

If you are considering purchasing a Horn: 2019

The first thing to know is that buying most new instruments can be similar in some ways to buying a car. There is a MSRP price and there is a lower price. Some stores might be flexible. On the other hand, an instrument direct from a small manufacturer will have firm pricing. The brands of the smallest manufacturers are often known only by the professional horn players because of the high price and long waiting list times.



Try to think of a horn purchase in terms of filling your current need. **There is a market for used instruments of good quality.** They don't usually depreciate to zero unless you treat them badly. They will however usually lose value unless availability and currency swings influence the price. Aside from accidental damage, wear and tear on the valves will occur and it makes many cheap instruments not worth the repair. When the time comes, professionals do rebuild the valves of their instruments. I perform and teach fulltime and although my horn is over 10 years old, it does not need a valve rebuild.

I recommend the \$5000 range for new instruments. Be careful though because more expensive horns ARE NOT necessarily higher quality, so please consult your Horn Teacher. Also, remember that there is of course never any guarantee that one can resell an instrument for the value you think it might have. It is worth what someone will pay. In my opinion, unless you really know what you are doing, in general stay away from new horns costing less than \$3000.

I like to look at the used instruments for sale in order to get an idea of current values. Sometimes those deals are hard to pass up. The best website for purchasing used horns in my opinion is <http://www.hornsociety.org/en/free-classifieds/5-full-double>. If

you consider buying a used horn please talk with your teacher beforehand so that they can explain that process more fully. You should always negotiate a trial period with a used horn where you can get your money back, and you should have a written contract of some sort. **Your Private Lesson Teacher should play any horn during the trial period in order to make an evaluation. Please don't buy a horn right before college without involving the College Horn Teacher.**

Just as with the used instruments, it's better to get a new horn with a money-back return policy if possible so your teacher can evaluate the instrument. Sometimes new horns have problems too.

I think that for college students and young professionals, some of the best values for the dollar are the Yamaha Horns. I recommend the Yamaha 671D which is a Geyer wrap design. If you want a detachable bell, and I do recommend that for the convenience and resale value, the model I prefer at this time is the **Yamaha 671D**. Most places at the time of this writing are selling this model for \$4900 even though the MSRP is \$7584. I have noticed that used ones sometimes become available in the \$2500-3500 range.

Other equipment notes...

- One excellent mouthpiece is the Laskey 75G, but there are others. Always consult the private lesson teacher.
- High school students and beyond may need a straight mute and I prefer at this time the straight mute by **RGC**.
- Professional musicians often own stopping mutes and the **Alexander** is my preference in that category, but something in the \$70 ranges is more realistic for college students.
- If you want a backpack style case, it might cost as much as \$340- \$550. There are various distributors and you can Google them, but here is one manufacturer's website; **Marcus Bonna** <http://www.mbcases.com>. They are the manufacturer of the cases that many professionals use. Many shops sell them in the US. There are cheaper cases by other manufacturers, but I don't have an opinion on their value or durability.
- If you purchase an instrument, please look into insurance coverage. Many homeowners (perhaps renters) policies will give some coverage, but often when playing an instrument becomes more than a hobby, they won't cover it. Each insurance company may have a different threshold for this so ask the insurance carrier. Many professional musicians use **Clarion Insurance** <http://clarionins.com> There may be other carriers.