

Definition: **harp** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

Ancient musical instrument consisting of a frame over which strings are stretched. Variations have been found in civilizations as diverse as Egyptian, Greek and Celtic. A modern orchestral harp has a large triangular frame that carries 47 strings. Seven pedals ensure the whole chromatic range is covered by altering the pitch of the strings.

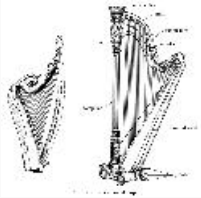


Image from: [Harp \[Fr. harpe; Ger. Harfe; It., Sp. arpa\] in \*The Harvard Dictionary of Music\*](#)

Summary Article: **harp**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

stringed musical instrument of ancient origin, the strings of which are plucked with the fingers. Harps were found in paintings from the 13th cent. B.C. at Thebes. In different forms it was played by peoples of nearly all lands throughout the ages. The harp was particularly popular with the Irish from the 9th cent. They adopted the small instrument still in use, called the Irish harp, as a national symbol. The larger instrument was well known on the Continent by the 12th cent. During the 15th cent. the harp came to be made in three parts, as it is today: sound box, neck, and pillar. The strings are stretched between the sound box and the neck; into the neck are fastened the tuning pegs. Chromatic harps, having a string for each tone of the chromatic scale, have appeared since the late 16th cent., but none has been as practical as the diatonic harp, made in the late 17th cent. in the Tyrol and equipped with hooks capable of altering the pitch of any string by a semitone. A pedal mechanism that shortened the strings was devised (c.1720) in Germany. The harp was perfected with Sébastien érard's invention (c.1810) of the double-action pedals, which can shorten each string twice, raising the pitch by a semitone or a tone. The harp appeared occasionally in the orchestra in the 18th cent., but its regular inclusion there, as well as most of its solo literature, dates from the late 19th cent.

See Rensch, R. , *The Harp* (1970) and *Harps and Harpists* (1989).

**APA**

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

Harp. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/harp>



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## APA

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## Chicago

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## Harvard

Harp. (2018). In P. Lagasse & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia*. (8th ed.). [Online]. New York: Columbia University Press. Available from: <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/harp> [Accessed 18 September 2019].

## MLA

"harp." *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University, Columbia University Press, 8th edition, 2018. *Credo Reference*, <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/harp>. Accessed 18 Sep. 2019.