

All About That Bass

01/10/2021

Presented by Jamison Forge

Bass Recorders in F

The Bass Family:

Basset in F-

Great Bass in C-

Contrabass in F-

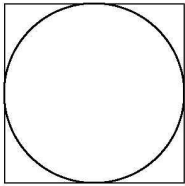
-Played either direct blow with or without mouthpiece, or a bocal

Sub-Great Bass in C-

Sub-Contrabass in F-

Sub-Sub-Great Bass in C-

Paetzold Square Bassettes-



Why Switch to Bass?

Here's some excuses to not switch to bass, which I will overturn!

-“The Music is too easy”- In consort music, especially Renaissance, the bass is the ground, and usually does have the easiest notes to play...

-”I'd get bored playing it”- Consort music isn't the only thing you can do with the bass recorders...

-”Buying a bass is too expensive”- It can be an investment, but there are ways to determine if the investment is right for you...

What is the Bass Function?

- YOU ARE THE GROUND!- In an ensemble setting, basses are the leader in tuning, timing, and tempo...

How do the Basses differ from the Smaller Instruments?

-How you hold the instruments...

-How you breathe...

-How you read music...

-Added Keywork...

-Alternate Fingerings...

Holding the Instrument

Sling in Front-
Sling to the Side-
Floor Spike-
Crossed Legs-
Standing Riser-

The comfort of your right hand is the most important factor

How to Breathe Out

Two types of air- Warm Air and Cold Air...

Warm Air... (haaaaaaaa)

Cold Air... (hoooooooo)

How to Breathe In

Basses will take a more significant amount of air than the small ones. Breathing in properly is key.

- Breathe in from the diaphragm, not the lungs
- Fill the abdomen with air first, then fill the lungs
- Expel all air with warm breath
- Abdomen should stay expanded through most of the exhalation
- Focus on keeping a steady tone with no vibrato, keep the note in tune, ration your air to make it to the end of the note, breathe in quickly and properly before the next note



Reading Bass Clef

- The biggest change in the music is that bass parts will be reading in bass clef
- F basses and C basses can read the same music, extended low range for C instruments
- Many ways to notate clef, but here is the most common for contemporary when each bass has a different part.



Basset

Great Bass

Contrabass

Sub-Great Bass

Sub-Contrabass

Sub-Sub-Great Bass

Transposing

-Many times, basses will have to transpose parts, such as reading an alto line as if playing an alto recorder, or reading a tenor line at pitch...

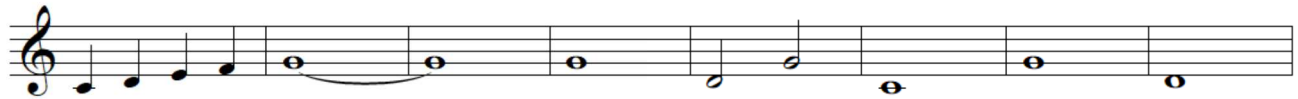
Read as Tenor line at Pitch



Die Katzen Pfote

Anonymous- Arrangement from Lord Dorian Longwind's Music Book

Read as Tenor line at Pitch



Keywork on Basses

-As instruments get larger, our hands stay the same size. Keys are added to make reaching the holes easier.

-Basset- While some bassets can be keyless, most are equipped with keys for hole 3, 4 and 7

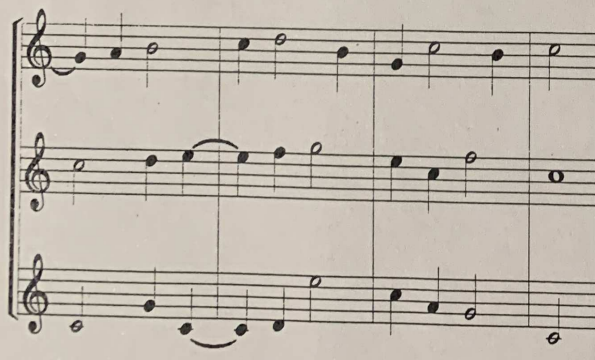
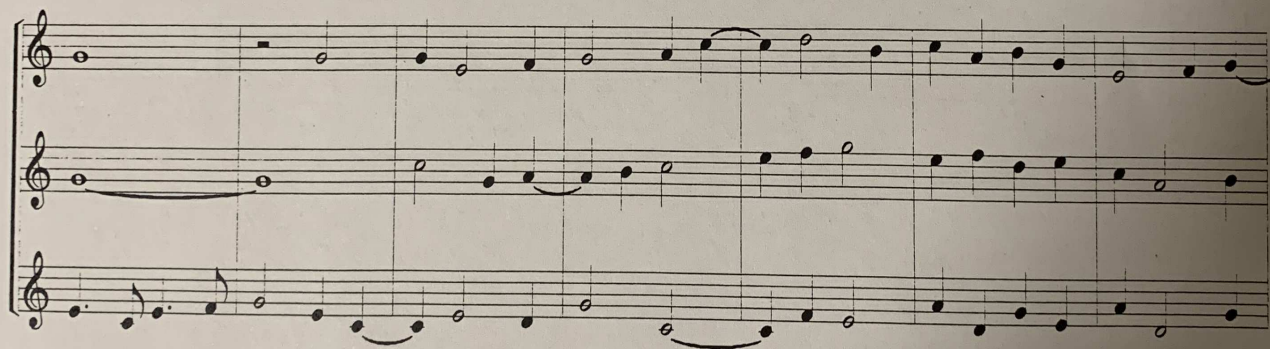
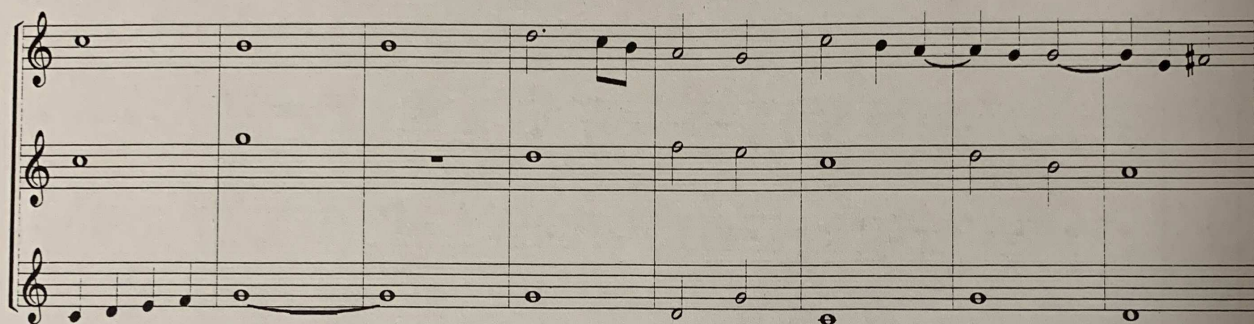
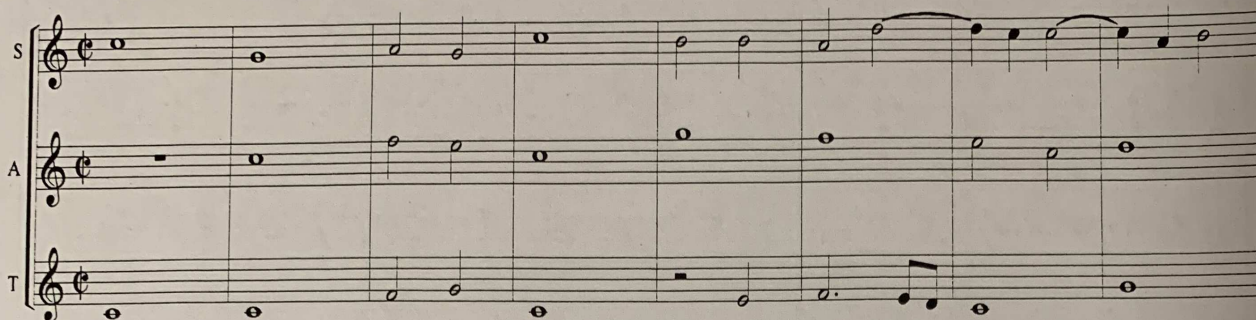
-Great Bass- Keywork is usually supplied for all holes except for 1 and Thumb, and in most cases, a G# key for the right pinky is added. Also, certain brands will add a ring key on hole 5, or, have a different setup of open holes altogether.

-Contrabass- Adds a key to hole 1, leaving only your thumb operating an open hole.

-Paetzolds have a key for everything, including a double thumb key, and a double plate key for hole 6.

Die Katzen Pfote

Anon.



Alternate Fingerings

-Why the huge focus on keywork? This affects your fingerings and what fingerings will be in tune! Every instrument is different, and may require different fingerings than you are used to from playing the smaller instruments...

Online Fingering Charts

<https://blockfloetengriffe.de/en/index.php>

<https://www.wfg.woodwind.org/recorder/>

Forked Notes

F Instruments: Bb and Eb

C Instruments: F and Bb

Rosemondt

van Eyck- from *The Bass Recorder Handbook* by Dennis Bloodworth



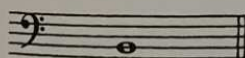
Open 3-4's

F Instruments: B and C#

C Instruments: F# and G#

-These notes are tricky on any recorder, but especially on the basses! Not only do we need to find the correct air pressure, and correct articulation to speak the note clearly, it is very likely to be out of tune with a standard fingering.

-The next few pages illustrate the difficulties of these notes (written for an F bass), extracted from *The Bass Recorder Handbook*.



B

The standard and most convenient fingering is:

| | |
|-------|-----|
| Thumb | ● |
| L.H. | 1 ● |
| | 2 ● |
| | 3 ● |
| R.H. | 1 ○ |
| | 2 ● |
| | 3 ● |
| | 4 ○ |

but any of the following may be more in tune:

| | | | | | |
|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|
| Thumb | ● | Thumb | ● | Thumb | ● |
| L.H. | 1 ● | L.H. | 1 ● | L.H. | 1 ● |
| | 2 ● | | 2 ● | | 2 ● |
| | 3 ● | | 3 ● | | 3 ● |
| R.H. | 1 ○ | R.H. | 1 ○ | R.H. | 1 ○ |
| | 2 ● | | 2 ● | | 2 ● |
| | 3 ● | | 3 ○ | | 3 ● |
| | 4 ● | | 4 ● | | 4 ○ |

6

You will be better off with an instrument that responds to the standard fingering. Recorders with ring keys (such as those by Küng) require just the edge of the ring for the first finger of the right hand to be pressed down:

| | | |
|------|-----|---|
| R.H. | 1 ○ | ⊕ |
| | 2 ○ | ⊕ |
| | 3 ○ | ⊕ |

| | |
|-------|-----|
| Thumb | ● |
| L.H. | 1 ● |
| | 2 ● |
| | 3 ● |
| R.H. | 1 ○ |
| | 2 ○ |
| | 3 ○ |
| | 4 ○ |

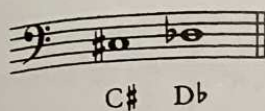
Some bass recorders have a hole and a key for the right-hand first finger:

| | | |
|------|-----|---|
| R.H. | 1 ○ | ⊕ |
| | 2 ○ | ○ |
| | 3 ○ | ○ |
| | 4 ○ | ○ |

For B natural the first finger is moved off the hole down on to the touch-piece of the key:

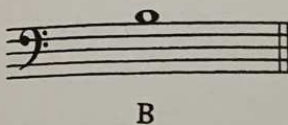
| | |
|-------|-----|
| Thumb | ● |
| L.H. | 1 ● |
| | 2 ● |
| | 3 ● |
| R.H. | 1 ○ |
| | 2 ○ |
| | 3 ○ |
| | 4 ○ |

This key arrangement, and to a lesser extent the ring-key system, is less convenient than the normal cross-fingering especially in rapid passages.



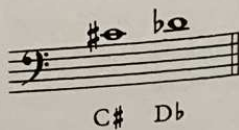
The best fingering for C sharp will depend on the individual instrument and is mainly dependent on the size and position of the hole for L.H.3. Try the following:

| Thumb | 1 | 2 | 3 | Thumb | 1 | 2 | 3 | Thumb | 1 | 2 | 3 | Thumb | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------|---|---|---|-------|---|---|---|-------|---|---|---|-------|---|---|---|
| L.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | L.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | L.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | L.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | ● | ● | ○ | | ● | ● | ○ | | ● | ● | ○ | | ● | ● | ○ |
| R.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | R.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | R.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | R.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | ● | ● | ○ | | ● | ● | ○ | | ● | ● | ○ | | ● | ● | ○ |
| | | | 4 | | | | 4 | | | | 4 | | | | 4 |
| | | | ○ | | | | ○ | | | | ○ | | | | ○ |

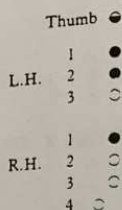


| Thumb | 1 | 2 | 3 | Thumb | 1 | 2 | 3 | Thumb | 1 | 2 | 3 | Thumb | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------|---|---|---|-------|---|---|---|-------|---|---|---|-------|---|---|---|
| L.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | L.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | L.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | L.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| R.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | R.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | R.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 | R.H. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | ○ | ● | ○ | | ○ | ● | ○ | | ○ | ● | ○ | | ○ | ● | ○ |
| | | | 4 | | | | 4 | | | | 4 | | | | 4 |
| | | | ○ | | | | ○ | | | | ○ | | | | ○ |

is the normal fingering except for instruments with a holed-key or a ring for the right-hand first finger when this note is fingered just like the low B but with a pinched thumb hole. With both these systems the same problems as in the lower octave arise with rapid passage work. If you have such an instrument it is worth trying the normal forked fingering (or some modification) to see if it is acceptable. It could help you out of some difficulties.



C sharp often gives trouble with bass recorders with the fingering:

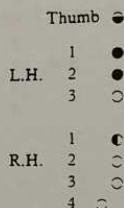


which will not give a satisfactory note.

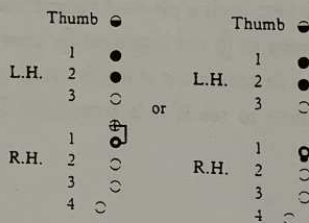
It is usually unstable and out of tune.

There are, however, instruments that are completely satisfactory with this fingering.

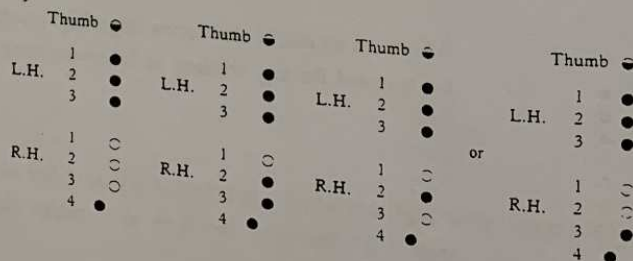
Half covering R.H.1 often helps:



This is easy with a bass without keywork on this hole but impossible with the key usually fitted. On instruments with a ring or a holed-key for R.H.1 the standard fingering will be:

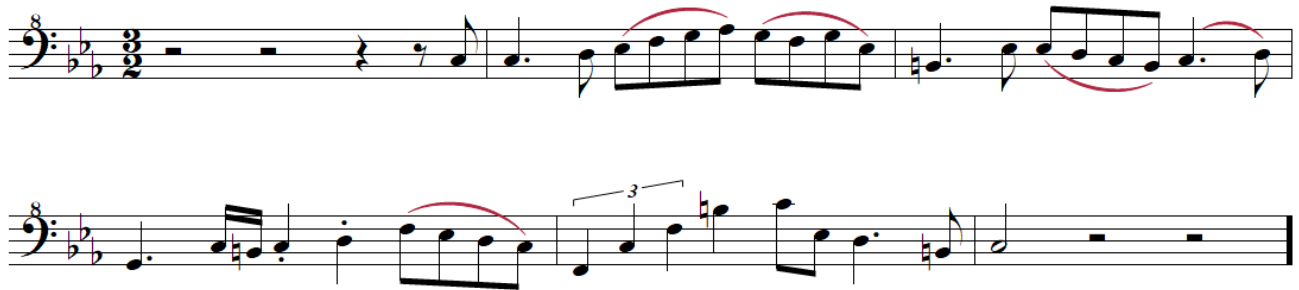


Often a very good C sharp can be obtained by fingering C and adding the right-hand little finger with or without R.H.2 and R.H.3. Try:



Courante- Cello Suite #5

J.S. Bach- Excerpt arranged for Bass Recorder by Jamison Forge



Niaise

Telemann- Arranged from *The Bass Recorder Handbook*



So You Want to be a Bass Player?

-Once you've decided you want to play bass, the next step is to purchase an instrument. What should you buy? Here are my recommendations:

Basset in F:

Plastic-

Yamaha YRB-302B- ~\$290

Wood-

Yamaha YRB-61 Maple- ~\$1,500

Great Bass in C:

Küng Superio- ~\$3,500

Moeck Flauto Rondo- ~2,275

-Want to try out a bass but not sure if you're ready to make the investment? PRS has 2 Bassets in F available for loan if you want to try it out. Contact Laura Kuhlman or Susan Campbell if interested.

-Anything written for Alto!

-Tons of contemporary literature can be found at <http://www.blokfluit.org>

Seascapes- for Paetzold Recorder- <https://youtu.be/uBr3Vmy5EdI>

Fausto Romitelli

Seascape 1994

Per flauto a becco
contrabbasso

ad Antonio

[illegible]

Chinese Pictures, Mvt 2 The Hermit at the Water- <https://youtu.be/s7wtZWt7wgo>
Isang Yun

II Der Eremit am Wasser
II The Hermit at the Water

♩ ca. 52
weich, tranquillo

Bass Burner- <https://youtu.be/EkqIrex5fGM>

Pete Rose

Pete Rose 1994

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 126$

Bass recorder

p

mp

A

B

C

D

E

Flutter

F

8

13

18

24

29

34

38

42

46

49

52

55

Other Exciting Links

Introduction to “BigBabe”, the largest recorder in the world- Team Recorder:

<https://youtu.be/U3CsmeKU2vE>

Detailed History of the Paetzold Recorders- Team Recorder:

<https://youtu.be/UTvSRe-7D4I>

Paetzold Recorder Ensemble- Quinta Essentia Quarteto:

<https://youtu.be/Z5EpAGnhvqI>

The Royal Wind Music- All Basses:

<https://youtu.be/x52-VKWI9hg>