

Thank you for purchasing one of my Lotus Drums, you probably waited a long time and now that it's in your hands you're probably thinking, "how do I play this and how do I take care of it?". I'm writing this in order to help answer those questions for you.

Playing your drum

First of all, let's take a moment to understand what "it" is; the Lotus Drum is an enclosure with various 'areas tuned to different pitches composing a musical scale. The scales vary, but the arrangement is always the same. *Practice working your way all the way up, and all the way down while alternating hands. This will familiarize your subconscious and help develop motor-memory.*

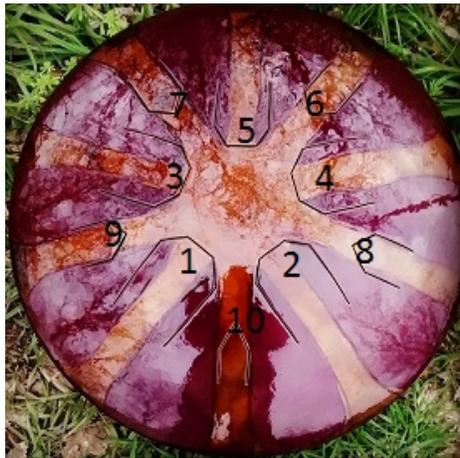


Figure 1

The notes are arranged in an alternating pattern starting at #1 (the lowest note) and moving up to #10 (the highest note). On many of the more recent drums I have also tuned the shell to a pitch harmonizing with the rest of the scale and usually one step from note #10. This "hidden note" can be accessed by striking the center of the drum. When I play any percussive instrument I like to find a "resting zone" where the rhythm can be maintained without making much sound. The center is a wonderful place for this "off beat" resting action when playing with the thumbs or fingers.

Often, when I hand a drum to a novice they bang on it with their palms and get no sound at all. The best way I can explain without a video is this; *imagine that you are touching a very hot surface, a boiling pot of water or a hot skillet and get your fingers away from it as soon as you make contact!*

Also, playing with the palms won't get you very far. You want to play with the side of your thumb for the best sound from the hands. You can also play with the index or middle finger; I utilize the thumb, index and middle depending on where I am and where I want to go. The key is in a quick motion, moving away from the surface **as soon as contact is made**. Visualize a hot stove, you definitely don't want to keep your hand there for long!

Sound is generated through the vibration of the steel echoing inside of the shell and exiting as sound waves. When you keep your hand on it for too long you are muffling the vibration and keeping the note from ringing. This can become a technique when understood and controlled. Playing shorter and longer notes will allow for more exploration.

To fast forward and begin playing without or before developing hand-technique you can also very easily play with mallets, but not just any mallet. Be *very careful* in your choice of mallets as some will yield wonderfully soothing tones while others could potentially *damage* your instrument.

The ideal mallet will be very soft, the softer the better. **Never use mallets made from wood, rubber or plastic.** Making a set of mallets is easy and you can customize them to fit your needs. If you can't locate suitable mallets in your area feel free to contact me and I'll make a pair for you. Mallets provide a different experience in comparison to playing with the hands. I find them to be very meditative and because they do not interfere with vibrations, the sound can fill the room as a Tibetan Singing Bowl does.

Caring for your drum

Your drum is made of steel and is painted with resilient paints. It is not indestructible and can be damaged in a number of ways.

Do not take your drum to the beach.

Do not pour water on your drum or fill your drum with water, do not take your drum swimming.

Do not leave it outside overnight(the morning dew will begin the erosion process)

Do not hit it with hard mallets, they are like little hammers(I have seen drums where the paint was knocked off and the steel was mauled from hard mallets hitting the surface).

Remove all rings and bracelets before playing

Keep your drum in a safe place away from the elements when not in use.

You can clean your drum with a soft towel.

Use common sense.

Meditation

Music is the great communicator. It is a bridge between the spirit/unseen and the physical planes. Whenever we play music, even things as simple as clapping our hands, dancing ecstatically, or *humming an improvised tune*, we open an opportunity to distract the mind from itself and allow our subconscious to flow freely and communicate with our Higher Self. Through practice we can empty our minds and let our spirits fly and cleanse themselves. Music can be a great Healer when allowed to be. Let your hearts be filled of music, let your lives be filled with joy, let's meet together in the cosmos and join the mystic dance of the Everything.

Namaste

I love you

We are One

Let us grow and evolve into our greatest potential