



## 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.



## *Purchasing a musical instrument*

### *A guide for first time buyers*

# SAXOPHONE

**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 student model is ideal for starting out.
- The best place to start is by checking the local 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 and/or ask for the student price.
- 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.
- Play the instrument first to see how it feels and sounds. Please be sure to use your own mouthpiece and reed, and insist the instrument has been thoroughly cleaned and wiped down prior to handling.
- Stick to a well known brand when buying a second-hand instrument.
- 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.

#### **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 of time.
- 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.

### **Some important reminders**

Students should **ONLY** play their own instrument.

No sharing of instruments/mouthpieces/reeds even by family members.

Students only use their own accessories and cleaners and clean their instruments after each use.

### **What to look for in a quality student saxophone**

- Always specify the type of saxophone you want. Most students will be learning on the alto saxophone.
- There are different models of saxophone available, ranging from student to professional. A student model will have all the necessary features for a beginning student, whilst a semi-professional or professional model will have additional features such as double-articulated pinky keys and an f sharp key. Your child's teacher will be able to advise you which model is most suitable.
- All instruments come with a mouthpiece that best suits it in terms of intonation. Be careful to choose a brand of instrument that comes with a mouthpiece made of good quality ebonite. This will be a large determining factor in the quality of sound your child will produce.
- The key layout must be comfortable. It is a good idea to take your child to the music retailer to try the instrument, or consult your child's teacher.
- A good quality neck strap is essential. The saxophone is very heavy and can lead to considerable discomfort. Look for ones that have a wide strap made from stretchy wet-suit material. This may need to be an additional purchase.
- When purchasing a second-hand instrument look for reputable makes and models. If possible, your child should play the instrument to see how it feels and sounds, but students are advised at all times to use their own reed and mouthpiece when testing a second-hand instrument. Most second-hand instruments will need to be serviced prior to use so include this when negotiating a price.

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.



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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