

SketchPad User Manual

Introduction

SketchPad is a VST/AU looper plugin designed to be operated with sustain pedals or momentary footswitches. It can be used for building click tracks, developing rhythms for songs, practising solos, and jamming over parts to generate ideas.

Key Features

- Up to 16 layers
- Hands-free operation
- Intelligent doubling
- Sync to host
- Undo/ Redo record
- Scalable UI
- Render loops for mixdown
- Windows / mac / Linux

Demo Version

SketchPad is provided as a fully functioning demo. On loading the demo, you will need to close a nag screen and the plugin will only function for 20 minutes. You can follow the link on the nag screen to make a purchase. MIDI Expression customers can get a free license [here](#).

The User Interface

(A) Sync To Host

When enabled, SketchPad will use your host's tempo to atomically size loops. It will also start and stop playing along with your host.

(B) Duplicated Parts

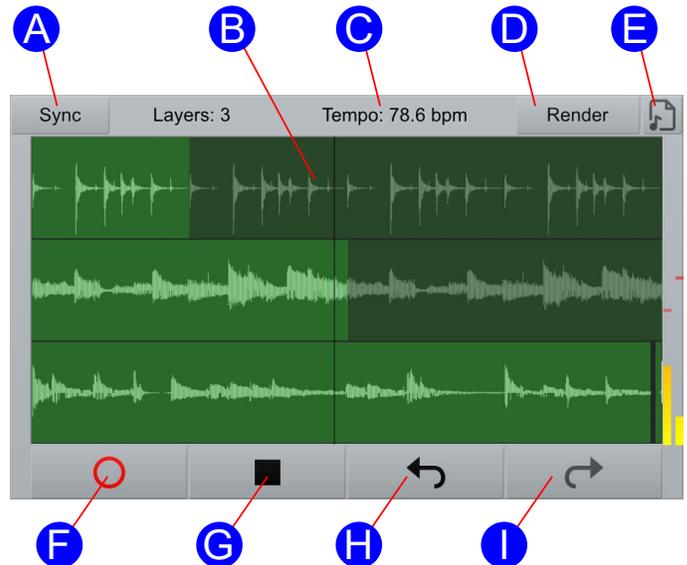
Loops that have been automatically duplicated are drawn in lighter shade of green. In the image above, the first loop was only one measure long, but has been duplicated 3 times.

(C) Tempo

When not in sync mode, a tempo is calculated based on the length of the first loop. This measurement assumes that the first loop is only one measure long. If you the first loop was 4 measures long and the temp reading was 32, then the real tempo would be 128 bpm (32×4).

(D) Render

This renders all the loop down into an audio file and saves it into the SketchPad render folder.



(E) Audiofile link

After you have rendered a loop, the icon will light green. You can click on the icon and the render will be revealed in your file manager, or you can drag and drop the file into your host application. If you record more loops after you render a mixdown, this icon will turn orange indicating that the current render does not match the current set of loops.

Note: Drag and drop is currently not supported on Linux.

(F) Record / Play

Starts recording a new loop. Press again to stop recording. If you have previously pressed 'Stop' then this button turns into a play icon and pressing it will begin playback.

If you stop recording a loop just before the loop is completely filled, the recording will continue until the loop is completely full. If you do not stop the recording within about 0.5 seconds after the loop is filled, the length of the loop will be doubled and any previous loops will be duplicated.

(G) Stop / Reset

This stops playback. If you press it two times, all the loops will be cleared and you will not be able to undo to bring them back.

(H) Undo (I) Redo

This removes or replaces a recorded loop. A removed loop isn't destroyed and can be brought back by clicking 'redo'. However, if you undo and then record a new loop, all 'undone' loops will be cleared.

Controlling with MIDI

SketchPad is designed to work with momentary switches (on/off), such as a sustain pedal. With a single pedal, you can control the Play / Record button to easily build up loops.

The plugin has built-in MIDI learn, but can also be controlled using host automation. To activate a controls, the plugin expects to receive an ON message directly followed by an OFF message. For host automation that's 1.0, followed by 0.0 . For MIDI, that 127 followed by 0.

You can MIDI learn controls by right clicking on a control and selecting the learn CC icon. The control will turn green. Send a MIDI CC to the plugin and the CC will be mapped. SketchPad ignores the MIDI channel, so make sure each CC you use is unique.

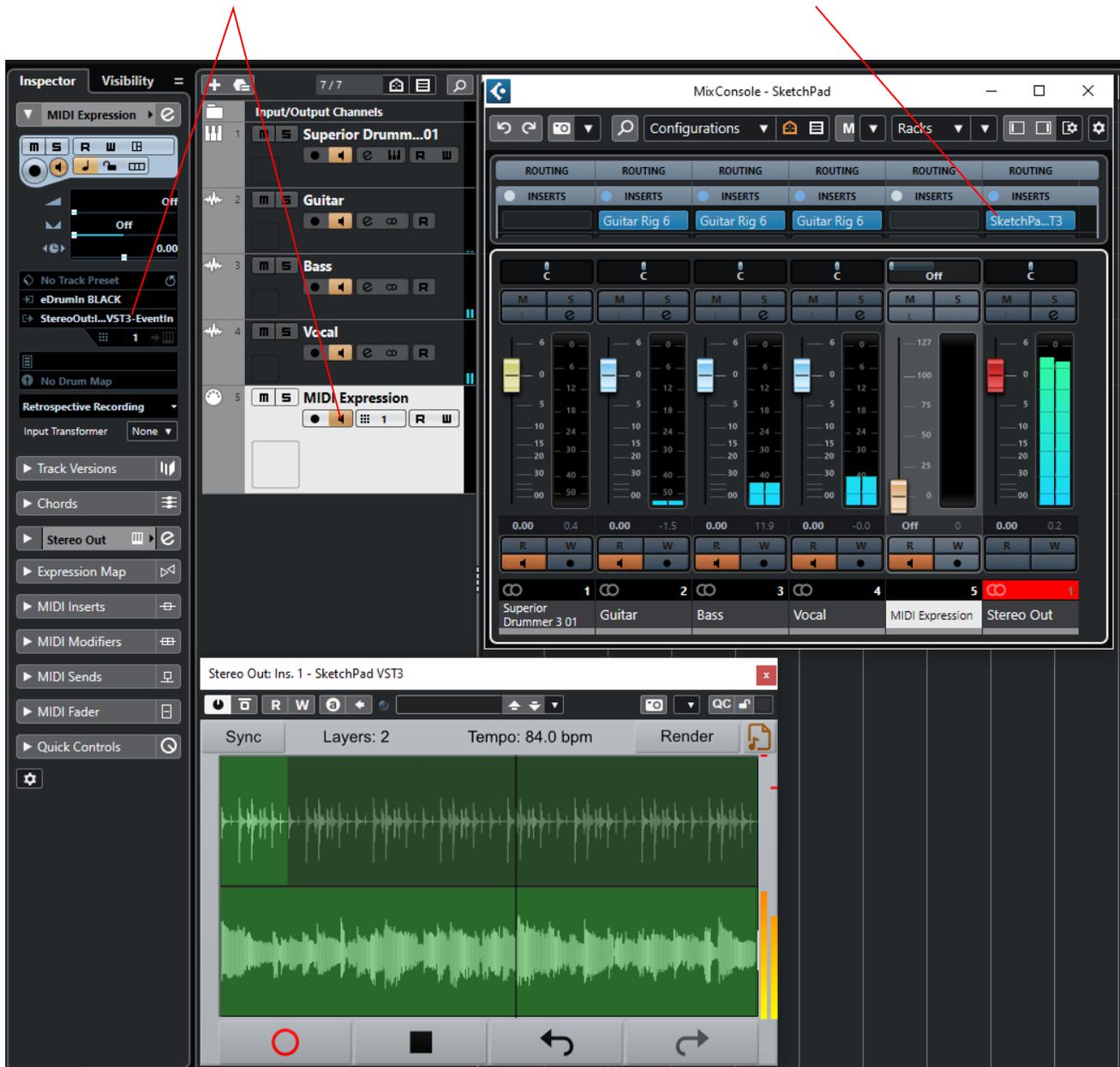


NOTE: Be careful about writing automation for the plugin. Automation is intended for live performance applications and could lead to weird behaviour if written to an automation lane in your host application.

Example Setup in Cubase 12 using MIDI Track

MIDI Track routing MIDI to Sketchpad

SketchPad inserted on Master



In the above setup, SketchPad is on the master channel. The other tracks all feed into the master. The highlighted MIDI track is monitored and routes MIDI from the connected MIDI Expression to the SketchPad plugin.