

Mexican Guiro

The Mexican guiro might look familiar to you, since it has become a popular rhythm instrument across North America. The guiro is one of the oldest Latin American instruments, with its history tracing back to the native tribes that originally lived there.

The guiro is traditionally made from a hollowed-out gourd. Notches are cut into the gourd, and a stick or bone is scraped across the notches to produce a rhythm. Although many guiros are now made from hollowed wood, they all work in the same way.

The guiro is usually played by holding it in your left hand, with the thumb and index finger inserted into the sound holes on back. Then, your right hand plays the guiro with the scraper. Younger children may find it easier to hold the guiro by its base.

For many centuries, the Mexican guiro has been used as an accompaniment to ceremonial music and dances. Over time, it has become a common instrument in all sorts of folk and popular music.