



**SCOTT'S
BASS
LESSONS**



FREE **LESSON** **BOOK**

**How to Master Your Entire
Fretboard in 7 Steps**



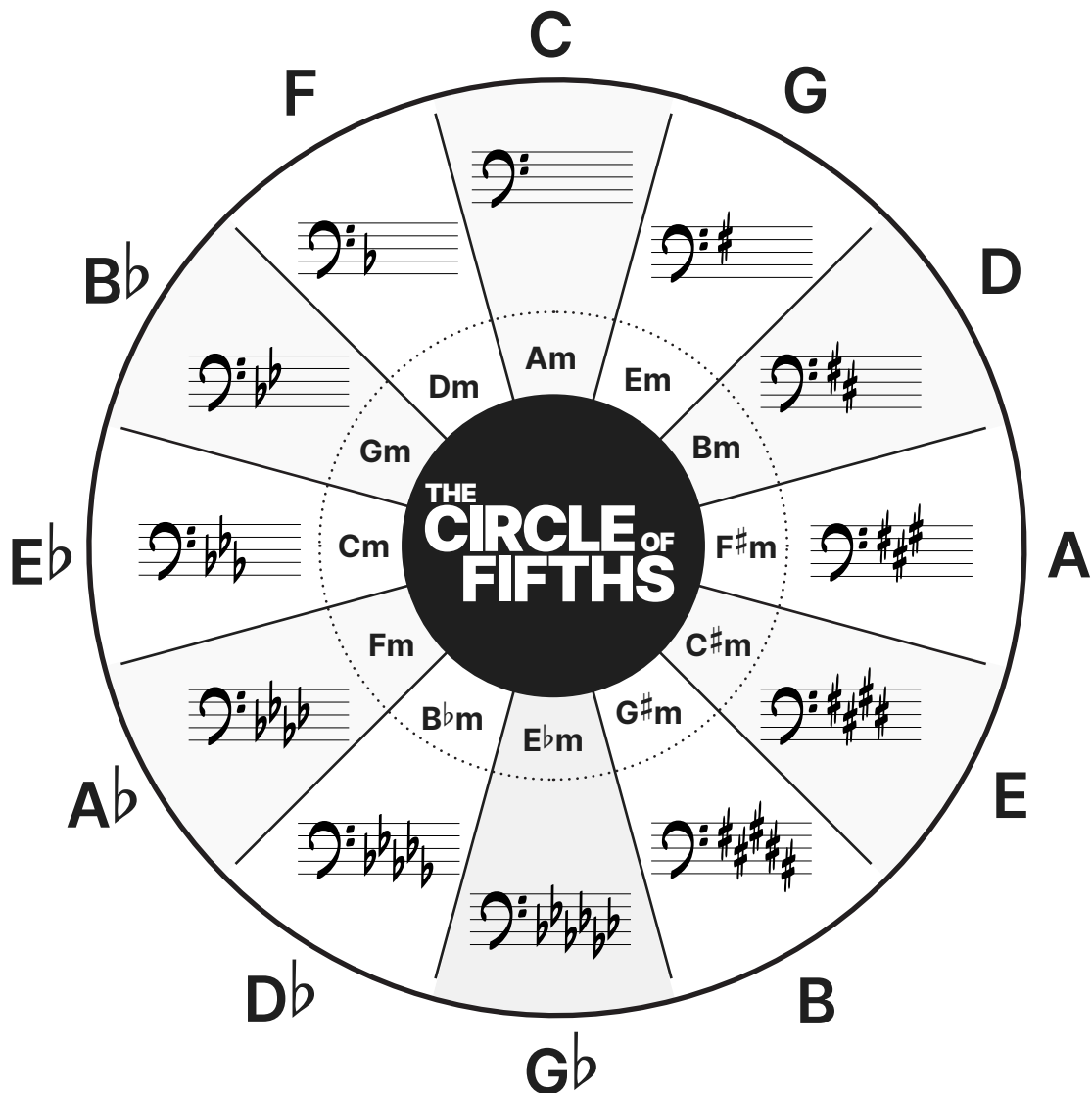
How to Master Your Entire Fretboard in 7 Steps



Have you ever thought of how amazingly helpful it would be if you could learn every note on the fretboard, and be able to navigate the neck with ease? In this lesson, Scott Devine breaks down his methodical seven-step process with specific details of what you need to do, and in what order, to conquer this common bass hurdle.

Background Information

There are two things you'll need to know before we dive into the Seven Steps. First, you'll need to familiarize yourself (if you haven't already) with the **Circle of Fifths**, a framework used to organize the notes (and keys) of the musical scale that will be used to guide the exercises in this lesson. There's a lot of information in the Circle of Fifths diagram shown here that goes beyond the scope of this lesson. All you need to look at for now are the **outer letter (note) names** and their order when moving counterclockwise around the circle:



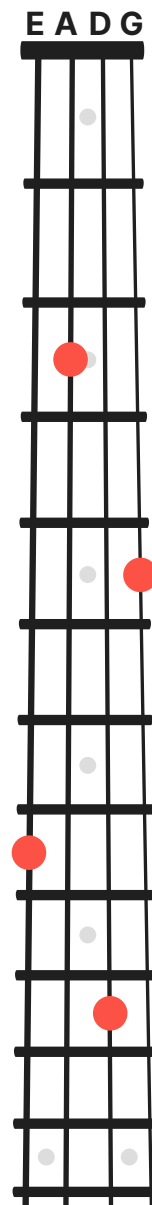
But, how many notes are we actually going to learn on the fretboard? Well, the second thing you need to know is that there are only **12 notes** that exist on the bass! And each of those notes exists only **once** on each string below the twelfth fret.

STEP 01 Get Familiar With the Exercise

Begin by simply finding where all the *C* notes are on each string below the 12th fret on the fretboard. (See the diagram to the right.) The goal here is just to understand what we want to do in the rest of the steps of this lesson.

Do not try to memorize a pattern here. And there's also no need to use a metronome... yet!

But try a couple other notes. Just to get the hang of it.

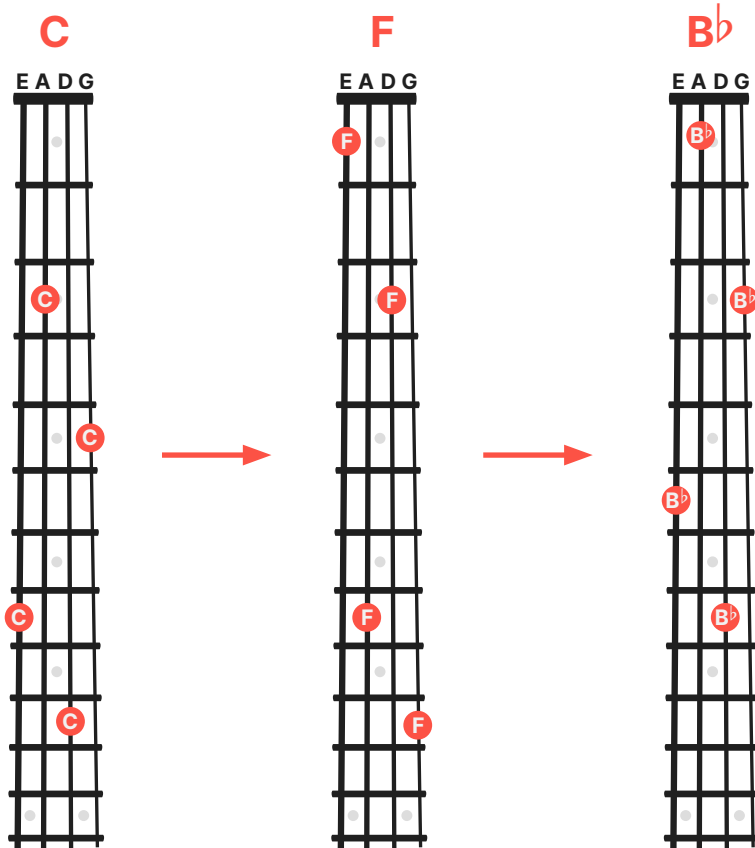
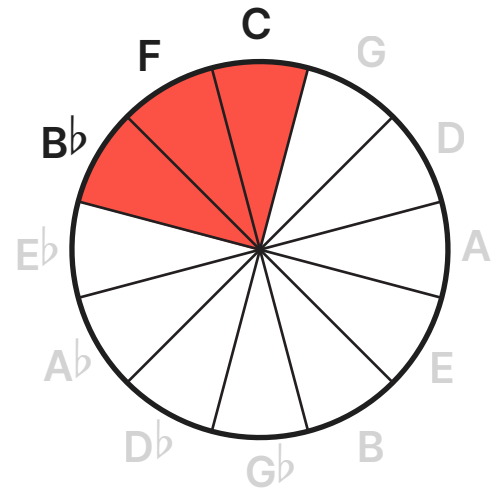


STEP 02 Break the Circle Into Groups of 3

Next, break the circle of fifths into **four groups** of three notes each.

The first group of notes will be **C, F, and B^b**. Feel free to ignore the other nine notes for now!

Next, run the exercise from Step 01 using just these *three* notes. Start with C, and play each C note beginning on the E string and finishing on the G string, then reverse the order. Do this over the first twelve frets of the fretboard. Then move to F, and finally B^b. Play at your own pace and don't rush.



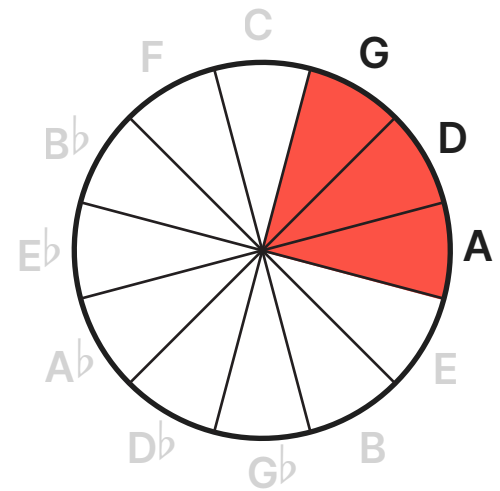
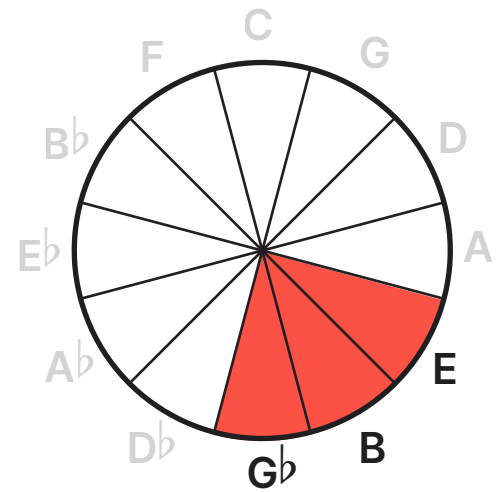
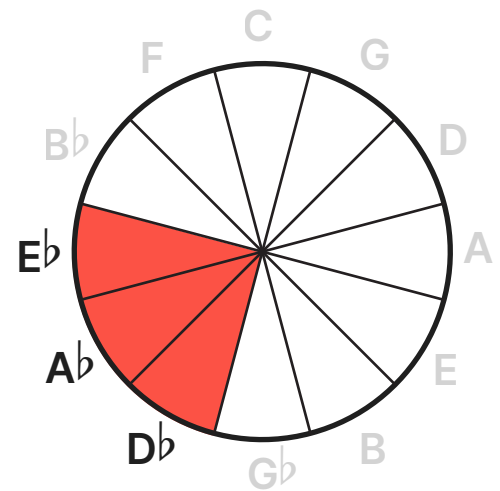
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Take your time and work at your own pace—this may take you a day, or even a week *or more* to get used to. But be sure you have these three notes nailed down before you even think of moving on to other notes.

When you're ready, move on to the *next* three notes— E^b , A^b and D^b —and repeat the exercise.

Finally, repeat the process for the remaining two groups of three notes, G^b , B and E, then A, D and G.

Keep in mind as you're repeating these exercise: you're actually working on the stuff that will make a difference in your bass playing—you're *actually learning the fretboard!*



"This is the best exercise I've ever used with any of my students."

STEP 03 Introduce the Metronome

Step 03 is a repeat of the previous step, but this time with just a little added pressure by adding a metronome into the mix.

Set your metronome to a slow tempo of, say, 40 bpm. Work your way through the same four groups of three notes from Step 02. Remember, one single group may take you some time to get comfortable with, so work at your own pace.

STEP 04 Run the Entire Circle

You knew it was coming! Step 04 in learning the fretboard is to play our now-familiar exercise over the *entire* circle of fifths, with the metronome still set at 40 bpm.

C → F → B^b → E^b → A^b → D^b → G^b → B → E → A → D → G

You can likely expect this step to take quite a bit of time until you're comfortable. Keep up the great work!

STEP 05 Break the Circle Into Pairs

Next, we'll break the circle of fifths into **6 groups** of 2 notes each:

C and F, B \flat and E \flat , A \flat and D \flat , G \flat and B, E and A, and D and G.

In this exercise, we'll play "up" the strings for the first note, then "down" the strings for the second—for example, play all the C notes starting on the E string and ending on the G string, then play all the F notes starting on the G string and ending on the E string.

Repeat going "up and down" one pair of notes until you're comfortable, then move to the next.

STEP 06 Run the Entire Circle

In Step 06, play the entire circle of fifths, alternating moving "up" and "down" the strings for each note. Essentially, we're playing all the exercises from Step 05 back to back to back.

STEP 07 Increase the Speed

Finally, gradually increase the tempo on your metronome and repeat Step 06 working towards a final tempo of **80 bpm**. It's going to take you a little bit of time to get there!

"If you just do this lesson, it will really help you to nail these notes down, and actually learn them once and for all!"

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