

# Peace Drum



## Background of the Frame Drum

This frame drum is one of the oldest types of percussion instruments. Its origin may have been the sieve used for sifting grain. The earliest visual depiction of a drummer playing a frame drum comes from a cave in Catal Huyuk, ancient Turkey, around 5600 B.C.E. It is believed that the Neolithic community who painted on these caves did not engage in warfare. Possibly this drummer from Catal Huyuk was the first drummer for peace! The frame drum was predominantly, but not exclusively, played by women in the ancient world (1 Samuel 10:5). This is the drum, without metal jingles, which is referred to in the Hebrew Scriptures as the "tambourine" or "timbrel" (Hebrew=tof ) and was used in worship (Psalm 68:24-25). Following God's liberation of Israel from Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea, Miriam and the women celebrated with the frame drum and dancing (Exodus 15). Psalm 150 encourages worshippers to praise God on the frame drum (Psalm 150:4). Following Jewish tradition, the early church would have worshiped and celebrated playing the frame drum. It wasn't until the drum became associated with pagan Graeco-Roman gods and goddesses that the drum was forbidden and fell out of use within Christian worship. Today, the drum is being reintroduced into Christian worship and peacemaking. The drum has been an essential element of the spirituality of the majority of the earth's peoples since the dawn of civilization.

## Playing the Frame Drum

The frame drum can be held and played from several positions: 1) Held with one hand and played with the other along with the fingers of the holding hand; 2) Held in both hands and played with the fingers of both hands; 3) Placed on top of one leg, held with the forearm and played with both hands; or 4) Held between both legs and played with both hands. You will have to try these positions to see which ones you prefer.

The framedrum can produce different tones by striking the rim, the mid zone, and the center of the drum. The head may loosen in cooler temperatures and produce a low tone. By using a hairdryer on the head for only a minute or two the tone will get higher as the head tightens. The basic strokes on the drum are: 1) DOM= the lowest tone of the drum produced by striking the mid zone or center of the drum with the thumb; 2) TAK= the highest tone of the drum produced by sharply striking the rim with the tip of the index finger; 3) SLAP= the muffled tone produced by striking the center of the drum with the whole hand; 4) SNAPPING= a high tone produced by snapping fingers against the rim of the drum; 5) BRUSHING= produced by brushing tips of fingers or fingernails across the drum head.

Begin with this basic rhythm, the Middle Eastern Saidi: (repeat this four-beat pattern)

*(continued on back)*

&

4

TAK

&

3

DOM

&

TAK

2

&

1

DOM

Count:

Strokes: DOM



For more information on playing your frame drum check out these videos and web sites:

- Glen Velez, *The Fantastic World of Frame Drums*, Interworld Music Associates, 1990. [www.glenvelez.com](http://www.glenvelez.com)
- Layne Redmond, *A Sense of Time*, Interworld Music Associates, 1994. [www.layneredmond.com](http://www.layneredmond.com)
- John Bergamo, *The Art and Joy of Hand Drumming*, Interworld Music Associates, 1990. [www.tamala-beramo.com](http://www.tamala-beramo.com)

## Drumming for Peace

Historically, drums have been used for purposes of war making, along with worship, ritual, and celebration. For example, snare drum rudiments were originally used as signals for battle. But, drums can be transformed into instruments of peacemaking. Drums are increasingly

becoming a part of peace vigils, rallies, and gatherings. Drumming for Peace is an organization based in Lancaster, Pa., co-directed by Leo Hartshorn and Heidi Beth Wert, that uses rhythm, drumming, and stories of peace drums to teach and perform public witness for peace through programs such as Found Sounds



Drumming for Peace ensemble Commit No Violence with Nobel Peace Prize recipient Archbishop Desmond Tutu.



(school program), Commit No Violence (drumming ensemble), A Joyful Noise (church program), PEACE K.I.D.S. (for younger children), The Healing Drum (for people with special needs), and Revelation 7:9 (a multi-ethnic musical group). We encourage you to use your frame drum to “drum for peace.”

This peace drum can be used as an instrument of peace in numerous ways:

- Play it in worship settings
- Play it along with peace songs
- Use the drum to lead rhythmic peace chants
- Play rhythms while marching for peace
- Form a group of drummers for peace

## Benefits of Buying This Drum

By purchasing this drum you not only have the benefit of owning your own peace drum and using it in promoting peace, but you are also benefiting the work of peacemaking in the U.S. and beyond. Sales from this drum support the Peace and Justice Support Network of Mennonite Church USA, a network that provides peace and justice resources to individuals, congregations and conferences.

For more information on PJSN and its resources go to our web site: <http://peace.mennolink.org>. Your purchase of this drum also supports the work of Ten Thousand Villages, which provides vital, fair income to people in developing countries by marketing their handicrafts in North America. For information on Ten Thousand Villages go to their web site: <http://www.tenthousandvillages.com>.

The persons particularly benefited from your purchase will be those artisans in India who made this frame drum. For three generations a family in Kolkata has been making musical instruments, including these damfa drums. One master artisan and two other people are responsible for making this damfa, a frame drum, from the soft Deodar wood (from Deo=God and dar=wood). In the Indian village the damfa is used with folk and religious songs. It is often brightly hand painted with vegetable colors.

For more information on the Peace and Justice Support Network or Drumming for Peace contact:

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Count: 1 & 4  
 Strokes: DOM & TAK