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USING THE AUDIO

The audio has been recorded with the bass track entirely on the left channel so that by dialing the balance control on your stereo all the way to the right, the bass track can be completely eliminated. By doing this, you can play along with just the piano and drums, like a real band situation. If you have doubts about what to play, dial the balance control back to the center and listen to the given track. Then dial it out and insert your own playing.

Each track on the recording begins with eight “free” beats ahead of the actual music: four clicks, followed by a spoken count-off, “one-two-three-four.” This is to give the tempo and to show exactly where the beats are so you can start playing exactly together with the recording at the beginning of each example.

To get the most benefit from this recording, record yourself playing with the audio while the bass track is dialed out. Then you can play back the recording you’ve just made and really hear how you sound playing with the band! This is a lot of fun and a very useful learning tool, so please experiment with it.

Okay, that covers some very basic musical info, so let's talk about the bass itself. Some of you will be playing acoustic bass, and others will be playing electric bass, so I will cover some basic technique on both instruments.

First, the position of the hands on both instruments is very important. Take a look at the pictures on the next two pages, and compare them to your own hand position:

BASIC TECHNIQUE



Standing with electric bass



Sitting with electric bass



Standing with acoustic bass



Sitting with acoustic bass



Left hand on electric bass



Right hand on electric bass

Both hands should feel natural and relaxed, and the wrists should not be bent too much. The left hand thumb should support the fingers, so that the pressure to push the string down is between the thumb and the finger. Be careful not to let the left hand collapse so that the palm or heel of the hand is supporting the finger pressure. This is very important! The thumb should never be “peaking” around the front of the neck, but should always be behind it, supporting the fingers. This will help you to hold down each note until you play the next one, so that your bass line sounds smooth and connected, not like a bunch of short, choppy notes.

On acoustic bass, the right hand plucks the strings over the bottom end of the fingerboard. To imitate this sound on electric bass, it makes sense to pluck the string over the end of the fingerboard, rather than back by the bridge. Experiment with this a bit. Pluck some notes by the bridge, over the fingerboard, and at all points in between, and notice the difference in sound.

It's important to get familiar with your instrument, so before you try to do anything, just play some notes and mess around with the bass. Play some high notes, some low ones, play loud and soft, try to pick out a little melody, and just get acquainted with how the bass feels and what it sounds like. Maybe you can even put on an album and try to play along! Have some fun, and then you'll be ready to go on with *Crawl Before You Walk*.



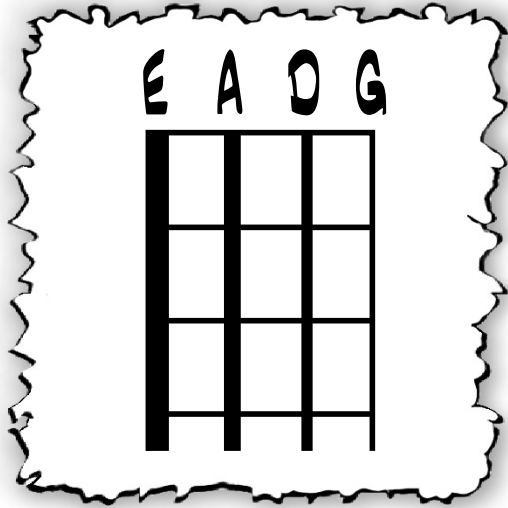
Left hand on acoustic bass



Right hand on acoustic bass

The first thing you need to do when you pull the bass out of the case is to tune it up so that it matches the pitch on the recording. The open strings, from the lowest pitched, fattest one, are E, A, D and G. Check the pitches on your bass and be sure that they match the pitches on the recording.

 **Track 1**



Now we're ready to get started. The first two things that are important to learn are where the notes are on the bass, and what their names are. For now, we will learn just a few notes on each string. The following diagram shows each string with the open string note-name at the top, and the note names for each of the first three frets (or positions, if you're playing fretless or acoustic bass). Look at this diagram closely; play these notes and listen to them until you really feel comfortable and confident that you know where these notes are.

