

Essential bassists and recordings

Rick McLaughlin

Pops Foster

Louis Armstrong – *Hot Fives and Sevens*

Walter Page

Count Basie and His Orchestra – *1936-1938*

Jimmy Blanton

Duke Ellington – *Cotton Tail*

Duke Ellington – *The Blanton/Webster Years*

Duke Ellington – *Solos, Duets and Trios*

Oscar Pettiford

Duke Ellington – *The Carnegie Hall Concerts, December 1947*

Duke Ellington – *The Carnegie Hall Concerts, November 1948*

Coleman Hawkins – *Ken Burns Jazz: The Definitive Coleman Hawkins*

Sonny Rollins – *Freedom Suite*

Thelonious Monk – *Brilliant Corners*

Lucky Thompson – *Tricotism*

Slam Stewart

Charlie Parker – *Yardbird Suite*

Slam Stewart & Major Holley – *Shut Yo' Mouth*

Art Tatum – *The complete trio sessions with Tiny Grimes & Slam Stewart, Vol. 2*

Various Artists – *Town Hall Concert, 1945*

Changes in how jazz recordings were made and sold result in far too many essential recordings to list for the remainder of this list. In hopes of making this list rather concise, I have attempted to focus on the “must-hear” recordings.

Ray Brown

Jazz At the Philharmonic (JATP) – Far too many recordings to mention each great one.

Jazz At the Philharmonic (JATP) – *Charlie Parker 1949*

Oscar Peterson – *Night Train*

Oscar Peterson – *And the basses*

Ray Brown – *Something for Lester*

Sonny Rollins – *Way Out West*

Oliver Nelson – *Sound Pieces*

Dizzy Gillespie – *The Complete RCA Victor Recordings*

Dizzy Gillespie's Big 4

Paul Chambers

Miles Davis – *Relaxin' With the Miles Davis Quintet*

Miles Davis – *Cookin' With the Miles Davis Quintet*

Miles Davis – *Workin' With the Miles Davis Quintet*

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Miles Davis – *Steamin' With the Miles Davis Quintet*

Miles Davis – *Kind of Blue*

Paul Chambers – *Bass on Top*

Paul Chambers – *Whims of Chambers*

Percy Heath

Modern Jazz Quartet (MJQ) – *Django*

Modern Jazz Quartet (MJQ) – *Third Stream Music*

Miles Davis – *Bags Groove*

Miles Davis and the Modern Jazz Giants

Charles Mingus

Charles Mingus – *The Clown*

Charles Mingus – *Pithecanthropus Erectus*

Charles Mingus – *Mingus Ah Um*

Charles Mingus - *Mingus Mingus Mingus Mingus Mingus*

Ron Carter

Ron Carter is by far the most recorded double bassist in jazz history, with by some counts, as many as 5,000 recordings to his name.

Ron Carter – *Blues Farm*

Ron Carter – *Third Plane*

Ron Carter – *Friends*

Ron Carter – *The Bass and I*

Chick Corea – *Inner Space*

Miles Davis – *Seven Steps to Heaven*

Miles Davis – *The Complete 1964 Concert*

Miles Davis – *E.S.P.*

Miles Davis – *Sorcerer*

Miles Davis – *The Complete Live at the Plugged Nickel 1965*

Stan Getz – *Sweet Rain*

Jim Hall – *Concierto*

Herbie Hancock – *Speak Like a Child*

Herbie Hancock – *VSOP*

Eddie Harris – *The In Sound*

Joe Henderson – *The State of the Tenor, Vol. 1 and 2*

Sam Rivers – *Fuschia Swing Song*

Wayne Shorter – *Speak No Evil*

McCoy Tyner – *The Real McCoy*

Scott LaFaro

Ornette Coleman – *Ornette!*

Bill Evans – *Portrait in Jazz*

Bill Evans – *Explorations*

Bill Evans – *Sunday at the Village Vanguard*

Bill Evans – *Waltz for Debby*

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Hampton Hawes – *For Real!*
Victor Feldman – *The Arrival of Victor Feldman*

Jimmy Garrison

John Coltrane – *A Love Supreme*
John Coltrane – *The Complete 1961 Village Vanguard Recordings*
John Coltrane – *Sun Ship*
Ornette Coleman – *New York is Now!*
Duke Ellington and John Coltrane
Lee Konitz – *Live at the Half Note*
Sonny Rollins – *East Broadway Rundown*

Charlie Haden

Michael Brecker
Ornette Coleman – *Change of the Century*
Ornette Coleman – *The Shape of Jazz to Come*
Ornette Coleman – *Science Fiction*
Charlie Haden – *Closeness*
Charlie Haden – *Liberation Music Orchestra*
Charlie Haden – *Ballad of the Fallen*
Charlie Haden – *Dream Keeper*
Charlie Haden – *In Angel City*
Charlie Haden – *Haunted Heart*
Charlie Haden – *The Art of the Song*
Keith Jarrett – *Birth*
Keith Jarrett – *The Survivor's Suite*
Abbey Lincoln – *The World is Falling Down*
Pat Metheny – *Rejoicing*
Paul Motian – *On Broadway, Vol. 1, 2 and 3*

Cecil McBee

Charles Lloyd – *Forest Flower*
Cecil McBee – *Unspoken*
Sam Rivers – *Streams*
Pharoah Sanders – *Jewels of Thought*
Pharoah Sanders – *Deaf, Dumb and Blind (Summun Bukmun Umyun)*
Pharoah Sanders – *Black Unity*
Lonnie Liston Smith – *Expansions*

Stanley Clarke

Stanley Clarke – *School Days*
Stanley Clarke – *If This Bass Could Only Talk*
Chick Corea – *My Spanish Heart*
Return to Forever
Return to Forever – *Light as a Feather*
Return to Forever – *Romantic Warrior*

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George Mraz

Pepper Adams - *Ephemera*

John Abercrombie - *Abercrombie Quartet*

Richie Beirach - *Elm*

Steve Kuhn - *Steve Kuhn Live in New York*

Carmen McRae - *Carmen Sings Monk*

Dave Holland

Conference of the Birds

Emerald Tears [double bass solo]

Triplicate

Extensions

Points of View

Prime Directive

John Abercrombie - *Gateway*

Anthony Braxton - *Five Pieces 1975*

Gary Burton - *Like Minds*

Chick Corea, Dave Holland, Barry Altschul - *A.R.C.*

Circle (Corea, Braxton, Holland, Altschul) - *Paris Concert*

Miles Davis - *In a Silent Way*

Miles Davis - *Bitches Brew*

Miles Davis - *At Fillmore* (A few other, similarly titled recordings exist - they are all great)

Miles Davis - *Live-Evil*

Dominique Eade - *Long Way Home*

Joe Henderson - *So Near, So Far*

Pat Metheny - *Question and Answer*

Dave Holland/Sam Rivers

Sam Rivers/Dave Holland Vol. 2

Kenny Wheeler - *Gnu High*

Kenny Wheeler - *Double, Double You*

Herbie Hancock - *The New Standard*

Michael Brecker - *Tales from the Hudson*

John Patitucci

Chick Corea - *Akoustic Band*

Chick Corea - *Elektric Band*

Chick Corea - *Eye of the Beholder*

John Patitucci - *Sketchbook*

Danilo Perez - *Central Avenue*

Wayne Shorter - *Beyond the Sound Barrier*

Wayne Shorter - *Without A Net*

Christian McBride

Gary Burton - *Like Minds*

Gary Burton - *For Hamp, Red, Bags and Cal*

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Joe Henderson – *Lush Life*

Kenny Kirkland

Joe Lovano – *Tenor Legacy*

Joe Lovano – *Quartets: Live at the Village Vanguard*

Larry Grenadier

Peter Bernstein – *Heart's Content*

Brad Mehldau – *The Art of the Trio, Volume 1*

Brad Mehldau – *Live at the Village Vanguard; The Art of the Trio Volume 2*

Pat Metheny – *Trio-Live*

Matt Penman

James Farm

SF Jazz Collective

Aaron Parks – *Invisible Cinema*

Electric Bass

Carol Kaye

Kaye was a session bassist in Los Angeles in the early 1960s. By far, her most well-known recording is with the Beach Boys, *Pet Sounds*.

Paul McCartney

Bassist with The Beatles, and leader of his own band(s), McCartney is not only one of the most successful songwriters in history, he is an incredible bassist.

The Beatles – *Revolver*

The Beatles – *Abbey Road*

Paul McCartney – *Tug of War*

Wings – *Wings over America*

James Jamerson

Bassist on many of the Motown recordings of the 1960s and early 1970s, Jamerson is one of the most emulated electric bassists in bass history. As Motown was primarily a singles (not albums) oriented record label, research into Jamerson's playing will be track-by-track, primarily. Having said that, Marvin Gaye's *What's Goin' On* features Jamerson throughout the album, and showcases his incredible playing.

Jaco Pastorius

Joni Mitchell – *Heijira*

Joni Mitchell – *Shadows and Light*

Jaco Pastorius

Jaco Pastorius – *Word of Mouth*

Weather Report – *Heavy Weather*

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Weather Report – *8:30*

Marcus Miller

Miles Davis – *Tutu*

Miles Davis - *Amandla*

Grover Washington, Jr - *Winelight*

Oteil Burbridge

Burbridge is an exceptional bassist, focusing more on 6-string and chordal playing than his predecessors. His early recordings with Col. Bruce Hampton and the Aquarium Rescue Unit are fantastic. He went on to work with Derek Trucks (The Tedeshi Trucks Band) and The Allman Brothers Band. He also has a strong web presence.

Victor Wooton

For many, Wooton is the example of what is possible on the electric bass. Look for recordings of him as a leader, or a sideman with Bela Fleck (and the Flecktones).