



## The Nerve Buster Game - Defeat Performance Anxiety with Digital Recording.

The nerve-buster technique is simple. We're going to play a game using the digital recorder that helps us practice playing under pressure. With enough practice, we'll be able to get rid of performance nerves.

On this page, we'll explain the two very simple rules of the game. Then, in the following pages, we'll teach you the tools and techniques you need to record your piping so you can play the game as often as you'd like to, from the comfort of home!

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### Rule #1: I Get One Take, and One Take Only.

The first rule of the game is simple, but it absolutely must be followed, with no exceptions, ever.

**The rule is:** Once your pipes are warmed up, you turn on the recorder, and you get one chance to record. From there, you stop the recorder, and that's that. No re-dos. No woulda-coulda-shoulda's.

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### Rule #2: I Will Email These Recordings to FIVE Pipers That Are Better Than Me.

This rule is also NOT OPTIONAL. It brings the high-stakes to the game.

**The rule is:** You will email your recordings to five pipers that are better than you. If you have a Pipe Major, he/she must be one of the pipers. If you have a Pipe Sergeant, he/she must be one of the pipers. If you have a private teacher, he/she must be one of the pipers. If you are a Dojo University Member, we must be one of the pipers.

Meanwhile, once you've done this for a wee while, you should develop a fan base! Post these recordings to your social media and allow all of your friends, family, and fans to hear you. It'll be great to get your name out there!

...and it'll just amp up that pressure. Which is what we want.



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## How/Why This Game “Busts” Your Nerves

Anybody can record themselves playing. But, we need to go the extra mile if we actually want to *use the recorder as a tool to make ourselves better.*

So, why are we allowed only 1 take? It's because *in real life, you're only going to be allowed one chance at a great performance.*

Why do we have to send the recordings to pipers that are better than us? Because, *in real life, we compete/perform in front of highly educated audiences.*

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## The Recorder Helps Us Simulate (and/or AMPLIFY) Real Life!

That is the magic of recording! We don't record ourselves so that we can admire ourselves. We don't even record ourselves to “try to hear what we can fix.”

***We record ourselves to simulate - and hopefully to AMPLIFY - the experience of playing under pressure.***

If you can produce a *more intense performance environment* from the comfort of home than you experience out in the real world, you'll no longer experience negative nerves during the real-world performances that really “matter.”

Then, once you get in the *habit* of producing high-pressure recordings, and you do it MANY times, you're just going to get better, and better, and better.

# Play the Game. It Works.

Next up, let's dive into the logistics. We're going to need to set up our recording studio. And that's what we'll do, and we'll do it for cheap!



# Building (and Using) Your Own Bagpipe Recording Studio - for Under \$100!

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## Introduction:

Recording is a hugely important part of being a great musician, and, therefore, a great piper. There are so many things that go on during a performance - Scale Navigation, Rhythm, Articulations, Expression, Dynamics... not to mention nerves, adrenaline, and pressure - it's impossible to add *detailed analysis* into that mix in real-time.

That, of course, is where the recording will come in. However, it can be difficult to get a good bagpipe recording, and difficult to work with a recording that you do get, due to the challenges of digital sound. All of this having been said: with a very small investment in the right gear, and a very brief tour of digital audio fundamentals, you'll be off to the races in no time, and you'll have a VERY POWERFUL tool at your disposal from here on out.

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## What's In This Guide

In this guide, I'm going to show you how to build and how to use a high-quality recording studio in your own practice space, on a limited budget.

Yes, you're going to have to shell out a few dollars to do this the right way, but you'll have the benefit of knowing this is what I use personally, and what the Dojo Universe (i.e. students all over the world) use to create high quality audio for development, publication, analysis, and expert feedback.

Here's a quick run-down of what the following pages will include:

1. A Shopping/Acquisition List of items that will make up your studio. I'll include some approximate pricing and where to find the items.
2. A Studio "Flow" Checklist - This is a step-by-step description of what to do (and in what order) when producing a recording in your studio.

Let's get started!

## Studio Shopping/Acquisition List

Here are the essential items you'll need for your studio.

Item Name	Approximate Cost	Required?	Where to find it
Decent Computer with USB Ports	(You already have one if you're reading this!)	Yes	
Zoom Q2HD Audio/Video Recorder (or any Zoom Q series recorder)	\$199 New, but under \$100 if you find used Zoom's online!	Yes	Musician's Friend, ZZounds, B&H Photo
Tripod	\$25	Recommended	Amazon
128GB SD Memory Card	\$35	Recommended	Amazon
Audacity Digital Audio Editing Software	FREE!	Yes	<a href="http://audacityteam.org/">http://audacityteam.org/</a>
Audio Sharing Service [We recommended SoundCloud, Dropbox, and/or Google Drive]	Free to start with, pay small fee for more storage.	Recommended	<a href="https://soundcloud.com">SoundCloud.com</a> , <a href="https://dropbox.com">dropbox.com</a> , <a href="https://drive.google.com">drive.google.com</a> , respectively

## Notes On Your Acquisition Items

**A ‘Decent’ Computer:** I’m going to be honest here. If your computer was built in 1984, you’re going to have trouble with the audio importing, editing, and sharing. However, chances are, if you’re reading this PDF now you’ll be ok to get started.

**Zoom Q2HD Recorder:** Actually, I’m well aware that, at the time I’m writing this, Zoom no longer makes the Q2! However, this is what I still use, and you can still find them on eBay and Amazon for a pretty good price!

Meanwhile, anything in the Zoom “Q” Series is amazing. The Zoom Q4, which will work wonders for you, is (currently) around \$199, and it will do all you’ll ever need for a great sounding studio.

The Zoom is an amazing product for several reasons:

1. It has a simple interface and produces an AMAZING quality of recording.
2. It’s extremely portable, so you can record “in the field” as well as in your home-studio.
3. It does HD video as well as high-fidelity audio, so you can make great YouTube Videos of your performances (if you want to).

4. It can be used as a USB mic, so as to “cut out the middle man” of first storing the audio to a Micro SD card before importing.

The moral of the story? This is a magical investment for any bagpiper. Break open the piggy bank and let’s do this thing!

**Tripod:** This is just a good thing to have for a couple of reasons. First off, the *positioning of the microphone relative to the pipes* is a very important aspect of creating a great quality recording. Rather than trying to “rig something up” to put the recorder on, it’s best to just have a tripod to use.

Second, if you do ever want to use the HD video function of your Zoom recorder, you’re going to want a nice steady shot provided by your tripod.

**128GB SD Card:** The Zoom comes with a basic memory card, but you’ll want to upgrade to the 128GB to get maximum storage on your device. It’s always a bummer when you realize that great performance never got recorded due to running out of storage on your device!

(PS: Read the instructions on your device carefully to make sure you buy the right type of memory card!)

**Audacity Software:** Yep, this software is free, and magical. Download and install it to be able to import, edit, and export to any file format you want (usually MP3).

**Audio Sharing Service:** The age of emailing large files is over, thanks to the magical “cloud” world we now live in. Using services like SoundCloud, DropBox, and Google Drive, we can now simply share a link in an email that *points to* a file on the cloud - a MUCH better way to share files than before.

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## How to Use Your Studio

Now that you have the ingredients you need to create amazing bagpipe recordings, it's now time to use them!

On the next page, you'll find a 12-step checklist that you can pin up in your practice-room/studio, to make sure you get everything right.

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## Extra: How I Use My Studio

I use my studio on a daily basis whenever I am in high-gear preparing for a competition or performance. Once it is set up, it is so easy to get high-quality recordings that I can use for analysis.

Let me quickly outline my personal process:

- I use my 12-step process (see next page) to get my performances into a high quality MP3 file.
- I upload my audio to my SoundCloud account as soon as I'm done.
- From this point, I send the SoundCloud links to my most respected peers and teachers, to get their feedback (or simply for them to enjoy!)
- Meanwhile, *I can listen to my recordings* anywhere I want to, all day long using my SoundCloud app on my phone. There's no better way to prepare for tomorrow's practice session than to have carefully studied the previous days' strengths and weaknesses!

What will your daily studio routine be? Be sure to contact us and let us know!

## Your 12-Step Studio “Flow” Checklist

Complete this step-by-step process (in order) to create great quality recordings in your bagpipe studio.

**Important:** For a detailed explanation and tutorial on any of these 12 steps, see our “Create Your Bagpipe Recording Studio” Video Success Plan Course at [DojoUniversity.com](http://DojoUniversity.com)!

- Make sure you’re in a place that your bagpipes sound great, and that there is little to no background noise.
- Carefully position the microphone *exactly where you’d like your ears to be if you were listening to yourself.*
- Set your levels, so as to avoid distortion but achieve fullest possible audio signal.
- [Recommended] Do a test and play it back to make sure you like the quality of sound.
- Record your performance(s). You don’t need to stop and restart the recorder in between sets - we’re going to edit it later!
- Stop the recorder, and connect device to your PC (Or, optionally, simply insert the SD card into your computer if it has an SD port).
- Import new audio to a dedicated folder on your PC.
- [Recommended] Clean un-needed audio off of your device, so as never to run out of space!
- Import your audio into Audacity Software. Edit the audio by separating out the different sets, adding fade-ins and fade-outs, and/or adding special effects like reverb/EQ/etc.
- Export individual audio tracks to desired format, usually MP3 (remember: the smaller the file, the greater the loss in quality, and vice versa)
- Upload your MP3 file(s) to your audio-sharing platform (SoundCloud, Dropbox, Google Drive, etc.)
- Share the **link** *not the file* with friends, teachers, and fans!