

# Bluegrass Music

Amolith

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When I was younger, I prided myself on being a classical musician. I played piano and organ, I was in a nearby fine arts university's choir (singing soprano of course), and, quite honestly, I was rather stuck up about it. I didn't know any bluegrass musicians so I had never really interacted with them or gotten "into" the genre but, whenever my mother would show me a group of people with a double bass, a banjo, a mandolin, and a fiddle, I would listen for a few seconds and write it off as "boring country". It wasn't until I started taking lessons that I grew fond of genre.

One of the things I had always wanted to play was double bass. However, lessons were *extremely* expensive and the instrument was even more so. Coming from a rather poor family of just me and my mother, classical lessons were completely out of the question. She did end up finding a way for me to take bluegrass lessons at an incredibly cheap rate; I won't say what the program is called because my name is plastered all over the internet for the branch in this area but it allows student to take lessons at a greatly reduced cost. Pricing was based on school lunch status and, with this particular branch, I was able to take free lessons and rent a bass for something like \$30/semester. I picked it up quickly and started to really enjoy it, learning some classical pieces on the side and playing with a violin bow rather than the expensive bass bows. Throughout the lessons, my main goal was not to get "roped into" doing bluegrass for the rest of my life because I was entirely uninterested in that; I wanted to keep bluegrass in the back and classical in front.

Because I picked it up so quickly, the style is very common in this area, and bass players in something of a shortage, I ended up playing for a number of different groups at different levels. In one of them, the youngest member was 12 and, in another, I was the youngest with the next being 30 years older. With all of these groups, I ended up meeting *many* amazing and wonderful people, playing *so much music*, and getting to travel quite a lot. It was very slow but, about three years after first picking up a bass, I'm actively seeking out more bluegrass to learn, recently picking up fingerstyle guitar, banjo, and maybe mandolin in the future.

In opening my mind to the genre, I also discovered a lot of beautiful music

that's...not quite bluegrass but...not quite anything else I've heard either. I absolutely *love* the style and can't wait to meet up with a friend of mine and put some pieces together. The main band I've been following is [The Punch Brothers](#). [Chris Thile](#), the leader...holy shit he's a *musician*. From classical to bluegrass to jazz, he's an absolute madman. A couple of my favourite songs that The Punch Brothers do are written by him: *My Oh My*, *Julep*, *Patchwork Girlfriend*, and *Between 1st and A*. The style is just so unique and different yet has those evident bluegrass roots underpinning it all.

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