

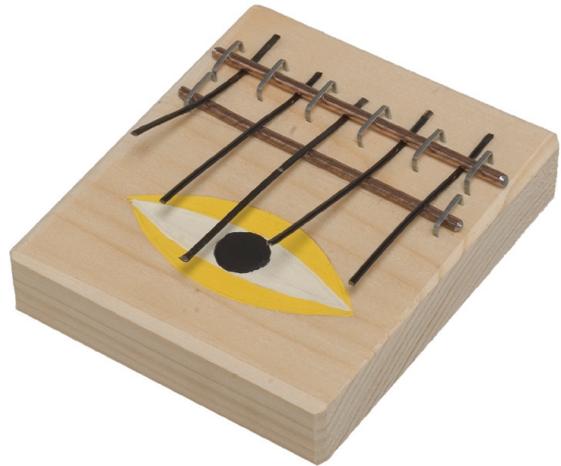
HAIRDRESSER'S KALIMBA

(Thumb piano)

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: 3



When attaching the clamps we need the help of an adult!



WE NEED:

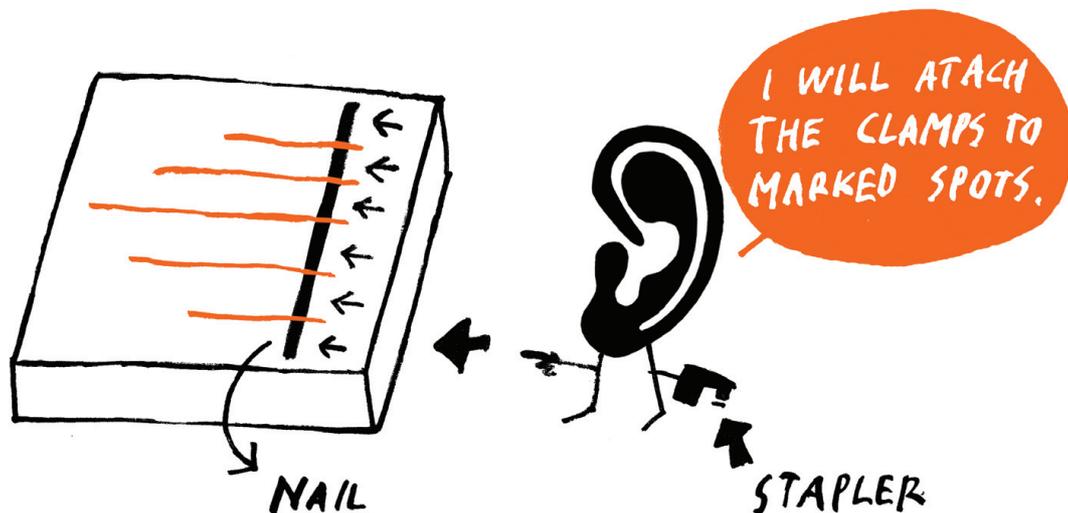
- ★ spruce tree board, approximate dimensions are 10 cm (4 ") width x 8 cm (8 1/8 ") length x 2 cm (7/8 ") thickness
- ★ 5 large hairpins
- ★ 2 nails, 70 mm (2 3/4 ") long and 3 mm (1/8 ") thick
- ★ sticky tape
- ★ clamps and a strong stapler (electric is the best)
- ★ sandpaper
- ★ a hammer
- ★ a hacksaw



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- 1** We sand the spruce board with sandpaper and make sure the edges are smooth.
 - 2** We break the hairpins in half - we place the parts that are flat on a hard surface and strike the wavy parts with a hammer. If the hairpin does not break on its own because of that we break it with our hands.
 - 3** We place five flat halves of hairpins parallel to each other on a wooden board and arrange them in a V shape. We make sure the distances between hairpins are equal. Then we attach them with sticky tape which we place across the hairpins on the board.



- 4** First we cut off the head and the pointy end of the nails. We place the first nail on the rear part of the hairpins. Then we attach it to the wooden board with clamps between each hairpin and at the ends. To do this we use a string stapler, the best is an electric one.



- 5** We push the second nail from the front end under the hairpins so that they are lifted. We also attach both ends of the nail to wood (see photo at the beginning).
- 6** We set the tones of individual tips by setting the length of the hairpins which swing freely (a longer swinging part means the tone will be lower, a shorter one means it will be higher).

We play the kalimba by slightly pressing the wooden table and plucking the tips with fingers – preferably with thumbs on both hands (That is why the kalimba is called ‘thumb piano’). The wooden table under the kalimba will work as a resonant body and will strengthen its sound (We can also test what the sound of the kalimba is on other bases – for example, styrofoam box, metal pot, floor ...).

The sound of the kalimba appears because of the tips, which are attached to the base in one end and are still, whereas on the other end they swing freely. The instrument belongs to the group of idiophones or more accurately to ‘struck’ idiophones, a part of which is also a better known wood block.

