

# THE BASS

## A QUICK GUIDE

All you need to know about this amazing instrument

### BASS GUITAR & AMPLIFIER

If you want to play bass you should first plug it in to an amplifier (amp). You could play the bass 'unplugged', but it would be too quiet to hear properly. Here are all the parts of the bass and amp that you need to know about...

#### PICKUPS

The pickups have magnets inside that sense the strings' vibrations. These smart devices then turn the vibrations into a signal that can be amplified (made loud) by an amplifier (or amp).

#### FRET BOARD

This is the area on the front of the neck where you place your fingertips.

#### BRIDGE

The strings are fixed at the body end of the bass by the bridge.

#### VOLUME CONTROL

Turn this clockwise (from 0 to 10) to increase the volume of your bass.

#### TONE CONTROL

Turn this clockwise (from 0 to 10) to increase the brightness of your bass's sound.

#### JACK PLUG

Plug a cable in here then plug the other end into your amp.

## STRINGS

The bass's sound starts here. When you pluck a string it vibrates, making a note. How high or low the note sounds (its pitch) depends on where you press down on the string.

## TUNING PEGS

Turn these to get your strings in tune. The best way to tune your bass is with an electronic tuner, or if you don't have one of these you could ask your teacher for some help.

## FRETS

Frets divide the strings into separate notes.

## FRET MARKERS

You can use the fret markers to quickly work out which fret is which. The following frets are usually marked: 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.

## NECK

The strings are stretched across the length of the neck, which is shaped so you can place your fingers and thumb around it to play notes.

## STRAP PINS

Attach a strap to these and you will be able to stand up while playing your bass.

## DID YOU KNOW?



The first bass guitar was invented by a man called Leo Fender. It went on sale in 1951 – over 60 years ago! – and was called the Fender Precision because, unlike the upright bass, the Precision (or P-Bass) had frets so bassists would know *precisely* where to place their fingers to play each note. The P-Bass was such a success that it is still on sale today and most other basses are based on its design.

DOUBLE BASS © WWW.ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

**CABLE** Carries a signal from your bass's pickups to your amp.

## AMPLIFIER

This makes your bass sound much louder than when it's unplugged. It has four basic controls: volume, bass, middle and treble. Volume makes the sound louder. The bass control makes the sound fuller and warmer. Treble is the opposite: it makes your bass sound light and sparkly. Middle is between bass and treble.





# POP

## PART 1

In this lesson you will play your first **pop bassline**. You'll also learn a **new note** and a **new rhythm**

### DID YOU KNOW?



Larry Graham was the bassist for Sly & The Family Stone. He invented the slap bass style where the strings are slapped by the thumb rather than picked with a plectrum or fingers.

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### WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

- ✓ A new note: D
- ✓ Whole- and half-note rhythms

**P**op music is a style of music that's all about making catchy songs that lots of people will like. One Direction, Bruno Mars and Katy Perry are some of the most famous pop acts. Most pop bands use keyboards and synthesizers to produce their

sounds as well as drums, bass and guitars. Pop basslines are usually simple so they complement the song rather than stand out on their own.

### RIFFS & MELODIES

Riffs are short repeated phrases that are used in lots of popular styles of music, especially rock, pop, blues and metal. Melodies are musical phrases that are longer than riffs and are usually sung by a vocalist or played by a lead instrument such as guitar or

keyboard. Although bassists don't normally play a song's melody, they will sometimes play basslines that sound like melodies. These are known as melodic basslines.



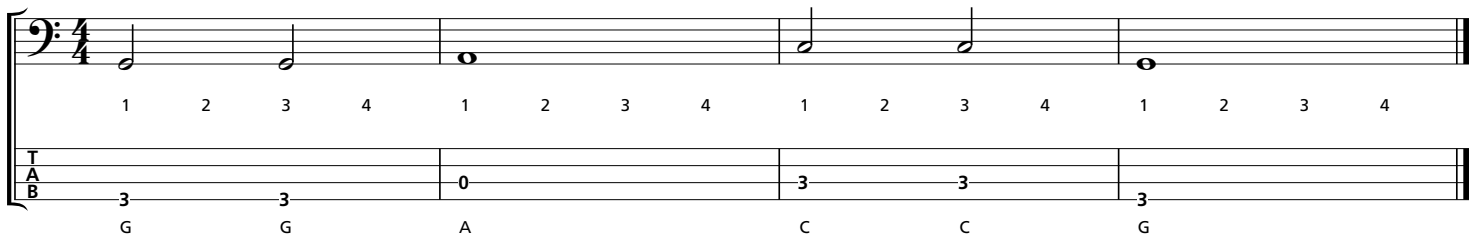
Don't forget that audio is available for all the musical examples and pieces in this book. Full details on how to access the full band mixes and backing tracks can be found on page 4.

### Example 1

### BASSLINE USING WHOLE NOTES & HALF NOTES

Whole notes last for four beats. Half notes last for two beats. This example uses both of these note values. Each half note should ring for two full beats, so try not to leave any gaps in between. Tap your foot or count along to the pulse to help you play the notes for the correct length.

♩=90

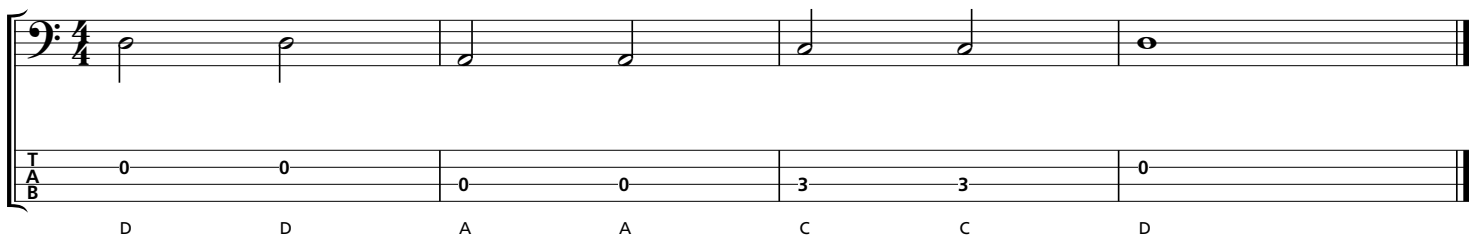


### Example 2

### ADDING THE D NOTE

This exercise adds a D note, played on the open D string. Make sure you remove your finger from the C note in bar 3 to stop it ringing into the final bar.

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### Example 3

### MIXING RHYTHMS

In this example the new half-note rhythm is combined with the quarter-note rhythm. Each bar contains a half note followed by two quarter notes. Tap your foot or count along to the pulse to play the notes in the correct place.

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Teacher's Notes

Teacher's Rating

