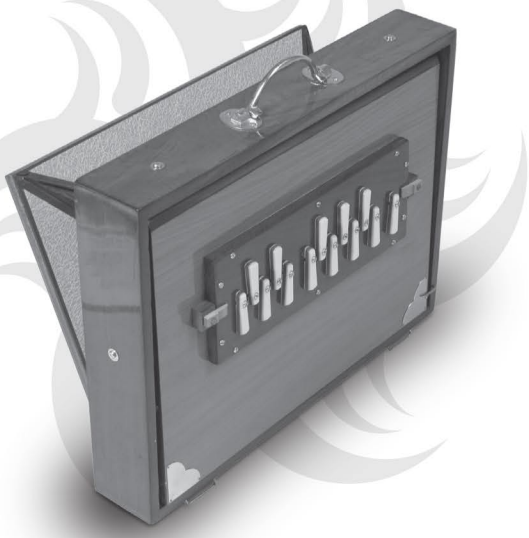
# banjira™

# Shruti Box



## – Owner's Guide –

## Before you play *IMPORTANT!*

banjira® Shruti Box

***Never pump a bellows, on a shruti box or harmonium, unless you hear sound. The sound must be audible if you are pumping or deflating a bellows. Forcing a bellows when the controls are closed, will result in costly damage to the inner workings of the instrument.***

Shruti is translated as 'that which is heard,' or sound. The shruti box is also called surpeti, swar pethi, swar peti, swarpeti, surpeti, sur peti, or sruti box. The shruti box has one function, to provide the drone behind the music. There are two, basic forms of the shruti box. One form is manual and the other is electronic. The shruti box is extremely easy to play and produces a powerful, drone sound. It is designed to accompany any kind of Indian music, including vocal and instrumental.

## Construction

The shruti box is similar to a harmonium, without keys. Metal reeds are mounted on the inside of the instrument. These reeds vibrate by compressed air passing through them. The air movement is controlled by the bellows on the side of the instrument. The controls on the outside of the box restrict, or direct, air through the individual reeds. Opening one or more controls allows the air out and causes the reed underneath to produce a note. Shruti box controls are mounted on the side and each reed has a single control. You will not need to open more than four reeds.

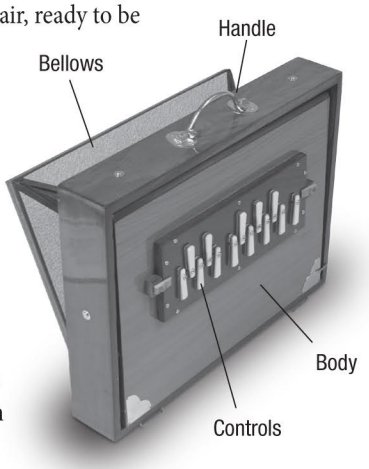
There are a number of advantages of the shruti box over the harmonium. Its smaller, lighter, size makes it more portable. Since there are no keys and the drones are fixed it is easier to play, especially by untrained players.

In the last few decades, the electronic versions have become very popular.

## Playing technique

The shruti box can be played with one hand. Set the box so the bellows is on the far side from you. First, open the levers that lock the bellows. Then open the controls for the desired notes — this side should be facing you. Place your hand on top of the instrument and pump the bellows. The volume can be adjusted by varying the tempo and pressure applied to the bellows. When you release the bellows, it will automatically refill with air, ready to be pumped again for a rhythmic sound.

Although the shruti box is common throughout India, their usage differs considerably. Hindustani musicians will regularly use them in practice but usually would not consider bringing them onto the stage. This is in contrast to Carnatic musicians who very regularly use them in stage performances.




*Caring for your*

## banjira™ Shruti Box

As with all musical instruments, common sense will go a long way in protecting its longevity. Do not store any musical instrument in direct sunlight, or places with drafts. Avoid sudden changes in humidity and temperature. Do not use abrasives on the wood body.

Here are some simple tips to care for your shruti box.

- Use a dry soft cloth for dusting
- Use a damp soft cloth for cleaning
- Avoid extreme temperatures
- Avoid extremely dry conditions
- Avoid water and high humidity
- Avoid using abrasives

### Accessories

Other shruti boxes and accessories are available at www.mid-east.com

Mid-East® est. 1973

www.mid-east.com

© Copyright 2016. Mid-East Mfg. Inc.

Shruti Box