GENERAL

# bad to the bone tab bass

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## Bad to the Bone Tab Bass: Mastering the Iconic Groove

When you hear the opening riff of George Thorogood's classic "Bad to the Bone," you instantly recognize the swagger of the guitar, the punch of the drums, and the steady pulse that keeps the whole arrangement moving forward. But beneath that surface lies a deceptively simple yet powerful bass line that anchors the song's groove. For bass players looking to add a touch of blues-rock swagger to their repertoire, learning the **bad to the bone tab bass**is a must. In this guide, we'll walk you through the entire tab, break down each section, explain the techniques that make the line feel so alive, and give you practical tips to practice and play it with confidence.

## Why the Bass Line in "Bad to the Bone" Is a Masterclass

The bass part in "Bad to the Bone" is a perfect example of how a simple, repetitive pattern can drive a whole song forward. It's built around a walking 12 bar blues progression in the key of E, with a tight syncopation that locks in with the drums and guitars. The line doesn't rely on flashy runs; instead, it emphasizes groove, timing, and feel. For bassists, this makes it an ideal learning piece because:

- It introduces the concept of a walking bass line that keeps the rhythm section locked together.
- It demonstrates how to use minor chord tones and dominant 7th notes to create tension.
- It highlights the importance of palm muffling and muted playing to keep the sound tight.
- It offers a clear example of how to transition smoothly between sections without losing momentum.

By mastering this tab, you'll gain a solid foundation for countless other blues rock tracks.

## Getting the Right Gear for the Tab

Before you dive into the actual notes, let's talk gear. While the **bad to the bone tab bass**can be played on any electric bass, certain setups make it easier to capture the original feel:

1. Instrument: A 4 string Fender Precision or Jazz Bass works great. The Precision's punchy midrange complements the groove.
2. Pickup Configuration: Use the neck pickup for a warmer tone, or switch to the bridge for a tighter attack if you're playing in a louder setting.
3. Amplifier: A tube amp with a clean channel and a slight overdrive (like a Fender Twin Reverb or Vox AC30) will give you the classic blues tone.
4. Effects: A subtle chorus or a light compression pedal can help your bass sit nicely in the mix. Avoid heavy distortion; the groove comes from the clean sound.

With the right gear in place, you're ready to tackle the tab.

## The Full Bass Tab for "Bad to the Bone"

Below is the complete bass tab for the entire song. The notation follows standard bass tab conventions: numbers indicate fret positions, and the lines represent strings from the lowest (E) to the highest (A). The rhythm is indicated by the placement of the notes within the bar. For simplicity, the tab is broken into sections: Intro, Verse, Chorus,

Bridge, Solo, and Outro.

### Intro (4 Bars)

e|----------|----------|----------|----------|

B|----------|----------|----------|----------|

G|----------|----------|----------|----------|

D|----------|----------|----------|----------|

A|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|

### Verse (12 Bars)

e|----------|----------|----------|----------|

B|----------|----------|----------|----------|

G|----------|----------|----------|----------|

D|----------|----------|----------|----------|

A|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|

### Chorus (8 Bars)

e|----------|----------|----------|----------|

B|----------|----------|----------|----------|

G|----------|----------|----------|----------|

D|--2-2-3-2-3-2--|--2-2-3-2-3-2--|--2-2-3-2-3-2--|--2-2-3-2-3-2--|

A|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|

### Bridge (4 Bars)

e|----------|----------|----------|----------|

B|----------|----------|----------|----------|

G|----------|----------|----------|----------|

D|--5-5-7-5-7-5--|--5-5-7-5-7-5--|--5-5-7-5-7-5--|--5-5-7-5-7-5--|

A|--3-3-5-3-5-3--|--3-3-5-3-5-3--|--3-3-5-3-5-3--|--3-3-5-3-5-3--|

### Solo (8 Bars)

e|----------|----------|----------|----------|

B|----------|----------|----------|----------|

G|----------|----------|----------|----------|

D|--7-7-9-7-9-7--|--7-7-9-7-9-7--|--7-7-9-7-9-7--|--7-7-9-7-9-7--|

A|--5-5-7-5-7-5--|--5-5-7-5-7-5--|--5-5-7-5-7-5--|--5-5-7-5-7-5--|

### Outro (4 Bars)

e|----------|----------|----------|----------|

B|----------|----------|----------|----------|

G|----------|----------|----------|----------|

D|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|

A|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|--0-0-2-0-2-0--|

## Breaking Down the Tab: How to Play Each Section

### Intro and Verse: The Walking Bass Line

The first thing to notice in the intro and verse is the repetitive pattern on the open E string (0). It's essentially a **walking bass line**that moves up and down the E minor scale (E, G, B). The line starts on the root note (E), slides up to the minor third (G) on the A string, and then back to the root on the E string. This gives the groove a feeling of motion while staying grounded.

- Root Note (E): Play the open E string twice.
- Minor Third (G): Play the 3rd fret on the A string.
- Return to the open E and repeat.

Rhythmically, each note lasts a quarter note, so you're playing a steady 4/4 groove. The key is to keep the attack clean and consistent.

### Chorus: Adding a Little Drive

In the chorus, the bass shifts to a more syncopated pattern, incorporating the D string (2nd fret) to create a stronger sense of movement. The pattern goes from the root (E) to the 2nd on the D string (F#), then back to the root. This simple change gives the chorus a punchy feel.

- Play the open E string (root).
- Play the 2nd fret on the D string (F#).
- Return to the open E string.

Notice how the rhythm now includes a slight swing; the first note of each measure is slightly longer, creating a groove that feels more relaxed.

### Bridge: The Power of the Fifth

The bridge introduces the dominant 5th (A) and its relative minor (D). The pattern goes from the 5th (A) to the 7th (B) on the D string. This gives a bluesy tension that resolves back to the chorus.

- Play the 5th fret on the A string (D).
- Play the 7th fret on the D string (E).
- Return to the 5th on the A string.

These notes are played with a slightly heavier attack, adding a sense of urgency.

### Solo: Walking in the Upper Register

During the solo section, the bass follows a similar pattern but moves up the neck. The line uses the 5th and 7th frets on the A string and the 7th and 9th frets on the D string. This keeps the groove consistent while providing melodic interest.

- Start on the 5th fret of the A string (D).

- Move to the 7th fret of the D string (E).
- Return to the 5th of the A string.

Keep the rhythm steady, and feel free to add a slight ghost note on the A string for extra texture.

### Outro: Closing the Loop

The outro is a perfect echo of the intro. It brings the bass back to the root, giving the track a satisfying conclusion. The pattern is the same as the verse, ensuring the listener feels the groove again before the final chord.

## Techniques That Bring the Tab to Life

While the notes themselves are straightforward, the feel comes from a few key techniques

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