

THE PIANO SUITE

INSTRUMENT EXPANSION

A COLLECTION OF MULTISAMPLED ACOUSTIC PIANOS AND 30 SOUND PATCHES. CREATED BY PAD PIMPS

Installation & User Guide

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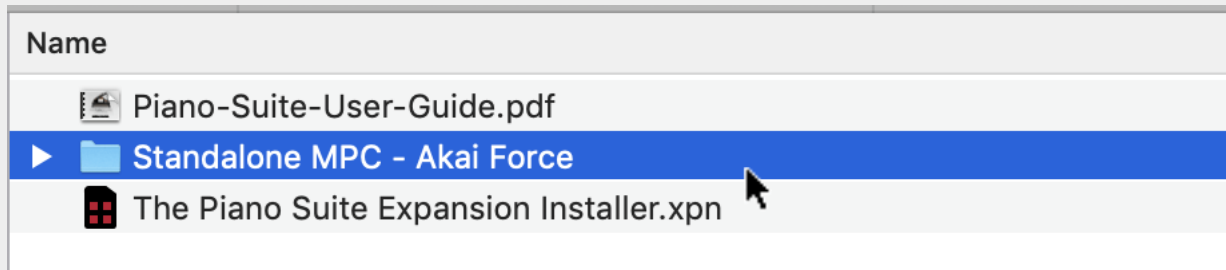
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The Piano Suite: Introduction

- **The Piano Suite** is a collection of patches created from four beautiful acoustic pianos; a **Modern Grand**, an **Antique Grand**, a **Vintage Upright** and a **Saloon Bar Piano**.
- Each piano has been faithfully recorded and mapped out across the MPC pads with 30 sound patches ready to load up and play 'out-of-the-box'.
- The Expansion is fully compatible with all modern standalone MPCs including the **MPC Live (I & II)**, **MPC One** and **MPC X**. This expansion is also fully compatible with the **Akai Force**, the **MPC Software** and the **MPC Beats App**.

Install: Standalone MPC & Akai Force

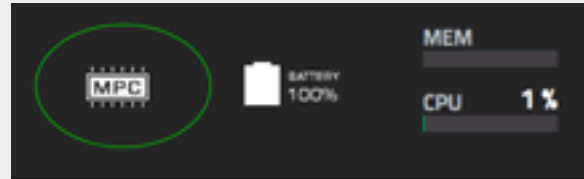
After downloading the expansion, extract the zip file contents to your computer. Enter the '**Standalone MPC-Akai Force**' folder and inside you'll see a sub folder '**The Piano Suite**' – this is the folder we're going to transfer to your MPC/Force.



Expansions must be installed to either an **SD card**, a **USB drive** or, if you have one, an internal **SATA disk**.

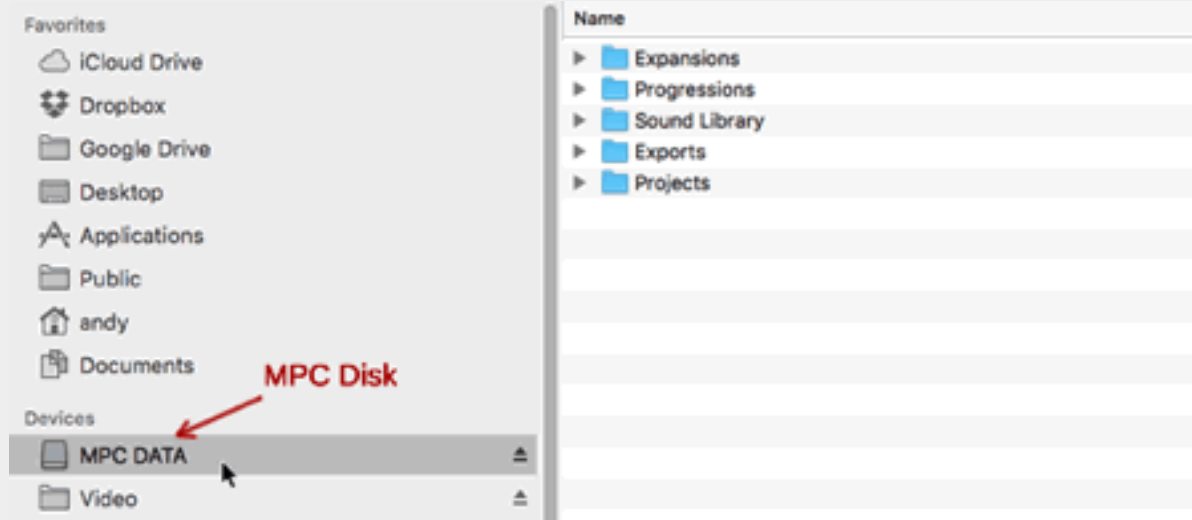
The first step is to mount this 'MPC disk' on your computer. If you use an SD card or USB disk, you can just eject the disk from your MPC/Force and physically insert it into your computer's SD card reader or USB port.

Alternatively, connect your MPC or Force via USB to your computer and go to **MENU** and hit the '**MPC chip**' icon at the top of the screen (this is the '**Laptop**' icon in the Force).

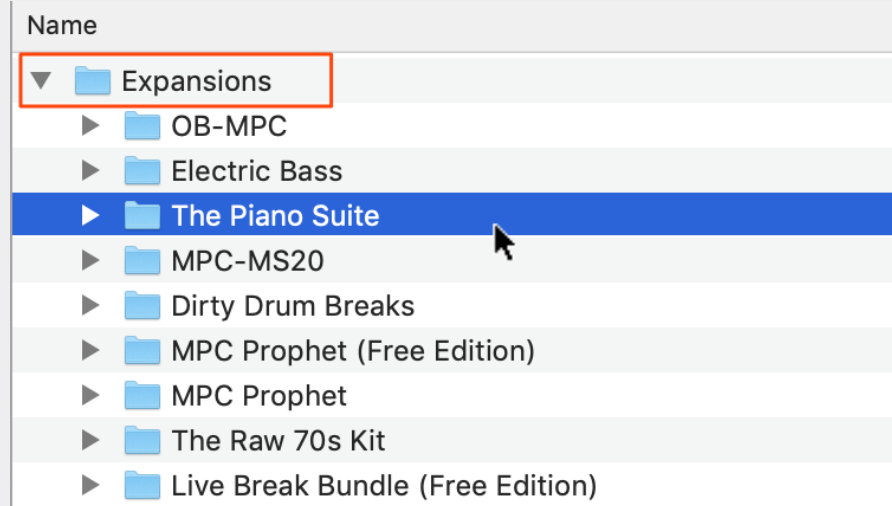


Now select **CONTROLLER MODE** ('**COMPUTER MODE**' in the Force).

Whichever connection method you choose, your MPC disk should now appear as a removable drive in your computer's file manager (e.g. Finder or File Explorer). Click on the drive to open its file system:



If it doesn't already exist, create a folder called '**Expansions**' in the root of your disk. Now copy the '**Piano Suite**' standalone expansion folder *inside* this 'Expansions' folder:

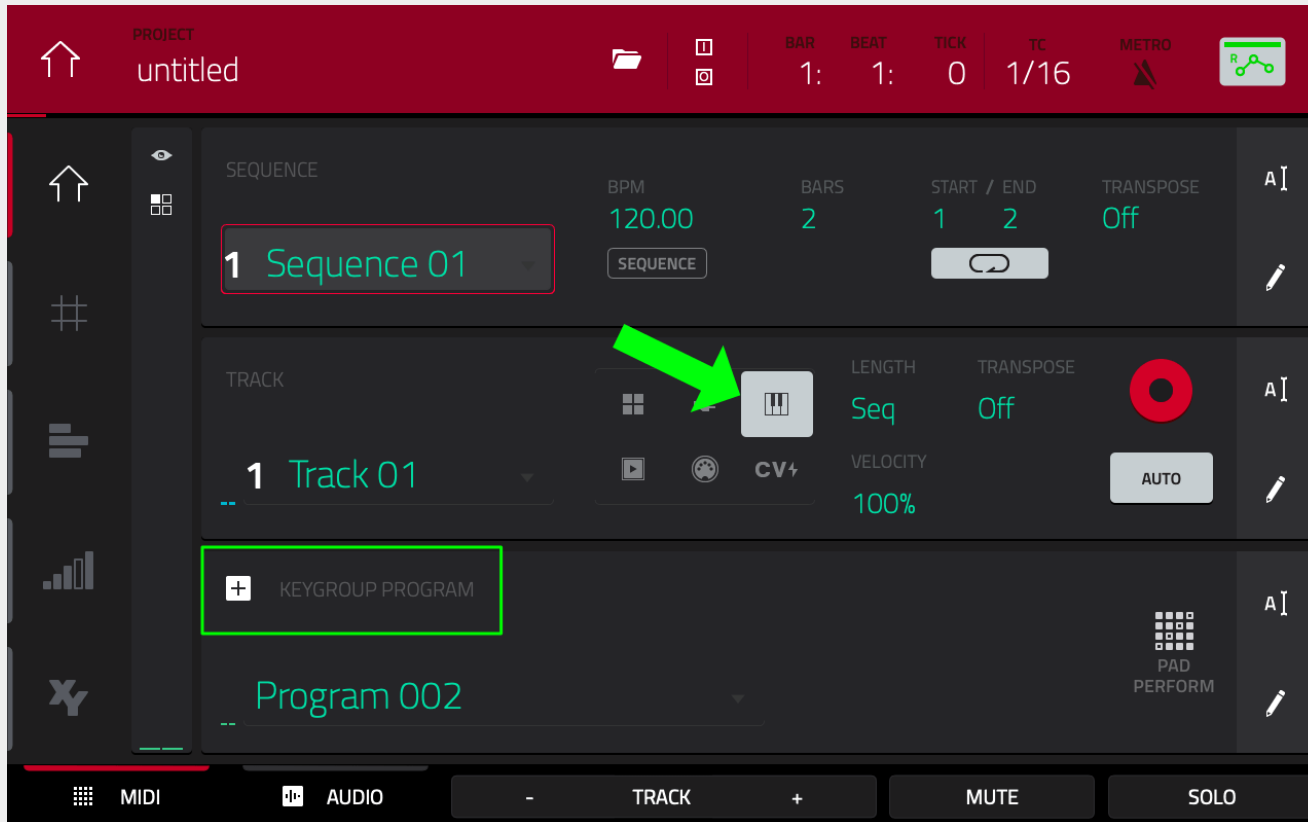


All done! If you had physically transferred the MPC disk to your computer you should now eject the disk from your computer and put the disk back in your MPC.

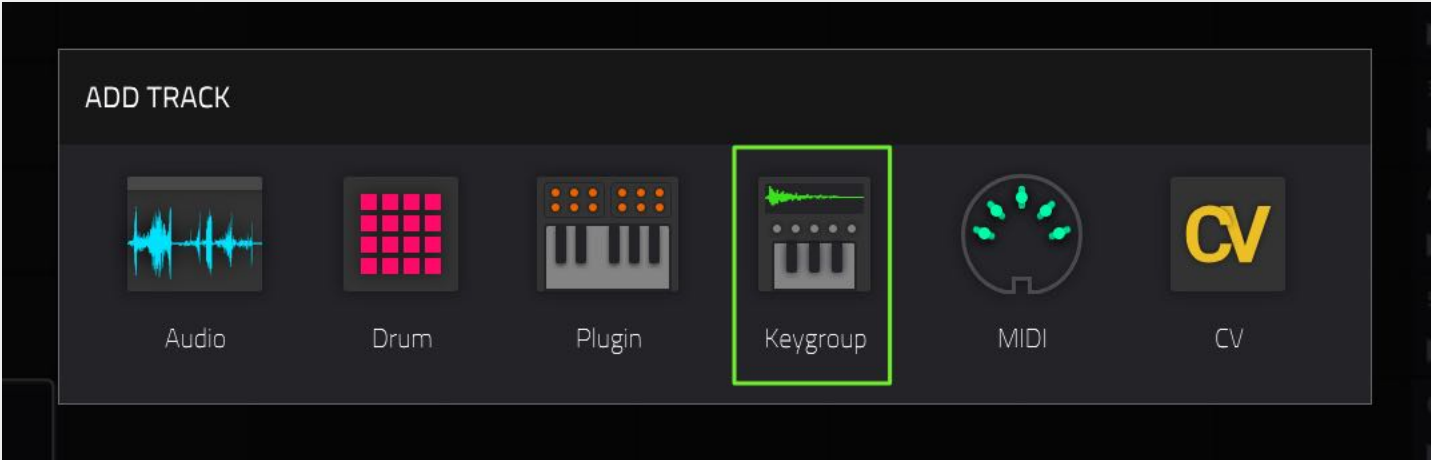
Alternatively, if you used USB transfer then go back to **MENU** and select the computer icon to return to standalone mode - *don't forget to eject/unmount the MPC from your computer first, this avoids any potential data loss.*

Loading Instruments (Standalone MPC/Force)

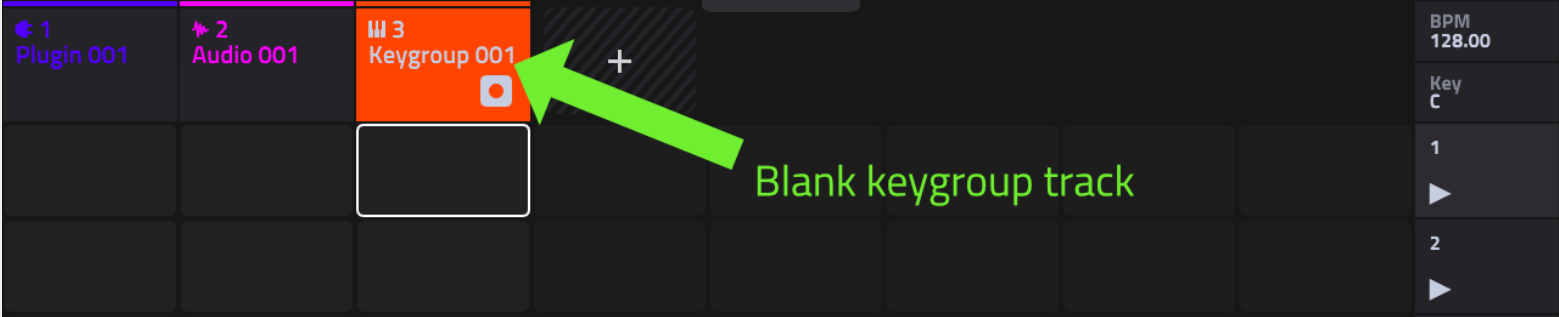
In your MPC, go to **MAIN** and create a **KEYGROUP** type track:



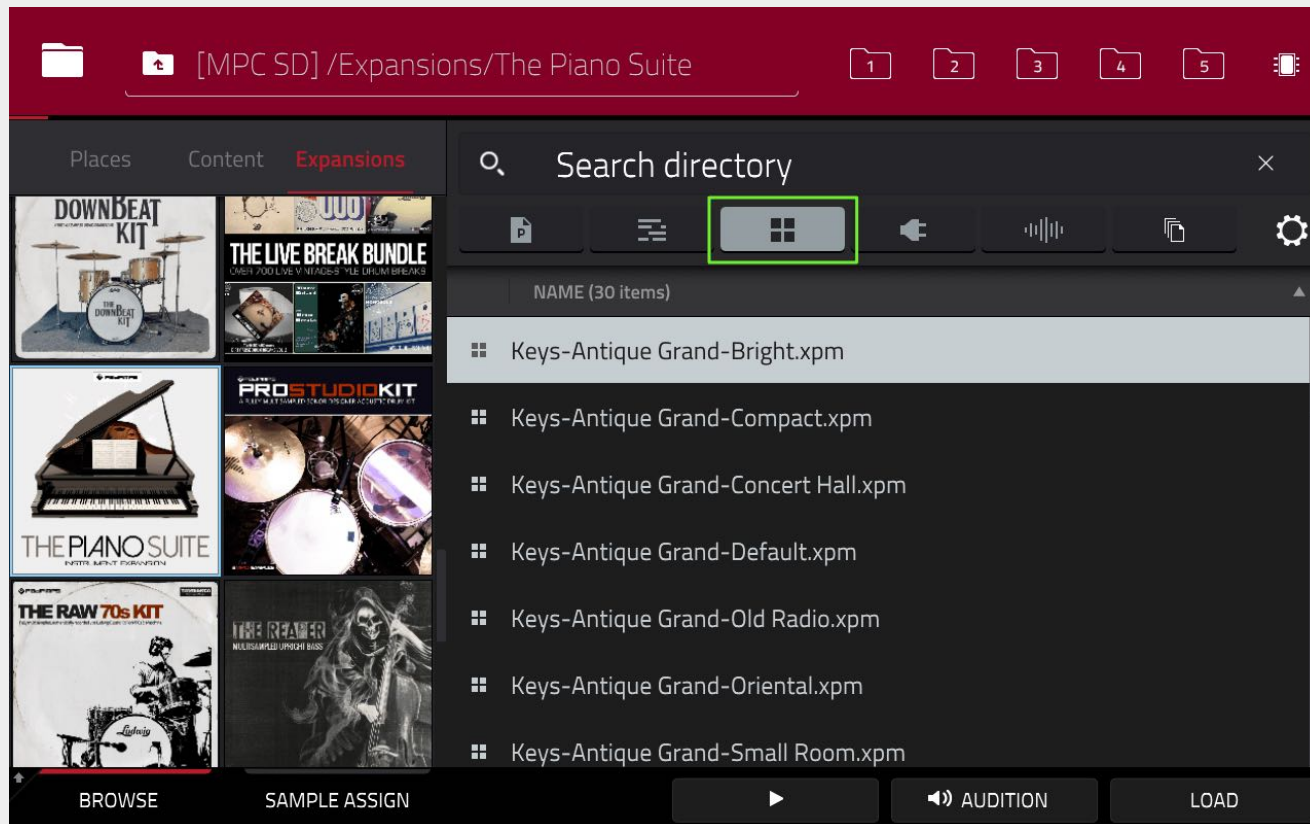
In the Force, hit the '+' icon in the touchscreen matrix and select a **Keygroup** track:



This adds a new blank keygroup track to the matrix:



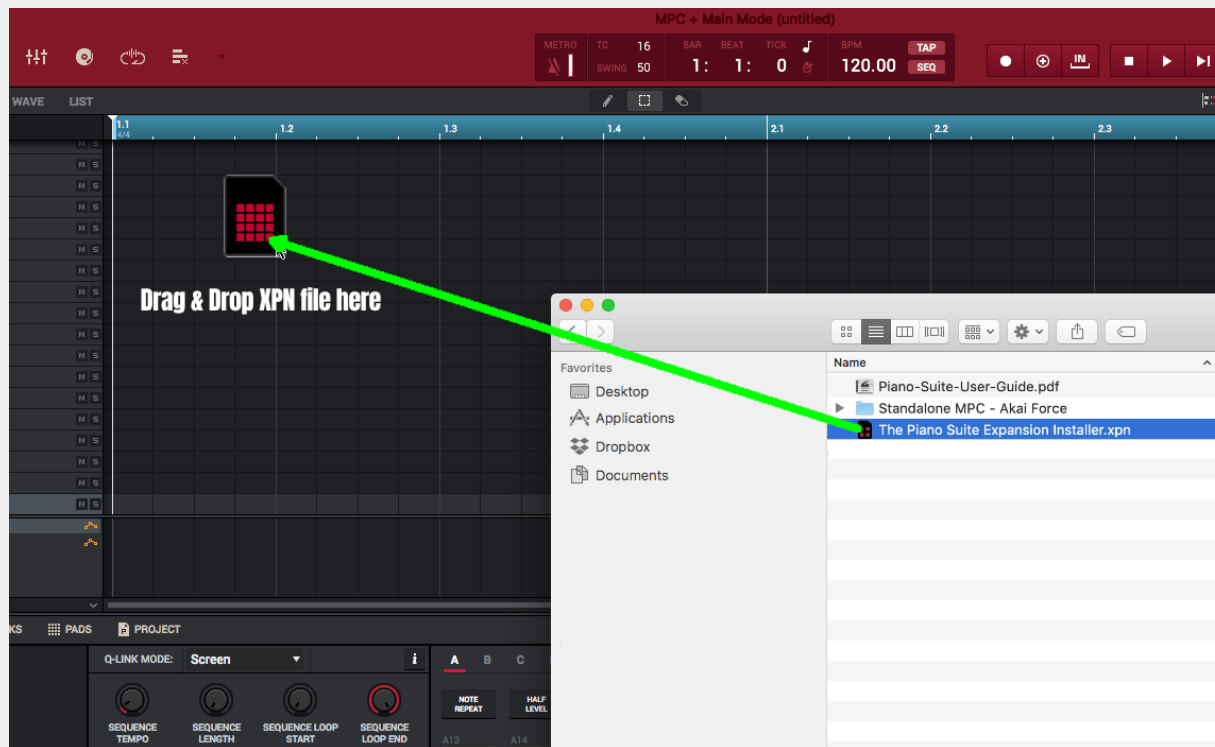
Now go to **'MENU > BROWSER > Expansions'** and tap on the **'Piano Suite'** thumbnail. On the right side, select the **PROGRAM** filter to view all the available instruments:



Single tap the program to hear a preview (requires '**AUDITION >AUTO**').
To load the instrument to the current track, either double tap the XPM file or single tap and press **LOAD**.

Install: MPC Software/MPC Beats App

Locate the 'Piano Suite Expansion Installer.XPN' file and drag & drop it directly into the MPC Software/MPC Beats UI from your computer's File Explorer/Finder:

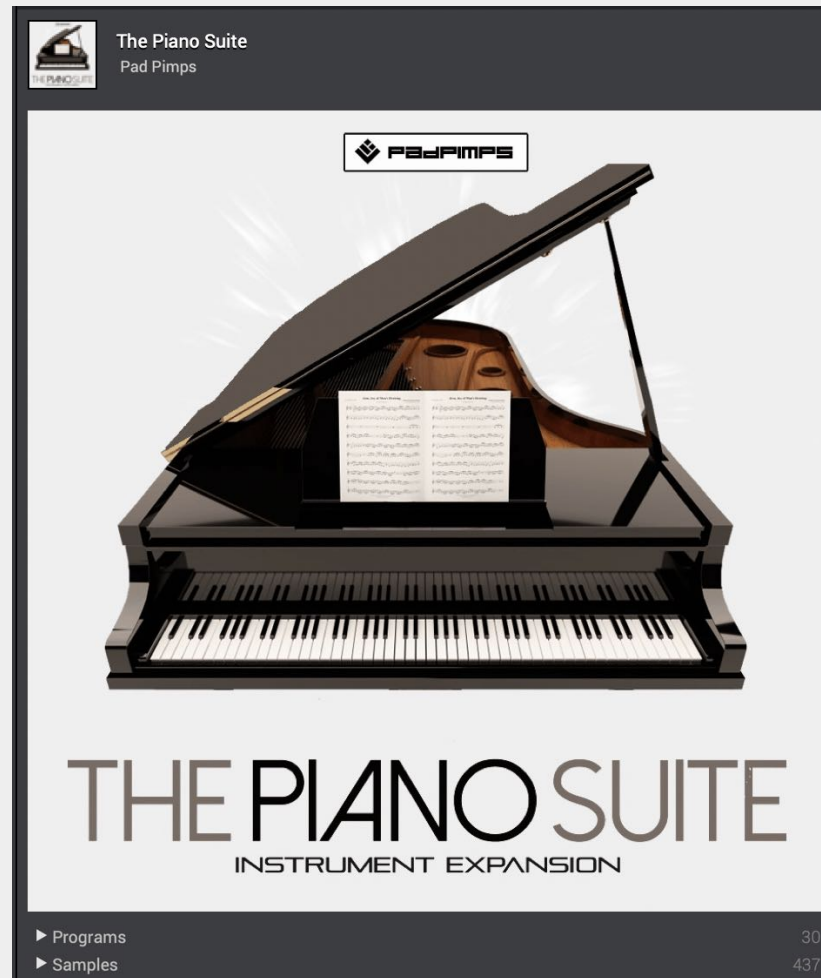


Please note that an XPN file **cannot** be installed by double clicking from your computer's file explorer.

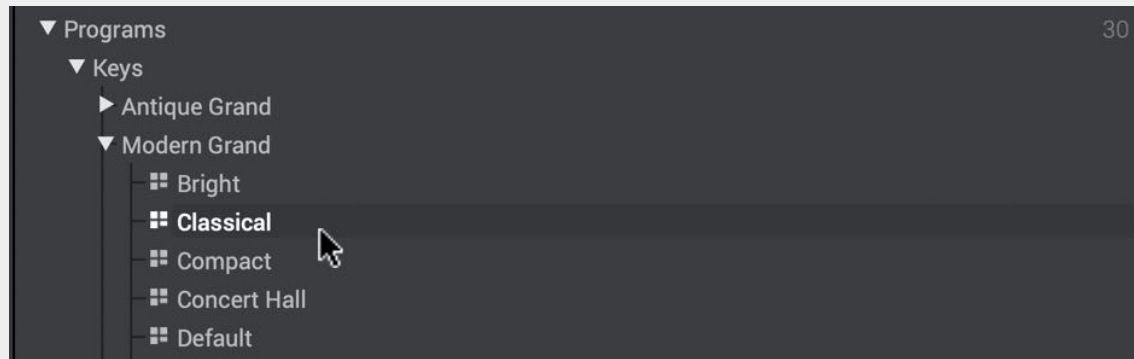
After dragging the XPN into the software UI you will see the following:



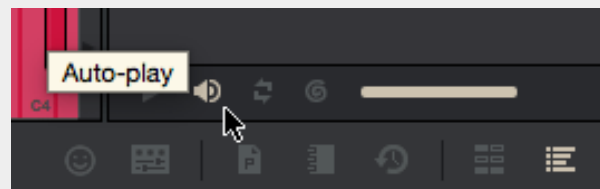
Select **'Import'** and once installed, open the **Expansion Browser** ('X' on your keyboard) and click on the **'Piano Suite'** thumbnail to view:



Expand the '**Programs**' group to reveal all the instruments, all organised into sub-categories based on the piano type and patch:



Single click any instrument to hear its program preview - this requires 'Autoplay' enabled:



Double click a program to load it to the current sequencer track. Alternatively, drag the program directly into your project. All instruments are '**keygroup**' programs and must be assigned to a '**KEYGROUP**' type track in your sequencer.

Playing the Instruments with the Pads

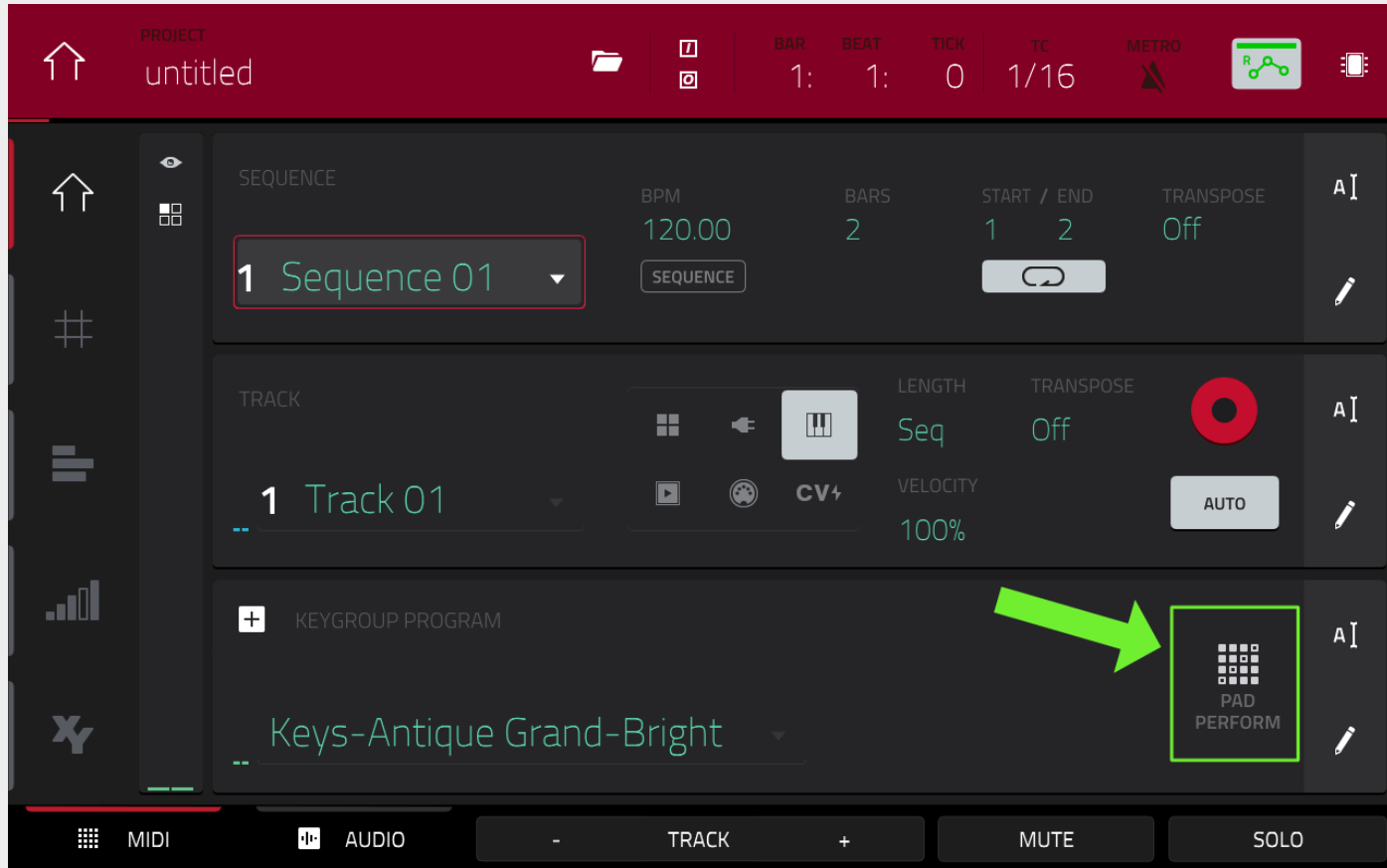
All programs are mapped out to reflect the note range available on the original instruments themselves, the standard 88 key piano range is A-1 to B6, while the Antique Grand has a slightly shorter 85 key range of C0 to G6.

For the most realistic sound, set **FULL LEVEL** to '**OFF**' so you can take advantage of the multiple dynamic levels offered in each program.

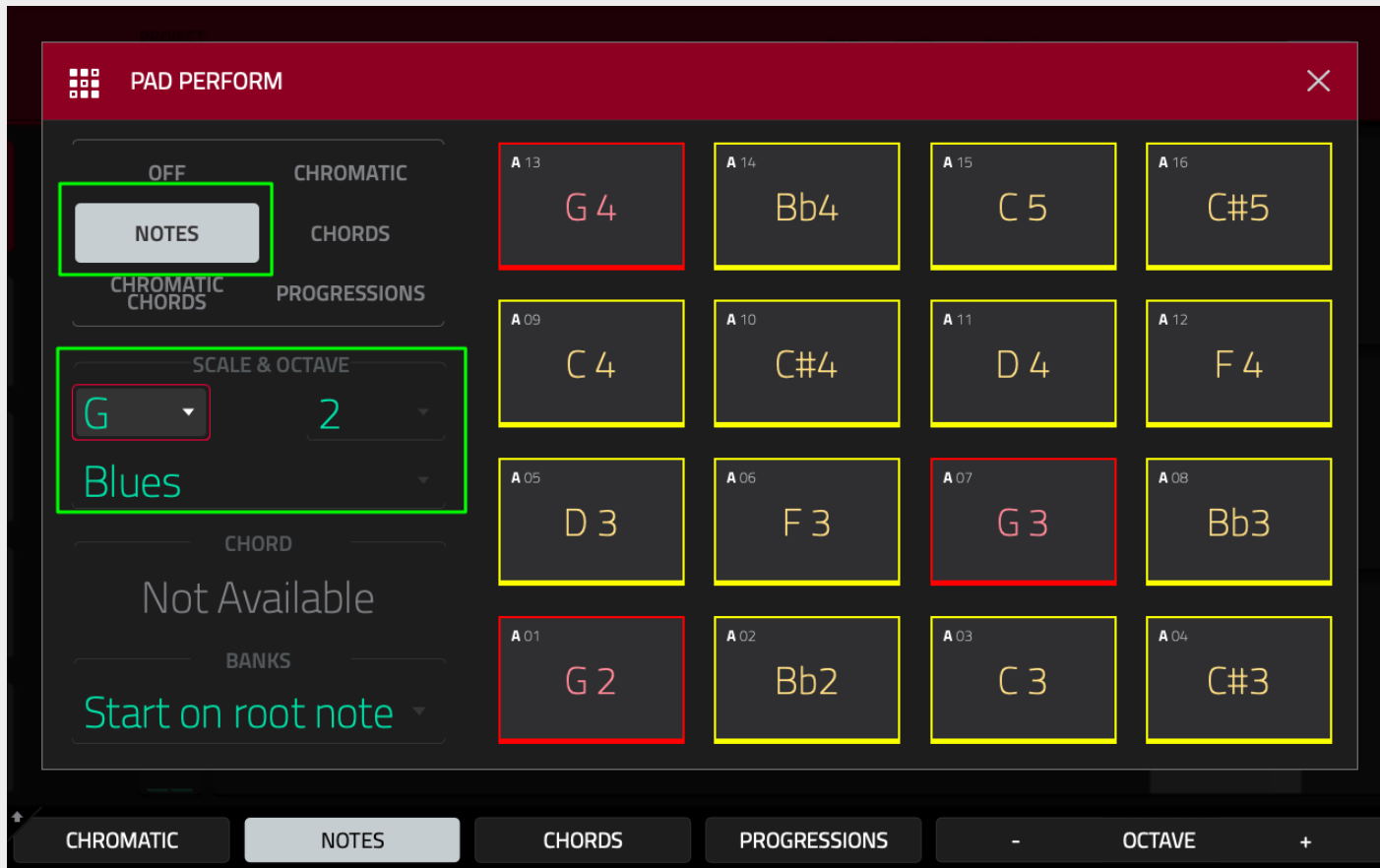
If you are playing the instruments using your pads you will find the playable notes within **banks B-G**. For example, the lowest note on the Modern Grand is A-1 which within an MPC keygroup program is always mapped to pad B06. So don't panic when there's no sounds in bank A; just select bank B or higher.

A great way to play instruments with your pads is to use **Pad Perform Mode** ('Notes Mode' in the Akai Force) which will set your pads to only play back notes from specified scales, or even trigger an entire chord from each individual pad.

With your instrument assigned to a track, in the MPC go to **Pad Perform Mode** by hitting the **PAD PERFORM** icon on the 'PROGRAM' row in MAIN. Alternatively, press **SHIFT & 16 LEVEL**.



To create melodic leads and riffs, select **NOTES** & under 'SCALE & OCTAVE' select your preferred scale, octave & musical key.

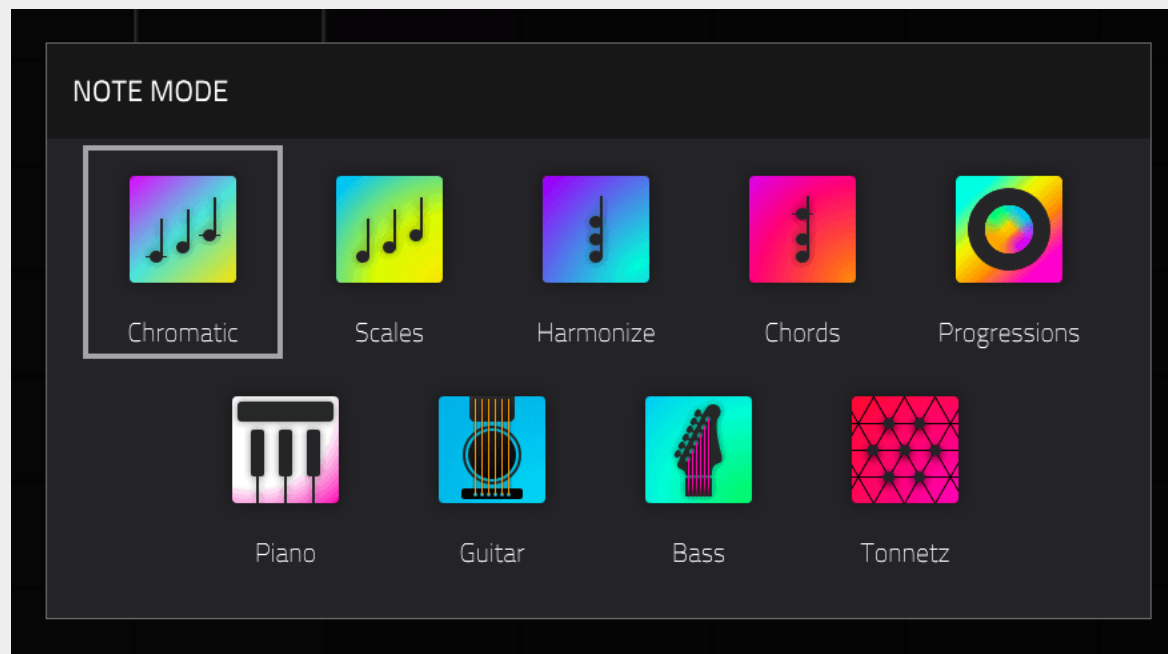


The 16 pads on your MPC will now only play back the notes in this specific scale. Red pads indicate the 'root' note in the scale. You can also play a complete chord on a single pad by selecting the **CHORDS** or **PROGRESSIONS** options.

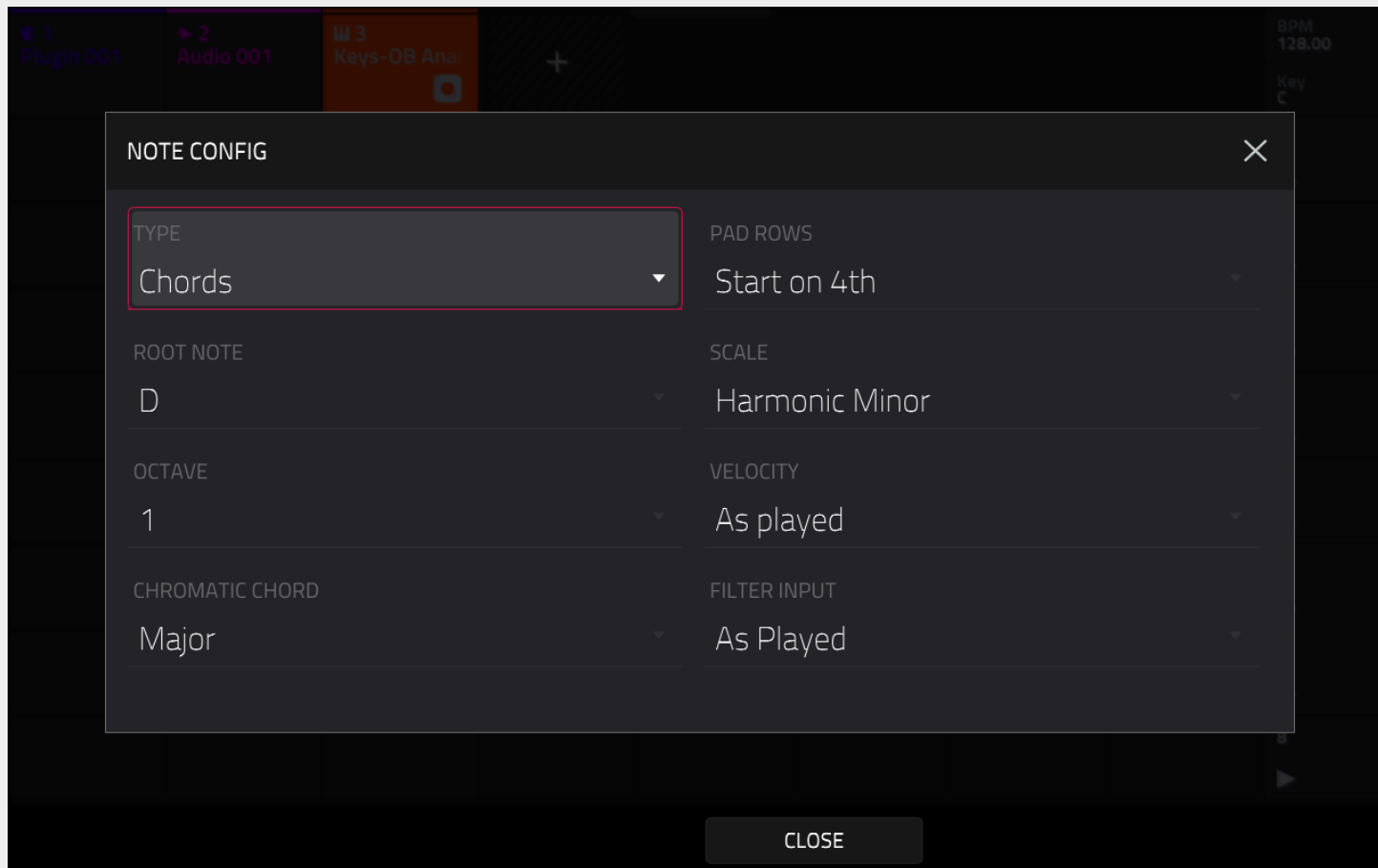


Important: When you have finished with PAD PERFORM mode, remember to turn it off otherwise your pads will remain locked to the selected scale pattern.

In the Force, hit the **NOTE** hardware button to enter **NOTES** mode. Now press and hold the **NOTE** button to select the preferred note mode:



Press **SHIFT** and **NOTE** to launch the full **NOTE CONFIG** screen:



You can now play the instrument across the Force's 64 pads.

Playing the Instruments with a MIDI Keyboard

Instruments can be also played using an attached MIDI keyboard. For standalone MPCs/Force you can connect a USB keyboard directly to your MPC's USB port and you should immediately be able to play the instrument assigned to the current track, no additional configuration needed.



If your MPC has Bluetooth support you can configure a Bluetooth controller via **Preferences > Bluetooth**. Alternatively connect a keyboard via the 5 pin MIDI ports.

If you are using the MPC Software/MPC Beats you can connect your controller to your computer directly via USB or use a 5 pin MIDI cable connected to a suitable USB-MIDI interface. If you have an MPC controller such as the MPC Touch, MPC Renaissance or MPC Studio already connected to your computer, you use the MPC itself as the MIDI interface.

For more information about connecting MIDI controllers to the MPC, check out my dedicated article:

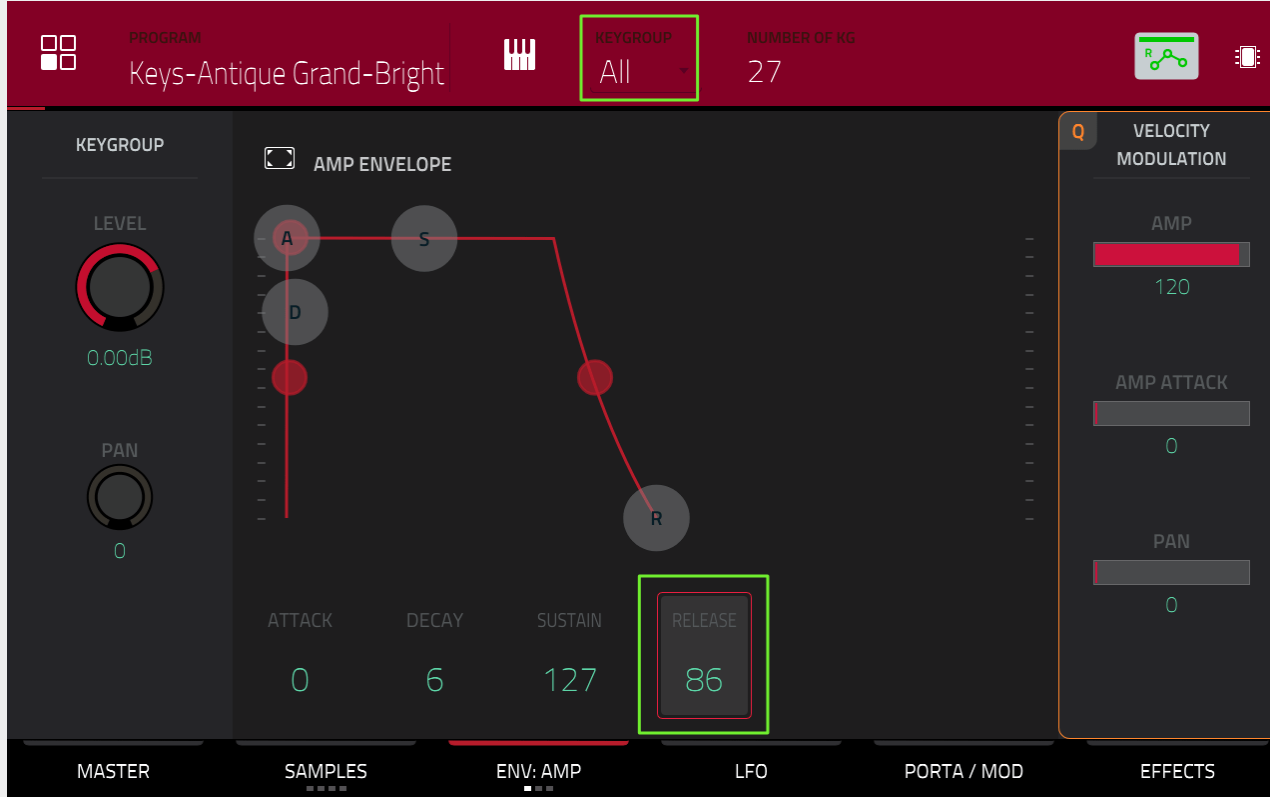
<https://www.mpc-tutor.com/mpc-midi-tutorial-connecting-midi-controllers/>

Usage: Editing Instruments

All instruments are standard MPC 'keygroup' programs, so you can edit the programs to suit your particular needs.

Adjusting Release

Go to **PROGRAM EDIT > ENVELOPES (ENV:AMP)** and you'll see the default amp envelope settings – the main parameter to adjust is the **RELEASE** which will affect how abruptly each note stops playing after you release it – changing this value can alter the entire feel of the piano.

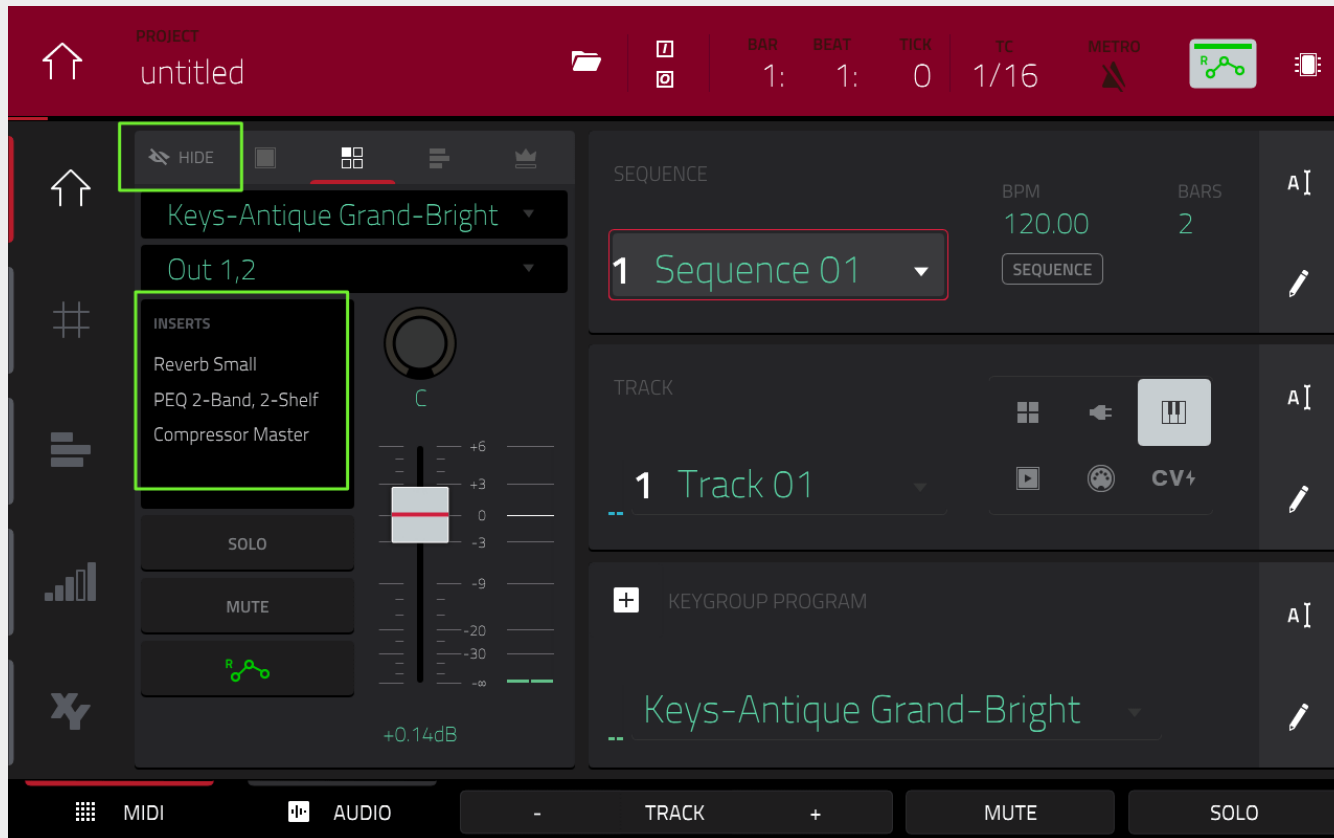


You can select each individual keygroup and adjust the release on a 'per keygroup' basis, or select all keygroups simultaneously to set the same the same release across all keygroups (**KEYGROUP** > **ALL** at the top of the PROGRAM EDIT screen).

You can also try increasing the **ATTACK** setting to produce softer sounding notes.

Adding Effects

You can apply effects across an entire program using the four inserts available in the program channel strip in **MAIN** – hit the ‘eye’ icon to reveal it:



Tap on the '**INSERTS**' box to bring up the effects select dialog box where you can edit settings and change the applied effects.

Further Resources

If you need help learning how to use your MPC, check out MPC-Tutor's range of **MPC tutorial** books and courses at:

<https://www.mpc-samples.com/section.php/8/0/mpc-tutorials-courses/>

The Piano Suite 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/>

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