

vanBasco's MIDI Player Help - Topics

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The vanBasco's MIDI Player Windows

vanBasco's MIDI Player consists of the following windows and dialogs:

Main Window

Real-time Display Window

Piano Window

Karaoke Window

Setup Dialog

Playlist Dialog

Tips & Tricks

As for in fact any multimedia-software out there, one rule applies: Try everything. For example, if you don't know what a button does, simply click it (or move the mouse-cursor above it, wait 1000 ms and read the appearing tooltip in order to get a hint). Check out the options in the main window of the [Setup Dialog](#). Note: before changing settings in the Advanced ... sub-dialog, please see "[Advanced Settings dialog](#)" where all options are discussed. If everything is fine, just leave the advanced settings unchanged.

The Main Window

The main window is the heart of the player. Here you can playback songs, edit the playlist and also access some special functions like "shuffle" or "scan".

In detail, you can:

- load songs or edit the [Playlist](#) by clicking the button in the upper-left corner
- playback songs by pressing "Play" and halt all output by clicking "Stop" - of course, operation may also be halted temporarily (Pause)
- minimize the main window by clicking the "triangle" next to the X
- access the [Setup Dialog](#) by clicking the bevel gears located below the Exit-Button
- toggle the options
 - Shuffle (the cube), to re-order the songs in the current playlist randomly,
 - Autoplay (the "yin-yang"-sign), with dragged-and-dropped files being played instantly,
 - Scan (the telescope), for listening to just one certain frame (usually in the beginning of the song, by default ranging from 00:10 to 00:20) of each song, which is very useful for trying a series new files and
 - Repeat (the double-arrows), which is actually a tri-state option allowing to either repeat the current song, loop the whole playlist or do neither of these.
- operate by clicking the buttons in the bottom-line of the window, the functionality of which should be clear (Play/Pause, Stop Playing, Fast-Backward, Fast-Forward, Previous Song in List, Next Song in List)
- adjust velocity (bpm) by pressing ">" (increase bpm) and "<" (decrease bpm)
- transpose current tune by pressing "+" (up by one semitone) and "-" (down by one semitone)
- Reset transposition and velocity by pressing the "R" key
- quickly select one specific song out of the playlist by clicking inside the area where the current song's name is displayed
- access a menu by right-clicking where you can
 - again open the [Playlist](#)
 - again access the [Setup Dialog](#)
 - again exit the program
 - hide/unhide all other [windows](#)
 - access this [online-help](#)
 - obtain version (and other) information on vanBasco's MIDI Player

By the way, vanBasco's MIDI Player can also be controlled via several keyboard shortcuts. These are in detail:

+	transpose up
-	transpose down
<	decrease speed
>	increase speed
R	reset ALL parameters (velocity, transposition)
Alt+K	toggle Karaoke Window
Alt+O	toggle Output Window
Alt+P	toggle Piano Window
Ctrl+R	toggle repeat
Ctrl+S	toggle shuffle
Ctrl+C	toggle scan
Ctrl+A	toggle autoplay
Ctrl+Q	quick select
Alt+S	open Setup Dialog
F1	Help
RIGHT	Fast Forward
LEFT	Fast Backward

PGDN	play next song
PGUP	play previous song
RETURN	open Playlist
SPACE	play / pause
ESCAPE	stop playing
Alt+X	exit program

The Real-time Display Window

The Real-time Display window shows what's happening actually on each channel, e.g. what instrument currently is selected for each channel. The name of the currently selected instrument usually is displayed in green letters. Sometimes, an instrument's name appears in red color, meaning that no name was found for the selected patch- and/or banknumber. If this is the case, this instrument is either replaced by something similar directly by your soundboard or simply omitted. Additionally, a channel's instrument name may be displayed in dark green color, meaning the instrument was set using SYSEX commands.

A (GS) at the end of the instrument's name means that this instrument is only existent on GS-compatible soundboards. Similarly, an (XG) at the end of an instrument means that an XG-compatible synthesizer is required in order to get the "real" instrument. (MT) stands for MT-32-emulation on bank 127 - only available on certain GS-cards. If the name appears in BIG LETTERS, the channel is a drum-channel.

Finally, the user can mute one or several channel(s) (red button) or mark it/them as solo instrument(s) (green button). These settings also affect the output of the Piano Window.

The Piano Window

The Piano Window displays notes in real-time in a piano-keyboard style.

If no MIDI channels are selected as "solo" in the [Real-time Display Window](#), notes on all channels (except for the drum channels) are displayed. If there are "solo" channels, only notes on these channels are shown.

The Karaoke Window

The Karaoke Window is used to display karaoke lyrics or additional information on the MIDI file. This works as follows: If the currently loaded MIDI file contains karaoke lyrics and the "Hide Karaoke" option (see below) is not enabled, vanBasco's MIDI Player will automatically switch to karaoke display: One or two lines of lyrics are displayed and the active lyric is highlighted in red color. If there are no karaoke lyrics or "Hide Karaoke" is enabled, the karaoke window is used to display various texts, for instance track names and copyright remarks.

You can select additional options for the karaoke window by clicking inside it using the right mouse button:

Always On Top

This option will cause the karaoke window to stay on top of all other windows. This can be used to sing a song or get the current information while working in another program.

Hide Karaoke

Just select if you want to see file-specific information even if there are karaoke lyrics present.

Show 2 Lines

Disable this option in case you want to have only one line of karaoke words.

Swap Lines

Without this option selected, the line containing the currently active lyric will always be the top line. Thus the bottom line will be scrolled up every time lines are changed. To avoid this, select "Swap Lines" making the active lyric being alternately in the top and the bottom line which makes it easier to follow.

Copy Lyrics

Copies lyrics of current song to clipboard. Useful if you want to save lyrics to a textfile.

The Setup Dialog

The Setup dialog is used to specify various options for playback.

Output

Select here which device is used for MIDI output.

Reset Mode

Determines how the MIDI device is reset between songs to prevent settings from the previous file from affecting the currently playing song. Choose one of the following options:

- General MIDI** Select this if you are using an external synthesizer or add-on board which is GM but neither GS nor XG compatible.
- GS** Use this for Roland GS compatible synthesizers and XG devices in GS mode.
- XG** This is the right setting for Yamaha XG devices in XG mode.
- Windows** This is best for internal synthesizers like Creative Labs AWE 32 or when you are not sure which reset mode to choose.
Please note that this may cause delays between songs on external synthesizers or add-on boards.
- SYSEX file** If you want your own custom reset sequence to be sent to your synthesizer select this setting and choose a SYSEX file (.syx) in the "File" dialog. Selecting "SYSEX file" as reset-type without specifying a filename causes the program not to output any reset at all.

Play from first note

If this option is enabled, vanBasco's MIDI Player will skip any silence at the beginning of a MIDI file and start immediately at the first note. Please remember: this is another big advantage of our software over any MCI-based MIDI Software (most players around this planet).

Fade Scan

"Fade Scan" will cause the sound to be faded in/out if the player is in "Scan" mode. This option may cause problems with some synthesizers or MIDI files.

Scan from ... to ...

The values entered here decide which part of the song will be played when the "Scan" mode is active.

Advanced...

If your MIDI files really sound wrong, try changing one of the settings in the [Advanced Settings dialog](#).

The Advanced Settings Dialog

The settings in this dialog affect playback on MIDI transmission level and should not be changed unless you are an expert or have serious problems with MIDI playback.

Disable Running Status

Select this option if you don't want running status compression to be used. Running status compression is used to speed up MIDI transmission. However, there are some MIDI devices that don't support this. If you experience difficulties like hanging notes and notes that are not played, you should try this option.

Disable Smart Mode

"Smart Mode" is another technique used by vanBasco's MIDI Player to speed up MIDI transmission whenever the user jumps through a MIDI file using "Fast Forward" or "Fast Backward". This may cause problems with some MIDI files. If a MIDI file sounds different than one would expect, try disabling the smart mode.

SYSEX Delay

Some (usually older) synthesizers need some time to process SYSEX messages and cannot receive other MIDI commands meanwhile. A symptom of this phenomena is e.g. wrong instruments (usually piano) on all channels. If this is the case with your soundboard, try setting the SYSEX delay to a value between 50 and 1000. Please use the lowest possible value since vanBasco's MIDI Player will have to wait after a SYSEX message for this amount of milli-seconds until the next MIDI message is posted.

The Playlist Dialog

Use the Playlist Dialog to select which songs vanBasco's MIDI Player will play.

This window has two list boxes: The left one displays the content of the currently selected playlist. To switch to another playlist, choose from the list on top of the window. The right box ("directory list") lists the contents of the selected directory. To select a different directory, press the "Directory" button.

Adding files from the directory list to the playlist can be done by either double-clicking on the corresponding entry in the directory list or by selecting one or more songs and pressing the "Add" button.

New

Creates a new playlist.

Rename

Changes the playlist's name.

Remove

Deletes the playlist.

Add

Adds all selected files from the directory list to the current playlist.

Add All

Adds all files from the directory list to the current playlist.

Remove

Removes the selected files from the playlist. This of course will not delete any files from your harddisk physically.

Up / Down

Changes the position of the selected songs in the playlist by moving them up / down by one.

Directory

Changes the directory whose contents are displayed in the directory list.

About vanBasco's MIDI Player

vanBasco's MIDI Player is a standard MIDI file player with Karaoke support for PCs running Microsoft Windows. It's interface is designed to be both efficient and easy to use. Available features include:

- Karaoke display
- Piano display
- Real-time display of notes, velocities and patches
- Playback of standard MIDI (.mid), Microsoft RMID (.rmi) and Karaoke (.kar) files
- Will try to read even damaged files
- Drag & Drop supported
- Unlimited number of playlists
- Quick access to all files in the playlist
- "Scan" and "Shuffle" functions
- User-configurable MIDI reset
- Play from first note option
- Muting and Soloing of individual MIDI channels
- Currently available for Windows 3.1x, Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0
- Support of long filenames
- Supports any MIDI device that has a Windows driver, including popular software synthesizers such as Yamaha's S-YXG50 and Roland's SoftCanvas

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Bastian Tugemann
Zugspitzstr. 23
82054 Sauerlach
Germany

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Frequently Asked Questions

Problem: I've found a bug.

Solution: In the first part, please check our list of known bugs at http://www.vanbasco.com/vm/known_bugs.html. Then, if the error you discovered is not among the items mentioned in the list, please contact us via e-mail (bug_report@vanbasco.com) and tell us about the problem as exactly as possible but as detailed as necessary. Otherwise there may already be a work-around provided or a new version of the software available for download.

Problem: I've switched the screen-resolution of my desktop and now cannot find one or more windows anymore although these windows are not configured "hidden".

Solution: Please see your "vmidi.ini" where you can edit the coordinates of the windows' positions. For example, just set "Xpos=10" and "Ypos=10" in the [* window] sections, making all windows (except for the Karaoke window) appear in the upper-left corner of the desktop. If you want to move the Karaoke window, you'll have to adjust the values for "top" and "left" in the [Karaoke window] section.

Problem: Some files lack correct instrumentation - I only hear piano (and percussion)!

Solution: See the [Advanced Settings dialog](#) and modify the options as needed.

