

Operation Manual



HALION SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA



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HALion Symphonic Orchestra

HALion Symphonic Orchestra is a virtual instrument sound set offering you the full range of instruments of a symphonic orchestra.

Main Page

The **Main** page allows you to select an expression and make settings for key switches, voice and pitch, and the amplifier.

- To open this page, click the **Main** button in the top right of the window.



For easy editing, the layers of the HALion Symphonic Orchestra VST Sound Instrument Set have a defined set of controls. In the list at the top left, you find the available expressions of a layer. Typically, an expression is a specific playing style of an instrument. In the lower window section, you find the **Voice & Pitch** and **Amplifier** settings.

Expressions Section

The **Expressions** list has four columns: **On**, **Expression**, **Sw**, and **Mute**.

- To load an expression, activate the corresponding checkbox in the **On** column.

NOTE

- You can reduce the amount of used RAM by deactivating individual expressions.
 - You can only use loaded expressions.
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- The **Expression** column displays the name of the expression.
 - The **Sw** (Key Switch) column provides you with different controls depending on the selected key switch mode.

By default, you see the internal key switch that is assigned to the expression.

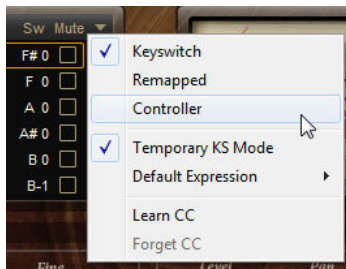
- If you activate the corresponding button in the **Mute** column, the expression will not play back. Click the button again to make the expression audible.

Key Switches

The key switches of HALion Symphonic Orchestra are set to low keys to maximize the playable range. They cannot be changed internally. However, in some cases you need to shift the key switches into another keyboard range to get access to them. You may also want to select the expression using a MIDI controller. You can do this by switching to one of the alternative key switch modes **Remapped** or **Controller**. The internal key switch assignments are unaffected by the selected key switch mode and always work. The last received key switch always has priority.

Options Menu

To define which key switch mode you want to use, open the **Options** pop-up menu by clicking the triangle at the top right of the **Expression** section and select a mode.



Key Switch

This mode uses the internal key switch assignments. The key switches are displayed in the list.

Remapped

This mode allows you to transpose the fixed, internal key switch assignments into the playable range of your MIDI keyboard.

- To transpose the internal key switches, set the mode to **Remapped** and enter the MIDI note to which you want to reassign the expression. The MIDI notes that you use for key switches cannot be used to trigger samples any more.

Controller

This mode allows you to define a MIDI controller that remotely controls the internal key switches. The specified MIDI controller switches only between the active expressions.

- To assign a MIDI controller, set the mode to **Controller**, open the **Options** pop-up menu, select **Learn CC**, and use the hardware controller.

Temporary KS Mode

If this option is activated, other expressions than the default expression are only active for as long as the corresponding key switch is held. This allows you to “throw in” notes with other expressions by pressing a key switch and return automatically to the default expression when releasing this key switch.

Default Expression

Sets the default expression for the **Temporary KS** mode and the expression that is active after loading a program or layer.

Voice & Pitch

This section gives you access to the tuning of the expression.

Octave

Adjusts the tuning in steps of octaves.

Coarse

Adjusts the tuning in steps of semitones.

Fine

Adjusts the tuning in steps of cents.

Expression Mode and Expression Controller options

The layers of HALion Symphonic Orchestra consist of several velocity sublayers to capture the full dynamic range of the instruments. These sublayers can be accessed by sending different velocity values or a specific MIDI controller. The **Expression Mode** allows you to specify whether the sublayers are switched (abrupt change between sublayers) or crossfaded (blending between sublayers).

The settings **Expression Mode** and **Expression Controller** can be combined as follows:

Switch + Velocity

In this mode, only velocity controls expression. Technically, the velocity value selects the corresponding layer, that is, high velocities play fortissimo layers. While this is not the way instruments are used normally, keyboard players who use orchestra sounds from samplers or other keyboards are used to this way of playing orchestra sounds.

NOTE

In this mode, continuous expression control is not possible.

Fade + Velocity

In this mode, only velocity controls expression. However, there are velocity regions where two layers are played and crossfaded to create a smoother transition.

Fade + MIDI Controller

In this mode, you can blend through the different layers using a specific MIDI controller, for example, from pianissimo to fortissimo. This gives the most authentic sound and behavior. However, it also puts the highest load on CPU and hard disk because all layers have to be played at the same time – audible or not. This means that in the violin programs, for example, up to four stereo voices are played for each note.

Switch + MIDI Controller

In this mode, the expression controller switches from layer to layer rather than blending them into each other. Volume, however, is controlled continuously. The disadvantage of audible transitions yields an unbeatable advantage: Only one stereo voice per note is used, so these programs can be used on slower systems.

Amplifier Section

The **Amplifier** section gives you access to the level and pan settings of the expression. All samples have been recorded in stereo, therefore, you can also adjust the stereo width before placing it in the stereo panorama.

Furthermore, you can adjust the attack and release times of the amplifier envelopes individually.

Level

With this parameter, you adjust the loudness of the expression.

Pan

With this parameter, you specify the position of the expression in the stereo panorama.

Width

This parameter allows you to control the width of the stereo image of the samples.

Attack

Offsets the attack time of the amplifier envelope. Positive values decrease and negative values increase the attack time.

Release

Use this parameter to offset the decay time of the amplifier envelope. Positive values decrease and negative values increase the decay time.

Options Page

On the **Options** page, you can define globally how to control the two available aspects of a program. These aspects are **Expression** and **Espressivo**.

- To open this page, click the **Options** button in the top right of the window.



You can control the aspects using a MIDI controller, velocity, or a Note Expression controller. These sources can be sent through an individual curve.

- To assign a controller, open the pop-up menu for the **Expression** or **Espressivo** aspect and select a MIDI controller, a Note Expression controller, or velocity.

If a program does not use the **Espressivo** aspect, no controller is assigned. Assigning a controller afterwards has no effect.

Curve Editor

The curve editor allows you to transform the incoming controller data, for example, from linear to exponential or logarithmic behavior. You can set up individual curves for each controller assignment. The curve editor displays the settings of the currently selected controller.

- To adjust the settings of a controller, click the **Curve** button to the right of the aspect that you want to edit.

The curve editor offers different curve shapes that you can select by clicking the corresponding curve button on the right.

- To set up a curve, click the **Custom curve** button at the bottom of the left column.

If the **Custom** preset is selected, you can edit the curve graphically with the mouse:

- Double-click in the editor to insert a new node.
- Double-click on a node to delete it.
- Drag the nodes to the desired positions to adjust the basic shape of the curve.
- Drag the lines between the nodes up or down to change the curvature.
- Use the preset controls to save your custom curve as curve preset.

Pitch Bend

The **Pitch Bend** parameters allow you to define how much the pitchbend wheel on your keyboard can bend the original pitch. You can define the range independently for the **Up** and **Down** direction (-48 to + 24 semitones).

Alternation Enable Key

Many of the programs in HALion Symphonic Orchestra work with alternating layers, for example, to realize alternating bow up and bow down directions. This option is by default assigned to a specific key, so that you can easily enable and disable it while playing. This key is shown in red on the keyboard.

You can modify the key assignment by clicking in the **Enable Alternation Key** value field and then playing the note. Alternatively, you can type in the new note number or name. For programs that do not contain alternating layers, the **Enable Alternation Key** parameter is not available.

Key Switch Assignments

Key	Strings Tutti	Strings Solo	Woodwind	Brass	Perc
A-1	trill whole note	trill whole note	trill whole note	legato (default)	
A#-1	spicc/stacc	spicc/stacc	stacc	stacc	
B-1	trill half note	trill half note	trill half note		
C0	tremolo/trem accent	tremolo/trem accent	cresc-decres	cresc-decres	rolls
C#0	pizz tight	pizzicato	accent	accent	
D0		ornament HT	ornament HT		
D#0	pizz loose	cresc-decres		diminuendo	
E0		ornament WT	ornament WT		
F0	esspressivo	long (not fast)			
F#0	legato (default)	long fast (default)	legato (default)		default
G0		short down			
G#0		short alt on/off			

HALion Symphonic Orchestra
Key Switch Assignments

Key	Strings Tutti	Strings Solo	Woodwind	Brass	Perc
A0	portamento dn	short up			
A#0	portamento oct				
B0	portamento up				
