

BALLAD HARP

Owner's Manual



CONGRATULATIONS

YOU OWN A HARP!

We believe that making music is one of the worthiest of human endeavors. The harp is special because, no matter what your skill level, it sounds lovely. Sit down, pull the instrument to you, pluck a note or a chord, take a deep breath, and let the sound wash over you. How wonderful that you get to do this!



ENCOURAGEMENT

Touch and play your harp often. Make it a point to take a break from your busy life to be with your harp. Giving your full attention to playing even a few notes or a simple chord progression will put you in a good place every time.

Making music is its own reward - believe that you are making music everytime you pluck your harp strings.

Relax and enjoy. Harp music is beautiful.

Share your harp and music with others and multiply your joy.

CONTACT INFO

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns about your harp.

phone 651-439-9120

email info@harpkit.com

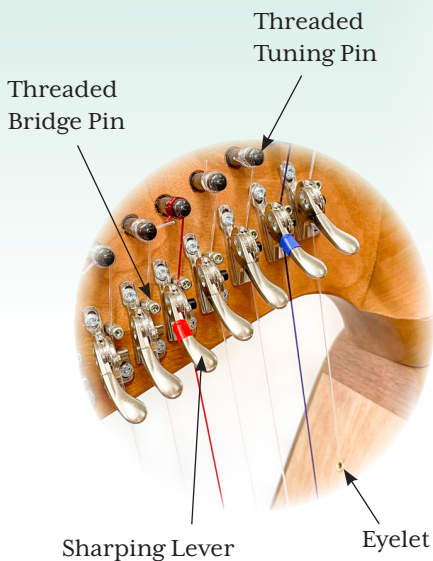
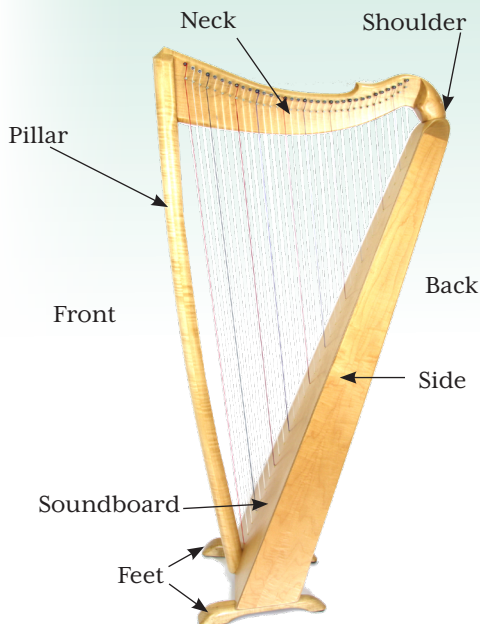
UNPACKING YOUR HARP

- ___1. **Important** - The feet have been removed for shipping. **Your harp won't stand on its own without first installing the feet.** Lay the harp on its back and install the feet with the four included screws. The wider part of the foot should point toward the front.
- ___2. **Save the Shipping Box.** I know - it is large and takes up a lot of space. But these boxes are custom made to fit your harp. If you ever need to ship your harp you'll be very glad you saved this box.



GET TO KNOW YOUR HARP

Take the time to learn the proper names for the parts of your harp. It will be useful if you ever need to talk to a repair tech about any issues with your harp.



TUNING YOUR HARP

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I TUNE MY HARP

Expect your harp to be out of tune when it first arrives. Tune it several times a day until it stabilizes. After about 30-40 tunings over the course of two weeks your harp should be fully acclimated and quite stable. Beyond that, tune it as needed. During seasonal changes, as humidity increases or decreases, changes in the wood can cause strings to break and tuning pins to stick. Frequent tuning during these transitional periods will do much to prevent this.

TOOLS

Any chromatic tuner will work. You'll find some for sale on our website or at your local music store. We also have a free online tuner on our website

Free online tuner at www.harpkit.com/online-tuner

KEY OF C

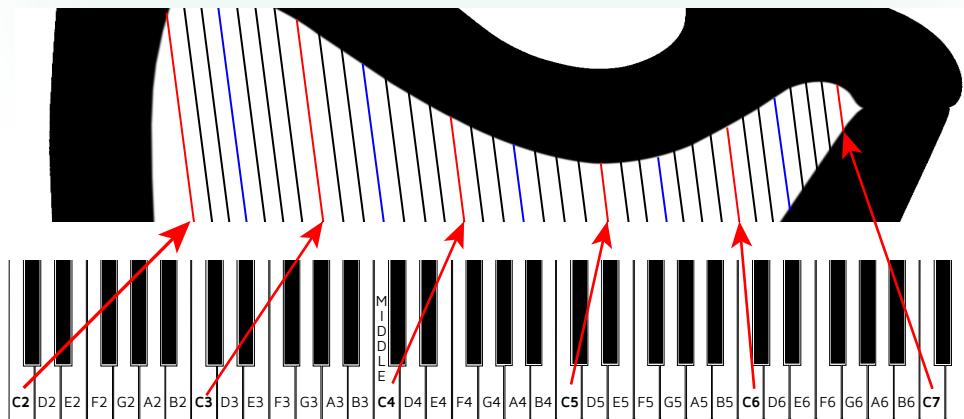
Tuning your harp to the Key of C (no sharps or flats) is the simplest tuning and works for just about all the music in most beginning instructional books. This is the tuning we recommend if you are just starting out.

PENTATONIC TUNING

With your harp tuned to the key of C, engage the levers on all of the B and E strings. This a tuning with “no wrong notes” and is great fun for noodling around as everything you do will sound pleasant.

KEY OF Eb

This tuning makes the most efficient use of your sharpening levers. Tune all of your B, E, and A strings flat. Then, when you want to play in the key of C, engage the sharpening levers on those strings



This picture shows a 36 string harp and where the notes fall on a piano.

CARE AND FEEDING OF YOUR HARP

TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY

If you just remember that your harp is generally comfortable in the same environment you are, you will be fine. Prolonged exposure to extreme temperatures can and will damage your harp. Mostly this means that you don't want to leave your harp in your car for much more than an hour on a very hot or very cold day.

Humidity generally isn't a problem structurally but can affect the tuning if the harp goes through frequent humidity changes.

It is also best to avoid storing your harp right next to a window or heating vent.

CARING FOR THE FINISH

Your harp is finished with a water-based varnish which is durable, long lasting, and environmentally friendly. We recommend Old English furniture cleaner and polish for regular maintenance and hiding scratches.

If you use your harp in a clinical setting and need to sanitize the surface between patients, most any of the sterilizing wipes will work. The hydrogen peroxide based wipes, such as the Oxivar TB Wipes, tend to be gentler on the finish.

NICKS AND SCRATCHES

Old English Scratch Cover works miracles on minor scratches.

If you decide you want to do a more involved touch-up and end up sanding out any damage, re-finishing is best done with Deft brand spray laquer in semi-gloss.

If you have a Vivid Color Harp, we **do not** recommend sanding as there is a risk of sanding through the stain.

THINGS TO WATCH

Harpes are under a tremendous amount of tension - often over a thousand pounds. Consequently, the harp tends to undergo some noticeable changes. Most of these changes are normal and should not concern you. For example, you'll notice the soundboard start to crown upwards over time. If you look at the harp head on, you might see a slight bend in the pillar. Minor flexing is normal and to be expected. You need not be concerned unless cracks start to develop.

More info on harp repair at
www.harpkit.com/resources/how-to-touch-up-your-harp

REPLACING YOUR STRINGS

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I REPLACE MY STRINGS

Strings do decay over time but it happens so slowly that you aren't likely to notice. You don't ever have to change your strings unless they break. However, installing a new set of strings will freshen up your tone. If keeping your harp sounding fresh is important to you, re-stringing once every couple of years should be adequate.

HOW TO REPLACE A STRING

Replacing harp strings is a bit of an art and explaining the process is beyond the scope of this manual. You can download complete instructions for re-stringing your harp from our website.

Stringing Instructions online at www.harpkits.com/stringing

HOW TO ORDER REPLACEMENT STRINGS

Every harp has a unique set of strings so you can't just walk into a local music store and ask for a set of harp strings. They will likely just stare blankly at you. The best way to order replacement strings for your harp is to order them through us directly.

You can order individual replacement strings or a complete set from our website or by calling us at 651-439-9120

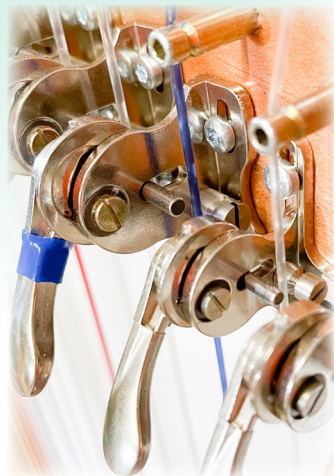
BUZZING STRINGS

Sooner or later you are going to have a string that buzzes. It will drive you crazy. But there is hope. 99% of string buzzing is caused by one of the following two scenarios and is easily fixed.

Levers are the primary source of string buzzes. If the buzz occurs when the lever is engaged, try tightening the screws that hold the lever on the neck.

If the buzz occurs when the lever is disengaged, pluck the string and look closely at the string as it passes through the lever and see if it is vibrating against some part of the lever. If so, adjust the threaded bridge pin in or out with a 5/64" allen wrench (or 3/32" allen wrench for large bridge pins) until the buzz is gone.

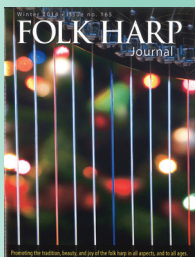
String Tails are the other primary offender. Check the clipped end of the string at the tuning pin and make sure it isn't touching any other string. String tails at the knot, behind the soundboard, can also cause buzzing. Stick your hand inside the harp and twist several knots around as you pluck the string that is buzzing.



BALLAD HARP STRING CHART

					Vibrating
String	Note	Gauge	Code	Color	Length
1	A6	.028"	BH-A6	clear	3-3/4"
2	G6	.028	BH-G6	clear	4-1/2
3	F6	.028	BH-F6	blue	5-1/4
4	E6	.028	BH-E6	clear	6-1/8
5	D6	.028	BH-D6	clear	7
6	C6	.028	BH-C6	red	8
7	B5	.028	BH-B5	clear	8-7/8
8	A5	.028	BH-A5	clear	9-7/8
9	G5	.028	BH-G5	clear	10-7/8
10	F5	.032	BH-F5	blue	11-7/8
11	E5	.032	BH-E5	clear	13
12	D5	.032	BH-D5	clear	14
13	C5	.036	BH-C5	red	15
14	B4	.036	BH-B4	clear	16-1/8
15	A4	.036	BH-A4	clear	17-1/4
16	G4	.040	BH-G4	clear	18-3/8
17	F4	.040	BH-F4	blue	19-1/2
18	E4	.040	BH-E4	clear	20-3/4
19	D4	.045	BH-D4	clear	21-7/8
20	Middle C4	.050	BH-C4	red	23
21		.050	BH-B3	clear	24-3/8
22	A3	.055	BH-A3	clear	25-1/2
23	G3	.060	BH-G3	clear	26-3/4
24	F3	.060	BH-F3	blue	28-1/8
25	E3	.045/.010 n/n	BH-E3	clear	29-1/4
26	D3	.045/.013 n/n	BH-D3	clear	30-5/8
27	C3	.050/.016 n/n	BH-C3	red	32
28	B2	.050/.016 n/n	BH-B2	silver	33-1/4
29	A2	.055/.018 n/n	BH-A2	silver	34-3/4
30	G2	.055/.022 n/n	BH-G2	silver	36-1/8
31	F2	.020/4/.008 sfb	BH-F2	blue	37-5/8
32	E2	.022/5/.008 sfb	BH-E2	silver	39-1/8
33	D2	.022/5/.010 sfb	BH-D2	silver	40-3/4
34	C2	.022/6/.012 sfb	BH-C2	red	42

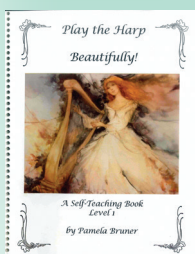
HARP RELATED RESOURCES



FOLK HARP JOURNAL

The Folk Harp Journal (FHJ) is a quarterly publication of the International Society of Folk Harpers and Craftsman (ISFHC). Membership in the ISFHC gets you a subscription to the FHJ. You can also buy the current issue, back issues, and several themed collections from Musicmakers.

Find the Folk Harp Journal online at www.harpkit.com/fhj



INSTRUCTIONAL BOOKS

Musicmakers offers several excellent books that will instruct you in the proper technique and teach you how to play the harp.

We also have a collection of repertoire books in a variety of genres.

Explore our offerings online at www.harpkit.com/harp-books

WARRANTY INFO

We will repair or replace, within five years from date of purchase, an instrument that we built if the materials or workmanship are found to be defective during normal use. String breakage, damage from accident, abuse, neglect, exposure to high heat & humidity or water, is not covered. This warranty covers the cost of parts and labor, but you will be responsible for sending the instrument to us in Minnesota for repairs, and for returning the repaired instrument back to you.



14525 61st ST CT N
Stillwater, MN 55082