

Buying a Drum Kit

Drum kits can be large and noisy and so I do understand that they can place a burden on a household. For the first term of lessons it is easily possible to survive without a kit, but as we progress into a second and third term of lessons it will become increasingly necessary to have access to one. This not only enables regular practice on the instrument which rapidly improves progress, but also increases the overall enjoyment, enthusiasm and dedication to the commitment of drum lessons

Here are a few thoughts on buying a drum kit;

What to get

You will be looking to get a 'standard' 5 piece drum kit. This means it includes 5 drums - snare drum, bass drum and 3 tom toms (2 that are mounted on the bass drum and one that stands on the floor. Included in this should also be a bass drum pedal, hi hat stand, snare drum stand, a stool and at least one cymbal stand. Standard beginner packages will also include hi hat cymbals and at least one other cymbal (this can be any size)

I HIGHLY recommend getting a kit with a smaller size bass drum (18 or 20 inch). This enables everything to be set a little lower which is great for those who are not yet fully grown. You will not need to upgrade the size of the bass drum - professionals use drums this size too.

While you can buy all the components of the kit separately, it is much more convenient and cost effective to find a 'package' that includes everything. Any reputable retailer will have this covered.

Respectable brands to look for include Mapex, Tama, Pearl and Yamaha

Acoustic vs Electronic kits

Electronic kits can be a very practical solution for when you do not have a lot of space or cannot handle the noise of acoustic drums. Although they do not offer quite the same playing experience as acoustic drums, this is a minor hurdle and not a great concern.

Electronic kits will always come as a package with drum and cymbal pads, stands, sound module, and pedals. The only thing missing might be a stool.

Brands to look for include Alesis, Roland and Yamaha

How Much to Spend

You should look to spend between £300 - £500 for either acoustic or electronic kits. Anything cheaper and I would seek advice as to the quality of what you are getting. Any more expensive and you are paying for things that are not important yet (heavier stands, better quality wood, more electronic sounds). Even at this price you can easily get something that will last for years and years.

Second hand drums

If looking at 2nd hand options, make sure that everything is included (drums, stands, cymbals, stool) and that everything works (especially the hi hat stand, bass drum pedal, and snare mechanism on the snare drum). Drum skins may be a bit worn out but this is OK - they are fairly tough, and at worst are not expensive to replace. Make sure any cymbals aren't chipped or cracked.

Second hand electronic kits are very hard to judge because there are so many components that could go faulty. You would also have no support if there was any problem with the equipment.

Where to shop

Good online retailers include

- www.gak.co.uk
- www.gear4music.com
- www.grahamrusselldrums.com

I am happy to help as much as I can with this so please send a note along with your child and I will be in touch.

Jeremy