

# How do I book a bagpiper right?

## Know How & Checklist

You want to book a bagpiper, but this is not a daily thing, therefore I want to give you some information to do everything right. The checklist may help you, to bring your wishes and the reality in line.

## Piper knowledge in five minutes

[The Scottish Great Highland Bagpipes](#)

[The fee](#)

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## Piper Basic knowledge

*The Scottish Great Highland Bagpipes*

The set of Bagpipes is a wooden instrument, called wind instrument. Moisture and temperature has a great influence in the results of tuning the instrument. The set of bagpipes can't be unpacked and played as a keyboard. It needs a certain working temperature and moisture before tuning. The pipes must be played in.

For playing in and tuning a piper needs round about 10 till 15 minutes. Between tuning and gig it shouldn't be too much time. It is difficult to tune the set of bagpipes, but it is easy for the bagpipes to get out of tune.

The bagpipes don't forgive climate fluctuations. When the piper plays in winter at an 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in an overheated room and the instrument must be played in outside for reasons of secrecy, the fiasco will be naturally: the instrument is out of tune and it needs a long time to come back in tune. The guests are out of tune, too, because a set of bagpipes which is out of tune sounds very badly.

Good is a close distance between playing in and gig and the temperature should be similar.

The most important thing is a good communication between piper and customer: no event runs as planned, delays happen and the piper aren't able to start on time. Are timing, tuning and the whole circumstances good, the piping gig will be a loud, but wonderful presentation.

### *The Fee*

When you order a mechanic, you know, that there is an expensive fee for the work and the travel expenses. The fee for a piper (better: expenditure compensation) is matter for negotiation, but some things are to attend:

- The piper is not an musician by trade, he had to do other obligations.
- When gigs are at the working time, the piper has to take holiday.
- The Scottish Great Highland Bagpipes are not popular overall. It can be, that the piper has a longer journey to the gig venue.

The Great Highland Bagpipes are very loud instruments: directly at the chanter it will reach 120 decibel. Higher values can be reached in bad acoustic rooms with overlay of the sound waves.

120 decibel is the same as a small airliner 100 metres away. Luckily, the loudness would not be felt by the audience.

For a typical gig, the piper needs the following time (round about):

- Put the uniform on:	20 minutes
- Journey to the venue:	60 minutes
- Playing in and tuning:	10 minutes
- Git 1:	15 minutes
- Waiting time:	20 minutes
- Gig 2:	15 minutes
- Journey home:	60 minutes
- Put out the dress:	<u>40 minutes</u>
Sum:	<u>240 minutes</u>

A short gig is an expenditure of round about four hours as well. This is a half working day!

### *The Booking What?*

What is the reason? A wedding, a jubilee, a firm party? Every of this reasons have other conditions and make other demands to the piper. You give your event a highlight to book a solo piper. He is a point in your programme, after then, you can talk and dance again.

There are considering a lot of problems. A gig outside in the summer with a warm dry weather is not hard to play. In other conditions you must establish the best conditions.

Venue and time must be discussed between the customer and the piper. A map or a location plan helps, because the piper don't know the venue area normally.

Very important is a local contact person who helps the piper to find the way.

The telephone numbers must be known between piper and customer that they can have contact every time.

### *How?*

Will the gig be a surprise? Then the playing in and tuning must be at another venue what is far enough but not too far away from the gig venue.

A man or a woman in kilt catches anybody's eyes at once. He or she must be brought to the venue very secret. When all would be thought, it will be a great surprise for everyone.

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