



## ĠĀVĀL

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**ĠĀVĀL** (also known as *daf*, q.v.), the most widespread percussion instrument in the Republic of Azarbaijan, played as much in artistic as in popular music and professional ensembles. It is also used in Armenia and the Persian Azarbaijan. In Azarbaijan *ġāvāl* is made up of a circular wooden frame of a diameter of thirty-eight centimeters on which catfish or, failing that, goat skin is stretched. In modern times, the use of synthetic skin, more resistant to humidity, but less appreciated, is also common. The frame is made of various kinds of wood, such as walnut, acacia, vine, and mulberry. Much care is often applied in the manufacture of *ġāvāl*; its wooden frame is usually covered with mother of pearl and black horn and several metal rings are placed on the inner side of the frame acting as bells. Traditionally, the male or female singers (classical or popular) accompany themselves by playing the instrument, but there are also specialized soloists, especially in the bard groups *āšeq* (q.v.) as well as bands of oboe players (*sūrṅā*). *Ġāvāl* is sometimes replaced by a two-sided drum called *naqqāra*, which is played a bit like *daf* only on one side, but held on the knees.

The *ġāvāl* playing techniques can be quite sophisticated requiring the use of all the fingers. In Persia, however, the technique is simpler. *Ġāvāl* is used to accompany *āšeq* bards, but rarely in Persian art music.

For a music sample, see [Tajnis](#).



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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