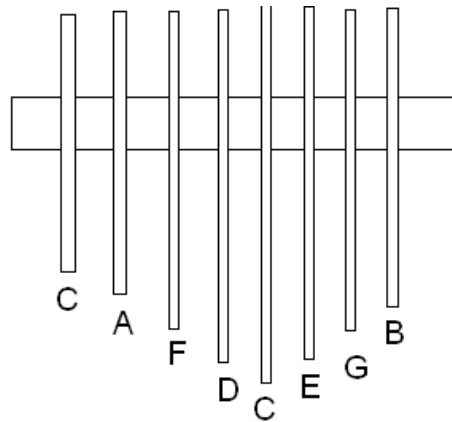


Tuning a Kalimba

The tines on a kalimba are tuned so that you can play a major scale by starting in the middle and plucking tines with alternate thumbs, moving steadily out from the middle:

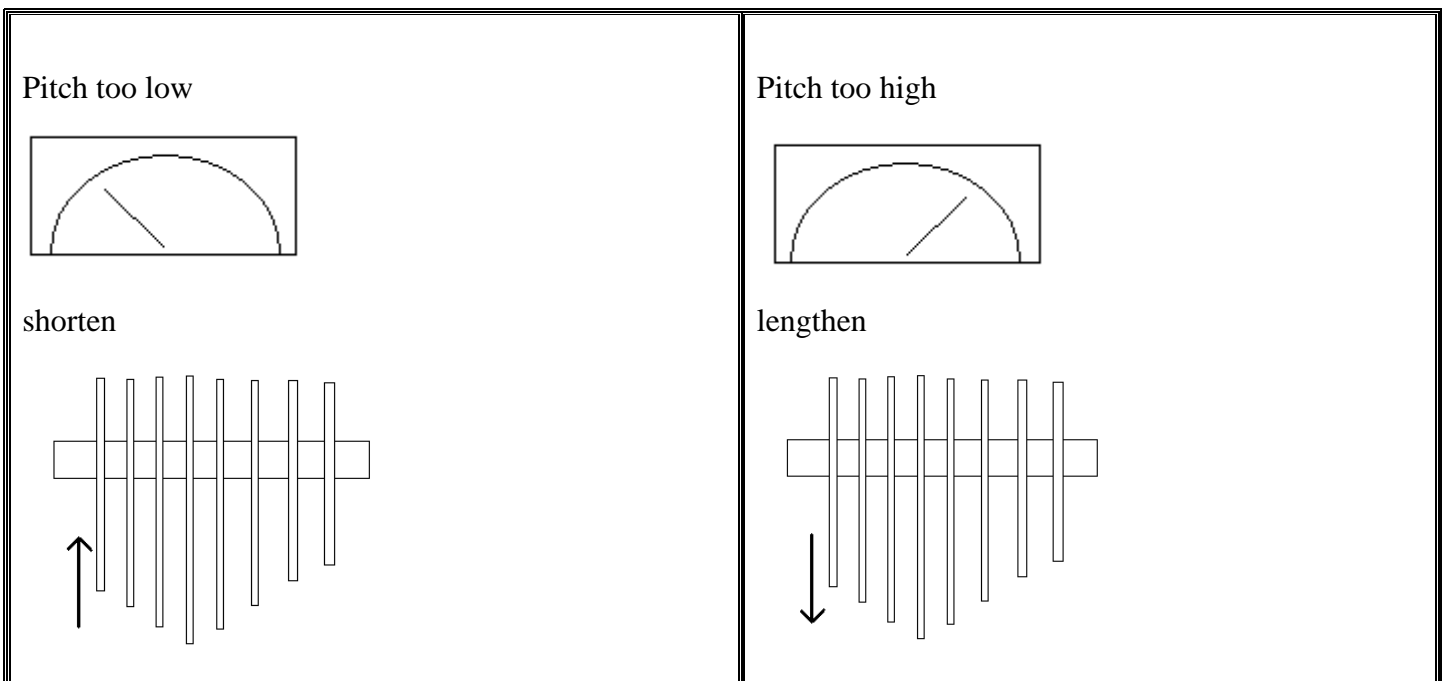


If your kalimba is already in tune and you need to disassemble it for some reason, use masking tape to hold the tines in position and remove them all as a unit. Line the tape up with something (like the edge of the bridge) so that you can get it back to the same position. Then retuning will be fairly easy.

To tune

- Loosen the bolts 1/2 turn.
- Attach an electronic tuner, in vibration mode, to the bar holding the tines down.
- Gently tap the tine backward (shortening it) to raise the pitch. You can use a woodblock or hardwood dowel to hold against the tip of the tine, so that you can tap the dowel and avoid accidentally dislodging other tines.
- To lower the pitch, lengthen the tine by tapping the end you don't pluck.
- When you've got the right pitch, tighten the bolts again.

A visual summary:

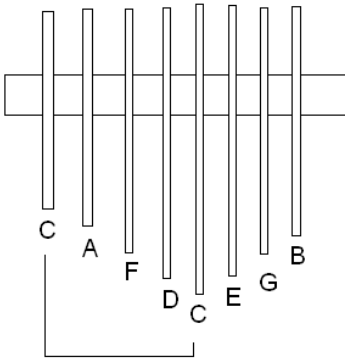


The tines near the tuner might be deadened by its being clamped to the bar. Tune tines farther away, then move the tuner.

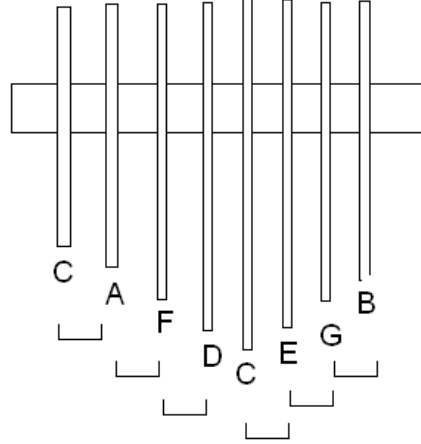
It's easier to make the tine longer than shorter, so you can make it too short to begin with and just work from the back. If the bolts are still too tight, loosen them or pull on the tine with pliers. If loosening the bolt makes some tine fall out of place, you can tune those last, with tighter bolts than the first lot.

You can also get them all close to the right pitch and then make another pass getting them right on. Then try your kalimba.

The longest and shortest tines should be the same note an octave apart:



Each side-by-side pair except D/C should sound sweet when played together:



And the notes played in alphabetical order (alternate hands) should sound like a scale.