

Reed shape

Andrew Zajac 2015/08/27

Properly shaped reeds have a tremendous impact on how well your harp will play. With some practice, you can adjust the shape of a reed any way you like.

Use your ears and mouth to determine if the reed is properly shaped. Plink the reed and listen to the volume, tone and sustain. Put the reed plate to your lips and play the reed. How does it sound? How does the note feel in your oral cavity?

Use your eyes to find clues about how to change the shape of the reed. Look at the reed from the side.



(Shade the light from above to make the light coming from under the reed plate easier to see.)

Look through the slot and watch the light disappear as you push the reed through the slot. The ideal situation is that the light disappears all at once - that means the whole length of the reed passes through the slot at the same time.

There are only two or three different techniques to change the shape of a reed. But there are many variations on the theme.

ADVICE:

- Always work from the base of the reed to the tip.
- Plink ten times after every single change.

Here are the basic techniques: (Mix and match, do the inverse or reverse as needed. This is to display the ideas. There is no recipe that works every time!)

Legend

