

# McCALLUM BAGPIPES REVIEW

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McCallum Bagpipes have a reputation as a great sounding bagpipe and a very cost effective alternative with exceptional customer service. This review is of a set of AB2 Bagpipes which are one of the better “entry level” sets. They come with nickel ferrules, slides and ring caps and imitation ivory Projecting mounts.



The pipes on first inspection appear to be traditionally shaped with some modernising of the fountain around the drone tops. They have nice clean turning and bores. The bores had good uniformity with most parts being interchangeable with the ferrules and mounts being accurately fitted. The projecting mounts are nicely shaped and formed of a cream coloured plastic without a grain pattern like many other modern makers. The beading and combing is of good quality. The combing is not deep and features 8 threads.

The nickel alloy mounts on the pipes were nicely shaped and very well made. They are all threaded and glued onto the pipes. The alloy used does not appear to tarnish and dull like most nickel pipes. A real plus!



Hemp retainers are fitted to the instrument. These are made of plastic and are perfectly sized. The bass upper section does not have one, and that presumably is a sound issue? The shape of hemp retainers are known to change the sound of a drone.



The blow stick has a good size bore as does the mouthpiece so as not to cause a blowing restriction. The stocks all have a taper around the top edge making insertion of parts easier. It probably assists to restrict any potential cracking as well.



The drones were very easy to set up and accepting of different types of reeds. Crozier, Canning, Kinnaird and Ezeedrone reeds were all “plug and play” and a good result was obtained from them all. The drones have a full resonant and vibrant tone. The tenors produced an average of 119db at the bushes and the bass 115db. This is a good strong volume with good bass/tenor balance, giving a good rich dominance from the bass without being over bearing.



The chanter that came with this bagpipe was the poly version which was bright and quite true straight out of the box. It was very easily reeded. Both a ridge cut and straight cut reed suited the chanter well. There were no obvious flaws in its performance, good stability, brightness and very good volume. Piobaireachd High G was also very stable and pleasantly toned.

A visit to the McCallum Bagpipes website at <http://www.mccallumbagpipes.com/> will show the extent of their range. These are great looking sets of pipes, which are well made with a very good sound and reasonable price tag.

Available from: [http://www.schoolofpiping.com/shop/bagpipes\\_and\\_accessories.html](http://www.schoolofpiping.com/shop/bagpipes_and_accessories.html)

An advertisement for the website schoolofpiping.com. It features a dark background with a photograph of several bagpipe chanter reeds. To the right of the reeds, the text reads: "articles, reviews, sound files photo albums, audio lessons news, historic information and more for the piper at every level!". At the bottom of the advertisement, the website address "www.schoolofpiping.com" is written in a large, yellow, sans-serif font.

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