

Dulcimers Around the World

Activity Ideas and Lesson Plans

PLAY A SANTOOR (an Iranian dulcimer) - on a tablet computer

Download and have a go at playing a tune on a santoor on a tablet computer. There are quite a few apps which simulate playing the dulcimer or one of the international cousins, the one below is our favourite.

Santoor Apps

iOS app by Amir Kamali (Free)/Android app by Amir Noori Music (59p)

Note: If apps have adverts, turn wifi off to use.

By downloading this app you can have a go at playing the Iranian santoor. Listen to the scale as it is not the same as the Western Scale, some notes are quarter tones. You can even record your own tune and play it back.

Activity 1: (based on iOS app) Try to pick out a scale by going all the way up one bridge (there are 3 areas, left, middle and right. Start at the second string from the bottom.

What do you notice about the 3 areas? Which notes sound funny? (These are quarter tones).

Activity 2: Improvise a simple tune by ear using this scale.

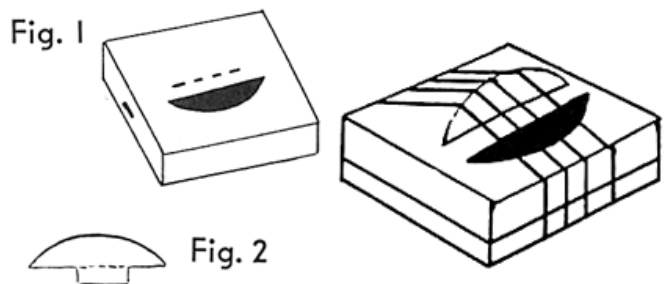
MAKING AN APPALACHIAN OR MOUNTAIN DULCIMER FROM RECYCLED MATERIALS

Dulcimers were traditionally made from recycled materials in order to make the hobby affordable. Make a simple Appalachian or mountain dulcimer from a cardboard box and various sizes of rubber bands.

Follow the instructions below:

Find a box measuring approx. 15cm square and 3-5cm in depth. Cut a hole and a slot in the cover, as pictured in figure 1. Cut out a bridge from cardboard, as in figure 2. Make certain that the tab at the bottom of the bridge fits securely into the narrow slot, and that the bridge stands upright. Return cover to box and secure with tape. Stretch rubber bands of various sizes over the entire box passing them over the bridge. The smaller bands which are stretched more tightly over the bridge will produce the highest tones.

To play your mountain dulcimer pick the bands with your fingers, press down on the 'strings' to see how this changes the notes you can play.





DULCIMER AND WORLD MUSIC WORKSHOPS

The Nonsuch Dulcimer Club has members all over the UK who can be booked to run workshops or hold demonstrations of both hammered and Appalachian dulcimers or suggest performers who can lead world music workshops. The Nonsuch Dulcimer Club has a Child Protection Policy. Some of its members have DBS checks and teaching experience.

Contact the Nonsuch Dulcimer Club by visiting www.dulcimer.org.uk.

