



## **World Music Drumming**

### **Transforming Lives . . . Building Community**

## **Tuning Tubanos and Bongos**

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We get a lot of questions on how to tune Remo Tubanos, so here are a few quick ideas that work well.

The following applies to tunable tubanos only. Pretuned drums cannot be tuned. The only remedy for a bad-sounding pretuned drum is to replace the head.

Start with the 12” medium tubanos and find a happy “medium” pitched drum; then tune the others to it using the tuning device supplied with each Remo drum.

Tune each drum by tuning across the drumhead (like a clock: 12:00, 6:00, 3:00, 9:00) rather than around the head. Keep tuning until you have reached the desired pitch.

Once you have the medium tubanos tuned to each other, tune the 10” high drums a perfect 4<sup>th</sup> higher and the 14” low drums a perfect 4<sup>th</sup> lower. Tuning in 4ths eliminates the sound of a normal triad and avoids setting up a tonality that may conflict with the tonality of a song.

When tuning the low drums, you may have to stretch some of the heads a bit by pushing down in the center of the drumhead. Avoid loosening the tuners so much that they rattle and/or come undone.

If your bongo drums are tunable, tune the smaller drum to a fairly high, bright pitch. The larger drum should be tuned about a 3<sup>rd</sup> lower. Most bongos found in schools are not tuned and are pitched way too low. Bongos should have a snap when hit, and they should cut through the lower drums.