

Published based on [Learning Bass - For Beginners](#)

Learning Bass - For Beginners

Bass, a simple instrument to play but yet very hard to master. For a beginner, you only need to learn how to play one note at the time, unlike multiple notes with a piano or guitar player, and you only have your fingers to worry about, unlike a drum player.

This article is for those who want to learn the basics of bass playing. This is written for those that are right-handed. For you left-handed players, just switch the hands around. Fortunately bass makers make the left handed instruments in a way you just can switch hands.

Let's start with the first lesson. Hold your right arm and hand straight out (parallel to the ground) and release all of the muscles in your hand. Look at your hand and notice the position your fingers are in. Make your hand a flat, hard surface keeping your arm parallel to the ground. Place your index and middle fingers on the flat surface so that the fingertips of your index and middle fingers are on the tabletop and both fingertips are touching each other. Raise your index finger to a comfortable height and bring it back on the table. When you bring your index finger down, raise your middle finger to a comfortable height and then bring it back down, raising your index finger when your middle finger hits the table. Make sure that when one finger is in the air, the other finger is on the table. Slowly start this process and then increase speed while decreasing the distance between the tabletop and your fingers, and you will see difference after some days.

When you are done with the last exercise, you're ready to pick up an instrument. Sit down with your feet flat on the floor and place the instrument on your right thigh so that the strings are facing away from your body. There should be a slope on the body of the instrument that easily allows for this. Now with your right forearm, position the instrument so that it is resting on both your right thigh and against your body. You'll want to hold the neck of the instrument at first to provide stability, but you should be able to comfortably hold the instrument with only your right forearm, right thigh, and body. Get used to the feeling of holding the instrument without using the left hand, because as we start to play, you won't be able to depend on the left hand to support the instrument.

Now you're ready to start to play. Place your right thumb on the E string (the fat string that is closest to you) midway between the end of the fingerboard and the pickups. If your instrument does not have pickups, place your thumb approximately two inches beyond the end of the fingerboard so that the string lies across the "meaty" part of the finger. Now place your index and middle fingers on the D string (two strings away from the E string, the string that is the second farthest away from you). Hold your fingers together as you did on the tabletop. Your fingers should be situated in such a way so that the fleshy part of each finger is on the string your fingernails are facing away from you, and approximately 1/2" of each finger will lie below the string. Also, your palm should be facing the strings. Now, pick up your index finger and place it on the G string (one string above the D string, the farthest string away from you) in the same manner that you had it on the D string and move it back to the D string, plucking the G string in the process. (Note: do not try to force the G string to come back to the D string, there should be little in the way of pressure that you're putting on the G string). After plucking the G string, let your index finger rest on the D string again, and move your middle finger in the same process. Repeat this pattern increasing speed, but make sure you do not lose accuracy with each pluck.

Now we're ready for the left hand. Now place your left index finger (first finger for future reference) just to the left of the first fret on the D string (so that it's touching the fret, but not on it). Place your left middle finger (second finger for future reference) just to the left of the second fret, your left ring finger (third finger for future reference) just to the left of the third fret, and your left pinkie finger (fourth finger for future reference) just to the left of the fourth fret. Place your left thumb on the back of the neck, opposite of your second finger, so that it lies perpendicular to the neck. Make sure you're using your fingertips to hold down the string. Hold that position for a while. It may be uncomfortable, but it's something that you have to get used to.

Now we're going to combine left hand technique along with right hand technique. On the G string, play the open string, then place your first finger on the first fret and play the string again (this will produce the pitch of A), then play the open string again (G). Continue this process until you feel comfortable with it, increasing speed each time you do it. After you feel comfortable with that, place the first finger on the first fret, play the note, and then place the second finger on the second fret play the note (Bb), then play the G again. Continue this process with all four fingers (open-1-open, 1-2-1, 2-3-2, 3-4-3). Then go onto new pattern: open-1-open, open-2-open, open-3-open, open-4-open, 1-2-1, 1-3-1, etc . . . Practice this pattern on each string. After you've mastered that, start with your

first finger on the second fret and repeat the pattern, then with your first finger on the third fret, etc. . . .

Now we're ready to shift. Start with your left hand in the first position I taught you (first finger on first fret) and move your entire hand so that your first hand is on the second fret and your fingers are placed so that there is one per fret (your pinkie or fourth finger is on the 5th fret). Now go back to the first position I taught you and shift your hand so that your hand remains in position but your first finger is on the third fret, etc. After you've gone all of the way up the fingerboard, start at the second fret and repeat the process and travel all of the way up the fingerboard. Then position your hand so that your fourth finger is at the uppermost fret (because of differences in bass design, there is no specific fret number or pitch of the uppermost fret) and re-position your hand so that your fourth finger now lies on the second-to-last fret. Replace your hand at the top of the fingerboard and repeat the last step so that you end with your pinkie finger on the third-to-last fret. Repeat this all the way down the fingerboard. Then, start with your pinkie finger on the second-to-last fret and repeat the previous procedure. Repeat this on each string until you feel completely comfortable with these procedures.

Now you're ready to begin reading music and playing some "real" bass guitar. Unfortunately I know that there are MANY sources available that are more useful than I can be. I'd suggest purchasing some books (Mel Bay is great for beginning bass), and remember to always have fun!

Original Source : [Mel Bay](#)

Fetch practical advice about [blogging internet](#) - check out quoted webpage.

You can also find this article published on [Learning Bass - For Beginners](#)