

Musical Instruments

Music is an integral part of Indian culture. Festivals are incomplete without a background of music, such as the playing of the *shehnai* or the *dhol* (double-sided barrel style traditional Indian drum) in the northern part of India, or *nadaswaram* or the *thavil* (similar to the dhol, but slightly different in shape) in the southern part of India. Temple devotees sing bhajans accompanied by the *manjiras* (small cymbals connected with strings), *tabla*, and the *harmonium*, to spiritually transcendent effect.

The music of the Indian subcontinent is usually divided into two major traditions of classical music: Hindustani music of North India and Carnatic music of South India, although many regions of India also have their own musical traditions that are independent of these.

Instruments most commonly used in Hindustani classical music are the sitar, sarod, tanpura, shehnai, sarangi, and tabla; while instruments commonly used in Karnatak classical music include the tambura, vina, mridangam, kanjira, and violin.

The celestial musicians of the gods, the Gandharvas, are depicted as demigods who entertain the gods with music. The Gods themselves are depicted as holding musical instruments.

Krishna plays the *baansuri* (flute), which enchanted animals and humans alike. Goddess of the Arts, Saraswati, plays the *veena*. The *veena*'s structure is said to be anthropomorphic, with its head and vocal chords, and the resonant gourd body.

On the spiritual side, the Unstruck Melody, or the Music of the Spheres, the inner resonant melody is the one said to be sought by humanity, and all external music is said to point to this inner melody.

The cabinet features small sized reproductions of instruments such as the harmonium tabla, dhol and sarod, a stringed instrument, being played by a trio of musicians.

1. <https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/music-music-and-religion-india>
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Indian_musical_instruments
3. https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/indi/hd_indi.htm#:~:text=Instruments%20most%20commonly%20used%20in,mrdangam%2C%20kanjira%2C%20and%20violin.
4. www.livehistoryindia.com
5. www.heritage-india.com
6. Wikimedia commons