

Categories of Non-Pitched Percussion Instruments

The following is a list of some basic non-pitched percussion instruments, the methods by which they produce sound, playing directions, the materials from which they are made, and a few ideas to make them from found materials. They have been grouped by the method of playing (striking/tapping, shaking, and scraping), however, they could also be compared and contrasted by materials.

Method of Playing	How to Play	Instrument	Material	Sounds Like	Some "Found Sound" Ideas
STRIKE/ TAP	Tap or strike – hit together or tap one on a surface	Rhythm/ Lummi Sticks	Wood	Skipping, clacking	Broom sticks, doweling
	Tap or strike with flat palm side of hand or fingers	Hand drums	Membrane (also made of wood)	Plodding, marching	Balloon stretched over a bowl
	Pick up with the fingers and tap edge of one cymbal against the rim of the other. Do not put fingers in the loops/elastics.	Finger Cymbals	Metal	Magical moment, fairies	(Get these – they are inexpensive and make a unique tingling sound.)
	Tap with its metal rod while holding by its strap	Triangle	Metal	Brightness, announcing something	Metal pipe Metal clothes hanger
	Tap with fingers or shake	Tambourine	Metal and Wood; sometimes has Membrane as well	Rattle	Bottle caps attached to a piece of wood
	Tap block with a mallet (preferably wood mallet)	Wood Block	Wood	Tock – clock horse hooves	Empty closed plastic container Piece of 2x4 wood
SHAKE	Tap on the hand which is holding the bells	Bells	Metal	Sleigh bells, rain	Bags of sewing notion bells
	Hold in front at chest level and shake in the direction of away from you and to you.	Maracas	Wood	Dry rattle, chacka-chacka	Closed container with handle. Place marbles or small rocks inside.

	Hold with one hand- thumb on bottom and 3rd and/or 4 th finger(s) on top.	Egg shakers	Plastic	Sicka-sicka (similar but softer than maracas)	Closed container or plastic easter eggs containers with sand or paper clips inside.
SCRAPE	Hold the guiro by placing the thumb and middle finger in the holes at the bottom. Scrape the ridges back and forth with a stick.	Guiro	Wood	Ratchet, clicking	Plastic bottle with ridges, scraped with popsicle stick
	Rub against each other	Sand Blocks	Wood (and sand paper)	Sliding, rubbing, rain falling gently, train starting up	Sandpaper glued onto a small sturdy box