

Nord Piano 6 vs Grand 2 Keyboard: Sound Quality, Specs & Price

Meta Description: Nord Piano 6 vs Nord Grand 2: same sound engine, very different keybeds. Compare weight, touch, price, and specs to find the right stage piano at Sam Ash.



Alt text: Nord Piano 6.

Key Takeaways

- Choosing between the Nord Piano 6 and Nord Grand 2 comes down to one question: how important is the physical feel of an acoustic grand piano to the way you play?
- Both instruments run the same sound engine, the same Piano Library, and the same effects architecture, so the sound is not the deciding factor. The keybed is.
- Sam Ash carries both models, and the short answer is this: the Piano 6 gives you excellent weighted feel at a lower price in a lighter package, while the Grand 2 uses an actual Kawai hammer mechanism for a touch that is as close to an acoustic grand as a stage piano gets.
- The Piano 6 88 weighs 42.3 lbs. The Grand 2 weighs 47 lbs. Over dozens of gig load-ins, that 4.7-pound difference is not trivial, and it compounds if you are also carrying a stand, pedals, and a gig bag.

- The Gear Expert Team at Sam Ash has helped pianists choose the right Nord since 1924. Call 800-472-6274 to talk through which keyed suits your technique and budget, or [browse Nord pianos at Sam Ash](#).

Nord's Flagship Stage Piano Dilemma

If you are deciding between the Nord Piano 6 and Nord Grand 2, Sam Ash can help you land on the right one: both instruments run an identical sound engine, so the choice is entirely about how the keys feel under your hands. The Piano 6 uses Nord's own Triple Sensor keyed with Virtual Hammer Action, while the Grand 2 puts a physical Kawai hammer mechanism under every key, the same type of action Kawai builds into its acoustic pianos. That is a meaningful difference for pianists who spend hours on a bench, and a less meaningful one for players who need a lighter, more portable rig for regular gigs.

Both offer dual Piano layers, dual Sample Synth layers, 120-voice polyphony, 2 GB of Piano Library memory, extensive effects sections, and access to the same Nord Piano Library sounds.

So what's the difference?

The answer lies in the keyed. The Piano 6 uses Nord's in-house Triple Sensor keyed with Virtual Hammer Action, while the Grand 2 employs a premium Kawai Responsive Hammer mechanism, the same type of action found in Kawai's acclaimed acoustic and digital pianos.

Understanding this central trade-off helps clarify which instrument deserves your investment.

Sam Ash: 100 Years of Music Expertise, Now Online
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The logo for Sam Ash DIRECT is displayed on a dark blue rectangular background. The text "Sam Ash" is written in a large, white, cursive script font. Below it, the word "DIRECT" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif, all-caps font. At the bottom of the logo, the phrase "Online Music & Sound Megastore" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

Perfect Gear for Every Musician:

- [Electronic Drums](#): Complete selection from beginner-friendly kits to professional studio setups. Get the authentic acoustic feel with modern convenience – perfect for home practice and recording.
- [Digital Pianos & Stage Keyboards](#): Portable alternatives to premium acoustic pianos without sacrificing sound quality. Ideal for home players, live performers, and studio work.

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The Keybed Difference

Nord Piano 6: Triple Sensor Keybed with Virtual Hammer Action



Caption: Nord's in-house Triple Sensor keyed has earned respect throughout the industry for delivering weighted piano feel in a relatively lightweight package.

Alt text: Nord Piano 6 88-key stage piano with LED fader panel and Triple Sensor keyed on a white background.

Nord's Triple Sensor keyed technology sits at the center of the Piano 6's design.

Virtual Hammer Action is Nord's proprietary technology that emulates the mechanical behavior of acoustic piano hammers through electronic modeling. The keys do not contain actual physical hammers, which keeps the weight down considerably, but the response feels weighted and graduated, with resistance that increases as you move toward the lower register.

Grand Weighted Action: The keyed delivers heavier resistance than semi-weighted or synth-action keyboards, appropriate for serious piano playing. Three selectable touch curves (Heavy, Medium, Light) allow customization for different playing styles and repertoire.

The Trade-off: At 42.3 lbs for the 88-key model, [the Piano 6](#) is approximately 5 lbs lighter than the Grand 2. While neither qualifies as truly "portable" in the way a 61-key synth might be, this weight difference matters significantly over the course of loading in and out of venues, climbing stairs, or touring regularly.

Nord Grand 2: Kawai Responsive Hammer Keybed



Caption: [The Grand 2](#)'s premium Kawai Responsive Hammer keyed represents a different philosophy entirely.

Alt text: Nord Grand 2 88-key stage piano featuring Kawai Responsive Hammer keyed on a white background.

Rather than simulating hammer behavior electronically, this mechanism employs actual physical hammers with advanced triple-sensor tracking.

Real Hammer Movement: Each key triggers a physical hammer mechanism that moves in response to your playing. This creates a fundamentally different tactile experience that many classically trained pianists prefer, the slight resistance at the beginning of the keystroke, the momentum transfer through the key's travel, and the natural return feel all mirror acoustic grand piano behavior.

Triple Sensor Precision: Three sensors per key track hammer movement with exceptional accuracy, capturing velocity nuances from the gentlest pianissimo to the most powerful fortissimo. This enables expressive dynamic control that satisfies demanding pianists.

Advanced Mechanism: Kawai's latest-generation keybed (improved from the original Nord Grand) provides extraordinary control through the entire dynamic range, supporting fluid repetitions and retriggering without fully releasing the key, which is essential for advanced repertoire requiring rapid repeated notes.

At a higher street price than the Piano 6, the Grand 2's keybed represents a significant premium. For pianists whose primary concern is authentic acoustic piano touch, that investment may be worthwhile. No electronic simulation can perfectly replicate the physical feedback of actual hammer movement, and the Kawai mechanism does not attempt to.

Sound Engine: Virtually Identical



Caption: The Piano 6 and Grand 2 share the same Nord Piano Library, identical memory, polyphony, and layering architecture.

Alt text: Nord Piano 6 sound engine panel showing Piano and Sample Synth layer controls with OLED display.

Piano Section

Both instruments feature 2 GB memory dedicated to sounds from the Nord Piano Library, which includes sampled grands, uprights, electric pianos, clavinetts, harpsichords, and more. All sounds can be replaced using the free Nord Sound Manager software.

The 120-voice polyphony provides ample headroom for complex passages with sustained pedal, ensuring no note-stealing even during demanding playing. Two independent Piano layers enable stacking different piano sounds, creating splits, or combining them with crossfades.

Advanced String Resonance reproduces the complex interplay of piano strings resonating at fundamental and harmonic frequencies when other notes are played, adding rich sympathetic resonance. Dynamic Pedal Noise reproduces the mechanical sounds of lifting and releasing the damper mechanism when using the included Nord Triple Pedal 2.

Dynamic Compression reduces dynamic range without sacrificing nuance, useful for cutting through live band mixes. Unison creates rich, ensemble-like piano sounds by blending multiple sample voices. Five Timbre Filters shape tone quickly.

Sample Synth Section

Both instruments feature 1 GB memory dedicated to the Nord Sample Library, which includes orchestral instruments, vintage synths, pads, Mellotron and Chamberlin sounds, and samples from ProjectSAM's Symphobia and Swing libraries.

The 40+ voice polyphony suffices for layered synth sounds alongside piano layers. Two independent Sample Synth layers enable stacking or splitting sample-based sounds or combining them with piano layers.

Full ADSR envelope control shapes Attack, Decay/Sustain, and Release for sample sounds. Tru-Vibrato accurately models the unique vibrato characteristics of various instruments.

Round Robin provides natural-sounding fast repetitions by cycling through multiple samples of the same note. Mono/Legato/Glide modes serve lead synth lines and bass sounds.

User Interface and Performance Features

Both instruments use the LED fader design introduced with the Nord Stage 4, providing visual feedback on layer levels and quick adjustment during performance. Dedicated LED faders give each of the four layers its own fader with LED indication.

Direct access controls provide knobs and buttons for all essential performance functions. OLED displays provide clear visual feedback on current settings, program names, and parameter values.

Live switching lets you move between programs without audio dropout, which is essential for live performance. Split point crossfades provide nine selectable split points on the Piano 6 and ten on the Grand 2, with optional crossfades for smooth transitions between zones.

Live Mode offers six auto-saving live program slots for quick access to frequently used sounds. Program transpose adjusts ± 6 semitones per program, with global transpose ± 6 semitones across all programs and fine tune ± 50 cents for matching pitch with other instruments.

Both instruments offer identical storage with 576 locations (16 banks $\times$ 36 programs) and 6 Live program slots.

Nord Piano Library: Shared Sound Content

Both instruments access the same extensive Nord Piano Library, which is continuously updated with new content. Acoustic grands include Steinway Model D concert grand, Yamaha C7 grand, Bösendorfer Imperial, Bechstein concert grand, Fazioli concert grand, and vintage grands from various eras.

Acoustic uprights include Yamaha U1/U3 models, vintage European uprights, and honky-tonk and prepared piano variations. Electric pianos include Rhodes Mark I and Mark II models, Wurlitzer 200A, Yamaha CP70/CP80 electric grand, Hohner Pianet series, and various FM-based electric pianos. Digital pianos and clavinetts include classic DX7-style FM pianos, Clavinet D6, and harpsichord variations.

All sounds can be downloaded and managed using the free Nord Sound Manager software, allowing you to customize your instrument's library based on your specific needs.

Weight and Portability

For gigging musicians, weight matters significantly. The Nord Piano 6 88 at 42.3 lbs provides the lighter option. The Nord Piano 6 73 at 35.7 lbs provides the most portable option with 73 keys. The Nord Grand 2 at 47 lbs adds weight from the premium Kawai keyed.

The Piano 6's 5-pound weight advantage over the Grand 2 may seem modest on paper, but multiplied across dozens of load-ins and load-outs, up flights of stairs, or through airports, it represents meaningful ergonomic savings.

For maximum portability with premium Nord sound, the Piano 6 73 at 35.7 lbs offers a compelling option, though you sacrifice the lowest octave-plus of keyboard range.

Who Should Buy Which?

Choose the Nord Piano 6 If You:

- Prioritize portability and need to transport your instrument regularly
- Find the price difference significant and want to allocate that \$700 elsewhere
- Are satisfied with excellent weighted action rather than requiring the absolute best
- Need 73-key option for even greater portability (Grand 2 is 88-key only)
- Play diverse repertoire where ultimate piano authenticity isn't the sole priority

Choose the Nord Grand 2 If You:

- Prioritize keyed authenticity above all other considerations
- Are a classically trained pianist accustomed to acoustic grand feel
- Have permanent or semi-permanent installation where weight matters less
- Perform primarily acoustic piano repertoire where touch nuance is critical
- Consider this a long-term investment in your primary performance instrument
- Have tried both keybeds and strongly prefer the Kawai action

Quick Specifications Comparison

Feature	Nord Piano 6 88	Nord Grand 2
Street Price	\$3,799	\$4,499
MSRP	\$3,999	\$4,499
Keys	88	88
Keybed Type	Nord Triple Sensor	Kawai Responsive Hammer
Keybed Technology	Virtual Hammer Action	Premium Hammer Action
Triple Sensors	Yes	Yes
Touch Curves	3 (Heavy, Medium, Light)	3 (Heavy, Medium, Light)
Piano Memory	2 GB	2 GB
Piano Polyphony	120 voices	120 voices

Piano Layers	2 independent	2 independent
Sample Synth Memory	1 GB	1 GB
Sample Synth Polyphony	40+ voices	40+ voices
Sample Synth Layers	2 independent	2 independent
Effects per Layer	Yes	Yes
Split Points	9 selectable	10 selectable
Split Crossfades	Yes	Yes
Programs	576 (16 banks × 36)	576 (16 banks × 36)
Live Programs	6	6
OLED Display	Yes	Yes
Seamless Transitions	Yes	Yes
Triple Pedal	Included (Nord Triple Pedal 2)	Included (Nord Triple Pedal 2)
MIDI	USB, 5-pin DIN (in/out)	USB, 5-pin DIN (in/out)
Dimensions (W×D×H)	1282 × 349 × 121 mm	1286 × 396 × 174 mm
Included Accessories	Triple Pedal 2, dust cover, manual, power cord	Triple Pedal 2, dust cover, manual, power cord

The Keybed You Choose Is the Piano You Play

The Piano 6 and Grand 2 are identical from the ears of your audience. Every preset, every sample, every effect is the same on both instruments. Your decision is about what you feel when you sit down to play. If you gig regularly and weight matters, the Piano 6 at 42.3 lbs delivers outstanding weighted action without the extra burden. If you are a classically trained pianist and touch authenticity is non-negotiable, the Grand 2's Kawai hammer mechanism is the closest a stage piano gets to an acoustic grand.

These are not questions you can answer from a spec sheet, and the team at [Sam Ash](#) understands that. Our Gear Expert Team has been helping pianists work through exactly these kinds of decisions since 1924, and the right keybed for a touring jazz pianist is not always the right keybed for a church worship leader or a studio session player.

Both models ship free on orders over \$49 and come with a 45-day return policy, which matters more here than it does with most purchases. A stage piano reveals how it truly feels after a few weeks of rehearsals and gigs, not after five minutes in a showroom.

We also offer financing through Affirm and Synchrony so you do not have to put the full amount down at once.

[A Nord](#) at this level is an instrument you will rely on for years. We want to make sure you start with the right one.

[Shop our keyboard collection today!](#)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Do they sound different?

No. Both instruments use identical sound engines with the same Piano Library, Sample Synth Library, polyphony, and effects. Playing the same program through the same speakers, they would be indistinguishable to listeners. The difference is entirely in how they feel to play.

Which keybed is better?

Neither is objectively better — they serve different priorities. The Grand 2's Kawai Responsive Hammer keybed provides a more authentic acoustic grand piano feel through actual hammer movement. The Piano 6's Triple Sensor keybed with Virtual Hammer Action provides excellent weighted feel in a lighter, more portable package.

Can I load the same sounds on both?

Yes. Both instruments access the same Nord Piano Library and Nord Sample Library. Any sound downloaded through Nord Sound Manager works on either instrument.

Is the Grand 2 worth \$700 more?

For pianists who prioritize authentic acoustic piano touch above all else, the Grand 2's Kawai keybed may justify the premium. For those who need portability, play diverse repertoire, or are price-sensitive, the Piano 6 delivers virtually identical sound in a lighter, more affordable package.

Can I get both the Nord Piano 6 and Nord Grand 2 at Sam Ash?

Yes, [Sam Ash](#) carries both the Nord Piano 6 (in both 88 and 73-key versions) and the Nord Grand 2.

***Note:** Pricing and/or product availability mentioned in this post are subject to change. Please check our [website](#) for current pricing and stock information before making a purchase.