



YT407 - Why This One Country Bass Line Unlocks “Fretboard Freedom”

Introduction

This lesson is based on part of my latest book: **Fretboard Freedom**.

The aim of this book is for you to understand the simple geography of the fretboard, recognising patterns, shapes and the constant physical relationships between each note you fret.

In this section, the emphasis is on Country music’s tried-and-tested perennial favourite **root** and **5th** patterns.

We also look at the major and minor triads we create by simply adding the **3rd** to these notes.

Exercise 1

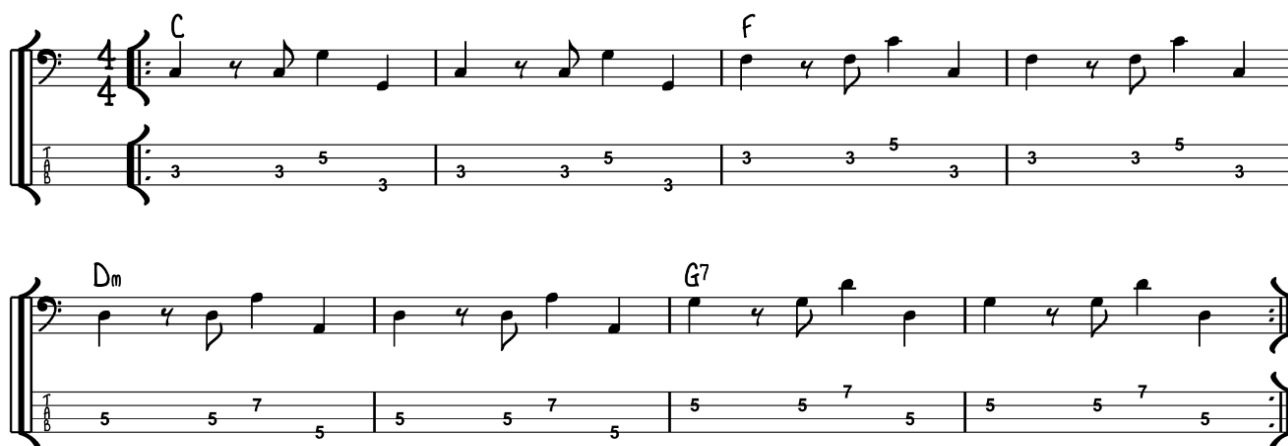
Root and 5th

This pattern is something you will have heard thousands of times! There’s a very simple reason for this: it works perfectly! Appreciate how note lengths and dynamics can change the feel of this classic bass line approach.

The musical notation for Exercise 1 consists of two systems of bass lines. The first system is in C major, with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. It features a root and 5th pattern for C major (C4, E4, G4, C5) and F major (F4, A4, C5, F5). The second system is in D minor, with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. It features a root and 5th pattern for D minor (D4, F4, A4, D5) and G7 (G4, B4, D5, G5). Fingering numbers (3, 5, 7) are indicated below the notes.

Exercise 2

We started by playing the **5th** higher than the **root**; now we're adding the **lower 5th** to the bass line.



Introducing Triads And The Three Registers Of The Bass Guitar

This is your introduction to triads, which comprise the **root**, **3rd** and **5th** notes.

There are major and minor triads in all keys; it's the **3rd** that dictates whether the triad (chord) is major or minor. We won't get caught up in the theory behind this here. Instead, we're looking at the shapes the triads form on the fretboard.

We're also dividing the fretboard into three areas:

1. **Lower register** open strings to fret 4 or 5
2. **Middle register** frets 5 to 8
3. **Upper register** frets 9 to 12 and beyond

Exercise 3 - The Lower Register - Home Position

Play these examples with the one finger per fret method. So, for example, the home position fingering for a C major triad is:

	2	1	4
giving the notes	C	E	G
also known as	Root	Major 3rd	5th

And for a C minor triad in home position, use these fingerings:

	1	4	3
giving the notes	C	E^b	G
also known as	Root	Minor 3rd	5th

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Fretboard Freedom

Now we can apply these home position fingerings to our 8-bar chord sequence:

Exercise 4 - Middle Register - Introducing Reverse And Forward Positions

Reverse Position Triads

Using the one finger per fret method, start major **and** minor reverse position triads by fretting the **root note** with your fourth finger; fret the **5th** with your first finger. Like this, you should be able to play the **major 3rd** with your third finger, while the **minor 3rd** should sit equally comfortably under your second finger.

Forward Position Triads

The fingerings for these are quite changeable, and these variations lend themselves to different articulations (including slides and hammer-ons).

One fingering possibility: play the **root** with your first finger, then slide up the same string to the **major 3rd** using your third finger (the **minor 3rd** may be better under your second finger), which will put the **5th** directly under your first finger, but on the next string up.

Exercise 5

This is all about the upper register and is a forward position workout; enjoy those slides!

4/4 C F FORWARD

8 8 12 10 12 8 8 12 10 12 8 8 12 10 12 8 8 12 10 12

Dm G7 HOME FORWARD

10 10 13 12 13 10 10 13 12 13 10 10 14 12 14 10 10 14 12 14

If you'd like to continue this journey, there are six more books in the eBassGuitar library to explore:

- *The Bass Guitar Foundations Guide*
- *The Essential Guide To Walking Bass*
- *The Essential Guide To Blues Bass*
- *The Essential Guide To Technique*
- *The Complete Guide To Music Theory*
- *Bass Line Mastery*

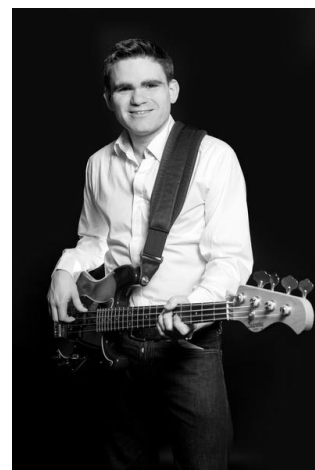
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And for a deeper dive, I invite you to take a free 14-day trial of The Bass Lab PLUS — my complete online membership with step-by-step courses and a vibrant community. You'll even find the Fretboard Fundamentals course inside, which brings this book to life in video format.

Start your free trial here: eBassGuitar.com/trial

Thanks for reading, and above all — enjoy the journey of discovering your own Fretboard Freedom!

James



P.S. Got questions or need help?

I'm always happy to hear from you: eBassGuitar.com/contact

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