

## Tips for purchasing your child's first Instrument

Purchasing your first violin can be a daunting experience given that there is so much around on the internet and in music stores. By providing you with some information on what to look for in new and second-hand instruments we hope to make this experience much easier and more enjoyable and exciting.

### NEW INSTRUMENTS

New Violins and violas are readily available through the local music store and range from \$200 - \$400 for student model instruments. A new cello will start at about \$800. Always remember – you get what you pay for! This means that the quality of sound produced will be affected by the brand of the instrument and the quality of the strings on the instrument.

Recommended **brands** available locally include:

- Neo Vivo
- Vivo
- Raggetti

All new instruments come with a bow and a good case.

All student model instruments will need to have **good quality strings** added to the cost so that the sound is the very best it can be when it is being played. The cost for a new set of quality student strings will start at about \$50 and go up. Brands to look for would be Clarendon Gold and AlphaYue.

Please avoid purchasing a coloured violin and instruments branded *Ashton*. Try to **avoid** purchasing an instrument from eBay as it is very difficult to ensure that you are getting what you think you are buying because you cannot try it out before-hand.

Instruments are available locally through **Green Brothers** on the corner of Alma and William Streets in Rockhampton.

However if you would like to buy a better quality new instrument you can visit the following Brisbane stores online or in person:

#### Simply For Strings

Website: [simplyforstrings.com.au](http://simplyforstrings.com.au)  
Address: 78 Enoggera Terrace, Red Hill Q 4059  
Tel: 1300 739 293

#### Animato

Website: [animato.com.au](http://animato.com.au)  
Tel: 1300 739 777  
Address: Unit 5, 789 Kingsford Smith Drive, Brisbane

#### The Violin Studio

Website: [theviolinstudio.com](http://theviolinstudio.com)  
Address: 6/ 29 Lamington Terrace, Dutton Park Queensland 4102  
Tel: 3844 6090

## SECOND-HAND INSTRUMENTS

Please try to avoid purchasing the instrument from eBay as it is very difficult to determine the quality or state of the used instrument.

Looking for second-hand instruments can be fun and you can start by checking out the following each week:

- The Morning Bulletin Saturday Classifieds
- Handy Trader
- Trading Post
- Online local "Buy, Swap and Sell" facebook pages

When you have found an instrument that you are keen to buy you are going to have to check it over to make sure you will not have to spend too much extra money on repairs to get the instrument in to working order. Here are a few hints for you to follow:

- As a rule, avoid mass-produced violins like *Ashtons*, or anything coloured. These tend to be unbalanced, have a horrible tone (meaning the playing sound will be extra scratchy) and they are badly put together, making the violin harder to play than usual.
- If possible, make sure that you get to see and hold the instrument before you buy it because there are some aspects of the instrument you will need to check.
- Check that the bow hair is full and not worn down with much of the hair missing.
- Check that the bow hair is able to be wound up and down successfully. If the screw is unable to do this then you are going to need to purchase a new bow
- Check that the fine tuners (found on the tailpiece) are able to moved easily and that there are four of them on the instrument.
- Is the bridge up straight or bent over? If it is bent over it will need to be replaced adding a further cost to the price of the instrument.
- Is there a chin rest on the violin/viola?
- Do the zips and catches on the case work easily or appear worn? If they do not work then you may need a new case.
- Even if the instrument has all four strings still there it is recommended that you buy a fresh set of strings to help the instrument to sound its best.
- There are thousands and thousands of Stradivarius copies. That Stradivarius violin in your attic/on that website is not a real one