

GERANIUM PRODUCTION

INS BROWSER FOR LIVE

USER MANUAL
Version 1.6 beta

English edition

Cédric Lawde - Geranium Production

www.geraniumproduction.be | info@geraniumproduction.be

CONTENTS

- 01 Introduction
- 02 System requirements
- 03 .ins instrument files
- 04 First launch
- 05 Adding an instrument file
- 06 MIDI configuration
- 07 MIDI active
- 08 Configuration menu
- 09 Choosing an instrument and definition
- 10 Filtering banks
- 11 Searching for a preset
- 12 Browsing the preset list
- 13 Selecting and sending a preset
- 14 Understanding Bank, Sub and Program
- 15 Copying Bank, Sub and Program
- 16 MIDI controllers
- 17 Status information
- 18 Saving a configuration
- 19 MIDI Panic
- 20 Using Ableton Live or another DAW
- 21 Troubleshooting
- 22 Beta version and support
- 23 Legal notices
- 24 Useful resources

01 INTRODUCTION

INS Browser for Live is a Windows application designed to make it easier to explore and select sounds on a hardware synthesizer from a computer.

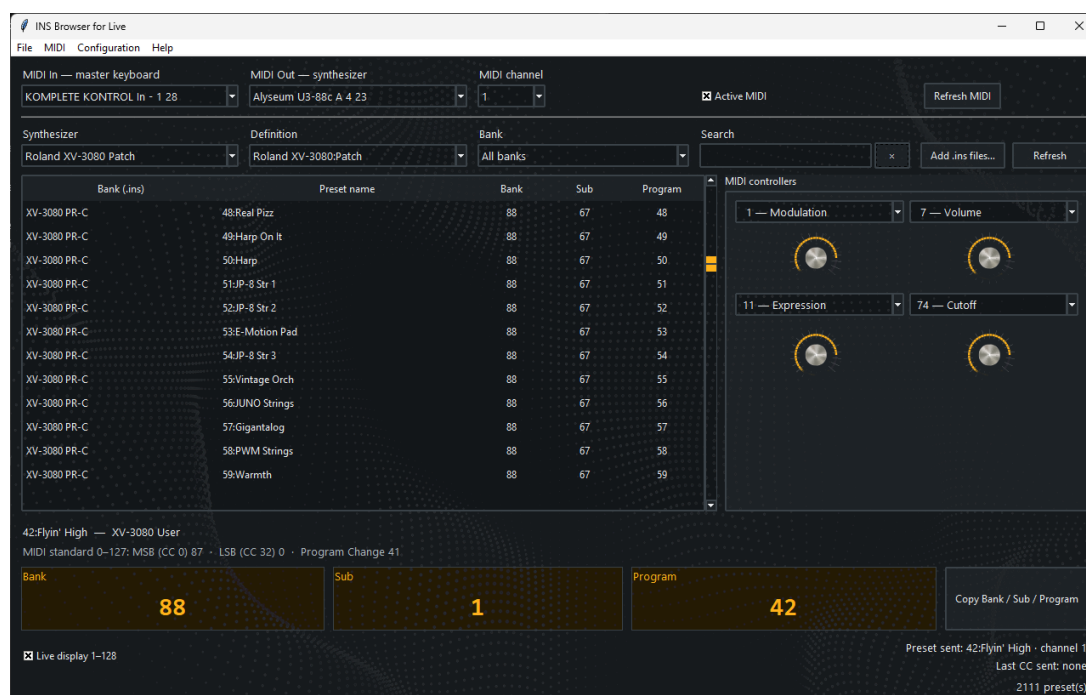
The application reads Cakewalk Instrument Definition files in .ins format and displays their contents as a clear, directly usable list. Selecting a preset sends the required MIDI messages to the synthesizer:

- Bank Select MSB - MIDI controller CC 0
- Bank Select LSB - MIDI controller CC 32
- Program Change

INS Browser for Live was designed for use with Ableton Live, but it can also work with other digital audio workstations or as a standalone application.

The application can, in particular:

- browse a synthesizer's banks and presets
- search for a preset by name
- filter presets by bank
- send program changes directly
- relay notes and, optionally, MIDI controller messages from a master keyboard
- control four MIDI controllers from the interface
- save different working configurations



Overview of INS Browser for Live 1.6 beta.

02 SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

To use INS Browser for Live, you need:

- Windows
- a MIDI-compatible hardware synthesizer
- a MIDI interface or USB-MIDI connection
- at least one Cakewalk Instrument Definition file in .ins format for the synthesizer
- optionally, a MIDI master keyboard (required when using a rack synthesizer)
- optionally, audio software such as Ableton Live

No Internet connection is required to use the application.

03 .INS INSTRUMENT FILES

The .ins format, known as Instrument Definition, was originally created for Cakewalk software, including Cakewalk SONAR. It describes an instrument's MIDI organization: bank names, program names, Bank Select MSB and LSB values and, depending on the file, MIDI controller names.

INS Browser for Live reuses these definitions to display a synthesizer's presets in an interface that is independent of Cakewalk. An .ins file is not a sound, a sample or a synthesizer backup. It is a text file that describes the instrument's MIDI mapping.

COMPATIBILITY

An .ins file must match the exact synthesizer model and, where applicable, its operating mode. A definition created for a different model or revision may select incorrect banks or programs.

For more information, see the following resources:

- [Cakewalk SONAR - official website](#)
- [Instrument Definitions - Cakewalk forum topic](#)
- [Yamaha - Cakewalk Instrument Definition files for Yamaha synthesizers](#)

Other manufacturers, user communities and specialist websites may also provide .ins files. Always check their source and compatibility with your instrument before use.

04 FIRST LAUNCH

Launch the INS Browser for Live executable. Windows may display a warning because the executable is not signed; you can nevertheless run the application.

At startup, the application looks for available .ins files in its instruments folder. If this folder does not yet exist, it is created automatically.

The application configuration is stored locally. INS Browser for Live does not modify the contents of the .ins files it uses.

05 ADDING AN INSTRUMENT FILE

- 1 Click Add .ins files...
- 2 Select one or more .ins files.
- 3 Confirm your selection.
- 4 Click Refresh if the new definition does not appear immediately.

The added files are copied to the application's instruments folder. You can also place .ins files in this folder manually before launching INS Browser for Live.

06 MIDI CONFIGURATION

The upper part of the window contains the main MIDI settings.

Using Windows MIDI Services is recommended. Its multi-client operation allows several applications - for example, your DAW and INS Browser for Live - to use the same MIDI device simultaneously. With the legacy Windows MIDI system, some drivers allow a MIDI port to be opened by only one application at a time. In that case, you must close the port in your DAW before using it in INS Browser for Live, or vice versa. This limitation also depends on the device and its MIDI driver.

MIDI input - master keyboard

Select the port for the keyboard or MIDI controller you want to use. This input is optional when the synthesizer has its own keyboard: INS Browser for Live can be used simply to select presets and operate the on-screen controllers.

MIDI output - synthesizer

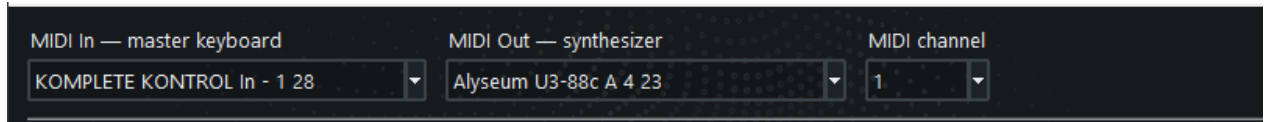
Select the MIDI port connected to the synthesizer. Bank changes, program changes and MIDI controller messages generated by the application are sent to this output.

MIDI channel

Select the channel used by the synthesizer, from 1 to 16. Messages relayed from the master keyboard are automatically sent on the channel selected in INS Browser for Live.

Refresh MIDI

The Refresh MIDI button reloads the list of available ports. Use this command after connecting, disconnecting or restarting a MIDI device.



Selecting the MIDI input, output and channel.

07 MIDI ACTIVE

MIDI active is enabled by default. When it is enabled, INS Browser for Live relays the permitted messages from the MIDI input to the MIDI output.

When it is disabled, the master keyboard is no longer relayed to the synthesizer. The application can still send changes for presets selected in the list and messages generated by the four on-screen MIDI controllers.

08 CONFIGURATION MENU

The Configuration menu lets you choose the MIDI relay mode and interface language.

8.1 MIDI relay mode

MIDI Relay - Notes only

This mode is selected by default.

INS Browser for Live relays notes played on the master keyboard but does not relay Control Change messages. This mode is suitable when MIDI controllers are already handled by the audio software.

MIDI Relay - Notes and CC

In this mode, INS Browser for Live relays notes as well as Control Change messages from the master keyboard.

You can therefore use the faders, knobs and wheels on your MIDI controller directly to test or adjust synthesizer parameters.

To avoid unnecessary transmissions, INS Browser for Live does not resend a CC message that is strictly identical to the previous message for the same channel and controller number.

8.2 Language

INS Browser for Live is available in French and English.

When you choose another language, the application restarts automatically to apply the change. The selected language is retained for subsequent launches.

09 CHOOSING AN INSTRUMENT AND DEFINITION

Use the Synthesizer and Definition lists to select the section of the .ins file you want to view. A single file may contain several instruments or several MIDI definitions. The preset list is updated automatically when you change the synthesizer or definition.

10 FILTERING BANKS

The Bank list lets you display all available banks or only presets belonging to a specific bank. The bank filter can be combined with the search field.

11 SEARCHING FOR A PRESET

Enter part of the name in the Search field. The list is filtered as you type; you do not need to know the preset's full name. The button marked with a cross clears the search.

12 BROWSING THE PRESET LIST

The main list displays the bank name, preset name, Bank value, Sub value and program number.

You can browse the list with the mouse, mouse wheel, scroll bar or keyboard navigation keys when the list has focus. Click a column heading to sort the presets by that column.

The application's graphic background moves slightly according to the position of the selected preset. This visual effect has no impact on MIDI operation.

Synthesizer

Definition

Bank

Sea

Roland XV-3080 Patch

Roland XV-3080:Patch

All banks

Bank (.ins)	Preset name	Bank	Sub	Program
XV-3080 PR-C	48:Real Pizz	88	67	48
XV-3080 PR-C	49:Harp On It	88	67	49
XV-3080 PR-C	50:Harp	88	67	50
XV-3080 PR-C	51:JP-8 Str 1	88	67	51
XV-3080 PR-C	52:JP-8 Str 2	88	67	52
XV-3080 PR-C	53:E-Motion Pad	88	67	53
XV-3080 PR-C	54:JP-8 Str 3	88	67	54
XV-3080 PR-C	55:Vintage Orch	88	67	55
XV-3080 PR-C	56:JUNO Strings	88	67	56
XV-3080 PR-C	57:Gigantalog	88	67	57
XV-3080 PR-C	58:PWM Strings	88	67	58
XV-3080 PR-C	59:Warmth	88	67	59

Filters, search and navigation in the preset list.

13 SELECTING AND SENDING A PRESET

Click a preset to select it. INS Browser for Live then sends the following to the synthesizer on the selected channel:

- 1 the Bank Select MSB value via controller CC 0
- 2 the Bank Select LSB value via controller CC 32
- 3 the corresponding Program Change message

The name of the last preset sent appears in the status area at the bottom right of the window.

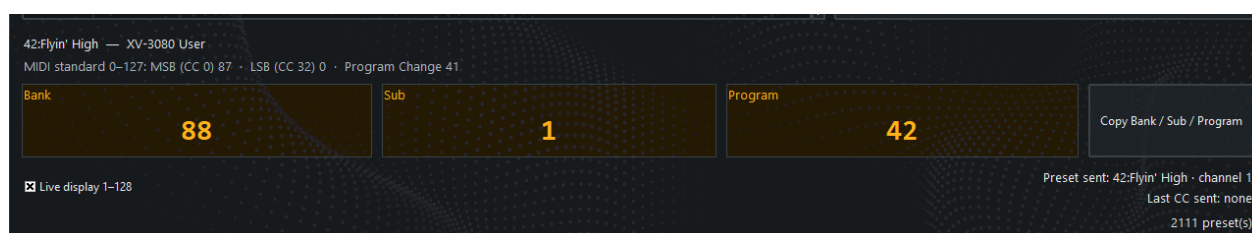
14 UNDERSTANDING BANK, SUB AND PROGRAM

- Bank corresponds to Bank Select MSB, or CC 0
- Sub corresponds to Bank Select LSB, or CC 32
- Program corresponds to Program Change

An information line also shows the standard MIDI values from 0 to 127.

Live display 1-128

When Live display 1-128 is enabled, the large displays show values from 1 to 128 to match Ableton Live's display convention. This option changes only how the numbers are presented: the MIDI values actually sent remain compliant with the MIDI standard, from 0 to 127.



Standard MIDI information and the Bank, Sub and Program displays.

15 COPYING BANK, SUB AND PROGRAM

The Copy Bank / Sub / Program button copies the selected preset's values to the clipboard as text. You can then paste them into Ableton Live, a document or any other application. Double-clicking a preset also copies this information.

When Live display 1-128 is enabled, the copied values match the display intended for Ableton Live.

16 MIDI CONTROLLERS

INS Browser for Live provides four configurable MIDI controllers.

The controller numbers and names shown in the drop-down lists come from the MIDI definition in the selected .ins file. They therefore correspond to the controllers documented for the relevant synthesizer. When no specific name is defined in the .ins file, the controller is shown with a generic label associated with its CC number.

For each controller

- 1 select a CC number from the drop-down list
- 2 move the knob to choose a value from 0 to 127
- 3 the message is sent to the synthesizer immediately

Full controller names are displayed in the drop-down lists. The list width adjusts automatically when a label is particularly long.

Operating the knobs

You can change a value:

- by dragging the mouse vertically
- with the mouse wheel
- with the available keyboard commands when the control has focus

The orange progress ring around the knob represents the current MIDI value. To avoid unnecessary transmissions, a CC message that is strictly identical to the last message already sent for the same channel and controller is not retransmitted.



The four configurable MIDI controllers.

17 STATUS INFORMATION

Last preset sent

This line shows the last preset transmitted to the synthesizer and the MIDI channel used.

Last CC sent

This line shows the last Control Change message actually transmitted: controller number, value sent and MIDI channel used. If an identical message is blocked, the status does not show it as a new transmission.

18 SAVING A CONFIGURATION

INS Browser for Live can save a complete configuration in an `.inslive.json` file. A configuration can store, among other things:

- MIDI input and output
- MIDI channel
- the state of MIDI active
- MIDI relay mode
- the selected synthesizer, definition and bank
- 1-128 display mode
- the assignment and last value of the four MIDI controllers

To identify MIDI devices, INS Browser for Live stores the exact names of the input and output ports as presented to Windows by their drivers. When opening a configuration, the application looks for ports with the same names. If a port name has changed - for example, after a driver update, connection to another USB port or use of the configuration on another computer - the relevant device may not be selected automatically. In that case, manually select the MIDI input or output again, then save the configuration to update the stored names.

Use the File menu to save or open a configuration. This feature lets you prepare several environments for different synthesizers, live performances or projects.

19 MIDI PANIC

If a note becomes stuck or the synthesizer continues producing sound after a MIDI interruption, use the MIDI Panic command in the MIDI menu.

This command sends, in particular, Sustain Off - CC 64 and All Notes Off - CC 123 on all sixteen MIDI channels to maximize the chance of stopping hanging notes immediately.

20 USING ABLETON LIVE OR ANOTHER DAW

Direct use

Select the master keyboard as the input in INS Browser for Live and the synthesizer as the output. In this case, leave MIDI active enabled.

Using DAW monitoring

If Ableton Live or another DAW is already sending a MIDI sequence to the synthesizer, disable MIDI active in INS Browser for Live.

The DAW then continues to send the sequence notes, while INS Browser for Live no longer relays notes from the master keyboard. This prevents doubled notes.

Preset changes and the four controllers shown in INS Browser for Live remain available. You can therefore let a sequence loop in the DAW and browse different presets to find the sound that suits it best.

This workflow requires the DAW and INS Browser for Live to access the same MIDI output simultaneously. Windows MIDI Services or a multi-client MIDI driver is recommended for this configuration.

AVOID DOUBLED NOTES

When audio software already relays the master keyboard to the synthesizer, disable MIDI active in INS Browser for Live so that notes are not sent twice.

21 TROUBLESHOOTING

No MIDI port appears

Check that the device is connected correctly and recognized by Windows, then click Refresh MIDI. If necessary, close other applications that may be using the MIDI port exclusively.

No sound is produced

Check the MIDI output, selected channel, synthesizer audio connections, its receive channel and the monitoring status in the audio software.

Notes are played twice

Disable MIDI active in INS Browser for Live or disable the corresponding MIDI monitoring in the DAW.

The resulting preset does not match the selected name

Check that the .ins file exactly matches the synthesizer model and active mode, that the channel is correct and that no other software is sending bank or program changes at the same time.

A controller does not seem to resend its value

INS Browser for Live intentionally blocks two successive CC messages that are strictly identical. Change the value to trigger a new transmission.

A note remains stuck

Use the MIDI Panic command immediately.

22 BETA VERSION AND SUPPORT

INS Browser for Live 1.6 beta is an advanced development version. Although its main features are operational, some behavior may vary depending on the MIDI driver, synthesizer, .ins file structure, Windows configuration and other MIDI applications open at the same time.

To send feedback: info@geraniumproduction.be

23 LEGAL NOTICES

Software

© 2026 Cédric - Geranium Production. All rights reserved.

INS Browser for Live, its code, interface and graphic elements may not be reproduced, distributed, adapted or exploited without the author's prior permission, except where otherwise provided by law.

Documentation

© 2026 Cédric - Geranium Production. Some rights reserved.

This user manual is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International license (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

The documentation may be shared in its original form, provided that the author is credited, it is not used commercially and no modified version is distributed without permission.

License: creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.en

Website: www.geraniumproduction.be

Contact: info@geraniumproduction.be

24 USEFUL RESOURCES

- [Geranium Production](#)
- [Cakewalk SONAR](#)
- [Cakewalk forum - Instrument Definitions](#)
- [Yamaha - Cakewalk Instrument Definition files](#)
- [Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 4.0](#)