

Methods for obtaining a band instrument for your child

There are several methods to obtain an instrument for your child. In this letter I will name them and give a description of how they work.

1. You may already own an instrument
2. You may be able to borrow one from a relative or friend
3. You may purchase one new or used
4. You may rent one

If you already own or can borrow an instrument then you are all set. It is best to have the instrument checked out by a qualified repairperson to make sure it is in proper playing condition. Learning to play an instrument is challenging, having an instrument that doesn't play properly will lead to frustration. Having it checked over will insure that your child has the best tools for the job!

Purchasing a new or used instrument is the next option, although you may want to wait a few months to be sure your child is going to continue to play and that they are sure of the instrument they want to play. If you decide to go this route, be careful. Buying instruments on the Internet can be dicey if you are not sure of what you are looking for. Be sure to stick with the name brand instruments.

King	Yamaha	Gemeinhardt
Conn	Getzen	Blessing
Selmer	Bundy	Armstrong
Jupiter	Bach	

If at all possible, have the instrument checked out by the teacher or a qualified repairperson before purchase.

Renting is by far the most popular option for obtaining an instrument for your child. That being said, there are a couple of rental options offered by different vendors. I will try to describe these options to the best of my ability. Keep in mind, the choice of vendor and rental option that fits your needs and budget are yours to make.

1. Rent to own

This may apply to either a new or used instrument. Generally you will start with a monthly payment and continue these payments until the instrument is paid off at which time it is yours. You are usually financially responsible for all repairs from day one.

Please keep two things in mind, especially woodwind players, pads are designed to last 5 to 6 years. Some will last longer and some will not last that long. So, by the time your child reaches high school your horn will be in need

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of some expensive repairs. If it is a rent to own used horn it will need those repairs sooner.

2. Rent to buy new

This option is probably the most popular since it allows you to use a rental instrument owned and maintained by the vendor. Usually there will be a 1 payment trial period, sometimes 4 months, sometimes 3 months, in which you make one payment for the trial period. After the trial period, if you decide to continue renting, you will start making monthly payments. Most vendors will accrue this money for a period of up to three years. At any point you may use this money to purchase a brand new instrument. You may continue to rent but no more money accrues after the 3-year point. However, as long as you continue to rent, the accrued money is available to purchase a brand new instrument.

The biggest advantage by far is that the vendor performs all standard maintenance for free. If there is a problem with the instrument all you need do is notify the vendor and they will bring another instrument to the school and exchange it for the broken instrument.

There are several things to consider when choosing a vendor.

1. Does the vendor send a representative to the school on a regular basis or will you need to travel to the store for repairs or maintenance?
2. Does the vendor have a qualified in house repair staff or do they send out all repairs to a different location?
3. In the event that you would need to go to the vendor's store, where are they located? Is it convenient and do they have convenient store hours?
4. Does the vendor supply any instruments to the school to be used in case your child forgets to bring their instrument in for their lesson?
5. Does the vendor offer an optional catastrophic damage waiver?
6. Are the instruments Brand name and expertly serviced?
7. Are the rental accounts handled in house or by an outside service?
8. Can the instrument be returned at any time without further obligation?

I hope this guide is helpful in choosing the best way to obtain an instrument for your child.