

EncycloMedia Man by Mike Overly

Bass Patterns: In and Out of Sync

We'll begin this lesson with a typical 12 bar harmony progression in the key of A major. Letters: A D E and harmony numerals: I IV V. **Figure 1.**

Figure 1.

Next, let's present a natural and chromatic "core four" scale degree tone number pattern that may be play on a 4, 5 or 6 string bass. On a 4 or 5 string bass the form is ④2 and on a 6 string bass the form is ⑤2. **Figure 2.**

Figure 2.

In-sync simply means "together". In other words, the tone numbers and the rhythm counting numbers are occurring at the same time. There are many "in-sync" bass patterns that may be "spelled" with tones and applied to each letter and harmony numeral of the above 12 bar progression. Here are a few one bar "in-sync" bass patterns. **Figures 3-10.**

Figure 3.

4 | Tones: 1 3 5 6 8 6 5 3 |
4 | Rhythm: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

Figure 4.

4 | Tones: 1 3 5 6 b7 6 5 3 |
4 | Rhythm: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

Figure 5.

4 | Tones: 1 1 3 1 5 1 4 3 |
4 | Rhythm: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

Figure 6.

4 | Tones: 1 1 b3 3 5 5 6 8 |
4 | Rhythm: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + |

Figure 7.

4	Tones:	1	1	8	8	b7	b7	5	5	
4	Rhythm:	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	

Figure 8.

4	Tones:	1	1	8	5	b7	b7	7	8	
4	Rhythm:	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	

Figure 9.

4	Tones:	1	5	b7	5	8	5	b7	8	
4	Rhythm:	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	

Figure 10.

4	Tones:	1	8	5	b7	1	1	5	b7	
4	Rhythm:	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	

Out-of-sync simply means "not together". In other words, some of the tones are played "off the beat". When this occurs, the rhythm is called **syncopated**. Syncopation is most easily created by using the "tie". The **tie** is symbolized by a curved line and means to "sustain" (connect the sound). Again, there are many "out-of-sync" bass patterns that may be "spelled" with scale degree tones and applied to each letter and numeral of the above 12 bar harmony progression. Here are a few one bar "out-of-sync" bass patterns.

Figures 11 - 14.

Figure 11.

4	Tones:	1		3		5				
4	Rhythm:	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	

Figure 12.

4	Tones:	1		5		b7	8			
4	Rhythm:	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	

Figure 13.

4	Tones:	1		3		5	6	5		
4	Rhythm:	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	

Figure 14.

4	Tones:	1		5	b7	b7	8	b7		
4	Rhythm:	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	

We'll end this lesson with a two bar syncopated bass line made famous by **Ray Charles** in the 1959 hit song - **What'd I Say**. **Figure 15.**

Figure 15.

4	Tones:	1		5	5	b7		8	1		5	5	b7		8				
4	Rhythm:	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+		1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	

Till next time, have some bass pattern fun...I'll be listening.

Mike Overly is a regular contributor to **BassBooks.com** and author of *Bass EncycloMedia*, *BEM Jam audio disc 1*, *Bass Fretboard Facts* and *Bass Fretboard Flashcards for 4, 5 & 6 String Bass*.