

# Bass

## The Basics

- Strings: (high) G, D, A, E (low)
- Main accessories: Rock stop & stool
- Bow: Shortest and thickest, with a large frog
- Bows can be French or German
- Tuned in **fourths** -- strings are reverse of violin

## Posture & Positioning Checkpoints

### Sitting - recommended for beginning/intermediate students

- Stool legs at an angle--one stool leg facing music stand (makes a diamond) so left foot can comfortably prop on a wrung of the stool
- Sit on front half of stool--should have space behind them for rosin/cloth, phone, or beverage.
- Right foot comfortably on the floor (no tip toes!), left foot on stool wrung
- Bass resting on left leg, neck tilted slightly toward player, edge of bass resting against inside of left hip
- Back straight, spine elongated
- Instrument at slight angle so player can reach all four strings (without having to pick up the bass to play the E string)
- Bend from hips to reach higher shifts

## Left Hand Checkpoints

- Fingers curved to play on finger tips -- nails must be kept short enough to properly play on tips of fingers
- Hand shaped like a "C" -- like holding a soda can
- Thumb aligned between 1st and 2nd finger
- Fingers evenly spaced

## Right Hand Checkpoints

### Pizzicato

- Thumb on side of fingerboard (not under), halfway between shoulder & end of fingerboard
- Fingers curled in
- Pluck with the index finger (near smallest knuckle)
- Pluck away from where the bow will be... about halfway between the shoulder and the end of the fingerboard
- Tilt top of hand slightly back to face ceiling, fingers pointed toward end of fingerboard

### Bow

- Curved thumb, inside corner of thumbnail touches inside corner of the bow where frog meets stick.
- Fingers draped comfortably over stick, stick touches where fingers meet palm
- Pinky also draped over stick.
- Bow should land comfortably past the fingerboard



### Check out this video & Remember these two things:

1. Don't underestimate your bass players.
2. Remember, small students AND female students can be just as successful as tall boys.

Page Contributor:

Emmaleigh Carr, bassist  
and teacher

