

THE BASICS

Posture

Sit on the edge of your chair (or stand), and always keep your:

- Spine straight and tall
- Shoulders back and relaxed
- Feet flat on the floor

Instrument & Left Hand Position

Your instrument should be fully supported by the strap when standing, and rests on top of your right leg when seated. Point the instrument neck slightly upwards. Your left hand helps balance the instrument—place the pad of your left thumb on the back side of the neck and curve the fingers just above the strings.

Producing The Essential Tone

Good bass players learn to produce a clean sound with a clear start to each tone and an even volume between tones. Except for the 4 open strings, your left hand “selects” a note by pressing down a string just behind a fret, and holding it for the entire length of the note. Your right hand “plays” the note by pulling across the string to start it vibrating.

STARTING THE TONE

- Rest your thumb on the E (largest) string or on the top edge of the pickup.
- Pull across the G (smallest) string with your index finger so that the finger comes to rest on the next string (D).
- Make the same tone by playing the G string with your middle finger.
- Play 2 tones on each string, with alternating index finger/middle finger.
- Strive for an even volume and clear start to each tone.

STOPPING THE TONE (DAMPENING)

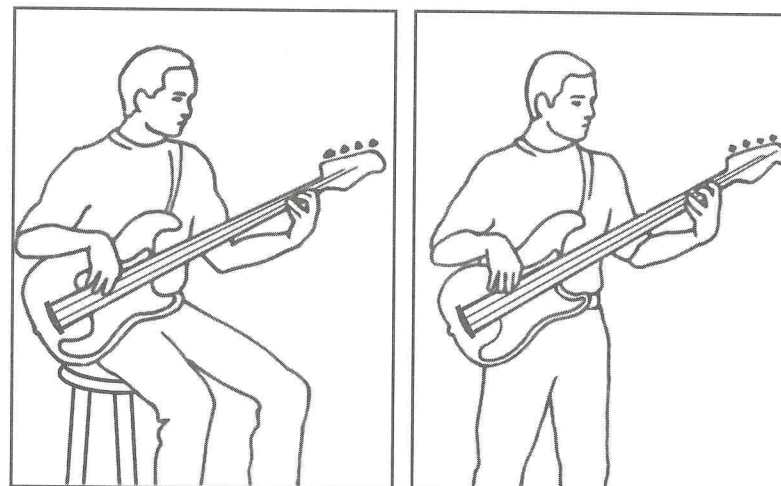
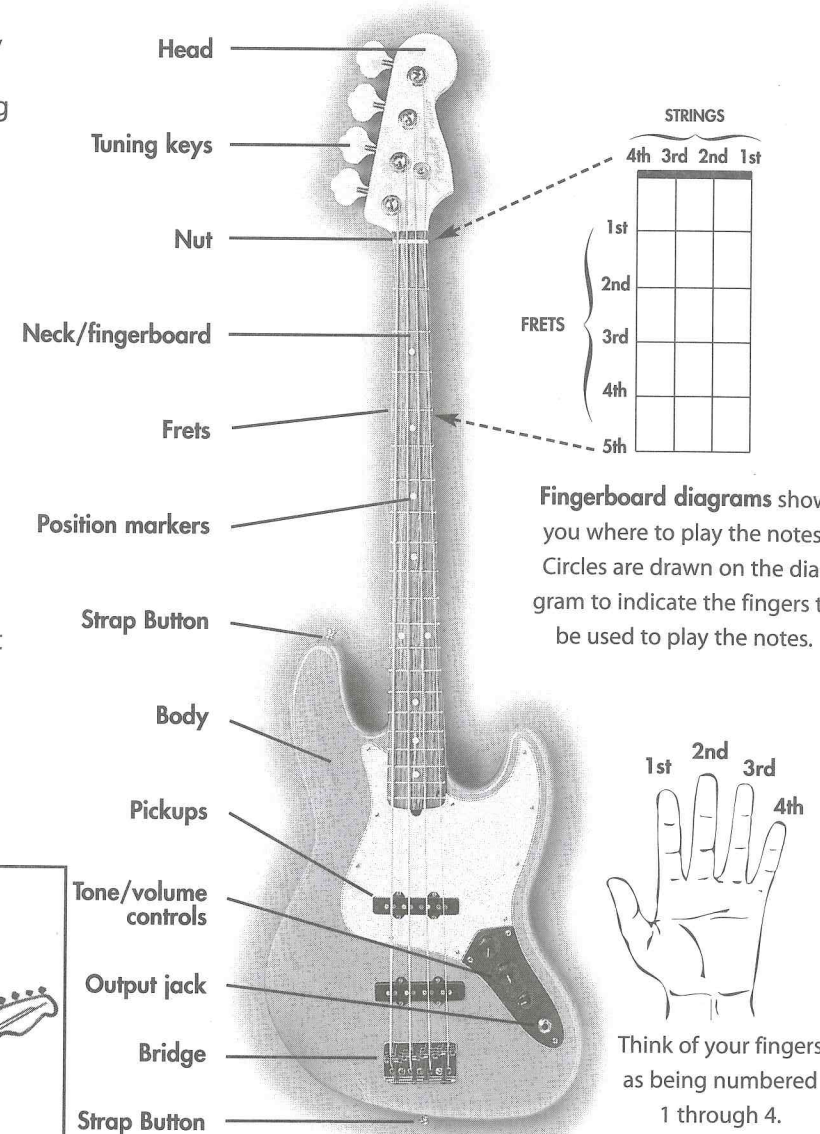
- Stop a tone by gently touching the string with either hand.
- Fretted tones can also be stopped by lifting the left hand finger which was pressing down the string, but keeping the finger on the string.

Taking Care Of Your Instrument

- Be sure your amplifier is turned off before plugging-in or unplugging the audio cable connecting it to your instrument.
- When unplugging a cable, hold it by the plug (not by the wire).
- After playing, wipe off the instrument and strings with a clean soft cloth. Return the instrument to its case.
- Close all the latches on your case when the instrument is inside.
- Keep all 4 strings in tune (at normal tension) to prevent warping of the neck.
- Your case is designed to hold only specific objects. If you force anything else into the case, it may damage your instrument.

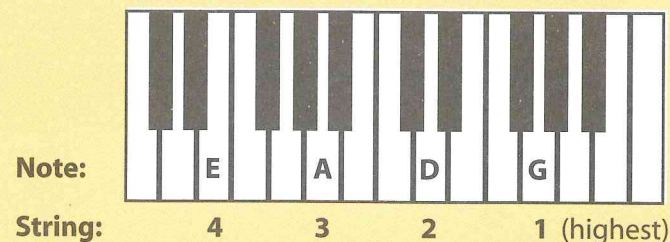
Getting It Together

- Step 1** Securely attach the strap to the strap buttons, adjusting it so that the bass is at the correct height (approximately waist-high) and playing angle.
- Step 2** With the amplifier off, plug the audio cable into the bass and the amplifier. Turn on the amplifier and set the volume.
- Step 3** LEFT HAND: Place the pad of your left thumb on the back side of the neck. Your fingers should be relaxed and curved, just above the strings.
- Step 4** RIGHT HAND: Rest your right thumb on the E (largest) string or on the top edge of the pickup. Rest the pad of your index finger on the G (smallest) string.
- Step 5** Always sit or stand tall when playing, with feet flat on the floor and with arms and shoulders relaxed. Check your playing position with the illustrations:



TUNING THE ELECTRIC BASS

Tuning means setting the correct pitch (higher or lower tone) of each string. This is adjusted by tightening or loosening the tuning keys on the head of the bass. Your teacher can help you tune to the 4 notes on your CD—found on track 1—or to the notes on a piano:



Many bass players use an **Electronic Tuner** which “listens” to each string and indicates whether it is too high or low. You can learn to use **Relative Tuning** by comparing one string with another. After one string is tuned, it is compared

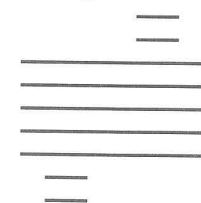
READING MUSIC

Identify and draw each of these symbols:

Music Staff



Ledger Lines



Measures & Bar Lines

