

Hand percussion

Hand percussion is a term used to indicate a percussion instrument of any type from any culture that is held in the hand. They can be made from wood, metal or plastic and are usually either shaken, scraped or tapped with fingers or a stick. It is a useful category in terms of a large percussion orchestra in that it identifies all instruments that are not drums or pitched percussion such as marimba and xylophone.



Modern half moon tambourine

Shakers



Caxixi from Africa

A shaker (percussion) is any instrument that makes a noise when shaken. Historically they were naturally occurring items such as seed pods. A caxixi is a basketwork shaker with a gourd base. Gourds are used all over the world and covered with a net with shells or seeds to create an instrument such as the shekere. Modern shakers are often cylinders made from metal wood or plastic containing small hard items such as seeds, stones, or plastic - an example is the Egg Shaker. There is another category of shaken instrument using jingles, little discs of metal which tap together when shaken. Tambourines fall into this category.



Gourd shekere from Africa with seeds in the net.

Scrapers



Modern fibreglass güiro from South America

This can be a wood, metal or plastic instrument which has ridges on its body. Often known as Güiro, rhythms are created by running a thin stick up and down the ridges at different speeds. Gourds or bamboo have traditionally been used as they have a resonant hollow body and can easily be cut with ridges. A common type from Asia is a carved wooden frog which has ridges cut on its back and its mouth and belly hollowed out.



Frog shaped güiro from Japan

Cowbells



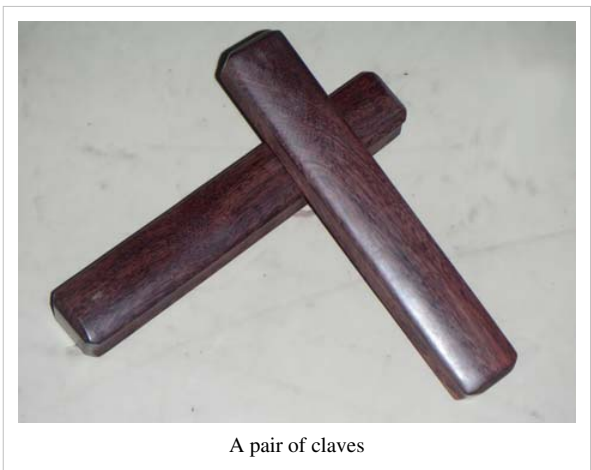
The origin here is obvious from the name, a simple way of keeping track of your livestock was to tie a bell around its neck. They are any type of hand held bell tapped with fingers, wood or metal. They occur all over the world and are used extensively in Latin Percussion music and often found as part of a standard Rock Drum Kit. The name cowbell usually refers to a single bell. The Agogô bell usually refers to a double or triple bell.

Triangles

The Triangle (instrument) is a piece of steel bent in the shape of a triangle tapped with another piece of steel. It is suspended on one hand which can be open and closed to alter the sound. Very commonly used in South American Music to give a persistent high pitched pulse.



Sticks



Tapping two sticks together is the simplest form of hand percussion, and has developed a place in traditional music all over the world. Indigenous Australians use *clapping sticks* alongside the didgeridoo, and claves are an integral part of South American Music.

Small drums

There are a variety of small hand held drums such as taborim which fall into the Hand Percussion category.

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