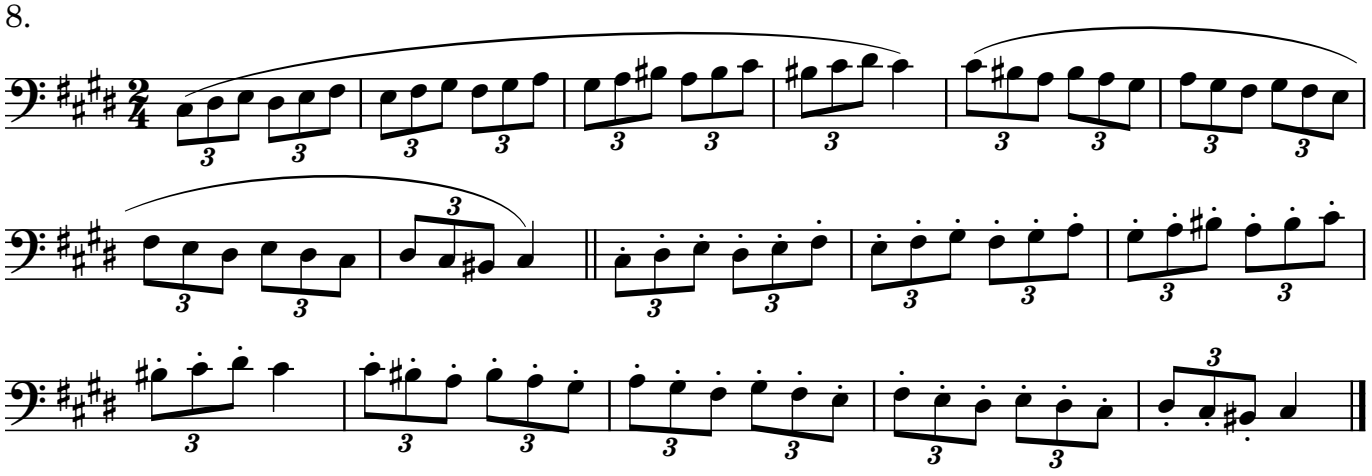

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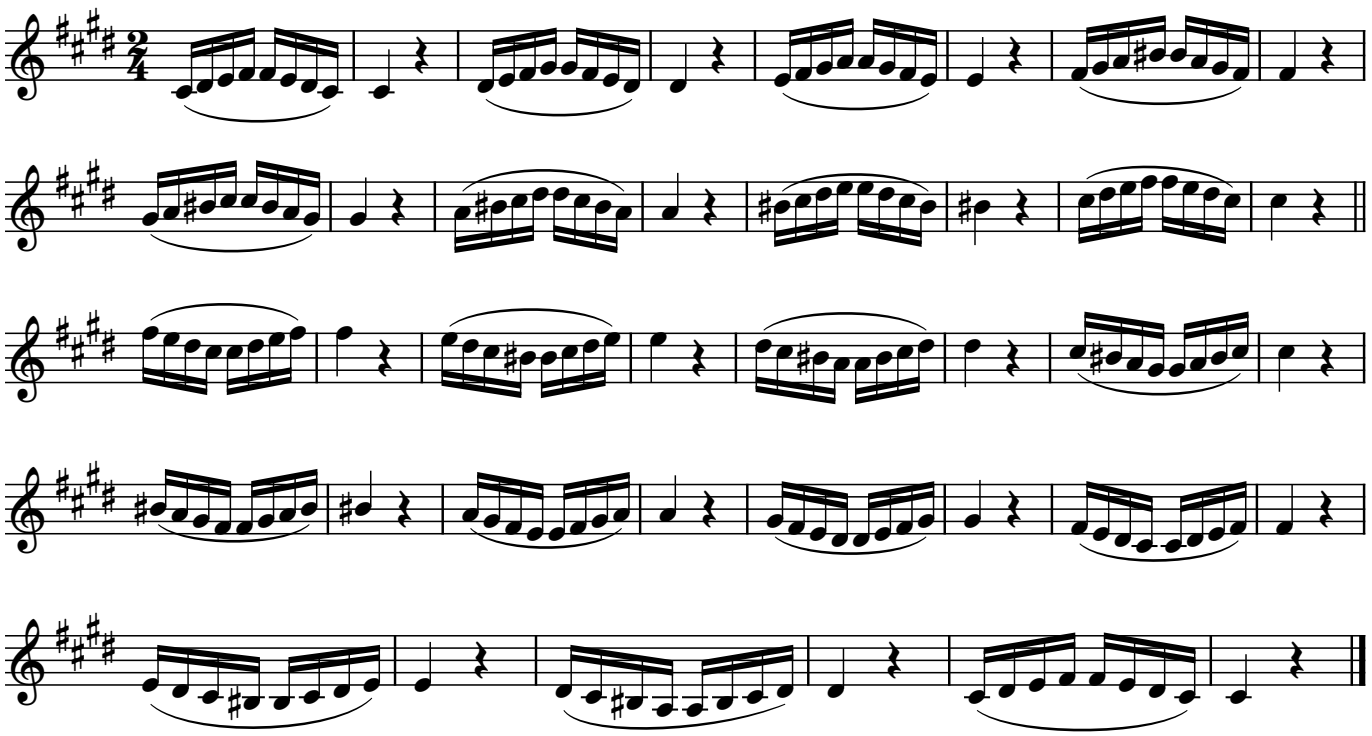

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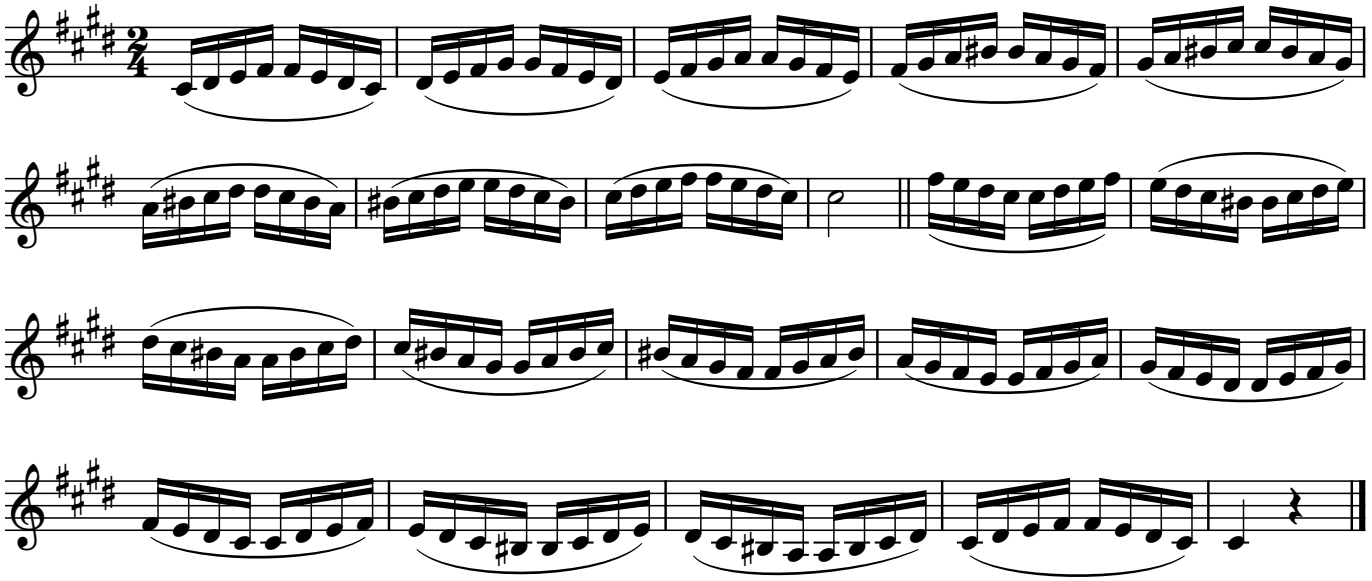

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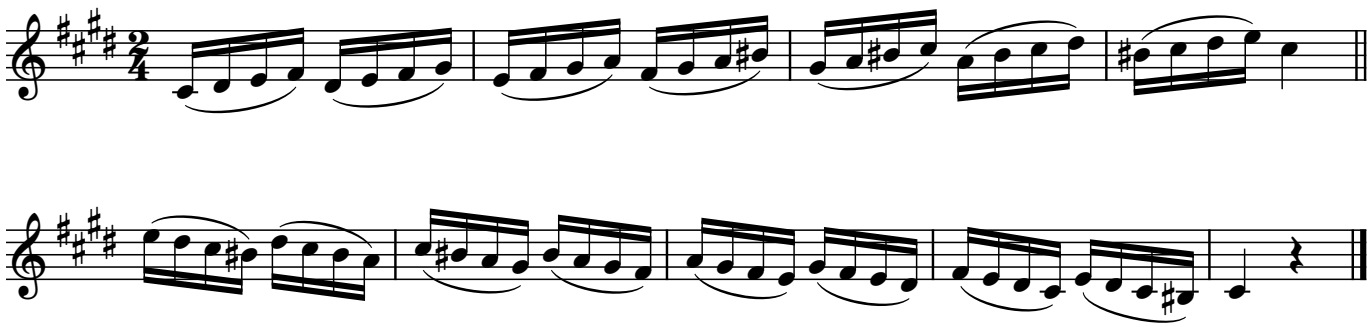

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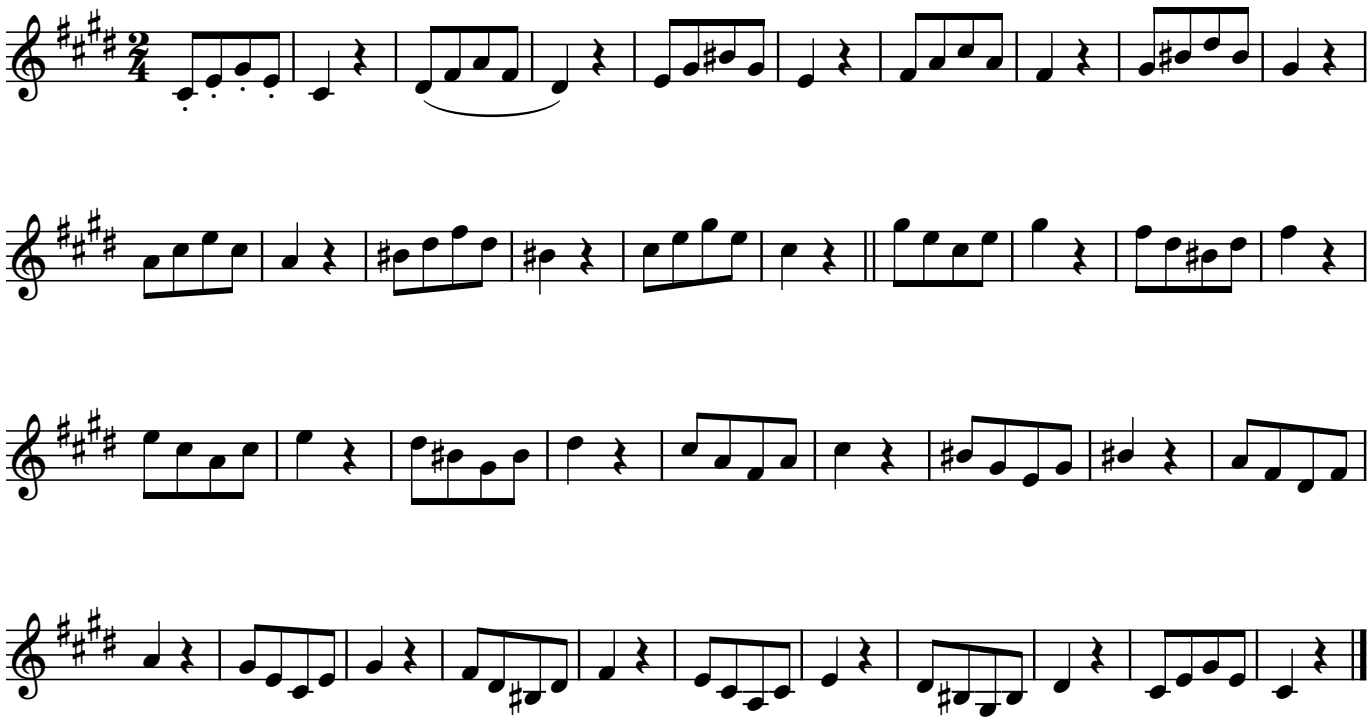

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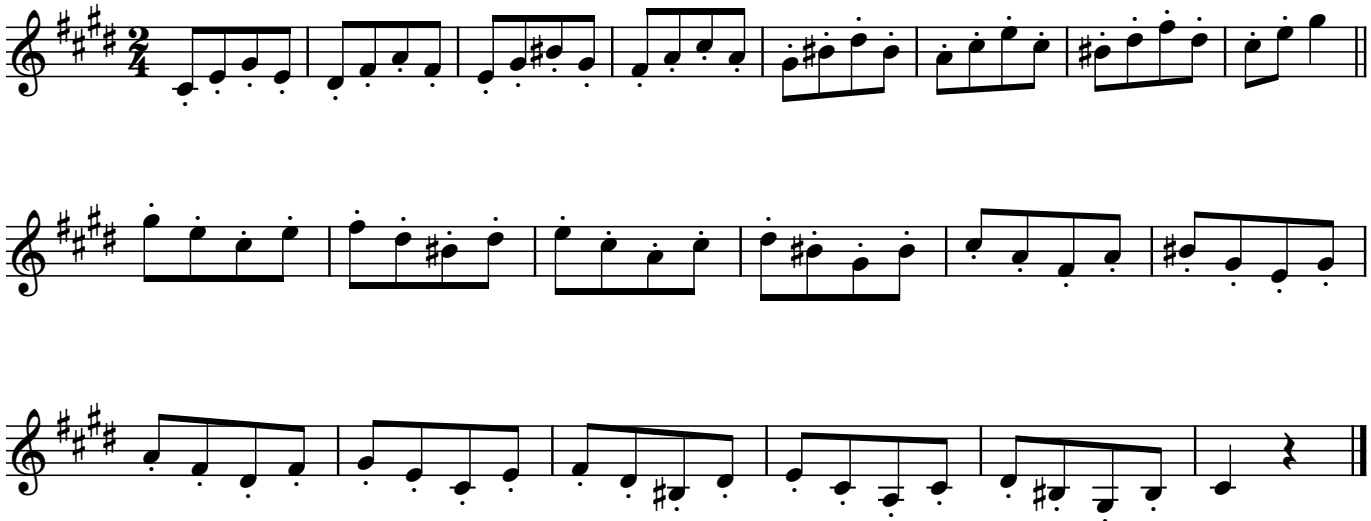

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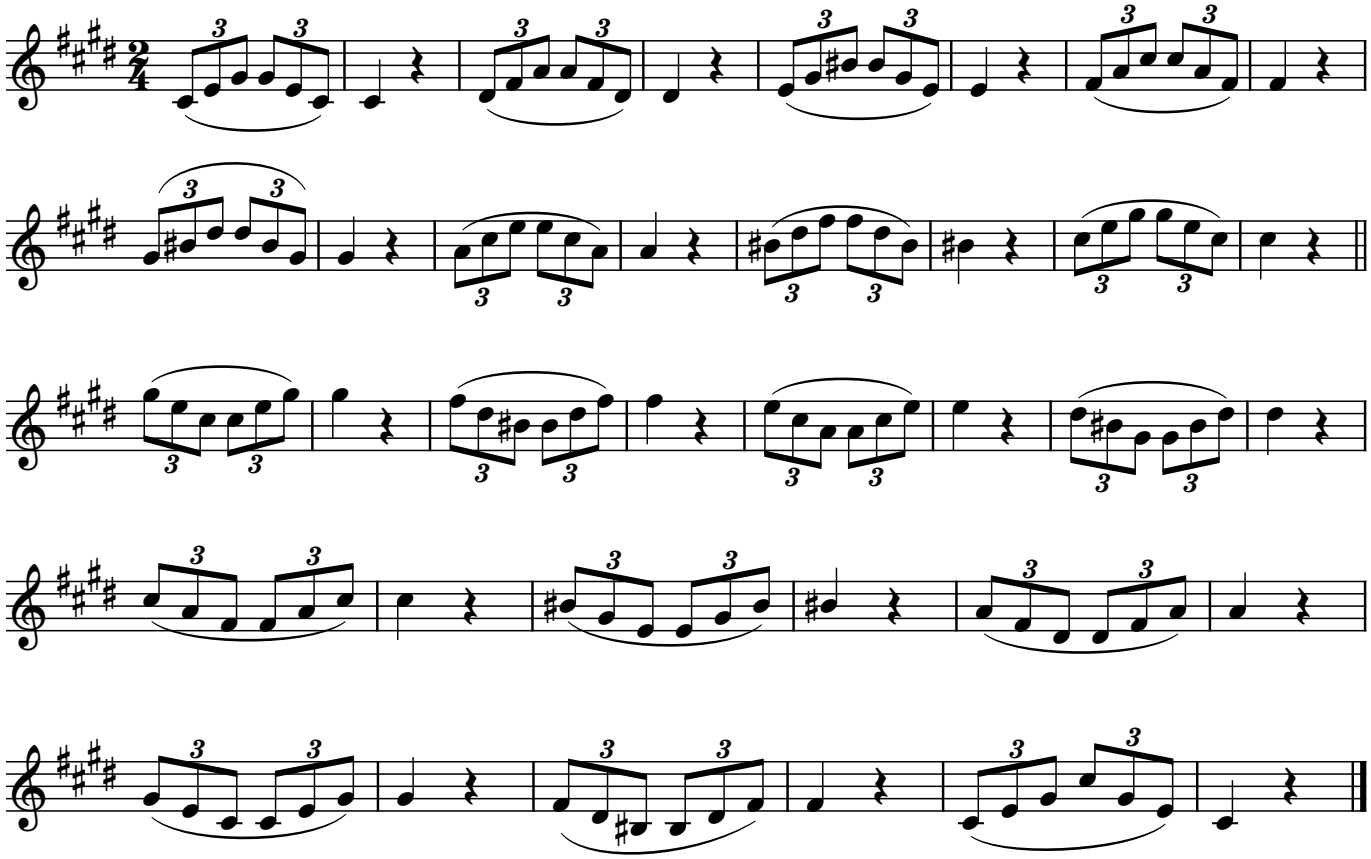

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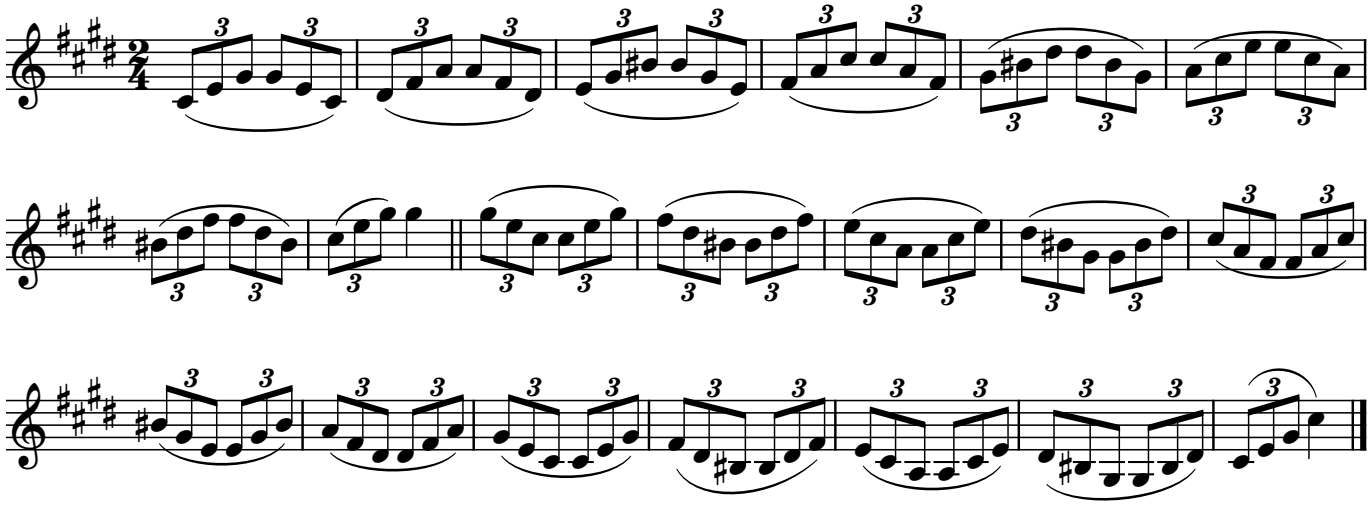

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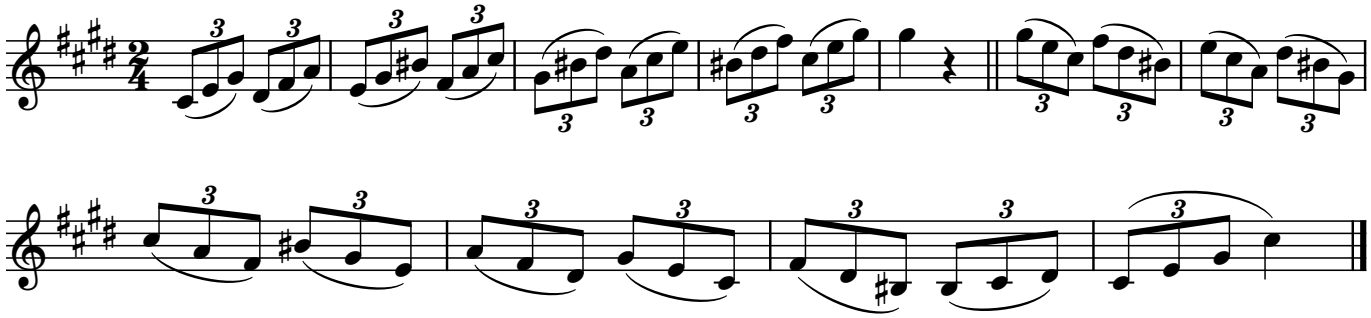

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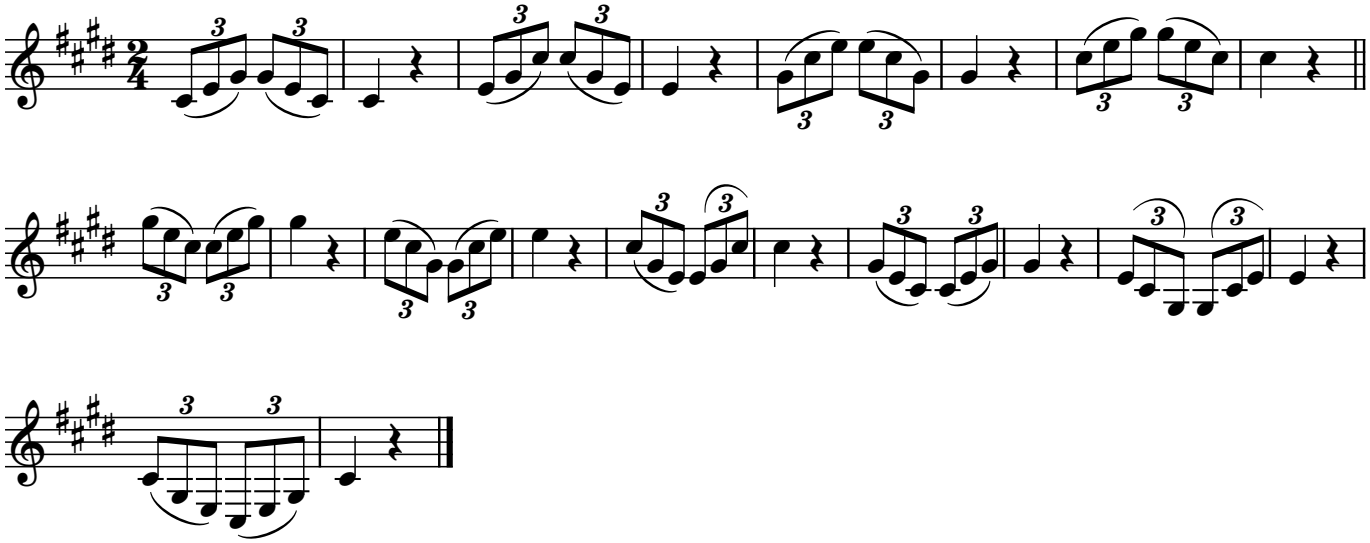

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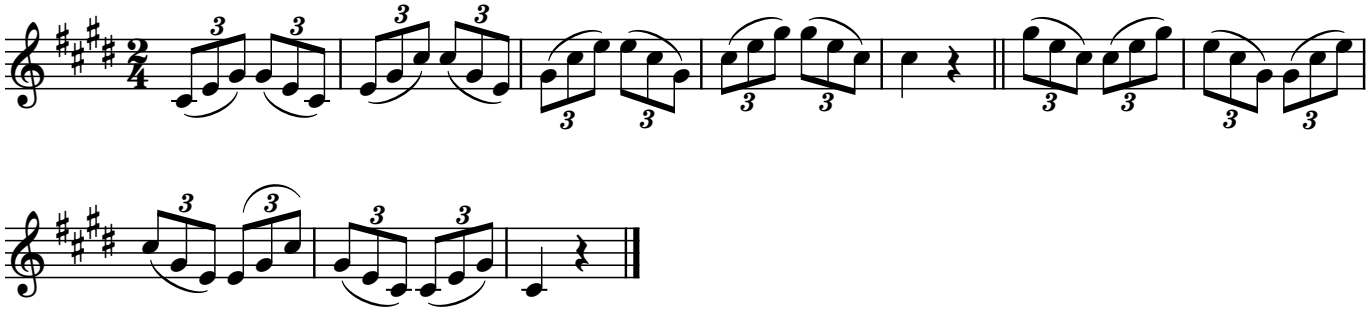

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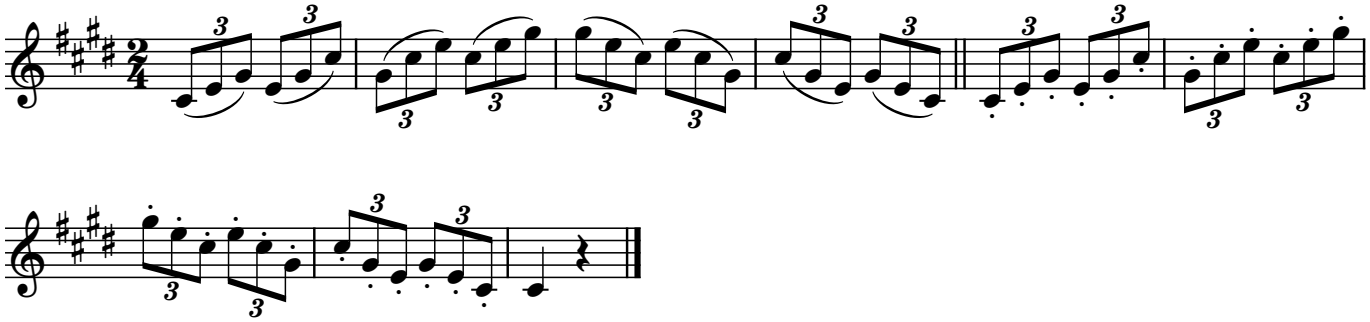

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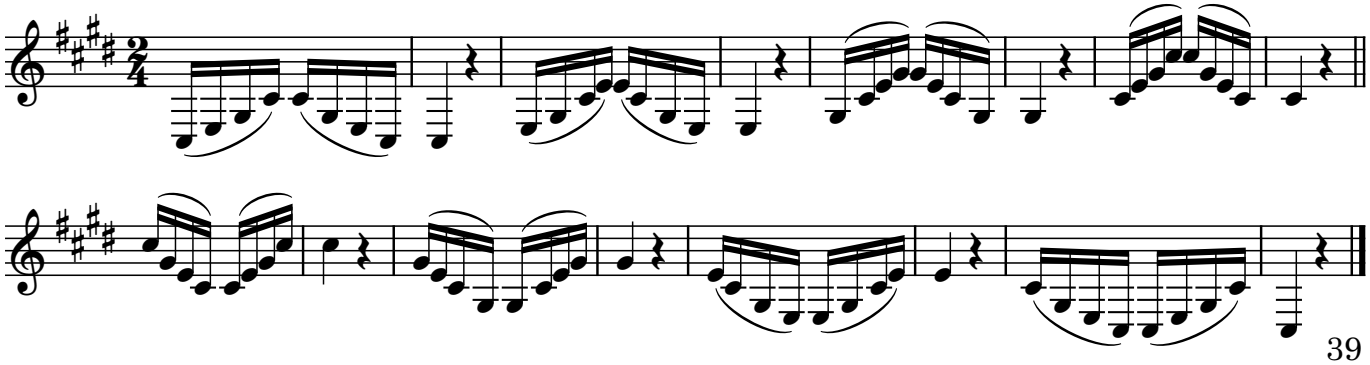

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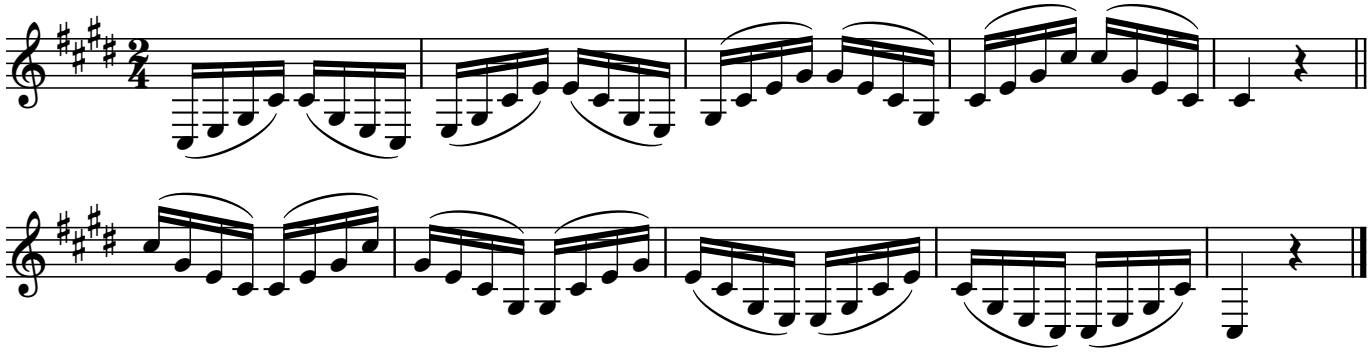

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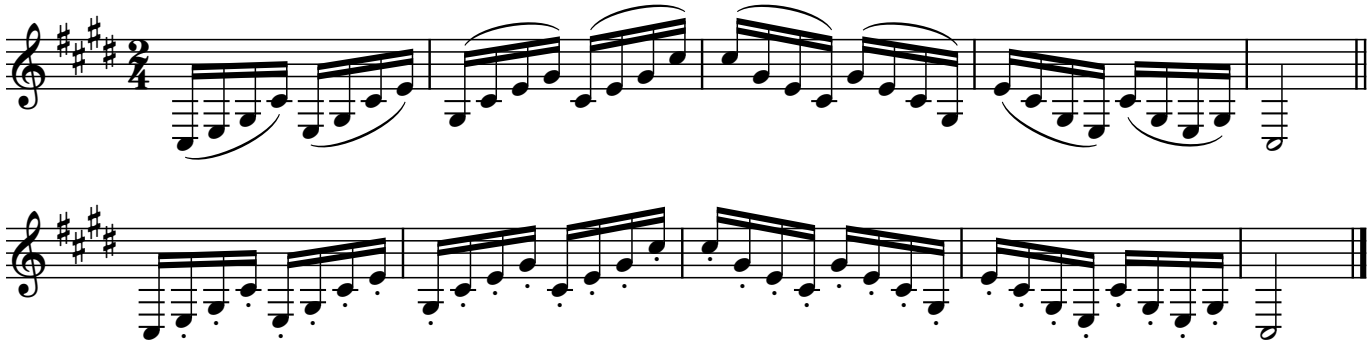

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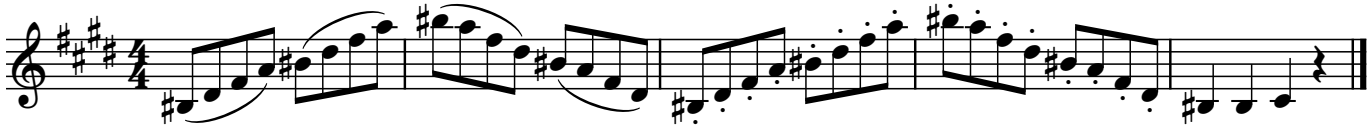

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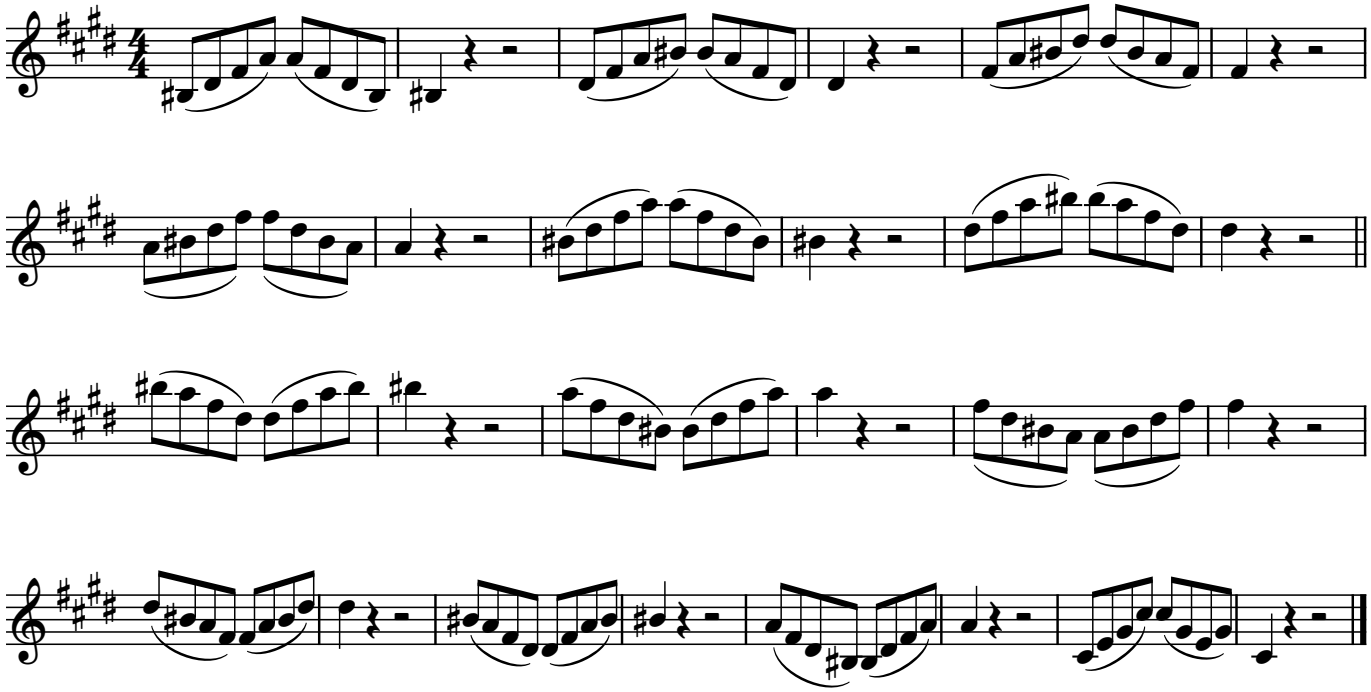

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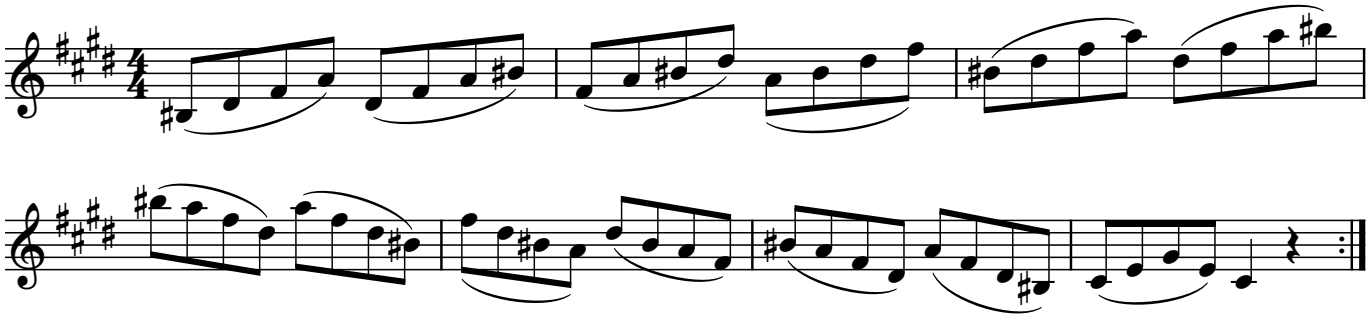

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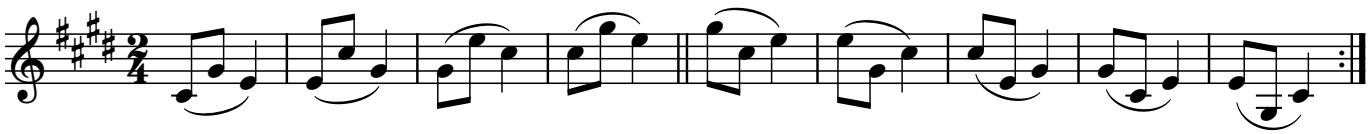

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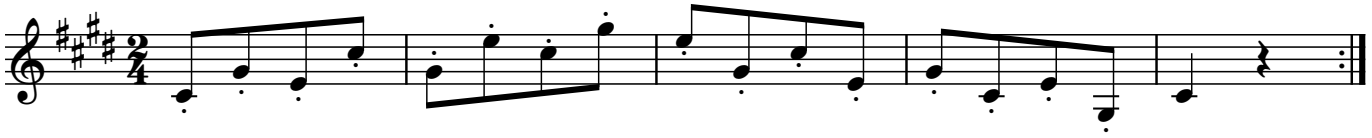

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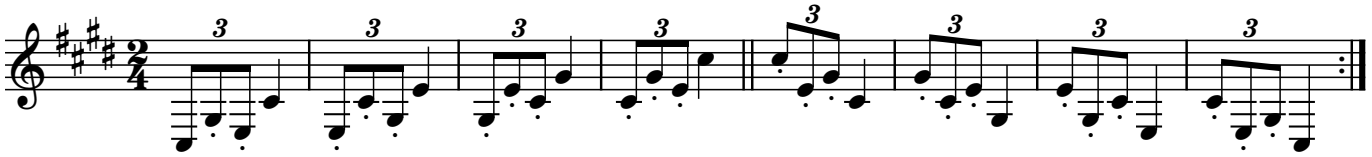

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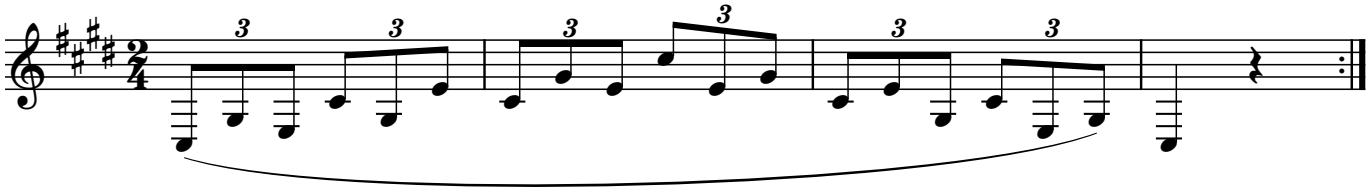

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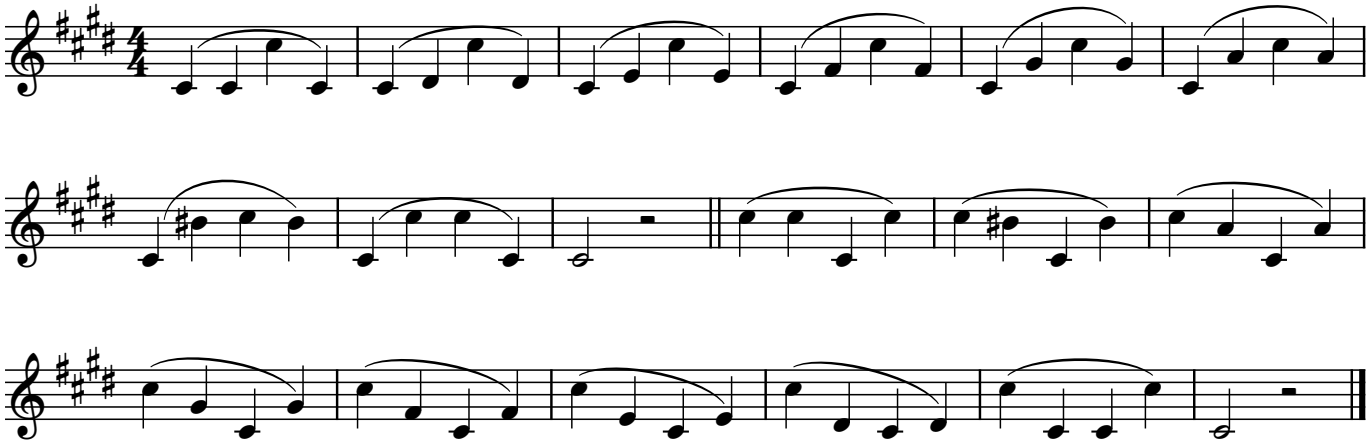

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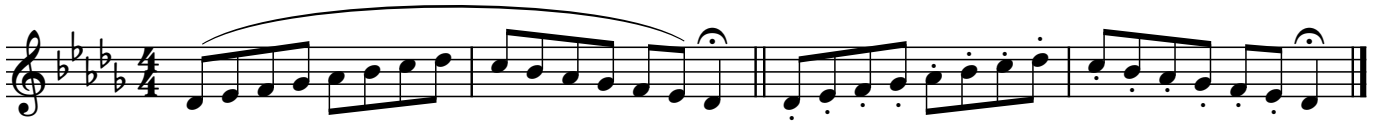

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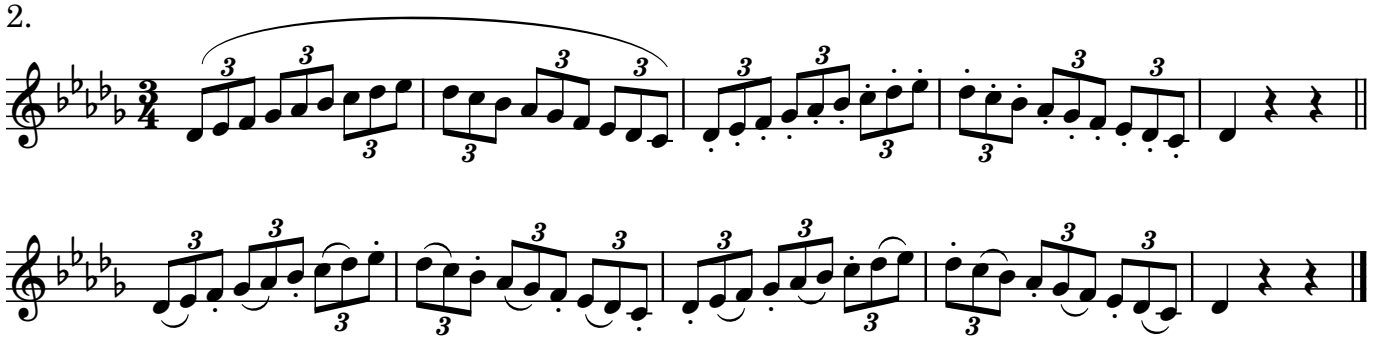

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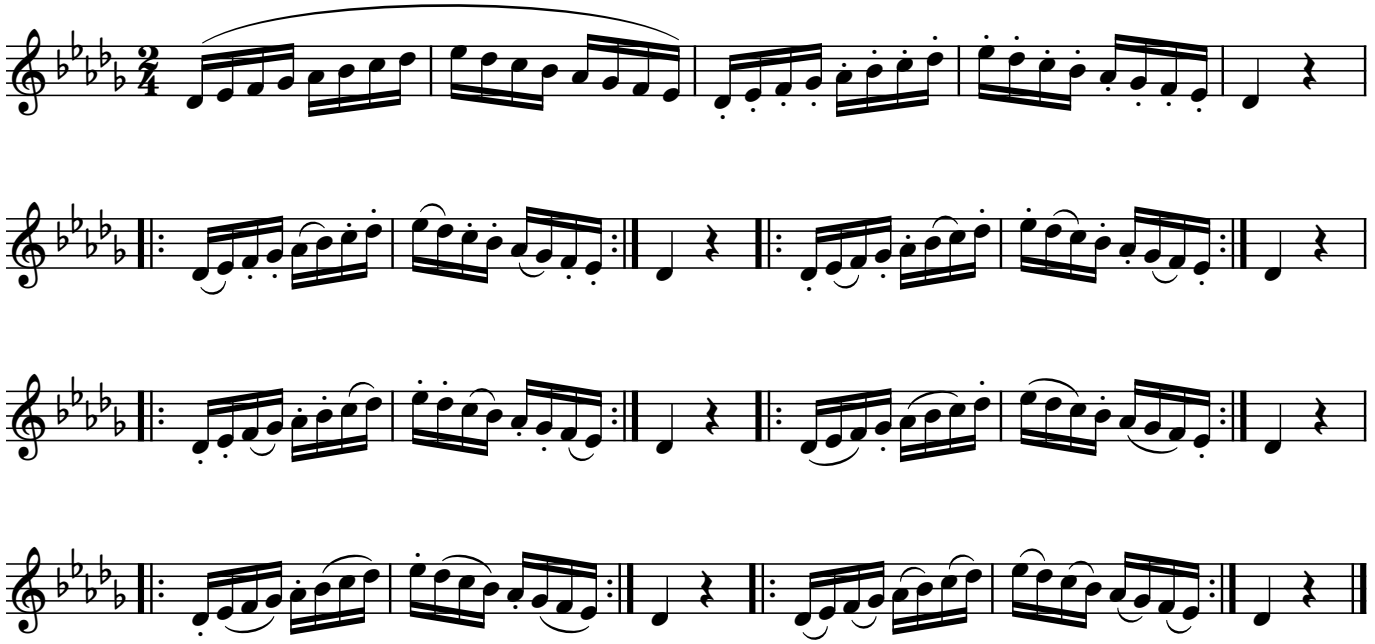

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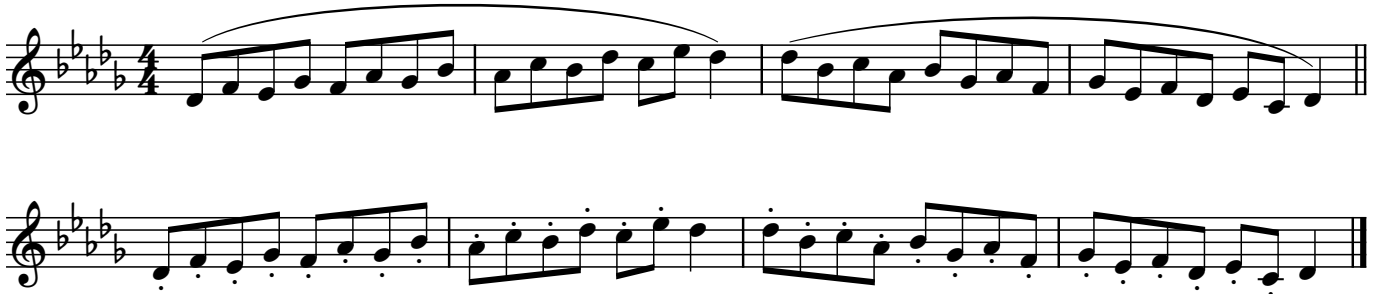

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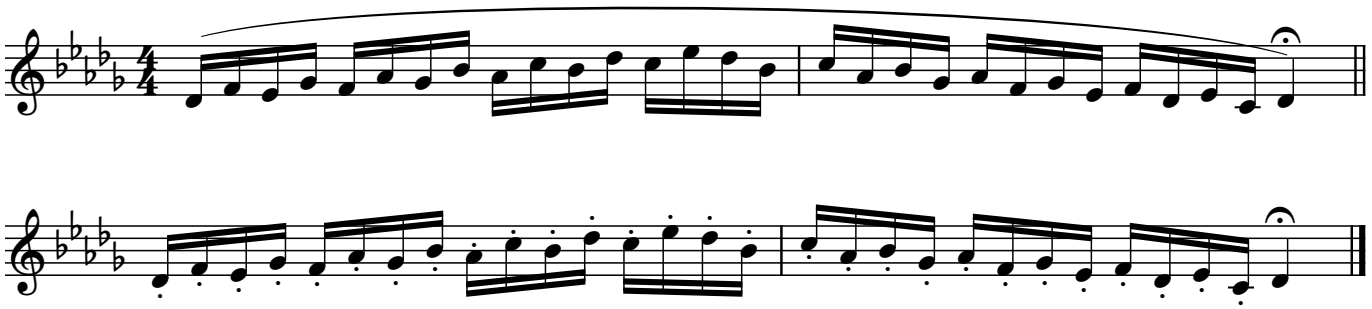

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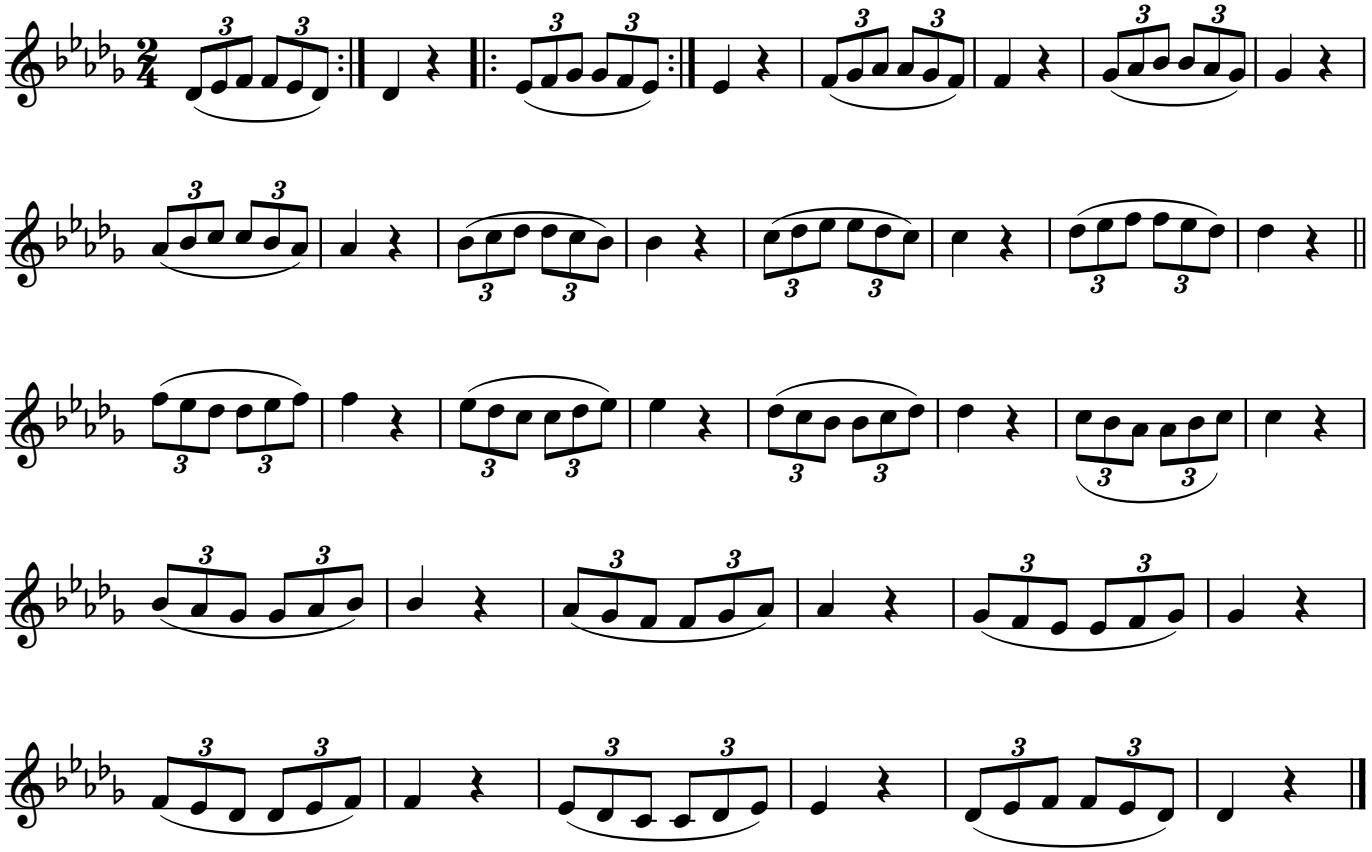

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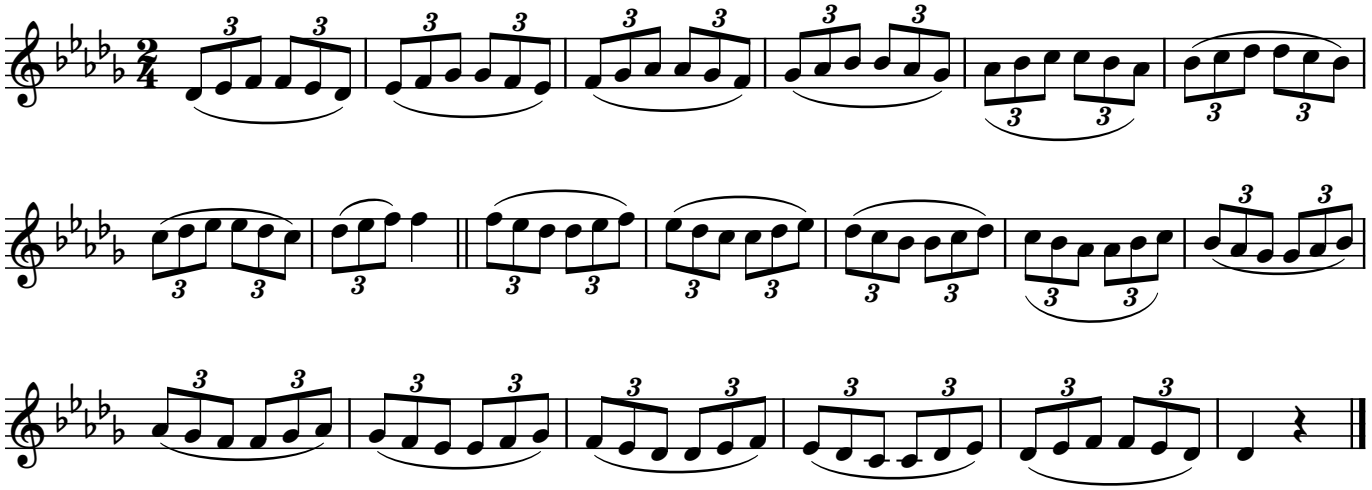

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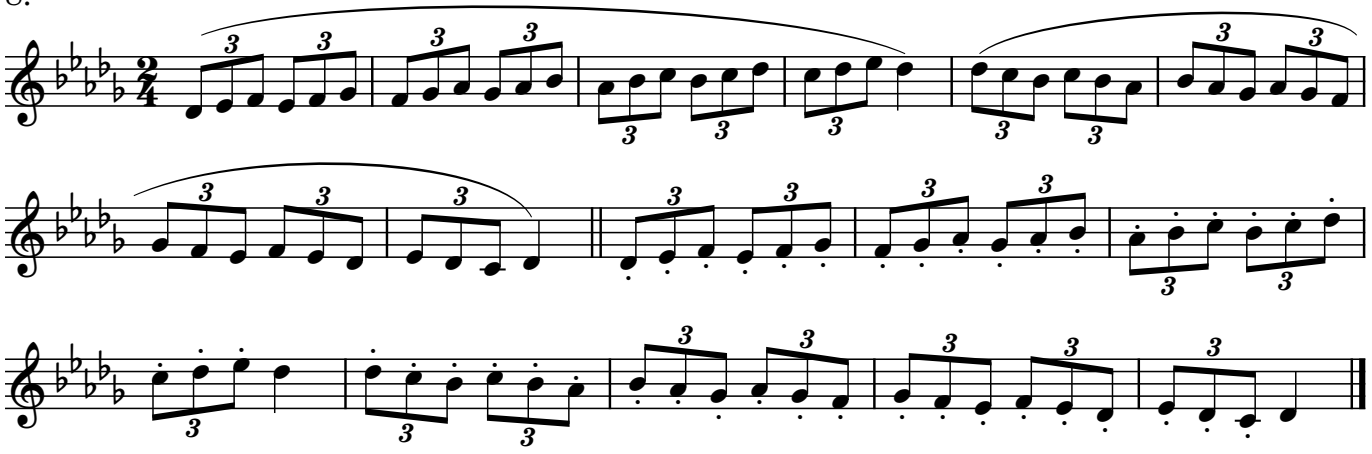

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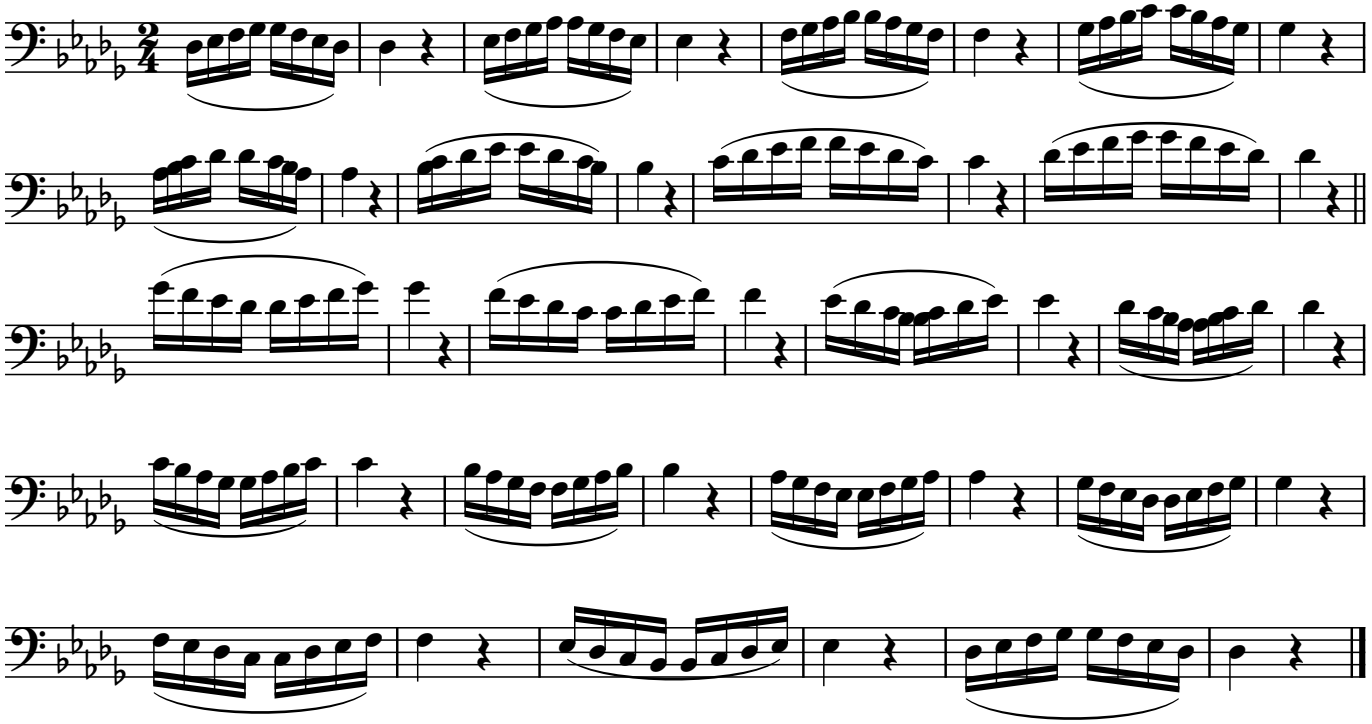

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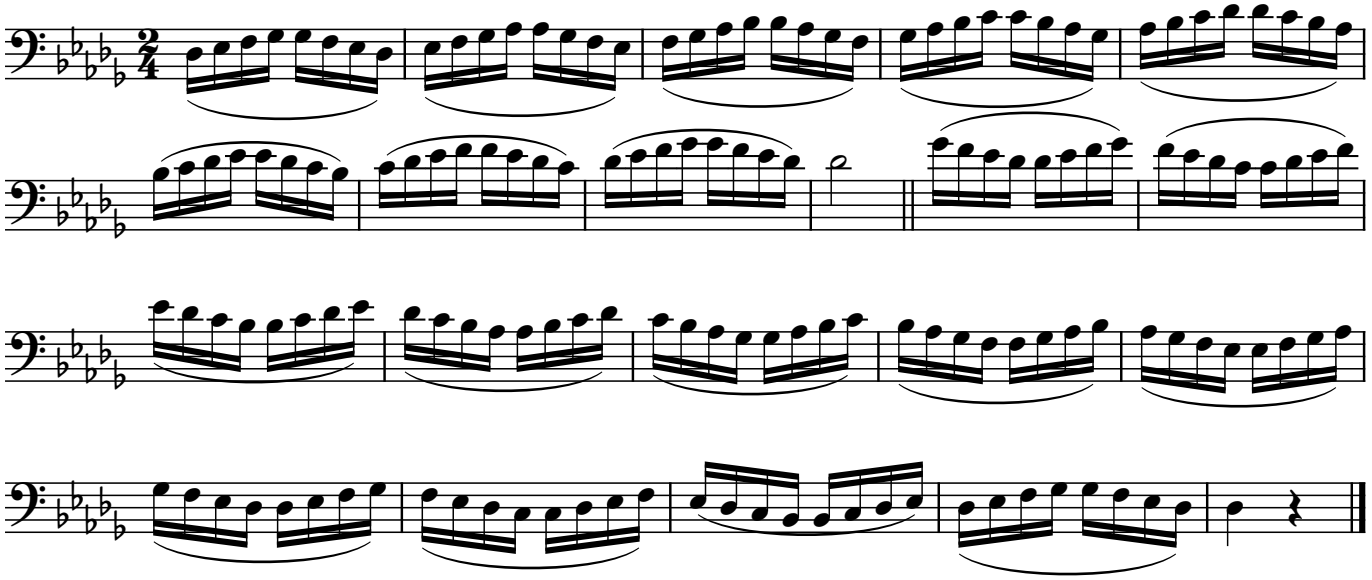

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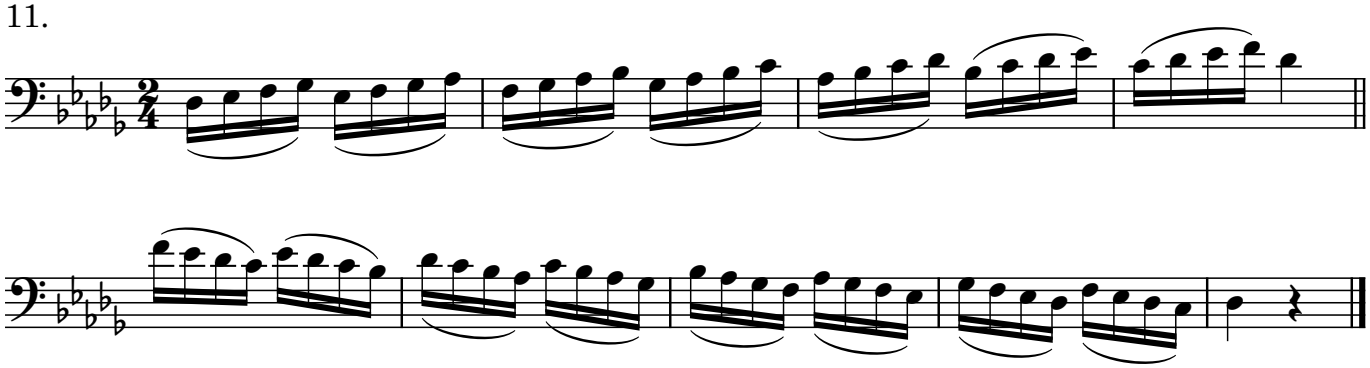

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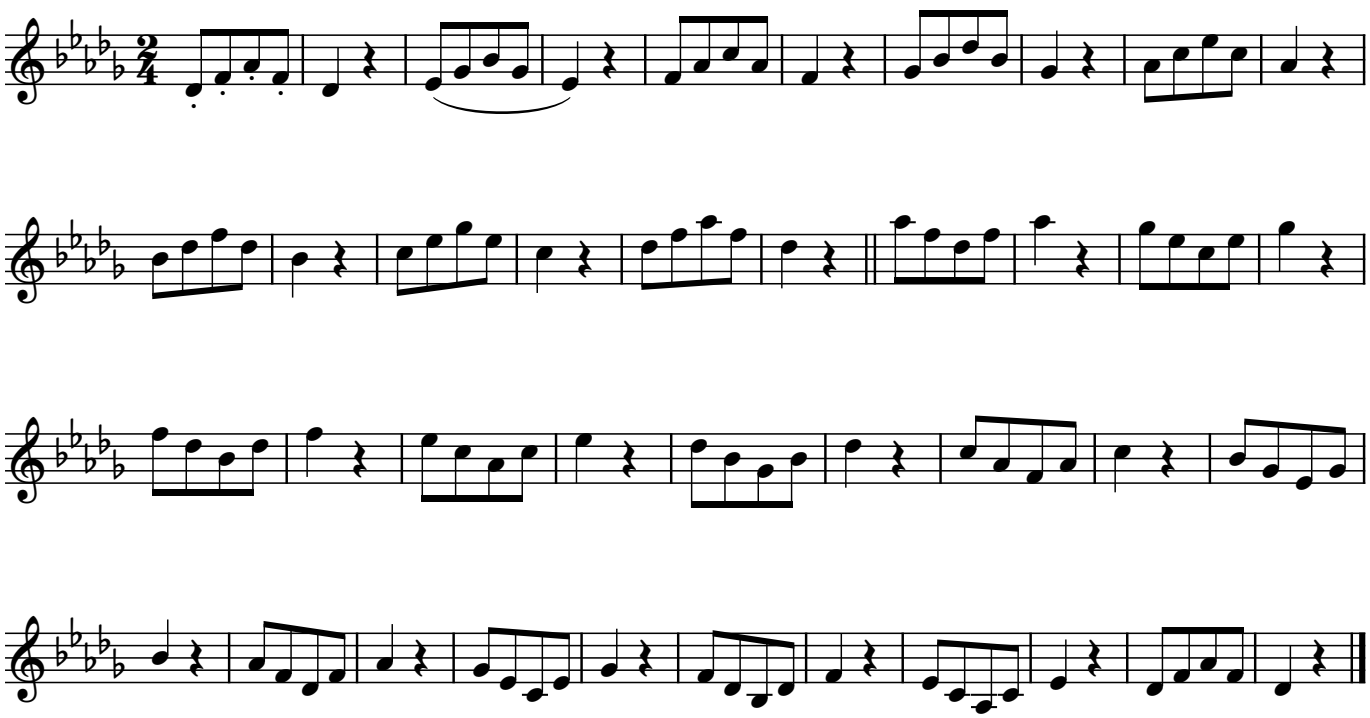

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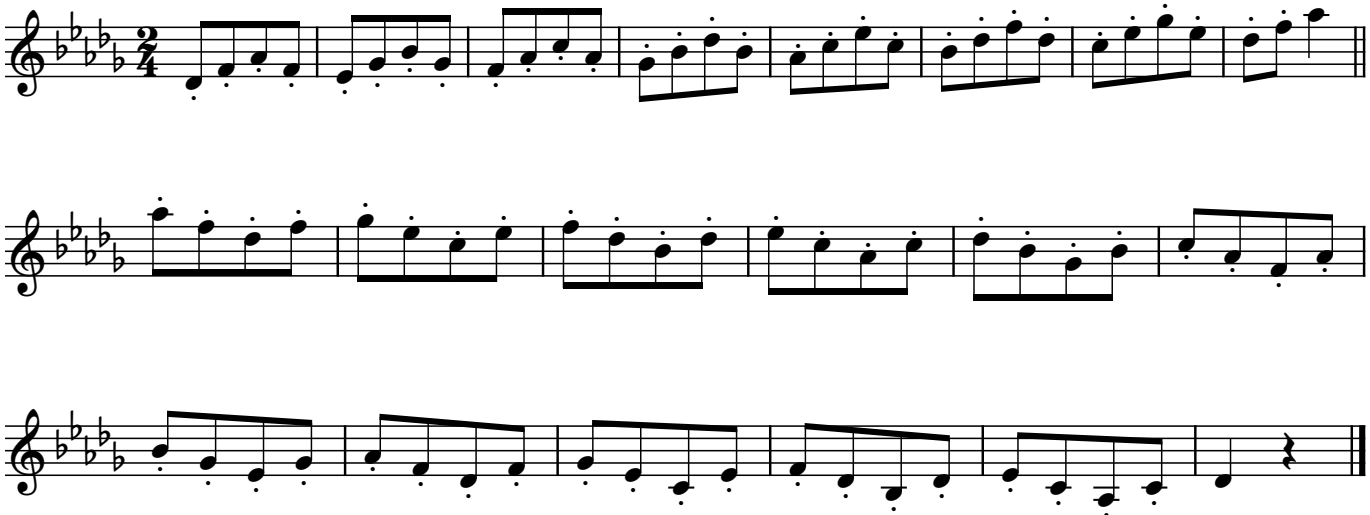

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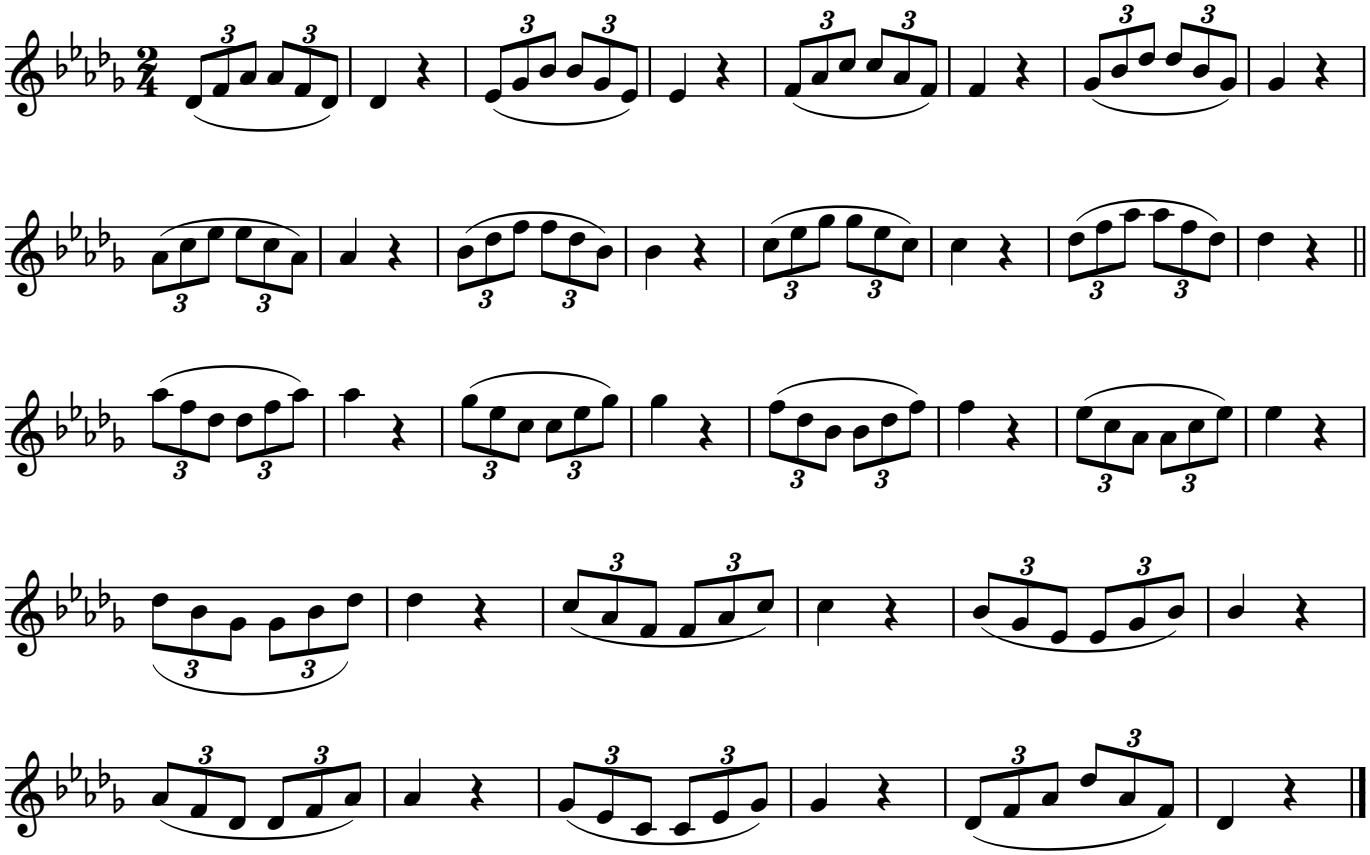

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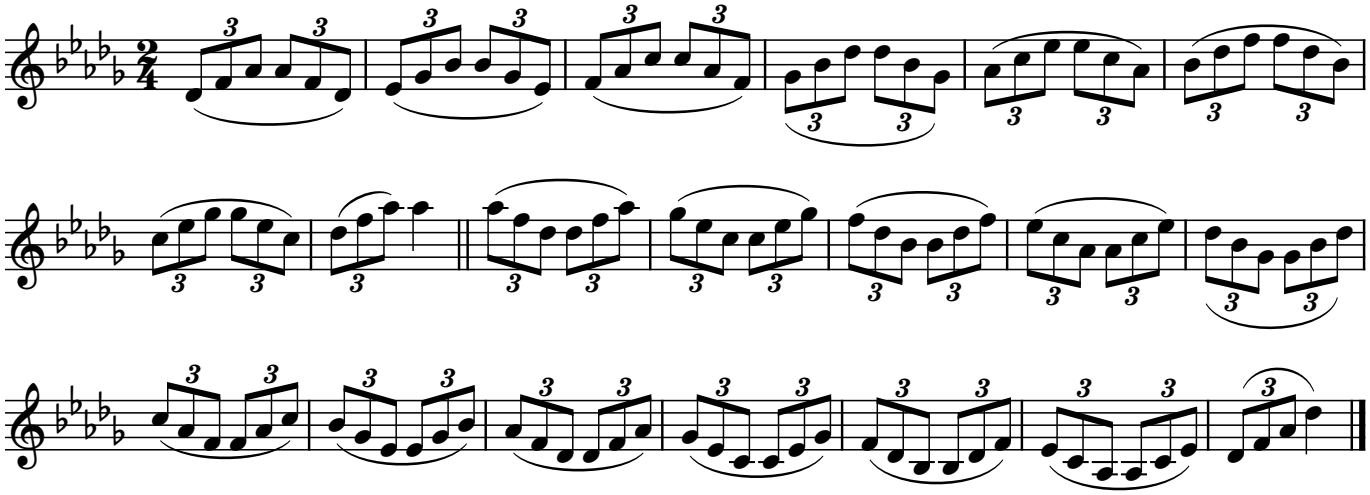

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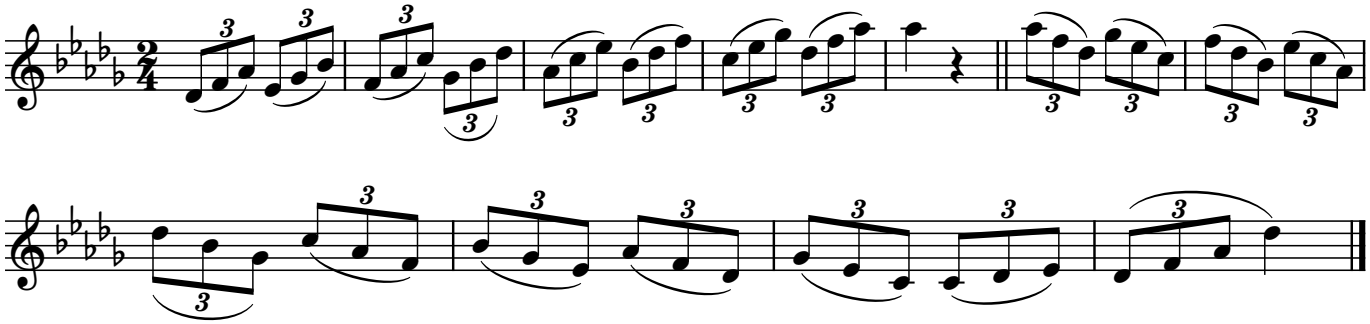

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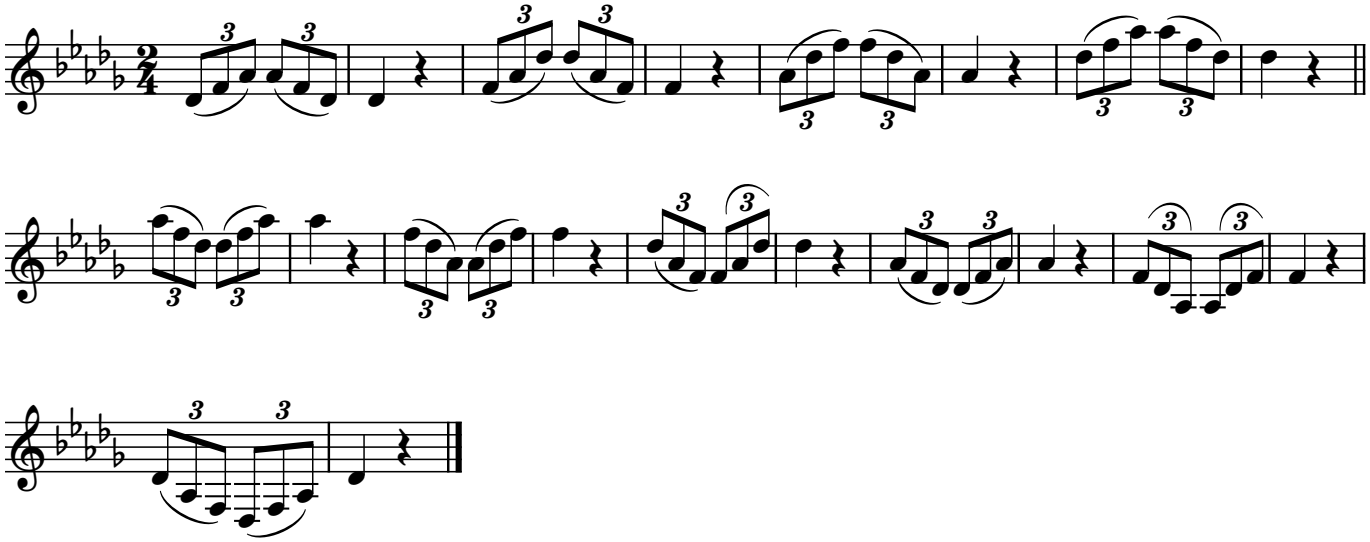

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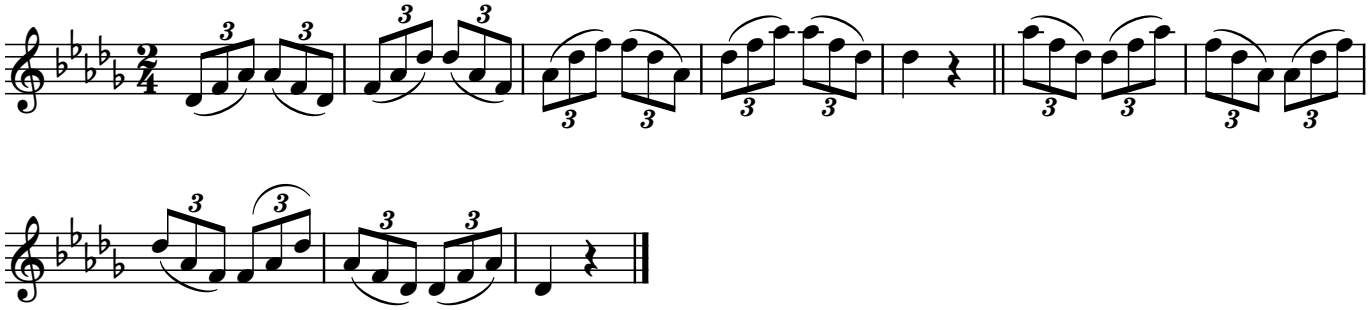

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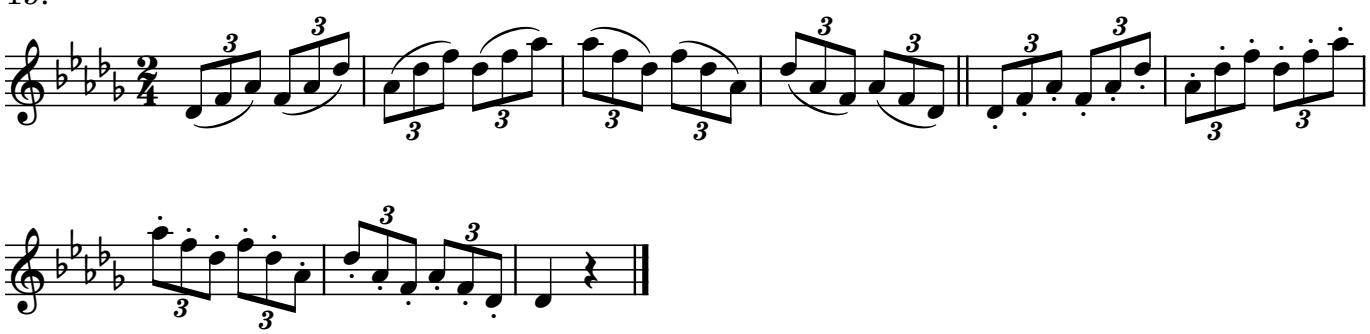

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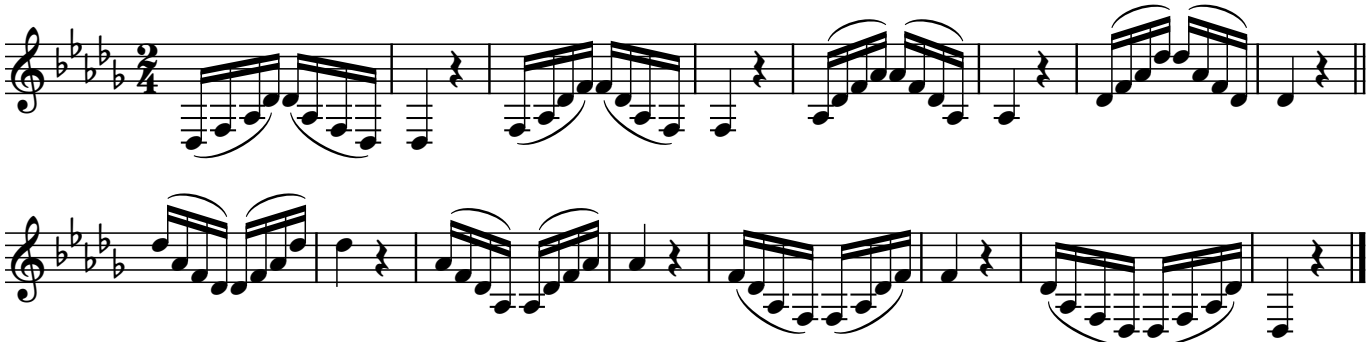

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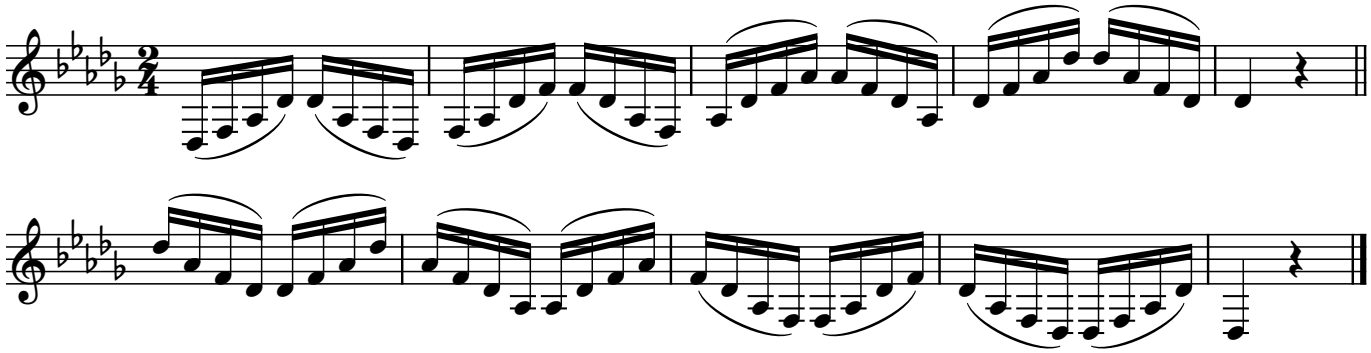

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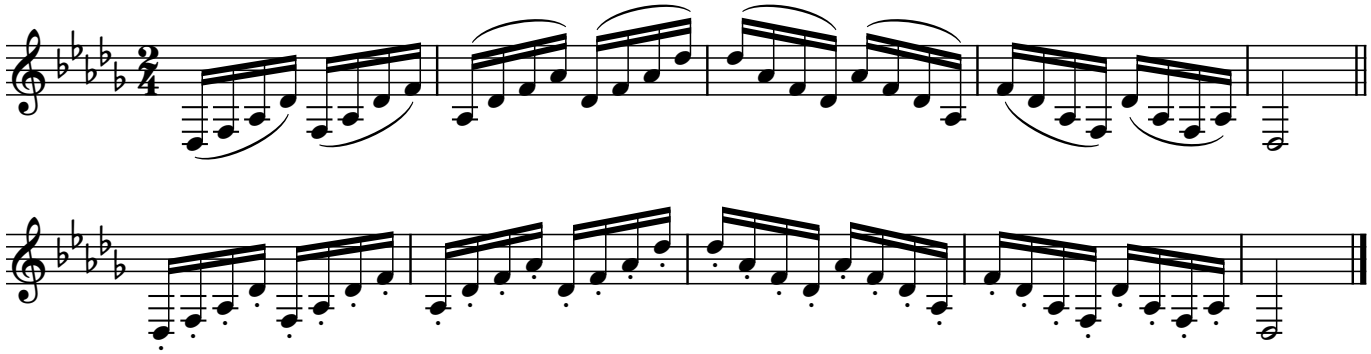

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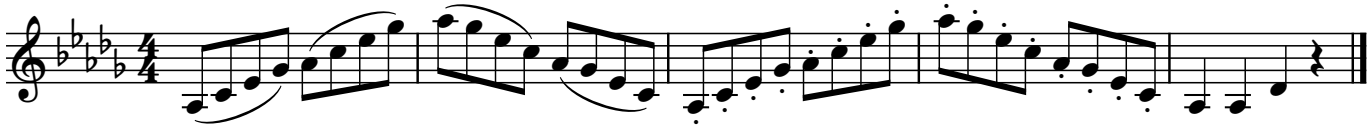

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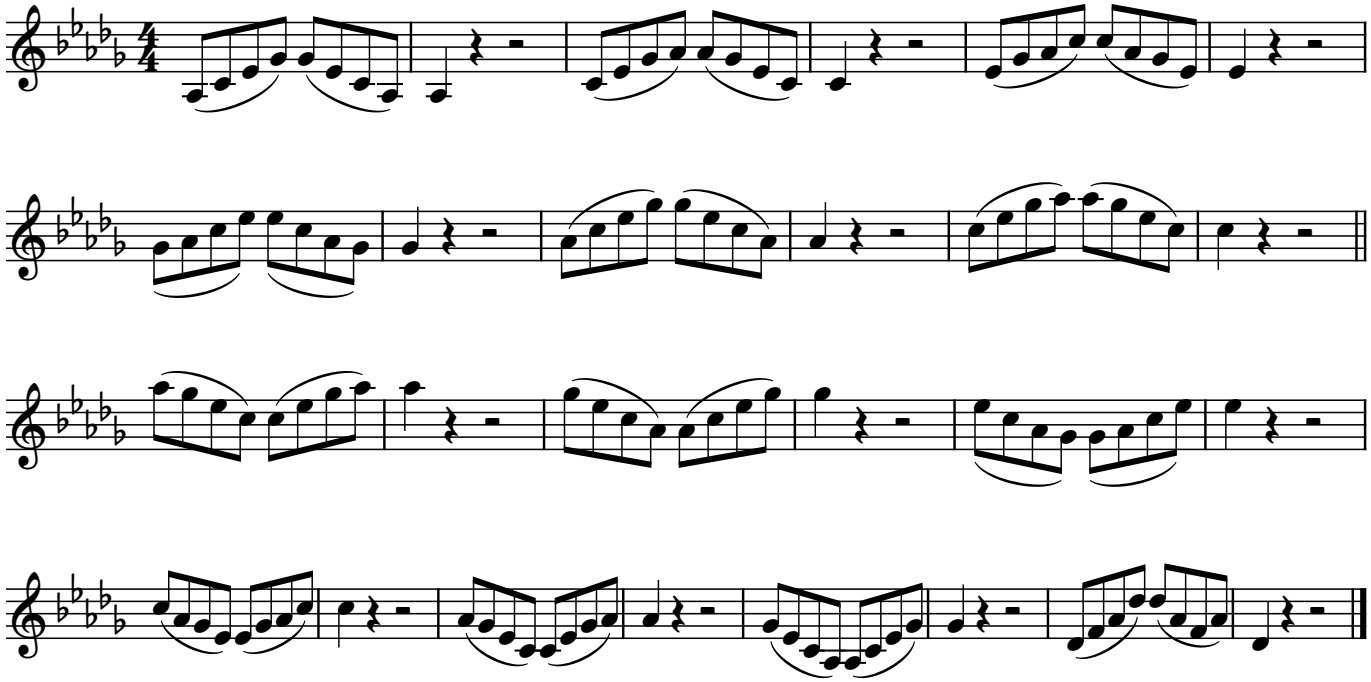

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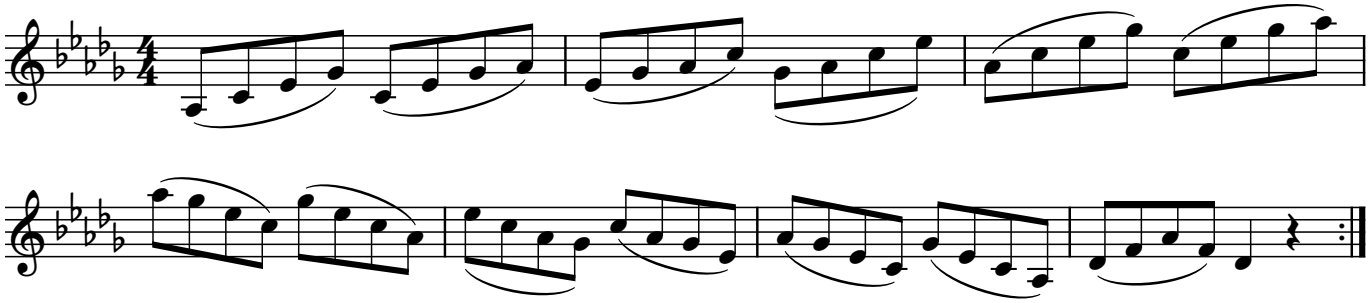

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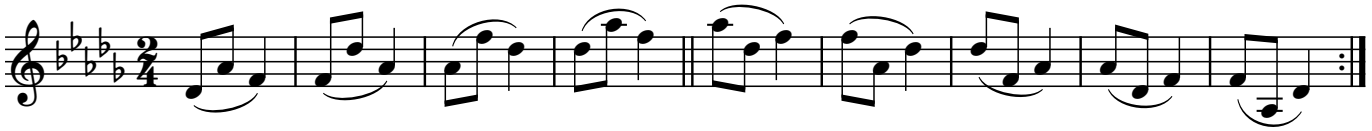

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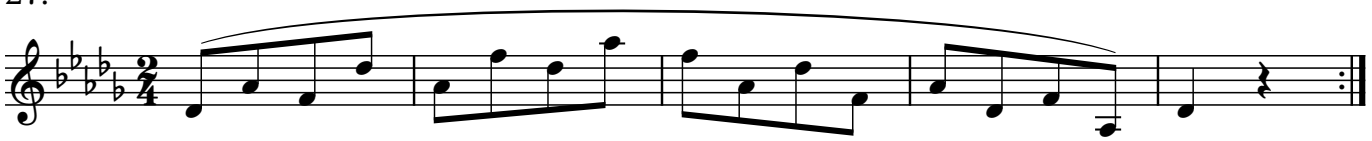

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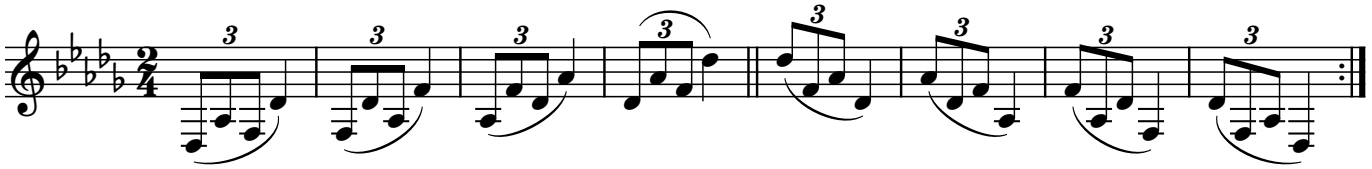

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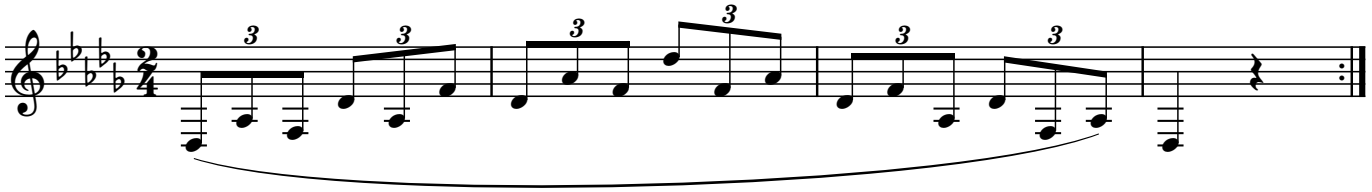

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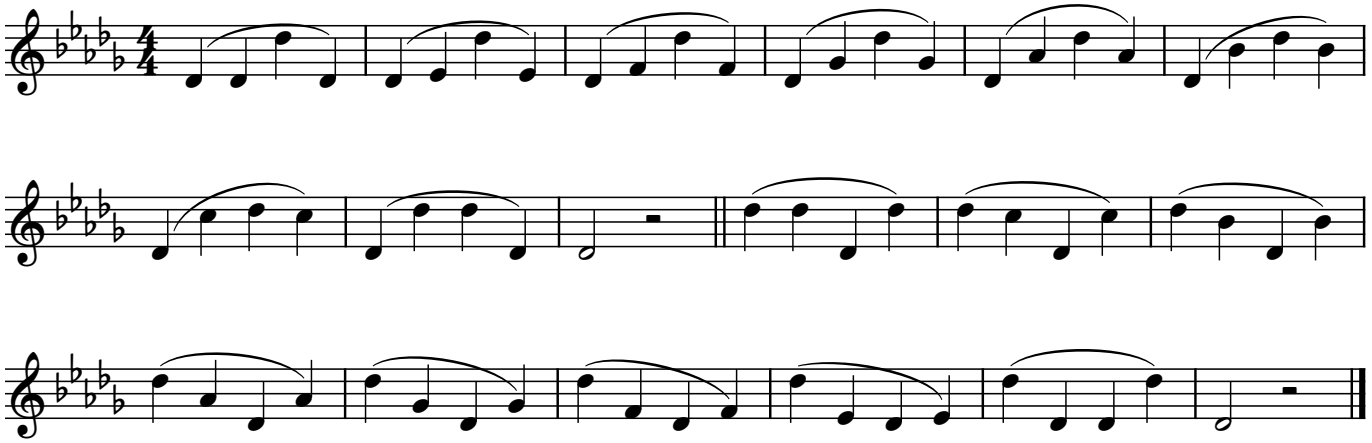

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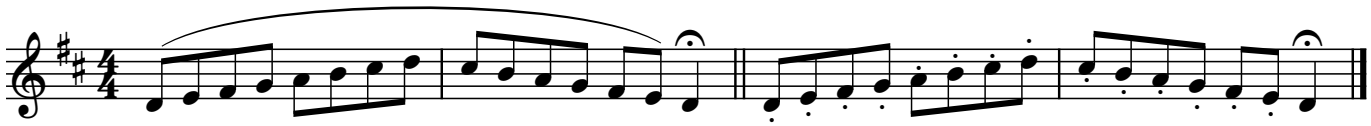

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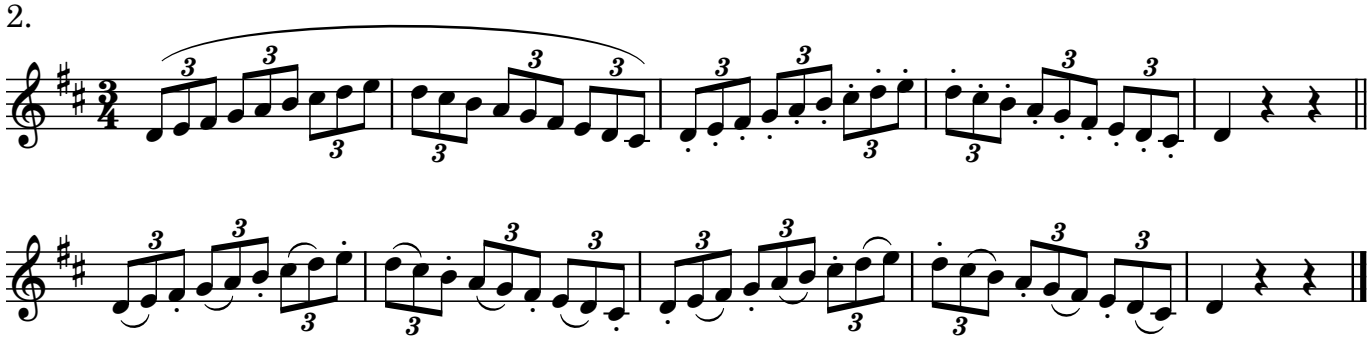

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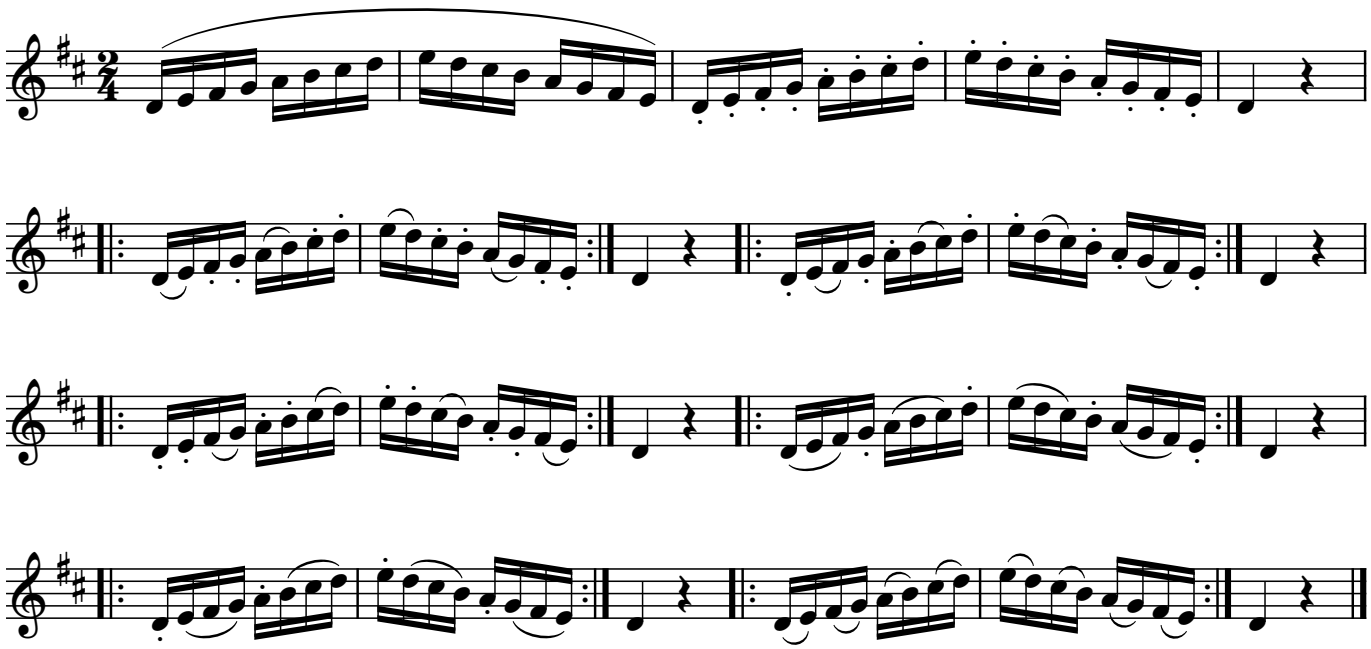

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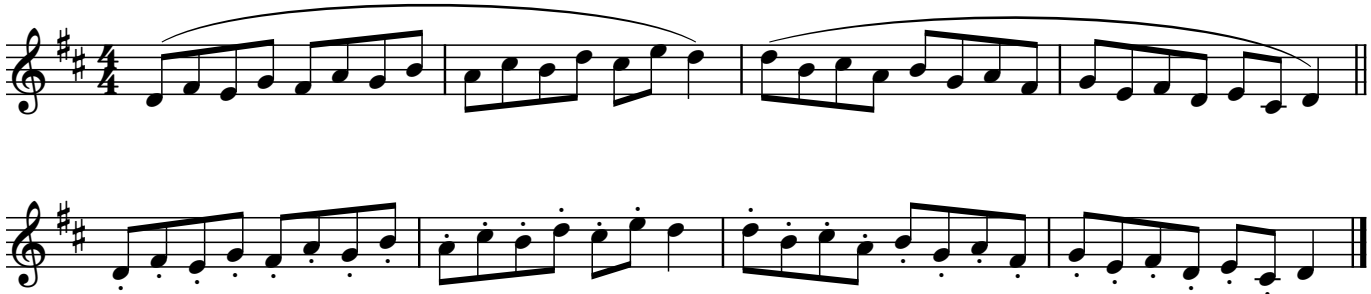

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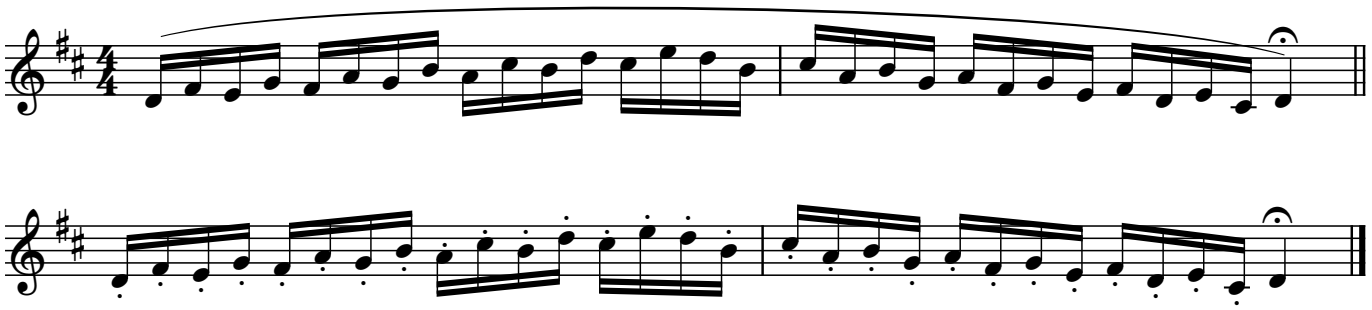

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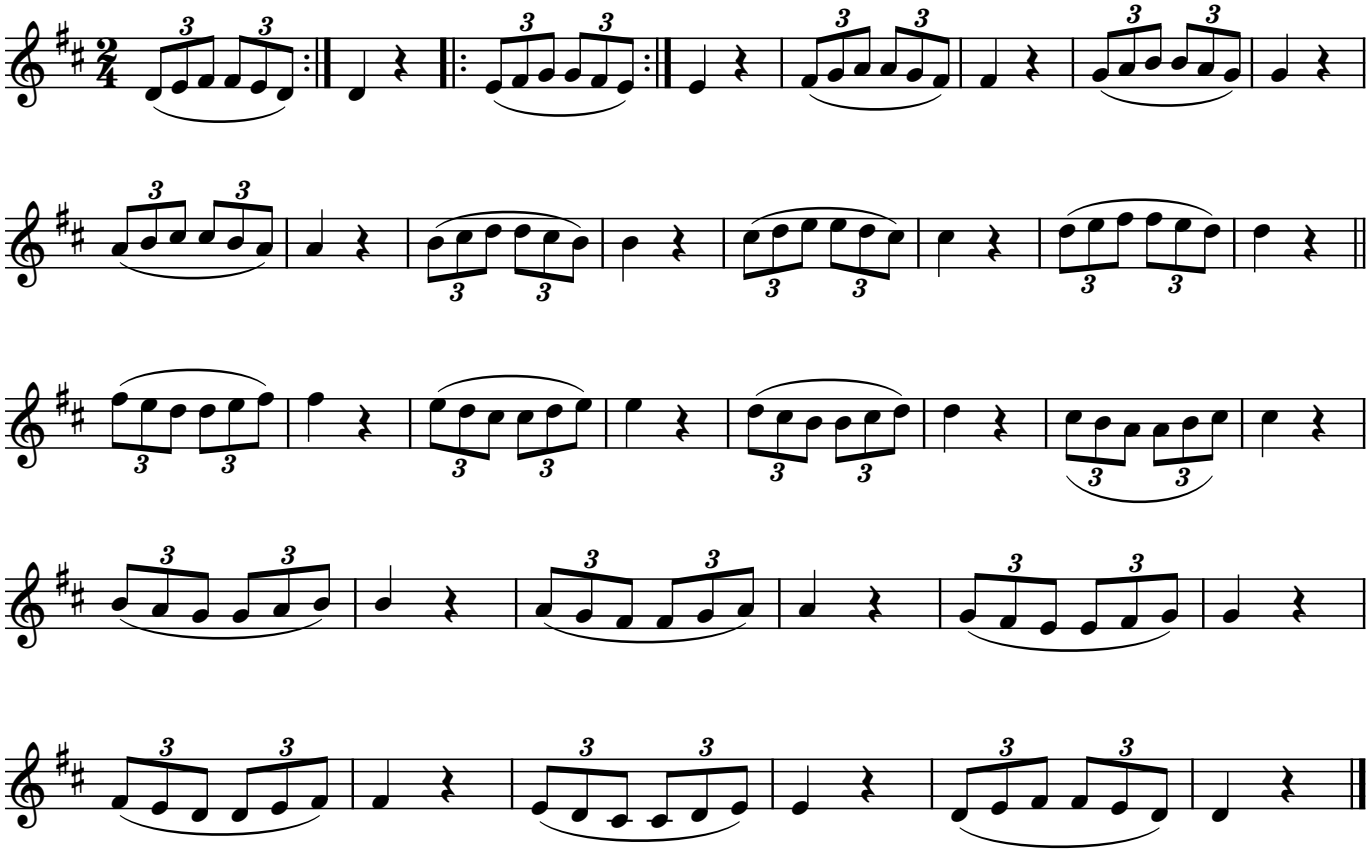

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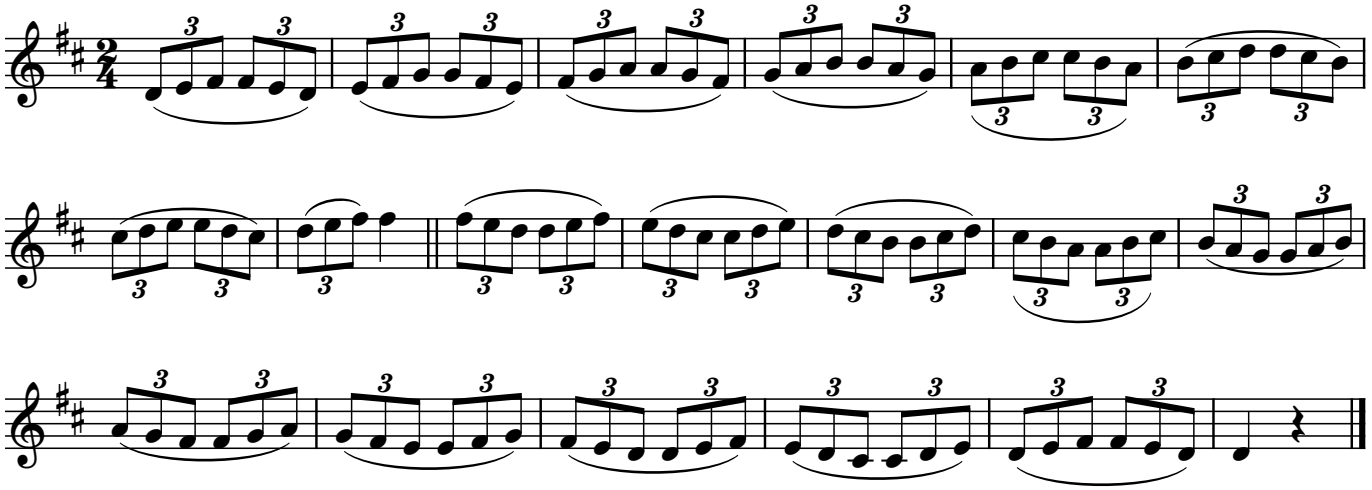

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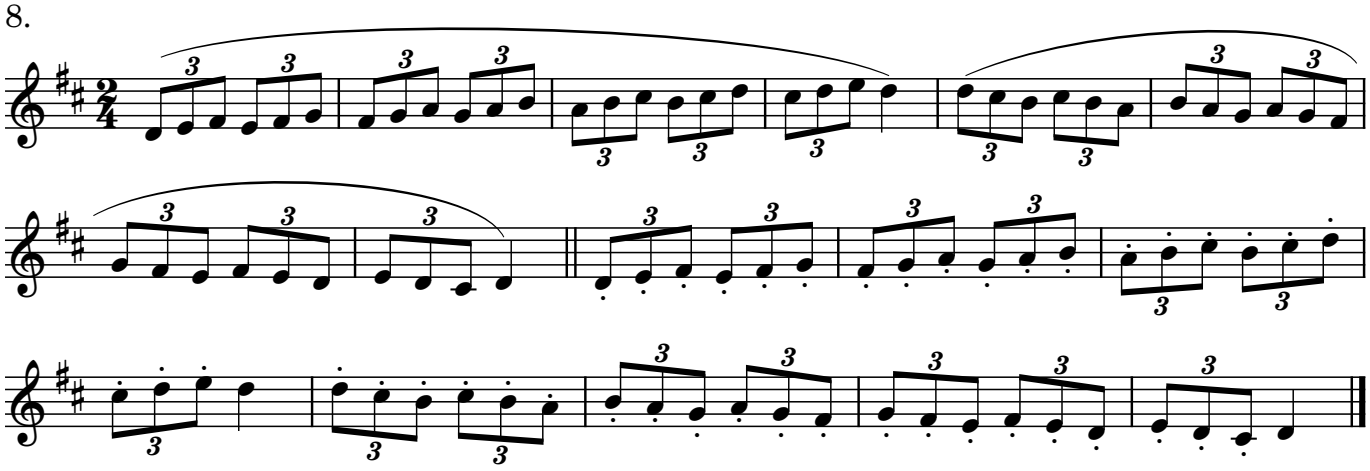

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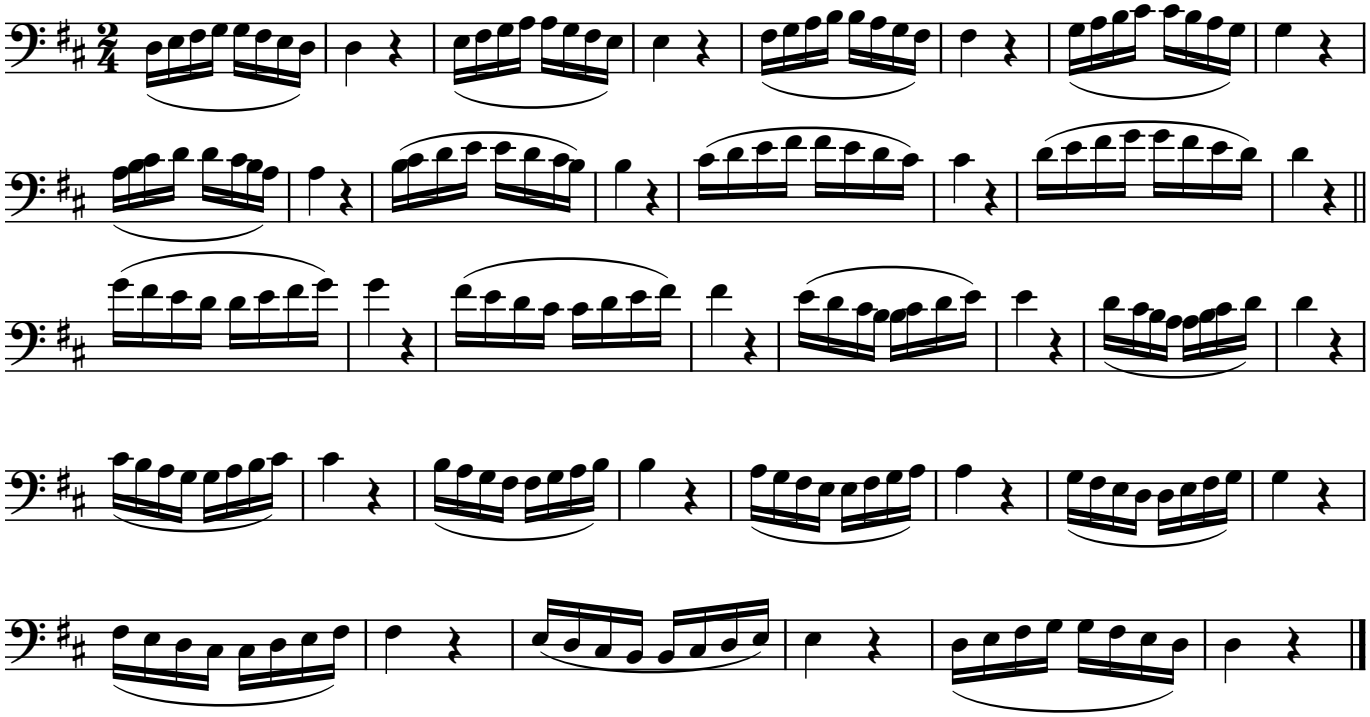

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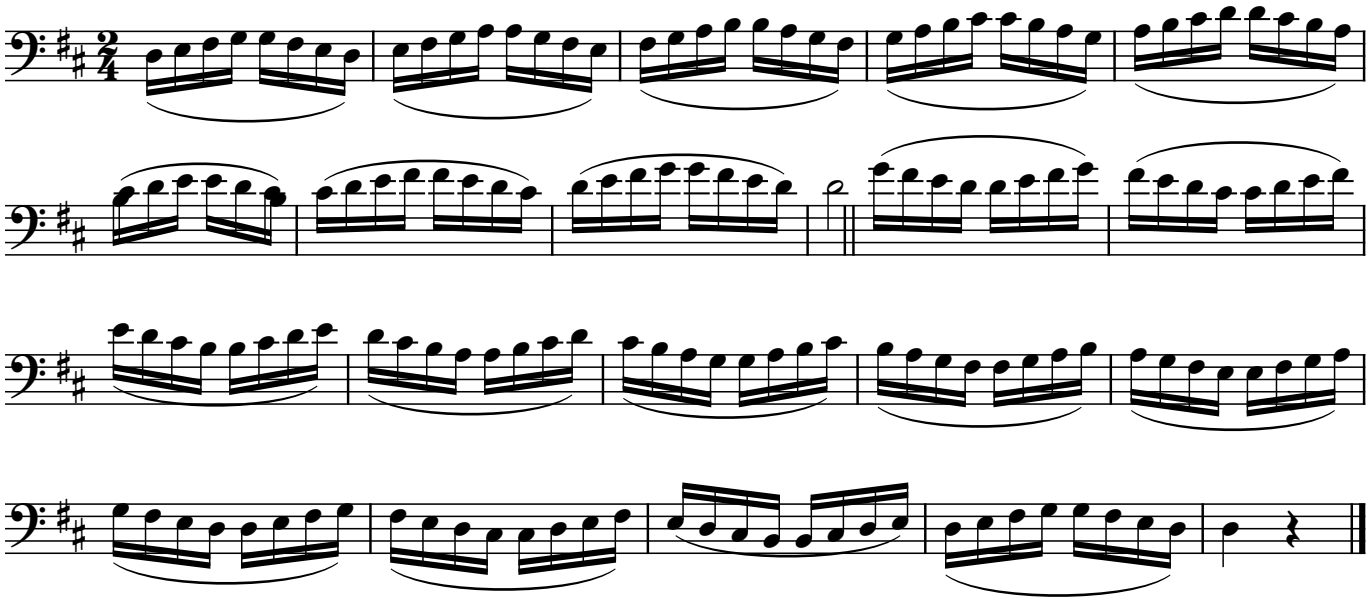

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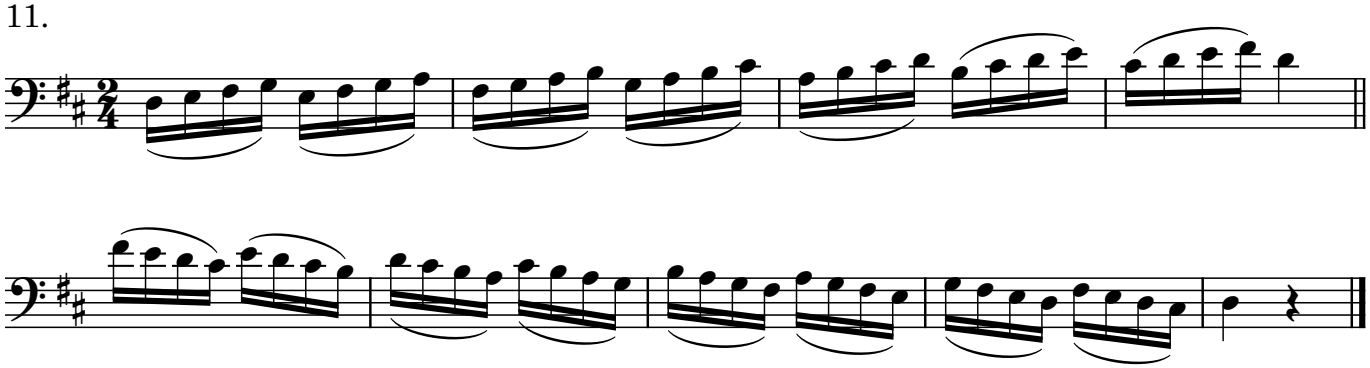

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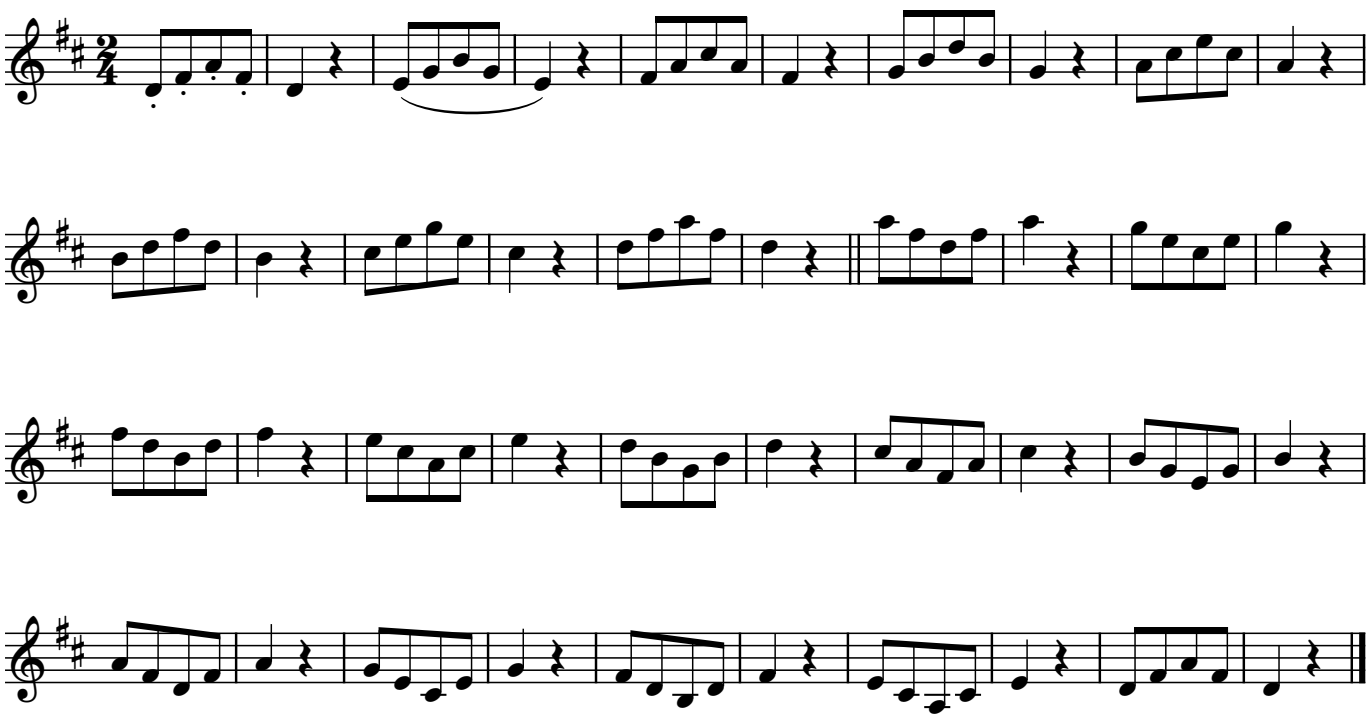

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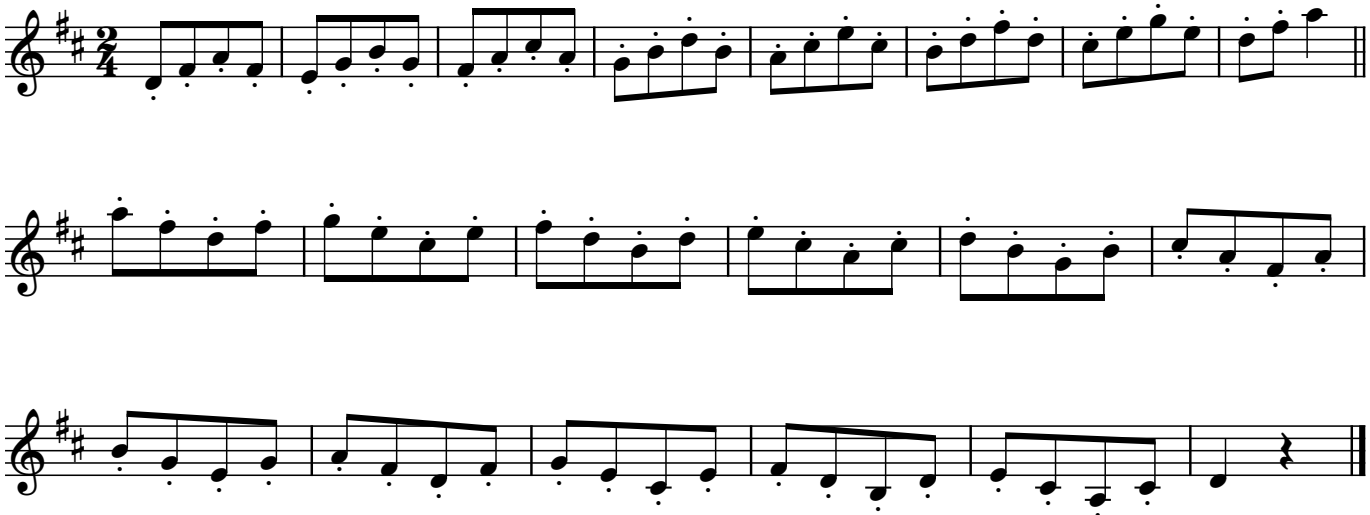

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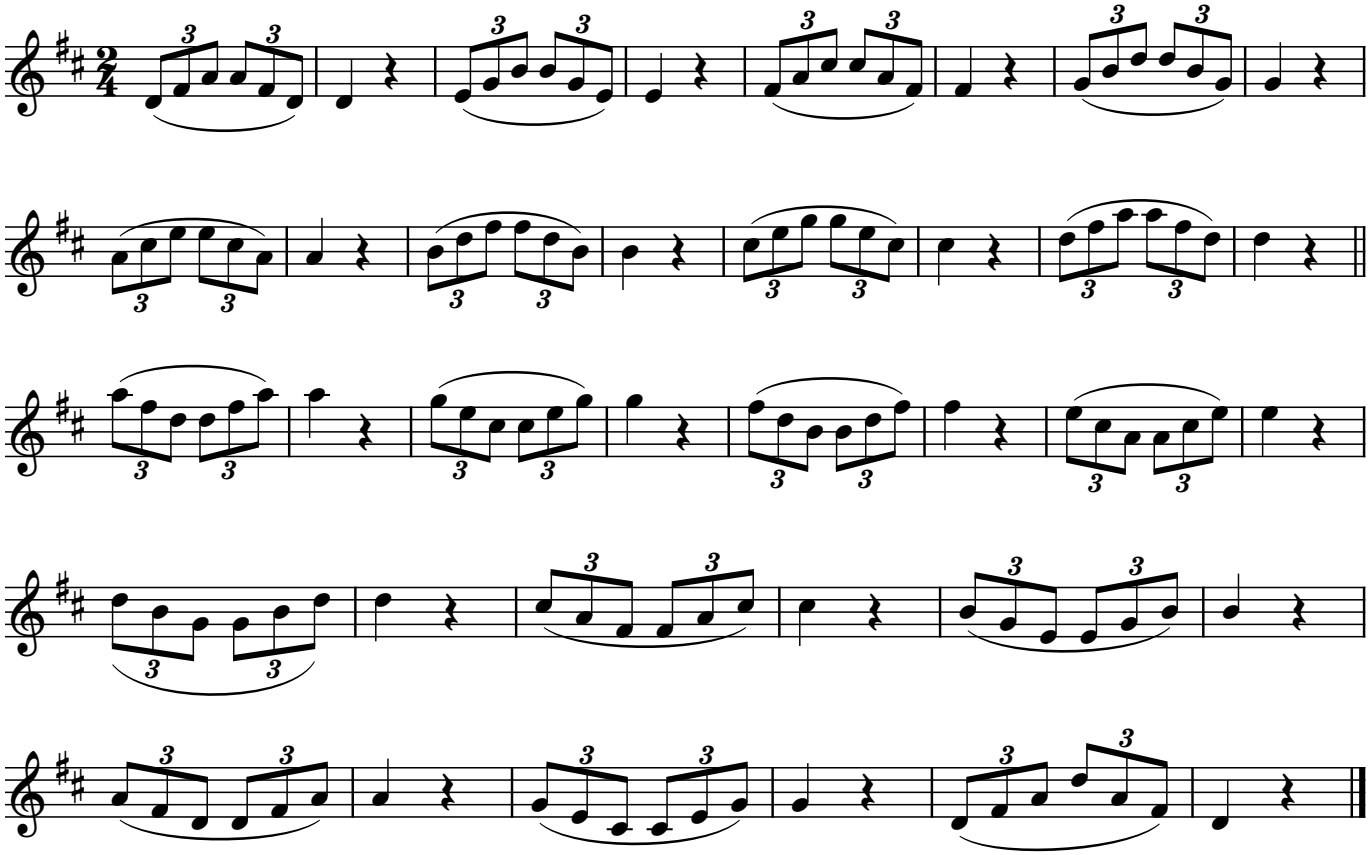

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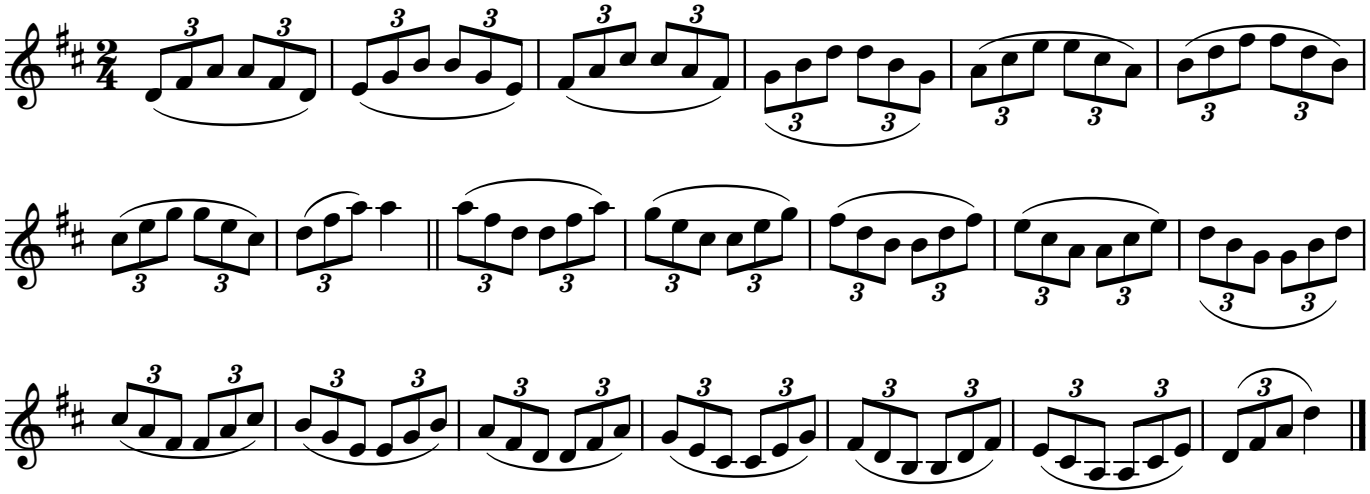

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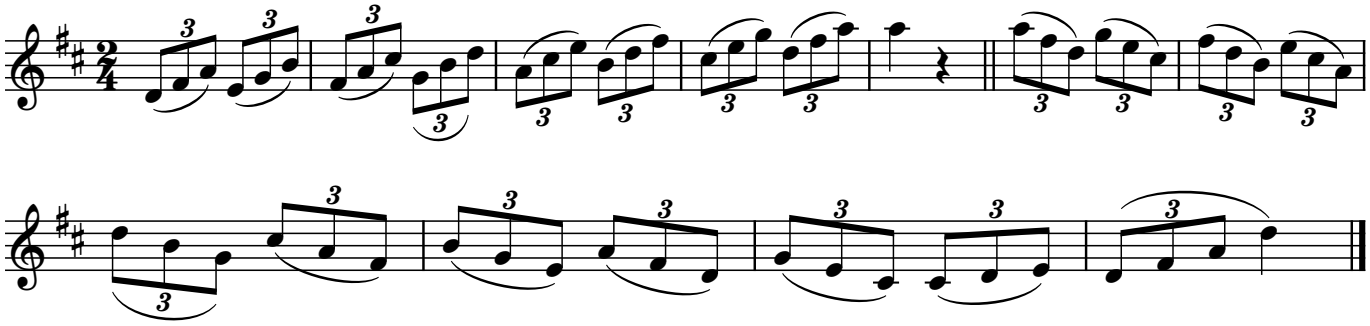

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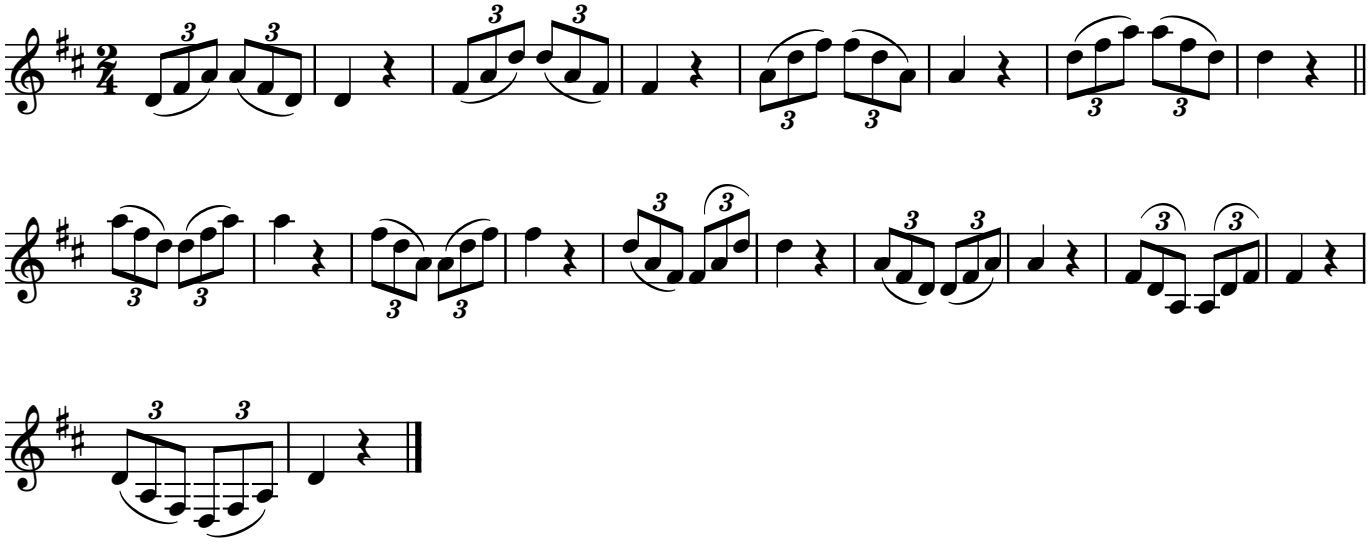

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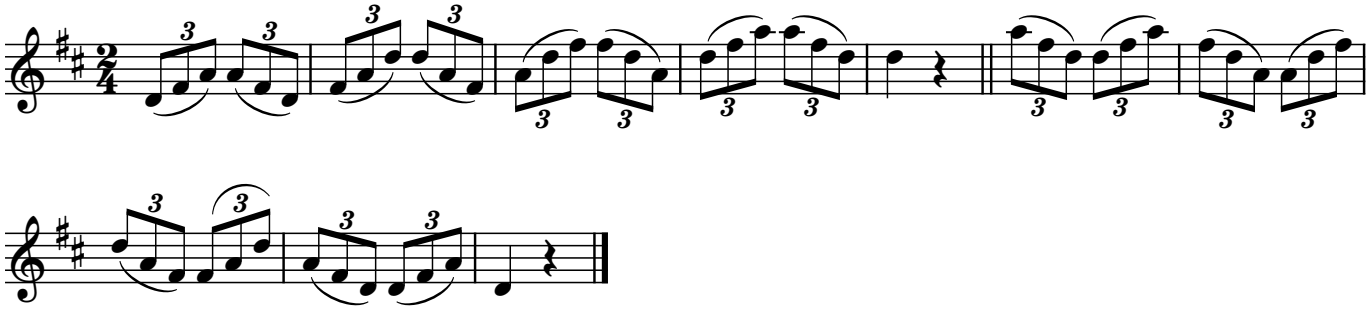

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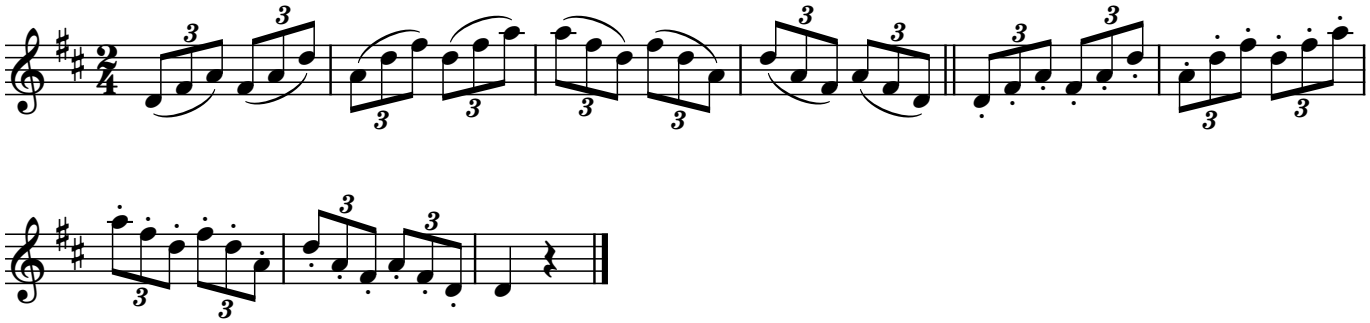

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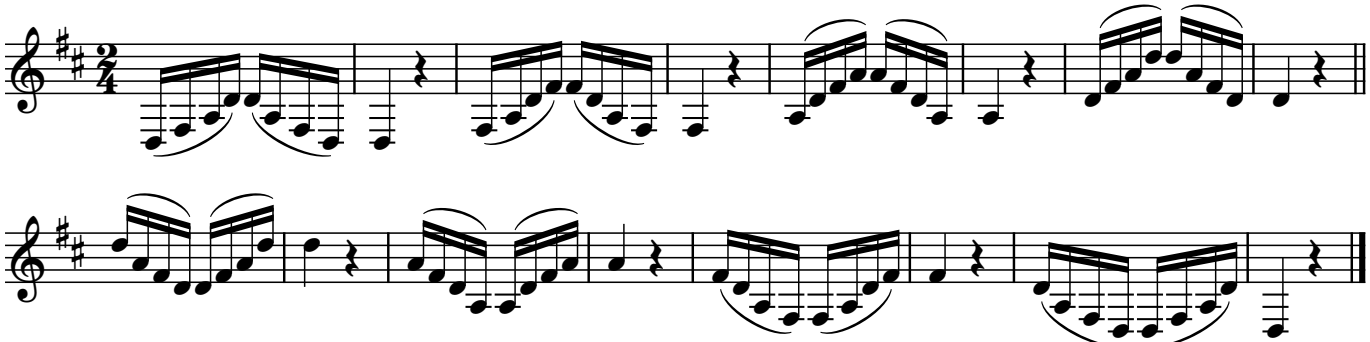

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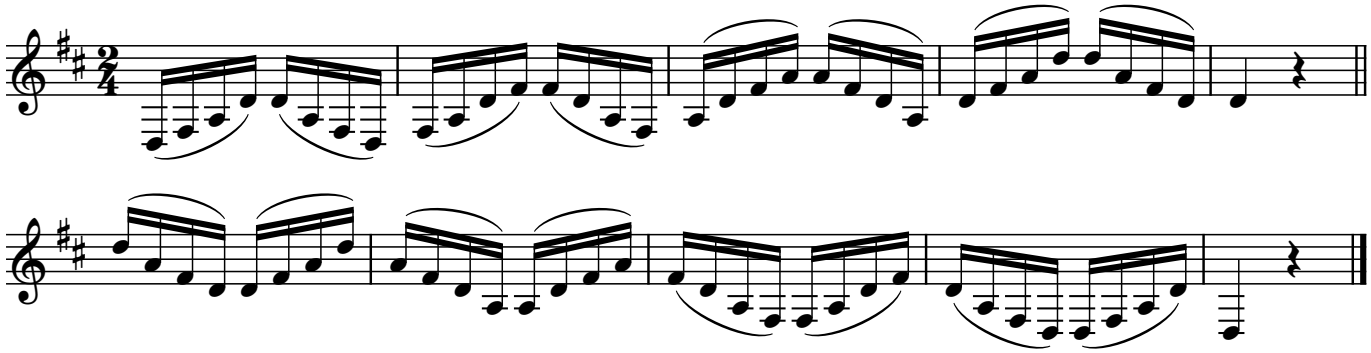

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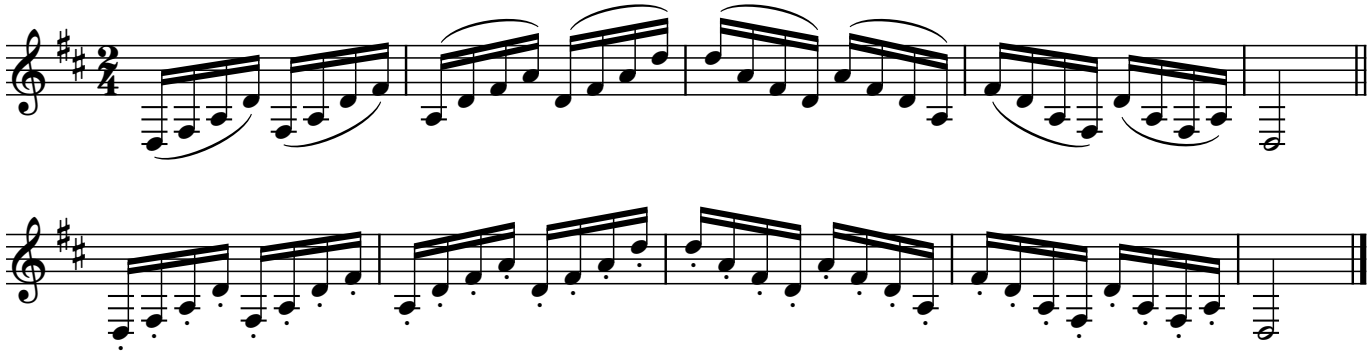

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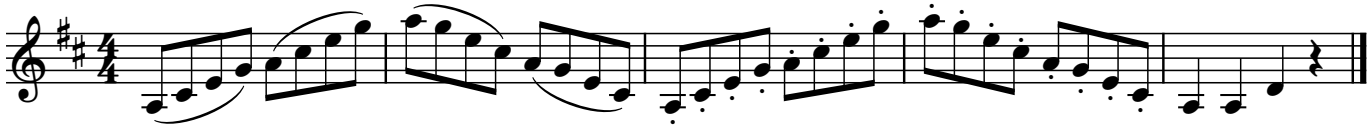

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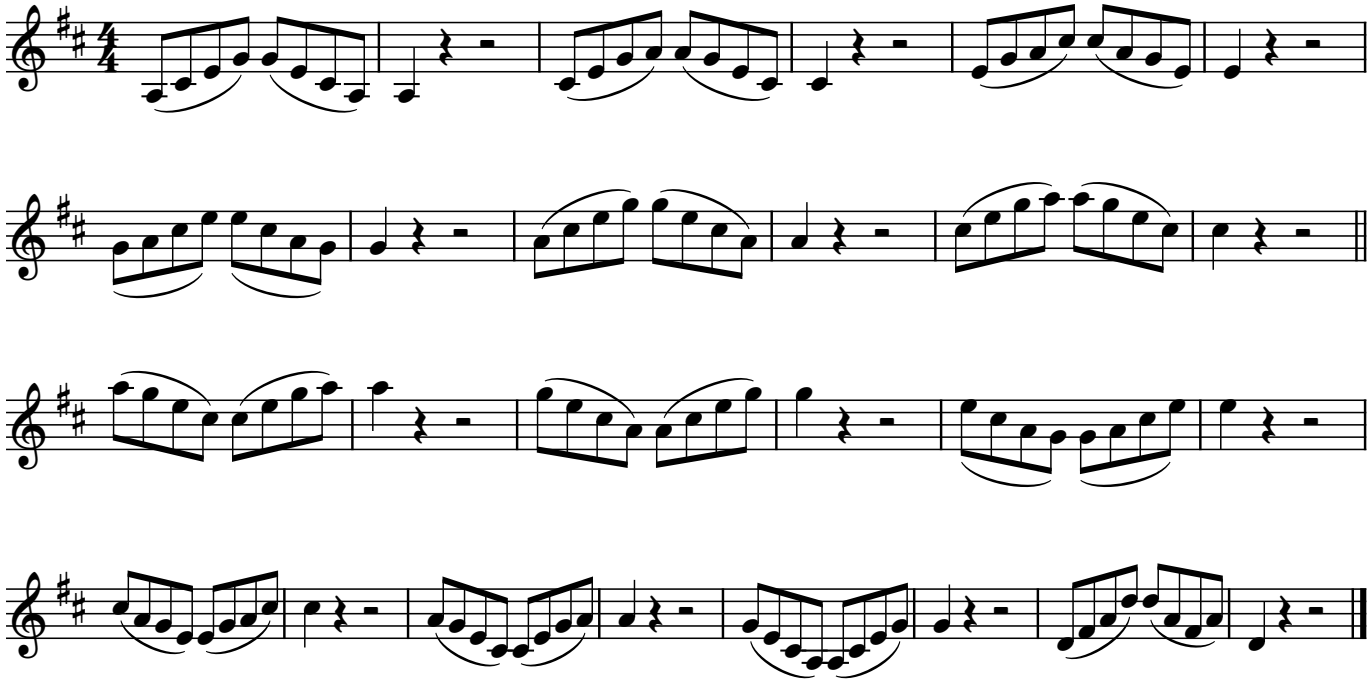

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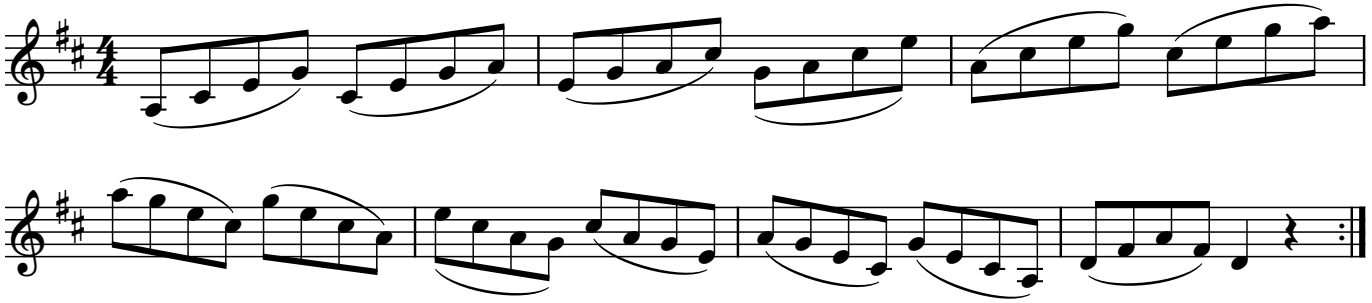

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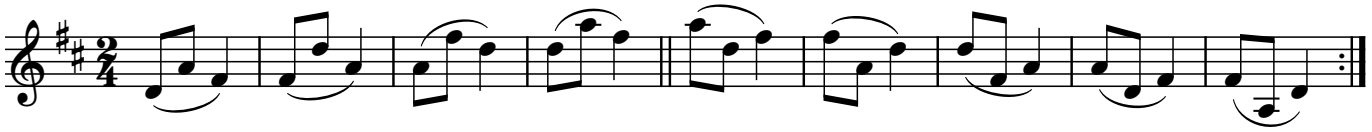

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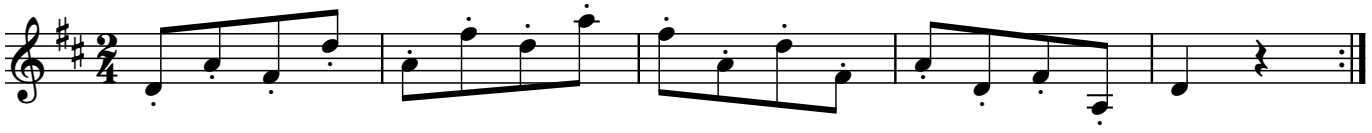

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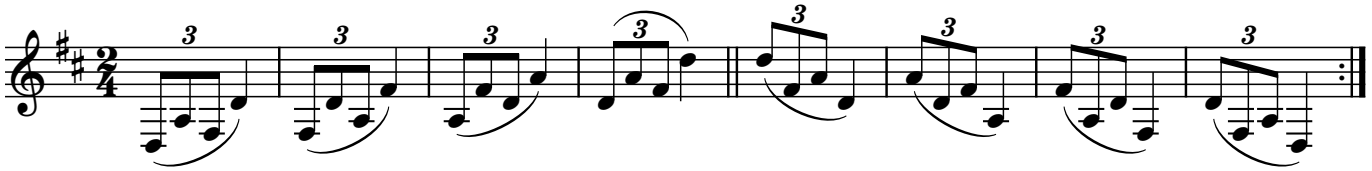

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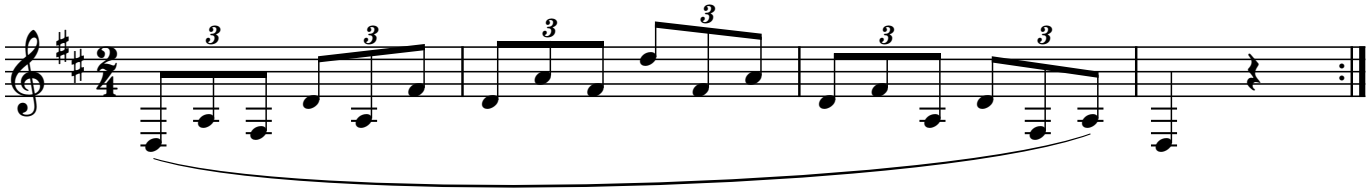

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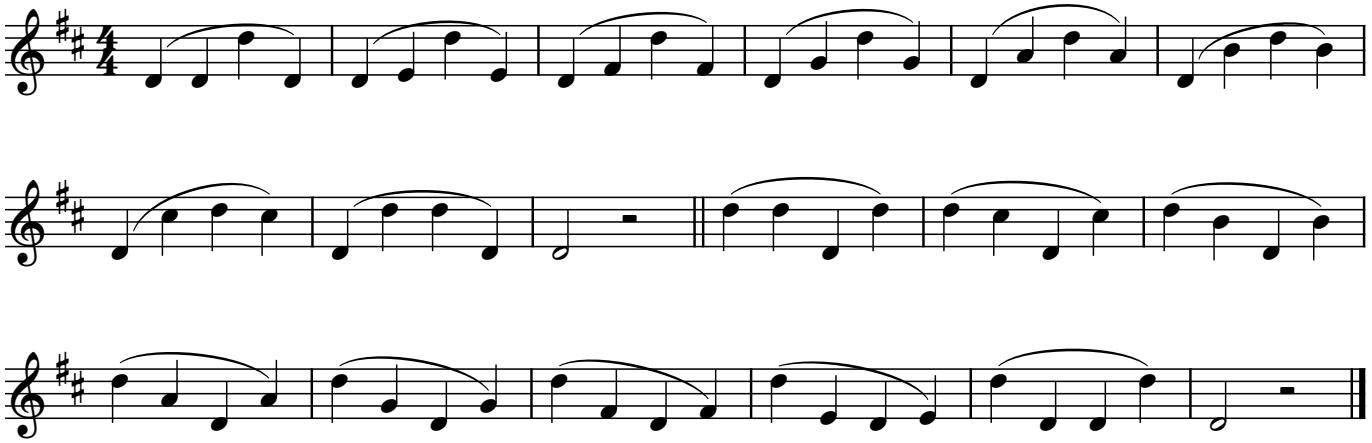

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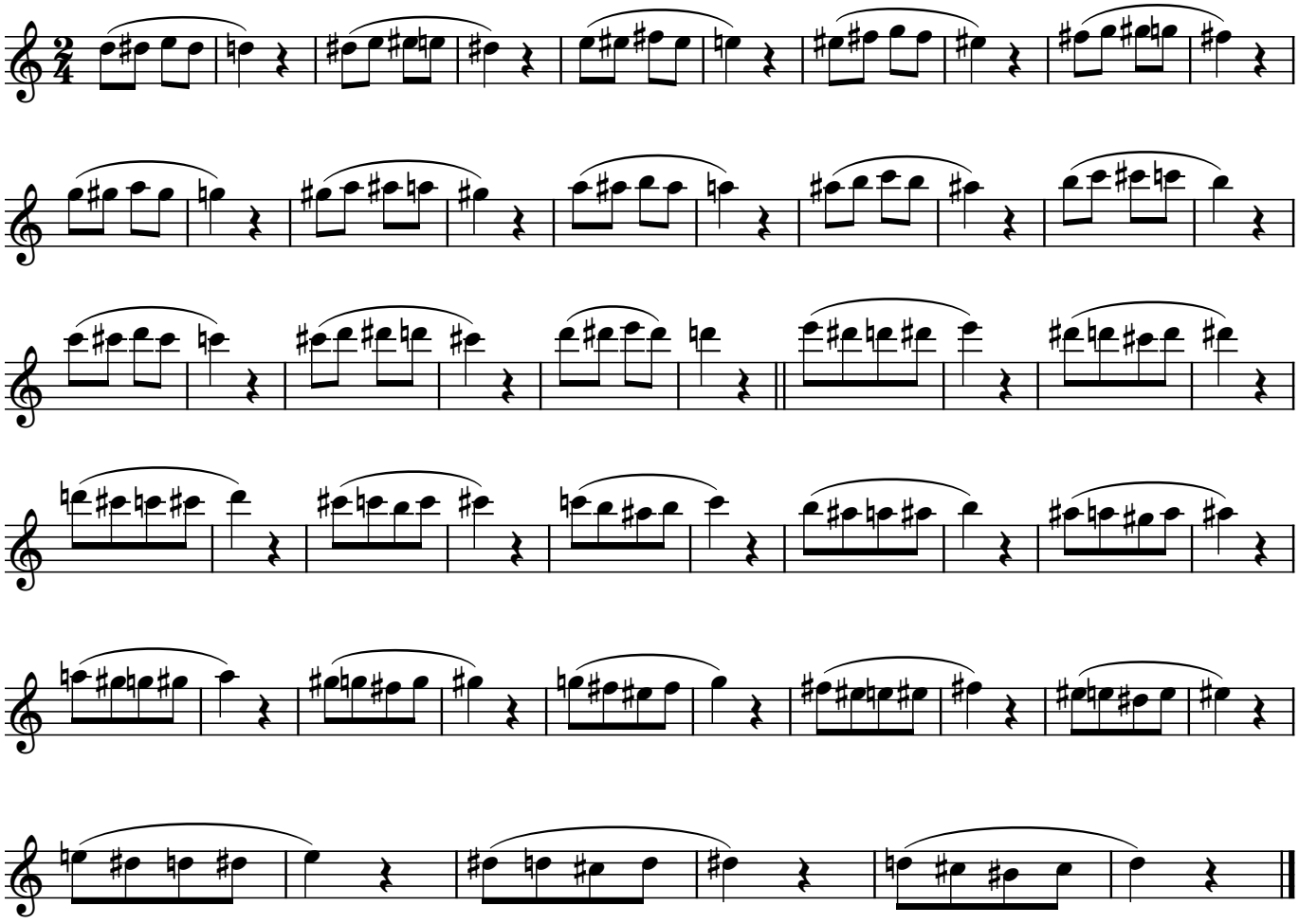

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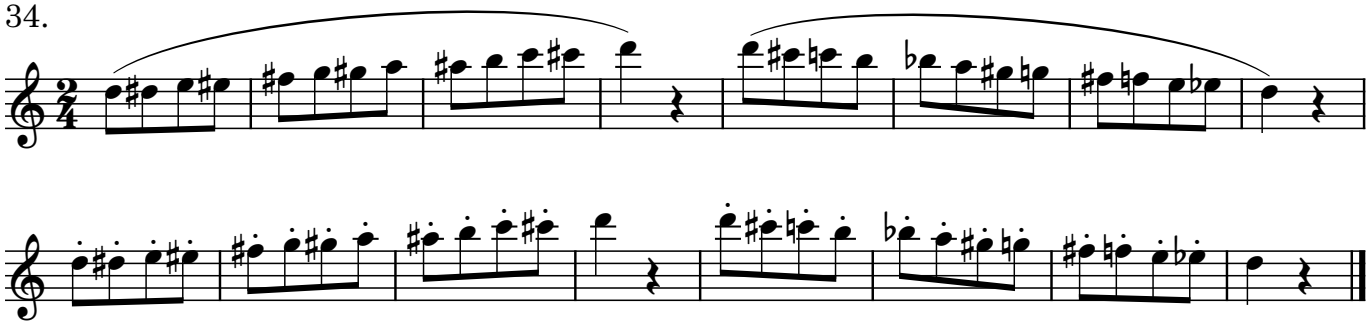

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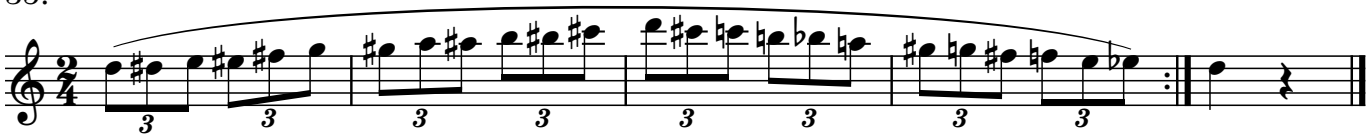

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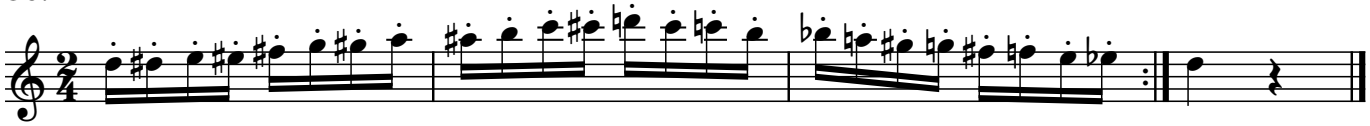

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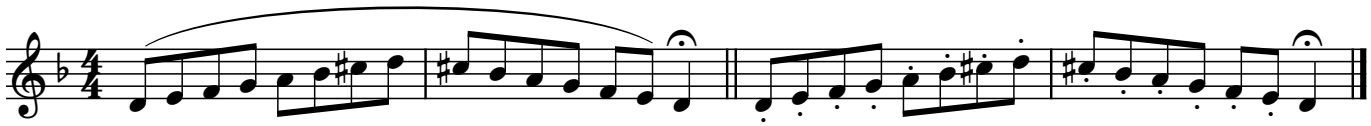

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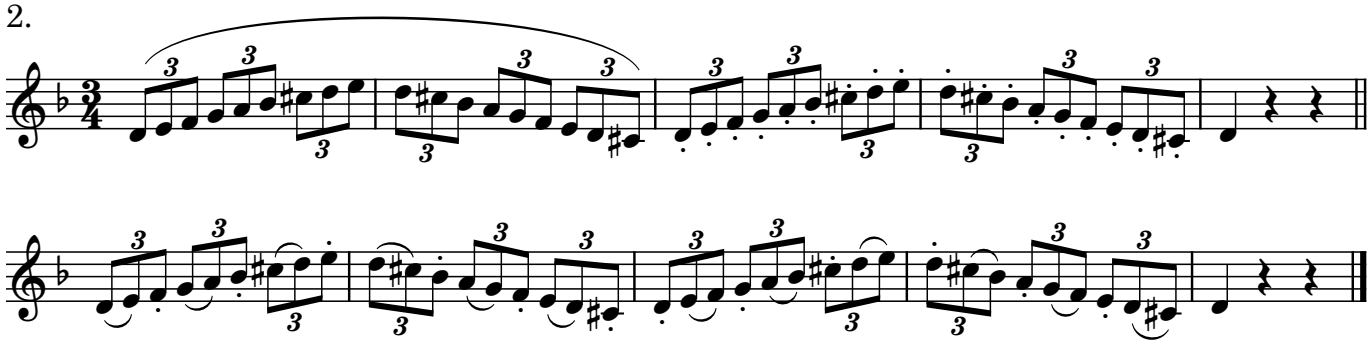

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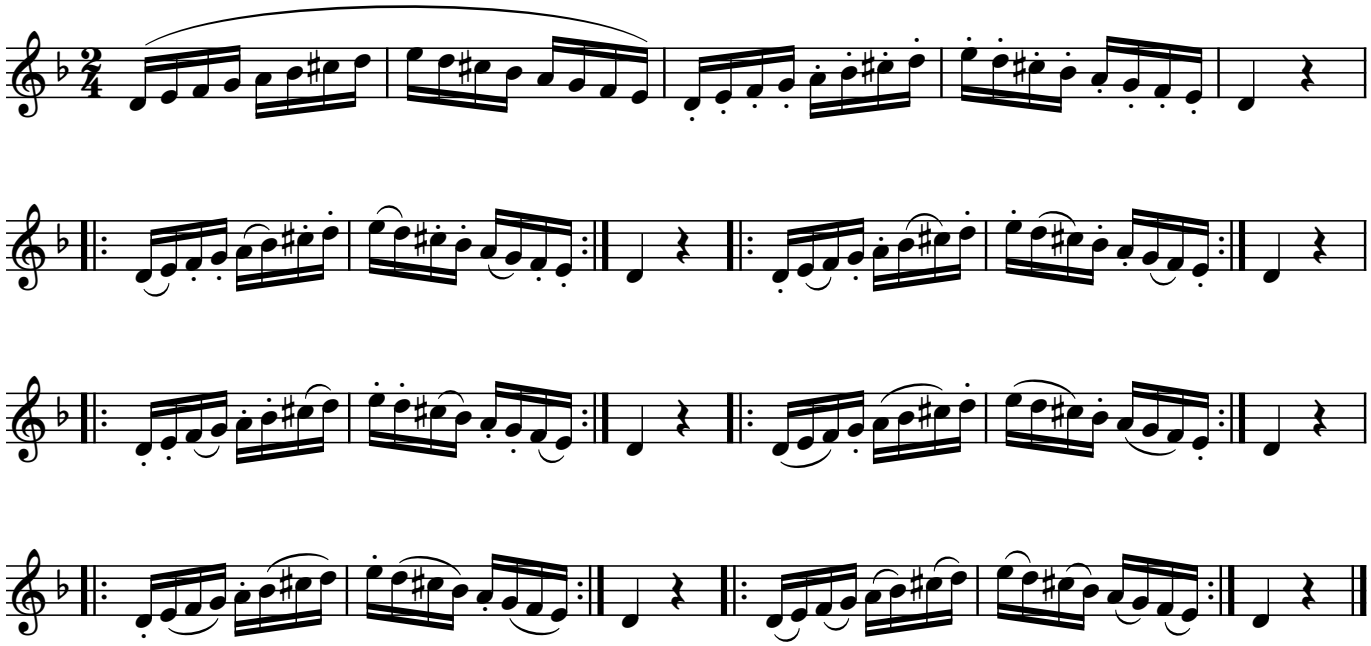

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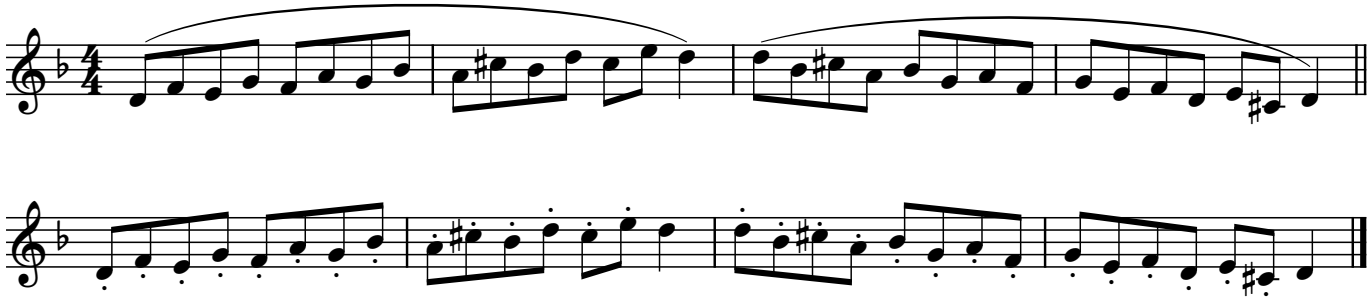

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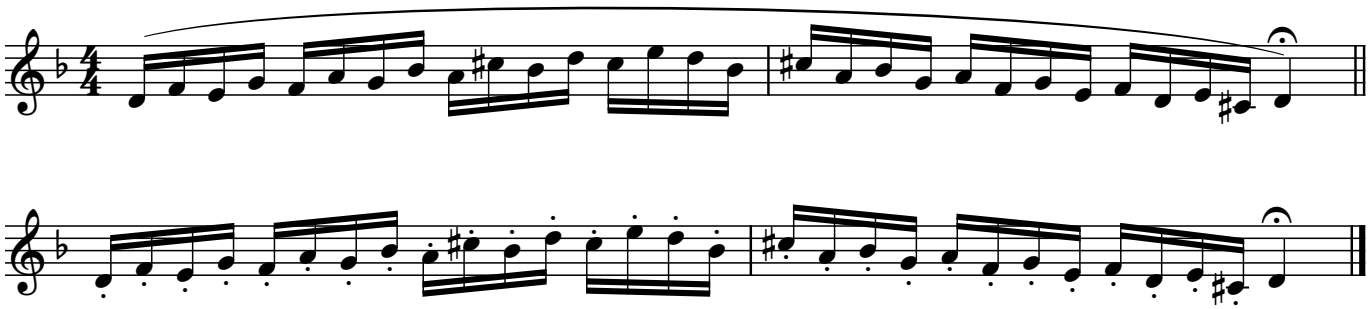

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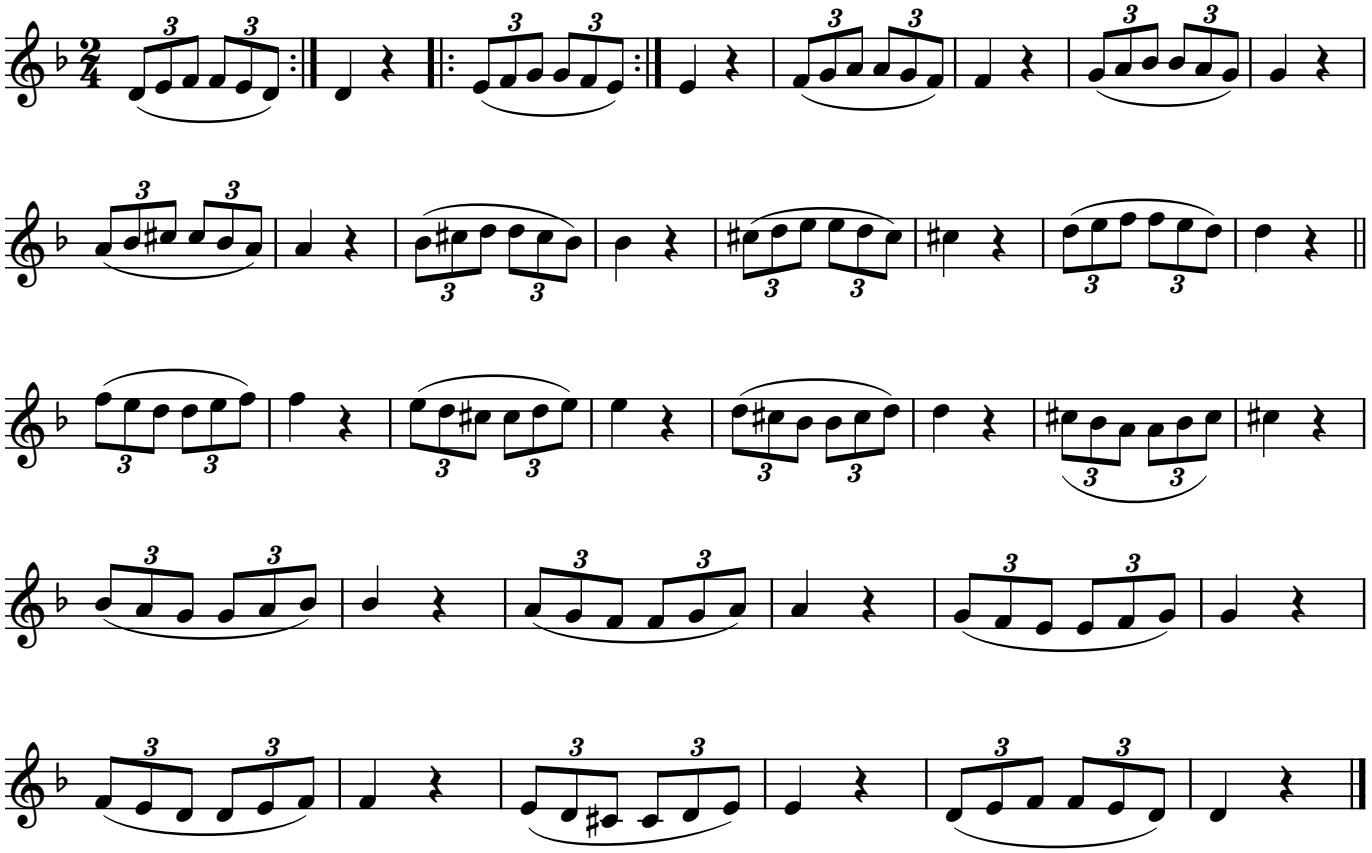

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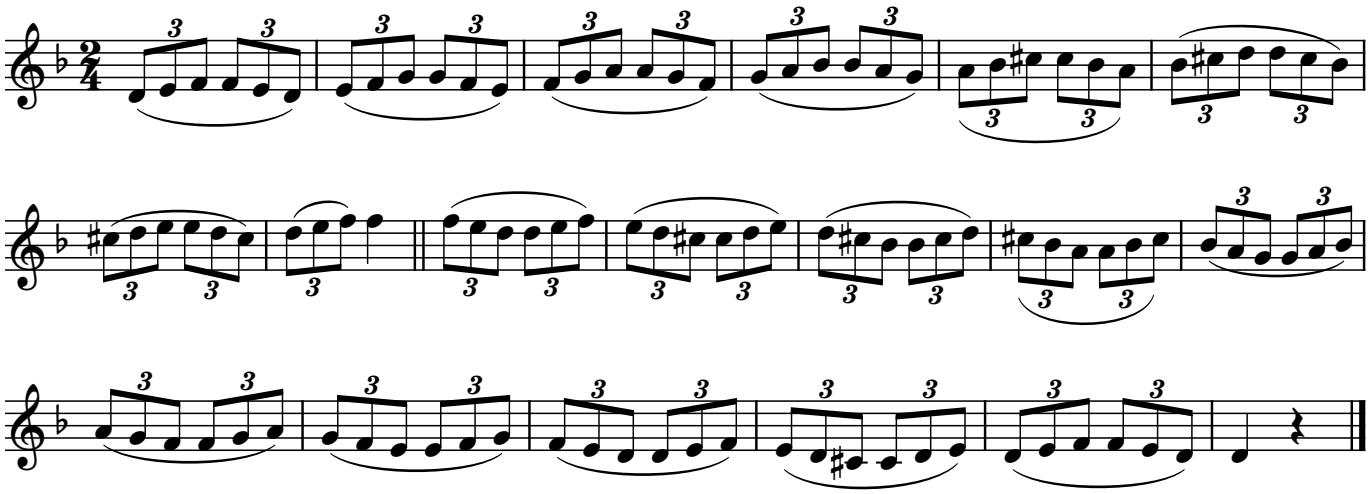

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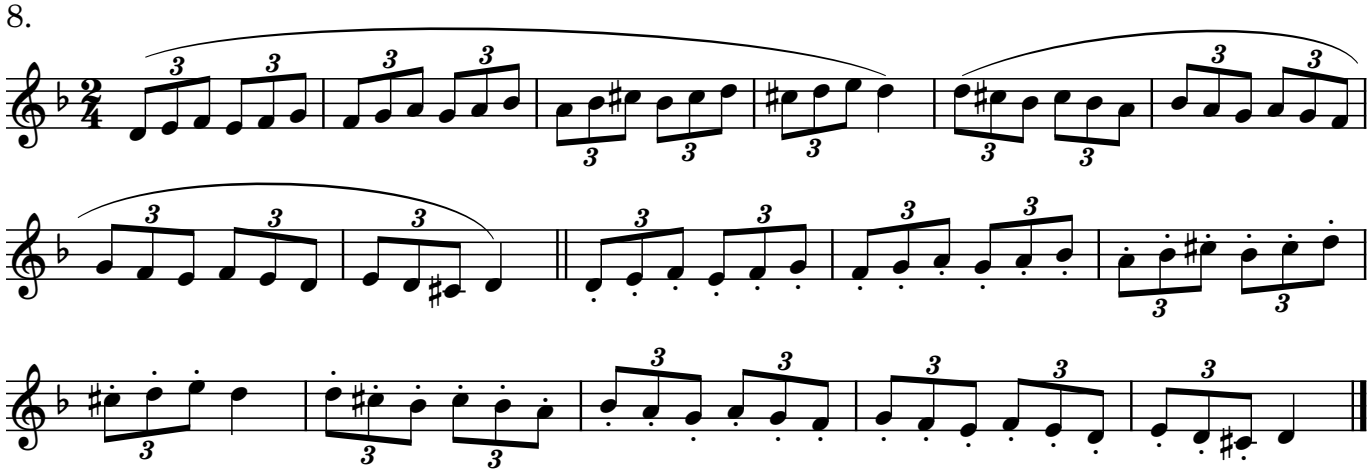

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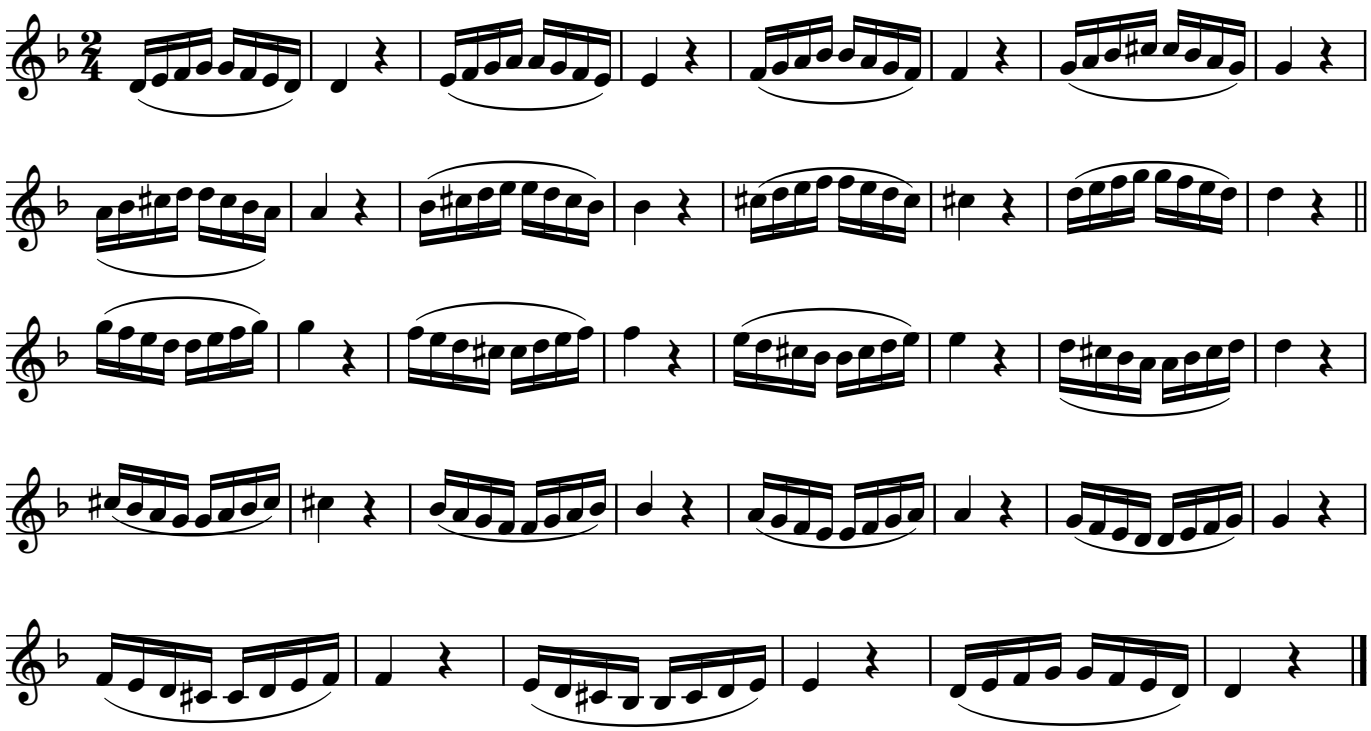

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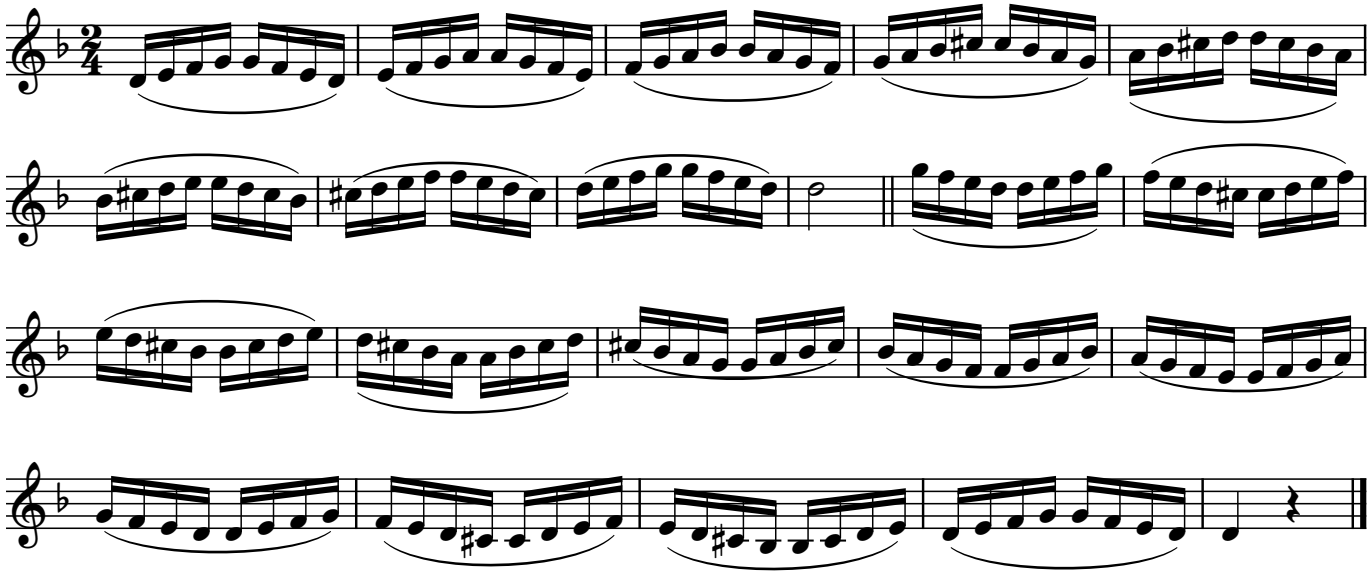

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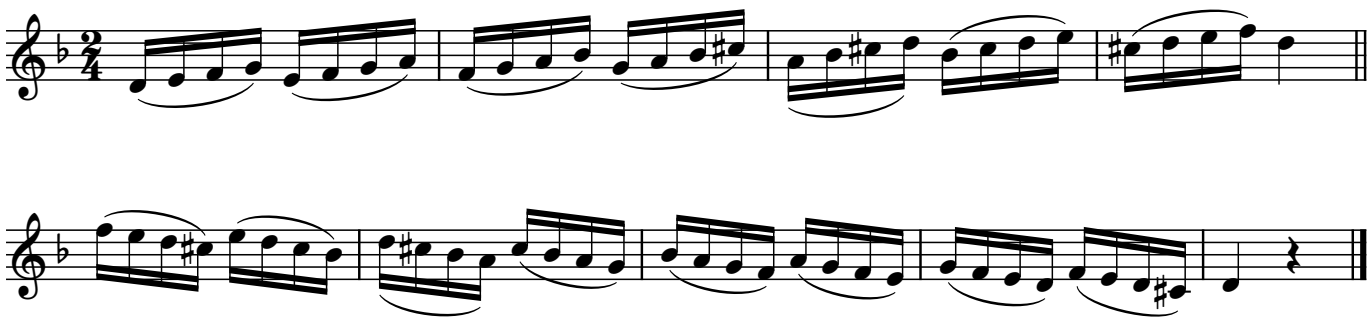

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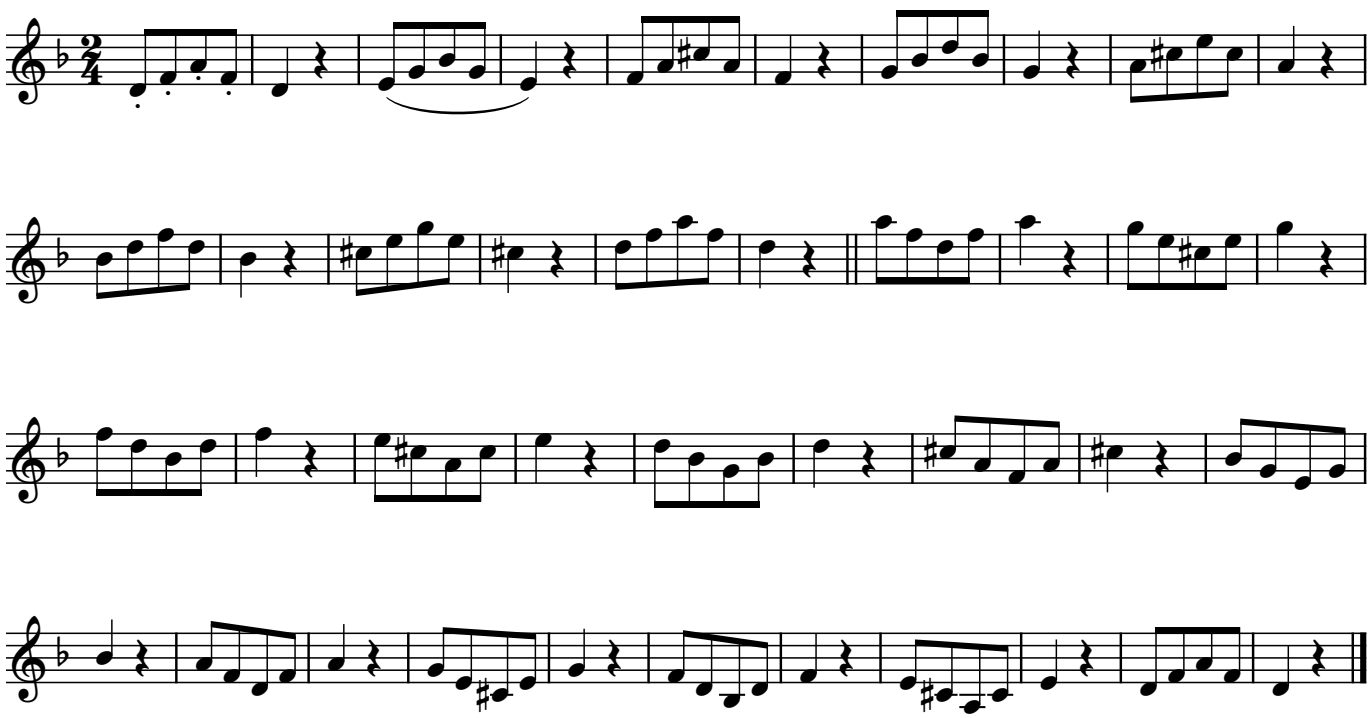

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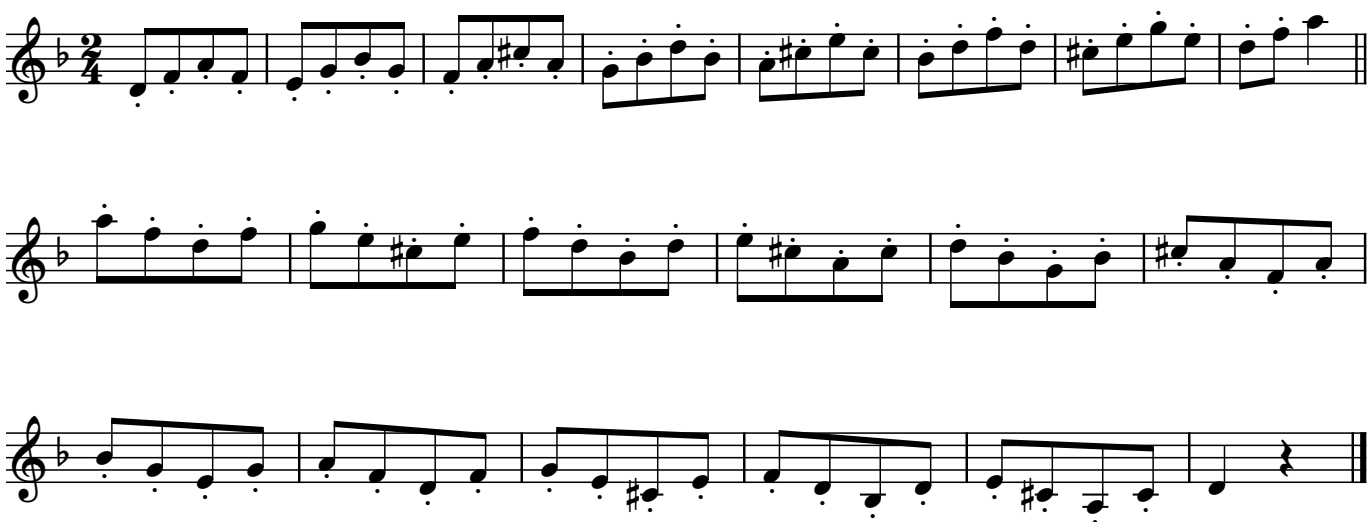

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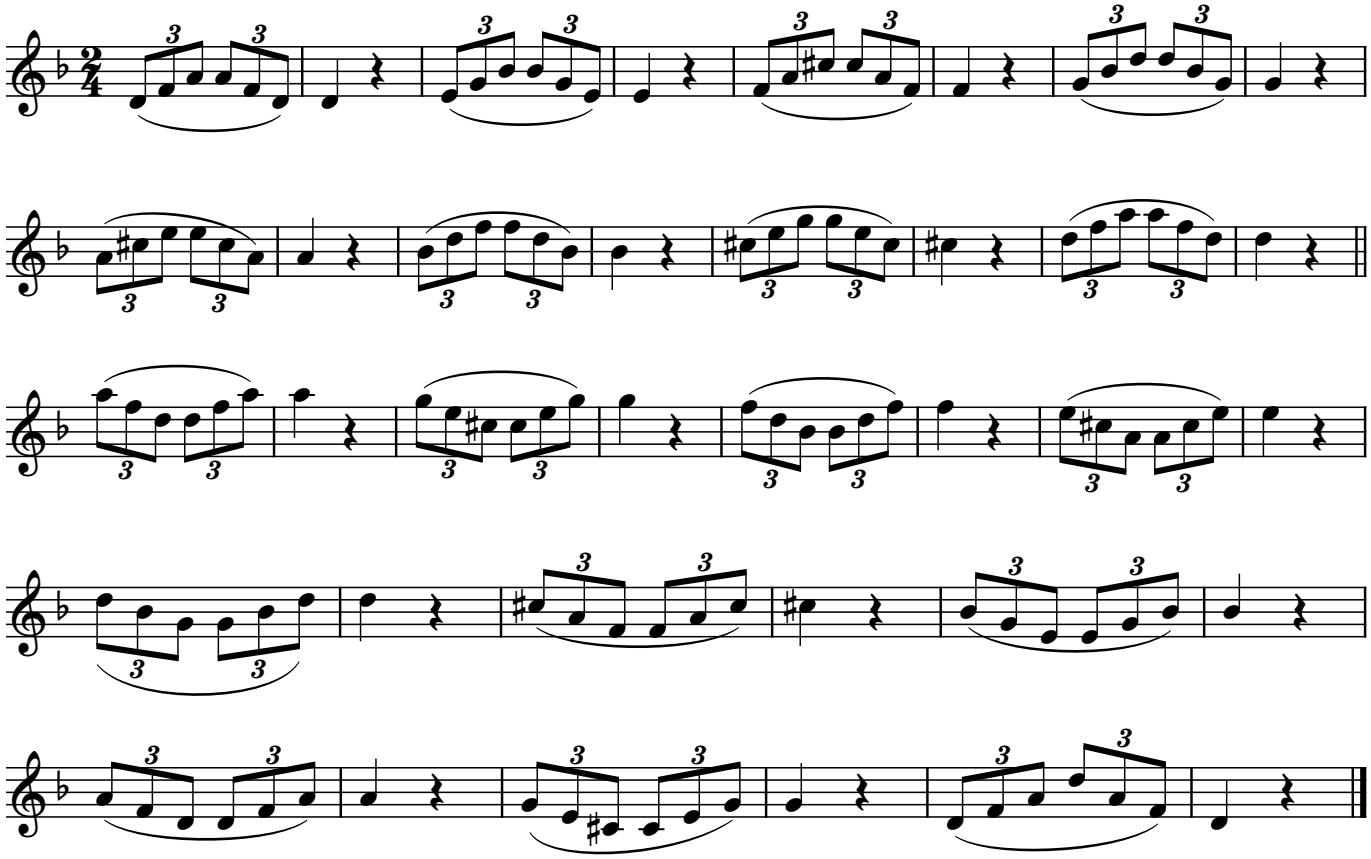

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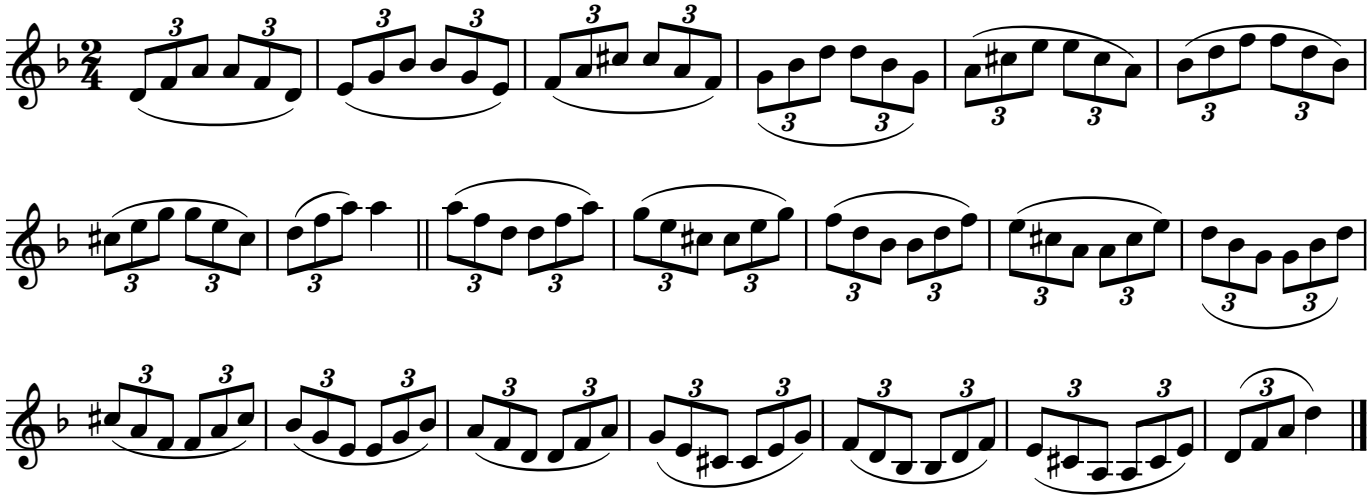

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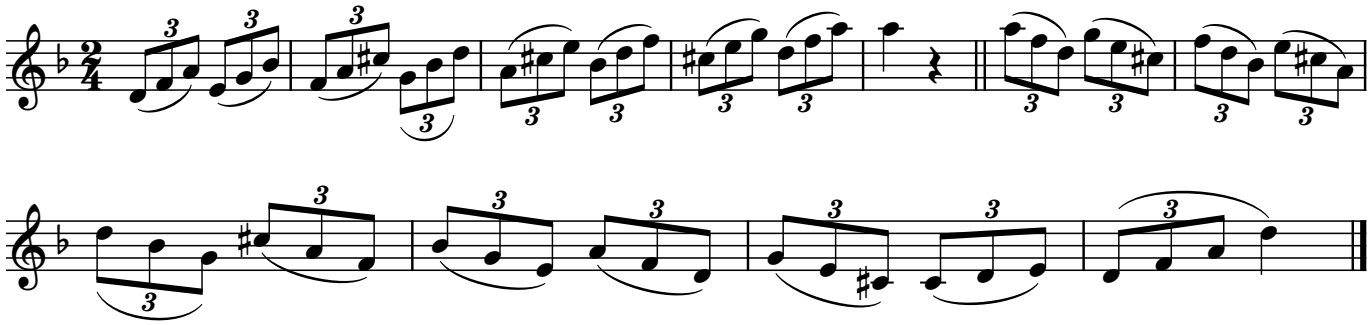

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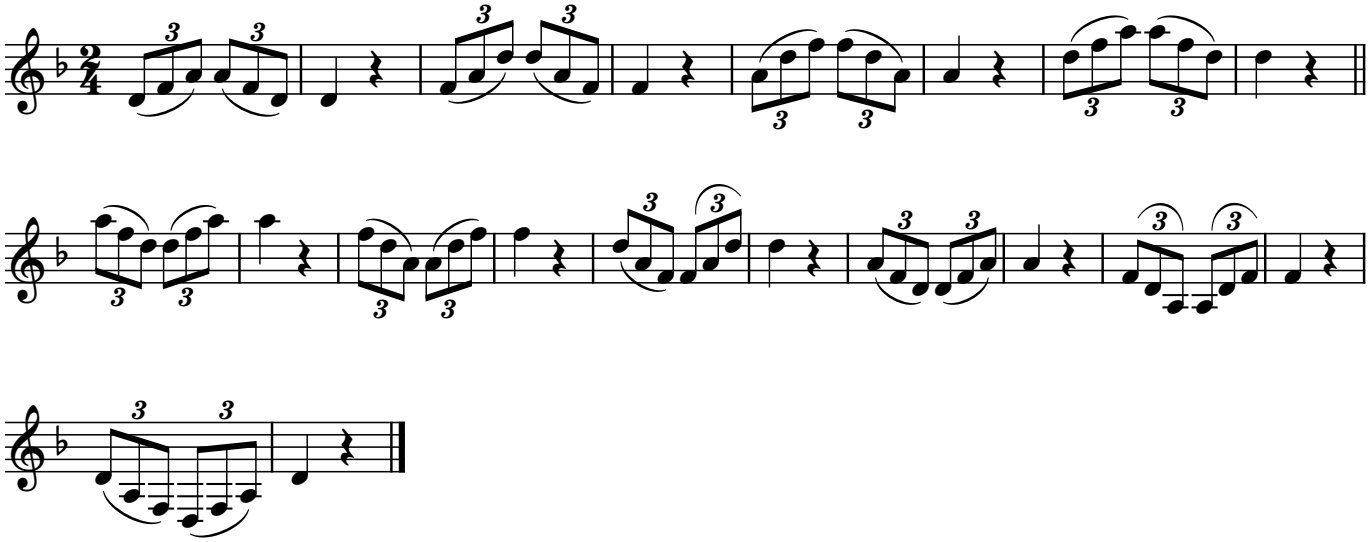

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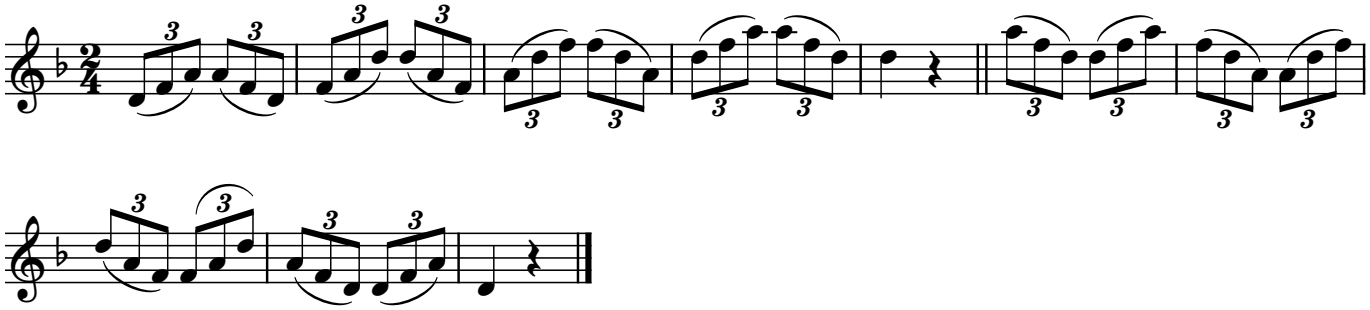

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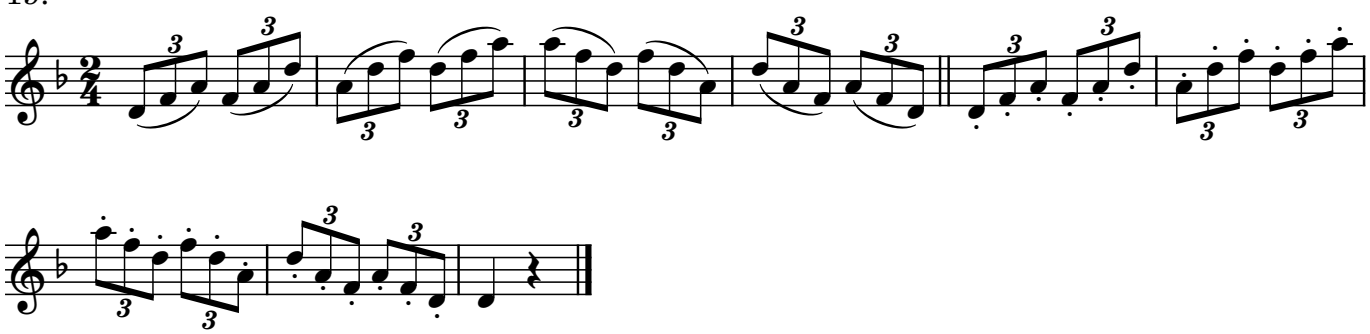

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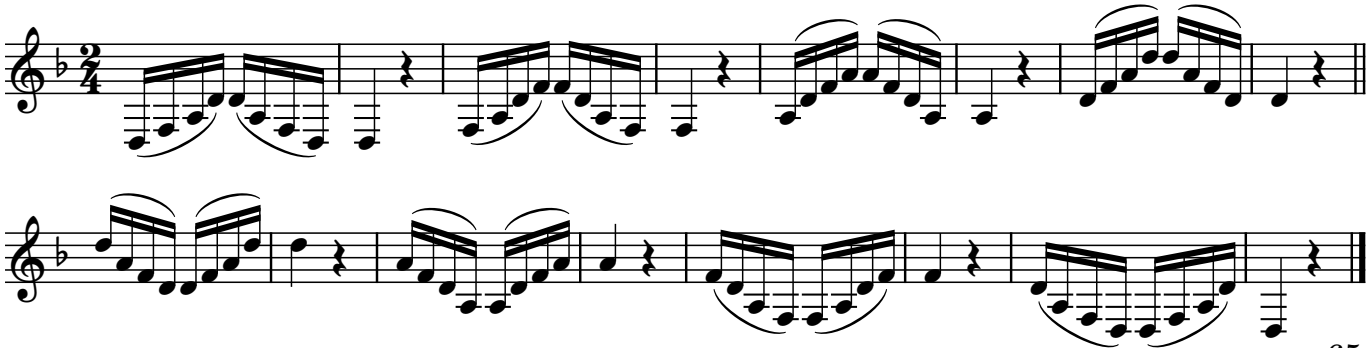

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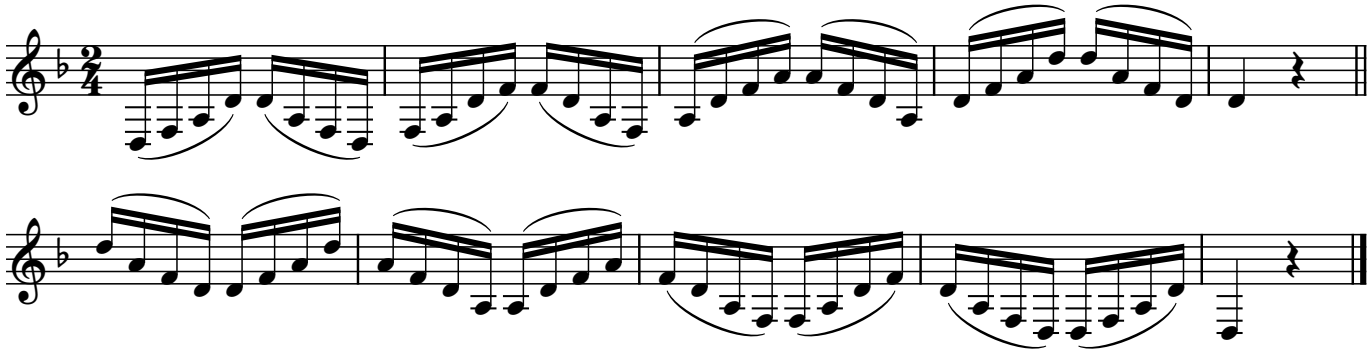

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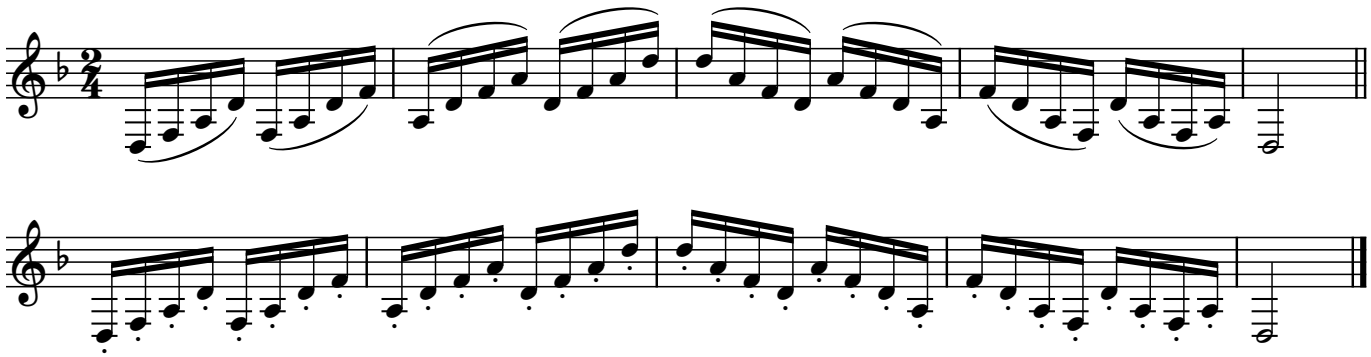

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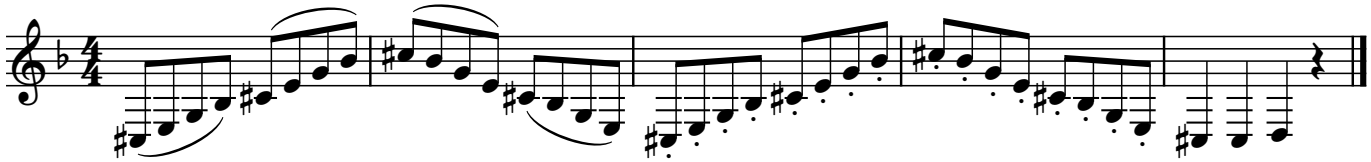

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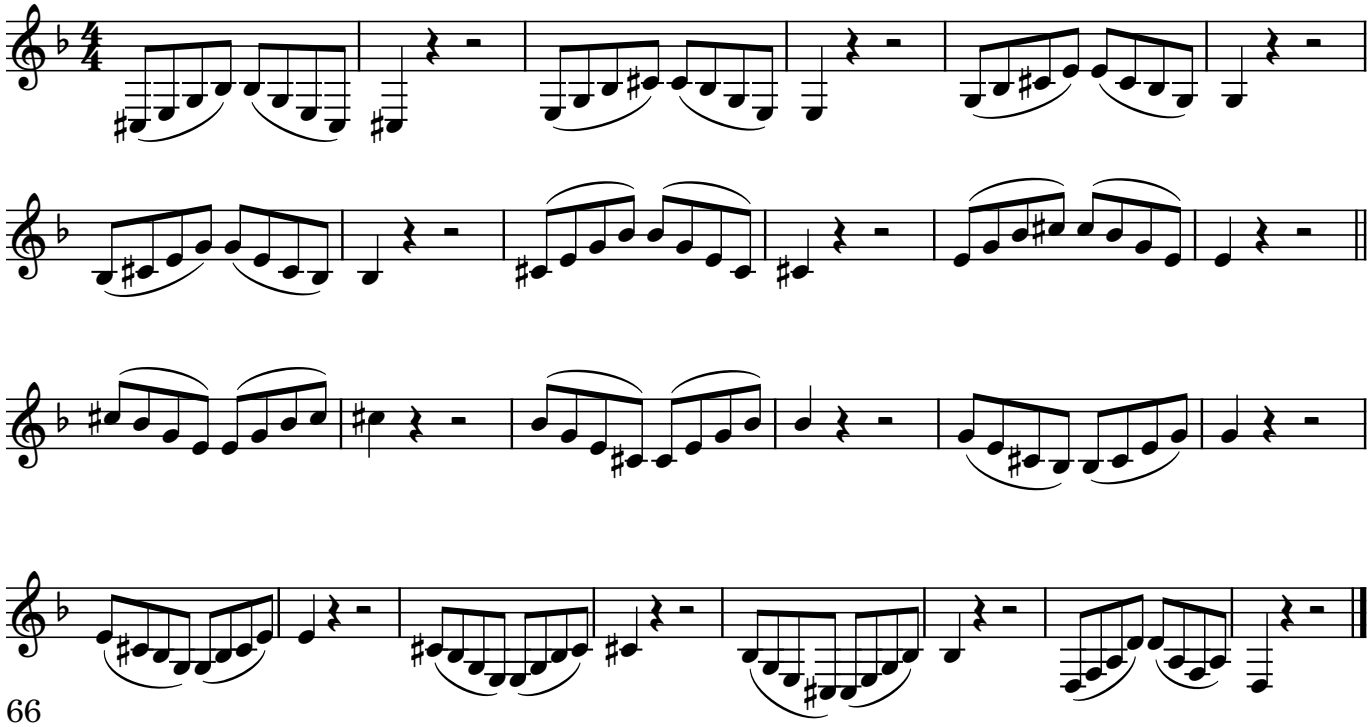

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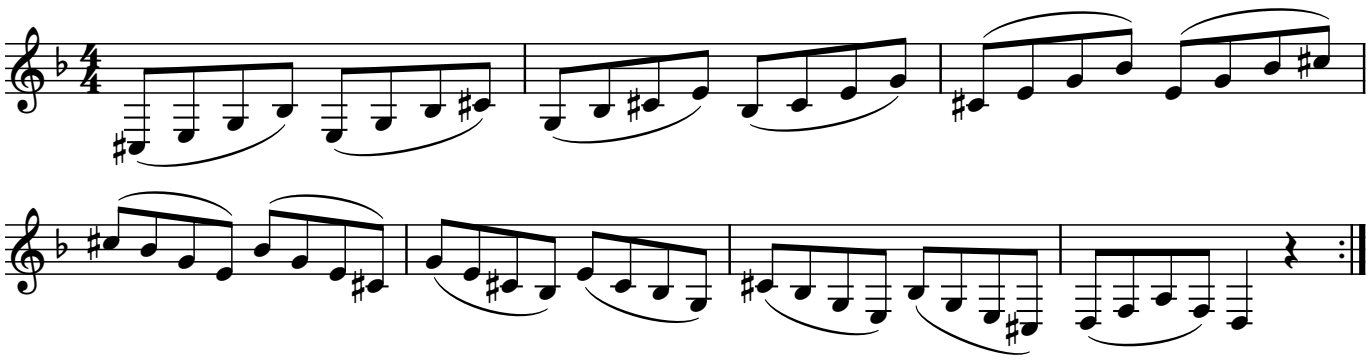

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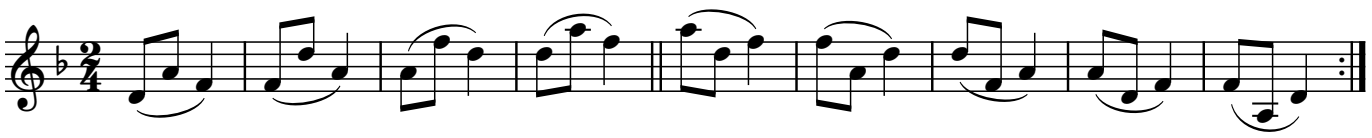

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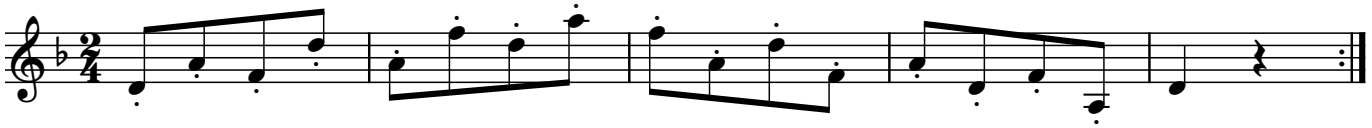

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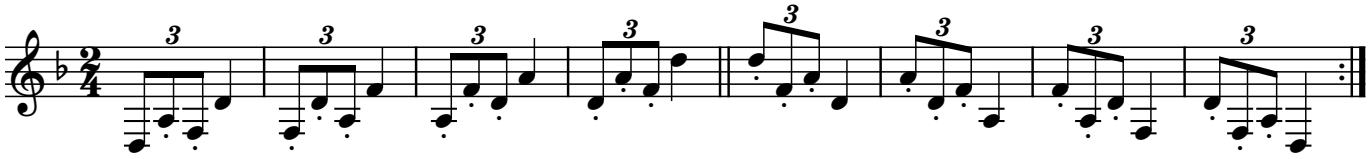

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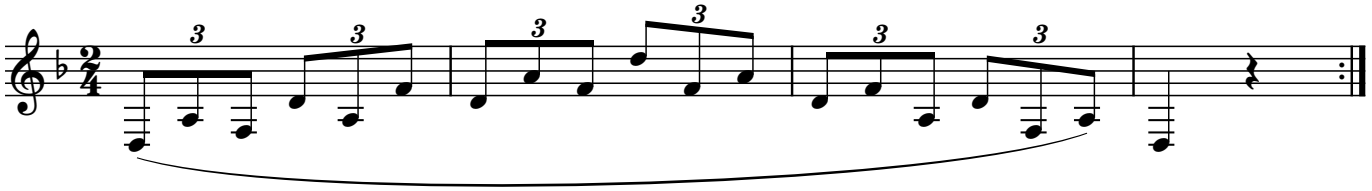

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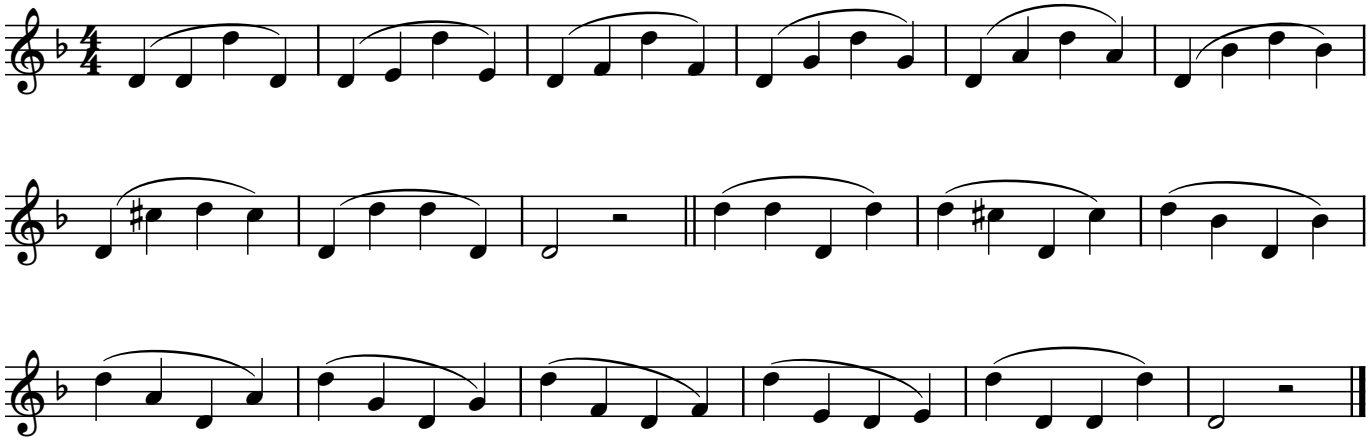

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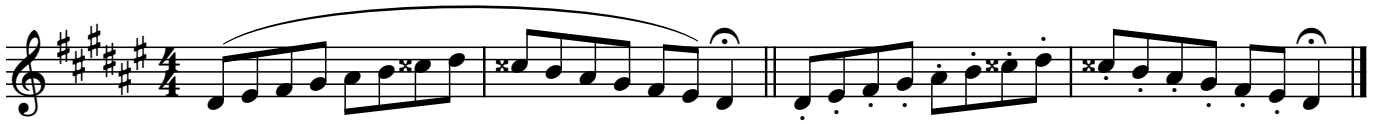

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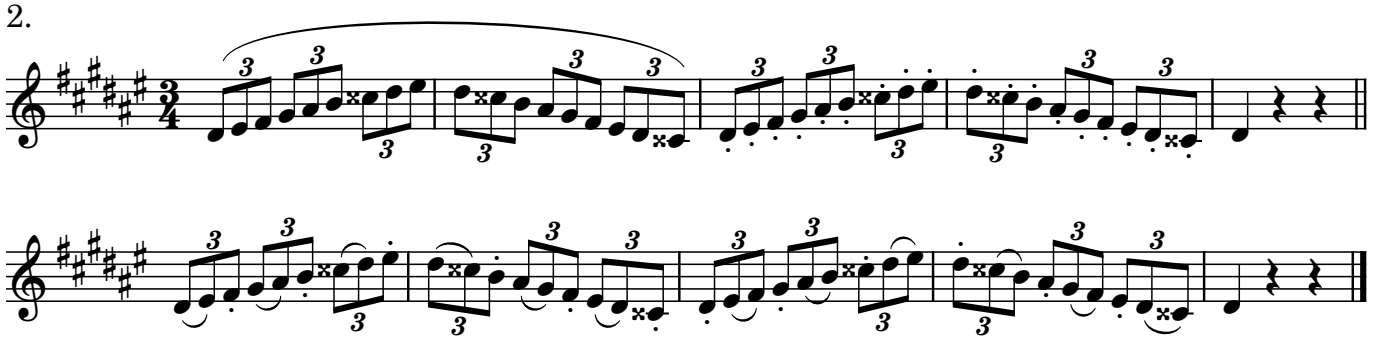

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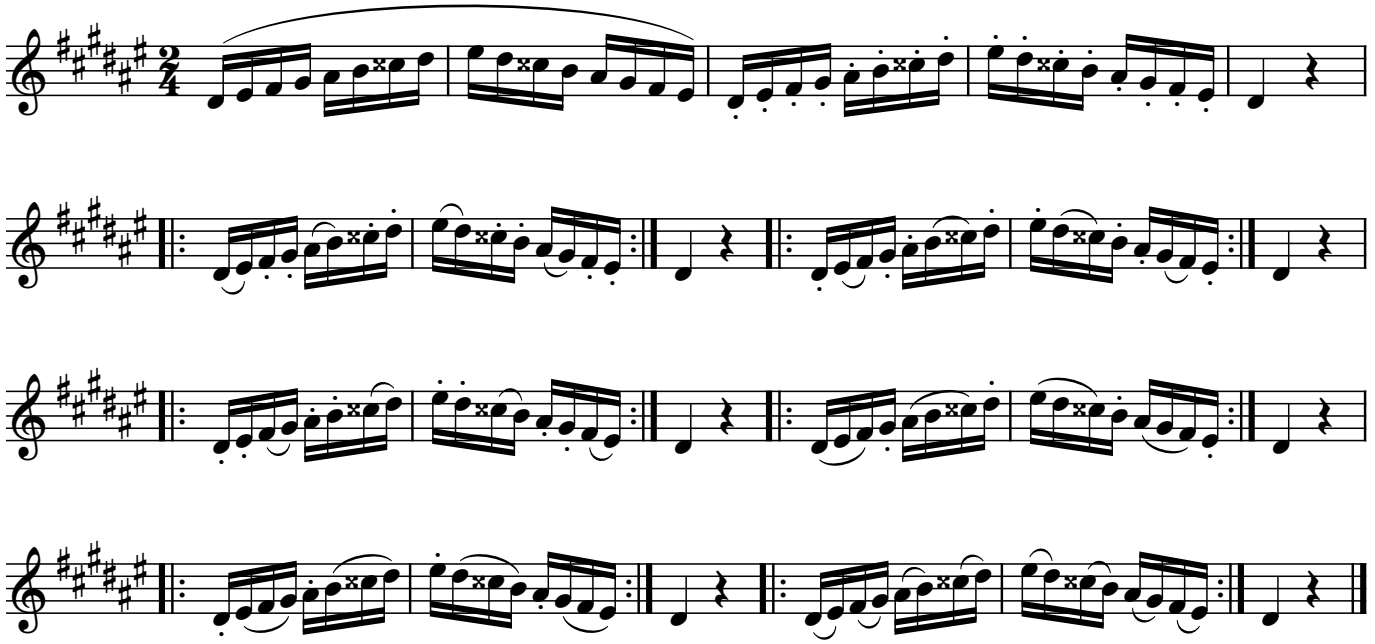

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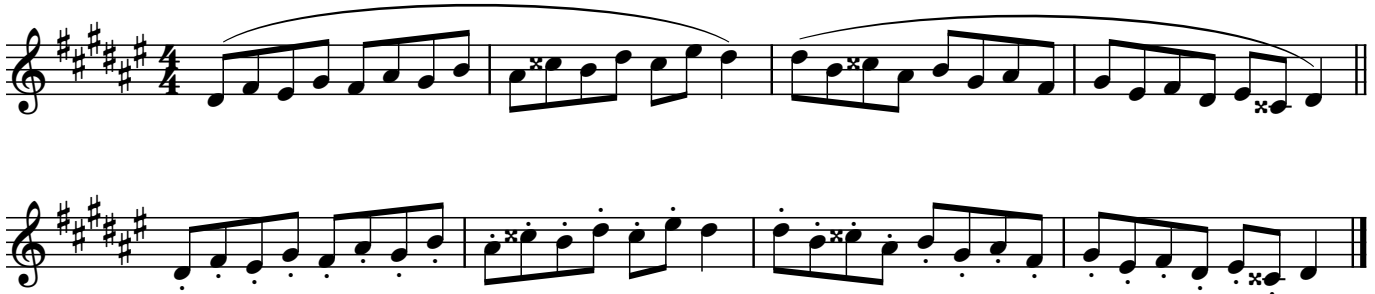

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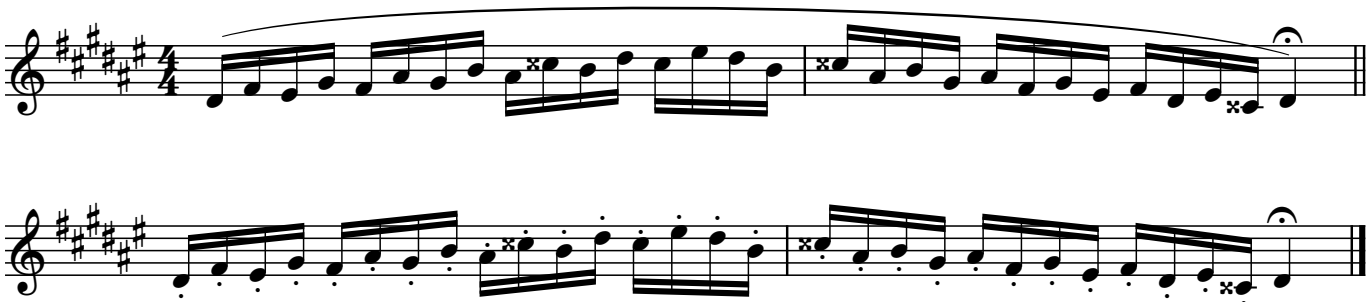

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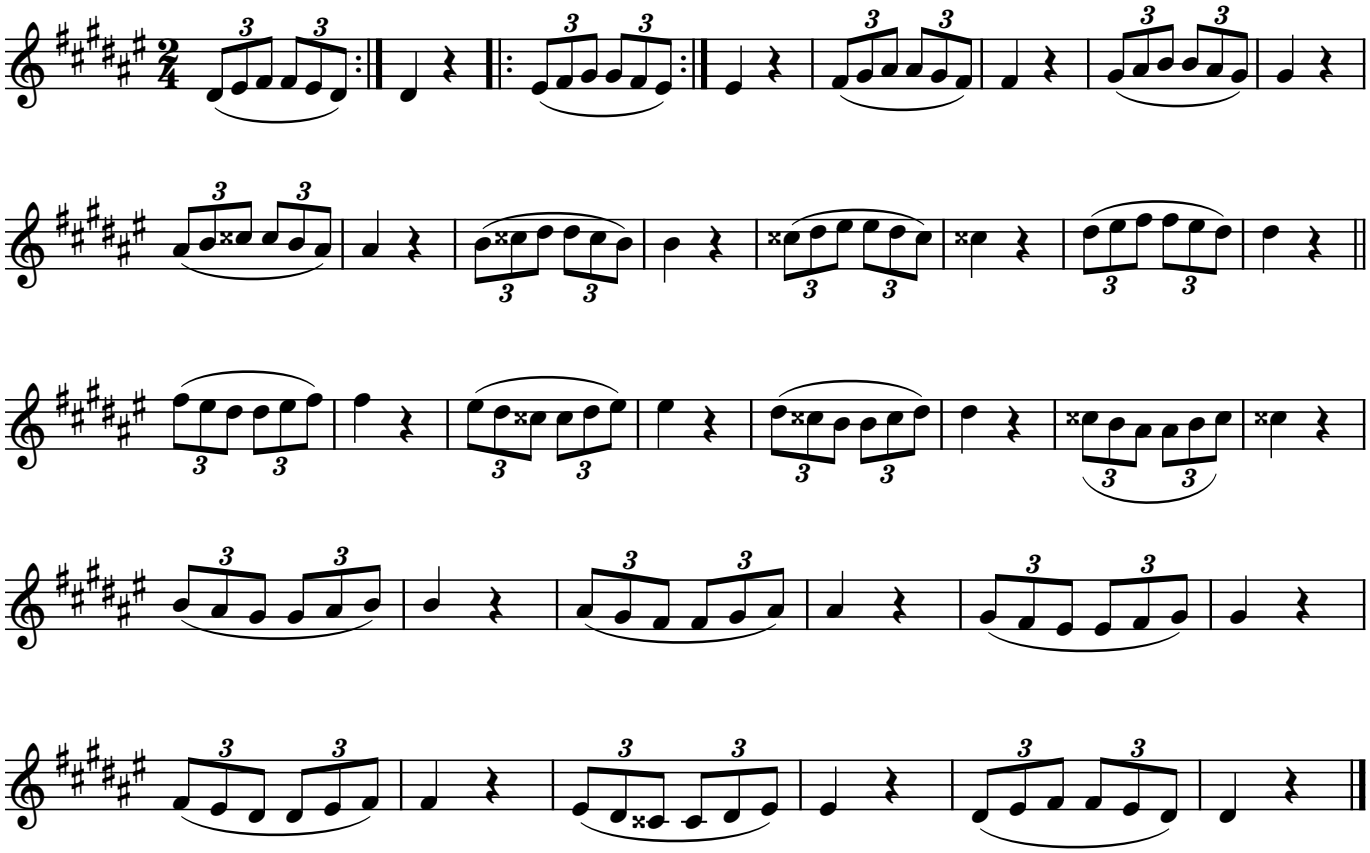

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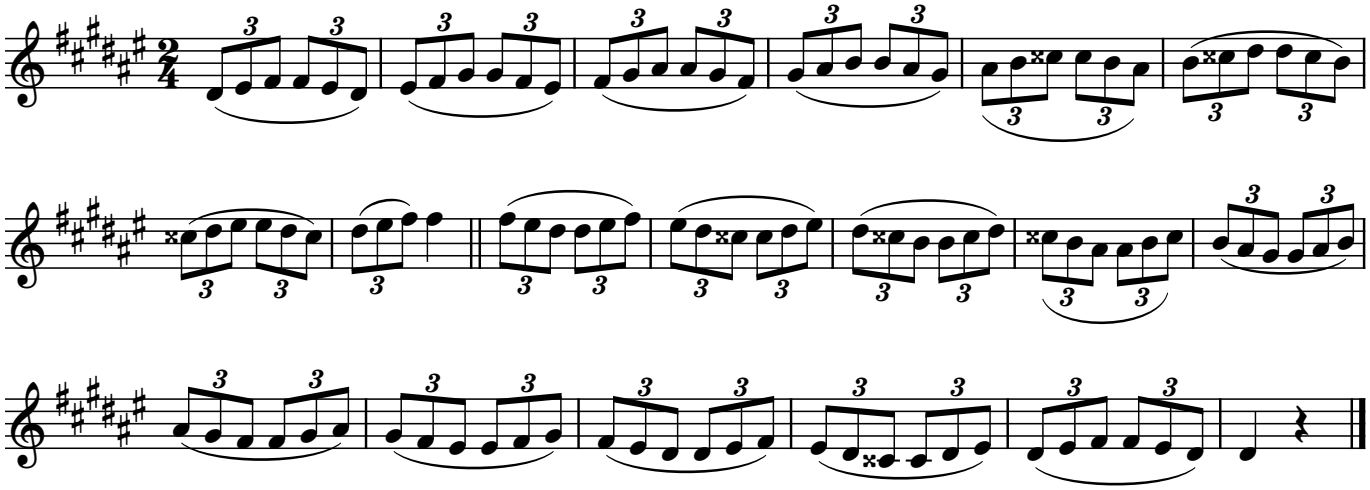

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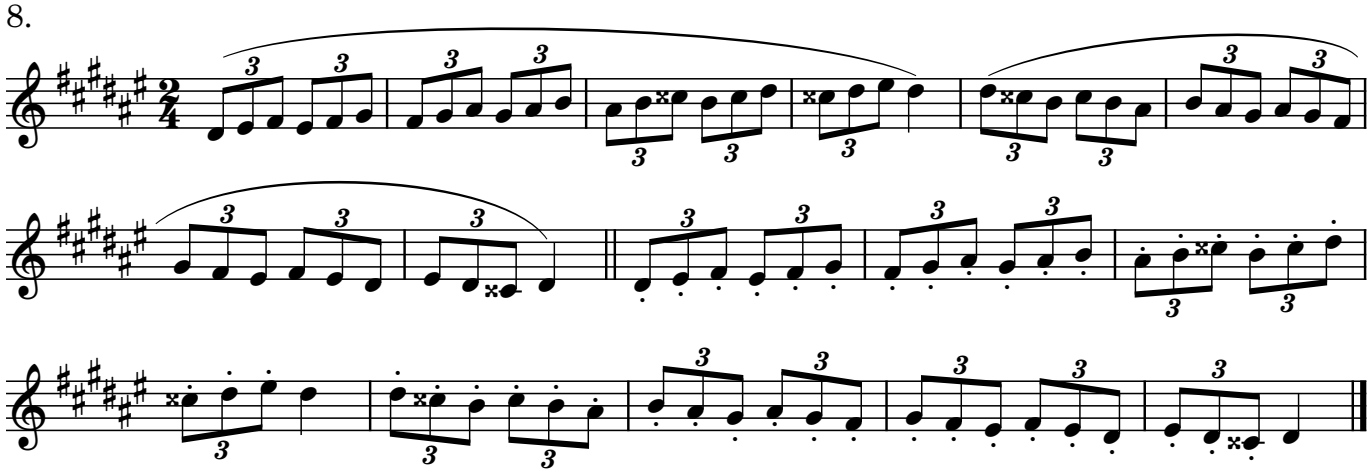

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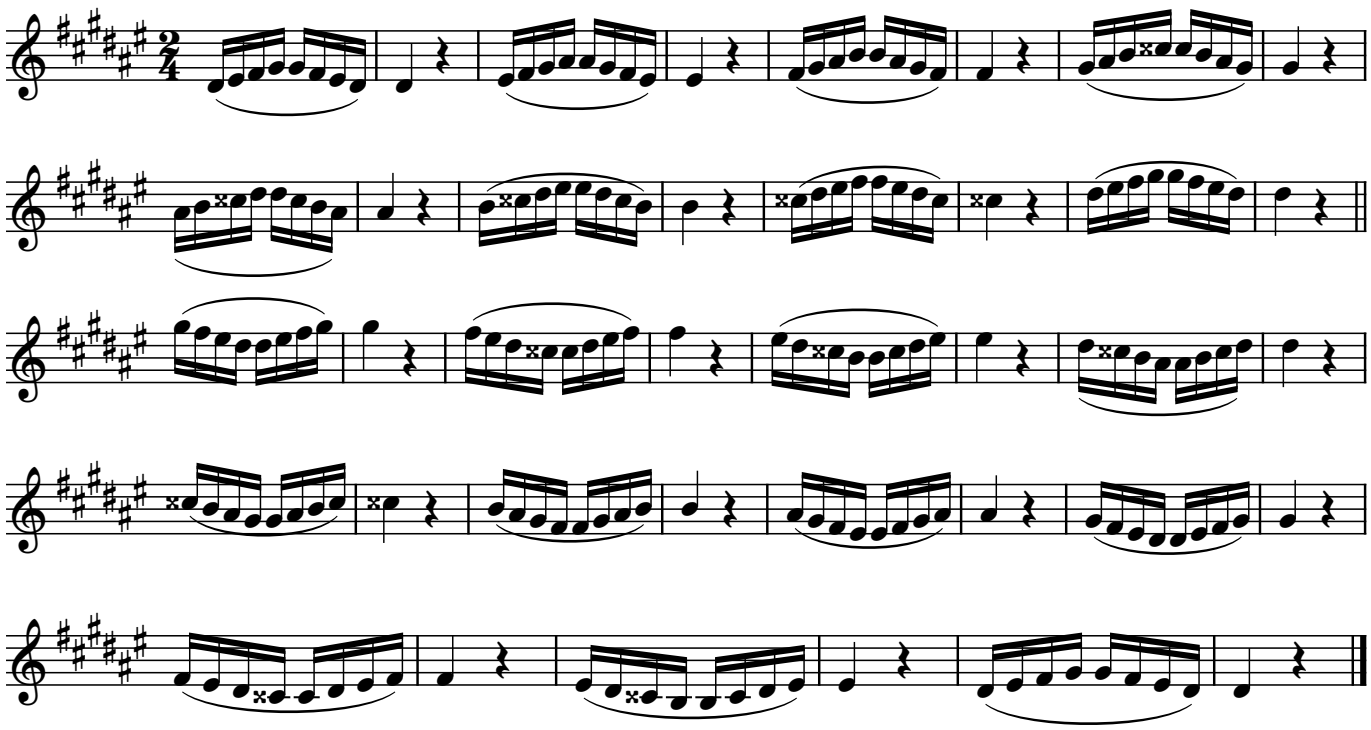

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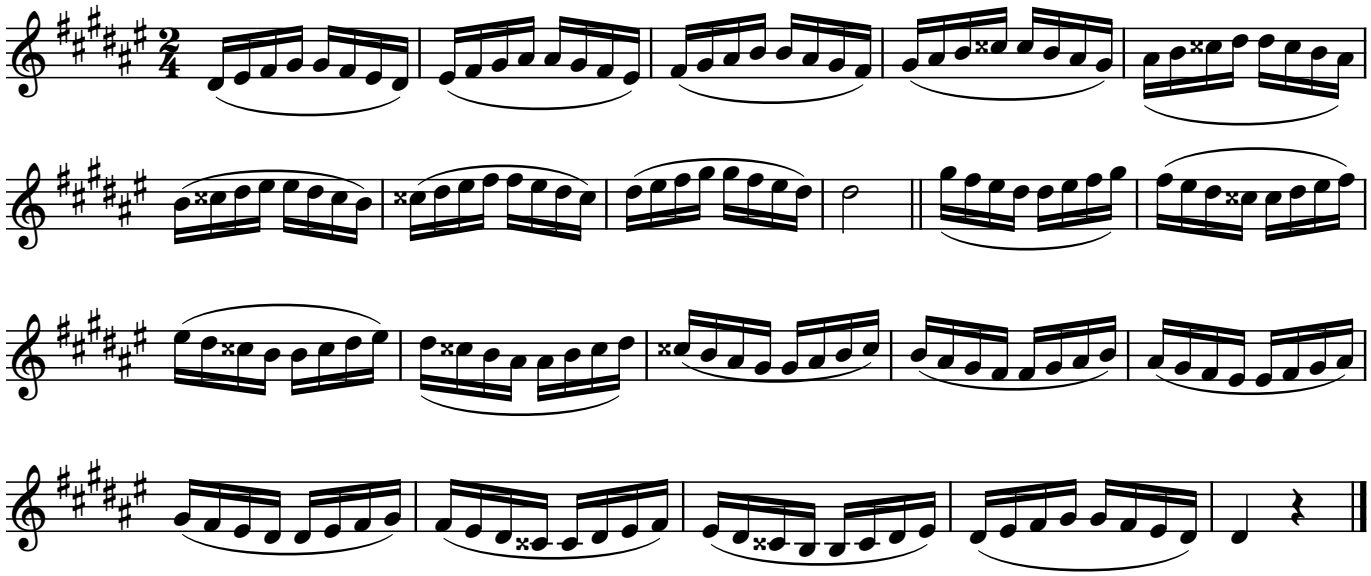

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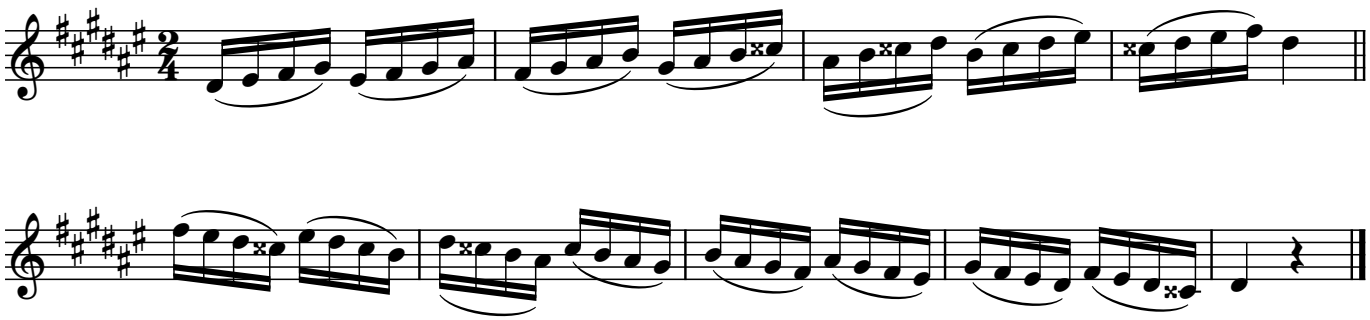

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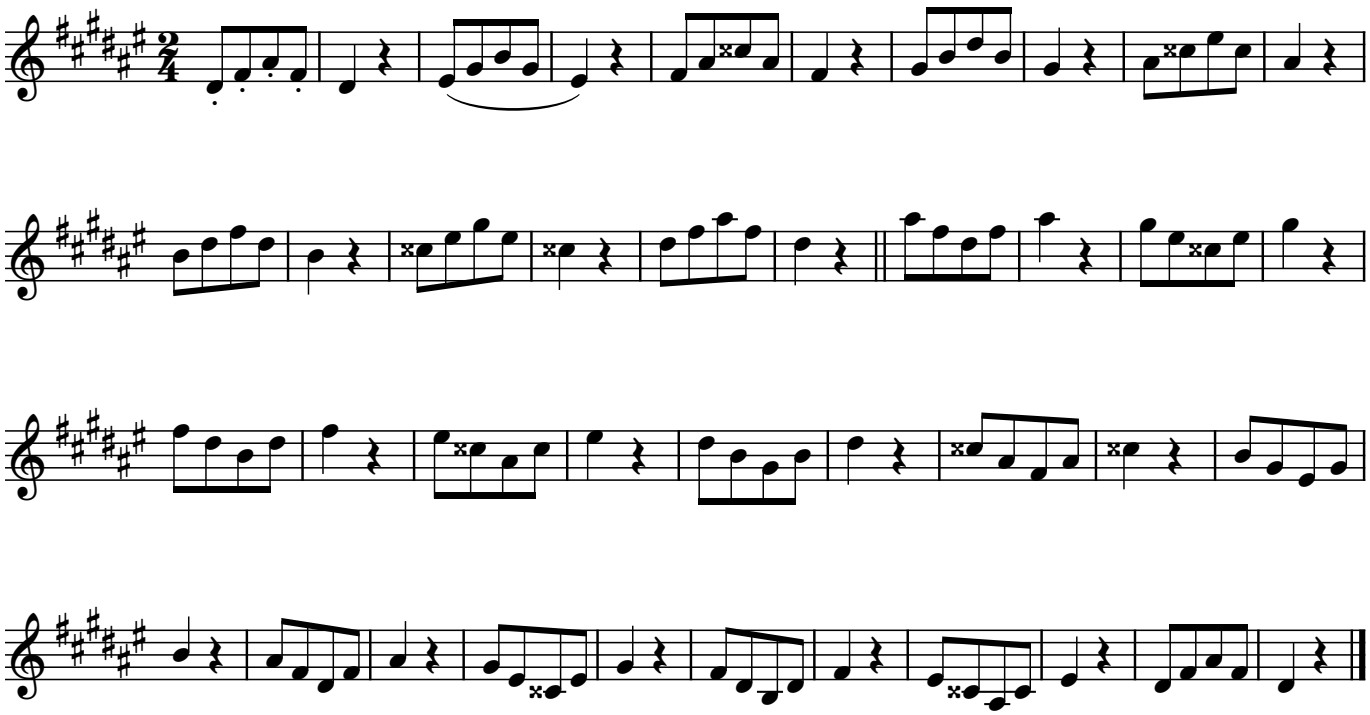

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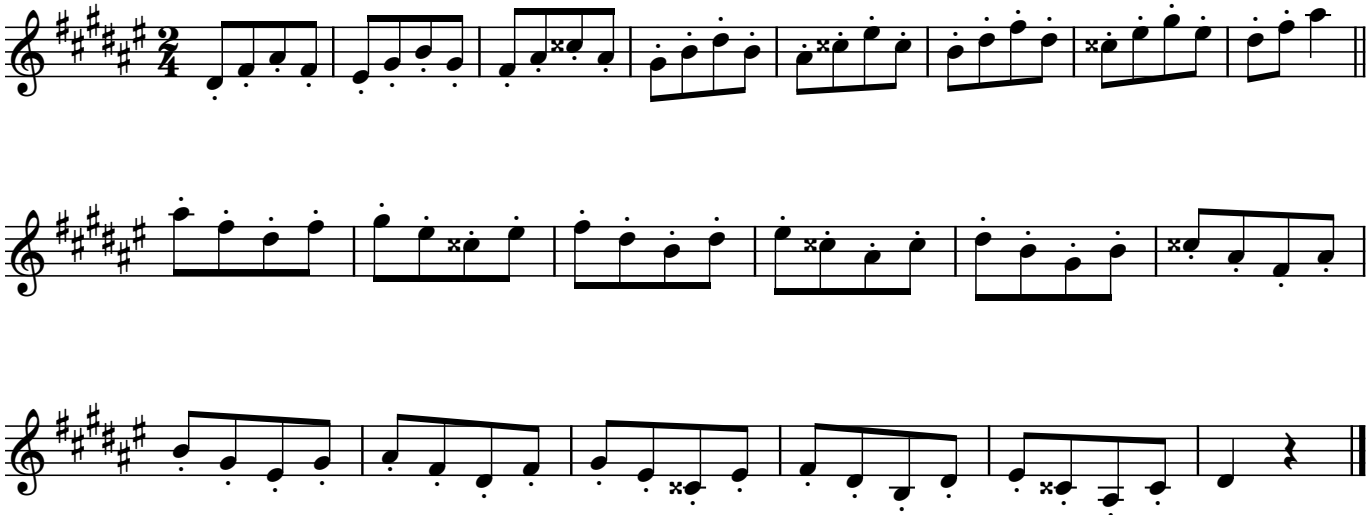

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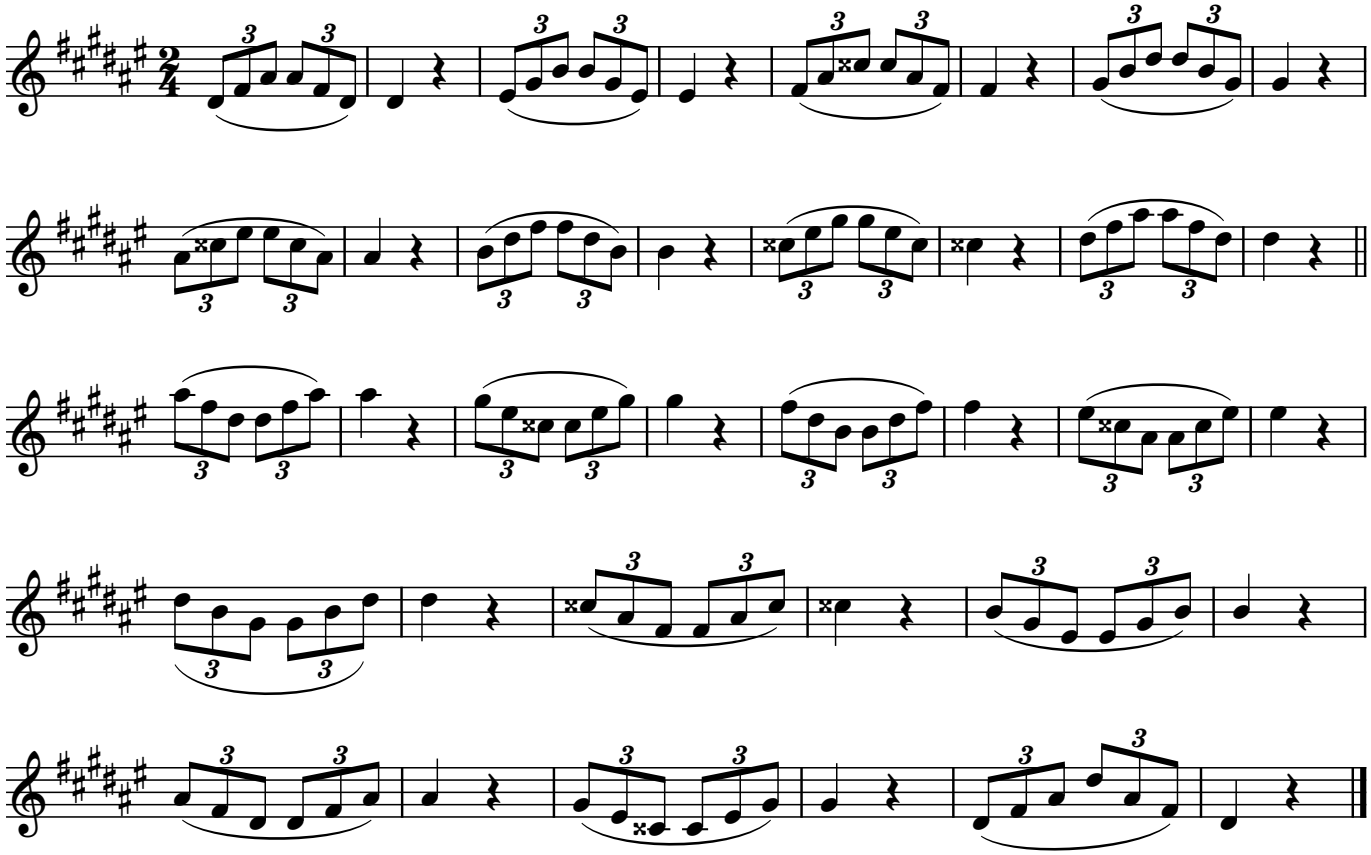

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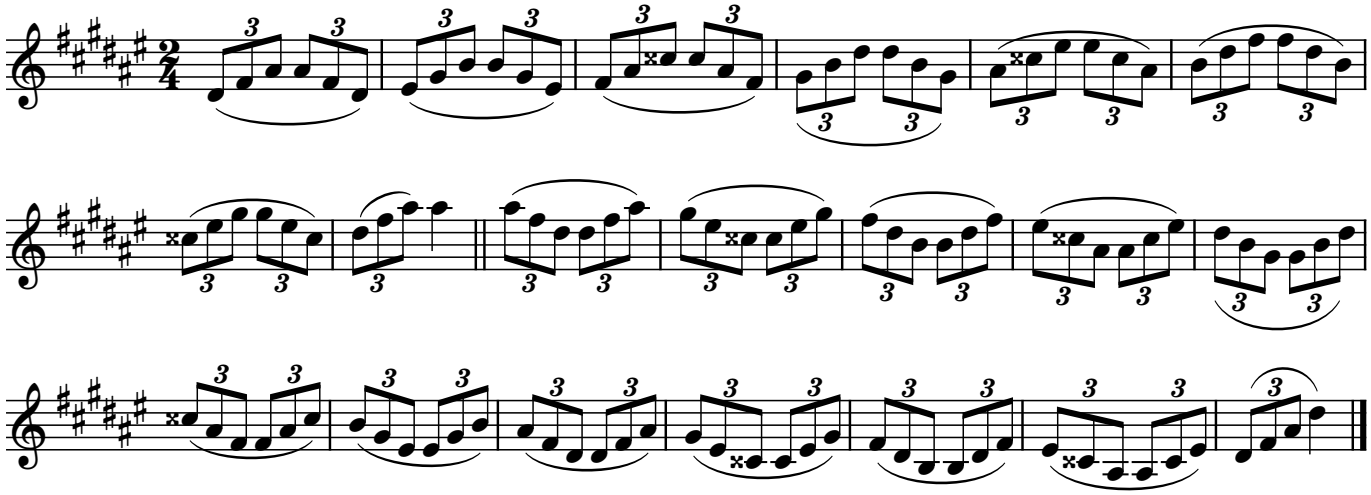

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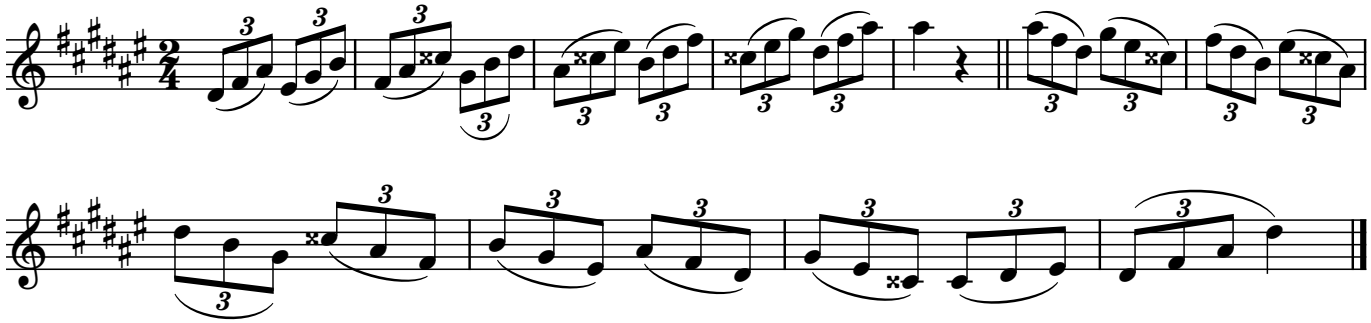

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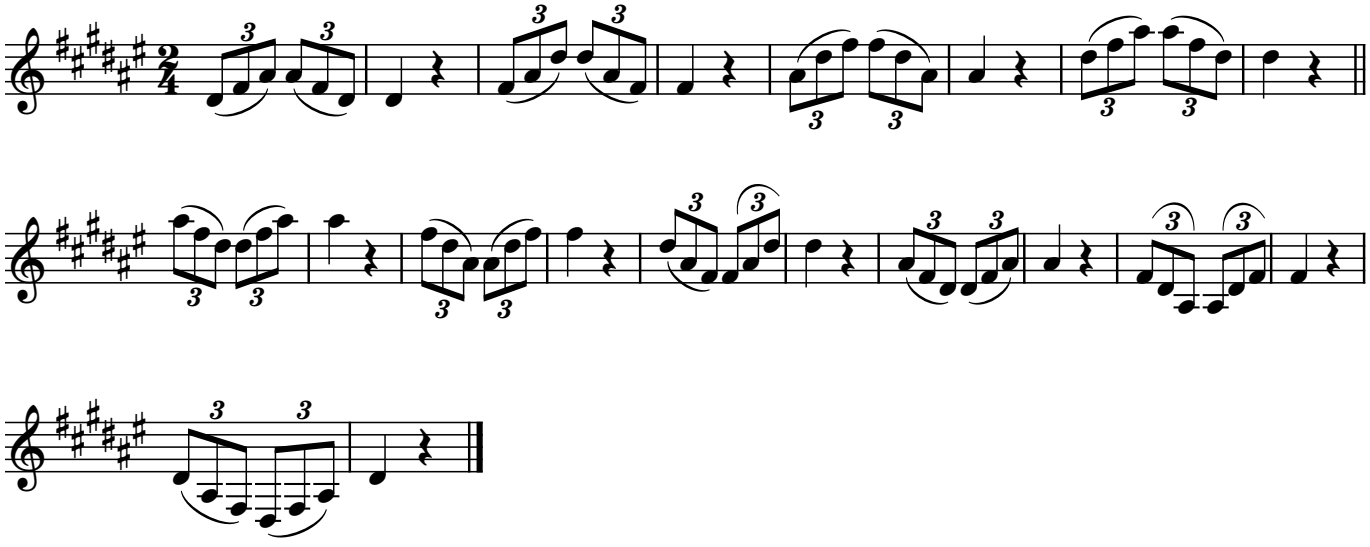

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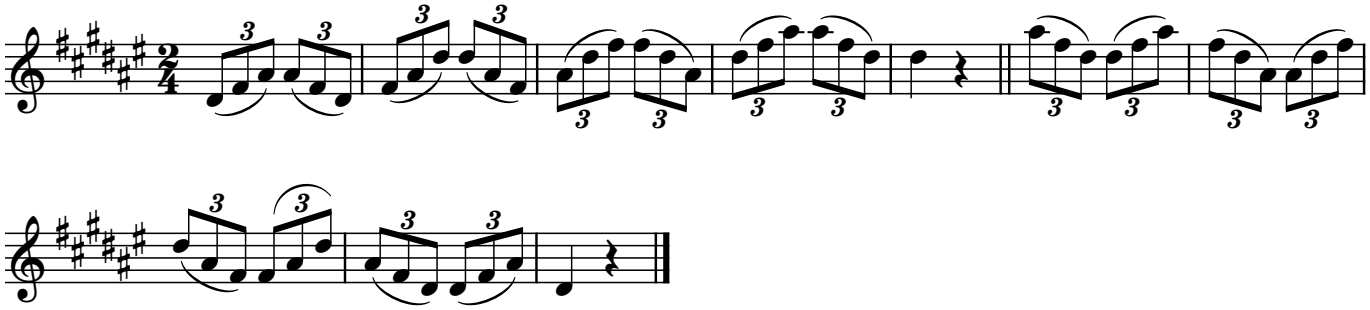

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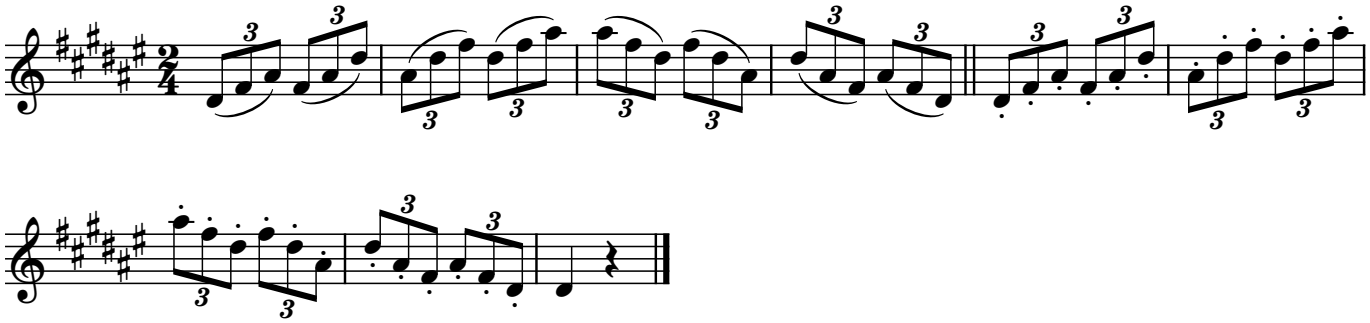

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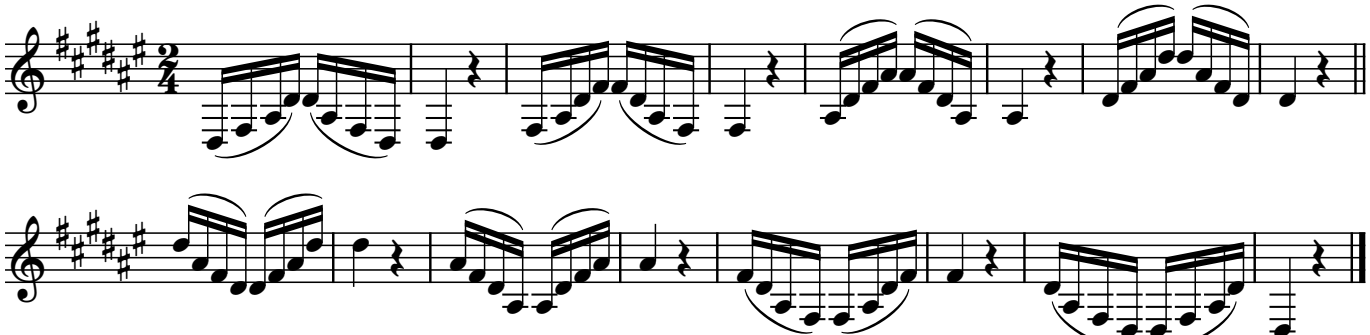

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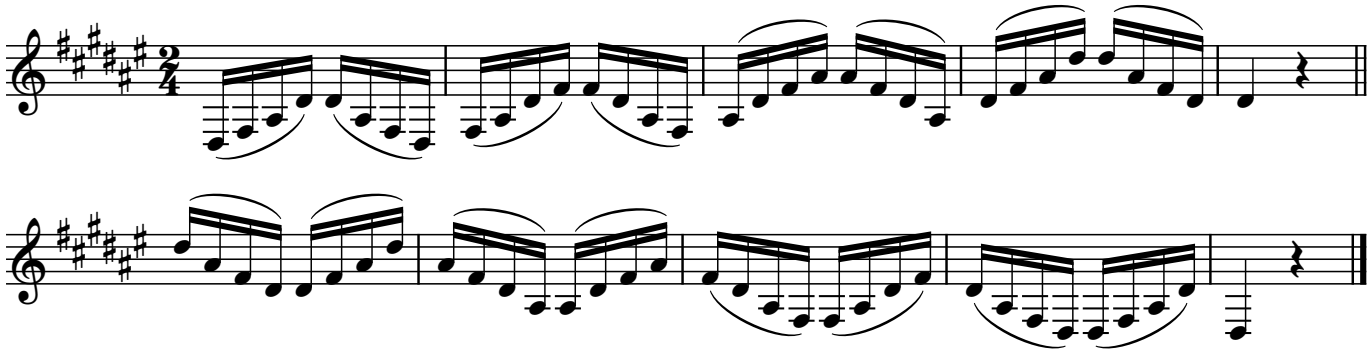

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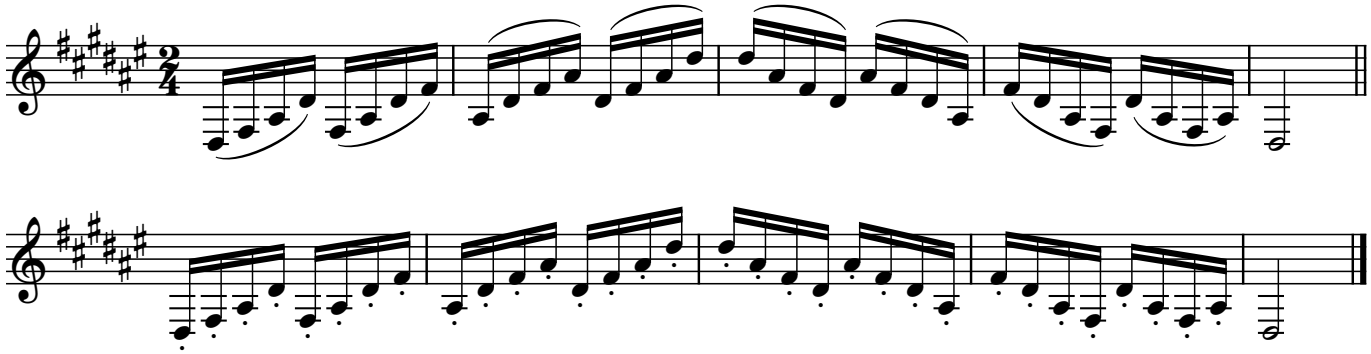

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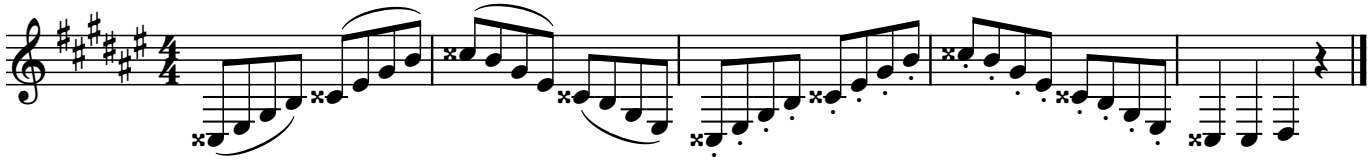

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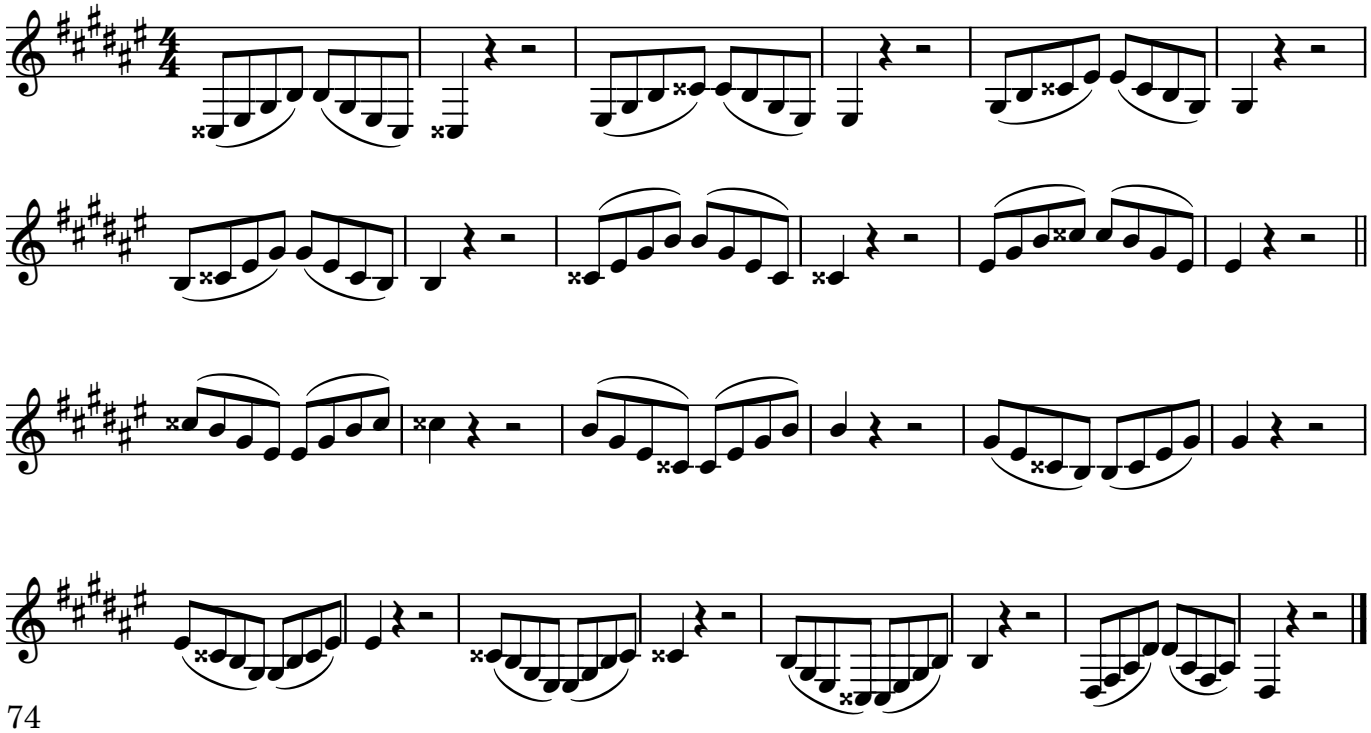

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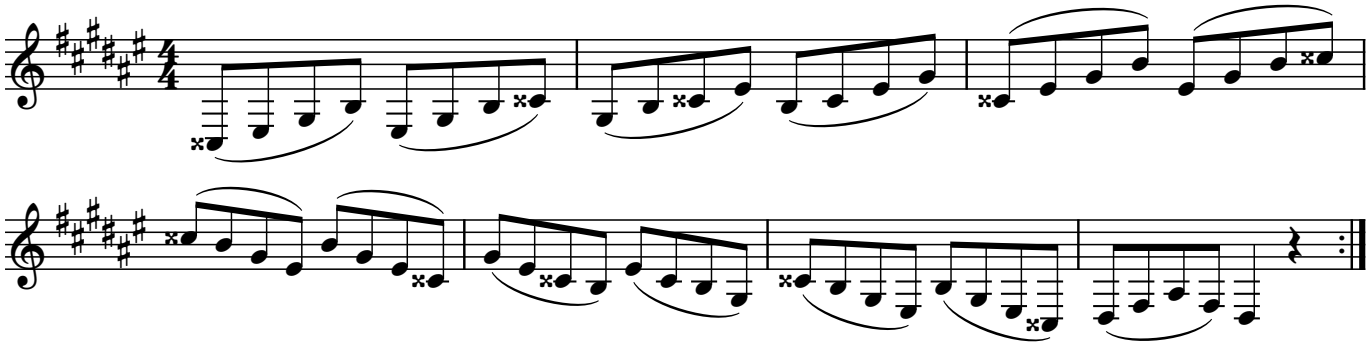

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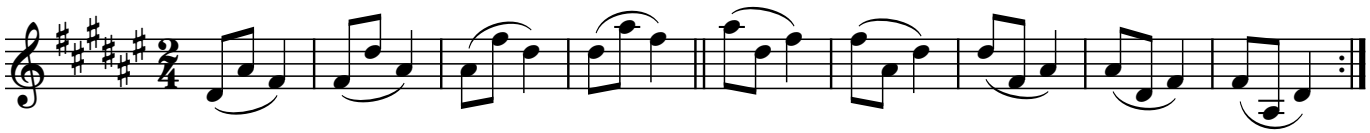

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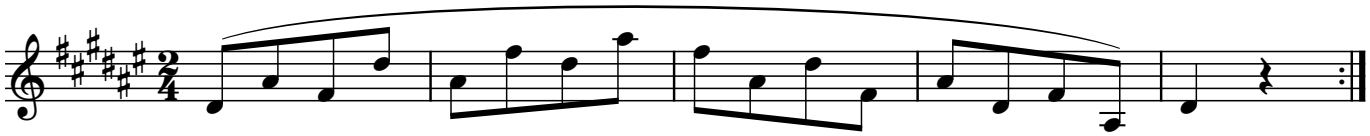

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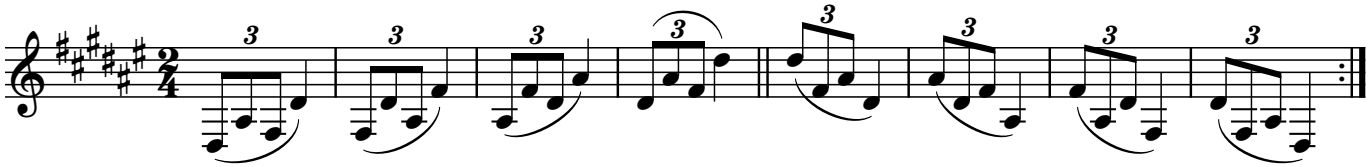

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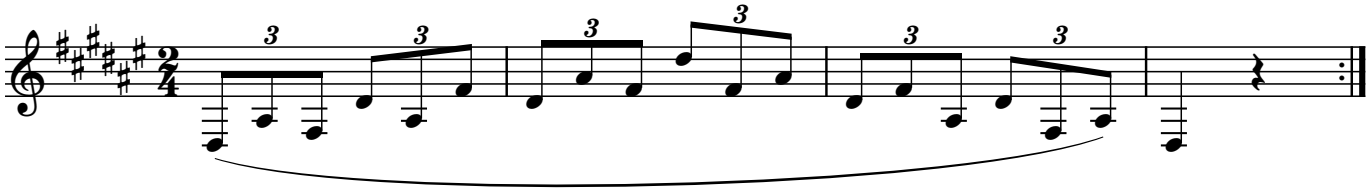

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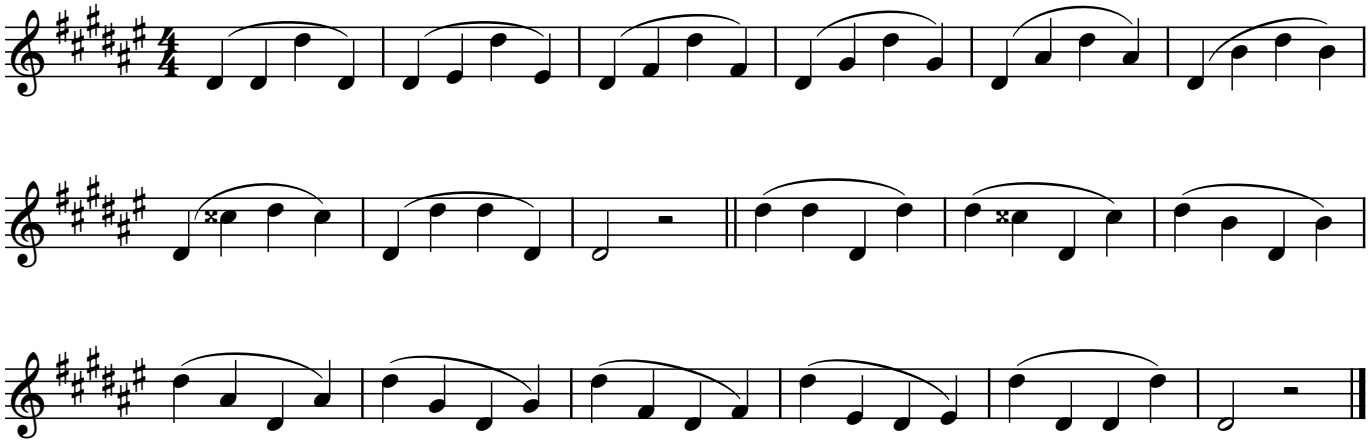

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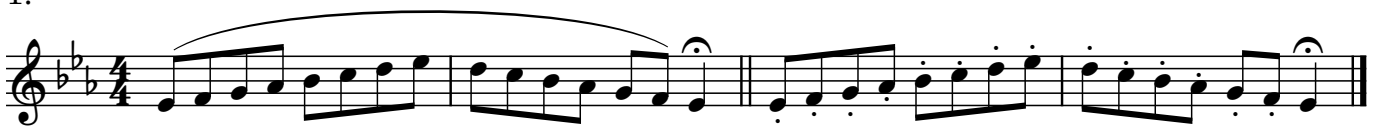

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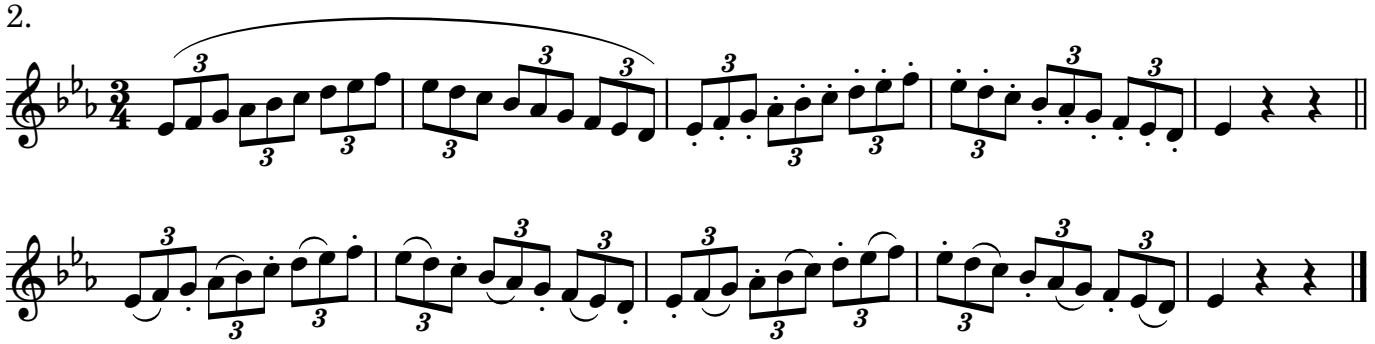

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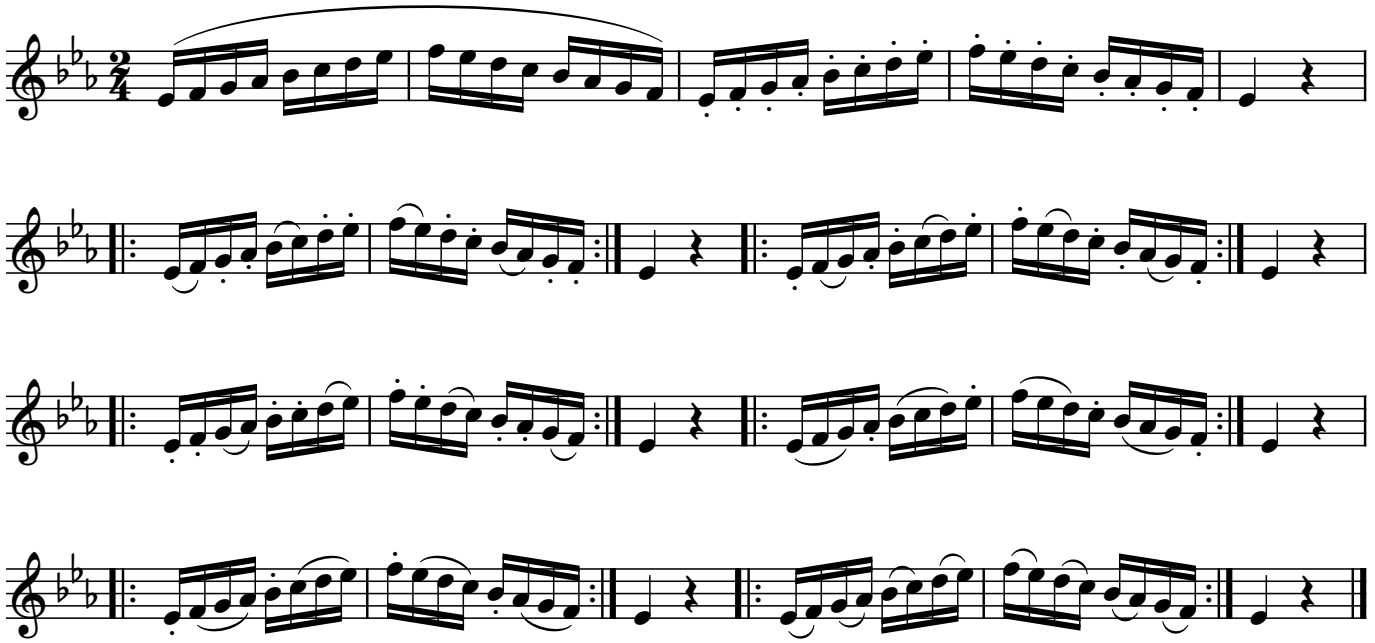

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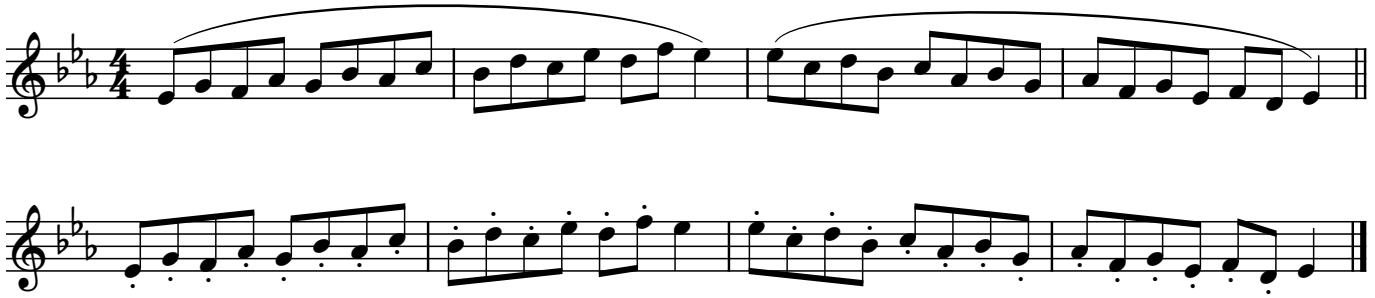

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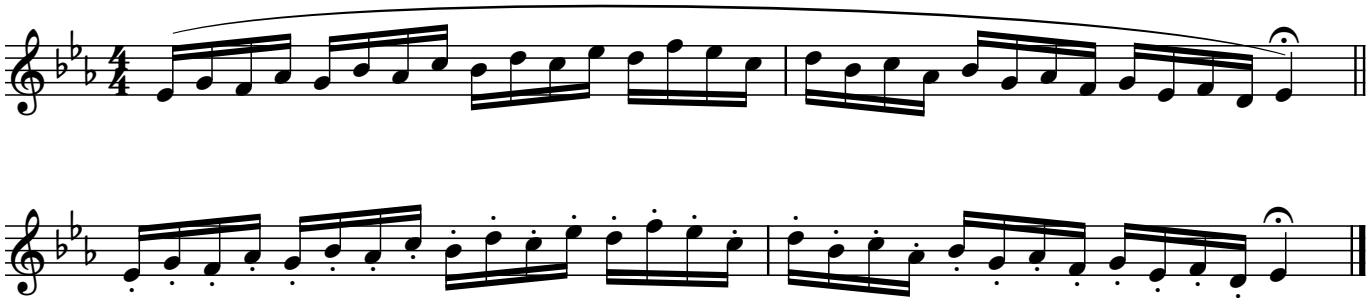

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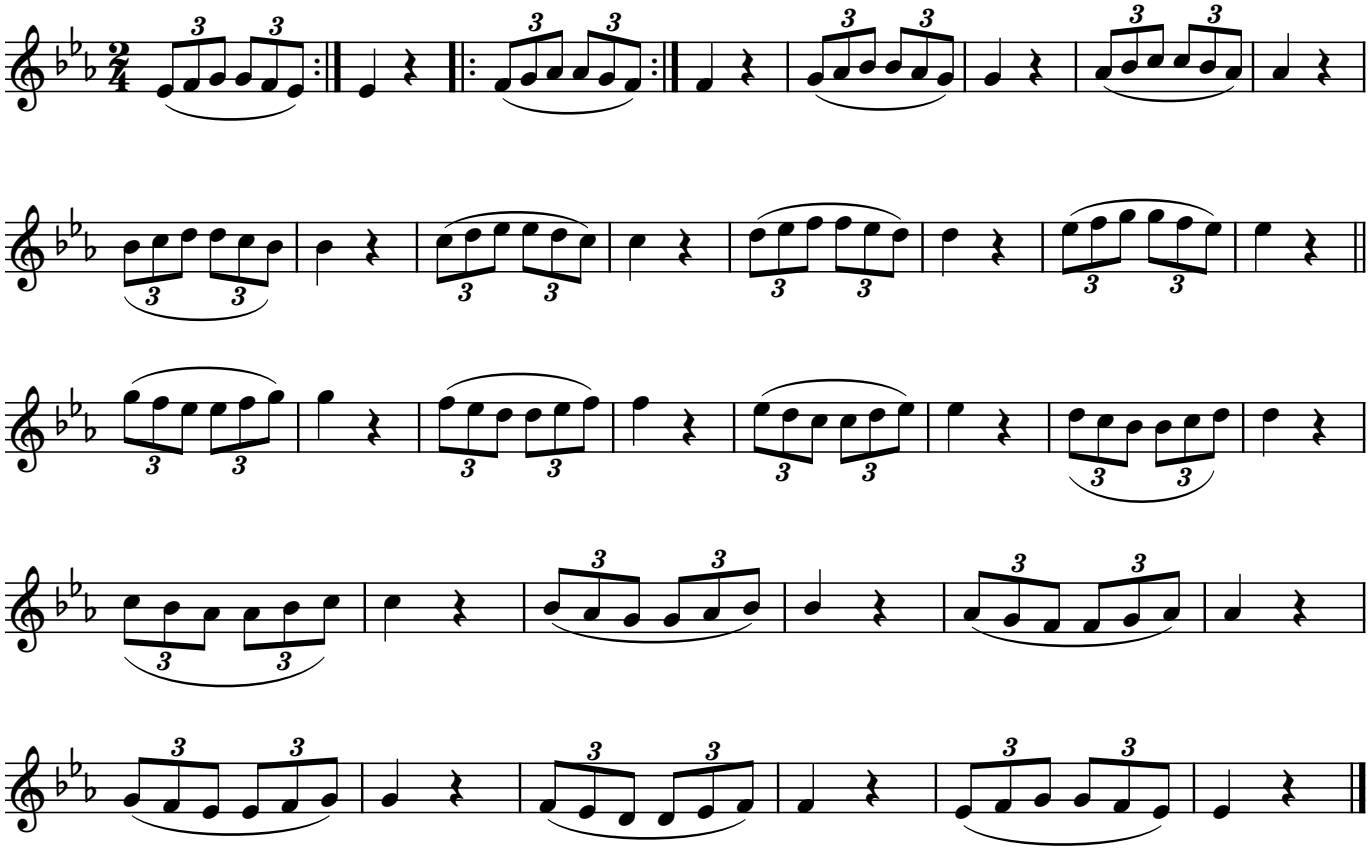

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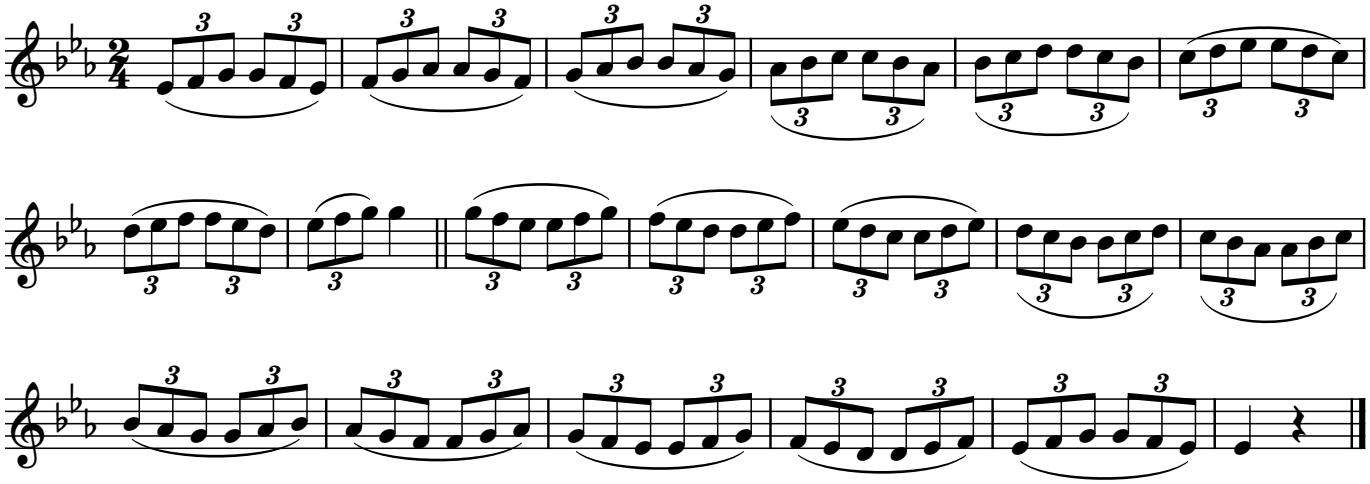

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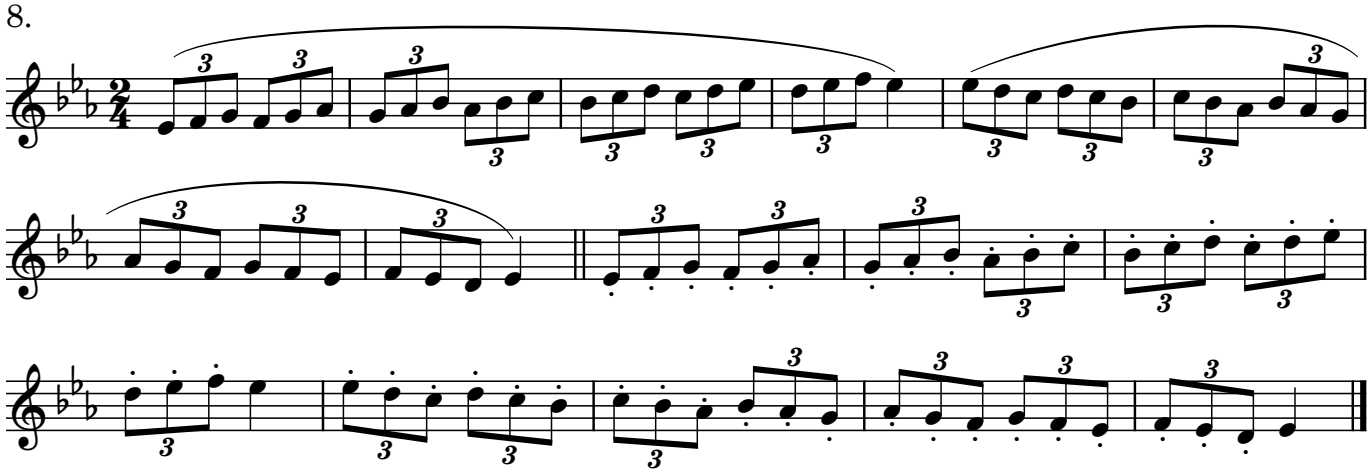

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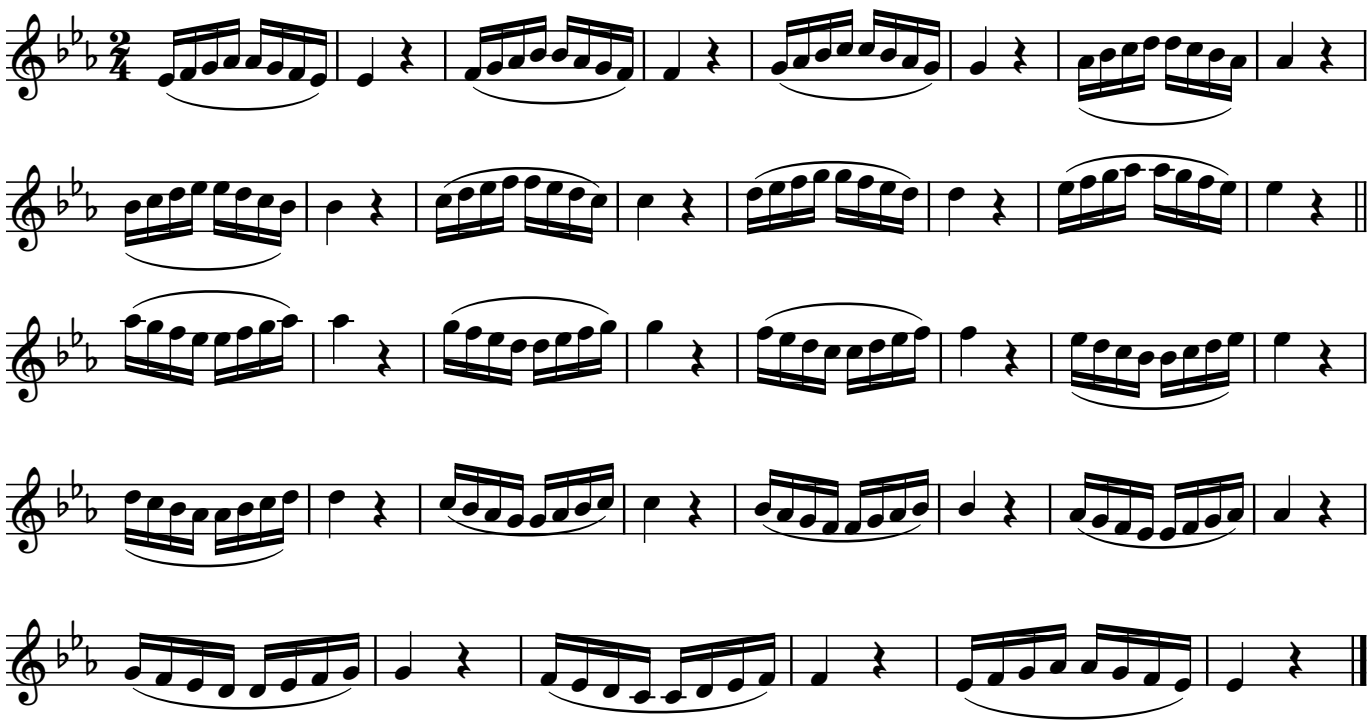

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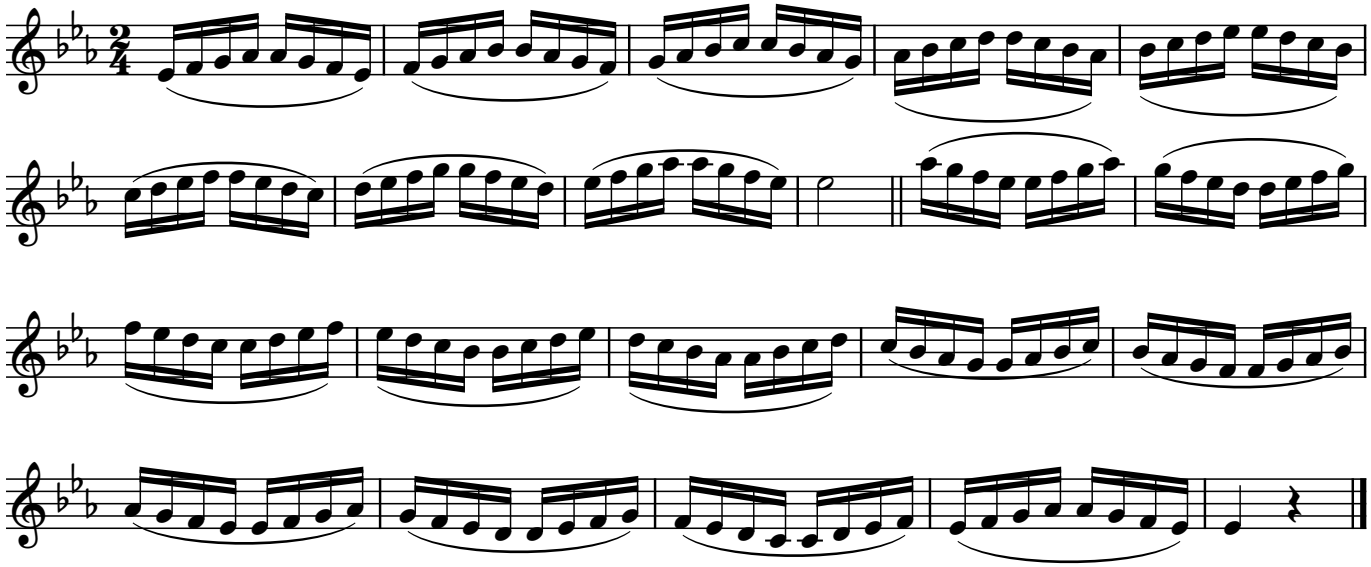

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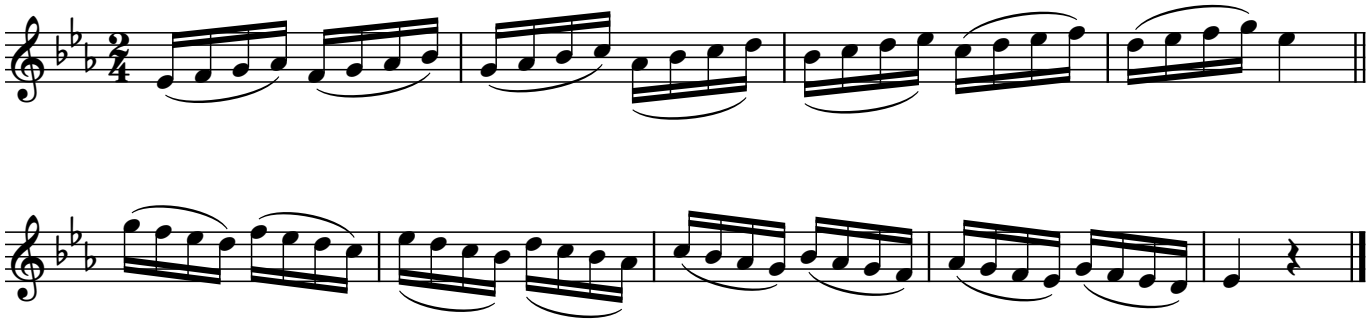

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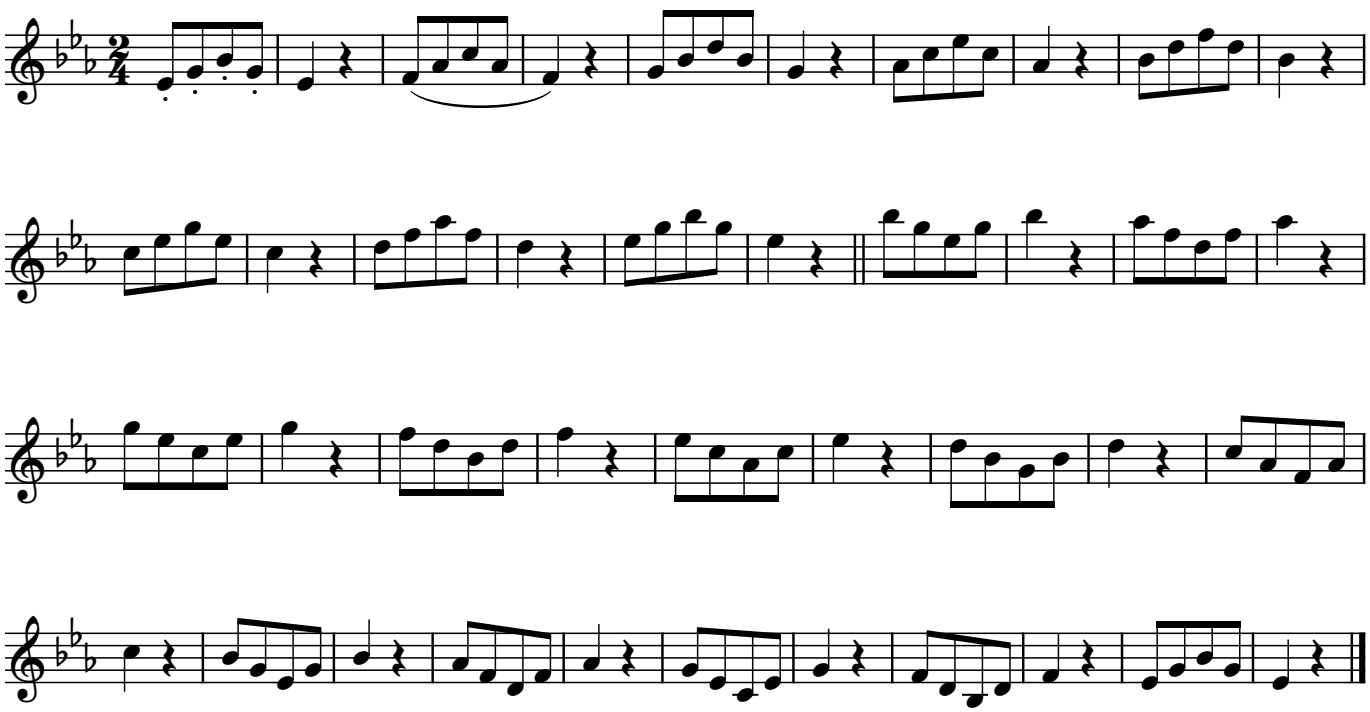

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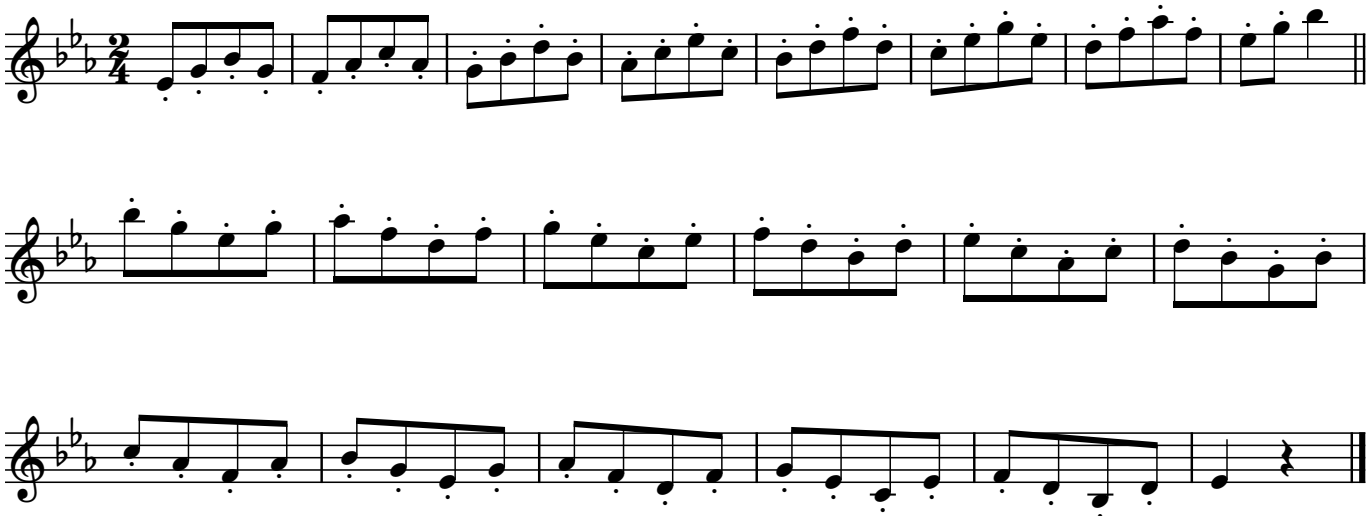

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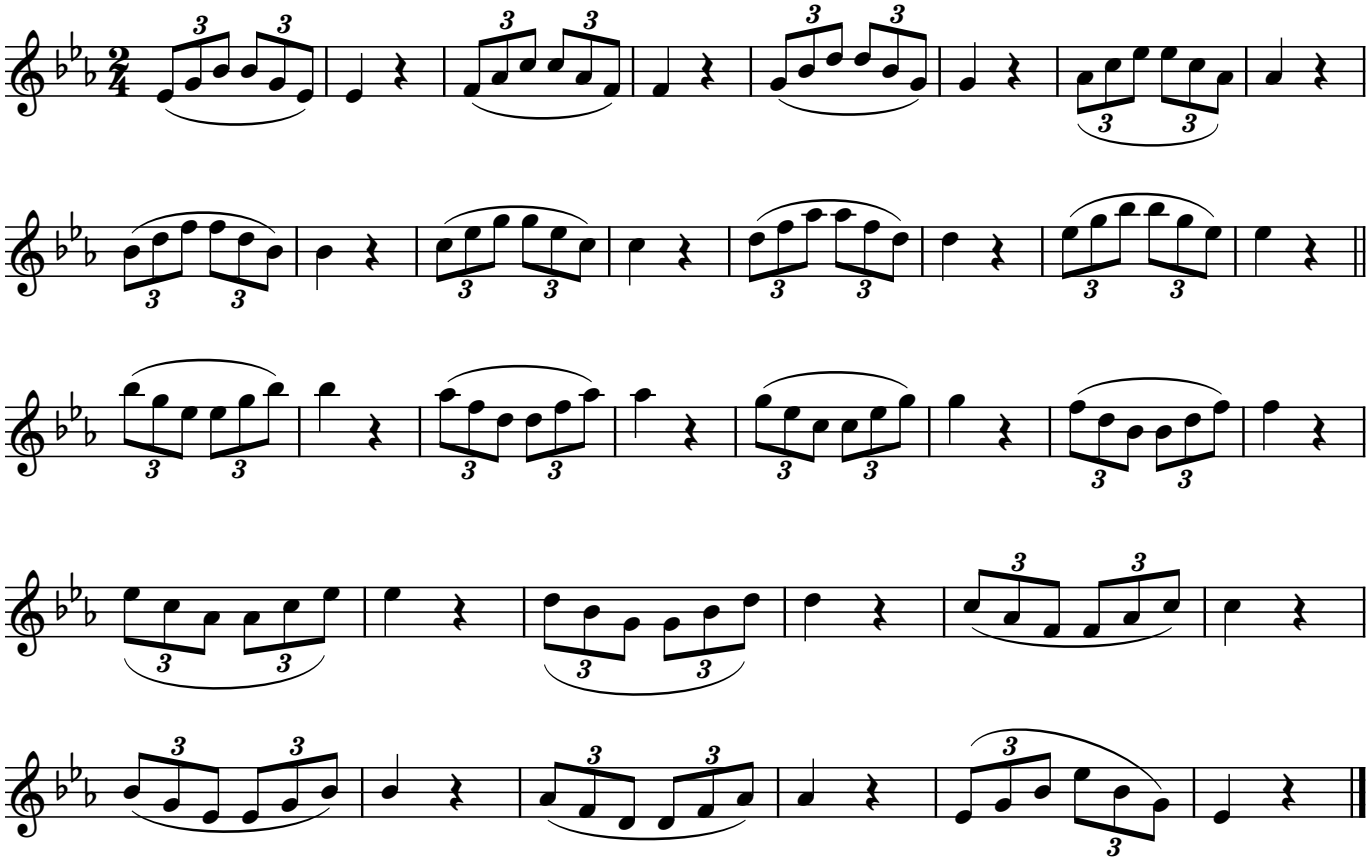

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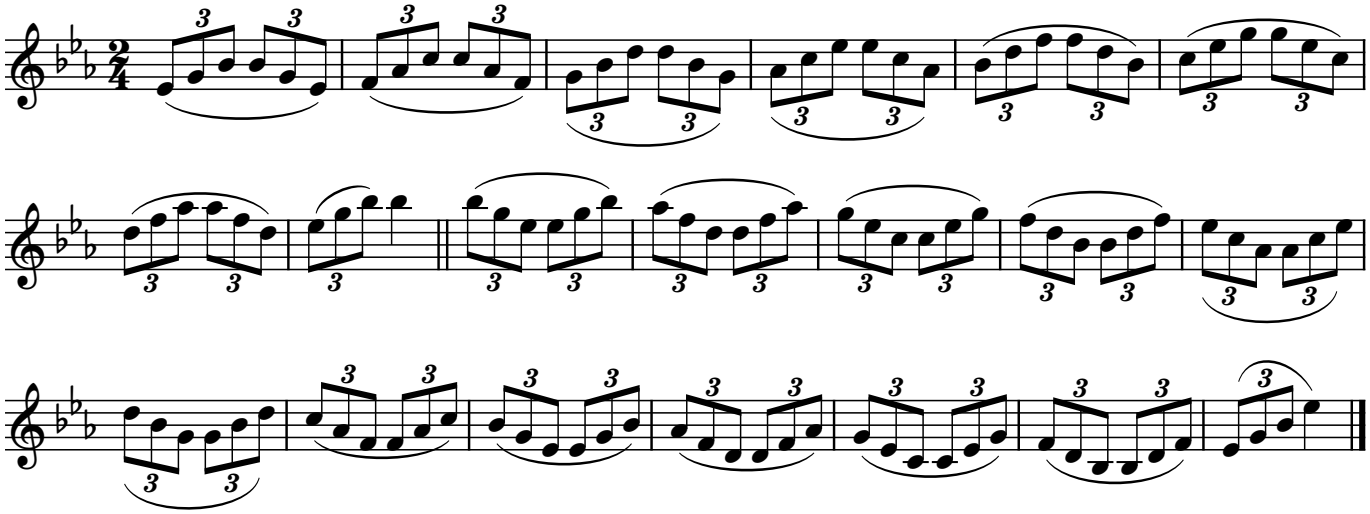

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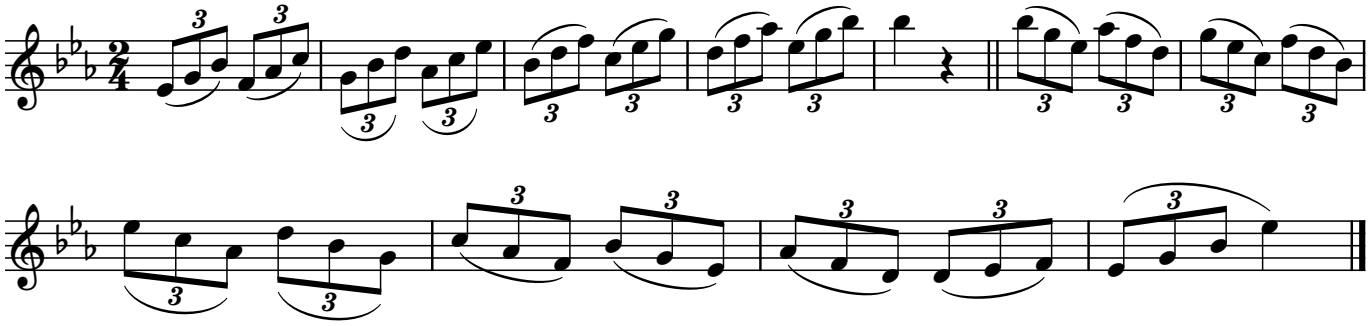

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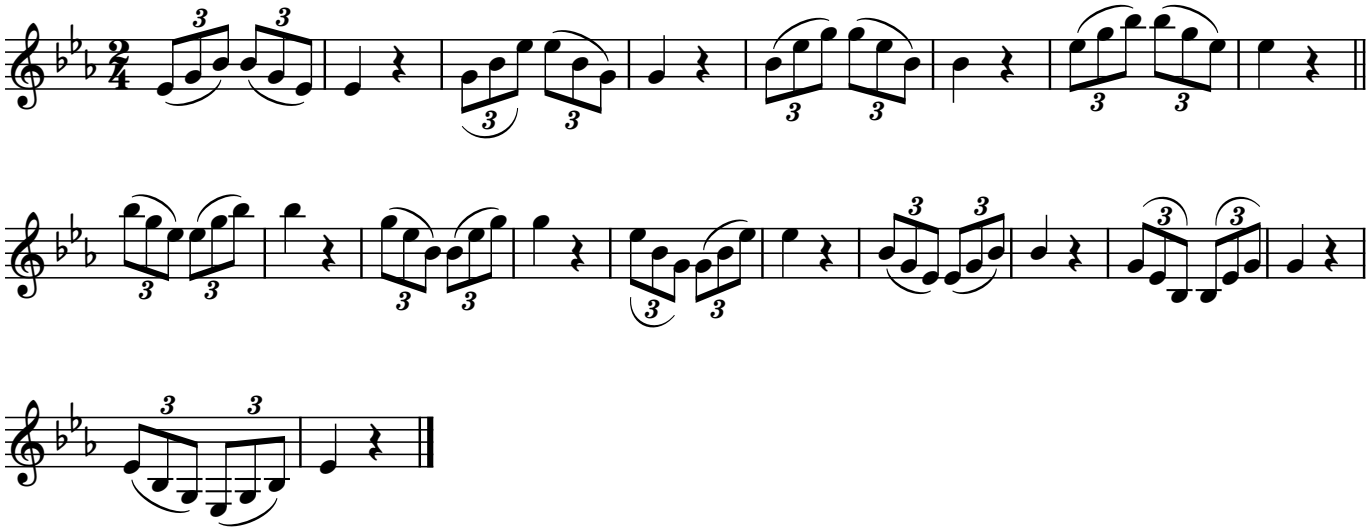

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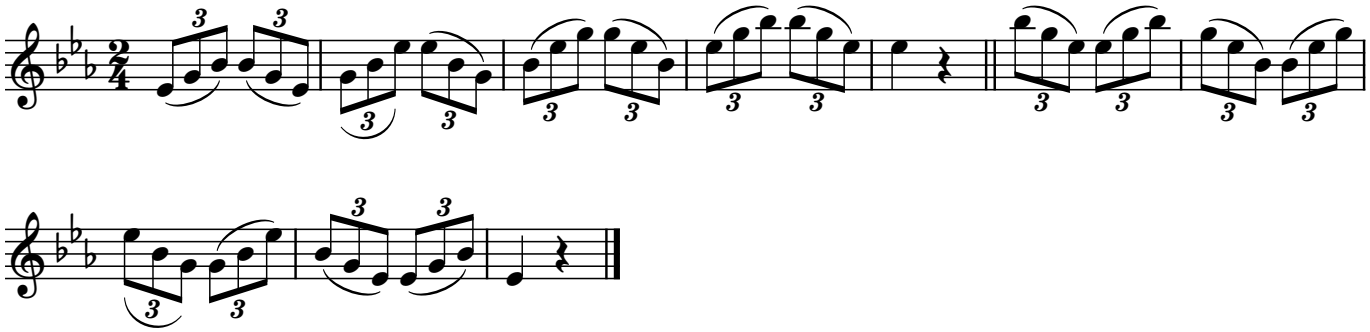

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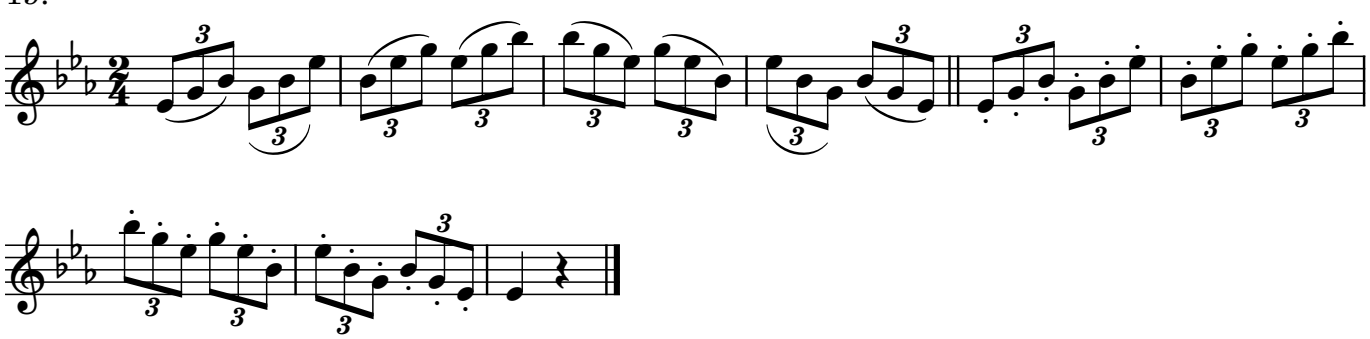

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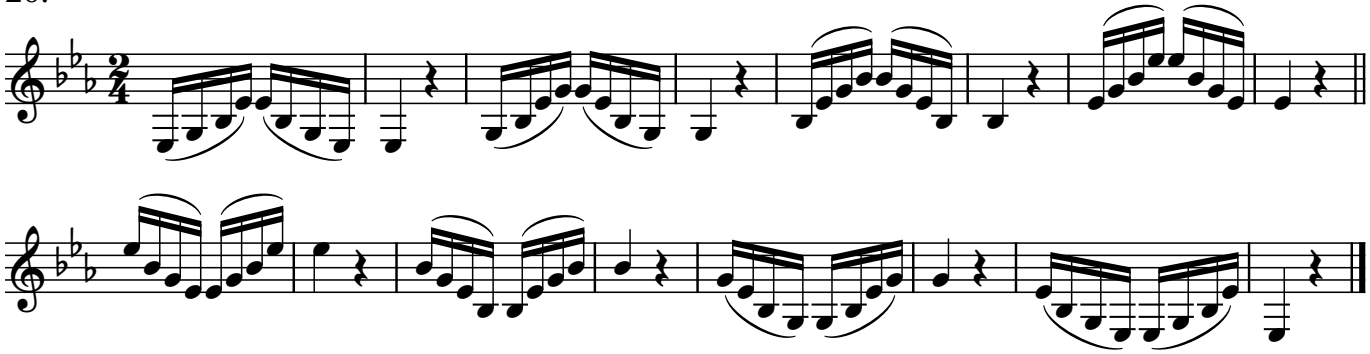

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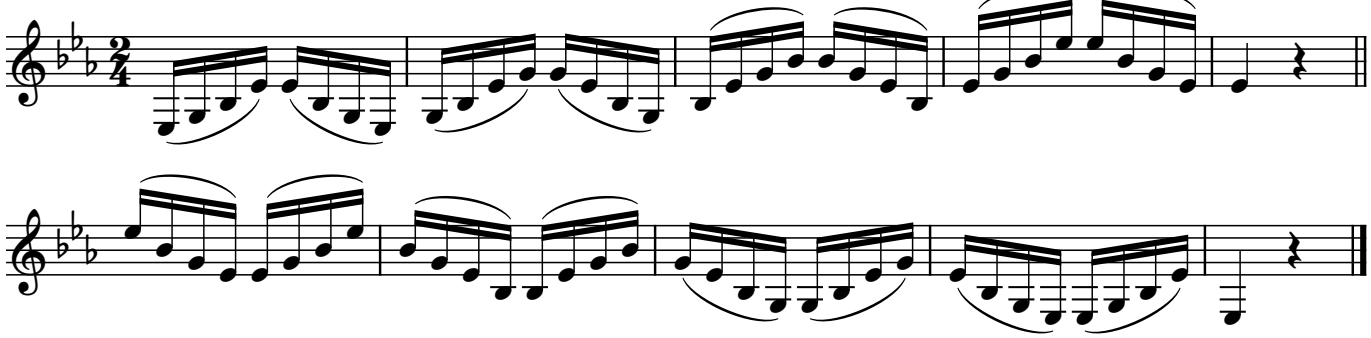

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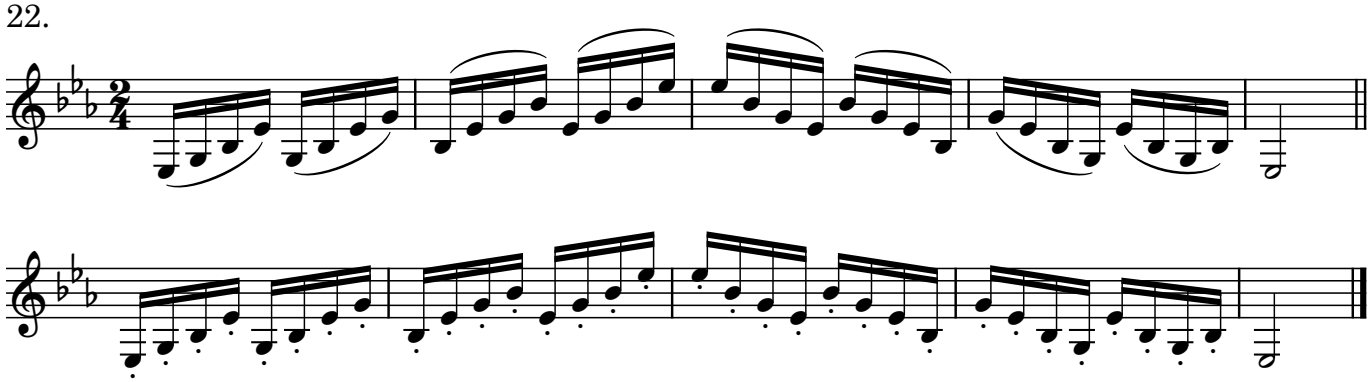

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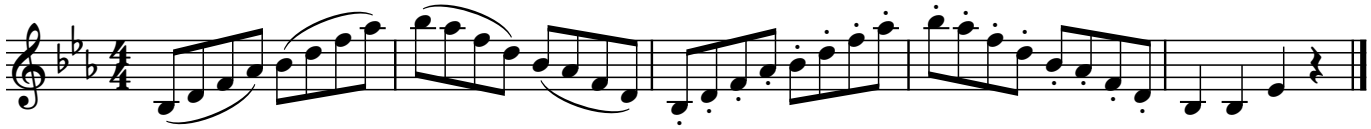

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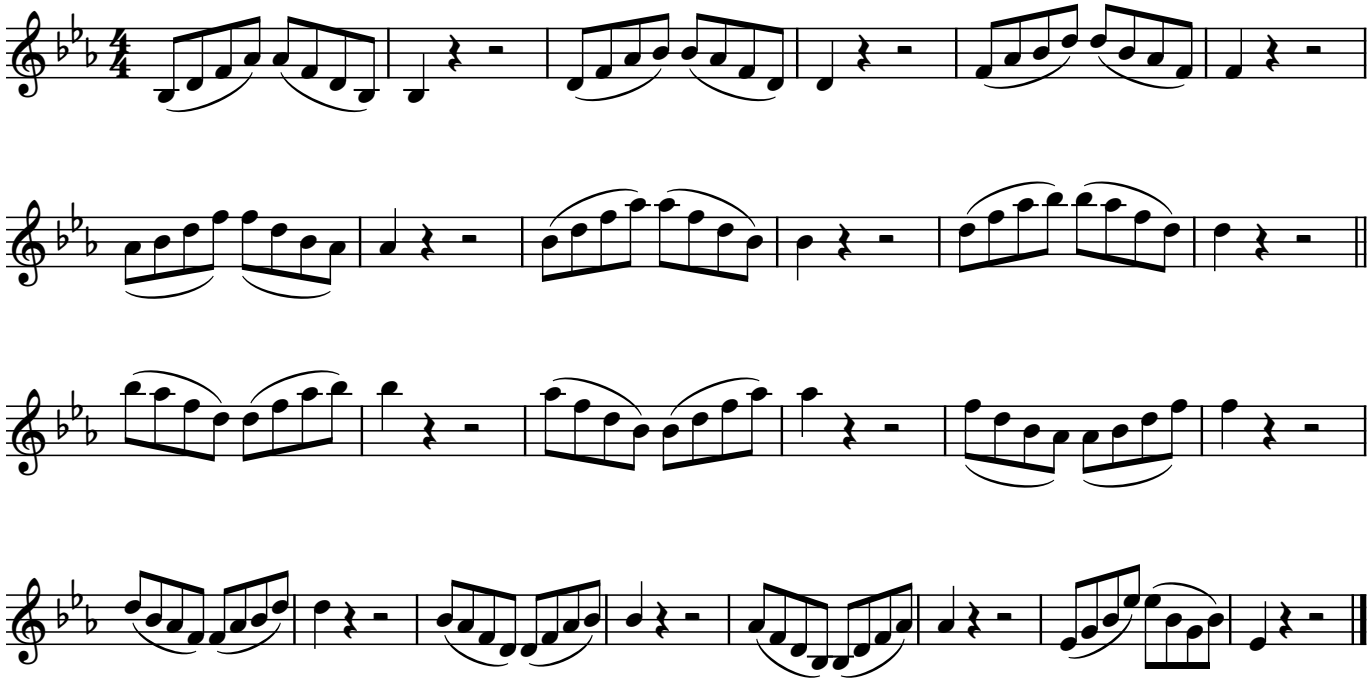

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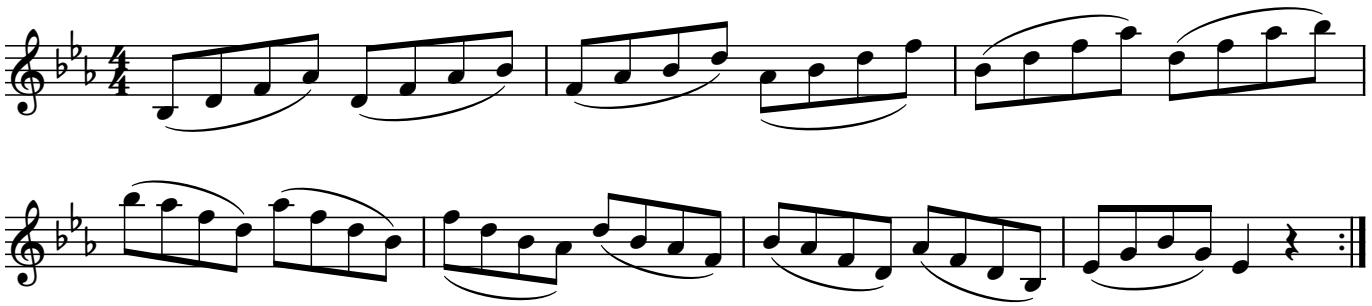

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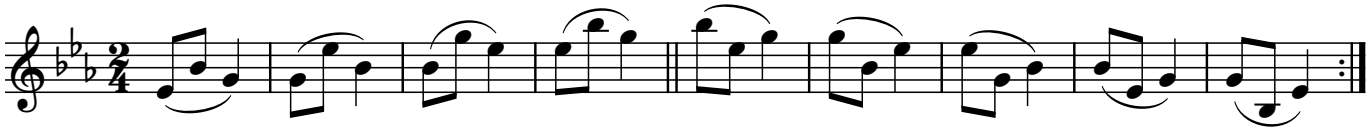

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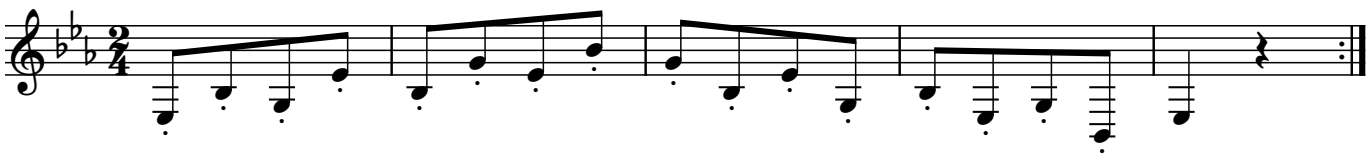

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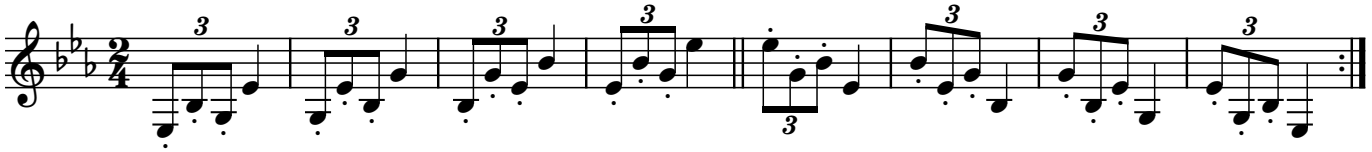

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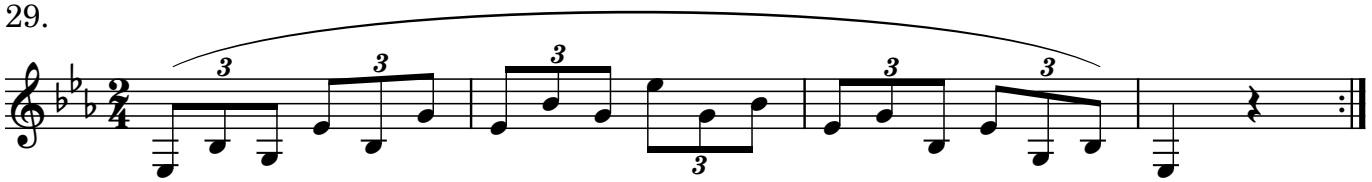

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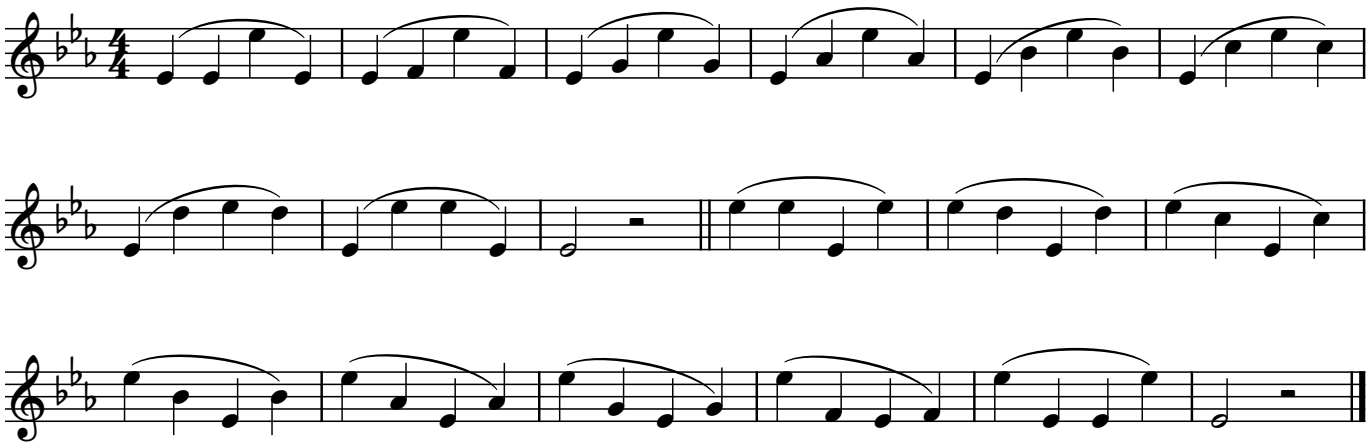

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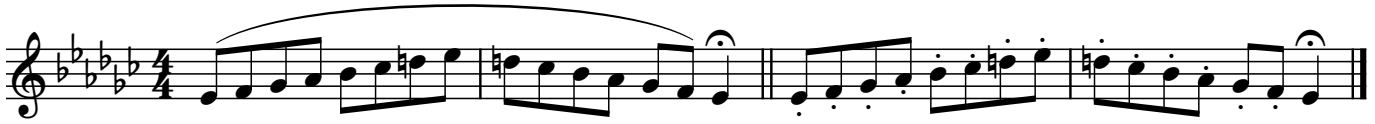

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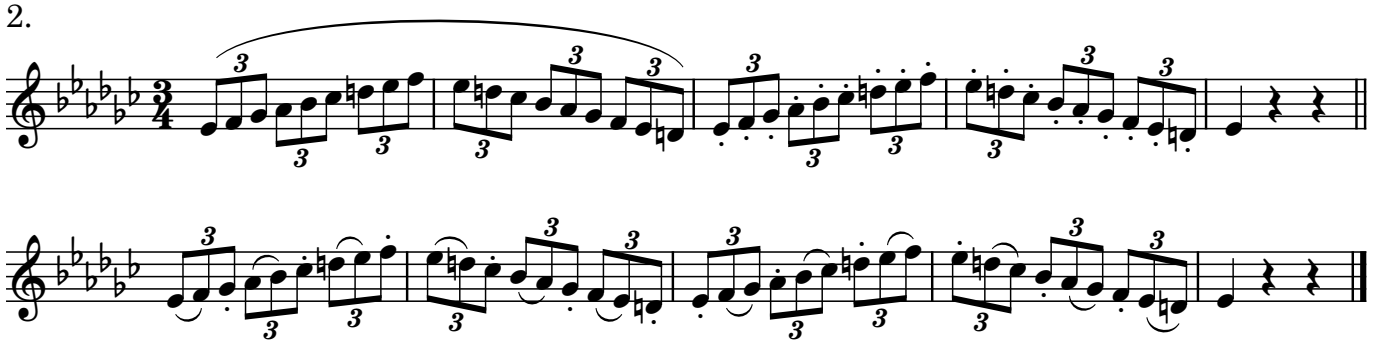

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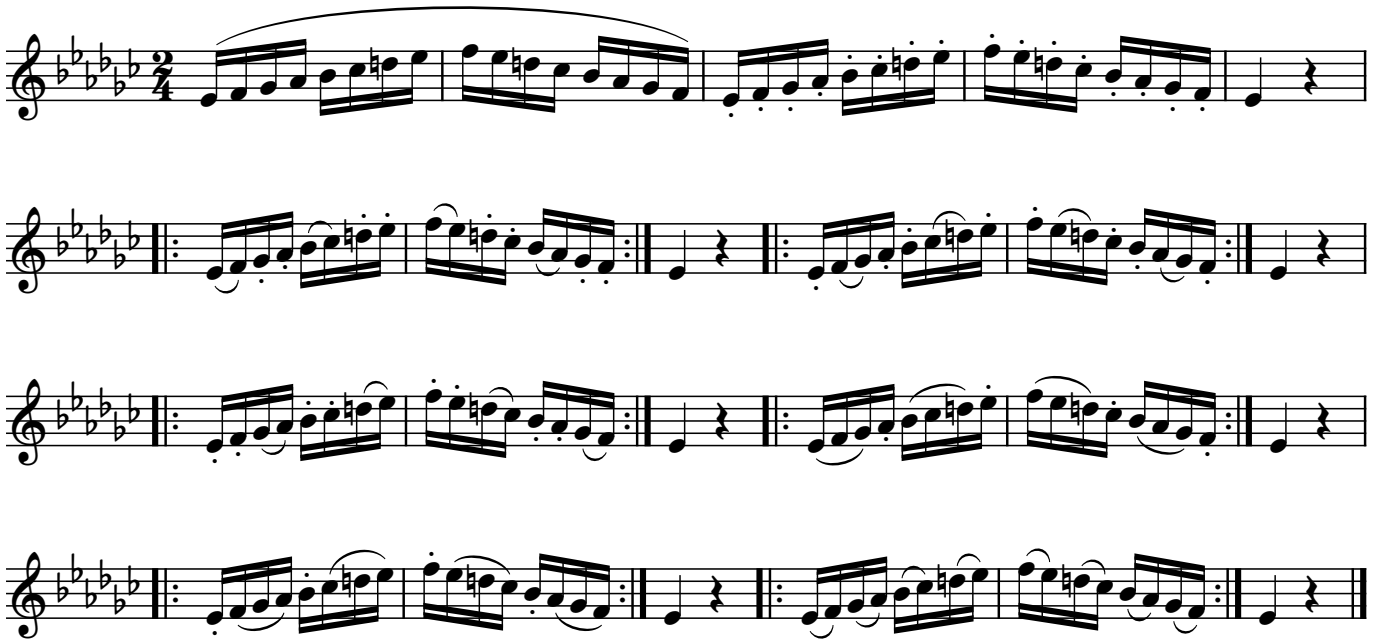

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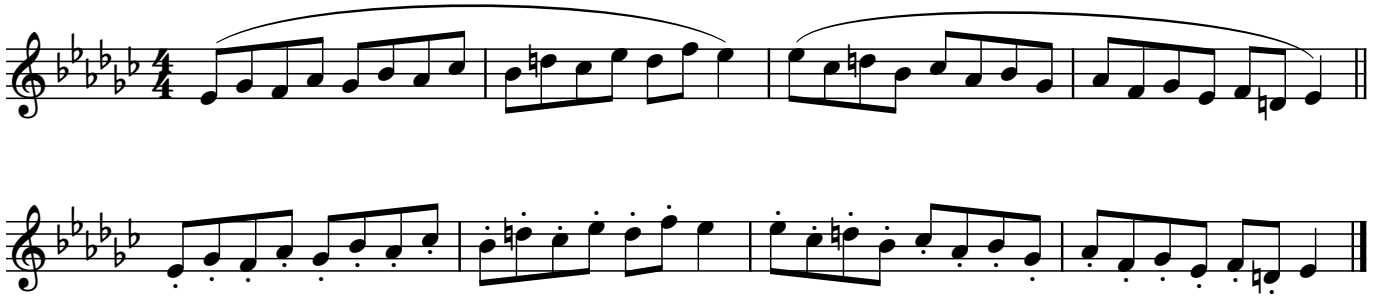

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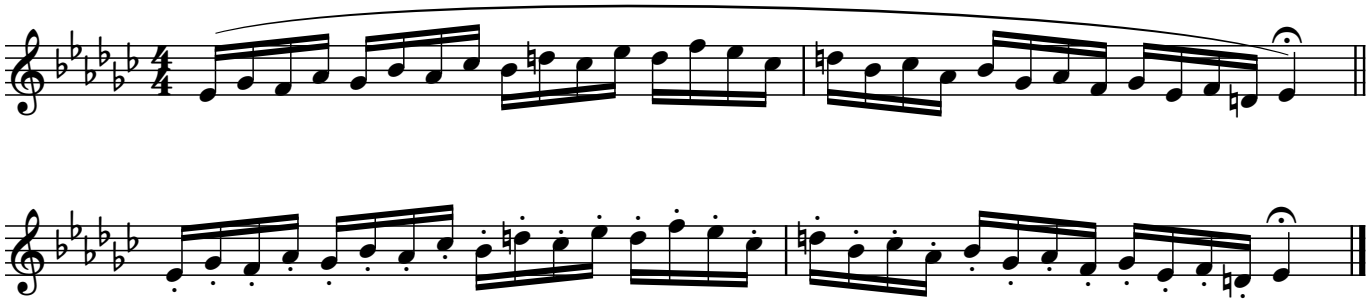

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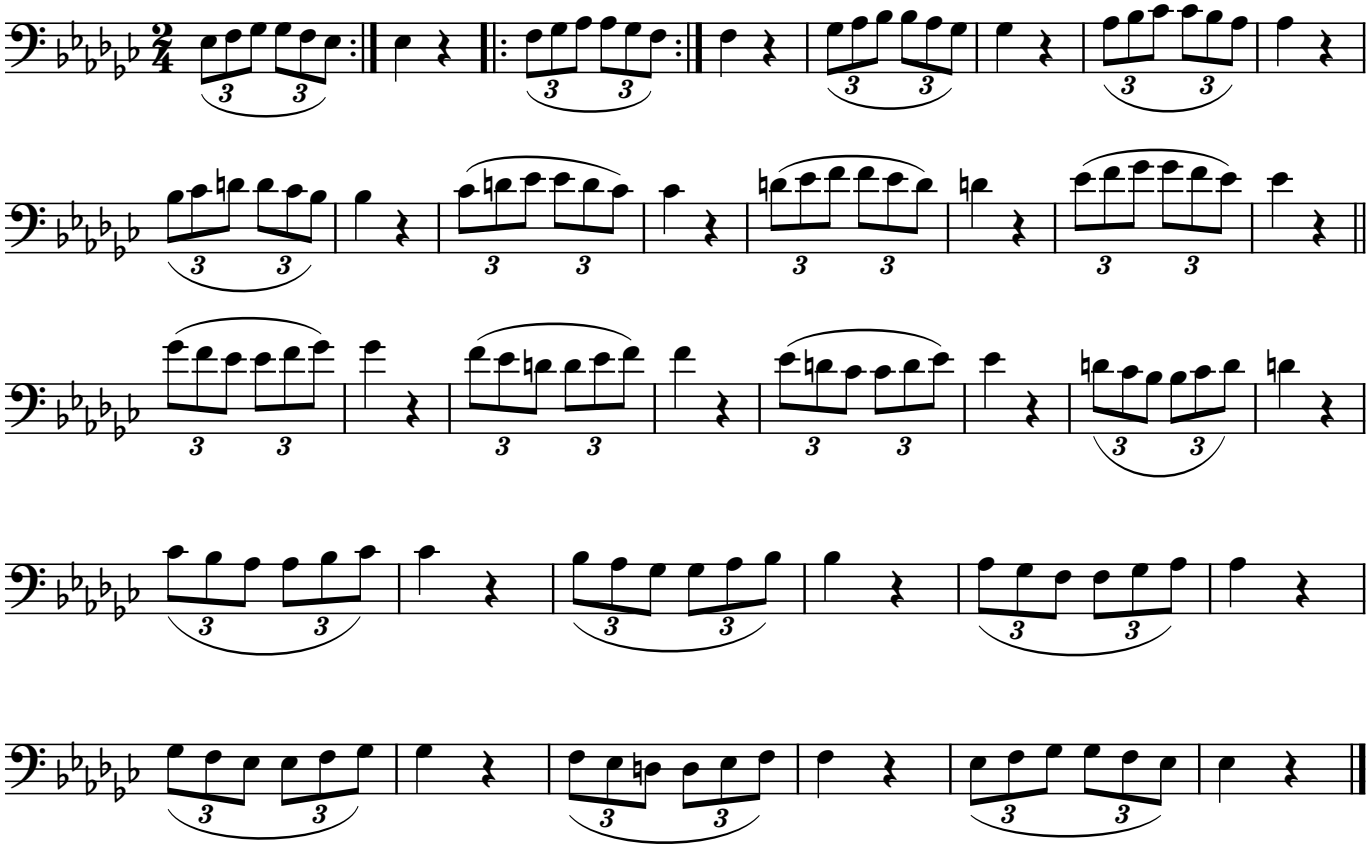

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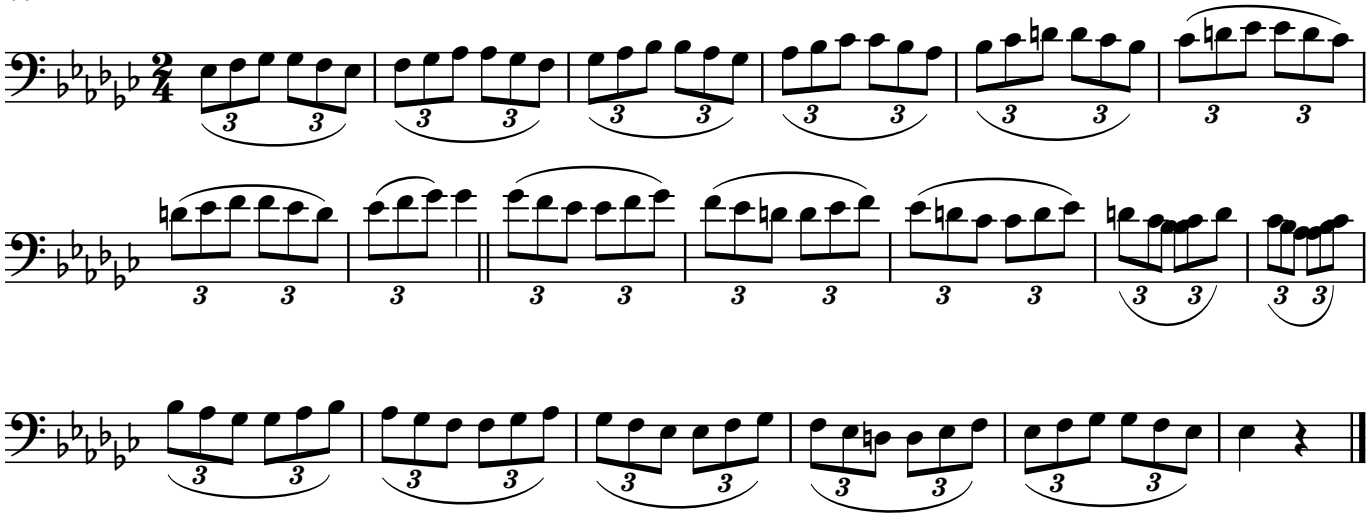

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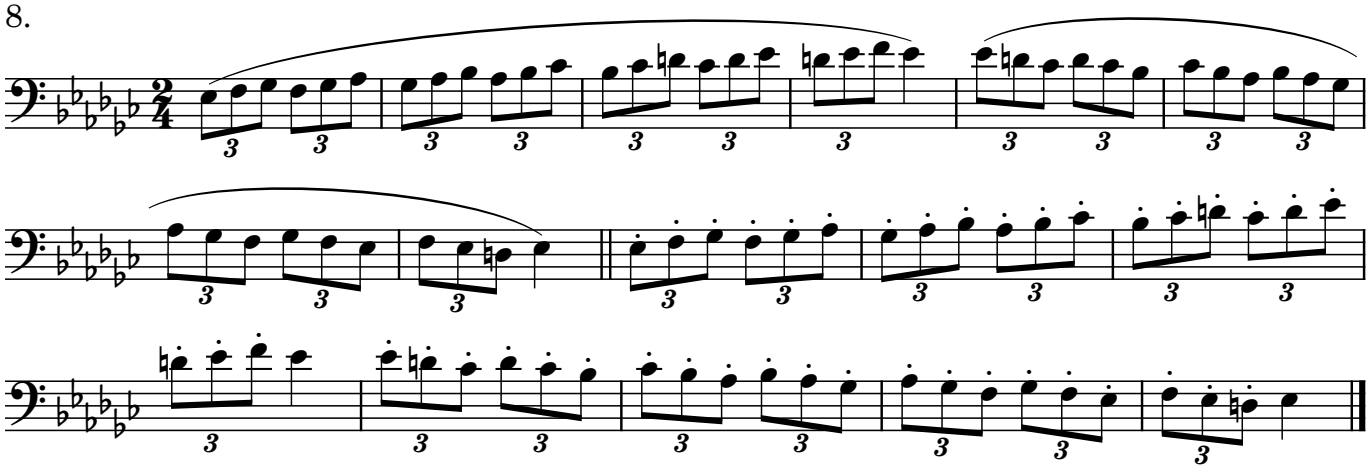

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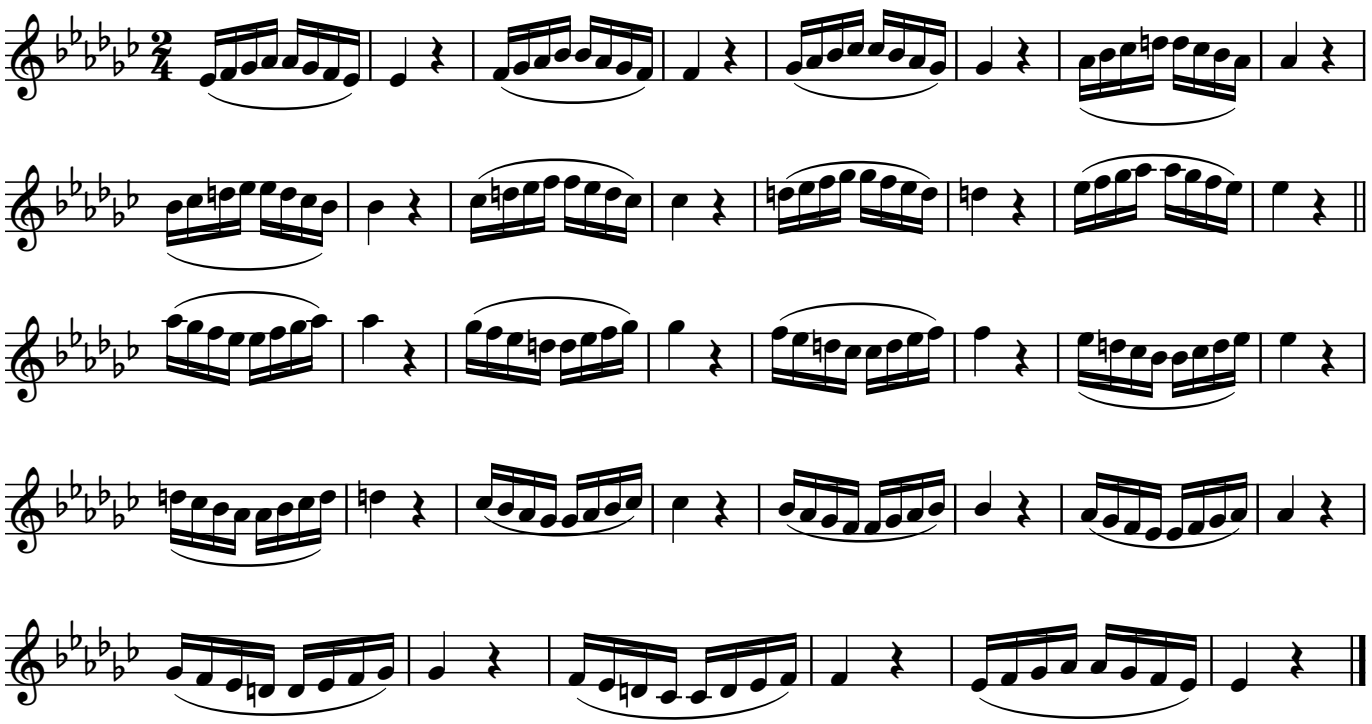

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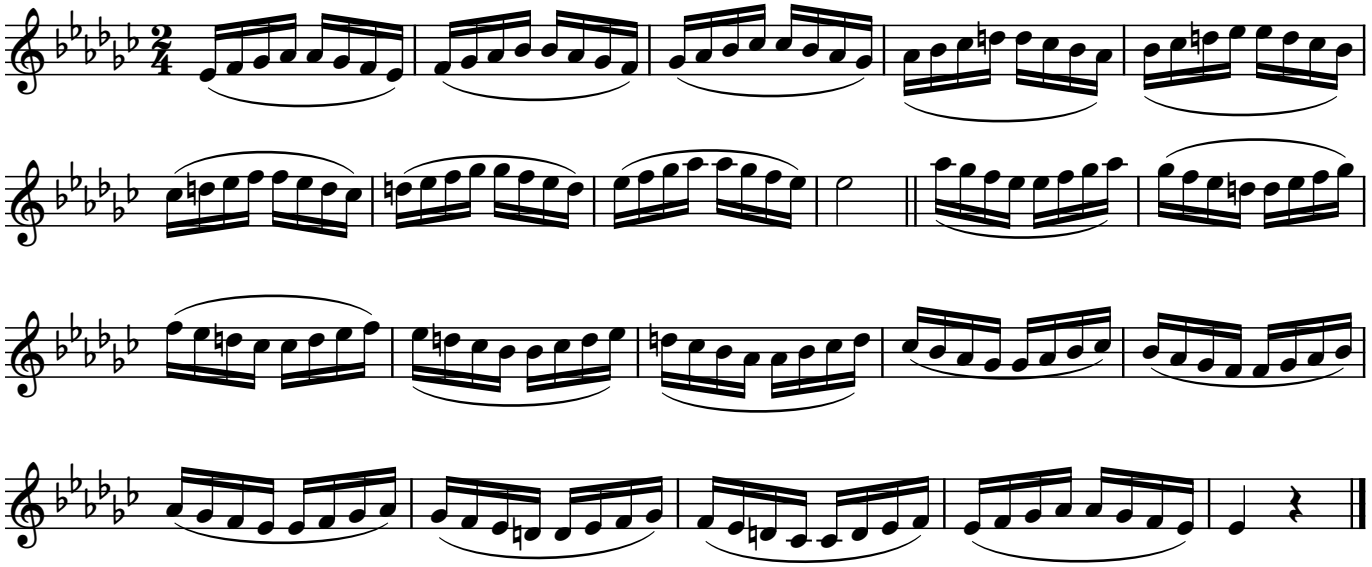

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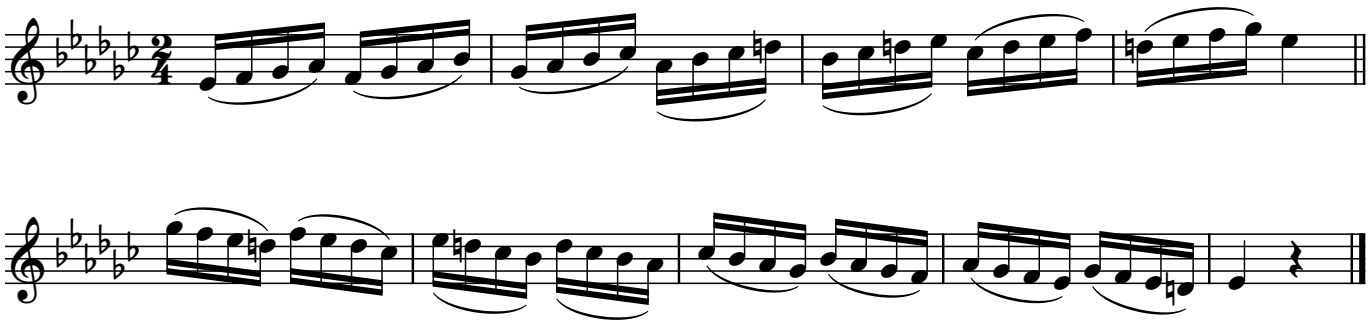

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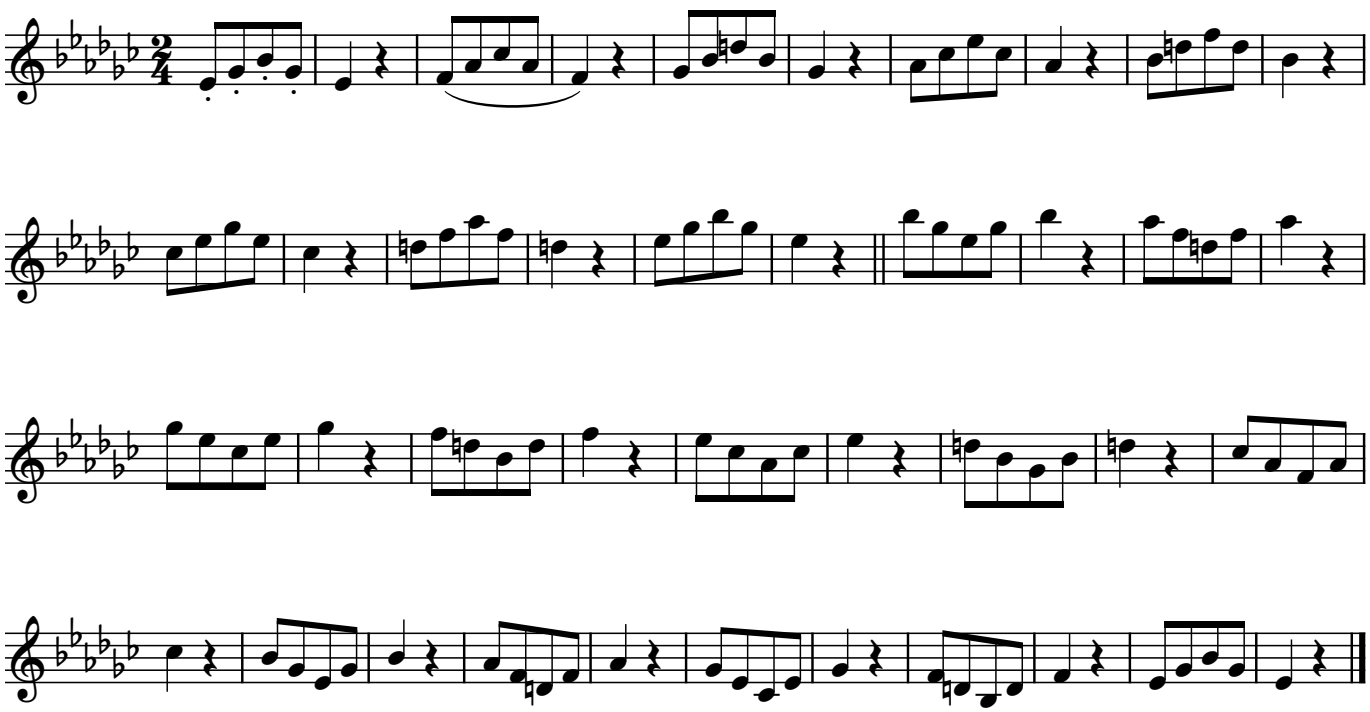

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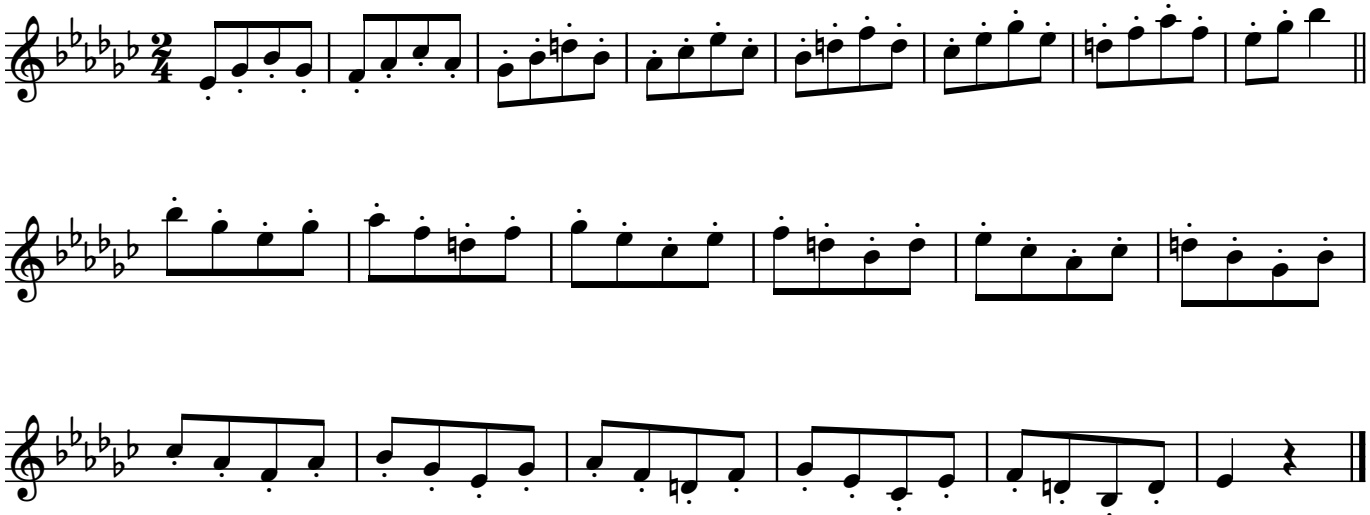

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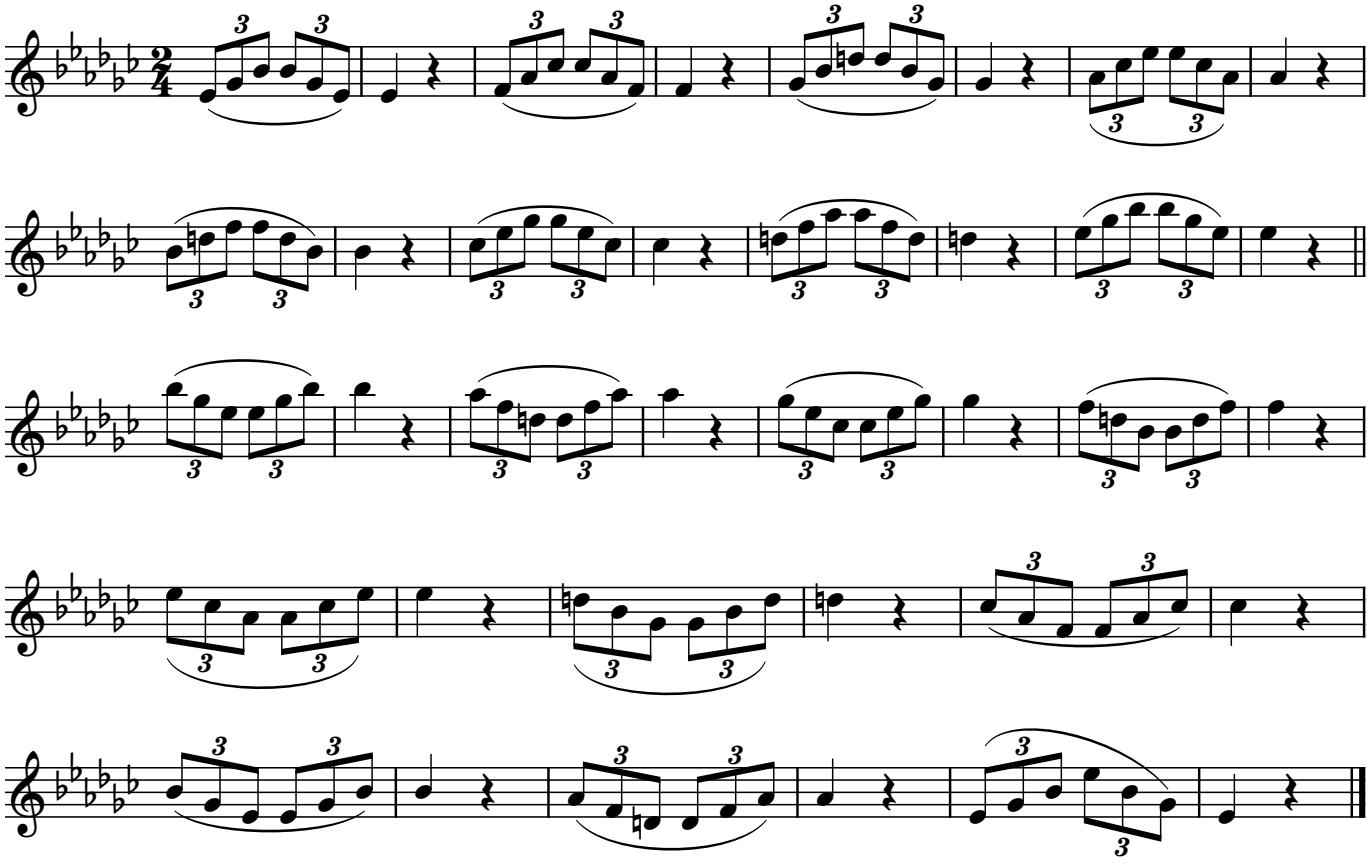

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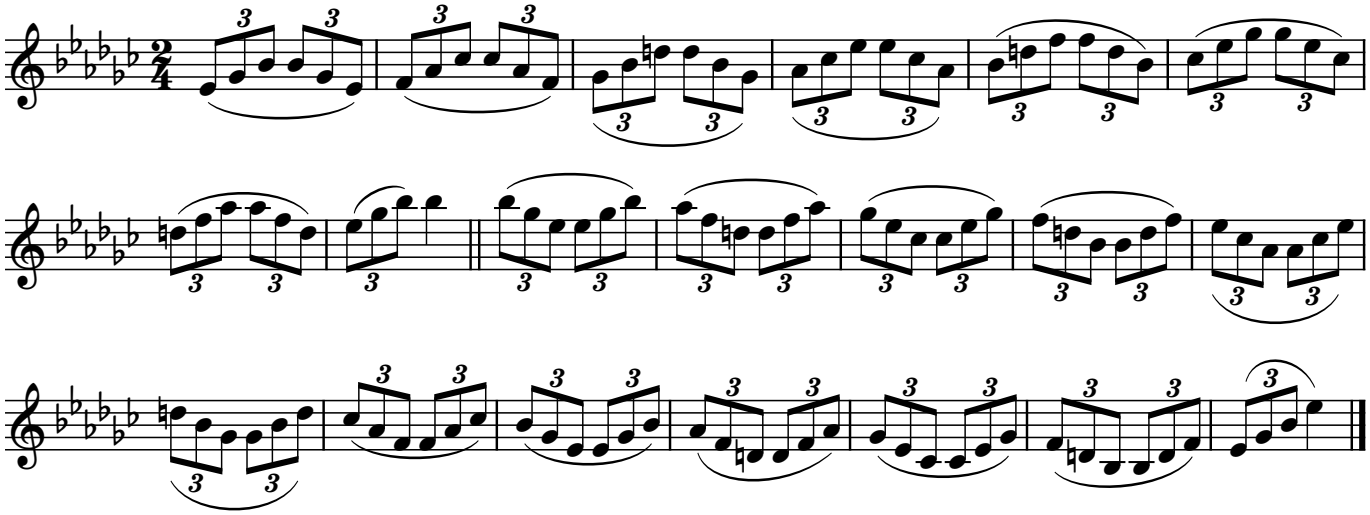

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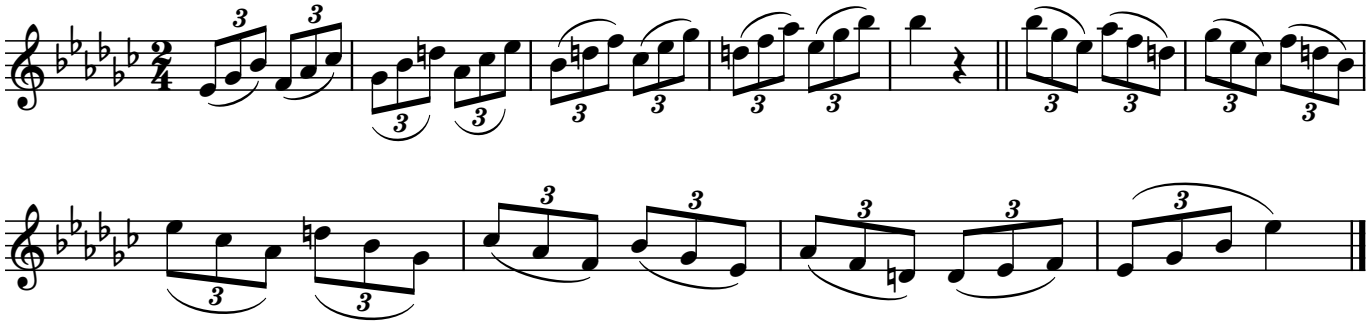

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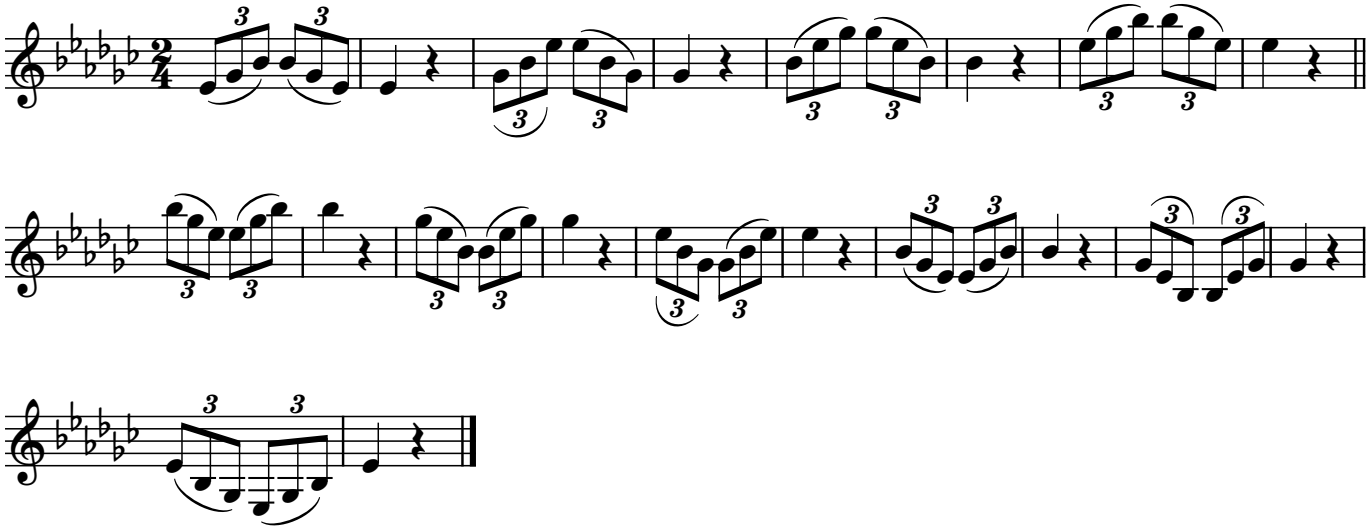

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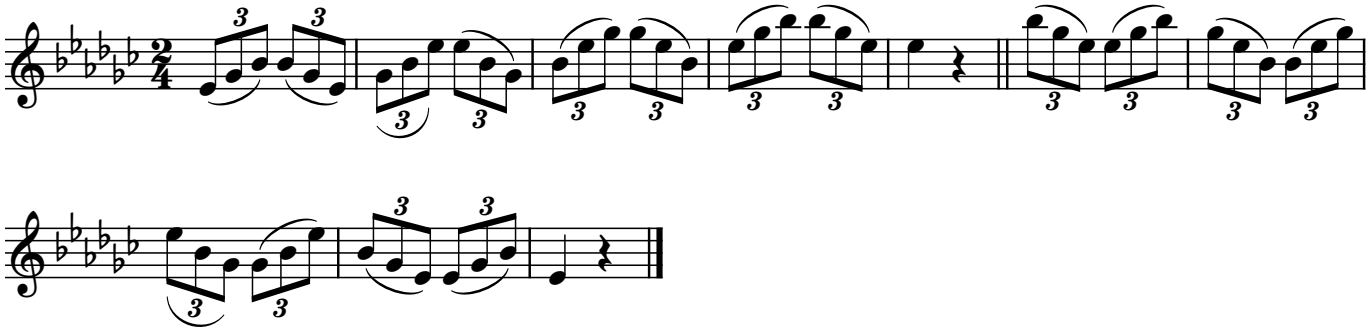

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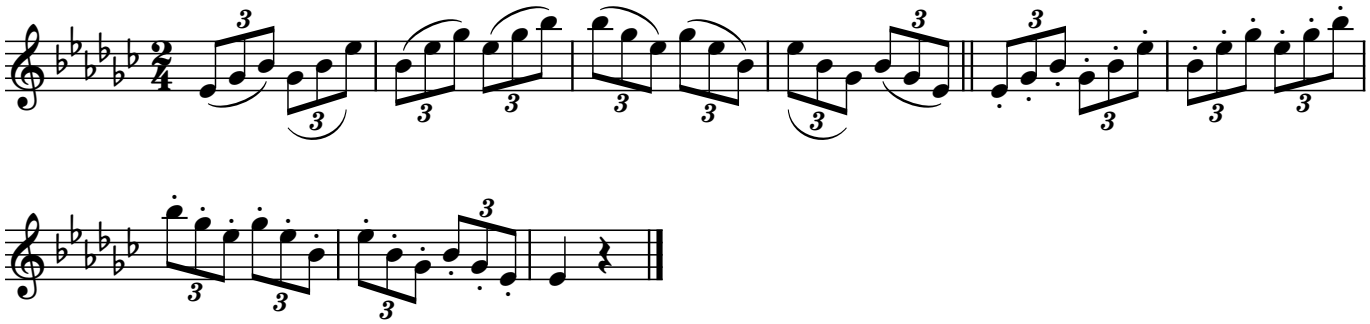

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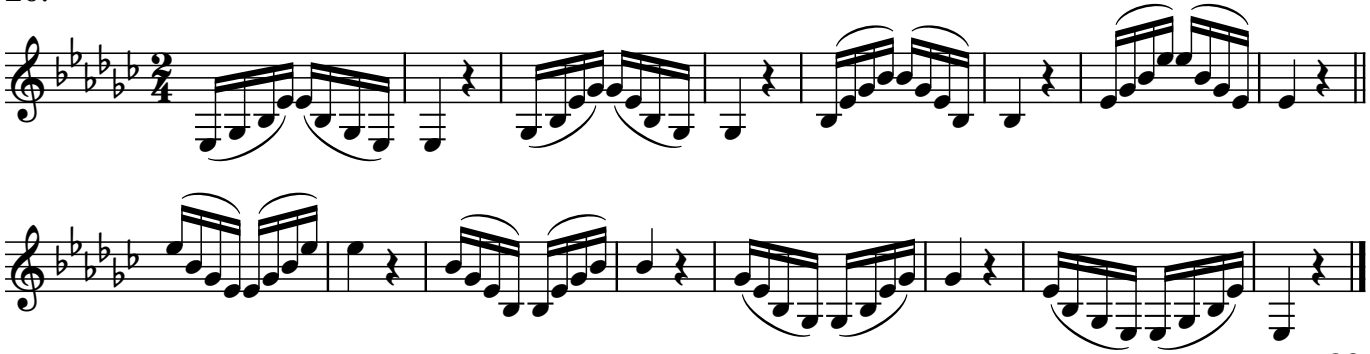

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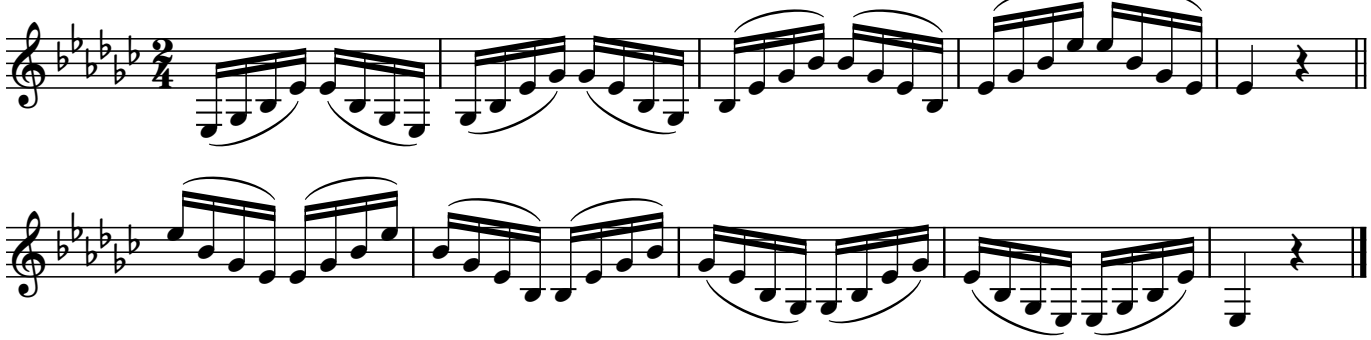

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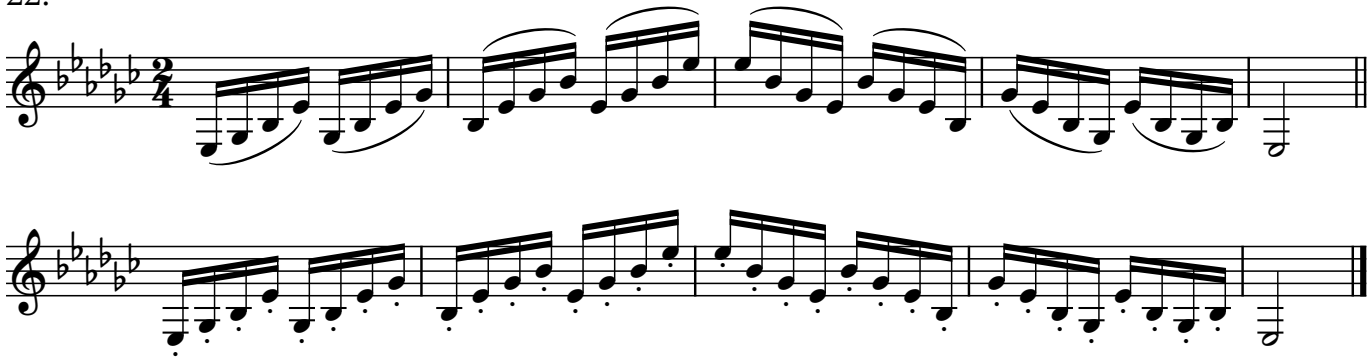

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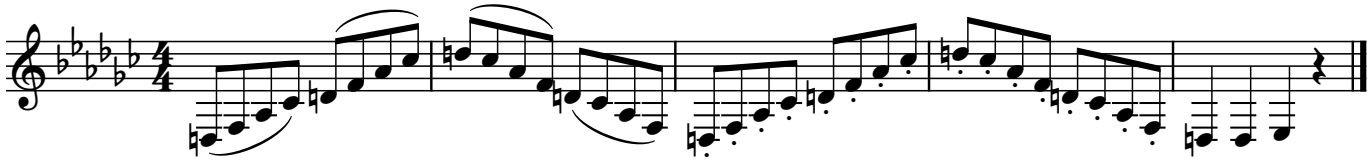

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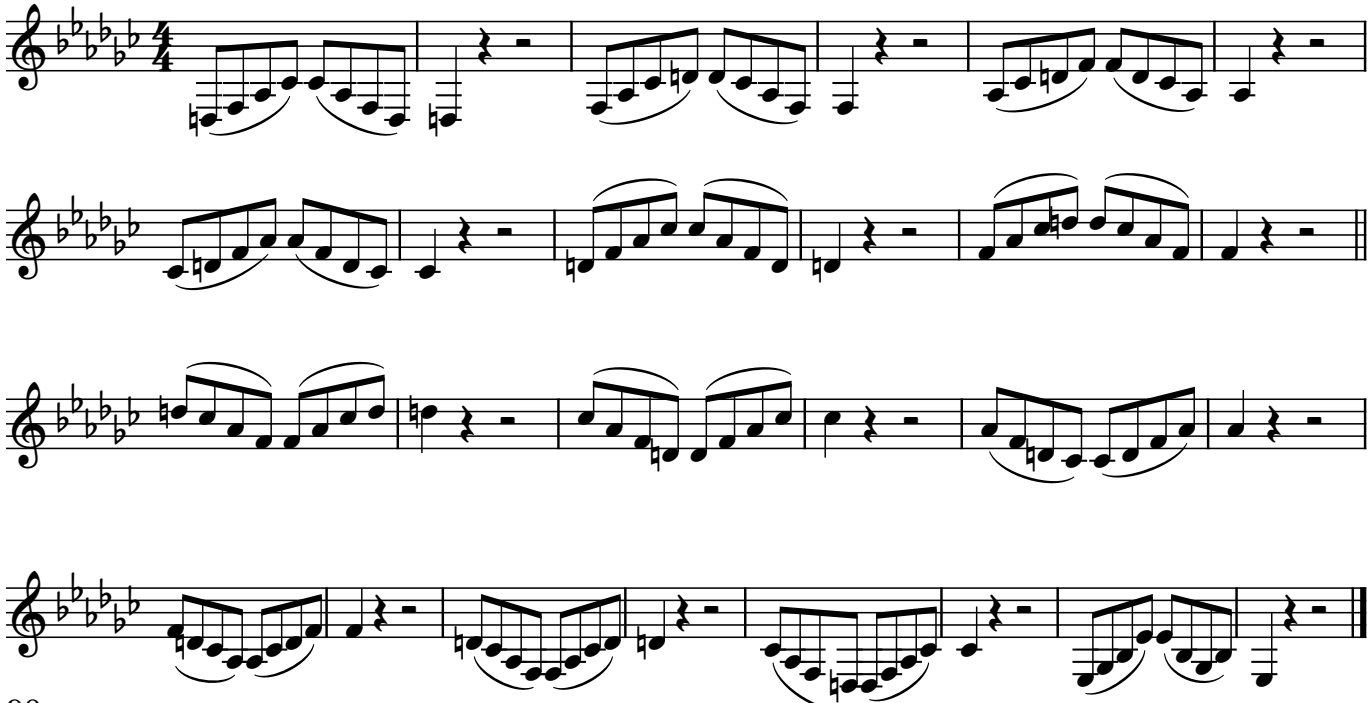

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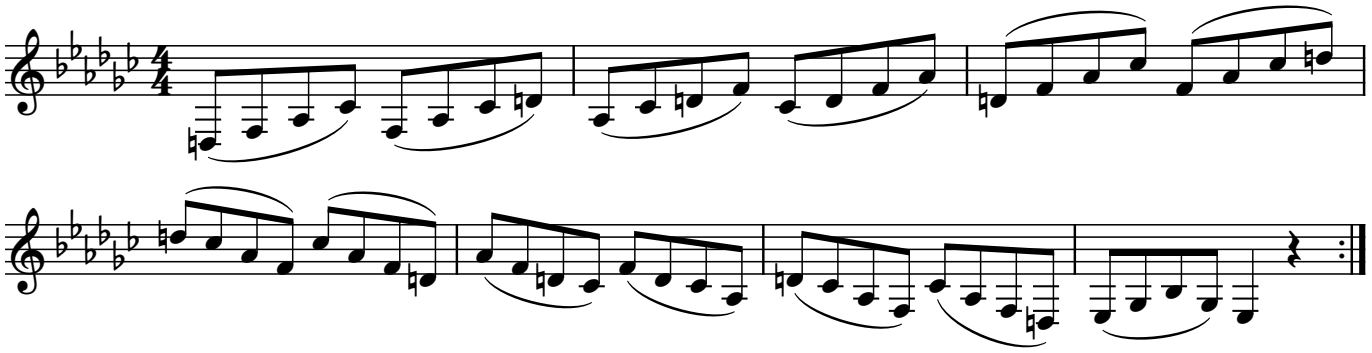

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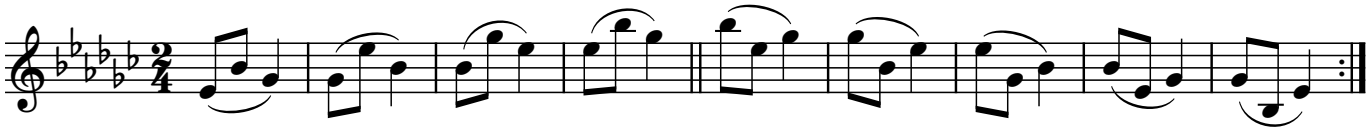

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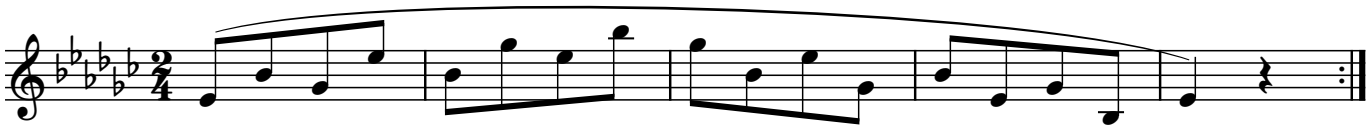

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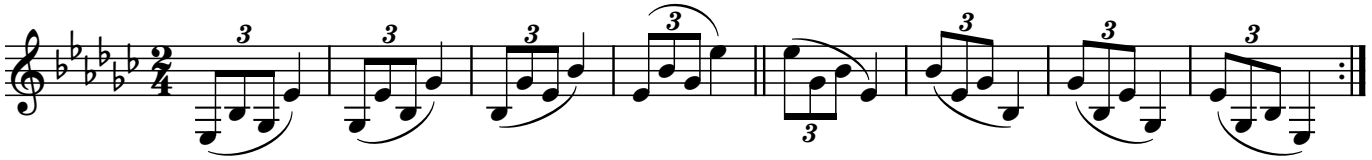

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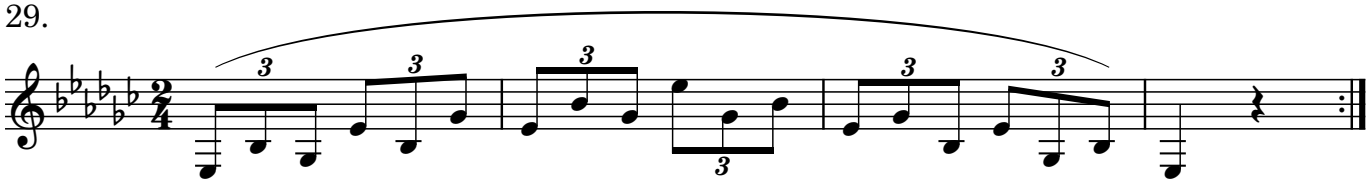

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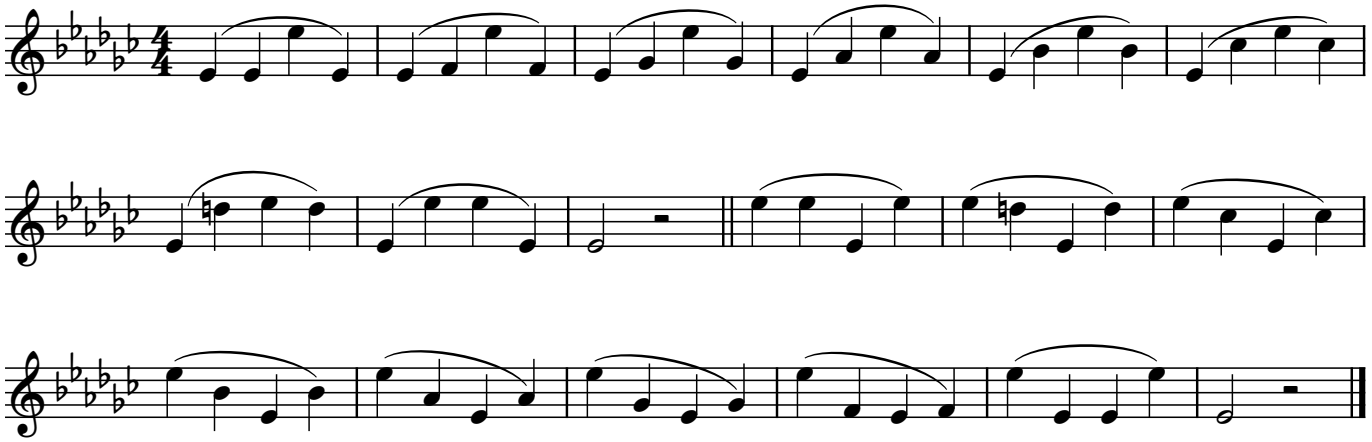

E-Dur - E Major

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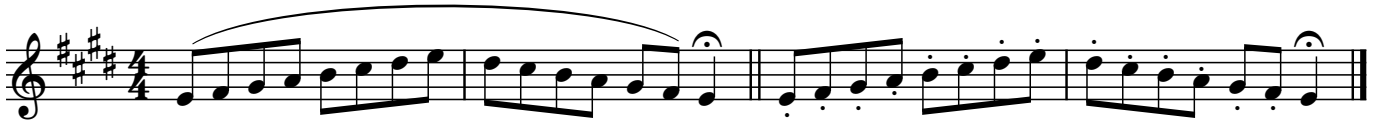

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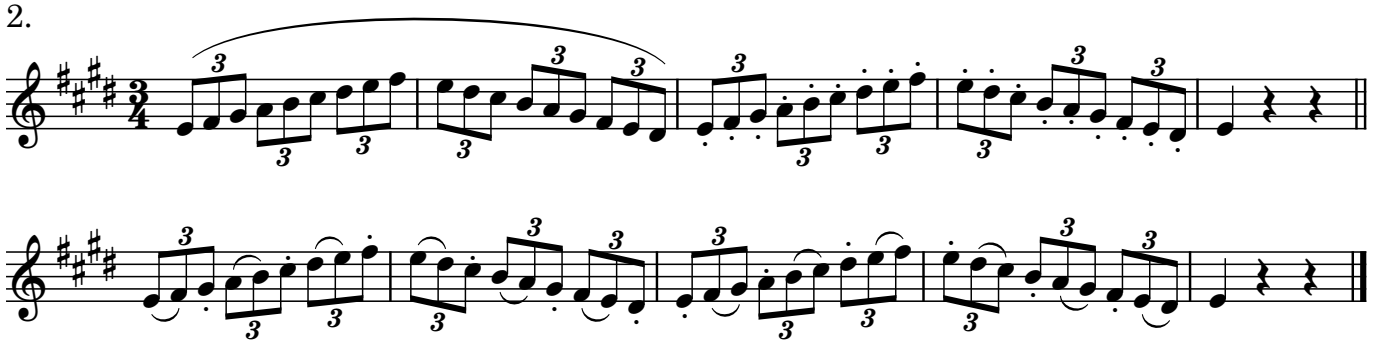

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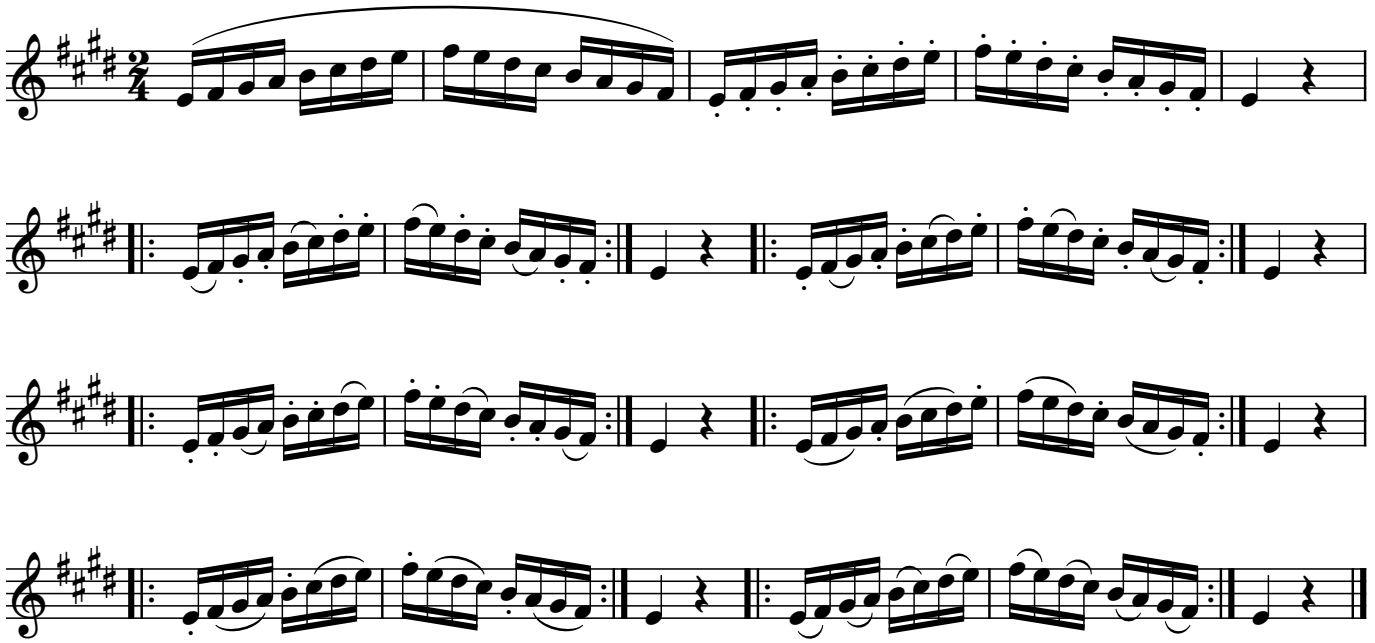

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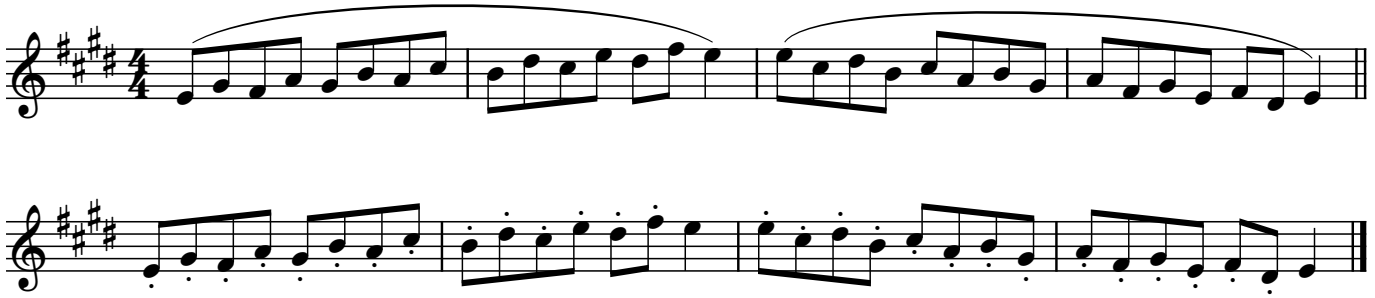

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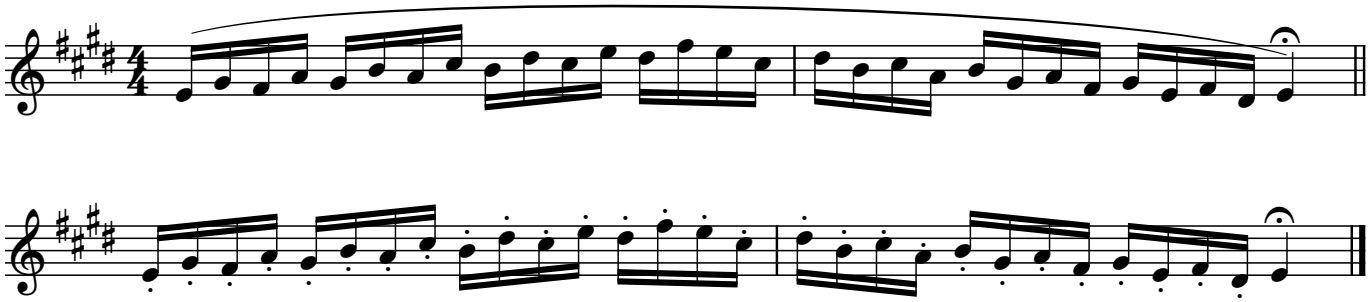

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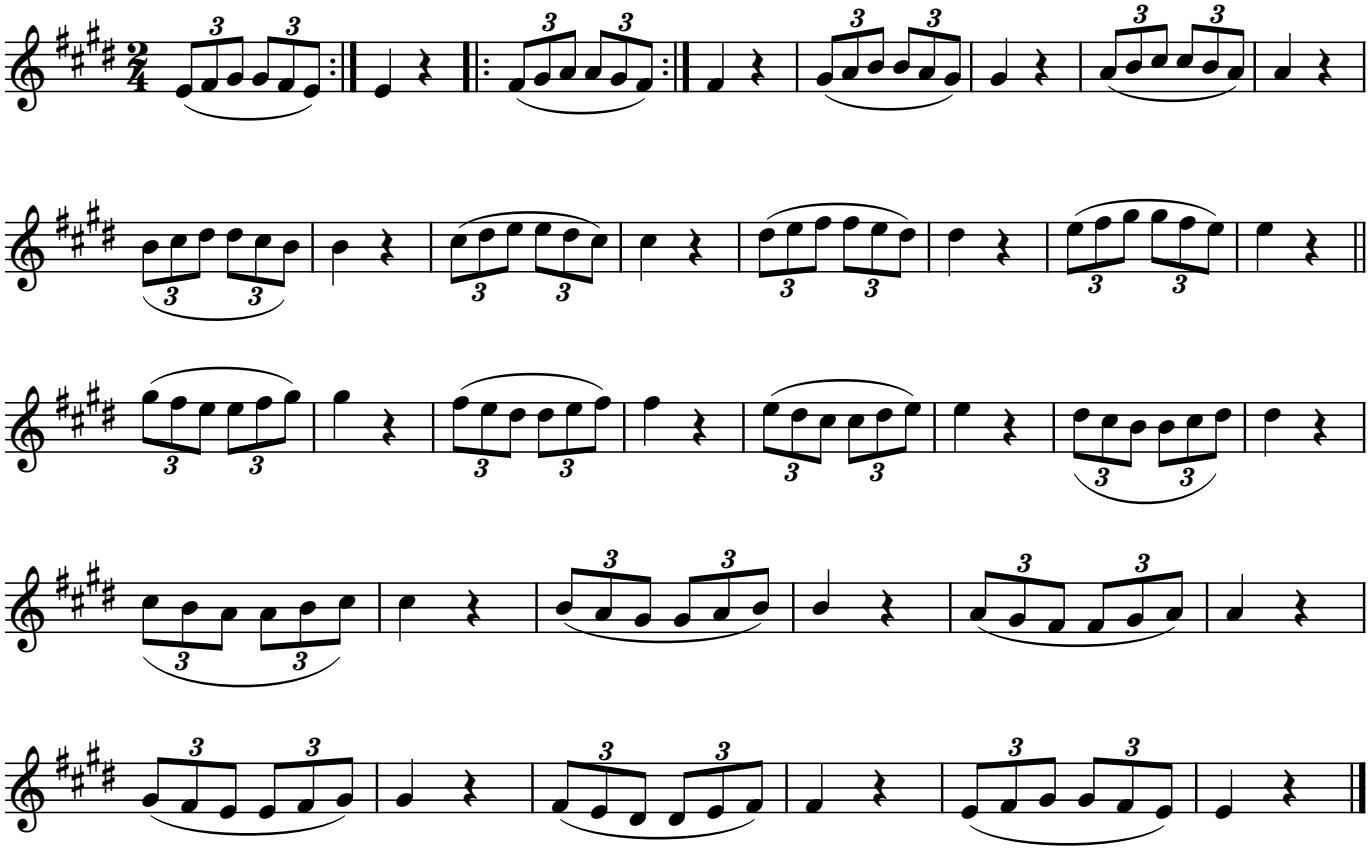

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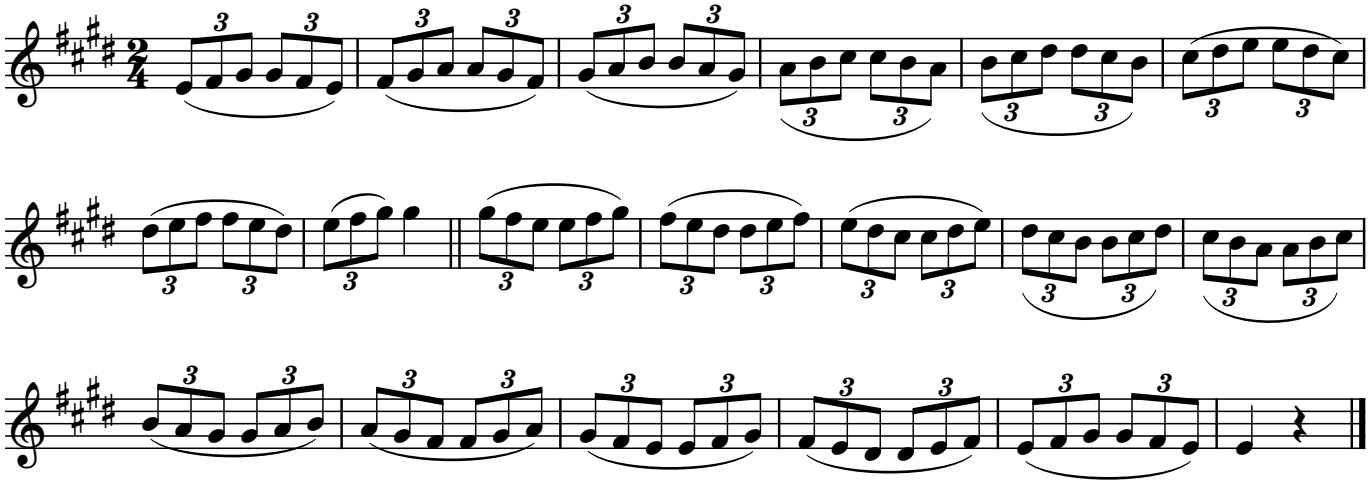

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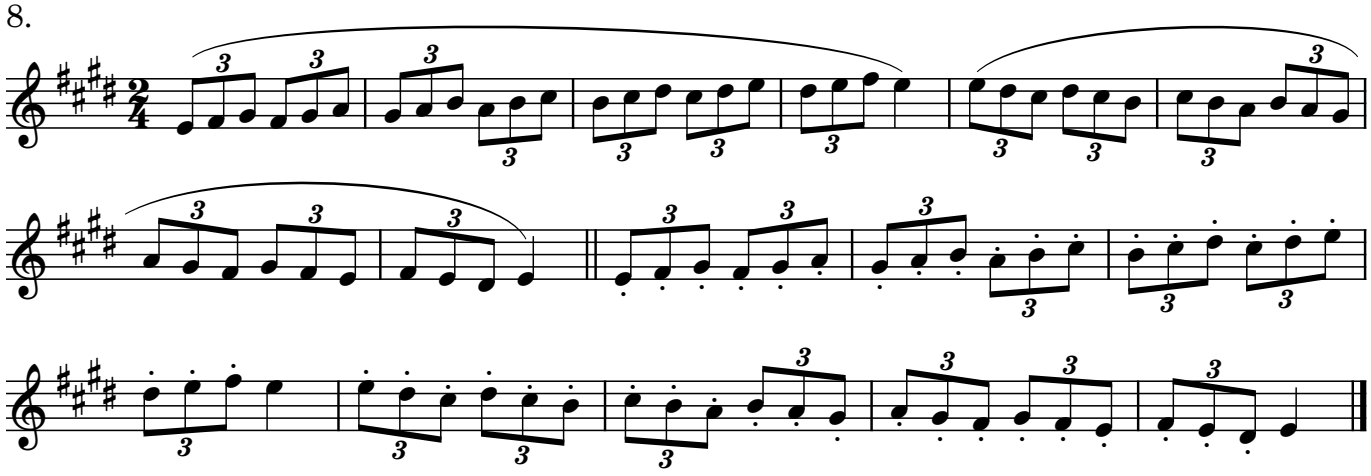

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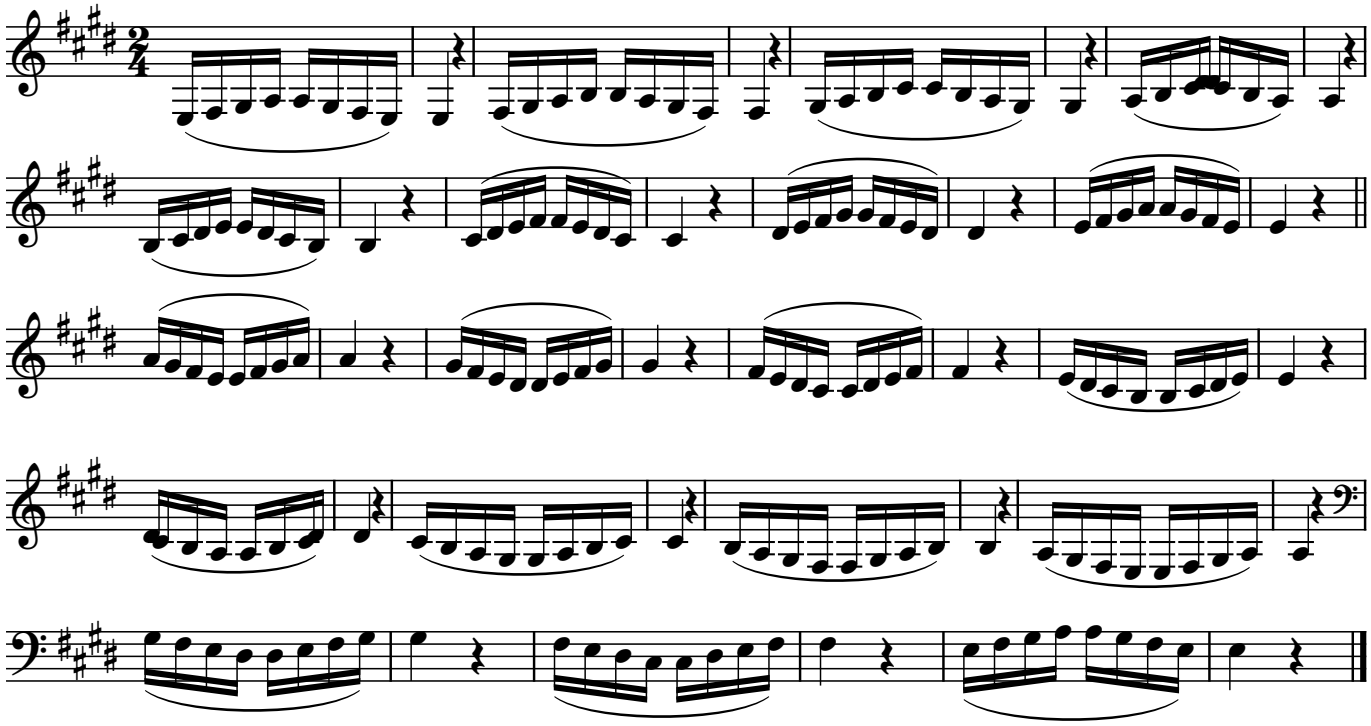

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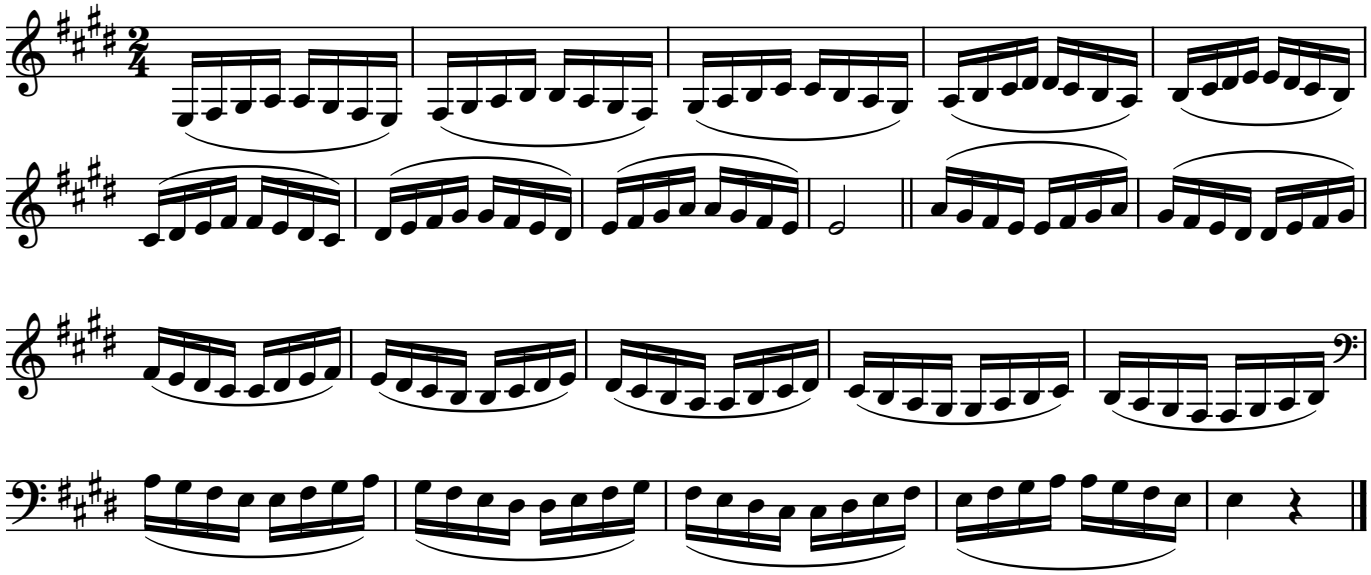

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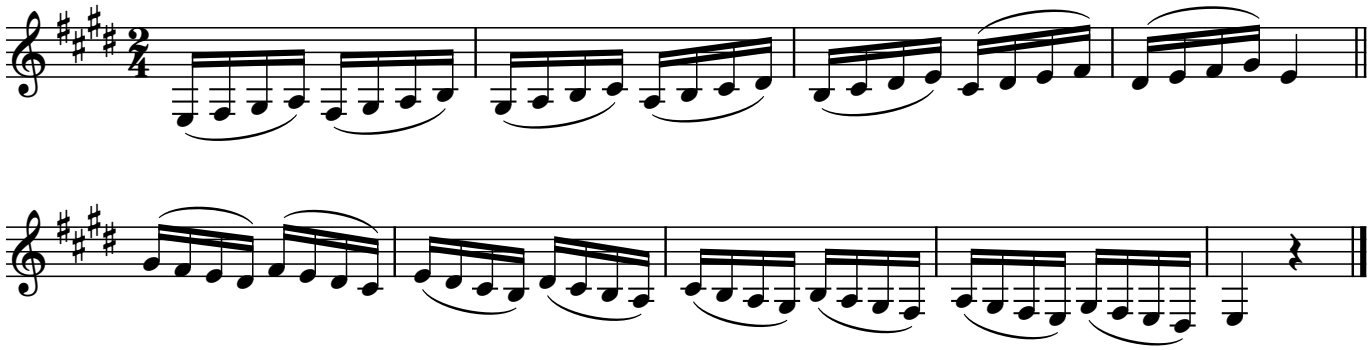

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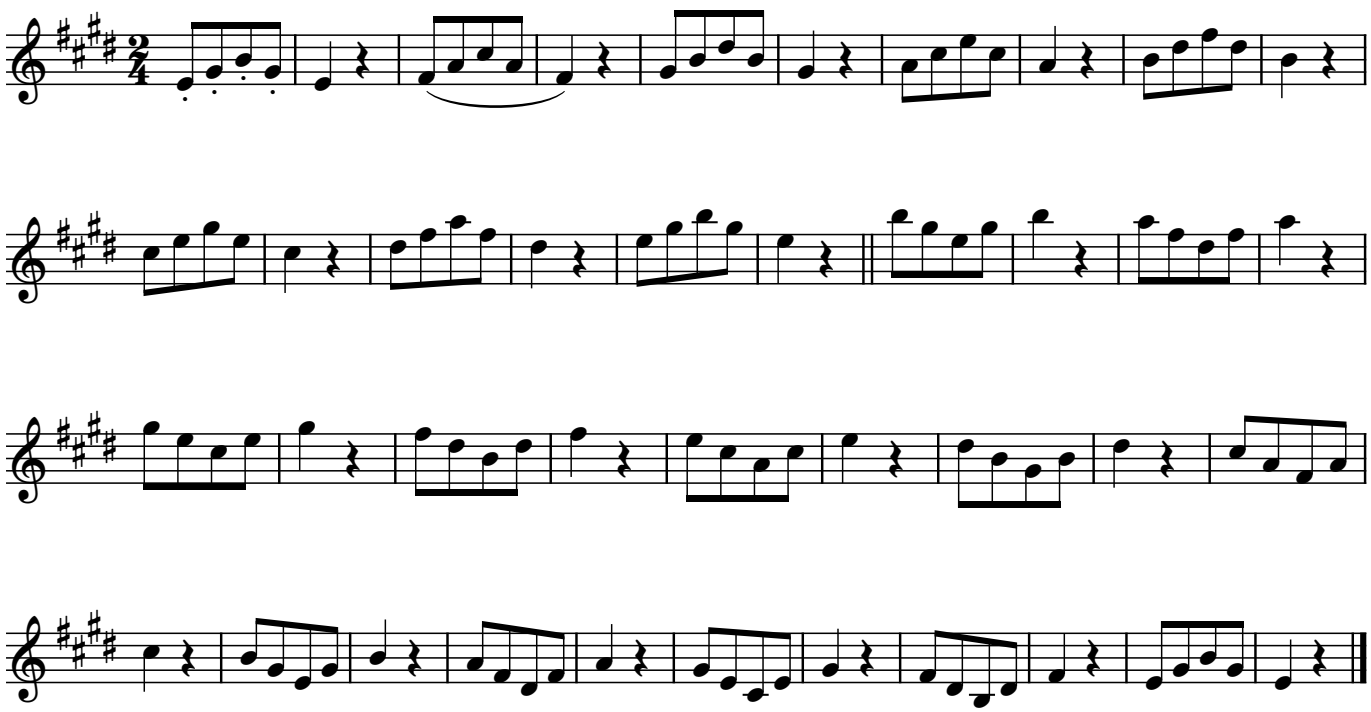

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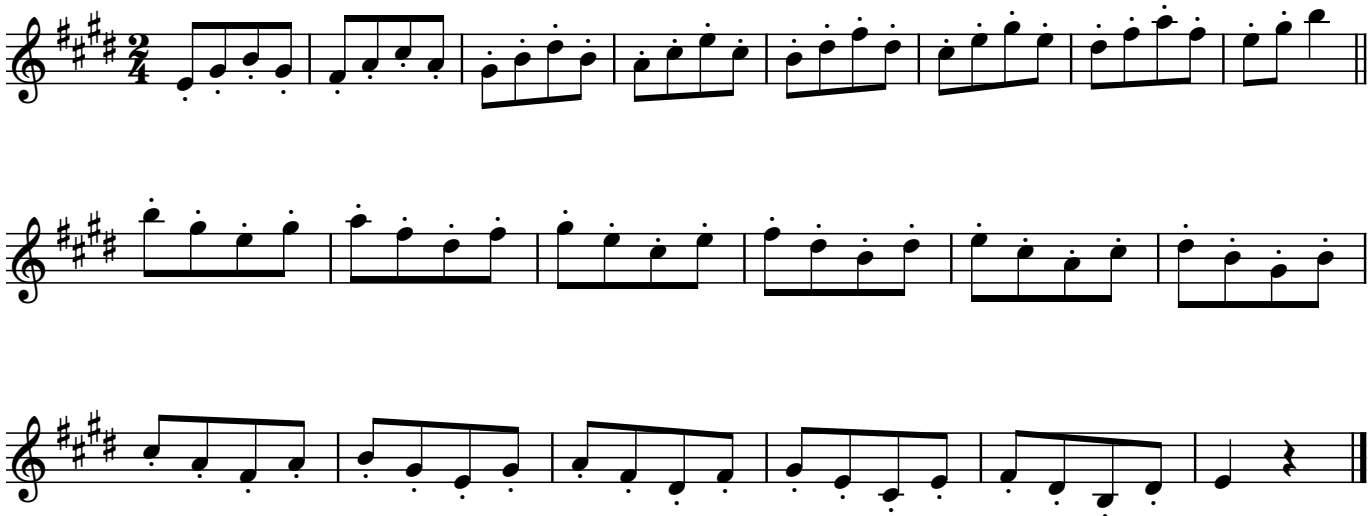

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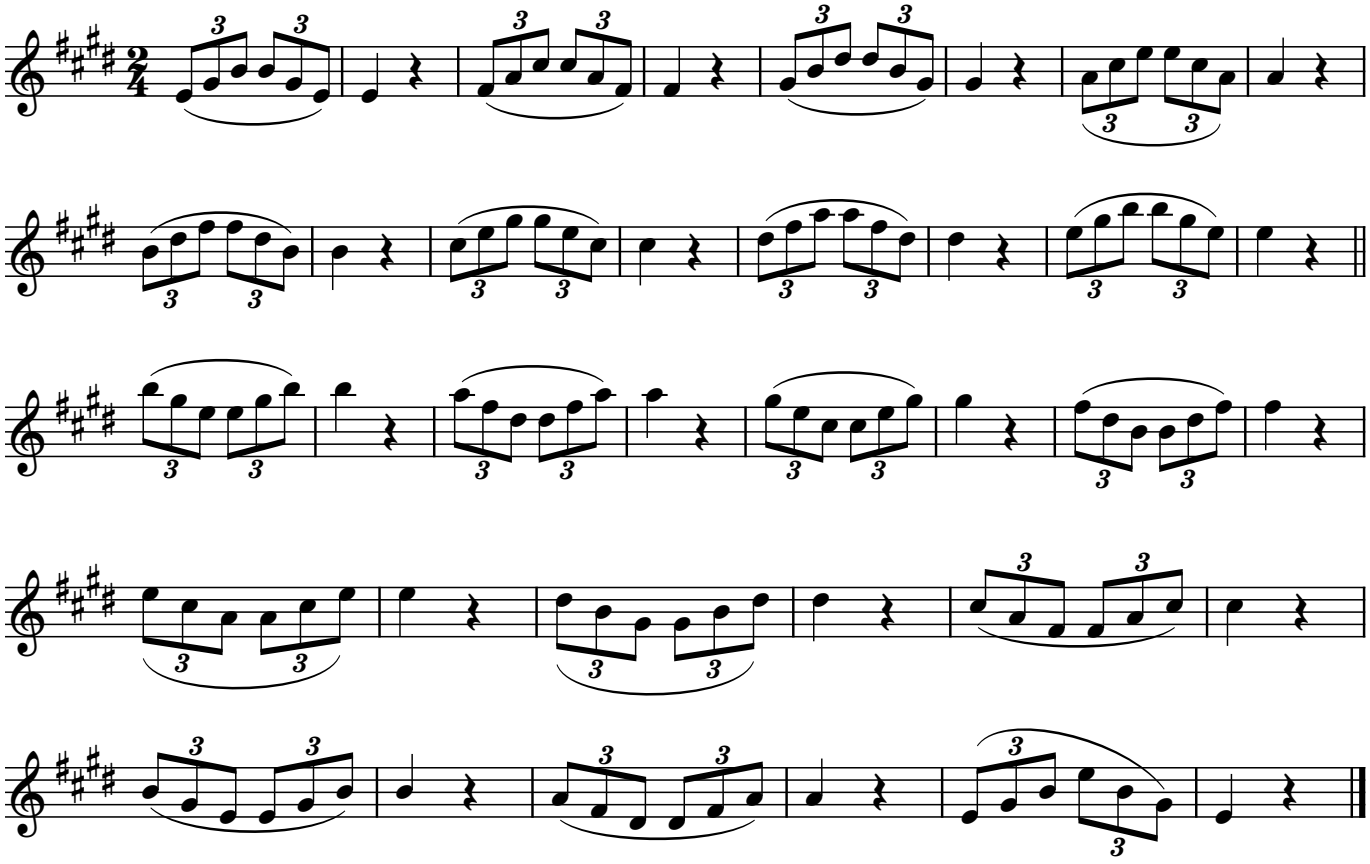

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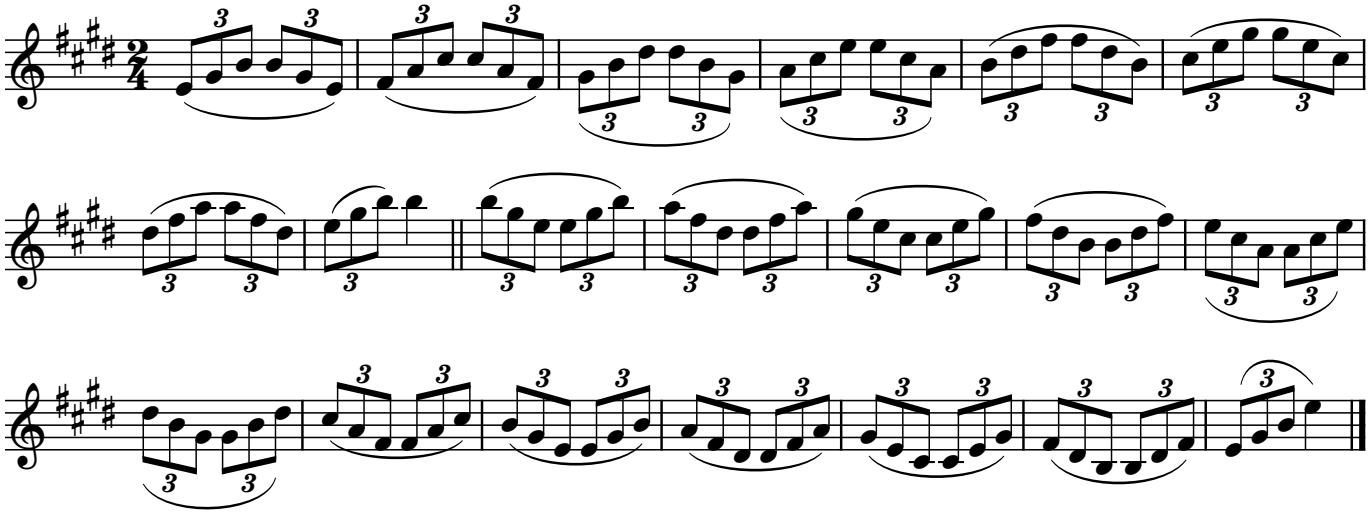

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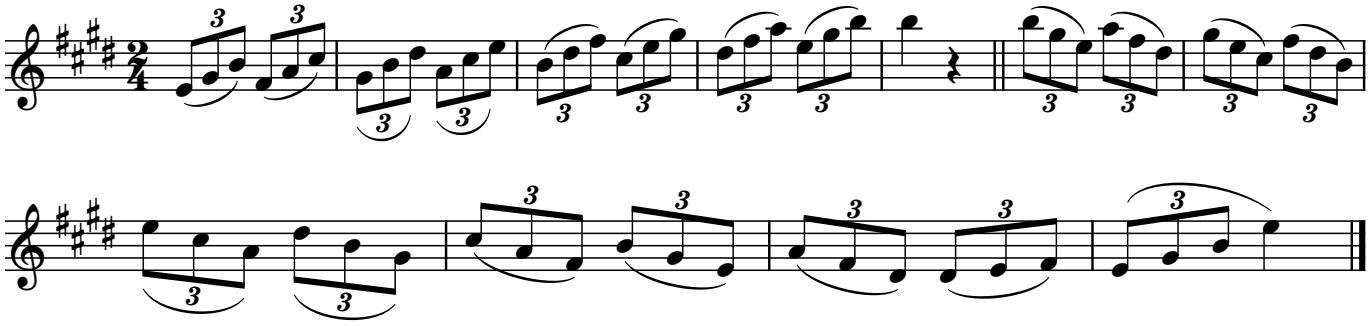

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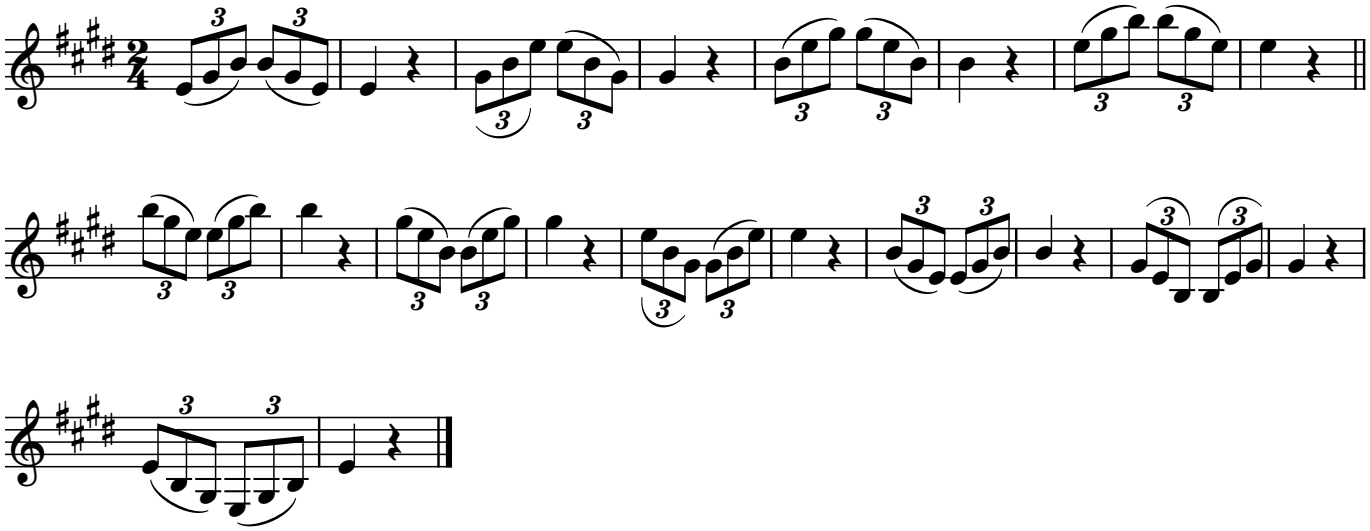

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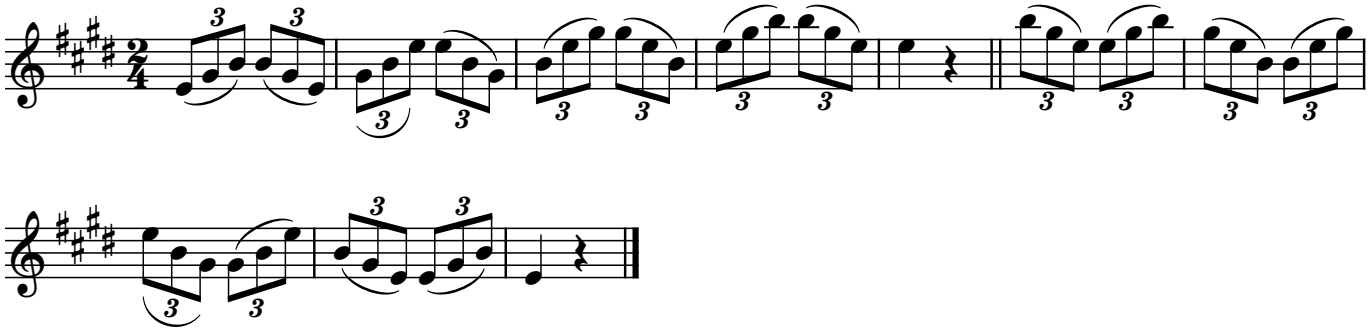

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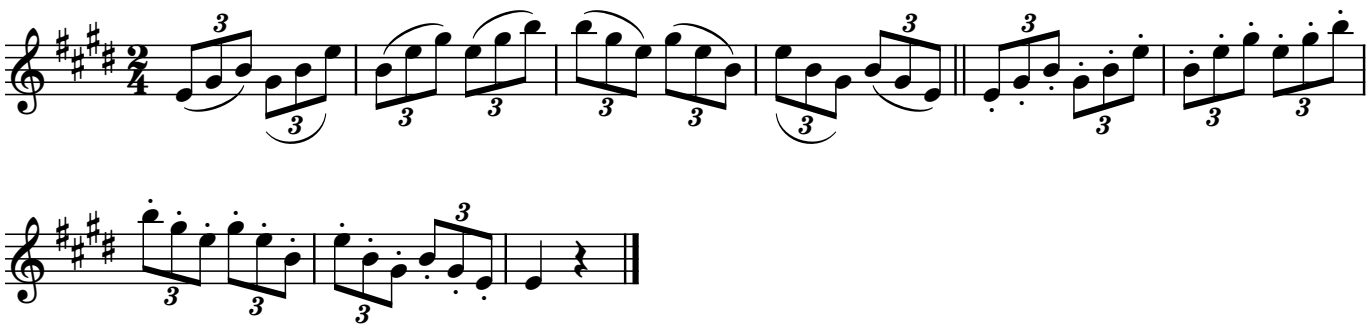

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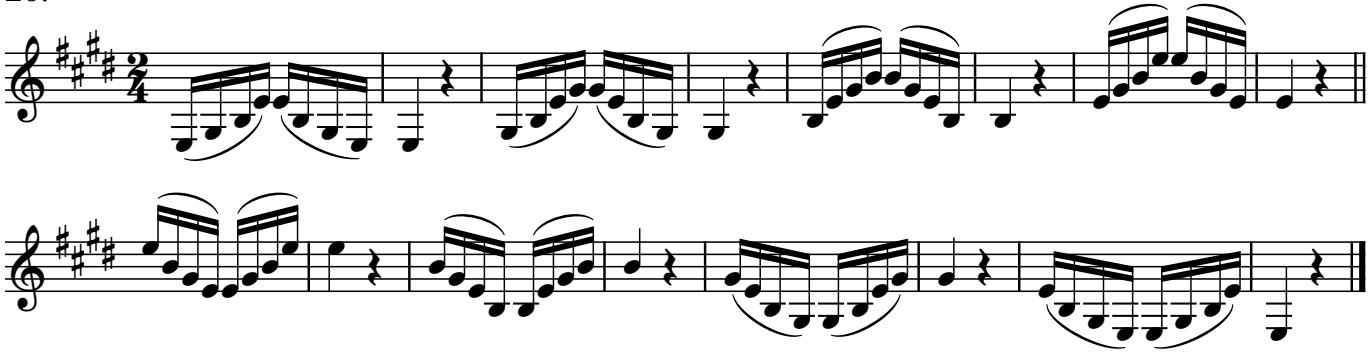

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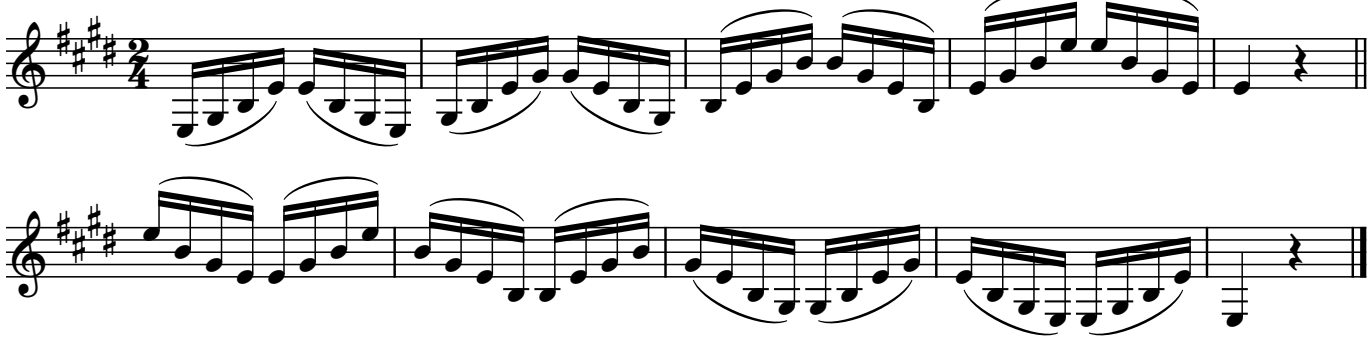

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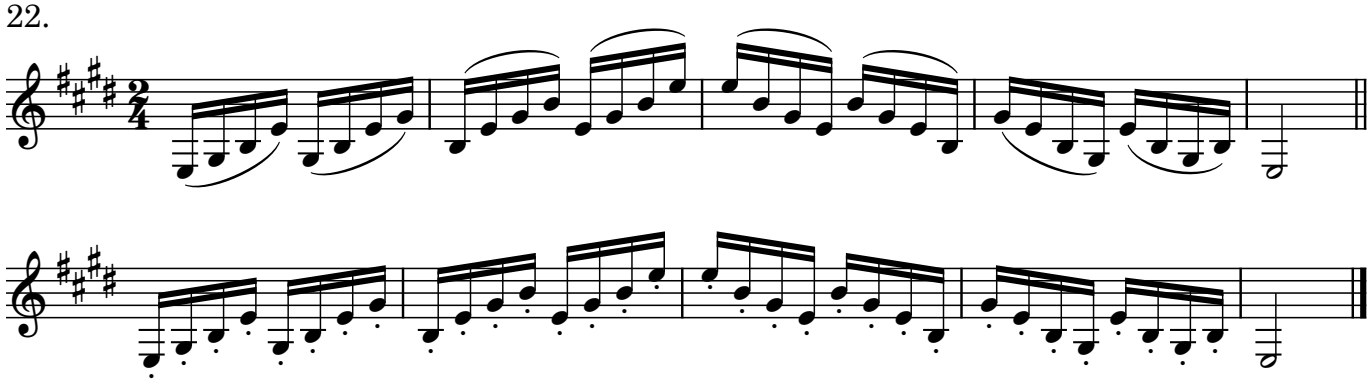

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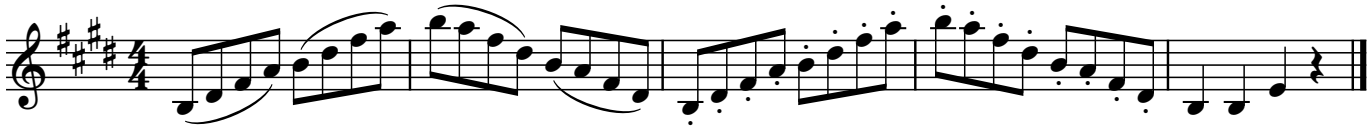

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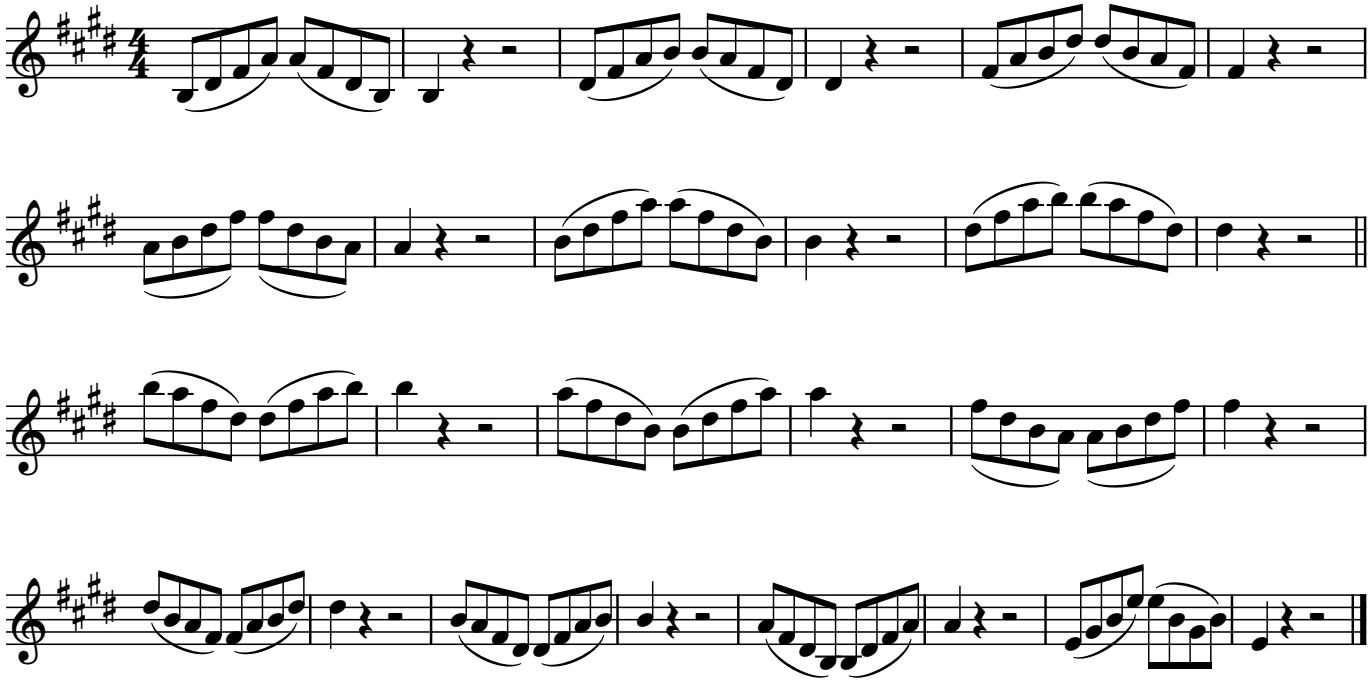

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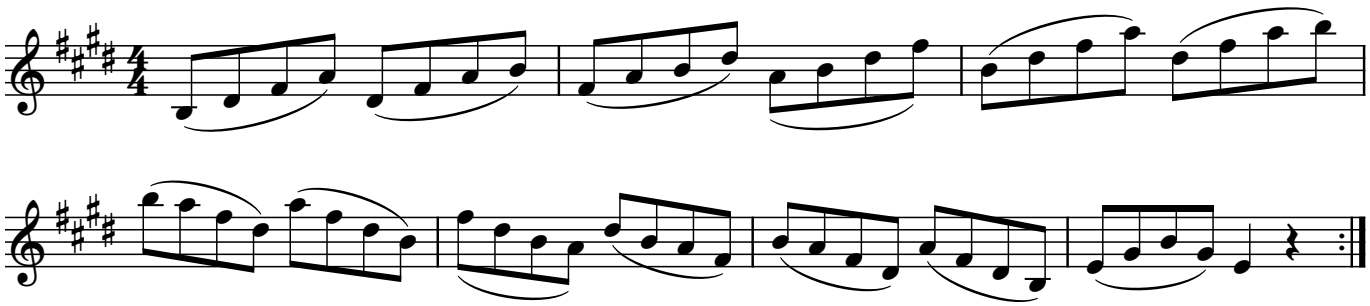

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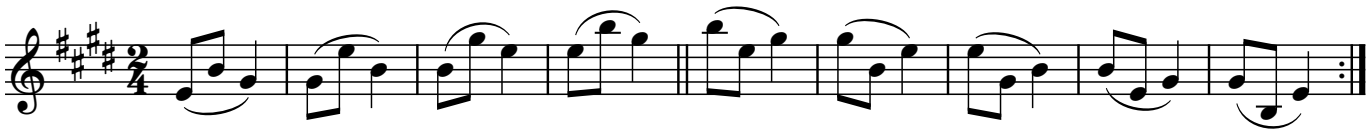

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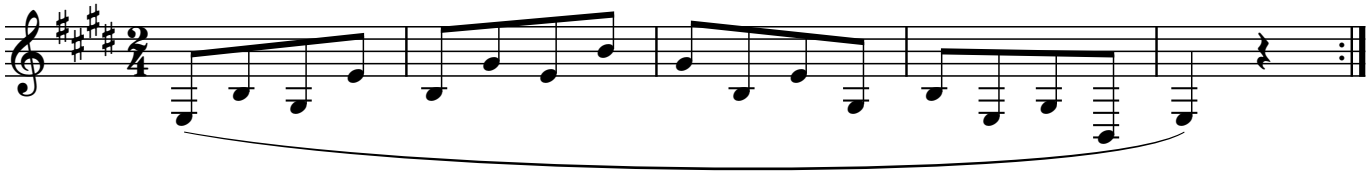

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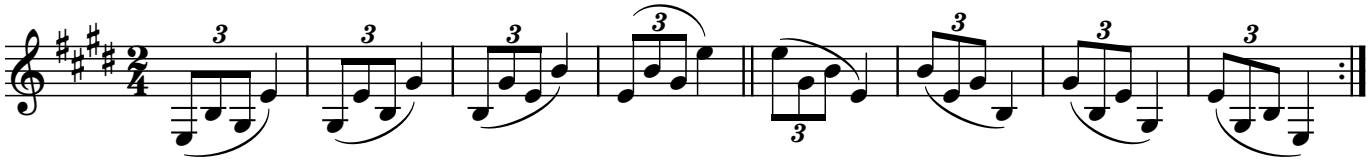

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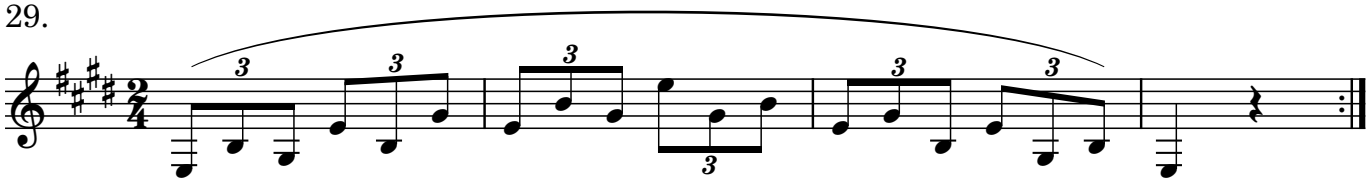

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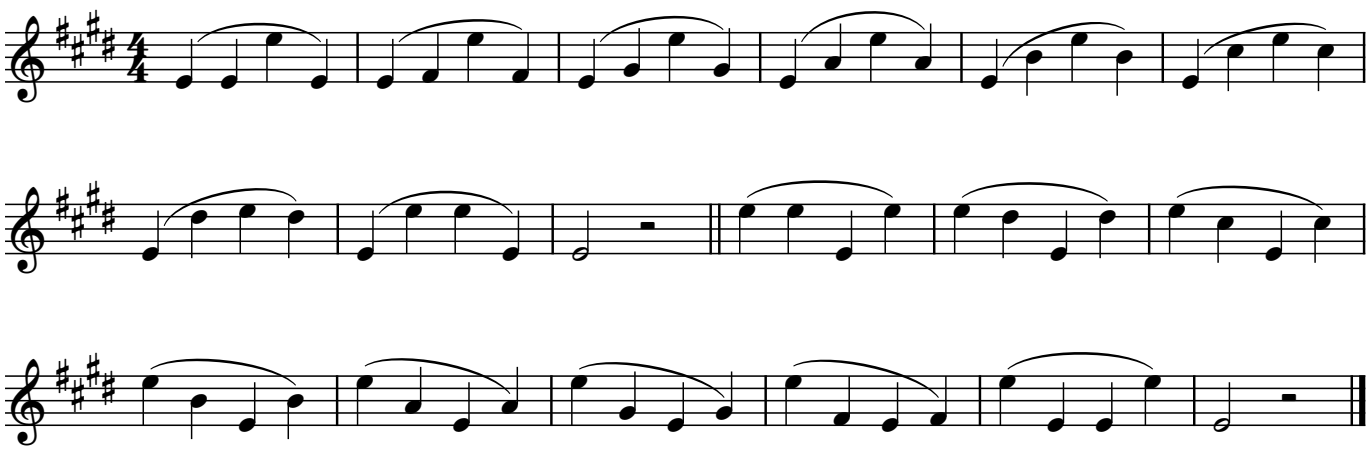

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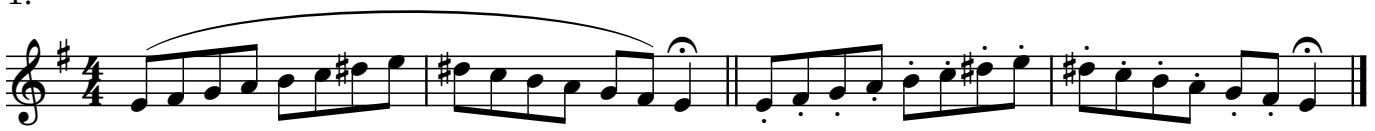

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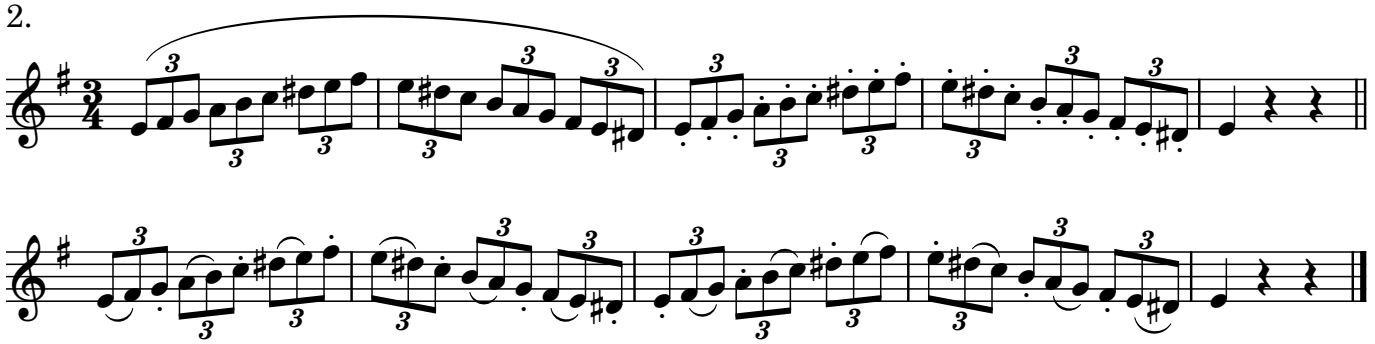

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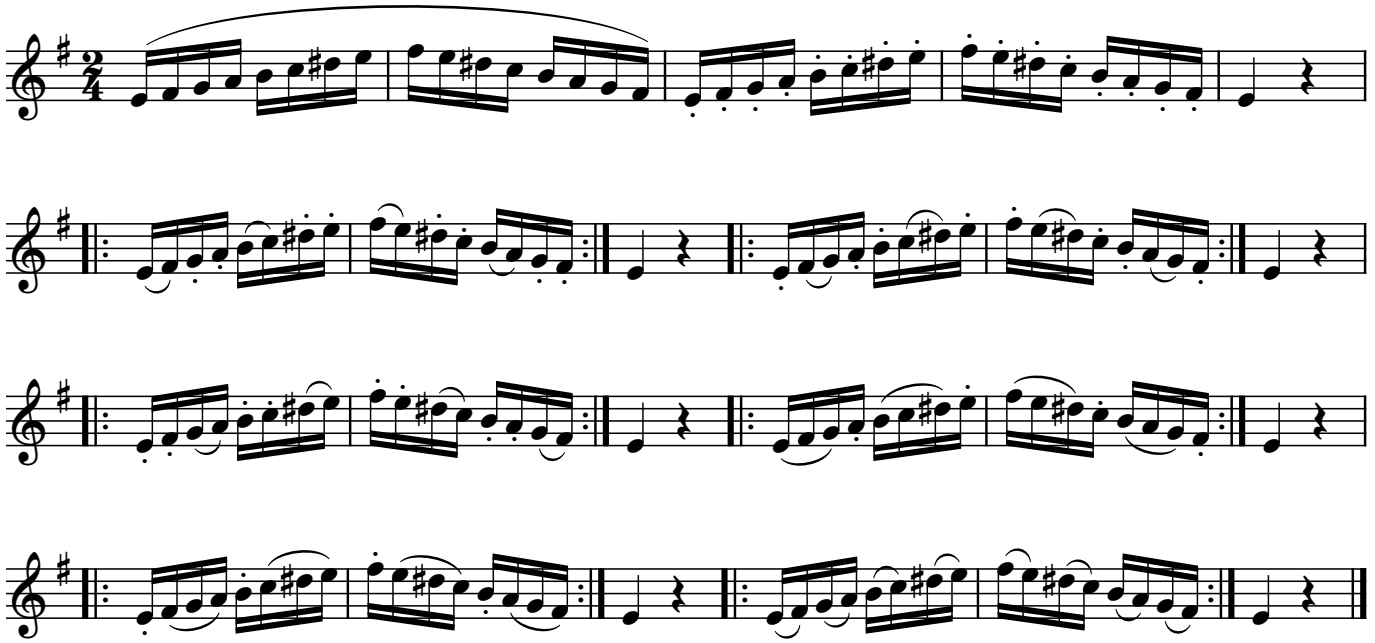

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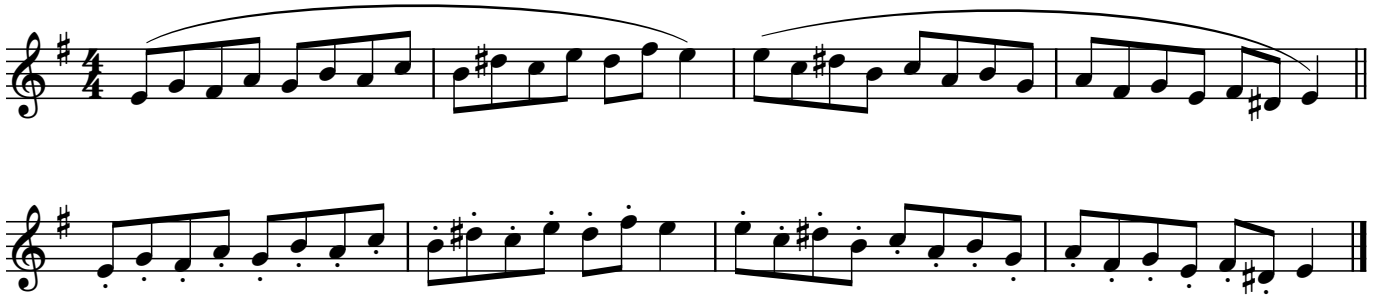

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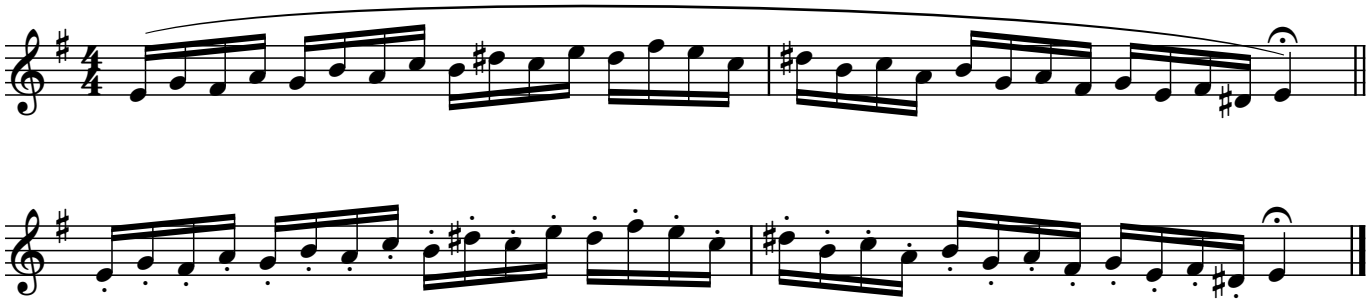

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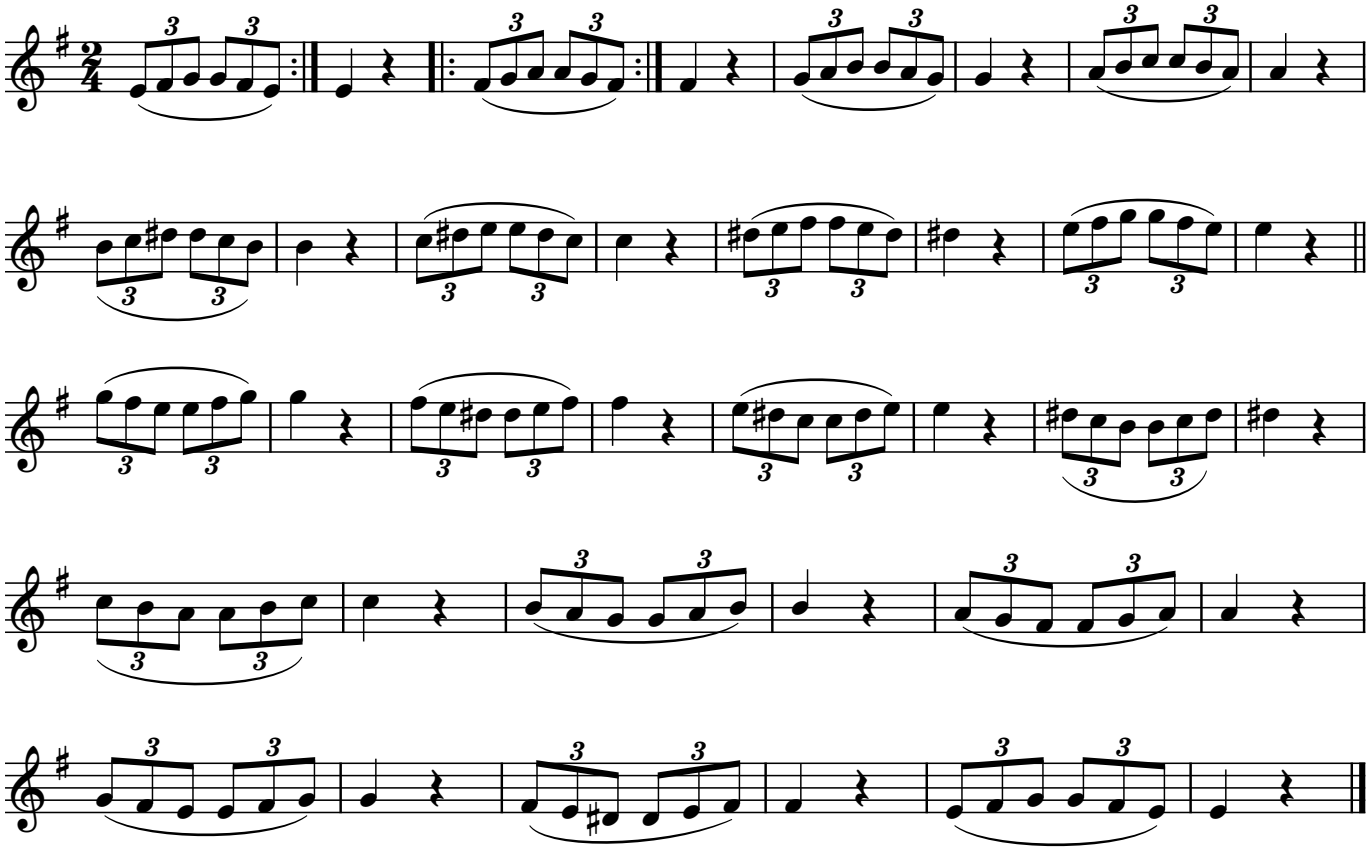

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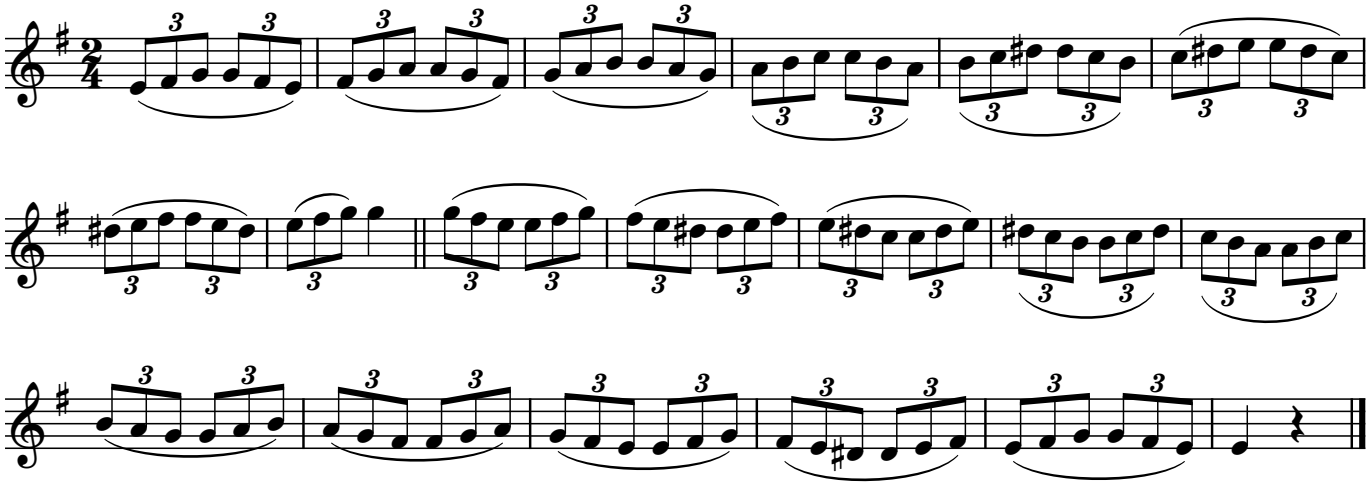

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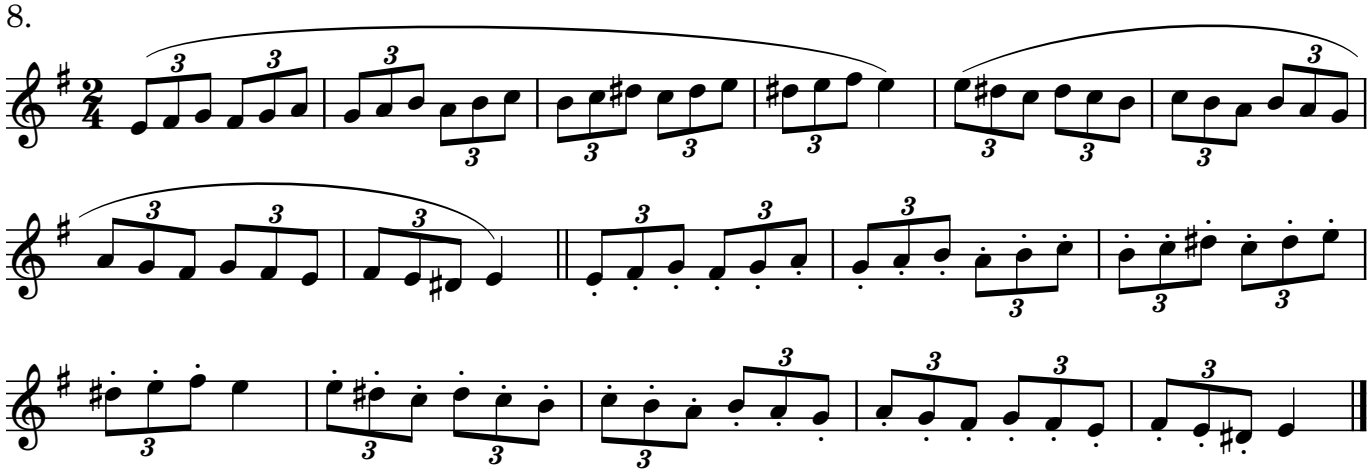

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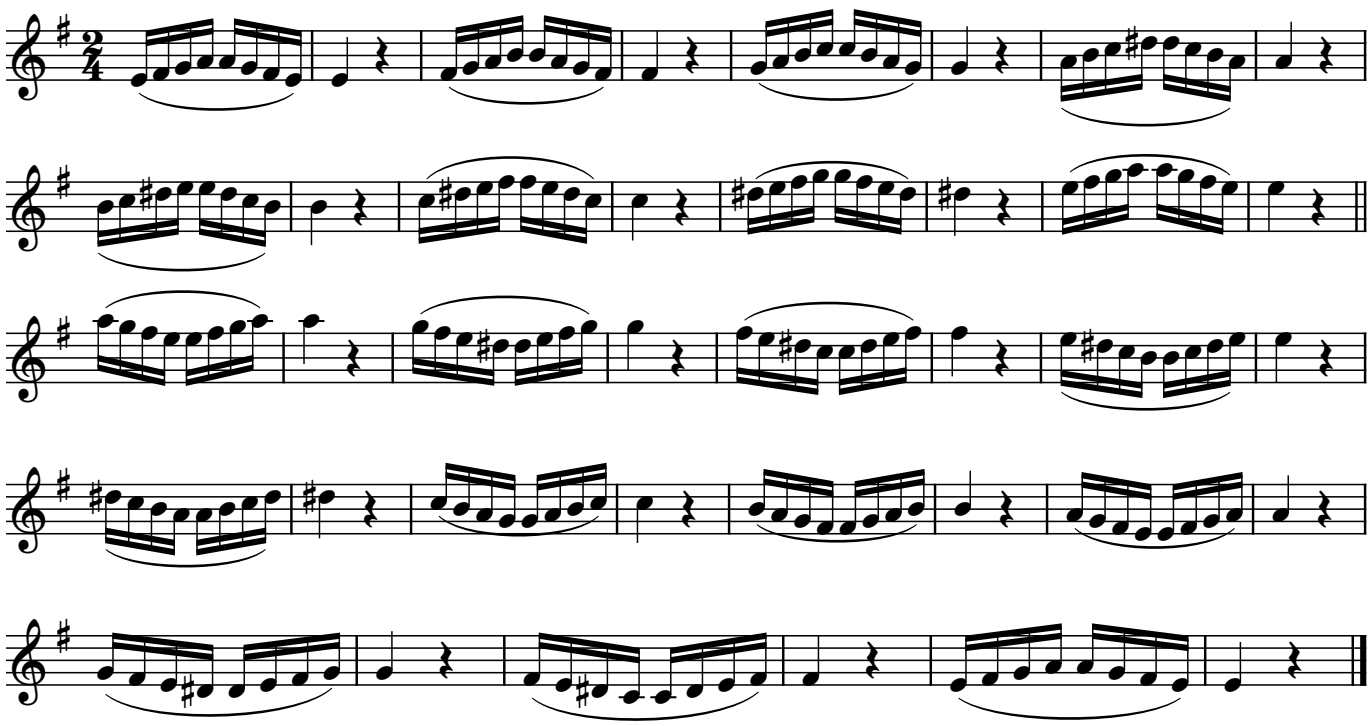

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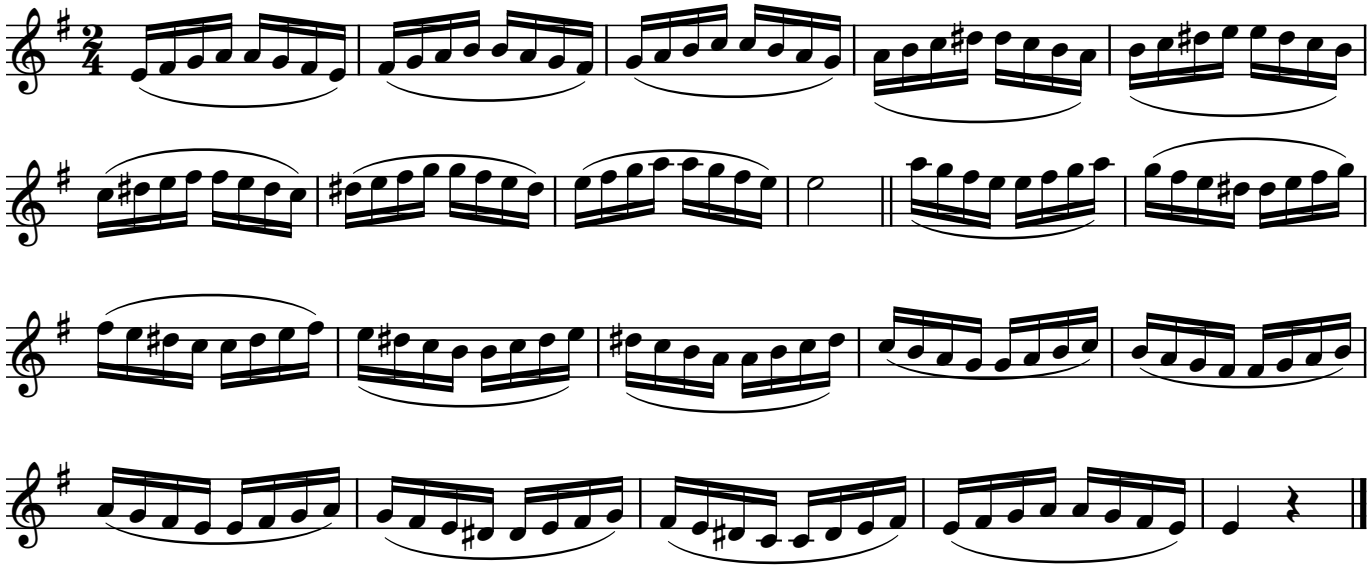

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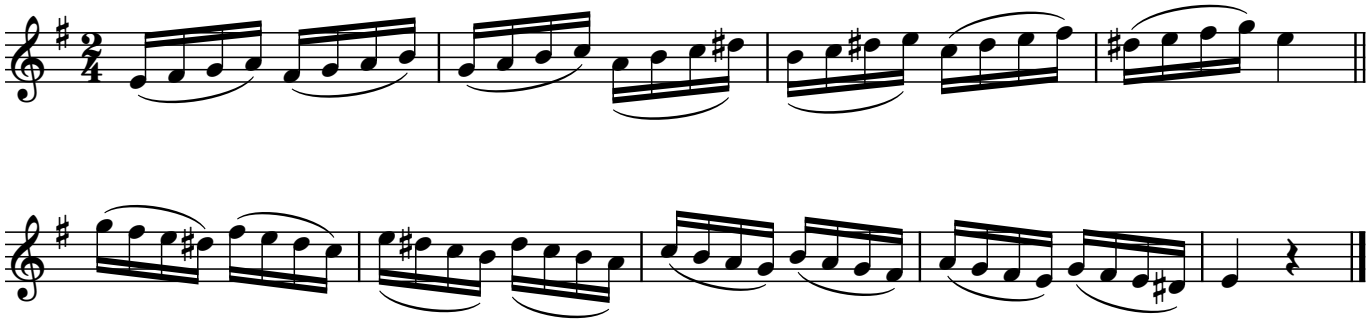

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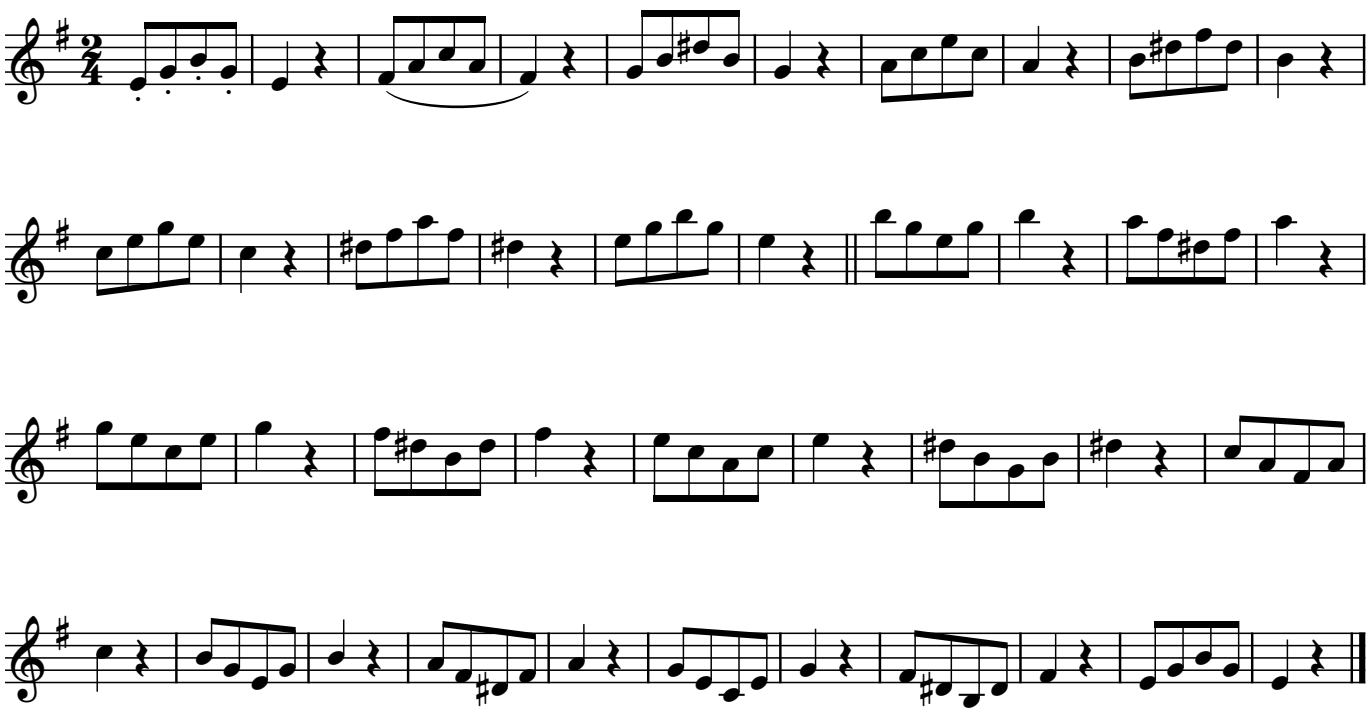

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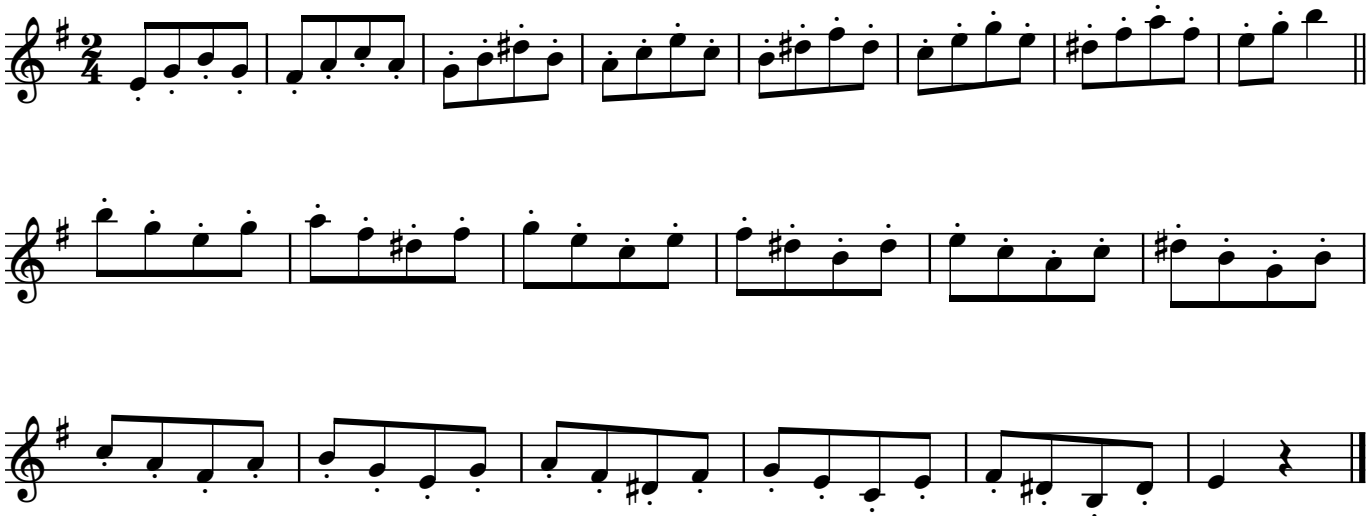

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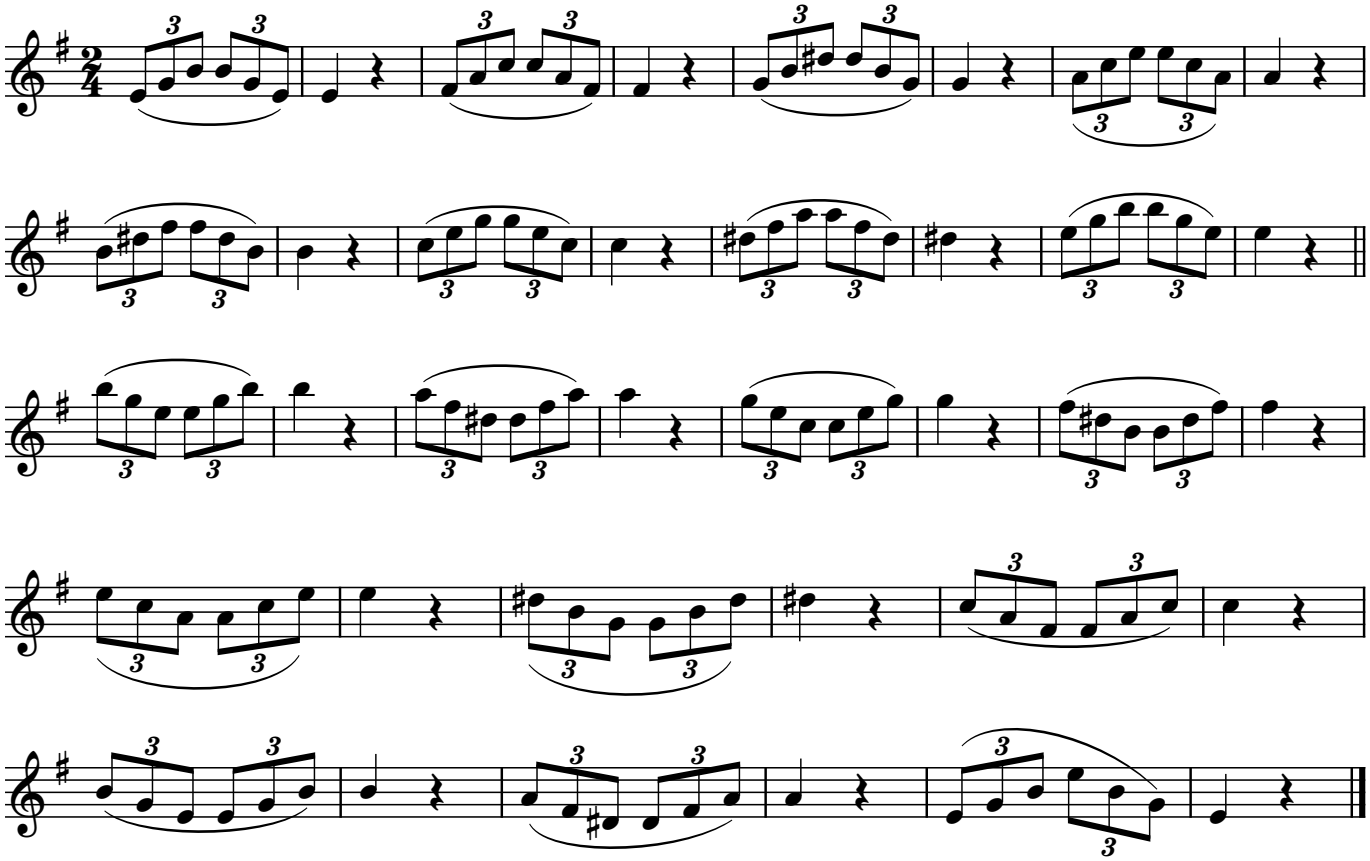

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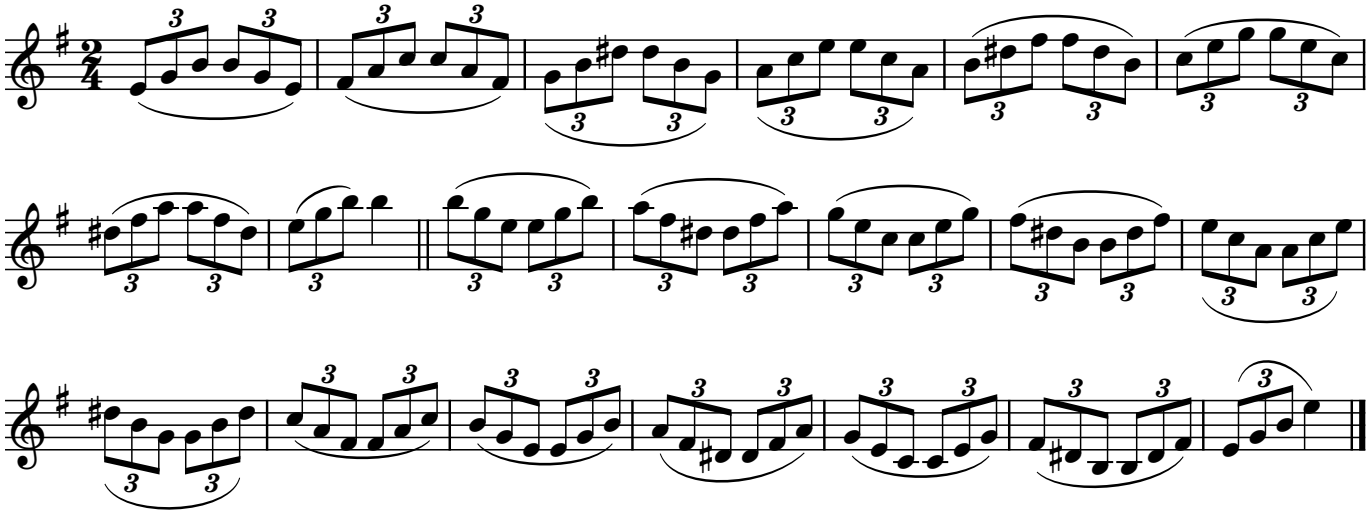

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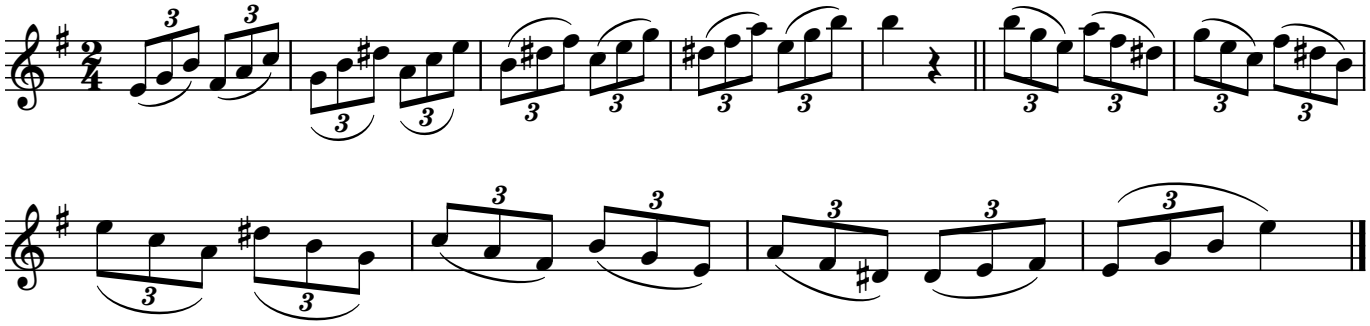

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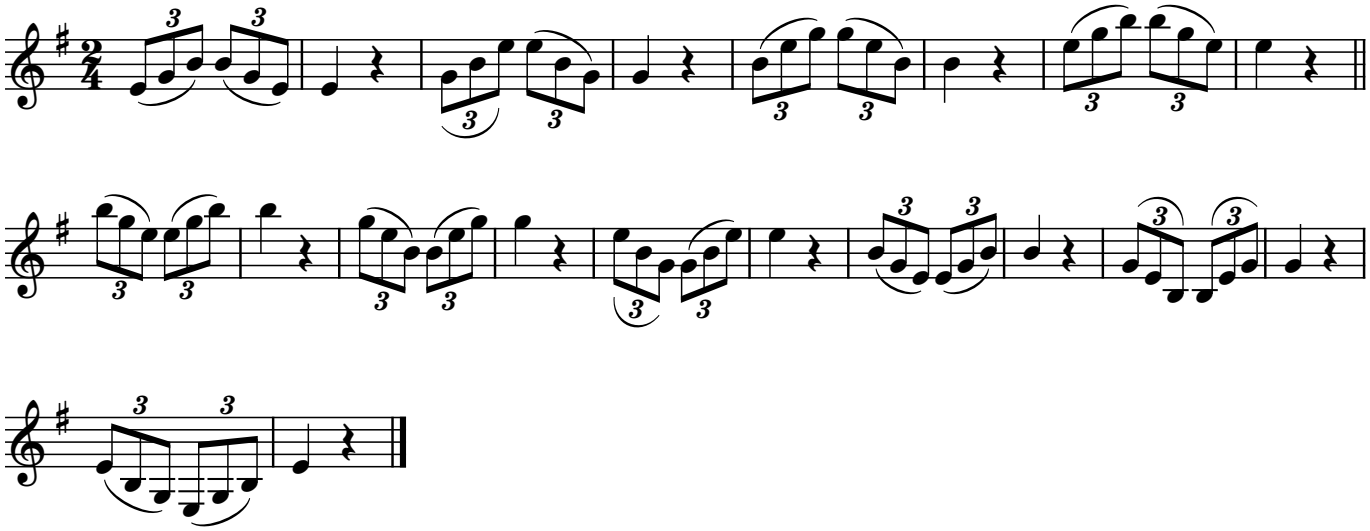

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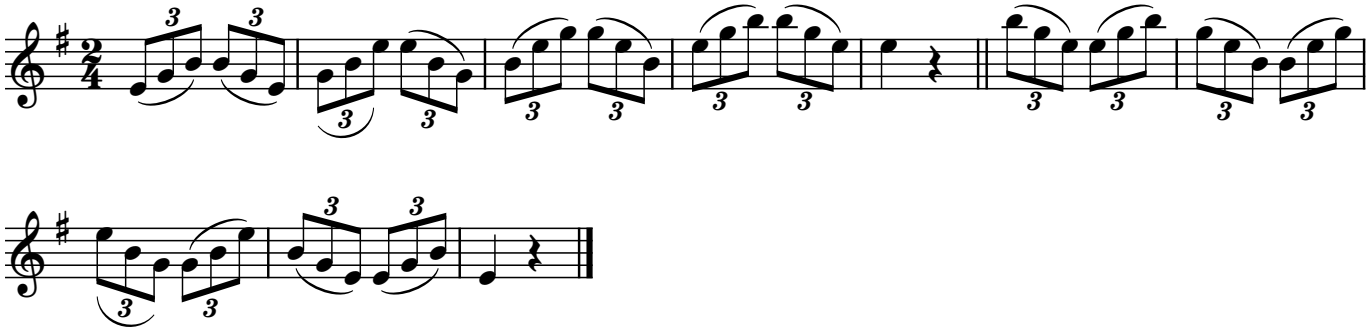

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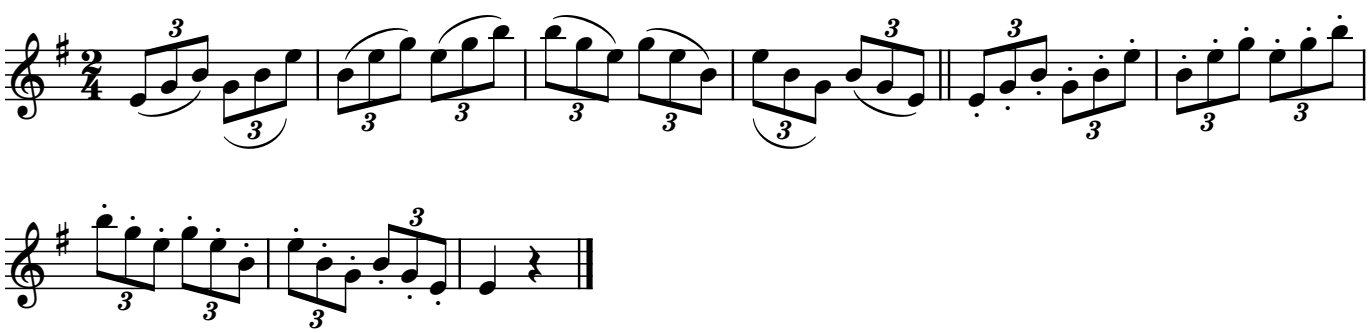

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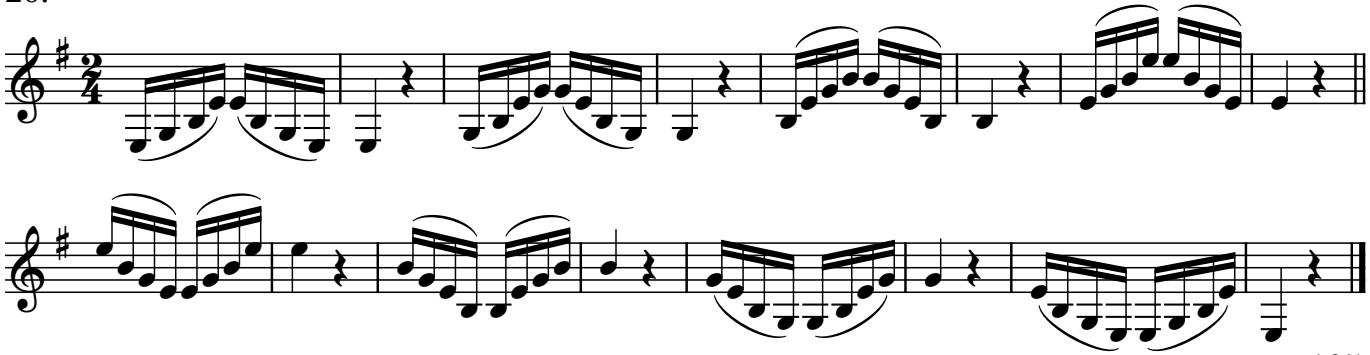

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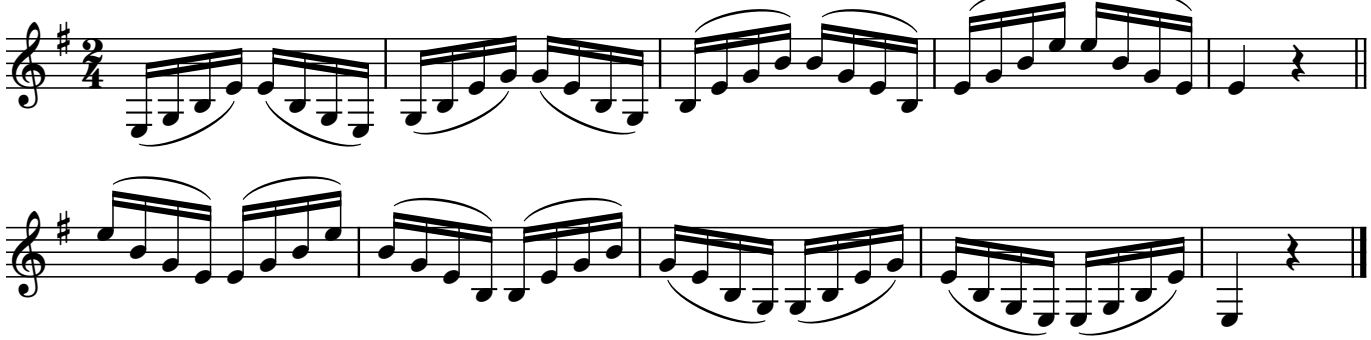

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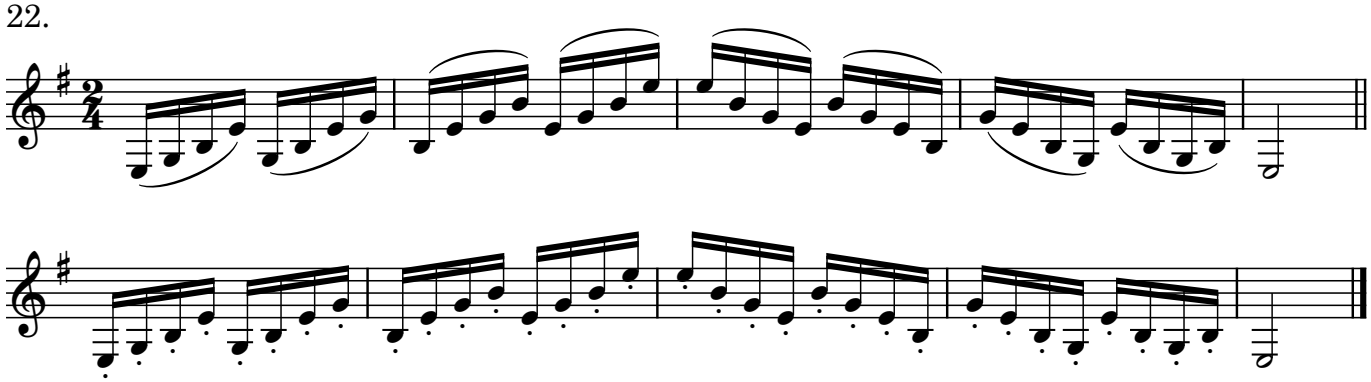

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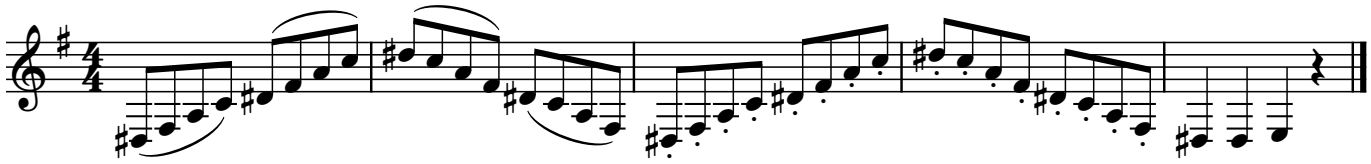

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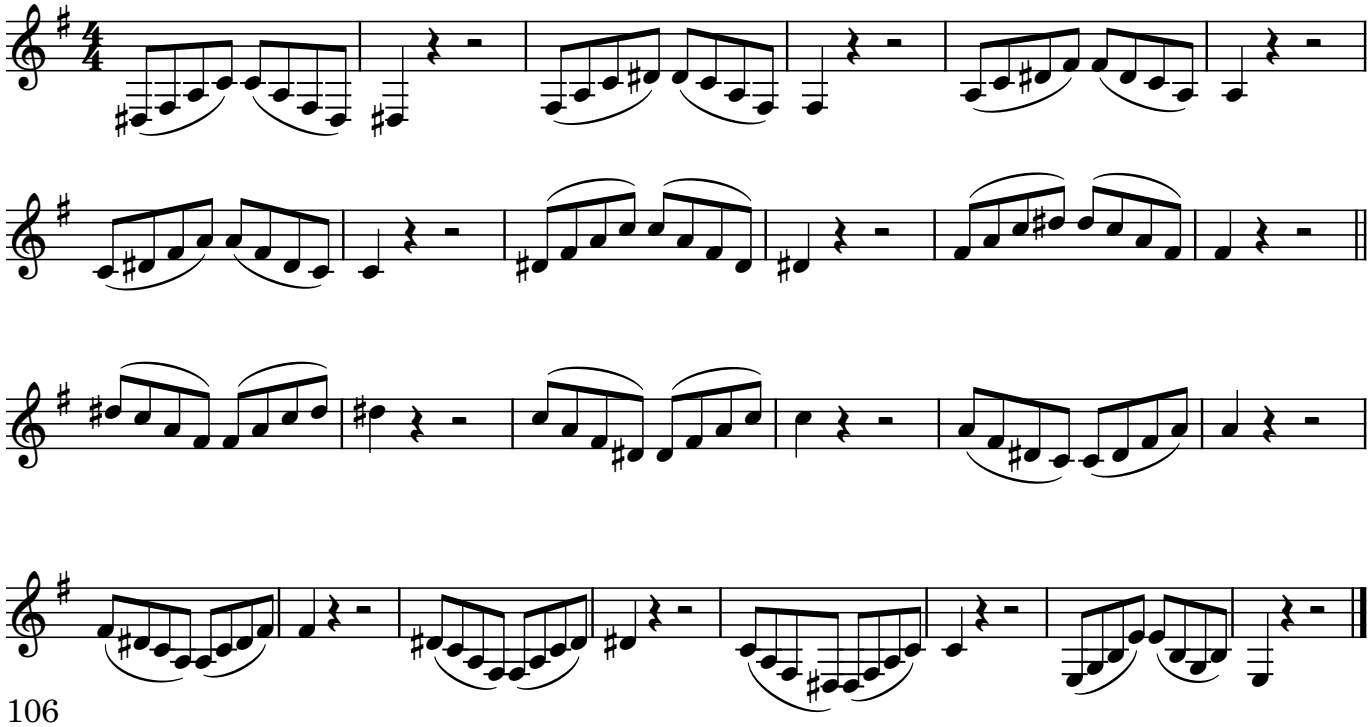

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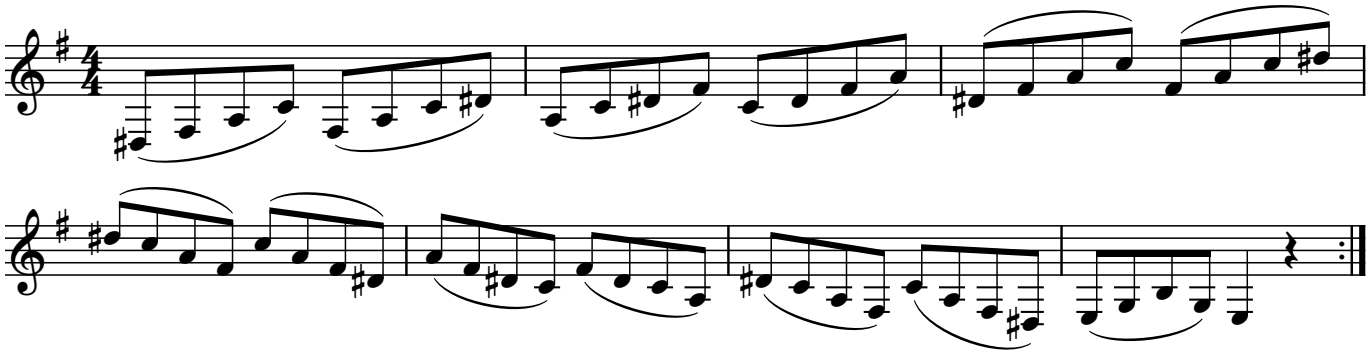

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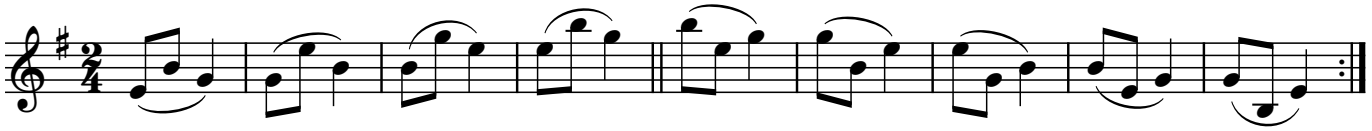

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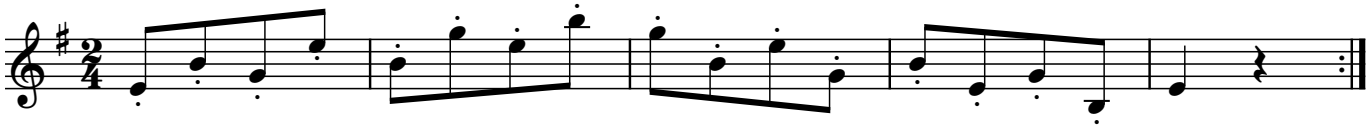

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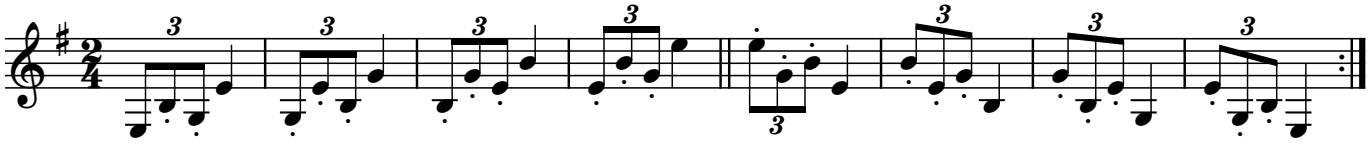

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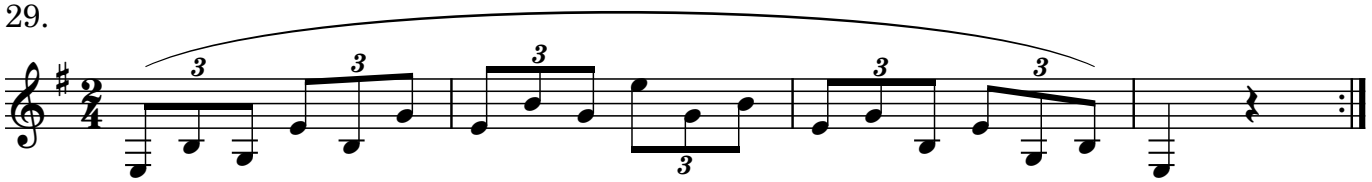

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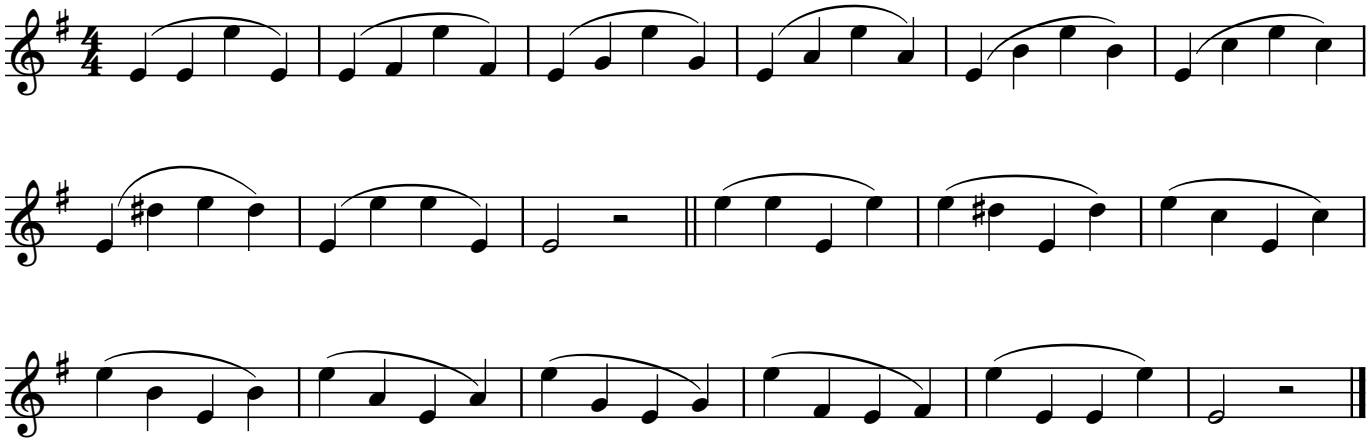

F-Dur - F Major

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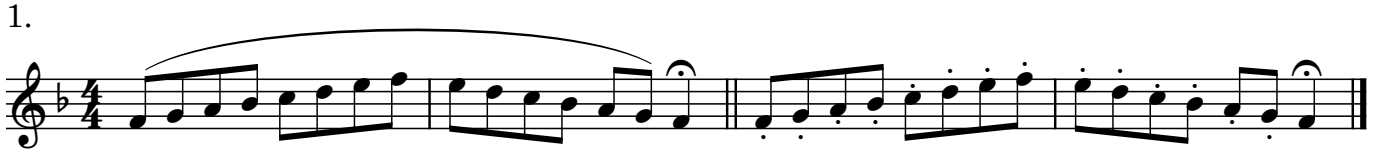

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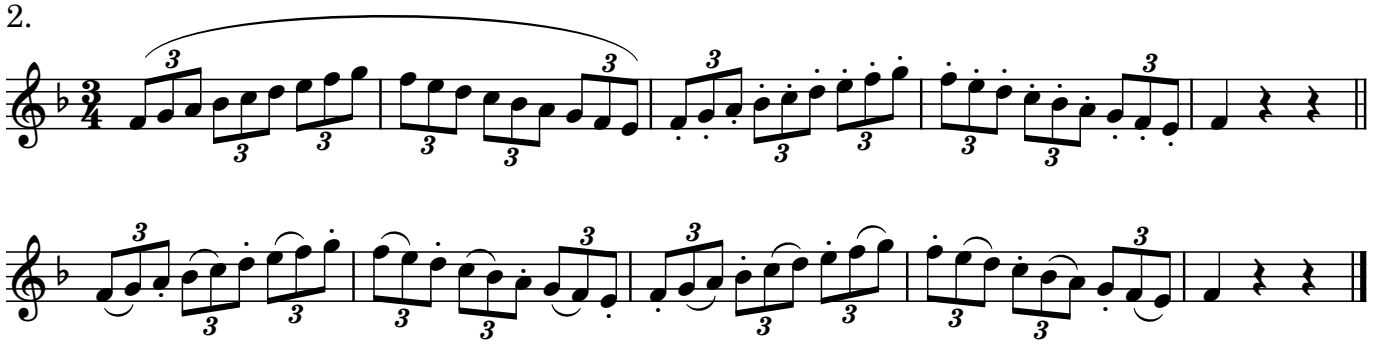

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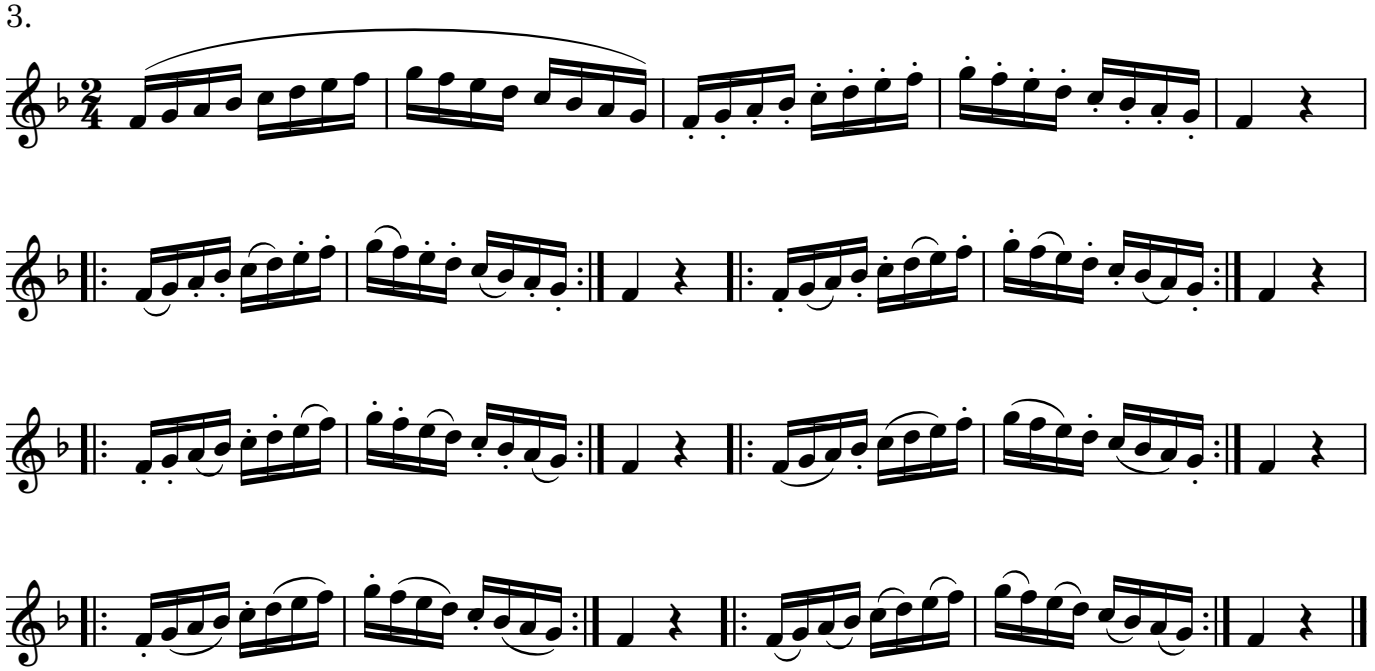

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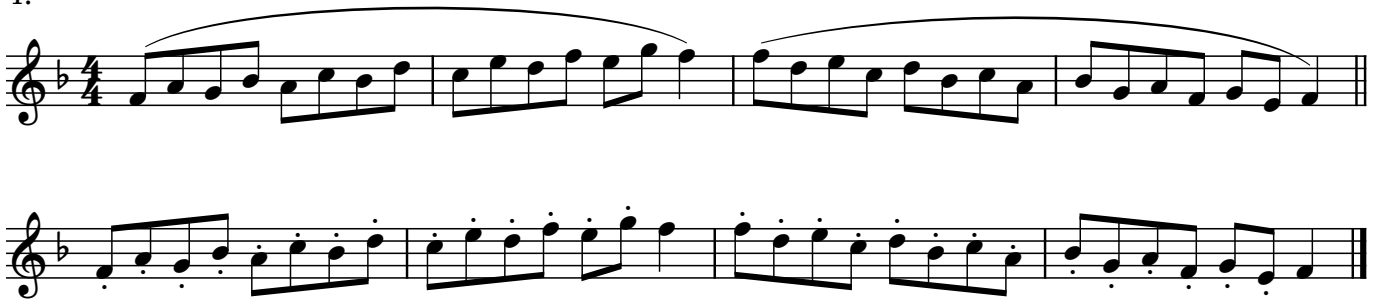

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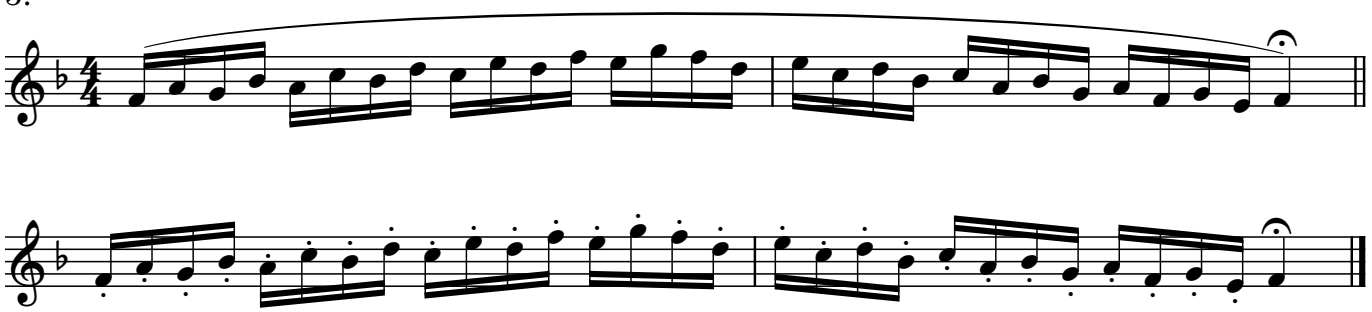

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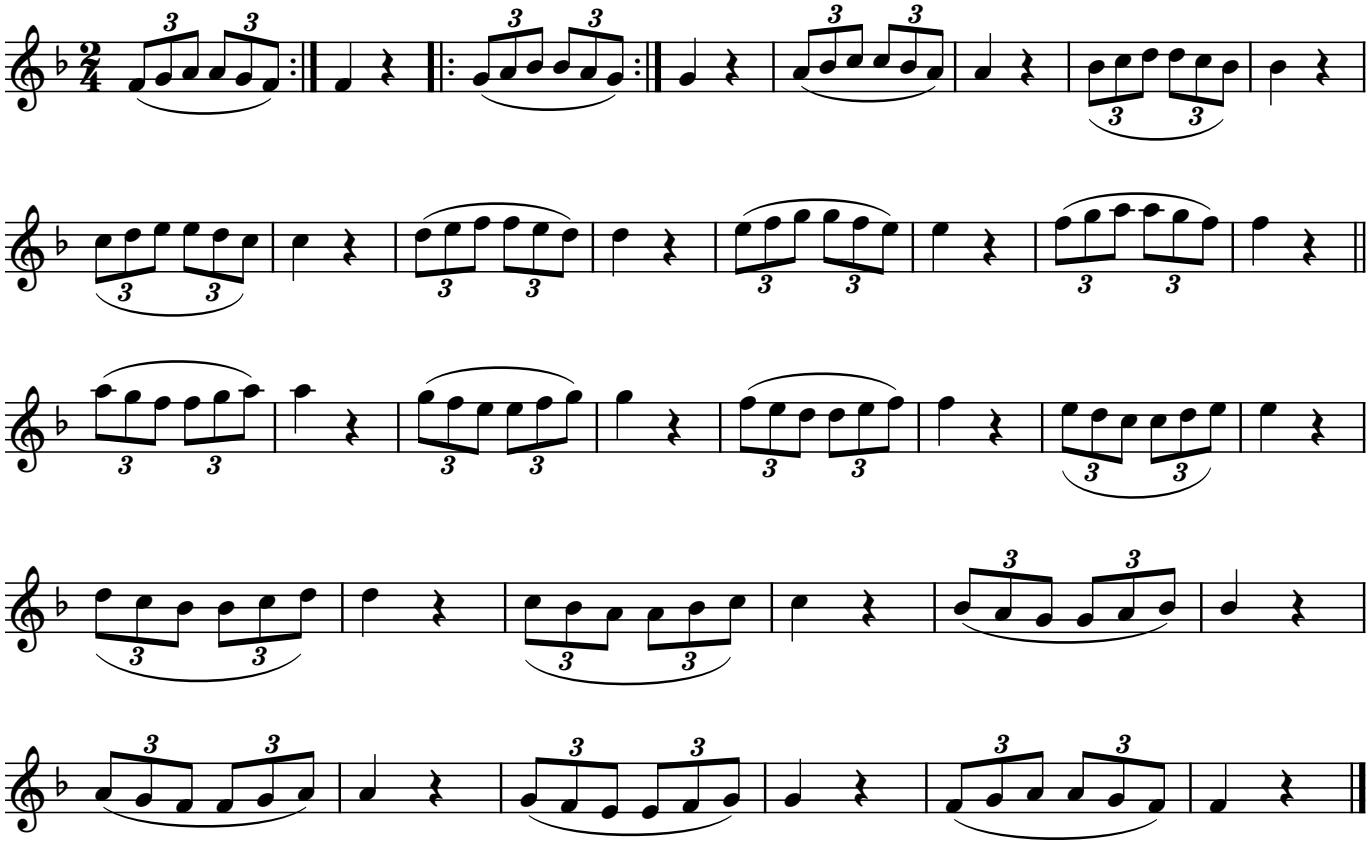

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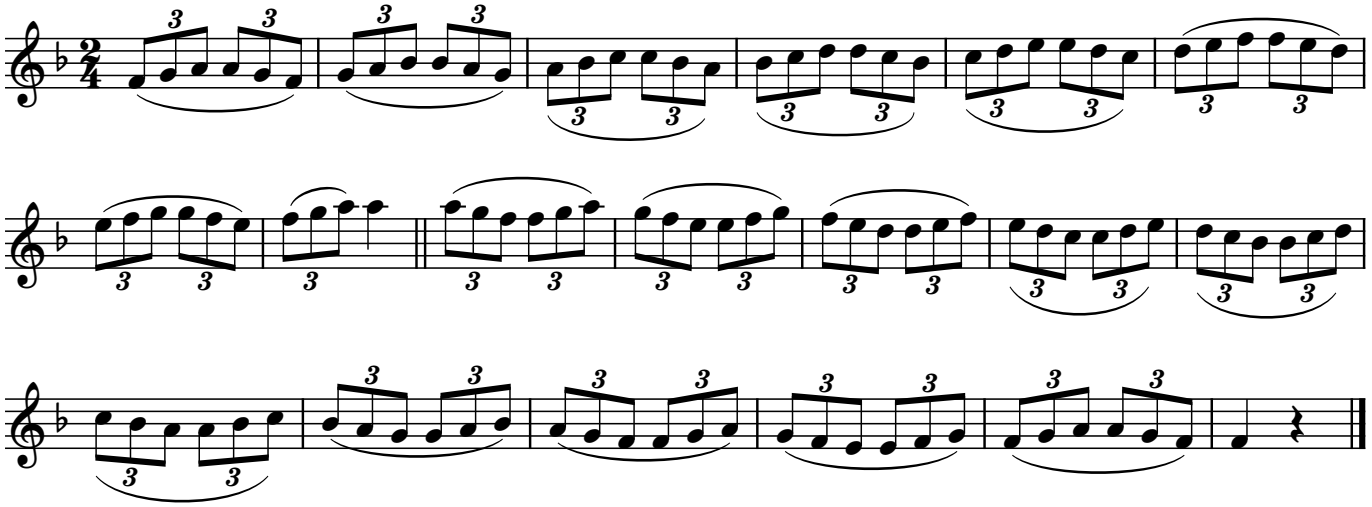

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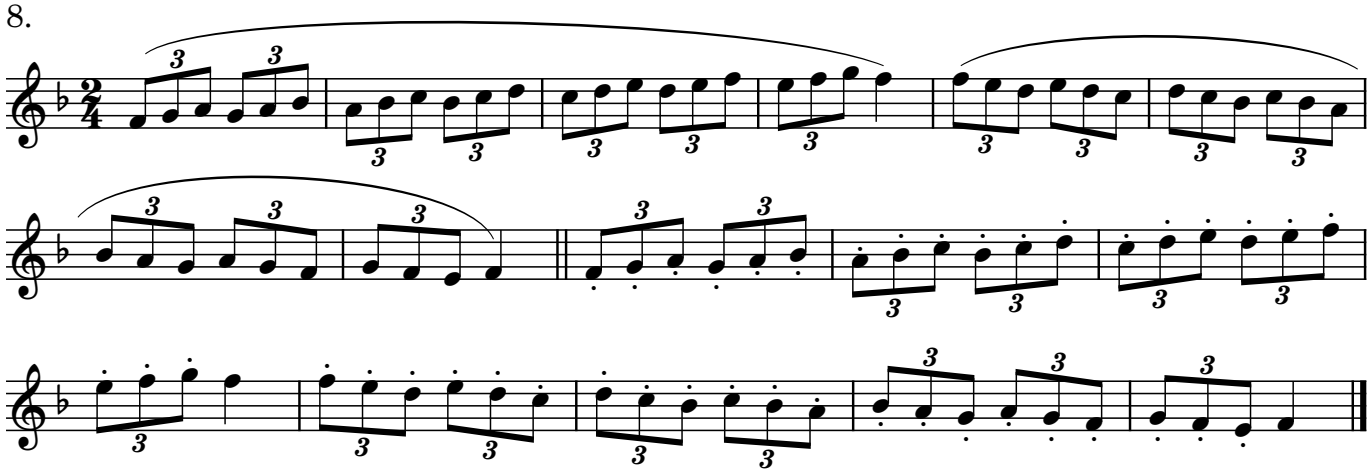

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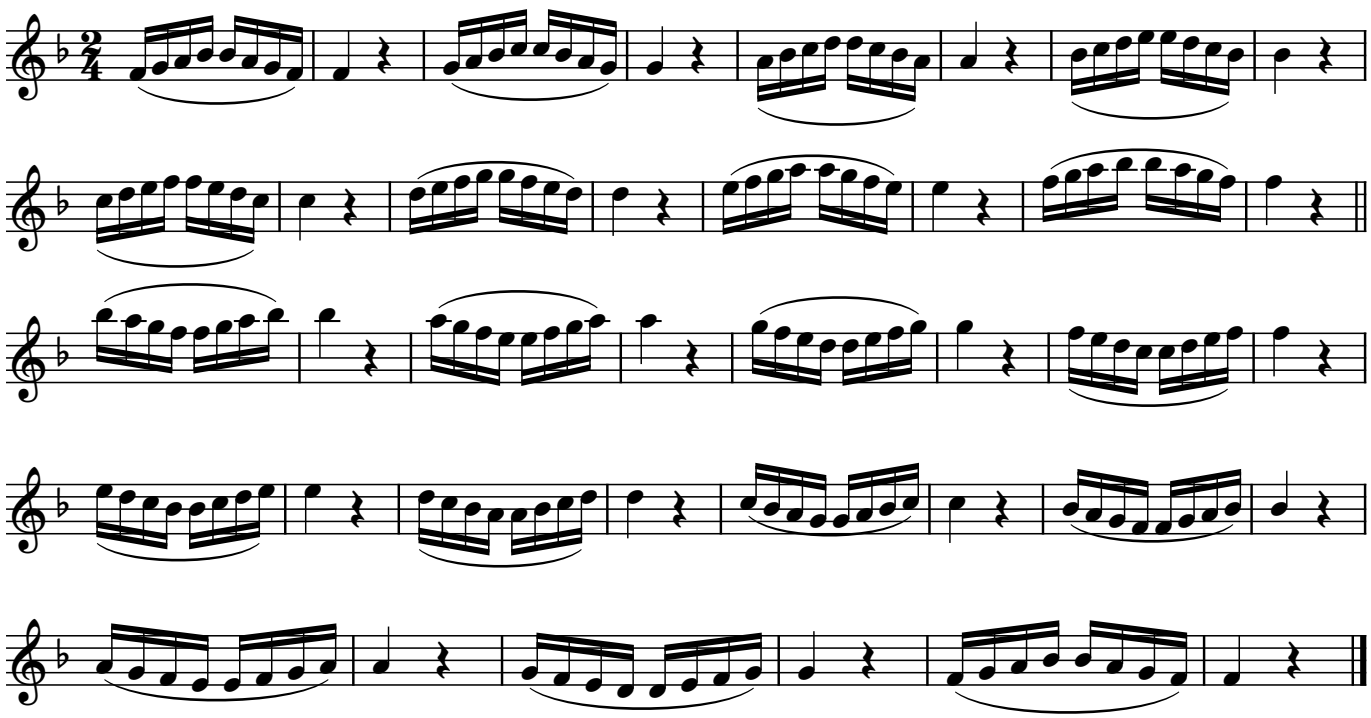

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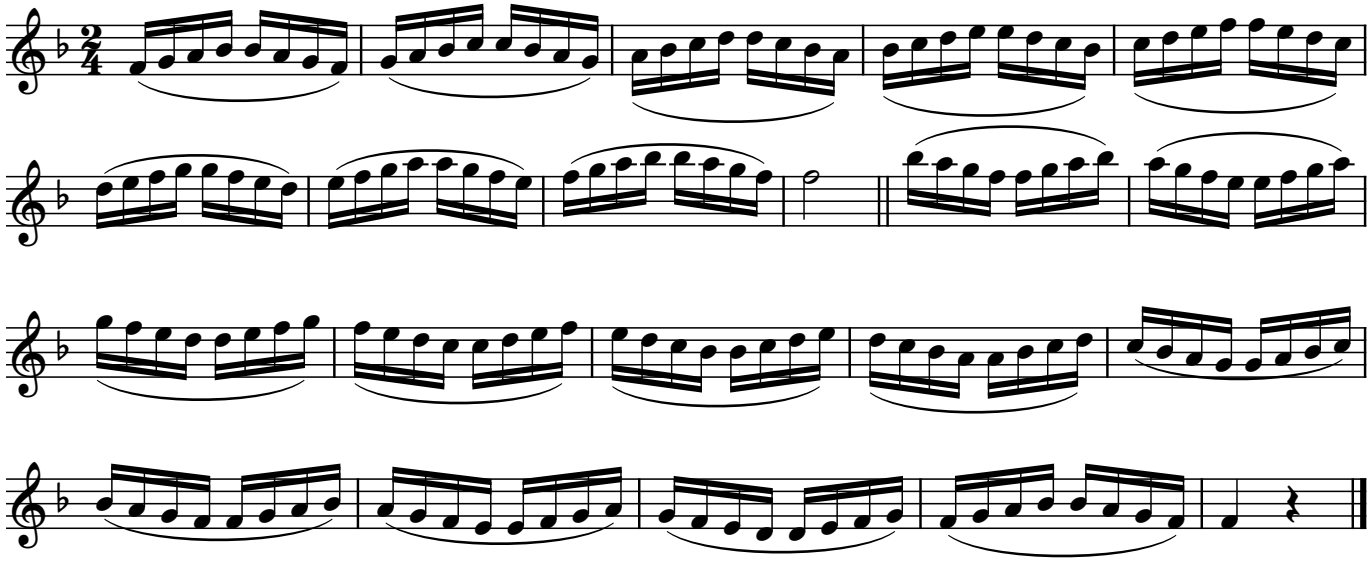

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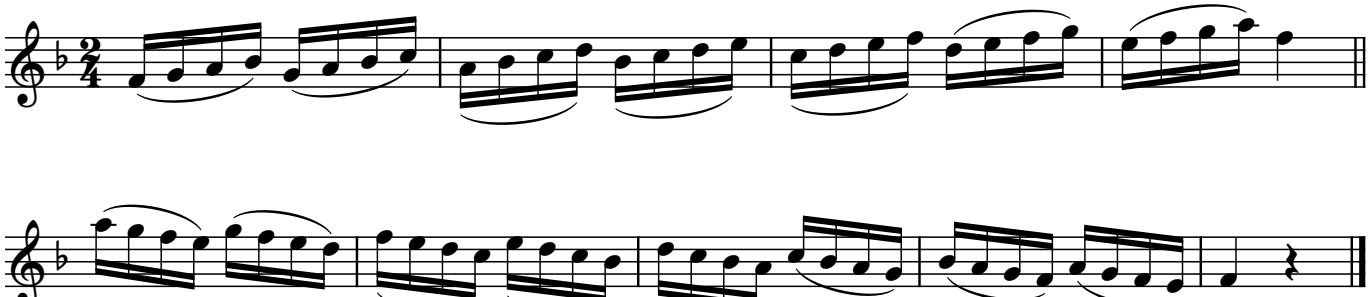

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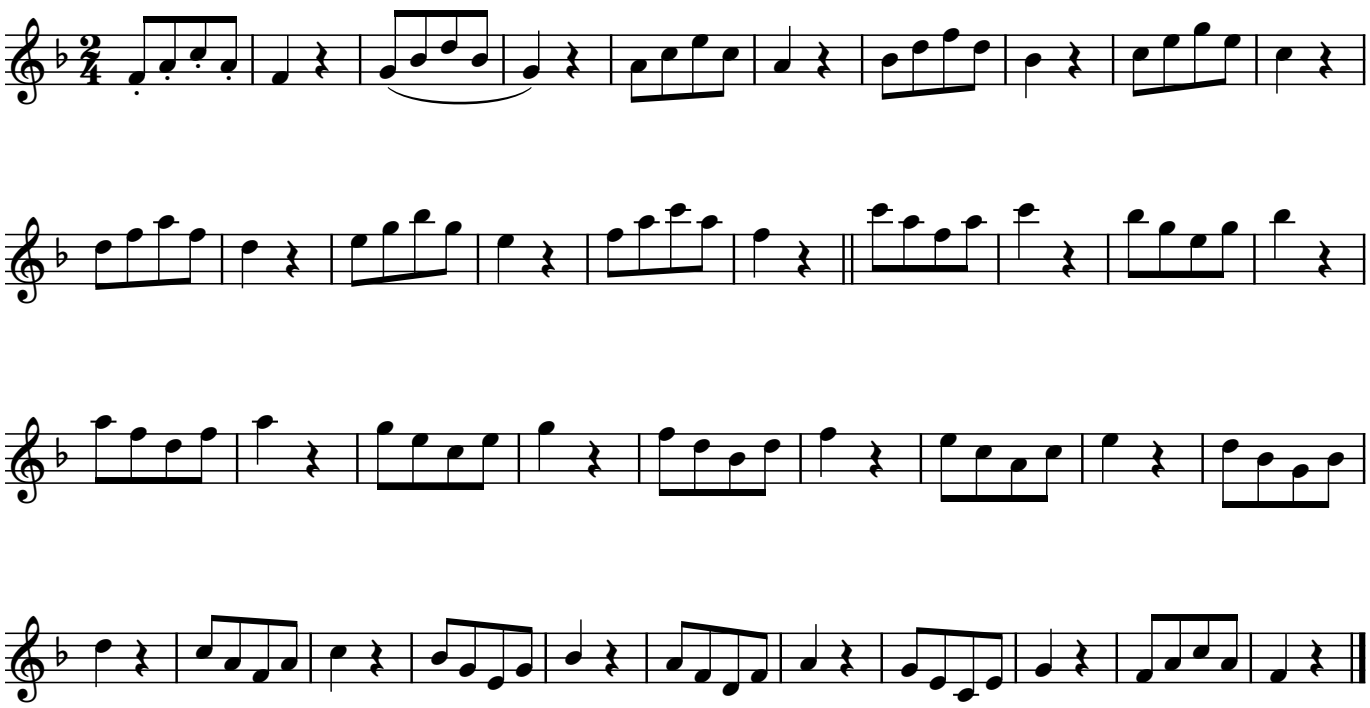

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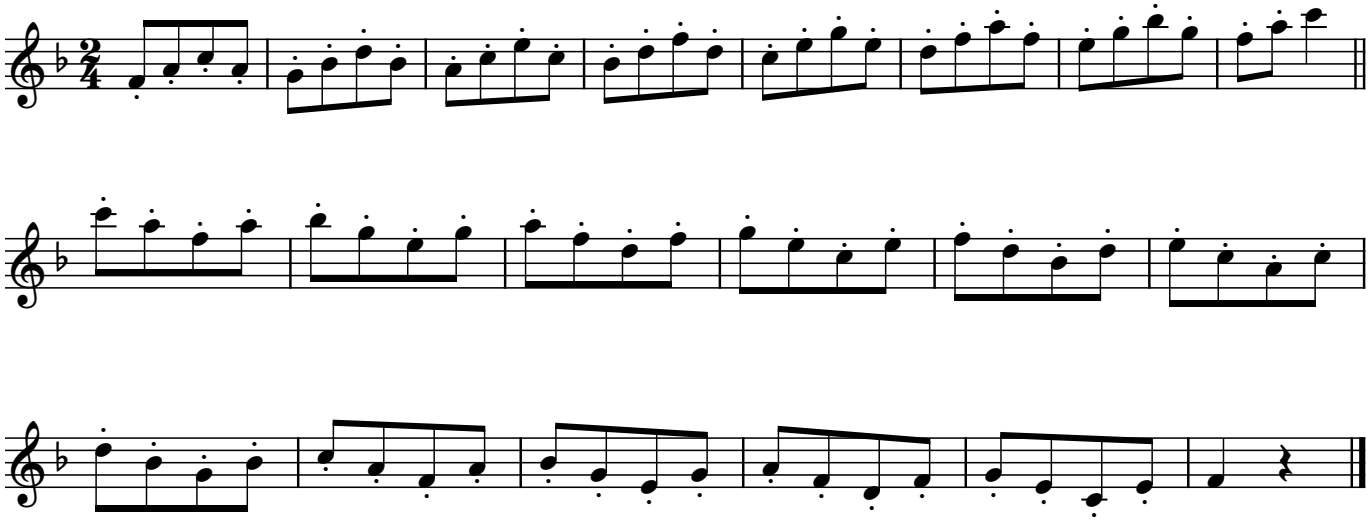

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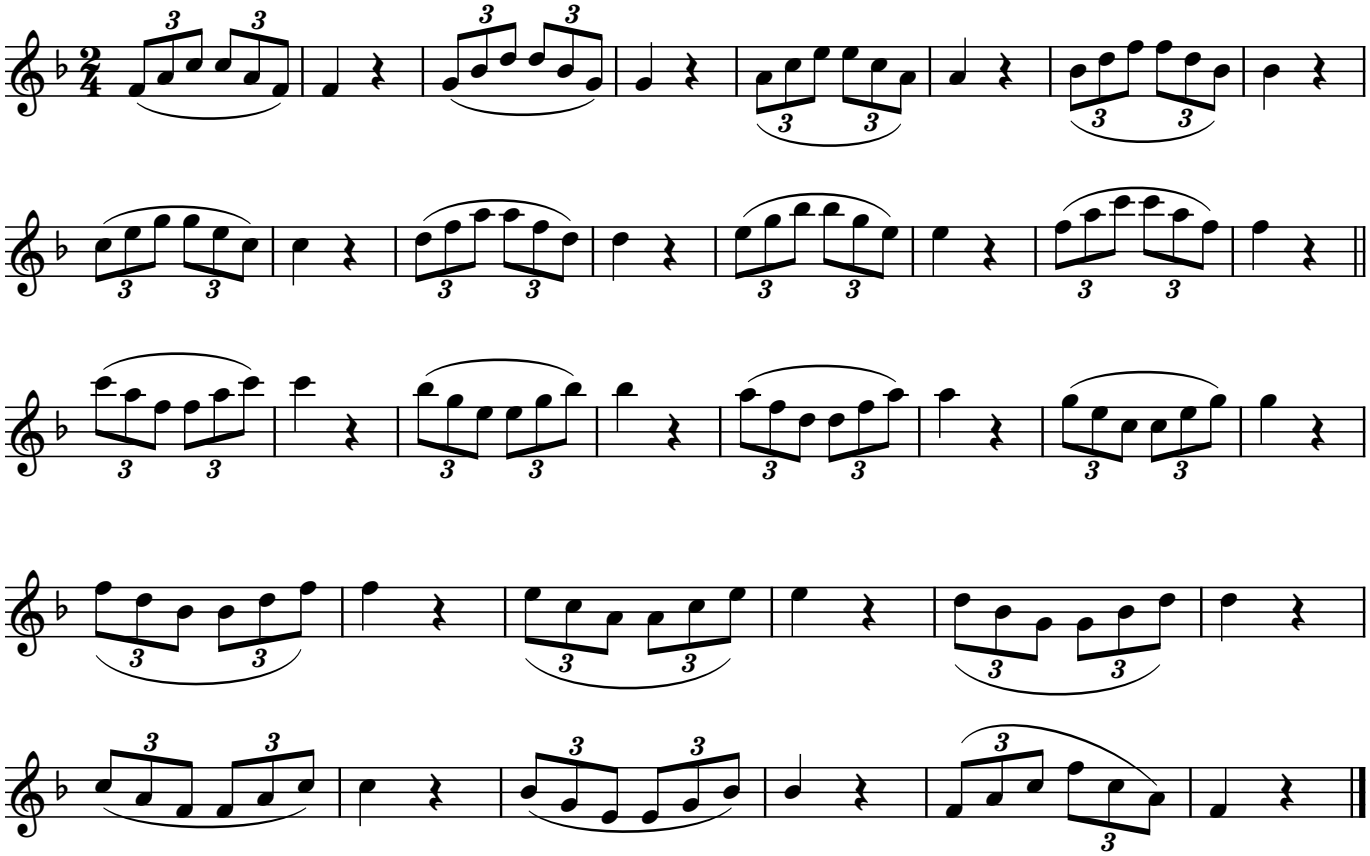

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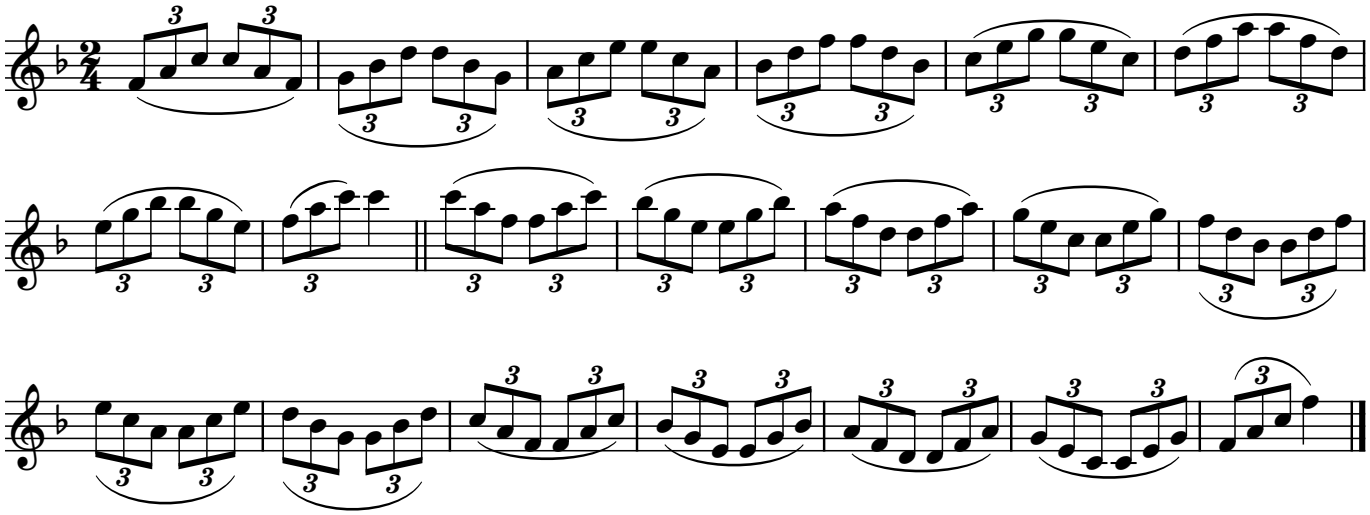

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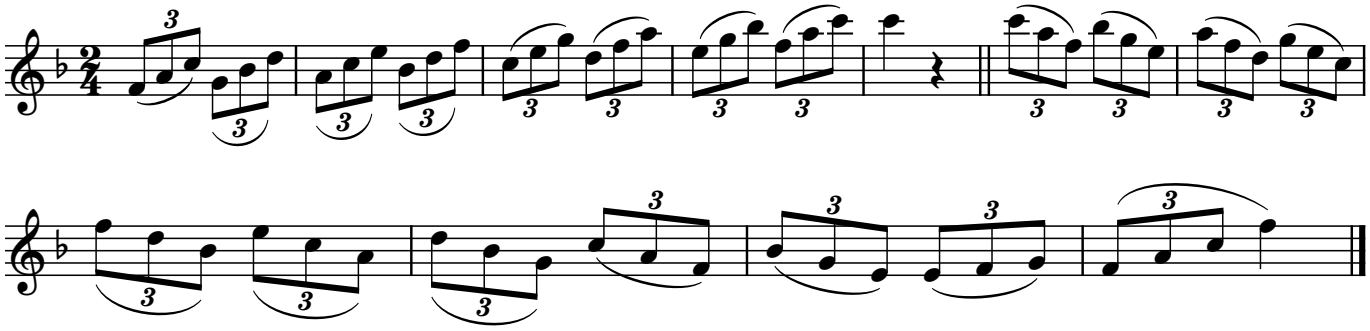

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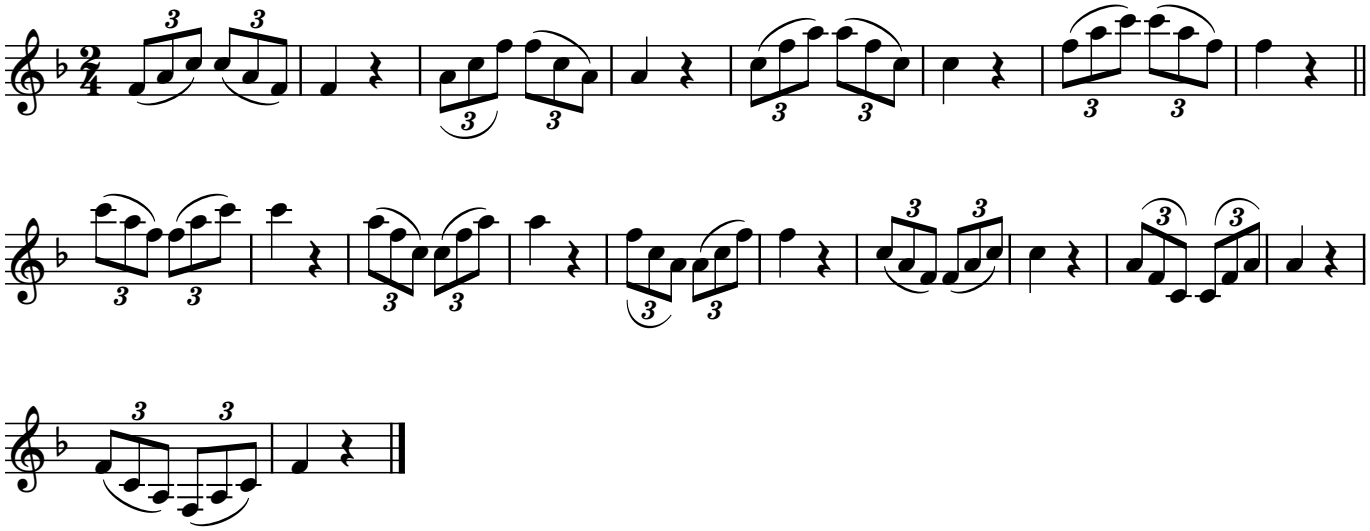

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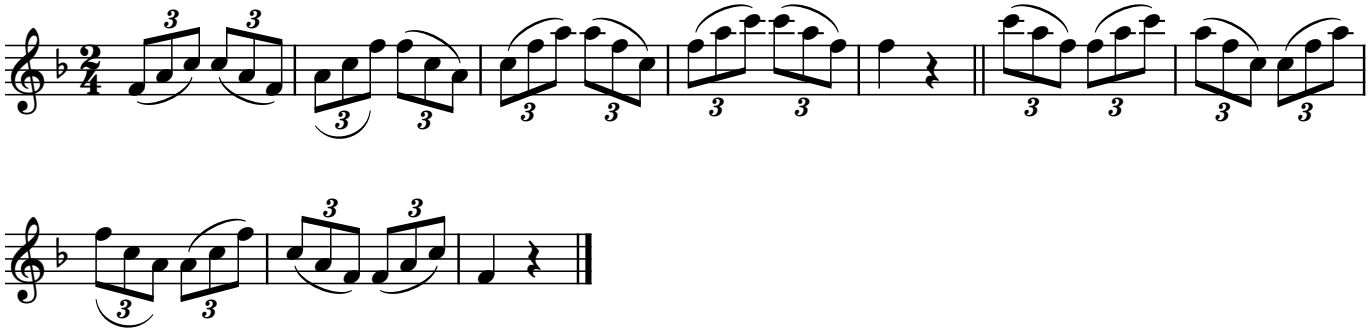

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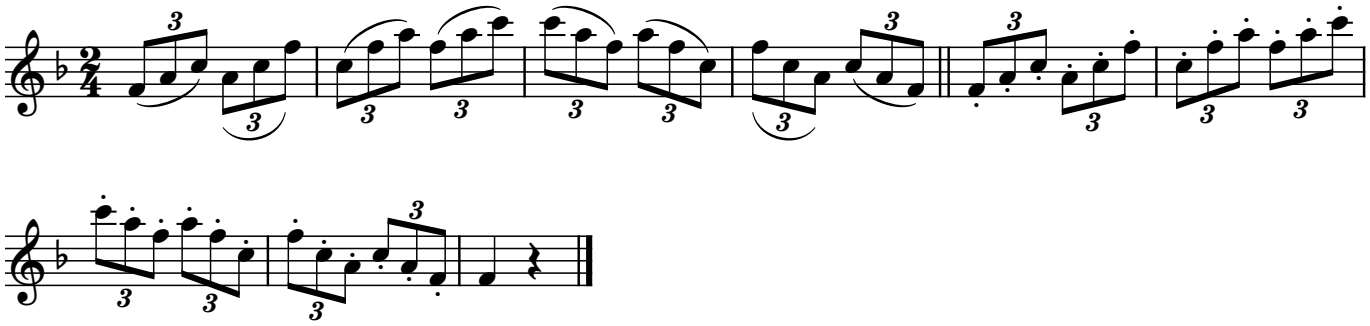

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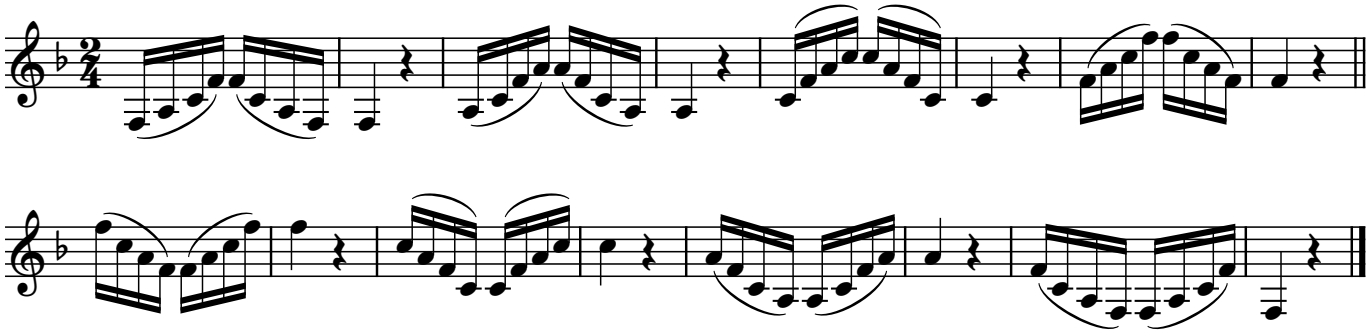

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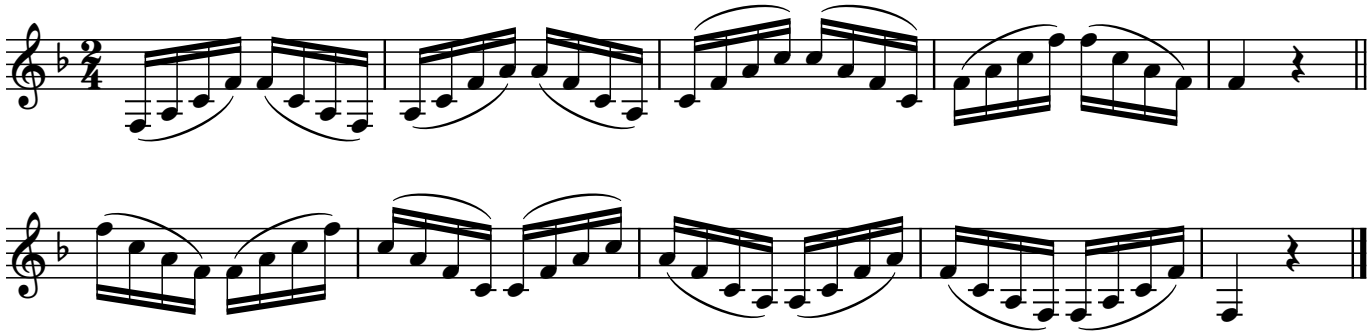

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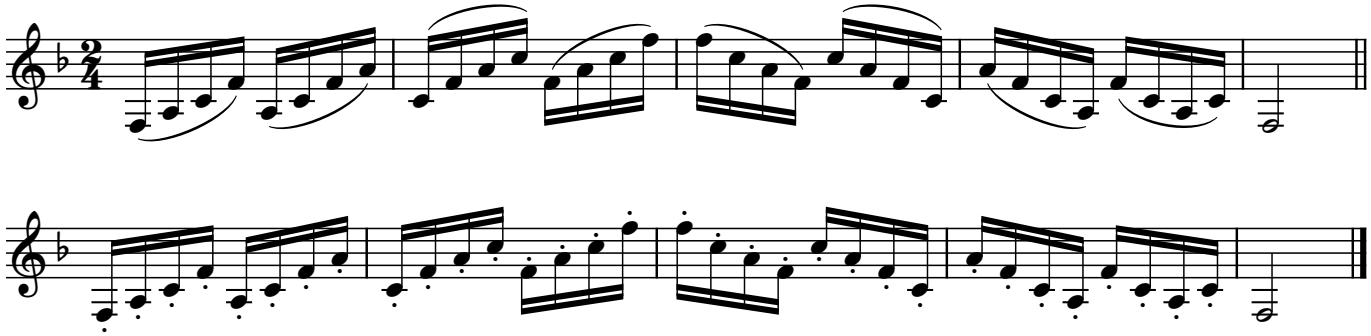

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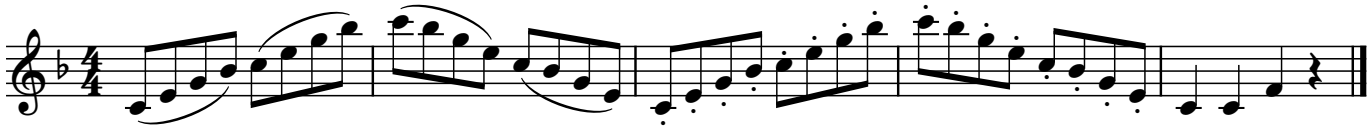

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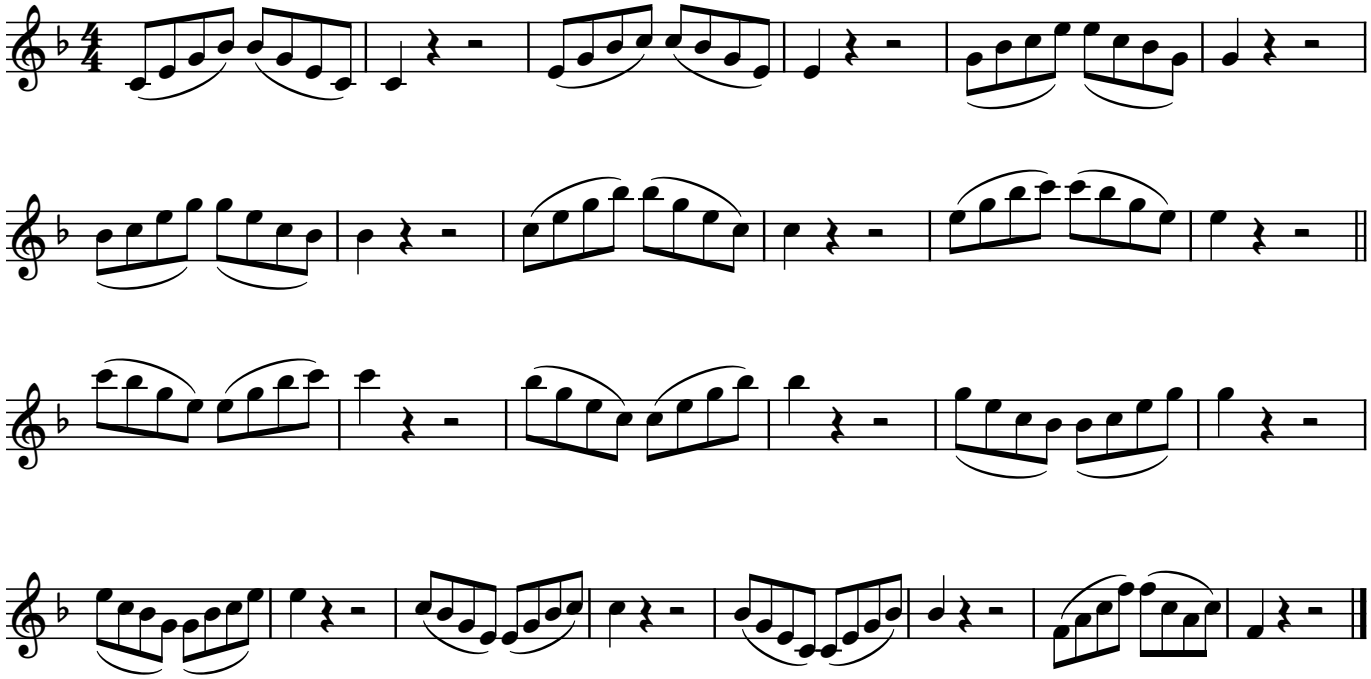

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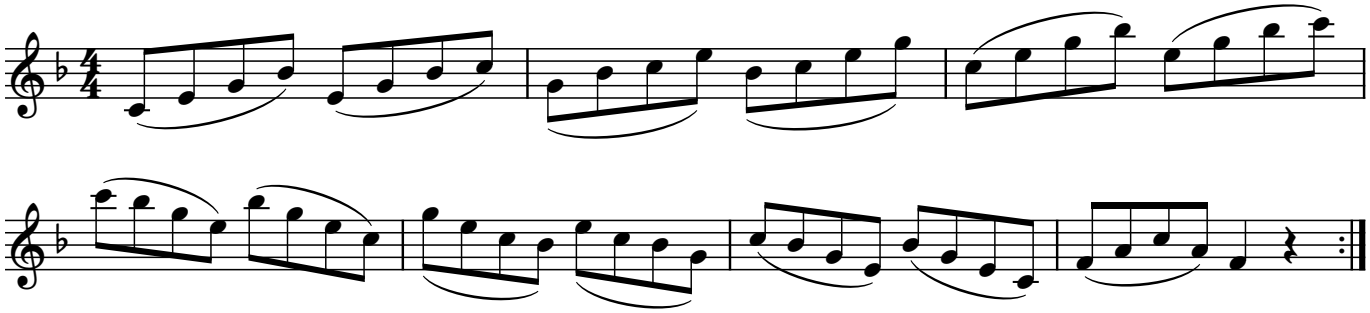

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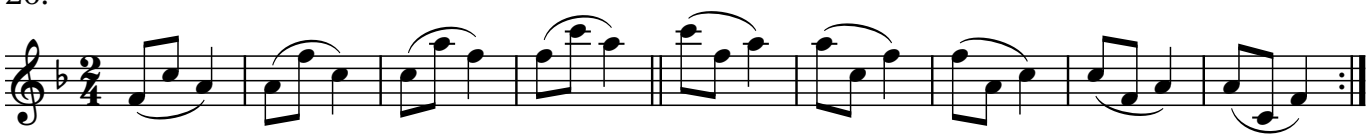

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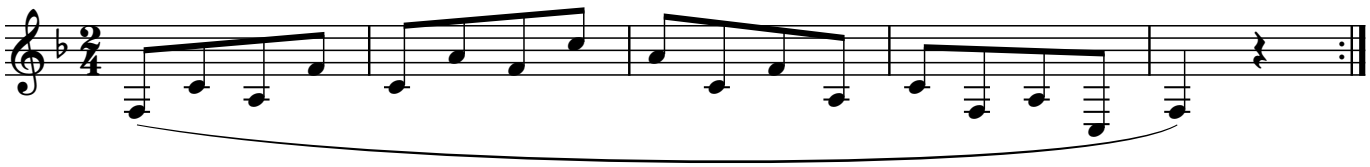

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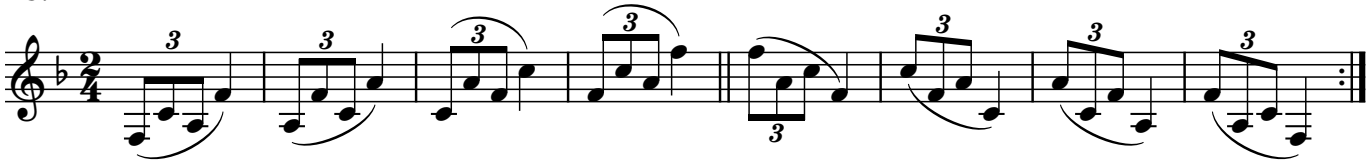

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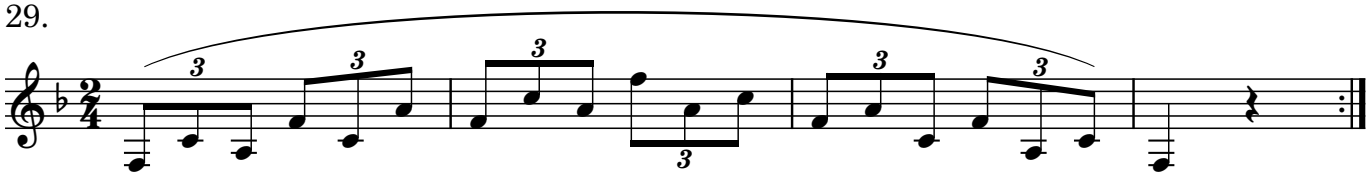

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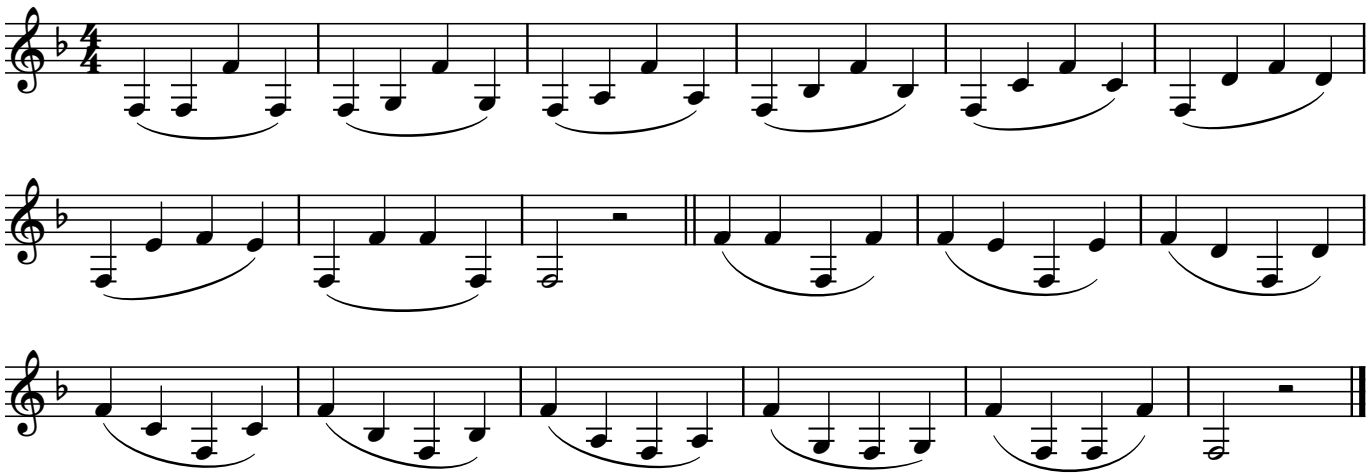

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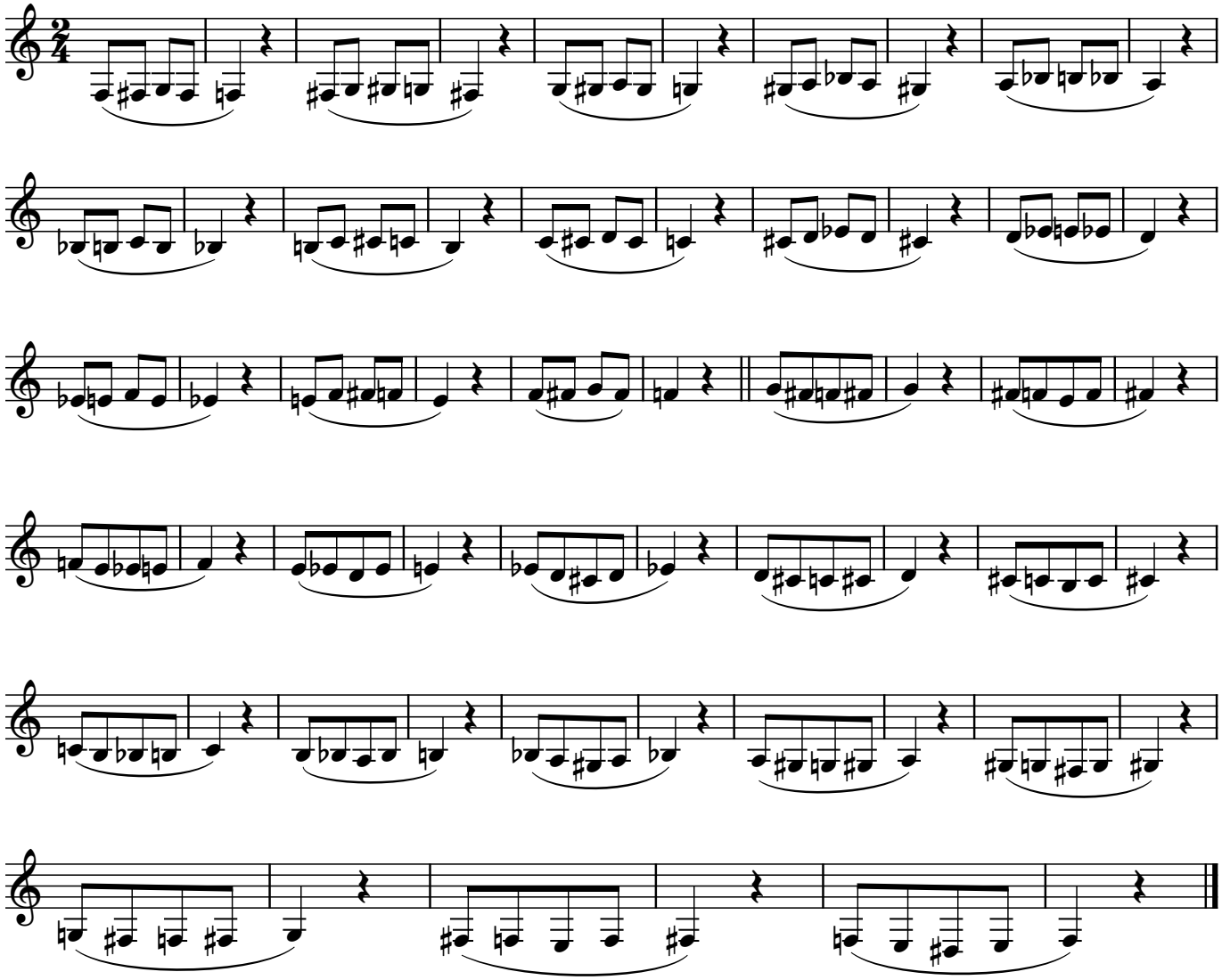

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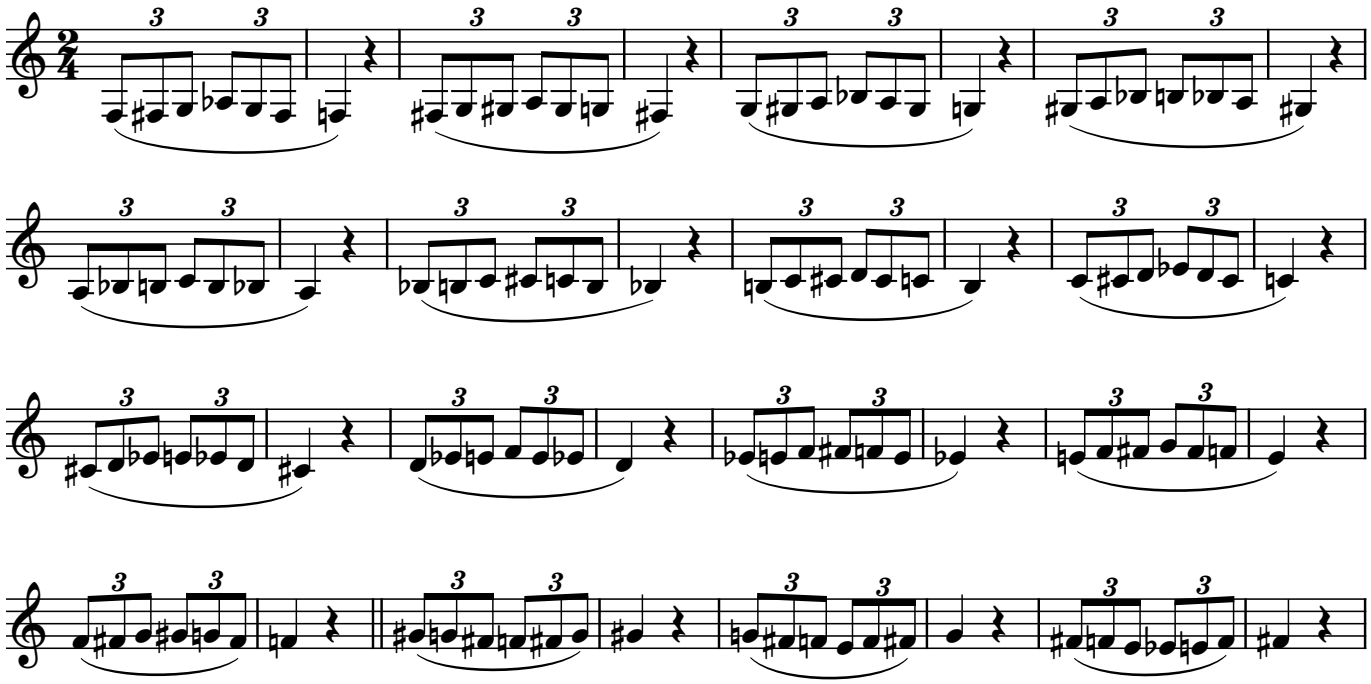

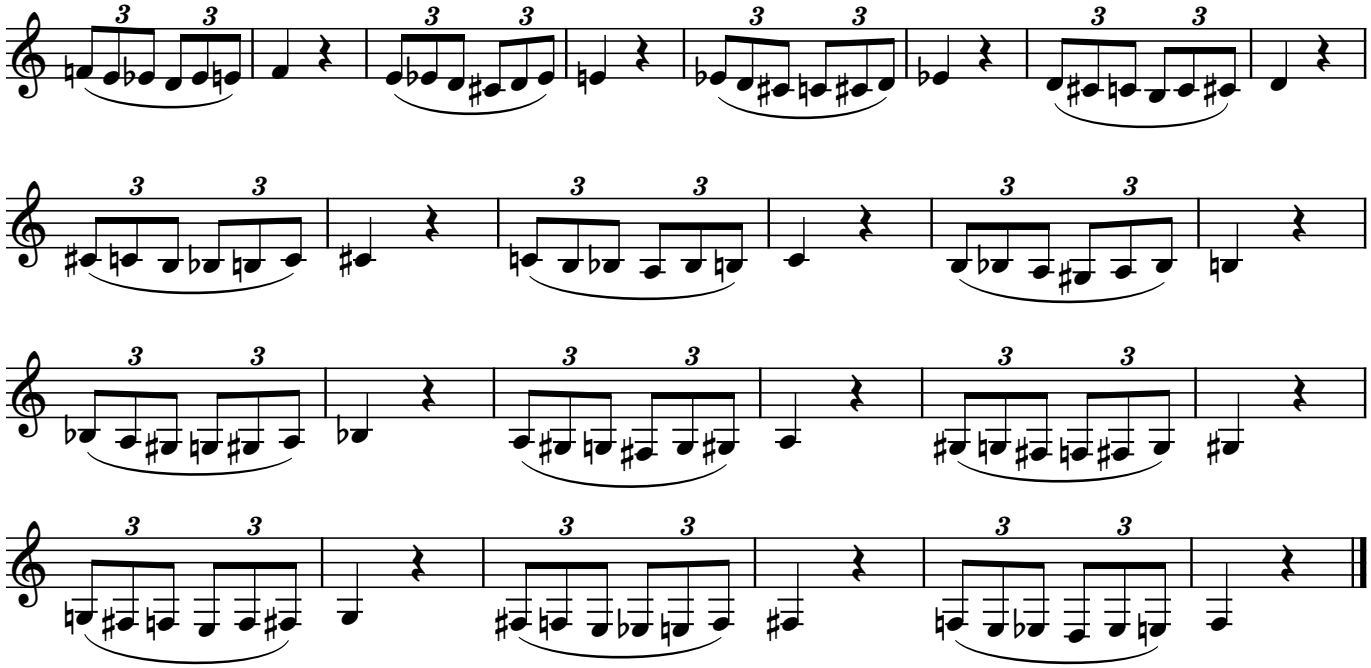

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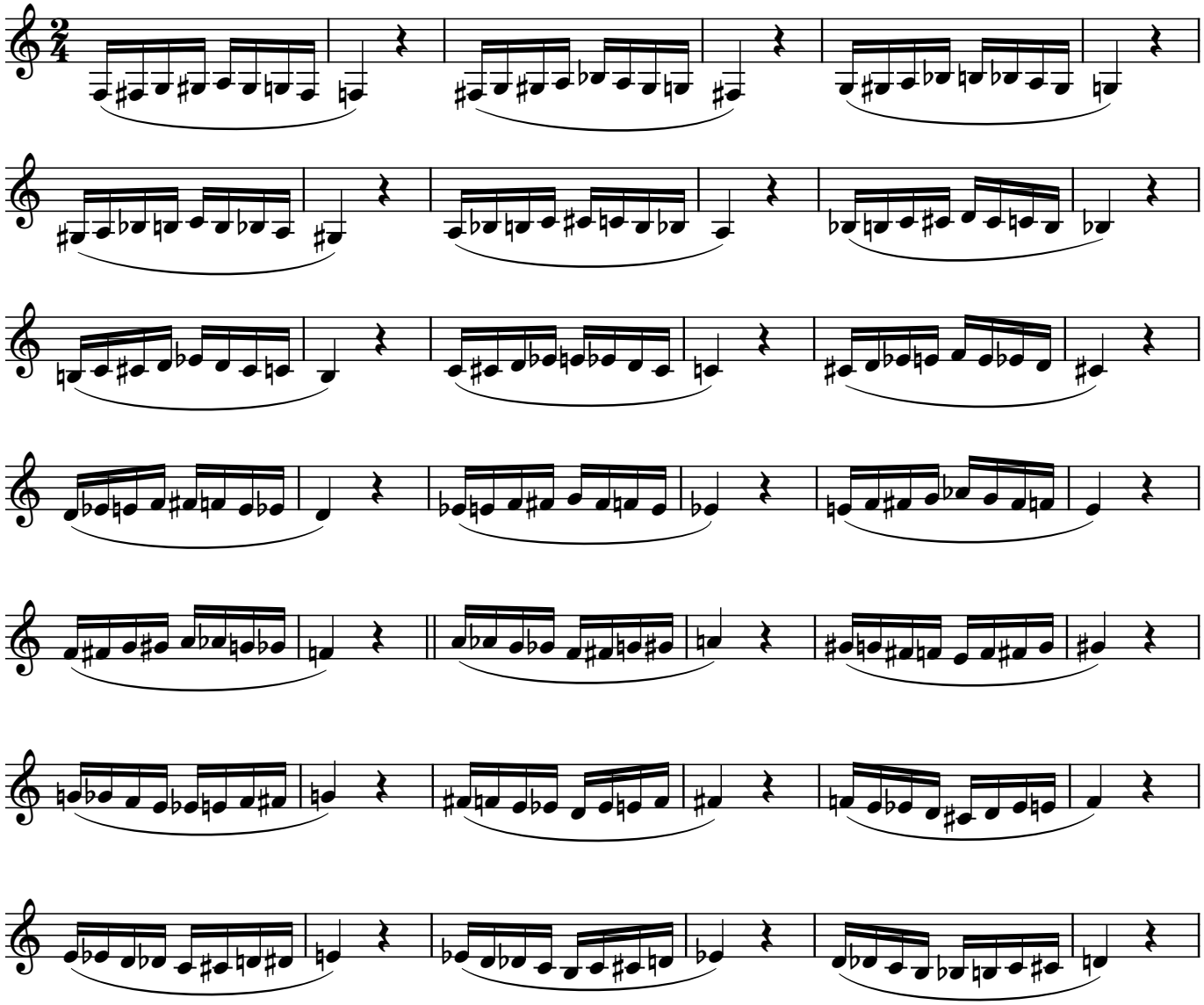

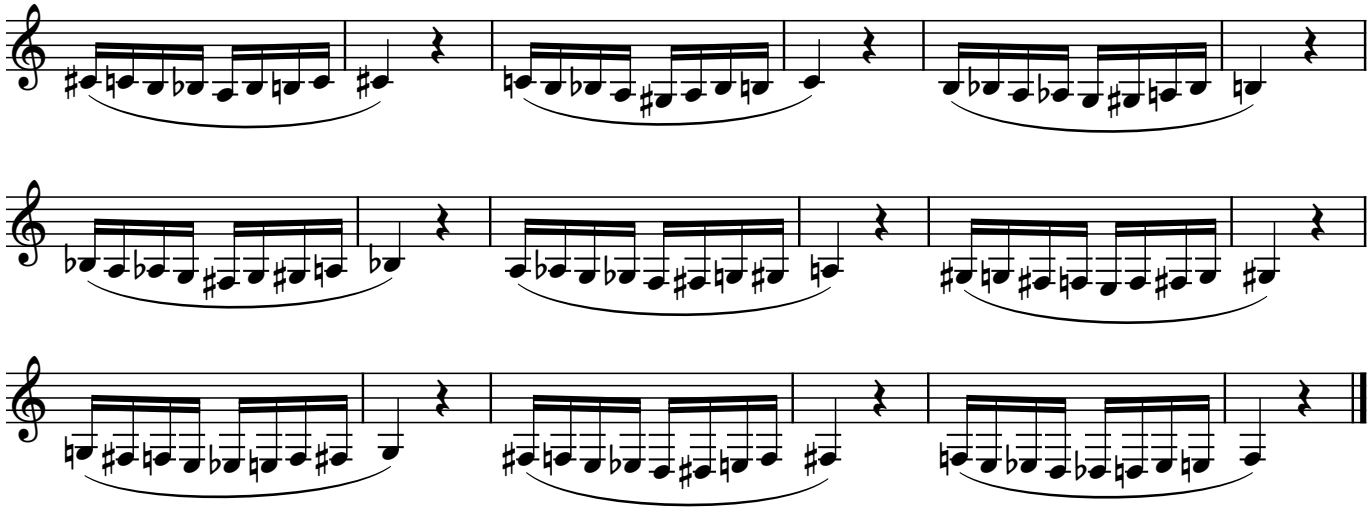

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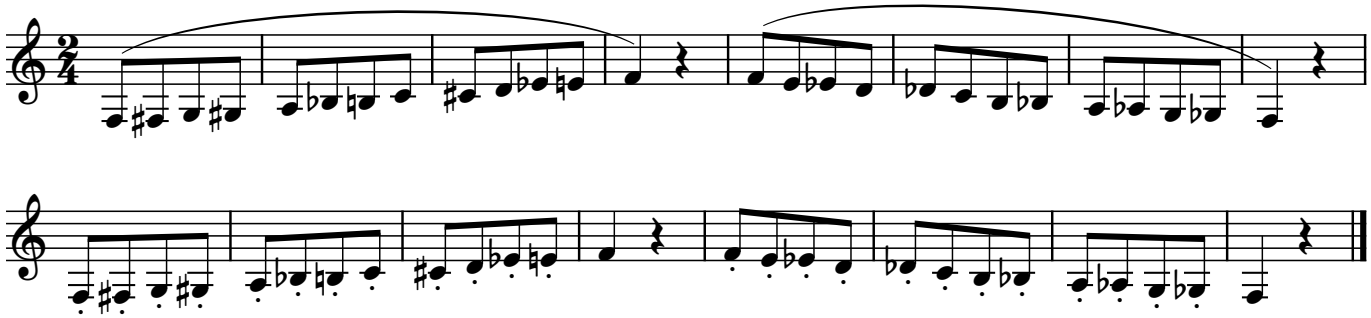

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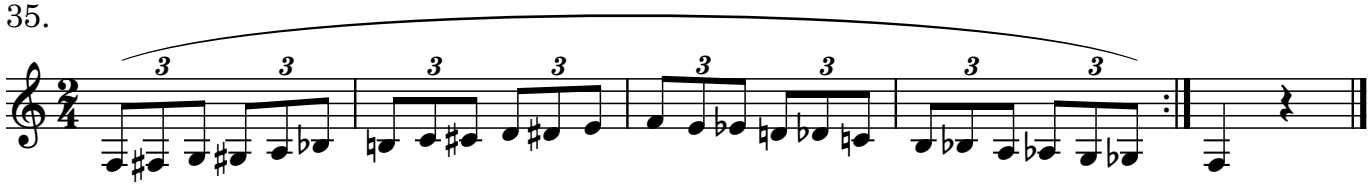

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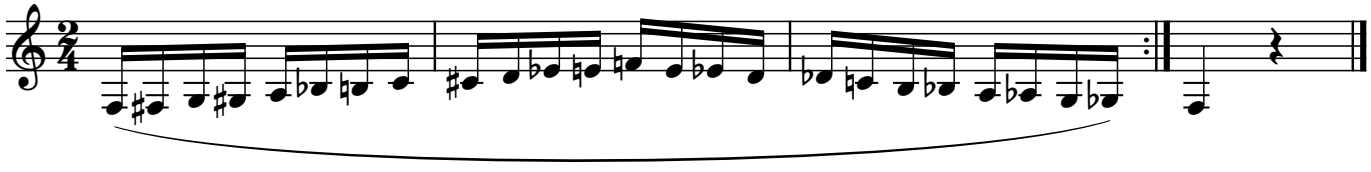

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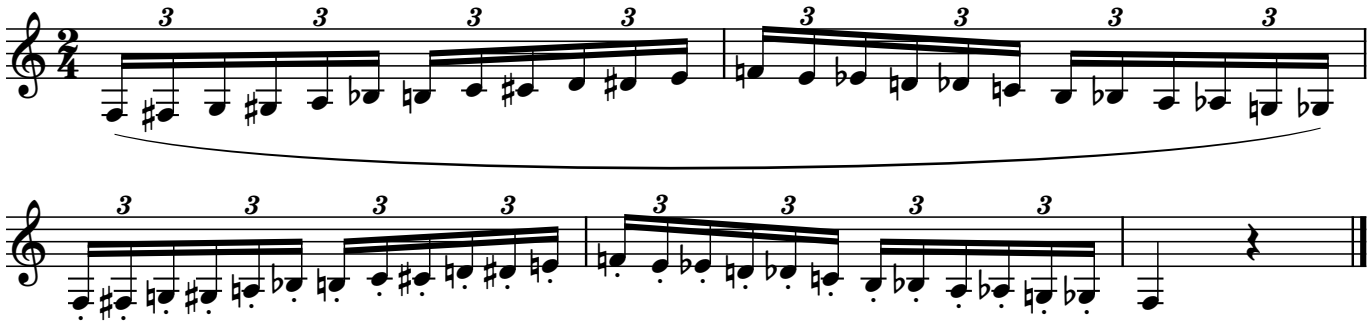

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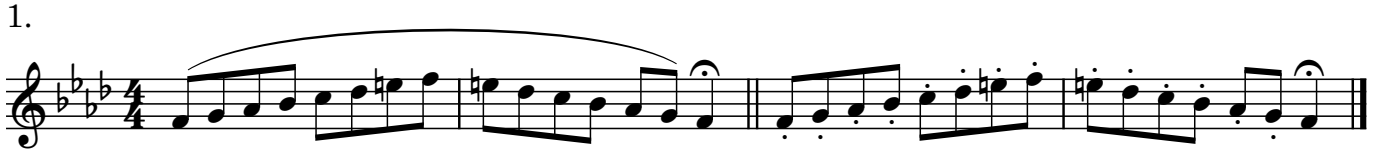

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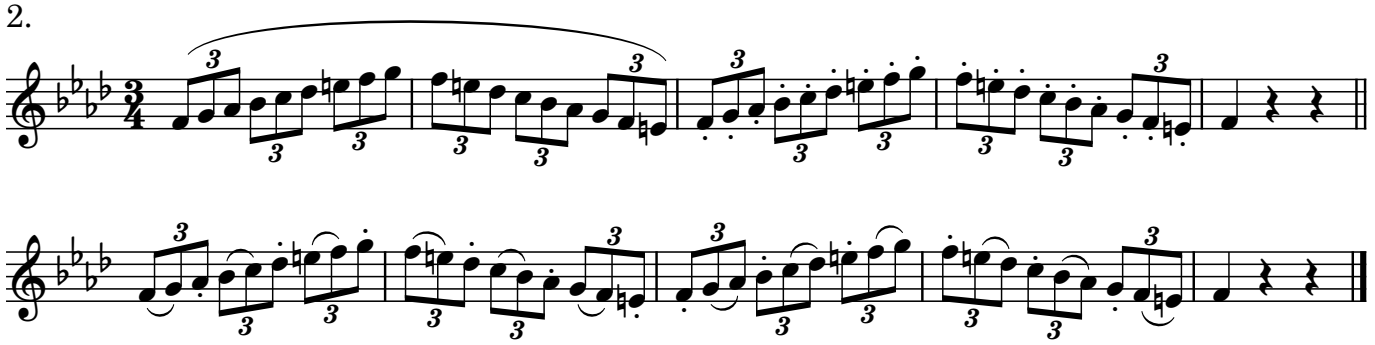

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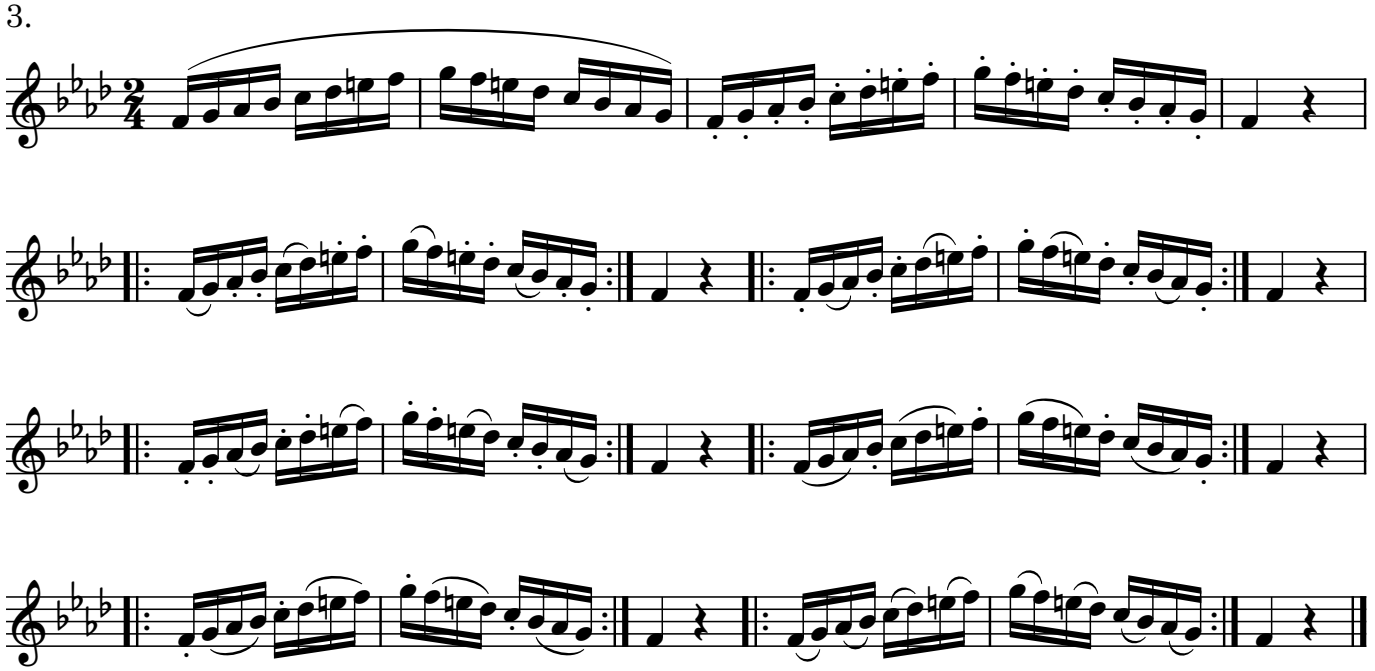

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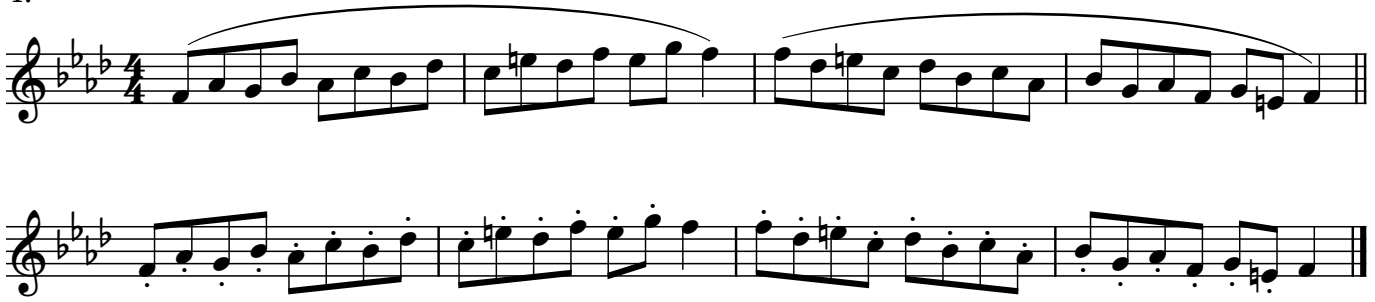

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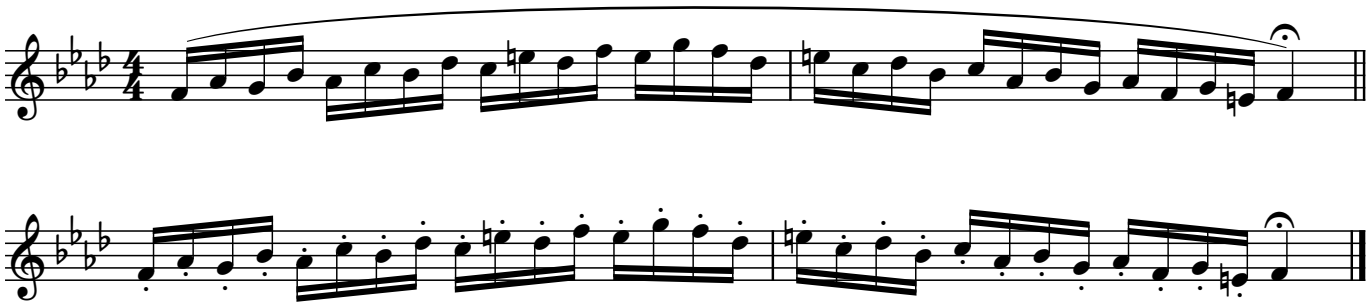

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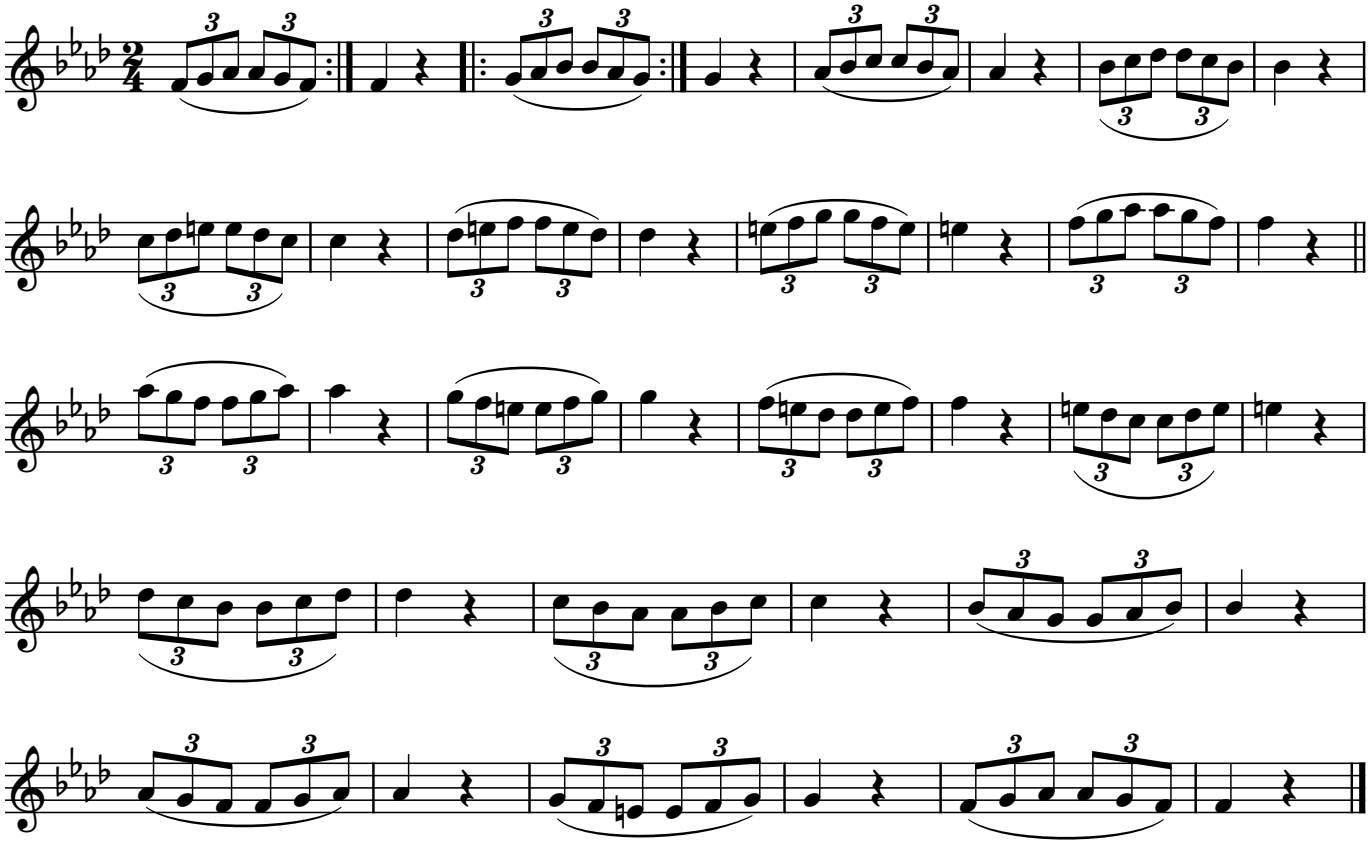

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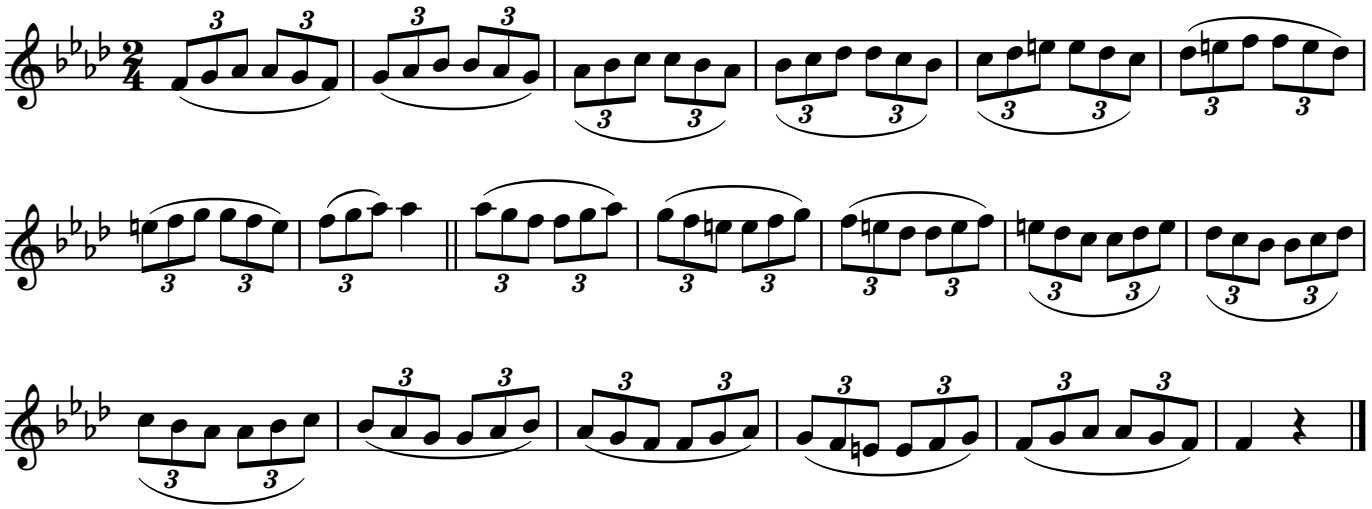

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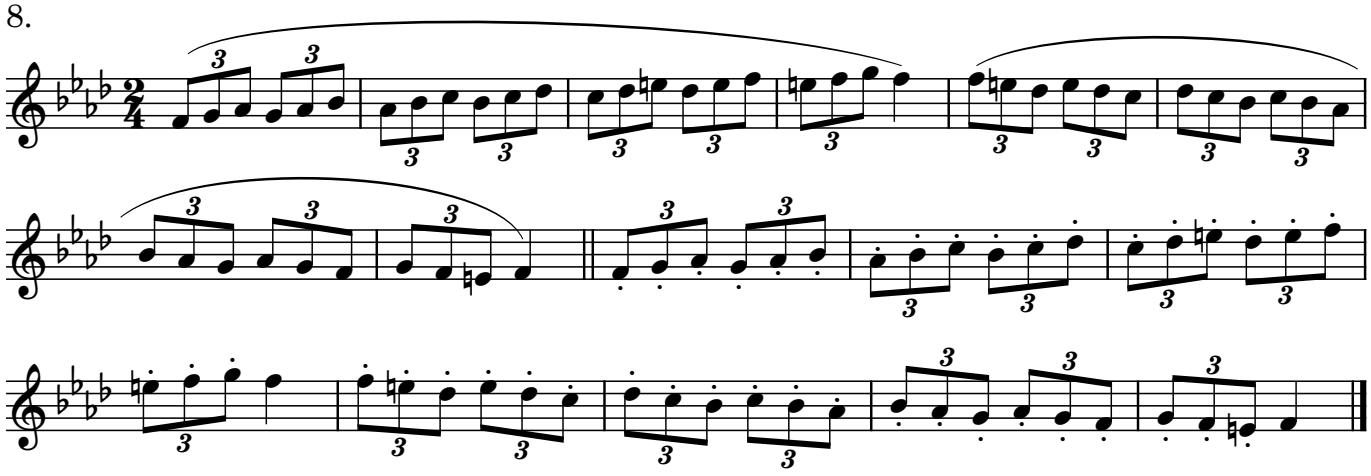

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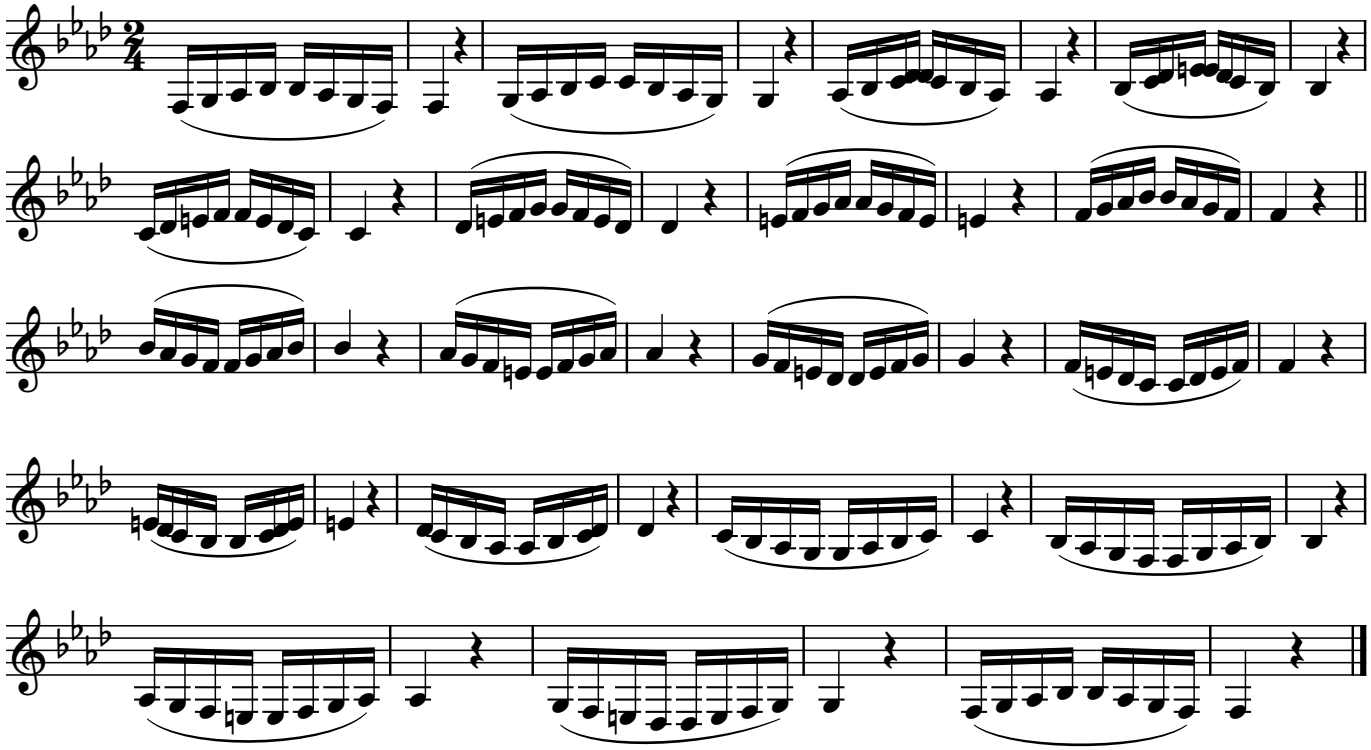

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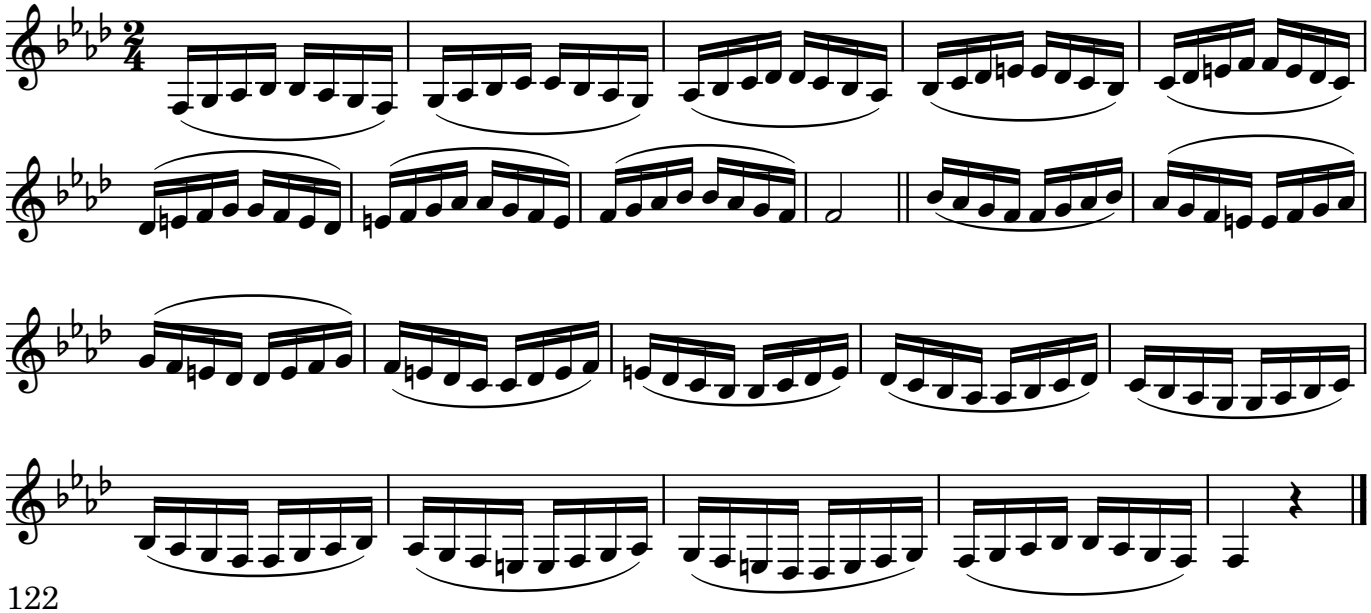

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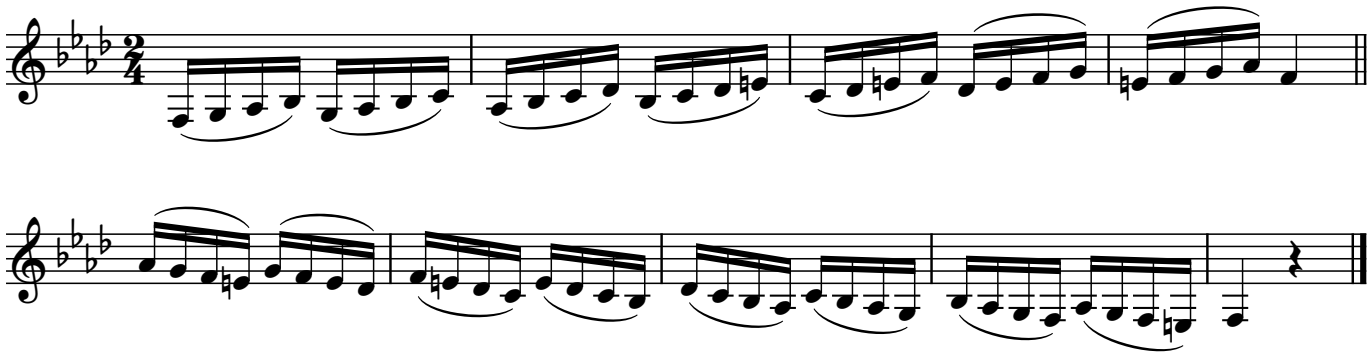

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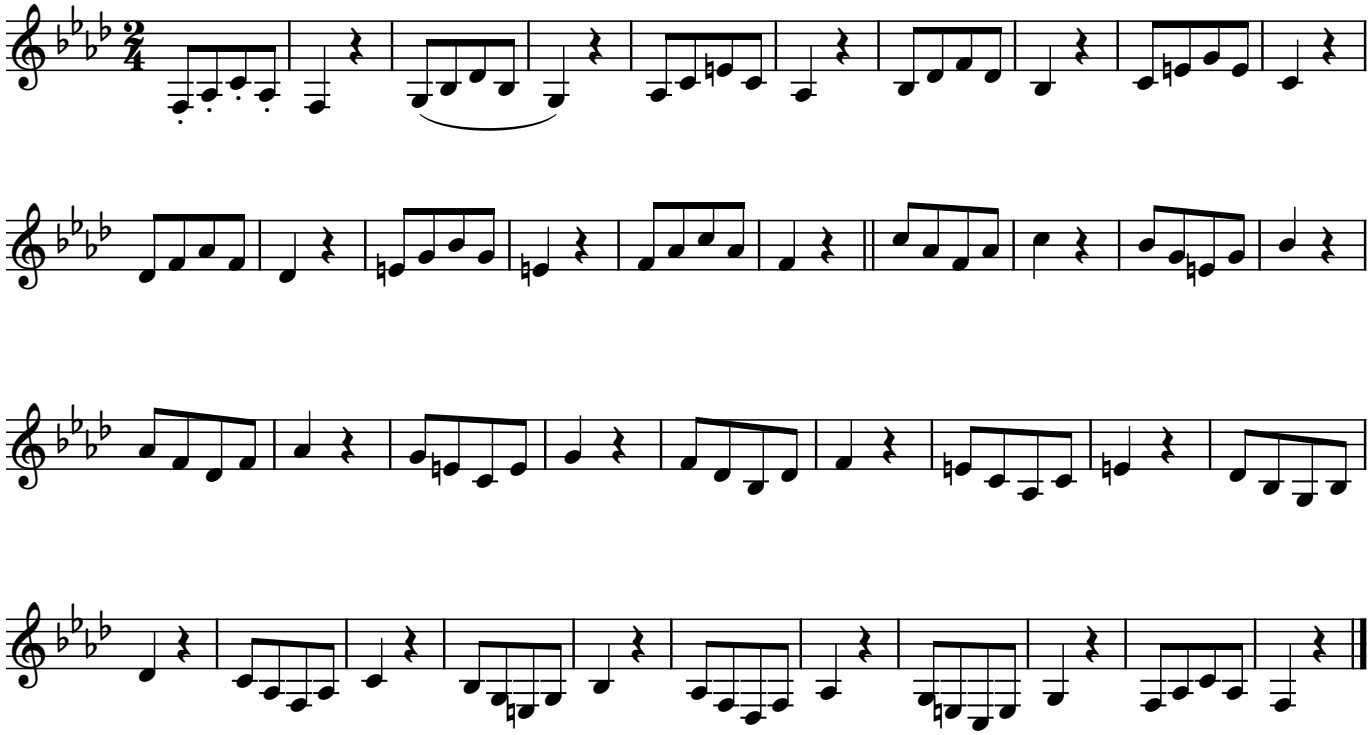

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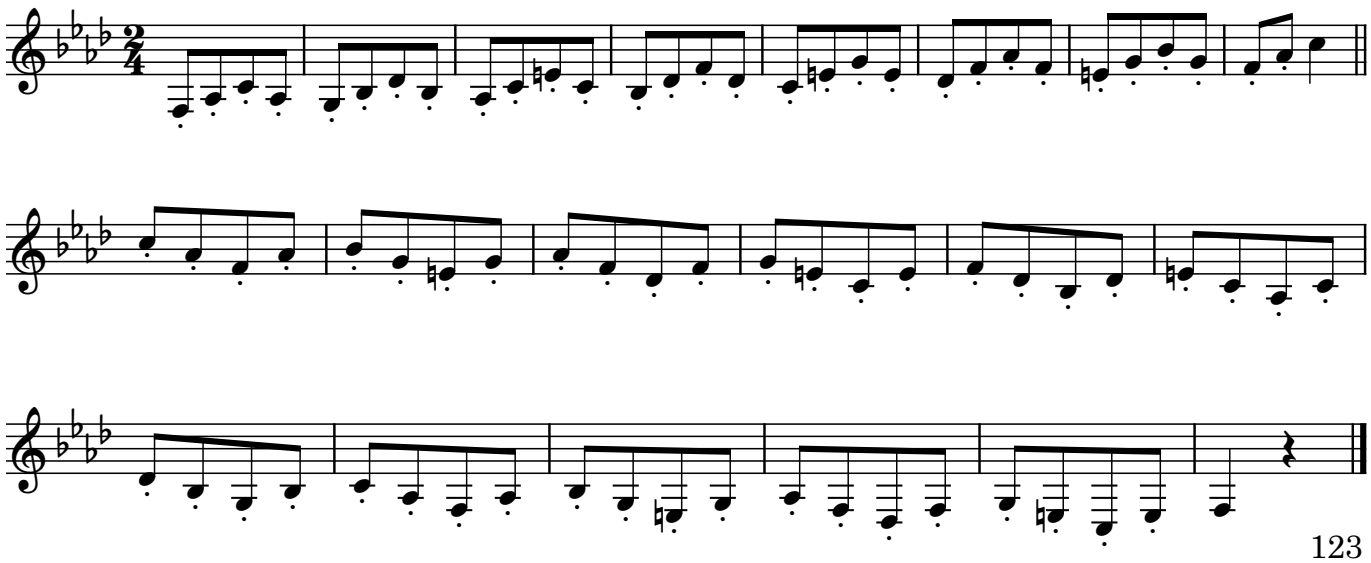

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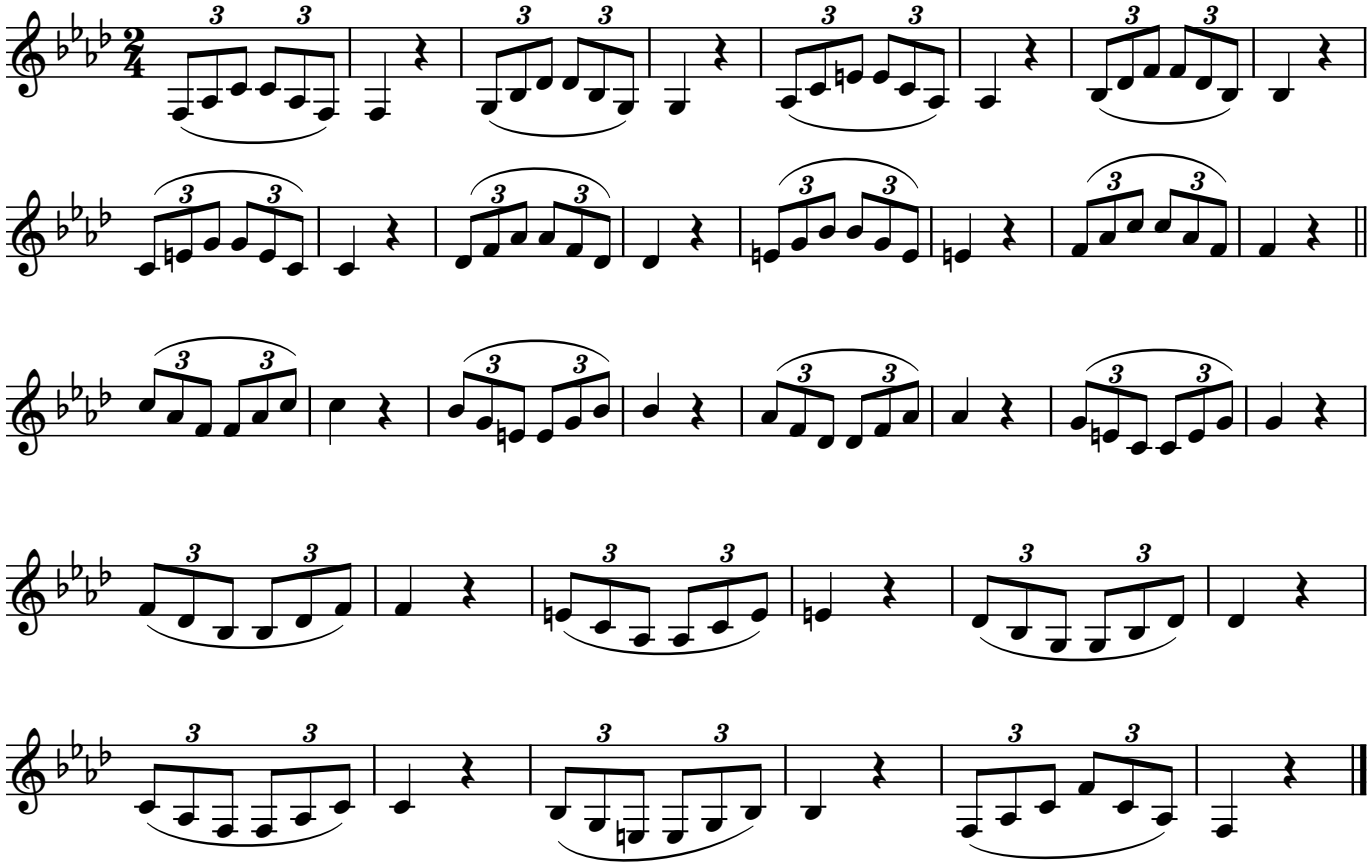

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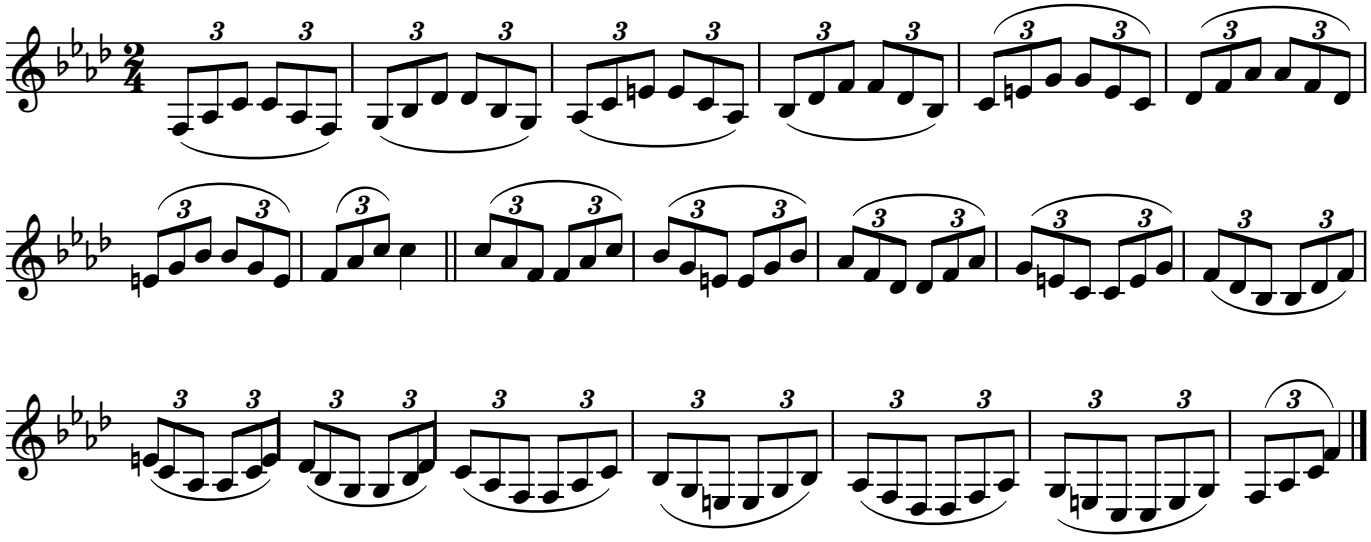

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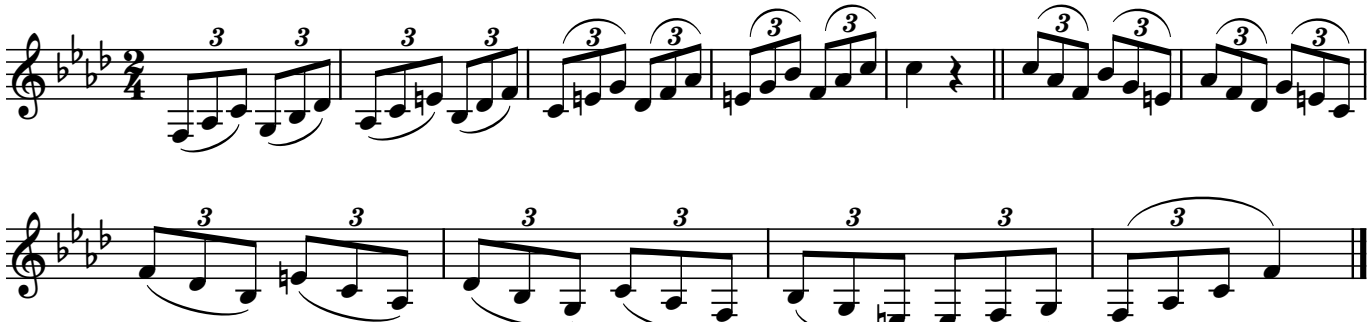

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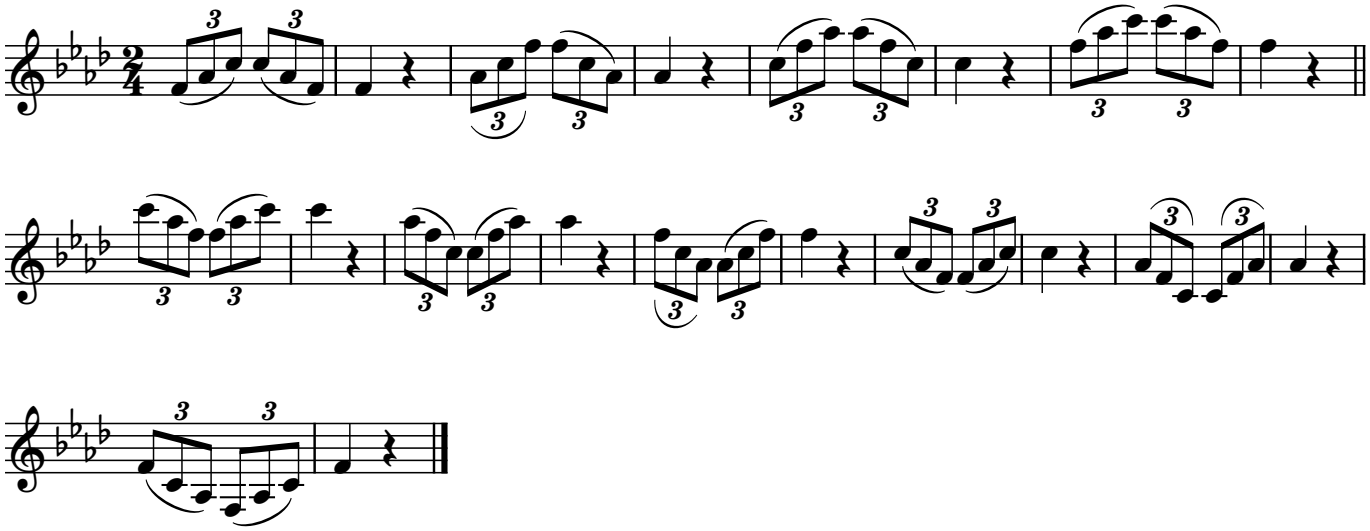

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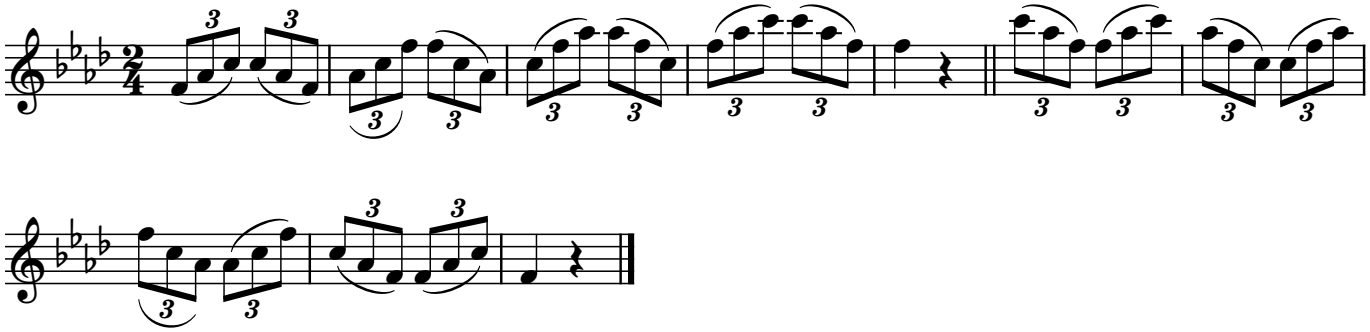

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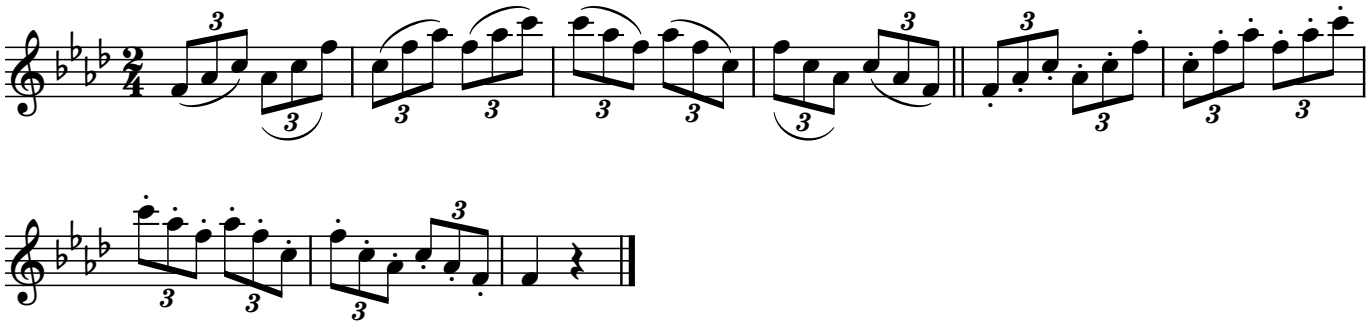

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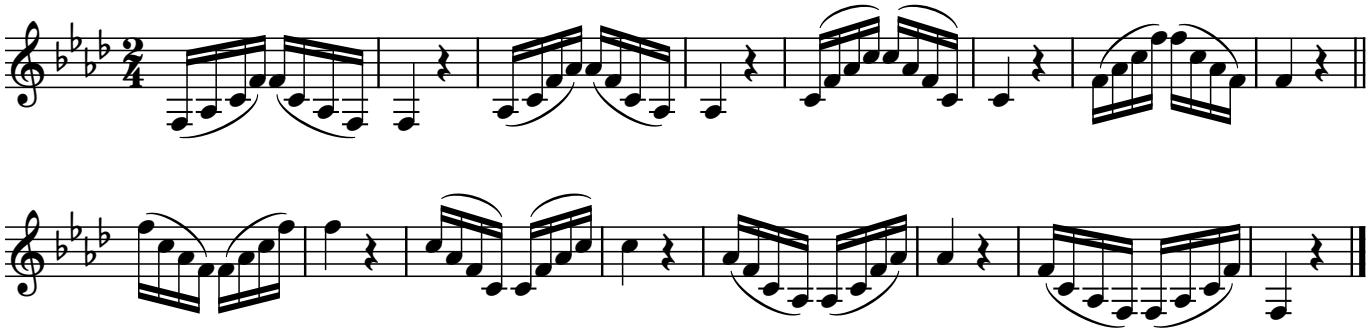

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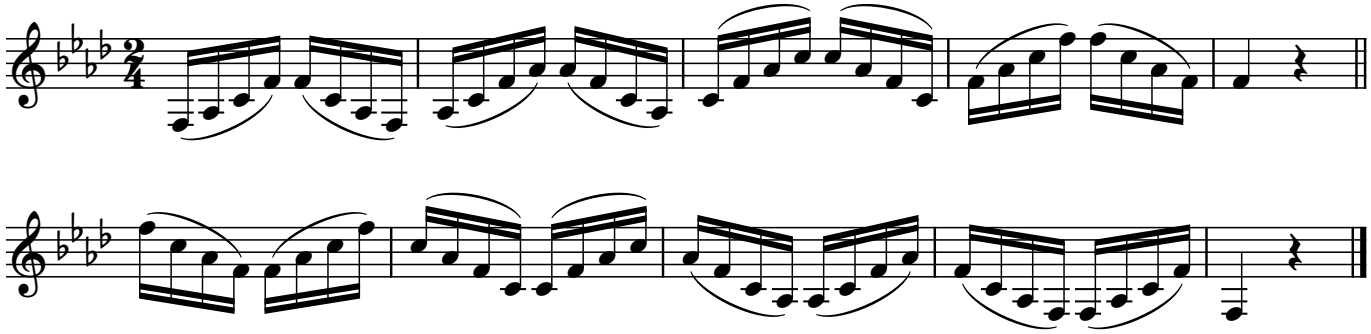

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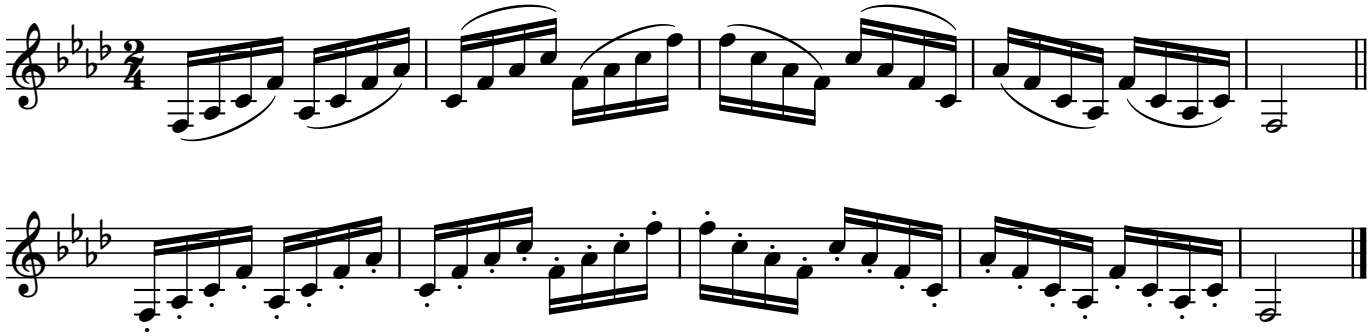

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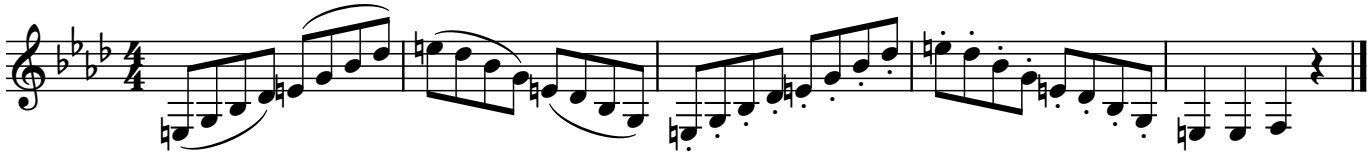

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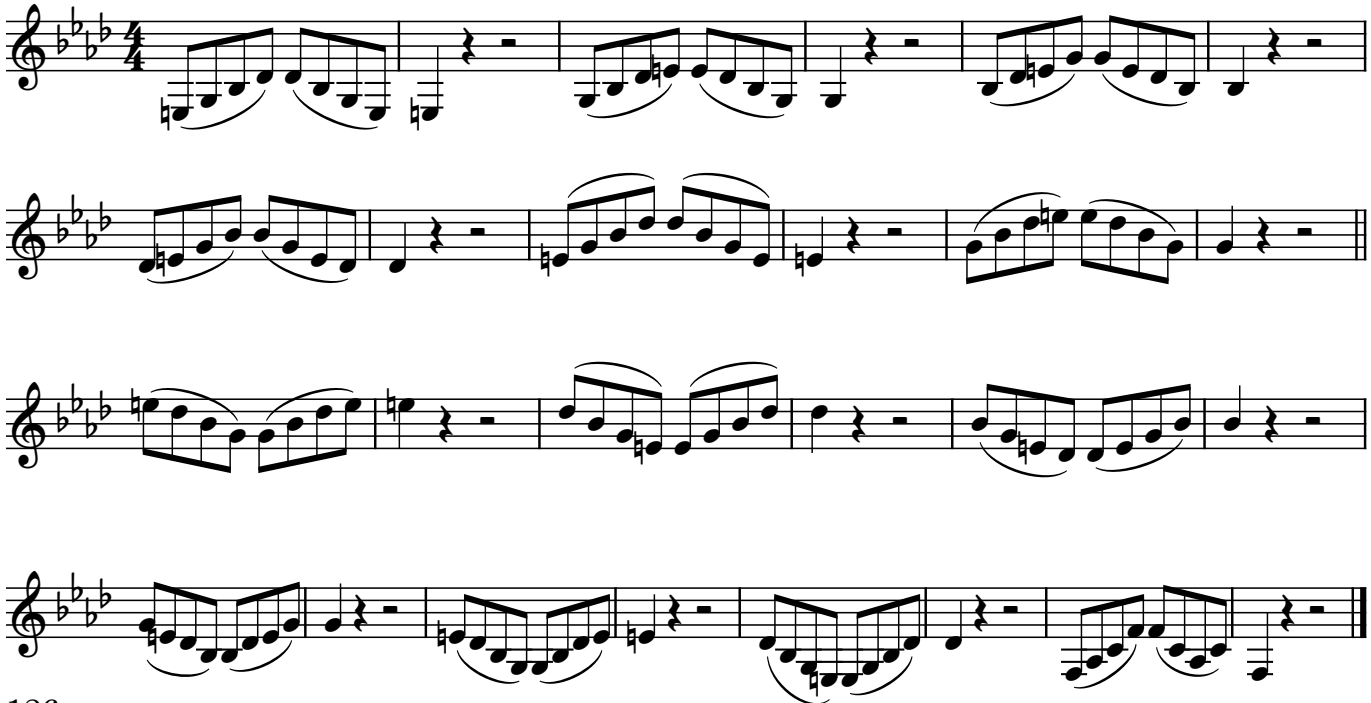

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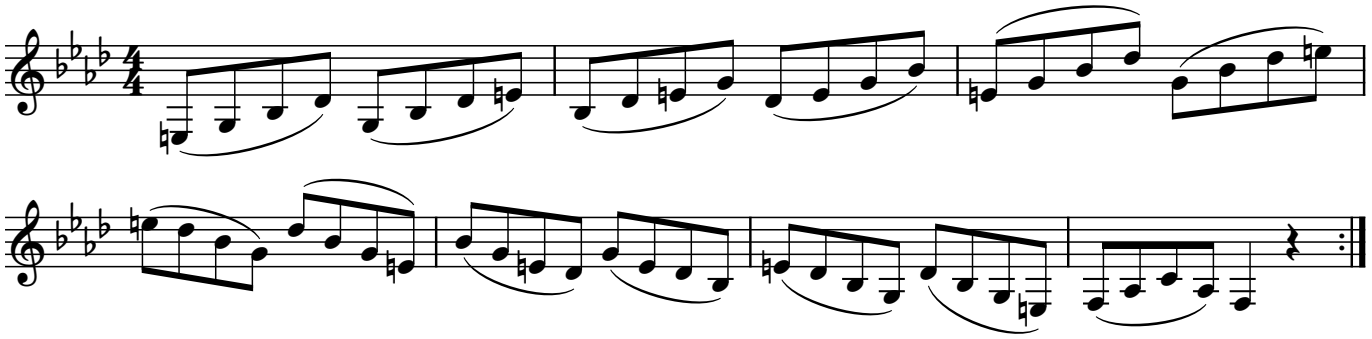

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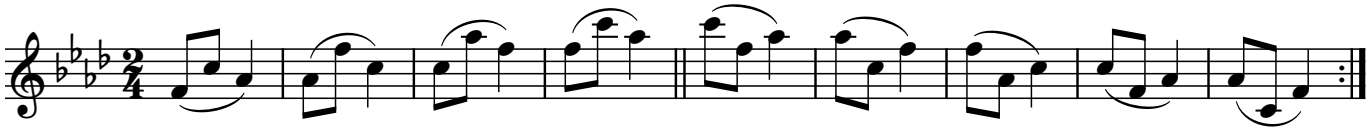

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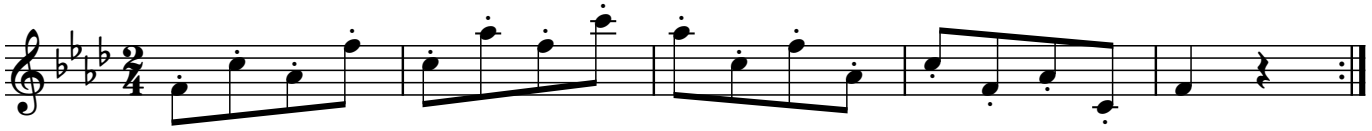

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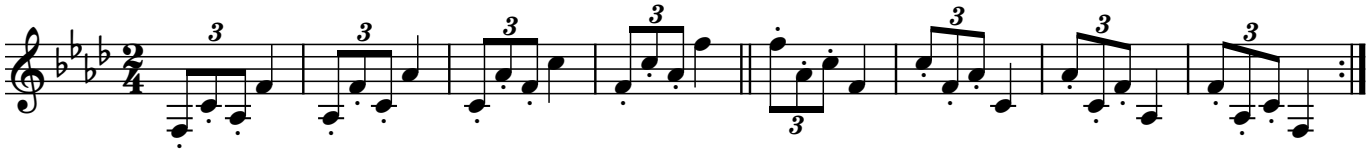

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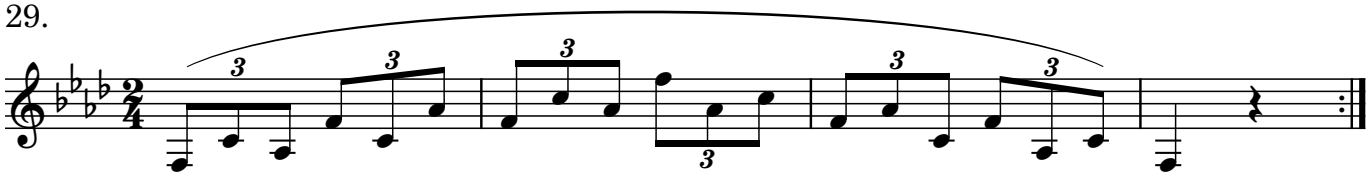

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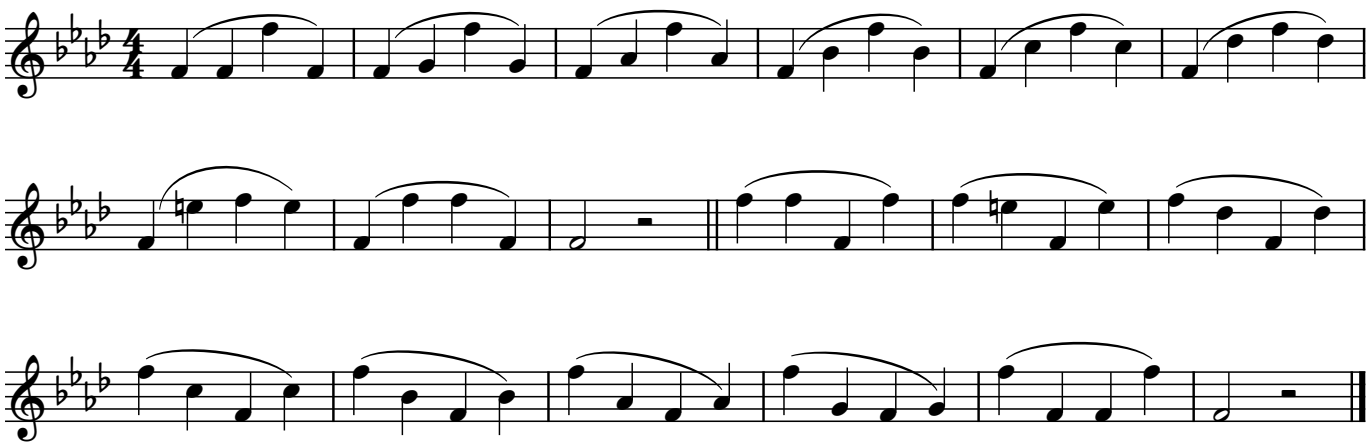

Fis-Dur - F♯ Major

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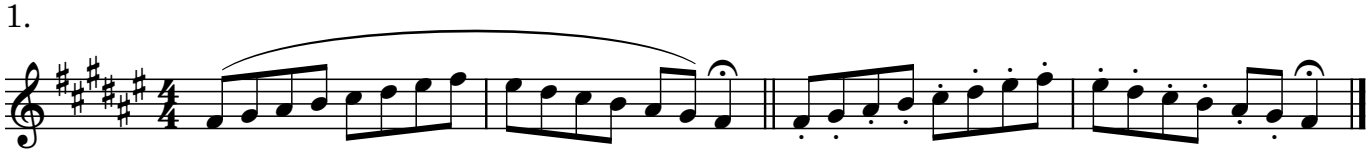

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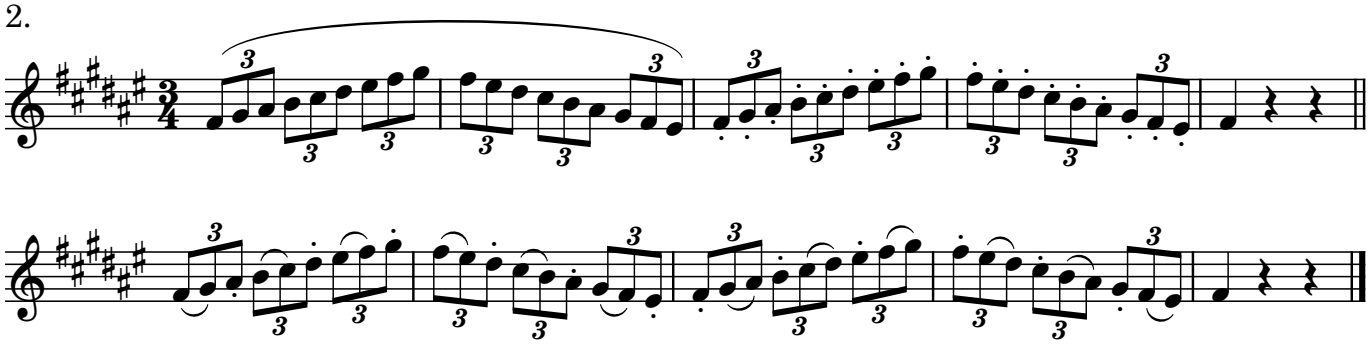

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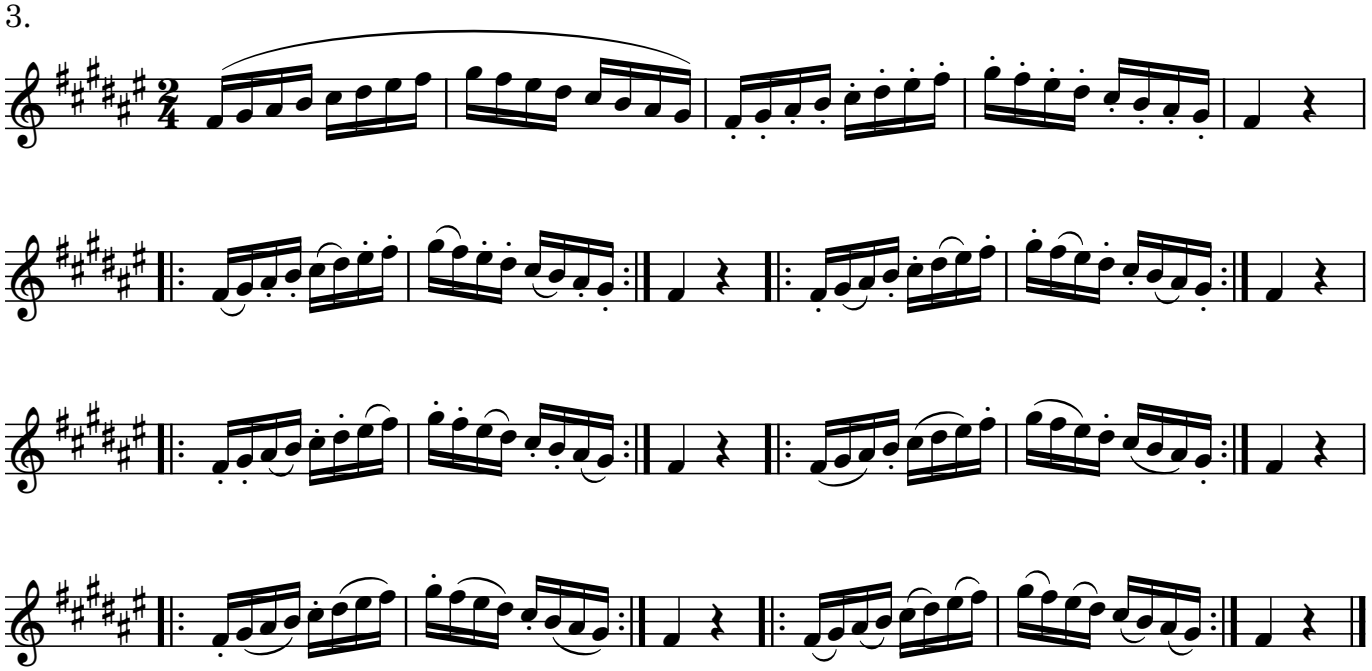

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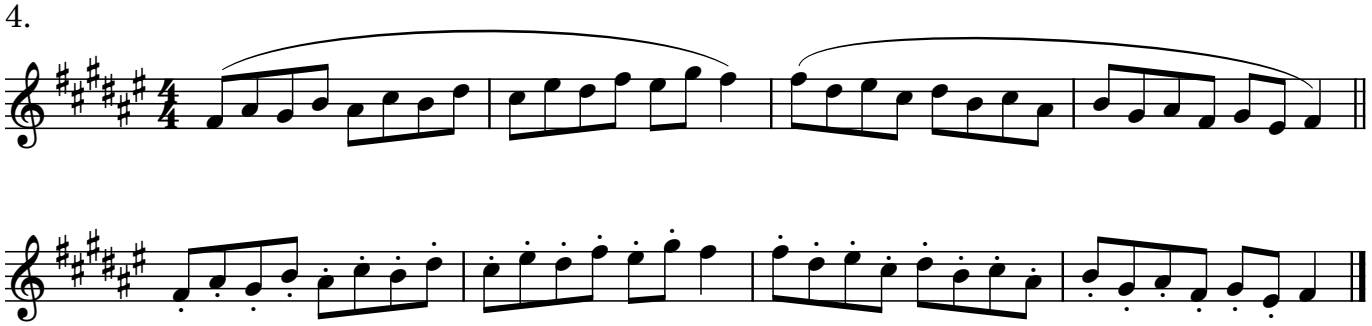

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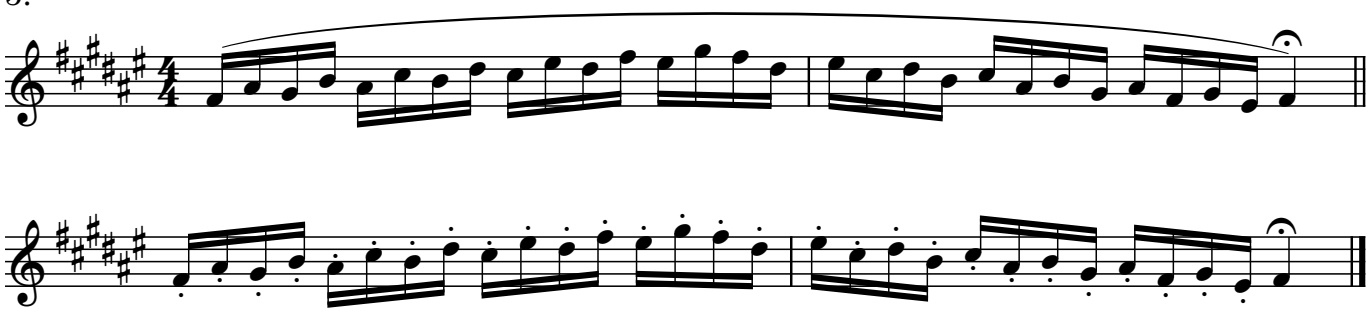

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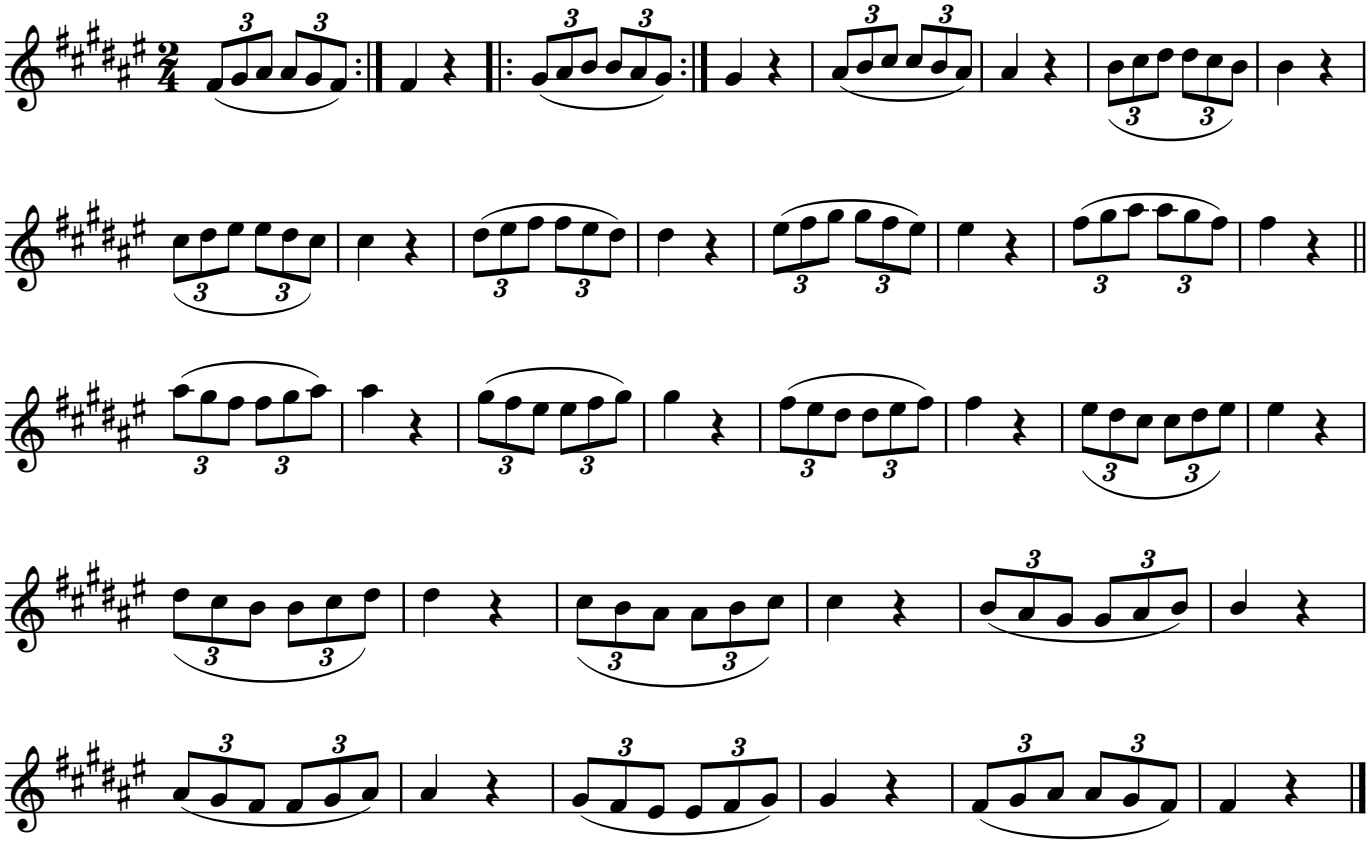

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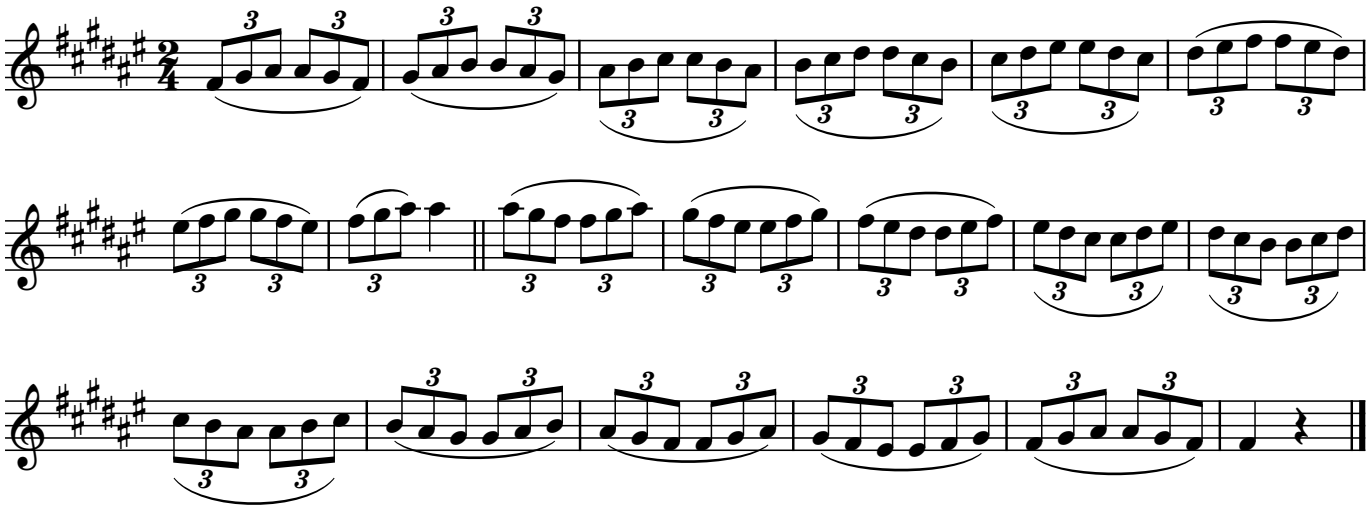

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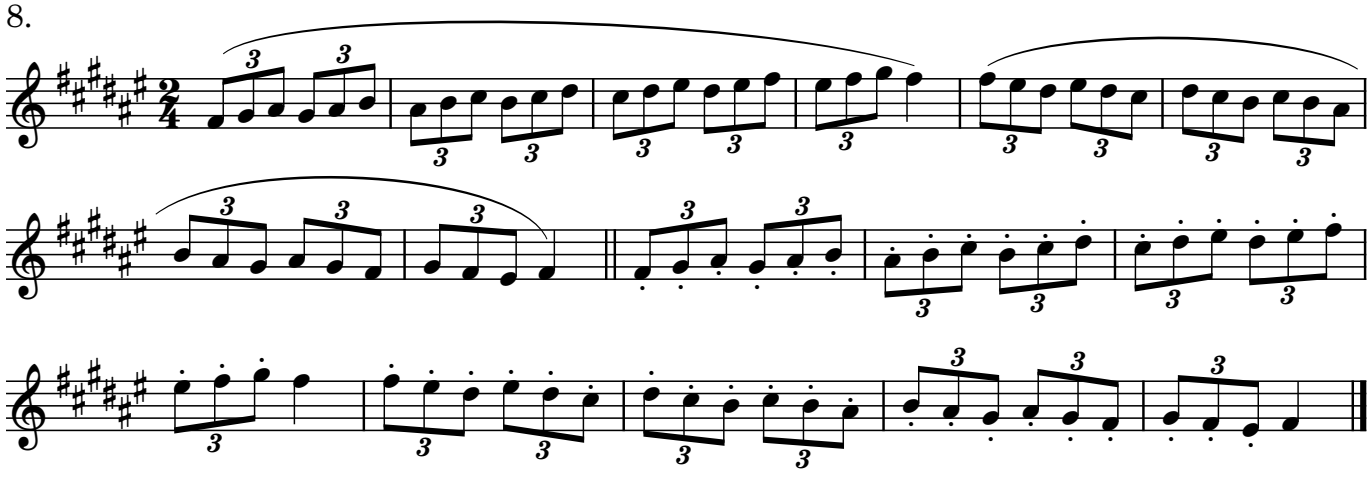

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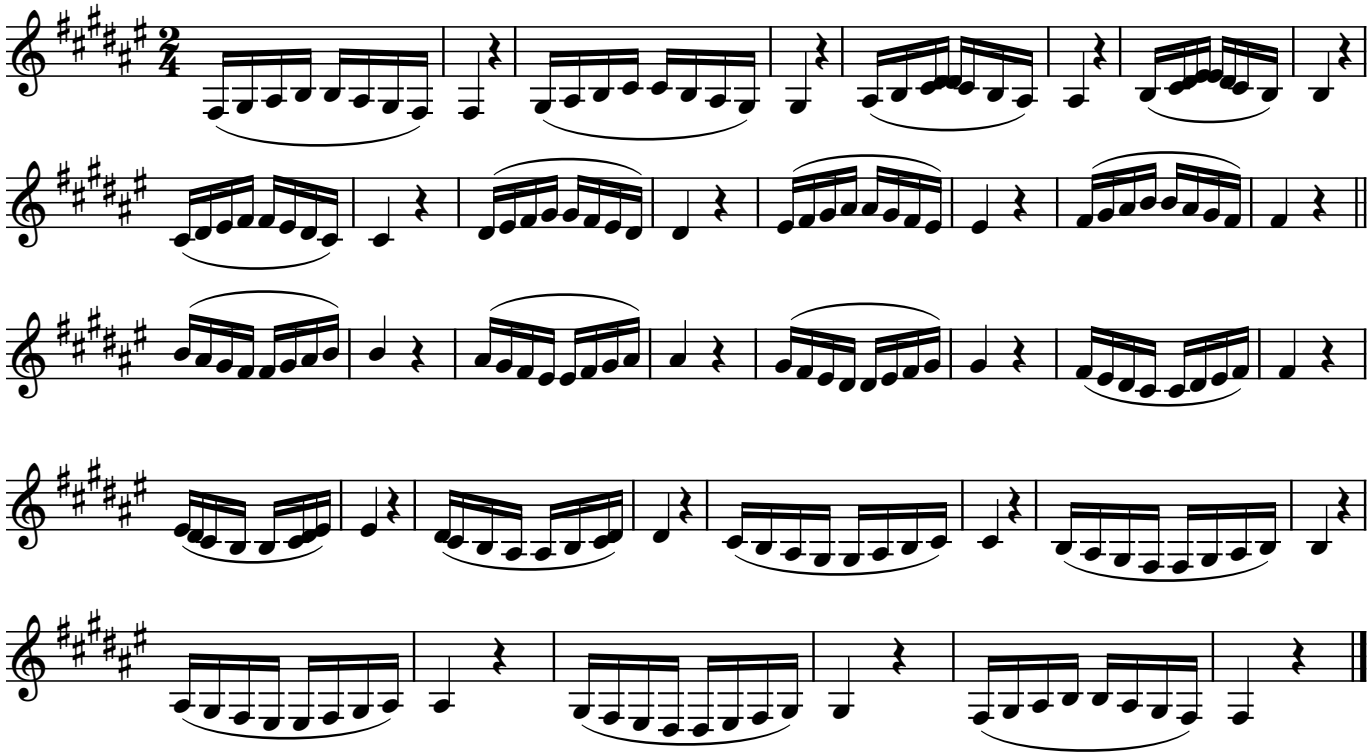

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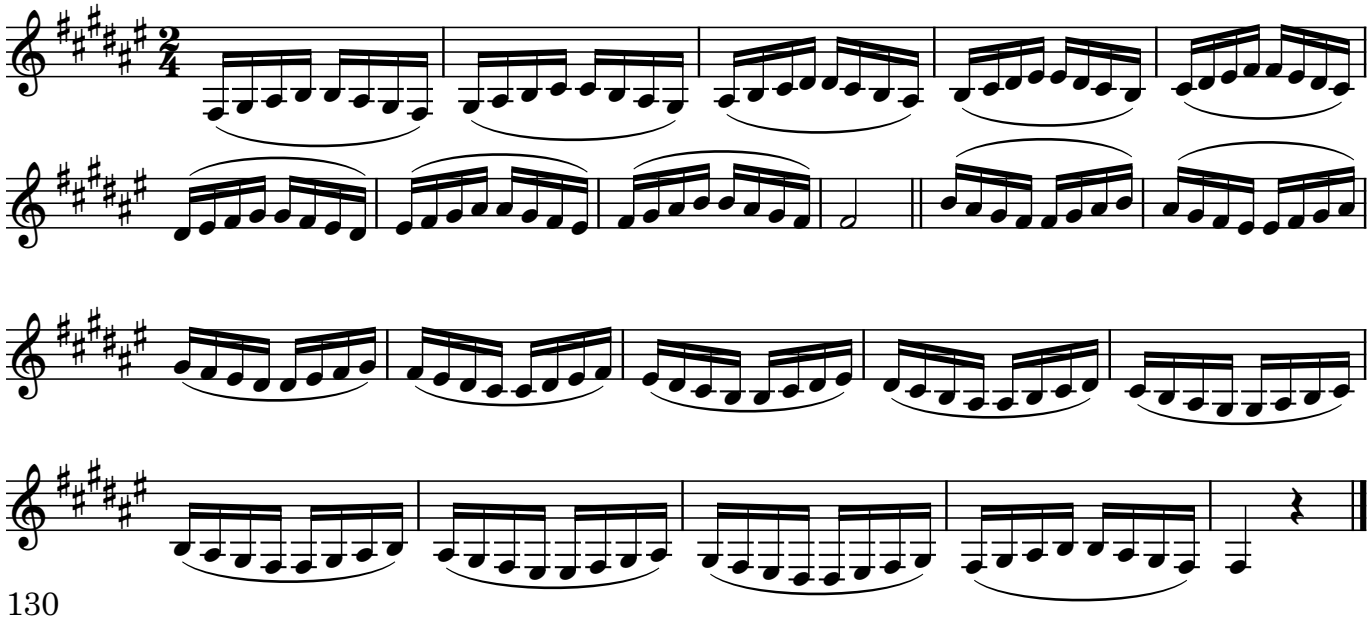

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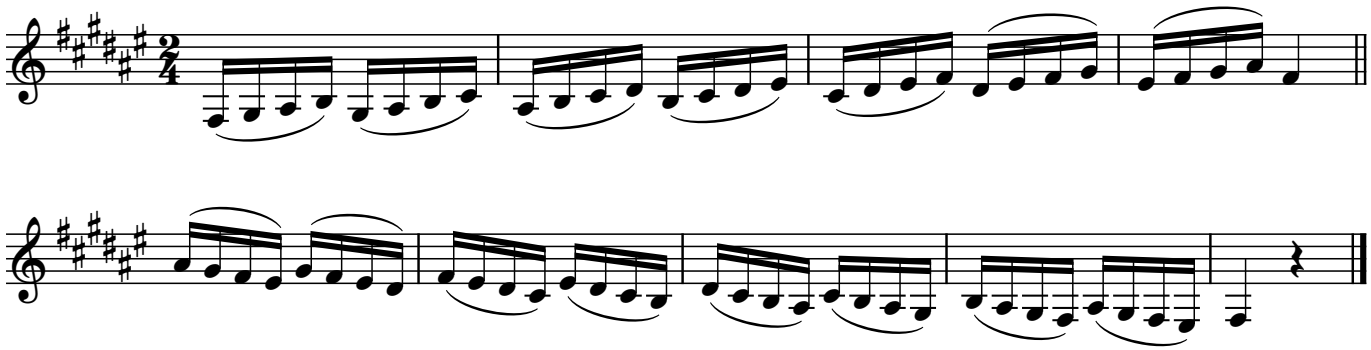

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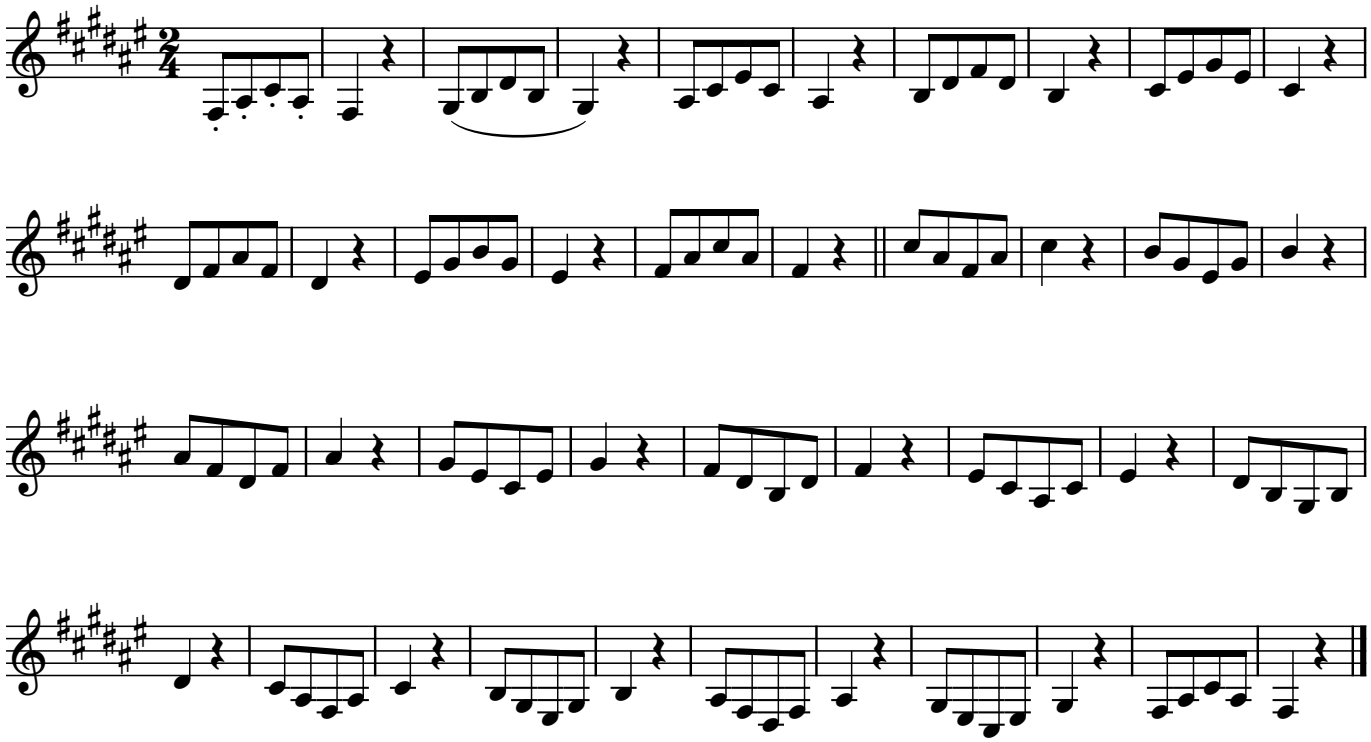

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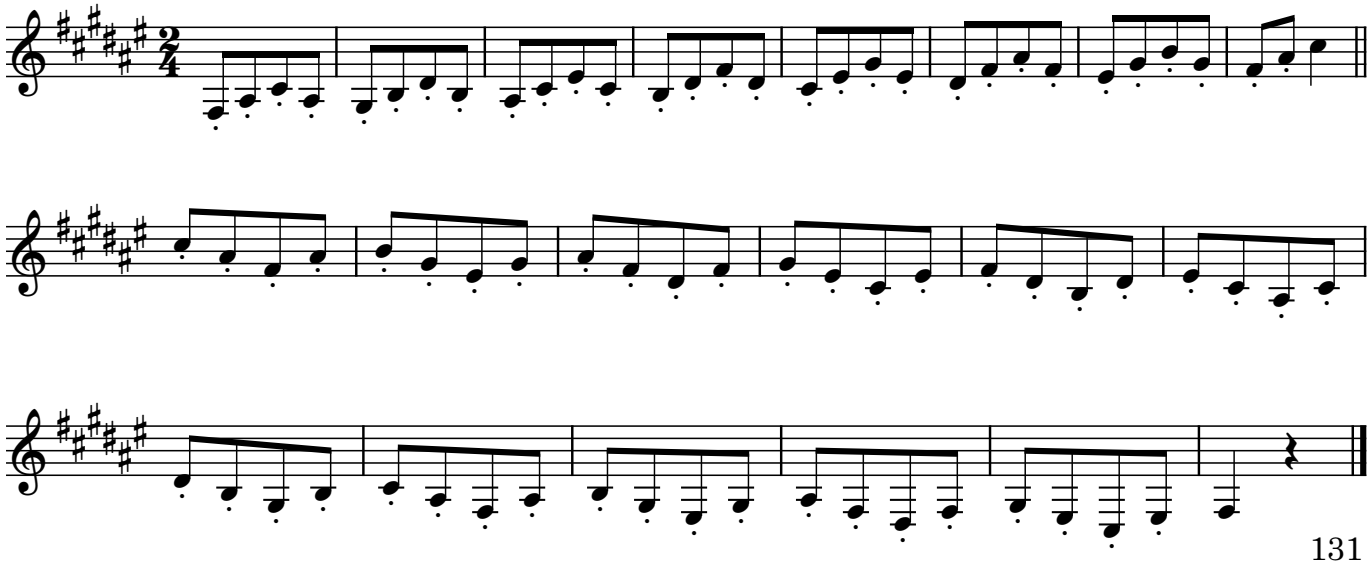

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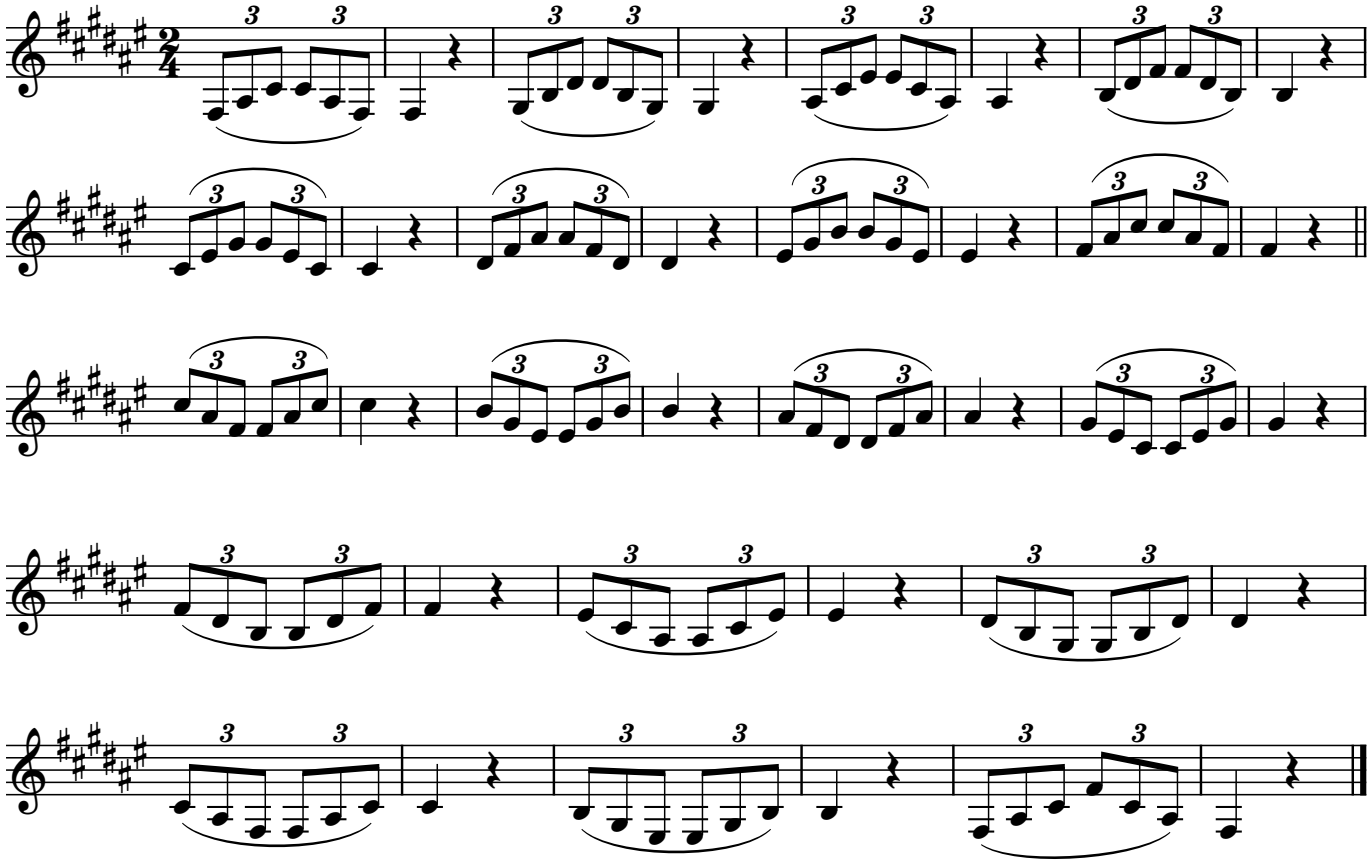

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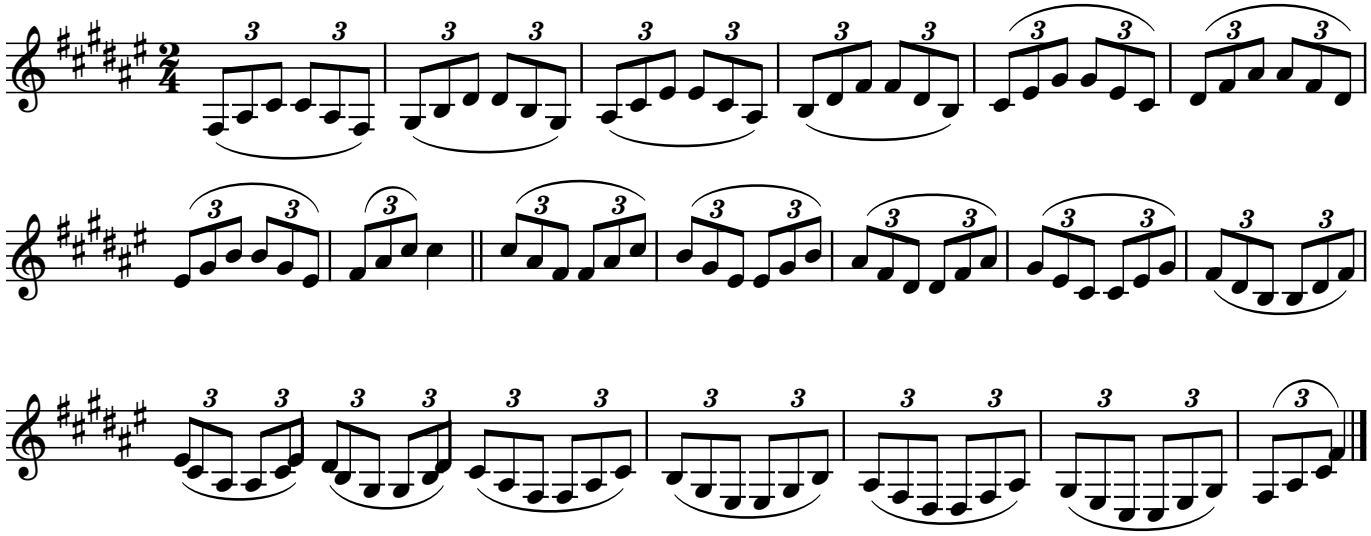

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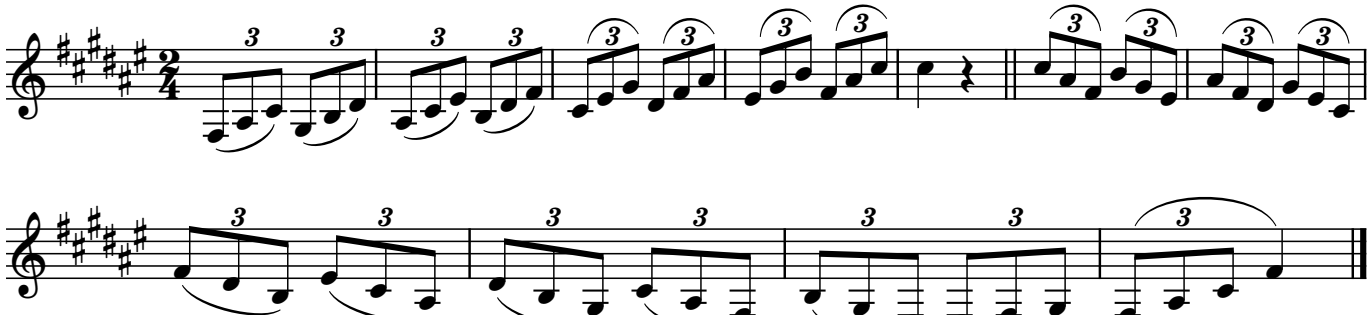

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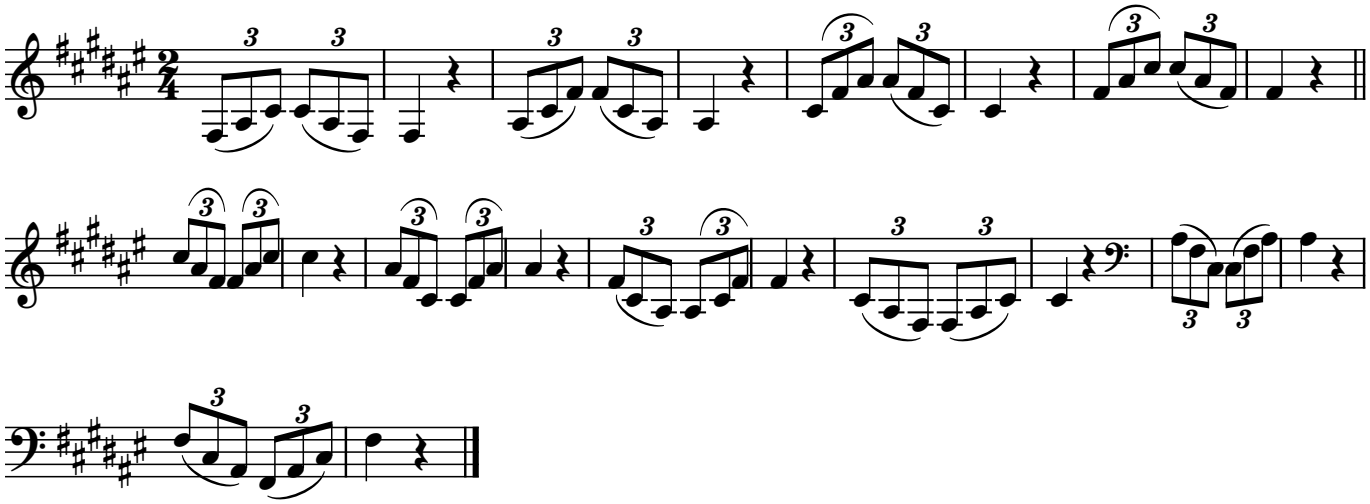

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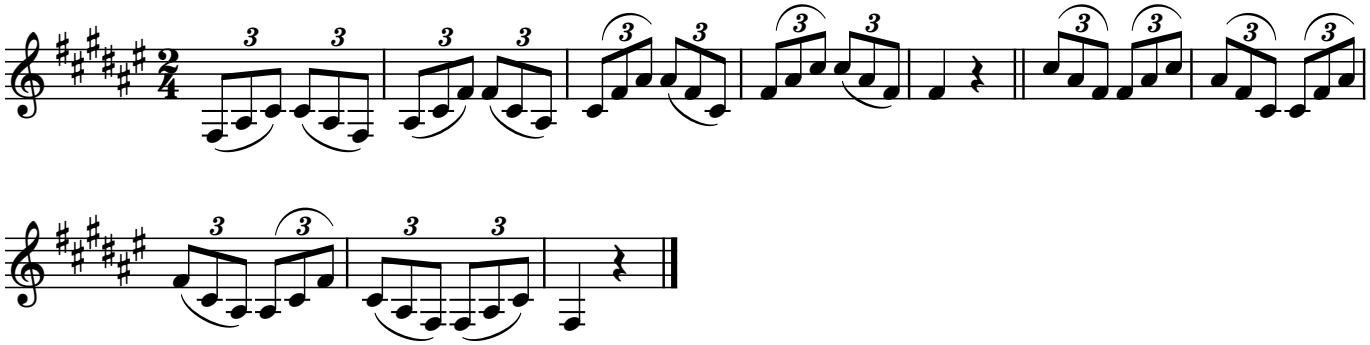

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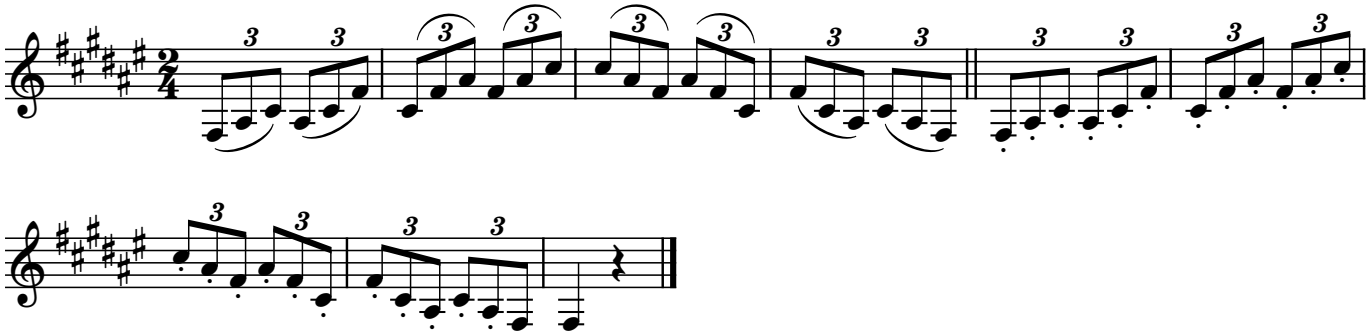

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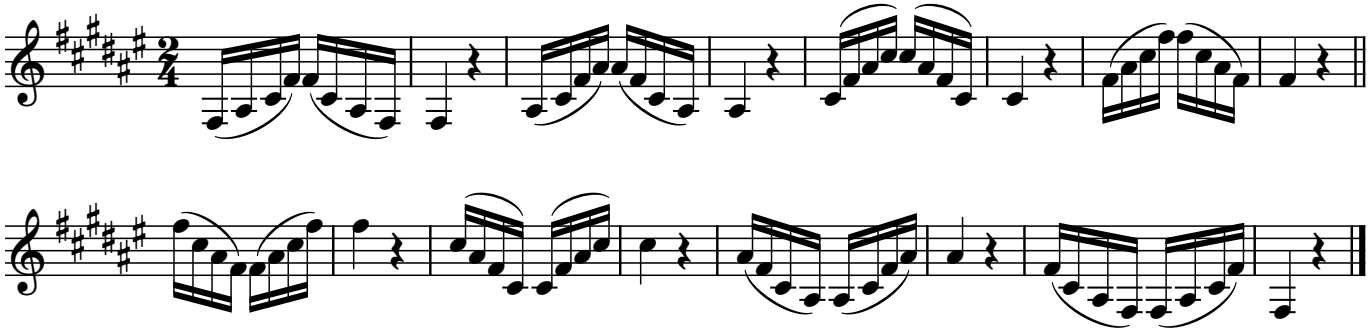

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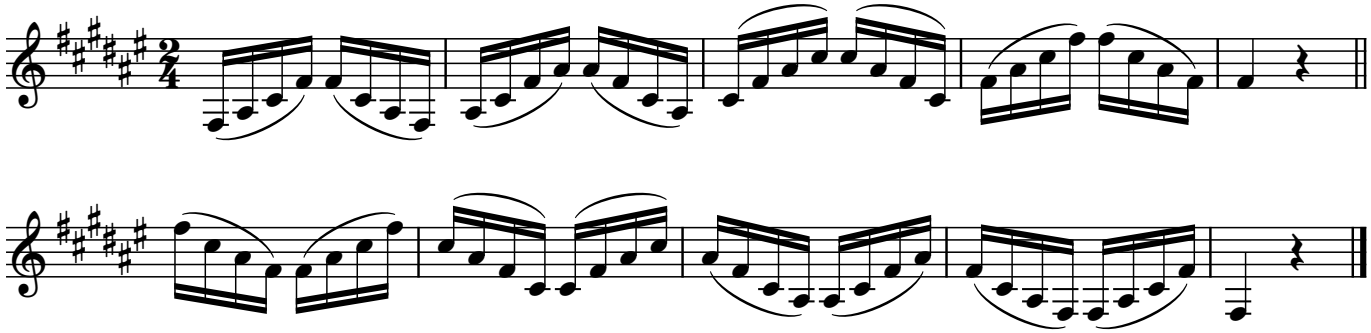

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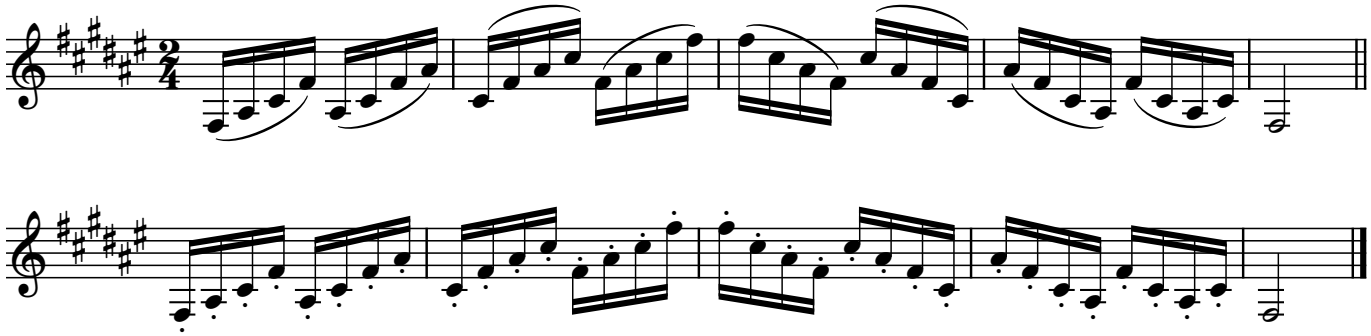

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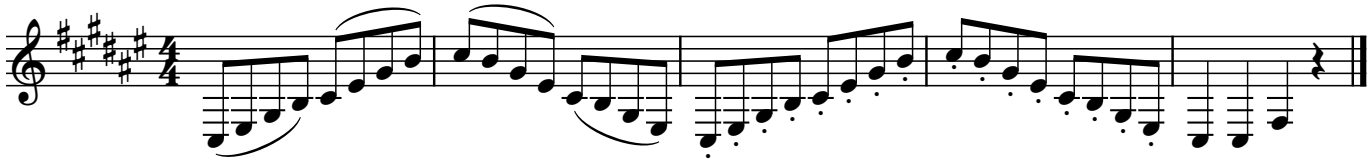

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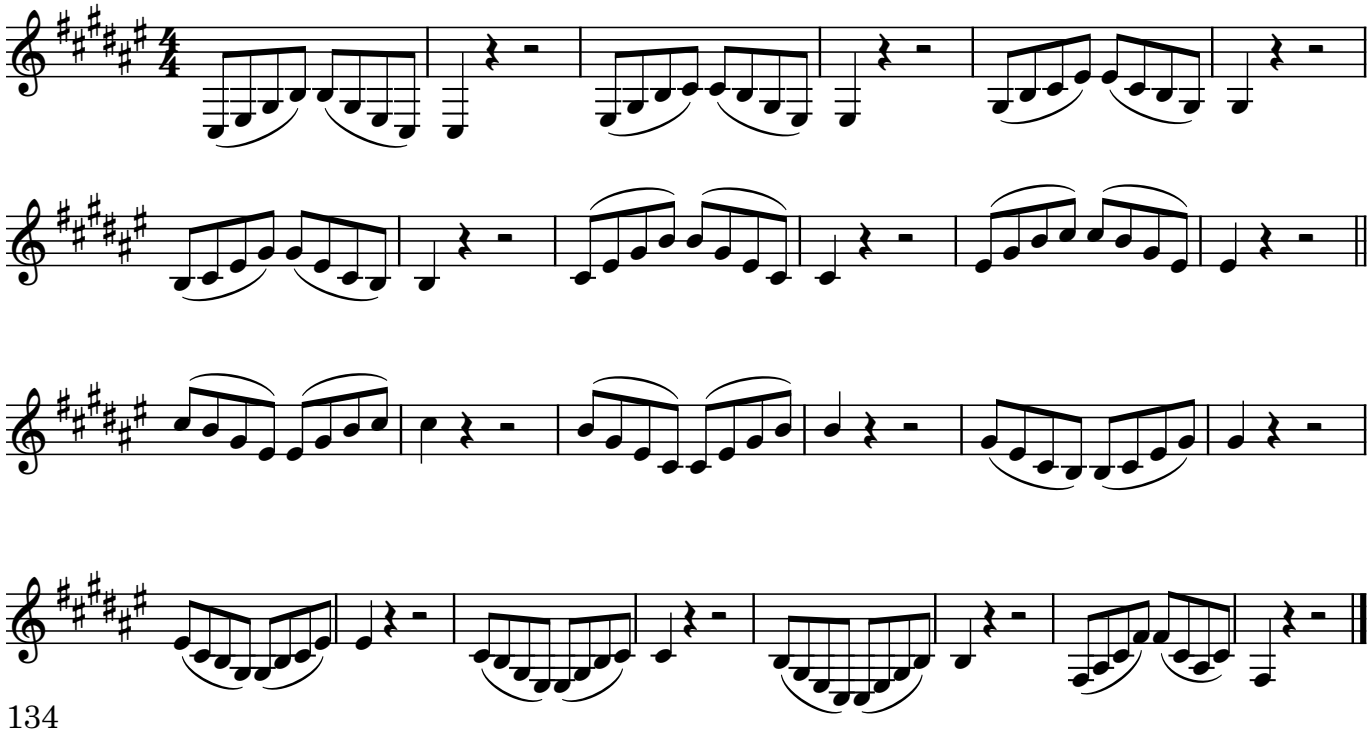

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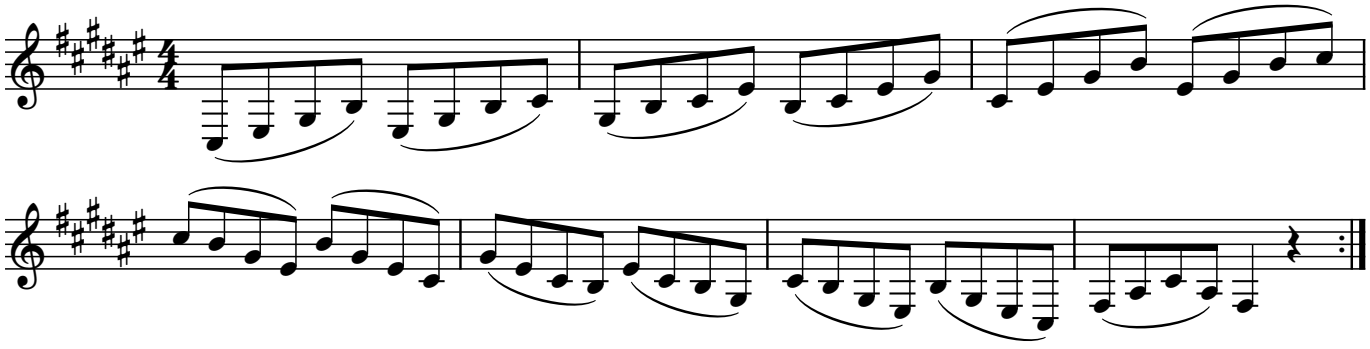

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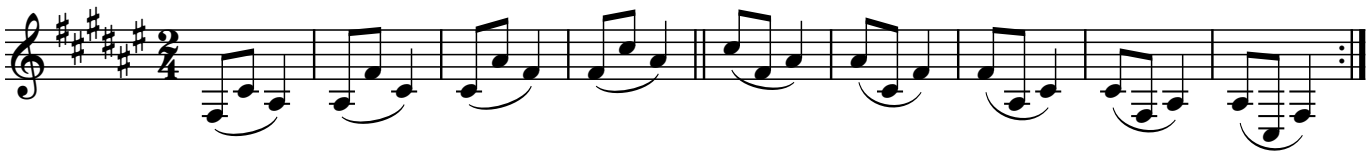

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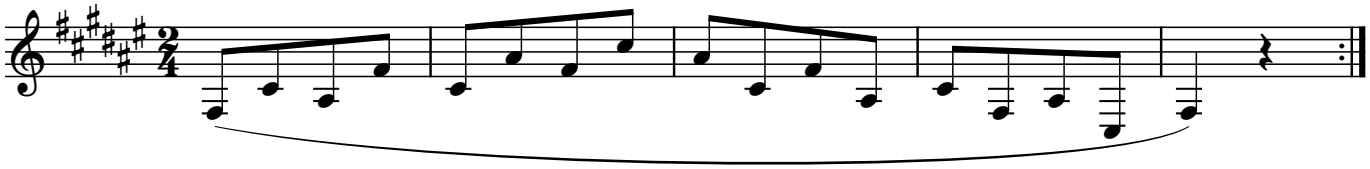

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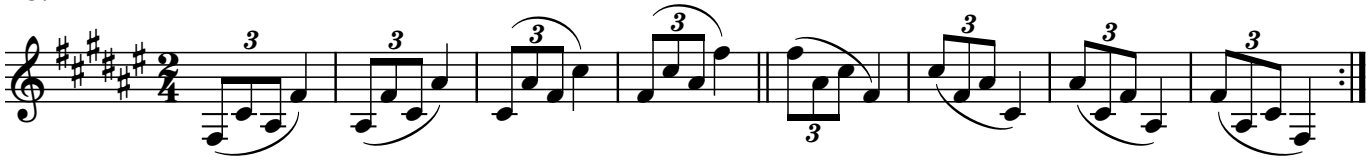

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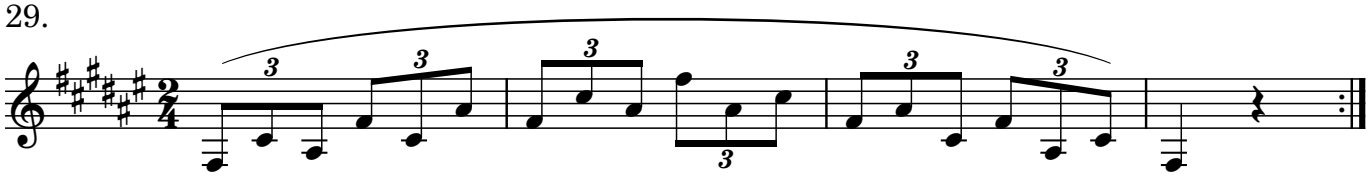

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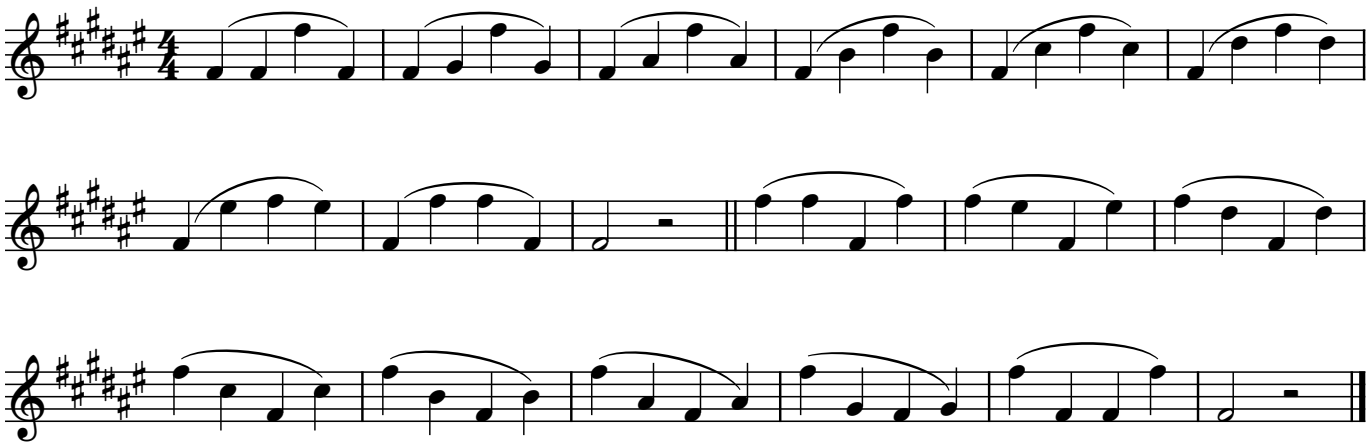

fis-moll - f♯ minor

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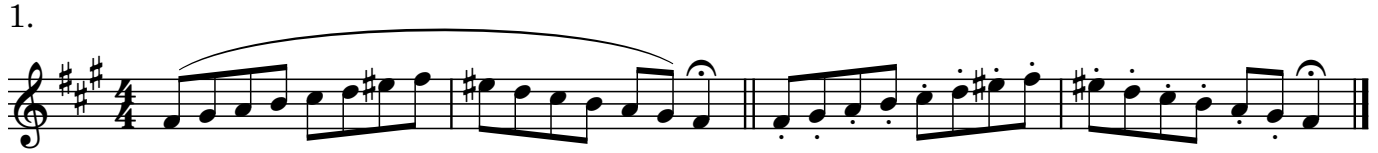

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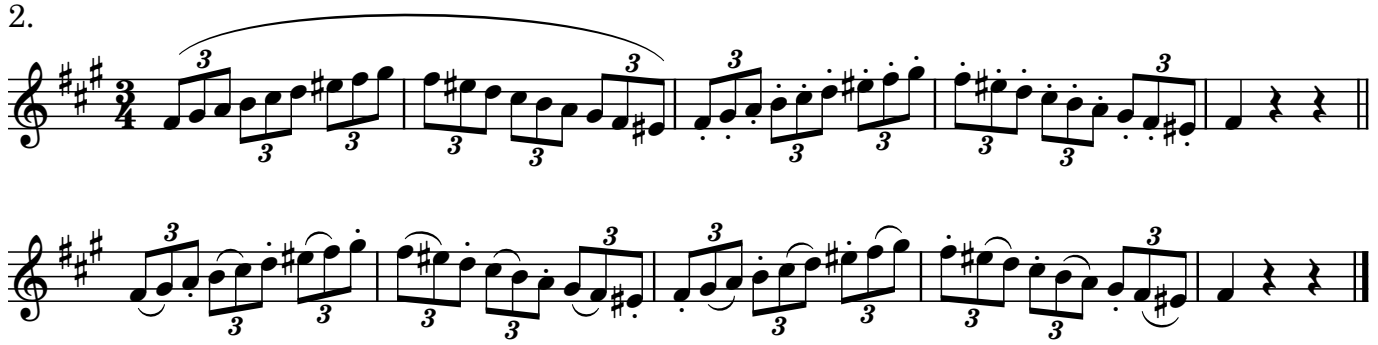

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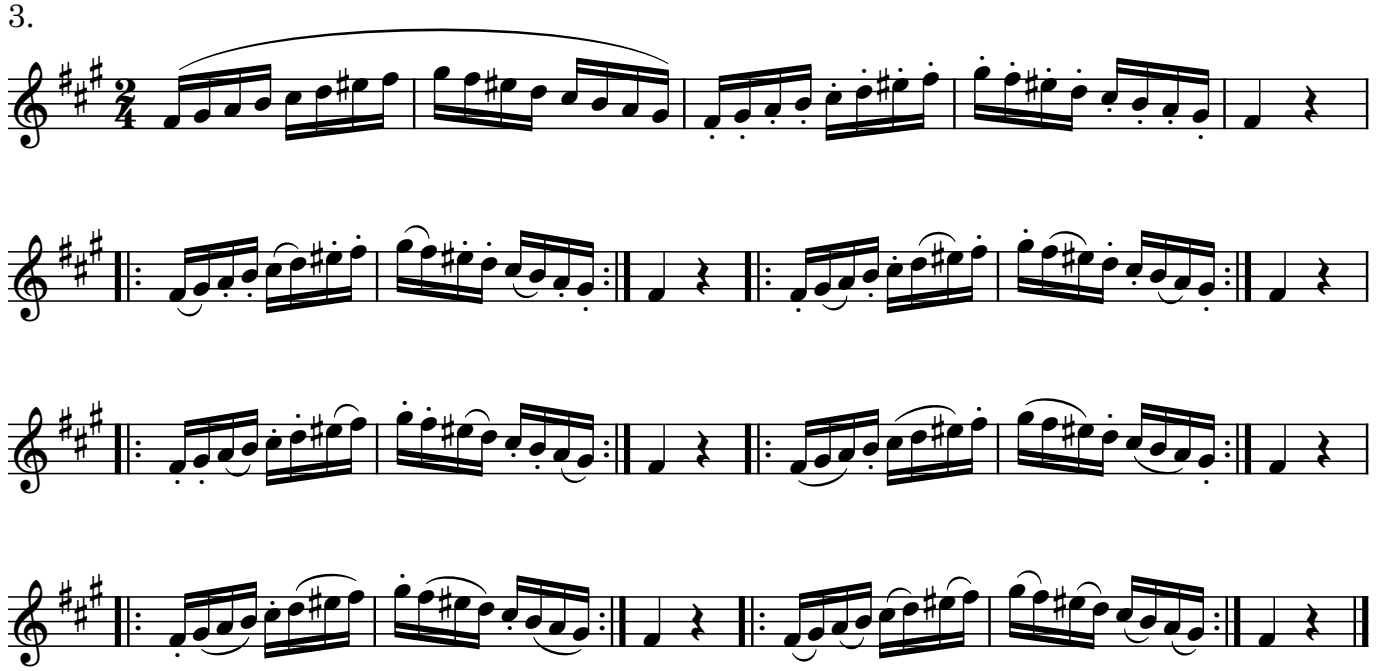

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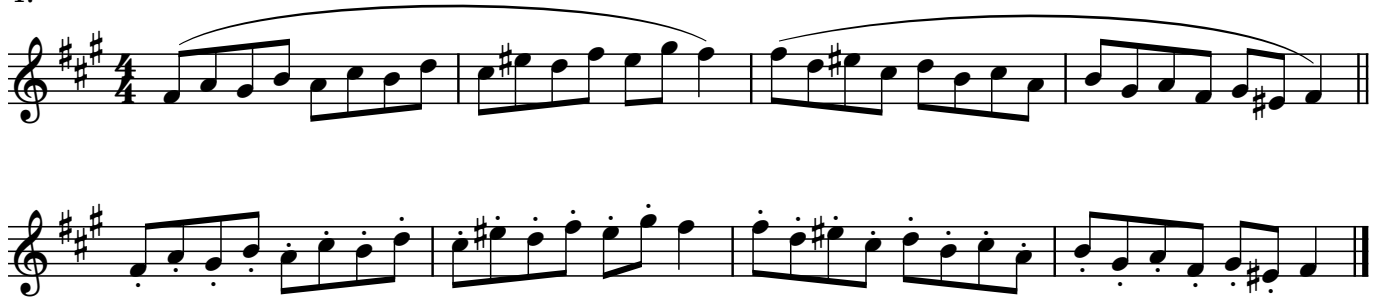

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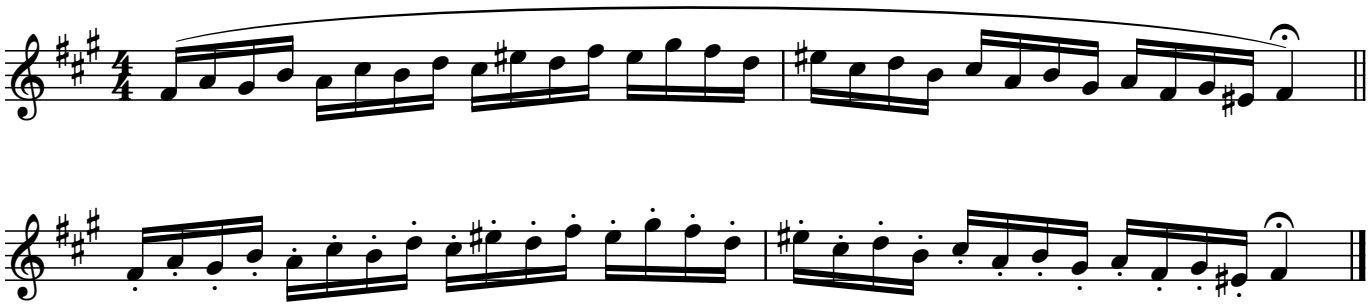

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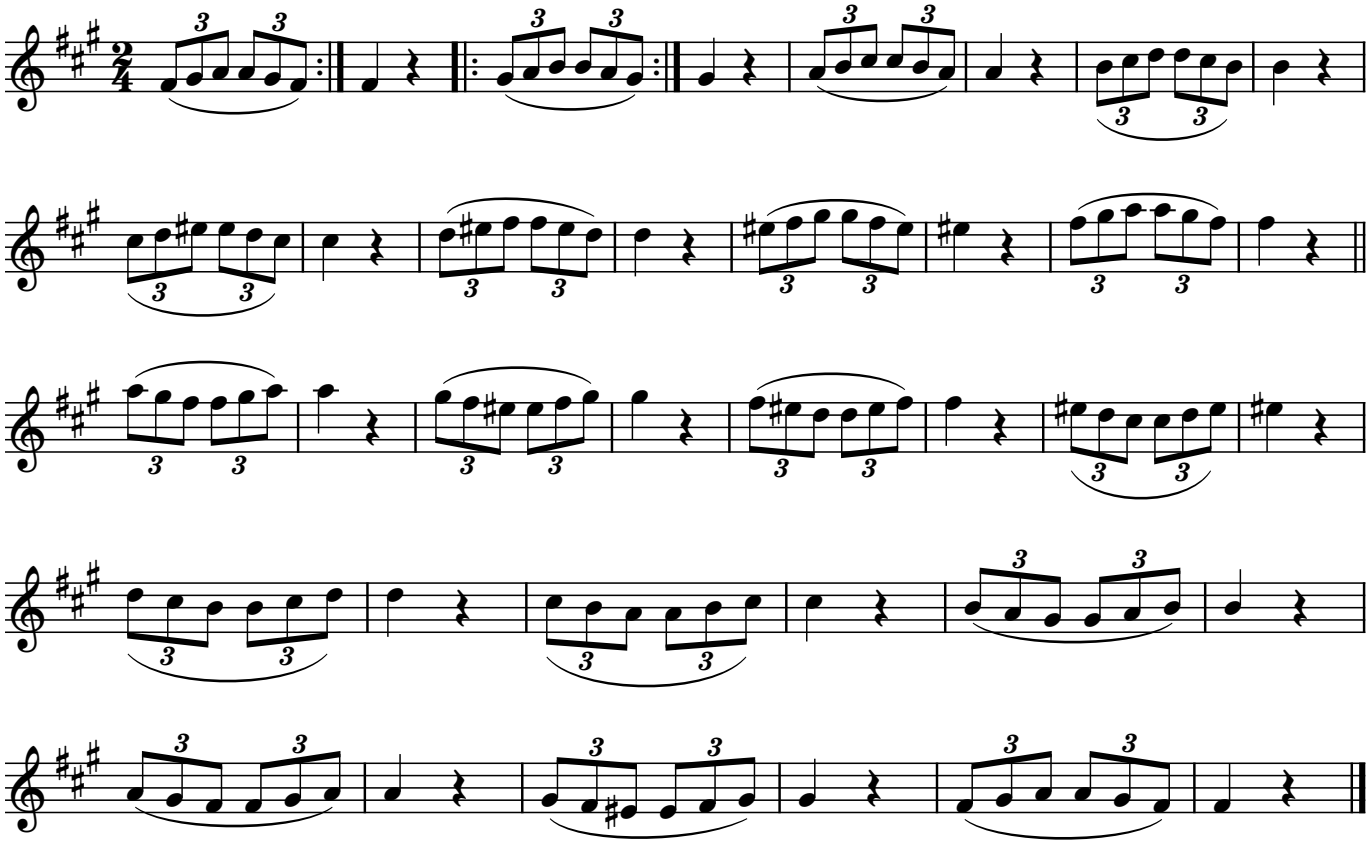

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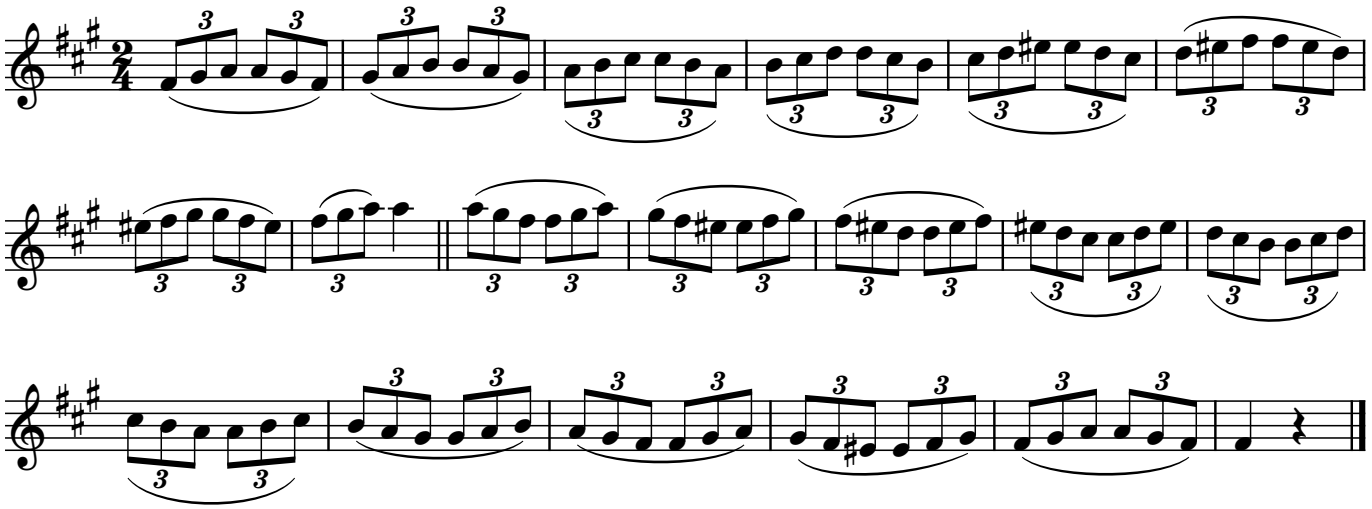

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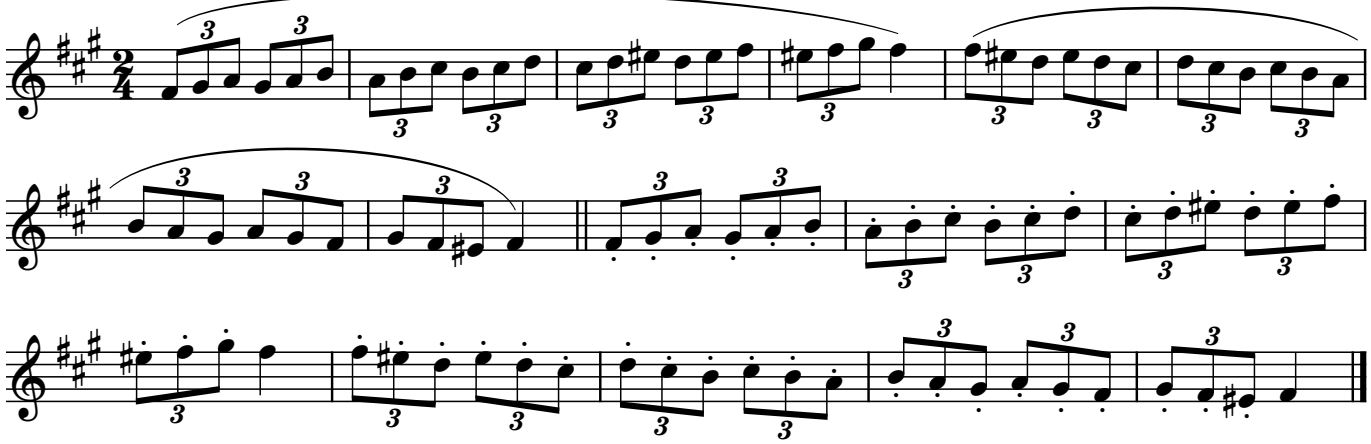

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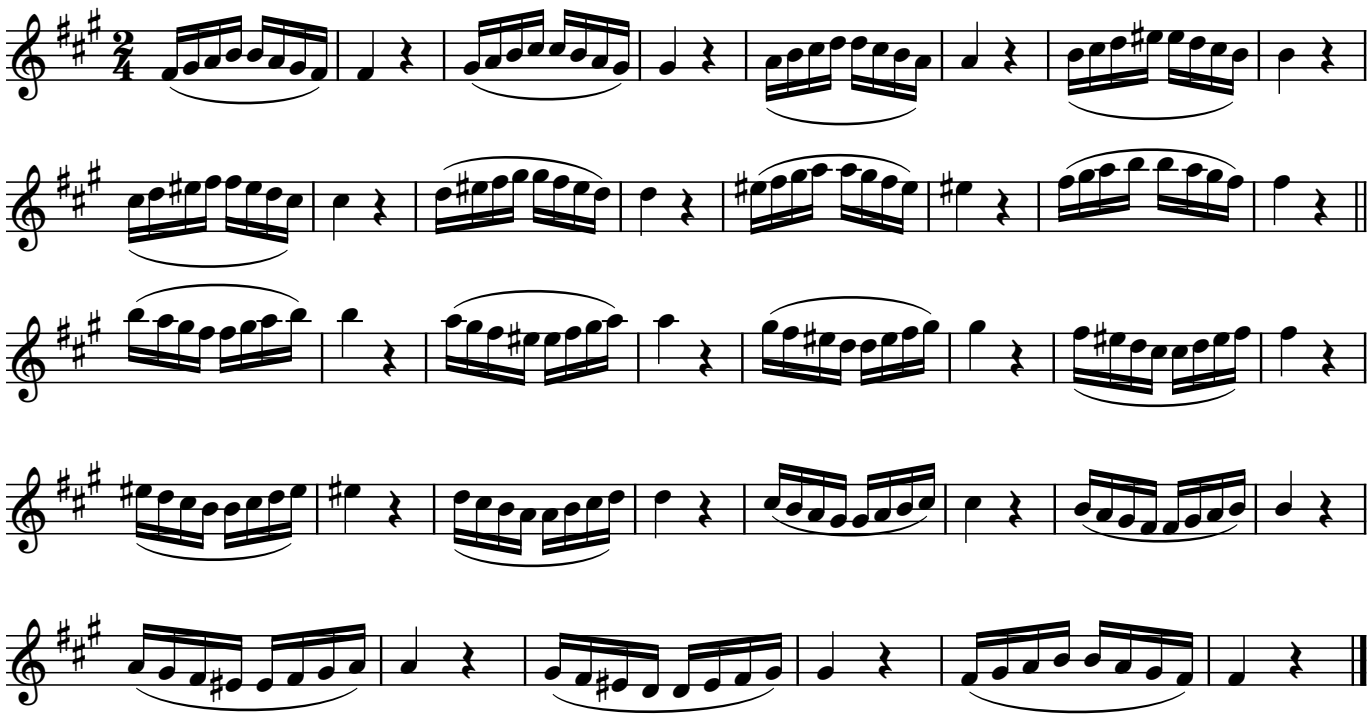

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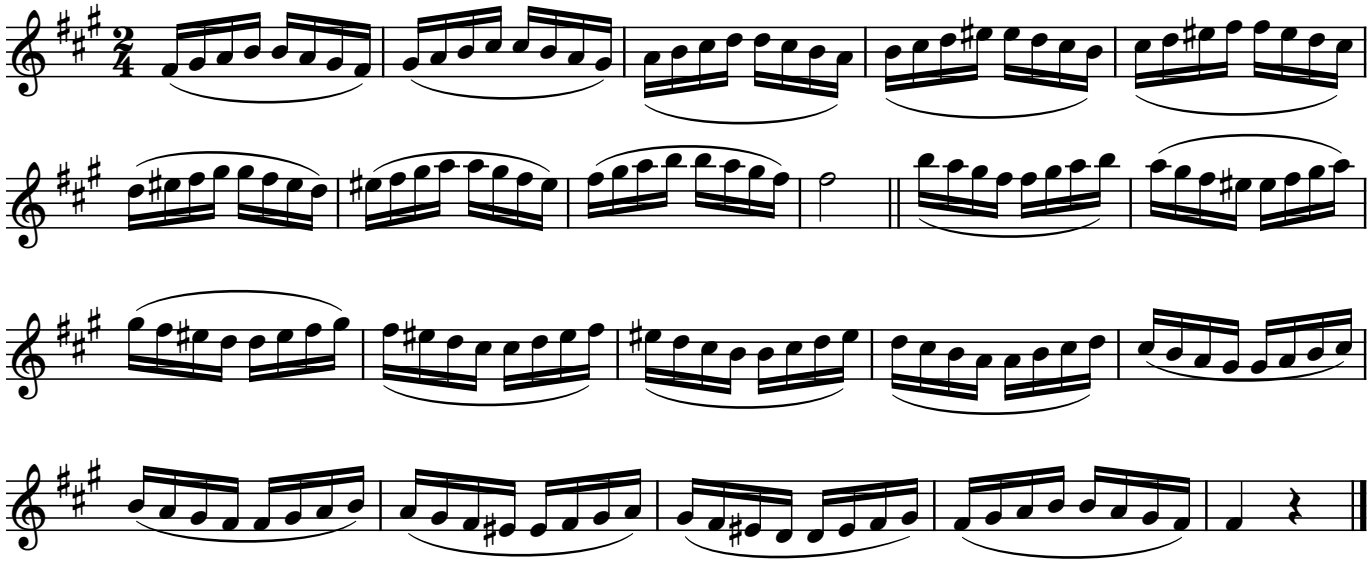

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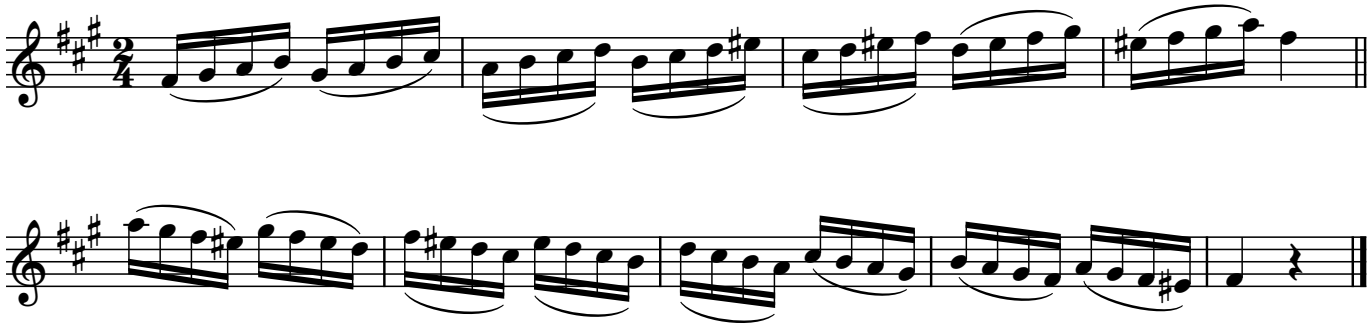

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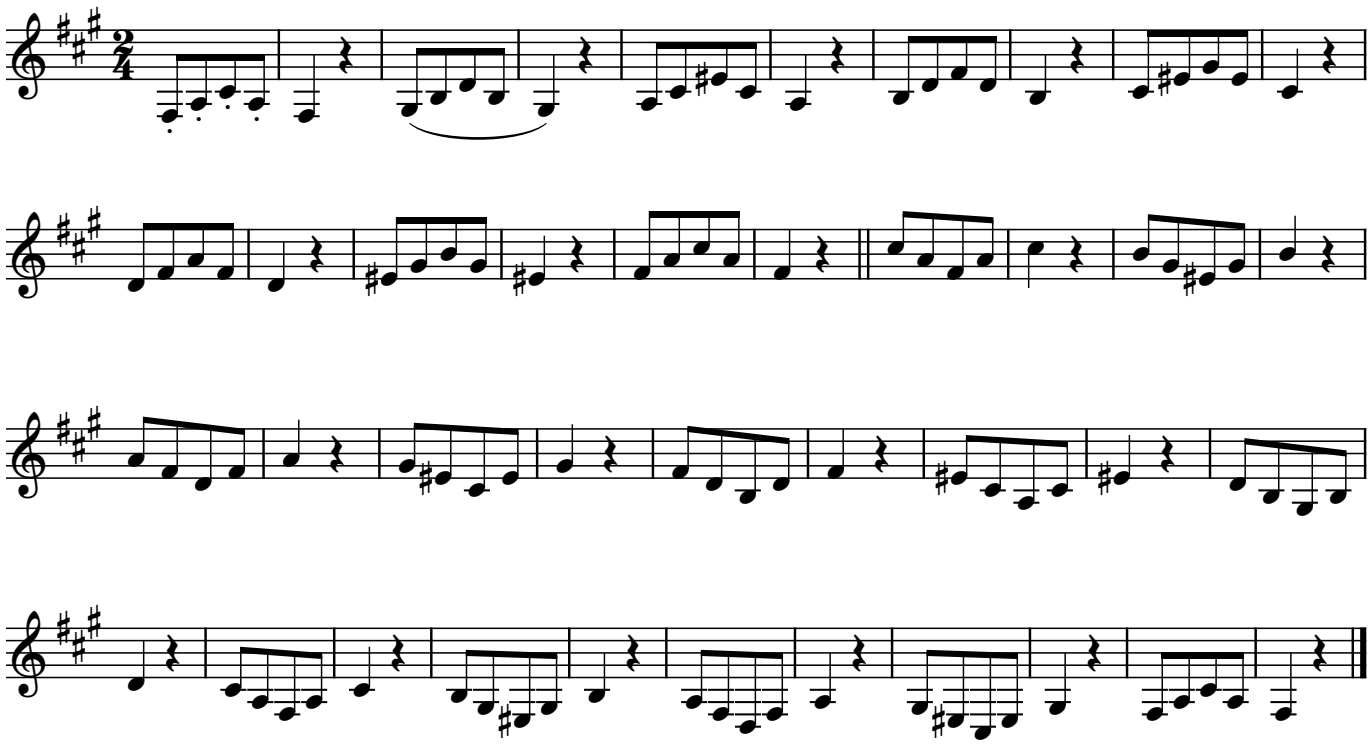

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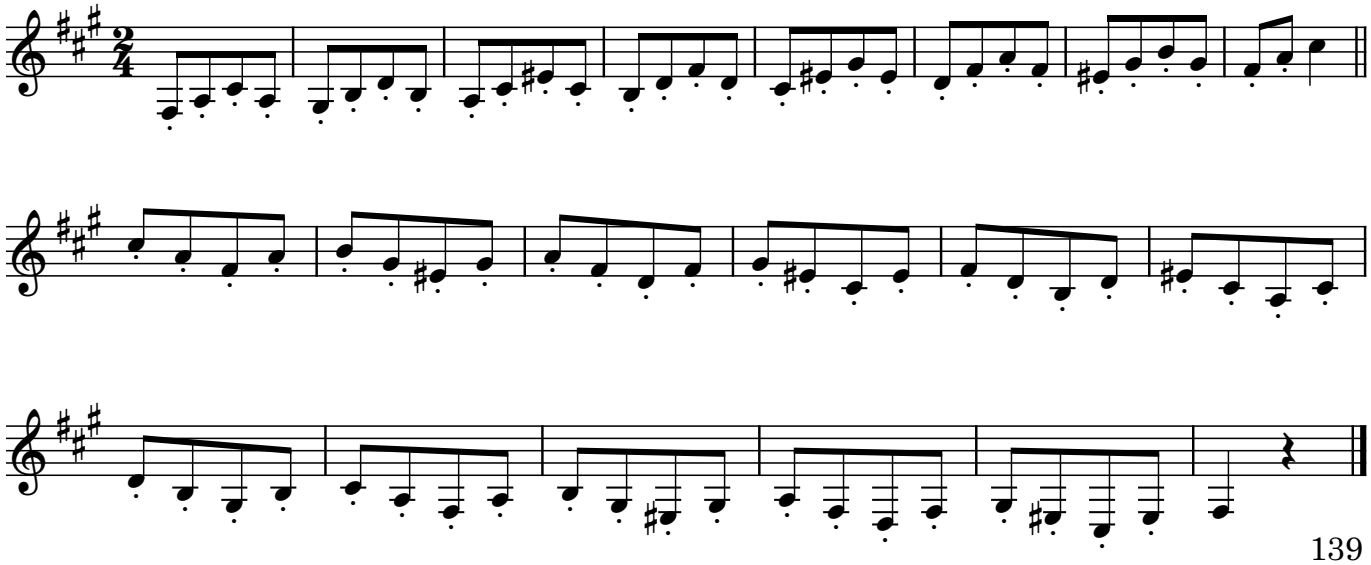

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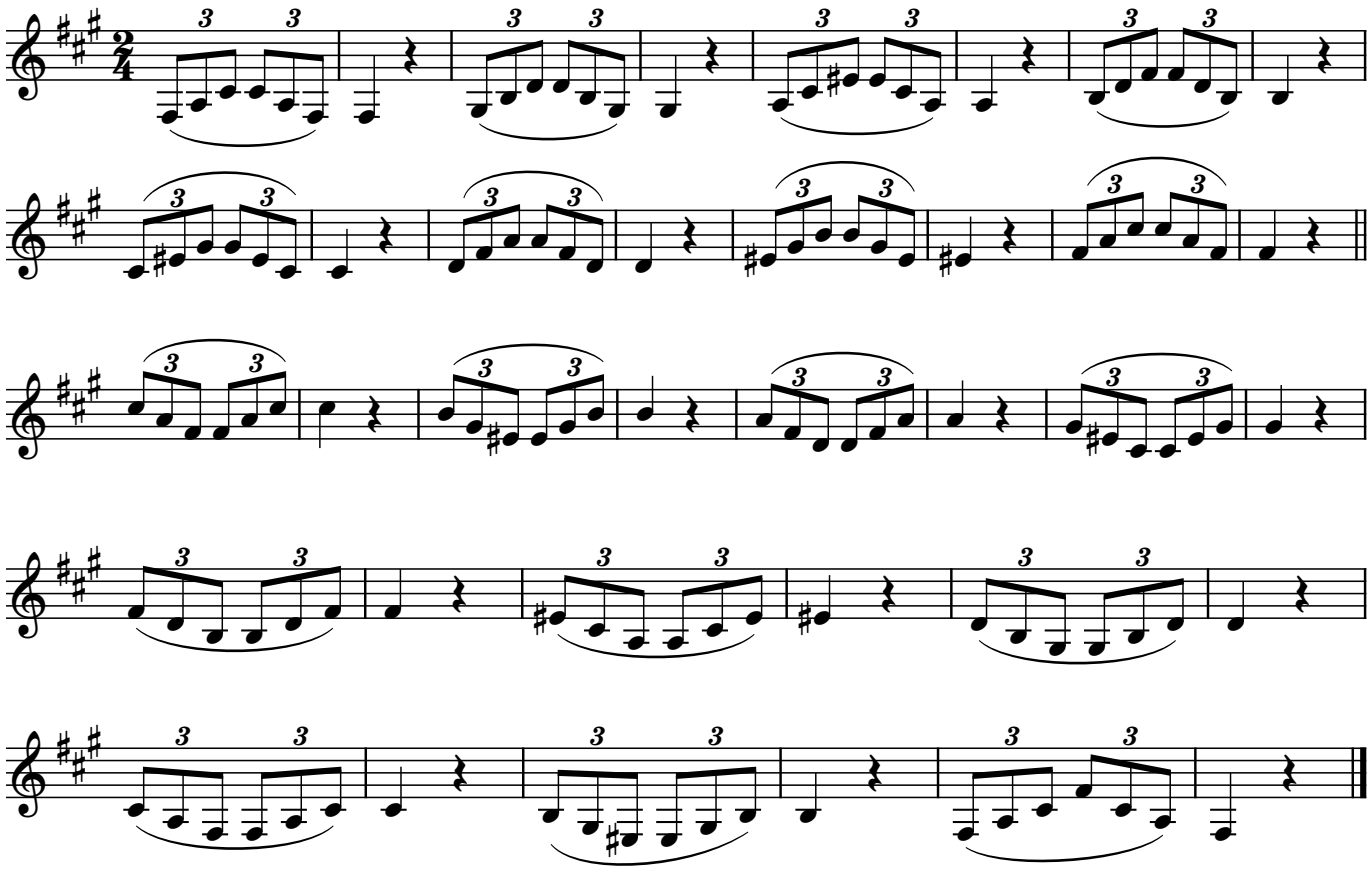

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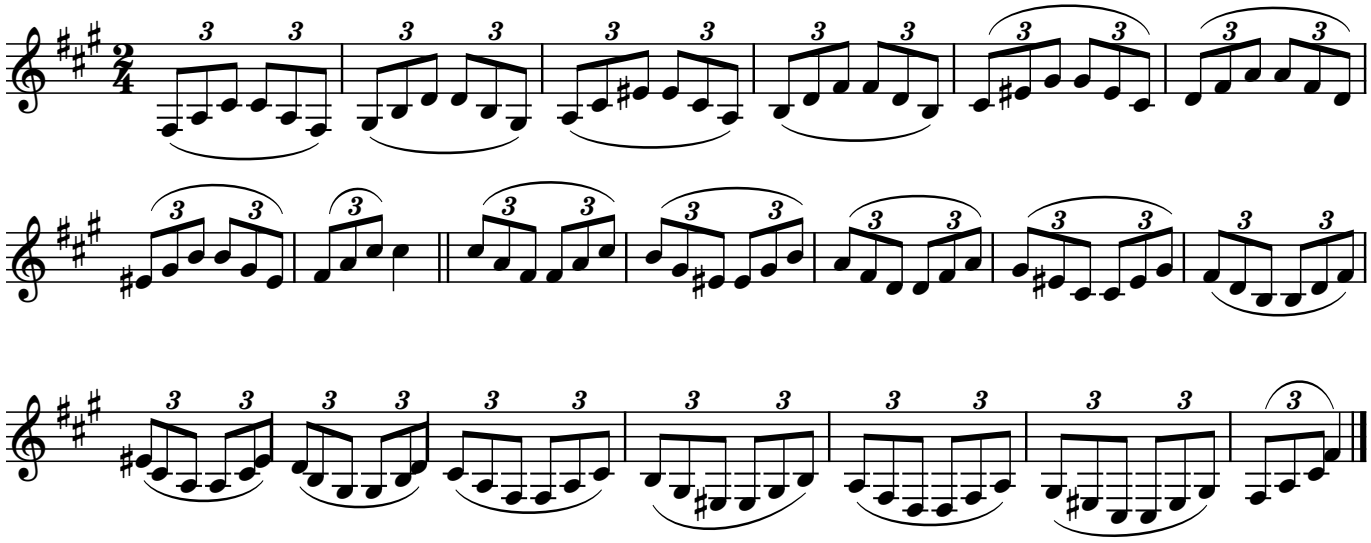

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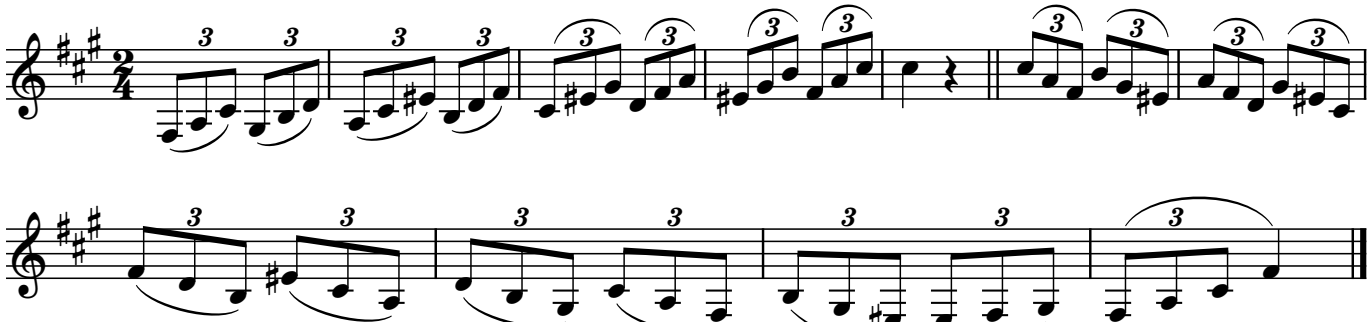

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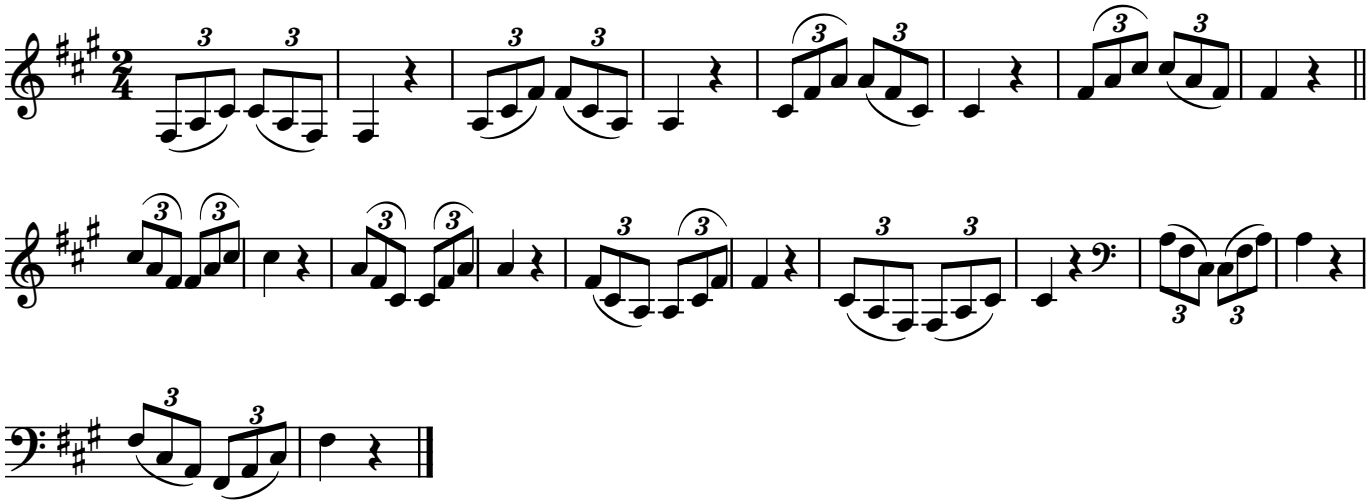

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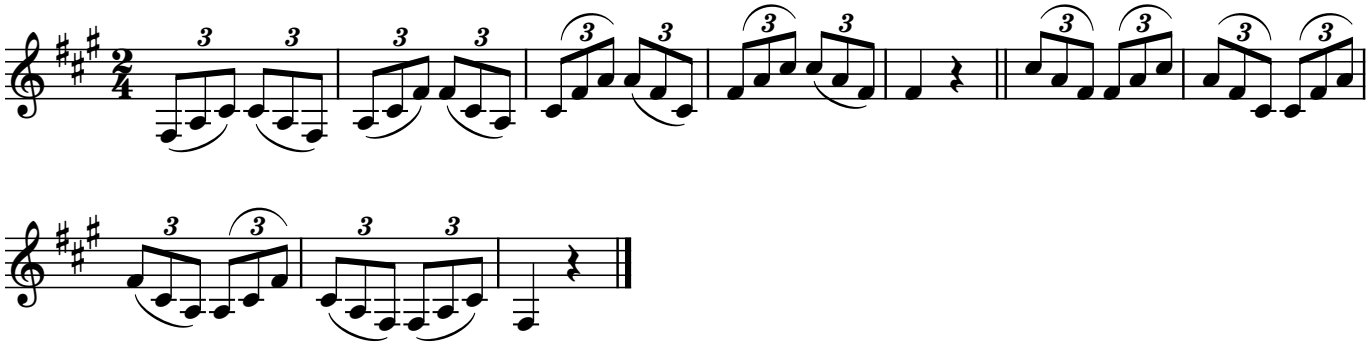

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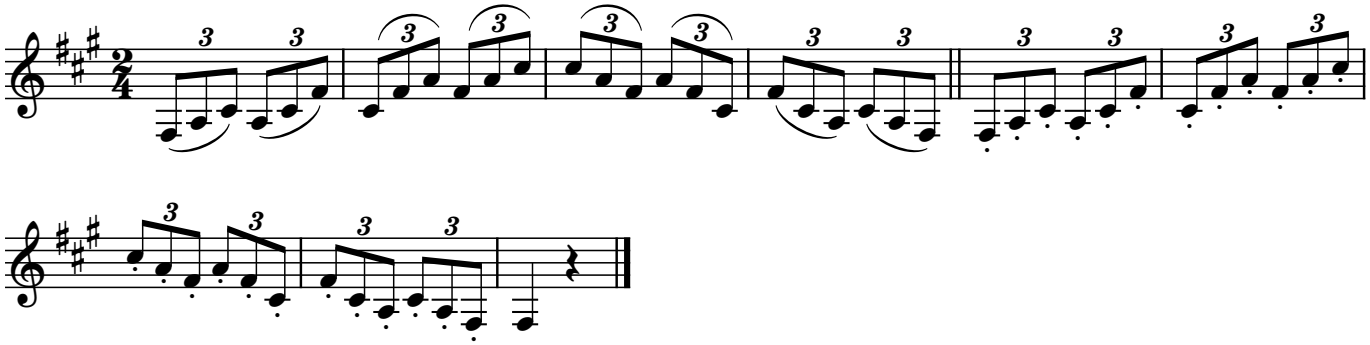

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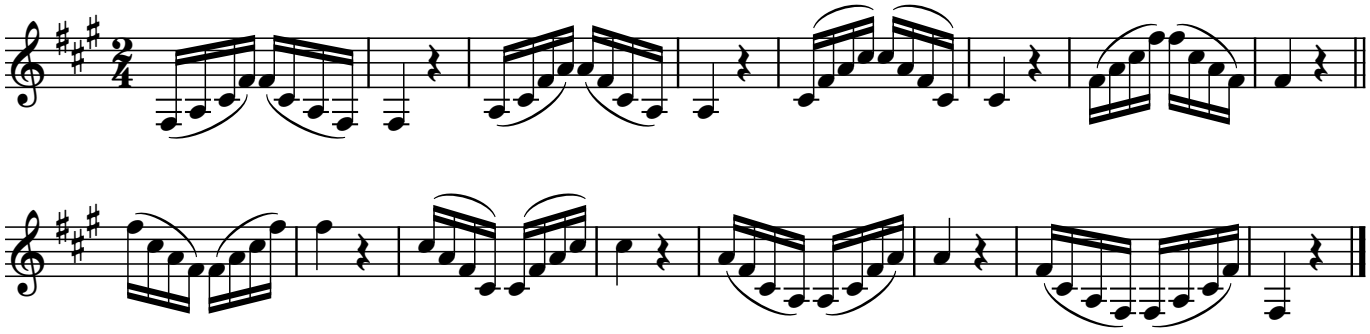

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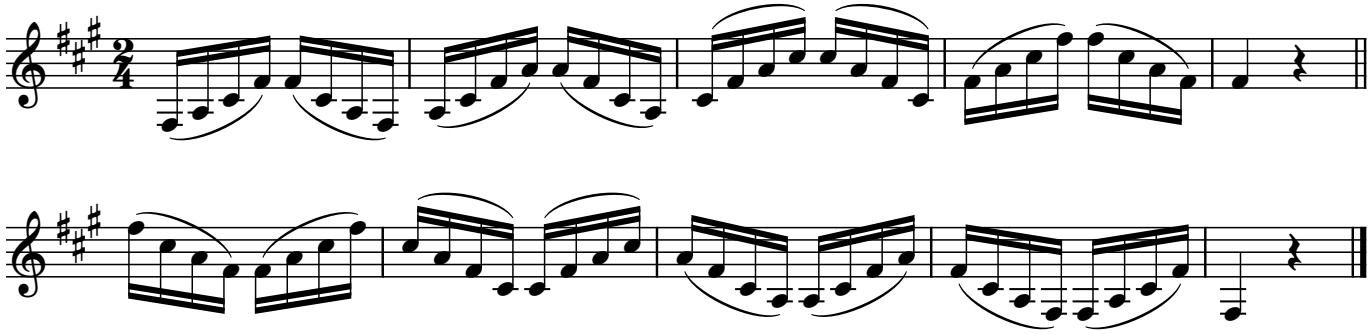

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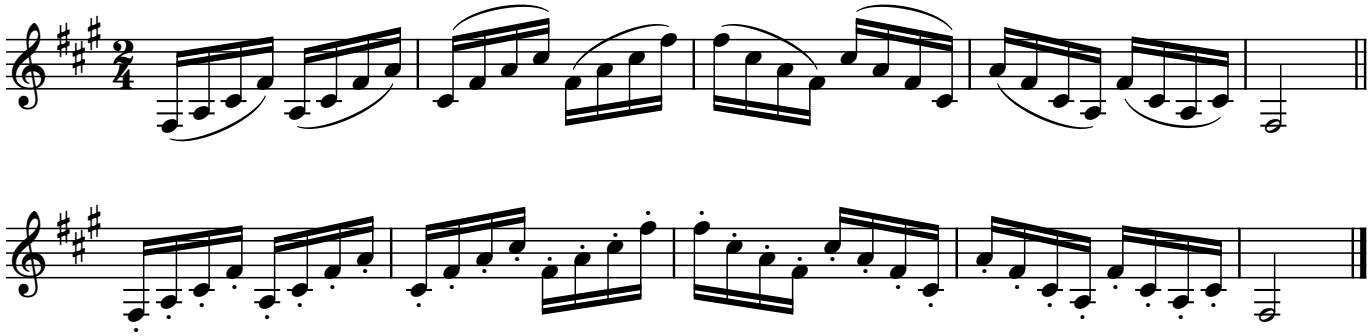

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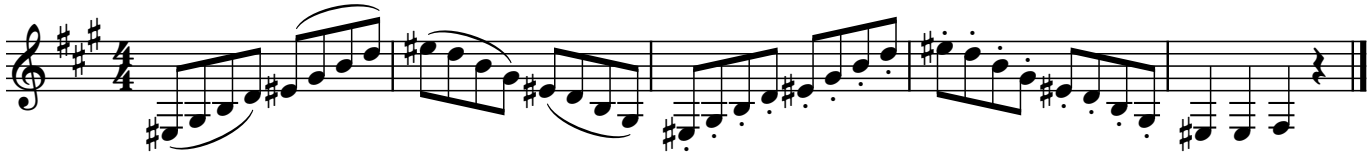

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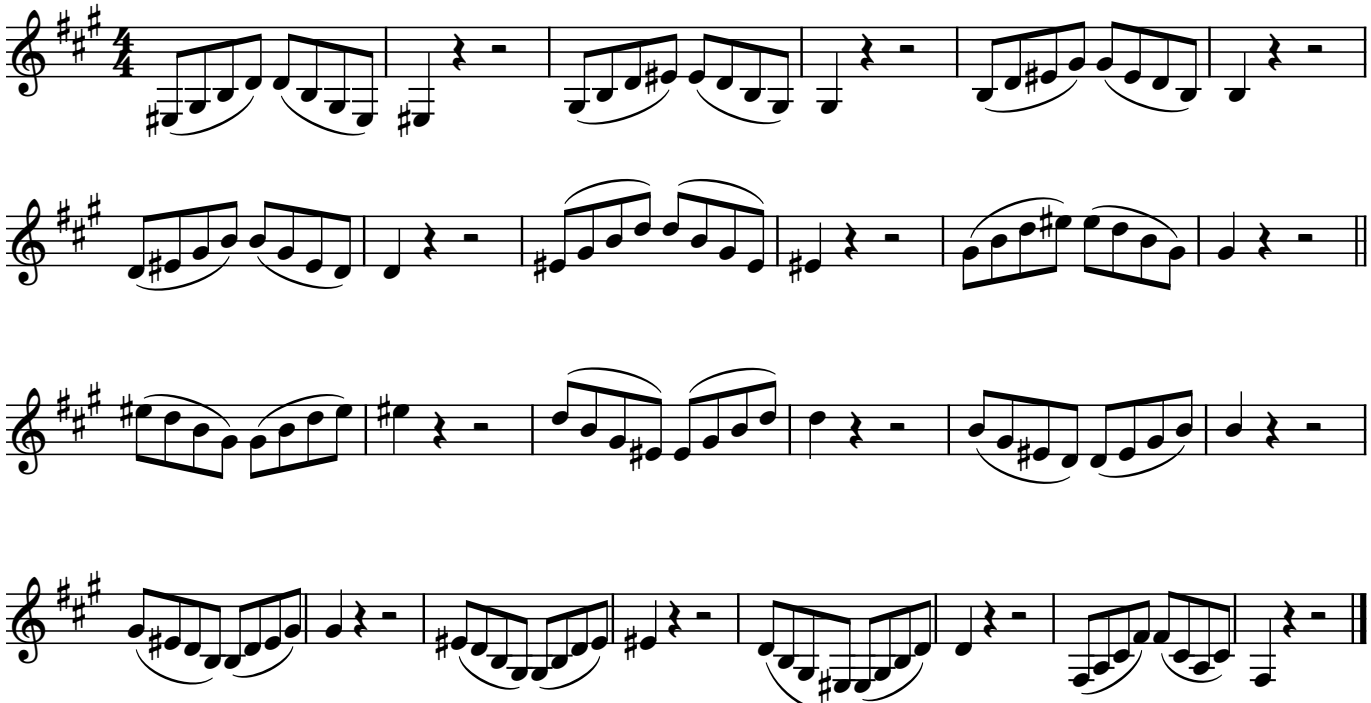

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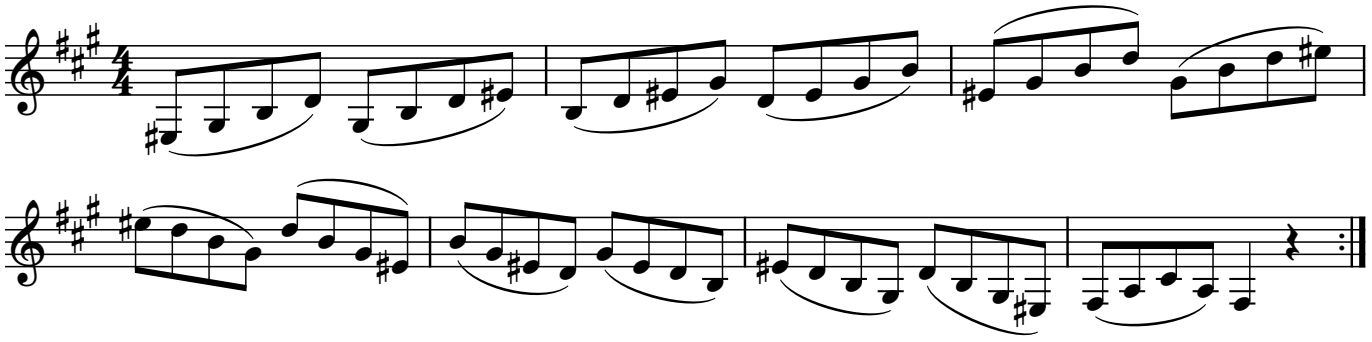

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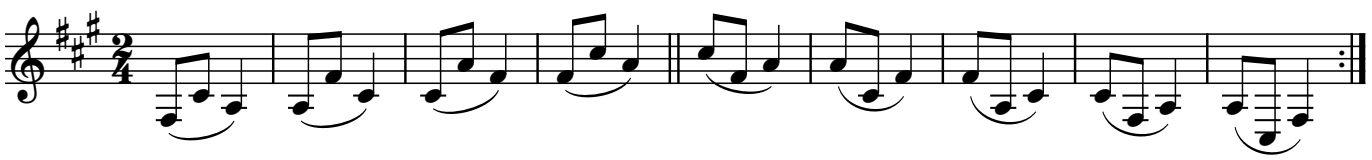

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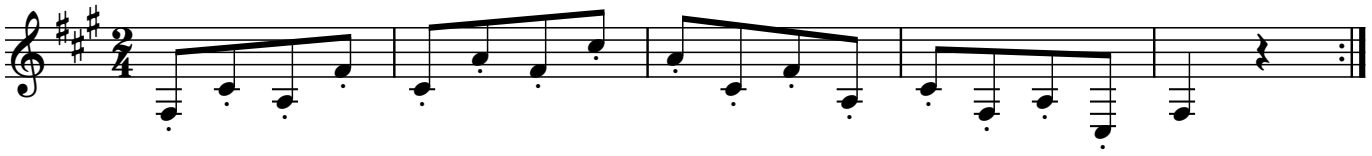

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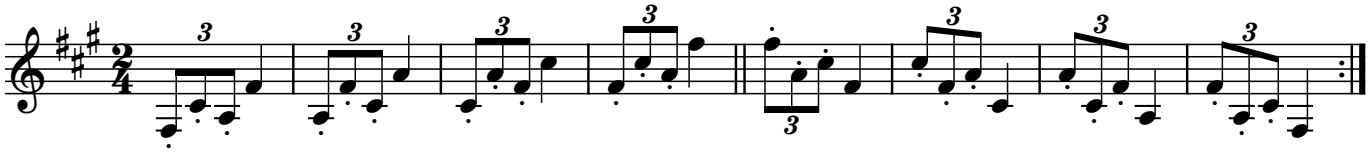

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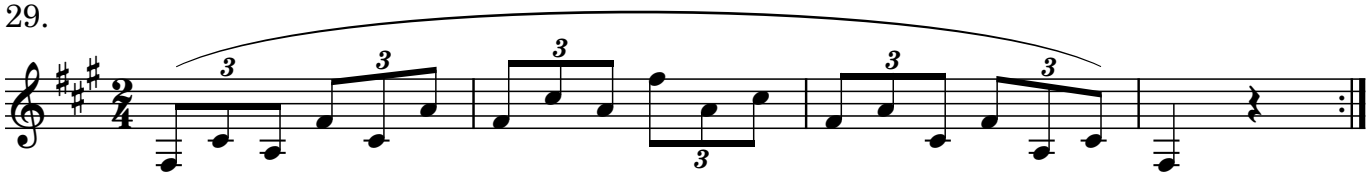

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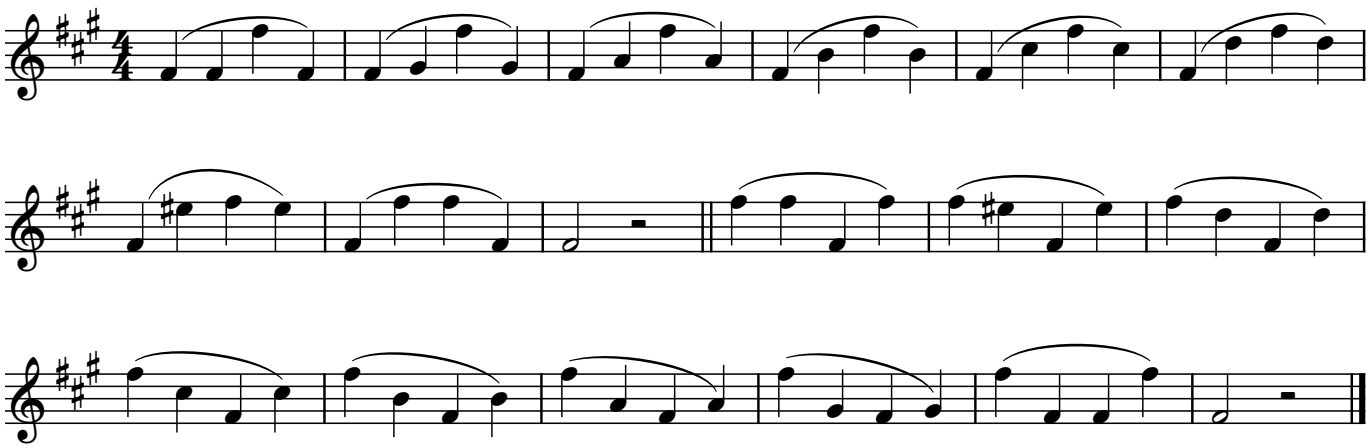

Ges-Dur - G♭ Major

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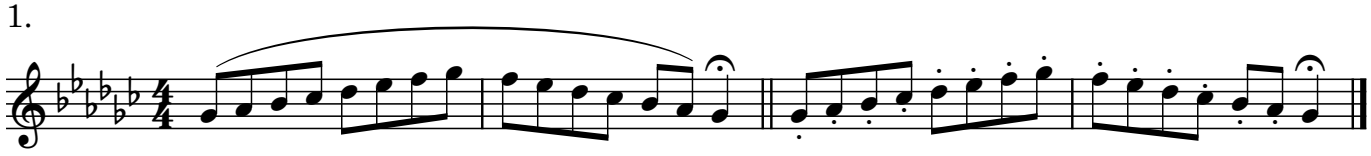

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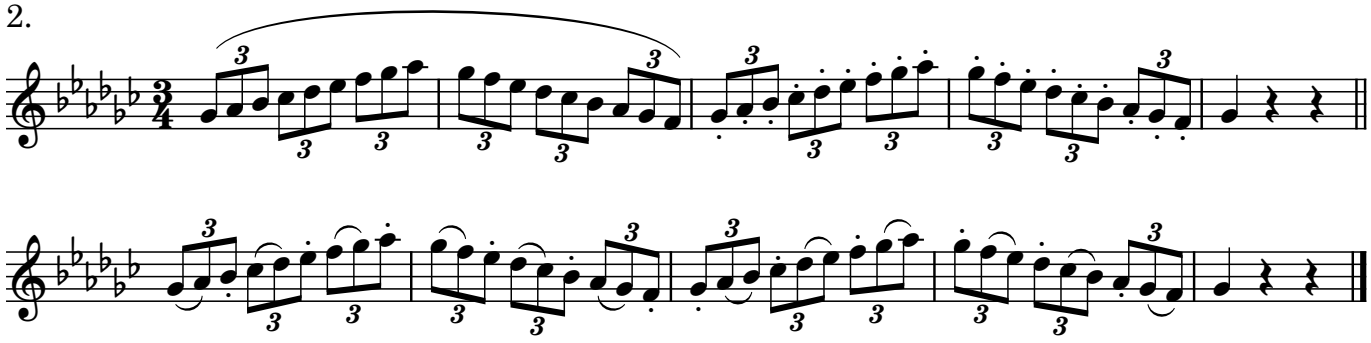

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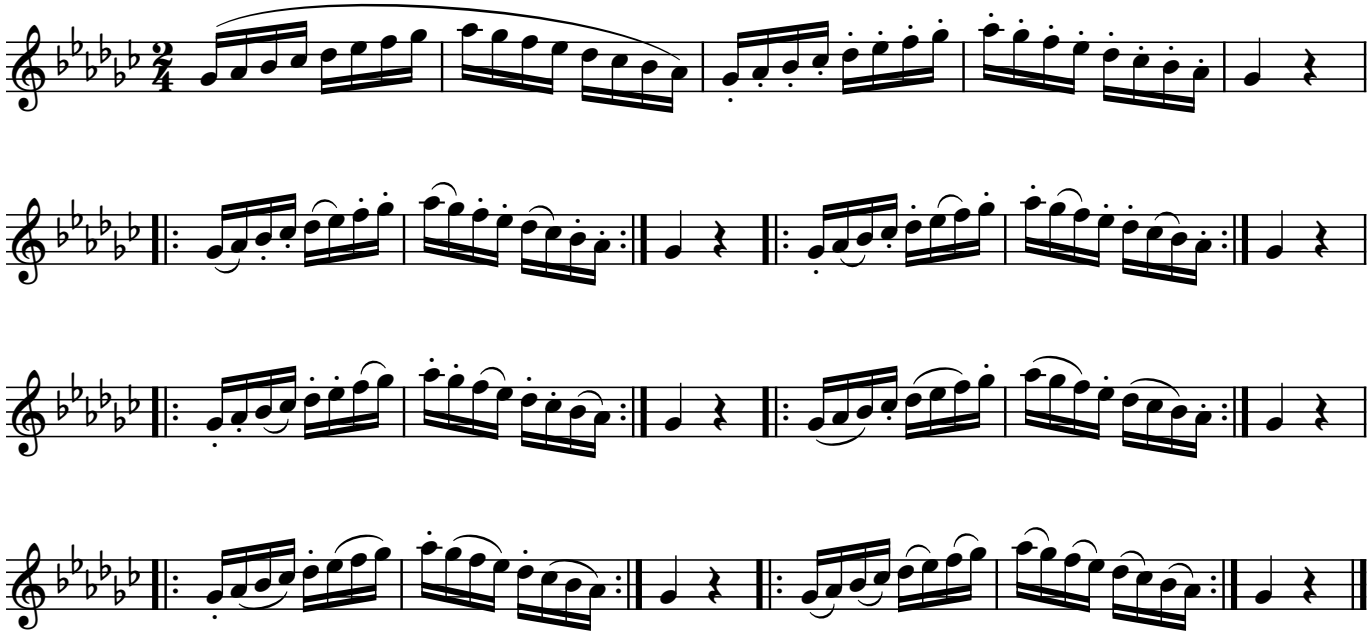

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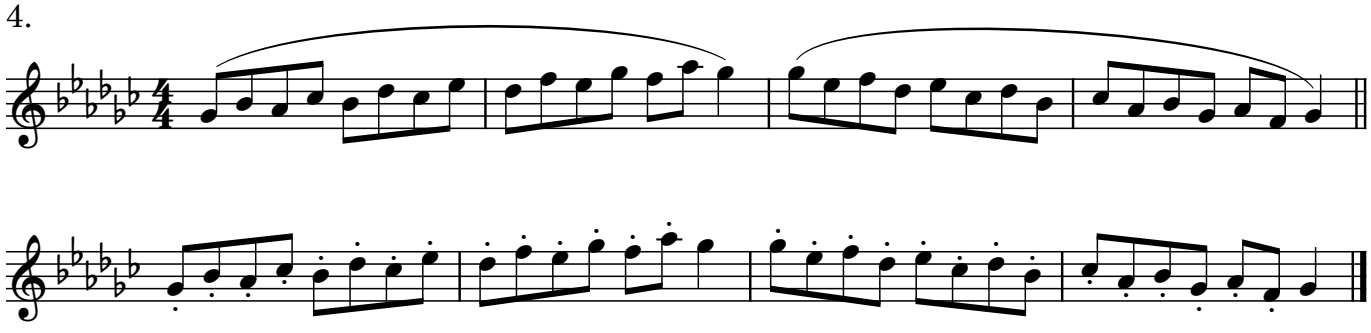

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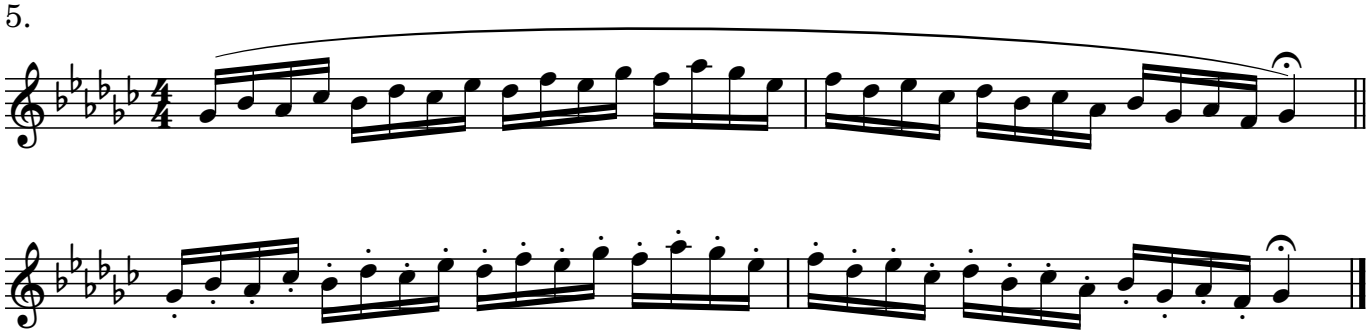

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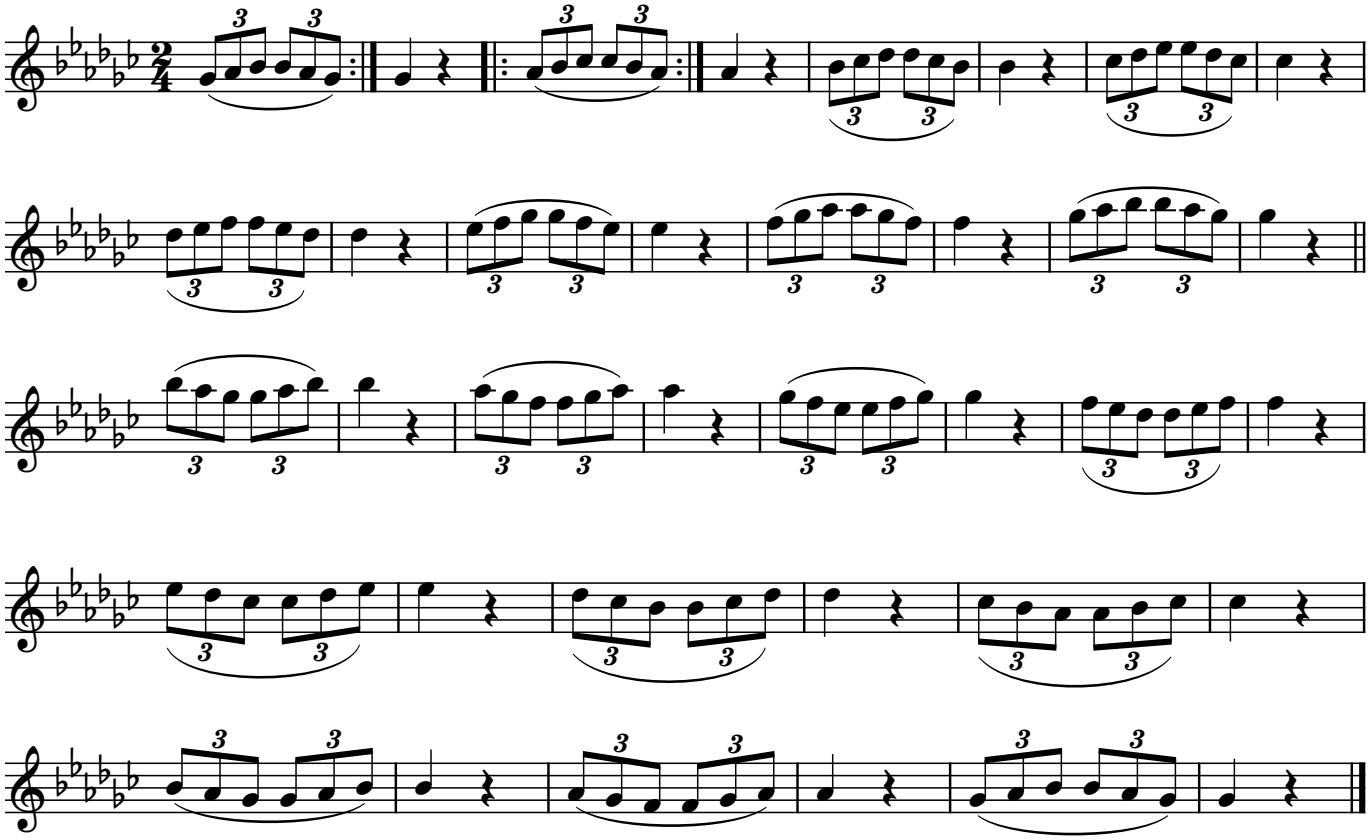

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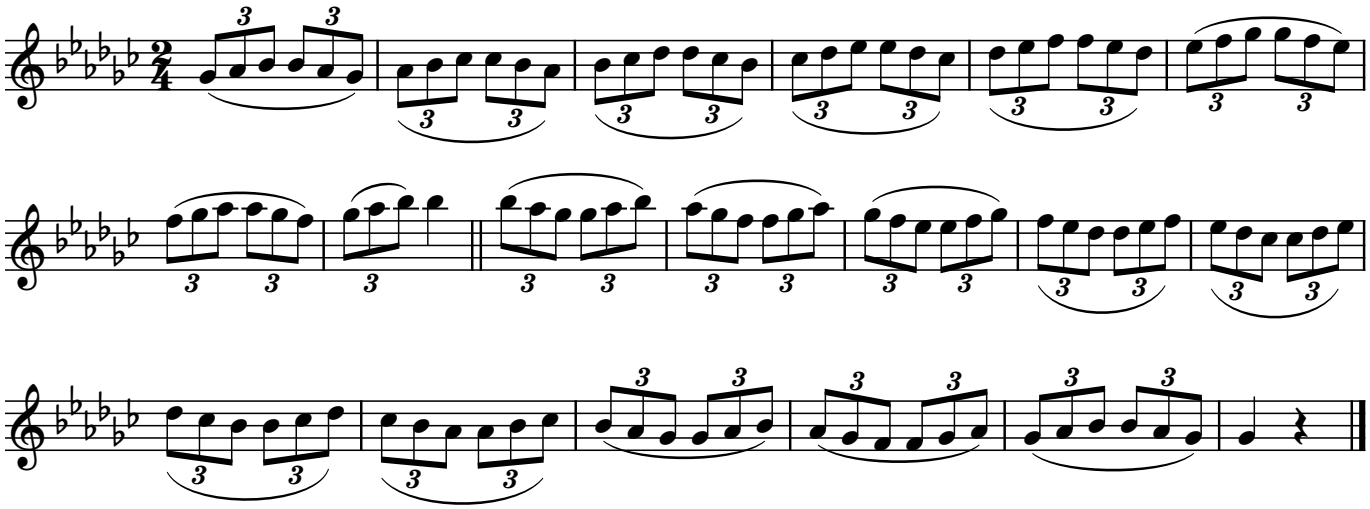

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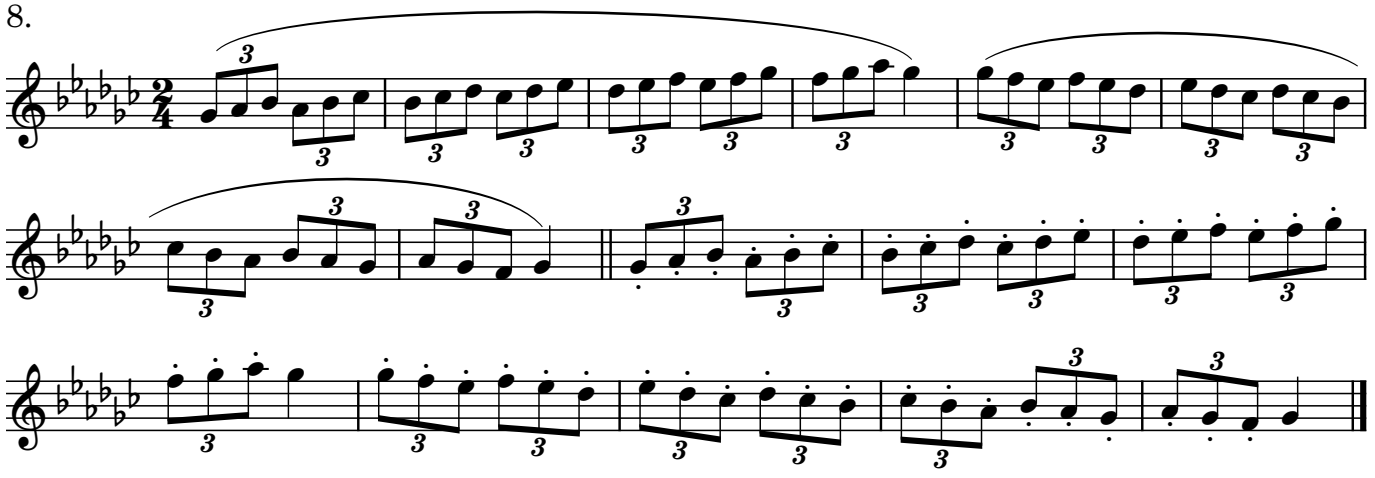

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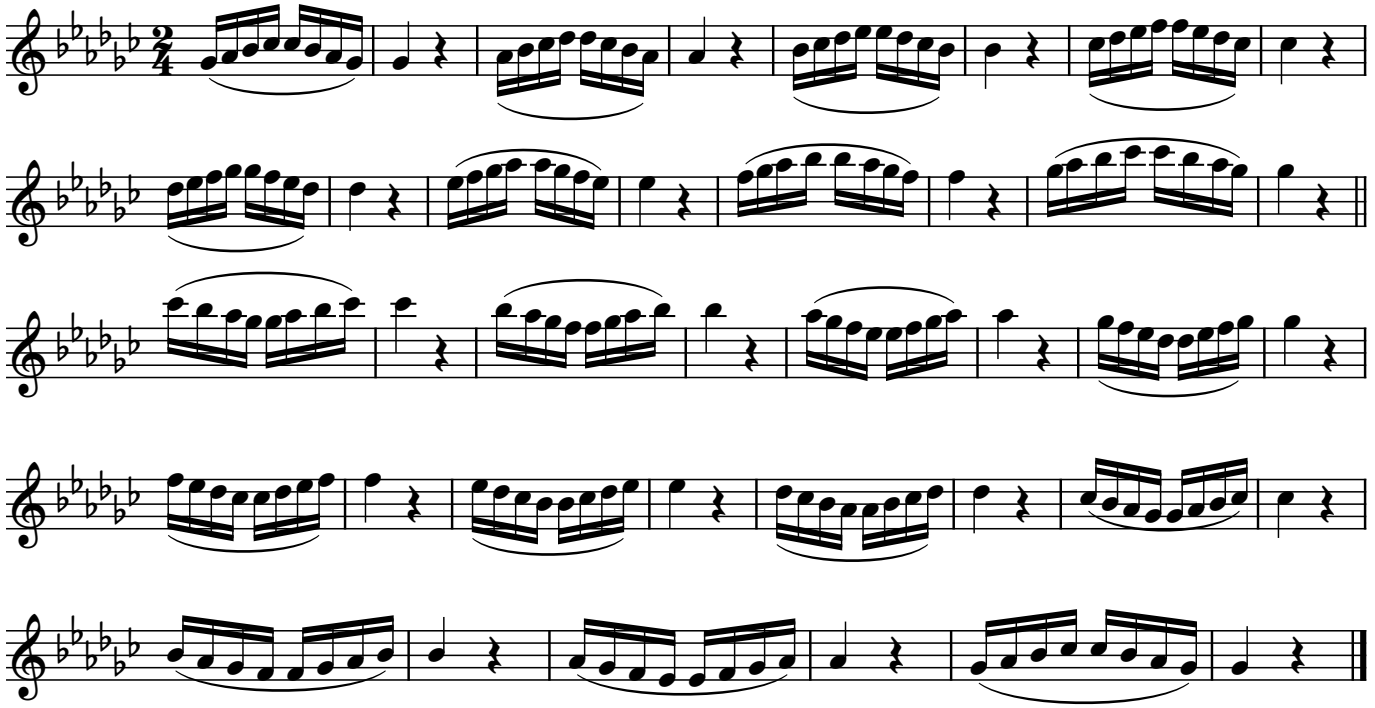

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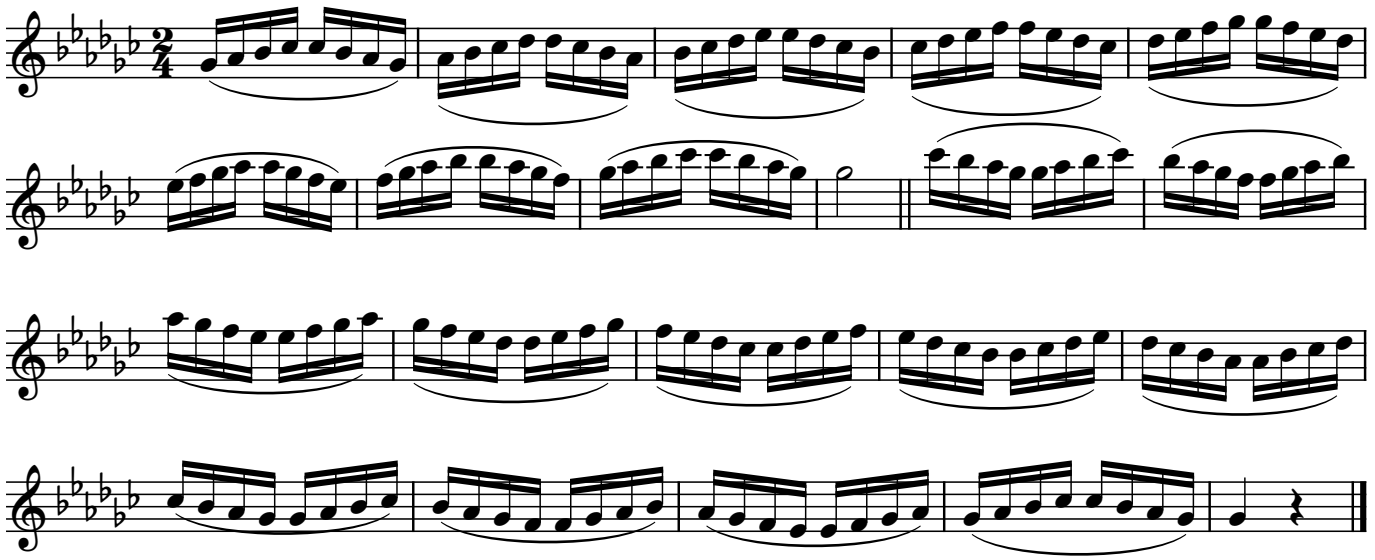

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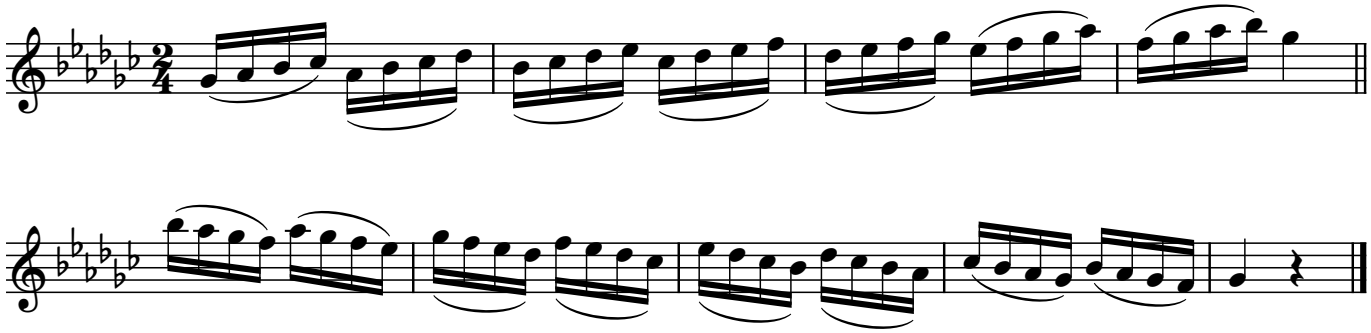

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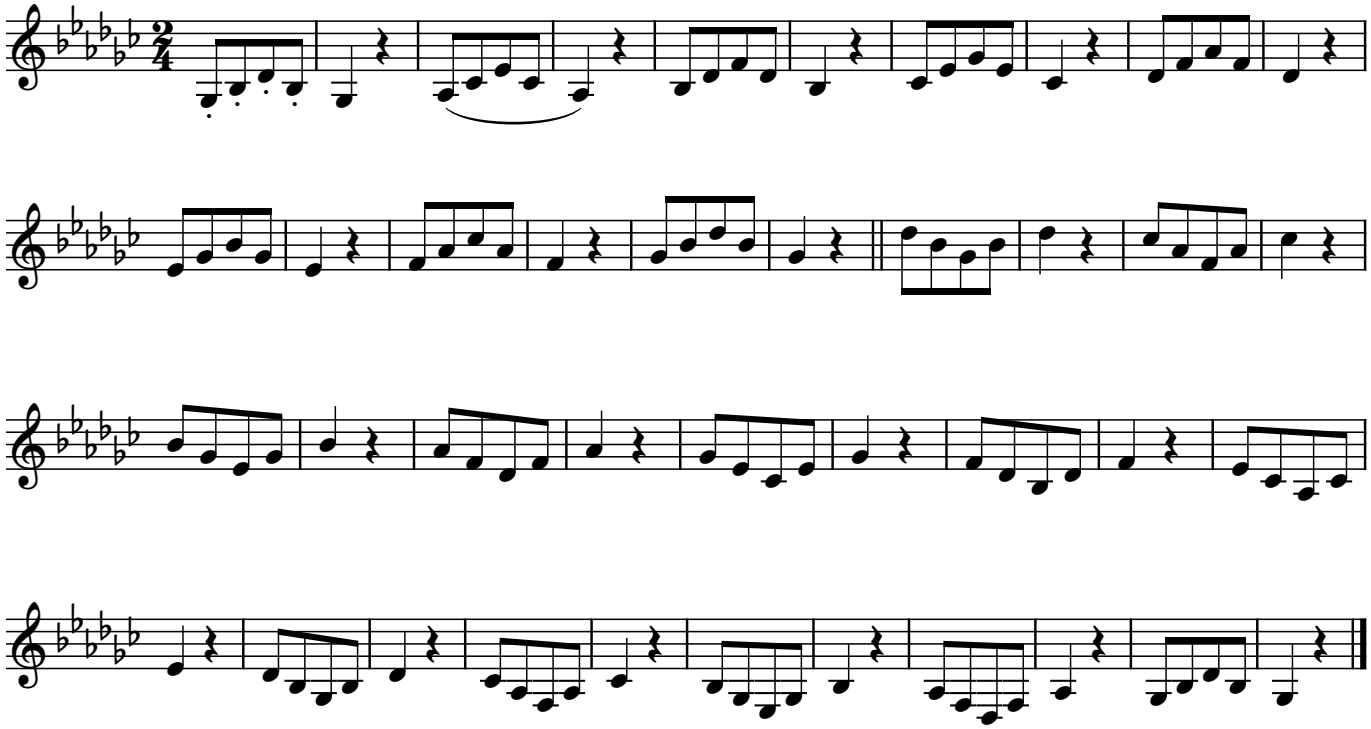

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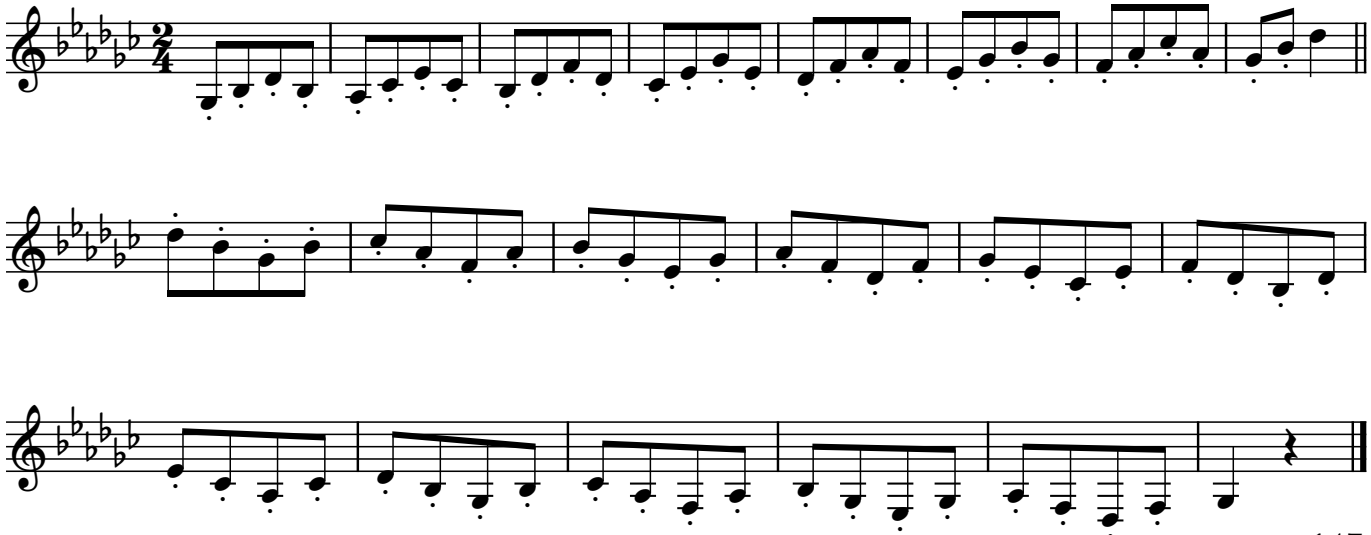

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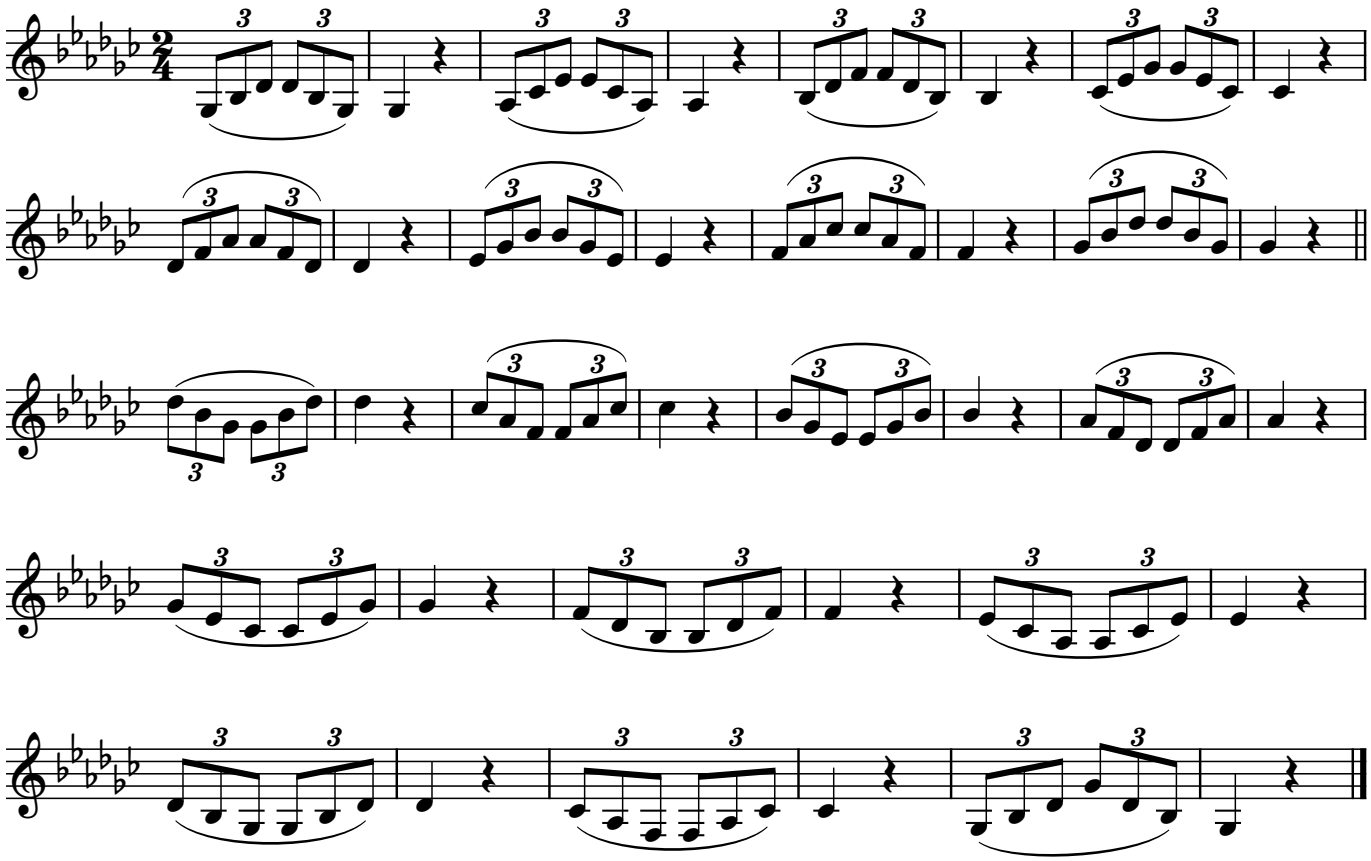

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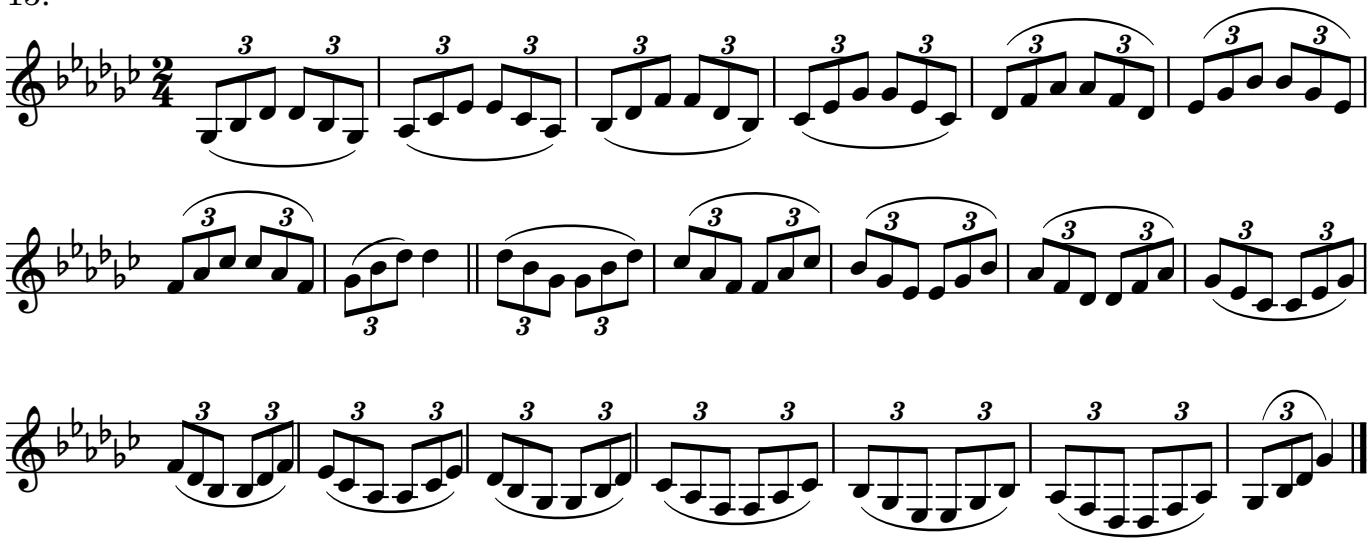

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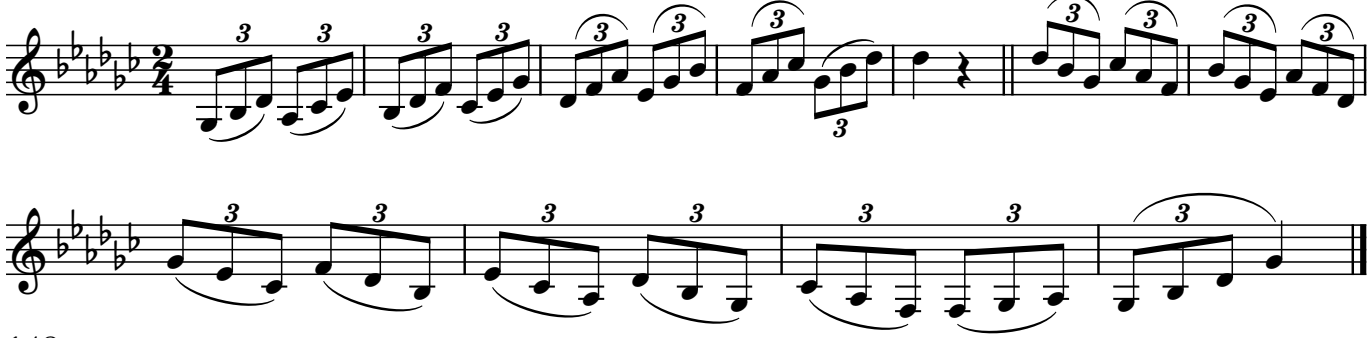

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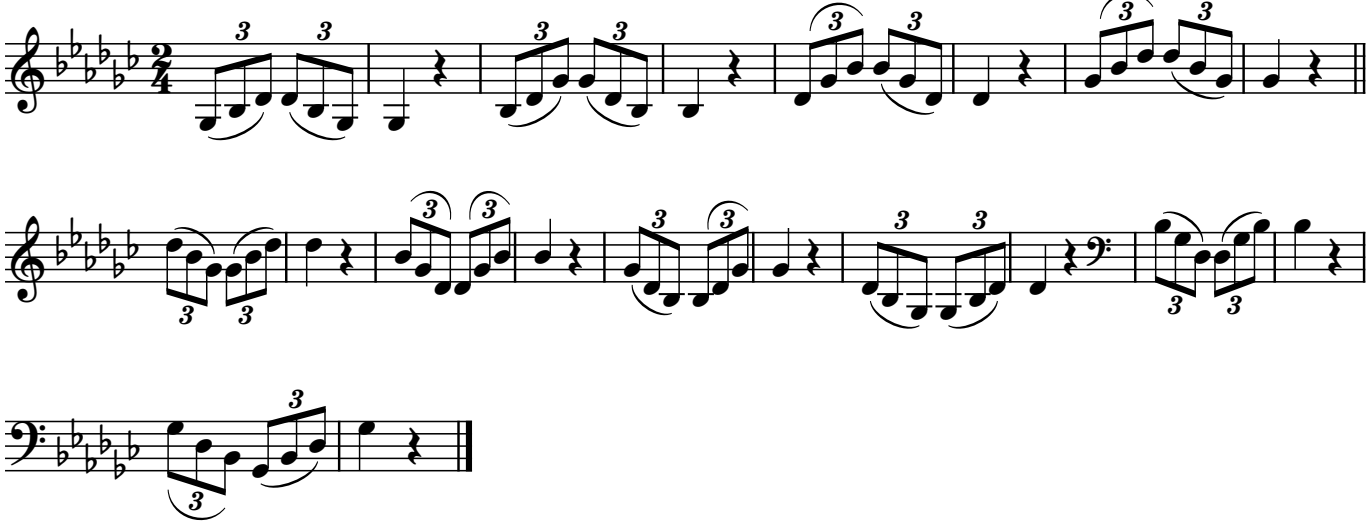

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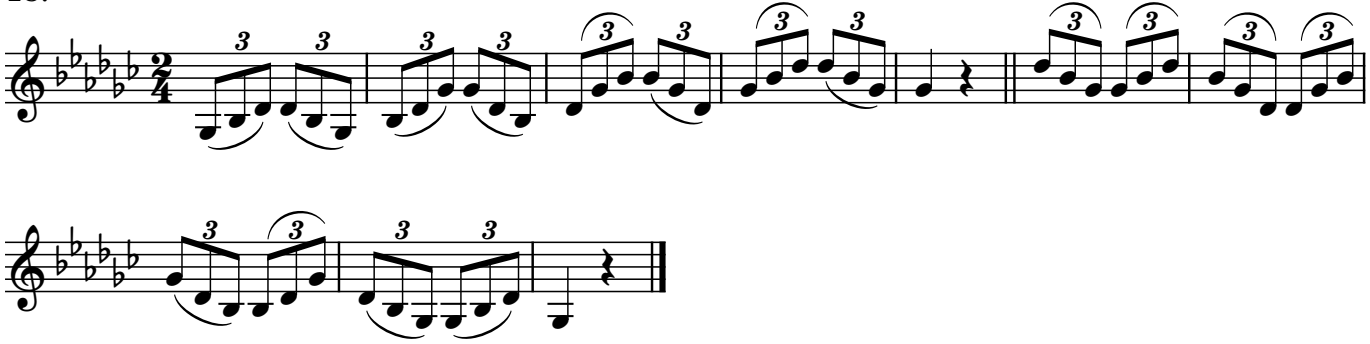

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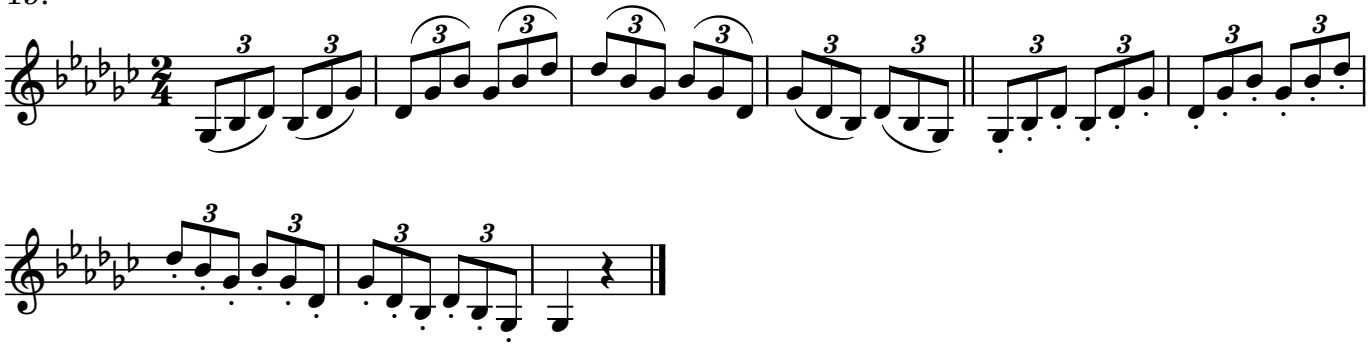

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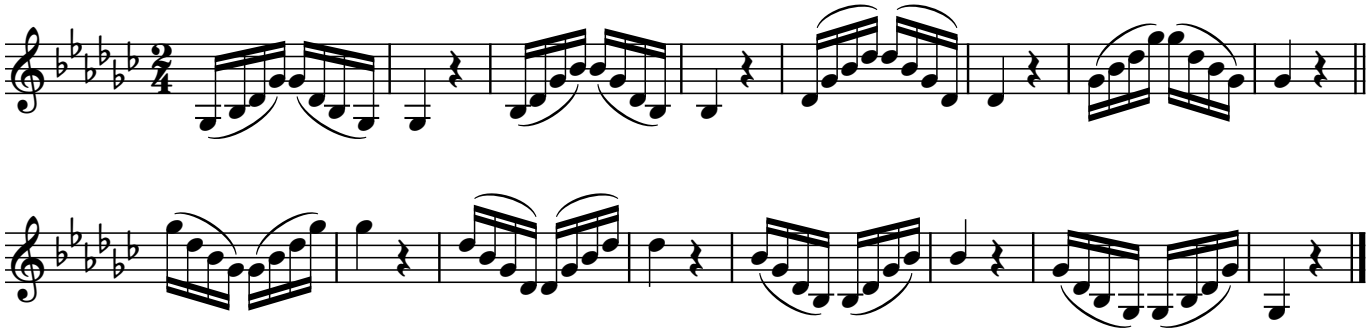

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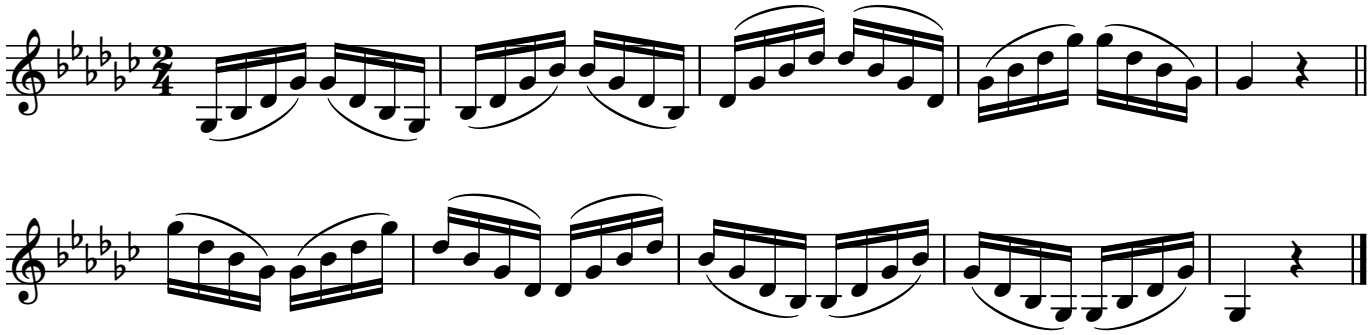

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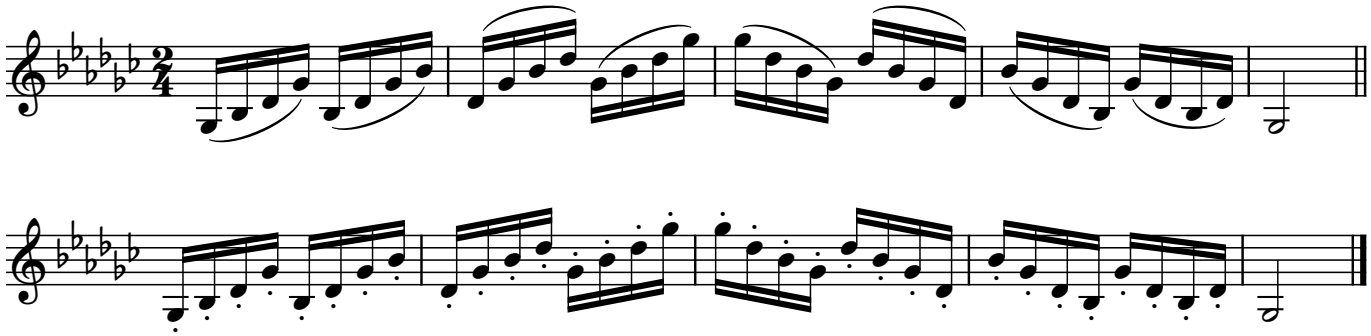

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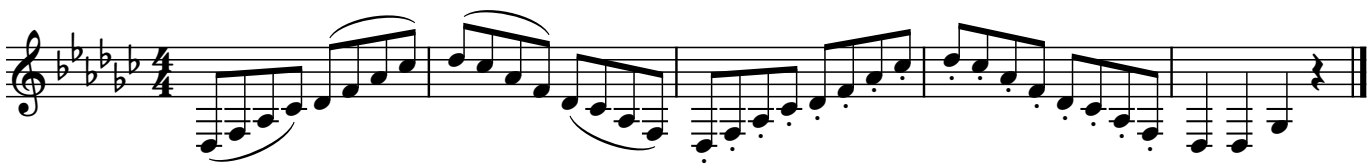

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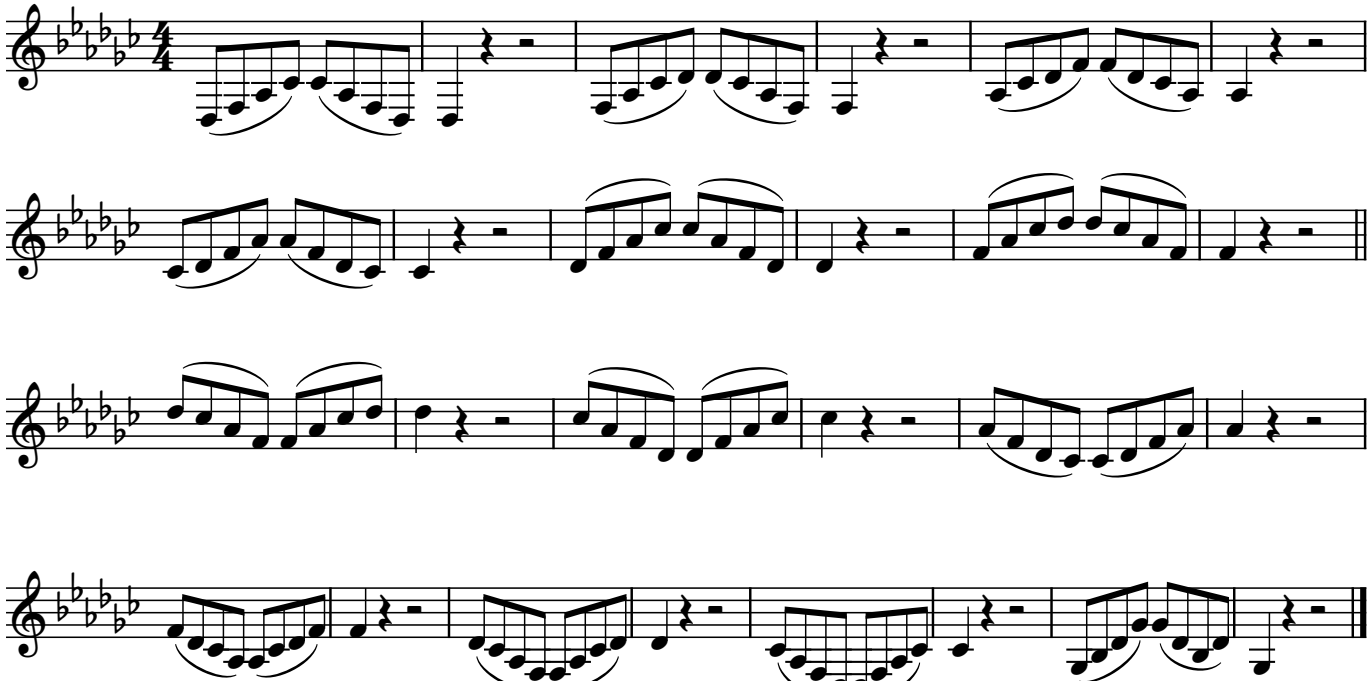

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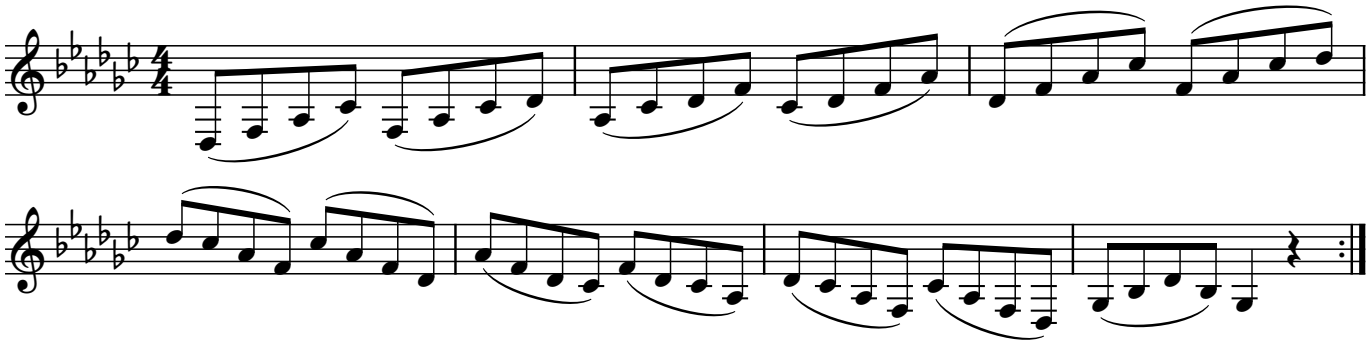

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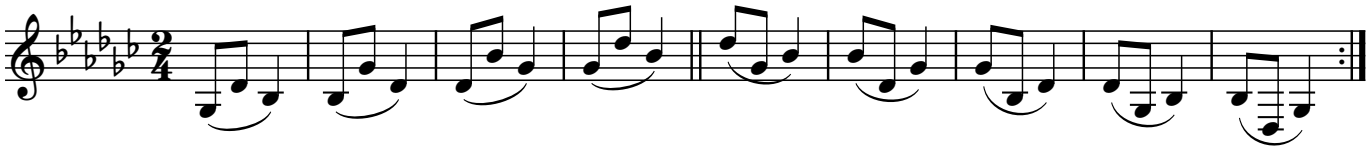

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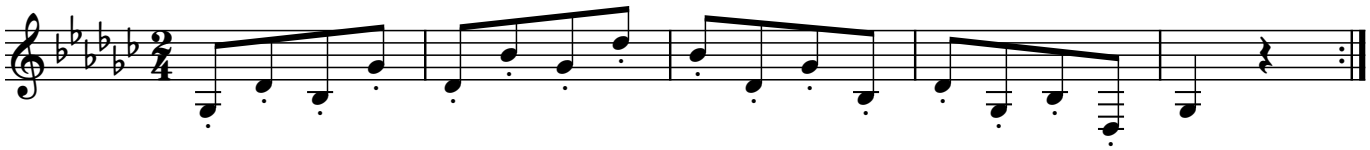

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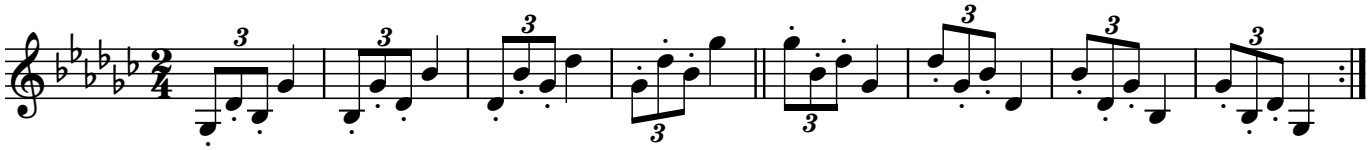

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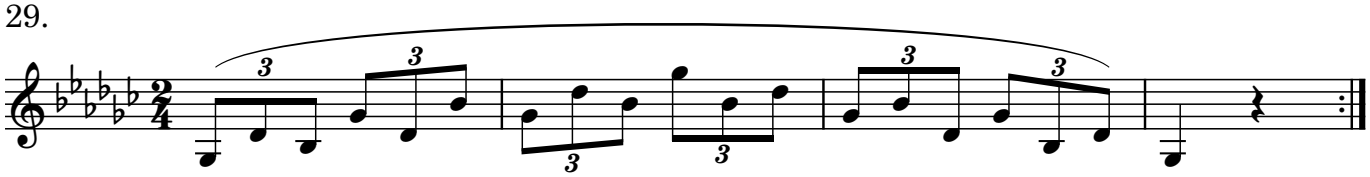

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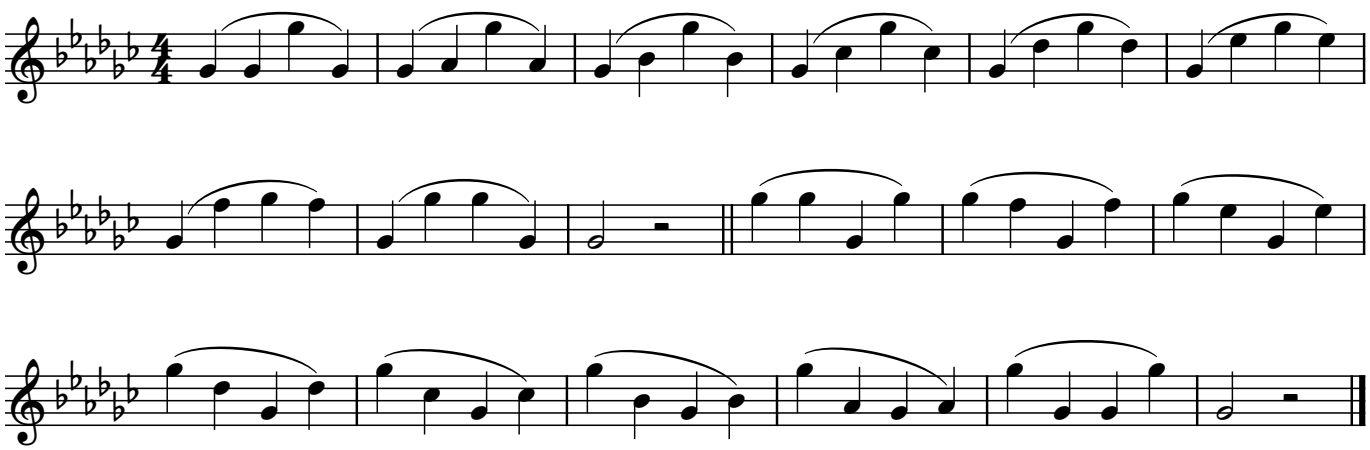

G-Dur - G Major

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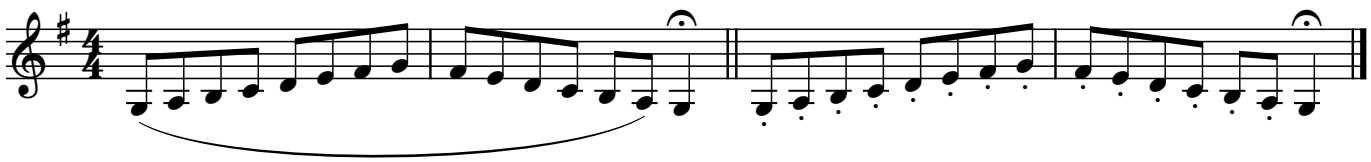

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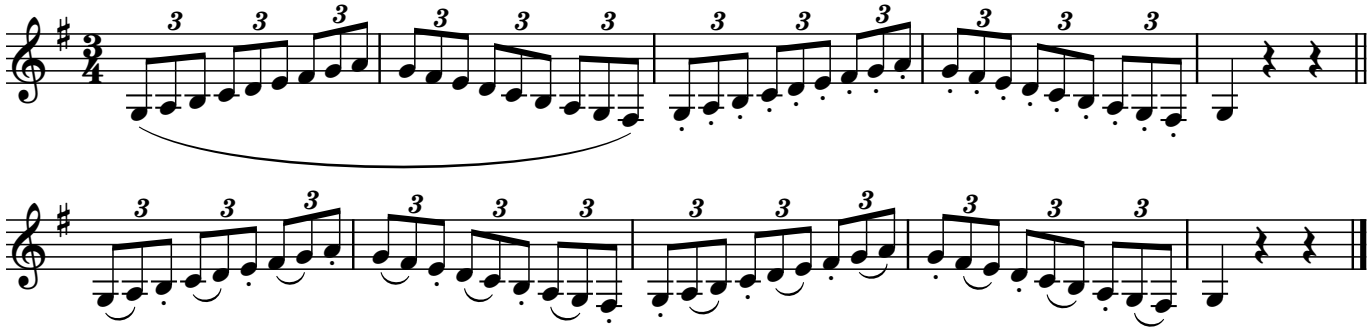

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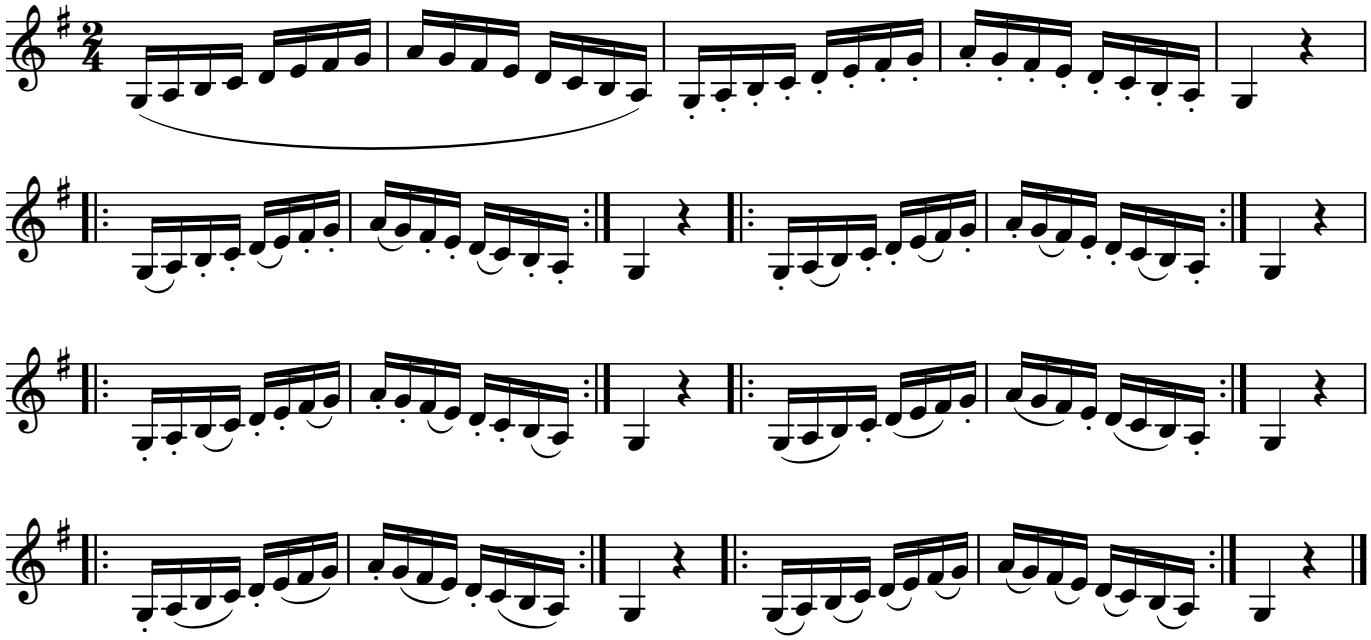

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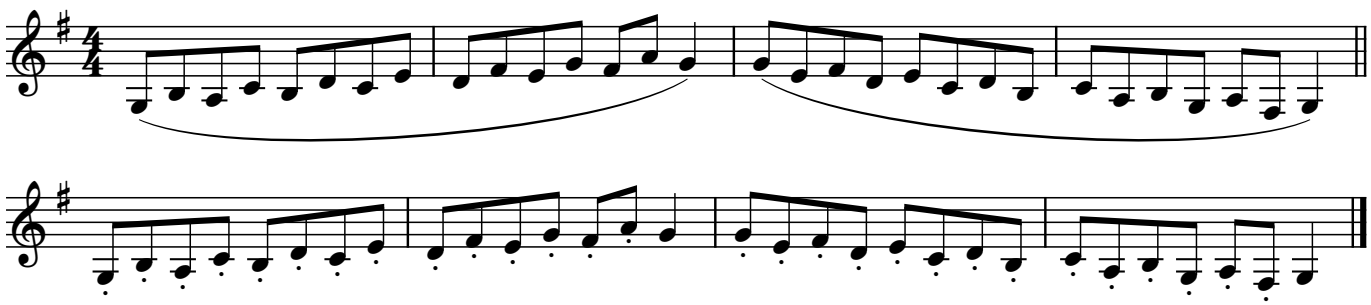

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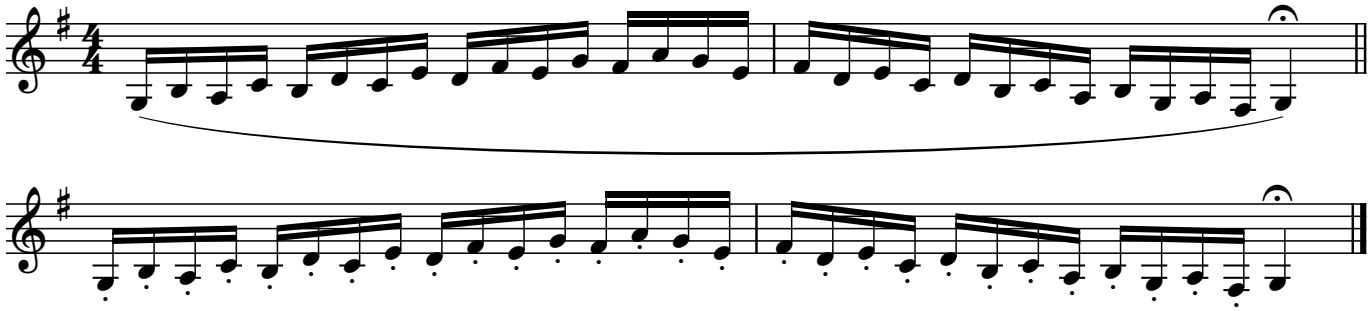

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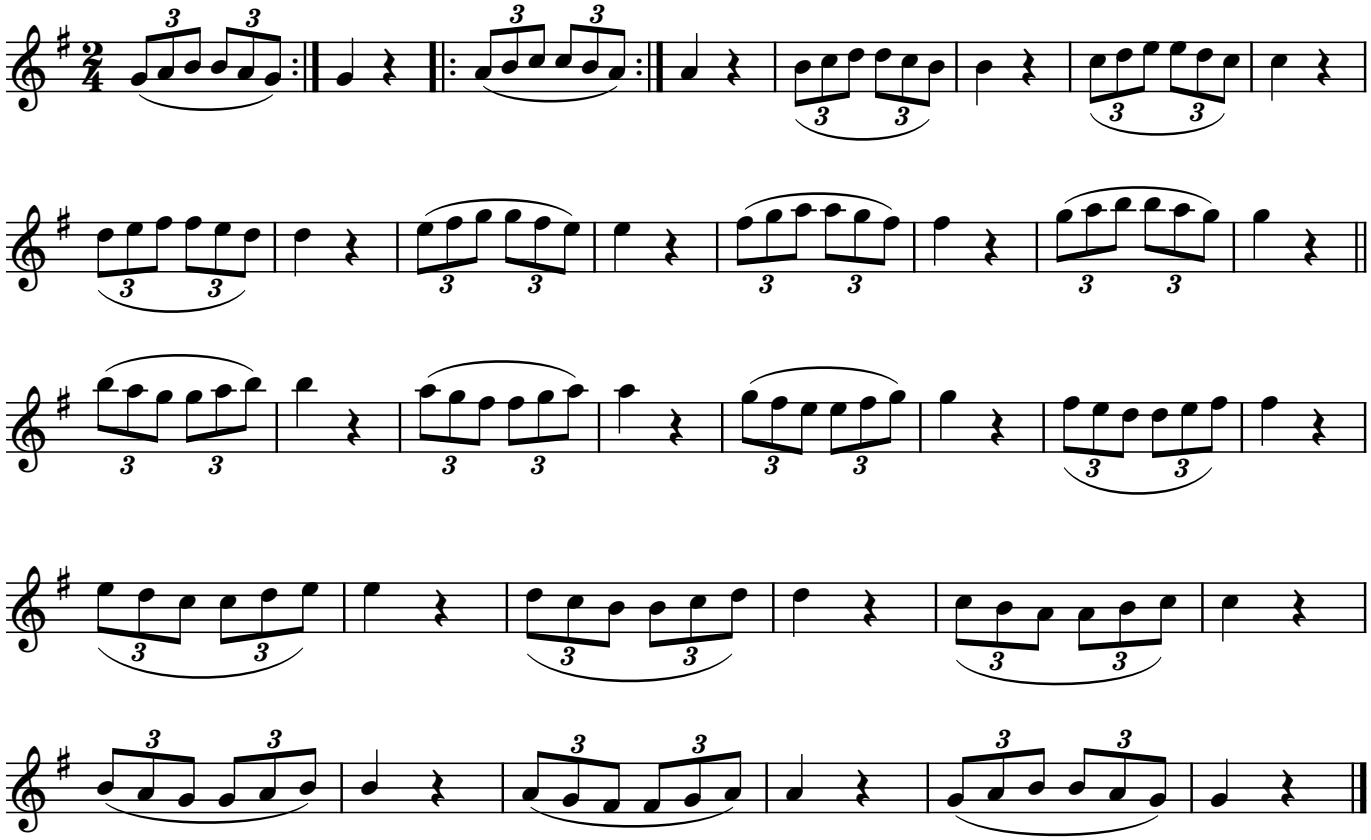

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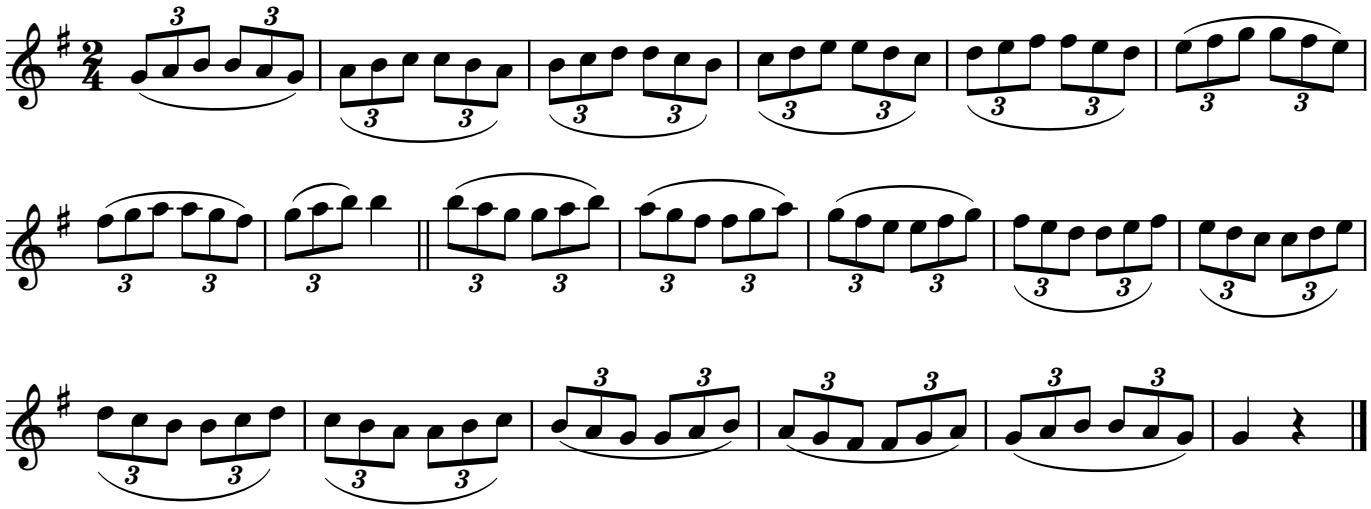

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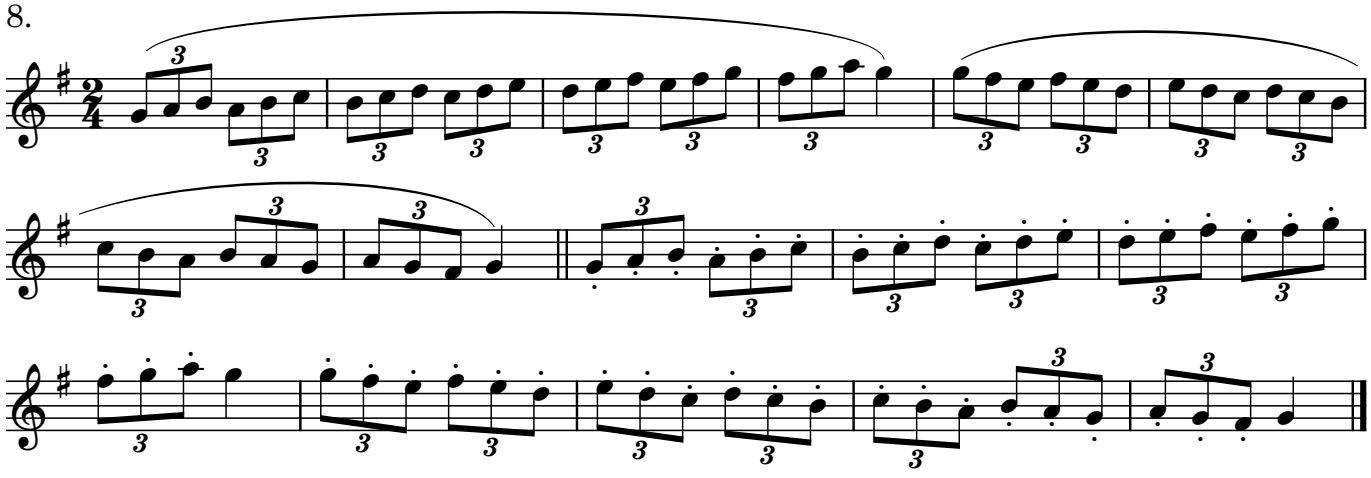

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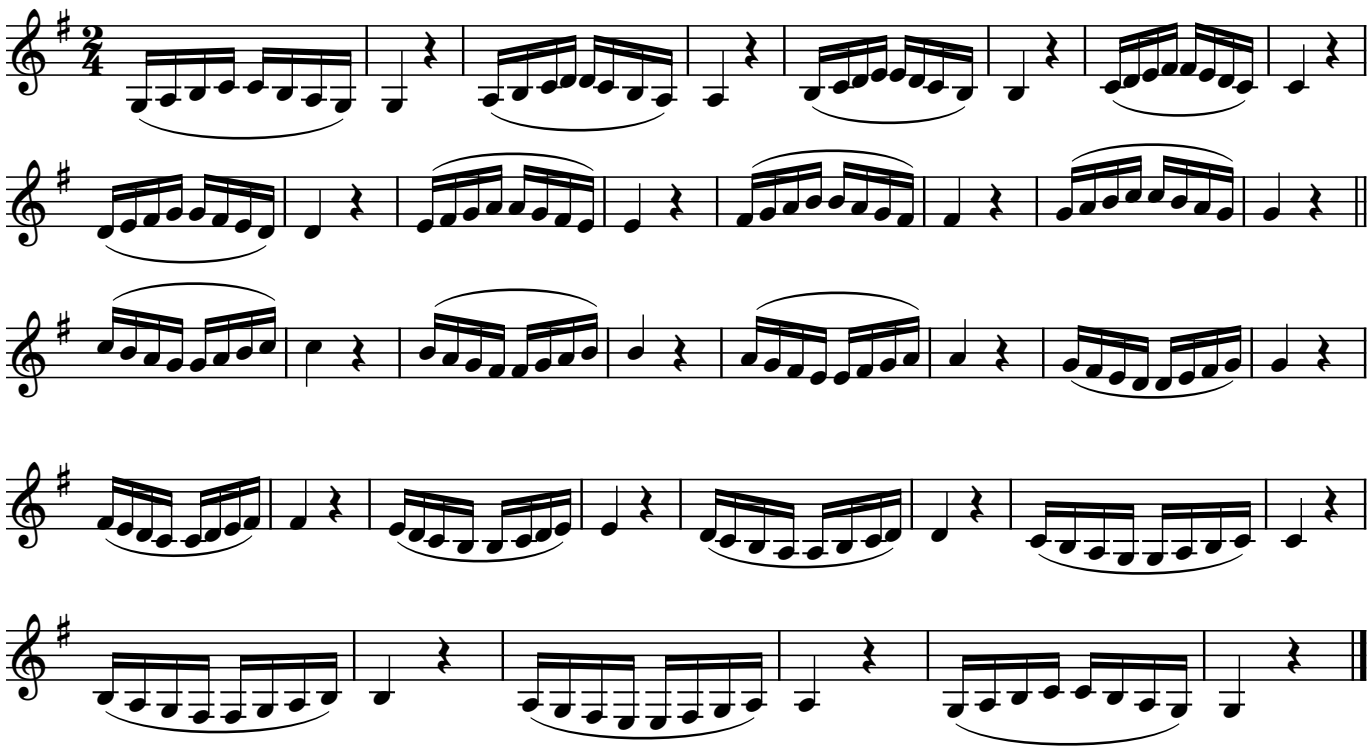

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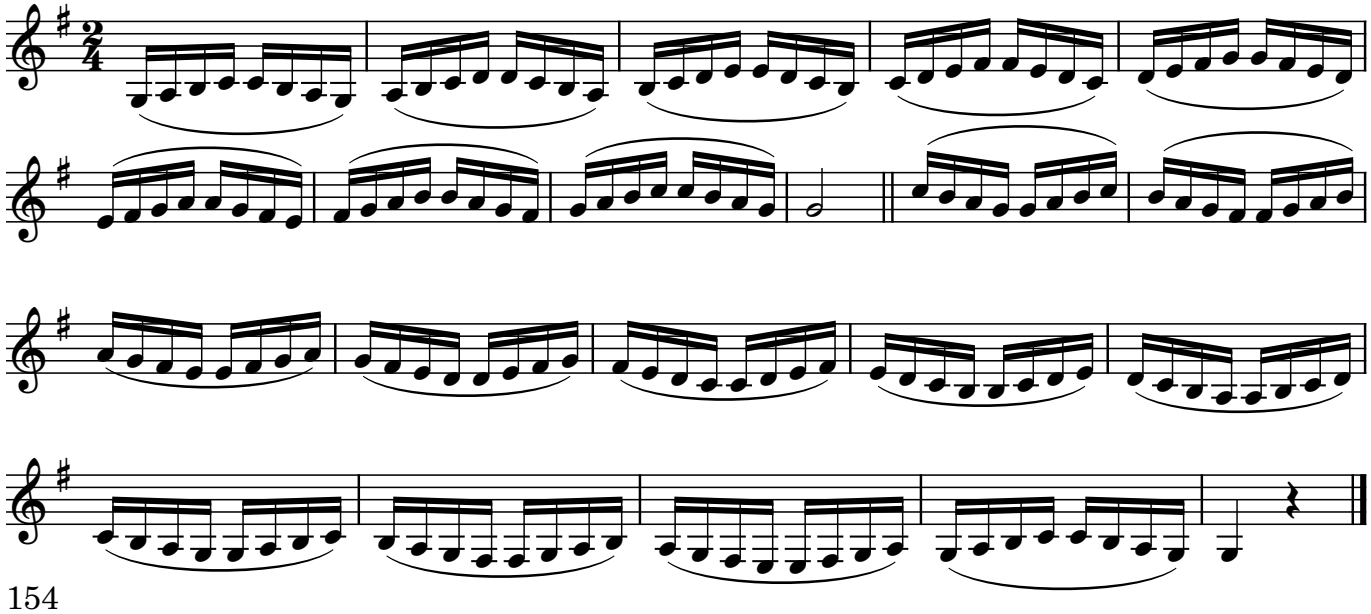

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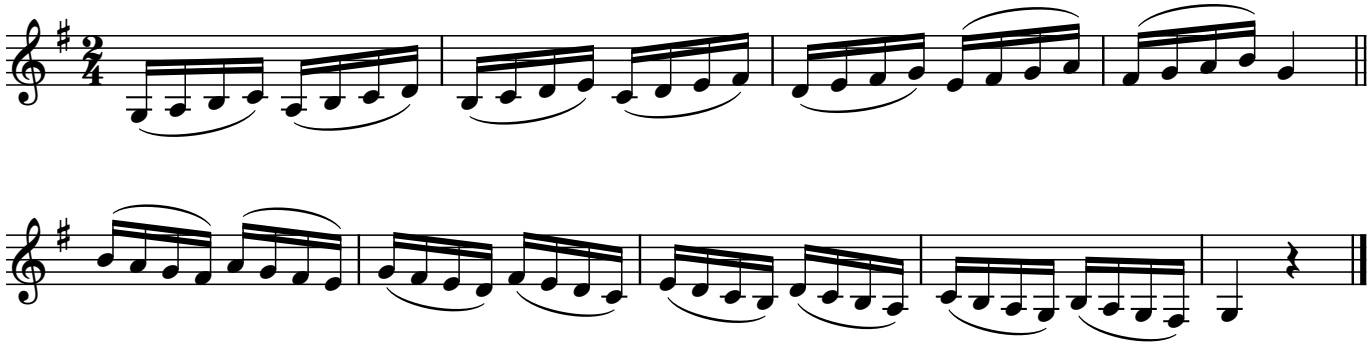

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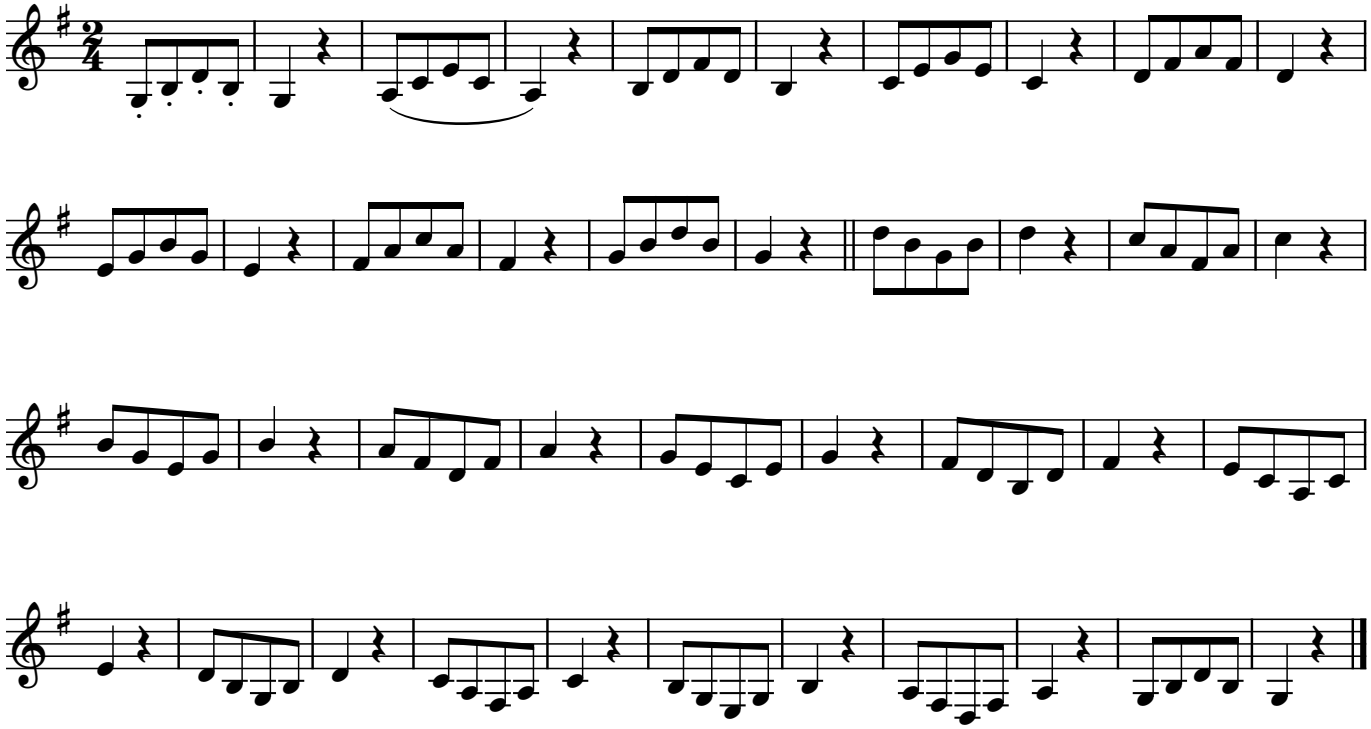

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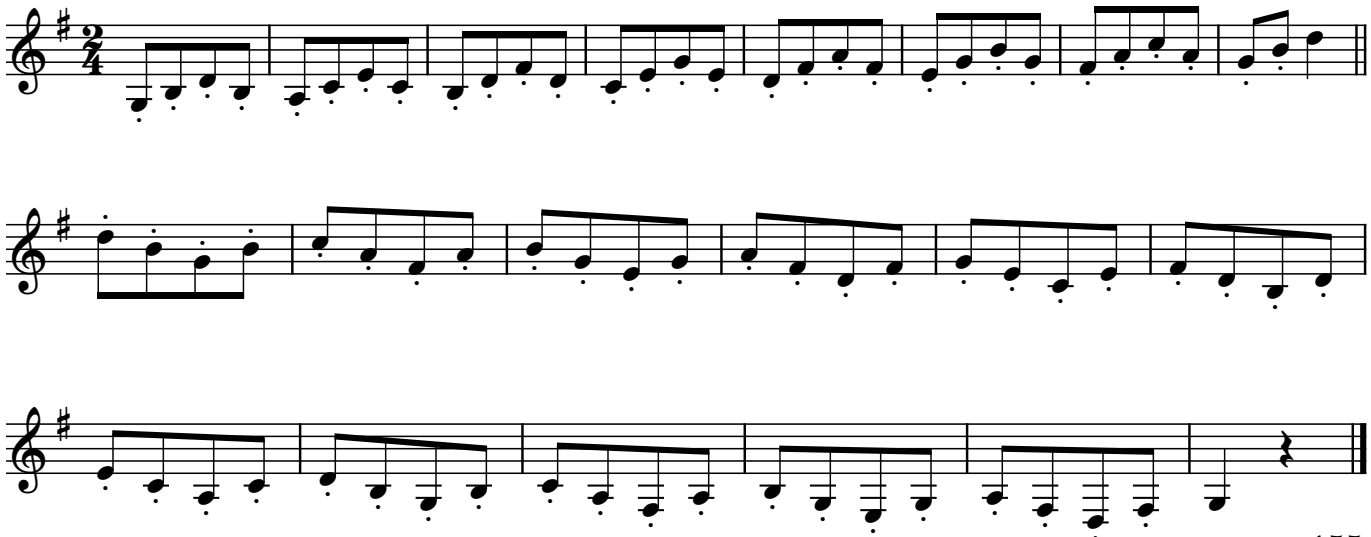

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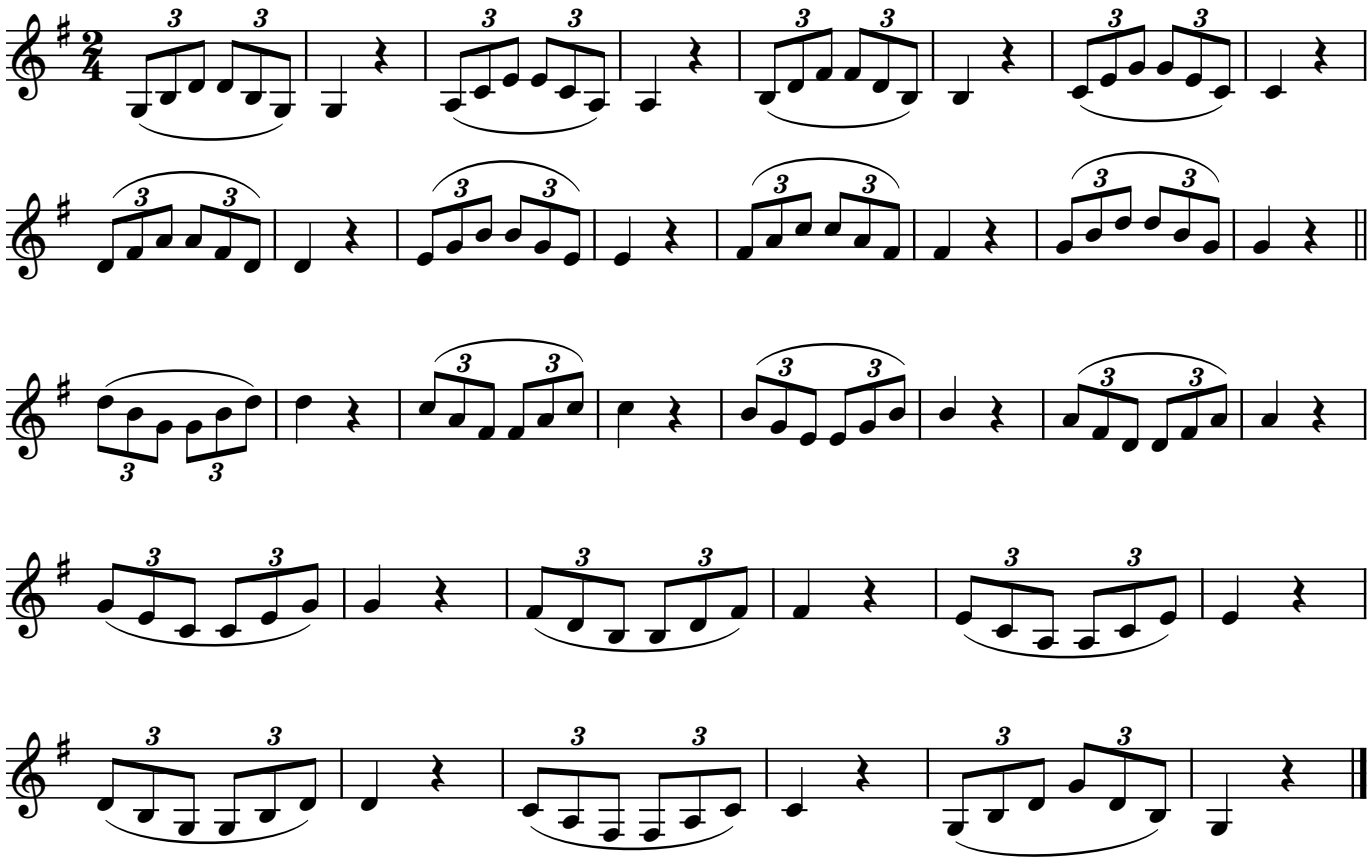

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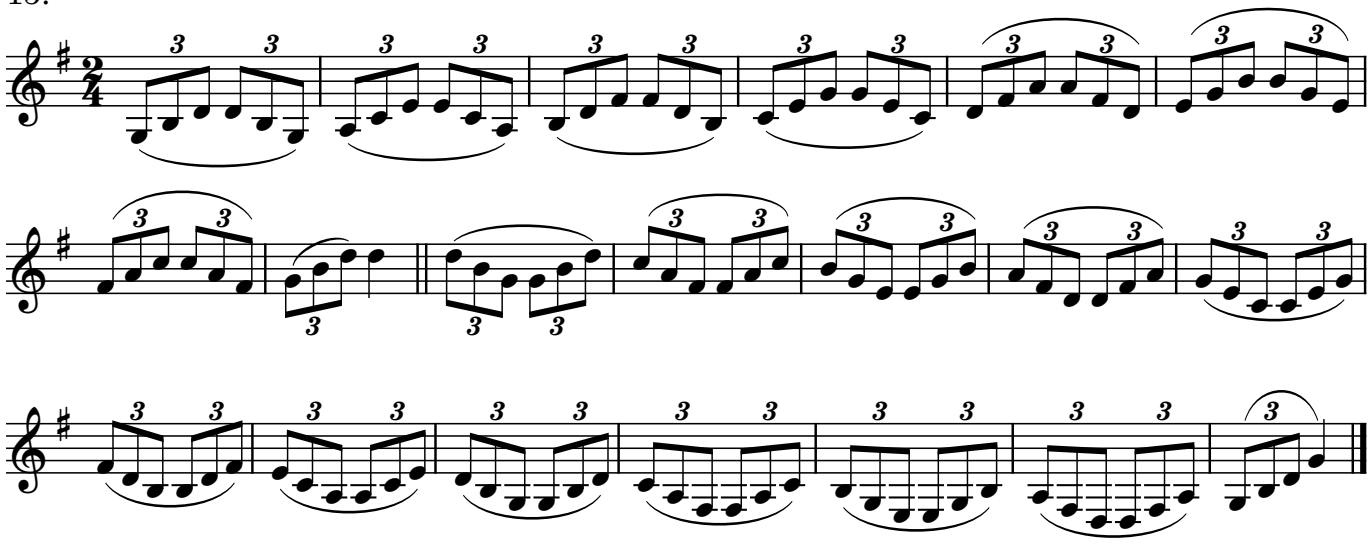

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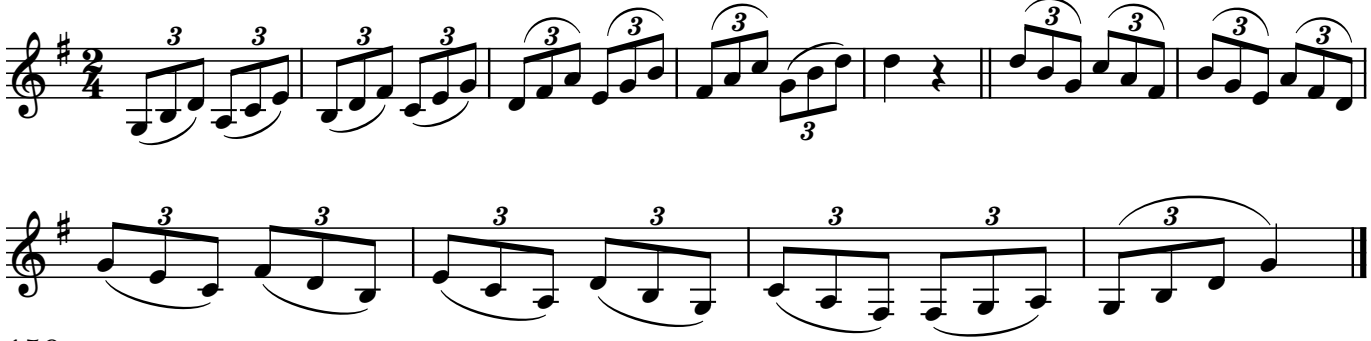

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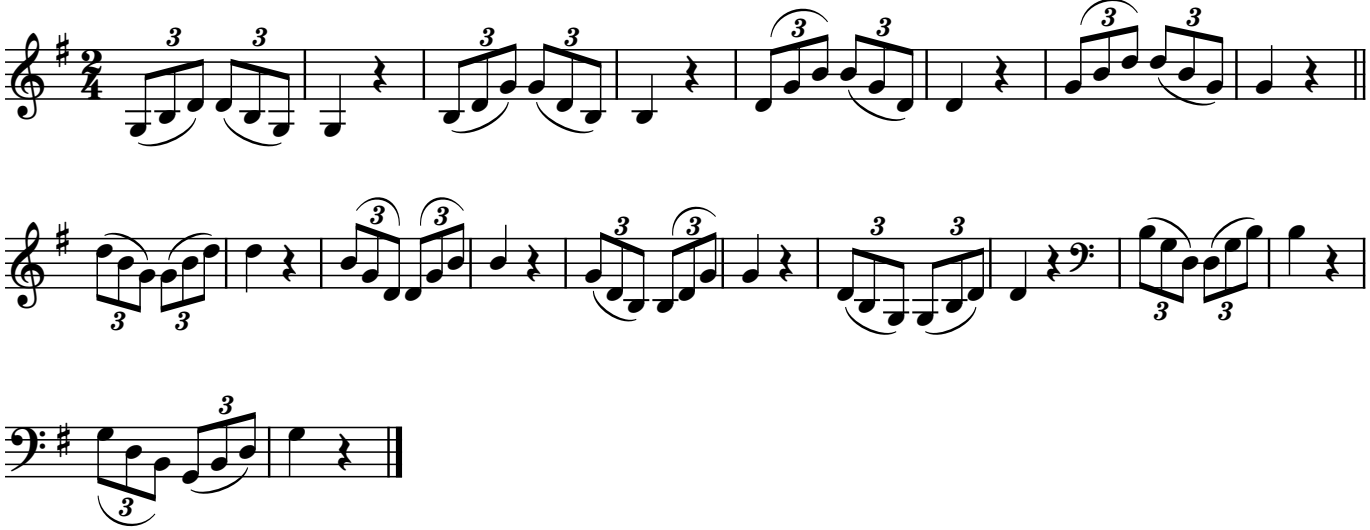

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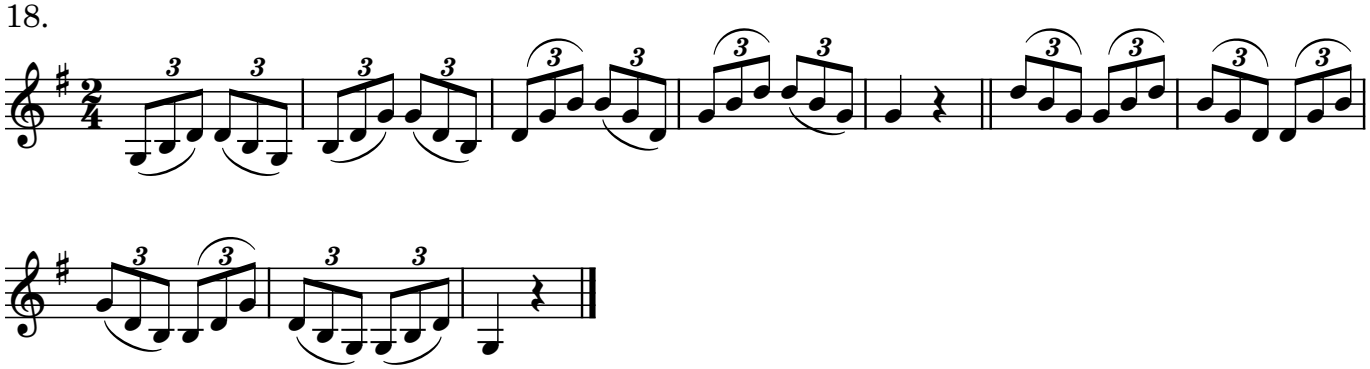

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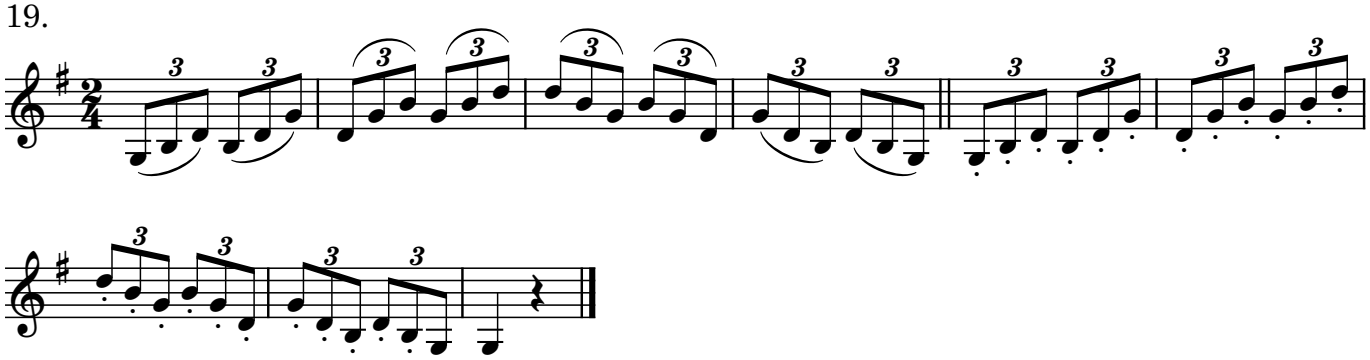

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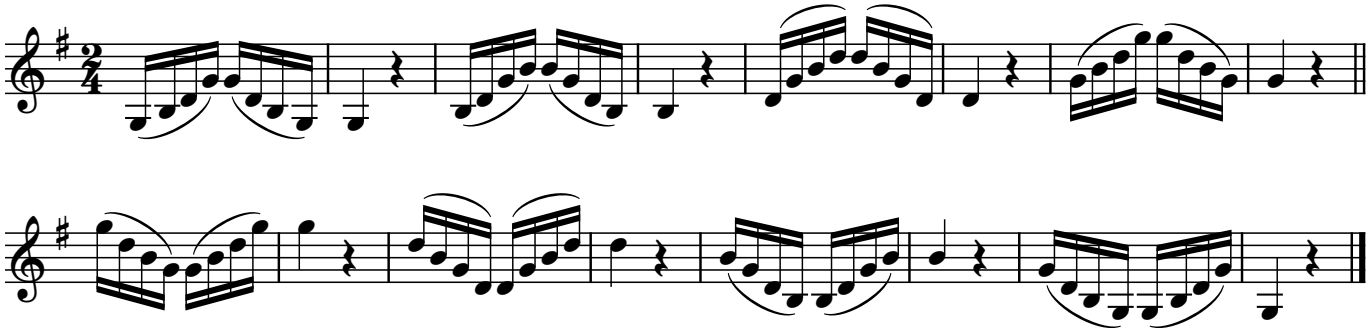

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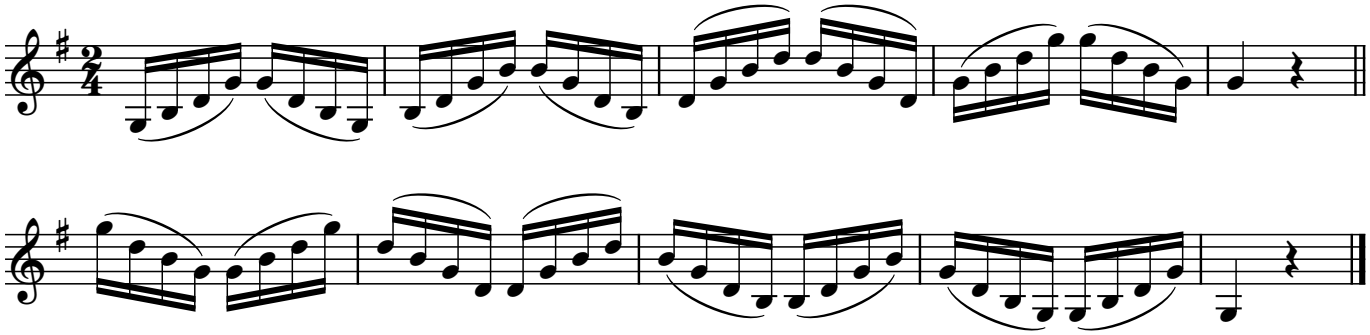

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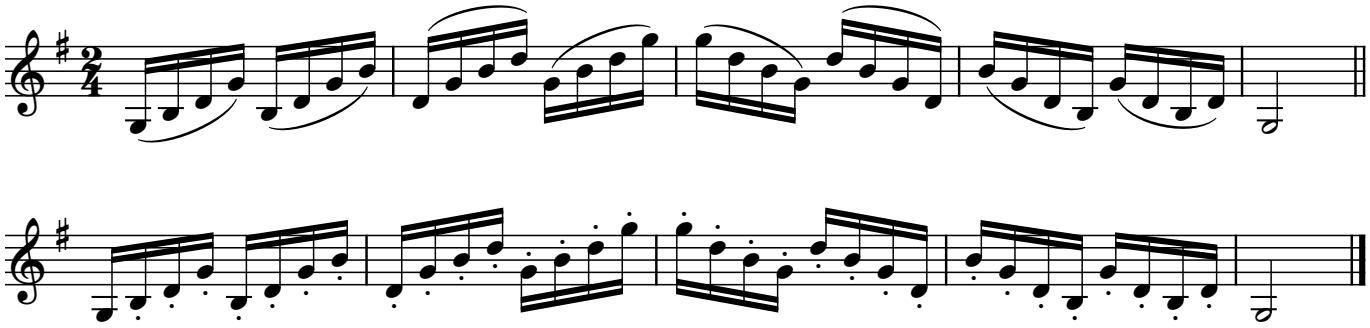

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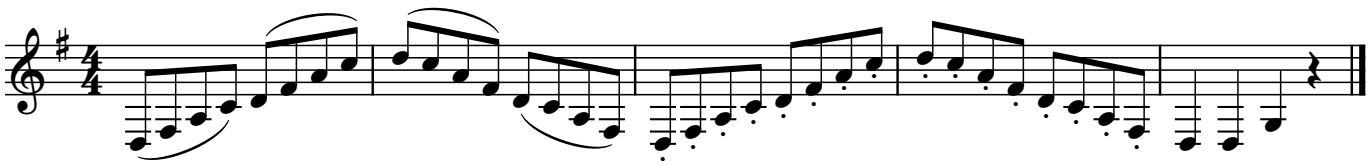

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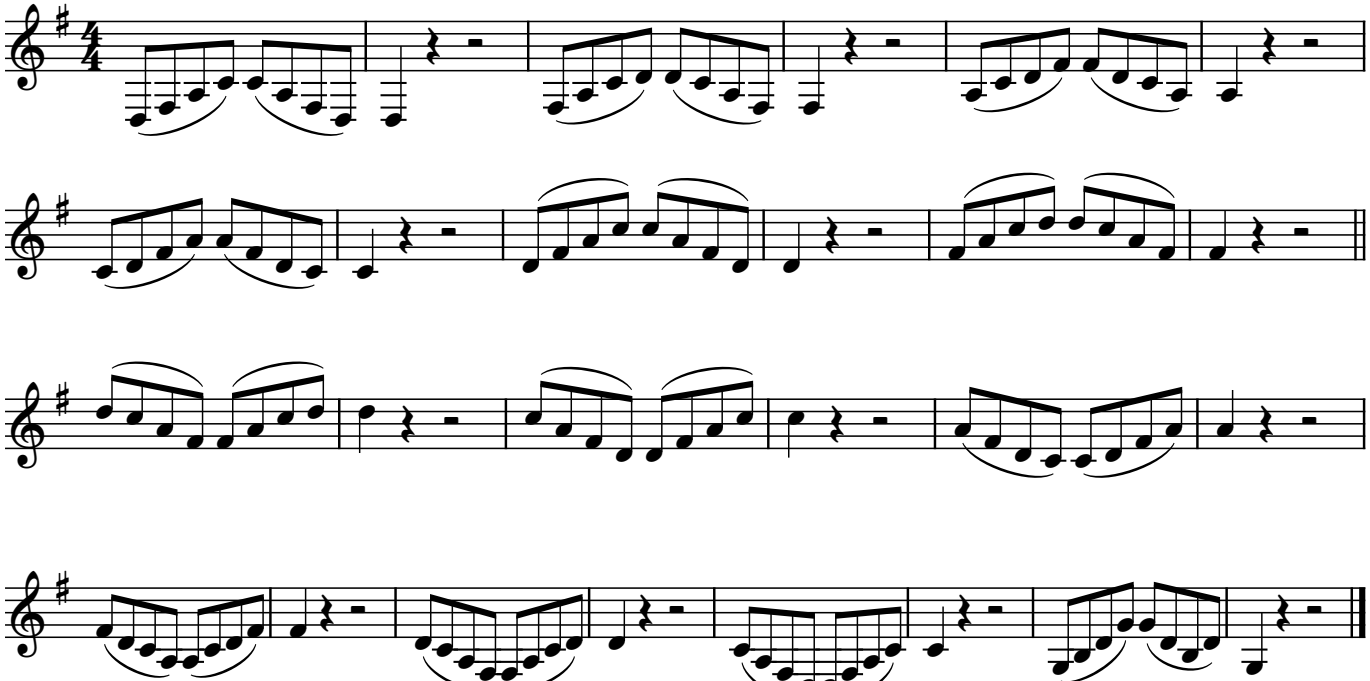

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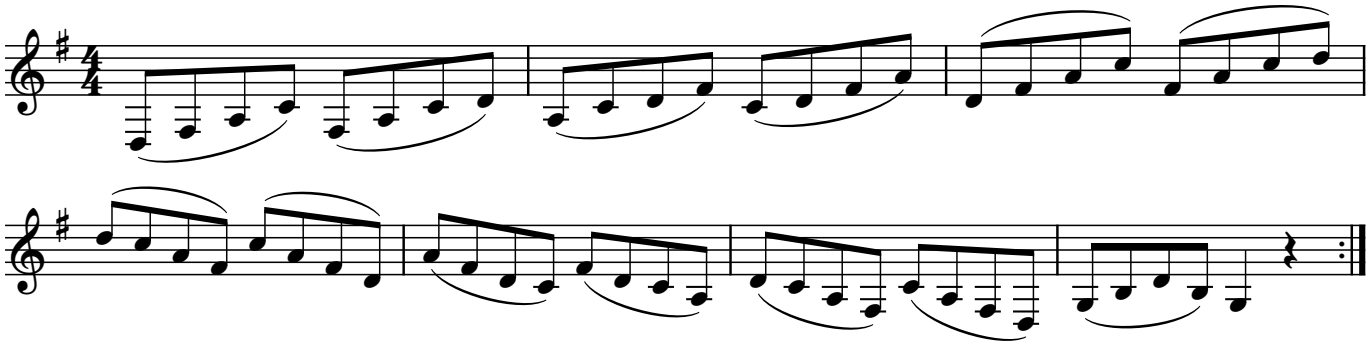

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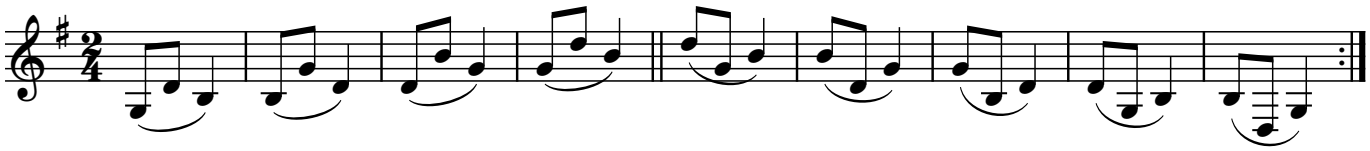

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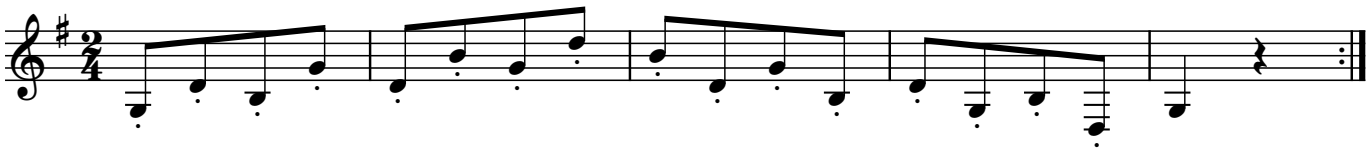

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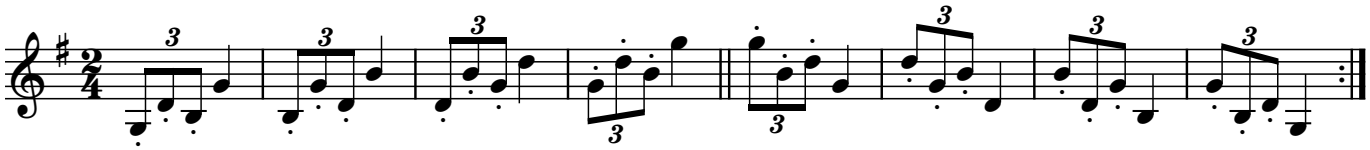

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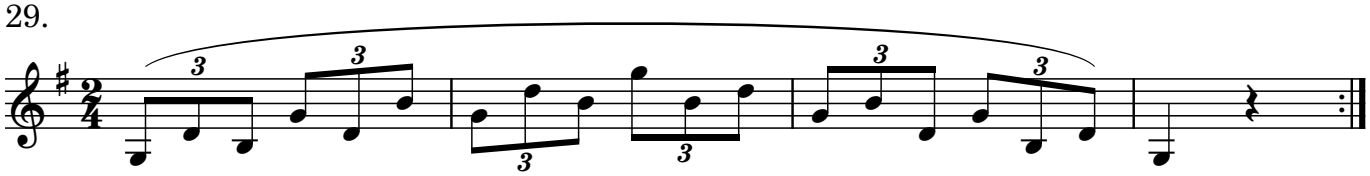

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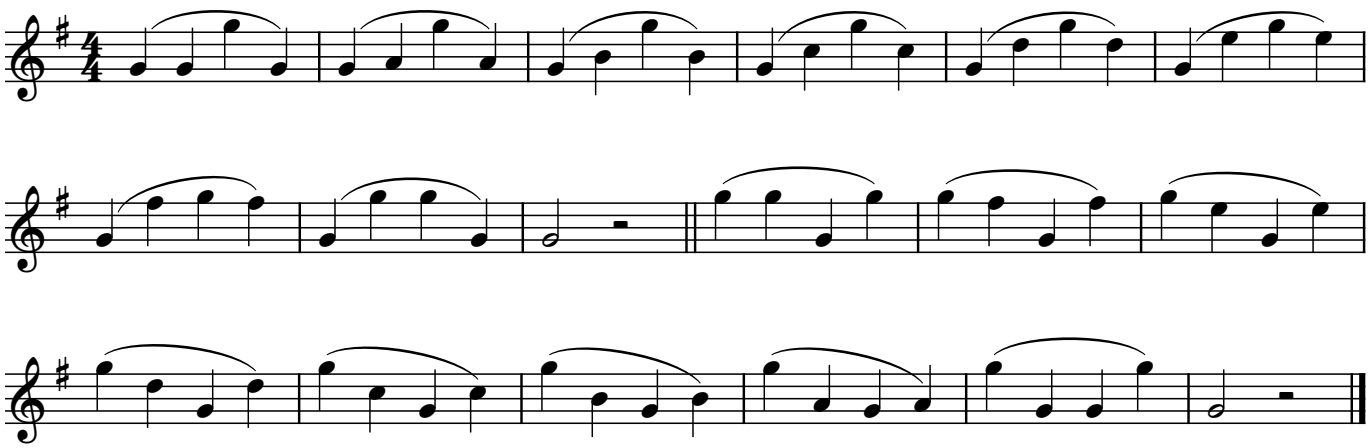

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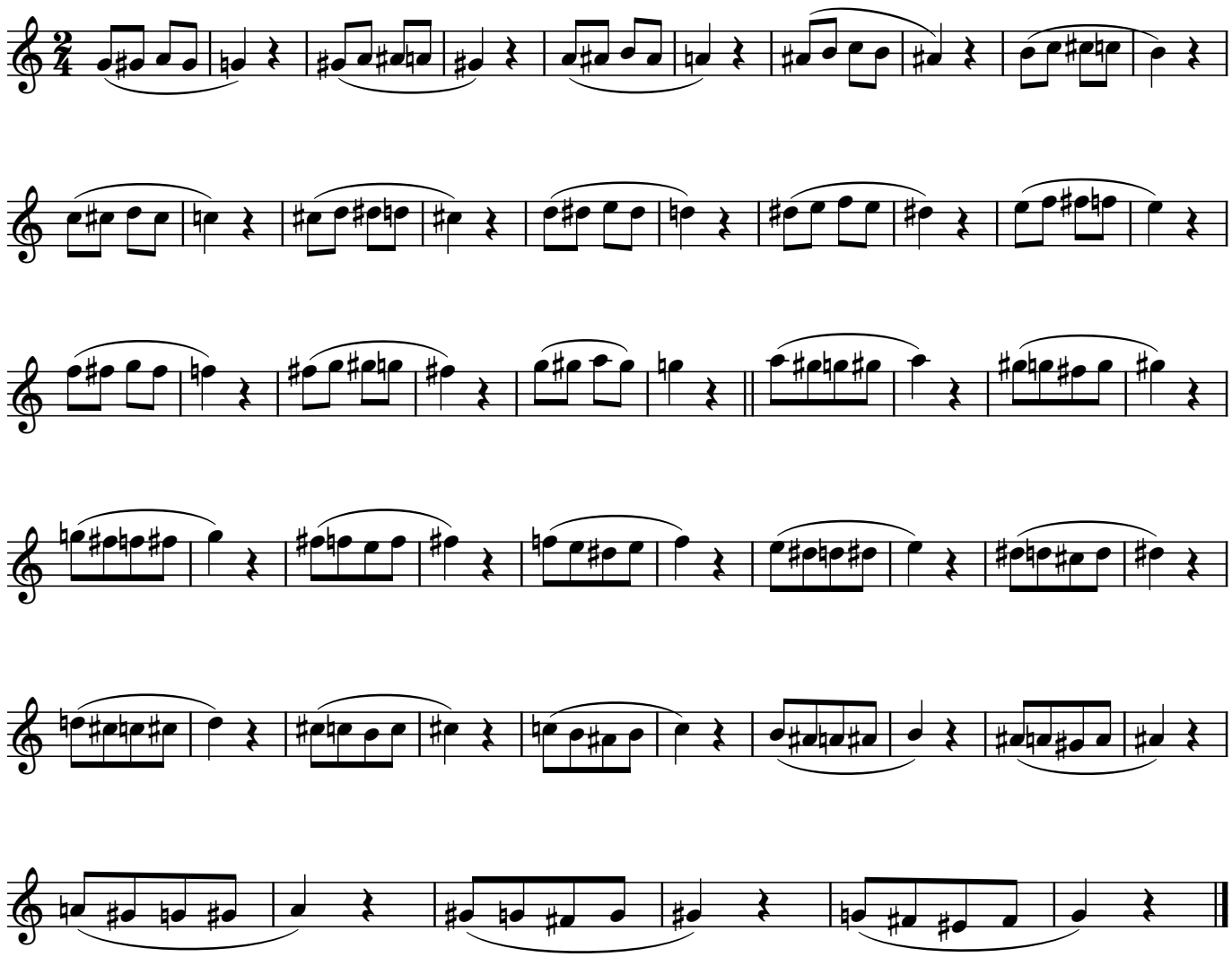

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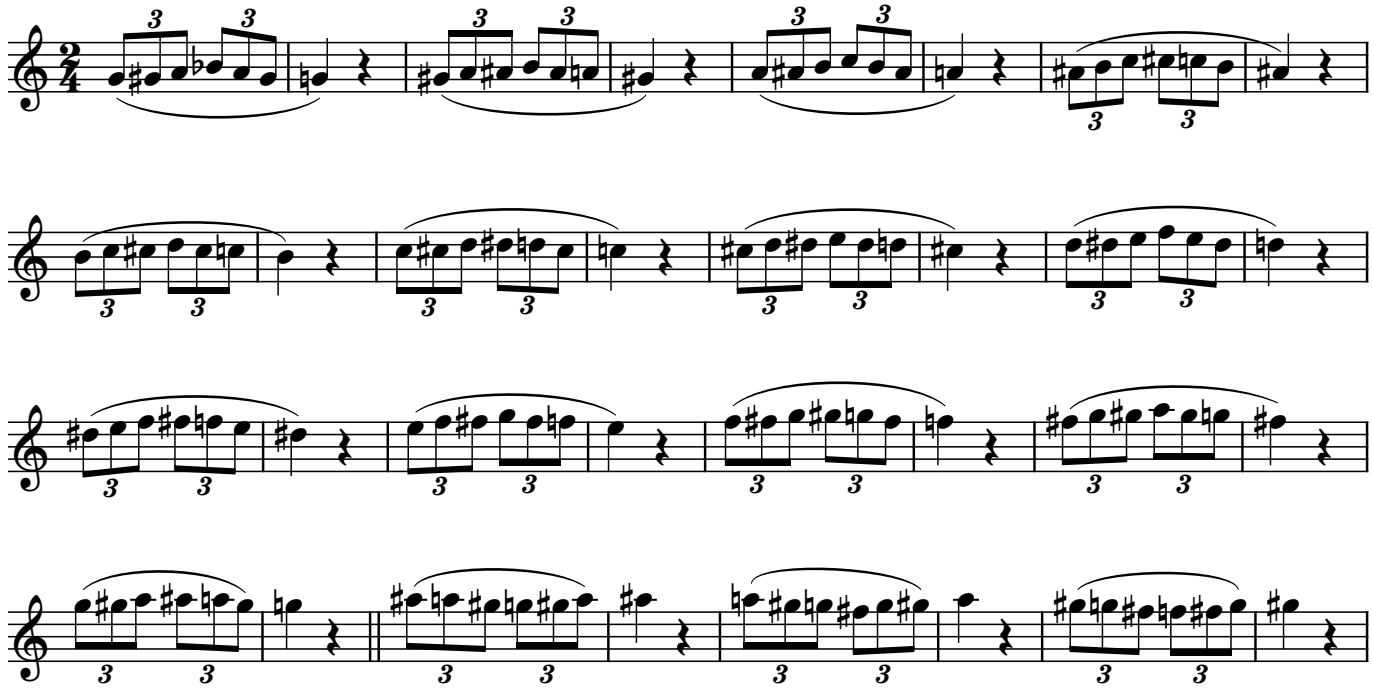

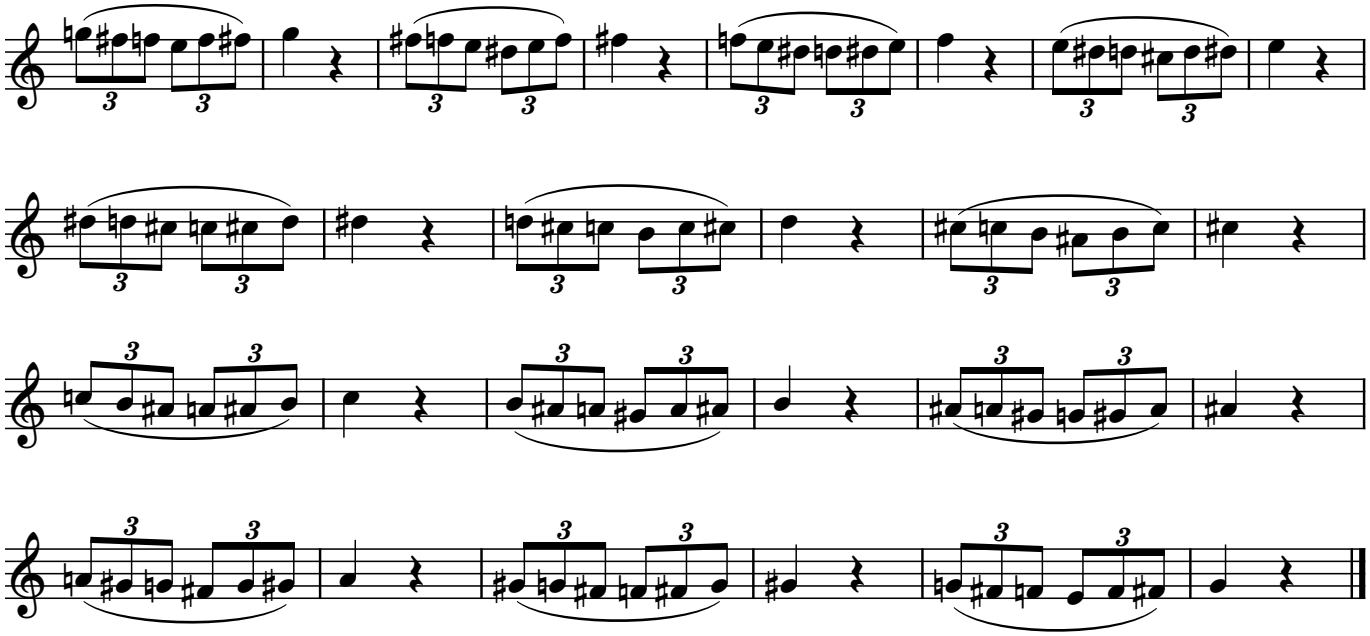

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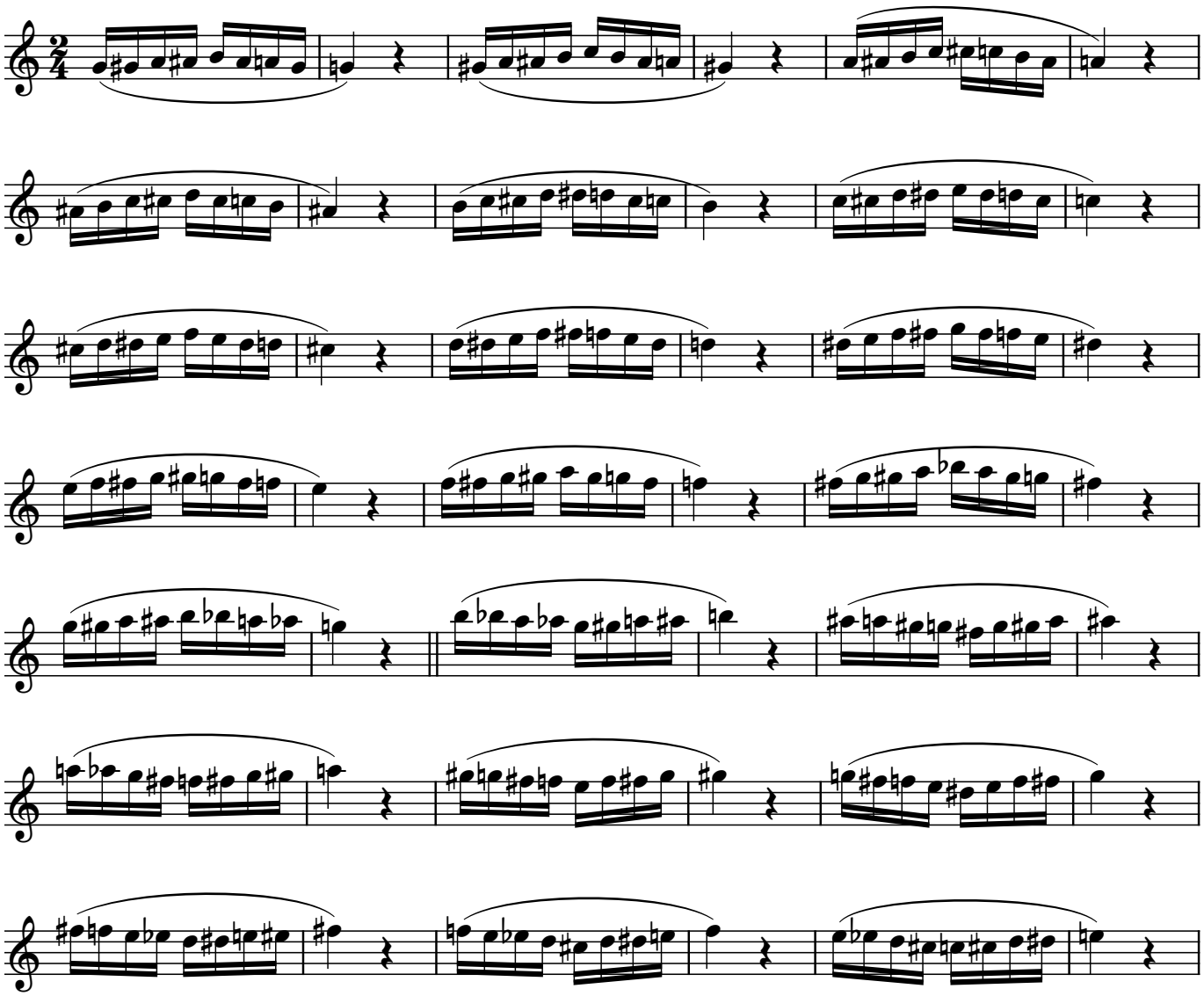

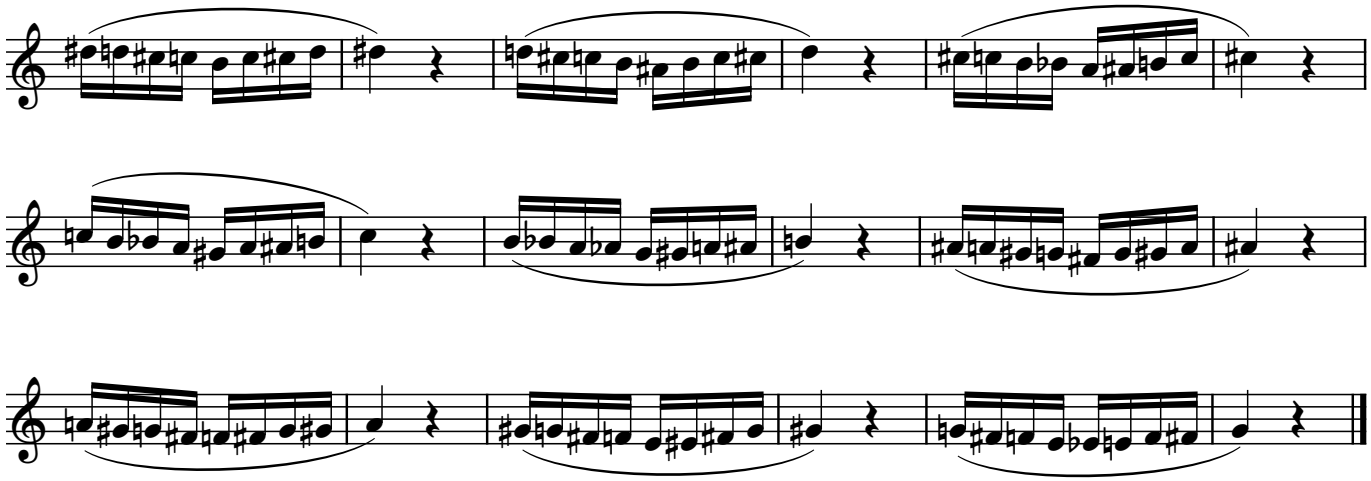

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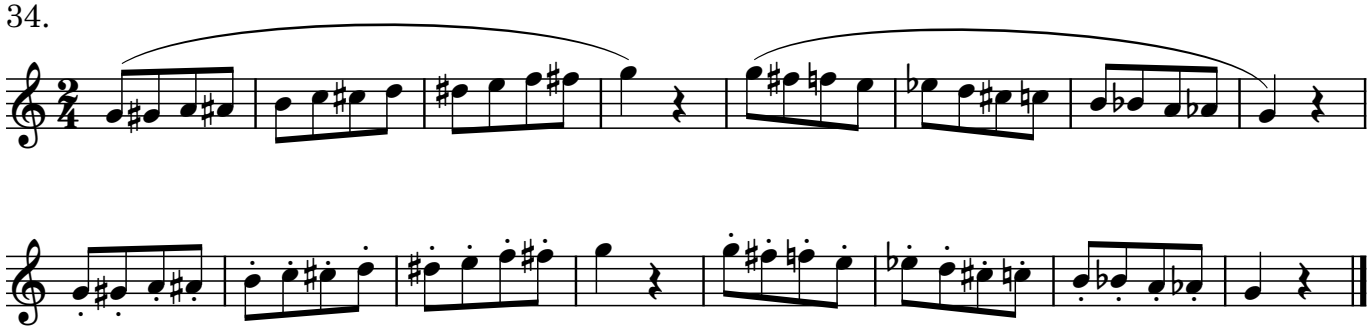

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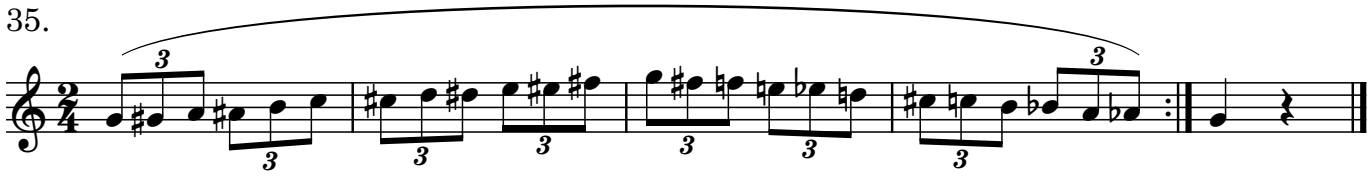

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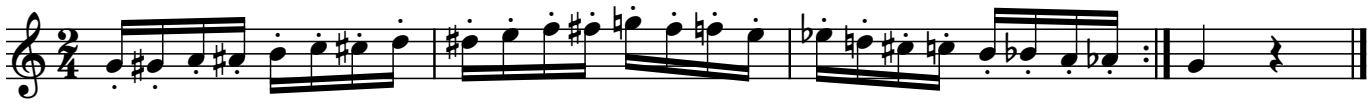

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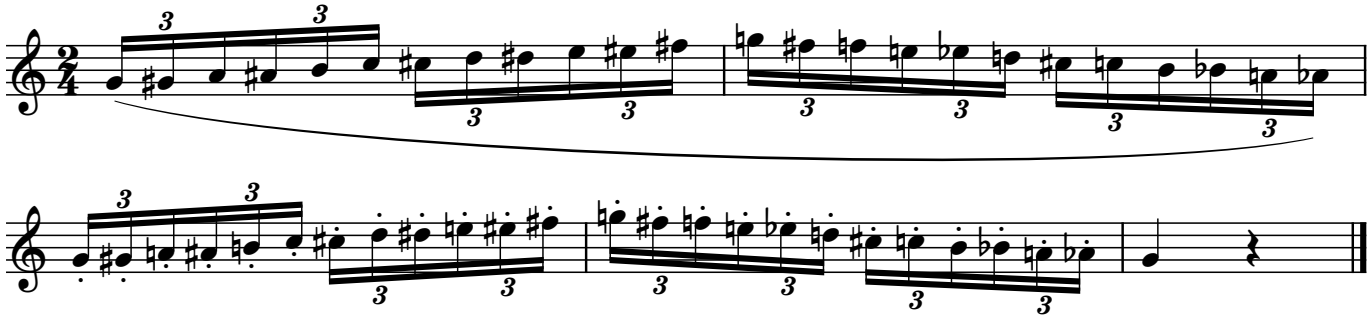

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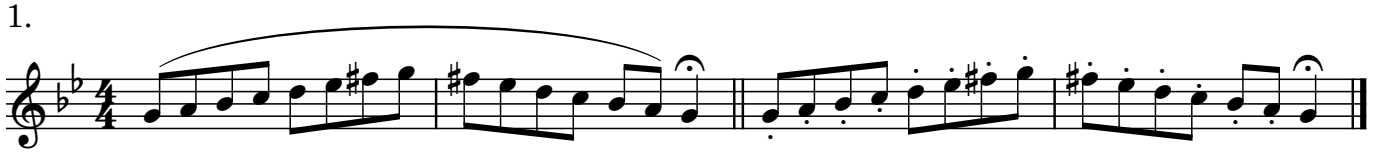

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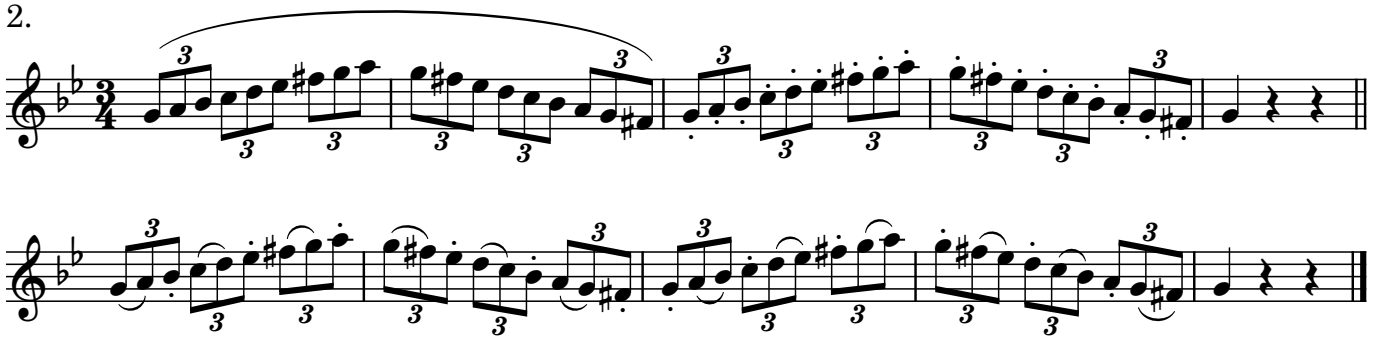

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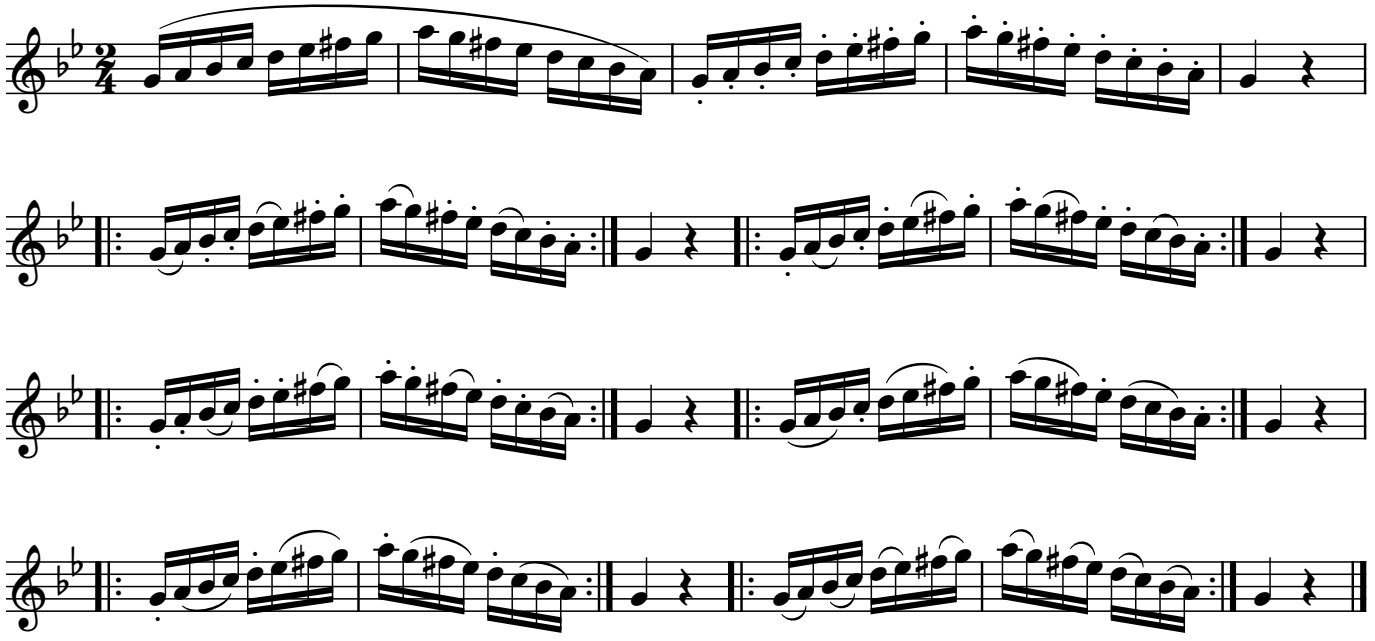

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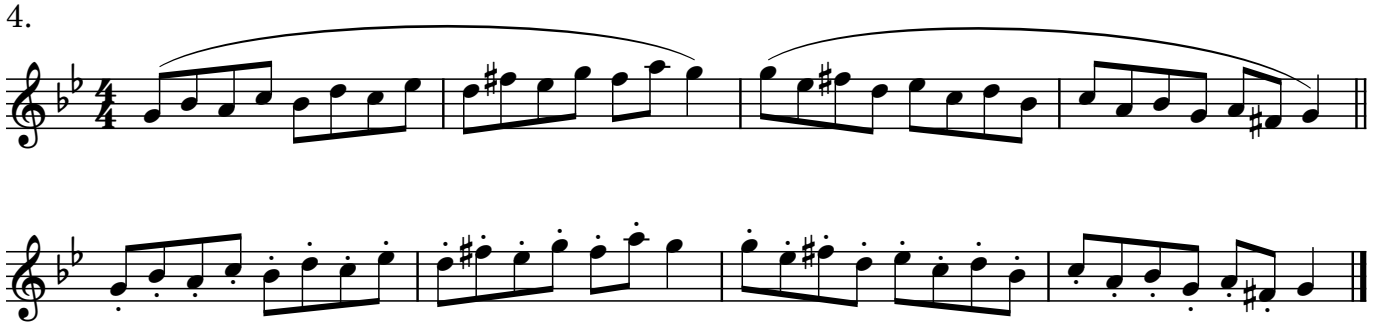

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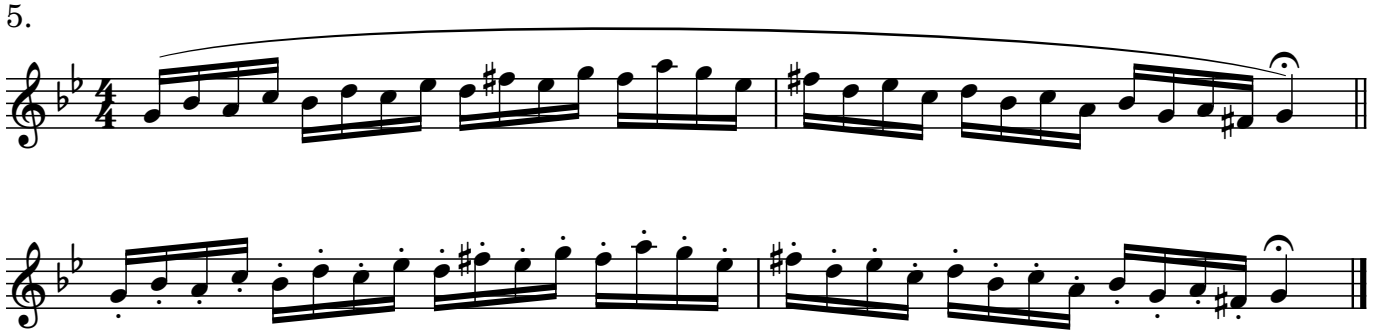

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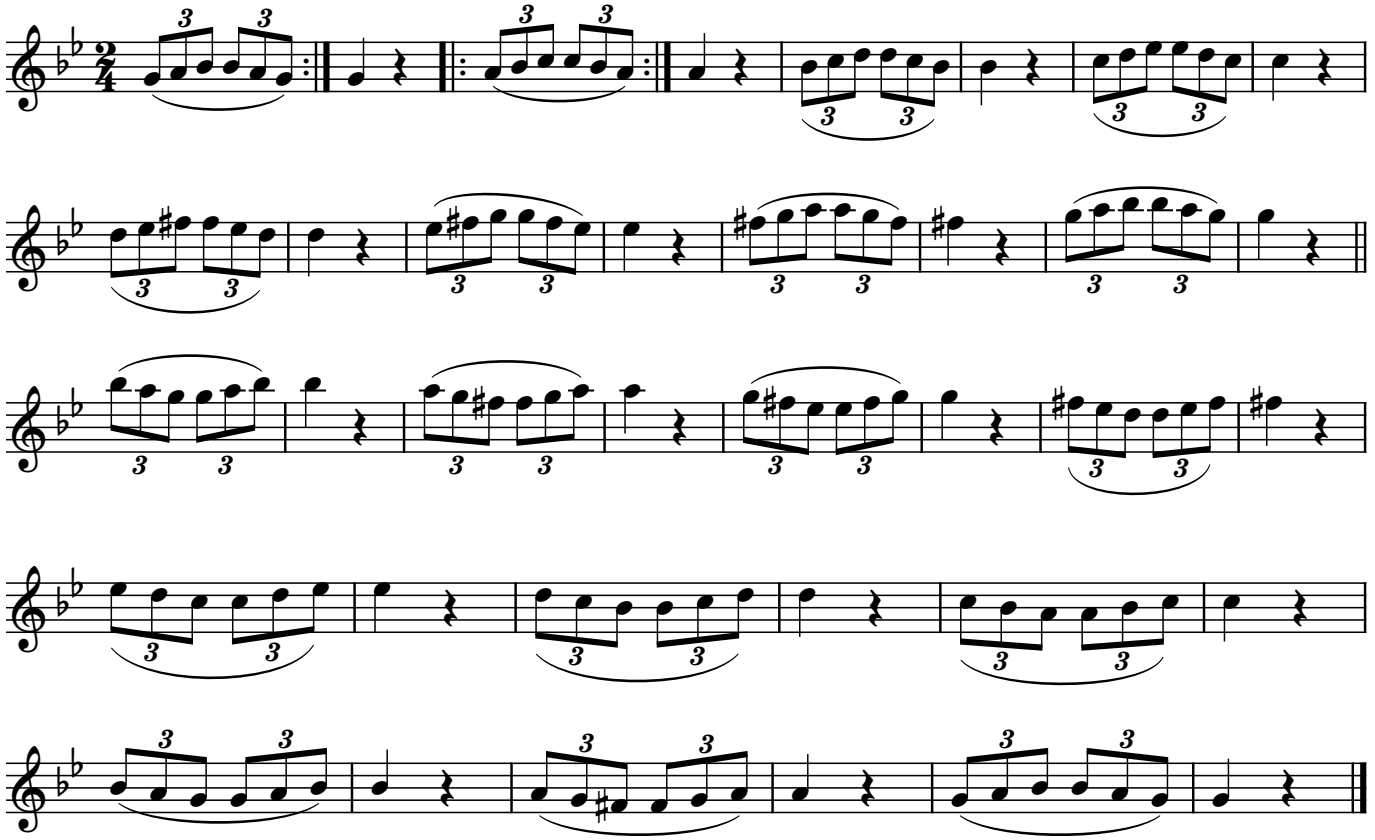

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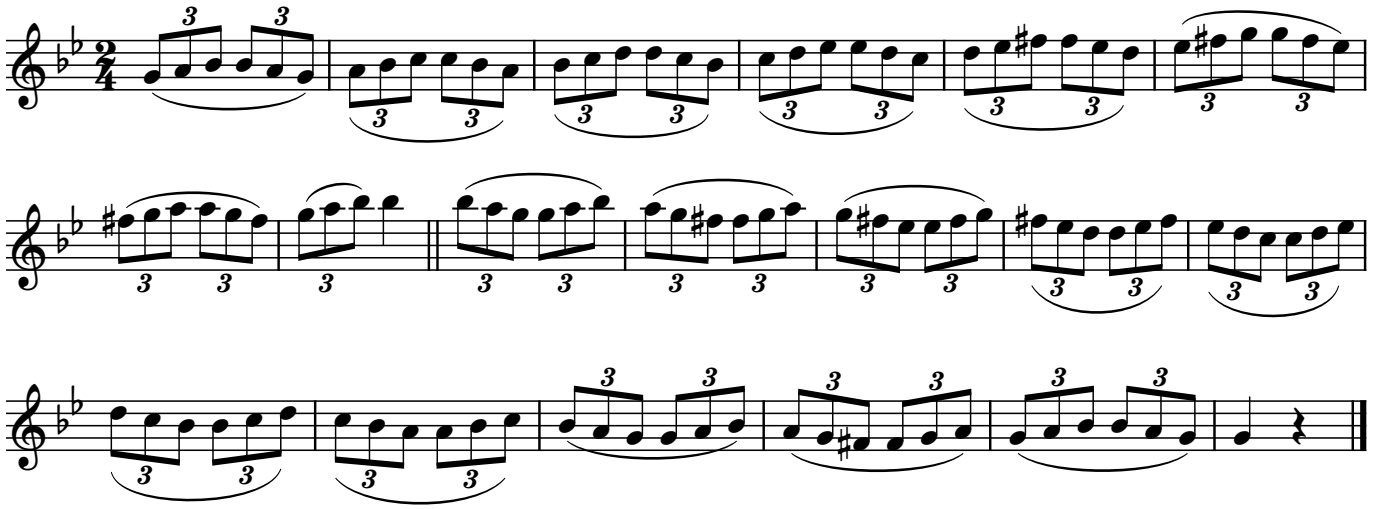

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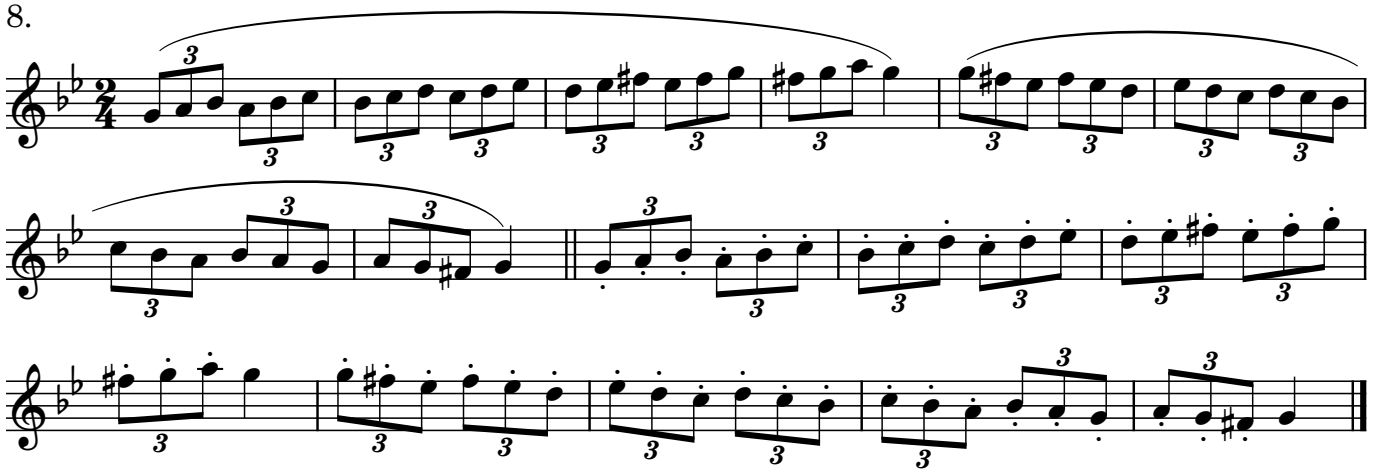

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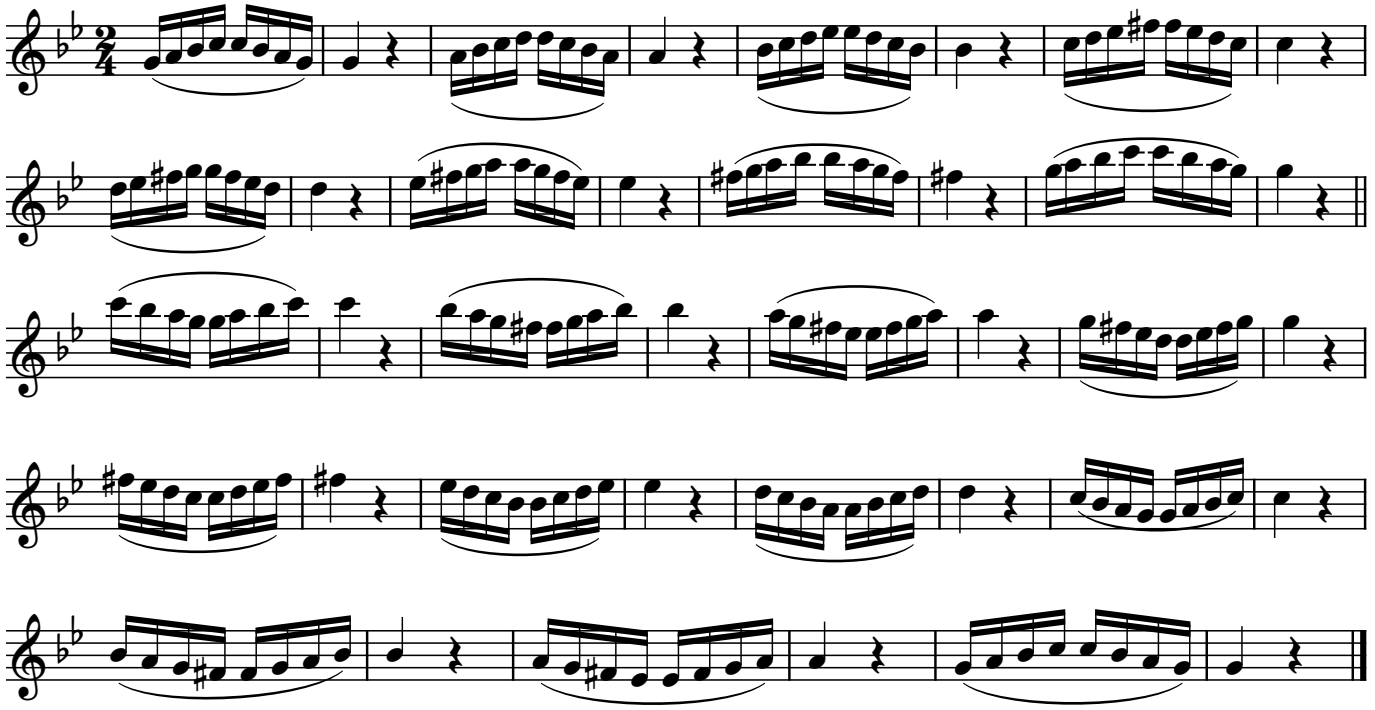

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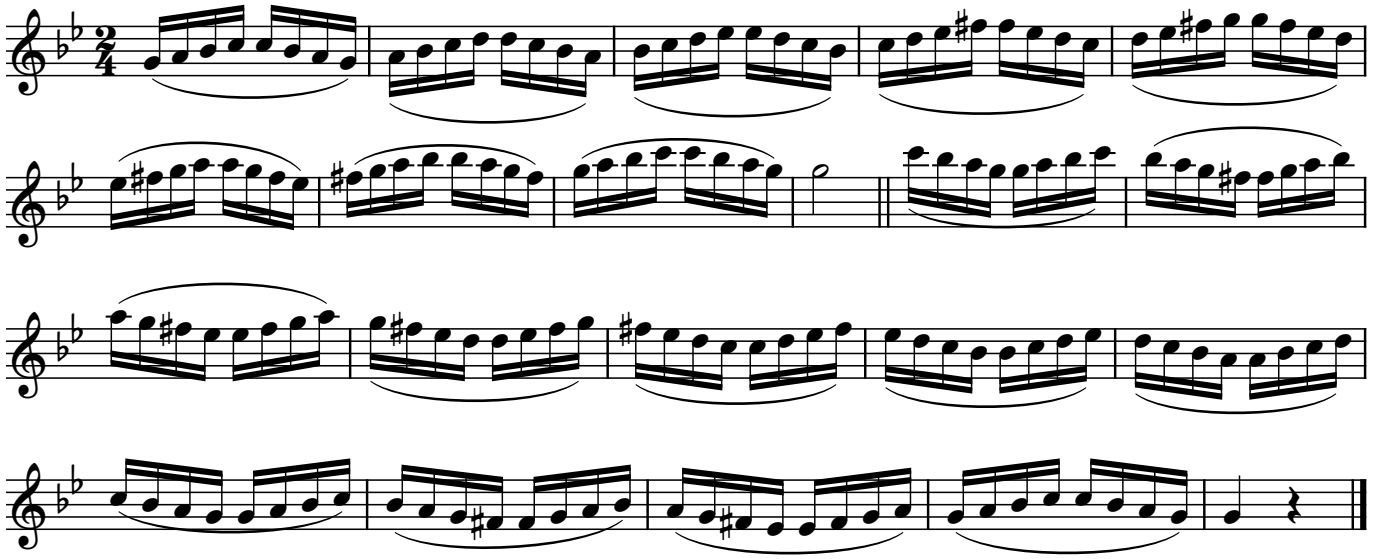

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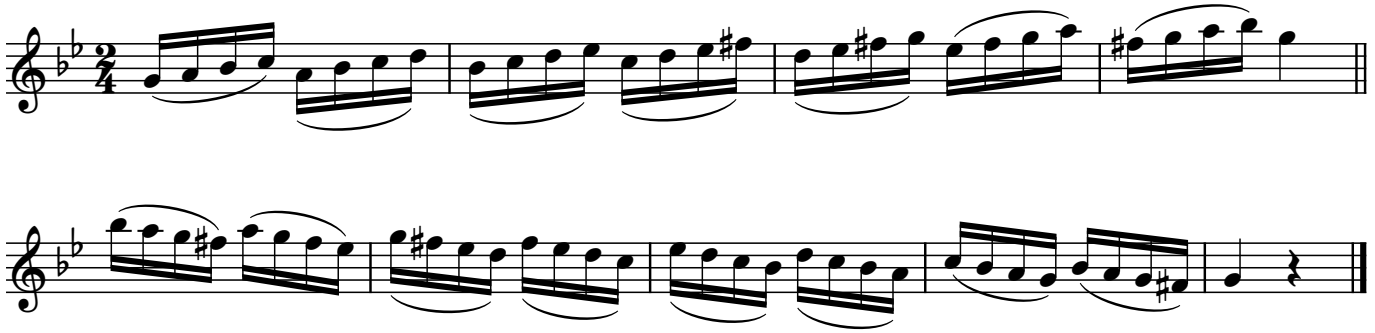

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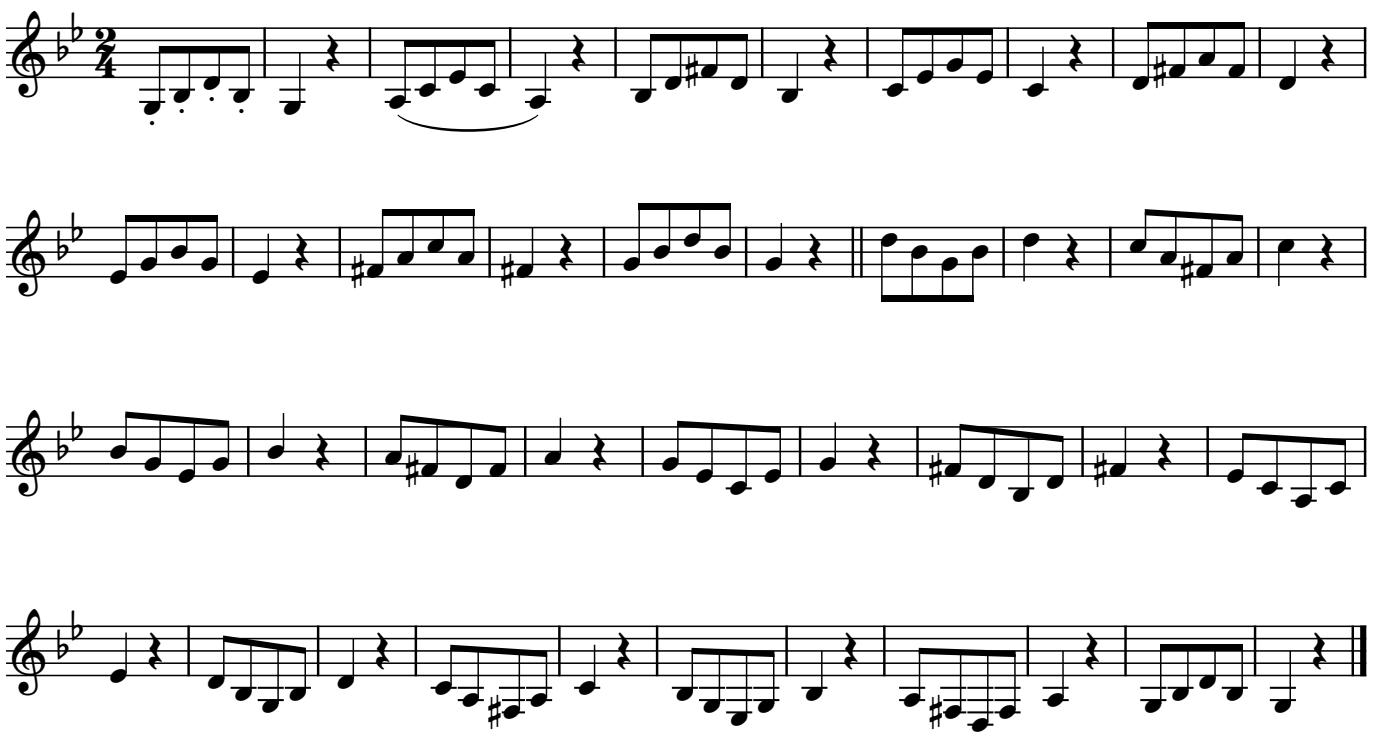

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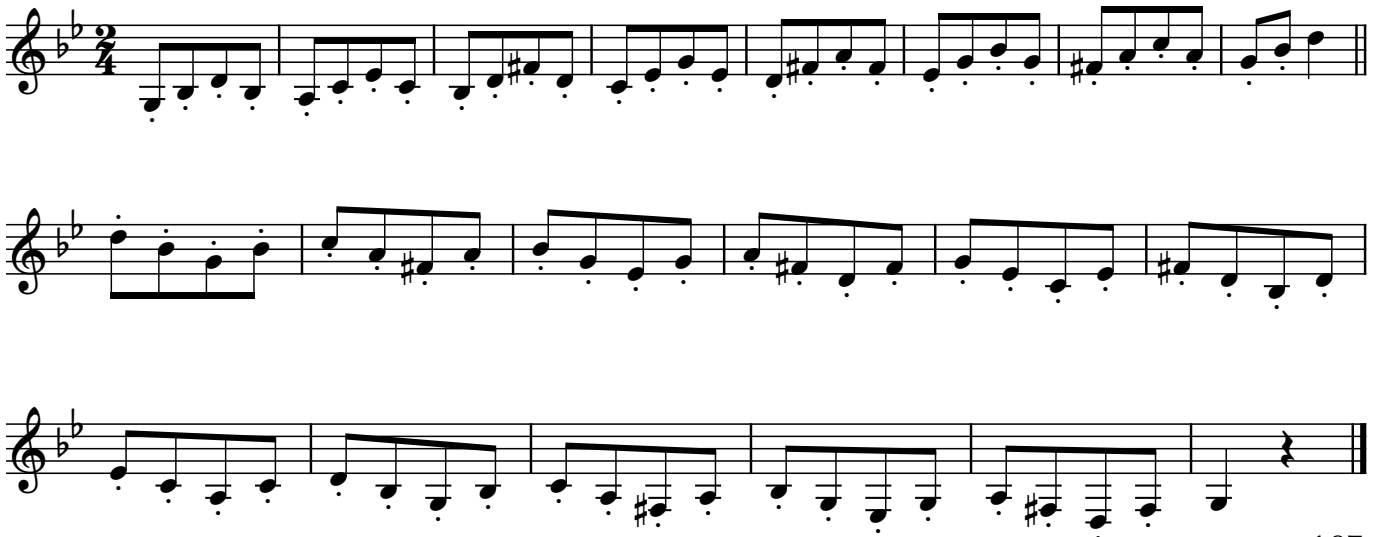

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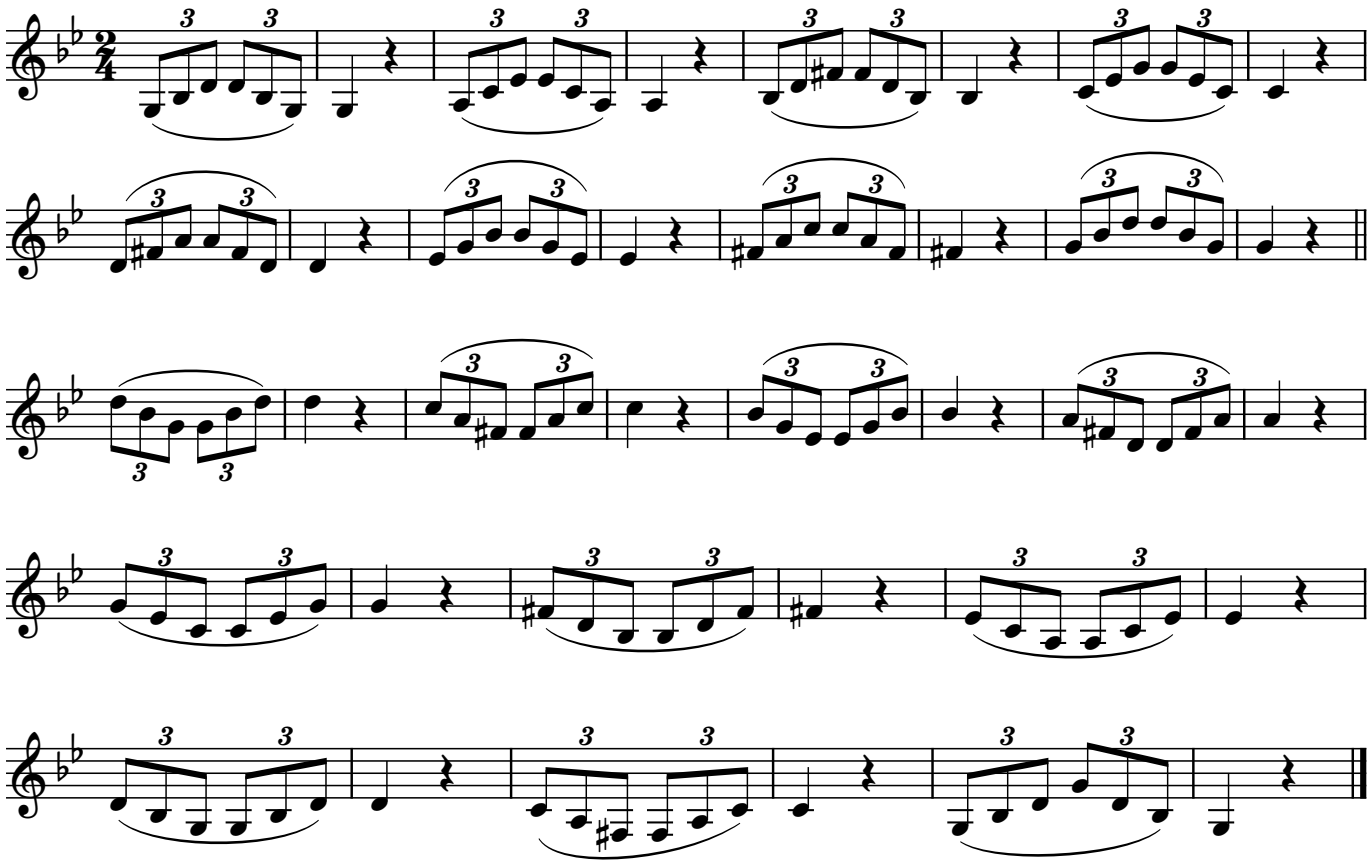

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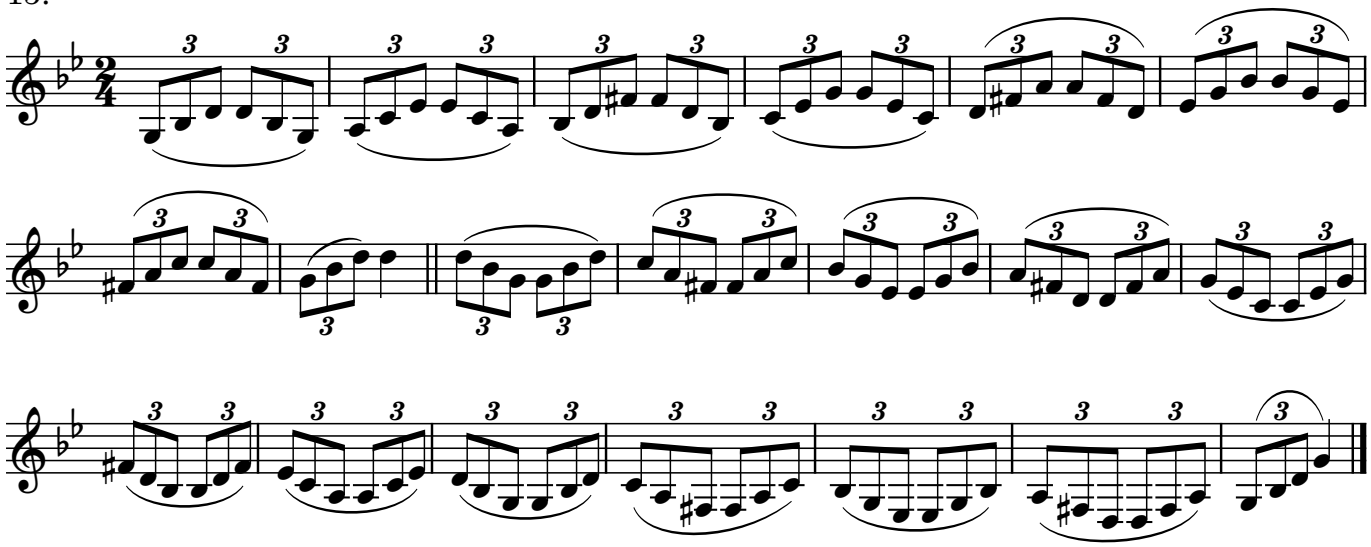

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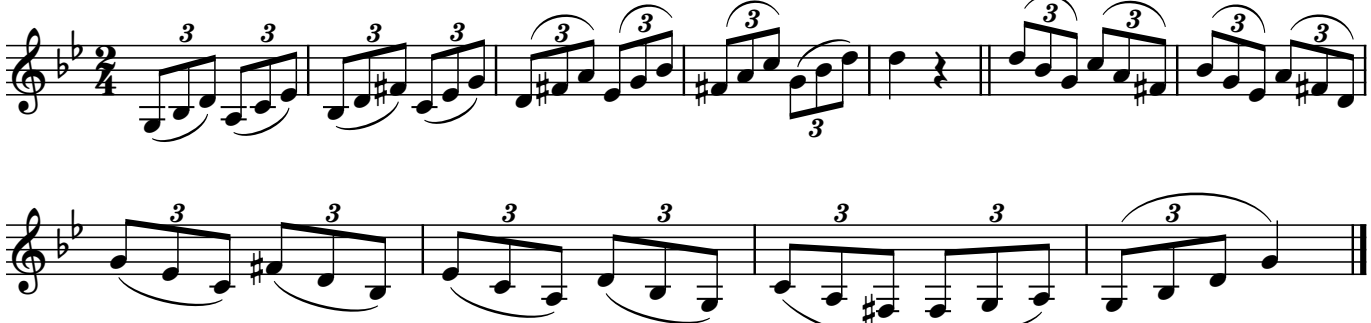

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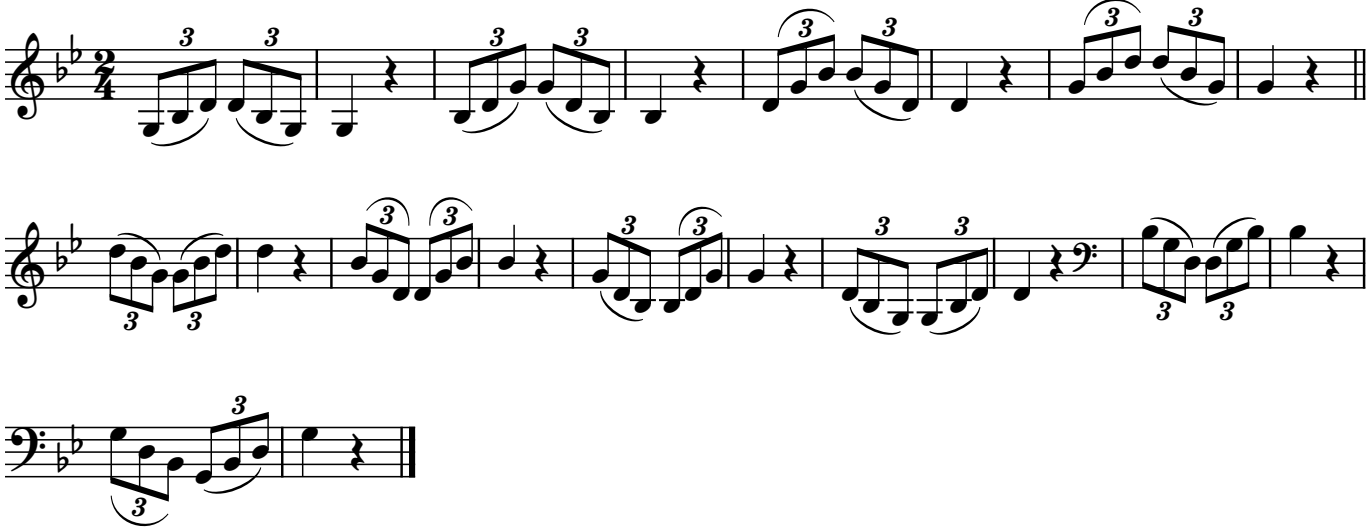

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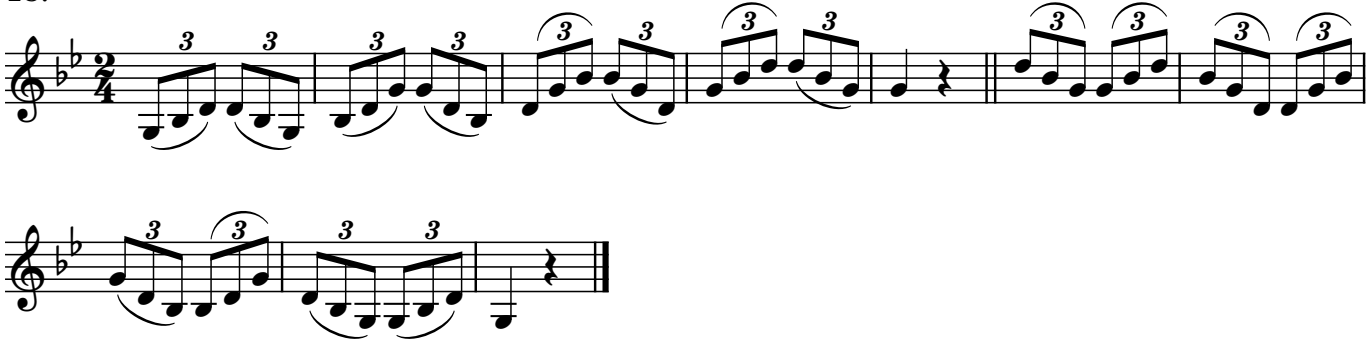

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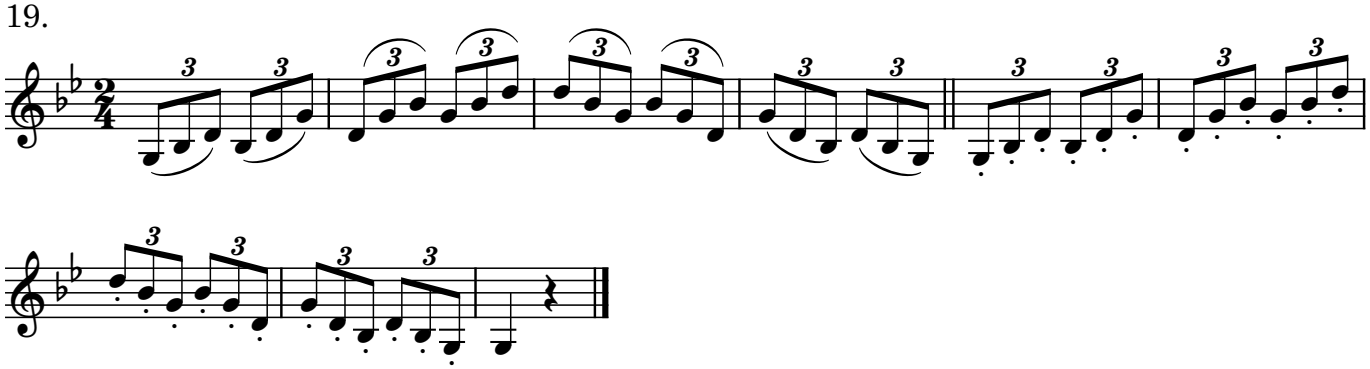

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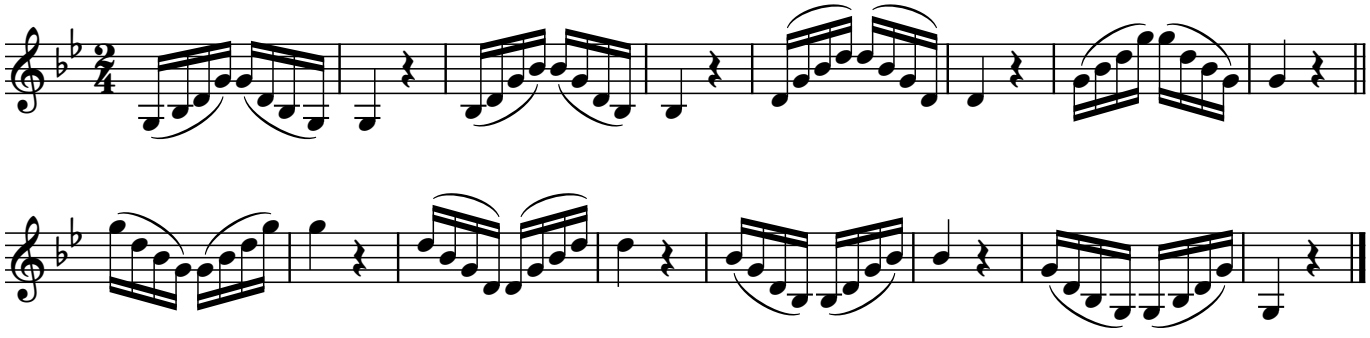

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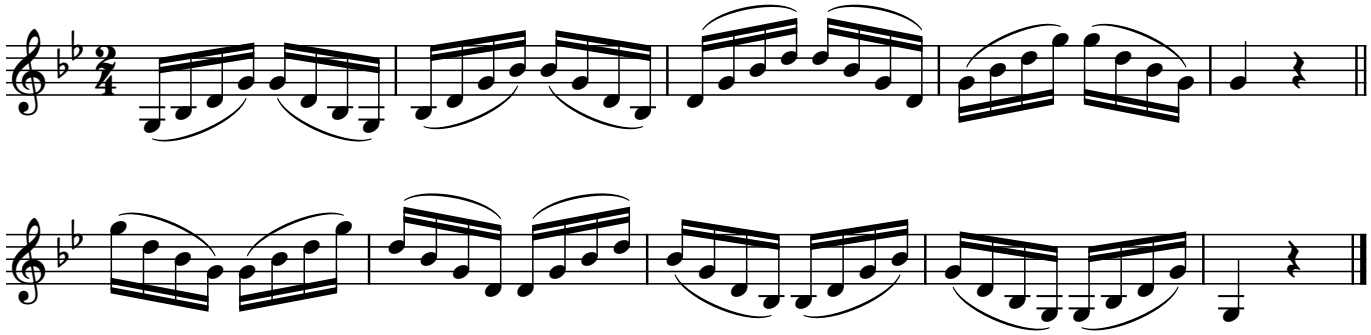

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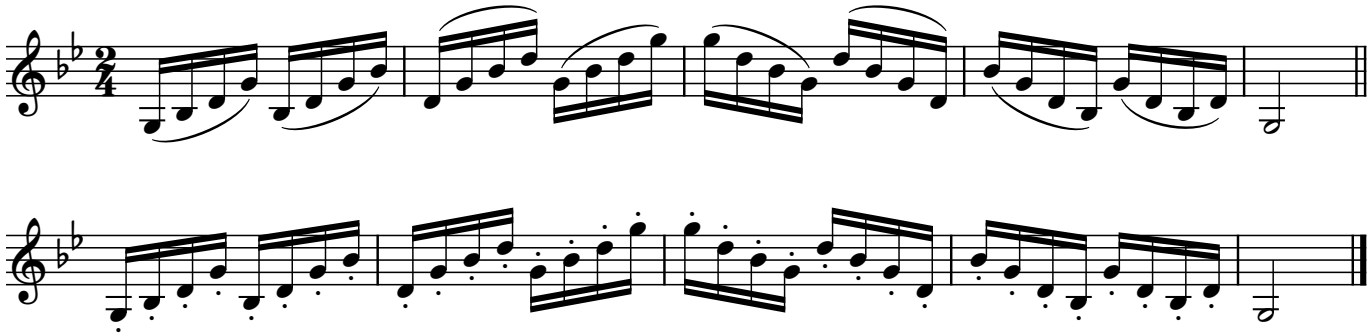

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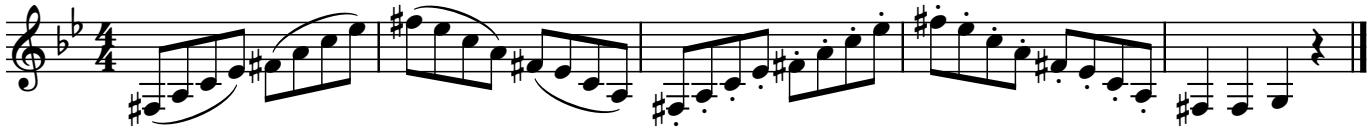

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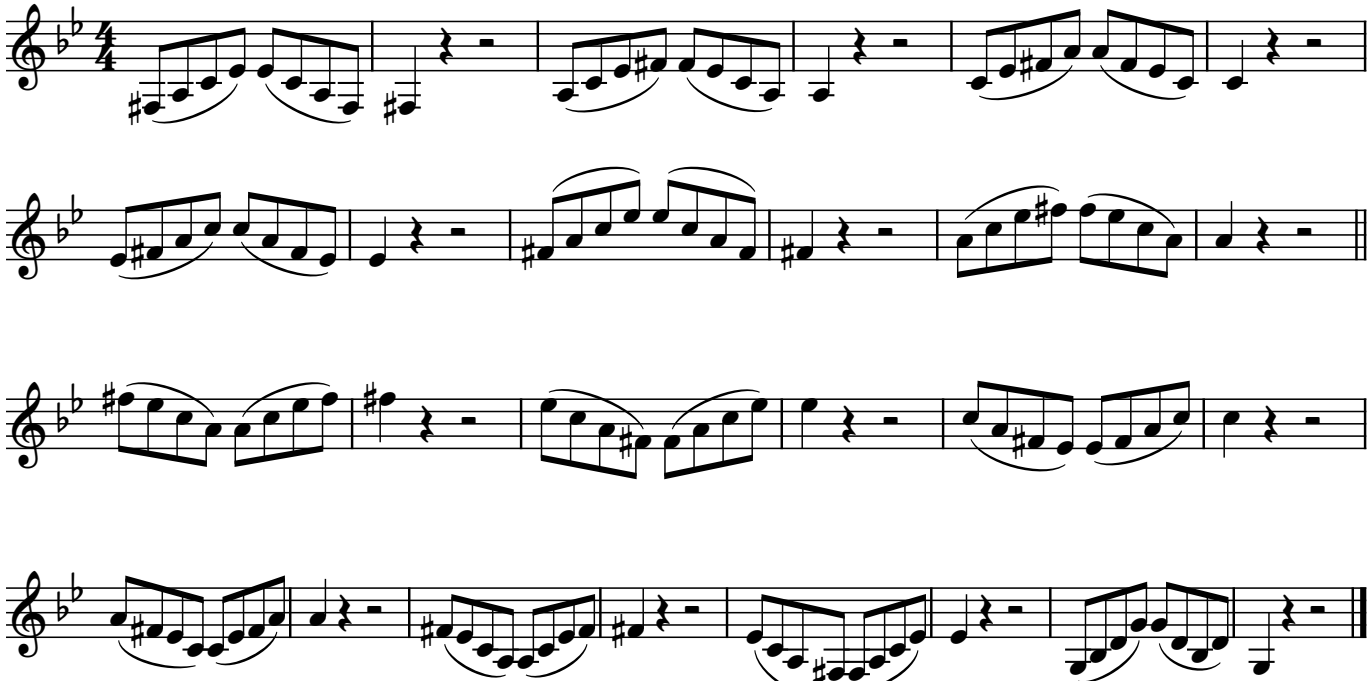

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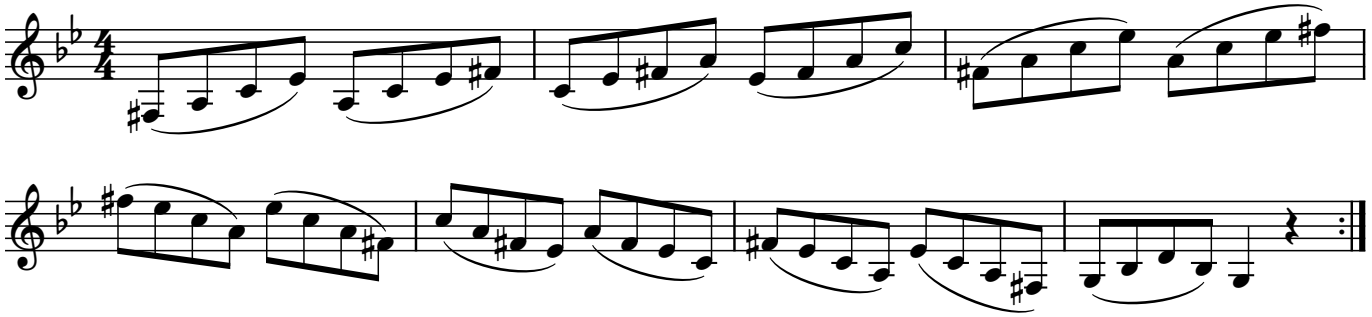

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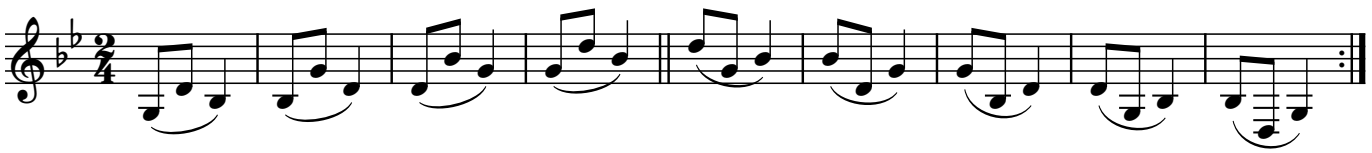

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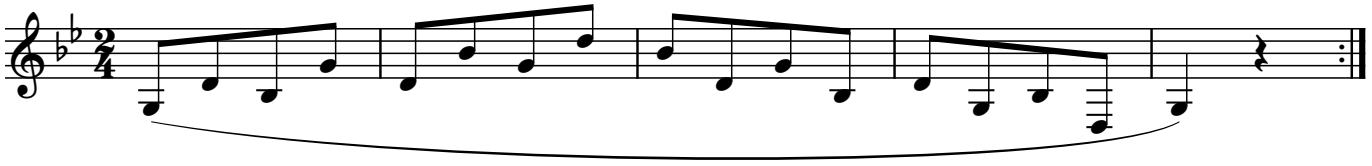

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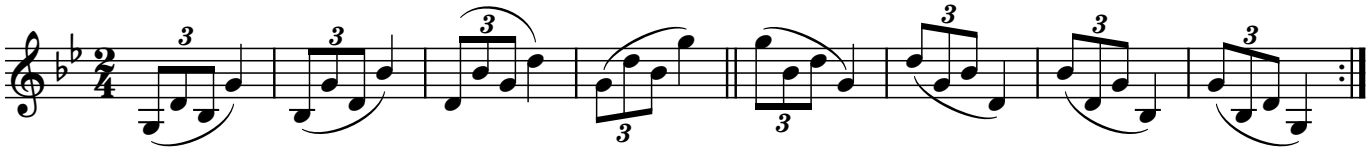

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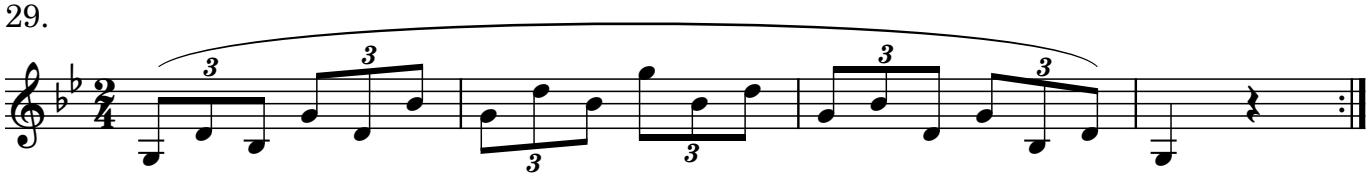

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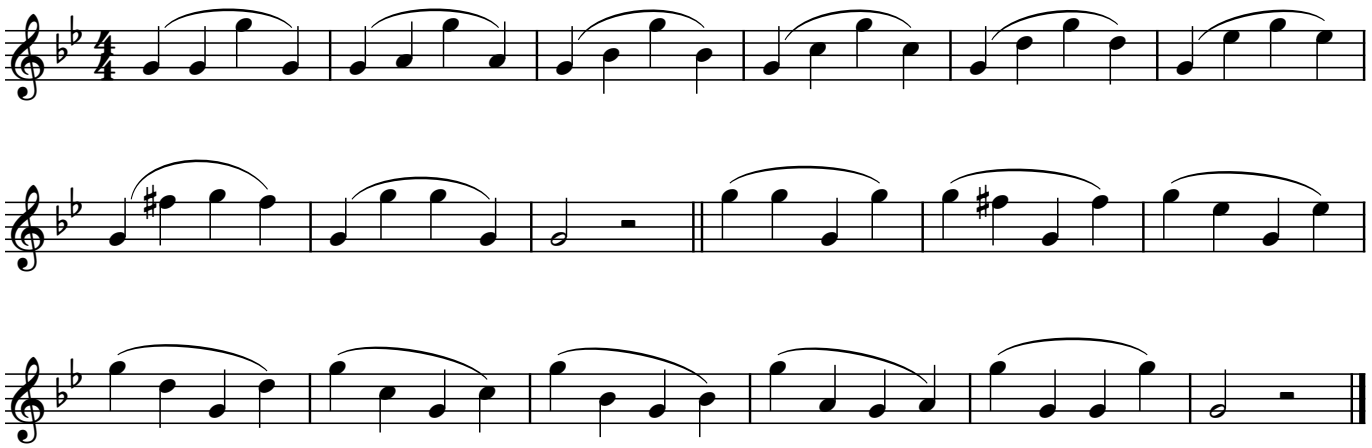

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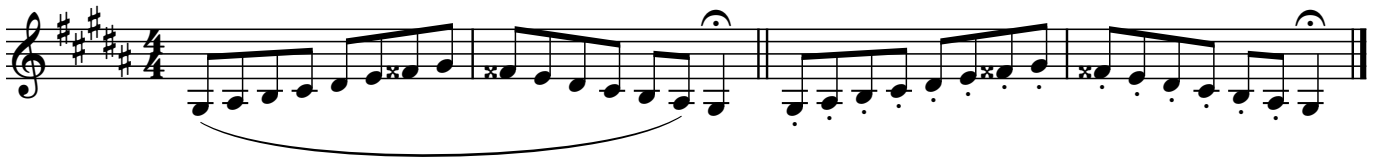

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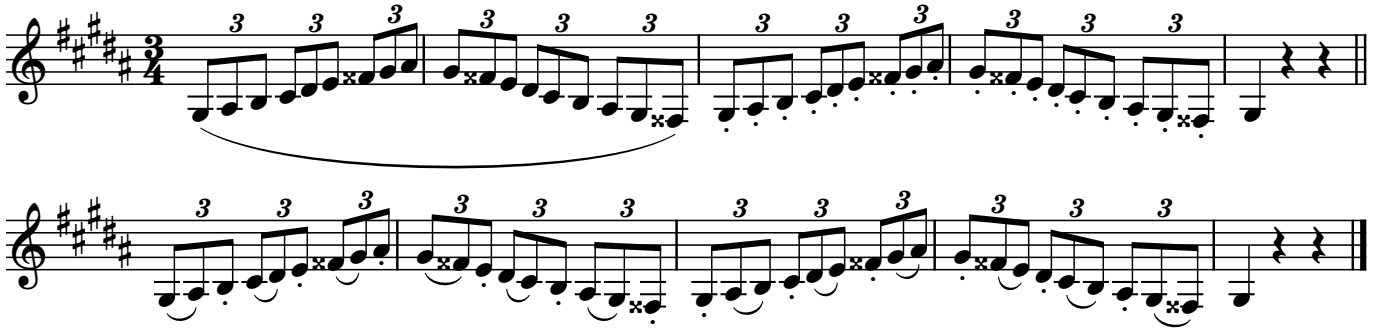

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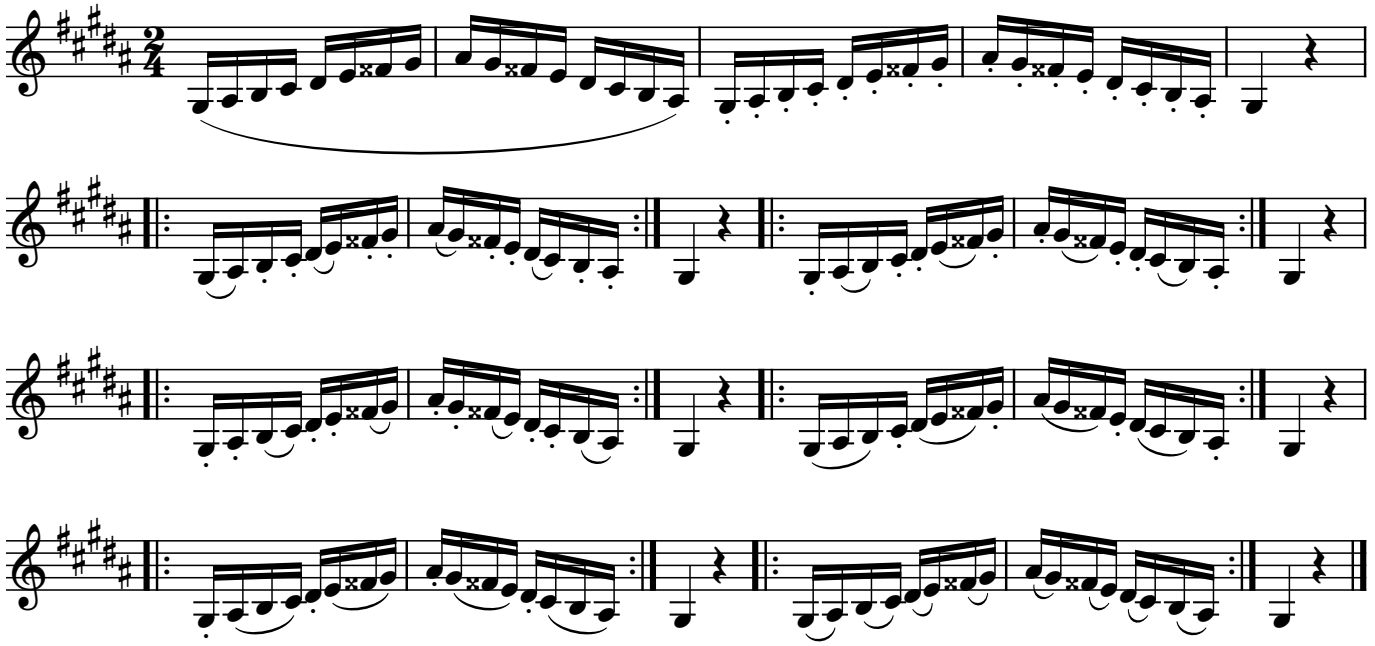

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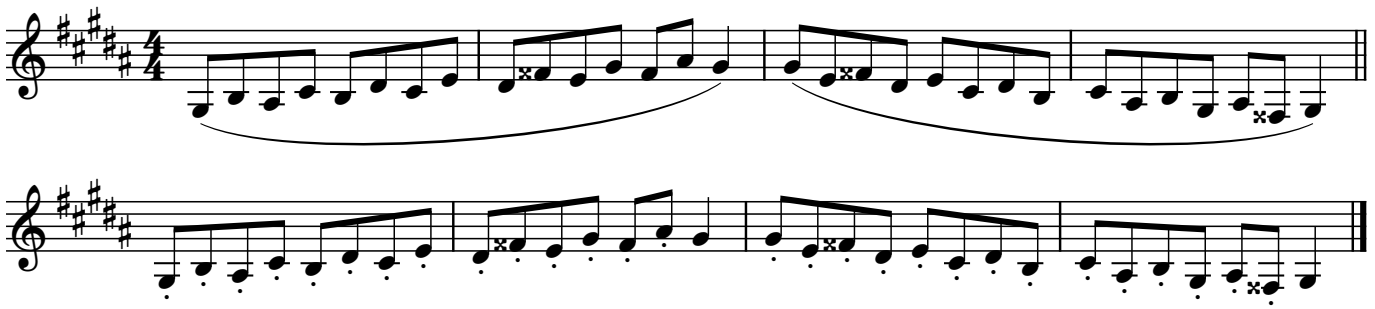

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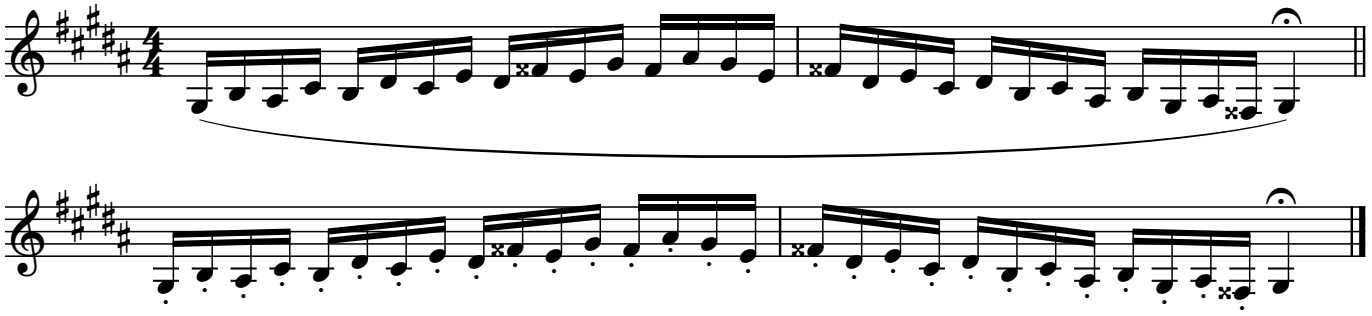

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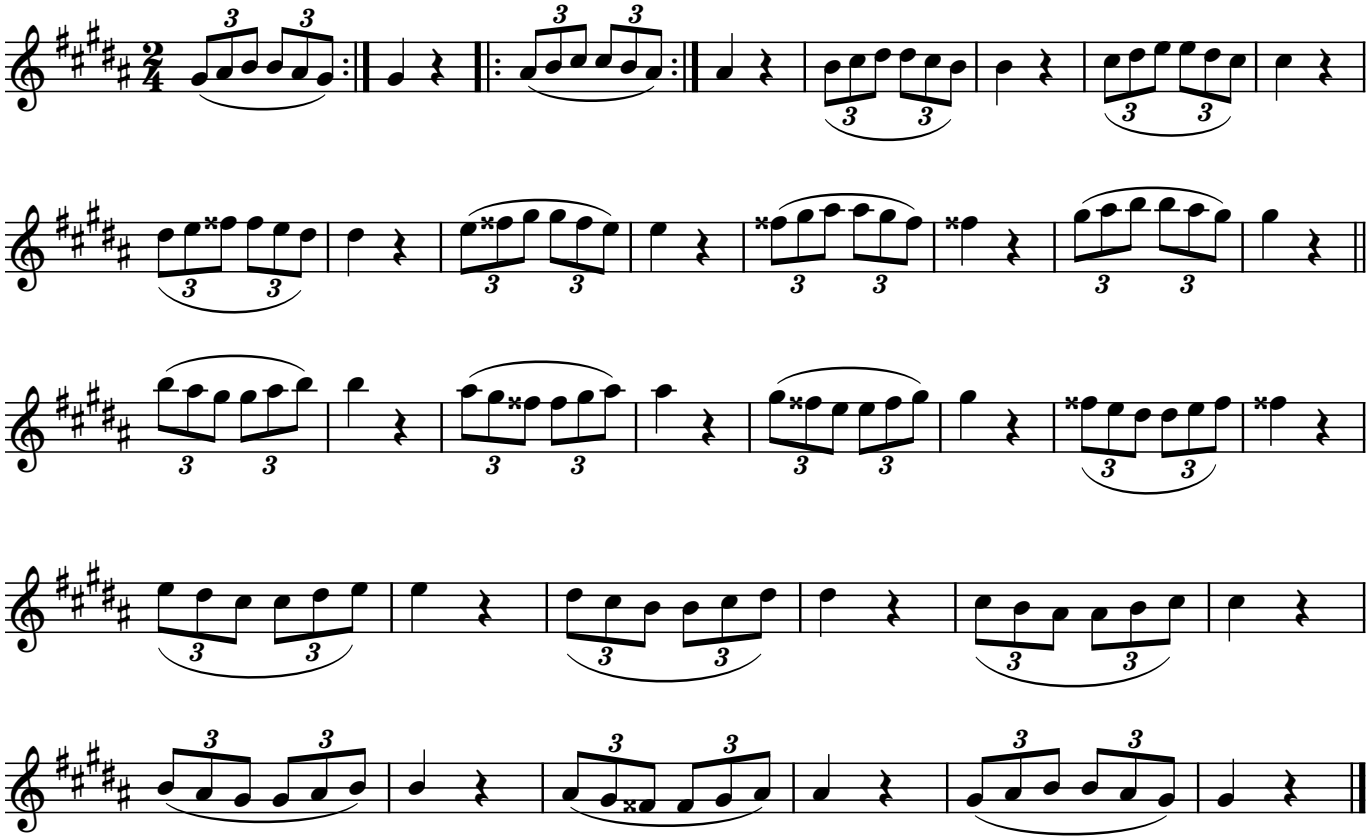

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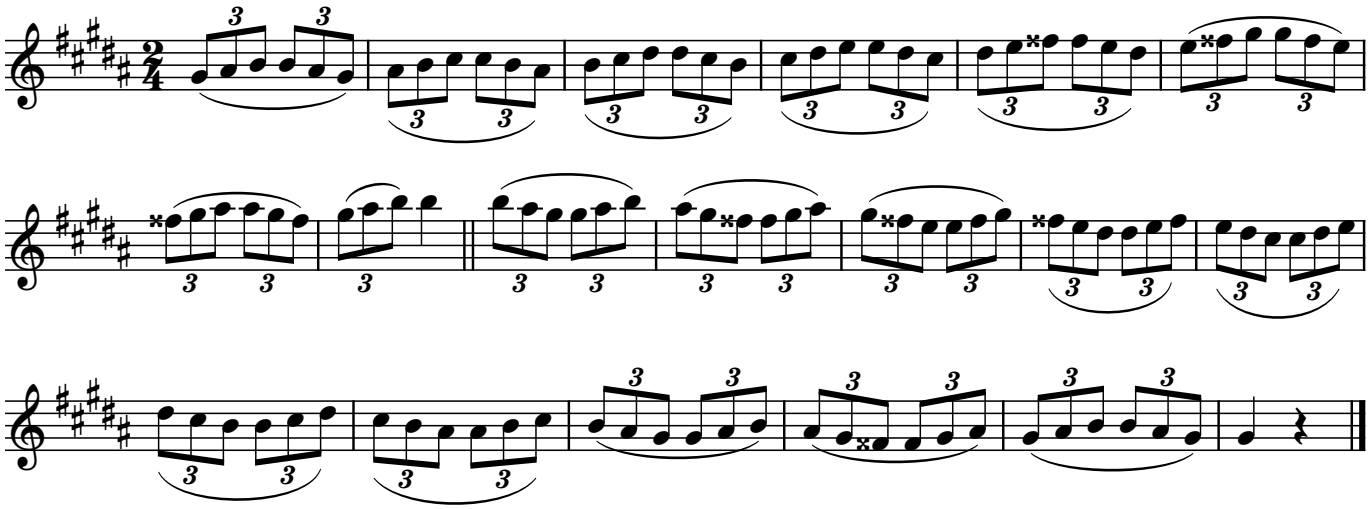

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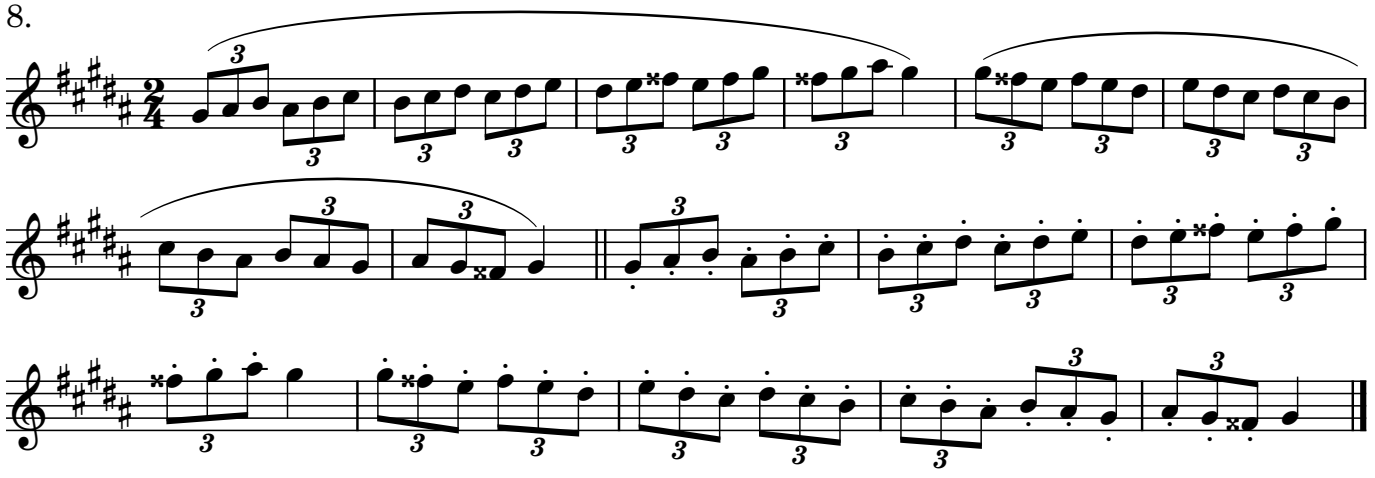

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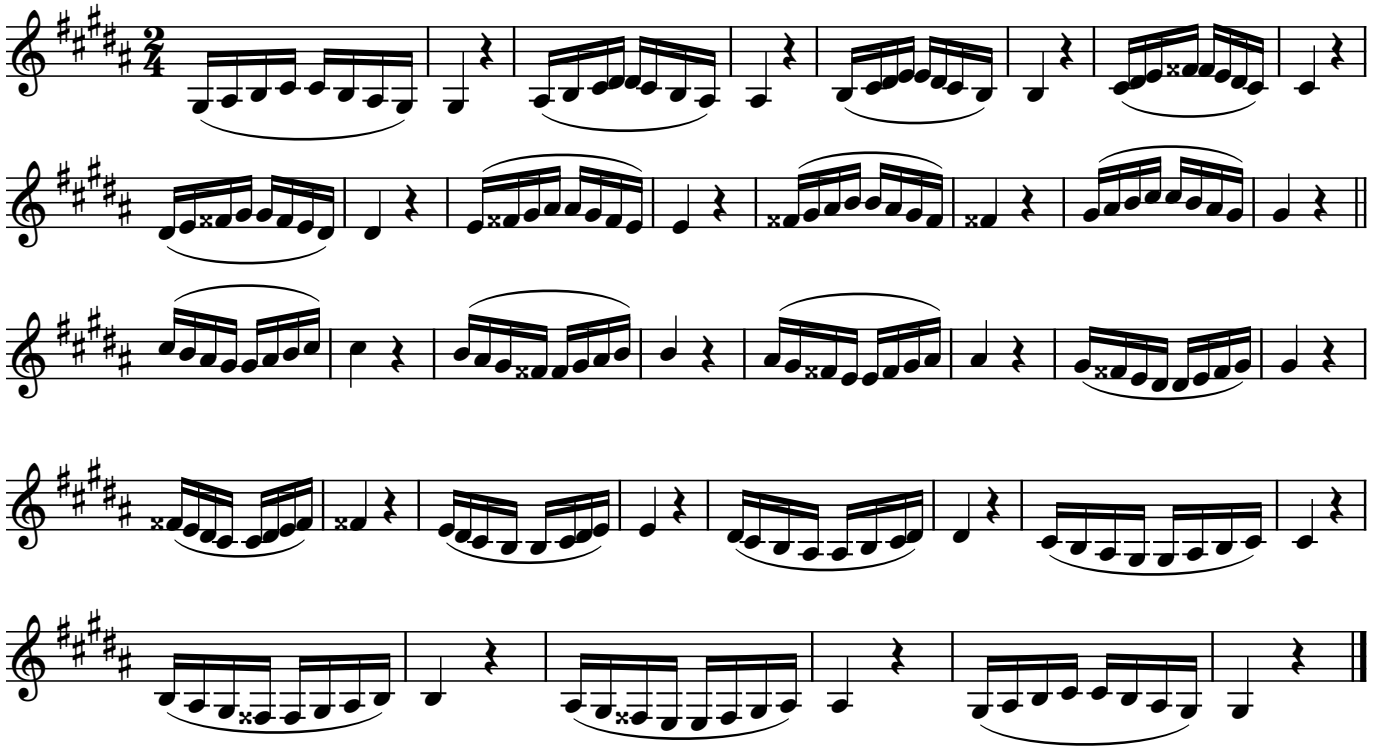

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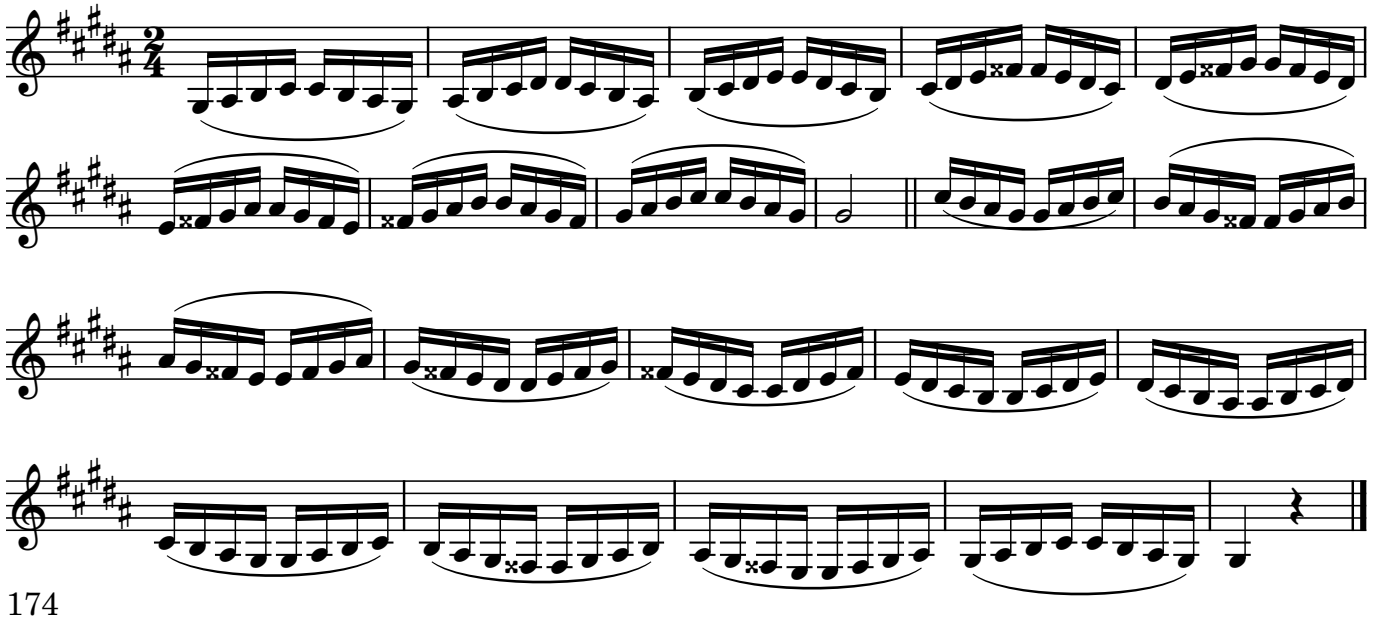

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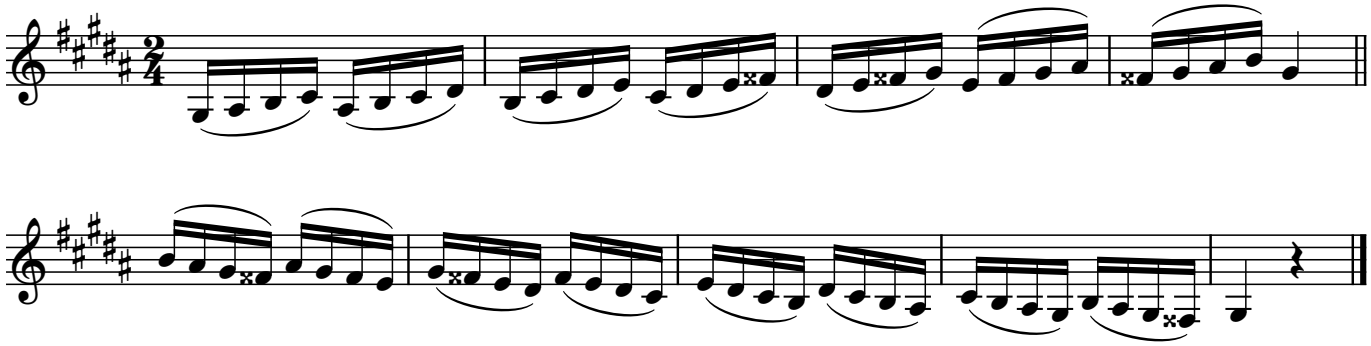

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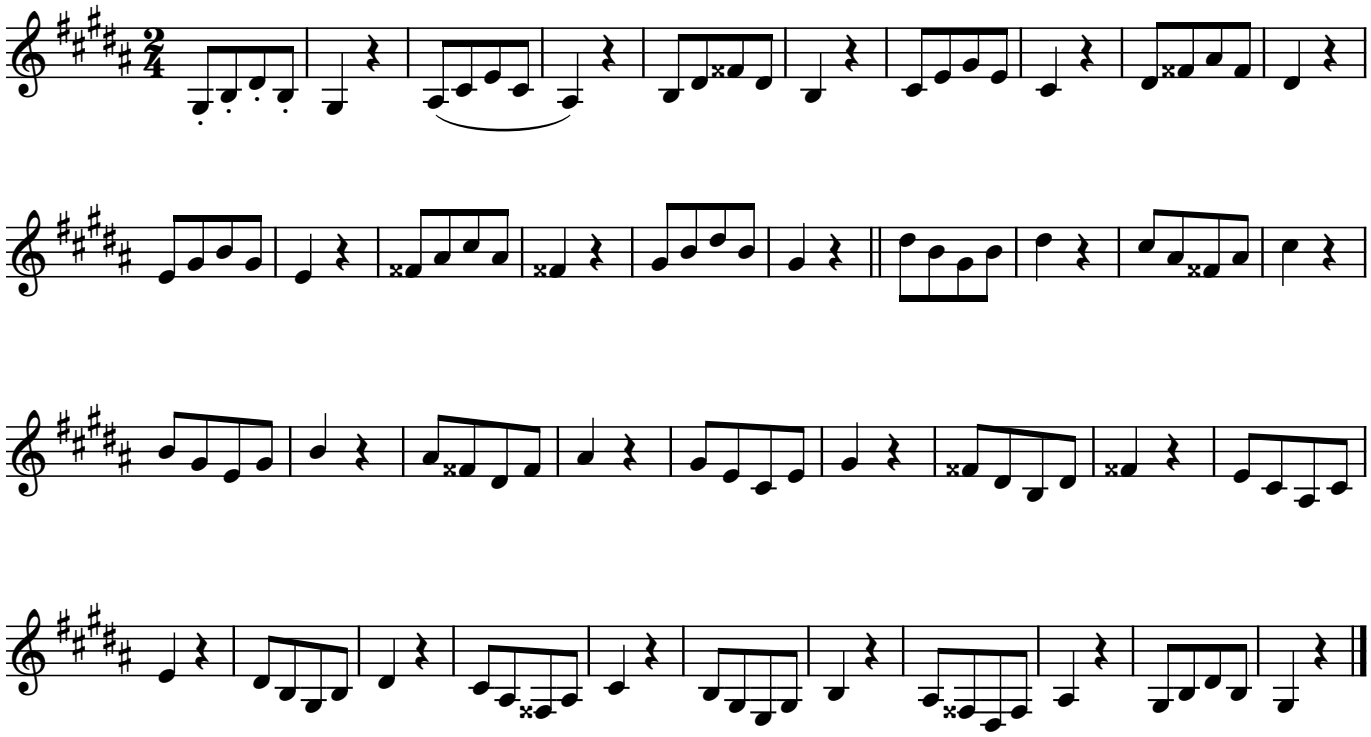

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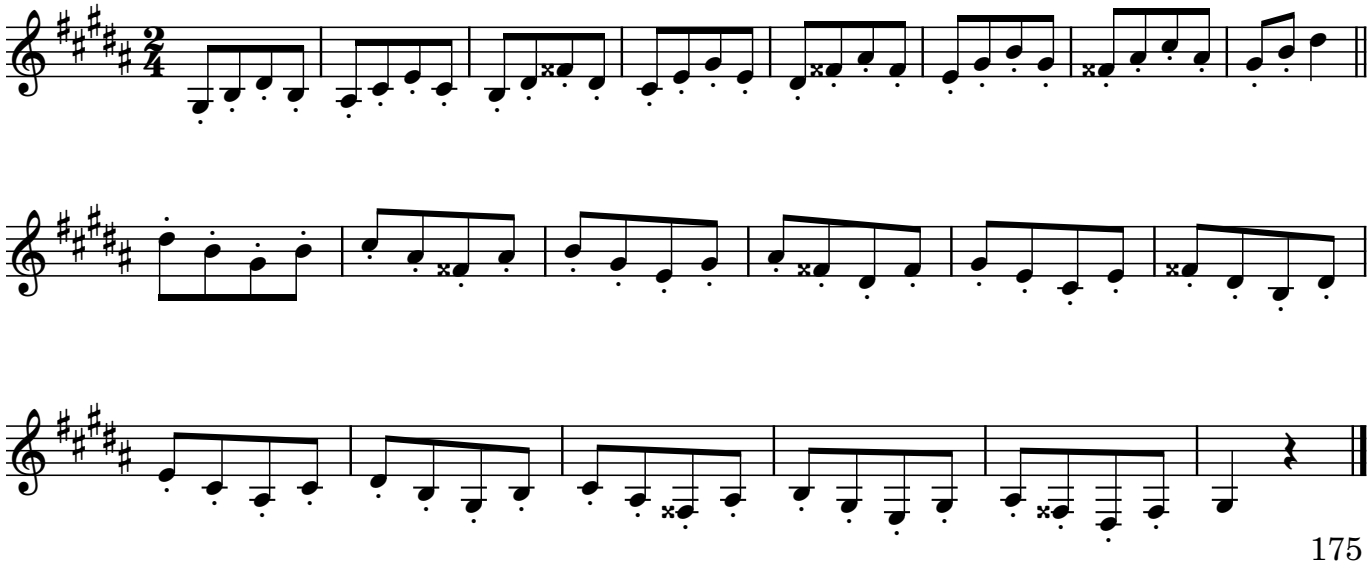

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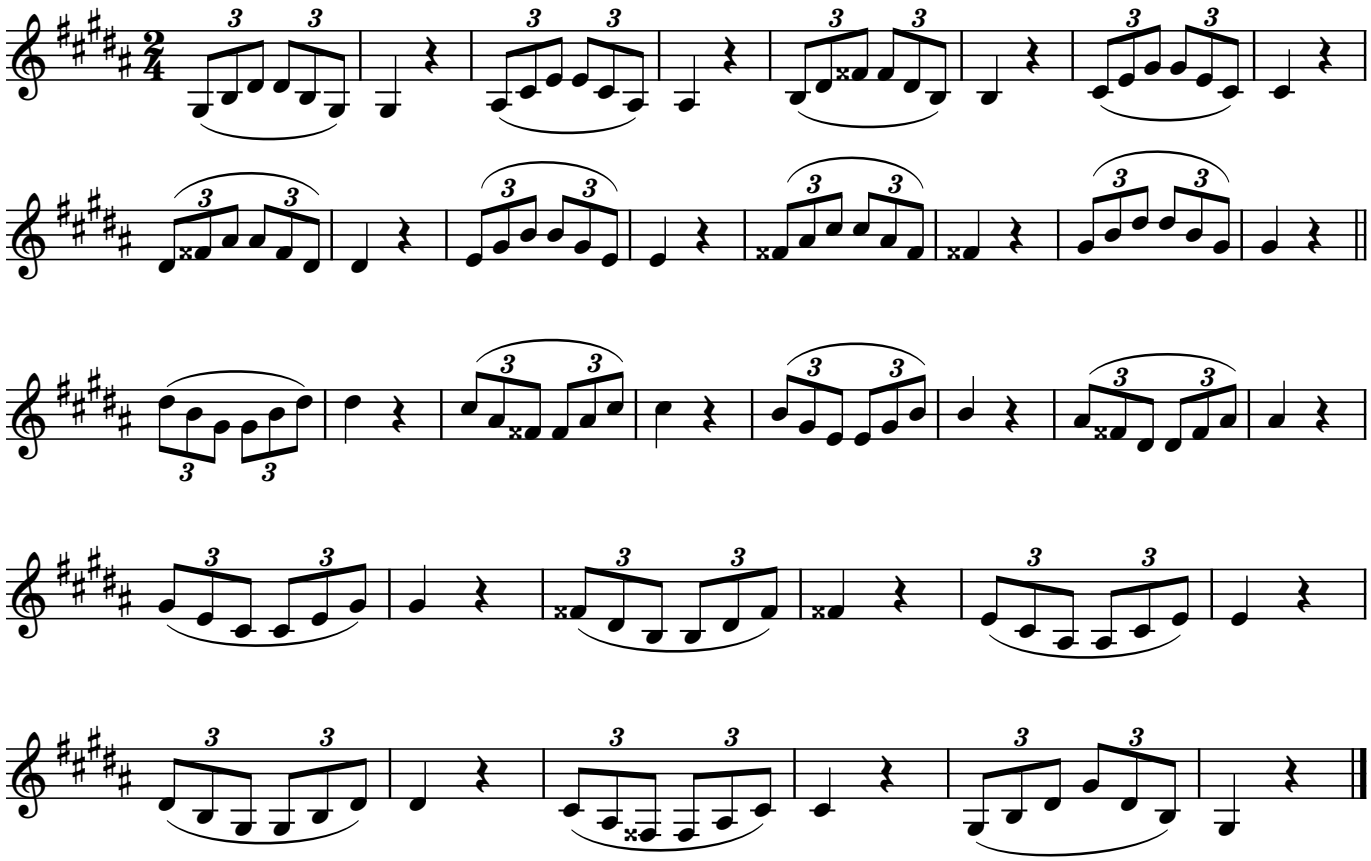

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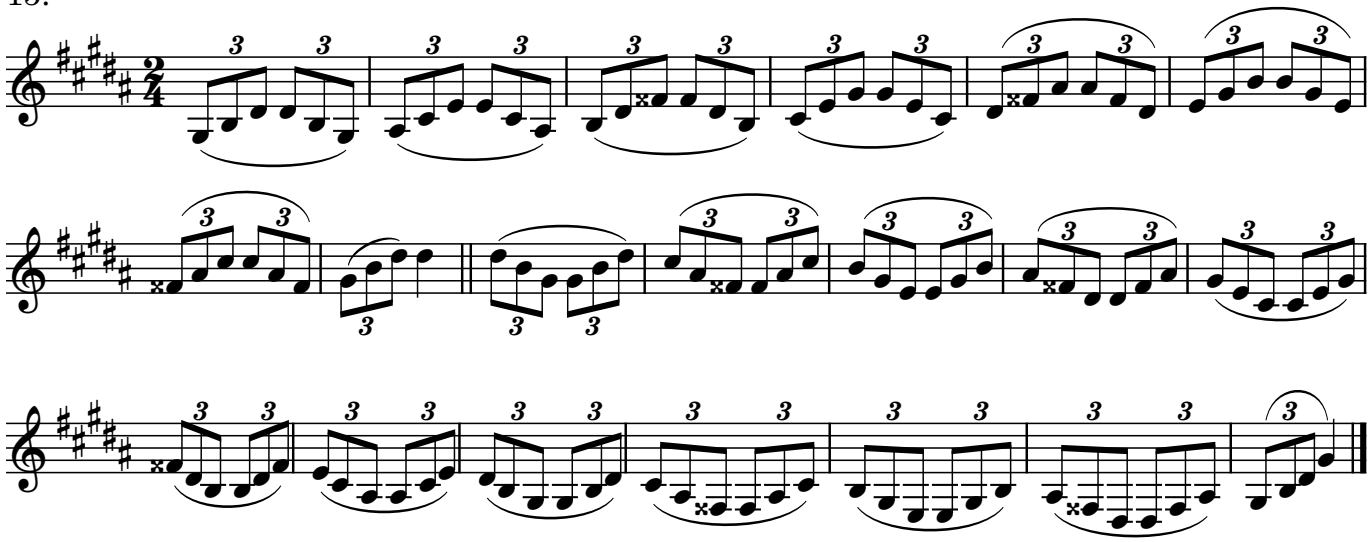

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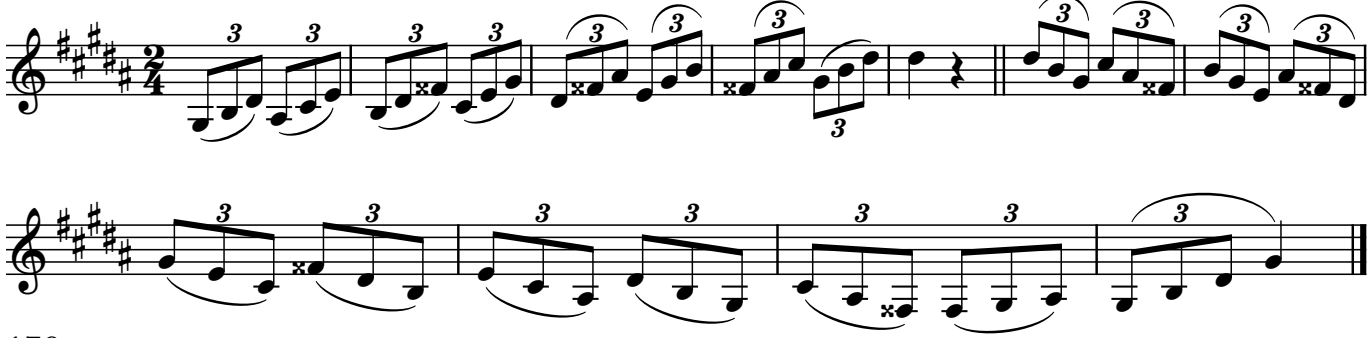

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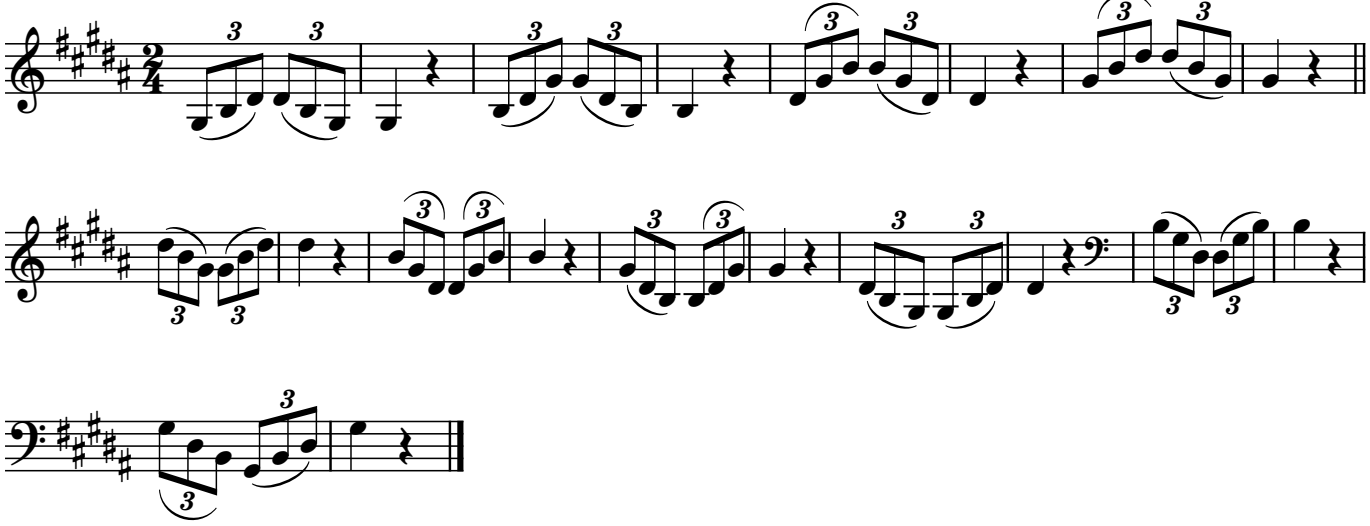

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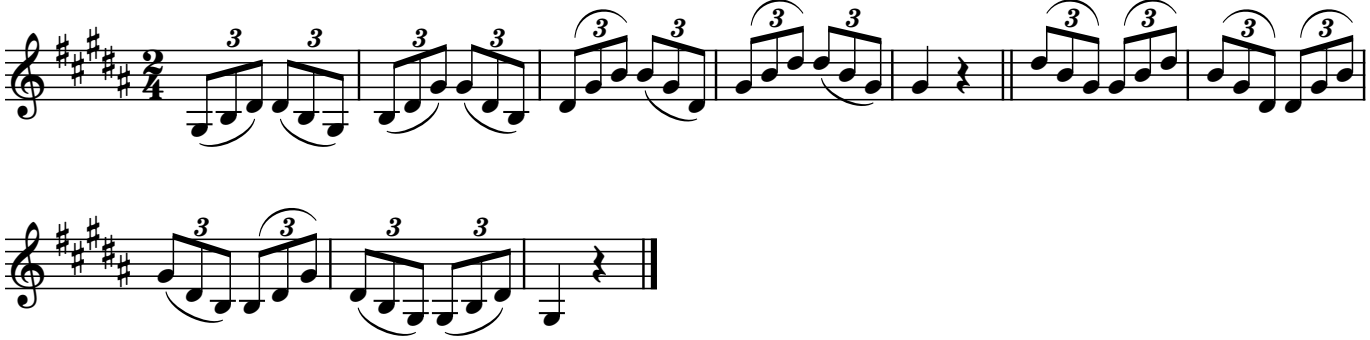

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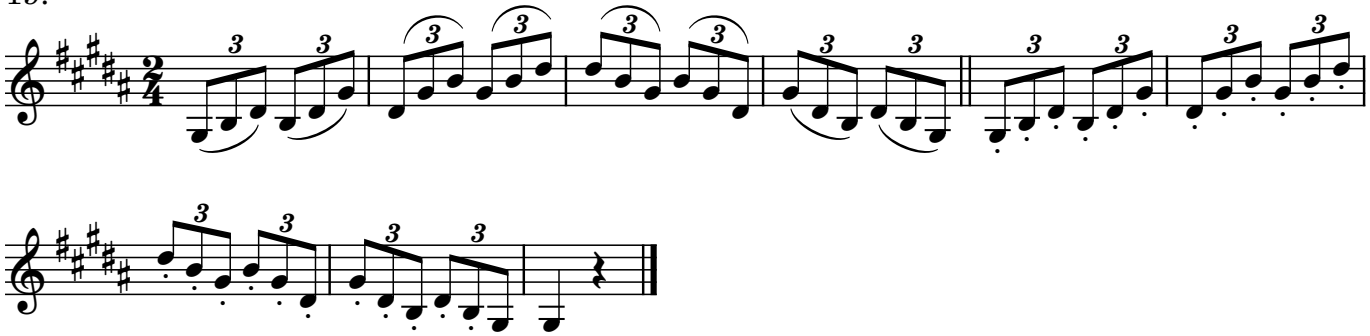

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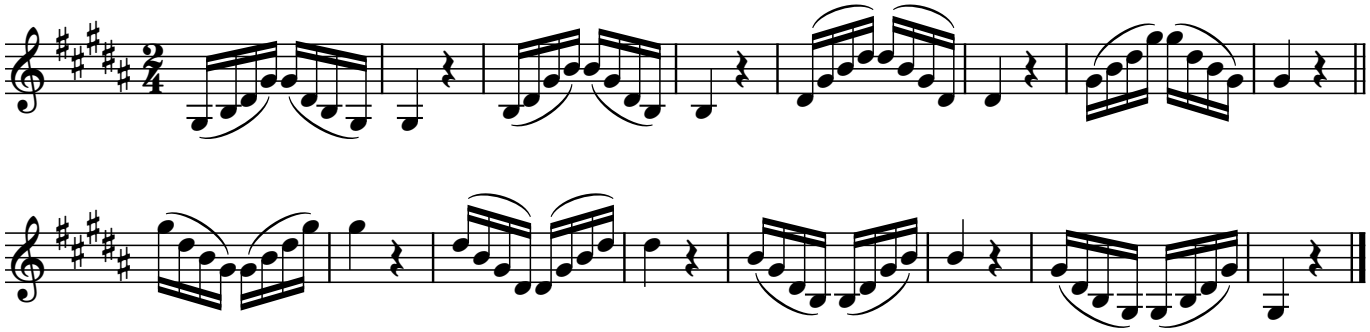

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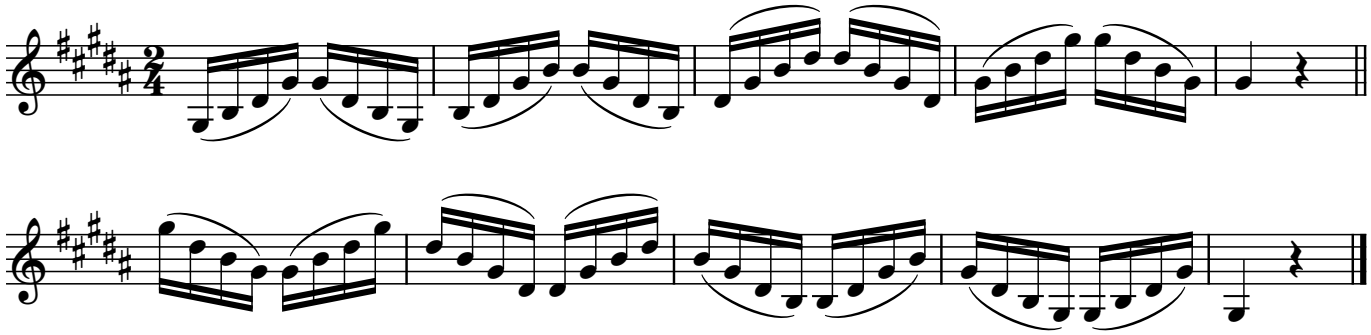

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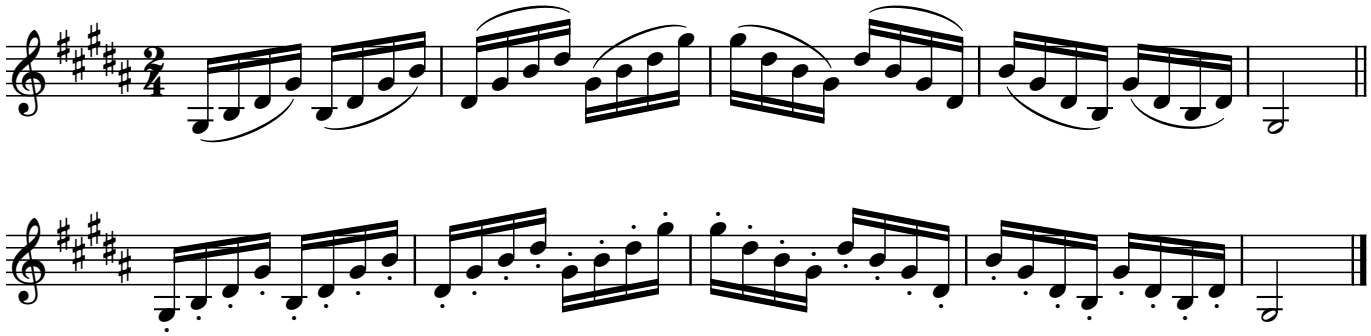

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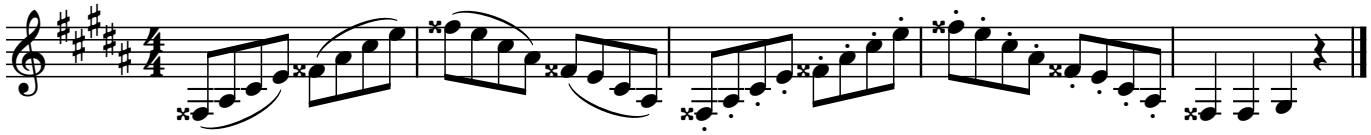

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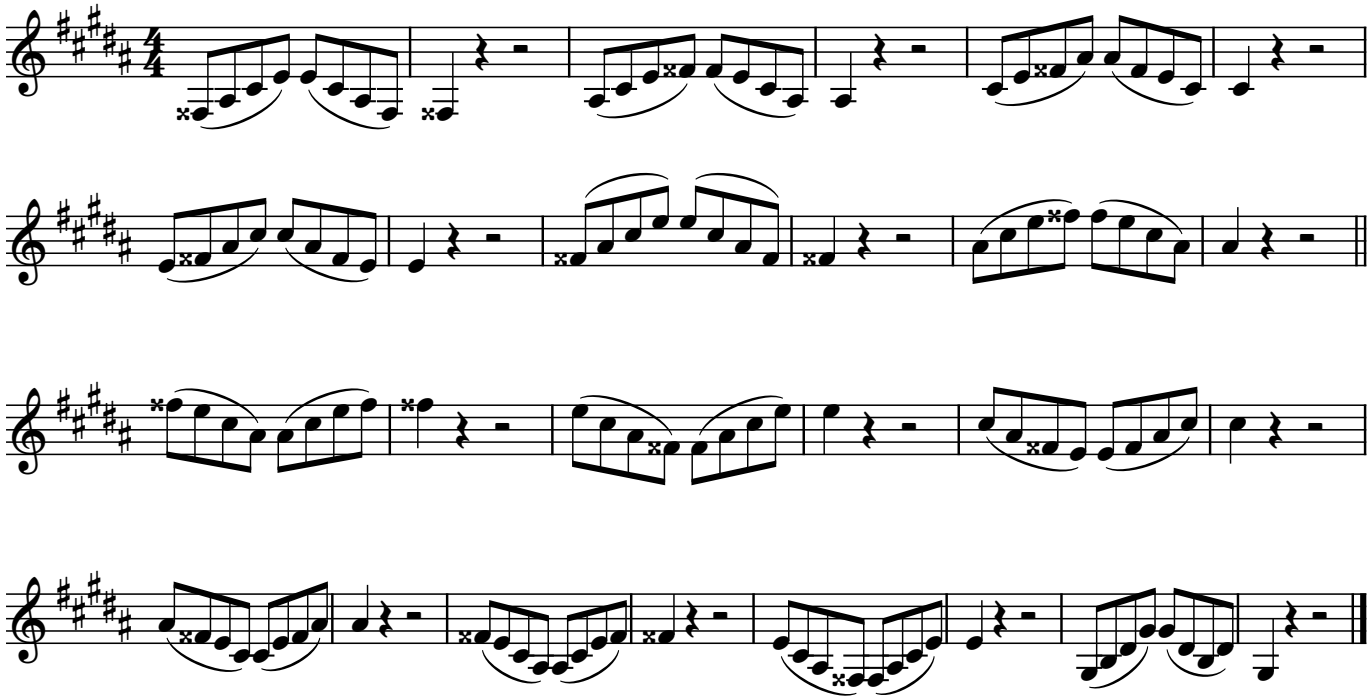

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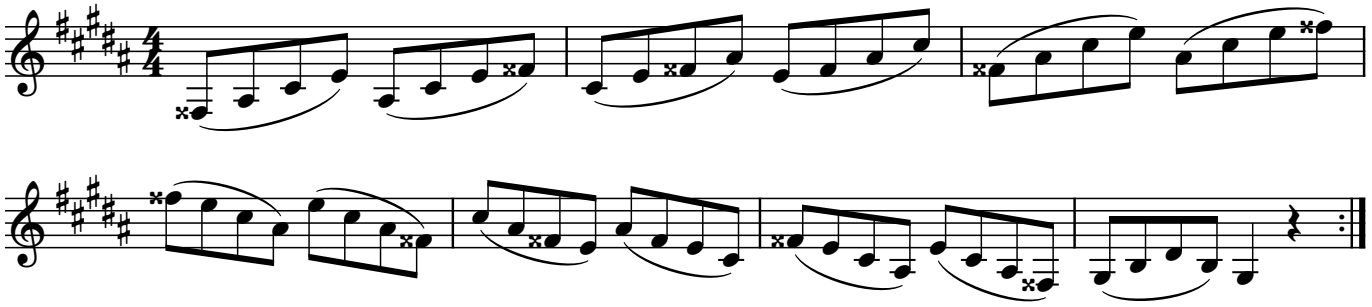

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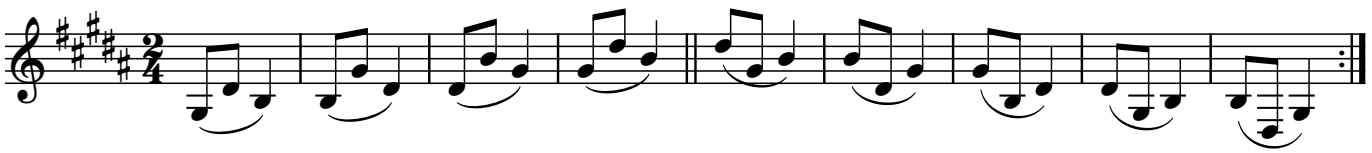

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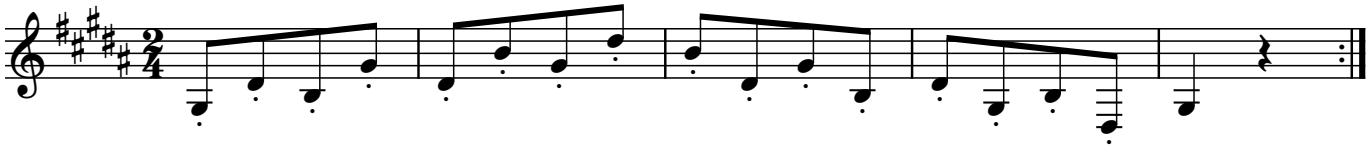

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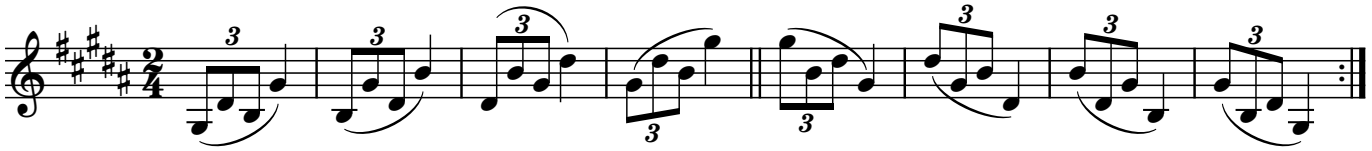

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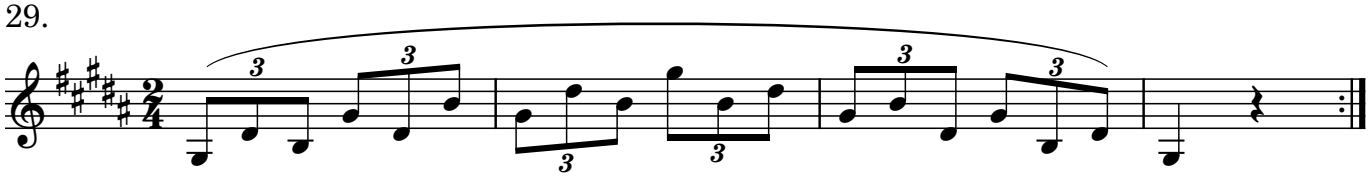

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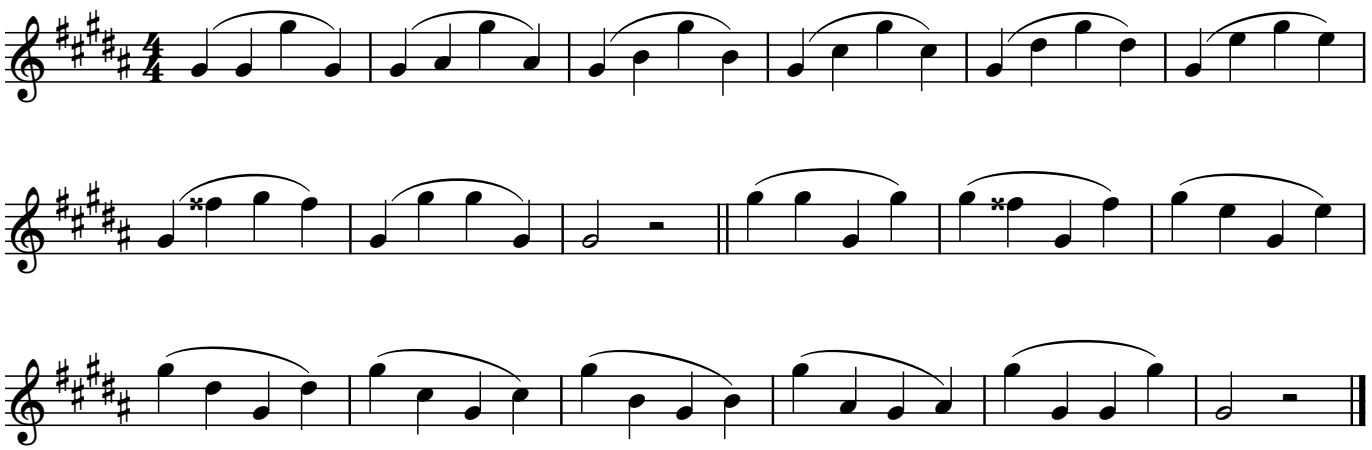

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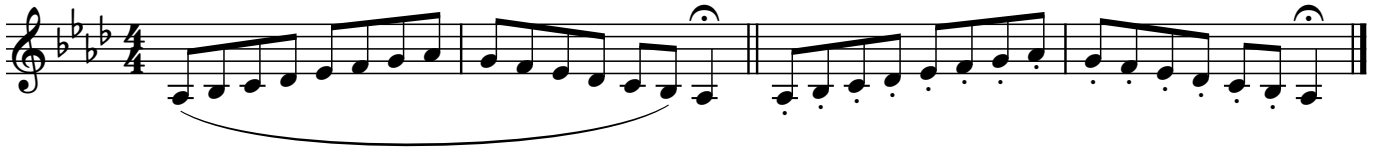

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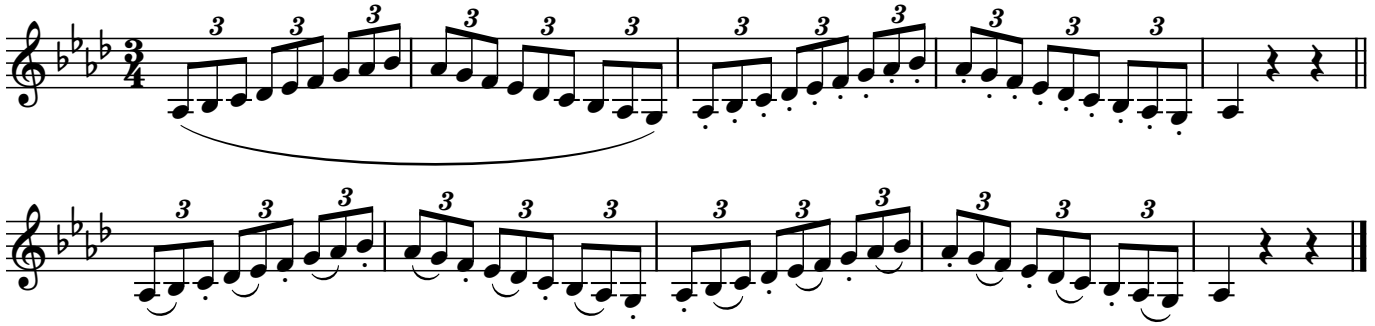

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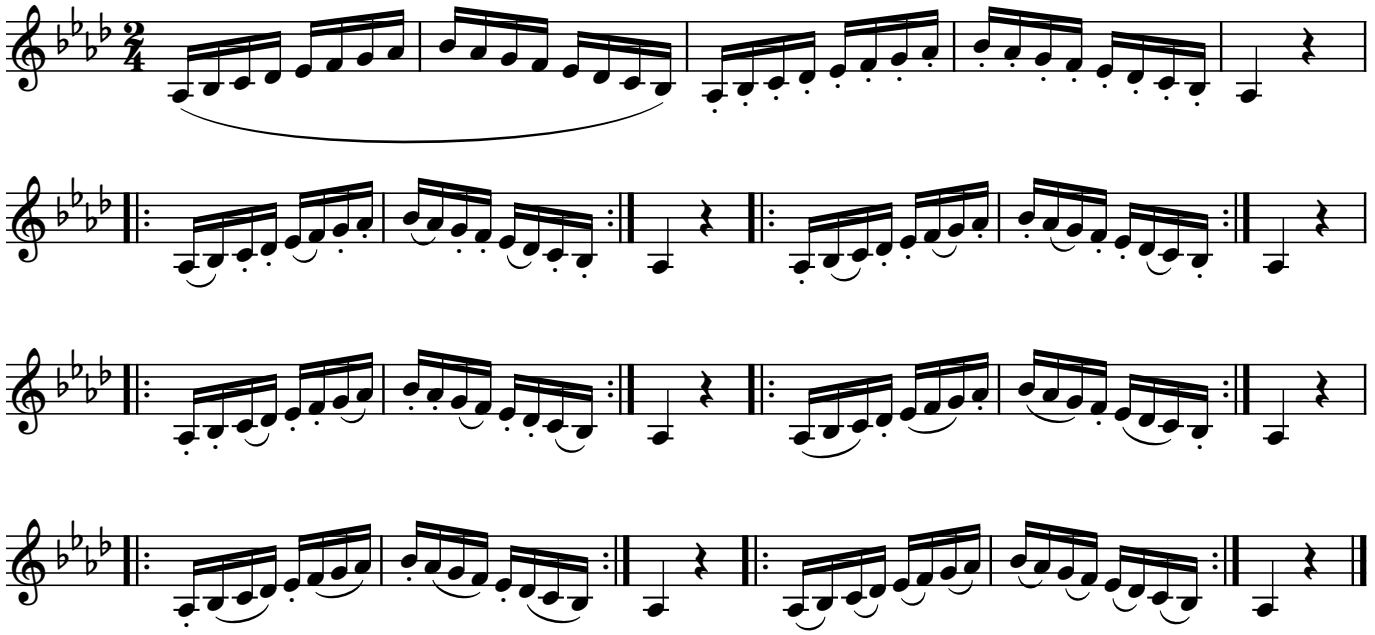

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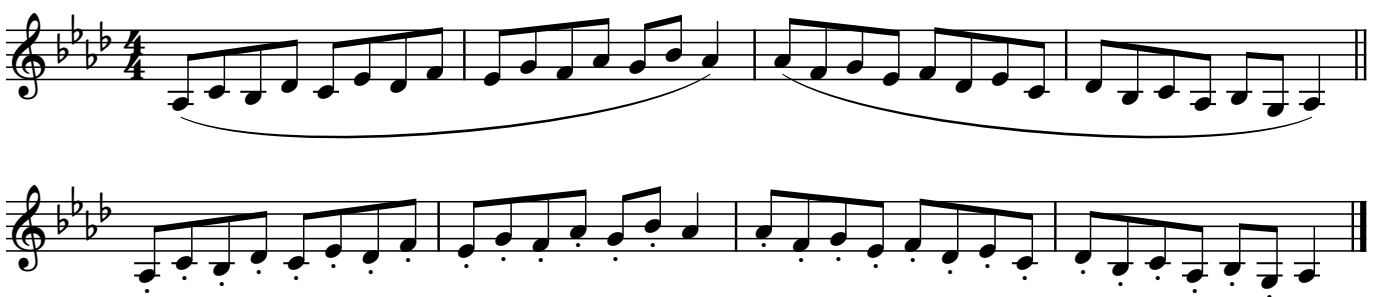

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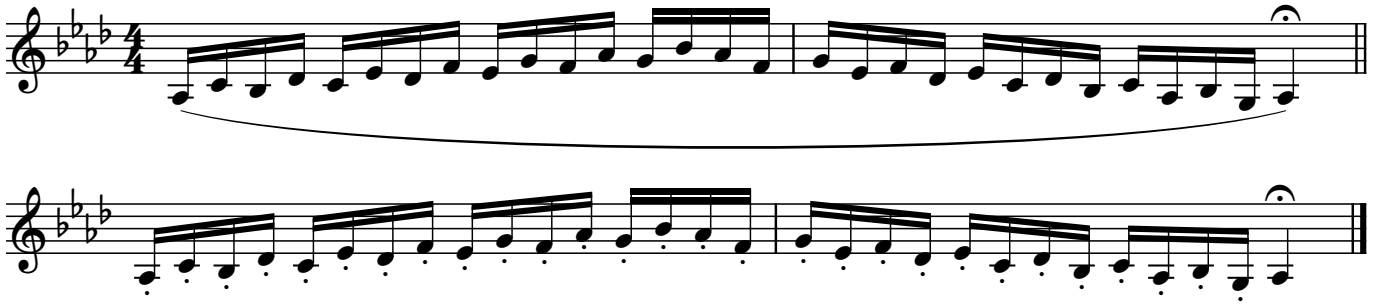

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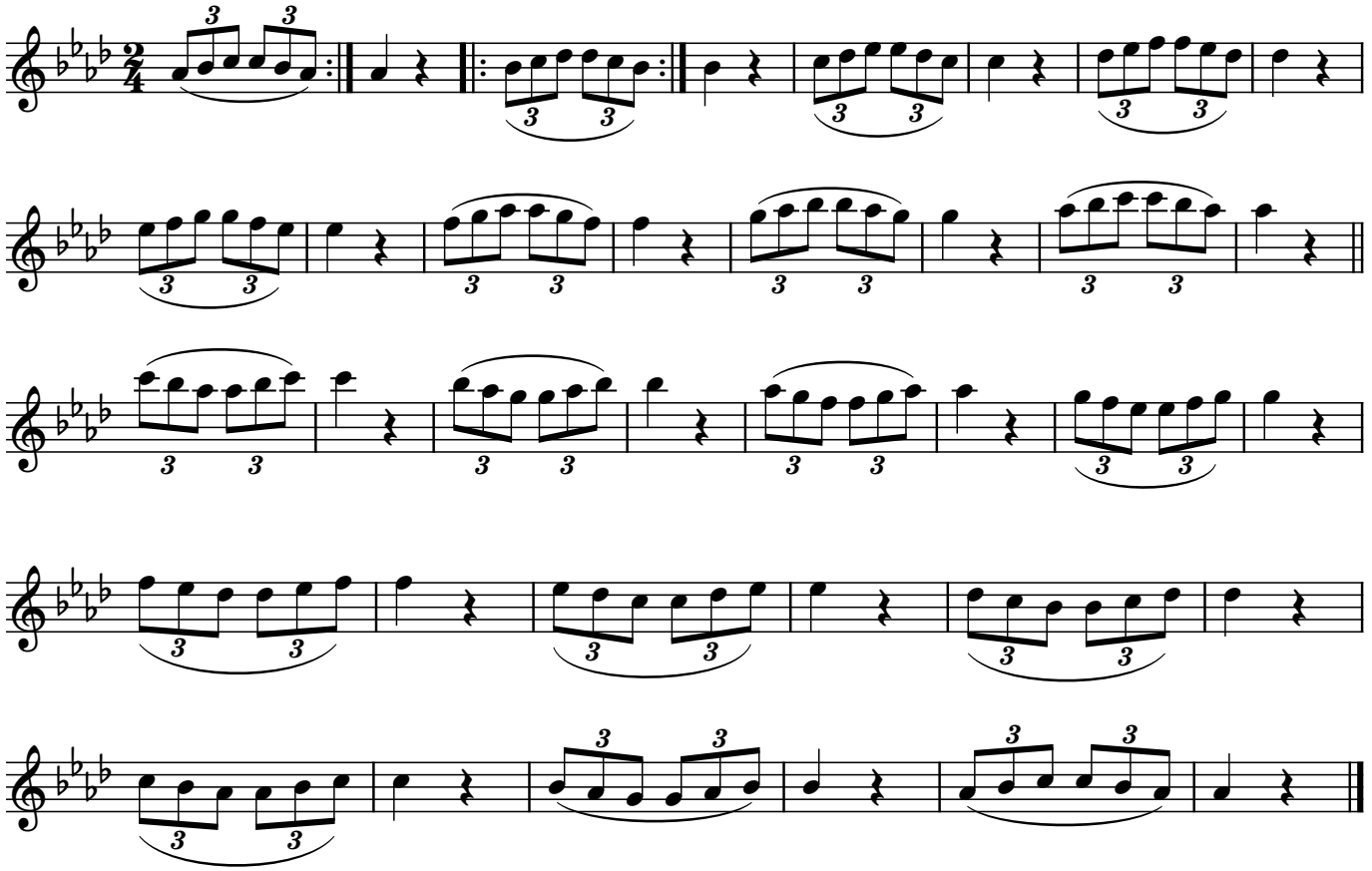

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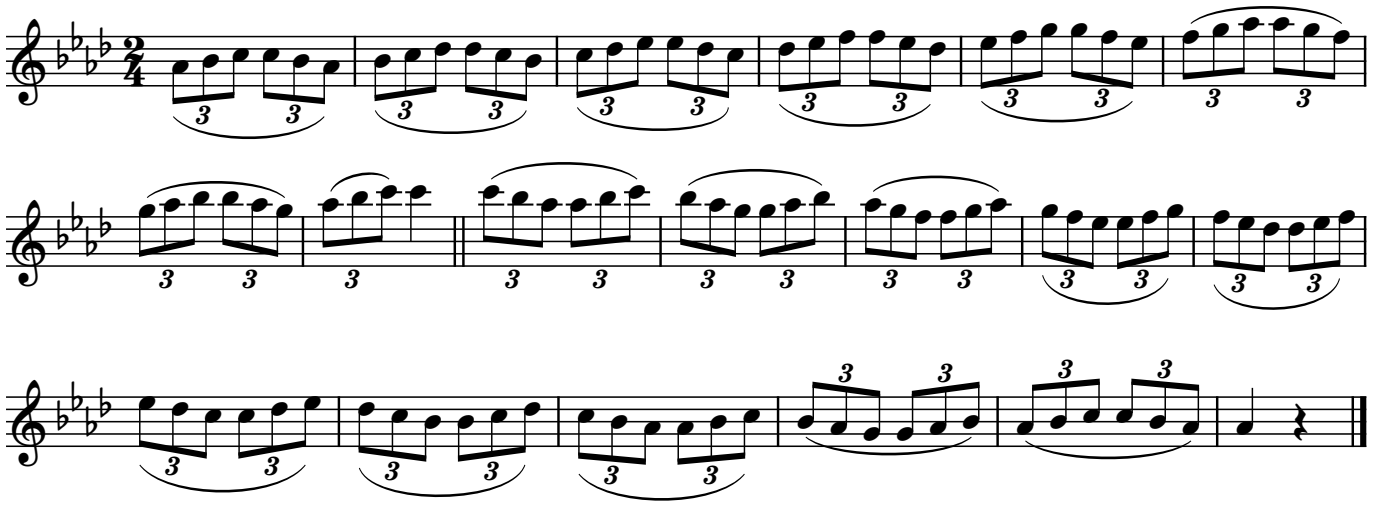

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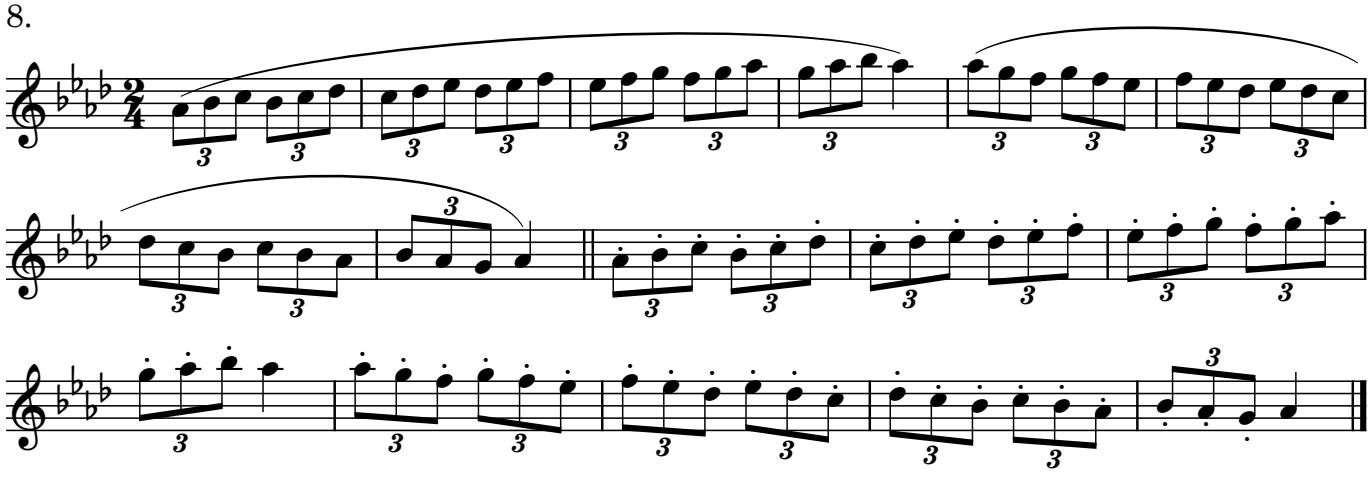

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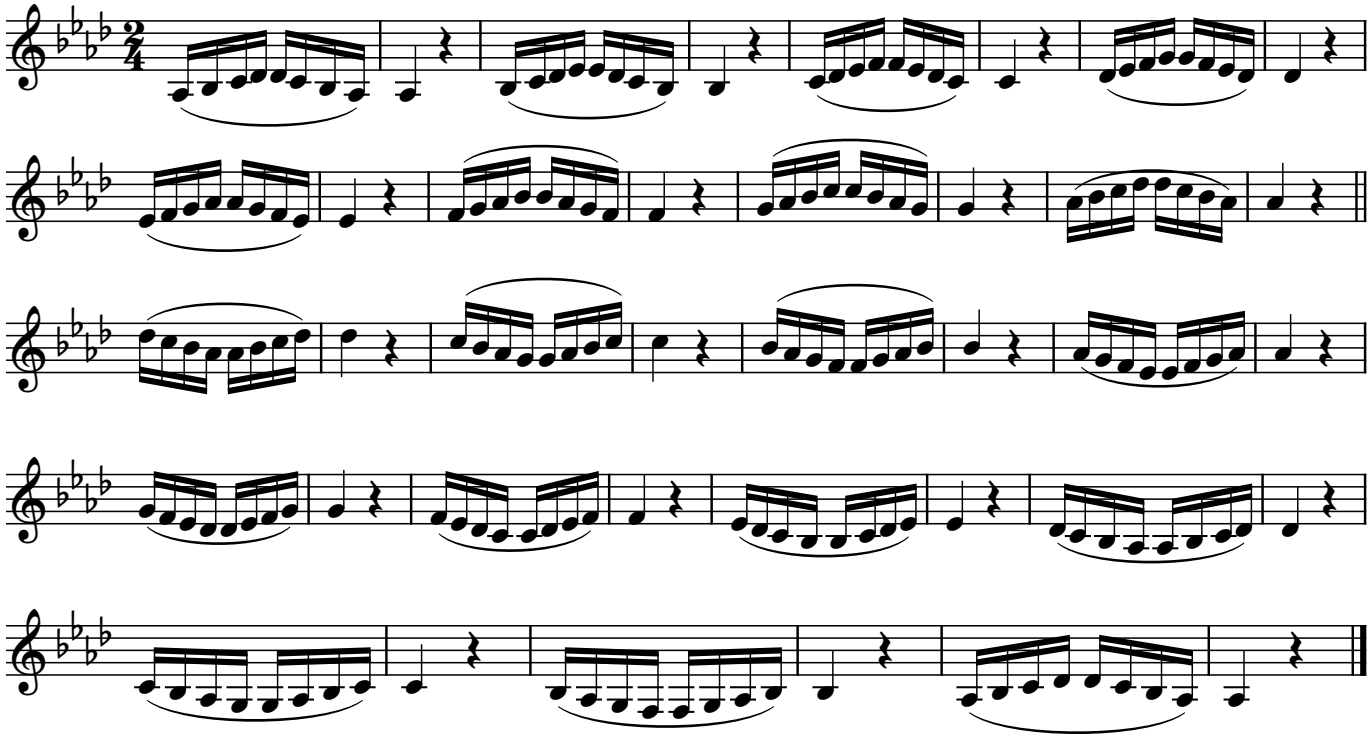

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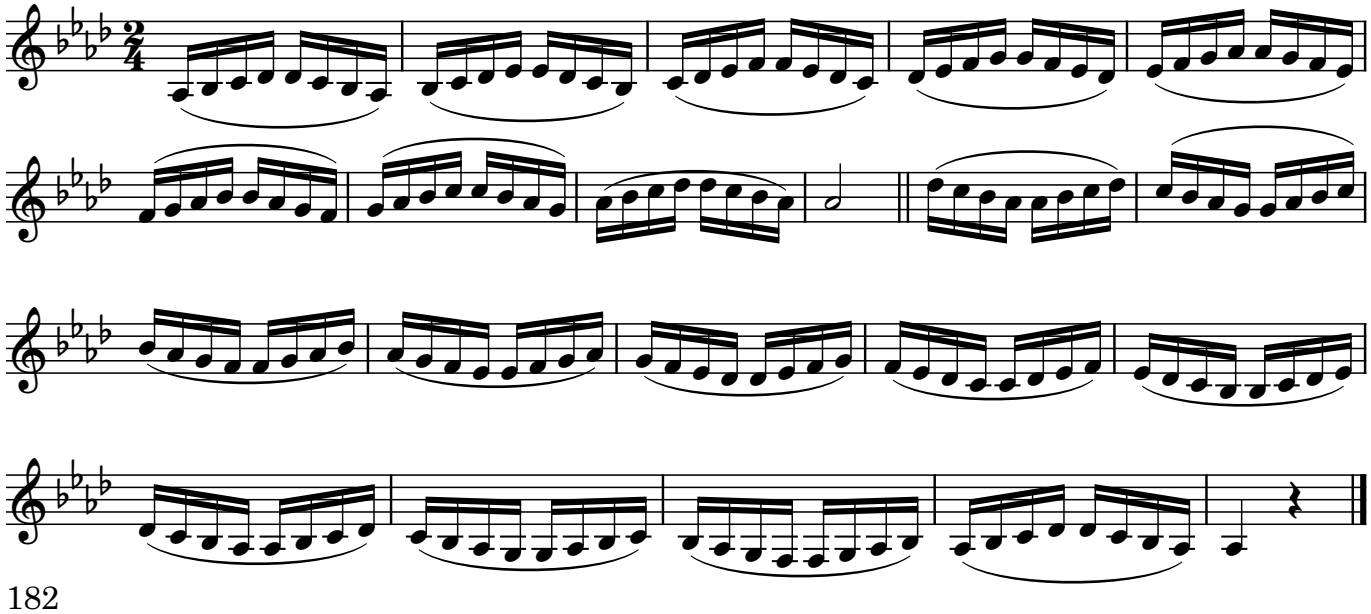

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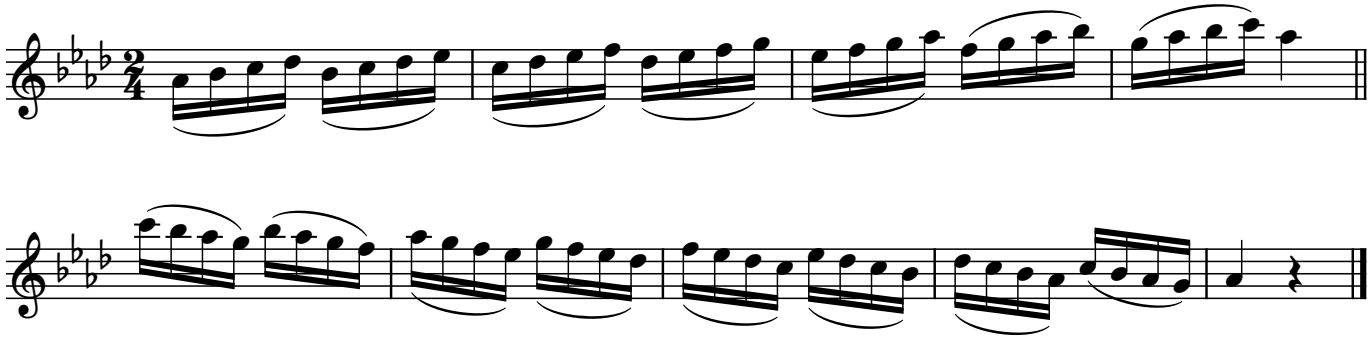

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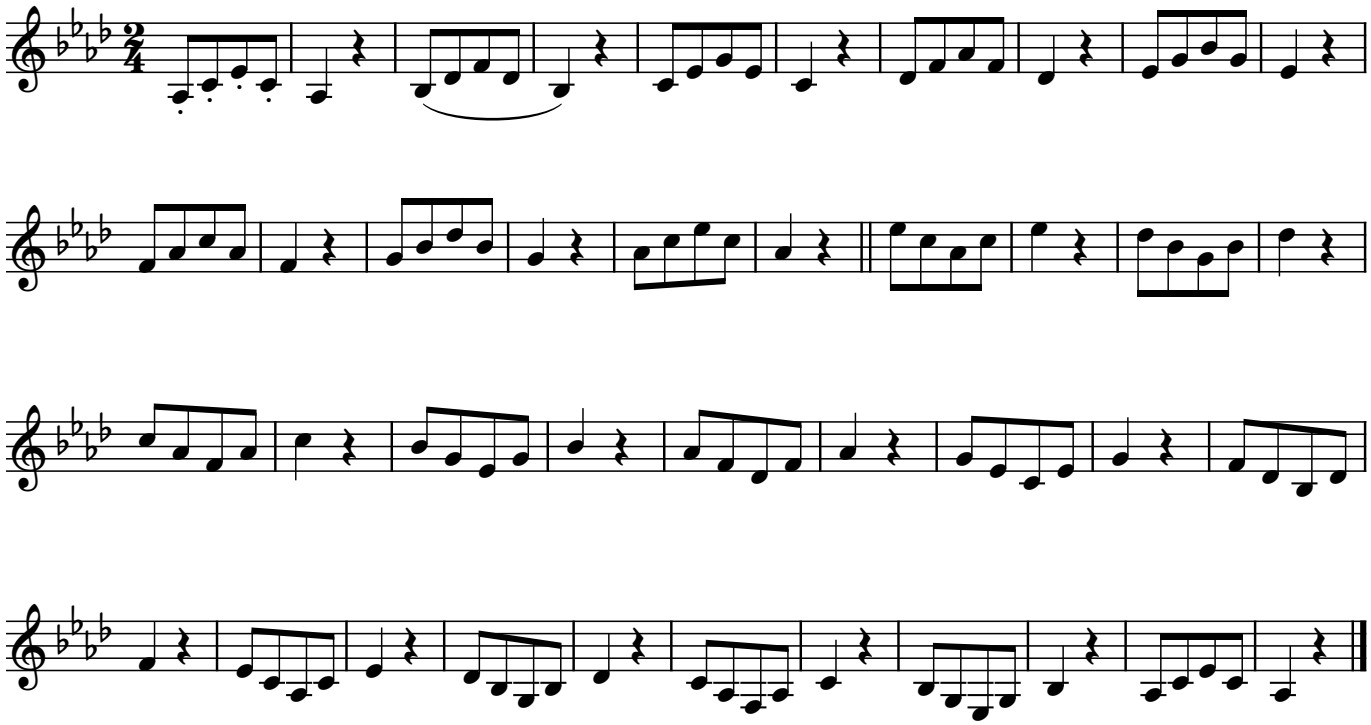

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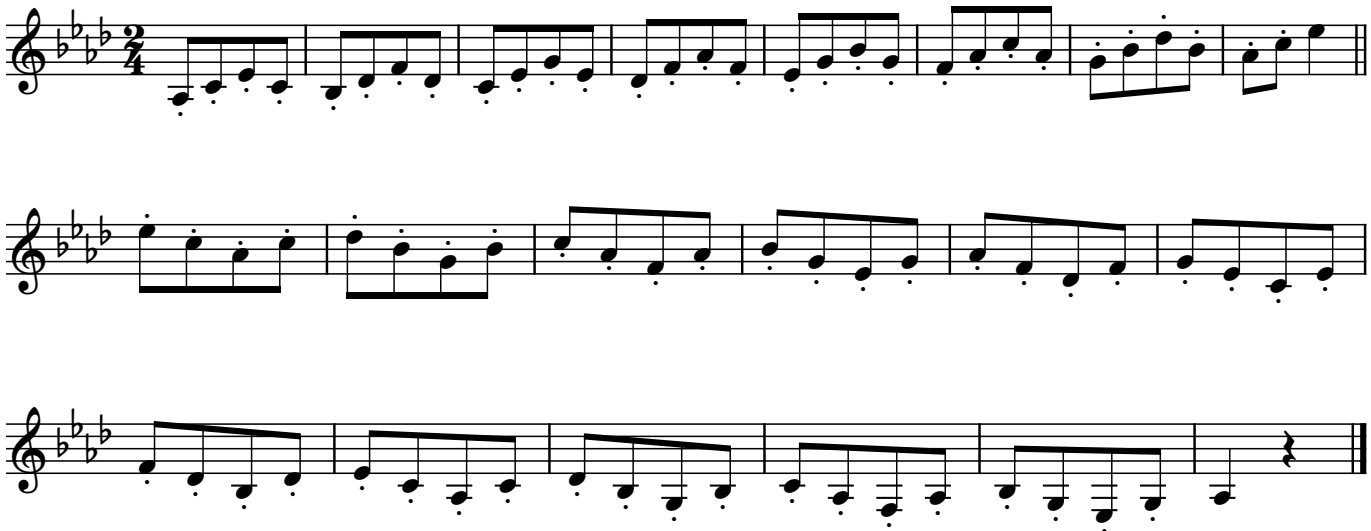

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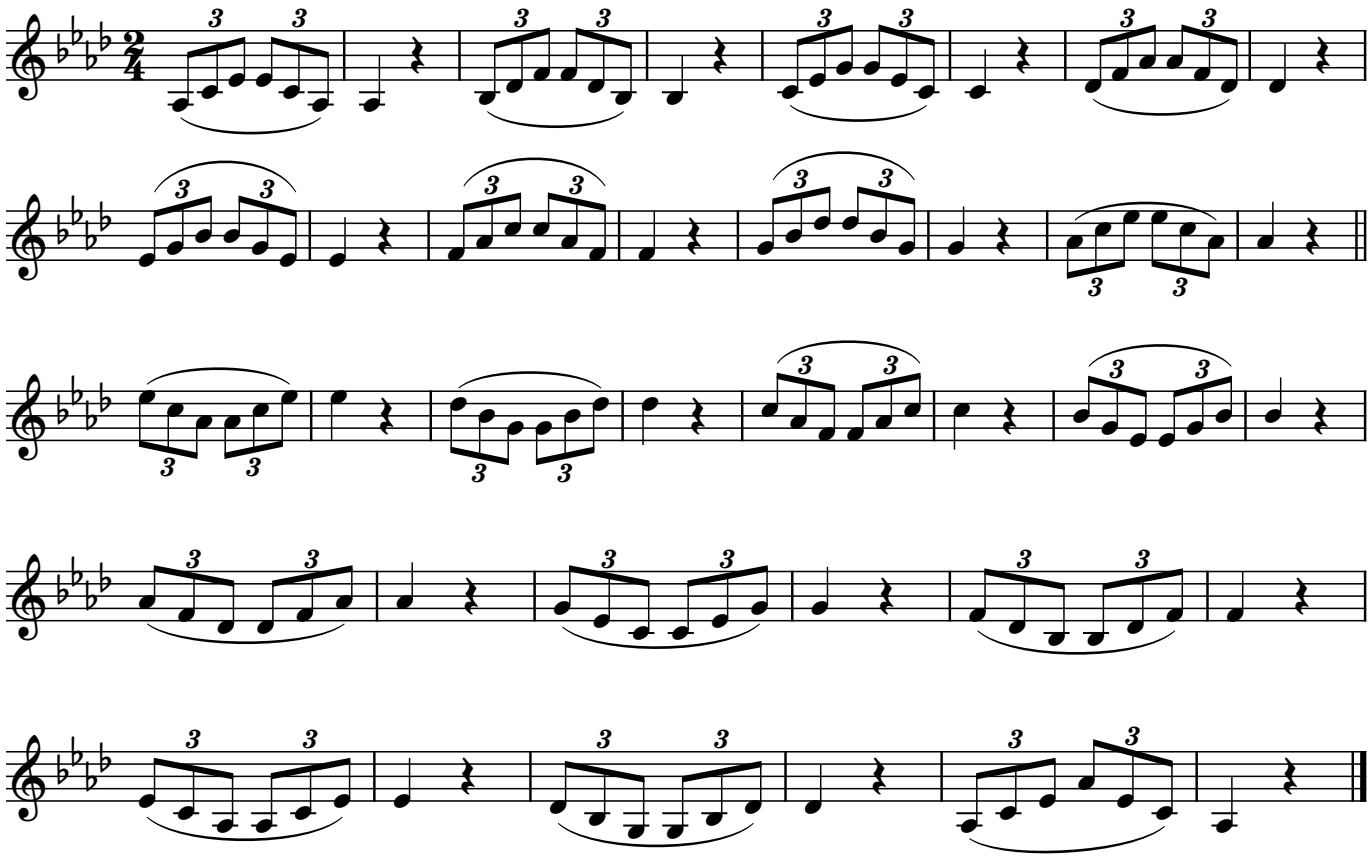

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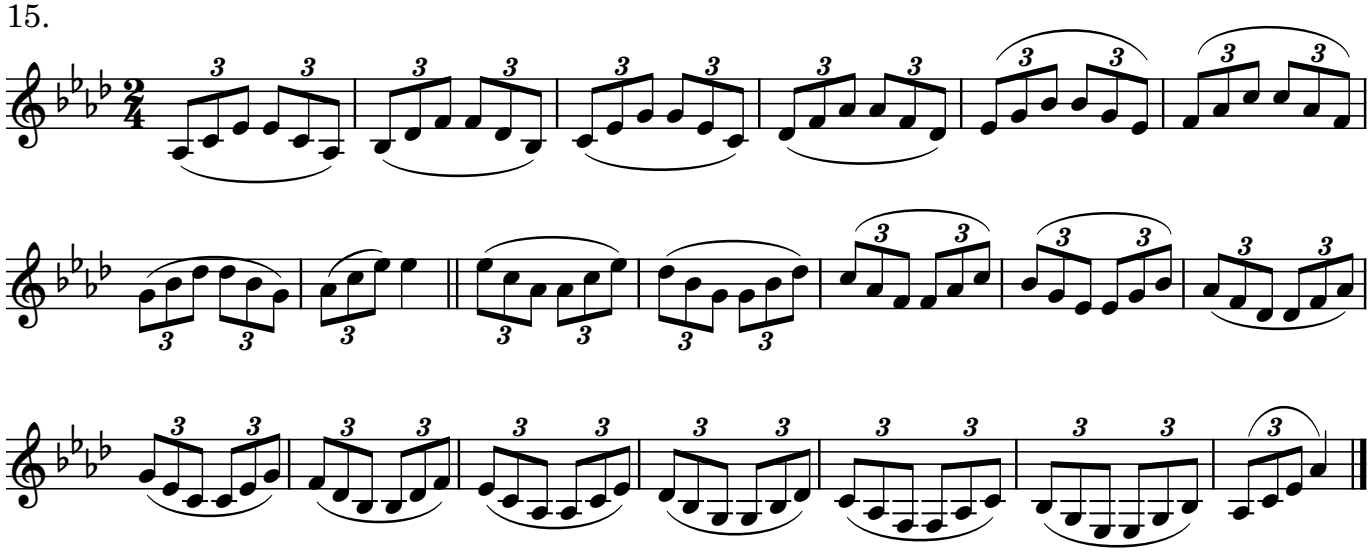

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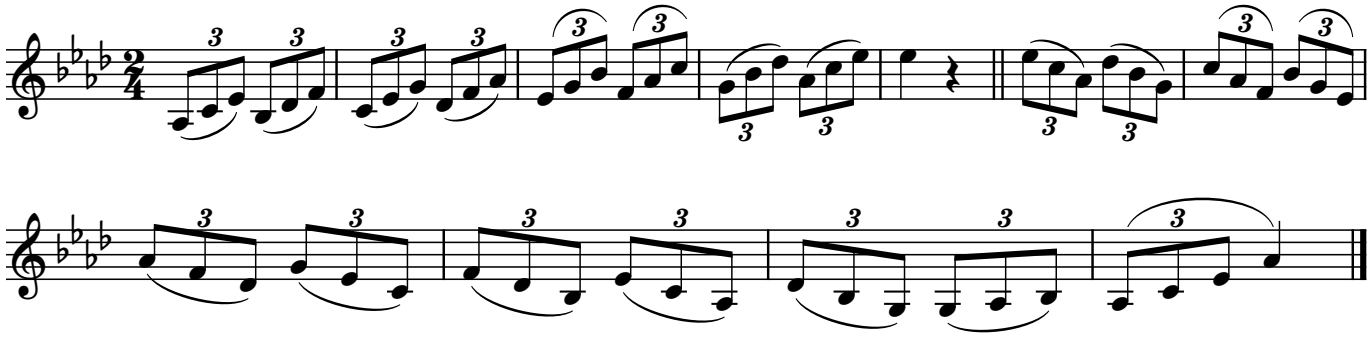

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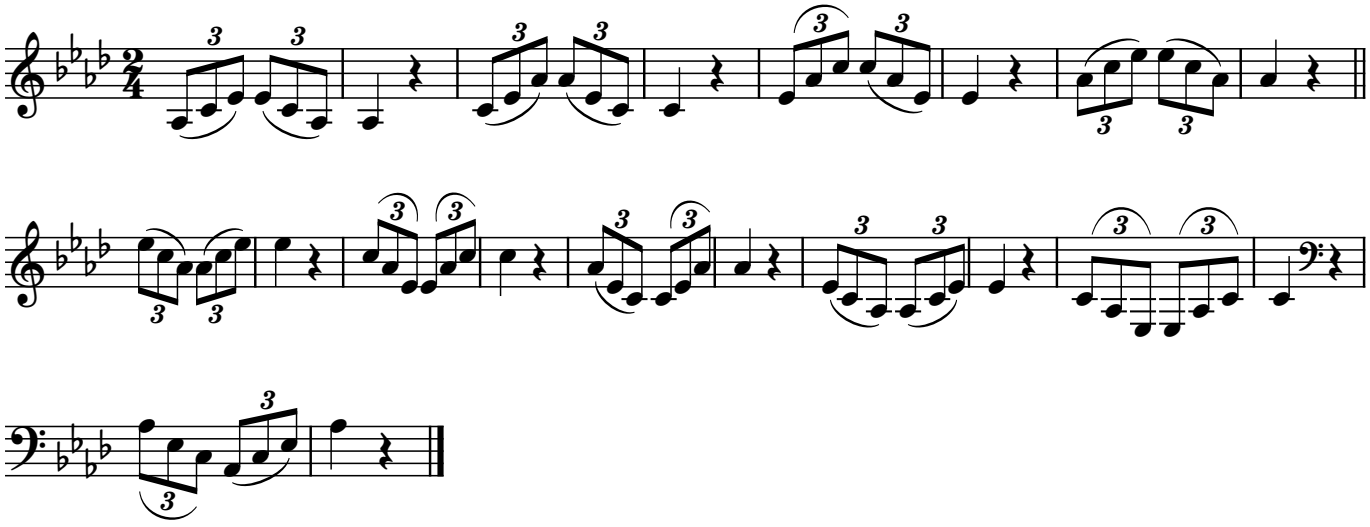

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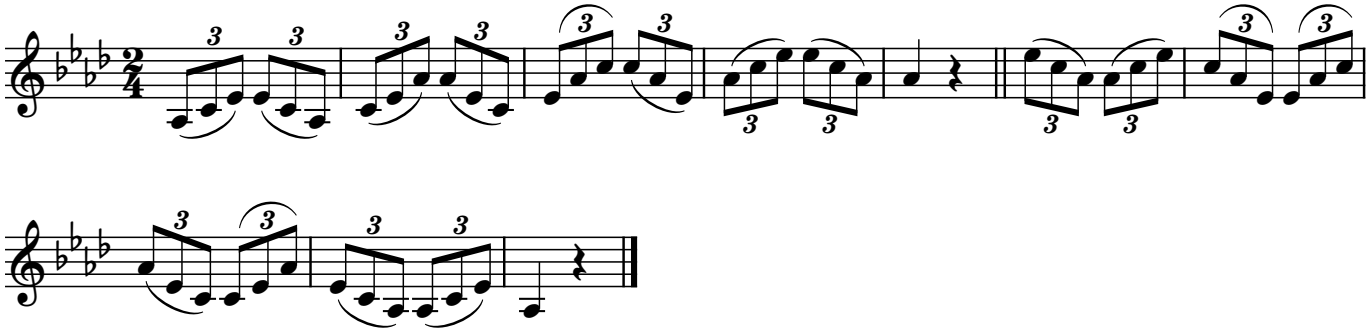

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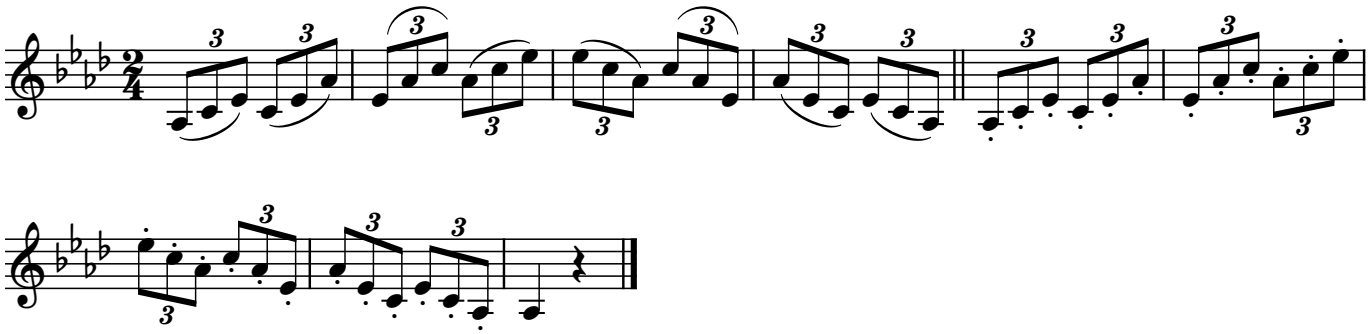

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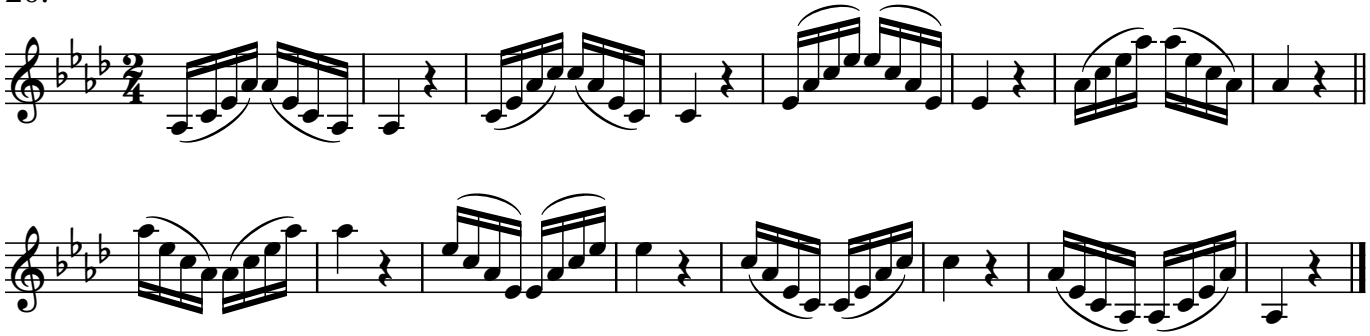

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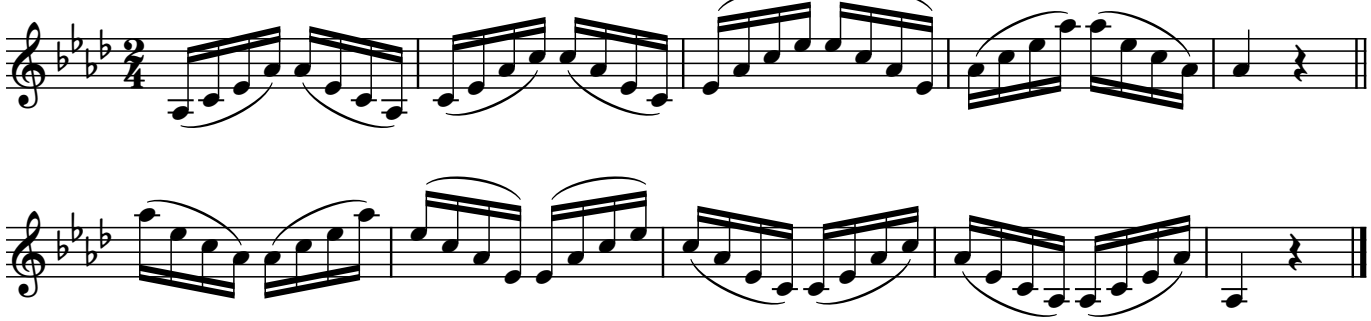

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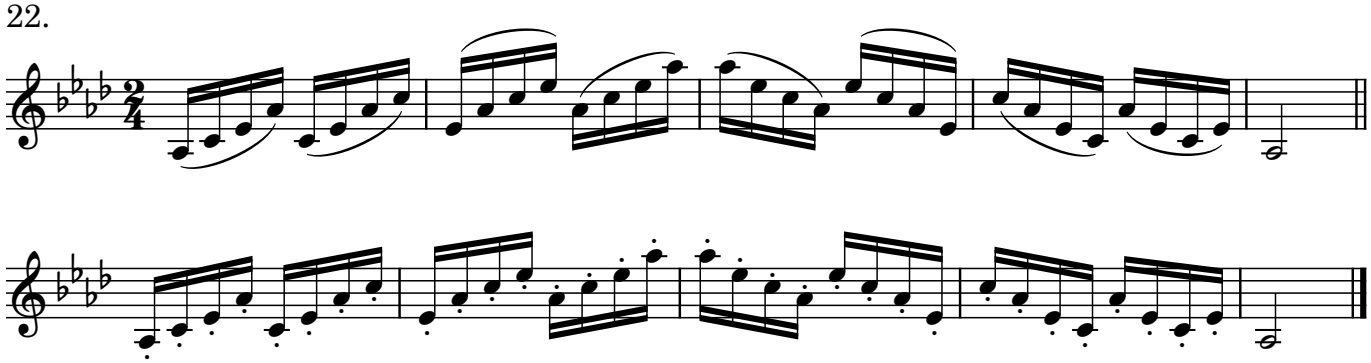

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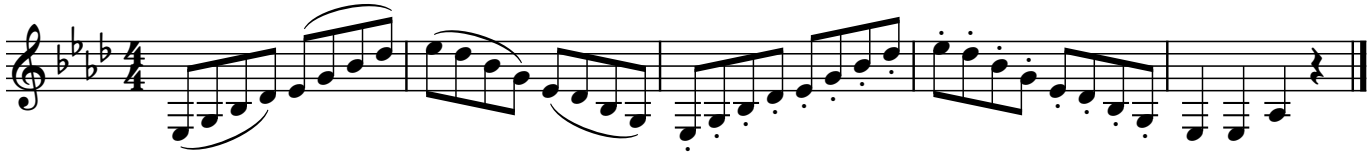

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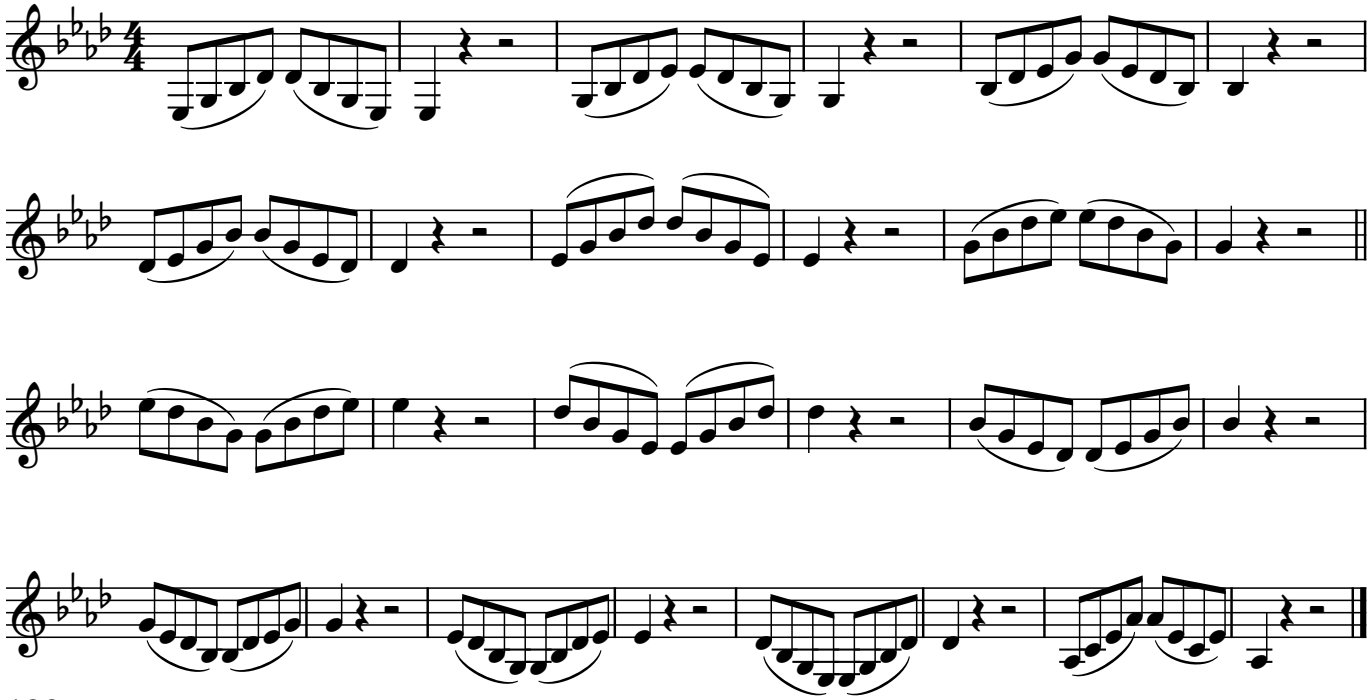

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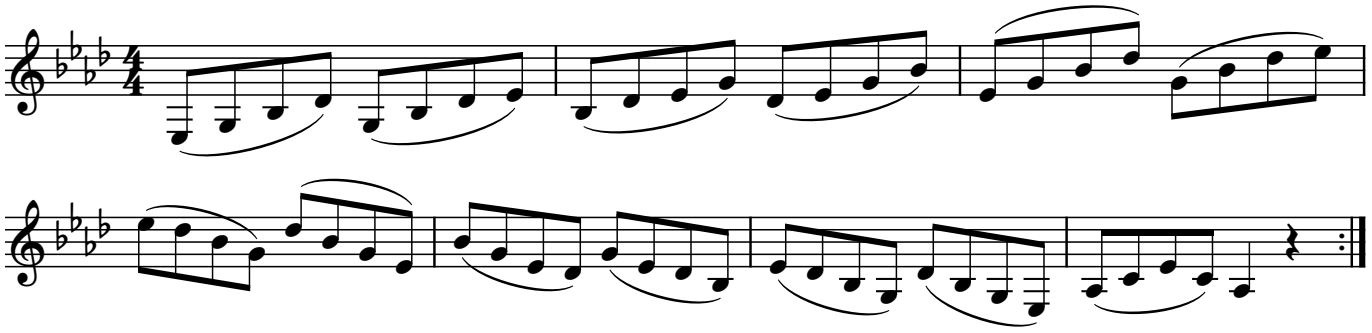

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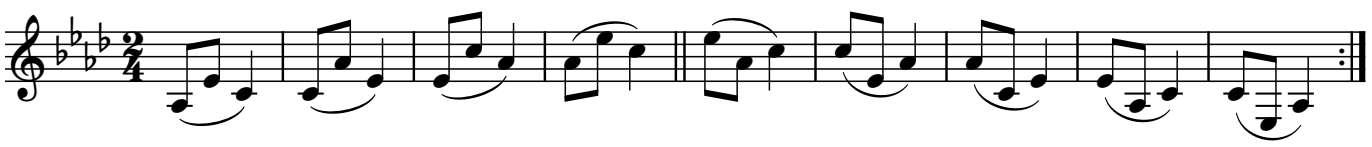

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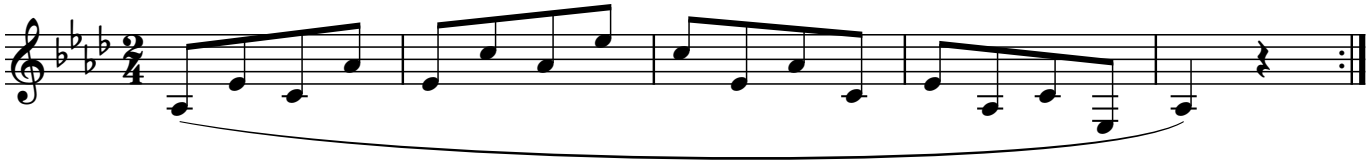

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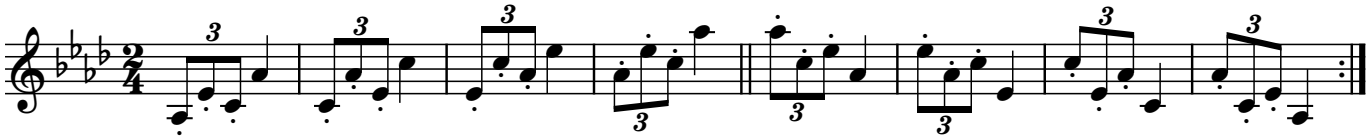

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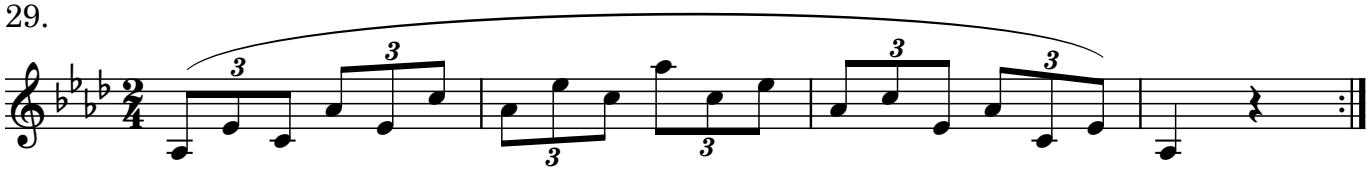

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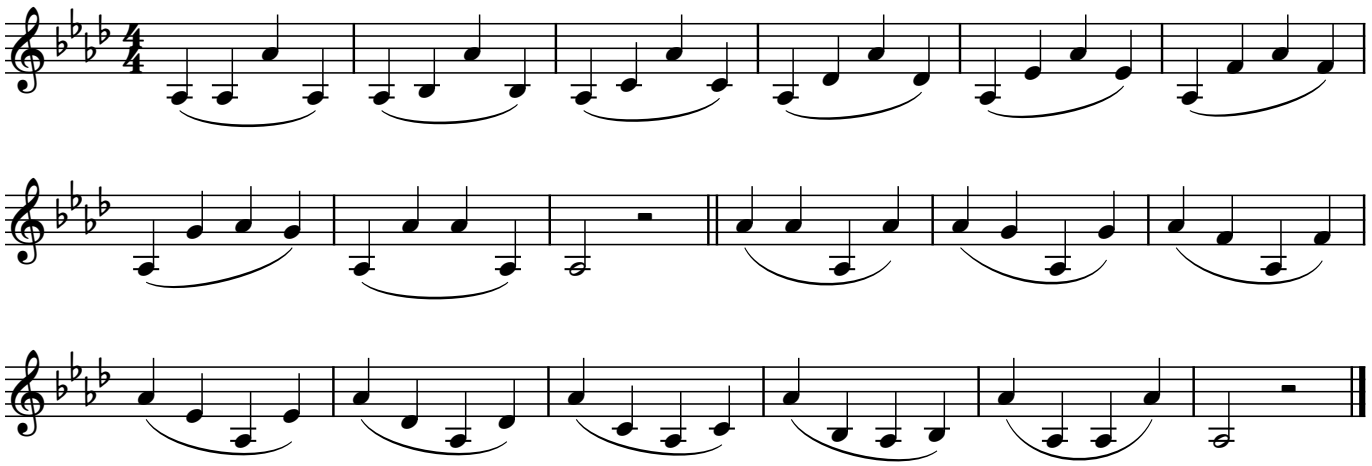

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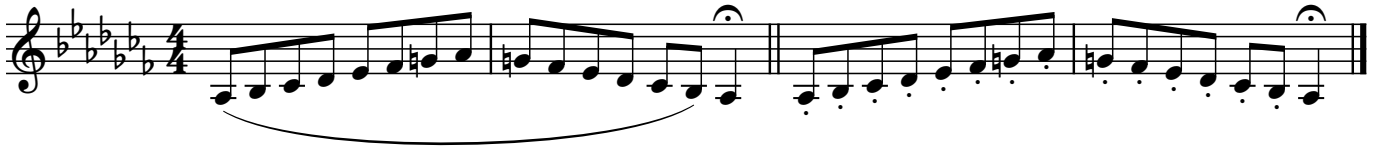

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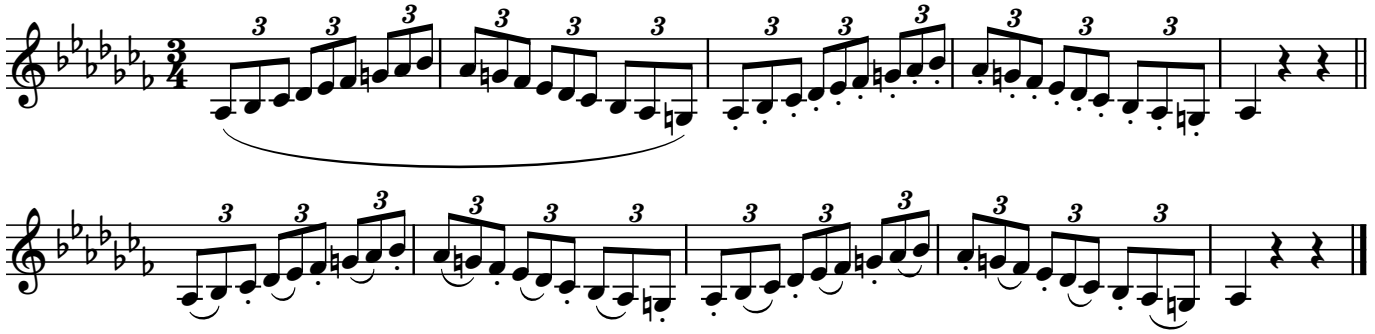

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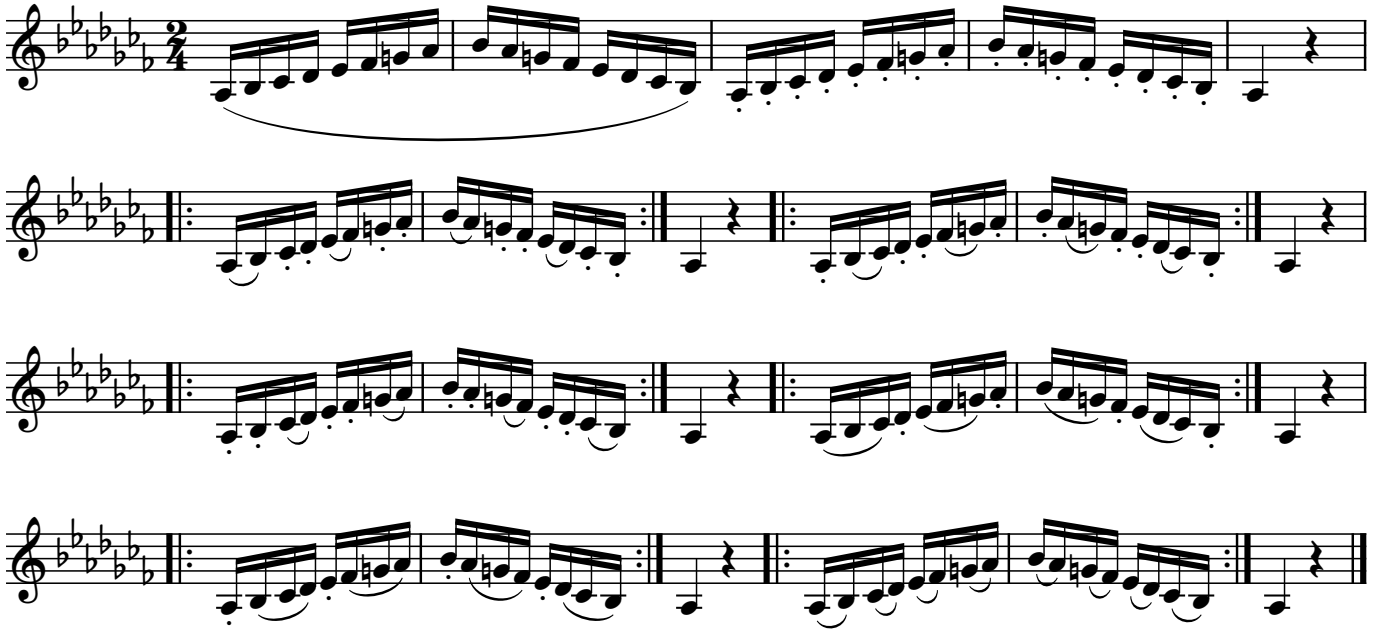

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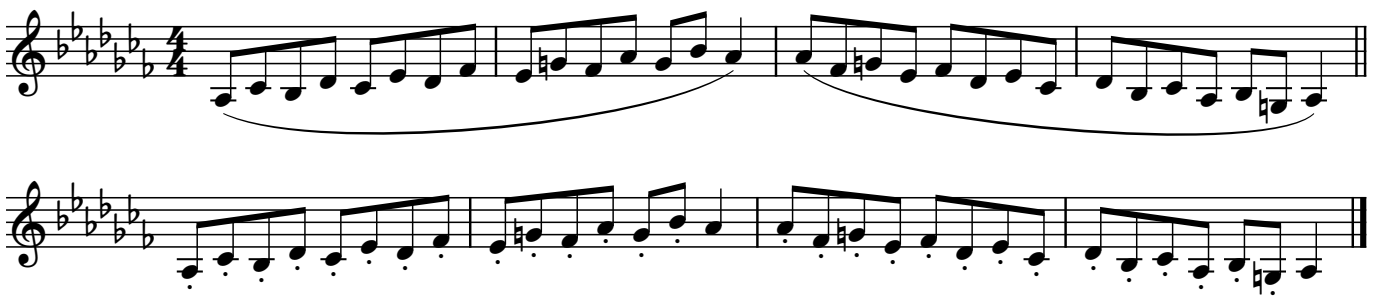

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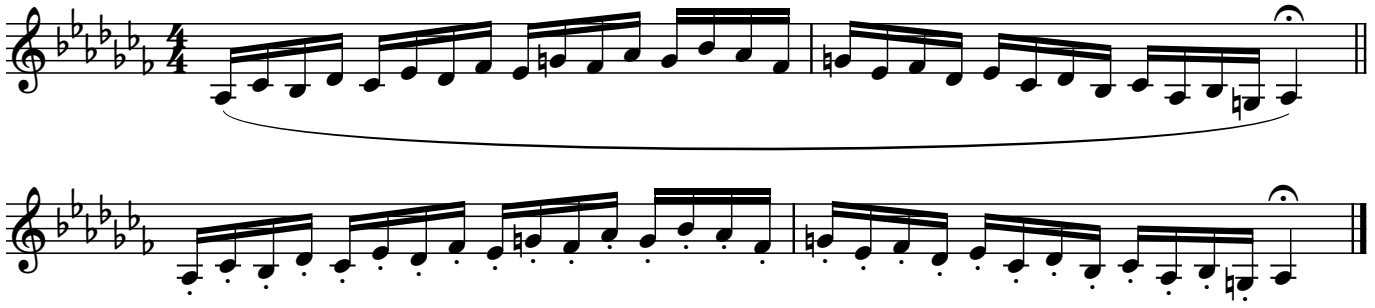

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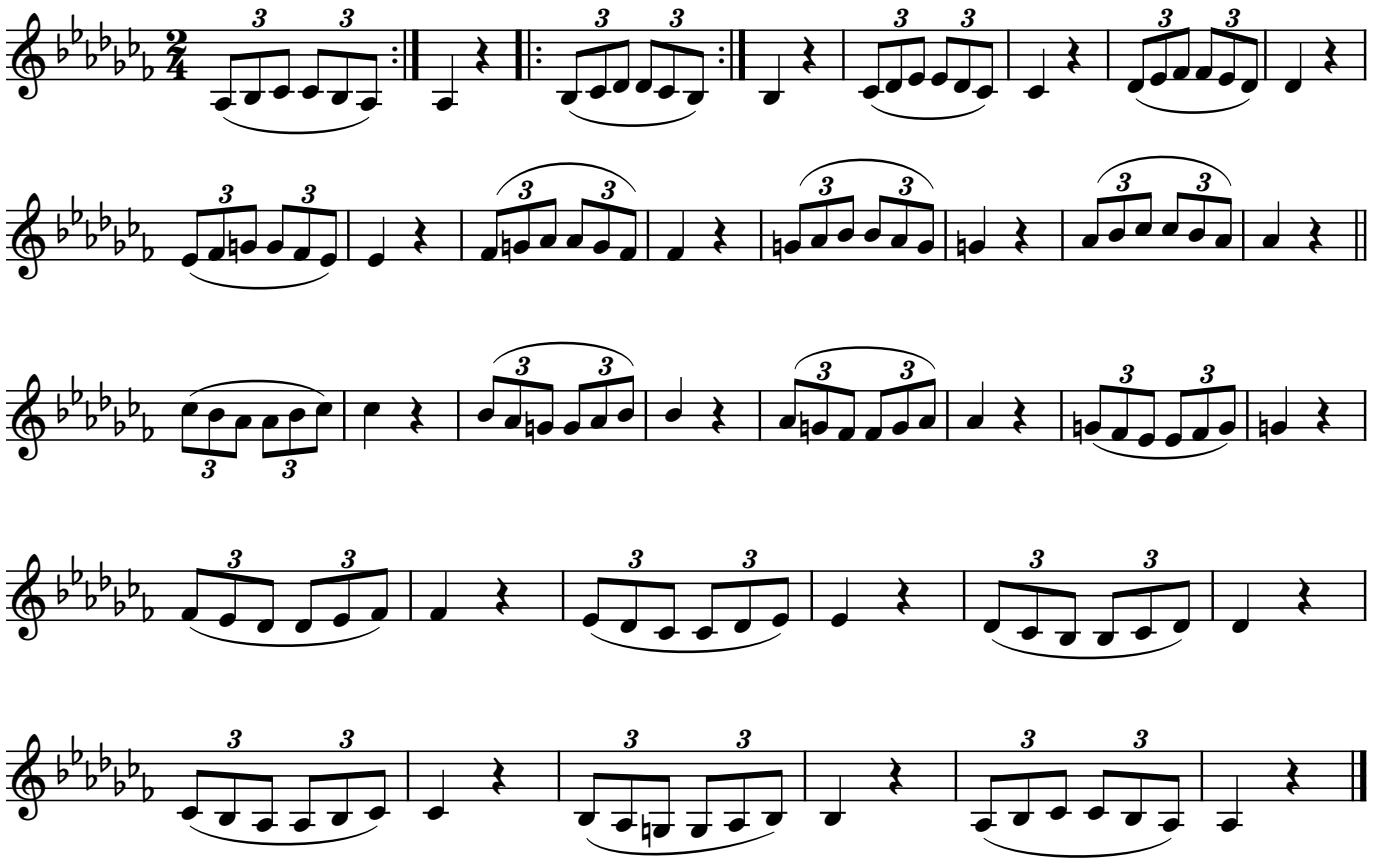

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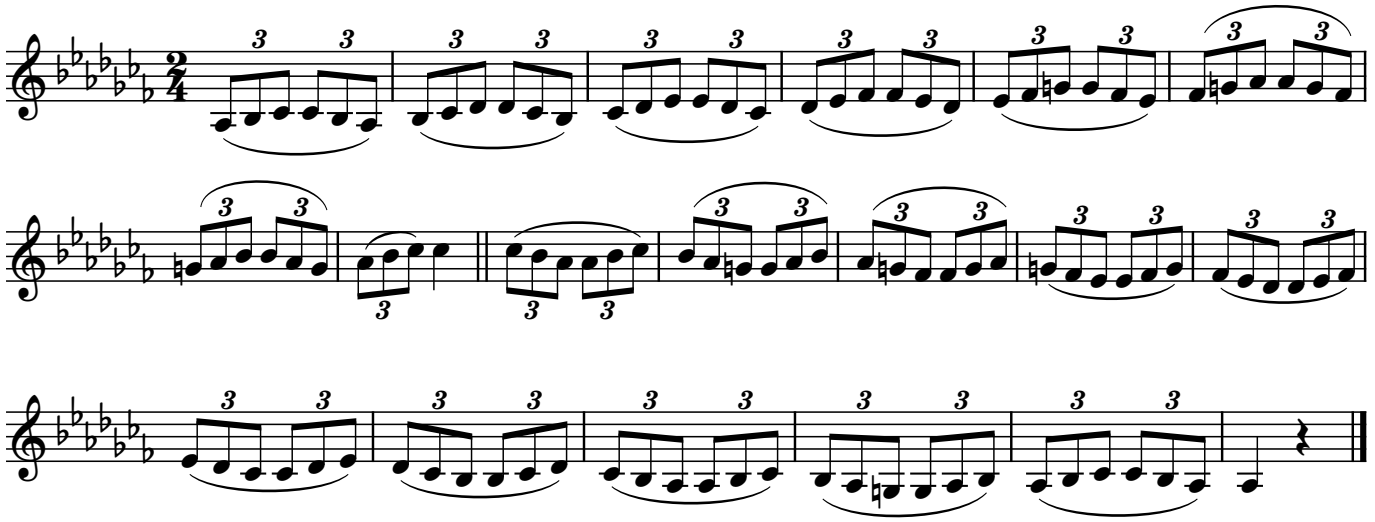

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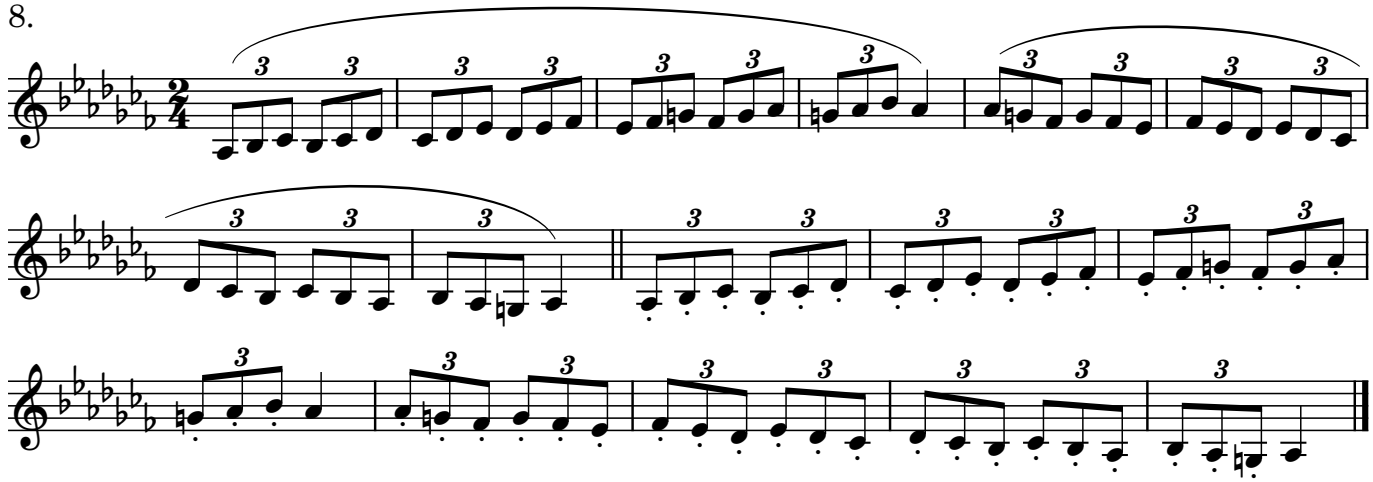

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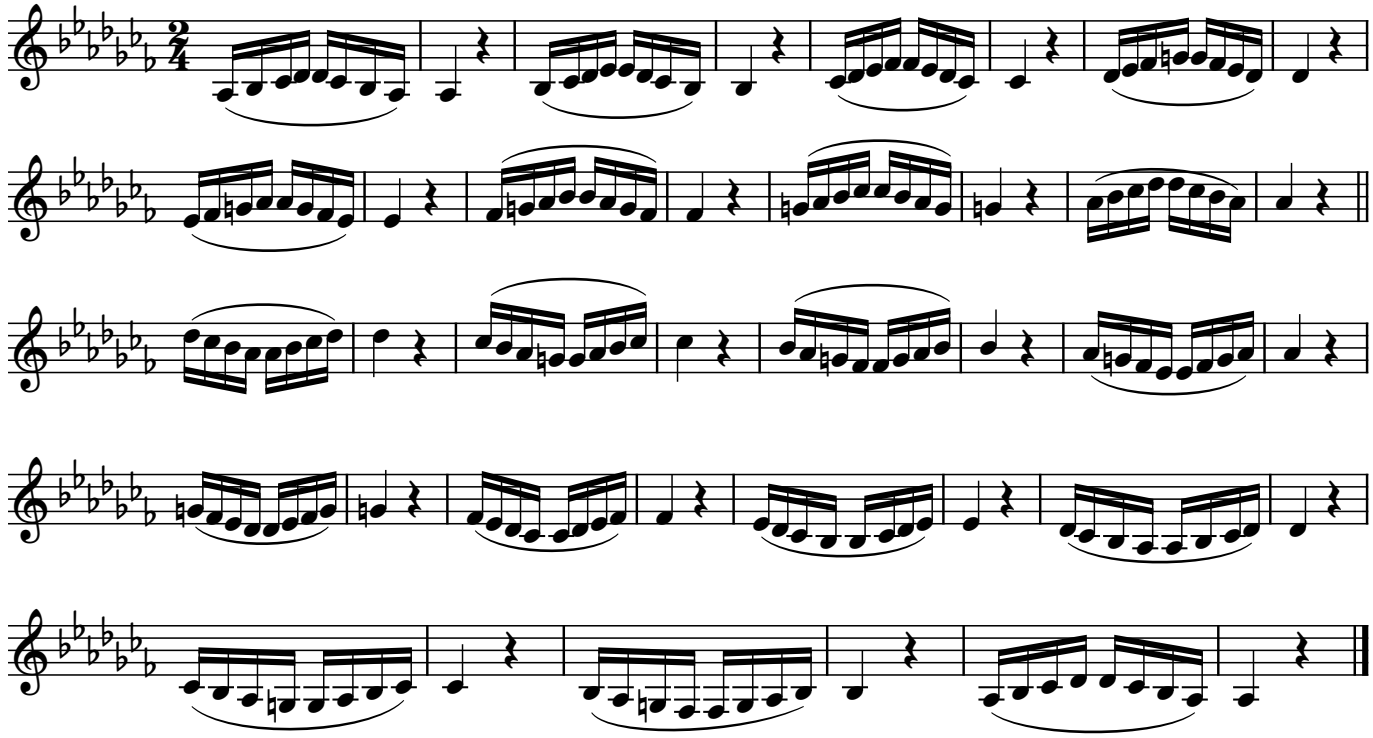

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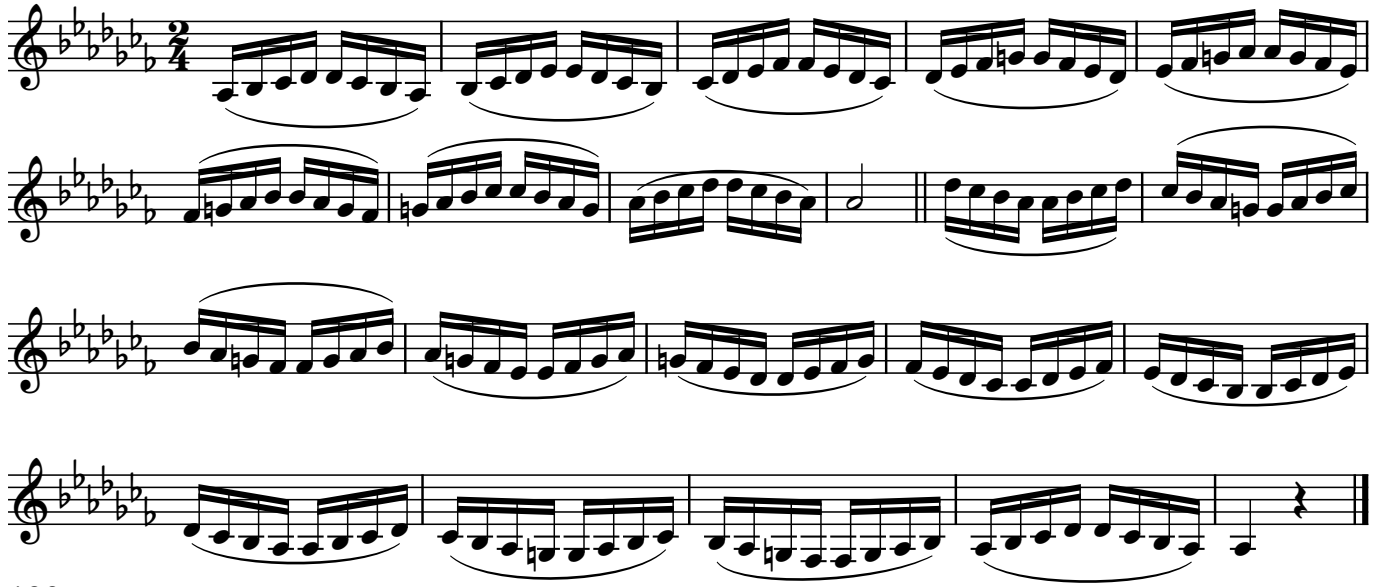

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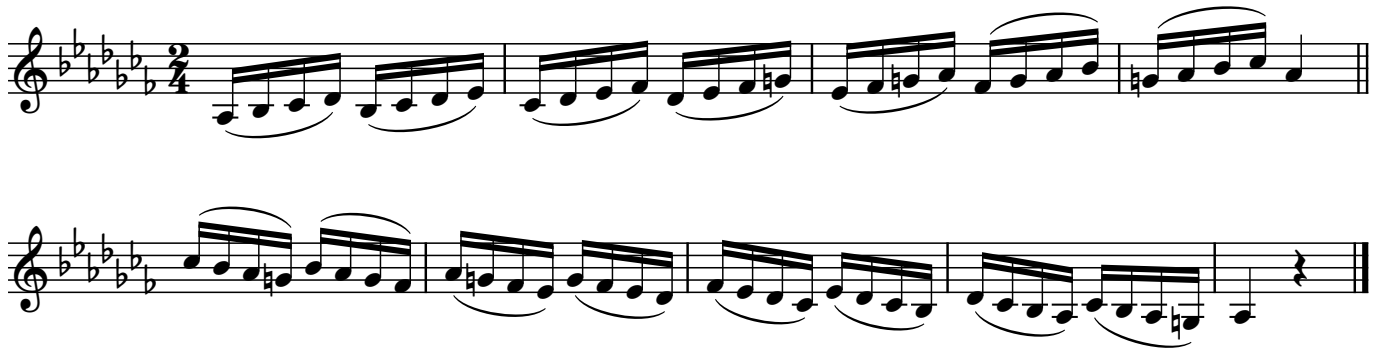

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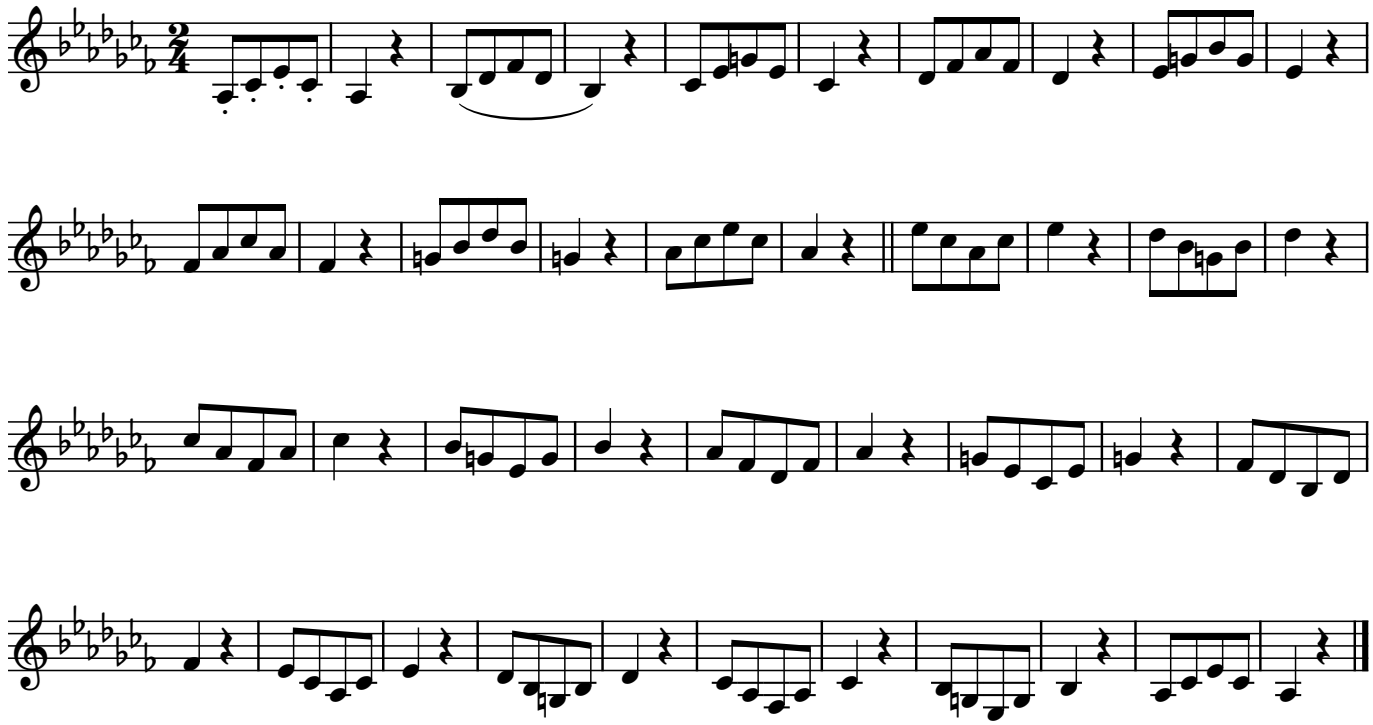

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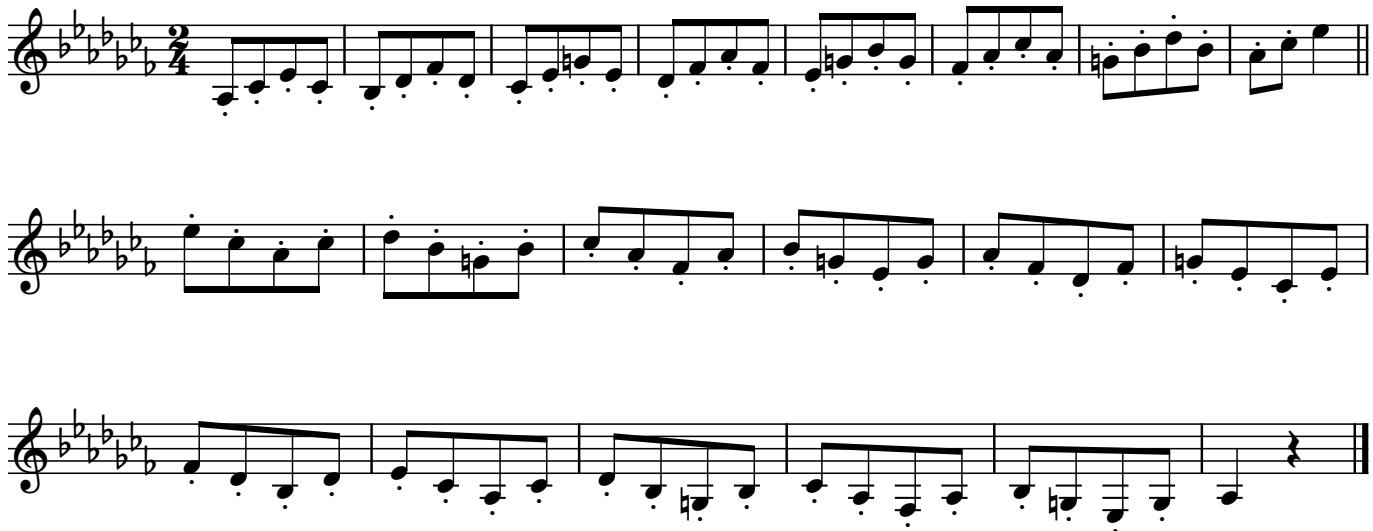

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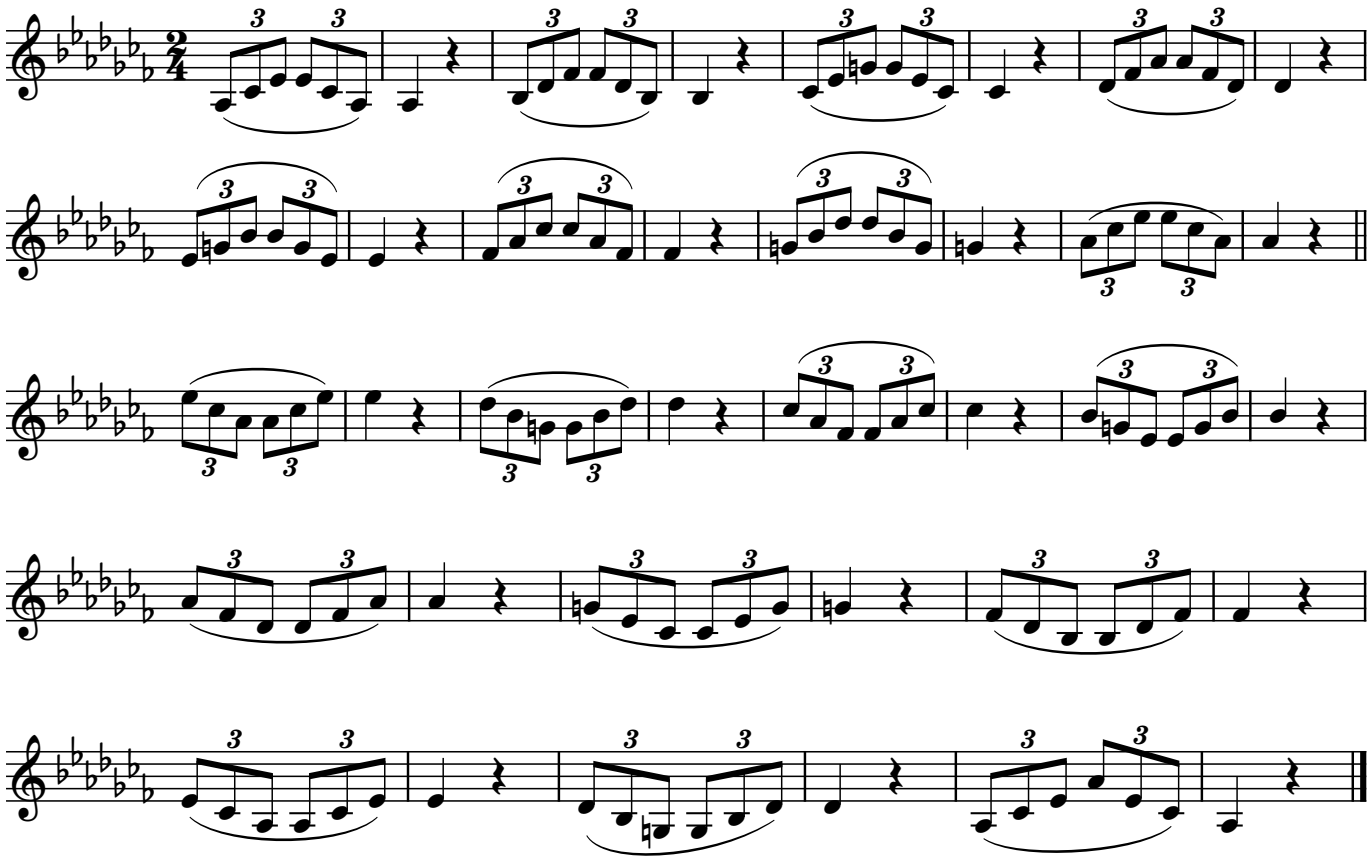

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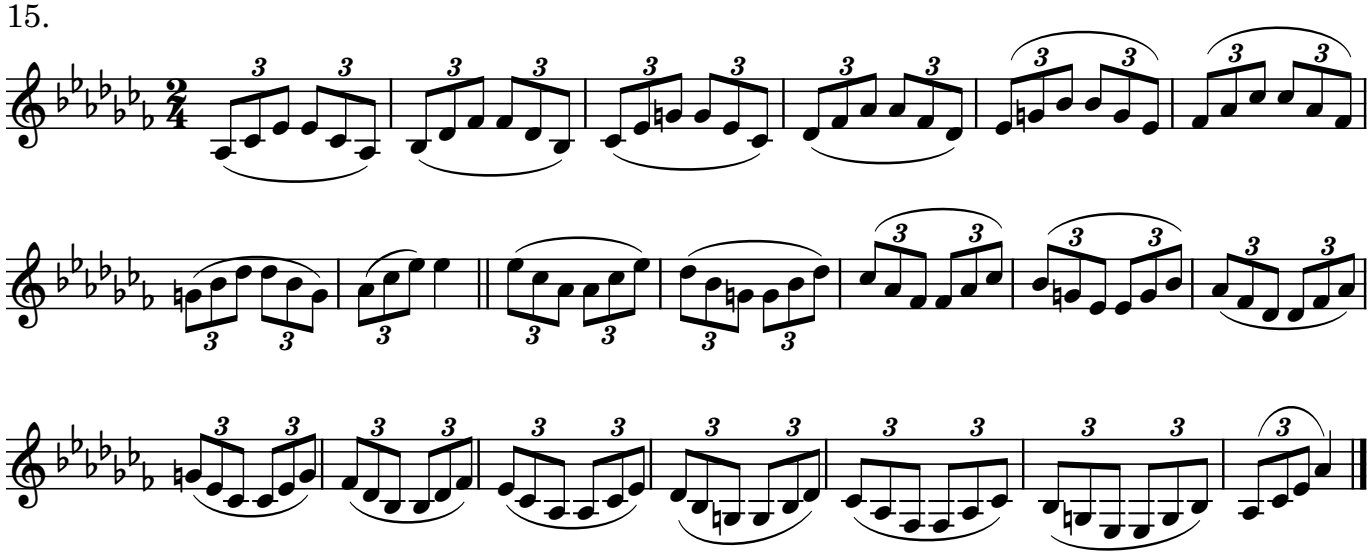

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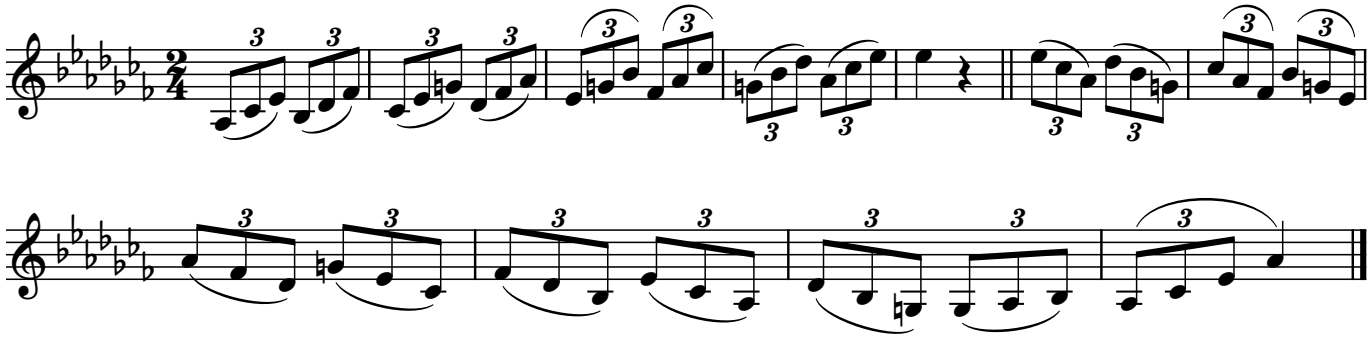

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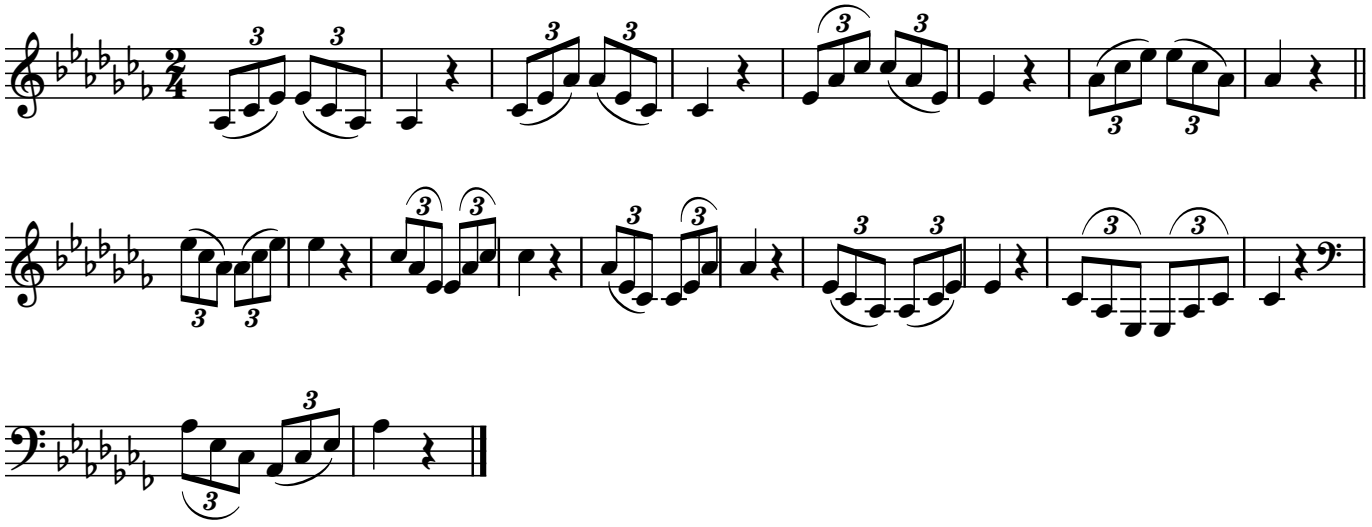

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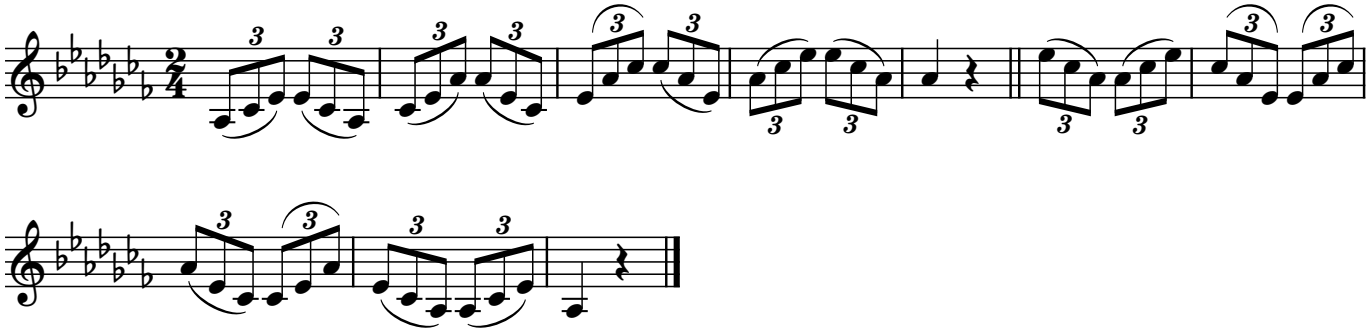

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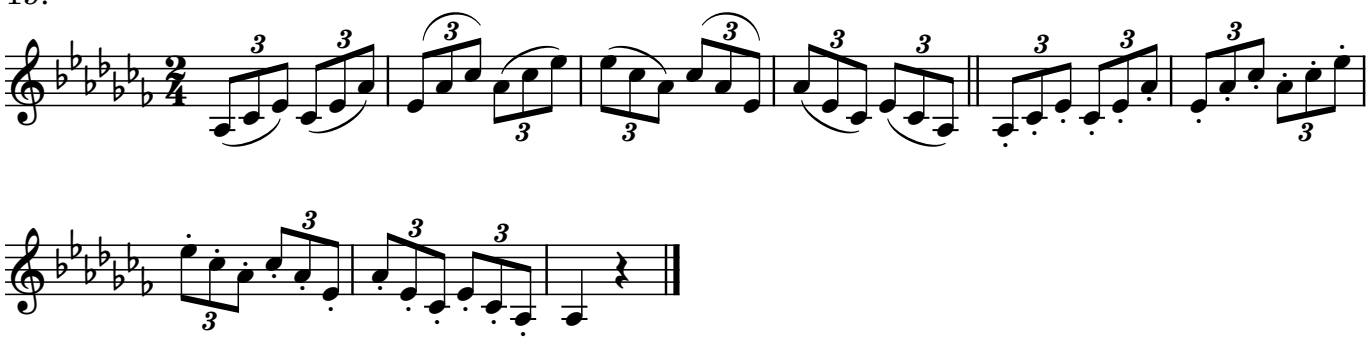

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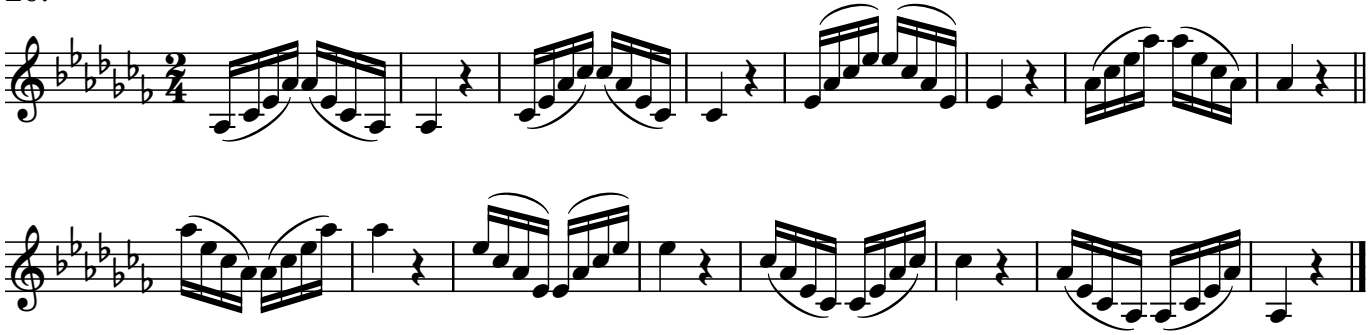

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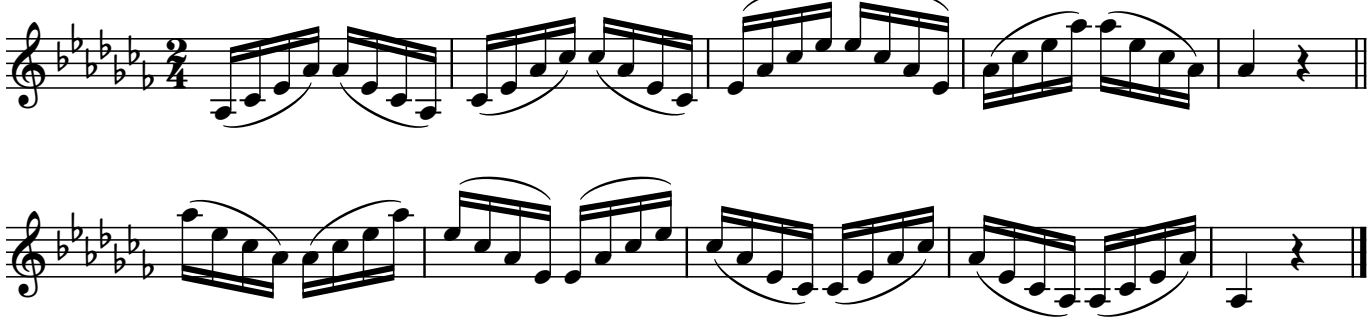

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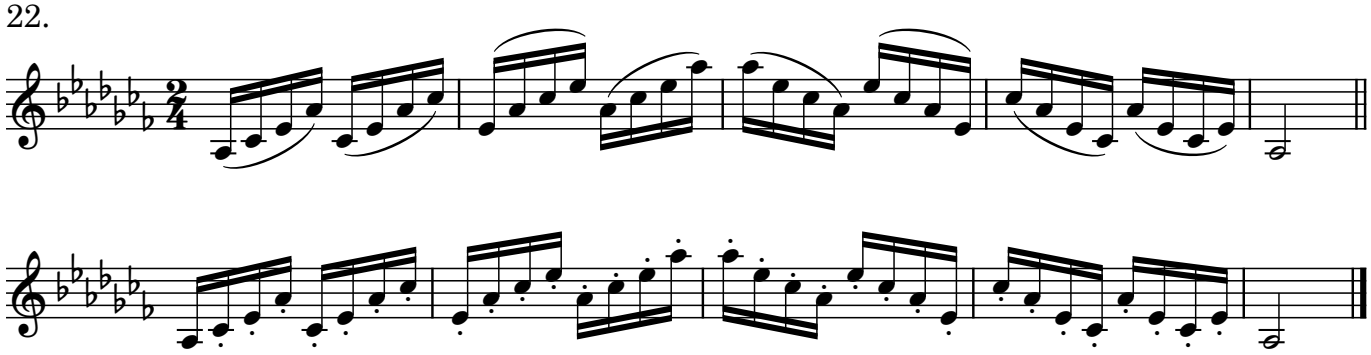

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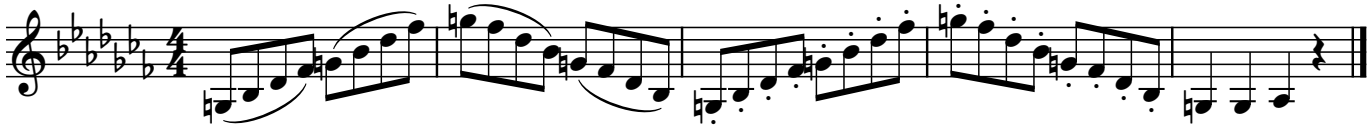

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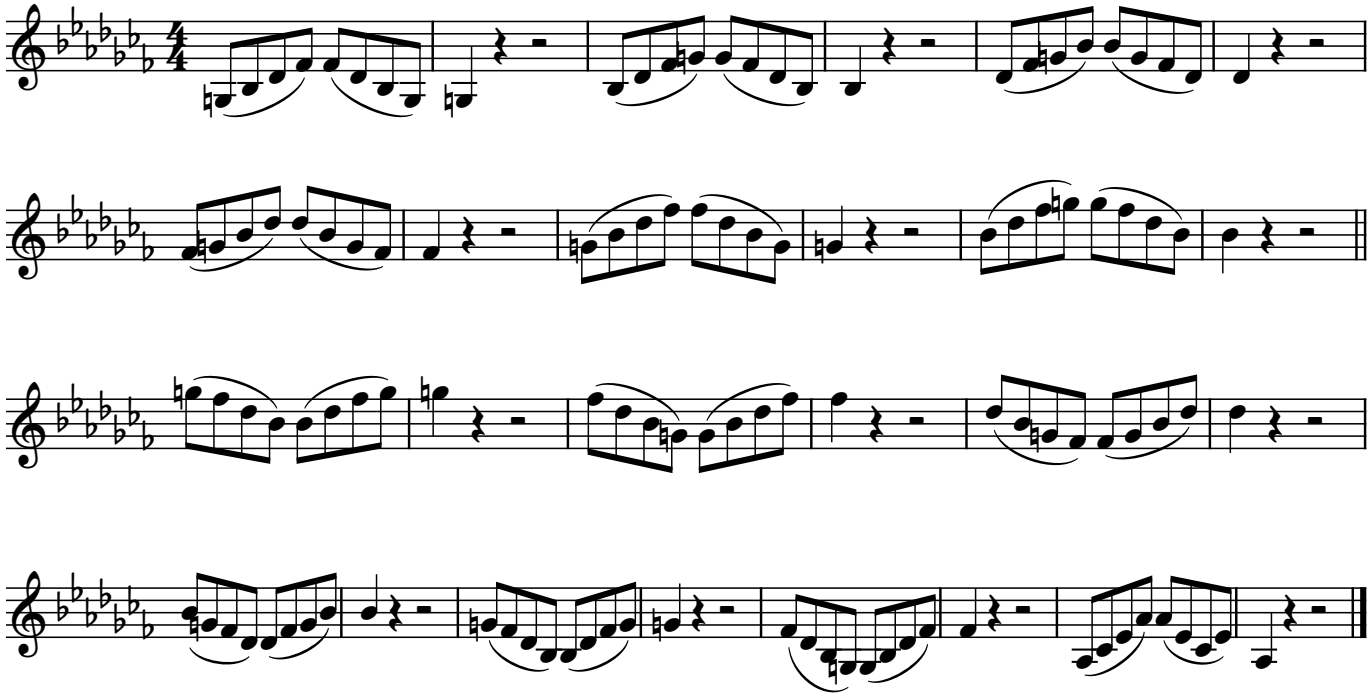

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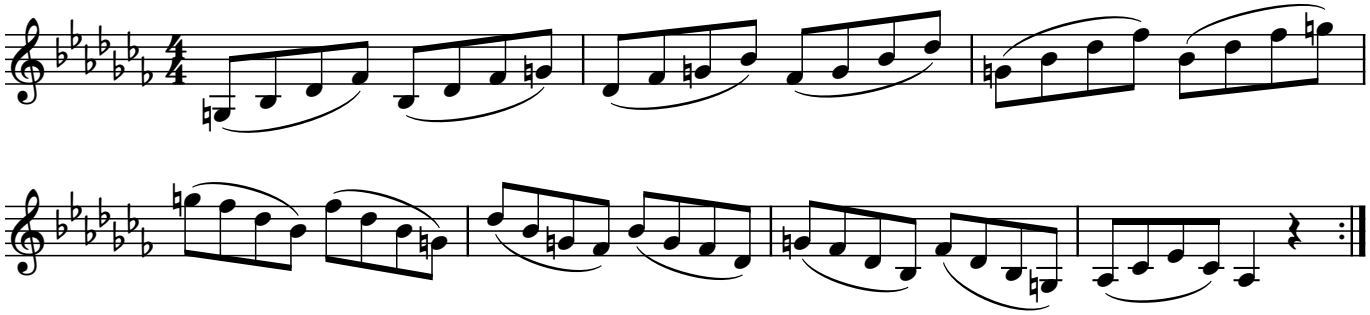

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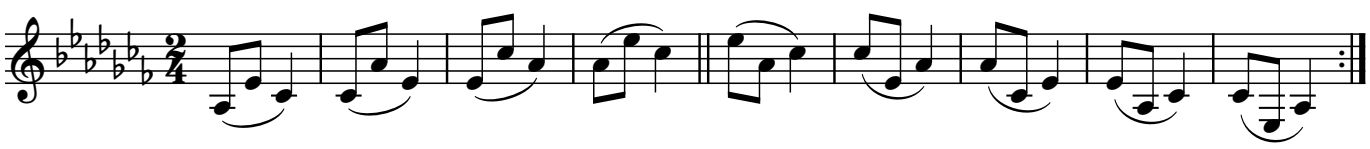

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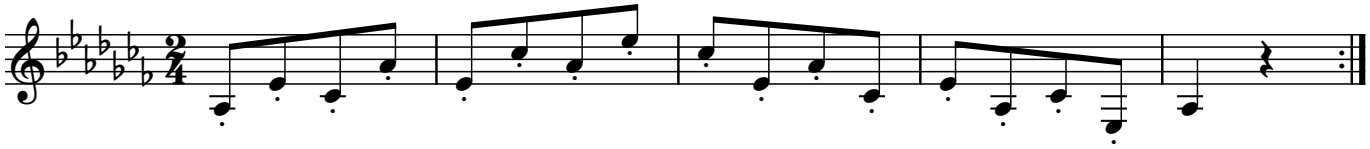

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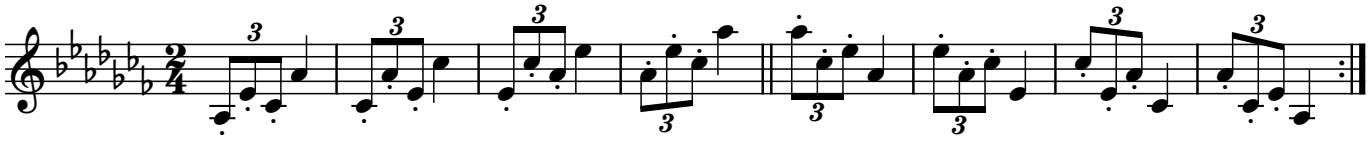

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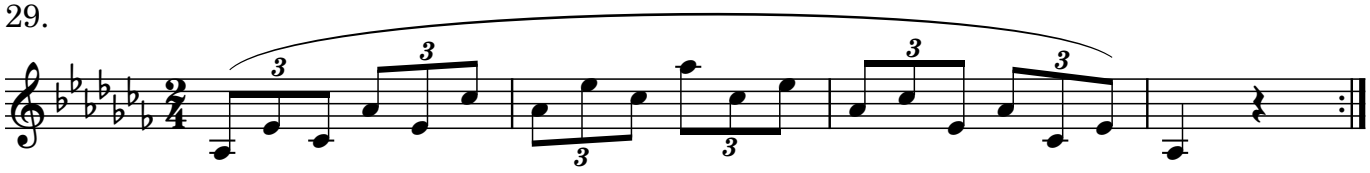

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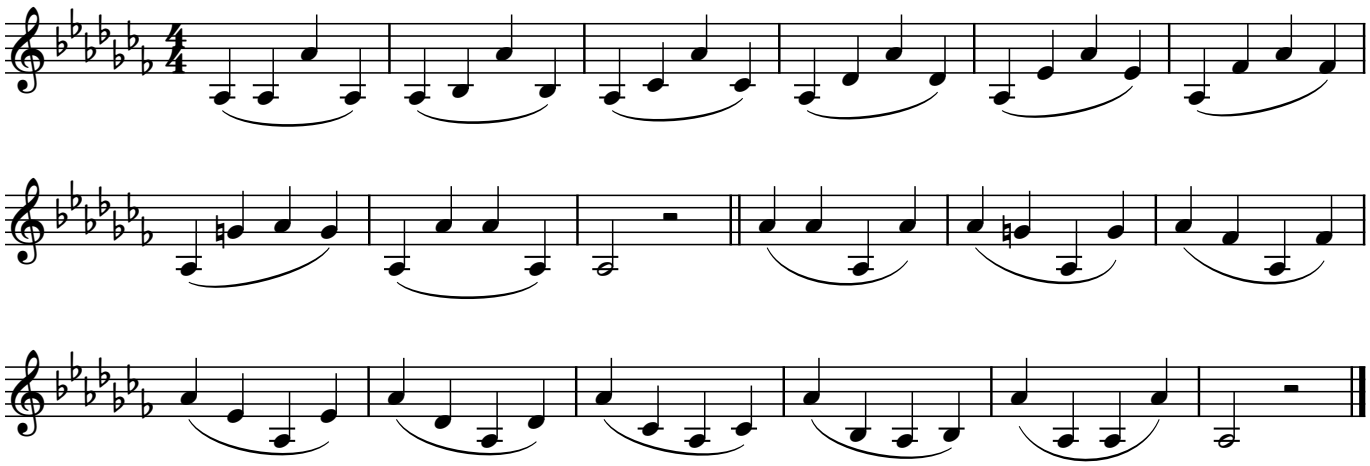

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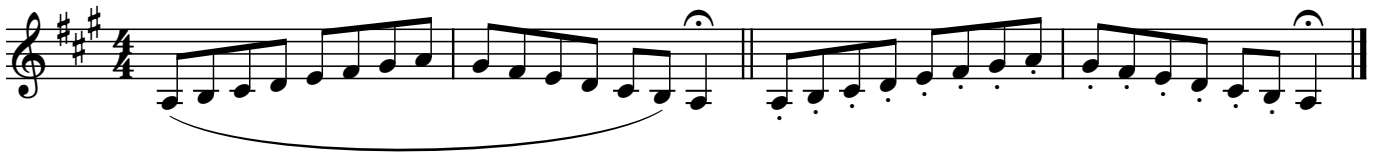

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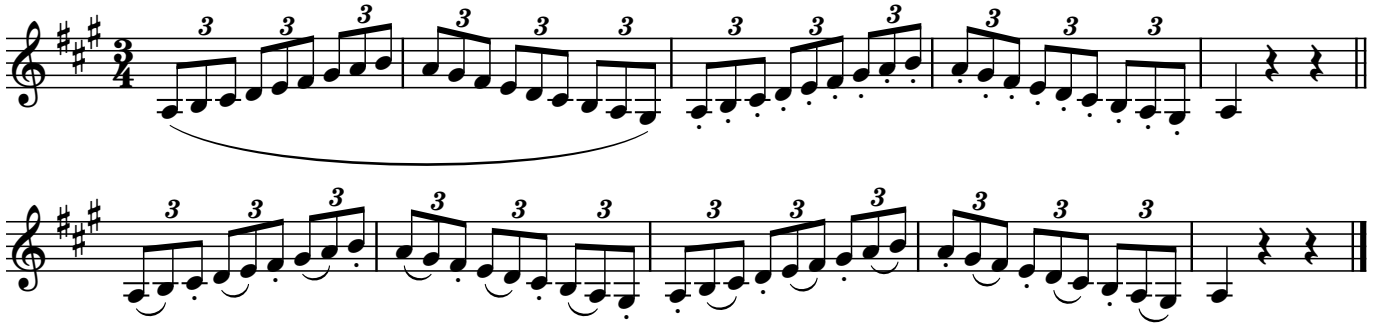

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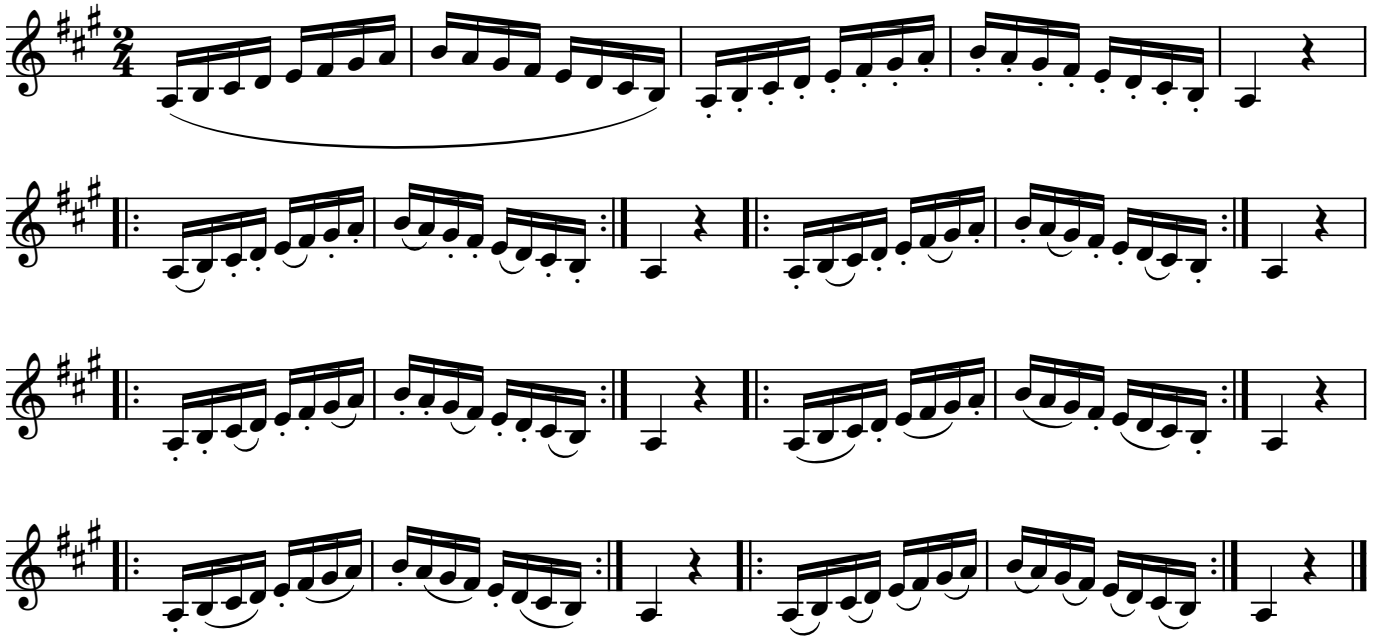

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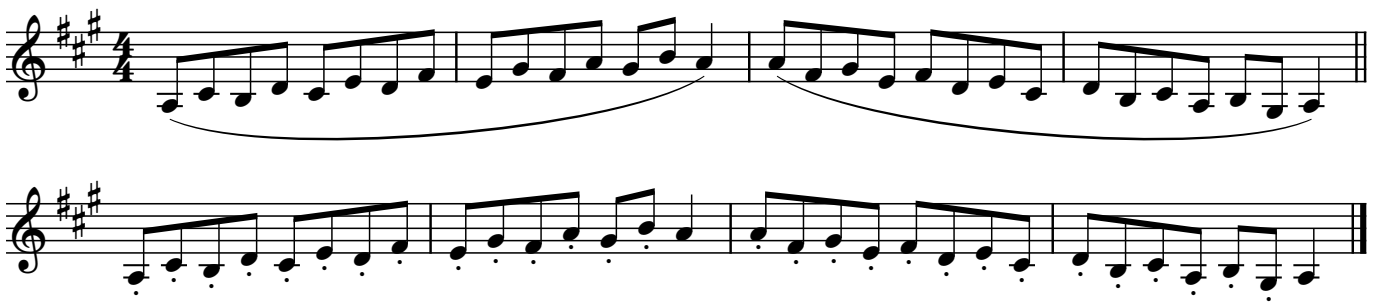

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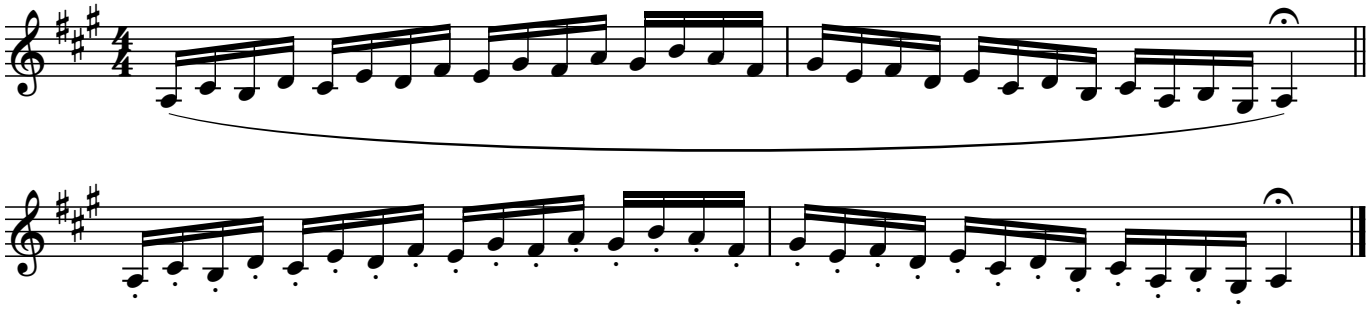

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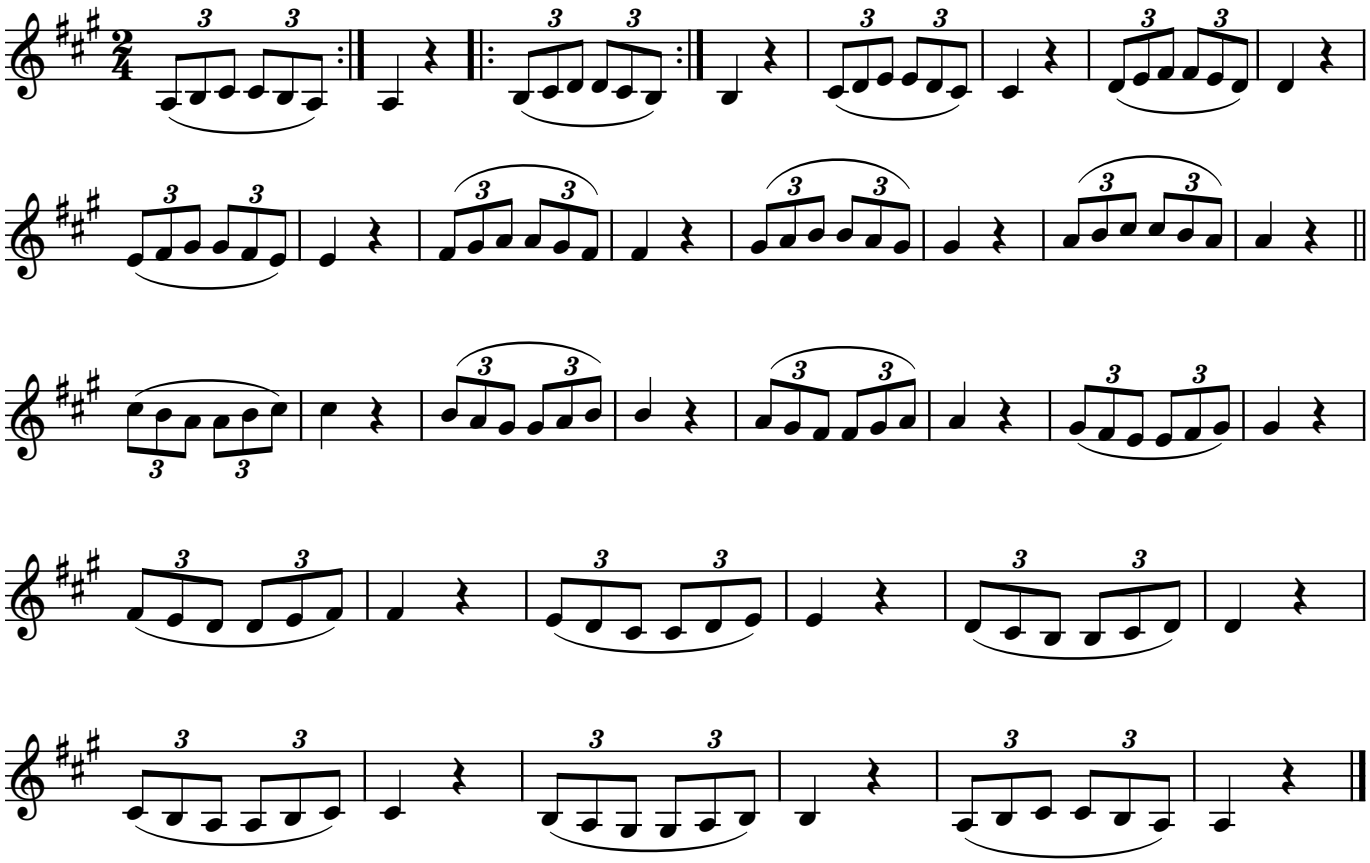

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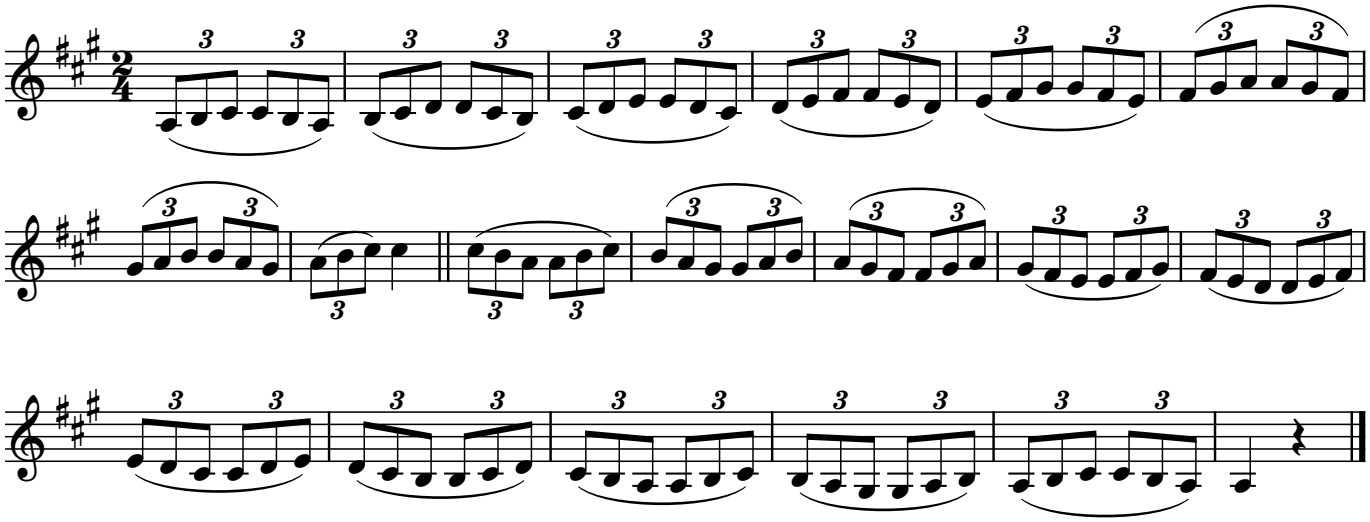

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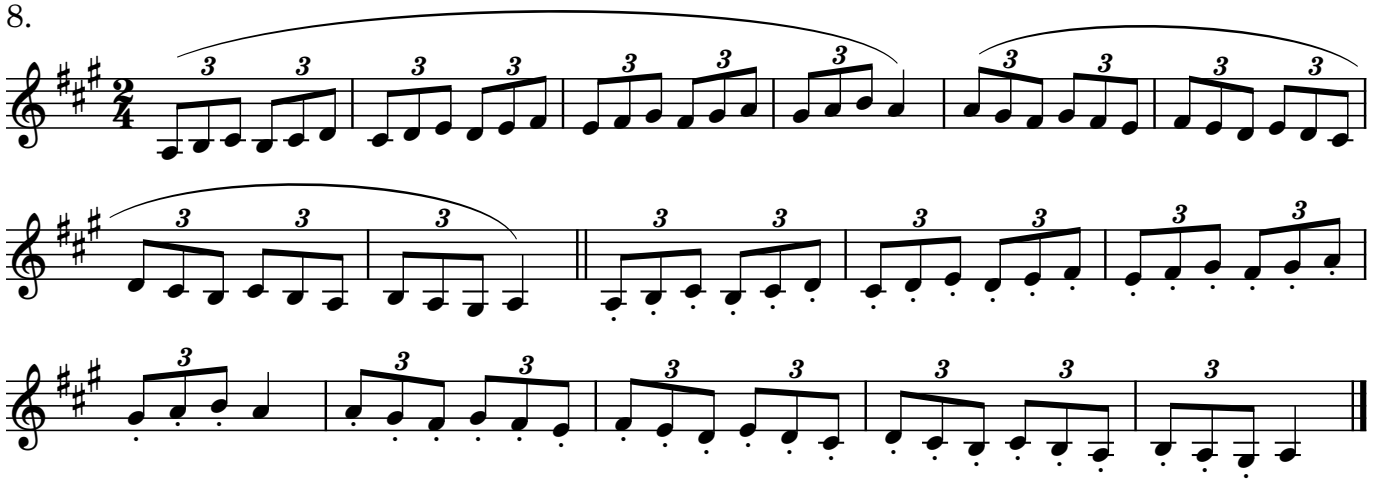

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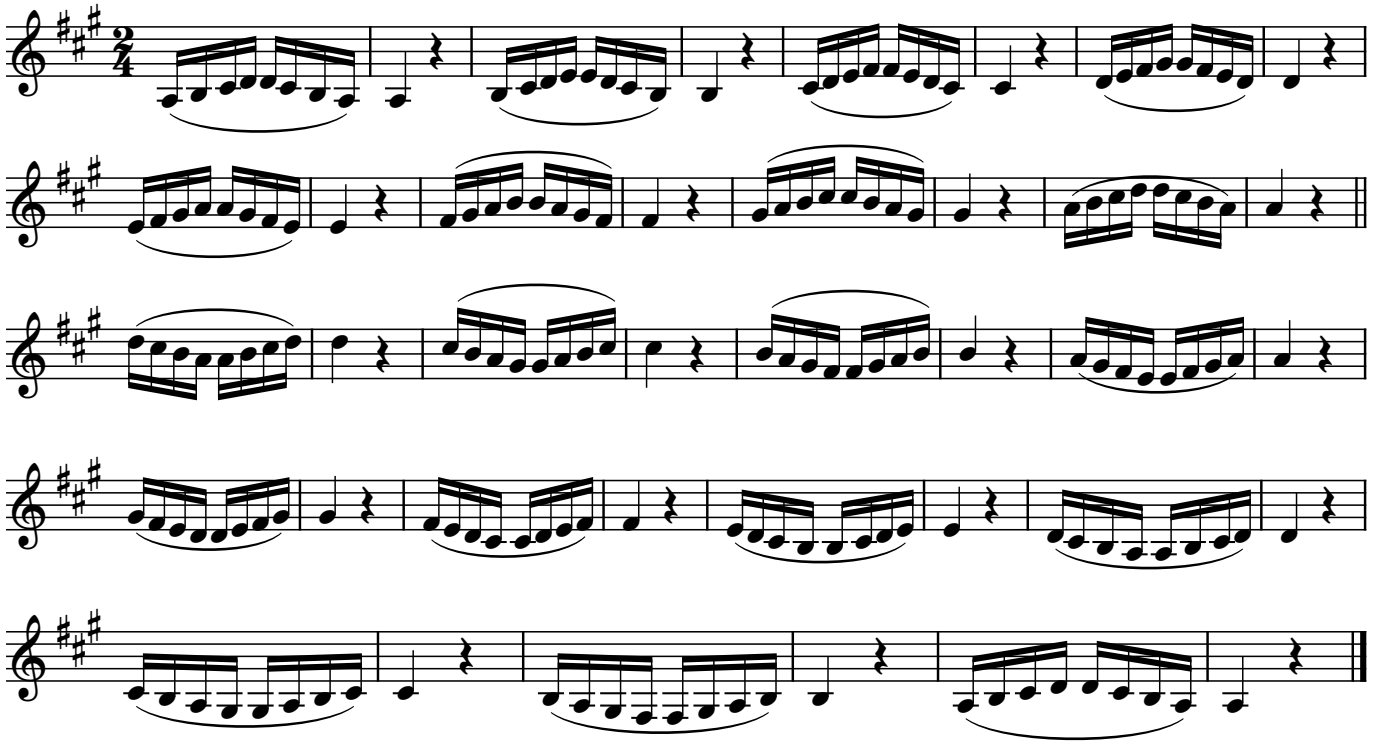

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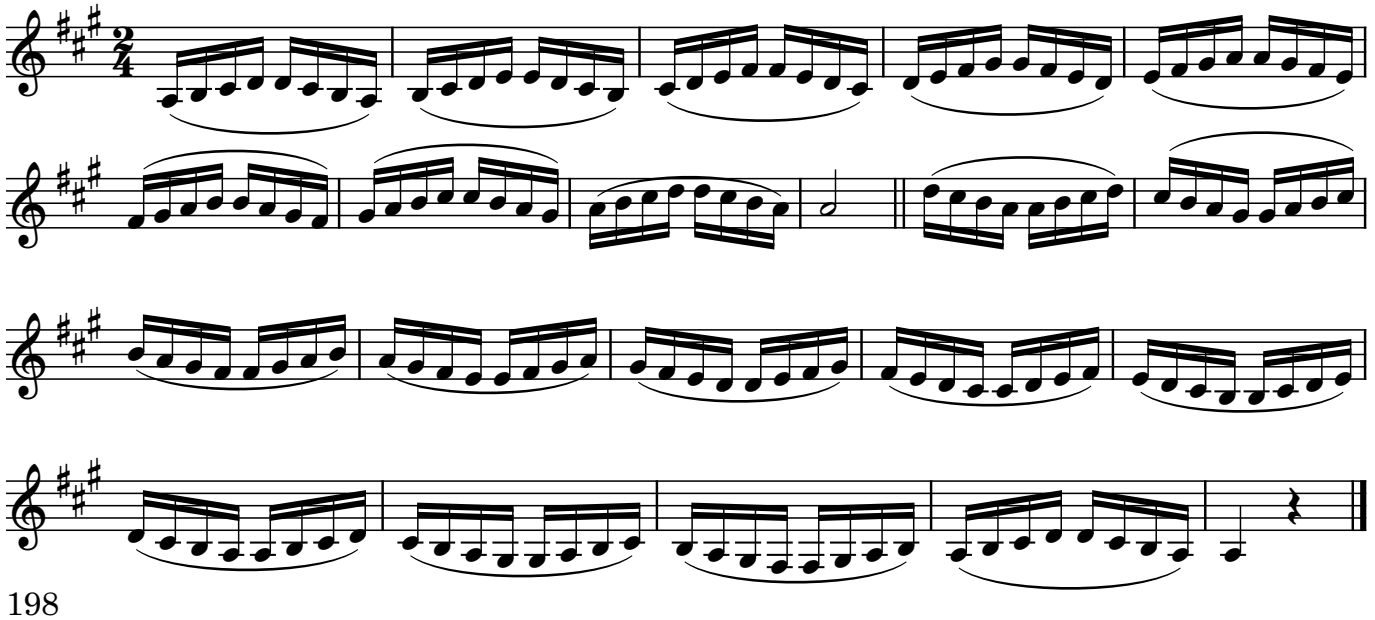

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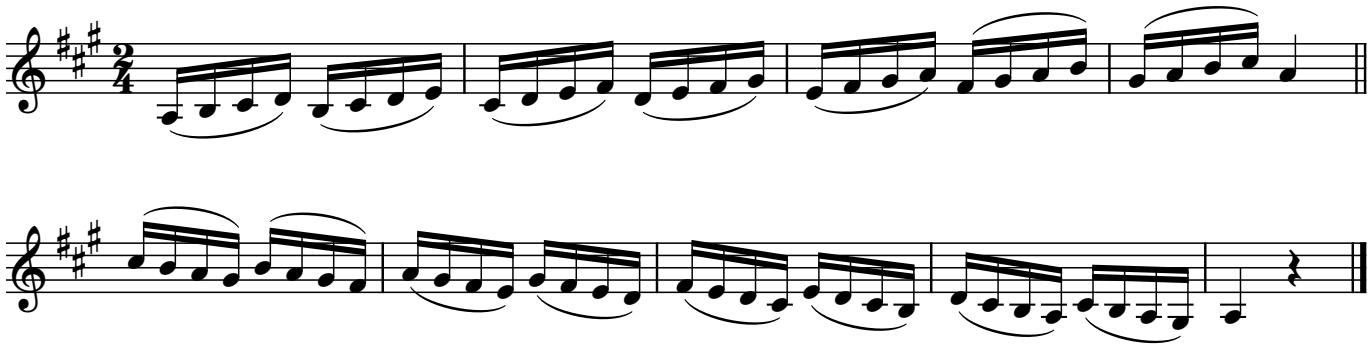

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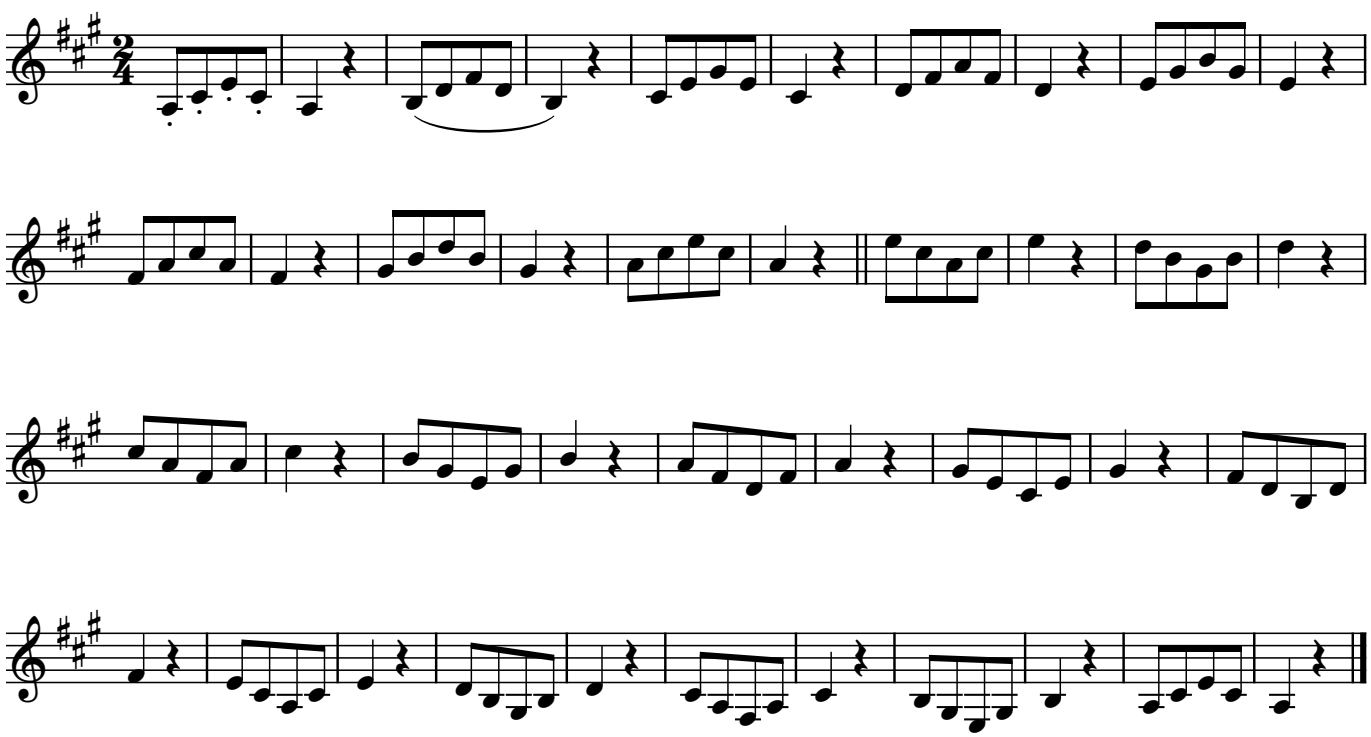

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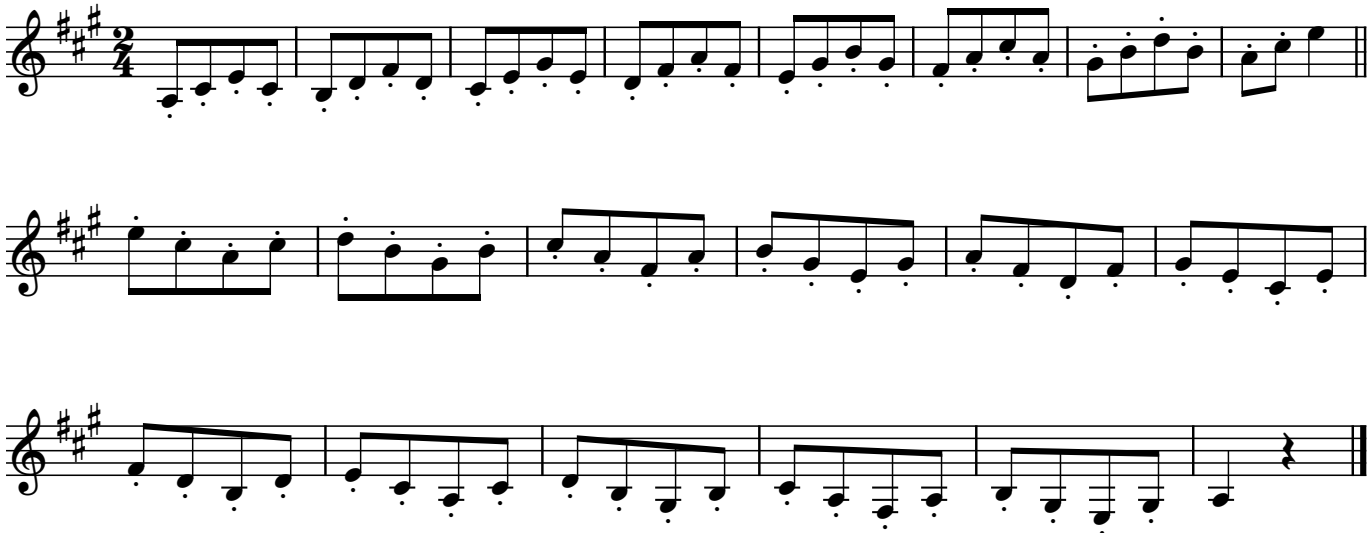

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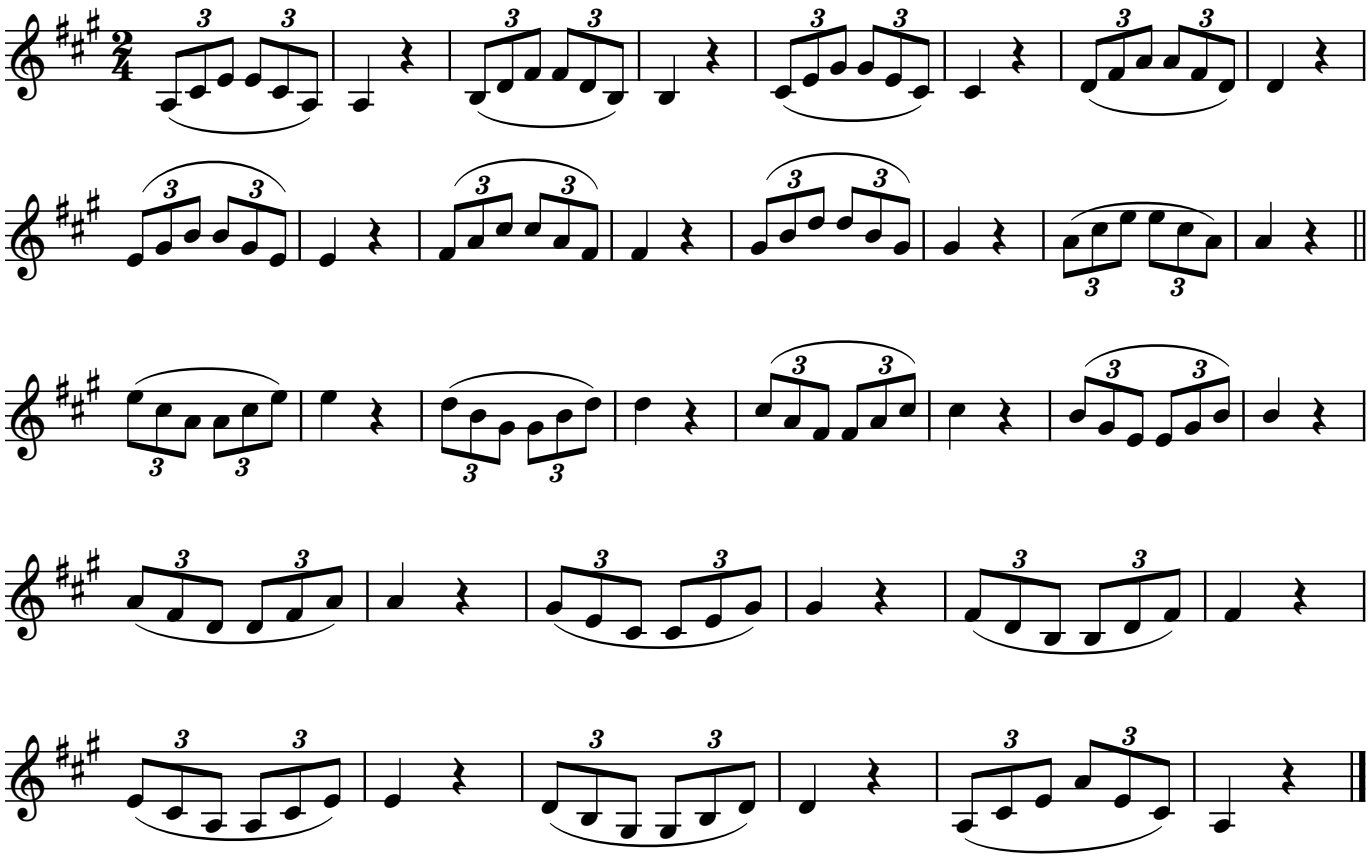

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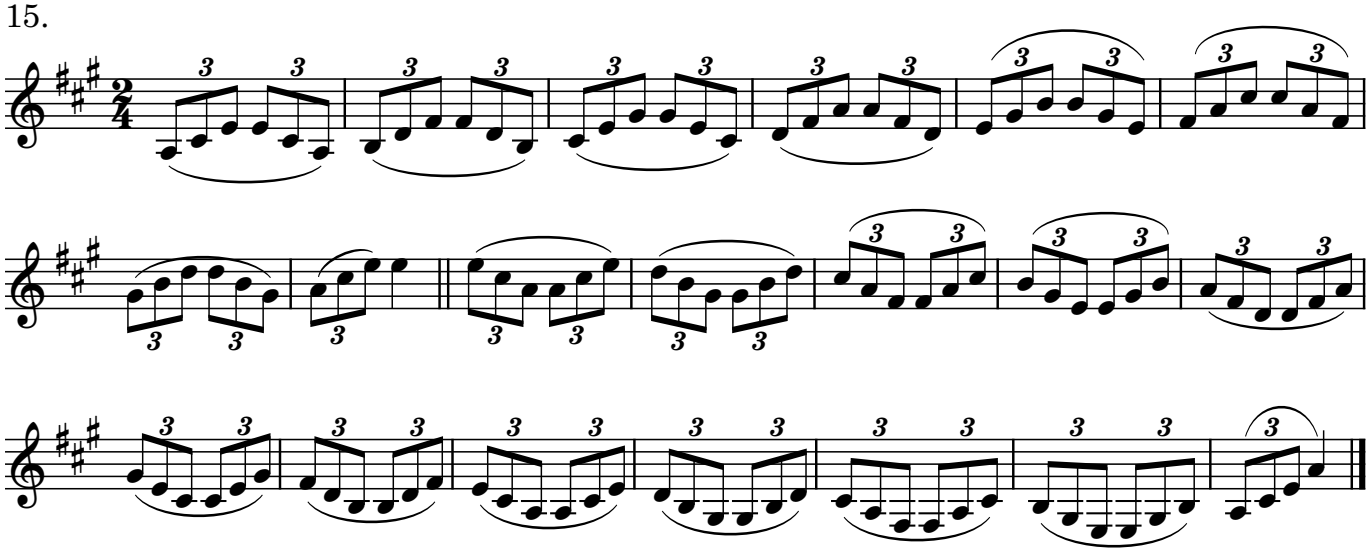

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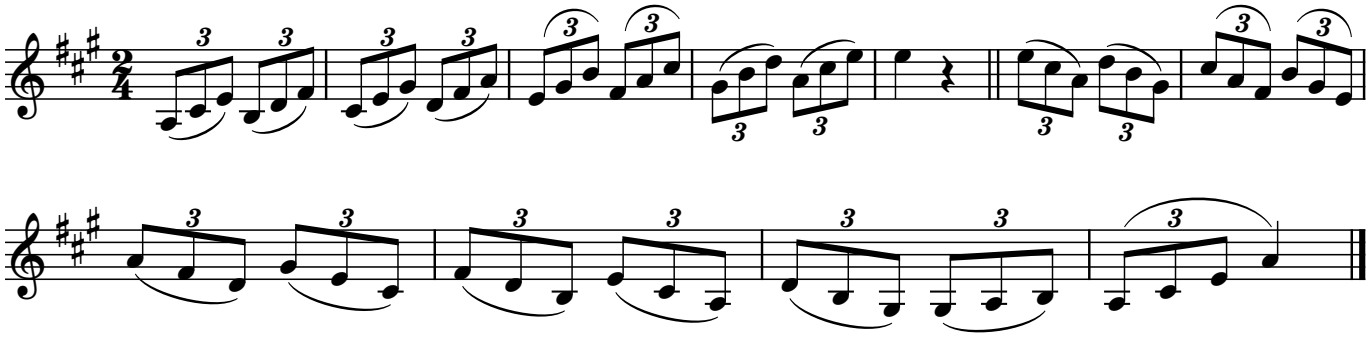

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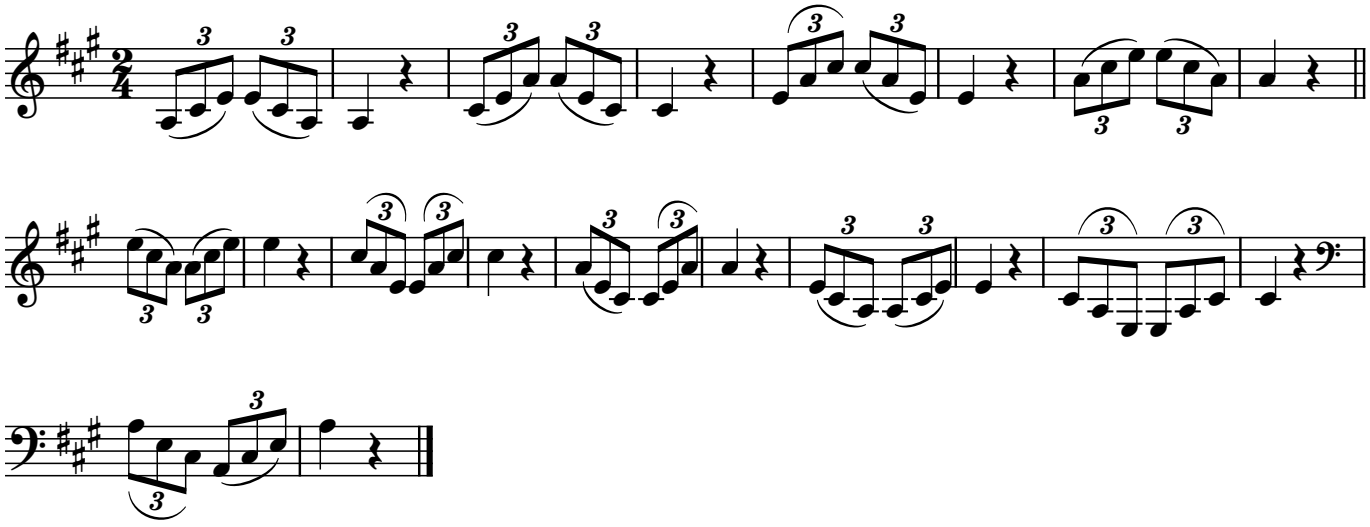

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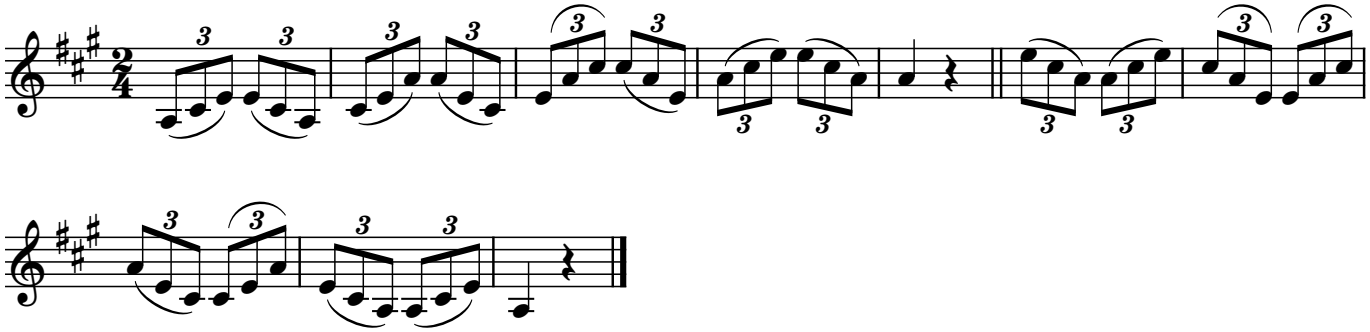

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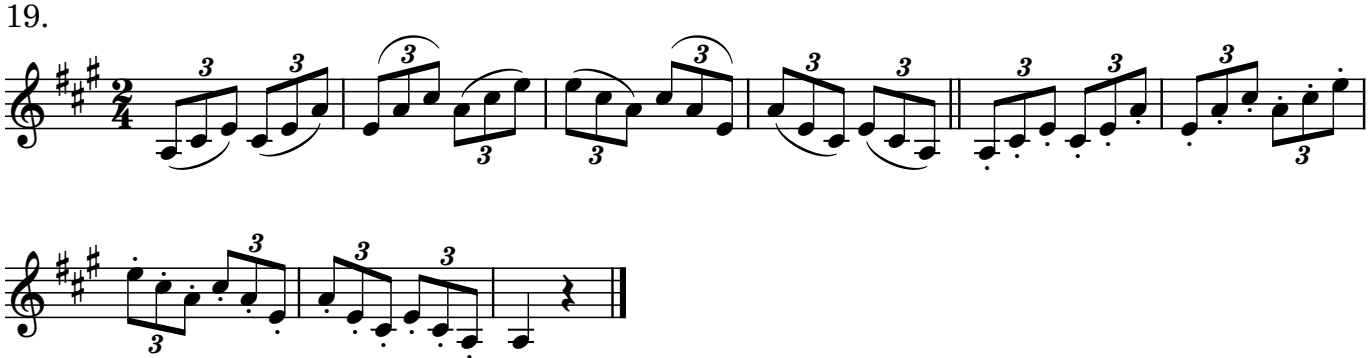

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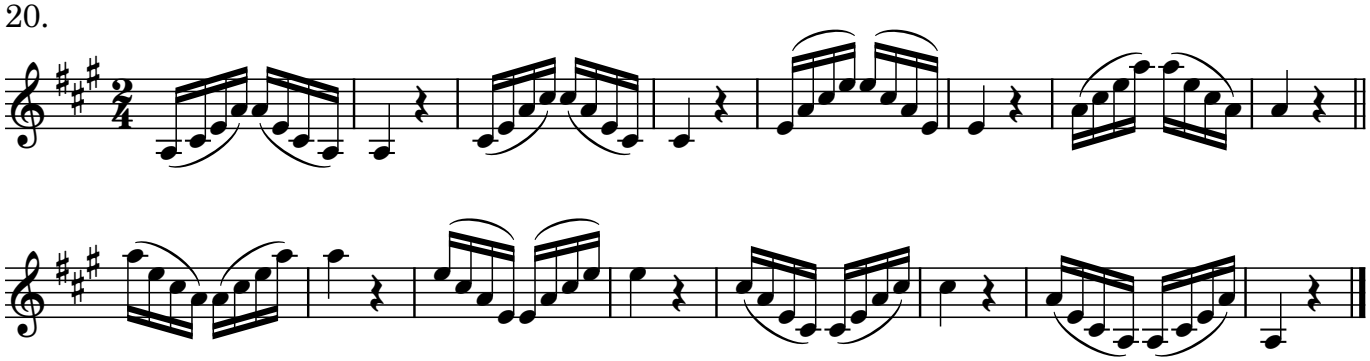

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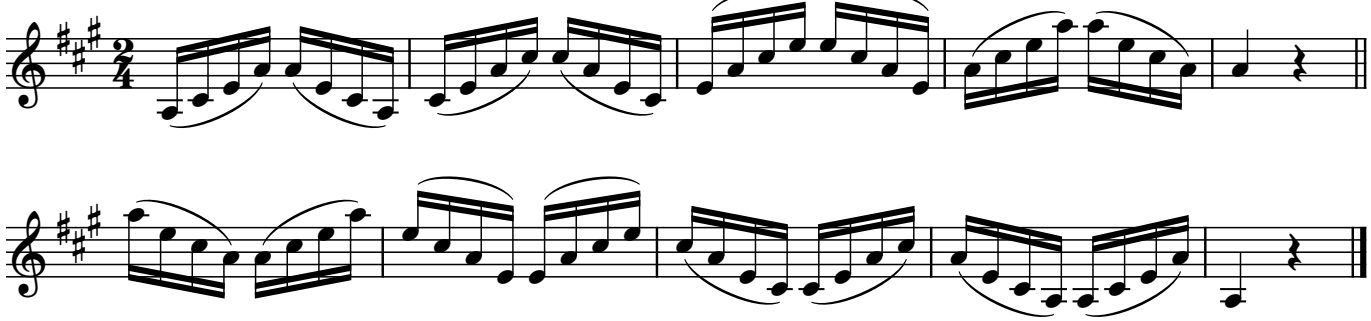

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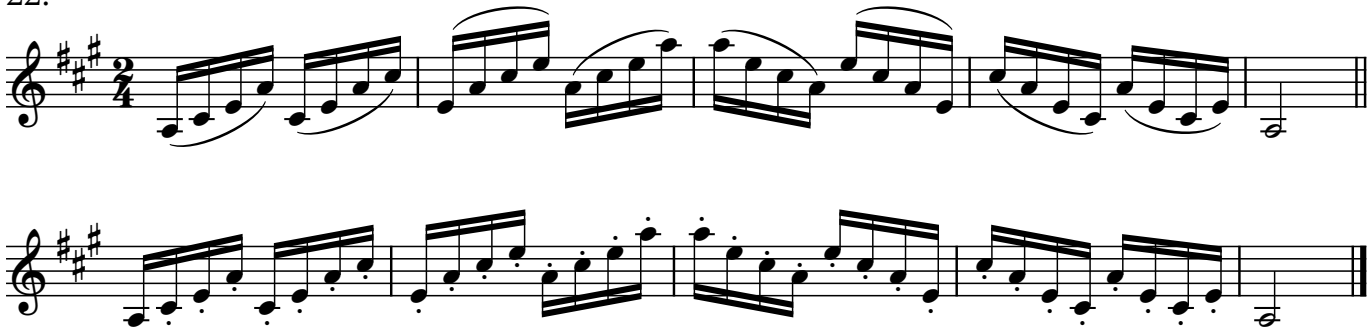

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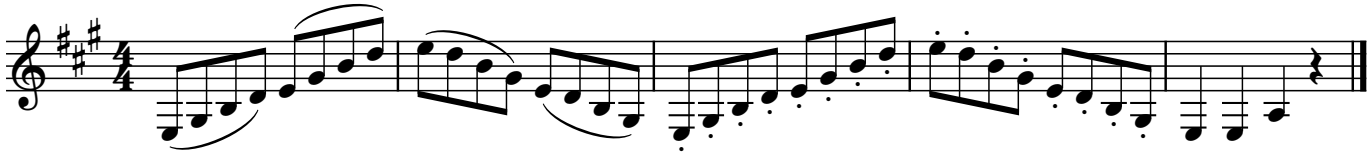

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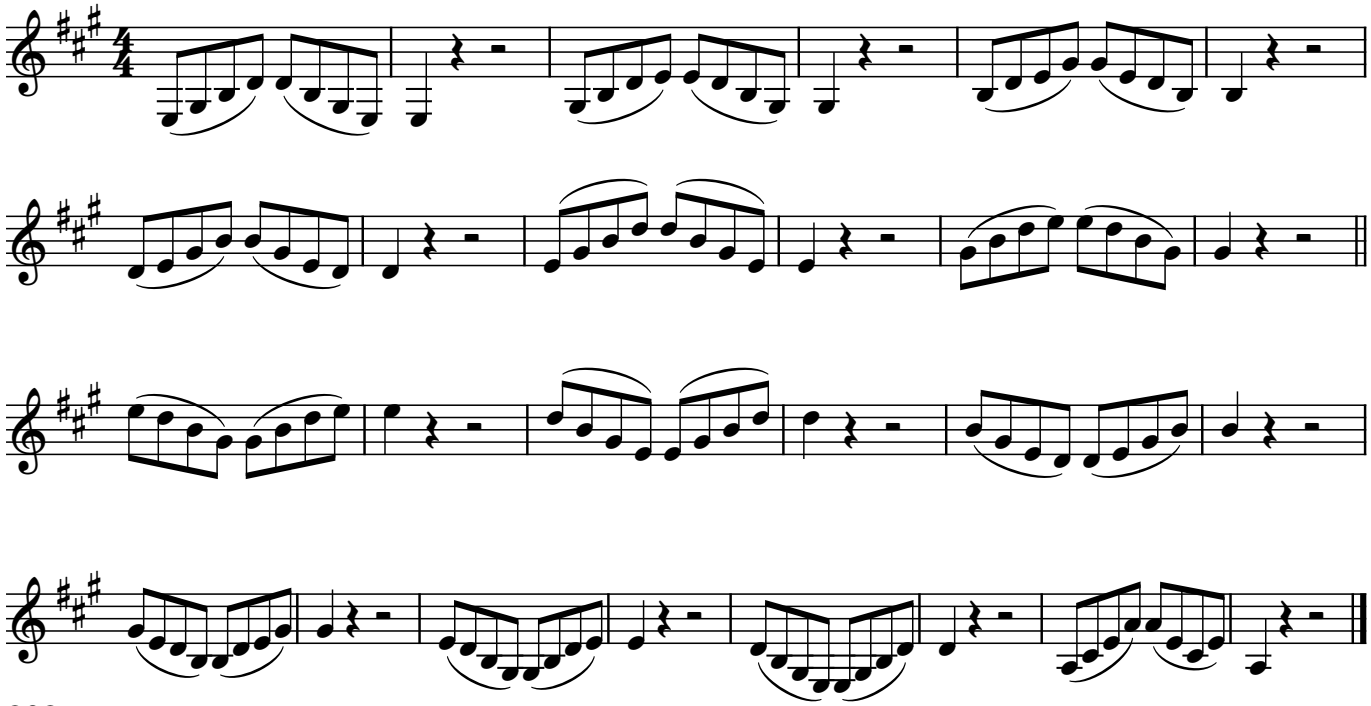

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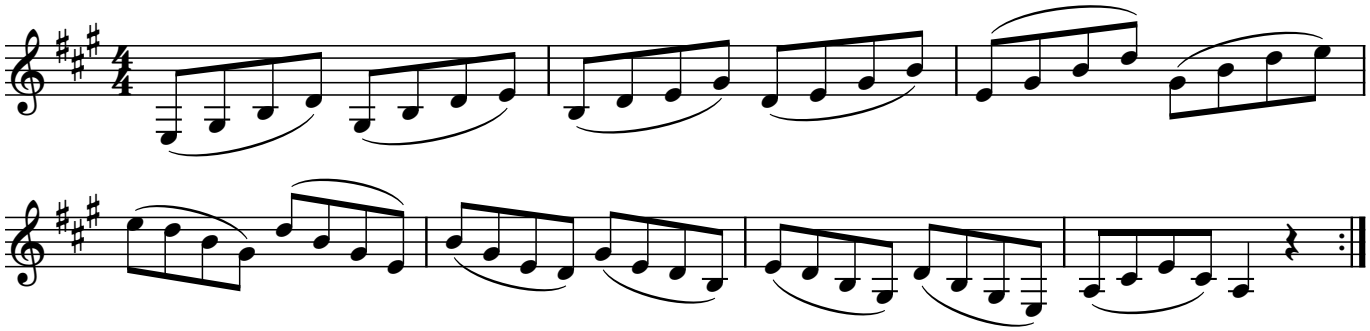

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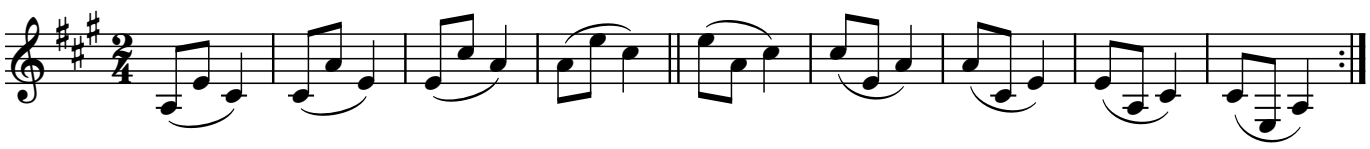

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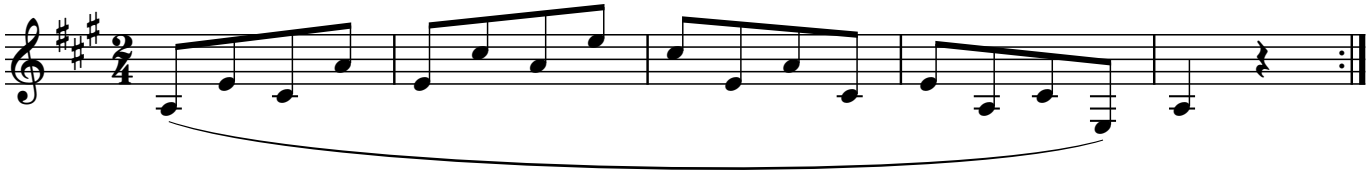

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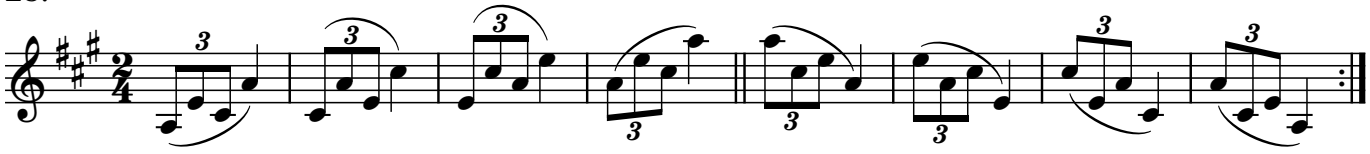

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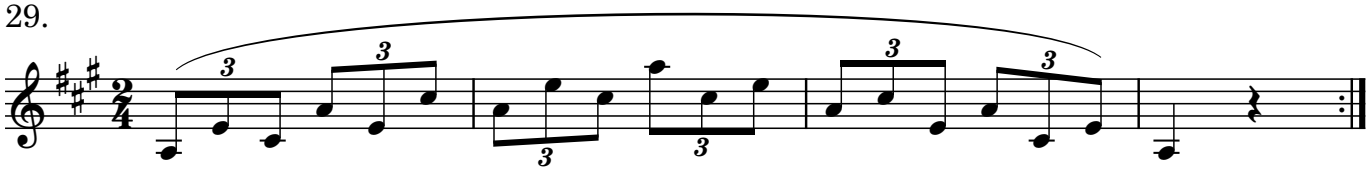

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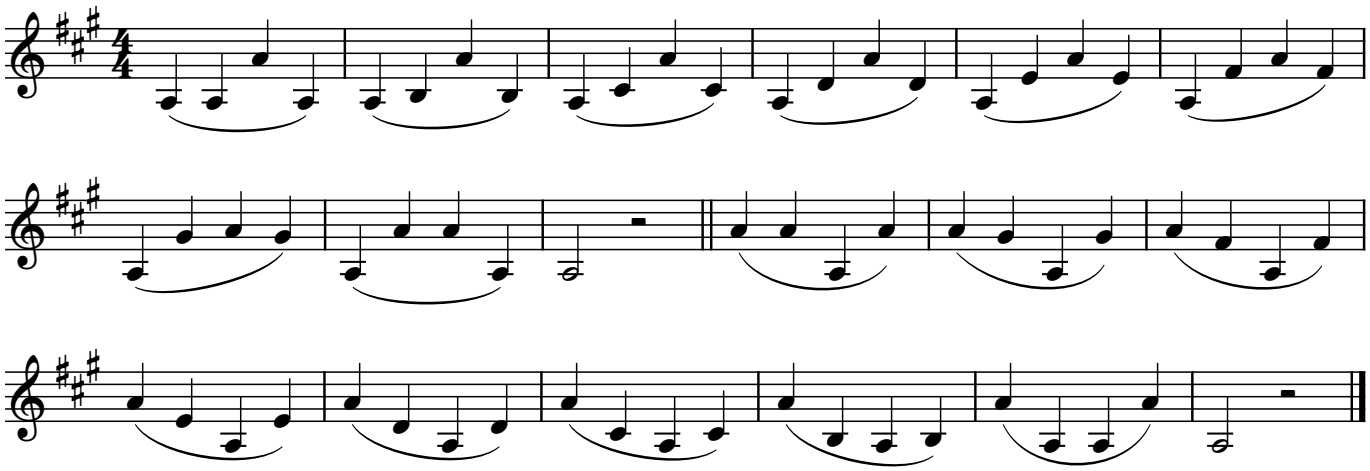

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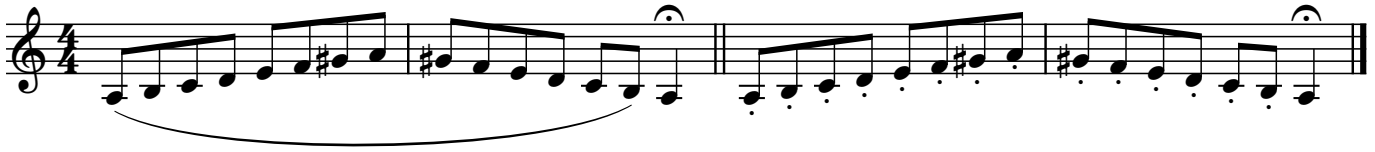

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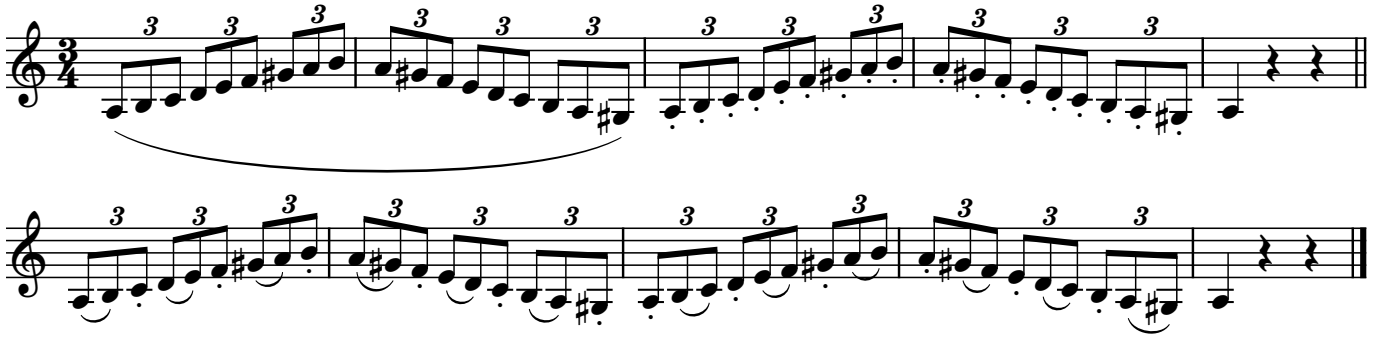

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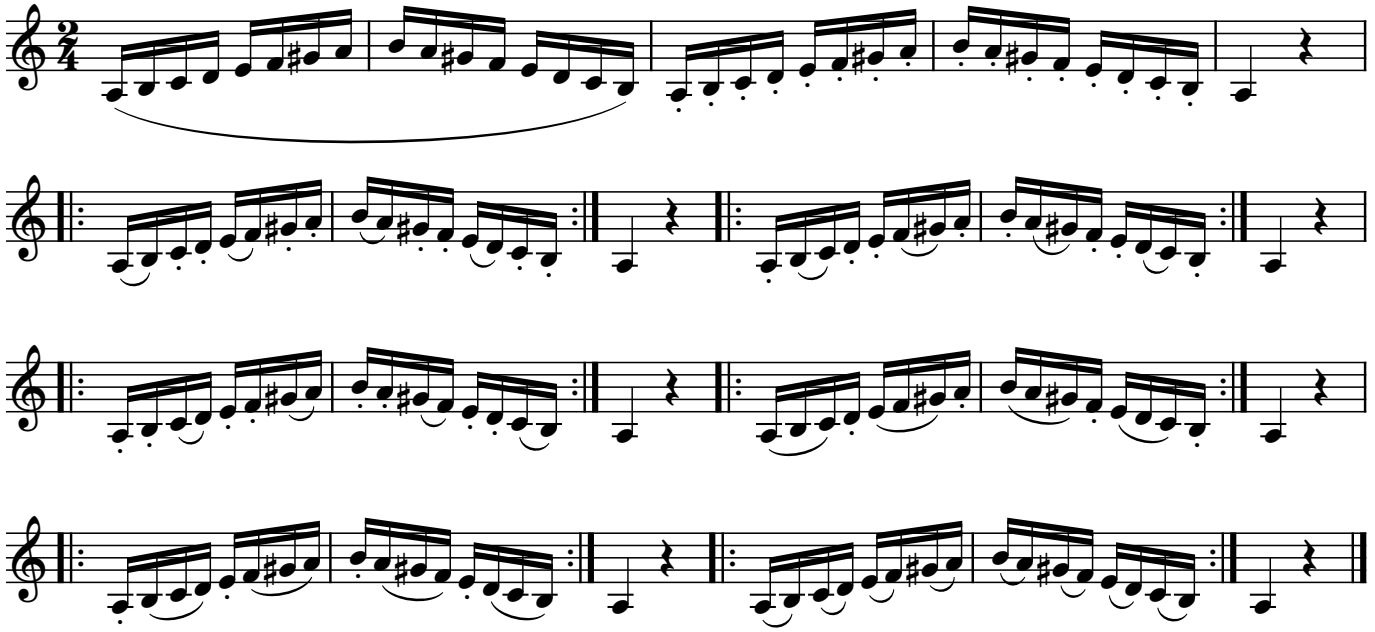

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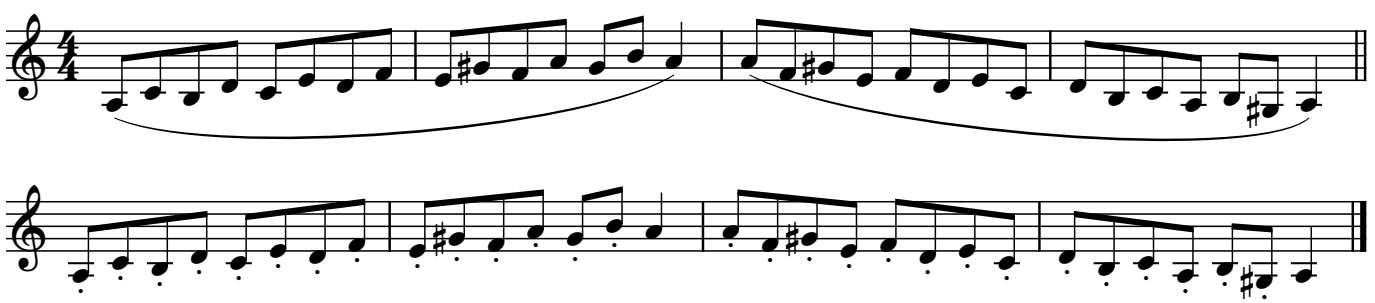

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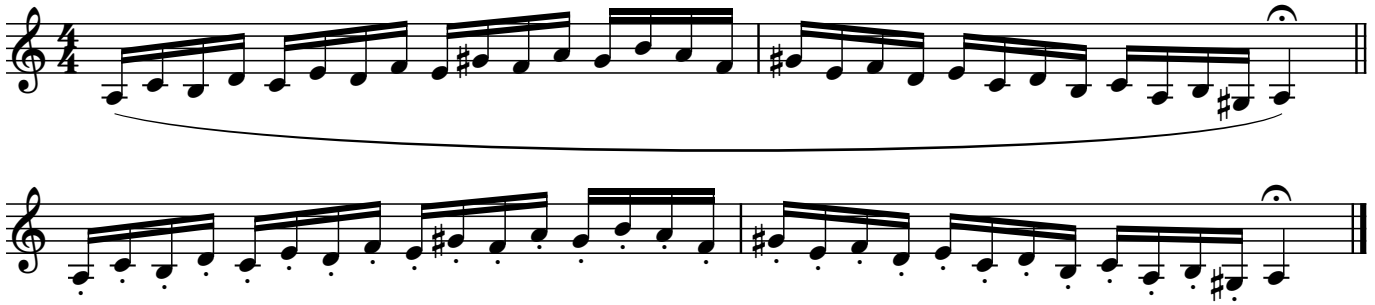

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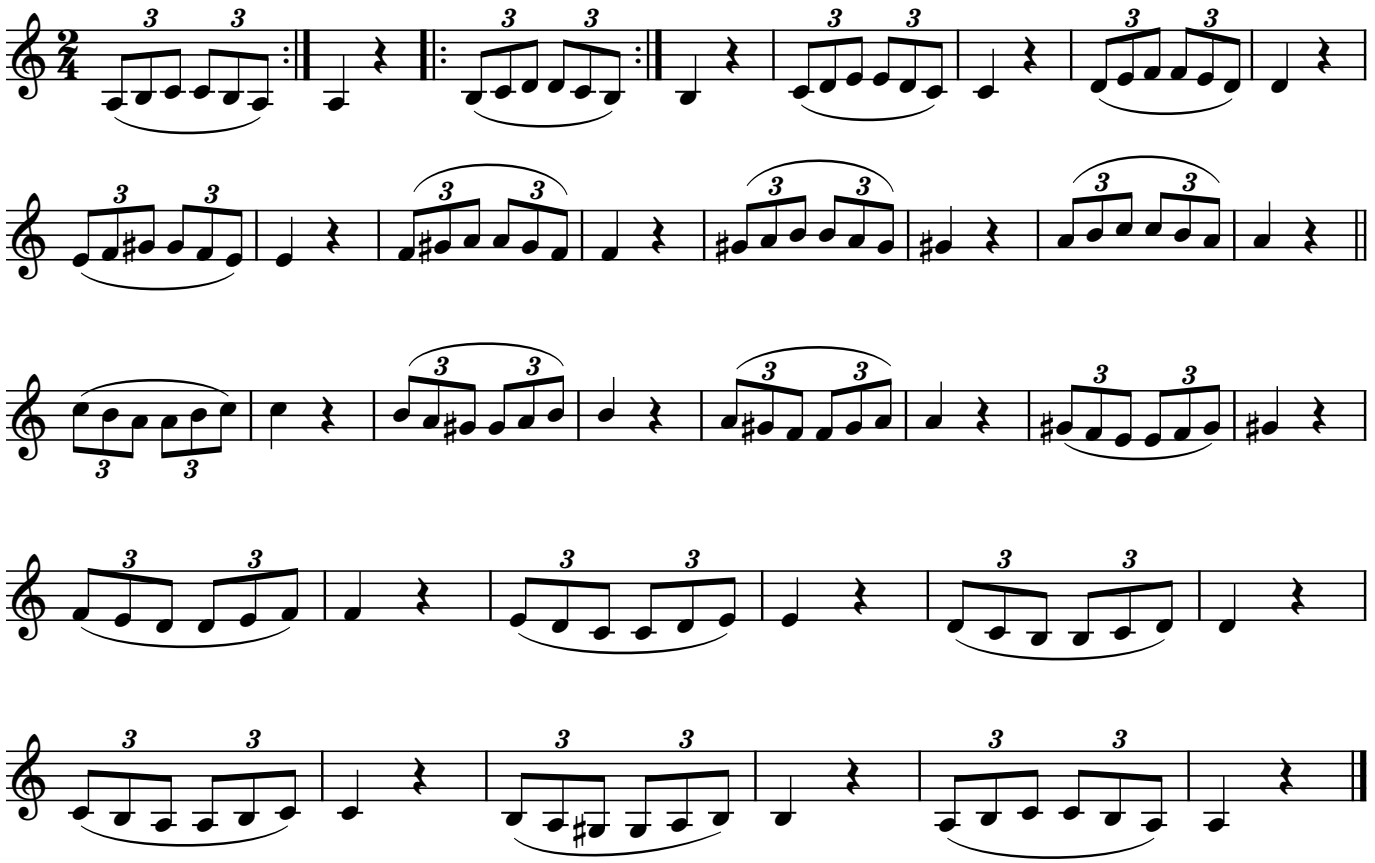

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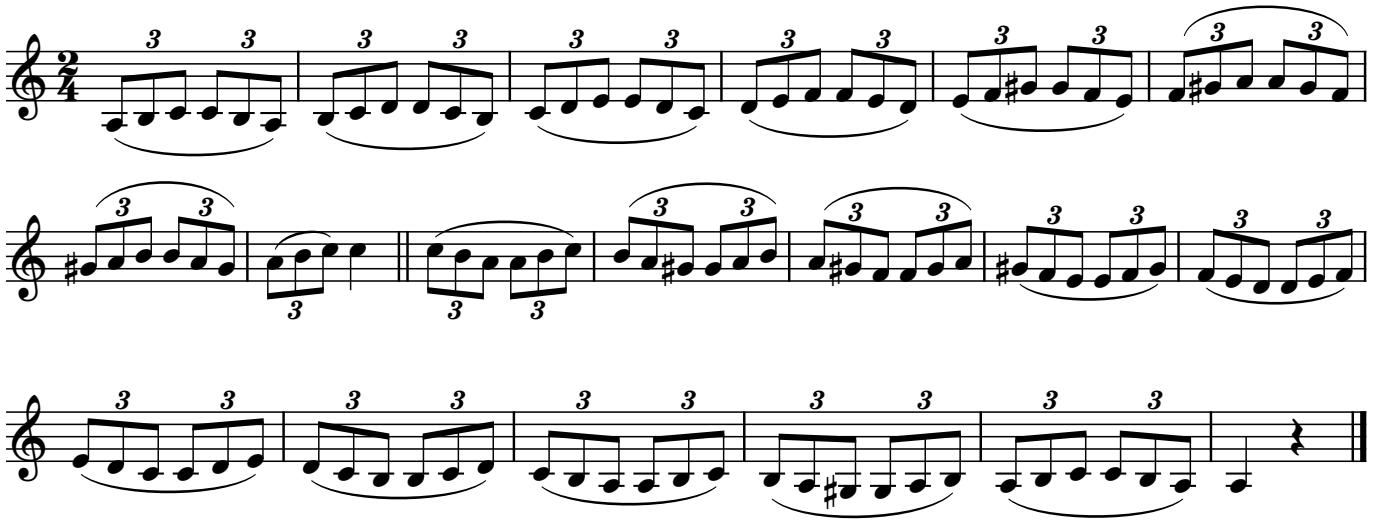

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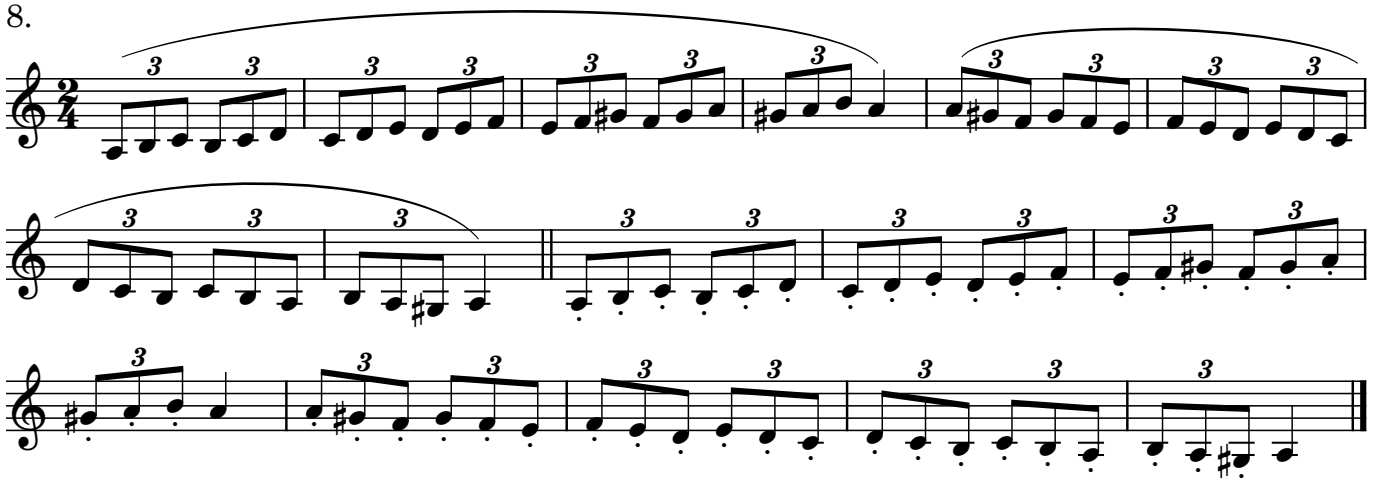

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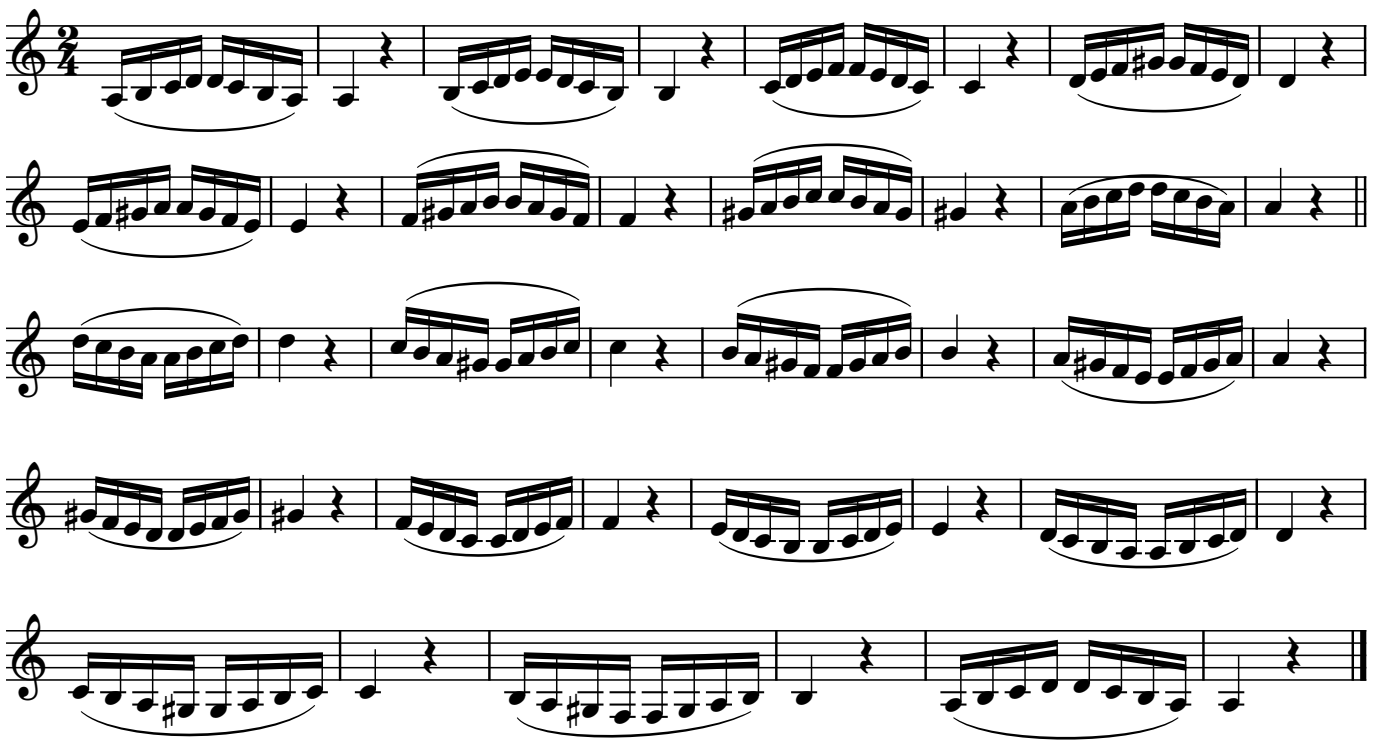

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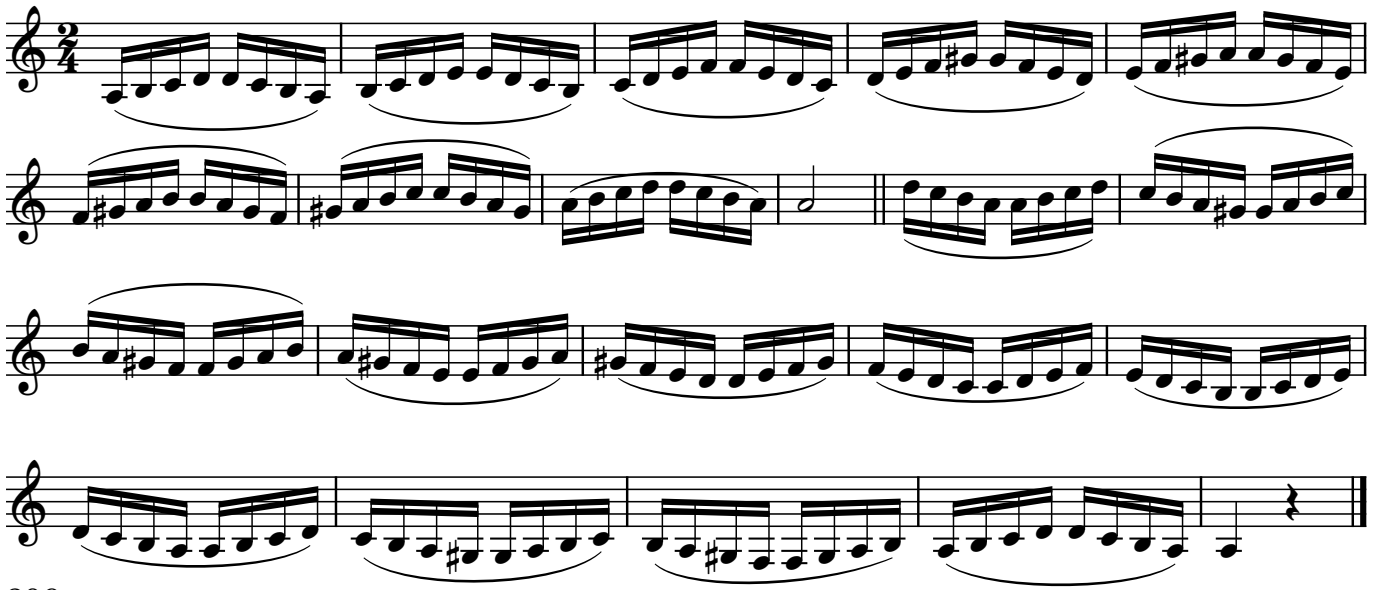

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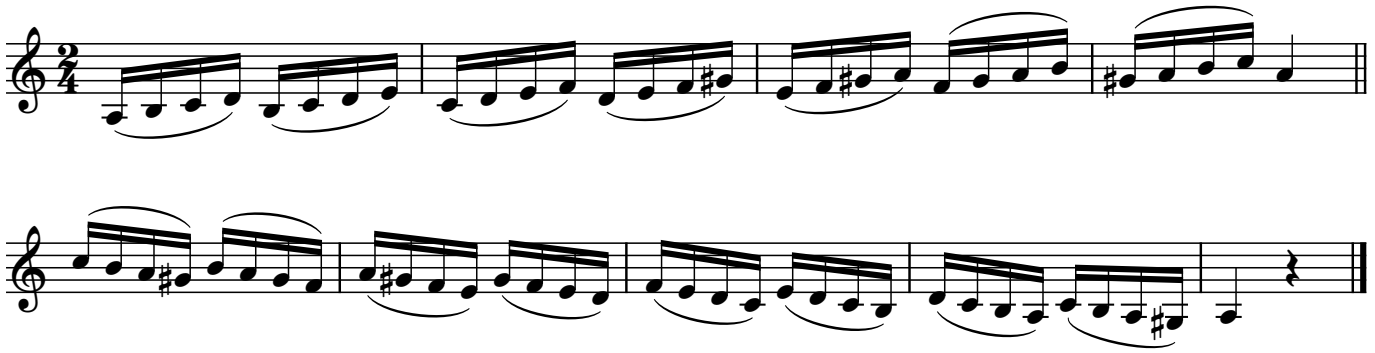

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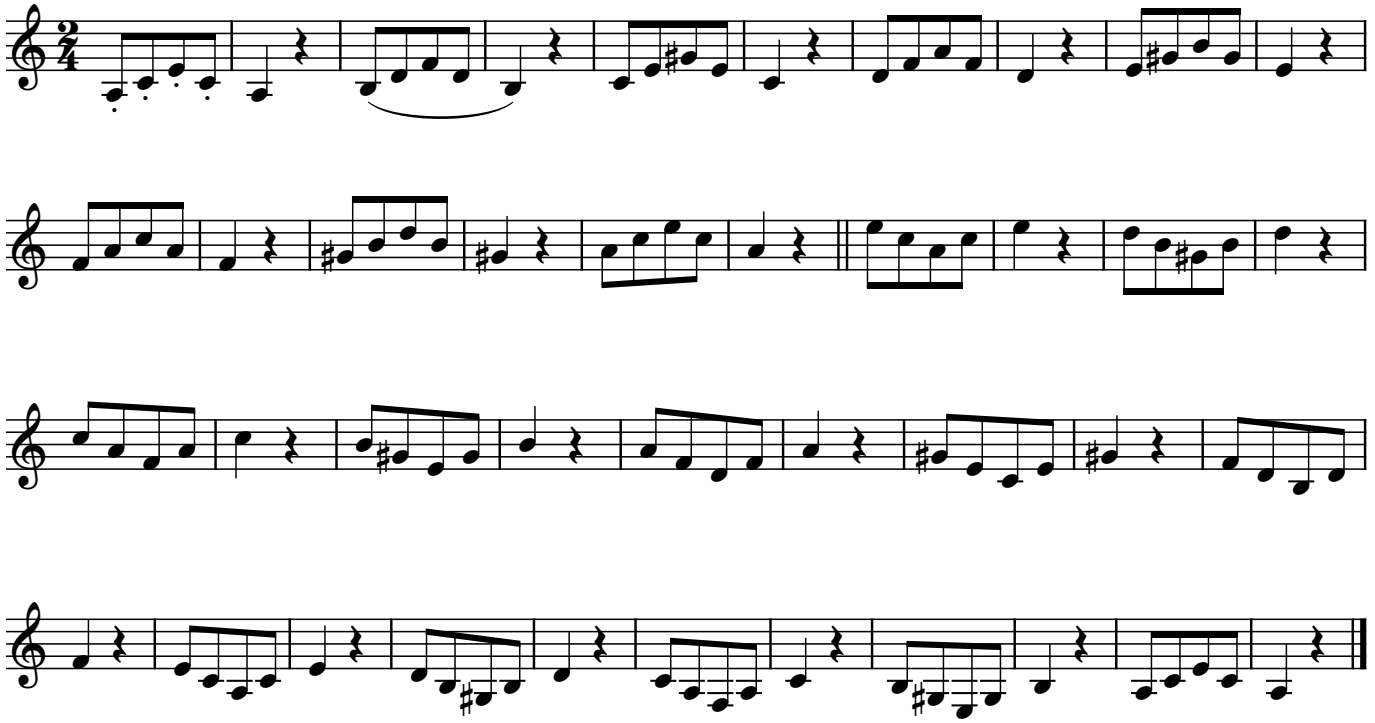

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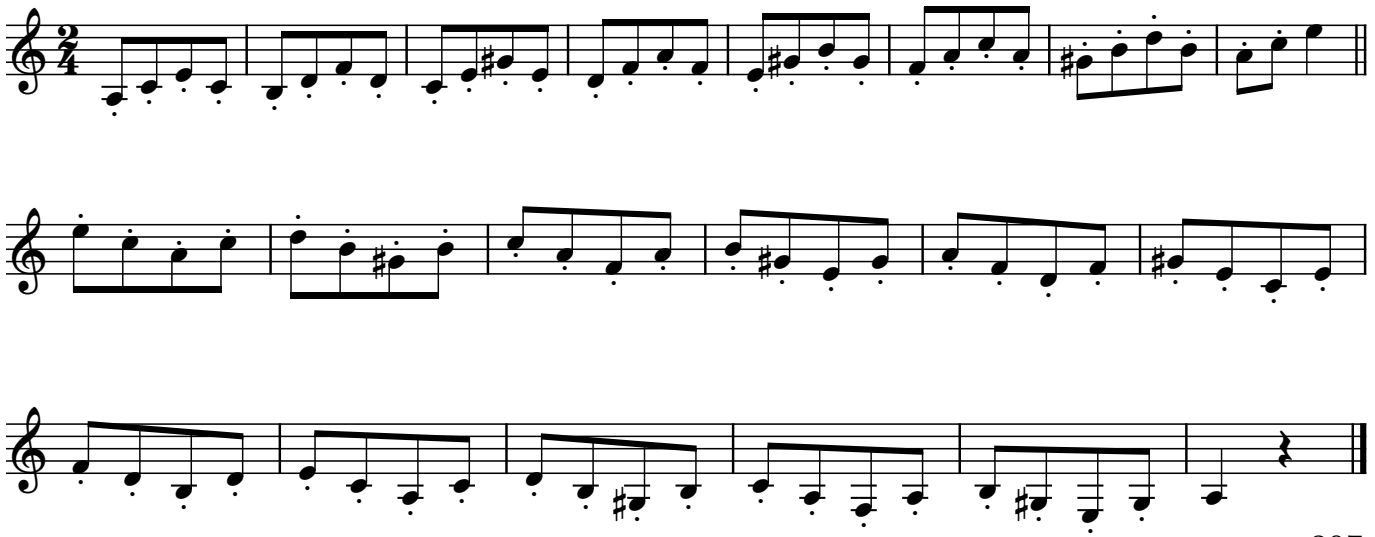

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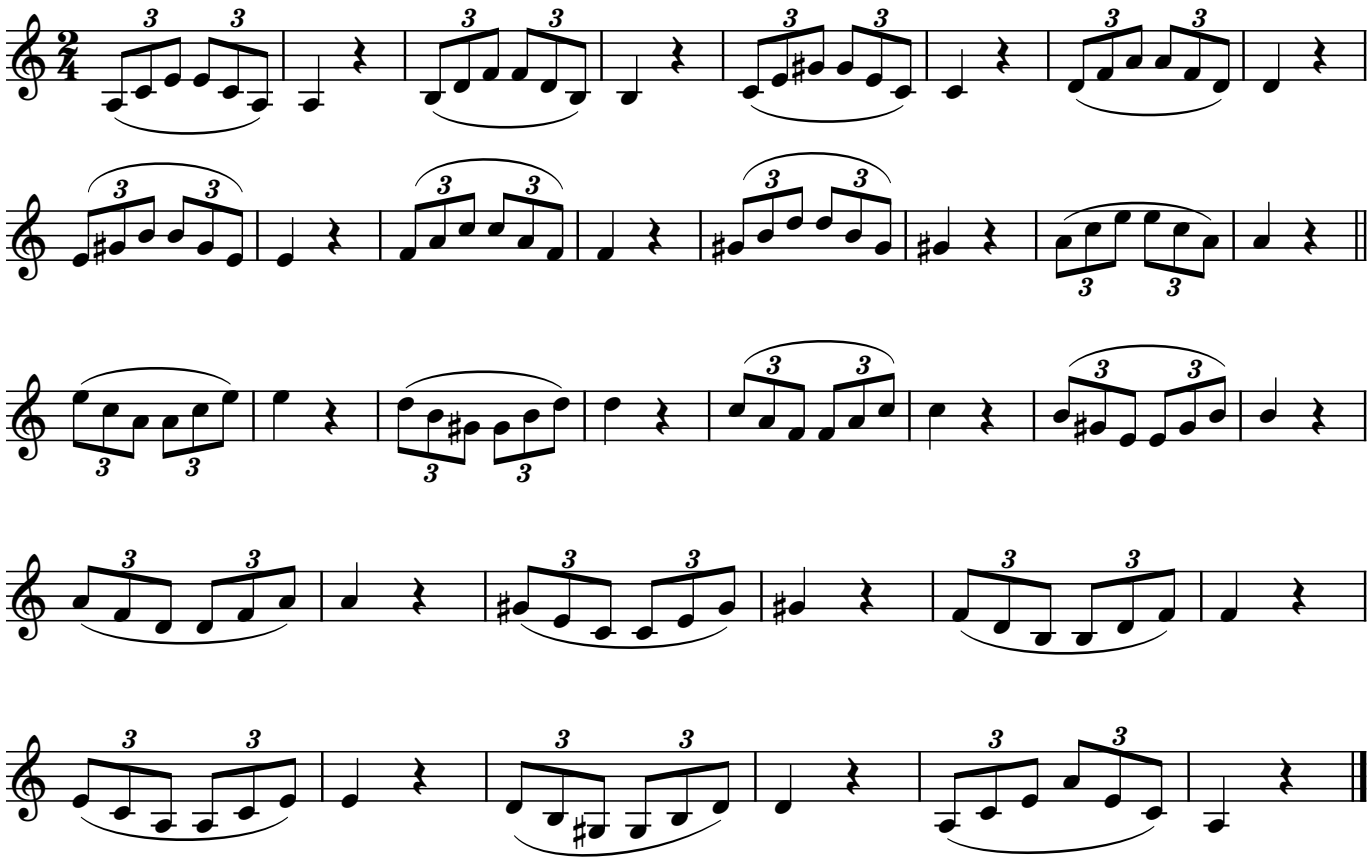

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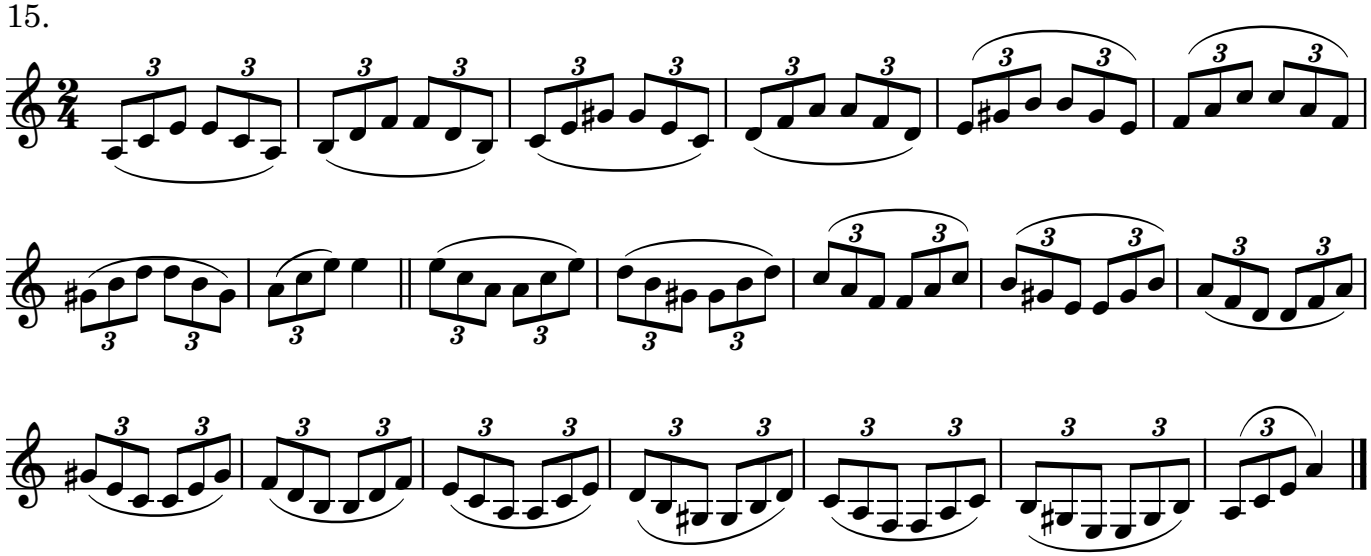

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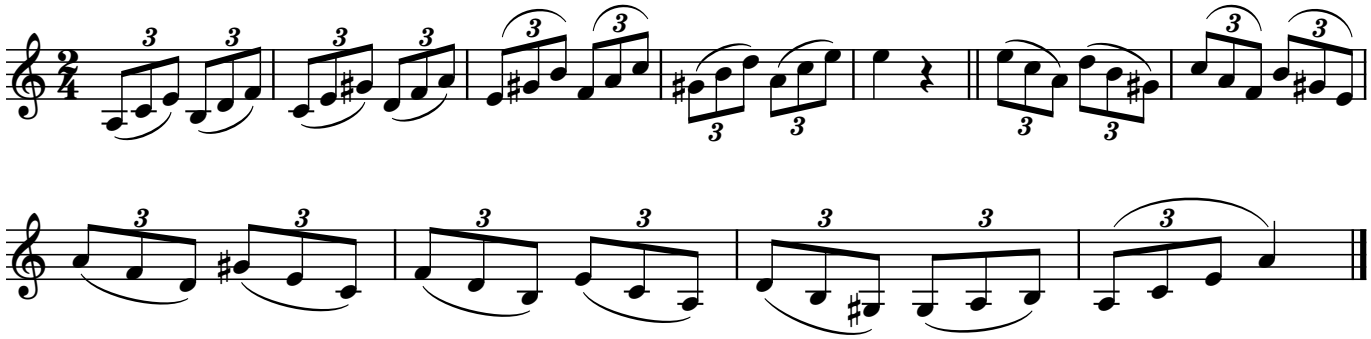

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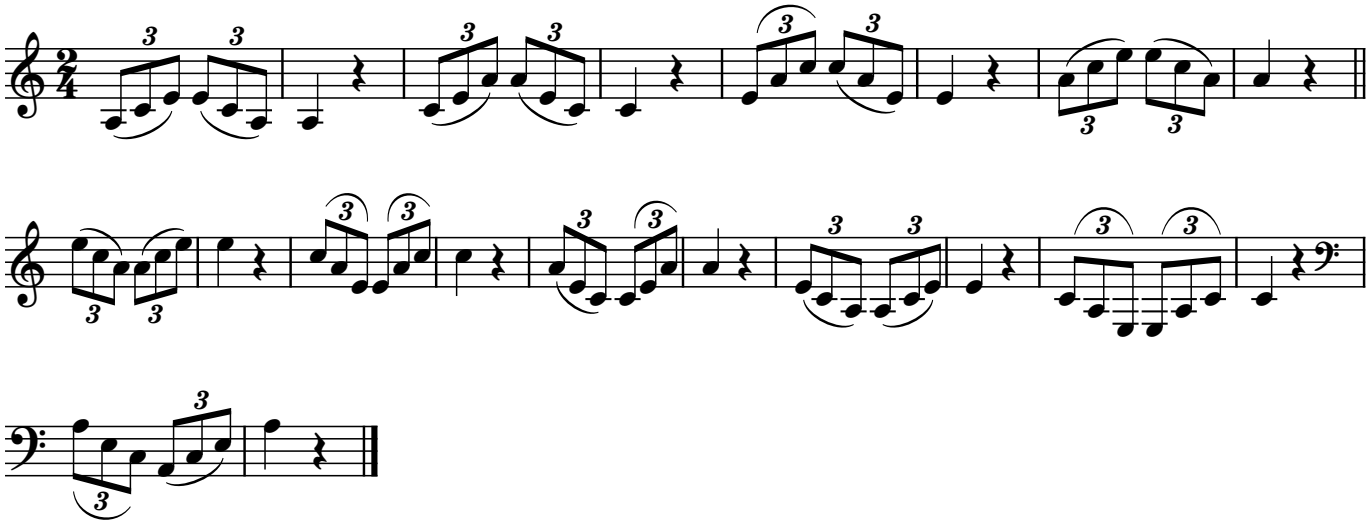

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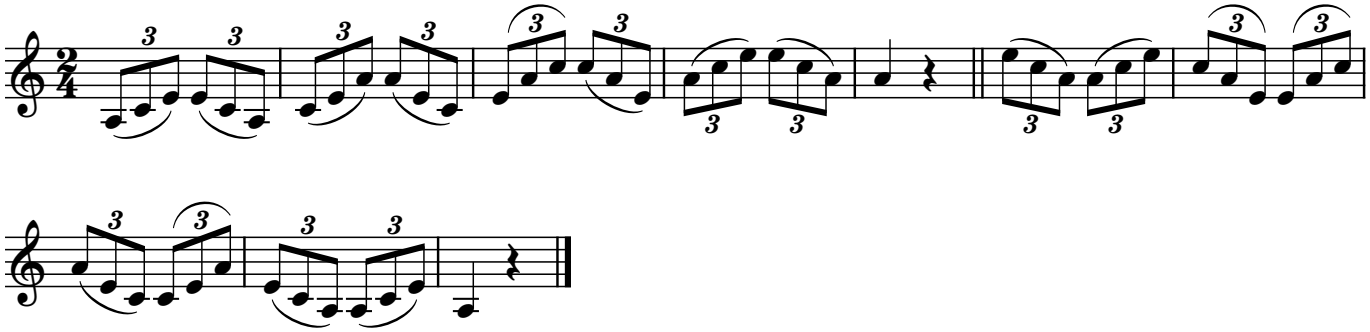

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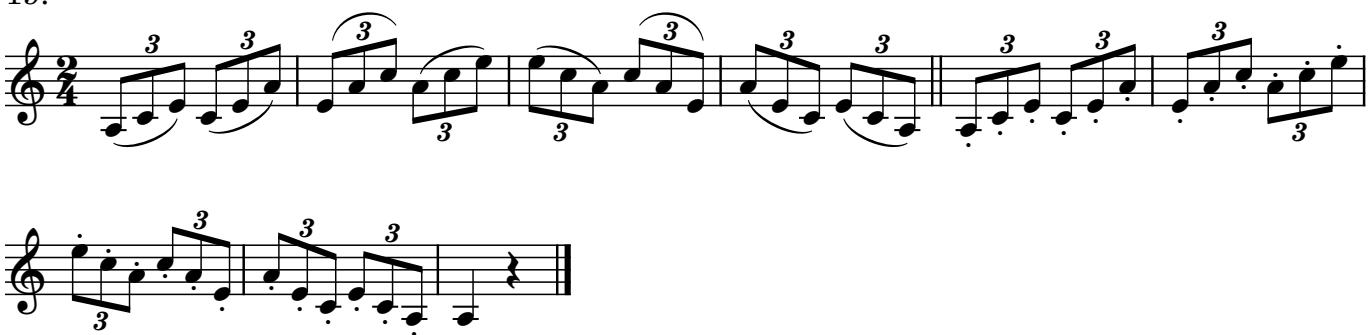

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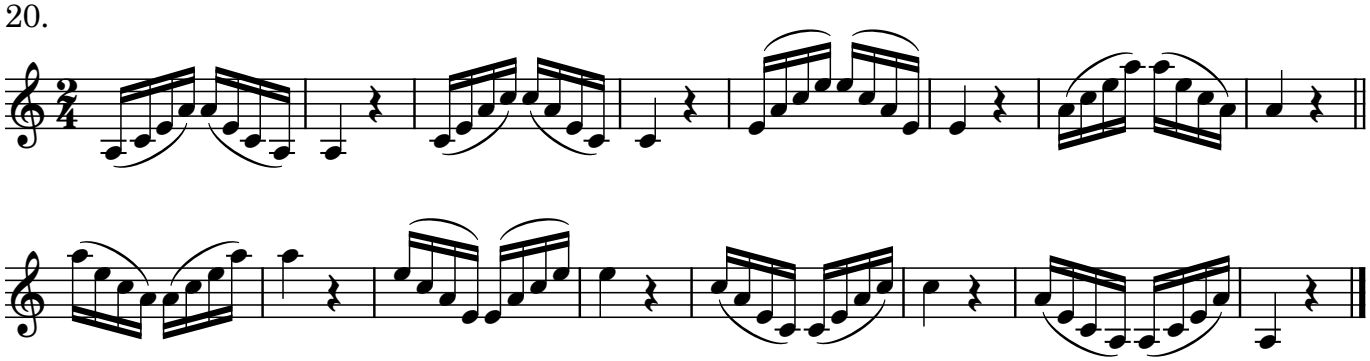

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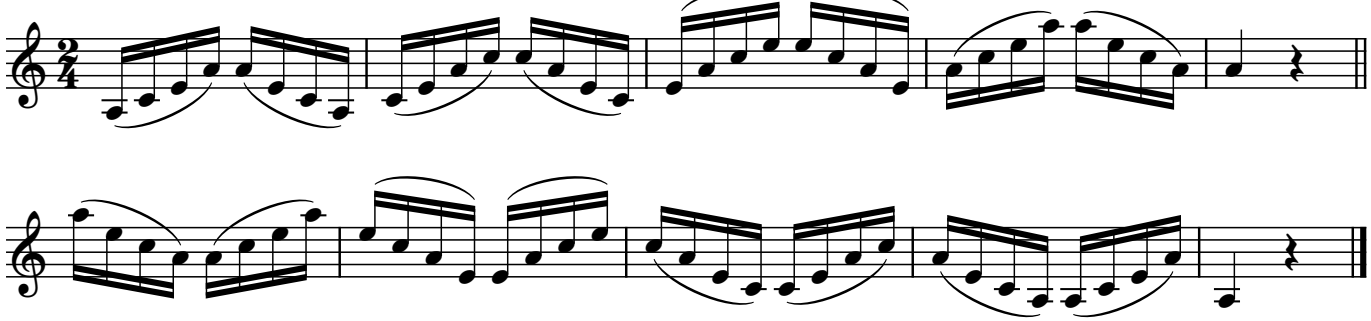

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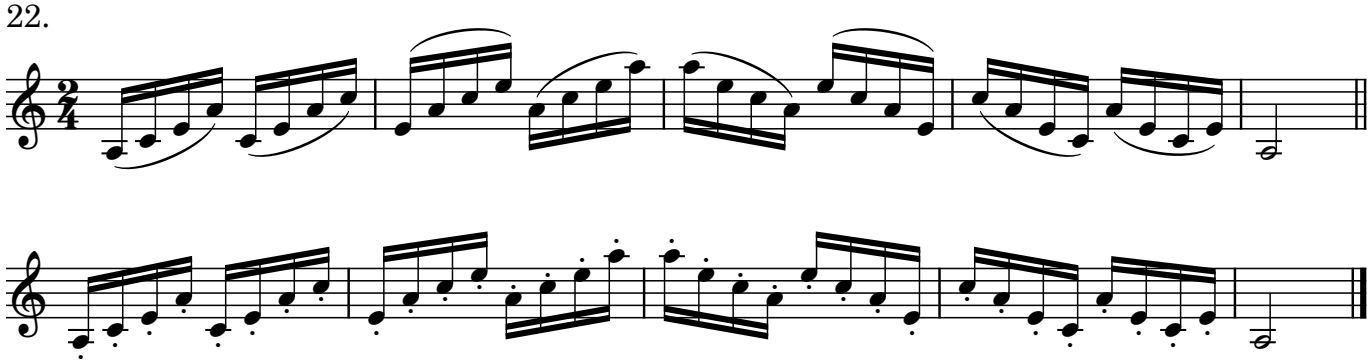

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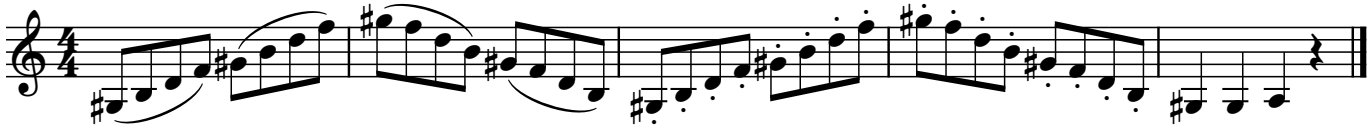

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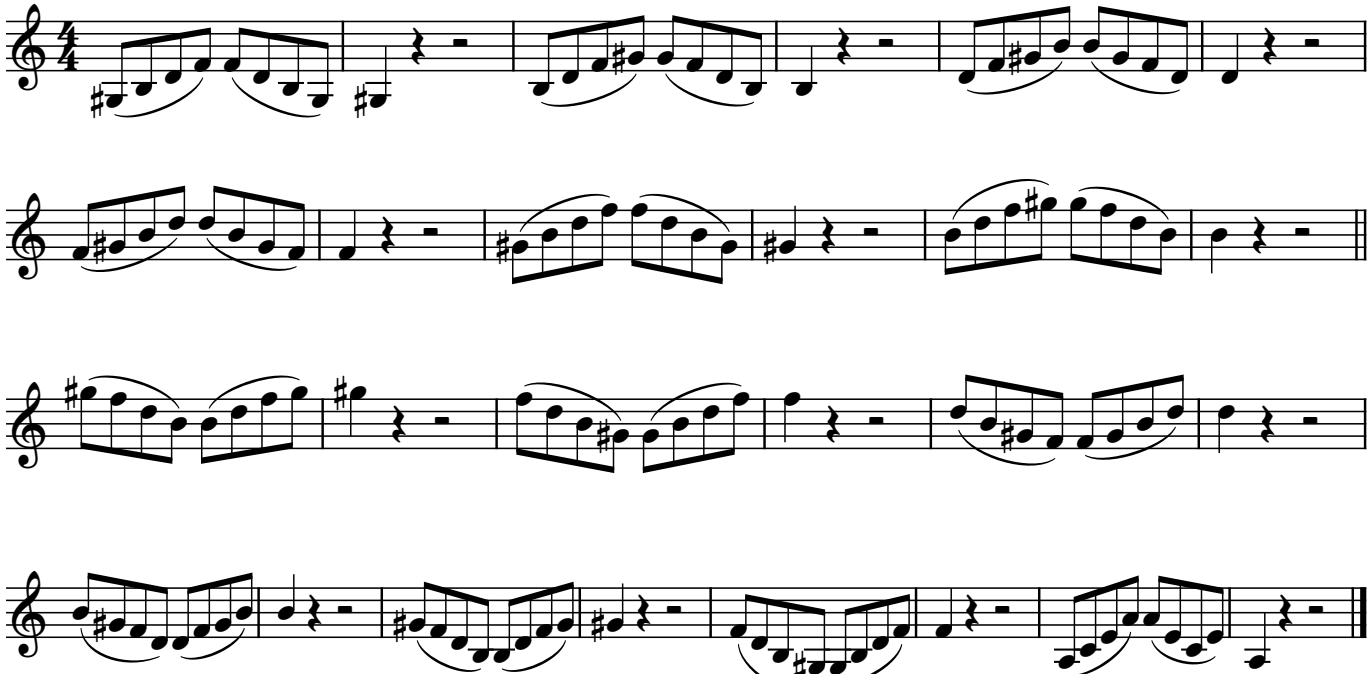

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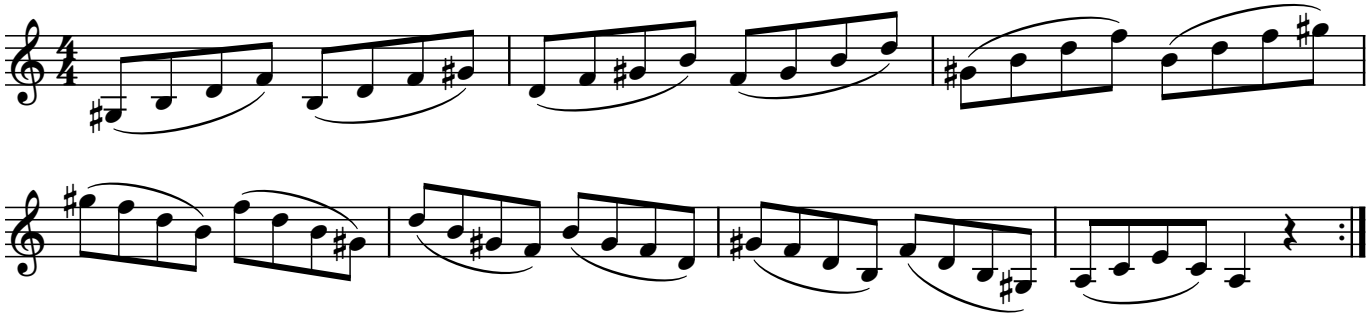

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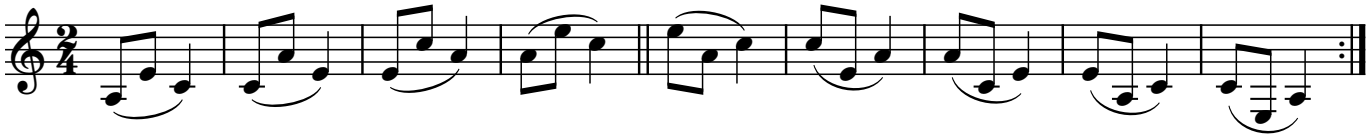

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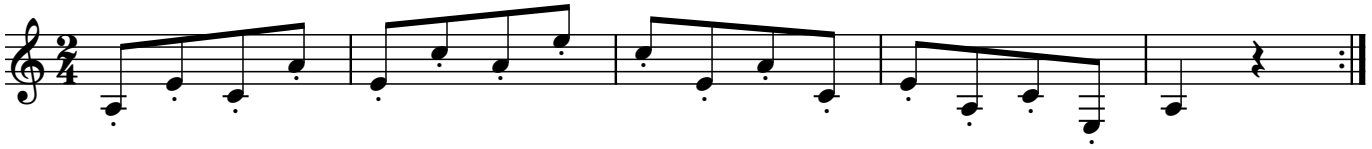

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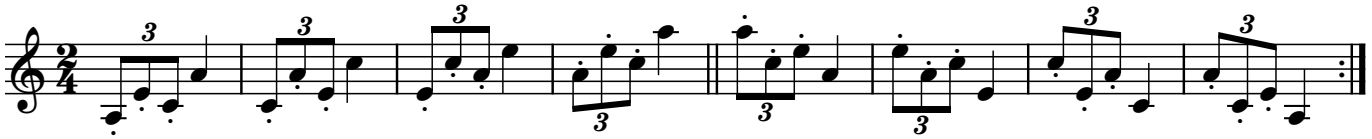

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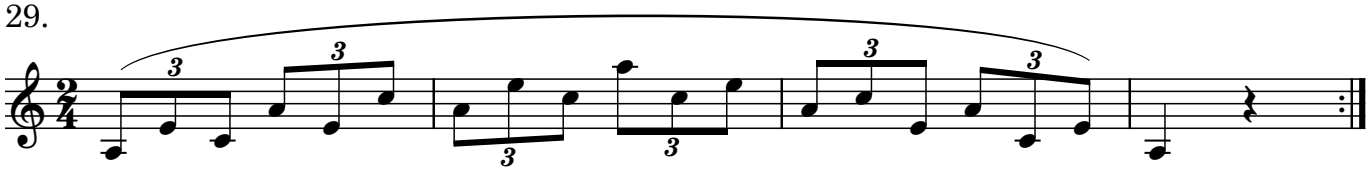

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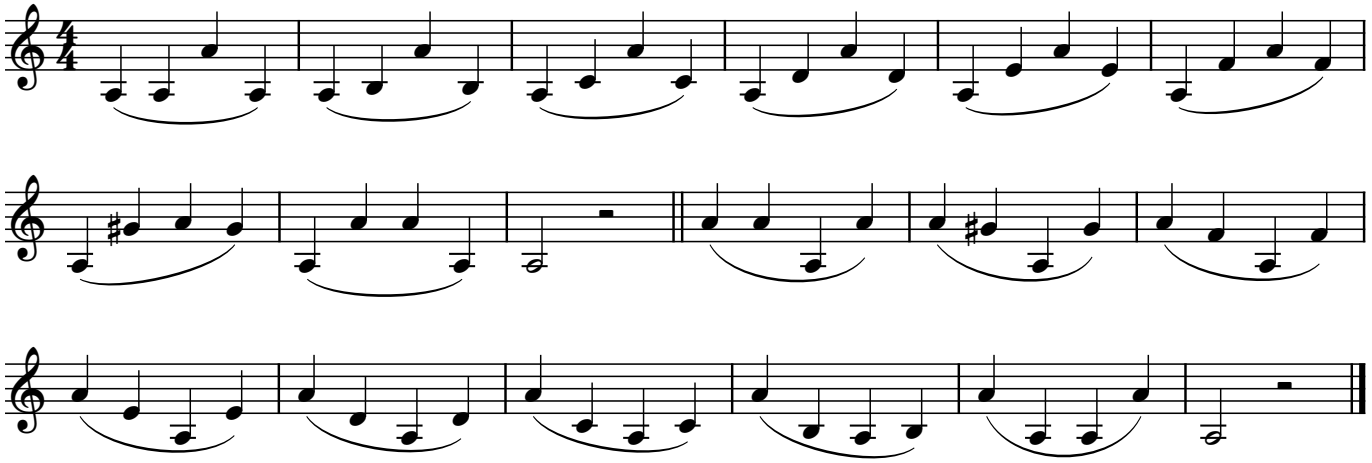

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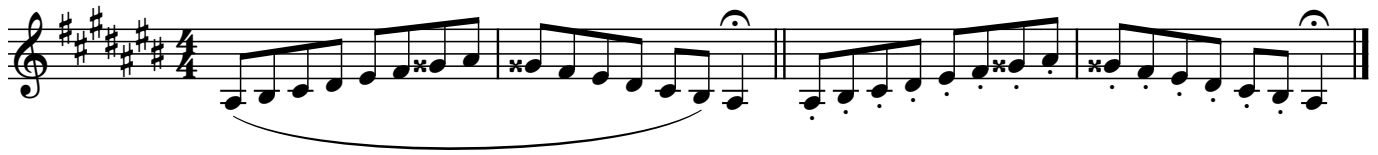

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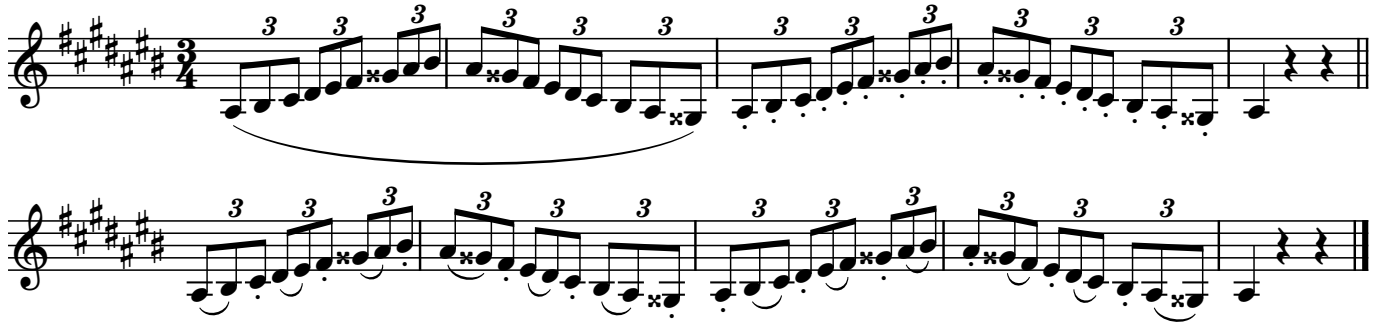

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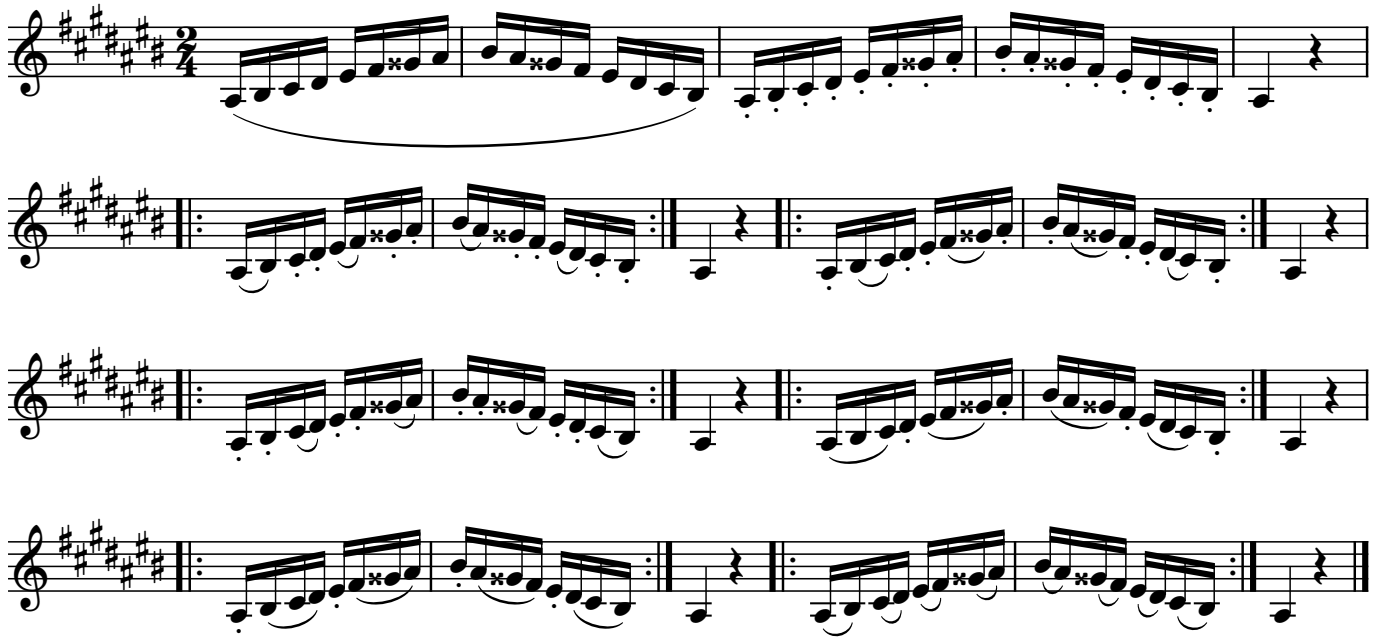

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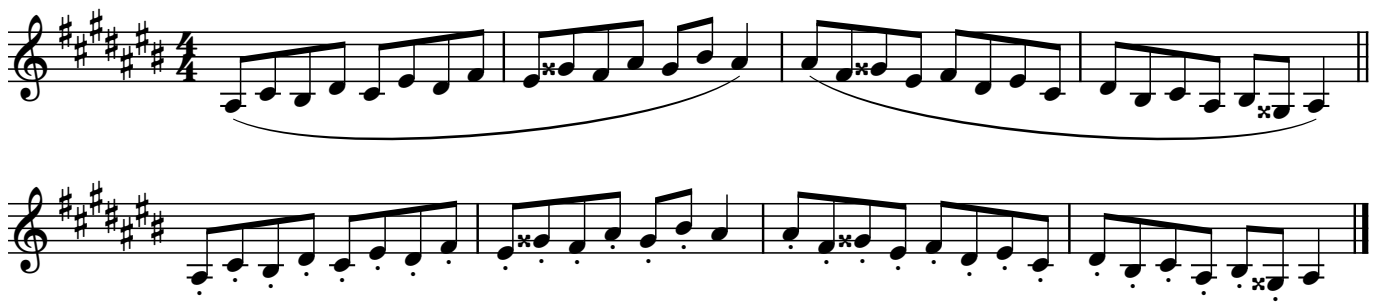

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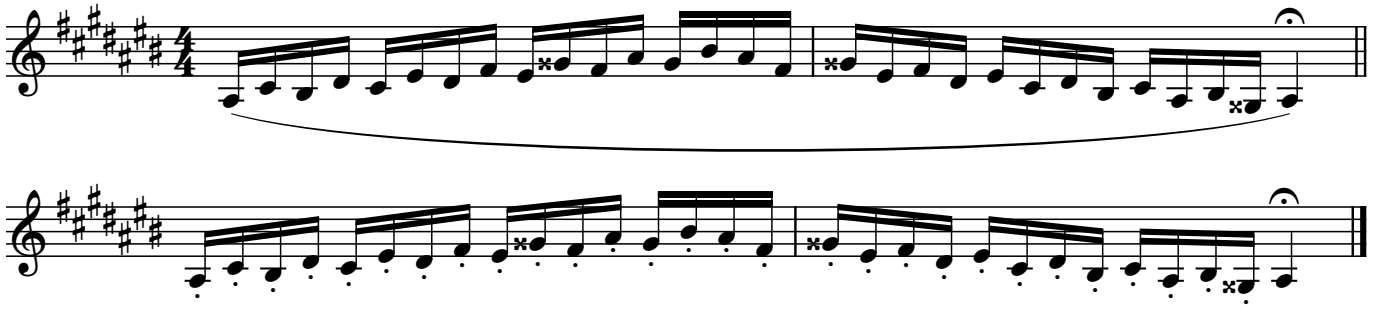

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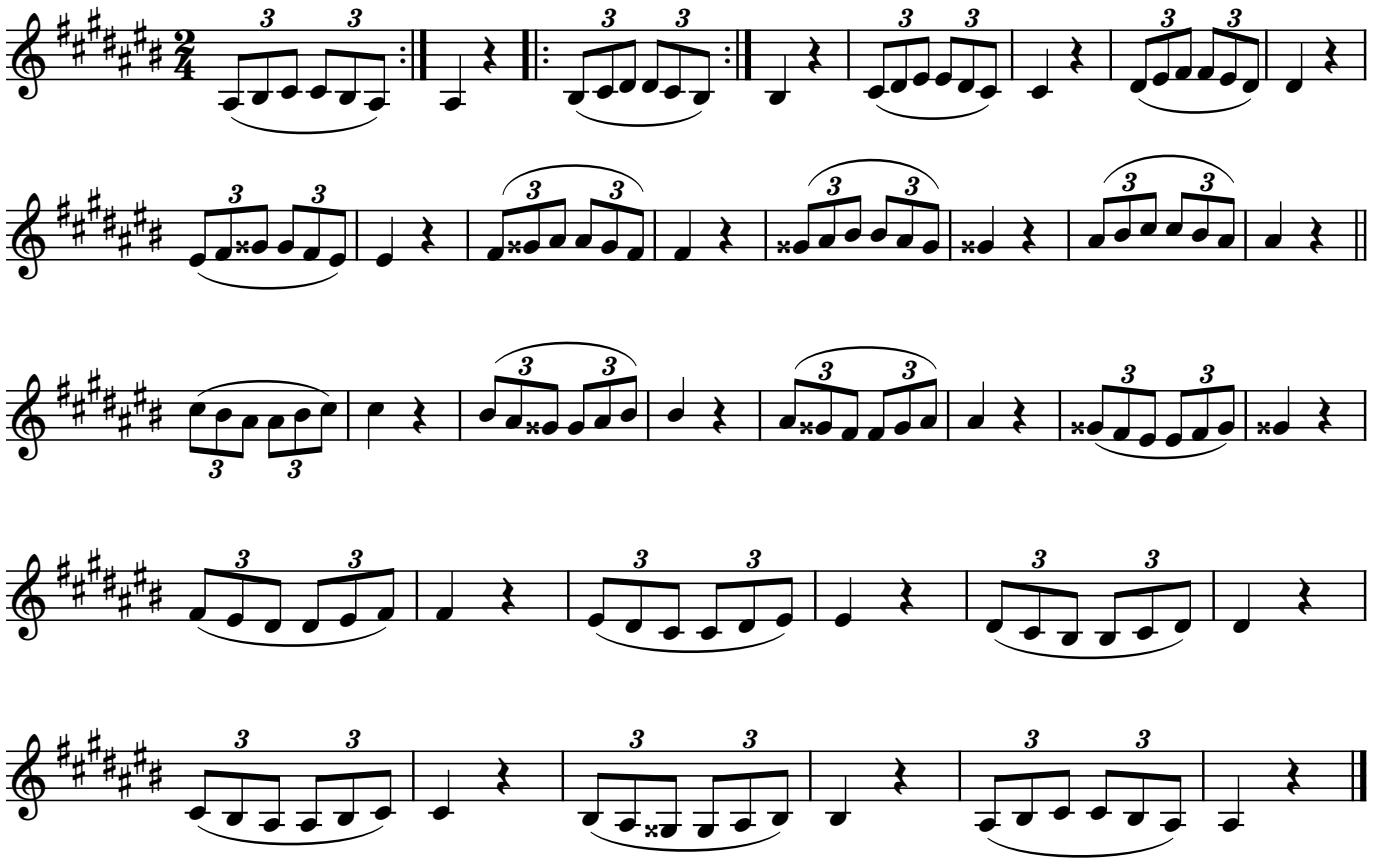

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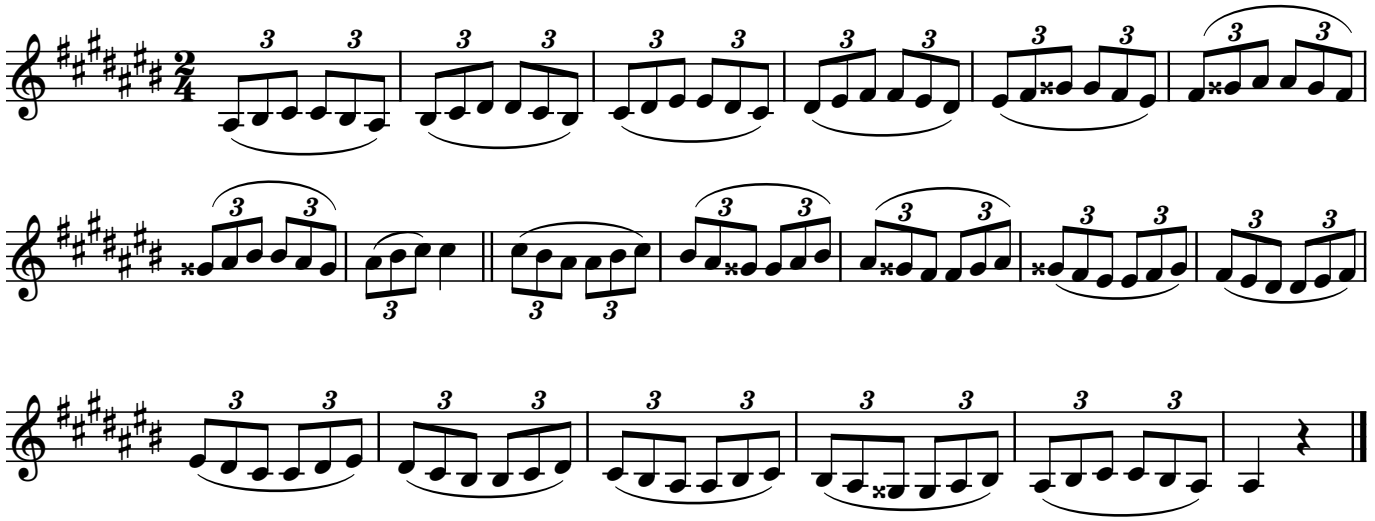

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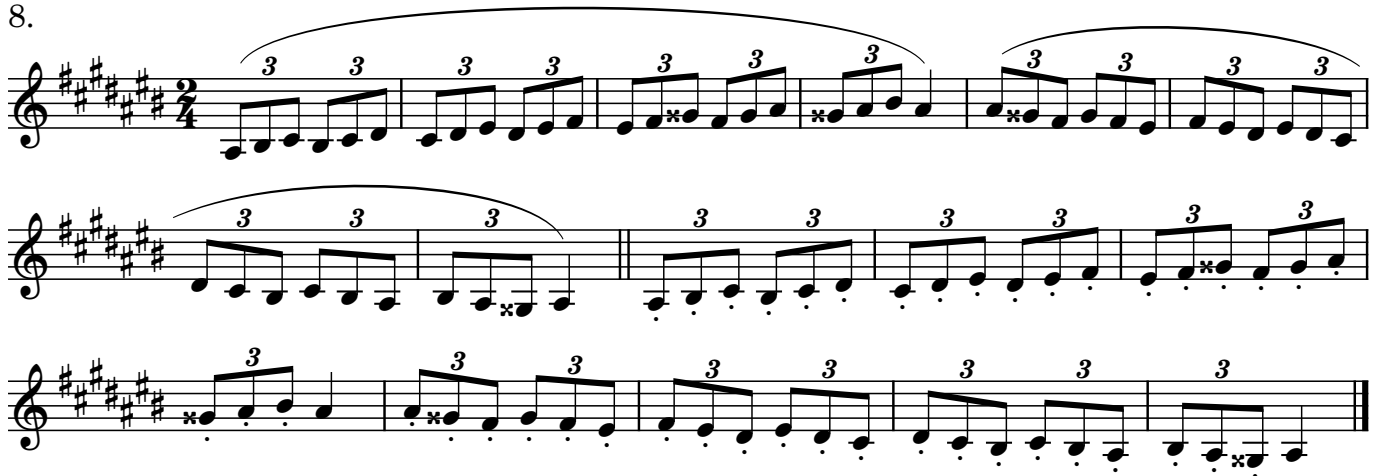

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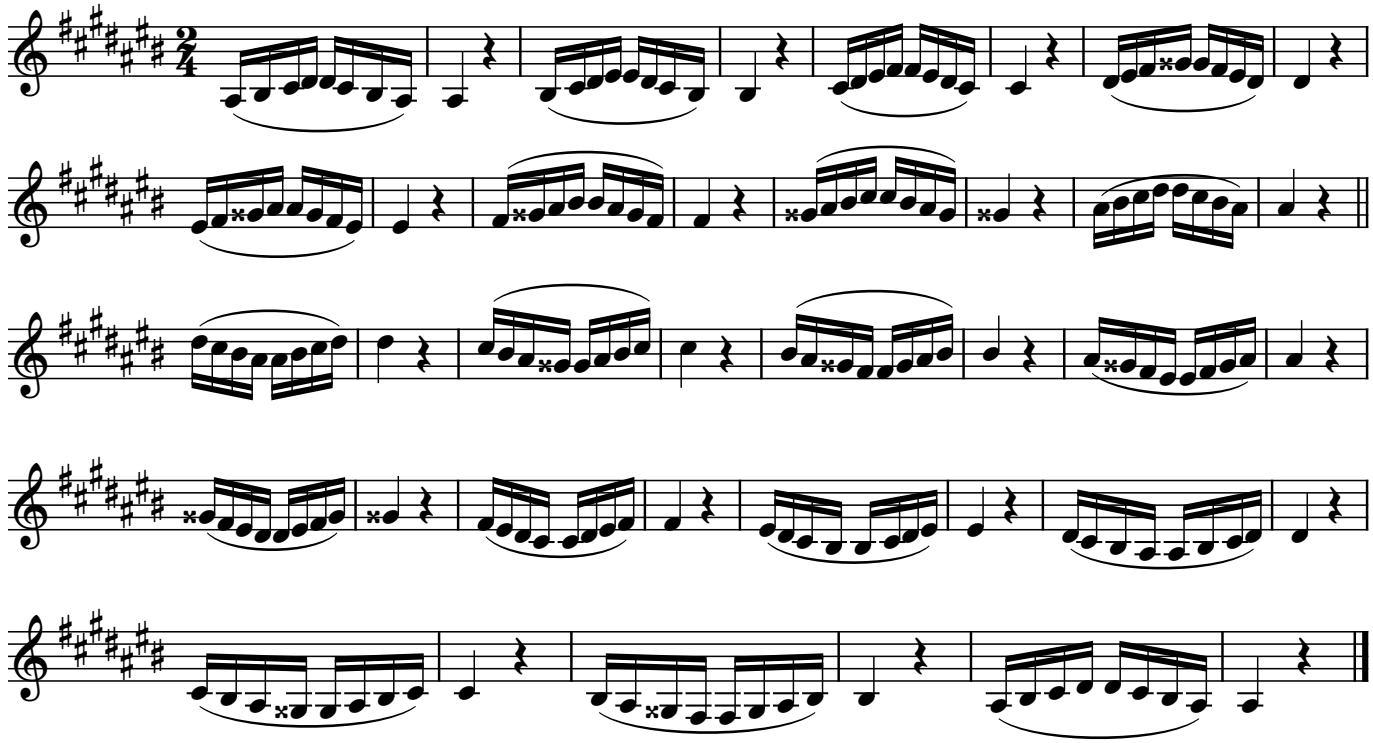

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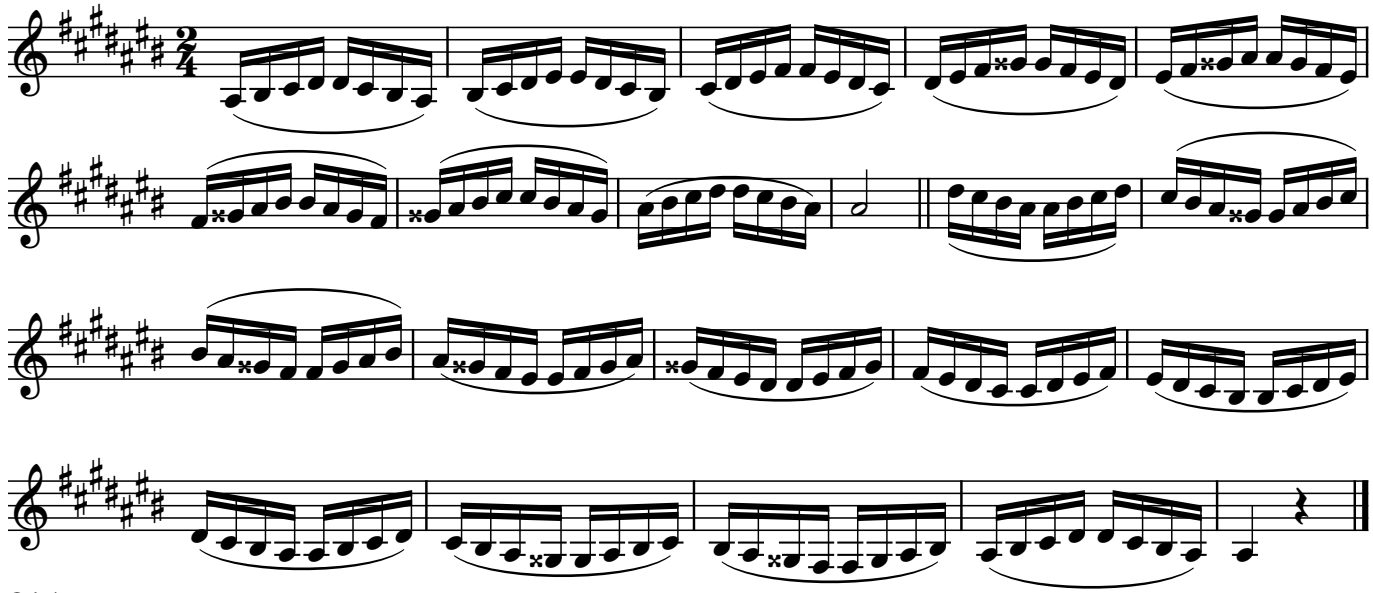

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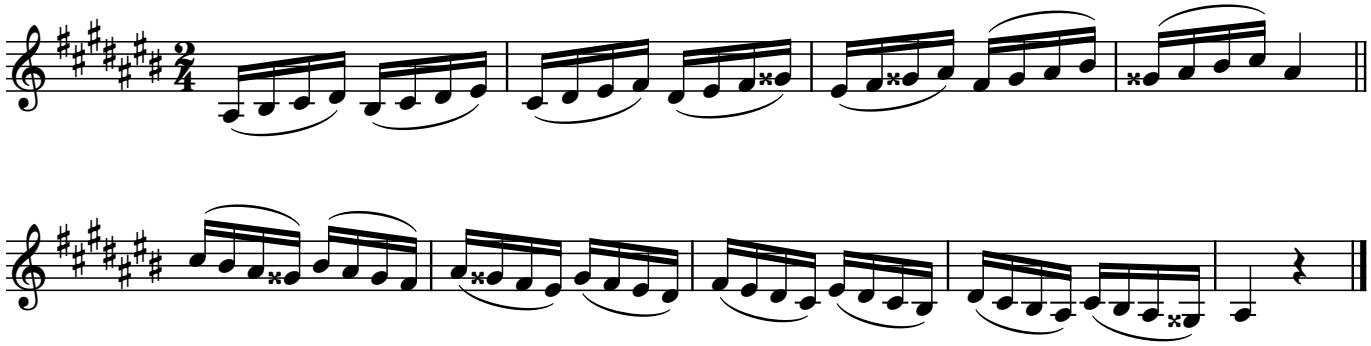

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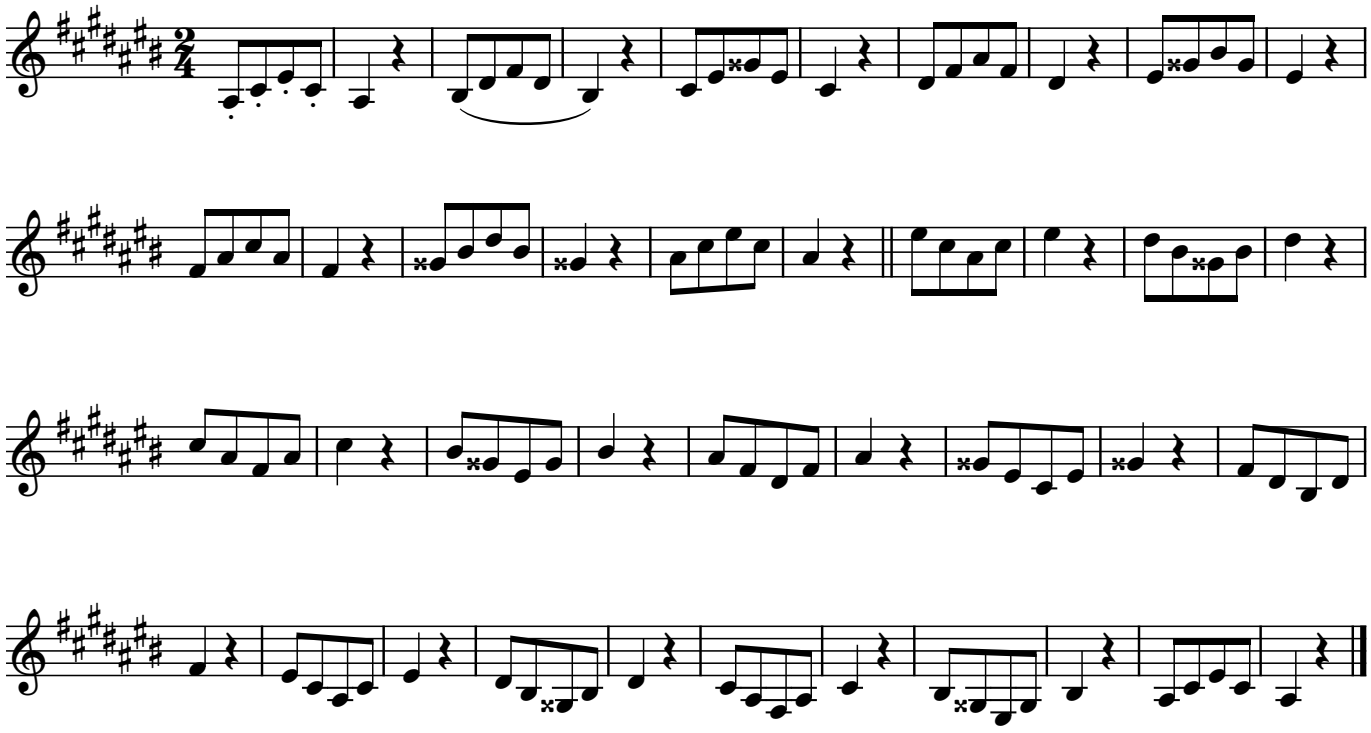

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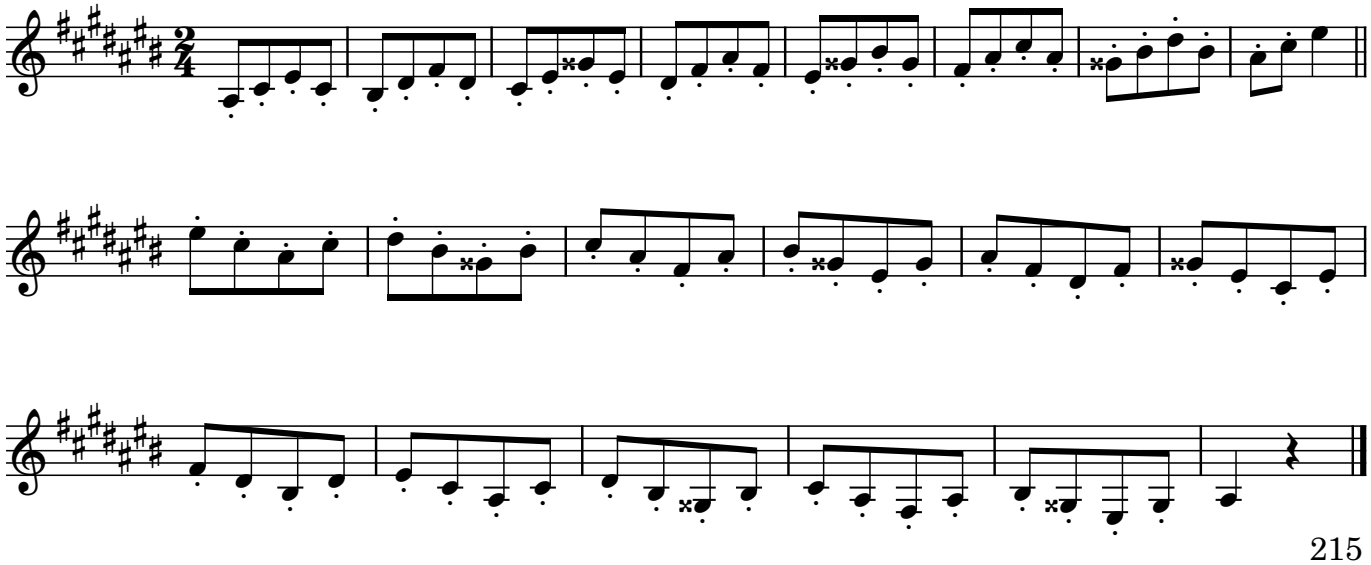

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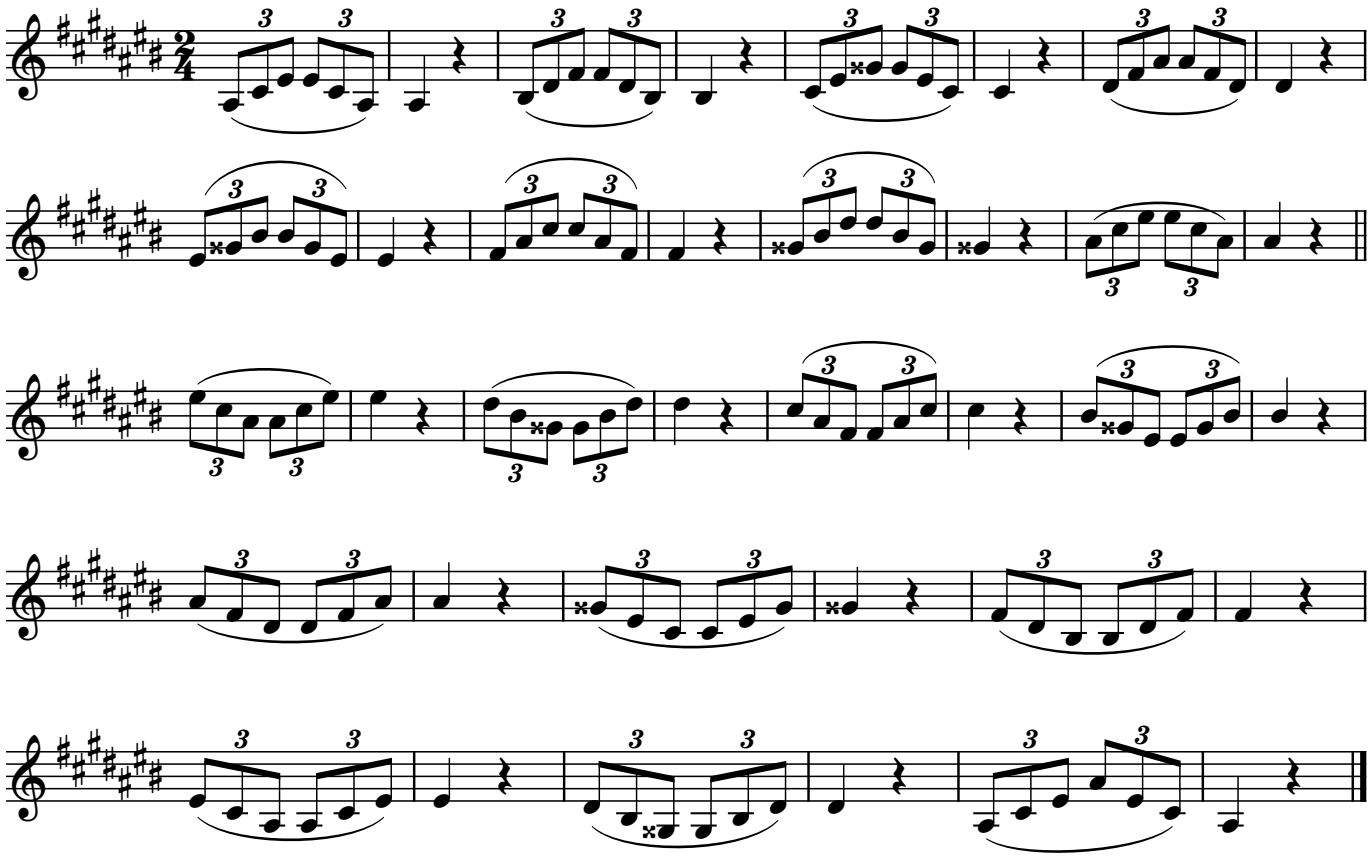

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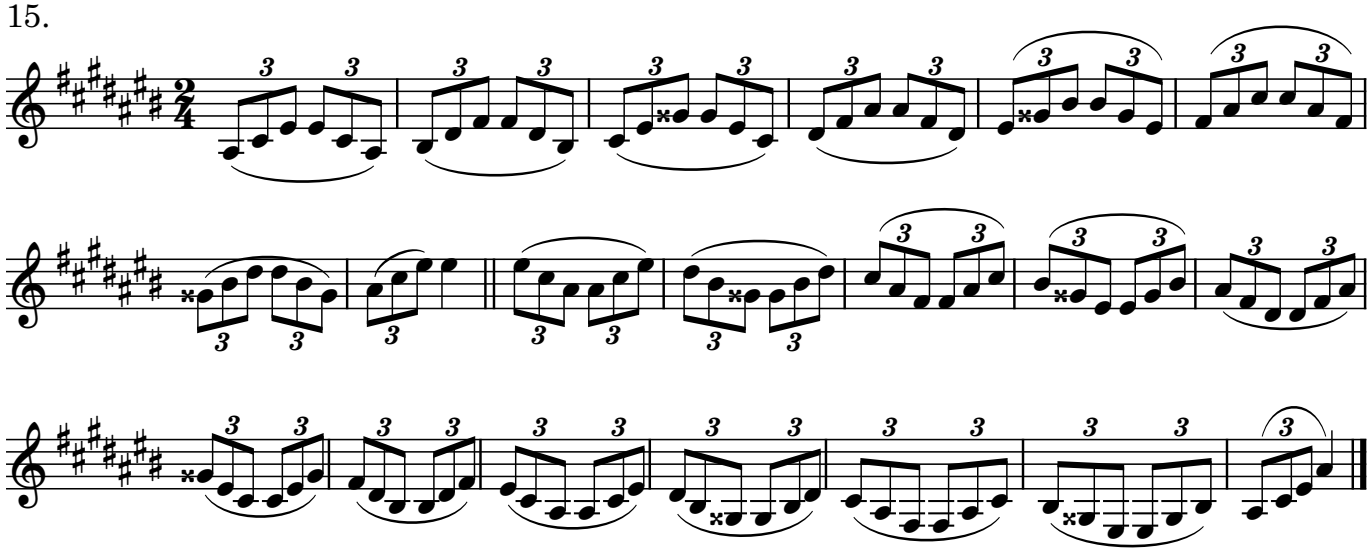

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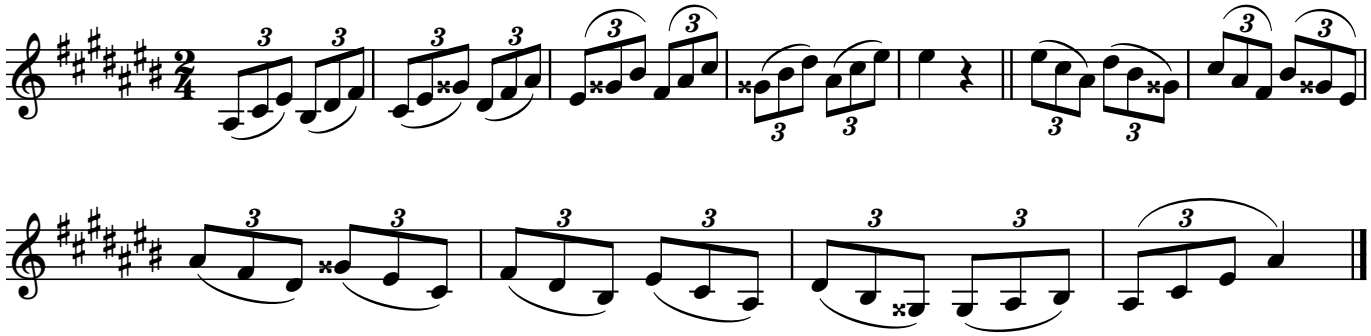

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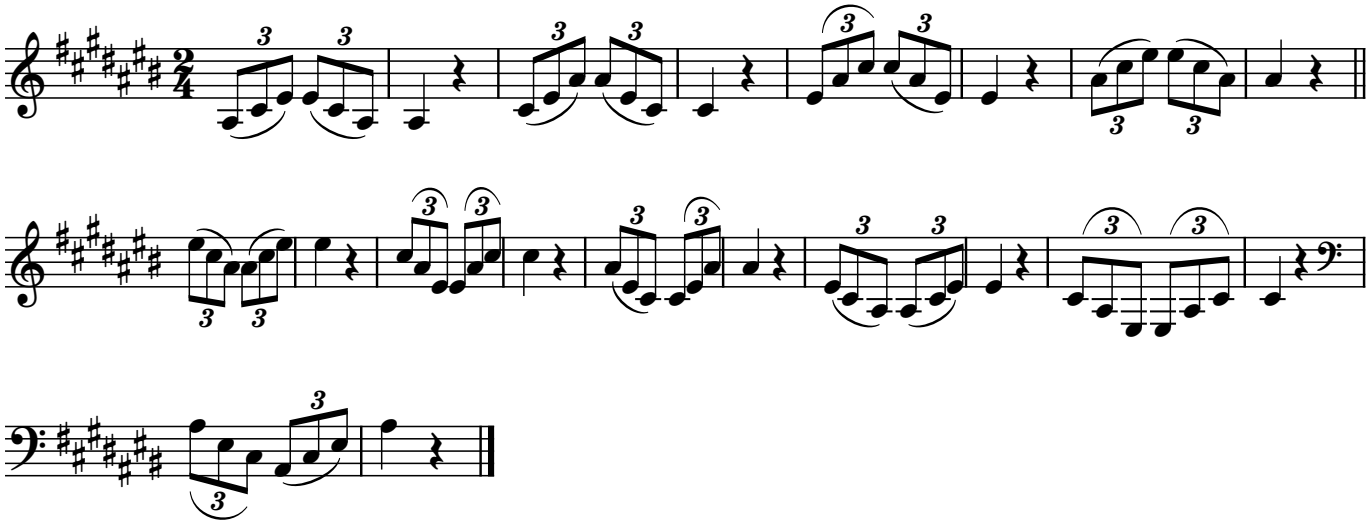

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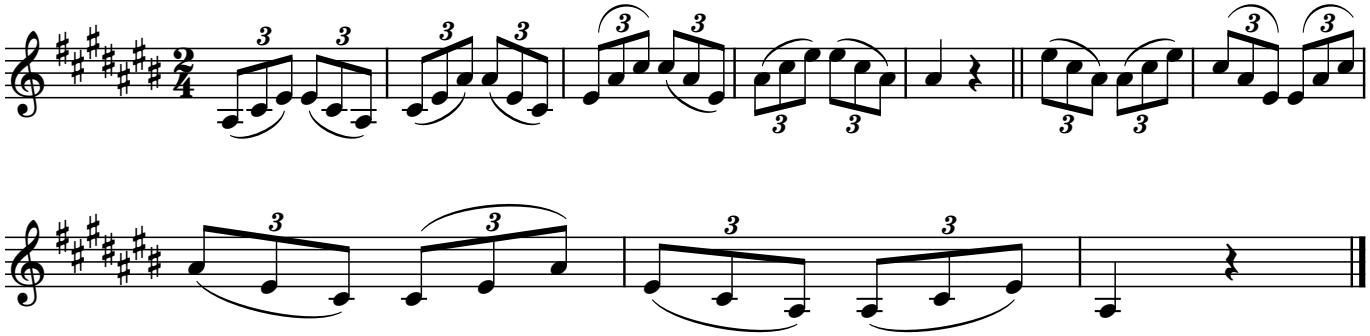

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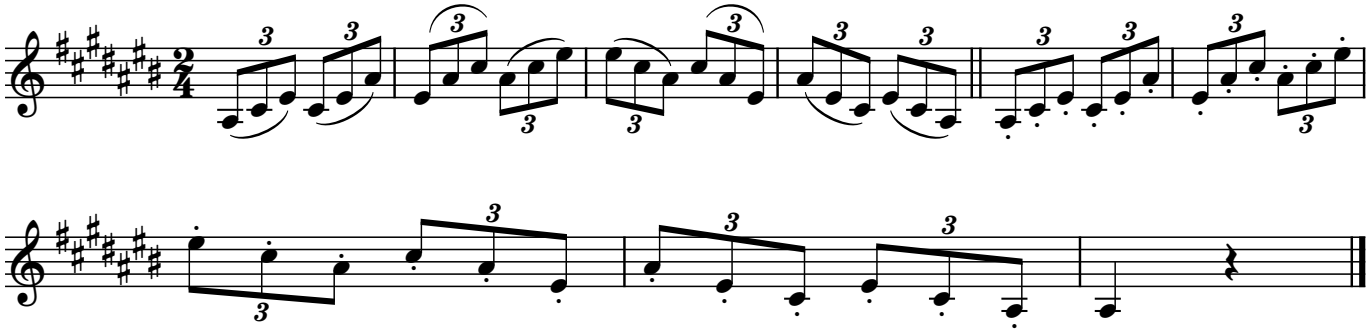

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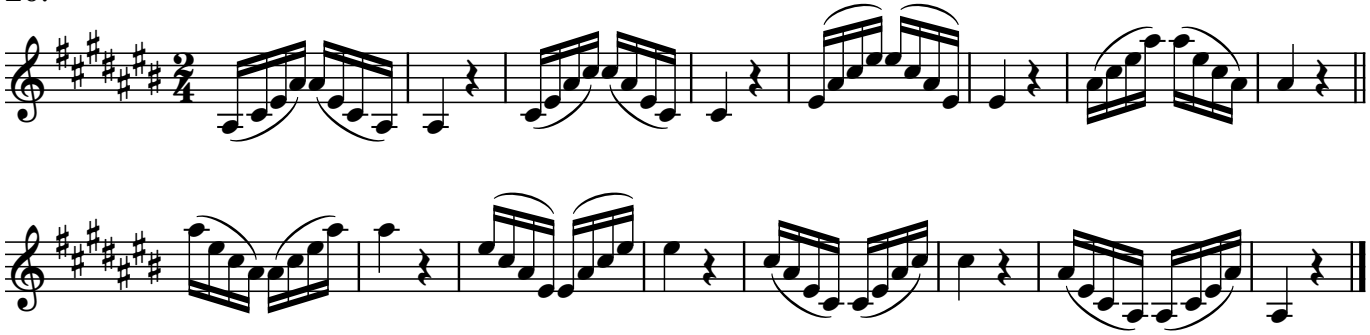

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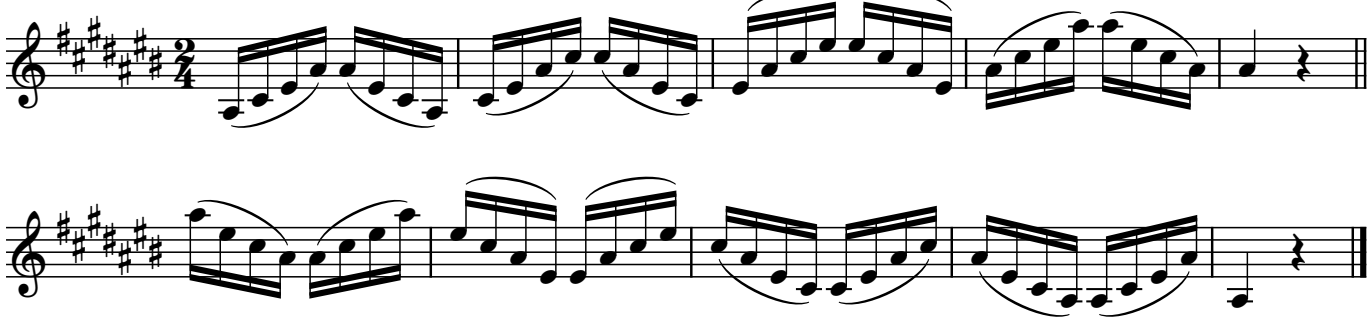

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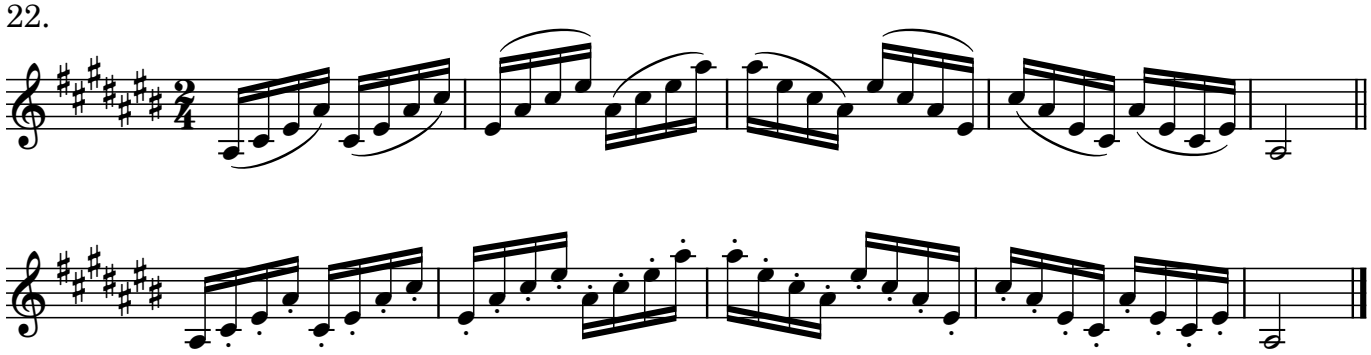

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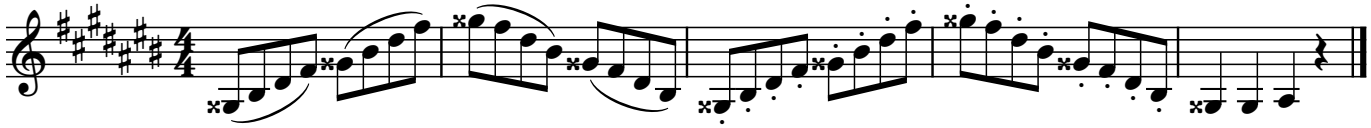

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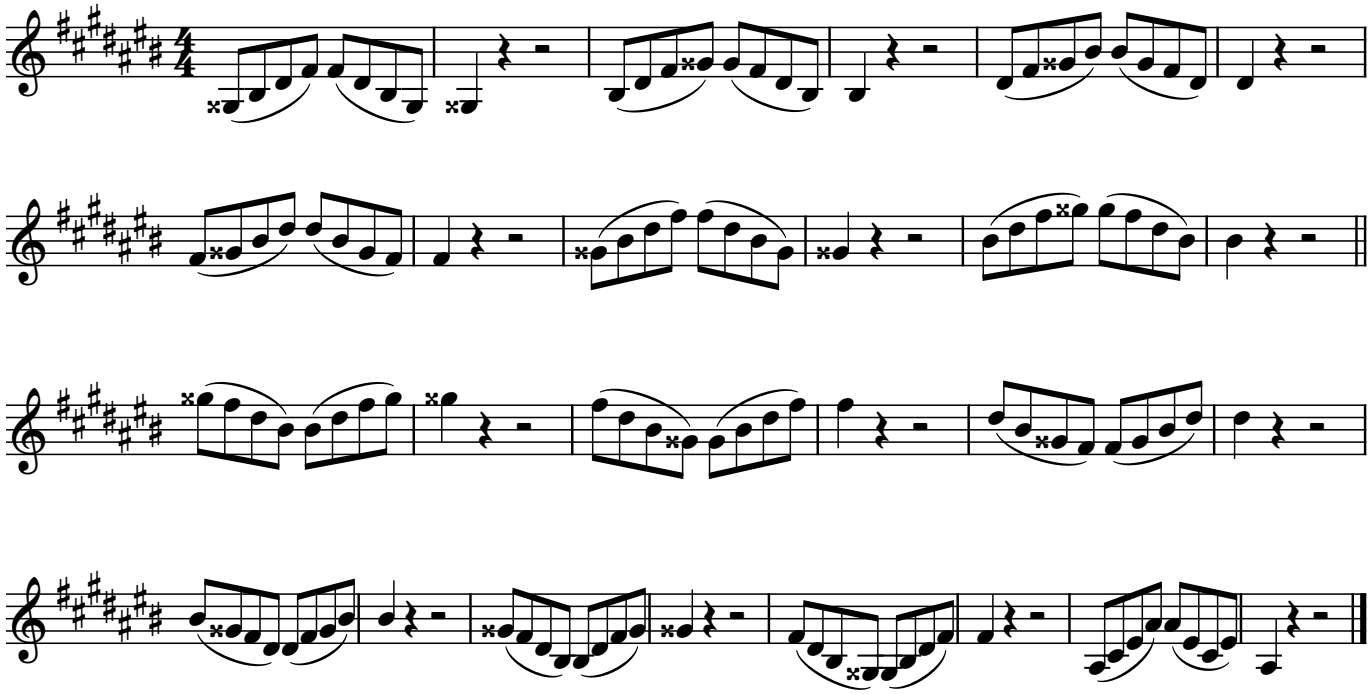

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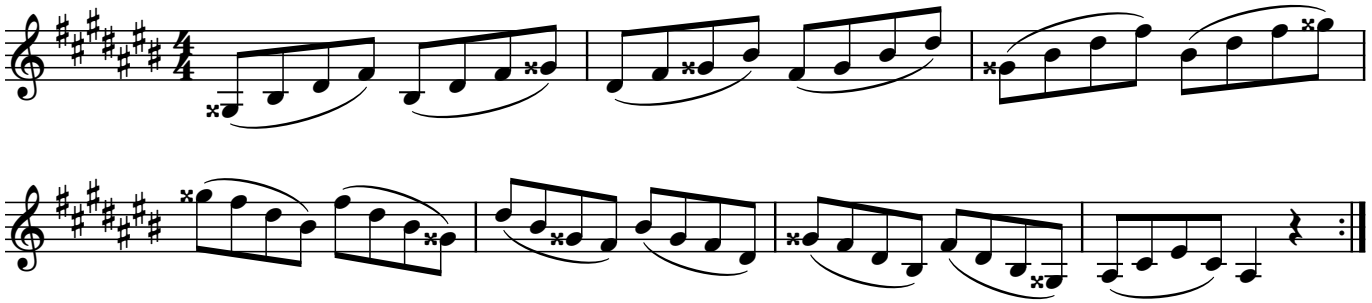

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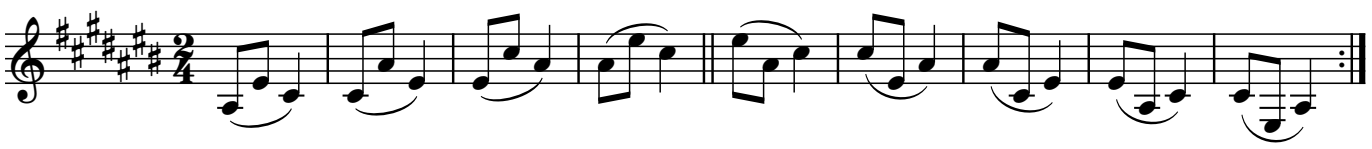

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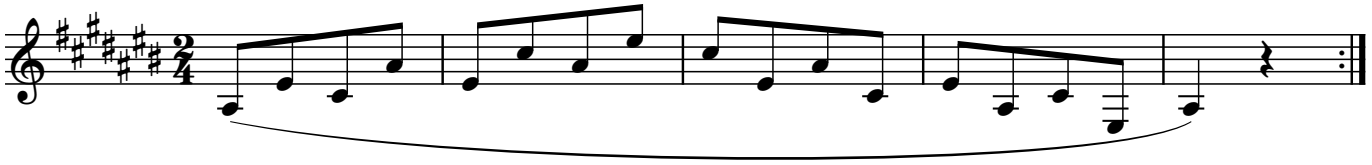

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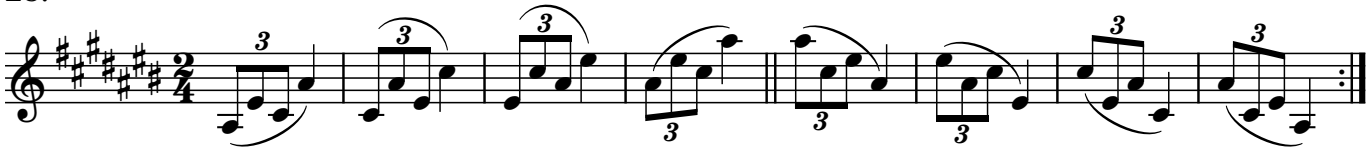

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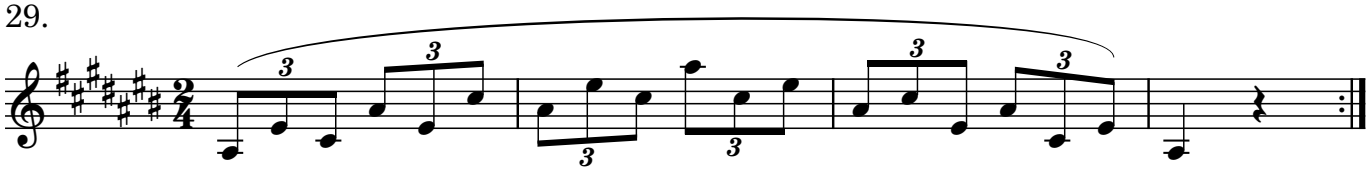

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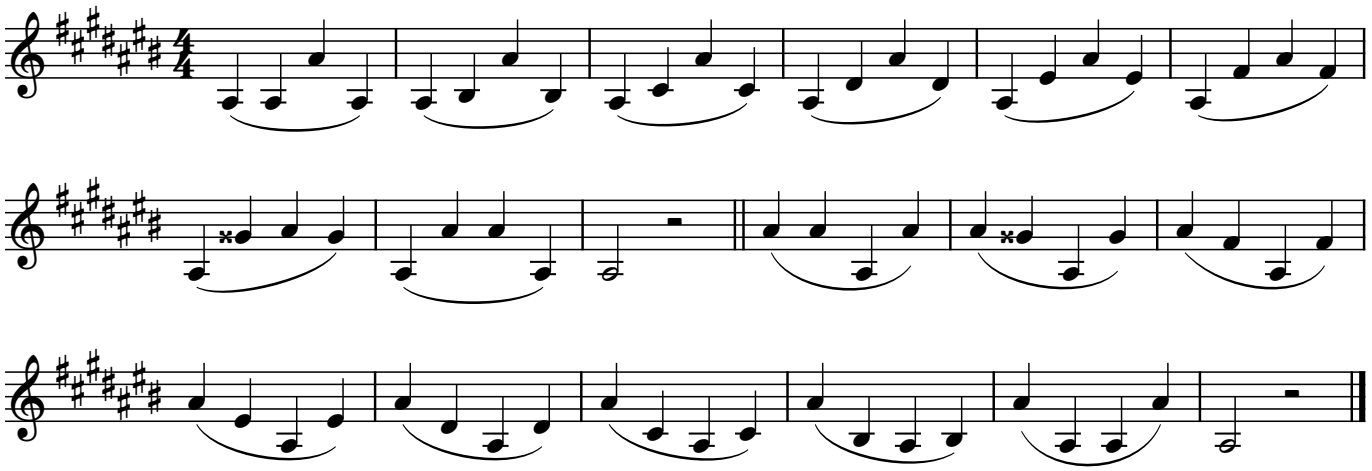

B-Dur - B♭ Major

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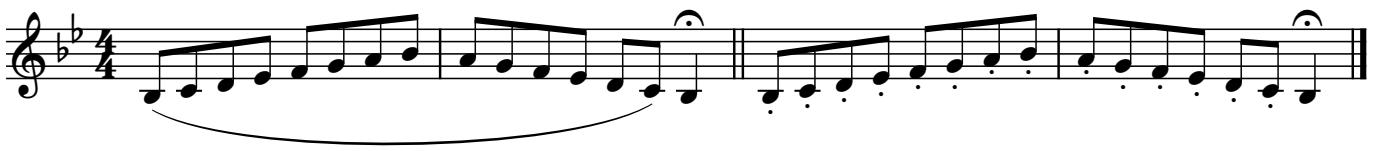

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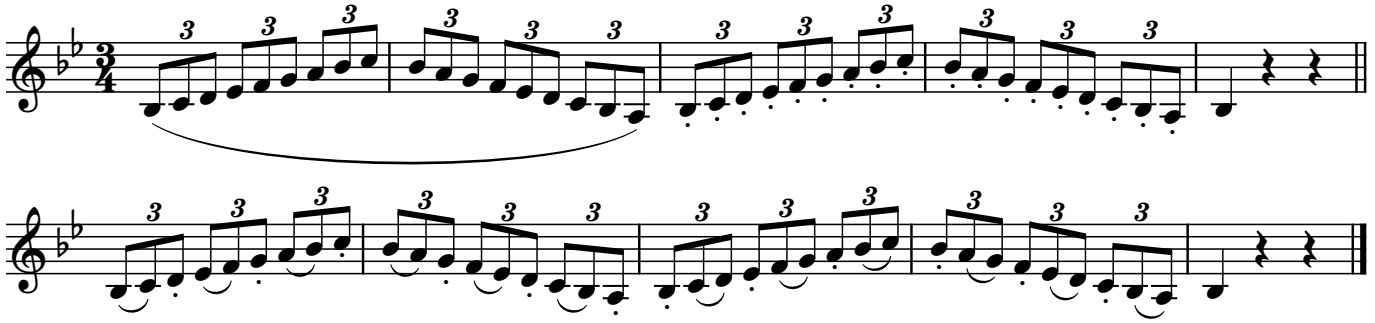

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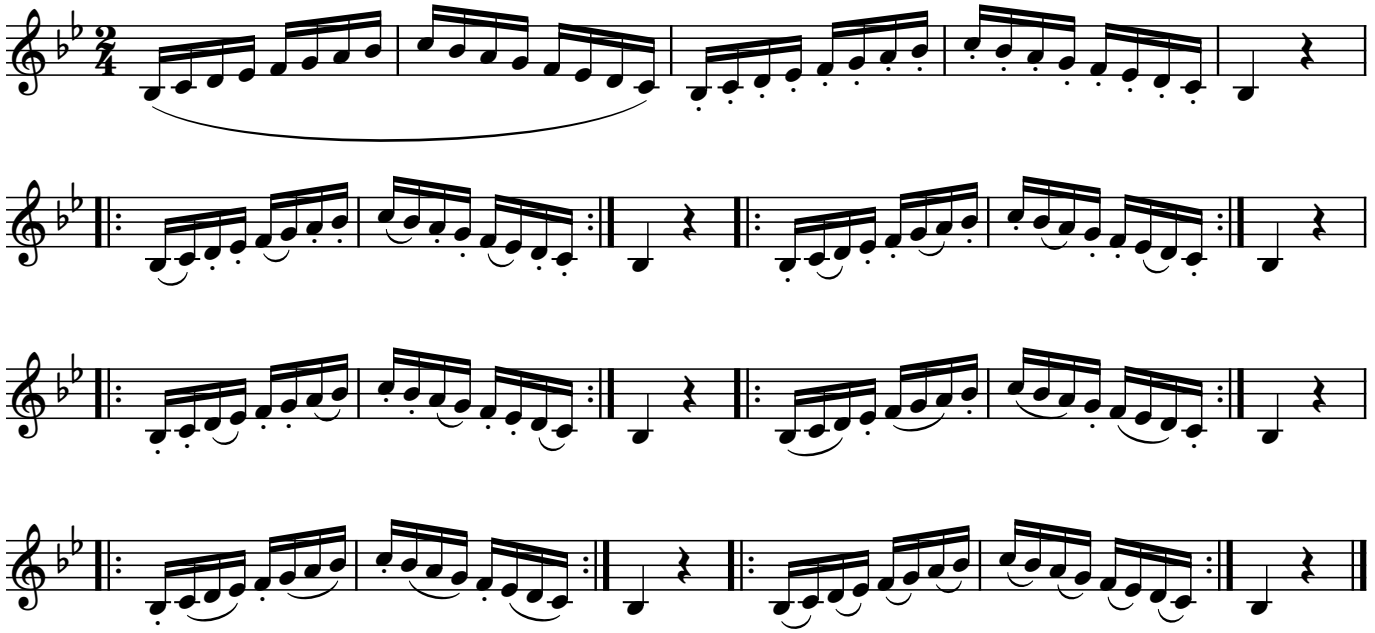

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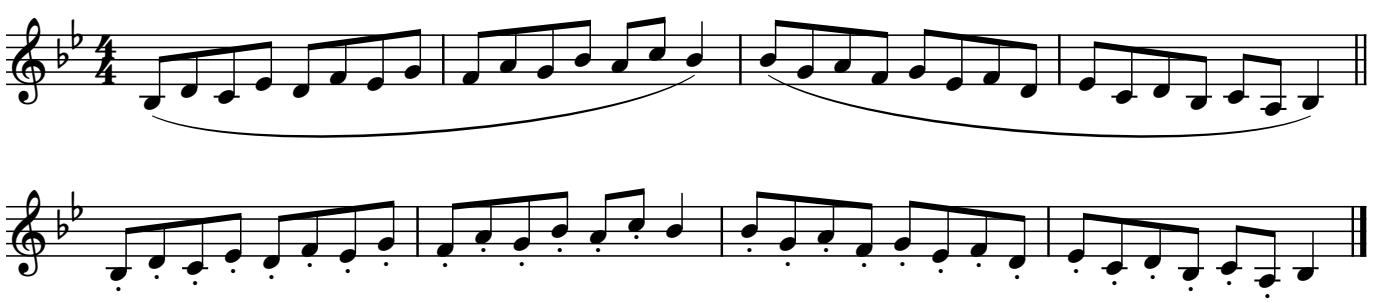

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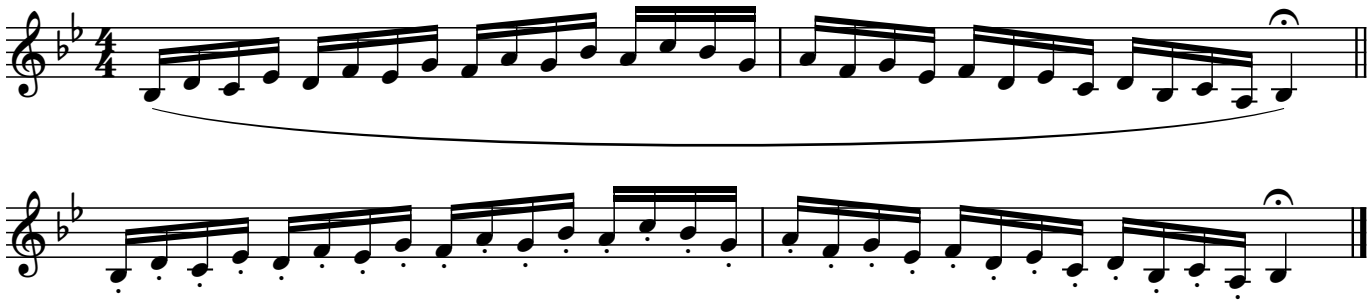

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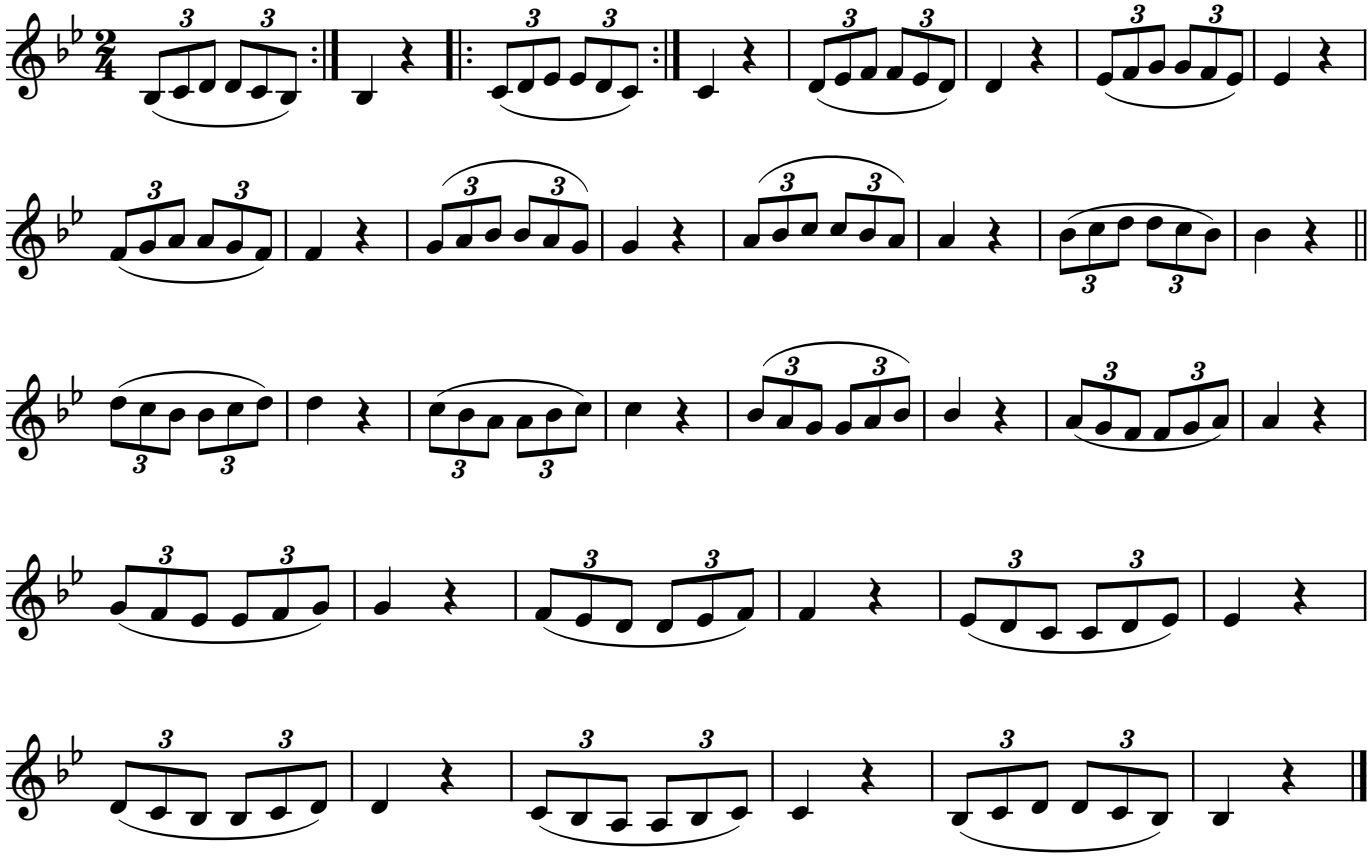

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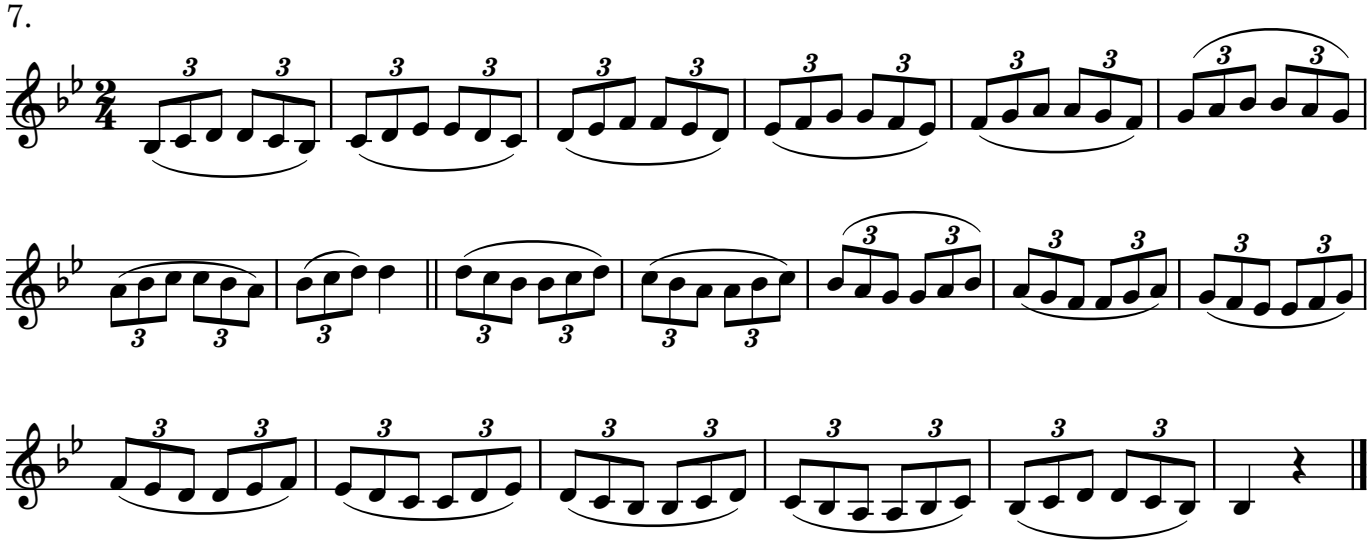

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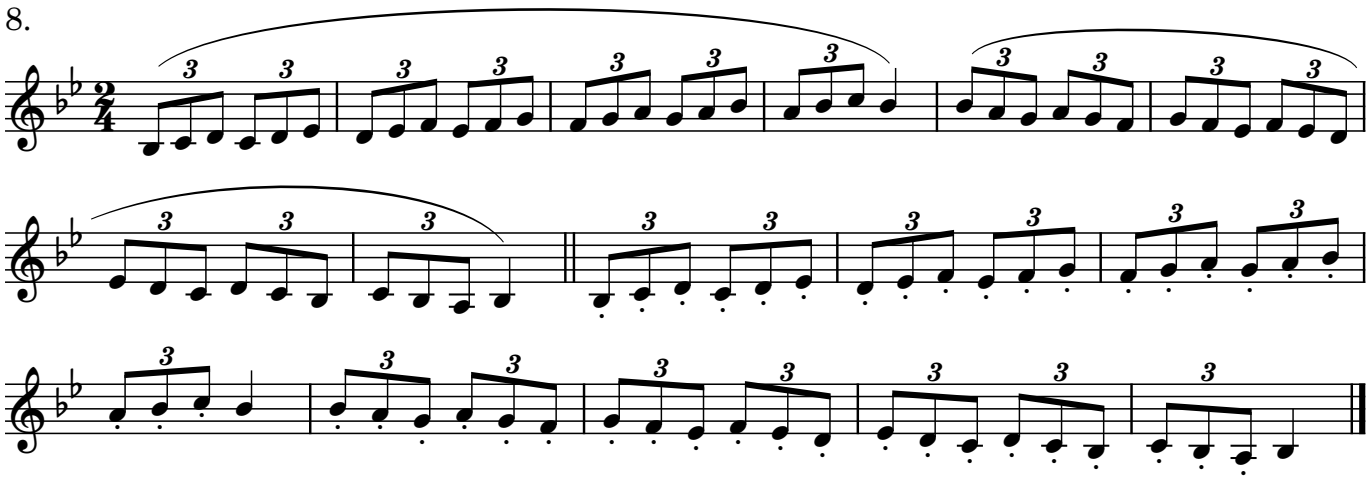

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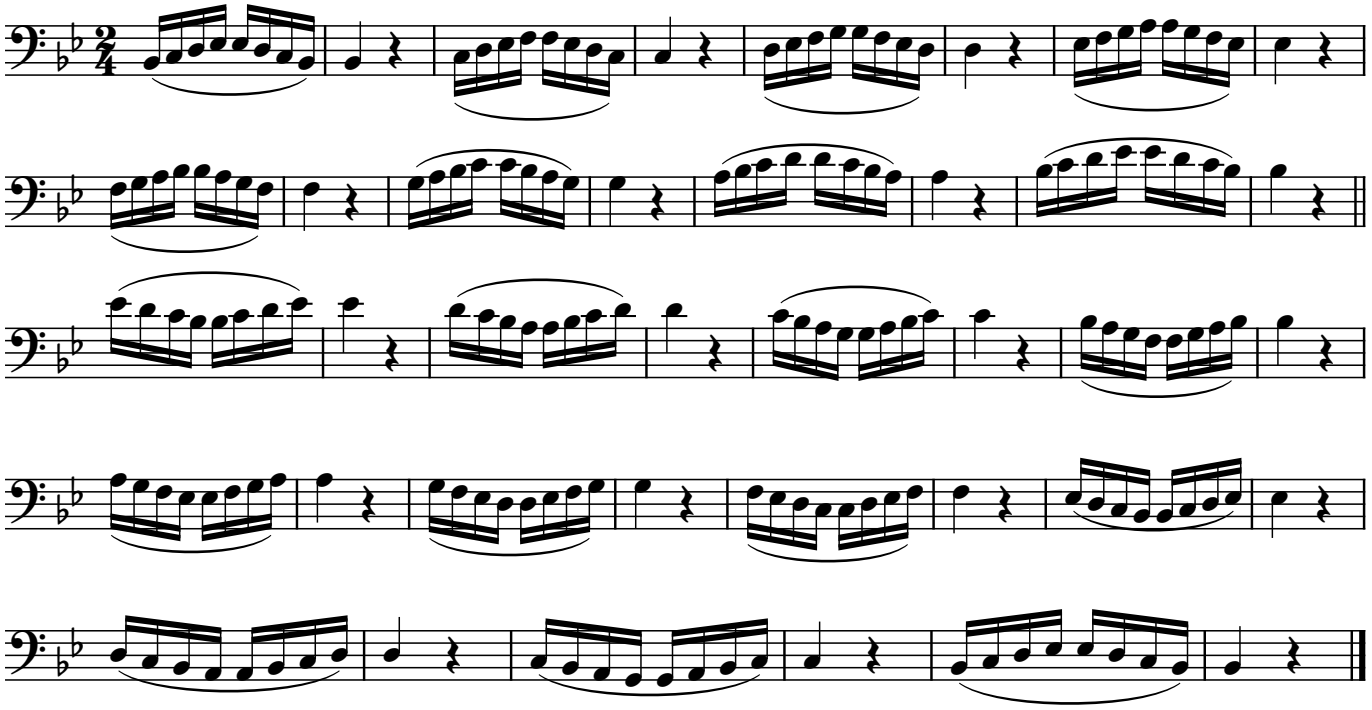

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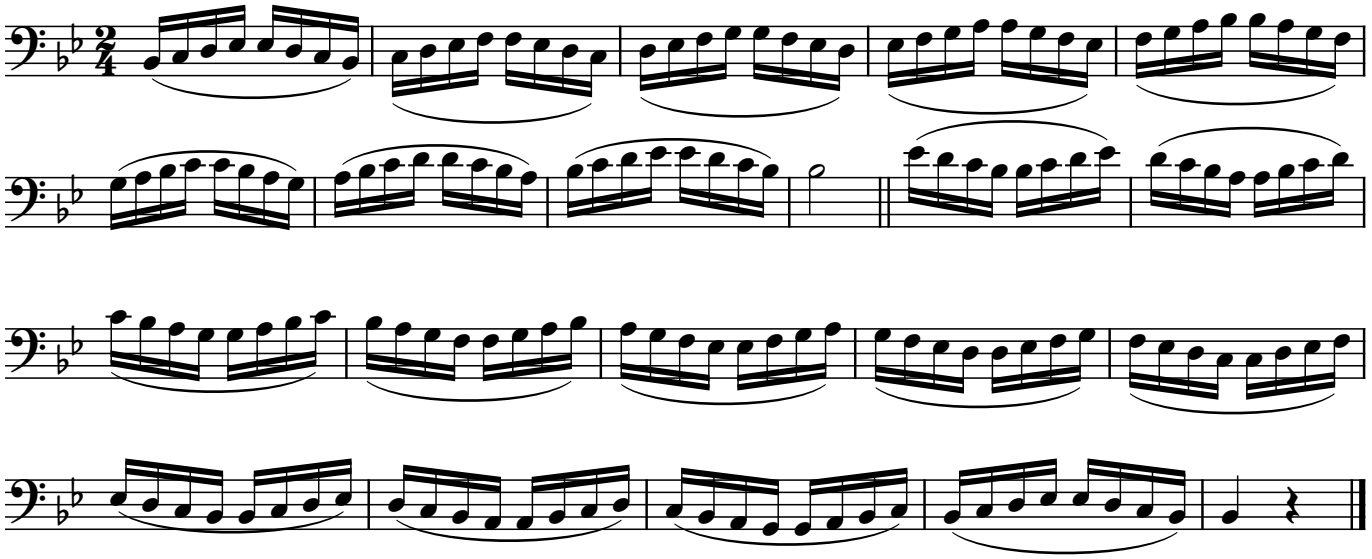

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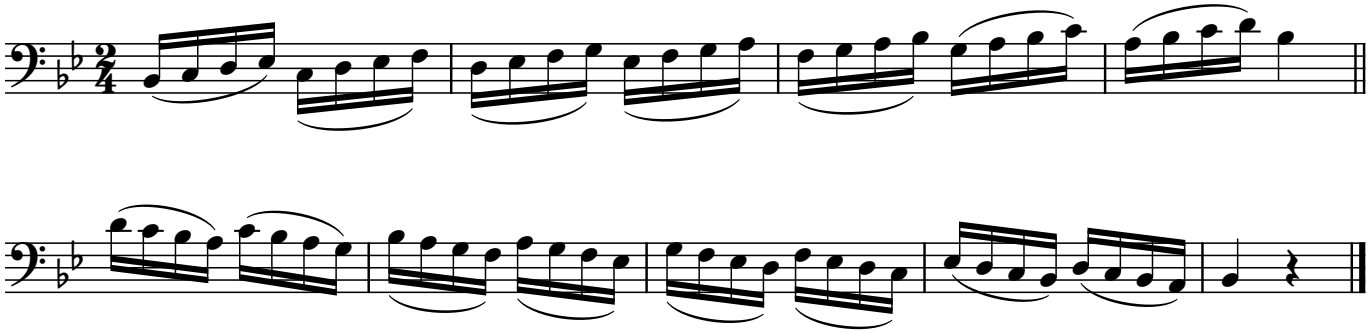

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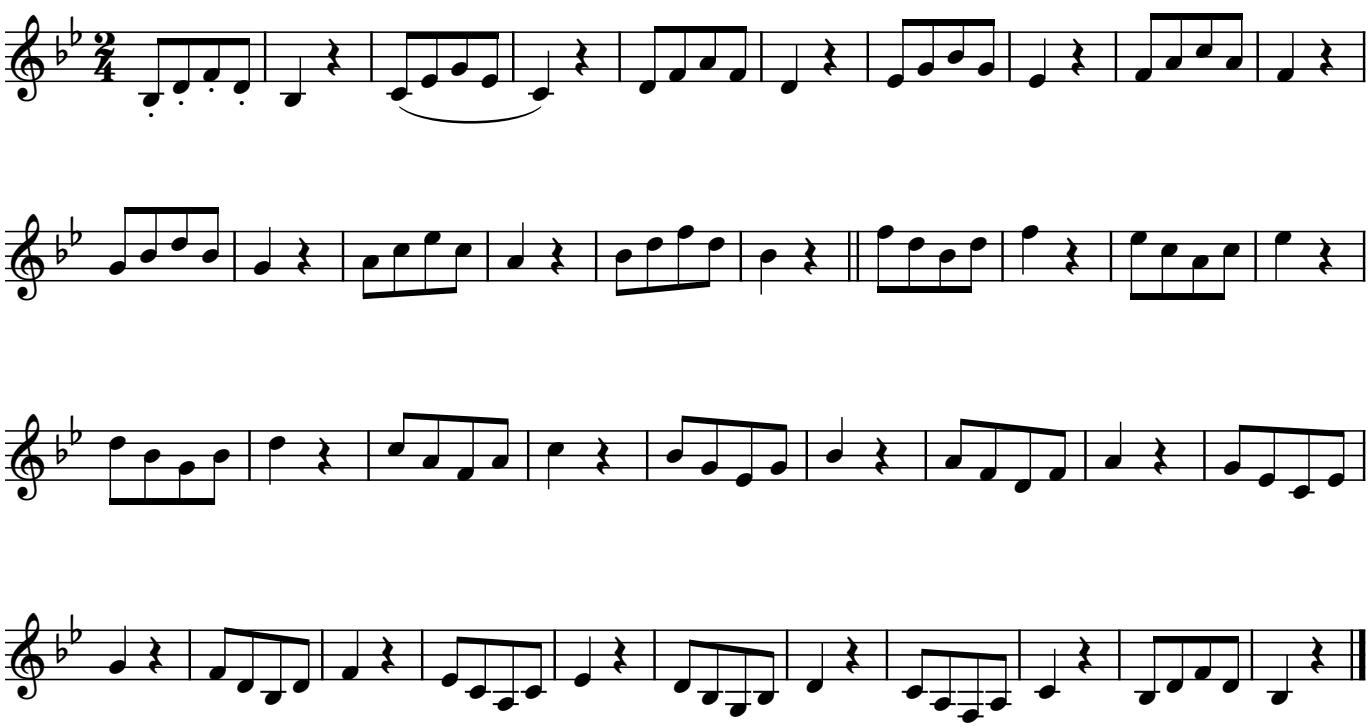

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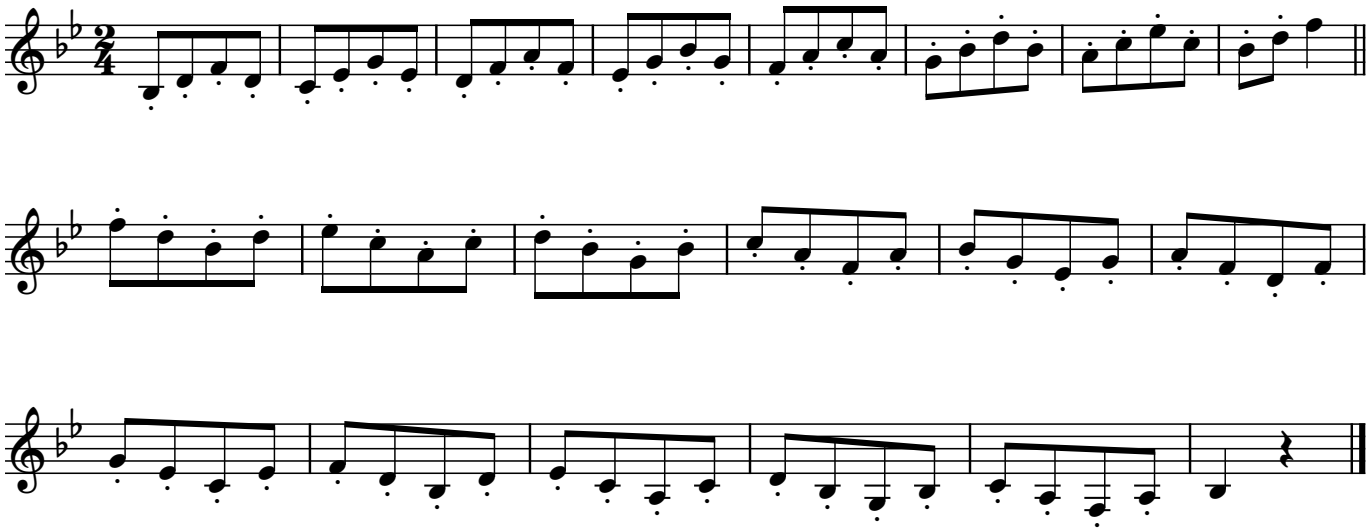

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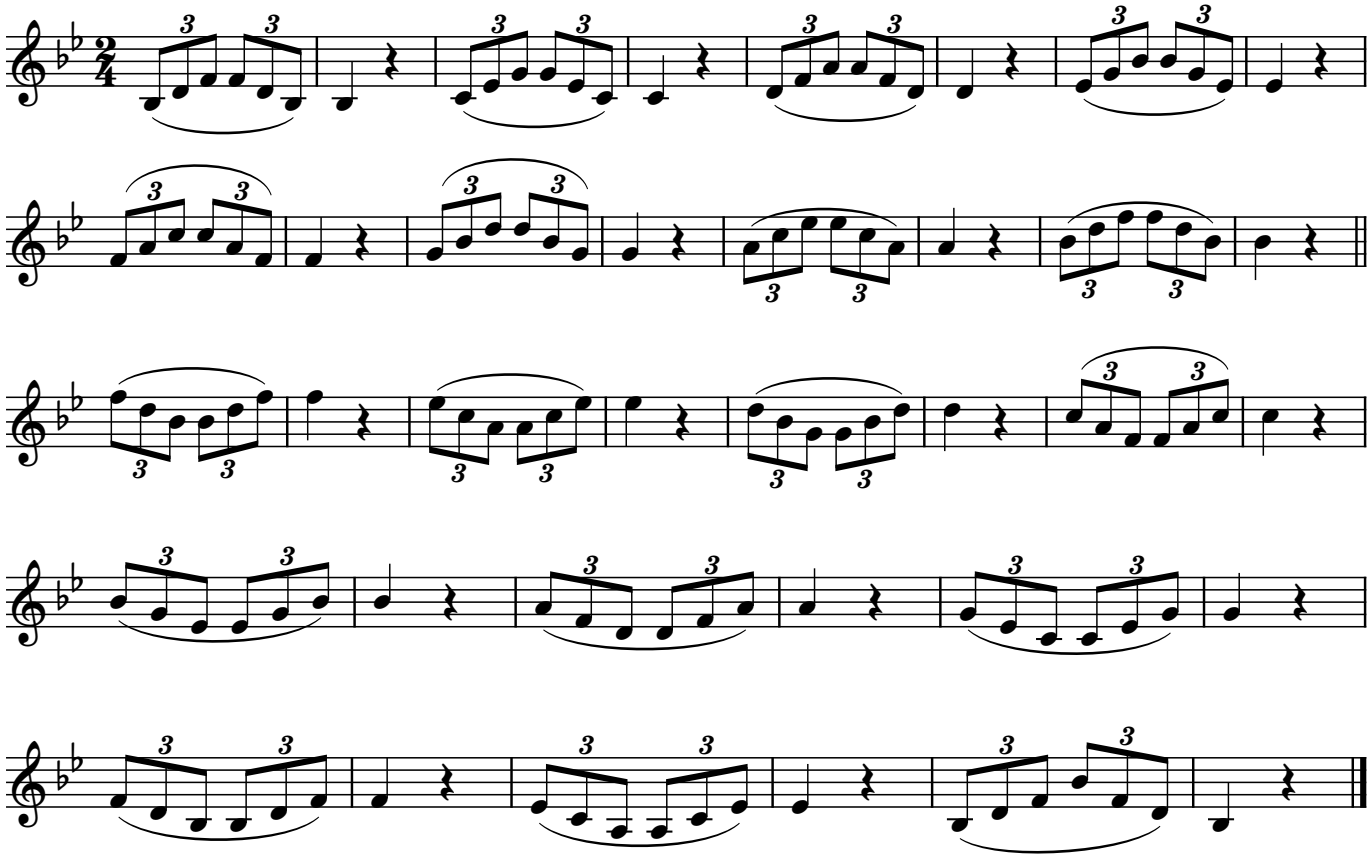

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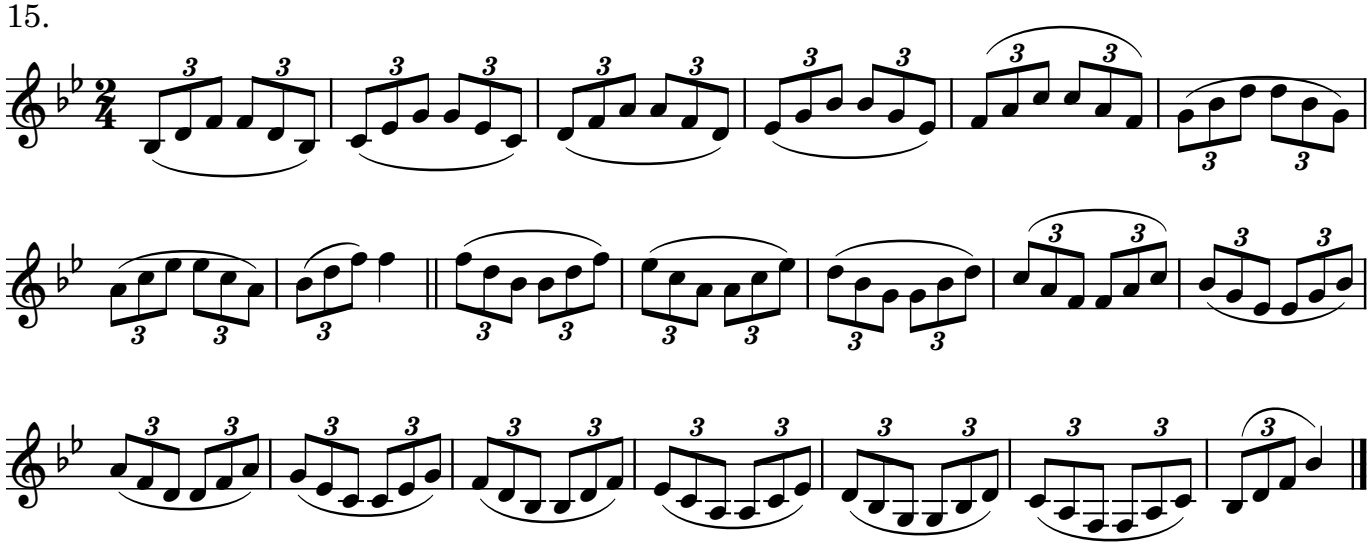

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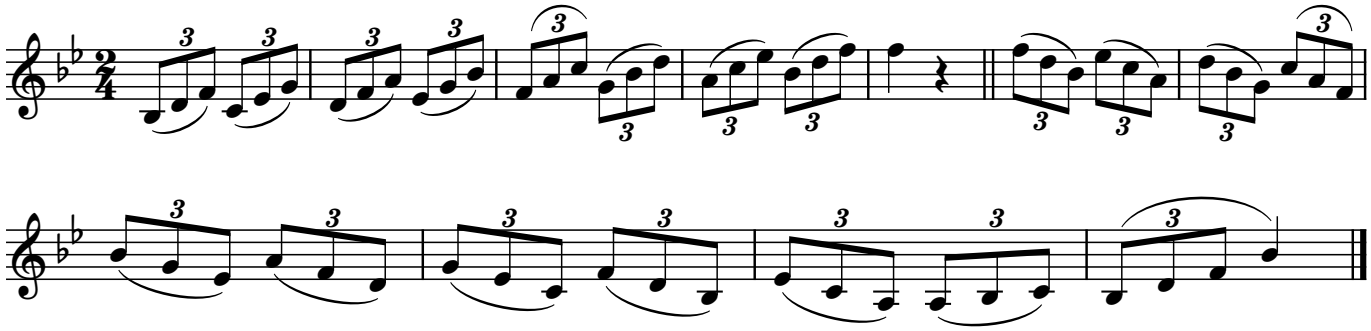

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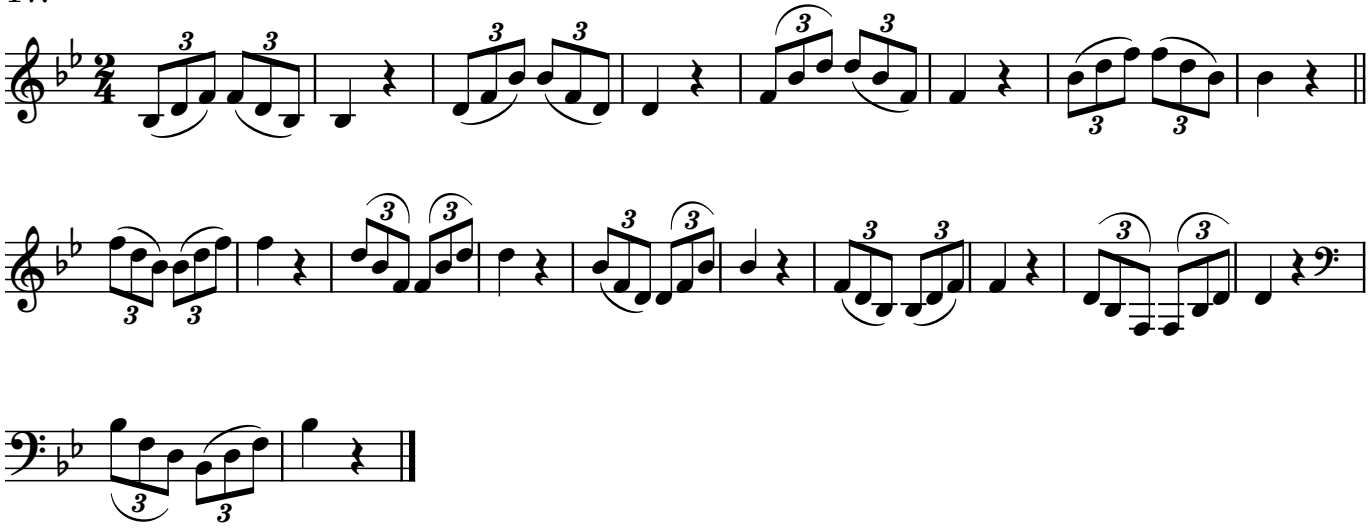

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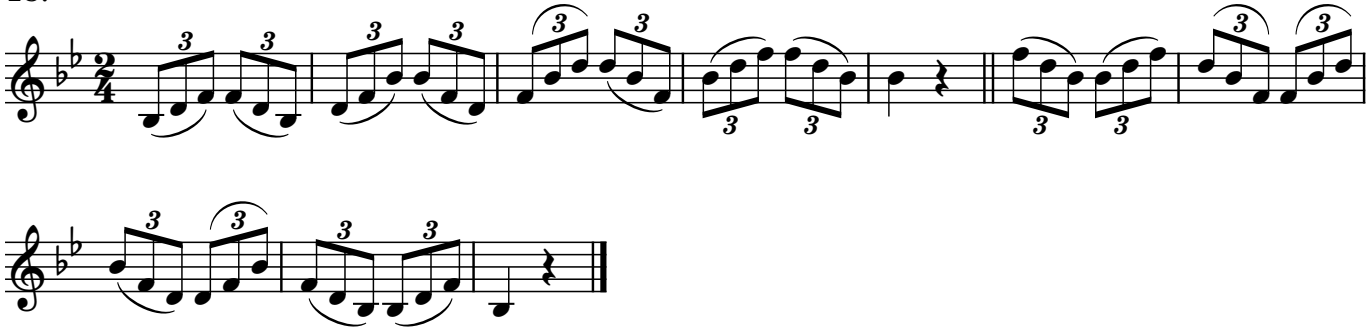

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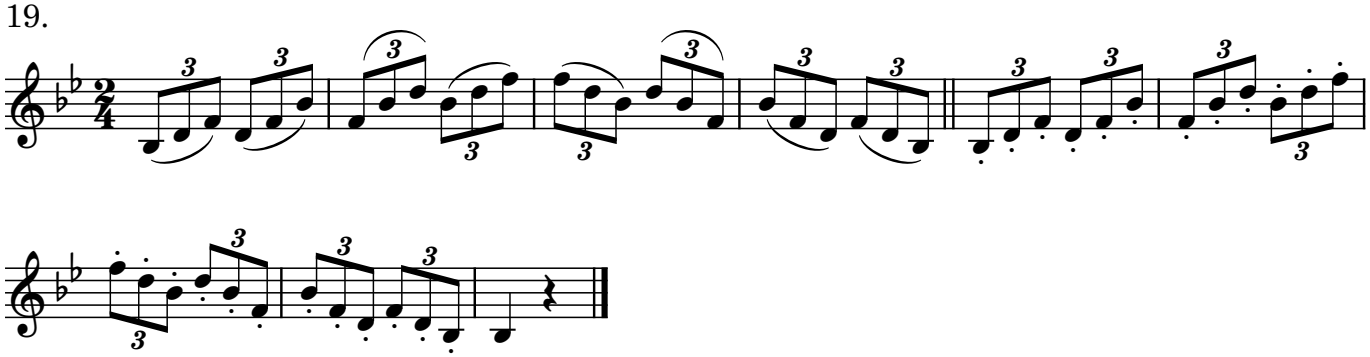

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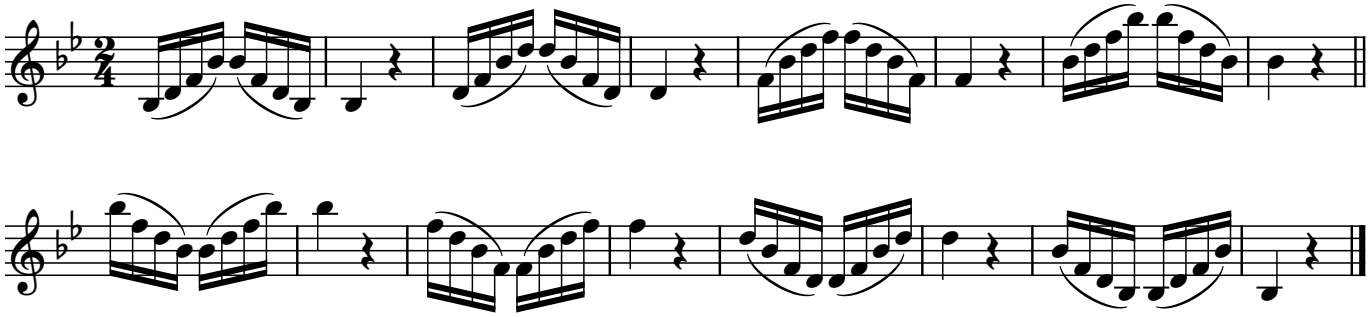

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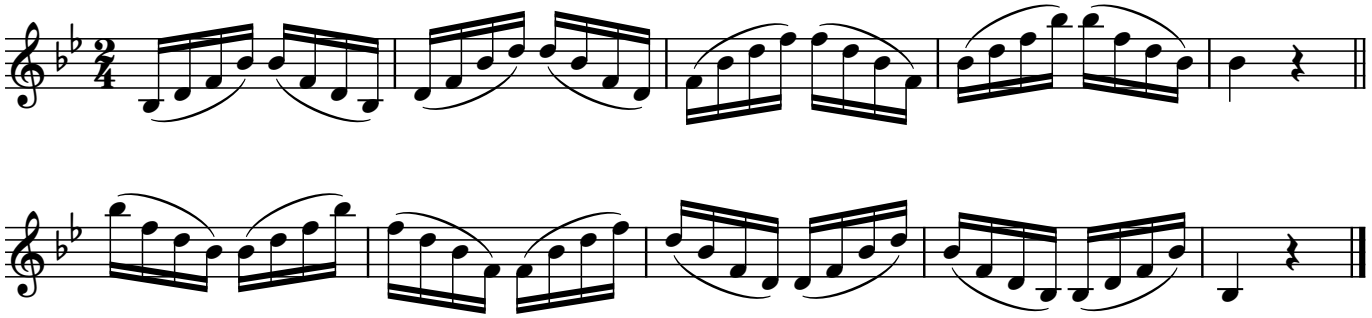

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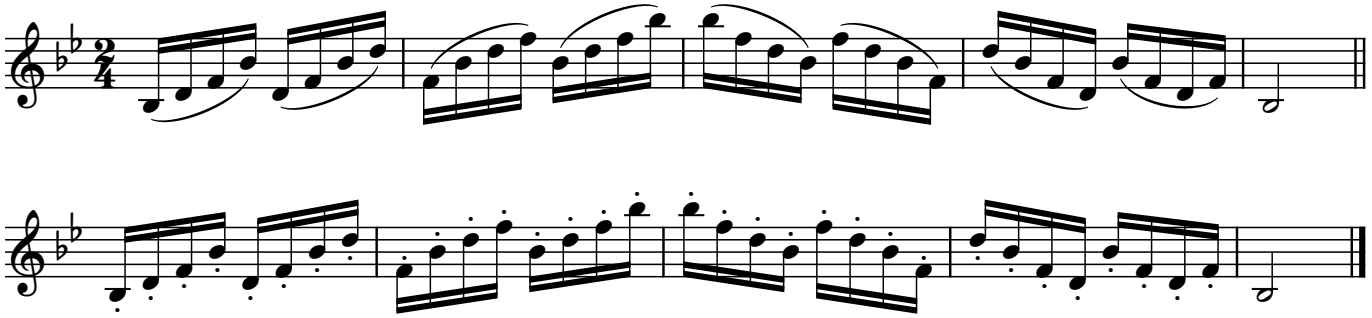

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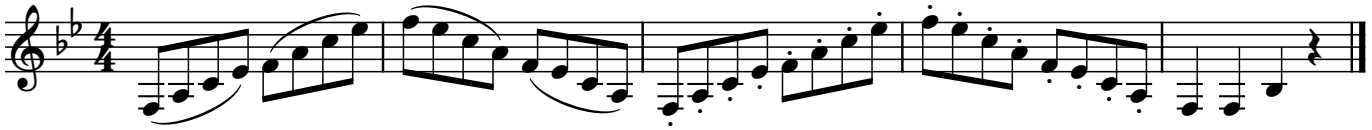

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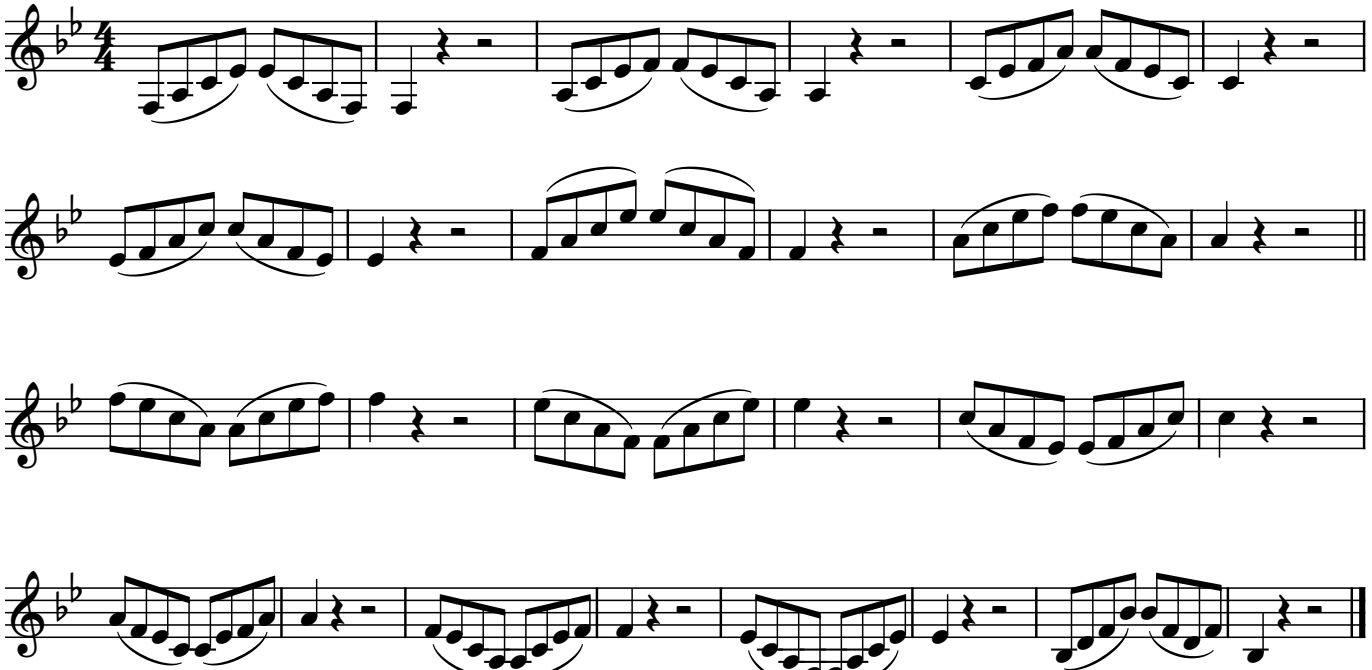

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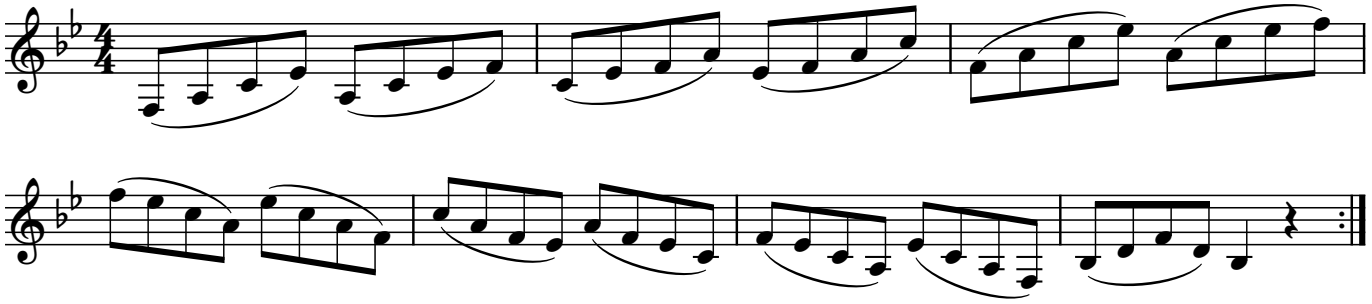

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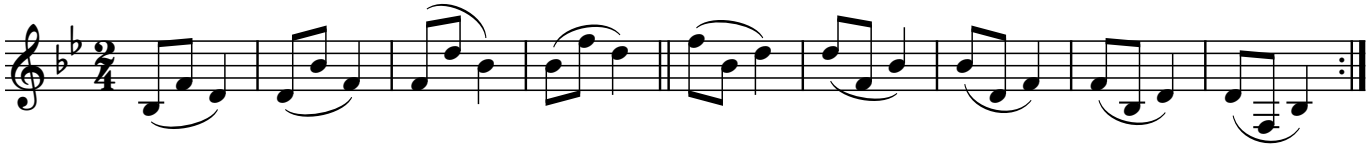

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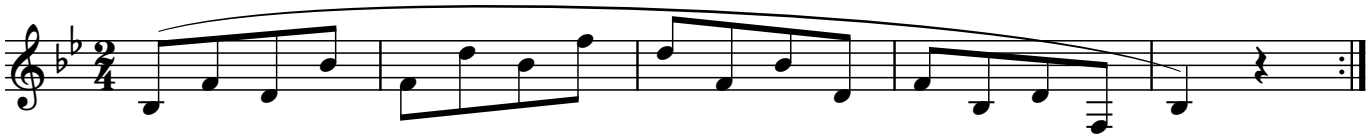

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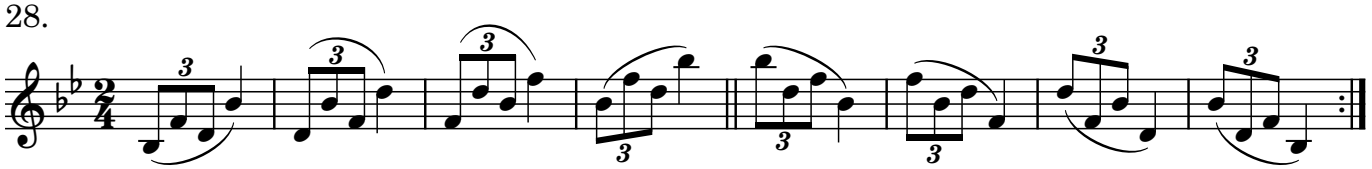

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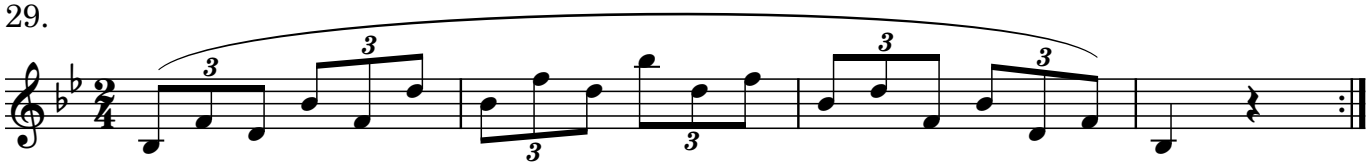

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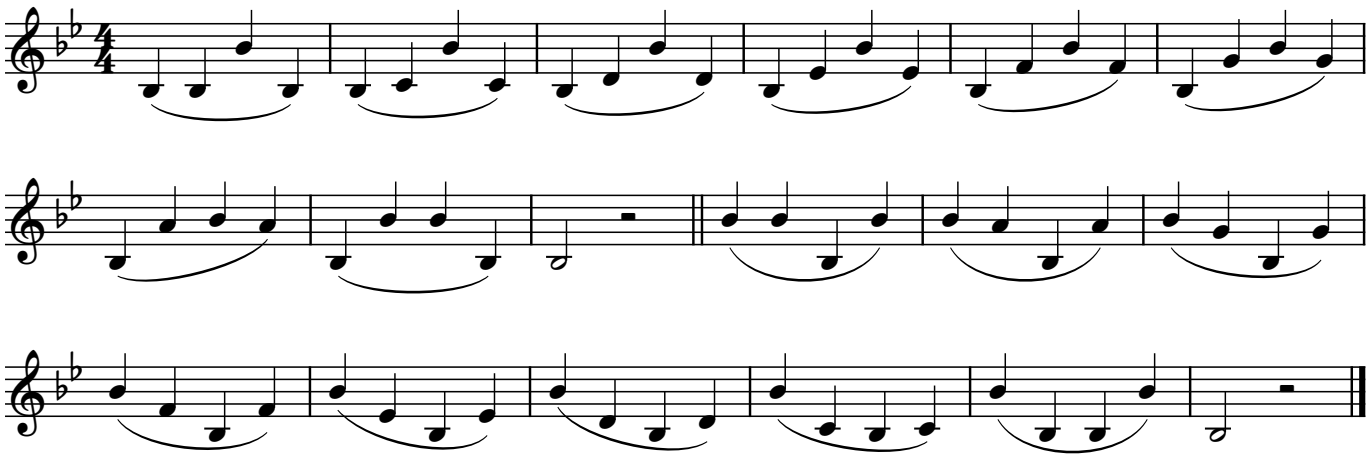

B Chromatic

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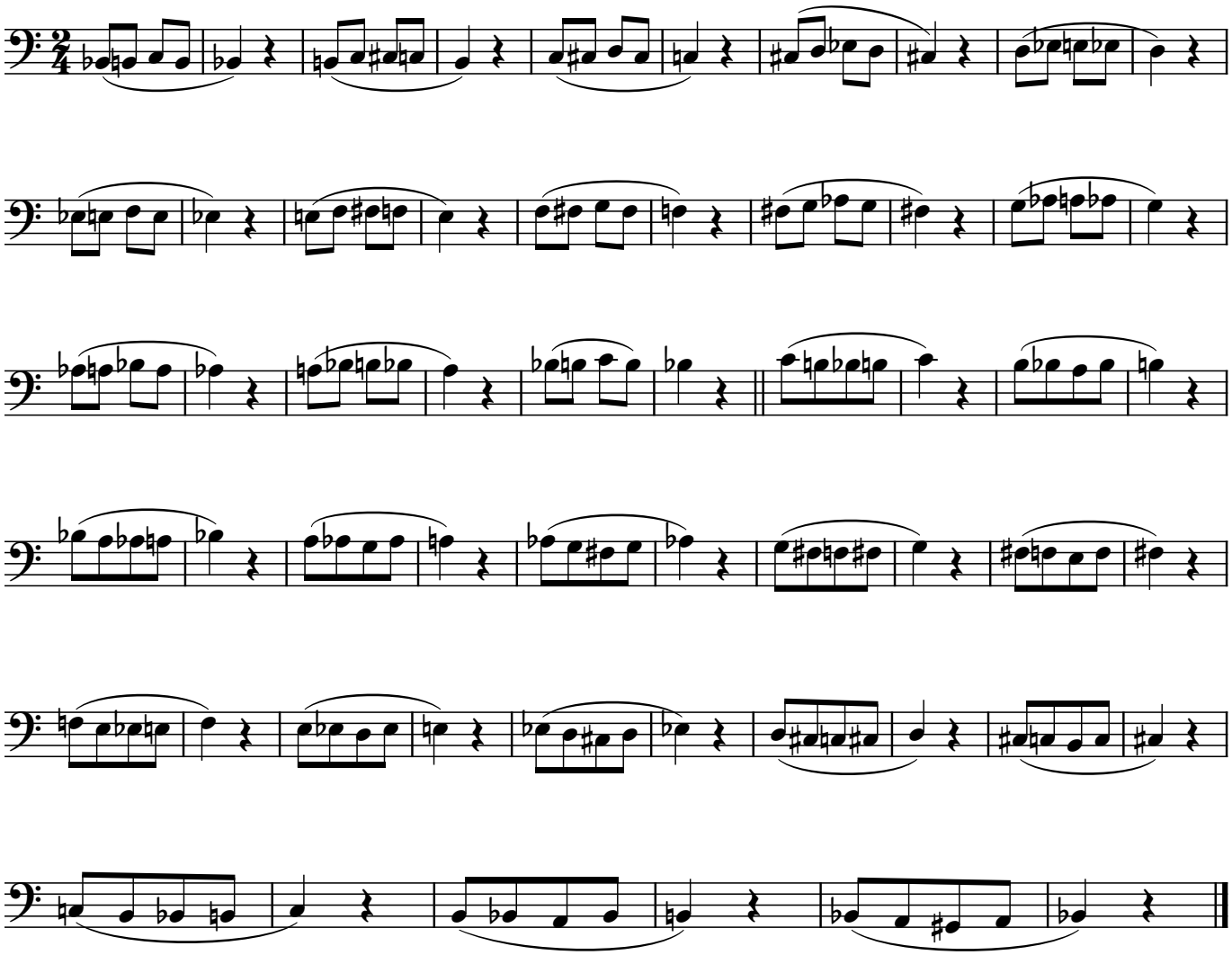

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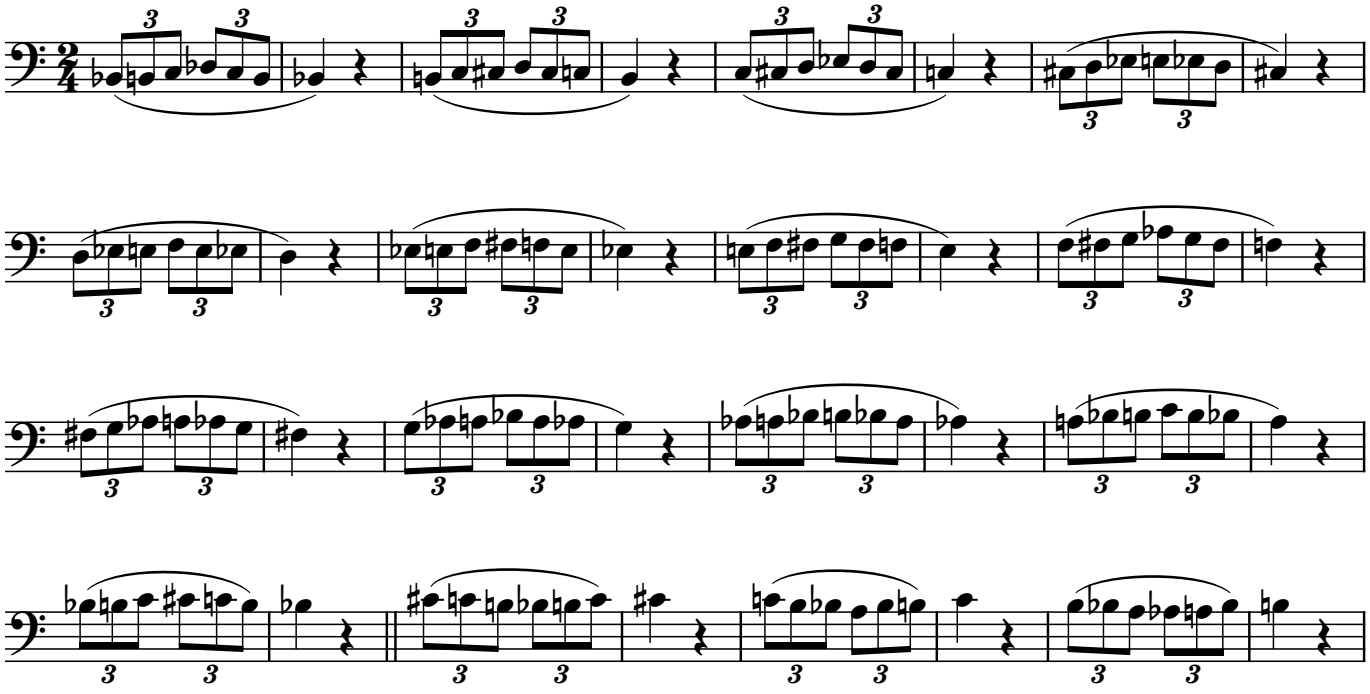

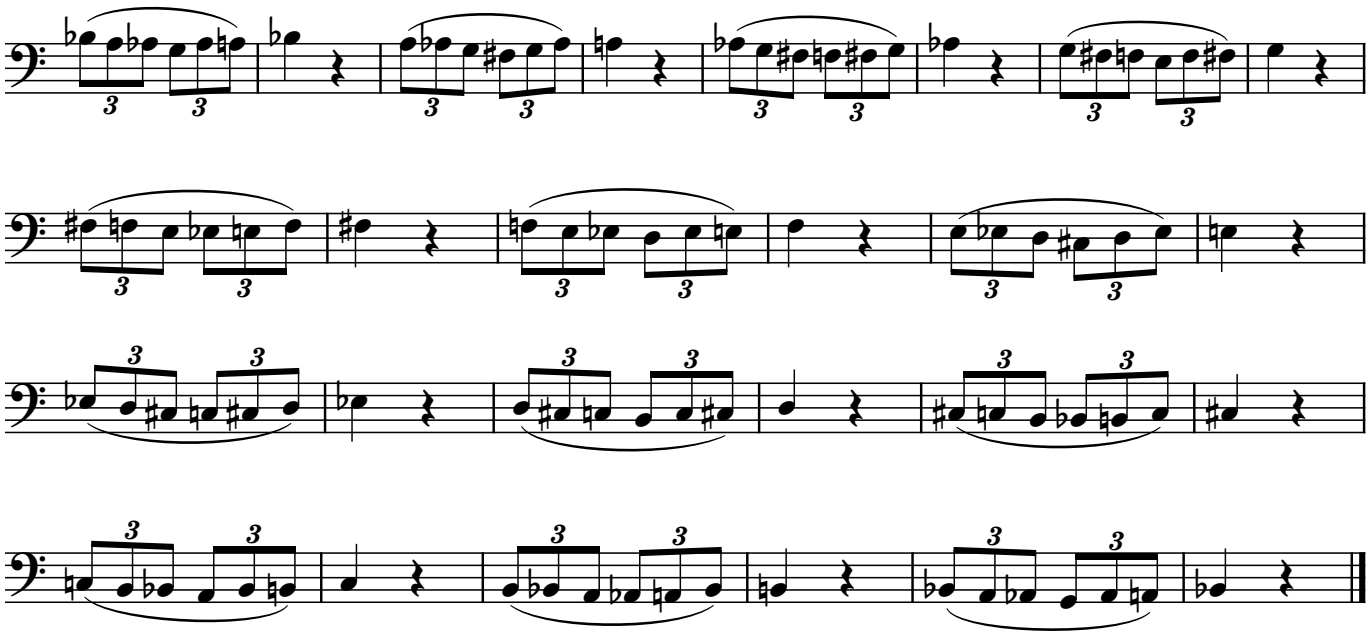

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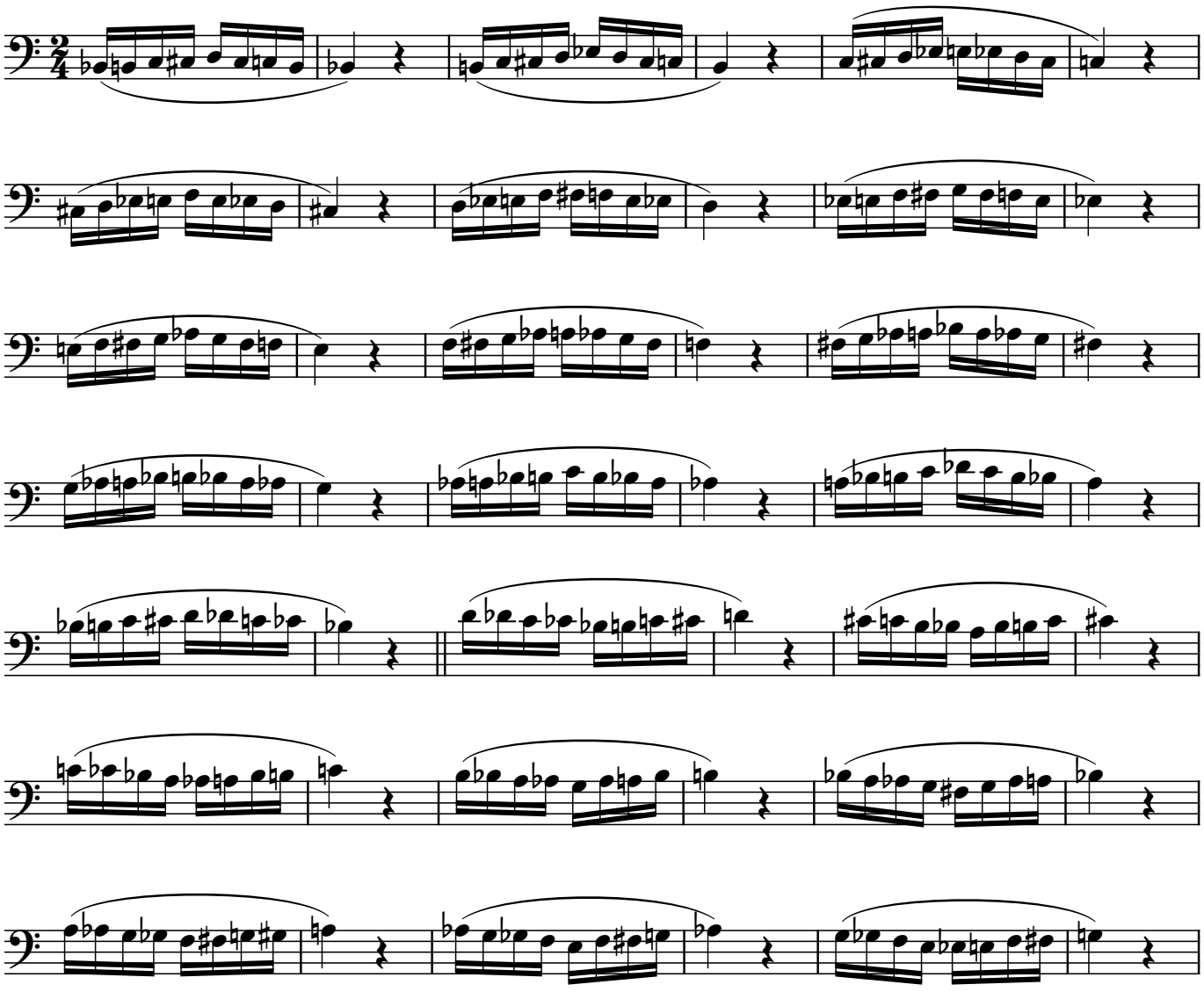

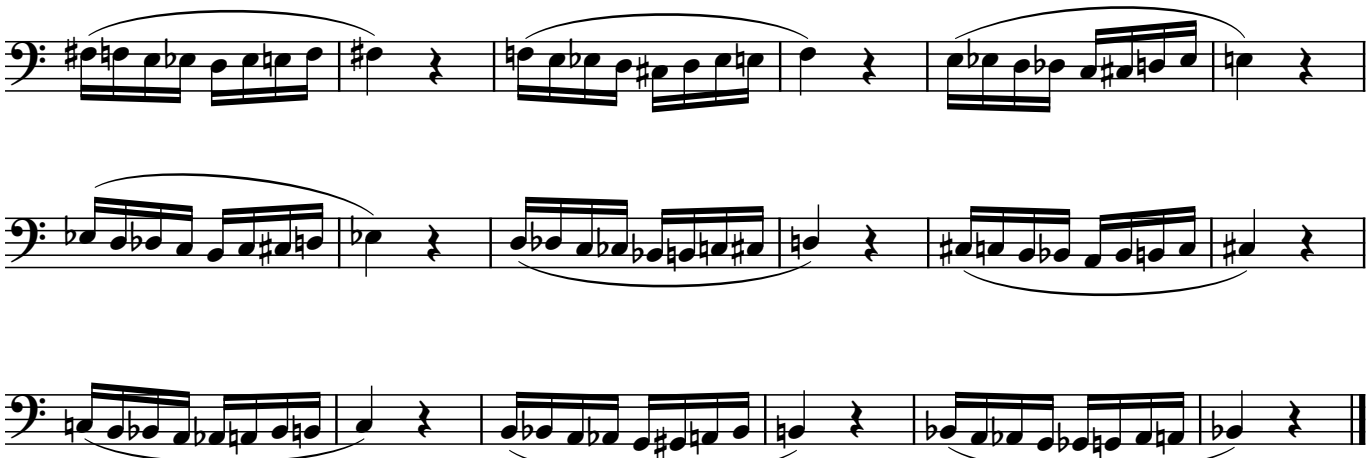

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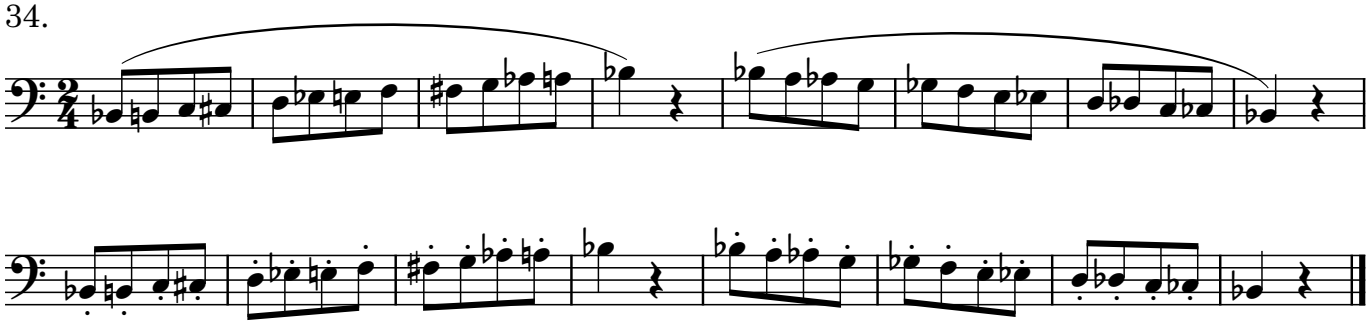

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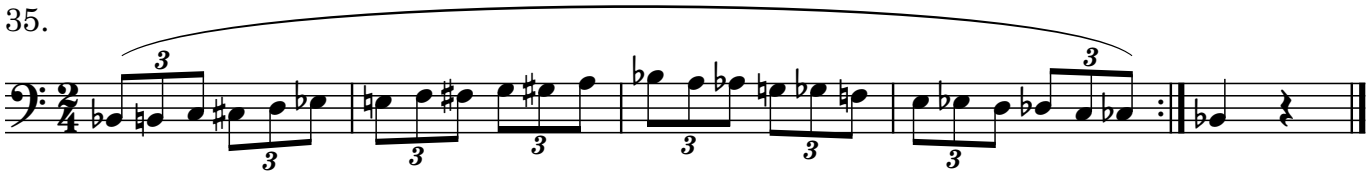

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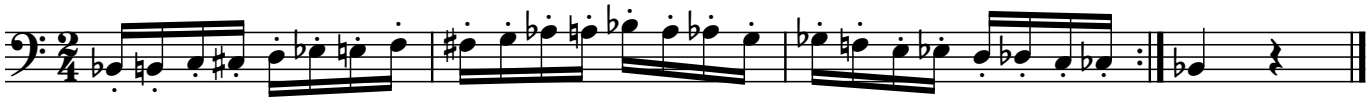

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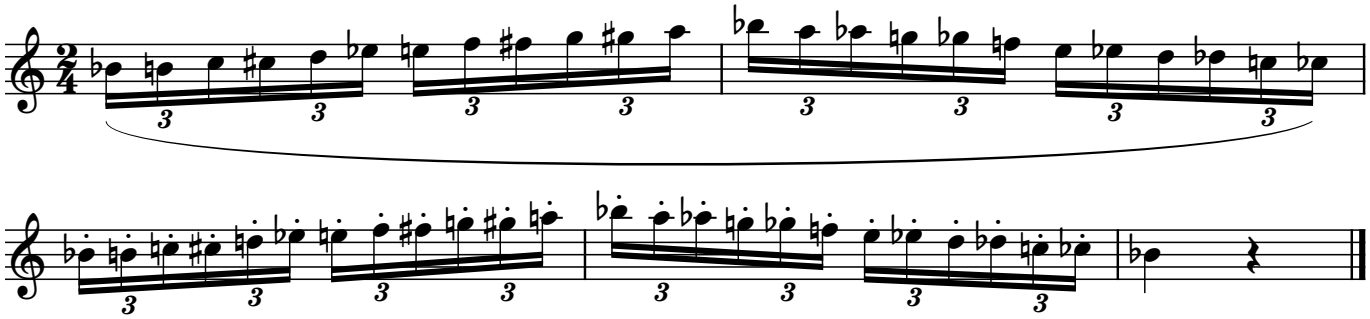

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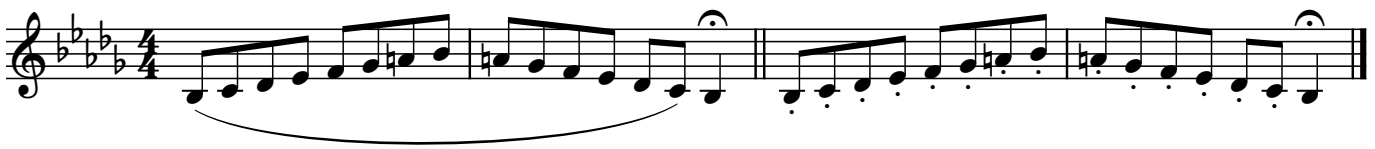

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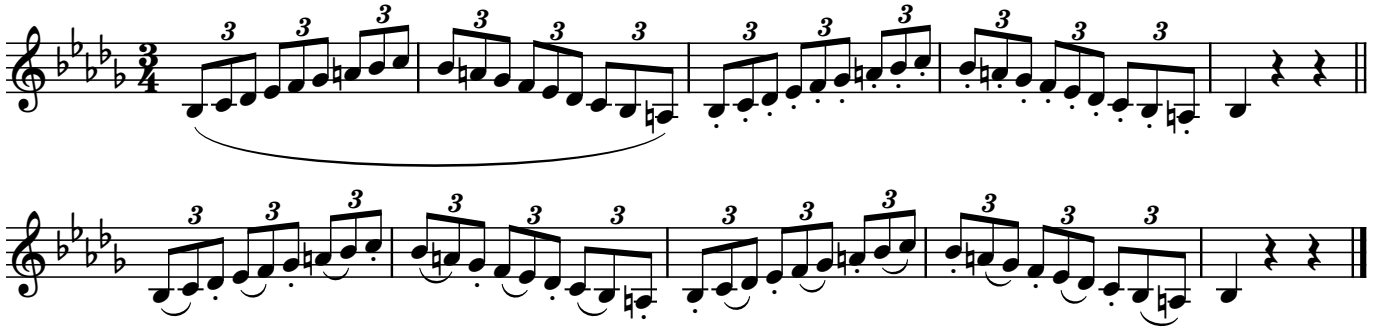

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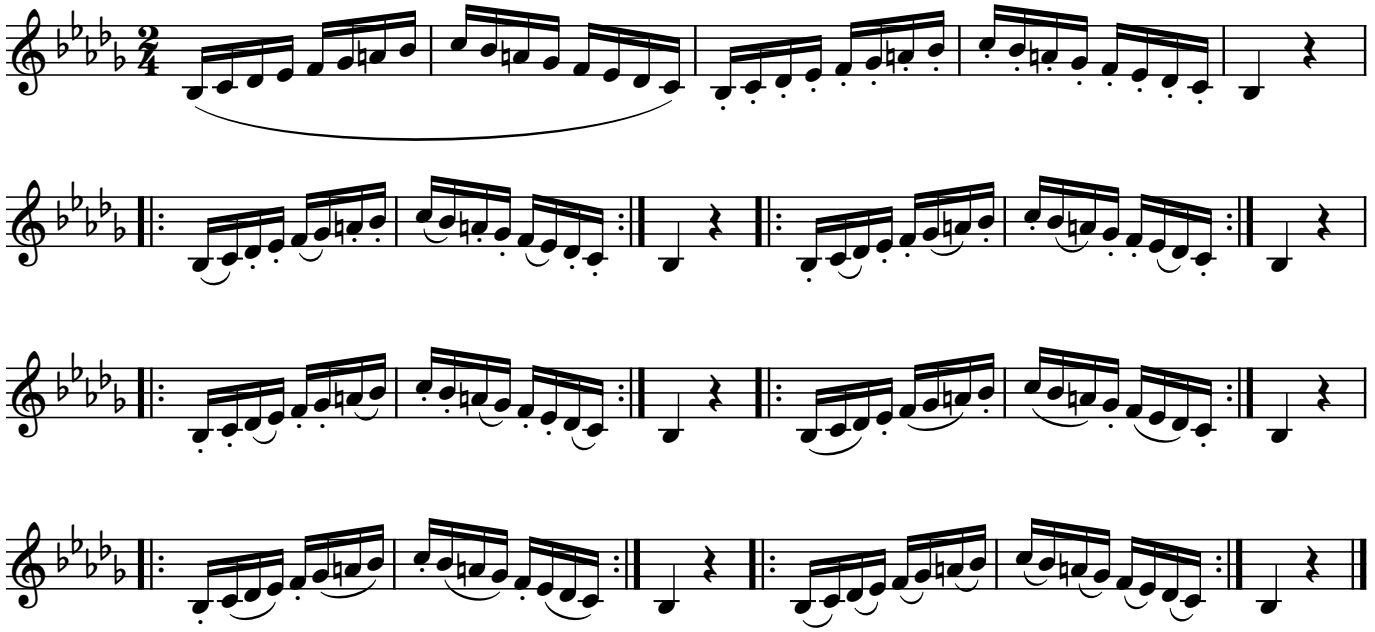

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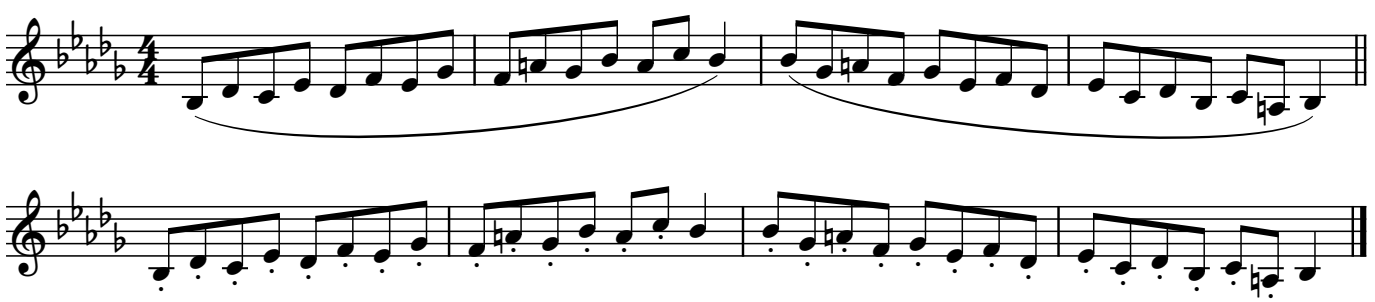

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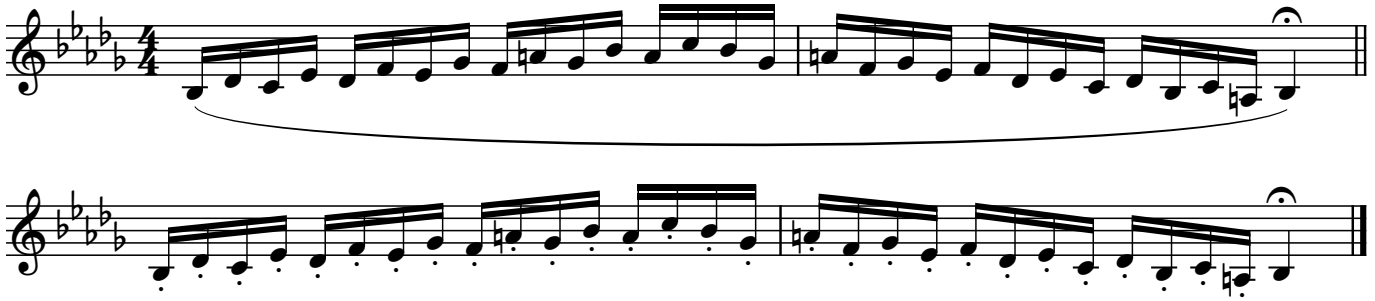

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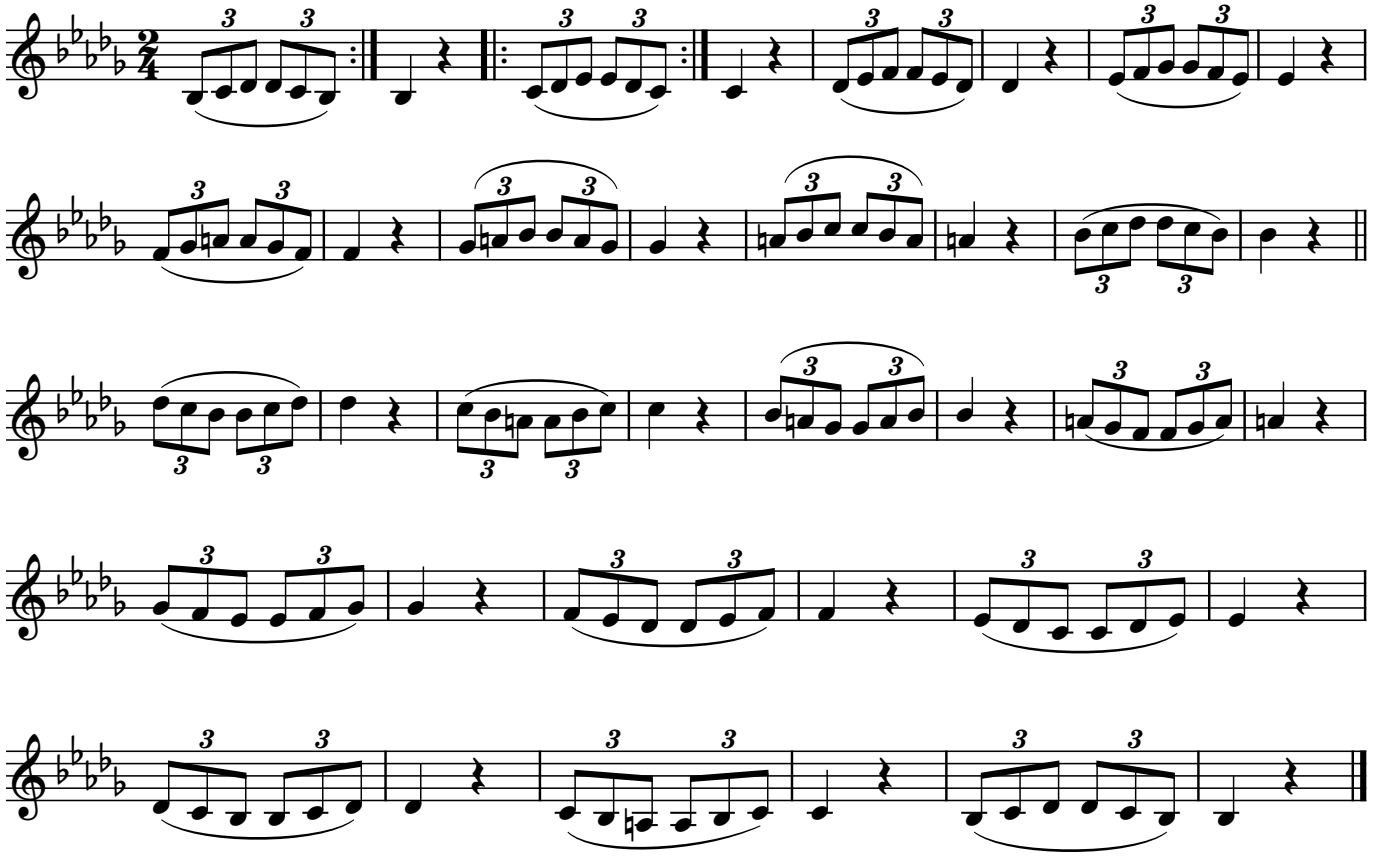

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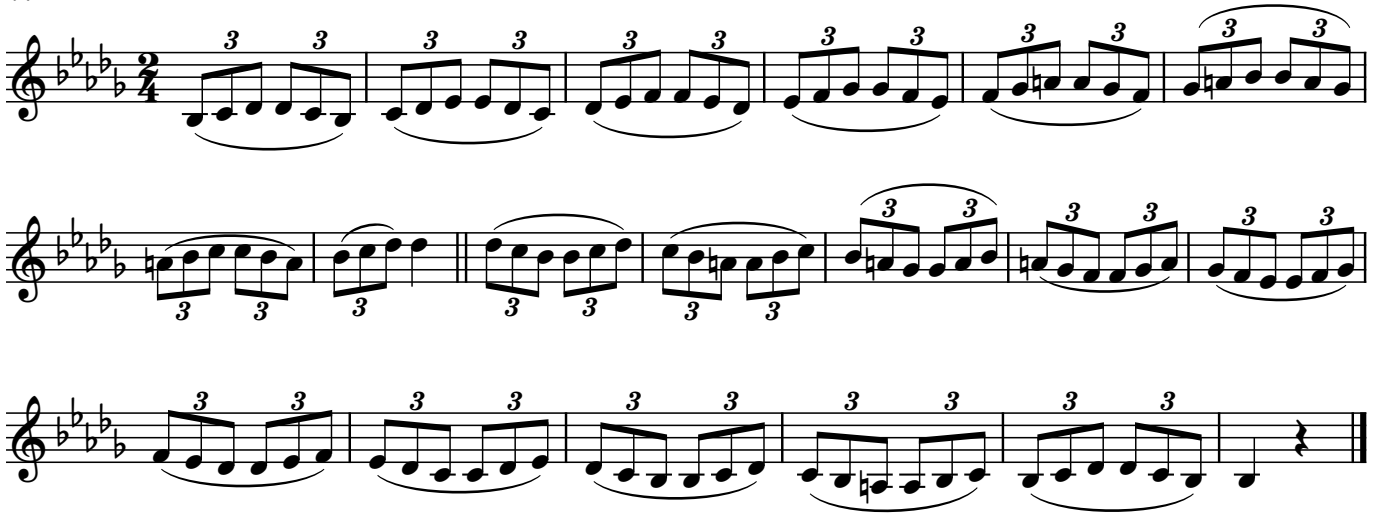

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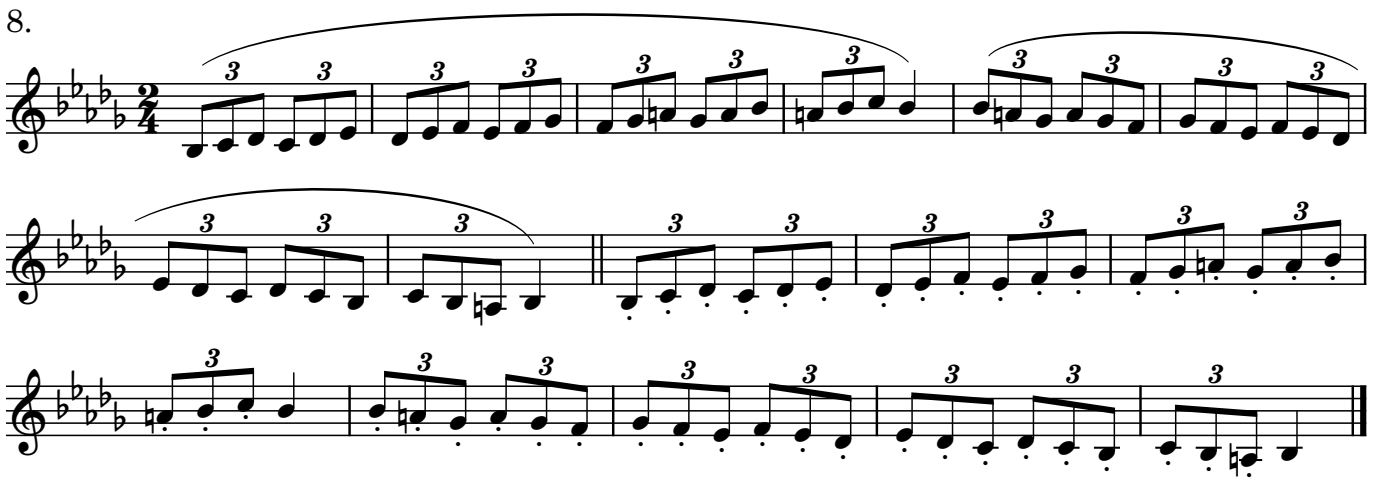

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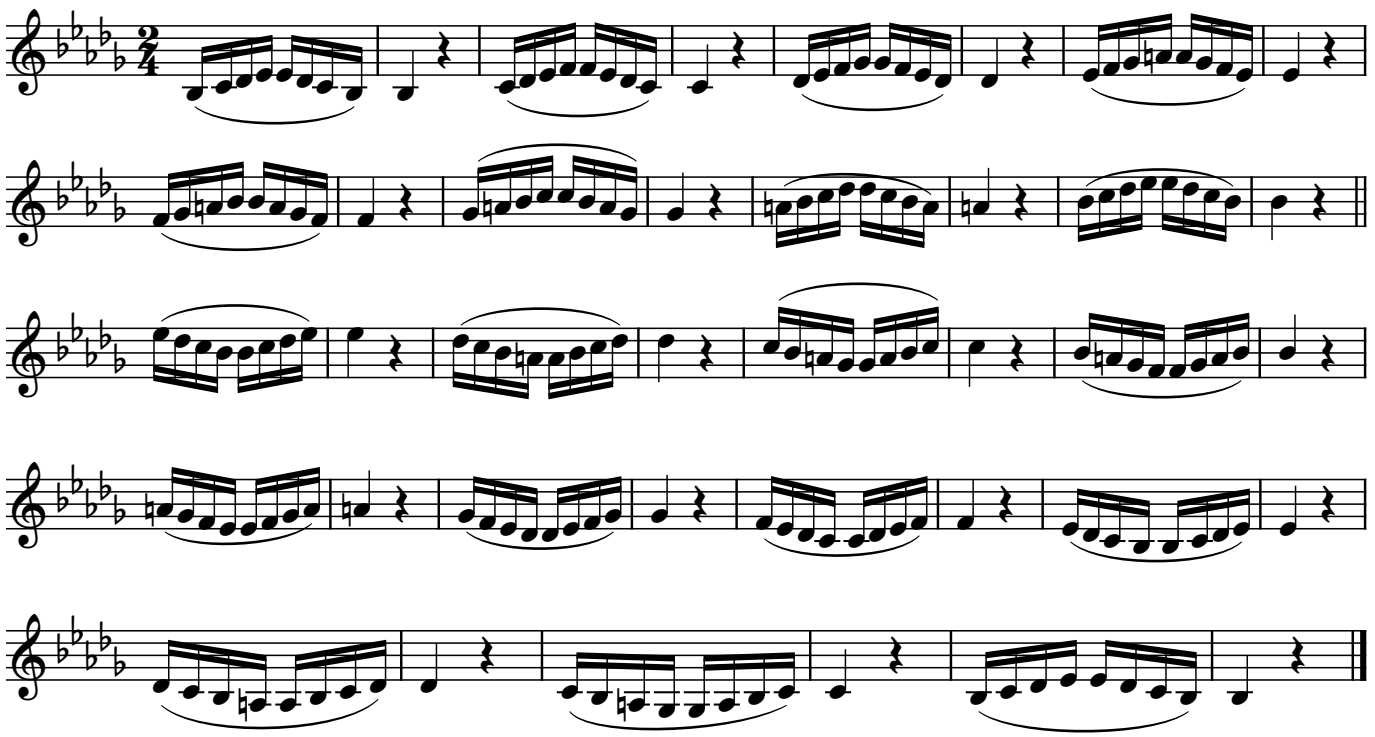

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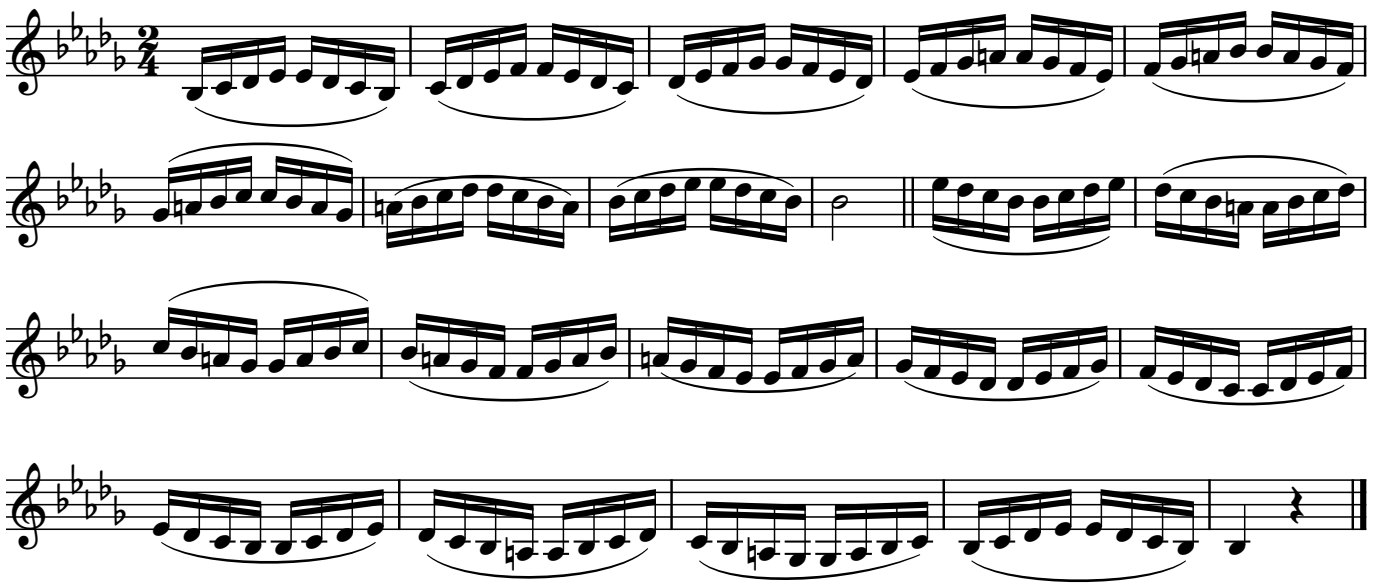

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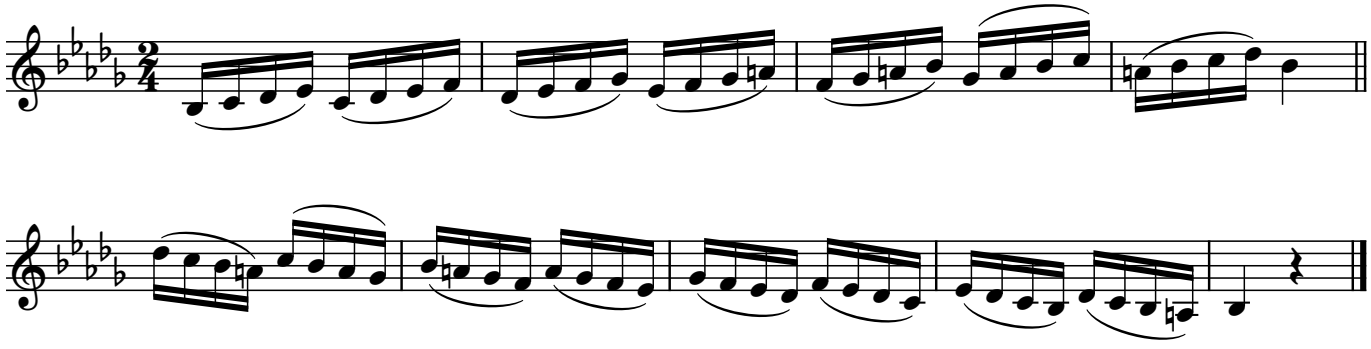

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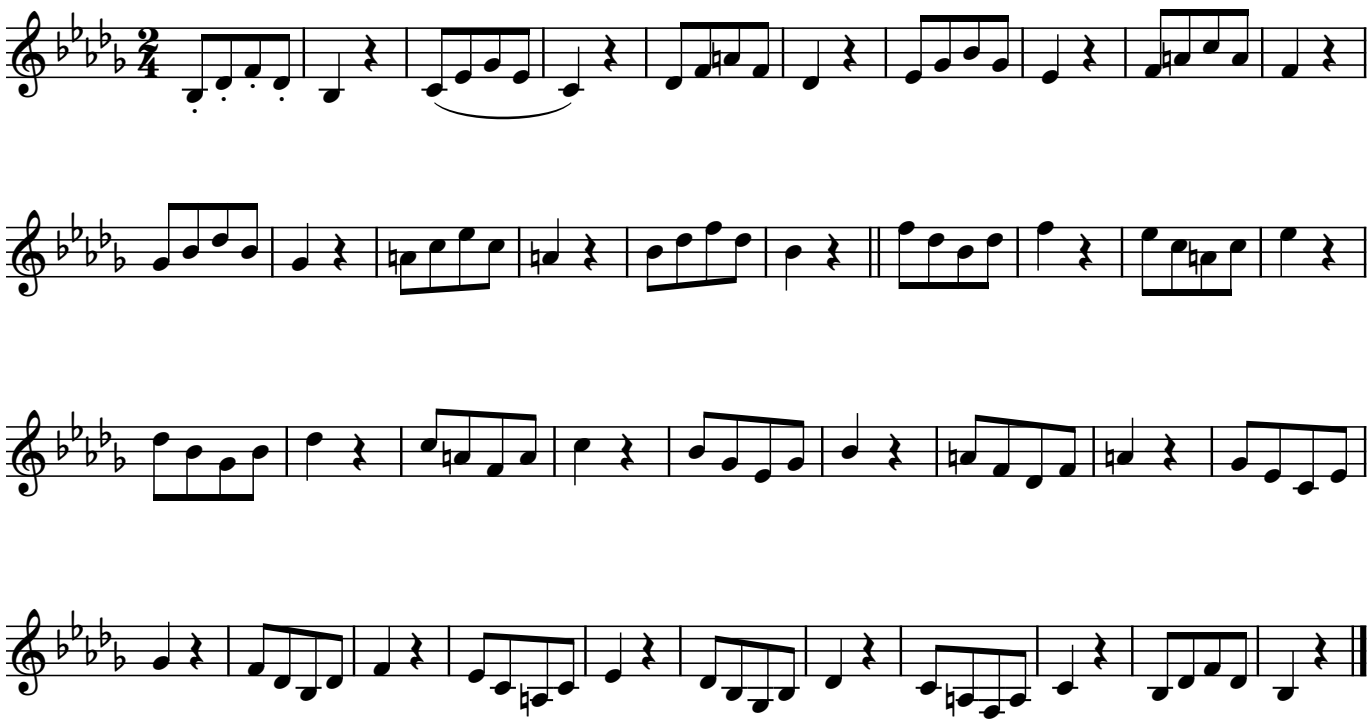

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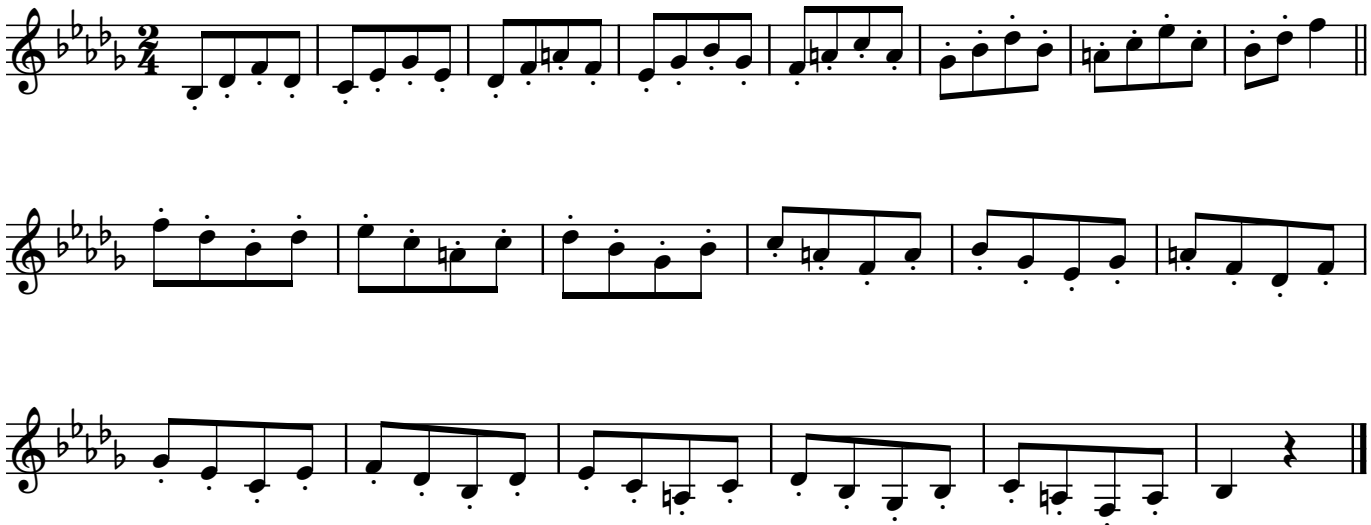

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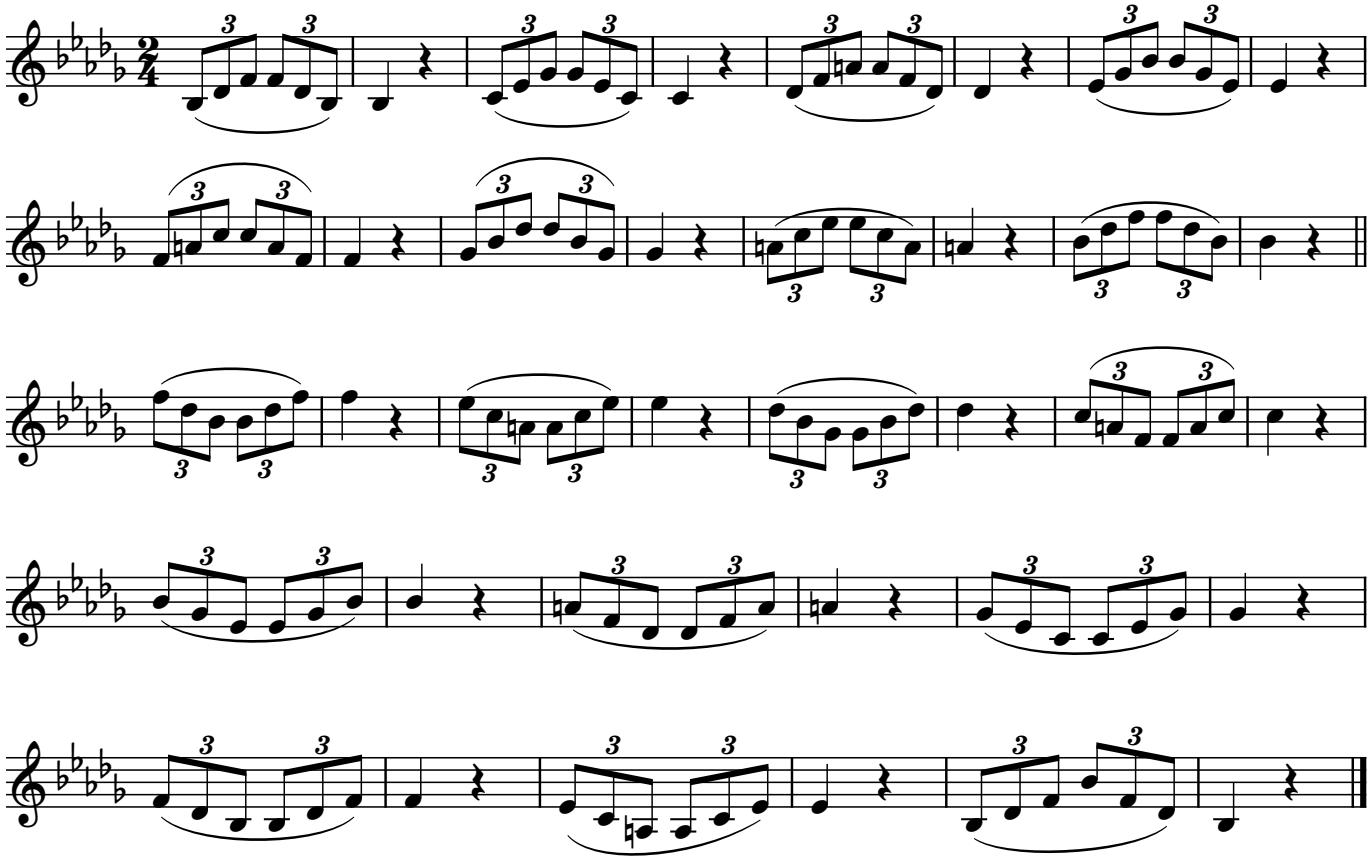

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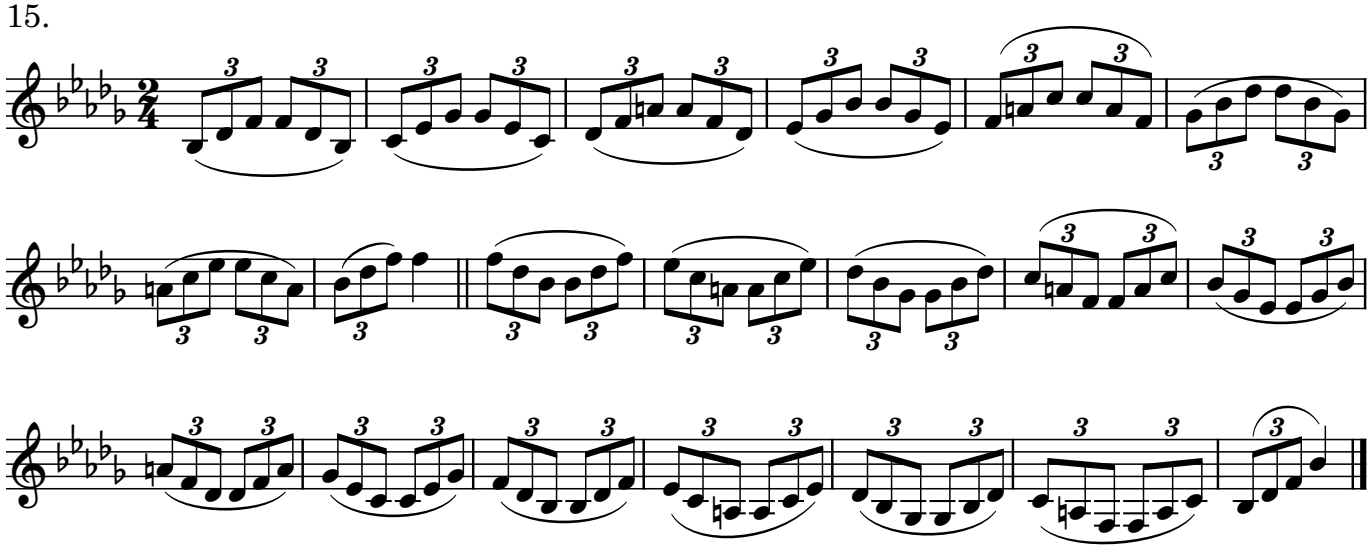

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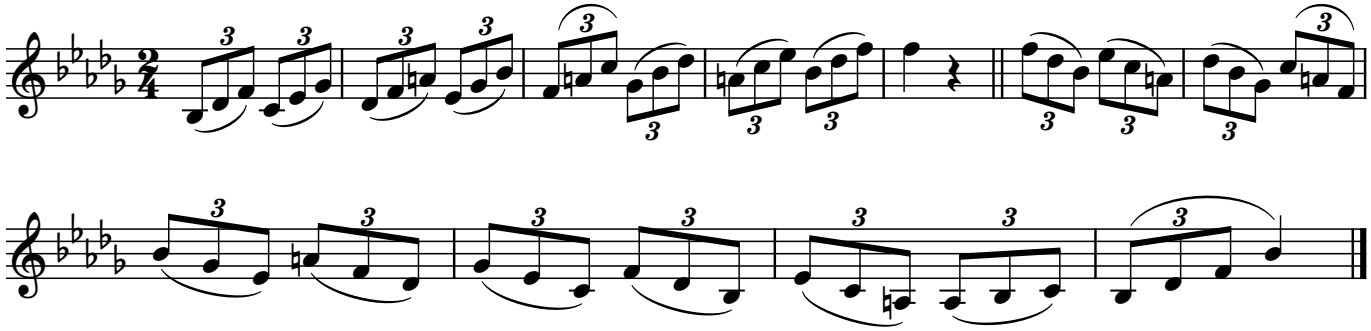

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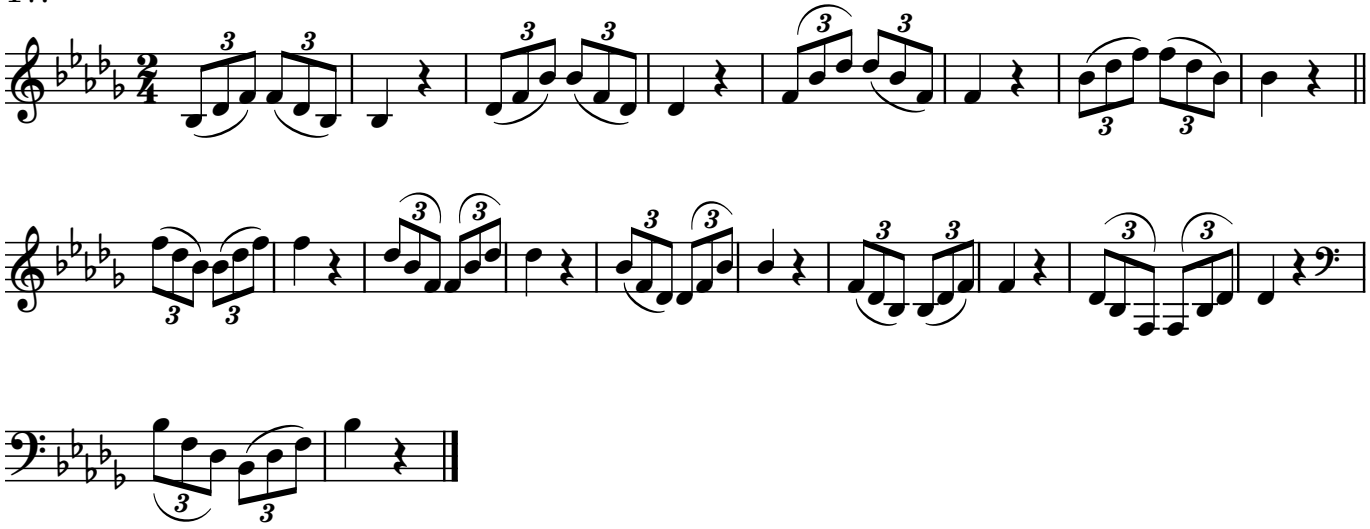

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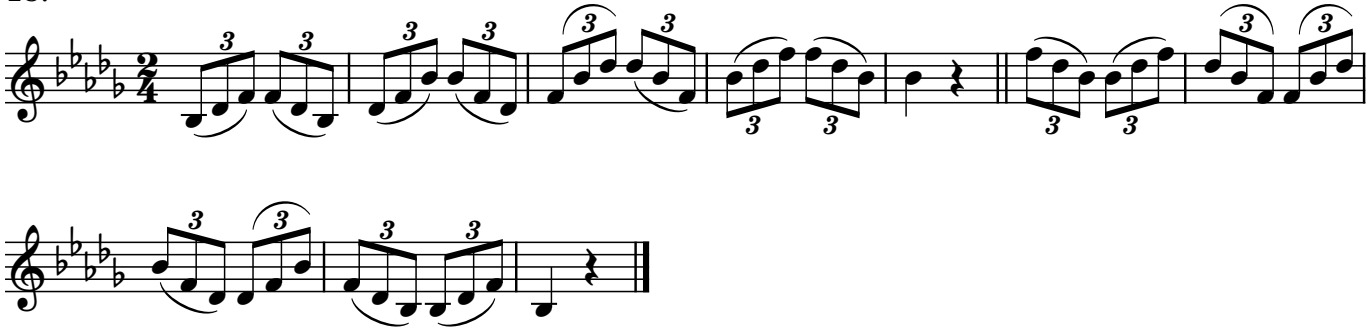

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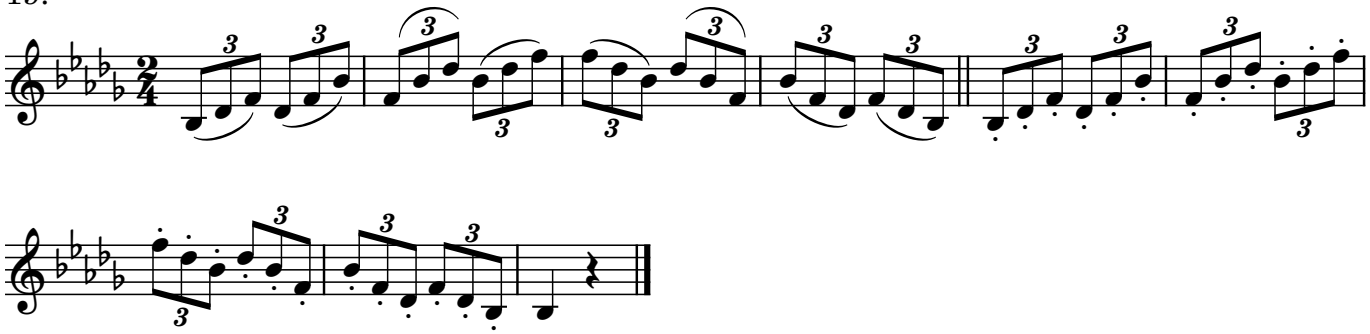

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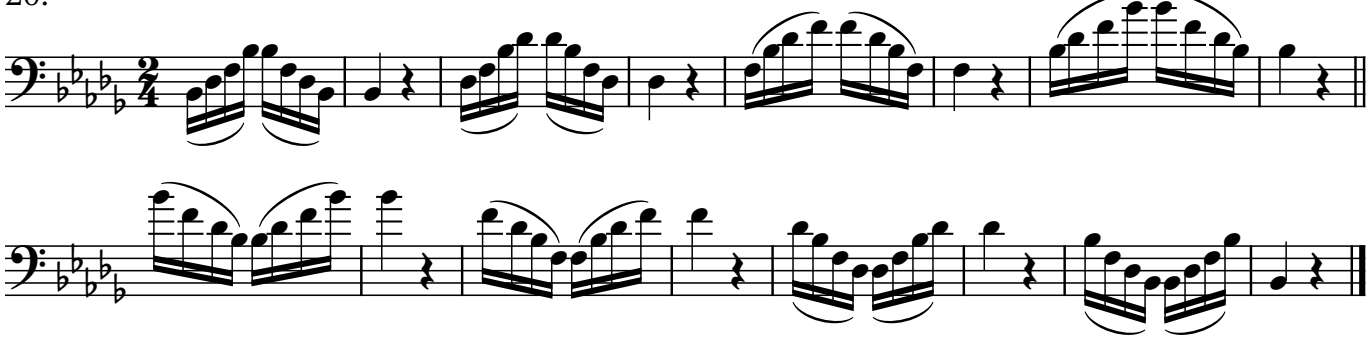

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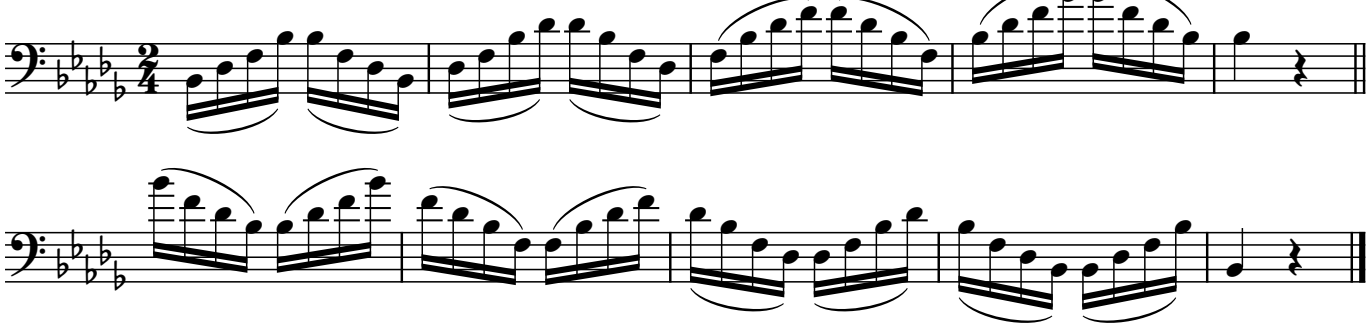

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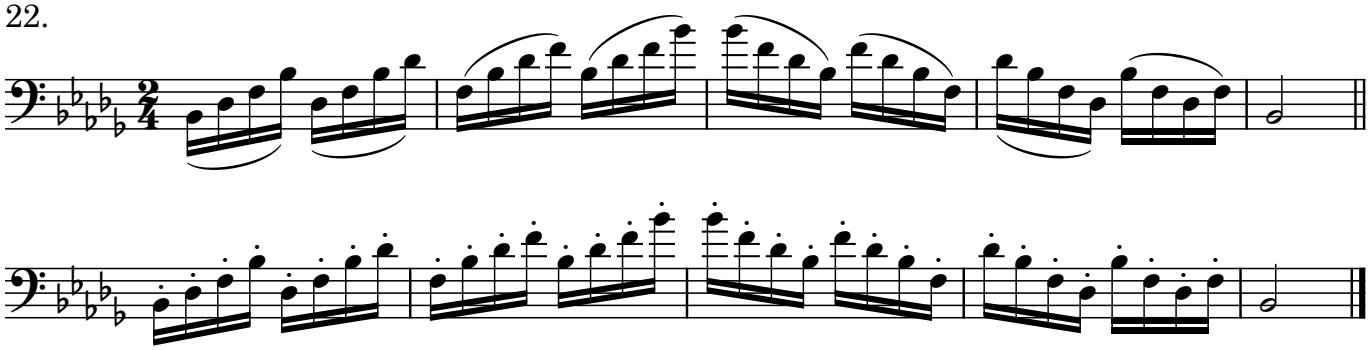

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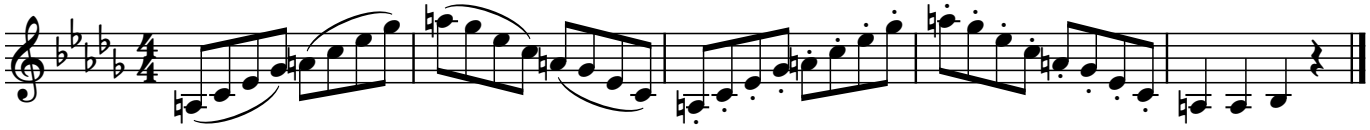

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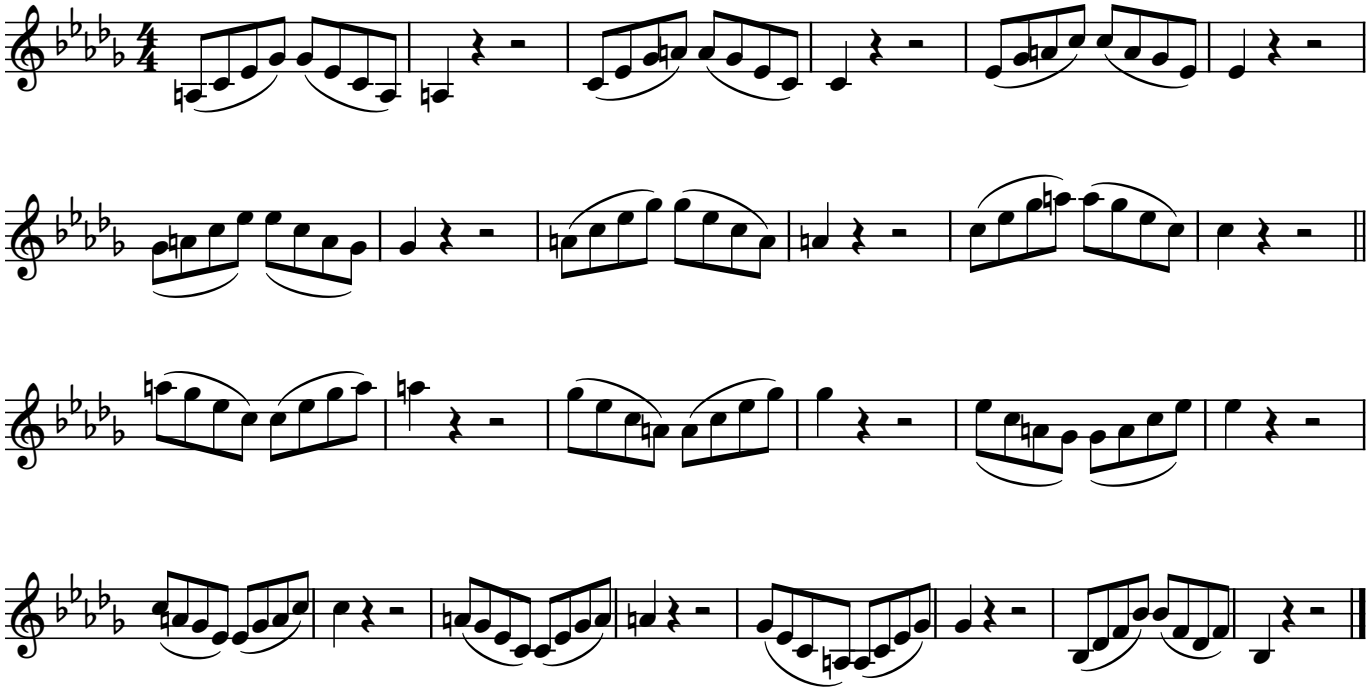

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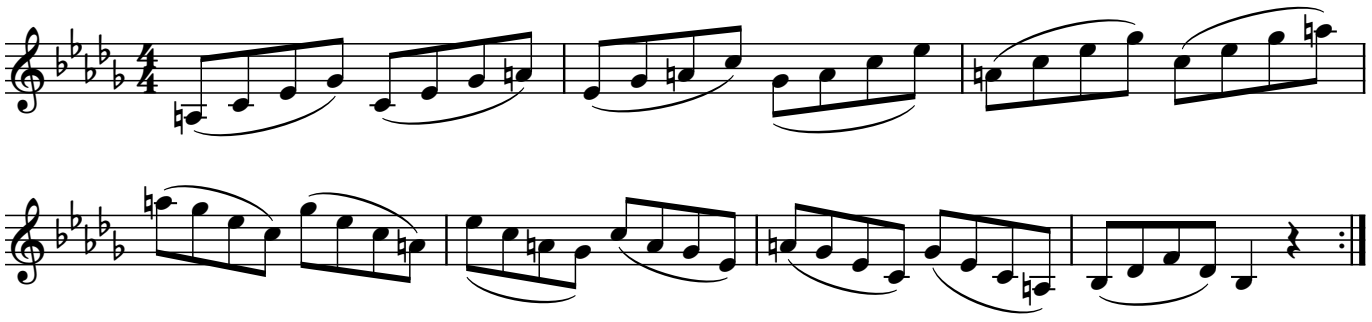

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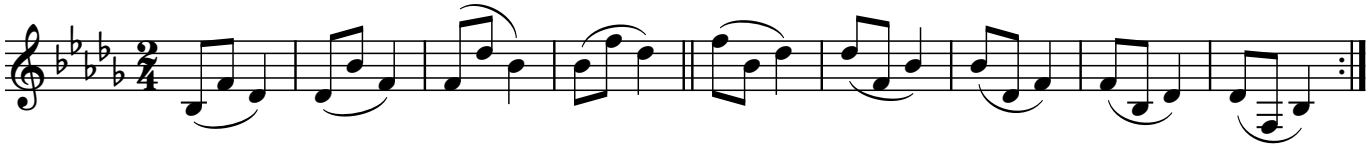

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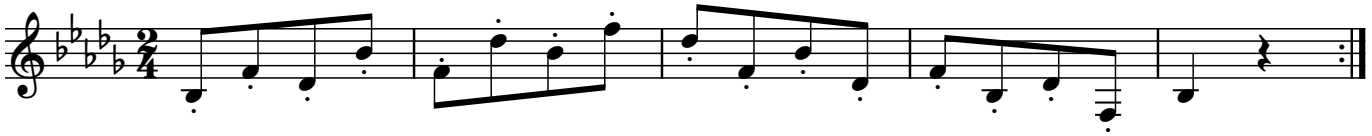

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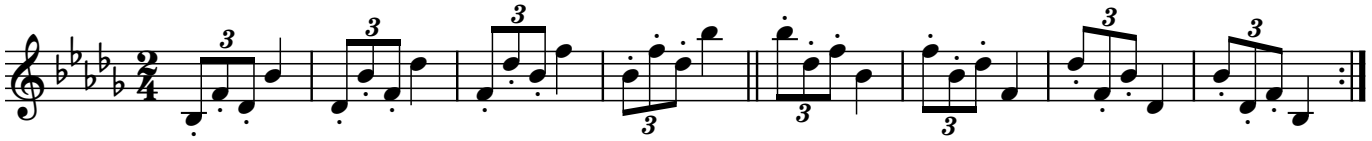

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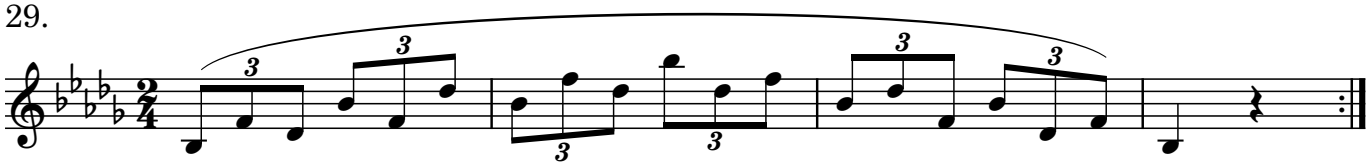

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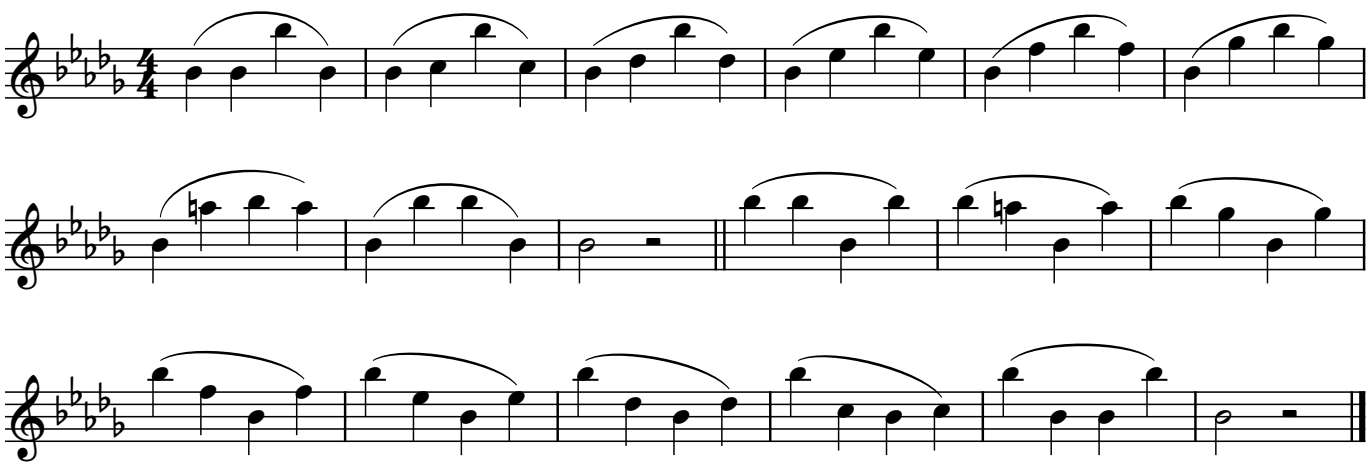

H-Dur - B Major

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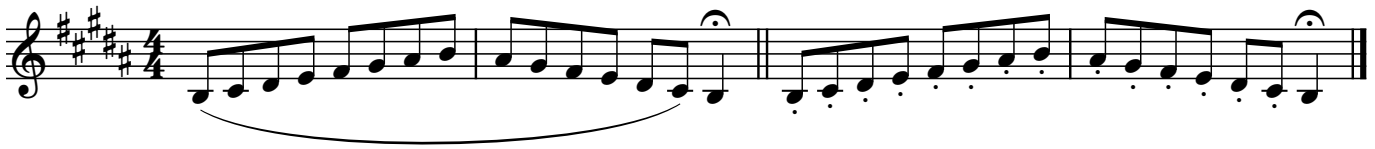

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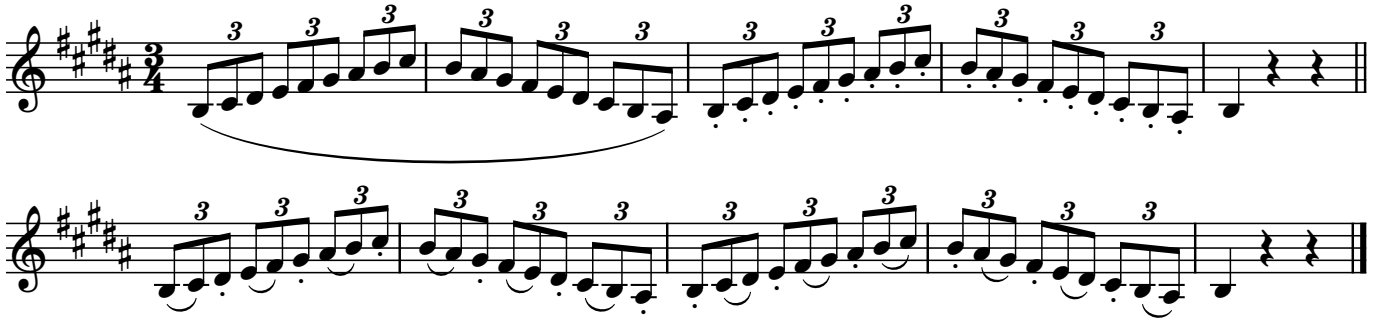

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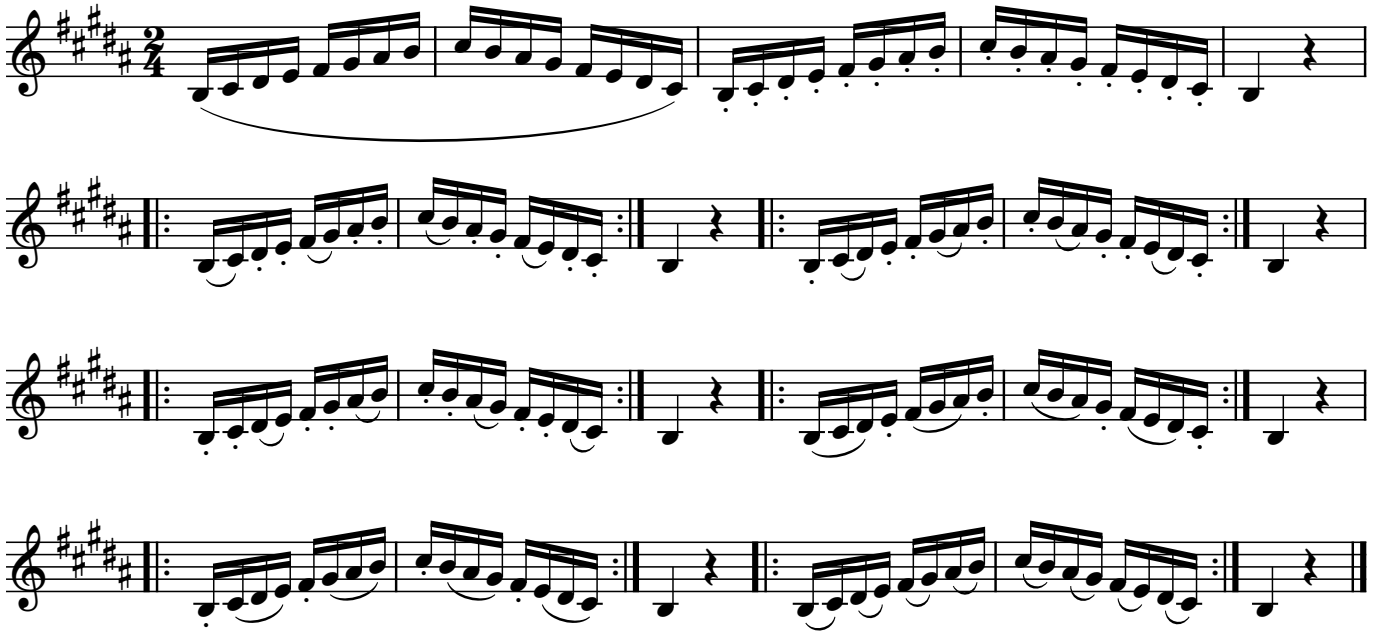

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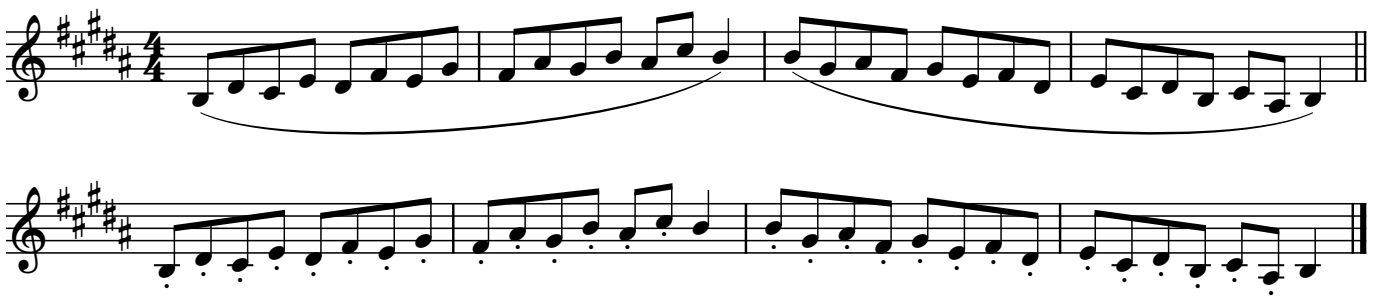

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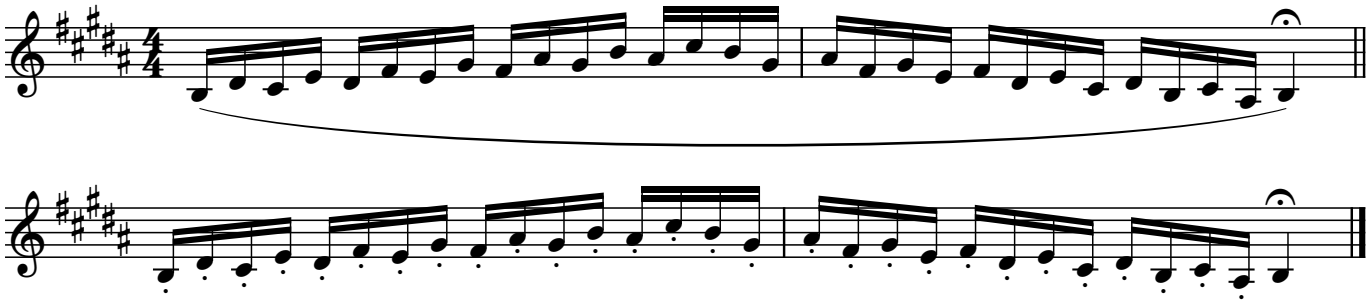

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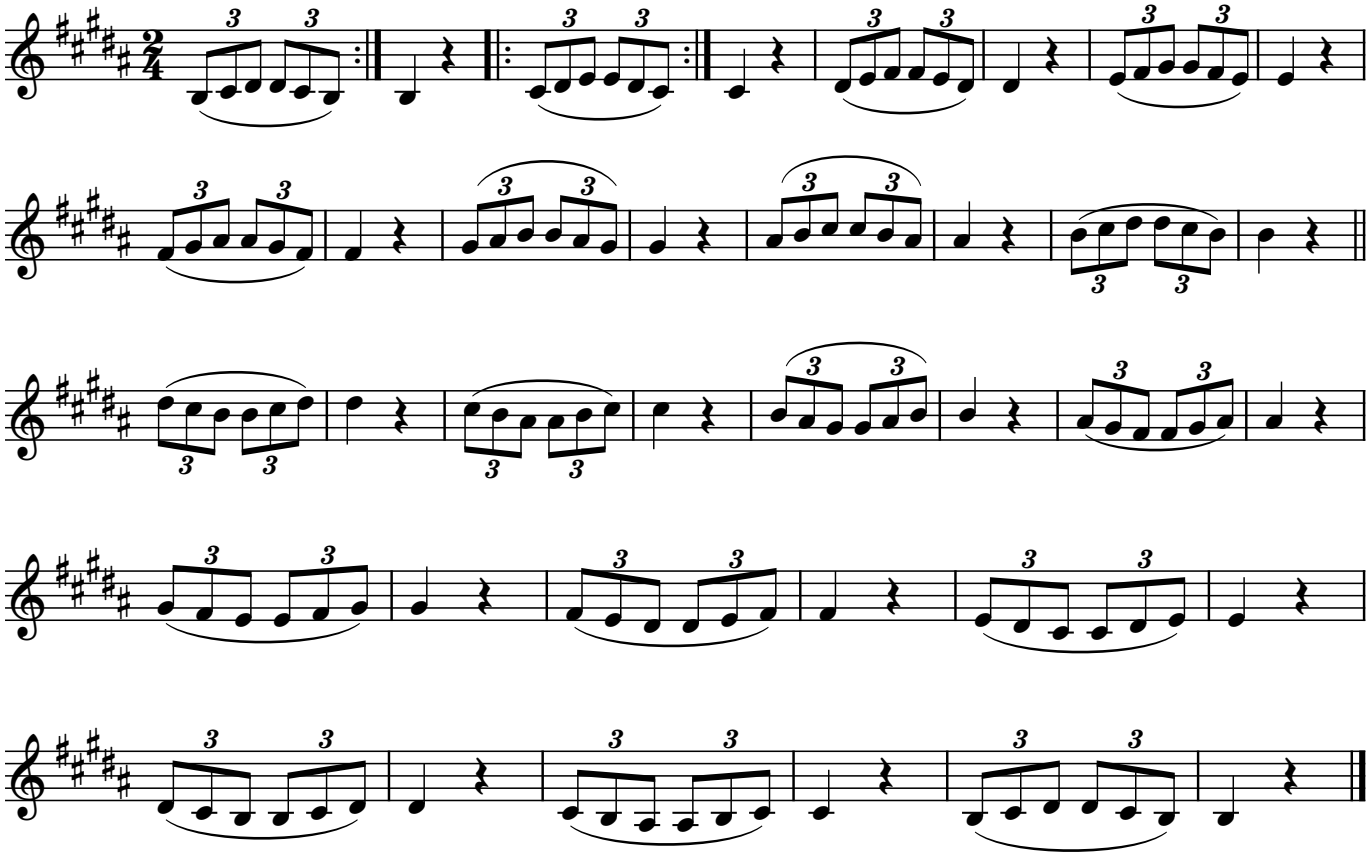

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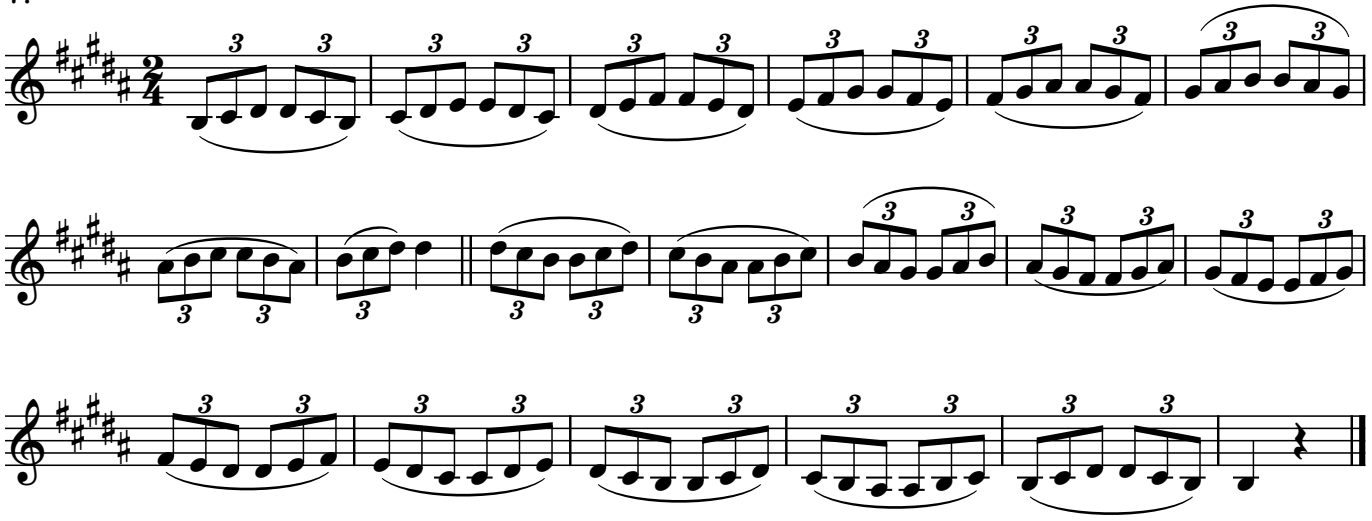

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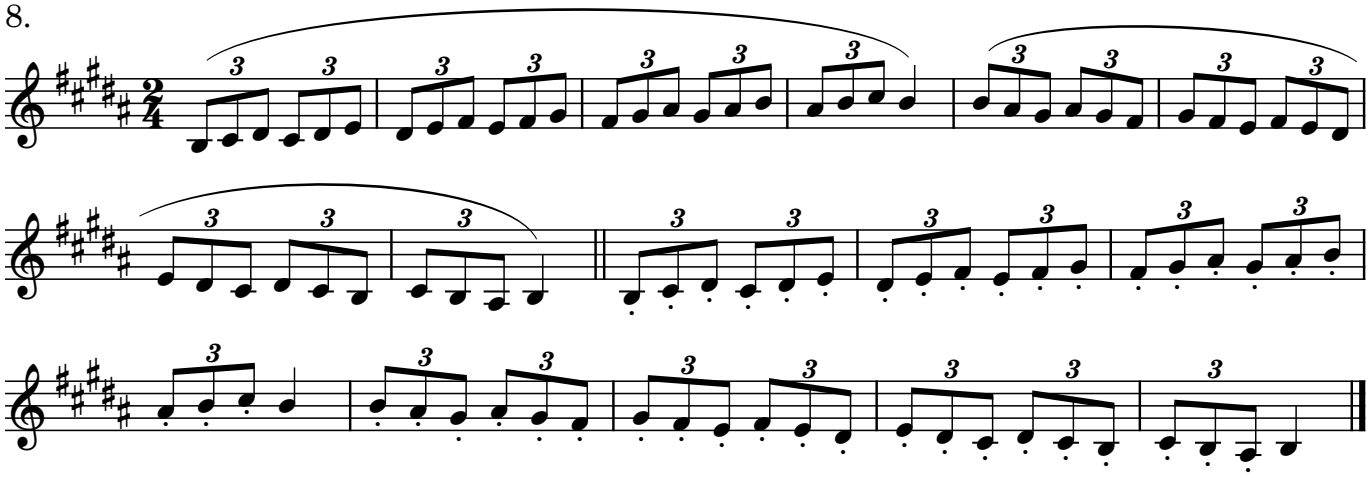

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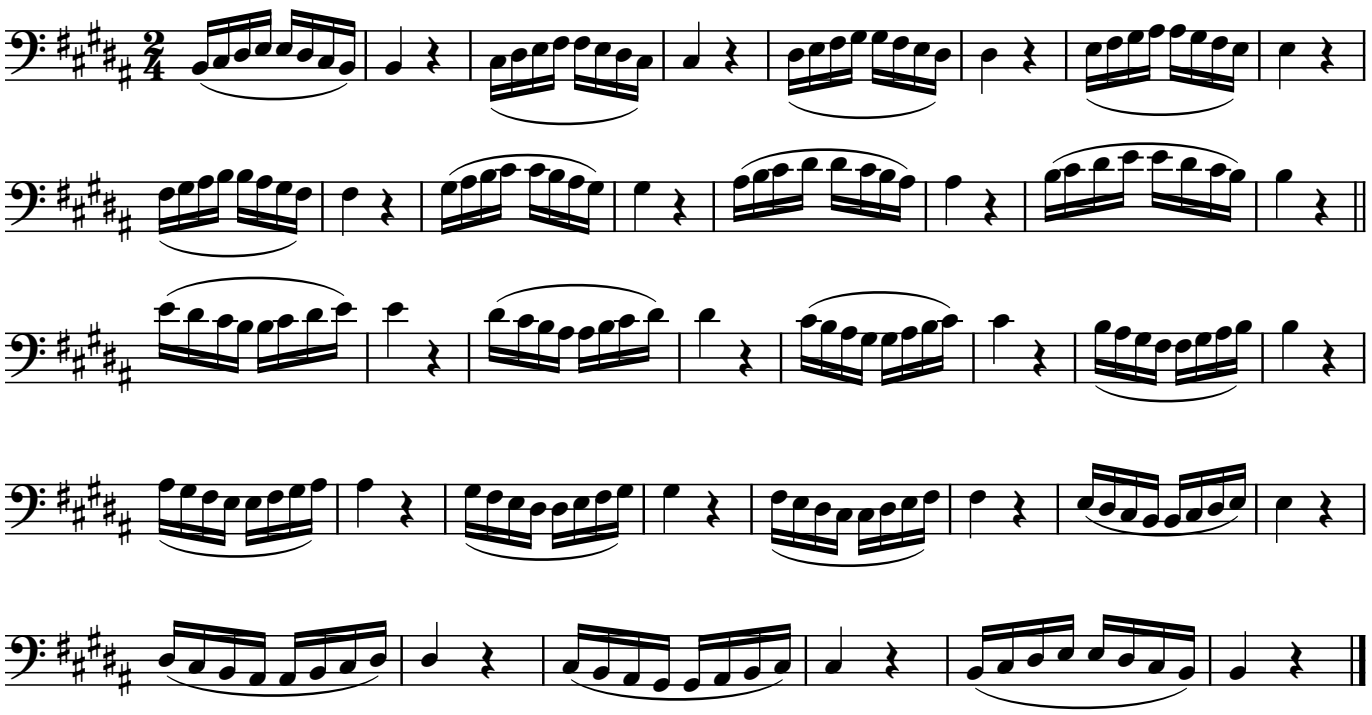

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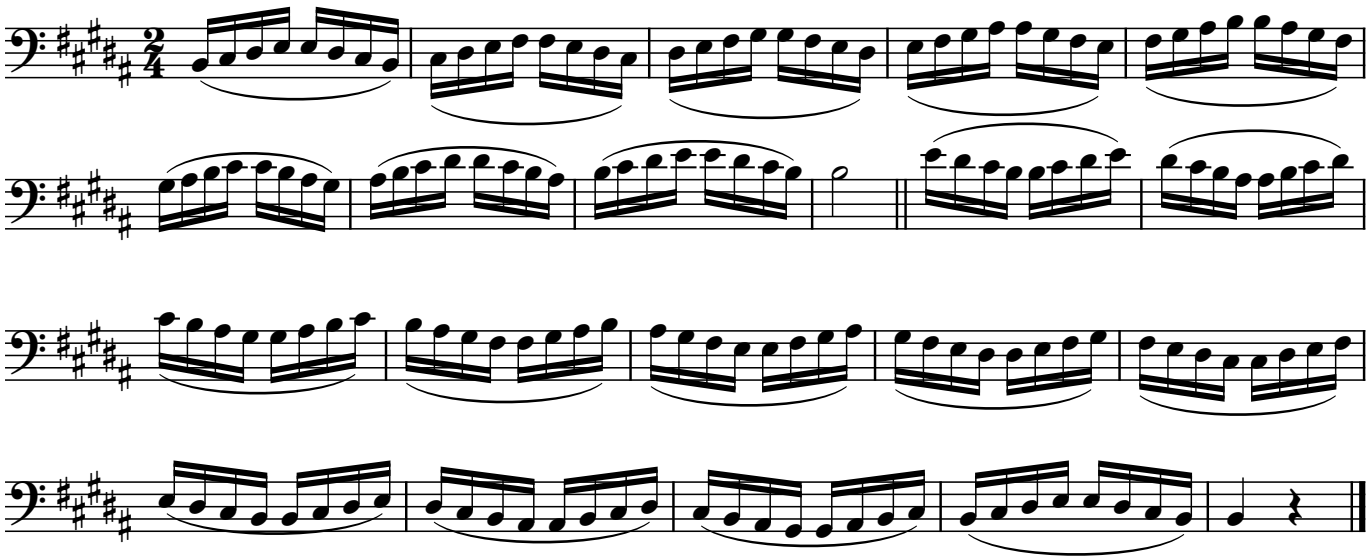

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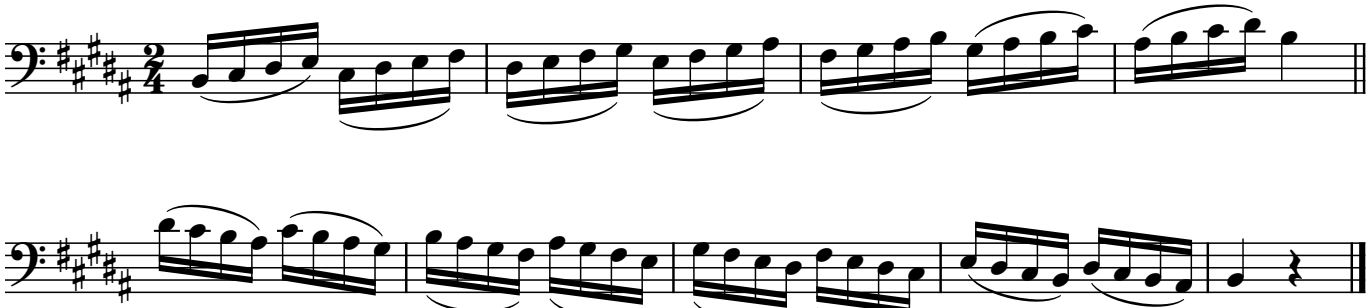

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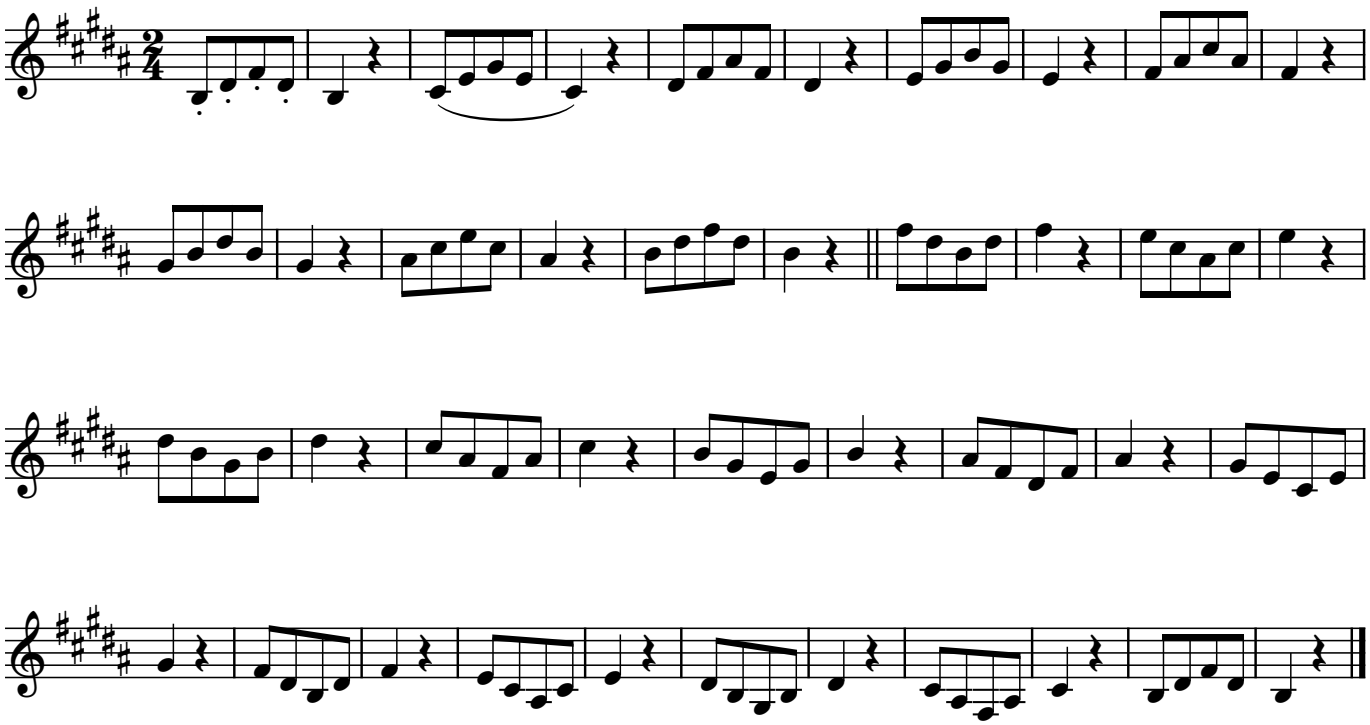

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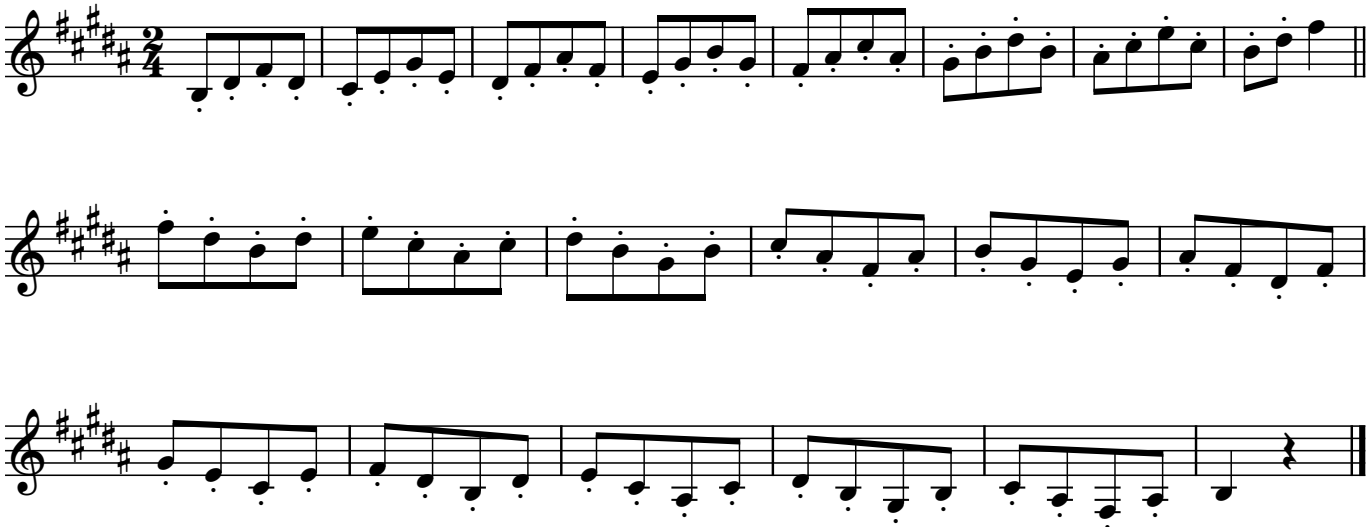

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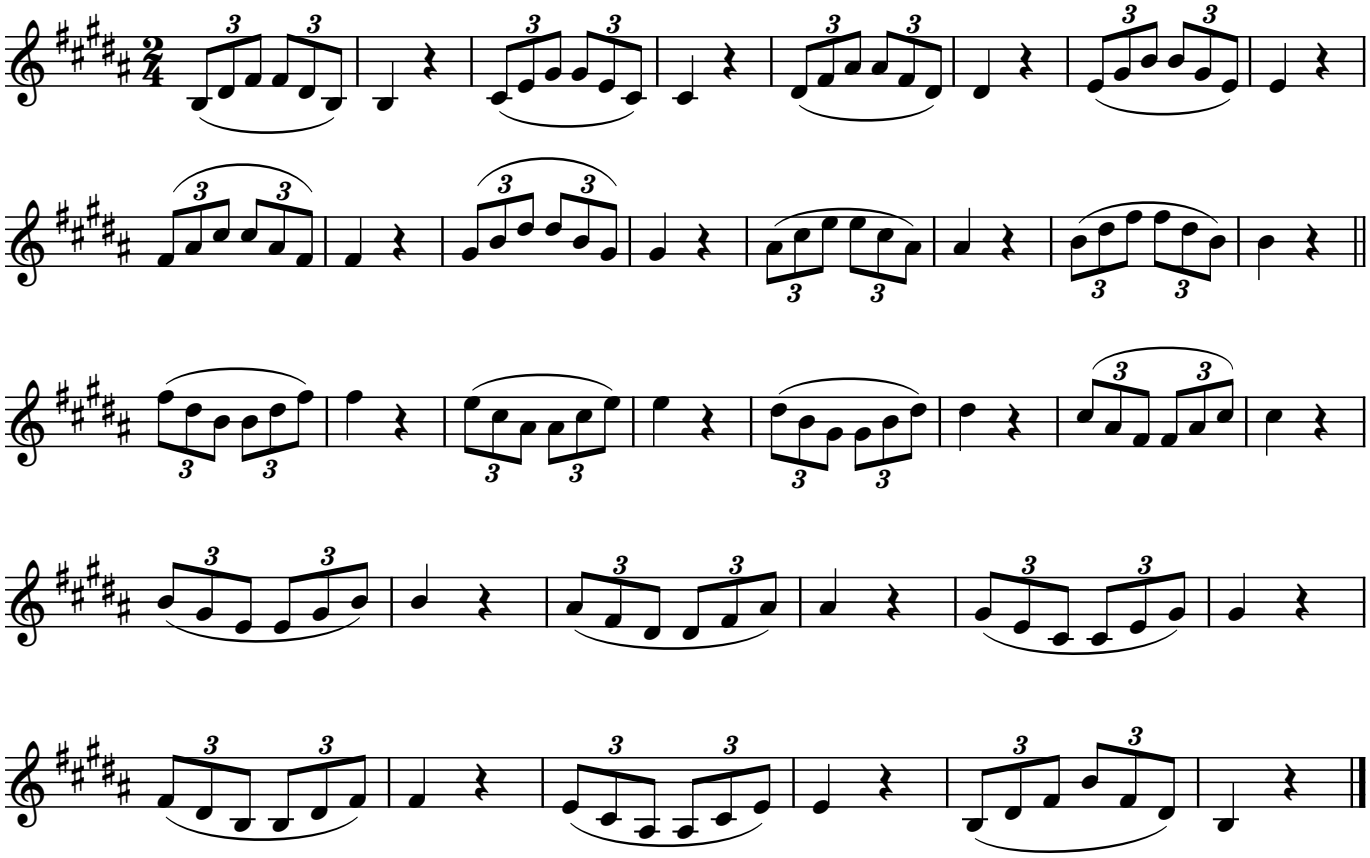

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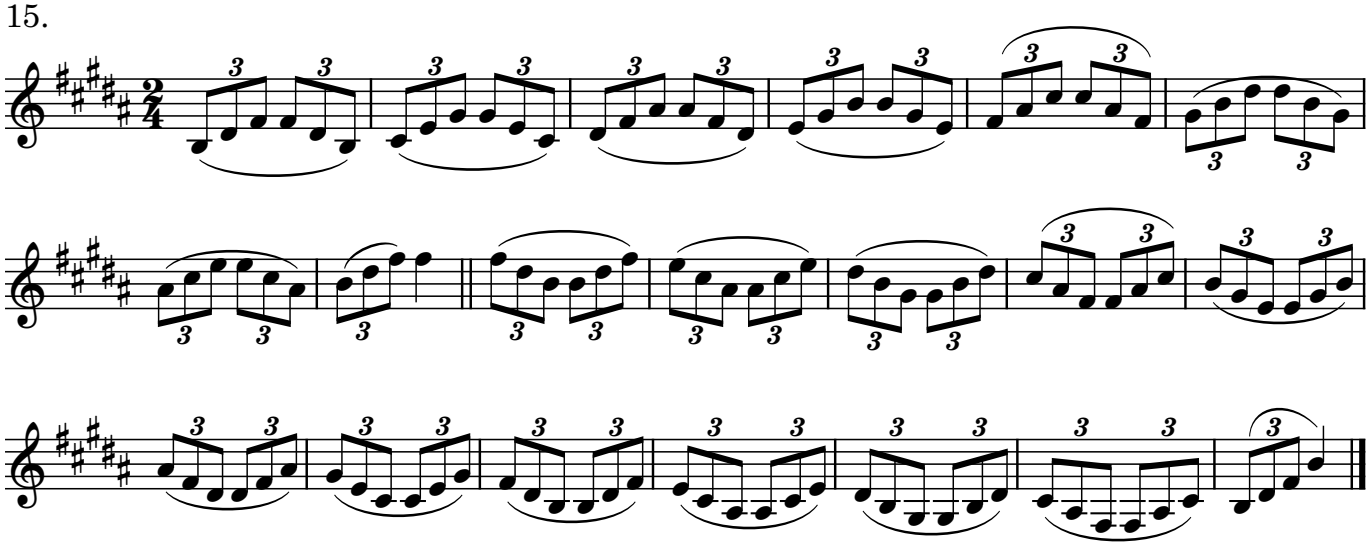

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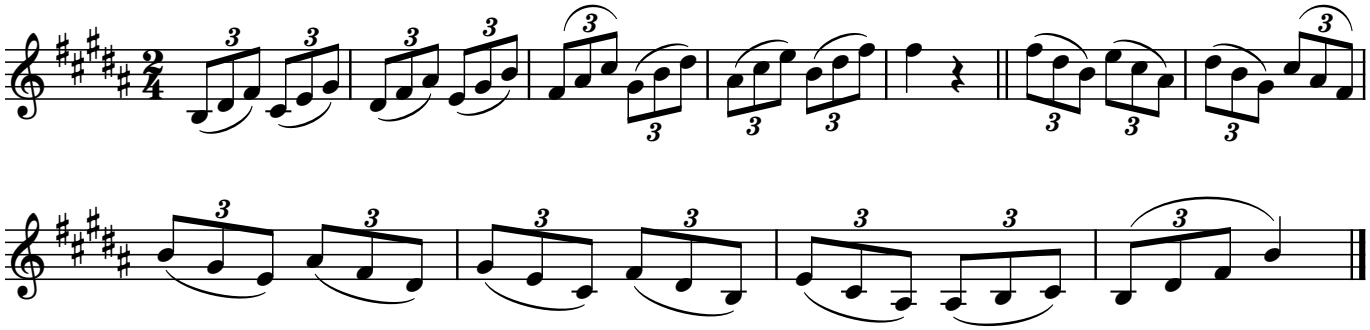

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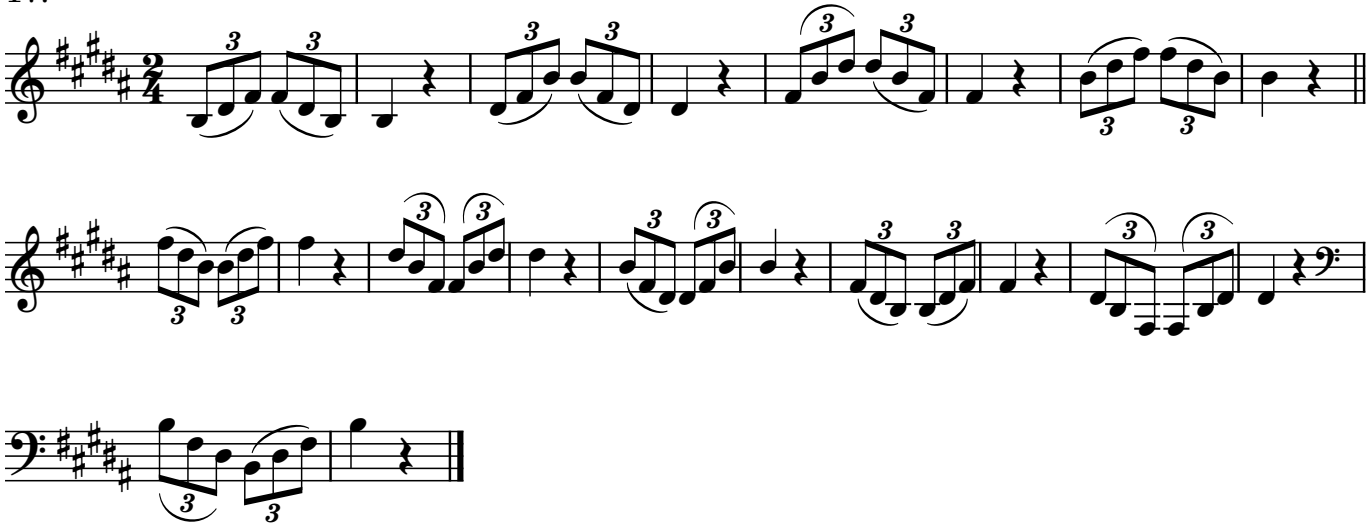

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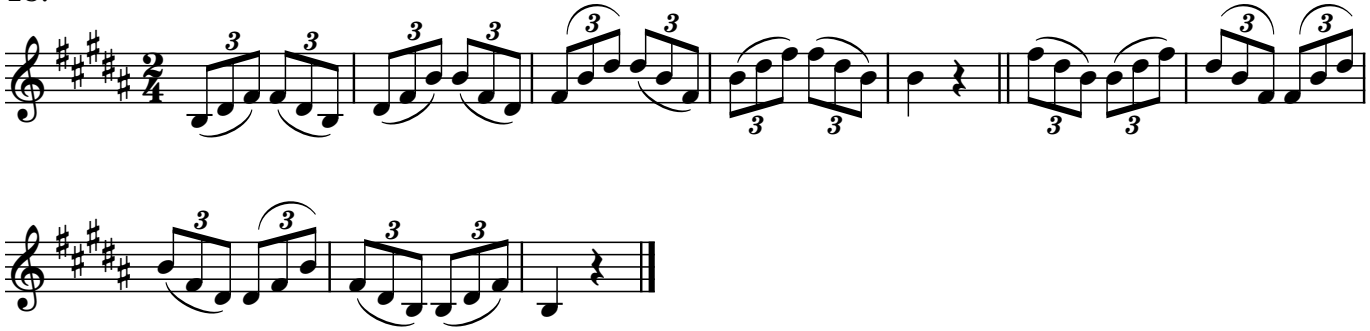

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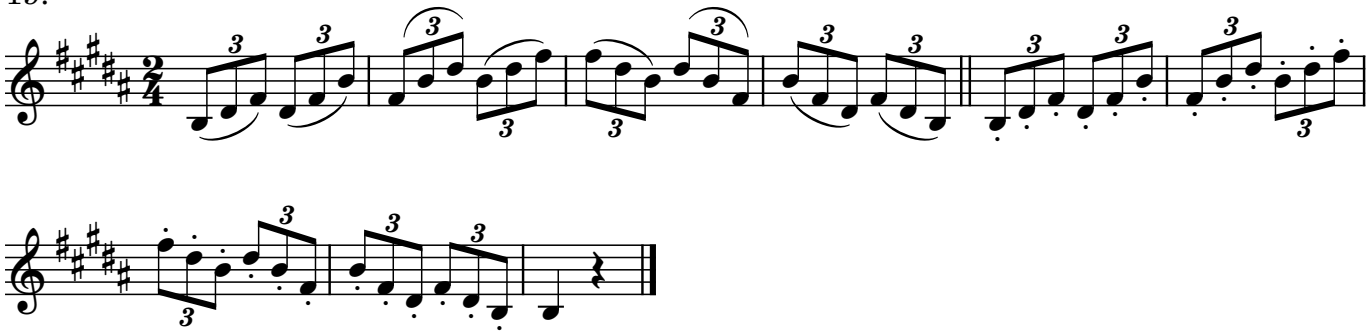

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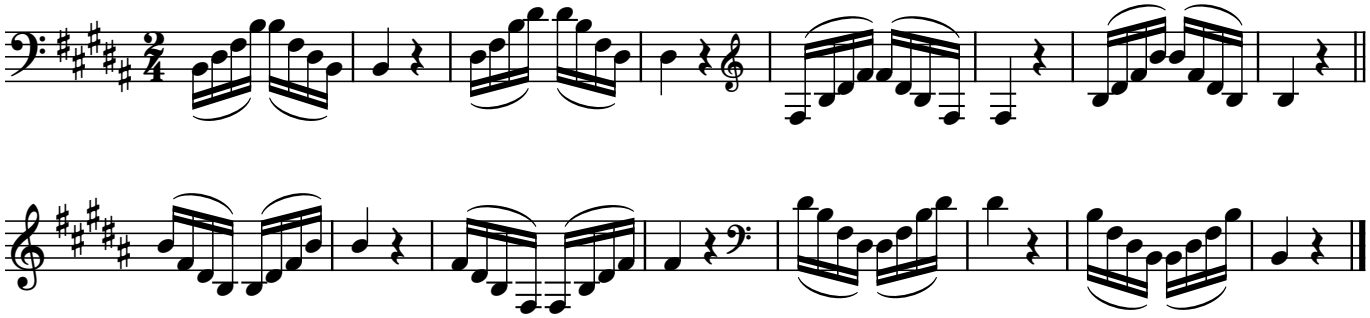

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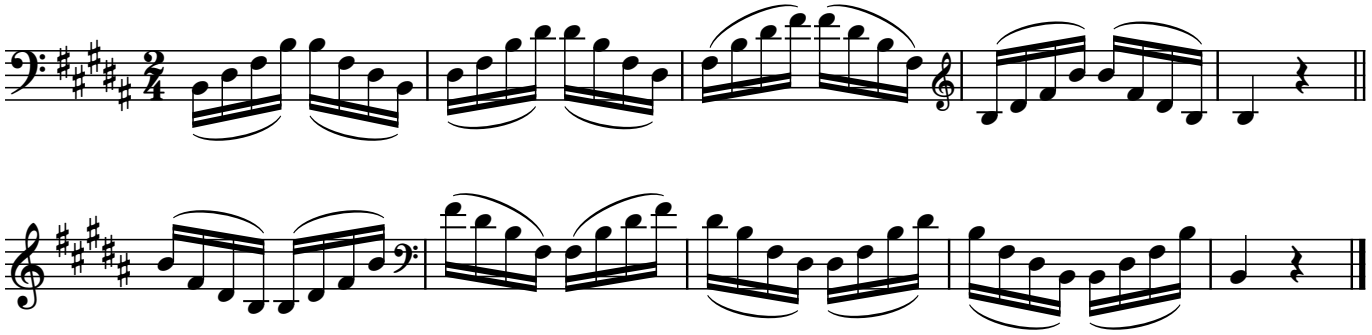

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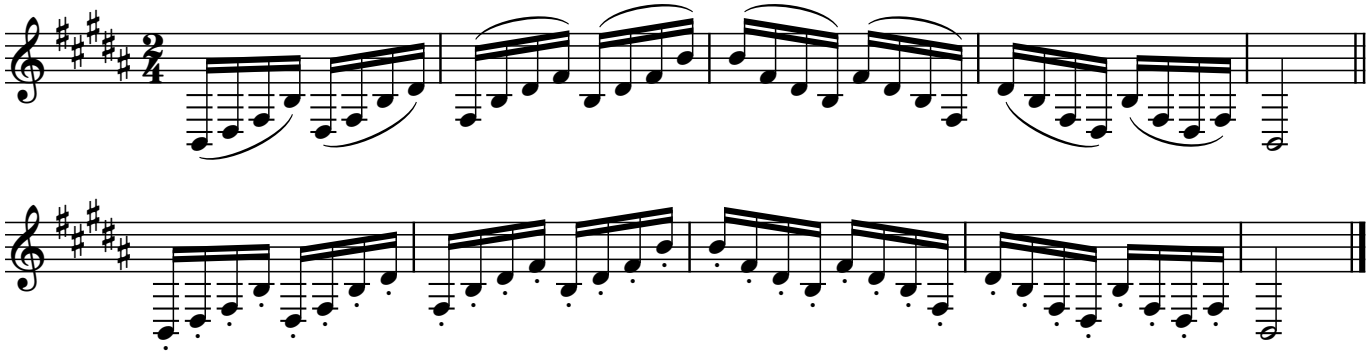

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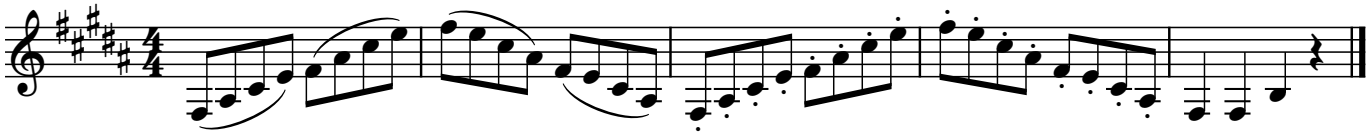

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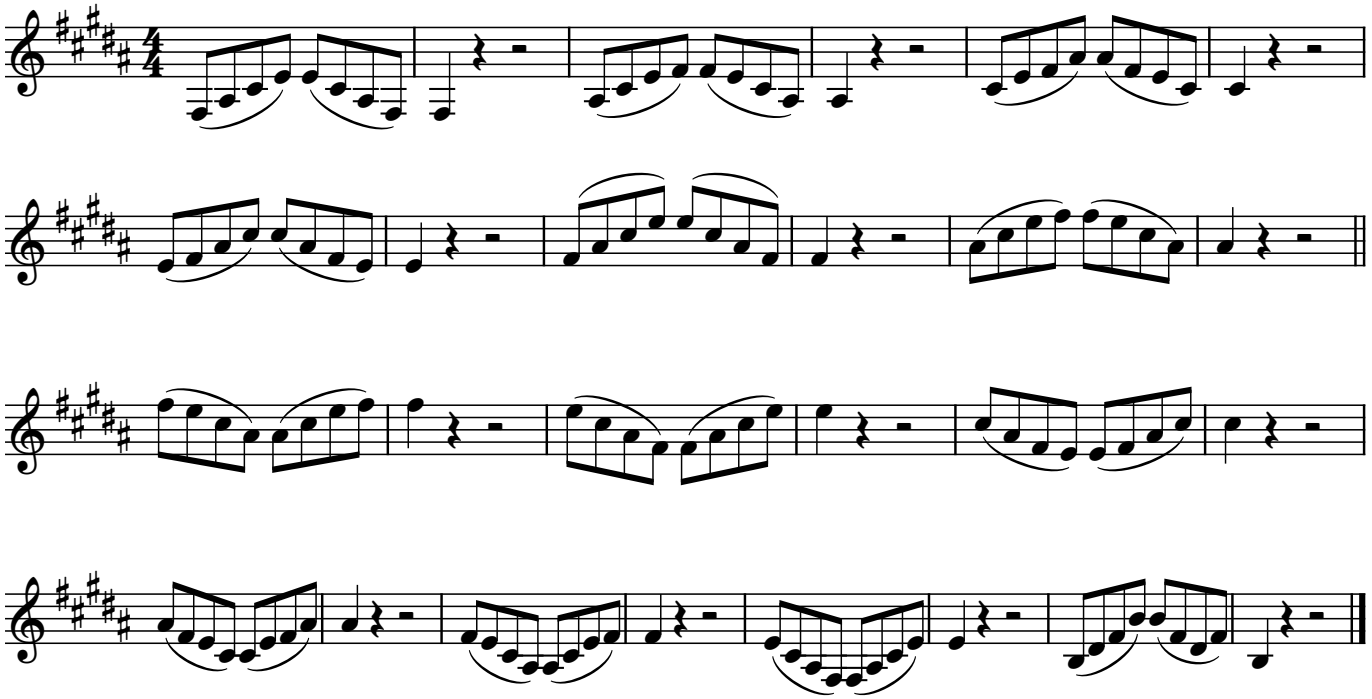

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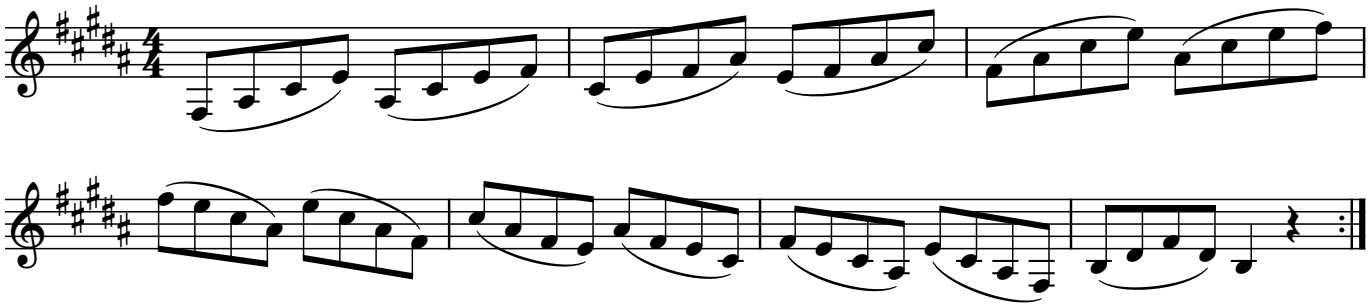

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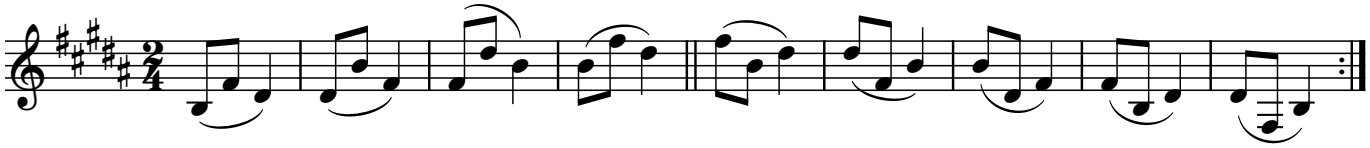

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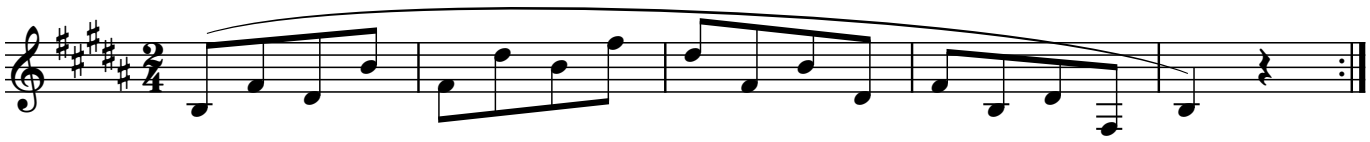

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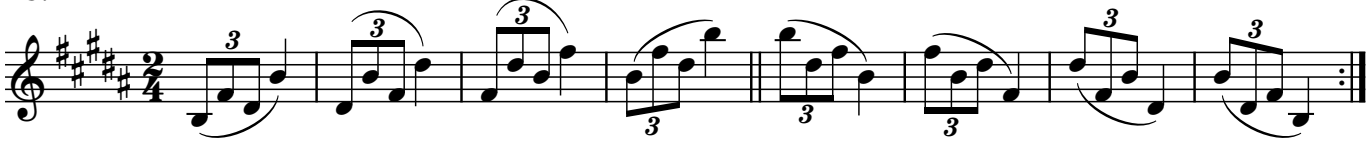

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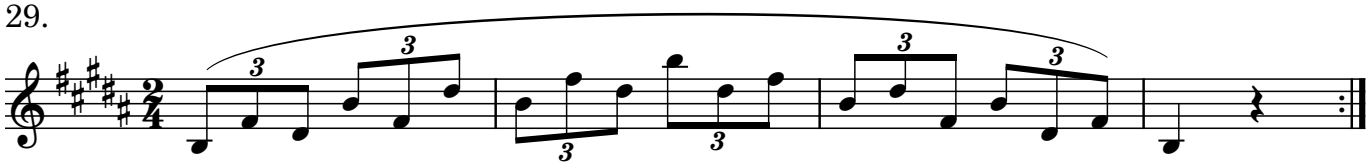

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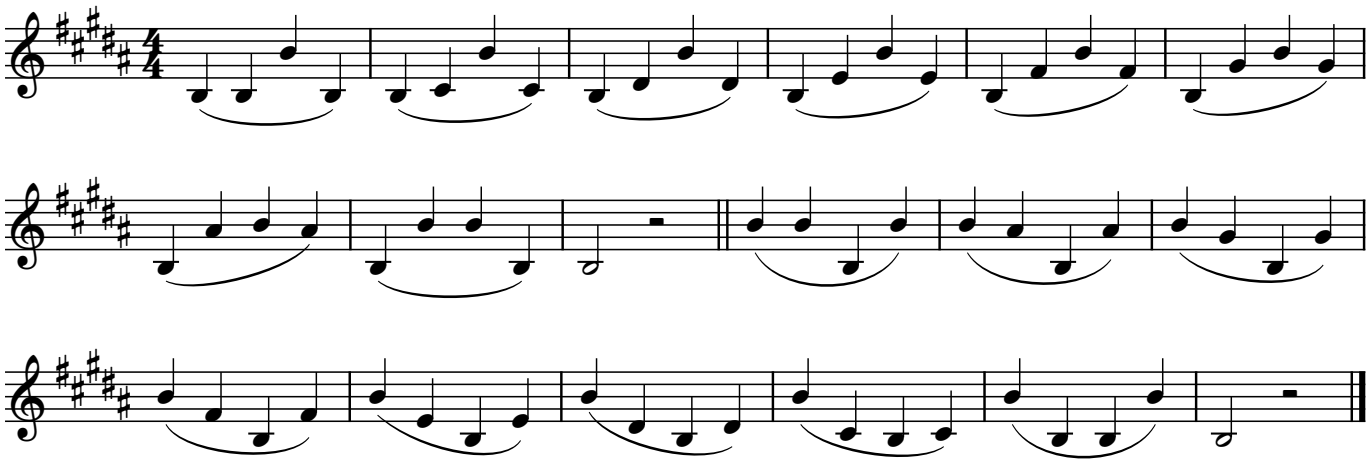

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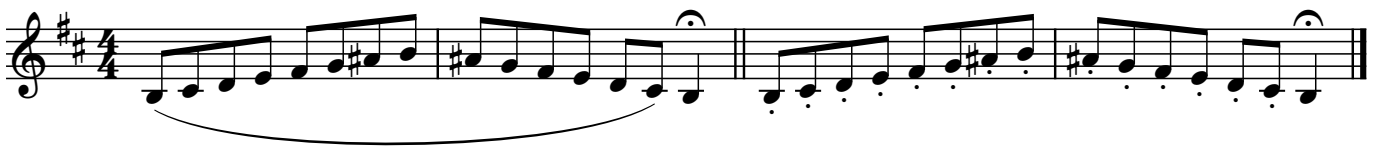

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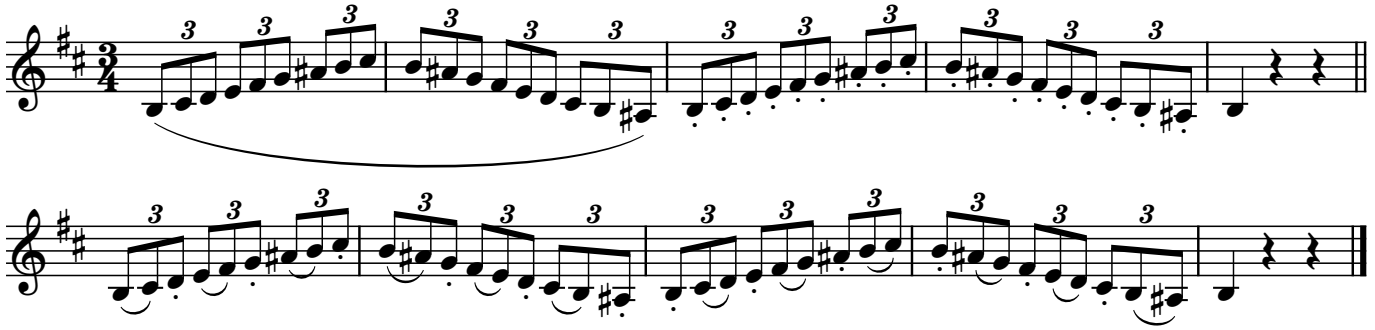

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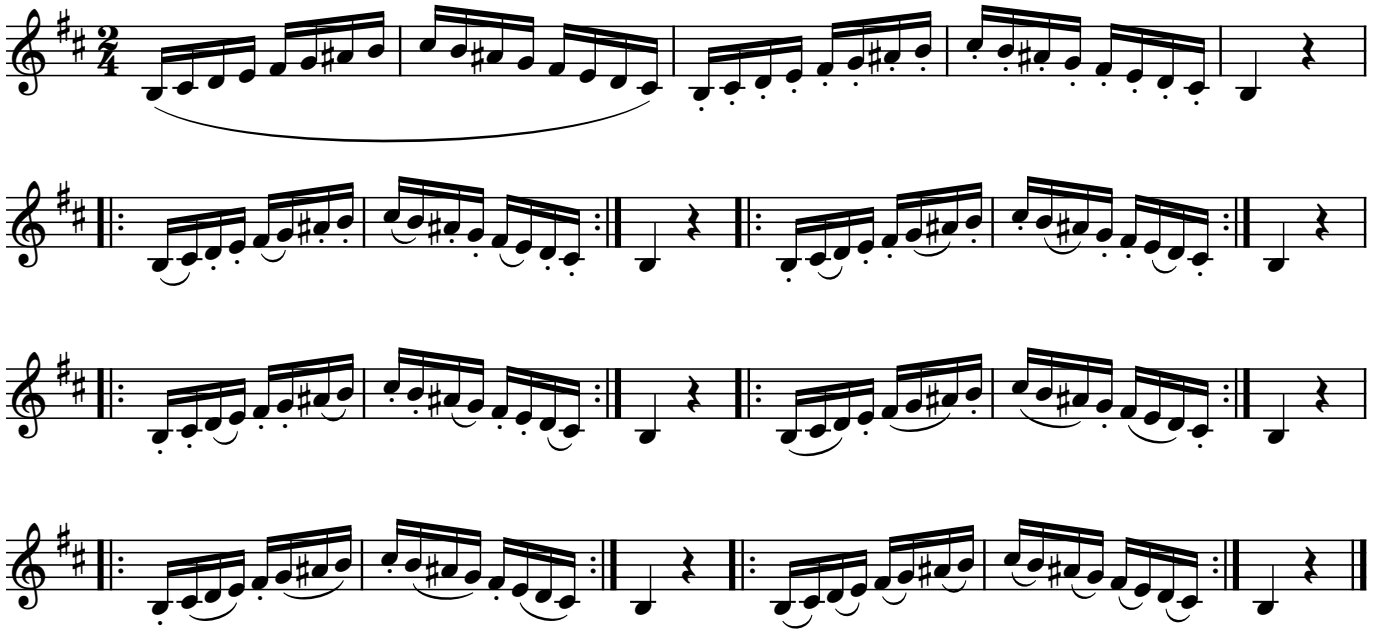

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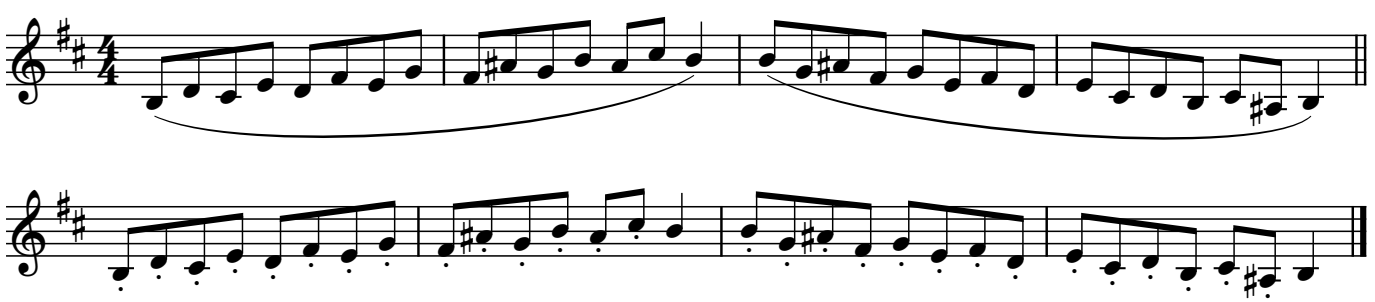

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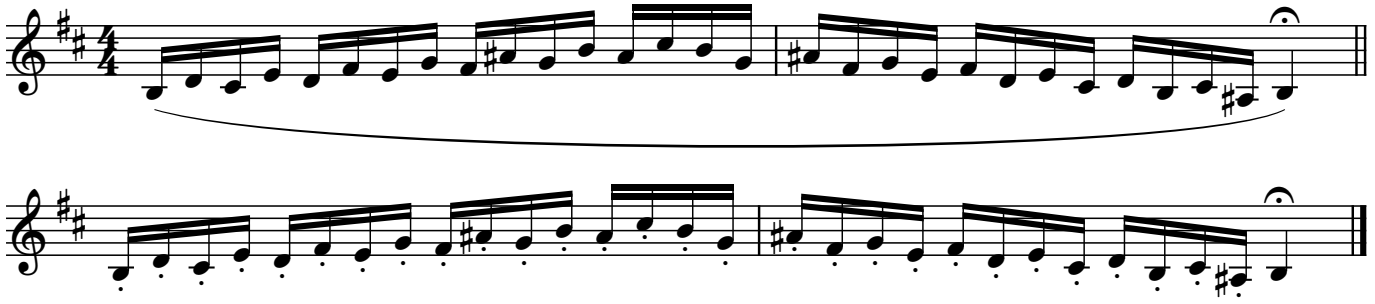

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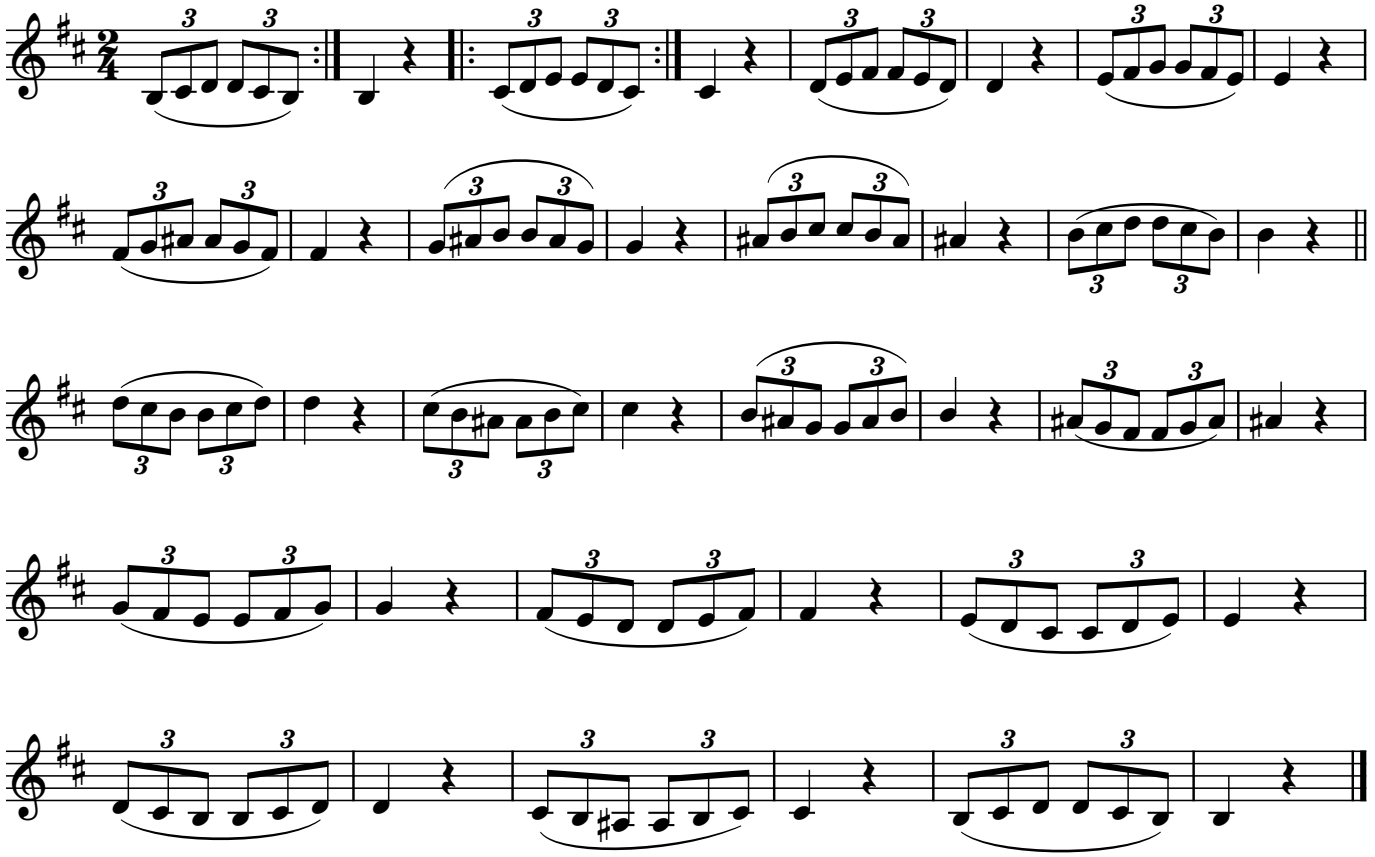

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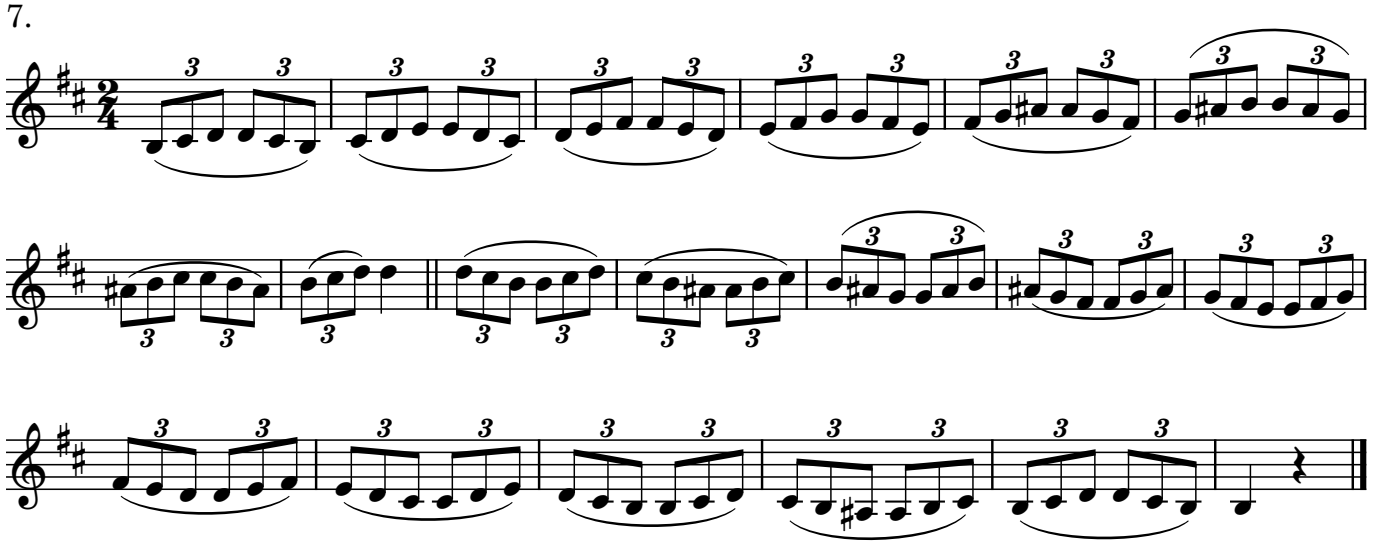

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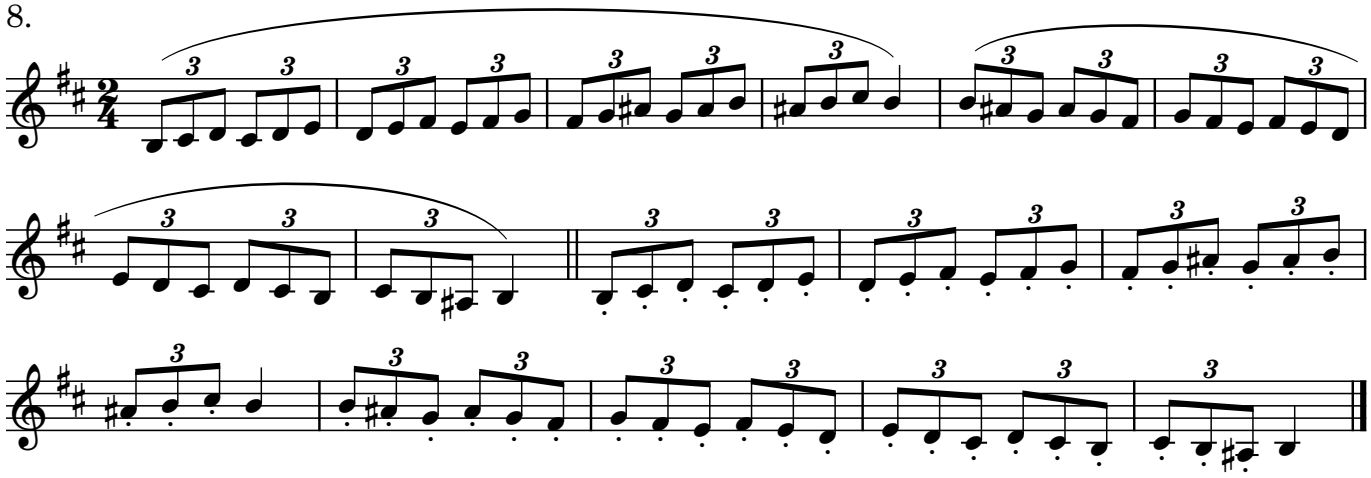

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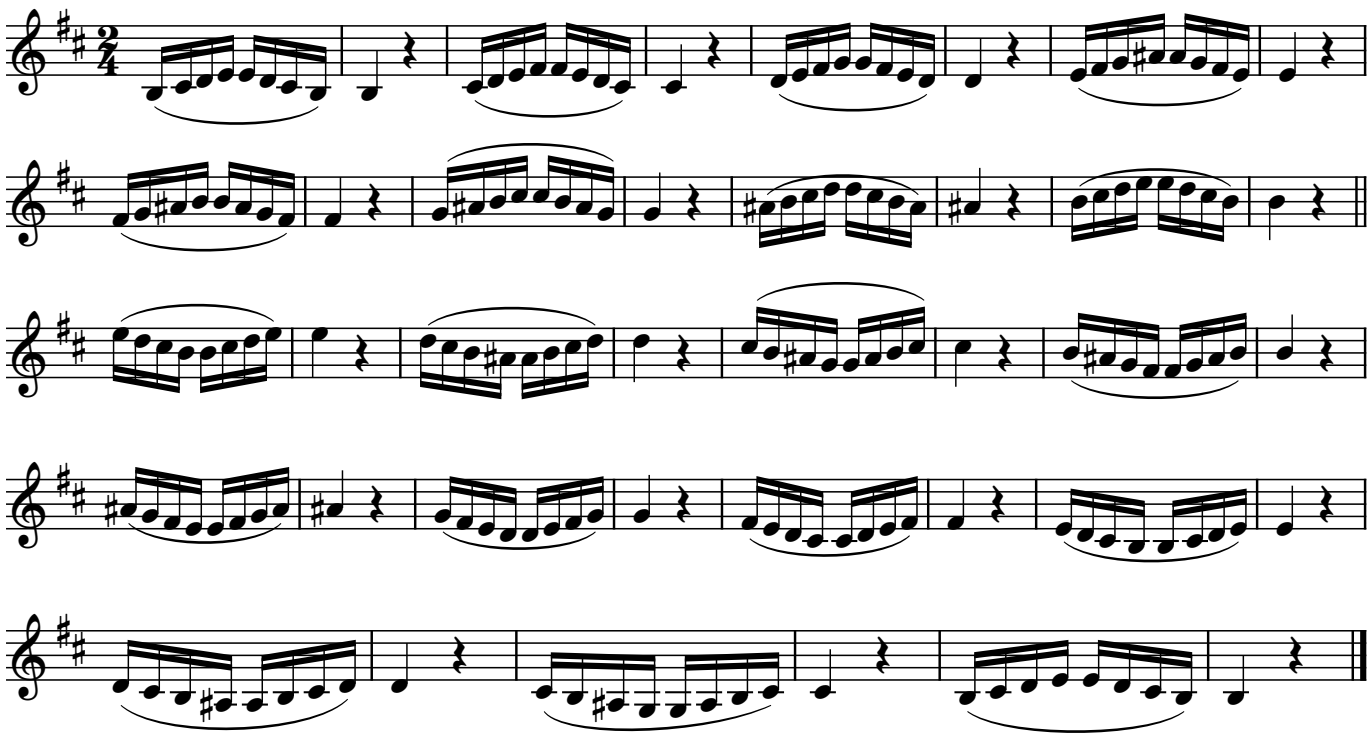

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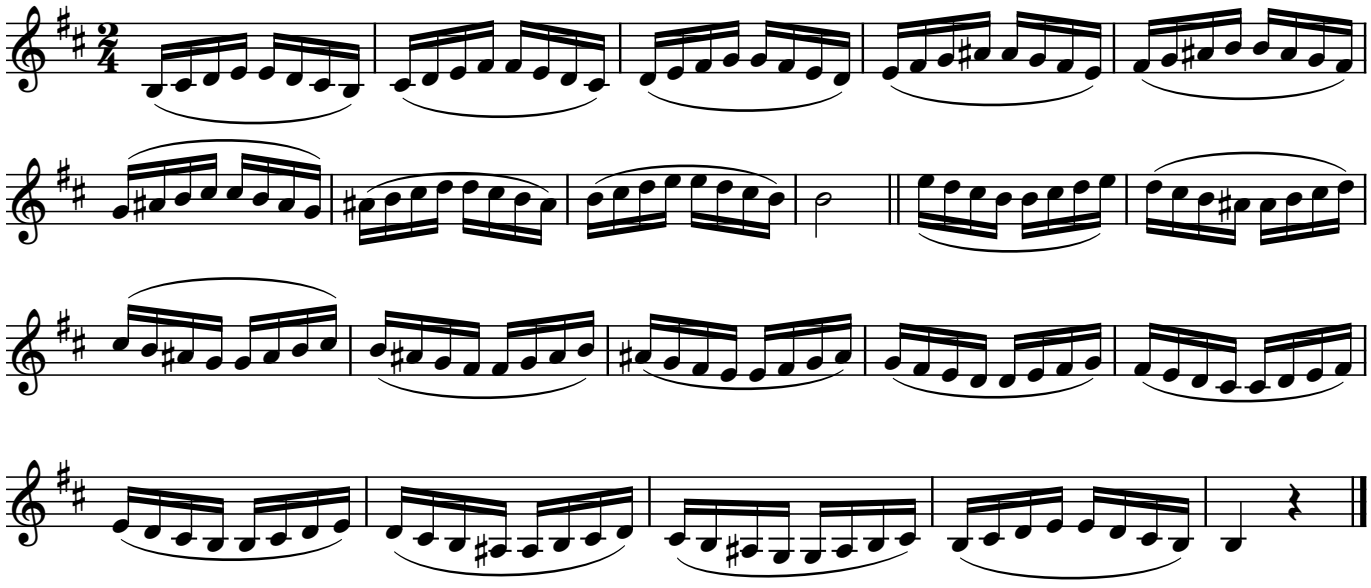

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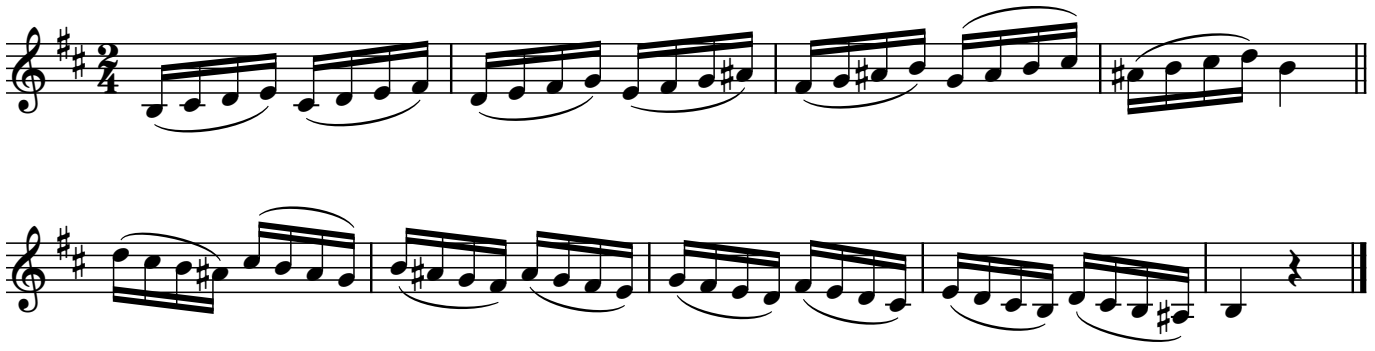

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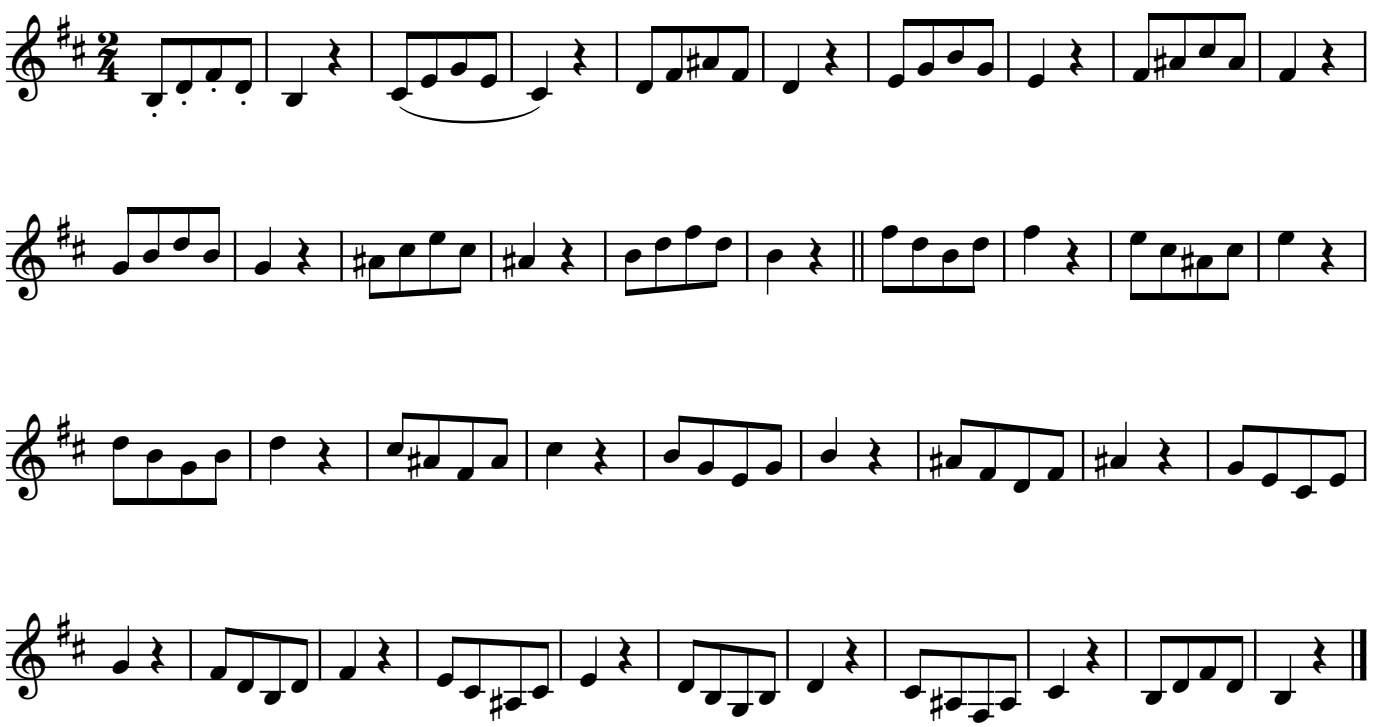

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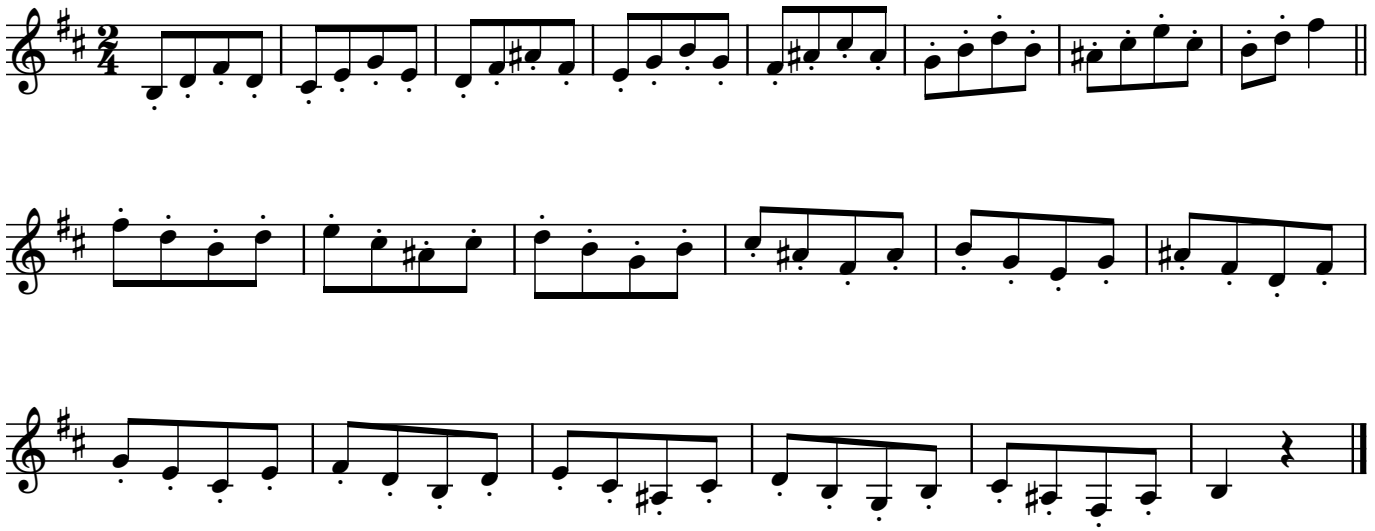

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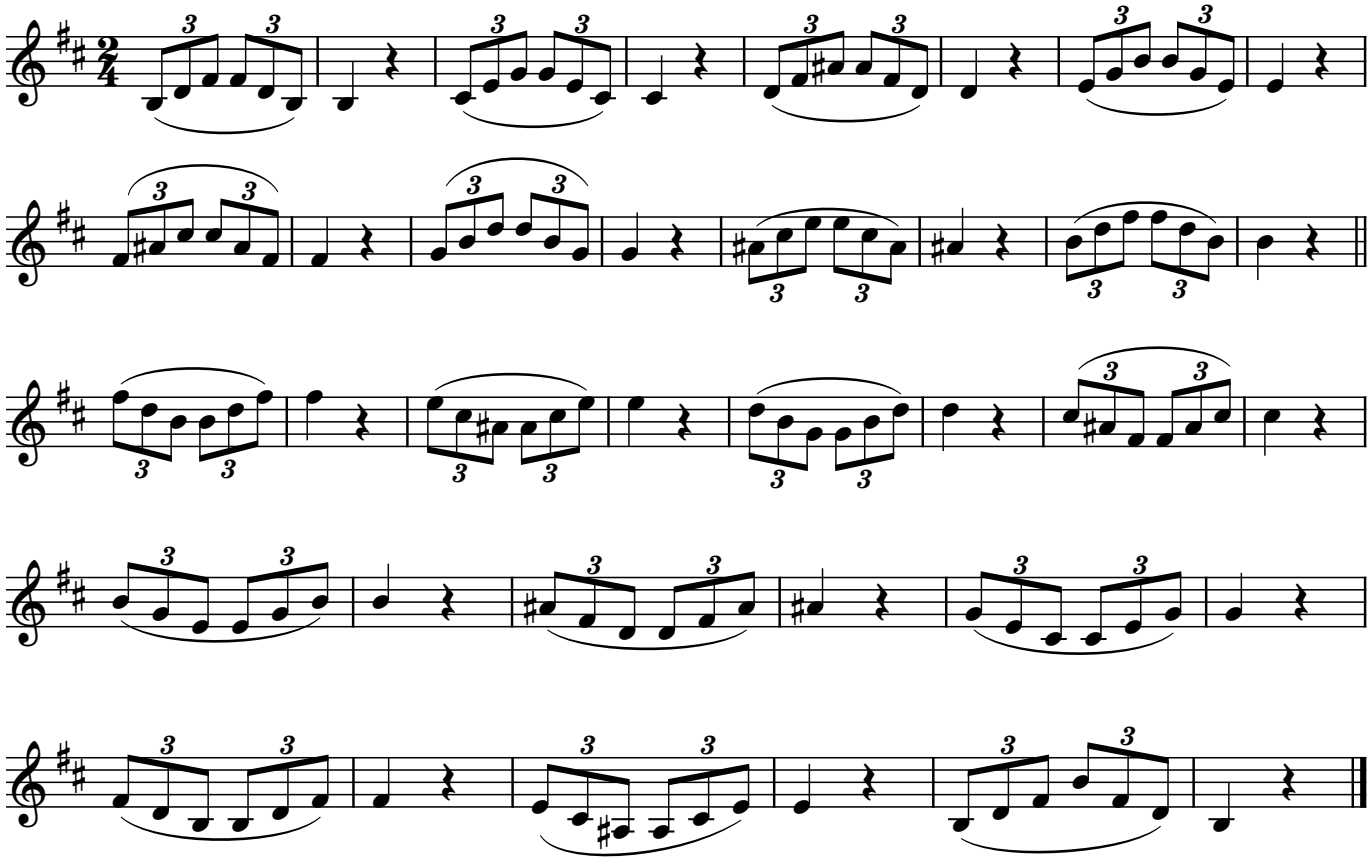

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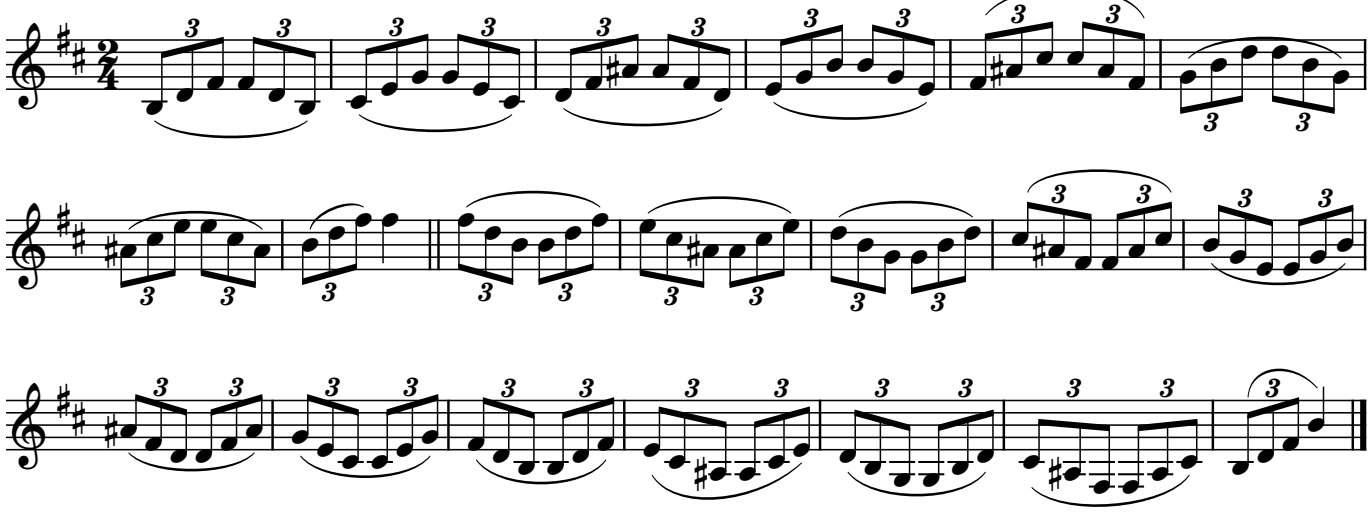

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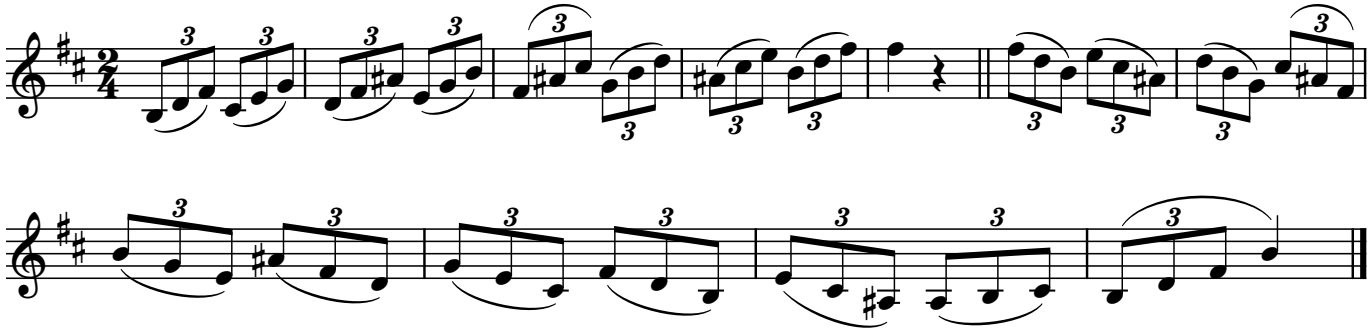

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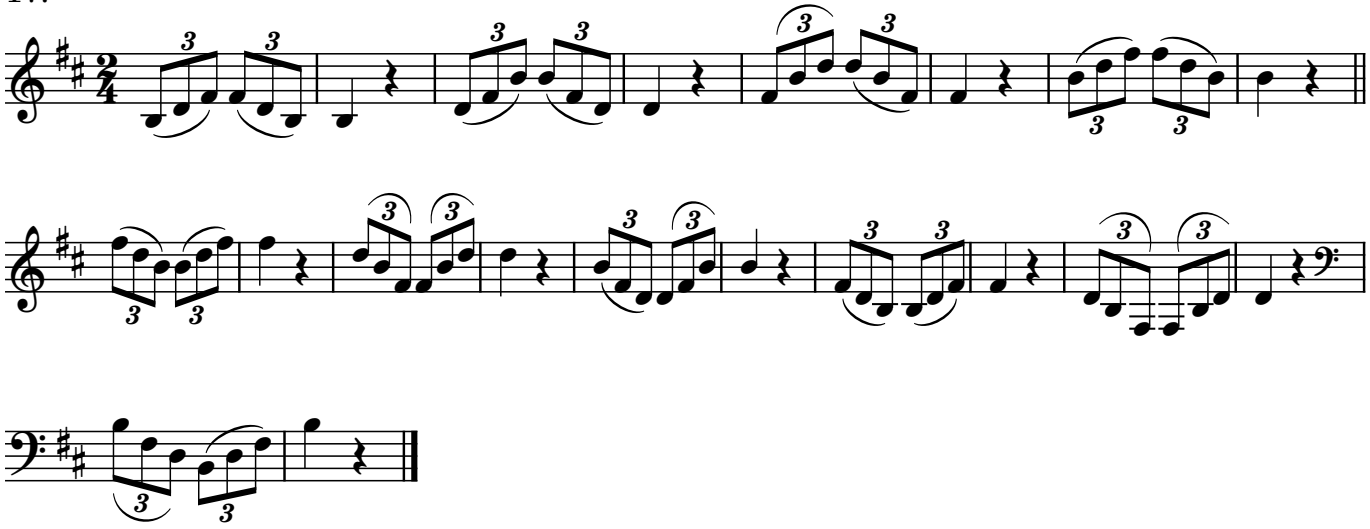

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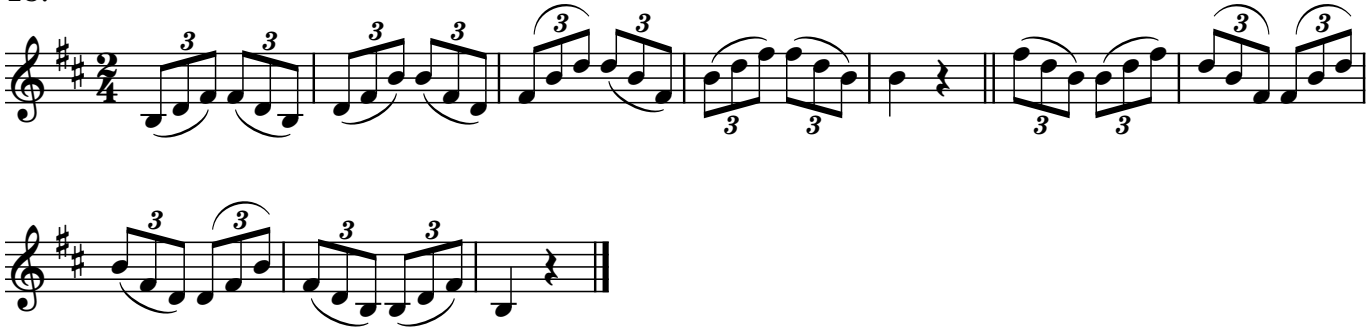

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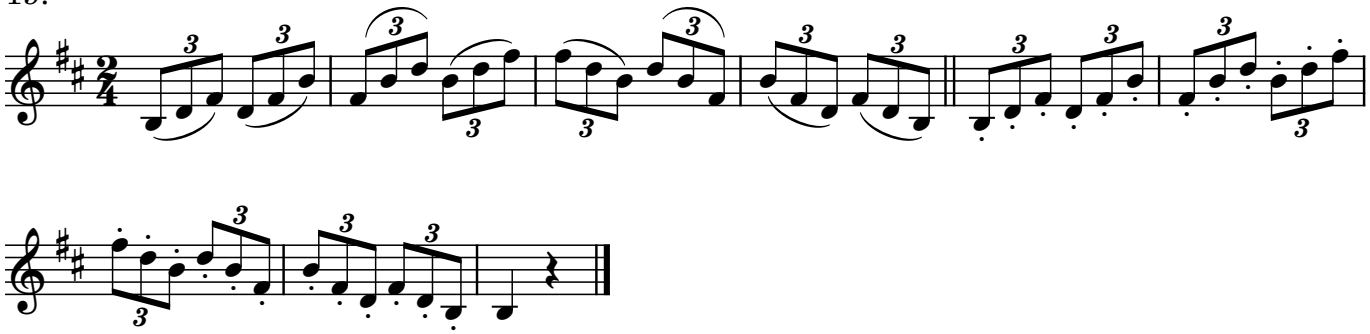

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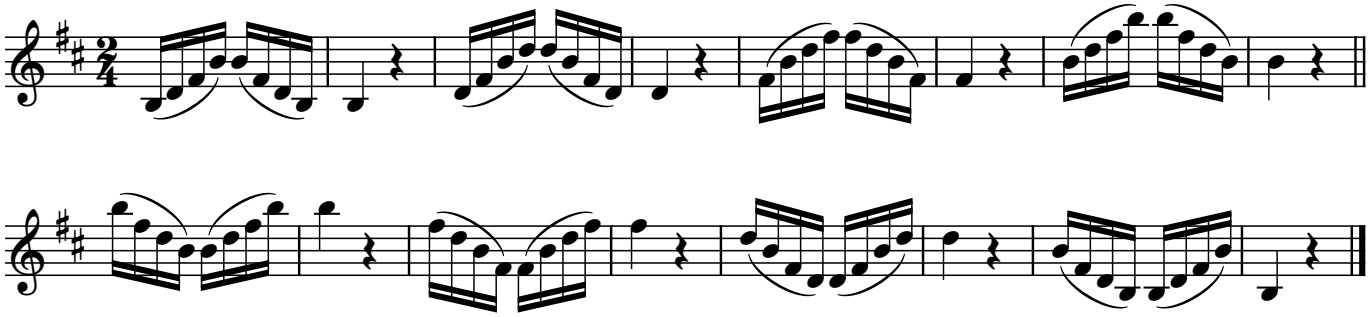

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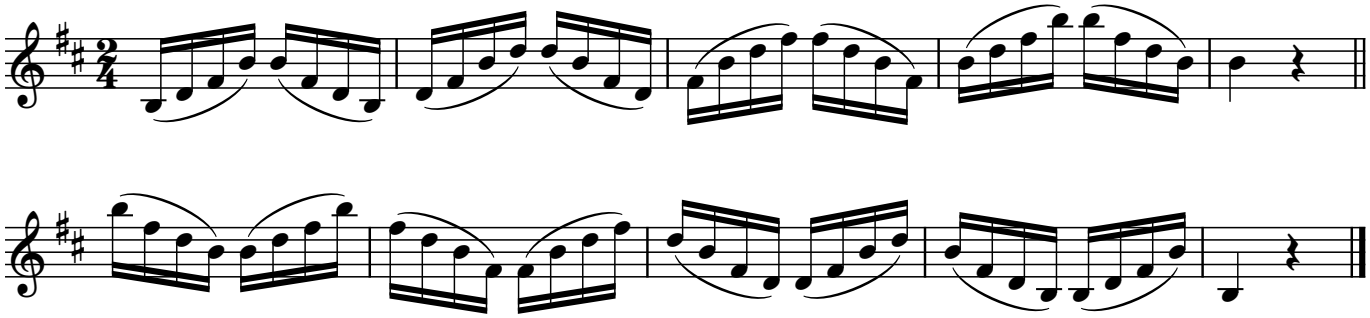

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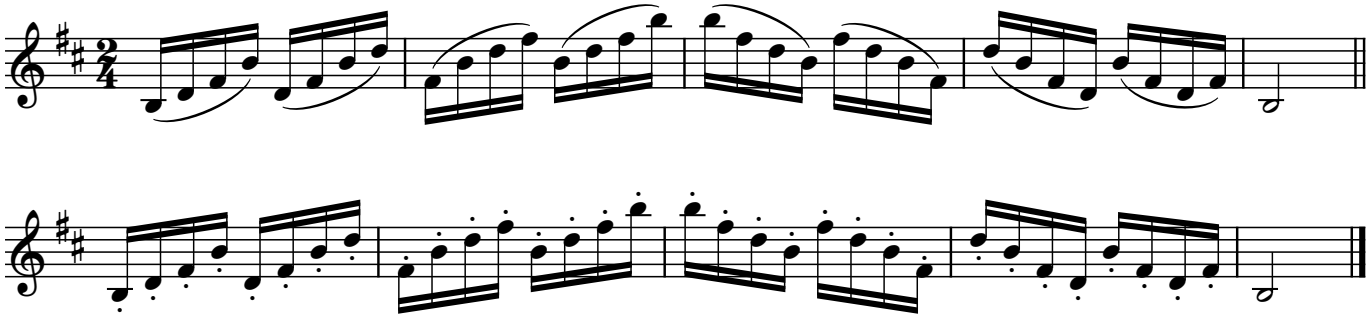

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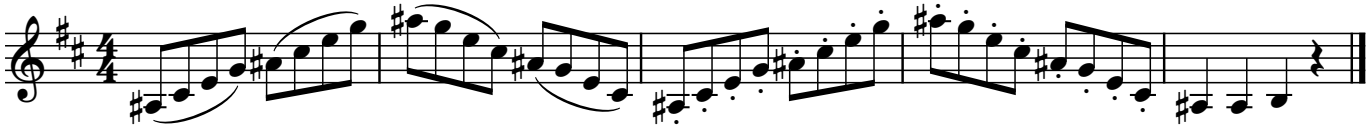

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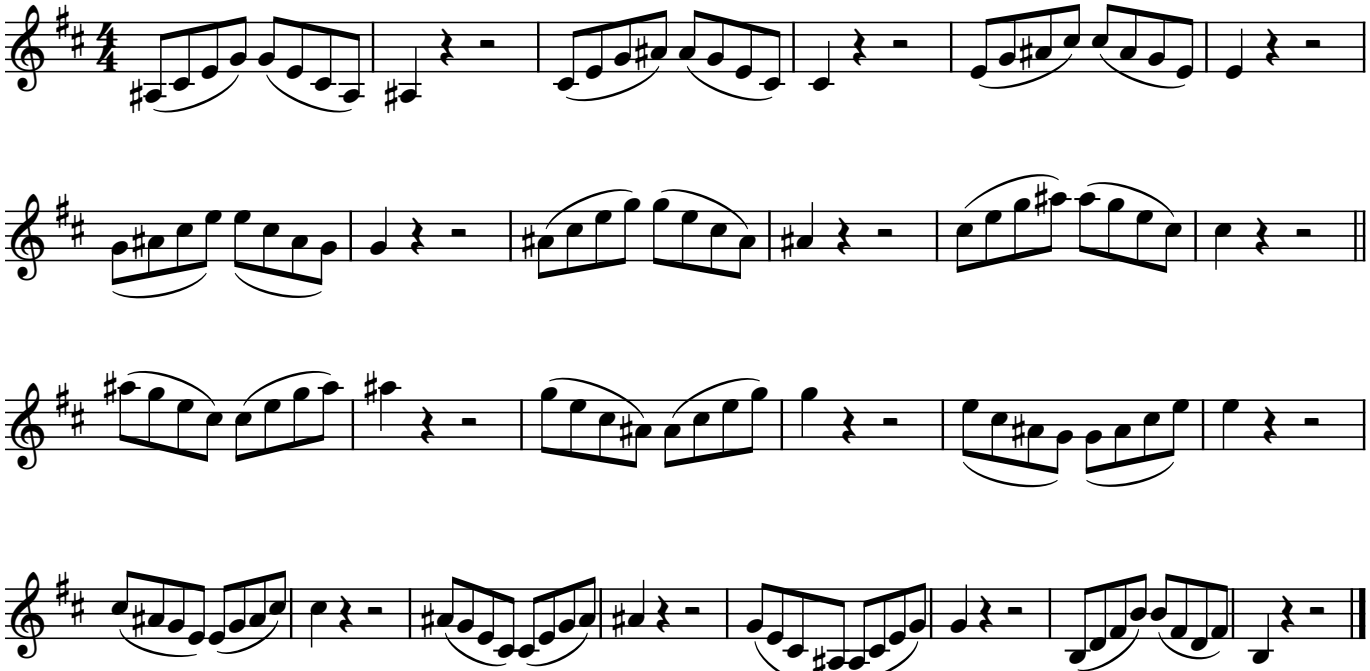

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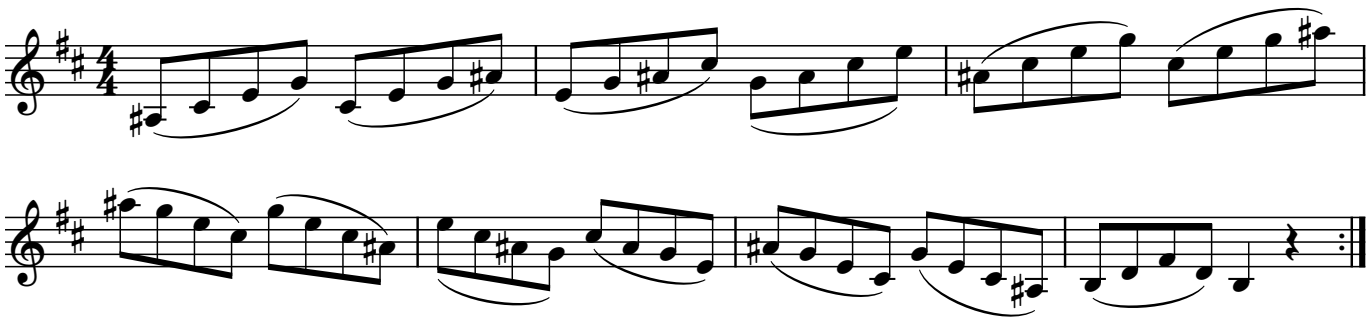

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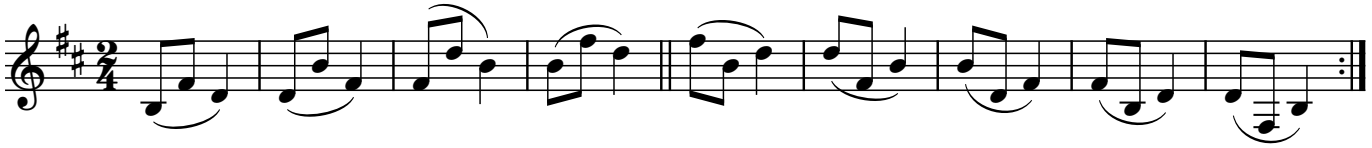

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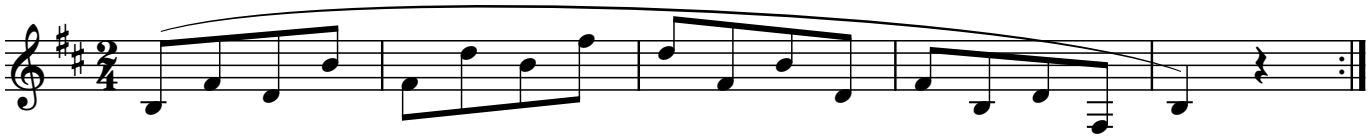

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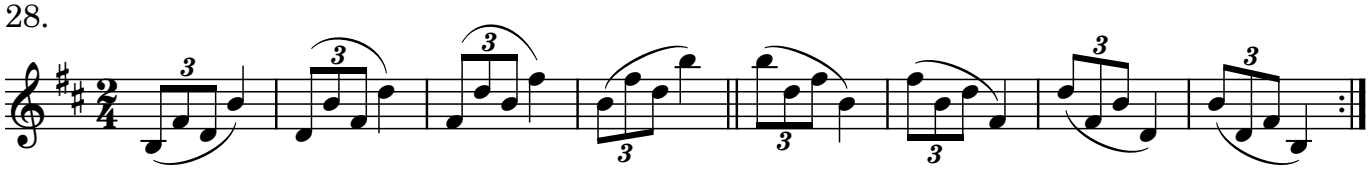

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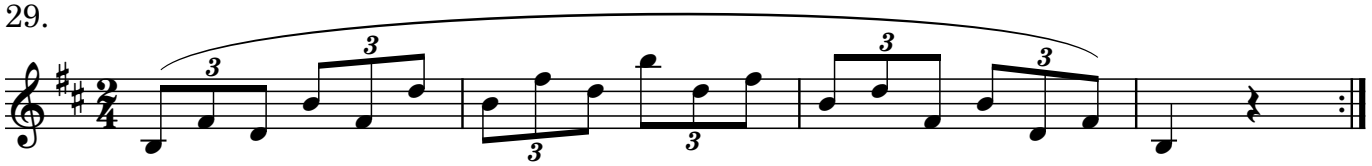

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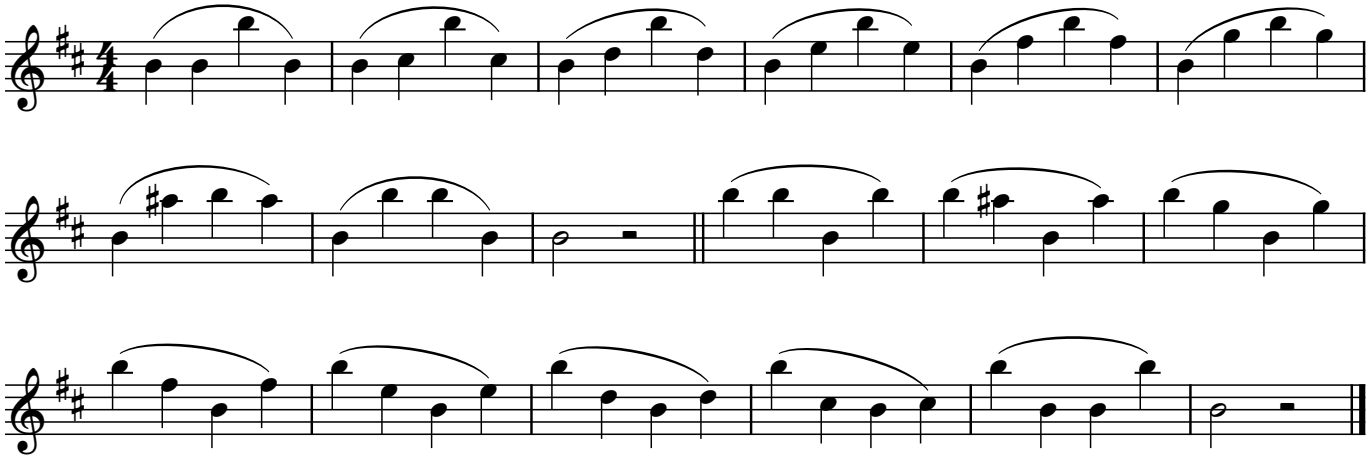

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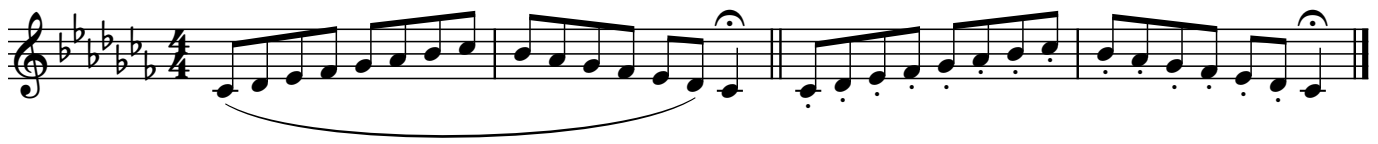

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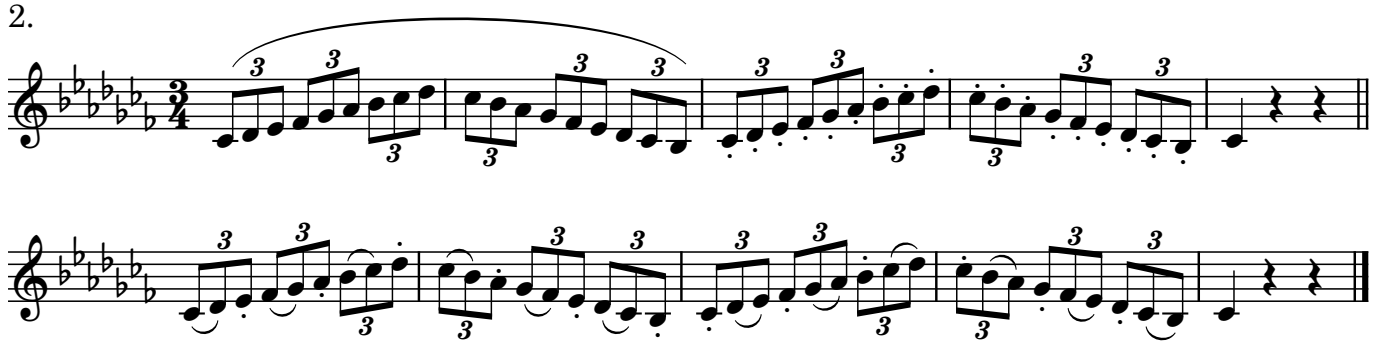

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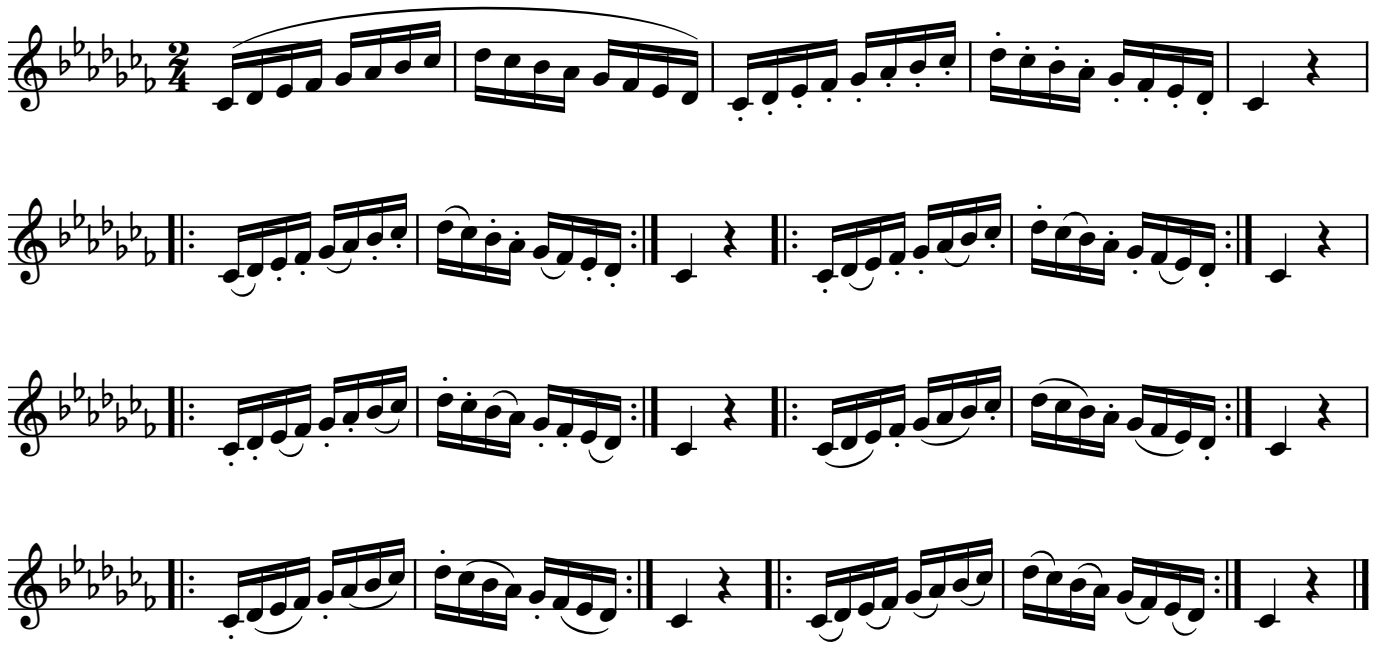

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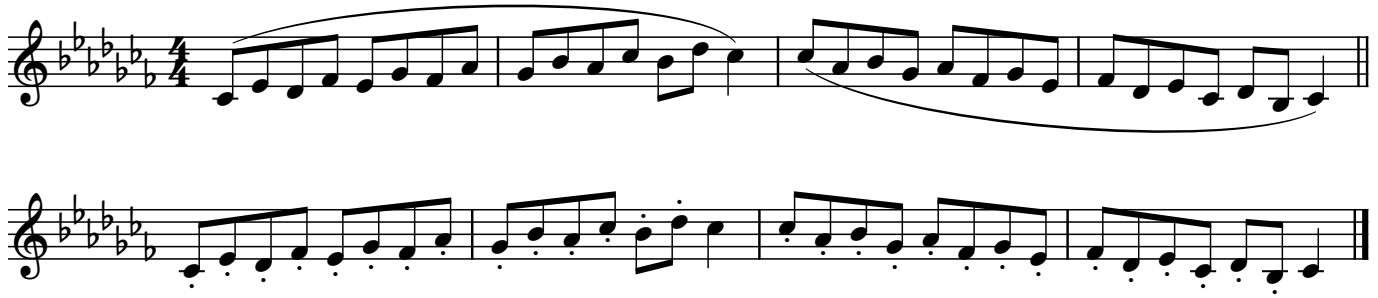

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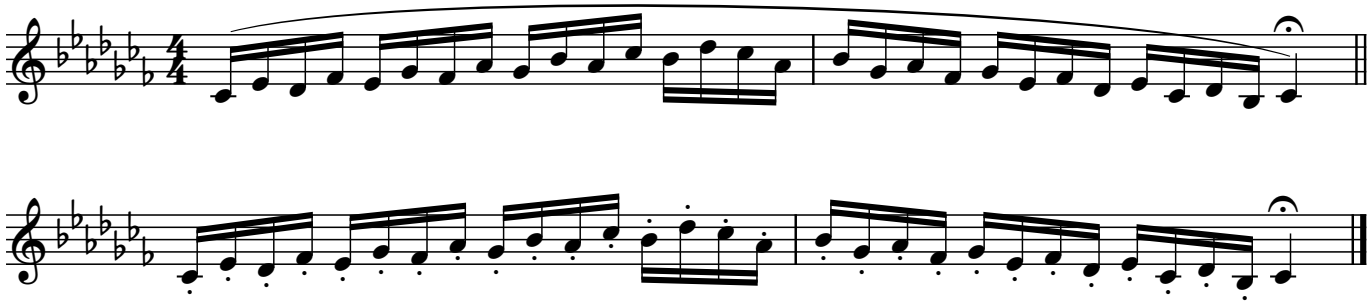

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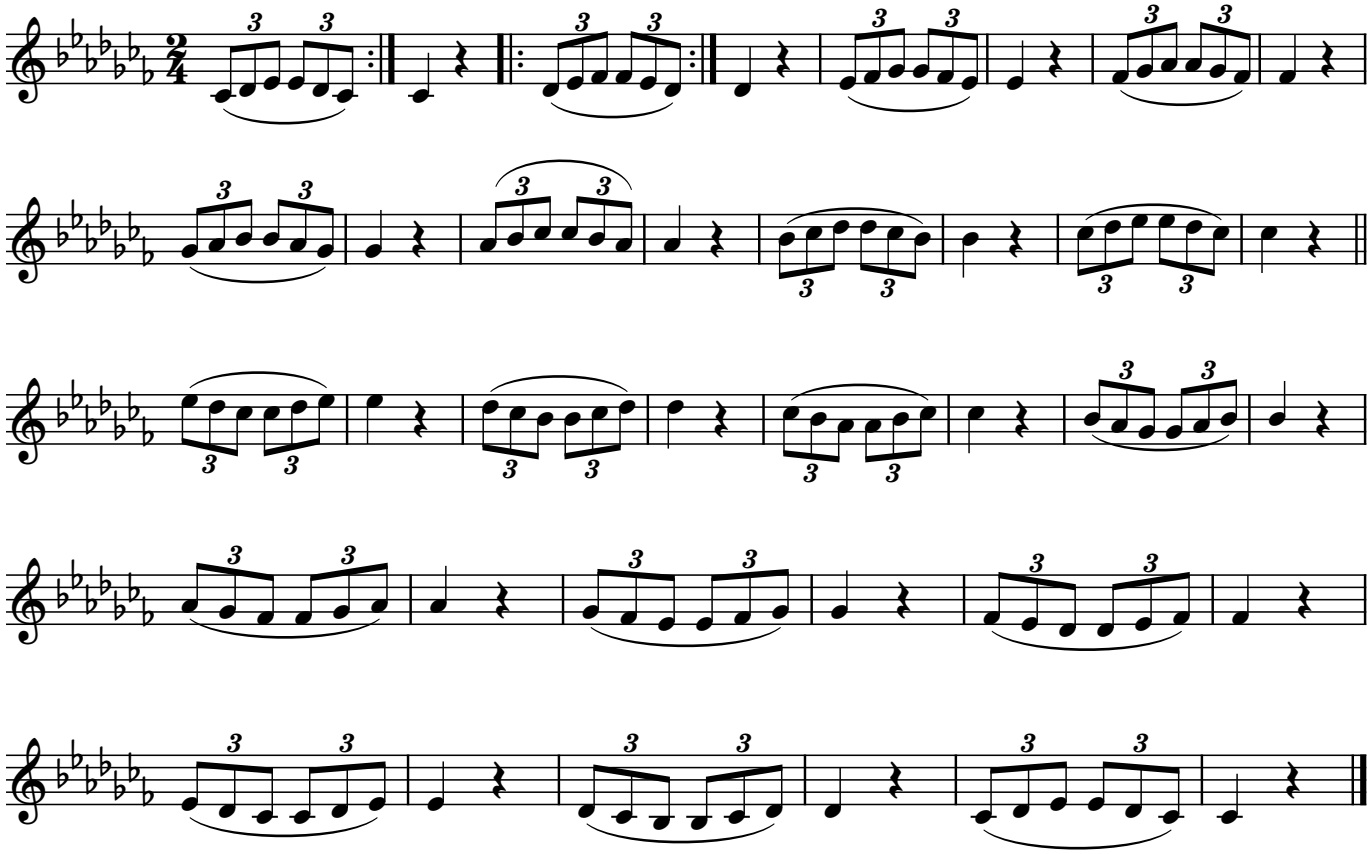

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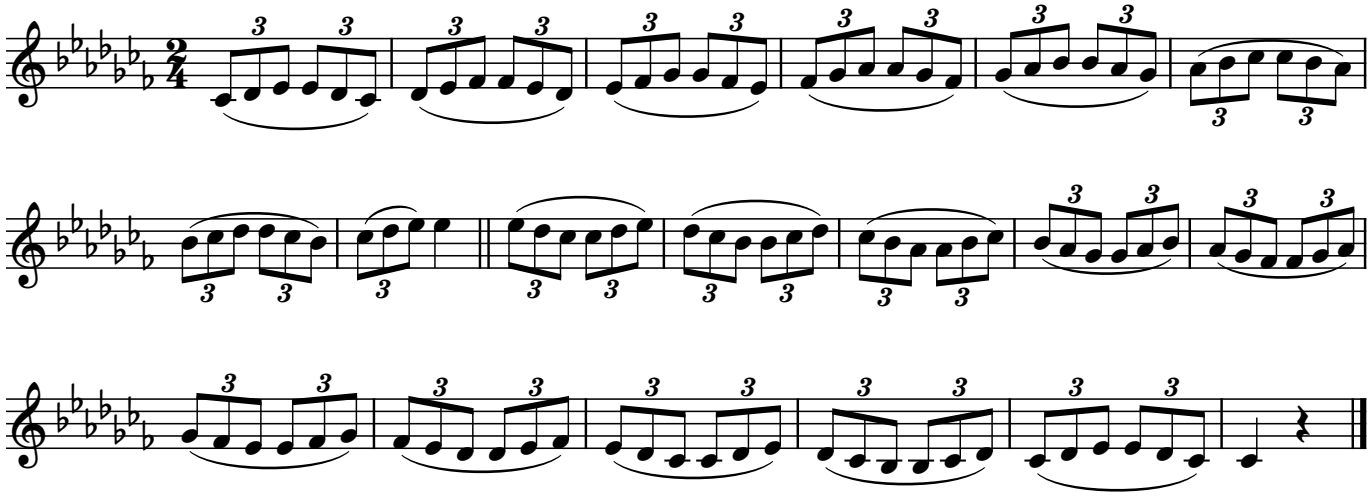

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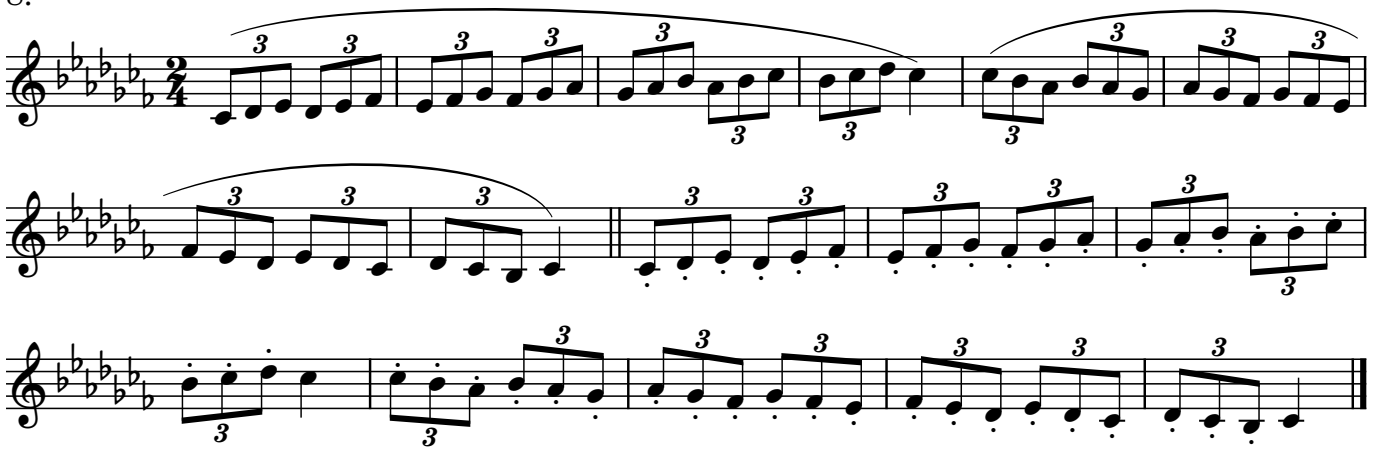

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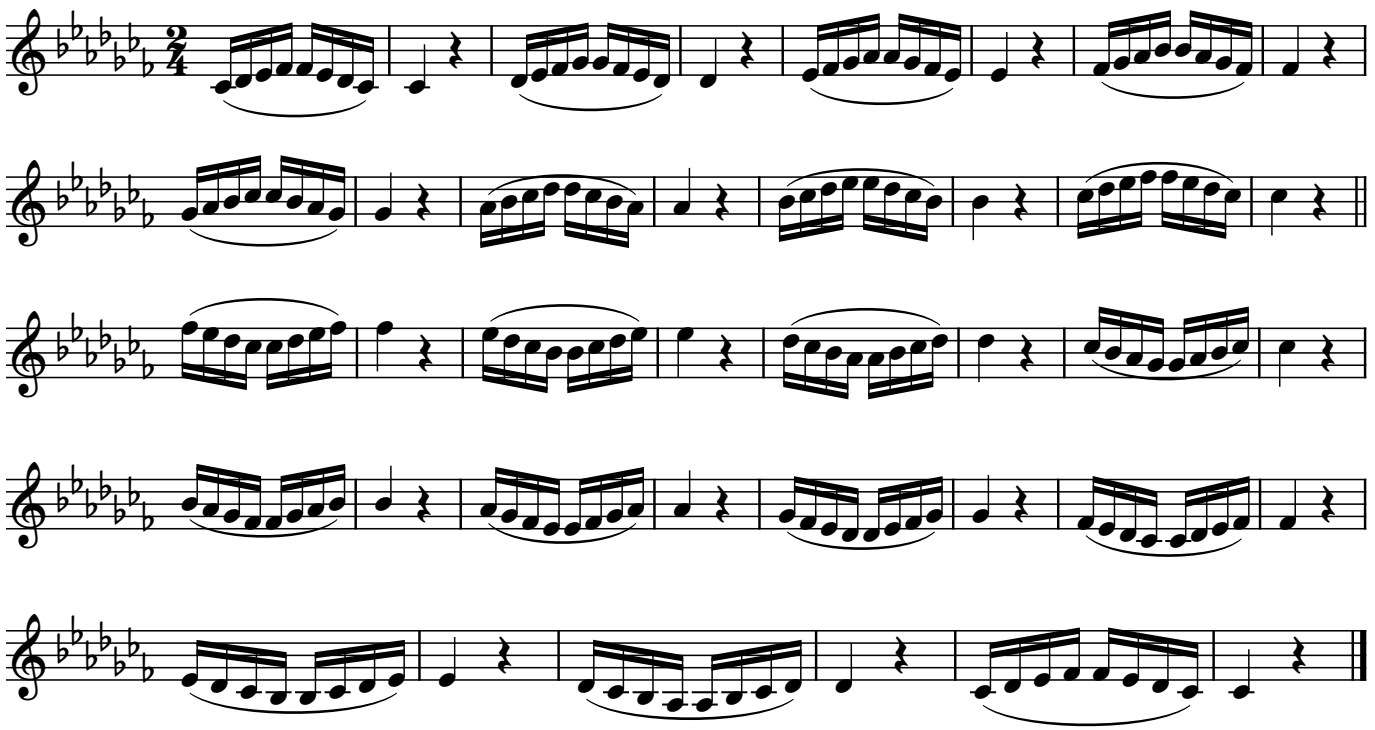

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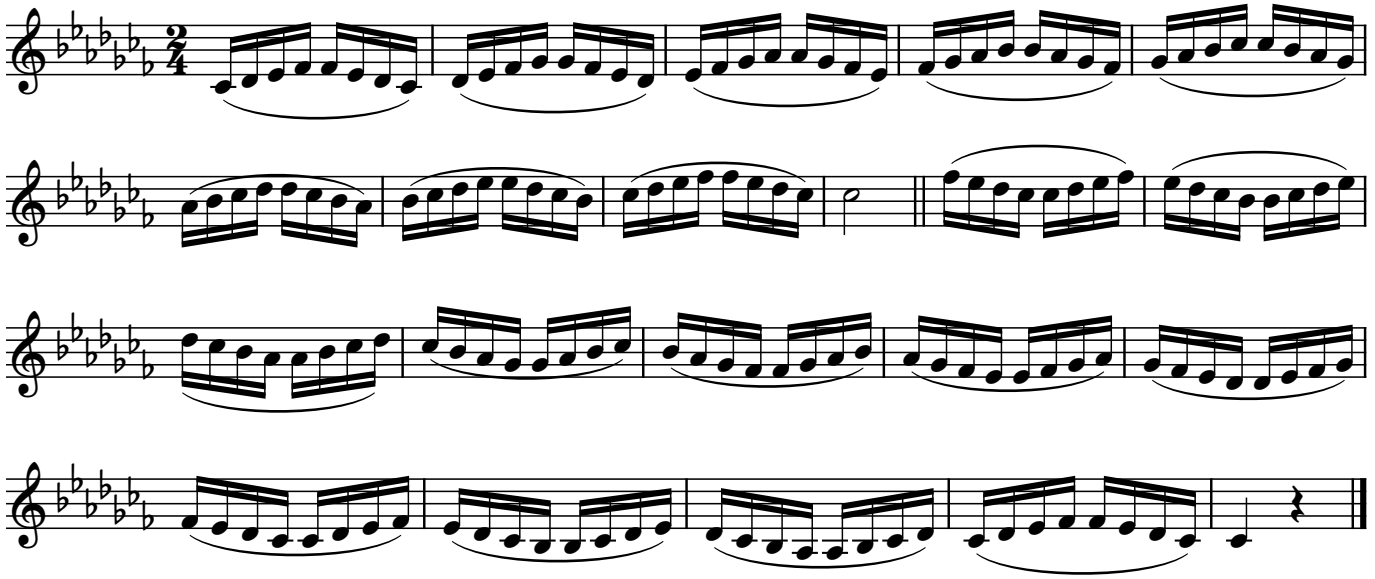

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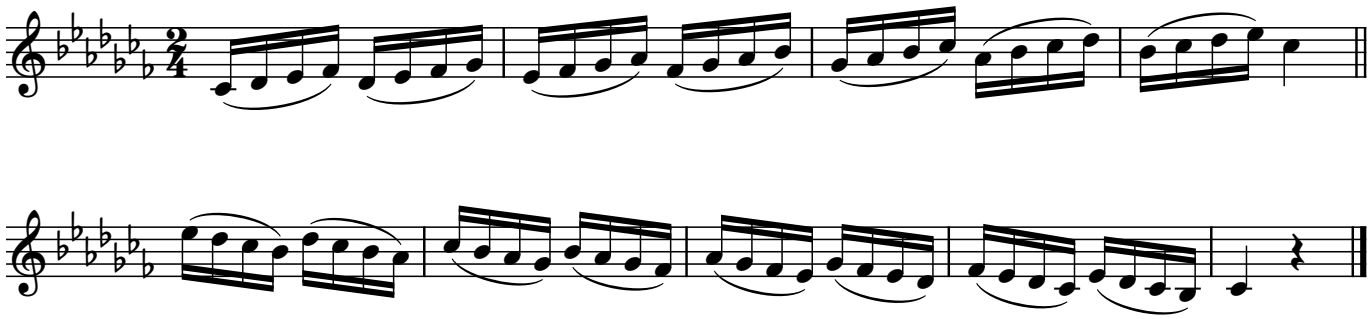

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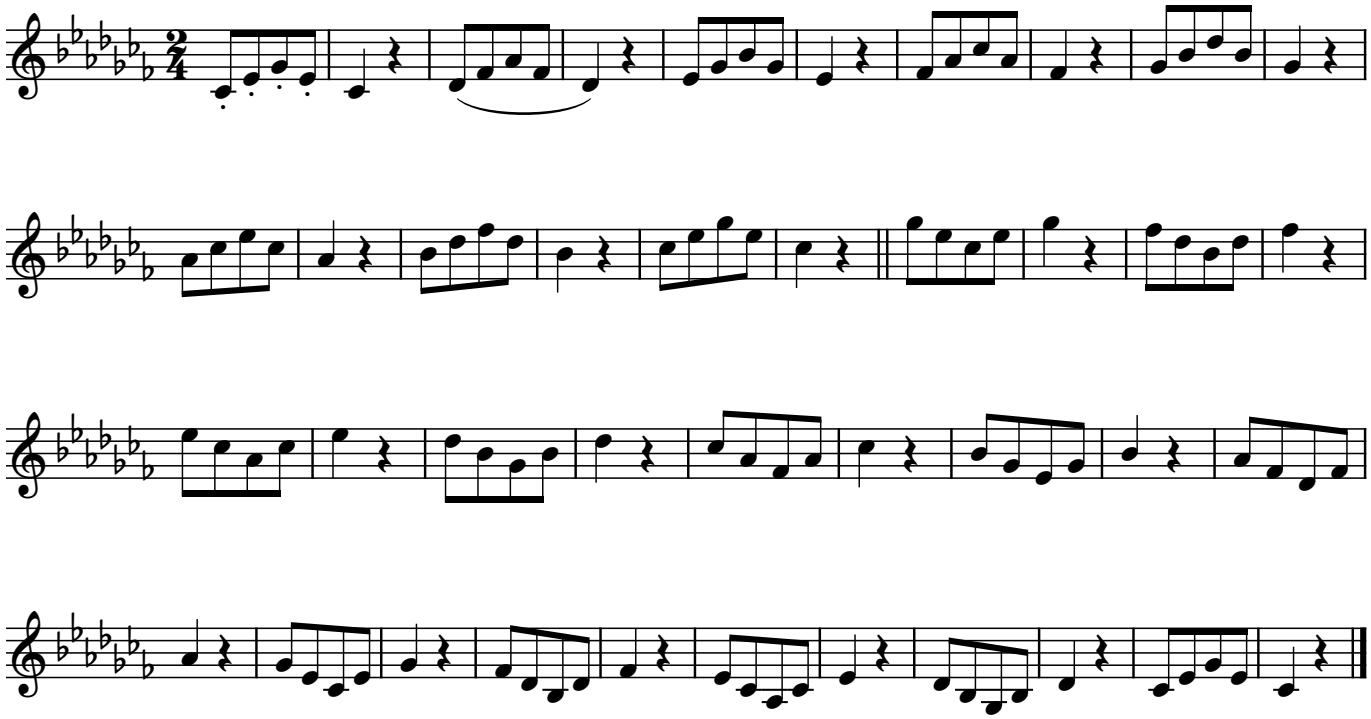

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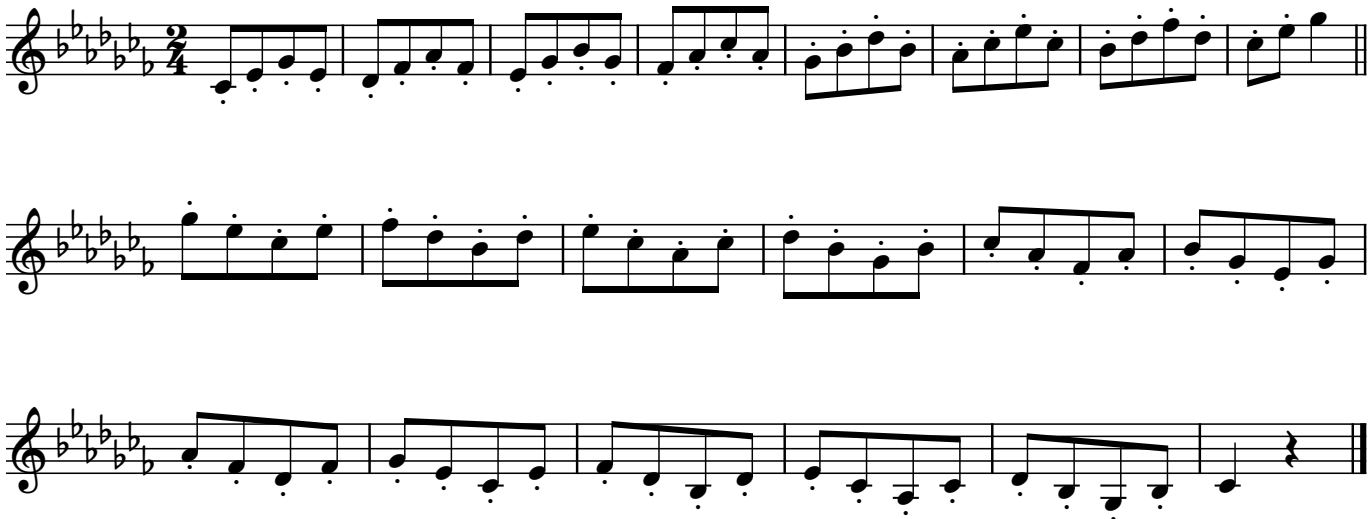

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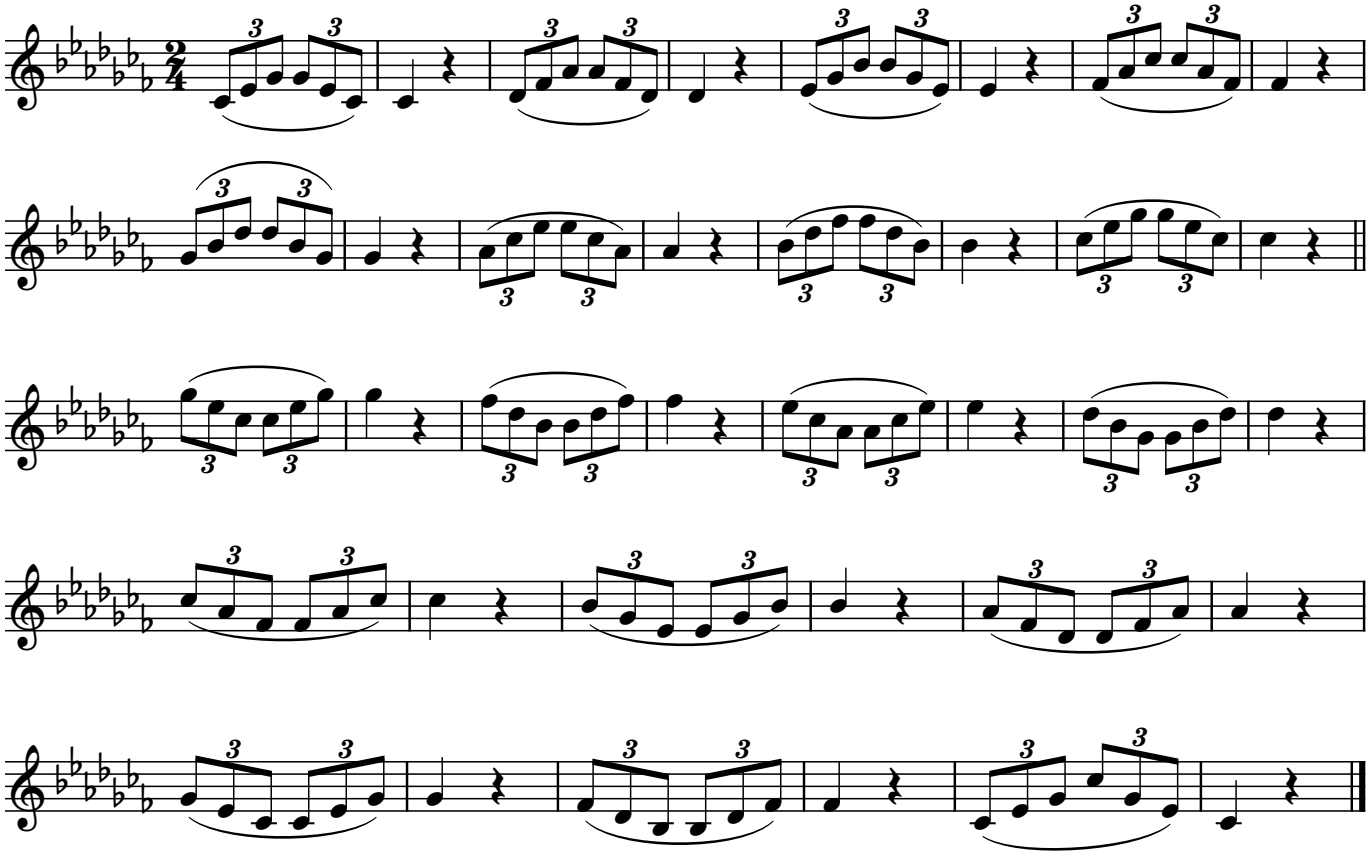

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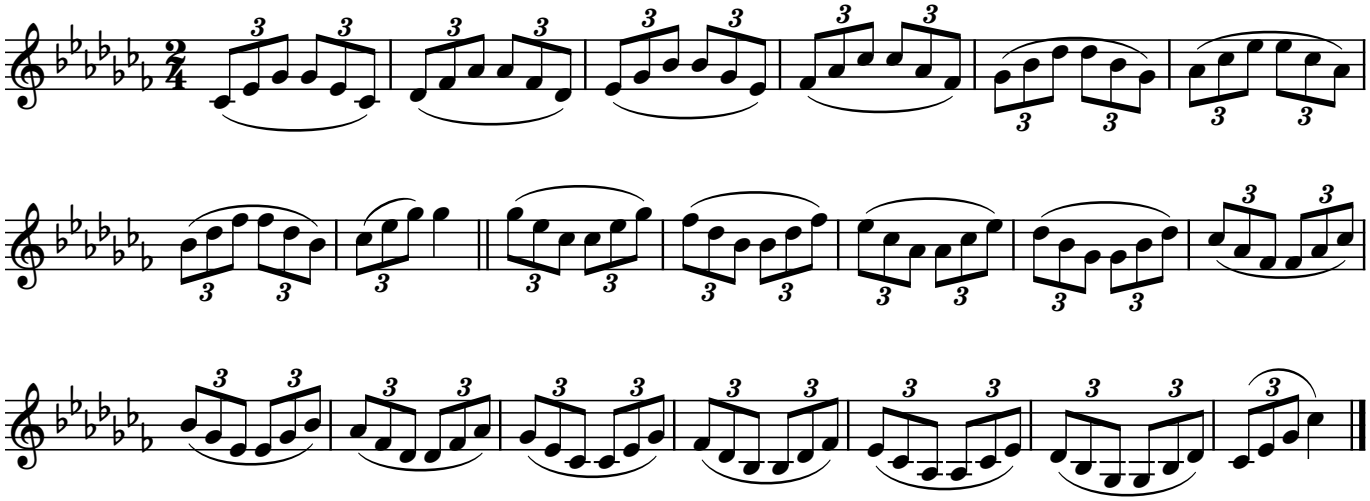

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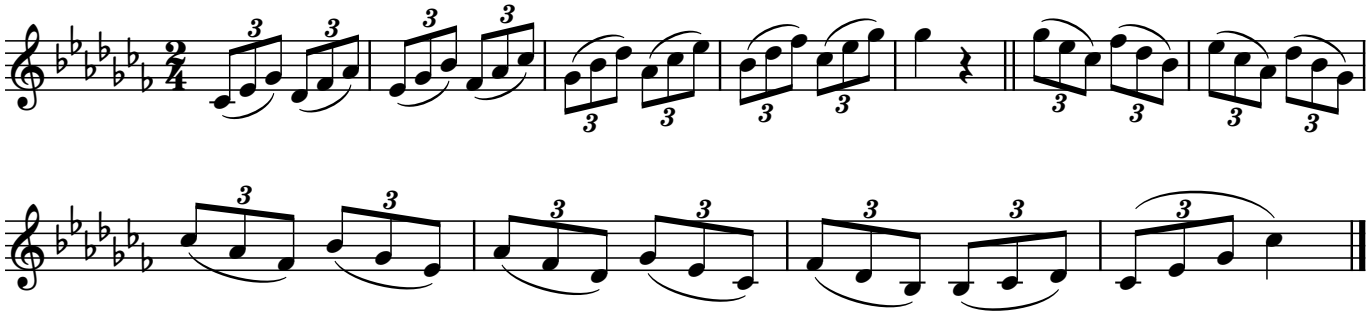

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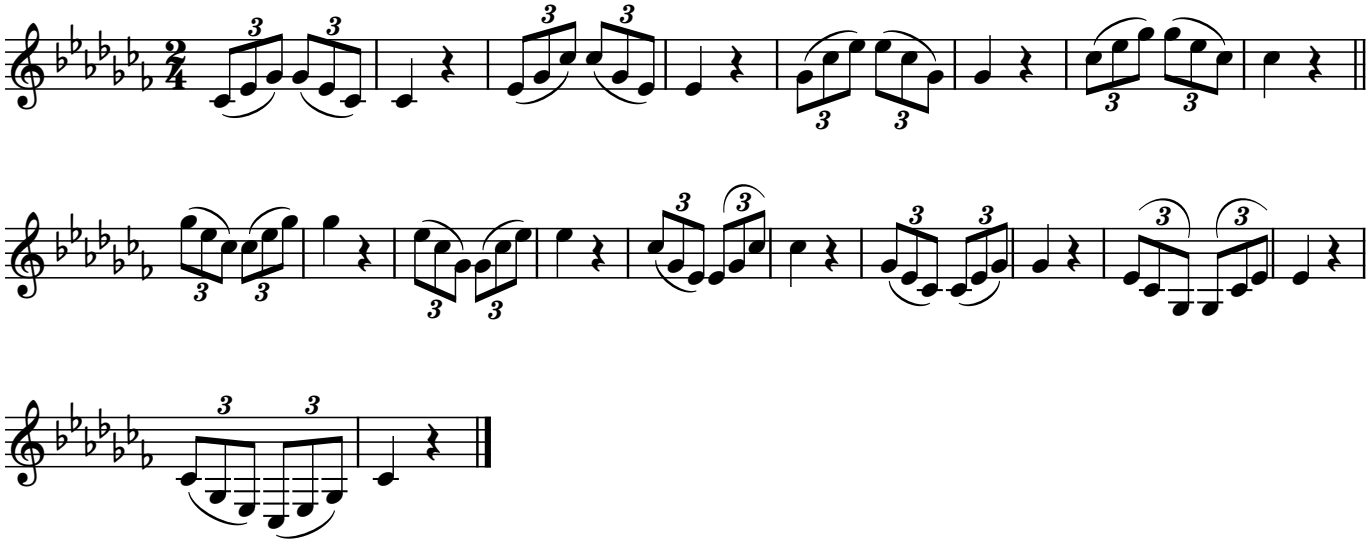

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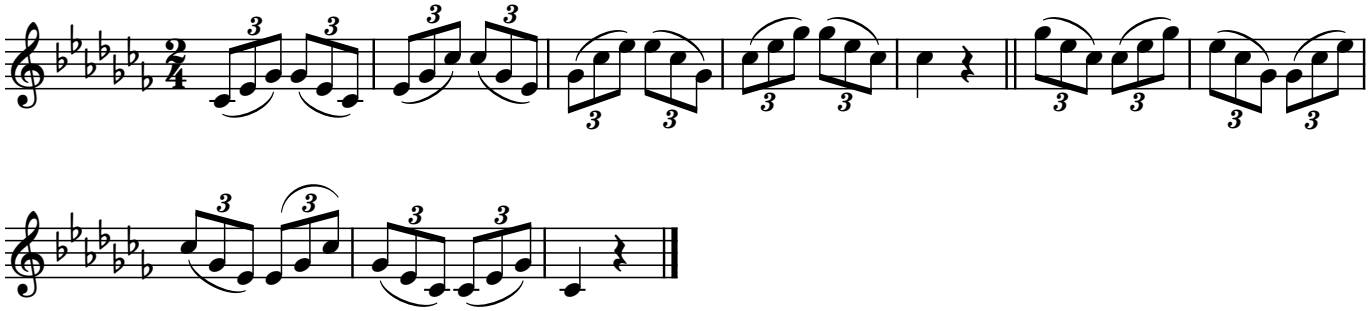

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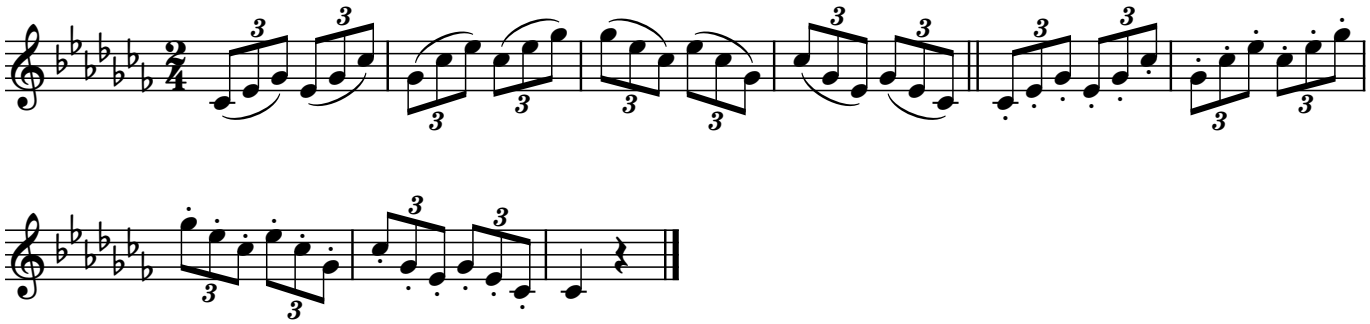

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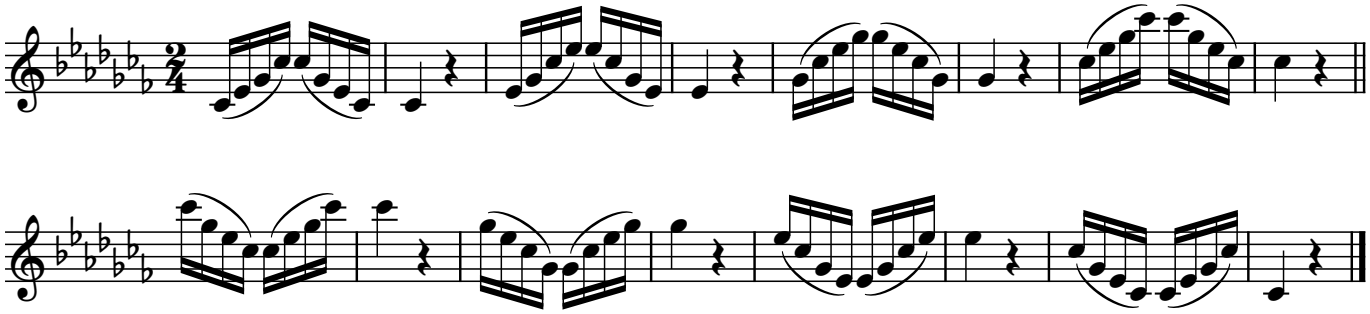

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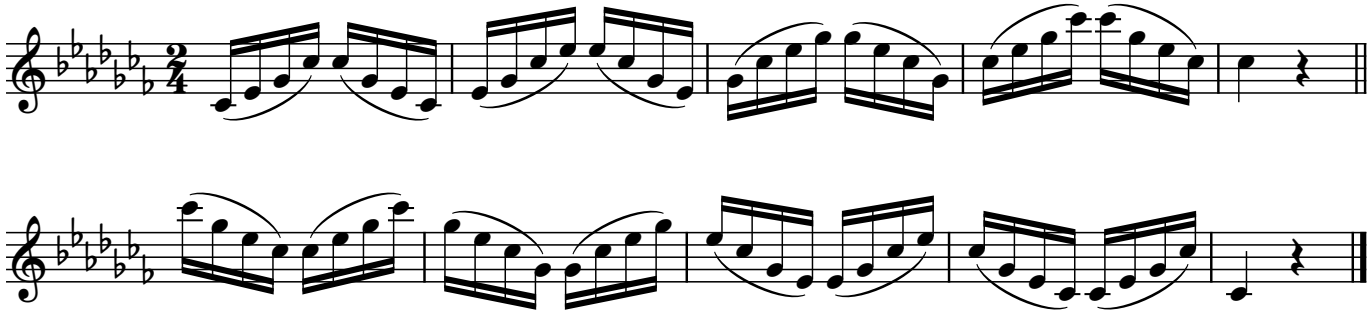

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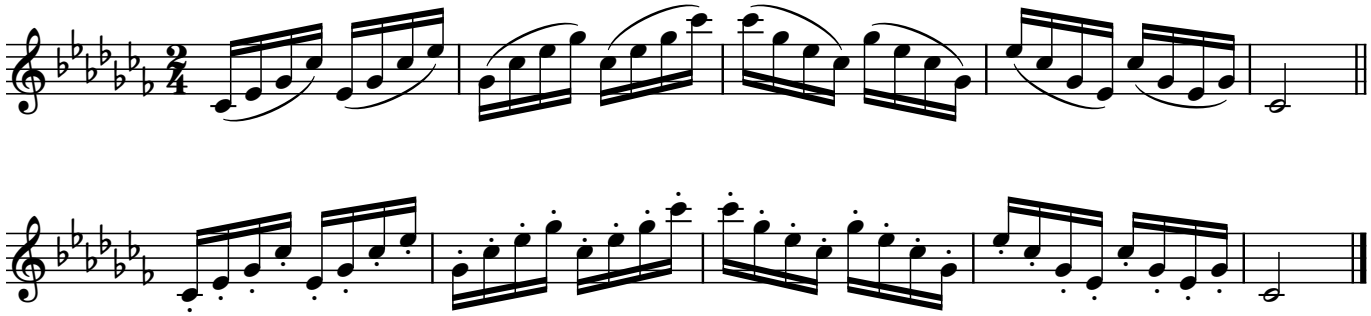

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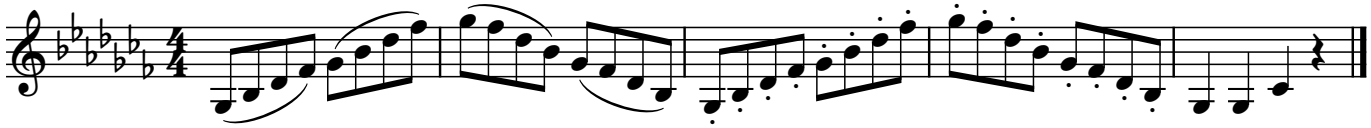

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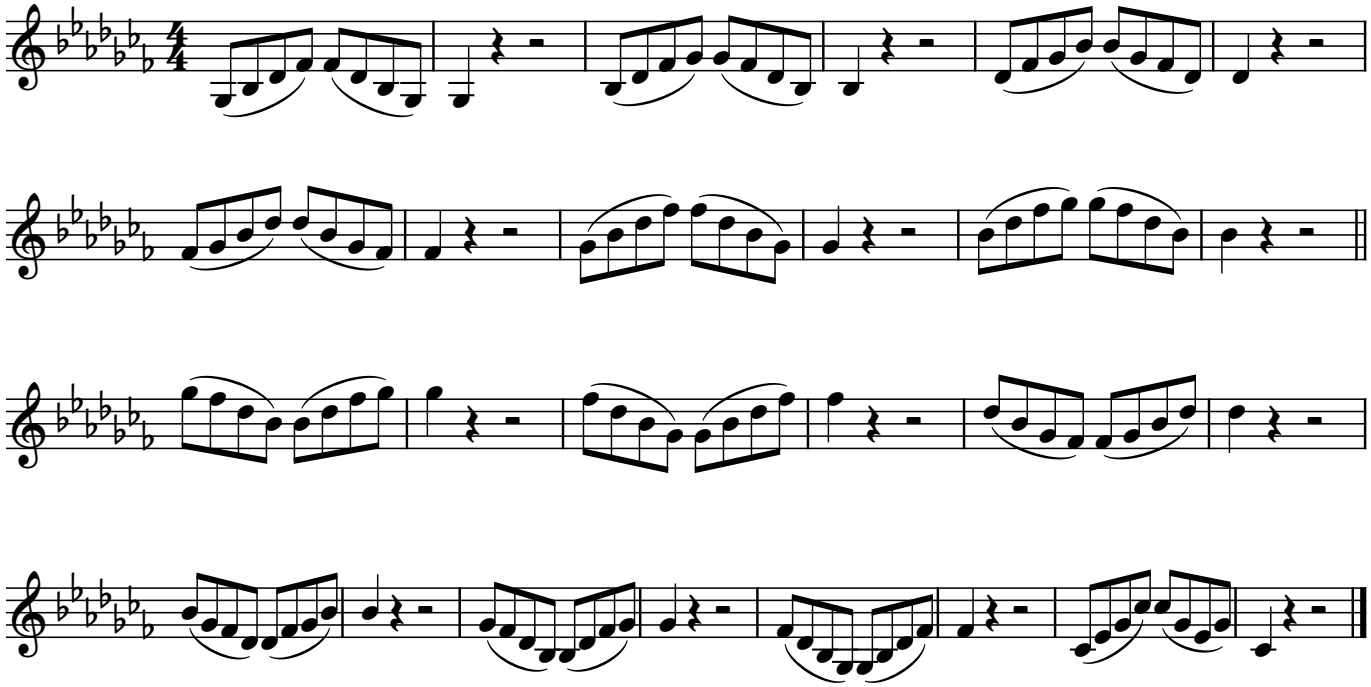

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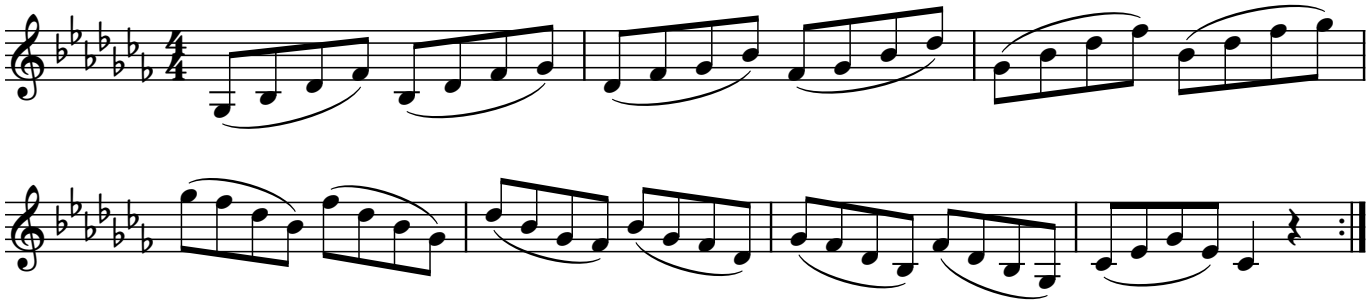

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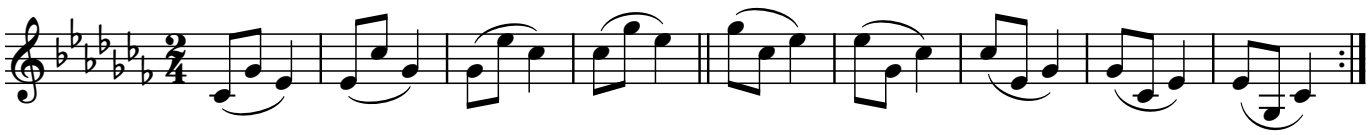

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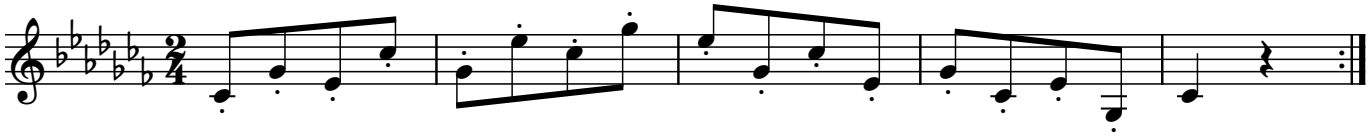

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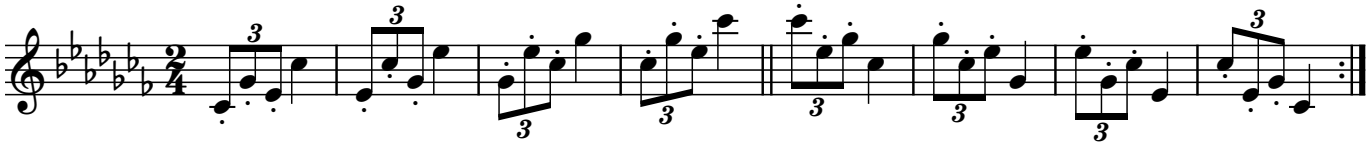

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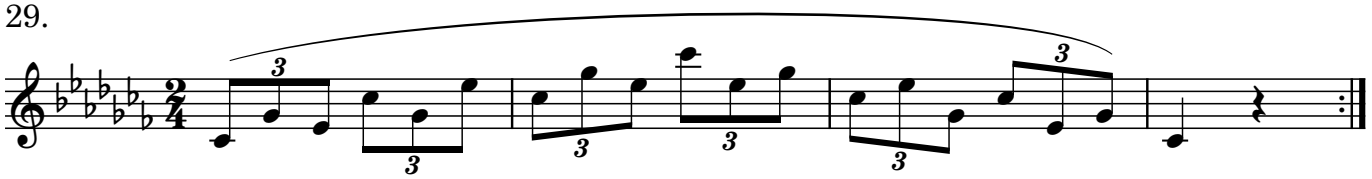
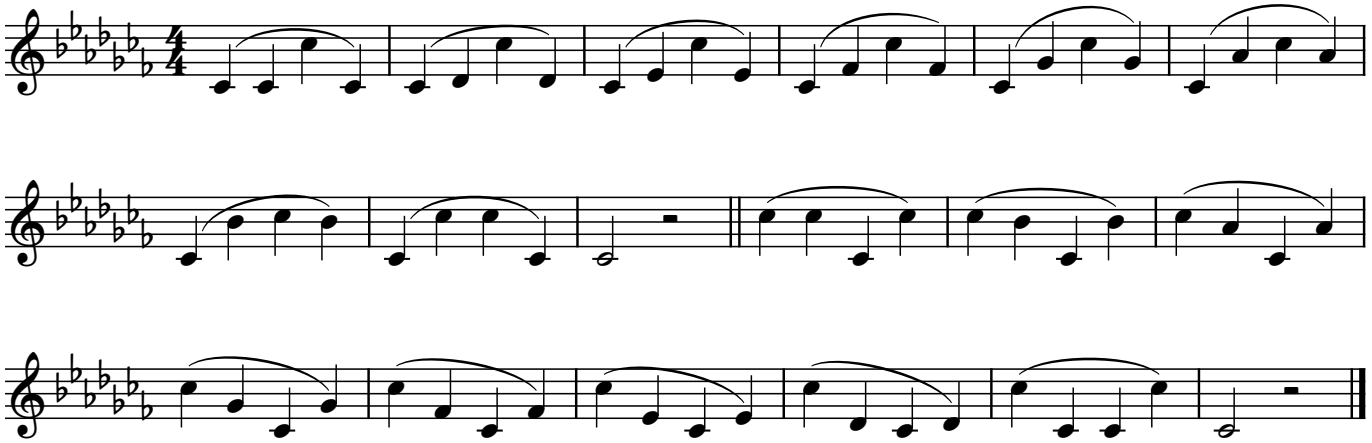
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