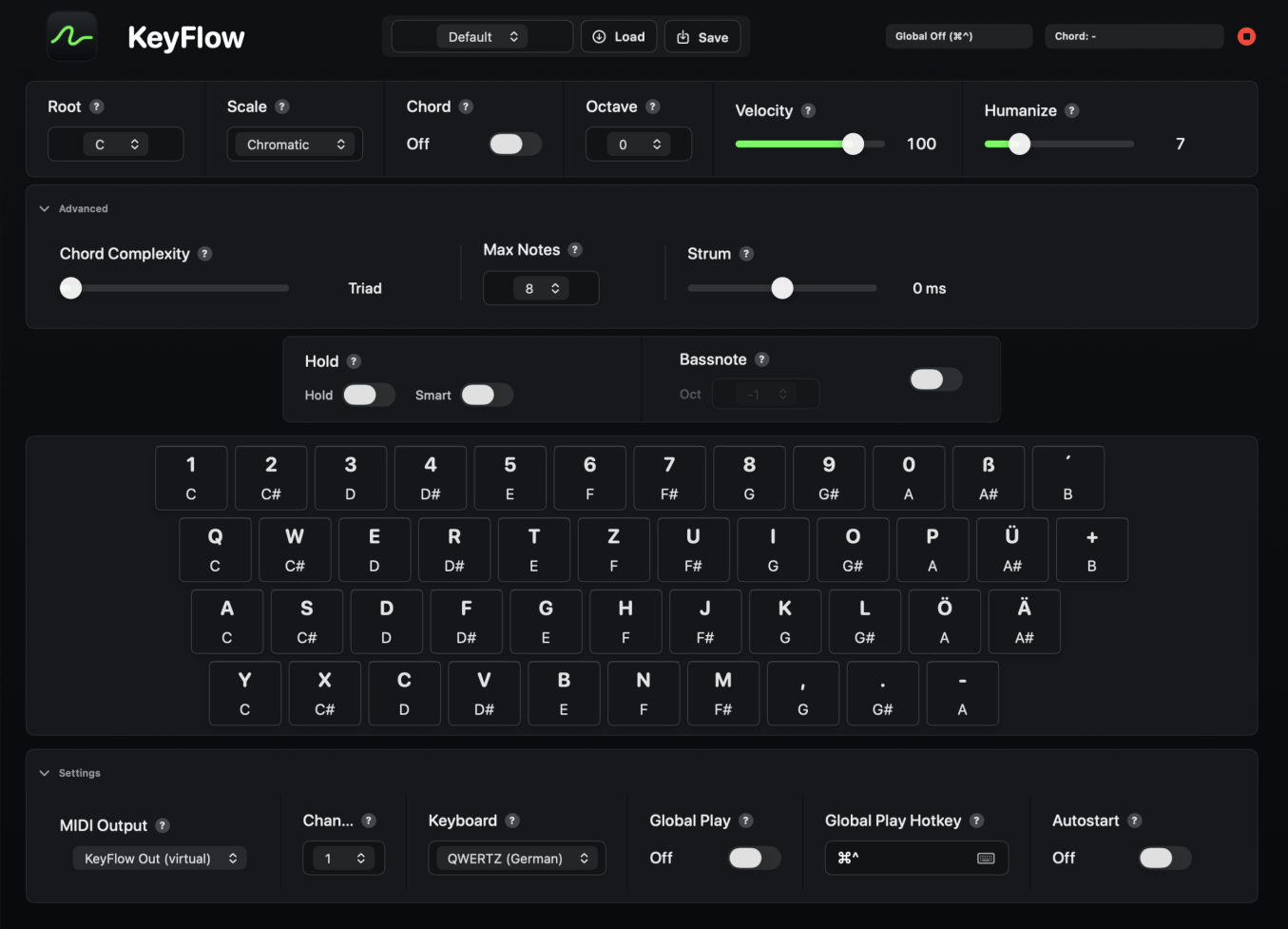


KeyFlow User Manual

Version 1.0 - July 2026



Current KeyFlow interface with Advanced expanded.

What KeyFlow does

KeyFlow lets you play MIDI notes with the Mac keyboard. It sends notes to your DAW or instrument plugin. KeyFlow does not create sound by itself; the sound comes from the instrument track in your DAW.

- Play notes, scales, triads, first inversions, tenth voicings, seventh, ninth, and eleventh chords from the Mac keyboard.
- Use QWERTZ or QWERTY layouts, including German special-key positions.
- Use Chord Complexity, Max Notes, Smart Hold, Bassnote, Humanize, Velocity, Strum, presets, and Global Play.
- Send the notes to KeyFlow Out, IAC Driver Bus 1, or another MIDI place your DAW can listen to.

Beginner idea
Think of KeyFlow as a small MIDI keyboard drawn onto your Mac keyboard. Press a mapped key, and your DAW receives a MIDI note or chord.

Quick Start

1. Open KeyFlow.app.
2. In Advanced, choose MIDI Output. This is where KeyFlow sends the notes. KeyFlow Out or IAC Driver Bus 1 are the usual choices.
3. Choose Root, Scale, Chord, Octave, Velocity, Humanize, Hold/Smart Hold, Bassnote, and the Advanced performance controls if needed.
4. In your DAW, enable the same MIDI connection and create an instrument track.
5. Turn on the track's live input or recording button, then play KeyFlow.
6. Enable Global Play when you want to play KeyFlow while your DAW window is open.

MIDI Routing

1. KeyFlow	2. MIDI bus	3. DAW input	4. Instrument track	5. Record
Choose MIDI Output in Advanced.	Use KeyFlow Out or IAC Driver Bus 1.	Enable that input in your DAW.	Load a software instrument and monitor it.	Play or record MIDI notes.

Most reliable macOS setup: turn on IAC Driver Bus 1 in Audio MIDI Setup, choose it as KeyFlow's MIDI Output, then choose the same bus inside your DAW.

1. Open Audio MIDI Setup > Window > Show MIDI Studio.
2. Double-click IAC Driver and enable Device is online.
3. Create or rename a bus, for example IAC Driver Bus 1.
4. Select that bus in KeyFlow's MIDI Output menu.
5. Enable that same bus inside your DAW.

First Sound Checklist

Check	What should be true
MIDI output	KeyFlow is sending to KeyFlow Out or the selected IAC bus.
DAW input	The same MIDI input is enabled inside the DAW.
Track	A software instrument track is selected, armed, or monitored.
Plugin	A synth, piano, sampler, or drum instrument is loaded.
Typing	Global Play is on only when you want KeyFlow to react outside its own window.

KeyFlow Controls

Control	Purpose	Use it for
Root	Sets the tonal center for scale and chord generation.	Match the song key or keep C for neutral writing.
Scale	Chooses the note set. Chromatic uses all semitones.	Chromatic for full control; scales for fast writing.
Chord	Turns generated chords on or off.	Off for single notes; On for Chord Complexity voicings.
Chord Complexity	Moves from simple chords to richer voicings: Triad, Inverted, Tenth, Seventh, Ninth, Eleventh.	Shape how wide or colorful one-key chords become.
Octave	Moves the keyboard range.	Bass, pads, leads, or higher layers.
Velocity	Sets MIDI note intensity.	Louder/brighter instrument response.
Humanize	Adds small velocity variation.	Less robotic repeated notes.
Hold	Manual latch.	Drones, pads, held notes.
Smart Hold	Sustains and retriggers note/chord clusters.	Automatic sustain-style chord writing.
Strum	Spreads chord notes by milliseconds. Center is 0 ms; positive and negative directions reverse the order.	Natural chord attack.
Bassnote	Adds the detected root below input.	Fast full-range progressions.
Max Notes	Limits the number of notes KeyFlow sends at once.	Useful for synths with limited polyphony.
Global Play	Lets KeyFlow react while you are using your DAW.	Play while browsing DAW presets.

Chord Complexity

Stage	What it plays	Musical feel
Triad	Root, third, and fifth.	Simple, direct chords.
Inverted	First inversion with the root moved up.	Smoother movement between chords.
Tenth	Root plus the third one octave higher.	Open two-note producer voicing.
Seventh	Root, fifth, seventh, and upper third.	Wider seventh chord without dropping notes below the played key.
Ninth	Root, seventh, ninth, and upper third; less essential tones may be omitted.	Colorful but not too crowded.
Eleventh	Adds the eleventh color above the open voicing.	Richest built-in chord color.

Keyboard Layouts and Highlighting

- QWERTZ maps the German keyboard layout, including Ü, Ö, Ä, ß, +, comma, period, minus, and accent key positions.
- QWERTY maps the common US/English layout.
- Only playable keys are shown. Non-musical keys are intentionally hidden.
- Chord mode highlights the generated musical chord tones on the visual keyboard.

Hold, Smart Hold, Bassnote, Strum

Feature	Behavior
Hold	Latches notes until stopped or toggled.
Smart Hold	Holds the current note/chord cluster, replaces it when new input starts, and retriggers the same input when played again.
Bassnote	Adds the detected root below the current note/chord and follows release/retrigger behavior.
Strum	Offsets chord voices slightly so attacks feel less perfectly quantized.
Max Notes	Keeps the outgoing MIDI note count under the selected limit.

Global Play and Mac Permission

Global Play lets KeyFlow keep reacting to your keyboard while you are using another app, for example your DAW. macOS needs you to allow this in System Settings because KeyFlow has to read your keyboard outside its own window.

1. Open System Settings > Privacy & Security > Accessibility.
2. Enable KeyFlow.
3. Return to KeyFlow and toggle Global Play.
4. Use the Global Play Hotkey to switch between performance mode and normal typing.

Important: when Global Play is on, the mapped music keys are used for playing. Turn it off before typing names, searching plugins, or writing in DAW text fields.

Hotkey tip

The hotkey can use a single key or modifier combinations such as Command, Control, or Option plus another key. The status area shows the currently saved hotkey.

Presets

1. Set up the controls you want to reuse.
2. Click Save and name the preset.
3. KeyFlow saves preset files with the .kfp suffix.
4. Click Load to open a .kfp preset from disk or from the KeyFlow Presets folder.
5. Share .kfp files with another KeyFlow user when you want them to load the same setup.

Preset files

A .kfp file stores the musical setup, selected MIDI output, keyboard layout, hotkey, and performance options so the same setup can be restored later.

Universal DAW Setup Pattern

Step	Action
1	In your DAW, turn on KeyFlow Out or IAC Driver Bus 1.
2	Create a software instrument track.
3	Set the track to listen to All Inputs or KeyFlow/IAC.
4	Load a synth, piano, sampler, drum plugin, or other instrument.
5	Turn on recording or live listening for the track, then play KeyFlow.

Recommended test

Before recording a real part, press one simple note in KeyFlow and check that the DAW receives it. Then test one chord, Smart Hold, Bassnote, and Global Play one at a time.

DAW Setup Guides

Logic Pro

1. Enable IAC Driver Bus 1.
2. Set KeyFlow MIDI Output to that bus.
3. Create a Software Instrument track.
4. Load an AU instrument.
5. Turn on Record or select the track.

FL Studio

1. Open Options > MIDI settings.
2. Select IAC Driver Bus 1 or KeyFlow input.
3. Click Enable.
4. Use Generic Controller.
5. Open a plugin and record to Piano Roll.

Ableton Live

1. Open Settings > Link, Tempo & MIDI.
2. Enable Track for the KeyFlow/IAC input.
3. Create a MIDI track with an instrument.
4. Set MIDI From and Monitor/Arm.
5. Record clips.

REAPER

1. Preferences > Audio > MIDI Devices.
2. Enable KeyFlow/IAC input.
3. Create track and insert instrument.
4. Turn on recording and monitoring.

Studio One

1. Preferences > External Devices.
2. Add New Keyboard.
3. Receive From KeyFlow/IAC.
4. Create an Instrument track.
5. Turn on Monitor or Record.

Cubase / Nuendo

1. Open Studio Setup.
2. Enable the MIDI port.
3. Create Instrument Track.
4. Input: All MIDI Inputs or KeyFlow/IAC.
5. Turn on Monitor or Record.

Pro Tools

1. Create an Instrument Track.
2. Insert a virtual instrument.
3. Set MIDI input to All or KeyFlow/IAC.
4. Turn on Record and play.

Bitwig / GarageBand

1. Bitwig: add Generic MIDI Keyboard and choose KeyFlow/IAC.
2. GarageBand: create Software Instrument track.
3. Restart the DAW if the MIDI bus was enabled after launch.

Troubleshooting

Problem	Likely cause	Fix
No MIDI in DAW	Input disabled.	Enable KeyFlow/IAC in DAW MIDI settings.
MIDI but no sound	No instrument loaded or live input is off.	Load an instrument and turn on the track's live input or recording button.
Keys type into DAW	Global Play off.	Focus KeyFlow or turn Global Play on.
Cannot type normally	Global Play on.	Use the hotkey to turn it off.
Wrong keys play	Layout mismatch.	Choose QWERTZ or QWERTY in Advanced.
Accessibility loops	macOS cached old app entry.	Remove old app entries and add the current KeyFlow app again.
Icon missing in Accessibility	macOS settings cache.	Functionality is unaffected; signed releases usually behave better.

Fast reset

If a note ever keeps playing after closing or changing apps, reopen KeyFlow and press the red Panic button. KeyFlow also sends a panic when the app closes.

Best Practices

- Use Chromatic for full control; use scale modes for fast sketching.
- Keep Velocity around 80-110 for most instruments.
- Use subtle Humanize and Strum values unless you want obvious movement.
- Use Bassnote for sketching, then record a dedicated bassline later.
- Turn Global Play off whenever you need normal typing or shortcuts.

Support Checklist

When asking for help	Send this information
DAW setup	Which DAW, which MIDI input, and whether the track is armed or monitored.
KeyFlow setup	Root, Scale, Chord state, Chord Complexity, Max Notes, Hold, Smart Hold, Bassnote, and Global Play state.
Preset	Attach the .kfp preset if the behavior depends on a saved setup.
Problem moment	Describe the exact key pressed and what you expected to hear.

Sources

- Apple Audio MIDI Setup - transfer MIDI between apps: support.apple.com/guide/audio-midi-setup/transfer-midi-information-between-apps-ams1013/mac
- Image-Line FL Studio Manual - MIDI settings: image-line.com/fl-studio-learning/fl-studio-online-manual/html/envsettings_midi.htm
- Ableton Help - using MIDI controllers with Live: help.ableton.com