

## How Marimbas Make Sound

A marimba is a **percussion** instrument. Marimbas have rows of wooden keys, or **tone plates**. Marimba players use sticks, or **mallets**, to hit the tone plates.



The length of the tone plate affects the sound: a longer tone plate makes a lower sound, and a shorter sound plate makes a higher sound. The **volume** of a marimba's sound depends on how hard or gently a player hits the tone plates. Underneath each tone plate is a tube. The tubes **amplify** the sounds, or make them louder.



Different kinds of mallets make different sounds on the marimba. Mallets can be hard or soft. A marimba player can hold one, two, or three mallets in each hand.

When a player hits the tone plates with the mallets, the tone plates vibrate. The mallets bounce off the tone plates so the vibrations can last a long time.

Marimbas come in different sizes. A marimba band has many different marimbas, and their sounds work together to make layers of music.

### Citations:

Photo 1: <http://blog.costarican-american-connection.com/marimba-wood-sings/>

Photo 2: [https://www.yamaha.com/en/musical\\_instrument\\_guide/marimba/structure/structure002.html](https://www.yamaha.com/en/musical_instrument_guide/marimba/structure/structure002.html)

Additional information: [https://www.vsl.co.at/en/Marimba/Sound\\_Production](https://www.vsl.co.at/en/Marimba/Sound_Production)

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