



Lesson Twenty Nine

Gigajam Bass School Lesson 29 IBS PIAT

Applying our understanding of Theory

Lesson Objectives

- Overview all of the theory studied throughout the course so far.
- Apply the theory learned to develop creative use of the bass guitar.
- Develop further the ability to visualise and transfer shapes.

The role of the bass

The role of the bass is the same in any **ensemble**—to provide a solid rhythmic and harmonic foundation to the music. This gives the bass a unique position as the bridge between the rhythmic instruments (drums) and the harmonic instruments (guitars, keyboards).

To this end, a thorough knowledge of chords and scales is of course essential. Moreover, how to use this information is the most important thing of all.

Often a bass player stands or falls on what they can create from a chord, or chord progression - so you need to make it memorable.

Theory overview

The following table details the theory covered so far. The first consideration is of course major or minor.

Fig 1 Theory Overview Table

chord	scale	triad	pentatonic	blues
major	yes	yes	yes	yes
minor	yes	yes	yes	yes

Blues scale and major and minor

The blues scale has a strong 'personality' and often seems to fit in with both major and minor chords.

Because of its similarity with the blues scale, it is also possible to use the minor pentatonic scale over major chords. This works well for bass riffs and is a particularly fruitful area of bass playing. A lot of music, especially rock music is about blurring the lines between major and minor to create interesting sounds.

Being creative with our theory

Just running up and down a scale and adding some rhythm is probably not always likely to produce a memorable bass riff. You could miss out a note on the way up the scale for instance, using your knowledge of rests.

Look at a practical example to highlight this approach. The first exercise demonstrates this well. It is based on a G minor pentatonic. In this example the flat 3rd (B \flat) is left out. Make sure you understand the notes used and not used and how all this relates to the minor pentatonic scale.

Take a look at **Exercise 1** and use the multimedia files in the usual manner.

Exercise 1 lesson029.ibspiat.01



In **Exercise 2** we have transferred the scale to another note!

Exercise 2 lesson029.ibspiat.02



In **Exercise 3** we have joined these two patterns together to create a longer phrase.

Exercise 3 lesson029.ibspiat.03



Root and fifth in a minor pentatonic riff

Using the root and fifth as a basis for a minor pentatonic riff is another good idea.

The notes **used** are: **root, 5th, flat 7th**, and the **octave**.

The notes **not used** are: **flat 3rd** and the **4th**.

Technical consideration

We need to consider our fingering before we play the next set of exercises as the fingering we have been playing makes playing the riff smoothly quite difficult.

Watch the technique clip for an alternative way of fingering the exercise.

Video Clip

Lesson029.ibspiat.techstore.01



Having considered the technical aspect of playing Exercise four, now take a good look at the exercise, along with supporting multimedia and practise.

Exercise 4

lesson029.ibspiat.04



Exercise 5 transfers this riff to another note!

Exercise 5

lesson029.ibspiat.05



12 bar pattern

Finish this lesson by applying the skills developed to a minor based 12 bar pattern.

Exercise 6

lesson029.ibspiat.06



Revision

Note how all these examples have a very similar shape or pattern on the fingerboard. Look back at each example and make sure you understand the fingerboard shape of each one.