

Students will use the studio's pianos during class, but each student needs a keyboard at home on which to practice.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN BUYING A KEYBOARD

Which keyboard to purchase will all come down to how much you want to spend. Please note that these keyboard features are not required. These are suggestions for what features to inquire about when purchasing your keyboard:

1. FULL-SIZE KEYS: Keys are the width of real piano keys.
2. TOUCH-SENSITIVE KEYS or VELOCITY-SENSITIVE KEYS: Key sounds softly when pressed lightly and sounds loudly when pressed hard.
3. MUSIC RACK: Holds up the music book
4. BUILT-IN SPEAKERS: Keyboards and digital pianos should have built-in speakers; synthesizers will not.
5. DAMPER PEDAL JACK: Pedal is usually sold separately.
6. "TRUE PIANO SOUND" or "GRAND PIANO SOUND"
7. WEIGHTED KEYS: Feels like you are pressing down a real wooden piano key instead of a light piece of plastic.
8. AT LEAST 61-KEYS: The more keys the keyboard has, the longer a student will be able to use it. A 61-key piano will suffice through about the 6th year of piano.
9. FEW BELLS-AND-WHISTLES: Many keyboards come with a lot features that you don't need, such as 500 instrument sounds, midi interface, or 300 prerecorded songs. I recommend that you spend your money on the quality of the keyboard, rather than the quantity of bells-and-whistles.
10. YAMAHA: My personal favorite in keyboard brands is Yamaha; they are well made and have a great sound.

SOME GOOD KEYBOARD OPTIONS FOR BEGINNERS

• Yamaha NP12 61-Key Piaggero Digital Piano \$180

- This keyboard meets all 10 of my criteria listed above.
- If I were looking to buy a keyboard for a young student, this is the one I would buy.
- This keyboard has very few bells-and-whistles which means your money is going to quality rather than quantity.
- This keyboard does not come with an electrical plug, so you will need to purchase a Yamaha power adapter separately for about **\$15**. Another option is the Yamaha SK-B2 Survival Kit which is a Yamaha power adapter, foot switch (damper pedal), and stereo headphones. The Yamaha SK-B2 Survival Kit is **\$35**.
- (The 76-key version of this keyboard is model **NP32** for **\$280** plus the corresponding Yamaha SK-D2 Survival Kit for **\$40**)

• Yamaha PSRE253 61-Key Keyboard \$120

- This keyboard meets 7 of my criteria listed above.
 - The 3 criteria that it does **not** meet:
 1. keys are not touch-sensitive
 2. keys are not weighted
 3. has lots of bells-and-whistles
- Although it does not meet all 10 of the criteria, it is a good keyboard for the price.
- This keyboard does not come with an electrical plug, so you will need to purchase a Yamaha power adapter separately for about **\$15**. Another option is the Yamaha SK-B2 Survival Kit which is a Yamaha power adapter, foot switch (damper pedal), and stereo headphones. The Yamaha SK-B2 Survival Kit is **\$35**.

Both of these keyboards, along with countless others, are available through walmart.com and guitarcenter.com. The advantage to ordering through these websites is that they have nearby store locations, so you can easily return your keyboard if you are unhappy with it.

The above criteria and keyboards are only my opinion. Please talk to the store from which you will be purchasing to help you decide which keyboard is the correct choice for your student. Please let me know if you have any questions.