CHAPTER 2:
RIGHT-HAND TECHNIQUES

In this chapter, we will cover two common approaches to plucking the bass with your fingers: the two-finger and three-finger approaches. If you develop a good grasp of these techniques, you should be able to handle all of the play-along examples presented in chapters 5 through 10. Just about everything I play features some combination of these techniques.

TWO-FINGER PLUCKING

Two-finger plucking on the bass is the most common of all of the plucking techniques. It's usually the first way bassists are taught to play, as it is the most natural and intuitive; alternating your index and middle fingers should come fairly naturally for most people. Two-finger plucking really is the “meat and potatoes” of bass playing.

This example will help you develop your alternate two-finger plucking technique. Try to strictly alternate between your index and middle fingers, even when crossing strings. You'll notice that every four bars of this exercise contain the first three notes of a diminished arpeggio, starting on the open B string. This is the first of many exercises you'll find in this book that features a diminished tonality.

Example 2-1: