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The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Soyou want to use bagpipes in your band or musical arrangement? The uniqueness of the instrument makes it tricky to record. Heres why: Bagpipes are not in a standard pitch. It is near the key of Bb or B. The pitch also changes as the piper plays the pipes (or stops playing it). The bagpipe does not have the same versatility to change keys as many other instruments. There are (for the most part) just 9 notes on the bagpipe, in a mixolydian scale. Yes, you read that correct. Bagpipes are not in a specific pitch. A = 440 Hz? You can throw standard tuning out the window. In the earlier days bagpipes would be tuned near a pitch of Bb (Bb is 466.16 hz). In this earlier recording of Pipe Major RU Brown, the bagpipes are a little above Bb. Ah, the good ole days. Theres a certain mystique with a lower pitched bagpipe that stirs one to the call of battle with the rich harmonics of the drones. As time went on however the pitch began to raise. A large part of this phenomena took place in the pipe band competition scene where judges tended to award bands with higher pitches with prizes. In other words, theres a tendency for the higher pitch band to win. This phenomena, led to what is known as the pitch war, and is somewhat controversial in the pipe band world. Many people despise the newly higher pitched bands, while others prefer it. Regardless, higher pitch is not going away. The highest pitched bands are falling short just of the B pitch (493.88 hz). Again, compare this: To this: It is worth noting that part of the development towards higher pitched pipe bands also came with the ability to tune higher pitched drums. This was in due to technological advancements in drum head production. The old bands drums sounded something like this. Notice how the lower pitch bagpipes compliment that type of drum sound? This however is a very "dated" sound for a pipe band. Now, that all being said, as a bagpiper plays their instrument during a session, the pitch that they started at will start to increase due to heat slightly (by a few hertz). If its a hot day, that extra heat will also cause the reed to pitch higher. (Woodwinds are fun; aren't they?!) But, if the piper takes a break, the pipes will then start to cool down and the pitch will actually start to lower slightly. The changing of the pitch therefore further complicates things. Want to take a melody but play it in a different key? This will be unlikely since the pipes off to boot only has 9 notes. So take a melody like Happy Birthday on the bagpipes; you won't be able to alter the key of that melody. There are some limited exceptions. In this composition, a famous and prolific bagpipe composer Donald McLeod wrote a key change of the same melody in the middle of the tune The Ferryman (by the way this example is played on a different type of bagpipe than the Scottish bagpipes): That all being said, tunes are written in different keys (within those 9 notes). Amazing Grace is written in D. And the Minstrel Boy is written in A major. But guess what? Those note names are actually just conventional names. What a bagpiper calls an A is actually again the note somewhere between Bb and B (as described earlier). Its just easier to call it A rather than Bb or whatever the mysterious pitch between Bb between B is. In fact in bagpipe notation the scale is written without any flats or sharps USUALLY, even though technically the C should be C# and the F should be F# and thats if the bagpipe was indeed in the key of A. Heres an example: The bagpipes notes are a mixolydian scale. Basically that just means that if you played a major scale, the 7th note of the scale is a semi-tone down. An example of this would be if you were to play all the white keys on a piano, like in a C major scale, but started on the G key instead of C. Although this may sound confusing if you are not familiar with modes, we see another example of this in the key of A minor; all the notes of the scale are the same as C major but it starts on the A note instead of C. There are a few exceptions to the 9 note rule of thumb. You can bend the rules a bit by playing certain notes, which are like blue notes, which can give melodies an eastern-esque sort of feel. (However Ive noticed that sometimes, depending on the reed, those atypical scale notes dont sound accurately.) Below are 3 examples. This, of course, will veer away from the defining mixolydian scale that is very characteristic of the bagpipes, so you may not want to get too adventurous if you want to retain a Gaelic melody in your writing and composition. And you wont be able to ever play more complex melodies like The Star Spangled Banner on the bagpipes unfortunately, regardless of these extra notes. In the 2nd example the talented piper Stuart Liddell actually uses tape to help produce the so called dirty B note giving it a middle eastern flair. Moving forward. Here are some tips for arrangements and compositions. If you want to incorporate other instruments, build those instruments around the bagpipes limitations. Compose your tune first in the scale of Bb (guitarists, get your capos out). However this will not be precise and the bagpipe will be slightly off (but not terribly). However if your arrangement demands pitch accurate tuning, the bagpipes now have special chanters (the part of the instrument that produces the melodies) that tune to concert Bb pitch. From there you can build your composition and arrangement from the bagpipes' Bb pitch. Have any questions? Shoot me an email. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. What musical key does the bagpipe play in? This is a very confusing point for many people. It's sad to say that many amateur musicians (read "most pipers"!) do not know the difference between the tuning pitch and the key. Terrible mistakes can result from this misunderstanding. It's generally only an issue when bagpipers try to play with guitars, organs, orchestras or other bands. I know of pipers who've told orchestras that they'd be happy to play Amazing Grace in B-flat with the orchestra. I know of people with smallpipes tuned to concert A and told folk musicians that they'll play Amazing Grace in A. This can lead to very embarrassing situations and can potentially ruin a musical program. Please read on to find out why this DOESN'T WORK. For the benefit of all, it must be known that the key of the instrument is not necessarily the pitch to which it is tuned. The low A on the modern chanter of great highland bagpipe (and the drones) are commonly tuned to above concert B flat, which is 466.16 Hz. With the application of some tape and a bit of adjustment of the reeds, the instrument can be adjusted such that low A on the chanter (and the drones) vibrate at 466.16 Hz. This is a concert B-flat tuning of the instrument, but it is not necessarily the key. (Please note that most bagpipes today tune at 476 to 480 Hz! This is roughly halfway between B-flat and B. Setting up a concert B-flat bagpipe can be challenging. Setting up a concert A pitch instrument is difficult.) Musical "key" is defined in the Harvard Brief Dictionary of Music as "something like "tonal center" or "main note" of a composition and, by extension, all of the notes related to the central note and forming the tonal material for the composition." As an example, a B-flat clarinet sounds 466.16 Hz when it plays a C. This is defined as a B-flat instrument. However, since it is a chromatic instrument, which can play all sharps and flats, and has a wide range, almost four octaves, it is capable of playing most pieces in any key. That is to say that it can start any tune on any note and play appropriate intervals to play the tune. The bagpipe is much more limited. Because it is not a chromatic instrument, the music is generally written without sharps, although C sharp and F sharp implied. Because of the lack of chromatics and the limited range of an octave plus one note, tunes usually only sound decent in one arrangement on the bagpipe. For example, Amazing Grace must start with pipes playing the notes Low A ("Ah"), D ("a-maz"), F(#)ED ("zing") and then F(#) ("grace") or the tune cannot be played. Hence the bagpipe can only play Amazing Grace in one key. So what key is this? The easiest way (and generally correct) to find out what key your tune is in is to determine upon which note the tune ends. This is generally the "resolution" of the tune and will commonly be the tonic of the key. Since, the note called low A on the great highland bagpipe tunes close to concert B flat, let's assume that the piper adjusts the tuning (with tape, sealing way, dowels, baling wire and other stuff) to become pitched to "true" concert B flat. Now Amazing Grace ends on a D on the chanter. For a chanter tuned such that when an A is sounded it comes out at 466.16 Hz, the note fingered as a D is pitched concert E flat. In communicating with other musicians, they should be told that Amazing Grace will be played in E flat. (Note: NEVER try playing with others without actually tuning the instrument. (i.e - such that Low A to concert B Flat) I've had to endure such a fiasco on Amazing Grace and it wasn't pretty.) Thus, we can see that the actual key depends upon the instrument and the tune. The bagpipe can regularly play in any of three keys. The scale contains essentially a sharp C and a sharp F. Tunes can be resolved to play in the following keys: Resolved Note (generally written note at end of tune) Primary Notes in Tune (tonic/third/fifth in bold) Examples Concert Key for GHB tuned to B-flat Concert Key for Smallpipes (or GBH) tuned to A Concert Key for Smallpipes tuned to D D D,E,F(#),G,A,B,C(#),D Amazing Grace, Highland Cathedral, Irish Washerwoman, Auld Lang Syne E Flat Major D Major G Major A A,B,C(#),D,E,F(#),G,A Scotland the Brave, Irish Washerwoman, Auld Lang Syne B Flat Major A Major D Major G (rare) G,A,B,C(#),D,E,F(#),G ??? A Flat Major G Major C Major E E,F(#),G,A,B,C(#),D,E The Little Cascade F Minor E minor A Minor B B,C(#),D,E,F(#),G,A,B Mist Covered Mountains C Minor B Minor E Minor Most amateur folk musicians don't like to play in B Flat and E Flat. Consequently the more popular folk instrument accompaniment are smallpipes tuned to A or D. This puts Amazing Grace in D or G, respectively. Smallpipes in D are generally more popular than A as they are easier to play and to sing along with! (Note that there are arrangements of Irish Washerwoman and Auld Lang Syne can be played in more than one key on any bagpipe. The melody gets "folded" (and sometimes a bit spindled and mutilated!), but it can work. Most tunes don't work well in their unintended keys.) So what concert pitch are you playing when you finger a note? In the table below, find your instrument across the top and what note you are fingering on the left. The intersection of the rows and columns corresponds approximately to the "concert pitch" that you are playing. Note being fingered below GHB tuned to B-flat Smallpipes (or GBH) tuned to A Smallpipes tuned to D Low G A-flat G C Low A B-flat A D B C B E C (a.k.a. C-sharp) D C-sharp F-sharp D E-flat D G E F E A F (a.k.a. F-sharp) G F-sharp B High G somewhere between A-flat and A between G and G-sharp between C and C-sharp High A B-flat A D (Note: Since concert pitch is "even tempered" and the bagpipe is "just tempered", the agreemnt to concert pitch approximate. To learn more about how far "off" you'll be, go to Can I use a tuner for intonation on my chanter?) Finally, three additional notes (pun intended!) which will expanded to their own section in the future!: Please note that the pentatonic mode is notes 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8 (i.e., do, re, mi, so, la, do) in any major scale. Any and all these notes are prominent in many "Celtic" tunes. The sharp-eyed, knowledgeable reader will note that there is a G# missing in some of these scales. Bagpipe staff notation contains only two sharps - if any at all are noted. The reason is that the tuning of High G is an issue in that the pitch doesn't quite conform to a convenient category in Western music. It's typically tuned higher and G and lower than G#. Seamus MacNeill (Classical Music of the Highland Bagpipe, 1968, BBC) suggests that the proper pitch of this note is intended to maximize the number of pentatonic modes that can be played on the instrument. He goes on to say that the interval is known as a "limma" and occurs in the Phrygian scale of ancient Greek music. As a result, some tunes can sound a bit, well, ..odd to those used to western intervals... on high G (e.g. Going Home). To make matters worse, I've not read any text that deals with the tuning of the piobaireachd high G, and, given his predilection for piobaireachd, I'm not completely sure which high G Seamus was referring to! In various texts, the scale of the bagpipe is described as being in a mixolydian mode. This mode is derived by playing only the white keys on a keyboard and starting at G and would result in a major scale with a flatted seventh (i.e. F, not F# in the G scale). This suggests that the bagpipe scale (presumably starting on Low A) has intervals equivalent to a major scale with a flatted seventh . Maybe it's close enough. However, because of the tuning issue regarding high G, this is close, but not quite right. Seamus MacNeill (ibid) suggests that, because there are tuning issues with both G and D (which I didn't mention above!), the bagpipe scale should be called a major scale with an augmented fourth and a diminished seventh. Professor Yamane (who studied this problem while developing the Korg AT-2 Tuner) suggest that the fourth should not be augmented. (Subnote: I'm working on some MIDI based scales for comparison so that you can hear them if you have a soundcard.) Copyright S.K. MacLeod 1996-2025 There are lots of crazy explanations out there about what key bagpipes are in, and how to tune them to other instruments. Without judging all the things youve heard, let me take you through my explanation, which I have put to the test on my two albums, and while jamming with many musicians (most recently, Bryan Adams! :D).First, a brief, semi-accurate history of why the bagpipe is so darned hard to tune to other instruments:Originally, the bagpipe scale-notes closely resembled the notes of other mainstream instruments. It may never have exactly matched up to concert pitch, but bagpipes did possess a coherent scale that was ultimately possible to fit into the crazy world of music theory. Our A was closest to concert A, and thats how it got its name.Where did concert pitch come from? To my knowledge, it was actually mandated by the church in Rome. Apparently, organists at various churches would attract more members to their church by cranking up the pitch of their organs! By doing this, it produces a psychological effect that makes the music sound better. Needless to say, this got out of hand over time, and eventually the church said enough is enough, and required all organs and other instruments involved with the church to play at a set pitch, wherein A = 440 hertz (aka vibrations per second).Meanwhile, back at the ewe pen, bagpipes were undergoing the same phenomenon. Bagpipes that were higher pitched seemed to sound more pleasant, and so pipers began shooting for the sweetest pitch possible. This was never checked by the church (obviously!), and so the bagpipe wandered off on its own, ultimately straying so far from conventional instruments that it became extremely hard to tune to them. Actually, this still happens today in a big way. A great example can be heard on the World Pipe Band Championships CDs. Each year, the pitch of the winning band goes up, I would say, by an average of 1 hz per year.Fast-forward to today. The bottom line is: Today, the bagpipes have actually increased to be approximately a semi-tone and a half above concert pitch. And, its still going! So, our A would actually sound somewhere between concert B-flat and concert B. This is where the myth comes from that bagpipes play in the key of B-flat. Not really true. It is possible to think of it this way, but pointless. If you explain to a musician that you actually play a semi-tone and a half above concert pitch, that will make it simple. You can think in your usual notes, and the musician can think in their usual notes as well; ie, theres no need for anyone to transpose.So, to tune to other instruments, its important that your A equals the other players A. A tuner is an excellent aid here, to get the precision you want. For example, a guitarist needs to tune his A string up a semi-tone and a half. Or, they could put a capo on the first fret and tune up half a step. Or, you guessed it they could put the capo on the second fret and tune down!Electronic Keyboards can often tweak their tuning. They simply want to adjust the whole thing up a semitone and a half; so that their A equals your A.Youll notice you dont hear many French Horn vs. Bagpipe duos. Or trumpets, or clarinets, flutes, etc. Even most Irish whistles dont jive with the pipes. This is because theres really no way to tune them significantly enough to match the bagpipe tuning. Even to just adjust the half-step to reach B-flat is essentially impossible. For projects like this, I would recommend exploring special-made chanters that play at a lower, concert pitch. I think somewhere out there there are A and B-flat chanters. Want to give your brand videos a cinematic edge? Join our visual experts and special guests for an info-packed hour of insights to elevate your next video project. 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Our experts explainhow.Learn MoreThe Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to todays most recentcoverage.Discover The Collection While the Great Highland Bagpipes are usually played by themselves or with percussion, it is also a refreshing change to hear them played with other instruments. In addition to the Highland Pipes, the Smallpipes and Folk Pipes are also great for playing in a group as they are quieter instruments that are tuned to concert A 440. Before we can get to setting up the pipes, lets look at the key and options of our instrument:Highland Pipes:The sheet music for Highland Pipes is always written in A mixolydian (meaning that our G note is lowered and not a G sharp as it would be in A major), however we don't actually play in A as our sheet music suggests. The Highland Pipes' "A" is anywhere from 470 to 487 hz while a concert instrument like a piano tunes "A" at 440 hz. So our instrument is almost a whole step above "A" and is in fact somewhere between B and B flat on a normal scale. The first thing we have to do to tame the high pitch of our instrument is acquire a B flat chanter and reed.Smallpipes:These are much easier to settle into a defined key as they're made to play in A 440. The bellows blown smallpipes will sometimes have an "E" harmony drone which creates a lovely blend to the drones, however it can get in the way of tunes in the key of D like "Amazing Grace". For this, simply plug the E drone with a small cork. The folk pipes have no harmony drones so you won't need to worry about corking any off. Some smallpipes are also capable of playing in B flat, D and sometimes C. Since these aren't as in demand as the "A" pipes, they are more obscure and are only made by specific craftsmen.Electronic Bagpipes:This electronic version of our instrument is surprisingly more versatile and adaptable than the acoustic pipes. Depending on the brand and model, you can change the instrument in terms of pitch, volume, drone to chanter balance, drone tuning, alternate fingering, additional scales, and even different kinds of bagpipe sounds. With most of these, we're able to feed them into a speaker for amplification or even to record them via a sound cable to an audio interface. While the sound of these are sampled or digitally reproduced, they won't sound exactly like a live set, but are able to do more as an instrument. Many different models are out on the market today and all have different options for what they can do. Depending on your specific need and capabilities, an electronic bagpipe may be the best fit for you.Adjusting the Highland Pipe Chanter:The best thing to have is a B flat pipe chanter or a B flat reed. McCallum, Shepherd, and G1 chanter options are available on our website in B Flat models. Having a B flat reed to suit a higher pitched chanter works well or, having a dedicated B flat chanter will also make the challenge easier. You'll want to either have a tuner on hand or a tone in B flat (pitch pipe, piano, sine wave) to help you adjust the low A to the correct pitch. For the best result, test in your pipes with the drones corked so you get the most accurate reading from your chanter. Since most pipers play with a slightly flat high "A" you may want to seat the reed in further to get it spot on as this could clash with other instruments also playing this note. Tuning tape is a must for this operation as you'll want to be able to adjust the chanter in any condition. I, personally, tune the low "A" just a tad sharp and use tape to flatten it back down to B Flat. Having that adjustability is crucial for fine tuning yourself with other instruments. The less you have to move the reed, the better. A small bit of tape on every hole allows for adjustment of every note.Side note: You may find that you have to adjust your high and low G a tad sharper than normal since it won't mesh very well with other instruments who play the same note.If you don't have a B flat chanter and reed, you might be able to experiment with seating the reed much farther out of the chanter and taping the holes quite a bit. The issue with this is that the reed won't be very stable when seated further out like that. The chanter will also be more likely to chirp and squeal on top hand grace notes with excessive amounts of tape. Over-taping will also lose the volume, resonance, and tone that your chanter previously produced. It is much better to have a dedicated chanter to use for playing in B flat. Adjusting Drones:Since our drones are set up to play at modern bagpipe pitch, we'll also have to tune them back down to B flat. There are two ways to do this. You can use drone/drone reed extenders to lengthen the bore or you can adjust your own reeds and manipulate them to sit at a lower pitch. External drone extenders are great since they require virtually no set up. The external model allows you to fit it into the ring cap of your drone and the reeds won't have to be touched at all. The internal model requires you to screw the piece into the place of your standard tuning screw. These internal extenders only work for MG and Ezee drone reeds. Without the use of drone extenders you might be able to set your own reeds to play at a lower pitch. You can seat the reed further out of the drone as well as lengthen the screw to balance the tuning better.If you find yourself playing multiple performances with a B flat setup, you may find it easier to have another bagpipe that is totally dedicated to playing in this lower pitch. The effort is great when it comes to resetting your instrument to play at B flat and takes practice. A committed set might be a good way to make the challenge easier in addition to having a B flat chanter and drone extenders on hand.Other instruments:Pipers usually play with drummers as they don't need to worry about the key of the tune. When it comes to melodic instruments, it becomes somewhat more complicated. Here are some common instruments that the pipes are often paired with:Pianos and Keyboards:An acoustic grand piano or pipe organ paired with the pipes is a great combination. You will definitely have to be in B flat for this pairing. Accordion or concertina players will also need to be played with a B flat instrument since they have no way to adjust their pitch. Electric keyboards and synths are somewhat easier. Some models allow you to automatically transpose and adjust the pitch to whatever the player desires. For this, you won't even need to adjust to B flat as the piano can tune to you. However the piano player will most always tell you to be in a specific key. (B flat)Guitars and other Stringed Instruments:Stringed instruments are a great addition to the sounds of the highland pipes. Guitars are fairly simple to get into tune with a B flat set of pipes. While it can be tuned sharper to play with a standard set of pipes, most players won't want to adjust their instrument to fit us as they can break strings. Depending on their tuning preference, a guitarist can also use a "capo" to change the key of their guitar. Electric guitar players might also be able to adjust their pitch via an effect pedal, which can affect the pitch of the instrument in small increments. Any kind of bowed instrument like a violin or cello is best suited with a B flat set. The makers of these instruments design the body and strings to play specific notes in standardized ranges. Making them adjust to us could prove problematic for their instrument. While these instruments might be able to push for the standard highland pipe pitch, B flat is probably best for this pairing.Whistles and Brass:The timbre of the Irish whistle or flute greatly compliments the highland pipes. Pipers who double as whistle players will often start with a tin whistle in the key of D. The highland pipes require whistles in E flat to blend the tuning. Both high and low E flat whistles would work. The E flat whistles will need to be transposed since B flat on the whistle is actually where the highland pipe "E note" would be. This means that the whistle can glide both above and below the highland pipe scale while playing a tune. B flat whistles would also work, however you would lose the crucial "low G" note as well as the rest of the natural whistle scale. The tuning of the whistle is mainly reliant on the temperature. Some whistles are made from a metal like steel or aluminum. They will likely be flat at the start of playing since they are cooler, but as they get warmed up, their pitch will rise to the appropriate note (like the highland pipes). Some whistles are also tunable, in which case, one might not need a B flat bagpipe to mesh the two instruments. Brass instruments like the trumpet or trombone are also a great pairing. Keep in mind that while our pipes get sharper as we play, the brass instruments will flatten with time. Brass instruments pair best with a B flat setup.Volume:One of the biggest flaws with our instrument is the inability to adjust our volume. In the case of acoustic instruments like whistles, piano, and guitar, amplification by speaker is the simplest way to blend the mix. The pipes are overpowering for quiet instruments and won't be heard by a live audience without a microphone and speaker. For larger shows, every instrument (including the pipes) should be mic'ed and blended by a professional live sound mixer. One might also be able to experiment with chanter reeds and see if a quieter and more mellow sound is achievable. But the Highland pipes were not made to be a quiet instrument. For classical ensembles like an orchestra or a choir, a bagpipe can fit in this mix well. The dynamics and music for these groups is meant to be performed without the need for amplification. Some experimentation with positioning of the players might be needed to establish the best volume mix (position the piper(s) behind the strings or brass etc.). I've personally played with many different groups including folk bands, orchestras, choirs, and rock bands and every situation is slightly different in terms volume and mix adjustment.Final Words:The combination of pipes with other musicians is a refreshing change from typical pipe band or solo performances. You can bet that the attention will be on the piper during any mash-up of instruments. With some instances, you can get away with a standard pitched set of pipes, but it is almost always better to be in B flat where other instruments are comfortable. Playing live with others is a fantastic experience as well as recording. With the addition of Midi and digitized instruments, the options for new music and recording opportunities are virtually endless. Adding effects to the pipes and using them in a musically contemporary way keeps the innovation of our music moving forward. It is also entertaining for others to see the pipes used in a different way. Tasteful combinations with the pipes will continue to promote excitement and uphold the notable reputation of this ancient instrument.Feel free to get in touch with us about any questions or comments! Call us on 800-426-7268Email us at: admin@jhiggins.net Once or twice, Ive had students insist to me that a Cb is the same as a B. Each time, I have to remind them that, actually theyre not the same note at all and as singers its very important to remember that.Now, many of you may go huh? I thought a Cb and a B were the same note? Theyre the same key on a piano!. They are indeed the same key, but theyre not actually the same note. As a t-shirt I bought in Thailand says Same Same, But Different.About 300 years ago, Western music adopted Equal Temperament. In essence, this is where all instruments (pianos in particular) are tuned so that all intervals are exactly the same*, even though in the natural world, theyre not. So your beloved piano is, by the wonders of modernity and our desperate need to enforce order in a chaotic world, tuned slightly flat at one end and sharp at the other. So, in the world of equal temperament, yes, a Cb looks and sounds and sings like a B. But its not a B.Outside our crazy, regimented Western music, a Cb is fractionally higher than a B. Which brings us back to bagpipes. Bagpipes are not tuned to equal temperament! Theyre tuned to Just Intonation (or, as I like to think of it, left in their wild slightly-unharmonious natural state). This is why their intervals sound slightly strange to us, as though theyre not quite in tune. In reality, the bagpipes are actually -in- tune, and the rest of our music isnt. Kinda.Acappella singing also tends to drift towards just intonation. I suspect this is why its blindingly obvious when TV shows and films like Glee and Pitch Perfectuse voice samples plugged through a keyboard to fill out the acappella singing. It just doesnt sound right, and I wonder if its because actually, true acappella singing is justly intonated, not equally tempered.So there you have it, a short explanation of why bagpipes sound weird, and also why the voice is the most flexible instrument out there it can be equally tempered and justly intonated without any trouble.If you want more, the Wikipedia pages are pretty good, and I believe Ross Duffins How Equal Temperament Ruined Harmony and Why You Should Care comes pretty well recommended. *The intervals are not all the same length because the frequency ratios differ slightly for each pair of notes. Equal Temperament is an average ratio, based on the ratios of the note A, which has nice neat frequencies of 110hz, 220hz, 330hz, 440hz etc. For a more detailed explanation, see the Wikipedia page, or speak to a music teacher! Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. The finger holes share a familiarity with a recorder. The chanter makes nine notes from low G, low A, B, C, D, E, F, high G, and high A. These notes don't exactly correspond to modern tuning, the A most pipers play to is closer to a B flat. Inside the chanter is a small reed which is made of cane or increasingly a synthetic plastic material. The smaller the reed the louder the sound it creates by vibrating then projecting a sound. This is also why you need a bag to push enough air through to get the stiff reed vibrating. Highland bagpipe music is written in the key of D major, where the C and F are sharp. Due to the lack of chromatic notes, to change key is also to change mode. Watch Finlay play the chanter

Different bagpipes. Bagpipes are annoying. What key are bagpipes in. Can bagpipes play in any key. Do bagpipes come in different keys.