

BASS: THE POWER OF BARBERSHOP

The bass part occupies the bottom of every BBS chord. The “lock and ring” we all strive for are impossible without the skillful execution of a bass line rich in overtones.

A good bass...

- ...resonated her high notes as well and completely as her low notes
- ...has learned to love head tone, because strength in and skillful use of this part of her voice greatly enhances her ability to produce overtones
- ...maintains her flexibility and overall artistry in the lower third of her range by maintaining a gentle lift of the soft palate
- ...sings her part with melodic authority
- ... skillfully positions her part in every chord to accommodate the other 3 parts in her overtone series
- ...learns to sing “weightless” descending intervals
- ...keeps her sound three dimensional at all times
- ...realizes the importance of equally balancing head tone and chest tone, ultimately being able to mix registers throughout her range
- ...is skilled at the full range of BBS embellishments...from finesse to power
- ...understands the tuning issues and relationship between bass and each of the other 3 parts
- ...realizes the need for constant vocal energy
- ...realizes the importance of vocal flexibility
- ...doesn't need to sing loud to sing with energy, realizing that loudness and artistry are not synonymous
- ...knows that really powerful bass is a combination of energy(at all volume levels), resonance, and the ability to produce overtones
- ...maintains the dimension of her sound:
 - ...moving through the register break, ascending and descending
 - ...moving through dynamic changes, especially decrescendo
 - ...moving through difficult intervals, ascending and descending
 - ...at any tempo and using any rhythm
- ... thinks her part IS the melody