

ELECTRIC BASS

History of the instrument:

The Electric Bass was invented by Leo Fender in 1951, the first model was called the "Precision Bass" or just "P-Bass".

Online educational educators/resources:

Damien Erskine: <https://www.basseducation.com/>

Ariane Cap: <https://arisbassblog.com/>

Scott Devine: <https://scottsbasslessons.com/>

Places to buy instruments/books:

Sweetwater Sound: <https://www.sweetwater.com/>

Musician's Friend: <https://www.musiciansfriend.com/>

J.W. Pepper: www.jwpepper.com

Recommended book for beginning reading and playing in band: "Standard of Excellence, Book 1 for Electric Bass"

A good budget friendly option for beginners is the "Squier Affinity" line from the Fender company.

Also, buying used can be a good option as long as there is a good return policy.

String brands: D'Addario and Thomastik (round wound strings are "brighter" and flat wound strings are "darker")

Notable players:

James Jamerson (played with numerous Motown/R&B artists)

John Paul Jones (Led Zeppelin)

Paul McCartney (The Beatles)

Jaco Pastorius (Weather Report-jazz fusion)

Victor Wooten (Bela Fleck and the Flecktones-slap bass, extended techniques)

Cliff Burton (Metallica)

Technique Tips:

Stay relaxed/natural posture “You play the bass, the bass doesn’t play you!”

Fretting hand “the claw”:

1. curved fingers
2. thumb behind middle finger
3. push the strings down with fretting finger at a 45 degree angle (not the exact tip/not on the flat pad)
4. the 1st finger is the only “loner”, keep fingers close, or in contact with the strings.

Picking hand:

1. Two approaches to the thumb:
 - A. resting the thumb on the pick up
 - B. “floating thumb” -the thumb moves with the picking fingers-especially useful for 5 and 6 string basses.
2. Use the big knuckles to move the picking fingers.
3. Pick into the next string up (if picking the G string, the picking finger should end up resting on the D string after plucking) “follow through”
4. Strive for consistency between the 1st and 2nd fingers when picking

Strength building: “The Spider Finger Exercise”

Fingering hand: one finger per fret, starting on the G string-12th, 13th, 14th, 15th frets using the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th fingers

-Use various picking patterns and note combinations to build strength/coordination (creating your own exercises).

-Move down the fretboard and to the lower strings as strength is gained.