

**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
WRITING BETTER AND MORE
MEMORABLE MELODIES**

OVERVIEW

- The Essential Relationship Between Melodies and Chords
 - Chord tones vs. non-chord Tones
- Melody vs. Motif
- The Core Elements of a Great Melody
 - Motion
 - Space
 - Rhythm
 - Repetition
- Learning From the Pros.

THE (ESSENTIAL) RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MELODY AND CHORDS

A melody must relate to the chords in a harmonious and purposeful way

- How can we related chords and melodies?

Chord tones vs. Non-chord tones

- A chord tone is a note that is in the chord, and a non-chord tone is a note that is not in the chord (but still in the scale).
- Chord tones are *stable* and *comfortable*
- Non-chord tones are *unstable* and *tense*
- A great melody has a balance of both chord tones and non-chord tones

THE (ESSENTIAL) RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MELODY AND CHORDS

Chord Tone Example:

C Major Scale - C, D, E, F, G, A, B

C Major Chord - C, E, G

- Chord tones - C, E, G
- Non-chord tones - D, F, G, A, B

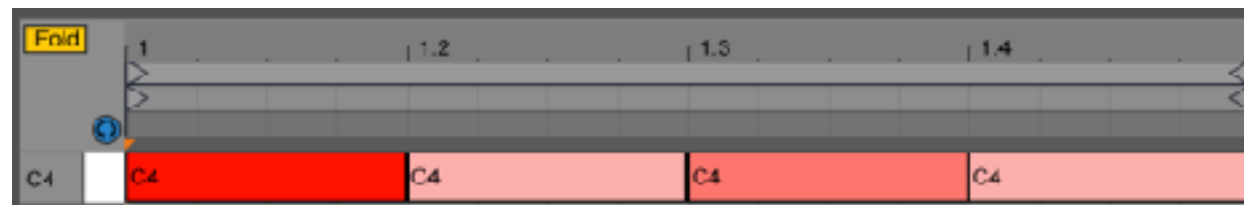


THE (ESSENTIAL) RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MELODY AND CHORDS

How To Use Chord Tones:

Chord tones are stable, and non-chord tones are unstable: A great melody has a good balance of both.

- Notes that play on strong beats will have more emphasis, and notes that play on weak beats will have less emphasis.

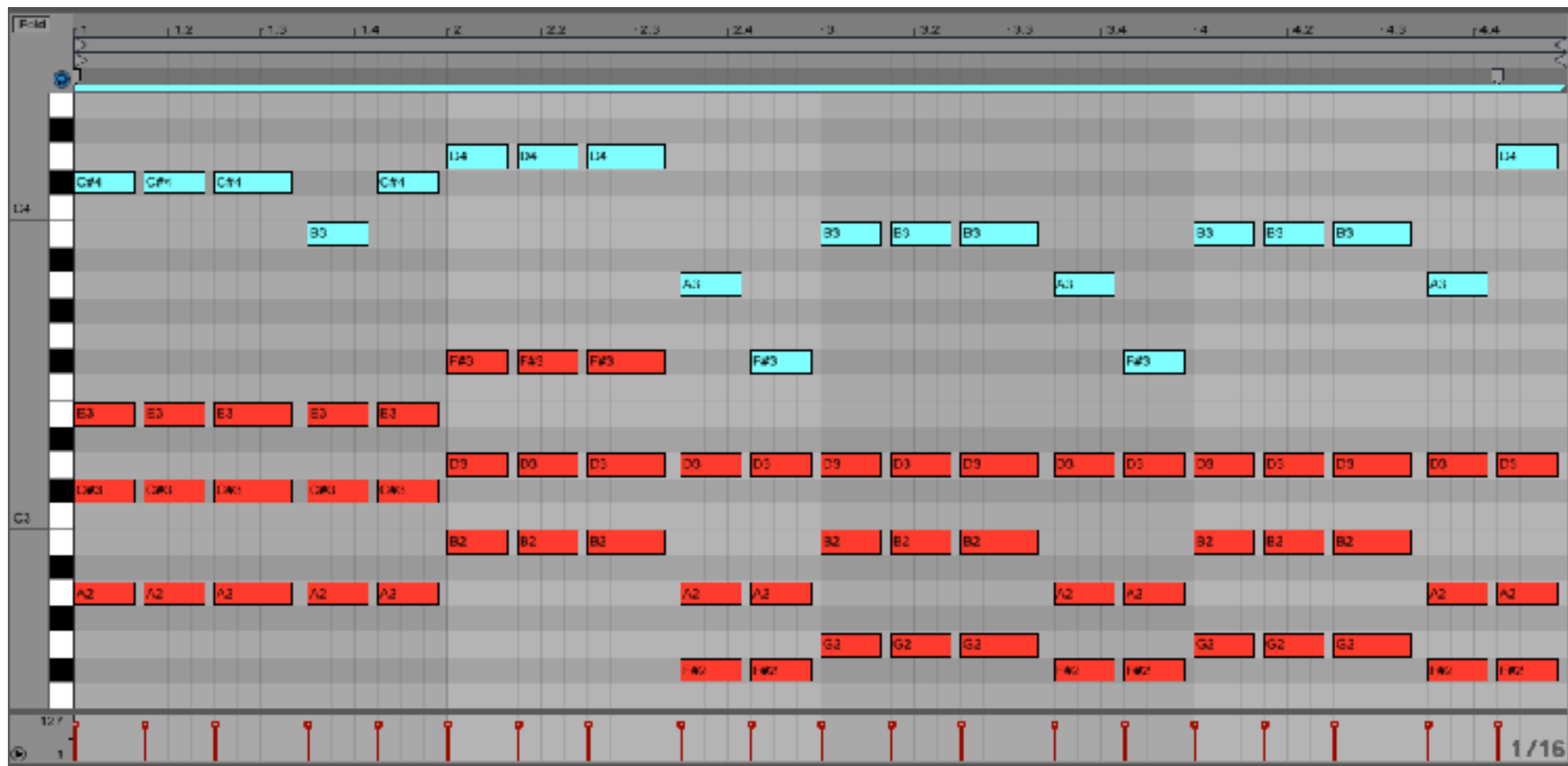


- Notes that play with the chords will have more emphasis, and notes that play in between chords will have less emphasis.
- Non-chord tones want to be quickly resolved, especially if they're played on a strong beat.

THE (ESSENTIAL) RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MELODY AND CHORDS

Chord Tone Example:

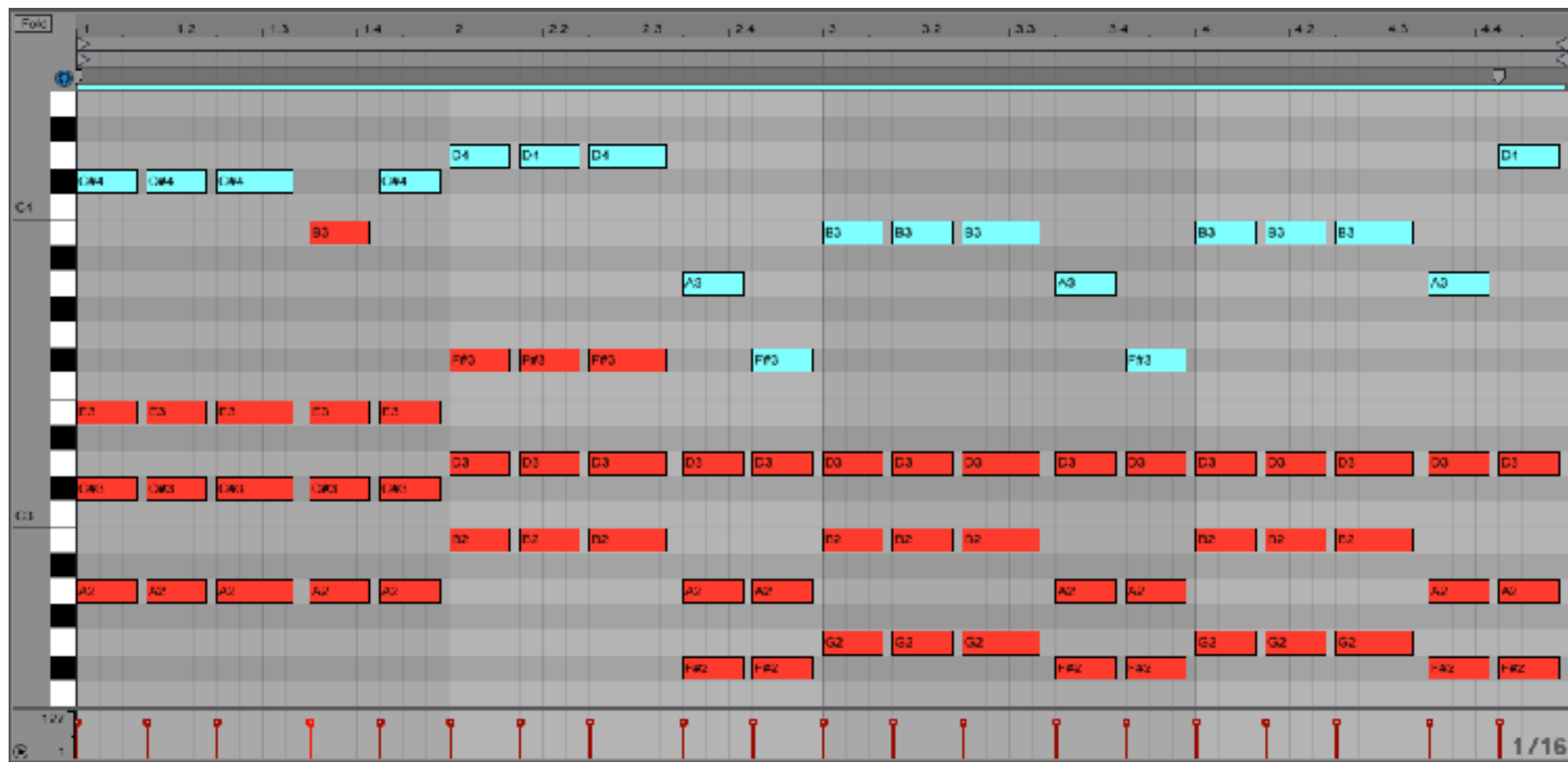
Swedish House Mafia's "Don't You Worry Child" - Melody Highlighted



THE (ESSENTIAL) RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MELODY AND CHORDS

Chord Tone Example:

Swedish House Mafia's "Don't You Worry Child" - Chord Tones Highlighted



MOTIF VS. MELODY

Motif vs. Melody:

A motif is a short musical idea.

- It's composed of a few or several notes that relate to each other in a meaningful and purposeful way.

A melody is a collection of motifs:

- A collection of motifs played together creates a full music idea, or in other words, a full melodic phrase.



THE CORE ELEMENTS OF A GREAT MELODY

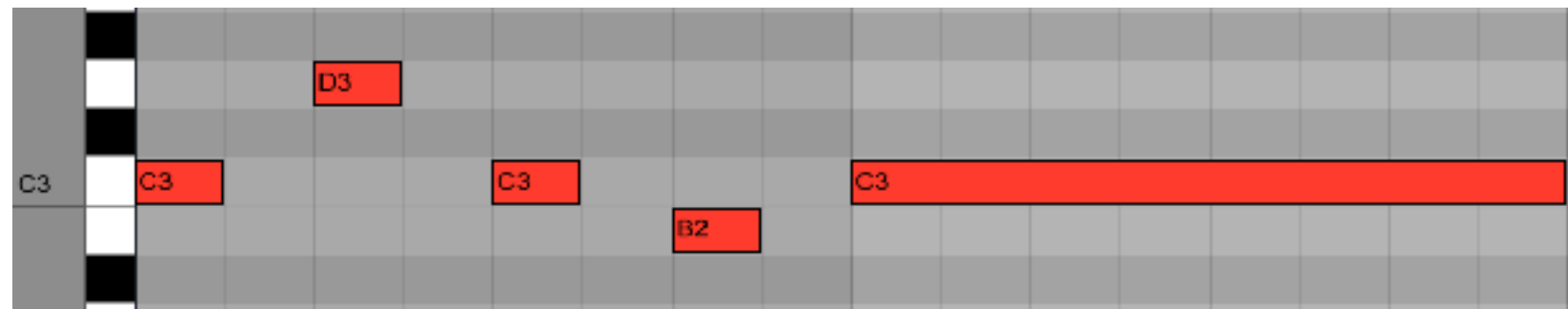
The four core elements of a great melody:

- Motion
- Space
- Rhythm
- Repetition

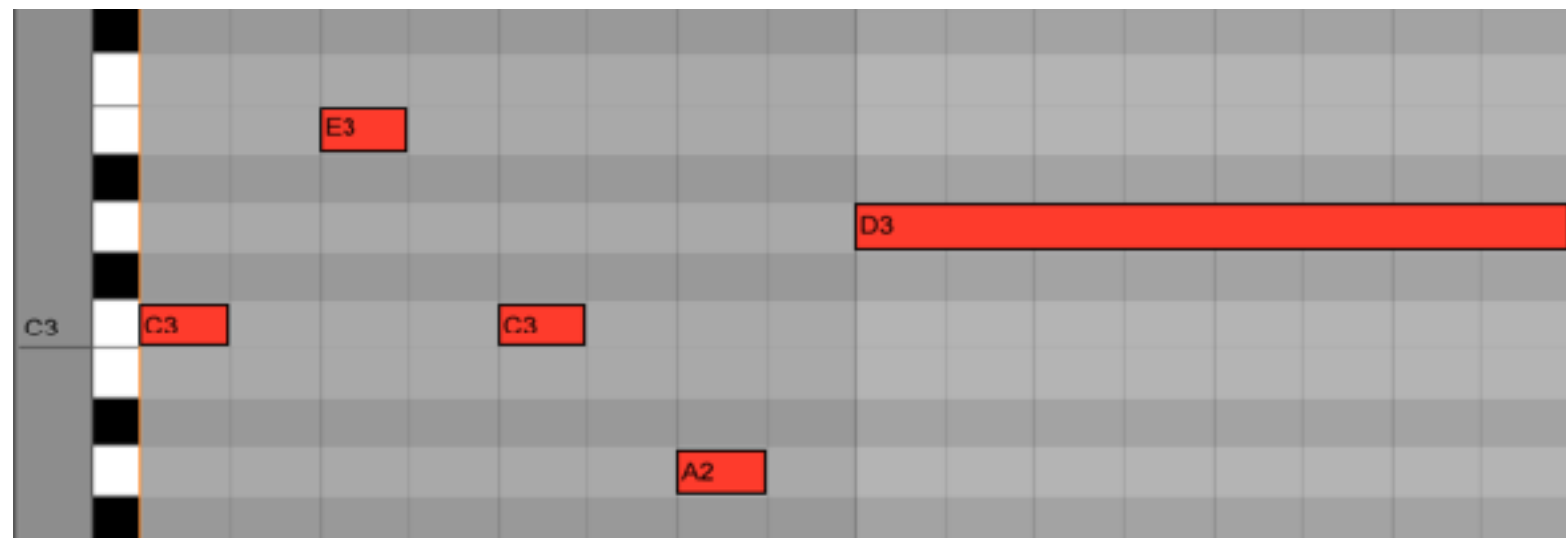
MOTION

Stepwise Motion vs Leapwise:

Stepwise -



Leapwise -



MOTION

Stepwise Motion vs Leapwise:

Stepwise motion- Easy to follow, easy to remember

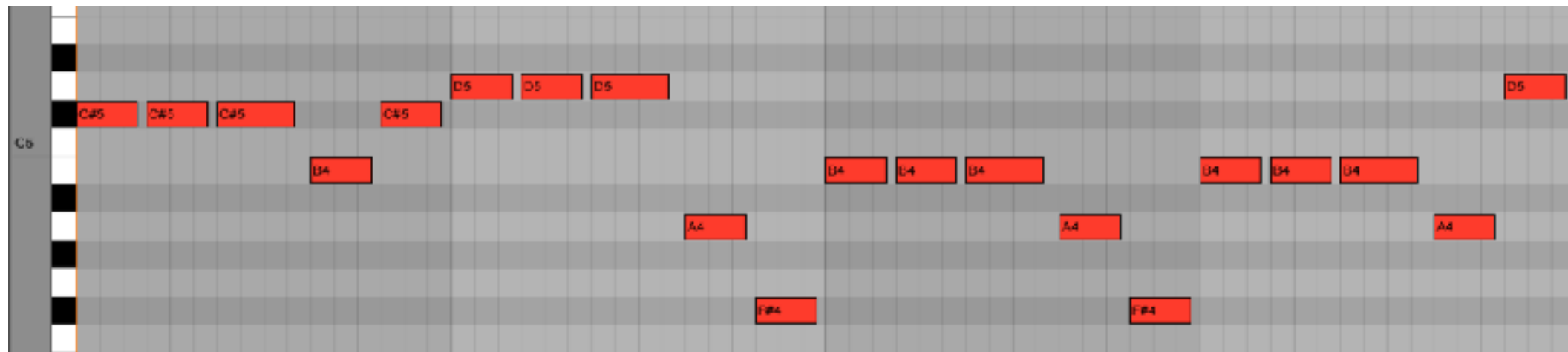
Leapwise motion - Adds tension and development

- A great melody has a balance of both stepwise and leapwise

MOTION

Stepwise Motion vs Leapwise Example:

Swedish House Mafia's "Don't You Worry Child"

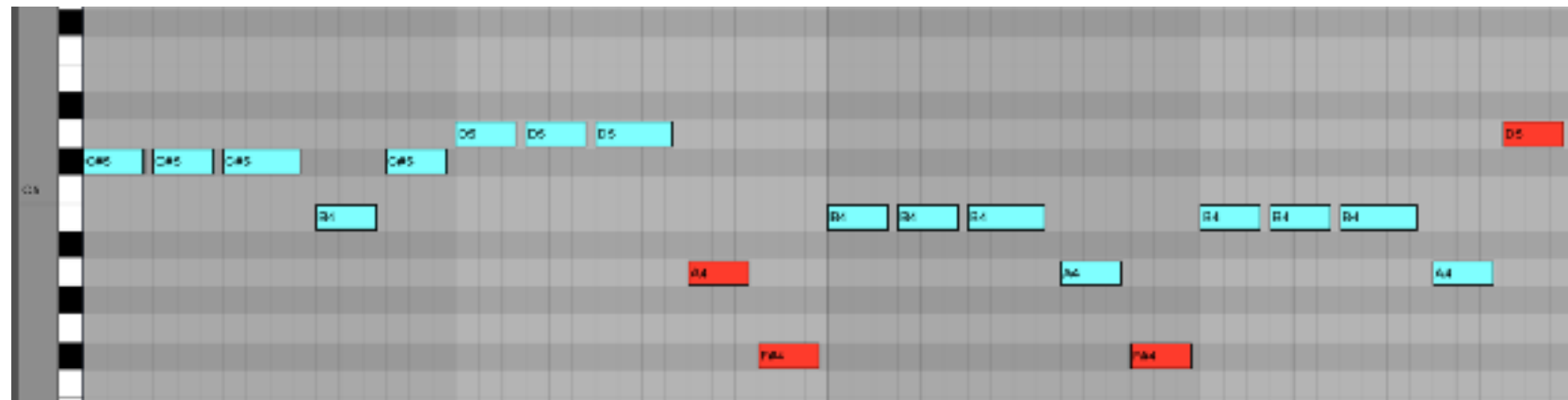


MOTION

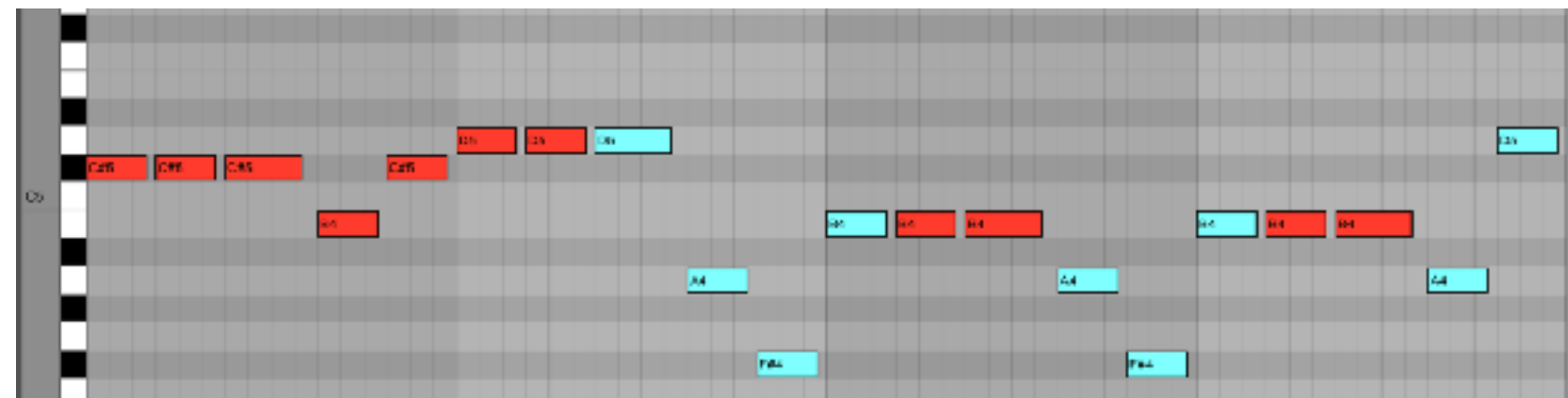
Stepwise Motion vs Leapwise Example:

Swedish House Mafia's "Don't You Worry Child"

Stepwise -



Leapwise -



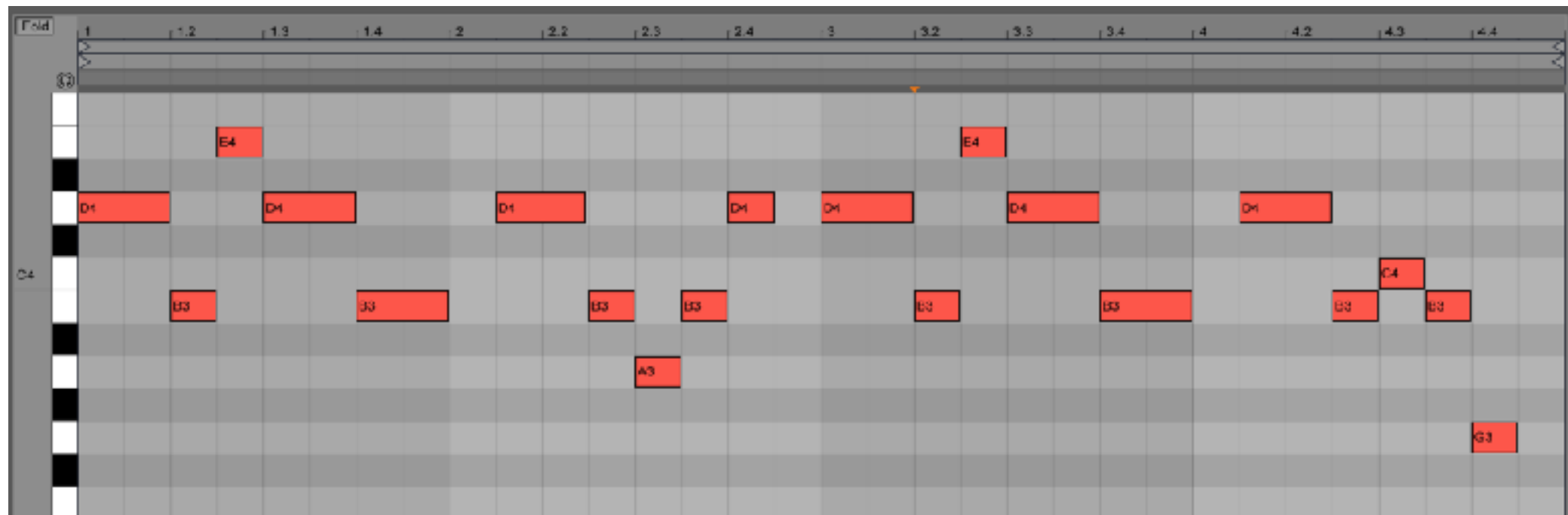
SPACE

Space:

- Finding the right spacing for a melody is all about balance.
- You want a clear line for the listener to focus on, and you want that line to be easily understood.

SPACE

Example - Martin Garrix's "In The Name Of"



RHYTHM

- The rhythm of your melody should be “simple” and easy to remember.
- 2-3 different rhythmic patterns in a melody is a good balance, helping make it easy to remember.
- The rhythm of your melody needs to purposefully interact with the chords.

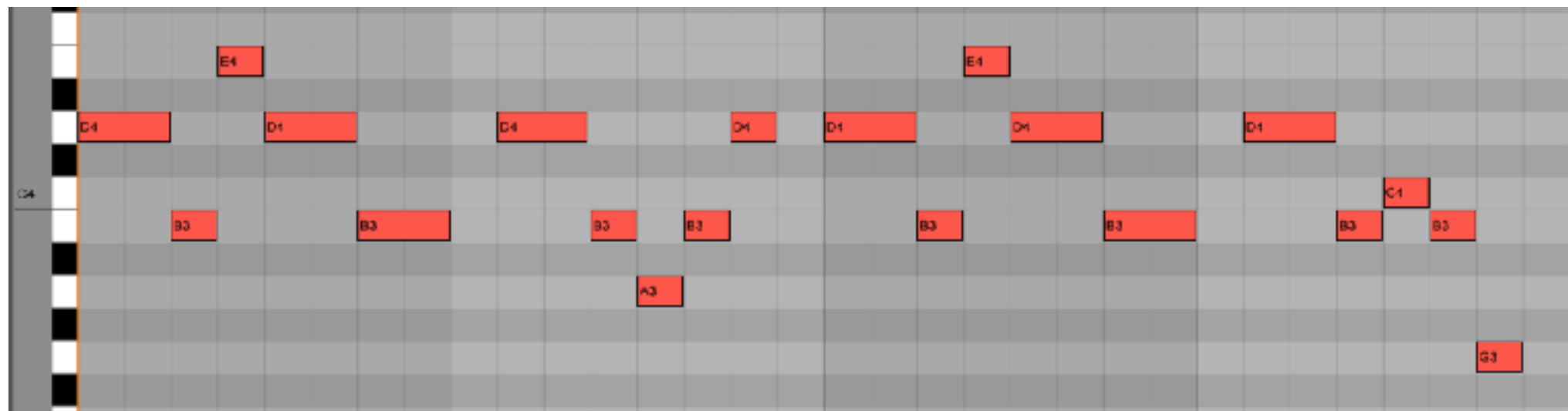
RHYTHM

Example - SHM's "Don't You Worry Child"



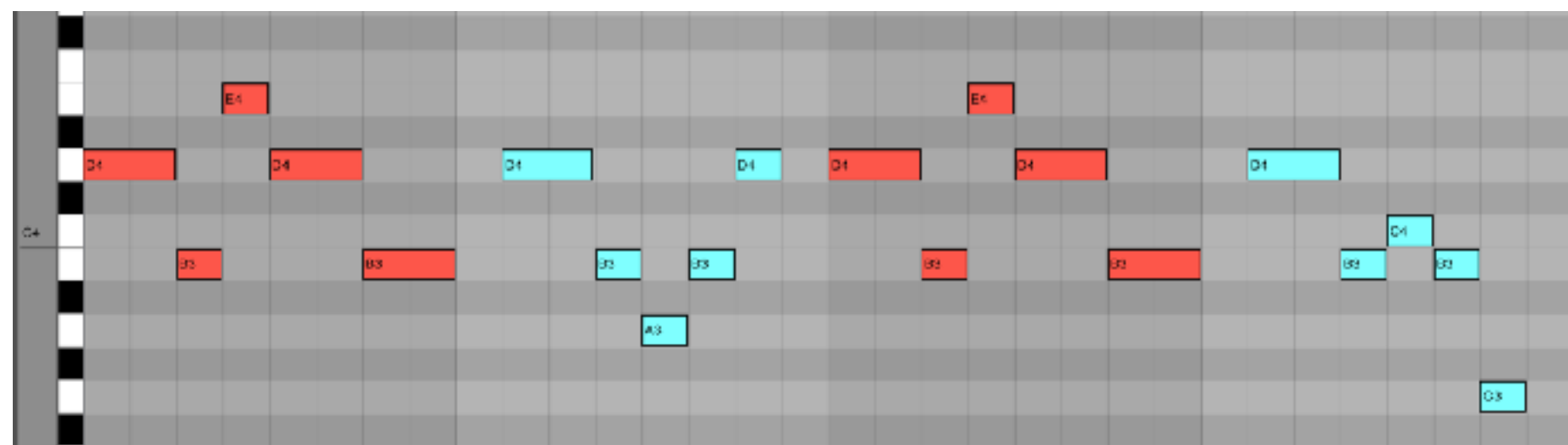
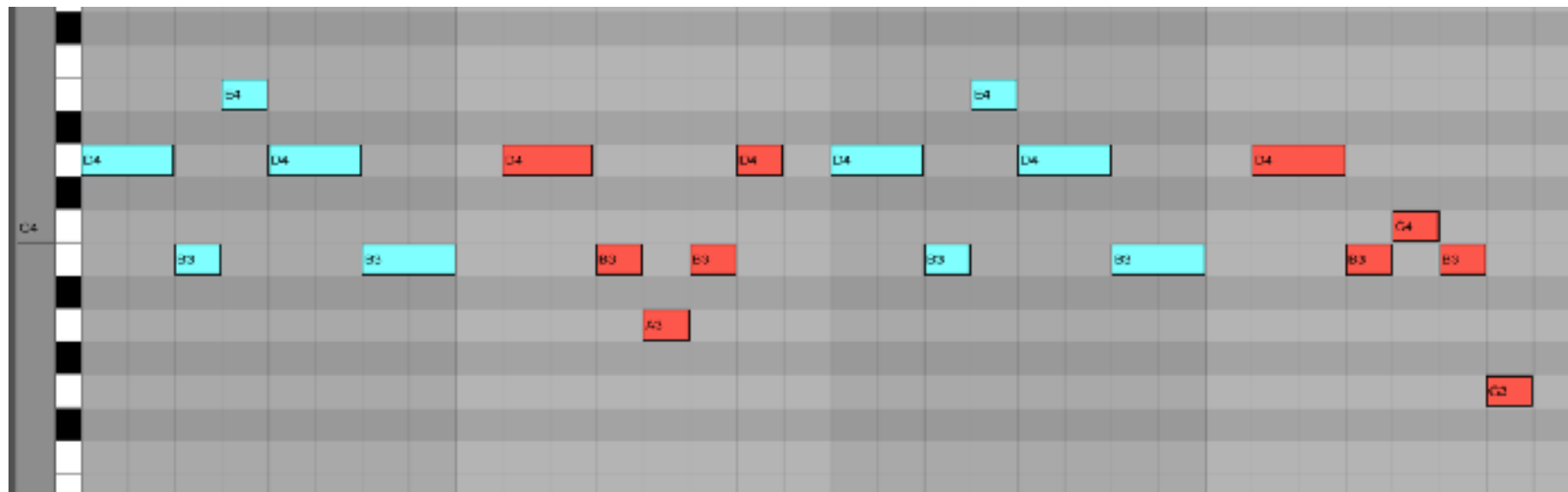
RHYTHM

Example - Martin Garrix's "In The Name Of"



RHYTHM

Example - Martin Garrix's "In The Name Of"



REPETITION

Main types of melodic repetition

- Melodic repetition
- Rhythm repetition
- Shape/Contour repetition.

REPETITION

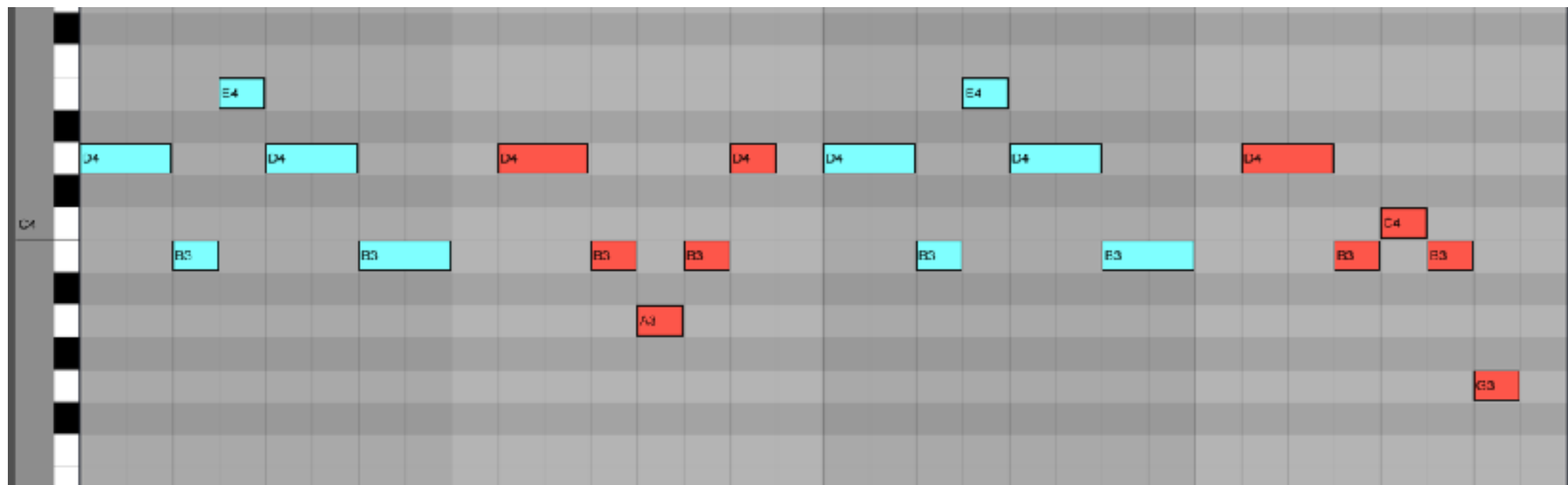
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The memorability of your melody relies on repetition

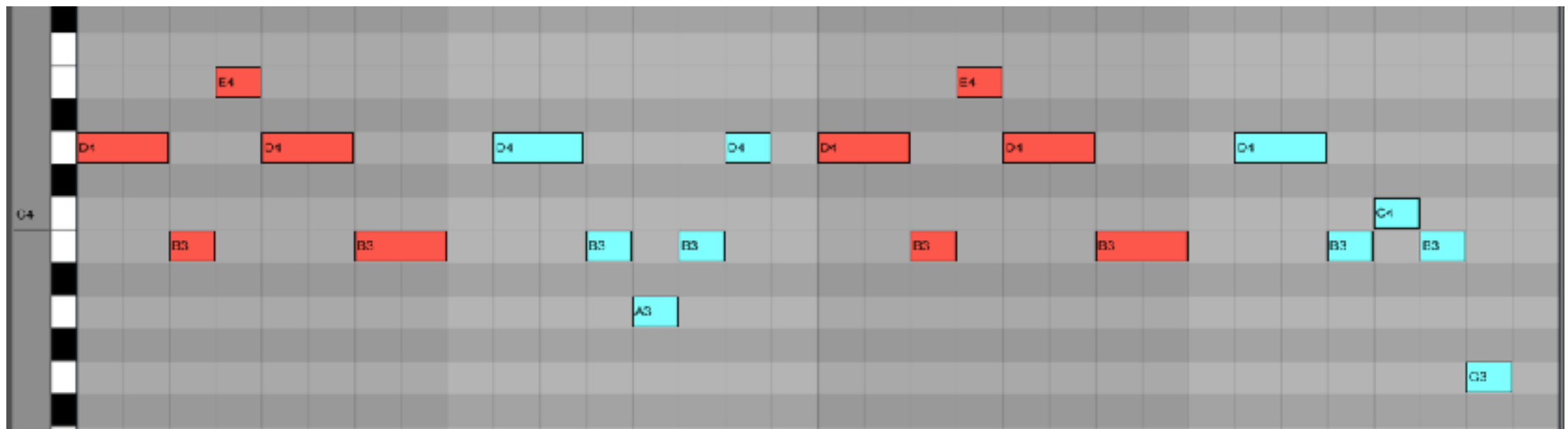
MELODIC REPETITION

Melodic repetition: when a melody repeats



RHYTHMIC REPETITION

Rhythmic repetition: when a melody plays different notes with the same rhythmic pattern



CONTOUR REPETITION

Contour repetition: when a melodic “shape” repeats



LEARNING FROM THE PROS

Deconstructing the melodies of memorable tracks is a great way to learn how to write memorable tracks yourself.

What to look for:

Motion

- Does the melody move around a lot?
- How big of an interval range does the melody cover?
- Does the melody use primarily stepwise motion, or both stepwise and leapwise motion?

Space

- Does the melody use a lot of space?
- Where does the space fall? On strong or weak beats?
- How does the space of the melody relate to the rest of the song?

LEARNING FROM THE PROS

Deconstructing the melodies of memorable tracks is a great way to learn how to write memorable tracks yourself.

What to look for:

Rhythm

- What is the rhythm of the melody? Are there multiple rhythms?
- How does the rhythm of the melody relate to the rhythm of the rest of the song?

Repetition

- Is the melody continually repeated?
- Are rhythmic patterns repeated?
- Are melodic shapes repeated?