

In this chapter, we will continue our study of special techniques, looking at the following:

- Bending
- Slides
- Trills
- Vibrato

Bending

Bending notes on the electric bass is a carryover technique from the electric guitar. Due to the fact that bass strings are much heavier in tension than guitar strings, much more effort is needed to bend a bass string than a guitar string. On bass, anything larger than a major second bend (whole step) may be too difficult, depending on the gauge of strings you use.

Place your third finger on A on the G string (fourteenth fret). We will now bend this A up to B \flat . If you hold your hand in our "standard" position (as outlined in Chapter 1), you will see that it is almost impossible to produce enough pressure to comfortably bend the string that far. In order to get more power in the left hand, move your thumb out from behind the neck and place it over the back of the neck, so the first joint is bent over the top edge. Now when you bend, squeeze your fingers and thumb together as if you were going to make a fist. Having the thumb over the back of the neck will give you the extra power necessary to make the bends comfortably and still have *control* over the exact pitch.



The bend described above is shown below in Exercise 133. A "pointed slur" indicates a bend.

Ex. 133

In Exercise 134, bend up to B \flat then release the bend back down to A. Maintain control over the speed of the bend and also the pitch. Try bending and releasing both very slowly and very quickly.

Ex. 134