

# BALLOON DRUMS



Bash The Trash builds, performs and educates with musical instruments made from reused and repurposed materials. They combine science, music and environmental awareness in performances, programs and social initiatives, reaching over 60,000 students a year in the New York City metro area, online, and nationwide through a network of regional performers. [www.bashthetrash.com](http://www.bashthetrash.com)

Drums can be difficult to make because it can be hard to stretch the membrane (drum head) tight enough. Typically around the world people make their drums by using animal skin which tends to tighten as it dries. Luckily our industrial world provides us with a perfect alternative material to use - balloons!

**WARNING - Don't build this instrument if you have latex allergies!**

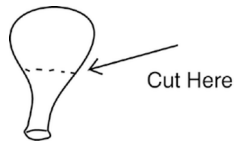
## YOU WILL NEED:

- One or two pieces of sturdy cardboard tube **OR** glass jars, aluminum cans, or toilet paper rolls (for small drums)
- A 10" balloon
- Duct or packing tape

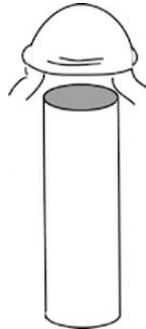
**Caution!** Instructions include common-sense simple tool use. You, the user, need to take all precautions to keep yourself safe.....

**watch John Bertles' how-to video:**  
[bit.ly/balloondrums](http://bit.ly/balloondrums)

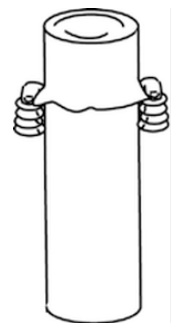
1. Cut the balloons as shown and discard the valve. (You can also make a supremely annoying wind instrument by blowing through the cut valve, but you didn't hear it from me...)



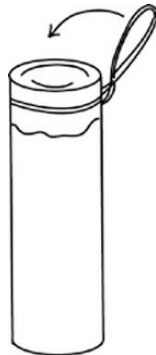
2. Stretch the "cap" of the balloon over the open end of the tube.



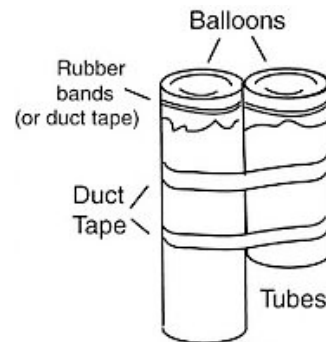
3. Pull the balloon as hard as you can down the tube. The tighter you stretch the balloon, the higher the pitch, and vice versa.



4. Wrap a length of duct tape (or a rubber band) tightly around the balloon to prevent it from slipping.



5. (Optional) Repeat steps 1-4 to make a second drum, and wrap duct tape around the tubes to hold them together (two lengths of duct tape ensures better stability).



When playing the tube drums, don't close off the bottom by putting them on a flat surface, but rather, hold them between your legs for better sound. Lightly tap on the balloons with your fingers (don't use a pencil or stick). For a louder sound you can pinch a bit of balloon and pluck it.