



Medieval Instrument: Harp

By: XXXX

What does it look like?

b





What
does it
sound
like?

**Follow this link to
listen to the harp**



<https://www.music.iastate.edu/antiqua/files/instrument/files/harp2.mp3>

Description & Background:

The harp is an ancient stringed instrument that was commonly used in the Middle Ages and continues to be seen today in different forms. Although the number of strings on the instrument varied throughout the era, the strings were commonly made up of twisted animal gut, horse hair, or even silk during the Middle Ages. These strings were then attached to either wooden pegs or metal pins, which were used for tuning the instrument. The instrument was played by the plucking of the strings. It is known that due to a lack of a notation system, many performers relied on memory and improvisation when playing the instrument. The harp also held much significance and importance in pre-Christian cultures.



Historical References:

01

King David



The harp was the instrument of King David, who was the biblical King of Israel.

02

Supernatural Powers

The harp was very popular in legend and folklore. It was said that the harp held supernatural powers that could potentially "*destroy the feynde's myght*".





**A PICTURE
OF TWO
ANGELS
WITH HARPS**

My Observation:



Prior to researching about the harp I believed that I had known quite a lot about the instrument, its background, and how it was played. From my research I have discovered that I had known much less than I had anticipated. I was very interested and intrigued in learning about how the harp evolved over the centuries from its beginnings in Egypt to its movement toward Europe during the Middle Ages. Although I had known and understood that the harp had evolved throughout the years, I was somehow oblivious to the fact that it was used in many different cultures and places around the world. For example, the harp that I had been aware of and knew most about was the Ancient Greek harp that I had learned about in my World History class and discovered in movies such as the Disney movie *Hercules*. Learning about the medieval harp, how it was constructed, and its historical background gave me a broader interpretation and understanding of the instrument's use in different areas of the world. One of the main reasons I chose to research the harp, however, was due to peaceful and soothing sounds of the instrument. In general, I personally believe that the harp is pleasing to the ear's. With its has gentle, yet very clear sound characteristics, listening to the harp created a very peaceful atmosphere and helped me to concentrate when I was doing my research on the instrument.



Sources

<https://www.music.iastate.edu/antiqua/instrument/harp>

<https://www.ardival.com/index.asp?pageid=200765>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F10CR9dYtI0>



<https://slidesgo.com/theme/music-composition-workshop>