

Bass Player EQ Secrets Interview #2	
James	So we have Mike Ippersiel, the head honcho behind a website that I don't know if you've seen called BassGuitarRocks.com. It is more of a gear oriented website, am I right to say that Mike?
Michael	Probably, I mean, we don't do a lot of instruction there. We just kind of talk about gear and different sort of bass related stuff like, you know, how to pick a bass and all that type of stuff. Yeah, not so much like what you do, more the lesson based stuff, just more kind of bass general stuff. Some talk about different bass celebrities or bass musicians and stuff like that too.
James	Cool. You started this website. It's been around quite a while now, hasn't it?
Michael	We're coming up on 10 years, which kind of blows my mind. It will be 10 years in July from when I started.
James	<p>I bet that makes eBass look like a baby where we're going to be celebrating a year in I think March or April, sometime. Now, it's been a crazy year and I am really grateful to you guys for joining Bass Lab and being part of this ever-growing community. It's totally blown me away in what it's done and it's given me the opportunity to have really cool conversations and hook up with guys like Mike who are, how can I say this. . .are a bit more gear orientated than I am, but I don't mean it in the slightest derogatory way. I am a playing kind of character and guys don't follow the gear thing quite as closely. Although granted, I do love it! But there are always guys who are a lot more on a technical level than me, and so this is why it's really cool to talk to Mike and get on with it.</p> <p>We're going to talk for probably about 40 minutes or so. Then we'll have a bit of a Q&A in the end. You are welcome to ask us questions as we go through. This is going to be me giving Mike a bit of an interview. But please, if you are going to go on in depth with questions, do ask towards the end because that is your time. I want us to try and be super interactive because it's great to have you guys in the mix. This is here for kind of your benefit, for you to ask those questions that have always been bugging you about gear and how to set yourself up gear; because I personally think guys it took me a long time and I've made some rookie errors there.</p> <p>Mike, one thing you're best known for is an article called <i>Bass Amp EQ for Beginners</i>, isn't it? This has been downloaded a hundred of thousands of times, I believe. We're going to talk through, first of all, how did that article come about?</p>
Michael	Well, it just started out as I wanted to put together all the wisdom of all the things that I had learned just from playing gigs and practising in different sorts of scenarios, using different bits of gear and different things like that. You know, I was a long time subscriber with Bass Player magazine and so I'd read random articles or have a bass hero say one little tidbit here; and I just thought there's not just one place where it's just all together like one consolidated resource where people, especially someone who is just starting out, or you could be playing for decades but you've never played out in a band, you've just been playing in your room, basement or garage; you may not have learned these lessons that I may have picked up along the way, it's not entirely me, these are things I've read and learned from other bass players as well. I just thought, "hey, let's put it all in one place", and it was just really trying to give something back. I wasn't really expecting too much out of it but it started to get shared and the next thing I know it was getting a lot of attention.

	<p>It's definitely the most popular article on my site and with most comments and everything like that. I think there's a little bit of controversial stuff in there, I know a couple of trolls that came along and said "hey, you're not an audio engineer", and I'm like "no, I do not claim to be an audio engineer and I'm just saying this is what I do, this is what I've found works for me and feel free to test it out yourself, and if it doesn't work for you, don't use it"; but I've had a lot of responses from bass players that thanked me for putting it together.</p>
James	<p>I'm totally with you there. One of the things that I found, and we are going to talk about this article in just a second, before I fly off on my piece, is though what sounds great in a music store can often sound crap on a gig. Particularly when I was younger, I'd have so many experiences like that because I was a bit of a gear nerd in my former life and that went through Eden's, Hartke's, Acoustic Image, you name it, all that sort of stuff. I think I've probably (Gallien Krueger) done most of the big brands actually over the years. What would happen is you'd play something that sounded great in the store and you get it home, and when you get it on the gig crucially and it would sound crap! But what would come into play was multiple other factors. A good music store would, by and large, try and get their music store sound good, try a carpet on the floor or whatever it might be to do it. And you are playing basses, which have used strings or they want to sell kits to it's put in the best possible light. One of the big things they will do in the bass world, which sounds good to our ears, is put a big smiley face eq in. We're going to talk about that in a second. But that scoops out all the mid range to the sound and it sounds great slap and it's just like the studio records, which is great. But that sound is useless when you get on a gig, because you can't hear it. And that's what I found is that a lot of these ideas come from my quest to actually hear myself on a gig. It's that basic! Even sometimes, in a really really bad room these days, it can be hard to get the sound right. But 9 times out of 10 I can and it's these sort of tips which do that.</p> <p>Mike, tell us what's bass amp eq, we're going to work our way grass root level and work our way up.</p>
Michael	<p>Nowadays almost anything you buy has got eq on it. You've got a lot of on board eq on your amp, on your bass and then you've got the strip on your amp and you may have some sort of eq boost of something with pedal. When I am talking about it (eq), for the sake of the article, I'm basically referring to your amplifier, but also in relation to these other pieces of gear. So specially if you've got an issue where you're trying to get a good sound, you want to go to ground zero. You don't want to have all the crazy effects or filters that you have on your bass active and be tweaking stuff on your amp and be tweaking stuff on a pedal. Ideally what I'd recommend, even if you take the effects out, just have your patch chord, plug your bass into your amp and just put your settings flat on your bass and get your amp on as flat as possible.</p> <p>And that's going to mean something that's actually. . . I was revisiting the article, and if I was going to make an update to the article today, one of the things I would say is READ THE MANUAL. Or read if you have a manual for your bass and read the manual for your amp, because each manufacturer does things a little bit differently; some of them are 12 o'clock everything is neutralized, some of them they have to be rolled all the way down to like 9 o'clock or something at the zero position. So you need to know how your amp works because if you don't know then basically ignorance isn't bliss in this case; you're going to be turning knobs, you're not going to know what you're doing to your sound. That's just the eq section on your amp, it's going to be the section that's either sliders or knobs and the most basic way of saying it is high, low and bass or maybe if it's the actual faders that</p>

	<p>I've got on. . . I play a Trace Elliot Amp and it's got like the 12 graphic equalizers on it, so it's got the different Hertz levels on it, which I certainly don't have memorized but some people will say "hey, I need the 5kHz here" or whatever, I don't, I kind of look at the shape. But that's the section on your amp that's going to be sculpting your sound that's coming out of the speaker.</p>
James	<p>Another expression you might hear from more old school amps and stereo, I find, is tone control. It's that basic. How you sculpt the sound. . . I'd love it if anybody could put in the chat box here, if they feel confused, by some of the knobs which are either on their bass guitar or their amplifier. If we want to get super-specific at the end of this webinar or masterclass rather, we will actually try and answer it.</p> <p>Have you (Mike) got any tips on how you'd go around equalizing your amplifier? Where would you start doing that?</p>
Michael	<p>As I was saying earlier, knowing your gear: at least having the idea of where ground zero is for starters; and then have different ideas and understandings of basically how do bass frequencies work. Then you can get into the idea of room acoustics, right? Because as you were saying earlier, James, you go to the instrument store and it sounds awesome because they've got it carpeted and everything. A lot of times I see it too, I mean, it's a space saving thing but a lot of times you might be trying out an amp and they've got it stacked on top of a different cabinet. So it's 4 feet off the ground, it's hitting you right in the chest and it sounds amazing. Then you take it home and you put it down on the floor somewhere and it sounds like shit, right? So you need to know the sort of physical space you are going to be using your amp in and whether you have it coupled to the floor, whether you have it on the stand, you know, these are going to impact your sound. That's why, if you get to the end of my article, one of the things I say is "congratulations, now that you've got a good sound, you have to change it wherever you go", and you have to go through these steps every time. I am not sure if this answered your question. . .</p>
James	<p>Yeah. Starting point of how to eq your amp: I would go as far as to say that this is how you do it. It might be a bit controversial here, but the starting point of eq-ing your amp. . . actually let me take it a step back and tell you how I conceptualize this actually. I set the tone up on the bass guitar active bass, and that is where I set my song to song tones. It's done between a combination of my hands, in fact a large amount of it is done with my hands. If I need an odd little tweak or a slap run, it's all done on the bass. That's where it happens. I don't use a huge amount of pedals, that's not my bag; I don't look down on guys who do that, I think there's some really cool sounds you can do that way, I use an octave-divider and distortion on occasion, but it's just kind of not my thing really.</p> <p>When it comes to the amp, I look at the bass as what you do on a song by song basis. And then the amp is how you tailor the sound to the room. So when you come in, you should set everything, I would say. Your best starting point is to set everything to zero, whatever zero might be on your amplifier. Does this make sense, Mike?</p>
Michael	<p>Yeah, totally!</p>
James	<p>And then you start tweaking your amplifier towards what the room is doing. This is where it gets a bit more confusing because you get a bunch of variables in this situation. This is where you can go from your great sounding amplifier which sounds amazing on the store, to on the gig sounding like a heap of crap. So it literally is the place to start: put everything at zero. So Mike is bang on! You go and find out where zero is on your amplifier. They normally say zero, 12 o'clock is the most common thing at the moment, but sometimes</p>

	<p>they do work from the 0 all the way round to 10, or if it's Spinal Tap then 11! (Joke) That's the most important thing in my opinion.</p> <p>Next thing we're going to talk about is bass amp setup. Now, what do you mean by this one?</p>
Michael	<p>I totally agree with getting your amp to manage the room. You are going to end up coming to a situation where your amp is placed in relation to the room – that's basically your setup. Now, sometimes it's your garage and you can place your amp right in the center of your garage if you want, and you don't ever put a car in there. Or most of the times we are dealing with a bedroom or if you are in a band and you are opening up for another band, you are getting whatever space they've allotted to you and you basically just have to make it work. In the article I run through some ideal settings, based on speaker size; it's not an exact science but if you have larger speakers then, ideally or in a perfect scenario, you'd be farther away from your amp so that you are getting the full effect of the sound. But if you have an 18" speaker and you are standing 2" away from it, the sound's going to be coming together like several feet away from where you are standing.</p> <p>I know, I think the gigs that you (James) often tend to do are probably in a bigger kind of ensemble setting, correct?</p>
James	<p>Yes, right.</p>
Michael	<p>So you're probably just like, "here's the corner for the bass player" and are probably sitting on your amp half the time.</p>
James	<p>Yeah! And this is kind of what the game is of setting your gear up. The first thing I do on a gig is, I raise the amp off the floor. There's actually a picture of what my setup looks like on the gig and I am screen sharing it with everyone. This is actually taken in a small jazz club. You can see the space that I had to fit into here.</p> <p>My amp is off the ground and what that would do is stop the sound go straight through the middle of my legs, and so I can actually hear it better. The second thing it will do in not this particular situation but in a stage, which tends to be a box-y kind of wooden thing. . .if you then put your speaker cabinet on a wooden stage, that will then act as another cabinet. So, to take you to the extreme, two 10" would end up as vast cabinets and that's when the bottom end of your sound can start to get a little bit out of control. That's another reason to take the amp off on-to a chair, and I am not using the whole stage as another speaker.</p> <p>I'm going to zoom back to Mike now. How do you like to position your amp on the gig, Mike?</p>
Michael	<p>Just to poll the audience here, who is actually performing live gig? Because I know a lot of what we are talking about is more applicable for a live gig or a rehearsal. If it's just you in a room by yourself, a lot of this stuff is not going to be missing critical! James is obviously on the gig, as you see he's got a small space that he has got to fit into. And then raising the amp off the stage helps to kill that boom-ness from the hollow stage, usually most of the stages are hollow like James was saying. Get your cabinet off the ground so it's easier to hit your ears, because you need to be able to hear yourself when you play, otherwise the first 2 or 3 rows out in front they're hearing you and you aren't hearing you and you are just trying to muddle through it, right?</p> <p>If anyone watching this aren't currently playing gigs, then you can tuck this under your hat for now. These are some good concepts to know and if you are doing some practise or rehearsals with multiple musicians or multiple sound sources, then what ends up happening is you aren't playing by yourself anymore. So if you have a distorted guitar or</p>

	<p>loud drummer, something like saying “I can’t hear myself anymore” or “why isn’t this smiley face eq not solving my problem”, then you know.</p>
James	<p>I see John has written here: this is why it’s so great to see you guys interacting here. I gig at church 3 times a week and one of the things I would really like to do is go to a big American church services one of these times. We don’t get too much of anything like this because they are technically monstrous animals. I’ve seen pictures on the internet and gear coming out of your ears! But one of the things that a church market does is that they will use headphones on a gig. It’s on ear monitors. Musicians will actually be listening to themselves on earpieces.</p> <p>Let’s talk about this for a couple of minutes, as a bit of background so you understand this. I’ve used in ear monitors extensively. Personally I love in ear monitors. Bass guys have a love/hate relationship with them, some will hate them, some will love them. They take a while to get used to, I can’t pretend that you instantly overnight get to like them because you hear things differently. But going back to talking about crap rooms, I’ve played in some dreadful rooms on in ear monitors and still had great gigs, because it’s something I’ve learned how to use.</p> <p>It’s worth knowing why people like them, particularly sound guys like in ear monitors. What you can do is you can pump the signal back into your headphones. What that means is that it can turn the stage volume right down. So the amplifier you’ve got on stage can then be on a much lower volume and then the floor monitors around you can be turned down too, or turned off. I do gigs where we have completely silent stages, I did a tour of <i>Saturday Night Fever</i> about 10 years ago in the UK, was on the road for 3 months for that show. They have an electronic drum kit, 3 brass guys and that was the only acoustics instruments you could hear. Everything else was DI’ed. It’s a personal taste thing whether you like that sound or not.</p> <p>But what sound guys can do is lower the stage volume. Because what happens is when everybody is battling to hear each other, everybody just turns up their volume and so you end up with this counterintuitive thing. So they make things sound better when you can’t hear yourself. You can actually turn things down or everybody turns things down and works from there. There are stories in the rock and roll world from back in the 80’s when they actually would had louder PA’s on the stage where musicians had their hearings completely screwed up in one ear, like Phil Collins.</p> <p>If any of you guys checked out my band <i>Metropolis</i> in the UK where I’ve used in-ear monitors, and if you’ve seen my rig there, I actually put my amplifier on the floor. It’s different from the picture I’ve just shown you there, and what that does for me is it feels me in the bottom end. But 3 out of 4 times the engineer will come to turn me down and that’s where I kind of know why you want me to do it, so I will do because I trust most of the engineers I’ve worked with, I trust quite a lot of them. You can get some rubbish ones too and that can destroy your sound. But the wise guys I’ve been lucky enough to work with do know their craft. And that’s a different example where I would get the stage shaking a little bit, I want to get those low frequencies, those soft kind of 60 Hz, something like that, that bottom end. Because they’re frequencies which headphones don’t replicate quite that well. So my preference in that situation is still to use an amplifier. I can work without actually but what I find myself doing is using bass like eq or guitar or whatever. So my preference with in-ear monitors is to use an amplifier but place it in a different way to get a different play or feel or effect. If you get a chance to work with headphone I do urge you to give it a try. It’s a different experience but once you get used to it, it’s good.</p>

	<p>Cool! So does anyone have any questions about what I just said there? Or have I gone massively off on a tangent? Because I didn't mean to talk about in-ear monitors here, but the church thing came up and I know that's something that might get thrown at you. Let's crack on with it, we've still got a good bit of good way to go on. We're going to go on a bit of frequency type of stuff, you've got a bit on bass frequency versus room acoustics. Can you talk a bit about that?</p>
Michael	<p>Yeah. We kind of touched on it a little bit in the sense that if you are putting in your cabinet or amp or a combo amp, and that's the other thing. . .if you are just starting out, you have all these terms thrown at you; like an amp could be just the amplifier or it could be, you know, part of the combo amp or the amp plus two cabinets that are 6' tall. Apologies to anyone if it is a little confusing to anyone in that sense. Essentially it is whatever the sound is coming from, if it is sitting on the ground then it is going to be bass-ier, because now it's coupling with the floor and it's resonating and vibrating everything. If it's a wood floor it's going to go through and shake the whole room and everything else. That's sort of the bass frequencies a lot of the times. As bass players, especially if you are playing by yourself you might be thinking "I like cranking the bass or whatever"; and then you get into a band situation and it's just mud and sludge and you can't figure out what end and where you are, you can't hear distinct notes at all. For me, I don't know. . .maybe there are some days as far as out there where I really like that, but otherwise I feel like I'm completely blind, I can't figure out what note I'm playing. I rely a lot on my ears, I'll let you know most musicians do! But like James, I get the amp off the floor. That way you can hear the speakers more easily, it's also not vibrating the floor; and as you said earlier, when you had the in-ears in, you were not getting those low frequencies so then you would deliberately put it on the floor, you're not worried about hearing yourself because you got it in your ears, you just want that vibration to kind of feel it as well as hear it!</p> <p>Also there are certain places in the room that is you put your amp in a corner or if you push it right up against the wall, it's the same effect as when you put it on the floor. You're now attached to the wall, you're vibrating the wall; and again if the wall is wood or anything that picks up sympathetic vibrations then you're going to be shaking the whole place apart. It's cool, it's a cool superpower us bass players have, but you want to know when to use it and when not to use it. And usually you want that clarity first and then low end second, at least I do anyway because I need to hear what I'm doing.</p>
James	<p>Yeah, it's an interesting one you're saying, in how talking about room stuff. I'm no physicist here, but you get these things called bass traps as well. They exist in corners of rooms and so if you look on whatever gear there, acoustic panelling or whatever studios use there, you'll have triangular things dedicated to go into corners. So putting speakers in corners of rooms is never a great idea. If you can kind of get away from that, it's always a good idea. Sometimes, in all honesty, you don't get a choice and I've done loads of gigs and you know I'm a jobbing player really, that's my background; and when you're doing a regular job at a big award ceremony, say, you're just one cog in a bigger wheel doing a gig like that. As a band, we can't have egos, because we want to get rebooked next year, so we kind of got to get on with it because the food or the catering or the celebrity presenter is a million times more important than the client size of us. So sometimes you do get the situation where you do get to make the best of that situation. That will get thrust upon you and I have had situations in my career where my heart was slowly dying inside as the gig was going on, particularly as the noise limits were on or something like that. I mean. . .??? . . .often it's the bass frequency and they'd just set that one up.</p>

	<p>Sometimes it's about making the best of a bad situation where you have to know how to use your eq correctly; that can be hugely beneficial. So going back to your (Mike) article, you said here "as a bassist can you have too much low frequencies" and yes is the oddest answer! So a couple of quick fire questions for you, Mike.</p> <p>What would you do if you found yourself in a really weak, thin and trebley? What would you do?</p>
Michael	<p>Weak thin and trebley. . .well, if the amp was off the floor I would put it on the floor. If I had a lot of treble and mids boosted then I'd roll them back, usually starting with my bass; because this is the same thing as you described as early, James. I don't usually do a ton of eq-ing at the amp, unless it's for the room, but I'd probably start with my bass first then see if I have something enabled, do I have something up and double check that first. Then if it is room related, I'll make the adjustment on my amp; that'd be either putting the amp on the floor or rolling off any treble.</p> <p>Depending on the type of cabinet you have, if you've got horns or tweeters on, then I might be turning that thing off, because I may not need it and that type of stuff.</p>
James	<p>I've got a question actually for everybody out there. Do you use an active bass or a passive bass, or if you are not sure then we will answer the exact question. Because if you're not sure, we need to answer that right away. You need to be clear by the end of this master class if it has been an active or passive bass. So get typing guys, we want to know.</p> <p>Do you use an active or passive bass, Mike?</p>
Michael	<p>I have an F-bass, made here in Canada, wooden pickups. Technically it does both, it has active and passive. I use it active 90% of the time. But they have passive there if your battery dies or if the active electronics are too noisy then you could just go passive, so you can do both.</p>
James	<p>What eq? How many bands of eq do you have on that?</p>
Michael	<p>I think you said there's a lot of knobs on this, right?</p>
James	<p>Tricky comment to face me, wasn't it?</p>
Michael	<p>It kind of looks maybe intimidating for some, but I've had basses before. I've had stacked eq pods on it, and eventually they break or they stop working. So one of the things I really appreciate with the design of this bass is that it's one knob per function and that way if one knob breaks it's not going to be "oh, I lost my mid and my bass boost" because it was a stacked knob. That makes sense?</p> <p>Basically it's like a jazz bass in the sense that it's like volume, volume and tone –</p>
James	<p>That's kind of unique for an active base, isn't it? The two tones.</p>
Michael	<p>They also have the option of doing just the master volume and the blend. I played around with it and I like it. It's volume, volume, tone on top and then it's bass mid and treble on the bottom. You don't get lost with what knob's what or what's up or what's down.</p>
James	<p>I've got my Sadowski here, which I'm pretty certain everybody has seen in one of my videos to this day. Let me talk you through the Sadowski pre-amp on here. Pre-amp is another expression for the electronic switcher. If you don't understand that term, stick it in the chat-box. This Sadowski has done probably 95% of the gigs I've done in the past 5 years now. It wasn't supposed to be that way, just ended up that way. It's a super comfortable bass. What I've got here is I have a wonky volume knob there. I have different mics bass, I have a pickup blend here and for some reason Sadowski wired it the other way round, because the other way is every other bass in the world, but you kind of get used to it.</p> <p>Then it has this passive tone control. This is just like Fender, which a lot of active basses don't have. This is an active bass, it has a battery at the back of there. It also has a passive</p>

	<p>tone control. The strange thing about Sadowski's, I don't quite know why it works, they are very topky instruments very naturally the way they sound. I often roll off a bit of top on there. And then we have 2 band eq, which is where it's different from Mike's. Mine don't have the mid control there, so I've just got bass here and a treble control. In reality on a gig, these aren't set notching like you find in a lot of basses. This is 0 to 10. So all the way down is 0, which is virtually adding nothing and then you can keep adding more and more to it. In reality, going back to what we were talking about earlier, I actually don't add any bass or any treble here. I actually work in much flat. I let my hands do the work and this is all about gear. If you want a bit more punch on a gig, you can hear a bit more punch from down there. . .(plays bass). . .to down there. . .(plays bass). . .I would always say to any player, and I know this is a master class about gear, that the bulk of the sound is still in your hands. Your hands will do the bulk of the work. So when I'm working from song to song, if I've got something which has a lot more punch, for instance, I will adjust my hand position before I reach to touch any controls. That's the first place that I will always start, before I start tweaking anything there.</p> <p>We've got to kind of the end of it, we've done 52 minutes of it. I thought we'd go for half an hour on this subject, so it's amazing how much we can get on this subject and it's amazing to see all of you are still here. I'm super grateful that you've joined us.</p> <p>Mike, do you want to give a link to your article in the chat-box so that everything can take it away for a bit of a romantic bed time reading!</p>
Michael	<p>Yes! There's a link in there, just click it and it'll take you to the article on my site. If you want you can opt in to get a PDF version of it, but otherwise it's all there. It goes into a little more detail than some of the stuff we talked about. Actually I was inspired to revisit this with a couple of different editions as well, like I said at the very top. Like I said, know your gear as James was just talking about it. I call it "organic bass playing". You are using the actual instrument the way it's designed. You want to more mellow tones, rounder kind of sounds, or if you want punchier you go more towards the bridge. Just understanding the way your equipment works, you'll be able to get those sounds that are hard to get otherwise. You can't just step on a pedal to get sounds; you can get them from the instrument and your hands.</p>
James	<p>Do you guys have any questions? Now is the time to ask, we're very happy to answer.</p>
Michael	<p>I'll just ask you a question, because you mentioned earlier, how can you tell the difference between an active and passive bass?</p>
James	<p>It's basically got to do with whether it's got a battery in the back. That's the easy way to tell. The insides will also be different.</p>
Michael	<p>So if you have a battery in there, then chances are that you've got an active bass.</p>
James	<p>And that will give you a load of more control. An active bass sounds different. So, a passive bass will sound more modern. The old Fender basses will sound like old school fenders, that has a kind of woody, warmer sound. Then you can take it to the extreme, to the Steinberg, which came around in the 80's, the Cricket bat type of basses, which sounds modern or modern 80's really. That's the difference.</p> <p>Another way of looking at it is, in an active bass a lot of the knobs will be center clicking, so you move them up and down and they click in the middle. So you go from -6 to +6, something like that. It clicks in the middle. Passive basses are just 0 to 10, all the way through.</p> <p>On an active bass the volume will go almost consistently from 1 to 10, in 10 degree increments. But passive basses are kind of off or on, isn't it? You get very little difference</p>

	<p>between 1 and 10. I mean, that's actually in all honesty kind of how Brian May used to do a sound on his guitar. Sort or rolling-off the volume to get different amounts of distortions. I hope I haven't confused anyone, but the knobs will behave differently on an active to passive bass.</p> <p>We've got some questions here that we're going to run through.</p> <p>Tobias asks, what would you guys recommend for headphones for rehearsal purposes? For rehearsal purposes, if we're talking over-ear headphones, I love and this isn't Gospel by any stretch of imagination, I would recommend sanheiser hd 25's, they are quite expensive, probably about \$100-150. But they are great investments and what I found with them is they've got quite a lot of honk in the mid-range, which bass players hearing ourselves is actually quite a nice thing to do if you've got the use in life for anything. I think they sound good, but headphones can be of personal taste. I would urge you to go on the side of professional headphones to sanheiser, bare dynamics, anything like that. Don't go to Bose, Dr. Beats kind of lines of headphones or anything like that or the fashion headphones or anything like that, because they are inducing it to kind of sound good for mp3's and that kind of thing rather than the bass guitar. If you can afford them, go for pro-range headphones. They're great investments and there are some cheaper HD25SD, something like that. I will recommend those, that's my personal experience. But go out there, have some experiments. Take your bass to the shop and try it. They do sell pre-amps, little, Vox do one, where you can plug your bass in and do that. And so you can wonder around home with a pair of headphones and battery, which is a cool kind of way of practising.</p> <p>It's also better, when we are dealing with bass stuff, to go pro-audio than to go consumer. I think, particularly when you are playing bass frequencies, you will take a hell of a lot more battering than the ready-consumer-kind of "fashion" brand.</p>