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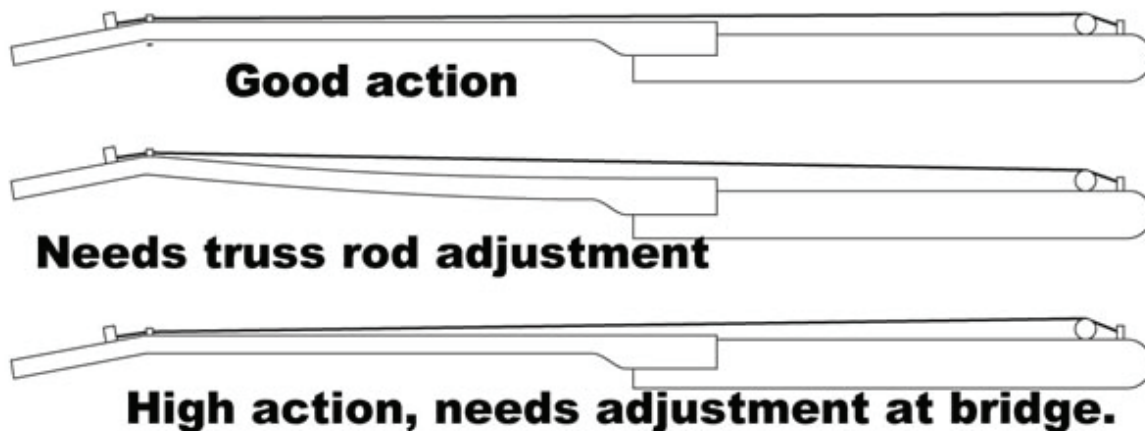
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**TRUSS ROD ADJUSTMENT** The truss rod helps stabilize the neck. You can adjust the truss rod to help bring the neck into a flat position. There is a personal taste as to how flat you like the neck. When tapping, I have found that a flat neck is most desirable. We are assuming that the frets are level, and as we flatten the neck, we do not get unusual buzzing.

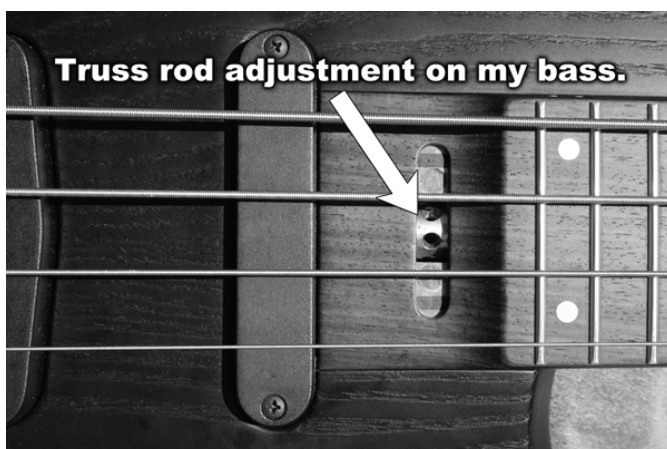
When the neck is flat, the tension is more balanced between the upper register and the middle. If the neck has too much bow, the strings will be higher in the middle of the neck than in the upper register and lower register. This is not good for tapping.

There are some very clear and easy to follow videos on YouTube that illustrate how to adjust your truss rod. I encourage you not to be afraid. You need to learn how to adjust your own instrument. If you travel as a performer, your bass neck will probably move and require adjustment to keep it flat. In the area where I live, I need to adjust the truss rod a few times a year as the weather and humidity change.

Picture 2 Neck adjustment - action



Picture 3 Neck adjustment - action



## Technique - Single Lines

**TAP-ON PULL-OFF** The Tap-on Pull-off stroke is a common technique used in this style of playing. Let's break it down into separate parts and begin learning the motions used in the right hand.

Using the index finger on your right hand, strike the G-string at the twelfth fret. Hold down this note. This produces the octave pitch on the G-string. The note being tapped should resonate clearly. A short percussive sound is not the desired effect. The desired sustain is created by holding down the note.

Next you should pull your finger toward your thumb in a pinching motion until the string slips out from under your finger. This should produce another clear resonant tone. This last motion is very much like normal playing except you are plucking over the fingerboard. If you have done this correctly you should hear two clear notes consecutively with no separation between them. For those of you who are new to tapping, this could take several tries to get it right.

Picture 4 Tap-on Pull-off



Example 5 Tap-on Pull-off on the G string.

tap pull tap pull tap pull tap pull tap pull

1

Be patient with the basics. Take it slowly and get it right. Play it over and over until the movement becomes comfortable, and it sounds good.

## Hammer-on

A hammer-on is a unique way of attacking a note. Some people call it a slur. The main difference is that when playing a slur, the second note is attacked gently, creating a smooth sound from one note to the next. When playing a hammer-on, the second note is attacked strongly by hitting the string. Hence the name, hammer-on.

Let's add the "Hammer-on" to our previous tap-pull pattern. Tap on the twelfth fret of the G string and pull off. This is the same as the earlier exercises. Now, while the open note is sustaining, bring the first finger of your left hand down on the C note on your G string. You should have sounded three separate notes, high G, open G, and closed C. You are essentially tapping with your left hand. The reason we will call it a hammer-on is because the open string is still sounding while you tap with your left hand.

Next, with your first finger down on the C, and the note sustaining, bring down your third finger on the D note. All together you should have produced four clear notes, G G C D.

Example 12 - Hammer-on added to tap-pull.

The musical notation for Example 12 is written on a bass clef staff in 4/4 time. The notes and their corresponding techniques are as follows:

- Measure 1: Tap (high G), Pull (open G), Hammer 1 (C), Hammer 3 (D)
- Measure 2: Tap (high G), Pull (open G), Hammer (C), Hammer (D)

The staff is marked with a '1' at the beginning, indicating the first measure. The notes are represented by stems with dots above them, and the techniques are labeled above each note.

[Video Example 2 - Demonstration of hammer-on with tapped exercise.](#)

## Tap - Pluck - Hammer - Shift

Now comes the tricky part, shifting. Play those same four notes again that we just played in Example 8. Now add another tapped high G at the end. This sounds; G G C D G. While you are holding this last G note down with your right hand, move your left hand into position to hammer on notes D and E. Hammer the D and E notes and add a high tapped G. While sustaining the G, make one more shift in the left hand to hammer-on E and F#.

Watch and play along with the video demonstration.

### Video Example 3 - Tap, Pluck, Hammer, Shift.

### Example 15 - T, P, H, Shift going uphill

For most students, the tricky part is making the shift with the left hand while holding down the tapped high G. Work slowly. It will come. When you get this combination of motions down, you will be amazed how quickly and fluently you can do this. It sounds really cool, too.

### Example 16 - T, P, H, Shift going downhill

Example 21 - *Slippery Moon* notation.

L L R simile

**A**

1

3

**B**

5

7

**A**

9

11

**B**

13

15

The 1-5-9-10 chord begins exactly the same as the 1-5-9, but now we add the 10 (major 3rd one octave higher) by sliding the 9 up a whole step. This is a very effective musical sound as the slide adds articulation and style. Watch the video demonstration.

### Video Example 6 - Demonstration of 1-5-9 and 1-5-9-10

#### Example 23 - 1-5-9-10 tapped chord

Emaj

L L R R

1

scale degrees 1 5 9 10

#### Example 24 - 1-5-9 tapped chord in A major

Amaj

1

1 5 9

#### Example 25 - 1-5-9-10 tapped chord in A major

Amaj

1

1 5 9 10

Video Track 8 - Demonstration tapping Latin rhythm

Example 35 - Notation of Latin tapped rhythm

A-7                      D7                      A-7                      D7

Video Example 9 - Latin Tap Song.

Example 36 - Chord changes for Latin Tap song.

Latin Tap

A-7                      D7                      A-7                      D7

1

B-7                      E7                      B-7                      E7

5

A-7                      D7                      A-7                      D7

9

Gmaj7                      E7

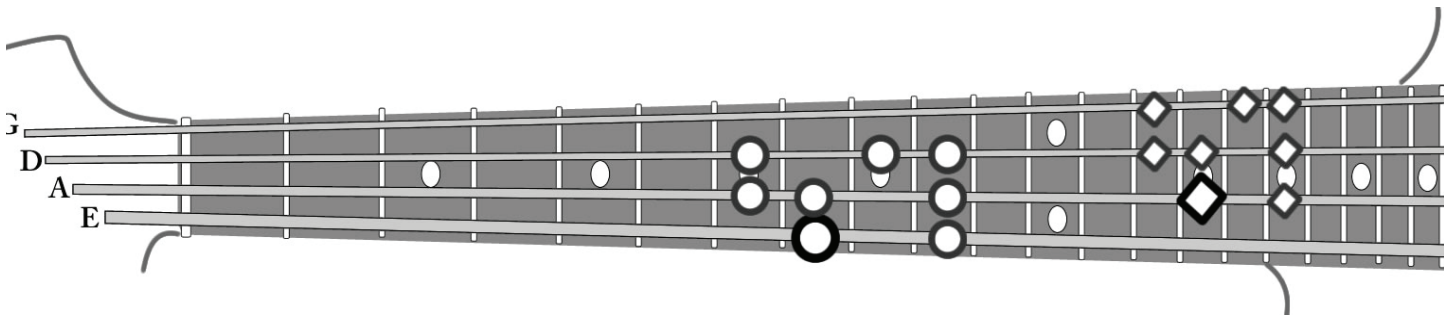
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We are going to tap a major scale with each hand, at the same time, using the cycle of 4ths as our root motion. Place your second finger of your left hand on the C note on your E string. Now place the second finger of your right hand on the higher C note on your A string, 15th fret. Using the same fingering in both hands, (one finger per fret) play the C major scale now sounding in two octaves. Try to keep every note held as long as possible before moving to the next, creating a sustained sound.

Playing one finger per fret, the fingering for the dominant scale is: 2 - 4, 1 - 2 - 4, 1 - 3 - 4.

### Example 39 - Diagram of major scale in both hands



Your left hand is on the E string while your right hand is on the A string. At some point you will need to shift down, to a different octave as opposed to up, because you will eventually run out of space on your fret-board. When shifting your right hand down you will be moving it to the same fret that your left hand just vacated. Learn this root movement well. This is just the beginning. What we are going to do is play scales and scale patterns over each chord.

### Video Example 11 - Tap Cycle, major scale

Play along with the video. Watch the hand posture. Watch how the fingers stay close to the fingerboard. Maintain your hand posture when you shift. Look ahead to find the note where you will shift to next. Keep your fingers spread out and over the notes they will be playing. Sustain.

Download our practice CDs that offer you a play-along to work with. Practicing along with the audio support is valuable practice. They tend to keep you going. Besides, it's fun.

## Example 51

*Bb Minor #2 - 12 Keys Etude*

♩ = 110

1

5

9

13

17

21

25

29

## About the Author

Grant Stinnett is a fountain of positive energy and exciting music. His contemporary techniques and styles are drawn from the music of Victor Wooten, Louis Johnson, Marcus Miller, and his mentor, Michael Manring. Grant is an accomplished “Solo Bassist” and his newest release, *Tapestry*, is a testament to his mastery.

Grant is an outstanding teacher. Having grown up in the *Bass Workout* environment, Grant is keenly aware of the challenges of learning and is a thoughtful and diligent instructor. Grant is also the author and facilitator of the highly acclaimed online course, *Contemporary Techniques For Electric Bass*.

As a popular contemporary bassist, Grant’s free YouTube instructional videos have received many thousands of views. Grant has also performed his original music on stages the world over.

Grant also enjoys several other forms of artistic expression including, drawing, pottery, pirography, videography, wood working, and the martial arts.

Grant is a **LeFay** bass Artist.

