

Where should the instruments go?

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What do I do with my instruments when I'm not using them? Do I leave them out all the time? Do I put them away on shelves, in the corner, in my office? How do I set up my room?

Our classrooms are only so big, so the instruments can be a big challenge. If they are away, you probably don't use them as much as if they are out and readily available. But if they are out, how in the world do I teach folk dance without someone tripping over it and breaking themselves and the instrument? Here is ONE way I have found that works for me and my classroom:

- 1) Find a best "away" position. (On tables, on shelves, along the wall, on tables)
- 2) Establish your "out" position
- 3) Mark numbers on the floor where each instrument will go (I use SitSpots to do this)
- 4) Mark numbers on your instruments that correspond with where they go on the floor.
- 5) Assign each student an instrument. This is the instrument they are responsible for getting out.
- 6) Practice, Practice, Practice getting them out and putting them away.

I let 3rd through 5th graders get them out and put them away. They are strong enough and tall enough to carry them without breaking them. It does take a lot of modeling and pre-teaching but now that they can do it themselves, I can have them away when we need more floor space and out when we need to play them. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask!