POWERED BY
PYRAMID

AUDIO IMPERIA

OVERVIEW:

EPIC SOUNDS FOR EPIC COMPOSERS

AUDIO IMPERIA is a boutique sample library developer, crafting instruments designed to instantly inspire. Continuously renewing its creativity and inventiveness, Audio Imperia is supported by a team of producers with years of experience in the world of cinematic music and who understand how to breathe life into the heart of a sample.

Meet PYRAMID: Audio Imperia's advanced Kontakt-based framework for building state-of-the-art sample libraries.

A unifying engine that provides an incredible architecture for optimized and enhanced playability, PYRAMID gives you the freedom and control to deliver highly complex products as easy-to-use yet cutting-edge instruments. PYRAMID is carefully crafted, finetuned and truly ensures that all Audio Imperia instruments provide the highest possible level of realism.

Years in the making and successfully tested in products such as Audio Imperia's critically acclaimed orchestral libraries "Nucleus" and "Areia," PYRAMID delivers uncompromising quality products that can stand the test of time. Enjoy this cutting-edge technology and move from one Audio Imperia product to the next with an incredibly smooth transition experience. Audio Imperia - Creativity starts here.

1. DOWNLOAD & ACTIVATION

1.1 PREPARATION:

Download/Serial code:

- Check the Download/Serial code you received in the e-mail account you provided with your purchase. The Download/Serial code has the following format: xxxxx-xxxxx-xxxxx-xxxxx-xxxxx.

- This code will be used for both downloading and activating the library.

Kontakt/Kontakt Player:

- This library is made for both Kontakt and Kontakt Player (free version) 6.1.1+

- If you have Kontakt or Kontakt Player already installed, please update to the latest available version before proceeding with the activation process.

- If you don't have Kontakt or Kontakt Player installed yet, download and install the latest version using the following link: https://www.native-instruments.com/en/products/komplete/samplers/kontakt-6-player/free-download/

1.2 DOWNLOAD / ACTIVATION:

- This library uses Native Access for download and activation.

- First, install Native Access from the link below: https://www.native-instruments.com/en/specials/native-access/

- Once Native Access is installed, log in using your Native ID, or create a new ID if you are not yet registered.

- Click "Add a serial" in the top left and paste in your Download/Serial code. Then click the "Add Serial" button at the bottom right corner to register it. You will need to be connected to the internet to complete your activation.

- Find the library in the "Not Installed" area of Native Access and click "Install".

- Once the download is finished, close Native Access and launch Kontakt or Kontakt Player. You should now be able to see the library in the Libraries tab on the left side of Kontakt.

- Enjoy your product!

2. PATCHES: MULTISAMPLES

Our libraries commonly include two kinds of multisampled patches: tonal and atonal.

- **Tonal patches**: On tonal instruments, like violins or trumpets, you can play different pitches, so samples must be mapped to the corresponding keys. Keyswitches are used to switch between articulations.

Keyswitches   Instrument Range
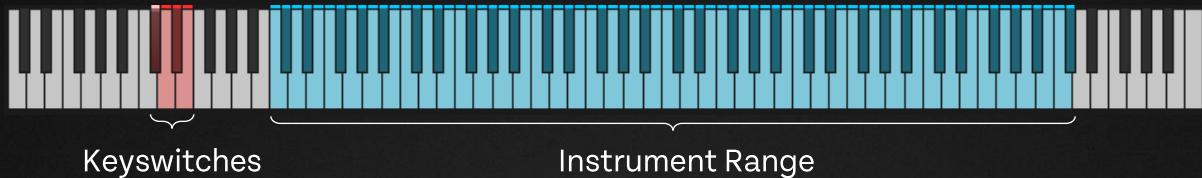
- **Atonal patches**: On atonal instruments, like snare drums or cymbals, you cannot play different pitches, so samples can be mapped to any key you want. This means a single patch can contain multiple instruments, with each of their articulations mapped to different keys.

Inst. 1   Inst. 2   Inst. 3

The main Pyramid interface has two pages: Basic and Advanced. The basic page contains all the essential elements for using the library, while the advanced page augments these with additional controls.

2.1.1 TONAL - BASIC PAGE:

1. EZ-Mixer

2. Reverb (Basic)

3. Articulations

4. Basic Controllers

5. Additional Toggles

2.1.2 TONAL - ADVANCED PAGE:

1. Mixer

2. Reverb (Advanced)

3. Articulations

4. Articulation and Keyswitch Options

5. Controllers (Advanced)

6. Options

2.1.3 ATONAL - BASIC PAGE:

1. Mixer

2. Reverb
(Basic)

3. Instruments /
Articulations
(Basic)

4. Select by MIDI

5. Controllers
(Basic)

2.1.4 ATONAL – ADVANCED PAGE:

1. Mixer

2. Reverb
(Advanced)

3. Instruments /
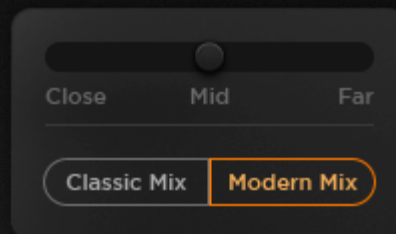Articulations
(Advanced)

4. Select by MIDI

5. Controllers
(Advanced)

6. Options

2.2 MULTISAMPLED PATCHES

2.2.1 EZ-MIXER:

- The slider can be used to quickly fade between the different microphone positions.
- **Classic Mix** features the raw and unprocessed sound of the original recordings.
- **Modern Mix** adds subtle processing for a ready-to-go cinematic sound.

2.2.2 REVERB:

Pyramid features the new algorithmic reverb that comes with Kontakt 6.

BASIC:

- **Amount**: Controls the send amount for the reverb.
- **On/Off**: Toggles the reverb send bypass.

ADVANCED:

- **Pre Delay**: Controls the amount of reverb pre-delay.
- **Time**: Controls the reverb time.
- **Reverb Type**: Selects from the two available reverb algorithms: Room and Hall.

2.2.3 ARTICULATIONS (TONAL):

Articulations can be selected by clicking the articulation's name in the list (1), or by using keyswitches.

The keyswitch display shows the currently mapped keyswitch for each articulation (2).

Individual articulations can be loaded or purged using the power buttons (3).

2.2.4 ARTICULATION AND SYLLABLE KEYSWITCHES OPTIONS (TONAL)

Keyswitches can be moved up or down the keyboard by clicking and dragging the keyboard icon or by clicking the small arrows to either side (1).

Keyswitches can be locked using the padlock button (2). When locked, keyswitch commands via MIDI are ignored, though switching is still possible by clicking the articulation's name in the list.

NOTE: In choir patches, an additional set of keyswitches is available for the Staccatissimo Phrases articulation. The Phrases articulation cycles through nine different syllables, and the keyswitches reflect the next syllable that will sound. A specific syllable can be selected using the keyswitches.

2.2.5 INSTRUMENTS/ARTICULATIONS (ATONAL):

BASIC:

Clicking an instrument name (1) reveals the available articulations for that instrument.

Entire instruments can be purged or loaded by using the power button next to the instrument name (2). Articulations can also be individually purged or loaded by using the power button next to the articulation name (3).

The instrument color can be previewed on the basic page. This color is reflected on all keys that trigger the instrument. (7).
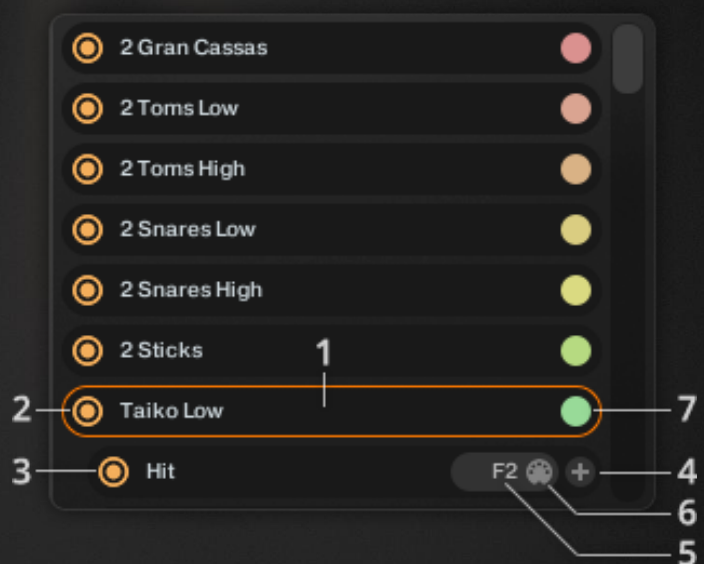
ADVANCED:

Each articulation can be mapped to a maximum of two keys. Click the (+) button (4) to enable two-key mapping. To go back to one-key mapping, click the (-) button.

You can map an articulation to a key by dragging up or down on the key name (5), by typing in the value (double click the key name) or by using MIDI learn. To trigger MIDI learn, click the small MIDI icon (6) and press any key to map the articulation to that key.

The instrument color can be modified on the advanced page by dragging up or down on the color icon. This color is reflected on all keys that trigger the instrument. (7).

2.2.6 SELECT BY MIDI:

The Select by MIDI function (1) when turned on allows you to visualize the instrument that is currently being triggered via MIDI.

2.2.7 CONTROLLERS:

BASIC:

- **Dynamics**: When a long articulation is selected, the dynamics knob crossfades between the different recorded dynamic layers. Note that on short articulations, dynamic layers are triggered via velocity.

- **Expression**: An additional layer of volume control that affects the instrument pre-reverb.

- **Vibrato**: On specific long articulations, the vibrato knob crossfades between the recorded vibrato and non-vibrato samples.

- **Tight Toggle**: When enabled, sets Sample Start to its highest value, making the patch play with very low latency. This is useful when playing live with a keyboard or other MIDI controller, but is best left off for playback. For more on sample start, see the next section.

ADVANCED:

- **Dyn. Range**: The Dynamic Range knob applies volume scaling to all articulations. With the Dynamic Range slider set at 0, samples will play back as they were recorded. As you increase the Dynamic Range, all but the loudest dynamic layer scale down, allowing the library to play quieter on the lowest dynamics than originally recorded. With the Dynamic Range slider at maximum, a modwheel (for long articulations) or velocity (for short articulations) value of zero will result in silence.

- **Sample Start**: The Sample Start controller can be thought of as a "realism / responsiveness" knob. When set higher (0ms), the instrument will repond with lower latency, but attacks, releases, and legato transitions may sound abrupt. Lower values (-250ms) have the opposite effect, introducing more latency, but with the benefit of smoother attacks, releases, and legato transitions. For an in-depth explanation of Sample Start, see section 3 of this manual, "Sample Start Methodology".

- **Leg. Smooth**: The Legato Smoothness controller affects the length of the crossfades used when playing legato articulations. Higher values tend to sound smoother and reduce legato "bumpiness", but lower values can sound better when playing faster legato lines.

2.2.8 ADDITIONAL TOGGLES:

- **Sordino**: On select instruments, the Sordino toggle enables an instrument-level sordino emulation based on real recordings of sordino and non-sordino samples.

- **2nd Violins**: On violin patches, enables neighbor-borring to shift the timbre of the instrument. The arrows select whether the timbre is shifted up or down.

- **Niente**: When enabled, Niente adds volume modulation in the lower range of the Dynamics controller, allowing the instrument to fade out to silence. Setting the Dynamic Range controller to maximum has a similar effect, though unlike Niente this also introduces volume scaling on all dynamic layers.
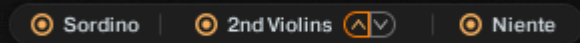
2.2.9 OPTIONS

Options can be selected from the main drop-down menu (1). Enable or disable options using the power button (2). An asterisk will appear next to the name of any enabled options (3).
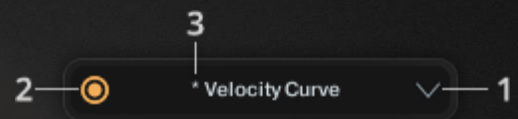
Velocity Curve: This option allows you to change how a patch reacts to velocity. There are three curves that can be selected using the drop down menu (2): linear, shelf and fixed. These can be further customized by clicking and dragging up or down on the velocity curve display (1).
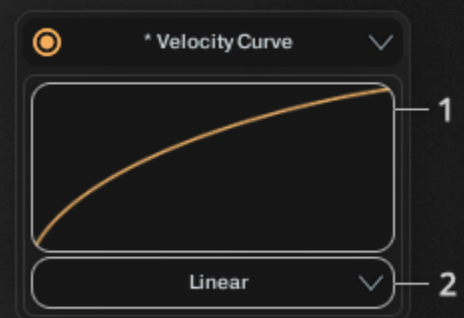
Transpose (1): Shifts the playable note range up or down the keyboard. Note that this option does not affect keyswitches.

Range (2): Increases or decreases the playable range of an articulation above or below the recorded range of the instrument. Unlike the previous options, which are global, Range is set per-articulation. The extended range will show up as yellow on the keyboard.
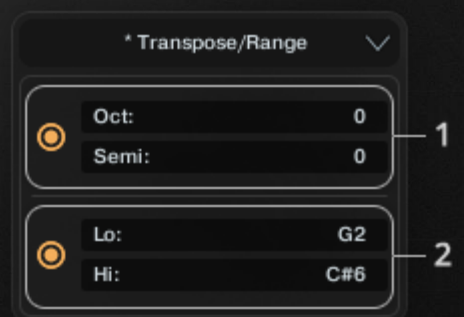
Envelope: On articulations other than Legato, the envelope controls set Attack, Decay, Sustain and Release for the currently selected articulation. This can be useful for creating pads from sustains, or to adjust the feel of a short articulation.

Polyphonic Legato: On legato articulations, this option allows you to control two independent legato lines by playing notes in a specific velocity range. The Velocity Splits control determines how many lines can be played simultaneously. For instance, with 2 velocity splits, any notes above Velocity 64 trigger one legato line, while notes with a velocity less than 64 trigger a second independent legato line.

Stacking: In select percussion libraries, Stacking enables additional round robins and plays them simultaneously to create an even larger ensemble sound. The Layers control determines how many additional samples are triggered, and the randomize and stereoize controls add timing and panning variation, respectively.

3. SAMPLE START METHODOLOGY

In the editing process, all samples in our libraries, including legato transitions and releases, are meticulously edited to ensure that the patches will play realistically and consistently in time.

We could edit samples using essentially a gate, simply cutting each sample at the start of its waveform. However, editing samples in this way results in a patch that has timing inconsistencies:

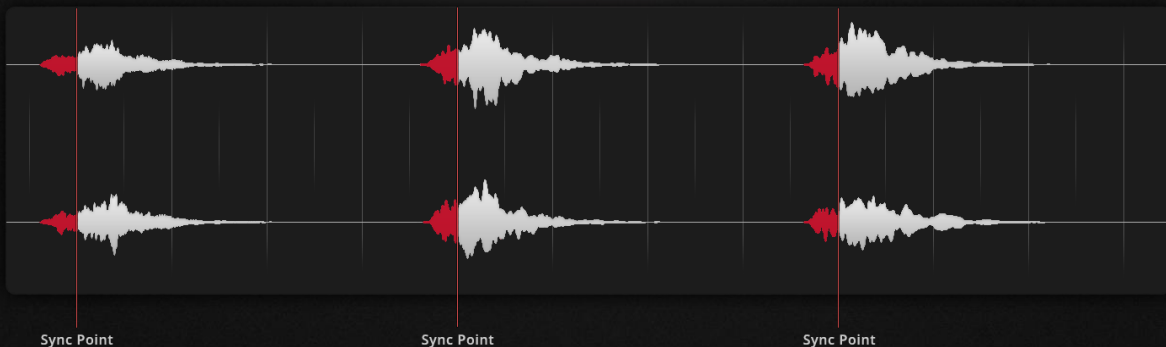Sync Point   Sync Point   Sync Point

Instead, we listen to every single sample in the library, and shift it either earlier or later until it sounds perfectly in time with the click.

We refer to this point where the samples sound in time with the click as the "sync point":

Sync Point   Sync Point   Sync Point

If we were to cut each sample exactly at the sync point we would be removing some important audio, as samples missing the buildup just before the sync point can sound abrupt and unnatural:

Sync Point   Sync Point   Sync Point

Instead, we cut every sample a fixed amount of time before the sync point. This audio between the start of the sample and the sync point is referred to as "padding" or "pre-padding". In our libraries we use a padding amount of 250ms.

When used in a patch, samples with generous pre-padding will sound the most natural, but will introduce noticeable latency equivalent to the amount of pre-padding.

While this latency is normal and, in fact, intentional, playing a patch with 250ms of latency can be rather difficult. This is where the Sample Start controller comes in.

The controller allows you to choose where samples will start playing back from. The controller goes from 250 ms before the Sync Point (-250 ms), right up to the Sync Point itself (0 ms).

250ms Sync Point

Sync Point
Sample Start
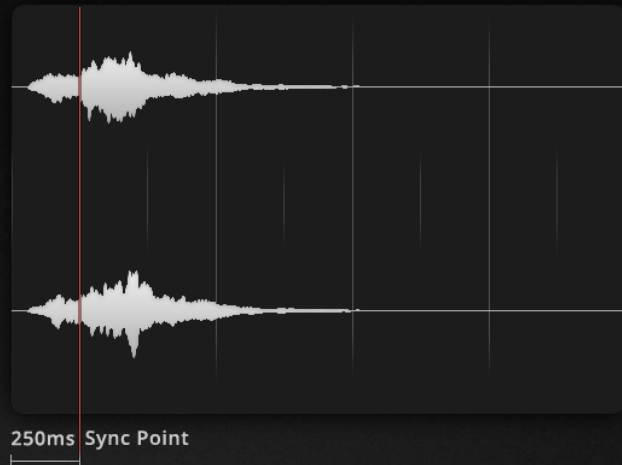
By setting Sample Start, you can adjust how "tight" or "loose" a patch will be.

A Sample Start value closer to 0 results in a "tighter" patch, meaning it has lower latency, but lacks realism: attacks, legato transitions, and releases sound very abrupt and unnatural.

A Sample Start value closer to -250 results in a "looser" patch, meaning it has higher latency, but is more realistic: attacks, legato transitions, and releases all remain intact.

So, how do we recommend using the sample start controller? Here is a proposed workflow:

- When recording MIDI, set Sample Start to 0 ms, or enable the Tight toggle on the Basic page. This will cause the patch to sound a little unnatural and abrupt, but will virtually eliminate latency.

- Once you have finished recording and are ready for playback, set Sample Start to a larger value. We recommend a setting of -125 ms. This will introduce a latency of 125ms, which should then be compensated for.

- For latency compensation, try either shifting your MIDI items earlier in time by 125 ms, or if your DAW supports it, applying a -125ms MIDI offset. This will keep your original recordings in time, but attacks, legato transitions and releases will be much more realistic.

-125 ms is just a recommendation, and we encourage you to experiment and adjust this setting to your liking. Just make sure that whatever value is displayed in the sample start controller is the value you are using for latency compensation.

We have set Sample Start to -125 ms as default for all patches, as we find this setting to be the best compromise between playability and realism.

If you just want fast, immediate response from the library, either set the Sample Start to 0ms, or enable the Tight toggle on the Basic page. Still, we highly encourage you to try the workflow proposed above, as it allows you to best use the library to its full potential.

4. MEASURED TREMOLO PATCHES:

Measured tremolo patches are provided for select string instruments. In Sequenced mode (1), the patch plays a looping sequence that is synced to the host tempo, while Playable mode behaves more like a standard shorts patch. The tempo control (2) allows the playback tempo to be set to a multiple or fraction of the host tempo.

In Sequenced mode, the modwheel controls the overall velocity of the sequence, but the accent table (3) can be used to vary the relative velocity of each individual note. The table always displays the exact velocity at which a note will play, and moving the modwheel updates the table accordingly. Keyswitches (4) are used to select between eight different sequences, which can also be saved or loaded with the save and load controls (6). The remap controls (5) transpose the keyswitches up or down the playable range.

5. PERFORMANCE PATCHES:
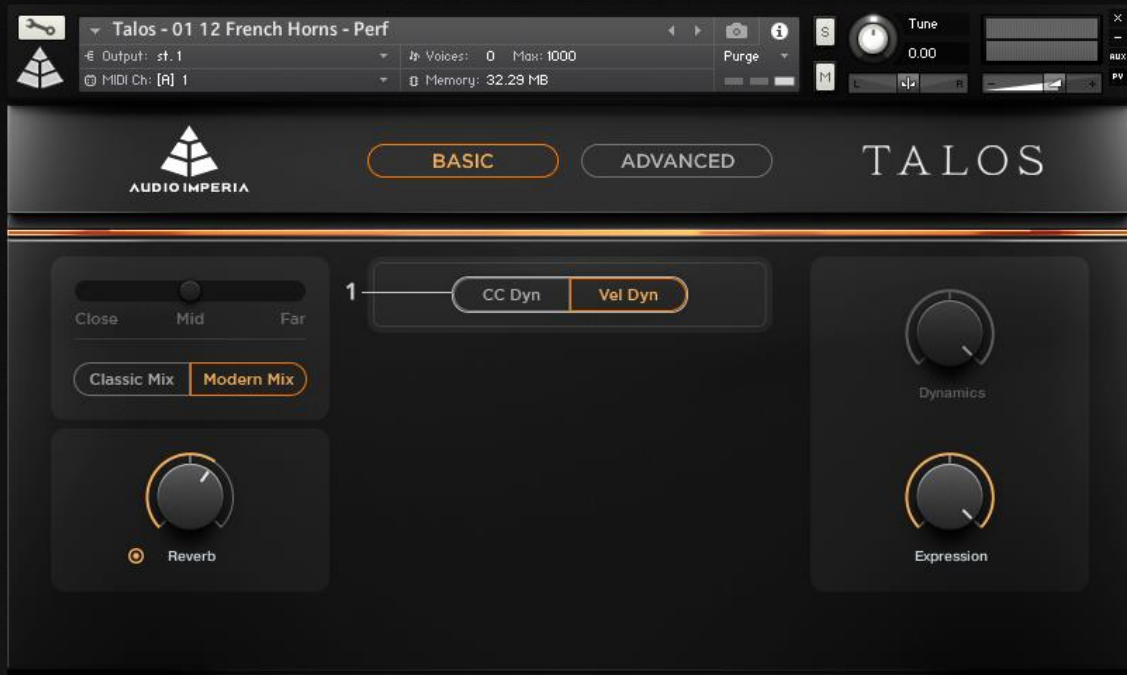
All our orchestral libraries include performance patches, which combine sustains and shorts into one easy to play patch with no keyswitching required. In performance patches, the length of a note determines how the samples are triggered, and dynamics are controlled either by CC or velocity, as determined by the CC/Vel toggle (1).

6. SOUND DESIGN PATCHES:

PYRAMID sound design patches have two pages: Main and FX. The Main page contains a set of essential sound modification tools, and the FX page contains a set of insert and send effects that you can apply to expand your musical possibilities.

6.1   MAIN PAGE

1. **Sound Selector:** Click on the sound name to open the sound selection menu. You can also browse through sounds by using the left and right arrows.

2. **Sound Modifiers:** These are the essential controllers for modifying the sounds to your liking. We offer 8 automatable controllers for Volume, Pan, Attack, Release, Pitch, Stereo Spread, Low Pass Filter Cutoff and High Pass Filter Cutoff.

3. **Semitone Lock (Pitch):** When enabled, truncates the pitch difference value to semitones.

4. **Sample Start:** Determines where playback of the selected sample will start from. Click and drag the cursor to set a new position.

5. **Global**: Determines whether the main controls affect the patch globally or per-sound.

6. **Forward / Reverse playback**: The direction of the arrow reflects the direction of playback, either forward or reverse.

6.2 FX PAGE

1. **Effect selector:** Click on an effect name to select it.

2. **Effect on/off:** Click the power button to turn the effect on/off.

3. **Effect parameters:** All the parameters for the selected effect are displayed here. All parameters are automatable.

4. **Save/open buttons:** Can be used to save or load presets. Presets are stored in .nka files.