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## **Intro: Styrofoam Maracas**

These may look like baseball bats, but they are musical instruments -- maracas.

Maracas get their sound from many loose objects, such as seeds, inside a hollow container (such as a gourd). It is usually on a stick handle.

Well, these maracas are not better or worse than others -- just different.

The tops have been hollowed out and small containers of seeds have been placed inside them.

The foam not only acts as a handle, but it can also be used as a sort of drum stick, for tapping against one's body, or other objects to get that sound as an overlay on the maraca sound.

In the last step, you can hear the sound they make.



## **step 1: Shaping the Styrofoam**

I started off with a big piece of 4 inch-thick Styrofoam I purchased years ago from a refrigeration supply store. (I use Styrofoam a lot in sculpture, for one thing.)

I cut the basic shape out with a hand saw first, and then touched it up with a course file and sandpaper. It is very easy to shape.

Beware of the little flakes of Styrofoam that will land on the floor and blow all over the place, if you let them. I work indoors where there is no breeze and catch them in a big plastic box as they fall. I mix the foam "sawdust" with cement later, as a filler material, and use it in sculpture.

One could decorate the Styrofoam, I suppose, to make it prettier. I don't mind bare bones functionality in this case. The sound is more important to me than the looks.



#### Image Notes

1. Scraps after cutting the maracas from a big piece of foam.
2. The tip has been sawed off, prior to hollowing out a space for the seed container.

### step 2: The Seeds

There is a plant here called "maraca" that, surprisingly enough, produces maraca seeds. The instrument apparently took its name from the maraca seeds that were traditionally used to fill it. They are hard and round little seeds, like BB's.

I put the seeds in a plastic film can (In this digital world, are they antiques yet?), and buried the can inside the foam by cutting off the top and drilling a hole with a wood bit. After placing the can in the hole, a little wood glue stuck the top back on again. I held it temporarily with masking tape until the glue dried.





### step 3: Hear the Maracas

Click the thumbnail icon below (looks like a blank piece of paper with the corner bent over), to open the .mp3 audio file.

I hope you enjoy hearing the Styrofoam maracas

### File Downloads



**MARACA.mp3** (451 KB)

[NOTE: When saving, if you see .tmp as the file ext, rename it to 'MARACA.mp3']

## Related Instructables



**The Biggest and Baddest Maracas in The World** (video) by wildwood



**Appleseed Maracas** by Artanus



**Music instruments** (slideshow) by MichelMoermans



**Paper Balloon** by kid123



**How to be a better "Jam" musician** by Gypsyman



**Play music by test tube (Water music organ )** by farzadbayan