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The Piano Book: Buying & Owning A New Or Used Piano



Synopsis

This bible of the piano marketplace is indispensable to buyers and owners of pianos, amateur and professional players alike. Hundreds of thousands of pianos are bought and sold each year, yet most people buy a piano with only the vaguest idea of what to look for as they make this major purchase. The Piano Book evaluates and compares every brand and style of piano sold in the United States. There is information on piano moving and storage, inspecting individual new and used pianos, the special market for Steinways, and sales gimmicks to watch out for. An annual supplement, sold separately, lists current prices for more than 2,500 new piano models.

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Customer Reviews

This comprehensive volume contains valuable information for the consumer; following a technical but lucid description of the mechanics of a piano's action, it discusses all aspects of purchasing and maintaining an instrument. Numerous illustrations and charts enhance the text, which is clearly and directly written, and buying tips accompany the guides to purchasing both new and used instruments. But most valuable for a prospective buyer are the numerical ratings of virtually all models of pianos currently available, both foreign and domestic, based on the experiences of technicians around the country. An excellent source book. Susan Kagan, Hunter Coll., CUNY
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“If there is to be a piano in your future, the single indispensable reference is The Piano Book

by Larry Fine. • Noah Adams, host of NPR's All Things

Considered • "The Piano Book is a must-have resource, no matter what kind of music you play, or what kind of piano you own or intend to buy. • Robert Moog, inventor of the Moog Synthesizer • "It is a book that I never thought I would see in print and a book that will be of great service to the piano world. • Robert Silverman, former editor of The Piano Quarterly • "Clearly and directly written. . . . An excellent source book. • Library Journal

I just went through the process of researching and ultimately buying a piano. The most important part of this research was this book plus the accompanying 2016 supplement • Acoustic & Digital Piano Buyer: Spring 2016 Supplement to The Piano Book. The Piano Book was easy and fun to read, and made me a much more informed piano shopper. The latest supplement contains prices - not just list but Larry's estimate of the most you should realistically have to pay. The two books together help you understand the piano industry and where each brand and each class of piano fits in, so you can find the best possible piano for your situation and budget. These books are also helpful if you're considering a used piano - and you should, as a good piano that's cared for will last much longer than a person's lifetime. Buying a piano is a big investment, one that you'll have possibly the rest of your life. It's worth taking a few extra hours to educate yourself to be an informed shopping and make sure you make the best purchase decision. Larry Fine's excellent book is an important part of that. You should also visit his website, which has a variety of articles and reviews, and some updates.

Very helpful. I bought this after wracking my brains trying to get good info on a 1927 Baldwin resto. It didn't have much on Knabe which was a model I was considering. Got me comfortable with the investment.

There's not much to add to the superlatives written about this book except to note that simply having it in your possession can influence salespeople! I took this book with me in Sept. 2003 to buy a "nearly new" piano at the annual sale of the prestigious Peabody Institute in Baltimore. The saleswoman noticed it and said, "I see you have Larry Fine's book. I bet you'll leave here with a good piano at a great price." Throughout our tour of the many pianos on sale, I felt as though she was being more factual because I had the book! And, because I had read parts of it, I was able to ask more questions about the types of materials used in construction of the various parts. I bought a 2

month old Kawai GM-10 for about 2/3 list price! Not only did the book give me independent in-depth information on the Kawai, but several paragraphs (p.118) to read comparing it to other brands in terms of sound, feel, durability, warranty, etc. Now, every time I sit at my piano, I feel an added confidence that I'm playing the finest instrument I could afford.

Essential information for anyone buying a piano. Must read!

Excellent and thorough primer on pianos in general. Great advice for individuals in the market for a piano. The consumer guide gives you confidence in your selection of a piano and gives you reasonable expectations within a particular price range and build quality. Enables you to make the best selection for your budget and demands in terms of performance.

This definitely helped me in choosing my first grand piano. More than anything else, it helped me understand some of the terms that the piano technician talked about. That said, I don't think this replaces getting a piano technician to inspect a piano. Getting a piano technician to inspect the piano before I purchased it was the best thing I could have done. Some of the discussions in the book were too technical. I would have liked a more practical approach, and a less technical discussion of the topics.

I read this book before my very first piano purchase, and the information Mr. Fine shared in the chapters "Buying a New/Used Piano" was invaluable. I entered the retailer's floor thinking that I would buy a brand new piano but was most impressed by the sound, tone, feel of a 98-year-old vintage German piano. I took The Piano Book with me and read the history of the European manufacturer while trying out many pianos on the floor. I made the purchase after comparing many pianos and saved thousands of dollars because I was prepared to negotiate a fair price based on the 2007-2008 Supplement and The Piano Book. The combination of both books helped me differentiate facts from the retailer's selling points, which is essential when committing to large investments. Being informed also led to more respectful negotiations between the customer and the shop owner. My experience when purchasing pianos, cars, or other big-ticket items is that retailers appreciate it when they perceive a knowledgeable customer, and they do not attempt to take advantage of you as forthrightly.

You don't have to be buying a piano to enjoy this book, which is the ultimate compendium of

(almost) everything you need to know piano-wise. In addition to being stuffed with fascinating and useful information, it is just plain fun to read. Larry Fine, the author, uses a wonderfully direct conversational style that conveys technical material with finesse and ease. It avoids being dry and academic, or being condescending -- this is not 'pianos for dummies'. If you don't already have a good piano, this book may make you want one.

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