

Digital Pianos vs. Electronic Keyboards

In today's rapidly advancing world of music technology, one of the most exciting areas to follow is the advancement of digital pianos and keyboards. With impressive touch and tone, there's many things to like about these instruments. But for starters, you may be wondering "what's the difference?" They both have black and white keys, and they plug into the wall. But from there, these instruments diverge to satisfy the interests of two different types of players.

DIGITAL PIANOS: This category of instruments is generally defined by its piano-focused sound and cabinet. Digital pianos, such as the Yamaha Clavinova and the Roland HP and RP series, are substantial in size and weight, due to their sophisticated piano-like keyboard systems and built-in amplified speakers. These tend to be a piano teacher's preference among electronic instruments, as they provide the most realistic tone and touch available, and provide 76 to 88 note keyboards. The product lines in the digital piano category are very extensive, ranging from entry level models that contain simply a handful of piano-type voices, including harpsichord and electric piano, to elaborate ensemble-based instruments that include drum rhythms, recording features, and hundreds of sounds.

ELECTRONIC KEYBOARDS: These instruments, also called portable keyboards, offer an exciting set of features, often centered around automatic chord accompaniment and built-in songs. While they can be played in a traditional piano style, their shorter keyboard lengths and lightweight keys allow their true potential to be found more in playing with a chord/melody style. This is where the left hand plays chords that trigger a background band, and the right hand plays the melody. It's a great way to introduce a student to the world of chord theory, and they provide instant musical gratification by filling in additional sounds like guitars, bass, drums, brass, and more.

While no substitute for a real grand piano, digital pianos and electronic keyboards have found their place in the consumer market, and are allowing their owners a satisfying means of achieving musical fulfillment.