Latitude
Latin Rock Percussion

User Guide

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Introduction

Foreword

Latitude Latin Rock Percussion is the culmination of over ten years of development. In addition to being our most expansive and advanced virtual instrument to date, it debuts new proprietary technology to give you unparalleled realism and playability.

We went to great lengths to authentically and deeply sample each instrument. When it comes to the engine that hosts these instruments, an extraordinary amount of deliberation went into making the workflow as efficient and intuitive as possible without sacrificing any flexibility.

We can’t wait for you to explore Latitude Latin Rock Percussion’s sounds, and we’re confident they will provide fresh rhythmic inspiration and valuable new sonic textures for your productions.

The Team

Chris Poehler

Latitude Latin Rock Percussion was co-produced by Chris Poehler, who personally curated the instruments and guided the sample recording process. Beyond organizing the logistics for the audio content, he also oversaw the library’s overarching design and development.

Chris has been involved with practically every facet of the music industry. As an educator, his former students include luminaries such as John Patitucci and Eric Persing. A prolific bandleader in his own right, Chris has shared the stage with legends such as Frank Sinatra, Louis Armstrong, Earl "Fatha" Hines, Stan Kenton, and George Benson. Chris’s expertise extends into the digital realm; he studied FM synthesis under John Chowning at Stanford University and was also featured as a performer on *The Nonesuch Guide to Electronic Music*. Additionally, Chris wrote compositions for Columbia Pictures Publications and contributed to the film scores for *Apocalypse Now* and *The Black Stallion*.

Ed Smith

The percussion was performed by Ed Smith, a premier session drummer, percussionist, composer, and producer. Within the Latin music world, Ed has performed and recorded with icons such as Juan Gabriel, Sergio Mendes, Tito Puente, Vikki Carr, Pete Escovedo, Francisco Aguabella, Ramon Stagnaro, and others. As an active composer for media, Ed Smith brought an invaluable intuition for the essential sounds and articulations to include in the virtual instrument.

Michael Aarvold

The project was engineered and mixed by Michael Aarvold, whose career encompasses a seemingly endless list of notable artists. His Latin music credits alone include working with icons such as Ricky Martin, Sergio Mendes, Simone (Simone Bittencourt de Oliveira), Caetano Veloso, Selena Quintanilla-Pérez, and Paulo Ricardo, as well as the Barrio Boyzz, Diego Schoening, Camisa De Vênus, Cidadão Quem, and Millie Corretjer. Michael's experience was foundational in ensuring that the sound of every instrument in the library is authentic and mix-ready.

"In an earlier part of my career, I spent literally thousands and thousands of hours working as the 'right hand' person to the legendary engineer Moogie Canazio," Michael writes. "It was through him that I deepened my knowledge of how powerful, impactful and bold Latin percussion in particular can be, as well as how it should sound and be recorded. In this library, the 'Vintage' samples are recorded with the same microphones he taught me to use—some of which cost multiple thousands of dollars in today's marketplace."

The Instruments

In general, Latitude Latin Rock Percussion provides multiple options for each type of percussion instrument. That way you aren't limited to a single choice for an instrument, but have an assortment of vintage, rare, and even handcrafted boutique instruments to choose between when selecting the best sounds for your production.

The Recording

The instruments were sampled at Angel Song Studios, a Los Angeles area recording studio.

All the instruments include a stereo room signal, designed to provide a more distant perspective without inadvertently adding a lot of room ambience as would happen when recording in a concert hall or scoring stage. The room signal is an important factor for getting the instruments to blend together and sound like cohesive, particularly when working with large percussion ensembles.

Depending on the instrument, there are sometimes multiple close signals to blend or select between. For example, the snares have separate top and bottom mic signals, while instruments like djembes and cajons have an additional bottom mic that can be used to add lower bass frequencies. Many instruments offer a choice between vintage and natural mic options to suit the vibe of your track.

Key Features

Latitude Latin Rock Percussion isn't just packed with instruments, it's also loaded with features for getting more realistic percussion tracks. Here's a rundown of some of the highlights:

Playable Rolls: We expanded on the playable roll system introduced in our Paradise Marimba virtual instrument, which lets you actively control the speed and dynamic of rolls. When applicable, the engine uses speed-dependent logic for accurate left and right handed sticking for greater realism.

Sample Shading: Our sample shading technology emulates the difference in sound when playing rapidly. A cymbal struck when already in motion sounds different compared to playing it at rest, a factor that makes a huge difference when paired with the playable roll system.

Predictive Preroll: Originally debuted in our free *Delphi Shakers* instrument released in 2014, this proprietary technology intelligently anticipates MIDI notes during playback, providing the natural air and movement that happens before the sample's main transient.

Best of all, it happens automatically, without the headache of setting negative track delay or manually nudging the MIDI notes to compensate for built-in latency.

Multiple Velocities: We sampled the percussion with multiple velocity layers with loudness interpolation for a smooth gradient between dynamics.

Variable Round-Robin: Our intelligent mapping system allows for each articulation and dynamic to have its own number of round-robin samples. For high-repetition articulations like shaker hits, we provide up to 16 round-robin samples, while more specialized performance effects like swells only need a couple.

Intelligent Release Samples: While release samples themselves aren't a novel concept, we included extra logic that ensures that you get a smooth transition at any duration. This is particularly noticeable in articulations like cymbal chokes. That way the release samples sound like a smooth, natural conclusion to the sustain sample and not a separate event being triggered.

Installation

Step 1: Extract the ZIP File

The first thing you need to do after downloading the ZIP file from your account on the Orange Tree Samples website is to extract Latitude Latin Rock Percussion. Both Windows and macOS can natively extract ZIP files without requiring other software. The entire library is self-contained within this ZIP file, so you can always move the folder afterwards to relocate the library anywhere you like.

Step 2: Activate Through Native Access

After the library has been extracted, it needs to be activated using the Native Access application.

Run Native Access and log into your Native Instruments account, registering an account if necessary. Next, click the "Add a serial" button and enter your serial number for Latitude Latin Rock Percussion, which can be found in your order confirmation email as well as in your account on the Orange Tree Samples website.

Afterward, click the "Add Product" button next to Latitude Latin Rock Percussion‘s listing in Native Access and then click the “Choose a location” button, which lets you browse to the library's folder. That way Native Access knows where you've installed the library. In this case, you'll need to select the main "Latitude Latin Rock Percussion" folder.

> *Tip: If you ever move the library's folder after it's been activated, you'll need to reopen Native Access to update its records about where the library's folder is currently located. Afterwards, Native Access automatically relays this information to software like Kontakt, Komplete Kontrol, and Maschine.*

Step 3: Load in Kontakt

Next, launch the Kontakt plugin or standalone application. You should see Latitude Latin Rock Percussion appear in Kontakt’s browser as a graphical tile. Clicking on it will open a list of all the available presets that come with the library. We have organized the presets

into various banks to help you quickly get to different categories of presets, or you can load the “Latitude Latin Rock Percussion” option at the top of the list to load the blank, initialized preset.

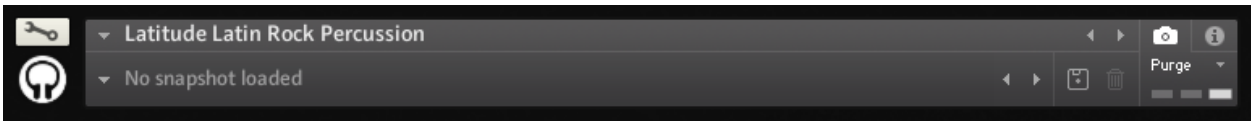
Kontakt Sample Library Organization

As your collection of Kontakt libraries expands, it's important to keep them organized. For example, keep them all within a main "Kontakt Sample Libraries" folder rather than leaving them in your downloads folder, desktop, or scattered around your hard drive. Backing up the installation files for your sample libraries is also a good idea, although you’ll always be able to re-download the library from your account on the Orange Tree Samples website if necessary.

Factory Presets

Latitude Latin Rock Percussion uses Kontakt's snapshot preset system to manage factory and user presets. This offers a convenient way to navigate through presets one-by-one, or access a dropdown list of all the available presets. It also integrates nicely with the Native Komplete Standard, which gives you access to the presets through the Komplete Kontrol software as well as hardware such as the Kontrol S-Series keyboards and Maschine.

You can access the snapshots from the header portion of the instrument's interface, which is directly above the instrument’s interface.



Kontakt’s snapshot preset system

In order to see the snapshot controls as shown in the picture above, the camera icon needs to be selected (as opposed to the "i" icon, which is for accessing the audio and MIDI settings and other instrument-related options). In the snapshot preset panel, you can click on the downward-pointing arrow button to the left of the snapshot name to open a dropdown menu of all the presets available. You can also audition the presets one-by-one by using the left and right arrow buttons to the right of the snapshot name.

When you first open the instrument, there isn't a snapshot loaded, which is why it shows "No snapshot loaded". Without a snapshot preset loaded, the instrument is in its default, initialized state.

You can store your own user presets using the disk icon button. Once you've created your own user preset(s), they will be present in the snapshot dropdown menu alongside the factory presets for easy and convenient access.

Preset Categorization

The presets that come with the library are organized into several categories:

Menus - These contain all the options for a single type of instrument, allowing you to quickly audition the various choices. This is probably the fastest method to find the your favorite sounds included in the library.

In these menu presets, the instruments are either mapped in parallel octaves, in a condensed format with as small gaps between articulations as possible, or some combination of both in order for all the instruments to fit within a single MIDI channel.

Ensembles - These are pre-made combinations of different instruments designed for different musical genres. The ensembles are mapped to fit within a single MIDI channel for conveniently access.

Grooves - These presets are similar to the ensembles, but focus on ready-to-play patterns that are mapped to keys on your keyboard in the octave from C1 to C2. Each instrument is mapped to its own MIDI channel to ensure that you have access to every instrument's articulations. These presets are a great source of inspiration for your percussion grooves, if not a good starting point.

Kits - These presets are designed to roughly correspond with the General MIDI drumset mapping, providing you with a variety of creative sounds, while still retaining the familiarity of the General MIDI layout.

> *Tip: The "Latitude Latin Rock Percussion.nki" instrument reflects the initialized state of the instrument. By loading this instrument in Kontakt instead of the included snapshot presets, you can start your project with a blank slate, without any instruments pre-loaded or changes to the mixing.*

Interface Layout

Instrument Slots

Rather than having separate patches for each percussion instrument, we opted to allow you to load multiple instruments within a single instance.

There are many advantages to this multitimbral approach. For example, it makes it easier to switch between percussion instruments without losing any patterns you have loaded in them. Also, snapshot presets can recall entire ensembles of percussion, patterns pre-loaded, and the mixing set up to support that particular selection of instruments.

The upper left panel lets you navigate between the 16 instrument slots. We chose that number of slots so that you can have each instrument mapped to its own MIDI channel. Also, if you use a drum pad controller such as the Maschine, each of its 16 pads can correspond with a different instrument if needed.

Instrument Editor

The upper right panel is dedicated to editing the individual instruments loaded in each slot. That includes controlling the instruments' mic signals, how its articulations are mapped, the built-in patterns, and various other settings.

Global Mix

The panel at the bottom lets you control the global mixing of the entire ensemble. Essentially it contains submixes of the close and room signals as well as a reverb bus and finally the main output.

All the individual instruments' close signals–which includes the vintage, natural, and other close-type mic positions–get routed to the global "Close" channel. Similarly all their room signals are routed to the global "Room" channel.

Instrument Slots

There's a button in the top right corner of the instrument slot panel that toggles the panel between its default minimized view and an expanded view that provides additional controls for each slot.

Default View

When no instrument is loaded into the slot, the slot shows the text, "Empty". Clicking on an empty slot will open the instrument browser, allowing you to browse the instruments included in the library and then load an instrument into the currently selected slot.

In its default minimized view, the instrument slots provide you with a few controls for the currently selected instrument. From left to right these are:

Playing indicator: This speaker icon indicates when the current instrument is being played.

Instrument name: This displays the name of the instrument that's currently loaded into the slot. Double-clicking on the instrument's name cycles between showing the instrument editor and the browser view.

Instrument browser: As when double-clicking on the instrument name, the magnifying glass icon toggles the instrument browser view.

Left / right arrow buttons: The two arrow buttons cycle between similar instrument types, allowing you to quickly audition different options for the instrument without having to open the browser.

Remove instrument: The button with an "X" icon removes the currently loaded instrument, emptying that instrument slot.

> *Tip: CTRL/CMD + clicking on an instrument in any slot will instantly remove it from that slot without having to select the slot first.*

Expanded View

Clicking on the button on the top right side of the instrument slots panel expands and collapses the instrument slot panel. When expanded, the panel is maximized, showing additional controls for each of the instrument slots:

MIDI channel menu: This dropdown menu lets you assign the instrument to one particular MIDI channel, or by selecting the “Omni” option, allows the instrument to be played from all MIDI channels.

> *Tip: As a shortcut for convenience, by selecting the same option that the menu is already set to, all instrument slots will be assigned to that same MIDI channel. If all the instrument slots are already assigned to the same MIDI channel, it will set each of the occupied instrument slots to sequential MIDI channels.*

The key colors shown on Kontakt’s keyboard and Light Guide on Komplete Kontrol hardware change depending on which MIDI channels you have the instrument slots assigned to and which instrument slot is currently selected.

Of course, any instruments or patterns set to “Omni” will always be shown on the keyboard. However, if you have specified individual MIDI channels instead, only the keys for the MIDI channel for the currently selected instrument slot will be shown. That way you can see the keys that are mapped for the current MIDI channel only.

Mute: Mutes the current instrument slot.

Solo: Solos the current instrument slot, allowing you to listen to only the soloed instruments.

Volume: Adjusts the overall volume of the instrument. This is helpful if you want to make an instrument louder or quieter without affecting its mic signal balance established in the instrument’s own mixer.

Pan: Pans the entire instrument.

Width: Adjusts the overall stereo width of the instrument.

Instrument Browser

There are two buttons In the top right corner of the instrument browser panel:

Favorites: Clicking on the button with a star icon toggles all your favorites being pinned to the top of the browser's options. That way the instruments you've marked as being favorites get shown first for convenience. When this option is disabled, you'll still be able to see which instruments have been marked as favorites, but they're shown inline with the other instruments.

Close: This closes the browser, returning to the instrument editor or initialized view.

Instrument Cards

Each instrument card shown in the browser contains a picture of the instrument as well as a brief descriptor to help you find the instrument you're looking for quickly.

Any instrument can only be loaded in one slot at a time. In other words, you can't load the same exact instrument in multiple slots. If an instrument has already been loaded in a slot, the number of the slot is shown in the bottom right corner of the card. Clicking on an instrument that's already loaded will jump to selecting that particular slot.

Favorite button: By toggling the button with a star icon in the upper right corner of an instrument card, you can designate the instrument as a favorite. That way you can quickly see which instruments are your preferred ones when scrolling through the options. When the favorite option at the top of the instrument browser panel is enabled, all your favorite instruments get pinned to the top of the options in the browser, making it even more convenient to find them.

> *Tip: CTRL/CMD + clicking on an instrument in the browser will load it in the currently selected slot and instantly jump to the instrument editor. CTRL/CMD + clicking on an already instrument will remove it from its associated slot.*

Browser Filters

When the instrument browser is open, the bottom panel is used to display several columns for different ways the instruments can be filtered, letting you quickly navigate to a particular type of instrument. The instruments can be filtered by general category, instrument type, material, or their maker/manufacturer.

The filters selected between separate columns allow you to narrow down the currently visible instruments to the exact ones you're looking for.

> *Tip: By CTRL/CMD + clicking on a filter option within the same column, you can select multiple filters at a time, combining their results. The currently selected filter options are pinned to the top of the list.*

When selecting multiple filters within the same column, they get added together, meaning that the scope of the instrument increases, and the browser display instruments in all those selected options. For example, if you select both the "Drums (Hand)" and "Drums (Stick)" options from the "Category" column, the browser will show you all the drums played with hands in addition to the drums played with sticks.

When selected filters in separate columns, the results get narrowed down. In the previous example, if you were to also select the "Metal" option from the "Material" column, the browser would limit the results to only the drums played with either hands or sticks that are constructed from metal, like timbales and some of the snares. If you were to select the "Wood" material, the browser would show bongos, congas, cajons, etc.

Clicking on the arrow button next to the column name will clear all selected filters in the that particular column. Of course, you can also clear single filters by clicking on them individually as well.

> *Tip: CTRL/CMD + clicking on the arrow button next to any column name will clear all the filters in all the columns.*

Instrument Editor

The instrument editor panel in the upper right side of the interface lets you adjust how the instrument in the currently selected slot sounds and performs.

The instrument editor is divided into four sections which you can select between using the tabs at the top of the panel:

Mix: This section contains all the mic signals for the instrument, allowing you to adjust their individual levels as well as applying EQ and compression.

Patterns: This area lets you access the built-in pattern presets and editor.

Mapping: All the instrument's articulations can be mapped to any keys you want, or the existing entire mapping shifted to other registers of your keyboard.

Setup: Advanced settings are available in this section, such as the instrument's velocity response, attack and decay envelope, tuning, and preroll.

Instrument Mix

Primary Controls

Power: Enables and disables the mic signal, loading and unloading those associated samples from memory.

Stereo: This option, which is only available in stereo signals, quickly toggles the signal between stereo and mono.

Output: This menu allows you to send the instrument's mic signal directly out an alternate audio output.

Volume: This controls the volume of the mic signal. At 0 dB, the mic signal is at its as-recorded volume.

Mute: Silences the mic signal, while still keeping the samples still loaded in memory.

Solo: Solos the mic signal, allowing you to listen to the signal isolated from the others.

Pan: Adjusts the panning of the mic signal.

Width: Available in stereo signals, this control lets you adjust the stereo width of the signal. At 100%, the width is at its as-recorded value, while reducing it to 0% condenses the signal to mono. Negative values reverse the stereo image so that the left and right channels are swapped.

Send: Allows you to send a certain amount of the signal directly from an instrument's mic signal to the FX bus.

Additional Effects

Clicking on the "FX" button in the lower right corner of the mic signal displays an additional set of controls for per-channel EQ and compression.

The signal flow goes from the primary controls into the compressor, and then finally into the EQ, so while any boost/reduction in the EQ will not impact the compressor, bear in mind that the compressor *is* affected by the signal's volume control.

> *Tip: CTRL/CMD + clicking on the "FX" button will quickly bypass any active effects in the channel.*

SOLID 292 EQ

This is a four-band EQ modeled after a legendary console EQ.

Gain: Controls the amount of boost or cut.

Freq: Sets the frequency of the EQ band.

Q: Adjusts the bandwidth / quality of the band, measured in octaves.

Peak / bell: This switches the highest and lowest bands between a peak and bell shape.

SOLID BUS COMP

This is a bus compressor modeled after a legendary console bus compressor.

Thresh: Sets the threshold above which the signal gets compressed. As stated earlier, bear in mind that the signal's primary volume knob affects the input level going into the compressor.

Ratio: Controls the ratio of compression that happens when the signal exceeds the currently set threshold.

Mix: Allows you to mix between the dry and compressed signal for parallel compression.

Atk: Adjusts the compressor's attack time, how quickly the compressor reacts to the signal exceeding the current threshold. Short attack times result in the transients becoming quickly squashed, while high attack times allow more of the unaffected transient through.

Rel: Adjusts the compressor's release time, or how quickly the compressor recovers after the signal falls below the threshold.

Gain: Adjusts the makeup gain, allowing you to compensate for the gain reduction resulting from the compression.

Instrument Patterns

We've included a powerful pattern editor with many factory presets to choose from. Of course, rather than using the built-in pattern editor, you can always drag the patterns out as MIDI clips into your DAW's timeline.

However, depending on your needs, there are several good reasons to keep the patterns inside the built-in pattern editor and playback system:

1. The built-in pattern playback plays articulations directly without depending on where the instruments' articulations are currently mapped on your keyboard. Once you drag the MIDI out to your DAW, any changes to the instrument's mapping will cause its patterns to not play back correctly.

2. You can take advantage of the real-time dynamic control, using a MIDI CC to scale the pattern's overall dynamic while it's playing.

3. Any patterns you create or customize can be saved as presets and show up in the pattern browser for convenient use in other projects.

If these aspects are important to you, rather than dragging the patterns out as MIDI clips, you can use the pattern keys corresponding to the patterns to control their playback. Just bear in mind that you'll need to start your song's playback before the pattern key plays in order to hear it begin at the correct time.

That being said, dragging the patterns into your DAW's timeline has its own benefits depending on your needs. For example, you can use the patterns as building blocks for a more complex arrangement, adding your own fills as needed. Your DAW's own piano roll can also be useful for creating more complex rhythms that can't be achieved through the library's built-in step sequencer approach, especially if you need more control over the lengths of each note.

Slots

There are a total of eight pattern slots available for each instrument slot. An instrument can only play one of its eight pattern slots at a time, allowing you to dynamically switch between the pattern slots during playback without the pattern starting from the beginning

each time. That way you can move between different patterns and variations in the middle of playback. When more than one pattern key for the instrument is held, the highest pattern key takes precedence.

> *Tip: This behavior can be used to your advantage if you have multiple instruments' patterns mapped to one key, and then variations mapped to higher adjacent keys for certain instruments in the ensemble. By keeping the main pattern key held, you can press the keys corresponding with the other pattern slots to have only certain instruments change the pattern they're playing.*

Playing indicator: This speaker icon indicates when the pattern is being played.

Pattern name: This shows you the name of the pattern that's loaded into the slot.

MIDI export: The icon with four arrows pointing in different directions can be used to drag the current pattern out as a MIDI clip to your DAW or as a MIDI file.

Omni: When enabled, the pattern can be triggered from any MIDI channel and not just the channel that the instrument is currently assigned to. That way you can have instruments' individual articulations available in separate MIDI channels while the patterns are accessible globally.

> *Tip: CTRL/CMD + clicking on the "Omni" button will enable/disable it for all the instrument's pattern slots.*

Duplicate: When enabled, you can map the pattern to two separate keys instead of a single key. That way you can have instruments' patterns mapped to the same key to play all the patterns simultaneously, while also having the same patterns mapped to separate keys that play the pattern by itself.

Pattern key: You can drag this control up/down to select which MIDI note the pattern is assigned to. By double-clicking on the value, you can type the MIDI note name directly into the field.

MIDI learn: When enabled, this lets you quickly assign the pattern to a MIDI key by pressing the note on your MIDI controller. If you press two notes at the same time, the pattern will be mapped to both keys instead of a single key.

Pattern browser: The magnifying glass icon toggles the pattern browser view. You can also double-click on the pattern name to open the browser.

> *Tip: You can also load a pattern preset into a pattern slot by dragging the ".nka" file directly from Windows Explorer / macOS Finder into a specific slot, or into the pattern editor panel to load the pattern in the currently selected slot.*

Left / right arrow buttons: After loading a pattern from the browser, these two buttons cycle to the previous and next the patterns without having to open the browser.

Remove pattern: The icon of an "X" removes the currently loaded pattern, emptying that pattern slot.

> *Tip: CTRL/CMD + clicking on a pattern slot will instantly clear any contents in the pattern slot.*

Browser

The browser shows all the patterns available for the current instrument type you have loaded. There are four columns for each pattern option: the pattern name, the instrument it was originally created with, its author's name, and finally the length and original BPM.

When the original instrument the pattern was created with matches the instrument you have currently loaded, the instrument's name will have a small star next to it. That indicates that the pattern is native to the instrument you have loaded.

Most instruments of the same type have the same set of articulations. However, in certain circumstances there are slight differences in articulations, in which case the pattern gets automatically translated to fit the available articulations.

Pin native presets: When enabled, patterns originally created using the currently loaded instrument get listed first in the browser.

Sort presets: Opens a menu of different options for the order to sort the patterns in. By selecting the same order option that's already selected, it alternates between displaying the options in an ascending and descending order.

Rescan pattern presets: Scans the “Patterns” folder for any changes or newly available patterns.

Close pattern browser: Closes the pattern browser view.

Settings

This panel shows settings for the currently selected pattern slot.

Length: Sets the pattern’s length in measures.

Beats: Sets how many beats there are in each measure, equivalent to the time signature’s numerator.

Rate: This adjusts a tempo multiplier in case you want the pattern to play at twice as fast or half the speed, for example. This is similar to how the denominator in the time signature works.

Dynamic: This lets you assign a MIDI CC to control the overall dynamic of the pattern. That way you can adjust the pattern’s dynamic in real-time while it’s playing. Alternatively, the dynamic can be assigned to the velocity of the MIDI note triggering the pattern. While this option doesn’t provide the real-time control of the dynamic mid-pattern, it lets you set the overall dynamic of the pattern at its onset.

MIDI learn: The button with a keyboard icon next to the dynamic setting enables a MIDI learn mode to quickly assign the pattern dynamic setting to a MIDI CC from your MIDI controller.

Groove

We’ve included various groove options for adding stylistic timing adjustments.

Groove type: This dropdown menu allows you to select from a collection of different grooves that affect the timing of rhythms, representing a variety of styles of music and regions of the world.

While these grooves are not exhaustive replicas, they should get you closer to the authentic, nuanced timing differences of different musical styles.

It's also important to recognize that not all the instruments in an ensemble typically play with the same rhythm feel, some playing more metronomically straight than others. A big part of what creates the overall groove in styles like Samba or Reggae is how some players in the ensemble are playing "straighter" than others.

We spent a lot of time analyzing the timing differences from many regions, styles, and players, but it's important to note that in reality the timing also varies depending on other elements such as the exact rhythm played, accents within that rhythm, not to mention the tempo at which the rhythm is played. For that reason, it's a good idea to dial in the amount of groove by ear.

Here are descriptions of the different groove options included:

- Swing 8th: Every second eighth note is delayed.
- Swing 16th: Every second and fourth sixteenth notes (the "e" and "uh") are delayed.
- Quintuplet Swing: Unlike the 8th and 16th swing feel, this pulls the rhythms toward a quintuplet division to emulate a general (arguably simplified) Dilla feel.
- West African Triplet: This option makes the second and third notes in a triplet gravitate toward the last two sixteenth notes, heard in Ewe (agbekor bell), Gahu (particularly in the kagan), Agbadza, and Yoruba (the bàtá drums in particular) music. This groove is often subtle, only evoked at certain tempos. In many ways, this blend between 4/4 and 12/8 meters is the ancestor to the Afro-Cuban rhythmic feel exemplified in Rumba and Bembé.
- Gnawa Triplet: This delays the second and third notes in a triplet, modeled after the triplet feel typically played by the krakeb in Gnawa music.
- Gnawa 16th: Modeled after another rhythmic feel played by the krakeb in Gnawa music, this feel delays the second sixteenth note while anticipating the fourth sixteenth note.

- Brazilian Suingue: Emulates the general timing of the repinique, tamborim, and pandeiro playing in Brazilian sambas for an all-purpose Brazilian suingue feel.
- Suingue de Romero: Modeled after the feel of legendary bongocero, Ray Romero.
- Suingue de Giovanni: Modeled after the feel of one of the greatest conga players, Giovanni Hidalgo.
- Suingue de das Neves: Modeled after the feel of Wilson das Neves, influential Brazilian percussionist.
- Suingue do Sul: Modeled after the caixa playing feel from southern Brazil. In Rio de Janeiro, this is sometimes known as “Carreteiro.”
- Suingue do Norte: Modeled after the caixa playing feel from northern Brazil in areas like Bahia and Pernambuco. A good example of this feel is found in Maracatu de Baque Virado.
- Samba de Roda: Deeply traditional style of music from northeastern Brazil around Salvador.
- Samba Reggae: Also from Salvador in northeastern Brazil, a more contemporary sound introduced in the ‘70s that incorporates elements of Reggae music.
- Caribbean Swing: Modeled after the feel of the Barril de Bomba.
- Cumbia 16th: A rhythmic feel commonly heard played by the guira in Cumbia music, this anticipates the third and fourth sixteenth notes, moving them toward the placement of an eighth note triplet.

Override global: By default, the groove type and amount controls have a global effect to make it easier to have the groove settings apply to the entire ensemble. By enabling this button, the current instrument can have its own individual groove settings instead. This is especially useful in situations where one percussion instrument might have a heavier amount of swing that the other instruments, for example. Timing differences like these really help your ensemble feel less uniform and more alive.

Amount: This controls how much the currently selected groove affects the rhythm, depending on how subtle or drastic you want the timing adjustments to be applied.

Editor

The pattern editor doesn't attempt to recreate every single option your DAW might have, but instead offer a powerful, yet streamlined approach to creating percussion grooves.

It uses a step sequencer approach for its easy of being able to quickly "paint" in the steps, but allows you to create more complicated rhythms through being able to control how many steps each beat is divided into.

The top of the pattern editor hosts an assortment of tools and actions. On the left side are various tools you can toggle between when creating your pattern. From the left to the right, they are:

Box selection: This allows you to select an area of the pattern to be used in conjunction with other tools and actions. Clicking on an already selected area clears the box selection.

Erase: Selecting this tool and then clicking and dragging over steps in the step sequencer allows you to quickly erase areas of the pattern. If you make a selection with the box selection tool first, clicking the erase tool will act as an action instead, erasing the currently selected area with a single click.

Velocity: When selected, the velocity tool lets you click and drag to "paint" in the velocity of each step in the main area of the editor. The vertical mouse position defines the velocity of each step.

> *Tip: By holding SHIFT while dragging, the velocity is locked to the last value, essentially allowing you to "paint" a straight line.*

Articulation: Selecting the articulation tool lets you click and drag to "paint" in the articulations that get used. Although painting over a blank area lets you set the velocity with the vertical mouse position, ordinarily this control does not affect the velocity of the steps. That way you can change articulations without overwriting their velocities. However, you can always disable this behavior by holding down the CTRL/CMD key to change both the articulation and velocity simultaneously.

> *Tip: To "paint" in articulations while skipping over empty steps, click and drag just below the steps, in the articulation ribbon area of the pattern editor.*

In the center of the pattern editor controls is essentially a “palette” of the current instrument’s articulations to be used with the articulation tool:

Double: Enabling this option allows you to play two articulations simultaneously. Note that this control is only available for certain instruments where playing two things at once is physically possible.

Articulation menu: This selects the current articulation that the articulation tool “paints” into the step sequencer. By selecting an area with the box selection tool first, you can quickly change the articulation used for the entire selection at once.

> *Tip: Selecting steps with the selection tool causes the articulation menu to jump to the step’s articulation, much like how the color picker tool in graphics software works.*

Left/right arrows: These arrow buttons cycle between all the articulation options on the dropdown menu.

The rightmost side of the controls provide specific actions:

Beat division: This determines how many steps each beat is divided into. By using the box selection tool, you can change the division for multiple beats at once. If no area is selected using the box selection tool, the entire pattern is affected.

Copy: This copies the selected pattern data into the clipboard. If no box selection is active, the entire pattern gets copied.

Paste: This pastes pattern data from your clipboard into the current pattern. If the destination is longer than the originally copied data, the clipboard’s contents are repeated to fill that area–whether that’s a box selection area or the entire pattern.

Import pattern: This loads an “.nka” pattern file into the editor. You can also drag the pattern file from Windows Explorer / macOS Finder into the pattern editor.

Export pattern: This saves the pattern to an “.nka” pattern file in order to share the pattern with other users. By storing the pattern in the “Patterns” subfolder, you can have your own patterns available next to the factory ones. Similarly, placing any downloaded pat-

terns in that folder lets them show up there as well. Note that in either case you will need to use the rescan option in the pattern browser to refresh the currently available patterns.

Step record: When enabled, you can play the pattern from your MIDI keyboard to set the articulation and velocity of each step sequentially. We opted to not include the option to record the pattern with timing information, as that would necessitate additional controls like quantizing, a metronome, and other features that we feel are more appropriate to use a DAW for.

> *Tip: By pressing an unmapped note on your MIDI controller, the step record leaves the current step blank, advancing to the next step.*

> *Tip: You can use the box selection tool to step record only a portion of the pattern.*

The primary section in the middle of the pattern editor shows the beat and measure numbers, the number of steps each beat is divided into, and finally the main edit area where you can “paint” in the velocities and articulations.

By clicking on the dot(s) below the beat/measure numbers, you can change the division of an individual beat, setting how many steps that beat is divided into.

At the bottom of the pattern editor is the articulation ribbon, which shows the articulations used throughout the pattern. When space is limited, the articulation’s full name gets reduced to just a number which correspond with the articulation palette dropdown menu.

If you need to accomplish more intricate patterns than what’s possible in the built-in editor, you can always drag the pattern out as a MIDI clip into your DAW’s timeline using the MIDI Drag option in the pattern slot above. From there, your DAW’s piano roll or other MIDI editor can be employed to further embellish the pattern.

However, note that once the pattern is in MIDI format, it can’t be imported back into the built-in pattern editor. It also doesn’t have the flexibility that the built-in pattern editor has, where the instrument’s mapping can be changed without inadvertently affecting the pattern. That’s because the pattern editor refers to the articulations directly, regardless of which note they’re mapped to. Once you drag the pattern out as a MIDI clip, the articulations get represented as the MIDI notes they’re currently mapped to.

Another benefit of using the built-in pattern editor is the way it automatically ports patterns between instruments. This happens when changing instruments or loading a pattern in another instrument, different from the one it was originally created using.

User Patterns

The pattern presets are stored as ".nka" files in the "Instruments/Patterns" folder. The instrument refers to this folder when determining the different patterns available, which includes all the factory pattern presets as well.

Installing additional patterns is as simple as placing the ".nka" files in this "Patterns" folder, and then using the option to rescan the pattern presets (described earlier) to refresh all the available pattern options.

Of course, you can always try out the pattern first by dragging the ".nka" file directly onto a pattern slot, the pattern editor, or use the "Import Pattern" tool in the editor to load the pattern without actually adding it to the browser.

When it comes to saving your own pattern files, we recommend following a similar format as the factory pattern presets. This naming convention isn't imperative, but at least including the general type of instrument in the pattern's name will help keep them organized and ensure that the files all have unique names.

The ".nka" pattern preset files contain all the information needed for the pattern, so sharing your patterns is just a matter of sending or uploading those pattern files.

Instrument Mapping

We've designed the mappings for all the instruments to be as intuitive and ergonomic as possible, while also being as consistent between different instruments.

We also balanced that with a general philosophy like having lower pitched sounds mapped to lower keys, multiple sizes of drums having parallel mappings octaves apart.

However, we realize that you might want to change the mapping based on your preferences, which is why we not only built in a system to customize the mapping, but save it as your own preset, even overwriting the default mapping for future use.

Articulations

At the top of the mapping view is a scrollable list of the selected instrument's articulations. By selecting an articulation, additional controls get displayed.

Power: This button enables and disables the articulation. All the enabled articulations are pinned to the top of the list to make it easier to see only the currently mapped articulations.

> *Tip: By holding CTRL/CMD and clicking on any articulation's power button, you can quickly enable and disable all the articulations simultaneously.*

Duplicate: For articulations that have separate left and right handed hits, the "L/R" button separates those to two different keys instead of using the automatic stick/hand alternating. If the articulation doesn't have separate left and right handed hits, you can still duplicate the articulation to two keys.

Mapping note: You can either double-click on this field and type in the note or drag the value vertically to set the note that the articulation is mapped to.

MIDI learn: When enabled, the button with the keyboard icon toggles the MIDI learn mode, allowing you to press a MIDI note on your keyboard to assign the articulation to that key. If you press two notes at the same time, the articulation will be mapped to both keys instead of a single key.

Playing indicator: This speaker icon lights up to indicate when the articulation is being played.

Options

Select via MIDI: When enabled, the articulation currently played will be automatically selected.

Aftertouch learn: Enabling this mode lets you assign the currently selected articulation to the note(s) being held by triggering aftertouch. That way you map the articulation to a note by pressing the key and then pushing farther to trigger aftertouch, at which point the articulation will get instantly mapped to that note.

> *Tip: By enabling both the "Select via MIDI" and "Aftertouch Learn" options, you can quickly map an instrument using your MIDI controller alone without having to click on the interface whatsoever. Essentially you press the note corresponding with the articulation you want to change first, and then use the usual aftertouch learn process to map it to the new note.*

Mapping actions: This dropdown menu contains an assortment of actions that apply to the instrument's entire mapping:

- **Initialize mapping**: This action turns off all the articulations and resets the value of all their parameters.
- **Disable all articulations**: This disables all the instrument's articulations.
- **Enable all articulations**: This enables all the instrument's articulations.
- **Automap (chromatic, separate L/R)**: This action maps all the instrument's articulations chromatically, separating the left and right handed hits to adjacent keys.
- **Automap (white keys, separate L/R)**: This action maps all the instrument's articulations to only the white keys, separating the left and right handed hits to adjacent keys.
- **Automap (chromatic)**: This action maps all the instrument's articulations chromatically.

- **Automap (white keys)**: This action maps all the instrument's articulations to the white keys only.
- **Remove gaps**: This removes any gaps in the instrument's mapping, condensing the mapping to chromatically adjacent keys.

  Tip: When sequencing MIDI directly from the piano roll, the ergonomics of which keys the articulations are mapped to doesn't matter. In fact, it's often preferable to avoid gaps in the mapping when using the piano roll. This avoids having empty keys to skip over, and keeps your mapping more compact.

- **Swap L/R keys**: This action swaps the keys that the left and right handed hits are mapped to.

Load keymap: This lets you import a keymap from an ".nka" file or select a keymap from a list of available options. The instrument's default mapping is included as an option, in case you need to revert to the default.

By putting your mapping files in the "Keymaps" folder, your own mapping presets will appear on this list. You can also drag the keymap ".nka" file from Windows Explorer / macOS Finder directly onto the mapping panel to load it.

Save keymap: This allows you to save your keymap as a mapping preset file. You can also replace the default mapping from this menu if you want to ensure that your own custom mapping gets used instead.

Rescan keymaps: This rescans the "Keymaps" folder for any changed/new keymap options.

Transpose

If you have instruments loaded in multiple slots and assigned to the same MIDI channel, you'll likely need to move the instruments' mappings to avoid any overlap. This panel gives you controls to quickly move the instrument's entire mapping.

Octave: This knob shifts the instrument's mapping by entire octaves.

Semitone: This shifts the instrument's mapping by semitones. If you're working in the piano roll, shifting the mapping this way is fine, but on a MIDI keyboard will result in a more drastic mapping change due to notes switching between black and white keys.

Key shift: This knob is shifts the mapping in a way that maintains whether articulations are mapped to white or black keys. All the articulations mapped to white keys get shifted to the higher/lower white keys, while articulations mapped to black keys are moved to the adjacent black keys.

If you're playing the instruments from a MIDI keyboard and need to keep multiple instruments' mappings closer than what you can achieve by shifting their octaves, using the key shift option is a better keyboard-friendly alternative to shifting the mappings by semitones.

User Keymaps

The keymap presets are stored as ".nka" files in the "Instruments/Keymaps" folder. The instrument refers to this folder when determining the different mapping presets available. All the instruments' default mappings are already in this folder, and you can keep your own user keymaps there, too.

For example, if somebody shares a keymap preset with you and you want the preset to show up as an option inside the instrument, you'll need to place the file in the "Keymaps" folder. Of course, if you just want to try out the preset first, you can always drag the file onto the interface instead, or use the "Import keymap from file" option that's in the "Load Keymap" menu.

When it comes to saving your own keymaps, we recommend following the same format for naming any of your own keymap files: the instrument's name (with spaces removed), a dash, and then something unique to identify the mapping preset. While this naming convention isn't imperative, it will help keep your keymaps organized.

After making any changes to the keymap files–whether installing someone else's keymaps, saving your own presets, or deleting a keymap file to remove it–you will need to click the "Rescan Keymaps" button to update the available options.

Instrument Setup

Dynamics

Velocity curve: You can click and drag the velocity curve control in any direction to adjust how the velocities are distributed across the velocity range, either to adjust for your particular MIDI controller or based on your personal taste.

Dynamic range: This adjusts how much the volume relates to the dynamic, allowing you to either reduce the dynamic range so that even the softest velocities are the same volume as the loudest velocities, or increase the dynamic range for an even greater difference in volume between the softest and loudest velocities.

Velocity curve preset: This menu lets you select between different presets for the velocity curve.

Override global: By default, the dynamic controls have a global effect to make it easier to have them apply to the entire ensemble. By enabling this button, the current instrument can have its own individual dynamic settings instead.

Rolls

For articulations that can be played as a roll, we've included a playable roll mode. This allows you to hold down a note or multiple notes, and then sustain a roll using a MIDI CC. When the value of the MIDI CC is greater than 0, it triggers the roll. The overall dynamic of the roll is determined by the MIDI CC value. The roll ceases when either releasing the key or decreasing the MIDI CC to zero.

Roll CC: This lets you set the MIDI CC that controls initiates and controls the dynamic of the rolls.

Roll CC MIDI learn: This toggles a MIDI learn mode that listens for the next MIDI CC triggered so that you can quickly assign which MIDI CC controls the roll mode.

Speed: This adjusts the overall speed of the rolls.

Speed CC: This lets you assign the speed of the roll to a MIDI CC for real-time control over how fast the roll is played. Note that when assigned to a MIDI CC, this overrides the main speed knob's setting.

Speed CC MIDI learn: This toggles a MIDI learn mode that listens for the next MIDI CC triggered so that you can quickly assign which MIDI CC controls the roll speed.

Release velocity: When enabled, this triggers a final hit when releasing a roll. This knob not only enables this feature, but also sets the velocity of the hit.

Fine-Tuning

Attack: This adjusts the volume envelope's attack, allowing you to smooth out the instrument's transient.

Decay: This adjusts the volume envelope's decay. By decreasing the decay, the volume envelope counteracts the instrument's natural decay, giving you a shorter sound.

Coarse tune: This adjusts the instrument's tuning in semitones.

Fine tune: This adjusts the instrument's tuning in cents.

Preroll

Many instruments have sounds preceding their main transient. Traditionally samples are trimmed to sound as instantaneous as possible, which is beneficial in the sense that it prevents any inherent latency in the samples. The downside is that certain instruments and articulations lose realism from that sound being removed.

Length: This adjusts the total amount of preroll, up to 100 milliseconds.

Offline: This adjusts the amount of preroll that's handled offline rather than in real-time. Offline preroll sounds when playing back and rendering your sequence. The benefit of using offline preroll is because it will automatically anticipate the MIDI notes with the preroll, meaning that you don't need to nudge the timing of the MIDI notes to get their transients to occur at the right times.

Total latency display: This automatically calculates the total real-time latency, including factoring in the coarse and fine tuning as well. If you use the negative track delay in your DAW, simply match its value with the measurement shown here in milliseconds.

Override global: By default, the preroll controls have a global effect to make it easier to change the entire ensemble's preroll settings at the same time. By enabling this button, the current instrument can have its own individual preroll settings instead. This is useful in case you only need preroll added to shakers, and not other instruments, for example.

> *Tip: If you're using instruments like shakers, the attacks of the notes will typically sound abrupt due to the lack of preroll. You'll get a much more natural sound by increasing the preroll. You can always use some amount of real-time preroll so that it sounds more natural when playing live from your MIDI controller (at the expense of a little added latency), and then use the offline preroll to reintroduce the rest of the preroll.*

Global Mix

Each channel in the global mixing panel generally have these controls in common:

Power: This turns the signal on and off, not only enabling and disabling the signal but also loading and unloading the corresponding samples.

Mute: This silences the signal while still keeping its corresponding samples loaded into memory.

Solo: This solos the signal so that you hear its isolated sound.

Output: The default output routes to the “Main” output channel on the interface. However, you can bypass this routing and have the signal output to an alternate audio output.

Volume: Controls the main volume of the signal.

Width: Adjusts the stereo width of the signal with 100% being its full, as-recorded stereo image. At 0%, the left and right channels are combined to give you a mono signal. Below that, the negative values reverse the stereo image.

Send: Controls the amount of signal that gets sent to the FX bus.

Additional Controls

Clicking on the “FX” button in the lower right corner of the channel displays an additional set of controls.

> *Tip: CTRL/CMD + clicking on the “FX” button will quickly bypass any active effects in the channel.*

Close / Room Signal

SOLID 292 EQ

This is a four-band EQ modeled after a legendary console EQ.

Gain: Controls the amount of boost or cut.

Freq: Sets the frequency of the EQ band.

Q: Adjusts the bandwidth / quality of the band, measured in octaves.

Peak / bell: This switches the highest and lowest bands between a peak and bell shape.

FET 76 COMP

Modeled after a legendary feedback compressor known for its punch and warmth.

Input: Sets the signal level going into the compression circuit, which serves to control how much signal exceeds the fixed threshold in the feedback compressor design.

Ratio: Controls the ratio of compression that happens when the signal exceeds the fixed threshold.

Attack: Adjusts the compressor's attack time, how quickly the compressor reacts to the signal exceeding the current threshold. Short attack times result in the transients becoming quickly squashed, while high attack times allow more of the unaffected transient through.

Release: Adjusts the compressor's release time, or how quickly the compressor recovers after the signal falls below the threshold.

Gain: Adjusts the makeup gain, allowing you to compensate for the gain reduction resulting from the compression.

FX Bus

While primarily used for the built-in convolution reverb, the reverb in the FX bus can be bypassed in order to send the signal to a separate audio output instead. This allows you to use your own reverb plugin and other processing inside your DAW while still leveraging the send amount controls. Alternatively, the internal reverb can be left active, but routed to a separate audio output so that you have independent control of the reverb signal in your DAW.

The built-in reverb is loaded with numerous production-ready reverb options. We've included multiple reverb units to choose between–ones that have been recording studio staples throughout the decades.

Model: The topmost dropdown menu in the convolution reverb panel lets you select between several reverb units.

Type: Depending on the selected reverb unit, the presets have been organized into separate categories you can access using this second dropdown menu.

Preset: The bottom dropdown menu lets you select between individual reverb presets.

Length: Adjusts the reverb's decay time by time-stretching the convolution reverb's impulse response, allowing you to shorten or lengthen the reverb tail.

Delay: Adds pre-delay before the reverb signal is outputted. A small amount of delay can help add separation between the transients and the reverb signal for better clarity and depth. Using larger amounts of delay achieve a slapback reverb sound.

LP: Adjusts the frequency of a low-pass filter on the reverb signal. Attenuating the low frequencies will help mitigate any muddiness.

HP: Adjusts the frequency of a high-pass filter on the reverb signal, whether you're looking for a darker, smoother tone or just to take off the edge off the reverb.

Main Output

The final stage of processing provides EQ, tape emulation, and a limiter.

EQ

This is a two-band EQ intended for subtle, final adjustments to the overall sound of the percussion ensemble.

Gain: Controls the amount of boost or cut.

Freq: Sets the frequency of the EQ band.

TAPE

The tape emulation adds soft compression and saturation.

Gain: Controls the signal gain going into the input of the tape emulation, which determines the overall amount of tape distortion and compression.

Tone: Boosts or attenuates the low frequencies, allowing you to get either a warmer or thinner saturation tone.

Rolloff: Controls the frequency at which the high frequencies get attenuated.

LIMIT

Unlike a compressor, the limiter is designed to sound as transparent as possible and has a “brick wall” ratio of one to infinity. Although the limiter’s release time is adjustable, its attack time is tuned to a very short value so that it quickly reacts to peaks to prevent clipping.

Threshold: Sets the threshold at which the limiter begins to affect the input signal. The output volume is automatically adjusted to compensate for the threshold, making it easier to keep the volume the same while lowering the threshold.

Release: Adjusts the limiter’s release time, or how quickly the limiter recovers once the signal falls below its threshold.

Ceiling: Sets the limiter’s maximum output level in case the output signal’s volume needs to be reduced to avoid clipping or to compensate for any difference in loudness due to the limiter effect.

Changelog

Version 1.0.0 (May 15, 2026)

- Initial release

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Credits

Ed Smith
Percussion performance, patterns

Marco “Gibi” Dos Santos
Cuica performance

Chris Poehler
Production, additional percussion performance, patterns

Michael Aarvold
Engineering, mixing

Greg Schlaepfer
Scripting, interface design, production, audio editing, patterns

Elan Hickler
Audio tools, audio editing

Jackson Harris
Documentation, beta testing

Chris Mortensen
Audio editing

William Derganc
Instrument mapping

Breanna Davis
Color grading

Peter DeLegge
Marketing consultation

Beta testing:

Brian Brylow, James Michael Wolk, Richard Penrose, Perry D'Armond, Bob Bergen, Bill Thompson, Tony Ostinato, Jackson Harris

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Recorded at Angel Song Studios in Glendale, California

Contact

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Website: orangetreesamples.com

Social:

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