



## HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT BASS FOR YOU!

With the wide variety of name brands, models, features and countries of manufacturing, it can be very confusing to find the right instrument for you.

At Music Go Round, we are all about “The right gear for the right customer.” In an effort to further support our philosophies, we are offering an easy to follow, but detailed document on how to find the right guitar for your needs.

Of course, Music Go Round LOVES USED gear, but this document will benefit you if you are looking at new or used products.

## Here are some FAQ's our sales associates hear every day!

**Q: I am a beginner and I am left-handed. Should I play a left-handed guitar?**

A: Not necessarily! There are two reasons we suggest that beginners start on a right-handed guitar:

- When learning to play guitar, your “Fret” hand is typically the more “challenged” hand as it requires the fingers to move independently of each other. Playing a guitar Right-Handed, your fret hand is your left...which will be advantageous to the Left Handed individual
- There is a very limited amount of Guitars made in Left-Handed versions. They also cost up to 15% more than a right-handed model. Your selection will be very limited and the guitar WILL cost more.

Of course, the final decision is always with the player, but our educators also support our recommendations. We really think you should at least TRY to play Right-Handed.

**Q: I see basses with 4, 5 and 6 strings. What is the difference between them?**

A: A standard bass guitar has 4 strings (E, A, D & G).

- A 5-string bass adds a Low B underneath the E.
- The 6-string bass adds the low E and a C above the G string.
  - This differs from the standard guitar tuning which has a B string above the G
- There are also 8, 10, 12 and 15-string basses made. These instruments are similar in nature to a 12-string guitar where additional strings are added at an octave pitch above the open note.

**Q: Why are some Bases \$100 and some are over a \$1000? Are they not all made of wood and metal?**

A: As with most products in the world, they are not all created equally!

There are MANY factors that go into the “value” of a Bass...some are tangible and some are intangible.

-Some of the **tangible** values of a guitar are:

- **Where the product is manufactured.** This has a tremendous bearing on the value or cost of an instrument. Generally, the most expensive instruments are made in the USA, then Canada, Mexico and Japan. Korean and Chinese instruments follow with Other Asian countries like Indonesia, Vietnam and India coming in towards the bottom. Yes, the labor costs to build instruments have some impact on the overall cost, but what you will always find is that an American made instrument is of the highest quality woods and products, with the best workmanship, quality and consistency. Asian made instruments, while very good products, are more “mass produced” and use lesser quality woods and finishes.
- **What types of woods are used.** The more “rare” the tone woods used, the more expensive the instrument will be. Many entry level acoustic and electric guitars are made with “laminated” wood which is a nice name for plywood! Obviously, a guitar made with laminated wood is intended to last a long time, but the sound quality will not compare to an instrument made of solid wood construction.
- **Type of construction.** With Bass guitars, you will find two types of construction; Bolt-on and neck-through designs.
  - A **bolt-on neck** is just that - the neck of the guitar is held to the body in a recessed cavity and screwed into place. You can see the screw heads when you flip the guitar over. The Fender Precision Bass® or Jazz Bass® are perfect examples of this type of construction. This is not a lesser quality instrument, just a more affordable way of manufacturing one.
  - A **neck-through** model is a guitar which has the neck and center part of the body as one piece of wood. The Pedulla Buzz Bass® is a fine example of this type of construction. Following along with the set-neck theory, this construction type is considered to have the best characteristics, as the entire spine of the instrument is one piece of wood. You can see that this type of construction would require a considerable amount of workmanship and quality, hence the cost of the product.

- Here are a few examples of **Intangible** values added to a guitar:

- **Name Brand.** Yes, you can and will pay more for a popular name brand compared to a similar model with a lesser-known brand (Fender or Gibson vs. Cort or Stagg). The funny part is that when looking at a guitar made in most Asian countries, many of the guitars are made in the same factories, with the same parts, finishes and by the same

people...they just have a different label put on them when the guitar is finished.

- Don't be fooled by a logo or name brand. Many secondary brand guitars are "as good or better" than their Asian made counterparts. Play the guitar, test the instrument and let your fingers and ears decide!
- **Popular Model played by Popular Artist** Certain body shapes are synonymous with a specific artist (Steve Harris plays a Fender P-Bass®, Paul McCartney played his Hofner 500/1 "Beatle Bass, etc..."). These specific models may cost more based purely on supply vs. demand economics. This is also the reason that many secondary name brands have models that look almost identical to the products listed above. Some are so close that from ten feet away, it is very hard to tell one from the other.
- **History of a specific model or year.** Like fine wines, guitars have "Vintage" years that are sought after by collectors and guitarists alike. Many of the specific years/models have something to do with an event in the history of that company or name brand. For example, Fender guitars made BEFORE 1965 have additional value as these are considered "pre-CBS" instruments (Very early in 1965, Leo Fender sold the Fender company to CBS, hence the moniker of Pre-CBS).

With ANY Vintage instrument, there are MANY factors that will go into the valuation of that specific guitar. We ALWAYS suggest getting an appraisal on any vintage guitar/amp that you are considering, so you can be sure you are getting what you are paying for.

**Q: Why are there so many shapes and colors? Does the body shape effect the sound of the instrument?**

A: Simply put, the guitar can be considered a piece of art, or an extension of one's inner creativity. This is the reason for all of the different shapes and colors. The finish of a guitar has very little effect on the overall tone...although some would argue this point. Choose the shape and color that best fits your needs and your personality. If it inspires you to play, you WILL get better and want to play more...pretty cool, huh?

**Q: I already have a guitar amp at home. Will that work for a bass guitar?**

A: Yes, but we do not recommend it. Simply put, a bass amp has different speakers capable of handling lower frequencies. A bass amplifier also has a different pre-amp stage and EQ frequencies. Yes, the bass will work when plugged into a guitar amp, but it will not sound right and you could potentially damage the amp or speaker if played at higher volumes.

Music Go Round always has a great selection of quality USED bass amps at great prices.

**Q: What are some key factors I should look for that will tell me if a guitar is a quality instrument?**

A: Music Go Round buys and sells 1000's of guitars every month, so we have a wealth of knowledge when it comes to indentifying a quality instrument!

Here are a few things we look for when buying our inventory from our customers:

- **Physical condition.** Is the body and finish clean and free of major dings, dents or cracks? Is the neck pocket a tight fit? Is the neck straight without twist or warping? Are there any small stress fractures between the tuning machines? Are the frets sharp on your hands as you slide your hand up and down the neck? Does the instrument/case smell funky? Was it potentially exposed to water or other elements (which would greatly effect the longevity of the instrument and electronics)?
- **Electronics.** Are the electronics in perfect working condition? Are the pots clean and free moving? Are the switches and jacks operating correctly?
- **Adjustability.** Is the action (height of the strings off the fret board) of the guitar set up correctly? Is the truss rod free and moveable? Are there any loose parts or adjustments on the instrument?
- **Tone.** When we play the guitar, does is sound right? Is there an issue with the bracing (acoustic) or tone (electric)? Does the instrument make odd noises or buzzes when played?

**Q: Which Bass strings are right for me?**

A: Bass strings come in many different thicknesses or "Gauges" typically defined by a size moniker of Extra-light, Light, Medium, Medium-Heavy or Heavy. The lighter the gauge of the string, the thinner the string is and hence, the easier to bend them while playing. Conversely, a heavier gauge string may be harder to bend and harder on your fingers, but will sustain longer and supply more "tone" (a subjective term used to define how good an instrument sounds).

Most Basses will come from the factory with Light Gauge strings on them. Music Go Round typically re-strings our USED Basses with Light gauge strings as well.

While the gauge is subjective to the player, most players play Light or Medium gauged strings. Music Go Round carries a wide variety of brands and gauges in our stores.

**Q: What accessories will I need to complete my instrument purchase?**

A: Check out the other document on our "Basses" page for advice on getting started. We have a complete list of products and accessories to make sure you get started on the right foot!

**Q: Should I take lessons?**

A: YES...YES...did I say YES? We always suggest taking lessons from a qualified educator (Like the one's you'll find at Music Go Round). Their input and

instruction will ensure good habit and rapidly improve your learning curve...which will make you want to play more and more!

**Q: So which Bass is right for me?**

A: This is a very subjective question and there are a lot of factors that will influence your purchase:

- **How much can you afford?** Keep in mind that there may be additional products you will need to complete your instrument purchase. You may need an amp, case, cables and many other accessories.
  - Music Go Round is extremely "value-focused" and can surely find a quality Instrument package to fit your budget
- **What kind of music do you want to play?** Certain models lend themselves to certain types of music. If you already play or know what your intentions are when you do begin playing, this will have an effect on what model you choose to buy.
- **What features do you want your instrument to have?** Pickups, locking bridges, pickup selectors, tuning machines, fret board materials, woods and finishes all have an influence on the playability or tone of an instrument. Make sure you know what features you want on your instrument to narrow your decisions! Don't worry...our gear experts can help identify specific instruments that have what you need.
- **Go with your gut!** If it looks good to you, feels good to you and sounds good to you, then you may have already answered your own question. The best guitar for you is the one you think is best...and we will help you find it!