

THE DOWNBEAT KIT

A Fully Multisampled Ludwig Downbeat Kit For MPC



USER GUIDE

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INSTALLATION

Thank you for purchasing **Downbeat Kit 3**. For the most up-to-date, step-by-step installation instructions for your MPC/Force, please refer to our comprehensive set of installation guides on our web site:

<https://www.mpc-samples.com/support/expansions>

COMPATIBILITY

Downbeat Kit 3 was built primarily for **MPC 3.7** (or greater) but also includes versions suitable for **MPC 2.15+** and the **MPC Sample**. Requirements are as follows:

MPC 3 Edition:

Any modern standalone MPC running MPC 3.7+
MPC Software 3.7+
Akai Force 3.7+

MPC 2 Edition:

Any modern standalone MPC running MPC 2.15+
MPC Software 2.15+
MPC Beats 2.15+
Akai Force 3.3+

MPC Sample Edition:

MPC Sample firmware 1.3.0+

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Downbeat Kit 3 features a fully multisampled **1963 Ludwig Downbeat acoustic drum kit**, famed for its unrivalled colour, tonal projection and chunky, warm vibe.



Perhaps the most famous proponent of Ludwig Downbeat series was The Beatles' Ringo Starr, who is often seen pictured with a set sporting an 'Oyster Black Pearl' finish.

In this new **MPC3** edition of the expansion we wanted to take full advantage of the new features available in the **MPC3 firmware** and are proud to present a completely remastered and revamped version of the kit;

- Fully remastered from the original studio recordings
- **40 unique drum articulations** including 'brushed' snare drums
- each articulation features up to **8 velocity layers & 3 round robins per layer**
- **crossfaded velocity layers** for smooth, step-free velocity switching
- **2 core acoustic drum kits** and **15 additional sound designed presets**, all fully pre-configured and ready-to play with a finger drumming friendly layout.
- **Q-link macros** for quick hands-on control of sound design and performance parameters.
- Extensive **MIDI drum library** covering multiple musical genres
- **MPCe kits** which combine multiple articulations on each pad.

The original acoustic drum kit itself was recorded with drummer Bobby Arechiga at **MU Studios, UK** and consisted of the following drums:

Kick: 1963 Ludwig Downbeat Kick Drum 20" x 14"

Snare: 1965 Ludwig LM400 Supraphonic 5x14 snare drum

Rack Tom: 1963 Ludwig Downbeat Rack tom 12" x 8"

Floor Tom: 1963 Ludwig Downbeat Floor Tom 14" x 14"

Hi Hat: Meinl 15" Byzance Hi-Hat Medium

Crash: Meinl 18" Byzance Medium Crash

Crash: Meinl 20" Byzance Medium Crash

Ride: Meinl 22" Byzance Medium Ride

We used the following microphones; **Electro-Voice HM7** (Kick), **Yamaha Sub Kick Mic** (Kick Sub), **Sure SM57** (snare 'over'), 3 x **AKG C414** (snare 'under, rack & floor toms), 2 x **Neumann KM 84** (overheads), 2 x **Coles 4038** (additional ribbons), **Neumann U87** (room mic 1), **AKG PCC170** (room mic 2).

The **MPC2 edition** contains separate velocity switching and 'cycle kit' versions of kits A and B, plus cycle kit versions of all preset kits.

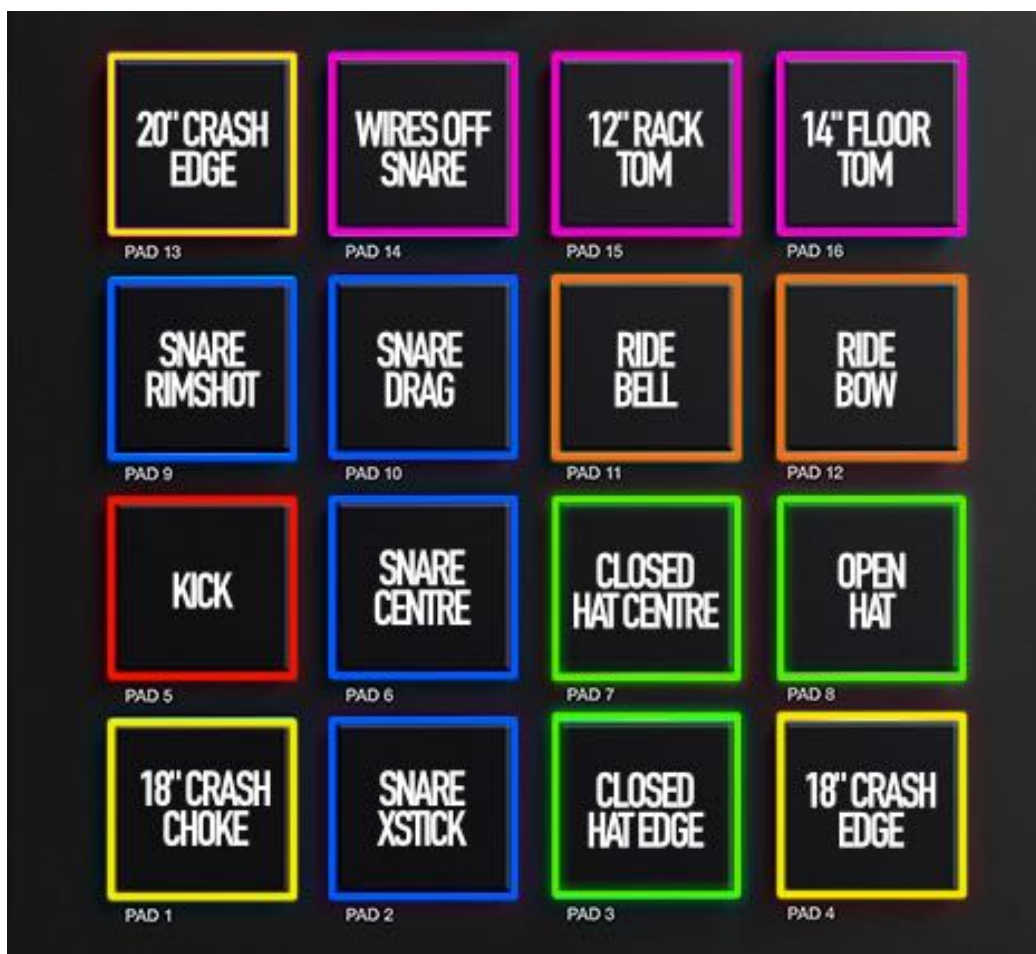
The **MPC Sample edition** features cycle kit versions of all kits and presets, with the main Kits A and B covering pad banks A and B, while preset kits cover bank A (except for the Jazz and Blues kits which also use Bank B for use of the snare brushes). Please note that due to the limitations of the MPC Sample hardware and software, all FX used in the original MPC3 presets are 'flattened' into the samples used in each kit.

THE KITS

The expansion features two 'core' kits (A & B) and an additional 15 carefully crafted presets for a range of different sounds and vibes. And for users of MPCs with 'MPCe' pads, we've also included 'MPCe' versions of all kits.

Standard Kit Layout

Bank A in all standard kits features the most common 'primary' articulations with the following layout:



The bank A articulations are as follows:

- **[A01] Crash 18" Choke** – Short cymbal hit, produced grabbing and holding the cymbal immediately after hitting it.
- **[A02] Snare Cross Stick** – tip of the stick rests on the skin, shaft brought down on the rim, creating a dry click sound.
- **[A03] Hi hat closed edge** – edge hit of a closed hi hat
- **[A04] Crash 18"** – edge hit of an 18" crash
- **[A05] Kick** – played with moderate damping
- **[A06] Snare Centre** – snare hit in the dead centre of the skin
- **[A07] Hi hat closed centre** – centre hit of a closed hi hat
- **[A08] Hi Hat open** – hitting the top hi hat when the two hat cymbals are separated. This is muted/choked by the two closed hat pads
- **[A09] Snare Rim** – the skin and snare rim hit together simultaneously
- **[A10] Snare Drag** – very short snare roll
- **[A11] Ride Bell** – hit on the 'bell' on the ride cymbal
- **[A12] Ride Bow** – hit at the centre of the main portion of the cymbal
- **[A13] Crash 20"** – edge hit of a 20" crash
- **[A14] 'Wires off' snare** – a snare with the underside wire mesh disabled, which in this kit is used to act like a 'high' tom
- **[A15] Rack tom** – centre hit of rack tom
- **[A16] Floor tom** – centre hit of floor tom

Bank B contains 'secondary' articulations:



- **[B01] Snare Brush Sweep Short** – quick dragging of the brush in a circular ‘swirl’ over the snare skin
- **[B02] Snare Brush Dig** – ‘Digging’ the brush into the snare skin
- **[B03] Snare Brush Skip R** – Quick skipping movement across the skin
- **[B04] Crash 18" Centre** – centre hit of the 18" crash cymbal
- **[B05] Snare Brush Sweep Hard** – hard sweeping action of brush along the snare skin
- **[B06] Snare Brush Skip L** – Quick skipping movement across the skin
- **[B07] Hi Hat Pedal Shut** – stepping on the hat pedal so the two hats hit **each other**

- **[B08] Hi hat Pedal Open** - quickly lifting foot off the hat pedal to produce a soft opening sound
- **[B09] Brush Sweep Long** - long, slow brush sweep
- **[B10] Brush sweep Release** - a 'note off' sweep with a release skip
- **[B11] Snare Edge** - hitting the snare near the edge of the skin
- **[B12] Snare Brush Slap** - 'slapping' down the length of the brush on the skin
- **[B15] Snare Flam** - a quick double snare hit
- **[B16] Snare Bounce** - a long, multiple bounce snare roll

Kit A vs Kit B

The two core kits, A and B both feature the same above pad layout but have some differences in articulations which gives them distinctly different vibes.

The biggest difference is the way the Ludwig LM400 snare was 'damped' to control the amount of 'ring' produced. Kit A was damped using cloths which gives a tight, punchy sound, while kit B features the same snare but damped with 'moongel', giving it a more 'ringing', open snare sound compared.

The kick articulation in Kit A was recorded along with all the various sympathetic kit vibrations intact (e.g. snare rattle, cymbal and tom vibration) - this gives a very natural sounding kick drum. In kit B, the same kick was recorded fully 'isolated' from the rest of the kit to produce a distinctly different, 'purer' kick drum sound.

Finally we have two different open hat variations, with a growly half open hat in Kit B and a cleaner, fully open hat in kit A.

In addition to the two core kits we've also created an additional **15 preset kits** which are built around the articulations from both kit A and kit B but each featuring different FX and track parameters to create unique sounds for different musical genres. These all feature the exact same articulation layout as the two main kits.

ROUND ROBINS & VELOCITY LAYERS

All MPC3 kits feature **8 crossfaded velocity layers**, each with up to **3 round robins per layer** to ensure an incredibly realistic recreation of the original kit dynamics and nuances.

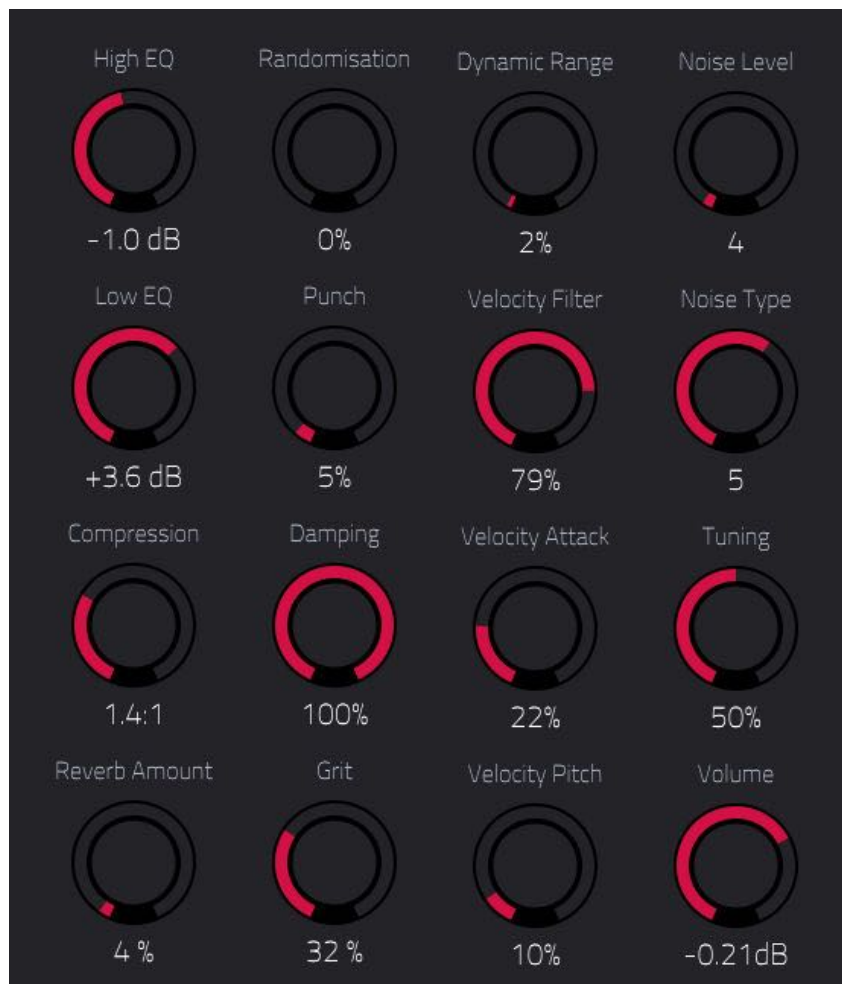
MPC2 has more limited support for these features; here we've provided kits A and B with separate 8 layer velocity switching kits and round robin ('cycle') kits, and each of the preset kits built as 4 layer cycle kits.

The **MPC Sample** kits take advantage of the its 'hidden' support for round robins, giving you up to 4 round robins per pad. When it comes to FX, we've gone with Akai's recommendation and have 'bounced' all the original MPC3 FX into the samples themselves to produce 'flattened' versions of all sample. This ensures the kits and sequences perform perfectly with the MPC Sample's less powerful CPU.

MPC3 Q-LINK MACROS

You can further edit and tweak any of the provided kits and presets using the pre-mapped Q-LINK 'macros', giving you the ability to change the sound and performance of each kit without any need to deep dive into TRACK EDIT. *Please note Q-LINK macros are only compatible with MPC3.*

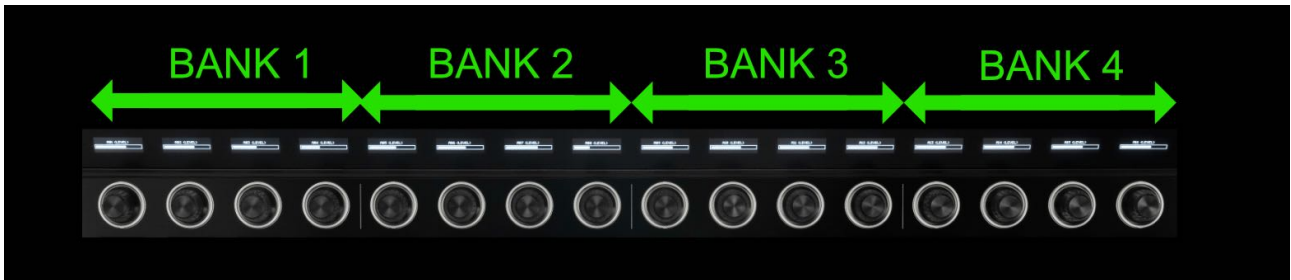
Hold down the [**Q-LINK**] button and select the **'Track'** Q-LINK page:



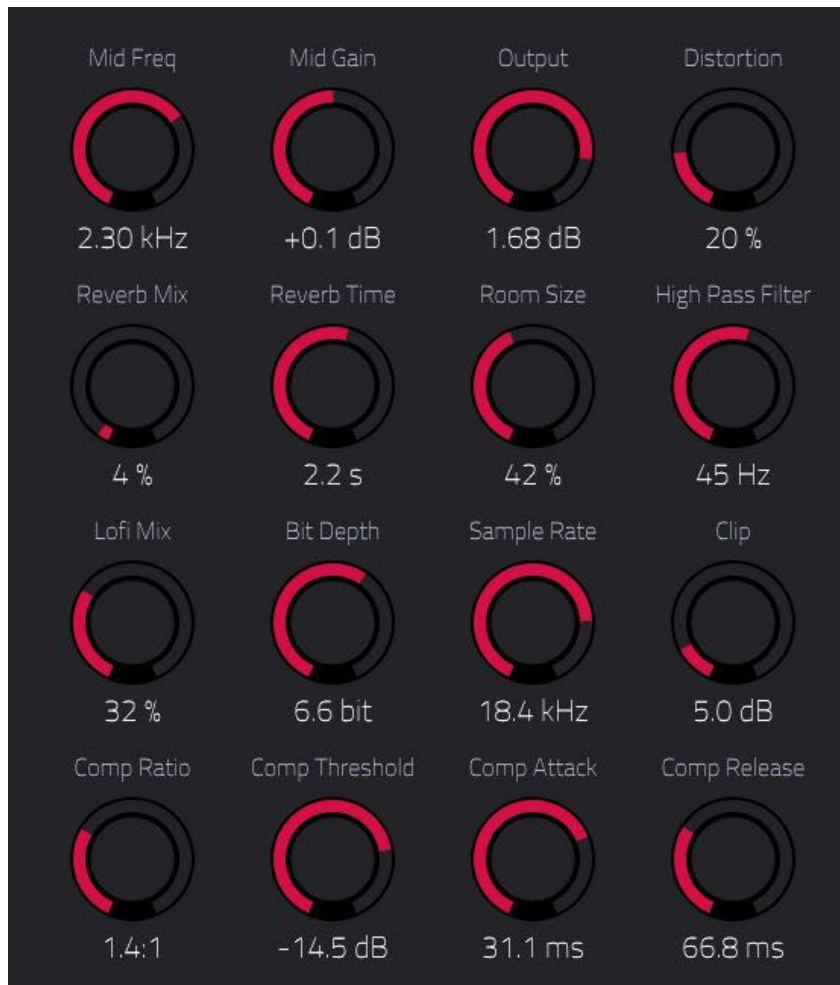
With 'Track' Q-LINKS enabled, all Q-LINKS are pre-mapped to sixteen different macro controls and these will remain available on all screens.

Q-LINK	Macro	Details
<i>Column/Bank 1</i>		
Q13	High EQ	Boost/cut higher frequencies of the kit
Q9	Low EQ	boost/cut low end of the kit
Q5	Compression	Adjust amount of compression
Q1	Reverb Amount	Add ambience to the kit
<i>Column/Bank 2</i>		
Q14	Randomisation	Randomise volume and pitch of the articulations
Q10	Punch	Additional, aggressive attack transient applied to all articulations
Q6	Damping	Creates an additional emulated damped drum sound
Q2	Grit	Amount of lofi grit
<i>Column/Bank 3</i>		
Q15	Dynamic Range	The difference in volume between soft and loud notes
Q11	Velocity Filter	Velocity sensitive low pass filter (for darker soft hits)
Q7	Velocity Attack	Velocity sensitive attack (softer drums at low velocities)
Q3	Velocity Pitch	Velocity sensitive pitch (higher pitch at hard velocities)
<i>Column/Bank 4</i>		
Q16	Noise Level	Add background lofi noise to the kit
Q12	Noise Type	Select the type of lofi noise
Q8	Tuning	Adjust tuning of the kit
Q4	Volume	Adjust the volume of the kit

Please note that in the MPC XL, the 'Q-LINK bank 1' dials are mapped to the XL's first four Q-LINK dials, bank 2 to the next four, and so on:



We've also assigned macros to the **Track FX Rack Q-LINKS** page to give you hands on control of various FX parameters. To switch to editing the FX macros, hold down the [**Q-LINK**] button and select **TRACK FX** (the exact macros available on this page will vary depending on the preset used).



More Detailed Editing

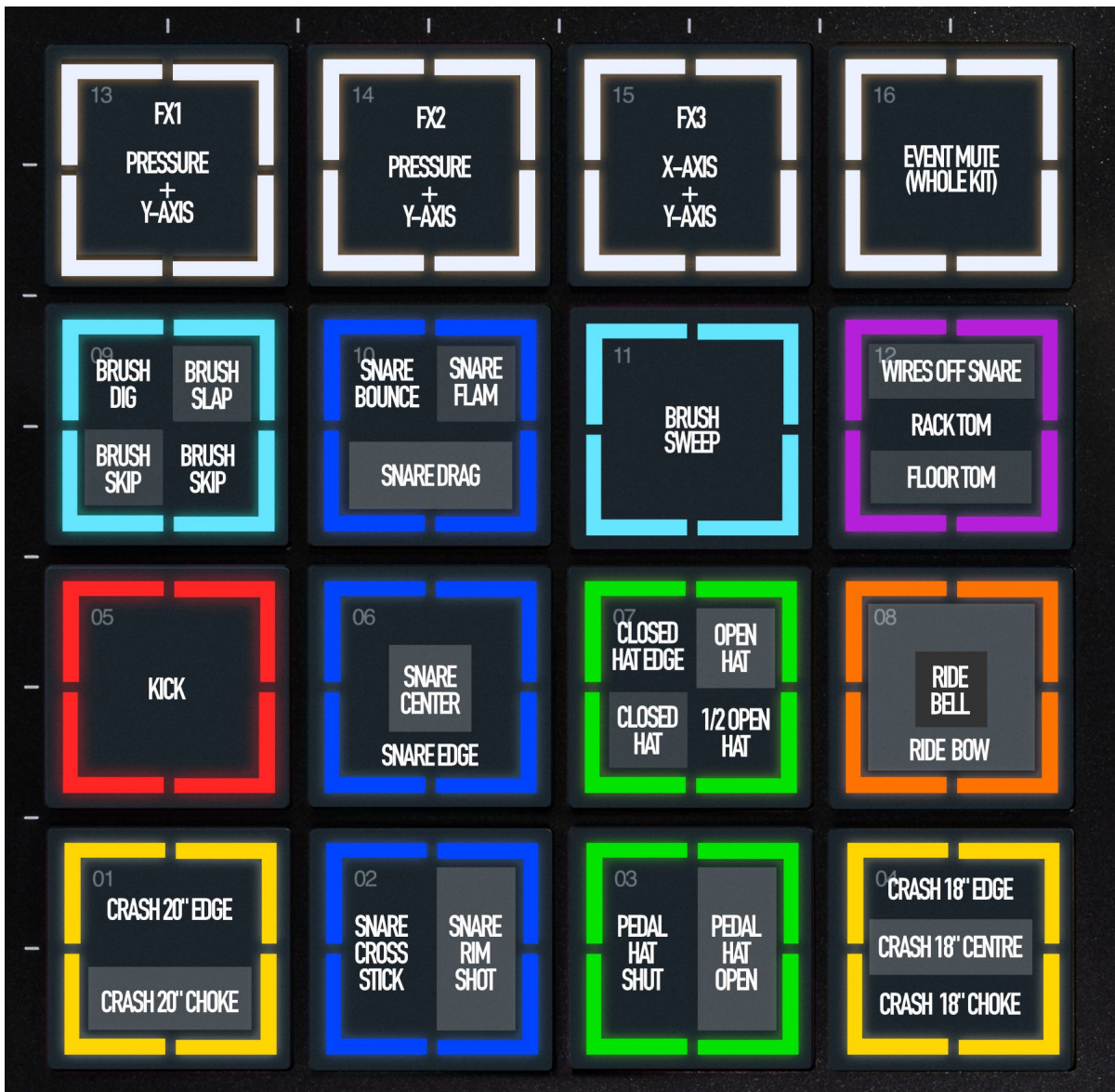
To adjust all possible FX settings, or to change which FX plugins are inserted across a kit, you can use the **XL CHANNEL STRIPS** in **[MAIN]** – choose the **'FX'** tab on the kit channel strip. And for more detailed editing of any underlying kit parameter, go to **[MENU] > TRACK EDIT**.



Check out the [MPC Bible](#) for in-depth, step-by-step tutorials on all aspects of configuring FX and editing DRUM tracks.

MPCEKITS

We've also included experimental 'MPCe' versions of all kits. These kits combine multiple articulations per pad, making them perfect for creating realistic sounding finger drumming performances. Each kit contains **29 articulations** across 12 pads in BANK A:



Most quadrants feature multiple velocity layers and round robins per layer. Where possible we've configured the pads to mimic the physical action of a real drum instrument.

- **Snare pad [A06]** – hit in the centre of the pad you'll hear the 'centre' hit snare articulation, but as you move towards the outer edge of the pad it gradually blends in the 'edge' snare articulation.
- **Hi Hat Pad [A07]** – split into four zones, with full and half open on right, centre and edge hi hats on the left
- **Ride Pad [A08]** – centre is the bell, outer is the 'bow'.
- **Tom Pad [A12]** – Top is the wires off snare ('hi tom'), middle is rack tom, bottom is floor tom
- **Crash pads [A01] and [A04]** – Bottom section is the 'choke', top is the 'edge' hit.
- **Kick [A05]** – single articulation but pitch increases slightly as you move to the edge.
- **Snare Brush Sweep [A11]** – a 'note on' pad that produces a swirling 'sweep', with a subtle 'note off' sound on release. Drag your finger in a circular downwards motion to vary the pitch slightly
- **Snare 2 [A02]** – a split of cross stick (left) and rimshot (right)
- **Snare 3 [A10]** – a top split of snare bounce and flam, with drag on the bottom half.
- **Pedal Hat [A02]** – left is the pedal shut, right is the pedal open
- **Snare brushes [A09]** – 'skips' on the bottom, dig and slap on the top

MPCe Pad Macros

The top row of white pads provide four real time **MPCe pad macros** offering different combinations of FX across pad pressure and X/Y axis. Pads [A13] and [A14] will vary to suit the kit preset.

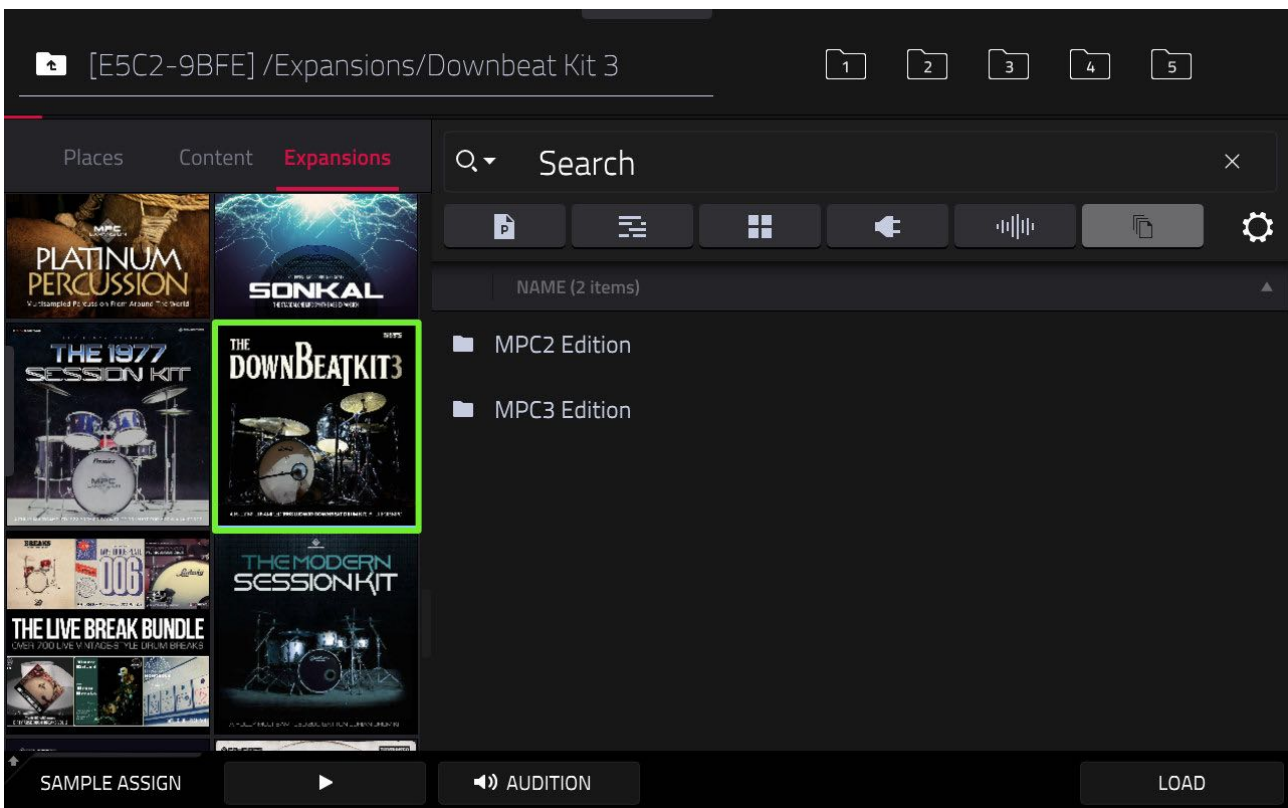
- Pad [**A13**] - hi-pass filter gate & rectifier (pressure & y-axis)
- Pad [**A14**] - lo-fi decimation (pressure & y-axis)
- Pad [**A15**] - a low pass filter (x-axis & y-axis)
- Pad [**A16**] - 'event' mute (*hold down to mute, release pad to enable events again*).

These MPCe pad macros are provided in addition to the Q-LINK 'track' macros, as detailed previously.

We're currently experimenting with MPCe kit design and welcome any feedback on how you feel they could be tweaked or improved as we appreciate that everyone has their own vision on how these new features can be utilised. For example, what are your preferred articulation layouts, which features work best and which ones could benefit from some tweaking.

STANDALONE MPC/FORCE

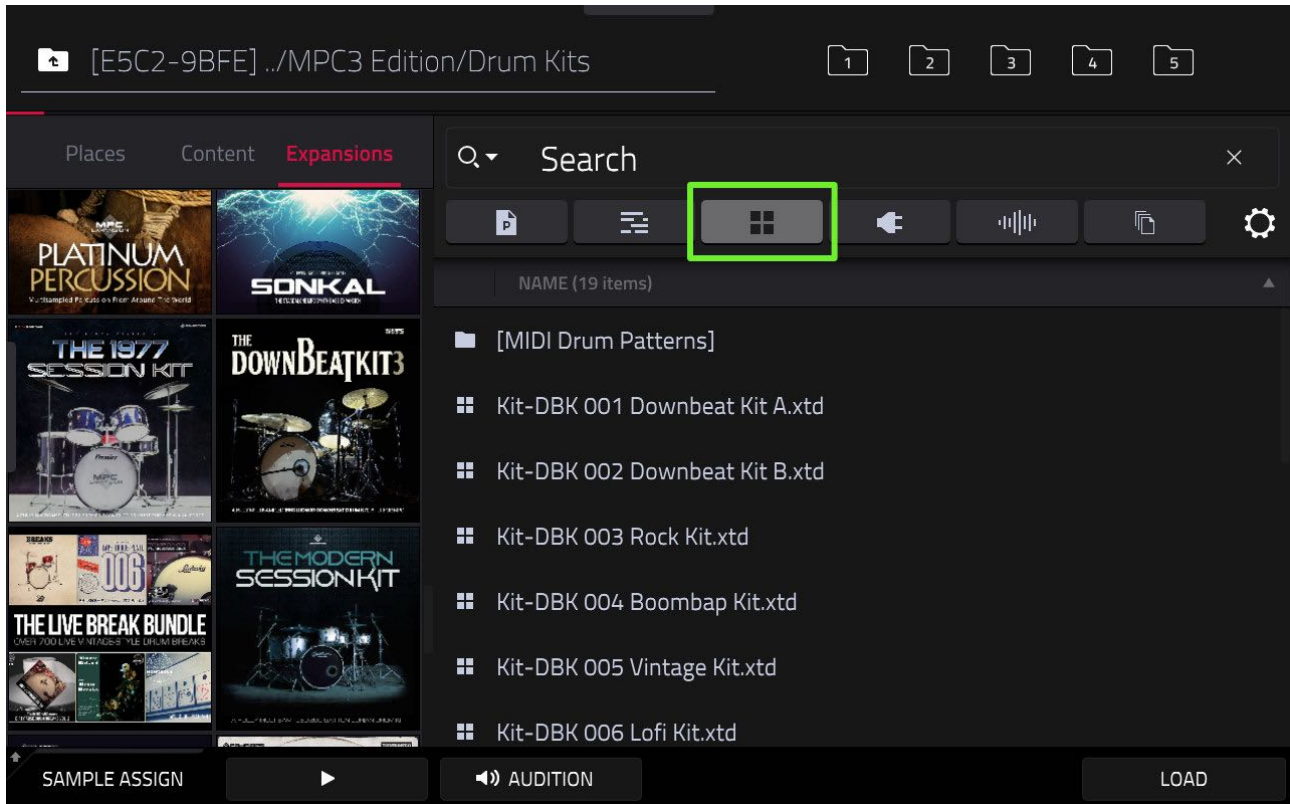
After [installation](#), boot up your MPC and go to **BROWSER > Expansions** and tap on the **Downbeat Kit 3** thumbnail to reveal the expansion on the right side of the screen.



MPC 3.7+ and Force 3.7+ users should enter the **MPC3 Edition** folder. MPC 2.15+ and Force 3.3 users should enter the **MPC2 Edition** folder.

Loading Instruments:

Enter the '**Drum Kits**' folder and choose the **PROGRAMS/TRACKS** filter to view the available instruments:



In MPC3, the kits are in '**XTD**' format. In MPC2, they are '**XPM**' files. The two main kits are:

- **Kit-DBK 001 Downbeat Kit A:** The first raw, un-effected kit with two banks of articulations and featuring cloth damped snare, 'bleed' kick and half open hat.
- **Kit-DBK 001 Downbeat Kit B:** The second raw, un-effected kit with two banks of articulations and featuring 'moon gel' damped snare, 'isolated' kick and fully open hat.

All other kits are 'presets' built around the two main instruments but with different parameters and FX applied to achieve a range of different kit sounds.

Single tap on a kit to select it and press the 'audition' triangle in the bottom menu to play a pre-recorded preview of the instrument. For automatic previewing, tap on **AUDITION** and select '**AUTO**'.

Loading kits in MPC3 / Force 3.7+:

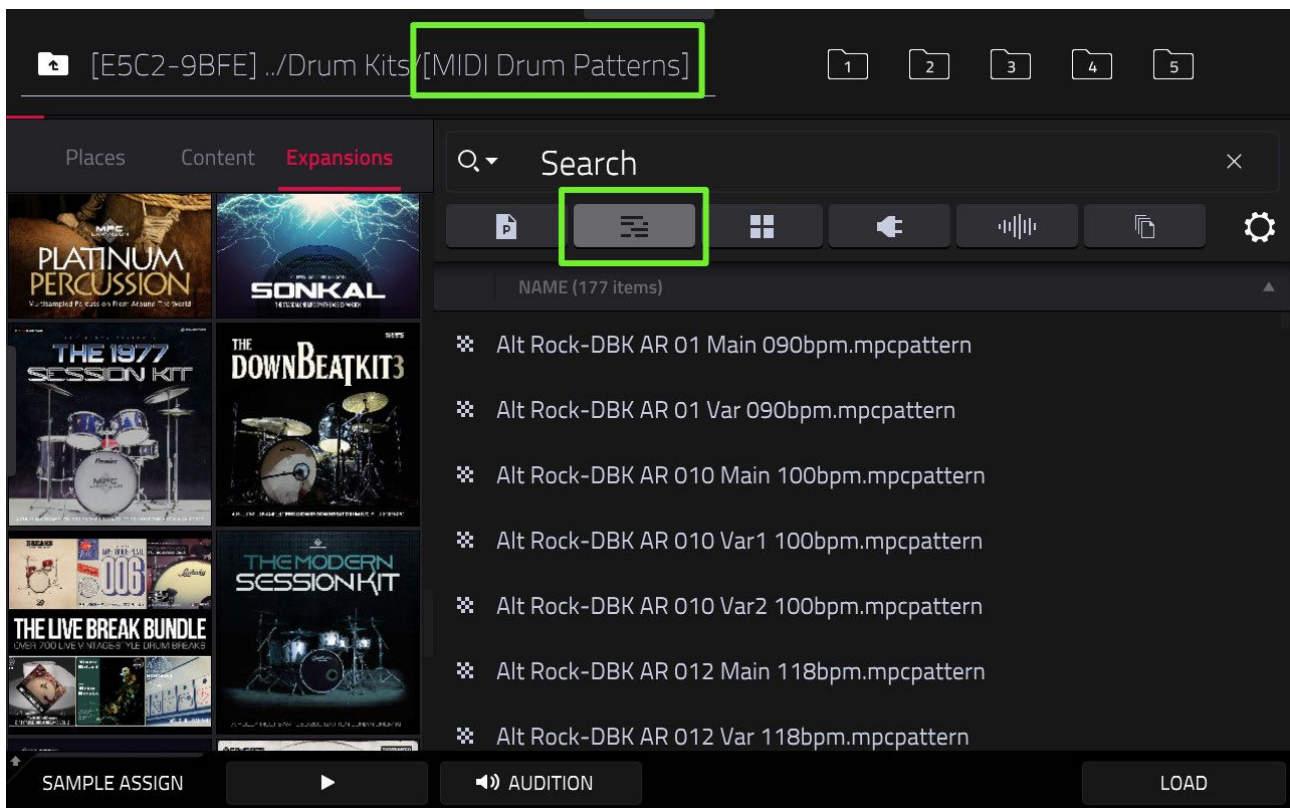
To load a kit to the current track in your project, either double tap the **.xtd** file or single tap and press **LOAD**. This will overwrite the existing track; if you prefer to load to a new track, press **LOAD TO NEW TRACK** instead. You can now view your loaded **DRUM** track in **MAIN**.



Loading Kits in MPC2: *To load a kit to the sample pool in your project, either double tap it or single tap and press **LOAD**. Now go to **MAIN**, select a **DRUM** type track and assign the kit to this track.*

Loading MIDI Drum Patterns:

Enter the [**MIDI Drum Patterns**] folder and select the **MIDI** filter:



Each pattern is labelled with a genre and a suggested tempo. Most of the patterns can be used with any of the provided kits and presets so feel free to mix and match, although in some cases you'll get best results matching a pattern to the preset of the same genre, for example, using the 'jazz' patterns with the 'Jazz Kit' preset.

To hear a pre-recorded preview of a pattern, single tap the pattern and press the 'play' icon in the bottom menu, or set **AUDITION > Auto** to play the previews automatically.

To load a pattern to the current track in **MPC3/Force 3.7+**, simply double tap the pattern. If the track already has one of the drum kits from the Downbeat Kit expansion assigned to it you can just press **[PLAY START]** to hear the pattern in action, no need to leave the BROWSER.

At this point you can preview further patterns simply by loading them to the same track (the existing track MIDI data will be replaced in real time, no need to press [STOP]).

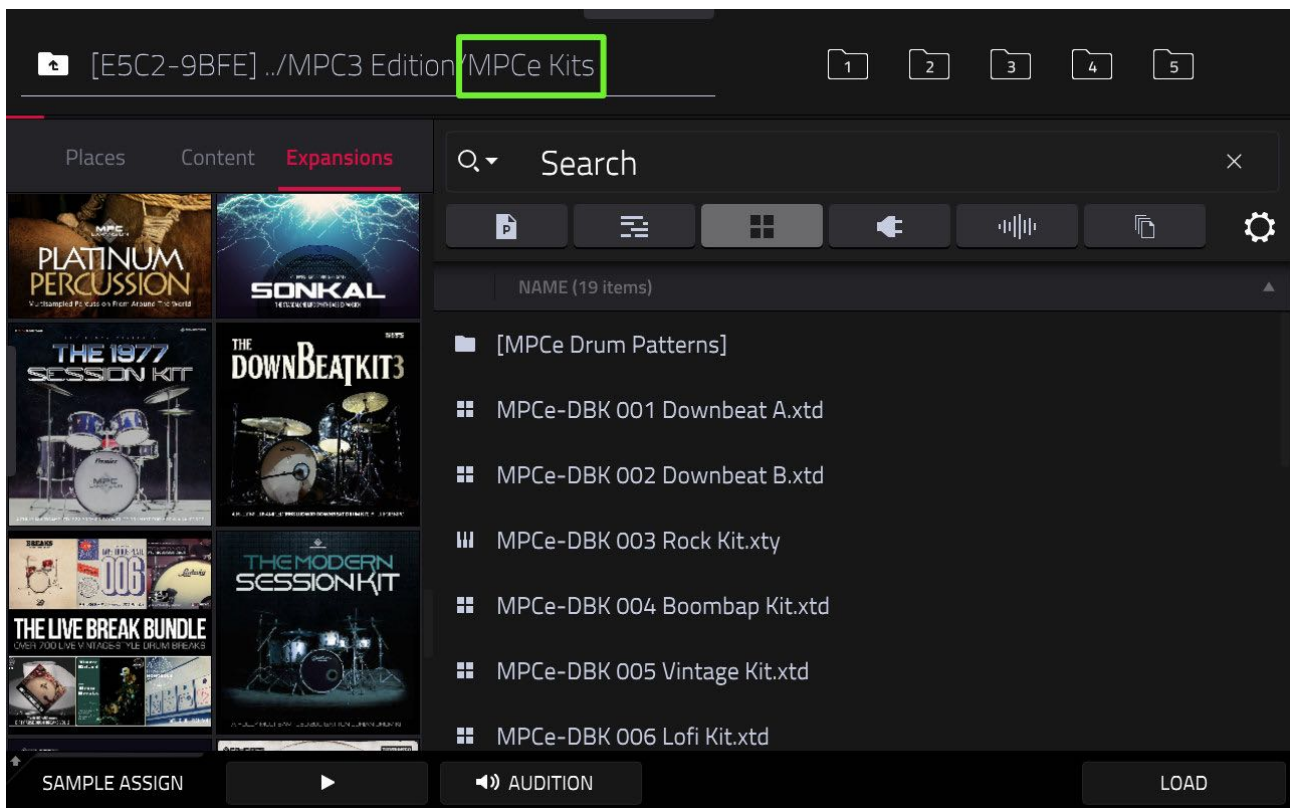
As these are MIDI files they will automatically adapt to the tempo of the sequence you import them to. Check out the [MPC Bible](#) for extensive, hands-on tutorials covering use of the MPC sequencer.



MPC2/Force 3.3: *In MPC2, patterns are always loaded to the first available 'unused' track in your selected sequence. First, double tap a pattern to load it and in MAIN locate the track containing the loaded pattern. Now set this as a DRUM track and assign a Downbeat Kit drum kit to it.*

Loading MPCe Kits & Patterns

MPCe versions of all kits are located in the **MPCe Kits** sub folder:

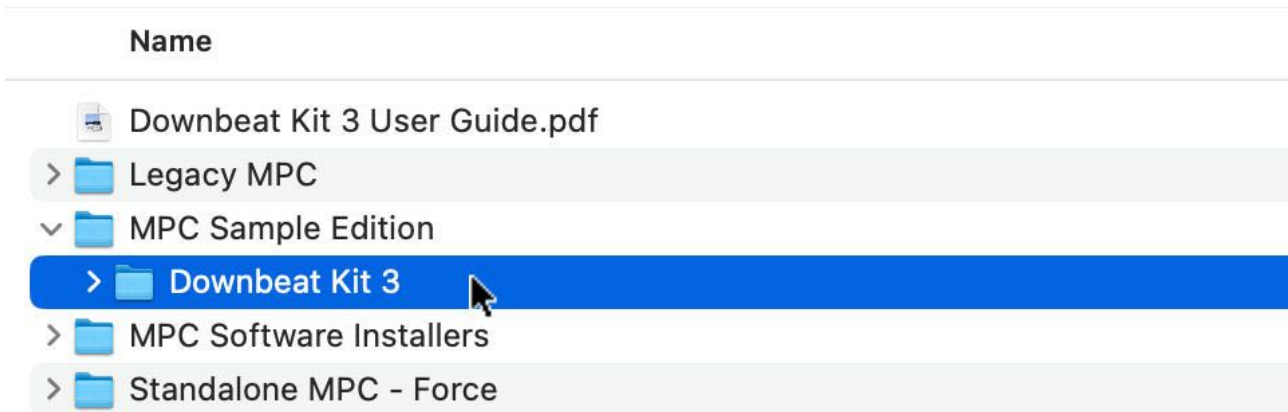


Load these in the exact same way as the standard kits.

The **[MPCe Drum Patterns]** folder contains converted MPCe versions of the entire MIDI groove library. These patterns are compatible with the more compact layout employed by the MPCe kits and include all the required MPCe positional data to trigger the correct drum articulations within each multi-zone pad.

AKAI MPC SAMPLE

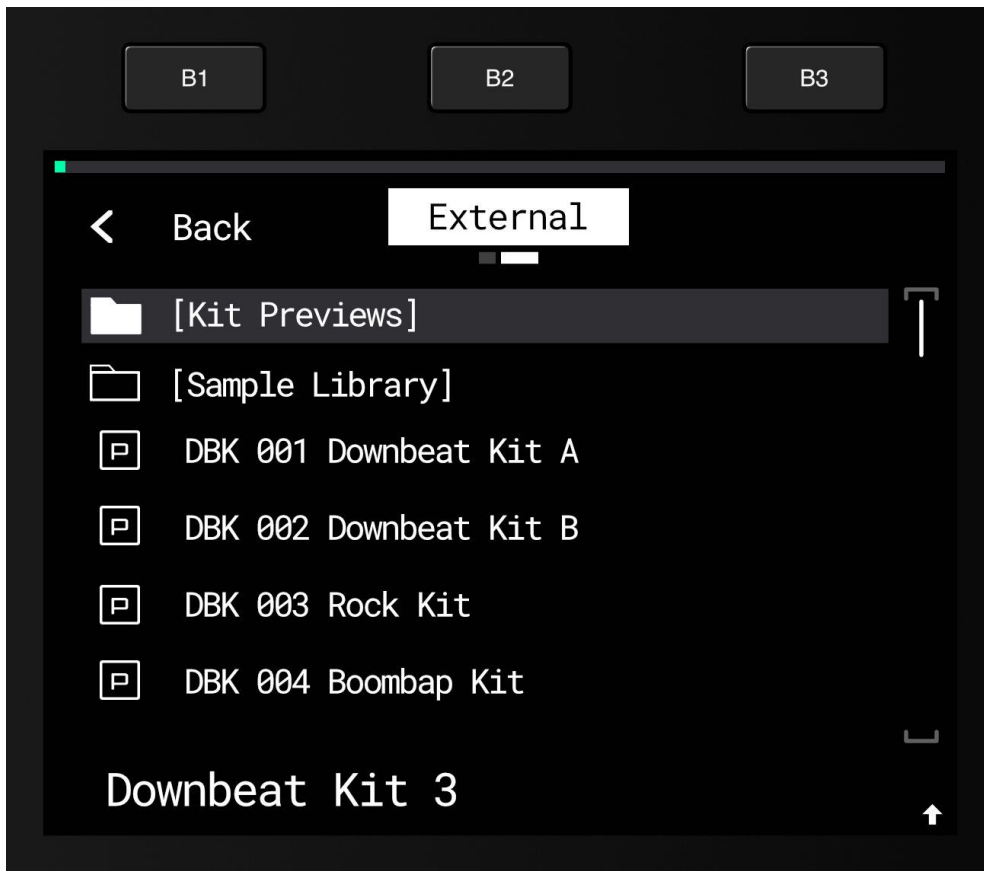
From the downloaded files, enter the '**MPC Sample Edition**' folder:



Now copy the folder '**Downbeat Kit 3**' to your preferred location on your MPC Sample SD card; check out our [MPC Sample Expansion Installation](#) guide for more details.

LOADING PROJECTS

In your MPC Sample, press [**SHIFT**] + [**PAD 16**] and select **Load Project**. Now press [**B2**] to select your '**External**' disk and if required, use the [**B1**] button to navigate inside the **Downbeat Kit 3** folder:



Here you'll see a list of projects; turn your (ENCODER) to highlight a project and press down to select it - confirm 'Yes' with the [B3] button to load the project.

A project consists of a 'cycle kit' and a four bar drum sequence built with the kit (**SEQ A01**). The two main kits (A and B) utilise in [**PAD BANK A**] and in [**PAD BANK B**], as do the Jazz and Blues preset kits. All other kits use only in [**PAD BANK A**]. Layout is identical to the main MPC3 kits.

All kits feature up to 4 round robins per pad, giving you a different timbre and tone each time you hit a pad for a more natural drum kit sound.

Press the [**PLAY**] button to play the four bar drum sequence included for each kit. Hit the pads to play the individual drums.

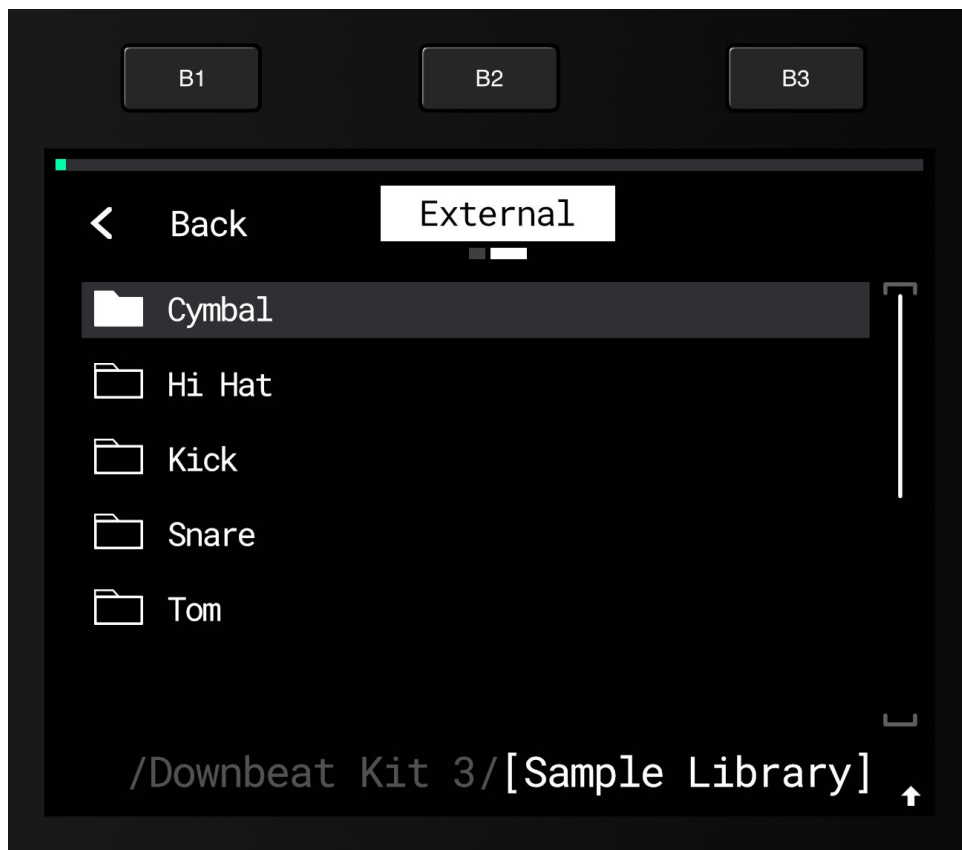
LOADING INDIVIDUAL KITS

To load just the kit from any project (thus replacing the kit currently loaded to your project), head back to the **Load Project** screen, enter a project folder but instead of clicking down on the project with your (ENCODER), hit [**B3**] - '**Load Kit**'.

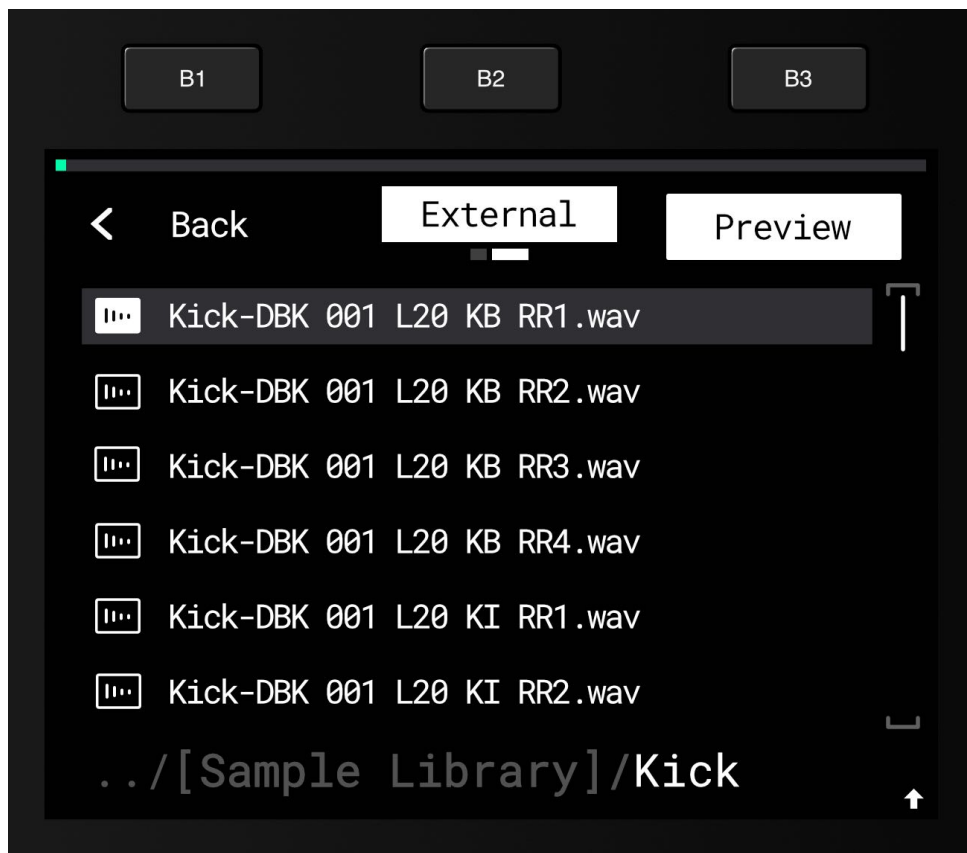
LOADING INDIVIDUAL SAMPLES

To load and assign individual drum samples to any project, press the [**SAMPLE SELECT**] button, navigate to your copy of the '**Downbeat Kit 3**' expansion folder on the '**External**' disk.

Enter the '**[Sample Library]**' folder where samples are organised by drum type:



Enter a folder to view the samples in that category:



To load a sample to a pad, first tap the pad so it is lit yellow, then use the (ENCODER) to highlight and click on the sample you wish to load to that pad.

PROJECT / KIT PREVIEW

The MPC Sample browser does not currently offer any way to 'audition' the sound of a complete project or kit, so as a workaround go to [**SAMPLE SELECT**] and navigate inside the '[**Kit Previews**]' folder where you'll find short WAV file previews of all projects / kits.

MPC SOFTWARE / MPC BEATS

Please note that this expansion features separate installers for MPC Software 2 and MPC Software 3, so please ensure you install the correct XPN file for the version of MPC Software that you are using.

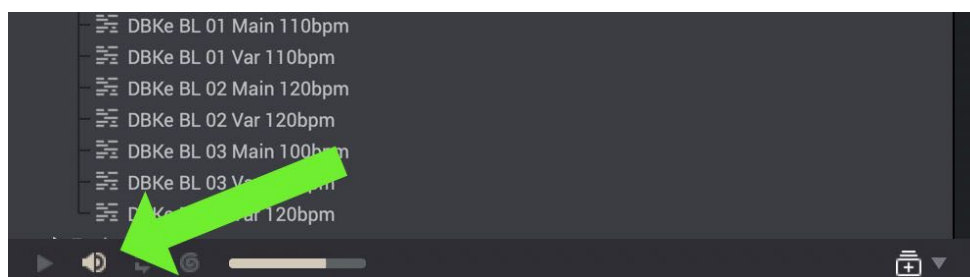
After [installing](#) into the MPC Software via the provided XPN file, open the **Expansion Browser** (shortcut X) and tap on the **Downbeat Kit** thumbnail:



Expand the '**Programs**' group and then the '**Kit**' sub-group to view the standard kits:



MPCe versions of the kits are within the '**MPCe**' group. Click to select a kit. Press the 'play' triangle to hear a pre-recorded preview, or enable the 'Auto Play' option to launch previews automatically.

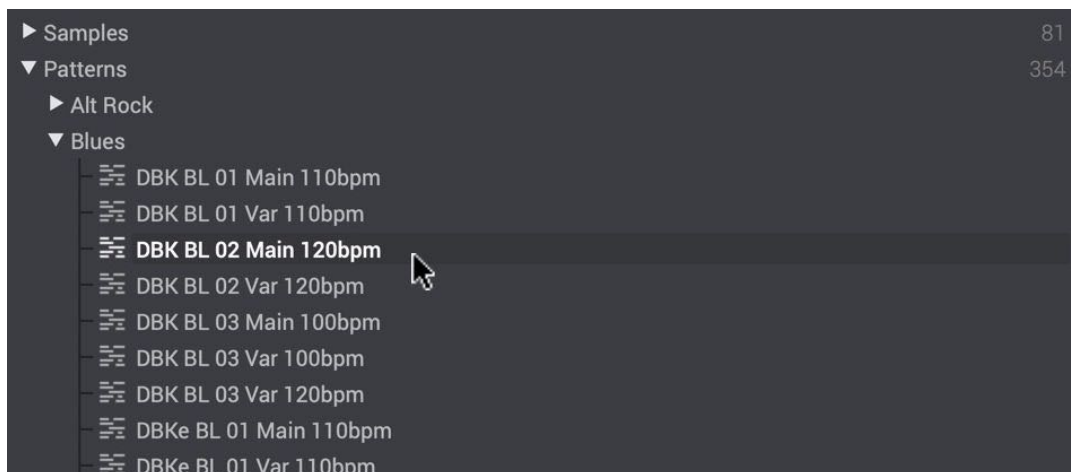


To load a kit in to the current track in an MPC3 project, either double click it or drag it into the MPC Software grid. This will automatically convert the current track to a DRUM track containing the kit.

To load a kit to the sample pool in an MPC2 project, either double click it or drag into the MPC Software grid. To assign it to a track, select a **DRUM** type track in the 'Inspector' and manually assign the kit to this track.

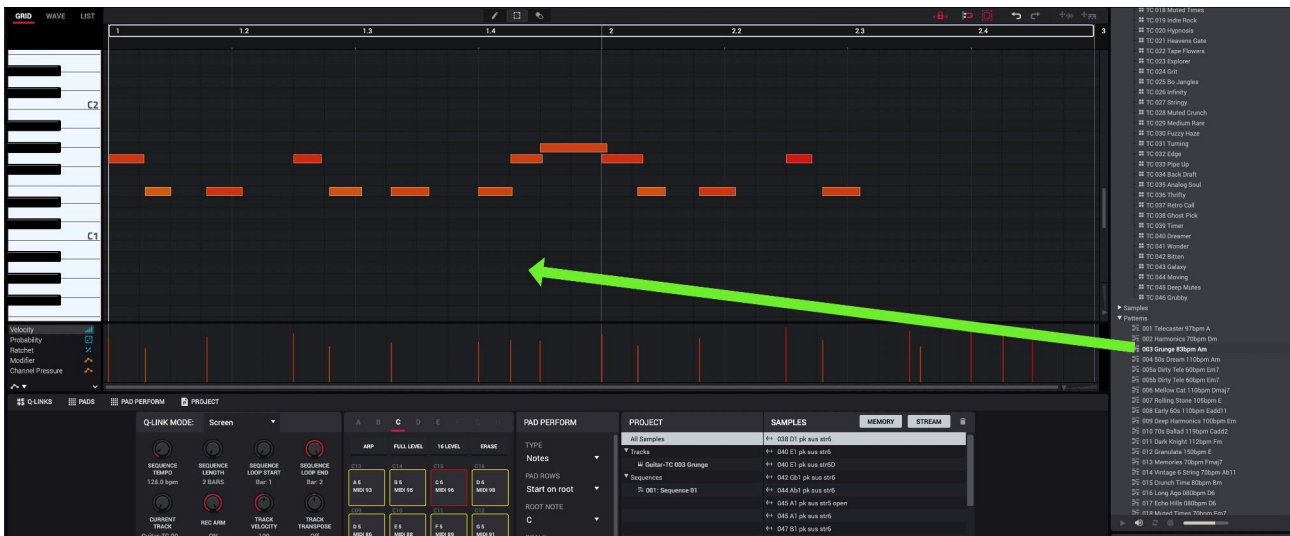
MIDI Patterns

To load the MIDI patterns, expand the '**Patterns**' group:



As with kits, single click and press the play button to hear a preview or use 'Auto play' for automatic previews.

To load a pattern to the currently selected track in an **MPC3** project, either double click it or drag it over to the grid:



In **MPC2**, double tap to load a pattern to the first available 'unused' track in your selected sequence. After loading, set this track as a **DRUM** track and assign a Downbeat Kit drum kit to it.

LEGACY MPCs

Please note that Downbeat Kit 3 is not suitable for legacy MPCs, however we have included the original 'legacy edition' version of the kits which can be found in the '**Legacy MPC Edition**' folder. There are three kits available, each built using a different mic mix to achieve a different kit sound.

Simply transfer the folder to your legacy MPC using your preferred method. You can find more detailed transfer instructions here:

<https://www.mpc-samples.com/article/transfer-legacy-mpc-samplepacks>

FURTHER RESOURCES

Downbeat Kit 3 is part of our growing range of MPC and Force expansions – check out our entire range here, with loads of acoustic keys, pianos, drum kits, bass, synths & much, much more:

<https://www.mpc-samples.com/section.php/78/0/mpc-expansions/>

If you need help learning how to use your MPC, check out the MPC Bible at:

<https://www.mpc-samples.com/product.php/268/mpc-bible/>

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