

# MAKE YOUR OWN

# Ocean Drum



*a traditional ocean drum*

## ***An ocean drum is a truly unique instrument!***

It looks like a frame drum from the Middle East, but it is filled with small round objects that, when tilted back and forth, sound remarkably like the waves at the seashore. Its sound is soothing and when ocean drums are filled with colorful or interesting objects, they are as beautiful to watch as they are to hear. *Want to make your own version of this amazing instrument? A complete supply list for this easy project can be found at the bottom of page 2.*

### **HOW TO MAKE IT**

Start with a sturdy box. It's a good idea to decorate your box before experimenting with what you want to put inside. If you started with a plain box from a stationery supply store, you have a clean slate to create an ocean motif or decorate with paint, crayons, markers or glitter and glue. If you have an overly busy box, like a pizza box, you may wish to cover it with colored paper (leaving space for the window, of course) and decorate from there.

Next, create the window so you can watch the smaller items move around inside the drum. To do this, get some sturdy clear plastic and cut it into a large square or rectangle. Draw a slightly smaller square or rectangle on the inside of the top of your ocean drum box and cut it out. Secure the window in place inside the box using a strong tape such as packing tape, electrical tape, or masking tape.

Now choose something to create the sound of the surf. Small, round objects make a sound that is closest to a real ocean drum. However, you can get creative with what you'd like to try. You can choose tiny pasta like acini de pepe, pastina pasta, seed beads, bee bees, or mung beans. You can fill your drum with lentils, dried peas, marbles, pony beads, larger beans, or orzo pasta for a louder drum. You can mix and match to see what sounds best to your ear.

You may also want to make it interesting by adding colorful beads or other items like marbles, buttons, glitter or confetti that will add to the visual appeal of the drum.

Once you've chosen what you want to go inside, you are ready to seal the drum. Cover it with packing tape so that the contents will stay inside. Seal up all the edges where the smaller objects might come out and then you're ready to play your ocean drum.





SAMPLES OF OCEAN DRUMS YOU CAN MAKE ON YOUR OWN

### PLAYING THE OCEAN DRUM

This is a fun instrument to explore. Here are a few techniques you can use when playing it:

- Tilt it back and forth at gentle angles
- Tilt it back and forth at more extreme angles
- Tilt the drum for a gentle swooshing sound then turn it on its side to stop the sound
- Tap the sides or top with your fingertips
- Shake your instrument as if it were a rattle

Many people find the sound and the changing patterns very calming and meditative. You can relax and play it without any other accompaniment or you can play this instrument along with soothing music or any of your favorite songs. Try to match the beat by tilting the ocean drum along with the rhythms of the song.

If you enjoy this type of drum, you may want to make several as each one will have a distinct sound or might fit better with different musical styles that you enjoy.

### SUPPLY LIST FOR THIS PROJECT

**A Sturdy Box:** Flat shipping boxes, or any sturdy small box

**Clear Plastic:** You can recycle old report covers, salad bar containers, clear tablecloth covers or purchase a small amount of clear vinyl at a fabric or hardware store. Hint: Don't use plastic wrap as it simply won't hold up to the task.

**Strong Tape:** Packing tape, masking tape, or electrical tape are good choices.

**Contents For The Drum:** Choose any small fillings such as seed beads, pasta, acini de pepe pasta, orzo, pony beads, mung beans, lentils, dried beans, marbles, or small pebbles.

*Feel free to experiment and make this unusual instrument all your own!*



### FOR KIDS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

For children who have noise sensitivity or seem to connect with certain types of sounds in special ways, pay careful attention to "tuning" your drum for contents that sound right to the person who will use it. You can fill it several times and have him or her pick out what sounds the most pleasing before sealing it up.

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