

The Piano Owner's Heads-Up Guide to Important Piano Maintenance

Focus On: Routine Maintenance for Your Parlor Grand Piano



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As an owner of a parlor (home-size) grand piano, you have the good fortune to be able to play and enjoy the piano of choice for many musicians. With proper maintenance, a quality smaller grand will give outstanding performance for generations of musicians. The tone and touch of a grand piano set it apart from other types of pianos. Since the design of the grand piano was perfected early in the previous century, no matter what the age of your instrument, you certainly have the "top the line" when it comes to performance and sound.

Tuning: With any acoustic piano, following a regular tuning schedule is essential for the piano to perform up to its potential. An adequate tuning schedule for a piano being used on a regular basis is a once-a-year tuning, usually scheduled for approximately the same time of year each year. For the piano that is being played heavily, a semi-annual or quarterly tuning would be better yet.

Repairs: Your grand piano action has thousands of individual parts, and after decades of use, breakage may occur or parts may simply wear out. The good news is that most of the parts found in a grand piano action (the working mechanism) do not often break and those parts that do happen to break or wear out commonly may be either replaced with parts available to the professional piano technician, or repaired to like-new condition.



Hammers being filed to remove cut marks.

Regulation and voicing: For an grand piano to perform at its peak, the first step is to get it into tune, and to repair all broken or worn parts. When this has been done, the piano is ready to be "regulated" and "voiced." Regulation refers to the procedure of adjusting all the moving parts of the piano action so that the mechanism is performing in peak form, with no wasted motion. Voicing refers to evening out and improving the tonal quality of the piano by making careful adjustments to the hammers of the piano.

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