

# OldBlackGrand PLEYEL

SETTINGS

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## OldBlackGrand User Guide

# Welcome to Acousticsamples

Thank you for using the OldBlackGrand library. We hope you enjoy playing the instrument and wish it supports your musical ideas or even better: inspire new ones.

In this User Guide we will provide you with an overview of how to use the OldBlackGrand library.

If you have any questions, feel free to email us at:  
**[samples@acousticsamples.com](mailto:samples@acousticsamples.com)**

or use the contact form on our website  
**[www.acousticsamples.net](http://www.acousticsamples.net)**

The OldBlackGrand library, produced by  
**Acousticsamples**



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## Requirements and Installation



# Interface and Parameters

The history of keyboard instruments is a fascinating one, and a key part of this history belongs to Pleyel & Cie Pianos - founded in 1807, they were the instruments of choice for some of the greatest composers of all time; Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky and Saint-Saëns to name a few. Frédéric Chopin famously referred to them as 'non plus ultra' - essentially he was saying pianos will never get any better than this. When you hear this legendary instrument, it's hard not to see where Chopin was coming from - there's a unique warmth and depth to the sound which is seldom heard in today's pianos.

This particular instrument is an F-71240 model from 1928, and we sampled it with appropriately vintage gear like a studer console and tube microphones. We also packed it full of innovative features to give you a huge amount control over the sound itself. The result is something truly special, so if you're a fan of pianos but tired of the usual piano VSTs, which are often virtually indistinguishable from the next, or if you already own dozens of virtual Steinway Bs or Ds...

...this might just be the instrument for you.

As well as being the go-to piano for many classical musicians over the centuries, this Pleyel serves jazz music equally well, particularly if you're writing in the style of the golden years. Don't forget to check out the rest of our catalogue if you're looking for instruments to use in a traditional jazz ensemble.

The demos are performed by [Jean-Michel Bernard](#) (former composer for Ray Charles, film music composer) and [Romain Collin](#), a French virtuoso jazz piano player based in New York City.



## Preferences

The OldBlackGrand is now in its 3rd version, and it more than holds its own against the best virtual modern pianos on the market today.

It's extremely playable straight out of the box, but there are many detailed and customizable features to help enhance the realism even further, each of which is explained in depth below.

- **The Release Volume:** the sound produced when you release a key whilst a note is being sustained.
- **The Key Noises:** the sound produced when you release a key and no notes are sustained.
- **The Pedal Noise:** the sound produced when you depress or release the pedal.
- **The Tone:** a quick way to make the piano sound brighter or darker.
- **The 'Sostenuto' CC,** also referred to as the middle pedal. This enables you to sustain select notes, whilst other notes remain dry.

- **The Polyphony.** If you lower the buffer, or simply want to be lighter on CPU, then increase or lower this value.
- **The Reverb.** We use a convolution reverb - the dry and wet parts can be adjusted separately and there is a generous selection of high quality Impulse Responses to choose from.
- **Round Robin.** We added a software round robin feature, this should be switched on for pieces with lots of repeated notes.

## Three microphone positions

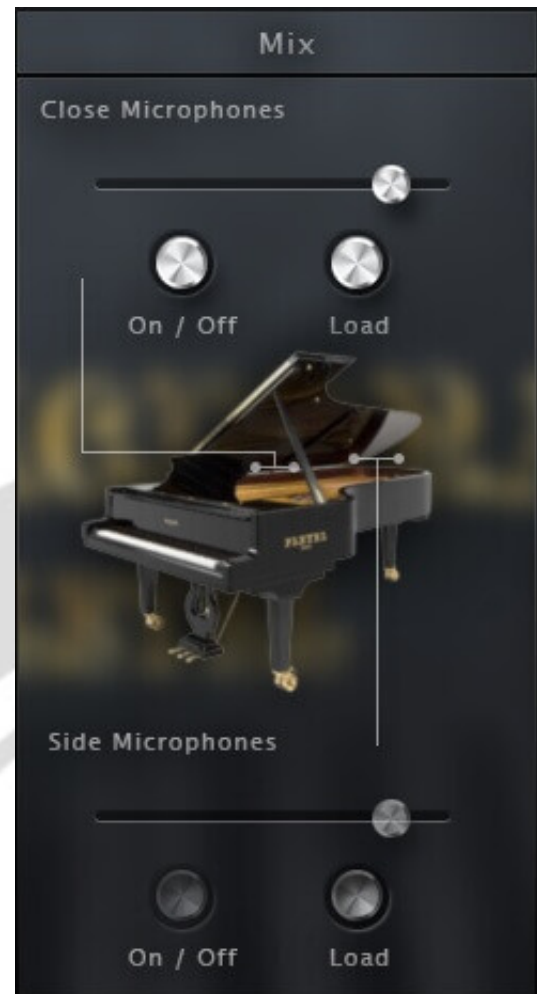
We recorded the Playel with two microphone positions:

- **Close:** A pair of microphones close to the strings inside the piano to provide deep bass sounds and rich resonances.
- **Side:** A pair of microphones in the well of the piano to lean more towards the perspective of the listener.

The microphone positions can be mixed individually to tailor the sound to your needs.

Each microphone has three different controls:

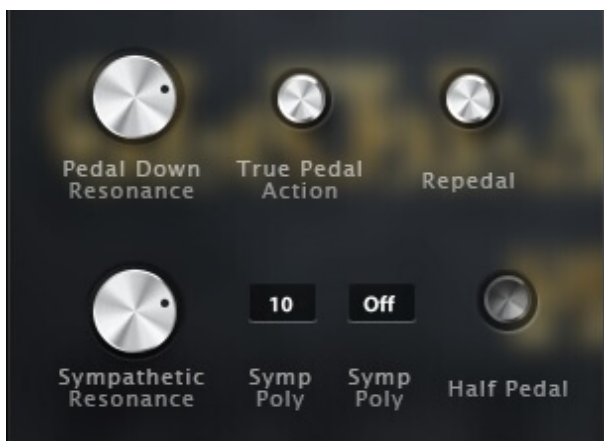
- **Gain.**
- **On / Off:** This enables and disables each microphone position.
- **Load/(Unload):** You can load or unload the samples of each position. If you're only planning to use one mic position, unload the other to save on RAM by simply clicking on the Load button again. The controls are greyed out when the samples are unloaded.



## Resonances

The resonances specific to a piano give a sort of a reverb effect when all of the strings start resonating.

There are two kinds of resonances that are important to capture for a virtual piano; the 'pedal down' resonance, and the sympathetic resonance between the held notes. Both of these effects are present in OldBlackGrand, and they can even be adjusted individually.



The Resonance controls operate as follows:

- **Pedal Down Resonance** controls the amount of the resonance when you depress the sustain pedal.
- The **True Pedal Action** introduces the progressive resonance from the sustain pedal when you hold a chord and depress the pedal afterwards.
- **Sympathetic Resonance** controls the volume of the sympathetic resonance. If you prefer the harmonics to sing out a bit more, this should be increased.
- **Symp Poly** controls how many voices you want to allow for the sympathetic resonance effect.

## Re-pedalling / Half pedalling

On a real piano, the pedal is not a simple on/off switch; there are a variety of techniques used, particularly in classical music.

- Re-pedalling allows you to "restart" a chord that has been released with the pedal if the decay has not yet ended. This is especially useful to blend chords together.
- Half pedalling is as its name suggests - the sounds made when the pedal is pressed down half-way. This offers a unique variation to the sound, and the decay is much quicker in the lower register.



The half pedal can be enabled or disabled from the interface, and you can also control the size of the CC zone where the half pedal effect will occur. Half pedal min and max are the minimum and maximum values of the sustain pedal CC.

## MIDI controls





Included in the V3 update are some MIDI controls. The sostenuto and sustain CC can be adjusted to suit the use of an expression pedal instead of a regular on/off pedal. You can also alter the MIDI curve, the dynamics and the velocity response to refine the library to your taste, keyboard and playing style.

- The **Velocity Sensitivity** controls the volume curve, making it easier to reach maximum velocity, without changing the range of the lowest and highest volume levels.
- The **Velocity Amount** controls the dynamics, so the minimum volume associated with the lowest velocity.
- The **MIDI Remapper** controls the mapping - which layer corresponds to which input.
- The **Min and Max Velocity** control the minimum velocity needed to create a sound, and the maximum velocity that can be reached.
- The **Sustain CC** is by default at 64 but can be changed to any other controller.
- The **Sostenuto CC** is by default at 66 but can be changed to any other controller.

# Features

12.89Gb uncompressed, 2Gb compressed in lossless flac format, around 3000 samples.

2 microphone positions that you can mix from the interface (close and rim).

9 Velocity layers for the sustain.

9 Velocities for the release.

Pedal down resonance and true pedal action.

Key noises samples.

Sustain pedal noises (up and down), triggered automatically.

Sostenuto (middle pedal).

Advanced midi controls.

Advanced UVI scripting giving you access to a simple yet powerfull interface and advanced features.



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