Five Categories of Musical Instruments

Classification system devised in India in the 3rd or 4th century BC.
What is an instrument?

• Anything with which we can make music?
• Rhythm, melody, chords,
• Pitched or un-pitched sounds...
• Narrow definitions vs. Extremely broad definitions
Tone Colour or Timbre

(pronounced TAM-ber)

• Refers to the sound of a note or pitch, not the pitch itself.

• Different instruments have different timbres.
1. Aerophones

- Wind instruments, anything using air
- Aerophones are generally either:
  - **Woodwind** (Doesn’t have to be wood i.e. flute)
  - **Reed** (Small piece of wood i.e. saxophone)
  - **Brass** (Lip vibration i.e. trumpet)
1. Wind Instruments (Aerophones)

- **Saxophone:**

- In the reeds family of aerophones
1. Wind Instruments (Aerophones)

- **Tenor Saxophone:**
  Ex: Maceo Parker – “Maceo” (1970)
  Ex: Rolling Stones – “Brown Sugar” (1971)
  Sax: Bobby Keys

Ex: Rusty Bryant – “Night Train” (1970)

- John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Charlie Parker
1. Wind Instruments (Aerophones)

- **Soprano Saxophone:**
  Ex: John Coltrane – “My Favorite Things” (1961)

- **Baritone Saxophone:**
  Ex: Charles Mingus – “Moanin’” (1960)
    Sax: Pepper Adams

- **Alto Saxophone:**
  Ex: George Michael – “Careless Whisper”
    Sax: Steve Gregory
1. Wind Instruments (Aerophones)

- **Trumpet:**
- Brass family of aerophones
- Military
1. Wind Instruments (Aerophones)

- **Trumpet:**
- Ex: Miles Davis – “Freddie Freeloader” (1959)
- Ex: James Brown – “Gittin’ A Little Hipper” (1969)
- Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie
1. Wind Instruments (Aerophones)

• **Trumpet:**

• Mute

Ex: *Wah Wah Trumpet Sound*

Ex: Miles Davis—“Oleo (live)” (1961)
1. Wind Instruments (Aerophones)

- Trombone:
  
- Ex: Don Drummond and the Skatalites– “Heavenless” (early 1960s)

- Ex: The Specials – “A Message to You Rudy” (1979)
1. Wind Instruments (Aerophones)

- **Harmonica:**
  - "Free-reed" instrument
  - Same family as accordion

- Ex: Muddy Waters – “I Just Want to Make Love To You” (1954)
- Ex: Howlin’ Wolf – “Moanin’ At Midnight” (1951)
- Ex: Neil Young – “Heart of Gold” (1972)
2. Chordophones

- All stringed instruments
- Chordophones are either: bowed (violin), plucked (guitar), or hammered (piano).
Stringed Instruments (Chordophones)

• **Violin/Fiddle** – difference?

• Ex: Hank Williams –
  “I Got a Mansion on the Hill” (1948)

• Ex: Buck Owens –
  “Under Your Spell Again” (1959)

• Ex: Marvin Gaye –
  “I Heard It Through the Grapevine” (1968)
Bass Guitar/Electric Bass

Ex: Black Uhuru –
  “Guess Who’s Coming To Dinner” (1979)
Ex: Limp Bizkit – “Re-Arranged” (1999)
Stringed Instruments (Chordophones)

- **Pedal Steel Guitar or Lap Steel Guitar**
  
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrbSL92Kz1Y

- **Slide**

Ex: Buck Owens – “Together Again” (1964)

3. Membranophones

- All drums with heads
  (i.e. not percussion instruments like shakers)
Drums (Membranophones)

• **Drum Kit or Drum Set**

• **Origins**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wea_zXuLcP0
Drums (Membranophones)

- **Hand Drums: Djembe and Conga**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llbRuIm9MxI
4. Idiophones

• Includes most percussion instruments that are not drums.
• Xylophones, maracas, etc.
Percussion (Idiophones)

• **Vibraphone or Vibes**
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ywJ8APgP67Q

• Damper pedal

**Ex:** Bill Jennings – “Glide On” (1960)
Percussion (Idiophones)

- **Cowbell**

Ex: Rolling Stones – “Honky Tonk Women” (1971)
Ex: War – “Low Rider” (1975)

https://vimeo.com/55624839