

FRETBOARD MAP FOR BASS

The musical 'alphabet' goes from A to G and then starts over again with the next OCTAVE.

There are no sharps or flats between E&F, or between B&C. (These notes are one half step, or one fret apart). All other notes are separated by a sharp or flat (These notes are one whole step, or two frets apart). Natural notes are neither sharp nor flat. Sharp is one fret higher, flat is one fret lower.

Fill in the natural notes on the Fretboard. Also draw where your fretboard markers are:

E	A	D	G

Once you have filled in the fretboard map, note the following patterns:

- The octave is located two strings over and two frets up (towards the bridge).
- The octave is also located three strings over and three frets back (towards the nut).

Bass strings are located a fourth apart (A is the fourth note in the key of E, D is the fourth note in the key of A, and G is the fourth note in the key of D). In a blues progression whatever pattern is under the I chord can be moved to the next string and be used to play under the IV chord. The V chord is always a whole step above the IV chord. Therefore, whatever pattern is used under the IV chord can be moved two frets up (toward the bridge) to play under the V chord.

Relate the locations of the natural notes to nearby fretboard markers. In other words, learn that the first A on the E string is located at the second marker (first marker on some guitars), rather than the fifth fret. It is MUCH easier to locate the markers than to count frets.

Note: On a five string bass the low string is tuned to B (a fourth below E), on a six string bass the high string is tuned to C (a fourth above G). This allows the bass player to move patterns across all strings with no modification to the physical pattern.

Once you learn where all your natural notes are, sharps or flats (called accidentals) are one fret away.