

## Yamaha Tyros 4 is it worth it to upgrade?

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If you're upgrading from the Tyros 2 or lower, and customization is not important to you, you'll be happy with the Tyros 4. But if you're upgrading from the Tyros 3, and/or customization IS important to you, this keyboard is NOT for you.

The Tyros 4 is an update, not an upgrade, and it is full of bugs.

The Tyros 3 by comparison, was a proper upgrade to the Tyros 2. On the hardware end, it added sliders, a new user layout, better resolutions screen. In the sound department, it added amazing synths, 6 new drum kits, pianos, saxes, trumpets. In the software department, it added an advanced sampling section that cut down sample load times by 90%, and of course SA2 technology.

Let's compare that to what the Tyros 4 adds to the Tyros 3: New pop and gospel voices, VH2 and Flash Ram if you pay an additional \$300. Essentially everything else is the same. Yamaha didn't even design a new case.

Let's look at this objectively:

- There is no reason to build a new keyboard for the voices, because the Tyros 3 already has the capacity to load new expansion voices. Yamaha even produced an

SA2 Trombone and Pan Flute for sale for the Tyros 3 and could have done the same with all the new instruments on the Tyros 4. (Of course the Trombone and Pan Flute are not in the Tyros 4, because you're supposed to pay extra for them.)

In my opinion, the pop and gospel voices are corny. I don't plan to ever use them in a performance. In fact I wish there was a setting that would allow me to mute them from all styles.

Some of the voices are updated, but it's a joke. Take the pianos for example. All the pianos were changed into SA2 voices. Apparently this gives them resonance and key off sounds. If you've ever had the good fortune of playing a sampled piano, you know what an advantage this is. It brings the piano to life. Now, I have a pretty good ear and sat with both keyboards side by side and tried to hear the difference. Here is a short clip. Can you tell the difference? <http://musicbychony.com/music/pianocomparison2.mp3> . Neither can I.

There are three new drum kits. Real drums, Real brushes, and Drum Machine. These are actually good kits, but too few to be considered an upgrade.

The new guitars are good, the ability to use SA voices in styles is also a plus. But quite honestly, altogether, the new sounds are nothing to write about.

I was really shocked however that the T4 does not have the Chinese, Indian, and Arabic ethnic percussion of the s910. It just makes no sense at all that the mid-line keyboard has more percussion options than the flagship. What's going on here? This is a first!

- The VH2 seems alright, but people don't buy a new \$3500 keyboard because they can sing into it, especially since you can pay \$300 and get a machine which does it much better.

- The option to have Flash Ram is good, but you can only use Yamaha's product, so you have to shell out an additional \$300 (no discounts). Basically the upgrade is that instead of waiting 1 minute for the samples to load; you wait 15 seconds.

Now, to tell you the truth, I knew all of this going in, but decided to buy it anyway because I felt I could improve my music product even slightly with this machine. But nothing prepared me for the problems I have encountered over the last few days.

In short, if you have any thoughts of customizing your keyboard, be aware that the Tyros 4 is full of bugs.

#### Editing

custom styles is very frustrating. For example I wanted to change the volume on an instrument on one of my custom styles. So I change it in the style creator. But then I realize that the "Bass" instrument has mysteriously changed. So I change the Bass back. Only to realize that now all the volumes and instruments for the entire style have changed for no apparent reason. Every time I fix one thing, another problem arises. I sat on a single style tonight for an hour trying to get it back to normal with no success. It was like a game of hide and seek. Every time I identified a problem, it would duck and reappear in a different form somewhere else. There were some styles that I managed to fix, only to return to them 5 minutes later and find they were all corrupted again.

I am sure this is a Tyros 4 problem and not a problem in my styles, because these very same styles work beautifully on my Tyros 3. Basically there are bugs in the Tyros 4 programming.

This really surprised me because I'm used to Yamaha putting out stable instruments. Although I've owned all the Yamaha flagships, I've never needed to update the system software because I'd never encountered problems. But in the case of the Tyros 4, although there is no significant change in the software from the Tyros 3, it is full of bugs. I have other custom styles that sometimes work and sometimes do not. It's really bizarre.

Not

only have my styles taken on a life of their own, my samples have too. Some of them have become really loud, some of them really soft. Many of my samples are middle eastern percussion. Even though the percussion volume is set to 80 for a style, it is deafening loud in one variation, almost impossible to hear in another. Sometimes within a single variation it will dip for no reason. I tried editing the volumes so that they would be somewhat equal, but ran into the problems I described previously.

If there was someone at Yamaha to speak with, it would help. But unfortunately Yamaha does not have a number to a technical service department.

In conclusion, it seems to me that Yamaha has made the mistake of taking its customers for granted. They feel that "if we build it, they'll buy it." They don't seem to understand that the reason the Tyros 3 was such a success is because it was a genuine upgrade. I do not believe the Tyros 4 will see anything close to that success.

I bought this keyboard unheard and unseen because I trusted Yamaha. I just can't help but feel that I've been taken advantage of.