



YOUR PIANO

DESERVES

THE **BEST**



THE PROBLEM WITH MOST PIANOS TODAY

There is an extreme lack of education for piano owners and teachers when it comes to basic piano care. This is because few owners realize how complicated of an instrument it is and its need for regular servicing to play and sound at its best. Even if the piano is not played, it should be serviced once a year to keep everything running smoothly.

As a child, I took piano lessons but my piano never played very well.

Even after being tuned by a local tuner, it sounded better but played the same. The keys were still sloppy and hard to control and I couldn't play soft passages. Because of these problems, I did not want to play it, much less take time to practice!

The truth is that the tuner never fully inspected the piano.

If he did, he could have told me that with a few adjustments, my piano could sound and play like new, I didn't have to be frustrated with how it played!

When we started our business, we quickly learned that our customer's pianos were not playing their best. Past tuners did basic pitch adjustments but never fully inspected the piano.

Because of this, our customers were left in the dark, not realizing that their piano was not playing at top performance; whether you are a beginner or advanced musician, a piano that doesn't play at its best will stop you from advancing.



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THE IMPACT OF THE PIANO

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One of my biggest thrills for me still is sitting down with a guitar or a piano and just out of nowhere trying to make a song happen.

— Paul McCartney —

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When I had nothing else, I had my mother and the piano. And you know what? They were all I needed.

— Alicia Keys —

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I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music.

— Albert Einstein —

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Many of us have vivid memories of a piano at some point. Whether it's listening to grandma play at Christmas time, mom teaching piano lessons, or us playing songs as a kid.

No other acoustic instrument exists that has touched the heart and lives of so many people!

The piano can emulate an entire Symphony from the softest note to the loudest forte and has been used for generations to captivate and entertain audiences worldwide!

Before the radio and TV became popular in homes, the piano was the primary source of entertainment. Women of the time were even considered to be more suitable mates if they could play.

With the piano being such a popular instrument no wonder it is still strong today. But did you also know that the piano is the most complicated instrument in the world, having over 8000 parts?

Besides a car a piano is the most complicated piece of machinery in the average home. And like a car, the piano requires basic care to continually play at its best. We have seen many pianos that suffer from a lack of basic care.

Because of this, the piano is very much out of tune and does not play as well as it could. It may be very flat in pitch, and keys may stick.

Because of this, we have put together a few simple but vital piano care tips that are guaranteed to keep your piano in perfect health for years to come!



IN THIS DOCUMENT YOU WILL LEARN

- ◆ How to properly store your piano when not in use
- ◆ Where to put your piano in your home for best results
- ◆ How to clean your piano
- ◆ How often to have your piano serviced
- ◆ How your piano can play like new
- ◆ How your piano can sound like new instead of bright and harsh

1. The Sound Of The Piano

The sound and feel of a real acoustic piano is unmistakable. Electronic synthesizers may come close, but they cannot approach the true beauty of the real thing. A piano's beautiful, natural sound is due to the remarkable blending of materials such as wood, metal, buckskin, and wool.

The piano is a complex instrument having over 8000 parts and 25 adjustments per key. They are made up of many parts such as wood, felt, leather, springs, wires, glue, and a 200-pound cast iron frame. This cast iron frame is the heaviest part of the piano and is responsible for holding the 18-20 tons of tension exerted by the strings.

Having the right piano in your home will bring a lifetime of enjoyment to you and your family. Protect that investment by following these simple tips on keeping this beautiful instrument in perfect working order.





2. Storing Your Piano When Not In Use

While most pianos are kept safely in the home, sometimes pianos must be stored for a time. This may be because the owner is moving and can't take it with them right away, or they may need the extra room.

A piano should be stored properly to prevent damage to the outside structure, soundboard, bridges, and other internals. Storing the piano in your home is always the most cost effective option as it will not cost you anything.

If this is not an option, consider storing the piano at a storage facility that is climate controlled. (Not all are so be sure to ask.) While this is slightly more expensive, it is worth protecting the instrument's health.

Do not store a piano anywhere that is not climate controlled unless you want to ruin your piano! This includes garages, basements, barns, and storage units with no heating or cooling system. Pianos are vulnerable to high humidity and extreme temperatures.

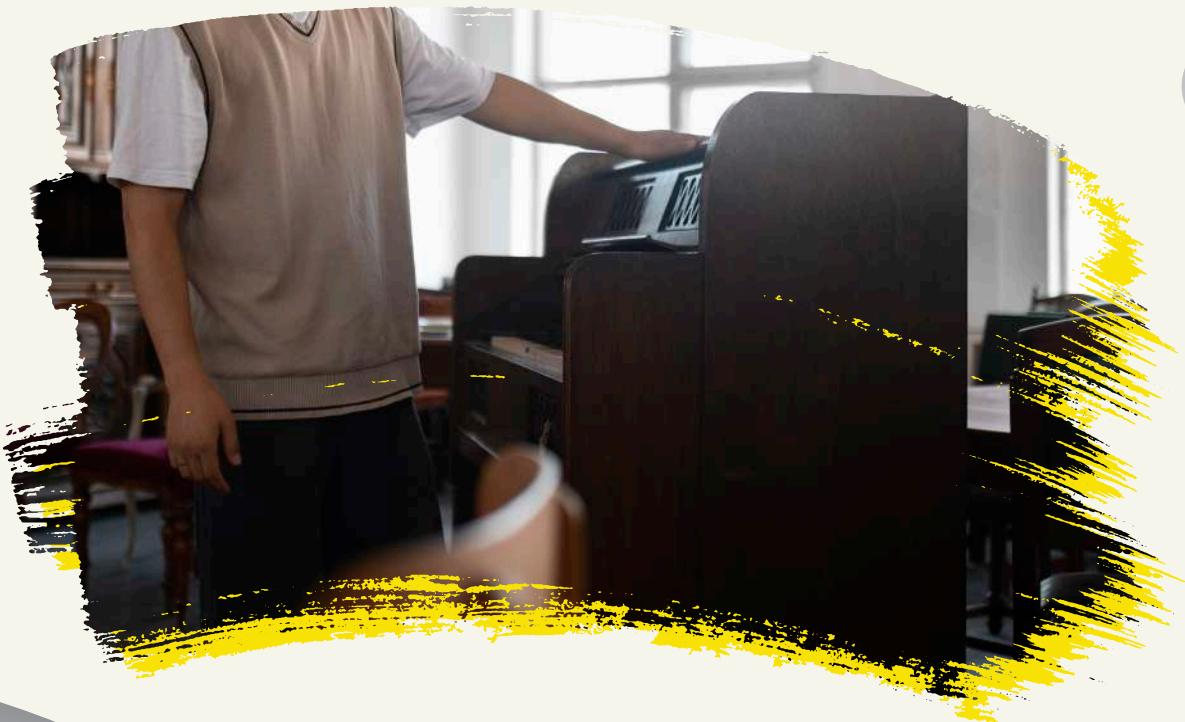
As temperatures and humidity levels fluctuate, the wood and other parts of your piano swell and shrink. In extreme cases, glue joints fail, felts and leather deteriorate, and soundboards crack. If parts become damaged due to improper storage, it may cost thousands to repair.

3. Where To Put Your Piano In Your Home For Best Results

The best place for a piano is in a room in the home that is regulated year round with consistent temperatures and humidity levels. You do not need to worry about putting your piano on an inside wall anymore, as most homes are well-insulated. A piano likes to be in a room of about 65-75 degrees and 40-50 humidity.

While most people do not have a built-in system for regulating the humidity of a room, keeping the temperature within a ten-degree window should work well for pianos on a 6-month tuning schedule.

Try not to place the piano near locations such as AC vents, heaters, fireplaces, high-traffic doors, and rooms with large windows with direct sunlight. The temperature and humidity in these areas are not as stable and might affect the tuning. Direct sunlight can also cause the finish on your piano to fade over time.





4. Cleaning The Outside Of Your Piano

Sometimes the outside of your piano may get a little dusty. However, dust is easy to remove with a soft microfiber cloth. Using rougher dishcloths, paper towels, or sprays is not recommended, as they could scratch the finish or change its color.

Cleaning the insides of your piano, such as under your piano keys, should be done every 5 to 10 years. This will keep dirt and other debris from building up and causing the piano to play sluggishly.

This should be left to a professional piano technician.

How To Keep The Piano Keys Clean And Covered

It is always recommended to use the piano's built-in key cover to cover your keys when not in use. Dust is always in the air and will settle on your keys in a thick layer if not cleaned. If you have a large amount of dust and dirt buildup, all that debris will float toward your face every time you play. This could cause allergies for you or your children.

To clean your keys, you can use a microfiber cloth and mild soap such as Don. Lightly (and lightly) dampen the cloth in water and put a small amount of soap on the cloth. Clean the keys from back to front, ensuring no water is running inside the piano. Dry the keys with a dry cloth and you should have a dust-free keyboard.

5. Do Not Use Your Piano As A Table For Your Food Or Drink!

We humans seem to want to use any box-shaped object with a flat top for a table! And pianos are no different. However, certain things should not be placed on the lid of a piano. These include lit candles, plants, and any food or drink.

Spilling food or a drink on a piano can cause major damage to the piano's wood finish and other internals.



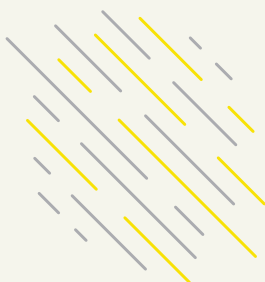


6. Keep Your Piano On A Regular Service Schedule

Having your piano on a regular service schedule is essential for the health of your instrument. A simple servicing every 6 months will keep everything running smoothly. Would you go ten years without changing the oil in your car?

Hopefully not! If piano tuning is overlooked, you can be sure that other basic maintenance forms are also overlooked. Having your piano serviced once every 6 months ensures that everything runs smoothly and sounds its best. A good piano technician will feel and hear other things besides the pitches of notes and intervals. This means small problems can be addressed immediately before they become major ones. There is nothing like sitting down at a freshly tuned piano!

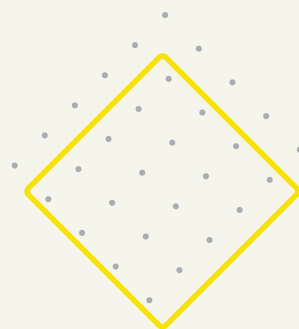
But did you know that around 80 percent of the pianos we service require more than just a tuning to play like new again? As a piano is played over its lifetime, the felts inside wear down and are no longer playing as they used to when new. The piano owner may think that the piano is old and worn out but many times all is needed is a good regulation and voicing job to bring the piano back to like new condition.



7. Piano Action Regulation. What Is That?

Piano action regulation is something we work with daily as piano technicians. Unfortunately, the vast majority of pianos have never had anything other than tuning since the piano was new. Many times, that means 10, 20, 30 years or more.

Most piano owners are unaware that a piano requires more than just tuning. That is because most piano tuners are piano tuners only. Most piano tuners do not bring up or explain piano action regulation because they have not been trained in it.





Why Have My Piano Action Regulated?

The main reason is written in EVERY piano brand's Owner's Manual; they ALL mention the need for action regulation every 3-5 years. Steinway says every 3-5 years, Baldwin says every 5 years, Yamaha says every 5 years, Kawai says every 5 years, Bosendorfer 3 years. The Steinway at the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra is regulated once a year, sometimes more often than that.

If you have owned your piano for more than 5 years and it has not had an action regulation, it is overdue by your own brand's recommendations.

Tuning has nothing to do with the physical adjustments done to the action mechanisms that occur in an action regulation procedure.

Besides following your brand's factory recommendations, the most important reason to have the procedure performed, is that you paid 100% of your dollars to get 100% of a piano. When an action is out of regulation after 5 years, you are losing, conservatively, 5% of the volume, tone, touch, power, repetition capabilities and dynamic control of forte and pianissimo volumes. 10 years; 10%, 15 years; 15% and so on.

If your piano is 30 years old and has never been regulated other than at the factory 30 years ago, you are only getting 70% of what your piano CAN STILL give; If only it were regulated it could play like new.



What Does An Action Regulation Entail?

If your brakes were only giving you 70% of their stopping power, you would take them to have them adjusted or regulated.

Most pianists and piano students don't realize they are not getting the optimal response and tone that they once did years ago. It is such a gradual deterioration; most people don't realize what they are missing. When they play a newer piano that is 'in' regulation, they just think that their piano is old and the new one is a better piano. That is definitely not the correct assumption.

A competent piano technician can determine very quickly what is out of adjustment and how far out it is. Piano action mechanisms have 12 adjustments (regulations) that have to be performed on each of the 88 notes. That is a total of 1,056 adjustments to make a Yamaha have the Yamaha feel and tone; to make a Kawai have the Kawai touch and tone; to make a Steinway have the Steinway touch and tone.

All of that correct tone, touch, volume power, repetition capability and dynamic control is lost when the action mechanisms between your fingers and the strings is compromised due to felts wearing on keys, wear on action parts, hammerhead felt wear and hammerhead felt compaction.





What Exactly Is It?

If you have an upright piano, the action regulation procedure can take place in your home without moving the piano. With a grand, however the action will need to be taken into our shop as we have a specialized regulation setup for grand pianos.

It is usually a 6-hour procedure that is noiseless for the most part. It involves the readjustments of regulation screws, bolts, felts, wires on the piano action mechanisms and keys. All adjustments, dimensions and measurements are brought back to the factory specifications for your piano's brand.

An action regulation will enable the piano action mechanism to play at the optimum efficiency it was engineered and designed to do on the blueprints and at the factory before it was shipped.

On performance pianos, at the Symphony, these pianos are always asked to perform at 100%. Anything less is unacceptable by the artist that may have traveled, literally, thousands of miles to perform for two hours. That is what an action regulation is; a concert preparation procedure to make the stage piano or your piano, perform at 100% concert level performance; to play at its optimum level of performance.

Bringing a piano back from 30 years of unknowing or neglect to 'concert ready' will give the piano 30% more of all the good things it has to offer in tone, touch, feel, sound, repetition, volume, etc.



8. Voicing. Correct The Bright And Harsh Tone Of Your Piano

Tuning is the most important procedure that can be done to a piano to improve its tone. However, the second most important procedure is one that some music professionals are not familiar with.

The procedure, called Voicing, corrects the tonal quality of the instrument. It corrects the 'voice' of the instrument, by working with the 88 hammerheads felts. That is to soften or harden the felt, to achieve the correct tonal quality for that particular instrument. This is not an unusual procedure.

All major piano manufacturers suggest a Voicing procedure be performed every 5 years. If it has been longer than that for your instrument, it is overdue for a voicing procedure.

A piano, grand or vertical, can be perfectly in tune, but still produce a 'bright, brassy, tinny' sound. Additional tuning will not remedy this. Voicing will soften the hammerhead felt fibers that have been packed and compacted over years of the hammers striking the strings.

The Voicing procedure involves several tasks; filing the 88 hammerheads felts, needling the felt with a tool to soften the compacted felt fibers, and "fitting" the hammerheads to the 220 strings by filing them to the correct shape for each brand of piano.

Bringing the hammerhead felt back to the softer density it was when the instrument was new, is the goal. Less dense felt translates into a more mellow and more uniform tone.

Having your piano voiced will bring out the best tonal quality your instrument has to offer. Tuning and Voicing; the two most important and effective procedures to make your piano sound like it did when it was new!



LET'S GET YOU INSPIRED TO PLAY AGAIN

Are you ready to bring your piano back to life? You will be inspired to play more than ever with a piano that sounds and feels like new.

With every piano we service we fully inspect every part to make sure it is playing at its best. And if not we will recommend a service package to bring it back to top performance.

One of our most popular packages is our overhaul service. This service is excellent for bringing your piano back to an excellent performing level without breaking the bank. Our overhaul is excellent for pianos that have not been serviced in many years and includes the following:

- ◆ All tuning to bring the piano back to standard A440 pitch
- ◆ A deep cleaning to remove years of dirt and debris from inside your piano and under the keys
- ◆ Many adjustments to the piano's playing parts so that it plays as close to new as possible



CONCLUSION: GO PLAY YOUR PIANO!



Music is one of the best stress relievers there is.

Even if you take ten minutes a day to sit down and play, you will not regret it!

We believe that one of the coolest things about practicing something that you could not do before is that you can measure your progress and see yourself improving on the instrument!

You are literally developing your brain and muscles to work as one unit enabling you to increase your piano skill set every time you sit down and play!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Blake and his team are experts at bringing pianos back to life, whether it is a cherished antique instrument or a modern piano.

From the smallest upright to the largest grand, every piano should both sound and play at its best. You deserve to have a piano with a beautiful tone that plays at top performance. Don't settle for typical piano tuners who only make basic pitch adjustments. Whether you are a beginner or an advanced piano player, a piano that doesn't play at its best will stop you from advancing. And when your piano plays as well as it sounds, you will enjoy your piano like never before.

[Schedule A Call With Blake Today](#)

