

About Purchasing a Used or Restored Yamaha or Kawai Piano

Customers frequently call us about purchasing one of our restored Yamaha or Kawai pianos. Typically, they want to know how old the piano is, whether it is a good piano or not, how much the piano is worth and if they should purchase it or not. We do our best to answer their questions, from a technical standpoint. We first let our customers know that we have never had any problems with these pianos other than the same problems that any new piano might have. We explain that there is a small degree of risk in purchasing a "used" piano of any kind and that the only piano better than our restored, remanufactured Yamaha and Kawai pianos would be a new piano. All pianos will need tuning, adjustments and from time to time and some small technical adjustments. These include tuning, pedal linkage adjustments, a squeak, a damper wire adjustment or easing a key for better operation and of course removal of objects with might drop into the keys or action such as guitar picks, pencils and pins.

Our pianos have been thoroughly inspected and are factory conditioned to bring the piano back to as-new condition. We invite technicians to check our pianos for our customers. In the case of a non-restored used pianos it is impossible to know whether the piano has been properly maintained, whether or not it is damaged, how worn the piano is, or whether the piano is in need of major rebuilding. We recommend that they contact a competent piano technician and have the technician make a thorough inspection of a used piano, before purchasing it. We also offer this service locally.

What Piano Buyers Should Know

Fortunately, we have a cumulative history with Yamaha and Kawai pianos that has proven an excellent record of service for the last 40 years. With this information, along with the experience we have had with hundreds of Yamaha and Kawai pianos in North America during the last 40 years, we can provide information that may assist in reducing the purchase risk for the potential customer if they are buying any used, non-restored pianos.

More and more frequently, some pianos customers are asking about pianos that were not originally sold in the USA. More often than not, it is a well-used older piano (1970's or earlier) that was recently brought in from Japan and sold to a piano dealer in the USA. When asked about one of these pianos we remind the buyer that used, non-restored pianos of any kind may have problems. However our pianos that are restored to AAA first class condition will not have any problems other than normal maintenance. Used, non-restored pianos of any brand should be checked by a technician before purchasing.

What is The Main Issue with Used Yamaha Pianos Made for the Japanese Market?

Yamaha had manufactured pianos for Japan and the Asian market for over 50 years before exporting pianos to North America and Europe. In the 1960s, Yamaha began exporting pianos to the United States and Canada. Using original technologies for drying and production of these pianos, both Yamaha and Kawai pianos did have some issues pre 1970.

Consequently, some of the Yamaha & Kawai pianos sold in North America during the 1960s developed dryness-related problems. We do not sell these pianos. Eventually new technologies were developed which corrected these problems. Since the U.S.A. is a large area with many micro-climates, Yamaha and Kawai production methods insure that their pianos will perform well in any climate found in the U.S.A. This includes humid areas and dry climates such as the desert areas and high altitudes.

Since neither Yamaha nor Kawai can predict exactly where a piano will eventually find a home, these pianos must be built to function in all climates in North America equally well. Our restored, rebuilt pianos from Japan are no exception. Few if any problems exist at this time and we have never had any significant problems with any of them.

We do recommend that pianos in very dry or very wet climates, regardless of brand, should be protected with appropriate humidity and temperature mitigating systems. This may include addition of humidity or removal of high moisture levels depending on the area of the country.

So What Does Yamaha and Kawai Say?

Reading between the lines, it seems that Yamaha does not want any independent dealer selling their pianos without a relationship to the factory where they can control selling prices. They essentially want to pressure and scare buyers with a well targeted conversation about things that "might happen", "could happen", "somewhere, and sometime" etc.

This is a ploy to force buyers to purchase new pianos vs. restored pianos because Japan restored pianos are in competition with their new pianos. In addition, unlike new pianos, Yamaha cannot control prices for restored pianos... all to the benefit of our hundreds of satisfied buyers who have purchased stunning pianos at half or less the cost of new.

Kawai on the other had does not really make an issue of it and furnishes restored pianos to their dealers in order to compete in the market place. Will one of these pianos develop problems after several years in North America? The answer is: No more than a new piano or any other piano would have.

Parts availability is not a problem for any of our pianos. Parts are available if needed. Very few parts in Yamaha or Kawai pianos are ever replaced unless a piano has undergone smoke, fire, or flood damage, or was severely damaged in transportation. Parts replacement is never a problem. We can provide information about any of these restored piano models and furnish parts if needed. Serial numbers are available for checking dates. See our Yamaha Kawai Serial charts.

So What Does This Mean?

It simply means that our customers can enjoy a Yamaha or Kawai Grand Piano or Professional Upright Piano and less than half the cost of new. Our date ranges and models span the spectrum of production models and build dates witch are from 1972-2007.

It also means that a pianist, teacher or student can own a Yamaha C5, 2005 Grand Piano at about half the price of a new one selling for \$37,000. Or one could own a 52" Kawai US8X Professional Upright at less than half the cost of a new one selling at \$14,000. Our restored pianos can save thousands of dollars and enable a musician to own a piano that they could never afford otherwise and with the same high quality, resale value and prestige that both Yamaha and Kawai are famous for.

Thank you for visiting *Japan Pianos U.S.A*