

# The *Ultimate* Piano **Ins****pection** Guide

✓ Checklist + Scoresheet



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# DISCLAIMER

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The Ultimate Piano Inspection Guide (hereafter referred to as the "Guide") is intended to give you a better understanding of what determines the condition of a used piano. The Guide is not a guarantee of the piano's condition. Only a qualified piano technician can determine a piano's true condition. If using the Guide, you agree that the Guide is only intended to better educate and assist you in making a reasonable assessment of a used piano's worth. You agree to not hold the Guide's author responsible for any decisions you make regarding your assessment. You also assume all risk involved in following the instructions outlined in the Guide.

## Things You Will Need

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This Checklist and Scoresheet



Flashlight



A friend who plays piano (if you don't)



A Phillips and flat-bladed screwdriver (just in case)



## Step 1: The Obvious Stuff

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1. Play every single note

2. Is it relatively in tune?

If yes, go to #3.

If no, go to #4.

3. Now play a little ditty!

4. Check in with your gut. Do you still like it?

If no, go to 5.

If yes (or not quite sure yet) go to Step 2.

5. Thank the seller and wish them luck!

## Step 2: Disassembly (Easy Peasy)

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### Quick Reminder:

Don't be shy here! Ask their permission, but if you get pushback, remind them, like Larry Fine says, they wouldn't buy a car without first looking under the hood. Also, have them (not you) remove any items on the piano.

1. Open the lid.
2. Look inside and see how the front panel attaches.
3. Remove front panel and set down gently somewhere safe.
4. Close the fallboard (keyboard cover).
5. Remove lower panel and set down gently somewhere safe.

# Step 3: Inspection Time

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## STRINGS



\_\_\_ Are any broken?  
If yes, write how many. If no, write 0.

\_\_\_ Overall, any major rust?  
If yes, mark 5. If no, write 0.

\_\_\_ **SUBTOTAL**

## HAMMERS



\_\_\_ Any missing, broken or stuck?  
If yes, write how many. If no, write 0.

\_\_\_ Overall, how deep are the grooves in the felt?  
5 - if deep  
1 - if medium

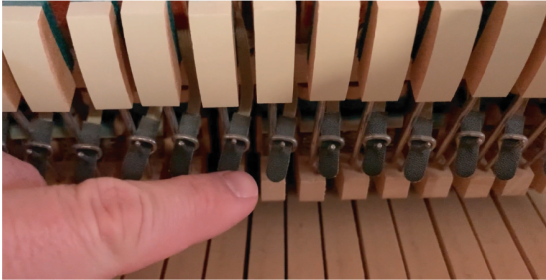
\_\_\_ **SUBTOTAL**



# Step 3: Inspection Time

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## BRIDLE STRAPS

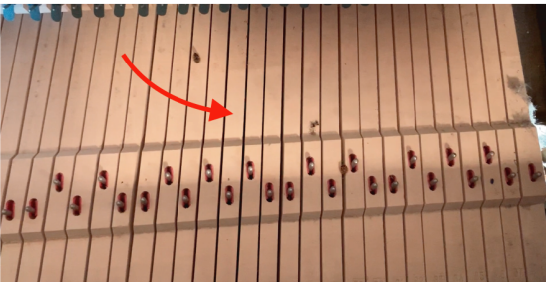


\_\_\_ Are any missing or broken?  
If yes, write how many. If no, write 0.

\_\_\_ **SUBTOTAL**

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## KEYS



\_\_\_ Are any broken or cracked?  
If yes, write how many. If no, write 0.

\_\_\_ Overall, how much can you wiggle them  
from sided to side?  
5 - a lot  
3 - little wiggle  
0 - if snug



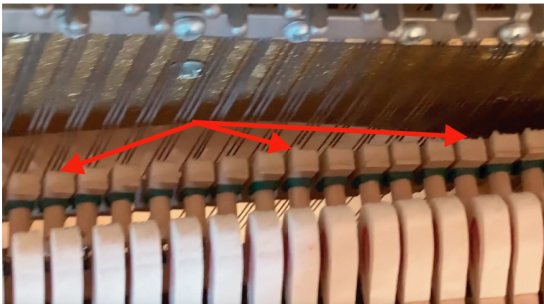
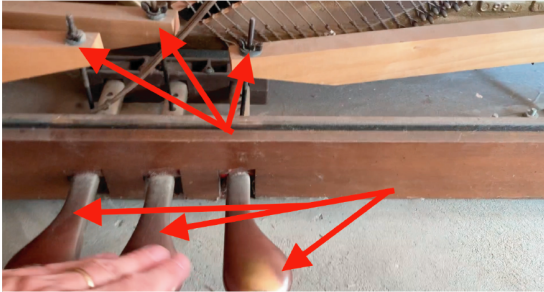
\_\_\_ Overall, how are the key tops?  
10 - "mostly chipped or missing."  
3 - "mostly good."  
0 - "none or one or two chipped."

\_\_\_ **SUBTOTAL**

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# Step 3: Inspection Time

## PEDALS



\_\_\_\_ Are they working properly?  
If yes, write 0. If no, write how many don't work.

\_\_\_\_ Overall, are the dampers ok?  
If yes, write 0. If no, write 3.

\_\_\_\_ Any missing dowels?  
If yes, write how many. If no, write 0.

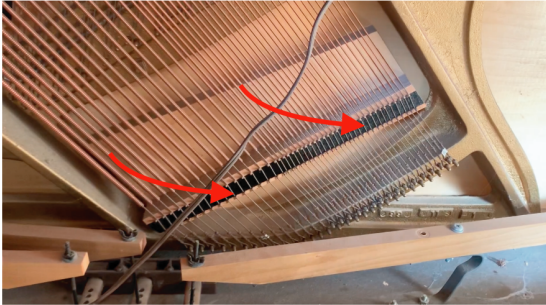
\_\_\_\_ **SUBTOTAL**



# Step 3: Inspection Time

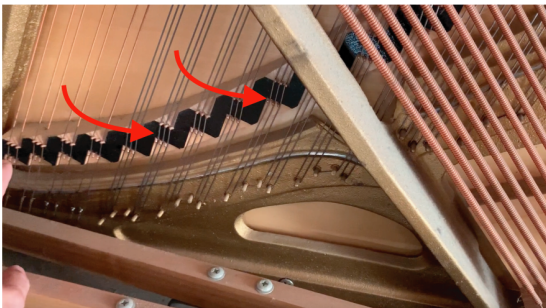
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## BRIDGES



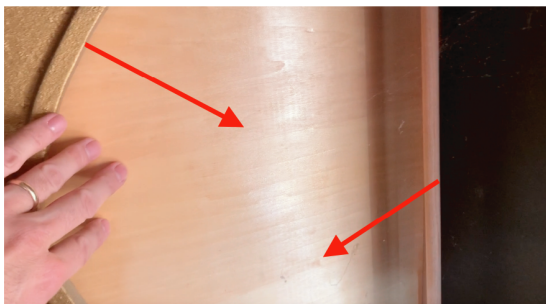
\_\_\_ Any severe cracks?  
If yes, write 25. If no, write 0.

\_\_\_ **SUBTOTAL**



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## SOUNDBOARD



\_\_\_ Any extensive cracks (dismiss hairline cracks)?  
If yes, write 25. If no, write 0

\_\_\_ **SUBTOTAL**

## Step 3: Inspection Time

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### CABINET



\_\_\_\_ Any signs of water damage  
(loose or bubbled veneer)?  
If yes, write 25. If no, write 0

\_\_\_\_ **SUBTOTAL**

## Step 4: Reassembly (Old Hat Stuff!)

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- 1. Put the lower panel back in place.
- 2. Put the upper panel back in place.
- 3. Close the lid

## Step 5: Give the Piano a Score

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Write the subtotal from each category in **STEP 3**. Add all subtotals

\_\_\_\_\_ Strings  
\_\_\_\_\_ Hammers  
\_\_\_\_\_ Bridle Straps  
\_\_\_\_\_ Keys  
\_\_\_\_\_ Pedals  
\_\_\_\_\_ Bridges  
\_\_\_\_\_ Soundboard  
\_\_\_\_\_ **GRAND TOTAL**

### SCORE RATING

**0-9**

**GREAT!**

Needs zero to a few minor, inexpensive repairs.

**10-24**

**GOOD**

Needs minor, inexpensive repairs but still very playable.

**25-49**

**OK**

Needs more extensive, likely costly repairs.

**50<**

**POOR**

Piano needs considerable work. Proceed with caution.