TRANSCRIPTION OF WILLIE WEEK’S BASSLINE TO
“WHAT’S GOING ON”
by DONNIE HATHAWAY

by PAUL WOLFE
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TRANSCRIPTION OF “WHAT'S GOING ON” by DONNIE HATHAWAY/BASS LINE BY WILLIE WEEKS

Donnie Hathaway’s version of What’s Going On - from the live album of 1974 - is a very cool remake of an already very cool original! The bass line has a very subtle swing 16th note feel which i’ve not noted on the score. So when you interpret it please bear that in mind. And it’s a serious groove masterclass.

A lot of contemporary hip hop/r&b type bass lines have a swing 16th note feel. And you can find this feel in “smooth jazz” too. The bass line that Willie Weeks plays is very, very cool. There is a ton of stuff you could take from this to work on in your own playing.

I’ve been working on the transcription on and off for four months or so. Please note that I consider this a first draft - at some stage I’ll take another detailed pass, there are a few bars where I want to relook at the rhythmic notation.

The transcription is presented in notation, and then notation with tab. The tabbed positions reflect my current pre-occupation with playing in first position - feel free to change it around to suit your own fingering system and fretboard scale.
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Wolfe has been playing since he was 15...which is wayyyyyy too long.

He is based in London in the UK where he runs one of the most sought after cover bands for weddings, corporate parties, charity balls and events.

Paul also runs a [how to play bass](www.how-to-play-bass.com) website focusing on beginners. Paul’s teaching philosophy is song based rather than scale based - as most private teachers seem to be. Paul is the author of [Bass Hanon Volume 1](www.how-to-play-bass.com) and [Deliberate Practice: How To Make Constant And Consistent Progress In Your Bass Playing](www.how-to-play-bass.com).

This is his second contribution to the [www.bassbooks.com](www.bassbooks.com) website. There will be more to come.

This transcription originally appeared in one of his free Ezines. These ezines are now monthly - all you have to do is head over to his website and subscribe to join the mailing list.

As of this writing -April 2010 - the current issue features the transcription to the very cool “Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick” by Norman Watt Roy as played with Ian Dury and The Blockheads.