



## Tuning & Tunings

If you fancy trying your hand at retuning harmonicas or already tuning with some success after making a muddle of the mouth organ, you may want to hone your skills and find out more! So why not get in touch with *Harmonicas Ireland* and book a course now!

*Harmonicas Ireland* offer specialist courses in tuning run by qualified *Hohner Service Technician*, Cathal Johnson.

### Course Requirements

Hohner's tool kits; *Harmonica Service Set* and *Harmonica Instant Workshop* have the required tools for this course, directly available to buy from *Harmonicas Ireland's* on-line harmonica shop.

Any participants taking this course can expect to experiment with tuning reeds, leading to tuning harmonicas to various simple and basic diatonic harmonica tunings such as *Paddy Richter* and *Easy Third* tunings. While progressing to more complicated diatonic, chromatic and tremolo tunings such as the popular *Powerbender* and *Diminished* tunings...

With so many possible tunings available, *Harmonicas Ireland* select a list of popular alternative tunings for chromatic, diatonic and tremolo. Diatonic tunings such as *Solo* tunings, popular alternative tunings as *Country*, *Reggae*, *Easy Third* and as *Paddy Richter*, a term (as *Jaw Flick*; playing technique) coined by Brendan Power. To chromatic *Diminished*, *Bebop*, *Power Chromatic*, covering Asian tremolo tunings, not to mention endless amazing variants!

Listed below; diatonic, chromatic, tremolo tunings and a few curious tunings thrown in for good measure. Highlighted bold words signify tunings of particular interest that stand out as popular and niche, shown for your information.

Information gleaned from Pat Missin's extensive collection of tunings and information from his website. For a lot more information on this topic and much more, check out [patmissin.com](http://patmissin.com).

## Country Tunings

### 1.2 - MAJOR SEVENTH (COUNTRY)

BLOW C E G C E G C E G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G B D F# A B D F A

A tuning favoured by many such as Andy Irvine.

## Melody Maker

### 1.3b - FEADAN TUNING (Randy Goodhew)

BLOW D F# A C E G C E G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW E G B D F# A B D F# A

In the Irish language the word “feadan” used when referring to a whistle or flute. Interesting name, interesting tunings!

## Minor Tunings

### 2.2 - WILL SCARLETT TUNING

BLOW C E A C E G C E G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW E G B D F# A B D F# A

**Will Scarlet**, credited for advancing the evolution of the harmonica by discovering the fascinating potential of adding auxiliary reeds for extra bending possibilities. This ultimately led to Rick Epping designing the XB40 for Hohner and releasing this fantastic harmonica on the market, unfortunately however they are no longer made. Although Will Scarlet was not the first to discover this phenomenon as Richard Sleigh and Brendan Power, aware of the possibilities, made prototype harmonicas with research and development. The following tunings composed by Will Scarlet make for interesting playing abilities

### 2.3 - HARMONIC MINOR

BLOW C Eb G C Eb G C Eb G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G B D F Ab B D F Ab

### 12.4b - GYPSY MINOR TUNING (Andreas Duwe)

BLOW C# Eb G C# Eb G C# Eb G C#  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G Bb D F# A Bb D F# G

### 3.2 - POWER TUNING (Brendan Power)

BLOW C E G C E G B D G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G B D F A G C E A

3.4 - P-CHROM (Brendan Power tuning for chrom - works well on diatonic soloist) (See also 12.10)

BLOW C E G G C E G G C E G G  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW D F# A B D F# A B D F# A B

3.6 - "PADDY RICHTER" TUNING (Brendan Power - blow reeds from 1.3, draw reeds from 1.1; see also 6.2)

BLOW C E A C E G C E G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G B D F A B D F A

## JOE FILISKO TUNINGS

Joe Filisko can probably considered the 'Godfather' of harmonica technicians for birthing of the movement and advancing a harmonica revival, very idea of the harmonica techs movement currently undergoing throughout the world. Famous for his tunings specifications, innovations and customised diatonic blues harps. Joe Filisko makes harmonicas for Howard Levy who plays chromatically on a diatonic blues harps, Joe sets them up to play *over-bend* techniques of playing and supplies others established harmonicas players. As an historian of blues harmonica playing Joe plays with great depth and feeling and as close to the tradition as you can get. A true harmonica player, a believer and an excellent teacher in the old style of traditional playing harmonicas called *Tongue Blocking* or *Vamping* methods of traditional mouth organ playing.

4.1 - BLUES TUNING #1 (See also 5.2)

BLOW C E G C E G C E G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G B D G B D F F A

4.2 - BLUES TUNING #2 (See also 3.5)

BLOW C E G Bb C G C E G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G B D F A B D F A

4.3 - BLUES TUNING #3 (See also 8.1b)

BLOW C E G C E G Bb E G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G B D F A C D F A

4.4 - CHORD TUNING (\*\* notes an octave lower than usual)

BLOW C E G C E G Bb \*Bb\*D\*\*\*F\*

HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G B D F A C \*D\*\*F#\*\*A\*

## SPANISH AND RELATED TUNINGS

### 7.2 - SPANISH DRAW BENDING

BLOW F A C F A C F A C F  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW G# B E G# B E G# B E G#

7.2c - AUGMENTED SPANISH TUNING WITH CHROMATIC WHOLE-TONE  
EXTENSION (16-hole-stretch-"diatonic", chromatic  
bending c/o Buzap)

BLOW E G# C E G# C E G# C E G# A# C D E F#  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16  
DRAW G B D# G B D# G B D# G A B C# D# F G

## SPIRAL TUNINGS

6.1 - BASIC SPIRAL TUNING (Mike Photis, but covered by German patent 9404910,  
granted in 1994 to Laurenz Wiskott)

BLOW C E G B D F A C E G  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D F A C E G B D F A

### 11.12 - IRISH SEMI-SPIRAL - MIXOLYDIAN VERSION

BLOW C F A C E G B D F A  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW D G B D F A C E G B

## TUNINGS FOR CHROMATIC HARMONICA

### 12.1 - STANDARD SOLO-TUNED CHROMATIC (See also 5.3)

BLOW SLIDE IN C# E# G# C# C# E# G# C# C# E# G# C#  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G C C E G C C E G C  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW SLIDE IN D# F# A# B# D# F# A# B# D# F# A# D  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D F A B D F A B D F A B

### 12.1a - IRISH TUNING

BLOW SLIDE IN B D# F# B B D# F# B B D# F# B  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G C C E G C C E G C  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW SLIDE IN C# E G# Bb C# E G# Bb C# E G# Bb  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D F A B D F A B D F A B

**Eddie Clarke:** The most outstanding musician who ever played Irish Traditional Dance Music on a chromatic harmonica was Eddie Clarke from Cavan, Ireland. RIP. Eddie played the chromatic Hohner 270. Eddie played so much while vigorously playing jigs and reels that his harmonica reeds quickly broke. Eddie pressed in the button to play in C sharp on his C or Ab on his G... By doing this he discovered rolls that matched fiddles rolls note for note and other ornamentations, decorations and cuts into his tunes, playing closer to the tradition. Some people reverse the slider to achieve this style of playing while other have them tuned and customise to C#/D or D/C# same as or similar to C#/D accordion tuning that many musical prefer.

12.1b - ALTERED CHROMATIC (Slide raises each note to next scale tone - C major in this case, but can be applied to other keys and/ or tunings)

BLOW SLIDE IN D F A D D F A D D F A D  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G C C E G C C E G C  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW SLIDE IN E G B C E G B C E G B C  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D F A B D F A B D F A B

12.2 - RICHTER CHROMATIC (Koch or Slide Harp, or old "regular tuning" 260) (See also 1.1)

BLOW SLIDE IN C# E# G# C# E# G# C# E# G# C#  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G C E G C E G C  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW SLIDE IN D# G# B# D# F# A# B# D# F# A#  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D G B D F A B D F A

12.2f - CHICAGO DOUBLE-CROSS (Randy Goodhew - 1998 modification)

BLOW SLIDE IN B Eb Gb B Eb Gb B Eb Gb B  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G C E G C E G C  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW SLIDE IN Db Gb Bb Db Gb Bb Db E Ab A  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D G B D G B D F A Bb

12.2g - NASHVILLE DOUBLE-CROSS (Randy Goodhew)

BLOW SLIDE IN B Eb Gb B Eb Gb B Eb Gb B  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G C E G C E G C  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW SLIDE IN Db Gb Bb Db Gb Bb Db F Ab Bb  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D G B D G B D F# A B

12.3 - BOOGIE TUNING (John Infante)

BLOW SLIDE IN C Eb G A C Eb G A C Eb G A  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G A C E G A C E G A  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW SLIDE IN Eb F A C Eb F A C Eb F A C  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D F G B D F G B D F G B

**12.3f - BEBOP TUNING**

BLOW SLIDE IN C# E# G# B C# E# G# B C# E# G# B

BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G Bb C E G Bb C E G Bb  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW SLIDE IN D# F# A# B# D# F# A# B# D# F# A# B#  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D F A B D F A B D F A B

### **12.5 - DIMINISHED TUNING (UK PAT# 2,259,802 by Yeadon)**

BLOW SLIDE IN D F Ab B D F Ab B D F Ab B  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C# E G Bb C# E G Bb C# E G Bb  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW SLIDE IN D# F# A C D# F# A C D# F# A C  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D F Ab B D F Ab B D F Ab B

### **12.7 - QUARTER-TONE CHROMATIC WITH 1/4TONE SLIDE (UK PAT# 2,259,802 by Yeadon)**

('+' = one quarter-tone sharp)

BLOW SLIDE IN C+ D+ E+ F#+ G#+ A#+ C+ D+ E+ F#+ G#+ A#+  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C D E F# G# A# C D E F# G# A#  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW SLIDE IN C#+ D#+ F+ G+ A+ B+ C#+ D#+ F+ G+ A+ B+  
DRAW SLIDE OUT C# D# F G A B C# D# F G A B

### **12.9a - ADAPTATION OF SUGGESTED MELODEON TUNING**

BLOW SLIDE IN Bb Db Ab Bb Db Ab Bb Db Ab Bb  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G C E G C E G C  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
DRAW SLIDE IN B Eb Gb B Eb Gb B Eb Gb B  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D F A D F A D F A D

### **12.10 - P-CHROM (Brendan Power. Removal of blow reed valves allows blues-type bending on all draw notes.) (See also 3.4)**

BLOW SLIDE IN C# E# G# G# C# E# G# G# C# E# G# G#  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G G C E G G C E G G  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW SLIDE IN D# G A# B# D# G A# B# D# G A# B#  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D F# A B D F# A B D F# A B

12.10a - VARIATION OF 12.10 (Slide raises all notes to next scale tone)

BLOW SLIDE IN D F# A A D F# A A D F# A A  
BLOW SLIDE OUT C E G G C E G G C E G G  
HOLE NUMBER 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW SLIDE IN E G B C E G B C E G B C  
DRAW SLIDE OUT D F# A B D F# A B D F# A B

## Tremolo Tunings

This is a brief selection of tunings for double-reed diatonic harmonicas (octave and tremolo harps). Harmonicas of this type often use tunings similar to those of the single reed diatonic, but there are a few that use a rather different layout. Although these harps use pairs of reeds (tuned either to a unison or an octave), here they are treated as single notes, except where different pitches are involved.

### 13.1 - TYPICAL ASIAN TREMOLO TUNING

BLOW	C	E	G	C	E	G	C	E	G	C											
HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
DRAW	D	F	A	B	D	F	A	B	D	F	A										

13.1a - NATURAL MINOR VERSION OF 13.1

BLOW	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G	C											
HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
DRAW	D	F	A <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>	D	F	A <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>	D	F	A <sub>b</sub>										

13.1a - HARMONIC MINOR VERSION OF 13.1

BLOW	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G	C											
HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
DRAW	D	F	A <sub>b</sub>	B	D	F	A <sub>b</sub>	B	D	F	A <sub>b</sub>										

### 5.1 - STANDARD 14 HOLE

BLOW	C	E	G	C	E	G	C	E	G	C	E	G	C	E
HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
DRAW	D	G	B	D	F	A	B	D	F	A	B	D	F	A

5.2 - STEVE BAKER SPECIAL (All Richter variations could be applied to this tuning.)

BLOW	C	E	G	C	E	G	C	E	G	C	E	G	C	E
HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
DRAW	D	G	B	D	G	B	D	F	A	B	D	F	A	B

Steve Baker works for Hohner as a consultant and instrumental in the creation in Hohner's Marine Band Series of the Crossover and Marine Band Deluxe.

5.3 - SOLOIST (US PATENT #863960, W.B Yates, 1907)

BLOW	C	E	G	C	C	E	G	C	C	E	G	C
HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DRAW	D	F	A	B	D	F	A	B	D	F	A	B

5.3g - VARIATION OF DIMINISHED TUNING (c/o Ed Coogan)

BLOW	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	A	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	A	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	A
HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BLOW	E <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	A	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	A	C	E <sub>b</sub>	G <sub>b</sub>	A	C

5.6 - C/F TUNING, AKA BEBOP TUNING

BLOW C E G Bb C E G Bb C E G Bb  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW D F A B D F A B D F A B

5.9 - PENTATONIC TUNING (Adapted from Japanese tremolo tuning by Juko Saito)

BLOW C D G A C D G A C D G A  
HOLE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
DRAW D E A C D E A C D E A C