

FLUTE GUIDE

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Learning a new instrument is exciting, rewarding and at times challenging for all beginners, however, we understand that there is pressure on the parent as well. Which is the right instrument to buy for home practice? What do they need for their lessons? What do you need to do to support this venture? This short guide has been written from our list of FAQs and will hopefully answer any questions you might have. If you need any more information, you can get in touch any time via e-mail or phone and we will be happy to help.

What do I need to buy for lessons?

Books

Your child will be learning from one of the following books to begin with,:

Vamoosh Flute Book 1

Abracadabra Flute

Please discuss the recommended syllabus with your child's teacher before purchasing a book.

Flute

Buying your first flute can be daunting: there are so many different makes, models and types of flutes available, and the variations in price can be hundreds of pounds.

It is important to be careful of flutes that look too cheap. Some supermarkets, high street chains and online-only warehouses sell their own brand of flutes. In our experience, these flutes should be avoided there are many poor-quality, cheap flutes around, and while the initial outlay is low, the running costs can quickly overtake the price of a well-branded flute. As well as the high running costs, cheap flutes are not as easy to play and can be difficult even for an advanced player to make a decent sound on. We see so many players on the verge of giving up because they thought they were just no good at the flute – when in fact the problem was caused by a poor-quality instrument. Just Flutes has a great guide about the pitfalls of cheaper flutes.

We recommend that you should budget between £250 – £500 for an entry-level flute, although rental schemes, hire-purchase and buying second hand can help to reduce the up-front strain on your wallet.

Buy something that's designed for a beginner

It should go without saying that flutes classified as 'beginner flutes' have been designed specifically for beginner players. A good quality beginner flute should be easy to play, lightweight, and be able to withstand knocks and bumps. Step-up flutes, professional flutes and so on, have been designed for players who can already play the flute to an extent. They're not designed to be as easy to play, they tend to be heavier, offer the fuller sound and increased projection that an advanced player needs.

Get the right size and think ahead

Flutes don't come in different 'sizes' as such, but you can get curved head joints for a small beginner. This brings the keys of the flute closer to the body, reducing the stretch. If your child needs a curved head joint, the truth is that it will cost more; but the problems if you don't get a curved head joint could far outweigh the price difference. Neck and back pain from over-stretching can arise, and players can easily get into the bad habit of poor posture. It can take many years to sort out a poor posture that wouldn't have arisen with a curved head joint.

Certain beginner flutes – notably the Pearl PF-505 and Yamaha YFL-212 – are upgradable by replacing the head joint (the part that you blow into). Simply putting a handmade silver head joint on one of these makes a huge improvement, for a fraction of the price of an intermediate flute.

For very small players (ages 5 to 7), you could start on the fife or Apprentice flute, both of which are affordable 'mini' flutes.

Summary

Taking up a new instrument is an exciting experience! Your child will likely want to perform what they have learned in lessons to you – after all, you are their first audience! Mistakes are inevitable in the early stages but are an essential part of learning and progression. Be sure to encourage repetition and express interest when they play. A positive response will encourage practice and motivate learning! If you have any further questions please feel free to contact us. We look forward to being a part of your musical adventure!