



# YAMAHA

## Educator Series

PERCUSSION



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## Mallets for the Band Room

### Making sure your students have the proper Keyboard Mallets

*By Joel Tetzlaff*

Selecting the proper keyboard mallets is the same as a woodwind or brass player choosing the correct mouthpiece. Utilizing a variety of mallets allow percussionist to explore the various timbre possibilities of each instrument.

Using sound as the priority, the correct tools or mallets enables you to create the desired effect with out damage to the instrument or using incorrect technique. For instance high volume doesn't necessarily mean a harder mallet. Two basic sounds of mallet instruments are attack and resonance. Using too hard of a mallet can distort the bar sound and even cause damage. Using heavier mallets with a soft attack can create the combination of sounds to increase volume while maintaining the integrity of the instruments sound. Let mallet selection made with common sense and good musical judgment be your guide to the desired sound.

Mallets are in two categories wound and unwound. Mallets also come in a variety of shaft materials: rattan, fiberglass, and birch.

This is a guide for the most common configurations:

| Instrument | Head                             | Shaft           |
|------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Marimba    | yarn wound                       | birch or rattan |
| Vibes      | cord wound                       | rattan          |
| Xylo       | rubber, phenolic, wood.          | birch or rattan |
| Bells      | brass, phenolic, lexan, polyball | birch           |

There are always exceptions, for example the use of cord mallets on marimba will produce more attack, or for a mellow sounds on a vibe try, yarn mallets. The standards also will vary between brands of instruments, types of materials for example wood vs. synthetic and so on.

Regarding shaft selection, some like to use fiberglass for younger students because of the durability but the feel of rattan and birch are preferred by advanced players. The birch shaft has a rigid feel to the player and transmits some vibrations to the player. Birch shafts are typically used with the Burton or Stevens grip. The rattan shaft is more flexible and transmits less vibration to the player. Rattan is typically used with the Musser grip.



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This is a basic list of mallets and the basic four percussion mallet instruments. For an advanced list of songs and suggested mallets for marimba check out the Percussion Educator Series article "Marimba Repertoire: Choosing the Right Mallets" by Giff Howarth.

This list is in order of most common use.

### **Marimba**

#### **Unwound**

##### Grade School to Middle School:

ME-105 Purple - Soft; rubber; Educational keyboard mallets

##### High School to College:

- KRB-4: Works for entire range, may be bright on low end. Light green rubber - medium; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets
- KRB-3 Works for entire range, may be soft on high end. Brown rubber - medium soft; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets
- KRB-2: Works on lower half. Tan rubber - soft; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets
- KRB-1: Good for lower third. Black rubber - extra soft; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

#### **Yarn wound**

##### Grade School to Middle School:

- ME-203 Medium-soft; yarn wound; Educational keyboard mallets
- ME-204 Soft; yarn wound; Educational keyboard mallets
- ME-202 Medium-hard; yarn wound; Educational keyboard mallets

##### Middle School to High School:

- KYB-13 Blue - medium; yarn wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets
- KYB-14 Red - medium soft; yarn wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets \*Shipped with YM-2400
- KYB-12 Green - medium hard; yarn wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets \*Shipped with YM-40 & YM-1430
- KYB-15 Aqua - soft; yarn wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets
- KYB-11 Yellow - hard; yarn wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets
- KYB-16 Orange - extra soft; yarn wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets
- KYB-61 Yellow - mushroom - medium; yarn wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

##### High School to College:

- MP-03 Light pink tape, medium-soft professional keyboard mallets \* Shipped with YM-5100A, YM-4900A & YM-4600A Birch shaft
- MP-02 Yellow tape, medium professional keyboard mallets
- MP-04 Green tape, soft professional keyboard mallets
- MV-4030 Light green; medium soft; small; Virtuoso keyboard mallets
- MV-4020 Peach; medium hard; small; Virtuoso keyboard mallets
- MKA-05 Rattan
- MKA-06 \*Shipped with YM-6000 & YM-6000A
- MKA-03 Two-mallet work
- MKA-08
- MTB/R-10 Two-tone
- MKA-01

### **Vibes**

##### Grade School to Middle School:

- ME-302 Medium-hard; cord wound; Educational keyboard mallets
- ME-304 Soft; cord wound; Educational keyboard mallets

##### Middle School to High School:

- KCB-23 Blue - medium; cord wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets \*Shipped with YV-4110, YV-3910 (one pair), YV-3710, YV-2700/G, YV-1600, YV-520
- KCB-24 Red - soft; cord wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets \*Shipped with YV-4110 & YV-3910 (one pair)

##### High School to College:

- KCB-25 Silver - jazz; cord wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets
- KCB-62 Yellow - mushroom - medium; cord wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets
- MV-5030 Green; medium soft; small; Virtuoso keyboard mallets
- MV-5040 Medium blue; soft; small; Virtuoso keyboard mallets
- MV-7040 Light purple; soft; medium; Virtuoso keyboard mallets



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### **Xylo**

#### Grade School to Middle School:

ME-103 Medium-hard rubber; Educational keyboard mallets

ME-102 Hard rubber; Educational keyboard mallets

#### Middle School to High School:

KRB-5 Dark green rubber - medium hard; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

KRB-6 Gray rubber - hard; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets  
\*Shipped with YX-135

KRB-4 Light green rubber - medium; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

#### High School to College:

KRB-91 Poly ball - medium hard; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets\* Shipped with YX-335

KWB-8A Large rosewood - hard; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets \*Shipped with YX-350

KWB-7 Large maple - medium; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

KPB-93 Black phenolic - extra hard; in bell kit; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

KPB-10 Black phenolic - extra hard; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets \*Acoustalon outdoor only

### **Bells**

#### Grade School to Middle School:

ME-10W Hard and soft; dual head; Educational keyboard mallets

ME-101 Very hard; hard rubber; Educational keyboard mallets

#### High School to College:

KPB-10 Black phenolic - extra hard; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

KPB-93 Black phenolic - extra hard; in bell kit; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

KPB-92 Lexan - hard; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

KBB-9 Brass - hard; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

KPB-91 Poly ball - medium hard; unwound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

### **Suspended Cymbal**

KCB-23 Blue - medium; cord wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

KCB-24 Red - soft; cord wound; Artist-Master keyboard mallets

### **Gong**

YGM-2 General; Artist-Master gong mallet

### **Chime**

DCM-11002 Rawhide; Deagan chime mallet

DCM-15002 Plastic; Deagan chime mallet; for outdoor use

### **Concert Bass Drum**

CBM-300 General; single; pile; Artist-Master concert bass drum mallet

CBM-500R General; pair; pile; rollers; Artist-Master concert bass drum mallets

### **Timpani**

YTM-2 Blue band; general purpose; timpani mallets

YTM-1 Orange band; legato; timpani mallets

YTM-5 Maroon head with white band; hard staccato; timpani mallets

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