

Drums





Hitting a steel drum
makes a loud sound.

Sounds of Drums

People all around the world have played drums for many hundreds of years. The first drums were made from animal skins that were pulled tight on the drums. People used sticks to beat on the skins.

Different materials make different sounds. Drums made with soft materials, such as animal skins, make soft sounds. Drums made with hard materials, such as steel, make loud sounds.

Hitting a drum makes it shake, or vibrate. The harder a drum is hit, the harder the vibrations and the louder the sound.

Key Notes:

How does a drum make sound?



Drums are played
during some
celebrations.

Drums in Celebrations

People around the world play drums to celebrate important events. In some places, people play drums to celebrate when a baby is born. Other people play drums at events that celebrate when crops are brought in. Some special drums are played at celebrations for kings and queens and other important people.

During some celebrations, people dance to the beat of drums. Drummers tap on drums with their hands, and dancers move quickly to the beat. The sound of drums helps people keep the beat as they dance in celebration.

Key Notes:

How are drums used in celebrations?



Drums were used during wars of the past.

Drums in War

Since long ago, drums have been used during wars. Drums were played to scare the enemy. The sound of loud drumbeats made the enemy think it would have to face many soldiers.

During war, drums were also used to give soldiers their orders. The sound of drumbeats told soldiers whether to move ahead or turn back.

Drummers became very important among soldiers. Special clubs were formed to pick drummers who could go to war. Then the drummers had to train for many years before they went to war.

Key Notes:

Why do you think drums were chosen to be used during wars?



This drum kit has drums of different shapes and sizes.

Drums Today

Today, many drummers play a set of drums called a drum kit. Drummers in rock bands usually play drum kits. A drum kit has several drums of different shapes and sizes as well as other instruments. Each instrument makes a different sound. Instruments in a drum kit are called percussion instruments.

Percussion instruments are struck with a hand, stick, or brush. One drum even has to be played with a foot. Drummers need a lot of skill and speed. Think of trying to hit that many instruments and still keep the beat.

Key Notes:

Why are drums made in different shapes and sizes?

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