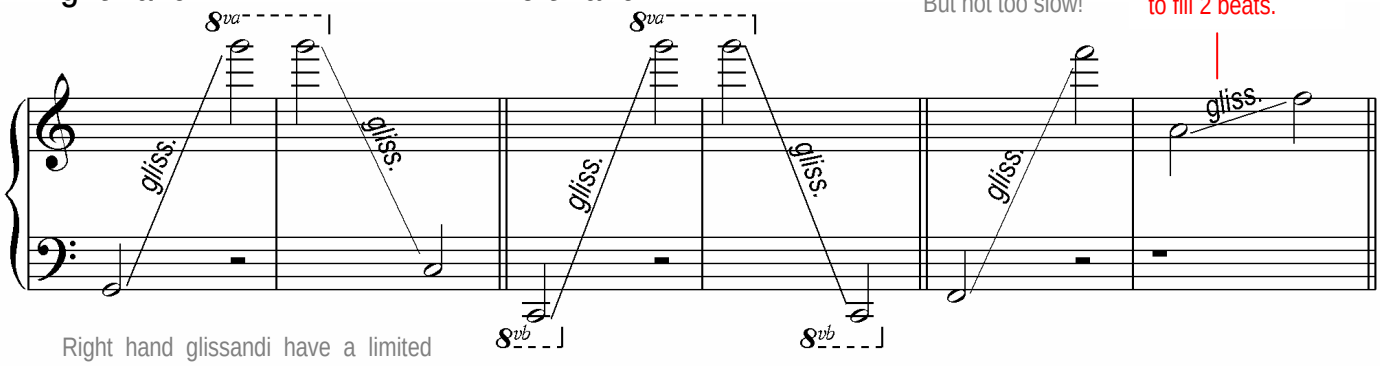
GLISSANDO

Reach
right hand

Reach
left hand

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

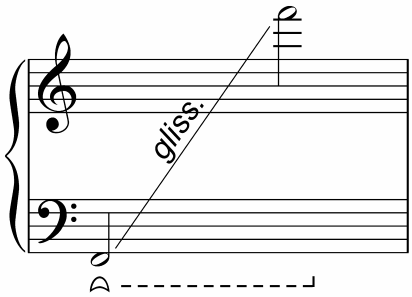
Not enough notes
for a glissando.
Not enough notes
to fill 2 beats.



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

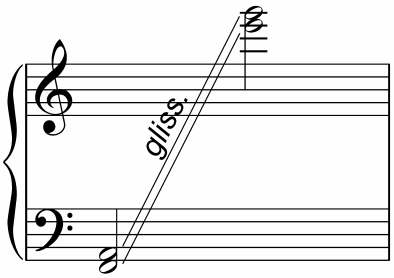
The left hand can play glissandi across the entire harp.

Glissando
with nail



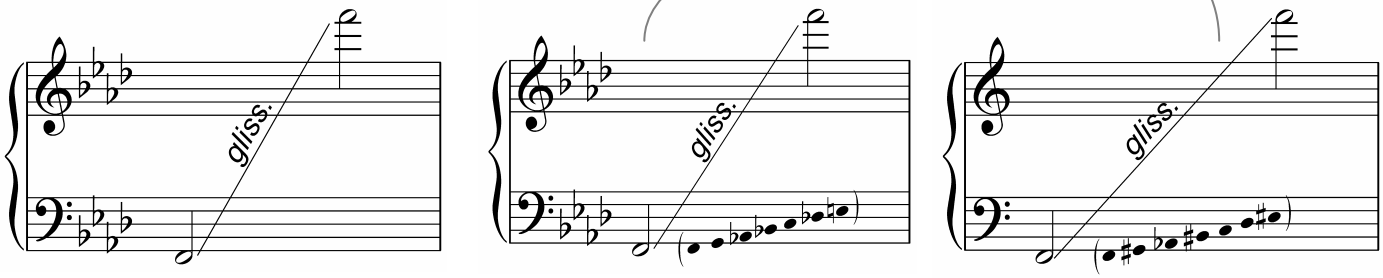
Glissando
in thirds

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



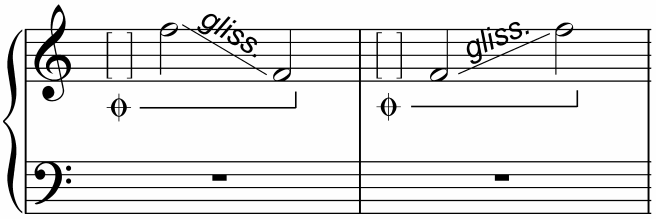
Unless instructed otherwise, harpists will gliss in the key signature of the piece.

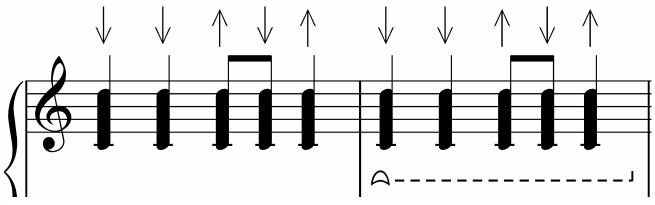
Another scale or sequence can be notated under the glissando.



Muffled glissando

Two hands are needed!
Muffling cannot exceed
the handspan.





Rhythms

Rhythms with nails

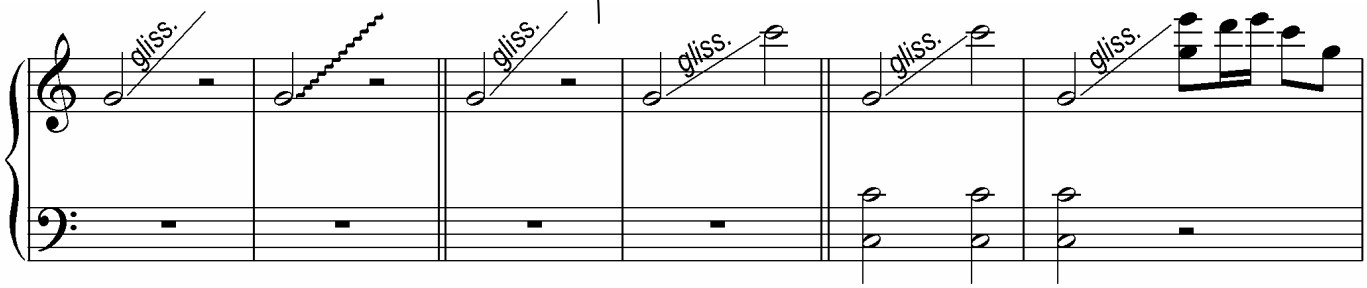
GLISSANDO

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.

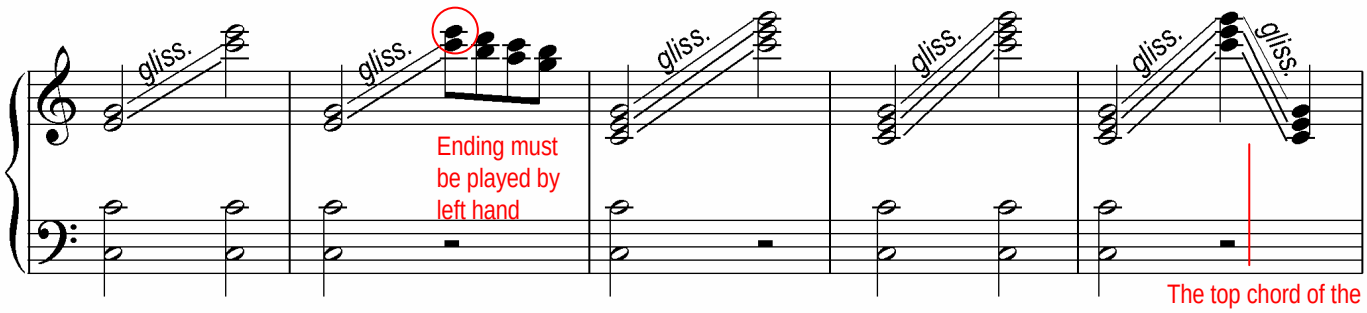
If a glissando is immediately followed by other notes, we prefer to end the glissando with the other hand. A second voice or bass note is not possible!



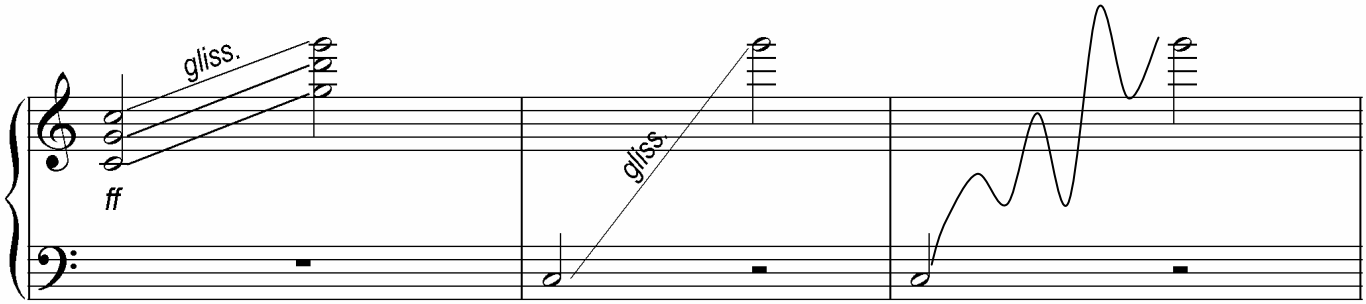
It is convenient to end a **glissando in thirds** with the other hand, but it is not impossible to keep it in 1 hand.

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.