

# 10

---

## Performing A Song



## Following a Bass Guitar Chart

You have learned so much in these 9 Lessons, it is time to start putting it all into practice by playing a song.

This lesson focuses on playing a song whilst following the music from a bass guitar chart. A **bass guitar chart**, or **bass guitar guide**, is the music **session bassists** are given to follow when they are asked to perform a tune, be it **live**, or in a **recording session**.

To do this though we need to prepare ourselves...

---

## Understanding the Chart

Let's go through the chart together step by step looking at each bit and understanding what the chart is asking us to do.

### STEP ONE

The first thing you will see is the name of the tune 'The First Time' and the name of the **composer**. The title is the important one, as if you had a number of songs to play it is essential that you play the correct one!

### STEP TWO

At the top left hand side before the tune starts you will see the note, '**4 clicks**'. This means that you will hear four clicks before the tune starts. This will help count you into the song.

### STEP THREE

Next is the **time signature** C which is the sign for **common time** and means there are 4 beats in each bar. This is familiar territory for you.

### Lesson Objectives

- Introduce a piece of music to be played on the electric bass guitar.
- Follow a **bass guitar chart**.
- Apply the learning points developed in *Lessons 1–9* focusing on:
  1. Fluency of performance through string crossing and fingerboard symmetry.
  2. Timekeeping.
  3. Playing bass grooves with a band.
  4. Playing octave shapes.
  5. Reading pitch, rhythm and note values.



## STEP FOUR

The first thing you play is a 6 bar pattern using whole notes and half notes. This generates quite a relaxed feel and you will realise later that this contributes significantly to the way the track builds dynamically.

If you look at bar 6 you will see that we have put in a Double Bar Line. These are used to denote a new section and in this instance it reflects the end of the 6 bar verse pattern. Bars 7 to 12 are still the verse, but the bass groove has changed to Quarter notes, reflecting a change in mood in the piece.

## STEP FIVE

So after you have played the verse you are then ready to move into the Chorus. You will notice from the chart that the double bar line shows the end of the Verse and the beginning of the Chorus at bar 13.

The dynamic changes again and goes up a gear in intensity with the rhythm now using steady eighth notes.

Now there is a Run at bars 16 and 20 which helps highlight the change in chords in the sequence and you change rhythm to two quarter notes and 4 eighth notes. This is played by the whole band so you are looking to play this very tightly and accurately. I would be tempted to just run it through a few times on your own to familiarise yourself with the notes and fingering. Feel free to use the looping function on the BassXtractor to play along with.

## STEP SIX

The second verse returns to the same rhythm as the first verse for the first six bars, but notice that we are playing the A, F and G lower on the fingerboard. In the second half of the verse though we have the Quarter note pattern again, but this time we want you to use your Octave Shape skills to add flavour to the bass groove. This is a challenging section and will almost certainly require you to practise around a few times before attempting the song.

## STEP SEVEN

Chorus 2 is pretty much the same as Chorus 1, save for the fact that the runs are slightly different at bars 36 and 40. This time parts of the rhythm contrast with the rhythm in the band to create a slightly different effect. I would run those a few times to understand the fingering and how the run sits with the rest of the band.

## STEP EIGHT

The last verse has more energy than the previous verses and you are fundamentally playing an eighth note groove. Be mindful though that in bar 42 the F moves to the G on the '+' of 2 which may require a little practise. In bar 46 the G is on the 3rd beat. These small variations are common in music and being able to cope is an essential skill for the modern musician.

The bass part follows the phrasing of the guitar and piano at bars 44 and 45 with the use of whole and half notes before returning to the eighth note feel and finishing with one bar of C in bar 47.

Hold that note for the whole bar and finish. The word ***Fine*** at the bottom of the piece means 'finish'.

## STEP NINE

Now, I would suggest that you watch and listen to the multimedia files and follow the chart through a couple of times. Once you have done that have a go yourself. You can play with the bassist or mute the bass track so that you can play with the band on your own.

Remember to:

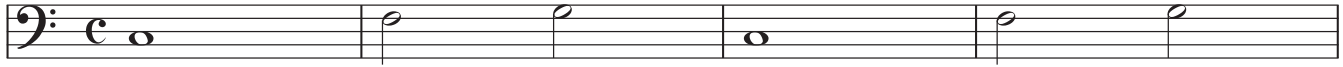
1. Concentrate.
2. Count.
3. Look at the chart as you play.
4. Cycle the difficult bits and practise them.
5. Slow it down to a tempo you can play and read at.
6. Have fun!

Brian Greene/Gigajam Bass School  
Arranged by Terry Gregory

# The First Time

4 Clicks

1 Verse 1



5 6



7



9



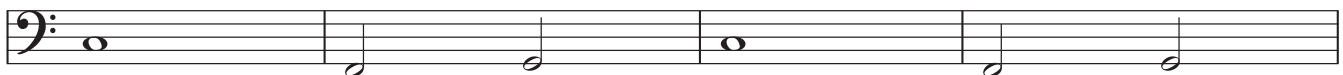
13 Chorus 1



17



21 Verse 2



2

25



29



33 Chorus 2



37



41 Verse 3



45



Fine