

GONG

DESCRIPTION

- The gong is a fixed-pitch percussion instrument, consisting of a suspended circular piece of metal with a slight dome shape in the center.
- The gong is made of heavy brass, bronze, silver, copper, or iron. It comes in various sizes.
- A tam-tam is similar in shape, but has a flat surface with a slightly turned edge. It is unpitched and also made of metal.

HOW TO PLAY

- Both the gong and tam-tam are suspended from a frame by one or two cords or ropes.
- They are generally struck or scraped with a large felt mallet, the fist, or any other kind of mallet or beater. Each will create a different effect.

SOUND

- The sound of a gong is that of a loud crash, which rings for a long time.

FUN FACTS

- The gong has its origins in 6th-century China, where it was used to ward off evil spirits. It was continually used in China through the beginning of the 20th century to announce the arrival of important people.
- In Chinese opera, a pair of gongs is essential. The larger one has a descending tone (announcing the entrance of major players and dramatic moments), while the smaller one has a rising tone (announcing the entrance of minor players and humorous moments).
- The size of a gong can range from 6 to 60 inches in diameter.
- Sometimes the instrument is hit lightly before the main strike, preparing it to ring sooner and enhancing the sound.

SOUND SAMPLES

TRACK 44 - *Going, Going, Gong!*

GOOSE ON THE GONG

