

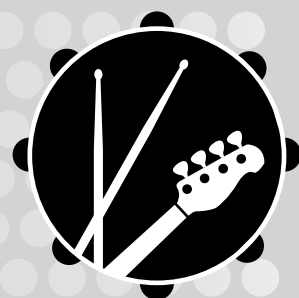
Beginner Bass

Written by Paul Gibson

Free Backing
Track
Downloads
Available

For beginner Bass players

Including notation & tabs,
scales, backing tracks and
reference materials

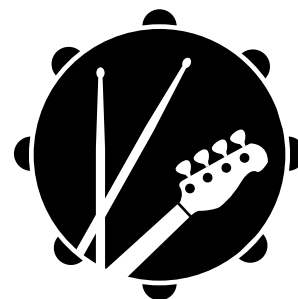


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Written & Published by Paul Gibson
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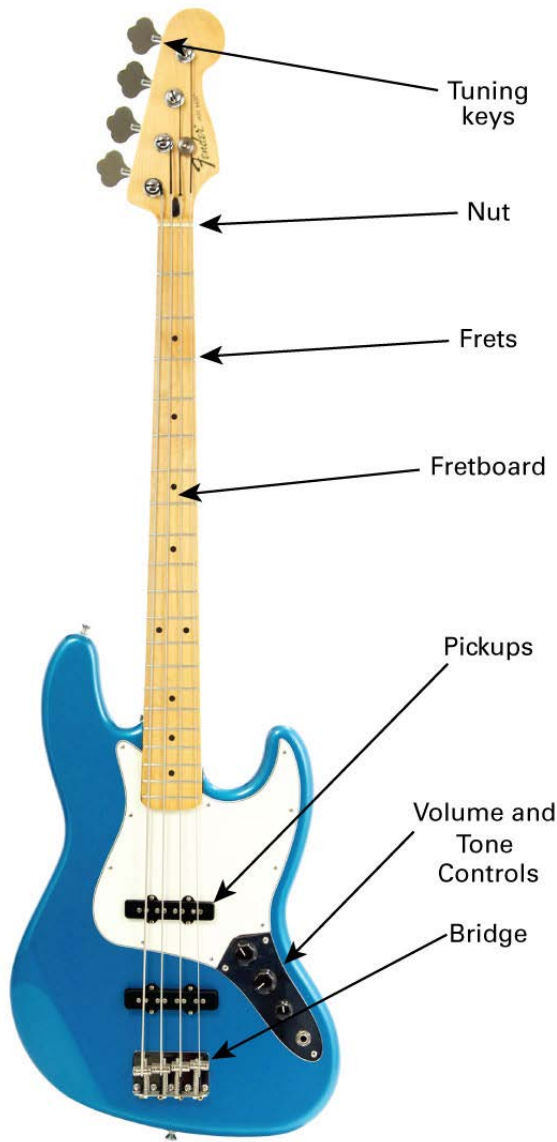
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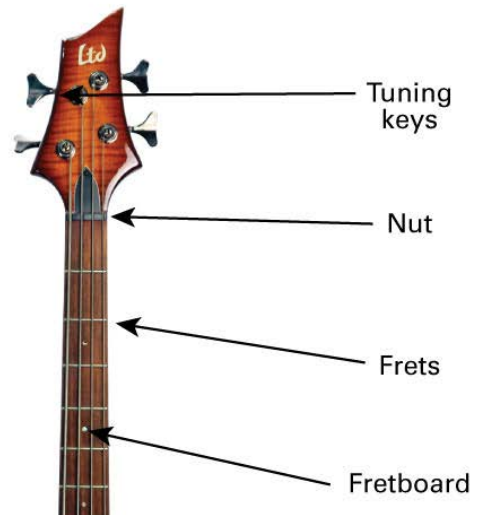
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Whatever it Takes
Eye Of The Tiger
Night Ride
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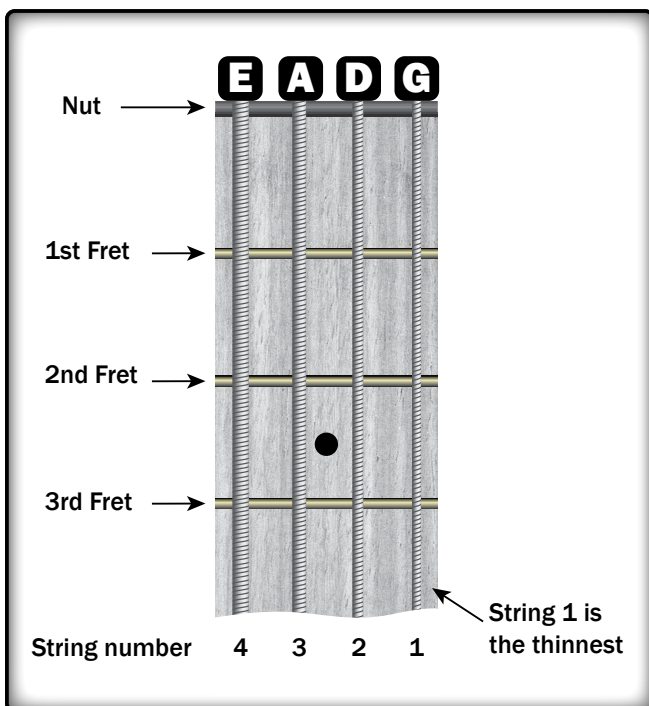


Parts of the Electric Bass Guitar

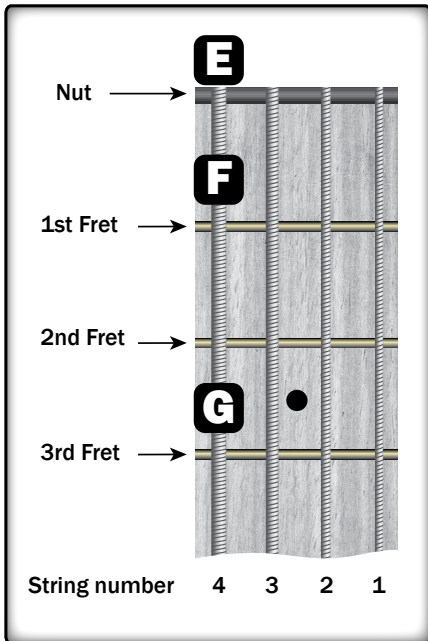
There are many different styles of bass guitar, with different shapes, sizes and pickup designs. Irrespective of the design, most share the same components.



Fretboard Diagram



Lesson 1



The E string (4th string)

The first notes we will learn are found on the 4th string: the E string. To play the E, simply play the open string (not fretted).

The F note is played on the 1st fret, and the G is played on the 3rd fret.

The dot commonly found on guitar fretboards is simply a guide to locate the fret number.

The Quarter Note (Crotchet)



This is a quarter note. It lasts for **one** beat. There are four quarter notes in 1 bar of $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

Quarter Note Rest (Crotchet)



This is a quarter note rest. It lasts for **one** beat. There are four quarter note rests in 1 bar of $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

Exercise 1


	E	E	E	E	F	F	F	F	G	G	G	G	F	F	F	F
Count	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

Exercise 2


	E	E	E	E	F	F	F	F	G	G	G	G	F	F	F	F
Count	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

Lesson 2

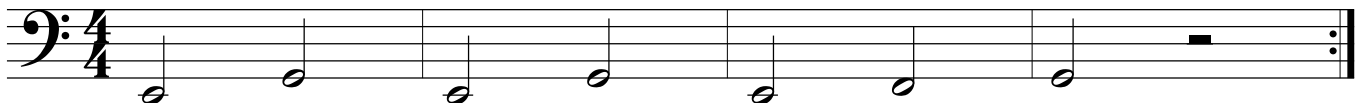
The Half Note (Minum)

 This is a half note. It lasts for **two** beats. There are two half notes in 1 bar of $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

Half Note Rest (Minum)

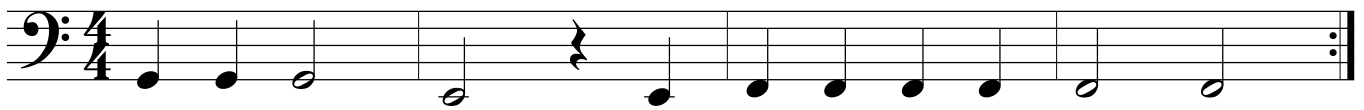
 This is a half note rest. It lasts for **two** beats. There are two half note rests in 1 bar of $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

Exercise 7




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

Exercise 8




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

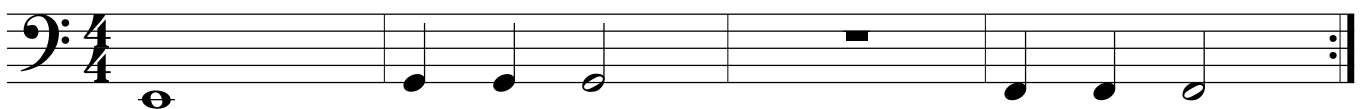
The Whole Note (Semibreve)

 This is a whole note. It lasts for **four** beats. There is one whole note in 1 bar of $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

Whole Note Rest (Semibreve)

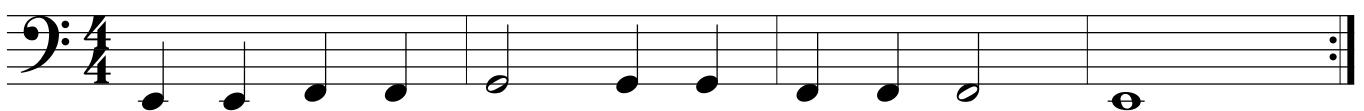
 This is a whole note rest. It lasts for **four** beats. There is one whole note rest in 1 bar of $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

Exercise 9



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

Exercise 10



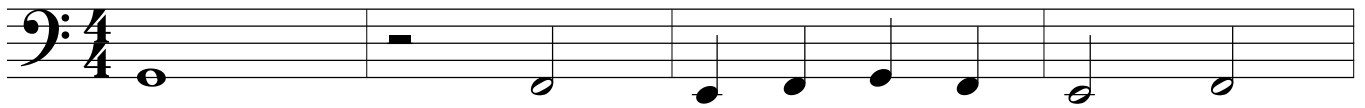
Count 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Try to use the note values to count your way through the bars. You can write the counting in yourself for this page of exercises.

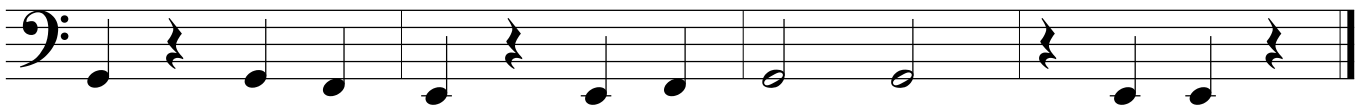
Exercise 11



Exercise 12

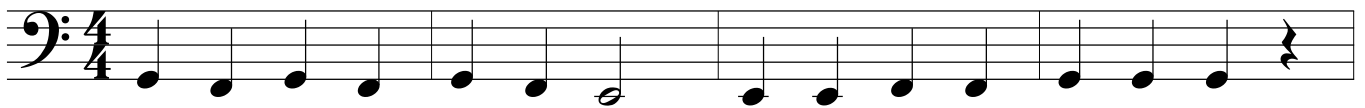


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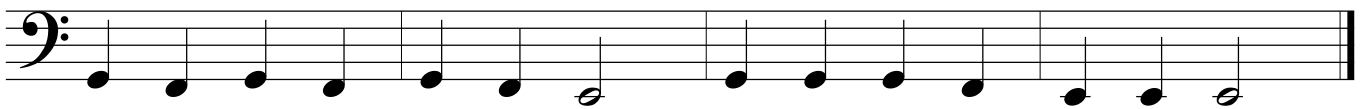


.....
See if you can increase the speed of this exercise, really trying to move smoothly at pace through the 8 bars. Perhaps around 120bpm would be the aim.

Exercise 13

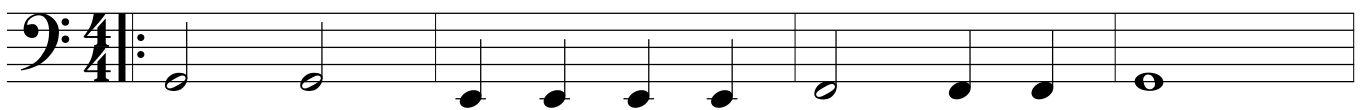


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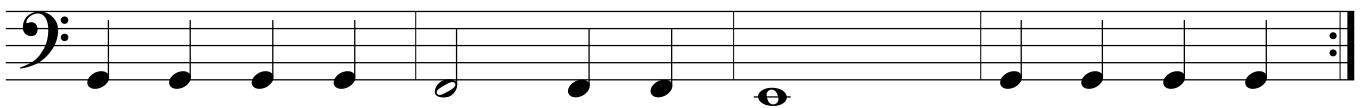


Backing Track 1

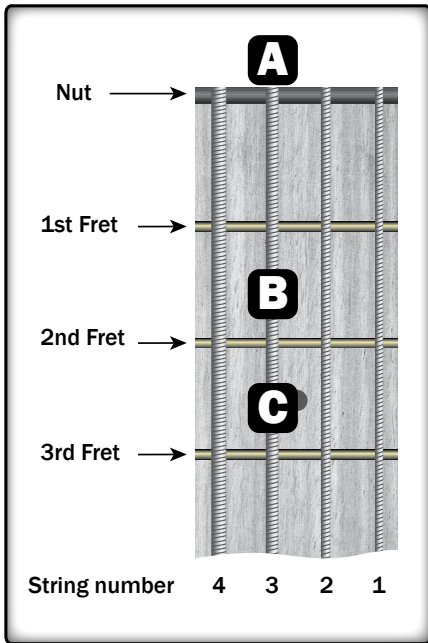
Exercise 13a



5



Lesson 3



The A string (3rd string)

The A string is introduced this lesson. The A string is the 3rd string from the bottom (smallest) To play the A, simply play the open string (not fretted).

The B note is played on the 2nd fret, and the C is played on the 3rd fret.

Exercise 14

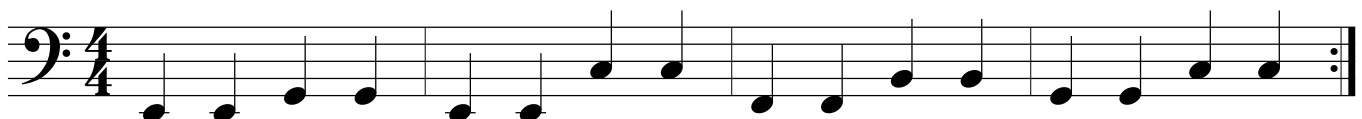


Exercise 15

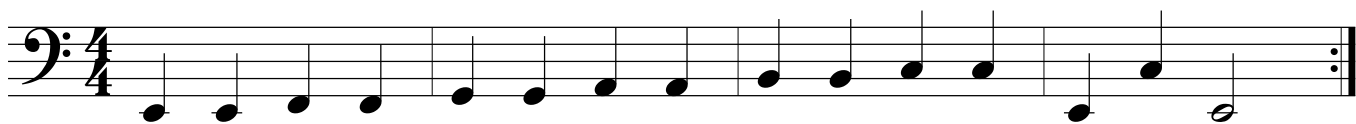


The following combine both the 4th E and the 3rd A strings. Try these slowly and try to make clean changes between strings.

Exercise 16




Exercise 17




Exercise 18



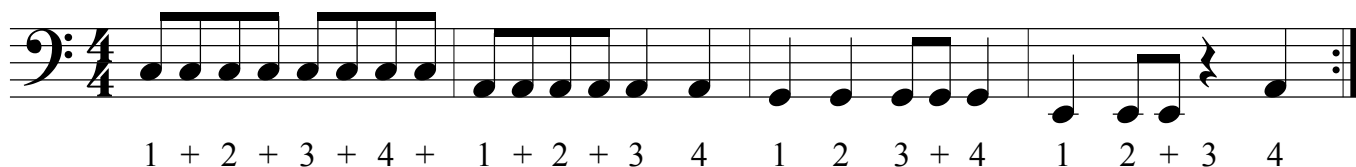
The Eighth Note (Quaver)

 This is an eighth note. It lasts for **half** a beat. There are eight quavers in 1 bar of $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

Eighth Note Rest (Quaver)

 This is an eighth note rest. It lasts for **half** a beat. There are eight quaver rests in 1 bar of $\frac{4}{4}$ time.

Exercise 19



Exercise 20

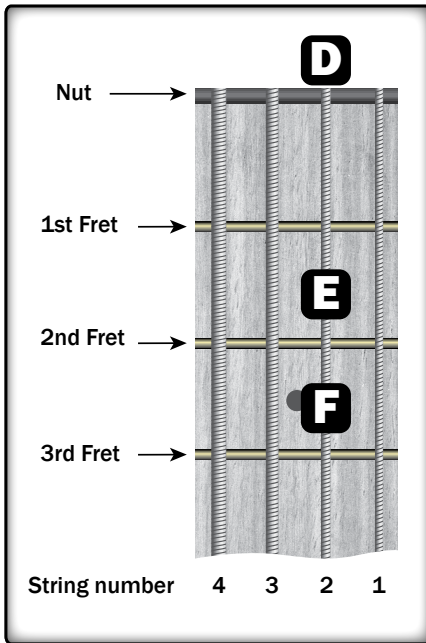


Backing Track 2

Exercise 21



Lesson 4



The D string (2nd string)

The D string is introduced this lesson. The D string is the 2nd string from the bottom (smallest). To play the D, simply play the open string (not fretted).

The E note is played on the 2nd fret, and the F is played on the 3rd fret.

Exercise 22

Exercise 22 is a musical exercise in bass clef, 4/4 time. It consists of a single line of music with a repeat sign at the end. The notes are: D (open), D (open), D (open), D (open), E (2nd fret), E (2nd fret), E (2nd fret), F (3rd fret), F (3rd fret), F (3rd fret), F (3rd fret), D (open), E (2nd fret), F (3rd fret), E (2nd fret).

Exercise 23

Exercise 23 is a musical exercise in bass clef, 4/4 time. It consists of a single line of music with a repeat sign at the end. The notes are: D (open), D (open), D (open), D (open), E (2nd fret), E (2nd fret), E (2nd fret), F (3rd fret), F (3rd fret), F (3rd fret), F (3rd fret), D (open), E (2nd fret), F (3rd fret), E (2nd fret).

The next 2 exercises are to play from E to E avoiding any sharps & flats (1 full octave).

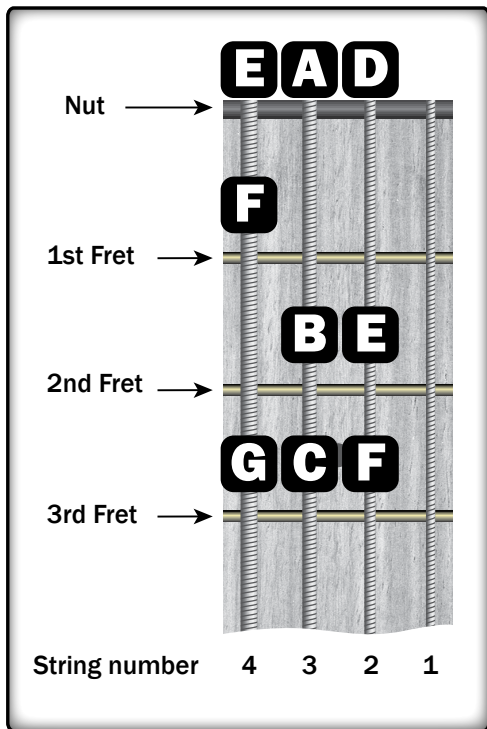
These are not diatonic scales, simply exercises to make you more familiar with the fingering and note positions.

Exercise 24

Exercise 24 is a musical exercise in bass clef, 4/4 time. It consists of a single line of music with a repeat sign at the end. The notes are: E (2nd fret), F (3rd fret), G (3rd fret), A (3rd fret), B (3rd fret), C (4th fret), D (4th fret), E (4th fret), F (4th fret), G (4th fret), A (4th fret), B (4th fret), C (5th fret), D (5th fret), E (5th fret).

Exercise 25

Exercise 25 is a musical exercise in bass clef, 4/4 time. It consists of a single line of music with a repeat sign at the end. The notes are: E (2nd fret), F (3rd fret), G (3rd fret), A (3rd fret), B (3rd fret), C (4th fret), D (4th fret), E (4th fret), F (4th fret), G (4th fret), A (4th fret), B (4th fret), C (5th fret), D (5th fret), E (5th fret).



The fingering positions so far...

This diagram shows all the notes we have learned so far.

You will notice that there are many gaps in the diagram: These are spaces where either a sharp or a flat is positioned.

A sharp or a flat simply means go up half a note (sharp) or down half a note (flat). Each fret on the Bass Guitar is worth 1/2 a step (or semitone).

.....

Dotted Notes

A dot directly after a note changes its duration/length. It adds 1/2 of the original note value to its length - see examples.

= 1 1/2 beats in total

= 3 beats in total

= 6 beats in total

.....



Backing Track 3

Exercise 26

F F Am Am

5 F F Am Am

9 Dm Dm Gm Bb F

Tip:
To make this exercise easier, circle lightly the open string notes

Lesson 5

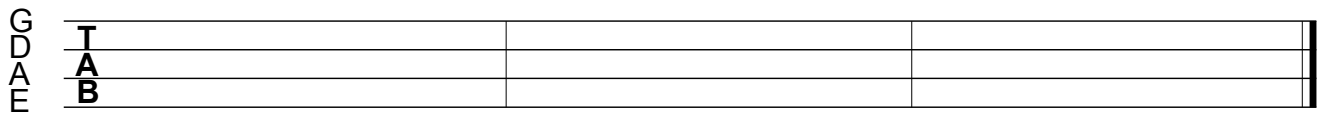
Introduction to TABS

Bass tablature, or bass tab, is a pretty simple system of music notation for bass. You will find it in music books, bass magazines, and all over the internet.

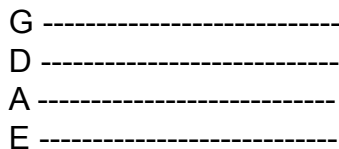
Bass tab shows the strings of the bass drawn horizontally. Most often bass tab is written for 4-string bass, but you may see it for 5-string and 6-string basses, too. That will depend on whether more strings are required to play the song.

The bass strings are drawn with the lowest-pitched string at the bottom (E). Standard bass tuning from lowest to highest is E-A-D-G and can look similar to these 2 examples:

Example 1 - commonly used in professional print music

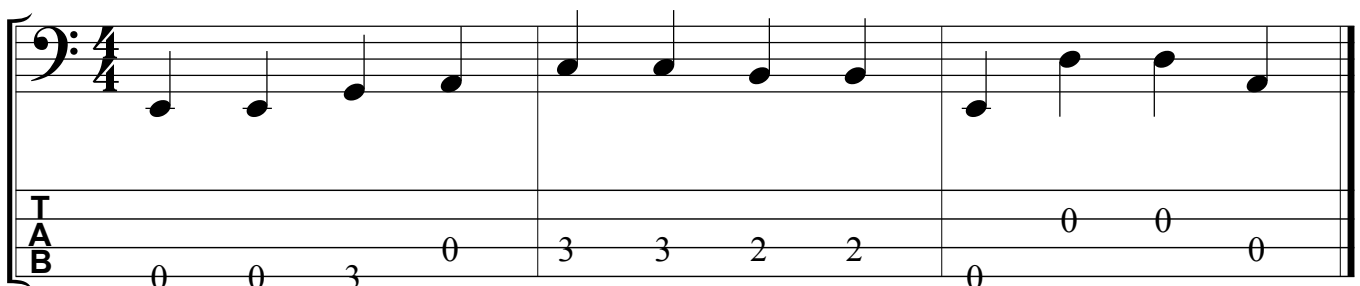


Example 2 - basic format, most commonly found in music from the internet



In bass tab, notes are indicated by fret number. The fret number is written on the string on which it is played.

In the 1st bar of this example, the E is played on the open string twice, then up to the G (the 3rd fret on the 4th string), then up to the open 3rd string (A).



This example also uses both the traditional notation for the rhythm to be played as well as the tablature for ease of navigating the frets.

Lesson 6

Introduction to Songs

We have enough notes available now to begin playing along with some real songs. There are 5 components to the following piece: Time signature, key signature, piano chords, our bass notation, and the bass tabs. Each of these components are important to check prior to playing along with the backing.

There are many things happening when we listen to any backing, and our listening skills are critical to the success of any song. We need to try and filter past many of the irrelevant sounds and concentrate on specifics for instance the speed of the piece, and the current position of the progression.

.....

This first backing track uses 8th note quavers across 2 strings as you can see from the tabs. The first D could easily be played on the open string, so you can try both options and decide which one is best for you.



Backing Track 4

With Or Without You - U2

109 bpm

D Major

Main Riff D D/A B min7 D/G

Lesson 7

Accidentals

1. Accidentals are used to indicate notes that are not usually a part of the key that the music is in. For example in the key of C, there are no sharps or flats normally, but if the composer has decided to use a Bb, then an accidental is added to that note specifically.

2. Accidentals can be used to show sharps & flats in music rather than by using the key signature. However if many accidentals are used, the music can become very cluttered and confusing.

The following backing track - Chasing Cars, uses accidentals rather than the key signature of 3 sharps (A major).



Backing Track 5

Chasing Cars - Snow Patrol

100 bpm

A Major

The image shows a backing track for the song 'Chasing Cars' by Snow Patrol. It consists of ten staves of music in 4/4 time, all in the key of A major. The notes are primarily eighth notes, with some quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the staves: 'if I lay here...', 'with...', 'told...', 'garden...', 'am...', 'perfect...', 'where...', and 'things...'. Above the first staff, the chords 'A' and 'G#' are indicated. Above the second staff, 'D' and 'A' are indicated. Above the third staff, 'A' and 'G#' are indicated. Above the fourth staff, 'D' and 'A' are indicated. Above the fifth staff, 'A' and 'G#' are indicated. Above the sixth staff, 'D' and 'A' are indicated. Above the seventh staff, 'A' and 'G#' are indicated. Above the eighth staff, 'D' and 'A' are indicated. The music ends with a whole note on the eighth staff.

Key Signatures

Key signatures play an important role when it comes to reading and writing music; they indicate the key of the song by telling you how many sharps or flats there are. So far, most of the exercises we have played have been in the key of C, so we haven't had to worry about many sharps or flats.

The list below shows the relevant number of sharps or flats of some common major keys:

Key	Sharps	Notes	Key	Flats	Notes
C Major	0		C Major	0	
G Major	1	F#	F Major	1	Bb
D Major	2	F# / C#	Bb Major	2	Bb / Eb
A Major	3	F# / C# / G#	Eb Major	3	Bb / Eb / Ab

A full description is provided in the reference section at the back of this book (Circle of fifths diagram)

The following song: Boulevard Of Broken Dreams shows that there is 1 sharp to be played & a **CAPO** is to be used on the 1st fret.



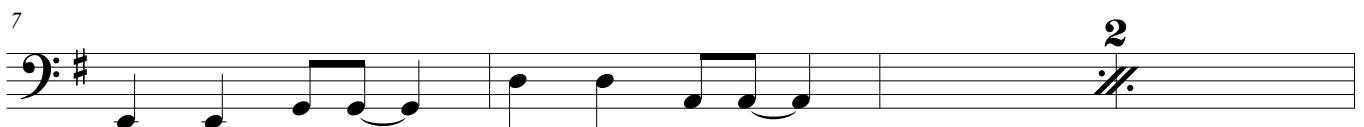
Backing Track 6

90 bpm

Boulevard Of Broken Dreams - Greenday G Major

CAPO 1

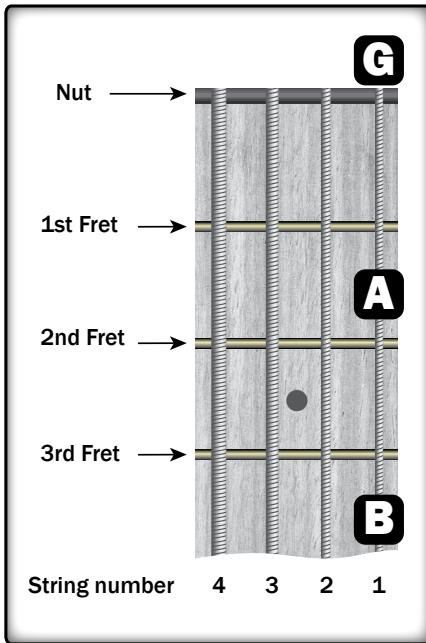
Verse



Chorus



Lesson 8

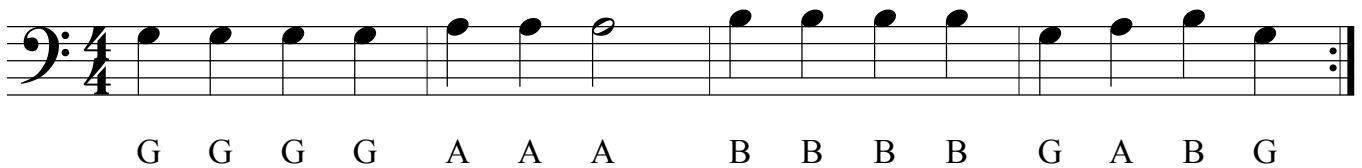


The G string (1st string)

The G string is introduced this lesson. The G string is the 1st string from the bottom, the smallest string. To play the G, simply play the open string (not fretted).

The A note is played on the 2nd fret, and the B is played on the 4th fret.

Exercise 27



Exercise 28



Now we have explored all of the strings on the 4 string Bass Guitar. With so many fingering positions known, it can be tricky to remember them all. A great tip would be to recognise all of the open strings in the staff, and work from there.

Circle each of the open strings and label them above or below the line.

Exercise 29



Lesson 9

Major Scales

There are many different kinds of scales that exist in music. Examples of some common types are: Major and Minor, Blues, Pentatonic, Harmonic and more.

We will have a look at 3 major scales to begin with, the C, G & F major scales.

The C major scale is played simply from a low C through 1 octave to the next C on the 1st string. As per the Circle of Keys (reference section), there are no sharps or flats in this scale. This scale is in fact the same as the A minor scale.

C major Scale - (A minor)

Exercise 30

Exercise 30: C major scale in bass clef, 4/4 time. The notation shows the scale ascending and then descending. Below the staff is a guitar tablature with fret numbers: 3, 0, 2, 3, 0, 2, 4, 5, 5, 4, 2, 0, 3, 2, 0, 3.

Sharps & Flats

Sometimes it can be tricky to work out the order of the sharps and flats in various keys. A couple of analogies can be used to help: the order of sharps are as follows F, C, G, D, A, E, B.

A simple way to remember this order could be as follows: **F**at **C**at **G**ot **D**runk **A**t **E**ast **B**righton...

An example of using this analogy could be:

If a piece of music is in the key of D major, it has 2 sharps. The sharps are F and C.

A piece in the key of E major, the 4 sharps will be F, C, G & D

To remember the flats, you could use something like this: **BEAD - GCF**

An example of using this analogy could be:

If a piece of music is in the key of F major, it has 1 flat. The flat note is B.

A piece in the key of Eb major, the 3 flats will be B, E & A.

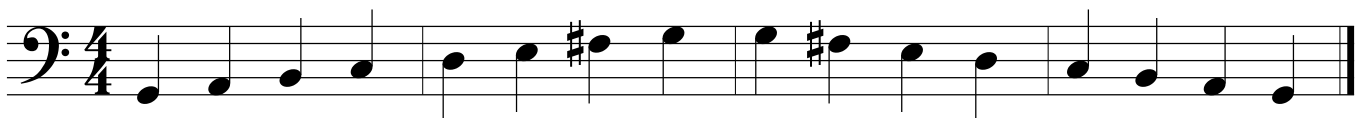


G major Scale - (E minor)

The G major scale is played simply from a low G through 1 octave to the next G on the 1st string. As per the Circle of Keys, there is 1 sharp this scale: F#. This scale is in fact the same as the E minor scale.

In Exercise 31, an accidental is used to show the F#. Exercise 32 simply uses the key signature, and every F will be raised a semitone to F#.

Exercise 31



Exercise 32

Musical notation for Exercise 32, showing the G major scale on the 1st string. The notation is in bass clef, 4/4 time, and consists of a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The scale is played from a low G through one octave to the next G. Below the staff is a tablature (TAB) section with three lines (T, A, B) and fret numbers (0, 2, 4, 0, 0, 4, 2, 0, 3, 2, 0, 3) indicating fingerings for each note.

F major Scale - (D minor)

The F major scale is played simply from a low F through 1 octave to the next F on the 2nd string. As per the Circle of Keys, there is 1 flat this scale: Bb. This scale is in fact the same as the D minor scale.

Exercise 33

Musical notation for Exercise 33, showing the F major scale on the 2nd string. The notation is in bass clef, 4/4 time, and consists of a single staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The scale is played from a low F through one octave to the next F. Below the staff is a tablature (TAB) section with three lines (T, A, B) and fret numbers (1, 3, 0, 1, 3, 0, 2, 3, 3, 2, 0, 3, 1, 0, 3, 1) indicating fingerings for each note.

Lesson 10

Songs with chord charts

Many songs that you might wish to learn can be difficult to find on the internet at times. Often the only thing you maybe be able to find are the lyrics with the chord names listed. These are very basic charts but they are enough to begin working through the song.

Often with the bass, you can use the root note of the chord to begin playing along, but then you need to use your listening skills to work out the timing and any other small variations or runs that might add to the song. Not always the root note of the chord is the accurate bass note, and it doesn't help with the octave etc.

The next sample song is presented just how you might find it on the net, with little information. You can see that all you get is the chords with the lyrics.

Perfect - Ed Sheeran

[INTRO]

G

[VERSE]

 G Em
I found a love for me

 C D
Darling just dive right in, and follow my lead

 G Em
Well I found a girl beautiful and sweet

 C D
I never knew you were the someone waiting for me

[PRE-CHORUS]

 G
Cause we were just kids when we fell in love

 Em C G D
Not knowing what it was, I will not give you up this ti-ime

 G Em
But darling just kiss me slow, your heart is all I own

 C D
And in your eyes you're holding mine

Note: The following page contains the next backing track song to try, using this style of notation.



Backing Track 6

90 bpm

CAPO 1

American Honey - Lady Antebellum C Major

Verse

C
She grew up on the side of the road
Am7
Where the church bells ring and strong love grows
Fmaj7 Dm7
She grew up good, She grew up slow
C
Like American honey

C
Steady as a preacher, free as a weed
Am7
Couldn't wait to get going but wasn't quite ready to leave
Fmaj7 Dm7
So innocent, pure and sweet
C
American honey

Chorus

F C Am G5
There's a wild, wild whisper blowin' in the wind
F C G5
Callin' out my name like a long lost friend
F C Am G5
Oh, I miss those days as the years go by
F
Oh, nothin' sweeter than summertime
C
And American honey

Verse

C
Get caught in the race of this crazy life
Am7
Tryin' to be everything can make you lose your mind
Fmaj7 Dm7
I just wanna go back in time
C
To American honey

Verse

F C Am G5
There's a wild, wild whisper blowin' in the wind
F C G5
Callin' out my name like a long lost friend
F C Am G5
Oh, I miss those days as the years go by
F
Oh, nothin' sweeter than summertime
C
And American honey

Bridge

Am G5 F
Gone for so long now
F C Dm7
I gotta get back to her somehow
C
To American honey

[Instrumental] F C Am G5 F C G5

Chorus

F C Am G5
There's a wild, wild whisper blowin' in the wind
F C G
Callin' out my name like a long lost friend
F C Am G5
Oh, I miss those days as the years go by
F
Oh, nothin' sweeter than summertime
C
And American honey
C
And American honey

Lesson 11

Arpeggio

Arpeggios, often called broken chords, are simply notes from a chord played individually instead of strummed together. Because an arpeggio contains all the notes of its chord, you can use them in your bass lines and link them to what's going on in the chord structure of the piece.

Most of the bass lines we have played in the backing tracks have been based on the root note of the chords. By using an Arpeggio you can become more creative when developing a bass line to a new piece.

The following piece uses Arpeggio's in the key of C, play the piece to get the feel of the chord pattern.

Exercise 34

Exercise 34 is a bass line in 4/4 time, consisting of three staves. The first staff starts with a C chord and contains four measures of arpeggiated notes: C4, E3, G3, C4 (quarter), C4, E3, G3, C4 (quarter), C4, E3, G3, C4 (quarter), and C4, E3, G3, C4 (quarter). The second staff starts with a C chord and contains four measures of arpeggiated notes: C4, E3, G3, C4 (quarter), C4, E3, G3, C4 (quarter), G2, B2, D3, G2 (quarter), G2, B2, D3, G2 (quarter), G2, B2, D3, G2 (quarter), and G2, B2, D3, G2 (quarter). The third staff starts with a C chord and contains two measures of arpeggiated notes: C4, E3, G3, C4 (quarter), C4, E3, G3, C4 (quarter), followed by a whole rest for the final measure.

Using the same chord structure below, write an original bass line using crotchets and rests.

Exercise 35


Exercise 35 is a blank bass line in 4/4 time, consisting of three staves. The first staff starts with a C chord and contains four measures of blank space. The second staff starts with a C chord and contains four measures of blank space. The third staff starts with a C chord and contains two measures of blank space, followed by a double bar line.

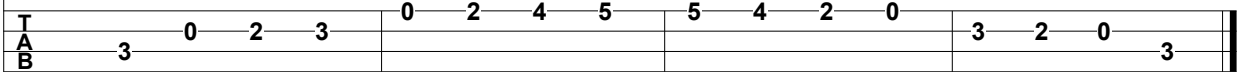
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References

Major Scales (#)


C Major

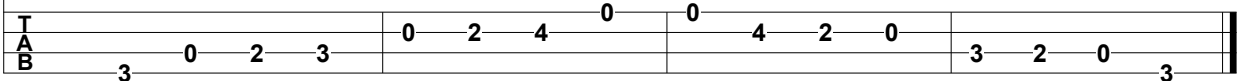
Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

.....

G Major

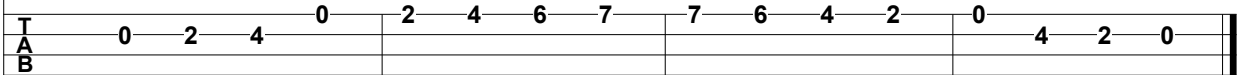
Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

.....

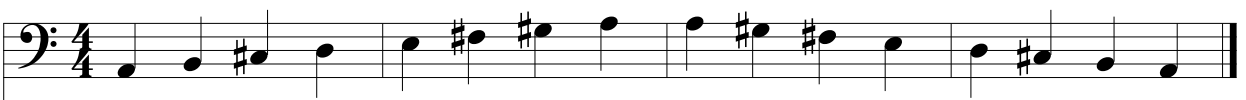
D Major

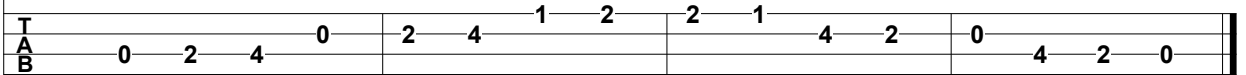
Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

.....


A Major

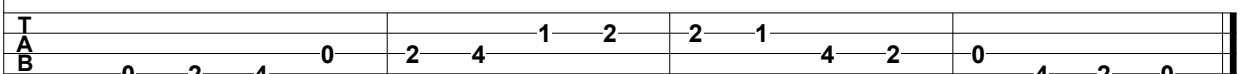
Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

.....

E Major

Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

.....

References

Major Scales (#) - Cont.

B Major

Accidentals

Bass Tab

T																
A	2	4	1	2	4	1	3	4	4	3	1	4	2	1	4	2
B																

.....

F# Major

Accidentals

Bass Tab

T																
A	2	4	1	2	4	1	3	4	4	3	1	4	2	1	4	2
B																

.....

C# Major

Accidentals

Bass Tab

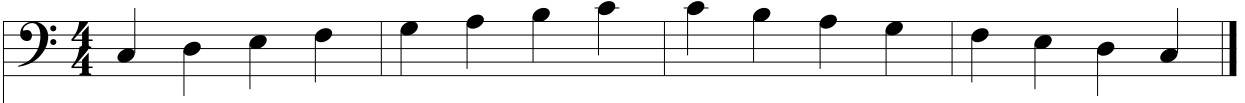
T																
A	4	1	3	4	1	3	5	6	6	5	3	1	4	3	1	4
B																

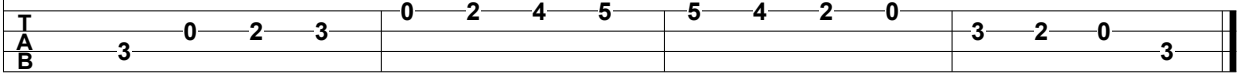
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References

Major Scales (b)


C Major

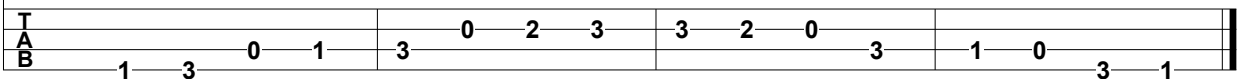
Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

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F Major

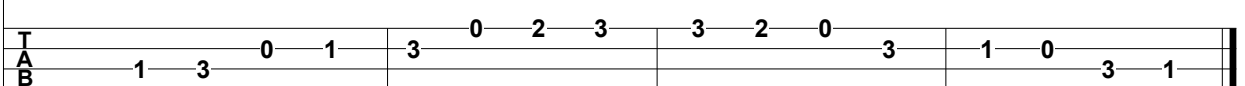
Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

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Bb Major

Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

.....


Eb Major

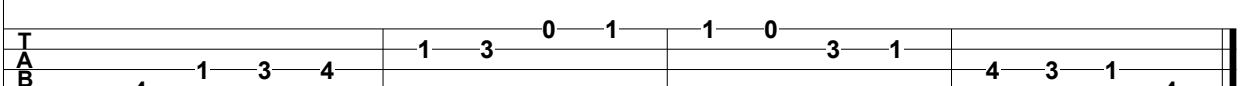
Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

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Ab Major

Accidentals 

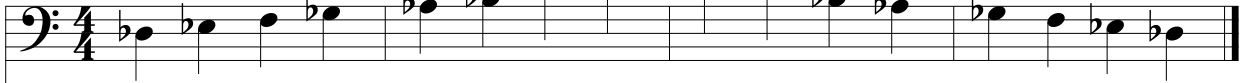
Bass Tab 

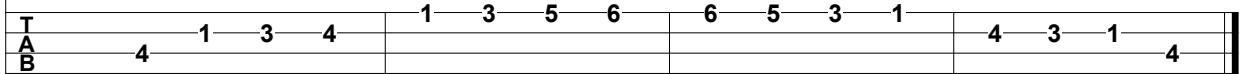
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References

Major Scales (b) - Cont.


Db Major

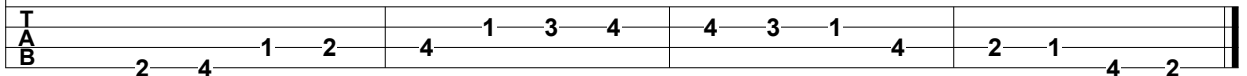
Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

.....


Gb Major

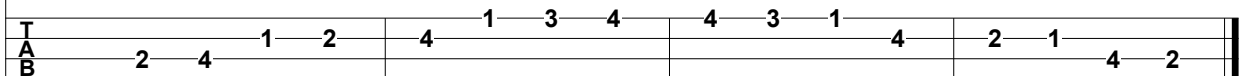
Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

.....

Cb Major

Accidentals 

Bass Tab 

.....

References

Circle of Keys (fifths)

