AK

ADDICTIVE
KEYS

ADDICTIVE KEYS REFERENCE MANUAL

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WHAT IS ADDICTIVE KEYS?

Addictive Keys™ is a powerful music production and songwriting tool setting a new standard for virtual keyboard instruments. With its unique sound creation ability, smart workflow, fast loading times and high quality producer presets Addictive Keys is perfect for any production style and music genre. Addictive Keys is easy to use and slim enough to run on both stationary and laptop computers without compromising sound quality. The standalone version is perfect for spontaneous jamming and live performances and the plug-in version support all major DAW hosts. Addictive Keys will have an ever-growing catalogue of keyboard instruments making it possible to expand and customize libraries.

The instruments allow the user to mix and match different microphone perspectives and other instrument specific features. With Addictive Keys the user can utilize professional effects like EQ, filter, noise, compression, distortion, reverb, delay, chorus, phaser and tremolo – add advanced envelopes for filter, pitch and volume, and create truly unique sounds never heard before. When music comes first and finding the right sound is crucial Addictive Keys is the perfect tool to make any production unique.

Addictive Keys - Creative Sounds For Creative People.

HOW DO I USE ADDICTIVE KEYS?

INSTALLATION AND AUTHORIZATION

The Addictive Keys installation and authorization process is handled automatically by the XLN Online Installer application – available for download by clicking the link below:

www.xlnaudio.com/install

Download, unzip, run it and follow the steps to install and authorize Addictive Keys.

For detailed information about how to use the Online Installer please visit the install page.

AS A STANDALONE APPLICATION

After the installation is complete, the standalone version of Addictive Keys will appear in the Programs Folder in the Start Menu (Windows) or Applications Folder (OS X) in the "XLN Audio" folder.

Run the application and click on the [Audio Settings] button in the top left corner to set up the audio output and input port for the MIDI keyboard.

AS A PLUG-IN IN A HOST SOFTWARE

Addictive Keys can be loaded as a plug-in in most major DAW hosts. When using Addictive Keys as a plug-in, the Audio/MIDI settings can be adjusted in the preferences of your host software.

For detailed instructions how to load Addictive Keys in your specific host please visit:

www.xlnaudio.com/how_to_load_plugins

ABOUT THIS MANUAL

ABBREVIATIONS AND TECH TERMS

"Host" means DAW host software (Like Cubase, Pro Tools, Logic)

"AK" is short for Addictive Keys.

QUICK TOUR

The Addictive Keys Quickstart Guide is located in the help menu in Addictive Keys. It's also available online in our support portal at www.xlnaudio.com/support

ADDICTIVE KEYS MANUAL

NAVIGATION

The top section of the Addictive Keys user interface gives you quick access to all the essential pages and features in Addictive Keys.

A. Memo Browser
B. Record Memo
C. Loading Indicator
D. Preset display
E. Preset Browser
F. Save Preset
G. Logo (Show Program Information and Credits)
H. Page Select
I. Help Menu

GALLERY PAGE

The Gallery page shows all the installed instruments and instruments available for purchase. Use the arrow buttons to select the next/previous instrument. The bottom of the Gallery page shows thumbnails of the available ExploreMaps for the currently selected instrument.

Press [VIEW] in the right corner of the Gallery page change the view to all ExploreMaps to view all currently available ExploreMaps for all currently installed Instruments. Click an ExploreMap thumbnail load the full ExploreMap.

EXPLORE PAGE
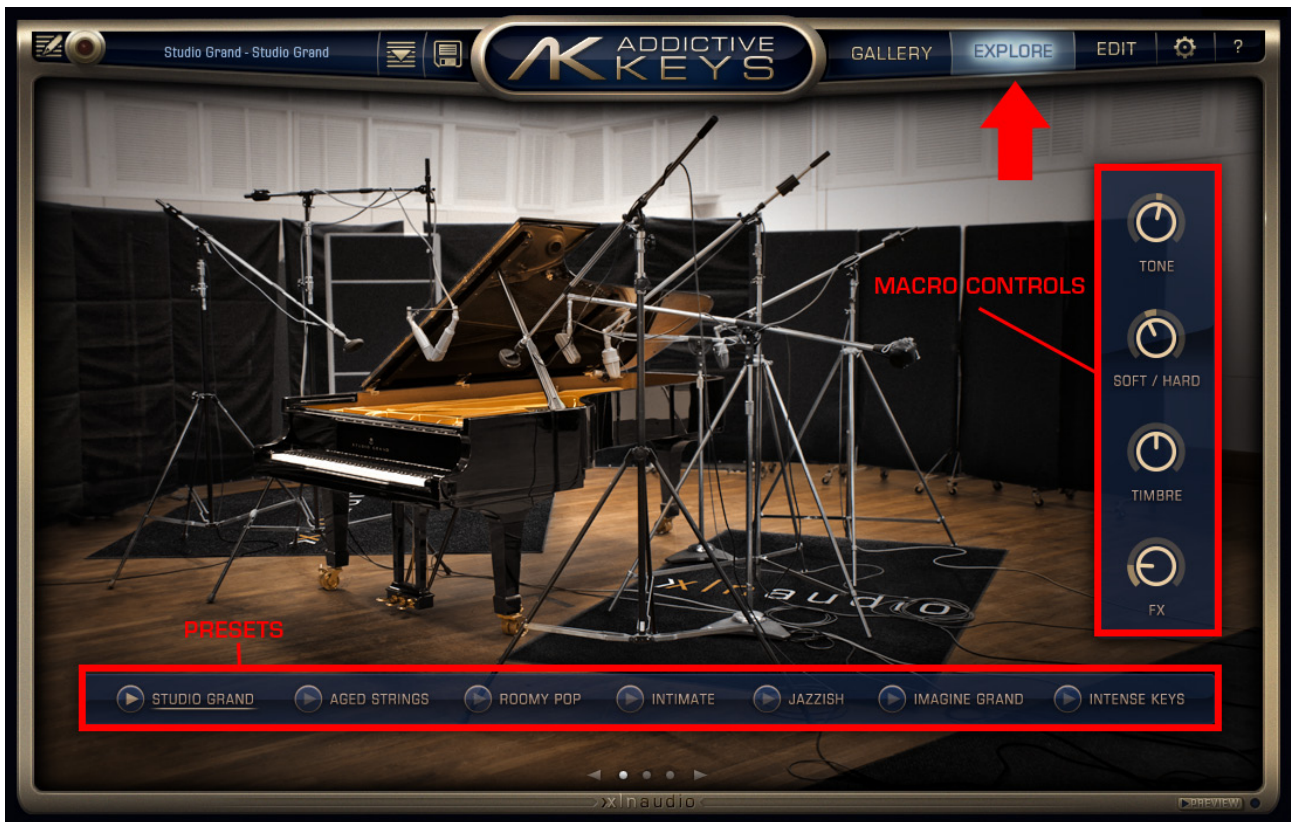
An ExploreMap displays a selection of presets that can be used as they are, or provide a starting point for further editing. All presets are provided with a preview that enables you to listen to the preset without having to play. Tweaking is done by using the Macro Controls available on some ExploreMaps and/or by opening the Edit page.

- Preset Select: Click a [preset name] to load that preset.
- Preset Preview: Click the [Play] next to each preset name to hear a preview of that preset.
- Macro Controls: These knobs are assigned to one or more parameters in the EDIT page and provide basic tonal shaping without having to open the Edit page. Please note that not all Explore Maps have Macro Controls.
- Next/previous arrows: Click to switch ExploreMap.

(Click GALLERY in the top section to go back and switch instruments)

EDIT PAGE

INTRODUCTION

The EDIT page allows advanced tweaking of the sound using a vast selection of settings and effects. Before digging deeper into the different sections, here are a few notes on how the controls in the EDIT page works.

X-Modulation

On the EDIT page you'll find smaller knobs next to some of the controls. These are called X-modulation (X-mod) knobs and allow you to control one or several parameters in Addictive Keys with your midi keyboard, using the mod wheel, aftertouch, or a MIDI CC value of your choice (see the Session Settings chapter for more information). The X-mod knob controls the range of modulation for the parameter it is located next to.

All X-modulation featured parameters are marked "X-modable" in this manual.

Use [Shift] to increase control resolution

If you hold [Shift] on your computer keyboard while editing a control, you get a finer control resolution, enabling high precision adjustments.

Scroll wheel support

Addictive Keys supports scroll wheel editing for most controls, just place the cursor over the control and use the scroll wheel to adjust it.

Instant On

To activate a "darkened" (=turned off) section, just alter one of the controls and it will become active.

Reset a control to its default position

To reset a control to its default value, use [Ctrl]+click (Windows) or
[Cmd]+click (OS X)

OVERVIEW

A. Instrument Settings
B. Sample Playback Section
C. Channel Strip
D. Microphone/Input Selection
E. Mixer Section

INSTRUMENT SETTINGS

This section of the EDIT page contains settings that are specific for the currently selected instrument. Click the arrow button in the top left of this section to open the Instrument Select menu or use the scroll wheel while holding the cursor over the arrow to select instrument.

Pedals

(This option is not available for all instruments)

- Softness: Adjusts the instrument softness when the soft pedal (Una Corda) is pressed.
- Pedal Noise: -inf - +10 dB. Adjusts the volume of the pedal noise. At 0, the Pedal Noise sounds at the level it was recorded.
- Sustain Body: Off - 0 - +10 dB. Adjusts the amount of sympathetic resonance in the instrument while the sustain pedal is pressed. The more you add, the "richer" the sustain tone will sound. At 0, the Sustain Body sounds at its natural level.
- Sustain Noise: Off - +10 dB. Adjusts the amount of string resonance for all strings in the instrument while the sustain pedal is pressed, adding a natural noise within the instrument. At 0, the Sustain Noise sounds at its natural level.

Vel > Sample

The 'Velocity to Sample' slider allows you to filter out the lowest and/or highest velocity layers of the current instrument, while keeping the dynamic range intact. This means that if you would retract the Vel > Sample slider to a thin line, Addictive Keys will only play samples from a single velocity layer, but you still get normal volume differences on those samples based on velocity.

SAMPLE PLAYBACK SECTION

This section of the EDIT page provides three tabs with note/voice specific sound shaping possibilities: Pitch, Filter and Volume. Note that these settings affect the whole instrument and the audio outputs.

Pitch

- Octave: Transpose the instrument via MIDI one octave up (+1) or down (-1).
- Tune FX - Dissonance: Adjusts the amount of random detuning. The graph in the Session Settings page serves as a visual reference for the detuning key by key.
- Tune FX - Sample Shift: Shifts the pitch in semitones while simultaneously compensating with midi transpose in the opposite direction. The result is an increase or decrease in overtones.
- Vibrato - Rate: 0 - 24Hz
- Vibrato - Depth: 0 - 100%. (X-Modable)

Pitch Envelope
- Pitch Start: +/- 24 semitones.
- Hold Time: 0 - 500 ms.
- Release Time: 0 - 10 s.
- Vel: Increase this slider to let the velocity of incoming midi notes determine the influence of the pitch envelope.

Envelope parameters can be edited either by dragging the points in the graph or by adjusting the values below the graph. Adjust the curves between the points in the envelope by dragging them up/down.

Filter
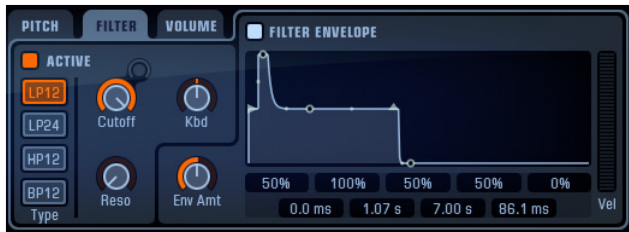
- Enable: Turns on/off the entire filter section.
- Type: Low Pass 12dB and 24dB, High Pass 12dB or Band Pass 12dB.
- Cutoff: 16Hz - 16744Hz. (X-Modable)
- Resonance: 0-100%
- Kbd (Keyboard): Increasing this control, the cutoff will increase with the MIDI note value (high note = high cutoff, low note = low cutoff). Set this control to a negative value to get the opposite effect.

Filter envelope

- Enable: Turns on/off the envelope section
- Envelope Point (Cutoff): 0 - 100%.
- Attack Time: 0 - 7 s
- Sustain 1 Time: 0 - 7 s
- Sustain 2 Time: 0 - 7 s
- Release Time: 0 - 15 s
- Vel: Increase this slider to let the velocity of incoming MIDI notes determine the influence of the filter envelope.

Envelope parameters can be edited either by dragging the points in the graph or by adjusting the values below the graph. Adjust the curves between the points in the envelope by dragging them up/down.

Volume
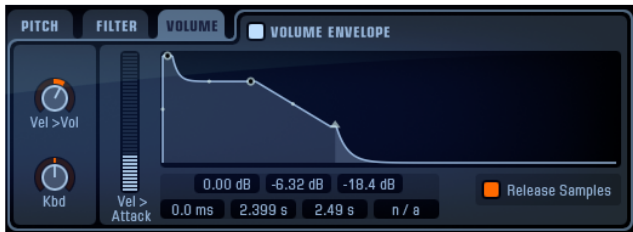
- Vel >Vol: Adjusts how velocity affects the volume
- Kbd: Increasing this control, the volume will increase with the MIDI note value (high note = high volume, low note = low volume). Decrease this control to get the opposite effect.

Volume envelope
- Enable: When the envelope is disabled instruments will playback "as recorded" using release samples if available.
- Vel >: Increase this slider to let the velocity of incoming MIDI notes determine the influence of the volume envelope.
- Envelope Point Amplitude: -inf. - 0 dB
- Attack: 0 - 7 s
- Decay: 0 - 7 s
- Sustain 2: 0 - 7 s
- Release: 0 - 15 s (only available if Release Samples are deactivated)
- Release Samples: Activates/deactivates release sample playback.

Envelope parameters can be edited either by dragging the points in the graph or by adjusting the values below the graph. Adjust the curves between the points in the envelope by dragging them up/down.

CHANNEL STRIP
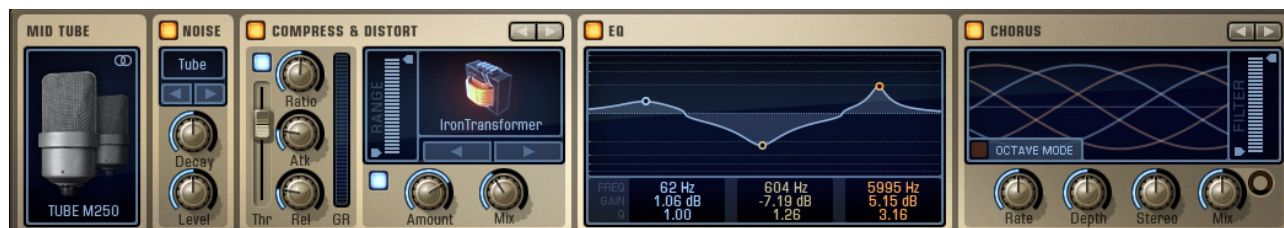
The Instrument Channels and the Master Channel in Addictive Keys each have a channel strip. Click the channel label in the mixer to select the Channel strip you want to edit. The Channel Strip contains useful tools for shaping the sound. By clicking the button in the top left corner of each instance it can be turned on or off, indicated by a darkened area when the instance is turned off – adjusting any of the controls will immediately active it again.

Input

This section shows the currently selected microphone/input. By clicking the input slot a scroll down menu shows all available selectable microphones/inputs for the selected instrument.

Noise

The noise section controls the amount of modeled analog noise added to the sound. On the three instrument channels the noise module is placed before the effect chain allowing the noise to be more integrated with the direct sound. On the master channel the noise module is placed at the end.

- 7 noise types: Neumann U67, Jupiter 8, "Burr" rack distortion unit, Big Muff stomp box, Vinyl noise, Tape 7,5 lps, Tape 15 lps - Select noise type by clicking the arrow keys or click the noise type name to get a popup. You can also hold the cursor over the noise type name and use the scroll wheel to flip through the different noise types.
- Noise Decay: 0 – 24s
- Noise level: -78 – -30 dB

Multi Effect Slots

Each AK channel has two identical Multi Effects Slots, one pre- and one post-EQ. Use the arrow buttons to select the next/previous effect or click on the effect name and use the dropdown menu.

Compress & Distort

Activate or deactivate the compressor/distortion separately by clicking the Enable buttons on each section (circled).

Compressor:
- Threshold: 0 – -48 dB
- Ratio: 1:1 to 8:1
- Attack: 1 – 500 ms
- Release: 10 – 2000 ms

The AK compressor has an advanced AutoGain algorithm that keeps levels in check.

Distortion:
- Distortion Algorithm Selector:
- Crunch, Tube Pair, Iron Transformer, Zap, Air Pressure. Select algorithm by clicking on the arrow buttons, or click the distortion type name to get a popup.
- Dist Amount: Adjusts the amount of distortion added to the sound
- Mix: Mixes between the clean and the distorted sound.
- Range: 20 – 20000 Hz. Sets the frequency range exposed to distort.

Chorus

A 5-voice Chorus effect.

- Rate: 0 – 32 Hz. Adjusts the chorus rate. An alternative rate control is to drag the graph left or right.
- Depth: Adjusts the chorus depth. An alternative depth control is to drag the graph up or down.
- Stereo: Adjusts the chorus stereo width by spreading the chorus voices.
- Mix: Mixes between the clean and wet sound. X-modable.
- Filter: 20 Hz - 20 kHz. Sets the frequency range that is passed through the effect.
- Octave Mode: Sets individual rates for each chorus voice in octave relations. For example: if you set the chorus rate knob to 16 Hz, the 1st voice will pitch shift at 16 Hz, the 2nd at 8 Hz, the 3rd at 4 Hz, the 4th at 2 Hz and 5th at 1 Hz. With Octave Mode off, all voices will pitch shift at the same rate, but with a LFO phase offset for a rich sound.

Phaser

- Waveform Selector: Triangle, Sine, Square, Sawtooth, 3 steps, 4 steps, 6 steps, Random. Select waveform by clicking the arrow keys or click-hold and drag the waveform graph left/right.
- Invert: Press [INV] to invert the waveform.
- Rate: Adjusts the phaser rate. Press [SYNC] to sync the phaser rate to your DAW's current tempo.
- Stereo On/Off: Triggers stereo mode.
- Stages: 6, 12, 24.
- Depth: Adjusts the phaser depth.
- Feedback: Adjusts the phaser feedback. X-modable.
- Phase: 0 - 1. Gradually flips the phase.
- Mix: Mixes between the clean and wet sound. X-modable.

Tremolo

- Waveform selector: Triangle, Sine, Square, Sawtooth. Select waveform by clicking the arrow keys or click-hold and drag the waveform graph left/right.
- Rate: Adjusts the tremolo rate. Press [SYNC] to sync the tremolo rate to the current tempo in your host.
- Invert: Press [INV] to invert the waveform.
- Volume Amount: Adjusts the amount of volume modulation. X-modable.
- Pan Amount: Adjusts the amount of pan modulation. X-modable.
- Filter On/Off Button: Activates/deactivates filter modulation.
- Cutoff: 20 Hz - 20 kHz. Adjusts the cutoff of the tremolo's LP Filter. X-modable.
- Filter Amount: Adjusts the amount of filter modulation and resonance. Turn right for modulation with filter resonance. Turn left for modulation without filter resonance. X-modable.

EQ (3 band)
- Centre Frequency: 20 Hz - 20 kHz.
- Gain: +/-24 dB per band.
- Q-Value: 0.1 - 10.

Edit the EQ settings either directly in the graph (scroll wheel controls Q value) or by clicking the values below the graph and moving the mouse up/down.

MICROPHONE/INPUT SELECTION

Each Addictive Keys instrument was recorded using several microphones from different perspectives. Some instruments have also been recorded through DI boxes or similar. You can choose one input for each Instrument Channel and blend them to your liking in the AK Mixer Section.

The virtual room serves as a visual reference for the available and currently used microphone perspectives and inputs. The virtual room will highlight the microphone(s) selected for the current instrument channel with an orange circle. Microphones used by the other channels will be high-lighted with a white circle. The virtual room also serves as a microphone selector; by clicking the microphone perspective of choice the selected instrument channel will load the selected perspective.

Input Selection

There are three ways of selecting an input for the Instrument Channels in Addictive Keys:

1. Press the small downwards arrow on the Instrument Channel Label and select input from the dropdown menu.
2. Select the Instrument Channel you want to change, then click on the microphones in the virtual room you want to use.
3. Select the Instrument Channel you want to change, then click the microphone picture in the channel strip and select microphone from the dropdown menu. You can also hold the cursor over the picture and use the scroll wheel to flip through the different microphones.

MIXER

The Addictive Keys Mixer Section has 6 stereo mixer channels. Every mixer channel has its own tab (with exception for the joint FX1/FX2 tab) that holds individual settings. Click on the channel label to view the tab. The three Instrument Channel tabs and the Master Channel tab hold individual Channel Strips. The 'FX1 / FX2' tab displays the Delerb (Delay/Reverb) settings for the two FX channels.

A. Three Instrument channels
B. Two channels handling the FX1 / FX2 returns.
C. Master channel. All channels in Addictive Keys are summed to the master channel for final processing.

Channel Controls

Each channel has:

- Volume Fader
- Pan: See Pan Controls
- Solo and Mute buttons (With exception of the Master Channel that has no Solo button)

The Instrument Channels (A) also have:

- Send knobs for FX1 / FX2

The FX Channels (B) also have:

- Delerb balance knobs

Pan Controls

The levels of the left and right channels can be adjusted in a variety of ways using the pan control. Drag the Pan Control areas left/right to pan channels. You can also control the stereo width by dragging the mouse up/down, and even reverse the stereo image by dragging upwards; beyond center (the pan handle turns blue to indicate a reversed stereo image).
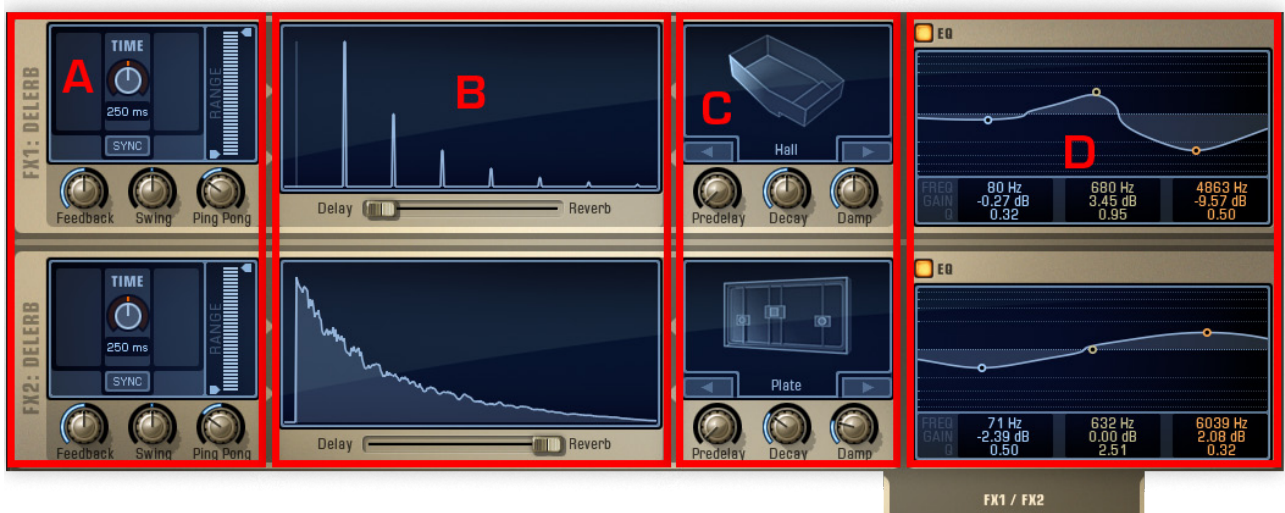

A. Full width, centered
B. Stereo width reduced, not centered
C. Mono, centered
D. Mono, not centered
E. Reversed stereo image, full width, centered
F. Reversed stereo image, reduced width, not centered

To quickly center a Pan:

To reset a control to its default value, use [Ctrl]+click.

FX – DELERB

The FX Section of Addictive Keys consists of 2 identical Delerb units (a delay that is fed into a reverb). Each Instrument Channel in the AK Mixer Section can send to these effects. The Delerb outputs are available in the Mixer section, where you can adjust volume and pan, before they are summed in the Master Channel together with the Instrument Channels.

A. Delay

- Time: 0 - 1000 ms. Sets the delay time. Click the SYNC button to sync the delay to the DAW's current tempo. You can also click-hold and drag the Delerb Graph left/right to adjust delay time.
- Feedback: Sets the delay feedback. You can also click-hold and drag the Delerb Graph up/down to adjust the delay feedback
- Swing: Adds a swing or shuffle effect to the echo repeats.
- Ping Pong: Makes the sound bounce back and forth between the left and right output channels, creating a distinct stereo effect.
- Range: 20 Hz - 20 kHz. Limits the frequency range of the delay.

B. Crossfader & Delerb Graph

- Delerb Crossfader: Sets the balance between the delay and the reverb.
- Delerb Graph: Displays a visual graph of the current Delerb decay. Drag the Delerb Graph to control delay time/feedback and reverb decay: left/right = delay time, up/down = delay feedback and reverb decay.

C. Reverb

- Reverb Algorithm Selector: Ambience 0 - 1s, Room 0 - 3s, Hall 0 - 10s, Plate 0 - 10s. Select algorithm by clicking on the arrow keys, or click the algorithm name to get a popup.
- Pre-delay: 0 - 500 ms.
- Decay: Adjusts the reverb time. You can also click-hold and drag the Delerb Graph up/down to adjust the reverb decay.
- Damping: For managing the high frequency reflections.

D. EQ (3 band)

- A duplicate of the regular insert EQ.

PRESETS AND MEMOS

PRESETS

A preset contains information about an instrument and its applied effects making it easy to save and load different sounds. All the presets from the ExploreMaps are listed in the Preset Browser, along with any user-created presets. Click a play button in the list to hear a short preview of that preset. Use the filtering options in the top of the Preset Browser to only show presets from a specific instrument, or to show/hide user-created presets or presets included in instruments.

The right section of the Preset Browser shows information about the currently selected preset. It also allows you to Share your preset (via My Cloud), Rename it or Delete it. You can also drag the preset preview as a MIDI region from the "Drag to track"-bar onto the Addictive Keys track in your host or export the preview as a MIDI-file by dragging it to a folder in your computer OS.

The bottom of the Preset Browser contains a dropdown menu that allows you to sort the presets alphabetically or chronologically, while the Prev/Next buttons selects the previous/next preset in the list.

SAVE PRESET

Press the floppy disc icon in the top section to open the Save Preset dialog and save your current sound as a preset.

- Name: Name the preset in this field.
- Info: Write additional info about the preset in this field.
- REC: Click this button to record a MIDI Preview for the preset to be played when hitting the preview button in the Preset Browser.
- PLAY: Click this button to play the current preview for the preset.
- Save: Click this button to save the preset to your computer and to My Cloud.
- Cancel: Click this button to cancel the saving process and close the Save Preset dialog.

MEMOS

Memos is a brand new feature developed for Addictive Keys and it lets you record ideas and sketches instantly when inspiration strikes.

Simply hit the Record Memo button at any time to start recording a MIDI-based memo then hit it again when you're done. Your Memo is conveniently saved together with the preset at the time of the recording so that it will sound exactly the same the next time you listen to it.

The right section of the Memo Browser shows information about the currently selected Memo. It also allows you to Share your Memo (via My Cloud), Rename it or Delete it. You can also drag the Memo as a MIDI region onto the Addictive Keys track in your host or export the memo as a MIDI-file by dragging it to a folder in your computer OS.

The bottom of the Memo Browser contains a dropdown menu that allows you to sort the Memos alphabetically or chronologically, while the Prev/Next buttons selects the previous/next preset in the list.

The [Preview] button in the bottom right of Addictive Keys lets you preview the current memo. It's available from any page in AK, which means that you can, for example, adjust the controls on the EDIT page while the memo is playing.

MY CLOUD

My Cloud is the new way of sharing presets and memos over multiple systems developed exclusively for Addictive Keys and it works like this:

If you are using Addictive Keys while connected to the Internet, all presets and memos saved will be uploaded instantly to your XLN account. When working on more than one computer all your presets and memos are automatically kept in sync; do a fresh install on a new computer and the first time you start Addictive Keys all your old presets and memos will instantly become available. My Cloud keeps track of different versions of the presets you've saved and even stores deleted presets and memos so you can restore them at any time.

 You can also share presets through My Cloud. In Addictive Keys there's a Share button and it's also available in your account on the web site. Clicking the Share button will render a unique link for your preset; copy the link and send it to a friend – by vising the link your friend can add the preset to his/her own XLN user account. The next time your friend starts Addictive Keys the preset will automatically be downloaded and available in the Preset Browser.

SESSION SETTINGS

The Session Settings provides control over the performance elements of your instruments, such as relative and absolute tuning, pitch-bend, X-modulation and velocity response. These settings are saved along with all other settings when saving your song/arrangement. They are however not saved with your presets, or changed when you change presets or instruments.
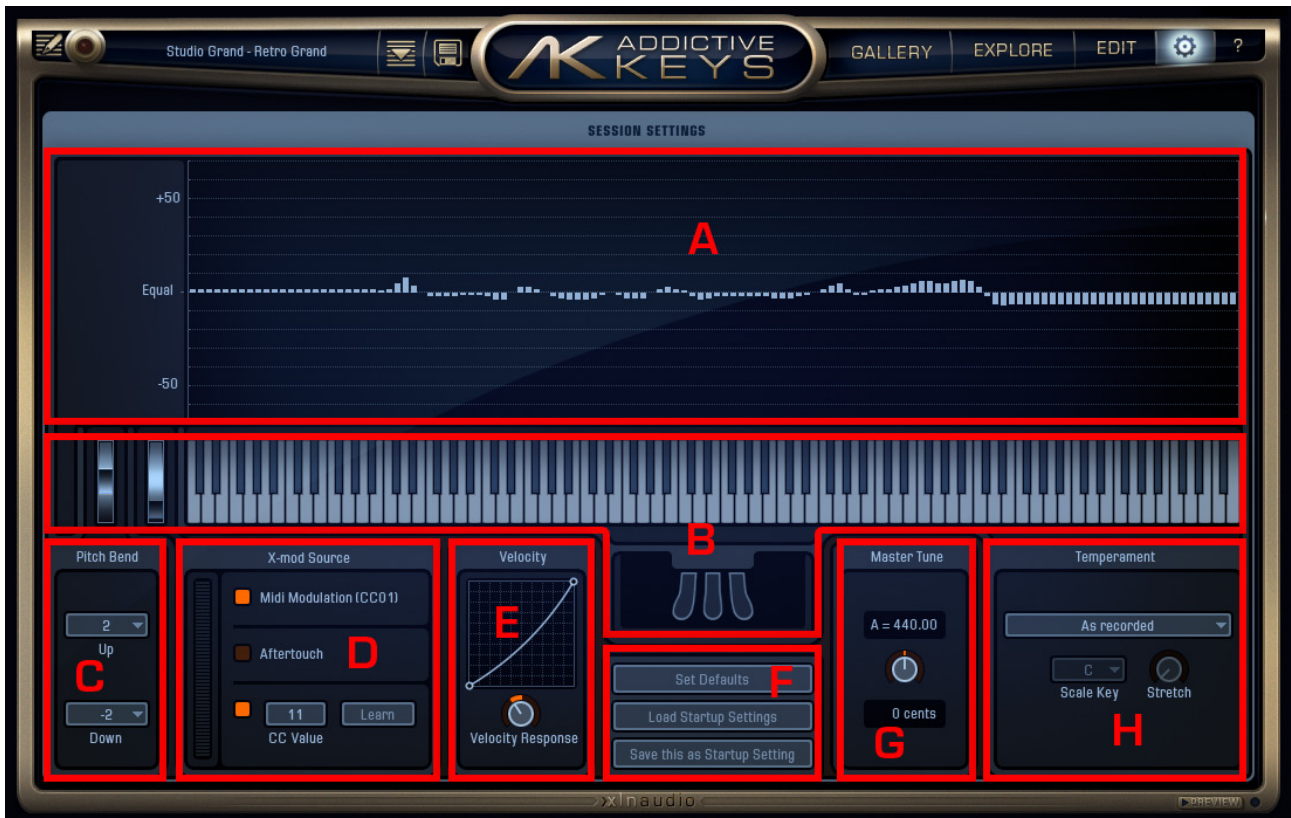
TEMPERAMENT GRAPH

The Temperament Graph serves as a visual reference for the tuning of the current instrument. The Graph updates in real time when tuning settings like Temperament, Master Tune, Scale Key, Stretch and Dissonance (on the EDIT page) are changed.

KEY AND PEDAL DISPLAY

The Key and Pedal display serves as a visual reference for MIDI input signals.

PITCH BEND

Set the pitch bend range for the pitch bend controller on your MIDI keyboard. Separate settings are available for upwards and downwards pitch bend.

X-MOD SOURCE

Set which MIDI parameter that will control the X-modulation. Choose from modulation wheel, aftertouch or a MIDI CC value. If you are not sure what CC value the knob/slider on your MIDI controller use then click the [Learn] button and move the knob/slider. Addictive Keys will then register the MIDI CC value and assign that knob/slider to control the X-modulation.

VELOCITY RESPONSE

Set the velocity response curve by rotating the knob or drag up/down in the graph.
Moving the mouse up/down close to the sides of the graph lets you limit the range.

SESSION SETTINGS

- Set Defaults: Sets all Session Settings to the default values.
- Load Startup Settings: Sets all Session Settings to the Startup values.
- Save this as Startup Setting: Saves the current Session Settings as the Startup Settings. Every time a new instance of Addictive Keys is opened, the Startup Settings are loaded.

MASTER TUNE

Edit the master tuning of your instrument in Hz or cents.

TEMPERAMENT SETTINGS

Adjust the tuning of your instrument by choosing from 30 different temperaments.

- Temperament dropdown: Click this field to open the temperament dropdown and select temperament.
- Scale Key: Some temperaments are key specific. This option lets you select the root key for your temperament.
- Stretch: Use this knob to stretch your tuning by sharpening the high notes and flattering the low notes.

HELP MENU

Click the [?] button to open the help dropdown menu with the following options:

- Open Quick Start PDF (opens a PDF guide on the basics of AD)
- Open Manual PDF (opens this document)
- XLN Audio Website (opens www.xlnaudio.com in your Internet browser)
- Video Tutorials (opens your Internet browser and goes to www.xlnaudio.com/videos-tutorial_videos
- About (same as clicking the logo)

AUTOMATION

The following parameters can be automated in Addicitve Keys:

• Channel Volume (Instrument Ch 1, 2 and 3, FX1, FX2, Master)

• FX Sends 1 and 2 for each Instrument Channel

• Master Channel Filter (Hi/Lo)

• X-Mod

CREDITS

The Addictive Keys software is created by the XLN Audio Team: Mattias Karlgren, Markus Dimdal, Martin Eklund, Lars Erlandsson, Niklas Möller, Thomas Larnhed, Andreas Mood, Staffan Gustafsson, Kim Lindberger, Kristin Sjöström, Tore Jarlo, Markus 'Majken' Höglund, Andy Simon, Gustaf Svenungsson.

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GUI Graphics: Bitplant

Additional Graphics: Martin Eklund & Staffan Gustafsson, 3D Graphics by Upper First

Testing and Manual: Tore Jarlo & Gustaf Svenungsson

Please visit www.xlnaudio.com for credits regarding the content products for Addictive Keys.

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To our excellent beta testers and preset tweakers.

The makers of fine teas and coffees around the world for keeping us going all those long hours.

Fresh pooooots!