

Design Resource

## Dholak waale - Thanisandra

Folk Drum Player

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S.,

Lija M. G. and Shruti K.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/dholak-waale-thanisandra>

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<http://www.dsource.in/resource/dholak-waale-thanisandra/introduction>

## Introduction

The people carries and play with the dholak or dhol, goes around the streets of Bengaluru making different sounds from dholaks with the rhythm of high and low pitches where the people are referred to as Dholakwaale or dholakwalas. These people go around playing and cheering the children around there by the children force their parents in buying one for them to spend their time drumming around and playing with during vacations. Dholakwaale's live in tents with their families in the Thanisandra region of Bengaluru, Karnataka. It is believed that these people came to Bengaluru 20 years back and from then keep wandering from region to region in the city selling the dholaks. It is believed that the dholakwaale originate from the Fatehpur, Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh state of India. They usually belong to the Usmani community who earlier was distinctively known for the dholaks made from the wood. Mango, Teak or Jackfruit wood is preferred for the dholak, purchased from Moradabad. Rest of the materials is gathered from neighboring places of their village. As per the artisan they make and sell the cardboard dholak more in the summer season (Month of March, April and May).

Membrane of dholaks are the leather (skins of animal) covered on the two ends of the cardboard cylindrical rolls by giving a resonating chamber for the resulting sound. The leather usually preferred for the dholaks are usually made up of goat which is tanned and purchased from Kanpur region of Maharashtra. If the leathers are not in good condition it is washed, dried under direct sunlight and utilized further. This type of dholak is usually made for the children to play around which is said to be developed from the wood dholak which was actually prepared previously. Nowadays these people prepare the dholak with wood only on the requirement of the customer.



Body of the dholaks are polished and kept for drying.

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Barrel shaped wooden dholak carved with floral designs.



Cardboard rolls are painted with brown shade to make dholaks.



Work environment of the craftsmen.



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Craftsmen ensure the sound and rhythm of the drum by playing.



Membrane is attached to the body of the dholak using cotton rope.



Craftsman's family involved in Dholak making.



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Designs are carved to make the dholak which adds value.

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## Tools and Raw Materials

For the wood and the cardboard dholak's following are the tools and raw materials used. Wood preferred for the making of the dholaks are either Mango, Jackfruit, Teak wood. Cardboard rolls usually left as a waste is collected and made to the required shape and sizes. Cardboard rolls are mainly used as the children instrument as these have only certain period as their durability.

### Tools:

- **Knife (Chaku)** - Knife used in cutting.
- **Rapi** - Rapi is used for removing wax and cutting the designs to required form.
- **Stone** - It is used for polishing and to sharp the Rapi.
- **Hammer (Hathodi)** – Hammer to make rings.
- **Needle(Suha)** - Needle to stitch and insert.
- **Scissors** - These are used to cut the ropes as per required size and form.
- **Brush** - to apply the polish.
- **Plate** - It is used to mix the mixture.

### Raw Materials:

- **Wood Polish (Shellac)** - It is coated on the wood for shine and fine finishing.
- **Bamboo Sticks** - These are used to tie the leather sheets
- **Sahi-kare** - A mixture of lambi, grease, used engine oil and chalk powder
- **Wood Dholak** - Wood of Mango, Teak or Jackfruit is preferred.
- **Rings** - Iron rings for the cardboard dholaks and steel rings for wooden dholaks.
- **Adhesive** - To fasten the two rolls together.



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Different types of tools are used in Dholak making process.

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Bee wax provides shine to the Dholak body.



Goat skin is used to prepare the leather membrane.



Khatha is used to make the color solution.



Cardboard rolls purchased from textile industries.

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Bamboo is cut into thin strips to make rings.



Metal rings are used to tighten the membrane for better tuning.



Sharp blade is used to carve design on dholak.

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Barrel shaped dholak body is made from mango wood.



Wood polish applied on the body of dholak to give shine.



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Membrane and body of the dholak is tied with cotton rope.

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## Making Process

Traditionally dholak is made from wood but nowadays several forms like cardboards are also used. Mango, Teak or Jackfruit wood is preferred for the wood dholak. During the summer season artist make and sell the cardboard dholak on large scale.



Bamboo Rings



Cardboard Dholak



Wooden Dholak

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## Bamboo Rings

Thin strips of bamboo are extracted from hollow bamboo sticks. It is used as rings to fasten membrane. These strips are soaked into the water to increase their flexibility. Bamboo strip is rolled around the end of the dholak to form a ring. The rings are placed on the dholak body to ensure the measurements.



Hollow bamboo cut to strips is used as rings to fasten membrane.

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Bamboo logs are cut into half with a help of sharp knife.



Bamboo is cut into thin sticks.



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Thin strips are extracted from bamboo sticks.



Rough edges are scraped out with knife.



Bamboo strips are soaked in water to make them flexible.



Bamboo strip is rolled around the end of dholak to get the measurement for the membrane.

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Bamboo strip is rolled to form a ring and tied with cotton thread.



Extra length is cut.



Prepared bamboo rings.



The rings are placed on the dholak body to ensure the measurements.

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## Cardboard Dholak

Dholaks are made of cardboard rolls and wood, cardboard rolls purchased through middlemen which are the leftover from textile industries. As cardboard rolls vary as per size and thickness it is evened with by removing the extra thickness from the rolls for the cardboard to get the good sound. Generally two cardboard rolls are fixed to get a size close to (one) feet, which is suitable for kids. First step is to fix the two cardboard rolls and dried under direct sunlight.

A mixture of Kataha (paan ka maale or color kataha) is mixed with water and chunna (lime stone), brushed to the surface of the cardboard and dried completely. Patterns are made on the outer surface is cut as per the requirement into the required shapes that adds value. The goat leather is soaked in the water for about 10-15 minutes and squeezed. Soap is applied on the leather sheets to which the bamboo sticks made to the ring form are placed on the leather sheets and locked. The mixture of sahi-kare (mixture of lambi (scorpion shells of tropical waters), grease, used engine oil and chalk ka mutti (lime stone powder)) is applied at the center and dried for some time for the sound production of the taal. Sahi-kare must be applied with only the required thickness.

The body of the cardboard roll is coated with a layer of wax for better finish after which it is scrap with the rapi tool to smoothen the surface. It is then applied with a coat of wood polish for the final finish. As the leather with the bamboo rings are made it is joined to the two ends of the cardboard rolls with the rope moving in a zigzag manner along with iron rings at one end for the production of the taal (rhythm).

Membrane and body (roll) are fasten using twine, stitched at seven places in a zigzag manner by adding metal rings along with the for producing the taal. Usually the number stitching may increase from 7 to 9, 11 or 13 as the size of dholak increases with minimum of 7 knots for the production of the sound (rhythm).



Excess material of the cardboard rolls are removed to reduce the weight.

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Reducing the weight of the roll helps the kids in handling.



Mixture of lime stone solution and Kataha is used as color on rolls.



The prepared solution is applied on the roll.



Using a shoe polishing brush, color is applied evenly.

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The colored roll is dried under direct sunlight.



Bee wax is rubbed on the dried roll.



Surface of the roll is smoothen and the excess wax is scraped out using a knife.

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With the help of a sharp blade patterns are carved on the roll.



Carved pattern makes the dholak attractive and eye catching.



Wood turpentine is applied on the carved cardboard roll.



Wood turpentine gives dark shade of color, which enhances the finish.

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Craftsmen displaying the difference of plain and carved cardboard rolls.



Leather (membrane) in circular shape is soaked in water.



The leather wrapped on a bamboo ring to prepare a membrane for the dholak.



Another bamboo strip is inserted to prevent the leather from coming out.

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Excess membrane is cut using a knife.



A mixture prepared of Sahi Kare, grease, lime stone solution and used engine oil is applied on the membrane.



The applied mixture helps to produce better sound and taal when the dholak is played.



Membrane is fasten to on either sides of dholak's body, where the surface on which the mixture is applied faces inside the roll.

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Craftsmen ties both side of the membrane at 7 places with the help of cotton ropes adding the metal rings.



The ropes are tightly pulled and tied in the end.



The metal rings are added to tune the sound accordingly.

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## Wooden Dholak

Wood dholaks are made from mango, jackfruit or teak wood which is brought from Moradabad. Solid/seasoned wood is processed and made hallow to the required size (1.5 feet to 2 feet) and dried under direct sunlight for further process.

Dholak generates two kinds of sounds, dhab-dhab side (right side while playing) the mixture of sahi-kare (mixture of lambi (scorpion shells of tropical waters), grease, used engine oil and chalk ka mutti (lime stone powder)) is applied at the center and dried for some time for the sound production of the taal. Sahi-kare must be applied with only the required thickness, if less there will be no sound produced and if more the sound produced won't be of the needed tune. Therefore care should be taken to apply the right quantity of the mixture only to the sides of the Dholak.

Wood dholaks are made only on the demand of the customer. Earlier usmani community was known for the dholaks made from the wood.



Body of wooden dholak is made out of mango wood.

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The mixture of Kataha, water and lime stone powder is applied on the barrel.



The solution is applied evenly.



The colored barrel is kept to dry.

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Wood turpentine is applied on the barrel.



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Polish gives a darker shade and shine.



Leather sheet is cut and soaked in water, before creating the sidewall (membrane).



The sheet is rolled and inserted inside the ring.



Supporting bamboo strip is inserted to lock the leather sheet and to prevent unlock.

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Image of the prepared membrane.



Membrane is soaked in water and kept to soften it.



A mixture prepared of Sahi Kare, grease, engine oil and lime stone powder is applied inside the membrane and fasten to the barrel.



Cotton rope helps to fasten membrane and body.

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The membrane is tied to both side of the dholak in a criss-cross manner.



Ropes are tied at 9 places and pulled to stiffen the membrane.



Metal rings helps in fine-tuning of the sound.



The extra rope is tied on both ends and used as a band to hold.

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Craftsmen play the dholak to confirm the sound effects.



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## Products

Dholaks are played when it struck with both hands which is one of the folk drum of northern India. This is usually of barrel (hallow) shaped with goat leather (tanned skin) on both sides.

As per the artisan some of the products are:

1. Rhamba samba
2. Cango
3. Tabla
4. Jambae (UP)
5. Djembe
6. Dholak
7. Damroo

Dholaks are varied based on the plain and design surface which usually attracts the children. For small dholaks the rate varies from Rs. 200 to Rs. 250 and for bigger dholak it varies from Rs. 300 to Rs. 350. Even wooden dholak with carvings for aesthetics costs more than Rs 5000.



Simple designed wooden dholak.

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Well-crafted wooden dholak.



Wooden dholak named as Rhabba samba.



Design Resource

## Dholak waale - Thanisandra

Folk Drum Player

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S.,

Lija M. G. and Shruti K.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/dholak-waale-thanisandra/products>



Small cardboard roll dholak, used as showpiece or toy for children.



Different type of dholak producing varieties of sounds.



The dholak comes in many shapes and sizes with different designs.

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## Video



Dholak waale - Thanisandra

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### Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/dholak-waale-thanisandra/contact-details>

## Contact Details

This documentation was done by Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. Lija M. G. and Shruti K. at **NID Campus, Bengaluru**.

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You could write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

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