

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

Focus On: Pin Treatment of a Loose Pinblock



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Your piano is tending to go quickly out of tune in part because of loose tuning pins. One option to consider is to have me professionally apply pin treatment around each tuning pin where it meets the pinblock.

For a piano to hold a stable tuning, it's essential that the tuning pins are tight. While there are other factors (such as fluctuations in humidity) which have an impact on the longevity of a tuning, a tuning pin which is loose to the point where it slips and turns in its hole will cause the individual note involved to sound horribly out of tune.

The reason that a professionally applied pin treatment improves the torque of the pins has to do with the fact that the treatment acts to swell and stiffen the wood fibers around the pins. It quickly acts to improve the tightness felt by the tuner when the hammer is placed on the tuning pin and the pin is turned.



Before Treatment



After Treatment

With a vertical piano, it is sometimes necessary to lay the piano on its back to prevent the pin treatment from running down the cast iron plate. If tilting the piano is called for, a piano tilter will be used to safely tip the piano backwards. To make the job go more quickly, it is helpful if any furniture directly in front of the piano be moved out of the way. With a grand, it is necessary to remove the action from the piano.



Once the piano is readied, the pin treatment will be applied with a special applicator around each tuning pin. Ordinarily, it will take more than one pass to reach the saturation point. Once the treatment quits wicking in, the process is done. Results will vary, but almost always the pins are much more snug after an application.

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