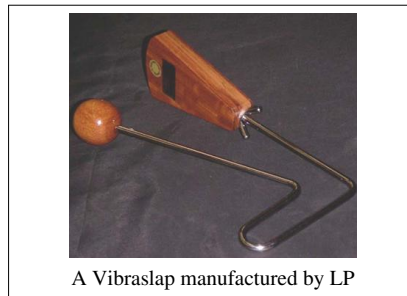


Vibraslap

Vibraslap

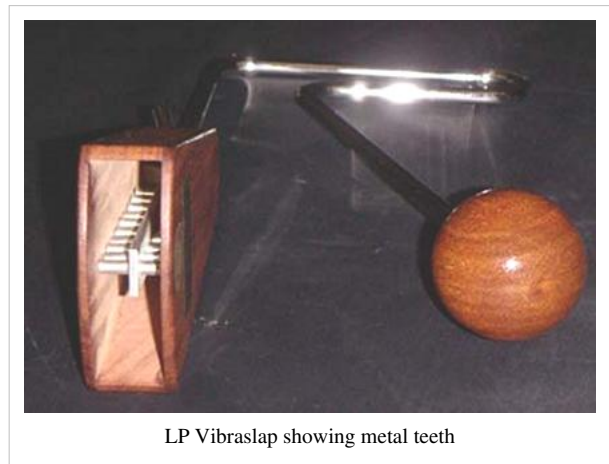


A **vibraslap** is a percussion instrument consisting of a piece of stiff wire (bent in a U shape) connecting a wood ball to a hollow box of wood with metal “teeth” inside. The percussionist holds the metal wire in one hand and strikes the ball (usually against the palm of their other hand). The box acts as a resonating body for a metal mechanism placed inside with a number of loosely fastened pins or rivets that vibrate and rattle against the box.^[1] The instrument is a modern version of the jawbone.

The Vibra-Slap was the first patent granted to the instrument manufacturing company Latin Percussion.^[2]

The Vibra-Slap's inventor was Martin Cohen. Cohen was told by percussionist Bob Rosengarden, ‘If you want to make some money, make a jawbone that doesn’t break.’ About the inventing process Cohen remembers, “I had never seen a jawbone before, but I had heard one on a Cal Tjader album. I found out that it was an animal skull that you would strike, and the sound would come from the teeth rattling in the loose sockets. So I took that concept and invented the Vibraslap, which was my first patent.”^[3]

The instrument is frequently used in Latin American music. The vibraslap was a ubiquitous part of jazz or pop-based film scores, primarily action films and television series, in the 1970s and early 1980s. It is also used extensively in the music of alternative rock band CAKE (as well as in "Weird Al" Yankovic's "Close But No Cigar", which is a parody of CAKE's style). Other songs that have prominently featured the vibraslap include Bono, Keith Richards and Ron Woods version of the U2 song Silver and Gold which appeared on the "Sun



City" anti Apartheid album. "Fame" by David Bowie, Jimi Hendrix's version of "All Along The Watchtower", Santana's "Incident at Neshabur", "Jungle Strut", The Grateful Dead's "Alligator", Blue Cheer's "As Long As I Live", Black Lips' "Veni Vidi Vici", R.E.M.'s anti-war anthem "Orange Crush", Jethro Tull's "Velvet Green," Styx's "Lights", The Cure's "Lullaby", The Tubes' "Attack of the Fifty Foot Woman", Amon Tobin's "Four Ton Mantis", Dr. Dre's "Nuthin' but a "G" Thang", Them Terribles' "Bullets and Guns", during the guitar lead on Rush's song "Closer to the Heart", at the beginning of Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train", during the percussion jam in Enter the Haggis's, Traffic's song, "The Low Spark of High Heeled Boys" "Congress", Aerosmith's "Sweet Emotion", and My Chemical Romance's "Teenagers". Alestorm's "Of Treasure" uses the vibraslap multiple times, along with various other percussion instruments. A vibraslap is used in Blue Man Group's "How to Be a Megastar 2.0 Tour", not for real music production, but for a humorous skit. It is also heard in the theme tunes of *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, "Hawaii Five-O" and *Countdown*.



Enter the Haggis guitarist Trevor Lewington plays the vibraslap in "Congress."

An example of a film that contains a vibraslap as a background sound effect is *There's a Girl in My Soup* (1970).

Vibraslaps come in a variety of sizes and materials.

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- [2] (<http://www.steveweissmusic.com/product/30749/hand-percussion>) URL last accessed December 11, 2009.
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