

Design Resource

Nadaswaram

The Art of Making Music Instrument

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Ms. Amruthalakshmi Rajagopalan and Ms. Anisha Crasto
NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/nadaswaram>



1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details

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Introduction

Nadaswaram is the popular music instrument which is played in pairs accompanied by Thavil (drums) in all auspicious occasions. Nadaswaram is a long hollowed instrument made of wood having seven holes in the body with a tip (mouth piece) at one end and a conical bore at the other end. It is a wind based instrument. One must need a strong lung power to blow the instrument through the mouth tip made of reed.

Narasingampettai is a small cluster located 40 km away from Thanjavur. It is well known for its traditional musical instrument production. The artisan with his well practiced skill makes the Nadaswaram. The wood is first cut into blocks and it is turned on the lathe machine. Once the long hollow shaped body is made, the seven holes are drilled on the body. Finally it is smoothed with sand paper and mouth tip is attached at the top and a conical bore is attached at the end. Nearly 5 to 6 families are involved in traditional Nadaswaram making in the village of Narasingampettai.

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2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details

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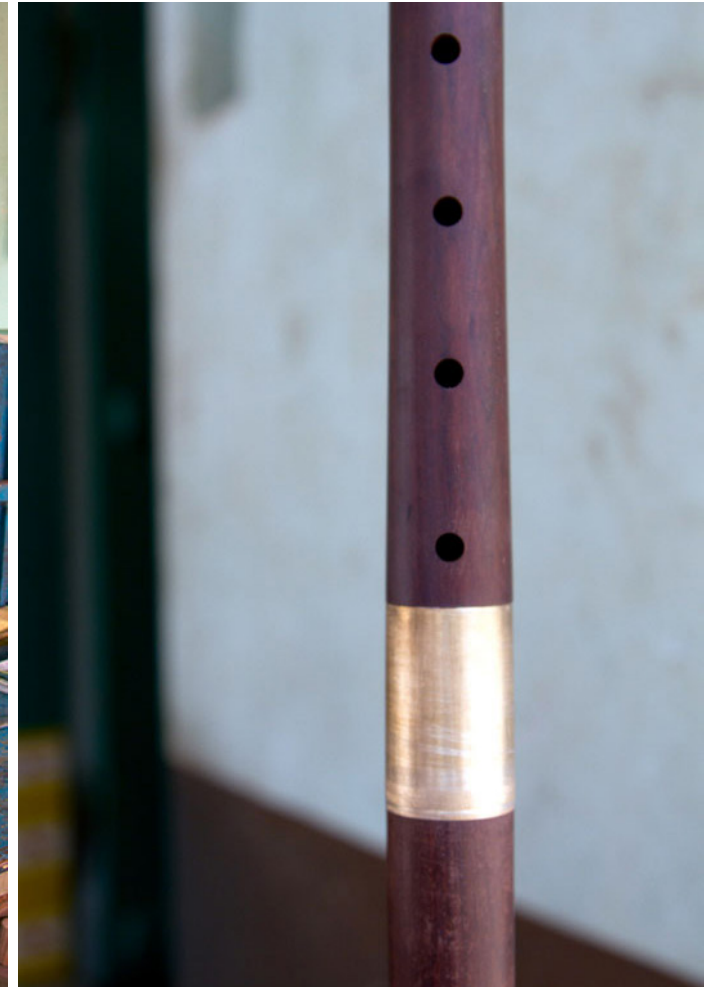
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1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details



Traditional Nadaswaram.



Nadaswaram with brass ring.

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Artisans with music instrument.



Skilled craftsmen are engaged in traditional method of Nadaswaram making.

1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Contact Details



Mouth tip made of reed.



Senior artisan at Narasingampettai.

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Village environment.



Various stages of making a Nadaswaram.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details



Turned conical bore.

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1. Introduction
2. **Tools and Raw Materials**
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details

Tools and Raw Materials

Tools:

Different types of chisels and sharp tools are used in the carving process. The surface of the wood is smoothed/ polished using sand paper. After smoothing, the body of Nadaswaram is drilled with a drilling tool to make holes. These holes are drilled accurately at equal intervals by marking them with the help of marker tool and a metal scale. The tip of instrument is made of natural reed.

Raw Materials:

The 'Wood' is the most important material required for making of the Nadaswaram. The wood is locally called as aacha maram. The wood is turned on the lathe machine. In Narasingampettai, two types of lathe machines are used. One lathe which runs with the help of electricity. The other lathe machine is traditional and operated manually by two persons using rope.



Drilling and marking tools.



Oil used while turning the wood.

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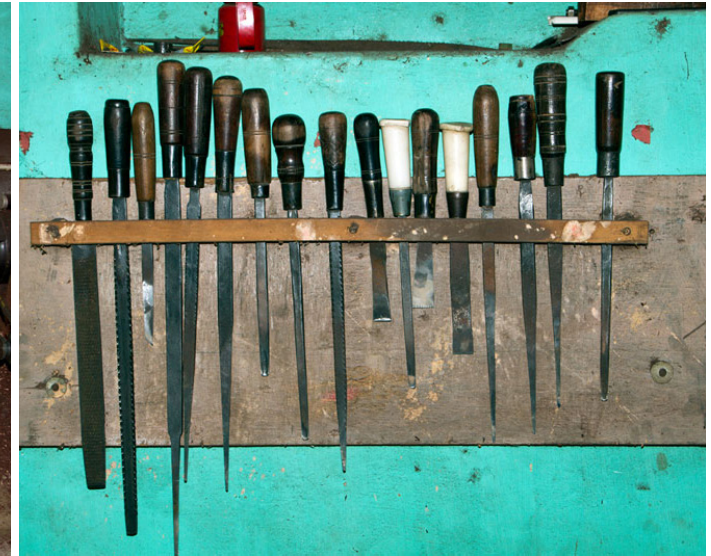
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Work environment at artisan's place.



Files and chisels of different sizes.

1. Introduction
2. **Tools and Raw Materials**
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details



Storage place for tools and small machines.



Aacha maram- wood used as basic raw material for Nadaswaram making.

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Sharp edged triangular files.



Lathe machine.

1. Introduction

2. **Tools and Raw Materials**

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Contact Details



Chisels of different sizes and hammer.



Sand paper used to smoothen the surface of wood.

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1. Introduction
2. **Tools and Raw Materials**
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details



Leaf of a coconut tree is used for measurement while drilling holes.



Tip of Nadaswaram made with reed.

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1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Contact Details

Making Process

Initially, the wood is turned on the lathe machine. The block of wood is inserted to lathe machine and then it is turned to create the long wood stick in circular shape. The inner part of stick is removed by piercing it with a sharp edged file. The body part of Nadaswaram is made into a shape of a pipe by removing the inner wood pulp. Then the hollowed wooden stick is smoothed and cleaned with normal water.

A straight line is then marked on the pipe using a thin rope which is coated with lime stone powder. The artisan drills seven holes using a drilling tool on the basis of the white line mark created by the rope. The seven holes are accurately drilled maintaining equal distance between them.

The base part of Nadaswaram is a large flaring bell. This is made of wood by turning it on the lathe machine. Upper part is said as mouth tip and made of reed. Both, the flaring bell and the reed tip are made separately and fixed to the body of Nadaswaram. The final product is checked for proper tuning before sending it to the market.



Artisan turning the wooden block on the lathe machine.



Turning is done to convert the wood piece into a circular wood stick.

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Traditional method of turning with rope.



Sharpening the file.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Contact Details



The file is inserted into the wooden stick while it is in motion.



The process of removing the inner pulp of wood.

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Water is poured on the wood to make it soft.



The excess inner wood pulp is washed with water.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
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The wooden pipe is cleaned.



Marking the straight line.

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Based on the line holes are marked.



Rough marking is done before drilling.



Drilling the holes.



A Nadaswaram will have seven holes for tuning.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
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5. Contact Details

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Nadaswaram of Different sizes.



Turning the flaring bell.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
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Smoothering the bell with rough file.



The bell is ready to be fixed in the Nadaswaram.

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Brass ring is inserted in the middle of instrument..



The final product.

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2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Contact Details

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/nadaswaram/products>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. **Products**
5. Contact Details

Products

Nadaswaram is one of the main classical musical instruments made in Tamil Nadu. It is a double-reed wind instrument with a large flaring bell. The wind instrument consumes tremendous lung power. The artisan blows uniformly through the blow tip. This is made of grass locally called Korukku Thatta. The length of instrument is two and a half feet long. This Nadaswaram is accompanied by a percussion instrument Thavi in all ritual and auspicious functions and music programs.



Nadaswaram with brass metal ring in the body.



Sharp edges and smooth finishing are the examples of expertise craftsmanship.

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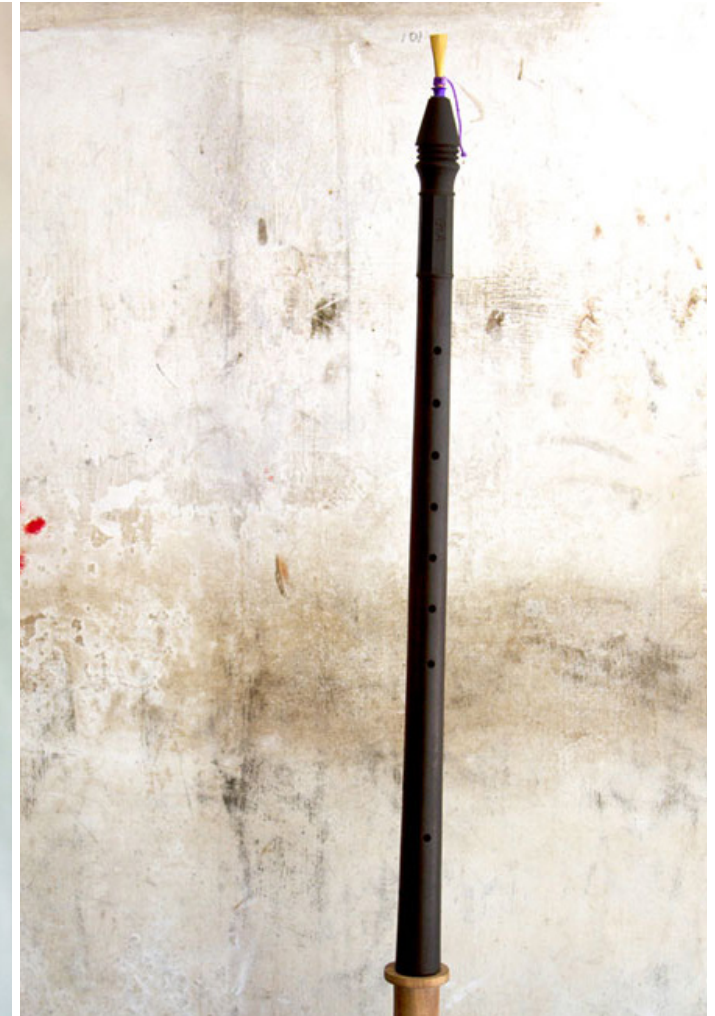
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1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. **Products**
5. Contact Details



Traditional Nadaswaram is a must in all auspicious occasions.



Simple Nadaswaram without brass metal.

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1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. **Contact Details**