

# ***Aldo's Pianito – MicroStudio***

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## **Reference Guide v1.0**

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**<http://www.aldostools.com/>**



# 1. Description

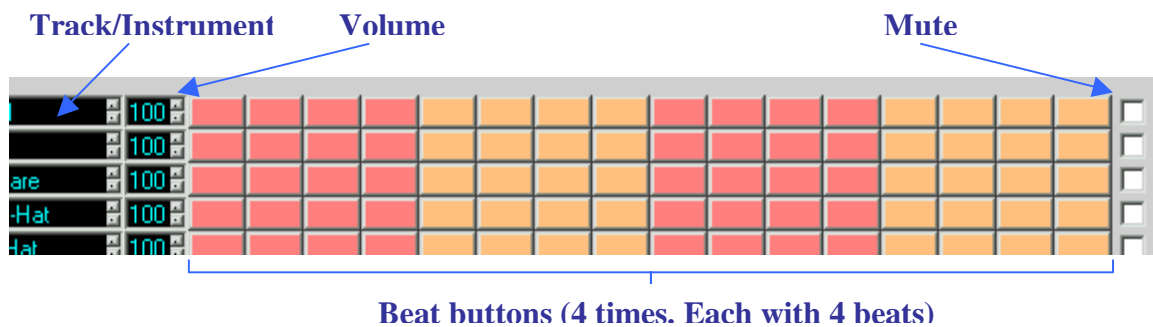
**Aldo's Pianito – MicroStudio** is a very funny piano simulator and drum machine ideal for all the family members. The software consist in two main components highly integrated: **MicroStudio** and **Pianito**.

## 1.1 MicroStudio Basics

**MicroStudio** is a 24-track drum-machine software that let you create easily rhythm sequences by graphically selecting the beats in the panel of instruments.

You may select 8 percussion instruments (from the 128 available instruments in the kit list), 8 synthesizer instruments (from the another 128 available standard instruments, increasing your options to 256), and 8 wave sounds.

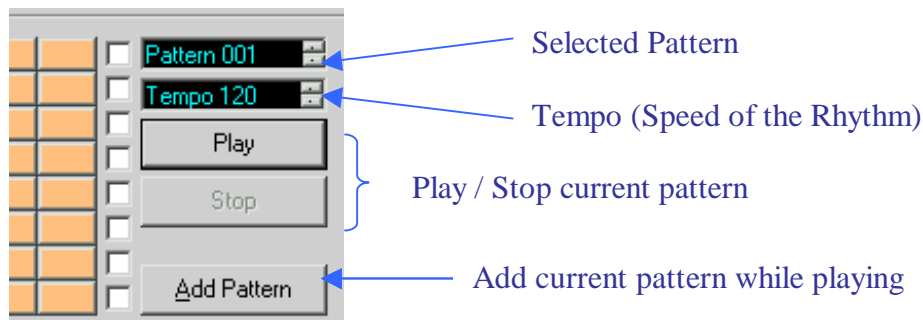
Each instrument in the pattern has 16 beats, divided in 4 times of 4 beats (look in the figure 1 that each time have a different color). Each instrument can have its own volume setting for all patterns. A set of 16 beats represents a single pattern. **MicroStudio** supports up to 500 patterns per song.



Right-click on the Mute check box of each track/instrument to clean or alternate all the beats of the chosen instrument. Click on each beat button to enable a beat in the sequence.

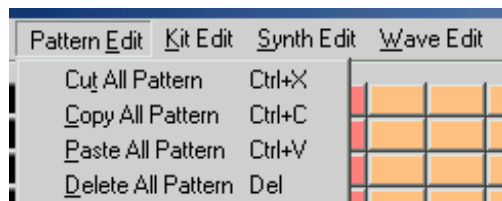
## Creating Patterns

It's highly recommended that you create the beats while the **Play** button of MicroStudio is pressed, letting you listen the current pattern. When the pattern is ready (you like how it plays), press the **Add Pattern** button. This will keep the current pattern, and copy all the beats to the next pattern in the list. Press Stop button to stop playing the current pattern.

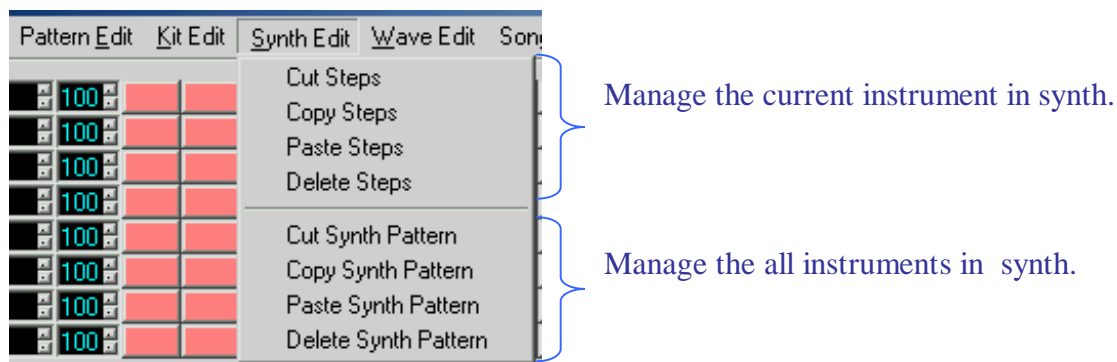


## Managing Patterns

You may copy/cut/paste or delete a whole pattern or just a part of the pattern. For editing the whole pattern (drum, synth and wave) use “**Pattern Edit**” option, for editing only the drum beats in the current pattern use “**Kit Edit**”, for editing the synthesizer steps use “**Synth Edit**”, and for editing the beats of the wave sounds use “**Wave Edit**”.

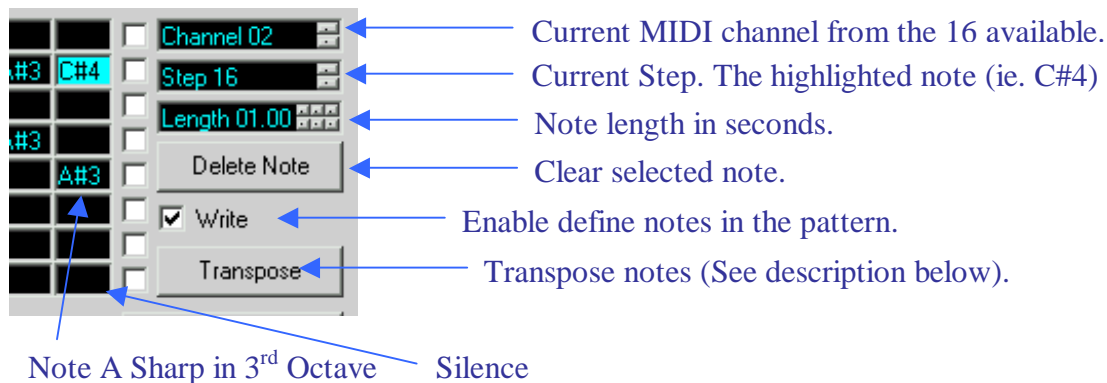


In **Synth Edit** you may copy/cut/paste or delete all the steps in the current pattern, or only in the selected instrument.

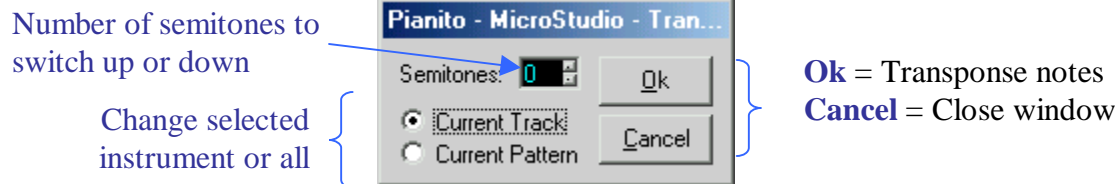


## Creating Synth Steps

Steps are the notes in a song within a set of 4 times (16 notes/silences). To define the steps you should place a check mark the “**Write**” option. Once in write mode, select the first note on the synth instrument and play the notes in the computer keyboard (use same keys as in **Aldo’s Pianito**) or use the mouse and press the notes in the on-screen piano keyboard.

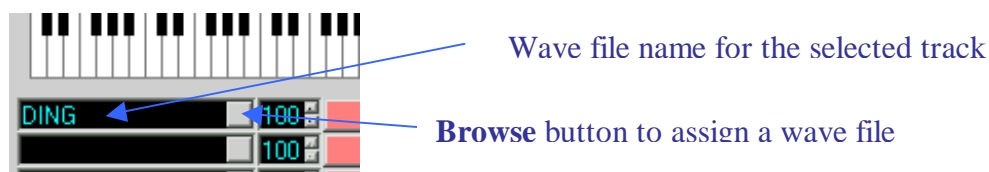


Use “**Transpose**” button to switch up or down the tones of the sequences of notes in the current pattern. For instance, to switch a note sequence of C to C# increase 1 semitone, to switch from E to C use -4, to switch up one octave use.



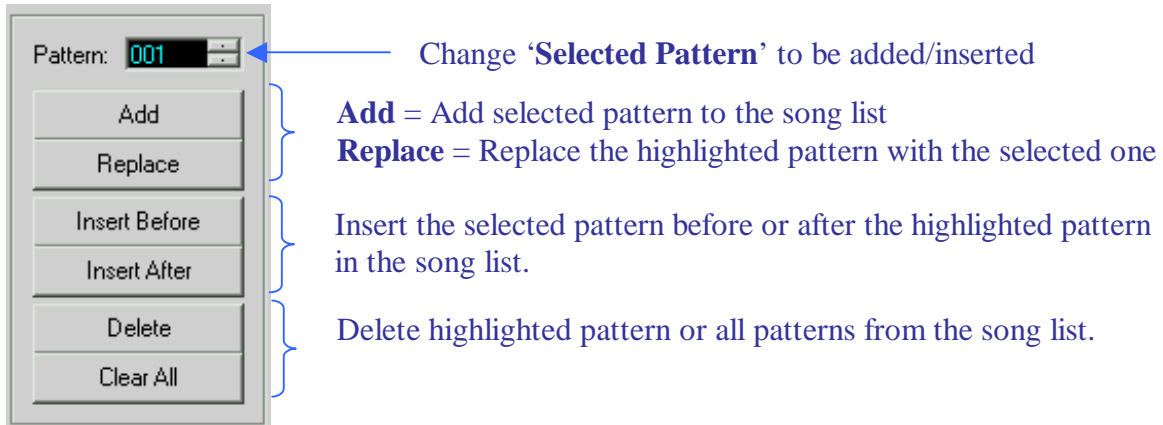
## Adding Wave Effects

You may add up to 8 sound effects to your rhythm sequence in wave format. First you have to “**Browse**” for the wave file to be able to select the beats. Also you may change the frequency in which the effect will be played, and press **Del** button to clear the selected track.

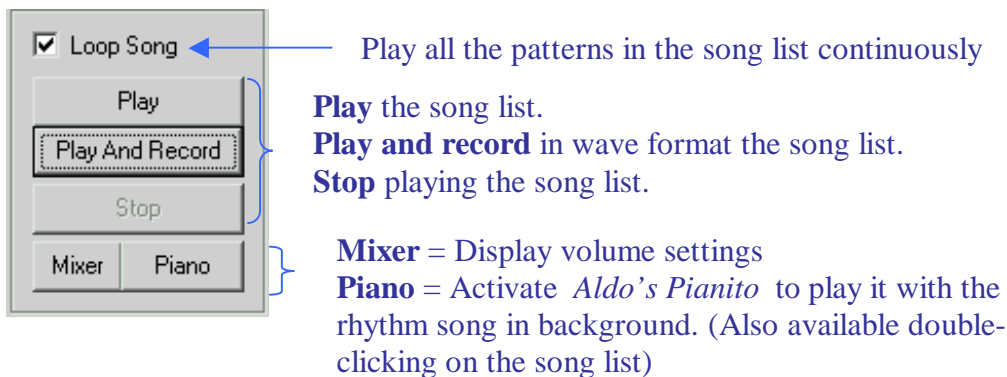


## Song Mode

After you have created each individual pattern, you may enter in “**Song Mode**” to compose the song using any the existing patterns. Use the following panel to add, replace or delete patterns to the **song list**. A song list is a sequence of patterns that form the composed song. Patterns can be repeated in a song.



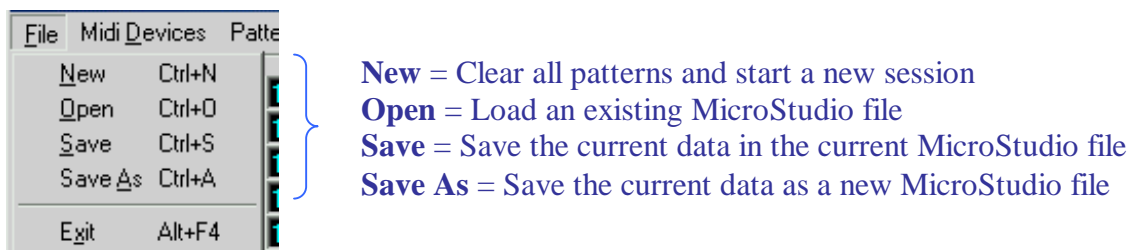
The following panel let you test the composed song.



**Note:** Recording in wave format may not work with certain sound cards, and requires the microphone open.

## Saving Patterns & Songs

Once you have created the patterns and composed your song, you may save it for future access using the following options:



## Other MicroStudio Options

Use '**Pianito**' button or click on the piano keyboard to activate the Aldo's Pianito and play it while the current pattern is playing or to play it alone.

Use '**Midi Devices**' to select the MIDI drivers that you want to use for sound output. Some drivers may have a better quality of instruments than others.

Use '**Tools/Open Mixer**' to configure the volume of the multimedia devices.

## 1.2 Pianito Basics

While *MicroStudio* is in charge of the rhythm, *Aldo's Pianito* provides the tools to create the melody in your personal orchestra.

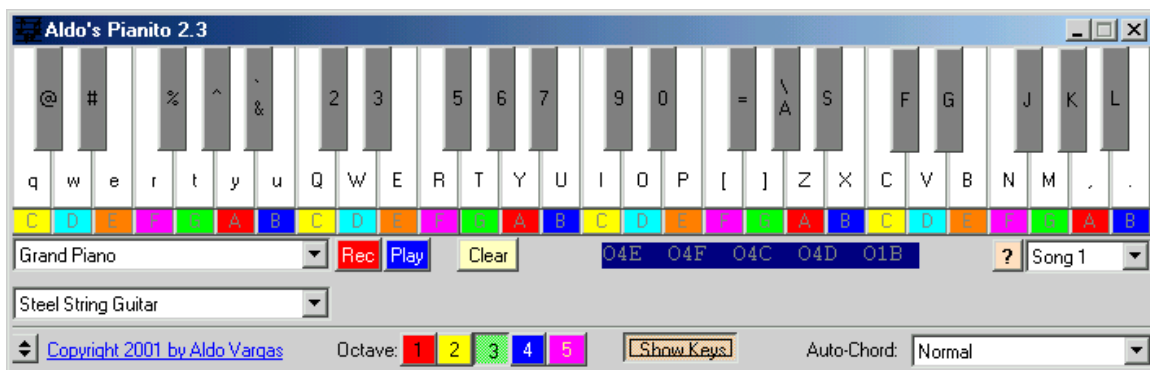
*Aldo's Pianito* is a simple but powerful piano (synthesizer) simulator that can be played using the mouse or the computer keyboard. You have direct access to four octaves from the 5 preset octaves, and play simultaneously two different instruments from the 128 available instruments.

You may play *Aldo's Pianito* alone, or companied by the '*Robot Player*' or by *MicroStudio* songs. The '*Robot Player*' is a sequence of notes that you may pre-record and play continuously to form the background melody, while you focus on your attention playing the main melody.

### Playing Melody

Each key in the computer keyboard is mapped to a note in the piano, you may use the keyboard or mouse to play notes in the main instrument (which by default is the Grand Piano).

Press '**Show Keys**' button to display the mapped keyboard keys on the piano keyboard.

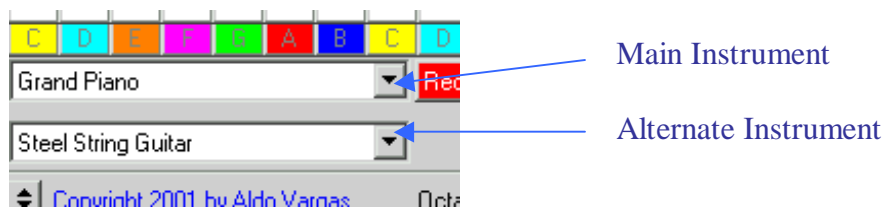


## Selecting Octave

Press **Shift + key** to switch an octave down in the current set of octaves. You may select among 5 sets of octaves, where 1 is the lower octave and 5 is the higher. Press **Home/End** to switch an octave up/down through the keyboard, or select directly the octave number with the mouse.

## Selecting Instruments

You may choose two instruments to play simultaneously among the 128 available MIDI instruments. The top one is the main instrument; the other is the alternate instrument and is accessed pressing **Alt** key.



Press **PgUp/PgDn** to select the main instrument through the keyboard, or click on the list to select it with the mouse. Use **Alt+PgUp** and **Alt+PgDn** to select the alternate instrument.

Press **F1** through **F12** to select one of the preset instruments. Use **Alt+F1** through **Alt+F12** (except Alt+F4 which is reserved to Close the window) for the alternate instrument.

The 12 preset instruments are: (F1) Grand Piano, (F2) Music Box, (F3) Organ 2, (F4) Nylon String Guitar, (F5) Violin, (F6) Harp, (F7) Trumpet, (F8) Brass Section, (F9) Clarinet, (F10) Soundtrack, (F11) Brightness, (F12) Synth Drum.

Play notes in the alternate instrument by pressing **Alt+key**, where 'key' is one of the mapped key in the computer keyboard.

Note sequences are recorded with the selected instrument. That means that you may change the main and/or alternate instruments while saving a song sequence.

## Playing Chords

**Aldo's Pianito** supports play two or more simultaneous notes by pressing keys together to form a chord. Optionally you may use **Auto-Chord** for playing multiple notes just pressing a single key. There are 14 preset chords.

Holding **Caps Lock** key temporarily selects the Auto-Chord in *Normal* mode.

## Recording Song Melody

**Aldo's Pianito** allows to save up to 8 songs of unlimited length, and 8 background melodies (Robot Player). To record a song use the following commands:

Press **Rec** button to start recording.

Press **Esc** key to stop recording.

Press **Clear** button to clear the recorded notes and start over.

Press **Play** button to play recorded notes.

Press **CTRL** key to play recorded notes, one note at a time.

The song will be recorded in the selected song (ie. Song 1). Before press record, you must select the song slot (ie. Song 2).

**Note:** The recorded file is **not** a standard midi file.

## Recording Background Melody (Robot Player)

Robot Player is a feature that let you save a song sequence and play it continuously in the background while you play the song melody. The volume of the background melody is slightly lower than the normal melody.



Press the button near the Copyright to access the advanced features, which includes the Robot Player.

To record the background melody use the following commands from the *Robot Player* section:



Press **Rec** button to start recording.

Press **Esc** key to stop recording.

Press **Play** button to play recorded notes.

Press **SPACE BAR** key to play recorded background melody.

Use '**Tempo**' to increase/decrease speed of recorded melodies.

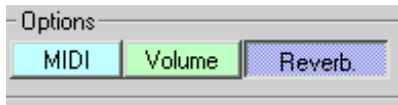
The song will be recorded in the selected melody slot (ie. Melody 1). Before press record, you must select the melody slot (ie. Melody 2).

**Note:** The song will be recorded in the selected song (ex. Melody 1)



## Other Pianito Options

Other advanced options are:



"**Volume**" button display the volume settings of the multimedia mixer.

"**MIDI**" display the multimedia configuration

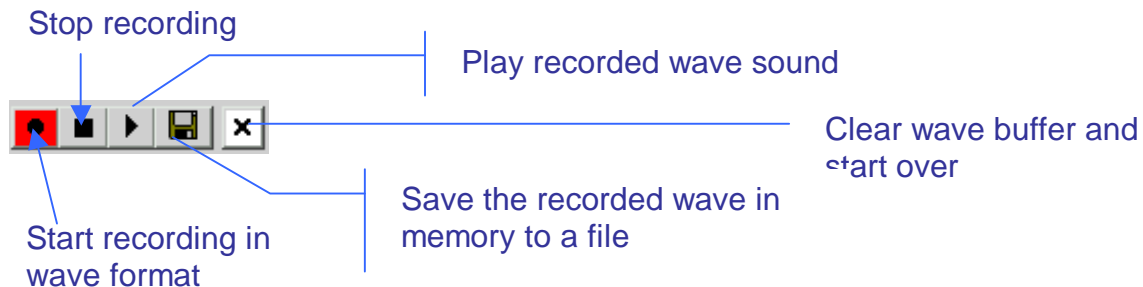
"**Reverb**" enable/disable the reverberation on some instruments.

Press **Esc** key to stop reverberation.

Press **?** button or link for credits and visit my home page.

## Save in Wave Format

You may save your piano (synthesizer) performance in wave format and later convert it to MP3 (with any other conversion software like LAME™), using the following options:



Saving in wave format requires a microphone, and you can save also voice and any other background sound. It doesn't work in all sound cards. Use this feature carefully as it uses large amount of memory (around 10MB per minute).

### **Aldo's Pianito - MicroStudio Requirements**

Pentium 133Mhz or above, 32MB RAM  
Windows 95, 98, Me, NT 4.0 or Windows 2000  
Visual Basic 5 Runtime Libraries (<http://www.aldostools.com/>)  
DirectX 7a or above (<http://www.microsoft.com/directx/>)

### **Download / Upgrades**

<http://www.aldostools.com/piano.html>

(Main Site)

<http://www.geocities.com/aldo.vargas/tools/piano.html>

(Mirror Site)

### **Credits**

*Aldo's Pianito*            Developed by Aldo Vargas  
*MicroStudio*            Developed by Stuart Pennington  
Software integration, documentation, support, etc. by Aldo Vargas

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