

Accordion Repair

An accordion is an instrument that, when properly tuned and in good working order, sounds good enough for a symphony orchestra. An old or poorly tuned accordion, on the other hand, can sound like it's ready for the junkyard. So, what do you do when your old accordion sounds like it's on its last note?

Accordion owners basically have two choices when faced with an aging instrument: sell it, or repair it. Of course, avid musicians who sell their accordions will want to replace them; so it may be more beneficial to have the old instrument tuned up and repaired. Otherwise, selling the old instrument will leave you in the position of finding a newer (and more expensive) replacement.

An accordion is a musical instrument that belongs to the family of hand held, bellows-driven, free reed aerophone instruments. Also known as a "squeezebox", you play the accordion by expanding and compressing the bellows. This generates airflow across the reed. Just like some keyboard instruments, the accordion also has a series of keys that allow the musician to produce different tones.

Being a sensitive reed instrument, the accordion has many parts that are extremely delicate and can be easily damaged if you're not careful. In other words, don't attempt to repair an accordion on your own. Ever. Don't even take the cover off. When you're considering accordion repairs, do your instrument a favour and take it to a qualified technician. If you are confident and careful enough to proceed with your own repairs, take the accordion apart slowly. Record every part carefully, and make note of where each part comes from. This will help you when you're done with your DIY repairs and it's time to put your accordion back together.

When conducting your own accordion repair, never take apart the bass mechanism unless you've successfully done it before or have been trained in the proper technique. Each of the 120 buttons that make up the bass mechanism will fit in exact locations only, so repairing the bass mechanism requires a specially made fixture to allocate each button to its respective location.

Another thing that should never be attempted is replacement of the reed skin with anything other than a proper skin from an accordion supply shop. Reed skin has very distinct properties that cannot be found in other types of leather. The reed should never be removed or tampered with, as this can cause the note to play out of tune. You also need to be careful not to get dirt on the base of the reed block. You should never try to remove the reed block unless you're very experienced or have an old accordion that you don't mind damaging.

Accordions contain delicate networks of parts and pieces that work together to create a joyful sound. Because of the intricate nature of these instruments, maintenance areas like tuning, waxing and repairs should be left to the experts.