

IELTS Academic Reading Sample Paper 9

For questions 1 – 8 label the diagram below. Choose A LETTER or ONE WORD from the passage for each answer.

Bagpipe Finger Positions

There are nine notes most commonly played on the Great Highland Bagpipe. This page shows charts and diagrams for the hand and fingering positions for the bagpipe/practice chanter and explains how to play each of these individual notes as well as several less commonly played notes.

The nine basic notes are sounded using the eight finger holes found on the chanter. The holes are named for the note that is sounded when that hole is open. Located on the front of the chanter are seven holes. Located from the bottom up are Low-A up to High-G. Located on the back near the top is High-A. (Pipers typically don't refer to a "Low-G hole" as Low-G is sounded when all the finger holes are closed. If anything, such a term would apply to the opening the base of the chanter or, if present, the twin vents located to either side below the Low-A hole.)

Finger Locations

On the two hands, the only fingers not used to sound notes are the left little finger — completely unused, if a piper were to choose a finger to be amputated, this would be it! — and the right thumb which simply holds the chanter. Positioning the hands, the left index finger covers the High-G hole, and the right index finger covers the D hole. The rest of the fingers fall into place. Note: This information is oriented to the standard "right-handed" hand positions. Much like guitars, many left-handed people opt to learn the pipe pipes as a right-hander. One left-handed piper I know wishes he had, in fact, learned as a right-hander. (In his case, simply for uniformity with other band members.) That said, it is perfectly acceptable to play left-handed.

Finger/Hand/Arm Positioning

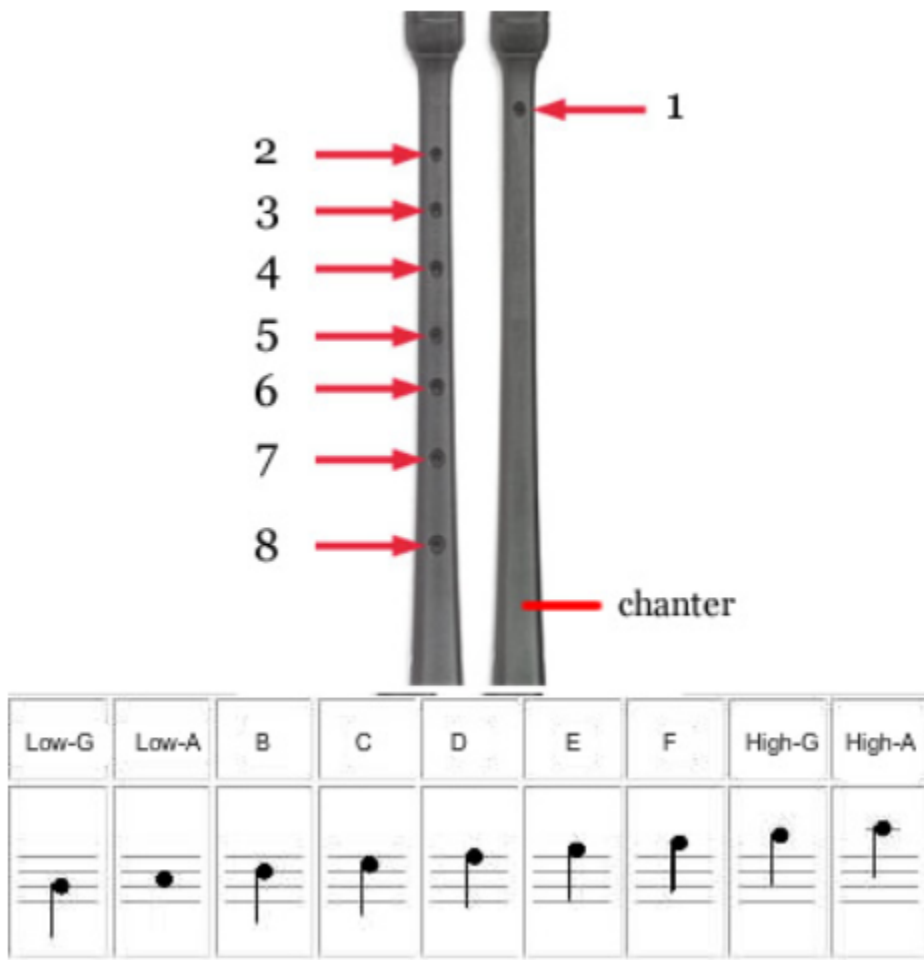
A few things to know. The chanter is not played with the fingertips, which is a common beginner's error. With the left (top) hand, the holes are covered with the pads of the fingers in front of the joint. With the right (bottom) hand, the holes are covered behind the first joint, with the exception of the little finger which is played with the pad in front of the joint. The top thumb's pad covers the High-A hole. The bottom thumb holds the chanter a little lower than is typically natural, that is, it rests in the vicinity of where the C finger is on the opposite side of the chanter, perhaps a little lower or higher, but definitely below the level of the D finger. The fingers are kept relatively straight, though not locked stiff, just ever so slightly curved. The back of each hand should be parallel with the back of the forearm, not bent in, not bent out. You should be able to rest a ruler along the back of both the arm and the hand without a gap.

When you raise fingers to play notes, they should be raised approximately the thickness of a finger. To be safe, if you were to pass a finger under that raised finger, the passing finger should brush both the chanter and the raised finger. A little higher is fine, you want the finger high enough that the note will sound clearly, but not have "fly away finger"

syndrome"—, you need to keep control. Also a raised finger should stay above its hole so it's ready to come straight down to close the hole, not having to move forward, backward or side to side to meet the hole.

A quick word about that unused high-hand little finger. That little finger will "float" with the E finger, just tagging along with the ride. You don't want to make any effort to force it somewhere it doesn't naturally go. It should have a relaxed natural slight curl. If it goes up when raising the E finger, that's fine. If it goes down when lowering the E finger, that's fine. If you find that it bumps into anything, either the chanter or your other fingers, then you probably need to angle your top hand more—imagine that your index finger is the pivot and you back your E finger away from the chanter a bit. Just ignore it and let it do what it wants to do. After a while, you'll never even think about it. Text copyright 2004-2007 Andrew T. Lenz, Jr., www.BagpipeJourney.com. Used with permission.

For questions 1 – 8 label the diagram below. Choose A LETTER or ONE WORD from the passage for each answer.



For questions 9 – 15 complete the sentences below. Choose NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS from passage 3 for each answer.

Guitar players and pipers who are left-handed can play their instruments as if

Beginners tend to think that the chanter is played with

While the

hole is covered by the left hand, the right thumb just holds the chanter.

It is important to keep the back of

neither bent in nor bent out.

Why is it important to keep a raised finger just above its hole?

What shouldn't the left hand pinky do?

What should you imagine your index finger to look like if your high-hand pinky does not "flow" naturally?