



Bass Setup, Strings and Alternate Tuning

When a bass is new, the manufacturer will have set it up on the assumption of a particular string type and playing style. If you are new to bass, it's best to leave the standard settings alone until they become a limitation to your preferred style of playing. At some point, you may feel that something needs to be done to achieve an improvement. You could just experiment with settings until the bass feels or plays better, or you could consult a bass setup specialist who can advise on suitable strings and perform the necessary adjustments. With Sonic Fix, you can explain what you would like to achieve (or simply describe the problem that you have) and we can translate this into the optimal combination of strings and settings required for your particular bass and style of playing. A Fender Jazz 5 is given as an example because there is so much that can be adjusted – and so much that can go wrong if setup and strung incorrectly! We also setup Electric and Acoustic Guitars – see alternative guides for info.

String gauge and type is the first choice to make. As standard, most solid-body electric bass guitars will be strung with 45-110 gauge strings – meaning that the thinnest string is 0.045" in diameter and the thickest string is 0.110" in diameter. Strings are available from 0.040" to 0.145" and may be overwound with round, semi-round or flat wire. The string core is always the same high-tensile steel material but the plating and winding can vary considerably with each type affecting the feel and sound of the string.

Some 4 string bass players prefer alternate tuning – often dropping to D. This can have a very great affect on the setup and playability and usually requires heavier (thicker) gauge strings and adjustments to the Tuner Friction, Nut, Neck Relief, Bridge Saddles and Pickups. When we make these adjustments, we use special tools to make measurements such that precise adjustment can be made without causing any problems. We keep a record of these adjustments and also inform you what has been done. This is just one of the reasons why our setups are considered to be very good value and why we have such good customer loyalty. For more information, contact Pete on 01692 630102 or email pete@sonicfix.co.uk