

ways demand the right to handpick each piece of lumber that goes into the piano. The lumber buyer is responsible for the initial selection of American walnut and Central American mahogany; for the mountain-grown eastern spruce from Vermont for the soundboard; for poplar from the Great Smokies for core stock; maple from Indiana, Wisconsin, and Canada for rims, wrest planks, and bridges; sugar pine from Idaho for the keys; rosewood from Brazil for part of the action. As a result of this buyer's nod, the Steinways have accepted over seven million square feet of highest grade lumbers, at a cost of over fifteen million dollars.

But selection is only the first step, for the wood must then be seasoned properly before use. This seasoning requires two or more years outdoors, followed by two additional years indoors, plus drying in patented humidity kilns which turn out a wood whose precisely controlled humidity is equal to six to eight percent. Then comes the consummate skill required in matching the grains for strength and resonance qualities, followed by the glueing, bending, and finishing processes.

The work involved in making a Steinway consists of a thousand individual endeavors, blended and coordinated into one immortal product. The Steinway is made of wood, steel, iron, felt, and ivory—but it is also made of love, art, science, knowledge, loyalty, and idealism. It has set the standard of piano perfection.