



# BASS GUITAR GUIDELINES

1. Sensitive to the Holy Spirit
2. Working knowledge of the scales of A, C, D, E, F, G, Em, Am, Dm
3. Understands 1-4-5 method
4. A firm understanding of the 100% rule
5. Play cleanly - one note at a time - no ringing strings
6. Lock in with drummer
7. Play in time with the metronome
8. Attentive to song leader during praise
9. Understands E.Q., volume

The bass guitar has its very own large part of the sound spectrum and therefore has a pretty important job, "hold down the low end". This expression simply means that since you're the only musician down there, play solid. Playing "solid" (accurate in timing and note) seems to be the most talked about thing amongst bass players, and the biggest complement one bass player could give another. Let's focus on what it takes to play solid.

1. Working knowledge of the scales of A, C, D, E, F, G, Em, Am, Dm. I won't go into great detail, but if you're weak in a key, practice the scale of that key and get comfortable with where the 1's, 4's, and 5's are in that key.
2. Timing has way more to do with playing solid than you may give it credit. With the bass it is reasonably easy to make the drummer speed up or slow down. The song leader might look back at the drummer to find out why we've sped up, but it just might have been sped up by the bass. This can be done on purpose, but if you're unaware, it will happen on accident.
3. Attempt to get your plucking pattern from the bass drum kick. It's not always the same, but for troubleshooting situations it will always shed some light on the issue.
4. The bass is a surprisingly dynamic instrument. Be aware of your plucking intensity throughout a song. You can adjust the knobs for volume, but your fingers create the tone and dynamic control. The bass has probably the biggest impact on pulling the rest of the band into a chorus or a more intense groove. Likewise to bring the band back down, a single note held long creates a peace that the band will follow right down into a soft verse.
5. At the end of a song, (softer songs usually) the last note ringing is usually the bass. If you put your hand on the strings to stop the note, sometimes you can actually see the congregation open their eyes and look up on stage to see what will happen next. If you allow the note to fade away, or stop the ringing very gradually, people will often times keep their eyes closed and continue to worship. We can do nothing in ourselves to make people worship, but there are things we do that can make them stop worshipping. Our goal is to give them every opportunity to worship.