



## Piano construction and tuning

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# Strona 1

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## Piano technician



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A grand piano is one of the most popular European musical instruments. The earliest reference dates back to the end of the 16th century. Since many years it has been used both as a solo and a concert instrument. An upright piano which, unlike the grand piano, has strings placed vertically, and thus takes up less space, became hugely popular at the end of the 19th century. A piano technician is the person who makes these instruments.

A person performing this profession can find employment in record companies, factories, music schools and concert halls. Their place of work can therefore be a factory room in which grand pianos and upright pianos are produced, an institution or a place indicated by clients where the instrument should be repaired. The piano technician usually works several hours a day, depending on the number of orders and their place of employment.

A piano technician should be musically and manually gifted and have developed technical skills. Furthermore, such person should have good hearing, pay close attention to details and be patient. In addition, he or she should be a good multitasker and be able to work in a team. In their work, a piano technician deals with the production and assembly of subassemblies and elements of these instruments. Apart from that, their task is to keep grand and upright pianos in good technical condition by tuning and repairing them whenever necessary.

The reasons for not pursuing this particular career is the hearing impairment, limited hand dexterity or chronic respiratory diseases. During work, there's a risk of accidents due to contact with machine tools or sharp tools. However, the most endangered is hearing as the piano technician may work among the noise of factory machines and instruments, which can cause muffled hearing.

## Piano tuner



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The grand piano is an instrument that produces a wide scale of sounds. It is distinguished by a great musical expression and the possibility of volume graduation thanks to three pedals. An upright piano shares many common features with a grand piano. Both these instruments need to be well-tuned to produce the best quality sound. In most cases it is 85 to 88 sounds that must be tuned, and in larger grand pianos even up to 92 sounds. This is the job of a piano tuner. The tool kit that a tuner uses in their daily work contains: a tuning fork, felt tapes, a wedge to suppress the strings that are not being tuned strings and a wrench, but above all a musical ear.

In addition to tuning, the tuner's responsibilities include evaluation of the performance of pianos as well as their technical condition, naming the existing defects and maintaining the instruments' good musical performance. A piano tuner can find employment in schools and music academies, music theaters, philharmonics, production plants as well as in individual clients.

A tuner should have technical and manual skills and a good ear for music, which allows distinguishing the pitch and timbre of sounds. A person working in this position should also be patient, accurate, self-controlled, and have a good attention span.

Contraindications to working in the piano tuning profession are hearing loss or motor system dysfunctions as well as rheumatic diseases which limit the mobility of hands. It is crucial that a piano tuner can play the piano that's why musical school graduation of at least the first degree is a prerequisite. In order to tune a grand piano or an upright piano well, one needs many years of practice and continuous education. However, it is one of life's great pleasures to listen to a beautifully played concert on a well-tuned instrument, so it's worth the effort.

# Strona 2

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