Buying Bagpipes

How to buy a set a Bagpipes

Buying Bagpipes Purchasing your first set of bagpipes can be quite a chore. New pipers must rely on the advice of experienced pipers, magazine reviews, advertisements, and sales person's recommendations to selecting a set of bagpipes. Unfortunately, there will be many different opinions. Our goal is to provide some insight on what maker and model you will want to decide on. This is not an endorsement of one particular pipe maker, but an introduction to the varied choices of models available. This article will only focus on buying a new set of bagpipes, and not on purchasing a pre-owned set. Narrow your choice of pipe makers to at least two to three different manufacturers. Next you need to decide on a particular model and your price range. Factors that will determine these two choices are how much, when and where you will be playing the most. Below we have commented on two types of bagpiping; Band Playing and Solo Playing. If your playing is predominately pipeband setting, a nice sounding set pipes that are easy to set up and maintaing may be perfect for you. If solo playing is important and you may wish to achieve a certain sound to give you the extra edge in a competition. BAND PIPES For general pipe band use, your choice of bagpipes does not need to be the most expensive. Outdoor functions such as marching in parades may expose the instrument to the harsh elements, such as the cold, rain and snow. Before you spend $5,000 on a set of "Chased Silver Bagpipes" for pipeband playing think about how they will be affected by the weather. There are many good pipe makers out there to choose from that will provide you with a nice sounding set of pipes. Please remember that now matter how nice the pipes can sound, improper tuning, reed setup, maintenance and playing will determine how the pipes eventually sound. Low maintenance products such as Gore-Tex bags eliminates the need to season the pipes. Improperly seasoned bags will not be airtight. Plastic chanters will not break as easy as a wood chanter.Plastic drone reeds are great if you are not a type of bagpiper that can practice everyday. SOLO PIPES If your competing or playing a great deal of solo jobs, you may desire a certain sound and tone. Ask other competitors, judges, instructors and other respected sources on their personal choice of bagpipes and their reason why they like the sound of one over the other. If you are buying a second set of bagpipes, then your choice may be more demanding on tone, accessories and material used. Items that add to overall sound besides the drones, are wooden pipe chanters, hide (leather/sheepskin) bags, cane reeds. For pure adornment you may want exotic materials, precious metals, engraving, etc..

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