

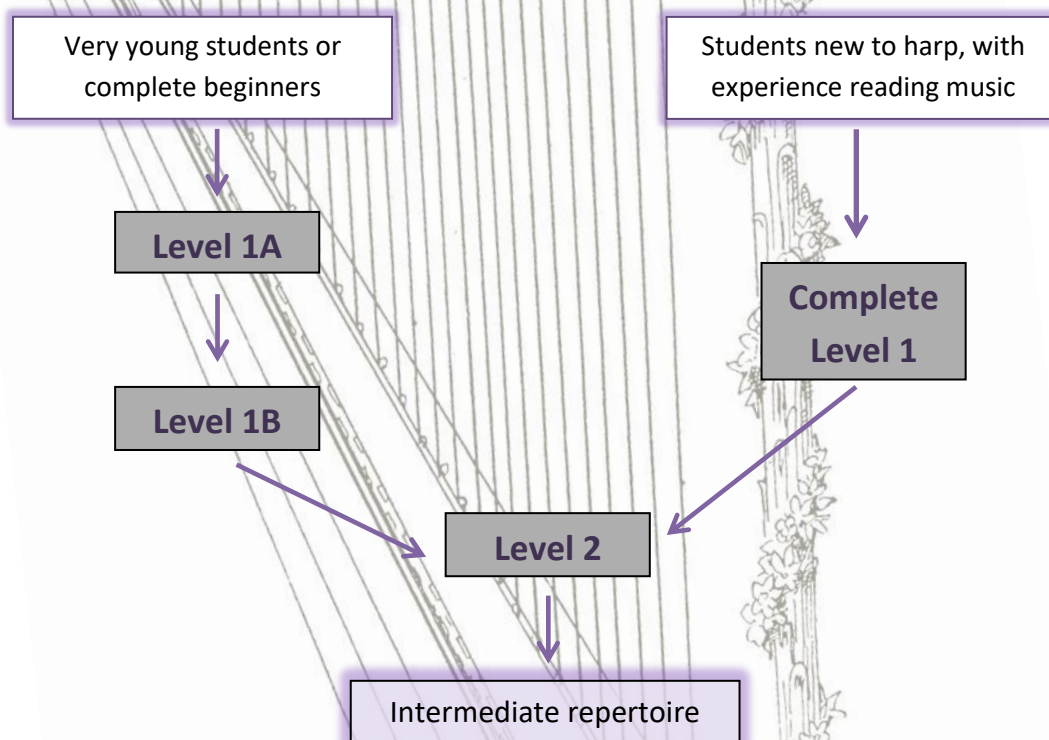
# Happy Harps

complete level 1

by Zoe Coppola

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*The Happy Harps curriculum is organized as follows:*



More information about the author can be found at her website, [www.zoecoppola.com](http://www.zoecoppola.com)

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## ***Introduction:***

Welcome to the happy world of harp playing! This curriculum is designed to be a step-by-step approach that provides satisfying repertoire as well as a solid foundation in technique and theory/note reading. The basic pedagogical method is that taught by Ruth Inglefield at the Peabody Conservatory; the student begins by using fingers one and two (thumb and pointer) in order to develop secure hand position, placing, and closing. Midway through this book, the third finger is added. In my experience, other methods such as “plunking” out notes with only finger two, or putting all four fingers on the harp from the beginning, are a recipe for frustration and hand position disaster no matter the capabilities of the student! Concepts covered in this level include replacing, dynamics, intervals, pattern recognition, sharps, 8va, gesture/raising, key signatures, time signatures and rhythms, triads, and arpeggios. Also included are opportunities for critical listening, improvisation, writing/notation, and exposure to sounds from the musical traditions of various cultures.

This curriculum also encourages the student to work toward being a self-sufficient learner, not dependent on the teacher to teach by rote or to mark up the music. There are numerous piano methods that do a wonderful job with these aspects of beginning music instruction, and I believe that the harp – if studied with a similarly well-designed method – should be considered equally viable for young students and beginners.

## ***This book is for:***

- ♪ Students new to the harp but with experience reading music on another instrument
- ♪ Older students who show great aptitude and readiness to read on the staff

## ***Notes for teachers and parents:***

This book is for use by a student and knowledgeable teacher, rather than for self-instruction. Before opening the book, the teacher should work with the student on a few basics like: how to sit at the harp, parts of the harp and their functions, up/higher versus down/lower, how to number the fingers, how to form a good hand position, how the fingers will close, etc. Therefore, it is reasonable that this book would only be opened at the second lesson. If this is the case, I would suggest teaching the “hop down” exercise by rote during a first lesson, in order to get the student playing. When adding the third finger, it’s important to remind the student that finger three places and closes just as finger two does, with no funny angles or “curling in” necessary.

Theory information listed on the section pages may be learned before looking at the first exercise/piece of each section, or as needed while working through the material. Students very experienced with music notation may not need to review the concepts listed in italics on each section page. New information for the section will be highlighted in purple. Additional materials such as a staff paper notebook, a theory workbook, or flash cards may be beneficial. Each section contains a lot of information, and all skills and knowledge within a section are necessary for success during the next section. Therefore each section may take a few weeks to complete. One or more exercise and one or more piece may be assigned each week.

The student will need to have a harp with levers as we will be working with sharps. (If a partially-levered harp is being used, the teacher can make modifications to utilize the levers available.) I recommend tuning it in C major, as flats will only be introduced in Level 2. A 26-string harp (like a harpsicle) is sufficient for this level, as no piece will call for strings outside that range. When the student is ready to learn to tune his/her own harp, make sure to include ear training in this practice.

*Happy harping!*

*Zoe Coppola*





# Section 1



## Exercises

Hop Down  
Together

## Pieces

The Fountain

## Theory

C and F strings  
Stem direction  
Finger numbers  
Glissando

Review if you don't know:

Quarter, half, and whole notes and rests

The treble staff

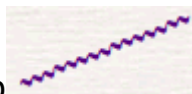
Measures, bar lines, and time signature

On all harps (not just yours), **C strings are red** and **F strings are blue** or black.  
How many C strings are on your harp? How many F strings?

Some *stems* go up and some go down. In *The Fountain*, "up stems" tell you to play that note with your right hand. Play notes with "down stems" with your left hand.

For harp, we number our fingers the same way pianists do, except that we never use finger 5. Right now you only need to use finger 1 (thumb) and finger 2 (pointer).

A *glissando* can go up



or down!

