

A photograph of a baby grand piano with a lamp and a fern in the background. The piano is dark wood with a white keyboard. A brass lamp is visible in the upper left, and a green fern is in the upper right. The piano is on a patterned rug.

Routine Maintenance for Your Baby Grand Piano Promo Set Preview

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

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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.

Heads-Up Preview

About This Preview Packet

The 24 main topics available for your free personalized promo or newsletter set all come in 2 versions—heads-up and full-length, both of which are shown in this preview packet.

Heads-up versions (see example on previous page) are always 1 page in length and as such are very direct and to the point. These shorter versions work especially well for pianos which have a number of repair issues in that a packet of them can be included with an estimate without creating a perceived overload of information for the owner. For my own business, I print multiple copies of heads-up for every topic covered thus far and carry several of each with me in my briefcase on tuning rounds in case I need to put a packet together. I spend a little more on printing expenses to have them produced on heavy-weight card stock, but the extra expense is well worth it, at least in my opinion—the promos have a very substantial 'feel' about them on the heavier-weight paper.

With a written estimate accompanied by relevant heads-up promos, a well-informed decision can be made more easily at the owner's leisure. This is especially helpful when the decision (to repair or not to repair) involves a discussion between joint owners of the piano—a husband and wife for example. The couple can sit down at the kitchen table together and go over the materials in an informed manner. Also, heads-up promos are great for any situation involving committees. If a half dozen repair topics are involved in a proposed restoration of a church piano, for example, the heads-ups can be passed around among committee members for everyone to become involved in the discussion and decision making.

Full-length versions (see example on following pages) go into enough detail that even your most discriminating customer will be satisfied. For my own use, I've printed off a single copy of each full-length version that I have in a binder which I also carry in my briefcase. Occasionally, I get my binder out if the customer wants more information on the spot. More frequently, however, are situations in which I ask my customer if they would like me to send the full-length copies of the topics concerned via email for further reading and consideration. Quite often customers do opt to see the in-depth materials.

Whichever version of the promos are put to use, the fact is that they work! In my own business, since I have begun giving out promos with estimates, the percentage of clients having recommended repairs done has increased steadily. In 2011, over 90% of the estimates which I gave were followed through with. Before promos, those types of numbers were way beyond what I ever saw. Other users of promos (see testimonials) have experienced similar results. Technicians have reported back that because of the promos, their businesses are doing better than ever before.

But enough about my own experiences and those of other technicians. Try a promo set out for yourself! Pick out a topic for your free promo set, and let us help you start building upon your own success story! Best wishes to your future!

Full-Length Preview

The Owner's Guide to Piano Repair



Focus On: Routine Maintenance for Your Baby Grand Piano

Information provided courtesy of:

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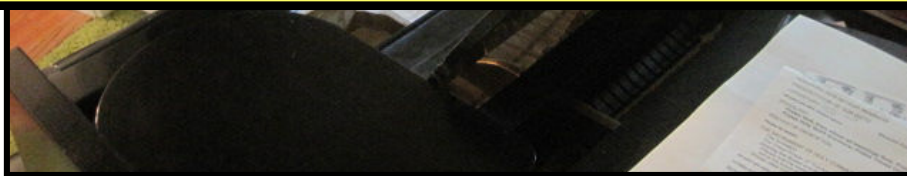
As an owner of a baby (home-size) grand piano, you have the good fortune to be able to play and enjoy the piano of choice for many musicians.

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.



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Sitting down to play on a freshly tuned grand piano is a wonderful experience!

The following information is intended to enable you to better understand the proper maintenance required to keep your grand piano in top form.

Tuning: With any acoustic piano, following a regular tuning schedule is essential for the piano to perform up to its potential. All pianos go out of tune over time because of a variety of factors such as seasonal swings in humidity levels. An important key to your piano sounding its best is to keep it in proper tune by having it professionally serviced on a regular basis. 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.

For a piano currently not being played but which is being maintained for future use, a tuning every other year will usually suffice. Letting an piano go for longer than two years without tuning, however, is not recommended.

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.



One example of a part which might need to be replaced or repaired on a grand piano would be that of a broken hammer shank. Each shank connects to a hammer, and as such is subject to a great deal of stress and occasional breakage. In the photo

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Many times in repairing pianos, a choice has to be made whether to repair the old parts, or simply replace them. With newer pianos of well-known brands, replacement of worn or broken parts with new parts may be the most practical solution. Other times, when an older or lesser known brand of piano is being worked on, exact replacement parts may not be available. In that type of situation, repairing the old parts may be the best option. In the photo to the right, a well-done splice suffices to repair a broken shank.



In certain cases where overall wear and tear is a factor, replacing the entire set of parts with new may be the best option. By doing so, repairs in the foreseeable future will not be needed. The problem is solved, once and for all. This approach is therefore recommended whenever possible.

Other commonly needed repair work on an grand piano would include such jobs as the filing or replacing of worn hammers, installation of a new set of dampers, replacement of broken ivory keytops or the installation of an entirely new set of keys. The photos below illustrate these often needed repairs:

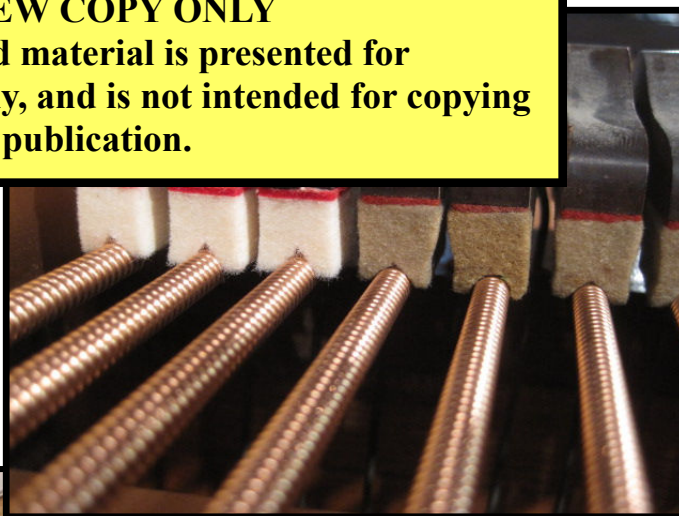


An old, worn-out set of hammers may very well need attention in a piano that has been played hard over the years. Careful reshaping of the hammerheads is sometimes possible, as is being done in the photo to the left. At other times where the old hammers are badly worn, the installation of a new set of hammers is

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placed in
This will result in an improvement to the cessation of sound once notes are released. Old dampers often become hard, and don't quiet the strings as quickly as intended.



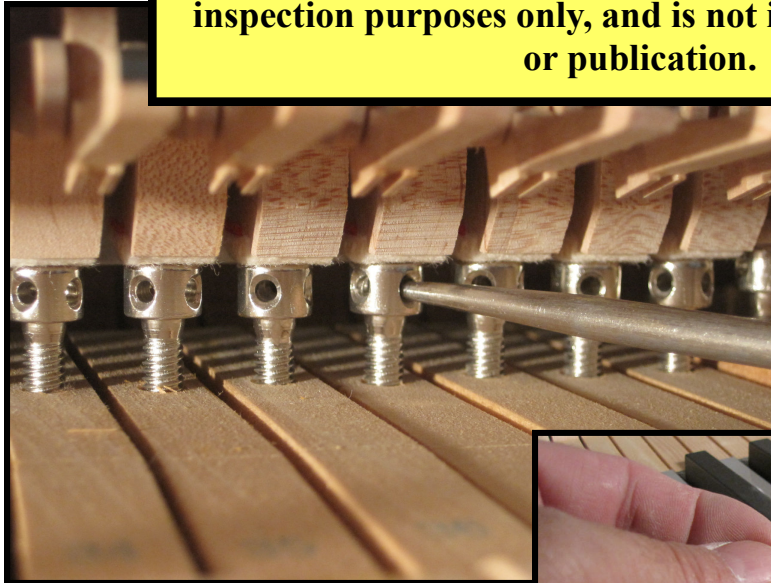
Original ivory in good condition on a older grand piano is a definite plus. A few chipped keys may oftentimes be replaced or repaired. In cases where the old keys are badly worn, however, installing a new set of keytops (shown being fitted to the keysticks) will benefit the appearance of the piano.

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.

When an grand piano is in perfect regulation, each hammer is be propelled almost all the way to the strings by the action. At the last possible moment, the hammer is released to strike the strings under its own momentum. In the photo to the right, adjustments are being made to ensure that the hammers right mor



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justed so that they are perfectly level from one end of the action to the other. Here, adjustment of the height of the hammers is made by precise adjustment of the appropriate brass capstans.

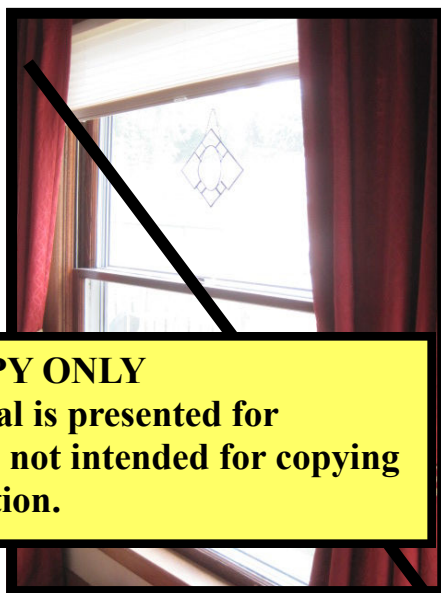
Perfectly level keytops give an grand piano more of a "new" feel when played, and are essential for a piano to look its best. In this photo, a set of grand keys are adjusted to a tolerance of .002".



Environment: While tuning, repairs, regulation and voicing are the job of the technician, seeing to it that your grand piano is placed in an appropriate spot within your home is up to you. What is needed, as much as possible, is a location where temperature and humidity are kept at moderate levels year-round. Drafty locations, or areas where wide swings in either temperature or humidity occur (unheated porches, moldy basements, etc.) are unsuitable for a piano. In particular avoid placing your piano in front of either of the following:



1. Hot blowing
piano is particularly bad for the soundboard.



2. Sun-drenched southern exposures—again very hard on the piano.

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Note: Effective humidity control equipment, either for the home in general or the piano in particular, will aid in keeping your piano in top form.

In conclusion: To keep your quality grand piano performing at its best so that everyone who sits down will enjoy their musical experience, it makes sense to come up with a plan for maintaining the piano which fits both your budget and expectations. If you would like, I would be happy to schedule a time that we could sit down together and go over the specific repairs your piano would benefit from and come up with a plan for a regular maintenance schedule for tuning and regulation.





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A 125 year-old grand having undergone extensive work is ready to be put back into service.

"In business to bring your piano to its full potential."

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