

SynthFont – the MIDI file SoundFont player.

© Kenneth Rundt, 2002 - 2011
Version 1.559 released May 6th 2011

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Official Web page at: <http://www.synthfont.com>



New in Version 1.560 (May 9th 2011)

Bug fixes:

- In the process of moving from the Delphi 7(2002) compiler to Delphi 11(2007) a few odd things happened, for instance, some string lists very emptied. For example the Small Buffer size list in Setup, which is used to set the buffer size when playing live and not using ASIO, was nullified, with adverse side effects, of course. Version 1.560 tries to fix all these (minor) issues.

New in Version 1.559 (May 6th 2011)

Bug fixes:

- Some VST effects and instruments were not accepted by Version 1.558 [due to the change of compiler from from Delphi 7(2002) to Delphi 11(2007)]

New in Version 1.558 (May 5th 2011)

Bug fixes:

- SynthFont did occasionally not send Midi Program Change messages on to a VST instrument as it might have been flagged as "Locked" (i.e. not General Midi compatible), although the "Locked" button in the VST instrument editor was not pressed
- When assigning a VST instrument to several tracks at once, SynthFont did (since version 1.500) assign different instances to each track. Before version 1.500 the same single instance was assigned
- The Delete key did not delete selected notes in the Pianoroll
- Some GIGA and DLS files were not correctly interpreted

Other:

- Replaced unmodified shortcut keys with modified ones, mostly using Shift+Ctrl as modifier (see file ShortKeys.txt)
- SynthFont had problems with midi files in which there were Midi Program Change messages for a particular channel spread over many tracks. SynthFont now moves all Program Changes to the track with the corresponding notes
- First version to be compiled with the Delphi 11(2007) compiler.

New in Version 1.557 (April 14th 2011)

Bug fixes:

- Since version 1.552 some notes have tended to remain playing after note-off although they were mostly silent already and did not contribute anything. This caused the polyphony to rise and the system to slow down
- Master Fine and Coarse Tuning did not always work
- The two latest versions have often experienced a not fatal exception at start-up
- Exclusive Class for percussions did not work when short-cutting of overlapping notes was switched off
- A large number of other minor bugs fixed

New in Version 1.556 (March 22nd 2011)

Bug fixes:

- Versions 1.554 and 1.555 had a bug causing it to draw the Pianoroll badly when the Grid Size was set to more than 1. Additionally the "Show Scale" checkbox in "Key Signature and Melodic Scale" did not work (notes were not grayed)
- Some midi files were not correctly read
- Keys used as shortcuts could not be used to navigate to files in the Explorer list
- After editing and saving a SoundFont group file in use by a track, the track presets were not updated
- The playback position in the Pianoroll did not respond to a user change of the BPM factor (in "Plug & Play")

Other:

- The shortcut key for pause/resume playback used to be "W" or "Pause/Break". It is now only "Pause/Break".

New in Version 1.555 (March 6th 2011)

Bug fixes:

- Version 1.554 had a nasty bug causing it to throw an exception at start-up when the Setup dialog was initially displayed. Function has been removed.
- The Scale Tuning feature for various temperaments has been broken since a few versions back.

New in Version 1.554 (March 2nd 2011)

Bug fixes:

- If SynthFont cannot save the update file in the folder chosen for temporary files, SynthFont now tries to use another folder
- SynthFont could not read midi files created from Tyros style files
- SynthFont could not restore a VST instrument in an Arrangement file if the path contained parenthesis symbols "(" and/or ")"
- Since version 1.530 SynthFont may have decided to assign the SPDIF audio output as the default although not originally set so, resulting in no sound output
- Since version 1.540, you could not assign a SoundFont to a track in Live Midi Input mode
- Pitch Wheel range was not always correctly set from the Continuous Controllers
- Fixed a number of other reported bugs.

New in Version 1.553 (February 22nd 2011)

Bug fixes:

- Fixed a minor but annoying bug that could prevent some midi type 0 files to be correctly read

New in Version 1.552 (February 21st 2011)

Bug fixes:

- In version 1.520 an attempt was made to make the note release decay curve match the decay curve of my Creative Live! audio card. The curve became too steep. It is now correct
- Fixed a number of other reported bugs, for example problems with Pitch Wheel range settings and loops
- Slightly improved SFZ file support
- CPU load meter did not work on Windows 2000 (since version 1.522)
- In the virtual keyboard, the option to define the key velocity by using the mouse wheel did not always work.

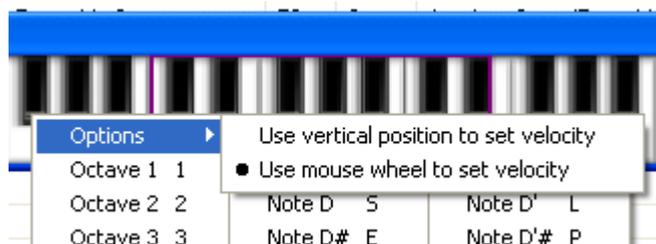
New in Version 1.551 (February 7th 2011)

Bug fixes:

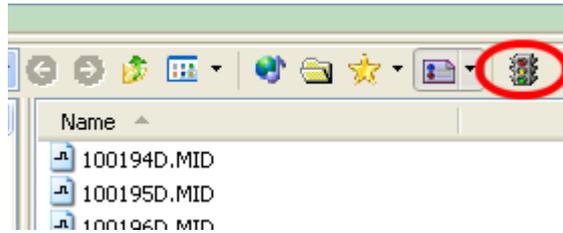
- The new Explorer control did not always behave as expected
- Some shortcut keys, like space bar for playing, were inactivated
- Exception reports never reached the SynthFont bug report server
- When minimizing to the Notification Area, the thread priority was set too low

New features:

- In the virtual keyboard you now have the option to define the key velocity either by the vertical position of the mouse pointer (default) or by using the mouse wheel. To select method, use the right mouse button to pop up a menu with a new item called "Options".



- In the toolbar of the Explorer files list there is a new button with traffic lights. Check to have SynthFont play the tune immediately after loading it (you must double-click to load it). Also see the Autoplay checkbox in the "Play options" box at the top-right corner Files/Folders window.



New in Version 1.550 (January 31st 2011)

Bug fixes:

- When selecting the German language, some additional File Open or Save dialog options were not visible (for instance settings for writing compressed audio files)
- A number of bugs fixed ... again

New features:

- When playing to various compressed file formats (MP3, OGG, FLAC, APE; WMA), SynthFont now writes the compressed files directly, avoiding the initial creation of uncompressed WAV files. Additionally, also 24 bit and 32 bit files are allowed when using FLAC or APE.
- The Explorer in "Files / Folders" is now Windows 7 compatible (supports Libraries)
- New localization language: Italian, thanks to Andrea Bevilacqua.
- A new checkbox in the "Default SoundFont Override" dialog: "Disable all overrides". Check to temporarily disable all overrides (NOTE: state is not saved between sessions). Additionally, when importing a set of overrides from a file, all existing overrides are removed at first.
- The behavior of the solo play button in the Pianoroll has been extended so that you can change state also while playing

Background

SynthFont can be described as a MIDI file player and SoundFont emulator, emulating SoundFont compatible soundcards like Creative's SoundBlaster Live! Series. To use SoundFonts with SynthFont you need only to have a basic soundcard installed on your system.

History

SynthFont started off in the year 2000 as a small exercise in learning to understand the structure of SoundFonts. The goal was to learn how to create good quality SoundFonts and to develop a SoundFont editing tool with features not available in Vienna. In the end I didn't create too many SoundFonts, but continued to develop SynthFont into this package.

Goal

The goal now is to create a free SoundFont tool with a number of distinct properties. The final version of this tool will hopefully help you create good quality SoundFonts with ease. The basic concept is that you have a SoundFont editor that also can play back a MIDI file at the same time. This concept still remains to be demonstrated, as the

current version will not let you edit the SoundFont. Anyway, I still decided to release this intermediate version (BETA 0.1) to the public at this stage to get some feedback, and possibly some help as well.

A new feature I have added to the long wish-list is the possibility to use this tool as a VST instrument as well.

Design concepts

The code is written in Borland Delphi (i.e. Pascal) and at this moment not really optimized for speed. The Delphi environment is a RAD (Rapid Application Development) tool that makes it very easy to add new features. The Pascal language compiler produces code that is not that much slower than any C++ compiler's code. Although SoundFont is not supposed to be Open Code (not just yet anyhow) I am prepared to include code from anyone interested to share. For example, the current long pass filter seems to be very slow. If anyone has a good, fast and reliable filter to share (in almost any language) then please contact me.

You can assign a different SoundFont to each *MIDI channel* (not track) in the MIDI file. This is the current implementation and could be changes so that each *track* actually has a separate SoundFont, meaning that two or more tracks sending notes to the same MIDI channels could do it through different SoundFonts. I would like to hear your comments on this.

Note that you also can change the preset separately without changing it in the MIDI file. This is how you create an arrangement, which is saved in a separate file, having the extension 'sfarr'.

License

This is a freeware version of SynthFont.

If you want to support my work you can either donate a sum of money or help me develop a new feature.

You are free to distribute the unmodified setup file, but note the following:

1. If you want to add it to your own web site I would prefer if you contacted me at first.
2. Copyright must be honored: Kenneth Rundt, 2009, <http://www.synthfont.com>.
3. I would expect you to refer to www.synthfont.com as the home-site of SynthFont.

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