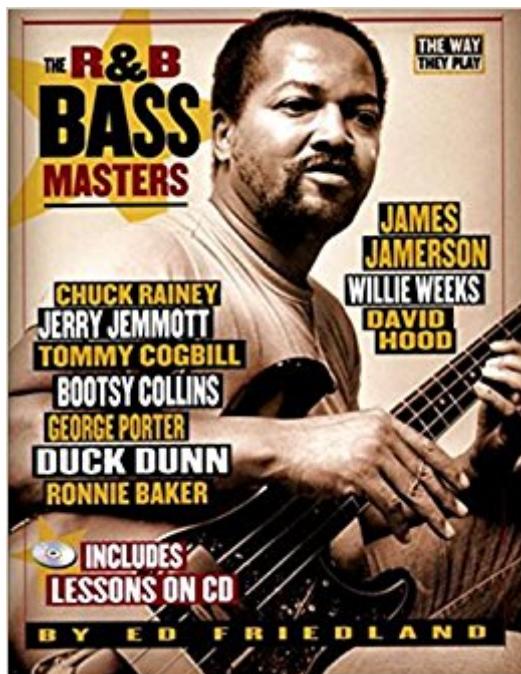


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# R&B Bass Masters: The Way They Play



## Synopsis

The R&B Masters: The Way They Play explores the lives and works of the bassists whose tracks propelled R&B's greatest period. The book includes lessons in the styles Motown genius James Jamerson, Memphis master Duck Dunn, New York ace Chuck Rainey, Muscle Shoals stalwart David Hood, and many others. The chapters detail each bassist's career, gear, and unique approach to the groove, and the CD provides audio tracks for all of the book's written examples.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

First, my background: I am a performer (bass trombone and electric bass) and an instructor. I am also a composer and arranger. My undergraduate degree is in Music Education (Masters in Music Composition); and the majority of my Air Force career was spent in the field of Education and Training. I "collect" bass guitar method books, always searching for that "perfect" book for the beginning, intermediate, or advanced bassist. "The R&B Bass Masters: The Way They Play" is written by Ed Friedland who, once again demonstrates that he is truly a master at authoring bass method books that are well-organized and easy to understand, yet extremely comprehensive and informative. (I dare say that, if Ed Friedland is the author, then the book is worth purchasing without any further research required!) Aside from the obligatory introduction, author's biography, acknowledgments and CD track list, "R&B Masters" is divided into 10 chapters, each featuring a

different R&B bass legend. Each chapter contains a brief biography of the featured bassist as well as sections on his gear and setup, style and technique, and a lesson with examples from his repertoire (included on the accompanying CD). The lesson examples are explained and analyzed; and written in both standard music notation and tablature. I firmly believe that every bassist (i.e., "musician") should develop as least a rudimentary ability to read music and not rely on tablature. However, this is the precise circumstance where tablature is an invaluable tool to gaining insight as to "how" the R&B master played a particular bass line. What makes this book so great is that the drum part is also included with the music notation and tablature. In addition (and this is the "icing on the cake"), each chapter includes a selected discography (with recommended "cuts") and a detailed "checklist" which covers each bassist's equipment (type of bass, fingerboard, condition [stock or custom], setup, strings, pickups, and amp), as well as the bassist's tone, attack, signature traits, influences and overall approach. As an example of how this all fits together, the chapter on Ronnie Baker (one of Philadelphia's top session bassists in the late '60s-mid '70s) states that he used an Ampeg B-15 amp (as a monitor in the studio; but a direct box fed his sound to the mixing board) and a stock, pre-CBS Fender Precision bass with stock Fender Precision split-coil pickups, a rosewood fingerboard, and heavy-gauge flatwound strings (that had "possibly" been marinated in butter!). It goes on to state that his tone was dark with a very dead sound (strings muted at the bridge with masking tape or paper towels) with a very punchy, yet rounded sound. He kept solid time, and his bass lines were unassuming with occasional bursts of flair. He was influenced by Duck Dunn and James Jamerson, and his overall approach to playing the bass was with melodic, laid-back grooves with a behind-the-beat feel. Further insight into Baker's style and technique is provided by comments from his session-soulmate, drummer Earl Young, who states that Baker made sure he knew what was going on by watching the drummer and his kick-drum pedal. "Baker would watch my feet, explained Young. "He sat on my left side and he'd copy whatever my foot was doing." All in all, a "must have" book for anyone interested in a bassist's perspective of R&B: both its history and bass playing style.

I've had this book for about ten days now and am very happy with it. The biographical backgrounds on the players is enjoyable to read and it's interesting to see what gear these guys were using -- this information really rounds out this book in a way that makes it stand out from other books I've used. The recording that comes with the book is also very good. The bass is very loud and the author does a good job of nailing each bassist's tone and feel. Also, the rhythms stand up, too, which is key. What's cool is that the bass is in one speaker and the drums are in the other so, if you

want, you can turn the balance on your stereo and play with the drums alone, without the bass track getting in your way. I think some people are turned off by this book because the entire bass line for each song isn't written out. Personally, I prefer it this way. I just want to get a taste for what these particular players were doing and don't feel like learning entire songs.

The musical reviews and bios are nice, but music scores are only samples. I think I would have given this publication a 4 star or 5 stars if the bass lines were full, complete music scores (to experience the style indept). Anyway, nice to have your music library.

It's written by Ed Friedland, what more do I need to say, really? He is the master of bass instruction books, and this is one of his better books. While it doesn't give you as much theory or charting as most of his other books, it does give you a decent glimpse into the careers and lives of some of the greatest bass players who ever lived, and explains how they got their signature sounds, making it easier to emulate their style when covering their tunes.

I buy a lot of these types of bass books, and I like this author's books. This one is good; it's a nice review and tribute to the major bass players within the R&B genre during its heyday. It provides some basic background information about each bassist., and a few measures of signature sample grooves. I like that it has some suggested tracks to listen to for each bassist. The author has done this with some of his other books, and I appreciate it. It helps me build a music library based on bass players and genres. There isn't a lot to engage you and your bass in this book, so it's different from the usual bass work books, which isn't a bad thing. As a book about bass players, styles, and the genre. it is worth the purchase. However, as a bass workbook, maybe not so much. However, I'm glad it's in my library.

I don't like to get into long reviews about an item or the seller. But, I do like to help my brethren. So, the transaction was flawless. This item might be a bit misleading to those trying to master these methods. The only way to master this style is to take it and work on your own technique. This is a book of the sub-genres within the R&B rhythm that has been so influential to every type of music!

Buen libro para aprender a tocar r&b, asi que comprenlo y tambien pueden aprender la historia de algunos bajistas de aquella epochas. Gracias .

This is the perfect tool for me to check out my R&B heroes - all the good licks and the styles that can be difficult to check out by my self

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