




SAND User Guide

version 3.0

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1. Main Screen

1.1 Top toolbar



1.1.1 Undo / Redo

- Tap to undo the last action.
- Long-press to open a menu with the full undo/redo history.

1.1.2 Project Versions

Save a named snapshot of the current project state at any point. Snapshots can be restored later, making it safe to experiment without losing previous work.

1.1.3 Menu

Tap the  button to open the project and settings menu.

MIDI

- **Controllers:** manage connected MIDI controllers.
- **Bluetooth:** connect Bluetooth MIDI devices.

Project

- **Rename:** change the project name.
- **Save a copy as:** duplicate the project under a new name.
- **Save as template:** store the project as a reusable template.
- **Export:** export the whole song (main track or separate tracks).
- **Export Song:** renders and exports the full mix or individual stems.

App

- **Show Hidden Tracks:** reveal tracks that have been hidden from the main view.
- **Show Master Track:** toggle visibility of the master track.

Settings / Store / Help & Feedback: access app settings, in-app purchases, and support.

1.2 Tracks

To create a new track, tap the **+** button below the track list.

Tap the  buttons to:

- **Add an instrument** to create a new playable sound source on the track.
- **Add MIDI or audio effects** to process the track signal.
- **Recall a saved track template** to quickly load a preconfigured track setup.

1.2.1 Track Controls

Volume:

- Drag up or down to adjust the track's volume.
- Double-tap to reset to the default (0 dB).

Pan:

- Drag left or right to adjust stereo position.
- Double-tap to reset to center.


Solo / Mute / Arm:

- **Solo:** Isolate the track's audio.
- **Mute:** Silence the track.
- **Arm:** Enable the track for recording into clips.
- Empty clips extend automatically as notes are added (unless a length is set manually).
- Recording into a non-empty MIDI clip will overdub — new notes are added to the existing content.

1.2.2 Full Screen Track Controls

- Long-press the volume or pan slider to open full-screen controls.
- Tap the track name to rename it.
- Tap any empty area to dismiss the controls.

1.2.3 Track Menu (long press on a track)

- **Rename track**
Change the visible track name in the mixer and related views.
- **Duplicate track**
Create a copy of the track with its current setup.
- **Hide track**
Temporarily remove the track from the main view. Use the **Show hidden tracks** toggle in the  menu to reveal hidden tracks.
- **Save as template**
Store the track configuration so it can be reused in other projects.
- **Set icon**
Assign a different icon to improve visual identification.
- **Change track color**
Change the track color used in the UI.
- **Recording options**
- **Pre-MIDI Plugins:** records input exactly as played
- **Post-MIDI Plugins:** records MIDI after plugin processing
- **Export**
- **MIDI:** exports one MIDI file per clip in the track
- **Audio:** exports one rendered WAV file per clip in the track
- **Delete track**

1.2.4 Clip Menu (long press on a clip)

MIDI Clips

- **Edit:** open the MIDI clip editor.

- **Sync with master:** link editing to a master clip. See [Master Clips](#).
- **Transpose:** shift notes one octave up or down.
- **Length:** change clip duration.
- **Quantize:** align notes to the selected grid.
- **Legato:** extend notes to the next notes.
- **Copy / Paste / Duplicate:** reuse clip content quickly.
- **Import MIDI:**
 - Depending on the file format, one or more clips and tracks may be created.
 - Alternatively, drop a MIDI file from an external app.
- **Export:**
 - **MIDI:** export one MIDI file for the clip (you can also drag the clip to another app).
 - **Audio:** export one rendered WAV file for the clip.
- **Delete:** remove the clip.

Audio Clips

- **Edit:** open the audio clip editor.
- **Transpose:** shift playback one octave up or down.
- **Length:** change clip length; for imported audio, adjust source BPM and beat count (with optional time-stretch).
- **Copy / Paste / Duplicate:** reuse clip content quickly.
- **Import Audio:**
 - Depending on the file format, one or more clips and tracks may be created.
 - You can also drop audio files from external apps.
 - Clips of 20 seconds or less import as **Loop**; longer clips import as **One Shot** (play once, without looping).
 - **Loop** clips are time-stretched to match the project tempo. SAND detects the source BPM:
 - from the file name when it contains `bpm` (for example `120bpm`, `120-bpm`, or `bpm-128`)
 - otherwise by analyzing the audio
 - If the tempo or beat count is wrong, use **Length** to adjust the source BPM and clip length.
- **Export:**
 - **Audio:** exports a rendered WAV of the current clip
 - **Original Audio:** exports the unprocessed source audio file
- **Delete:** remove the clip.

1.3 Song Mode

Organize your clips into sections that can be launched sequentially. Tap on a section to launch all the clips in it.

Tap the **+** button on top of the tracks to create a new section.

Add clips to a section by:

- Copying and pasting clips
- Dragging and dropping clips
- Recording directly into an empty clip

1.3.1 Linked Clips

Clips added to a section can be "linked" to the original. Any changes made to one of the linked clips will automatically sync across all linked clips.

1.3.2 Launching Sections

- Tap the section name to launch it.
- All clips in the section will start together.
- The section loops based on its defined length.

1.3.3 Section Options (long press)

- **Rename section** to keep arrangement labels clear.
- **Change section length** (in beats). **Automatic** sets section length to the longest clip.
- **Duplicate or delete section** to manage arrangement structure.
- **Drag and drop to reorder** sections in playback order.

1.3.4 Chain Recording

Chain recording lets you record through multiple sections one after another in a single pass, without stopping playback.

To use chain recording:

1. Arm one or more tracks for recording.
2. Select the initial section.
3. Press record. Recording starts on the current section and automatically advances to the next section when the current one completes its loop cycle.

Each section is recorded in sequence until you stop playback or all sections have been recorded. This makes it easy to lay down a full arrangement in one take.

Tip: Set explicit lengths on your sections beforehand so each section records for exactly the intended number of beats before moving on.

1.4 Compact Layout

- Tap the vertical handle on the left to collapse a track header.
- If the project has one or more sections, drag the vertical handle on the right to rebalance space between sections and clips.
- Pinch vertically with two fingers to adjust track height.

2. Master Track

Use the master track to apply global audio effects to the entire mix. Add any audio effect plugin to the master track and it will be applied globally.

2.0.1 Long Press Menu

- **Collapse** for compact view
 - **Hide the master track** — effects will still be applied; show the master track again from the menu button on the top right of the screen
-

2.1 Master Clips

Apply edits to multiple clips simultaneously.

Setup: long press on a clip in a section and choose **Sync with master**.

Clips belonging to a section of a project track can sync editing with a clip belonging to a section of a master track.

2.1.1 Sync Modes

Edits done in the "master" clip are propagated to synced clips in two modes: **monophonic** and **chords**. An offset can also be applied to the octave.

Adding a note in the master clip:

- In a clip set up with **monophonic** sync, a single note will be added (optionally applying the octave offset).
- In a clip set up with **chord** sync, a chord in the project key with the master clip's inserted note as root note will be added.

Deleting a note in the master clip will delete those in the synced clips that are contained in the master clip time span.

Editing the pitch or length of a note in the master clip will propagate to the synced clips.

3. Toolbar & Drawer

Open the bottom drawer by tapping the toolbar buttons. Close by dragging the toolbar downward.

Note

In narrower screen configurations (such as when using an iPad in multitasking mode or on an iPhone) some buttons may be collapsed. Press the button with the up and down arrow to select a section.

3.1 On-Screen Keyboard

- Add and remove keys with the – / + buttons.
- Move the keyboard with the arrow buttons — either by one octave or one tone (configurable in Settings).

Key:

- Use the project key, or override it and set a key for a single track.

Velocity is higher when pressing the lower part of a key. Velocity sensitivity can be adjusted in the global settings.

3.2 Drum Pads

A grid of 16 velocity-sensitive pads for playing and recording drum or percussion parts.

- Tap a pad to trigger the note assigned to it.
- Velocity is higher when pressing the upper part of a pad. Velocity sensitivity can be adjusted in the drum pads settings.
- Reveal more pads by dragging up the toolbar

3.3 Track Plugin Parameters

Pick and control any parameter of any plugin in the current track.

Long press on a parameter to:

- Rename
 - Delete
 - Drag to reorder
-

3.4 Track MIDI Settings

- **MIDI Input:** select a device or another track to receive MIDI from. The selected track will receive MIDI when armed.
 - **MIDI Output:** select a device to send MIDI to. A channel must also be specified.
-

3.5 Track Audio Input

Select the audio input channel for the current track.

MIDI tracks can also receive audio input — useful for audio-processing plugins (such as vocoders), sampling plugins, or for routing an external synthesizer through the track's effect chain. Enable audio input for a MIDI track by selecting it when adding an instrument.

3.6 Tempo & Ableton Link

Set the tempo and time signature of the project. The Ableton Link indicator is visible when a session is active. Enable or disable Ableton Link in the Settings.

3.7 Key

Choose the project key.

3.8 Recording Options

Quantize recording: apply selected quantization when recording notes via on-screen keyboard or MIDI keyboard.

Start recording after:

- **Count-In:** after pressing the record button, 4 beats will be counted and then recording starts.
 - **First note:** after pressing the record button, SAND waits and starts recording when a note is played (either on the on-screen keyboard or on a MIDI keyboard).
-

3.9 Tape Recorder

Record to audio file(s).

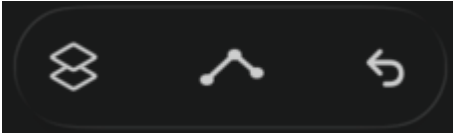
Tap the red record button and then start the song with the play button. The audio will be recorded onto audio files, one per track.

After stopping the recorder, the audio file(s) can be exported.

4. Clip Editor

4.1 MIDI Clip Editor

4.1.1 Top Toolbar



- **Ghost clip:** pick another clip to be displayed alongside the current one. "Switch to ghost clip" will swap the two.
- **Automation:** toggle visibility of the clip automation area.
- **Undo / Redo:** undo edits; long press for Redo.

4.1.2 Grid Options

- **Audition notes:** enable to hear selected notes.
- If transport is stopped, notes play in sequence at the current tempo — useful to preview a melody without playing the whole clip.
- Tap on the keyboard on the left to hear a single note.

4.1.3 Scale Mode

- **None:** notes can be moved freely on any row.
- **Highlight:** notes in the project or track key will be colored; moving notes will keep them in key.
- **Show only notes in key:** only rows in key are shown; moving notes will keep them in key.

Grid background: optionally use a light background.

4.1.4 Notes Editor

4.1.5 Top Bar

- **Grid size:** used to quantize, split to grid, and align notes when moving.
- **Chord selector:** select one or more notes → tap the note/chord name at center → select a type and inversion.
- **Clip length.**

4.1.6 Selecting Notes

- Tap on a single note.
- Long press and drag to select multiple notes.
- Tap on the keyboard on the left to select all notes of a pitch.
- Double-tap to select all notes.
- Double-tap on the ruler to select all notes that intersect the playhead.

4.1.7 Moving Notes

- By dragging.
- Or with the arrow buttons (toggle visibility with the four-arrows button).

Change note length by dragging the handle on the right of the note.

4.1.8 Toolbar (left to right)



1. **Plus** — add notes
 2. **Brush** — add several notes on the same pitch; length is determined by grid size
 3. **Step input recording** — record one step at a time via MIDI or on-screen keyboard
 4. **Duplicate** selected notes
 5. **Copy** selected notes
 6. **Paste** selected notes at the playhead position
 - Move the playhead by tapping or dragging the beat numbers bar
 - **Paste notes velocity** (long press on the paste button): applies the velocity of copied notes repeatedly. For example, copying two notes (100 and 80) and pasting velocity onto 5 notes results in: 100, 80, 100, 80, 100.
 7. **Trash** — delete selected notes
 8. **Change notes velocity**
 9. **Quantize** notes
 10. **Legato** — extend notes up to the following ones
 11. **Split note at playhead** — select notes, move the playhead, then tap Split
 12. **Split notes to grid** — select notes, choose a grid value, tap Split; notes will be split at every grid intersection
-

4.1.9 Loop Markers

Set start and end points to loop a portion of a clip.

Crop the part delimited by the loop markers by tapping the crop button.

4.1.10 Step Input Recording

Enables step-by-step note entry via MIDI keyboard.

4.1.11 Advancing the Step

- Entering a note via MIDI keyboard automatically advances to the next step.
- Disable auto-advance by deselecting the advance button — this allows multiple notes to be inserted in the same step.
- Use the advance button to manually advance (i.e. insert a rest/pause).
- Alternatively, tap on the editor to manually select a step.

4.1.12 Toggling Steps

Toggle a step (note) by pressing a key on the MIDI keyboard. Each note can be turned on or off by hitting the corresponding key.

4.1.13 MIDI Controller Navigation

- Enter step editor via the **Enter** command inside the clip editor.
 - Navigate steps via **Left** / **Right** commands.
 - Toggle the step by hitting a key on the MIDI keyboard.
-

4.1.14 Automation

Pick a parameter to automate. Available parameters:

- Volume or pan of a track
- MIDI pitch bend, program change, or controllers
- Any track plugin parameter

Points snap to the grid (set at the top of the clip editor). Disable by setting grid to "off".

Select points by long press and dragging, or tap individual points.

4.1.15 Automation Toolbar

- **Plus** — add a single point
- **Brush** — tap and move to add multiple points
- **Trash** — delete selected points

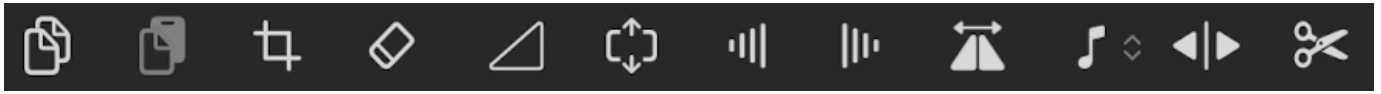
- **Curve switch** — determines whether values are ramped or stepped. Parameters with on/off values or "Program Change" should typically not be ramped.
-

4.2 Audio Clip Editor

Use the audio editor to make destructive or non-destructive edits to audio material inside a clip.

- **Select audio**
Select a region of the waveform to target edit operations.

4.2.1 Toolbar



- **Copy / Paste**

Copy the selected region and paste it at the playhead or current insertion point.

- **Crop**

Keep only the selected audio and remove everything outside the selection.

- **Erase (replace with silence)**

Remove the selected content while preserving timing by replacing it with silence.

- **Gain**

Open a dB slider to raise or lower level. Applies to the selected region; if nothing is selected, applies to the loop range or the entire clip.

- **Fade in**

Apply a volume ramp from silence to full level at the start of the selected region.

- **Fade out**

Apply a volume ramp from full level to silence at the end of the selected region.

- **Normalize**

Adjust the selected audio gain to raise overall level while preventing clipping.

- **Flip (reverse)**

Reverse playback direction of the selected audio region.

- **Change pitch**

Shift the pitch of selected audio up or down.

- **Stretch**

Time-stretch selected audio to make it longer or shorter.

- **Split into clips**

Split the current audio content into multiple clips based on the current selection/split point. The resulting clips will be inserted into a new track.

- **Automatic preview of selected audio**

The editor can automatically audition the selected region when it changes.

- Turn this off by tapping the speaker button  in the top-left corner.

- Trigger preview manually with the  button on the top-right corner.

5. Track Devices

Access by tapping on a plugin circle in the main screen.

Top bar controls:

- Back to main screen
- Toggle mini-clips view
- Open track controls
- Track selector — quickly switch to another track
- Undo / Redo
- Enter edit mode to change plugin order or delete plugins

5.1 Plugin View

- **Show plugin interface**
- **Show parameters**
- **Preset list**
- drag down to reveal search
- **Show plugin interface fullscreen**
- **Menu:**
 - **Default state for plugin** — save the current state as default; every new instance of the plugin will start with that state and parameters
 - **Replace plugin** with another
 - **Delete plugin**

6. Settings

6.1 MIDI Controllers

Connect a MIDI controller and assign its knobs, faders, and pads to actions in SAND. Each entry pairs an input device (and optional output) with a **mapping** you edit command by command.

- Tap **+** (top right) to add a controller and configure its mapping.
- Swipe a row left to delete a controller.
- Use the import button next to **+** to load a saved `.sandmap` mapping file.
- Open a controller, then tap the export button (top right) to save or share its mapping as a `.sandmap` file.
- When you are signed into iCloud, your controllers and mappings sync automatically across devices. Without iCloud, they are stored on the device only.

6.1.1 Mapping categories

Tap a command in the mapping editor, then move the hardware control you want to assign. Commands are grouped as follows.

Transport

- Play (toggle), Stop, Record.

Mixer

- Volume, pan, arm, mute, and solo — for tracks 1–8, or for the **selected track** only.

Track

- Select previous or next track, or jump to track 1–8.
- Select previous or next effect, or jump to effect 1–8.
- Toggle clips 1–8 on the selected track.
- Add instrument track, audio track, or effect.

Parameters

- **Change Param 1** through **Change Param 8** — adjust parameters on the focused track or plugin (eight assignable slots).

Sections

- Add a section; launch **Play Section 1** through **8** in Song mode.

Editing

- **Shift 1–4** — map up to four buttons as shift modifiers. Hold one or more while triggering another control to assign (or trigger) a different command on the same physical control, regardless of which screen is open.

The commands below behave like keyboard shortcuts — their effect depends on which screen is open:

• Enter

- Track selected — open the plugin rack
- Clip focused — open or select the clip
- MIDI clip editor — enable the step editor
- Parameters view — add or pick a parameter
- Lists — confirm the focused item

• Escape

- Step editor open — leave the step editor
- Clip editor — close the clip editor
- Plugin or parameter screens — go back

• Up / Down

- MIDI Editor: move selected notes — Move through items in plugin, parameter, and preset lists

• Left / Right

- MIDI Editor: move selected notes
- Step editor — move by beat
- Plugin focused — switch tabs (UI, parameters, presets)
- **Undo, Redo, Delete** — Editing actions in the current view, when available.

6.2 Bluetooth

Connect to MIDI Bluetooth devices. Must be done here before they can be used as inputs or controllers.

6.3 Export Project

- **Export MIDI:** export clips as MIDI files, one per clip.
 - **Export Audio:** export clips as audio files (.wav), one per clip.
 - **Ableton Live Set Export:** export the whole project as a Live Set, which can be opened in Ableton Live on Mac or Windows. Each SAND track will be included twice: once with MIDI data, once with rendered audio.
-

6.4 App Preferences

Show or hide master track

6.4.1 Audio

- **Preferred sample rate** — iOS will decide the actual sample rate based on the audio interface and other apps.
- **Buffer size**
- **Output device** — use this to select a Bluetooth audio device.
- **Keep active in background:**
- **Off:** SAND will stop audio and MIDI processing when going into the background if transport is stopped.
- **On:** SAND will not stop audio and MIDI processing in the background. This means SAND will continue using CPU and battery when not actively in use. Remember to quit the app when not needed.

6.4.2 Interface

- **Auto arm track on selection** — when on, selecting a track will also arm it.

- **Project name** — choose how names are assigned when creating a project:
- **Random:** two random words
- **Template:** use the specified template to name a project (an incremental number is appended if the name already exists)
- **Edit on project creation:** edit the chosen name when creating a project.

6.4.3 On-Screen Keyboard

Settings for adjusting the on-screen keyboard, applied globally.

6.4.4 App Icon

Pick your favorite color.

7. Key Commands

SAND supports an external keyboard on iPad and Mac. Shortcuts depend on which screen is focused — see the lists below.

Finding shortcuts on iPad

- **iOS 18 and earlier** — long-press **⌘** to see shortcuts for the current view.
- **iOS 26 and later** — open the top menu bar and choose **Help** → **More Keyboard Shortcuts**.

This page lists all shortcuts in one place.

Legend: **⌘** Command · **⇧** Shift · **⌥** Option

7.1 Global

Available on the main screen, in clip editors, and in full-screen track controls.

- **Space** — play / pause
- **⇧ Space** — record
- **⌘ M** — toggle metronome
- **⌘ Z** — undo
- **⇧ ⌘ Z** — redo

7.2 Main Screen

- **↑ / ↓** — select previous / next track
- **← / →** — focus previous / next clip
- **S** — solo selected track
- **M** — mute selected track
- **R** — arm selected track for recording
- **V** — show track controls
- **⌘ O** — open track (plugin rack)

- **⌘ E** — edit focused clip
 - **⌘ N** — add track
 - **⌘ I** — add instrument
 - **⌘ X** — cut clip
 - **⌘ C** — copy clip
 - **⌘ V** — paste clip
 - **⌘ D** — duplicate clip
 - **↑ ⌘ D** — duplicate track
 - **Delete** — delete focused clip or selection
 - **⌘ Delete** — delete clip
-

7.3 Track Devices (Plugin Rack)

- **Space** — play / pause
 - **↑ Space** — record
 - **C** — show / hide clip strip
 - **V** — show track controls
 - **T** — cycle current device views (UI, parameters, presets)
 - **F** — open current device full screen
 - **P** — toggle current device on / off
 - **↑ / ↓** — select previous / next device
 - **⌘ ↑ / ⌘ ↓** — select previous / next track
 - **⌘ [** — go back
-

7.4 Full-Screen Track Controls

- **↑ / ↓** — raise / lower track volume
- **⌘ ↑ / ⌘ ↓** — select previous / next track
- **← / →** — pan track left / right
- **S** — solo track

- **M** — mute track
- **R** — arm track
- **Esc** — close controls

Also includes the [global](#) shortcuts.

7.5 MIDI Clip Editor

- **A** — show / hide automation
- **T** — switch note tool
- **↑ / ↓** — move selected notes up / down
- **↑ ↑ / ↓ ↓** — move selected notes one octave up / down
- **= / -** — increase / decrease grid size
- **⌘ = / ⌘ -** — increase / decrease clip length
- **⌘ A** — select all notes
- **Esc** — clear selection, or close step editor / clip editor
- **⌘ C** — copy
- **⌘ V** — paste
- **⌘ D** — duplicate
- **⌘ U** — quantize
- **⌘ L** — legato
- **⌘ S** — split at playhead
- **↑ ⌘ S** — split to grid
- **Delete** — delete selection
- **⌘ [** — go back

Also includes the [global](#) shortcuts.

7.6 Audio Clip Editor

- **A** — show / hide automation
- **← / →** — move playhead left / right (by grid size)

- \uparrow / \downarrow — increase / decrease grid size
- $= / -$ — increase / decrease grid size
- ⌘ C — copy selected region
- ⌘ V — paste at playhead
- **Delete** — replace selection with silence
- **Esc** — clear selection, exit split / stretch mode, or go back
- ⌘ [— go back

Also includes the [global](#) shortcuts.