

**SIBELIUS**<sup>®</sup>

THE MUSIC NOTATION SOFTWARE

# **Hints and tips for using Sibelius**

*For use with Sibelius version 1.4 only*

# Introduction

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Sibelius is a highly intuitive program, and you should find that you can get started writing music almost as soon as you have installed it. The User Guide in your Sibelius box contains a **Quick tour** section that takes about an hour and a half to work through, and you should follow this through before you do anything else with the program – it introduces the functions that are central to working with Sibelius, and will give you a sound working knowledge of the software.

You should also keep your keyboard shortcuts tower handy; nearly every operation in Sibelius can be carried out without using the mouse at all, so familiarising yourself with the most important key combinations will save a lot of time.

If you have a copy of the demo CD-ROM (which is included with our brochure), this also contains a 40-minute video walkthrough of Sibelius's most important features.

If you're not sure how to do something, try one of the **Reference** sections of the User Guide, or look it up in the index.

Don't worry if you can't remember all the hints in this booklet! You'll find the menu at the top of the screen called **Create** contains pretty much everything you need to write music in Sibelius.

One final thing before we get started: it's always a good idea to be running the latest version of Sibelius, since we often release free minor updates to the program, adding new features. You can update your version of Sibelius from the User Area of our website, [www.sibelius.com](http://www.sibelius.com), or you can call our Corporate Office for more details: 925 280 0600 (or call Technical Support on 888 280 9995).

## Typography

This booklet follows similar typographical conventions to the User Guide (to which you should refer for more details), e.g.:

- **Create ▶ Bar Number Change** means use the mouse to choose the Bar Number Change option from the Create menu.
- **⌘O or Ctrl+O** means hold down the **⌘** key on Mac or the **Ctrl** key on Windows and then type **O** – this is a keyboard shortcut, and in this booklet shortcuts for Mac are always listed before shortcuts for Windows.

# Hints and tips

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## Opening, playing and moving around a score

- Type **⌘O** or **Ctrl+O** to open a score
- Type **⌘P** or **Ctrl+P** to print a score
- Type **P** to play a score, and type **Esc** (in the top left hand corner of your computer's keyboard) to stop it playing
- If you have a note or passage selected when you start playing the score, Sibelius will start playing from that point, rather than from the beginning of the score
- When you start playing a score, don't forget to press **Esc** to stop at the end. Sibelius goes on playing your score, even when there are lots of blank pages containing empty bars (bars)!
- Use the mouse to 'drag' the music around (by pressing and holding the mouse button), but click on some blank, white space before you start dragging, or else you might drag notes, staves and markings around!
- To zoom in and out of your score (which you can even do while it's playing), type **⌘+/⌘-** or **Ctrl++/Ctrl+-** (using the plus/minus keys on the main keyboard, not the keys on the numeric keypad)
- To move rapidly around the score, drag the *navigator*, the miniature view of the score in the bottom left corner of the screen
- If you want, you can hide the navigator by choosing **View ▶ Navigator** (switch it back on again by repeating this)
- A quicker way of moving around the score a screenful at a time is by using **Page Up/Page Down** (to move up and down) and **Home/End** (to move left and right)
- To go back to the first page of a score, type **⌘⌵** or **Ctrl+Home**
- To go to the last page of a score, type **⌘⌴** (or **⇧⌘⌵**) or **Ctrl+End**
- To go straight to any bar of your choosing, type **⌘G** or **Ctrl+G**

## Starting a new score

- Type **⌘N** or **Ctrl+N** to start a new score
- When you start a new score, you must *choose some manuscript paper* to use. These are templates of blank paper or commonly used sets of instruments, like **String Quartet Letter** (a string quartet on a letter-sized piece of paper). If you're not sure what instruments to write for, choose **Letter** (i.e. a blank piece of letter-sized paper)

- If you chose blank paper, you'll then be asked what *instruments* you'd like to use. Simply select them from their families and click **Add**. When you've finished, just click **Create**.
- You will then have a score consisting of five blank bars. To add more bars, type **⌘B** or **Ctrl+B**. If you keep holding down these keys, Sibelius will add lots of bars (and create lots of extra pages of music)
- There's no command to make a new page in Sibelius – to make more pages, just add more bars to your score

## Entering notes

- Remember that there are five ways of adding notes:
  - by using the *mouse and keypad*, or typing the letter-names of the notes in the score;
  - by using *step-time* note entry (choosing a note length on the keypad and a bar rest in any staff, then playing on the MIDI keyboard);
  - by recording live, using *Flexi-time™*;
  - by *scanning* using the free PhotoScore Lite program; or,
  - by *importing* MIDI files, Finale, Allegro, PrintMusic or SCORE files directly into Sibelius.
- The onscreen *keypad* corresponds to the numeric keypad on your computer's keyboard – try to avoid using the mouse! The number **3** on your numeric keypad selects eighth-notes (quavers), the number **4** selects quarter-notes (crotchets), and so on.
- You can use the *arrow keys* to move notes up and down in pitch, once they're on the screen and selected (or you can drag them with the mouse)
- You can change the length of any selected note by choosing a different note-value on the keypad, then typing the **Enter** key on the numeric keypad
- You can always respell the pitch of a selected note or passage enharmonically – e.g. to write F# as Gb – by typing **Return** (the key at the right of the main block of letters on your keyboard, usually labeled with an arrow, not the **Enter** key on the numeric keypad)
- There are actually five pages (or layouts) of different functions in the keypad. If you need to get to the other four layouts not normally displayed on the screen, type **F9-F12** (the function keys above the main block of keys on your keyboard) to get to them. The normal, first layout of the keypad can be obtained by typing **F8**
- The numbers **1-4** on the keypad refer to *voices* 1 to 4. Generally speaking, always enter your notes using voice 1 (so your notes go *blue* when selected). Use voice 2

occasionally when you need a second, independent line of music on the same staff as music you've already got (like soprano and alto parts sharing the same staff), and you should see that the notes go *green* when selected. You shouldn't really need to use voice 3 or 4.

- When you start using the keypad to enter notes, and you have a note length selected, the mouse pointer should go blue (or green for voice 2). At this point, you should be able to point and click notes anywhere on the screen.
- What if you want to stop adding notes? Simply press the **Esc** key, and the pointer will stop being blue.
- The quickest way of inputting notes is often to copy notes you've already entered – read on!

## Selecting, copying and deleting

- To select an object (such as a note, rest, piece of text, or a symbol), just click it
- To select a bar, click on a blank part of the staff (i.e. not on a note), and the bar is enclosed by a blue box
- To select a passage, select an object or a bar, then **Shift**-click on another object or bar, and the selection is enclosed in a blue box
- Don't forget that a *single click* inside a bar (but not on any note) should select the whole bar. A *double-click* on a bar will select that staff throughout the current system (line of music). A *triple-click* on a bar will select that particular staff for the whole score
- To copy notes, bars and passages from one place to another, *don't* use the standard shortcuts **⌘X/⌘C/⌘V** or **Ctrl+X/Ctrl+C/Ctrl+V** (unless you need to copy between different files). It's quicker simply to select the notes, move your mouse to where you'd like the music to be copied, then use **⌘-click** or **Alt+click** to copy (hold down the **⌘** key on Mac and click the mouse button, or hold down the **Alt** key on Windows and click the left mouse button)
- Whenever something is selected in Sibelius, it should go blue (or green for voice 2). At this point you can copy whatever is selected to somewhere else on the score, just by using **⌘-click** or **Alt+click**, even dynamics and symbols!
- If your mouse skills are good, and you use a Windows PC, you can also try pointing the mouse where you'd like the selected note or marking to be copied, and clicking *both mouse buttons* simultaneously. This is called a *chord-click*, and does the same thing as **Alt+click**
- There are times when you might want to select notes or other objects that aren't next to each other. If you do need to do this, click the first note you need, then **⌘-click** or

**Ctrl**+click on any other notes, and you'll see that Sibelius just selects these; you can then alter them all at once, copy them, add articulations, etc.

- Using filters (**Notes ▶ Filters**) can help you select notes in a certain pitch, position or voice, and can also help you to choose the top notes of chords, for example, which is great when you want to 'explode' a piano score into an arrangement for single-note instruments. You can also do multiple searches at once, by returning to the **Filters** menu and refining your search – e.g. to find all the sixteenth-notes on the third beat of the bar. Having found the notes, you can edit them all at once, instead of searching painstakingly through your whole score
- If you need to delete a note, just click on it and hit **Delete**. Sibelius will replace it with a rest
- If you click inside a bar (but not on a note), and then hit **Delete**, Sibelius will delete all the music in the bar, and replace it with a rest
- If you double-click or triple-click, you can select more music and then delete it (see above)
- If you need to remove bars you don't need (for example, at the end of your piece if you used Flexi-time to input the notes), do the following: **⌘**-click or **Ctrl**+click inside the first bar that you don't need (you should get a double blue box around that bar). Then go to the final bar of your score (make sure you don't click on any actual music while you're doing this) and **Shift**-click inside the final bar you want to delete. This should give you a double blue box around all the offending bars. Then hit **Delete**!
- One final thing! There are times when you want to stop selecting things in your score. To do this, simply hit the **Esc** key, and whatever you had selected should return to being black, rather than blue. It's now no longer selected

## **Adding other objects to your score**

- **T** adds a time signature to your score
- **K** adds a key signature to your score
- Select a note or chord, and type **R**. This will repeat the note or chord that's already selected; you'll get an exact copy of it next to the original. Hold down the **R** key, and you'll get a whole stream of notes!
- Select a note, and type **N**. This will give you an extra note, a third above the selected note. You can use the *arrow keys* on your computer's keyboard to move the note up and down.
- Type **L** for the **Lines** dialog box, from where you can choose things like trills and pedal markings, and simply draw them in your score. Don't forget that you can copy lines, text, etc. around your score by using **⌘**-click or **Alt**+click, just like copying notes

- **S** adds a slur above or below a selected note. Use the **space** bar to extend this to the next note, and use **Shift-space** to pull it back one note. Pressing **X** flips the slur to the other side of the note, if necessary. You can pick up either end of a slur by clicking the mouse in the little blue box that appears when the slur is selected, and you can also pick up the middle of a slur to alter its curve.
- **U** displays the **Guitar Frames** dialog box; you can create any guitar frame you like, and simply position it in the score
- **H** adds a hairpin (crescendo) below a selected note. Use **space/Shift-space** to extend and retract it (just like a slur), and drag the hairpin with the mouse if you need to reposition it; you can also select either end of a hairpin and drag it
- **Shift-H** adds a diminuendo hairpin below a selected note
- **I** brings up the **Sounds** dialog box, where you can alter the sounds in your score, and also the muting, panning, balance and MIDI channels
- **Y** displays the **Clefs** dialog box – if you need to change clef during a score, or at the beginning, just select the clef you'd like, click **Create**, then click on the score. Sibelius will redraw all the notes to suit the new clef
- **Z** displays the **Symbols** dialog box, for any weird and wonderful symbol you might need to add to your score. Symbols are all available in four different sizes
- Dynamic markings such as *p* or *mf* are entered as text – see below

## Entering text

- Type **⌘E** or **Ctrl+E** to add dynamic markings in your score; the mouse pointer should go blue. At this point, *click somewhere near the note* you'd like to add the dynamics to (typically just to the left of the actual notehead). It should change to a flashing cursor (or caret). At this point, you can either type your text, or else click the *right mouse button* (on the Mac, use **Control-click**) to see a sub-menu of common dynamics, and simply choose one; when you click it, it is typed into your score. When you've finished entering dynamics, hit **Esc**
- One useful plug-in allows you to add text (like dynamic markings) to multiple staves at once. Just select all the notes in your score at a given point (by **Shift-clicking** on a specific note), then choose **Plug-ins ▶ Copy Text to Multiple Staves**, and choose the marking or text that you'd like to add from the plug-in dialog box
- To get lyrics, type **⌘L** or **Ctrl+L**, and click near the note at which you want the lyrics to start. A flashing cursor below the staff should appear. Then:
  - simply start typing lyrics; **Space** will take you to the next note!

- Use the hyphen key if you have a word with two syllables; Sibelius will jump to the next note ready for the next syllable – there’s no need to use the **Space** bar
- If you’re at the end of a word, but you want lots of notes over the last syllable, just go on hitting **Space** until you reach the note where you want the next word to start
- When you’ve finished inputting lyrics, hit **Esc**
- You can *double-click* on lyrics to select all the lyrics in a line of music, and use the up and down *arrow keys* to alter the vertical positioning
- To put miscellaneous text (such as general instructions) in your score, type **⌘T** or **Ctrl+T**, click where you want the text to go, and simply start typing! You can use the **Return** key (on the main keyboard) to get a new line. When you’ve finished, type **Esc** to stop entering text, then re-select your ‘block’ of text with the mouse and you can then move it around anywhere on the page by dragging the mouse, or by using the arrow keys. Simple!
- To add chord symbols to your score, type **⌘K** or **Ctrl+K**, then click near the note above which you’d like the chord symbol to appear, giving you a flashing cursor. Now right-click (or **Control**-click on Mac), and a word menu of all the standard chord symbols will appear. Just choose what you need. For **A<sup>m7</sup>**, for example, you’ll need to choose **A**, then get the menu again to choose **m<sup>7</sup>**. When done, simply hit the **Space** bar, and Sibelius will jump to the next note, ready for more chord symbols to be added
- You can even add chord symbols to your score automatically – select the staves you want to add chord symbols to, then choose **Plug-ins ▶ Add Chord Symbols**

## Layout and formatting

- If you ever need to make the spacing of notes or bars wider or narrower, just select what you want to respace first (so it goes blue), and then hold down the **⌘** or **Alt** key and use the left and right arrow keys. You should see the music and all the spacing change accordingly
- Don’t forget that you can always force a system break, and push music onto the next system, by selecting a barline (so the actual barline goes blue), then hit **Return** (on the main keyboard), and all the music after that barline is forced onto the next system – just like in a word processing document. You shouldn’t normally need to do this
- You can also force all the music onto the next page, by selecting a barline (as above) and hitting **⌘-Return** or **Ctrl+Return**. You’ll then have a page break in your score, just like a word processor. As with system breaks, this isn’t usually necessary

- Occasionally, you might want to force the spacing of Sibelius to make more bars fit on a particular line than you currently have. To force the spacing, select the bars that you want to end up together (by clicking inside the first bar and **Shift**-clicking inside the final bar). You should get a blue box around all the bars you want to work on. Now choose **Layout ▶ Make Into System**, and Sibelius will indeed squeeze all the selected bars into one system. You'll get some blue padlocks on the screen, to warn you that you've locked the spacing. Don't worry – they don't print out (and you can switch them off on your display by choosing **View ▶ Breaks**)!
- If you want to hide instruments in your score when they're not playing and have lots of bars rest, the easiest thing to do is to select your whole score (**⌘A** or **Ctrl+A**), and then choose **Layout ▶ Hide Empty Staves**. Sibelius then hides all the appropriate instruments. You can always get them back, by following the same action and choosing **Layout ▶ Show Empty Staves** instead. You can also perform these actions on selected passages in your piece, rather than the whole score
- Don't forget that you can align objects in a row or a column on your scores; just select all the markings you'd like to align (by clicking on the first object, then **⌘**-clicking or **Ctrl**-clicking on all the subsequent objects in turn). Then choose **Layout ▶ Align In A Row** or **Align In a Column**, and you should find everything realigns itself. Then, while all the objects are still selected, use the arrow keys to fine-tune their positions as necessary
- If you want to have fun with the page layout of your score, just choose **Layout ▶ Document** (or type **⌘D** or **Ctrl+Shift+D**). A dialog box will appear, where you can change the paper size, orientation, size of your music and page margins. Click **OK**, and Sibelius will instantly reformat your whole score

## Swapping voices

Occasionally, you might want to swap the voices that your notes are in: most commonly, you might do this if you have two staves with music on them, that you'd like to merge into one staff instead. Simply select one of the staves (probably the one with lower pitched notes), so that all the notes go blue. Then, inside the **Notes** menu, you'll find the option to *swap voices*, typically from voice 1 to voice 2. The notes will then (of course) go green. You can then hit **⌘**-click or **Alt**-click to copy them into your other staff. You'll end up with two voices on the same staff, with stems up and stems down.

## Plug-ins

Do check out the plug-ins included with Sibelius; they often automate tasks that would otherwise take a long time, such as adding chord symbols to your score, checking for errors

in your music, or even doubling the note-values of all your music. Make sure you have the latest version of Sibelius to get access to all the latest plug-ins.

## Irregular bars

If you ever need some bars of an unusual length, but you don't want to put in an odd time signature, you can do this. Typically, you'd need to do this if you're creating worksheets where you want to notate a scale in whole notes (with no barlines), or if you're writing a cadenza or recitative. To create an *irregular bar*, as it is called:

- Choose **Create ▶ Bar ▶ Other**
- In the dialog box that appears, click **Irregular**, and choose the actual length you want your bar to be (by choosing note-values – you can choose 8 whole notes, for example)
- Finally choose how many of these irregular bars you want (Sibelius defaults to giving you 1), and click **OK**
- Sibelius will then give you an extra irregular bar in your score (with a double blue box around it). It looks completely innocent, like any other bar in your score – until you put any notes in it!

## Editing staff types

A rather advanced feature (but very useful) is the ability for any staff to be notated with 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 or zero lines. Any staff can change during the course of a score from one type to another – as many times as you like. Why would you need to do this? The most common scenario is when you simply want to erase a staff half-way through a line, perhaps when you're creating a worksheet. Try this:

- Start a new score with just a single treble clef instrument. You'll get 5 bars in your score as usual
- Choose **Create ▶ Staff Type Change**. You'll see lots of choices for what type of staff you might need. Choose **No lines (hidden)**
- The mouse pointer goes blue; click somewhere inside the first few bars of your score. You should see the staff disappear
- Try dragging where the staff type change occurs, using your mouse – you can move the change-over point left and right
- If you want the staff to reappear as a 5-line staff later in the score, just create a **5 lines** staff type change, and insert it in the score
- You can in fact copy and paste your staff type changes – just like copying and pasting notes – using **⌘-click** or **Alt+click**

## Changing noteheads

If you need to change the notehead of a specific note, remember there are 19 different notehead styles in Sibelius:

- Click on the note (or notes) you want to change, so they go blue
- You have two options for scrolling through the different noteheads you'd like. You can hold down **Shift** and press the up and down arrow keys. Sibelius will go through all the possible noteheads you can have. Just stop when you reach the one you want.
- Alternatively, select the notes, and then type a number using the keys across the top of your main computer keyboard (not the keypad). Each number represents a different notehead. For numbers above **10**, just type the two digits quickly, one after the other

## Drum mapping

When you're notating for a 5-line drum set, you might want each notehead to make a different drum sound. How can you change the sounds played by each notehead?

- Create a score with a 5-line drum set instrument, and put some notes on the score.
- For the moment, just add some normal notes to this staff, although you can of course change some of the noteheads of the notes (as above)
- Now you're ready to do some *drum mapping*. Make a mental note of one of the notes you've created, and remember where it is on the staff. It might be making a bizarre sound at the moment, but we can change this!
- Choose **Create ▶ Staff Type Change**, and select the **Drum set** radio button
- On the next dialog box, make sure you click where it says **5 lines (drum set)**, so that this goes blue, then click **Modify**
- You should now be inside a new dialog box, with two 'tabs', one that says **General** and one that says **Drum set**. Click on the **Drum set** tab
- This is where you do the drum mapping. You should have a staff with lots of notes in it. Using this little window, click on the note you'd like to change, so it goes blue – as an example, try the note on the top line of the staff
- Once selected, have a look at the **Notehead** box below. It should say **Normal**. You can alter this to choose any of the 18 noteheads that Sibelius has, but leave it as **Normal** for the moment
- Below, you can see the word **Sound**, and it will probably say **Ride cymbal 1** (because that's the default sound notes in that place in the staff make). You can click on this, and perhaps choose another sound from the list that appears – **Cowbell**, for example. Then click **Edit** and Sibelius from that moment on will remember to make

that sound for that notehead in that place on the staff (but only for that particular score)

- Then click **OK** in that box, and **Close** on the next dialog box, to take you back to your score. You should then find that the sound of your drum notes has changed

That's how you do drum mapping. Once you've done your note mapping, you can save your amended score as a piece of *manuscript paper*, so that it's a template for you to use in the future, whenever you write for drum set.

## Editing text styles

One other piece of modifying that it's quite common to do is to change the way text behaves in your score. As an example, here's how to change the default setting of lyrics

- First, add some notes and lyrics in your score. Now, you can change the way the lyrics look, if you'd like them to be a different size or font
- Choose **Create ▶ Text ▶ Edit Text Styles**. A dialog box appears, listing all the different types of text that there are in Sibelius. Scroll down until you see **Lyrics**, and select it (but don't select **Lyricist** or **Lyrics verse 2** etc.), then click **Modify**
- You should now find yourself inside a new dialog box with five 'tabs', labeled **General**, **Border**, **Horizontal posn**, **Vertical posn** and **Repeat**. This is where you can alter what you need
- For example, inside the **General** tab, which is already open, change the **Size** of lyrics to **11**, and switch on the **Italics** box
- Now click **OK** to close that dialog box, and **Close** to close the previous screen

You should find that the lyrics you previously typed have now changed. You can always return to the same box later to make some more changes.

## And finally...

- If you go wrong at any stage, writing music, don't panic! If you type **⌘Z** or **Ctrl+Z**, Sibelius will 'undo' your last action. If you go on typing **⌘Z** or **Ctrl+Z**, Sibelius will undo more and more actions, until eventually it has undone everything you've done! You can also redo your actions.
- You should be able to figure out all the other things in Sibelius, as you go along. If you run into problems, try the User Guide, or visit the list of Frequently Asked Questions and chat page in the User Area on [www.sibelius.com](http://www.sibelius.com), or else contact technical support.
- Most importantly, have fun!