

BEAD Guides Chord Flow

by Timmy Riordan, TimmyRMusic@gmail.com

Sabotage by the Beastie Boys kinda gets down to the pith of what a song can be. It's also pretty much all beat and rhythm, bass and drums. The bass line drives the song, and for most of the song it's simply two notes. What are those notes? How are they creating tension?

The first note is a Ab at the 11th fret

The second note is an Gb also at the 11th fret

These two notes outline the two most important notes in a (dominant) 7 chord. What makes them important? They are the root, (the note the chord is named after), and the 7 of the chord. Here's a scale ruler using C7 (a more familiar chord) as an example, By counting notes along the ruler you get the scale degrees. In a C7 chord, C is 1 and Bb is the 7:

C is the root, Bb is the 7. Playing only those two notes creates the outline of a dominant 7 chord

C7

Here's a C7 chord with the C and Bb the notes labeled.

Because the shape of the notes are the same, they're the same interval. But here's a scale ruler for the two notes in Sabotage so you can see it:

Sabotage is basically a master class in the tension created between the root and the 7 of a dominant 7 chord.