

HOW TO GET AN INSTRUMENT



A “secret to success” in strings class is to have a quality instrument that sounds good and will stay in tune!

There are several local music stores that offer rental programs for string instruments. Call and compare to get the best value for your rental. Driving a few extra miles may be worth it to get a quality instrument.

Washington Music –Wheaton, Maryland 301-946-8808 <https://rentfromchucklebins.com/>
*this is an affordable option for those who are looking to pay less but still have a quality instrument, if you are willing to go to the store in Maryland.

Brobst Violin Shop – Alexandria; 703-256-0566 <https://brobstviolinshop.com/>

Day Violins – Chantilly; 703-391-9444 <https://dayviolins.com/>

Foxes Music – Falls Church; 703-533-7393 <https://www.foxesmusic.com/>

Music & Arts – Springfield 703-451-0875 (also several other local locations)
<https://stores.musicarts.com/springfield>

Potter’s Violins – Takoma Park, Maryland; 301-652-7070 <https://potterviolins.com/>

In addition, some string instrument dealers offer rental service and will ship the instrument to you. This may be a good option if you want to limit your public exposure.

Baroque Violin Shop; 866-846-5469 – <https://www.baroqueviolinshop.com/aboutrental>

Shar Music; 800-248-7427 - <https://www.sharmusic.com/Rentals/>

Southwest Strings; 800-528-3430 - <https://www.swstrings.com/rentals>

Instrument Rental Information - Strings

Instruments for All program

FCPS strives to provide instruments to all students, regardless of family financial situation. Students who qualify for and have applied for the free or reduced lunch program may rent an instrument (*violin or viola only*) through the county for a non-refundable fee of \$20.

Cellos and Basses we have *some* instruments available to rent from the school for a fee of \$72 for the year. There are limited sizes available, and these will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis. Mr. Johnson will contact parents of students who sign up for cello or bass with more information.

IF YOU PLAN TO RENT FROM THE SCHOOL: Please go to MySchoolBucks and complete the registration information and payment online, or you may bring payment to the school office, or you may bring payment to the school when you pick up your instrument. A date and time will be announced for you to pick up the school instrument. All parents and students will need to sign the instrument rental contract when they pick up their instrument.

A few words from Mr. Johnson about buying an instrument:

It has been my experience that students who have brought in purchased instruments with attractive low prices unfortunately are in possession of a low-quality product that is difficult to keep in tune and produce a pleasant sound. The risk also is that, if there is a problem with the instrument, it is often not able to be repaired. In addition, if your child will be playing a smaller than full-size instrument, then, at some point, they will need a bigger size if they want to play in the future.

For these reasons, I suggest that you consider renting from a local music store first. The stores mentioned here provide quality instruments and many offer a rent-to-own program, which means your rental money goes towards purchasing the instrument. The "violin shops" deal exclusively in string instruments, but all of these stores should be able to help you find a quality instrument and a good rental plan.

If you still decide to purchase an instrument, generally the instruments that I see that cost under \$100 are not recommended. Some of these instruments come with a 30-day warranty, which suggests that they will not last long with normal use. Look for an instrument that is set up by a professional luthier (as you would get from a local store rental or the instruments in the county rental program), which may cost more but suggests a higher-quality instrument.

