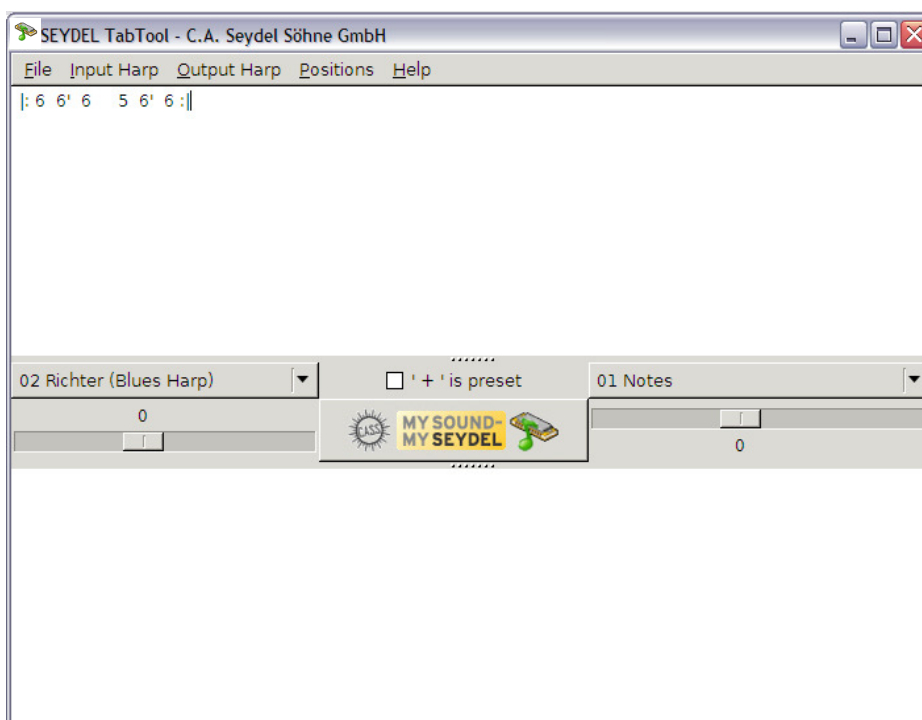




SEYDEL-TabTool - Harmonica notation editor

Manual for V1.0



presented by

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www.SEYDEL1847.com



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Introduction

This manual describes the freeware programm SEYDEL-TabTool. SEYDEL-TabTool is a versatile tool for transforming and adapting harmonica-specific tabulatures – named “tabs” in the following. The manual in your hands describes almost the full range of functionality. Many functions can be used if you know about the basic features. To fit all demands this manual is separated into basic, medium and advanced level.

SEYDEL-TabTool is provided as a freeware software by the C.A. SEYDEL Söhne GmbH the oldest harmonica maker still in production, located in Klingenthal, Germany since 1847.

All changes following after writing this manual can be found on the SEYDEL homepage: www.SEYDEL1847.com (Search string: “SEYDEL-TabTool”).

System requirements: Windows XP/Vista 32-bit

Pro and Contra Tabs

Tabs are the typical syntax for writing down all kind of melodies in a manner suited for playing harmonica by naming the number of the hole and the direction of the air-flow while playing a note on the instrument instead of using “real” sheet music notation. For some players tabs are essential for making music others do not like and use them at all. Whatever is your point of view tabs provide a very good aid for starting on the harmonica and are the most easiest and usual way to share melodies (through the www).

We are sure about the fact, that many of the alternative tunings, like the circular tuning, diminished- or augmented-tuned harmonicas would be much more commonly used by players if tabs for these would be available. To fill this “missing link” we designed the SEYDEL-TabTool. With the program you can transform all kind of tabs written for the standard Richter tuning into tabs for any kind of alternative tuned harmonicas. But you can profit from using the SEYDEL-TabTools even if you are not interested in altered tunings at all.

Basic level

What all of you need to know about the SEYDEL-TabTool.

The user interface

If you start the SEYDEL-TabTool you see a large white input panel, a grey control panel in the middle and a white output panel at the bottom. The input panel is used for typing in notes or tabs, with the control panel you decide what SEYDEL-TabTool should do with your input and the result is given in the lower output panel.

The input panel

Here you can input your melody. SEYDEL-TabTool accepts different kinds of tabs and notes:

1. +4 -4 +5 -5 +6 +6
2. 2 +4 4 5
3. 2 3' +4 4 4'
4. 2 3bb -3b +4 4 4b
5. +5 +6< -7* +5
6. F4 G4 A4 Bb4 C5 C#5
7. -3 -4 and here with additional text: +6 +6 !

Example 1 means „hole four blow“, „hole four draw“, „Five blow“, and so on „+“ is the indicator for blowing, „-“ indicates drawing a note.

In **Example 2** there are some „+“ or „-“ missing. If you start SEYDEL-TabTool it interprets numbers without any signs to be draw-notes, you can easily swap this behaviour by switching on the „+ as default“-option. More about this later.

In **Example 3** the bending notes are indicated with apostrophes. SEYDEL-TabTool interprets one single apostroph as a note bended for a semi-tone, two apostrophs as a double-bended note (one full tone) and so on. It is also possible to use “b”, “bb” or “bbb” for this purpose. A small „o” is the character for indicating overblows (overblows *or* overdraws). You must be sure

for which kind of harmonica you create your tabs. E. g. the „-8b“ is not playable on a Richter-tuned harmonica but you can play this note on a half-valved variant of the same harmonica! The situation is vice-versa for the overdraw in “-8o”. SEYDEL-TabTool can handle both, but the tabs and the harmonica used for creating/playing the tabs must fit to each other. At SEYDEL's it is possible to equip any Blues harmonica model with valves for a small surcharge.

Example 5 shows the tabs used for chromatic harmonicas. The „<“ or the “#” and the „*“ indicate the slide-in situation. SEYDEL-TabTool can deal with tabs for any tuning variant of the chromatic harmonica.

Example 6 shows how SEYDEL-TabTool reads note names: A large letter for the note, a “b” or a “#” for the semitones below or above the given note and a number for the octave the note is in. If these international note-names might confuse you, just remember that a standard C-harmonica starts with the C4 in blow 1 and the +4 is the C5.

Example 7 shows that you can mix tabs and text with the SEYDEL-TabTools. SEYDEL-TabTool tries to differ between both and only deals with the tabs/notes if it translates them without effecting the texts. Therefore it is possible to display texts and tabs at the same time. Please do not use any number in your texts otherwise it will happen that the program mis-interprets this part of the text (e. g. chord names like C7 would be translated though they are not part of the tabs!).

You can directly type your tabs into the upper panel, but also use the clipboard to paste its content by using the right button of your mouse. You also can import simple text-file containing the tabs of a melody by using the “File→Load tabs” function.

The control panel

After you wrote your melody into the input-panel you have to tell SEYDEL-TabTool, for which type of harmonica they were written. You also have to name the type of harmonica (or key) you want to translate the input tabs into. On the left side of the middle panel you will find a box with many different types of harmonicas – choose “Blues harmonica” if you entered Blues harmonica tabs. Or choose “notes” if you typed in note-names or choose “chromatic” if you used a Chromatic harmonica to figure out the tabs. If your type of harmonica is not in the list, you can load a harmonica layout using the “Add harp” option in the “File” menu.

On the right hand side of the control panel you will find a similar box. Please choose here for which type of harmonica you wish the translation for. If you then press the yellow "My Sound - my SEYDEL"-logo SEYDEL-TabTool translates the given tabs into the desired ones.

All harmonica players are used to name blowing with the plus-sign and drawing with the minus. If you missed out "+" or "-" SEYDEL-TabTool handles blank numbers like draw notes. If this should not be the case, please activate the "+ as default" option – this can be forgotten by accident very easily and the result will be wrong in this case.

With these simple entries you are now able to transform tabs of different types of harmonicas into each other. But one information is still missing. Harmonicas are available in many different keys. Until now the SEYDEL-TabTool refers to a C-harmonica as the key of the harp you used for creating the input/output tabs. If for example you like to use a G-harmonica for input you have to indicate this by setting the left slider to -5. The notes of a G-harmonica are tuned to a pitch that is 5 semitones lower than the notes on a C-harmonica. If you want to use a F-harmonica for the output, you have to set the slider on the right side of the control panel to +4, because the notes on a F-harmonica are always 4 semitones higher in pitch than on a C-harmonica.

OK? You perhaps would say that you do not like to remember all the time that the notes of a harmonica in A are always three semitones lower in pitch than on a C-harmonica or the note of a G-harmonica always five semitones lower. That is why SEYDEL-TabTool offers you a more convenient way of setting the key of the harps. Look at the menu "Input Harp" for the pitch of the input harmonica and look at the "Output harp" menu for the key of the harmonica you want to create the tabs for. Choosing a key there effects the slider in a way that they skip into the right position.

But SEYDEL-TabTool can do even more and the sliders will be "your best friends" if you want to use more functions than simply translating tabs.

The output-panel

You already realized: in the output panel you can see the results of the calculations of the SEYDEL-TabTool. These can be highlighted with the mouse and copied to the clipboard (right click → copy). Or you can store them into a text-file using the "File" menu and "Save tabs..."

In the input panel it is possible to use different kind of tabs. In the output you will find only one type of tabs: each note has a number and a "+" or a "-" for blowing or drawing. Bending is

always indicated with a "b" and pressing the slide of a chromatic is always indicated with a "<". The note above "A" is always named as "Bb" and the note above the "Bb" is named "H" always! The SEYDEL-TabTool always uses "#" for building semitones and never uses "b"s. It is possible to play one and the same note in different ways on the harmonica (e.g. on a Richter-Harmonica 2 draw is the same note as 3 draw). SEYDEL-TabTools can display both variants using the "|" as a divider („-2|+3" in the example). This option can be switched on and off by using "File → Show enharmonics".

Positions

For beginners often a hard to handle issue, for advance players an important means. You can play a piece in the key of C on a harmonica in C (= 1st position). But why not trying to figure out if it is possible, let's say to play it in G on a C-harmonica (2nd position)? The pitch of the melody changes as well as the location of the notes on the harmonica, because the melody then is played 5 semitones lower than in the key of C. Instead of playing the "+4" note you play the "-2" (or "+3") on a Richter harmonica. In the program you can simply set both boxes to "Richter harmonica" and switch the left slider to -5 (or the right slider to +5 respectively) and the tabs will be translated for second-position playing. So you can use SEYDEL-TabTool for transposing melodies from one key to the other (or one playing position to another).

OK? You perhaps would say that it is not easy to remember how the slider has to be set to get out a defined position or pitch. If you choose the menu "Positions" you can easily set the sliders to the desired position. If the result is displayed one octave too high simply set the left slider to -12 (one octave consists of 12 semitones). Do not forget to click the logo to refresh the output tabs! If you like to know more about the positions on the harmonica choose "Circle of fifth" in the "Help"-menu.

Transposing

You have the tabs for a melody played in A, but your playback is in the key of D? No problem. You simply have to transpose the tabs or notes up or down for the right number of semitones. Just count: A→Bb→H→C→C#→D so it is 5 semitones and you can set either SEYDEL-TabTool's left slider to 5 or the right one to -5 respectively. Best way to do it is to translate the tabs into note-names and then check if you chose the right slide and then let the TabTool calculate the appropriate tabs. The slide setting remains the same.

Caution!...

At the end of the basic level description we need to state the following: **SEYDEL-TabTool takes your commands seriously** and will not ask things like “Do you really like to quit the program?”. If you click on “Delete Tabs” they will be erased without any additional warning message! Be sure to always save your data you just worked on early enough!

Medium level

After working through the basic level description you already know 95% of the functionality of the SEYDEL-TabTool. The following text describes the more special functions.

More Harp-Layouts

Example: You already know how to convert Blues harmonica tabs into chromatic tabs and vice versa. You now want to display the tabs for a SEYDEL DeLuxe Chromatic special tuned to "Irish". If you start the SEYDEL-TabTool the note layout of the "Irish"-chromatic is not in the list. So you have to load it from the hard-disk. Go to the "File→Load harp" menu and choose the file with the note-information of the Irish layout. Afterwards you'll find it in the list of available harmonicas in the control panel. You can load up to 15 different harmonica layouts during one session. You also can create your own harmonica-layouts (more about this later). The files can easily be sent via e-mail, so we hope to find more and more interesting harmonica layouts on the internet soon.

Translate automatically

If you are fed up with always clicking onto the SEYDEL logo button in order to get the translation you can switch on the option "File→Translate automatically" and the program takes the action if you use the sliders. Exception: if you have chosen "Play melody" the automatic translation does not work at all until you switch off "Play melody".

Playback Melody

If you create your own tabs by hand it will happen that you make some mistakes. A good method to check tabs is to playback the entered melody. If you activate the "Play melody" option in the "File"-menu SEYDEL-TabTool activates its playback function. It starts if you click the SEYDEL logo to translate your tabs. The program used for this is named „[SoX](#)“ and plays back the melody note by note through any installed sound card. You can imagine that this function is very useful, because your ear can differ the wrong notes much better than your eyes can from the written tabs. If you hear too many wrong notes make sure you set the "+ as default" option already.

You can also create your own sound-samples and replace the provided ones in the appropriate folder.

Harmonica Tab Fonts – many methods for writing harmonica tabs

For many years some authors of instructional books have thought about how to write down melody lines for harmonica simply without using the standard sheet music notation. Perhaps you are missing your beloved arrow notation that are used in many tutorial books? Or you like numbers in circles or something else more than just numbers and plus and minus. We checked carefully and found out that there are many good ways to play melodies note by note using different kind of tabs. All are suited after you get used to them. The simple plus-minus-number notation remains the best way to easily share your melodies via e-mail or on internet. So the main functions of the SEYDEL-TabTool is not suited for arrow notation. But we incorporated a way to create your kind of notation with a simple procedure:

The solution are "Tab-Fonts" - SEYDEL provides a special „[CASS-Harmonica Font](#)“ which is freely available for download on the SEYDEL webpage and you can use this so called True Type Font like you use „Times New Roman“ or „Arial“, in your word processing editor (Word, Open Office Writer...) - most of the special symbols §, \$, %, &, etc. are replaced with the arrows needed for typing harmonica tabs

If you look into a the "File" menu „Transform for Tab Font→CASS-Harmonica Font“ you can "transform" the tabs in the output panel into characters to prepare them for the CASS-Harmonica Font – just copy these into your word-processing software (Word oder OpenOffice Writer) and select "CASS-Harmonica Font" from your list of fonts (the CASS-Harmonica Font must be already installed on your system). Now your tabs are displayed with arrow notation.

<i>Example:</i>	-2 -3b -2bb +6o +6
is transformed to:	!2 "3 §2 =6 &6
displayed with the <i>CASS-Harmonica Font</i> :	↓2 ↘3 ↓2 ↗6 ↑6

Afterwards you can edit your notation in the word processing software and design the song as you like. The British National Harmonica League NHL also provides some free and well made True Type Fonts for creating harmonica tabs. They are called [SuperTAB](#) and can be downloaded from their page. SEYDEL-TabTool can prepare your tabs to be displayed with the NHL-SuperTabs. The NHL uses circles and numbers. Here's an example for the diatonic harmonica:

<i>+ - # in the SEYDEL-TabTool:</i>	-2 -3b -2bb -3bbb +6o +6 -8o
is transformed to:	" E S C y 6 I
displayed with the NHL "Richter Tab"-font:	② ③ ② ③ 6 6 ⑧

You see that the NHL-SuperTab fonts use standard letters for displaying tabs. So if you want to mix tabs and texts you have to switch to another font to write down your text content.

The menu "Take back font transformation" allows you to restore the output text back to what it was before you clicked "Change to harmonica font". *Note:* If you made any changes in the output panel text after the transformation these will not be restored!

Erase text-function

In SEYDEL-TabTool you are encouraged to use both together, tabs and text. If you like only to have tabs left in the output text you can choose "File→Erase text" and then restart the translation by clicking the logo-button. This function can be useful if some long tabs do not fit the page anymore or if you like to get the blank tabs with the NHL-SuperTab fonts.

Advanced level

You already learned to use the basic functions and also know about the special functions from the medium level description. Here you'll find some more background information for advanced usage.

H or B

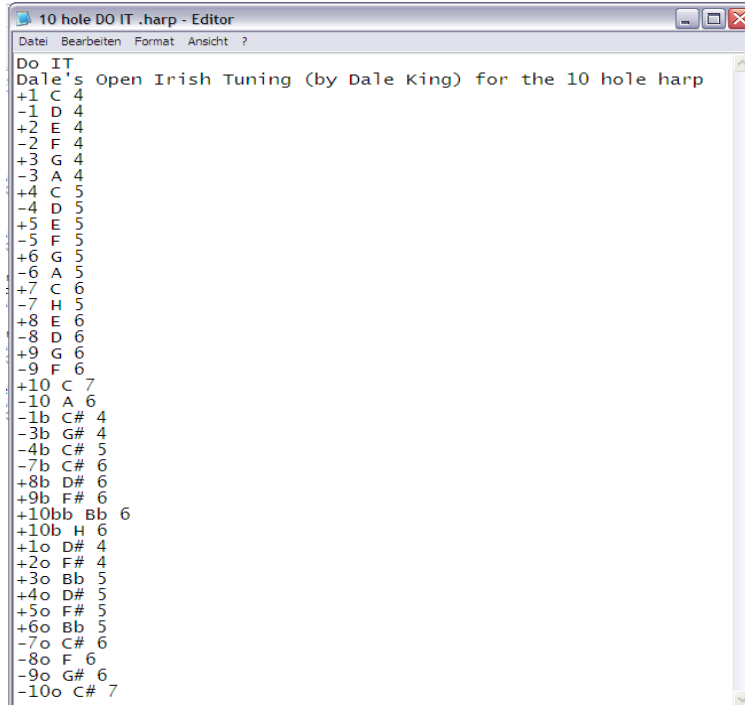
In Germany and some other countries of eastern Europe the note which is a semitone above the "A" is called "B", the international term is "Bb" (b-flat). The international name for the note two semitones above the "A" is called "B" - the German term for the same note is "H"! The "B" therefore has a double meaning for many musicians. "TabTool accepts "B" as input but for output always uses "Bb" for the b-flat and "H" for international "B" - so there never will be any confusions. English users can use B on input as they expect but will have to adapt that in the output there will be an "H" where they expect a "B".

Harp-Layouts

If you choose "File→"Load Harp" you can load new harmonica layouts into the lists of the control panels. You can create your own special tunings and store them in a text file using the *.harp file extension. Just have a look at harp-layout file using the windows editor. The syntax

is very clear and easy and so you can edit an existing harmonica layout file and store it as your own special tuning:

Example: (e.g. opened with the Windows Editor)



```

Do IT
Dale's Open Irish Tuning (by Dale King) for the 10 hole harp
+1 C 4
-1 D 4
+2 E 4
-2 F 4
+3 G 4
-3 A 4
+4 C 5
-4 D 5
+5 E 5
-5 F 5
+6 G 5
-6 A 5
+7 C 6
-7 H 5
+8 E 6
-8 D 6
+9 G 6
-9 F 6
+10 C 7
-10 A 6
-1b C# 4
-3b G# 4
-4b C# 5
-7b C# 6
+8b D# 6
+9b F# 6
+10bb Bb 6
+10b H 6
+1o D# 4
+2o F# 4
+3o Bb 5
+4o D# 5
+5o F# 5
+6o Bb 5
-7o C# 6
-8o F 6
-9o G# 6
-10o C# 7

```

The first row contains a short name of the harmonica, which is displayed in the select box in the program. This name should be not longer than 20 characters – less is even better. The second row contains a brief descriptive text about the special tuning, which is displayed when you load a new layout into the program. Followed by three columns – these successively describe the hole number, the note name and the octave the note is situated in. The separator is always the blank key. You need to use the right note-names and numbers of the holes in order to get a correct tab output in the program.

Aberrations from these conventions like the ones we implemented in the layout "Guitar.harp" lead to limitations in usability. "Guitar.harp" is only suited for the output, but not for the input of tabs. In this special case it was worth to interfere the convention. *.harp files are nothing else than text files and can be shared over the internet easily. Please help the harp community and take the chance to use this opportunity! All custom tunings should refer to a harmonica tuned in the key of C (if suitable) so that the sliders work as usual.

Changing sound effects

For playing back melodies the SEYDEL-TabTool uses the external program "[SoX](#)". This is provided with the setup of the program. SoX not only plays back the sound examples of the displayed notes in the output panel, but also can add some effects to them e.g. some delay and a little of reverb. You can alter the settings by yourself in the file "english.ini". In the last row you will find the default settings which can be changed according to your taste. Please also read through the manual of SoX if you like to learn more.

Translating the program into other languages

The desktop of the SEYDEL-TabTool is designed with the freeware tool "Glade". Using "Glade" you can easily change all button and menu texts into your language – a glade manual is available on the internet.

Closing words

We have tried to describe all the essential features of the SEYDEL-TabTool program carefully. If you find out something useful during using the program please let us know. Please also discuss and share the program with your musician friends and tell as much players as possible about its powerful features! But what is most important – have fun using the program!

The SEYDEL Team and Bernhard Lehnert (concept and programming)

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