Instrument Condition Guide

Inventory · https://docs.dacapoinventory.com/doc/instrument-condition-guide/

Use the condition of an instrument to describe its **current physical and functional state**. Condition should not be based only on the instrument's age, purchase price, or current value.

When selecting a condition, choose the **lowest condition level that accurately applies**.

Condition Levels

New

The instrument is unused and in the same condition as when it left the manufacturer.

- No cosmetic wear
- No functional wear
- No repairs are needed
- Manufacturer warranty may apply depending on the purchase date and warranty terms

Excellent

The instrument has been lightly used and shows minimal wear.

- Fully playable and functional
- No repair is currently needed
- Finish and mechanical components are in excellent condition
- Only minor cosmetic blemishes may be present

An older instrument can still be considered **Excellent** if it has been well maintained and remains in excellent functional condition.

Good

The instrument is fully playable and suitable for normal student use but shows visible signs of normal wear.

Examples may include:

- Surface scratches
- Small dents that do not affect playability
- Worn plating
- Light tarnish
- Normal wear on pads, valves, slides, keys, corks, or other components

The instrument does **not** currently require significant repair for normal use.

Fair

The instrument is playable, but one or more issues affect its performance or normal operation.

Examples may include:

- Leaking woodwind pads
- Sticking valves or slides
- Damaged or deteriorated corks
- Warped necks or other string instrument components
- Dents that affect tone or intonation
- Mechanical issues that interfere with normal playing

Repair or adjustment is recommended.

Poor

The instrument has significant functional problems and should generally **not be issued for student use until it is repaired**.

Examples may include:

- Cracked woodwind bodies

- Missing or severely damaged pads
- Broken keys
- Severely dented brass
- Nonfunctioning valves or slides
- Broken or significantly damaged string instrument components
- Other major problems that prevent normal use

Significant repair is required before the instrument can return to normal service.

Obsolete

The instrument is no longer suitable for normal student use and is beyond economical repair or otherwise no longer practical to maintain.

It may be retained for:

- Replacement parts
- Scrap
- Disposal
- Historical or archival purposes

At a Glance

Condition	Playable?	Repair Needed?	General Description
New	Yes	No	Unused
Excellent	Yes	No	Minimal wear
Good	Yes	No significant repair	Normal wear
Fair	Yes	Repair or adjustment recommended	Performance issue present
Poor	No or significantly impaired	Significant repair required	Major functional problems

Condition	Playable?	Repair Needed?	General Description
Obsolete	No	Repair generally not economical	Parts, scrap, disposal, or archive

Choosing the Correct Condition

When an instrument fits more than one description, select the **lower condition**.

For example, an instrument may look cosmetically excellent but have a sticking valve or leaking pad that affects performance. In that case, the instrument should be marked **Fair**, not Excellent.

A simple way to distinguish the most commonly confused conditions is:

Good: Normal wear is present, but the instrument can be used normally without repair.

Fair: The instrument can still be played, but a repair or adjustment is recommended.

Poor: The instrument should not be issued for normal student use until significant repairs are completed.

> **Tip:** Always rate the instrument based on its current condition, not how it looked when it was purchased or how valuable the instrument may be.