THE 6 COMMANDMENTS OF SELF-TEACHING BASS

From "How to Start Learning Bass - Self Taught!"

You can absolutely learn bass 100% self taught - as long as you avoid the catastrophic errors that lead to Reddit posts like this...

> **Should I give up?**
>
> I've been trying to learn bass on and off for 14 years now, and I'm still not even at the point where I can play a song from start to finish.

So to prevent such misery, here are the 6 commandments of self teaching bass (as they were passed down from on high in this BassBuzz Youtube video by the inclusive and inoffensive boomy voice of Bassists Past).

COMMANDMENT 1

Set Thee Thine Goals

Make solid goals by using the Long/Medium/Short Term system -

- → **LONG GOAL** = a big thing you want to achieve, like joining a band or learning a challenging song.
- → **MEDIUM GOAL** = the time you'll put in to get there.
- → **SHORT GOAL** = the day-to-day practice you'll do in that time.

Examples -

LONG	MEDIUM	SHORT
• Join friend's bar band	• Practice 20m/day, 4x week, for 3 months	• Practice rhythm with drums • Create simple bass lines to chord charts
• Learn Hysteria by Muse	• Practice 1h/day, 5x week, for 6 months	• Plucking speed practice • Fretting hand exercises • Watch this video

COMMANDMENT 2

Learn Thy Songs

Because if you don't wanna be part of the 90% of people who quit after a year, you need to have some **fun** and get some **wins** by playing songs you love.

Beginner Song Ideas

- 5 Beginner Bass Riffs (You Can't F*** Up)
- Feel Good Inc - Gorillaz
- Smells Like Teen Spirit - Nirvana
- Longview - Green Day
- First 50 Songs You Should Play on Bass
- First 50 Metal Songs You Should Play on Bass
- 7 Bass Riffs Normal People Actually Find Impressive
- 7 Bass Riffs Normal People Actually Find EVEN MORE Impressive
- 5 Popular Beginner Bass Lines (Are You Playing Them Wrong?)
- Top 30 Most Iconic Bass Riffs
- Top 30 Most Iconic FUNK Bass Riffs
- 3 Beginner Bass Riffs (You Can't F*** Up)

BASS BUZZ

COMMANDMENT 3

Suffer Not Poor Technique

The quickest way to improve your technique is doing bass exercises... but only if you follow this checklist:

- ☐ Focus on how you play, not what you play
- ☐ Practice with a metronome or drum track
- ☐ Start slower than you think you should start
- ☐ Don't speed up til you can play decently at least 5 times in a row
- ☐ Track your progress in a simple journal

Need some exercises and technique tutorials? I have so many for you -

- Practice THIS Daily (10 Mins)
- Slap... Practice THIS Daily (10 Mins)
- Practice THIS Daily (10 Min Technique Fix)
- 5 Levels of Bass Finger Exercise (Beginner to Advanced)
- Bass Mistakes That Are SLOWING You Down
- Are You Fretting the Wrong Way? (Bass Fingering Showdown)
- Are You Plucking the Wrong Way? (Raking v. Alternating Showdown)
- How to F**k Up Your Bass Playing

COMMANDMENT 4

Make Thy Life Easier

This commandment lumps together a couple things that yeah, technically, you could be a solid bassist without knowing... but it's way harder.

BASSBUZZ

Fretboard Knowledge

- Learning how notes are named, and where they live on the bass neck
- Plus identifying patterns and shapes that are useful for bass playing
- The quickest way to get started - Learn Your Bass Fretboard Notes (Easy Starter Method)

Theory

- YEAH I SAID IT
- Not everyone needs to learn a bunch of music theory
- But theory can help you understand what you're playing, memorize songs faster, plus come up with your own cool stuff
- How much do **you** need to learn? Check out this vid - Music theory you actually need, none of the sh*t you don't

COMMANDMENT 5

Avoid Thy Various Pitfalls

Lotsa little things can go wrong when you self teach - here are the most dangerous ones (and their solutions).

PROBLEM → Buying the wrong bass
SOLUTION → Get a 4 string, fretted bass you enjoy playing, and get it set up. Here's a bass buying guide.

PROBLEM → Pressing way too hard with the fretting fingers and thumb
SOLUTION → Do these two things -

BASS BUZZ

***Minimum Viable Pressure**, as described here and here.*

The Thumb Off Exercise:

- *Make sure your bass strap is holding the bass stable*
- *Try fretting some notes with your fretting thumb NOT TOUCHING - notice the bass gets pushed around*
- *Counterbalance that motion with your plucking arm in a way that feels comfortable*
- *You should now be able to press down fretted notes, still with NO THUMB CONTACT, and keep the bass relatively stable, proving that there is no useful function to your thumb jamming into the neck.*
- *Now lightly allow your thumb to touch the neck, and practice playing while noticing the sensation of non-death-grip in your fretting hand*
- *Rinse and repeat!*

PROBLEM → Putting stickers on your frets to find the notes
SOLUTION → Never ever do this. Fixed.

PROBLEM → Trying to learn only through Yousician, Guitar Hero and Rocksmith
SOLUTION → Treat those as dessert, not dinner, and do some actual lessons.

PROBLEM → Practicing unplugged
SOLUTION → Always use an amp or headphones - it's way more fun and you need to hear yourself how other people will hear you.

BASS BUZZ

PROBLEM → Putting the bass away in the case or closet
SOLUTION → Keep it ready to go on a stand so you don't forget to play… or on the couch, your housemates will love that.

PROBLEM → Trying to learn all alone and feeling lonely
SOLUTION → Create musical community, by jamming with friends or hanging out on friendly bass forums.

COMMANDMENT 6

Thou Shalt Be Patient

Actually self teaching a skill is about the long game.

It's not about the perfect practice routine…

Or being consistent every single day…

It's showing up over and over, beyond the initial excitement, gradually making progress and making music.

But even with the tools in this guide, it's challenging for most people to keep picking the right stuff to practice as the months go by.

So if you don't wanna be part of the 90% of quitters, click here to check out my comprehensive step-by-step **Beginner to Badass course**. Its pre-recorded video lessons let you self-teach at whatever pace is best for you, and you'll be playing music and feeling badass all along the way.

Click Here

BASS BUZZ