



*This how-to blog post was used for an antique store / restoration company in response to a request from a reader because the reader lived hundreds of miles away, could not find a repair shop in their area, and did not want to send the clock in question.*

## CUCKOO CLOCK REPAIR MADE EASY

Many collectors adore the intricate beauty of the cuckoo clock. The Salem Clock Shop says the first cuckoo clock, most famous in the Black Forest regions of Europe, was made in 1738 when Anton Ketterer of Schonwald created a decorated clock that incorporated a simple cuckoo bird. The inner workings of these clocks haven't changed much since then.

### Understand the Parts

Clockworks lists the needed parts of the clock as being the pendulum, two or three weights, the clock hands, the back, the heading, the bellows, and the bird. The number of weights needed is determined by the number of chains coming out of the clock. Clockworks says these weights control the time, the cuckoo and, if there are any other animated characters or a music box, these additional functions.

### Restoring the Voice

If everything seems to work on the clock but it doesn't make noise, the cloth on the bellows might be torn. This cloth frequently wears out with age. Clockworks recommends attempting to replace the tops of the bellows first as these are the easiest parts to trade out and most often the source of the problem.

### Syncing the Beat

If the clock doesn't beat with an even tempo, it will run for a while but then stop. An indication that this is the problem is if the beat evens out when the clock is tilted on the wall. This problem is fixed by adjusting the internal weight. The back of the clock is removed and the wire that holds the pendulum is located. To one side is another wire that moves the pendulum wire back and forth. The beat is adjusted by moving this wire one way or the other until the clock is able to keep a steady beat.

### Set When the Bell Tolls

Sometimes the clock is not ringing the correct hour. When the minutes move around to the hour position, the clock does everything it is supposed to do but rings with too many or too few cuckoos for the time. When the hour and the bells don't match, it is necessary to point the hour hand to the correct hour and then loosen the minute hand, moving it back to just before the hour mark. The minute hand is then tightened, and the clock is tested again.

### Sources used in this article:

Salem Clock Shop: A History of Cuckoo Clocks

<http://www.salemclock.com/extra/cuckoo%20history.htm>

Clockworks: Cuckoo Clocks <http://www.clockworks.com/cintro4.html>