

Instachord 2

MIDI Processor Plugin

Manual

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1. Introduction



Instachord 2 is a MIDI Processor Plugin that makes playing chords and chord progressions easier and perhaps a bit more interesting. The initial idea was inspired by how we play chords on a guitar. Fret a chord with one hand and pick the strings with the other one. Instachord takes that idea and expands on it, letting you use the same method and experience the same feeling on a MIDI controller and inside of a DAW. The difference is that you don't have to memorize all the chord shapes and hold down all the notes to make the chords ring.

The controls are divided into two main sections: Chord keys and Pick (Action) keys. Switch between chords using the chord keys and play them using the pick keys. Depending on the action assigned to a pick key you can play anything from individual notes to arpeggios, strums or even complex patterns thanks to the new features added in the new version.

The **2.0** update takes the concept to a whole new level. An entirely new pattern editor has been added that lets you create your own patterns and sequences. You can also use the onboard AI to create an infinite number of procedurally generated patterns. Another new feature is the chord progression generator that lets you pick a scale and generate a new chord progression based on it. These are not just basic randomizers, the algorithms are trained to create something that is more likely to sound more desirable to human ears.

Each pattern can be set to loop, play once or sustain the notes. The playing mode as well as the time division parameters can be set independently for each of the 24 patterns, providing more flexibility.

Features:

- All the chords users might need (Maj, Min, Sus, etc.)
- Different voicing for each chord (Inversions, guitar, wide, etc.)
- Edit or create custom chords
- 24 chord keys holding up to 24 chords per preset
- 24 pick keys holding up to 24 patterns and actions per preset
- AI pattern generator lets you procedurally generate an infinite number of patterns
- AI chord progression generator lets you procedurally generate an infinite number of chord progressions
- Scale and chord guides highlight the notes and the chords that can be used in a scale
- 24 scales can be used when generating new chord progressions
- Advanced pattern editor
- Different playback modes for each pattern (loop, one-shot and hold)
- Different time divisions for each pattern
- Different playing and holding modes (pick, fret, etc.)
- Global transpose, octave and bypass controls
- Customizable mapping for chord and pick key groups
- Load legacy presets directly from version 1 (with minor exceptions explained in the manual)
- Resizable UI (90% up to 200%).
- Hundreds of factory presets to get you started

2. Installation

Run the installer and follow the instructions to install the plugin.

Windows. Default locations:

VST 32bit: 'C:\Program Files (x86)\vstplugins'
VST 64bit: 'C:\Program Files\vstplugins'
VST3 32bit: 'C:\Program Files (x86)\Common Files\VST3'
VST3 64bit: 'C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3'
AAX 32bit: 'C:\Program Files (x86)\Common Files\Avid\Audio\Plug-Ins'
AAX 64bit: 'C:\Program Files\Common Files\Avid\Audio\Plug-Ins'

MacOS. Default locations:

VST2: 'Library/Audio/Plugins/VST'
VST3: 'Library/Audio/Plug-ins/VST3'
AU: 'Library/Audio/Plugins/Components'
AAX: 'Library/Application Support/Avid/Audio/Plug-Ins'

Preset folder: To install presets on Mac use the 'Open Preset Folder' option from the menu to reveal the correct folder. This will open up the preset folder in your Mac's Finder. You can then copy the presets from the installer folder and paste them here.

Demo Version Limitations

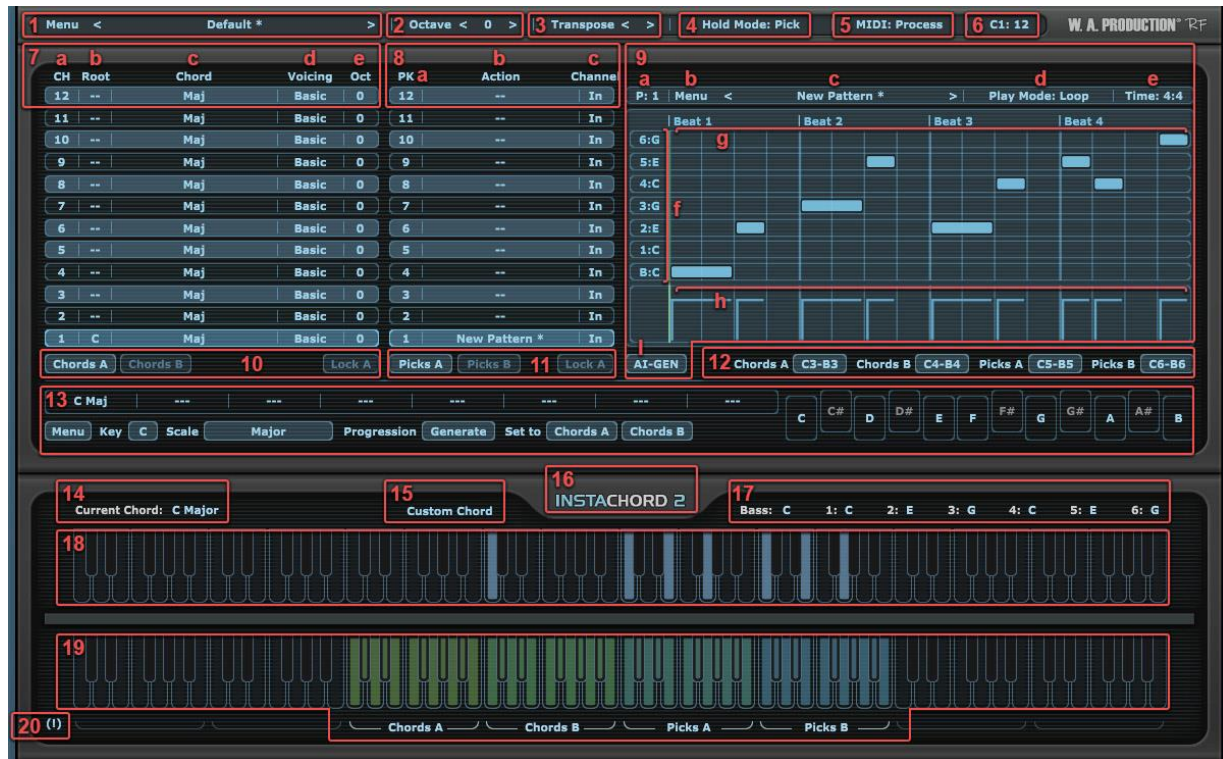
- Only Major chords are available
- Editing chords is disabled
- Will not load previous parameters in saved projects

Authorization

If you have purchased the plugin and finished the payment process, you'll receive an email with the information you need to unlock the plugin. Please consult our online [Help Center](#) if you encounter any problems.

3. Reference

Interface Overview



1. Main menu & preset menu: here you'll find the options to manage the presets.



Options:

- **Save:** saves the changes to the current preset file. If a file with that name doesn't exist, it will be created. **Please note** that any changes you make won't be saved unless you click on the save option.
- **Rename and Save:** use this option if you want to rename the current preset and also save the changes.

- **Save Preset As:** use this option if you want to save the changes to a new preset file instead of overwriting the current one.
- **Load Preset:** if you have a preset in another location on your computer you can use this option to browse for it.
- **Reset Preset:** resets all the parameters and controls to their default values.
- **Copy / Paste Preset:** copy the current preset and paste it when needed. You can paste it to another instance of the plugin if you need to.
- **Delete Preset:** this option deletes the current preset file from the drive (if it exists).
- **Open Preset Folder:** this option reveals the preset folder in the File Explorer/Finder. It's located in the user's app folder and users can manage their presets there manually. The plugin searches for one layer of sub folders too, so by creating folders, you can organize your presets better.
- **UI Scaling:** you can scale the UI size from 90% up to 200% to fit your screen better.
- **About:** opens up the about page which contains some information about the plugin, authorization form and status and the version number.

Note: You can load presets from version 1 but the strum option with velocity to speed link will not work as they did in the old version. Those strum options will have the same speed regardless of the input velocity.

2. Octave: use to shift the main output octave up or down.

3. Transpose: use these buttons to shift all the chords up or down. This is handy when you want to transpose to another key.

4. Hold mode: currently the plugin has three hold modes, each providing a slightly different experience when playing chords and patterns.

- **Pick:** in this mode pick (action) keys will start and stop the pattern playback. Notice that changing the chord while playing a pattern will not affect the notes that were already playing, only the next notes.
- **Pick+:** similar to pick mode, but in this mode if you change a chord while playing a pattern, the new chord notes will replace the old ones immediately and start playing if the notes they replaced were on.
- **Fret:** in this mode the chord keys take the role of the fretting hand and the pick keys take the role of the picking hand. In other words the chord keys sustain the playback, and the pick keys trigger the start. So to play a pattern hold down a chord key then use a pick key to trigger the start. Release the chord key to stop the playback.
- **Fret-Toggle:** similar to fret mode where the pick keys trigger the start, but the difference is that the pick keys in this mode will also stop the playback when

pressed for a second time. Notice that in **Fret** mode pick keys will start the playback but to stop them you have to release the chord/fretting key. So if you want to play multiple patterns at the same time and toggle them on and off independently, use this mode instead.

- **Fret-Switch:** similar to fret mode, but in this mode when a new pattern starts the previous pattern will stop playing. Notice that in **Fret** mode you can trigger multiple patterns at the same time. So if you want to play the patterns one at a time and just switch between them, use this mode instead.

5. MIDI process mode: switch between the process and pass through modes. This is useful when you want to play the target instrument normally.

6. C1: use this parameter to determine which MIDI note number should be labeled as C1. Note labels may vary from one host to another. Some might start from C:0 and some might start from C:-2. So, if the note numbers used in the plugin don't match your host's, you can set the correct value here. For example, FL Studio labels MIDI note #0 as C:0, so we set the C1 parameter to 12, and Logic Pro labels it as C:-2, so we set it to 36.

7. Chord (fretting) keys: you can set the chords and switch between them using the chord keys. There are 24 chord keys available in total and they are divided into two groups: chords A and B. Each group is mapped to an octave on the controller. Here are the options you'll find on each chord key:

- **7. a. Chord Key ID:** click to switch to the chord
- **7. b. Root:** C, C#, etc.
- **7. c. Mode:** Major, Minor, etc.
- **7. d. Voicing:** Inversed, Guitar, etc.
- **7. e. Octave**

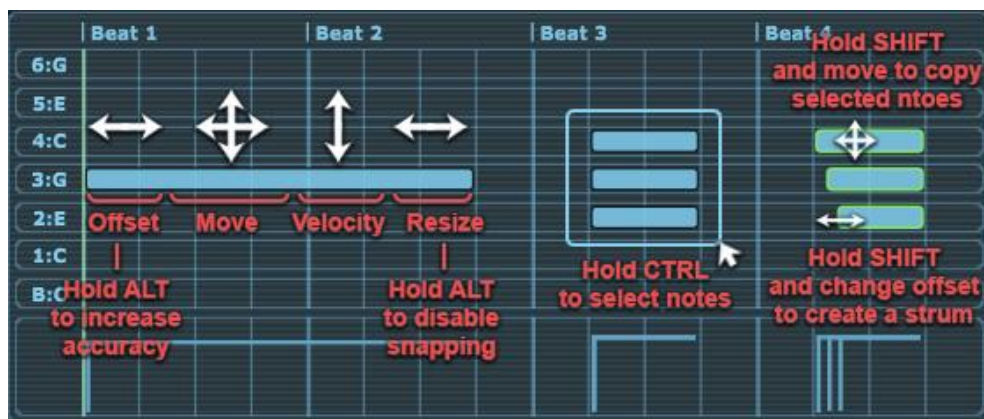
8. Pick (action) keys: the pick keys are used to play the patterns or perform actions like changing the octave. Pick keys are also divided into two groups and here are the options you'll find on them:

- **8. a. Pick key ID:** click to select the pick
- **8. b. Action:** set what the key should do when pressed
 - --: disabled
 - **Pattern:** play the pattern
 - **All OFF:** send an all notes off message
 - **Octave -/+:** shift the octave up or down
 - **Transpose -/+:** transpose all the chords up or down
- **8. c. MIDI channel:** which MIDI channel to send to
 - **In:** send the notes to the same channel as the input

- **1-16:** send the notes to a specified MIDI channel

9. Pattern editor: here you can create, load or generate a pattern for the selected pick key. The length of all the patterns is one bar and each pattern has its own time division and play mode settings.

- **9. a. Pattern ID:** to keep track of which pick is selected
- **9. b. & 9. c. Preset menu:** save, load, copy and paste patterns using these menus. Use the 'Open Pattern Folder' option to reveal the correct folder on your drive and manually manage the files there. The plugin also searches for one layer of subfolders so you can create folders to organize your patterns better.
- **9. d. Play mode:** this is where you can set the playing mode for the pattern.
 - **Loop:** in this mode the pattern will keep playing and looping back as long as you hold the playing key down.
 - **One-shot:** in this mode the pattern will only play once and then stops.
 - **Hold:** in this mode the pattern will play once but the notes that are extended to the end of the pattern will be sustained as long as you hold the playing key down. Note that the "playing key" could be a pick key or a chord key depending on the global hold mode (in 'fret' mode you need to hold down a chord key then use a pick key to trigger the playback).
- **9. e. Time division:** here you can change the number of beats per bar and the number of notes per beat for each pattern. They can be set to any number from 1 to 8. Note that changing these values will clear the current pattern.
- **9. f. Chord note labels:** each chord in Instachord has 7 notes (bass + 6) and they are ordered from bottom to top in the pattern editor. These labels display the note names and their numbers.
- **9. g. Note editor:** use left click to add new notes and right click to remove them. There are different zones on the notes as shown below where you can resize them, change their velocity, change their starting offset and move them. There are few keyboard shortcuts that add additional functions:
 - Hold down the **ALT/Option** key to disable snapping when resizing a note or to increase the accuracy when changing its starting offset.
 - Hold down the **CTRL** key and drag over multiple notes to select them.
 - Hold down the **SHIFT** key and drag the selected notes using their **move** zone to duplicate them.
 - Hold down the **SHIFT** key and drag the selected notes using their **Offset** zone to create a strum shape.

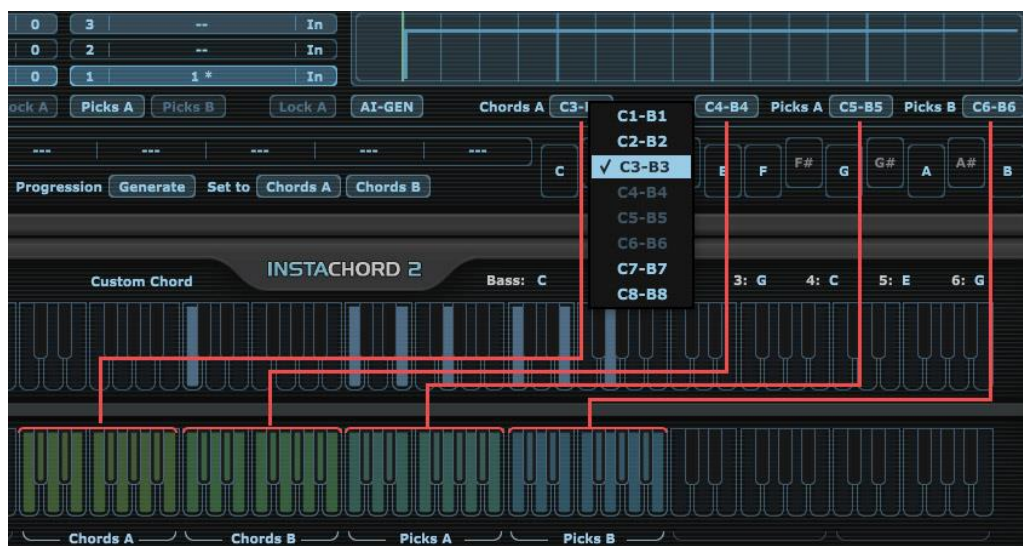


- **9. h. Velocity controls:** another way of changing the velocities.
- **9. i. AI-GEN:** procedurally generates new patterns. The code is adopted from W. A. Production's Instacomposer plugin and should be able to produce desirable results often. It's highly unlikely to get the same pattern twice so you can always count on it to give you something new when looking for a bit of inspiration.

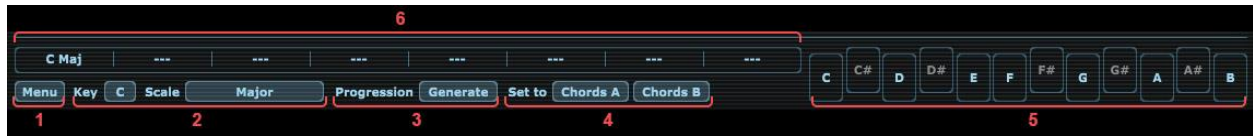
10. Chord key groups & Lock: switch between the chord groups A and B. If you want to keep the current chords but load patterns from another preset use the lock button to lock the chords down.

11. Pick key groups & Lock: switch between the pick groups A and B. If you want to keep the patterns and actions but load chords from another preset use the lock button to lock the picks down.

12. Mapping menus: use these menus to set where the key groups should be placed on the controller. A visual representation of the mapping can be found on the lower section of the UI.



13. Chord progression generator: this is where you can generate new chord progressions and assign them to the chord keys.

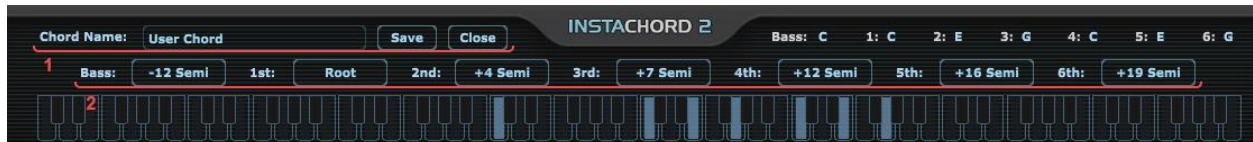


1. **Menu:** save and load chord progressions.
2. **Scale:** pick the key and the scale for the chord progressions that are going to be generated.
3. **Generate:** generate a new chord progression based on the selected scale (up to 8 chords per progression).
4. **Set to:** load the generated chords to the chord key groups A or B (the first chord goes to the chord key 1, the second one goes to the chord key 2 and so on).
5. **Scale helper:** highlights the notes for the current scale.
6. **Chords:** shows the chords in the current progression.

14. Active chord label: displays the name of the current chord.

15. Custom chord tab: switches to the chord editor tab where you can edit existing chords or create your own. There are two ways to do that:

A. Create manually: in this method you can pick the intervals between the chord notes using a set of menus.



1. Name and save the chord when you're done editing it. The new chord will be saved on the drive and can be accessed at any time from the chord menus under the 'user chords' sub-menu.
2. Each chord in the plugin has 7 notes and the intervals between these notes define the chord. Here, you can set the intervals manually. Notice that the numbers correlate to the distance between the notes and the 'root' note (not the next note).

For example for a Major chord we have:

- **Bass:** -12 (root - octave)
- **1st note:** 0 (root)
- **2nd note:** +4 (major 3rd)
- **3rd note:** +7 (5th)

- **4th note:** +12 (octave)
- **5th note:** +16 (major 3rd + octave)
- **6th note:** +19 (5th + octave)

B. MIDI learn: in this method you'll get instructions (see 4 below) to input the chord notes one by one using your controller or by clicking on the virtual keyboard in this section.



1. Name and save the chord when you're done editing it. The new chord will be saved on the drive and can be accessed at any time from the chord menus under the 'user chords' sub-menu.
2. Here, you can see the root name and all the intervals between the notes.
3. Use the start button to begin the process of creating a new chord. Follow the instructions to finish the process.
4. The text in red takes you through the steps. Here are the instructions you'll get:
 - a. **Click on the start button to begin:** the start button begins the process.
 - b. **Waiting for the root note:** play or click on the note you want to assign as the root note.
 - c. **Waiting for the bass note:** play or click on the note you want to assign as the bass note.
 - d. **Waiting for the 1st note:** play or click on the note you want to assign as the 1st note.
 - e. ...
 - f. **Waiting for the 6th note:** play or click on the note you want to assign as the 6th note.
 - g. **Done! Save the chord or click on the start button to try again:** if you're happy with the result, don't forget to save the chord before quitting. Click on the start button to try again.

16. Instachord logo: click to open the about page.

17. Chord note labels: displays the current chord notes and their playing status.

18. Output Keyboard: the output keyboard displays which notes are being sent out from the plugin. You can see the current chord notes filled in blue and turning green while

playing. Sometimes it can also be helpful to click on this keyboard to make sure the plugin is properly connected to the target instrument when initially setting up the MIDI routing.

19. Input Keyboard: the input keyboard displays which MIDI notes the plugin receives from its input. You can see the current chord and pick key groups highlighted in different colors, which should make them a bit easier to find.

20. Kill button: this will send an all MIDI notes off message. Use this to shut all the notes off, which could be useful if some of them get stuck for some reason.

Using Instachord 2

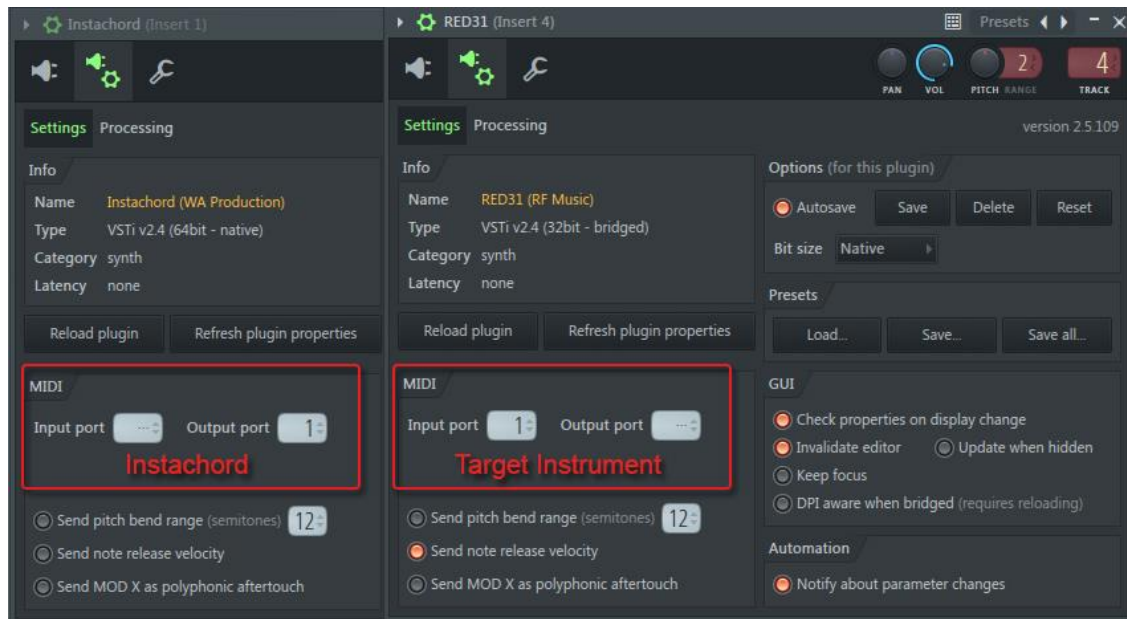
Setting up

The process for setting up the plugin depends on the host application/DAW but generally, if you're using the VST or AAX versions, you need to insert the plugin on an instrument track then route its MIDI output to the target instrument you want to play. The AU version is a bit different and can only be used in hosts like Logic Pro that support the AU MIDI effect (Processor) type. **Please note** that Instachord 2 does **not** generate any audio – only MIDI. It must be routed to an instrument/synth.

On the following pages we have a few examples of setting up MIDI routing for Instachord 2 in some of the most popular DAWs. If you still have questions or didn't find yours here please visit our online [Help Center](#) for more information. There are also plenty of detailed videos online showing how to use MIDI plugins in different DAWs, and the process for Instachord 2 will be essentially the same as for any other MIDI plugin.

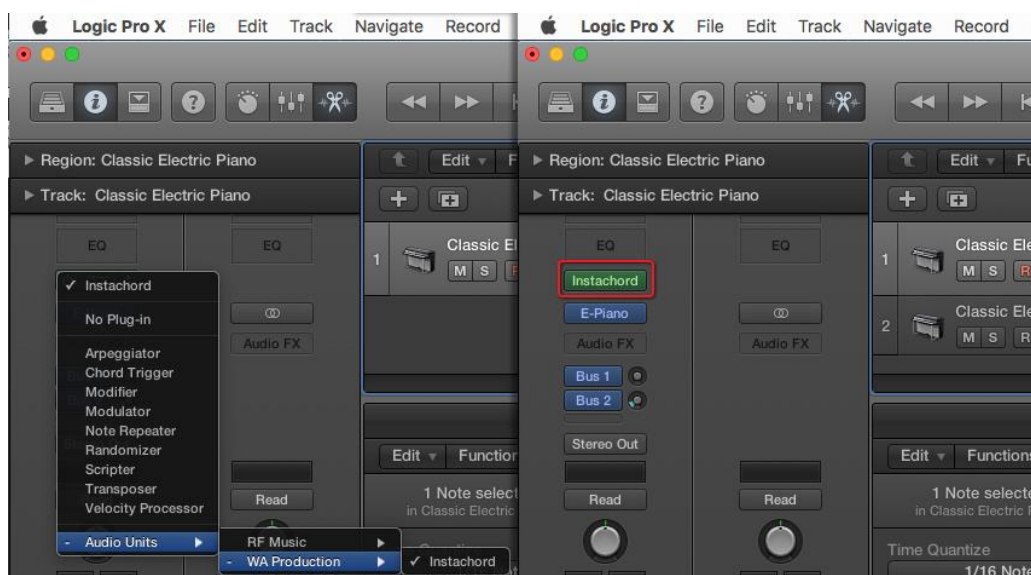
Example 1: FL Studio

1. Load Instachord 2 as a VST instrument and navigate to the wrapper settings.
2. Set the MIDI output port on Instachord to one of the available ports.
3. Set the MIDI input port on the target plugin (instrument/synth) to the same port.



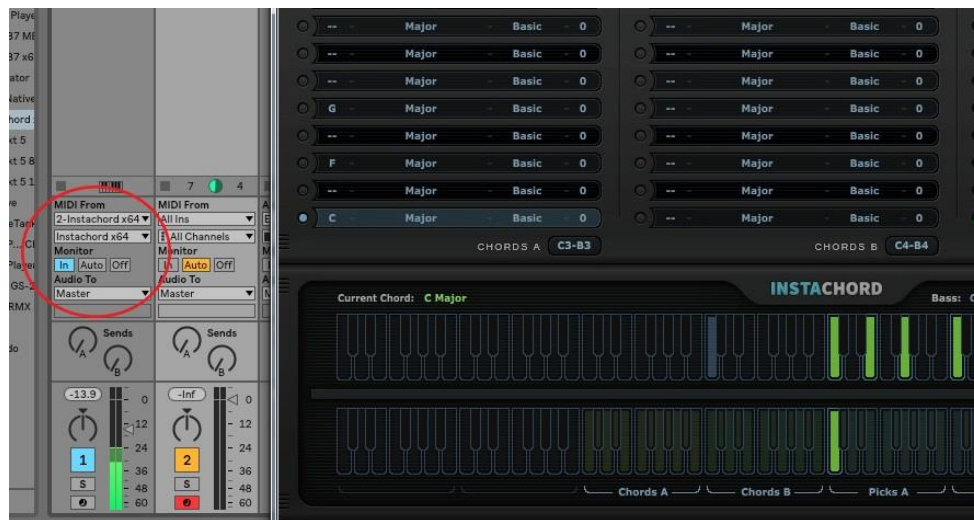
Example 2: Logic Pro X

1. Add the target instrument on a new track.
2. Click on the MIDI FX slot on the same track (above the instrument menu) and insert Instachord 2 as a MIDI effect plugin.



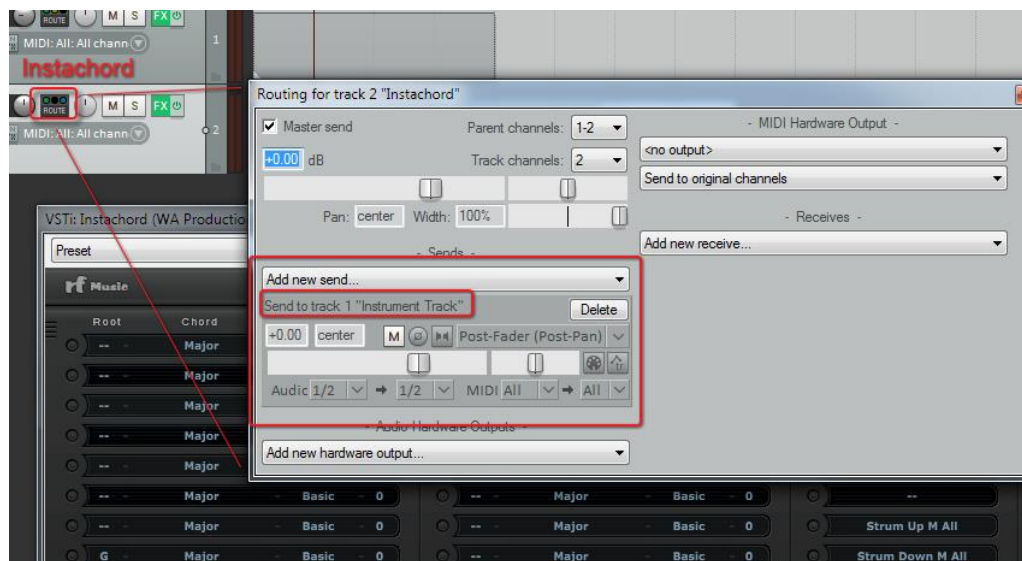
Example 3: Ableton Live

1. Add Instachord 2 on an empty MIDI track.
2. Add the target instrument/synth on a second MIDI track.
3. Set the MIDI input option on the target instrument to receive MIDI from Instachord 2 (as shown below).
4. Turn input monitoring on for the target instrument.
5. Arm the Instachord 2 track so it receives MIDI input (the red button below or next to the Solo button).



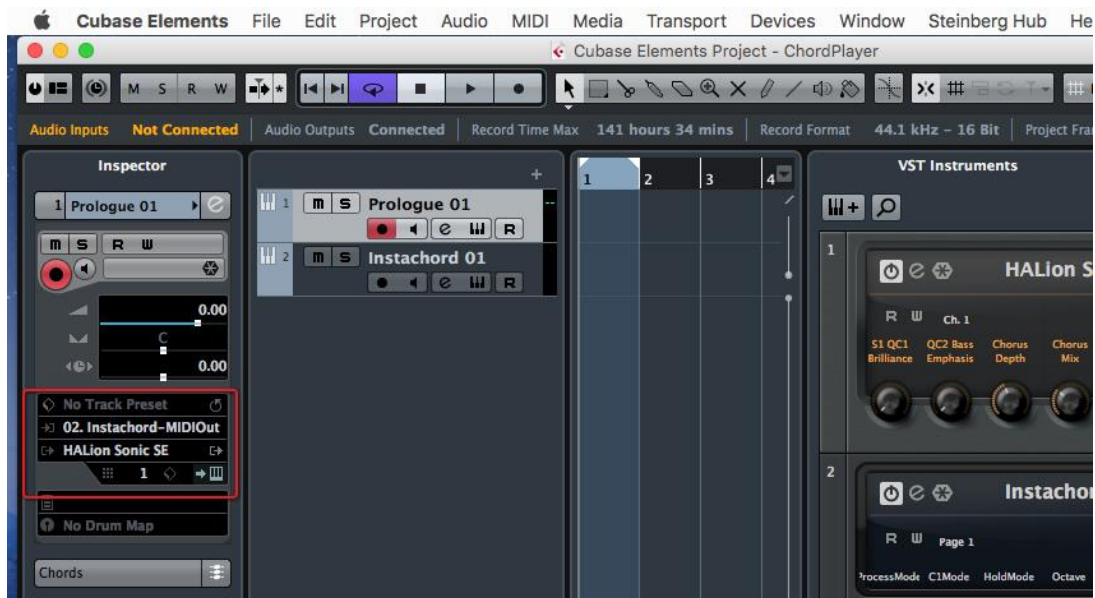
Example 4: Reaper

1. Add Instachord 2 as an instrument track.
2. Add the target instrument/synth.
3. Set the send option on Instachord 2 to send MIDI to the target instrument.



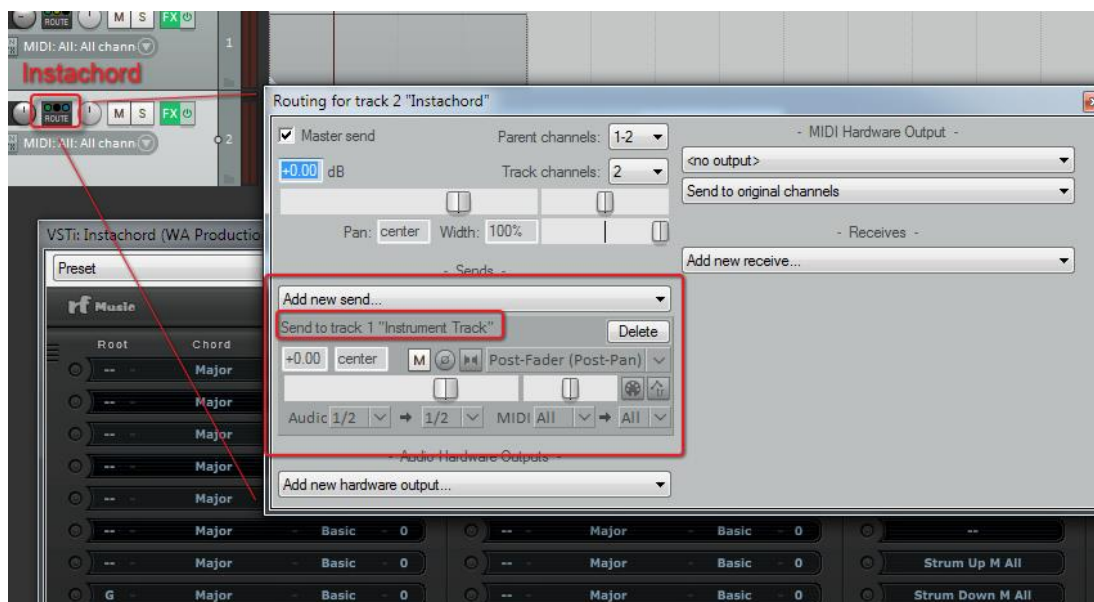
Example 5: Cubase

1. Add Instachord 2 as an instrument track.
2. Add the target instrument/synth.
3. Set the MIDI input option on the target instrument to receive MIDI from Instachord 2.



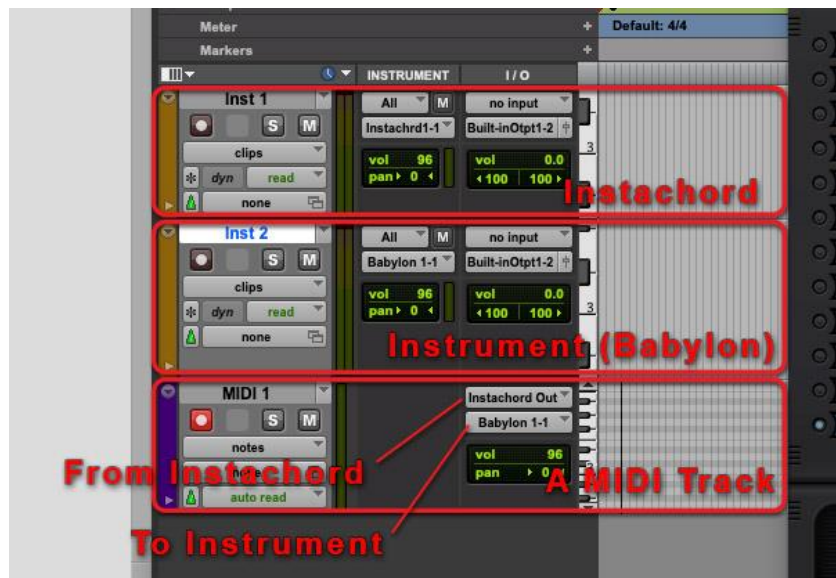
Example 5: Reaper

4. Add Instachord 2 as an instrument track.
5. Add the target instrument/synth.
6. Set the send option on Instachord 2 to send MIDI to the target instrument.



Example 6: Pro Tools

1. Add Instachord 2 as an instrument track.
2. Add the target instrument/synth.
3. Add a MIDI track.
4. Use the MIDI track to route the MIDI messages between the two.
5. Turn on the monitoring if necessary.



Setting chords and playing

1. Set your chords. Set the root, mode, voicing and octave for each chord.



2. Enable a pick key by picking an option from the action menu. This will determine what that key should do when pressed.
 - a. Pattern: enable playing the pattern.
 - b. Controls: enable using one of the controls. You can use these options to change the octave, transpose chords, or send an all off message using the controller.



3. After setting the chords, switch between them using the chord keys on your controller (or host's MIDI editor).



3. Now you can use the pick keys to play the patterns (or perform an action).



Note: If you have set the hold mode to Fret, then just like a guitar you have to hold down a chord key then use a pick key to trigger the playback. To stop the playback release the chord key.

Credits

Developing, coding and GUI design by Rahman Fotouhi (rfmusic.net).

Visit waproduction.com for the latest updates and news.

Contact info@waproduction.com for support.

The support for the first version of Instachord was overwhelming and that enabled and motivated us to keep working harder. To do our best to improve the quality and functionality of the plugin. So if you owned a copy of the first version, we appreciate your help immensely. We're excited for you to try out the new version and hopefully you'll find it useful in your music making process. And for all the new users, welcome! We hope Instachord 2 could help you in your future projects and bring you more creative ideas.

Thank you for your support.