

Piano Pedals

Grand Pedals

Left - Una Corda - Slides the action and keys sideways.

Makes the tone quieter. Sometimes referred as the soft pedal.

This pedal is not meant to miss or hit one string.

This pedal shifts the hammers so that the strings hit fresh felt.

Really good pianists will "play" with this pedal, pressing 1/4 pedal, 1/2 pedal, etc, to get varying tone difference.

Aside: Regulation is a spectrum.

It doesn't work

It works but can we
get it to work better?

The area where fanatical
technicians spend hours
getting the smallest
measurement to be perfect.

I concentrate more on the first two areas.

When Una Corda *doesn't* work:

- Sometimes the hammer shifts so much that it hits the string of the neighbouring note, and the key sounds a semitone.

- Sometimes the tone isn't quieter because the strings have shifted over and line up with neighbouring grooves which produce bright tone that is no different.

Middle - Sostenuto

Play a note.

Press the sostenuto pedal.

Whatever note you were playing, that damper will stay up.

Let go of the sostenuto, keep pressing the note(s), and only those notes will sustain; all others can be played staccato.

All grand pianos have a working sostenuto, except for the lowest quality grand pianos. For low quality grand pianos, the middle pedal just lifts the bass dampers.

Right - Sustain - Lifts all the dampers

Upright

Left - Soft Pedal - Moves all the hammers closer to strings. It often doesn't change the tone or volume at all. The hammer rest rail needs to get really close to the strings, and that only works if the action is regulated.

Middle (may be missing)

- 1) Does nothing. It's there to make it look like a better quality piano.
- 2) Same thing as left pedal.
- 3) Same thing as left pedal, but half as much.
- 4) Lowers a strip of felt between the hammers and the strings.

Sometimes referred to as the practice pedal.

Most of the time, it can be locked by shifting the pedal sideways when depressed. Sometimes (on older pianos, some newer ones too) there's a cool mechanism that locks the pedal down automatically, and you just press the pedal again to unlock it.

5) Some very cool uprights (Older Heintzmans, and some Yamaha U3's) will have a *real* sostenuto.

Some pianos have a lever under the key bed that actuates a mute rail.

Right - Sustain - lifts all the dampers

Grand Pedals



Upright Pedals

