

cleveland piano studio

Julie Cleveland, Piano Instructor
www.clevelandpianostudio.com

Acoustic versus Digital Piano FAQs (or the Plight of the Poor Piano)

Do we need an acoustic piano for lessons?

No. You can use a digital piano. A digital piano has 88 weighted keys and pedals, preferably three, but at least two (any other keyboard is not acceptable). I would prefer it if you didn't get a digital piano, but got a real piano instead. Why? Because when you sign up to learn to play the piano, or sign up your child, you're not studying digital piano, or taking digital piano lessons, you are signing up for piano lessons.



Is an acoustic piano better?

Yes. Nothing replaces the feel and sound and, of course, the emotional experience of playing a real piano. An electronic instrument will never sound or feel like an instrument made of wood and strings and metal all vibrating together. When learning on a digital piano, the emotional reaction with the instrument is not the same.

We live an apartment/condo and don't have room for a real piano.

The truth is that the difference in size (cubic space) between acoustic and digital is only in inches, when comparing an upright acoustic piano with a digital piano. The measurements below include depth and width. (Height is moot, unless you have wainscoting or shelving all the way around your house that comes way, way out from the wall, or live in an apartment or condo with 6-foot ceilings.)

An upright acoustic piano measures about **60 inches long**.

A digital piano measures about **54 inches long**.

An upright acoustic piano measures about **46 inches deep**, which includes the space of the bench from the piano when seated to play.

A digital piano measures about **43 inches deep**, which includes the space of the bench from the piano when seated to play.

We can't afford a real piano.

Sometimes, real pianos are much less than digital pianos. **Craigslist**, on the web, always has acoustic pianos for sale, no matter where you live on planet Earth. Some are great, some are not. It's like buying a used car. Bring a piano technician with you to assess the piano. Buy Larry Fine's **The Piano Book** to help you learn about new and used pianos. Visit piano stores and play different brands. Often stores will

let you rent a piano by the month, for a very low cost. And recruit me to help you. I will always help you in any way I can to buy a real piano.

Pros and Cons – Acoustic versus Digital

<i>Acoustic Piano</i>	<i>Digital Piano</i>
Needs to be tuned.	Never needs tuning.
Is a real piano.	Is not a real piano.

Why are you so against digital pianos?

It's not that I am against them, it's that I am for acoustic pianos. Having played a real piano since the late 1960s, and many various keyboards and digital pianos since the late 1980s, I am in a position to have an opinion about it. I speak from experience. I don't own any stock in a piano company, and I am not anti-technology. I have been accused of being old-fashioned on the subject. But if I, a pianist of almost 40 years, and a teacher for over 20, don't stick up for real pianos, who will?