



Fretboard Freedom

SAMPLE LESSON

Lesson 1.3

In this next lesson, I want to introduce you to **“The Landmark System”**. This is my personal process for quickly identifying all of the notes on the fretboard. I’m going to introduce you to three sets of landmarks:

- The Fundamental Landmarks
- The Primary Landmarks
- The Secondary Landmarks

Here’s my confession...even after 30+ years of playing the instrument, I’m aware I do not know every single individual note in isolation. My entire process is all about relating individual frets to a few core landmarks on the instrument. After many years of practice, I know this is something I do incredibly quickly and instinctively, almost without thinking about it. The good news is that if you follow this system, you can do the same over time.

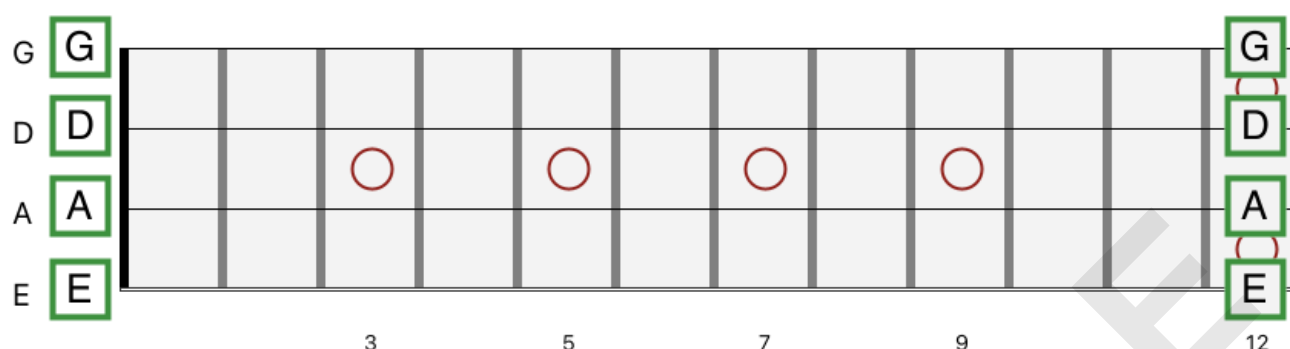
Eight Fundamental Landmarks

In this first diagram, I am going to introduce you to the Eight Fundamental Landmarks. These are the four open strings and the corresponding octave at the double dots at the 12th fret. I think of these landmarks as book-ending one complete octave of the bass guitar fretboard.

www.eBassGuitar.com

Fretboard Freedom

Diagram 1.3.1

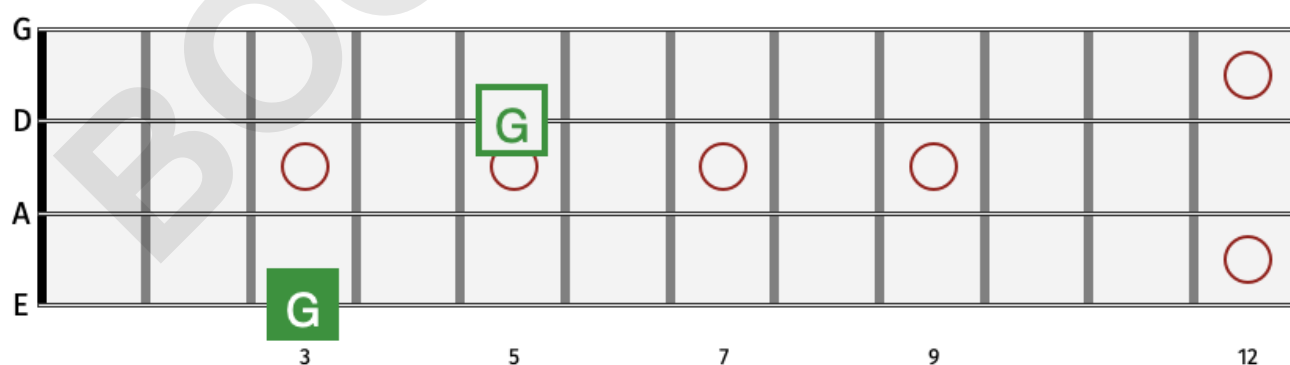


To create the Primary and Secondary Landmarks, we need to understand one of the most important, fundamental shapes on the bass guitar fretboard: the Octave shape. The Octave shape looks like an 'L', two strings down and two frets along (as you look at it from the perspective of standing/sitting with the bass guitar).

An octave is when the same letter note is played higher or lower in pitch, but it still sounds like the same note.

Using the one finger per fret technique, play the lower note with your first finger and the upper note with the third finger of your fretting hand. If you find this too much of a stretch, you can use the fourth finger, but bear in mind you will lose the one finger per fret technique, which could make seeing some of the patterns and shapes trickier.

The Octave L-Shape



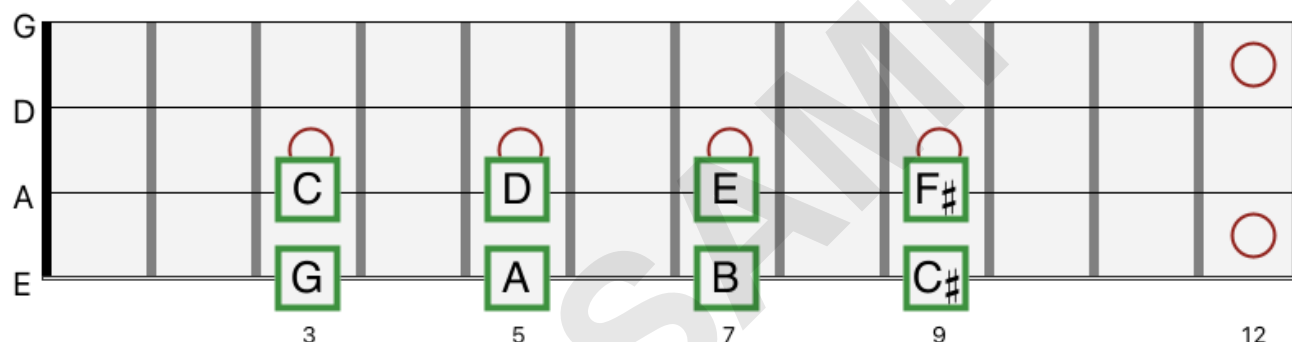
Octave Shapes At The Dots (E-String)

===

To create our next set of landmarks, we are going to use the notes at the dots on the fretboard. You will find a single fret dot marker at frets 3, 5, 7 and 9.

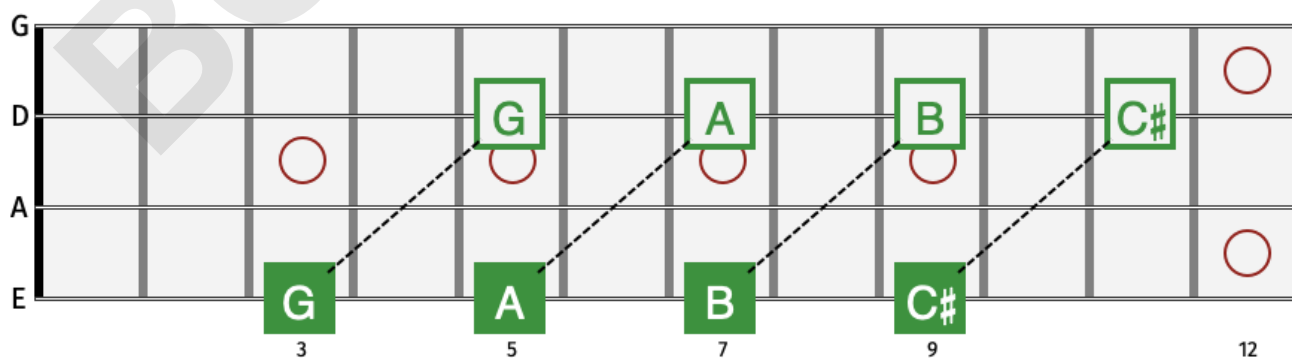
We can create eight primary markers by learning the notes at the dots on the E-string, followed by the notes on the A-string. There's quite a simple, almost alphabetical pattern of G, A, B and C# on the E-string and C, D, E and F# on the A-string.

Diagram 1.3.2 - The Primary Landmarks



Next, we are going to create our Secondary Landmarks one string at a time. Our Secondary Landmarks are created by using the octave shapes we learned earlier in this chapter.

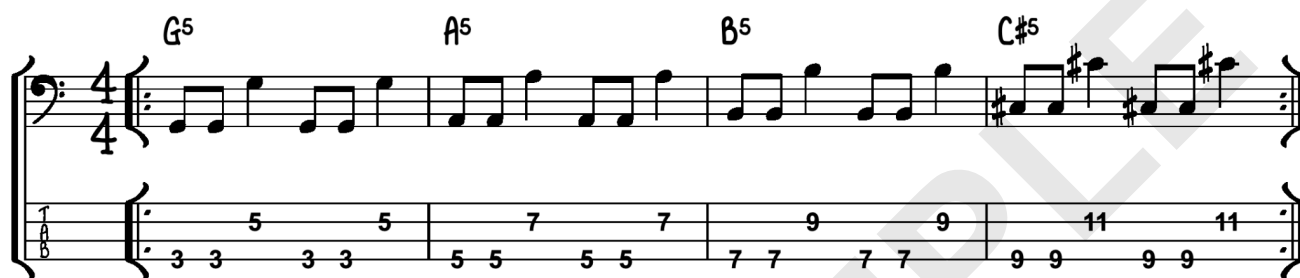
Here are the Primary and Secondary Landmarks on the E- and D-strings, respectively. Notice how they have the same pattern of notes G, A, B and C#:



To get you comfortable with this, I've put together a simple chord progression where you can practice playing the octaves.

Example 1

With this example, make sure your first finger is always on each lower octave and observe how the first finger lines up with the fret marker on the instrument.



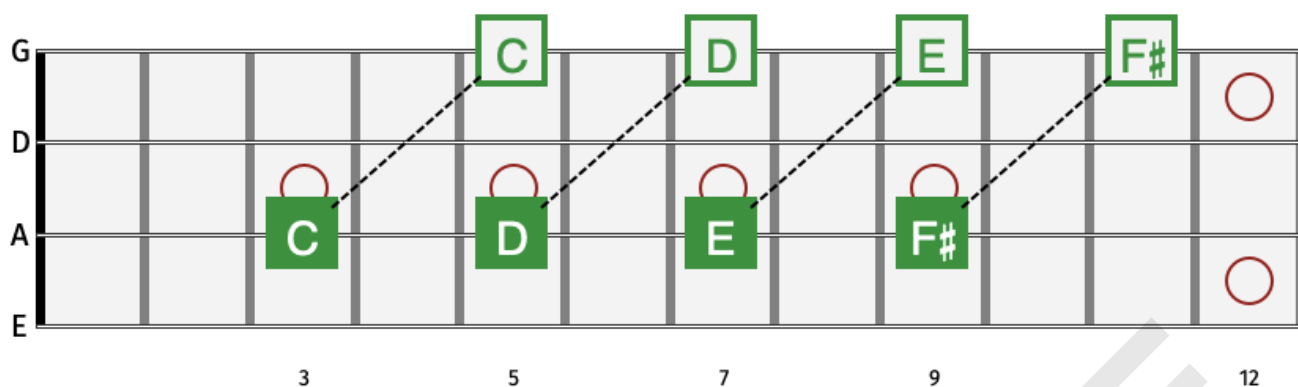
Example 2

Next, I just want you to play the notes on the D-string, but I want you to observe how these notes relate to the fret markers on the E-string. I recommend using the third finger on your fretting hand to start with (so your first finger 'ghosts' the octave shape); then challenging yourself by switching to your first finger and simply visualising the fret markers on the E-string.



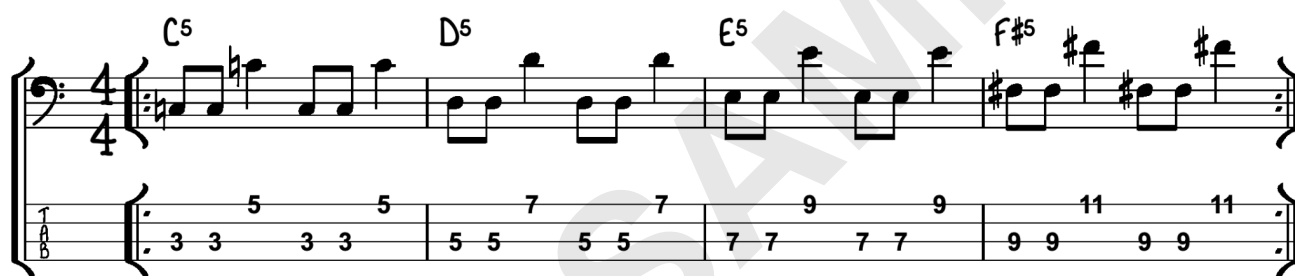
Octave Shapes At The Dots (A-String)

Next, we want to learn our Primary and Secondary Landmarks on the A- and G-strings, respectively. Again, notice how our octave shape creates the C, D, E and F[#] on the G-string.



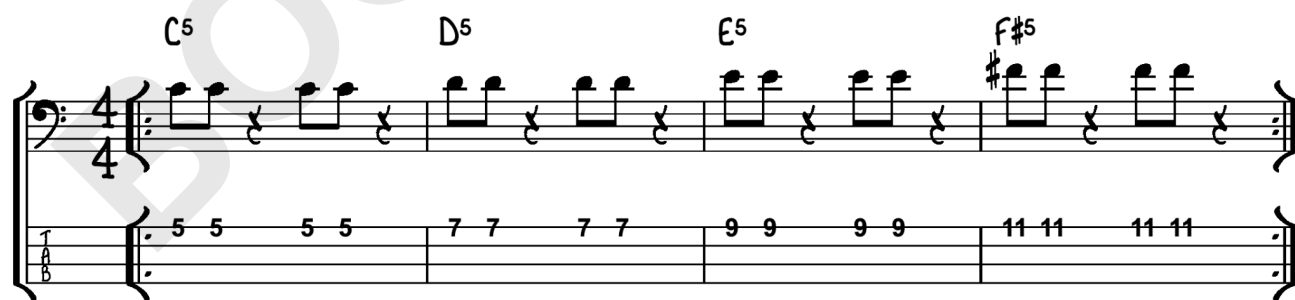
Example 1

Here is a simple chord progression to get comfortable with the Primary and Secondary Landmark shapes on the A- and G-strings.



Example 2

Again, practice hitting the Secondary Landmarks on the G-string but visualise the Primary Landmarks on the A-string, at the fret marker dots.

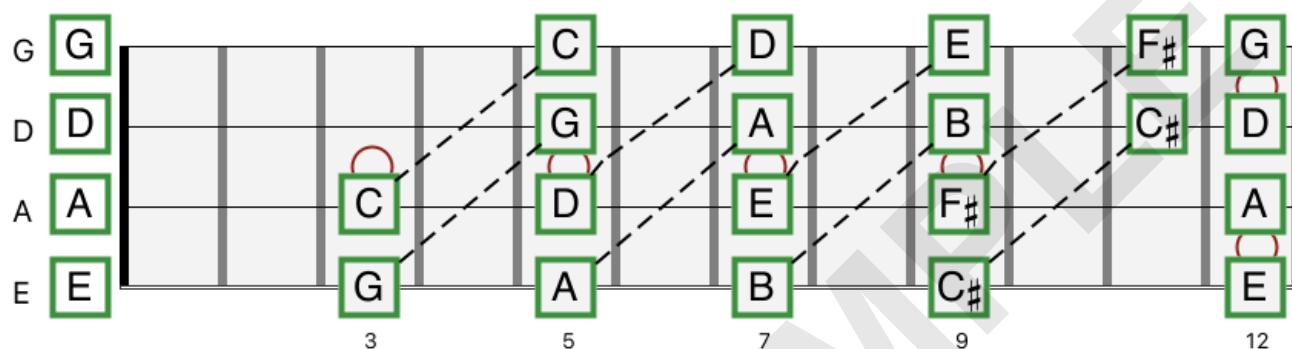


Combining The Landmarks

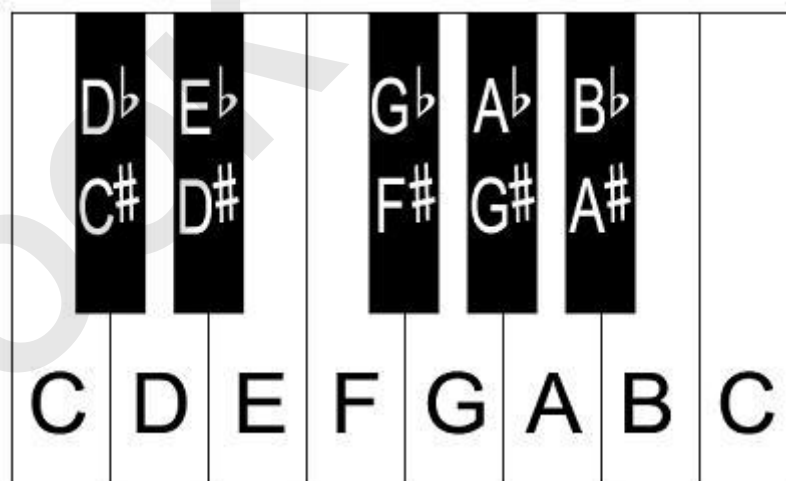
===

The great news is you can now combine your eight Fundamental Landmarks, eight Primary Landmarks and eight Secondary Landmarks to 24 simple note locations.

Diagram 1.3.3



You can now work out all of the notes that are not labelled by inserting the relevant note from the 12 Chromatic Notes Diagram from earlier. There is virtually always an important landmark just one fret away.



Tip: You can easily use the octave 'L' shape to identify notes at fret 2. Just imagine your first finger pushing down the nut of the instrument, and your third finger will naturally give you the octave shape at fret 2.

www.eBassGuitar.com

Fretboard Freedom

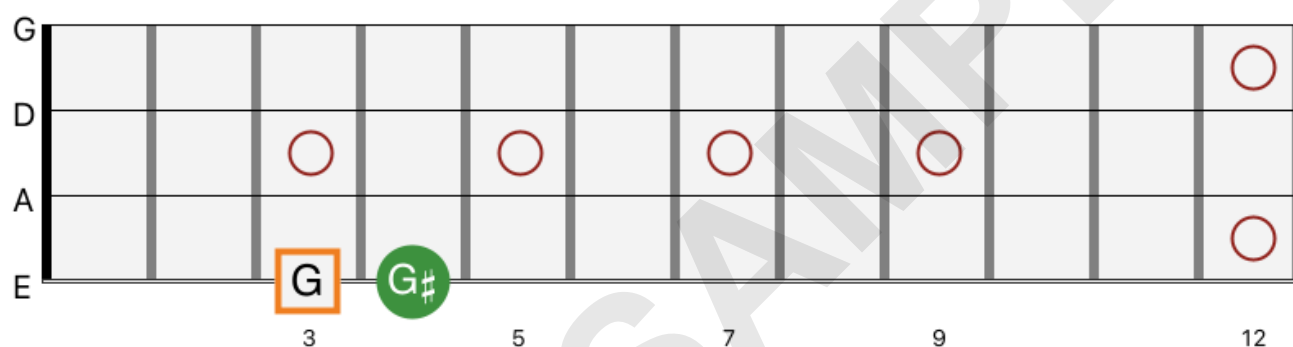
To complete this concept, I'm going to show you how to locate a note on each string and how it relates to the Landmark System.

There are many different ways you could slice and dice this concept, and multiple other examples that could be given.

E-String

Our target note is a G# on the E-string.

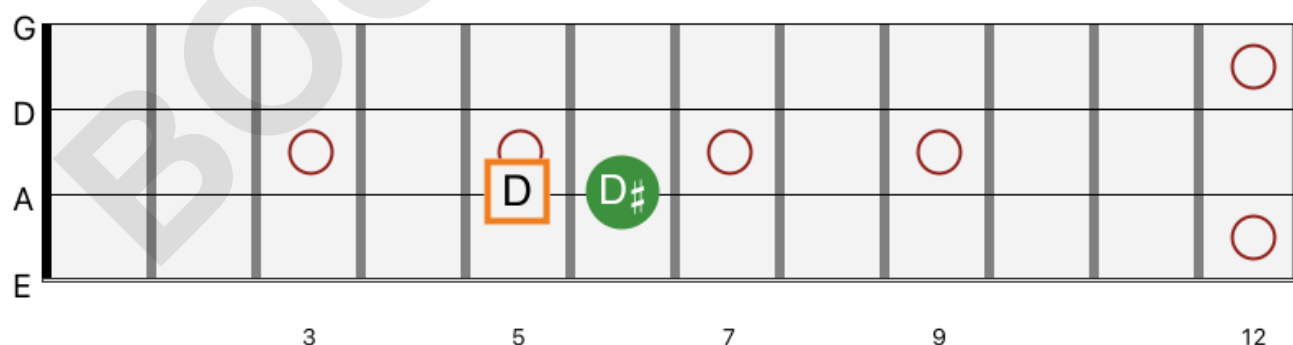
To find this, locate the landmark G at the 3rd fret and simply go up a half step or one fret to find the G# at the 4th fret.



A-String

Our target note is D# on the A-string.

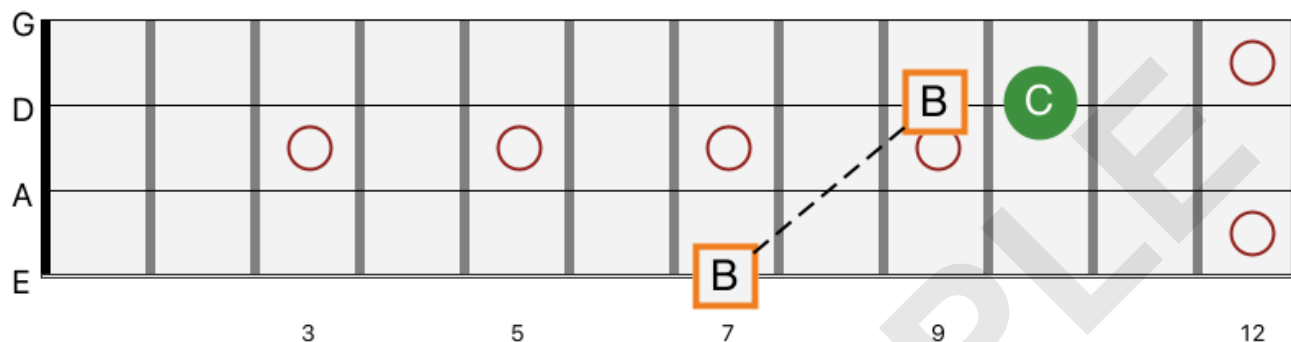
To locate this, the landmark I look for is D at the 5th fret on the A-string, then simply go up a half step.



D-String

Our target note is C on the A-string.

To locate this, locate B on the E-string at the dot, using the octave shape to create our Secondary Landmark and go up a half step.

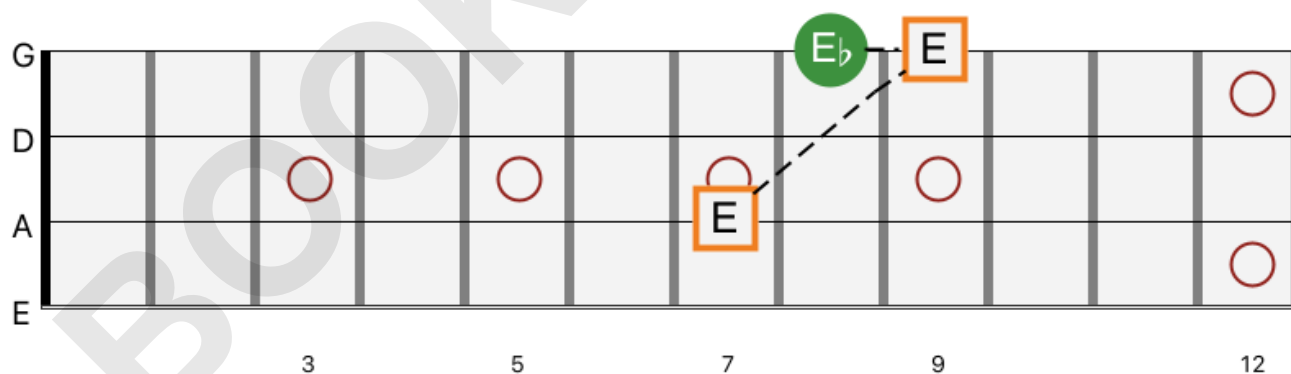


G-String:

Our target note is an E $\flat$.

In all of the examples so far, I've used a sharp note and come from below. In this example, I'm going to use a flat note and use the landmark above the note.

To find the E $\flat$, my Primary Landmark is the E at the 3rd dot on the A-string. I then find my Secondary Landmark using the octave shape and simply go down a half step or one fret.



To wrap up this whole concept, remember this is not about memorising each individual note on the fretboard; it's about locating every note on the bass using a simple, logical system and visualising the shapes on the fretboard. At the heart of it, all you need to do is start by remembering the eight Primary Landmarks.

Take the Next Step Toward Complete Fretboard Freedom



You've just explored one key part of the Landmark System but that's only the beginning.

In the full [Fretboard Freedom](#) book, you'll also get:

- The complete visual method for navigating the entire neck
- Step-by-step patterns to connect every note into real music
- Diagrams, tabs, and play-along tracks to lock it in
- The confidence to move anywhere on the fretboard without getting lost

 **Official Release:** First week of September 2025

👉 Reserve Your Copy Now and start playing the entire bass guitar fretboard with confidence.

PRE-ORDER

www.eBassGuitar.com

Fretboard Freedom