

Finished
Limerick Lap Harp



Musicmaker's Kits

P.O. Box 2117
Stillwater MN 55082
(651) 439 9120
www.harpkit.com

Finished Limerick Parts List:

- 1 Set of Stringing & Tuning Directions
- 1 L-shaped Tuning Wrench

STRINGING & TUNING

____ **1.** Stringing a harp is somewhat of an art. We recommend that you read through these last pages of directions completely before beginning, so you know what to expect. It is not uncommon for people to call us in a panic because their harp either: a) won't stay in tune; or b) keeps breaking its strings. Careful installation will do much to eliminate these problems. We string this model harp regularly and tune it up to concert pitch right away with rarely a broken string, but it takes a little patience and concentration.

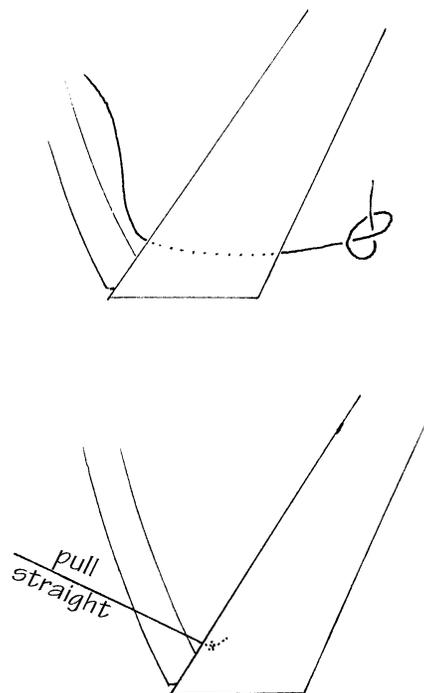
The strings are numbered from 1 (for the smallest) to 26 (for the longest), and they are color-coded to help guide you as you play. "C" strings are all red, and "F" strings are blue.

Gather the following tools for this operation:

- Set of harp strings with plastic beads
- Scissors
- Tube of Superglue or Krazy glue
- Tuning wrench

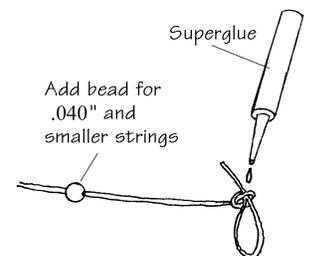
NOTE: If the color on the strings happens to fade, you can restore it with permanent marker.

**IF STRINGING WITH WIRE
SKIP TO PAGE 6**



____ **2.** Start at the bass (longest) end of the harp with #26 (red). Push the end of the string through the lowest hole in the **SOUNDBOARD** from back to front.

____ **3.** If it is a tight fit through the eyelet, work the eyelet carefully over any bulky spots. If there is no knot at the end of the string, tie a simple overhand knot, as shown. Put a drop of Superglue or Krazy glue on the knot to keep it from slipping under tension.



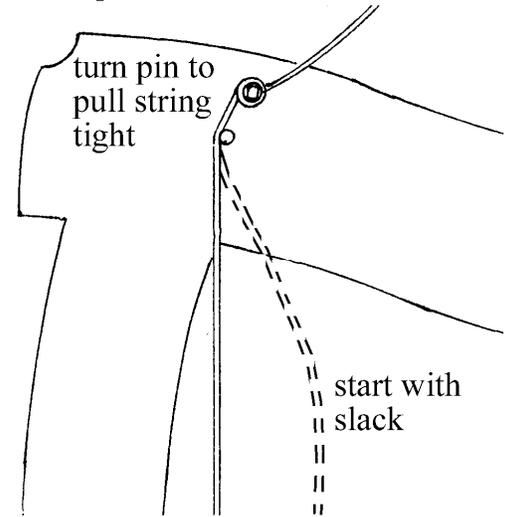
Then pull the knot tightly against the inside of the **SOUNDBOARD**, as shown.

NOTE: PULL STRAIGHT THROUGH THE HOLE, NOT AT AN ANGLE, SO AS TO AVOID SCRATCHING THE NYLON AGAINST THE BRASS EYELET.

Thread the other end of the string through the last **TUNING PIN** at the point of the **NECK**. Pull it through the **PIN** until there is some slack below the pin.

Turn the **PIN** clockwise with the tuning wrench and guide the windings of the string downward toward the wood. As the string begins to tighten, place it in the groove of the **GUIDE PIN**.

HINT: Do not accumulate a lot of windings of string around the **TUNING PINS**, especially in the bass. They become bulky and cumbersome. If you find yourself with that problem, turn the **TUNING PIN** backwards to unwind the string and then pull more slack through the hole before tightening again.



___ **4.** When you come to the .050" and higher strings, tie the bottom knot a little differently to give it more bulk. Start with the same overhand knot, but before tightening it; push the loose end part way back into the knot, just to add one more thickness of string to the knot.

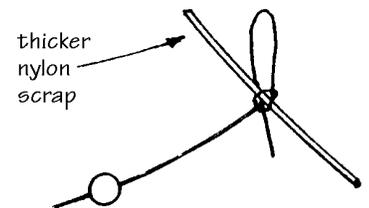
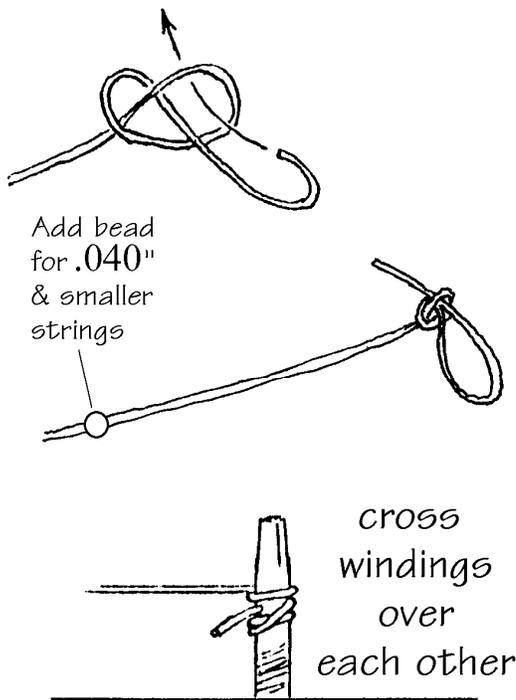
___ **5.** For the rest of the strings (sizes .040" and higher), thread a small plastic bead onto each string before tying the knot. The bead will prevent the knotted string from pulling through the hole in the **SOUNDBOARD**.

ANOTHER HINT: We also like to anchor the tops of these lighter strings securely to the tuning pins, as follows: Make one or two windings of string around the tuning pin, then cross the next winding over the others so the string is holding itself tightly around the **PIN**. Otherwise we often experience string slippage and breakage, especially in the upper half of the instrument.

CAUTION: Nylon strings are somewhat fragile, especially in the upper octaves. Try to avoid scratching them as you install them. Most string breakage occurs at the tuning pin, when the string is pulled forcefully around the sharp corner

of the small hole in the metal. You can minimize the problem by installing the string carefully and by anchoring the windings before applying too much tension to the strings, so the nylon does not begin to slip back through the hole under tension and become scratched.

___ **6.** When you come to the lightest strings (.025" diameter), you will need to add a short piece of heavier string into the knot in order to make the knot bulky enough to keep from pulling through the hole in the plastic bead. Just use some scraps of excess nylon from the bottom strings. When all the strings are installed, tighten them to pitch and allow the instrument to adjust itself to the tension.



TUNING

The strings should all be tuned to the natural C major scale (white keys on the piano). All the red strings will be C notes and the blue ones F notes. Middle C is string number 19 from the top, or the eighth string from the bottom.

NOTE: It will take several tunings before the harp will stay in tune. Be patient! It should get better each day.

Many people are not certain if they are tuning their harp strings to the correct octave. Tuning the strings an octave too low will result in flabby harp strings that don't provide much volume. Tuning the strings too high will cause strings to break. To make sure you are tuning your harp strings to the correct octave, you can double-check the pitch on our website with our "online tuner". www.harokit.com/freetuner

CONGRATULATIONS! We hope you have enjoyed building this harp and that you enjoy many years of musical pleasure from playing it. We stock a good number of teaching materials and accessories for your instrument to help you get started. Just call us for more information or for placing an order.

ACCESSORIES FOR YOUR HARP

Please check our website or catalog for current pricing.

| | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| LIMSTRGNY | Spare set of 26 nylon strings |
| LIMSTRGWR | Spare set of 26 wire strings |
| LIMBAG | Padded gig Bag for Limerick harp |
| CA1 | Korg CA1 electronic tuner |
| TUNERCORD | External pickup & cord for tuner |

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SHARPING LEVERS

Sharping levers are used on folk harps to facilitate key changes. Installing a lever over a string allows you to raise the pitch of that string one-half step by engaging the cam against the string. Thus an F-string can be raised to F# by a simple flick of the lever. Similarly, a B-string may be tuned to Bb so that the lever will raise it to a B-natural and release it back to a B-flat, as needed.

Most folk harp players set the key signature (sharps or flats) on the harp before starting each piece of music. For the key of G, you would engage the levers on all the F strings to produce the F# needed for that key (making sure all other notes on the harp are natural). If the following piece were then to be played in the key of F, you would then release the levers on all the F strings to produce F-natural, and also release all the B-string levers to produce Bb.

You may install a lever over every string on the harp, or, if you think you won't use all of them, it would be more cost-effective to select which keys you think you are most likely to use, and then install only the levers necessary for those keys.

| | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| KEY OF E: | requires F# and C# and G# and D# |
| KEY OF A: | requires F# and C# and G# |
| KEY OF D: | requires F# and C# |
| KEY OF G: | requires F# |
| KEY OF C: | requires no sharps or flats |
| KEY OF F: | requires Bb |
| KEY OF Bb: | requires Bb and Eb |
| KEY OF Eb: | requires Bb and Eb and Ab |

Check our website or catalog for current sharping lever options and prices.

LIMERICK LAP HARP

INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR WIRE STRINGS

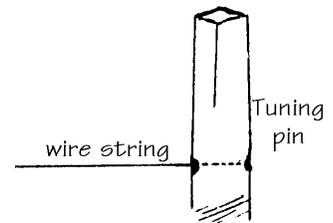
NOTE: Wire strings do not come with pre-colored C and F strings. Just install all the strings first, in proper order, and then use "opaque paint markers" from an arts & crafts store (like Michael's) to color the C strings red and the F strings blue. These paint pens give the most vivid we have found for wire strings. Keep the pens with the harp in case you need to touch-up the color in the future.

_____ **1.** Begin at the bottom of the harp with the longest string (.032" diameter). Thread a plastic bead onto the string first. Then poke the end through the **SOUNDBOARD** from the inside.

_____ **2.** Pull the wire all the way until the ball end is snug against the inside of the **SOUNDBOARD**. Then hold it taut up to the first **TUNING PIN** and clip off the excess length, about 3 inches beyond the pin.

_____ **3.** Hide the end of the wire in the hole in the **TUNING PIN** (so it barely shows on the other side) and begin turning the pin with your tuning wrench. Turn clockwise to wind the slack wire onto the pin. You should have enough slack to make about 3 full turns around the pin, but take care not to over-tighten it.

NOTE: This technique of hiding the end of wire inside the tuning pin prevents the hazards of pricking your clothing on the sharp points. It may take a little finesse but it will be worth the effort, as it is difficult to trim the wires very closely with a wire cutter.



_____ **4.** Proceed with the remaining strings, keeping them in order.

_____ **5.** Mark all F strings with a blue permanent marking pen, running the pen up and down the length of the strings from all sides. Do the same with a red pen for all the C strings, referring to the tuning chart to make certain you are coloring the correct strings.

_____ **6.** Tune the strings according to the tuning chart. It will require several tunings, as the **SOUNDBOARD** will respond to the added tension with each try. But it will settle down after a few days and begin to stay in tune nicely.

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LIMERICK LAP HARP -C TUNING

(C3 to G6) code: **limstrg**

FULL SET OF 26 STRINGS

| STRING | NOTE | GAUGE | CODE | COLOR | VIBRATING LENGTH | LOVELAND LEVER SIZE |
|--------|--------|-----------|----------|-------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | G6 | .025 | NYL025 | clear | 3-3/4" | 00 |
| 2 | F6 | .025 | NYL025 | blue | 4-3/8 | 00 |
| 3 | E6 | .025 | NYL025 | clear | 4-7/8 | 00 |
| 4 | D6 | .025 | NYL025 | clear | 5-1/2 | 00 |
| 5 | C6 | .032 | NYL032 | red | 6-1/8 | 00 |
| 6 | B5 | .032 | NYL032 | clear | 6-3/4 | 00 |
| 7 | A5 | .032 | NYL032 | clear | 7-3/8 | 00 |
| 8 | G5 | .032 | NYL032 | clear | 8 | 0 |
| 9 | F5 | .036 | NYL036 | blue | 8-5/8 | 0 |
| 10 | E5 | .036 | NYL036 | clear | 9-1/4 | 0 |
| 11 | D5 | .036 | NYL036 | clear | 10 | 6a |
| 12 | C5 | .040 | NYL040 | red | 10-3/4 | 6a |
| 13 | B4 | .040 | NYL040 | clear | 11-1/2 | 6a |
| 14 | A4 | .040 | NYL040 | clear | 12-1/4 | 6a |
| 15 | G4 | .050 | NYL050 | clear | 13-1/8 | 6a |
| 16 | F4 | .050 | NYL050 | blue | 14 | 6a |
| 17 | E4 | .050 | NYL050 | clear | 15 | 9 |
| 18 | D4 | .040/.010 | NYNY18D4 | clear | 16 | 9 |
| 19 | Mid C4 | .040/.010 | NYNY19C4 | red | 17-1/4 | 9 |
| 20 | B3 | .040/.010 | NYNY20B3 | clear | 18-1/2 | 9 |
| 21 | A3 | .045/.010 | NYNY21A3 | clear | 19-3/4 | 9 |
| 22 | G3 | .050/.010 | NYNY22G3 | clear | 21 | 12 |
| 23 | F3 | .050/.013 | NYNY23F3 | blue | 22-1/4 | 12 |
| 24 | E3 | .050/.015 | NYNY24E3 | clear | 23-1/2 | 12 |
| 25 | D3 | .055/.015 | NYNY25D3 | clear | 24-3/4 | 14 |
| 26 | C3 | .055/.020 | NYNY26C3 | red | 26 | 14 |

(Set includes one spare clear string of each monofilament nylon size)

NOTE: 15 beads enclosed for the upper strings

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LIMERICK LAP HARP -C TUNING

(C3 to G6) **WIRE** STRINGS code: **limstrgwr**

FULL SET OF 26 STRINGS

| STRING | NOTE | GAUGE | CODE | COLOR | VIBRATING LENGTH | LOVELAND LEVER SIZE |
|--------|--------|-------|---------|-------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | G6 | .010 | BALL010 | clear | 3-3/4" | 00 |
| 2 | F6 | .010 | BALL010 | blue | 4-3/8 | 00 |
| 3 | E6 | .010 | BALL010 | clear | 4-7/8 | 00 |
| 4 | D6 | .012 | BALL012 | clear | 5-1/2 | 00 |
| 5 | C6 | .012 | BALL012 | red | 6-1/8 | 00 |
| 6 | B5 | .012 | BALL012 | clear | 6-3/4 | 00 |
| 7 | A5 | .014 | BALL014 | clear | 7-3/8 | 00 |
| 8 | G5 | .014 | BALL014 | clear | 8 | 0 |
| 9 | F5 | .016 | BALL016 | blue | 8-5/8 | 0 |
| 10 | E5 | .016 | BALL016 | clear | 9-1/4 | 0 |
| 11 | D5 | .018 | BALL018 | clear | 10 | 0 |
| 12 | C5 | .018 | BALL018 | red | 10-3/4 | 0 |
| 13 | B4 | .020 | BALL020 | clear | 11-1/2 | 2 |
| 14 | A4 | .020 | BALL020 | clear | 12-1/4 | 2 |
| 15 | G4 | .023 | BALL023 | clear | 13-1/8 | 2 |
| 16 | F4 | .023 | BALL023 | blue | 14 | 4 |
| 17 | E4 | .023 | BALL023 | clear | 15 | 4 |
| 18 | D4 | .023 | BALL023 | clear | 16 | 4 |
| 19 | Mid C4 | .025 | BALL025 | red | 17-1/4 | 4 |
| 20 | B3 | .025 | BALL025 | clear | 18-1/2 | 4 |
| 21 | A3 | .025 | BALL025 | clear | 19-3/4 | 4 |
| 22 | G3 | .025 | BALL025 | clear | 21 | 5 |
| 23 | F3 | .032 | BALL032 | blue | 22-1/4 | 5 |
| 24 | E3 | .032 | BALL032 | clear | 23-1/2 | 5 |
| 25 | D3 | .032 | BALL032 | clear | 24-3/4 | 5 |
| 26 | C3 | .032 | BALL032 | red | 26 | 5 |

(Set includes one spare string of each plain wire size)

NOTE: 26 beads (8mm size, clear plastic) enclosed for all strings

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