

Piano Tuning FAQs

- 1. *How often does a piano need to be tuned?*** A piano should be tuned every 6 months. Once per year can be acceptable, but for the best care and maintenance for your piano, plan to have it serviced twice per year.
- 2. *Why do pianos need to be tuned regularly?*** A piano is a stringed instrument. Each key has 1 to 3 strings per key that are wound around pins that are inserted in to an iron plate and thick piece of wood called the pin block. The strings are each tightened to be pulled “up” to pitch, creating an immense amount of tension throughout the piano. Over time, the strings begin to stretch and therefore fall in and out of tuned constantly. A piano is always moving in and out of tune, even as it’s being tuned! In order to maintain tuning stability and for these pitch changes to be very small in between tunings, a piano should only need to be fine-tuned at each service, meaning only slightly sharp or flat. If it goes longer, it will need a pitch raise, which disrupts this stability.
- 3. *What is a Pitch Raise?*** When a piano has gone long enough without being tuned, the piano will fall flat enough that the piano will need to be pulled up to the correct pitch before it can be fined tuned. This requires, the piano to be tuned 2 to 3 times in one visit just to get the piano close to correct tuning. A piano cannot be fine-tuned during a pitch raise. A pitch raise simply gets the piano relatively close to where it should be, and regular tunings should follow the pitch raise in order for the piano to maintain stable tuning over time.
- 4. *Why is my piano already falling out of tune? I just had a pitch raise?*** A piano’s strings are all interdependent and putting tons of new tension on the strings, which is what is done during a pitch raise, will cause the piano to be relatively unstable for a time. Some pianos settle only a small amount and others will settle enough that the ear can hear it falling out of tune rather quickly. This is normal. This is also why a piano needs to be tuned regularly. If a piano is only being tuned every few years, it will need a pitch raise each time and will never be able to be fined tuned.
- 5. *Are the pianos in the showroom tuned?*** Yes, each piano is tuned before it is sold from The Piano Gal Shop. However, the majority of pianos that are being sold need some level of a pitch raise. The reason they are being sold is because they are no longer being played. That generally means they also haven’t been tuned for long enough that a pitch raise is warranted. This is why each piano is inspected and appraised before coming to the shop and is tuned, to ensure that it can maintain tuning stability after purchase. The Piano Gal Shop includes a free tuning after purchase, within 6 months, which will begin a regular maintenance cycle for your new piano!