

# Traditional Music in Scotland

The country of Scotland has many traditions that people relate to. Scotland is well-known for the long tradition of Celtic (folk) music and playing musical instruments. Some of the instruments played in Scottish traditional music are quite unusual and rare, but Scottish music has influenced many different genres of music around the world.

On many of the Scottish islands and on the Scottish mainland, there are children and adults who have taken up playing an instrument because members of their families play one. The skill learned by one family member is often passed on to the younger generations. Of course, lots of people take up an instrument simply because they like the sound it makes!

Scottish folk music has traditionally included a number of seemingly unusual instruments, such as the bagpipes. It is thought that the bagpipes were first introduced by the Gaels of Ireland in the 6th century, over 1400 years ago. The earliest recorded mention of bagpipes in Scottish history is from the 15th century. Most people think of the Great Highland bagpipe when thinking about Scottish music.



The Great Highland bagpipe (or the 'piob mhó' in Gaelic) was developed in Scotland, along with other styles. Bagpipes are comprised of a bag filled with air which sits under the player's arm, some tall pipes that come out of the bag and a pipe that the player blows into. This pipe looks similar to a recorder, with holes in it to create the varying notes. Bagpipes come in different sizes and shapes; they can produce very different sounds depending on what kind they are. There are many contemporary Scottish bands who use bagpipes. Some examples are Skerryvore, Skipinnish, Tidelines and The Peatbog Fairies.

The tin whistle is another traditional Scottish wind instrument which bears a resemblance to the recorder. Despite its name, today tin whistles are usually made from brass, nickel, aluminium or plastic, though the cultural history of the whistle does owe a lot to tin. It has six finger holes and a mouthpiece, also known as a fipple. The player blows into it and uses their fingers to cover holes to make different notes. It makes a higher-pitched sound than the bagpipes and is often used in Celtic or Scottish folk music. People who play the bagpipes or the flute can often play the tin whistle too.



## Traditional Music in Scotland

The accordion is another wind instrument but it uses bellows to make sound, rather than someone blowing into it. Many Scottish islanders play this instrument. It has one side which looks like a small piano and one side which has up to 120 buttons on it!



Stringed instruments are also used - and have been used for a long time - in traditional Scottish music. Some examples are the guitar, the harp and the fiddle. A harp is plucked with your fingers, and is so large that a harpist has to sit down to play it! In contrast, the fiddle is played by sitting the instrument under your chin. It has four strings and is played with a bow: the bow has lots of fine hairs that brush against the strings to make a noise. The fiddler puts pressure on the strings with their fingers in different places to make different pitches of note.



### Did You Know?

- Due to the number of strings on the harp (up to 47), it can take many years to learn to play.
- The fiddle can also be called the violin, depending on the kind of music it is playing. 'Violin' is used for classical and jazz music, while 'fiddle' is used for folk, country and bluegrass.
- Violin bows are usually made out of real horse hair!



Another Scottish instrument is the bodhran. It is a hand-held drum, played with a special wooden beater with two ends.

Many of these instruments are played as part of a Ceilidh band. A Ceilidh is a special event where a band plays well-known Scottish songs and people dance to the songs. A Ceilidh band often includes a guitar, a fiddle, an accordion and drums.



# Questions

1. What is Scottish folk music called?

---

2. What is a 'tradition'?

---

---

3. Why might people take up a traditional Scottish instrument?

---

---

4. When were the bagpipes introduced to Scotland?

---

---

5. What are the Great Highland bagpipes known as in Gaelic?

---

---

6. Can you name two Scottish bands who still use the bagpipes?

---

---

7. What are tin whistles made from? Why do you think they are no longer made from tin?

---

---

8. What is the name of the instrument which uses bellows to make sound?

---

9. What is a Ceilidh?

---

---

10. Which of these instruments would you choose to play? Explain your answer.

---

---

---



# Money Problems



**1** Solve these problems. Write the answers in the answer boxes below the questions.

- a** Find the difference in cost between seven pizzas at £2.36 each and five lasagnes at £2.25 each.
- b** Colin has £8.30. Helen has three fifths of this amount. How much have they altogether?
- c** Tara has spent  $\frac{1}{6}$  of her pocket money on a book and  $\frac{2}{3}$  of her money on some jeans. What fraction of her money was unspent?
- d** 11 children each had an equal share of a sum of money. They each received £1.18 and there was 2p left over. Find the sum of money.
- e** Work out the change you'd get from £16.00 after spending £9.48 and £5.82.

**a**  **b**  **c**  **d**  **e**

**2** Work out the original cost for each half-price amount shown below.

**a** £27.16  **b** £49.20  **c** £35.13

**3** How much does one of each cost?

**a** 10 for £4.60  **b** 9 for £14.04  **c** 5 for £11.00

**4** Subtract each of these amounts from £100. Give your answer using the £ sign.

**a** 97p  **b** 1434p  **c** £81.29

**5** Work out the answers to these questions in your head.

**a** 25 FIFTIES + 25 TENS =  **c** £4.89 - £2.22 - 42p =

**b** (£4.75 + £2.25) ÷ 14 =  **d** £0.14 × 15 × 2 =

