

The Bass-ics

Why are we learning this? Bass lines are the foundation of most pieces of music. It is important to be able to understand what makes a good bass line and read bass clef notes for GCSE music, especially for composition.

The Bass-ics? What is that??

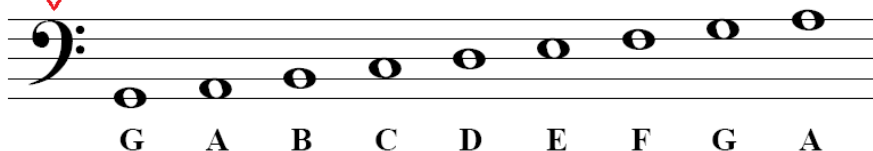
- The Bass-ics is our clever play on words meaning that we will be learning the basic elements of a good bass line. Get it....Bass-ics?
- A **bass line** is the foundation stone of a piece of music. It is the lowest part of the music. It helps set the mood, keep the rhythm, and can be important to get the right style or genre of a piece.
- This is true all the way from Baroque music all the way to Hip Hop and Grime today.
- A bassline can be quite repetitive – a **ground bass** for example is a short bass line idea that repeats throughout an entire song, even when the chords or melody changes above it.
- Most bass lines are played by lower pitched instruments such as bass guitar, cello, double bass or left hand piano. As they are lower instruments, they read **bass clef**. In bass clef, the notes are in a different place on the staff compared to the treble clef we have read before.

Composing a good bass line...

- Stick to using only a few notes – keep it simple.
- Make sure the notes you used fit with the chords you have chosen above.
- Start with a basic rhythm such as minims – you can jazz the rhythms up later on when you are happy with the notes
- Create a sequence where possible – repeating ideas shifted up or down will help make your bass line memorable.
- Are you creating a ground bass, or will your bass line change depending on the section of your song?

Bass Clef

Bass Clef Notes



Keywords

Bass line	The lowest part/layer in a piece of music. Often played by bass guitar, cello etc.
Ground Bass	A short musical idea in the bass parts that is constantly repeated whilst other parts of the music change over the top.
Ostinato	A short repeating pattern
Bass Clef	The bass clef is the notes that lower pitched instruments read (see below)
Melody	The main tune of the music – the most prominent layer (e.g the vocals in a pop song).
Sequence	When a musical idea is repeated but up/down in pitch. Often used to form a catchy melody or bassline
Tempo	The speed of a piece of music
BPM	Beats per minute – how fast the music is when you calculate how many beats there are per minute.
Rhythm	The pattern of beats of a piece of music and the types of notes they use.