CHAPTER 14

•Creating Your Own Bass Lines

The guitarist and the drummer write the songs. It's only natural they're the ones you can't compete with. You have to work with them.— Jason Newsted

So now that you've played all of those vicious Metallica's bass lines, you're probably dying to come up with your own. Let's face it, everyone wants their moment in the sun—and so do you! Just think of being on stage with all of the adoring fans and the flying intimate apparel coming your way, and think of the envy you'll instill in your friends!

Well, before you can make it big, you've gotta pay your dues. So, let's put in the practice time and check out some ways Metallica comes up with their bass lines so you can get some solid ideas of your own.

Here are some fundamental concepts used by Metallica and countless other groups for creating bass lines.

Playing Chord Roots

A bass player's first priority, no matter what style of music, is to lay down the *roots* (notes on which the chords are built or based). If the chord that is noted above the staff is an E chord, the root is an E, so play an E. If it's an E♭ chord, the root is an E♭, so play an E♭. Follow this simple strategy and you can't go wrong!

"Master of Puppets" Intro from *Master of Puppets*

Track 55

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Adding Octaves

If you want to add some simple spice to the chord roots, try alternating between the root and its *octave*. The octave note is a note of the same letter but either higher or lower in pitch. For instance, here are two Fs.

One way to find the octave above a note is to count two frets higher and two strings higher from your original note.

Here's an example with octaves.

"Seek & Destroy" Solo from *Kill 'Em All*

Track 56

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