strike

User Guide





Introduction

Strike is a virtual instrument that can be used to add realistic drum tracks to your music software. Using proprietary technology, Strike goes beyond the boundaries of conventional MIDI and sampling when it comes to computer-based playing, arranging, and mixing of drums.

Strike provides a "professionally skilled drummer" and a number of drum kits set up in a professional recording studio. Each instrument was recorded with up to three close, two overhead, and two room microphones. Strike also provides a complete mixing console with built-in effects.

Strike puts you in the producer's chair, providing quick and easy global control, as well as access to all the nuanced details that influence a drum track and make it come alive. Use Strike to play a perfect seamless crescendo, switch the mix from ballad to crushed punk, or just tweak the tuning of the snare drum.

System Requirements and Product Support

For complete system requirements, compatibility information, and product registration, visit the AIR website: <u>www.airmusictech.com</u>.

Installation

Windows®

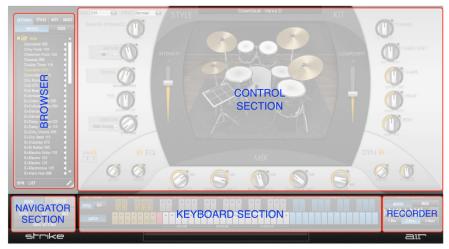
- 1. Double-click the .exe installer file you downloaded.
- 2. Follow the on-screen instructions.

Note: Strike uses PACE copy protection, so it will install the PACE InterLok driver on your system if you do not already have it. As most audio software uses PACE copy protection, though, this is probably already installed on your system.

Mac OS X

- 1. Double-click the .pkg installer file you downloaded.
- 2. Follow the on-screen instructions.

Understanding Strike: An Overview



Strike is a powerful virtual instrument and may appear a bit overwhelming at first glance. Not to worry, though—Strike becomes much easier to understand if you think of it as five sections, each of which handles specific tasks. The following sections of this chapter will give you an overview of each section.

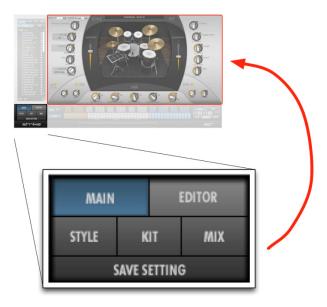
Strike Terminology

Before we dive into the individual sections of Strike, let's take a moment to clarify the meaning of certain terms we'll use throughout this guide:

- **Style:** A Style is a musical playing style, like Samba, Rock, or Ballad. Strike comes with a range of preset Styles that cover the most common musical genres. Each Style contains 35 different Patterns (see below) that are played and combined create a performance.
- **Pattern:** Patterns are complex drum performances that have been captured as MIDI data. There are six types of Patterns: Verse, Bridge, Chorus, Intro, Fills, and Outro. Each Style contains of 35 Patterns. When Strike is playing, the Patterns determine when and how any individual Instrument (see below) is played.
- **Part:** A Part is what one single Instrument plays within a Pattern—in other words, each Pattern consists of several Parts, each played by one Instrument. Parts can be easily muted to create more dynamic and musically interesting performances.
- **Instrument:** An Instrument is a single drum contained in a kit. There are all kinds of drum Instruments in Strike, including such standards as kicks, snares, and crash cymbals. There are also exotic Instruments, such as darbuka or trash-ride.
- **Kit:** A Kit is a complete collection of Instruments all stored in one file. Strike comes with many preset Kits, but you can create your own custom Kits using any of the Instruments.
- **Mix:** A Mix is a file that contains all of the settings of the drum mixing console within Strike, including Level, Equalizer (EQ) and Insert Effect settings.
- Setting: A Setting is a single "master" file that stores the complete state of the Strike, including all Style, Kit, and Mix settings.

Tip: Strike was designed to have separate files for Style, Kit, and Mix settings. This was done so that you can freely mix and match playing styles, drum kits, and mix settings. This is a very powerful feature and opens up many musical possibilities. For example, you can play a Samba Pattern through Techno drum kit and have all the Instruments come together in a Reggae-style mix. The possibilities are nearly virtually limitless.

Navigator Section



At the bottom left of the screen is the Navigator. This collection of buttons lets you view the five "pages" (Main, Editor, Style, Kit, and Mix) that can be displayed in the Control Section at the upper right of the screen. The currently selected page is illuminated in blue.

You can also save all—or specific parts—of your Strike session by clicking the **Save Setting** button at the bottom.

Control Section



Control Section: Strike contains five pages. Each page provides controls that correspond to a certain stage or aspect of drum track production in a real studio situation. The Navigator selects which page is shown.

- Main Page: This is where you will likely spend most of your time. This page has
 many global controls that influence the overall behavior of Strike from a producer's
 point of view. Here you can give instructions to the drummer (for example, "play with
 more intensity"), the drum technician ("tune the kit down"), or the recording engineer
 ("more bright"). For more information, see the *Main Page* section of this guide
- **Style Page:** Provides detailed controls for changing the performance from the drummer's point of view. For example, whether the kick's timing should be tight or loose. For more information, see the **Style Page** section of this guide.
- **Kit Page:** Provides control over individual Instruments from a drum technician's point of view. For example, you can tune down the Kick or adjust the decay of the cymbals. For more information, see the *Kit Page* section of this guide
- **Mix Page:** Provides a powerful mixing desk specifically designed for recording drums. The drum channels can be EQed, balanced, routed, and processed using a variety of effects. For more information, see the *Mix Page* section of this guide.
- Editor: Provides features for in-depth editing of Styles and the creation of your own Patterns and Parts. For example, you can add or delete events and change the timing of notes in a style. For more information, see the *Editor* section of this guide.

Browser Section

Strike ships with many gigabytes of content including Instruments and Kits, Styles, Mixes, and Settings (which contain Styles, Kits, and Mixes in one file). The Browser lets you access all of this content as well as any custom Settings and Kits that you have created yourself.



Viewing the Settings, Styles, Kits, or Mixes:

Along the top of the browser are four main "folder" buttons: **Settings**, **Styles**, **Kits**, and **Mixes**. The currently selected folder is highlighted in blue and only those files are shown.

Presets vs. User Data:

Each of the four main folders includes two sub-folders called **Presets** and **User**. **Preset** contains factory files that cannot be modified. **User** contains all of the custom files that you create and save.

Previewing a Setting

In the Browser, you can quickly preview Preset Settings without having to load them. Clicking and holding the **Preview** icon of a Setting will play a short audio example of that Setting.





Keyboard Section



Keyboard Section: The Keyboard section provides 72 keys for playing Strike, **Key Mode** switches (to select **Style** or **Kit**), and a Latch switch. The Keyboard section is always available, regardless of which page you have selected in the Navigator.

You can control Strike by clicking the on-screen keys, using a MIDI controller, or by sending MIDI data from an Instrument or MIDI track in your music software.

To find out more about the Keyboard section, please see the *Strike In Depth* chapter.

Recorder

Strike has a recorder that can capture drum loops as either digital audio or MIDI data. This data can then be dragged and dropped from the recorder's central display into your session timeline, or on to your computer's desktop so that it can be used later. The red record button determines if the recorder is active or not.

The Audio and MIDI buttons at the top determine whether audio or MIDI data will be recorded.

Note: The recorder intelligently synchronizes itself so that loops always start "on the one" and are in sync with the session. In other words, you do not need to start and stop recording with perfect precision to capture a loop—the system handles this automatically.



- Audio Mode: When in Audio Mode, you can capture 1-, 2-, or 4-bar loops.
- MIDI Mode: When in MIDI mode, there is no limit to the length of a performance that can be captured. You can even perform a full-length song and capture it all as MIDI data. Note that MIDI data can be captured in Full mode that makes maximum use of Strike, or as "General MIDI"-compatible data by selecting GM.

Quick Start: How-To Guides

This chapter helps you to explore Strike with short "How-To..." guides. You will touch the most important functions, understand the basic concepts, and hear a lot of drums. The purpose is to give you a high-level overview and show you how to do common tasks.

The next chapter provides detailed information about all Strike features.

Note: Please make sure you have installed Strike and inserted it on an Instrument track in your software.

How to: Load and Play a Setting

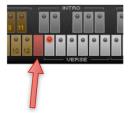
- 1. If you have a MIDI keyboard available and prefer to use it, connect it to Strike's MIDI input, and assign it to MIDI channel 1.
- 2. In the Browser, select the **Settings** folder. Locate and double-click **Hard Funk 90** (in the **Funk+RnB+Soul** folder) and wait for the Setting to finish loading.



3. Set your software's tempo to 90 BPM.

Tip: The number next to each Setting's name shows the recommended tempo.

- 4. In the Keyboard section, click any of the white keys on the bottom row to begin playback. Alternatively, you can hit the corresponding **D1** key on a MIDI keyboard start the Strike performance.
- 5. Stop playback with the red key (C1).

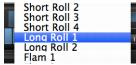


How to: Use the Strike Keyboard Section

- 1. Click some of the white keys. Notice that white keys on the bottom row play looped Verse, Bridge, and Chorus Patterns, while darker keys on the top row play one-time Intro, Fill, or Outro Patterns.
- While a looped Pattern is playing, click the yellow key labeled 1 on the keyboard (C0). This pauses the playback of the kick drum while everything else continues to play. Click it again to bring back the kick drum.



- 3. Now try clicking various keys in the two blue octaves (C4–B5) to trigger individual Instrument hits that can be added to Pattern playback.
- 4. Right-click any of the blue trigger keys to open a list of Instruments you can assign to that key. This way you can assemble your own customized palette of sounds that you need.



5. Now click the **Kit** button at the upper-left of the screen. The left four octaves of the keyboard switch to a complete General MIDI Kit that you can play.

Tip: Assigning your MIDI keyboard to Strike on MIDI channel **2** lets you trigger Strike in Kit mode, even if the Strike keyboard is set to Style mode. This way, you can use trigger Patterns (channel 1) and individual hits (channel 2) simultaneously.

How to: Conduct Strike

1. Click the Chorus A key (C3) and let the Pattern play.



2. Move the **Intensity** slider slowly up and down (you can also move the Mod wheel up and down on your MIDI keyboard). This controls how hard Strike actually plays the Instruments. Unlike in conventional drum samplers, you will not hear sample-switching. The Intensity control allows for subtle or drastic dynamic changes adding an unprecedented range of articulation.



- 3. Move Intensity back to maximum.
- 4. Now move the **Complexity** slider down (you can also pull down the pitch wheel on your MIDI keyboard). You will notice that Strike plays fewer notes. Move it all the way up to play more. Repeat this with different Patterns to get a sense of how this slider works.

How to: Modify the Drummer's Style

The Style section controls on the Main page adjust Strike's timing, dynamic behavior, and groove globally.

- 1. From the Browser, load the **Boogaloo 153** Setting and set your software's tempo to **153 BPM**.
- 2. Play a Pattern. Turn the **Feel** control to the right and Strike will play with a laid-back feel, or turn it to the left and Strike plays slightly ahead of the beat.



- 3. Turn the **Hit Var** knob fully to the left and **Timing** fully to the right. This eliminates all dynamic (volume) variability and hard-quantizes the timing. Set both knobs to the center position afterwards.
- 4. No real drummer would loop the same bars over and over again. Instead, the playing would always have a bit of variance. Click the **Jam** button at the bottom of the Style section and set to **5**. Strike now increases the variability of each Pattern.



Note: The Style parameters can be changed individually for every Instrument. See the *Style Page* section of this guide to learn how to do this.

How to: Modify Sound of the Drum Kit

The Kit section controls globally affect the drum kit and how Strike plays it.

- 1. Play a Pattern.
- 2. Turn the **Timbre Shift** control to the right, so that Strike will sound harder without becoming louder. Turn it to the left and Strike almost brushes the Kit, but the volume stays the same. Set **Timbre Shift** to its default afterwards.



3. Turn the **Snare** control to the left and Strike plays the Snare towards the center. Turn it clockwise, so that Strike plays closer to the rim.

Note: Each Instrument's Kit parameters can be changed individually on the Kit page. See *Kit Page* to learn how to do this.

How to: Modify the Overall Mix

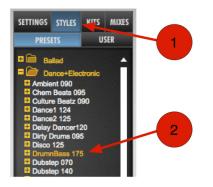
- 1. Have a Pattern playing, and move the **Close Mics**, **Overheads**, **Room**, and **Talkback** controls to adjust the volume of the corresponding microphone groups. Every microphone on every Instrument can be set individually on the Mix page. See *Mix Page* of this guide to learn more.
- 2. Turn all knobs down and turn each of them up one after another to find out how they contribute to the overall sound of your Strike drum kit.



How to: Combine different Styles, Kits, and Mixes

In the Browser, you are not limited to loading complete Settings (a Setting includes Style, Kit, and Mix). You can load Styles, Kits, and Mixes independently of each other.

- 1. Load the Setting RnB 75, set your software's tempo to 75 BPM, and play a Pattern.
- To change only the Style, open the Dance+Electronic Styles folder and double-click DrumnBass 175. Now Strike plays the new DrumnBass 175 Style with the old RnB 75 Kit and Mix. Try that with other Styles as well.



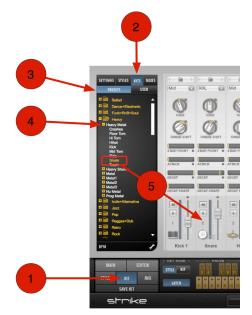
- 3. Open the **Presets** Kits folder in the Browser and double-click **Vintage Kit**. Strike now plays the same existing Style and Mix on the Vintage Kit.
- 4. While a Pattern is running, open the **Presets** Mixes folder and double-click your way through the entries to load other Mixes. This will change the overall volume relations, EQ settings, and effect processing of the Kits.

How to: Exchange Instruments

To replace single Instruments in a Setting that you've already loaded:

- Click the **Kit** button in the Navigator to bring up the Kit page in the Control Section.
- 2. Next, click the **Kits** button at the top of the Browser.
- 3. Make sure Presets is selected.
- Click the plus (+) sign next to the any Kit to reveal all individual Instruments within that kit.
- 5. Next, drag and drop your preferred Instrument to any channel in the Control Area.

Tip: Instead of dragging and dropping, you can double-click an Instrument in the Browser. This will automatically replace the same sound in your existing Kit. For example, double-clicking **Snare** in the Browser will replace the Snare sound in the Kit that is currently loaded.

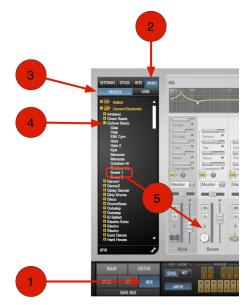


How to: Replace a Single Channel's Mix Settings

With Strike, it is possible to replace the mix of a single channel. For example, if you have assembled a Kit that you like but the sound of one Instrument is off in the Mix (for example, the snare), it is possible to borrow specific channel settings from another Mix.

- 1. First, click the **Mix** button in the Navigator to bring up the Mix page in the Control Section.
- Next, click the Mixes button at the top of the Browser.
- 3. Make sure Presets is selected.
- Click the plus (+) sign next to the any Mix to reveal all individual Instruments within that Mix.
- Next, drag and drop your preferred Mix channel to any channel in the Control Area.

Tip: Instead of dragging and dropping, you can double-click an Instrument in the Browser. This will automatically replace the same Instrument's channel in your Mix. For example, double-clicking **Snare** in the browser will replace the snare mix settings for your snare channel.

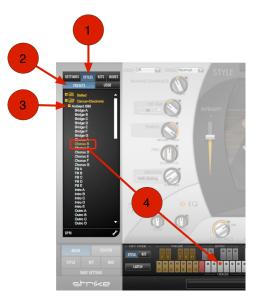


How to: Replace a Single Channel's Mix Settings

With Strike, it is possible to replace the Pattern assigned to any white key in the Keyboard Area. For example, if you have loaded a Setting that you like but prefer a specific Pattern from a different Style (for example, **Bridge B** from an unrelated Style), it is possible to borrow specific patterns from another Style.

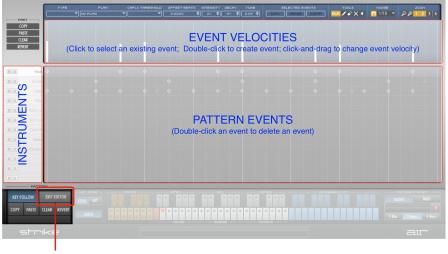
- 1. First, click the **Styles** button at the top of the Browser.
- 2. Make sure **Presets** is selected.
- 3. Click the plus (+) sign next to the any Style to reveal all individual Patterns within that Style.
- 4. Next, drag and drop your preferred Pattern channel to any white keys in the Keyboard Area.

Tip: Instead of dragging and dropping, you can double-click a Pattern in the Browser. This will automatically replace the white key corresponding to your selection. For example, double-clicking **Chorus B** in the browser will replace the Pattern on the second chorus key in the Keyboard Area.



How to: Use the Editor

Strike has an Editor page that lets you edit Patterns.

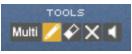


PRESS TO EXIT EDITOR MODE

- 1. Load any Setting file.
- 2. Click the Editor button in the Navigator to open the Editor.

In the Editor, you will see your Instruments listed along the left edge. Patterns events are listed in the large area to the right of each Instrument. Here you can see note hits for each Instrument. Above the Pattern events, you can see the velocity of each hit.

- 3. Play a Pattern on the Keyboard to view it in the Editor.
- 4. In the Event Velocities section (at the top of the Editor), click on a line to select an individual note hit. You can change the velocity of that hit by clicking and dragging the line up or down. Alternatively, you can make a variety of other changes by using the drop-down menus directly above the Event Velocities section.
- 5. Select the pencil tool and draw in the Editor window to add events. Use the eraser tool to delete events.



6. To exit the Editor, click the Exit Editor button on the lower-left corner of the screen.

How to: Modify and Save a Mix

Strike includes a powerful mixer specifically designed for drums. Before we take a closer look, load the **Heavy Metal 135** Setting, set your software's tempo to **135 BPM** and open the Mix page from the Navigator.

1. The Master section is located at the right side of the mixer. Click the small yellow triangle at the left edge of the Master section to hide or reveal it.



2. Select the Master channel by clicking it. Notice that the Equalizer and two insert effects at the top of the page change to show the settings for the Master channel (if you click on other channels, the EQ and Inserts will update to show settings of those channels).

Note: In the Master channel, the second insert effect is hard-wired to the **Dynamics 3** compressor, and its **Attack** and **Drive** parameters are reflected on the Main page. For all other channels, the insert can be changed by using the drop-down menu above the insert.

3. Change the parameters of the **Distortion** effect in the first insert.

Distortion			on 😑
\sim	0	\bigcirc	
DRIVE	MIX	GAIN	

4. Click the Save Mix button underneath the Mix page tab.



- 5. In the prompt that appears, name your Mix My New Mix and save it.
- 6. You can now load your saved Mix from the Mixes > User section of the Browser.





How to: Change a Time Signature

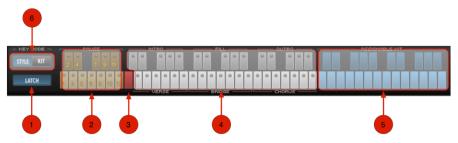
Change Meter			
New Meter: 3 / 4 Click:			
Starting at bar: apply change: to session end			
Change: 0 bars of 4/4 to 1 bars of 3/4			
Realign: C Mater, Tempo, Key, and Chord rulers, all tok-based markers & tracks, and All Tok-based markers & tracks.			
Apply			

(Pro Tools® Meter Change Window)

Strike intelligently follows time signature changes in your software. Set the desired time signature in your software and Strike will automatically re-calculate every Pattern to match the new time signature.

Strike in Depth

Keyboard Section



In the Keyboard section there are 72 keys, the Style/Kit selector, and a Latch switch. The Keyboard section is always available, regardless of which Control page is currently displayed.

The 72 keys in the Keyboard section represent the keys of a MIDI keyboard and correspond to MIDI notes starting from **C0** on the left to **B5** on the right. You can control Strike by clicking the on-screen keys, through a connected MIDI keyboard, or from a MIDI or Instrument track in your software.

1. Latch – In Latch mode, Strike continues playing even when you release a trigger key. The Pattern contrinues to play until you hit the red Stop key or deactivate Latch mode. Click the Latch switch to enable or disable Latch mode.

Tip: You can use sustain pedal to temporarily enable Latch mode.

- Pause Keys When a Pattern is playing, these keys can be used to stop an individual Instrument from playing. For example, clicking 1 will stop the kick from playing. Clicking the button again will bring back the Kick.
- 3. **Stop Key –** This key stops the playback of a Pattern.

- 4. White Keys These keys start playback of the various Patterns in each style (Intro, Verse, Fill, Bridge, Chorus, Outro). If Latch mode is enabled, these Patterns will continue to play until either the Stop Key or one of the Outro keys is pressed.
- 5. **Blue Keys** These keys play individual hits and various other rolls and articulations. They can be used to add variations to a Pattern that is playing. You can customize any of these keys to your preferences by right-clicking a key.
- Key Mode This parameter is normally set to Style and lets you to play and orchestrate Patterns. However, if you wish to play a General-MIDI-compatible file through Stike (or simply trigger individual Instruments using the familiar General MIDI formatting), you can do so by clicking Kit. This changes the left four octaves into a General MIDI Kit that you can play.

Tip: Assigning your MIDI keyboard to Strike on MIDI channel **2** lets you trigger Strike in Kit mode, even if the Strike Keyboard is set to Style mode. This way, you can use trigger Patterns (channel 1) and individual hits (channel 2) simultaneously.

air

Main Page



The Main page provides easy access to the most useful Strike timing and sound parameters. The parameters in the Style and Kit areas of the Main page are general controls that affect all Instruments. You can edit these parameters for a single Instrument, you can do so on the other Control pages: Style, Kit, and Mix.

- 1. **Kit Display** The Kit display shows a graphic representation of a kit. Instruments in this kit animate to indicate hits, including the intensity (velocity) of each hit.
- 2. Play Display The Play display shows what Pattern is currently playing.

- 3. **Style Section** The Style section parameters can be used to adjust the overall Strike playing dynamics and timing behavior.
 - Grid: Quantizes the Strike timing globally by reducing the number of played Instrument hits. For example, select 1/4 and Strike only plays Instrument hits that fall on quarter notes.
 - **Speed:** Adjusts the Strike tempo relative to the tempo of your software. For example, select **Half** and Strike plays at half of the software's tempo.
 - Intensity: This slider seamlessly adjusts the general strength of the drumming. This parameter can also be controlled in real time by your MIDI controller's Mod wheel.
 - **Complexity:** This slider adjusts the "complexity" of the Pattern by changing the number of individual Instrument hits used in the Pattern. Move the control up to increase and down to decrease Complexity. This parameter can also be controlled in real time by your MIDI Controller's Pitch wheel.
 - **Playing Dynamics:** Adjusts the general dynamic range of the playing. Turning this knob clockwise increases the dynamic range (there is more variation among all Instrument hits). Turning this knob counter-clockwise reduces the dynamic range (all Instruments are hit much more consistently).
 - Hit Var (Hit Variance): Adjusts the variety of different Instrument hits used. Turn this knob to the right to increase the variety of sounds used for certain Instrument hits during performance. This makes the performance sound more natural and versatile. Turn the knob to the left to limit the variety of sounds, this makes the performance sound less natural, and more like a drum machine. To affect only certain notes, select a note value from the Hit Variance drop-down menu to the left of this knob. For example, select 1 and 3 to affect only the notes landing on the first and third beats.
 - Timing: Adjusts the general precision of drum hits in a Pattern from natural to tight.
 - Feel: Adjusts Strike's overall timing in relation to the software's tempo. Ahead makes Strike play slightly ahead of the beat, while Fat produces a more laid-back, behind-the-beat feel.

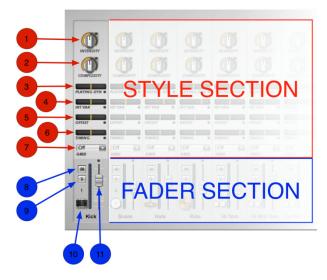
- **Groove:** Adjusts the shuffle, or swing, feel of Strike. Turning this knob clockwise delays offbeat hits slightly, creating a swing feel. When this parameter is set to 100%, Strike will play with a triplet feel. Select a Groove from the **Groove Template** pop-up menu to determine which notes the Groove parameter affects.
- Jam: The Jam function automatically adds variation to "humanize" the performance by subtly varying playback with each repetition of a Pattern. Adjust the intensity of the Jam function by selecting a value (1–5) from the Jam drop-down menu. Higher values increase the Jam factor.



- 4. **Kit Section** The Kit section parameters influence the sound of the current Kit and its Instruments.
 - **Tuning:** Adjusts the tuning of the whole drum Kit by a maximum of five semitones up or down.
 - **Timbre Shift:** Influences the Kit's sound character by simultaneously changing Instrument timbres and volume levels. Using Timbre Shift, you can easily change the character of the Kit's sound without having to rebalance Instrument levels.
 - **Snare:** Adjusts the playing style of the snare drum by moving the drum stick towards the center or the rim (edge) of the snare drum.
 - HiHat: Adjusts the playing style of the HiHat, from more closed to more open.
 - Ride: Adjusts the sound of the ride by moving the drum stick towards the edge or the bell of the ride cymbal.

- 5. Mix Section These controls give you global level control over your mix.
 - EQ (Low, High): Provides Gain controls for the low and high band of the Master channel's equalizer. You can activate or bypass the EQ by clicking the LED.
 - Close Mics: Adjusts the level of all Close microphones.
 - Overhead Mics: Adjusts the level of the Overhead microphones channel.
 - Room Mics: Adjusts the level of the Room microphones channel.
 - Talkback Mic: Adjusts the level of the Talkback microphone channel.
 - Master: Adjusts the level of Strike's Master output.
 - **Dynamics:** Provides controls for the Drive and Attack parameters of the Master channel's compressor (found on the Mix page). You can activate or bypass this compressor by clicking the LED.

Style Page



The Style page provides up to twelve Instrument channels, corresponding to the Instruments used in the current Setting—for example, Kick, Snare, HiHat, and Ride. The dynamics and timing behavior for each Instrument can be adjusted using the Style section parameters. For convenience, basic controls from the Mix page are also included in the Fader section.

- 1. **Intensity** Adjusts the dynamics of the Instrument by making it play softer or harder. Turn clockwise to increase intensity, or counter-clockwise to decrease Intensity.
- 2. **Complexity** Adjusts the overall density by changing the number of individual hits used during playback. Turn clockwise to increase or counter-clockwise to decrease.

- Playing Dynamics Adjusts the dynamic range of the Instrument. Moving the control to the right increases the dynamic range and Instrument hits are played with greater variance in strength. Moving the control to the left limits the dynamic range and Instrument hits are played with more consistent strength.
- 4. Hit Var (Hit Variance) Adjusts the variety of drum hits used in the playing. For a natural sound, move the control to the right to increase the variety of sounds used for a certain Instrument hit. Move the control to the left to limit the variety, making the playing sound more like a drum machine and less natural.
- 5. **Offset** Adjusts the timing offset of the hits on a single Instrument. Move the control to the right for earlier hits and to the left for later hits.
- 6. **Timing** Adjusts the timing accuracy of the playing. Move the control to the right for a tight feel and to the left for a loose feel.
- 7. **Grid** Quantizes the Instrument's timing. For example, select **4th** and Strike will only play the quarter notes of the current Part, removing all hits not matching the selected grid.

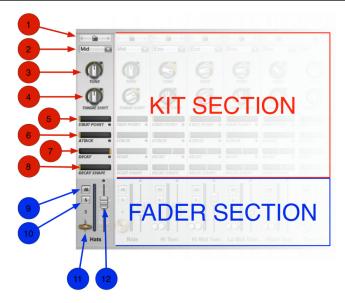


- 8. Mute Mutes the channel.
- 9. Solo Solos the channel.

Note: Control-clicking (Windows) or command-clicking (Mac) the Solo button "grays out" the solo button and puts the channel in "Solo Safe" mode. Channels with Solo Safe engaged will always play regardless, even if other channels are soloed or not.

- 10. Instrument Symbol Triggers the Instrument when clicked.
- 11. Fader Adjusts the channel volume.

Kit Page



The Kit page provides controls to make adjustments to the individual Instruments used in the current Style (for example, Kick, Snare, HiHat, and Ride). For convenience, basic controls from the Mix page are included in the Fader section.

 Sample Import – Strike lets you import your own WAV or AIFF sample sounds to create new Instruments in a Kit. You can do this by clicking the folder icon and locating your desired sound file in the prompt that appears. Once a custom sample is loaded, the Instrument channel strip updates to show an audio file icon and the name of the file at the bottom of the channel strip. In this mode, the Instrument Load Size and Timbre Shift controls are greyed out.

You can mix the direct signal from the loaded sample using the Close Mics control in the Mix Page. Strike emulates the Room, Overhead, and Talkback Mics for imported samples as well.

Tip: If the loaded sample's directory contains other audio files, you can click the left and right arrow icons to cycle through the other files in that directory.

2. Instrument Load Size – Use this control to adjust the amount of sample data that is loaded into your computer's RAM for each Instrument.



- Eco: This is the smallest possible Instrument load size. Eco uses fewer system resources for the Instrument, but also limits the range of expression available.
- **Mid:** This is the Strike default Instrument load size. Mid provides a good balance between system load and range of expression available.
- XXL: This is the largest possible Instrument load size. XXL provides the maximum range of expression available, but also places the greatest demands on system resources.
- 3. **Tune** Adjusts the tuning of the Instrument up or down. The maximum tuning deviation is five semitones up or down.
- 4. **Timbre Shift** Changes the Instrument's sound character by simultaneously adjusting timbre and volume level. This lets you can change the Instrument's character without having to rebalance levels.

- 5. **Start Point** Changes the Instrument's attack by moving the sample's start point. This means the start point "cuts" into the sample, usually resulting in sharper attacks.
- 6. **Attack** Softens the attack phase of Instruments by applying an amplitude envelope to the start of each Instrument hit. Move the control to the right to increase the time needed for the attack to rise to full amplitude.
- 7. **Decay** The Decay control shortens Instrument's sound by applying an amplitude envelope to the end of each hit. Move the control to the left to decrease the time needed for the decay to fall from full amplitude to zero.
- 8. Mute Mutes the channel.
- 9. Solo Solos the channel.
- 10. Instrument Symbol Triggers the Instrument when clicked.
- 11. Fader Adjusts the channel volume.

Mix Page Overview



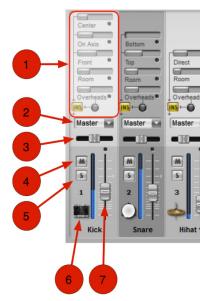
The Mix page provides a fully featured mixing desk for Strike. It includes two effects Inserts and a three-band equalizer for each channel. By default, each channel is routed to the Master output, however it is also possible to route each channel to its own separate output.

Mix Page: Instrument Channels

In this area of the Mixer page, there are 12 channels for the Instruments used in the current Setting. Use the controls in the Microphone section to adjust the levels of the different microphones available for each Instrument.

- Microphone Section In the Microphone section you can adjust the levels of Close, Overhead, and Room microphones.
 - Close Microphones: Adjusts the levels of up to three Close microphones per channel. The Close microphones are named based on their position in relation to the Instrument. Adjust their levels using the grey horizontal faders. The Close microphones are sent through the inserts to the Master channel.
 - **Room:** Adjusts the amount of Instrument signal going to the Room microphone channel.
 - **Overheads:** Adjusts the amount of Instrument signal going to the Overhead microphone channel.

Tip: Unlike a real recording situation, with Strike you can adjust how much of an individual Instrument's signal is going to the Room and Overhead microphones using the Room and Overhead faders on Instrument channels.



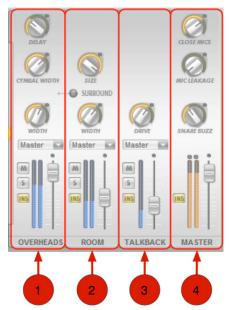
air

- **Downmix Button:** Routes the Instrument's Overhead signals through the Inserts to the individual channel output, instead of the Overheads channel.
- Insert Button (INS): Activates and deactivates the channel Equalizer and Effects inserts. The Insert button is lit when activated.
- Output Bus Select In addition to the Master Output, you can assign the Strike channels to one of 15 individual outputs for further mixing and processing. To learn more about this, please refer to the Output Routing section later in this chapter.
- 3. Pan Slider Sets the Instrument channel's position in the stereo field.
- 4. Mute Mutes the channel.
- 5. Solo –Solos the channel.
- 6. Instrument Symbol Triggers the Instrument when clicked.
- 7. Fader Adjusts the Channel volume.

Mix Page: Master Section

The Master section is the "last stop" of your Instrument signals before they "leave" Strike. This section has four channels (**Overhead**, **Room**, **Talkback**, and **Master**), each with its own specialized sound-sweetening controls.

- Overheads The Overheads are a pair of stereo microphones positioned above the Drum Kit, capturing a spatial sound containing signals from all Instruments. Unlike a real studio recording, you can adjust the amount each Instrument contributes to the Overhead channel using the Overhead slider in each Instrument channel.
 - **Delay:** Delays the Overhead signal by up to 20 ms to simulate different overhead microphone distances.
 - Cymbal Width: Adjusts the stereo width of all cymbals in the Kit.
 - Width (Overhead Width): Adjusts the stereo width of the overhead microphones.



- Room The Room microphones are stereo microphones similar to Overheads, but are positioned further away in the room and capture a more diffuse sound. Unlike a real studio recording, you can adjust the amount each Instrument contributes to the Room channel using the Room slider in each Instrument channel.
 - **Delay:** Delays the Room signal by up to 50 ms to simulate different room microphone distances.
 - Size: Adjusts the decay of the Room signal to simulate smaller or larger recording spaces.
 - Width: Adjusts the stereo width of the Room signal.
 - **Surround:** Sends an additional two channels of room ambience into the Overhead channel, so a total of four channels are available which can be panned to the front and rear for a surround effect. The surround signal passes through the Overhead EQ, inserts and fader, and to the audio output selected for the Overhead channel. The Surround LED is lit when activated.
- Talkback The Talkback channel is a mono microphone, originally placed in the recording room near to the drummer and heavily compressed to hear what he is saying, but later utilized as an effect. The Talkback microphone captures a sound similar to Overhead and Room microphones, but produces a very hard, compressed, and slightly distorted ("dirty") sound.
 - **Drive:** Adjusts the gain of the Talkback channel compression. Increased Drive makes the Talkback signal denser and slightly distorted.

- 4. **Master** The Master channel is Strike's main output. All channels are mixed down to this channel by default and then output to your software's Instrument or Auxiliary Input track on which Strike is inserted.
 - Close Mics: Adjusts the overall level of the Close microphones routed to the Master channel.
 - Mic Leakage: Adjusts the level of "bleed" across the different microphones. When recording drums in a studio environment, each microphone picks up some signal of all of the Instruments in the drum kit. At the minimum setting, each microphone only captures the sound from one Instrument.
 - Snare Buzz: Adjusts the amount of sympathetic resonance of the snare drum when the kick drum and toms are played. In a real drum kit the snares of the snare drum rattle whenever another nearby drum is hit, particularly the kick drum. In Strike, the level is variable so you can choose between an ultra-clean kick drum sound at a lower setting, or a "live"-sounding kit at a higher setting.

Mix Page: EQ & Insert Section

Each channel in the Strike Mixer contains an EQ and two user-selectable insert effects. The controls for the EQ and Insert effects can be found along the top of the Mix page.



1. **EQ Section** – Strike provides a three-band equalizer for each track. Each of the three colored dots represents and controls an equalizer band. Click a mixer channel to select it, and display its Equalizer and Effects inserts.

Click and drag the red, green, or blue dots to modify an EQ setting. Drag left/right to adjust the cutoff frequency or up/down to adjust the gain. Right-click (Windows) or control-click (Mac) and drag any of the dots up/down to change the Q value of the selected filter band.

Tip: All three bands have a bell shape, but at the minimum Q value setting switch to: low shelf (red dot), high-pass filter (green), or high shelf (blue).

2. **Insert Effects** – Strike provides two Effects inserts connected in series per channel. Select a channel to see its Effects settings.

To select an effect Insert, click the Insert selector window (at the upper-left of each insert slot) and select an effect from the drop-down menu. The **Insert On** button can be clicked the engage or bypass an effect. To clear the insert of any effects, click the Insert selector and select **None** from the drop-down menu.

Click and drag the rotary controls of an Insert to change the associated parameter. The value of the parameter being adjusted is displayed in the **Information** display below Strike's keyboard.

Output Routing

In addition to the Master Output, you can assign the Strike channels to one of 15 individual outputs. These can be routed to separate mixer channels in your music software for further mixing and processing.

To assign a Strike channel to an individual output:

1. Select an output for the channel from the Output drop-down menu in the Routing section.



- 2. Create a Stereo Auxiliary Input track in your music software.
- 3. Select the Strike output as an input for the Auxiliary Input Track.



(Selecting track input in Pro Tools)

To assign two channels to two Auxiliary Input tracks using one Output:

- 1. Create two mono Auxiliary Input tracks in your music software.
- 2. Select the Strike output **Out 1.L** as an Input for the first, and **Out 1.R** for the second Auxiliary Input track.

I/O no input Out 1-2	no input				
AUTO auto read	interface bus	•			
	plug-in		Strike – Inst 1 – Insert a	Þ	Out 1.L
no group					Out 1.R
					Out 2.L
					Out 2.R
pan ► 0 ⊀					Out 3.L
					Out 3.R
					Out 4.L
SM					Out 4.R
					Out 5.L
12					Out 5.R

(Assigning Strike to Mono channels in Pro Tools)

MIDI Controller Mapping

Strike lets you assign standard MIDI controllers to virtually any parameter so that you can control Strike from a MIDI controller in real-time.

To assign a MIDI controller to a parameter:

- 1. Right-click (Windows or Mac) or Control-click (Mac) a control.
- 2. Do one of the following:
 - a. Select the desired MIDI controller from the Assign sub-menu.
 - b. Select **Learn**, and move the desired control on your MIDI controller. The parameter is automatically assigned to that control.

To un-assign a MIDI controller:

- 1. Right-click (Windows or Mac) or Control-click (Mac) a control.
- 2. From the pop-up menu, select Forget.

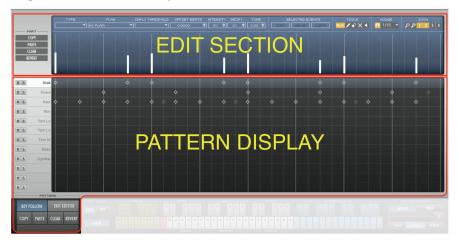
About Strike

Clicking the Strike logo at the lower-left corner brings up Strike's version number and the names of the people behind Strike. The version number may be useful for troubleshooting purposes. Click the Strike logo again to hide this information.

Strike Editor

Editor Overview

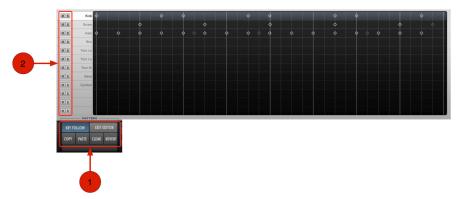
The Editor provides features for editing Patterns and Parts. Click the **Edit Style** button in the Navigator section to access the Style editor. There are two main sections:



Edit Section: Displays the Instrument hits of the currently selected Part as horizontally ordered events. Just like in any MIDI editor, you can change, move, and add events to alter or otherwise create your own Patterns.

Pattern Display: Displays the entire Pattern and the rhythmic structure of its events as diamonds in vertically stacked lines, one for each Instrument. Clicking a line selects that Instrument's Part for editing, showing the individual events in the Edit section.

Pattern Display



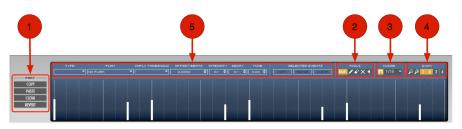
- 1. General Controls This cluster of controls relates to the overall Pattern.
 - Key Follow: When the Key Follow button is enabled, the Editor automatically changes to always show the currently playing Pattern. You can disable Key Follow if you don't want the display to change when you select other Patterns.

Tip: The selected Pattern is indicated by a red LED on the Strike keyboard.

- Copy: Copies the entire Pattern to the clipboard.
- Paste: Pastes the Pattern from the clipboard, replacing all Parts.
- Clear: Clears the entire Pattern.
- Revert: Reverts to the last saved version of the Pattern.
- Exit Editor: Exits the Editor.
- 2. Mute and Solo Part These buttons let you temporarily mute or solo the part.



Edit Section



The Edit section shows the currently selected Pattern superimposed on a bar/beat grid. Each vertical bar in the blue area represents an Instrument hit.

Depending on the current Complexity level set on the Main page, some events in a Part may not be played. Events that are not played appear grayed out in the Edit section. Muted events are shown as an outline only. The selected event is highlighted yellow.

- 1. Part Controls These are high-level controls for the Editor.
 - Copy Part: The Copy Part button copies the Part to the clipboard.
 - **Paste Part:** The Paste Part button pastes the Part from the Clipboard, replacing all Instrument hits in the current Part.
 - Clear Part: The Clear Part button deletes all Instrument hits from the current Part.
 - Revert Part: The Revert Part button reverts to the last loaded Style or Setting, restoring the Part to its original state.

2. Tools – There are five tools for editing the events in the Edit section.



- Multi: Selects events. To move events, drag bars to the left or right. To change intensity, drag bars up or down.
- Pencil: Adds events. Click in the blue area of the Edit section to add an event.
- Eraser: Removes events. Click an event to remove it.
- Mute: Mutes events. Click an event to mute it.
- Listen: Plays events. Click an event to play it.
- Snap To Grid If Snap to Grid is active, the time position of events in the Edit window can only be modified in eighth-note steps. To move events to any time position, deactivate Snap to Grid.

Tip: Small time offsets are retained when moving events with Snap to Grid active. For example, a slightly late snare hit will stay slightly late at the new position to help preserve the feel of the Style.

4. **Zoom & Bar Numbers** – Click the Zoom tool to change the Edit section's view. Click to zoom in, and click again to zoom out.

The Bar Numbers illuminate to show which bars (1, 2, 3, 4) are currently viewed in the Editor. Click any bar number to show that bar in the Edit section. Drag left or right to scroll through which bars are viewed in the Edit section.

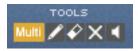
- 5. Event Attributes This section lets you assign the various attributes of each event.
 - **Type:** All Instruments consist of several types of hits—for example, center, rim, and sidestick for the snare drum. Choose a Type for the currently selected event from the pop-up menu.
 - Flam: Use the Flam selector to add a Flam to the selected event. This creates a new event for the Flam and may reposition the originally selected event (depending on the type of Flam chosen).
 - **Complexity Threshold:** Depending on the current Complexity level set on the Main page, not all events in a Part are played. Increase an event's Complexity Threshold level if you want it to play only at high Complexity levels. Decreasing the event Complexity Threshold level lets it play even at low Complexity levels. Setting the Complexity Threshold to **Play Always** ignores the Complexity level and always plays the event.
 - Offset-Beats: In a real drum performance, small timing offsets between Instrument hits contribute to the overall feel of the groove. Drag this control to fine-tune the position of the currently selected event. Values are shown as a fractional beat position where 0.125 beats is equivalent to one 32nd note.
 - Intensity: Use the Intensity control to increase or decrease the Intensity of selected events. You can also drag up or down in the Event Intensity bar graph.
 - **Decay:** Shortens the decay of selected events.
 - Tune: Adjusts the pitch of selected events (+6.00 semitones).
 - Copy Selected Events: Copies selected events to the clipboard.
 - Merge Selected Events: Click the Merge Selected Events button to merge any events that are copied to the clipboard with the currently selected events.

Tip: Control-click (Windows) or Command-click (Mac) to intelligently merge only those events that do not overwrite an existing event.

• Clear Selected Events: Click the Clear Selected Events button to clear selected events.

аг

Edit Section: The Multi Tool



Strike has a useful "Multi" tool that allows you to perform a variety of tasks without having to change tools (for example, switching from Pencil to Eraser). Like the other tools, the Multi tool can be used to make changes to the top (blue) display area. With the Multi tool, you can:

- Create note events by double-clicking in an open area containing no note data
- Select a note by clicking the note's vertical velocity bar
- Move a note by clicking the note's vertical velocity bar and dragging left or right
- Delete notes by double-clicking en existing note's velocity bar
- Select one or more notes by clicking-and-dragging when the mouse is near the top of the blue display (the mouse icon changes into an upward facing arrow).
- Change the value of one (or many) notes by clicking a note's vertical bar and dragging up or down.

Edit Section: "How To" Instructions

To add an event:

- 1. Select the Pencil tool.
- 2. Click in the **Edit** section where you want to add an event.

To remove an event, you can do one of the following:

- Click it with the **Eraser** tool.
- Double-click it with the Multi or Pencil tool.

To mute an event:

- 1. Select the Mute tool.
- 2. Click the event you want to mute.

To select an event for editing:

- 1. Select the Multi tool.
- 2. Click the event you want to select.
- 3. Adjust the Event attributes.

To select multiple events for editing:

- 1. Select the Multi tool.
- 2. Drag to select multiple contiguous events.
- 3. Adjust the Event attributes.

Tip: You can also Shift-click to select multiple noncontiguous events.

To move an event:

- 1. Select the Multi tool.
- 2. Drag an event to a new location.

Tip: With the Multi tool selected, Alt-drag (Windows) or Option-drag (Mac) to copy and move an event (or multiple selected events).

To adjust the intensity of an event:

- 1. Select the Multi tool.
- 2. Drag an event up or down to increase or decrease the Intensity.

Tip: With the Multi tool selected, Control-drag (Windows) or Command-drag (Mac) to inversely increase and decrease selected events according to the Event Complexity Threshold setting.

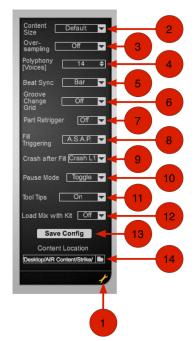
To quickly add note events without changing what is shown in the Edit area:

1. Control-click (Windows) or Command-click (Mac) directly in the Pattern Display.

Configuration

Strike has a Configuration page containing several global parameters affecting the operation.

- 1. **Wrench Icon** This button opens and closes the Configuration panel.
- Content Size The Content Size configuration option defines how much waveform content Strike loads into RAM by default. To adjust the RAM usage, select a value from the menu that best fits your computer's system resources. Because lower values limit the range of expressive nuance in Strike, we recommend using higher Content Size values, if possible.
- Oversampling Using Oversampling can help avoid aliasing noise when adjusting the tuning of Instruments like crash cymbals, which can be rich in overtone content. Oversampling increases Strike's internal sampling rate to achieve higher quality at the expense of slightly higher CPU load.
- 4. Polyphony (Voices) Configure the maximum number of voices (Instrument hits played at a time) that you want to reserve for Strike, using the Polyphony setting. Strike intelligently manages the number voices to suit the current Setting's requirements. If you experience problems with system resources such as audio drop-outs, decrease the number of voices.



- 5. **Beat Sync** The Beat Synchronization setting defines how Strike synchronizes to your music software. There are three settings:
 - Off: Synchronizes Strike to the software's tempo, but not to the bar or beat position. When a Pattern is triggered, it synchronizes to the currently playing Pattern, that means, for example, when you play Strike in latched mode, every successively played Pattern will synchronize to the previously played. If no Pattern is already playing, Strike immediately starts playing the newly triggered Pattern from its beginning. In this mode, Strike beats will not automatically lock to the bars and beats—for example, if you trigger a Pattern in the middle between two quarter-note beats, Strike will play synchronized but with an steady eighth-note time offset. This is the default setting.
 - Beat: Synchronizes Strike to the software's tempo and to the nearest beat. This means a Pattern that is triggered will start from its beginning at the next available quarter-note beat in the software's timeline. Strike locks to beats but not to their position in the bar—for example, a Pattern can be started on the third beat of the timeline but not between two quarter-note beats.
 - Bar: Synchronizes to the software's tempo and to the current bar position. This means a Pattern that is triggered in the last quarter of the software's timeline will not play from its beginning but from the corresponding position in the Pattern and will start the next bar at the same time the software does. This means Strike automatically locks its bar position to the software. In this mode, it is not possible to play the first beat of a Strike Pattern on the third beat of the timeline—Strike will always play the third beat of its Pattern on the third beat.
- 6. Groove Change Grid The Groove Change Grid option sets the position in the bar where Strike changes from the current Pattern to the next. For example, if this parameter is set to half notes (1/2), the Pattern change only occurs when the next half note in the bar is reached, regardless of when the Pattern is actually triggered.
- Pattern Retrigger If Pattern Retrigger is set to On, each time a new Pattern is triggered, it immediately replaces the Pattern that is currently playing. If Pattern Retrigger is set to Off, the new Pattern is not played immediately but only after the current Pattern finishes playing, based on the time set in Groove Change Grid.

- 8. **Fill Triggering** The Fill Triggering setting defines how Fills are triggered. There are three options:
 - **Next**: Triggers the Fill at the next allowed position defined by the Groove Change Grid setting, plays the whole Fill, and then changes back to the previously selected Pattern.
 - A.S.A.P.: Triggers the Fill at the next musically sensible position for the time the key is held and changes back to the previously selected Pattern after the key is released.
 - While Held: Triggers the Fill immediately and plays it for the entire time the key is held. It changes back to the previously selected Pattern immediately after releasing the key.
- 9. **Crash After Fill** When the Crash After Fill setting is **On**, Strike plays a crash cymbal hit at the •rst beat of the next bar after a Fill is played.
- 10. **Pause Mode** This configuration defines how the Pause keys work. There are three options:
 - **Toggle:** Pauses Instrument playback when a Pause key is triggered. Playback resumes only when the Pause key is triggered again. This is the default setting.
 - Held: Pauses Instrument playback as long as the Pause key is held.
 - **Released:** Pauses all Instruments by default. Single Instruments' playback resume as long as their Pause keys are held.
- 11. **Tool Tips** Activates or deactivates Tool Tips for Strike. A Tool Tip is a small window that displays descriptive text for a specific control. It appears next to the cursor when holding the cursor over a control.
- Load Mix with Kit When set to On, Mix settings are automatically loaded when a new Kit is loaded. In the (default) Off setting, Mix settings are maintained when new Kits are loaded.

 Save Configuration – Saves Strike's settings and the current MIDI controller mapping as Strike's default setting. These saved settings will be used each time you initialize a new instance of Strike.

Note: In general, Strike settings are saved with your software session/project, letting you save different default settings for different sessions/projects. Additionally, this guarantees that the current Strike and session settings transfer to other systems.

14. **Content Location** – Strike contains a number of large files that hold all of the sample data for various Instruments. If Strike is unable to locate this file at startup (for example, if you have moved the file to a new hard disk), you can set the new location by clicking here.

Appendix A: MIDI Channels

Strike can receive MIDI messages on many channels. The following table describes how each channel will interpret incoming MIDI data:

Channel	Description
1	Incoming note data on this channel triggers Patterns.
2	Incoming note data triggers individual Instruments in accordance with the General MIDI (GM) specification. If you would like to record or play GM-compatible drum performances through Strike, make sure that performance is being routed to MIDI channel 2 of Strike.
3-14	These MIDI channels correspond to each of the Instruments within a Strike kit. These channels are no longer used in any way by the latest version of Strike. However, they have been retained so that new versions of Strike remain backward compatible with MIDI recordings created in old versions of the software.
15	On this channel, every variation of every Instrument hit is mapped out across the MIDI keyboard. In other words, any sound that Strike can generate is mapped to a separate, unique MIDI note that you can then play with a MIDI controller.
16	This channel is unused. Incoming MIDI data is ignored.

Support

For technical support, please contact us through the **Support** page of our website: <u>www.airmusictech.com/support</u>.

Trademarks and Licenses

Pro Tools is a registered trademark of Avid Technology, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries.

Mac and OS X are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries.

Windows is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and other countries.

All other product or company names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

airmusictech.com

Manual Version 1.0