



PLAYOUTLOUD
MUSIC STUDIO

Tips On Buying Your First Piano

A beginning piano student needs a decent instrument if you want them to enjoy lessons. If you wanted your child to play soccer, you surely wouldn't send your child out on the field in a pair of cheap flip-flops—instead, you would make sure your child had a good pair of shoes! On the other

hand, does your child need professional-quality \$200 soccer cleats? Probably not on the first day.

As a parent, or as a beginning adult, you want to make sure you or your child have a good experience while learning to play, but you're probably not ready to go out and buy a baby grand. That's fine. To help you decide what will be best for your family and your budget, here are some options:

Acoustic Pianos

A quality acoustic instrument that produces sound from real strings and real wood offers a level of responsiveness and a range of dynamics and tone color than only the high-end digital pianos can match. The typical price range for a quality acoustic upright or 'vertical' piano is \$4,000 to \$8,000. One of my favorite economical upright pianos is a Yamaha B1, but there are many other options as well. Some piano stores even offer affordable acoustic piano rental programs if you're not ready for the commitment of a purchase.

If you already own a piano, or plan to purchase a used instrument, be sure it is tuned, and all the keys are in good working order. An acoustic piano in poor condition will be frustrating to play and hinder your progress.

Digital Pianos

While not completely simulating the nuances of a quality acoustic piano, there's nothing wrong with starting a beginning student on a digital piano. Digital pianos are designed to sound and feel as much like an acoustic piano as possible, and the newer models do an excellent job! Keys are weighted to provide the right resistance and sensitivity to speed and pressure.

A couple of my favorite entry-level digital pianos are the Yamaha Arius, and the Roland F140r. You can typically purchase one of these models for around \$1,000 - \$2,000. Below is some of the models listed for sale on Amazon, so you can easily compare features to determine which is the best model for you.

[Yamaha Arius \\$900 & up](#)

[Roland FP or RP models \\$800 & up](#)

If you need something more affordable, I recommend taking a look at the Casio Privia

series, which are Casio digital pianos with model numbers beginning with 'PX' (PX-770 etc.). The Privia series pianos won't come as close to matching the feel and sound of an acoustic piano as the Yamaha & Roland brands do, but they are still a decent starter digital.

Listed below are the top-rated Casio Privia models. Compare the features to decide which is the best model for you.

[Casio Privia PX-770](#)

[Casio Privia PX-780](#)

[Casio Privia PX-870](#)

While it's impossible to entirely simulate the experience of playing on an acoustic piano, there's nothing wrong with starting a beginning student on a digital piano. In fact, a quality digital piano is much better than an old out-of-tune acoustic piano with sticky or broken keys!

Electronic Keyboards

Electronic keyboards are the most affordable way to get started. They come in many sizes and prices, but what's most important for a new piano student is the number of keys, and whether the keys are weighted and touch sensitive. If you have a keyboard that does not have the full number of weighted keys (88), I recommend upgrading as soon as possible.

Weighted keys build hand strength and respond more like the keys of an acoustic piano, making it easier for a student to grow and advance. Many electronic keyboards do not have weighted keys, so be sure to check before purchasing.

When buying an electronic keyboard make sure to also purchase a bench and a keyboard stand. A keyboard set on a table is usually not the correct height for a young student seated in a chair. Ideally, the keyboard and bench should be set so that the player's arm from wrist to elbow is parallel to the floor or slightly above.

There are certain advantages to having a digital piano or electronic keyboard over an acoustic piano, such as the ability to plug in headphones so that you can practice without disturbing anyone. Many digital or electronic instruments can also be connected to a computer with a midi cable and used with all kinds of educational and music production software. They're more portable, and, unlike acoustic pianos, digital pianos and electronic keyboards never need to be tuned. A beginning student can get a good start on learning the piano with one of these instruments.

[Casio CDP-S100 88-Key electronic keyboard bundle](#)

[Yamaha P45](#)