

A photograph of a classic wooden spinet piano. The piano is made of a dark-stained wood, possibly mahogany or cherry, and features a decorative arched lattice backrest. The keyboard is visible, showing white and black keys. A matching wooden bench is positioned in front of the piano. A small, patterned rug with green and beige tones is placed on the wooden floor under the bench. The piano is set against a plain white wall.

**Routine Maintenance for Your
Spinet Piano
Promo Set Preview**

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

Focus On: Routine Maintenance for Your Spinet Piano



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Your Contact Information Goes Here

As the owner of a spinet piano you have the advantage of playing on an authentic acoustic piano which is conveniently sized—approximately the same dimensions as a digital piano. A spinet is often a good option for the home owner or apartment dweller who doesn't have an abundance of space, but who wants a real piano to play. With proper maintenance, a good quality spinet piano can be a reliable instrument that provides years of musical enjoyment.

Tuning: As with any acoustic piano, following a regular tuning schedule is essential for a spinet piano to perform up to its potential. An adequate tuning schedule for a piano being used frequently 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 spinet piano action has thousands of individual parts, and after years of use parts may wear out or simply break. Oftentimes spinets have plastic parts which may be more susceptible to breakage than wooden parts. The good news is that most of the parts found in a spinet piano action which are prone to breakage are typically replace-

able by a technician.



New plastic elbows being installed in a spinet.

Regulation: For your spinet piano to perform at its peak, the first step is to get it into tune and repair all broken or worn parts. When this has been done, the piano is ready to be "regulated." 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. Because of the compact design of the spinet piano, it is particularly important that the piano is adjusted to perform at its best. Just as a small car is more enjoyable to drive when it is running correctly, a small piano will be more satisfying to play when correctly regulated.

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 Spinet Piano

Information provided courtesy of:

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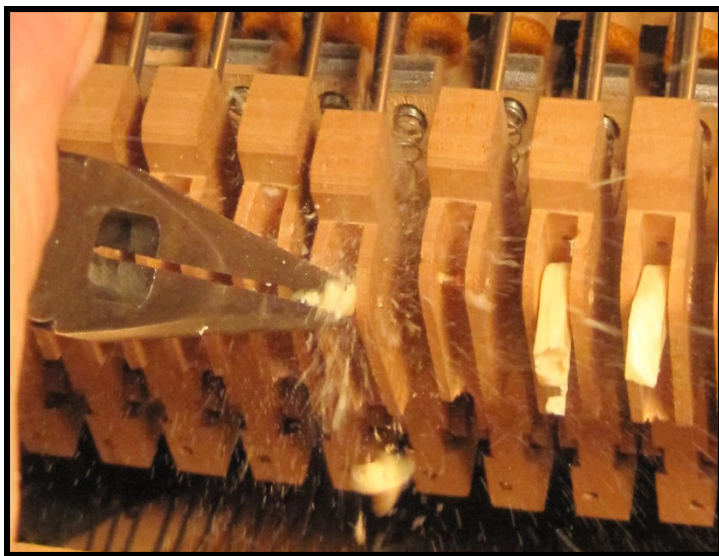
Sitting down to play on a freshly tuned spinet can be a pleasant experience for beginners and more advanced pianists alike!

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

Tuning: As with any acoustic piano, following a regular tuning schedule is essential for a spinet 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 spinet 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 frequently 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 any piano go for longer than two years without tuning, however, is not recommended.

Repairs: Your spinet piano action has thousands of individual parts, and after years of use parts may wear out or simply break. Oftentimes spinets have plastic parts which may be more susceptible to breakage than wooden parts. The good news is that most of the parts found in a spinet piano action which are prone to breakage are typically replaceable by the professional piano technician.



An example of a part which often fails in older spinets is that of plastic elbows—essential parts which connect the keys with the working mechanism (action). The plastic used in the original elbows hardens until it becomes extremely brittle. In the photo to the left, old elbows are being pulverized with a pair of needle nose pliers. Very brittle, indeed!

The best way to solve this problem is to replace the old plastic elbows with new replacement elbows. In the future, a new set of replacement elbows, a new set of replacement lifters on the lifter wire that connects the key to the action. The plastic used for replacement elbows is much more durable, and does not have the tendency to become brittle with age.

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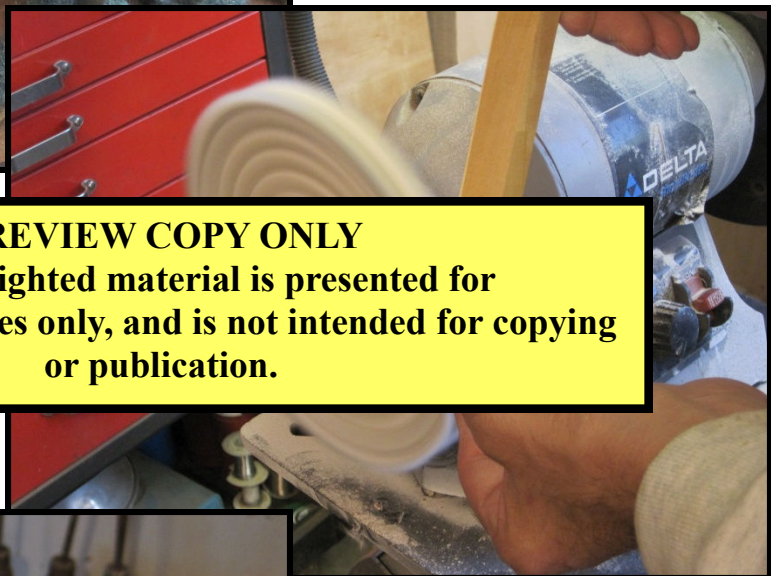


When an entire set of parts is replaced, further repairs should not be needed in the foreseeable future. In the photo to the left, a set of replacement elbows has been installed in a spinet which had been having recurring breakage problems. The problem is now solved, once and for all. This approach is recommended whenever possible.

Other commonly needed repair / maintenance work on an spinet piano would include such jobs as vacuuming up dust and debris from under the keys (especially important for those owners with dust allergies), professional polishing of grimy imitation ivory keytops, and repair or replacement of loose or worn hammerheads. The photos below illustrate these often needed repairs:



With careful removal of the keys (NOT a job for the DIY'er—way too many parts to break), the keybed may be thoroughly vacuumed and brushed out—making it as clean inside as the day the piano left the factory.



Imitation ivory keytops may be cleaned with special designed for (typically the workshop for this job) and restored to their original luster.

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Hammerheads which are loose (as in the photo to the left) or badly worn may need to be repaired or replaced entirely. Again, for this type of work the action would need to be transported to the workshop. With the action in the shop, other needed repair work could be done as well.

Regulation: For your spinet piano to perform at its peak, the first step is to get it into tune and repair all broken or worn parts. When this has been done, the piano is ready to be "regulated." 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. Because of the compact design of the spinet piano, it is particularly important that the piano is adjusted to perform at its best.

Explanation: The keys of a spinet are shorter than those in an upright or grand to allow room for the action to drop down below the level of the keys. (The keys of an upright or grand piano go all the way under the action parts.) This "inverted" style of action is necessary for the compact size of the spinet, but presents serious challenges for the technician.



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Because of the shorter length that
ry
op.
the
keys in playing certain chords, a
noticeable difference will be felt in
the amount of effort needed to de-
press the various notes.

In order to minimize the effects of the compact design of the spinet action and keyset, keeping the piano regulated (one step of which is shown in the photo to the right) is extremely important. Just as a small car is more enjoyable to drive when it is running correctly, a small piano will be more satisfying to play when correctly regulated.



Environment: While tuning, repairs and regulation are the job of the technician, seeing to it that your spinet 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 if at all possible:



1. Hot air registers—dry, heated air blowing directly on the back of a piano is particularly bad for the soundboard



2. Drafty windows

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Note: Eff piano in

or the

In conclusion: To keep your spinet piano performing at its best so that everyone who plays it and hears it will enjoy their musical experience, it makes sense to come up with a piano maintenance plan which fits both your budget and expectations. 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 maintenance schedule for both tuning and regulation.





A newly regulated spinet piano action, ready to be played and enjoyed.

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

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