**North Indian Instruments**  
  
North Indian classical music ensembles have only a handful of players. Most instruments are played while seated on the floor. There are usually the same three elements:

* ***soloist****- either a singer or an instrumentalist playing the melody*
* ***percussion****- usually tabla*
* ***drone****- usually a tanpura, harmonium or electronic box*

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| **Melody instruments**  [**The Sitar**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTPxqUtlLdo&feature=player_embedded)   * *is a long-necked plucked****string instrument****with movable frets and a gourd resonator* * *is played by****plucking****the strings with a metal plectrum* * *has six or seven****main****strings and twelve or more****sympathetic****strings running underneath them, which****resonate****in sympathy* * *has a characteristic shimmering sound*   [**The Sarod**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=A_bvM35T4l0)*is a plucked****string instrument***   * *is****shorter****than the sitar and has no frets* * *is played by****plucking****the strings with a large wooden plectrum* * *has****main****strings and****sympathetic****strings* * *plays ornaments by sliding up and down the strings*    [**The Sarangi**](http://youtu.be/vZefNFiL4XU) * *is a****fretless****bowed instrument is held in the lap* * *It has three****main****strings and as many as 36****sympathetic****strings*   [**The Esraj**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=yecQsOHYaeA)   * *a bowed string instrument* * *played sitting on the floor like the sarangi, but with frets like a sitar* * *has a number of sympathetic and drone strings*   [**The Bansuri**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=9n_ZayUW5cc) The **bansuri** is a bamboo flute with no keys. | [http://t1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTGfPRDmFJQUXrgCL5tg4XwfIvybhbaIF5KFbfvKJ5dZyBwo0TS6Q](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=sitar+picture&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CAcQjRw&url=http://www.tablasitar.com/sitar-kharaj-pancham-full-angur-patta-fiber-trolley-p-90.html&ei=-W79VK24KtX3ao-dgbAO&bvm=bv.87611401,d.d2s&psig=AFQjCNFUekZqdlT_Iyi7TBNK8mtWBS78NQ&ust=1425981468948633)  [Image result for sitar picture](http://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://img.click.in/classifieds/images/153/28_3_2013_14_31_1287_Sitar_Classes_Online.jpg&imgrefurl=http://delhi.click.in/tabla-dholak-flute-sitar-lessons-in-vasant-kunj-c153-v5308565&h=361&w=450&tbnid=DxYtCKrtGHWRhM:&zoom=1&q=sitar+picture&docid=PsSWv6TPVitbnM&ei=pG79VJSUB8nvaNnbgtgF&tbm=isch&ved=0CCcQMygfMB84ZA)  [http://t0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQjBpnzIFlWZY4KdKq2FNbMIaL0rXwNjXCga-pNGt98XBDxEtKXWA](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=sarod+picture&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CAcQjRw&url=http://www.binaswar.com/string12.htm&ei=6W_9VNKFAoO6aeT9gUA&bvm=bv.87611401,d.d2s&psig=AFQjCNGtdmqaeYU68oF36-S70BHtMIOsKA&ust=1425981784808991)  [http://t3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTCkpCuYYBmQ5zSih2_CmUdZjAhafd-w3bNUzGOFIM4WnmEPNUs](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=sarangi+picture&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CAcQjRw&url=http://www.rajfolkseries.com/music.html&ei=U3H9VJLuLc_7asOQgKgO&bvm=bv.87611401,d.d24&psig=AFQjCNFau7ayVgZVrY7mifCBxia5lt0Z5g&ust=1425982144305858)    [Image result for Esraj picture](http://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_cmt_cureAlo/TCLvz8Fhm2I/AAAAAAAAABc/4FV_F4G2Nq8/s1600/dilruba.jpg&imgrefurl=http://easternmusicinstruments.blogspot.com/&h=397&w=648&tbnid=7nOuxPUG8XJFwM:&zoom=1&q=Esraj+picture&docid=ZccH8hlgcM4KmM&ei=_XL9VPKVM8uVauzugIgC&tbm=isch&ved=0CFoQMyhSMFI4ZA) |

**Drone instruments**  
  
The **[Tanpura](https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=RDplhiDYRwb78&v=plhiDYRwb78&feature=player_detailpage)** is a stringed instrument similar to the sitar but it has fewer strings (usually four) and no frets. Unlike the sitar it plays very simple and repetitive music.  
  
The [**Harmonium**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r87GYVCBiPU&feature=player_detailpage) is a reed organ operated by **bellows** which open at the back. The **keyboard** is on top and has a range of two to three octaves.  
 **Percussion instruments**   
  
**Tabla** are a pair of small drums placed side by side on the floor in front of the player. Their main role is to keep the time, but they sometimes interact with the soloist and have short solos. The heads are made out of goatskin with a central area which has a coating made from iron filings and rice flour.  
  
The smaller drum is known as the **dayan** (meaning right). It is:

* *tuned to Sa*
* *played with the fingertips of the****right hand***
* *quite****high****in pitch*

The larger drum is known as the bayan (meaning 'left'). It is:

* *played with the****left hand***
* *played with the****heel of the hand****, which is pressed into the drum to change the pitch, providing a distinctive sound*
* *deeper in pitch, providing a bass sound*

Tabla playing is very difficult and it can take years to master the different strokes (**bols**). Some strokes are **open** (allowed to ring) and others are **closed**(dampened).