

BABYDRUMMER

Drum Pattern Sequencer

USER'S MANUAL

BabyDrummer is a versatile and easy-to-use pattern-based drum sequencer. With BabyDrummer you can design and play back your fantastic drum patterns in an arbitrary order.



BabyDrummer does not have a built in drum sampler so you need to use one in conjunction with it. A very nice choice might be *Sitala* by *Decomposer* which is totally free and yet covers all you need and even more. Simply place BabyDrummer before Sitala (or any other drum sampler) in the effects chain so that its output goes directly into the sampler. Although the interface of BabyDrummer might look intimidating at first it is in fact very simple and shows everything you need to see when designing a pattern.

- In the top left corner below the logo you see a project box where you can
- **open** an existing drum project,
 - **save** the current one and
 - **reset** all by clearing the project.

Your drum patterns are automatically saved into your current music project along with the settings of all other plugins you use, so you might not need to save or load a drum project manually here, unless you would like to export the drum patterns from the current music project and import them to another one. What you most frequently will use here is the *Rubber* icon resetting BabyDrummer and clearing all patterns.

To the right you can see a virtual keyboard. This is where you can select the pattern to edit. There are 128 patterns starting from C-1.

Not all of them are editable at first, however: you can edit the patterns between C5 and B6 by default (this can be modified on the Options panel). This also means that when BabyDrummer receives a MIDI note between C5 and B6 it will play the pattern belonging to that note. Should the MIDI note received falls outside of this interval, it will be ignored and goes straight through BabyDrummer. This way you can easily combine BabyDrummer patterns and single drum hits or fills sent directly to your drum machine. You can select a pattern to edit by either clicking on a virtual keyboard note or by clicking on the buttons with the left and right arrow beneath the keyboard.

Right under the virtual keyboard there are three icons. They help you manage the selected pattern: you can

- **clear** the current pattern,
- **copy** the current pattern to the clipboard,
- **paste** a previously copied pattern (and overwrite the current one).

To the right there are two arrow buttons with which you can move to the previous or the next pattern and a name field where you can give a unique name to the current pattern.

In the top right corner there are various controls managing recording, playback and the pattern editor layout.

- to record drum hits to the current pattern by hand click on the *Rec* button and then hit the keys / pads on your midi controller that belong to the desired drums as the play heads cycle around. Press the *Rec* button again to stop recording,
- hit the *Play* button to continuously play back the current pattern directly from the plugin (hotkey: *Backspace*). To stop the playback click the button again.

Note that you will use this function mainly during the editing process. You might want to control pattern playback from the host by sending MIDI notes to BabyDrummer. Each MIDI note will select the corresponding pattern and keep it playing while the note lasts. During recording and playback the pattern selector controls are disabled, you cannot change the current pattern manually.

- Select a note for the *Next* pattern to chain more patterns together. BabyDrummer will automatically start playing the chained pattern when the current pattern ends and the controlling note is still on,
- the slider called *Swing* is the classic **swing** control: 0% means regular 1/16 intervals, while 100% means that every even hit will be shifted halfway towards the next (odd) hit. The swing value you set here will affect the entire playback (all patterns),
- the (+) and (-) buttons add / remove drum lanes to the current pattern (see below). There can be 16 drum lanes in a pattern.

The middle section shows the current pattern. There are 8 lanes, each represents a unique drum and has 16 steps (1/16th note each). The selected step is marked by a white rectangle, the current lane is highlighted.

Each lane has separate controls for manipulating its content: use the small icons to the left to

- **clear** the lane,
- **copy** and **paste** lane contents,
- fill the lane with a **random pattern**,
- the blue slider can **shift** the drum hits of the lane in time in both directions (the value +/-100 means a +/-1/32th note shift). Be careful! If you use a negative value, the hit in the first position will be suppressed when the pattern playback has just begin (when you first play that pattern directly from the plugin or the pattern was just selected by the host),
- the *Mute* button will **mute** the corresponding lane,
- the *Solo* button will **solo** the lane,
- click on the text field above the shift slider to give a name to the lane (e.g. enter the **drum name** here),
- click on the note name to **preview the drum** that belongs to this lane,
- to **change the note of a lane** and so assign a different drum to it, either
 - select the lane and then click on the MIDI learn icon above the lanes panel, right above the note fields. The note starts flashing. Now use your MIDI controller to set the new note. If you finished selecting the new drum the flashing of the note will stop after a few seconds; or
 - right click on the note and select the new note from the popup list.

The little red dots are showing the position of the play heads. They start moving when the playback starts.

You can **draw** a new drum in the drum hit matrix by clicking on an empty rectangle. You can **clear** an existing drum hit the same way. To draw or clear more than one hits at once, simply drag the mouse inside the lane.

If you are into **polyrhythms**, you can drag the handler at the end of the lane to set the number of steps. During playback the play heads of shorter lanes start again when reaching the last step - regardless of the position of other play heads. This way you can make nice variations within the same pattern.

If you click on a drum hit, the corresponding lane is selected. Below the drum hit matrix you can see the parameters of the selected lane:

- here you can set the **velocity** of each drum;
- by default all drum hits are always played during playback. You can make the pattern more interesting by increasing its **randomness**. To achieve that reduce the Probability parameter of some of the drum hits. The lower the value the lower the probability of sounding that specific drum hit. A decreased probability value is also shown in the hit matrix: the drum hit becomes shorter;
- if you need more dense hits here and there you can increase the **repeat** parameter of a hit. If you increase the repeats of a hit, the drum hit matrix will also reflect the setting by dividing the hit into several parts. If the repeat count is more than one then a few circles appear around the current velocity slider. You can click on the 5 different circles on the left to set the starting velocity of the repeat (which can be 127, halfway to the current velocity, the current velocity, halfway to 0, 0) as well as 5 circles on the right to set the ending velocity;
- if you want a repeat to last longer than just one hit, simply drag the **Stretch** bar of the hit across its neighbors.

Any of the above sliders can be set by clicking (and then optionally dragging) the mouse. If you need more precision setting a value, hold down the shift key while clicking and dragging. You can set multiple values at once if you drag your mouse across multiple sliders.

You can click the Drag button located right to the Velocity sliders and drag your mouse to the desired MIDI track in your DAW to render the current pattern. If lane lengths are different (so you created a polyrhythm) the pattern will be repeated until all play heads meet again at the beginning of the pattern.

Open the Options panel to set the **capture notes interval** or click on the Show Hints switch to **turn on and off the hints** displayed when the mouse is over a control.

Finally the *User's Manual* link **takes you to the manual page** any time.

THE FINAL SECRETS REVEALED:

HOT KEYS

Here is the complete list of BabyDrummer hot keys to further boost your productivity:

- Arrow keys** - move the selection in the drum hit matrix
- Return** - toggle the currently selected drum hit on/off
- Ctrl + Left/right Arrow keys** - change the length of the selected lane
- Ctrl + Up/down Arrow keys** - move the selected lane up/down
- Shift + Left/right Arrow keys** - move contents of the selected lane left/right
- Plus / Minus** - change the velocity of the selected drum hit
- Shift + Plus / Minus** - change the velocity of all drum hits in the selected lane
- Ctrl + Plus / Minus** - doubles / halves the content of the current lane
- S** - solo the selected lane
- M** - mute the selected lane
- Page Up** - display the next pattern
- Page Down** - display the previous pattern
- Backspace** - plays the current pattern in a loop