Getting an instrument

An instrument that sounds good, with a good quality bow is more rewarding to play and is a better value. The price and quality of stringed instruments varies widely and there is a daunting number of options for getting "beginning" & "intermediate" level new, used for purchase, rent or lease. I suggest starting your search on the websites of both local stores and online sources, and comparing brands and models they offer in the various price ranges.

(Please see the Music Store List on back)

Check with me to see which size your child will need. ½ size is the most common size for 3rd & 4th graders, with some using 1/4 size. Many 5th, 6th, & 7th grader students use ¼ size, but many in grades 6 and up can use 4/4 or full. Violas really are constructed and sized differently, so ask me or a good shop first!

Violins and violas need a shoulder rest. They can be inexpensive foam that are held on by a rubber band or one of the many choices (but more expensive) clip on types. This makes correct playing position more comfortable.

Some things to consider and ask the shop:
- If you buy outright, (the end cost is usually less than a rental or lease) can we trade up in size?
- At local stores, ask for someone to play instruments in different price ranges, for you to compare sound.
- Insist on better quality strings like "Dominant", not all wire strings.
- Used instruments are often a great value and better instruments tend hold their value over time.
- Be sure the bow has real horsehair.
- Are the back and top carved? (not pressed wood)
- Whether though a mail order company or a shop, talk to them to find out if the instrument and bridge is professionally carved and completely adjusted by a professional who knows stringed instruments.
- Are the fingerboard & pegs made of ebony? (Other woods or plastic are too soft & often break.)
- Be wary of violin outfits under $200.
- No painted or spray varnished instruments, please!!

Tips on looking for instruments: http://www.beginnerviolintips.com/buying-beginner-violin
http://www.violinist.com/wiki/buying/
the violin channel

School Owned Instruments

We do have a limited number of school instruments that are primarily intended for students for whom cost is a hardship. Please consider getting your own instrument if possible, so as many students can participate in the program. I am very respectful about the expense of instruments and it should not be a barrier for any student to participate in our Orchestras. We request a $25 per year donation to cover maintenance.

Some recommended (many others,too)
Klaus Muller – Etude
Eastman – Segue
Eastman - Les Etoiles
Franz Hoffmann Etude or Concert or Coe
Sheng Liu Model 2
Sandler Model 306
Suzuki Model 220, 330 & up
Knilling
Roth
Amati
Bellafina -
Scott Cao (several models)
Yamaha
Yuan Qin

Marginal Quality inexpensive, but usually supplied with a poor bow and strings.
Cecilio
Palatino
Franz Hoffmann - Prelude
Not Recommended Instruments
Most instruments under $200 will be frustrating to learn on and have no resale value.
Mendino
Franz Hoffman – Amadeus
Merano
Bellafina – Prelude or Rainbow Series
Kiso Suzuki
Bazaar
Any instrument without a label
**Music Store List**
(Please see the Getting an "Instrument" on back)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quinn Violins</strong></td>
<td>1081 21st Ave S.E., Mpls (west of Hwy 280 off Hennepin)</td>
<td>612-378-5470</td>
<td><a href="http://www.quinnviolins.com">www.quinnviolins.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cadenza Music Center</strong></td>
<td>149 North Snelling Avenue (at Selby)</td>
<td>644-3611</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jennifer Becker Violins</strong></td>
<td>1161 Selby Ave Call for appointment</td>
<td>612-508-5739</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Very small shop, excellent quality beginning through professional</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Eckroth Music</strong></td>
<td>3065 Centerpoint Dr., Roseville</td>
<td>651 704-9654</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eckroth.com">www.eckroth.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>John Waddle Violins</strong></td>
<td>2032 St. Claire Ave, St. Paul</td>
<td>698-4692</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excellent small shop in home, call for appointment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fein Stringed Instruments</strong></td>
<td>1850 Grand Ave St. Paul</td>
<td>228-0783</td>
<td><a href="http://www.feinviolins.com">www.feinviolins.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Music Go Round</strong></td>
<td>933 W. 7th St, Saint Paul</td>
<td>695-9630</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1705 Weir Drive # 1, Roseville, MN</td>
<td>651-714-1460</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>All Strings Attached</strong></td>
<td>763-542-9542</td>
<td>651-439-8899</td>
<td><a href="http://www.allstringsattached.com">www.allstringsattached.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>House of Note</strong></td>
<td>7210 Minnetonka Blvd., St. Louis Park</td>
<td>952-929-0026</td>
<td><a href="http://www.houseofnote.com">www.houseofnote.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specializes in strunged instruments</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Claire Givens Violin</strong></td>
<td>1004 Marquette Avenue, Minneapolis</td>
<td>(612) 375-0708</td>
<td><a href="http://www.givensviolins.com">www.givensviolins.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Groth Music Company</strong></td>
<td>494 &amp; Nicollet, Bloomington</td>
<td>(952) 884-4772</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All String and Band instruments. Rentals and maintenance plans available</td>
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**THE MAIL ORDER / ONLINE SOURCES BELOW ARE REPUTABLE, HIGH QUALITY SHOPS**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Shar Products Inc</strong></td>
<td><a href="http://www.sharmusic.com">www.sharmusic.com</a></td>
<td>800-248-SHAR (7427)</td>
<td>very reliable online &amp; mail order shop strunged instruments, rentals, supplies and music in Ann Arbor Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Southwest Strings</strong></td>
<td>swstrings.com Tucson, AZ</td>
<td>(800) 528-3430</td>
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<td><strong>Atlantic Strings</strong></td>
<td>atlanticstrings .com Melbourne, FL 886-284-6546</td>
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***Large online retailers do not operate music shops and cannot provide the kind of service needed to make an informed decision or correct set up of a violin. I discourage anyone from ordering online through any site that is not a real music shop and have seen some very poor equipment come from such sources.***