

# Your First Flute

Today you will find many options if you are in the market for a student flute. We hope that the following advice will be of use if you are looking to make a purchase.

In order to ensure a good learning outcome, student flutes should:

- Be easy to play
- Play in tune
- Have a good sound quality
- Be durable

Concert flutes play in the key of C, and with the exception of the curved head flutes, are all the same size. Like other instruments, the cheaper a flute is the more likely it will fall short in one of these key areas. Budget flutes can be made from inferior quality materials including the metal, the silver plating and the pads. Cheaper softer metal will bend more easily especially in the hands of inexperienced players and will mean more frequent trips to the repair technician to fix bent keys.

**Making an investment in a good quality instrument will always pay off.**

The student will have a much better learning outcome and be far less frustrated than with an inferior quality instrument. You will also find it much easier to on-sell a quality brand when the time comes, and it will hold its price much better. Just make sure to clean and service the instrument regularly

## Choosing a New Flute

Children as young as 7 or 8 can start learning the flute. If they are small they may need a flute with a curved head joint that brings the flute body closer to the student. These are more expensive but may come with a straight head joint as well. When the child grows you can swap over to the straight one.

Flutes can also come with an extra key called a Split E mechanism. This helps make the high E note more stable and is useful after 2 or 3 years of playing, but not required by a beginner.

- Yamaha YFL222 (no Split E)
- Yamaha YFL212 (with Split E)
- Pearl 505E1R (with Split E)
- Jupiter JFL700E (with Split E)
- Jupiter JFL700UE (with Split E and straight & curved head joints)
- Di Zhao 301 (with Split E)

## Reputable secondhand student flute instrument brands

- Yamaha
- Jupiter
- Pearl
- Di Zhao

If you find a decent secondhand flute, try to find someone to help you make sure it does not need major repairs. We frequently see older flutes in the store for repair that have been unused for 20 years or more. While they may simply look in need of a clean, we often find that the pads have deteriorated to the point where a re-pad is required, which would cost more than the flute would be worth.

Don't hesitate to bring your old flute for out techs to assess prior to investing in expensive repairs. It may be better to buy a new flute, and enjoy all the advantages of a shiny new instrument that works perfectly!

**We recommend you stay away from:**

- Online auctions unless you are confident of the source (and remember if purchasing from overseas warranty issues will be a problem especially with larger instruments)
- Instruments with no brand name - quality instruments always have a brand
- Instruments without cases - the instrument may have damage and quality cases are not cheap.
- Instruments in unusual colours such as blue or red - the student will soon be told to get another one!
- Instruments available from shops that are not music shops (such as grocery stores)
- Instruments carrying a brand name that seem incredibly cheap or where the brand name is misspelled - they are probably copies. There has been an upsurge in the number of blatant copies of major brands lately so be very careful.

You can always call us for advice!