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# Equipment Top Picks

## New Amps & Mics

BluesHarmonica.com Support Material

By David Barrett

### Small Amps



**Price**  
\$99

**Amp Make/Model**  
**Fender**  
**Champion 20**  
1x8" Speaker, Solid State, Effects

#### Key Features

Great starter amp—the whole package for a very low price. If you're looking for something that can be used in a duo or rehearsal (louder) setting, upgrade to one of the amps listed below.



\$480

**Sonic Pipe**  
**Windy City +**  
1x10" Speaker, Tube

Most classic tone (similar to popular Masco rigs). Easiest for new players to achieve good tone. Sounds great with large selection of mics. Best amp for recording. Use of external reverb or delay would be a nice addition.



\$899

**Fender**  
**Princeton Reverb '68 Custom**  
1x10" Speaker, Tube, Reverb

Warm, pleasing tone, but not that distorted (some will not like this), but slightly louder and more resonant. Loud enough to perform a small gig with (though not as safe as a Fender Bassman, it's proven it can get the job done when mic'd through the PA).



\$499

**Fender**  
**Pro Jr**  
1x10" Speaker, Tube  
**HONORABLE MENTION**

Though not as preferred as the Princeton—this is a loud, small amp at a good price. Newer players will struggle to achieve a good tone (amp has cleaner sound), but experienced players who like a more natural sound (less distortion) will appreciate it. Use of external reverb or delay would be a nice addition.

## Mics



**Price** \$155  
**Mic Make/Model** Husky  
**Howler or Mini**  
**\*w/Red Devil Element**  
**#1 PICK**

**Key Features**  
 Two comfortable mic sizes with the only new production element that sounds as good as vintage.



**Price** \$159  
**Mic Make/Model** Hohner  
**Harp Blaster HB52**

**Key Features**  
 Easiest of all mics to hold, good output and overall tone.



**Price** \$189  
**Mic Make/Model** BlowsMeAway Productions  
**Bulletini**

**Key Features**  
 Small mic (slightly too small for some) with strong output and best-in-class bass. Add \$30 for volume control.



**Price** \$289  
**Mic Make/Model** BlowsMeAway Productions  
**Custom Wood Mic**

**Key Features**  
 Comfortable, lightweight mic with the same element as the Bulletini. You can also choose (for additional cost) vintage elements (commonly Astatic Crystal or Shure CR/CM).



**Price** \$349  
**Mic Make/Model** Dyna-Mic  
**Firebird**  
**#1 PICK (For Rack Playing)**

**Key Features**  
 A great sounding (through PA and tube amp) microphone for rack playing that has a system that doesn't get in the way of your lips while playing.

**Reminder** – When you get into the \$250 price range, you can purchase a vintage body (such as the most common Astatic JT30) with a vintage element (most commonly the Shure CR/CM or Astatic Crystal) from a vintage mic seller. This is what most professional players use. The Hohner Harp Blaster HB52 and BlowsMeAway Productions line of mics (Bulletini, Custom Wood Mic, and Ultimate 57) are all considered pro mics as well (most classic blues players prefer vintage mics, but these four mics are respected mics by contemporary players).