

STEP-UP

- **What is an upgraded or “step-up” instrument?**
 - An intermediate or professional-quality instrument.
- **How do these instruments differ from what my student is playing now?**
 - A student line instrument (what most student begin on) is designed for short-term use for success in the beginning ranges & techniques.
 - While student models produce a decent sound, the sound is nowhere near the sound quality students get with an intermediate or professional model.
 - Just like with clothes, as student musicians GROW they might begin to “outgrow” a student line instrument. Once students start mastering the complexities of the instrument and learning more complicated concepts, they excel faster with better equipment in their hands that is made for these advance ranges and techniques.
 - Materials! To keep prices low, manufacturers rely on more cost-effective materials for student instruments. Professional instruments are manufactured to last for decades while student models are constructed to provide a good playing experience during a student’s first few years learning the instrument.
- **How long will a professional instrument last?**
 - In short – forever! If a professional instrument is well maintained and stored properly, it can be passed down for generations!
- **What happens if I invest in a professional instrument now, but don’t want or need it later?**
 - High quality instruments are investments! Professional instruments (if well maintained) have excellent resale value!
- **When should we invest in a step up instrument?** Each student is different, but usually between 8th grade and 10th is when most begin to “outgrow” the student line instrument.

Watch for these signs in your student:

- Student is auditioning for Region Band, All-State Band.
- The desire to take private lessons
- The desire and ability to excel in music and the enjoyment of musical activities.
- The willingness to do assigned homework (practicing) on a regular basis.
- Selection for honors groups.
- If a student plans on playing throughout high school, you can’t go wrong with investing in a step up instrument. If a student has intentions of playing in college or beyond it is a necessary.