

Getting an Instrument—To Rent Or Buy

If you have an old violin, or have someone offers to loan or give you one, make sure it is the right size (per teacher recommendation).

Generally up to 5 years old: 1/8th-16th size;

5-7 years old: 1/8 or 1/4 size

8-10 years old: 1/4 or 1/2 size,

Over 10: 3/4 to full size.

You need to make sure it has good strings, tunable pegs, correct bridge, a useable bow and a decent case. That's a lot of variables that may end up costing you more that a rental from a credible dealer.

*And about getting a "great deal" online or at a garage sale, all I can say is, "**buyer beware!**"*

-Renting is a great way to go. Often dealers will have a rent/purchase offer. Rental prices currently range from \$15-\$35 per month, paid quarterly with 60% going towards an eventual purchase (as of 2020).

-Buying is tricky, in that your child may find that they want to quit early on, leaving you to re-sell the instrument, often at a loss. If you buy, there can be a problem when graduating to the next size or being "stuck" with the smaller size. Many dealers will give a partial of full credit for a "trade-up."

I would recommend buying a violin for a student once they are sure they are going to continue in study. A good teacher will help you with this.

It is critical that a student always have an instrument and bow that matches, one that dignifies and even exceeds their level of playing. A student should always be aspiring to reach the quality level of their instrument, and when that is achieved, it is often time for a new, better violin.

Quality and function questions when renting or buying a violin:

1. Does it stay in tune?
2. Does it sound good when the vendor or teacher plays it?
3. Is it properly set up?
4. Used or new is fine, but does it have any visible cracks of damage?
5. Is the bow warped and does it easily loosen and tighten?