



Congratulations on your child's interest in learning to play a musical instrument!

This information has been developed to assist you make the right decisions when purchasing a quality instrument.

When looking to purchase an instrument for your child, there are a number of options to consider. You can:

- purchase a new instrument outright;
- purchase a second-hand instrument; or
- investigate purchase plans or rental programs.

Always consult the instrumental music teacher before making a decision.

Purchasing a new instrument

- There is a range of brands available on the market, with some retailers acting as agents for specific brands. Keep in mind that you can always upgrade instruments when your child is more advanced and that a quality student model is ideal for starting out.
- The best place to start is by checking out either the Internet or reputable music shops. It is important to shop around and compare brands, models and prices. Once you have found a suitable instrument, compare prices on that brand and model to make sure you have the most competitive price.
- Ask for the student price.
- Look for shops that offer a trial period – this will allow your child to play the instrument to make sure it is suited to him/her. If not, it can be returned or exchanged as part of this service.
- Enquire about the warranty and clarify if service arrangements can be made for the maintenance and repair of your new instrument.
- Instruments hold value well if they have been carefully looked after and serviced when necessary.

Purchasing a second-hand instrument

- Check that the instrument has been serviced regularly before you purchase it and whether it is under warranty. This will save you from constant repairs and adjustments.
- The best places to find second-hand instruments are newspapers and music stores. Alternatively you could check with your local school to see if any older students are trading up to a more advanced instrument.
- Play the instruments first to see how it feels and sounds.
- Stick to a well known brand when buying a second-hand instrument.
- The rule of thumb when purchasing a second-hand instrument is that it should cost between one-third and one-half of the retail price of a new instrument, depending on age and condition.
- Instruments that are in poor condition are likely to cost you more in the long run. Check out shops that offer advisory services which will look at the condition of the instrument for you and advise of any repairs that may need to be done.
- Make sure you have access to a reputable and reliable repair service for your instrument.
- When using internet sites to purchase an instrument, parents should be aware that the instrument may be of inferior quality. The lack of warranty protection is also an important consideration when purchasing online.



Purchasing a musical instrument

A guide for first time buyers

BRASS - Trumpet and Trombone

What to look for in a quality brass instrument

- The instrument should come with a mouthpiece and an instrument case.
 - Does the instrument blow well? Your child should try the instrument before you purchase it to make sure it suits them.
 - The mouthpiece should not have any chips, dents (especially on the shank), scratches on the rim or dirt in the throat.
 - All tuning slides must work easily.
 - There should be at least one water key.
 - Trumpet valve caps and bottoms should unscrew easily.
 - Trumpet valves should work easily. Take out the valves for inspection – worn plating is a sign of excessive wear.
 - Trumpets must have a finger ring or trigger on the third valve slide for good intonation. Better quality instruments also have a saddle or trigger on the first valve slide.
 - Trombone slides must work freely and have no dents.
 - Trombones should have a functioning slide lock.
 - Check that the hinges and latches on the case work.
 - Silver instruments are silver plated. This finish protects the instrument very well and lasts for many decades however it is also usually more expensive.
 - Gold instruments are lacquered brass. This is normally cheaper than silver plating but needs more care to maintain the attractive appearance. Silver plating, lacquer or untreated brass finish is a personal preference. It is more important to make sure the instrument plays well than how it looks.
- There is a wide range of brands and models available, and prices vary. If in doubt, always wait until you can consult with your child's teacher.

Purchase plans or rental programs

- Some music retailers will provide you with a purchase plan to allow you to pay for an instrument over a period of time.
- It is possible to rent an instrument, particularly if it is only required over an interim period.
- Make a few telephone calls to get the best comparison of conditions and costs of either purchase plans or rental programs.

Once you have your instrument

Once you have a musical instrument for your child it is recommended you organise instrument insurance and make sure your child knows how to care for their instrument. It is also essential you record the instrument's serial number.

During music class, the teacher will advise students what they need to do to keep their instrument in top condition and will let parents know if servicing or maintenance is required. If you have any queries, please contact your child's teacher.



The information in this guide has been prepared by Instrumental Music School Services to assist in purchasing a musical instrument for your child. No recommendations are made for a particular supplier or brand of instrument.

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