

TRX CYMBALS PRESENTS

Cymbalson

A Guide to the History, Selection and Care of Turkish Cymbals



History

The history of cymbals actually began about 5,000 years ago when metalworkers in Mesopotamia, the “cradle” of early civilization, discovered that they could make their tools and weapons stronger by combining copper with a little tin. They called the new metal alloy Bronze and it was an instant hit. Over the next several thousand years this breakthrough—along with the processes of mixing, casting, shaping and tempering (further strengthening the material by heating and quickly cooling it)—was further refined and spread throughout the ancient world; south to Egypt, east to Persia and China and north to the area that would eventually become Turkey.

With Constantinople (Istanbul) at the center of Turkey, the Ottoman Empire and two continents, it became a major crossroads for travel and trade between Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. The Empire's influence extended over the region for centuries and the use of Turkish cymbals became common in Classical European operas and orchestras. As the age of world exploration and enlightenment (1650-1800AD) dawned, the Turkish formula and method of cymbal production had been perfected by generations of cymbal smiths. Cymbals made in Turkey grew increasingly important as Western civilization and culture expanded.

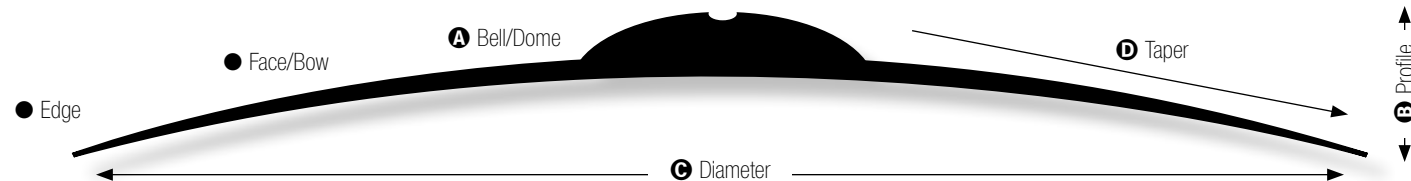
Turkish Bronze was initially used for military and religious purposes but it gradually found its way into musical instruments including bells and cymbals. By the time the Ottoman Empire was established, around 1300 AD, the Turks had already begun to become great cymbal makers and their instruments were fixtures in Turkish music.

In the early 1900's, the modern drumset was born and cymbals began to take on the main time-keeping role in new forms of popular music. The versatility, warmth and character of handcrafted Turkish cymbals became the standard of sound and performance for virtually every musical style that developed in the 20th Century.

Today, authentic Turkish cymbals trace their heritage back to the original development of Bronze as well as to the artists and craftsmen whose skill and passion created the processes for turning bronze into fine musical instruments. No other cymbals feature this long and distinguished legacy that has become the art and essence of Turkish cymbal making.

While today's Turkish cymbal masters are committed to honoring the traditions of cymbal making that have supported the evolution of music for hundreds of years, they also remain dedicated to working hand-in-hand with contemporary drummers to create new types of cymbals and cymbal sounds. This unprecedented and unparalleled combination of quality, experience, and innovation means that, together, genuine Turkish cymbals and the drummers who play them continue to make music *and* history.

Cymbal Anatomy and Terminology



The fundamental characteristics of a cymbal's sound and performance (pitch, power, tone, definition, sustain and durability) are primarily determined by its size and weight. In fact, “size” and “weight” were the only cymbal classifications until terms like Ride, Crash, Hi-Hat and Splash were introduced in the 1940's and 50's. This glossary includes definitions of the various factors that influence and modify a cymbal's performance along with other commonly used cymbal terms.

A Bell - The raised area in the center; also called the cup or dome. Cymbals with smaller bells have a more controlled frequency range and shorter sustain.

Cast vs. Sheet - Each Turkish cymbal is made from a single bronze casting. Other types of cymbals are made in batches and cut from large sheets of metal.

Custom vs. Production - Genuine Turkish cymbals are hand-made, one at a time as opposed to being mass produced or made by machines.

Finish - *Regular hammering* patterns produce a more focused sound. *Irregular hammering* produces a darker sound. *Deep hammering* creates a drier sound. *Lathing* creates tonal grooves for a fuller sound. A *Natural* or dull finish produces a darker, drier tone. A highly buffed or *Brilliant* finish increases the brightness and wash.

B Profile - The curvature and height. A cymbal with a higher profile will be drier and higher in pitch.

C Size (or Diameter) - Larger cymbals are louder, lower in pitch and sustain longer than smaller ones.

D Taper - The change in thickness from the edge to the bell. Cymbals with a gradual taper are faster and more explosive yet somewhat less durable.

Weight - Thicker, heavier cymbals are higher in pitch with more articulation, projection and durability than thin ones. Thinner, lighter cymbals have more shimmer and speak more quickly.

B20 - TRX and most other Turkish cymbals are made exclusively from B20 Bronze (80% copper with 20% tin), the formula that was perfected by Turkish cymbal smiths and is preferred by most high-end cymbal makers and professional drummers. Other formulations, from B24 (used for gongs) to B18, B12, B10 and B8 (used for student-model cymbals), also exist.

The Development of Bronze, Bells, Cymbals and Gongs



Turkey
China
Europe
America
Bronze

selection

Choosing cymbals is a very unique and personal experience. The process can involve many variables plus no two cymbals are exactly alike—especially when you're picking from an assortment of high-quality, individually handcrafted Turkish cymbals.

However, regardless of the names, types or brands that may be stamped on them, the most important factors in cymbal selection are your ears. It all comes down to how the cymbals sound to *you* and how well suited they are for *your* music. The general rule is that whatever sounds right, is right.

When you're ready to pick your cymbals—whether you need just one or a whole new set—find a store that has a good assortment and an isolated sound room. Here are a few more selection tips you should consider:

✦ **Bring your current cymbals.** They can be useful as a reference point to compare the new ones.

✦ **Bring your regular sticks.** Listen to how the cymbals respond to your own sticks as well as different stick sizes and tip styles, shapes and types. If you're going to be using brushes, mallets or bundles, try to those, too.

- ❶ **Rides** Check the articulation and wash of the face and the bell. If you're going to be crashing on the ride, try that, as well.
- ❷ **Hi-Hats** Are they crisp when played closed yet explosive as you open them? Is there a good "chick" when played with the foot?
- ❸ **Crashes** Listen for the initial explosion and the tone and length of the decay.
- ❹ **Chinas, Splashes & Effects** Make sure the effects cymbals have the characteristic sounds you're looking for.
- ❺ Does the whole cymbal-set balance/blend/contrast?

✦ **Consider the style of music you play.** Choose the types, sizes, weights and finishes that fit the style and frequency spectrum of the music you play. Decide whether the performance factors (pitch, power, durability, tone, etc.) of the cymbals you're testing meet your needs.

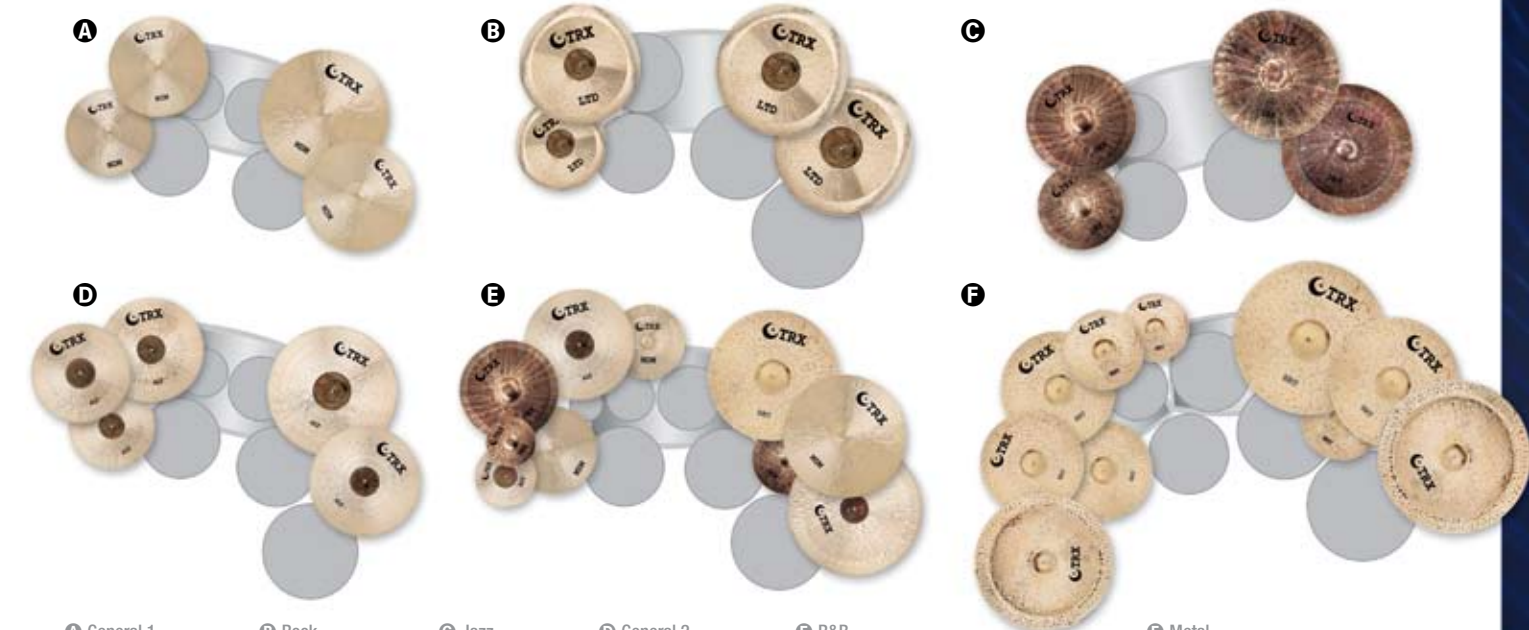
✦ **Try the cymbals on a drumset that's as close as possible to the sound of your drumset.** Let another drummer hit the cymbals so you can hear what they'll sound like out front, as well.

✦ **Know what you want but keep an open mind.** Try several cymbals of the same size and model, as well as different sizes and models. Whether you're seeking a set-up made from cymbals within a single series or a mix-and-match set-up made from a variety of series and tonalities, don't be afraid to try something different.

	weight	profile	taper	bell	6"	8"	10"	12"	14"	16"	18"	20"	22"	24"
Ride*	medium—extra-heavy	high	even	large										
Hi-Hat	light—heavy	medium	mid	medium										
Crash	extra-light—heavy	low	max	small										
Splash	extra-light	low	even	small										
China	light—medium	inverted	even	medium										

*includes Crash-Ride and Flat-Ride

Sample Cymbal Set Ups



A General 1

14" MDM Hi-Hats
16" MDM Crash
22" MDM Ride
18" MDM Crash

B Rock

14" LTD Hi-Hats
18" LTD Crash-Ride
20" LTD Crash-Ride
21" LTD Crash-Ride

C Jazz

14" DRK Hi-Hats
18" DRK Crash
21" DRK Ride
22" DRK China

D General 2

14" ALT Hi-Hats
16" ALT Crash
17" ALT Crash
22" ALT Ride
18" ALT Crash

E R&B

14" MDM Hi-Hats
10" ALT Splash
8" DRK Splash
16" DRK Crash
18" ALT Crash

F Metal

12" MDM China
22" BRT China
12" DRK Hi-Hats
20" MDM Crash
22" ALT China

G Metal

22" BRT China
15" BRT Hi-Hats
18" BRT Crash
20" BRT Crash
12" BRT Splash

style	tone/pitch	definition/sustain	power	size	weight	finish
World/Ethnic/Jazz	dark/low	wet/long	low	small—medium	light—medium	natural/hammered
General/Pop/R&B	medium	medium	medium	medium—large	medium—heavy	lathed
Rock/Metal	bright/high	dry/short	high	large—extra-large	heavy—extra-heavy	polished/hammered

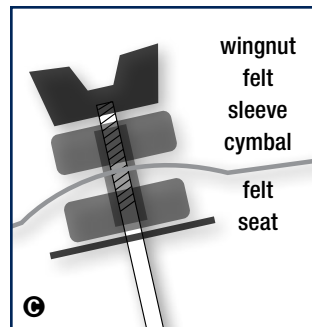
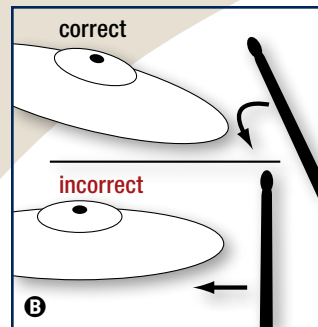
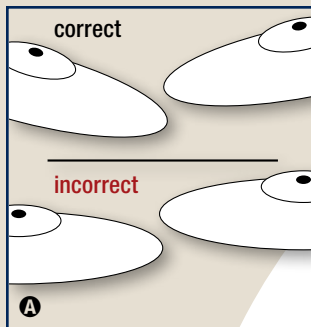
Care

After your drums, your cymbals are the most important part of your sound and most expensive part of your kit. In addition, where the sound of your drums can be modified by the use of different heads, tuning and muffling, cymbals perform best in their natural state. Therefore, keeping them in optimum condition is critical for a number of musical, visual and financial reasons.

Cymbal Position and Playing Techniques

Two basic yet often overlooked aspects of cymbal care are correct positioning and playing techniques. Applying the following simple rules will protect your cymbals and allow you to get the best sound, performance and life-span from them.

- 1 Keep your cymbals tilted at a slight angle so that you are striking them on the face; not directly on the edge (A).
- 2 Use a glancing stroke to “pull the sound out” of the cymbal rather than a straight stroke into the edge of cymbal (B).
- 3 Relax. Developing a smooth, fluid playing style will enhance your sound while protecting your cymbals and your hands.



Cymbal Stands

It is important to maintain the parts of your cymbal stands that contact and support the cymbals because they also help protect the sound and condition of the cymbals. This includes the wingnuts, seats, felts and sleeves on the tilter section of the cymbal stand (C) as well as the clutch, felts and seat on the hi-hat. These parts tend to wear out over time and should be inspected and replaced as needed. Individual parts and repair kits are offered by cymbal, hardware and accessory companies and available at most drum shops and music stores.

Cymbal Bags and Cases

A top-quality, well-padded cymbal bag or hard case (preferably with soft dividers) will protect your cymbals during storage and transport. For local gigs, a soft bag or light to medium-weight hard case offer protection and practicality without breaking your back or bank account.

Major tours require the strength and protection of heavy-duty road cases. A full range of hard and soft cases are available from a wide variety of cymbal and case companies. Compare prices and features and choose the one that best meets your needs.

Cymbal Cleaning

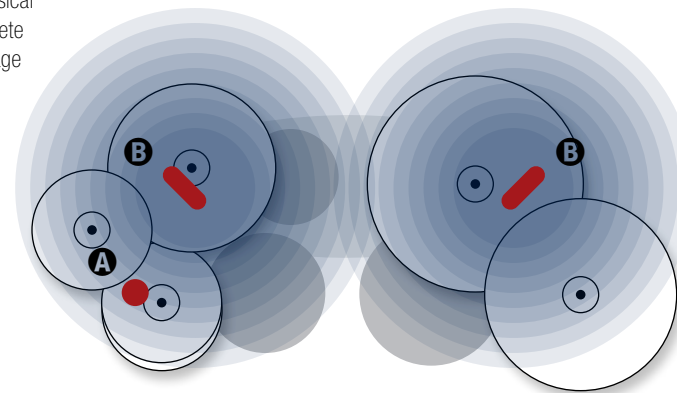
Regular cleaning will help keep your cymbals looking and sounding like new. For light dirt, fingerprints and tarnish, try gentle cleaning with warm, soapy water. In more extreme instances, a specially-formulated cymbal cleaner may be required. Several good cymbal cleaning and polishing products are commercially available, including “Groove Juice”, which is highly recommended for TRX and other B20 cymbals. Be sure to consult the manufacturer’s directions and try cleaning a small test area before using any polish or cleaner on your cymbals.

Cymbals and Live Sound

Selecting and maintaining your cymbals as discussed in the previous sections of this guide are essential parts of developing a professional drum sound and attitude. Making sure that you, your band and your audience can hear your cymbals is equally important. Any acoustic instrument has physical limitations and forcing it to compete with amplified instruments on stage puts it at an often overwhelming disadvantage. Today more than ever, it is up to the drummer to ensure that the cymbals, as well as the drums and other percussion effects, are properly heard. Combining acoustic drums and electronic technology is the modern, practical and intelligent approach to handle the situation.

In studio applications, a drummer will work with the producer and sound engineer to find the right mic’s and recording techniques to capture the full range of drum and cymbal sounds. In live rehearsal and performance situations, it is in a drummer’s best interests to understand how to mic, mix and monitor his or her own drumset—and possess the necessary equipment.

For the modern drummer, acoustic drums and microphones go hand-in-hand. Beyond the obvious benefit of amplifying the drums in live situations and recording them in the studio, there are other reasons to mic the drums.



Even in low volume conditions, drum miking can add a higher level of comfort to your playing and presence to your sound. Miking gives you control of your sound—letting you balance the volume of your kit separately and with the band. Plus, with your own mic’s you won’t be at the mercy of a sound person who may not have the right quality or quantity of mic’s to cover your set-up.

Optimum live cymbal miking is accomplished through the use of a dedicated mic on the hi-hat and two overheads. These mic’s are then mixed with the rest of the drum mic’s and sent to the drummer’s in-ear or external monitor speakers and the house PA system.

Use a separate mic with a tight frequency range, sensitivity and pattern for the hi-hat (A). Position the mic 3-4” above the open, top hi-hat cymbal at 10 o’clock and pointing straight down.

To capture the sound of the other cymbals, position two mic’s with a wider range, response and pick-up pattern on boom stands over the drums and 12 to 18” above the highest cymbals (B). Place one at 10-11 o’clock and the other at 1-2 o’clock. For the best overall coverage pattern, angle the mic’s downward at around 45° and pointing towards the middle of the kit.

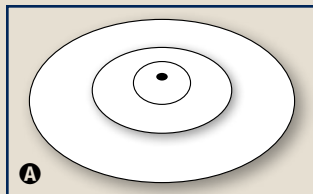
Purchasing your own mic’s, a mixer or monitors may not seem high on your priority list at first but it’s an investment that will pay off quickly by saving you money on replacing sticks, heads and cymbals. More than that, it may ultimately save your hearing and your hands while advancing your knowledge and your career.

For additional information on cymbal miking, consult your local music dealer or the individual microphone manufacturers directly.

Updates

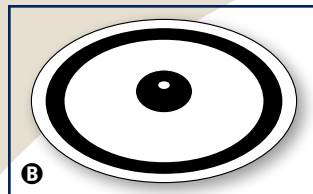
As music continues to change, cymbals have always adapted to support those changes. Some of the most recent developments involve the use of both conventional and unconventional types of cymbals individually and in combination to create new sounds.

A Stacks - Also called piggy-backs, stacking two or more cymbals on top of each other creates a short, crunchy sound. Drummers tend to stack a china, splash or crash cymbal that's 2 or more inches smaller inside a larger, inverted china or on top of a larger crash. For the best results, the bells of the cymbals should nest inside one another creating maximum cymbal-to-cymbal contact.



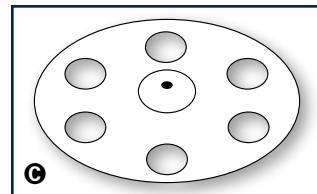
B Hybrids - Hybrid cymbals combine multiple features in a single cymbal. Examples of these are Crash-Rides, China-Splashes, lathed cymbals with natural bells and cymbals that employ several different finish types or zones to create unique tonal qualities.

● Cross-Matched - Although hi-hats usually consist of a heavier bottom cymbal than top, this term refers to hi-hats that are made by pairing more extreme weights or types of cymbals than would be normally used.



C Vented - Vented cymbals include bottom hi-hats with crimped edges, small holes or notches to allow better air flow. Vented crash cymbals with large holes are also available. This gives them a drier, shorter, trashier sound.

● Rivets - The installation of rivets prolongs the cymbal's sustain by creating a sizzle effect. Rivets are most often used on hi-hats and ride cymbals. This requires drilling and should only be done by an experienced technician.



The Breaking Point: Understanding Cymbal Warranties and Durability

Turkish-made cymbals are premium-grade, high-quality musical instruments but they are not indestructible. Like heads and sticks, all cymbals have a breaking point. Once they achieve their maximum acoustic output, application of additional physical force will eventually lead to damage and breakage. Although TRX cymbals are guaranteed to be

free of manufacturer's defects for a period of three years (see the TRX Cymbal Warranty for details), no cymbal can be guaranteed to withstand any and all playing conditions. For situations where extreme volume and durability are required, heavier, larger cymbals as well as miking and amplification should be considered.

For more information about the history, selection and care of Turkish cymbals please refer the cymbal companies' websites and the following reference books:

Percussion Instruments And Their History by James Blades, 4th edition, published by Bold Strummer (1992).

The Cymbal Book by Hugo Pinksterboer, published by the Hal Leonard Corp. (1992).

The TRX Cymbal Co. • www.trxcymbals.com

