

Instructions for the use of MIDI files and utilities.

The files on this CD were created from Reproducing Piano rolls made in the first half of the 20th Century. This was the heyday of Classical piano. It was also the golden age of American Popular Music. If this document was provided with a sample set, please note that the files are merely 30-second samples of the original files.

These files may be played on any MIDI piano, synthesizer or computer sound card. They are MIDI type 0 with a piano 0 instrument definition. There are several ways that the files may be used with modern solenoid pianos. Files may be copied to media suitable to the piano (using the appropriate software) or they may be played from a computer or other MIDI file player through the MIDI input of the piano. Playing through the MIDI input is the most versatile method as there is more information and control available with the software file players than on most pianos. Display of title, composer and performer information is available and playlists may be created for extended playing and reuse. The included MIDI file player is probably best suited to this end, but the files have been carefully formatted to display the maximum amount of information in the VanBascos Karaoke player as well. There is no text information displayed by the Windows Media Player as it does not have this feature.

For Mac users, a shareware MIDI file player is included. Look in the QMIDI folder.

Files are provided in two formats, with and without soft pedal control. Depending on what piano they are played on, one set might be preferred over the other. Some pianos do not have soft pedals at all but you may still prefer the soft pedal files. The files without soft pedal have velocity (loudness) reduction when the soft pedal was used in the original player piano roll. Sample sets contain only files without soft pedal control.

The dynamics coded into the files are intended to model the performance of Reproducing Pianos playing their original rolls. Variation will occur from system to system and from file to file. Some pianos will not handle the wide dynamic range of some of the pieces and it may be necessary to adjust the volume control on the piano or to modify the files to suit the piano and acoustic environment. Utilities are provided to assist with these modifications.

Several utility programs are provided on the distribution CD. They are also available from : <http://www.spencerserolls.com/Files4Download.html>
They are described below along with a brief discussion of their use. More detailed instructions are available in other documents as well as in help files in the graphical programs. It is recommended that the original MIDI files be retained and that experimentation with the various utilities be done on copies.

To copy MIDI files to CDs for use with modern reproducing pianos, a program called Mid2PianoCD is required. It may be downloaded from this link <http://dp70.dyndns.org/mid2pianocd/>

The command line programs are all quite simple to use and need little more discussion than what appears below. Double click the program exe to run and answer the few questions the program asks.

All command line programs work in batch mode and process every file in a specified folder. When prompted, the folder path may be typed manually but it is much easier and more accurate to use the following method: Open the folder in My Computer or the Windows Explorer and click the folder name in the address bar to highlight it. Then right click and select “copy”. Return to the program window and click inside it. The folder name will be pasted to the program in Windows 98 and some installations of Windows XP. If immediate pasting does not occur, click again or right click and select “paste”. Other copy and paste methods may also be used.

MIDI file player:

This program has an extensive user manual document included on the CD. It is the preferred playlist player for these MIDI files and has features not found in any other program. Direct X 9 or later is required for this program to work. An updater for Direct X 9 is included on the CD.

Midimod2:

This graphical program contains a help file accessible by clicking the “help” button in the program window. Various functions are provided including the ability to modify MIDI file velocities (loudness.) It works like a graphical equalizer for Velocity. Several other features are included that may be useful for Disklavier and PianoDisc owners.

MIDI Virtual Keyboard:

This graphical program contains a help file, accessible by clicking the “help” button in the program window. MIDI output may be directed to any MIDI device on the computer and therefore to an attached piano. Notes may be played singly, held, or repeated in various ways in order to test piano responsiveness, evenness of playing, etc.

The following programs are all command line based:

Keyword_2_Excel:

This program produces Excel files listing all MIDI text keywords found in all files in a selected folder. Also included is a hyperlink for each file which will allow you to play the files directly from the Excel sheet with the default MIDI file player. The full search and sort facilities of Excel may be used to find and play a vast selection of MIDI files. Any number of folders may be listed to Excel sheets and these may be combined producing an index to any and all MIDI files on the computer. The hyperlinks will work as long as the file names and locations are not changed.

Installations vary widely and some setup may be required to allow dynamic data exchange to work properly.

Later versions of Excel may present a warning every time a file is opened. To defeat this, either use an older version or try the following registry patch to turn off the warnings.

To “fall back” and use Office 9 or 10 behavior all you need to do is to add a value to the Windows registry. Do not attempt this if you are not familiar with regedit or another registry editor.

The location for the entry is

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Office\11.0\Common

- From here add a new key called Security
- Under this key add a DWORD Value called DisableHyperlinkWarning
- Set the DisableHyperlinkWarning value to 1

Setting the DisableHyperlinkWarning value to 1 overrides Office11 hyperlink warnings. If the value is set to 0 then the warnings are enabled again.

Rename as Title Plus:

This program will rename the file with a Windows compatible long file name which is taken from the internal title keyword. The performer’s name is added

in () to distinguish different performances. In addition, if a file is to be written that would have the same name as an existing file, the old file name is appended to the end of the name to keep them unique. Maximum file name length may be specified. The default value is 100 characters.

Rename as Track:

This program will rename the file with a windows compatible long file name which is taken from the first internal track name. If a file is to be written that would have the same name as an existing file, the old file name is appended to the end of the name to keep them unique. The length of the file name may be limited to any number of characters.

Std_MIDI_pedal_adjuster:

Sustain pedal onset and release timing may be adjusted with this program. This may be necessary to match individual piano pedal properties or to suit individual taste. Minor adjustments are recommended as the results of large timing changes can be unpredictable.

MIDI Equalizer:

This works like a graphic equalizer for the piano keyboard. Any or all keys may have a velocity scaling applied. This allows for compensation for piano scale or room acoustics.

MIDI text reformatter:

The text data in the MIDI files has been carefully formatted so as to display optimally in the VanBascos Karaoke player. If files are edited by Cakewalk (and possibly by other programs) the formatting will be altered. Cakewalk appends a line feed character to every text event. The result is that the text will appear double spaced and not fit in the Karaoke window. This program will remove the double spacing and restore the original appearance.