***Lesson 52: Playing First Tunes No Drones***

Materials

* Set of bagpipes
* Chanter Cap
* Drone corks
* Ear plugs

Lesson Summary

* Once you have gotten comfortable sustaining notes of the scale for several seconds each and playing basic exercises on the pipes, you are ready to attempt your first tune on the pipes with your drones corked - Blanchard’s Hornpipe
  + We are going to follow the same the progression on the pipes that we did on the chanter in practicing basic tunes on the pipes first before moving on to more complicated ones; this will allow you more time to focus on the physical aspect of the instrument than being preoccupied with executing difficult tunes on the pipes
* As you attempt the tune for the first time, focus on the following:
  + How am I breathing? Am I employing the breathing method described in previous videos?
  + Am I exerting firm pressure with my left arm to give myself a break when I inhale?
  + How is the pressure when I am on top hand notes? Am I making sure to keep the pressure at a constant level?
  + How is the pitch overall? Am I letting certain notes waver or dip in pitch, or am I maintaining a smooth, even pitch on every note?
  + Am I keeping the bag 90-100% full of air at all times?
  + Are my fingers relaxed and straight as I play, or am I gripping too tightly?
  + Am I executing clean transitions between notes, without crossing noises, just as I would on the practice chanter?
* It is likely that you will not be able to play the entire tune from start to finish the first time you attempt it, and that is completely fine and to be expected
  + *\*\*Rather than focusing on trying to get everything perfect right from the outset, focus on making small improvements every time you practice. To be successful, you need to be in this for the long game, not expecting immediate results in the short term!*
  + It is typical for it to take you days or weeks before you can play an entire tune on the pipes from start to finish with no mistakes. Keep this in mind as you set expectations for yourself