

MODERN BAND METHOD

Bass



Book 1

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Introduction

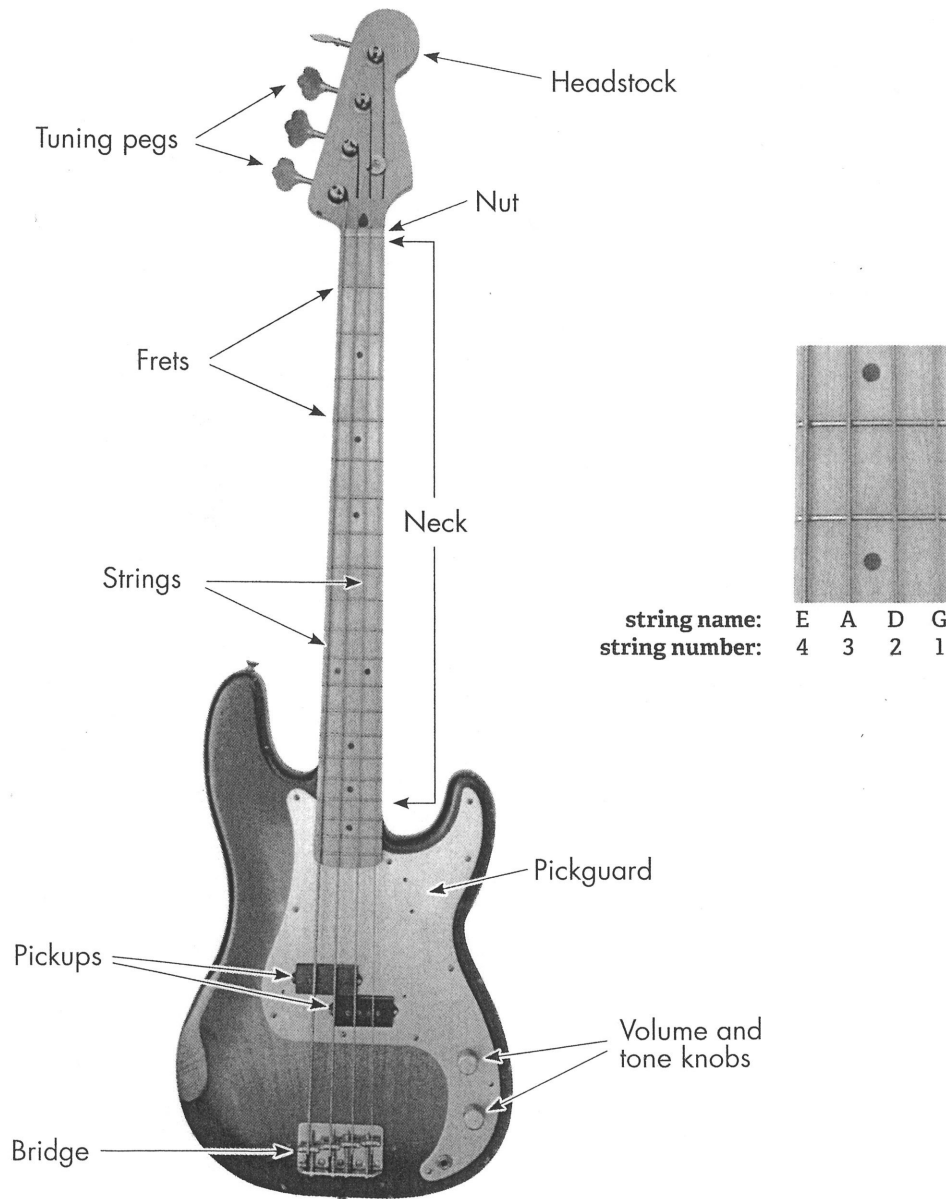
Welcome!

If you are reading this, you have already made the decision to learn to play bass so you can play some of your favorite songs. One of the best things about playing in a Modern Band is that you don't need much time to start jammin', but there are plenty of skills to learn and master over time too. Most popular musicians are able to perform in a wide variety of musical styles by playing grooves with different rhythms to accompany a vocalist. They often add memorable riffs, or short melodic phrases, that stay in your head all day. This method book is designed to teach you skills to play bass and create music in a variety of popular music styles—pop, rock, R&B, funk, hip-hop, and more. Let's get started!

Jam Tracks and Video Lessons

Use the audio Jam Tracks throughout this book to practice the songs and exercises. Also be sure to watch the included video lessons that demonstrate many of the techniques and concepts. To access all of the audio and video files for download or streaming, just visit www.halleonard.com/mylibrary and enter the code found on page 1 of this book.

Parts of the Bass Guitar



Tuning

Even if you're using perfect technique, your bass won't sound right if it's not in tune. Be sure to watch the video and tune your bass before you start playing.

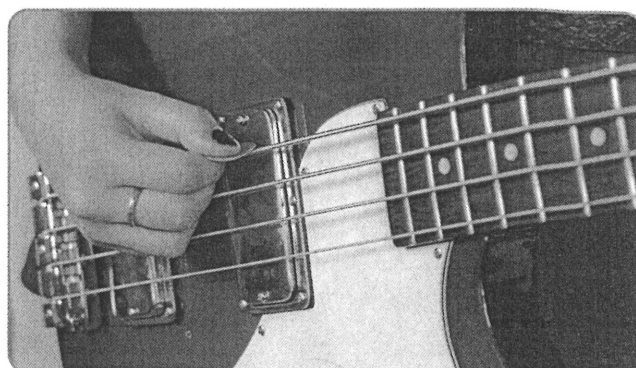
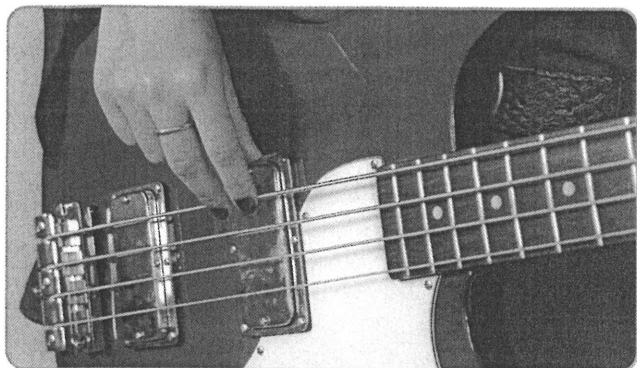
Basic Technique

If you're playing a right-handed bass, hold the neck of the bass in your left hand and rest the body of the bass on your lap. If you're standing, you should use a strap to hold the instrument and adjust it to a comfortable height. If you're using a left-handed instrument, use the opposite hands.



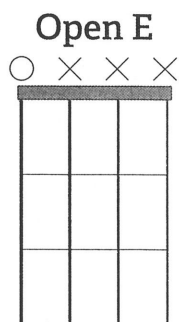
The two most common ways to play the bass are fingerstyle and picking. Which technique you use is entirely up to you. Some players use different techniques for different styles of music.

With fingerstyle, you do not use a pick. Instead, place your right-hand thumb on the bass' pickup and alternate using your index and middle finger to play the strings, like two legs walking. Your fingers should fall into the thumb (when playing the low E string) or the next lower string (when playing any other string). When using a pick, place the pick between your thumb and index finger and pluck the string with the pick. Throughout this book, the term "picking" will refer to either technique.

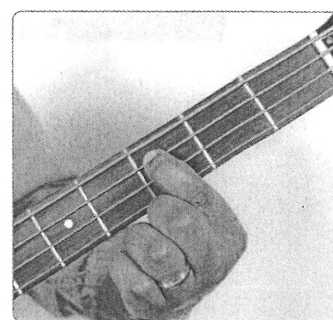
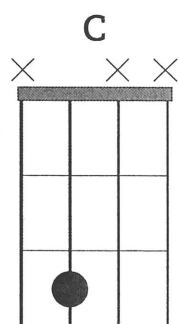


Notation

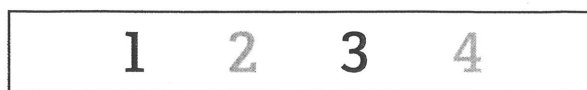
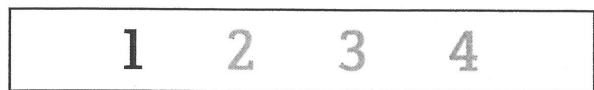
The following bass graphics will be used throughout the book. The first is the **note diagram**. An open circle above the diagram tells you to play a string **open**, or without holding down any frets. If you see an "X" over a string, it means to not play that string. In this example, the note diagram tells you to play the 4th string open.




Another version of this graphic includes dots on the neck of the instrument. This shows you where to press down your finger on the neck of the instrument. In this example, the note diagram tells you to play the 3rd string while pressing down at the 3rd fret.



Next, let's look at how we notate rhythms. This is read left to right. Count these numbers steadily, "1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4..." and play a note on the black numbers.



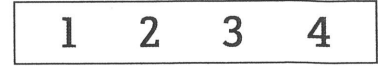
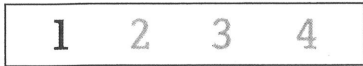
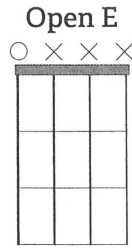
Learning rhythms and notes will improve your ability to "comp." **Comping** means using your musical knowledge to make up rhythms over a chord progression that fit a song's style.

This book is designed for you to learn alongside other Modern Band musicians so you can jam with your friends and classmates, but it can also be used as a stand-alone book to learn to play bass. Though some of the skills that you will be working on during each section will be different from those of the other instruments, all of the Full Band Songs  are designed to be played by a whole band together. Now, let's start playing some music!

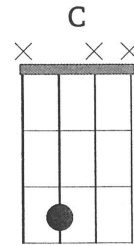
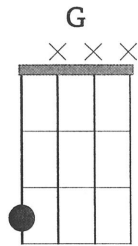
SECTION 1

Playing Bass Lines: One-Note Jam

Play the open E string using the rhythms below. Feel free to create your own rhythms based on how the music moves you.

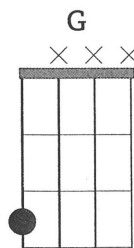
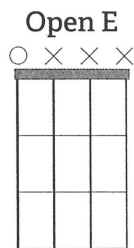


Now, try the activity with two more notes:



Improvisation: Two-Note Groove

The two notes shown here can be used to play a groove:



Practice playing these two notes in a variety of ways by mixing up the rhythm and order. Here are some ideas for improvisation:

- Start by playing the open note twice and switching to the G.
- Alternate between the two notes rapidly and then slowly. Then, try changing speeds.
- Focus on rhythm and lock in with the Jam Track.
- Play a rhythm on just the E, and then repeat that rhythm on the G.

Music Theory: The Song Chart

One way music is written is with a **lead sheet**. A lead sheet tells a musician what the chords of a song are. The lead sheet example below has four **measures** (or **bars**), which are divided by vertical lines (**bar lines**). Each measure is made up of four beats, shown by the diagonal lines, or **slashes** (/). You can play any four-beat picking patterns over those four beats. The measures are repeated over and over again, indicated by the **repeat bar** at the end.

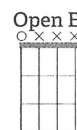
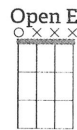
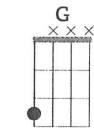


The next part of the lead sheet is the notes. The song below uses a G for four beats (one measure), then an E for four beats, a C for four beats, and finally another E for four beats. For now, try just playing one note at the beginning of each measure.



CAN'T STOP THE FEELING!

Justin Timberlake



Another way music is written is with the names of notes or chords over the song lyrics. This type of chart doesn't tell you how many beats to play each note, but it shows you which lyrics you sing when the notes change. Play G when you sing "feeling" and switch to E on the word "bones." (Almost all charts include the full names of the chords for guitarists, keyboardists, and other musicians. As a bassist, just focus on the first letter of the chord name. When you see "Emi," just play the note E.)

G **Emi**
I've got this feeling inside my bones.

C **Emi**
It goes electric, wavy when I turn it on.

G **Emi**
All through my city, all through my home,

C **Emi**
We're flying up, no ceiling, when we in our zone.

G **Emi**
I got that sunshine in my pocket, got that good soul in my feet.

C **Emi**
I feel that hot blood in my body when it drops, ooh.

G **Emi**
I can't take my eyes up off it, moving so phenomenally.

C **Emi**
Room on lock the way we rock it, so don't stop.

Here are some other songs that use the same three notes, E, G, and C. In the first two songs, each note is played for eight beats.



WITHOUT YOU



David Guetta ft. Usher

1 2 3 4

G **C** **Emi** **C**
I can't win, I can't reign. I will never win this game without you, without you.

G **C** **Emi** **C**
I am lost, I am vain. I will never be the same without you, without you.

G **C** **Emi** **C**
I won't run, I won't fly. I will never make it by without you, without you.

G **C** **Emi** **C**
I can't rest, I can't fight. All I need is you and I, without you, without you.

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To count the rhythm in this next song, say "1, 2 and, 3, 4 and." Pick on the numbers and on the "ands," shown by "+" symbols in the notation.



SEND MY LOVE (TO YOUR NEW LOVER)



Adele

1 2 + 3 4 +

G **Emi**
This was all you, none of it me. You put your hands on, on my body and told me,
you told me you were ready

G **Emi**
For the big one, for the big jump. I'd be your last love, everlasting, you and me.
That was what you told me.

G **Emi**
I'm giving you up, I've forgiven it all. You set me free.

G
Send my love to your new lover, treat her better.

Emi
We've gotta let go of all of our ghosts. We both know we ain't kids no more.

G
Send my love to your new lover, treat her better.

Emi
We've gotta let go of all of our ghosts.
We both know we ain't kids no more.

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In this song, the E and C notes are played for two beats each, and then G is played for four beats.

WAKE ME UP

Avicii ft. John Legend

Open E C G

||: / / / / | / / / / :||

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Emi **C** **G**
 Feeling my way through the darkness,
Emi **C** **G**
 Guided by a beating heart.
Emi **C** **G**
 I can't tell where the journey will end,
Emi **C** **G**
 But I know where to start.
Emi **C** **G**
 They tell me I'm too young to understand.
Emi **C** **G**
 They say I'm caught up in a dream.
Emi **C** **G**
 Well, life will pass me by if I don't open up my eyes.
Emi **C** **G**
 Well, that's fine by me.

Emi **C** **G**
 So wake me up when it's all over,
Emi **C** **G**
 When I'm wiser and I'm older.
Emi **C** **G**
 All this time I was finding myself
Emi **C** **G**
 And I didn't know I was lost.

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Composition: E, C, G

Use E, C, and G to create your own song. Place the notes in the song chart below in any order you'd like. Then, choose any of the rhythms you have used so far to play those notes.

Open E C G

Bass Notes:

||: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :||

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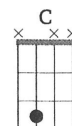
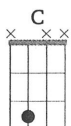
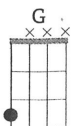


Full Band Song: I GOTTA FEELING

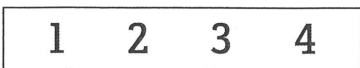


The Black Eyed Peas

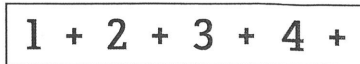
Form of Recording: Intro–Chorus–Verse–Chorus–Verse–Chorus



Use this rhythm for the Chorus:



And use this rhythm for the Verse. To count this rhythm, say, “1 and, 2 and, 3 and, 4 and.” Pick on the numbers and on the “ands,” shown by “+” symbols in the notation.



CHORUS

G **C**
I gotta feeling that tonight's gonna be a good night,

Emi **C**
That tonight's gonna be a good night, that tonight's gonna be a good, good night.

VERSE

G **C**
Tonight's the night, let's live it up. I got my money, let's spend it up.

Emi **C**
Go out and smash it, like, oh my God. Jump off that sofa, let's get, get off.

VERSE

G **C**
I know that we'll have a ball if we get down and go out and just lose it all.

Emi **C**
I feel stressed out, I wanna let go. Let's go way out, spaced out, and losing all control.

VERSE

G **C**
Fill up my cup, Mazel Tov! Look at her dancing, just take it off.

Emi
Let's paint the town, we'll shut it down.

C
Let's burn the roof, and then we'll do it again.

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Going Beyond: Singing and Playing

An important skill for a musician playing popular music is to not only play songs, but also to sing along. Here are a few tips for singing and playing:

- Make sure you have learned the bass part well enough to play it without thinking about changing notes, then try speaking the lyrics in rhythm over it.
- Sing the lyrics while fretting the notes with just the left hand. Pick only when it's time to change notes.
- Don't worry too much about singing the correct pitches (notes) at this point; just practice the skill of doing two things at once.

SECTION 2

Playing Bass Lines: One-Note Song

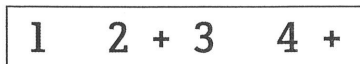
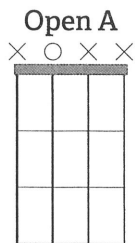
Play the new note A and use the picking pattern below to play "Low Rider" by War.



LOW RIDER

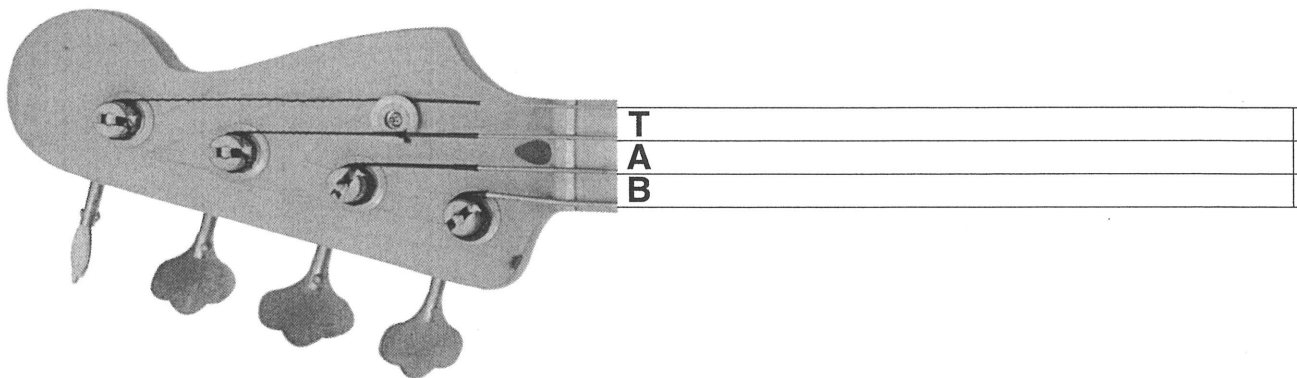


War



Music Theory: Reading Bass Tab

Tablature is another way to write music. It is used to write melodies and riffs. The tab staff has four lines, and each line represents a string. The thickest string on the bass is the lowest line on the tab.

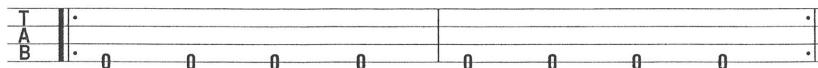


The next line up on the tab staff is the A string, which is the next string down on your bass guitar.

Here's a song you can use to practice playing the open E string evenly. Each "0" below tells you to pick the thickest string without holding down a fret with your left hand.

RUNNIN' WITH THE DEVIL

Van Halen



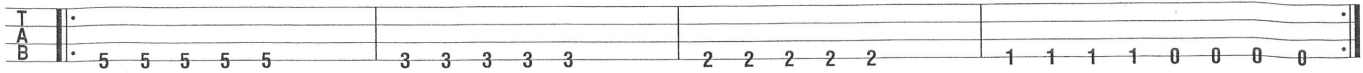
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Tablature can be used to learn new riffs. Numbers represent frets, not fingers. In the next example, the notes in the first measure are played on the 5th fret of the low E string; the notes in the second measure are played on the 3rd fret of the low E string, and so on.

Here are a couple riffs that just use the lowest string of the bass guitar. Listen to a recording of the songs for the rhythm.

25 OR 6 TO 4

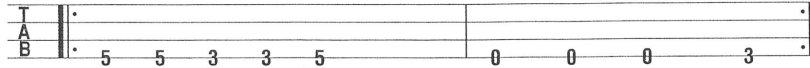
Chicago



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ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE

Parliament Funkadelic

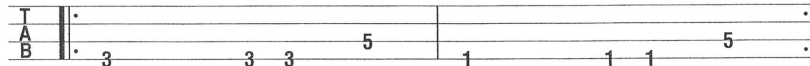


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These next two examples also use the A string.

EX-FACTOR

Lauryn Hill

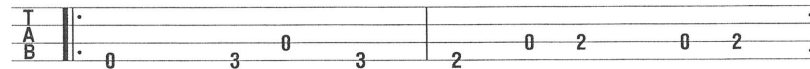


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LET'S GROOVE

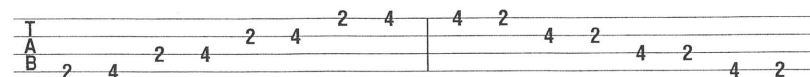
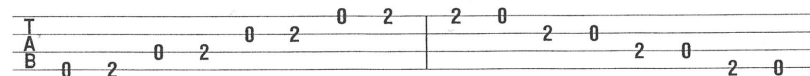
Earth, Wind & Fire



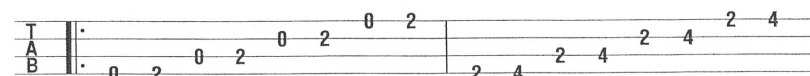
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Instrument Technique: Strengthening Your Fingers

In order to be able to play a variety of riffs and grooves, you must have strong and flexible fingers. Try different combinations of fingerings along with the video. (Try finger 1 or finger 2 for the notes on the 2nd fret in the first example; try fingers 1 and 4, or fingers 2 and 4 for the second example.)



Now, in the next exercise, focus on getting a clear sound out of each note while playing along with the Jam Track.




Instrument Technique: Muting Strings

The length of a bass note can change the feel of a song. You can change the length of a bass note by **muting** it. To mute a note, lightly touch the string with your right or left hand to stop the string from vibrating. Try playing the notes in “Shout” by the Isley Brothers both muted and unmuted:


SHOUT


The Isley Brothers

C



Open A





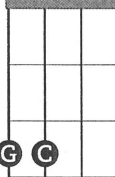
1	2	3	4	+
---	---	---	---	---

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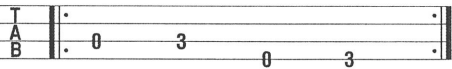
Improvisation: Four-Note Groove

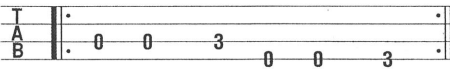
You can expand the two-note groove to four notes by playing the same frets on the next string. Try improvising using these four notes:

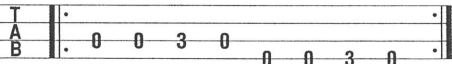
E A

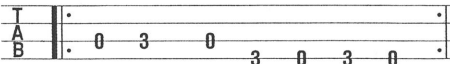


Here are a few examples of some bass grooves using the four notes, E, G, A, and C:










Music Theory: Whole Notes and Half Notes


In each measure of music so far, you have counted four beats. If you play a note once and let it ring for four beats, it lasts the whole measure. That is called a **whole note**. If it is cut in half, it becomes two **half notes**. Each whole note is four beats long, and each half note is two beats long.

Below, whole and half notes in traditional notation are shown along with their corresponding picking pattern.

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---







Full Band Song: HEATHENS



Twenty One Pilots

Form of Recording: Chorus–Verse–Chorus–Verse–Chorus–Chorus

Using traditional notation and note diagrams, you can read and play the Chorus of “Heathens” by Twenty One Pilots.

And here is the full song shown with slashes and note diagrams, as well as the chord and lyric chart below. In addition to the full Jam Track for this song, there are also two separate Jam Tracks for the Chorus and Verse looped so you can practice them individually.

Notice that the Verse includes a new note, B. This note is played on the 2nd fret of the 3rd string.

Chorus



Verse



CHORUS

C **Ami** **E C** **Ami** **E**
 All my friends are heathens, take it slow. Wait for them to ask you who you know.

C **Ami** **E C** **Ami** **E**
 Please don't make any sudden moves. You don't know the half of the abuse.

VERSE

C
 Welcome to the room of people who have rooms of people
Emi
 that they loved one day docked away.

Ami
 Just because we check the guns at the door doesn't mean
Emi
 our brains will change from hand grenades.

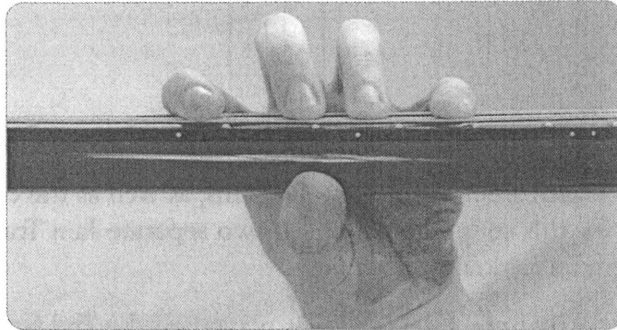
C **Ami** **Emi**
 You'll never know the psychopath sitting next to you.
 You'll never know the murderer sitting next to you.

C **Ami** **B**
 You'll think, “How'd I get here, sitting next to you?”
 But after all I've said, please don't forget.

SECTION 3

Instrument Technique: Chromatic Riffs

In this next tab example, use a different finger to play each different fret. When we move like this from one fret to the next in an upward or downward line, it is called **chromatic**. If you need to, you can move your hand up and down on the neck.

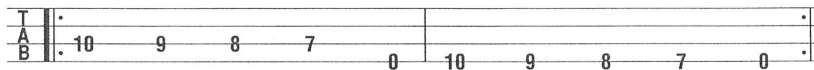


Now, check out your chromatic skills with this heavy Led Zeppelin riff. Listen to the original recording to hear the rhythms.

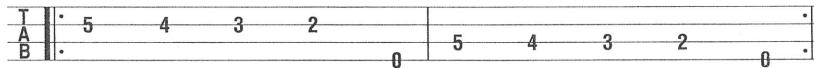


DAZED AND CONFUSED

Led Zeppelin



Or, you can play this riff like this.



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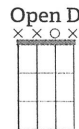
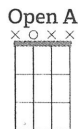
Playing Bass Lines: D

Using the notes A and D, you can play a variety of songs.



IMAGINE

John Lennon



A **D A** **D**
 Imagine there's no heaven. It's easy if you try.

A **D A** **D**
 No hell below us. Above us only sky.

A **D A** **D**
 Imagine there's no countries. It isn't hard to do.

A **D A** **D**
 Nothing to kill or die for, and no religion, too.

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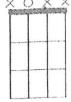


BEST DAY OF MY LIFE

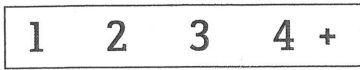


The American Authors

Open A



Open D



A

I had a dream so big and loud, I jumped so high I touched the clouds.

D

Whoa-o-o-o-o-oh. Whoa-o-o-o-o-oh.

A

I stretched my hands out to the sky. We danced with monsters through the night.

D

Whoa-o-o-o-o-oh. Whoa-o-o-o-o-oh.

A

D

Wo-o-o-o-oo! This is gonna be the best day of my life, my life.

A

D

Wo-o-o-o-oo! This is gonna be the best day of my life, my life.

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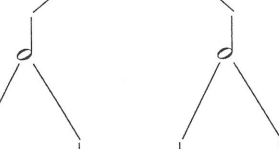
Music Theory: Quarter and Eighth Notes

Half notes can be broken into two quarter notes. Each quarter note gets one beat.

whole note:



half notes:



quarter notes:

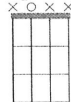


Playing and Resting



You can also use a rest when you want to stop the strings from ringing and leave some space. Try this while switching between the notes A and D. A rest means “count, but don’t play.” Each quarter rest gets one beat.

Open A



Play



Rest



Rest



Rest

Open D



Play



Rest

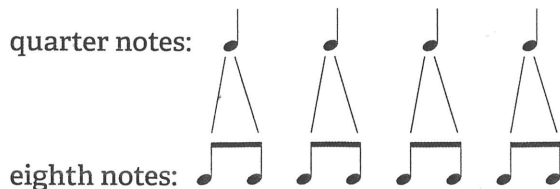


Rest

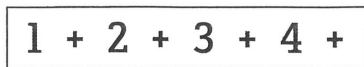


Rest

Quarter notes can be broken into **eighth notes**. Each eighth note gets a half of a beat.



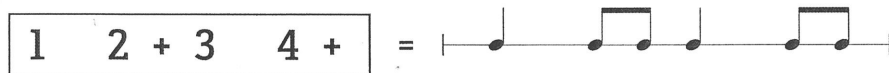
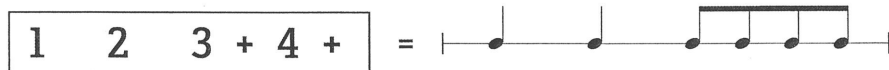
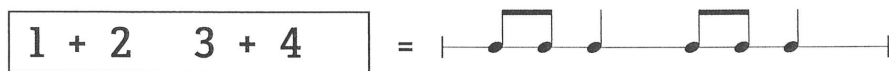
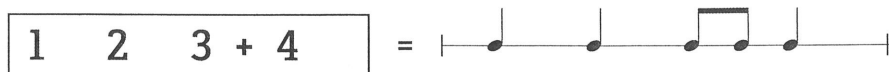
This rhythm:



...is just eight eighth notes:



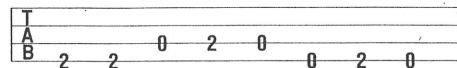
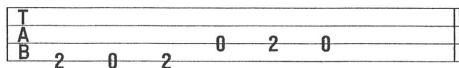
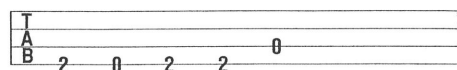
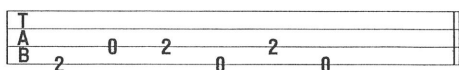
These picking patterns combine quarter notes and eighth notes in different combinations. Try picking and counting them.



Improvisation: Creating a Groove

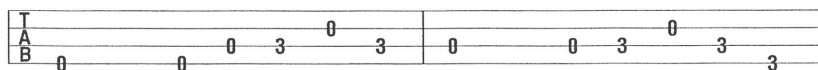
Bass players don't often take solos, but they almost never stop playing, even when another band member is soloing. The key to being a great bass player is to lay down a solid groove for the other bandmates to sing or play with.

Here are a few basic grooves to get you started. Feel free to create variations on these to compose your own grooves.

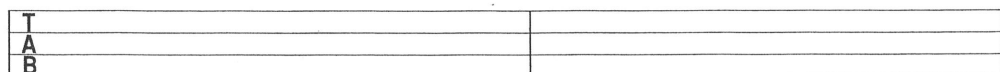


Composition: Compose a Riff

Using the notes we've already learned, try creating your own bass riff. Here is a sample two-bar riff:



Write your original riff here:



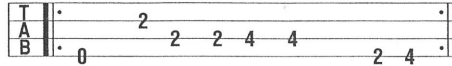
SECTION 4

Instrument Technique: Some New Riffs

Here are some bass riffs that use multiple strings. Listen to the following songs to get a sense of the rhythms.

UNDERNEATH IT ALL

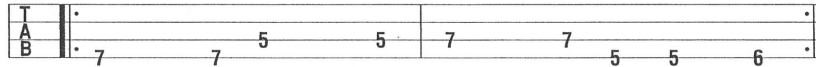
No Doubt



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WANNABE

Spice Girls

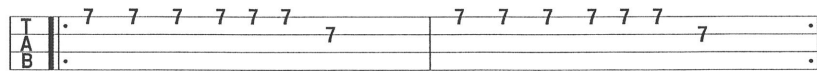


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For these next two riffs, focus on changing strings. If you're playing fingerstyle for "Under Pressure," alternate your right-hand index and middle fingers to play the fast part.

UNDER PRESSURE

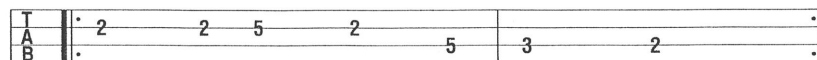
Queen ft. David Bowie



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SEVEN NATION ARMY

The White Stripes



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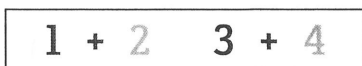
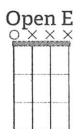
Instrument Technique: Muting Notes

As a bass player, you serve both a rhythmic (like a drummer) and harmonic (like a guitarist or keyboardist) role in a band. It's very important that you play in time. To help make your notes last only as long as you want them, you can **mute** them with either your left or right hand. To mute an open string, touch the string lightly to stop the vibration; you can do this with your left hand, right hand, or both. To mute fretted notes, lift the finger you're fretting with to stop the string from vibrating. Try muting in these examples. If you listen to the original recordings, you can hear these notes are played short.



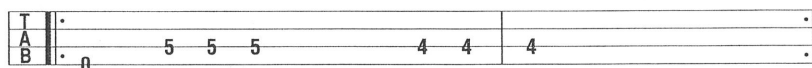
WE WILL ROCK YOU

Queen



BACK IN BLACK

AC/DC

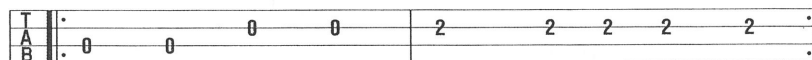


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WHAT MAKES YOU BEAUTIFUL

One Direction

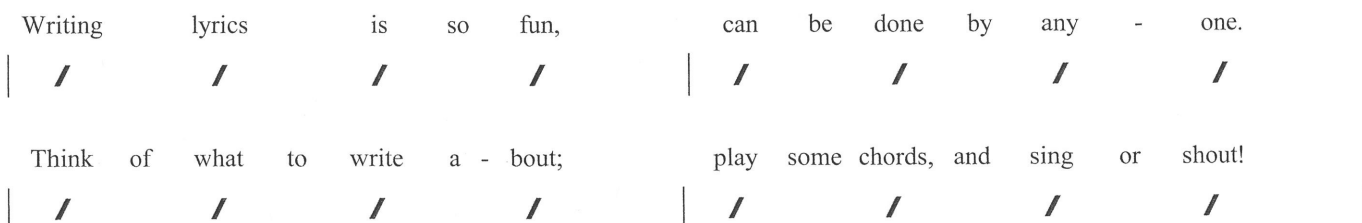


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Composition: Writing Lyrics

Here are three steps you can take to write your own song lyrics:

1. Pick a theme. Lyrics can be easy to write when you have something you want to say. Think of something you care about and write based on that, such as friends, family, hobbies, or dreams.
2. Choose two words that rhyme, such as "great" and "late," or "thrill" and "chill." Then, choose another pair.
3. Turn your words into sentences. Try to speak the words in rhythm and sing them with the Jam Track. Here is an example of a verse for a song written about songwriting:





Full Band Song: STIR IT UP



Bob Marley & the Wailers

Form of Recording: Intro-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus

With this Full Band Song, you can focus on just the root notes (the note diagrams) or play the tab.

Open A

x	o	x	x

Open D

x	x	o	x

Open E

o	x	x	x

	T																			
	A																			
	B	5	4	5	4	5	4	7	7	6	9									

CHORUS

A D E A D E
Stir it up. Little darlin', stir it up. Come on, baby.

A D E A D E
Come on and stir it up. Little darlin', stir it up. O-oh!

VERSE

A D
It's been a long, long time, yeah (stir it, stir it, stir it together).

E A D E
Since I got you on my mind (ooh-ooh-ooh-ooh).

A D E
Now you are here (stir it, stir it, stir it together). I said, it's so clear.

A D E
To see what we could do, baby (ooh-ooh-ooh-ooh). Just me and you.

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SECTION 5

Instrument Technique: Muted Note Review & Rhythms

Play these bass lines, keeping the length of each note in mind. Having control over the length of each note is an important skill for a bass player. Also, do you notice how these songs all use almost all the same notes, but are different genres?

From this point on, standard staff notation will be included with the tabs. Use this to begin familiarizing yourself with where the notes are on the staff. If you see any symbols or rhythms you don't understand, continue listening to the original recordings to hear the rhythms. You'll learn more about music reading as you continue through the Modern Band program.

HYPNOTIZE

The Notorious B.I.G.



The musical notation for 'HYPNOTIZE' features a bass staff with a treble clef and a guitar tab below it. The bass staff shows a rhythmic pattern of eighth and quarter notes. The guitar tab shows fret numbers 0, 5, and 7.

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-contains elements of "Rise." Also contains elements of "La Di Da Di" by Slick Rick/Danica Music

MY OWN WORST ENEMY

Lit



The musical notation for 'MY OWN WORST ENEMY' features a bass staff with a treble clef and a guitar tab below it. The bass staff shows a rhythmic pattern of eighth and quarter notes. The guitar tab shows fret numbers 0, 7, and 5.

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Music Theory: Notes, Chords, and Scales

All music is made up of the notes of the musical alphabet. All the riffs and chords you have been playing are made up of these individual notes. There are seven **natural notes**: A-B-C-D-E-F-G.

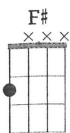
Chords are a combination of notes played together. Bass players rarely play chords. But it is important to know that other musicians, such as guitarists and keyboardists, often do.

A **scale** is a series of notes. The notes we've been using to improvise grooves all part of one scale or another. We will learn more about this later in the book.

The combination of notes, chords, and scales put to rhythm defines all the music we experience.

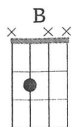
Playing Bass Lines: Drum and Bass

Play this next example with a drummer.



||: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / |

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---



/ / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :||

Notice how both the bass guitar and bass drum play on all four downbeats in this groove. Since it is the same rhythm, make sure your playing lines up exactly with the bass drum.

Both the bass drum and bass guitar are called “bass” because they sound low in pitch.

For this exercise, counting is included between the standard notation and the tab.

1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4

In both measures of this example from Weezer’s “Say It Ain’t So,” the second note of each measure lands on the “and” between beats 2 and 3, rather than on the beat.

SAY IT AIN'T SO

Weezer

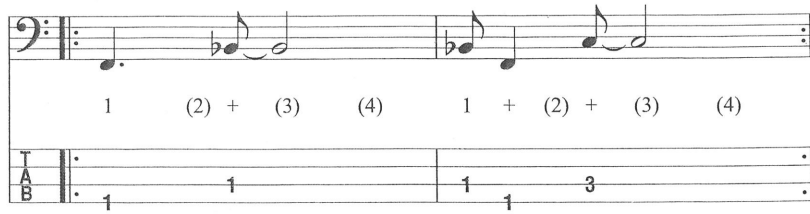
1 (2) + (3) (4)	1 (2) + (3) (4)

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In this example, there is an eight-beat groove (two measures of four beats each). Count along and be sure to notice which notes are played on the “and” and which are played on the downbeats.

FREE FALLIN'

Tom Petty



Musical notation for 'Free Fallin' showing bass line and guitar/bass fretboard. The bass line consists of two measures of four beats each. The first measure has notes on beats 1, 2+, 3, and 4. The second measure has notes on beats 1, 2+, 3, and 4. The guitar/bass fretboard shows the corresponding fret numbers: 1, 1, 1, 3 for the first measure and 1, 1, 3 for the second measure.

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In a great band, all the musicians pay close attention to what their bandmates are playing. For bassists, listening to the drummer is especially important. Together, the bass and drums tell the rest of the band important information about tempo, rhythm, style, and note lengths. In this section, you’ve been encouraged to practice with a drummer, and should be starting to notice some examples of the bass-drum connection in music. With that in mind, let’s try two more examples.

DOO WOP (THAT THING)

Lauryn Hill

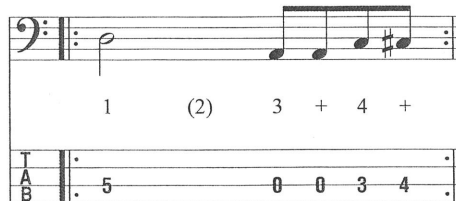


Musical notation for 'Doo Wop (That Thing)' showing bass line and guitar/bass fretboard. The bass line consists of two measures of four beats each. The first measure has notes on beats 1, 2+, 3, and 4. The second measure has notes on beats 1, 2+, 3, and 4. The guitar/bass fretboard shows the corresponding fret numbers: 1, 0, 3 for the first measure and 1, 0, 3 for the second measure.

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YOU KNOW I'M NO GOOD

Amy Winehouse



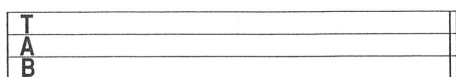
Musical notation for 'You Know I'm No Good' showing bass line and guitar/bass fretboard. The bass line consists of two measures of four beats each. The first measure has notes on beats 1, 2, 3+, and 4+. The second measure has notes on beats 1, 2, 3+, and 4+. The guitar/bass fretboard shows the corresponding fret numbers: 5, 0, 0, 3, 4 for the first measure and 5, 0, 0, 3, 4 for the second measure.

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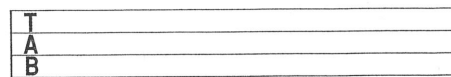
Composition: Mastering the Grid

Now that you've played several examples of grooves where the bass drum and bass guitar play the same rhythms, try writing some of your own. First, look at every eighth-note option below. Then, create riffs in the empty tab below using different rhythm patterns and any notes of your choice. If a drummer is available, practice the new rhythms together.

1 2 3 4	1 + 2 3 4
1 2 3 4	1 2 + 3 4
1 2 3 4	1 2 3 + 4
1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4 +

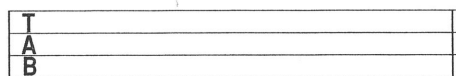


1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

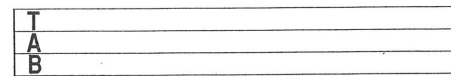


1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

Drummers don't only use the bass drum to line up with the bassist. Work with your drummer to find drum sounds that work best with the notes and rhythms that you're playing. For example, you may want the lower notes you play to be matched with a bass drum or other lower-pitched drum, and the higher notes with a higher-pitched drum (like a snare drum). Try creating a few more riffs together with that in mind.



1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

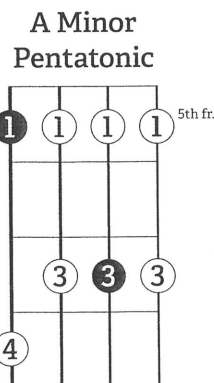


1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

As you listen to more music—with the drum-bass relationship in mind—you'll notice that a lot of the rhythms won't line up *exactly*, but rather, the bass and drums work together to emphasize, or **accent**, certain notes.

Improvisation: Full Minor Pentatonic Scale

The first scale you'll learn is the **minor pentatonic scale**.



The **tonic**, or **root**, is the note a scale or chord is named after. For this scale, starting at the 5th fret on string 4, the tonic is A. Both darkened notes in the diagram are A notes.

This scale sounds good with songs that have a bluesy or funky sound, like "Low Rider" by War.

A fun way to practice this scale is to create bass lines using notes from the scale. Practice playing up and down the scale, using different rhythms. Next, try skipping different notes of the scale. Finally, try playing some notes long and some notes short. Many bass lines are based on the pentatonic scale.

Here are a few riffs that use the pentatonic scale.

LARGER THAN LIFE

Backstreet Boys



The musical notation for 'Larger Than Life' consists of a bass staff and a guitar tab staff. The bass staff shows a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, followed by a double bar line. The guitar tab staff shows the fret numbers: 7 7 5 7 | 5 7 5 7.

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BILLIE JEAN

Michael Jackson



The musical notation for 'Billie Jean' consists of a bass staff and a guitar tab staff. The bass staff shows a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, followed by a double bar line. The guitar tab staff shows the fret numbers: 7 7 5 7 5 | 7 5 7 | 7 7 5 7 5 | 7 5 7.

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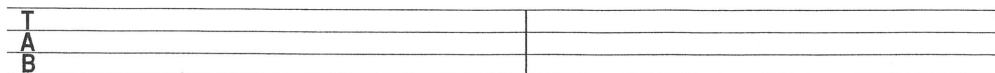
THRILLER

Michael Jackson



The musical notation for 'Thriller' consists of a bass staff and a guitar tab staff. The bass staff shows a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, followed by a double bar line. The guitar tab staff shows the fret numbers: 5 7 5 7 | 7 7 | 5 7 5 7 | 7 7.

Try to make some of your own riffs with the minor pentatonic scale:



A blank guitar tab staff with three lines labeled T, A, and B on the left side, intended for the user to write their own riff.

SECTION 6

Playing Bass Lines: One-Note Song

Here's a song that uses just one chord. You can practice with either a recording of the song or with your whole band. It's a great exercise for rehearsing even and steady eighth notes. If you're playing with a drummer, it's another great opportunity to practice locking in together.



LAND OF A THOUSAND DANCES



Wilson Pickett

Open D



1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

Instrument Technique: Changing the Rhythm

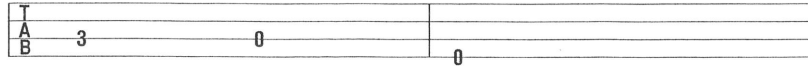
A bass player can change the feel of a song by playing different rhythms, just as a drummer can change the feel of a song by changing up their drumbeat.

Play these different rhythms on the note A (as written), or any other single note of your choice.

Music Theory: The Music Staff

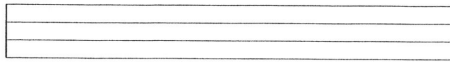
While tablature is useful for guitarists and bass guitarists, it doesn't translate to most other instruments. However, **standard staff notation** can be shared between different instruments.

Look at this bass line in tablature from a song you have already learned, "Heathens" by Twenty One Pilots.



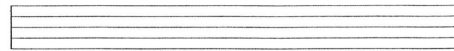
Every note on the bass has a place on the **music staff**. To start, look at a music staff, which is similar to a tab staff but with a few differences—there are five lines instead of four, and the lines *do not* refer to strings.

Bass Tablature

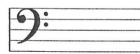


vs.

Standard Music Staff



The next important feature on a staff is the **bass clef**. It assigns specific note names to the lines and spaces on the staff.



You have already seen note heads used with rhythms. Here they are placed on the staff in the lines and spaces to let the musician know which notes to play. The vertical placement of each note determines what note it is. Every number in the tab staff corresponds to *exactly* one place on a music staff.

Using the tab and rhythms from "Heathens," we can now write the bass line in standard staff notation.

Play a few bass lines using traditional staff notation. The rhythms of some have been simplified to use only the rhythms covered so far. (The dot after the half note in measure 1 means to hold that note for three beats instead of two—and of course, the quarter note lasts for one beat.) Once you play them, write the tab showing how you played it.

BABA O'RILEY

The Who

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UNDER PRESSURE

Queen ft. David Bowie

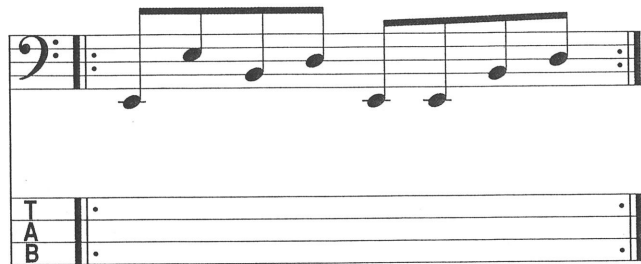


The image shows the musical notation for the song 'Under Pressure'. It consists of a single staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody starts with a quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3, then a quarter note D3, and finally a quarter rest. Below the staff is a TAB section with three lines labeled T, A, and B, each containing a single dot.

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LIVIN' ON A PRAYER

Bon Jovi



The image shows the musical notation for the song 'Livin' on a Prayer'. It consists of a single staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody starts with a quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3, then a quarter note D3, and finally a quarter note E3. Below the staff is a TAB section with three lines labeled T, A, and B, each containing a single dot.

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To play the next melody from "I Can't Help Myself (Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch)," we'll need to know the **eighth rest**: 7. This rest takes the place of one eighth note. Combined with another eighth note or eighth rest, it makes up a full beat. Find a recording of the following song and listen to the intro to hear how the rhythm works with the notation.

I CAN'T HELP MYSELF (SUGAR PIE, HONEY BUNCH)

The Four Tops



The image shows the musical notation for the song 'I Can't Help Myself (Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch)'. It consists of a single staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody starts with a quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3, then an eighth rest (represented by a '7' over a vertical line), and finally a quarter note D3. Below the staff is a TAB section with three lines labeled T, A, and B, each containing a single dot.

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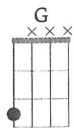
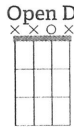
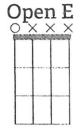
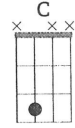
Full Band Song: SOMEONE LIKE YOU



Adele



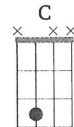
Form of Recording: Intro-Verse-Pre-Chorus-Chorus-Verse-Pre-Chorus-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus

Verse

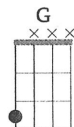
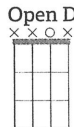
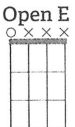
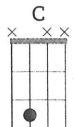
||: / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / :||

Pre-Chorus

||: / / / / | / / / / :|| / / ||

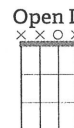
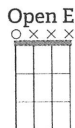
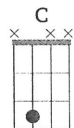
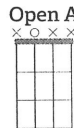
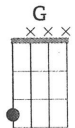
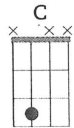
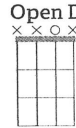
Chorus

(skip before Bridge)

||: / / / / | / / / / :|| / / / ||

Bridge

| / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / ||

Verse/Bridge Rhythm Pattern

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Chorus Rhythm Pattern

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

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VERSE

G **D** **Emi** **C**
I heard that you're settled down, that you found a girl and you're married now.

G **D** **Emi** **C**
I heard that your dreams came true. Guess she gave you things I didn't give to you.

G **D** **Emi** **C**
Old friend, why are you so shy? Ain't like you to hold back or hide from the light.

PRE-CHORUS

D **Emi** **C**
I hate to turn up out of the blue uninvited, but I couldn't stay away, I couldn't fight it.

D **Emi** **C**
I had hoped you'd see my face and that you'd be reminded that for me it isn't over.

CHORUS

G **D** **Emi** **C**
Never mind, I'll find someone like you.

G **D** **Emi** **C**
I wish nothing but the best for you two.

G **D** **Emi** **C**
Don't forget me, I beg. I'll remember you said,

G **D** **Emi** **C**
"Sometimes it lasts in love, but sometimes it hurts instead,

G **D** **Emi** **C**
Sometimes it lasts in love, but sometimes it hurts instead."

BRIDGE

D
Nothing compares, no worries or cares,

Emi
Regrets and mistakes, they're memories made.

C **Ami** **G** **C** **D**
Who would have known how bittersweet this would taste?

SECTION 7

Playing Bass Lines: Rhythmic Patterns

Practice playing through these patterns while staying on the same note of your choice. Then, try changing the note for each pattern.

1 2 3 4

1 2 3 + 4

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

1 2 + 3 + 4 +

1 2 + 3 + 4

1 2 + 3 + 4 +

Composition: Introduction

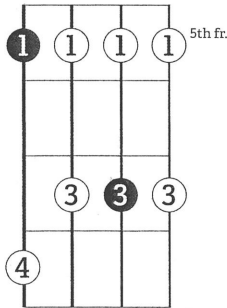
A lot of songs have an **introduction**. An introduction is often the instrumental section that happens before the vocalist begins. To compose an introduction, choose chords for each of the four bars below using the chords (notes) you know. Use the Jam Track to try out your ideas.



Then, choose a picking pattern:

Now, add a riff to your introduction using this scale:

A Minor Pentatonic



T	
A	
B	



Full Band Song: OYE COMO VA

Santana

Form of Recording: Intro–Verse–Breakdown 1–Verse–Breakdown 1–Verse–Breakdown 1–Verse–Breakdown 2–Verse

As a bass player, you don't have to worry about playing chords. You should focus on playing just the root notes of each chord. This is most often the letter name of the chord.

The main riff of "Oye Como Va" by Santana uses the rhythm shown below. Counting the rhythm out loud is a great way to help you learn it. Play A for the first three notes, then switch to D for the last three. Or, if you want to play the exact bass line, follow the tab below. (Notice the note C on beat 4 of the second measure.)

Verse

Open A

Open D

The following fill comes up periodically throughout the song. It happens first at the 30-second mark on the original recording.

Breakdown 1

Open A

Open D

Open A

Open D

Here's the last section, which is played over an E chord. This shows up just twice in the song. It's played one time around the two-minute mark, and then later it's played twice. For this section, just use the note E.

Breakdown 2

Open E

Ami D
Oye como va, mi ritmo.

Ami D
Bueno pa gozar, mulata.

Ami D
Oye como va, mi ritmo.

Ami D
Bueno pa gozar, mulata.

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SECTION 8

Instrument Technique: Two-String Riffs

One way to keep your fingers nimble is to learn more riffs. Here are a few more that focus on two strings:

COME AS YOU ARE

Nirvana



The image shows the bass line for the 'Come As You Are' riff. It consists of two staves: a standard musical staff with a bass clef and a tablature staff. The musical staff shows a sequence of eighth notes: G2 (with a sharp sign), A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The tablature staff shows the fret numbers: 2, 0, 2, 0, 2, 2, 1, 0, 2, 0, 0, 2, 0, 1.

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U CAN'T TOUCH THIS

MC Hammer



The image shows the bass line for the 'U Can't Touch This' riff. It consists of two staves: a standard musical staff with a bass clef and a tablature staff. The musical staff shows a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The tablature staff shows the fret numbers: 5, 3, 2, 0, 0, 3, 2, 0.

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UPTOWN FUNK

Mark Ronson ft. Bruno Mars



The image shows the bass line for the 'Uptown Funk' riff. It consists of two staves: a standard musical staff with a bass clef and a tablature staff. The musical staff shows a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The tablature staff shows the fret numbers: 5, 5, 5, 3, 5, 5, 3, 3.

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Instrument Technique: Steady Eighth Notes

A bassist is just as important as a drummer when it comes to keeping time. When playing steady eighth notes, bassists often alternate between their index and middle finger. If you're using a pick, alternate between upstrokes and downstrokes.

Here are a few bass lines that have steady eighth notes:

WITH OR WITHOUT YOU

U2

Words and Music by U2
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SUPERMASSIVE BLACK HOLE

Muse

from the Summit Entertainment Film TWILIGHT
 Words and Music by Matthew Bellamy
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ZOMBIE

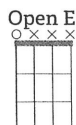
The Cranberries

Lyrics and Music by Dolores O'Riordan
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Always practice these bass lines with the Jam Tracks or a metronome to make sure you're playing steady and in time.

Music Theory: Syncopated Patterns

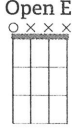
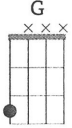
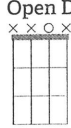
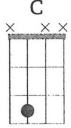
These next patterns, in which upbeats are played after skipping downbeats, are called **syncopated** rhythms. To practice with the Jam Track, follow the rhythm of the bass drum and play an open E on beats 1 and the "and" of beat 2.



If you take that same pattern but change the notes (two per bar), you can play a few other songs:

HELLO

Adele

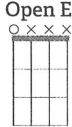
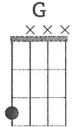
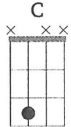

Open E  G  Open D  C 

||: / / / / | / / / / :||

1 2 + 3 4

SEE YOU AGAIN

Wiz Khalifa ft. Charlie Puth

Open E  G  C  Open D 

||: / / / / | / / / / :||

1 2 + 3 4


Playing Bass Lines: Reggae Bass

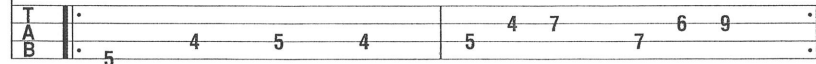
Keeping note length and stylistically appropriate rhythms in mind, you can play this reggae song by Bob Marley & the Wailers. Keeping the bass notes short is iconic of much reggae music.



STIR IT UP

Bob Marley & the Wailers





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WORLD-A-MUSIC

Ini Kamozé





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