

# Trumpet/Cornet Shopping Guide

It is time to start looking for a trumpet or cornet. This document is here to help you. Cut through the noise, understand what is important, and make the investment that is most appropriate for your child.

## Trumpet or Cornet?

These two instruments are closely related. To the untrained eye, they look just the same. *In school either instrument is appropriate.* [Here is an article that digs into the technical differences.](#)

A student who plays a trumpet can easily pick up a cornet and apply everything they've learned, and vice versa. In my experience, students with particularly small hands or short arms will be more comfortable starting on a cornet. Otherwise, they are interchangeable. For the remainder of this document, I will only use the term "trumpet", but it applies to either instrument.

## Levels

Instruments are marketed as being in "levels" based on the demands of the musician. They are manufactured and priced with those levels in mind.

**Student.** Student trumpets are made with the most durable and affordable materials. Some also have features that appeal to students. This is appropriate for our school band.

Examples: [Yamaha 2330](#), [Blessing BCR 1230](#), [Besson Prodige 120](#), [King 601](#), [Bach TR301](#).

**Intermediate or "step-up".** Intermediate trumpets are made of finer materials and facilitate more advanced playing. For many players, the intermediate instrument is enough to last a lifetime. Oftentimes, students will upgrade from a student to intermediate instrument in middle school or early high school. Examples: [King Silver Flair](#), [Getzen Capri 590](#), [Yamaha YTR 4335](#)

**Professional.** Full-featured instruments made to the highest quality. Examples: [Bach 37](#), [Yamaha Xeno](#), [Getzen Eterna](#), [Besson Sovereign](#), [Adams CN1](#).

**Artist.** When you make your living with tools, you need the best tools. Artist-level instruments are often specialized and custom-made to fit the specific needs of the player.

Examples: [B&S Prestige](#), [Schilke Custom](#), [Adams A8](#), [Yamaha Vizzutti Model](#), [Shires Severinsen](#), [Monette](#)

## About the Materials

**Case.** All trumpets require a case for safe transport. Most of them come with a case. It is possible that you will find a used instrument that is in good shape, but the case is falling apart. You can buy a replacement case.

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**Mouthpiece.** Most trumpets will come with an acceptable mouthpiece. If you purchase a used trumpet, you may wish to buy a new mouthpiece depending on its condition. Complicating matters further, [each manufacturer describes their mouthpieces somewhat differently](#). The Bach numbering system, consisting of a number and letter, is somewhat standard. Typically student trumpets come with the equivalent of a Bach 7C. [I often recommend a 5C](#) for beginners instead.

**Silver vs. Gold Finish.** This is entirely cosmetic. Typically, the silver instruments cost a little more. Generally, the gold finish is more common in student instruments, because it costs a little less. At the professional level, the split is more even between silver and gold finishes.

**First valve saddle.** A [U-shaped piece](#) that is home to the left thumb while playing. Not all instruments have them. If you have the option, you need a way to move the 1st valve slide. The [King Silver Flair trumpet](#) has an alternative lever system that works, as well.

**Third Valve Ring.** Next to the 3rd valve, this is usually a circular adjustable piece.

**Valves.** Functioning instruments have valves that freely move up and down.

**Slides.** There are parts of the instrument that should freely slide in and out with just a little resistance.

## Types of Trumpets

There are many different varieties of trumpets/cornets. The only variety that is appropriate for schools is *B $\flat$  Trumpet* or *B $\flat$  Cornet*. Pronounced “B-flat”.

## Where to Shop for a Trumpet - Online

[Dillon Music](#). Based in New Jersey. Arguably the best place in the US to buy a brass instrument. They have terrific service and prices.

[Baltimore Brass Co.](#) Another comprehensive brass shop with a mix of new and used inventory.

[Woodwind-Brasswind](#). An online music mega-store. They carry many high-quality instruments but have also started to carry some lower-quality instruments. Please check with me if the instrument you’re looking at is not on the list below of acceptable brands.

[BAC Custom](#). A smaller shop, based in Kansas City, with an excellent reputation.

[The Brass Ark](#). Los Angeles-based small store with high-quality used professional instruments and a reputable house brand.

**Facebook Marketplace and Craigslist.** These are buyer-beware markets, but often have good deals. Assume that any instrument you buy from Facebook, Craigslist, pawn shops,

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garage sales, or any other private dealer will require a thorough cleaning. This often costs \$50-100 at a local music shop.

## Where to Shop for a Trumpet - In Person

I recommend checking out websites and calling before visiting. Some of these stores will set time, space, and instruments aside for you before you get there.

Triads Music Center 219 Main Street, Hudson Falls, NY 12839

[John Keal Music](#) 819 Livingston Ave, Albany, NY 12206

## Mrs. Schultz's Trusted Brands

**Yamaha.** Almost all of their products are exceptional. Their "advantage" line is a step down, but everything else is highly recommended.

**Jupiter.** Rentals from Big Apple are often Jupiter's "Capital Edition", a model that is only available as a student rental. These have been great for our students.

**Bach/King.** [These are sold under the Conn-Selmer umbrella.](#) They were all separate companies at one time, and have maintained quality throughout. Selmer has started a "prelude" line which does not meet the same quality standard as the others.

**Other good brands:** Adams, Bach, BAC Custom, Bengel, Besson, B&S, Boosey & Co., Conn, Edwards, Getzen, Holton, Kanstul, King, Monette, Olds, Schilke, Selmer, Stomvi, York.