

# MEMORIZE THE BASS FRETBOARD

Are you tired of looking at the fretboard and feeling LOST?

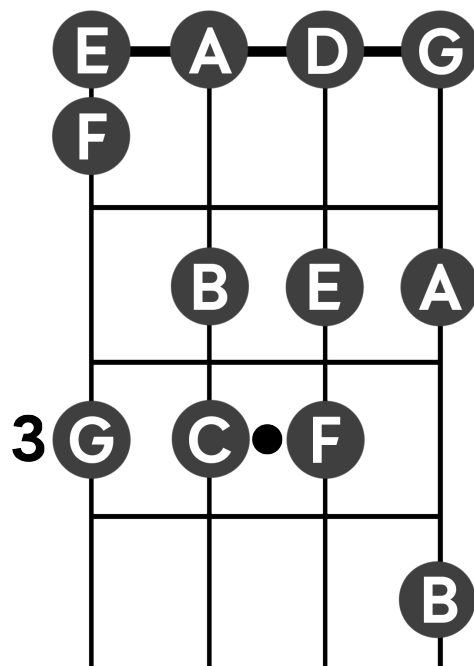
Well, me too. I'm also tired of you feeling lost. And also just generally tired. What were we talking about?

Oh yeah - **memorizing the bass fretboard**, [like I talked about in this Youtube video](#).

Here's all the note charts and other resources you'll need to get from 'dazed and confused' to 'amazed and bemused'.

## 1 - Money Notes

The easiest place to start with fretboard memorization - learning the notes that are used most often in actual bass playing. They're the plain-letter-name notes within the first 4 frets of each string.



## 2 - Say 'n' Play

But learning the fretboard isn't just about memorizing - you also need to know how to navigate up and down using the musical alphabet.

[If you need help learning the musical alphabet, this video teaches it in depth \(and also the money notes, win win\).](#)

[And here's an in-depth article on fretboard basics if you need more support.](#)

So here's how to do say 'n' play:

- **Play** each fret up and down on a string
- **Say** the name of the notes and **look** at the neck as you play
- Use **sharp names going up**, and **flat names going down**, for the least clunkiness
- You can stop at the 12th fret for a starter version, or all the way to your top fret to get to know the WHOLE fretboard

Advanced versions to make your brain hurt:

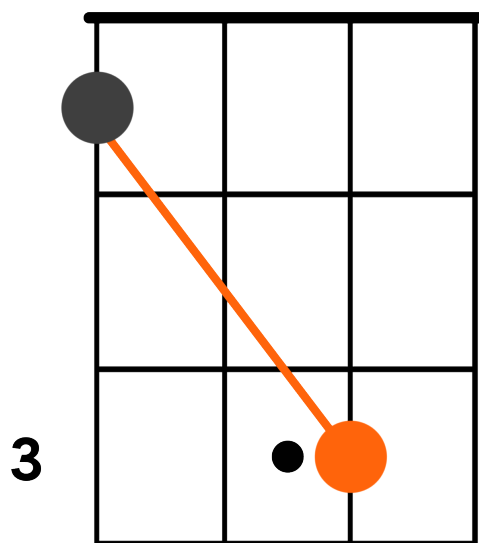
- Play only the **even** numbered frets (0, 2, 4, etc.)
- Play only the **odd** numbered frets (1, 3, 5, ya know, numbers)
- Use **flats** on the way up, and **sharps** on the way down

## 3 - Shapes

You can spot more note patterns on the bass neck by using two key shapes - **octaves** and **unisons**.

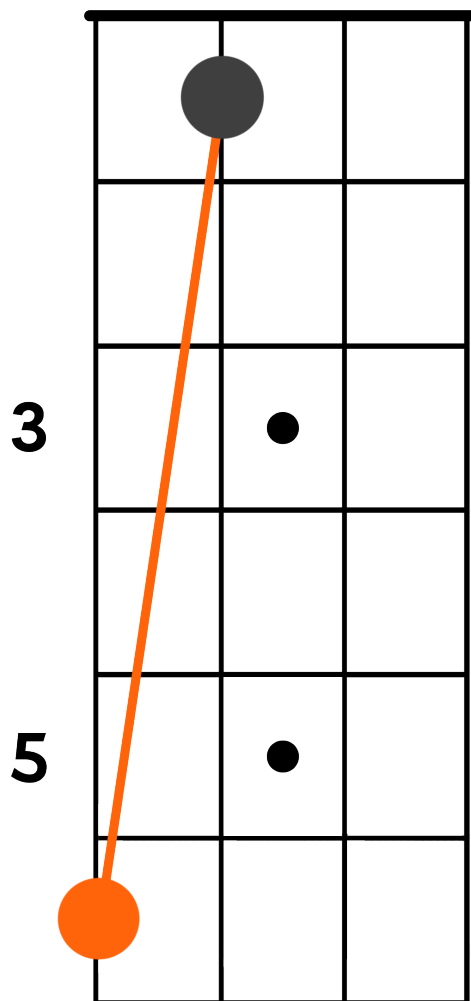
Octaves are how you find the same note name but higher/lower sounding.

You can either go **up two strings and up two frets**, OR **down two strings and down two frets**.



Unisons are how you find the same note name, in the **same octave**, on a different string.

You can either go **down a string and up five frets**, OR **up a string and down five frets**.



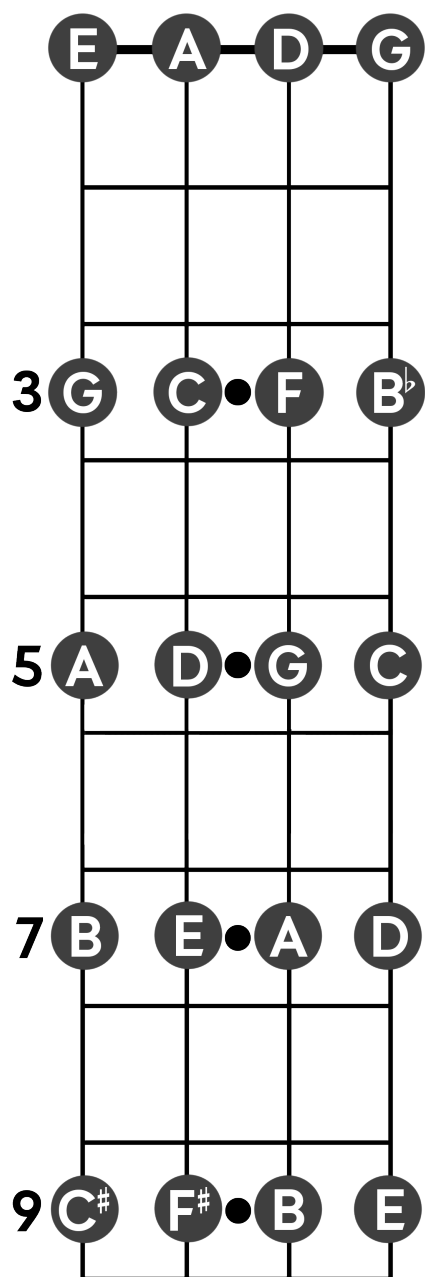
## 4 - Learn the Dots

Once you know your money notes, can say n play, and have some shapes up your sleeve, it's a good time to learn the frets with dots on them.

The dots make up a sort of skeleton of the fretboard - once you know them, you're never more than one fret away from a note you have memorized. Very cool.

Learn them one at a time, and use mnemonics to remember them more easily.

Once you learn to the 9th fret, the dots repeat - the double dot at the 12 fret repeats the open strings, the 15th fret dot is the same as the 3rd fret dot, etc.



Open strings: **EADG**  
**E**at **A**nd **D**rink **G**rapes

3rd fret: **GCFB $\flat$**   
**G**uitarists **C**an **F**requently **B $\flat$**  (be flat)

5th fret: **ADGC**  
**A**nd **D**rink **G**rapes, **C**aptain!

7th fret: **BEAD**  
 Spells the word **BEAD**

9th fret: **C $\sharp$ F $\sharp$ BE**  
 Good luck finding a mnemonic for this one

## 5 - Bass GPS

This exercise is the best way to see that your fretboard map is actually working, and find weak points you needed to patch up.

How to do the basic version:

- Look away from the bass and randomly fret a note
- Then look at the neck, and say the name as fast as you can
- Rinse and repeat

### More tips:

- Start out in a limited area of the fretboard, like money notes zone only
- Eventually you can tear all over the neck and increase your speed
- You can even gamify this with a metronome - give yourself 4 beats to play a note, 4 beats to look and say name, over and over
- Over time, you can increase the metronome speed or decrease the number of beats you get



Wouldn't it be nice if someone would walk you through all this stuff step by step? And also teach you all the other bass fundamentals you need to be a solid player?

Well hey, that possibility exists, if you take my **Beginner to Badass** course - it's the best damn beginner bass course on the planet. By the end of it you'll understand the fretboard, have solid technique, and be able to play real songs and jam.

[Click here to check it out.](#)