

What is Mridangam?

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About Mridangam:

- It is **one of the oldest Indian percussion instruments**, originating **2,000 years ago**.
- This traditional instrument is found in **various parts of South India**.
- It is a **popular bifacial drum of Carnatic music** and is used as an **accompaniment in South Indian Classical music**.
- It is also **known by** the name of **maddal or maddalam**.
- It is **held across the lap and played on both ends with the hands and fingers**.
- A **similar instrument, the pakhavaj, is played in** the Hindustani tradition of **northern India**, as well as in Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- **Making process:**
 - The body of the mridangam is scooped out of a **single block of wood**.
 - **Jack wood or redwood is the ideal choice** of mridangam makers, but the wood of the morgosa tree or the core of the coconut tree and the palm tree is also used for this purpose.
 - **Shape:** It is shaped **like a barrel whose right head is a little smaller than the left**.
 - **Layered parchments**, fastened to leather hoops and kept intact and **tight by leather braces**, control the skin tension.

- At times, **small pieces of wood are also put in between these braces to facilitate the tuning.**
 - A **removable patch of tuning paste is affixed to each end**, giving the drum a **definite pitch.**
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Q1) What is pakhavaj?

Pakhawaj is a percussion instrument made of wood, parchment, leather, and black paste. This traditional instrument is found in various parts of North India. Majorly used in North Indian classical concerts particularly with 'Dhrupad' and 'Dhamar' style of music and with the instruments played in Dhrupad style such as Been, Rabab, Surbahar, etc. Also a solo instrument.

Source: [Legendary mridangam maestro Karaikudi Mani dies](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/what-is-mridangam/>

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