

HOW TO LOCATE THE SERIAL NUMBER OF A PIANO AND CHECKLIST FOR INSPECTING A USED PIANO BEFORE BUYING

Find the serial number of the piano so you can look up its year of manufacture in the *Pierce Piano Atlas* (p. 178). Usually four to eight digits, the serial number is most often located near the tuning pins, either printed directly on the plate or engraved in the wooden pinblock and showing through a cut-away portion of the plate. Or the number may be printed somewhere else on the plate or soundboard, printed or engraved on the top or back of a vertical piano back, or printed or engraved on the front edge of a grand piano key frame (Figure 1). (Sometimes a three- or four-digit number used in the manufacturing process also appears on various case parts; don't confuse this with the serial number.) When no serial number can be found or if the year of manufacture isn't listed in *Pierce*, sometimes a technician can estimate the age within about ten years just by looking at the case styling or technical details.

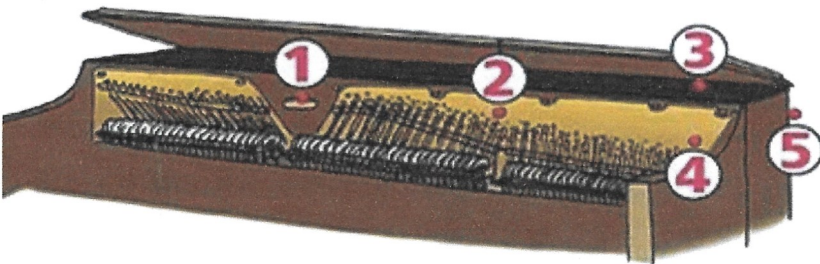


FIGURE 1a. The serial number of a *vertical piano* can usually be found in #1, either stamped on the plate or engraved in the pinblock and showing through a cut-away portion of the plate. #2 and #4, also on the plate, are other possibilities. On newer pianos, the serial number is sometimes on the top of the piano back (#3) or stamped on the back of the piano (#5).

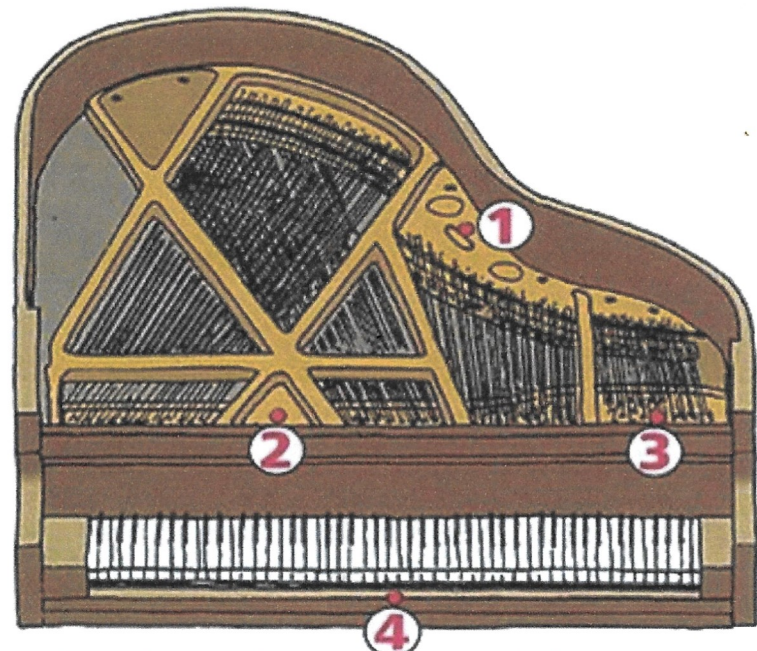


FIGURE 1b. The serial number of a *grand piano* is usually in position 2, stamped on the plate or engraved in the pinblock; elsewhere on the plate or soundboard (such as #1 and #3); or stamped on the front of the key frame (#4). Access to the key frame is gained by removing the keyslip.