

Music/Topic

I have looked at the instruments that the Ancient Egyptians are playing and they remind me of the harp and flute.

I think they would sound very similar to the instruments played today and that they would be made of wood, ceramic and metal.

Many of the musical instruments we love and play today have a deep and interesting history that stretches hundreds and thousands of years before our time. Some instruments were even used in Ancient Egypt, where they were either a part of some religious ceremony or were used to entertain the Pharaoh in his court.

From what we know from the hieroglyphs, men and women in Ancient Egypt played different musical instruments. As such, men were typically drummers or trumpeters, and their music was more often used in warfare. On the other side, female musicians were typically a part of some religious ceremony, a hymn or a prayer.

7 Most Common Musical Instruments in Ancient Egypt

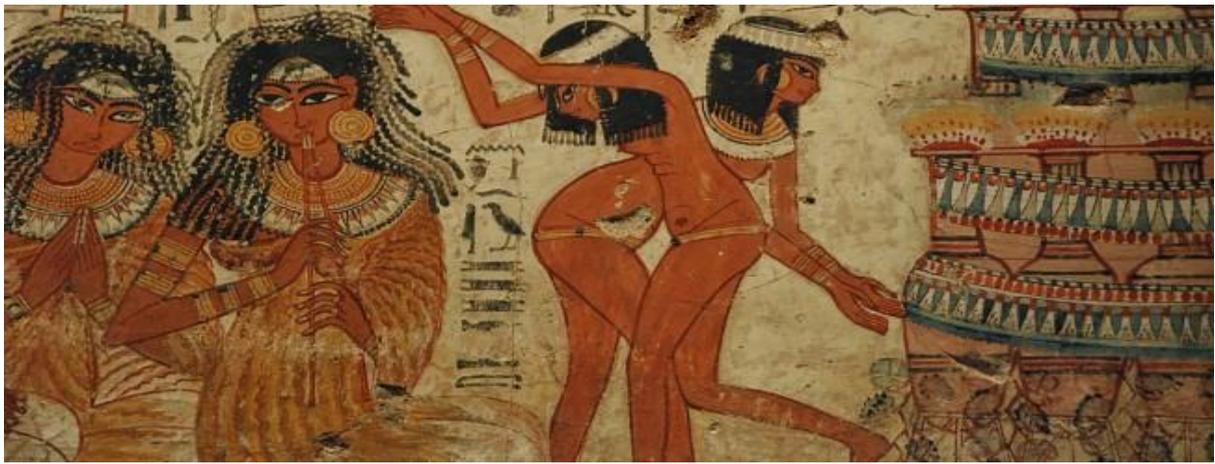
Most of our knowledge of musical instruments in Ancient Egypt comes from the hieroglyphs. That way, for example, we know for sure that they played these seven instruments:

Menit



Menit was a percussion instrument linked to Hathor. [During her festival](#), for instance, priestesses of Hathor went from door to door, shaking it in order to bring health and long life to those inside. Of course, the instrument was used in other ceremonies, usually those that were supposed to bring some sort of healing or restoration, and its sound was usually accompanied by dancing.

Sistrum



The word 'sistrum' in Ancient Egyptian means 'to vibrate'. This was another instrument closely associated with Hathor and it originated from the ritual of cutting papyrus stems and rattling them together in a rhythmic fashion. This represented '*opening your heart to Hathor*'.

The sistrum was usually made of wood; however metal and ceramic were also used. The instrument was Y-shaped and had a metal band fixed between the stems, with smaller metal pieces secured to it. When shaken, this would produce a sound very much like the tambourine.

Drums



Throughout history, drums were an integral part of the military. A skilled drummer would find a rhythm and the entire army behind him would advance against the enemy, or he would use it to help the oarsmen find a steady pace while their ship was afloat.

From what we know about musical instruments in Ancient Egypt, drums were typically barreled-shaped and played by hand, rather than sticks.

Trumpets



The sound of trumpets was throughout military history the sound of victory and it all began in Ancient Egypt. The first trumpeters came from Egypt and they can be seen in old tombs, blowing a straight, short instrument called the 'sheneb'.

What's more, old Egyptians are also responsible for the first metal trumpet, although they initially used wood to make this instrument and signal their warriors in the heat of battle to charge the enemy.

Lute



Organologists cannot entirely agree on the definition of a lute so its history and origins are a little vague. Regardless, some of the oldest lutes were made in Ancient Egypt, although the instrument itself probably came from Mesopotamia. From there, the lute spread to the ancient world, including Egypt.

Harp



The harp is one of the oldest string instruments so it's little surprise that it can be seen on the wall painting throughout Egypt. It's not entirely certain how the first harp came to be, but it is supposed that it was developed from an unlikely source – a hunting bow.

They had stringed, wind and percussion instruments. They also accompanied their musical performances with hand clapping as well as singing by both men and women.

Many instruments that have been found show how much they valued them because they had them inscribed with the names of their gods.

Cymbals



The Egyptian variation of cymbals didn't differ much from what this instrument looks like today. The major distinction was the sound they produced. Music historians believe the Ancient Egyptians tuned their cymbals to produce a sound similar to a small bell, while modern cymbals are largely not tuned.

Egyptians also played (typically together with drums or sistrams) a variation of cymbals called the 'crotals'. These were wood or ivory-made clappers with two cymbals tied to its end.

Music was clearly held in high regard in the lands of the Pharaoh and whether it was played for the army or for some kind of prayer, those that played it held a high place in society. Add to that the fact that many musical instruments in Ancient Egypt not only survived to tooth of time, but are today immensely popular, and you can see the kind of influence Egypt has on today's music.

They had stringed, wind and percussion instruments as we do today. They also accompanied their musical performances with hand clapping as well as singing by both men and women. Many instruments that have been found show how much they valued them because they had them inscribed with the names of their gods.