



Autoharp - Rasa Harp

Convert an Autoharp into a Healing Music Machine

1. **Here is an video introduction and example** of the instrument, as presented by Laraaji: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lzt44XYoyJY>
2. **Get an autoharp.** You can buy one new, or save some money and find a used one.
 - a. **If you get a new one**, you might want to get one with 36 strings so that you can follow the tuning included here. But any many-stringed instrument could be modified with this same principle.
 - b. **If you get a used one**, It's great if the chord bars are broken or not working because you'll get "broken autoharp pricing" but you'll be removing the broken part anyway. It is important that the tuning pegs are stable and working properly and hold a tune.
 - c. **You will need to buy a tuning wrench** (maybe they call it a "key"). If you don't know about tuning a guitar or something similar, you might want to ask the person at the music store to look at the tuning instructions and give you some advice. Or get a musician friend to help you.
 - d. **You will need a chromatic tuner** that can tell you what note is sounding no matter what note is playing. You can get a smart phone app, or a physical one like this one on amazon.com: <http://www.amazon.com/Korg-CA1-Chromatic-Tuner/dp/B002PMHAVS>

3. **Remove the mechanism from the autoharp.**
 - a. **You will need a screwdriver**, and it usually just involves unscrewing 4 screws and taking the mechanism off.
 - b. You can see what it looks like on the following link (Only read this one page. Instructions on other pages are unrelated to what we are doing) <http://www.alanhorvath.com/autoconvert2.php>. The goal is to get to the "naked as a newborn" stage as he describes it, but
 - c. **It is important that you leave on the black and white strip that looks like a piano keyboard.** That strip will help if you decide to experiment with your own tunings since they show what note each string was designed to be tuned to. If you tune to a note much higher the string will break, too much lower and it will be too loose.
4. **Tune the strings.** See the tuning chart that follows. Tuning is pretty straightforward – starting with the top (shortest) string, tune as indicated for each string down the line until you get the bottom, 36th string.
 - a. **If you don't know how to tune a string**, watch the video on this page for instructions about tuning a similar instrument:
http://www.harokit.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=CTGY&Store_Code=MK&Category_Code=revtune.
 - b. **For Musicians:** The basic idea of the open tuning is to tune the strings so that they sound harmonious together no matter what you do. The easy way to do this is to tune the entire autoharp to play one simple chord. To accomplish this you can tune a bunch of strings in a row to the same note, with each note corresponding to a note in a specific chord. For example, you might tune the first three or four strings to a G note, and then the next 2-5 strings to an E, and the next few to a C, the next few to the lower G, etc. Having the same note repeating right next to itself is what gives the instrument that cool echo-y sound. If you don't understand this paragraph, you don't need to unless you want to experiment with your own tunings.
 - c. **Other Tunings:** If after creating your healing zither you would like more information about tunings, please contact me. **Musicians** will find alternative tuning **ideas** that can be modified for the autoharp-zither at this link:
http://www.harokit.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=CTGY&Store_Code=MK&Category_Code=revtune.
5. **Now you're done! And ready to play.**

Open Tuning: F Minor with Scale at Top

This is the tuning I was shown when I first learned about the zither from Jill Mellick (who learned about it from Laraji). I consider it the “standard” tuning pattern which includes a melodic scale at the top few strings, and an echoing chord repeated underneath. If you get this far and would like a different tuning, let me know.

1= Highest/Shortest String

36 = Lowest/Longest String

1	C	19	F
2	Bb	20	F
3	G#	21	C
4	G	22	C
5	F	23	C
6	F	24	C
7	F	25	C
8	F	26	G#
9	C	27	G#
10	C	28	F
11	C	29	F
12	C	30	F
13	C	31	C
14	G#	32	C
15	G#	33	G#
16	G#	34	G#
17	G#	35	F
18	F	36	F