



Acoustic Pianos vs Digital Pianos



Acoustic Piano

The acoustic piano is a complicated structure. Touching the keys results in a hammer hitting a string, which then vibrates and the sound produced is amplified by the piano's soundboard. This provides a rich, true piano sound, which is quite valued at concerts and recitals. However, an acoustic piano requires a lot of space, upkeep and money.

Things to Consider When Choosing an Acoustic Piano:

- Acoustic pianos require regular tuning, particularly if there are changes in the weather or if the piano is moved.
- Nothing compares to the full-bodied sound provided by an acoustic piano.
- These pianos allow the artist to play softly or loudly, gently or with vigour, etc. depending on the mood of the piece- the piano responds to the touch of the pianist.
- Acoustic pianos are large, extremely heavy, and take up a considerable part of a room.
- Affordable and/or second-hand acoustic pianos are usually wrought with flaws and not worth buying, and for many, a true, good quality one is simply beyond their budget.

Digital Piano

A digital piano is one that is a replica of an acoustic piano. Rather than contain the strings and mechanisms to produce the sound, digital pianos just use recorded notes from a 'real' (acoustic) piano. There are definite advantages to using one of these instruments and they are often used by people who need an easily portable instrument, that is cheaper to purchase and maintain compared to an acoustic.

Things to Consider When Choosing a Digital Piano:

- Digital pianos are considerably cheaper than acoustic.
- There is some sensitivity in the digital key, but true interpretation of many piano pieces is simply not possible, as it doesn't allow for natural variation within the dynamics. Make sure you purchase one with 'full/heavy weighted', 'hammer-action' keys!
- These instruments are quite light and portable, and don't take up as much space in a room as an acoustic.
- Digital pianos offer a wide range of styles and extra features compared to an acoustic, including- drum tracks, recorded notes/sounds from a variety of other instruments and types of pianos, pre-recorded classical/popular/traditional songs to play along with or simply enjoy listening to, a metronome (to help keep a consistent beat whilst you play), volume button and headphone input, the ability to record your practise or performance and play it back later on, multi-track recording and playback, USB input to connect it directly to a computer, SD card slot to save your practise onto or your lesson (scales, songs, etc.)...the list goes on. Be sure to discuss with your local music store what features you require, your budget, your lifestyle, etc. and they will be able to assist you further with your decision.
- Digital pianos never need to be tuned, making them very useful- in humid areas, where the weather changes drastically or even for those who rent their home or unit, etc.

The debate of traditional acoustic pianos vs. digital ones has been around as long as digital pianos. Classical piano teachers and students insist that an acoustic piano is the best and to be honest, the digital piano is only an imitation, albeit a very good one these days. Even with the best technology, digital pianos are simply not able to live up to the sound, feel and beauty of the original acoustic.

However, this doesn't rule out digital pianos at all. They are extremely useful for the piano student on a budget or for anyone who has little space in their home for a large acoustic piano. Bands also find the more portable version to be easier to use, since it doesn't require tuning and can easily be packed up and moved to the next gig. In the end, it depends on your intent, as well as a few other factors, such as budget and space, as to whether or not you will go with an acoustic or a digital piano.