



Six Benefits of Learning on a Digital Piano

Modern Digital Instruments Offer Many Unique Advantages Over Acoustic Pianos...

Whether you're playing Chopin's scherzos or the intro to "Clocks" by Coldplay, the piano has the ability to excite, move, and inspire. The only obstacles are learning how to play in the first place, and then practicing enough to play well. Working with a qualified piano teacher gives you the best start for establishing good techniques and avoiding bad habits, while the natural sound, authentic playability, and innovative features found in digital pianos like those from Roland can help make learning more fun and enjoyable.

First and foremost, a digital piano is designed to accurately simulate an acoustic piano. Instead of physical hammers and strings, they incorporate high-level digital sound technology and strategically positioned speakers to produce a convincing and organic acoustic piano sound. In addition to providing great tone with easy volume control, the digital sound engine eliminates costly tuning and other regular maintenance that is required with acoustic pianos. Precision weighted keys recreate the feel of an acoustic keyboard for a realistic playing experience, while the ability to choose among different sounds—including various grand pianos as well as non-piano sounds—ensures that learning is varied and interesting. Some digital piano models even let you create your own sounds to suit your taste.

Beyond the essentials of quality sound and playability, digital pianos provide many unique benefits that are simply not possible with their traditional acoustic counterparts:

1. Quiet practice with headphones.

Most digital pianos let you plug in and monitor the sound with headphones, which can benefit both the learner and the people they live with. Headphones can block outside noise and other distractions, leaving you free to concentrate on private practice without bothering others. In addition, convenient features such as twin headphone jacks found in some models allow a student and teacher to listen together in high detail, making it easy to spot mistakes.

2. A built-in timing reference to develop your sense of rhythm.

Timing is essential to playing the piano well, and it's often a big issue when you're beginning to play. Because the learning process involves the development of muscle memory and mental cognition, there is a tendency to slow down or speed up a piece depending on the level of difficulty. Metronomes, which help develop your rhythmic and timekeeping skills by providing a steady reference to play against, have been around for a long time. However, a digital piano offers the great convenience of having a metronome built in and ready to go, with simple controls to adjust the tempo and beat. This makes it easy to slow pieces down to learn and master them, and to tackle complex time signatures and other advanced concepts. Many Roland pianos also include more sophisticated rhythm functions that provide the experience of playing with a drummer or a complete ensemble.

3. Record and listen to your own performance.

Recording your performance helps you analyze exactly what's going on in your playing so you can recognize your strengths and weaknesses.

The built-in recording features found in some digital pianos allow you to play back, pick out, and perfect any problems, nipping bad habits in the bud before they become ingrained.

Listening back to a recording can resolve issues with timing and melody, and if you have a good musical memory but

struggle to read music, you can learn a piece by ear and study the music while listening back to your recording.



Depending on the digital piano model, you can do many things with a recording you capture, including transferring your performance to a computer for sharing, editing, and printing it out as a score—the written piece of music also known as sheet music—so others can read and play it too. Onboard recording is also useful if you're interested in composition, as you can quickly record ideas as they come to you.

4. Play with different sounds to keep practice interesting.

Digital pianos are often equipped with a huge variety of sounds beyond the acoustic piano, such as electric pianos from the '70s and '80s, strings, harpsichord, and church and electronic organs. Some also have guitar, bass, and synthesizer sounds for even more versatility. It's great to be able to learn Scarlatti pieces using a convincing harpsichord sound, and a change in tone can inspire you and help recapture the passion if those fingering drills are becoming tiresome. Younger children also love experimenting and mixing sounds to make learning more exciting.

5. Use apps to improve your playing ability.

Using today's smartphones and tablet devices, you can take advantage of many apps to help liven up practice sessions and improve your playing. There are apps available that include sight-reading exercises that ask the pianist to identify written notes, flash card games to help with understanding music theory, and aural training exercises to develop abilities such as listening for particular scales or intervals.

A tablet device is particularly useful for piano practice, as it allows quick access to electronically stored sheet music in a convenient size for placing on a piano's music rest. When linked to a compatible digital piano, some apps display a piece of music and "listen" as you play, automatically switching to the next page when you reach the last bar. Apps designed for kids include fun musical games and play-along songs, motivating them by making practice a pleasure rather than a chore.

Many Roland pianos offer support for Apple's iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch, and the range of Roland apps available for these devices is constantly growing. Additionally, there are a number of Roland pianos that include large, built-in monitors that display digital sheet music as well as interactive music exercises and games.

6. Make practice more efficient.

It's always difficult learning something new, so it's crucial to put in dedicated time and effort. Just 20 minutes of piano practice a few days a week can help develop your skills and techniques. And if you're struggling with motivation, playing with others and even making mistakes together is a great way to stay motivated. Digital pianos are packed with features that maximize