

Make your Own Baschet Instruments: Easy music activities you can do at home

Recommended for ages 7+

By Jackie Maguire

The Baschet Sound Structures are intriguing musical sculptures designed and made by two artist brothers from France. The Ark was planning to bring these fun and unusual instruments to Dublin over Easter.

Even though sadly that couldn't happen in the end, musician Jackie Maguire has come up with these fun activities that you can do at home. You can make your own simple instruments inspired by the Baschet sculptures and then create your own music with them!

We would love to see and hear the results so do send us in your photos or audio files.



The Spirit of the Baschets' work

The Baschet brothers created striking visual sculptures that also produce sound and music. The brothers were interested in musical improvisation and creating electroacoustic, otherworldly types of music. The Baschet instruments are not standard instruments. They really lend themselves to improvisation and imagination – there's no wrong way to play them!

Perhaps you can find ways to make music with objects at home that you wouldn't normally think of as instruments?

So why not try and create your own version of two of the Baschet brothers' famous instruments - the **Cristal Baschet** and the **Percussion Baschet**?

If you're feeling particularly creative, you could also record your very own Baschet composition and send it in to The Ark.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED: THE INGREDIENTS!

2 x chopsticks (wooden preferably)

2/3 x stainless steel/metal mixing bowls

2/3 grills

2/3 pot lids of different sizes (small to large)

3 x large wine glasses and 1 x small wine glass

Some ribbon or twine

Water

A solid table or windowsill

**Please feel free to add to this list with other interesting pieces that you find in your home*

Optional for recording purposes only (ask a grown up for help):

2 x mobile phones

1 x speaker

Activity 1: Making your own Cristal Baschet

The Cristal Baschet instrument is played with wet fingers on glass rods. It looks like this – the glass rods are hiding behind the large circular pieces at the front.



As we don't have this instrument handy in our homes, we can try to simply create the Cristal Baschet instrument using glasses and water.



Example: Jackie's homemade Cristal Baschet!

METHOD

- Fill the water to different levels in the glasses in order to create different note pitches.
- Ask a grown-up to help you to keep the glass very steady while you dip your index and middle finger into the water and gently rub the top of each glass in a continuous circular motion with both fingers, until you create a sound.
- Experiment and try to make the sound continuous on each glass.
- Feel free to add more glasses too. Put different amounts of water in each glass to create different notes.
- *Optional* – if you have chime bars or another instrument at home, you can use that to tune the note in each glass. Just keep adding or taking away water until the note from the glass matches a note you are playing on your chime bars.
- What do you notice about the amount of water you put in each glass? Does it lower or raise the pitch of the note it produces?
- Remember, glass can be dangerous if it breaks so be careful.

When you are happy with all the notes you have created in your instrument, have a look at this video to hear an example of the Cristal Baschet instrument sounds:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqVGFdS2R_M

You may get some ideas for your own composition. Experiment with different combinations of the notes in your glasses to come up with your own music.

Activity 2: Creating your own Percussion Baschet

To set up your **Percussion Baschet** instrument gather the following items:

- stainless steel mixing bowls
- metal pot or saucepan lids
- oven grills
- wooden chopsticks
- ribbon
- and some chime bars (if you have them).

If you can, try to use steel bowls that have a lower sounding note, as this is more like the sound of the Percussion Baschet instrument.

Now create a corner or area where you will position all of your items near each other so that you can play them together as one instrument and create a good sound:

- Ask a grown up for help with this.
- Put the bowls on a table or position them on their side to amplify the sound.
- If it is possible, hang the pot lids and grills using the ribbon or twine from a frame (or a tree if you've got a garden with one). If the lids are hanging freely like this they make a better sound.
- Add other items you found at home that make an interesting sound too.

Now, take a look at this video to hear an example of the Baschet percussion instrument sounds:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4YesiVwo8Y>

You may also get some ideas for your own composition. Experiment with making sounds on your homemade Percussion Baschet using your chopsticks or your hands.

Example: Jackie's home-made Percussion Baschet instrument



Activity 3: Recording

Step One: The Cristal Baschet

- You will need someone to record you improvising on the Cristal Baschet instrument first.
- Create a piece of improvised music for approx. 60 seconds on your Cristal Baschet and record this.

Step Two: The Percussion Baschet

- Then play your recorded Cristal Baschet piece back through a speaker if you have one (if not play it on the phone's speaker).
- While it is playing then improvise and create your second piece of music on your Percussion Baschet. Again, a volunteer from home will need to record you on the 2nd mobile phone.
- Then you will have your final recording, consisting of both instruments being played together.

Here's a sample of what Jackie did at home in her garden – her final recording! Listen for when her recording of the Cristal Baschet starts about half way through.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fm4ds-Onw1w>

After that it's up to you to continue to play and compose music with your new instruments as much as you like! It's also fun to play with others if siblings or parents want to join in too.

We'd love to know how you get on creating and playing your own Baschet Instruments at home. Please let us know by asking a grown-up to send us photographs or recordings of your instruments by email at boxoffice@ark.ie or tag us on social media [@TheArkDublin](https://www.instagram.com/TheArkDublin) using the [#TheArkAtHome](https://twitter.com/TheArkAtHome).



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