

Sounds of Music



What makes music different from noise? Music is different from noise because it usually has a regular sound or rhythm. If you think about it, some noises, such as the drip, drip, drip of a faucet, can sound like music. What other noises inside or outside can sound like music? Create some instruments to make your own music?

1. Make Your Own

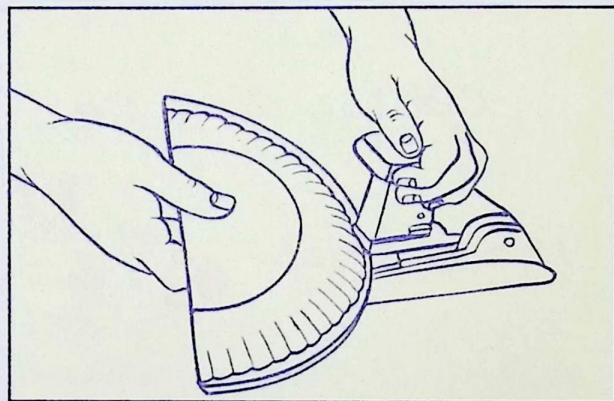
Percussion instruments make a sound when hit or shaken. They can be drums, rattles, gongs, tambourines, or shakers. Try making a shaker.

You will need:

- A paper plate.
- Dry beans, rice, sand, or other small things that rattle.
- A stapler with staples.

Place the beans on the paper plate and fold it

in half. Then staple the plate halves together so the beans will not fall out. Make one shaker for each hand.



2. Single String Swing

Can one string make music? Try your hand at this one:

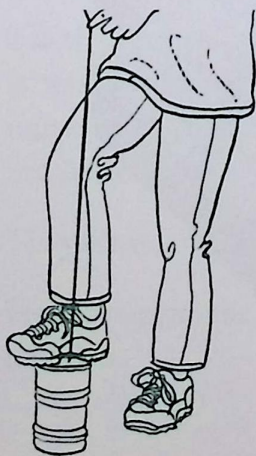
You will need:

- A large clean empty can (#10 size or 48 ounces) that is open at one end.
- A nail.
- A hammer.
- A heavy string.
- A pencil.

1. Ask an adult to help you use the hammer and nail to punch a hole in the middle of the can bottom.
2. Cut a length of string that goes from the floor to the middle of your thigh.



3. Knot the end of your string. Pull the other end through the inside of the can and through the hole you made. Make sure the knot is big enough so that it keeps the string from pulling all the way through.
4. Tie the other end of the string around the middle of a pencil.
5. To play your instrument, place one foot on the floor and the other foot on top of the can. Pull the string straight up from the floor so that it is stretched tight with one hand. Now, pluck the string with the forefinger of the other hand. Experiment with your fiddle sound by plucking in different places on the string. Try holding the string tighter or looser. How does the sound change? Can you get different sounds by changing the length of the string?



3. Sliding Air

What does wind have to do with music? Different sounds are made by changing the amount of air in a tube. Try making this wind instrument.

You will need:

- A straw.
- Water.
- A plastic soda bottle.

1. Fill the soda bottle about three-fourths full with water. See the picture.
2. Place the straw in the water and blow across the tip of the straw.



3. Lift the straw and lower it, continuing to blow. What happens? What is happening to the air in the straw as you slide it up in the water and as you slide it down? How does that affect the sound? When is the sound the highest? When is it lowest?

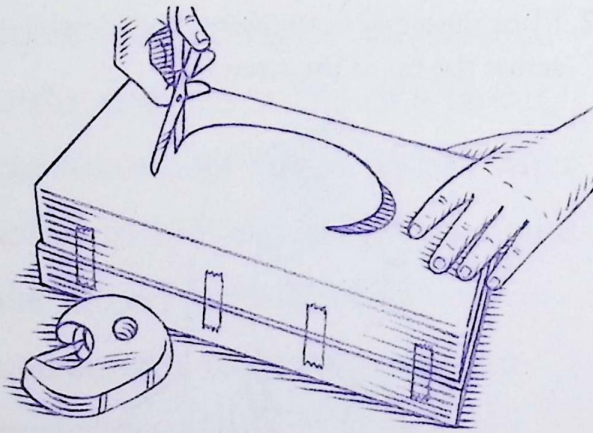
4. Shoebox Guitar

Did you ever think that you could make music with some rubber bands, a shoe box, and a paper towel roll? Here's one way.

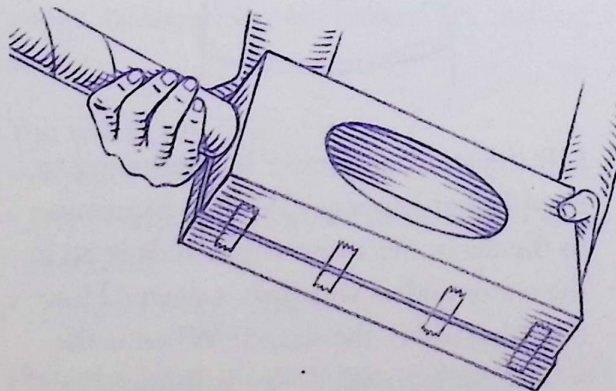
You will need:

- A shoebox.
- A paper towel roll.
- 5 rubber bands.
- Tape.

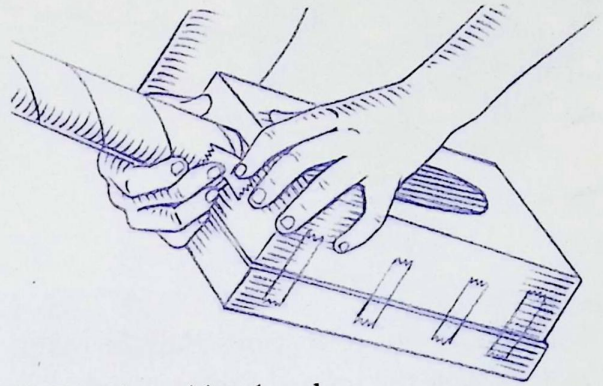
1. Tape the cover to the shoebox and turn the box upside down.
2. Cut a large oval hole in the bottom of the box.



3. Cut a round hole on one side of the shoebox, just large enough to fit the paper towel roll through it. (Do not slide it too far in. It should not show through the front oval hole covered by the rubber bands.)

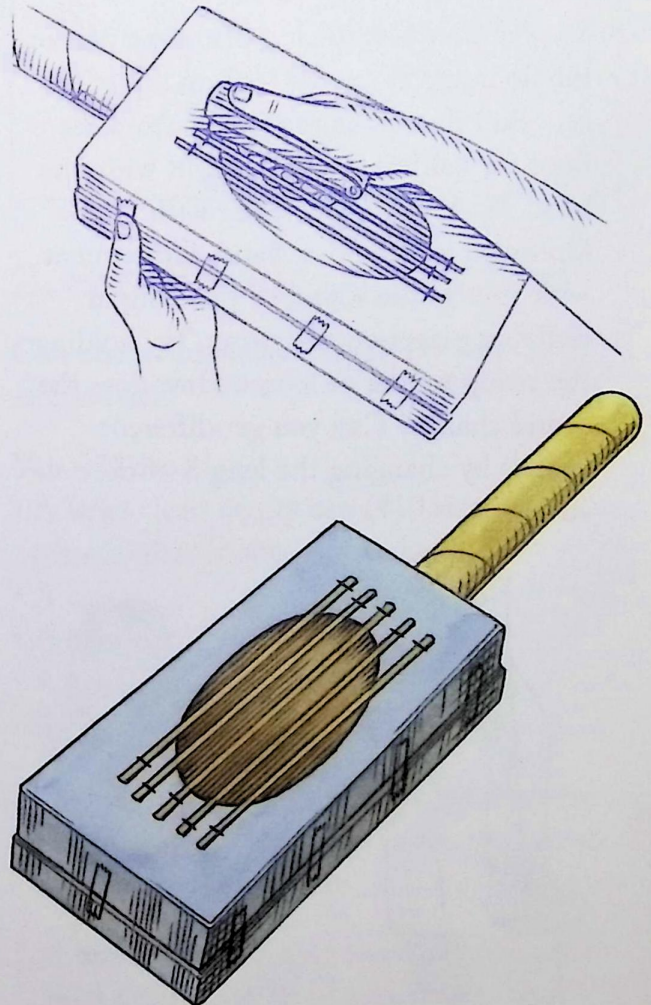


4. Tape the towel roll through the hole.



5. Cut the rubber bands.

6. Stretch each rubber band tightly over the hole in the shoebox, and tape each one down. (Leave a little space between each rubber band.)



5. Melody Mobiles

Create a mobile that makes music as it sways in the air. First collect small, lightweight items that sound pleasant to you when they bump into each other. Check this out by dangling the items from a string and making them knock into each other. They can be pieces of hardware such as screws, small toys, old pieces of jewelry, hair clips, and other found treasures around the house. Select between 8 and 12 items.

You will need:

- 2 wire hangers.
 - 2 pipe cleaners.
 - Heavy string or yarn.
 - The items you've selected.
1. Twist one pipe cleaner around the two hooks so that the hangers are joined at the top.
 2. Twist the other pipe cleaner around the center of the bottom of the hangers, so that they are also joined together there with about 2" between the hangers.
 3. Cut 8 to 12 pieces of string at different lengths: 4 pieces can be 14" long, 4 pieces 12" long, and 4 pieces 10" long.
 4. Tie the strings to the bottom of the mobile hanger. You should have the same number on each hanger so the mobile will not be crooked.
 5. Tie your items to the end of each string.
 6. Hang your mobile and listen to the sounds it makes.

6. Live Music

Attend a concert put on by a band or orchestra. Are any of the instruments like the ones you made?

