



Let's Make a Big Box Bass!

You Will Need:

- A pole/broom handle
- Washing line
- A box
- A washer
- Safety scissors
- A small drill

A Box Bass or a Skiffle Bass is an instrument used in American folk music from the 1900s. It makes a fun twanging sound that's similar to a double bass. Let's find out how to make one!

The base of the bass is the box. This make can be made with a cardboard box, but a wooden box gives the best results.

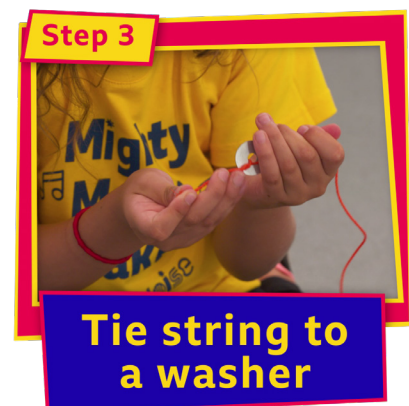
1. Have a responsible adult drill or poke a hole in the middle of the box. We're going to put the string through this hole, so you don't need to make it too large.



2. Next, cut the washing line. The length of the line needs to be longer than the pole, but if you make the line too long, you can trim the ends later.

Take the metal washer (a large one is preferred) and tie one end of the washing line to it.

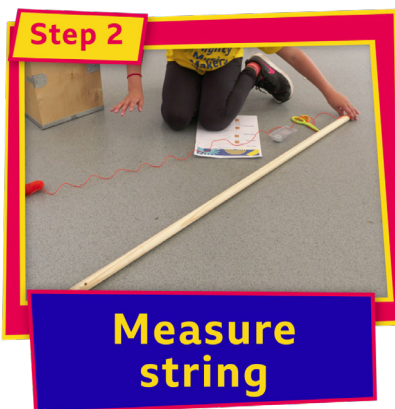
3. Thread the washing line from inside the box, so it comes out through the hole we made earlier. The washer we tied to the end stops the rest of the line from slipping through.



4. Take the pole, and hold it vertically at the corner of the box. Tie the loose end of the line to the top end of the pole.

You're now ready to play!

Play your big box bass by plucking on the washing line while holding the pole up straight.





How It Works

The Big Box Bass works similarly to large string instruments, like the double bass and the cello.

When the washing line is plucked with a finger, the line vibrates. The vibrations travel down the line and echo inside the box making the sound deep and booming.

The body of instruments like the double bass are hollow, giving room for the vibration of its strings to echo.



Make a Mini Box Bass

Want to scale down this make? You can make a desktop-sized version of this instrument simply by scaling down the items used.

An ice cream tub or plastic food container makes an excellent replacement for the box, a pen or pencil can replace the pole, and parcel string works great instead of the washing line.

Changing the size and material of the box changes the sound the bass makes. Have fun experimenting and see what sounds the best!

