

The Comprehensive

PIANO BUYERS GUIDE

2018.09



With compliments from



The contents are written without prejudice and meet our Mission statement of
“Promote the love and care of pianos”
45 Years Industry Experience

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COMPANY PROFILE

After 3 years of formal training as a Piano Tuner and Technician at Snadens Pianos – Perth, Gary Bailey started his piano business in 1973 in Kojonup, under the name of "G.J. Bailey Piano Tuner". At 19 years of age Gary saw the need to provide a valuable piano tuning and technician service to country West Australia.

Business and Sales grew with Gary winning a trip to view the Yamaha Factory in 1983. Operating out of Perth Gary changed the name in 1993 to "Piano Magic" as it is known today. Gary travels as far as Kalgoorlie, Esperance, Albany and almost to Geraldton to provide a necessary service to region Western Australia, Tuning, Rebuilding and Selling pianos.

Gary was the foundation Secretary of the Piano Tuners and Technicians Association (PTTA) when it was formed in 1980. Over the years Gary has been the President, Secretary of the West Australian PTTA and has been an active committee member for many years. APTTA (Australasian Piano Tuners and Technicians Association) is the national association that is setting the industry standard in piano technology. Gary was one of 8 Australian Piano Tuners that worked together to design the learning outcomes for TAFE to use as a part of formalizing piano tuning as a trade.

Piano Magic stands by its Business Logo as

"PERTH'S NO. 1 DESTINATION FOR PIANO INFORMATION"

And Our Mission Statement

We promote the love and care of pianos.

June 2001 saw Piano Magic move to its Welshpool Premises. With this move came a new vision for Gary. Very quickly the excitement set in with the first sale of a Schimmel 182TE grand piano made on July 21st 2001.

The larger workshop allowed Gary to start giving back to the industry. With the employment of trainee tuners and technicians, Piano Magic quickly burst the seams of that premises and in June 2004 took the next step and moved into what was the largest 'Piano Restoration Workshop in Australia' boasting 11 staff.

In 2005 it became evident that the Piano Industry was seeing new Piano Technology, Research and Development hit the marketplace at very affordable prices that resulted in Piano Magic making changes.

We now sell affordable new and second hand pianos. With Piano Magic knowledge and expertise, we confidently rebuild that treasure that has given you timeless joy in the past and then look after it with a tuning service second to none.

Piano Magic became a Member of the Australian Music Association. Each year Gary and Diane attend Sales, Retail and Industry Conferences and Conventions on the East coast to keep in touch with Industry and Product changes in Australia and Worldwide.

Gary, Piano Magic and team encourages Music Education.

Research has proven that Music Education can increase the academic ability of a child up to 35%.

In October 2007 Gary and Diane were invited to attend the award winning 'Hailun Piano Factory' in Ningbo, China. The Hailun Factory manufactures our great Bernstein Pianos which hosts features that are unique to the Bernstein.

Piano Magic is known to be one of Perth's and Western Australia's leading piano outlets. Piano Magic has the Western Australian Distributorship for Bernstein (Hailun – China), Story and Clark with Pianomation self play for the person that enjoys piano playing in the home.

Piano Magic operates with 3 very dedicated staff:- Introducing to you our dedicated team:-

Gary Bailey (ARPT) – Director, Sales Consultant, Tuner and Technician, Piano rebuilding, Piano Deliveries.
Diane Bailey – Sales Consultant, Administration and Financial Consultant, Minor Repairs, Piano Deliveries.
Ron. Wilkins – French Polisher, piano technician

Piano Magic, Gary and team are dedicated to Piano Sales and Service. Gary and Piano Magic with his team are here to stay. We now have a purpose-built showroom located at 79 Belgravia St, Belmont which includes Piano Showroom, Workshop, teaching rooms.

At Piano Magic, no enquiry is too small, feel free to contact us here. You can find us located at 79 Belgravia Street, in Belmont. Just 700 meters off Great Eastern Hwy.

Piano Magic holds the exclusive Western Australian Distributorship of **Bernstein Hailun** pianos. The Bernstein Hailun Piano range is manufactured in the 'Hailun Factory' Ningbo China to Piano Magic's specifications to suit our Western Australian climate. Also major stockists of Story and Clark pianos, Pianomation and Piano Life Saver Systems by Dampchasser

Imagine -

- Having the opportunity to *select a piano* of your choice.
- A large range to choose from.
- Help of over 40 years experience to complement your love for piano.
- Having personal backup service.
- An *extensive database* with the *history of your piano* enabling us to provide you with a **call-back record to maintain your tuning needs.**
A worry free Piano Magic delivery service to your lounge room*. The piano is checked by Gary on delivery to maintain the Piano Magic standard. *Possible extra charge over 3 steps

When you deal with Piano Magic, you do not need to shop around.
We are the one stop shop providing all your piano needs.
Perth's No.1 destination for piano information

STEPS TO BUYING A PIANO

① Determine *where* the piano is to be positioned in the home.

It needs to be away from sunlight and weather influences. Preferably on an inside wall in a room with moderated temperature. If this cannot be achieved we can fit a Piano Life Saver System to maintain the piano in an stable climatic environment.

② Judge *what size* piano will acoustically match the room.

With new technology, many of the new smaller pianos (121cm) will out-perform the older big pianos (131). Size comparison is no longer an overall guide. Gary is happy to inspect the room and help with advice on the best-sized piano for your needs. Or just measure your room and draw a simple plan. Bring this with you to our selection center.

③ What *colour* choice will suit your furniture?

Remember that you keep a good piano in the family for generations. Do you have red toning or brown. Would black or Ivory be better? If you really want to match the piano with other furniture, bring a draw or something to help guide you on your colour selection.

④ Establish the *comfort and performance level*

(See "*Are all Pianos the Same?*") What do you require for the appropriate progress for your student? Most piano vendors will avoid this most essential element. Many budding musicians do not develop dynamic sensitivity in their playing due to mono-sound pianos.

⑤ Open your mind to the *real cost* of a piano

(See "*\$1 Per Day*") If you add up the cost of lessons (approx. \$30 per lesson pwk), transport (approx \$10 pwk), books (approx \$50 per term) and time (about an hour per lesson), this equates to approximately \$500 per 10 weeks term. Over the years of developing enjoyable piano playing you can see that the cost of a good piano over time is the least expensive part of the equation. Remember, a professional piano retailer also shares in the cost, as he should provide good technical and tuning service and warranty assistance to you on an ongoing basis.

Your piano selection at Piano Magic will be a rewarding experience and benefit your family for years to come....

AROUND \$1 PER DAY

The most inexpensive part of learning piano... ..is the piano itself. WHY?

To provide a youngster with an improper piano is like learning to drive a modern manual car in an old bomb. It won't be long until they don't want to do it anymore. Pianos are **not all the same**. There are many variables to consider in the condition of the mechanical and sound processing components. If you are not an experienced piano person, **be careful**. It really is worth paying a little extra to deal with a reputable piano company. Price!!! For example, in 2005 a Category 3 piano was affordable and excellent value for money at around \$5500. **That was then, now our new Category 3 piano retails at around \$7695.** However, the most important consideration for a piano as a **long-term** asset is not the price but **the cost over the life of the piano**. For example, the investment in such an upright piano over 20 years is around \$1.00 per day – and this assumes that the piano has *no value* at the end of the period! However, on current resale trends this is highly unlikely. **So why miss out? Call Us Now on 9477 5866**

KNOW YOUR PIANO MAN

“If you don’t know pianos, know your piano man”



Buying a piano privately can be risky and costly. What appears to be a rare bargain may prove to be a real liability. Unless you are a piano expert, your best assurance is to rely on the judgement of the most experienced dealer/Tuner in your area with a proven record of integrity and fair dealing.

ARE ALL PIANOS THE SAME?

I wish that I had a dollar for every client who has asked me if we had a “*cheap piano for the kids to start on*”. My reply is that invariably there is **no such thing**. Piano playing should be an enjoyable experience, not laboured. It should engender desire to return to the instrument whenever possible and truly develop the creative art of making music.

Long Bass String length is not always a sign of the pianos performance. Some smaller piano will out perform taller pianos.

One comparative test is to look at the performance capacity of the instrument you are considering. To assist I will utilise **five categories** in analysing a piano’s performance capacity.

The performance criteria are:

- (a) Volume or Power produced by the piano.
- (b) Tonal range, from soft and warm, to bright and brassy.
- (c) Touch responsiveness, including key weight and repetition.

Five Categories of Pianos

Category	Volume/Power Produced	Tonal Range	Touch Response
1	No Change	No Change	Domestic
2	Some Change	No Change	Domestic
3	Good Change	Some Change	Domestic
4	Good Change	Good Change	Professional
5	Excellent Change	Excellent Change	Professional

In the current market, a New Category 1 piano could be around the **\$2,995** mark; to even be included in this category it has to be tuned to standard pitch and be over-strung with an under-damper system. Gary can explain this with examples in our workshop.

Other categories are easily illustrated in our selection center, so please call in and acquire more confidence in selecting the right piano for your needs. Do it Now 9477 5866

DIGITAL VS ACOUSTIC PIANOS

The Difference

Digital pianos are electronic instruments that reproduce piano like sounds. Unlike acoustic pianos, they have no hammers, no strings and no soundboard to produce the sound you hear. Instead, they have electronic sound chips and speakers.

Digital Advantages

Digital pianos usually have an array of features that make them an attractive alternative to an acoustic piano, such as different types of piano sounds, other keyboard sounds like harpsichord, organ, etc. Other instrument sounds like strings, flute, percussion etc. Built-in rhythm capabilities to accompany you when playing. The ability to record your performance. The ability to interact with other electronic music devices (MIDI). Never a need for tuning. Headphones to practice in private. Easier portability. Adverse climatic conditions.

Disadvantages

Digital pianos can't really duplicate the tone and touch of a real piano. They are a different instrument. Even with today's sampling technology, individual notes may be quite accurately reproduced, but the tone of notes sounding together, as in an acoustic piano - with complex harmonics mixing and resonating against a flexible wooden soundboard - cannot be matched. As a result, most music sounds rather sterile played on a digital piano. Digital pianos do not feel like real pianos. "Touch Sensitivity" and "Weighted Action" is not the same thing as the sophisticated inner mechanism, or "action", of an acoustic piano. Digital pianos merely simulate the touch of pianos. They do not provide the same feedback or responsiveness to your playing, so your performance range is limited. If you are considering buying a piano for your child, consider this: **many piano teachers will not teach students who have reached a certain level on anything other than an acoustic piano.** Digital pianos are counter-productive when it comes to technique and dynamic performance. These skills cannot be practised on a digital keyboard and then applied to a real piano action. It's not the same thing.

Why are digital pianos not used for exams? A piano also represents a stronger commitment to a student, as opposed to a digital keyboard that may represent the same thing to a child as a computer, an electronic game-station or a CD player.

Something else to consider is that an acoustic piano will hold its value far better than a digital. An acoustic piano can last up to 100 years, while a digital may be obsolete in 5 years, and may even be hard to give away after that time.

Bottom Line

If you are looking for a keyboard that can be easily transported, or connected to a sound system, or one that can be used to record music using computer software, or has the ability to use headphones for privacy, then a digital piano is the way to go or consider a real piano with the Genio Silent piano system. Otherwise, think very carefully before you decide to buy a digital in place of an acoustic instrument.

If you have a child learning or about to learn, check what the teacher requires in the way of an instrument.

Our recommendation is a real piano with soul. Try holding down one key in the bass then play a chord or arpeggio through the treble and listen to the soul of the piano. We will show you this in our showroom. Come in today and enjoy an introduction to piano.

UPRIGHTS VS GRAND PIANOS

Buying a piano can be as complex as buying a car or a pleasant experience.

What are the main differences between the upright piano and the grand piano? Other than shape, size and cost difference, the most important aspect is the action of the piano and dynamic range produced.

In upright pianos, the strings are held vertically and the hammers hit the strings from the front, so the hammer movement is going across gravity. Springs are used in the action to assist the return movement of the hammers also the jack needs to return to rest before re-strike can occur giving vertical pianos slower repetitive notes.

In Grand Pianos, the strings are held horizontally and the hammer hits the string from below and drops right back. This means the movement of the hammer is in the same direction as gravity. This allows faster repetition and better tone and expression control with the help of a special repetition leaver that hold the hammer off the jack allowing the hammer to re-strike without the key going right to the rest position.

Key action is a very important part of the feedback from a piano and influences the pianist's ability to improve expression and tone quality.

In grand pianos both sides of the soundboard are exposed to the room well enough for extensive sound radiation. In upright pianos, the soundboard is isolated from the room by the covers, and is typically very close to the wall. The result is a slightly muted tone compared with that of a grand piano.

Grand pianos have a una-corda pedal that moves the action and keyboard to the right so the hammer only hits 2 strings. This allows a softer part of the hammer to hit the string and quietens the tone enabling softer play.

Upright pianos move the hammers closer to the strings shortening the strike distance enabling softer play.

Grand pianos have a sostenuto middle pedal that holds a note once played while others can be played staccato this is required by certain composers.

Occasionally upright pianos have a sostenuto middle pedal and the mute pedal normally found as the middle pedal is a leaver on the left under the key-bed.

Two instruments of similar appearance may have drastically different tone quality due to different degrees of technological thoroughness. Usually grand piano technology provides more detailed and accurate regulation of key action, finer voicing, use of better materials, and so forth. These technological differences are surely audible, and are known to practical piano engineers.

Size:- Many high quality uprights have better tone than low quality grands.

The smallest grand is called the 'Baby Grand' and can start from about 4ft 6 inches or 140cm to 5'2" or 161cm. This Baby grand is very popular as its small size allows it to fit into many family homes.

The next size up is the 'Medium grand' which runs from 5'3" or 161cm to about 7'2" 220cm and has much larger soundboard. These grands are the favourites of piano teachers for the tone it produces and the volume. Music schools, universities and serious amateurs also favour the medium grand.

The largest grands are the 'Concert Grands' which runs from 7 foot or 220cm to 9 foot 280cm. These pianos are mostly used in concert halls, auditoriums, public performances, and churches. A Grand piano allows the sound to radiate effectively to the audience.

BUYING A SECOND HAND (PRE OWNED) PIANO

An acoustic piano is a very complex item. A piano action has 5000 to 10,000 thousand moving parts depending on the style of piano.

If you decide to go it alone and buy from the paper, there is only one piece of advice we can give you, it is this: Have a technician inspect a used piano before you decide to purchase. (Gary is available for your convenience at a modest fee) You wouldn't buy a house without having it White Ant inspected, would you? Also would you have your driving instructor pick a car for you. I don't think so.

Most people pay too much for old pianos; the as-is value of old pianos is actually quite low. Unfortunately, an inexperienced buyer may see new pianos for \$4,000 and think an old piano for \$800 is a bargain. In reality, they will probably pay \$600 too much, particularly if it requires thousands of dollars' worth of rebuilding or maintenance work that has accrued over many years. However, an older piano that has been regularly maintained by a competent tuner/technician and is on standard pitch can be a good instrument to own. Providing it has good dynamic range. See are all pianos the same.

Pianos age the way houses or people do. When they are 80, 90 or 100 years old they always need a great deal of work. This cost often exceeds the price of many quality new pianos. If a piano is going to be enjoyed, then a good quality newer instrument may be a better candidate, assuming that the newer piano will fit in with your décor.

Most people buying old pianos focus primarily on what appears to be the economic solution for minimal outlay, forgetting all about the sound and complex mechanical system controlled by the eighty-eight keys. This mechanism wears out and to replace components is expensive. The older the piano, the more probable it is that the instrument is very worn, resulting in "touch" that is noisy and very inconsistent. (Heavy on one note and light on the next)

A Piano that looks good and pretty on the outside is a piece of furniture is often not the instrument you want to be buying. It is quite often just for putting photos on, and past being a good playing piano.

Any piano buying decision should be a blend of three components:

- *a good long-term musical instrument,
- *a piece of furniture you like or can accept,
- *and an amount of money you are comfortable with spending.

You may give up some of one component to get more of another, but remember a piano is an instrument you will enjoy for a long time; it is important to be comfortable with it musically, financially, and cosmetically.

Do not think that pianos age like violins and guitars. Unlike violins and guitars, the strings in a piano create literally tons of stress that take their toll on soundboards, bridges, and pin-blocks, aging a piano far more quickly than other stringed instruments. Moreover, there is nothing between your fingers and the strings of a violin or guitar. However, when you play a piano you express yourself through a very complicated machine, which like any machine wears out as it is used.

Many parents think any old piano will do for their children starting out. If these parents knew as much about pianos as they do bicycles they would realize that their children were about to go on a bike with faulty tyres and twisted wheels.

If you find an older piano, which is in fact is in good condition for its age. Bear in mind that even if you have been very lucky to find an instrument in excellent condition. It could cost at least \$4000-\$7000 to put it in a similar condition to one you will find at a reputable dealer or a piano technician's collection.

Unfortunately, many older pianos are far more expensive to repair than it is for you to buy a new piano, which will last your family for many years. **Buying an old piano that has seen many years of use by other people. Means at some point someone has to start spending real money on it and that person could be you.**

If a piano passes a common sense test - i.e. the price is right and it does not seem to have been abused - then you might leave a deposit subject to approval by Gary.

Our experience is beware of Gumtree for piano buying. ... In the past couple of years, we have not seen one old piano bought by someone on Gumtree in a playable condition that a child could learn on. Pianos need to be played to be able to evaluate the Dynamic range and playability. Don't buy a piano site unseen.

Many advertisements, which appear to be private people selling pianos, can be unregistered dealers, and are usually selling dubious pianos at a cheaper price with inadequate workmanship and lacking performance. Remember they have already deceived you once with a misleading ad.

Some piano technicians will recondition pianos from their home, but they are not allowed by law to sell pianos from their home unless they have council approval. The amount of actual "rebuilding" and replacement with new parts, however, can vary considerably from one technician to another or one piano to another.

Once again, if you like the piano's look, sound and feel, enlist a technician to inspect its structural and mechanical condition before you decide to buy it. The fee will be good assurance. Remember a dealer with a large workshop has the capacity to do a full rebuild on an older style piano.

If you fall in love with the cabinet charm and the craftsmanship of an older piano, then it is something like falling in love with a beautiful turn-of-the-century home. The cost of restoration is certainly worthwhile, but it will make the home (piano) far more expensive than most new or newer homes (pianos). It is true that many old pianos were wonderfully made, and in the hands of a re-builder an old piano can be made like new again.

Make sure you get an Accredited Tuner/Technician like Gary to check out the piano you are interested in buying. There are a lot of so-called tuners around, quite often music teachers, who often mean well, but have not done the *3 year training required to be a piano tuner / technician* often fix things wrong within the piano action and this causes other problems. Although they may not charge much, the ultimate cost to you ends up being much more. Ask this question - would you get an untrained mechanic to work on your car.

The best assurance I can give you that your child will play the piano is – the easier and nicer the piano is to play the more likely it is that the child will want to practice and will want to continue to play.

There are only three main things in learning the piano – A good piano with good service, a good teacher that the child relates to and encouragement from a parent.

With these three goals your child will continue to play all through it life.

Areas of Concern...

- Plate/Frame** If cracked or broken the piano will be crippled and beyond repair. Or not hold standard pitch.
- Strings** Bass strings may be “tired and tubby”, totally devoid of tone. This can happen even in only 20-year-old pianos. If odd strings have been replaced, then the strings have reached the end of their life.
- Soundboard** May be cracked. The lines running diagonally across generally are cracks. Or worse still, may have lost crown to become tonally deficient (No soft and loud when playing notes light and hard) (Dynamic range).
- Ribs** May be loose and pulled away from the soundboard. This will cause a rattle when a note is played.
- Bridges** May have lost proper bearing, may be broken, split or cracked, pulled away from the soundboard necessitating major expense.
- Tuning Pins** May be loose, may require oversized pins and may require new pin block. Notes that sound like 2 notes together will have loose tuning pins. New methods are now available to help as short term solutions. Ask Gary about these new methods.
- Pin Plank** May be split and is very costly to repair. Since this is often concealed behind the frame, experienced judgement is required.
- Action** May be literally worn out this is very costly to re-felt and can take an experienced technician many weeks work to do properly.
- Regulation** Regulation is the playability of the piano. A complete regulation requires many hours work from an expert and if properly done, is expensive. This procedure can make all the difference to how the piano plays. Many technicians do not have the experience to regulate properly.
- Hammers** May be worn out or improperly faced, requiring replacement. Another costly repair.
- Trap work** The internal leverage controls of the expression pedals may be worn and need complete overhauling.
- Remember:** Gary can inspect all of these parts and give a full report on any problems for a modest fee.

BUYING A NEW PIANO

Buying a new piano is an exciting experience. With so many brands, styles and features, where do you start?

A piano is a very personal item to the person who plays the instrument.

To start, it is a good idea to buy a piano of slightly higher quality than you think you deserve, and then grow into it.

If there are several pianists in the family, aim your purchase toward the most advanced. A higher quality piano is an excellent investment, and will generally hold its value better.

Upright pianos need about a 1.5m wide x 60cm deep area (plus space for the pianist and bench).

Grand pianos need a triangle space about 1.5m wide. The length required will range from 1.5m to 2.9m depending on the model, plus another .6m for the pianist and bench.

Make sure the piano can be placed away from sources of heating and cooling, like radiators, heating vents, air conditioners, direct sunlight and fireplaces.

Seek advice on the best piano to suit your needs for now and the future. The longer the strings, the bigger the soundboard, the better tone. Used to be the rule of thumb, however **now with the latest technology excellent tone is be achievable in a smaller piano**. Space, money and proficiency will be the deciding factors here. Grand pianos are generally superior instruments to uprights. The action of a grand piano allows for faster repetition of notes, and for better, more subtle control of expression and tone than upright pianos.

What Brands Are Best?

Remember you can shop all day on price and still be confused and not achieve the best value. Today's piano market is filled with many piano makes mainly coming from China. This is not necessarily a bad thing. However, with approximately 250 different piano factories in China it is impossible to generalize the quality of one name over another, with so many price points. Well-known brand names are used to sell cheaper made pianos. Some manufacturers will have their parts made in China and the piano assembled in the country of origin. People buy the piano believing that the instrument they are buying is made in the country they thought. Ask the question - where is this piano actually made?

Remember! If you don't know pianos, then know a piano technician or specialist dealer you can trust who can give you the best information on the make and model you are considering. Although it is important for you to be happy with a beautiful-looking instrument, don't let this be the deciding factor in purchasing a fine quality musical instrument. Let the quality of construction, the tone and the feel of the keyboard be the final judge. Promise yourself that you will not select your piano on price alone, but on the best quality for the dollars you are going to spend.

Remember! Do not buy a long-term investment with short-term money.

SHOPPING AROUND — CAN CAUSE CONFUSION

Shopping around is not always the best idea when purchasing a piano.

Many dealers or technicians have their own agenda, to promote their best needs instead of your needs.

For example, a dealer / retailer with a piano workshop can recommend New and Second hand pianos, and can be informative about the New and the older piano.

You can usually tell a dealer's commitment from their showroom. Does the dealer have a resident piano tuner or tuners? A reputable dealer will not risk their reputation by selling you a "questionable quality" piano. They will supply you with a warranty, which covers the work done to the piano.

Remember! Save time and Money. Find a dedicated piano specialist who knows about pianos.

WARRANTY — READ IT...

In Australia New pianos by law need to be covered by a warranty, and it is the responsibility of the importer to cover the pianos he imports. This is all very well till an importer brings in a dubious piano, gives a warranty then when the pianos give trouble he dissolves the business or changes the company name. This practice happened with some second hand piano imports. The problem is that some pianos are imported from overseas and the importer has no idea that the piano will not last in our climate. It is important to find out what experience the importer has with pianos and if he has integrity in the industry

Many long-term warranties have a binding clause to have the piano tuned once a year. This is for your protection as all pianos can attract vermin both small and large. They also have a clause saying, the piano must be tuned by an accredited tuner / technician authorised by the retailer.

This is for your protection, as there are many tuners untrained in piano repair. They can do more damage to your piano than you might realise.

As a purchaser, you need to understand your Warranty statement so you do not void it unwittingly.

The warranty on Schimmel new pianos is 10 years and Bernstein 12 years.

Remember! We have a no fuss policy on warranty!

HIRE - AND OR THEN BUY

If you hire a piano for a student to learn piano it should play properly and be tuned too standard A440 pitch by a qualified and registered piano technician. Piano hire can range from around \$77 per month to \$265 per month depending on the quality of the piano. The more you pay the better the piano.

Don't fall into the trap that many parents do and think that any piano will do for the kids to start out lessons. When they give up you might think, "Just as well we did not spend much money on hire".

At Piano Magic, we give the last 3 months the hire cost back if the piano hired or another piano is purchased from us after 6 months.

Remember! The cost of piano lessons can be entirely wasted if you can't practice on a piano that won't hold its tune.

PIANO LIFE SAVER SYSTEM BY DAMPP-CHASER

MICRO-CLIMATE FOR YOUR PIANO

The benefits of the Piano Life Saver System unit installed in an out-of-sight position in your piano will make the tuning more stable and give the wooden parts less stress.

Stabilizes pitch and permits tunings to hold much better and longer (the tuning will not go sharp or flat when the weather or room humidity changes)

Minimizes the expansion and contraction of action parts which **provides optimum touch and predictable keyboard control**

Prevents rust on the strings and metal parts

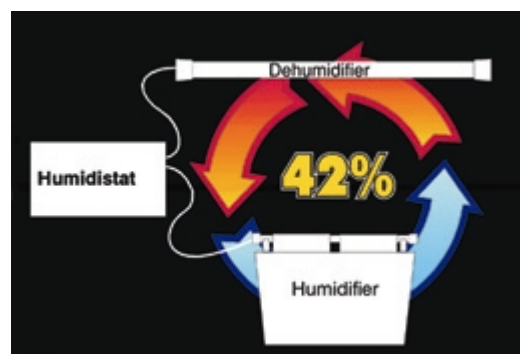
Minimizes felt deterioration, reducing the harsh tones that come from flattened hammer felt in low humidity or the muffled tones from swollen hammer felt in high humidity

Minimizes glue failure throughout the piano

Protects your piano's investment value year after year
Discuss this with your tuner or technician.

HOW DOES THE SYSTEM WORK? The Piano Life Saver System is comprised of **basic components** which work together to control the humidity levels within your piano, maintaining the recommended relative humidity, no matter what the external conditions are.

HOW THE COMPONENTS WORK TOGETHER- Through a cycling action, the Humidistat is calibrated to create a separate environment within the piano, producing a narrow range of average humidity. When the Humidistat, located less than an inch from the soundboard, senses that the wood is dry, it turns the Humidifier on. Then, when the Humidifier has provided enough moisture to the soundboard, the Humidistat turns off the Humidifier and turns on the Dehumidifier. The Dehumidifier carries away moisture from the soundboard on air currents until the Humidistat senses that the soundboard is dry. The System again switches to the humidifying function. The cycle continues day after day, year after year, protecting your piano from external conditions.



WHAT ABOUT PIANO TUNING?

There has never been any acoustic piano made by any company, at any price, that does not require a schedule of regular tunings. It is also a fact that a piano will go out of tune whether it is played or not. By far, the main reason why pianos go out of tune is due to changes in humidity from season to season, affecting pianos, new and old, played and unplayed.

In Perth, Western Australia the pitch of pianos drops flat in the summer months when dry heat draws moisture out of the piano's soundboard. In the spring, the air is usually moister. The soundboard absorbs this moisture, expands and causes the piano to go sharp by winter. These seasonal changes in tuning are often most noticed in the mid-range of the piano. Piano Magic prefers to tune your piano in the spring and autumn.

Fluctuations in room temperature surrounding the piano cause less of a change in tuning than humidity changes. But, direct sunlight or heat can cause rapid changes in tuning. Sometimes you might play your piano and think this sounds awful. Then the next day it's OK. This is because of humidity changes in the room.

When you move, it is not so much the transportation of the piano that throws the tuning out as is the piano acclimatising to its new room environment. If you think the environment is the same, then the piano can be tuned at the same time. However, we always suggest a retune six months after a shift. Often the piano has not been tuned for years in which case it will need a tune after it has been shifted.

New pianos have new strings that stretch and cause the pitch to go flat. New music wire is quite elastic and starts to stretch as soon as it is pulled up to pitch. This is why new pianos or pianos that have been restrung need to be tuned more frequently in the first 2 years. Each time the wire is pulled up the amount of stretching decreases and the tuning stabilizes.

Slipping tuning pins can cause a piano to go flat. Older pianos that have been exposed to regular seasonal humidity changes over the years can have loose tuning pins and as a result, have poor tuning stability.

The louder and more often you play a piano, the faster it goes out of tune by a small amount. The force of a hammer repeatedly hitting a string can affect the equalization of tension along the string's length, and cause its pitch to be slightly altered.

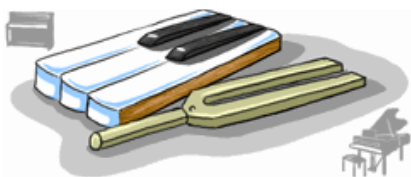
To put the matter of tuning in perspective, remember that a concert piano is tuned before every performance, and a piano in a professional recording studio, where it is in constant use, is tuned 3 or 4 times every week as a matter of course.

How often and when should I have my piano tuned? (Autumn and /or Spring)

Have your piano tuned as often as you feel necessary, but a minimum of twice a year is the rule of thumb should you be an advanced pianist. Just remember: when you turn on the heat in the winter, and when you turn it off in spring, you're about 2 weeks away from needing a tuning. These are the times of year when the humidity change starts to shrink or swell the wooden soundboard of the piano, and it starts to drift out of tune. So wait until the piano gets used to the climatic change, then tune your piano! Keep in mind that every piano is subject to one or more factors that will make it go out of tune, including: humidity changes, temperature changes, stretching of strings, slipping tuning pins and *HARD* playing.

How often you should tune your piano depends on its condition, the environment in which it is located, and the musical demands of the owner. A piano used mainly as a furniture piece probably will not "need" to be tuned more than once a year. A piano that is played regularly and is in good condition would be better off with two tunings per year, each time the seasonal humidity changes. A piano given a daily workout by a professional or serious student might need to be tuned more frequently, maybe 4 times a year or more. At this level of use, it's really up to the individual and at what point the tuning starts to bother them.

We recommend that a piano should be tuned at least every 2 years even if it is not being played. This helps to maintain the instrument and gives the piano a regular health check against vermin and pests that invade pianos.



WHAT THE MANUFACTURERS HAVE TO SAY

Steinway & Sons

"...no matter how expertly a piano is tuned, atmospheric variations and the nature of the piano's construction constantly conspire to bring it off pitch"

Yamaha Pianos

"...a piano should be tuned at least twice a year."

*"Complete piano service should include periodic **regulation** and **voicing** in addition to tuning."*

Baldwin Piano Company

"After the first year a piano should be tuned at least twice each year."

What method of tuning should I use?

Ear Tuning is the oldest and was the most common method of tuning. This requires frequent practice and major concentration by the tuner. Many tuners still believe this is the only way to tune. Piano Magic used this method for 30 years.

Electronic Tuning uses a fixed scale tuner to tune pianos that have many varied scales. *These tuners are out of date and have given electronic tuning a very bad name of the past years.*

Computer Tuning is often confused with electronic tuning.

(Piano Magic's preferred tuning method for the past 20 years is Computer tuning using the Cyber Tuner) The Cyber tuner computer program measures the scale of the piano before beginning the tuning thus giving a tuning with a scale like the ear tuning and is suited to the individual piano. The benefit to you is that the piano sounds better and with modern features that enable the tuner to do a pitch raise accurately with only one pass. This saves you money and you receive a better tuning for your money. Like all tools of trade, you can buy the best tool online and call yourself a tuner. Let's hope the tuners using computer tuners have kept up with changes in technology by going to all the conventions and workshops. Gary is actively involved in training. You might pay a little more for the tune, but the expertise offered will make your piano sound like magic and over a longer period cost you less in general maintenance. Remember training and experience for great sounding pianos.

PIANO CARE TIPS

Have your Piano tuned once a year.

Ask your technician to do a minor touch up regulation at each tuning. This will prevent most instances of unnecessary wear and breakage. Have a full regulation done every 2 to 5 years. You would be surprised at how your piano *should have* sounded and responded to you playing all these years.

Do not attempt any "home repairs" on your piano. Although it may appear easy to fix yourself, an innocent mistake can be costly. Let a technician do it - they have the right tools, replacement parts and expertise to do the job right the first time.

Keep your piano away from heating panels, radiators, fireplaces and air conditioning vents. Subjecting it to extreme fluctuations of temperature and humidity levels can do major damage. Keeping a piano away from an outside wall is a very good idea, however some houses are not built for pianos. **If you need to put your piano on an outside wall, fit a Piano Life Saver System.** Avoid direct sunlight on your piano - it can damage and fade the finish, or even create horrible tuning problems. Use curtains or blinds.

Try and keep the temperature and humidity levels as consistent as possible in the room where you have your piano. Using a temperature/humidity gauge can keep this in check.

Seasonal swings in relative humidity are the piano's greatest enemy. Swelling and shrinking of wooden parts affect tuning and keyboard touch, while extreme swings can eventually cause wood to crack and glue joints to fail. Pianos are happiest in a relative humidity level of 40 to 45 percent.

There a special piano humidifier/dehumidifier that can be installed in your piano. See Piano Life Saver System – **Dampp-chaser** page. Keep plants, vases, drinks, or anything to do with liquid off the piano. Condensation can ruin the finish, and spillage of liquids into the inner mechanism can result in irreversible damage.

To prevent scratches on the finish, never place objects on your piano without a soft cloth or felt.

Do not use furniture polish to clean your piano. It can soften the finish if overused, and the silicone & oils present in many household brands can even contaminate the wood, despite what the labels may say. Contact us for polish and cloth for your piano surface.

Just lightly dust the piano first (dust is abrasive, so wiping it first can cause scratches), then wipe with a soft, damp cotton cloth, wiping in the direction of the grain. Then, wipe up any excess moisture with a similar dry cloth. We now have Fast Glaze for the high gloss modern finish. Ask for a polishing kit today.

Cleaning Keys. Use a slightly damp cloth followed by a dry cloth and this will take off any finger dirt. Do not use cleaning agents! It is still a good idea to wash your hands before playing the piano.

Ivory keys can be cleaned as above, however if they are yellowed they will need bleaching by our technician.

VERMIN AND PESTS IN PIANOS

Certain insects have an appetite for the lovely fibrous materials in the piano; felt and wood. These insects generally only make themselves at home in older pianos, although all pianos may be vulnerable. Please contact your recommended piano tuner immediately if you are concerned.

Moths and Silver Fish:

The larvae of the clothes moth (tinea species) is liable to attack all felt parts of the piano, such as hammer heads and dampers and also may be present in other felt fittings which are usually invisible to the user. Moth attack can be seen if you look inside the top lid of the piano. Holes in the felts are the first sign. Then pupae sacks hanging. Of late a tiny soft beetle will do a lot of damage under the keys. Making the keys unlevel. Call Gary if you see any of these signs.

Mice:

A great lover of pianos. Should you have a mice plague, then place mouse baits in the area of the piano as soon as possible. If you think that a mouse is in the piano contact your Gary immediately and get advice, as the damage to your piano will be costly.

Wood Boring Insects:

The attack most commonly found is that of the furniture beetle (anobium punctatum) whose exit holes are readily recognised. When holes are discovered they should immediately be reported to the tuner. Remedial action should not be taken without professional advice. Insecticides may be highly damaging to the action of the piano. Furthermore, the wooden structure of a piano is so complex that only a piano technician will discover the full extent of an infestation. Since the insect larvae burrows for some two years before emerging from its single exit hole, it is clear that wood is invariably damaged to a far greater extent than surface holes may suggest and such holes may, in any case, be hidden in parts of the piano not visible without extensive dismantling.

MOVING PIANOS

Pianos are very heavy.

The average small piano weighs in at around two hundred kilos, full-size uprights at about three hundred kilos, sometimes as much as four hundred kilos. Grands vary from about three hundred to four hundred kilos, though a concert grand may weigh as much as five hundred kilos!

If it were simply a matter of weight, all it would take would be enough strong people to do the job.

Unfortunately, along with the weight come problems of balance and inertia, having enough hand holds around the piano when going through doors and stairs, knowledge of which can make all the difference in doing a moving job safely and efficiently.

Piano moving may conjure up images of men with monstrous arms and huge torsos, but actually two or three people of average build can do most piano moving jobs - even grands if they have some experience, the right equipment, and a knowledge of just when and where to apply a little lift or force. So, the task of moving a piano is not just a matter of weight.

The asymmetric shape, the fragility of the outer cabinet and inner mechanics, the uneven distribution of parts -- all this and more demands not only proper equipment, but also an understanding of the unique dynamics of balance and inertia that pianos pose.

Attempting to move a piano by yourself may easily result in a costly trip to the doctor for both you and your piano. **Do not take chances, hire a professional!**

Some furniture removalists don't use a proper piano trolley.

Remember! Ask this question. Do you use a proper piano trolley with straight wheels and rubber cover on the top of the trolley to stop the piano slipping?

Is your piano adequately insured whilst being shifted? The cheapest price could be the most costly.

BORROWING PIANOS

In this exercise we assume you want a good piano for your child to learn on.

You need a piano for your child to learn to play. Let's look at wear and tear!

Given that a piano will last one good student before the piano needs to be re-felted (modern pianos possibly two generations) and this cost is around \$3000 (plus GST). Short term may be ok.

Generally, I find that the piano lender assumes that playing the piano is good for it without thinking that playing a piano will cause wear and tear. I have seen many pianos that need re-felting, but the piano does not belong to the household so the repair is not done, therefore the child misses out. Then practice gets less because the playability is low and the child stops learning.

The parent then says " *just as well we didn't buy a piano.*

Cost in borrowing grandma's piano. Often the piano has not been played or tuned for several years.

First, you need to shift it safely approx \$220 then it will need to be pitch raised approx \$88, tuned approx \$189. Often the piano needs some regulating **from** \$220. Our total cost is \$717, then it will need to be returned when finished \$220 and to keep Gran happy we give it a tune as well \$189 so the real cost is \$1126. Not a cheap option.

We advise that you hire for the short term, say 6 months, then you have the opportunity to buy. We will include what you have paid on hire as part of your buying price. This includes tuning, delivery, stool, and you can have 6 months' trial from \$660 (depends on the pianos we have available).

Sounds better and no embarrassment when you have to tell Grandma her much loved piano is not good enough.

DEFINITIONS

What Is Standard Pitch?

Standard pitch A440 (A above middle C vibrating at 440 times per second) has been universally accepted as the pitch to which all instruments should be tuned. It ensures that when instruments or CD's and video are played together, they will all be in tune with one another. Pianos are designed and built to sound their best when tuned to A440. Therefore, when your pianos pitch drops due to lack of tuning, the quality of tone suffers.

When a piano has not been tuned for quite some time, its pitch begins to slip far enough away from standard pitch that it may require a **pitch raise** in order to achieve a stable tuning.

What Is A Pitch Raise?

When you don't tune your piano for a long time, then every year that passes by, the pitch drops further and further away from where it should be. This makes it harder for a piano tuner to pull it back up to its proper tension levels. It is widely accepted that to do a fine-tuning the piano needs to be within 5 cents of pitch (100 cents = 1 semitone)

Technicians have to raise the tension of over 200 strings, which puts a lot of strain on the piano's structure. It's impossible to make such a big jump in pitch and have a stable tuning in one pass. So what the tuner has to do is first raise all the strings to above their proper average tension levels, and only then can the piano be accurately tuned. This is called a "pitch raise".

A pitch raise requires more time and effort than a regular tuning, and as a result, a piano technician's fee is a bit higher.

Also, keep in mind that it is highly advisable (sometimes necessary) to have the piano tuned again within the next 6 months after a pitch raise. This will help keep the tuning stable.

Remember: regular tunings at least once a year (every 6 months is preferable or every 2 years even if the piano is not played) will prevent the need for a pitch raise in the future. Like many other things, pianos require *regular* maintenance.

What Is Regulation?

The inner playing mechanism, called the "action" of a piano, is an amazingly complex and sensitive machine. Like any other machine, it needs to be kept in adjustment so that it works the way it was meant to work when it was built. Each key on your Piano has over 25 points of adjustment that need to work together to produce the sound you hear when you play just one note.

In order to compensate for wear, compacting of cloth & felt, and changes in wooden parts due to humidity, periodic adjustments must be made. Keeping the correct relationship between every part will prevent unnecessary wear, and will make the action "feel right" - that is, each key will function smoothly and evenly throughout the whole keyboard. No more sticking keys, uneven feel, notes that don't do what you want them to do, pedals that don't work properly, squeaks, clicks, rattles, buzzes and so on. Many dealers do not regulate their new pianos.

The factories only regulate a piano to 70% of its potential, and the remaining 30% should be completed by the dealer to suit the needs of the buyer. We have found that often this last 30% is not done.

What Is Voicing?

Every piano has its own distinct sound or "voice". In many ways, that is how it was built and that is its personality.

However, over time, whilst the piano is played, the hammer felt strikes the strings thus compacting and wearing down the felt. This hardening can cause the tone to become too harsh or bright, and it's difficult to produce a wide or even range of expression, no matter how much you try to play using dynamics. In other situations, the piano may seem too dull or lifeless for your taste.

Either way, a technician can treat the hammers in various ways: by aligning, shaping, careful needling or hardening the hammers, in order to produce the tone, you prefer. Keep in mind, however, that a piano has to be finely tuned and regulated before it can be voiced.

What Piano Magic Recommends!

Bernstein by Hailun

They truly are *Affordable Excellence* continuing Bernstein's philosophy of *New Horizons in Piano Performance*.

Since 1981, Bernstein Pianos have offered Australians high performance instruments at affordable prices. The European parts and quality design of a Bernstein piano ensure great playing enjoyment for pianists of all levels. In 2006, Bernstein announced the launch of its new Bernstein 'Hailun' series giving exceptional grand and upright quality pianos.

The Bernstein Hailun series pianos are manufactured in the Hailun Factory in Ningbo - China. Since the 1950s this factory has been producing frames and parts for piano manufacturers worldwide. In 1986, Mr. Hailun Chen purchased this factory and, with his extensive engineering experience, Mr. Chen's unique parts became in high demand worldwide.

Mr. Chen developed his factory to complete the full stages of piano assembly, which seemed a natural transition with his efficient workforce of about 750 people. He invested significant money into state-of-the-art machinery not just to replicate designs, but also to refine designs to an even higher standard. The pianos from this factory have experienced great success in Europe and are now available to the American and Australian markets. On August 16, 2005 the first Chinese-made concert grand piano was featured in the Viennese Golden Concert Hall for a German peace celebration. This piano was a Hailun grand piano. Musico is very pleased to introduce the Bernstein Hailun series to Australia.

'Hailun' is amongst the world's largest piano manufacturers. We are very pleased to be able to supply you with product from this Award winning manufacturing company

Come and experience the outstanding range of new Bernstein Hailun pianos. They truly are *Affordable Excellence* continuing Bernstein's philosophy of *New Horizons in Piano Performance*.

We are celebrating 37Years

of Bernstein

The stunning good looks of Bernstein will do much to complete any new piano. The finishes are enhanced by numerous layers of quality lacquer, and satin finishes benefit from a delicate finishing process. Various colours and finishes provide you with a great choice. It's easy to find the Bernstein piano that is comfortable and ideal for you.

Your Bernstein piano is not only created to sound impressive for many years, but also to look stunning for generations.

Accessories for Bernstein Hailun Series pianos includes a range of matching piano stools. Please consult your Bernstein dealer to select your preferred option.

Key Features of the Bernstein

Soundboard: To produce a resonant, beautiful sound, Bernstein Hailun series pianos feature three-layers of soundboard, constructed of German Spruce and laminated with Russian Veneer. As sound waves travel at such a high speed, a three-layered soundboard lets soundwaves circulate in the piano; sound waves are circulated along the soundboards to give the true 'singing' quality of a good piano.

Tuning Pin Block: The Bernstein Hailun series features a pin block constructed of 19 layers of laminated timber. The tuning plank is drilled by a digitally controlled machine for perfect accuracy. The tuning pins are a high quality steel with reverse torque knurling to ensure tuning stability. This process ensures your piano's reliability for many years to come.

Production Line: Hailun exclusively uses Toyo machinery, imported from Japan, to ensure precision in piano manufacturing and assembly. No other piano manufacturer in China is known to operate this standard of machinery.

Felts: For a comfortable and responsive action, Hailun has imported superior felts from England and Australia for the Bernstein Hailun pianos.

Soundboard Crown: To ensure long life, the soundboard crown on Bernstein Hailun pianos is tapered and the soundboard liner is cut with a highly-advanced, 5-axis machine, which keeps soundboard tension secure and the crown of your piano stable. This process is renowned for consistency and stability and is not often available in very affordable instruments.

Reinforcement: To enhance the durability of your instrument, the Bernstein Hailun series feature metal key bed reinforcement and a metal action rail. This supports the action assembly and reduces long-term servicing of your piano.

Cabinets & Accessories: The stunning good looks of a Bernstein piano will delightfully compliment any home or studio. Timber finishes are enhanced by numerous layers of quality lacquer, and satin finishes benefit from a delicate finishing process. Various colours and finishes provide you with a great choice. It's easy to find the Bernstein piano that is comfortable and ideal for you. Your Bernstein piano is not only created to sound impressive for many years, but also to look stunning for generations.

Mouse-Proofing: A feature to put your mind at ease. Factory direct mouse-proofing assists in keeping your piano safe from predators and safeguards your investment.

Castors: All the pianos are fitted with dual castors to allow for easy moving.

Kick-Plate: Metal kick plate around the pedals that protects the case of the piano.

Stool options: A large range of stools design and options maximises the comfort of the players of the instrument.

Story and Clarke Pianos with Pianomation

WHY PIANOMATION®: BETTER DESIGN TECHNOLOGY AND NOW WITH THE RENOWNED OPTICAL RECHORD RAIL. BRINGING THE CONNECTION OF YOUR PIANO TO THE INTERNET

Today's player piano entertainment systems are based on solenoids and plungers that are computer-activated to move the keys. The design and construction of the solenoids and plungers is a key differentiator between brands and an important consideration when choosing your entertainment system. Pianomation has long been considered the "gold standard" in the industry for player piano technology, and with good reason.



Pianomation uses specially designed solenoids and plungers that eliminate problems commonly found in competitive systems.

- Plungers are made using a non-stick coating that minimizes friction and wear and are precision fit for tightness, to eliminate the potential for mechanical noise and rattling.
- Superior engineering and watch dog circuitry eliminate the risk of hot or overheated solenoids that can dry out the action parts of the piano.
- Plunger throw distance is adjustable on a solenoid-by-solenoid basis to perfectly match the distance that each individual key travels, ensuring unparalleled sound control and more musical expression.

ured

The Ancho is our top-of-the-line front-end Pianomation controller.

- Compact Flash reader for easy software updates and large storage capacity. [Q]
- Built-in SyncAlong capabilities using internal memory or Compact Flash. [Q]
- Record ready (just add PNOscan™). [Q]
- CD-ROM driven (reads MIDI, MP3 files and QRS CDs). [Q]
- CompactFlash Card is a portable hard drive that reads MIDI and MP3 files. [Q]
- Internal memory for instant recording. [Q]
- User-friendly 20-character alpha-numeric display. [Q]
- Data dial control for navigating without a remote control.
- Onboard sound card.
- Ergonomically designed angled front panel for easy reading and access. [Q]
- MIC input for Karaoke/headphone output for silent practice capabilities. [Q]
- Pianomation system's exclusive modular design provides the option of easy and affordable component upgrades [Q]

Standard Equipment

Ancho new owner's pack includes: control unit, wireless remote control, user's manual, one flash card with 300 songs from many different styles.

[Q] indicates QRS exclusive or exclusive among comparably priced competitive products.

Piano Magic Services

*Piano Magic is about giving life to your piano. With the expertise of a small dedicated team working together with Gary Bailey, 'Piano Magic' aims to **Do it once, Do it right.***

*From the time you start thinking about your piano, Piano Magic is able to **service** all your piano requirements,*

Huge Showroom boasting over 60 pianos from \$1650 to \$56,000

Piano condition reports available on request

Regular tuning Service

Genuine pre-delivery service on new pianos

Regulation

Rebuilding or restoration including fitting Wessel Nickel & Gross new actions

Relocating City and country

You have all the benefits of the latest technology as well as the older methods to assure a job well done.

You are assured of the best personal service by contacting Gary and his team.

Call Piano Magic Now on 9477 5866 for your appointment with Gary to choose your Upright or Grand piano

Bring this Buyers Guide with you as we would like to know how you liked it

Save time and money with people that you can depend on.

Call Gary or Diane now to order your piano or organise an appointment to view the instrument of your choice



*Treat your piano as a friend...
And it will be your faithful musical companion
For many years.*

**Call Piano Magic Now on 9477 5866
Pass this on to a friend and spread the love of piano**

