

# HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT KEYS

Keyboards and pianos come in many shapes and sizes and all sorts of options. This guide will help you along the proper path to finding what's right for you!

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF KEYS

Generally speaking there are 2 types of keys: **digital pianos** and **keyboards**. This guide will go over the definition of both and help you decide what you need for your musical journey.

If you are looking for a classic piano (wooden and full size) please reach out to us for any questions or concerns because there are many more factors at play!



**Digital Piano Example**



**Keyboard Example**

**Digital pianos** are made to mimic an acoustic (classic or wooden) piano. Their keys will be weighted (described below), the sounds extremely authentic, and the portability close to zero (not intended for gigs).

**Keyboards** are designed for the beginner, live musician, or someone who doesn't need a permanent fixture in their house.

**Both** will have built in speakers, headphone output, and (most likely) the ability to alter the sound in some way (different settings).

The differences between these 2 types are very subtle and most of it boils down to what you are looking for and need out of your keys. Usually **digital pianos** will be more expensive (worth it if you are going for an authentic piano sound without the burden of tuning etc.), while **keyboards** will provide most of everything you need at a better value.

Regardless of which one you choose there are some necessities to look for that are common between both!

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## OPTIONS TO LOOK FOR

**Touch sensitivity** really boils down to this: the harder you push a key down a key, the louder the sound. Seems simple enough, but there are keyboards made without this which makes playing different dynamics very difficult. They are also very sensitive; if you halfway push down a key it will sound at it's loudest.

This is also listed as **Aftertouch / Velocity**. Extremely important and should greatly influence your purchasing decision.

**Action** talks about the “response” of the keys. Weighted, semi-weighted, synth etc are all used with this term. I recommend finding semi-weighted to weighted keys, as this will give a greater “piano” like response and feel more natural to play.

**Number of keys** tells you exactly that! How many keys are on your digital piano or keyboard. While this number isn't extremely important, we do recommend 61 to 88 keys. This will definitely be something that is advertised in the description.

**Voices / Tones.** This determines how many sound presets exist on the instrument; which translate into a basic question: what can it sound like? A string ensemble? A brass ensemble? Car horns? Alien space guns? Static? As you can see, this number is as important to you as you want it to be!

Most other options are so common between the 2 they are practically standard. If you are asking yourself “Do I need this on my keyboard or electric piano?” then you probably don't.

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## PRICE

Buying a piano or digital keyboard can be exhausting, but it shouldn't drain the bank. I would recommend trusting your local Guitar Center or CME (Chicago Music Exchange) representative.

**Although** I do recommend shopping used You will find the best deals at your local pawn shop (Pawn America) or used at your local music store (Guitar Center, CME). Just take sure you cover the options above and you will be playing your favorite music in no time!