

What's the best type of drum set to buy for a beginner?

If you are a beginner or the parent of one, then the subject of buying a drum set can be very confusing as there are a lot of choices out there. My personal suggestion is to try to stick to purchasing drum sets and cymbals from well known, reputable, professional brand name companies and avoid the cheaper generic brands.

Drum companies such as *Pearl, Tama, Sonor, Mapex, Gretch, Yamaha, Ludwig* and *PDP*. Cymbal companies such as *Zildjian, Sabian, Mienl, Bosphorus* and *Paste*. And drumhead (drum skin) companies such as *Remo, Evans* and *Aquarian* are some of the names you want to look into.

If you need drumsticks, companies such as *Vic Firth, Promark* and *Vater* are the more well-known brands on the market.

All these companies make equipment that ranges from beginner to professional, and they do not want to put beginners off their pro- line products by making an inferior student model.

Things to be aware of with drums:

1. **Wood type:** Are the drums made of a softer wood that will warp and twist over time, or is it a hard wood that will hold its shape?
2. **Hardware type:** Are the metal stands and mounts strong and sturdy with good quality chrome to prevent rust? And do they stay where they are placed or do they move and wobble?
 - Breakage due to metal fatigue is very common in cheap drum sets.
 - Easily damaged threads on wing nuts and bolts is another issue with softer metal.
 - Hardware is one of the first things I suggest people upgrade if they can.
3. **Finish type:** Are the drums finished in a cheap plastic wrap stuck over roughly sanded shells or are the drums highly polished with professional varnishes and stains?
4. **Access to spare parts:** If something does go wrong can you get spare parts easily, or is the equipment simply disposable?

Things to be aware of with cymbals:

1. **Metal type:** Are the cymbals thin, flimsy piece of metal pressed into shape or is it a heavier, more solid model?
2. **Musical style:** Are the cymbals designed for the music you are playing? Are you buying cymbals designed for loud rock concerts or are you buying duller, quieter ones for smaller venues and home practice?

Things to be aware of with Drum Heads (Drum skins):

The drum heads (Drum skins) that come standard on most beginner / student level drum sets are best described as display heads. They are typically cheaper drum heads that the drum company often sources from a drum head company like *Remo* or *Evans* to go on their drum sets when shipping them out to retail stores.

Most serious drummers will replace these heads soon after they purchase a kit, and will replace them with more durable and musically suitable ones.

Things to know about Drum Thrones (Drum stools):

Cheap drum thrones are typically weak, wobbly, have very limited adjustability and hurt to sit on for long lengths of time. In my opinion many are actually dangerous, (especially if you are a heavier adult). My suggestion is to try to buy the best stool you can afford. It makes practicing more enjoyable as you are more comfortable and can adjust the stool to the exact height you prefer. (This often also makes playing easier as well). Try to avoid the style that has a bolt that slides through a hole to adjust the seat. The bolt and hole usually deform over time and you can't adjust them anymore. And if you're still growing you will have to likely have to buy another taller stool anyway in a year or so.

Be careful of retail staff pushing a particular brand or model.

Most retail staff are nice people who are there to help, but it is in their business to promote certain brands over others and to make a sale. Their livelihoods depend on it and there are a variety of reasons why they do it.

- Because a distributor is pushing them to do it.
- Because they have old stock that has not sold and they are hoping to get rid of it.
- Maybe they have limited stock and are just trying to convince you that what they have is suitable.
- Maybe they just have a personal bias for a certain brand or distributor over others.

In any case my personal advice is here is that before committing to anything I highly suggest you visit a few musical instrument stores and look at and compare all the different brands, models, and types in person. You will quickly see what and where the strengths and weaknesses are.