

GLISSANDO

Reach right hand

Reach left hand

Glissandi may be slow, or fast. But not too slow!

Not enough notes for a glissando. Not enough notes to fill 2 beats.

The image shows a musical staff with two systems. The first system shows a right-hand glissando from a middle register to a higher register, and a left-hand glissando from a lower register to a higher register. The second system shows similar glissandi. The left-hand glissandi are labeled with '8va' and '8vb' to indicate their range across the harp.

Right hand glissandi have a limited reach. The exact range depends on the harp, and how long the harpist's arms are.

The left hand can play glissandi across the entire harp.

Glissando with nail

The image shows a musical staff with a sharp upward glissando in the right hand, labeled 'gliss.'. A dashed line below the staff indicates the range of the glissando.

Glissando in thirds

Also, in thirds or chords: the reach of the right hand is much smaller than the left hand.

The image shows a musical staff with two parallel lines representing a third interval, with a 'gliss.' label and a dashed line below indicating the range.

Unless instructed otherwise, harpists will gliss in the key signature of the piece.

The image shows a musical staff with a glissando in a key signature of two flats (B-flat major). The notes are marked with flats.

The image shows a musical staff with a glissando and a scale or sequence of notes notated underneath it. A dashed line below the staff indicates the range of the glissando.

Another scale or sequence can be notated under the glissando.

The image shows a musical staff with a glissando and a scale or sequence of notes notated underneath it. A dashed line below the staff indicates the range of the glissando.

Muffled glissando

Two hands are needed! Muffling cannot exceed the handspan.

The image shows a musical staff with a glissando and a muffled note below it, indicated by a diamond symbol. A dashed line below the staff indicates the range of the glissando.

The image shows two musical staves. The first staff is labeled 'Rhythms' and shows a sequence of notes with arrows above indicating finger movements. The second staff is labeled 'Rhythms with nails' and shows a similar sequence with arrows above indicating finger movements.

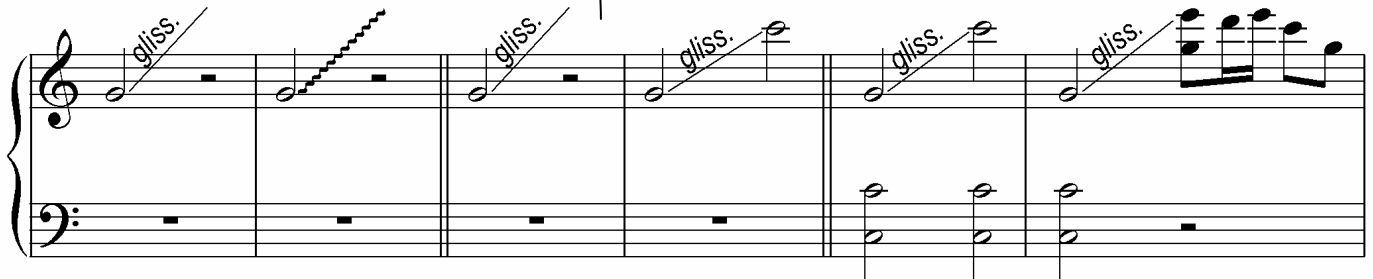
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This glissando has no specific top note. We will slide until 'somewhere in the high register'

There are two different correct ways of notating a glissando:

Harpists can end a glissando with the same hand as the one sliding. For clear and exact endings, it is easier to play the last note(s) with the other hand.

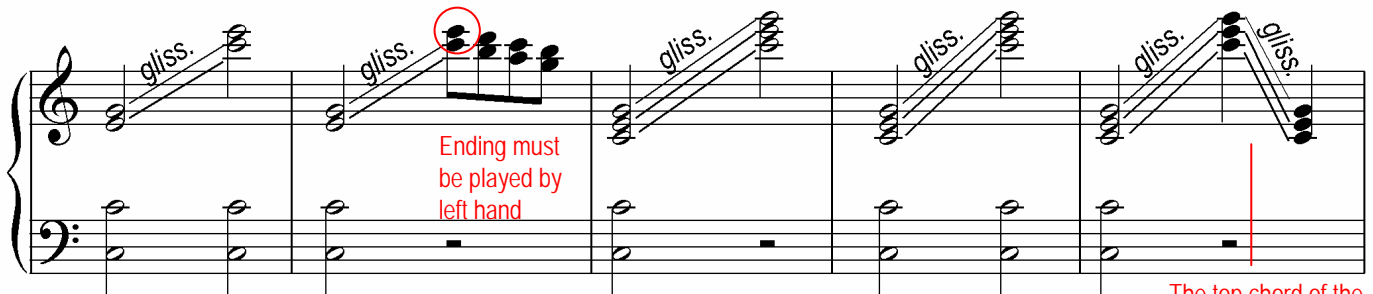
If a glissando is immediately followed by other notes, we prefer to end the glissando with the other hand. A second voice or bass note is not possible!



It is convenient to end a glissando in thirds with the other hand, but it is not impossible to keep it in 1 hand.

It is convenient to end a **chord glissando** with the other hand. It is possible to play everything in one hand but we have to 'jump' so there will be a little gap.

Ending a glissando with one hand and playing a second voice with the other hand needs perfect focus, so it is not possible to look at the score or the director.



The top chord of the glissando must be placed again so it will be played by the other hand. Therefore a bass note is not possible

Sliding in octaves is possible, but it will not sound twice as loud because the low glissando will muffle the high one. (Check the audio fragment on the video.)

To create fortissimo glissandi it is better to slide over a bigger range.

