

Bytesize Bagpipes

Looking after your Chanter

The practice chanter is the practice instrument of the Highland bagpipe. There are various types of practice chanter currently on the market. These range from standard size to long span and also child size practice chanters.

Students should take advice from an instructor when considering buying a practice chanter. The National Piping Centre can provide impartial advice and supplies from a number of reputable bagpipe makers.

Care of the practice chanter is relatively simple. The following points should be observed:

1. Ensure that the joint between the top and the bottom of the chanter is neatly hemped, preferably with waxed hemp, which helps to repel moisture. Moist hemp will swell and the joint may become too tight.
2. Ensure that the bore and holes of the chanter are kept free of dirt at all times. The chanter can be kept clean by using an appropriately sized bottle brush and/or pipe cleaners.
3. Ensure that the reed is securely fitted in the reed seat in the bottom half of the chanter. Hemp should be wound neatly around the bottom of the reed to maintain a secure fit in the reed seat. If it is necessary to handle the reed, do so by holding the lower part of the reed, and NOT the blades.

Please note:- Extreme care must be taken when dismantling and assembling the chanter. In particular, note the following:

4. Be very careful not to touch the reed with the top half of the chanter, as reeds are very easily damaged.
5. Keep your hands close together at the middle of the chanter and turn gently. DO NOT pull, use excessive force, or twist from the bottom of the chanter.

