

KeyFlow User Manual

Windows Edition

Version 1.0.2 - August 2026

 **KeyFlow**

Default ▾ Load Save License: Activated Global On (Ctrl+^) Chord: -

Root ?
C ▾

Scale ?
Chromatic ▾

Chord ?
Off ☐

Octave ?
0 ▾

Velocity ?
100

Humanize ?
7

Advanced

Chord Complexity ?
Triad

Max Notes ?
8 ▾

Strum ?
0 ms

Hold ?
Hold ☐ Smart ☐

Bassnote ?
Oct -1 ▾ ☐

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Settings

MIDI Output ?
KeyFlow Output ▾

Channel ?
1 ▾

Keyboard ?
QWERTZ (German) ▾

Global Play ?
On ☒

Global Play Hotkey ?
Ctrl+^

Autostart ?
Off ☐

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Current KeyFlow workspace on Windows with Advanced and Settings expanded.

14-day trialMIDI 1.0Shareable .kfp presets

Turn your computer keyboard into a playable MIDI controller for your DAW.

Install and make your first sound

1. Run KeyFlow-Setup.exe. The single installer detects x64 or ARM64 automatically.
2. Keep the suggested installation folder. A desktop shortcut is optional.
3. Allow the Microsoft Windows MIDI components to install if they are not already present, then finish setup.
4. Open KeyFlow and click the license status. Start the 14-day trial or enter the purchase email and license key.
5. In Settings, choose KeyFlow Output. In your DAW, enable KeyFlow Input as the MIDI input.

1. KeyFlow	2. KeyFlow Output	3. KeyFlow Input	4. Instrument	5. Play / record
Your PC keyboard becomes a MIDI controller.	KeyFlow sends into the virtual cable.	Choose this as the DAW MIDI input.	Load a synth, piano or sampler.	Monitor the track and start playing.

Good to know

KeyFlow sends MIDI data, not audio. The actual sound comes from the instrument loaded on your DAW track.

What KeyFlow adds to your setup

- Play single notes, scale-correct notes or automatic chords from the computer keyboard.
- Shape performances with Velocity, Humanize, Hold, Smart Hold, Bassnote and Strum.
- See the trigger key and every generated note directly on the on-screen keyboard.
- Save complete performance setups as portable .kfp preset files.

First sound checklist

Check	What should be true
KeyFlow	The license shows Trial or Activated, and the red Panic button is visible.
Output	KeyFlow Settings shows KeyFlow Output. Use the refresh button if the list was opened too early.
DAW	KeyFlow Input is enabled as the MIDI input.
Track	A software instrument is loaded and the track is record-armed or monitored.
Test	Click a key in KeyFlow or press one mapped computer key.

If the KeyFlow MIDI connection is missing

1. Close KeyFlow and run the latest KeyFlow installer again.
2. Restart Windows once so the MIDI service can finish loading.
3. Open KeyFlow, press the refresh button beside MIDI Output, and confirm that KeyFlow Output appears.

System requirement

Windows 11 64-bit (x64 or ARM64), internet access for activation, and a DAW or instrument that accepts MIDI input.

Controls and live performance

Hover over any question-mark button in KeyFlow for a short explanation. This table gives the complete overview.

Control	What it does
Root	Sets the musical starting note used by the selected scale.
Scale	Keeps generated notes inside the selected scale. Chromatic leaves every semitone available.
Chord	Turns automatic chord generation on or off for each played key.
Octave	Moves the complete performance up or down in octave steps.
Velocity	Sets how hard MIDI notes are played. Higher values often sound louder or brighter.
Humanize	Adds small velocity differences so repeated notes feel less mechanical.
Hold	Keeps released notes sounding until their trigger is pressed again or Panic is used.
Smart Hold	Holds one chord as a group and replaces it cleanly when the next chord is played.
Bassnote	Adds the root below a note or chord. Choose minus one or minus two octaves.
Panic	Immediately sends note-off messages for every active note. Use it whenever a note is stuck.

Fast slider editing

Ctrl-double-click or Alt-double-click any slider to restore its original value. Double-click the number beside Velocity, Humanize or Strum, type a value, then press Enter.

Chord Complexity

Turn Chord on, then move the slider from simple to rich. KeyFlow changes both chord type and voicing instead of only stacking more nearby notes.

Stage	Result
Triad	Root, third and fifth.
1st inv.	Moves the root above the other chord tones for a smoother, lighter shape.
Tenth	Plays the root and the third one octave higher as a wide two-note voicing.
Seventh	Adds the scale-based seventh and opens the notes across a wider range.
Ninth	Adds a ninth color while spacing or omitting tones when that sounds clearer.
Eleventh	Adds an eleventh color and uses a wider, less crowded voicing.

Max Notes

Off keeps every generated chord tone. Choose 1 to 16 when a synth has limited polyphony. Bassnote counts toward the total so the output never exceeds the selected limit.

Strum

At 0 ms, notes start together. Positive values play low to high. Negative values play high to low. The on-screen keys light in the same order.

Live keyboard display

The key you physically press is highlighted as the trigger. Generated chord notes use the performance highlight and follow Strum timing, so the screen matches what is sent as MIDI.

How KeyFlow chooses notes

Setting	Effect on the result
Chromatic + Chord off	Each mapped key plays its own semitone without scale correction or added chord tones.
Scale selected	Mapped keys are reorganized so the performance follows the selected root and scale.
Chord on	Each trigger builds a scale-based chord whose shape follows Chord Complexity.
Chord display	The top-right status analyses the actual notes sounding and names simple or extended chords when possible.

Playing beyond the KeyFlow window

Global Play

Global Play keeps the PC keyboard connected to KeyFlow while another app is active. Click the hotkey field and press a key or a combination using Ctrl, Alt, Shift or the Windows key. The chosen combination is remembered after restart.

Typing safely

Turn Global Play off before writing messages or naming presets. The same hotkey turns it back on when you want to perform.

Hold, Smart Hold and Bassnote

Mode	Use it when...	Release behavior
Hold	You want notes to remain until the same trigger is pressed again.	Panic always clears every held note.
Smart Hold	You want one complete chord to sustain until the next chord arrives.	The previous chord is released before the replacement is held.
Bassnote	You want an automatic root below a note or chord.	It follows normal release, Hold or Smart Hold together with the performance.

Presets

- Choose a preset from the top menu. KeyFlow remembers the last selected preset.
- Save stores a named .kfp preset in Documents > KeyFlow Presets.
- Load opens any compatible .kfp file, including one received from another KeyFlow user.
- A preset stores musical and performance controls. App settings such as Autostart remain separate.

License

- The 14-day trial begins on first use. It does not restart after expiry or after a licensed device is deactivated.
- Activate with the email used for purchase and the license key from XHL AUDIO.
- KeyFlow validates activated licenses online and allows a limited offline period between checks.
- When the license is expired, unlicensed or deactivated, KeyFlow stops sending MIDI until it is activated again.

Window and startup

Autostart adds KeyFlow to the current Windows account and launches it minimized after sign-in. Turn it off in KeyFlow or in Windows Settings > Apps > Startup.

Action	Result
Ctrl-Q	Closes KeyFlow and sends Panic first.
Ctrl-H	Minimizes KeyFlow without stopping it.
Global hotkey	Turns Global Play on or off from any app.
Mouse input	Click the on-screen keys to play without the computer keyboard.

Keyboard layouts

Choose the layout that matches the keys printed on the physical keyboard. QWERTZ follows German positions, including Z/Y, ß, the acute-accent key, Ü, Ö and Ä. QWERTY uses the corresponding English keyboard positions. The on-screen rows show only keys that can play notes.

DAW setup

KeyFlow sends to KeyFlow Output. Your DAW listens to KeyFlow Input. The names describe exactly where each connection is selected.

Logic Pro / GarageBand

1. Make sure KeyFlow Input is available as a MIDI input.
2. Create a Software Instrument track and load an instrument.
3. Select the track. Logic and GarageBand normally listen to enabled MIDI inputs automatically.
4. Play KeyFlow and confirm that the track meter reacts.

FL Studio

1. Open Options > MIDI Settings.
2. Under Input, select KeyFlow Input and click Enable.
3. Open a Channel Rack instrument or plugin and keep it selected.
4. Play KeyFlow. Choose a free controller port only when a plugin specifically needs one.

Ableton Live

1. Open Settings / Preferences > Link, Tempo & MIDI.
2. Turn Track on for the KeyFlow Input input.
3. Create a MIDI track, load an instrument and choose All Ins or the KeyFlow input.
4. Arm the track or set Monitor to In.

Studio One

1. Open Options / Preferences > External Devices.
2. Add New Keyboard and set Receive From to KeyFlow Input.
3. Create an Instrument track, load a plugin and select the KeyFlow keyboard as input.
4. Enable monitoring or recording on the track.

Cubase / Nuendo

1. Open Studio > Studio Setup > MIDI Port Setup.
2. Confirm that KeyFlow Input is active and included in All MIDI Inputs, or choose it directly.
3. Create an Instrument track and load an instrument.
4. Record-enable or monitor the track, then play KeyFlow.

Pro Tools

1. Open Setup > MIDI > Input Devices and enable KeyFlow Input.
2. Create an Instrument track and insert a virtual instrument.
3. Select the KeyFlow input or All, then record-arm the track.
4. Check Options > MIDI Thru if incoming notes do not reach the instrument.

REAPER

1. Open Preferences > Audio > MIDI Devices.
2. Right-click KeyFlow Input and choose Enable input.
3. Create a track, load a virtual instrument and choose the KeyFlow MIDI input.
4. Record-arm the track and turn monitoring on.

Bitwig Studio

1. Open Settings > Controllers and add a Generic MIDI Keyboard.
2. Choose KeyFlow Input as the input.
3. Create an Instrument track, load a device and select the controller as input.
4. Arm or monitor the track, then play KeyFlow.

The universal rule
KeyFlow must send to one MIDI connection, the DAW must listen to the matching input, and the instrument track must be monitored or record-armed.

DAW words in plain English

Term	Meaning
MIDI input	The connection from which the DAW receives notes and controller data.
Instrument track	A track that turns incoming MIDI notes into sound through a plugin.
Monitor	Lets you hear incoming notes immediately, before recording.
Record-arm	Prepares the track to record and often enables live input at the same time.
Plugin	The piano, synth, sampler or other virtual instrument that creates the sound.

Troubleshooting

Problem	What to do
KeyFlow Output or Input is missing	Run the current universal installer again, restart Windows, then use the refresh button beside MIDI Output.
The app did not start with Windows	Turn Autostart off and on once, then check Windows Settings > Apps > Startup. It starts minimized after sign-in.
Windows warns about the installer	Download only from xhlaudio.shop. Verify the publisher when a signed release is available; never run a copy from an unknown source.
CrossOver or Wine behaves incorrectly	The Windows build is designed for Windows 11. Automatic MIDI setup is not supported under CrossOver or Wine.
I see MIDI activity but hear no sound	Load a software instrument and turn on monitoring or record-arm the track. KeyFlow sends MIDI, not audio.
A note keeps sounding	Press the red Panic button. Closing KeyFlow also sends Panic before the app exits.
The wrong computer key is mapped	Open Settings and choose QWERTZ (German) or QWERTY to match the physical keyboard.
Global Play types into other apps	Use the Global Play hotkey to turn it off before typing, then turn it on again for performance.
My license will not activate	Check the internet connection, purchase email and complete key. Paste into the fields and try again.
A preset will not load	Use a KeyFlow .kfp file. Files from unknown or edited sources may not contain valid preset data.

System requirements

Item	Requirement
Operating system	Windows 11, 64-bit
Processor	x64 or ARM64; the universal installer selects automatically
MIDI	Microsoft Windows MIDI components included by KeyFlow Setup
Internet	Required for initial activation and periodic license validation

Updating KeyFlow

1. Close KeyFlow so Panic can release every active note.
2. Install the new version in the same normal application location.
3. Open KeyFlow and confirm the license, MIDI output, last preset and Global Play hotkey.
4. Test one note and one Panic before opening an important project.

Support

Email: business@chrisxhl.de

Downloads and updates:
xhlaudio.shop/keyflow/download

When contacting support, include your operating system, KeyFlow version, DAW name and the exact error message.

Official references

Windows MIDI Services:
aka.ms/midi

Windows startup apps:
support.microsoft.com/windows/configure-startup-applications-in-windows

DAW menus can move between versions. If a label differs, look for MIDI Inputs, MIDI Devices, External Devices or Track Monitoring.

Before a live session

Open KeyFlow, confirm the license and MIDI output, test one note, then test Panic. This small check prevents almost every avoidable setup problem.

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