

Advanced Method #3:

After you've mastered the Intermediate Method #2...you're ready for a challenge. So far we've ignored Holes #1 #2 #3...and there's a reason for that. The lower three holes require more precise air pressure to get good sound than holes #4 thru #10. While it isn't overly difficult to get holes #1 #2 #3 to sound on exhale (blow) it is somewhat difficult to get a good sound from them on inhale (draw). Hole #2 in particular is a difficult note to play. It takes good breath control, a steady draw (inhale), and just the right amount of air pressure to get the #2 Draw to sound right. If you're ready.....do Advanced Method #3

1. Holding the harmonica in your left hand, put it in your mouth on Hole #2
2. Using only one breath, Gently blow (exhale) through the harmonica on Hole #2. Experiment with the air pressure needed to get a good sound. Just like previous methods...blow until you run out of air and can't get sound from the harmonica. This time you should use your stomach muscles to force a little extra air out of your lungs at the very end.
3. Leave your mouth on Hole #2, and Gently draw (inhale) air back through the harmonica until your lungs are full. You'll have to experiment a bit to find the right amount of inhale (draw) pressure to use. Hole #2 is very unforgiving and if you use too much or too little air you will not get a good sound. Be prepared for squeaks, vibrations, and sometimes no sound at all from the #2 draw. Breathe from your diaphragm and let your ears guide you towards long, deep, controlled breaths that create a clear steady note on the #2 draw. Feel the note resonate in the back of your throat and down in your stomach.
NOTE: The higher scale notes (hole #4 - #10) are fairly forgiving notes in that they resonate pretty well at varying air pressures. The lower scale notes (hole #1 #2 #3) require more precise breath control.
4. Once your lungs are full....hold your breath for a slow count of three.
5. Leaving your mouth on Hole #2, Start the process all over again by exhaling through the harmonica.
6. Repeat this process 20-30 times.

Tabs for "Frosty the Snowman"

6 5-5 6 7

Frost-y the snow-man,

-7 7 -8 7 -7 -6 6

Was a jol-ly, hap-py soul

-7 7 -8 7 -7 -6-6 6 7 5

With a corn-cob pipe and a but-ton nose

6 -6 6 -5 5 -5 6

And two eyes made out of coal.

6 5-5 6 7

Frost-y the snow-man

-7 7 -8 7 -7 -6 6

Is a fair-y tale they say.

-7 7 -8 7 -7 -6 -6 6 7 5

He was made of snow but the child-ren know

6 -6 6 -5 5 -4 4

How he came to life one day.

4 -6 -6 7 7 -7 -6 6

There must have been some mag-ic in

5 -5 -6 6 -5 5

That old silk hat they found,

5 -4 -4 6 6 -7 -7 -8

For when they placed it on his head

-7 7 -8 7 -7 -6 6

He be-gan to dance a-round.

6 6 5-5 6 7 -7 7 -8 7-7 -6

Oh, Frost-y the snow-man was a-live as he could

6 -7 7 -8 7 -7 -6 -6 6 7 5

be, And the child-ren say he could laugh and play

6 -6 6 -5 5 -4 4

Just the same as you and me.

6 6 6 6 6 -6 6 6 6

Thump-i-ty, thump, thump! Thump-i-ty thump!

-6 6 5 6 -4

Look at Frost-y go.

6 6 6 6 6 -6 6 6 6

Thump-i-ty, thump, thump! Thump-i-ty thump!

6 6 6 -6 -7 7

O-ver the hills of snow.

General Bending Information

- **Bending performs two main functions for us on the harmonica:**
 1. **Wailing effect-** It creates a sound effect that is very human and at the same time animal-like. The bending effect can sound like crying or wailing or moaning.
 2. **Adds missing notes-** The bending technique also allows us to play some of the notes that appear to be missing on the diatonic harmonica. For instance, if you bend the hole 4 draw of a key of "C" diatonic harmonica, you will be playing a Db (or C#) note which is the missing note between hole 4 blow ("C") and hole 4 draw ("D"). With the basic draw and blow bends you can get fairly close to playing chromatically (all 12 different white and black keys on a piano) on a diatonic harmonica.
- **Bending can be one of the more difficult techniques-** Because bending tends to be one of the most difficult techniques to master on the harmonica, we suggest you come back this section and re-read it a few times over the next weeks (even after you think you've got it). Bending is not something you can show someone and sometimes words seem to fall short in explanation. There is a lot to comprehend on this page and the others in this section. Be patient, it will come.
- **Different types of bends-** Although bending is done primarily on the draw notes at the low end of the harmonica, there are four types of bending found on a diatonic harmonica. These are: draw bends, blow bends, overblows, and overdraws.
- **Standard draw bends always go down in pitch-** At this point, we will only concentrate on the most common type of bending, draw bends. You will notice that the standard draw (and blow) bends always go down in pitch (lowers the note).

BENDING ADVICE FROM BEGINNERS—courtesy of harp-I list.

If you can whistle, you can bend. Bending notes on a harmonica works the same way as changing pitches is whistling -- using the back of the tongue to change the size of the opening to change pitch.

With draw bending, try whistling on the inhale (possible, but rarely done). Most people can do a weak version of inhale whistling. The point is not to get a great whistle but to understand the concept of the technique. All you need to do is make enough noise on your inhale whistle to you can tell that you are changing pitch.

Failing that, trying saying yeow on the draw notes you are trying to bend. To avoid choking the note (an accidental bend that you DON'T want) say Eeeee on the inhale or exhale.

Remember, as everybody kept saying all week at SPAH--: It's finesse not force. You are not trying to suck the reeds out of the harp. Bends take very little effort -- if the mouth shape is right. You can play bend very quietly.

Phil Lloyd

I just wanted to add a small comment to Phil's post (below). I whistle on the inhale quite a bit. As I was reading the post, I took a second to whistle "in" and it reminded me very much of another key aspect of playing the harmonica.

[Breathe through the harmonica, don't "suck and blow"]

You'll find that it's much easier to whistle "in" with a steady, relaxed air-stream. You'll also find that playing the harmonica with good tone (and good bends) require(s) a similar relaxed, steady air-stream.

d.g.

I have recently been able to bend one note - 4 draw. What worked for me was moving my tongue back in my throat, dropping my jaw and sort of hollowing out my cheeks a bit.

However, I have not had much luck with 2 or 3 draw so far. When I do the same thing, I get just a partial bend and seems like I'm sucking a lot of air.

Congrats on your first bend. Hole 4 inhale will give you a bend without a razor sharp focus on correct technique. Holes 2 and 3 are not so forgiving - mostly because there is a lot more bending area built into those holes. So, you will have to refine your technique - even on hole 4, until you get the "essence" or "sweet spot" in the tongue/throat area where the bends live.

The Iceman

Simple Harmonica Tabs

- [London Bridge](#)
- [Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star](#)
- [Oh Susanna](#)
- [America](#)
- [Auld Lang Syne](#)
- [Happy Birthday](#)

+ = Blow (exhale) +1 = blow through the #1 hole
- = Draw (inhale) -1 = draw through the #1 hole

London Bridge

+5 -5 +5 -4 +4 -4 +5
Lon-don Bridge is fall-ing down

-3 +4 -4 +4 -4 +5
fall-ing down, fall-ing down

+5 -5 +5 -4 +4 -4 +5
Lon-don Bridge is fall-ing down

-3 +5 +4 +3
My fair la--dy.

Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

+3 +3 +5 +5 -5 -5 +5

Twin-kle Twin-kle Lit-tle Star

-4 -4 +4 +4 -3 -3 +3

How I won-der what you are

+5 +5 -4 -4 +4 +4 -3

Up a-bove the world so high

+5 +5 -4 -4 +4 +4 -3

Like a dia-mond in the sky

+3 +3 +5 +5 -5 -5 +5

Twin-kle Twin-kle Lit-tle Star

-4 -4 +4 +4 -3 -3 +3

How I won-der what you are

Oh Susanna

-4 +5 -5 -6 -6 +7 -6 -5
Oh, I come from Al- a- bam- a

-4 +5 -5 -5 +5 -4 +5
with a ban-jo on my knee;

-4 +5 -5 -6 -6 +7 -6 -5
And, I'm goin' to Lou-'si-an- a

-4 +5 -5 -5 +5 +5 -4
M- y true love for to see.

-4 +5 -5 -6 -6 +7 -6 -5 -4
Well, it rained all night the day I left

+5 -5 -5 +5 -4 +5
The weath-er it was dry;

-4 +5 -5 -6 -6 +7 -6 -5 -4
And the sun's so hot I froze to death,

+5 -5 -5 +5 +5 -4
Su-san-na, don't you cry.

+6 +6 +7 +7 +7 -6 -6 -5 -4 +5
Oh, Su-san-na, oh, don't you cry for me;

-4 +5 -5 -6 -6 +7 -6 -5
'Cuz, I've come from Al - a - bam - a

-4 +5 -5 -5 +5 +5 -4
With a ban-jo on my knee.

America

-4 - 4 +5 +4 -4 +5
My coun-try 'tis of thee

-5 -5 +6 -5 +5 -4
Sweet land of li-ber-ty

+5 -4 +4 -4
Of thee I sing

-6 -6 -6 -6 +6 -5
Land where my fa-thers died

+6 +6 +6 +6 -5 +5
Land of the pil-grim's pride

-5 +6 -5 +5 -4 -5 +6 -6
From e—v—er—y moun-tain-side

+7 +6 -5 +5 -4
Le—t free-dom ring

Auld Lang Syne

+3 -4 -4 -4 -5 +5 -4 +5
Should auld ac- quain- tance be for-got,

-5 +5 -4 -4 -5 -6 +7
A-nd ne-ver brought to mind?

+7 -6 -5 -5 -4 +5 -4 +5
Should auld ac- quain- tence be for-got

-5 +5 -4 -3 -3 +3 -4
A-nd days of Auld Lang Syne?

+7 -6 -5 -5 -4 +5 -4 +5
For Au-ld La-ng Syne, my dear,

+7 -6 -5 -5 -6 +7
For Au-ld La-ng Syne.

+7 -6 -5-5 -4 +5 -4 +5
We'll take a cup o' kind-ness yet,

-5 +5 -4 -3 -3 +3 -4
Fo - r Au-ld La-ng Syne.

Happy Birthday

Played with Lower Notes

+3 +3 -3 +3 -4 -4

Happy Birthday to you

+3 +3 -3 +3 +5 -4

Happy Birthday to you

+3 +3 -6 -5 -4 +4 -3

Happy Birthday Dear [Pulmonica™]

+6 +6 -5 -4 +5 -4

Happy Birthday to you

Played with Higher Notes

-6 -6 +7 -6 +8 -7

Happy Birthday to you

-6 -6 +7 -6 -8 +8

Happy Birthday to you

-6 +6 +10 +9 +8 -7 +7

Happy Birthday Dear [Pulmonica™]

-9 -9 +9 +8 -8 +8

Happy Birthday to you



+ = Blow (exhale) +1 = blow through the #1 hole

- = Draw (inhale) -1 = draw through the #1 hole