

# CYMBALS

## DESCRIPTION

- Cymbals are circular, thin, metal disks, generally made from copper or brass. They are usually shaped like a flat cone . . . a **very** flat cone. This is called a concave shape.
- They are percussion instruments that may be hand-held or suspended from a stand. Hand-held cymbals usually come in pairs, which the player strikes together.
- Because of their concave shape, crash cymbals have a fairly thin edge.
- Thicker cymbals may be used for heavy metal or rock bands.

## HOW TO PLAY

- Pairs of modern orchestral crash (or clash) cymbals are held in the center using leather hand grips. They are crashed together loudly, or can be slid lightly across each other for a softer sound.
- Because cymbals may ring for quite a while following a crash, the performer may dampen them by pulling the edges of the cymbals against the chest.
- When suspended or mounted, cymbals can be struck with a drum stick in various places to obtain a variety of sounds. Sticks or mallets can be used to create a swelling roll or crash.

## SOUND

- The sound of cymbals crashing is perhaps the most spectacular percussion effect of all. It can be heard above everything else in the orchestra and can resonate for quite some time.
- The sound of the suspended cymbal can be metallic, broad, or a light "pinging" sound, depending where the cymbal is hit and what is used to hit it.

## FUN FACTS

- Cymbals were used in ancient Israel, and also in ancient Greek theatre.
- In a drumset, many different types of cymbals may be used.
- Hi-hat cymbals are mounted in pairs and either struck with a stick or clashed together using a foot pedal.
- Pairs of finger cymbals (approximately 2 to 3 inches in diameter) are used in many different styles of folk music and dancing. They are generally worn on the thumb and middle finger (or forefinger) of each hand.

## SOUND SAMPLES

TRACK 42 - Crash! (crash cymbals)

TRACK 43 - Suspense! (suspended cymbal)

# SEAL ON THE CYMBALS

