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supermassive black hole bass tab

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Supermassive Black Hole Bass Tab: Master the Iconic Bass Line

When Muse burst onto the mainstream with their 2001 single “Supermassive Black Hole,” the world was introduced to a new kind of rock anthem—one that fused soaring guitars, thunderous drums, and a bass line that drives the song forward with relentless energy. For bassists, the track is more than a catchy hook; it’s a masterclass in groove, precision, and dynamic control. In this guide, we’ll dissect the **supermassive black hole bass tab**and walk you through every nuance, from the opening riff to the climactic bridge. Whether you’re a beginner looking to learn your first Muse bass line or a seasoned player aiming to polish your technique, this article will give you the tools you need to play the bass part with confidence and flair.

Why “Supermassive Black Hole” Is a Bass Player’s Dream

Before diving into the tab, it’s helpful to understand why this song stands out for bassists. Chris Wolstenholme’s playing on the track is a blend of rhythmic solidity and melodic flair. The bass line is not merely a support instrument; it’s a co lead that anchors the groove, punctuates the chord changes, and adds a layer of sonic depth that enriches the entire mix.

- Dynamic Range: The song shifts from a tight, muted groove in the verses to a soaring, open feel in the chorus.
- Technical Variety: From palm muted eighth notes to fluid slides, the bass part showcases a range of techniques that can improve any player’s skill set.
- Musical Context: The track’s structure allows bassists to explore syncopation, ghost notes, and melodic fills, making it an excellent exercise in musicality.

Understanding the Song’s Structure

“Supermassive Black Hole” follows a classic verse chorus bridge format, but with subtle twists that keep the listener engaged. Knowing the arrangement helps you anticipate changes and prepare for transitions in the bass tab.

1. Intro (0:00 0:15): A simple, syncopated groove sets the tone.
2. Verse 1 (0:15 0:45): The bass enters with a muted, percussive feel.
3. Chorus (0:45 1:15): The groove opens up; the bass plays a more melodic line.
4. Verse 2 (1:15 1:45): Repeats the first verse pattern with subtle variations.
5. Bridge (1:45 2:15): A breakdown that introduces a new rhythmic motif.
6. Final Chorus (2:15 2:45): Builds on the earlier chorus with added intensity.
7. Outro (2:45 3:00): A fade out that echoes the intro.

Breaking Down the Bass Line

The bass line in “Supermassive Black Hole” is deceptively simple at first glance. However, the real magic lies in the subtle variations, accents, and rhythmic choices that give the track its driving force. Below is a section by section breakdown of the main motifs.

Intro and Verse Groove

During the intro and verses, the bassist plays a repetitive pattern that locks in with the kick drum. The groove relies

heavily on muted, palm muted notes and a syncopated rhythm that creates tension. The pattern emphasizes the downbeat while leaving space for the drums and guitars to breathe.

Chorus Melody

When the song transitions to the chorus, the bass line becomes more melodic. Here, the bassist uses open strings and higher frets to outline the chord changes, adding a melodic counterpoint to the vocal line. The groove becomes more open, allowing the bass to breathe and interact with the other instruments.

Bridge Variation

The bridge introduces a new rhythmic motif that is both syncopated and melodic. It's a great example of how a bass player can use a simple motif to create a memorable hook. The bridge also features a subtle slide that adds a sci fi feel to the track.

Step by Step Bass Tab Tutorial

Below is the full **supermassive black hole bass tab** laid out in a clean, easy to read format. We'll walk through each section, explaining the notation and providing tips on how to play it with proper technique.

Intro (0:00 0:15)

Notation: The tab uses standard bass notation: numbers represent frets, horizontal dashes represent the string, and the vertical line indicates the beat. The following snippet shows the first 8 bars of the intro:

```
G|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
D|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
A|----3---3---3---|----3---3---3---|----3---3---3---|----3---3---3---|
E|--1---1---1---1--|--1---1---1---1--|--1---1---1---1--|--1---1---1---1--|
```

Key points:

- Use palm mute on the low E string for the first two bars.
- Shift to the A string for the third and fourth bars.
- Maintain a steady eighth note pulse.

Verse 1 (0:15 0:45)

```
G|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
D|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
A|----3---3---3---|----3---3---3---|----3---3---3---|----3---3---3---|
E|--1---1---1---1--|--1---1---1---1--|--1---1---1---1--|--1---1---1---1--|
```

During the verse, the bass pattern remains largely the same but with added ghost notes on the A string to create a subtle groove. Try adding a soft "hollow" note on the off beats to mimic the song's feel.

Chorus (0:45 1:15)

```
G|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
D|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
A|----5---5---5---|----5---5---5---|----7---7---7---|----7---7---7---|
E|--3---3---3---3--|--3---3---3---3--|--5---5---5---5--|--5---5---5---5--|
```

In the chorus, the bassist shifts to the E string for the first two bars, then moves to the A string for the last two bars. The transition between strings is smooth, and the groove becomes more open. Focus on keeping the rhythm steady while adding a slight accent on the second beat of each bar.

Bridge (1:45 2:15)

```
G|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
D|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
A|----7---7---7---|----7---7---7---|----9---9---9---|----9---9---9---|
E|--5---5---5---5--|--5---5---5---5--|--7---7---7---7--|--7---7---7---7--|
```

The bridge introduces a slide from the 7th to the 9th fret on the A string. Use a smooth slide to maintain the melodic flow. Add a slight vibrato on the 9th fret for a more atmospheric feel.

Final Chorus (2:15 2:45)

```
G|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
D|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
A|----5---5---5---|----5---5---5---|----7---7---7---|----7---7---7---|
E|--3---3---3---3--|--3---3---3---3--|--5---5---5---5--|--5---5---5---5--|
```

Repeat the chorus pattern with increased intensity. Emphasize the first beat of each bar and use a slightly faster attack to match the song’s crescendo.

Outro (2:45 3:00)

The outro mirrors the intro, but with a fade out effect. Play the same pattern as the intro, gradually reducing volume and intensity to create a smooth fade.

Key Techniques and Nuances

Mastering the **supermassive black hole bass tab**requires more than just reading the notes. It involves a deep understanding of several bass techniques that give the track its distinctive sound.

Palm Muting

Used throughout the verses, palm muting gives the bass a percussive, thudding quality. Position your picking hand near the bridge, just above the strings, and lightly rest the palm on the strings to dampen the vibration. Practice palm muted eighth notes in a metronome to build control.

Ghost Notes

Ghost notes are lightly played, muted notes that add rhythmic texture. In the verse section, add ghost notes on the A string between the main notes. This technique keeps the groove tight and adds subtle syncopation.

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