



MidiPhrase User Manual

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MidiPhrase is a composition assistant plugin designed specifically to help composers find inspiration.

Finding musical inspiration is an eternal theme in the creative process, especially for professional composers. Yet, inevitably, there are times when inspiration runs dry and creative passion fades. In those moments, the mind feels heavy, and it's as if the brain cells refuse to think. If you are a professional composer, I believe you'll understand this state all too well.

MidiPhrase was created precisely to address this exhausted professional state and those moments when the mind is out of tune. It is a tool that automatically analyzes and samples from MIDI scores, while providing real-time phrase preview. You can even trigger specific phrases via MIDI keys—a crucial feature, because when seeking inspiration, the only thing that matters is the ability to quickly audition a large number of phrases. In this way, you can experience a spark of thought colliding beyond time and space with the great works of countless outstanding musicians.

At the same time, you can quickly and efficiently edit phrases in real time. With the built-in Phrase Morph Toolbar, just a few mouse clicks can transform the MIDI scores of great composers—Beethoven, Chopin, or anyone else—by shuffling or morphing their phrases until they become completely unrecognizable. It may sound crazy, but MidiPhrase makes it effortless. The result might turn into a pile of nonsense, or perhaps reveal a few shining fragments of brilliance.

In addition, the [Duggal Inspire Me] button in the Phrase Morph Toolbar brings fresh ideas with every click. MidiPhrase will randomly select four phrase fragments from the current folder and load them onto the pads, with their length determined by the number of bars set in the lower settings panel. (Note: This will overwrite four unlocked pads and automatically lock them! It can be combined with the [Unlock All Pads] feature.)

Each fragment is chosen with a completely random starting offset—this is really, really important, as you know!

[Special thanks to UK musician Peter Duggal for this brilliant idea, which opens up even more possibilities for sparking musical inspiration.]

****Recommended Usage:**** You can create a new folder within your MIDI library—for example, name it *Duggal Inspire Me*—and place MIDI scores of a specific type inside. This way, you can control the style of the fragments that MidiPhrase extracts. For instance, you might organize them by composer, musical genre, instrument, or era. On pads loaded with random fragments, you can right-click to view the actual BPM and file name of each fragment.

Now, are you ready? Allow me to introduce the basic workflow of MidiPhrase! Please follow the steps below to use the plugin:

1. Open your primary DAW.
2. Load MidiPhrase.(You can check the bookmarked section for setup instructions in mainstream DAWs.)
3. In the built-in file browser on the left side of the plugin, double-click any MIDI file to load it. MidiPhrase will automatically analyze the score, slice it according to the time signature, and place the fragments onto the pads.
(Alternatively, you can drag MIDI files directly from your computer folders into MidiPhrase's Piano Roll window—another quick way to load scores.)

That's the basic workflow of the plugin. From here, you can quickly preview different fragments in real time by triggering the pads using your mouse, the number keys 1–9 on your computer keyboard, or a MIDI keyboard from C1–B2. Experienced users can even get a rough sense of each phrase's structure just by looking at the pad view.

(Note: Triggering pads with the mouse or computer keyboard may introduce slight latency. For synchronized preview alongside DAW tracks, use a MIDI keyboard, or add MIDI clips on your DAW track to trigger pads via C1–B2 for perfectly synced playback. Another important detail: the playback BPM of pad fragments is always locked to your DAW. To hear them at their original speed, simply set your DAW's BPM to match the score's BPM.)

Because piano roll key mappings vary across DAWs, the trigger range may not always be exactly C1–B2 in your DAW. Please test and confirm in your setup.

Tip for first-time users:

If this is your first time opening MidiPhrase, it's recommended to adjust the following settings:

Open the Settings Panel,

Specify your MIDI score folder and language,

Then close and reload the plugin.

(This step only needs to be done once. The purpose is to ensure that every time you start MidiPhrase afterwards, it automatically points to your MIDI score folder.)

By auditioning a large number of phrases in a relaxed state, you can at any time apply transformations such as tempo changes, key matching, randomization, pitch inversion, time reversal, or use the **\[Duggal Inspire Me]** function.

Eventually, you may stumble upon a fragment that truly resonates with you. At that moment, you can lock the pad and continue browsing through other pages, or, if you feel you've found what you're looking for, simply drag the pad with the left mouse button into your DAW track. A MIDI clip will be generated automatically—now it's yours to use.

If you stop at this step, that's perfectly fine—you've already found your inspirational theme.

However, most professional users don't leave MidiPhrase right away. Instead, they take advantage of the plugin's built-in tools designed for reshaping phrases, allowing for quick secondary refinement. For example, the real-time rhythm variation preview feature, located in the Phrase Panel system, can completely transform the groove of the current phrase in the Piano Roll—with just a single mouse click. (Please refer to the related tutorial video for details.)

MidiPhrase offers a wealth of phrase-morphing functions. Its Piano Roll MIDI editor covers the standard operations found in mainstream DAWs, while also providing a dedicated toolkit for rapid phrase refinement. If you leave immediately after finding inspiration, you're only missing out on just a little bit more magic.

Plugin Installation

1. This plugin uses the **Alibaba PuHuTi** font. Please install the included font file before use.
(This step is optional. Installing the font will enhance the visual appearance of the plugin's interface. If the font is not installed, the plugin will simply use your system's default font.)

2. Unzip the compressed file for the plugin format you want to install, then copy the **MidiPhrase.vst3** or **MidiPhrase.component** file into your VST3 or AU plug-in directory.

- Windows VST3 : C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3
- MacOS VST3 : Library\Audio\Plug-Ins\VST3
- MacOS AU : Library\Audio\Plug-Ins\Components

3. Done.

Important Note:

This plugin currently includes a factory phrase pack containing over 1,000 phrases.

To avoid copyright issues, MidiPhrase does not include any complete MIDI scores. Users are encouraged to build and expand their own MIDI libraries from external resources such as Google or other public-domain sources.

Recommended websites: <https://kunstdorfuge.com/>

Tip: If you are using this plugin for the first time, you can set the location of your MIDI library in the Settings Panel.

On first launch, the plugin will create a MidiPhrase user folder in the following location:

- Windows : %appdata%\MidiPhrase
- MacOS : Library\MidiPhrase

If you're encountering the "cannot verify the developer" issue when loading MidiPhrase on macOS, please refer to the following solution: : <https://midiphrase.com/Tutorial.html>

Setting up MidiPhrase in different DAWs.

MidiPhrase does not contain a built-in synthesizer, so you can think of it as a MIDI generator. You'll need to route the MIDI signals it produces to an instrument.

Cubase
https://youtu.be/xUktX12qf1Y?si=e_LYowgrPPL7ZI3E

Studio one
<https://youtu.be/KANeWSvWI4Y?si=TWXcRTqrro4lqW-n>

Reaper
<https://youtu.be/90P1DngmkkA?si=agCENAXpkx0UEESC>

FL Studio
https://youtu.be/wAfTjjLhb2s?si=ddSclj1XM_6Tjc9E

Digital Performer
<https://youtu.be/tYzyUZSZYT8?si=R7liPxuUysSmqCNU>

Bitwig
<https://youtu.be/77TojFXyWRA?si=j3h7ZapMfjBKI2ub>

Logic pro
https://youtu.be/0ahRdc-9mDM?si=ILikcR_Hwa95NAml

Ableton Live
<https://youtu.be/BsOYjufoC4E?si=V5m6c1D6XIjadzUu>

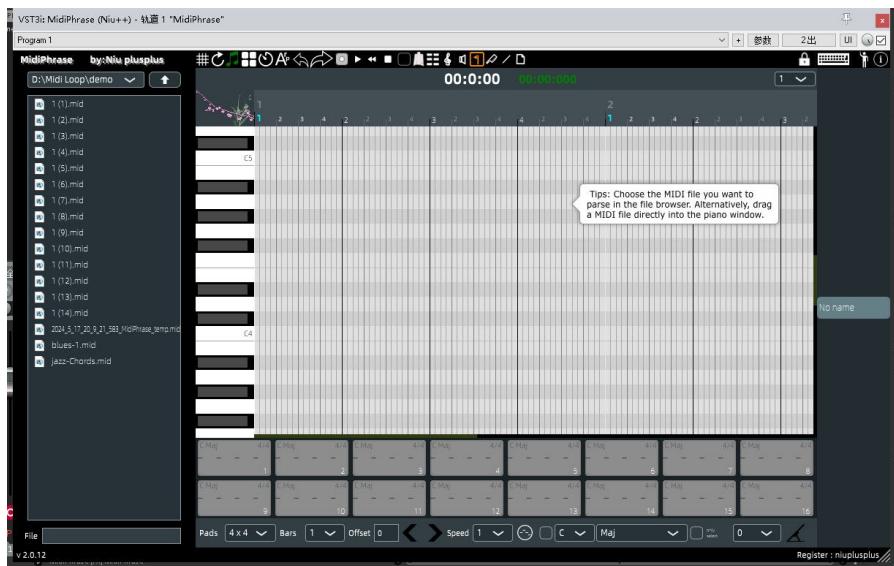
6 MidiPhrase Interface

When the plugin is launched, it will prompt the user to load a score.

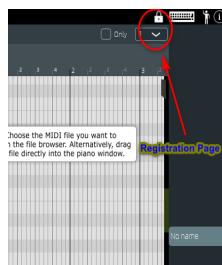
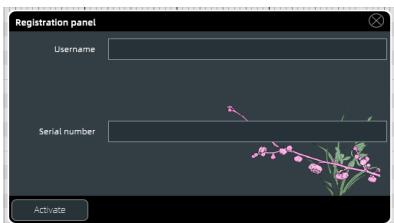
Basic MidiPhrase Workflow

The basic workflow starts with loading a MIDI score and then activating any pad. Both of these steps are mandatory—if you don't complete them, other features will be unavailable. This is a forced workflow for MidiPhrase!

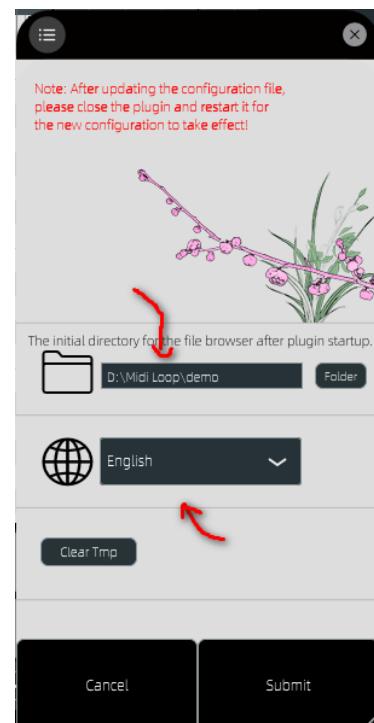
For example, the right-click menu will only appear after you have selected a note in the piano roll; otherwise, right-clicking is generally treated as a selection action.



How to Register the Plugin



Open the Configuration Panel



You can set the default MIDI folder path after the plugin is launched.

Note: After setting the folder path, you need to exit the plugin and reload it!

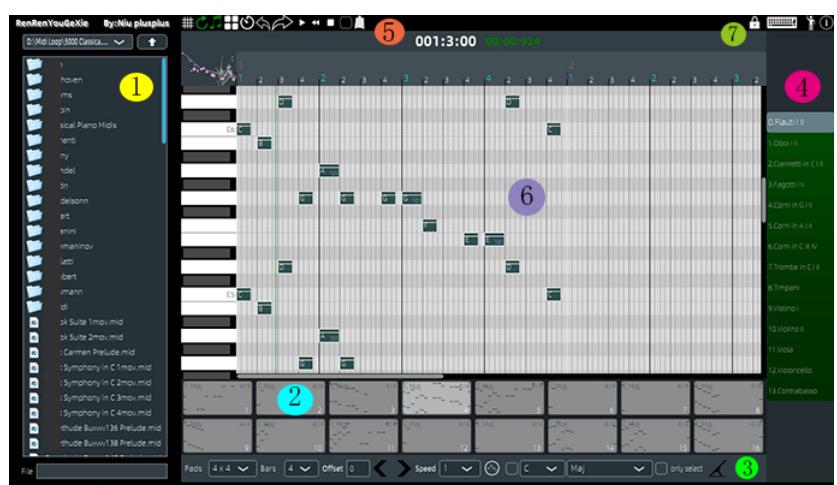
You can set your preferred language.

Note: After setting the language, you need to close the plugin window and reopen it.

After the score is loaded, you have four ways to preview a segment:

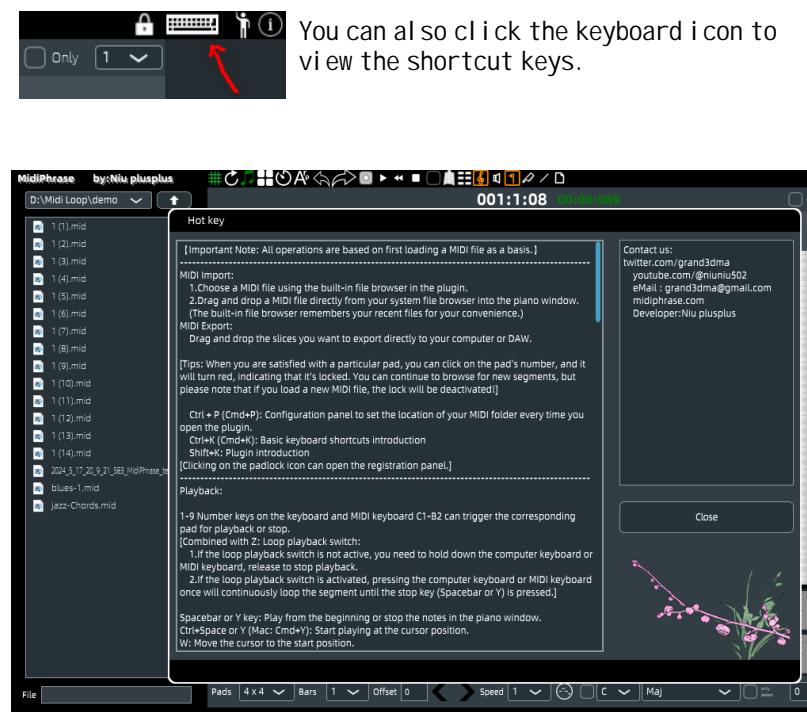
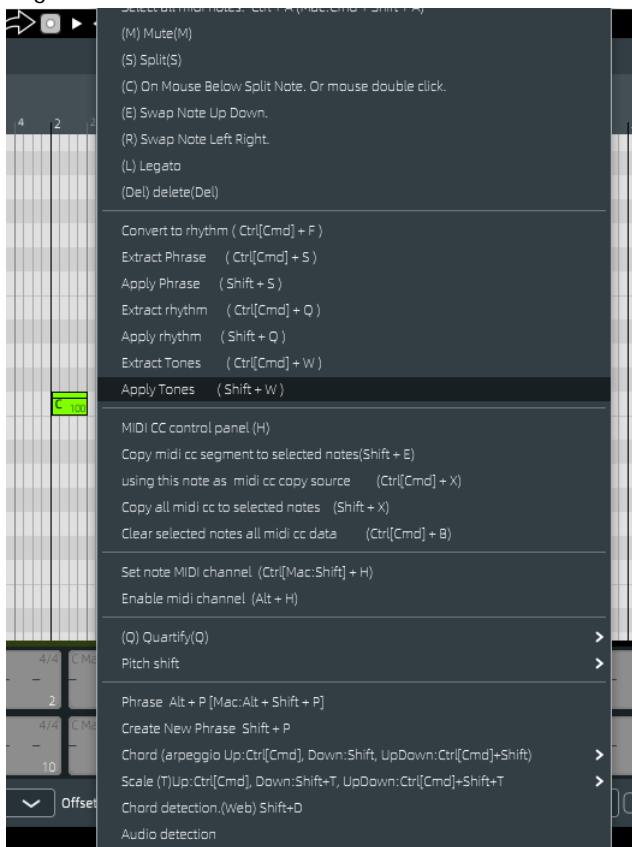
1. Click on the pad with your mouse;
2. Use the number keys 1-9 on your computer keyboard;
3. Use your MIDI keyboard (C1–B2);
4. Create a MIDI clip on the DAW's MIDI track and draw notes (C1–B2).

Note: The segment playback speed will automatically sync with your DAW. This is designed to integrate seamlessly with your creative workflow. You can directly adjust the BPM in your DAW.



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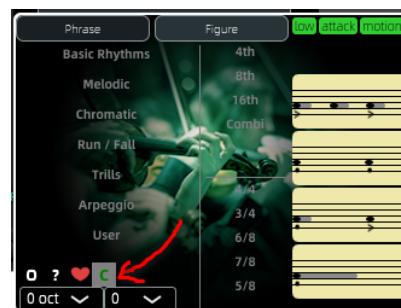
All functions provide shortcut keys. If you hover the mouse over a button, a relevant description and shortcut key will pop up. After selecting notes in the piano roll, right-click to see the menu.



Alt + P [Mac: Alt + Shift + P]

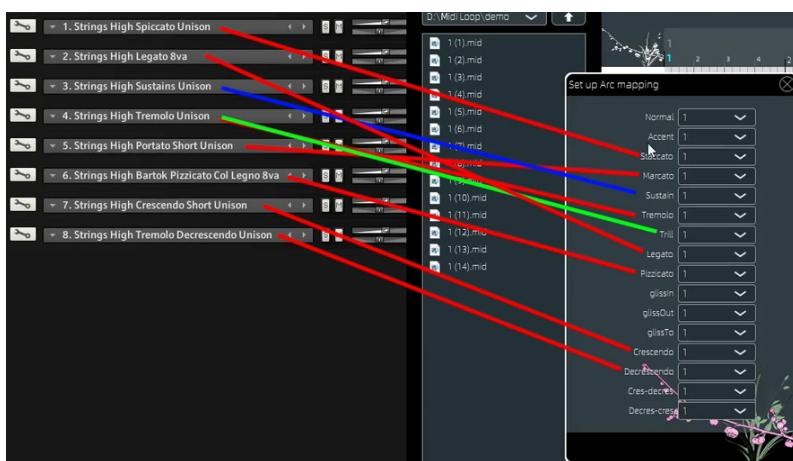
Phrase Panel : For operations related to this panel , please refer to the video tutorial :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoCGk7lwj5Q>

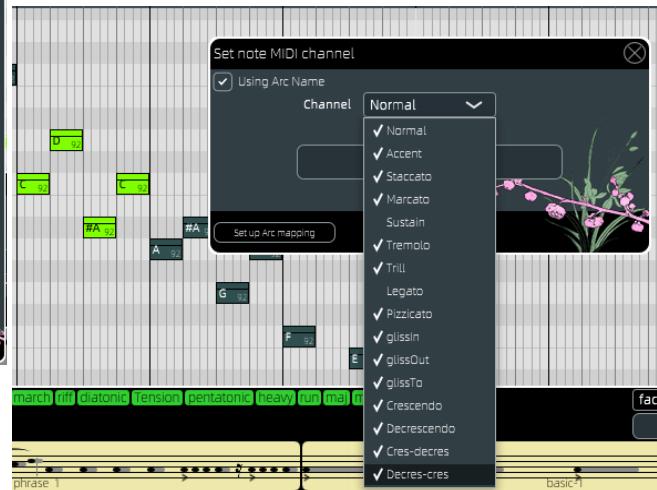


Click the button in the diagram to set up performance technique mapping.

Map the 16 MIDI channels to technique names.



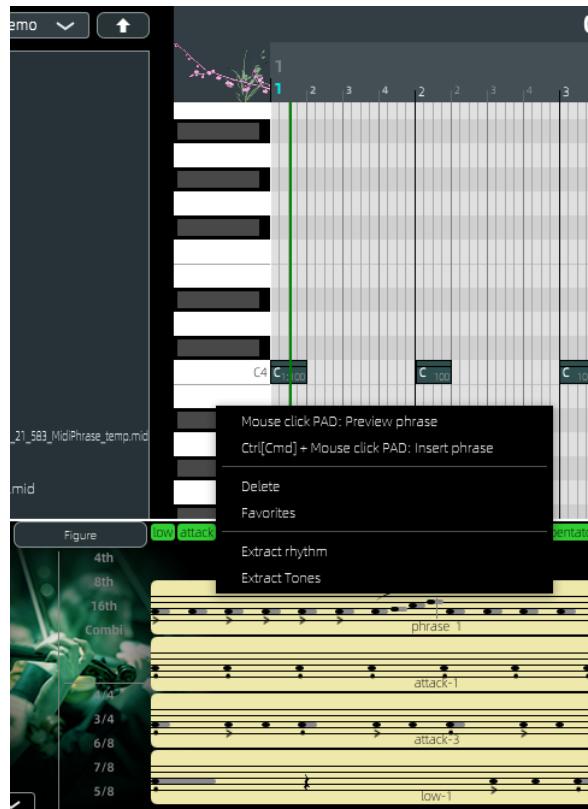
After setting up the Channel Number-Performance Technique Mapping, you can edit note channels using technique names, making the process clearer and more intuitive.



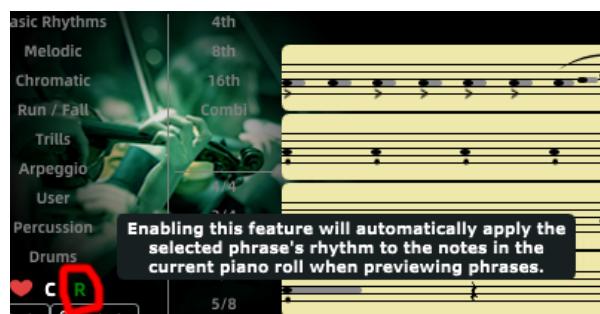
Video Tutorial on Setting Up Technique Mapping
<https://youtu.be/lK5vk7zmJ20?si=klq-zRAzN9h5ZNdR>

Right-click on the staff to access the following functions:

- **Left-click**: Preview the current phrase.
- **Ctrl + Left-click**: Apply the phrase using the selected notes in the piano roll as the root.
- **Delete**: Remove the phrase.
- **Add to Favorites**: Bookmark the phrase.
- **Extract Rhythm**: Extract the rhythm of the phrase (can later be applied to the selected notes in the piano roll).
- **Extract Pitch**: Similar to option 5, but for pitch.



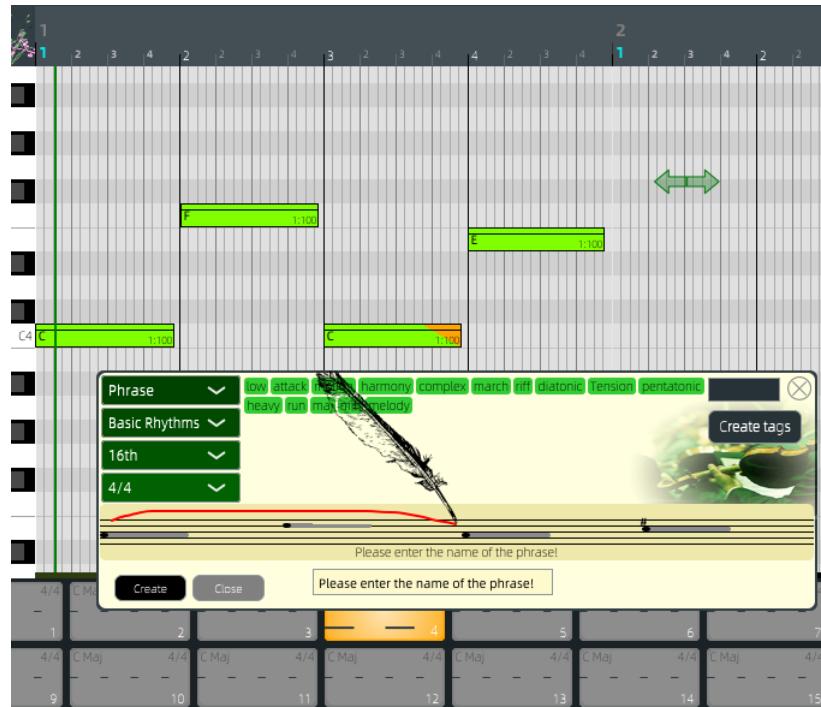
Adjust the rhythm of phrases in real-time and instantly preview the changes.
https://youtu.be/5t3gG0_Mn-8?si=sMul0molUVeZhjoG



This is an extremely powerful feature. Once activated, clicking on any pad will trigger the playback of the current phrase in the piano roll, but its rhythm pattern will be replaced by the rhythm pattern of the selected pad. You can freely click on any pad to listen to the emotional expression and impact of the phrase under different rhythms.

Select the notes you want, press **Shift + P** to open the **Create Phrase Panel**, where you can sample any phrase and build your own library. Generally, I believe any exceptionally compelling rhythm is worth capturing—don't you agree? Below is a video tutorial on sampling phrases:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9BO57YVaAU

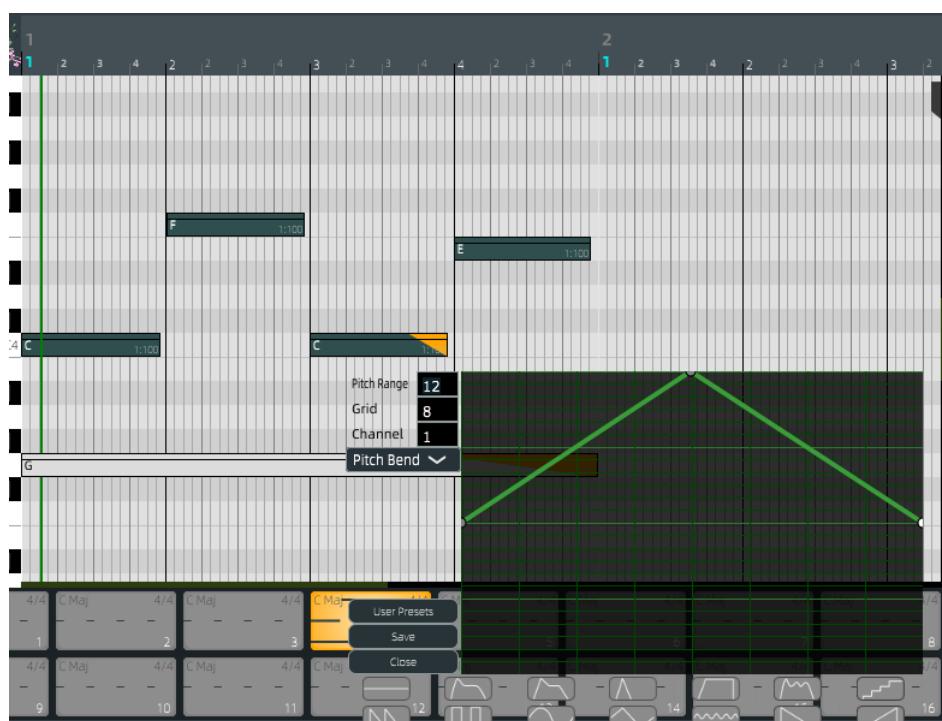


After selecting a note, press the **【H】** key to open the **MIDI CC Settings Panel**, where you can configure pitch, pan, modulation wheel, and other parameters.

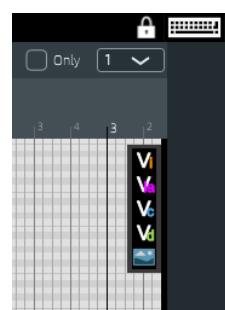
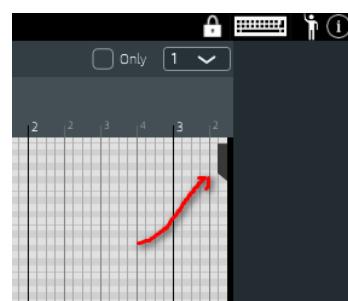
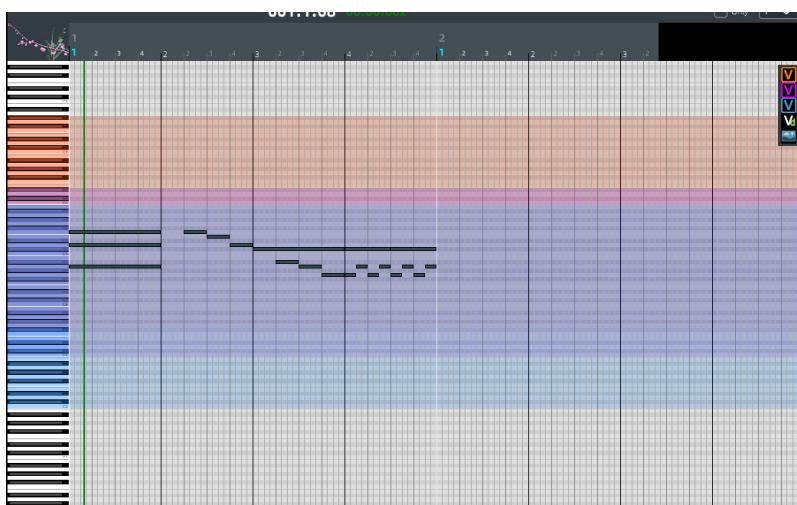
Key Point:

This method of setting MIDI CC differs from traditional DAW approaches. Here, the applied curve is scaled based on the **note length**, meaning the same curve will be stretched or compressed proportionally to the duration of the note. This creates a feel entirely distinct from traditional DAW adjustment methods. Why not give it a try?

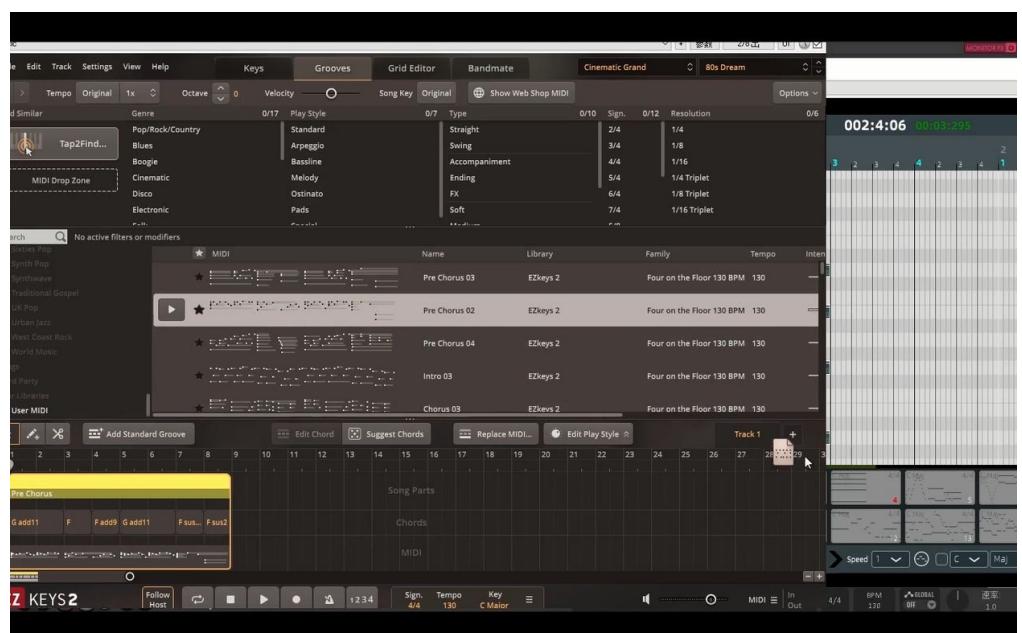
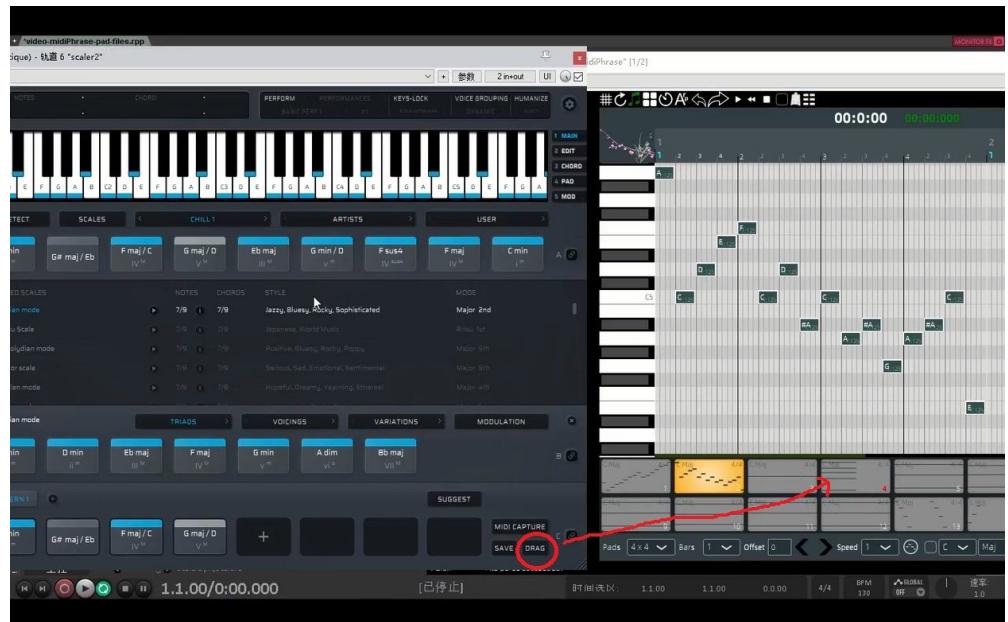
Tip: If you want to achieve behavior consistent with traditional DAWs, you can simply draw a long note that spans the entire length of the phrase, mute it, and then apply MIDI CC adjustments to this note. This will function similarly to a dedicated MIDI CC track.



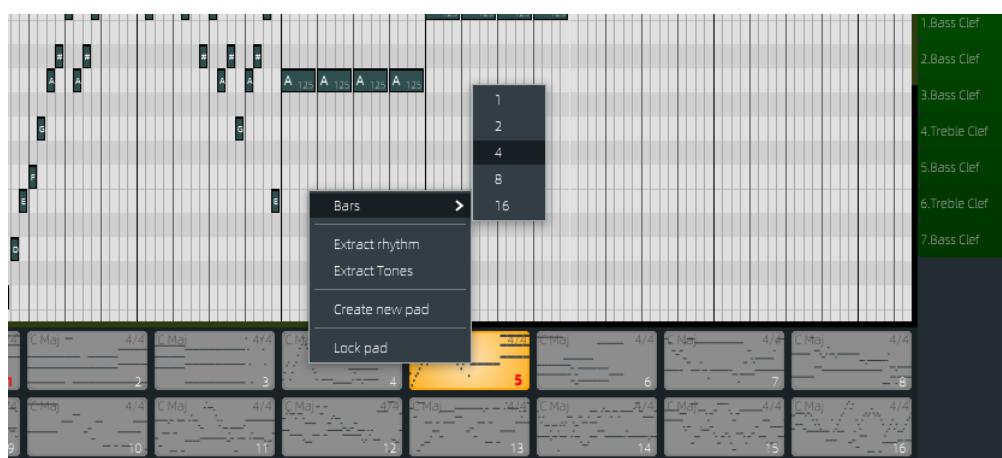
Four-Part Harmony Area Coloring



A single PAD can also independently load a MIDI score or segment. Simply drag and drop a MIDI file into the PAD, and the right-click menu of that PAD will then include an option to **set the number of bars the PAD can accommodate**. Additionally, when you move the mouse to the left or right side of the PAD, arrow icons will appear, allowing you to **offset the phrase segment** (if the content of the MIDI file exceeds the number of bars you set).

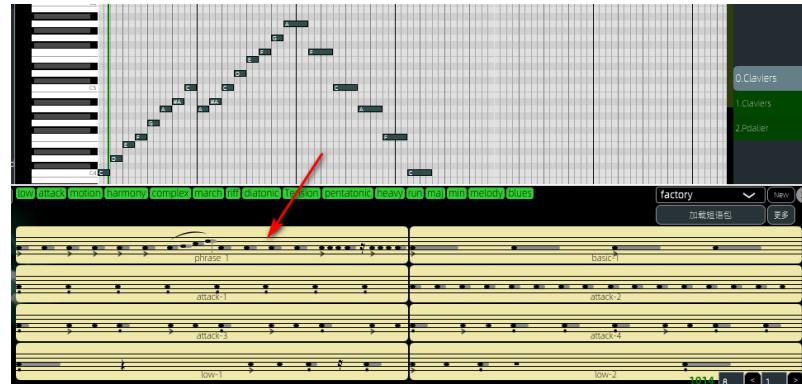


Set the number of bars for independently loaded file PADS.

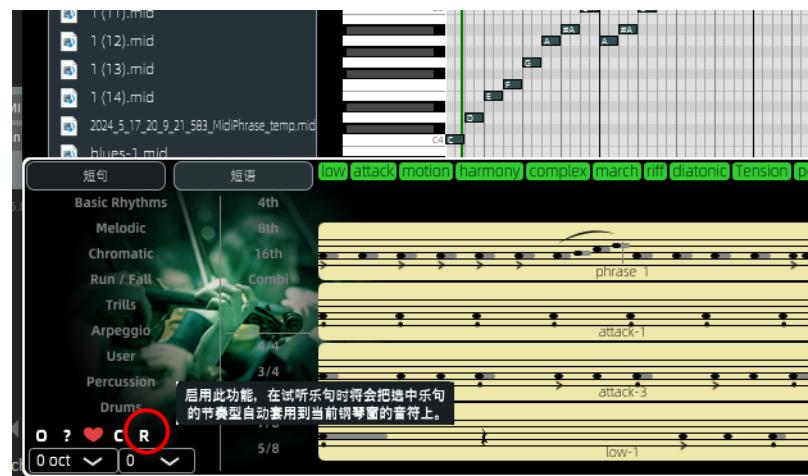


10. **Preview Phrase** | **Preview Rhythm**

Click on the staff with your mouse to preview the phrase.



Click the button in the diagram to activate **Rhythm Preview Mode**. Once enabled, clicking on the staff will apply the rhythm pattern to the phrase in the piano roll and play it back in real-time.



During the creative process, you can use sticky notes to jot down ideas or reminders.

You can also drag and drop an image into the piano roll to use as a background, which may help inspire your creative atmosphere. Recommended image aspect ratio: **4:3**.



Export and Import MIDI Files

Three Ways to Import MIDI Files:

1. Use the plugin's built-in file browser: Double-click a file to load it.
2. Drag and drop a file from your computer folder directly into the piano roll.
3. Drag and drop a file from your computer folder into a single PAD.

Export MIDI:

1. Hold down the left mouse button and drag the PAD to your DAW track.
2. Hold down the left mouse button and drag the PAD to a folder on your computer.

MIDI Phrase Transformation Tool bar



The Phrase Transformation Tool bar is a powerful creative tool designed to provide real-time transformation and inspire new musical ideas.

Duggal Inspired

Instantly integrate inspiration into your workflow. With each click, MidiPhrase randomly selects up to four clips from your current MIDI folder, loads them onto the pads, and automatically locks them.

The length of the clips is determined by the number of bars set in the configuration panel below.

It will overwrite unlocked pads and automatically lock them.

Right-click on a pad to view the actual BPM and filename of the loaded clip.

****Tip:**** Create a dedicated folder (e.g., "Duggal Inspire Me") containing MIDI files categorized by composer, style, instrument, or era to influence the type of phrases generated.

Special thanks to British musician **Peter Duggal** for this brilliant idea.

****Batch Unlock Pads**:** Unlock all locked pads with a single click.

****Randomize All Pads**:** Shuffle the order of all pads randomly.

Random Shuffle Mode:

When activated, all loaded segments will be randomly reordered. In this state, the musical phrases are no longer continuous. Enabling this mode may affect page navigation and subsequent file switching operations.

Flip Pitch Vertically

****Flip All Visible Phrases Vertically**** (Note Pitch Inversion).
This action will be reset after switching pages.

Mirror Notes Horizontally:

Flip All Visible Phrases Horizontally (Time Reversal).
This action will be reset after switching pages.

****Note:**** Vertical and horizontal flipping can also be applied individually via the right-click menu of each pad. In the piano roll, these functions can be applied only to selected notes.

If certain MIDI files are unavailable or do not contain valid segments, the ****Duggal Inspire Me**** feature may occasionally return fewer than four clips.

Tool bar Introduction



-  1. **[G] Grid Snap**: When enabled, drawn notes will snap to the grid based on the specified quantization precision. (Quantization precision shortcut: **[B]**)

Note: This setting also affects note recording.



2. **[Z] Loop Playback Toggle**



3. **[i] Enable MIDI Key Trigger for Pads** (activated by default; if deactivated, MIDI signals will pass through directly to the output). This does not affect the numeric keys 1-9 on the computer keyboard.



4. **Mute pad when switching** (may be useful in specific scenarios):

Shortcut: **Ctrl (CMD) + Shift + D**



5. Arp Function: Unlike traditional arpeggiators, this feature shifts the playback of the current phrase in the piano roll based on the notes you play. Shortcut: Alt (Option) + R



6. **Undo**: **Ctrl (CMD) + Z** **Restore Original Slices**: Shortcut **[X]**



7. **Redo**: **Shift + Z**



8. **MIDI Recording**: **Ctrl (Cmd) + R** ,Right-click this button to access the metronome settings.



9. Step Input: Alt (Option) + B ,Can be used in combination with: [G] Grid Snap and Quantization precision shortcut [B]



10. Playback (Spacebar or Y): Triggers synchronized playback in the DAW. To avoid triggering DAW synchronization, use the [Y] key instead.



11. **Stop** (Spacebar or **Y**): Behavior is similar to that of function 10.



12. **Return to Start Point [W]**



13. **The "Method of Three Parts"** (三分损益法) is an ancient Chinese tuning system that shares similarities with Pythagoras's circle of fifths. This feature adjusts the pitch of notes from the twelve-tone equal temperament approximation to frequencies tuned using the "Method of Three Parts," primarily through samplers or synthesizers.



14. **Multi-Channel Mode (Alt/Option + H)**: When activated, MIDI signals will be sent through the specified channels. If deactivated, all notes are forced to route to **Channel 1** (for convenient previewing).



15. **Phrase Panel**: **Alt (Option) + P** Opens the phrase panel.



16. Preview Ctrl[CMD]+I;



17. **Keep Playhead Centered**



18. **Razor Tool**: **Shift + I** A method for batch splitting notes.



19. **Batch Shift Note Start Points (Arpeggio)**: **Alt (Option) + I**



20. Composition stickers



21. **Draw Notes** (This is just a hint. Hover the mouse over it to see how to draw notes in the piano roll.)

Two MIDI Recording Modes:



1. **Real-time Recording Mode:**

Click the record button or use the shortcut **Ctrl (Cmd) + R** to enable MIDI recording, then press the **Spacebar** to start recording.

(Alternatively, you can press **Ctrl (Cmd) + R** during DAW playback to enter recording mode directly without pressing the Spacebar.)

Before recording begins, you will hear a count-in and metronome clicks (right-click the record button to disable the metronome).

This process is similar to most mainstream DAWs.

Recording Quantization: Press the shortcut **G** to enable note quantization. The system will prompt you to press **B** to switch quantization resolutions.

2. **Step Input Mode**

In this mode, playback is not required. Simply press keys on your MIDI keyboard to input notes step by step.

(You can also use the shortcut **B** to adjust note precision.)

Real-time Recording Mode

https://youtu.be/xWSDj0pE2TU?si=RI2kVaDBK8QdIN6_

Step Input Mode

<https://youtu.be/NnnXI1hBn9A?si=MUbyyXFez2cngLEd>

**How to Add Extended MIDI Phrase Packs: **

Simply drag the extension pack (e.g., Woodwind Pack: `woodwind.pfs`) into the piano roll. A window will pop up—just enter the serial number for the extension pack.

Demo:

<https://youtu.be/vdApnQVwckE?si=1fO5bnqeE0rZxx0N>

Video Introductions to More Features of MidiPhrase:

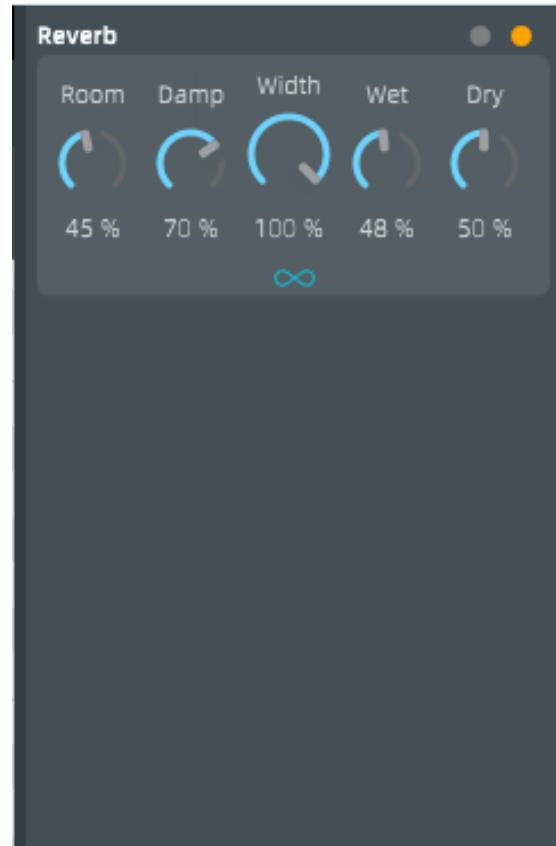
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNkDVC781ytIQNxpkErEn3vUiXeDpzWQfw>

This feature is disabled by default and exists for standalone versions or simple trial scenarios. In fact, using sound sources with their own unique effects in combination with MidiPhrase may yield better results when searching for themes. Of course, this is just a suggestion.



When the player is activated, the SFZ panel will pop up:

1. You can load SFZ instruments;
(You can directly drag and drop SFZ files into the piano roll to load them)
2. Open the effects panel;
3. Volume control.



Please note: The AU format, as a type of MIDI effect, does not include an SFZ player.

The above only covers some common regional functions. For more tool details, please refer to the right-click menu and the shortcut description panel. Hover your mouse over each button to view relevant instructions and shortcut tips.

Thank you for reading this user manual. Wishing you a pleasant creative experience.