Five Steps To Efficiency Practicing
On The Bass Guitar

Greg's Bass Shed
Five Steps to Efficient Practicing

Step 1. Set Aside a Regular Time to Practise

The first step to improving as a musician, is to set aside a regular amount of time each week, for practicing.

I would suggest initially trying to aim for a minimum of 45 minutes, five times a week.

This repetition is necessary and important if you are serious about progressing quickly.

You don’t need to practice at the same time each day, but try to block out an amount of time where you can prioritise practicing.

Step 2. Pick Target Areas to Practice

Once you have regular practice times set in place, you need to be clear about what areas of your playing you are going to work on.

You may already know what you want to work on, but if not, I have a free resource called, Target Three Areas To Quickly Improve and Progress. This will be really useful, as it has a set of questions, and then lots of information to help you pick certain areas to work on.

For example, you may want to start reading music, learning jazz, or work on improving your tone.

Being clear about what your aims are, will mean that you can meet these challenges head on, and this will help you with the next steps.
Step 3. Practice at a Level that Challenges You

It is important that you work on material that is not too easy or hard for you.

If you pick bass lines or exercises that are just a little bit more difficult than your current level, then this will challenge you in a positive way. Material that is too easy will not do this, and material that is too hard will probably just frustrate you, as it is best to learn incrementally, in small steps.

For beginners, I suggest you take a look at the Nirvana lessons from my Bass-Line Breakdown Series. For more advanced bassists, look at the other lessons in that series or tackle one of my bass technical exercises.

All my lessons at Greg's Bass Shed on Youtube, are in different Playlists. This is to make it easier for you to see what is there, rather than just looking through the long list of videos.

I am building these playlists up by adding at least one lesson every week so make sure you subscribe to get notified when I upload a new lesson. You can do this on the main page of my YouTube channel.
Step 4. Plan Your Practice Schedule

Now that you have set time aside for practicing, and you know what you want to work on, you need to plan out how you are going to break down your practice time.

If you have a 45 minute session, for example, then I would suggest breaking this down into three 15 minute blocks.

These blocks could look something like this:

- **Block One** - Focus on sound and technique by playing different scales and arpeggios. Most importantly, play them in different registers, for example, play a G Major scale starting on the 15th fret, for practice playing in the higher register. Play these scales slowly and really listen to your sound. Try to make your playing sound as lyrical as possible. You can use these two videos of mine, to help you with this:

  No.21 Five Essential Scales For Bass Guitar
  No.22 Learn Major and Minor Arpeggios For Bass Guitar

- **Block Two** - Work on developing your ear, by picking music you don’t usually play. Try to copy any of the lines, including melody. This will challenge you, and rapidly improve being able to ‘play by ear’.

- **Block Three** - Tackle areas of music theory that you need in improve in. This could be looking at understanding keys, or improving your reading music skills. Or you might want to start playing jazz. It really depends on where you want to go. Here are some of my other videos, to give you ideas to help improve your music theory.

  No.6 Easy Steps to Start Reading Music
  No.32 Understanding Different Keys In Music
  No.37 Five Steps to Start Playing Jazz Bass Guitar
Step 5. Use Support Resources

There is a wealth of information online that can help you to develop as a musician. Use some of the free resources out there, or buy an online course.

This page from my website - [gregsbassshed.com/resources](gregsbassshed.com/resources) has all my free resources. I am building this up, and adding further practice material all the time. You will find Bonus Material, in the four appendices, to help with your scales, reading skills, etc. I also have two printable tables in there, to help plan and record your practise time. Use the Weekly Planning Sheet to write in your blocks from Step 4.

If you do wish to buy a resource to help you with all of the above, then you might want to have a look at my [Bass Beginners Guide](#) which will help any bassist to progress, very quickly, to a good intermediate level. There are 120 pages covering topics such as, learning to read music, scales & arpeggios, getting a good sound, and rhythm. There are a lot of exercises and bass lines in it, plus links to the bonus material on my website. You could work through the guide, chapter by chapter, to give structure to your practice. Or you could just pick out certain areas in which to improve in.

Summary

The quickest way to improve as a musician, is to look honestly at your playing, set yourself short and long-term aims, and then through organised practice, achieve those aims.

In the last 25 years of professional bass playing and teaching, I have picked up the need and ability to continue to learn, and practice very efficiently. My personal aim with Greg’s Bass Shed, is to share with you as much of this knowledge that I can. I believe anyone can progress to good level as a bass player. It’s just a matter of investing some time into it.

Plan out your own practice schedule, and most importantly, enjoy your bass playing!

Greg