

NEW VS OLD

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In this article Jaime Gibson discusses what to watch out for when buying a second hand clarinet



Buying Second hand clarinets what to look out for by Jaime Gibson B music MMTA

Someone at school or eBay is always selling a second hand Clarinet for half the price of a new one so what should you look out for?

When buying a second hand instrument it is all about the quality and condition of the pads. The body and keywork should be ok, or at least if there is damage it is visible to the eye. Of course an instrument repairer should look over the instrument and check things like the alignment for the Low F and E keys but this is not the most expensive issue. Also this will not stop you being able to play the Clarinet.

Clarinet pads, like flute pads, are made out of thin tissue paper (bladder) , as opposed to the

saxophone whose are made out of leather and very tough.

Cheaper pads are single bladder, the clarinets I recommend are double bladder as the bladder can get a tear in it just by touching it. Also by drinking soft drinks or orange juice you wear out the pads quickly. On a Saxophone you can drink anything and the leather puts up with it. My Tenor Saxophones pads are about 12 years old.

If the skin of the pad is damaged at all through old age, or it being a cheap single bladder which has failed the clarinet is unplayable. Last week I had a student whose clarinet needed 3 pads replaced on a \$1500 wooden clarinet and it was only 2 years old. When buying second hand clarinet you should factor

in some money towards a \$80 basic service- on the keywork, screws, springs and pads - roughly \$50 per pad replacement. For between 2 and 8 pads.

Student brands that are good Jupiter,, Bond Australia, Buffet, Selmer, Suzuki, Solo

I feel that the market has changed and for the hassle I would buy a cheaper new instrument for that \$350 - \$500 range with between a 3 -5 year warranty.

The exception is buying a \$3000-\$7000 Professional Wooden Clarinet second hand and investing in a repair. However this is not in most students budget. www.valuemusic.com.au