

HOW TO MAKE A BOLANG GU



MAXWELL
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WHAT IS IT?

A bolang gu is a traditional Chinese pellet drum, noisemaker, and toy. A pellet drum has two heads and two pellets attached to the drum by a cord. Twisting the instrument causes the pellets to hit the drum in a rhythmic fashion.



Above:
Bolang Gu, Tibet, 1925-1968,
Maxwell Museum 68.59.204

MATERIALS

Materials Needed:

- empty cardboard tape roll
- two cardboard circles
- a chop stick, pencil or other straight stick
- heavy craft string about 20" in length
- two beads, buttons, small metal washers, or bolts
- craft paper
- Duck tape, electrical tape, or any thick colored tape
- glue stick
- scissors
- pencil
- Phillips head screwdriver, awl or electric drill (for adult use only)



INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Prepare two cardboard circles by tracing around the tape roll on some cardboard from an old desk calendar, cereal box or cracker box and cut them out.
- 2) Using the awl, screwdriver, or electric drill (for adult use only), make holes in the center of the tape roll 90°, 180° and 270° from the top.
- 3) Insert the chopstick into the bottom hole and push it up until it reaches the top of the tape roll.
- 4) Tie the string around the chopstick in the center of the tape roll and string each end through the holes on each side.
5. Tie each bead to the ends of the string so that each bead will reach to the center of the tape roll.
6. Use the cardboard circles to trace circles on the craft paper and cut them out.
7. Glue the cardboard circles on each side of the tape roll.
8. Wrap a piece of tape along the edge of the tape roll up to the point of each cardboard circle. Press down firmly.
9. Glue the craft paper to the cardboard circles on each side of the tape roll.
10. Your drum is now finished! Twist it back and forth or roll the chopstick between your palms to play it.

