

# ABENAKI MUSIC AND DANCES

Music, singing, and dancing are important parts of Abenaki culture. Some songs and dances are thousands of years old. Others are new, or a blend of old and new music.

Some Abenaki dances honor the earth.



The Sun Dance and the Rain Dance are performed after the crops are planted in the late spring.



The Green Corn Dance is performed in the late summer to celebrate the ripening of the corn.



Other dances are social, like the Friendship Dance.



Musical instruments, like drums and rattles, are made out of natural materials like wood and rawhide.

## Deer Toe Rattle

This deer toe leg rattle is used by the Abenaki in dances. Deer toes are hard, like toe nails are for people. These deer toes have been tied to the strap by thin leather strips. The leather strap ties around a person's leg, right under the knee. When the person moves his or her leg during the dance, the deer toes bump against each other and make noise.



## Ball Rattle

A ball rattle like this one also makes noise. The round part of the rattle is made from a dried animal skin and filled with dried corn, which rattles around and makes noise when the rattle is shaken.



**Moose on the Loose**  
Social Studies for Granite State Kids  
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