

ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS

# Bass Guitar

THE COMPLETE STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO PLAYING BASS GUITAR

FULLY ENHANCED AND PACKED WITH EXTRA FEATURES

- EASY TO USE MENU
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- 'PLAYALONGS' SECTION WITH PROFESSIONAL BACKING TRACKS
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- 32-PAGE BOOKLET

BASED ON THE AWARD-WINNING ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS SERIES

DVD

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# First note groove

**A** Verse  $\text{♩} = 112$

two-bar countoff

T								
A								
B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The Verse section consists of a bass line and a guitar tablature. The bass line is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 112 bpm. It features a two-bar countoff followed by eight measures of a steady eighth-note groove. The guitar tablature shows a simple pattern of open strings (0) for the first seven frets across the strings.

**B** Middle

The Middle section consists of a bass line in 4/4 time, continuing the eighth-note groove from the Verse section. It contains eight measures of music.

T								
A								
B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**C** Verse

T								
A								
B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

T								
A								
B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## From A to E

**A** Verse  $\text{♩} = 94$

two-bar countoff

T  
A  
B

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

T  
A

**A**  
**B**

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

**B** Middle

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

**T**  
**A**  
**B**

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

**T**  
**A**  
**B**

0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0

**C** Verse

The first system of the verse consists of two staves. The top staff is a bass clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: F#2, C#3, G#3, F#3, C#3, G#3, F#3, C#3, G#3, F#3, C#3, G#3, F#3, C#3, G#3, and F#3. The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with six lines. It contains 16 zeros, one under each note of the top staff, indicating fretless notes.

The second system of the verse consists of two staves. The top staff is a bass clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a sequence of 16 quarter notes: F#2, C#3, G#3, F#3, C#3, G#3, F#3, C#3, G#3, F#3, C#3, G#3, F#3, C#3, G#3, and F#3. The bottom staff is a guitar TAB with six lines. It contains 16 zeros, one under each note of the top staff, indicating fretless notes. The system ends with a double bar line.



# Up to D

$\text{♩} = 112$

**A** Intro

two-bar countoff

T  
A  
B

**B** Verse I

First system of musical notation for Verse I. It consists of a bass clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is: F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). The guitar tablature below shows: 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0.

Second system of musical notation for Verse I, identical to the first system. It consists of a bass clef staff with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is: F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C#5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). The guitar tablature below shows: 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 | 0 0 0.

**C** Verse 2

The first system of music for Verse 2 consists of two staves. The top staff is a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music, each starting with a dotted quarter note followed by two eighth notes, with a repeat sign at the end of each measure. The notes are G2, A2, and B2. The bottom staff is a guitar TAB staff with three lines. It contains four measures, each with three fret numbers: 0, 0, 0. The fret numbers are connected by horizontal lines.

The second system of music for Verse 2 is identical to the first system. It consists of two staves: a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature, and a guitar TAB staff. The bass staff contains four measures of music, each starting with a dotted quarter note followed by two eighth notes, with a repeat sign at the end of each measure. The notes are G2, A2, and B2. The guitar TAB staff contains four measures, each with three fret numbers: 0, 0, 0. The fret numbers are connected by horizontal lines.

**D** Middle

The first system of music consists of a bass staff and a three-line tablature staff. The bass staff is in the key of D major (two sharps) and contains four measures of music. Each measure begins with a dotted quarter note on D2, followed by an eighth note on E2, and a quarter note on F#2. The tablature staff shows the corresponding fret numbers: 0-0-0 for the first measure, 0-0-0 for the second, 0-0-0 for the third, and 0-0-0 for the fourth.

The second system of music is identical to the first, consisting of a bass staff and a three-line tablature staff. It contains four measures of music in D major, with the same melodic line and fret numbers (0-0-0) as the first system.

**E** Verse 3

The first system of music for Verse 3 consists of two staves. The top staff is a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains five measures of music, each featuring a dotted quarter note followed by two eighth notes and a quarter rest. The notes are G2, A2, and B2. The bottom staff is a guitar TAB staff with five measures, each containing the fret numbers 0-0-0.

The second system of music for Verse 3 also consists of two staves. The top staff is a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains five measures of music. The first four measures are identical to the first system, each featuring a dotted quarter note followed by two eighth notes and a quarter rest. The notes are G2, A2, and B2. The fifth measure contains a whole note G2. The bottom staff is a guitar TAB staff with five measures. The first four measures contain the fret numbers 0-0-0, and the fifth measure contains the fret number 0.

# Your first 12-bar blues

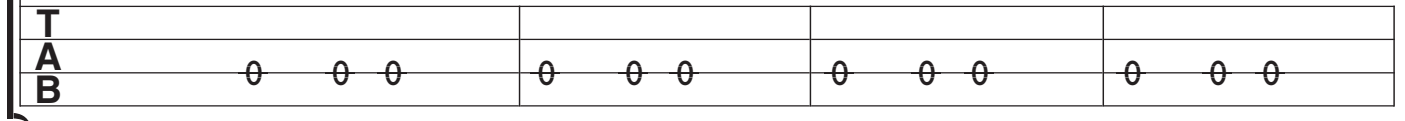
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♩ = 120

A



two-bar countoff



D

A



T  
A  
B

0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0
-------	-------	-------	-------

E D A E A

T  
A  
B

0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	0
-------	-------	-------	-------	---

# The C Major scale

♩ = 106

two-bar countoff

T			2 2 2 2	3 3 3 3	5 5 5 5	2 2 2 2
A	3 3 3 3	5 5 5 5				
B						

T	4 4 4 4	5 5 5 5	5 5 5 5	4 4 4 4	2 2 2 2	
A						5 5 5 5
B						



Musical notation for a bass line exercise. The top staff shows a melodic line in bass clef with a repeat sign and a fermata. The bottom staff shows guitar tablature for strings T, A, and B with fingerings: T (3 3 3 3), A (2 2 2 2), B (5 5 5 5) in the first four bars, and T (3 3 3 3), A ( ), B ( ) in the fifth bar, followed by a final bar with T (3), A ( ), B ( ).

## Speed it up!

$\text{♩} = 106$

*Play 4 times*

Musical notation for a faster bass line exercise in 4/4 time. The top staff shows a melodic line in bass clef with a repeat sign. The bottom staff shows guitar tablature for strings T, A, and B with fingerings: T ( ), A (3 5), B (2 3) in the first bar; T ( ), A ( ), B (5) in the second bar; T (2 4 5), A ( ), B ( ) in the third bar; T (5 4 2), A ( ), B ( ) in the fourth bar; T (3 2), A ( ), B (5 3) in the fifth bar, followed by a final bar with T ( ), A ( ), B ( ).

two-bar countoff

# Exploring arpeggios

$\text{♩} = 106$  *Play 8 times*

two-bar countoff

T  
A  
B

3 2 5 5 5 2 3

$\text{♩} = 106$  *Play 8 times*

two-bar countoff

T  
A  
B

5 8 7 7 7 7 8 5

# Right hand stamina

♩ = 100

two-bar countoff

T			
A			
B	3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3	3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3	3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Musical notation for the first system. The top staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains a continuous eighth-note pattern across three measures. The bottom staff is a TAB staff with the number '3' repeated under each note, indicating a triplet or a specific fretting technique.

Musical notation for the second system. The top staff continues the eighth-note pattern from the first system. It includes a repeat sign (double bar line with dots) and a fermata over the final note. The bottom staff is a TAB staff with the number '3' repeated under each note, indicating a triplet or a specific fretting technique.

# B<sup>b</sup> boogie

♩ = 122

two-bar countoff

T  
A  
B

The musical score consists of a bass line and a guitar TAB. The bass line is written in bass clef, B-flat major, and 4/4 time. It features a two-bar countoff followed by a repeating eighth-note pattern: B-flat, A, G, F, E, D, C, B-flat. The guitar TAB is a three-line staff with fret markers corresponding to the notes in the bass line: 2, 1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 2, 1 for the first bar, and 2, 1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 2, 1 for the second bar.

The first system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is a bass clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a melodic line of eighth notes, grouped in pairs of four across four measures. The lower staff is a guitar TAB staff, consisting of two lines. It contains ten vertical tick marks, with five in each of the two measures, indicating fret positions for the notes in the melody above.

The second system of music also consists of two staves. The upper staff is a bass clef staff with a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a melodic line of eighth notes, grouped in pairs of four across four measures. The final note of the fourth measure is a half note with a fermata. The lower staff is a guitar TAB staff with two lines. It contains ten vertical tick marks, with five in each of the two measures, corresponding to the notes in the melody above. A double bar line with repeat dots is placed after the fifth fret mark in the second measure, and a single bar line is placed after the tenth fret mark in the fourth measure.

# A blues classic

The next example is a 12-bar in the key of E – you’ve already tackled a blues in A so you should be familiar with the structure.

## 1st & 2nd endings

The symbol  $\text{||} \text{:}$  at the end of bar 12 is known as a repeat sign – once you reach that sign you should return to the beginning of the example and start again. Now, check out the brackets

above bars 11 and 12 – these tell you that you should use those bars on the first and second times through the blues only – this will lead you to the repeat sign once more – so return to the top for the third and final time. On the third time you need to leave out the 1st and 2nd endings and skip straight to the 3rd ending, which will take you to the end of the piece – otherwise you’ll end up going round and round in circles!

### Tip

Watch out for the last measure of each 12-bar sequence – it’s a little bit more complicated. Isolate that bar and practise it slowly – it’s a classic blues phrase that’s used to round off the piece.

3.  
E E/G# A A#dim B11 F9 E9

2  
0-0-4-4 0-0-1-1 2-1-0

$\text{♩} = 98$  (  $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$  )

**E**

two-bar countoff

T  
A  
B

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

**A**

T  
A  
B

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0



**E**

T  
A  
B

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

**B** **A** **E**  
1, 2.

T  
A  
B

2-2-2-2-2-2-2-2 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0

The image shows a musical score for guitar in E major. It consists of two staves: a bass staff with a treble clef and a guitar tablature staff. The bass staff contains a melodic line with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket. The guitar tablature staff shows the corresponding fretting for the bass line.

**Chords:** E A7 A#7 B7 | E E/G# A A#dim B|| F9 E9

**Tablature:**

Staff	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
T							
A	0	0	1	2	2	.	.
B	0	0	1	2	2	.	.

The tablature uses standard notation: 0 for open string, numbers 1-4 for frets, and a dot (.) for a natural harmonic. The first ending bracket covers measures 3 through 7.

# Let it rock!

---

This last tune has a four-bar intro before you come in on bass – watch the demonstration and try to familiarize yourself with the structure of the song (like the previous example, it uses first and second endings).

The first four bars of the track don't have a bass part – so count carefully and be ready to come in at letter **A**.

When you reach section **B** you'll find the bass part breaks into 'pumping' eighth notes.

Section **B** uses exactly the same finger positions as the verse.

Section **C** is a repeat of the intro but this time you do join in. You then play sections **A** and **B** again (with the second ending), which will then take you to section **E**, the outro.

## Tip

Watch out for bars 8 and 12 where the chord changes halfway through the bar – try to think ahead, and be prepared for each chord change before it happens.

♩ = 112

**A** Verse 1., 2.

**Intro** **4** **G** **C** **Bm**

two-bar countoff

T	.			.			.		
A	.			.			.		
B	3 3 3			3 3 3			2 2 2		

**Am** **D** **G** **C** **Bm** **Am** **D**

T	0 0 0			.			.			0 0 0		
A	0 0 0			.			.			0 0 0		
B	0 0 0			3 3 3			3 3 3			2 2 2		

**B** Middle

Em G A

C D Em G

T  
A  
B

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

3 3 3 3 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

**C** (Intro)

1.

**A** **C** **Am** **G** **C** **G** **C**

T  
A  
B

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 3-3-3-3-0-0-0-0 3-3-3-3 3-3-3-3

**D** Verse 3

2.

**G** **C** **G** **C** **G** **C** **Bm**

T  
A  
B

3-3-3-3 3-3-3-3 3-3-3-3 2-2-2-2

Am D G C Bm Am D

The first system consists of a bass staff and a guitar TAB staff. The bass staff is in the key of D major (one sharp) and contains a sequence of notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4. The guitar TAB staff shows the following fret numbers: 0-0-0, 3-3-3, 3-3-3, 2-2-2, 0-0-0.

**E** G C G C C G/B Am G

The second system consists of a bass staff and a guitar TAB staff. The bass staff is in the key of D major (one sharp) and contains a sequence of notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4. The guitar TAB staff shows the following fret numbers: 3-3-3, 3, 3-3-3, 3, 3-2-0, 3.

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