

Simple songsheet for buying a used piano

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Every year parents thinking about piano lessons invariably ask, "How do I buy a used a piano?" Registered piano technician Bob Steel offers some advice. Decide on your budget. As a rule of thumb, expect to pay \$1,000 to \$1,500 for an entry level used piano (\$3,000 to \$4,000 for new). There is a wide range of quality pre-owned pianos which may be in original condition, reconditioned, meaning that the original parts have been refurbished and the piano has been regulated, or it can be rebuilt, where major components have been replaced.

A retailer will know more about a piano you are considering than a private vendor and will include moving and tuning in the price. However, they will try to sell what is available and charge all the taxes.

Once you have found a piano that suits your budget, make sure that you like the look of it. Keep in mind that an ugly beat up piano

could be a fine instrument, and a beautiful looking piano may sound horrible. Don't be misled by name brands. Pianos were the home entertainment centre before radio, and in the early 1900s there were thousands of brand name pianos being built. Any piano is only as good as the condition it is kept in.

Before you buy your piano, have a piano technician look it over, this will cost \$50 to \$100. Like a trusted mechanic, a piano tuner can keep you from making an expensive mistake, they can identify deficiencies that may improve your bargaining position, and they will guide you on placing and caring for your piano. The best way to find a technician is through a referral from a friend or music teacher.

Finally, *The Piano Book* by Larry Fine is a piano buyer's bible. Generally, used pianos are a safe investment. If you pay a fair price you should break even when you sell it, and it will bring joy and culture to your home for years.