

**KAWAI**

CARING FOR YOUR  
KAWAI PIANO



## CARING FOR YOUR KAWAI PIANO

Your Kawai piano has been individually crafted with meticulous care by men and women devoted to the art of the piano. By giving it the proper care befitting any fine musical instrument, you will be able to enjoy its classic beauty and resplendent tone for many years to come.

# THE PROPER LOCATION

Where you decide to place your piano will determine how long it will serve you. Begin by asking yourself: "Would I feel comfortable standing for long periods of time in the space that I have chosen for this piano?" If the answer is "No", select a different location. Furthermore, because the piano is rather heavy, remember to give careful consideration to the eventual location before attempting to move the instrument.

## Ensure flooring is level

Most floors are quite capable of supporting the full weight of a piano. However, a floor that is uneven or vibrates excessively will upset the balance of the piano's delicate inner workings, affecting its musical performance and tuning stability. In extreme cases, the piano could even topple or roll, resulting in possible injury. For personal safety and optimum performance, always place your piano on firm, level flooring.

## Avoid direct sunlight

Your piano is encased in wood, a beautiful yet sensitive material that must be protected from direct sunlight and rapid changes in temperature or humidity. Placing the piano beside a window is strongly discouraged. In such a location, the instrument is susceptible to the harmful effects of direct sunlight, wind, rain, and dust. If it is essential that the piano be placed beside a window, protect the instrument by installing thick curtains that block direct sunlight and prevent other elements from reaching the piano.

## Consider room acoustics

The sound from your piano originates from the vibration of the soundboard, induced when the hammers strike the strings. Some of this sound reaches the ear directly, yet a considerable amount of the tone will reflect off the floor, walls, ceiling and other objects in the room before eventually reaching the ear.

The ideal balance of direct and reflected sound - that which yields the full, rich tone one typically associates with a fine piano - is produced in a room with slight reverberation for warmth of tone, yet not so much as to create a lasting echo.

Avoid spaces where the piano sound lingers everywhere for a sustained period, bounces repeatedly off walls, or tends to concentrate in one particular area. The ideal room should contain irregular (non-parallel) surfaces and sound-absorbing materials (such as rugs or cloth-covered furniture) in order to provide the correct balance of tone and reverberation.



# THE PROPER HUMIDITY

## Be cautious of extreme humidity

Your Kawai piano has been crafted from natural materials that 'breathe', including fine woods, wool felt, and genuine leather. While the material of each component has been carefully chosen for its durability and resistance to the effects of humidity, exposure to extremely high or low humidity environments over extended periods of time may lead to serious problems.

### High humidity may cause:

- Muffled or 'muddy' sound
- Sluggish action or keyboard response
- High and uneven pitch
- Warping or ridging of the soundboard
- Rusting of the strings

### Low humidity may cause:

- Weak, thin or tinny tone
- Noisy action operation
- Low and uneven pitch
- Possible cracking of the soundboard

Such problems can be prevented with regular care and attention, and by controlling the humidity of the piano's environment. A relative humidity level (RH) of approximately 45% is ideal, while levels between 35% - 70% are acceptable. Humidity levels below 25% and above 80%, however, can be especially harmful to the fine woods used in the construction of your piano.

## Avoid fluctuations in humidity

Frequent changes in temperature and humidity associated with intermittent use of heating and air conditioning equipment may cause condensation, with water droplets accumulating on the strings and other metal components, potentially leading to rust. Moisture may also accumulate on the felts, which then swell, interfering with the piano action. Such problems with condensation are especially prevalent in colder climates and in concrete enclosures, such as basements. Furthermore, frequent changes in humidity may also lead to unstable tuning and will eventually cause permanent damage to the piano.

## Shield your piano from moisture

Wet and rainy days can be particularly hazardous, especially when combined with strong winds. Keep windows and doors closed to prevent moisture from damaging your piano. When the piano is not in use, close both the lid and top board to further protect the piano from moisture.



# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

## **Shield your piano from heat**

Do not allow hot air from heating equipment to blow directly on the piano. This can cause severe drying and shrinkage of the wood, felt and leather parts of the action. Hot air may also damage the finish and potentially even cause cabinet warping.

## **Keep your piano clean**

If allowed to accumulate, dust will not only diminish the attractive finish of the piano, but may also disrupt the action mechanism, greatly affecting the touch and tone of the instrument. Wipe off exterior dust gently with a feather-type duster. Then, clean the finish with a soft cloth (slightly dampened, if necessary, followed by a soft dry cloth to remove any remaining moisture). Excessive rubbing can dull the finish over time, as tiny particles of grit are dragged onto the surface, causing micro-scratches.

For dust inside the piano, please contact your piano service technician for assistance in cleaning the soundboard, strings or action.

## **Keep your hands clean**

Whenever possible, wash your hands before playing, and keep fingernails trimmed to avoid scratching the finish or key surfaces. When you have finished playing, wipe the keyboard with a soft, slightly dampened cloth. Never clean with alcohol or other organic solvents as these may damage the key surfaces.

## **Keep your piano top clear**

Never place objects other than books or sheet music directly on top of the piano surface. Heavy or sharp objects can damage the exterior finish and may introduce abnormal vibrations when the piano is played.

Never place objects containing liquid (such as flower vases, etc.) on top of the piano as there is a strong risk of water spilling into the piano's delicate inner workings, potentially causing serious damage.

Furthermore, avoid objects containing organic solvents, which may damage the finish:

- Household paints and paint thinners
- Household adhesives and glues
- Art supplies
- Spot removers
- Alcoholic beverages
- Cosmetics - nail polish, hair spray, etc.
- Insecticides, repellents, etc.

## **Play your piano regularly**

Like all musical instruments, the touch and tone of your piano may begin to deteriorate if allowed to stand idle for extended periods. Playing the piano regularly will greatly benefit the instrument's internal action, helping to extend the life of your piano.

## **Have your piano tuned and regulated**

To maintain its beautiful tone, responsive touch and accurate pitch, your Kawai piano will also require regular tuning and servicing. Because of the considerable tension placed on the strings, gradual stretching may occur over time, lowering the pitch of the instrument. A qualified piano technician will restore the correct pitch, while performing adjustments to the action, keyboard, pedals and other moving parts to compensate for the effects of wear. The exact amount of adjustment required will vary by location, environment and amount of use. Do remember that regular care and attention is necessary to keep your Kawai piano in optimum condition.