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HARMONICA
USER GUIDE

3+
YEARS

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO LEARNING HARMONICA

How to Hold the Harmonica



Hold the harmonica in your left hand as shown. Cup your right hand around the back of your left hand as shown. Put the harmonica to your lips, making sure your lips cover the top and bottom of the harmonica so no air can escape. Exhale or blow gently into the harmonica - the less air you use the better the sound. (Note, if you are holding the harmonica correctly, the lower notes are the on the left. If this is not the case, flip your harmonica over.)

(If you're left handed, reverse your hands for steps 1 and 2.)

After playing, tap your harmonica against your palm to remove any excess moisture.



Playing the Harmonica

If you were to blow into the holes of a harmonica, one by one from left to right, you would hear the 1, 3, and 5 notes of a major chord (C, E, G in the key of C) repeated repeated three times (as well as one high C at the end). Alone, this won't do you much good, as it's only one chord.

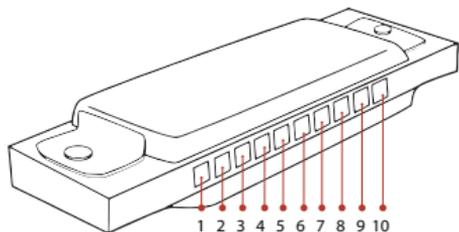
That's why playing the harmonica involves a combination of inhaling and exhaling (also called blowing and drawing).

If you blow into hole 4 on a C harmonica, you'll hear a C. Now inhale—the note moves up to a D. Blow into the next hole and it's an E. Inhale, F. Blowing into hole 6 produces a G, and inhaling makes an A. At this point you can probably guess what come next if you blow into hole 7: a B, right? Wrong! If you blow into hole 7, you will hear a C. You have to inhale to produce the B. As you can see, there isn't a set pattern to the blows and draws of a harmonica. The three main oddities are holes 2, 7, and 10. In holes 7-9, the pattern mentioned above is changed so inhaling moves the note down instead of up.

Now you're ready to play a simple tune.

Assume the holes in your harmonica are numbered as shown: mi, fa, so, la, ti, do)

Tip: Move the harmonica when you change notes, not your head.



Over each word or syllable in the song is a number. If the number is plain, exhale into the corresponding numbered harmonica hole. If the number is underlined, inhale at the corresponding numbered harmonica hole.

Song Name: Easy "blues"

By: Big Walter Horton

Song: | -3 | 4 -4 | -4 5 -4 4 -3 | -3 |
5	-5 6	66 -5 5	-4
-4 5 -5 -5 5 -4 4	6 6 -5 5 -4 -3 -3		
-2	-1 -1 1 -2 -1 -1		

This is a very soulful tune, played at a moderate blues tempo. The chord changes are on a typical 12 bar blues format.



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