

More Q&As from the AHC team

When dusting the harp do you brush all the way down the string?

You can dust the whole harp with a clean paint brush, but the strings do not usually see the same type of build up as the body. If you are seeing residue collect on the strings it may be an indication that it is time for a string replacement.

Will this be the same dusting techniques for Camac Ulysse?

This dusting technique can be applied to all harp models.

Should strings themselves be wiped down with damp cloth to remove finger oil?

The best way to avoid excess oil on the harp strings is to wash and dry your hands prior to playing. If you are finding a lot of buildup, wiping the strings with a dry or slightly damp cloth can help with cleaning but it may also be an indicator that the string needs to be replaced.

How do you sanitize a harp that is taken into medical environments for therapy?

Dusty Strings Harps has written some great material on sanitizing your harp. I definitely recommend checking out their article [HERE](#).

When using chemicals to clean or sanitize your harp make sure to test on an inconspicuous part of the harp first. Using any type of product can cause visual wear to the finish.

What was the name of the pens you used for scratches? And do you know where to get it?

The touch up pens featured in the video are made by Minwax and Dykem. You can find them at most stores that carry paint or wood supplies. Other brands are also available. Just remember to test them on the bottom of your harp before using them on a more visible area.

Could you please share again the company that makes custom harp covers?

The company we most frequently recommend is [Four Seasons Harp Covers](#).

How do you keep the anchor piece in the knot? Mine always falls out.

If you have trouble keeping the string anchor in place while putting a new string on your harp, try using a small piece of scotch tape. This will keep the anchor from falling until the knot pulls tight and can be easily removed once the string is in place.

You can also try using the [String Buttons from Dusty Strings](#). These are a great alternative for anyone who has difficulty tying string knots.

What do you think of the [D.S. buttons](#) for anchors on stringing?

The Dusty Strings buttons are great! They are a great tool if you have difficult tying knots in your harp strings. And they sometimes use less string than the traditional knot too!

Recently I traveled for 5 days so I put the cover on and pedals up. One of the high strings broke while I was gone. A Salvi Daphne from the Atlanta Harp Center. First break since I bought it 3.5 years ago. Would it have been useful to loosen them during my time away.

For such a short amount of time away, I do not believe loosening the strings would have prevented this break from occurring. In fact, it may have increased the possibility of more strings breaking when pulling them all back up to tension upon your return! Many factors can cause a string to break including age and weather changes.

As Ashley mentioned in the video, string breakage is completely normal, and all strings have an end-of-life range. For a Salvi Daphne pedal harp, only one break in over three years is fantastic! It may actually be time to think about a full string replacement for your gut and possibly nylon strings soon. The longer you go between replacing the strings, the higher chance of string breakage to occur more frequently.

Can you please comment on the best placement of your harp in a room at home? Can it be on an outside wall? What about windows? Humidity?

The best place for your harp is in a low traffic location with consistent temperature and humidity. Avoid placing it below/next to any air vents or by a window with direct sunlight. We recommend investing in a hygrometer to measure the humidity level as it can change depending on the day and season. The ideal humidity range is 40-60%.

Does keeping the dust cover on your harp hold humidity in and cause strings to break?

Any type of cover over your harp is going to have some type of insulating effect. In general, we recommend keeping your harp uncovered in a low traffic area. Not only does this allow you to have a better idea of the harp's actual environment, but it will be easier to maintain your harp with more frequent tuning. If you do store your harp with the cover on, the best way to make sure it is safe is to feel the harp. If you reach in and notice a substantial difference in temperature or humidity, you probably want to keep it uncovered.

We have not noticed a substantial difference in string breakage between covered and uncovered harps. Other factors such as the frequency of playing, changing seasons, and age all have much more impact on when a string will break.

I have to go two winters without a humidifier. Can the harp be reacclimated when in low humidity during winters?

Yes and no. A short time at a lower humidity level will probably not cause any lasting damage to your harp, but a longer period of time can cause small cracks in the wood. Some of these cracks may close over time once the harp is in a proper humidity level, but it is possible for structural damage to occur. The extended lower humidity can also cause increased string breakage.

For a low humidity environment without access to a humidifier, there are some options to protect your harp. Products such as a Dampit or Boveda humidity control packs are just a couple of items created to help protect wooden instruments from the affects of a dry environment. Always approach new products and environments with caution and keep a close eye on your harp to watch for signs of possible damage.

How do we find out when a professional regulator is coming to our town?

Harp technicians create their own schedule so the best way to know when to expect them is to contact them directly. They will let you know where and when they will be traveling and can add you to their own personal contact lists. You can also reach out to your local Harp Society chapter or harp store. Just remember that appointment times fill up quickly so don't wait!

I have an old Lyon & Healy Troubadour. The levers are very different from those you showed. Any experience?

Some harp companies have changed the style of lever they use throughout the years. For specific questions regarding older style levers, email info@atlantaharpcenter.com with an image of your harp and levers and we can give further recommendations on maintenance.