

How to embed Lyrics into a MIDI File using Sonar

... Tutorial by John Ialuna



Requirements

- PC with a MIDI sound module connected or GM sound card
- Sonar, any version or Cakewalk Audio Version 8 or later
- MIDI File with an accurate melody line on MIDI channel 4
- Text file of the lyrics

NOTE: This tutorial assumes a Melody Guide exists in the MIDI File. If the melody does not exist, refer to the tutorial ' How To Add a Cheats Melody guide in a MIDI File' further down this document.

Getting Started

This is a very simple process and should only take a few minutes with each song provided the melody line and lyrics are accurate. I will refer to the sequencing program as Sonar but the same applies to Cakewalk.

- Open Sonar and load a MIDI File with melody line included
- Select the MIDI channel that has the melody line. This should be MIDI channel 4. If melody line is on another MIDI channel, move the track on MIDI channel 4 to a pare channel then move the melody line to MIDI channel 4
- Hold the 'Alt' key and press the '7' to open the score page
- Hold the 'Alt' key and press the '8' to open the lyrics page
- Copy and paste the lyrics into the lyrics page then press the 'Hyphenate' button
- The lyrics should line up with the melody line notes, providing the melody guide and lyrics are accurate.
- Select the score section and play the song and check for accuracy. HINT - Click your mouse on the bar line when a section is OK as Sonar will always return to the start of the song if stopped when in this mode. By clicking on the bar line, a green flag will appear and Sonar will return to this point when stopped.
- Add a hyphen in between words if there are inaccuracies
- When complete, go: File>Save As and select MIDI Format 0 (or Format 1 if you desire split tracks) then save the MIDI File.

How to add a 'cheats' melody guide in a MIDI File

The following instruction applies if the MIDI File does not have a melody guide. The embedded lyrics require data to track to, otherwise the lyrics will not scroll in time with the song. It's easy to add a fake melody line because you don't have to play the right notes. You can add this tracking data yourself, as there is no musical accuracy required. Of course, if you have the ability, go ahead and add the right notes!

You need to know ...

The song and how to hum the tune. And, you'll need to know a little about MIDI sequencing, otherwise, contact the helpful team at Hit Trax (contact details at end of the tutorial)

- Load the MIDI File into Sonar or Cakewalk
- The melody line will be recorded to MIDI channel 4. Move any track that is on MIDI channel 4 to a new and unoccupied MIDI track
- Set up bar 1 of the now vacant MIDI channel 4 according to GM spec. You can copy and paste setup data from another track if needed.
- Change the instrument of MIDI channel 4 to something like a Tenor Saxophone
- When recording the melody line, simply play the same note to the beat and rhythm of the melody line - even though it will sound off key. Just make sure the notes are hit and released at the right time so it accurately follows the original vocal line.
- After recording and confirming the melody track is correct, set all velocities of the melody guide track (MIDI channel 4) to '0' and change the volume (controller 7) to 0. This ensures the track data is played but never heard.
- Save MIDI File then refer to the tutorial above to enter the lyrics

Good luck and feel free to contact me at Hit Trax.

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