

IGOR SARDI
100 FUNK GROOVES
FOR BASS GUITAR



**100 BASS LINES, WITH RHYTHMIC AND HARMONIC
EXPLANATION, TO PERFECTLY KNOW THE FUNKY
MUSICAL LANGUAGE, WITH EXAMPLES AND BACKING
TRACKS TO PRACTICE AND COMPOSE YOUR LINES!**

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Preface:

I decided to write this book because, almost always, in the ones I have bought over the years, let's say on the same "style," I never found an explanation of what was being offered. I could limit myself, therefore, to learning bass phrases, fills, grooves, without really understanding the meaning. Why were certain notes being played? Why were certain rhythmic elements working beautifully? On what chords were the bass lines "thought"? What scales or arpeggios, or substitutions, were being used and why? These, each time, were just a few of the many questions I asked myself after "parroting" the various examples offered.

Another thing, in my opinion instead fundamental, in all the books I bought, there were audio examples, but no backing tracks without bass guitar in order to play and study in the best way.

As with almost all my other instructional books then I thought, "Why not write one, exactly as I wished the ones I was buying years ago had been?" The title is a bit generic, because in reality not only Funk is covered, but also many similar styles of music from various different eras, and, in addition, many bass lines take inspiration from the greatest bass players in the history of these musical genres. A few examples: Francis "Rocco" Prestia, Louis Johnson, Jerry Jemmot, Bernard Edwards, Paul Jackson, Chuck Rainey, Flea, James Jamerson, Pino Palladino, Jaco Pastorius, Alain Caron, Donald "Duck" Dunn, Nathan Watts, Alphonso Johnson, Verdine White, and many others!

Each proposed groove is then analyzed rhythmically and harmonically, and, indeed, I have tried to make you understand why I use certain scales, arpeggios, substitutions, "out" notes and "in" notes, etc., etc. So many examples are offered in two keys, to give you the input to play everything studied, in as many keys as possible. All proposed grooves have, attached, the audio example, backing track and drum loops. There will also be videos attached, which I will point out later. The MAIN purpose of this book, is for you to take cues from my examples to compose your own bass lines. Try to understand and internalize each and every element suggested, to create your own musical "vocabulary," and have fun modifying my lines with your "taste," and , slowly, to create your own. Don't just read the tabs and try to resonate what I have done, this may suit you only on a "technical" level, but that is not the purpose.

The proposed examples have no order of any kind (difficulty, era, style, or otherwise), precisely because I would like to keep your interest up to the last groove, and because, the difficulty of a given bass line, is subjective!

To download the attached audio material, send an email to igorsardi@gmail.com with the subject line: request audio book 100 funk grooves. Good study guys, Igor!

- Minor pentatonic scale (identical to major pentatonic one major third above):
Root, minor third, fourth, fifth, minor seventh
(F - A \flat - B \flat - C - E \flat) identical to the major of A \flat (A \flat - B \flat - C - E \flat - F)
 - Blues scale: Root, minor third, fourth, augmented fourth, fifth, minor seventh
(F - A \flat - B \flat - B - C - E \flat)
 - Half/whole tone diminished scale (h/w): Root, minor second, minor third, major third, augmented fourth (or diminished fifth), fifth, major sixth, minor seventh.
(F - G \flat - A \flat - A - B - C - D - E \flat)
 - Whole/half tone diminished scale: Root, major second, minor third, fourth, augmented fourth (or diminished fifth), augmented fifth (or minor sixth), major sixth, major seventh.
(F - G - A \flat - B \flat - B - C \sharp - D - E)
- Other scales will be explained below.

Embellishments and various techniques:

Different from classical music (and beyond), where musical embellishments have precise "rules" that must be followed in execution, the embellishments you will find in the examples in this book, you will instead have to "interpret" and execute them as you please. For example, if instead of a trill you prefer a vibrato, do it, if instead of an "appoggiatura" you prefer nothing, do it! If you don't like a "wide" vibrato, perform it "tight," and so on. It is good and right, however, to know the various embellishments, at least the most commonly used ones, and to know how to perform them. Below are symbols and explanation of those you will find in this book:

Trillo		
Simbolo	Esecuzione (indicativa)	Alternativa
<i>tr</i> 		

Trill: It is represented by the term "tr." or "trill." followed by a dash that runs the length of the note and may also extend for several bars. The trill is an embellishment whose execution varies greatly, depending on the taste of the musician, and the tempo of the song in question, as well as the style and genre played. For example, if the piece is very slow, one will probably opt for 32nds or 64ths, while if it is very fast, 16ths may be effective. The trill consists of a rapid and continuous exchange between the "embellished" note (called the real note) and its upper or lower auxiliary, which

Chapter 2: Software and apps to have for studying

Unlike when I began my electric bass studies, now we can take advantage of an incredible amount of programs, apps, and software, which facilitate and help us in our study path.

- The first advice I give you, whether you use Apple or Android, is to download to your phone, or iPad, or Tablet, the main apps you find, by typing in the search, solfeggio app, music theory app, music study app, etc. Many are really well done, and (at least in my case) have stimulated in me, unlike many boring books, the desire to learn how to read music, rhythmic solfege, and more.
- An absolutely must-have program is called IReal Pro, available for any operating system, both on mobile devices and computers. It is really worth buying despite the fact that, if I am not mistaken, it now costs about 20 Euro. I have shown all the functions and possibilities of this program in this video - <https://youtu.be/jgfVLKk4Bjc>
- Another absolutely must-have software is called Transcribe, an audio player, with which you can, among other functions, slow down the file (without changing the pitch), loop larger or smaller fragments, change pitch on the fly, and much more. I have shown all the functions and possibilities of this software in this video - <https://youtu.be/DySe3G-FIFs>
- If you want a free, intuitive software with hundreds of functions, Audacity for me remains among the best ever. Changing tempo, pitch, removing hiss from an audio file and so many other things, which you can do in a totally simple way.
- The last software I recommend (vital for me, as I use it to make even complex arrangements, sequencers, backing tracks, record bass, vocals, guitar, etc., and many other things) is Logic Pro. Unfortunately from what I know it exists only for Mac, but there are similar software for other operating systems as well, but I cannot recommend them, as I am not familiar with them. Of the main functions I have talked about them in this video

https://youtu.be/O5CUx_6LG-M

- Rocco Prestia
- Richard Bona
- Verdine White
- Victor Wooten

How to approach the Funk:

As always, the first piece of advice I give is listening, a fundamental part of studying any genre and style of music. If you read the stories of the world's greatest musicians, ALL of them, they say they grew up listening to music for days on end!

Regarding Funk, its subgenres, and similar styles of music, obviously having solid timing and a good groove is a fundamental part of becoming a good Funky musician. Generally in Funk there are only a few chords (sometimes a whole song has only one or two chords), but it is vital to know them, because, first of all, on those few chords you will have to build whole bass lines, fills, solos, etc., therefore, knowing that from what notes each type of chord is made up becomes essential, and also, because triads are rarely used, very frequently very complex chords are used, which we will see later.

In these two videos, I tried to explain how to compose a Funk bass line from scratch, and how to compose a Funk bass line, using only chord notes.

Video 1 - <https://youtu.be/Nrb45Ot-M4Y>

Video 2 - <https://youtu.be/tGE45anzcHw>

If you search through my videos on the YouTube channel, there are many more on the Funk theme. In Funk bass lines, the most common clichés, are the use of ghost notes, "staccato," syncopation, chords, embellishments (trill, vibrato etc.), and the use of harmonic substitutions, chromaticism, and "out" notes.

In some of my teaching methods, I have covered these topics in detail, check out my site www.igorsardi.com

Groove 1

♩ = 115

A fairly fast classic funk groove with only one chord (I wrote it in B \flat 7).

The B \flat 7 is composed of the notes B \flat - D - F and A \flat .

On this type of chord, called dominant, we can use many substitutions, and many "color" notes, and even notes that are not even part of the most obvious reference scale, B \flat Mixolydian.

As you can see, in addition to the chord notes, I used a D \flat (minor third), a C (major second), a G (major sixth), an E \flat (fourth), an A (major seventh), and an E (augmented fourth). In addition, to embellish my groove, I made extensive use of ghosts and vibrato (try varying it with the trill).

After studying the groove perfectly, take your cue and try to create your own bass line.

Start simple, first create "the skeleton" of the groove, have fun playing with the backing track drums, and try slowly inserting the various harmonic and rhythmic elements to embellish it.

Try it out and study it in other keys as well, looking for other fingerings, this will be vital to you in your study and growth as a musician.

Groove 9

♩ = 95

C7

Bass

Palm.Mute

T
A
B

3 3 3 3 2 3 0 1 2 2 3 X

3 3 2 3 3 3 0 0 1 1 2 2

G7

T
A
B

3 5 3 1 4 5 3 5 5 5 7 5 5 5 5 3 5 4

Now I was inspired by another of my all-time favorite bass players, James Jamerson. The biggest advice I can give you is to listen to as many of the thousands of recordings James was on as possible. His style was unique and, at the time, totally innovative. The innovation Jamerson brought to the use of the electric bass in pop, Funk and R&B music consisted mainly in the originality and balance of his lines. Often very choppy and syncopated, the notes of his Fender did not impose themselves on or distract the listener from the melody, but supported the piece with great rhythmic power and a constant emphasis on key harmonic passages. In the 1950s he was noticed by Berry Gordy, patron of the Motown record company. Active since the late 1950s in recording studios, in the early 1960s he switched from double bass to electric bass. Jamerson's discography at Motown is quite extensive. Together with the other turntables (the group, which was virtually the same on all recordings, was known as The Funk Brothers) he helped create a soundtrack for an entire generation that is still exploited today in advertising jingles and soundtracks. Jamerson and the Funk Brothers record hits by Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, Marvin Gaye, The Jackson 5, The Four Tops, and The Supremes. James Jamerson is known for his unique technique! He played by making use of only the index finger of his right hand. This "technique" (which he nicknamed "The Hook") has been a hallmark of his playing since the days when he used the double bass exclusively. Many great bass players have claimed to have been greatly influenced by Jamerson, to name a few: Pino Palladino, Marcus Miller, Rocco Prestia, Geddy Lee, and many others!

Groove 33

♩ = 120

*Slightly staccato

C7

Bass

1

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 0 0 1 1 2 3

3 3 2 3 3 3 4 4 5 X 0 0 1 0 2 0

3

5 5 2 3 4 5 5 3 3 4 6 5 7 6 8 7 6 .

3 3 3 3 3 3 0 1 2 3 3 3 3 4 5 6 5 4 .

And here is the first groove in the style of Rocco Prestia, who, after Jaco, is my favorite bass player ever. For those who don't know him (very badly!), Prestia was the bass player in one of the most influential Funk bands ever, California's Tower of Power.

With his personal and innovative left-handed muting technique, Rocco Prestia always had a distinctive sound and style that was perfect for all the band's songs.

Rhythmically flawless and perfect even at fast speeds, Prestia always sounded completely at ease even in complex and fast bass lines, creating an overwhelming rhythmic base with his Tower of Power.

Sadly, he left us in 2020 at the age of 69.

The biggest advice I can give you (besides listening to all Tower of Power records) is to watch the video in which Prestia demonstrates his techniques, titled "Francis Rocco Prestia - Fingerstyle Funk Bass Lesson"

Groove 57

♩ = 130

Bass

C7

1

3 1 3 1 3 3 0 1 3 | 3 3 2 2 2 3 3 5 3

3

3 1 3 1 3 3 0 1 3 | 3 7 7 7 5 5 7 5 7

Another bass player who deeply influenced me is the great Donald "Duck" Dunn, a musician who was active from the early 1960s until his passing in 2012. In 1978 he joined the Blues Brothers Band.

Dunn was also a great reference for Jaco Pastorius, as for so many other great bass players.

He collaborated with artists and bands including, Eric Clapton, Elvis Presley, Rod Stewart, Bob Dylan.

He has used, primarily, a Fender Precision.

The groove in question, takes its cue from the Blues Brothers' version of the song Think, listen to it!