



## Sunbird User Guide

# Welcome to Acousticsamples

Thank you for using the Sunbird 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 Sunbird library.

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The Sunbird library, produced by  
Acousticsamples



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## Requirements and Installation



# Interface and Parameters

The Sunbird library is based on the legendary 1962 Gibson Hummingbird acoustic guitar.

The Hummingbird was created by Gibson in 1960, and it was the first square-shouldered dreadnought. It was designed to be extremely versatile so that it could cover many music genres, and the tone was designed to be deep without being too powerful, which is ideal for vocal accompaniment.

With all of this in mind, we sampled the instrument in painstaking detail, and together with our powerful strum, pattern and song engine, the Sunbird is the perfect tool for both accompaniment and solo playing.

As well as recording it with a pair of DPA microphones for a detailed stereo perspective, we used a U87 to capture both the bass and a precise mono perspective, and also using a contact pickup in order to be able to put the library through an amp simulation plug-in. We recorded many different styles of playing in incredible detail; all frets of all strings with upstrokes, downstrokes, round robins, releases, staccatos, mutes, palm mutes, hand blocks, slides, hammer ons, pull offs, retriggeres, fret noises, percussive sounds and other articulations. All of these details combined allow users to very accurately and very easily reproduce the performance of a live guitar player.

There are 4 basic modes; the *Solo mode* (usually for playing melodies), the *Chord mode* which helps make strums or picking very easy, the *Patterns mode* which does all of the strumming or picking for you and the *MIDI mode* that allows you to use your preferred midi guitar controller. These modes are selected using key switches (G5-C6).



## Strumming Machine

The Sunbird can strum in various ways, up, down, muted, and in legato, and it also allows finger picking. Everything is modeled from meticulously analyzing thousands upon thousands of chords played by live guitarists. Every aspect of the strumming engine can be tweaked to achieve the perfect sound.

The **chord recognition engine** converts any chord you play on your keyboard to ideal guitar voicing. The chord recognition is made through a database of thousands of standard chords, and as well as editing these chords, new ones can be added.

The **chord hammers** feature enables you to use left hand hammer ons and pull offs while strumming or picking.

The triggers are set from C4 to C5.

- C4 is the strum down,
- C#4 is the strum down muted,
- D4 is the strum up,
- D#4 is the strum up muted,
- E4, F4, G4, A4, B4 and C5 (the white keys) are for the 6 different strings,
- F#4 triggers the chord but shifted from the **Chord Slide** value,
- G#4 stops the chord and play a hand mute sample,
- A#4 stops the chord and plays slide down samples,

A small chord panel displays the chord currently being played and the selected octave range. Immediately beneath this panel is access to a **voicing** menu that contains all of the possible voicings of that chord on a guitar, and each chord can be selected for each octave.

In this panel, the chord currently being played can also be edited; click on the edit button, then change the chord and hit apply to override that chord voicing, or press insert to add that chord to the list of available voicings for that chord.

You can even export and load a chord configuration using the export and load buttons. The chord configuration will also contain the information present in the chord builder if you used it.

The **Chord Mode** can be set in two positions,

- The **Guitar mode** that separates the notes selection from the triggers. So pressing a chord with the left hand will only make the soft sounds that your left hand would make on a real guitar and you need to trigger the chords or the single strings with the right hand.
- The **Piano mode** will trigger the chords as soon as you press a chord, the upstrokes and downstrokes are automatic depending on the position in the current bar. Repeating a chord can be done by releasing and replaying any of the notes contained in the chord. It can be more intuitive, but does not allow for as much detail and realism when you play the chords.

The **UP/DOWN Trigger** controls if the automatic strum up and down is engaged. If set to manual, C4 is the strum down and D4 is the strum up. If set to Auto, C4 acts as a strum up or down depending on the position in the current bar.

The **Let Ring** controls whether the chord stops when you release your right hand. This can be handy for fast/complex chord progressions.

The **Mixed Mode** is as its name implies a mix of the solo mode and the chord mode. If you play chords a regular melody with one note at a time or two as a legato, it will play single notes or hammers and slides as selected in the solo mode. If you play 3 notes or more or play two notes simultaneously, the chord mode is engaged and it will strum that chord just like in the piano mode.

The **Accent**, **Strum Speed** and **Strum Center** are all linked to the chord simulation. We extracted the data from hundreds of real guitar strums and allow you to control these parameters.

- **Accent** controls how hard it is to trigger all of the 6 strings with velocity, the min strum number defines the minimum number of strings that are played in a strum at the lowest velocity.
- **Strum Speed** controls the overall time needed to strum all 6 strings.
- **Strum Center** is basically your right hand vertical position over the strings, if it is at the top (position 1), then you will hear more of the first and second string and if you are at the bottom (position 6), you will hear more of the last two strings.

The **Clean Play** controls how dirty and precise you want the playing to be, if set at 6, the engine will always use clean samples, but if at 1, it will mostly use samples of "not pressed well" notes.

The **Chord Hammers** is probably whatmakes the library the most realistic. It allows you to go from one chord to another and play the hammer ons and pull offs between them. We used it a lot in the finger picking demo.

The **Capo** simulates a real capo, you can choose to make it transpose the chords or not, transposing can be useful if you want to play chords high on the neck.

The **Transpose** is related to the Capo function. And it will decide if the Capo actually transposes the chord or not. For example an E chord with the Capo at fret one will sound like an F chord without the transpose function, if you enable it, the E chord will stay an E chord, but the engine will look for an alternate position to play it starting from the capo.

The **Auto Voicing** feature enables the different guitar chord positions depending on the octave in which it is played. You can disable it if you play on a small controller or just want to play the first position.



## Realistic patterns

The patterns mode is very similar to the chord mode, the chord recognition engine works the same way, but this time the triggers are not simple strums anymore, they are a set of patterns that you can loop, adapt to the tempo or the metrics, change the velocity in real time using a controller, synch to your host, add groove to.

You can choose from a large selection of patterns or create your using the pattern maker and assign them to each trigger to create a full song in a few clicks.

You can assign 13 different patterns of your choice to 13 different notes. Clicking on one of the keys on the interface will launch the pattern, triggering another one will stop the first one and start the new one. You can also trigger the patterns from the keyboard using the notes from C4 to C5. By default releasing the keys will stop the pattern. The velocity at which you press the key will determine the velocity of the whole pattern.

The **Parameters** can change a few aspects of the current pattern.

- **Let Ring** determines if the "off" events contained in the pattern will be played or not,
- **Length** controls the length of the pattern, it can be anything from 1 to the length of the pattern and can be adapted the metrics of your song (even odd numbers),

- **Speed** you can play the pattern at different speeds, half or double speed for example,
- **Link** makes the let ring, length and speed values of the patterns global for all patterns or only for the selected pattern. If it is on, then changing the let ring will affect all of the patterns, and when it is off, only the currently selected one,
- **Average Vel** is the center velocity or the pattern, it starts at the velocity of the trigger you played, but can also be modulated over time using a midi controller. By default, we use the modulation wheel to control it,
- **Deviation** is the difference between the lowest and the highest velocity of the MIDI events composing the pattern, it can also be modulated in real time,
- **Shuffle** adds groove to the pattern, we created a complex algorithm to allow for shuffle without quantizing, so you keep the realism and are still able to add some groove,
- **Latch** determines if releasing a key will stop the pattern or not, when turned on, pressing a key will launch the pattern and you will need to press it again to stop it,
- **Bar Sync** will sync your playing to the bars, meaning that whenever you play a key, the pattern will not start until the next bar starts, this is useful only when working in a sequencer,



## Pattern Maker

Creating realistic guitar patterns has never been easier. You can create strumming, picking, or finger picking patterns in seconds and even make them of an infinite size.

We even made the sharing of these patterns easy, just save them and send them to other users, the database can only grow!

The Pattern Maker is an improved step sequencer made especially for guitar strumming. Each fret represents a quarter note and you can either add a whole chord or just a single string (if the link icon is unselected). If multiple events are in the same step, they will be strummed following our strum engine parameters.

You can control a few aspects of the pattern you create.

- The **velocity** of each event can be changed by selecting an event and dragging the mouse over it, if you set the velocity to 0, the event will be removed,
- The **up and down** arrows at the top control the way you strum the chord (up or down),
- You can **mute** a string completely by clicking on the speaker icon at the left of the sequencer,
- You can play a **muted chord** by pressing the mute button on each step, The Stop buttons allow you to release a chord at the end of each step,
- The **Strum Speed** controls the speed of the strumming of the pattern,
- The **Shuffle** and **Humanize** knobs are general parameters and control the same thing as the ones

present on the patterns panel,

You can create as many pattern pages as you want, giving you access to many variations by just pressing one key. Of course you can copy the content of one page to another, reset a page or the whole pattern. You can also import the factory presets and modify them as you want, save your patterns, reload them and preview or add them to the pattern list. Once you click the "Add to pattern" button, the pattern you created will appear at the bottom of the patterns list in the pattern panel.



## Song Builder

The song builder panel is the feature that will let you compose songs extremely quickly. Sometimes playing a series of chords can be complicated, especially if you are not an advanced keyboardist. The song builder allows you to decide which chord will be triggered when selecting only one note. For example pressing only the C will be recognized as a C Major. You can repeat the operation for the whole 12 notes of the octave and this way construct your songs and play them easily.

We included a selection of presets to give song ideas, chord progressions, modes or chord types.

Combine this with the patterns and pressing two keys at the same time is enough to play a song.

The **song builder** is available in chord mode or in patterns mode.

You can use **set all chords** using the first menu, it will put the same chord on all of the 12 notes.

The **song presets** are a set of predefined songs with the right chord progressions, you can change the root if needed and the progression is detailed under song info.

The **mode presets** is a list of most music modes and their corresponding chord progressions, you can change the root of needed.

You can now change the type of each chord along with its root. So it makes it easy to play songs that have different chords for the same root note.

When selecting one of the presets, some keys will appear in red and the corresponding chord will be a "5th".

This means that there is no "valid" chord for this note in the selected song or scale. You can of course set each chord manually by clicking on them and selecting its kind, even starting from a preset.



## Solo mode, automatic hand position

The solo mode is very simple, and is suited to play melodies. It uses a smart hand position system that decides for you where a real guitarist would put his hand and which string he would play. A piano only has one middle C for example, but a guitar offers a few different options and our script will decide it for you. You can of course deactivate it and use only the first hand position if you want.

The Sunbird features our powerful legato engine that will automatically trigger legato, hammer ons, pull offs, or slides and the legato distance will define the maximum interval in which the legato will apply.

You also have access to key switches to play palm mutes, harmonics (flageolets) or even percussion sounds and control the legato engine.

The **legato mode** controls which sample will be triggered when you play legato notes on your keyboard, for example press C2 and then C#2 without depressing C2.

- **Hammer** , hammer on and pull-off samples will be triggered.
- **Slide** will trigger slide up and slide down samples.
- **Legato** will trigger regular sustain samples but will still stop the first played note.
- **Off** deactivates the legato function.

The **legato distance** controls the interval in which the legato function is active.

The **slide speed** is active only when the **Slide** legato mode is selected and controls the speed of the slide.

The **string selection** enables the automatic string and fret selection or constrains the hand to the first position or the position of your choice.

Here is a list of the keyswitches.

- **F0** will enable the **Palm mutes** when you press it and disable it when it is depressed. You can also toggle between palm and regular notes by pressing F#5.
- **F#0** enabled the **Slide legato mode**.
- **G0** enabled the **simple legato mode**.
- **G#0** completely disables the **legato mode**.
- **A0** plays **fret noises**.
- **A#0** plays a **right hand hit** on the strings.
- **B0** to **D1** play the **percussions sounds**.
- **D#1** enables the **harmonics (flageolets)** sounds, if you press it and play, it will trigger only harmonics and release them when you release the **D#1** note.



## Preferences / Microphone mixing

The Sunbird library comes with 3 microphones perspectives, a stereo pair of DPA and you can adjust the volume of each of them. Every aspect of the library can be tweaked, the release, fret and pre-notes volumes, as well as the midi response of your keyboard.

A three band EQ and a reverb module can be adjusted from the preferences panel, and you can enable and load/unload the pickup or the microphones.

The Preferences panel / Microphones mixing panel can be opened by clicking at the bottom of the interface, in there you have access to all of the different parameters of the library.

The **Release Vol** controls the volume of the release samples,

The **Auto Fret noise vol** controls the volume of the automatically generated fret noises, they happen when the left hand moves in solo mode and when you change chord in the chord mode,

The **Pre Notes Vol** controls the volume of the soft noises your left hand makes when selecting a chord in chord/Guitar mode,

The **Dynamics** controls the volume of the lowest velocity,

The **Velocity Curve** controls the volume response of the library to velocity,

The **Midi Sensitivity** is some kind of a midi remapper, and it controls how hard you need to press a key for it to trigger a certain velocity,

The **Reverb Amount** and **Room size** are two simple controls for the UVI SparkVerb, and you can tweak it a little more using the FX section in UVI Workstation.

You can choose which playing style (**picking** or **finger picking**) will be used for every trigger mode.

The Palm Length controls how long the palm mutes last,

The **EQ** is a simple 3 band EQ,

You can load / unload / enable / disable / and change the volume of each microphone perspective.

You can also set the whole output as **mono** or **stereo**.



## MIDI guitar

If you own a MIDI guitar and want to expand its sound capabilities, then the MIDI mode is for you, all you need to do is select the 7 different MIDI channels your guitar outputs and you are ready to play.

The **MIDI guitar** mode allows you to play the Sunbird using a midi guitar controller, all you need to do is select the 6 midi channels. You maybe have to use the **set patch as omni** to allow the plugin to respond to all midi channels.

# Features

8.16Gb uncompressed, 1.53Gb compressed in lossless flac format, around 13300 samples.

Strumming engine (features chord recognition and a smart strumming technique to produce guitar-like chords) and complete control of all its parameters.

67 realistic patterns for easy strumming, picking and advanced playing styles.

Integrated song builder to create songs within minutes and very easily

Integrated pattern builder to automatically strum your chords

Legato script to play natural hammer ons, pull offs and slides.

Natural hand placement simulation.

39 different samples per fret and all 21 fret sampled for each string.

Multi velocity Hammer on, pull off, slides up, slides down, mutes, ghost notes, pre notes.

Included sparkVerb®.

Control over the two microphones perspectives and pickup volumes.

Advanced bend control.

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

and more...

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