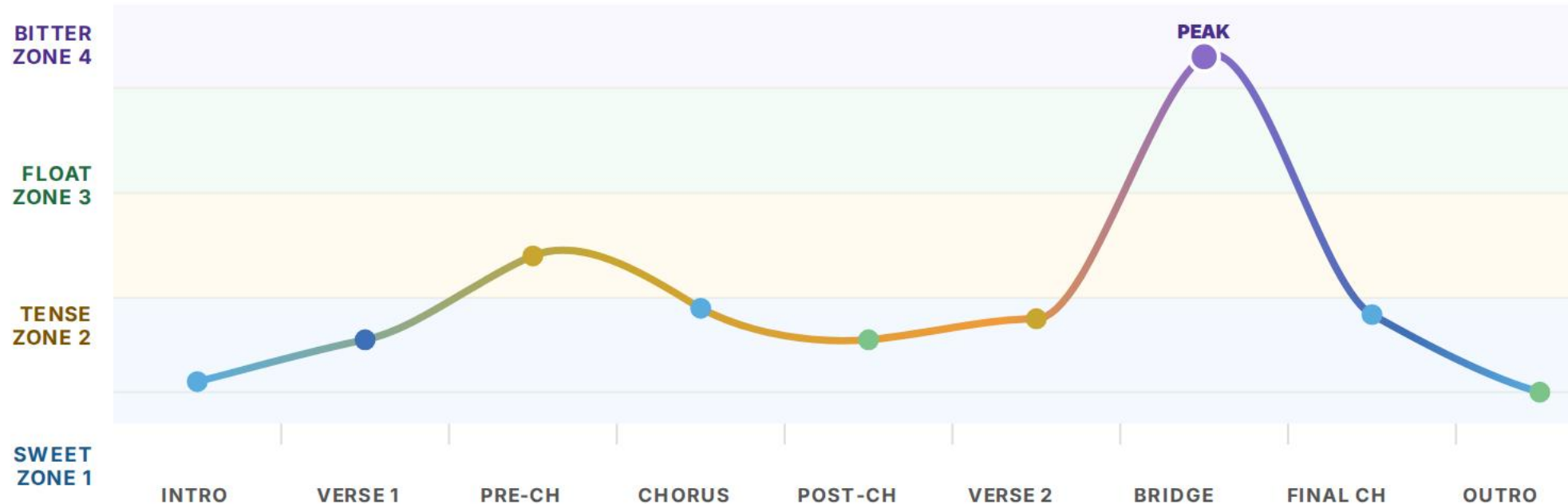


THE TENSION CURVE

Classic emotional tension arc across a full song structure. X-axis = song sections. Y-axis = tension level from Sweet (low) to Bitter (high).



INTRO → VERSE 1

Start mid-Sweet — Zone 1 chord tones establish the key. Leave some openness so verse can have somewhere to go.

PRE-CHORUS

Shift toward Zone 2–3. Unstable notes and non-chord tones create urgency. The ear should be leaning forward.

CHORUS

Land back in Zone 1 for the hook. The contrast with pre-chorus creates the "payoff" feeling. Chorus peak note = Zone 1 chord tone.

VERSE 2

Similar to Verse 1 but can push slightly higher tension — the listener now knows more of the story, can handle more complexity.

BRIDGE

Zone 3–4 territory. Maximum contrast — venture into floating, bitter, edgy zones. This is the emotional peak. FA and TI as non-chord tones work well here.

FINAL CHORUS → OUTRO

Return to Zone 1. After bridge tension, the final chorus resolution feels cathartic. Outro gradually descends toward DO — leave the listener at peace.