



# DRUMSET BUYING GUIDE

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Buying a drumset is a big commitment and there are a lot of different factors that go into picking a great drumset. For this guide I am going to keep the recommendations to what I have seen work well for my students in terms of price and quality. Most drummers have a favorite brand of drums, so if you would like more specific advice about a certain company or brand, please reach out and I will be happy to answer any questions.

*-Christian Dorn*

## PRACTICE PAD KIT <\$150



### PRACTICE PAD AND STICKS

To get started, all students really need are a pair of drum sticks, a practice pad, and a music stand to see the music. A practice pad feels just like a drum and is great to learn on (and it is about 80-90% quieter than a real drum). This is a great option to see if a student likes the instrument without having to buy a full drumset.

My Practice Pad Recommendation:

#### Practice Pad

Prologix Percussion Method Pad - 10.75 inch  
([www.sweetwater.com](http://www.sweetwater.com))

#### Sticks

Promark SD1 Maple (Amazon, Sweetwater, Guitar Center)

#### Snare/Practice Pad Stand

Donner Snare Drum Stand (Amazon)

#### Music Stand

Amazon Basics Portable Music Stand (Amazon)

# SNARE DRUM KIT \$200+



## SNARE DRUM KIT

A snare drum kit can be a great option for beginning students as many schools start students on kits similar to these. These drums are a little louder, so I do recommend purchasing a practice pad with the snare kit so the volume can be reduced at home. The kit actually comes with a drum mute (which helps), but having a good practice pad is something all drummers end up using a lot when working on technique and hand/stick control. These kits include a snare drum, sticks, snare stand, and sometimes even a small xylophone and separate stand.

## My Snare Kit Recommendation:

### Pearl Snare Kit

Pearl-SK910C-Educational-Snare Kit (on Amazon)

### Music Stand

Amazon Basics Portable Music Stand (on Amazon)

### Sticks

Promark SD1 Maple (on Amazon)

### Practice Pad

Prologix Percussion Method Pad - 10.75 inch (sweetwater.com)

# ENTRY LEVEL DRUMSET \$500+



## ENTRY LEVEL DRUMSET

The PDP by DW Encore Complete 5-Pieced drum set With chrome hardware and cymbals is a solid set of drums to start on and it comes with everything you would need to start playing (except a seat or drum throne). The only really weak link with this kit is the cymbals. That being said, they are more than enough to get started on and start learning. The cymbals are upgradable and most students end up upgrading these after a year or two of learning on them.

## My Entry Level Drumset Recommendation:

### **PDP Encore Drumset**

PDP by DW Encore Complete 5-Piece Drum Set With Chrome Hardware and Cymbals (Guitar Center, Sam Ash, Steve Weiss)

I also recommend buying an actual drum throne with this setup. Having a proper seat is a big part of playing the drums properly.

### **Drum Throne**

TAMA HT130 Standard Throne (Guitar Center, Amazon)

### **Music Stand**

Amazon Basics Portable Music Stand (on Amazon)

### **Sticks**

Promark 5A (Amazon, Sweetwater)

# MID-LEVEL DRUMSET \$1000+



## MID-LEVEL DRUMSET

I usually recommend the Yamaha Stage Custom drumsets for high-school/college students. Price-wise, they're middle of the road. Not a beginner drumset, but just one step under a really high-end professional set. These drums really sound great and are drums that could be used all the way through high-school and college. They come in many different colors/wraps and all sound really good. With these drums, one would need to buy a drum throne (seat) and a cymbal pack. In my experience, the websites Steve Weiss Music and Sweetwater have the best prices/customer service, and usually shipping is free. Most of what guitar center keeps in stock is either the very cheap drumsets, or the very expensive.

## My Mid-Level Drumset Recommendation:

### Drumset

Yamaha Stage Custom Birch w/ 780 Series Hardware  
(SteveWeiss.com, Sweetwater.com, and sometimes Guitar Center)

### Cymbals

The Steve Weiss Traditional Cast Cymbal Pack (SteveWeiss.com)

### Drum Throne

TAMA HT130 Standard Throne (Guitar Center, Amazon)

### Music Stand

Amazon Basics Portable Music Stand (on Amazon)

# PRO-LEVEL DRUMSET \$3500+



## PRO-LEVEL DRUMSET

The Ludwig Classic Maple kit is an incredible set of drums that not only tunes up very easily, but the hardware is solid and you are buying one of the most classic sets of drums available. This would be a kit one could add to in the future or play as-is for many years. This piece configuration is a little cheaper than a 5-piece kit, but there are 5-piece options available (3 toms + snare). If one is looking to spend this amount of money on drums, brand \*almost\* doesn't matter. At this level, most all companies are building fantastic drums. That being said, there are some brands I avoid completely. If you would like to discuss pro kits in more detail, just let me know. At this level most all high-end drumsets come with the kick and toms only, so you will need to invest in hardware, a throne, cymbals, and a snare drum.

## My Pro-Level Drumset Recommendation:

### Drumset

Ludwig Classic Maple 3-Piece ([SteveWeiss.com](http://SteveWeiss.com), [Sweetwater.com](http://Sweetwater.com))

### Snare Drum

Ludwig Supralite Snare Drum - 6.5-inch x 14-inch ([Sweetwater.com](http://Sweetwater.com))

### Cymbals

Zildjian Studio Recording Cymbal Set - 14/16/18/21 inch  
Sweetwater Exclusive ([Sweetwater.com](http://Sweetwater.com))

### Hardware

Yamaha HW-680W 5-piece 600 Series Hardware Pack ([Sweetwater.com](http://Sweetwater.com))

### Drum Throne

TAMA 1st Chair Standard Throne ([Guitar Center](http://GuitarCenter.com), [Sweetwater.com](http://Sweetwater.com))

### Music Stand

Amazon Basics Portable Music Stand ([on Amazon](http://Amazon.com))



# SHHH!

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## Drums are loud.

Luckily, companies have figured out ways to reduce the volume in a musical way. With quiet stroke drum heads and low volume cymbals, you can reduce the volume of your drumset by 75% or more. This is a great solution for apartment practice or for playing at night. If you plan to use your drums with a band live, I would recommend having a set of "regular" cymbals and drum heads to switch to.

### Quiet Drum Heads

Remo Silent Stroke Heads (Guitar Center, Steve Weiss, Sweetwater)

### Quiet Cymbals

Wuhan ORA Cymbal Set or Zildjian Low Volume Set (Sweetwater)





- Having a good practice pad and sticks is important at all levels. I would recommend these two items for all students.
- Setting your drumset on a rug will protect your floors and stop the drums from moving. A cheap rug from the local hardware store works great. 6'x4'
- Putting a pillow or small sized blanket inside the bass drum will help it sound the way it should and control some of the volume.





# GOT QUESTIONS?

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**I am here to help!**

I understand buying a drumset at any level is a big investment and I want to make this process as easy and fun for my students as I can. If you have any questions, please reach out and I will be happy to help.

**THANKS FOR READING!**

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