NMPAT

Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust

Guide to buying a keyboard or digital piano

What is the difference between a keyboard and a digital piano?

- Beginner keyboards tend to have non-responsive keys, meaning the volume will always be the same
- With a touch-responsive or touch sensitive keyboard, you can control the volume with your fingertips, just like a traditional piano would
- Keyboards are generally smaller than a traditional piano, with up to 61 keys
- Digital pianos generally have weighted, touch-responsive keys to feel like a traditional piano
- Digital pianos mostly have 88 keys, like a traditional piano

Which instrument is best for me?

- This is a very individual, space and budget related question
- For someone learning the piano, ideally a touch-responsive key is needed
- A YAMAHA keyboard with 61 touch-responsive keys is suitable for a beginner piano student
- A YAMAHA keyboard with 61 keys and an accompaniment function is suitable for a beginner keyboard player
- If you have a larger budget, then a portable digital piano with 88 weighted keys will take you further along your learning journey
- The following brands are recommended by our teaching staff:
    - GEAR4MUSIC dp1 (5 octaves) or dp 2 (7 octaves)
    - YAMAHA P45
    - ROLAND GO
    - NU-X NEK110 keyboard - has a rechargeable battery so no need for cables
- If you have the space, then a traditional acoustic piano is also a great option

How expensive are these instruments?

- Beginner level keyboards start from around £99
- Portable digital pianos start from around £250/£300

Other features to look out for

- Full-sized keys
- Touch-responsive or touch sensitive
- Foot pedal

Where can I buy an instrument?

- St Giles Music in Northampton offer expert advice and also a discount to NMPAT students www.stgilesmusic.co.uk
- GEAR4MUSIC www.gear4music.com
- AMAZON (of course!)
- Lidl supermarket often have a YAMAHA beginner keyboard in their middle aisle around Christmas time
- Second hand keyboards can also be found on Facebook Marketplace