THE 5 BEST MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

5. Drums

The drums start this list at Number 5 by simultaneously being the best AND the worst instrument for a Young Musician. Here's why:

- ✔ **Pros**

  Percussion and drums (like the bongos pictured above) are an easy instrument to start on. You hit it and it makes a sound.

  Because drums only have one (or a few) sounds, they are predictable and consistent, which is pleasing to young children.

  The loudness and the heartbeat like pulse that comes with banging a drum is a very human and powerful force.

  Drums are the most gross motor of the instruments, which allows for a lot of energy and movement to be channeled through the drums.

Every child have some drums in their life, however only giving your 3, 4 or 5 year old drums is doing them a disservice. From birth until age five, children undergo massive auditory growth. They are uniquely equipped to build their sense of pitch, which makes the need for a tonal instrument (one that plays pitches) essential.

4. Guitalele and/or Ukulele

Many children gravitate toward guitar and there are many child-guitar products out there. The Yamaha Guitalele comes in at number four on our list because it is the best quality small guitar out there (it's a real guitar in make and feel and only costs $100). It is also more likely to survive your preschooler than many of the lower quality kid guitars out there.

- ✔ **Pros**

•Playing the guitar is fun. You can wear it around the house, easily sing-a-long and you'll feel cool all the while doing it.
•It's an ideal instrument for any traveler, singer-songwriter, or casual picker.
•There are lots of amazing educational resources out there for the instrument.

A note on the Ukulele:

Ukulele's have four string instead of six and many of the chords only require one or two fingers to play. While this does make it easier on young children, you still run into many of the same problems as the guitar. I would not recommend the guitar as your child's first principle instrument.

3. Boomwhacker Xylophone or Resonator Bells

These color coded xylophones & bells are a great way to give children meaningful exposure to individual notes.

- ✔ **Pros** One benefit of these Boomwhacker instrument is that they are inexpensive. They cost $21.95. The resonator bell set (as shown above) is priced at $83.95.

- The resonator bells have a clear pitch and a long sustain, which is helpful for learning and identifying pitch.

- Both instruments are a collection of individual pieces that can be manipulated or organized in their own right, which is good for limiting a child to two or three simultaneous notes.

- Colors are used to identify the different pitches.

Summary

Both of these instruments are great for slightly older kids (3-6) or for teachers that want to split the 8 notes among a group of kids. The need for a stick to play them as a xylophone is indeed a little difficult but it's also not out of your child's reach.

2. The Piano (or keyboard)

The piano comes in at Number 2 because of it's broad musical application and because it is time-tested and true as a powerful first instrument.

✔ Pros

•From fine motor coordination to a musical ear, the piano builds a wide range of musical skills. Knowledge of the piano converts to knowledge of a MIDI Keyboard, which many producers and technologists use as their primary musical instrument when composing on a computer.
•Most important for young children is that the one-to-one nature of the piano. Similar to a drum, a child hits a key and a sound comes out. There is no mallet to strick with, no pick to use, no bow to master, no simultaneous pressing and plucking. Press it and it goes.
•Though the black and white keys don't make reading the pitches of a piano easy for a child, some Chromanotes Stick-On's will make the different notes of the piano easier to identify.

Summary

I highly recommend playing the piano! It's never too late to learn and it's never too early to start. It is the best instrument for visualizing the relationship between notes, chords, and scale. But, the least expensive and best musical instrument to build a sense of pitch properly is a set of C Major Deskbells.

1. C Major Deskbells – Instrument for Early Childhood Development

The best starting instrument for a Young Musician is a set of C Major Deskbells.
There are numerous advantages to Chromanotes desk bells that make them the ideal starting instrument for a child.
The cost of a starter set (shown here) is $85.00.

Pros

- They have a clear and simple timbre that rings out well, which makes the pitches easier to detect.
- The bells are color coded, which makes them easy to identify. Most children learn to identify and communicate basic colors before they can do the same for individual letters of the alphabet; therefore, they will find the red bell much faster than the C bell.
- Like the piano or a hand drum, the bells are a one-to-one experience for a child. There is no stick to swing, no bow to master, no string to press and pluck. Their ease of play means more time spent getting predictable responses from individual notes.
- They are tuned to the C-Major scale, which is the simplest scale to learn on the piano as well as the scale most often used in early music methods.
- The piano and the guitar have dozens of notes on them, but there are only eight notes in this bell set. This is much less overwhelming to a child. It also means they have a higher chance of finding the note they are looking for, meaning more successes & learning moments.
- Each bell is an individual object, which means you can focus on as few or as many bells as you want. Limiting a child to one or two or three bells will help them to focus on each bell's pitch.
- You also get the ability to move them, use them in free play (very powerful), and group them in different ways to illustrate different intervals, chords, and patterns.

Summary:

I cannot recommend these bells enough!! Use them in free play with your child, use them as musical cues, and play listening games with them!