



Music Musings No.9: Cool Bass Lines/ Styles

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Creating song styles using cool bass lines

Bass lines (single notes played in the left hand while your R.H. plays melodies or chords) are the foundation to giving a song its style or feel. Bass lines are usually played 1 or 2 octaves lower than the right hand notes.

----> **BASS LINE SECRET NO. 637:** Bass lines are made up of notes of the scale, and more specifically, notes of the chord! Thinking chords can help you create bass lines more easily. Here are a few examples. Remember to play these patterns with your **LEFT HAND!**

1) Boom-Chuck Bass

Used for basic singalongs, country, folk, gospel and other styles of music.

1. Boom-chuck Bass

Play a C note and then the G below it for the best effect. Then play a R.H. C chord in-between each bass note.

The pattern is:

L.H.	R.H.
C note	C chord
G note (below)	C chord
C note	C chord
C note	C chord

Then try doing the same thing with the 1 and 5 notes of the F and G chords

2) Cowboy Bass

Yee-hah! Used for cowboy music!

2. Cowboy Bass

Play a C - G - A - G (or think of it as 1 - 5 - 6 - 5). This uses the outer 2 notes of the C chord, as well as the 6th.

After this gets comfortable, try doing the same pattern with the F and G chords (remember, outer 2 notes of the chord plus the note above the 5th).

This uses the bottom (1) and top (5) note of the C chord, and the (6) note. Notes 1 and 6 should be longer than note 5.

3) Easy Boogie Bass

Used for Boogie & Blues music. 1 beat per note (4 beats total), and make the notes heavy and steady - lead boots! **Play a C - E - G - A over and over. When ready, try playing the 3 notes of the F chord (F - A - C) along with the D; and then play the notes of the G chord: G - B - D - E. Voila! A basic boogie bass pattern.**

Practice playing the bass pattern in the L.H., then playing the corresponding chord (C, F or G) in the right hand.

3. Easy Boogie Bass

continued .

4) Advanced Boogie Bass

Play these notes: C E G A B \flat A G E while playing a C chord in the R.H. The Advanced Boogie Bass pattern uses the 3 notes of the C CHORD (C E & G) in addition to the 6 and b7 notes of the C scale. The B \flat (B-flat) note is the 7th tone of the C scale, lowered a half step).

Play one note per beat (8 beats total), and make the notes heavy and steady. This gives your right hand a solid foundation upon which to improvise! **Once you've got the C Boogie Bass pattern down, then try it with notes of the F and G chords. Play the bass pattern in the L.H., and the corresponding chord (C, F or G) in the right hand. Coolness factor 99!**

4. Advanced Boogie Bass

5) Rock 'n' Roll Surf Bass

5. Rock 'n' Roll "Surf" Bass

This one's fun! Play the notes C and G together twice in a row, then the notes C and A together twice. It looks like this:

BEAT: 1 and 2 and
 NOTES: C/G C/G C/A C/A

When you've got this one learned, then try the pattern using these notes for the F chord: F - C -), and for the G chord: G - D - E. Of course, remember to play the matching chord in the right hand!

6) Elephant Bass

This one takes a bit of coordination, but is worth learning. Start by playing the C and G TOGETHER twice, then the E \flat , then the E. It goes like this:

BEAT: 1 and 2 and
 NOTES: C/G C/G E \flat E

And, of course, once you have it learned with notes of the C chord, try it with notes of the F and G chords (F C A \flat A) and (G D B \flat B).

6. Elephant Bass

Now what?

Once you've got these 6 bass lines learned, try using them with a simple song, such as "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" or "The Muffin Man." Play just the bass line and sing the song's melody. You'll be surprised how different the song will sound depending on the bass line played. You're well on your way to creating your own style of playing!