

Wood Sounds

Outlined below are instruments that can be used together, as a set, offering participants a wide range of sound possibilities. They are all played in different ways so should accommodate many levels of mobility and skill. Wooden instruments are great for reinforcing themes such as woodland, forest, boat builder or carpenter for example. Or they can simply be enjoyed for slowly building and creating a fun rhythmic section within the workshop. A useful set of wooden instruments might include:

Tongue Drums - tuned wooden instruments which sound great on their own, but can also be used to maintain a steady, melodic rhythm underneath a mixture of other wood sounds. Along with gato drums they come in different sizes, so offer complimentary bass and treble options. They sound best when played with soft rubber or cloth headed beaters.

Wooden xylophones and balafons - the initial outlay for one of these instruments is well worth it for the amount of use and pleasure it gives. It has a lovely tone and can be played by more than one person at a time. Buzzing resonators add the classic West African sound. Smaller versions can be found to play on laps and wheelchair trays.

Claves - easy to hold and play individually or in pairs, they give a sharp sound that cuts through to help maintain a regular rhythm.

Octagon - this is played with a wooden beater, running it round the inside of the drum, or tapping individual tuned 'notes'.

Wood Blocks - these come in a variety of shapes and sizes, either as large individual notes or on handles as with the wood agogos giving two or even three tones.

Shakers and Scrapers - these add another sound quality to a rhythmic wood section and are also more accessible to those who find a beater difficult to manage

Unusual wood sounds - there are some instruments that participants really enjoy for their strangeness and almost comical sounds. Examples of these are the Kokiriko and Vibraslap.

Sticks - Along with bought instruments, a set of 18" sticks made from sturdy dowelling is also very useful, as these can be used to tap rhythms, play with a partner, play wooden structures, wheelchairs, banisters, can be gathered like firewood for a 'fire' theme or laid in patterns on the floor, as bridges, boundaries or perhaps a step ladder.

Links

Workshops - Cabin, Salmon, Cobbler, Up the stairs

Videos - Wood sounds