Bass Clef Notes on the Bass Fretboard (left-handed)

One of the more confusing aspects of reading music on bass is that the exact same note appears in different locations on the fretboard. This happens with all string instruments.

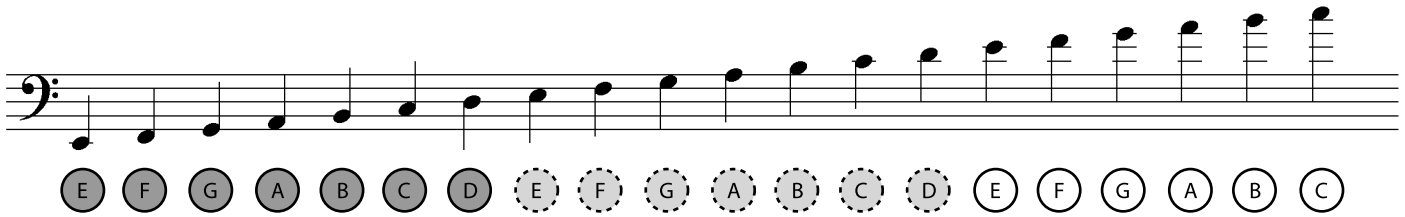
Below I have shaded the notes so you can match up the notes on the bass fretboard with the correct pitch on the staff.

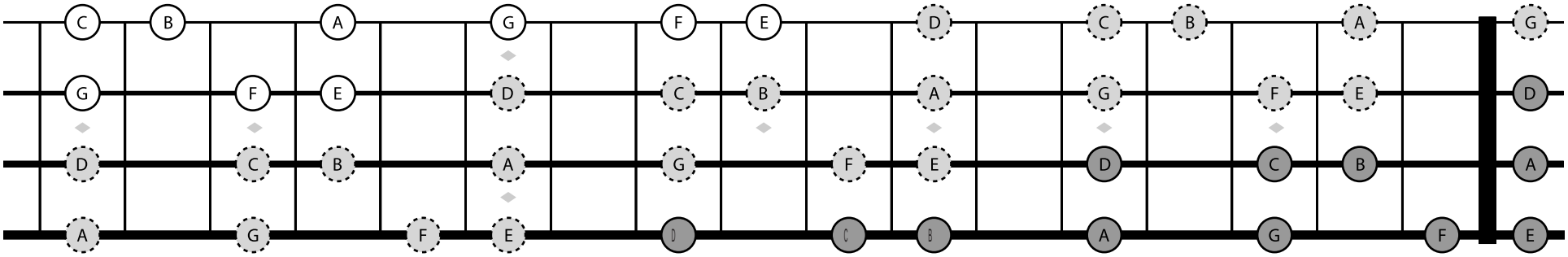
Each letter name with the same shading is the *exact same pitch*. Different shades are octaves of that letter name. I just used the naturals notes for legibility. You should be able to figure out the sharps and flats in relation to the natural notes.

To understand the fretboard a little better, let's look at how the very same pitch occurs in multiple locations...

Play the note G on the open string. (It's the skinniest string on a 4-string bass.)
Play G on the 5th fret of the D-string.
Play G on the 10th fret of the A-string.
Play G on the 15th fret of the E-string.
Each of those G notes is the same but in 4 different locations!

A common question is, "How do I know which one to play?" The answer is you can play any of them. The choice is up to you. But, the best choice will depend on the other notes in the phrase or bassline you are playing. You probably want to avoid constantly shifting all over the neck. By scanning the range (highest and lowest notes) of the music, or section of music, you can choose your fretboard position to avoid needless shifting.





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