

Instrument Purchasing Tips

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Have an open mind

Have some idea of the sound you are looking for

Go to a place with many options

Attempt to remove bias by having others switch the instrument or part in question

Trade parts among the instruments you have available to try

Test several of the same instrument or part: hand-made elements invite variations

Don't hurry

Record yourself

Bring friends to listen

Take breaks

Listen to others playing the instruments

Pay attention to this X factor: Is the instrument inspiring to play?

Consider ease and comfort

Test on bits of music, not just isolated notes, exercises, or excerpts

Test alone and with others (duets, section playing)

Smaller bore instruments sometimes zing the energy through and sound bigger out front

Larger bore instruments sometimes have a lot of presence up by the player, but not as much 30 feet away

These differences are also possible among similar-sized instruments, so ask "Where is the sound?"

Use a trial period if possible

A restocking fee is worth the expense