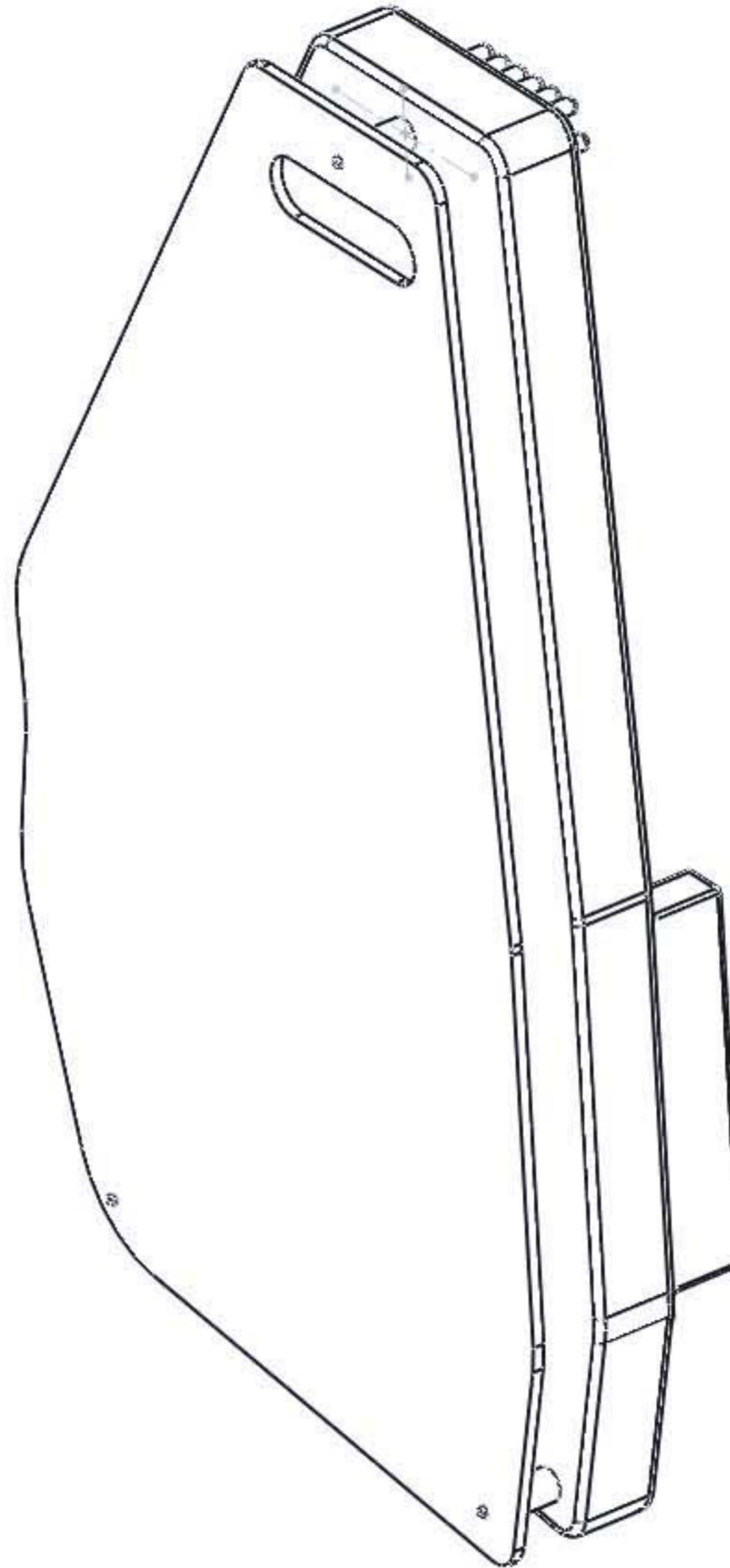


Autoharp Resonator



The purpose of adding a resonator to your autoharp is to take advantage of the significant amount of sound that comes out of the BACK of the 'harp.

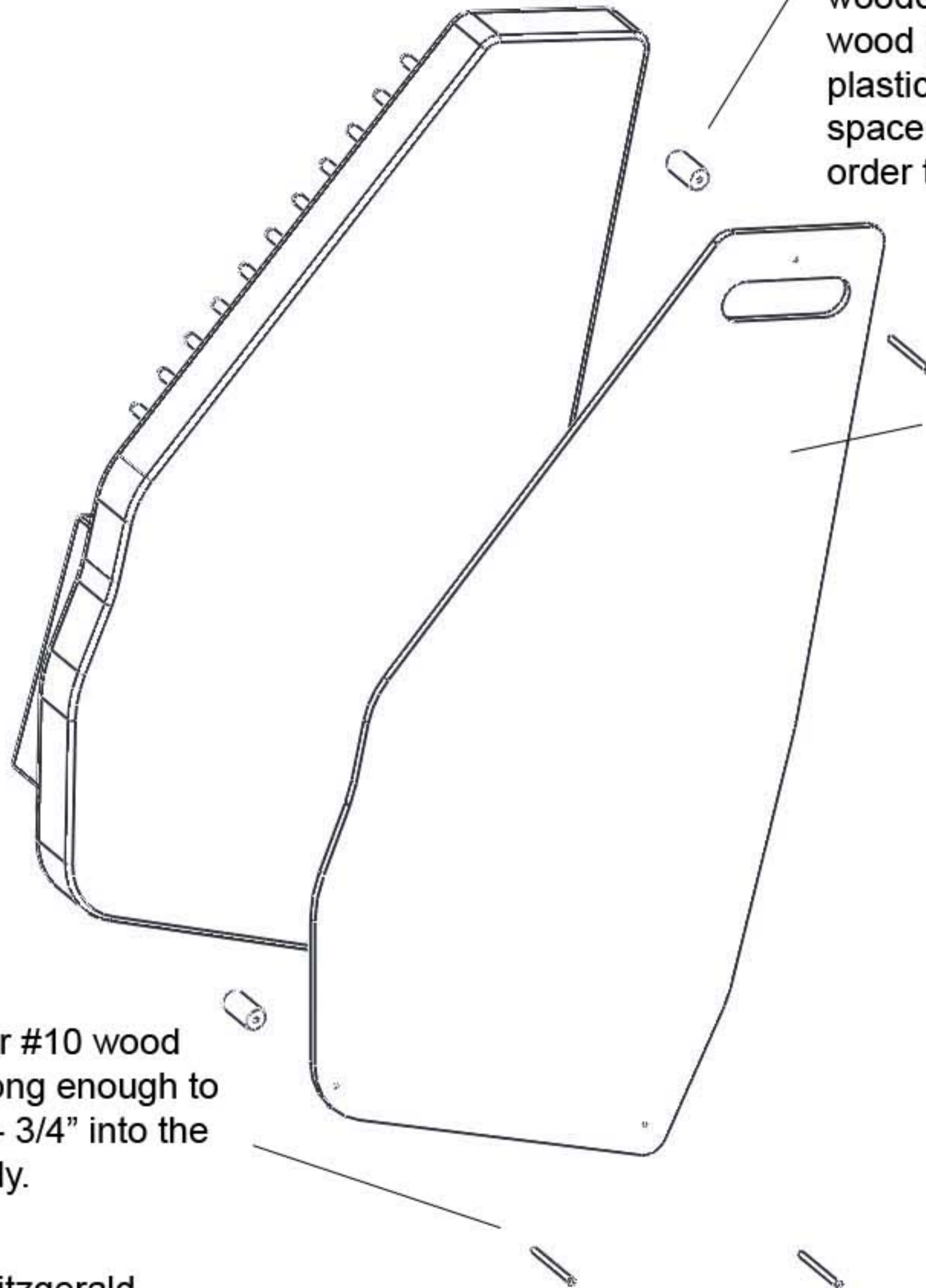
Playing Appalachian (upright) style can muffle much of the sound when the 'harp is held close to the body.

Adding a resonator - or false back- to the 'harp opens up this space and helps to reflect some of this lost sound back out toward the audience. You can simulate this effect by hugging your 'harp close to your chest and playing a tune. Then hold the 'harp farther out, perhaps holding it away with your shoulder, and see if it doesn't sound louder to you.

The resonator can be made of almost anything. It doesn't even need to be a solid piece of material. All you are looking for is a framework to hold the instrument away from your body so that more of the sound can get out.

The configuration shown is just one way to increase the volume of a standard OS chromatic autoharp without electronic amplification.

Autoharp Resonator



The spacers can be almost anything. The original wooden "feet" work fine. You can also use blocks of wood (shape is not important), short lengths of rigid plastic tubing or PVC pipe. The overall height of the spacer and resonator is limited to about 5/8" in order to fit into a standard OS autoharp case.

The resonator back can be 1/8" or 3/16" plywood, a chunk of masonite or wood paneling. Thinner is lighter, but also more flexible. You can add more spacers or adhesive backed rubber feet (like for trivets and picture frames) in the middle of the span to reduce the amount of deflection.

I've shown it with a hand-hole cut near the top to help with picking up and carrying the 'harp.

The pattern is made by tracing the outline of your 'harp onto the plywood. It is easily cut out with a jig saw or scroll saw.

If you play without a strap, Winfield Champion Betty Scott has suggested notching out the bottom edge of the resonator so that the 'harp, rather than the thin edge of the plywood, rests on your leg.

Use #8 or #10 wood screws long enough to seat 1/2 - 3/4" into the 'harp body.