Lessons

PRACTICE PROGRESS CHART

WEEK	ASSIGNMENT	Μ	Т	W	ΤH	F	S	S	TOTAL	Signed
Week 1										
Week 2										
Week 3										
Week 4										
Week 5										
Week 6										
Week 7										
Week 8										
Week 9										
Week 10										
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Week 35										
Week 36										
Week 37										
Week 38										
Week 39										
Week 40										
Week 41										





INTRODUCTION

You bought a bass...so now what?

Congratulations! You look great holding that new bass (even standing in front of the mirror, lipsynching to the radio, swinging your hips back and forth). But won't your friends and family be even more impressed if you can actually play the darn thing?

In just a couple of weeks, we'll have you playing some very well-known tunes, as well as jamming on some new ones. By the end of this book, it's on to the hits—The Beatles, Clapton, Hendrix, and more.

All we ask is that you observe the three Ps: patience, practice and pace yourself.

Don't try to bite off more than you can chew, and DON'T skip ahead. If your fingers hurt, take the day off. If you get frustrated, put it down and come back later. If you forget something, go back and learn it again. If you're having a great time, forget about dinner and keep on playing. Most importantly, have fun!

ABOUT THE AUDIO

G lad you noticed the added bonus—audio tracks! Each music example in the book is included, so you can hear how it sounds and play along when you're ready. Take a listen whenever you see this symbol:

Each audio example is preceded by one measure of "clicks" to indicate the tempo and meter. Pan right to hear the bass part emphasized. Pan left to hear the accompaniment emphasized. As you become more confident, try playing the bass part along with the rest of the "band."

> To access audio visit: www.halleonard.com/mylibrary

Enter Code 1697-4924-1881-1650

ISBN 978-0-7935-7408-7



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A GOOD PLACE TO START

Your bass is your friend....

An instrument can be like a good friend through the years—get you through the rough times and help you sing away the blues. So, before we get started, give your new four-stringed friend a name.

What a beauty!

Below is a standard electric bass. Get acquainted with the parts of your bass, and don't forget to give it a name.



TUNING

When you tune, you correct the pitch of each string. **Pitch** means how high or low a musical tone is. This is adjusted by tightening (or loosening) the string, using the tuning keys on the head of the bass. The tighter the string, the higher the pitch.

Your four strings should be tuned to these pitches (low to high): E-A-D-G.



CAUTION: Tighten slowly and not too much, or you'll be heading back to the store to buy new strings!

Piano tuning

No, you aren't about to tune an entire piano! If you have a piano or electric keyboard nearby, play the above notes one at a time and tune the corresponding string until its pitch matches that of the piano.

Electronic tuner

If you don't have the luxury of a piano or keyboard, you may want to purchase an electronic tuner.

A tuner will "listen" to each string as you play it and indicate whether the pitch is too high or too low.



Don't give up hope-If you don't have a piano and you can't buy a tuner, there's yet another solution...

Relative tuning

To tune your bass by ear, you must tune the strings to each other. This is done in the following manner:



Assuming string 4 is already E, press string 4 behind fret 5, play the depressed string 4 and open string 3 together. When the two sounds match, you're in tune.



Press string 3 behind fret 5 and tune open string 2 to it.

Press string 2 behind fret 5 and tune open string 1 to it.



A FEW MORE THINGS

(...before we jam!)

Sit down and stay a while...

Perhaps the most comfortable and least tiring way to learn bass is to sit while playing.

Once you learn a few tunes, feel free to stand up, lay down, hold it behind your head, or whatever. But for now let's put that extra effort to better use—playing.





standing

Please hold ...

Hold the neck of the bass with your **left hand**, with your thumb resting comfortably behind the neck.

Hold the neck slightly upwards—not downwards (at least not until you're on stage in front of thousands of fans).



left hand position (fingers)



left hand position (thumb)

There's nothing stressful here, so don't grip the neck too hard (you might strangle it!).

Picture This...

Fingerboard diagrams (or "grids") picture a portion of the fretboard and show you where to play the notes and chords. Circles are drawn onto the diagram to indicate the notes being played.



1st 2nd 3rd 1st 4th 1st - 4th

Think of your fingers as being numbered 1 through 4.

DOG-EAR THESE TWO PAGES

(...you'll need to review them later)

Music is a language with its own symbols, structure, and rules (and exceptions to those rules). To read, write, and play music requires knowing all the symbols and rules. But let's take it one step at a time (a few now, a few later)...

Notes

. بگ ۶⁰

Music is written with little doo-hickeys called **notes**. Notes come in all shapes and sizes. A note has two essential characteristics: **pitch** (indicated by its position on the staff) and **rhythmic value** (indicated by the following symbols):



Staff and Clef

All the notes are written on (or nearby) a staff, which consists of five parallel lines and four spaces. Each line and space represents a different pitch. A symbol called a clef indicates which pitches are represented.



Ledger Lines

Since not all notes will fit on just five lines and four spaces, ledger lines are used to extend the staff:



measures (or bars)

Notes on a staff are divided into measures (or "bars") to help you keep track of where you are in the song.



Time Signatures (or Meters)

A **time signature** (or "meter") indicates how many beats will appear in each measure. It contains two numbers: the top number tells you how many beats will be in each measure; the bottom number says what type of note will equal one beat.



Tablature

Tablature (or "TAB") is a specially designed staff for bassists. The four lines on a tablature staff represent (you guessed it!) the four strings on your bass. A number is placed on a line to indicate which fret to press.



IMPORTANT: Tablature should be used simply as a guide. You should still observe the notes, time signatures, and rhythmic values written on the music staff.

By the way, all of the music examples in this book use both a staff and tablature to make life easier (you're welcome!).

Relax for a while, read through it again later, and then move on. (Trust us—as we go through the book, you'll start to understand it.)

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Don't just sit there, play something!

If the left hand "selects" a note by depressing a string at a fret, what does the **right hand** do? The right hand actually plays the strings, but you have three choices of how to play with the right hand:

1. With a pick...

Because of its more accented sound, this is a preferred method of playing by many rock bass players. Hold the pick in your right hand, as shown, and attack each string:



Pick with **downstrokes** (attack in a downward motion) or **upstrokes** (attack in an upward motion).

Using all downstrokes, play four beats on each open string (meaning don't press any frets) with your pick:

Picking and Grinning



Try the same example again but use upstrokes.

This is the traditional way of playing and allows you more control (since your fingers can feel where to go). Rest your thumb on the **pickup** and play the strings with finger 1 (your index finger).



After you play a string, let finger 1 rest on the next string up. For example, play string 3 and rest finger 1 against string 4.

IMPORTANT: Don't let your right-hand fingers "curl up." Notice the relaxed position in the photo above.



NOTE: After playing string 4, you can rest finger 1 against the body of the bass.

3. Alternate fingers...

B

A third (and faster) way to play is to alternate between fingers 1 and 2. Keep your hand in fingerstyle position (thumb resting on the pickup) and play string 3 once with finger 1, then once with finger 2:





YOUR CHOICE: Choose the right-hand playing style that's the most comfortable and best-sounding to you.

Fingerstyle Practice



You've chosen a playing style. You know all the open strings. And you're eager to play. Let's get down to business...

String 1: G

Forget strings 2-4; let's concentrate on string 1 for now. Use the photos and fingerboard diagrams below to play your new note A.





You just learned it, but it's worth repeating. Here's the open string G:







Play string 1 while pressing fret 2 with finger 2 and you hear A, which lies just above G on the staff:



Practice your new notes. (If you need a quick review of rhythmic values or time signatures, flip back to page 6.)



NOTE: We realize that you already learned another A (open string 3 on page 8). But since the musical alphabet consists of only the letters A-G, this type of repetition will eventually occur with all notes.

Play string 3 open, followed by your new A:

Same Name, Different Note

Sound similar? The new A sounds one **octave** higher than string 3. An octave means eight notes apart. Bass players play lots of octaves, so get used to this new concept.

Put it to good use...

Just like reading a book, you should be going to the next line in the song as soon as you reach the end of each staff. However, when you see this symbol (), you are at the end of that song.





SOME MORE NOTES ON MUSIC

(...pardon the pun!)

Before going to Lesson 3, we want to tell you some more about the hieroglyphics of music.

Rests...

A musical **rest** is a pause. Rests are like notes in that they have their own rhythmic values, instructing the musician how long (or how many beats) to pause:



IMPORTANT: A rest does not mean rest your fingers or put your bass down! During a rest you should get your fingers into position for the next set of notes.



Take a Load Off

B

PLAYING TIP: During a rest, practice **muting** the strings with your left hand (so there is no sound).



FF22AM 2

Moving on...

Take a few seconds, flip back to page 3 and make sure your bass is still in tune. (If the mirror breaks, it probably isn't!)



Time for another workout. (Practice slowly and count out loud!)

D-E-F



When you feel comfortable with D-E-F, try them in combination with your other two notes...

CHANGING STRINGS: When changing fingers from string 1 to string 2, try to let your eyes move ahead in the music, and your finger move to the correct string before the next note occurs.



HELPFUL HINT: When playing a higher note, leave the lower note depressed. For example, leave finger 2 on E while pressing finger 3 on F. When you go back to E, simply lift finger 3.





Repeat these examples at least twice more, playing a bit faster each time. When you're ready (and after a snack from the 'fridge), we'll move on to Lesson 4.

LESSON 4 *Three's company...*

 $\label{eq:Unbelievable} Unbelievable-six notes already. You're a fast learner! How 'bout another string? (Make sure you're still in tune, if not-page 3.)$



String 3 is exactly like string 2 (except it's thicker):





Don't forget the open string is A:





 -	100 (10)	
)		

Press fret 2 with finger 2 and you get B. (Keep those fingers arched!):







Press fret 3 with finger 3. That's C:



Can you feel a practice tune coming?



Now play all the notes you've learned...

ው Ato A



Do you realize what you just played? That was your first musical scale—A minor!

What's a musical scale?

Scales are arrangements of notes in specific patterns of **half steps** (one fret apart) and **whole steps** (two frets apart). Most scales have eight notes with the top and bottom notes being an octave apart. The one you just played started on A and used a **minor pattern**, thus it was the A minor scale.

Try this bass line that's built on the A minor scale...



Scales are essential to bass players! They're the basis for all your riffs and licks. We'll learn many more scales throughout this book, but for now...

YOU GOT RHYTHM

Nice tie!

A tie connects two notes and tells you to hold the first note through to the end of the tied note:



The ones with dots are nice, too!

Another way to extend the value of a note is to use a **dot**. A dot extends the note by one-half of its value. Most common is the **dotted half** note:



Simple Simon! Try some bass lines with ties and dots ...



Remember to count out loud until you begin to think and feel the beat.

:

CAREFUL! The next one is in 3/4 meter. That is, there are three beats per measure. (For a quick review, flip back to page 7.)



Excellent! But can you do it faster? Are you playing along with the audio?

Crosswalk Blues



Repeat signs have two dots before or after a double bar line (). They simply tell you to (you guessed it!) repeat everything in between. If only one sign appears (), repeat from the beginning of the piece.





This is a good time to take a break, maybe get some ice cream. Then come back, review Lessons 1-4 again and continue with Lesson 5.

R



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Dotted Quarter Notes



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Rhythm Drills





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Rhythm Drills





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Basic Sixteenth Note patterns













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Rhythm Drills

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The Dotted Eighth-Sixteenth Note Pattern













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Scales

Major Scales



Natural Minor Scales



Harmonic Minor Scales



Melodic Minor Scales

The Melodic minor scale is different on the way up the scale than on the way down the scale. Going up, the 3rd scale degree is flat, but the rest is like a major scale, and going down it is the same as a natural minor scale.

