



# Chromatic for Diatonic Players

## Multiple Embouchure - Part 2: Oblique Motion

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Last time we did some basic exercises in switching between single notes on the left and right sides of the tongue. We did it without moving the embouchure. Even with the lips and tongue planted in one spot, a fair variety of melodic material was possible.

We can add complexity in two ways:

- We can anchor one side of the mouth in a single location, while the other traverses two or more neighboring holes by widening or narrowing both the total embouchure spread and the split between the left and right holes.
- We can keep the split locked in size and move it around the harp.

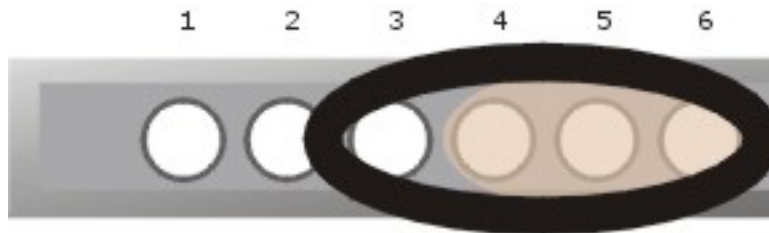
Once we master these two techniques, we can combine them and have a moving block that changes in size.

### Oblique Motion

Let's start with oblique motion – leaving one side anchored and moving the other.

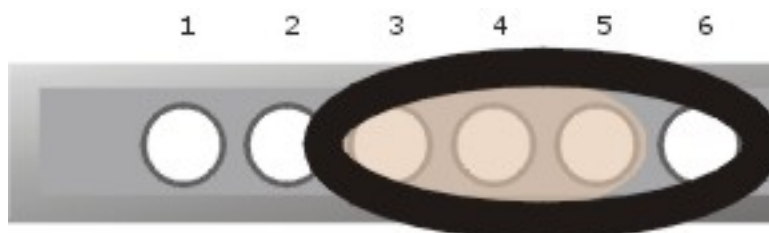
#### Anchored Left Side

Start by covering four holes with your mouth and three with your tongue, leaving the left side open.

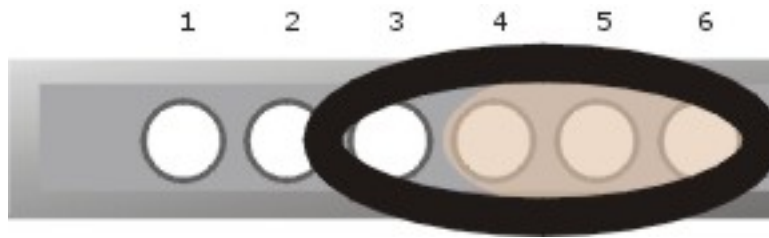


Here's a simple exercise that alternates notes on both sides of this block.

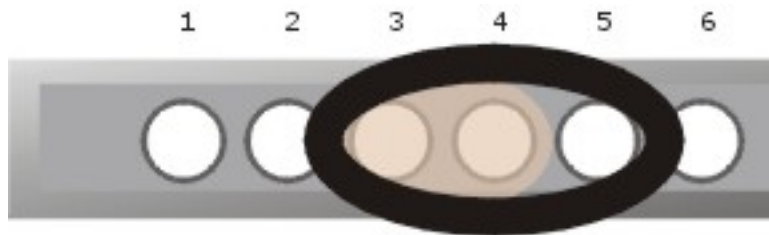
From here, we can go the note on the right side.



Now, go back to the left:



Now comes the tricky part. Your next move is back to the right side. But when you open the hole it will be one hole to the left. Instead of opening on Hole 7, it will open on Hole 6.



You can play this as all blow notes (Click here to listen <11-1.mp3> - Visit [www.harmonicassessions.com](http://www.harmonicassessions.com) to hear this and the following MP3 examples):

L                      R                      L                      R

↑                      ↑                      ↑                      ↑

3                      6                      3                      6

Or you can play it all as draw notes (click here to listen<11-2.mp3>):

L                      R                      L                      R

↓                      ↓                      ↓                      ↓

3                      6                      3                      6

Work on these two exercises until they come easily.

Now let's add a breath change on the right side as it moves (Click here to listen <11-3.mp3>):

L                      R                      L                      R

↑                      ↑                      ↑                      ↓

3                      6                      3                      5

Now let's do the same thing, only with a draw note anchored on the left side (click here to listen <11-4.mp3>):

If you've gotten comfortable with these, let's play a more extended melody that uses what we've learned so far. Remember, your left side is always anchored in Hole 3, though sometimes it plays a blow note and sometimes a draw note.

To hear it played twice, click here <11-5.mp3>:

### Anchored Right Side

Now let's anchor the right side and let the left side move.

Simple movement in blow notes (click here to listen <11-6.mp3>):

Simple movement in draw notes (click here to listen <11-7.mp3>):

Now let's add a breath change to the hole movement on the left side.

Blow version (click here to listen <11-8.mp3>):

Draw version (click here to listen <11-9.mp3>):

### Handing Off the Baton

So far we've played at least two notes on the anchor side, and scale-wise passages on the free side. Why not connect them to get an unbroken scale? To do this we need to determine a point in the scale to cross over between left-right alternation and just plain local motion. For now, the principle is simple: anything within one hole of the anchor should be played on the anchor side. Anything farther away gets played on the moving side.

Here's the crossover point with a left anchor (click here to listen <11-10.mp3>):

This allows us to play a complete scale alternating with the anchor note. The following exercise also stretches the embouchure to an octave (click here to listen <11-11.mp3>):

Here's the crossover point for a right anchor (click here to listen <11-12.mp3>):

Here it is used to play a complete scale alternating with the right side anchor note (click here to listen <11-13.mp3>):

### Anchor Point Arpeggios

Arpeggios are often played by alternating the notes of the chord with an anchor note. In Mozart's time it was used in the left hand as a bass line known as the Alberti bass. It can also be heard in fiddle tunes. The anchored arpeggio involves a crossover that is a little different from the one in the scale exercise. There will usually be two notes on the anchor side. Here are a couple of examples.

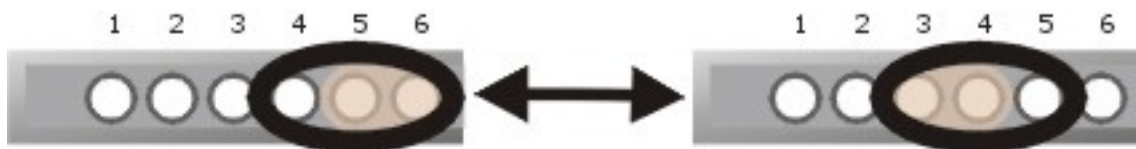
Left side anchor, two notes on anchor side (click here to listen <11-14.mp3>):

Right side anchor, two notes on anchor side (click here to listen <11-15.mp3>):

Two musical staves illustrating fingerings for right and left sides. The first staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: R (6), L (7), R (5), L (7), R (6), L (7), R (5), L (6), L (7), R (8), L (6), R (8). The second staff shows a sequence of notes with fingerings: R (7), L (8), R (6), L (8), R (8), L (9), R (7), L (9), R (9), L (10), R (7), L (10).

### The Direct Hand-off

So far, when we've switched between right and left sides, there has always been a total stretch of at least three holes. But sometimes you need to switch sides between two notes that are in adjacent holes:



Why would you need to do this when those two notes could be played all on one side? Usually it's because there's a leap coming up.

For instance, moving up, then leaping down (Click here to listen <11-16.mp3>):

Musical staff showing fingerings for a sequence of notes: L (5), R (6), L (7), L (5), R (6), L (7), L (5), R (6), L (7), L (5), R (6), L (7), L (5).

If you're going to switch for a smooth, clean leap, you need to be on the right side for the top note. If you repeat the move, you need to be on the left side for the bottom note. In between, you need to do a direct hand-off from left to right before you reach the top note.



L R L R L R L R

6 6 7 8 6 6 7 8 6 6 7 8 6 6 7 8

L R L R L R L R

6 7 7 8 6 7 7 8 6 7 7 8 6 7 7 8

L R L R L R L R

7 7 8 9 7 7 8 9 7 7 8 9 7 7 8 9

L R L R L R L R

7 8 9 10 7 8 9 10 7 8 9 10 7 8 9 10

L R L R L R L R

8 9 9 10 8 9 9 10 8 9 9 10 8 9 9 10

L R L R L R L R

9 9 10 11 9 9 10 11 9 9 10 11 9 9 10 11

Walking down, leaping up (Click here to listen <11-19.mp3>):

The musical score consists of six systems, each with a treble clef staff and a line of fret numbers with arrows. Above the notes are 'R' and 'L' labels with lines indicating which hand plays each note.

- System 1:** Notes on frets 7, 6, 5, 5, 7, 6, 5, 5, 7, 6, 5, 5, 7, 6, 5, 5. Fret numbers: 7 6 5 5 7 6 5 5 7 6 5 5 7 6 5 5.
- System 2:** Notes on frets 7, 6, 6, 5, 7, 6, 6, 5, 7, 6, 6, 5, 7, 6, 6, 5. Fret numbers: 7 6 6 5 7 6 6 5 7 6 6 5 7 6 6 5.
- System 3:** Notes on frets 8, 7, 6, 6, 8, 7, 6, 6, 8, 7, 6, 6, 8, 7, 6, 6. Fret numbers: 8 7 6 6 8 7 6 6 8 7 6 6 8 7 6 6.
- System 4:** Notes on frets 8, 7, 7, 6, 8, 7, 7, 6, 8, 7, 7, 6, 8, 7, 7, 6. Fret numbers: 8 7 7 6 8 7 7 6 8 7 7 6 8 7 7 6.
- System 5:** Notes on frets 9, 8, 7, 7, 9, 8, 7, 7, 9, 8, 7, 7, 9, 8, 7, 7. Fret numbers: 9 8 7 7 9 8 7 7 9 8 7 7 9 8 7 7.
- System 6:** Notes on frets 10, 9, 8, 7, 10, 9, 8, 7, 10, 9, 8, 7, 10, 9, 8, 7. Fret numbers: 10 9 8 7 10 9 8 7 10 9 8 7 10 9 8 7.

Two staves of musical notation. The first staff has fingerings: 10, 9, 9, 8, 10, 9, 9, 8, 10, 9, 9, 8, 10, 9, 9, 8. The second staff has fingerings: 11, 10, 9, 9, 11, 10, 9, 9, 11, 10, 9, 9, 11, 10, 9, 9.

### Using the Techniques

The following is a tune called the “Handoff Reel.” I wrote it to include all the techniques in this article. Normally a Scottish reel is played much faster than this recording, but the tempo here will give you a chance to hear what’s going on in the tune (Click [here](#) to listen <handoff\_reel.mp3>).

A multi-measure rest for 16 measures with fingerings: 1, 3, 1, 4, 1, 3, 1, 1, 3, 1, 1, 3, 2, 1, 1, 3, 1, 4, 1, 3, 3, 4.

First system of the Handoff Reel with two endings. The first ending has fingerings: 5, 3, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1. The second ending has fingerings: 5, 3, 3, 2, 1, 1, 2, 3.

Second system of the Handoff Reel with two endings. The first ending has fingerings: 5, 6, 5, 3, 5, 2, 5, 4, 5, 5, 6, 5, 4, 3, 3. The second ending has fingerings: 5, 6, 5, 3, 5, 2, 5.

Third system of the Handoff Reel with two endings. The first ending has fingerings: 4, 5, 5, 4, 5, 7, 6, 5. The second ending has fingerings: 5, 6, 5, 3, 5, 6, 7, 6, 6, 5, 4, 5, 3, 3, 2, 1.

## Next Time

This time we've worked with anchor points. Next time we'll work with a fixed embouchure spread and move it around on the harp.

## Notation Key

Please visit <http://www.harmonicassessions.com/feb05/ChromaticTab.pdf> for a notation key.