



R. G. HARDIE & Co.
Makers of the world's finest bagpipes

The
Bagpipe Buyer's
Guide

R. G. Hardie & Co. Bagpipe Buyers Guide

Choosing the right set of bagpipes requires careful consideration to ensure you get the best instrument to suit your needs. We have designed this guide to help you through the process of ordering your set of R. G. Hardie & Co. bagpipes.

We pride ourselves on our strong sense of history, quality materials and experienced craftsmanship. R. G. Hardie & Co. bagpipes can be found on the shoulders of generations of the world's top champion pipers.

Handcrafting the world's
finest bagpipes since

1950

R. G. Hardie & Co. acquired the Peter Henderson® brand of bagpipes in 1972 and we have continued the traditions associated with this historic brand since 1868. Features of the Peter Henderson® bagpipes are blended throughout the R. G. Hardie® range.



We are proud of our commitment to a traditional style of bagpipe-making, which we firmly believe produces the finest sounding and meticulously crafted bagpipes that will be treasured for years to come.



We want to share our extensive knowledge and experience with you as you choose your heirloom set of bagpipes

How does a bagpipe work?

Many people think bagpipes are one of the most complex and difficult instruments to play but by choosing the right bagpipe and accessories you will enjoy playing effortlessly. The bagpipe works by blowing air through a blowpipe into the pipe bag which pushes air through the reeds. The reeds vibrate, projecting a sound through the drones and pipe chanter. When you buy your first set it is important to choose the right options so your posture allows playing without discomfort.



Alastair Dunn
Managing Director of R.G. Hardie & Co.

Why choose a set of Bagpipes from R.G. Hardie & Co.?

It is our mission to hand craft the world's finest bagpipes that produce rich, resonant harmonics with a beautiful blend between the chanter and drones. We pride ourselves on the attention to detail in crafting each set, from selecting the African Blackwood to the threaded nickel mounts and the durable imitation ivory. We understand what makes a set of bagpipes look and sound magnificent. Our manufacturing processes have been refined over 60 years and we believe there is no match to the skill of our trained time-served turners.



Key Features

Year of Manufacture

Every set of R.G. Hardie® Bagpipes is engraved with the name and year of manufacture.



Plastic Lined Blowpipe and Blowpipe Stock

Our plastic lining system protects the inside of the wood from the stresses and strains caused by moisture.



Threaded Nickel Mounts

All nickel mounts are threaded for a perfect fit.



Silver Hallmark

All silver parts are hallmarked by the Edinburgh Assay Office with a traditional UK mark along with our PH mark which signifies you own a genuine set of Peter Henderson® Bagpipes.



5 Year Guarantee

All Peter Henderson® and R. G. Hardie® Bagpipes carry a free five-year guarantee which protects against the cost of repair against natural defect and workmanship that would not be considered normal wear and tear. To register simply fill in and return the guarantee card included with the bagpipes or register online.



R. G. Hardie & Co.
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These pipers play our bagpipes.

Should you?



FIELD MARSHAL
MONTGOMERY
PIPE BAND

Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association
12-times World Champions

Our Quality Guarantee



Alastair won the Argyllshire Gathering Gold Medal playing his Peter Henderson® PH05H bagpipes and chanter

As Managing Director of R. G. Hardie & Co., Alastair Dunn leads on all aspects of bagpipes and chanter design, production and testing. Guiding him is his success as both a double Gold Medalist solo piper and as Pipe Sergeant of the World Champion Field Marshal Montgomery Pipe Band of Northern Ireland.



Andrew Elliot, Keith Orr, P/M Richard Parkes and Alastair at the 2013 World Pipe Band Championships

All R. G. Hardie & Co. products must meet Alastair's high standards before they leave our shop. Only products that Alastair would be confident of playing in the Premier solo competitions are offered to our customers.

Alastair Dunn oversees the design, production and testing of all R. G. Hardie & Co. products



Margaret Dunn won the Silver Medal at the 2007 Northern Meeting playing her Peter Henderson® PH05H bagpipes

The Drones

Bagpipes are made from seasoned African Blackwood, a hardwood selected for its durability and instrument tonal qualities. There are three drones in a set including one bass and two tenor drones. Each drone comprises a series of different diameter bores, finishing off with a bell at the top of the drone to project a magnificent sound to compliment the chanter.



The geometry and concentricity of the bores determines the quality and vibrancy of our drone sound. Our range of fine quality bagpipes are based on a 1924 vintage set of Peter Henderson® bagpipes, with the bass and tenor bottom joints having R. G. Hardie® bores. Our bagpipes produce a rich, resonant sound accommodating a wide range of reeds that can be fine tuned with ease.

The Chanter

A chanter is made from either blackwood or delrin, a special polymer chosen for its durability and tonal qualities. It has eight finger holes and two sound holes that produce nine notes. The internal profile consists of a reed seat and throat moving to a conical bore with a bell at the bottom to project the sound.

Our chanter models will fulfil the aspirations of any solo piper or pipe band.

Despite only having ten holes to adjust, the design of a chanter is not a simple task. The specialists at R. G. Hardie & Co. have spent years producing thousands of chanters to perfect the design of what is now considered to be a first class instrument.

When selecting a chanter, it is important to consider both versions and find out what suits your taste. A blackwood chanter produces a rich, mellow tone while the delrin chanter will project a robust tone.

Each and every chanter is hand inspected and tested by world champion pipers prior to being dispatched.

The plastic chanter has gained a reputation for projection, stability and pitch which makes it the first chanter of choice for many pipe bands.



The Peter Henderson Blackwood Pipe Chanter

Played by pipers winning the highest accolades in solo piping, including:

- Argyllshire Gathering Gold Medal
- Argyllshire Gathering Senior Piobaireachd
- Argyllshire Gathering Former Winners March, Strathspey and Reel
- Argyllshire Gathering A Strathspey & Reel
- Northern Meeting Silver Star
- Northern Meeting A March, Strathspey and Reel
- Bratach Gorm, London
- Overall Glenfiddich Champion
- Northern Meeting Clasp



The Blowpipe

Selecting the right blowpipe is key to ensuring you are comfortable while playing the instrument. Here is what we recommend based on height:

5'0" – 5'7" : small pipe bag and 8 inch blowpipe

5'8" – 5'11" : medium pipe bag and 9 inch or 10 inch blowpipe

6'0" and above : large pipe bag and 11 inch or 12 inch blowpipe

We offer a wide range of plastic blowpipes that allow the piper to maximise the airflow into the bag. The BlowStick range includes the MaxiStick, AdjustiStick and FlexiStick which will help ensure you find your perfect playing position.



AdjustiStick

MaxiStick

FlexiStick

The Pipe Bag

Pipe Bags are available in leather or synthetic materials. For a premium quality sound, sheepskin is the preferred choice of leather pipe bag by many top band and solo players. It requires to be seasoned on a monthly basis using Airtight seasoning. For ease of use and longevity synthetic pipe bags are in high demand.



The Reeds

Chanter reeds are selected based on their strength and we have chosen reeds from makers that compliment our range of chanters. Pipe bands prefer a more robust sound and select reeds that are stronger to blow and feel more resistant, a solo piper prefers a more comfortable reed with a mellower tone that will enhance the musical enjoyment of the performance.



We have carefully selected a range of reeds that compliment our bagpipes and chanters.

Today synthetic reeds are available that produce an excellent drone sound on a consistent and reliable basis. Cane is still used by the traditionalists aspiring to achieve the perfect tone but the majority will select synthetic reeds for their reliability. We have carefully selected a range of reeds that complement our bagpipes and chanters.

Piper Deluxe Case

The ultimate backpack case for bagpipes

Features:

- Available in black, burgundy and navy
- 20mm foam padded walls
- Fashionable gold piping
- Ergonomic adjustable backpack straps
- YKK zips with lockable compartment
- Tailored pockets for accessories and A4 music
- Tuning meter/smartphone pocket

External Dimensions:

- Widest: 38 x 24cm
- Narrowest: 25 x 15cm
- Length including handle: 70cm



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Piper Case

The R.G. Hardie Piper Case is a padded lightweight bagpipe case ideal for transporting and storing bagpipes.

The Piper Case will accommodate all types of pipe bags and canister systems.

Internal Dimensions: 26 x 13 x 59cm

External Dimensions: 31 x 17 x 65cm

Features:

- Adjustable shoulder strap with heavy duty fixings
- Adjustable back pack straps
- Extra strong zips on lid closure
- Internal mesh pockets for storing accessories
- Large external pocket for books, sheet music and accessories
- Velcro straps to hold bagpipes in position while in transit



Deluxe Practice Chanter Case

The R.G. Hardie Practice Chanter Case provides excellent protection for storing a standard or long sized practice chanter along with an A4 book. The case requires the chanter to be broken down for storage which helps dry out the chanter after every practice

Features:

- Grab handle
- A4 book pocket
- Accessories zip pocket
- Reed bottle storage pocket
- Protective covers for the practice chanter top and bottom
- Velcro fasteners for the top and bottom



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Maintaining your Bagpipes

Premium quality heirloom bagpipes are made from African Blackwood, a natural material that will change depending on the conditions in which they are played and stored. We have created a range of accessory kits for bagpipe maintenance along with videos on our YouTube channel providing further guidance on the best procedures to follow.

When played, the instrument will fill with moisture from your breath which will absorb into the wood. While in storage the wood will dry and adjust to the natural climate. Combining this with the different climates around the world and the places bagpipes visit, they will be in a constant state of fluctuation.

Proper maintenance of your instrument will ensure you avoid any problems with the condition of your pipes and you will continue to enjoy many years of piping pleasure.

African Blackwood will change depending on the conditions around it

A bagpipe's moisture levels will be in a constant state of fluctuation



Based on our vast experience here is what we recommend:

Remove excess moisture from your drones using cotton brushes.

Use Piper blackwood oil once a year depending on your climate.

Leave the pipes disassembled for 1 hour after every period of play.

Do not apply too much hemp and monitor this after long periods of play. Moisture will absorb into the hemp eventually causing the wood to split if it is not maintained appropriately. This is particularly important for the blowpipe and stocks where most moisture passes.

Choosing a Dealer

Selecting a set of bagpipes requires much thought and consideration of the options offered by R.G. Hardie & Co. We have a network of reputable dealers around the world that we will put you in touch with to guide you through the process. Our dealers are recognised for their knowledge, expertise and for providing a high standard of service.

We select our dealers with the same care and attention that we put into making our bagpipes





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