

The Three Row Diatonic Melodeon A Comprehensive Guide

Part 2 - Different Types

There are three main types of three row squeezeboxes.

- 1) Type 1 - The melodeon I'm going to be talking about in this guide has the three rows tuned a perfect fourth apart with the rows getting progressively higher as you "move" towards the bellows e.g. ADG, GCF, *F, Bb, Eb, *E, A, D (* - not widely available in the UK). These boxes are sometimes known as quint boxes because if you reverse the order that you name the rows, they are five letters (notes) apart. *This type is related to but different from the melodeon that has the outside two rows tuned a fourth apart and the inside row with some useful accidentals and/or "helper" notes. These types of boxes are sometimes called "D/G/acc" or "G/C/acc. You may even find a hybrid of the two where the two outside rows are tuned a semitone apart and the inside row is tuned a fourth above the middle row e.g. C#/D/G*
- 2) Type 2 - The melodeon where the three rows are tuned a semitone apart B, C, C#. This is known as the British Chromatic System and was invented by the late Sir Jimmy Shand who was a wonderful player. This instrument can either have conventional melodeon basses (bass buttons that, in the main, sound different notes and chords whether you are pushing or pulling the bellows) or a stradella bass (lots of small buttons) like a piano accordion. The Hohner Shand Morino is a lovely example of this type of instrument
- 3) Type 3 - The chromatic button accordion which has a zig-zag arrangement of chromatic

or next-door-neighbour notes. This instrument, unlike the two above, is unisonoric – i.e. buttons sound the same note whether you are pushing or pulling the bellows and will definitely have a stradella bass.

With a bit of experimentation you should be able to work out which one of these you have if you don't already know.

Now go to Part 3:-

The Three Row Diatonic Melodeon – In General