



TalkingBass

Simple Steps To Sight Reading

Course Breakdown
and FAQ



Simple Steps To Sight Reading Read Music On Bass Guitar Like A Pro

The Ultimate Step By Step Music Reading Method For Bass Guitar

Reading music notation is one of the most valuable skills you can work on as a musician. You learn the language of music and open the door to a whole world of study and performance possibilities.

As a bass player, besides the obvious skill of interpreting written notes on the staff, you will learn the notes of the fretboard to an intuitive level, gain a thorough understanding of rhythm, improve your fluidity of movement around the instrument, gain access to a vast wealth of musical literature and much more.

Also, for those of you looking to take your playing as far as possible, you will develop the skills required for working as a professional bassist. Many pro gigs involve reading music. If you don't have the required level of reading you will be restricting the number of gigs available to you.

For many bass players, learning to read music may seem like too high a mountain to climb. Especially if you can already play. Many bass players start out learning by ear or by finding tablature online and then progress in a self-taught manner. Often with great success.

But learning to read music requires guidance and resources. You must be taught the correct information in a progressive manner. Unfortunately, electric bass methods that teach reading are less common than those of the classical world.

Simple Steps To Sight Reading fills a large gap in electric bass education. This course provides reading instruction from the absolute basics all the way through to an advanced professional level.

This course provides a huge 700+ pages of written musical content and exercises alongside 25 hours of video training. No other bass reading method provides this depth of content.

The course works through a series of levels from 1 to 9, presenting information and exercises in a progressive, step by step manner. At no point will you feel overwhelmed by the course material. Everything is designed to be easily digestible, every step of the way.

I'm incredibly proud of the Simple Steps To Sight Reading Course and hope to improve the reading skills of all bass players around the world with this comprehensive method.

Mark J Smith (Creator of Talkingbass)

Testimonials

This course was outstanding! Mark is such a gifted instructor. Every module builds upon itself and you are reading before you know it. "Simple Steps" is such a perfect title, it is so well laid out you can't help but succeed! I highly recommend anyone interested in learning to read take this course!

Bryan White, USA

I couldn't read any charts at all and found the course worth every penny. Easy to understand and lots (and I mean lots!) of exercises, materials and backing tracks.

Ben Kwakman, Holland

The course was exactly what I needed. The personal satisfaction when I was able to look at a new piece of music and play it first time was marvellous.

Paul Wright, UK

At the end of the first section, I was able to sight read the songs in the test. It put a HUGE smile on my face and really instilled a sense of accomplishment.

Andrew Goldstein, USA

Never thought that learning to sight read music could be that "easy". Concepts well explained and all the materials needed to really learn on your own. A great purchase. Recommended to anyone.

Jose Juan Tejas, Spain

This course is by far the best investment I have ever made in my bass education. The way Mark breaks down everything into bite pieces, is what makes his courses stand alone. My only regret is not investing in them sooner.

Carl Hagen, USA

Simple Steps To Sight Reading

Course Breakdown

Level 1

Lessons 1 to 9: Pitch Reading

Note exercises for each string in isolation and combination with invaluable tips on positioning, distance and playing while looking at the page.

Lessons 10 to 13: Rhythm Reading

Isolated rhythm exercises dealing with basic Whole Notes through to Half Note rests and ties

Lesson 14: Other Symbols

Introduction to other essentials such as the repeat sign, the double bar line and tempo markings

Lesson 15: Workbook Exercises

Guide to the Level 1 Workbook that contains 55 exercises combining all pitches and rhythms covered so far. Backing tracks are included so you can check you are playing the correct notes.

Lesson 16: Sample Pieces

Four Exam pieces designed to test your sight reading in a real life setting. No practice runs. Just reading at sight along to a complete backing track.

Level 2

Lessons 1 to 11: Pitch Reading

Here we work through the same isolation/combination exercises as level 1 but with the addition of sharps and flats in 1st position

Lessons 12 to 17: Rhythm Reading

Isolated rhythm exercises dealing with quarter notes, rests and ties

Lesson 18: Other Symbols

Here we expand on the level 1 repeat sign by adding the 1st and 2nd time symbols

Lesson 19: Speed Reading

Quarter note exercises to improve your ability to read ahead.

Lesson 20 to 21: Workbook and Sample Pieces

These final lessons provide tips on the level 2 workbook and the testing Sample Pieces.

Level 3

Lessons 1 to 10: Pitch Reading

With our new ability to negotiate sharps and flats we can safely introduce the concept of keys and key signatures. These lessons deal with the circle of 5ths, tonality and the keys G major and F major.

Lessons 11 to 16: Rhythm Reading

Isolated rhythm exercises dealing with dotted notes and a new time signature: 3/4

Lesson 17 to 20: More Symbols

In this set of lessons we look at section markings, multimeasure rests, dynamic markings and the DS Al Coda

Lesson 21: Workbook and Sample Pieces

These final lessons provide tips on the level 3 workbook and the testing Sample Pieces.

Level 4

Lessons 1 to 11: Pitch Reading

Two new Major keys before moving into the concept of Relative Minor keys. Pitch reading exercises for every key as well as focused practice at double sharps and flats.

Lessons 12 to 20: Rhythm Reading

This level sees the introduction of 8th note rhythms and time signature changes between 4/4, 3/4 and 2/4

Lesson 21 to 24: Other Symbols

Slurs, Staccato markings before delving into DS and DC al Fine.

Lesson 25: Workbook & Sample Pieces

Guide to the Level 4 Workbook that contains 59 exercises combining all pitches and rhythms covered so far. Backing tracks are included so you can check you are playing the correct notes.

Level 5

Lessons 1 to 7: Pitch Reading

Major and Minor keys up to 3 sharps and flats before venturing further up the fingerboard as high as the 12th fret on all strings.

Lessons 8 to 13: Rhythm Reading

More 8th note rhythms including the dotted quarter note and various rest permutation before adding 8th note triplets and Swing feel into the mix!

Lesson 14 to 17: Other Symbols

Anacrusis and Grace Note markings followed by Simile and other types of Alternate Notation

Lesson 18: Workbook & Sample Pieces

Guide to the Level 5 Workbook that contains 38 exercises combining all pitches and rhythms covered so far. Backing tracks are included so you can check you are playing the correct notes.

Level 6

Lessons 1 to 6: Pitch Reading

Major and Minor keys up to 4 sharps and flats and more practice in the higher areas of the fretboard

Lessons 7 to 18: Rhythm Reading

This level we take it up a notch by introducing ties into our 8th note rhythms, triplets and swing. We also introduce compound time signatures in the shape of 6/8 and 12/8

Lesson 19 to 22: Other Symbols

8va and 15ma markings are covered before looking at some 'technique' symbols for ghost notes, vibrato and slides.

Lesson 23: Workbook & Sample Pieces

Guide to the Level 6 Workbook that contains 30 exercises combining all pitches and rhythms covered so far. Backing tracks are included so you can check you are playing the correct notes.

Level 7

Lessons 1 to 5: Pitch Reading

Major and Minor Keys with 5 sharps/flats in both Low and Mid Positions. We also level up the Mid Position by working through every key reviewed thus far.

Lessons 5: Key Changes

Key Changes within a piece of music present some unique aspects regarding key signature notation.

Lessons 6 to 13: Rhythm Reading

In this level we move into the area of 16th Note rhythms. We also look at Quarter Note Triplets, Rests in Compound Time Signatures and then take a look at a new time signature in the shape of 2/2, or Cut Common Time.

Lesson 14 to 16: Other Symbols

A variety of tempo text expressions are covered as well as Accent Markings and a variety of Bass Specific Technique Markings used for more advanced techniques such as Slapping and Tapping.

Lesson 17: Etudes

There are 8 Etudes assigned to each level of Volume 3. These etudes are standalone pieces of solo bass music, written exclusively for the course. In this lesson we work through a complete etude as an example of the reading and learning process.

Level 8

Lessons 1 to 4: Pitch Reading

Major and Minor keys up to 6 sharps and flats and we introduce the High Position above the 12th fret of the bass.

Lessons 5 to 16: Rhythm Reading

We expand on the 16th note rhythms by introducing rests into the mix. We also look at 16th notes in Compound Time, Shuffle 16th Notes, Ties in Cut Common Time and Odd Time Signatures such as 5/4 and 7/4.

Lesson 17 to 19: Other Symbols

Fermata symbols and Rallentando/Ritenuto expressions are covered as well as the guitar/bass specific notation used for String Bending.

Lesson 20: Etudes

There are 8 Etudes assigned to each level of Volume 3. These etudes are standalone pieces of solo bass music, written exclusively for the course. In this lesson we work through a complete etude as an example of the reading and learning process.

Level 9

Lessons 1 to 3: Pitch Reading

Finish up Key Signatures with a look at 7 Sharp/Flats. We also level up all our keys in the High Position above the 12th Fret. After completing this final level you will have a complete knowledge of the fingerboard.

Lessons 4 to 14: Rhythm Reading

Here we finish up all of our rhythm studies with 16th Note Ties, Compound 16th Note Ties, Tied Shuffle 16ths, Tied 8th Notes in Cut Common Time and 8th Note Odd Time Signatures such as 5/8 and 7/8. We also take a look at 16th Note Triplets, Half Note Triplets and Duplets.

Lesson 15 to 18: Other Symbols

Trills and Tremolo Markings are covered and we also delve into some of the more advanced areas of reading on bass with a look at Harmonics and Chords.

Lesson 19: Etudes

There are 8 Etudes assigned to each level of Volume 3. These etudes are standalone pieces of solo bass music, written exclusively for the course. In this lesson we work through a complete etude as an example of the reading and learning process.

Simple Steps To Sight Reading

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Simple Steps To Sight Reading Course?

Simple Steps To Sight Reading is the ultimate guide to reading music on bass guitar.

It is a multimedia course using a combination of video lessons, PDF workbooks and MP3 backing tracks to provide the most comprehensive, step-by-step approach to sight reading available today.

What level of player is the course aimed at?

The course is aimed at any player from beginner to advanced level. Many advanced bass players are lacking in this very specialized area of playing so the number of playing years and experience is irrelevant.

If you cannot read music this course serves to take you from the absolute basics of reading through to an advanced professional level, whatever your current standard.

What Will I Learn?

After completing the course, you will have the knowledge and resources for working on your reading up to a professional sight-reading standard. This includes all the notes, rhythms and symbols in common use.

How Long Are The Lessons?

The lesson lengths vary but the complete course contains 25 hours of video content and over 700 pages of lesson material, providing many weeks, months or even years of practice. This is a BIG course!

How is the course presented? Do I Download Anything?

The course is hosted on the Talkingbass website so there are no video files to download.

There is a Dropbox folder for each module containing a Course Workbook and any relevant practice tracks.

Is There A Time Limit On Taking The Course?

No. You can take as long as want. There are no time limits

Do I Have Lifetime Access To The Course?

If you purchase the course then yes, you have lifetime access to the course and its material.