

READING 2

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MI Curriculum Series

Series Sponsor: Jon Clayden, Vice President of Academic Affairs

Creative Director & Executive Editor: Donny Gruendler, Vice President of Instruction and Curricular Development

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Published for MI by WBH MusicWorks LLC

Executive Producers: Rob Wallis, Joe Bergamini, Mike Hoff

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BASS READING 2

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Objective

This course continues from Bass Reading 1, introducing the fundamental processes involved with reading printed music and the basic terminology used in written notation as it is applied the bass guitar. Upon completion of this course the student will be able to navigate basic charts, will know all of the chromatic note names and positions on the neck of the bass, and will be familiar reading in different keys in the open through sixth position.

Recurring Subjects in Bass Reading 2:

- Exploring the Fingerboard.
- Reading Rhythms.
- Reading Harmony/Polyphony.
- Symbols and Terms.
- Charts/Real-World Reading.
- Concepts/Exercises/Lectures.

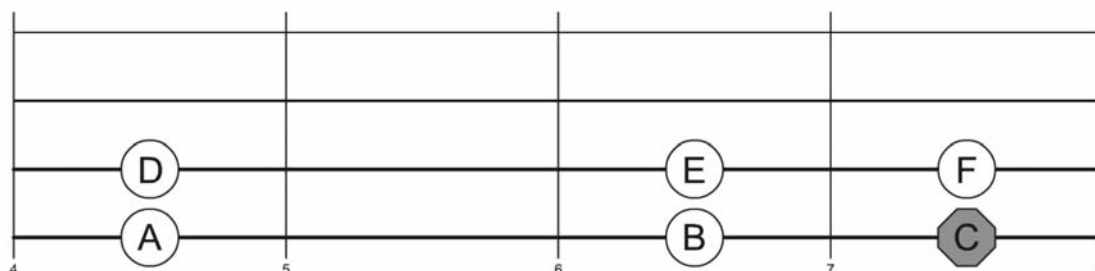
Chapter 1

Exploring the Fingerboard: Fifth Position, Key of C.

Here are the natural notes (those with no sharps or flats) from the C major scale on the E and A strings between frets five and eight. This is called fifth position.

Ex. 1.1

Fretboard Diagram, Natural Notes, Fifth Position, Frets 5-8, E and A Strings.



Note that this fingering pattern using one finger per fret outlines the first six notes of the A natural minor scale. The proper fingering is: fingers number 1-3-4 on the E string and 1-3-4 again on the A string.

These notes are written this way on the staff.

Ex. 1.2

Staff with Natural Notes, Fifth Position, Frets 5-8, E and A Strings.

Note name:	A	B	C	D	E	F
String & fret:	E5	E7	E8	A5	A7	A8

In the following exercises, start with the metronome initially at 60 bpm. Place your fretting hand in fifth position with the first finger on the fifth fret of the E string which is the pitch A. All of the notes in these exercises will be reachable with no position shifts.

In the first exercise the note names are written above the staff for illustration purposes. The beats are also written below the staff. Remember to tap your foot on the quarter note along with the metronome click. Increase the tempo gradually only after each exercise is played accurately.

Ex. 1.3

E and A Strings, Frets 5-8, Natural Note Reading Exercise 1.

Exercise 1.3 consists of two lines of musical notation in 4/4 time, bass clef. The first line has four measures with notes A, C, E, D, D; C, B, C, A, A; A, C, E, D, D; F, E, F, E. The second line has four measures with notes A, C, E, D, D; C, B, A; A, C, E, F, D; E, C, A. Fingerings and accents are indicated below the notes.

Ex. 1.4

E and A Strings, Frets 5-8, Natural Note Reading Exercise 2.



Two staves of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The first staff contains four measures of music: the first three measures feature eighth-note patterns with a quarter rest, and the fourth measure features a quarter note followed by eighth notes. The second staff continues the exercise with similar eighth-note patterns and a final measure with a quarter note and a quarter rest.

Ex. 1.5

E and A Strings, Frets 5-8, Natural Note Reading Exercise 3.



Two staves of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The first staff contains four measures of eighth-note patterns. The second staff continues the exercise with eighth-note patterns and a final measure with a quarter note and a quarter rest.

Ex. 1.6

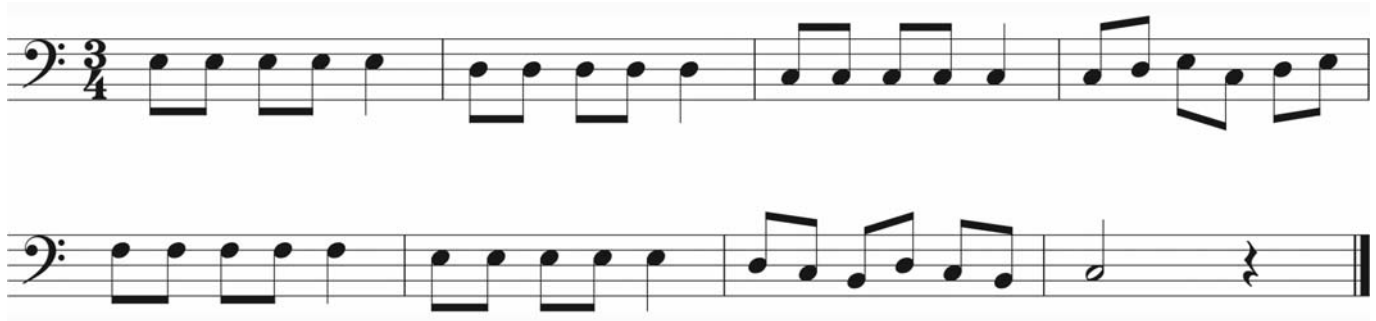
E and A Strings, Frets 5-8, Natural Note Reading Exercise 4.



Two staves of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time signature. The first staff contains four measures of eighth-note patterns. The second staff continues the exercise with eighth-note patterns and a final measure with a quarter note and a quarter rest.

Ex. 1.7

E and A Strings, Frets 5-8, Natural Note Reading Exercise 5.



Two staves of musical notation in bass clef, 3/4 time signature. The first staff contains four measures of eighth-note patterns. The second staff continues the exercise with eighth-note patterns and a final measure with a quarter note and a quarter rest.

Chapter 2

Exploring the Fingerboard: Open Position Flat Keys Revisited, Keys of F, Bb, and Eb.

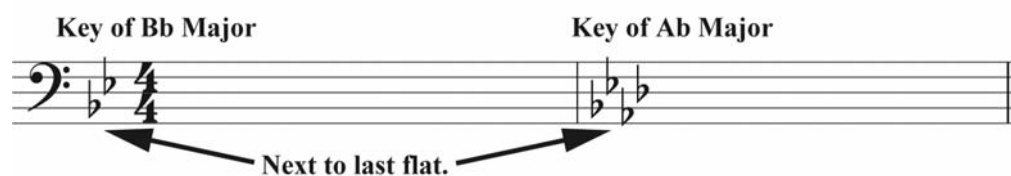
Flat Key Signatures: Glancing ahead to the circle of fifths chart in Unit 4, Chapter 3, notice that the key of C contains no sharps or flats. Adding one flat, Bb, to the key signature denotes the key of F. Adding two flats, Bb and Eb, indicates the key of Bb. Each additional flat added indicates the next key traveling counterclockwise on the circle of fourths.

There is an order of flats in key signatures, each up a fourth from the previous flat. The order of flats is: Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Cb, and Fb. This sequence must be memorized. An effective mnemonic technique for this is: **“Battle Ends And Down Goes Charlie’s Father.”**

When reading a new piece of music, the way to determine the key from a flat key signature is to look at the next to the last flat in the key signature. For example, in a key with two flats, Bb and Eb, the next to last flat is Bb, meaning the song is in the key of Bb for the entire piece of music. In a key signature with four flats, Bb, Eb, Ab, and Db, the next to last flat is Ab, indicating that the song is in the key of Ab.

Ex. 1.8

Flat Key Signatures



In these exercises three different random flat key signatures are employed, the keys of F, Bb, and Eb. Examine the key signature at the beginning of each example carefully to determine which is being used.

Place your fretting hand in position to play the specific major scale indicated by each key signature in each example. Play the major scale in question for each example before attempting the exercise to get the sound of the key in your ear. All of these exercises are playable in open position, using the open strings through fret number three across all four strings.

As a reminder, the key of F has one flat: Bb. The key of Bb has two flats: Bb and Eb. The key of Eb has three flats: Bb, Eb, and Ab. When a key signature is being utilized at the beginning of a piece of music, every note indicated in the key signature has that accidental applied to it throughout the piece unless specifically cancelled by a natural sign.

There are no additional accidentals used in these exercises beyond those indicated in the key signatures. All notes in these exercises will be notes in the major scales indicated by the key signatures.

Set the metronome to a slow speed, increasing tempo only after each exercise is played accurately.

Ex. 1.9

Flat Key Reading Exercise 1.

Musical notation for Flat Key Reading Exercise 1. It consists of two staves in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff contains four measures of music: a quarter rest followed by a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The second staff contains four measures: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The key signature is one flat (Bb).

Ex. 1.10

Flat Key Reading Exercise 2.

Musical notation for Flat Key Reading Exercise 2. It consists of two staves in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff contains four measures of music: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The second staff contains four measures: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The key signature is one flat (Bb).

Ex. 1.11

Flat Key Reading Exercise 3.

Musical notation for Flat Key Reading Exercise 3. It consists of two staves in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff contains four measures of music: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The second staff contains four measures: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The key signature is one flat (Bb).

Ex. 1.12

Flat Key Reading Exercise 4.

Musical notation for Flat Key Reading Exercise 4. It consists of two staves in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff contains four measures of music: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The second staff contains four measures: a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note. The key signature is one flat (Bb).

Ex. 1.13

Flat Key Reading Exercise 5.

Musical notation for Ex. 1.13, Flat Key Reading Exercise 5. The exercise consists of two staves of music in bass clef, 3/4 time, and B-flat major. The notes are: Staff 1: G2, A2, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2. Staff 2: C2, B1, A1, G1, F1, E1, D1, C1.

Ex. 1.14

Flat Key Reading Exercise 6.

Musical notation for Ex. 1.14, Flat Key Reading Exercise 6. The exercise consists of two staves of music in bass clef, 4/4 time, and B-flat major. The notes are: Staff 1: G2, A2, B2, A2, G2, F2, E2, D2. Staff 2: C2, B1, A1, G1, F1, E1, D1, C1.

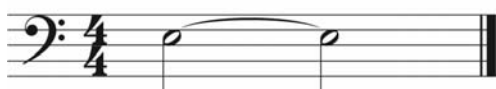
Chapter 3


Reading Rhythms: Introducing the Tie.

Tie: A tie connects two notes of the same pitch with a curved line written above or below the note heads indicating that there should be no break between the notes. Tied notes are played as one single note. A Tie may be applied to any note value or combination of note values as illustrated below.

Ex. 1.15

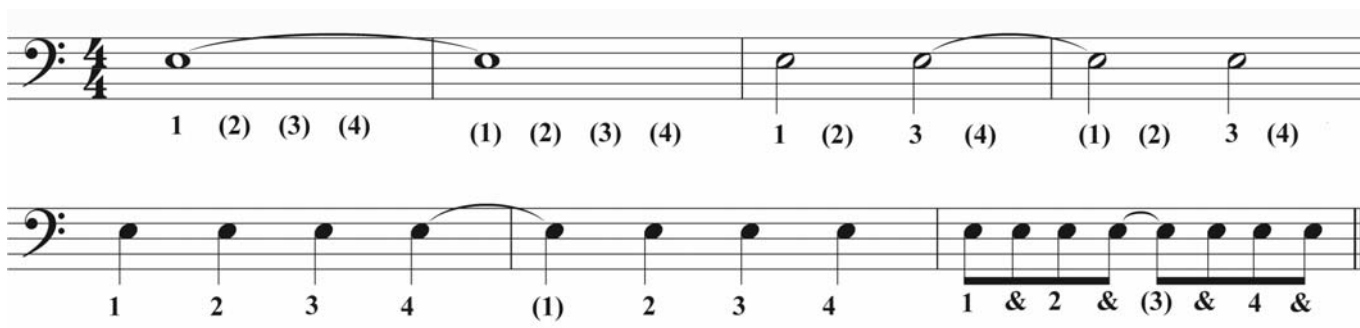
Tie.



Tap your foot  on a quarter-note pulse. Play each note indicated below. Hold all counts indicated in parentheses without re-attacking those notes.

Ex. 1.16

The Tie.



The Imaginary Bar Line: The “imaginary bar line” is a notational convention used to aid in syncopated rhythm reading. In a 4/4 time signature, the imaginary bar line separates beats one and two from beats three and four. It is called “imaginary” because nothing is actually written to signify it. In the example below, the imaginary bar line is indicated with a dashed vertical line for illustration. It is never actually written into a music score.

The imaginary bar line is already familiar from examining the way that eighth notes are traditionally beamed. Beats one and two are beamed together. Beats three and four are beamed together separately from beats one and two, as in the first measure of the example below.

Ex. 1.17

Imaginary Bar Line Example 1.

