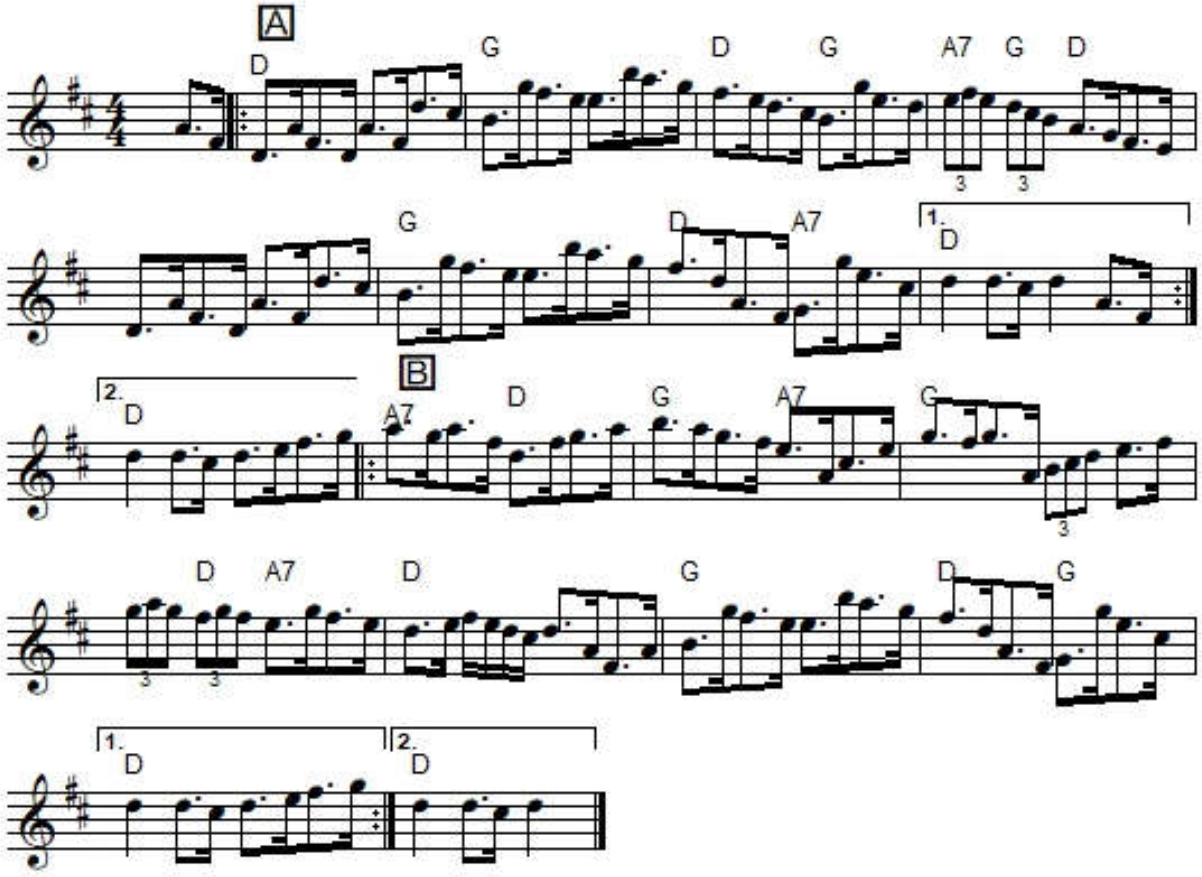
The Tailor's Twist



"The Tailor's Twist", in Gaelic "*Casadh an táilliúra*", also known as "The Jolly Butchers", "Spellan the Fiddler" is an Irish hornpipe in D Major. The parts are played AABB.

A 'tailor's twist' refers to thread that is stored by twisting in a figure '8' pattern around two dowels, rather than around a spool. The tune was first recorded by fiddler James Morrison (1893-1947) on August 10th, 1935, for Columbia Records as one of a set of two hornpipes. Morrison was born in Drumfin, near Collooney, south County Sligo and died in New York in 1947. He was a contemporary of Sligo fiddler Michael Coleman and was nicknamed 'the Professor' because of his love of teaching the instrument. New York fiddlers Andy McGann and Paddy Reynolds recorded the tune in the late 1970's. The tune was also associated with piper Tommy Reck, from whom Brendan Breathnach transcribed the tune for his ***Ceol Rince na hÉirreann* vol. III**. In fact, the tune has become an important piece in the modern uilleann pipe repertoire, popularized by not only Reck but Liam O'Flynn and Brian McNamara as well. It appears in the Roche collection under the title "The Jolly Butchers".

It was printed by Breathnach in ***Ceol Rince na* hÉirreann III** (1985), Bulmer & Sharpley's **Music from Ireland, vol. 3** (1976), Miller's **Fiddler's Throne** (2004), Peoples' **Fifty Irish Fiddle Tunes** (1986), Phillips' **Fiddlecase Tunebook** (1989), Roche's **Collection of Traditional Irish Music, vol. 2** (1912) and **Treoir**, vol. 36, No. 2 (2004).

It was recorded by Brian Conway on **Consider the Source** (2008), Brian McNamara on **A Piper's Dream**, Ken Perlman's **Clawhammer Banjo and Fingerstyle Guitar Solos**, Tommy Reck's **The Stone in the Field** (1977), Jimmy O'Brien-Moran on **Seán Reid's Favourite** (1996) and Andy McGann and Paddy Reynolds on ***Ón tSean-Am Anall***.