

Schaff Piano Supply Company Presents:

Using the Tuning Pin Crank Basic Tips



By Chuck Behm



TUNING PIN CRANK

Traditional hardwood handle style has a square tip opening that fits onto tuning pins for easily winding coils. The nickel plated steel crank measures 3" in width from the shaft centers.

-Rationale-

A staple item of the restringer's kit, this simple tool makes the job of winding coils on piano strings a snap. Whether replacing a single string, or restringing an entire piano, it is an extremely useful tool. Follow the step-by-step directions given in learning to use the tuning pin crank.

-Basic Procedures-

1. Loosening the brake on your wire spool slightly, pull a short length of piano wire (a foot or so) from the spool. Retighten the brake.
2. If the end of the wire does not have a bend (or becket) in it, put one in it now, approximately the width of the jaws pair of needle nose pliers (about $\frac{1}{4}$ ").
3. Holding the tuning pin in your left hand with the hole in the pin (the eye) facing you, use your right hand to insert the becket of the wire into the eye of the pin (Photo 1).



Photo 1

4. Put the thumb of your left hand firmly over the wire, holding the becket in place in the eye of the pin.
5. Release the wire with your right hand, pick up the tuning pin crank by the handle, and insert the squared end of the tuning pin into the chuck of the crank.

Tools / Tuning Pin Crank

6. Maintaining a firm pressure with your thumb on the string while cradling the pin in the crook of your fingers, slide your thumb down slightly about $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the pin (Photo 2). Push on the string with your thumb until it bends inwards slightly



Photo 2

7. With your right hand, slowly begin to turn the crank in a clockwise direction. Let the pin rotate freely in the crook of your fingers. Push hard on the wire to avoid having the becket pop out of the eye of the pin. (If this hurts your thumb, you might consider wearing cloth or leather work gloves. Some technicians wear gloves as a matter of course to avoid getting oil from their skin on the string).
8. Upon completion of the first turn, make sure the wire passes just to the left of the becket. You can control the location of the wire as it wraps onto the pin by shifting your thumb slightly from side to side.
9. Continue turning the crank, keeping the string firmly against the forming coil by pushing your thumb slightly to the right as the pin rotates in the crook of your fingers (Photo 3, next page).



Photo 3

10. If you wish to end up with 3 turns on your coil, go past your initial starting point by an extra half to three quarters of a turn. The wire will spring back to an even 3 turns once the pressure released.
11. If you were restringing and repinning a piano, at this point the pin would be pounded into the pin block of the piano with the wire attached. If, on the other hand, the string was to be put on a pin still in the piano, (as might be done in the case of replacing a broken or missing string), the coil would need to be removed from the pin used for winding. This may be done by inserting a small flat-bladed screwdriver under the first turn of the coil in next to the becket, and levering the string out of the eye (Photo 4).



Photo 4

12. The completed coil (Photo 5). To insert on a new pin, use your small screwdriver to pull the becket away from the coil slightly while pushing the squared end of a tuning pin into the coil. Line the wire end up with the eye the pin, and squeeze the becket in place with a pair of pliers.



Photo 5

Tool Ordering Information:

For your convenience, this tool is available from Schaff Piano Supply by referring to the following catalogue number.

Tuning pin crankCat. No. 109

To order, call Schaff Piano Supply at 1-800-747-4266

Notes on Tool