

MAKE
YOUR OWN

**DID
YOU KNOW**

The Spanish word for box is "caja". The word "cajón" means "big box" in Spanish.

CAJÓN

A Drum Shaped Like a Box



On the coast of Peru and in several other Latin American countries you'll find a drum that is square. Originally made out of dresser drawers or crates used in shipping, this instrument has an amazing sound all it's own. Played like any other drum, you can strike it with your hands, palms and fingers to create wonderful rhythms.



Make It!

A cajón is basically a box with a round-shaped sound hole. To make your own, start with a cardboard box of any size - even a shoe box will work. For a sturdier project, you can buy a wooden box at a craft store or look for one at a produce store. An adult with basic woodworking skills can also help you to assemble a wooden box to begin your project. Next, you'll need a sound hole, the place where the sound will escape.

Draw and cut a circle from your cardboard box or have an adult help with the preparation for the heavier wooden boxes. Although most sound holes are round, you could experiment with other sizes and shapes and see what happens!

Decorate It!

If your cajón is made of paper or cardboard, use anything you like to decorate it. Paper, paint, ribbons, stickers, photos, drawings, sharpie pens or rubber stamps are great choices. If you are working with wood, you can also use paint and pens and you may wish to add a coat of lacquer afterward to keep your designs from fading.

Play It!

All drumming consists of creating a series of patterns with sounds. Strike your box and get to know its different tones. Listen for the "boom" sound in the middle and the "tap" sound when you strike the edges of the box. Then mix and match what you find to make beats. As you play with the sounds, it's easy to discover how rhythm patterns might fit with your favorite songs.



Your cajón box drum will sound especially good when played with any type of music from Latin America!

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