

## Harp Buzz Checklist

### General Buzzes

- Check that the buzz really is coming from the harp, and not something else around you.
- Sometimes the buzz seems to come from one area of the harp, but is actually occurring in another area.
- If possible, press with your hand against different parts of the harp while playing the string, to see if you can locate the area that buzzes.
- Check that the large screw & washer that holds the forepillar onto the box at the bottom is tight.
- Especially resonant harps will tend to produce more buzzes than more muted ones, and some buzzes can occur seasonally, due to wood expansion and contraction, etc.
- If you are playing on a hard surface, try putting some carpet under the harp
- Check the screws in the feet to see if any are loose.
- In older harps an inside brace can sometimes come loose, and may need to be re-glued.
- With harps that have an electronic pickup installed, an added bit of complexity is faced. The endpin jack has an outer cover that is removable by using pliers to screw it off. That cover can become loose and buzz. Underneath that is a nut that can be adjusted to tighten the endpin jack assembly to the harp's soundbox. Check that the nut is tight. If the nut is tight but the endpin jack assembly is still loose, then you need to remove the nut and pull the jack out from the inside of the soundbox and adjust the nuts/washers that are on the inside. The jack assembly also has a screw-on cover on the inside that can be checked for tightness. Otherwise, check the wires that come from the soundboard pickup heads and make sure they are not touching anything inside the soundbox. Use tape or wire twisters to secure any wires that are touching anything that might cause a buzz.



### String Buzzes

- If it's a metal string, check that the winding isn't loose or frayed. Replace the string if it is.
- Check that the ball end at the bottom of a bass wire string is seated neatly against the string rib, and the leather or felt is against the wood, and the metal ball or washers not touching the wood anywhere.
- Check that the string knots & 'tails' at the base of the strings are at right angles to the string rib and aren't touching each other or perhaps laying flat against the string rib, thus vibrating; check all the way up the string rib, not just in the area of the buzzing string.
- Make sure the lever is firmly engaged or disengaged.
- Hold the lever firmly by the hand. Does the buzz stop when you pluck the string? Does the buzz stop when you engage the lever? It could be a loose lever, or parts of the lever.
- Are you perhaps pulling the string too hard for it's designed tension? Lighter tension harps need to be played in an appropriately lighter manner for best tone and to prevent string buzzing against the levers, etc.
- It's possible that a string will need to be changed, or perhaps a lever regulated if the above doesn't work out for you.
- If none of this works, which is highly unlikely, then either an authorized harp technician or I need to see the harp.