5 Simple Tricks To Make Your Basslines Sound PRO

Trick 1: Lock in with the kick

The first trick is simple enough but you'd be surprised how many bassists I see who forget this golden rule of bass playing - lock in with the kick.

Let's say you've got this groove right here:



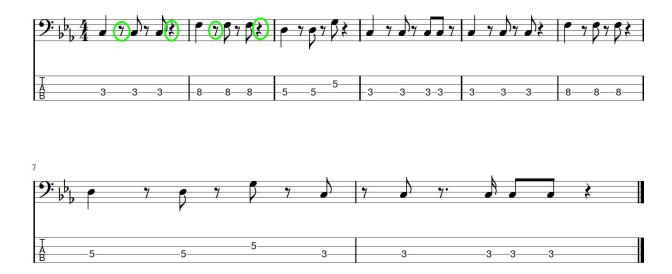
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The very first thing I'd do is listen and internalize the kick drum rhythm, and then just play the root notes of the chord progression, using the exact rhythm that the kick drum plays:



Trick 2: Leave space for the snare (pay attention to note lengths)

Ironically the second trick is almost the exact opposite of the first. It often sounds really great to leave space for the snare because it allows the backbeat to be emphasized even more strongly.

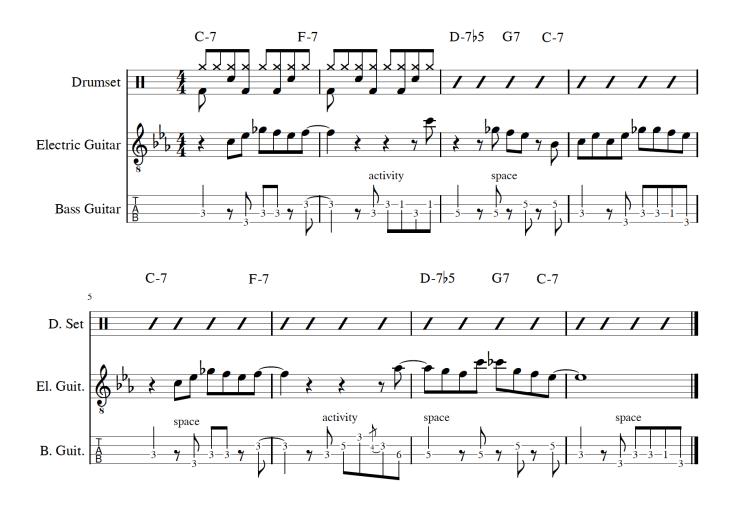


Trick 3: play less during the melody

As much as we all love BASS, in 99% of songs we're playing a supportive role and making the lead instrument or vocalist sound as great as possible.

So one of the biggest mistakes you can make is playing all of your favourite crazy jazz licks that don't really support the singer and just confuse the listener.

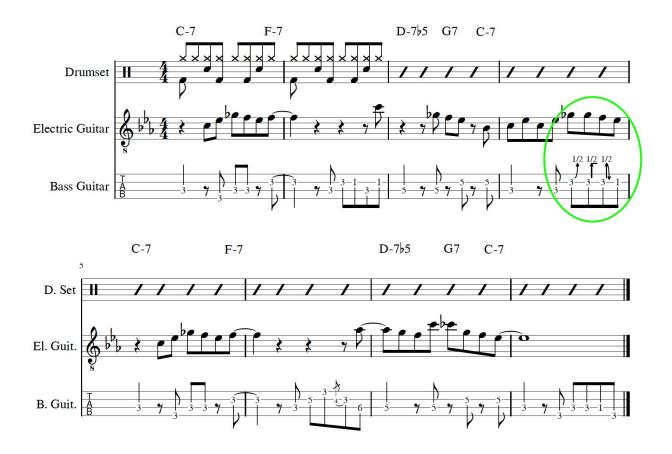
But most melodies have rests and that's where it's ok and often even encouraged to play some more complex stuff.



Trick 4: Double up one or two melodic moments

This trick is more of an icing on the cake, but band leaders will love it if every now and then you play one of their more interesting melodic parts on your bass at the same time.

Not only does it sound cool and make everything a bit more cohesive, it shows the melody player that you're listening closely and you respect what they're doing.



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Trick 5: Use different technique/articulation to match the energy level

Now we're getting into some really pro stuff.

If you can think about your bass lines with this much care and detail, you're gonna stand out from the pack.

One of the amazing things about bass is the absolutely massive range of techniques we have available to us.

And the great thing is, all these techniques give us the ability to convey totally different moods and energy levels.

Most songs have at least a couple of different energy levels, and sometimes it can sound great to emphasize those with a change of technique.

Listen to the full track and pay attention to when I start slapping halfway through, and how it raises the energy level of the song.

You might have noticed a common theme with all of these was that you have to be listening very carefully. That's probably the most important rule of being a musician - you have to listen to what everyone else is doing, and play whatever is gonna help make the song as powerful as possible.

Exercise: Try writing your own bass line!

Use these tricks to write your own bass line to accompany the guitar, keys and drums! Play it along with the backing track!

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