

What's Your Level of Level of Harmonica Development?

Raw beginner: still working on single notes, breathing, understanding cross harp, and bending and articulation. Needs time with harmonica, playing long notes, big mouth embouchure, and throat-articulating. Needs to master 2 draw and 3 draw, and get started bending. Needs to get awareness of throat and breathe control. Seek the sweet spots. Needs to make harmonica sound pretty each step of the way.

Beginner: Getting single notes, chords and bends most of the time, need to totally internalize riffs and songs. Need basic ear training. Internalize Question and Answer articulation format. Needs to feel musical, Needs to start listening hard to musical qualities of advanced harmonica and begin mimicking tone. Needs relaxation and deep breathing. Good time to start slow rhythmic chugging.

Advanced beginner: getting the big tone through throat articulation, able to accompany --using riffs, and articulation with clear tone. Able to jam using the Jon Gindick Certified Safe Note Learning Platform, the Principle of Repetition, and Q and A, to using throat articulation and chords. Needs to add emotion without losing tone. Good time to start amplifying.

Beginning/Intermediate: consciously using bends, articulation, memorized riffs, and special effects. Needs to develop phrasing, vibrato, better intonation and chordal awareness. If pucker player, start tongue-blocking. Start using IV chord in 12 bar format. Can play summertime, Amazing Grace, or should get started learning. Can do a rough chug. Starting use hands fluently.

Intermediate: Starting to speak the language. Has theoretical, physical, and intuitive ability to initiate and play 12 bar blues progressions both solo and with accompaniment. Is comfortable with holes 1 through 6. The intonation is effective. Has several melodic, riff approaches to improvising, but needs more experience, ideas, confidence and feedback. Needs to perform. Usually needs to articulate more decisively.

Advanced Intermediate: Has intermediate skills, plus polish. Can generate rhythms, riffs, 12 bar blues progression on his own. Does well when it's not 12 bar. Can listen to almost any rhythmic groove and find a place for the harp in it. Is starting to mimic melodies when improvising. Is comfortable amped. If a lip blocker, can use t-b for special effects. Main problems: Needs a more developed theoretical framework in which to keep growing. (Also needs to forget theoretical framework when performing.) Needs to reconsider goals. Now that you are good on harp, what are you going to do with it?

Advanced: seamless integration of effects, tone, electronics, theory, melody-mimicking to be a decided asset to whatever song you are accompanying, and to create energetic, relevant solos through a variety of chord progressions, depending on your genre. You are using the harp do something in the world..

