The Ear

The ear consists of:
1-THE EXTERNAL EAR
2-THE MIDDLE EAR, OR TYMPANIC CAVITY
3-THE INTERNAL EAR, OR LABYRINTH

1-THE EXTERNAL EAR

Made of

A-AURICLE
B-EXTERNAL AUDITORY MEATUS
A-AURICLE

It consists of:

a-Skin
b-a thin plate of **elastic cartilage** *(except the lobule, which is devoid of cartilage)*

3-It possesses both extrinsic and intrinsic muscles, which are **supplied by the facial nerve.**
a) Auriculotemporal nerve: upper ½ of the outer surface
b) Lesser occipital nerve: the upper ½ of the inner surface
c) Great auricular nerve: the lower ½ of both inner and outer surfaces
d) Auricular branch of vagus supplies an area on the inner surface
The outer third of the meatus is elastic cartilage (directed upwards and backwards)
The inner two thirds is bone formed by the tympanic plate (directed downwards and forwards).

The meatus is lined by skin, and its outer third is provided with hairs and sebaceous and ceruminous glands. Secrete a yellowish brown wax.

Remember that in the adult the external meatus is about 1 in. (2.5 cm) long and is narrowest about 0.2 in. (5 mm) from the tympanic membrane.

The sensory nerve supply of the lining skin is derived from
1. The auriculotemporal nerve
2. The auricular branch of the vagus nerve.!!!!
Tympanic Membrane Examination

**Otoscopic** examination of the tympanic membrane is facilitated by first straightening the external auditory meatus by gently pulling the auricle upward and backward in the adult, straight backward or backward and downward in the **infant**.
The tympanic membrane (ear drum)

- Is a thin, **fibrous membrane**
- The membrane **is obliquely placed, facing downward, forward, and laterally**
- Is formed of:
  1. An outer layer; skin
  2. Middle layer; fibrous tissue
  3. Inner layer; mucous membrane

Remember that the middle fibrous layer is present in the major parts of the ear drum which **called pars tensa**.

However, this layer **is absent** in the upper part of the ear drum which is called **pars flaccida** Shrapnell's membrane (also known as Rivinus’ ligament)

The pars tensa and flaccida are separated from each other by two folds called **the anterior and posterior malleolar folds**
The antero-inferior quadrant of the ear drum is called **The cone of light** (because of it reflects the light coming from the otoscope)

The tympanic membrane is extremely sensitive to pain and is innervated on its outer surface by the **auriculotemporal nerve** and the **auricular branch of the vagus**.
Middle Ear (Tympanic Cavity)

- It contains the auditory ossicles, whose function is to transmit the vibrations of the tympanic membrane (eardrum) to the perilymph of the internal ear.
- It is a narrow, oblique, slitlike cavity whose long axis lies approximately parallel to the plane of the tympanic membrane.

- It communicates in front through the auditory tube with the nasopharynx and behind with the mastoid antrum.

The middle ear has

- ROOF
- FLOOR
- ANTERIOR WALL
- POSTERIOR WALL
- LATERAL WALL
- MEDIAL WALL
THE ROOF

Is formed by a thin plate of bone, the tegmen tympani, which is part of the petrous temporal bone. It separates the tympanic cavity from the meninges and the temporal lobe of the brain in the middle cranial fossa.

THE FLOOR

is formed by a thin plate of bone, which may be partly replaced by fibrous tissue. It separates the tympanic cavity from the superior bulb of the internal jugular vein.
The Anterior Wall

- Is formed below by a thin plate of bone that separates the tympanic cavity from the internal carotid artery.

- At the upper part of the anterior wall are the openings into two canals. The lower and larger of these leads into the auditory tube.

- The upper and smaller is the entrance into the canal for the tensor tympani muscle.
1-has in its upper part a large, irregular opening, the **aditus** to the mastoid

2-Below this is a small, hollow, conical projection, the **pyramid**, from whose apex emerges the tendon of the stapedius muscle.

3-The **vertical part** of the fascial nerve

**THE LATERAL WALL**

is largely formed by the **tympanic membrane**.
The medial wall is formed by the lateral wall of the inner ear.

The greater part of the wall shows a rounded projection, called the **promontory**, which results from the underlying first turn of the cochlea.

Above and behind the promontory lies the **fenestra vestibuli**, which is oval shaped and closed by the base of the stapes.

Below the posterior end of the promontory lies the **fenestra cochleae**, which is round and closed by the secondary tympanic membrane.

The horizontal part of the facial nerve arching above the promontory.
**Auditory Tube**

The auditory tube connects the anterior wall of the tympanic cavity to the nasal pharynx.

- Its posterior third is bony,
- its anterior two thirds is cartilaginous.
- As the tube descends it passes over the upper border of the superior constrictor muscle.
- It serves to equalize air pressures in the tympanic cavity and the nasal pharynx.

**Mastoid Antrum**

The mastoid antrum lies behind the middle ear in the petrous part of the temporal bone. It communicates with the middle ear by the aditus.
Infections and Otitis Media

The meninges and the temporal lobe of the brain lie superiorly meningitis and a cerebral abscess in the temporal lobe.

(acute mastoiditis)

The posterior wall of the mastoid antrum is related to the sigmoid venous sinus. If the infection spreads in this direction, a thrombosis in the sigmoid sinus may well take place.

A spread of the infection in this direction can cause a facial nerve palsy and labyrinthitis with vertigo.

through the auditory tube from the nasal part of the pharynx.
The auditory ossicles are:

**MALLEUS**

**INCUS**

**STAPES**

1. The malleus is the largest ossicle and possesses a head, a neck, a long process or handle, an anterior process, and a lateral process.

*Its head is rounded and articulates posteriorly with the incus.*

2. The incus possesses:
   - A large body and two processes:
     - The body articulates with the head of the malleus.
     - The long process articulates with the head of the stapes.

The handle is firmly attached to the medial surface of the tympanic membrane.

*The incus possesses:* 
- A large body and two processes:
  - The body articulates with the head of the malleus.
  - The long process articulates with the head of the stapes.

The stapes has a head, a neck, two limbs, and a base:

- **The head** articulates with the long process of the incus.
- The neck is narrow and receives the insertion of the stapedius muscle.
- The two limbs diverge from the neck and are attached to the oval base which closes the oval window of the internal ear.
Muscles of the Ossicles
These are the tensor tympani and the stapedius muscles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Muscle</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Insertion</th>
<th>Nerve Supply</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tensor tympani</td>
<td>Wall of auditory tube and wall of its own canal</td>
<td>Handle of malleus</td>
<td>Mandibular division of trigeminal nerve</td>
<td>Dampens down vibrations of tympanic membrane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stapedius</td>
<td>Pyramid (bony projection on posterior wall of middle ear)</td>
<td>Neck of stapes</td>
<td>Facial nerve</td>
<td>Dampens down vibrations of stapes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Tympanic Nerve**

- The tympanic nerve arises from the glossopharyngeal nerve, just below the jugular foramen.
- It passes through the floor of the middle ear and onto the promontory.
- Here it splits into branches, which form the tympanic plexus.
- The tympanic plexus supplies the lining of the middle ear and gives off the lesser petrosal nerve, which sends secretomotor fibers to the parotid gland via the otic ganglion.
- It leaves the skull through the foramen ovale.
The chorda tympani
• arises from the facial nerve just above the stylomastoid foramen
• It enters the middle ear close to the posterior border of the tympanic membrane.
• It then runs forward over the tympanic membrane and crosses the root of the handle of the malleus

It lies in the interval between the mucous membrane and the fibrous layers of the tympanic membrane. The nerve leaves the middle ear through the petrotympanic fissure and enters the infratemporal fossa, where it joins the lingual nerve. The chorda tympani contains: Taste fibers from the mucous membrane covering the anterior two thirds of the tongue (not the vallate papillae) and the floor of the mouth.