

Compiled by Barbara Richmond, RPT, *Journal* Associate Editor

Adjusting the Butterfly Spring

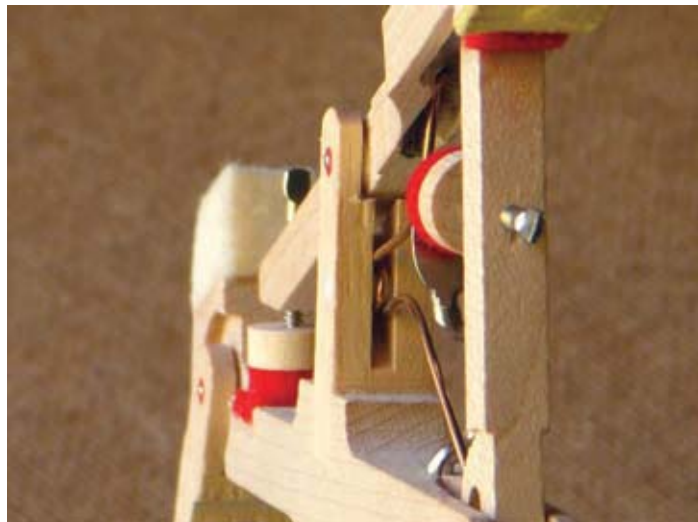


Photo 1: Check the direction of the spring coil.

On which side of the repetition lever should the butterfly spring be disengaged for making adjustments? Take your cue by looking at the spring to see which direction the coil is wound on the repetition spring center pin (Photo 1). On Steinways, the top part of the spring winds off in the direction of the bass, so for better adjusting and to avoid putting a kink in the spring, the spring should be released from the spring slot and adjusted on the bass side. If you are left handed, working from the front of the action should be no problem; but, if you are right handed, working from the rear of the action may prove beneficial (Photo 2).

Journal Staff



Photo 2: Working from the back of the action may be best for springs that wind off towards the bass.

Three Repetition Spring-Related Noises

1. The coil at the center of the butterfly spring can have some side-to-side play, sometimes causing a slight “tick.”

Solution: Pull out the spring from repetition spring slot (as in normal spring adjustment) and give a slight lateral pull. After pulling the spring towards the bass side and putting it back in place, the other side of the coil will have a slight pressure towards the treble, eliminating the side-to-side play. Don't pull it too hard—you don't want the bottom half of the spring to contact the spoon. Also, if the lateral pull is too much, it's possible that the spring won't ride easily in the center of the spring slot (Photo 3).

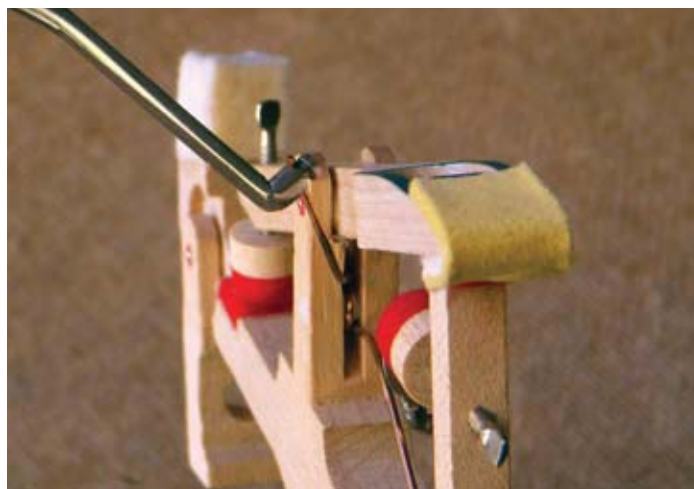


Photo 3: Give a slight lateral pull on a spring to eliminate side-to-side play.

2. The bottom part of the spring that inserts into the hole in the bottom of the jack can be just a little too long, causing it to bottom out and click.

Solution: Slip the end out of the hole and clip a tiny bit off the end, and re-insert (Photo 4).



Photo 4: Nip off the end of a too-long spring.

3. The angle of the bend where the spring goes into the hole in the bottom of the jack can be a little too shallow, so the jack doesn't come all the way back to where the button contacts the spoon (i.e. The spring is holding the jack in position instead of the button/spoon). This can click a little bit and make the action feel slightly bouncy. It also makes regulation impossible.

Solution: Slip out the spring's end and increase the angle just a tad—not too much, or you'll have the same problem caused by too much angle (Photo 5).



Photo 5: Adjust the bend of the spring.

Zeno Wood

New York City Chapter

What is the Best Vacuum for Cleaning Pianos?

A portable blower/vacuum is a must-have tool for piano technicians. Obviously, we want the most power and versatility we can get, but it also needs to be lightweight and compact. After doing some research, I decided to try this 4hp Metro canister vacuum a few months ago, and I'll never go back to using anything else (Photo 6).



Photo 6: The 4hp Metro canister vacuum with attachments.

This blower/vac has much more power than any regular household vacuum I've ever used with a hose attachment. The Metro Vac is designed for car detailing, but it's also great for cleaning pianos. The shoulder strap makes it convenient to carry around for shop work, etc. To turn it into a blower, just attach the hose to the opposite end of the vacuum, and blow dust and hammer shaping debris out of piano actions, or use it on shop floor sawdust. The Metro comes with all the standard extensions and attachments, plus a variable-power (bypass) nozzle and attachments for cleaning computers and other small items. I find that a standard duffel bag works great for transporting the vacuum and attachments.

Mark Purney, RPT

Phoenix AZ Chapter

Grand Shop Dollies

I have a shop with a very rough concrete floor. When I have a piano in the shop with nice casters I have to either lift the piano when I move it, have cardboard under the casters all the time, or change the casters for old shop ones. All of these solutions are a pain to deal with, so I came up with the idea of individual dollies for each leg. These dollies work with any piano, whether it has casters or not. I bought original dollies from Harbor Freight for about \$15.00 each, glued and bolted 3/4" plywood to the underside of the side rails and 1" by 4" (25mm by 102mm) boards to the top side to make a nest for the leg to sit in. Then I covered the plywood and side rails with scrap carpet. Both glue and bolts might be overkill but I sure don't want the bottom to fall out while moving a brand-new rosewood Steinway D. I find that with a little care they do not seem to want to tip over like some three-wheeled commercially made dollies (with no stem) did, and with the carpet they don't mar the casters or legs (Photo 7).

John Dewey

Central Illinois Chapter



Photo 7: These home-made dollies protect casters and legs.

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