



The DrumWise Guide To Buying Your First Drum Kit

Looking to buy your first drum kit can be a daunting experience as there are many brands, types of kit and price ranges out there. We hope that this guide will help you to buy the right kit for your situation.

Our first question to students when they are looking to buy a kit is always 'What is your budget?' as this dictates the level and quality of kit you will be looking for. Our next question is 'Do you want to buy new or second-hand?' A used kit will often be much cheaper than a brand new one, and will be better value for money, but there are some really bashed up used kits out there.

When buying a drum kit you need to consider whether you want an acoustic or an electric kit. Acoustic kits are traditionally 5 large wooden drums with metal cymbals (5 piece drum kits) and electric kits are usually rubber or meshed drums and cymbals that make very little sound, with an electric module that produces the drum sound through headphones or external speakers.

Electric drum kits are generally more expensive because of the technology involved, but are easier to play at home, take up less space than a typical acoustic kit and need very little maintenance. They are also nowhere near as loud which means that they are great for home practice. The downside to electric kits is that there are lots on the market and you have to spend a significant amount of money on one to get a good quality kit that will last a long time. The cheaper kits can be weak and badly designed and in general electric kits are harder to dismantle and use for gigs or concerts and they need some kind of amplification to be heard by an audience.

Acoustic kits come in all different sizes and set ups, from junior kits to 20 piece monsters. A new budget kit can cost as little as £125 and a professional level kit can cost up to 5 figures. Budget kits are generally low quality with thin cymbals that can be turned inside out and stands and pedals (hardware) that breaks quite easily. Spending around £600 on an acoustic kit will get you a very good kit that should last a long time. Most of the time with acoustic kits, the more money you spend, the less you get. For example if you spend £200 on a starter kit you will get 5 drums, stands, cymbals a stool and sometimes even sticks. A £600 Pearl Export you will usually get 5 drums and hardware, whereas if you buy a £4000 DW kit you will only get the drums (known as a shell pack). An acoustic kit will need to have its drum heads changed regularly as these will wear out, unlike most electric kits.

Generally for either electric or acoustic kits the more the kit is worth new, the less it will depreciate. Beginner acoustic kits that are worth £200 new will only sell for around £50-£75 depending on wear. But this also means that there are lots of second-hand bargains to be had. So if you have a tight budget, this could be the way to go.

It all ultimately comes down to how much you are willing to spend. If you want a kit that will last you a long time and that you won't outgrow as your playing develops, then a mid-range kit would be ideal as a starting point. If you're not sure if drumming is for you and you don't want to commit to spending a lot on a kit that you might not keep long-term budget kits are more for you.



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Acoustic Kit | New Price Guide:
(Prices from www.pmtonline.co.uk - Dec 2017)

The following prices are intended as a guide only

Back Rat Starter Kit – Approx £230



Mapex Tornado – Approx £330



Yamaha Rydeen – Approx £470





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Electric Kits | New Price Guide:
(Prices from www.pmtonline.co.uk - Dec 2017)

Despite there being other brands listed below, we only recommend Roland electronic drum kits as they are the best built and best value for money. We have listed other brands to try and suit all budgets

Alesis Nitro | Approx £345



Roland TD-11K – Approx £675



Roland TD-25KV – Approx £2300

