

# GOURD band

For those with a green thumb as well as a love for music, what could be more satisfying than growing your own musical instruments? Gourds are a great way to experiment making instruments of all shapes and sizes and from cultures around the globe. Put them all together, and voila: you've got yourself a global gourd band!

Regarded as the first plant ever to be domesticated by humans, gourds have been grown and used around for the world for thousands of years. They have been used as storage containers, water vessels, masks, pipes, bath sponges, birdhouses, and resonating chambers for musical instruments such as drums, shakers, koras and sitars.

The Yoruba people of Nigeria added natural beads and shells to netting, which they draped over a gourd to create a musical rattle called the *shekere*. When the gourd is shaken or slapped, the beads strike the gourd shell and make a nice rhythmic sound. The *shekere* is now a popular instrument in many countries and music traditions around the world.

**For step-by-step instructions on how to make a gourd *shekere* shaker, visit the Dig Art! website: [www.hort.cornell.edu/gbl/digart](http://www.hort.cornell.edu/gbl/digart)**



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