

Renting or buying an instrument?

SUPERSTRINGS STUDIO WOULD LIKE YOU TO PLEASE BEAR IN MIND THE FOLLOWING

- **CONSULT YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER**

S/he should have professional recommendations for an instrument shop or maker in the area and will be able to help you find out the correct size your child needs.

- **OKAY, WHAT ALL DO I NEED TO GET IN A SET FOR MY CHILD?**

Again, *please check with the teacher*, but I would suggest the following necessities:

Quality instrument, bow, case, rosin, extra set of strings, small pencil to bring to lessons, small notebook that the student and I can write in for each lesson, a shoulder rest, music stand, method book(s) in consultation with the teacher, a safe place to store the instrument where other children won't be able to get into it, and free membership in SuperStrings Studio!

- **WATCH OUT FOR VSOs AND PLEASE DO NOT BUY ONE**

What is a VSO? This is teacher jargon for Violin Shaped Object and we hate them.

We hate that the materials are inferior, break easily and may not even be able to be tuned. We hate the idea of placing something that sounds poor in the hands of a beginner who might never get off to a good start. And we also don't like to have to inform you that you would need to return this because it doesn't meet the minimum standard for actually learning how to play the instrument. A VSO is a sure path toward disappointment. VSOs are easily purchased from eBay or Amazon. Be wary. Be very wary. And please do not expect your child's teacher to accept one. Think of it this way: no employer would expect you to buy a fake car when you need one to get to work with every day.

- **HOW MUCH SHOULD A QUALITY INSTRUMENT COST?**

This depends on where you live, but you should be able to get an idea from your child's teacher. From personal experience, the vast majority of instruments for under \$200 are VSOs. If a quality instrument is taken care of, it should retain its value and actually increase in price.

Many makers or shops allow families to use the price of the rental toward the purchase of an instrument. The one I like to recommend will even continue this policy as the child grows into larger instruments, so that the rental fees paid for a half-size violin, for example, will still count toward a 3/4 or full-sized instrument when the child has grown into it.

- Do you have another question? Please send it to me via the **COMMENTS** section!