



Beware of the Free Piano



Would you teach your child to drive a 1930's car that has had nothing more than a few oil changes in its lifetime?

When considering the purchase of a previously owned instrument, one should be absolutely sure what can of worms is being opened. This is especially true for pianos. With 12,000 individual pieces, a lot can go wrong, and those problems may not always be evident to someone who doesn't play the instrument. The free piano on Craigslist is free for a reason: most likely, it has no value and no one will take it, but the seller has an emotional attachment to it and cannot bare to see it disassembled and thrown away. Free pianos are not a Godsend and can very quickly turn into an expensive mistake.

Consider for a moment something made in the 1930's. It has a particular look. It is probably a reflection of the times. It is purchased and used extensively. Also consider that this item is made of wood, felt, leather, and some paper. I'm sure many of us have seen paper or clothing that is 90+ years old in a museum or in

their grandparent's attic. Are these things in good enough shape that one would consider using these items every day or maybe trust these utmost now-fragile creations to their children less than ten years of age? Would you teach your child to drive a 1930's car that has had nothing more than a few oil changes in its lifetime?



I have seen people spend hundreds of dollars moving free pianos only to find out that those pianos are not tunable and require thousands of dollars in repair before they can even be used gently. When moving the piano costs more than the piano itself, a huge red flag should go up. Maybe this is not the piano for a child to learn on. They have to put in so much effort just to get this heap to make sound that it becomes quite discouraging quickly. No wonder little Johnny quit playing after a week; the piano he has is severely out of tune and most of the keys stick or simply don't work at all. No one can learn on something like that.

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I understand that maybe the piano isn't for everyone and a trial run is in order to see if Johnny even has any interest in music. This is when, if financially able, a new instrument should be purchased, no matter how small. It is in good shape, new materials, and it comes with a warranty. Maybe there isn't enough money for a new piano, but Johnny is still tugging at his mother's dress begging for a keyboard. As much as they feel different to play and will not be enough when Johnny starts to get a little more serious about playing, a digital keyboard is a jumping off place that is a great way to get music into the home. Some teachers will not teach if the student has only a digital keyboard, but maybe Johnny isn't ready for that teacher yet. Explain the situation and there will be a solution that is best for everyone involved.

What is true for everything else is also true for pianos: you get what you pay for.

\$5 OFF YOUR NEXT TUNING

For every person you refer me to that I complete work for, I will give you a \$5 credit toward your next tuning as my thanks. This only applies to private piano owners and not to institutions (Churches, Schools, Piano dealerships, etc.).