Handbook

This handbook is for MuseScore version 2.0 and above. It is maintained and translated by the MuseScore community. Find out how you can help.

In case of doubt, consult the English online version of the handbook here.

Getting started

This chapter helps you to install and run MuseScore for the first time. The chapter will also show you how to create a new score.

Installation

MuseScore works on many different computer systems including Windows, macOS, and Linux.

Install on Windows

Install

You can get the Windows installer from the download page of the MuseScore website. Click on the link to start the download. Your Internet browser will ask you to confirm that you want to download this file. Click Save File.

When the download finishes, double-click on the file to start the installation. Windows may prompt you with a security window to confirm this before running the software. Click Run to continue, you'll then briefly see
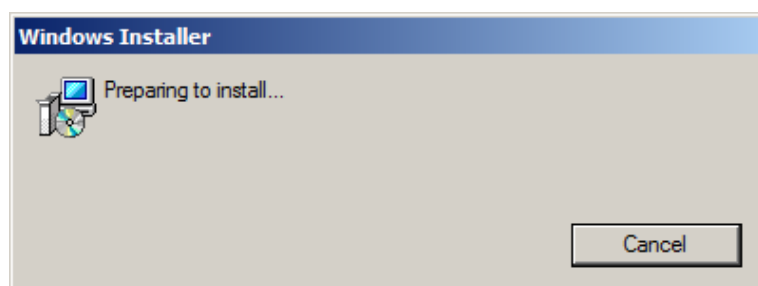
followed by
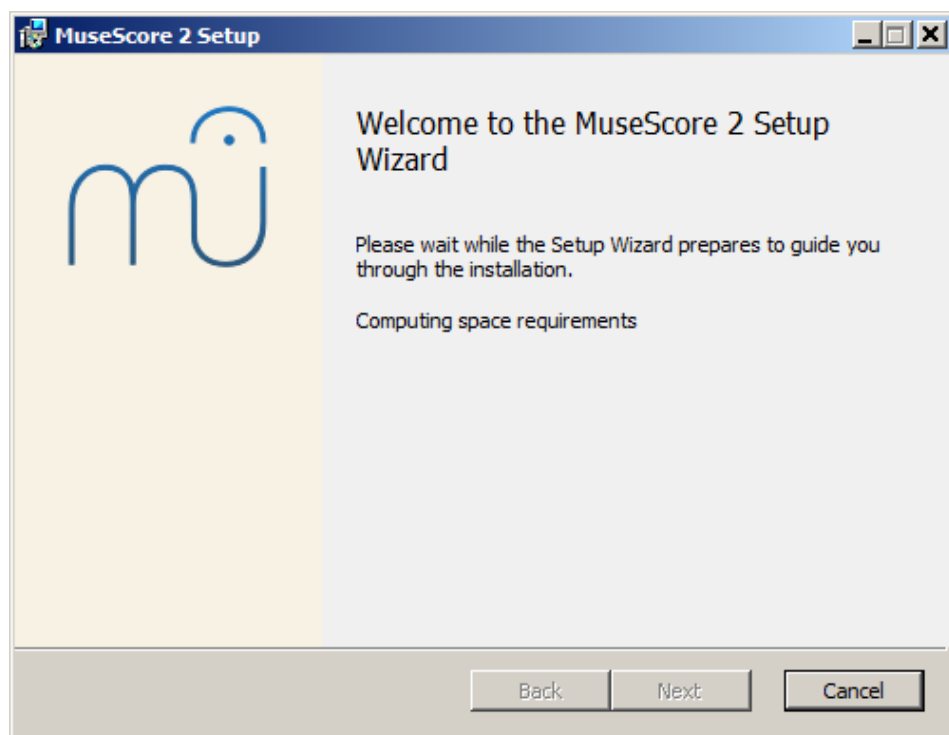
In case you don't see this installer window but something else, it's possible that the .msi extension is not associated with msiexec.exe. Either you can <u>fix the association</u>, or download and use the <u>portable version of MuseScore</u> instead.

Continuing you'll see
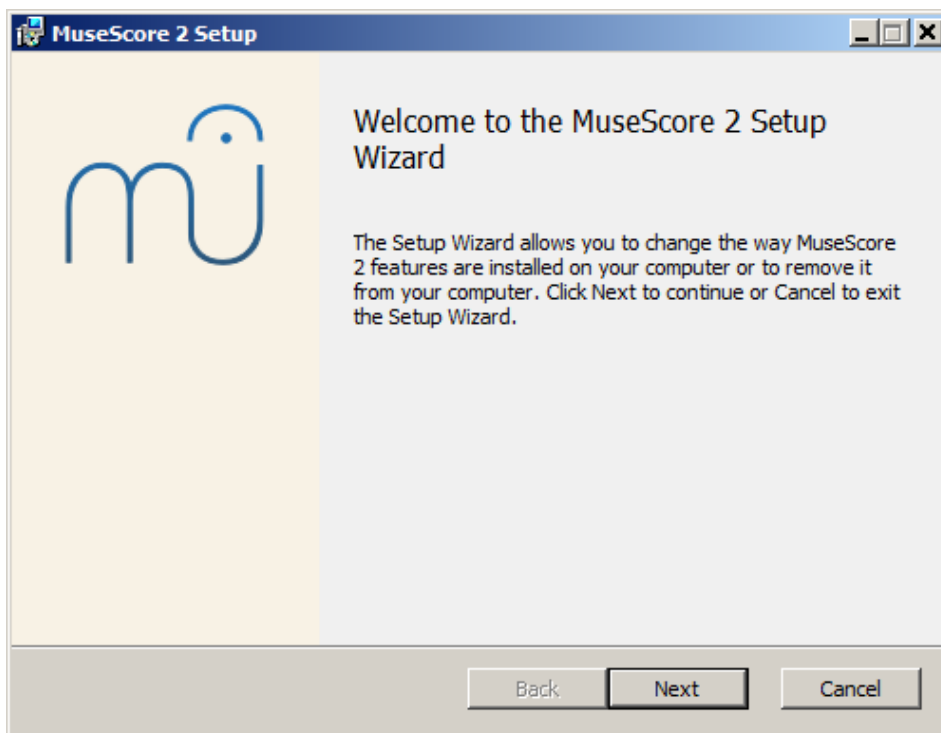
If you click `Cancel`, here or later, you'll see:
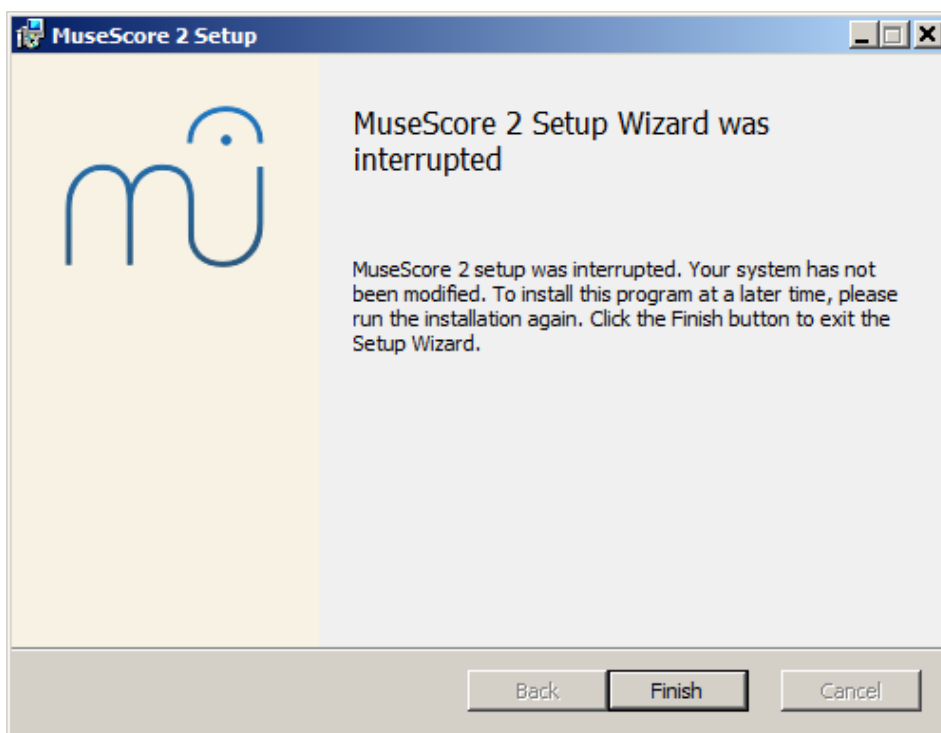
If instead you click `Next` to continue, the setup wizard displays the terms of the free software license.
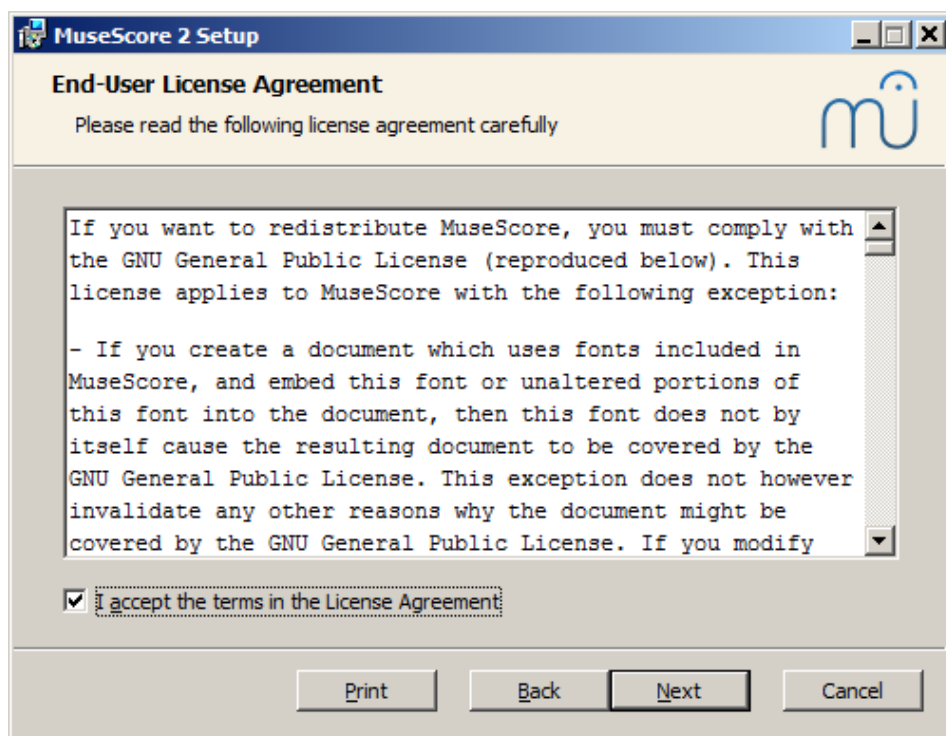
Read the terms of the license, make sure the box next to `I accept the terms in the License Agreement` is checked, and click `Next` to continue. Next the installer will ask you to confirm the location in which to install MuseScore.
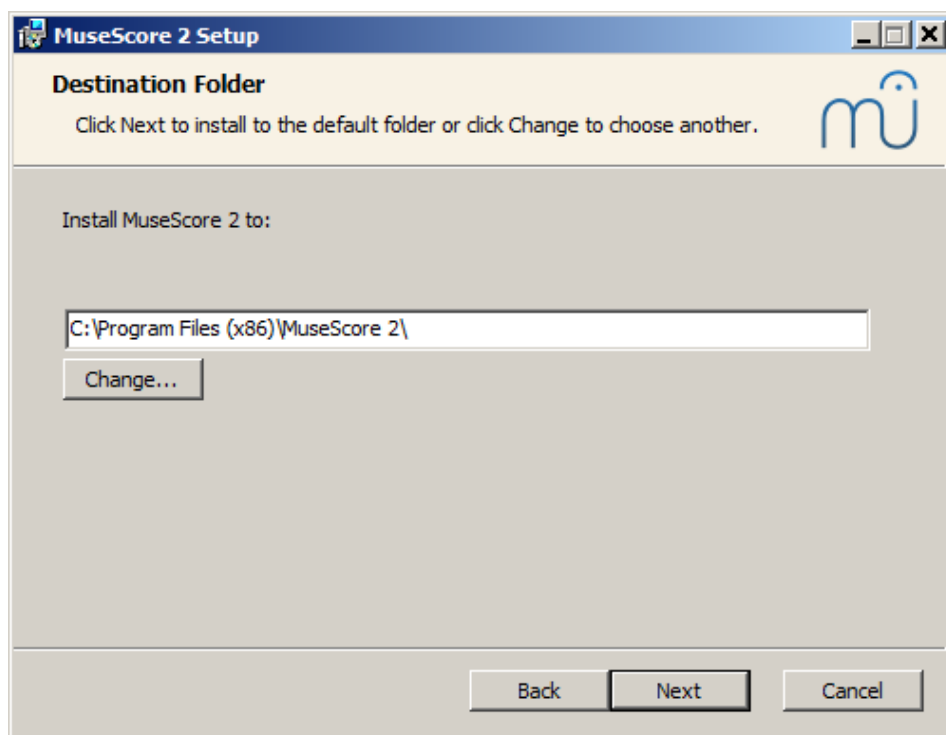
If you are installing a newer version of MuseScore but still want to keep the old version on your computer, then you should change the folder (note that MuseScore 2 can coexist with MuseScore 1 with no changes needed). Otherwise click `Next` to continue.
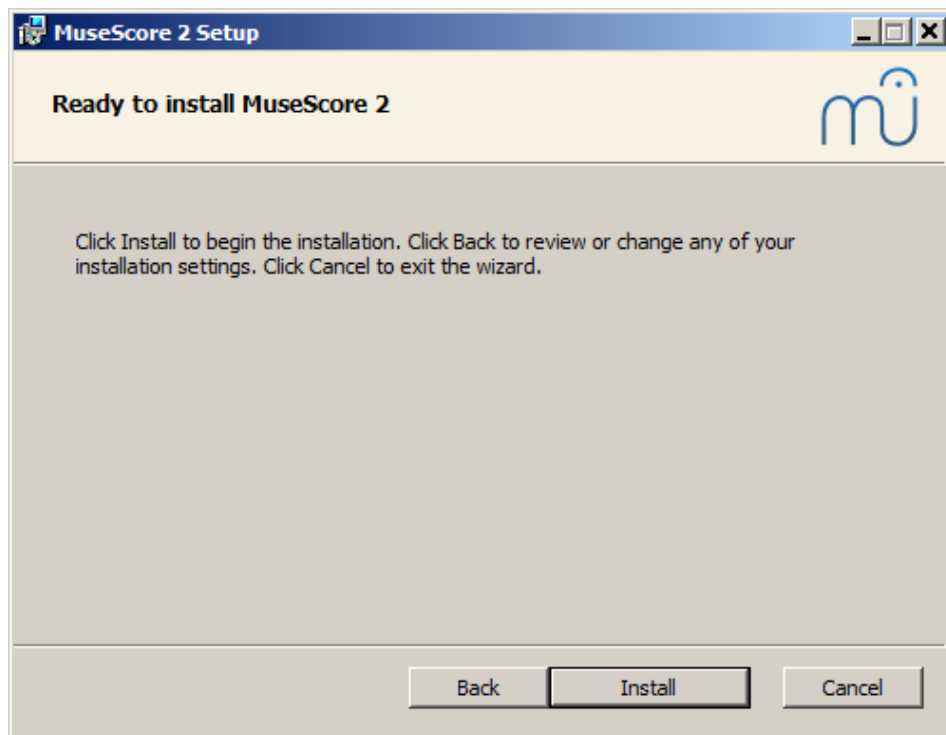
Click Install to continue.

Give the setup wizard a few minutes to install the necessary files and configurations. You'll see
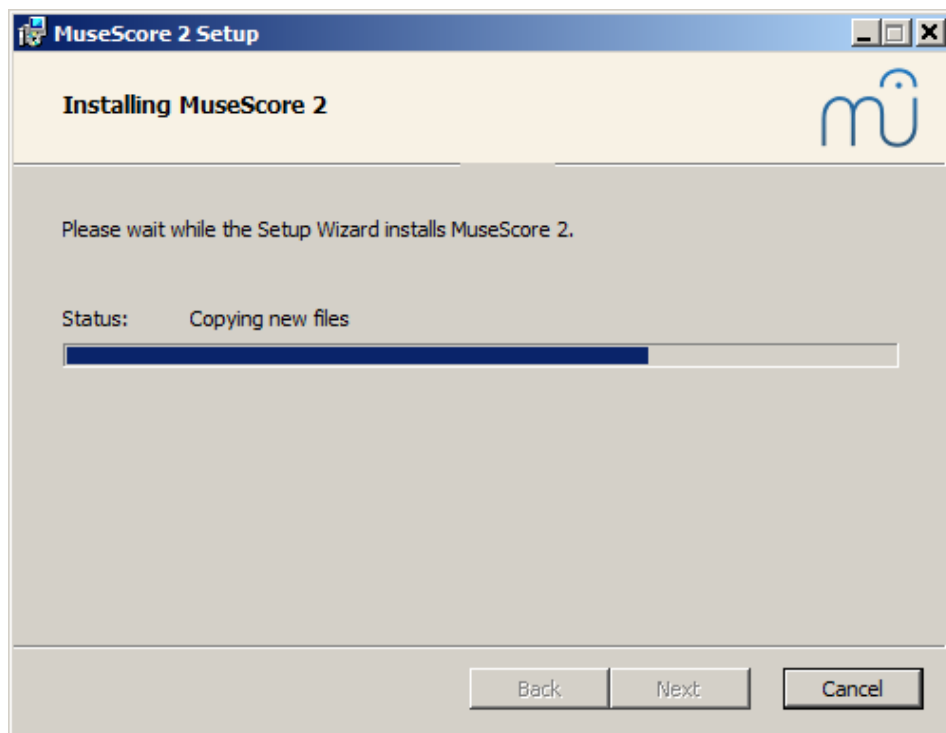
and finally
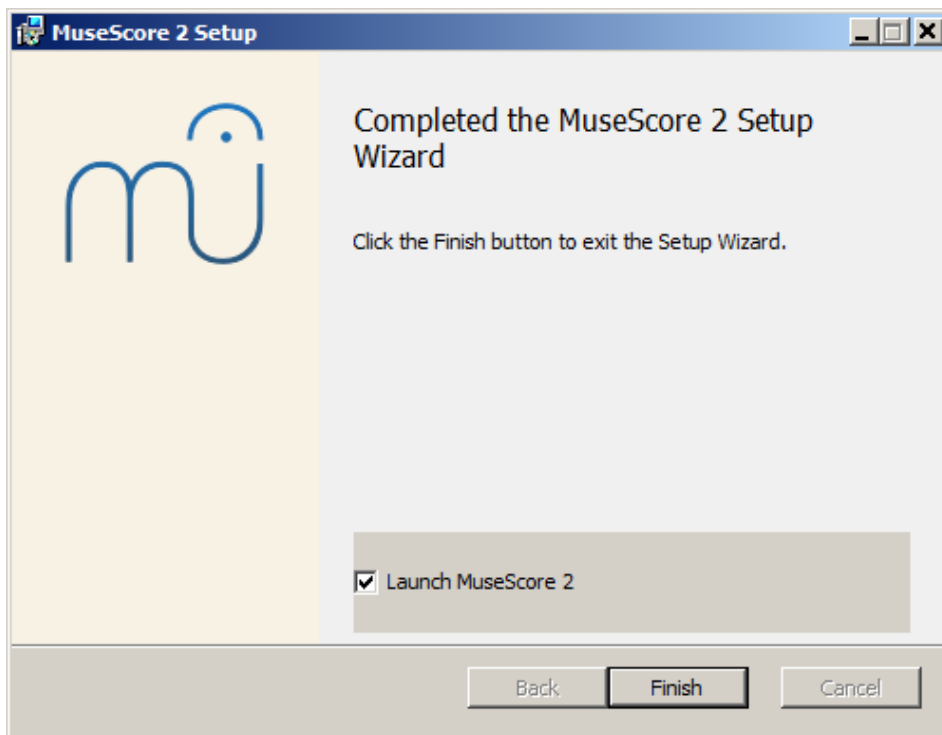
Click `Finish` to exit the installer. You may delete the installer file you downloaded.

Start MuseScore

To start MuseScore choose `Start → All Programs → MuseScore 2 → MuseScore 2.`

Uninstall

You can uninstall on 32-bit Windows with

```
cd C:\Program Files\MuseScore
Uninstall.exe /S
```

and on 64-bit Windows with

```
cd C:\Program Files (x86)\MuseScore
Uninstall.exe /S
```

Troubleshooting

On Windows XP and Vista, the installer might be blocked by the system. If you don't manage to install MuseScore, right click the downloaded file and click Properties. If there is a message *"This file came from another computer and might be blocked to help protect this computer"*, click on "Unblock", "OK" and double click on the downloaded file again.

External links

- How to install MuseScore on Windows without administrator rights
- How to run MuseScore as Administrator on Windows
- How to change the language in MuseScore

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Install on macOS

Install

You will find the DMG (disk image) file on the download page of the MuseScore website. Click on the macOS link to start the download. When the download is complete, double-click the DMG file to mount the disk image.
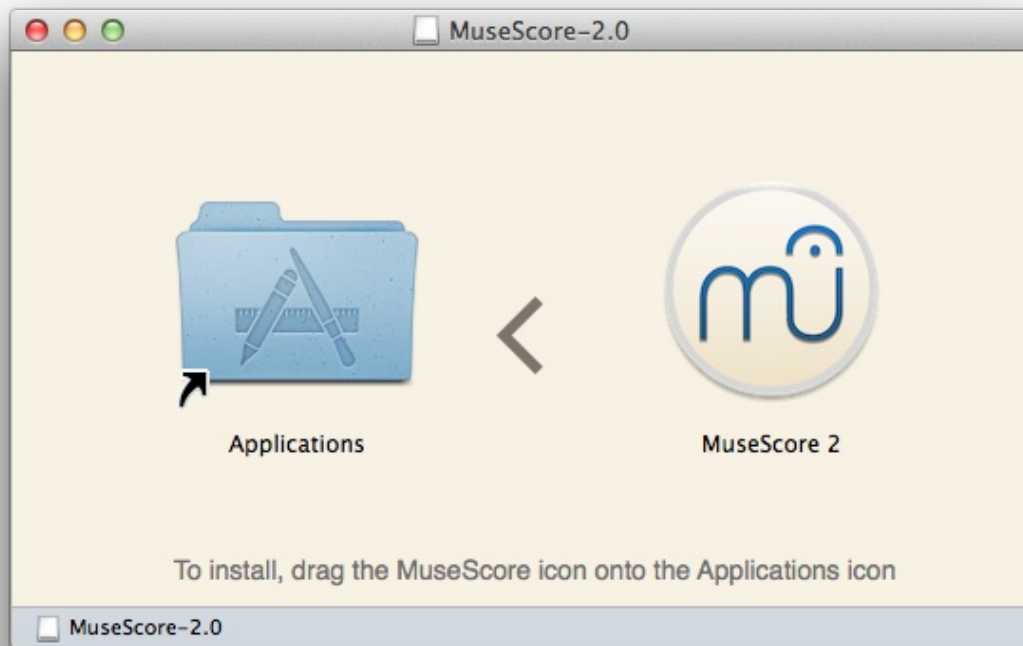
Drag and drop the MuseScore icon to the Applications folder icon.

If you are not logged in as administrator, macOS may ask for a password: click `Authenticate` and enter your password to proceed.
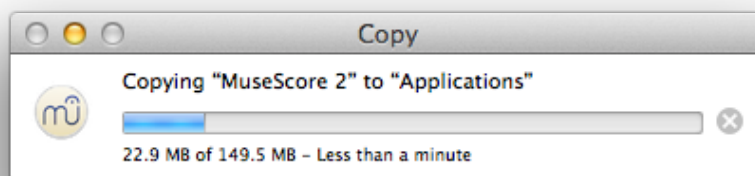
When the application has finished copying, eject the disk image. You can now launch MuseScore from the Applications folder, Spotlight, or Launchpad.

Uninstall

Simply delete MuseScore from Applications folder.

Install with Apple Remote Desktop

You can copy the DMG on all computers with the "Copy" feature of ARD. Then, install MuseScore with a couple Unix commands sent from the "Unix" feature of ARD.

```
hdiutil mount <Path to where you copied .dmg>/MuseScore-2.0.3.dmg
cp "/Volumes/MuseScore-2.0.3/MuseScore 2.app" /Applications
hdiutil unmount /Volumes/MuseScore-2.0.3
rm -rf <Path to where you copied .dmg>/MuseScore-2.0.3.dmg
```

If you want to deploy a PKG, you can make one with pkgbuild or with
https://github.com/scriptingosx/quickpkg.

External links

- How to change the language in MuseScore

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Install on Linux

With MuseScore 2.0.3 you can, for the first time, get hold of a copy for Linux straight from the Downloads page, just like Windows and Mac users. This is possible thanks to the AppImage packaging format, which runs on pretty much all Linux distributions. If you prefer, there is still the option to get it the traditional way via your distribution's package manager (but you may have to wait for it to get packaged by the relevant maintainer). Of course, you can always build from source.

AppImage

The AppImage format is a new way of packaging Linux applications. AppImages are portable - they don't have to be installed - and they run on pretty much any Linux distribution. Dependencies are included in the one AppImage file.

Step 1 - Download

Before you download an AppImage, you need to know your processor's architecture. These terminal commands will show it:

```
arch
```

or

```
uname -m
```

The output will be something like "`i686`", "`x86_64`" or "`armv7`":

- `i686` (or similar) - 32 bit Intel/AMD processor. (Found on older machines.)
- `x86_64` (or similar) - 64 bit Intel/AMD processor. (Modern laptop and desktop computers, most Chromebooks.)
- `armv7` (or later) - ARM processor. (Phones & tablets, Raspberry Pi 2/3 running Ubuntu Mate, some Chromebooks. Usually 32 bit at present.)

Now you can head over to the Download page and find the AppImage that best matches your architecture. Once downloaded, the file will be named "`MuseScore-X.Y.Z-$(arch).AppImage`".

Step 2 - Give execute permission

Before you can use the AppImage you need to give permission for it to be run as a program.

From the Terminal:

This command gives the user (u) permission to execute (x) the AppImage. It works on all Linux systems.

```
cd ~/Downloads
chmod u+x MuseScore*.AppImage
```

Note: Use the "`cd`" command to change directory to wherever you saved the AppImage.

From a File Manager:

If you prefer to avoid the command line, there is usually a way give execute permission from inside a File Manager.

In GNOME Files (Nautilus), simply:

1. Right-click on the AppImage and select "Properties".
2. Open the "Permissions" tab.
3. Enable the option labelled "Allow executing file as a program".

The process may be slightly different in other file managers.

Step 3 - Run it!

Now you should be able to run the program simply by double-clicking on it!

When you downloaded the AppImage it was probably saved in your Downloads folder, but you can move somewhere else it at any time (e.g. you could put it on your desktop for easy access). If you ever want to remove it then simply delete it.

Installing the AppImage (optional)

You can run the AppImage without installing it, but you must install it if you want it to be completely integrated with your desktop environment. This has the following benefits:

- Adds the AppImage to your Applications Menu or Launcher
- Sets the correct icons for MuseScore's files (MSCZ, MSCX) and for MusicXML files (MXL, XML)
- Makes the AppImage available via your File Manager's right-click "Open with..." menu

To install it, run the AppImage from the Terminal with the "install" option (see immediately below). This copies a desktop file and various icons to your computer. If you want to remove them you will need to run the "remove" option before you delete the AppImage. This does not affect any scores created with any version of MuseScore.

Using command line options

Running the AppImage from the Terminal allows you to use various command line options. The AppImage has some special options in addition to MuseScore's normal command line options.

You will need to change directory (cd) to wherever the AppImage is saved your system, for example:

```
cd ~/Desktop
./MuseScore*.AppImage *option*
```

Or give the path to the AppImage:

```
~/desktop/MuseScore*.AppImage *option*
```

Use the "--help" and "man" options to get more information about the available command line options:

```
./MuseScore*.AppImage --help    # displays a complete list of command line options
./MuseScore*.AppImage man       # displays the manual page (explains what the options do)
```

Distribution Packages

Fedora

1. Import the GPG key:

   ```
   su
   rpm --import http://prereleases.musescore.org/linux/Fedora/RPM-GPG-KEY-Seve
   ```

2. Go to the download page of the MuseScore website. Click on the link for the stable Fedora download and choose the correct rpm package for your architecture.

3. Depending on your architecture, use one of the two sets of commands to install MuseScore

   - for arch i386

     ```
     su
     yum localinstall musescore-X.Y-1.fc10.i386.rpm
     ```

   - for arch x86_64

     ```
     su
     yum localinstall musescore-X.Y-1.fc10.x86_64.rpm
     ```

If you have difficulty with sound, see Fedora 11 and sound

External links

- How to run the MuseScore AppImage on Linux - video
- How to change the language in MuseScore

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Install on Chromebook

MuseScore will not work natively on Chrome OS but there are some workaround solutions.

1. Via Crouton: Involves installing a Linux based operating system which runs in parallel with Chrome OS, and then installing MuseScore on Linux.
2. Via software-on-demand service such as Rollapp: By just visiting this website, you can run MuseScore in the browser, but you can only start scores from scratch and only save them to your online MuseScore account through the menu `File → Save Online...`, and sound and playback does not work.

External links

- How to run MuseScore on a Chromebook
- Check the installation procedure from the comments in this thread
- How to change the language in MuseScore

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Create new score

The **New Score Wizard** helps you to set up a new score. To open the New Score Wizard directly, see Create new score (below). You can also get to the New Score Wizard via the **Start Center**.

Start center
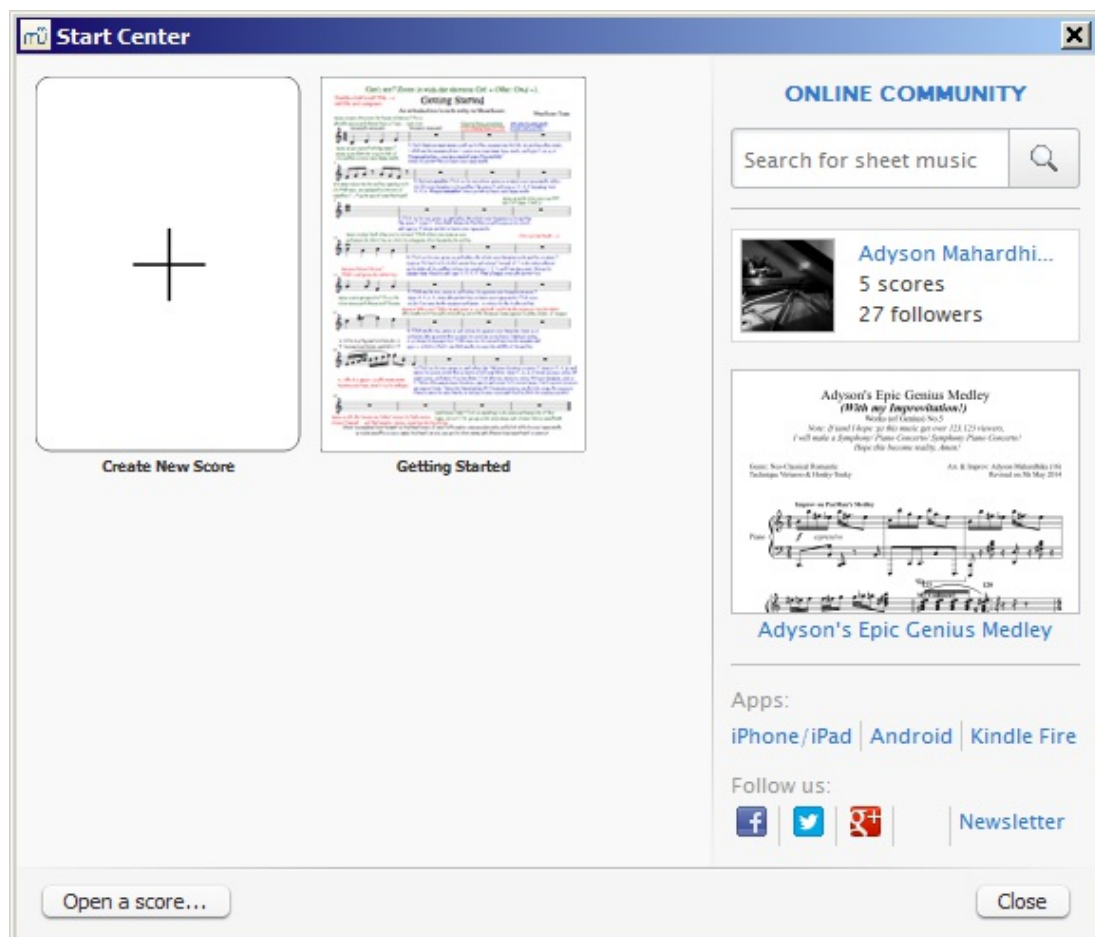
This is the window that displays when you first open MuseScore. Alternately you can open it by selecting it from `View → Start Center...` (keyboard shortcut, `F4`).

Here, you can choose between options such as
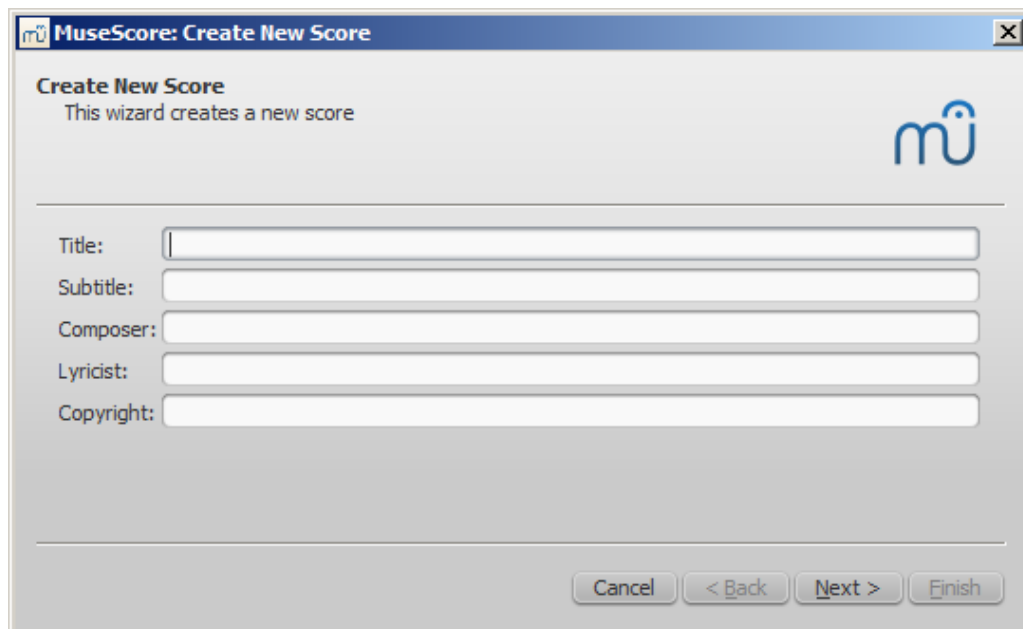
- Create a new score (by clicking on the icon with the plus sign)
- Open a previously opened score
- If opening MuseScore for the first time, open the "Getting Started" tutorial score
- Open an existing score from your computer's file system
- See the "In the spotlight" score of the day
- Search sheet music on musecore.com
- Link to mobile apps
- Link to follow MuseScore on social networks

Create new score

To open the **New Score Wizard** when the Start Center is not open, use one of the following options:

- Click on the New Score icon in the toolbar on the top left of the window;
- Use keyboard shortcut `Ctrl+N` (Mac: `Cmd+N`);
- Select `File → New...`.

Title, composer and other information

Enter the title, composer, or any other information as shown above, then click on `Next >`. This step is optional: you can also add this information after the score is created (see Vertical frame).

Select template
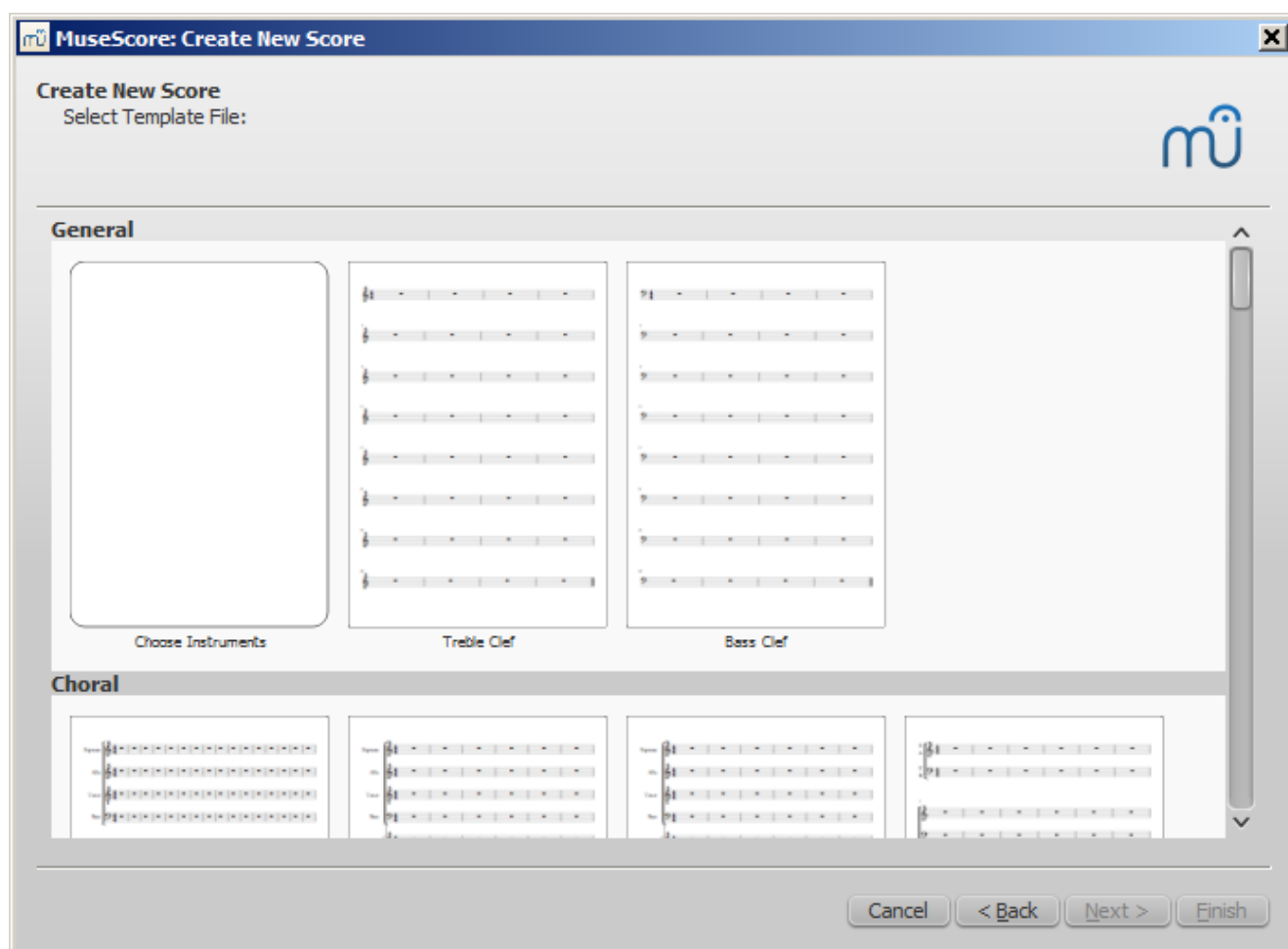
Here, you can choose from a range of solo, ensemble and orchestral*templates* (discussed in more detail below). If you wish to choose *exactly* what instruments should be in your score then click on the "Choose Instruments" template (under "General").

Choose instruments or voice parts

If you can't find an appropriate template, then click '**Choose Instruments**".
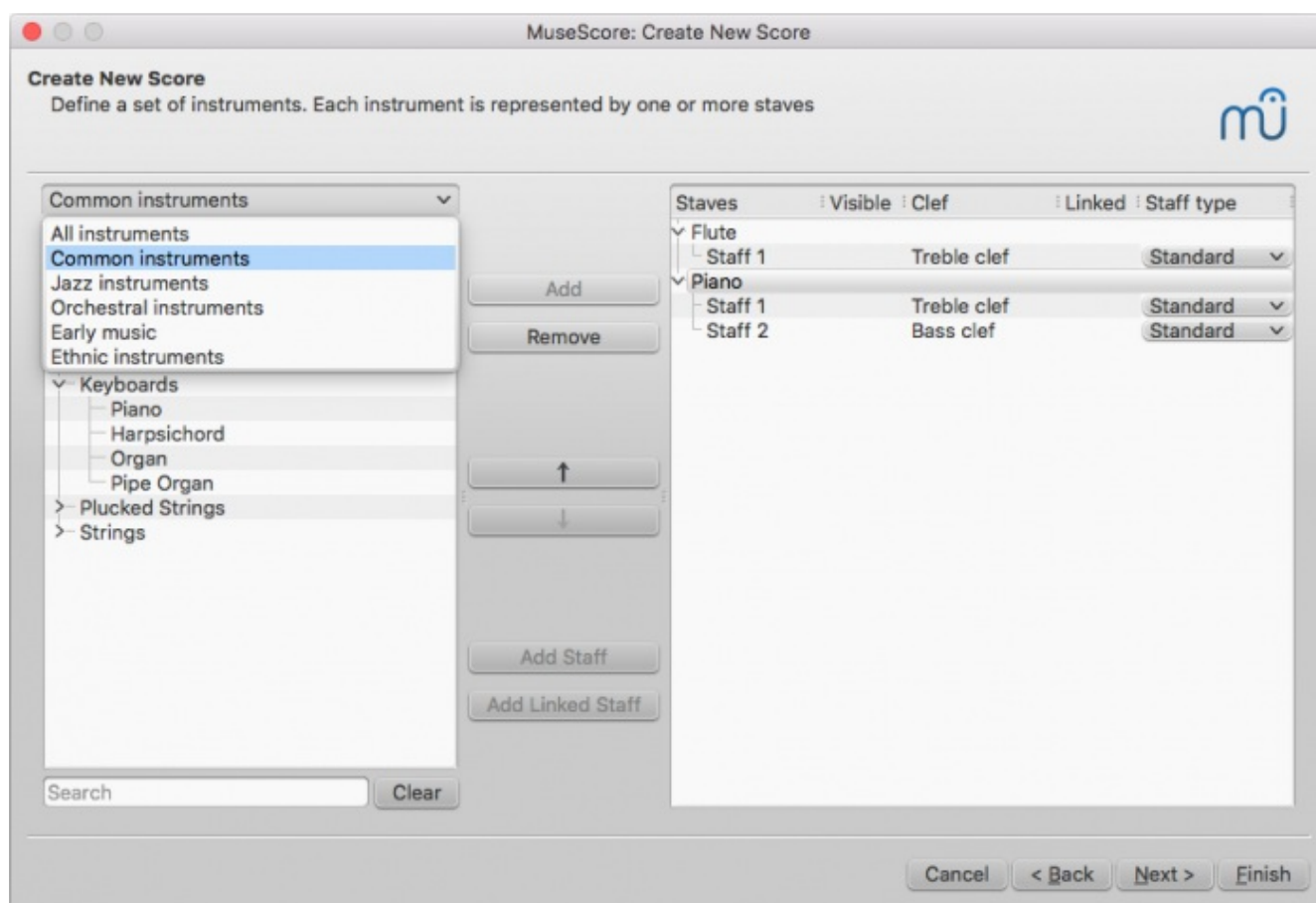
The **Chose Instruments** window is divided into two columns:

- The **left column** contains a list of instruments, or voice parts to choose from. This list is categorized into instrument families, and clicking a category shows the full list of instruments in each family.

  The default entry is "Common instruments" but you can choose from others, including "Jazz instruments" and "Early music". There is a search box at the bottom of the instrument window: typing the name of an instrument there will search for it in "All instruments".

- The **right column** starts off empty, but will eventually contain a list of instruments for your new score, in the order that they will appear.

  The most widely used staff is the **standard** type (five lines), but **percussion** and **tablature** staves are also provided. You can use the drop-down list under **Staff type** to make preliminary adjustments to staves: for example, to change a standard staff to tablature or vice versa, or to change the appearance of a tablature or percussion staff.

To **add** instruments to your score use any of the following options:

- Select one or more instruments in the left column and click Add.
- Double-click an instrument in the left column.

The instrument names, and their associated staff lines, now appear in the instrument list in the right column. You can add more instruments or voice parts, as needed. Each instrument added in this way is allocated its own Mixer channel.

To **change** the order of instruments/staves, click either an instrument name or a staff and use the Up or Down buttons to move it higher/lower.

To **delete** an instrument, or staff line, from your score:

- Select an instrument, or a staff line, in the right column and click Remove.

Add staff

This method is used to add another staff to an existing instrument in your instrument list:

1. Select a staff in the instrument list on the right-hand side (e.g. see "Staff 1" in the image below). Click `Add Staff`.

2. Adjust the **Staff type**, if applicable.
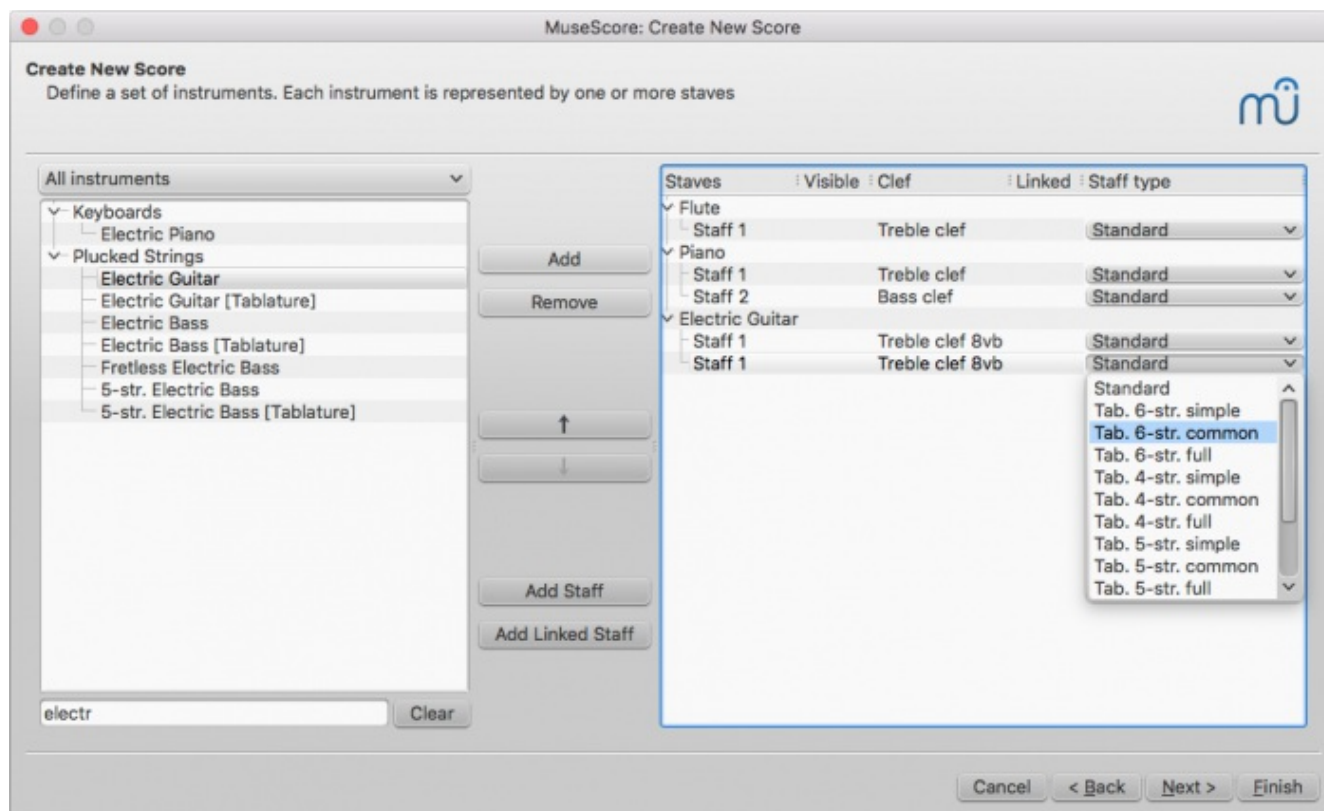
Each instrument staff can be edited independently of the other(s). All staves share the same instrument name and Mixer channel.

You can use `Add Staff` to create an **unlinked** staff/tablature system for the guitar or other plucked-string instrument (see Combine pitched staff with tablature).

Add Linked Staff

This method is used to add a **linked** staff to an existing instrument in your instrument list:

1. Select an instrument staff in your instrument list (e.g., "Staff 1"; see image above) and click `Add Linked Staff`.

2. Use the **Staff type** column to change the new staff as required.

Any changes to the notation in one staff will automatically be translated to the other. All staves share the same instrument name and Mixer channel.

You can use the `Add Linked Staff` button to create a **linked** staff/tablature system for the guitar or other plucked-string instrument (see Combine pitched staff with tablature).

Note: To adjust the distance between staves within a single instrument (created with the **Add Staff** or **Add Linked Staff** buttons), use the Grand Staff Distance setting.

Select key signature and tempo

The wizard asks for two things: The initial key signature and tempo of the score. Select any of the former and click `Next >` to continue. An initial tempo can be set here too.

Time signature, pickup measure (anacrusis), and number of measures

You can set your initial **time signature** here. If the score starts with a pickup, then mark the **Pickup measure** checkbox and adjust the time signature (a setting known in the context menu 'Measure

Properties' as actual duration).

Measures is set to 32 by default: you can change the number here, or add/remove measures later from the score.

Click `Finish` to create your new score.

Adjustments to score after creation

Any settings you make in the New Score Wizard can always be changed when you start work on the score itself:

Add/Delete Measures

To add/delete measures or create a pickup, see Measure operations

Add/Edit text

To change any text, see Text editing. To add a missing Title (or other text item), use the menu`Add → Text → Title` (or other text item)

Change Instrument set-up

To add, delete, or change the order of instruments, use the menu`Edit → Instruments...` or press `I`. This opens the **Instruments** dialog which is virtually identical to the Chose Instruments dialog in the **New Score Wizard** (see above).

See also Change instrument (Staff properties).

Templates

The second screen of the new score wizard allows you to choose a template to create a new score from (see above for details). To create a score using this method, click on a template instead of the "Choose Instruments" option. Continue and finish the new score wizard as usual.

Template files are normal MuseScore files, stored in a template folder. There are two template folders created by default: the system template folder that contains the templates installed with MuseScore and **should not be modified**, and a private user template folder to add your own templates to. You can create a custom template that will show in the new score wizard by simply saving a score into that folder.

User template folder

You can configure the location of your private templates folder in`Edit → Preferences... → General`, but MuseScore does create a folder for this purpose.

On Windows, the user template folder is located at`%HOMEPATH%\Documents\MuseScore2\Templates`.

On macOS and Linux, the user template folder is located at`~/Documents/MuseScore2/Templates`.

The new score wizard will show templates from both the system and the user template folder.

System template folder

The content of this folder **should not be modified**.

On Windows, the system template folder is usually located at`c:\Program Files\MuseScore 2\templates` or in the 64-bit versions at`C:\Program Files (x86)\MuseScore 2\templates`.

On Linux, look under `/usr/share/mscore-xxx` if you installed from the package manager. If you compiled MuseScore on Linux yourself, then look under `/usr/local/share/mscore-xxx` (with `xxx` being the version you are using).

On macOS, look under `/Applications/MuseScore 2.app/Contents/Resources/templates`.

See also

- [Key signature](#)
- [Time signature](#)
- [Clef](#)
- [Tempo](#)
- [Staff properties](#)

External links

- [Video tutorial: MuseScore in Minutes: Lesson 1 - Score Setup](#)

Do you have an unanswered question? [Post it in the forum](#).

Language settings and translation updates

MuseScore will be installed and work with your "System" language (the one used for most programs, and generally depending on your country and the language settings of the PC, or account).

Change language

1. Go to `Edit → Preferences...` (Mac: `MuseScore → Preferences...`)

2. In the `General` tab, there is a `Language` section:
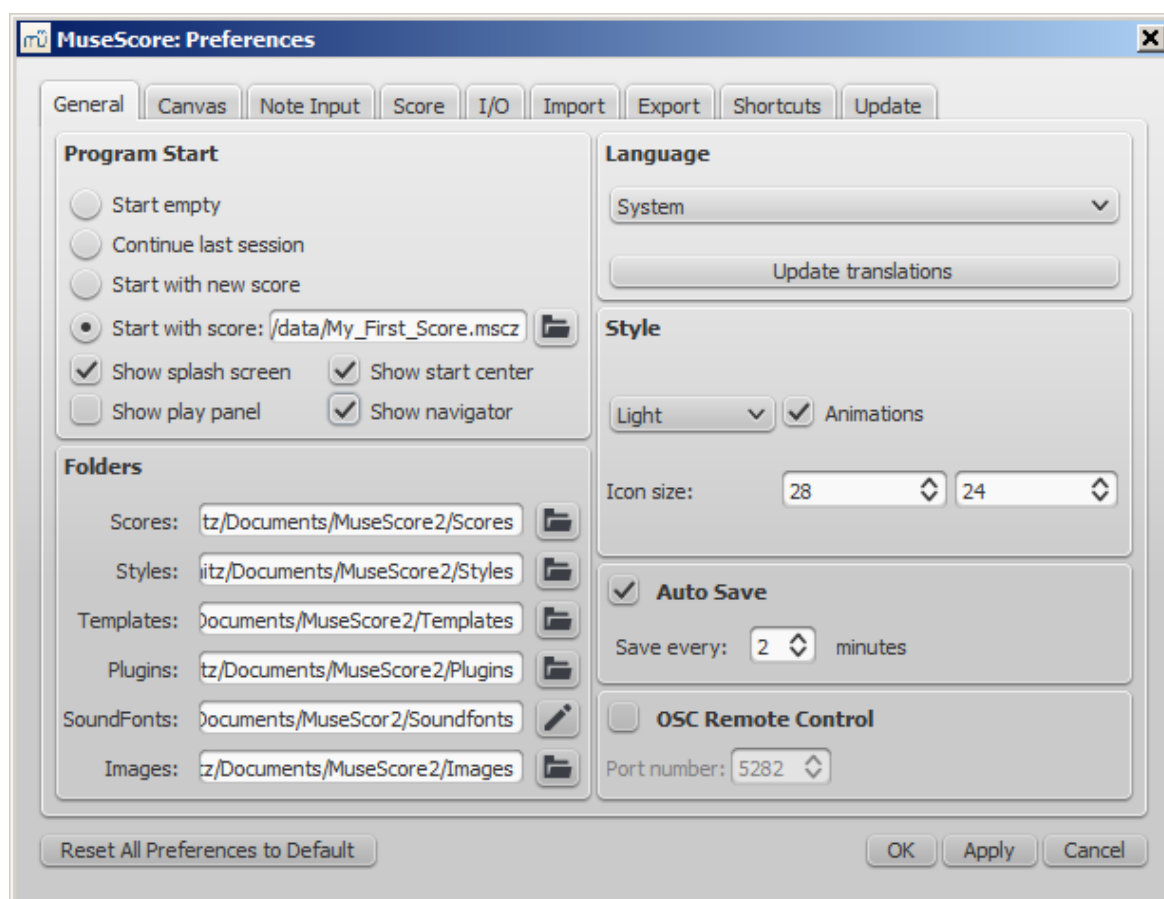
You can change it and also update the translation with the `Update Translations` button. A new window will appear, showing your language at the top - see [below](#).

As then indicated, you will have to exit and reopen MuseScore for changes and updates to take effect.

Update translation

You can update the translation as explained above, via the preferences settings, but there is another method:

1. Go to `Help → Resource Manager`

2. Click on the Update button
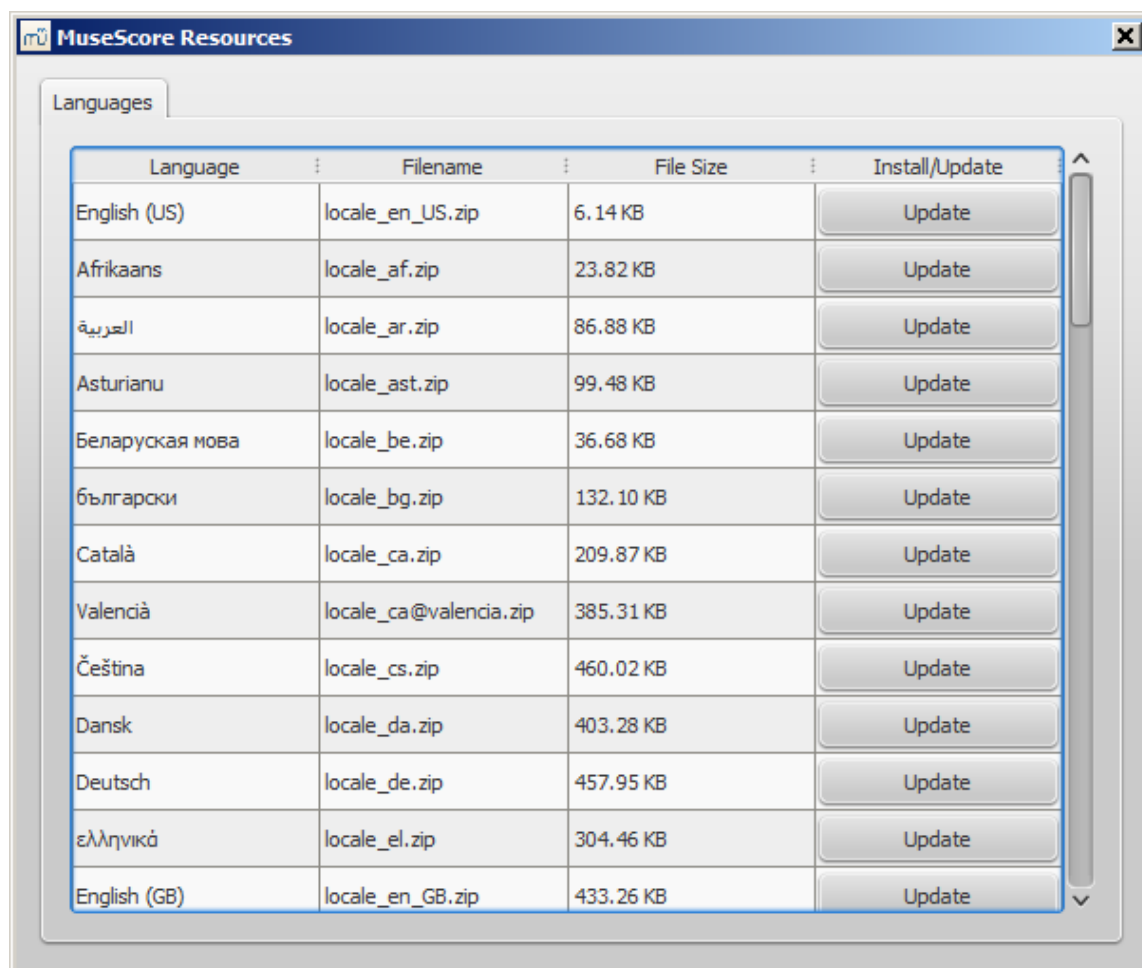
Here too you will have to exit and reopen MuseScore for the update to take effect.

See also

- Helping and improve translation

External links

- How to change the language in MuseScore

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Checking for updates

There are two ways to check for updates.

Automated update check

1. Go to `Edit → Preferences...` (Mac: `MuseScore → Preferences...`)
2. Select the `Update` tab

3. Check for update...
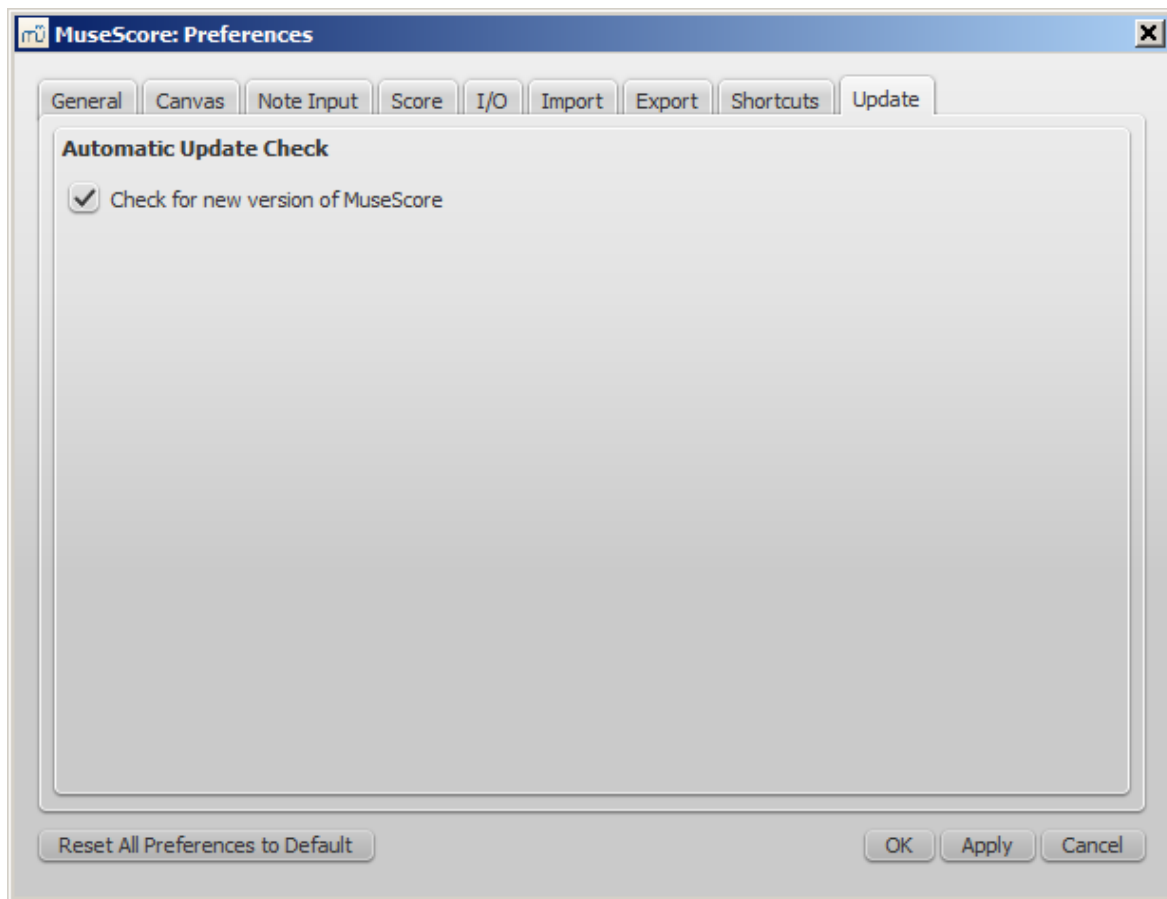
Now MuseScore will check for updates on every start and notify you, if need be.

Check for update

1. Select `Help` → `Check for Update`
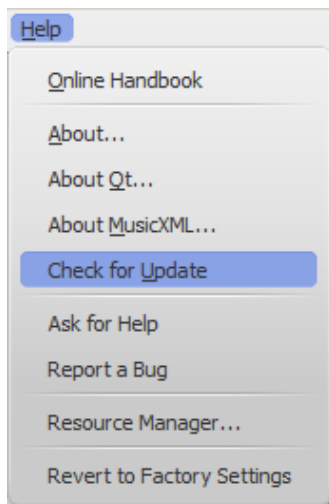
2. A dialog will appear with the update status: either "No Update Available" or "An update for MuseScore is available:" followed by a link to download it.

Note: This menu option is only available in the Mac and Windows versions of MuseScore, as those can be updated directly from MuseScore.org. Linux distributions have different mechanisms to make updates available.

See also

- Preferences: Updates

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum

Basics

The previous "Getting started" chapter guides you through the installation and process for creating a new score. The "Basics" chapter gives an overview of MuseScore and describes the general methods for interacting with the score.

Note input

Basic note entry

Adding notes and rests to a staff requires the following basic steps:

1. Select your starting position for note input
2. Enter `note input mode`
3. Select the duration of the note (or rest) you want to enter
4. Enter the pitch (or rest) using keyboard shortcut, mouse, or a MIDI keyboard

You may skip step 2 when entering pitches (or rests) using keyboard shortcuts. Using these shortcuts automatically enables `note input mode`.

To add overlapping notes **that start/end at different times (polyphony),** see Voices. For chords, continue reading here.

Step 1: Starting position

First, select a note or rest on the score as your starting position for note input. If you don't select a starting point, the cursor will be at the beginning of the score when you begin `note input` (see below). Note input in MuseScore replaces the existing rests or notes in a measure with your new notes (i.e. overwrites, rather than inserts). However, you can insert new measures at any point (see Measure operations: Insert), or use copy and paste to move a passage of notes.

Step 2: Note input mode

The "N" button at the left on the `Note Input` toolbar indicates whether you are in `note input` mode. To enter or leave `note input mode`, you can click on the button, or you can use the shortcut `N`. To leave `note input mode`, you can also hit `Esc`.

Step 3: Duration of the note (or rest)

After entering `note input mode`, select the duration you need from the `Note input` toolbar, or use the corresponding shortcut.

Note that if you have an irregular rhythm division (such as three eighth notes in the time of two), see Tuplet

The shortcuts for selecting the duration are as follows:

- `1`: 64th (hemidemisemiquaver)
- `2`: 32nd (demisemiquaver)
- `3`: 16th (semiquaver)
- `4`: Eighth (quaver)
- `5`: Quarter (crotchet)
- `6`: Half (minim)
- `7`: Whole (semibreve)
- `8`: Double whole (breve)
- `9`: Longa
- `.`: A period (dot) changes the selected duration into a dotted note/rest

Step 4: Enter pitch (or rest)

For all instruments (except unpitched percussion), you can add note pitches using the mouse by clicking directly on the staff. (For instructions specific to percussion see Drum notation). However, you may find it quicker to use a MIDI keyboard (see below), or your alphabetical computer keyboard. The following examples use the latter method.

Enter pitches by typing the corresponding letter on your keyboard:`C D E F G A B C`

`0` (Zero) creates a rest: for example, typing `C D 0 E` gives the result shown below. Notice that the duration you select for the notes (quarter/crotchet notes in this example) also determines the duration of the rest (quarter/crotchet rest).

During note input, the cursor automatically advances in the score. If you want to add a chord note to your previous entry, hold `Shift` and enter a note name:`C D Shift+F Shift+A E F`

To create chords with notes of different durations, see Voices.

If you want to create a dotted note, press `.` *after* selecting the parent note (or duration shortcut). For example, `5 . C 4 D E F G A` gives the following:

When you type a note on the keyboard, MuseScore places it closest to the previous note entered (above or below). When entering chords, though, the new notes are added above the current note (bottom-up).
If either of these leads to a note ending up in the wrong octave, move it up or down by using the following shortcuts:

- `Ctrl+↑` (Mac: ⌘+↑): Increase the pitch of a note by one octave.
- `Ctrl+↓` (Mac: ⌘+↓): Decrease the pitch of a note by one octave.

Other shortcuts

Other useful editing shortcuts available in `note input mode`:

- ↑ (Up): Increase the pitch of a note by a semitone (uses ♯).
- ↓ (Down): Decrease the pitch of a note by a semitone (uses ♭).
- `Alt+1-9`: Add interval (unison to ninth) above current note
- `J`: Change note up to enharmonic note (e.g., E# to F)
- `Shift+J`: Change note down to enharmonic note (e.g., F to E#)
- `Alt+Shift+↑`: Increase the pitch of a note using key signature
- `Alt+Shift+↓`: Decrease the pitch of a note using key signature
- `R`: Repeat the last entered note
- `Q`: Halve the duration of the last entered note
- `W`: Double the duration of the last entered note
- `Backspace`: Undo last entered note
- `Shift+←`: Exchange last entered note with the note before it (repeat to keep moving note earlier)
- `Shift+→`: Exchange note moved with `Shift+←` with the note that follows it
- `x`: Flip direction of note stem (can be reset to Auto position in Inspector)
- `Shift+x`: Move note head to opposite side of stem (can be reset to Auto position in Inspector)

MIDI keyboard

You can also insert pitches using a MIDI keyboard.

1. Connect your MIDI keyboard to the computer and switch the former on
2. Start MuseScore (this must be done **after** the keyboard is switched on)
3. <u>Create a new score</u>
4. Click the rest (selecting it) in measure 1 to indicate where you want note input to begin
5. Press `N` to enter `note input mode`
6. Select a note duration such as `5` for quarter notes (crotchets), as described <u>above</u>
7. Press a note on your MIDI keyboard

The pitch should be added to your score.

Note: The MIDI keyboard enters one note or chord at a time. This mode of note input (often called "step-time entry") is fast and reliable. Some notation software try to interpret "real-time entry", in which the musician plays a passage and the software tries to produce notation. However, such results are generally unreliable. MuseScore focuses on more reliable forms of note input.

If you have multiple MIDI devices connected to your computer, you may need to inform MuseScore which is the MIDI keyboard. Go to `Edit → Preferences...` (Mac: `MuseScore → Preferences...`). In the preferences dialog, click on the `I/O` tab and select your device under the section labeled "PortAudio".

Coloring of notes out of an instrument's range

Notes within the playable range of an instrument or voice part appear black, while those extending beyond the normal range of an instrument are marked red. For some instruments, the range depends on the skill of the musician. For these instruments, notes outside the range of an early amateur appear dark yellow, and notes outside the typical range of a professional appear red.

The colors are informational and appear on the computer screen, but not on printed copies. To disable note colors, choose `Edit → Preferences...` (Mac: `MuseScore → Preferences...`), click on the `Note Input` tab, and unmark "Color notes outside of usable pitch range".

Small notes/small noteheads

1. Select the note(s) you want in small size.
2. Check the "Small" checkbox in the <u>Inspector</u>. The one in the `Note` section is used to only change the size of the individual notehead; the one in the `Chord` section will change the note head, stem, beam, and flag sizes all together.

By default, the small size is 70% of the normal size. You can change that setting in `Style → General → Sizes`.

Change notes already entered

Change duration

To change the length of a single note or rest:

1. Make sure you are not in `note input mode` (press `Esc` to exit) and have no other notes selected.
2. Click on the note or rest and use the duration shortcuts listed <u>above</u>, or the duration icons in the toolbar, to change it to the duration of your choice.

Increasing the duration will overwrite the notes or rests that follow it; decreasing the duration will add rests between it and the notes or rests following.

For example, to change three sixteenth rests into a single dotted eighth rest:

1. Click on the first sixteenth rest.

2. Hit `4` to turn it into an eighth rest.
3. Hit `.` to turn it into a dotted eighth rest.

As the duration increases, it overwrites the other two sixteenth rests following it.

Change pitch

To change the pitch of a single note, first press `Esc` to make sure that you're not in `note input mode` and that you have no other notes selected; then either drag the notehead up or down with the mouse, or else select it and use the ↑ (Up) or ↓ (Down) keys to change its pitch. You can also type the letter name of the note you want to change it to, and use `Ctrl+↓` or `Ctrl+↑` to correct the octave, if necessary (Mac: `Cmd+↓` or `Cmd+↑`).

To change the enharmonic spelling of a note, select it and use the `J` command. For more information, see <u>Accidentals</u>.

To change the pitches of a passage of music by a constant interval, you can use <u>Transposition</u>.

To change the pitches of a passage of music to a different melody, while keeping the rhythm unchanged, use <u>Re-pitch mode</u>.

If your score contains a lot of misspelled accidentals, you might try the Respell Pitches command (see <u>Accidentals: Respell pitches</u>).

Change rest to note and vice versa

To change a rest to a note of the same duration:

1. Make sure you are not in `note input mode` (press `Esc` to exit).
2. Select the rest.
3. Enter the desired pitch by entering a note letter, `A–G`.

To change a note to a rest of the same duration:

1. Make sure you are not in `note input mode` (press `Esc` to exit).
2. Select the note.
3. Press `0` (Zero).

Note properties

- To adjust the horizontal position of a note/chord: see <u>Offsetting notes</u>.
- To edit note properties in general (spacing, offset, size, color, notehead direction, playback etc.): see <u>Inspector and object properties</u>.
- To adjust the layout of all notes in the score: see <u>Layout and formatting</u>, especially the sections about <u>notes</u>, <u>accidentals</u> and <u>tuplets</u>.

See also

- <u>Drum notation</u>
- <u>Tablature</u>
- <u>Tuplet</u>
- <u>Voices</u>
- <u>Shared noteheads</u>
- <u>Preferences</u>

External links

- <u>How to enter a chord</u>
- <u>How to enter a rest</u>
- <u>How to span a stem over two staves</u>
- <u>Video tutorial: MuseScore in Minutes: Lesson 3 - Note input</u>
- <u>Video tutorial: MuseScore in Minutes: Lesson 4 - MIDI Keyboard Input</u>
- <u>Video tutorial: MuseScore in Minutes: Lesson 5 - More Input Ideas</u>

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Concert pitch

For <u>transposing instruments</u>, music is notated at a different pitch and in a different key from how it actually sounds. If you prefer to work in **concert pitch**, however, the `Concert Pitch` button—located in the top-right of the <u>toolbar</u> area—will switch the display to concert pitch and display the music for all the instruments, transposing and non-transposing, as it sounds.

Before printing the score or exporting it to PDF, you should ensure that the `Concert Pitch` button is **off**, and that the individual parts are correctly transposed.

See also

- <u>Transposition: Transposing instruments</u>
- <u>Accidental: Respell pitches</u>

External links

- <u>Concert pitch</u> (Wikipedia article)
- <u>Transposing Instrument</u> (Wikipedia article)
- <u>Concert pitch or not??</u> (MuseScore forum discussion)

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Copy and paste

MuseScore supports the standard clipboard commands: **copy**, **cut** and **paste**. These can be applied to a range of:

- **Musical notes**: e.g. to repeat a section of music, or shift a passage by a beat or a measure.
- **Other elements** in the score, such as articulations, staff text, dynamics, fingering etc.

Note: <u>Lines</u> cannot be copied, but they can be duplicated (see →<u>below</u>).

Before clicking on the score to select anything to copy, cut or paste, press `Esc` to make sure you are not in <u>note input mode</u>.

Notes

You can cut, copy or paste a passage of music or a single <u>chord</u> as follows:

Copy or cut

To copy/cut a *single* chord

1. Hold down `Shift` and click on a note in the chord.
2. Chose an option:
     - **Copy**. Select `Edit → Copy`; or press `Ctrl+C` (Mac: ⌘+C).
     - **Cut**. Select `Edit → Cut`; or press `Ctrl+X` (Mac: ⌘+X).

To copy/cut a *range* of chords

1. `Click` on the first note or measure that you want to select.
2. `Shift+Click` on the last note or measure that you want to select. A blue rectangle highlights the region you selected.
3. Chose an option:
     - **Copy**. Select `Edit → Copy`; or press `Ctrl+C` (Mac: ⌘+C).
     - **Cut**. Select `Edit → Cut`; or press `Ctrl+X` (Mac: ⌘+X).

Paste

1. `Click` on the note or measure where you want your pasted selection to begin.
2. From the menu, choose `Edit → Paste` or press `Ctrl+V` (Mac: ⌘+V).

Note: It is possible to copy and paste the *pitch* of a note *only* (and no other properties), by clicking on

the notehead and applying the standard copy and paste procedure. The pitch of the destination note changes to match that of the copied note but the duration remains the same.

Other elements

Other score elements—such as staff text, dynamics, fingering, chord diagrams etc.—can be cut, copied and pasted *one at a time*. Articulations (sforzato, staccatto etc.), in addition, allow multiple selection.

Copy or cut

1. Select the element (or elements).
2. Chose an option:
    - **Copy**. Select `Edit → Copy`; or press `Ctrl+C` (Mac: ⌘+C).
    - **Cut**. Select `Edit → Cut`; or press `Ctrl+X` (Mac: ⌘+X).

Paste

1. `Click` on the note where you want your pasted selection to begin.
2. From the menu, choose `Edit → Paste` or press `Ctrl+V` (Mac: ⌘+V).

In the case of articulations, they are pasted to the destination notes in exactly the same order (continuous or intermittent) as they were in the initial selection.

Quick repeat

To quickly copy and paste a note, measure, or passage:

1. Select a chord, measure, or passage as described above.
2. Press `R`.

Musescore copies and pastes the selected notation to a point immediately after the last note in the selection. Any existing music in the destination range is replaced.

Duplicate

To instantaneously copy and paste a text element, line, or other object:

1. Hold down `Ctrl+Shift` (Mac: ⌘+Shift), click on the element and drag it anywhere in the score.
2. Release the mouse button, and the selected element is cloned to the new location.

Selection filter

It is possible to use a filter **before** copying a selection, to choose exactly what is going to be copied and then pasted.

1. Enable the Selection Filter with `F6` (Mac: `fn+F6`) or `View → Selection Filter`

The Selection Filter will appear by default below the Palettes. It can be undocked and made into a floating window, and if that window is dragged directly onto the Palettes, or the Inspector, then both will be accessible in the same space via a tab at the bottom.

1. Uncheck the boxes in the Selection Filter for things you don't want copied
   Example: Articulations and Slurs are unchecked.
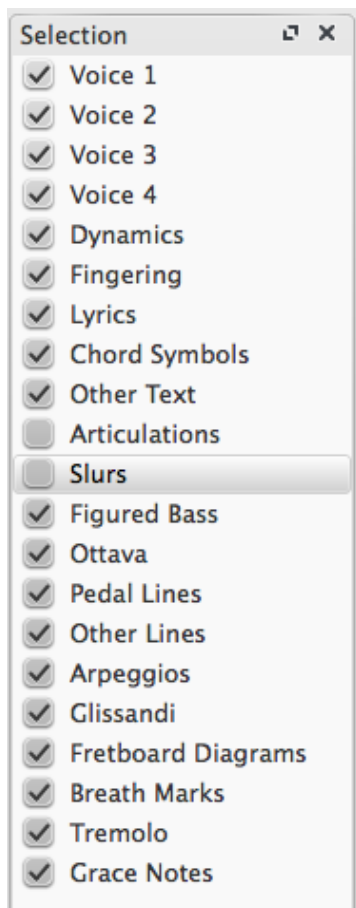
2. Copy and paste as before
(in the example, copy measure 4 and 5 and paste into measure 12 and 13)

3. See the result—slurs haven't been copied:
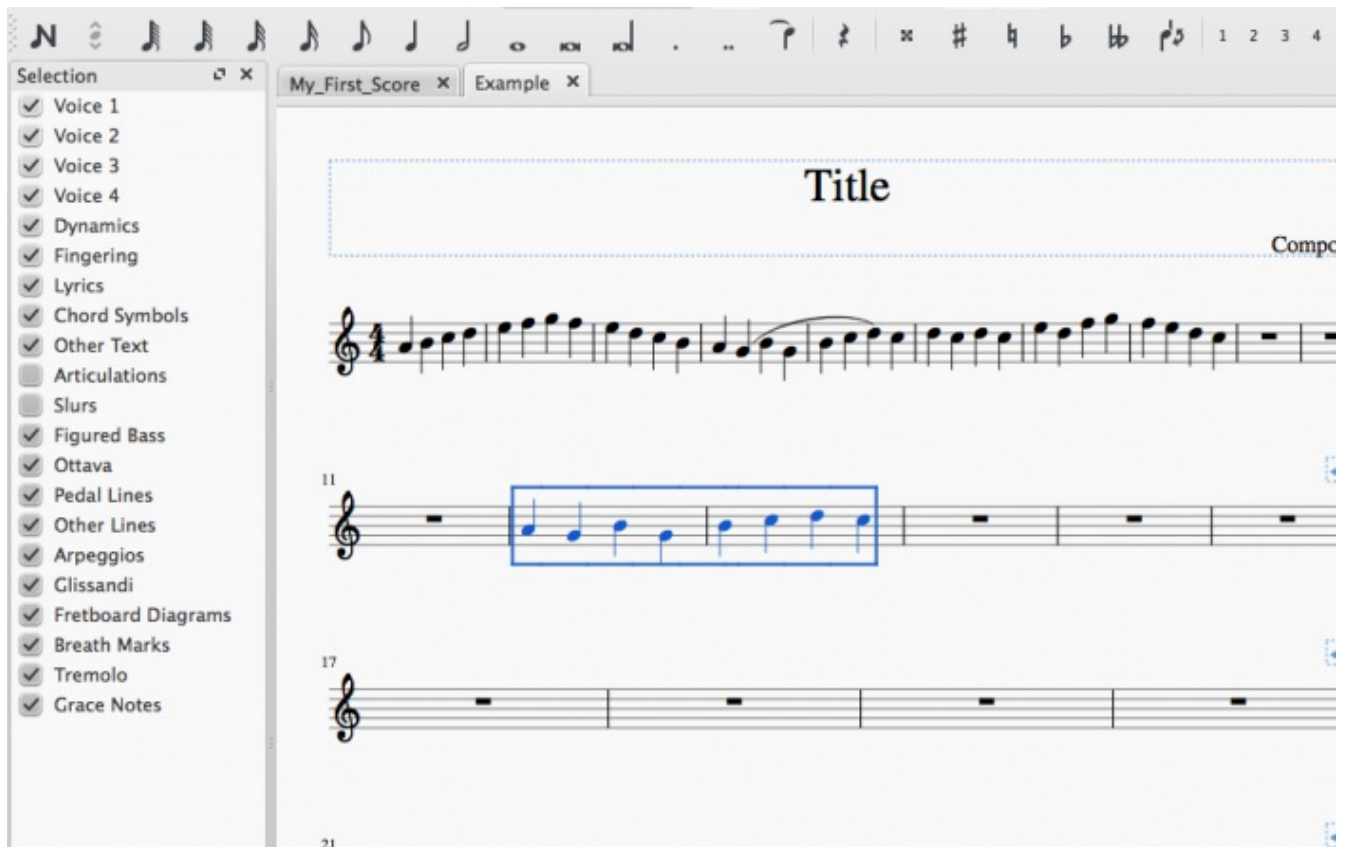
See also

If you want to change notes without altering the rhythm, you may combine transposition or re-pitch

mode with copy and paste.

External links

- Video tutorial: Lyrics, copying & dynamics

Edit mode

`Edit mode` is used to edit elements that have been added to a score. Most types of elements can be edited in one way or another in `edit mode`.

To enter `edit mode` use any of these methods:

- Double-click any element
- Right-click on it and choose `Edit Element`
- Click on it once and use the shortcut `Ctrl+E` (Mac: `Cmd+E`).

To leave `edit mode`, hit `Esc`.

Text

For `text edit mode`, see Text editing.

Lines

Lines and similar elements, such as slurs, hairpins, arpeggios, and brackets, display square *handles* in **edit** mode (which turn blue when selected). A slur, for example, looks like this:

To alter the shape of a line, click on a handle and either drag it or, for finer control, use the arrow keys. The following keyboard commands can be used to adjust the position of the currently selected handle:

- ←: Move handle left 0.1 staff space (one staff space is the distance between two staff lines, as set in Page Settings)
- →: Move handle right 0.1 staff space
- ↑: Move handle up 0.1 staff space
- ↓: Move handle down 0.1 staff space
- `Ctrl+←` (Mac: ⌘+←): Move handle left one staff space
- `Ctrl+→` (Mac: ⌘+→): Move handle right one staff space
- `Ctrl+↑` (Mac: ⌘+↑): Move handle up one staff space
- `Ctrl+↓` (Mac: ⌘+↓): Moves handle down one staff space
- `Alt+←`: Move handle left 0.01 staff space
- `Alt+→`: Move handle right 0.01 staff space
- `Alt+↑`: Move handle up 0.01 staff space
- `Alt+↓`: Move handle down 0.01 staff space
- `Shift+←`: Move handle's **anchor** (the note or measure to which it is attached) left
- `Shift+→`: Move handle's **anchor** right
- `Tab`: Go to next handle

When an endpoint handle is selected, an anchor—a dotted line showing what part of the score the line is connected to—may appear. To move an anchor, use `Shift+→` or `Shift+←`.

Notes

Offsetting notes

To move a *single* note to the right or left (e.g. to avoid a collision with another element or to override notehead sharing), select the notehead and change the **chord horizontal offset** in the Inspector.

41

Alternatively, you can do the same thing in **note edit** mode as follows:

1. Enter **note edit** mode by (i) double-clicking a notehead OR (ii) right-clicking a notehead and selecting "Edit Element", OR (iii) selecting a notehead and pressing `Ctrl + E`.
2. Press the arrow key in the direction (left or right) that you wish to nudge the note (or use `Ctrl+←` or `Ctrl+→` for larger adjustments).
3. Press the `Esc` key. This will allow the note stem to be redrawn.

Note: `Edit mode` for a note *stem* allows you to change the length of the stem, not move it horizontally. To reposition a note stem, click on it and adjust horizontal offset in the Inspector.

See also

- Text editing
- Slur
- Bracket
- Line
- Beam
- Hairpin

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Inspector and object properties

Most score elements have properties that can be edited in one of two ways:

- Click on any element, and many of its properties can be viewed and changed from the **Inspector** panel on the right-hand side of your screen.

- Right-click on an element and select an option with the word **Properties** in it. This option opens a dialog with advanced properties, only available for certain types of elements.

Inspector

The **Inspector** is shown by default on the right of your screen. To show or hide it, open the `View` menu and check/uncheck `Inspector`, or use the shortcut `F8` (Mac: `fn+F8`).

In the **Inspector**, the properties of any selected object are displayed and can be edited. This applies to virtually every single element in the score window—notes, text, barlines, articulations etc. Multiple elements can also be selected and edited simultaneously, as long as they are of the same type. However, if the selected objects are of *different* types, then the Inspector restricts you to editing color and visibility only.

The **Inspector** panel can be un-docked to become a floating panel by clicking the double-chevron symbol or double-clicking the top bar of the panel.
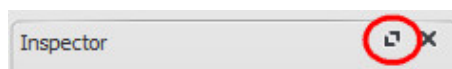
To re-attach the panel double-click on the top bar again. See also: Side panels.

Inspector categories

When you select one or more elements of a specific type, the properties which can be edited are conveniently divided into categories in the Inspector. Categories can be identified by their bold, centred lettering. For example, if you select a barline, you will see the following displayed at the top of the Inspector:

For details about how to adjust the properties of various score elements, refer to the relevant sections in the handbook. However, a few general points will be covered here:

Element

All score elements, except frames, display this category in the Inspector when selected. It allows you to set **visibility**, **color**, and adjust the position using **vertical offset** and **horizontal offset** values. Snap to grid buttons are also provided. The various options are as follows:

- **Visible**: Unchecking this box makes selected elements **invisible**. Invisible elements do not appear in the music when printed out or exported as a PDF or image. They will turn gray in the display to show that they are invisible (if you want invisible elements to be completely invisible on the screen as well as in the output, select `View → Show Invisible`). You can also use the keyboard shortcut `v` to toggle the visibility of selected elements (i.e., switch between visible and invisible).

- **Color**: Clicking on the rectangle opens a "Color Select" dialog which allows you to adjust the color and opacity of selected elements.

- **Horizontal offset** and **Vertical offset**: Allow you to fine-tune the placement of an individual element by inputting exact values for its offset from the default position.

Element Group

This category is displayed only when you have selected a mixture of different types of elements, and allows editing of color and visibility only.

Segment

This category is used to increase or decrease the space before/after an element in a music staff. Adjusting leading/trailing space here also affects any associated lyric syllables.

Chord

This category is displayed only if notes are selected. Any change to a notehead property under **Chord** affects the whole chord (i.e all the notes in one voice) at that location—and not just the selected note. If you want to make changes to the position of just one note in a chord, then use the Element category (above).

Note

This category allows you to make changes to selected notes (but for note position—see Element). It contains the following properties:

- **Small**: Make notehead smaller (you can specify the relative size of all small notes in `Style → General… → Sizes…`).

- **Head group**: See Notehead groups.
- **Head type**: See Notehead types.
- **Mirror head**: Position notehead to the left or right of the stem (default is "Auto").
- **Tuning**: Adjust tuning of note to the nearest cent.
- **Play**: Unticking this box silences the note.
- **Velocity type**: Chose one of two values:
  - **Offset**: Make the value shown in "Velocity" *relative* to the default of 80.
  - **User**: Make the value shown in "Velocity" *absolute* (0 to 127).
- **Velocity**: Adjust MIDI velocity of the note according to the setting chosen in "Velocity type."
- **Fix to line**: When ticked, the note is fixed to the top line of the standard 5-line staff.
- **Line**: A positive number moves the "fixed" note down; a negative number moves it upwards.

Select

This category is only displayed when you select a note, and allows you to easily switch the selection to the stem, beam, hook, duration dot (or dots) or tuplet number associated with the notehead (see image below).
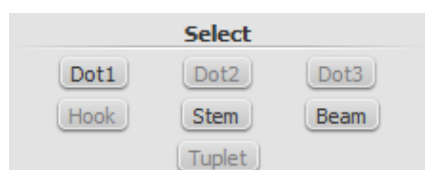
Properties dialogs

Properties of some objects are accessed by right-clicking on the object and choosing a "Properties" option from the context menu: these are in addition to the object's properties displayed in the Inspector.

(Note: **Properties** should not be confused with **Styles**. Changes to **properties** only affect the single element selected; all **style** controls apply to the entire score.)

Articulation properties

Right-click on an articulation and select `Articulation Properties...` See Articulations and ornaments.

Fretboard diagram properties

Right-click on a fretboard diagram and select `Fertboard Diagram Properties...` Allows you to create custom fretboard diagrams. See Edit fretboard diagram.

Line properties

Right-click on a line and select `Line Properties...` There are settings for the beginning, end, or continuation of the line. You can add or remove text, adjust the text's placement, and set the length and angle of optional hooks. Click the `...` button to access text properties for text included in the line. See Custom lines and line properties.

Measure properties

Right-click on an empty part of the measure and select `Measure Properties...` Adjust visibility, bar duration, repeats, stretch and numbering. See Measure properties.

Staff properties

Right-click either an empty part of a measure or the name of an instrument and select `Staff Properties...` This dialog allows you to adjust attributes of both the single staff and the instrument it is a part of. See Staff properties.

Text properties

Right click on a text-based element and select `Text Properties...` See Text styles and properties. If

the element is a line with text in it, see → <u>above</u>.

Time signature properties

Right-click on a time signature and select `Time Signature Properties...` Used to adjust appearance of time sig. and beam properties of notes. See <u>Time signatures</u>.

See also

- <u>Measure operations</u>
- <u>Note input</u>
- <u>Layout and formatting</u>
- <u>Staff properties</u>
- <u>Part extraction</u>

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Measure operations

Append

Append an empty measure to the end of a score

- Press `Ctrl+B` (Mac: `⌘+B`).

- Or select the menu item: `Add → Measures → Append One Measure`.

Append multiple measures to the end of a score

- Press `Alt+Shift+B` (Mac: `Option+Shift+B`); fill in the "Number of measures to append" field and press `OK`.

- Or select the menu item: `Add → Measures → Append Measures...`; fill in the "Number of measures to append" field and press `OK`.

Insert

Insert an empty measure into the score

- Select a measure, then press `Ins` (no shortcut on Mac).

- Or select a measure and use the menu item: `Add → Measures → Insert Measure`.

Insert multiple measures

- Select a measure and press `Ctrl+Ins` (no shortcut on Mac); fill in the "Number of measures to insert" field and press `OK`

- Or use the menu item: `Add → Measures → Insert Measures...`; fill in the "Number of measures to insert" field and press `OK`.

Delete

Delete a single measure

- Click on the measure, then press `Ctrl+Del` (Mac: `Cmd+Del`).

Delete a range of measures

1. Click on the first measure in the range, press `Shift` and click on the last measure in the range; release the `Shift` key.
2. Press `Ctrl+Del` (Mac: `Cmd+Del`).

Delete from a selected measure to the end of the score

1. Click on the first measure in the range, press `Ctrl+Shift+End` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift+End`); release the keys.
2. Press `Ctrl+Del` (Mac: `Cmd+Del`).

Delete from the start of the score to a selected measure

1. Click on the last measure in the range, press `Ctrl+Shift+Home` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift+Home`); release the keys.
2. Press `Ctrl+Del` (Mac: `Cmd+Del`).

Note: In multi-staff scores, measure deletion also removes all corresponding measures in the other staves of the system, even if these don't appear to be selected.

If you wish to delete only the elements (notes, symbols, text) and not the measure itself, then <u>select</u> a measure or range of measures and click `Del`. The selected measures are filled with whole measure rests.

Properties

To edit the properties of a measure, right-click an empty part of the measure and select `Measure Properties...`:
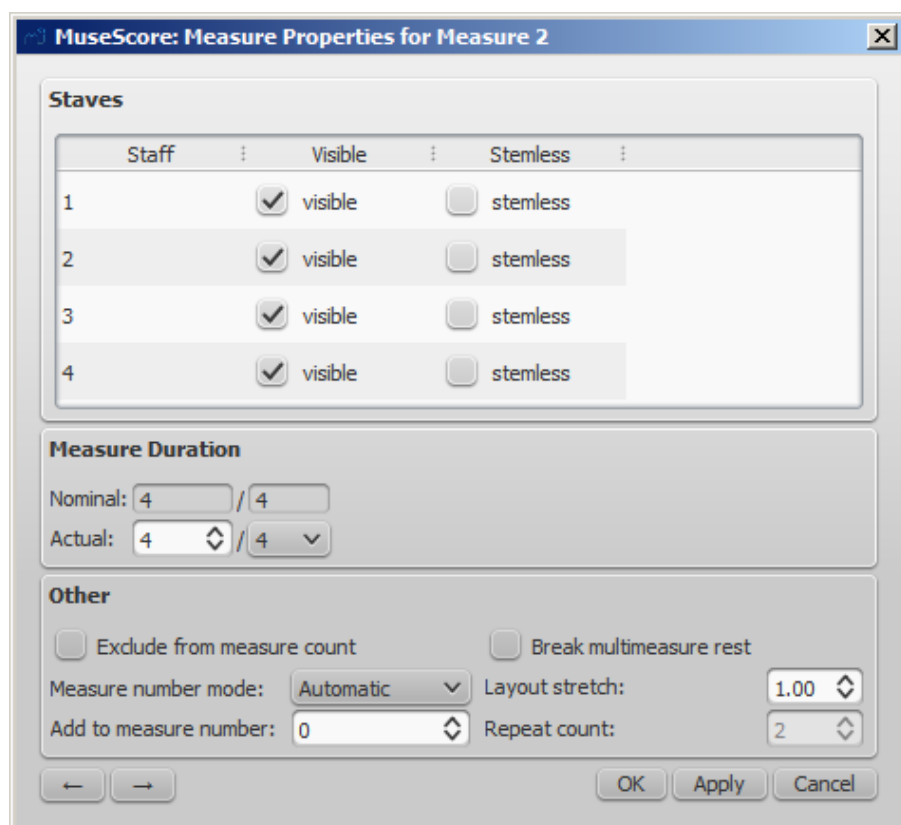
From within an open Measure Properties window, you can move to edit the previous or next measure via these buttons, at the bottom left of the window: (note that while the window changes, the measure shown as selected in your score does not. Be careful).

Staves

- The *visible* property allows you to show/hide the notes and staff lines for the current measure.
- The *stemless* property allows you to show/hide all note stems for the current measure. Notes that normally have a stem such as half notes (minims) and quarter notes (crotchets) only show the note head when marked as stemless.

Measure duration

This section allows you to make the actual duration of a measure shorter or longer than that indicated by the visible (nominal) time signature. Use it to create a *pickup measure* (anacrusis) at the beginning of a section, incomplete measures in the score, *cadenzas*, *ad lib* passages etc.

* The *Nominal* duration of the measure is the same as the time signature displayed in the score, and cannot be edited.
* The *Actual* duration of a measure can be set to anything you like regardless of the time signature displayed on the score.

In the figure below, for example, the quarter note pickup measure has a nominal measure duration of 4/4, but an actual duration of 1/4. The measures in the middle have both nominal and actual durations of 4/4. The complementary measure with only a dotted half note at the end has an actual duration of 3/4:

Other

* **Exclude from measure count**
  Use *"Exclude from measure count"* for "irregular" measures, i.e. ones that should not get counted in the measure numbering. Normally, a pickup measure is marked as "*Exclude from measure count*".

* **Add to measure number**
  You can also use the *"Add to measure number"* option to influence the measure numbering. You can enter positive or negative numbers here. Please note that this affects all subsequent measures. A value of "-1" has the same effect as marking a measure to be excluded from measure count.

* **Layout stretch**
  You can increase or decrease horizontal space between score elements (notes, rests, etc.) with this option. This provides a more precise control over the exact same measure spacing property as the menu commands or keyboard shortcuts for <u>Increase/Decrease Stretch</u> (`{` and `}`), which are accessed outside of the Measure Properties dialog while a measure is selected.

* **Repeat count**
  If the measure is the last of a <u>repeat</u>, you can define how often it is played.

* **Break multimeasure rests**
  This property will separate a <u>multimeasure rest</u> at the start of the selected measure. This option should be checked **before** you turn on the *"Create multimeasure rests"* option in `Style → General...`, in the **"Score"** tab.

  Multimeasure rests are automatically broken at important breaks, such as rehearsal marks, time signature changes, double barlines, <u>irregular measures</u>, etc. The default for scores is *off*, for <u>parts</u> is *on*.

Numbering

MuseScore automatically numbers the first measure of each System (except for the first system, actually except for a measure with the number 1), but more numbering options are possible. From the main menu, choose `Style → General...`, in the left pane, choose the **"Header, Footer, Numbers"** tab. At the bottom of the right pane is the **"Measure Numbers"** ("Bar Numbers") section.

Mark the checkbox next to the "Measure Numbers" ("Bar Numbers") to turn on automatic measure numbers.

Mark "Show first" if you want the first measure numbered.

Mark "All staves" if you want numbers on all staves. Otherwise, only the top staff of each system shows measure numbers.

Choose to show numbers on "Every system" which numbers the first measure of each line, or show numbers by "Interval" and specify the size of the interval. For example, an interval of 1 numbers every measure; an interval of 5 numbers every fifth measure.

Split and join

You may want have to have a longer or shorter measure without changing the time signature. You can change a measure's duration in <u>Measure Properties</u>, but there is now a new option to split or join measures. (Beams may be automatically modified.)

- Join

    1. Select the measures you want to join
    2. `Edit → Measure → Join Selected Measures`

Note: If you select measures on only one staff in a score with multiple staves, the same measures will be joined in each staff of the system.

- Split

    1. Select a note (or chord)
    2. `Edit → Measure → Split Measure Before Selected Note`

Note: If you select only one note from one staff, each staff of the system will be split at the same place.

See also

- <u>How to delete measures</u>
- <u>How to span a measure over multiple systems</u>
- <u>How to get scores without time signature (and clef)</u>

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Palettes and workspaces

A **palette** is a storage space containing a group of related musical symbols. A **workspace** is a collection of palettes and is docked, by default, on the left-hand side of the program window.

Display of the palettes can be toggled on or off with the menu option `View → Palettes`, or by using the <u>shortcut</u> `F9` (Mac: `fn+F9`).

Workspaces

A **Workspaces** is a set of palettes. MuseScore provides two preset workspaces: **Basic** (the default option) and **Advanced** (a version with more palettes and symbols). You can switch between the two by using the drop-down menu at the bottom of the workspace panel.

The names of palettes within a workspace are clearly listed under the word "Palettes." To open or close any palette, simply click on its name or the accompanying side-arrow.
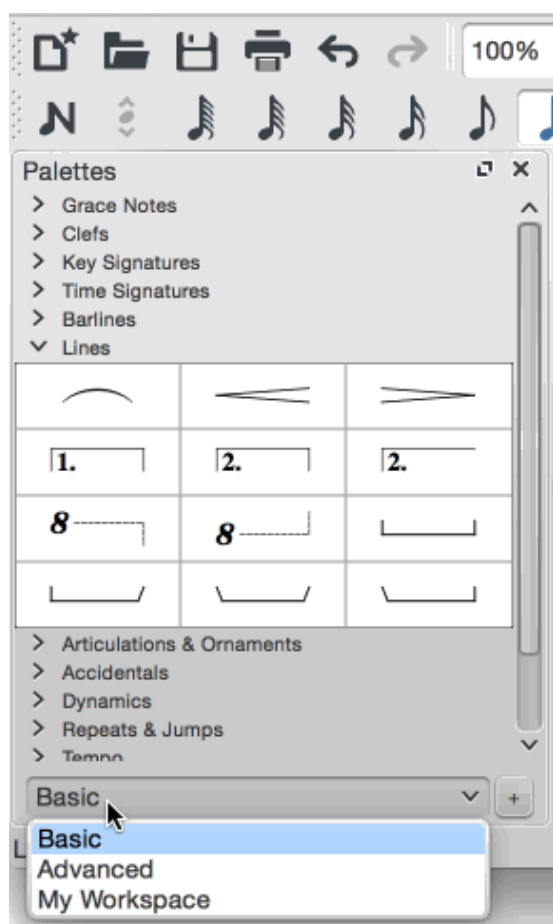
Palettes in the preset workspaces cannot be added to or edited. To do this you first have to create a custom workspace (see below).

Single Palette Mode

If you only want to allow one palette to open at a time, right click at the top of the workspace and check the "Single palette" box.

Docking/undocking

To undock or redock a workspace, see Side panels.

Custom workspace

A **custom workspace** is created by duplicating an existing workspace and renaming it. The palettes then become available for editing:

- Chose a workspace to duplicate. Use the drop-down list at the bottom of the workspace panel if needed.
- Click the + button, enter a name for the new workspace and press OK. The new workspace is added to the panel.

Alternatively you can use the menu option:

- Select Edit → Workspaces, and chose a workspace.
- Select New. Fill in the new workspace name and click OK.

Palettes

Applying symbols from a palette

To view the contents of a palette, click on the palette title. A palette symbol may be applied to the score using one of the following methods:

- Select one or more score elements and double click the palette symbol.
- Drag and drop the symbol onto the desired score element in the staff.

For example, to add tenuto marks (—) to a selection of notes:

1. <u>Select</u> the desired notes.
2. In the **Articulations & Ornaments** palette, double-click on the tenuto symbol

Once added to the score, objects can be copied, pasted, and duplicated—see<u>Copy and paste</u>.

Palettes in the preset workspaces cannot be edited. To do this you have to create a custom workspace first.

Preset palettes (Advanced workspace)

The more fully-featured **Advanced <u>workspace</u>** contains the following palettes:

- <u>Grace Notes</u>
- <u>Clefs</u>
- <u>Key Signatures</u>
- <u>Time Signatures</u>
- <u>Barlines</u>
- <u>Lines</u>
- <u>Arpeggios and Glissandi</u>
- <u>Breaths and pauses</u>
- <u>Brackets</u>
- <u>Articulations and Ornaments</u>
- <u>Accidentals</u>
- <u>Dynamics</u>
- <u>Fingering</u>
- <u>Note Heads</u>
- <u>Tremolo</u>
- <u>Repeats and Jumps</u>
- <u>Tempo</u>
- <u>Text</u>
- <u>Breaks and Spacers</u>
- Bagpipe Embellishments
- <u>Beam Properties</u>
- <u>Frames</u> and <u>Measures</u>
- <u>Fretboard Diagrams</u>

Custom palettes

Once you have created a **custom workspace** (see <u>above</u>), and providing editing is enabled (see <u>Palette menu</u> below), you can customise the palettes within it to your own requirements. Palettes can be created, deleted, renamed and reordered. New symbols can be added to them and existing symbols deleted.

To add an existing score element (such as a line, text, dynamic, fretboard diagram etc.) to a custom palette, press and hold `Ctrl+Shift`, then drag the symbol onto the palette. Symbols from the Master palette can also be added to a custom palette.

Palette menu

Right-clicking on the name of a palette in a custom workspace brings up a menu with a range of options:

- **Palette Properties...**: This allows you to make adjustments to the appearance of the open palette:
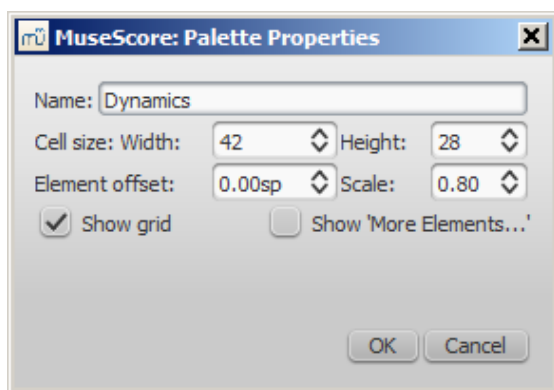
- ○ *Name*
- ○ *Cell Size: Width*, *Height*
- ○ *Element Offset*: Adjusts the vertical offset of all elements in the palette.
- ○ *Scale*: Makes all palette elements appear larger or smaller.
- ○ *Show grid*: Tick this box to visually divide the palette into cells, one for each element.
- ○ *Show 'More Elements…'*: Tick this box to create a cell which opens the Master Palette.
- **Insert New Palette**: Creates a new empty palette.
- **Move Palette Up** / **Move Palette Down**: Allows you to reorder the palettes.
- **Enable Editing**: Tick this option if you want to be able to edit a palette.
- **Save Palette**: Save as an .mpal file.
- **Load Palette**: Load an .mpal file.
- **Delete Palette**

Right-clicking on an element within a palette (if editing of the palette is enabled) brings up a menu with the following options:

- **Clear**: Removes the element from the palette
- **Properties...**: Opens the **Palette Cell Properties** dialogue:
  - ○ *Name*: The tooltip that appears when you mouse over the element.
  - ○ *Content offset (X, Y)*: Adjust the position of the element in the palette.
  - ○ *Content scale*: Make the element appear larger or smaller in the palette.
  - ○ *Draw staff*: Draws the five lines of a musical staff behind the palette element.
- **More Elements**: Opens the relevant Master Palette section.

Note: Changing values in "Palette Cell Properties" only affects the appearance of elements in the palette. It does not change their sizes or offsets on the score page.

Master palette

Music symbols not part of the palettes in the Advanced workspace can be found in the Master palette by pressing z or Shift+F9 (Mac: fn+Shift+F9).

Behavior of applied text and lines

If the symbol you are adding to the score from a palette contains a text element (e.g. staff text, dynamic, fingering, volta etc.), then properties such as font-type, font-size, text color, and alignment will adapt according to the following rules:

1. Text properties which have not been altered by the user will adopt the relevant, prevailing text styles.

2. Custom text-properties—i.e. those changed by the user before saving the symbol to a custom palette—remain as customized.

When adding a line, line properties always remain unchanged (i.e. as set by the user before saving to a custom workspace, or as predefined in the Basic/Advanced workspaces).

See also

- Custom palettes
- Master palette

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Save/Export/Print

Under the `File` menu in MuseScore, you can find options such as `Save...`, `Save As...`, `Save a Copy...`, `Save Selection...`, `Save Online...`, `Export...`, `Export Parts...` and `Print...`.
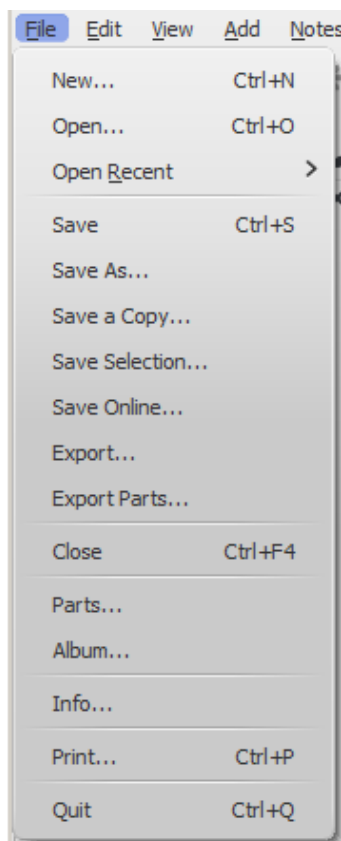
Save

`Save...`, `Save As...`, `Save a Copy...`, and `Save Selection...` allow you to save native MuseScore files (.mscz and .mscx).

- **Save...:** Save current score to file.
- **Save As...:** Save current score to new file.
- **Save a Copy...:** Save current score to new file, but continue to edit original file.
- **Save Selection...:** Save selected measures to new file. In order to ensure that the file is saved correctly, the time signature needs to be displayed in the first measure of the selected passage, unless it is 4/4.
- **Save Online...:** Save current score to MuseScore.com (see Share scores online).

Export

`Export...` and `Export Parts...` allow you to create non-MuseScore files, such as PDF, MusicXML, MIDI, and various audio and image formats.

In the `Export` dialog, you can choose which format to export to:
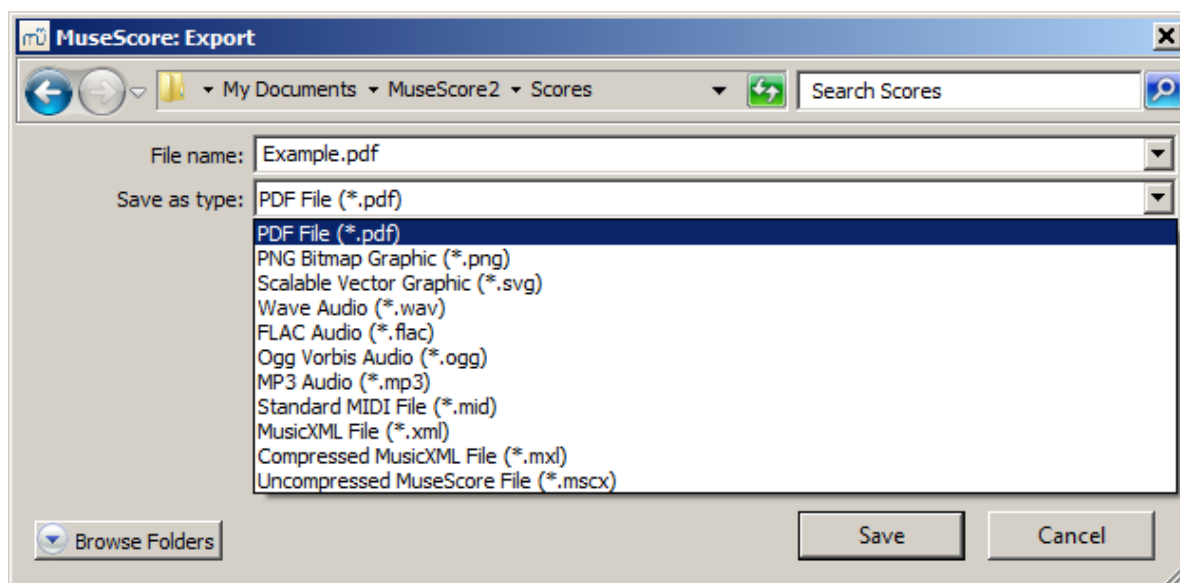
- **Export...:** Export current score to format of your choice.
- **Export Parts...:** Export current score and all linked parts to separate files in format of your choice.

MuseScore remembers which format you picked the last time and makes that the default for the next time.
There is a know issue with Windows XP and Vista, there you'd have to manually (un)set the filename's extension, when chosing a different format than last time.

Note: Uncompressed MuseScore format (MSCX) is available in both 'Save' and 'Export'.

Print

`Print...` allows to print your MuseScore file directly to a printer from MuseScore. Depending on your printer you will have different options, but generally you can define the page range, number of copies and collation.

If you have a PDF printer installed, you could also "export" to PDF using that, although this is not recommended.
For this to work properly with Adobe PDF, make sure to untick `Rely on systemfonts only, do not use document fonts` in Printer properties.

See also

- File format
- Part extraction

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Selection modes

There are different selection modes (ways to select objects).

Selection of a single object

- Just click on any object.

Selection of a single note or chord

To select all the notes in a chord:

- Make sure you are not in `note input mode`
- Press and hold `Shift`, then click on a note in the chord.

Note: Selecting a single note, then copying and pasting it, will only copy and paste the pitch—not

duration or other properties (such as stemless). To copy the entire note, including all properties, you need to hold down `shift`, the same as highlighting a whole chord.

Range selection

There are several ways to select a continuous range of notes, chords or measures:

1. **Shift selection**

   a) Make sure you are not in note entry mode
   b) Click on the first note/chord/rest or measure in the range. You can extend the selection up or down to adjacent staves, if needed, using `shift` + ↑ or ↓.
   c) Then chose one of the following options:

   - To advance the selection one chord at a time to the right: Press `shift` + →.
   - To advance the selection one chord at a time to the left: Press `shift` + ←.
   - To advance the selection one bar at a time to the right: Press `shift` + `Ctrl` + → (Mac: `shift` + `Cmd` + →).
   - To advance the selection one bar at a time to the left: Press `shift` + `Ctrl` + ← (Mac: `shift` + `Cmd` + ←).
   - To advance the selection to the beginning of the line: Press `shift` + `Home` (Mac: `Shift` + `Fn` + ←).
   - To advance the selection to the end of the line: Press `shift` + `End` (Mac: `Shift` + `Fn` + →).
   - To extend the selection to the beginning of the score: Press `shift` + `Ctrl` + `Home` (Mac: `Shift` + `Cmd` + `Fn` + ←).
   - To extend the selection to the end of the score: Press `shift` + `Ctrl` + `End` (Mac: (Mac: `Shift` + `Cmd` + `Fn` + →).

2. **Shift + Click selection (notes/rests only)**

   a) Make sure you are not in note entry mode
   b) Click on the first note/rest in the range
   c) Press and hold `shift`
   d) Click on the last desired note/rest.

   The final selected element can be in the same staff or in staffs above or below the initial note/rest. All selected elements will be enclosed in a blue rectangle, including associated lines and articulations (but not voltas). You can repeat the operation to extend the selected range as required.

   Measure selection: You can also select a range of whole measures by clicking on a blank space in the first desired measure, pressing shift, then clicking on a space in the last measure of the range. As with selecting notes, the range can be vertical as well as horizontal.

3. **Drag selection (all elements)**

   Press and hold `shift` and drag the cursor across the desired range. This method can be used to select notes/rests OR *independently* to select non-note symbols (e.g. staccato dots, lyrics etc.).

4. **Select All (notes/rests and elements attached to notes/rests)**

   Press `Ctrl+A` (Mac: `Cmd+A`) to select every music staff in the score. Or use the menu, `Edit → Select All`.

5. **Select section**

   In order to select a *section* (a region of the score starting and/or ending with a section break), click on an empty space in a measure in the section and select `Edit → Select Section`.

Note: See Copy and paste: Selection filter to disable certain types of elements from being selected in a range selection.

List selection

To select multiple individual elements (as opposed to a continuous range):

1. Select (click on) the first element

2. Press `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`)
3. Select (click on) additional elements while holding the`Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) key.

Select all similar

To select all elements of a specific type (e.g., all barlines, all text elements, all staccato markings):

1. Select an element
2. Right click → `Select`

3. Several options are available:

   ○ All Similar Elements: in the whole score
   ○ All Similar Elements in Same Staff: only in the same staff
   ○ All Similar Elements in Range Selection: only if a →range selection is active, selects
     similar elements only inside that selection
   ○ More... : opens a dialog that lets you fine-tune more options.

   Example: A flat (accidental) selected
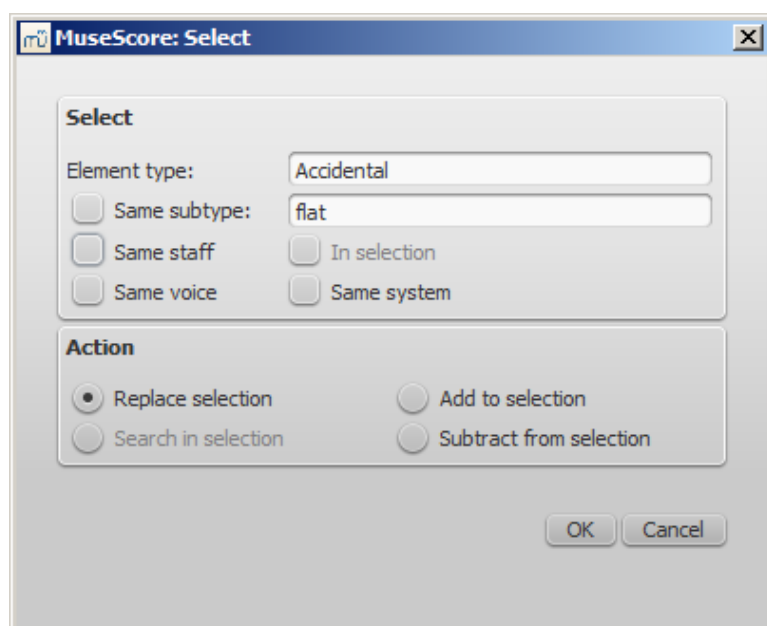
   You can choose from the following selections:

   ○ Same subtype: in this example only flats will be selected (not sharps nor naturals); some
     elements have a subtype (e.g. articulations, accidentals ...)
   ○ Same staff: only elements in the same staff
   ○ Same voice: only elements in the same voice
   ○ Same system: only elements in the same system
   ○ Same selection: if a selection is active, only elements in that selection

   Depending on what you had selected before you opened the`Select` → `More...` dialog, you may
   wish to now instead have all of your specified type of elements selected (the default, "Replace");
   keep everything you had selected before still selected, and simply add all of your chosen type of
   element ("Add"); or keep everything you had selected before still selected, except *without* your
   specified type of element ("Subtract").

What selections are useful for

- Copy and paste
- Edit mode
- Inspector and object properties
- Tools

See also

- Basics chapter, esp. Note input

- <u>Notation</u> chapter, esp. <u>Accidental</u>
- <u>Text</u> chapter, esp. <u>Text editing</u> and <u>Grid-based movement of symbols and staff text</u>

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Undo and redo

MuseScore remembers an unlimited number of undo/redo actions.

The standard <u>shortcuts</u> are:

- Undo `Ctrl+Z` (Mac: `⌘+Z`)
- Redo `Ctrl+Shift+Z` or `Ctrl+Y` (Mac: `⌘+Shift+Z`)

Or use the toolbar buttons:

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Viewing and navigation

Viewing options for the score can be found in the **View Menu**, and also in the **Zoom** and **Page View/Continuous view** menus located in the toolbar above the score.

View menu

Show sidebars/panels

- <u>Start center</u>: `F4`
- <u>Palettes</u>: `F9`
- <u>Inspector</u>: `F8`
- <u>Play Panel</u>: `F11`
- <u>Navigator</u>: `F12`
- <u>Mixer</u>: `F10`
- <u>Synthesizer</u>: `F7`
- <u>Selection filter</u>: `F6`
- **Piano keyboard**: `P`

Zoom in/out

- **Zoom In**: `Ctrl++` (Mac: `Cmd ++`)
- **Zoom Out**: `Ctrl +-` (Mac: `Cmd +-`)

To set a specific zoom, use the dropdown menu in the standard toolbar to set the view magnification of the score (25–1600 %) or display it using the options "Page Width", "Whole Page", and "Two Pages" (scales related to the size of the window).
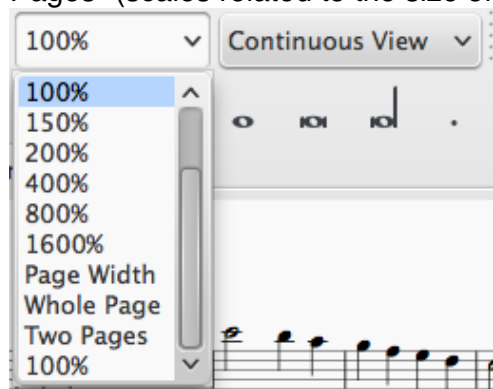
To return to 100% zoom use the shortcut `Ctrl+0` (Mac: `Cmd+0`).

You can also zoom in and out by scrolling up or down while holding down the `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) key.

Show Status bar

The **Status bar**, at the bottom of the screen, gives information about selected score elements. Tick/untick this option to display or hide.

Split display

It is possible to split the document display so as to view two documents at once, or to view two different parts of the same document. Tabs allow you to chose which document to display in each view. You can drag the barrier separating the two scores to adjust the amount of space in the window devoted to each:

- **Documents Side by Side**: Divides the window vertically into two score views.
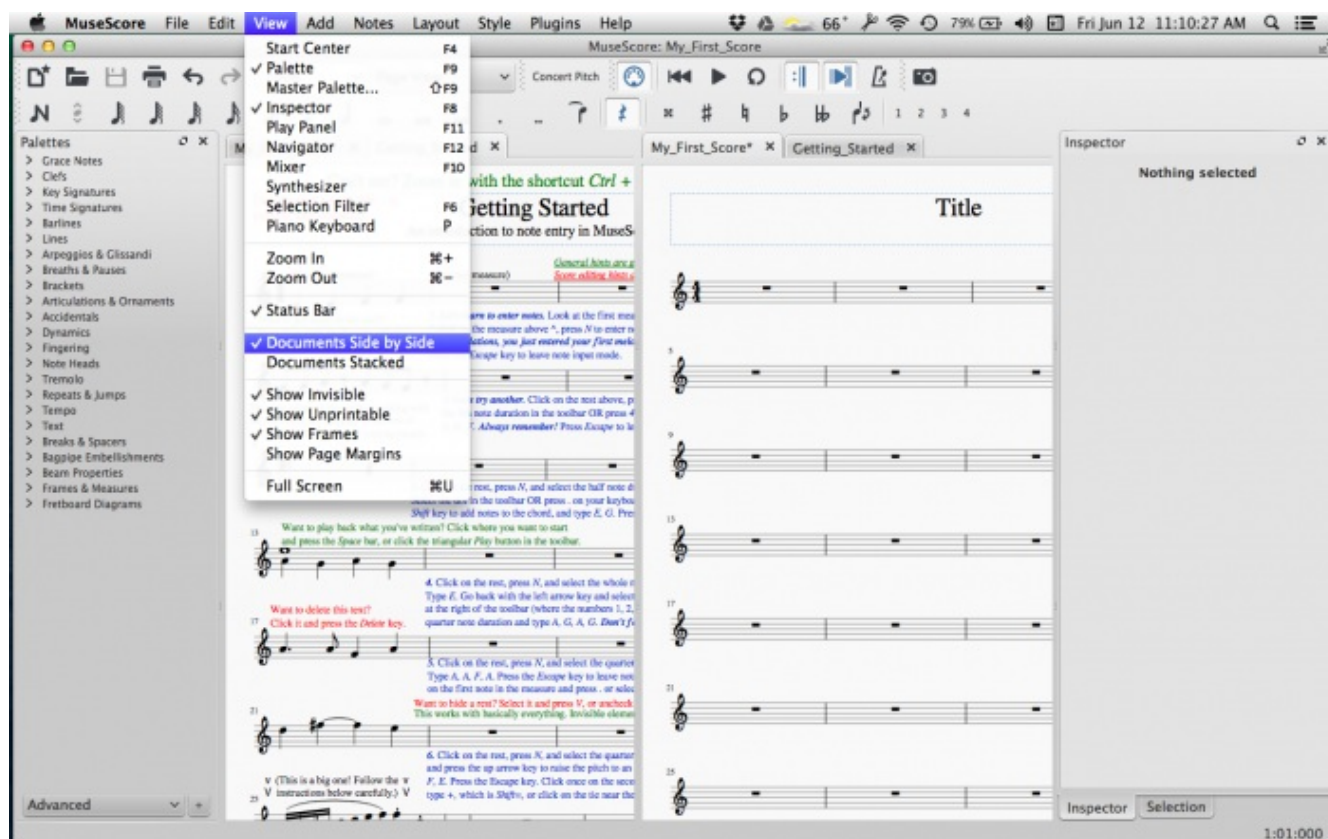
- **Documents Stacked**: Divides the window horizontally into two score views, one above the other.
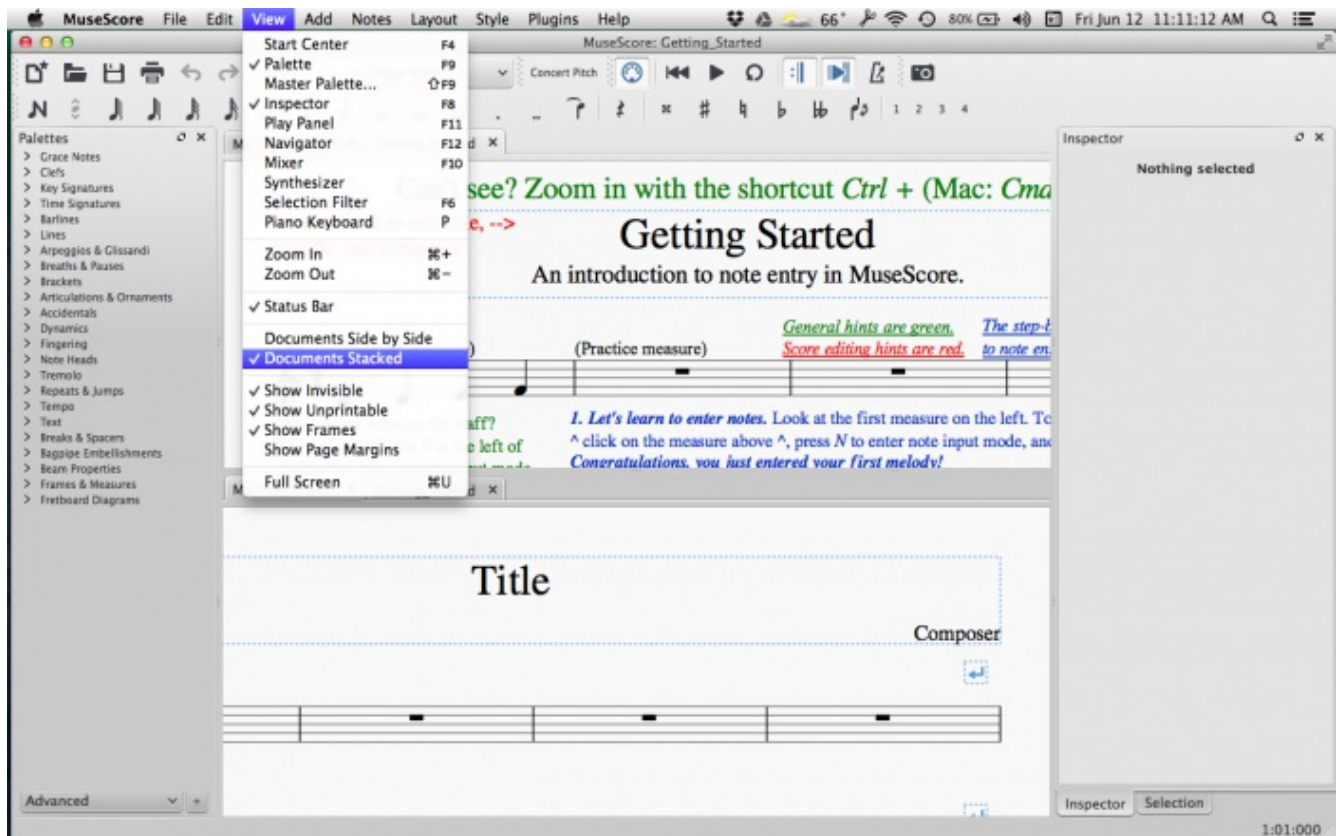
Visibility options

This section allows you to display or hide various non-printing elements:

- **Show Invisible**: View/hide elements that have been made invisible for printing.
- **Show Unprintable**: View/hide breaks and spacer symbols.
- **Show Frames**: View/hide the dotted outlines of frames.
- **Show Page Margins**: View/hide Page Margins.

Full screen

Full Screen mode expands MuseScore to fill your screen so more content is visible.
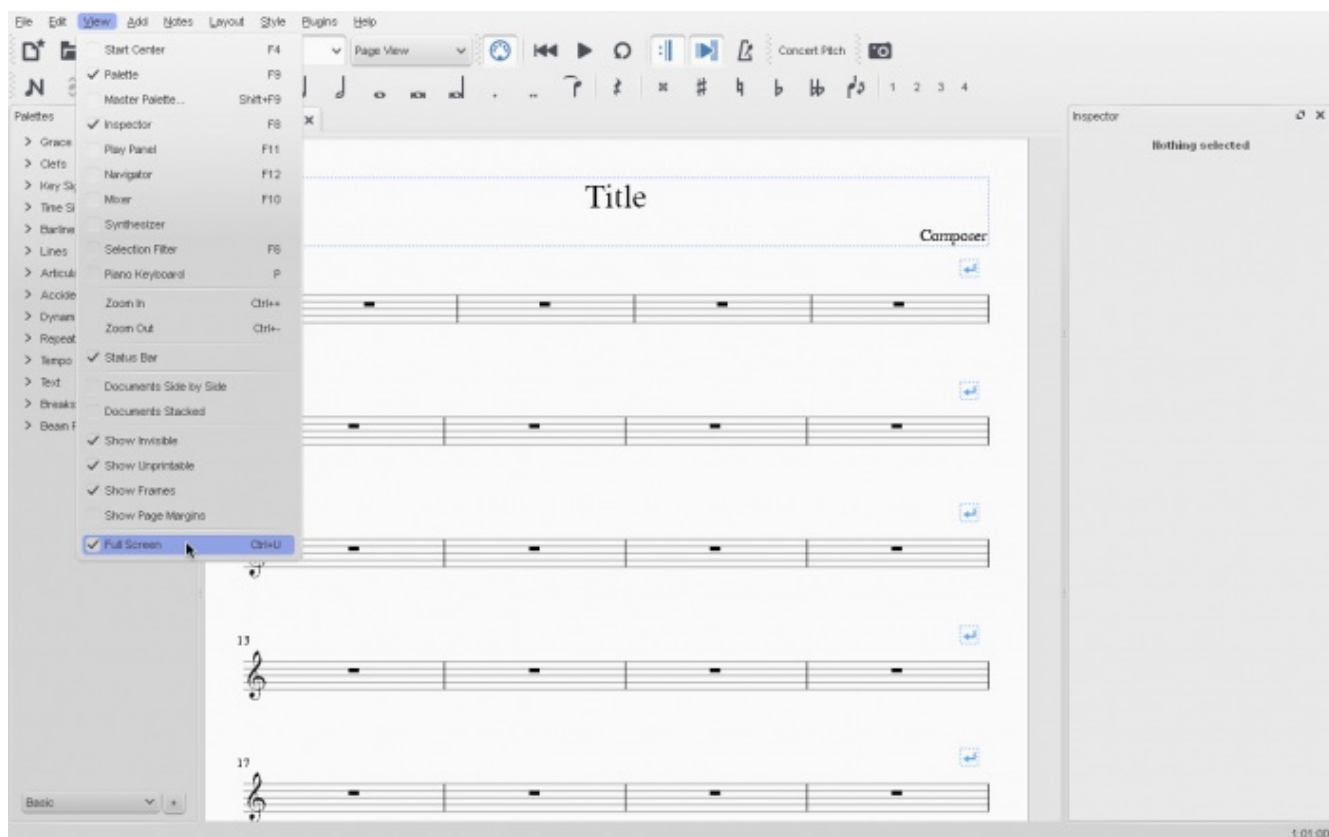
Page/Continuous View

In Page View, you can see your sheet music formatted as it will appear when printed or exported as a PDF or image file. In Continuous View, the score will be shown as one unbreaking system.

Note that when switching between Page View and Continuous View, the score is reformatted for the new view and manual adjustments may require reviewing.

You can switch viewing modes here:
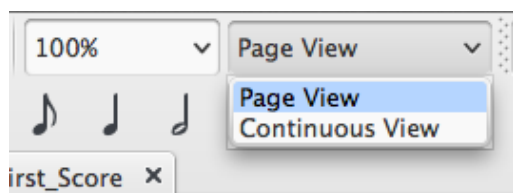
Page View

In Page View, the score is shown as one or more pages of a specific size with margins, and you can see all lines and page breaks, including those added manually and those automatically calculated by the software. (Manual page breaks can be helpful to have well-placed page turns in orchestral parts, for example.)

Continuous View

In Continuous View, the score will be shown as one unbreaking system. If the starting point is not in view, then a substitute form of measure numbers, instrument names, clefs, time and key signatures will be displayed.

Before printing a score or uploading it to MuseScore.com, switch to Page View to check line/page breaks.

Note: Because the layout is simpler, MuseScore may perform faster in Continuous View than Page View.

Navigator

The **Navigator** is an optional panel which allows you to navigate a long score more easily, or go to specific pages. To view/hide, go to the `View` menu and select `Navigator`, or use the shortcut `F12` (Mac: `fn+F12`). It appears at the bottom of the document window if scrolling pages horizontally, or on the right-hand side of the document window if scrolling pages vertically (see Preferences: Canvas).
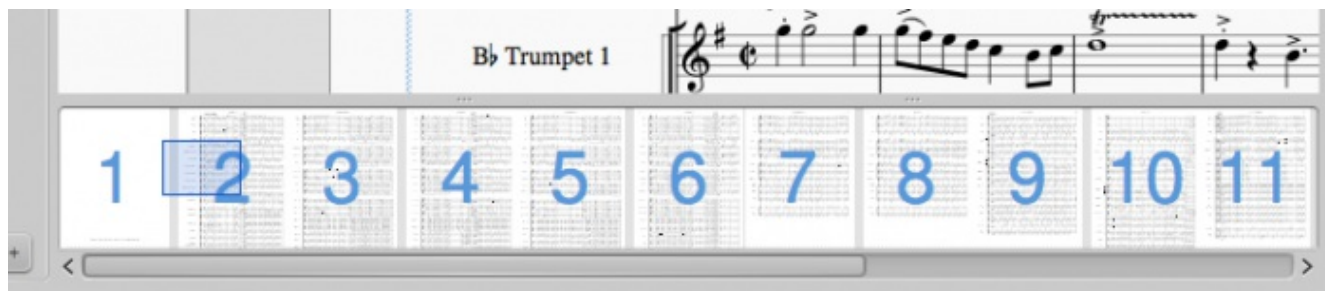
The blue box represents the area of the score that is currently visible in the main window. You can drag either the blue box or the scroll bar, or click on an area to immediately go to it.

Toolbars
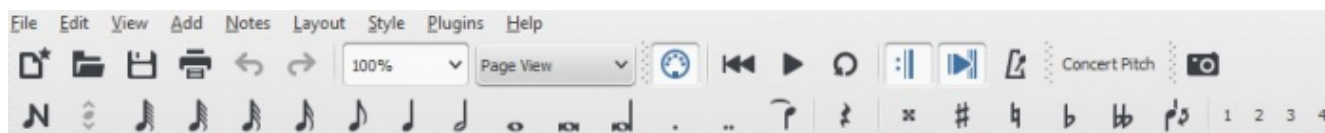
The **Toolbar** area is located between the **Menu bar** and **document window**. It contains symbols which allow you to perform certain operations. It can be divided into the following toolbars:

- **File Operations**: New score, Load score, Save, Print, Undo, Redo.
- **Zoom/Page View**.
- **Transport tools**: Enable MIDI, Rewind, Play/Stop, Loop, Play Repeats, Metronome.
- **Concert Pitch**: Displays score in written or concert (sounding) pitch.
- **Image Capture**: Allows you to take a snapshot of part of the score.
- **Note Input**: Note entry mode, Duration, Tie, Rest, Accidentals, Flip stem direction, Voice (1, 2, 3, 4).

To chose which toolbars to display, right-click on an empty space in the toolbar area and, from the menu, check or uncheck the required options. This menu also allows you to view or hide the **Piano keyboard**, **Selection** sidebar, **Text tools**, **Palettes**, and the **Inspector**.

Side panels

The **workspaces**, **Inspector** and **Selection filter** are conveniently displayed as **side panels** to the left and right of the score window. To undock a side panel use one of the following methods:

- Drag the panel;
- Click on the double chevron at the top of the panel;
- Double click in the title area at the top of the panel.

To redock a panel use one of the following procedures:

- Drag the panel to the top/bottom of an existing side panel and it will stack vertically above/below that panel.
- Drag the panel to the middle of an existing side panel and it will overlay that panel. Both panels can then be accessed by tabs.

Alternatively, double-clicking the title bar of the panel will restore it to its previously docked position.

Find

The **Find** function allows you to speedily navigate to a specific measure, rehearsal mark or page number in the score:

1. Press `Ctrl+F` (Mac: `Cmd+F`), or select `Edit` → `Find`. This opens the **Find** (or **Go to**) **bar** at the bottom of the workspace.
2. Use one of the following options:
    - To go to a **measure**, enter the measure number (counting every measure starting with 1, irrespective of pickup measures, section breaks or manual changes to measure number offsets).
    - To go to a **rehearsal mark**, enter its name (the first character must be a letter for it to be "found", but subsequent text can be letters or numbers; the search is case insensitive).
    - To go to a **page**, enter the page number using the format pXX (where XX is the page number; this also means that you won't find a rehearsal mark that starts with "P" and continues with a number).

See also

- Keyboard shortcuts, Navigation
- Save/Export/Print
- File format
- Layout and formatting

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Share scores online

Go to musescore.com/sheetmusic to view other scores from MuseScore.
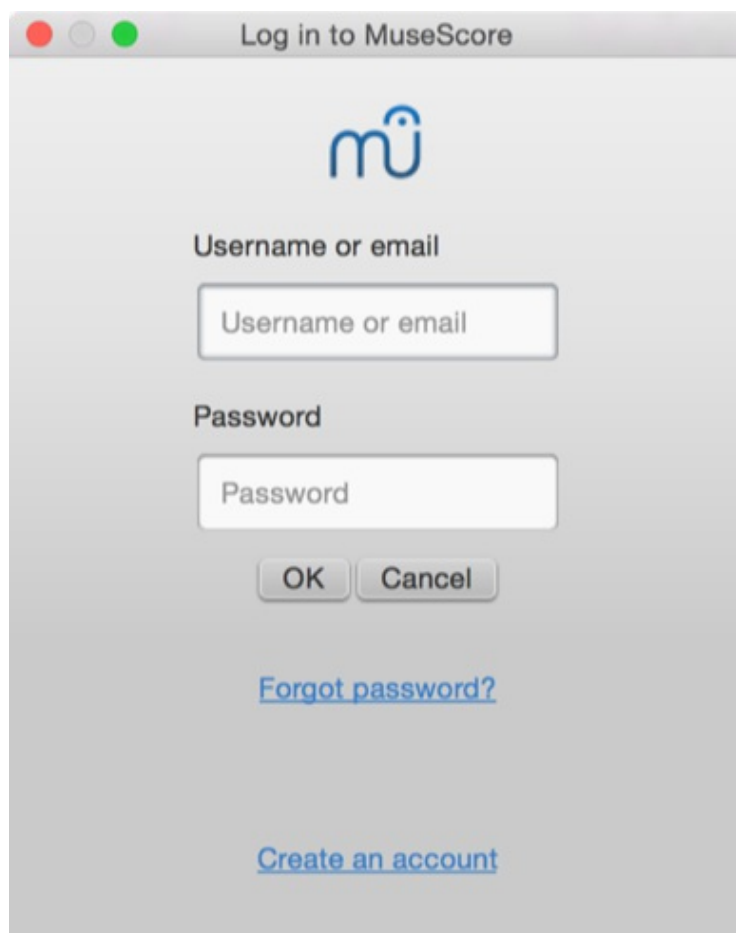
You can save and share your scores online at MuseScore.com. You can choose to save a score privately for personal access from any computer, or share it publicly. MuseScore.com enables the viewing and playback of scores in your web browser - an additional feature entitled `VideoScores` allows synchronization between the score and a YouTube video. For use outside of a web browser, you can download the score in a variety of formats (including PDF, MIDI, MP3, MusicXML, and the original MuseScore file).

Create an account

1. Visit MuseScore.com and click on "Create new account". Pick a username and enter a valid email and press "Create New Account".
2. Wait a few minutes for an email from MuseScore.com support. If no email arrives, check your spam folder.
3. Click the link in the email and visit your user profile to change your password.

Share a score directly from MuseScore

You can directly save a score online from `File` → `Save Online...`.

If you don't have a MuseScore account yet, create one first by clicking on the Create an account link. That will open your browser app and bring you to https://musescore.com/user/register

Next, enter your email address or MuseScore username, and password. Upon successfully logging in, you'll be able to enter your score information.

1. The **title** is the title of the score.
2. The **description** will appear next to it.
3. Privacy can be set to **Public** (visible to everyone), or **Private** (only visible to you or those you share a "secret link" with).
4. Choose a **license**. By using a Creative Commons license, you allow people to use your scores under certain restrictions.
5. You can add **tags** to help identify scores on MuseScore.com. Use commas to separate multiple tags.
6. In case you already saved the score online earlier, it will automatically update the existing one. Uncheck **Update the existing score** to save online as a new score.

Upload a score on MuseScore.com

You can also upload a score directly on MuseScore.com.

1. Click the Upload link on MuseScore.com.
2. You have the same options as with the Save Online menu.
3. You have also access to more information, such as **Genre**.

Note: Should you reach the **five score upload limit**, you can still upload scores directly from MuseScore, but only the last five are visible. If you wish more than this amount, upgrade to a Pro Account first.

Edit a score on MuseScore.com

If you want to make changes to one of your scores on MuseScore.com, edit the MuseScore file on your own computer and follow the steps below.

1. Go to the score page on MuseScore.com.
2. Click the `Edit this score` link on the right.
3. In the form, you can upload a replacement score file as well as change the accompanying information and privacy settings.

See also

- How to delete a score saved on MuseScore.com

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Notation

In the previous "Basics" chapter you learn how to enter notes and interact with the palettes. The "Notation" chapter describes the different types of notation in more detail, including more advanced music notation.

See also "Advanced topics"

Accidentals

The most common types of **accidentals** are provided in the Accidentals toolbar above the score and in the Accidentals palette in the basic workspace. A more comprehensive range can be found in the Accidentals palette in the advanced workspace.
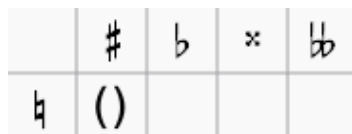
Accidentals palette (Basic workspace)

Add accidental

Accidentals are automatically added to a note, as appropriate, when you increase or decrease its pitch:

- ↑: Increase the pitch of a note by one semitone (favors sharps).
- ↓: Decrease the pitch of a note by one semitone (favors flats).

There are other methods of creating accidentals in the score, which also allow you to add a double flat or double sharp, courtesy (also called *cautionary* or *reminder*) accidentals, or non-standard accidentals:

- Select a note and click on an accidental in the toolbar above the score.
- Select a note and double-click an accidental in the Accidentals palette (basic or advanced workspace).
- Drag an accidental from the Accidentals palette on to a note.

If you wish to add parentheses to a **cautionary accidental**, use one of the following:

- Select the accidental in the score and double-click the parentheses symbol in the Accidentals palette.
- Drag the parentheses symbol from the palette onto the accidental.

If you later change the pitch of a note with cursor keys, manual settings to the accidental are removed.

If required, accidentals can be deleted by clicking on them and pressing `Del`.

Change enharmonic spelling

To change the **enharmonic** spelling of a note or group of notes, select the note or notes and press `J`. Repeatedly pressing `J` cycles through enharmonic equivalents. If the notes selected are not all the same, the effect may be unpredictable.

To change the enharmonic spelling in the transposed view, without affecting the concert pitch view, or vice versa, press `Ctrl+J` (Mac: `Cmd+J`).

Respell pitches

The menu function `Notes → Respell Pitches` tries to guess the right accidentals for the whole score.

See also

- Key signature: Change

External links

- Accidental at Wikipedia
- Enharmonic at Wikipedia

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Arpeggios and glissandi

Arpeggio and **Glissando** symbols can be found in the "Arpeggios & Glissandi" palette in the advanced workspace. The default symbols also include strum arrows, and slides for string instruments and brass etc.

You can customise the existing symbols on the score page and save them to a palette in a custom workspace if required.

To add a symbol to the score, use one of the following methods:

- Select one or more notes, then double-click a symbol in the "Arpeggios & Glissandi" palette.
- Drag a symbol from the "Arpeggios & Glissandi" palette onto a note.

The Inspector allows you to make various adjustments to the appearance and playback properties of the symbol.

Arpeggios

When an arpeggio or strum arrow is added to the score, it initially spans only one voice. However, you can easily adjust its height by double-clicking the symbol and dragging the handles up or down (for finer adjustment use the keyboard arrows). Playback can be turned on or off in the Inspector.

Glissandi (slides)

A **Glissando** or, more informally, a **slide**, spans two consecutive notes on the same staff, normally in the same voice.

You can edit, or delete the text of a glissando by clicking on it and making changes in the Inspector. If there isn't enough room between two notes, the text is not displayed. The Inspector also allows you to choose between a straight or wavy line, and to adjust the playback property of the symbol or turn it off altogether.

To adjust the start and end points of a glissando

1. Double-click the symbol to enter edit mode.
2. Click on the start or end handle and use shift + ↑ ↓ to move the handle up or down, from note to note. Shift + ← → moves the handle horizontally, note-by-note.

This method also allows you to move end handles between notes in different voices or even from one staff to another—for cross-staff glissandi, for example. You can also use the keyboard arrow buttons or Ctrl + arrow to make final adjustments to the positions of the handles.

Slides for stringed instruments, such as the guitar, can be created by editing the default glissando line. You can create slides between single notes or chords: the placement of the slide ends can easily be corrected using the method described above.

Other slides

Short up/down slides can be created by editing the existing *slide in* / *slide out* lines. These have handles which allow you to set the length and angle of the slide.

External links

- Arpeggio on Wikipedia
- Glissando on Wikipedia

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Articulations and ornaments

A comprehensive set of symbols can be found in the **Articulations and Ornaments** palette in the Advanced workspace. There is also an abbreviated version in the Basic workspace.

Articulations

66

Articulations are the symbols added to the score to show how a note or chord is to be played. The principal symbols in this group are:

- Fermatas
- Staccato
- Mezzo-staccato / Portato
- Staccatissimo
- Tenuto
- Sforzato
- Marcato

Specialist articulations are also included for bowed and plucked strings, wind instruments etc.

Ornaments

Ornaments include:

- Mordents, Inverted Mordents, Pralltrillers
- Trills
- Turns
- Bends

Note: **Appoggiaturas** and **acciaccaturas** can be found in the Grace Notes palette.

Add articulation/ornament

1. Select a note or a range of notes.
2. Double-click on a symbol in the palette.

Alternatively, you can add a symbol by dragging it from the palette directly onto a notehead.

Add accidental to an articulation

To apply an accidental to an existing articulation, such as a trill, add it from the Special Characters window to a text object. Or, alternatively, apply an accidental to the note from the Master palette.

Add fermata to a barline

A fermata can be applied directly to a barline by selecting the barline and double-clicking the fermata from a palette.

Keyboard shortcuts

- Toggle Staccato: `Shift+S`
- Toggle Tenuto: `Shift+N`
- Toggle Sforzato (accent): `Shift+V`
- Toggle Marcato: `Shift+O`
- Add Acciaccatura (grace note): `/`

Keyboard shortcuts can be customized in MuseScore's Preferences.

Adjust position

Immediately after adding an articulation or ornament from a palette, the symbol is automatically selected: It can then be moved *up or down* from the keyboard as follows:

- Press up/down arrow keys for fine positioning (0.1 sp at a time);
- Press `Ctrl+↑` or `Ctrl+↓` (Mac: `Cmd+↑` or `Cmd+↓`) for larger vertical adjustments (1 sp at a time).
- To flip a symbol to the other side of the note (where applicable), select it and press `x`.

To enable adjustments in *all* directions from the keyboard:

1. Double click on the symbol to enter Edit mode, or click on it and press `Ctrl+E` (Mac: `Cmd+E`) , or right-click on the symbol and select "Edit element";
2. Press arrow keys for fine positioning (0.1 sp at a time); or press `Ctrl+Arrow` (Mac: `Cmd+Arrow`) for

larger adjustments (1 sp at a time).

You can also change the horizontal and vertical offset values in the Inspector. To position more than one symbol at a time, select the desired symbols and adjust the offset values in the Inspector.

Note: The symbol can also be repositioned by clicking and dragging, but for more precise control, use the methods above.

Articulation properties

To access articulation properties, click on the symbol and make the desired adjustments to values in the **Inspector**. The exact properties displayed depend on the type of articulation. Other properties (i.e. direction and anchor position) can be accessed by right-clicking on the symbol and selecting `Articulation Properties…`.

You can also make global adjustments to all existing and subsequently-applied articulations by selecting `Style…` → `General…` → `Articulations, Ornaments`.

See also

- Grace notes

External links

- Ornaments at Wikipedia

Bends

A variety of simple and complex (multi-stage) bends can be created with the **Bend Tool** $\overset{\text{full}}{}$, located in the Articulations and Ornaments palette of the Advanced workspace.

Apply a bend

To apply a bend symbol, use one of the following options:

- Select a note and double-click the bend tool in the palette.
- Drag the bend tool from the palette on to a note.

By default, the tool applies a whole note up-bend. To edit the bend, right click on it and select "Bend properties." Five preset options are available, if needed, to the left of the graph.
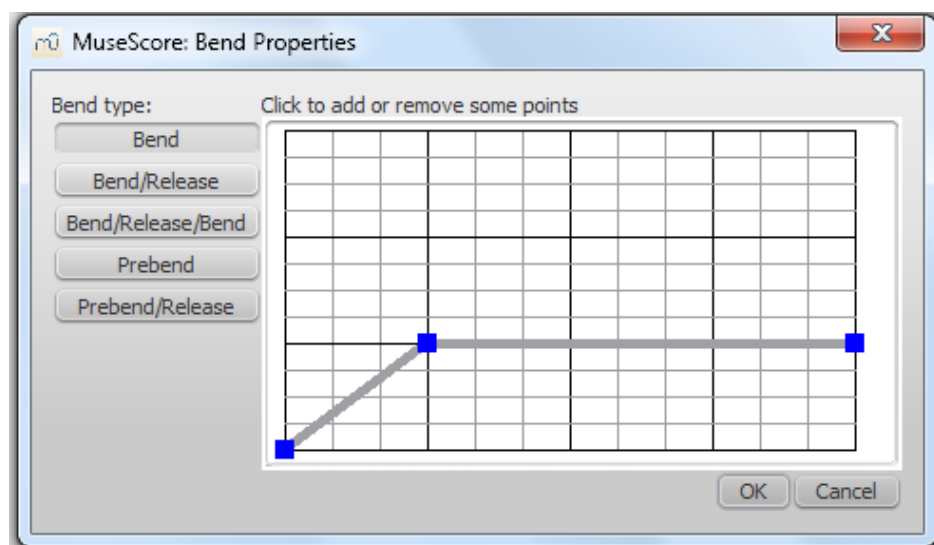
As you can see from the image (above), the bend is represented by a graph. The dark blue squares are control points, connected by gray lines. The slope of the graph indicates the type of bend:

- Up-slope = Up-bend

- Down-slope = Down-bend
- Horizontal line = Hold

The **vertical axis** of the graph represents the degree to which the pitch is bent up or down: one unit equals a quarter-tone: 2 units a semitone, 4 units a whole-tone, and so on.

The **horizontal axis** indicates the visual extent of the bend: each gray line segment in the graph equals width of 1 **sp** in the score (sp =**staff space**, the distance between two staff lines). Thus, each blue square added *lengthens* the bend by 1 sp; deleting a blue square *shortens* the bend by 1 sp.

A bend is modified by adding or deleting blue squares in the graph. To add a square to the graph, click on an empty intersection. To delete a square, click on it. The *Start* and *End* points of the bend can be moved up and down only.

Adjust height

The height of the bend symbol is automatically adjusted so that it appears just above the staff. This height can be reduced, if necessary, with a workaround:

1. Create another note on the top line (or space) of the staff, vertically above the note at which you want the bend to start.
2. Apply the bend to the higher note first: this will give you a bend symbol with the lowest height.
3. To increase the height of the bend move this note downward.
4. Drag the bend symbol downwards to the correct position.
5. Mark the top note invisible and silent (using the Inspector).

Adjust position

To adjust position use one of the following:

- Drag the bend symbol with a mouse.
- Click on the symbol and adjust the horizontal and vertical offsets in the Inspector.
- Double click on the symbol; or click on it and press `Ctrl+E` (Mac: `Cmd+E`); or right-click on the symbol and select "Edit element." Then use the arrow keys for fine positioning (0.1 sp at a time); or `Ctrl+Arrow` (Mac: `Cmd+Arrow`) for larger adjustments (1 sp at a time).

Custom bends

After a bend has been created in the score it can be saved for future use by dragging and dropping the symbol to a palette while holding down `Ctrl+Shift` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift`). See Custom palette.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Barlines

Barline symbols are available in the **Barlines** palette:

Change barline type

To change an existing barline, use one of the following:

- Select a barline, then double click on a symbol in the Barlines palette.
- Drag a symbol from the Barlines palette onto a barline in the score.
- Drag a symbol from the Barlines palette onto a measure.
- Select a measure, then double-click on a symbol in the Barlines palette.

To insert a new barline between existing ones, either:

- Drag a symbol from the Barlines palette onto a note or rest.
- Select a note or rest, then double-click a symbol in the Barlines palette.

Barlines can also be changed in the Inspector. Other options available here include:

- Dashed or dotted barlines
- End, double, repeat and adjustable partial barlines,
- Span staves
- Color
- Offset

To hide a barline entirely, select the line and press `v`, or uncheck `Visible` in the Inspector.

Connect barlines

To extend barlines over multiple staves, like in a grand staff, e.g. for piano, double-click on a barline (see `Edit mode`).
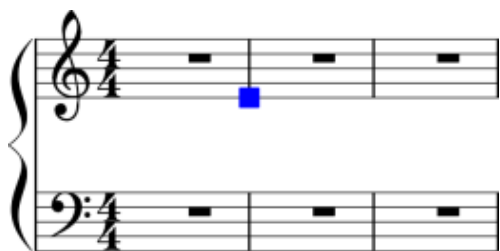
Click and drag the blue handle down to the next staff.

All the rest of the barlines will update when you leave `edit mode`.

See also

- Measure operations
- Add articulation/ornament to barline

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Beams

Beams are set automatically based on the time signature (see Time signatures: Change default beaming), but they can be altered manually on a case-by-case basis. Drag a beam symbol from the "Beam Properties" palette to a note in order to change its behavior.

Alternatively, you can first select a note (or rest), and then double-click the appropriate symbol in the palette.

- Start a beam at this note.

- ![beam icon] Do not end a beam at this note (or rest).

- ![eighth note icon] Do not beam this note.

- ![beam icon] Start a second level beam at this note.

- ![beam icon] Start a third level beam at this note.

- ![AUTO icon] (back to) Automatic mode: the mode MuseScore chooses on note input, dependent on current time signature.

- ![feathered beam icon] Start feathered beam (slower) at this note.

- ![feathered beam icon] Start feathered beam (faster) at this note.

To change the beam angle, or the distance of the beam to the notes (i.e. the length of the stems), double-click on the beam to put it into `edit mode`, with the right end handle being selected. Up/down arrow will now change the angle. Selecting the left end handle and using the up/down arrow keys will lengthen/shorten the stems. Hit `Esc` to get out of edit mode, once done with the changes.

To move a beam from above to below the notes, or vice-versa, flip the direction of the stems by using the *button* along the second top row (before the voice indicators) that shows a note with stems attached above and below or use the `x` key.

See also

- Cross-staff notation
- Edit mode
- Note input
- How to add a beam over a rest
- How to place a beam between notes

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Brackets

MuseScore provides standard **brackets** and a curly **brace** within the **Brackets** palette in the advanced workspace.

![bracket and brace symbols]

Add

To add a bracket or brace to systems, use one of two methods:

- Drag a bracket symbol from a palette on to an empty space in the first measure of the staff where you want the bracket to start.
- Select the first measure of the staff where you want the bracket to start and double-click a bracket symbol in a palette.

Delete

- Select the bracket and press Del.

Change

- Drag a bracket symbol from a palette onto an existing bracket in the score.

Edit

When you first apply a bracket it only spans one staff. To extend the bracket to other staves, double-click on it (or click on it and press Ctrl + E) to enter edit mode, then drag the handle downwards to span the required staves. The handle snaps into position, so exact placement is not required.

Style

The default thickness and distance from the system of brackets and braces can be adjusted in Style → General... → System.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Breaths and pauses

Breath and **pause** markings are available in the **Breaths & Pauses** palette in the advanced workspace.

To add a breath or pause (the latter also called a *caesura*, or informally "tram lines" or "railroad tracks") to the score, use one of the following options:

- Select a note or rest and double-click a breath or pause symbol in a palette
- Drag a breath or pause symbol from a palette onto a note or rest in the score.

Breath symbol in score (Emmentaler font)

The symbol is placed after the note. You may subsequently wish to adjust its position by entering edit mode and using the arrow cursor keys, by dragging, or by changing the offsets in the Inspector.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Clefs

Commonly used **Clefs** (Treble, Bass, Alto, Tenor) can be found in the Clefs palette in the Basic workspace. For a more complete range, see the **Clefs** palette in the Advanced workspace (see image below).

Note: You can tailor the display of clefs to your specific requirements using a custom palette.

Add a clef

Add clef to beginning of measure

Method 1—add clef to beginning of a measure, whether or not it is the first measure in a system

- Select a measure and double-click a clef symbol in the palette, OR
- Drag a clef from the palette onto a measure.

Method 2—only for changing the clef at the start of a system

- Select the existing clef at the beginning of the system and double-click a new clef from the palette, OR
- Drag a new clef from the palette directly onto the existing clef.

Add mid-measure clef

To create a mid-measure clef:

- Click on a note and then double-click a clef in the palette.

Note: If the clef is not the first in the system, it will be drawn smaller.

In this image, the top staff starts with a treble clef and switches immediately to bass clef, then after a note and a rest, changes back to treble clef.

Note: Changing a clef does not change the pitch of any note. Instead, the notes move to preserve pitch. If you want, you can use Transposition in conjunction with a clef change.

Courtesy clefs

When a clef change occurs at the beginning of a system, a **courtesy clef** will be generated at the end of the previous system. To show or hide courtesy clefs, go to `Style → General... → Page` and check/uncheck the "Create courtesy clef" option.

Remove a clef

Select a clef and press `Del`.

Hide clefs

Display clef only in the first measure (for all staves)

- Go to `Style → General... → Page` and uncheck "Create clef for all systems."

Display clef only in the first measure (for a particular staff)

1. Right click on the staff, select `Staff properties...` and uncheck "Show clef."
2. Open the Master Palette and select the "Symbols" section.
3. Drag and drop a clef from the master palette onto the first measure of the staff, OR select the first note and double-click a clef in the master palette

Note: This option may be useful to TAB users who do not want the clef to repeat on every subsequent line.

Hide all clefs in a particular staff

- Right click on the staff, select `Staff properties...` and uncheck "Show clef."

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Drum notation

Music notation for unpitched percussion differs significantly from notation for pitched instruments (such as the piano or violin), but you should be familiar with standard note input before proceeding.

On a 5-line percussion staff, each instrument is assigned a particular staff position (line or space) and a notehead shape. When writing for a drumkit it is common to use two voices: **voice 1** (the upper voice) usually contains (upstem) notes played by the hands while **voice 2** (the lower voice) usually contains (downstem) notes played by the feet (see image below).

Drum input palette

When a percussion staff is selected and note input mode is ON, a window opens at the bottom of the screen called the **Drum input palette**. Each note in the palette represents a percussion instrument: hovering the mouse pointer over the note displays the instrument name.

The letters A–G (shown above certain notes in the palette) are designated as shortcuts for entering particular instruments (bass drum, snare, closed hi-hat etc.), rather than referring to note pitches. They can be changed or reallocated as desired in the Edit Drumset window.

When the **Drum input palette** is open, double-clicking a note in the palette or entering a shortcut letter will add that instrument note to the percussion staff. The color of the note in the palette shows the voice allocated for that note—blue for voice 1, green for voice 2. This can be changed in the Edit Drumset dialog if required.

This voice allocation only applies only to keyboard and mouse entry of notes: entry via a MIDI keyboard or the virtual Piano keyboard allows any voice to be used.

Note input methods

You can add notes to a percussion staff from any of the following:

- External MIDI keyboard;
- Piano keyboard (virtual);
- Computer keyboard;
- Mouse.

These methods can be used in any desired combination:

MIDI keyboard

The easiest way to add notes to a percussion staff is via a**MIDI keyboard** connected to your computer. If you click on the percussion staff without entering <u>note input</u> node, you are free to demo the percussion instruments beforehand.

To enter notes from the MIDI keyboard:

1. Click on the note or rest where you want to start.
2. Enter <u>note input</u> mode.
3. Select the correct <u>voice</u>. For example, snares, sidesticks and all cymbals are normally added to voice 1; bass drum to voice 2.
4. Set <u>note duration</u>.
5. Press the MIDI key for that instrument to add a note to the score. To add another note, keep the first key held down while pressing the second key.

Note: Refer to a**GM2 drum map** for details about the allocation of keys to percussion instruments. Some MIDI keyboards (e.g., Casio) display percussion symbols next to the keys as an aid to the user.

Piano keyboard

To display the virtual **Piano keyboard**, press P (or select it from View → Piano Keyboard). If you click on the percussion staff without entering <u>note input</u> node, you are free to demo the percussion instruments beforehand.

To add notes to a percussion staff from the virtual Piano keyboard:

1. Ensure that the Piano keyboard is displayed.
2. Click on the note or rest where you want to start.
3. Enter <u>note input</u> mode.
4. Select the correct <u>voice</u>. For example, snares, sidesticks and all cymbals are normally added to voice 1; bass drum to voice 2.
5. Set <u>note duration</u>.
6. Click on the MIDI key for that instrument to add a note to the score.
7. If you wish to add another note to an existing one, press Ctrl and hold it while pressing the new note.

Note: Refer to a**GM2 drum map** for details about the allocation of keys to percussion instruments.

Computer keyboard

To enter notes on a percussion staff using your computer keyboard:

1. Click on the note or rest where you want to start.
2. Enter <u>note input</u> mode. The <u>Drum input palette</u> now appears at the bottom of the screen.
3. Select the desired <u>note duration</u>.
4. Press the shortcut key (A–G) for the instrument note you wish to enter.
5. If you wish to add another note to an existing one in that voice, press Shift + [A–G].

Note: Voice allocation is determined by the color of the note in the drum input palette: blue for voice 1, green for voice 2.

Mouse

To add a note to a percussion staff

1. Click on the note or rest where you want to start.
2. Press N to to enter <u>note input mode</u>. The <u>Drum input palette</u> now appears at the bottom of the screen.

3. Set note duration.
4. Chose one of the following options:
    ◦ Double-click a note in the Drum input palette.
    ◦ Select a note (e.g. Bass drum, or Snare) in the Drum input palette, then click on the percussion staff to add the note to the score.

To add a note to an existing chord in the percussion staff

1. Ensure you are in note input mode mode.
2. Select a note duration equal to the note you are adding to.
3. Click on the new note in the Drum input palette.
4. Click above or below the existing note in the percussion staff.

Note: Voice allocation is determined by the color of the note in the drum input palette: blue for voice 1, green for voice 2.

Edit Drumset

Clicking on `Edit Drumset` at the left of the **Drum input palette**, opens the **Edit Drumset** dialog. Alternatively, right click on a percussion staff and chose "Edit Drumset." The left-hand side of the window consists of a list of MIDI numbers/note names, their associated percussion instruments and any keyboard shortcuts.
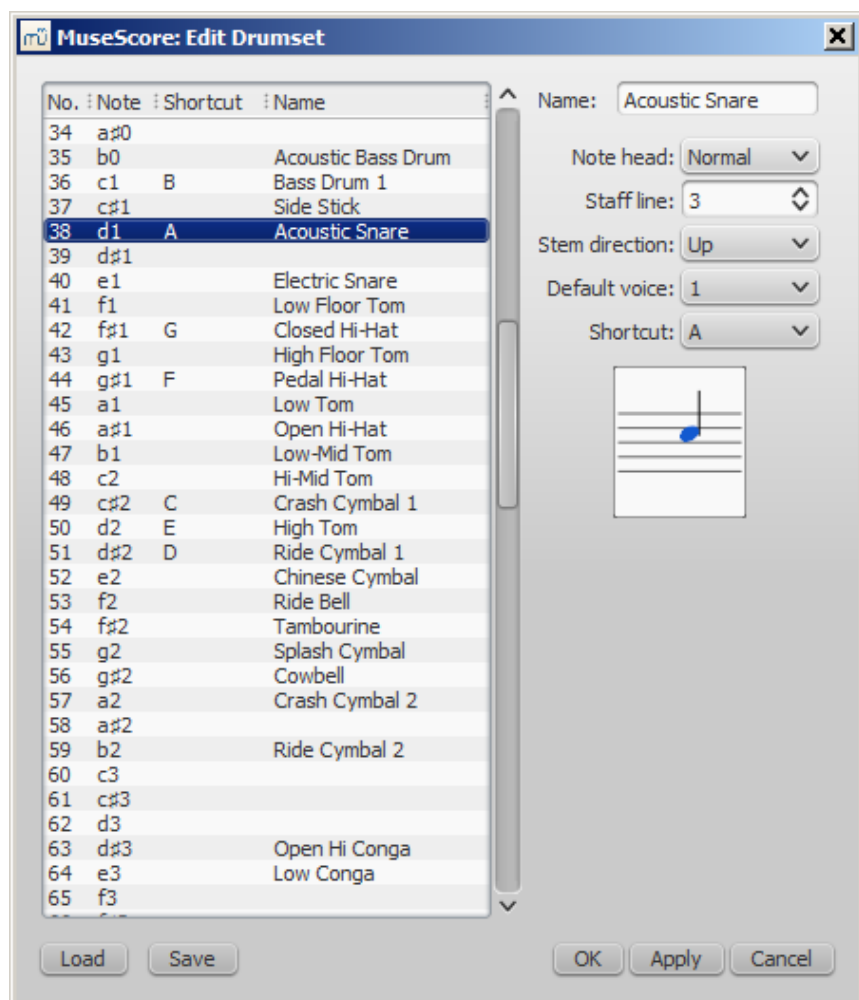
Clicking on a row in the left-hand column allows you to edit the display properties for that note as follows:

Name: The name you want displayed in the Drum input palette when you mouse over the note.
Notehead: Chose a notehead for that instrument from a drop-down list of options.
Staff line: This number indicates the staff line/space on which the note is displayed. "0" means that the note is displayed on the top line of the 5-line staff. Negative numbers move the note upwards step by step, while positive numbers move it downwards in the same way.
Stem Direction: Auto, Up or down.
Default voice: Assign to one of four voices. This does not affect input from a MIDI keyboard or the virtual Piano keyboard.

Shortcut: Assign a keyboard shortcut to enter that note.

The customised drumset can be saved as a .drm file by pressing `Save`. You can also import a customised drumset using the `Load` button.

Roll

To create a drum roll, use <u>Tremolo</u>.

External links

- <u>How to create jazz drum notation</u> [MuseScore How-To]
- <u>Video tutorial: MuseScore in Minutes: Lesson 7 - Tablature and Drum Notation</u>
- <u>Drum Parts</u> [video]
- <u>Editing the Drum Palette in MuseScore 1.1</u> [video]
- <u>Saving Drumset Changes in MuseScore 1.1</u> [video]
- <u>Guide to Drum and Percussion Notation</u>

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Grace notes

A **grace note** is a type of musical ornament, usually printed smaller than regular notes. The **Short grace note**, or Acciaccatura, appears as a small note with a stroke through the stem. The **Long grace note**, or Appoggiatura, has no stroke.

Create grace notes

Grace notes can be found in the "Grace notes" <u>palette</u> in the Basic or Advanced workspace.

Add a grace note

- Select a regular note and double click a grace note in a <u>palette</u>, OR
- Drag a grace note symbol from a palette onto a regular note, OR
- Select a note and press `/` to create an acciaccatura only.

To add a *group* of grace note to a regular note, simply repeat the above actions as many times as required.

Add a chord of grace notes

Grace note chords are built up just like regular chords:

1. Enter the first note of the chord as shown above
2. Select this first grace note and enter subsequent notes as you would for any other regular chord (i.e. `Shift`+ note names (C, D, E etc...)).

You can also create a grace note chord by using the **add interval** shortcut in step 2: `Alt+1-9` for intervals from a unison to a ninth above.

Change duration

If you want to change the duration of a previously created grace note, select it and choose a duration from the toolbar or enter with one of the keys `1` ... `9` (see <u>Note input</u>).

Manual adjustment

The position of a grace note after a note (such as a trill termination) may have to be adjusted by selecting the note, going into <u>edit mode</u> and using the left/right keyboard arrows; or change the chord

offset values in the Inspector.

External links

- Grace note at Wikipedia
- Appoggiatura at Wikipedia
- Acciaccatura at Wikipedia

Hairpins

Add a hairpin

Hairpins are line objects. To create a hairpin, select the range of notes that you want the hairpin to cover.

< creates a crescendo hairpin
> creates a diminuendo hairpin (decrescendo)
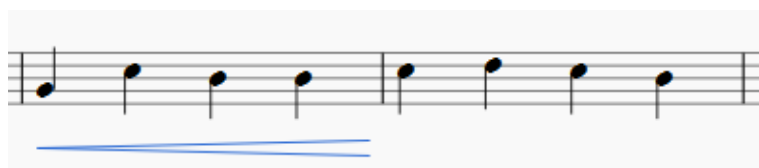
You can also create hairpins by double-clicking a hairpin in the Lines palette while notes are selected.

Edit a hairpin

Once you have a hairpin in your score, you can adjust, extend, or move it. To adjust length:

1. Double-click on the hairpin to enter `edit mode`. Then select (click on) the end point to move:

2. `Shift+→` or `Shift+←` moves the anchor of the selected end point, which determines which notes the playback will affect and enables the hairpin to extend across line breaks:

3. `→` or `←`, `Ctrl+→` or `Ctrl+←` (Mac: `Cmd+→` or `Cmd+←`), and dragging with the mouse will move the selected end point ***without changing where it is anchored.*** This method is suitable ***only*** for small adjustments to the visual appearance of the hairpin. ***To extend the hairpin under more or fewer notes, use*** `shift+→` ***or*** `shift+←` ***to change the anchor*** (see above). The "Reset" command `ctrl+R` (Mac: `cmd+R`) will undo these small adjustments, but will not undo anchor changes.

Cresc. and dim. lines

In addition to hairpins, there are *cresc.* _   _   _ and *dim.* _   _   _ lines with the same function in the Lines palette. To change the text (e.g. to *cresc. poco a poco*, or *decresc.* instead of *dim*), right-click on the line and choose `Line Properties...`

To turn a hairpin into its equivalent text line:

1. Select the hairpin.
2. In the <u>Inspector</u>, set "Line style" to "Wide dashed."
3. In the Inspector, select the "Text line" checkbox.

Hairpin playback

Playback of crescendos and diminuendos is only effective from one note to the next; it currently is not possible to change the dynamic over the course of a single note. By default, hairpins will affect playback only if <u>dynamics</u> are used before and after the hairpin.

For instance, a crescendo spanning notes between *p* and *f* dynamics will cause a dynamic change on playback. However, between any two successive dynamics only the first appropriate hairpin will have effect: a diminuendo between *p* and *f* will be ignored; of two or more crescendos between *p* and *f*, all but the first will be ignored.

A hairpin may be used without dynamic marks, by adjusting "Velocity change" in the <u>Inspector</u> (values in the range 0 to 127).

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Key signatures

Standard **key signatures** are available in the Key Signatures <u>palette</u> in the Basic or Advanced workspaces. You can also create custom key signatures using the <u>Key signatures section</u> of the Master Palette (press `Shift+K` to view), which also allows you to use a wide range of non-standard symbols.

Add a new key signature

Add new key signature to *all* staves

- Drag a key signature from the palette onto an empty part of a measure, OR
- Select a measure and double-click a key signature in the palette, OR
- Select a note and double-click a key signature in a palette.

Add new key signature to *one* staff only

If you wish to change the key signature of only one staff line, leaving others unchanged:

- Press `Ctrl` (Mac: ⌘) and hold while you drag a key signature from a palette onto a measure.

Replace an existing key signature

Replace key signature for *all* staves

- Drag a key signature from the palette onto the key signature to be replaced (or onto the measure containing the key signature), OR
- Select the key signature to be replaced, and double-click a new key signature in a palette.

Replace key signature for *one* staff only

If you wish to replace the key signature of only one staff, leaving others unchanged:

- Press `Ctrl` (Mac: ⌘) and hold while you drag a key signature from a palette onto the key signature to be replaced (or onto the measure containing the key signature).

Remove a key signature

- Click on an existing key signature and press `Del`, OR
- Drag the empty key signature from the palette (in the advanced workspace) onto the measure.

Courtesy key signature

In the Inspector for a selected key signature, there is an option for "Show courtesy." Additionally, `Style → General... → Page` has on option for "Create courtesy key signatures". The Inspector will affect only the selected one; the style setting will affect the entire score.

Naturals on key signature changes

By default MuseScore only shows naturals when changing to no signature (C Maj/A min). In all other cases, it simply shows the new key signature:

You can choose whether to show natural(s) in certain cases when changing the key signature. Under `Style → General... → Accidentals` you'll see the options:
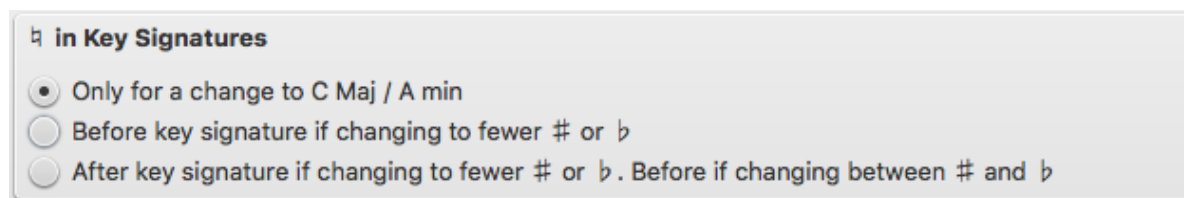
You can `Apply` the changes, or click `OK`. If you are in a linked part, rather than in the primary score, you can use the `Apply to all parts` button.

The option 'Before key signature if changing to fewer ♯ or ♭' yields this result:
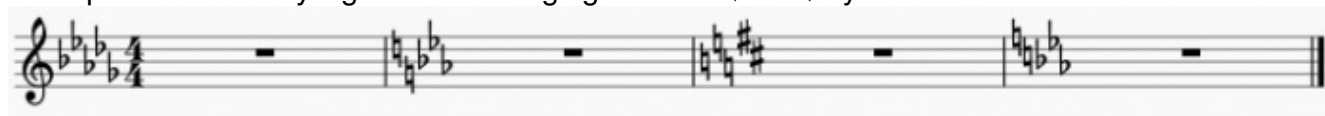
The third option 'After key signature if changing to fewer ♯ or ♭. Before if changing between ♯ and ♭' produces the following output:
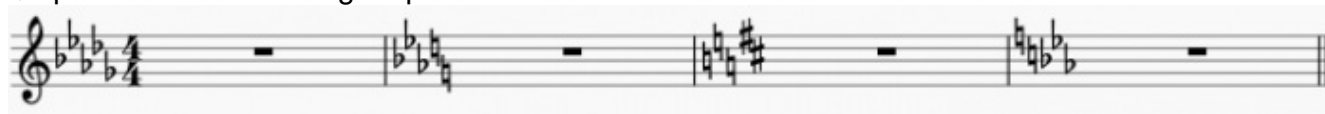
Key signature and multimeasure rest

Multimeasure rests are interrupted, if there is change in the key signature.

See Multimeasure rest

Courtesy key signatures and section breaks

A courtesy key signature will not be shown at a section break.
See Break or spacer: Section break

Custom key signatures

Press `Shift+K` to bring up the **Key signatures** section of the Master palette.
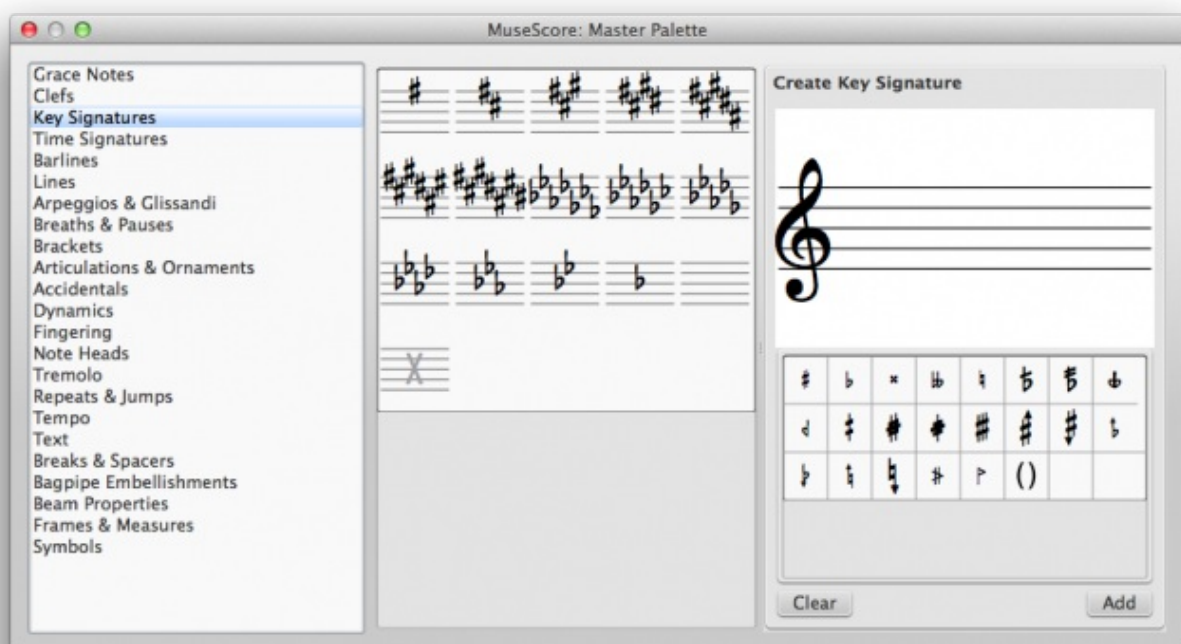
The left panel contains a library of **key signatures**. To the right is the **Create Key signature** panel where you can customize key signatures by dragging accidentals from the palette onto an appropriate location in the staff above. When completed, press `Add` to move the new key signature into the library. `Clear` cancels the custom key signature and allows you to start building again from scratch.

A full range of accidental symbols is available—both conventional and non-standard (such as half-flats, half-sharps, etc.). Note, however, that playback of custom key signatures is not currently supported (2.0.3).

Key signatures in the Master palette can be moved to a custom palette in a user workspace by dragging and dropping. It is also possible to apply key signatures to the score directly from the Master palette by either selecting a measure and double-clicking a key signature, or dragging the key signature onto a measure.

> Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Lines

The **Lines** palette of the Advanced workspace includes the following types of **lines**:

- Slur

- Hairpins (crescendo and diminuendo)
- Volta brackets (1st, 2nd, 3rd time endings etc.)
- Octave lines (8va, 8vb, 15ma etc)
- Keyboard pedal markings
- Extended ornament lines (Trills etc)
- Guitar barre line
- Straight line
- Ambitus (early music symbol)

Applying lines to the score

Lines can be applied in the following ways:

- Select a note and then double click one of the lines.

- Select a range of notes by clicking on the first note and using `Shift`-click to select the last note. Then double-click a line in the palette.

- Select a range of notes by clicking on the first note and using `Ctrl`-click to select the last note. Then double-click a line in the palette. This gives a shorter line than the previous selection.

- Drag and drop a line from the palette onto the score.

Slurs can also be created using the hotkey`S`.

Change length

1. If you are in `note input mode` then press `Esc`

2. Double click the line that you want to change to enter `edit mode`

3. **Move the handles using the following shortcuts:**

   o `Shift+→` to move the anchor right by one note (or measure)
   o `Shift+←` to move the anchor left by one note (or measure)

4. If you need to change the length visually **without changing the notes or measures that the line is anchored to**, then drag the handles with the mouse or use the following shortcuts:

- - → to move the handle right by 0.1**sp** (1 sp = one staff space = the distance between two staff lines).
  - ← to move the handle left 0.1 sp.
  - `Ctrl+→` (Mac: `Cmd+→`) to move the handle right one sp.
  - `Ctrl+←` (Mac: `Cmd+→`) to move the handle left one sp.

Custom lines and line properties

Lines like ottavas (8va, 8vb, 15ma, etc.) and voltas (1st and 2nd endings, etc.) make use of features such as embedded text or hooks at the ends of the line. You can also customize lines as you like after adding them to the score, and even add them back into the palette for future use.

1. Right-click on a line and choose `Line Properties...`

2. You can specify text to appear at the beginning, continuation (i.e., the beginning of subsequent systems), and/or end of the line. Click the `...` button to control the formatting and positioning of each text type within the line.

3. The **Hook** setting lets you create perpendicular or 45° angles at the ends of the line.

4. Exiting the Line Properties dialog, you can set the thickness of the line in the Inspector, where you can also choose the **Line style** (e.g., continuous, dashed, dotted).

5. To save your result back into the palettes, see Custom palette.

See also Line properties.

Copying lines

Once applied to the score, lines cannot be copied using the usual copy and paste procedures. However, you can duplicate lines within a score: press `Ctrl+Shift` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift`), click on the line and drag it to the desired location.

Extended ornament lines

To add an accidental to an extended ornament, such as a trill line, select the line and double-click a symbol from the Accidentals palette.

External links

- Piano pedal marks at Wikipedia.
- Guitar Barre at Wikipedia.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Measure rests

Full measure rest

When an entire measure is devoid of notes, a full measure (full bar) rest is used. A full measure rest looks like a whole note (semi-breve) rest, except it is centered in the middle of a measure, and instead of always being equal to four quarter beats it represents whatever the length of the measure is in the current time signature.

To create a full measure rest, select a measure and press `Del`. All notes and rests in this measure are then replaced by a full measure rest.
Note: To create a full measure rest for measures with custom durations select a measure and press `Ctrl+Shift+Del`.

Multimeasure rest

Multimeasure (multi-bar) rests indicate a long duration of silence for an instrument and are frequently used in ensemble sheet music. They are automatically interrupted at important points, such as double barlines, rehearsal marks, key- or time signatures, etc.

The number above the multimeasure rest indicates the number of measures that the rest lasts for.

Instructions

Press M on your keyboard to turn multimeasure rests on or off.

Alternatively:

1. From the menu, choose Style → General...
2. Click on the "Score" tab, if it is not already selected
3. Add a check mark next to "Create multimeasure rests"

Limitations

The style option automatically combines empty measures into multimeasure rests throughout the score. Therefore, it is recommended that you enter all your notes first and then turn on multimeasure rests afterward.

Break multimeasure rest

See also: Measure operations: Break multimeasure rest

You may want to have a multimeasure rest divided into two multimeasure rests.

This option should be checked before turning on the "Create multimeasure rests" option in Style → General..., in the "Score" tab.
Select the first measure where you want the second multimeasure rest to start, and do a right-click Measure Properties → Break multimeasure rest.

Note that multimeasure rests are interrupted if there is a rehearsal mark (not a simple text), section break, key or time signature change, or double barline.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Octave lines

Octave (Ottava) lines are used to indicate that a section of music is to be played one or more octaves above or below written pitch: The line may be dotted or solid. Ottavas are available in the **Lines** palette of the Basic and Advanced workspaces.

8⎤ or 8va⎤ : Play one octave above written pitch (Treble clef only)

8⎦ or 8vb⎦ : Play one octave below written pitch (Bass clef only)

8va/8vb lines are particularly common in piano scores, though they are sometimes used in other instrumental music.[1] 15ma (2 octaves above) and 15mb (2 octaves below) are also occasionally used.
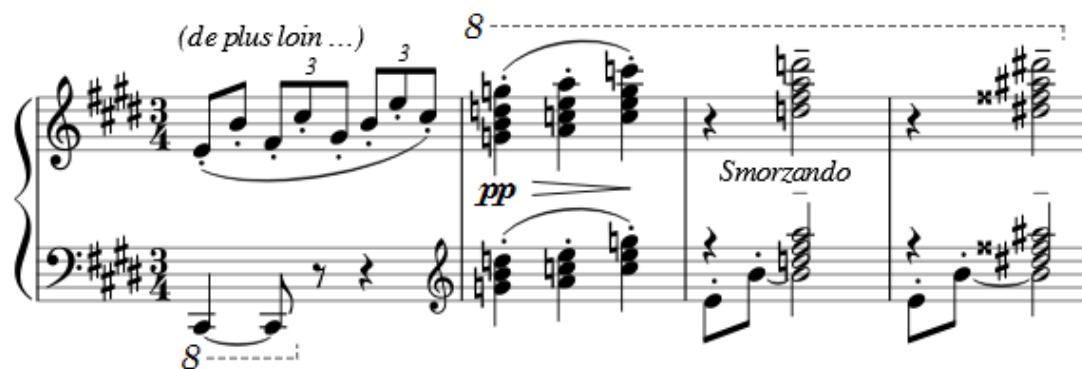
(*Debussy. Études, Book II, X*)

Apply an octave line

Use one of the following:

- Select a range of notes, then double click an octave line from a palette.
- Select one or more measures, then double click an octave line from a palette.
- Click on a note, then double-click an octave line from the palette (extends line from selected note to end of bar).
- Drag an octave line from a palette onto a note (extends line from selected note to end of bar).

Change length

To extend or reduce the octave line (while maintaining correct playback):

1. If you are in `note input mode` then press `Esc`

2. Double click the line that you want to change to enter `edit mode`

3. Move the handles using the following shortcuts:

   - `Shift+→` to move the anchor right by one note (or measure)
   - `Shift+←` to move the anchor left by one note (or measure)

To make adjustments in length without changing playback properties, drag the handles with the mouse or use the following shortcuts:

- `→` to move the handle right by 0.1**sp** (1 sp = one staff space = the distance between two staff lines).
- `←` to move the handle left 0.1 sp.
- `Ctrl+→` (Mac: `Cmd+→`) to move the handle right one sp.
- `Ctrl+←` (Mac: `Cmd+→`) to move the handle left one sp.

Custom lines

You can customize an octave line, including text if required, by editing it on the score page: Right-click on the line then chose `Line Properties`.... Save the result by dragging and dropping to a palette in your custom workspace while holding down `Ctrl+Shift` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift`).

External links

- Octave at Wikipedia

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1. Gerou/Lusk. *Essential Dictionary of Music Notation* (Internet Archive). ↵

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Repeats and jumps

The start and end of simple repeats can be defined by setting appropriate barlines. For instructions on first and second ending measures, see Volta.

Playback

To hear repeats during playback, make sure the "Play Repeats" ⦂‖ button on the toolbar is selected. Likewise, you can turn off repeats during playback by deselecting the button.

In the last measure of a repeat, you can set the property "Repeat count" to define the number of played repeats.

Repeat symbols and text

Text and symbols related to repeats are located in the Repeats palette. This palette contains symbols for measure repeat, segno and coda. It also contains 'D.S.', 'D.C.', 'To Coda', and Fine text:

∕.	𝄋
§	⊕
⊞	Fine
To Coda	D.C.
D.C. al Fine	D.C. al Coda
D.S. al Coda	D.S. al Fine
D.S.	

To add a repeat symbol to the score use either of the following:

- Drag the repeat symbol from the palette *onto* (not above) the desired measure (so the measure changes color), then drop
- Select a measure, then double-click the desired repeat symbol in the palette.

The object will appear *above* that measure in your score.

Jumps

Jumps generally consist of three parts:

- Jump to *tag*
- Play up to *tag*
- Continue at *tag*

Tags are names you give to certain measure positions. Two tags ("start", "end") denote the start and end of the score and don't need to get added explicitly. Tags you add explicitly are called markers. Jumps transfer playback to markers.

Markers

Markers are the places refered to by the jumps, in addition to the implict 'start' and 'end' there are:

- Segno (tag: *segno*)
- Segno Variation (tag: *varsegno*)
- Coda (tag: *codab*)
- Coda Variation (tag: *varcoda*)
- Fine (tag: *fine*)
- To Coda (tag: *coda*)

Examples

At the jump instruction *Da Capo* the playback jumps to the start (to the implicit *start* tag) and plays the entire score again (up to the implicit *end* tag).

At the jump instruction *Da Capo al Fine* the playback jumps to the start (to the implicit *start* tag) and plays the score up to the Fine (the *fine* tag).

Dal Segno al Fine (or *D.S. al Fine*) jumps to the Segno symbol (the *segno* tag) and then plays up to the Fine (the *fine* tag)

Dal Segno al Coda (or *D.S. al Coda*) jumps to the Segno symbol (the *segno* tag) and then plays up to the To Coda (the *coda* tag). Playback then continues at Coda symbol (the *codab* tag).

The properties (i.e. the tag names) of jumps can be set via a right-click on the element or via the Inspector. Marker tags can only be modified using the Inspector. You need to modify them if using multiple jumps and markers.

See also

- Volta

External links

- MuseScore in Minutes: Repeats and Endings, part 2 (video tutorial)
- How to separate a coda from the rest of the score (MuseScore HowTo)

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Slurs

A **slur** is a curved line between two or more notes that indicates they are to be played without separation. If you mean to join two notes of the same pitch, see Ties.

A slur can be created from the lines palette, but the methods below are recommended.

First method

1. Make sure you are not in `note input mode` and select the first note that you want the slur to cover:
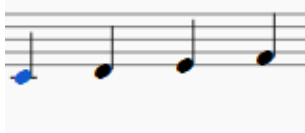
2. `s` creates a slur:

3. `Shift+Right` extends the slur to the next note:

4. `x` flips the slur direction:

5. `Esc` ends `edit mode`:
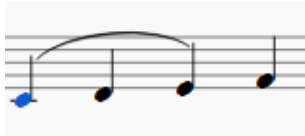
Second method

1. Make sure you are not in `note input mode`
2. Select the note where you want the slur to start

3. Hold down `ctrl` (⌘ on a Mac) and select the last note that you want the slur to cover
4. Press `s`

Note: If you `shift`-select the last note, slurs will be added to **all** <u>voices</u> in the range after step 4.

Third method

1. While in <u>`note input mode`</u>, type in the first note in the slurred section
2. Hit `s` to begin the slurred section
3. Type in the remaining notes in the slurred section
4. Hit `s` to end the slurred section

Adjustments

To adjust the size and shape of a slur, double-click it to enter <u>`edit mode`</u> (or use `Ctrl+E`, or right-click and select "Edit Element"). The two outer handles adjust the start and end of the slur, whilst the three handles on the curve adjust the contour. The middle handle on the straight line is used to move the whole slur up/down/left/right. The `Tab` key can be used to move from handle to handle.

For fine adjustments, click on any of the handles (displayed in the images for steps 2-4 above) and move them with the keyboard arrow keys. Larger adjustments can be made by dragging the handles with a mouse or other input device (or use `Ctrl+Arrow`).

The following shortcuts can be used to move the left and right handles from note to note:

- `Shift+→` Move to next note.
- `Shift+←` Move to previous note.
- `Shift+↑` Move to lower voice (voice 2 to voice 1 etc.).
- `Shift+↓` Move to higher voice (voice 1 to voice 2 etc.).

A slur can span several systems and pages. The start and end of a slur is anchored to a note/chord or rest. If the notes are repositioned due to changes in the layout, stretch or style, the slur also moves and adjusts in size.

This example shows a slur spanning from the bass to the treble clef. Using the mouse, select the first note of the slur, hold down `ctrl` (Mac: ⌘) and select the last note for the slur, and press `s` to add the slur.

`x` flips the direction of a selected slur.

Dotted slurs

Dotted slurs are sometimes used in songs where the presence of a slur varies between stanzas. Dotted slurs are also used to indicate an editor's suggestion (as opposed to the composer's original markings). To change an existing slur into a dotted or dashed slur, select it and then in Inspector (`F8`) change `Line type` from `Continuous` to `Dotted` or `Dashed`.

See also

- <u>Tie</u>
- <u>Edit mode</u>
- <u>Note input</u>

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Tablature

Music for fretted, stringed instruments is commonly notated using **tablature**, also known as **tab**, which provides a visual representation of the strings and fret numbers:
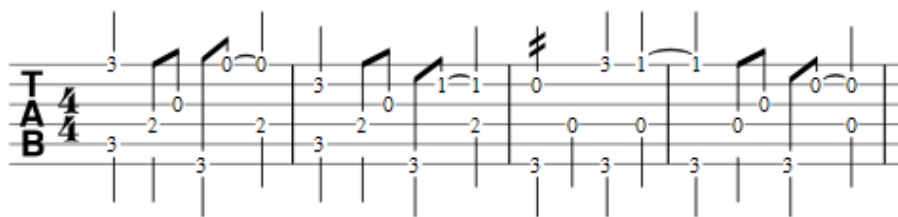
Tablature can also be combined with traditional staff notation:

Edit tablature properties

When a tablature staff is created in the New Score wizard it defaults to the most common tuning of the instrument in question—in the case of a guitar, for example, it assumes standard tuning of E2, A2, D3, G3, B3, E4. To alter the tuning—or any other tablature properties—right-click on the staff (in the score) and select **Staff Properties...** See → below for details.

From **Staff Properties** you can access **Advanced Style Properties**, where detailed adjustments can be made to the tablature display.

Create a new tablature staff

If you wish to create tablature as part of a new score, use the New Score Wizard. If you want to add tablature to an existing score, use the Instruments dialog. Or, alternatively, you can convert an existing standard staff. See below for details.

With the New Score wizard

To create tablature in a new score (for combined staff/tablature systems see →below):

1. Select `File → New` or use the shortcut `Ctrl + N` (Mac: `Cmd+N`) to open the **New Score wizard**.
2. Enter the score details (optional). Click `Next`.
3. In the **Select template file** page, click on Choose Instruments.

4. In the **Instruments** page, select one (or more) tablature options under "Plucked strings" in the left-hand column (see image below). Then click `Add`.
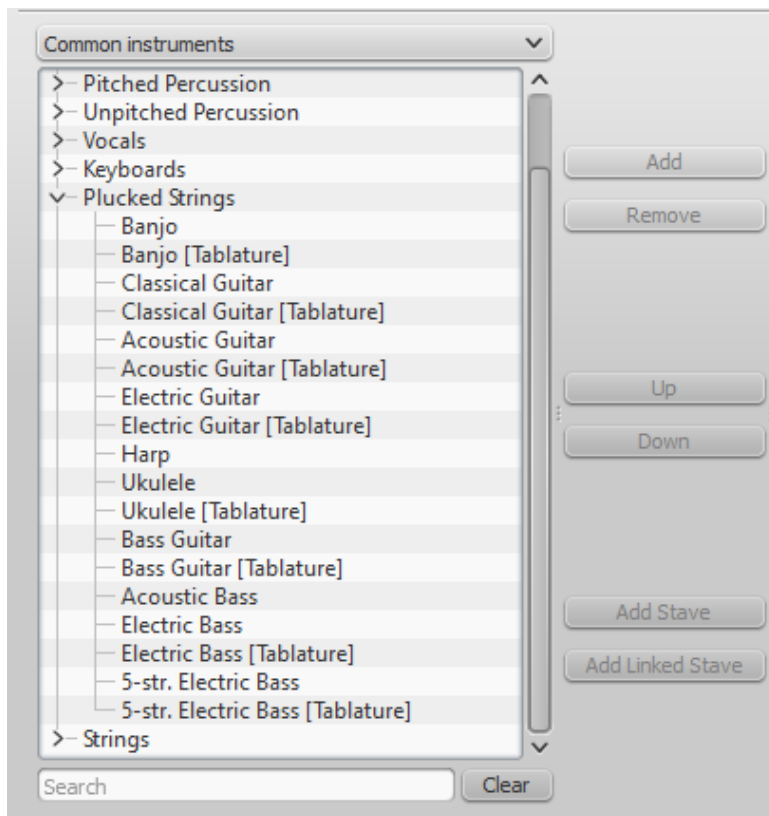
Note: You can use the dropdown list above the Instrument list to change the category displayed. Alternately you can search for the instrument using the "Search" field below the Instrument list.

5. Complete the rest of the New Score Wizard.

If the desired tablature is not available in the **Choose Instrument** list:

1. Select an existing "Plucked strings" tablature staff (in step 4 above).
2. Press `Add` to move it to the right-hand column.
3. Check the drop-down menu to the right of the newly-added instrument for the most suitable Tab option, if any.
4. Complete the rest of the New Score wizard and exit.
5. Modify the number of strings and tuning of the tablature, if needed, in the Staff properties window (see → below).
6. Change the Instrument name in Staff Properties, if required.

This allows you to create tablature for any chromatically-fretted instrument.

With the Instruments dialog

To add a single tablature staff to an existing score (for combined staff/tab system see →below):

1. Open the instruments editor (menu `Edit` → `Instruments...` or `I` key).
2. Add the tab staff as described in Instruments.

By changing staff type

To convert an existing standard staff to tablature, or tablature to a standard staff:

1. Right click on the staff and select `Staff Properties`…. If "Instrument" is already set to a plucked-strings type, then exit staff properties and go to step 4.
2. If "Instrument" is not a plucked-strings type, click on `Change instrument` and select an appropriate instrument from "Plucked strings."
3. Click on `OK` twice to exit staff properties.
4. Open the instrument editor from the score page (menu `Edit` → `Instruments...` or `I` key).
5. Click on the staff in the right-hand column and change the "Staff type" to the desired option.
6. Click `OK` to exit the Instrument editor and return to the score page.

Note: If you subsequently need to make further adjustments to the staff (e.g. tuning, number of

lines/strings etc.), right click on the staff and select `Staff Properties....`

Alternative version (using just the "Staff properties" dialog):

1. Right click on the staff and select `Staff Properties....`
2. If the Instrument displayed *is* in the "Plucked strings" category, go to step 4.
3. If the Instrument displayed is *not* in the "Plucked strings" category, click `Change instrument` and select an appropriate instrument from "Plucked strings". Click on `OK`.
4. Click `Advanced Style Properties...`, change "Template" to the desired option and press `< Reset to Template`.
5. Click `OK` twice to close the **Staff Properties** dialog box..

Note: Other adjustments to the staff (e.g. tuning, number of lines/strings etc.), can also be made in the `Staff Properties` dialog.

Change string tuning

In MuseScore, plucked-string instrument staves (pitched and tablature) are set by default to the most commonly-used string tunings. You can view the tuning by right-clicking on a staff in the score, selecting `Staff Properties...`, and pressing `Edit String Data`.

To change the string tuning of a staff:

1. Right-click on an empty spot in a measure of a staff whose tuning you want to change.

2. Select `Staff Properties....`
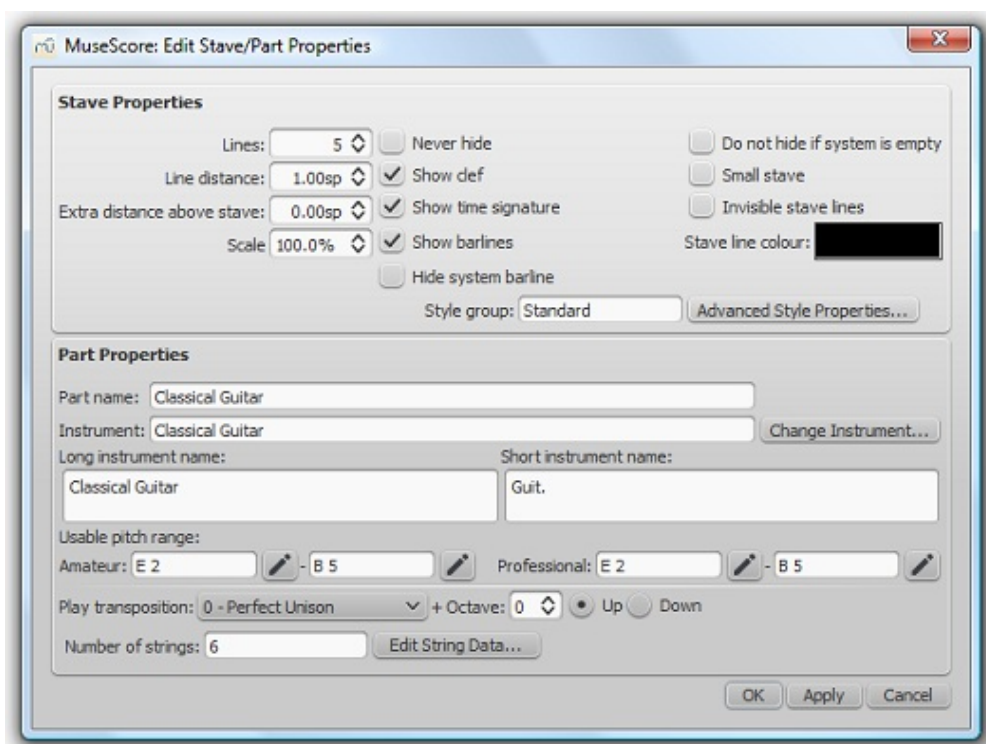
3. Press the `Edit String Data...` button at the bottom of the dialog box (only shown if instrument is defined as "plucked strings"). The **String Data** dialog opens:
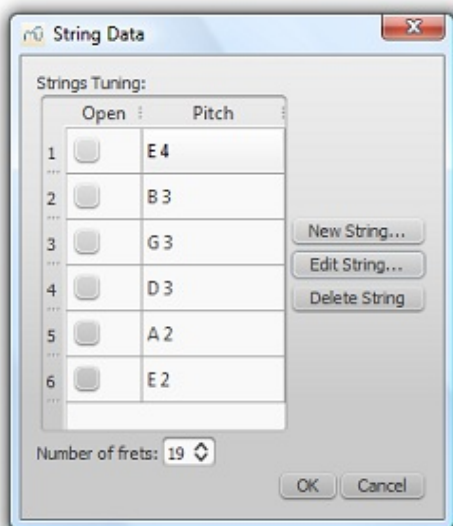
Here, you have a number of options:

- ○ **Retune an existing string**
  1. Click on a string pitch and select `Edit String...`. Or, alternatively, just double-click the string.
  2. Select a new pitch in the **Note Selection** box and click `OK`. Or, alternatively, just double-click the new pitch.

Notes: If tuning is changed when the tablature for that instrument already contains some notes, fret marks will be adjusted to produce the same notes with the new tuning (if possible).

Any change you make to the string tuning will only affect that particular instrument for that particular score, and will not alter any program default or built-in definition.

- ○ **Add a new string**
  1. Click on a string pitch and select `New String...`.
  2. Select the new pitch and press `OK`. Or, alternatively, just double-click the new pitch.

Note: The new string is inserted *below* the selected string.

- ○ **Delete a string**. Click on a string pitch and select `Delete String`.

Note: After adding or deleting a tablature string you will need to adjust the number of lines in the <u>Advanced style properties</u> dialog.

- ○ **Mark a string as "Open"**. Check one or more boxes in the "Open" column. This feature is used to designate unfretted strings – as in the Lute.

- ○ **Change number of instrument frets**. Select or enter a new number in the **Number of frets**" spin box. This sets the maximum fret number which can be entered on a string.

4. Click `OK` to close the "**String Data**" dialog box.

5. Click `OK` to close the **"Staff/Part Edit Properties"** dialog box.

Combine pitched staff with tablature

Plucked-string instruments, such as the guitar, are commonly notated using both a pitched staff and a tablature (TAB) staff. The pitched staff displays conventional music notation while the associated tablature shows the strings and fret numbers corresponding to the notes. The paired staves can be either **linked** or **unlinked**:

1. **Linked Staves**: The associated staves are said to be **linked** if changes in one staff are immediately applied to the other staff (mutual translation).

2. **Unlinked Staves**: The staves are said to be **unlinked** if they can be edited independently of one another. To transfer music notation from one staff to the other, <u>select</u> the desired range and <u>copy and paste</u> it into the other staff.

Note: Occasionally, you may find *numbers marked red* in the tablature. This means that a *fret mark* cannot be displayed because it clashes with an existing one. You can resolve this by moving and adjusting existing fret numbers (see Editing existing notes). However, a fretmark clash on the lowest line does not require any adjustment—this is "by design" and the red mark will not appear on any printed copy.

Create a staff/tablature pair with the New Score wizard

If you want to create a staff/tablature system (linked or unlinked) from new:

1. Select `File → New` or use the shortcut `Ctrl + N` (Mac: `Cmd+N`) to open the New Score wizard.
2. Enter the score details (optional). Click `Next`.
3. In the **Select template file** page, click on Choose Instruments.
4. In the **Instruments** page, select a pitched staff in the "Plucked strings" section of the left-hand column. Then click `Add`.
5. Select the newly-created staff in the right-hand column and chose one of two options:
   ○ Click `Add Linked Staff` to create a **linked** staff/tab pair
   ○ Click `Add Staff` to create an **unlinked** staff/tab pair
6. Change **Staff type** on the far right if required (more detailed display options are available by right-clicking on the tablature staff and selecting `Staff Properties… → Advanced Style Properties`).
7. Complete the rest of the New Score Wizard, or click `Finish`

Note: To create unlinked staves with *separate* mixer channels, instead of "Step 5" (above), select a Tablature staff in the left-hand column and click `Add`. Then continue with steps 6 and 7.

Create a staff/tablature pair from an existing staff

To add tablature to a plucked-string staff in the score (or vice versa):

1. Open the instrument editor (menu `Edit → Instruments...` or `I` key)
2. Select the staff you want to add to in the right-hand column.
3. Chose one of two options:
   ○ Click `Add Linked Staff` to create a **linked** staff/tab pair
   ○ Click `Add Staff` to create an **unlinked** staff/tab pair
4. Change **Staff type** on the far right if required (more detailed display options are available by right-clicking on the tablature staff and selecting `Staff Properties… → Advanced Style Properties...`).
5. Use `Up` to change staff position, if needed.
6. Click `OK`.

Notes: To create unlinked staves with *separate* mixer channels, instead of "Step 3" (above), select an appropriate staff in the left-hand column and click `Add`. Then continue with steps 4–6.

Change a linked staff/tablature pair to unlinked (or vice-versa)

(a) If you want to change a *linked* staff/tablature system in the score to *unlinked*:

1. Open the instrument editor from the score page (menu `Edit → Instruments...` or `I` key)
2. Click on the *pitched staff* in the right-hand column and click `Add staff`.
3. Change **Staff type** (on the far right) of the newly-created tab staff to the correct option. If the previous staff/tablature pair was blank, go to step 5. If there is existing music notation in the score, continue with step 4.
4. Click `OK` to return to the score. Copy and paste any notation from the linked to the unlinked tablature staff. Return to the Instrument editor.
5. Click on the linked tablature staff on the right, click `Remove` then `OK`.

(b) If you want to change an *unlinked* staff/tablature system in the score to *linked*:

1. Open the instrument editor from the score page (menu `Edit → Instruments...` or `I` key)
2. Click on the *pitched staff* in the right-hand column and click `Add linked staff`.
3. Change **Staff type** (on the far right) of the newly-created tab staff to the correct option.
4. Select the unlinked tablature staff and click `Remove`, then `OK`.

Inputting new notes

Keyboard

- First, ensure that you are not in note-input mode. Select the measure or existing note from which you want to begin note entry.
- Switch to note input mode (`N`): a short 'blue rectangle' appears around one tablature string: this is the *current string*.
- Select the duration of the note or rest that you wish to enter (see below).
- Press the up/down arrow keys to move the cursor to the desired string. Use the left/right arrow keys to navigate through the score.
- Press `0` to `9` to enter a fret mark from 0 to 9 on the current string; to enter numbers with several digits press each digit in sequence. Keys `A` to `L` (skipping `I`) can also be used: convenient when working in French tablature. **Note**: You cannot enter a number higher than the maximum fret number.
- You can also correct the fret number with `Alt+Shift+↑` or `Alt+Shift+↓`.
- Press `;` (semicolon) to enter a rest of the selected duration.
- You can enter notes in different voices if required—just as you would in a standard staff.

Mouse

- Enter note input mode and select the note or rest duration (see below)
- Click on a string to create a note there. Notes are initially created on fret 0 (or *a* for French tablatures): to correct, type in the right number from the keyboard.
- You can also correct the fret number with `Alt+Shift+↑` or `Alt+Shift+↓`.
- You can enter notes in different voices if required—just as you would in a standard staff.

Selecting note duration

In note input mode, you can use any of the following methods to set note duration in tablature:

- `Shift+1` to `Shift+9` (availability of these shortcuts may depend on the platform and/or keyboard layout)
- `NumPad 1` to `Numpad 9` (if a numeric keypad exists and `NumLock` is on)
- the input tool bar at the top of the screen
- `Q` to decrease the selected value and `W` to increase it

Editing existing notes

While NOT in note input mode, three key combinations can be used to change a fret mark:

- `↑` / `↓` increases/decreases the fret number without changing the string (ranging from 0 to the number of frets defined in the "**Edit String Data**" dialog box).
- `Alt+Shift+↑` / `↓` increases/decreases the fret number, but moves the note to a different string where possible to maintain it in the open position (frets 0–4).
- `Ctrl+↑` / `↓` moves the selected note to upper/lower string (if the string is free and can produce that note).
- `Shift+X` toggles ghost noteheads on/off.

Summary of keys

Note input mode

Type:	*to get:*
`↑`	Select above string as current.
`↓`	Select below string as current.
`Shift+1` to `Shift+9`	Select a duration (128th note to longa)
`NumPad 1` to `NumPad 9`	Select a duration (128th note to longa)
`Q`	Decrease current input duration.
`W`	Increase current input duration.
`0` to `9`	Enter a fret digit / letter.

Type:	to get:
Type a fret digit / letter (t excluded).	
`Alt+Shift+↑`	Increase current fret mark.
`Alt+Shift+↓`	Decrease current fret mark.
`;` (semicolon)	Enter a rest

Normal mode

Type:	to get:
`0` to `9`	Change <u>duration</u> of selected note or rest (128th note to longa)
`Alt+Shift+↑`	Increase the pitch of the selected note (MuseScore chooses the string).
`↑`	Increase the pitch without changing string.
`Alt+Shift+↓`	Decrease the pitch of the selected note (MuseScore chooses the string).
`↓`	Decrease the pitch without changing string.
`Ctrl+↑`	Move note to above string, keeping the pitch.
`Ctrl+↓`	Move note to below string, keeping the pitch.
`Shift+X`	Toggle the ghost note head on/off.

External links

- <u>Video tutorial: MuseScore in Minutes: Lesson 7 - Tablature and Drum Notation</u>

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Ties

A **tie** is a curved line between two notes of the *same* pitch, indicating that they are to be played as one note with a combined duration (see <u>external links</u> below). Ties are normally created between adjacent notes in the same <u>voice</u>, but MuseScore also supports ties between non-adjacent notes and between notes in different <u>voices</u>.

In <u>note-input mode</u>, if you specify a tie immediately after entering a note or chord, the program automatically generates the correct destination notes to go with the ties. Or, you can simply create ties "after the fact," between existing notes.

Note: Ties should not be confused with <u>slurs</u>. Slurs can look similar, but they will not be rendered correctly in playback.

Tie notes together

1. Press `Esc` to make sure you are not in note input mode.
2. Click on a note, or use `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) + click to select more than one note.

3. Press `+` or the tie button, .

.

Ties will be created between the selected note(s) and the following note(s) of the same pitch.

Tie chords together

To tie all the notes in a chord at once, either:

- Click on the stem of the chord, or
- Hold down `shift` and click on any note in the chord.

Then press `+` or the tie button . Ties will be created between all the notes in the selected chord and the following notes of the same pitches.

Add tied notes in note input mode

To create a single note tie during `note input`:

1. Select a single note (one that is not part of a chord).
2. Select a new note duration for the following note, if required (but see "Note" below).
3. Press `+` or the tie button, .

Note: This shortcut works, as described above, only if there is no chord following the selected note. If there is, then the duration is ignored and the tied note is added instead to the following chord.

Add a tied chord in note input mode

1. Make sure one note is selected *in a chord*.
2. Select a new note duration for the following chord, if required (but see "Note" below).
3. Press `+` or the tie button, .

Note: This shortcut works, as described above, only if there is no chord following the selected note. If there is, then the duration is ignored and the tied notes are added instead to the following chord.

Tied unison notes

If the chords to be tied contain unison notes the best way to ensure correct notation is:

1. Assign each note of a unison pair to a separate voice.
2. Ensure that one of the unison pairs is set to "stemless" (to remove the duplicate stem and tail).
3. Apply the ties voice by voice. Make adjustments for position, length as required.

Flip a tie

`x` flips the direction of a selected tie, from above the note to below the note, or vice-versa.

See also

Slur

External links

- Ties (music) at Wikipedia

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Time signatures

Time signatures are available in the main palette sidebar (see<u>Palette</u> for general information on working with palettes in MuseScore).
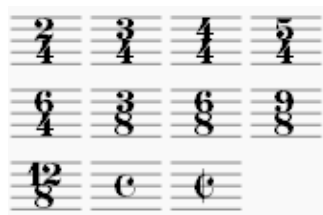
Add a time signature to a score

To **add** a time signature, use any of the following methods:

- Drag and drop a time signature from a palette onto a space in a measure.
- Select a measure and then double-click a time signature in a palette.
- Select any note or rest and double-click a time signature in a palette.

The time signature will appear at the beginning of the measure in question.

To **replace** a time signature, use any of the following methods:

- Drag and drop a time signature onto an existing time signature.
- Select a time signature in the score, then double-click a time signature in a Palette.

Delete a time signature

To delete a time signature in the score, select it and press`Del`.

Create your own time signature

If the time signature you require is not available in the Time Signatures palette of a<u>workspace</u>, you can create it in the Time Signatures section of the <u>Master Palette</u>: Press `Shift+T` to open it.

To create a new time signature, select an existing one in the Master Palette, then edit the various parameters (numerator, denominator, text, beaming) in the `Create Time Signature` panel. To add the newly-created time signature to the list, press the `Add` button. Once added, you can drag and drop it to the desired score location. To delete a time signature in the Master Palette, right-click on it and select "`Clear`".

You can transfer a time signature from the Master Palette to a customized<u>workspace</u> by dragging and dropping it onto a <u>Palette</u> in the workspace.

Additive (composite) meters

Additive (or composite) time signatures are sometimes used to clarify the division of beats within a measure. The visible time signature (numbers separated by a plus sign) is entered in the Text field in the `Create Time Signature` panel. e.g.:

Change default beaming

To make an overall adjustment to the way that notes are beamed in part or all of the score, right-click on the relevant time signature (in the score) and select "Time Signature Properties:"

This allows you to independently adjust the beaming patterns for 1/8, 1/16 and 1/32 notes in the *Note*

Groups" panel.

To break a beam, click on the note following it. To reset the beam, click in the same place. Note: This method only works if *all* secondary (or sub) beams are present at the intended location – if this is not the case then use the icons instead (see below). The `Reset` button cancels any changes made in that session.

You can also make additional changes to the beaming patterns by dragging one of the icons ♪ ⊤ ⊤ ⊤ (at the bottom left of the window) onto a note in the "*Note Groups*" panel:

- ♫ Start beam at this note.

- ♩ Do not end beam at this note.

- ♩ 1/8th note beam to left of this note.

- ♩ 1/16 note beam to left of this note.

Different duration from time signature: Pickup measures (Anacrusis) and Cadenzas

There are occasions when the actual duration of a measure is different from the duration specified by the time signature. Pickup measures and Cadenzas are a common example. To change the actual duration of a measure without displaying a different time signature, see Measure operations: Properties, Measure duration.

Local time signatures

Time signatures can be different for different staves. An example here is Bach's 26. Goldberg Variation:

MuseScore has the concept of a global time signature and an actual (local) time signature. To change the global time signature drag and drop a palette object to a staff. The global time signature is used to count beats (as shown in the status line) and is the reference for tempo markings. The global time signature is the same for all staves and normally identical to the actual time signature.

The actual time signature is set in the time signature property dialog and can deviate from the global time signature for every staff (upper staff 18/16 in the example).

The text of the time signature can be set independent of the actual values.

A local time signature is set by dropping a time signature symbol while holding the `ctrl` key (Mac: `Cmd`). The local time signature is set only for one staff. A global time signature is replicated for all staves.

Time signature changes and breaks

Multimeasure rests are interrupted when a time signature change occurs. Also, a section break will prevent a courtesy time signature being shown at the end of the previous measure.

See also

* Key signature

External links

* Additive meters at Wikipedia.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Transposition

Transposition moves a selection of notes higher, or lower on the staff. MuseScore supports several kinds of transposition, including transposing instruments.
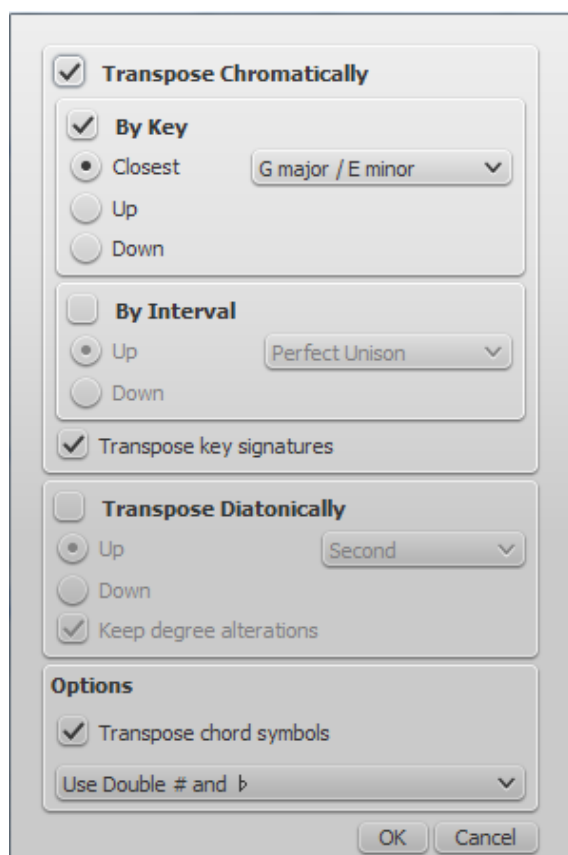
(See below for details)

Chromatic transposition, by key

Chromatic transposition moves selected notes up or down in semitone increments. From the main menu, choose `Notes → Transpose...`, select which key signature to transpose - closest, up or down. If no selection is made, transposition applies to the whole score.

Chromatic transposition, by interval

Chromatic transposition moves selected notes up or down in semitone increments. From the main menu, choose `Notes → Transpose....` Tick "By Interval", select the interval from the popup menus and whether to transpose up or down. If no selection is made, transposition applies to the whole score.

You can also transpose a selection of notes using the arrow keys (↑ or ↓).

Diatonic transposition

Diatonic transposition (also known as scalar transposition) moves notes up, or down the current scale according to the key signature. You can move a single note by dragging it up, or down. You can move a selection of multiple notes with `Ctrl` + click and drag.

Transposition shortcuts

`F2` (Mac: `fn+F2`): Transpose score and key signature UP one semitone.
`Shift+F2` (Mac: `Shift+fn+F2`): Transpose score and key signature DOWN one semitone.
`Ctrl+↑` (Mac: `Cmd+↑`): Transpose selection UP one octave.
`Ctrl+↓` (Mac: `Cmd+↓`): Transpose selection DOWN one octave.

You can also use `Edit → Preferences → Shortcuts` to set a convenient keyboard shortcut to open the Transpose dialog box.

Transposing instruments

Certain instruments such as B-flat trumpet or E-flat alto sax are known as transposing instruments. These instruments sound lower, or higher than their written pitch. MuseScore has built-in support for transposing instruments.

The `Concert Pitch` button and `Notes → Concert Pitch` from the main menu lets you switch between concert pitch and transposing pitch. Concert pitch helps composers and arrangers because it displays every instrument in the same key, so the notes on the staff match their sounding pitches. When concert pitch is turned off, the notes on some instrument staves may not match their sounding pitches, but they are ready for an instrumentalist to play from. If you use concert pitch during your session, remember to turn off concert pitch before printing the parts.

Change staff transposition

Instrument transpositions are already set up in MuseScore. However, if you want a rare instrument or transposition that is not available in MuseScore, you may need to edit the instrument transposition manually. Right-click an empty part of the instrument staff and choose `Staff Properties....` At the bottom of the Staff Properties window, you can select the interval of transposition, any octave shifts, and whether the interval is "Up" (sounds higher than written) or "Down" (sounds lower than written).

You can also use the `Change Instrument…` button in the Staff Properties window to automatically change the transposition to that of a different standard instrument.

External links

- How to transpose (MuseScore How-To)
- Concert pitch or not?? (forum discussion)

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Tremolo

Tremolo is the rapid repetition of one note, or a rapid alternation between two notes or chords. It is indicated by strokes through the stems of the notes or chords. If the tremolo is between two, the bars are drawn between them. Tremolo symbols are also used to notate drum rolls.

The tremolo palette in the advanced workspace contains separate symbols for one note tremolos (shown with stems below) and for two note tremolos (shown with no stem below).
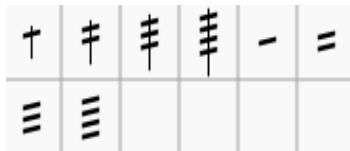
To add tremolo to a single note, select the note head and double-click the desired symbol in the tremolo palette.

In a two note tremolo, every note has the value of the whole tremolo duration. To enter a tremolo with the duration of a half note (minim), enter two normal quarter notes (crotchets), and after applying a tremolo symbol to the first note, the note values automatically double to half notes.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Tuplets

Tuplets are used to write rhythms beyond the beat divisions usually permitted by the time signature. For example, a sixteenth note **triplet** will divide an eighth note beat into three sixteenth notes instead of two:

In 6/8 time, an eighth note **duplet** will divide a dotted quarter note into two eighth notes instead of three:

Create a tuplet

The exact method of tuplet entry depends on whether you are starting off in note input mode or "**normal mode**" (in the latter you have notes or rests selected in the score but are *not* in note-input mode). We'll start off with a simple example: the creation of an eighth note triplet.

Create a triplet in normal mode

1. Select a note or rest that specifies the full duration of the desired triplet group. In the case of an eight note triplet, you will need to select a quarter note or rest—as in the example below:

2. From the main menu, choose `Notes → Tuplets → Triplet`, or press `Ctrl+3` (Mac: ⌘+3). This will give the following result:

3. The program automatically changes to note-input mode and selects the most appropriate duration—in this example an eighth note. Now enter the desired series of notes/rests. For example:

Create a triplet in note input mode

1. Ensure you are in note input mode (press `N`).
2. Navigate to the note/rest (or blank measure) where you want the triplet to start (use the left/right arrow keys as required).
3. Select a final duration for the whole triplet group. In the case of an eighth note triplet, click on the quarter note in the note input toolbar (or press `5` on the keyboard).
4. From the main menu, choose `Notes → Tuplets → Triplet`, or press `Ctrl+3` (Mac: ⌘+3). This creates a triplet number/bracket and appropriately divides the original note/rest (see image above).
5. The program automatically selects the most appropriate duration—in this example an eighth note—allowing you to immediately start entering the desired series of notes/rests.

Create other tuplets

Most other tuplets can be entered similarly, by substituting the general **create tuplet** command – `Ctrl+2–9` (Mac users `Cmd+2–9`) – in the above series of steps: this will create tuplets ranging from a duplet (2) to a nonuplet (9). For more complex cases, see Custom tuplets (below).

Custom tuplets

To create other tuplets than the default options (e.g., 13 sixteenth notes in the space of one quarter note), first enter and select a note or rest equaling the total duration of the tuplet, go to `Notes → Tuplets → Other...`, and enter the number of notes you want to appear relative to the number of notes you would normally expect to appear (e.g., 13/4 for thirteen sixteenth notes in the space of the selected quarter note).
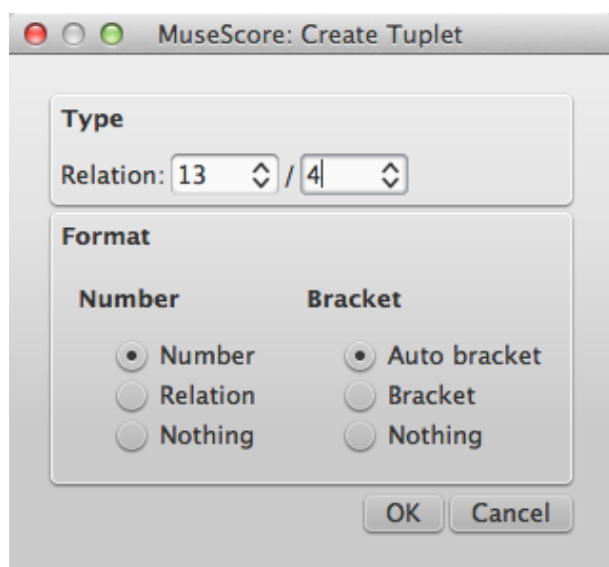
Delete a tuplet

To delete any tuplet, select the number/bracket and press `Del`.

Settings

To customize the appearance of a single tuplet, you can change its properties in the Inspector. You can also change the general style for all tuplets in a score.

Inspector

To change the display properties of a tuplet, select the tuplet number, or bracket, and use the Inspector.
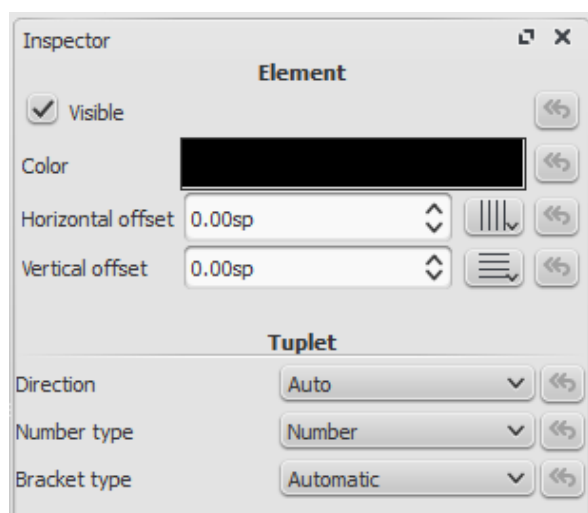
If neither the number nor the bracket is shown, select a note from the tuplet, then use the `Tuplet` button in the Inspector to see the above dialog.
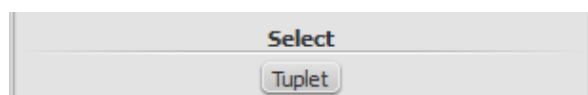
For `Direction`, choose `Auto` to place the bracket on the same side of the note heads as the stem, or beam. Choose `Up`, or `Down` to explicitly place the bracket above or below the note heads, respectively,

regardless of the stem, or beam position.

For `Number type`, choose `Number` to show an integer, `Relation` to show a ratio of two integers, or `Nothing` to show no number at all.
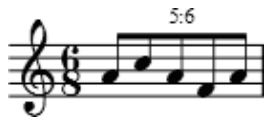
For `Bracket type`, choose `Automatic` to hide the bracket for beamed notes and show the bracket if the tuplet includes unbeamed notes or rests. Choose `Bracket`, or `Nothing` to explicitly show, or hide the bracket, respectively.

Style

Go to `Style → General...` and select `Tuplets`. It enables you to change all tuplet properties.
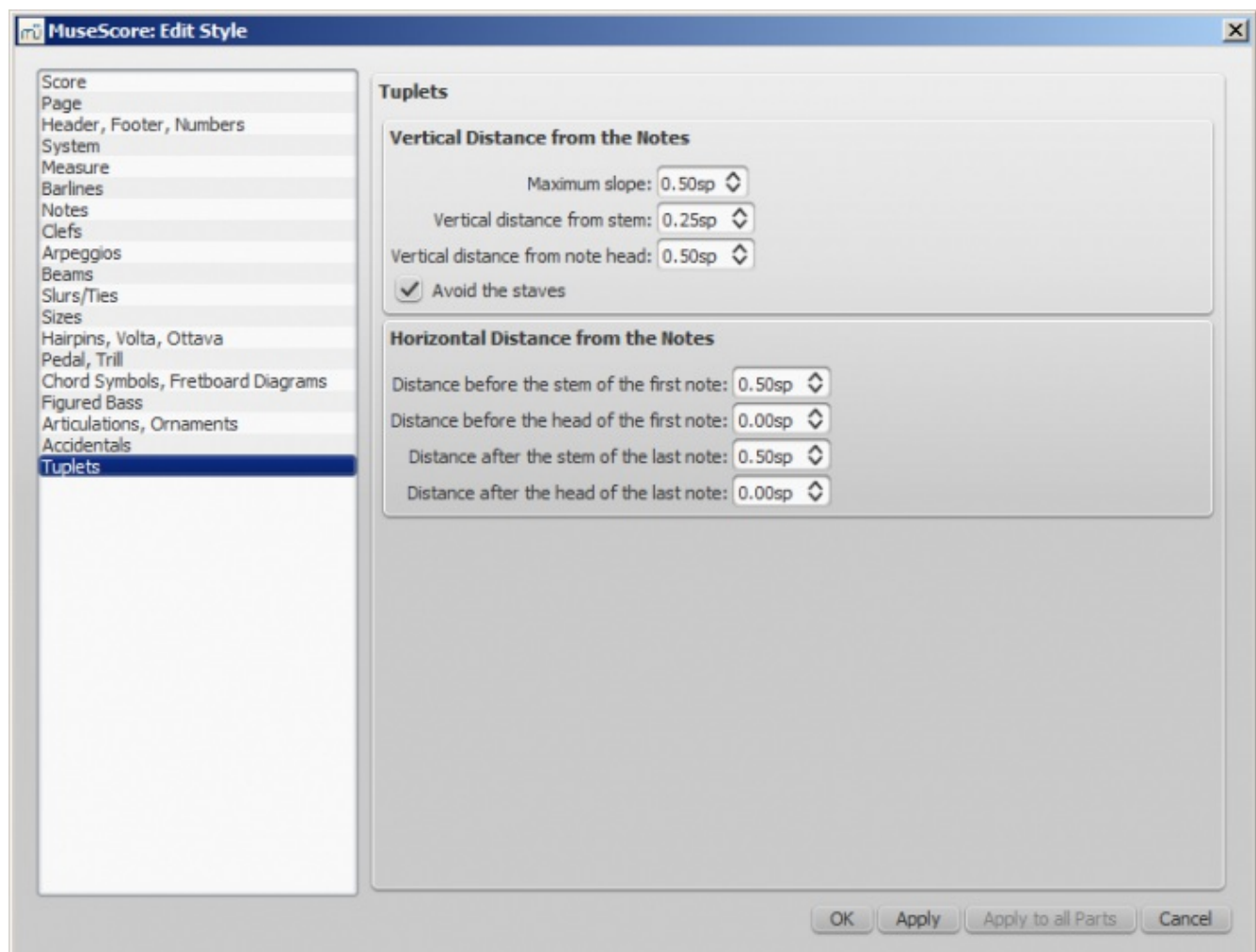
Two adjustments are possible: Vertical and Horizontal

- Vertical adjustment has three options with values in space units and one (un)ticked option
  - Maximum slope: default value is 0.50; range is from 0.10 to 1.00
  - Vertical distance from stem (see (2) below): default value is 0.25; range is from -5.00 to 5.00
  - Vertical distance from note head (see (3) below): default value is 0.50; range is from -5.00 to 5.00
  - Avoid the staves: by default ticked
- Horizontal has four options with values in space units
  - Distance before the stem of the first note (see (5) below): default value is 0.50; range is from -5.00 to 5.00
  - Distance before the head of the first note: default value is 0.00; range is from -5.00 to 5.00
  - Distance after the stem of the last note (see (6) below): default value is 0.50; range is from -5.00 to 5.00
  - Distance after the head of the last note: default value is 0.00; range is from -5.00 to 5.00
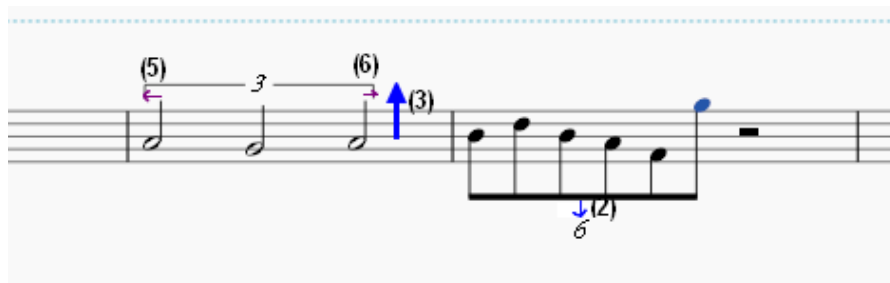
See also

- How to create triplets and other tuplets

External links

- Tuplet at Wikipedia
- How To Create Triplets in MuseScore [video]
- The User Guide to Tuplets in MuseScore [video]

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Voices

You can have up to 4 **Voices** on each staff line. A voice is a musical line or part which can have its own rhythm independently of other voices on the same staff. Voices are sometimes called "layers" in other notation software.

In a polyphonic measure, **voice 1** usually takes the *up-stem notes* and **voice 2** takes the *down-stem* notes.

Note: The feature called "Voices" should not be confused with "vocal staves," which can be added from the Instruments dialog (accessed by pressing I). When creating a closed SATB score, use Voices 1 and 2 for Soprano and Alto parts on the top staff, and use Voices 1 and 2 on the bottom staff for Tenor and Bass parts—**do not** use Voices 3 and 4 for Tenor and Bass.

When to use voices

- If you need stems pointing in opposite directions within a chord, on a single staff.
- If you need notes of different durations within a single staff, played simultaneously.

How to enter notes in different voices

The following example shows you how to notate a section using two voices:

1. **Enter voice 1 notes**: Make sure you are in note input mode: the Voice 1 button becomes highlighted in blue in the toolbar. Enter the notes in the top voice first (see example in image above or further down below). When inputting, some notes may have down-stems, but these will flip automatically when the second voice is added.

2. **Move cursor to start of section**: When you have finished entering a section of voice 1 notes, press the ← key repeatedly to move your cursor, note-by-note, back to the first note of the section (or alternatively use Ctrl+← to move back measure-by-measure). Or else you could simply exit note entry mode (press Esc) and click directly on the first note.

3. **Enter voice 2 notes**: Make sure you are in note-input mode and that the voice 1 note at the beginning of the section is selected. Click on the "Voice 2" button ![2] (on the right of the toolbar), or use the shortcut `Ctrl+Alt+2` (Mac: `Cmd+Option+2`). Enter all the lower voice notes (down-stem). The final result might look something like this:

Hidden spacer rests

Only the rests of voices 2, 3, and 4 can be deleted, but those of the main voice (1 - blue) can be hidden.

To hide a rest, select it and press `v` or uncheck the "Visible" checkbox in the Inspector, which can be enabled from the View menu or with the shortcut `F8` (Mac: `fn+F8`). If you have `Show Invisible` turned on in the View menu, the rest still shows in gray on your screen. The hidden rest will not appear if you print, or export as PDF, PNG, SVG, etc.

Exchange voices of notes

To swap the notes between any two voices:

1. Select a range of notes.
2. From the Menu bar, select `Edit → Voices`
3. Exchange any two voices from the list.

Note: The selection can encompass content of any voice, but only two will be processed at once.

Move notes to another voice (without swapping)

You can also move notes from one voice to another (without note-swapping):

1. Ensure you are not in note input mode.
2. Select one or more noteheads (in any voice).
3. Click on the destination voice in the Note Input toolbar or use the shortcut `Ctrl+Alt+1–4`.

Note: For a successful move, either of the following conditions should apply:

1. The chord(s) in the destination voice must be the same duration as the note(s) to be moved there.
2. There is enough rest duration in the destination voice to accomodate the new notes.

See also

- Shared noteheads

External links

- How to merge/combine/implode two staves in one with two voices
- Video tutorial: How To Write Two Parts On One Staff: Voices

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum

Voltas

Volta brackets, or first and second ending brackets, are used to mark different endings for a repeat.
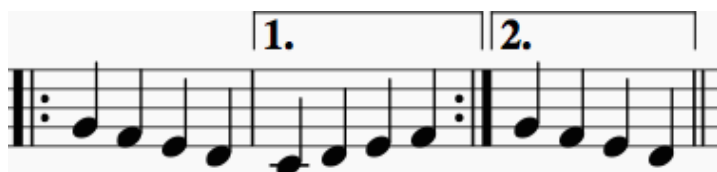
To place a volta bracket on the score, drag-and-drop the item from the Lines palette, or select the measure(s) you want the volta to span and double-click the palette icon.

To change the number of measures that a volta covers, double-click to enter `edit mode` and press `Shift+→` to move the end handle one or more measures to the right. You can also move the end handle back one measure by pressing `Shift+←`.

These commands move the "logical" start or end of the volta bracket, which determines correct playback in MuseScore and layout over multiple systems. **Moving the handles using the mouse or using the left or right arrows keys without `shift` allows fine position adjustments, but does not change how the repeat is played (and may cause playback or layout issues).**

If you move the handles, a dashed line appears on the score from the logical position of the handle to the adjusted position:

Text

You can change the text and many other properties of a volta bracket using the line properties dialog. Right-click on a volta bracket and choose `Line Properties...`. The figure below shows the volta text as "1.-5."
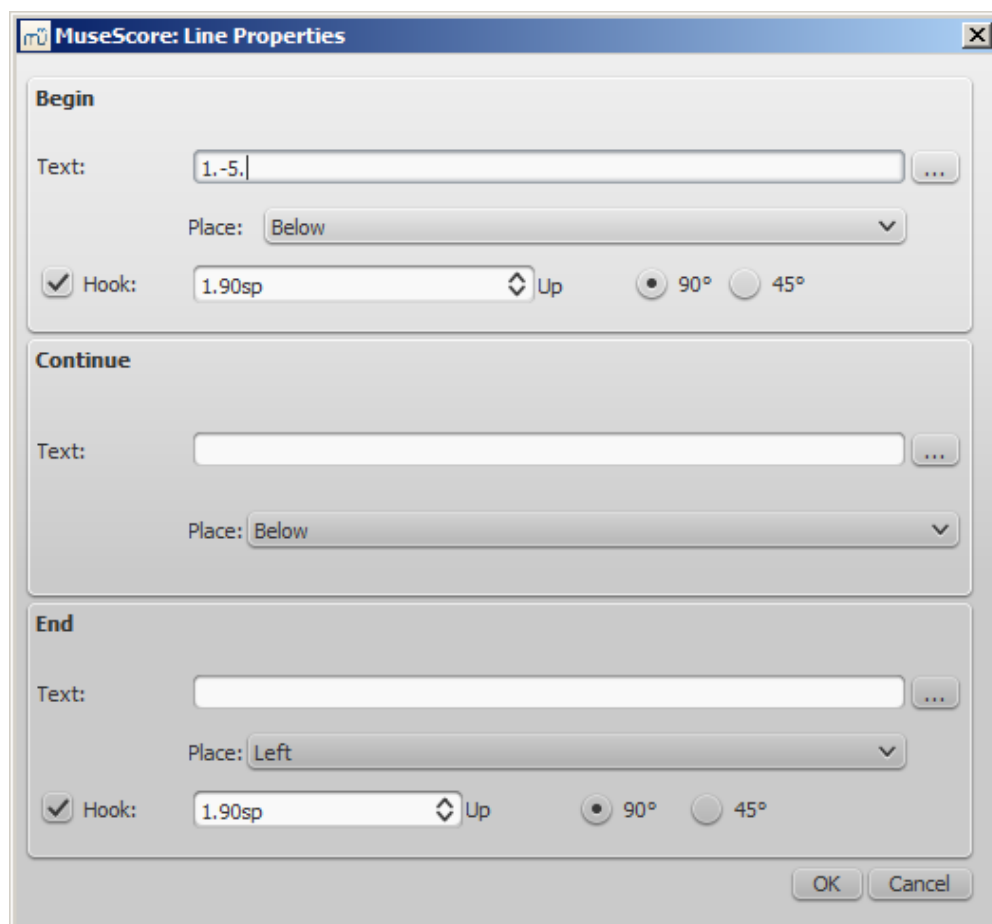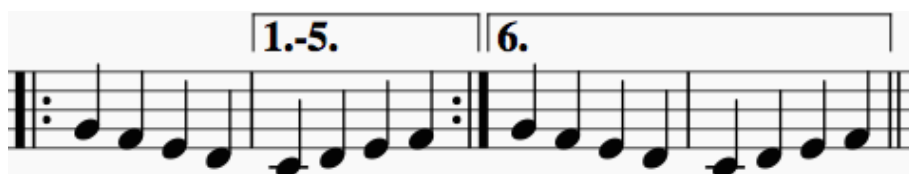
You can also right-click on the volta and bring up the volta properties dialog. From here, you can change both the displayed Volta text (the same from the line properties above) and the repeat list. If you want one volta to be played only on certain repeats and another volta on other repeats, enter the repeat times in a comma separated list. In the example below, this volta will be played during repeat 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7. Another volta will have the other ending, like 3, 6 and possibly other higher numbers like 8, 9, etc.
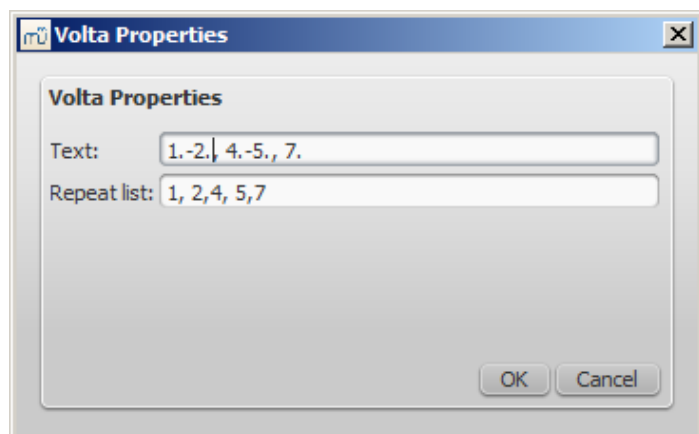
Playback

Sometimes a repeat plays more than two times. In the figure above, the volta text indicates that it should play five times before it continues. If you want to change the number of times MuseScore plays a repeat, go to the measure containing the end repeat barline and change its `Repeat count` (see Measure operations: Other properties for details).

External links

- MuseScore in Minutes, Lesson 8: Repeats and Endings, Part 1

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Sound and playback

MuseScore has "Sound and playback" capabilities built-in. This chapter covers the playback controls and ways to extend the instrument sounds.

MIDI import

MuseScore can import MIDI files (.mid/.midi/.kar) and convert them into music notation. To import, use the standard **Open** command.

Initially, the programs renders the MIDI to notation using certain default settings. A **MIDI Import Panel** appears at the bottom of the screen, showing a list of tracks (only tracks with note events are shown) and the operations available for each track. You can change these settings on a track-by-track basis and then reimport the data: The "Apply" button (at the top) submits any changes with immediate effect. The "Cancel" button immediately cancels any unsaved changes. The final result should be a better quality score reproduction of the file.

Use `Shift+Wheel` or `Ctrl+Wheel` to scroll track options horizontally; scroll tracks vertically without those modifiers.

If there are multiple tracks, then one more track is added at the top of the list to select all tracks at once.

	Import	Sound	Max. quantization	Max. voices	Tuplets	Is human performance	Split staff	Clef changes	Simplify durations	Show staccato	Dotted notes	Show tempo text	Recognize pickup measure	Detect swing
All	✔		16th ▾	4 ▾	3, 4, 5, 7, 9 ▾			✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	None (1:1) ▾
1	✔	Trumpet	16th ▾	4 ▾	3, 4, 5, 7, 9 ▾			✔	✔	✔	✔			None (1:1) ▾
2	✔	Alto Sax	16th ▾	4 ▾	3, 4, 5, 7, 9 ▾			✔	✔	✔	✔			None (1:1) ▾
3	✔	Tenor Sax	16th ▾	4 ▾	3, 4, 5, 7, 9 ▾			✔	✔	✔	✔			None (1:1) ▾

In the MIDI Import Panel, you can choose which tracks to import and reorder them. Some information about each track is displayed: sound, staff name, and lyrics, if any. The presence of the lyric column is an indication that the file contains a lyric track—assignable to different tracks through the drop-down menu.

The MIDI import panel updates the relevant information of whatever file is in view, if the user has several open. If the MIDI import panel is no longer required, it can be closed by clicking the close button in the top-left corner. The panel will re-appear after clicking on the button "Show MIDI import panel" which appears right after the panel is closed.

After saving the score, the MIDI Import Panel will not be available, because MuseScore is no longer importing a MIDI file.

Available operations

MuseScore instrument
> Assign a MuseScore instrument (listed in instruments.xml or in specified custom xml file in Preferences) that defines staff name, clef, transposition, articulations, etc.

Quantization

> Quantize MIDI notes by some regular grid. The grid MAX resolution can be set via the drop-down menu:

> * Value from preferences (default) - quantization value is taken from the main Preferences dialog of MuseScore (in the "Import" tab)
> * Quarter, Eighth, 16th, 32nd, 64th, 128th - user-defined values

> However, the actual quantization grid size is adaptive and reduces when the note length is small, so for each note the quantization value is different. But there is an upper limit for the quantization value, and that value can be set by the user as "max. quantization".
> For example, if some note is long - say, half note, and the max. quantization is set to 8th, then the note will be quantized with the 8th-note grid, not the half- or quarter-note grid as it supposed to be by the algorithm.
> Such quantization scheme allows to quantize all notes in the score (with different lengths!) adequately.

Max. voices
> Sets maximum count of allowed musical voices.

Search tuplets
> When enabled, this option attempts to detect tuplets and applies the corresponding quantization grid to the tuplet chords.

Is human performance
> If enabled, this option reduces the accuracy of MIDI-to-score conversion in favor of readability. It is useful for unaligned MIDI files, when no regular quantization grid is provided. For such files the automatic beat tracking algorithm is used which tries to detect the bar positions throughout the piece.

2x less measure count
> The option is active for unaligned MIDI files (when "Is human performance" is checked by default). It halves measure count obtained in the internal beat tracking operation. It may be convenient when the beat tracking gives 2x more frequent bar subdivision than necessary.

Time signature
> The option is active for unaligned MIDI files. The user can choose an appropriate time signature for the whole piece if the default detected value is wrong. The option is useful because it handles imported tuplets correctly unlike the direct time signature setting from the palette.

Split staff
> This option is suited mainly for piano tracks - to assign notes to the left or right hand of the performer. It uses constant pitch separation (the user may choose the pitch via sub-options) or floating pitch separation (depending on the hand width - sort of a guess from the program point of view).
> For drum tracks ("Percussion" sound in the track list) it splits the staff into multiple staves, each

of which gets only one drum pitch (i.e. drum sound). There is also a sub-option to allow/disallow the application of the square bracket for the newly created set of drum tracks.

Clef changes
> Small clefs can be inserted within a staff to keep chords closer to the 5 staff lines. Clef changes depend on the average pitch of the chord. Tied groups of notes are not broken by the clef insertion (if it occurs, one can report a bug for algorithm in importmidi_clef.cpp). This option is available for non-drum tracks only.

Simplify durations
> Reduces number of rests to form more "simple" note durations. For drum tracks this option can remove rests and lengthen notes as well.

Show staccato
> Option to show/hide staccato markings in the score.

Dotted notes
> Controls whether MuseScore will use dotted notes or ties.

Show tempo text
> Shows/hides tempo text markings in the score.

Show chord names
> Shows/hides chord names in the score, if any, for XF MIDI file format.

Recognize pickup measure
> When enabled, this option doesn't change the time signature of the first bar that is shorter than the second bar. It is also called anacrusis. This option is only available for all tracks at once.

Detect swing
> MuseScore tries to detect swing, and automatically replace a pattern of 4th + 8th notes in triplets (for the most common swing feel, 2:1), or a dotted 8th + 16th pattern (for shuffle, 3:1), with two straight 8ths and a "Swing" or "Shuffle" text at the beginning.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Mid-staff instrument changes

When a musician is required to double on a different instrument for a section of a piece, the instruction to switch instruments is generally placed above the staff at the beginning of that section. A return to the primary instrument is handled in the same manner.

MuseScore enables users to insert a special class of text called **Change Instrument** text for this purpose. This class of text is different from either **Staff** or **System** text in that it links the text to the playback and changes the sound to the new instrument. There are, however, several limitations to the functionality of this feature in 2.0.x, and these should be understood before attempting to use it.

1. Automatic transposition from concert pitch to the appropriate key for the transposing brass and woodwind instruments is not currently supported. For changes to instruments notated in a different key (C flute to Eb flute; Oboe to English Horn, etc.), the use of ordinary **Staff Text** to indicate the change is preferable, and the transposition must be done after the music is entered (using **Notes>Transpose** from the main menu). To avoid discord on playback, the instrument assigned to that staff should be muted in the F10 Mixer.

2. If it is necessary to hear the new instrument sound on playback, the **Change Instrument** text function must be used. However, after a mid-staff instrument change where the two instruments on the staff are not notated in the same key, *no attempt should be made to enter new music directly from the keyboard.* Instead, the music must be (a) pasted in, or (b) entered *before* the instrument change is effected. New input into measures following an instrument change is subject to two known program bugs, which cannot be resolved in the current 2.0.x versions without adversely affecting backwards compatibility. (This has been fixed for the next stable release, v.3.0.) In addition, the score must remain notated in concert pitch, or discord will result from the transposition. As a convenience to the players, a copy of the part may be saved as a separate file and the required sections transposed to the appropriate key before the part is printed. (Note that transposing a linked part will affect the score as well.)

3. When changing from one concert-pitch instrument to another, or from one transposing instrument to another in the same key (Bb trumpet to Bb cornet or Flugelhorn, etc.), the **Change Instrument Text** may be used to ensure that the playback sound is altered to the new instrument. Input may be done in the usual manner, and is not affected by the bugs mentioned above.

Add an instrument change

1. Select the start point of the change by clicking on a note or rest.

2. Open the main palette by typing F9 (or by using the **View** menu), and click on **Text** to open the text sub-palette.
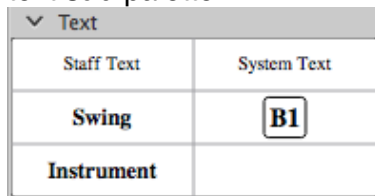
3. Double-click on **Instrument**
4. The word "Instrument" will appear above the anchor note or rest.
5. Double-click the word "Instrument", then type **Ctrl+A** to select all of it.
6. Type the actual text you wish to appear in the score, then click outside the box to exit text edit mode.

7. Right-click the text and choose "**Change Instrument**…"
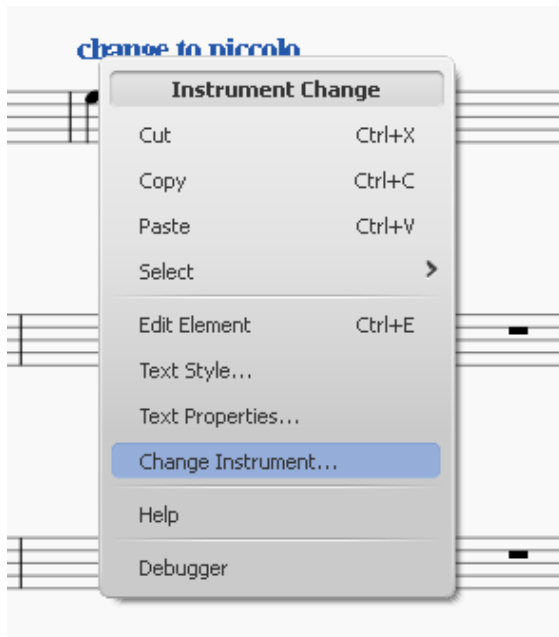
8. Choose the instrument, then click OK
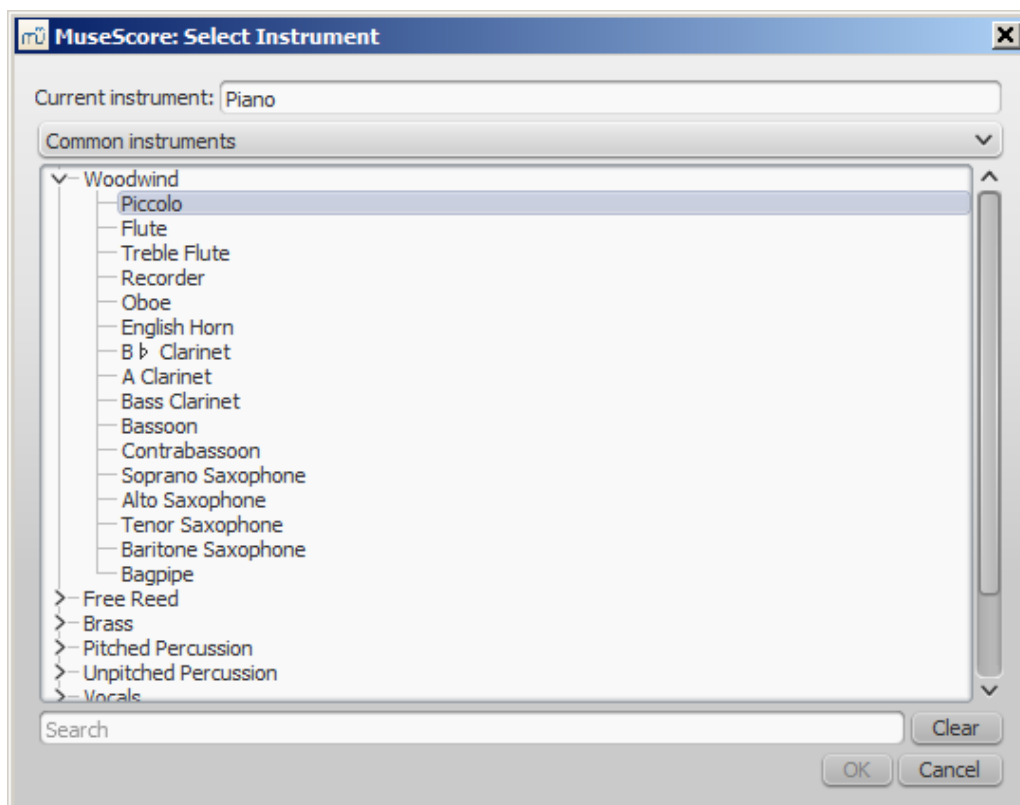
Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Mixer

The Mixer allows you to change instrument sounds and adjust the volume and panning for each staff (reverb and chorus are not currently supported). From the main menu, choose `View → Mixer` or press `F10` (Mac: `fn+F10`) to show the Mixer.

The name of each channel is the same as the **Part name** in the Staff properties dialog.

Mute and Solo

Use the `Mute` check box to quickly silence certain staves. Alternatively, use the `Solo` check box to silence all staves, except the staff or staves you mark as "solo".

Dials

To turn a dial clockwise, click and drag upwards. To turn a dial counter-clockwise, click and drag downwards. You can also hover the mouse pointer over the dial and then move the mouse wheel.

Double-clicking on any dial restores it to its default.

Sound

The Sound drop-down menu lists every instrument supported by your current SoundFont. If you have multiple SoundFonts loaded in the Synthesizer, all the patches from all the SoundFonts will appear in a single long list—all the sounds available from the second SoundFont appearing after all the sounds from the first SoundFont, and so on.

Mid-staff sound change (pizz., con sordino, etc.)

Some instruments come with multiple channels in the Mixer that can be used to change sounds midway through a score. For example, strings may utilize pizzicato or tremolo, and trumpet can switch to muted trumpet.

The following instructions use pizzicato strings as an example, but the same principles apply to tremolo strings or muted trumpet.

1. Select the first note of the section you want to be pizzicato
2. From the main menu, choose `Add → Text → Staff Text`
3. Type `Pizz.` At this point, this text is a visual reference only and not applied during playback
4. Right-click on the staff text and select `Staff Text Properties...`
5. In the `Staff Text Properties` dialog, select one or more voices on the left (in the Change Channel tab)

6. From the dropdown menu, select `pizzicato`
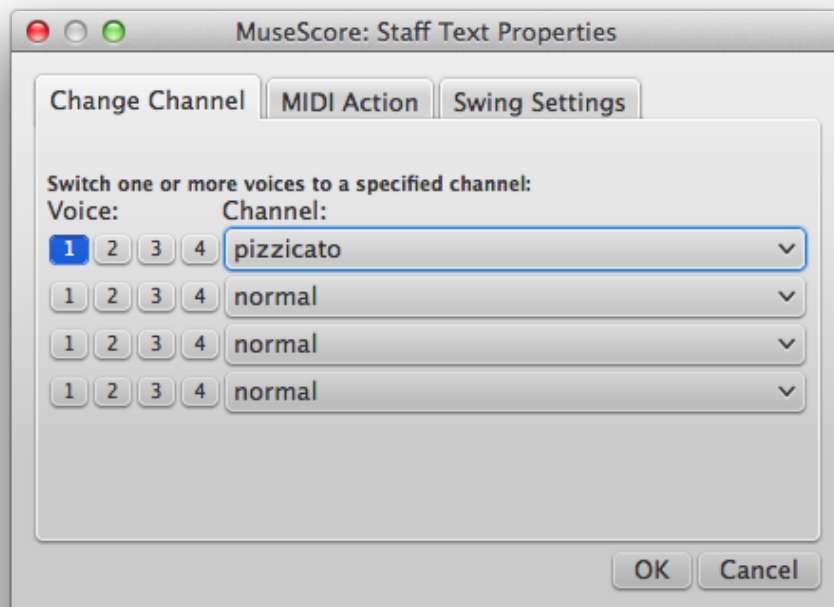
7. Click `OK` to return to the score

Every note after the staff text you added now sounds pizzicato. To return to a normal strings sound later in the piece, follow the same guidelines as above except type `Arco` in step 3 and select `normal` in step 6.

See also

- SoundFont
- Synthesizer
- Change instrument
- How to change instrument sound (e.g. pizz., con sordino) midway through score

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Play mode

MuseScore has an integrated sequencer and Synthesizer to play your score. Basic playback functions are accessed from the **Play toolbar** (see image below) located above the document window:

By pressing the Play button (or `Space`), you enter `Play mode`. In `Play mode`, the following commands are available:

- Go back to previous chord ←
- Advance to next chord →

- Go back to start of previous measure `Ctrl+←` (Mac: `Cmd+←`)
- Advance to start of next measure `Ctrl+→` (Mac: `Cmd+→`)
- Rewind to start of score `Home` (Mac: `⌘+Home`)
- Show/hide **Play Panel** `F11` (Mac: `Fn+F11`)

Press the play button again (or `Space` or `Esc`) to stop and exit `Play mode`.

MuseScore starts playback from the place it last left off. To start playback from a specific note (or measure), click on that note (or measure) before entering playback mode. Alternatively, if the score is already playing back, you can jump to a specific note by clicking on that note. The toolbar also has a rewind button to quickly return to the beginning of the score.

To include playback of repeats, activate the ⦂‖ *Enable/Disable Repeats*-Button.

Play panel

To open the Play Panel from the main menu, choose `View → Play Panel`, or type F11 (Mac: `Fn+F11`).

The Play Panel offers temporary controls over playback, including playback speed (labelled 'tempo'), loop playback (with specified starting and ending positions), and general volume for the current session.

Please Note: Changes to the parameters in the Play Panel are not saved-to-file for the score, even when **Save** is clicked. They only affect the playback behaviour in the current session. If you wish to modify the actual tempo of a piece, you must do it using the tempo text settings in the Inspector (F8) or via tempo text). If you wish to reset the default playback volume, you can do this in the Synthesizer dialogue. Synthesizer—`View → Synthesizer`.
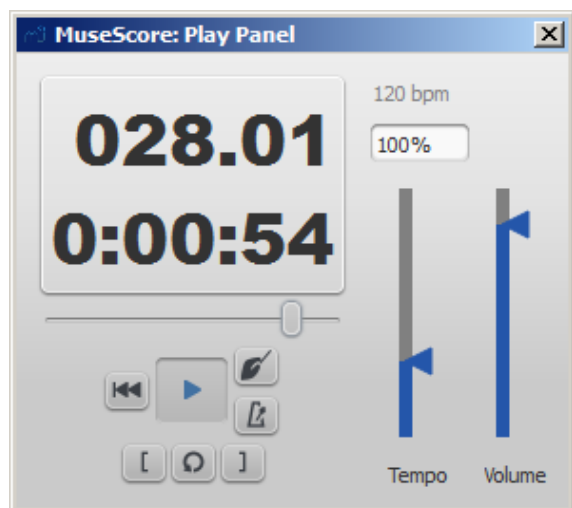
Count in

You can switch on and off a count-in to be played each time the playback starts. The count-in plays beats for a full measure (according to nominal time signature at playback starting point); if the starting point is mid-measure or at a 'short' measure (anacrusis), it also plays enough beats to fill that measure. The conductor icon in the play panel enables, or disables count-in.

Metronome playback

You can also switch on/off the accompanying metronome as the score is played (see the metronome icon on the play panel).

Loop

You can loop playback of a selected passage in the score using either the **Play toolbar** (see image above) or the play panel.

To loop from the Play toolbar:

- Playback should be **off**, and the "Loop playback button" **on**.
- <u>Select</u> the desired region of the score for loop playback.
- Press the playback button.

Playback will now cycle within the region marked by the blue flags.

- Use the "Loop playback" button to toggle the loop on or off.

To loop from the Play Panel:

- Select the note from which you want playback to start and click on the "Set loop in position" button. The "Loop Playback" button becomes active.
- Select the last note of the desired playback region and click on the "Set loop out position" button.
- Press the play button.

Playback will now cycle within the region marked by the blue flags.

- You can use the" Loop playback" button to toggle the loop on or off.

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

SoundFonts

Overview

A SoundFont file is a special type of file that contains many samples of different instruments playing different notes, enabling MuseScore to play each instrument sound. Some SoundFonts are custom designed for classical music, others are designed for jazz, pop, etc. Many SoundFonts are available on the web. Look for one that covers the 128 sounds of <u>General MIDI</u> (GM). If you use a SoundFont that does not conform to the General MIDI standard, others may not hear the correct instruments when you share the score or <u>export a MIDI file</u>.

MuseScore 2 comes with the soundfont `FluidR3Mono_GM.sf3`. Previous versions, MuseScore 0.9.6 – 1.3, featured a very light-weight SoundFont called `TimGM6mb.sf2`.

The file size and sound quality of SoundFonts available on the web varies. Larger SoundFonts often sound better but take up a lot of memory and may be too large to run on your computer. If you find MuseScore runs slowly after installing a large SoundFont, or your computer can't keep up during playback, then look for a smaller SoundFont.

Once a SoundFont has been <u>installed</u>, you can use it for playback in MuseScore (and control other aspects of the sound output) with the **<u>Synthesizer</u>**. To display the Synthesizer, go to `View → Synthesizer`.

Install a SoundFont

After finding and decompressing a SoundFont (see →<u>below</u>), double-click to open it. In most cases, the SoundFont file type will already be associated with MuseScore, and MuseScore will start and a dialog will appear asking if you want to install the SoundFont. Occasionally an application other than MuseScore will be associated with the SoundFont file type; if this is the case, you will need to right-click or control-click on the file, so as to display a menu from which you can choose to open the file in MuseScore. In either case, when the dialog appears asking if you want to install the SoundFont, click "Yes" to place a copy of the SoundFont file in MuseScore's SoundFonts directory. This directory can be viewed or changed in MuseScore's Preferences, but the default location is:

- Windows: `%HOMEPATH%\Documents\MuseScore2\Soundfonts`

- macOS and Linux: `~/Documents/MuseScore2/Soundfonts`

In contrast to user-added SoundFonts, the initial default SoundFont installed with MuseScore is located in a system directory, meant only for that purpose, which should *not* be modified. This directory and its default SoundFont file is:

- Windows (32-bit): `%ProgramFiles%\MuseScore 2\sound\FluidR3Mono_GM.sf3`

- Windows (64-bit): `%ProgramFiles(x86)%\MuseScore 2\sound\FluidR3Mono_GM.sf3`

- **macOS**: `/Applications/MuseScore 2.app/Contents/Resources/sound/FluidR3Mono_GM.sf3`

- **Linux (Ubuntu)**: `/usr/share/mscore-xxx/sounds/FluidR3Mono_GM.sf3` (with `xxx` being the MuseScore version)

Uninstall

To uninstall a SoundFont, simply open the folder where the SoundFont is installed and delete it.

Synthesizer

The **Synthesizer** is MuseScore's central control panel for sound output. Once a SoundFont has been installed, it needs to be loaded into the Synthesizer in order for MuseScore to use it for playback. To make a different SoundFont the default, load it in the Synthesizer and click `Set as Default`.

To display the Synthesizer, go to `View → Synthesizer`. For more details, see Synthesizer.
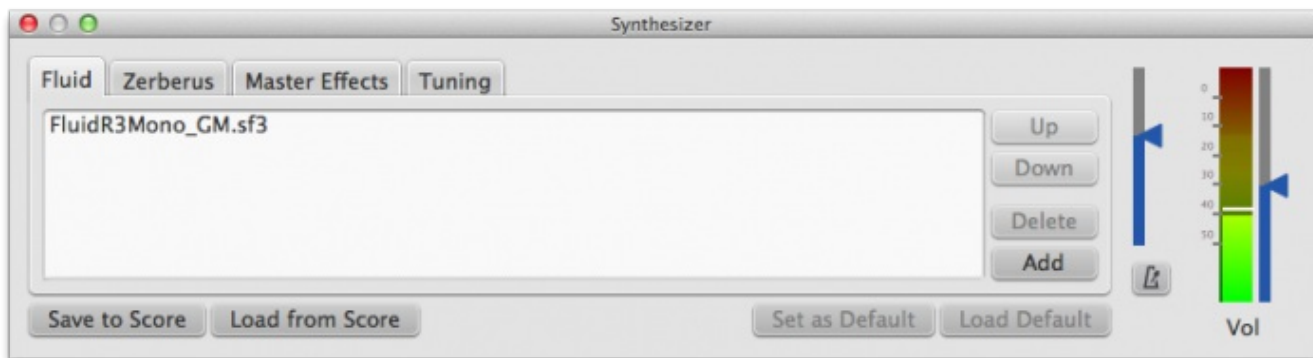
List of SoundFonts

Below are some popular GM SoundFonts of different sizes.

- Fluid R3 GM (141 MB uncompressed)
  License: released under the MIT license (included in the archive)
  MuseScore's default SoundFont is based on Fluid R3.
- GeneralUser GS (29.8 MB uncompressed)
  Courtesy of S. Christian Collins
- Magic Sound Font, version 2.0 (67.8 MB uncompressed)
- Arachno SoundFont, version 1.0 (148MB uncompressed)
  Courtesy of Maxime Abbey
- MuseScore 1 came with TimGM6mb (5.7 MB uncompressed)
  License: GNU GPL, version 2
  Courtesy of Tim Brechbill
- MuseScore 2 comes with `FluidR3Mono_GM.sf3` (12.6 MB).
  License: released under the MIT license
- Timbres of Heaven, version 3.2 (369 MB uncompressed)
  Courtesy of Don Allen

Specialized SoundFonts

- Acoustic grand piano, release 2016-08-04
  Description: Yamaha Disklavier Pro Grand Piano, sf2 format, 36MiB compressed, 113MiB uncompressed, 121 samples, 5 velocity layers
  More information: http://freepats.zenvoid.org/ including other soundfonts.
  License: Creative Commons Attribution 3.0
  Courtesy of Roberto Gordo Saez

In addition to SoundFont files, MuseScore also has some support for the SFZ format, thanks to the new synthesizer Zerberus. Here are some SFZ sound banks:

- Sonatina Symphonic Orchestra (503 MB uncompressed)
  Downloads: SoundFont | SFZ format
  License: Creative Commons Sampling Plus 1.0
- Salamander Grand Piano

Downloads: <u>version 2</u> | <u>version 3</u>
Description: Yamaha C5, 48kHz, 24bit, 16 velocity layers, between 80 MB and 1.9 GB uncompressed
License: Creative Commons Attribution 3.0
Courtesy of Alexander Holm
- <u>Detuned Piano</u> (244 MB uncompressed)
License: Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0
- <u>Plucked Piano Strings</u>
Description: 44.1kHz, 16bit, stereo, 168 MB uncompressed
License: Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0
- <u>The City Piano</u>
Description: Baldwin Baby Grand, 4 velocity layers, 696 MB uncompressed
License: Public domain
Courtesy of Big Cat Instruments
- <u>Kawai Upright Piano, release 2017-01-28</u>
Description: 68 samples, 44KHz, 24bit, stereo, 2 velocity layers, 58MiB uncompressed
License: GNU General Public License version 3 or later, with a <u>special exception</u>
Courtesy of Gonzalo and Roberto

Note: Since SoundFont files are large, they often are compressed into a variety of formats, including .zip, .sfArk, and .tar.gz. You need to decompress these files before they can be used.

- ZIP is standard compression format supported by most operating systems.

- sfArk is a compression format designed especially for compressing SoundFont files. Use the special <u>sfArk software</u> to decompress it, or use this online service:
  https://cloudconvert.com/sfark-to-sf2

- .tar.gz is a popular compression format for Linux. Windows users can use <u>7-Zip</u>; Mac users can use <u>The Unarchiver</u>, or macOS' built-in Archive Utility. Note that if using 7-Zip, you will need to apply decompression twice—once for GZip and once for TAR.

Troubleshooting

If the toolbar play panel is greyed out, or not visible, follow the instructions below to get your sound working again:

- Do a right-click on the menu bar and make sure there is a check mark next to the `Transport Tools` menu item. You can add or remove the check mark by clicking on the corresponding menu item. If this step does not solve your problem, continue below.
- If the play panel disappears after changing the SoundFont, go to `Edit → Preferences... → I/O tab` and click OK without making any changes. After restarting MuseScore, the play panel should reappear.

If you are setting up a SoundFont for the first time, please use one of the recommended SoundFonts listed above.

If playback stutters, then your computer is not able to handle the SoundFont being used. Two solutions:

1. Reduce the amount of RAM (memory) used by MuseScore by using a smaller SoundFont. See list above for suggestions.
2. Increase the amount of RAM available for MuseScore by quitting all applications except MuseScore. If you still have problems and a large SoundFont is important to you, consider more RAM for your computer.

See also

- <u>Synthesizer</u>
- <u>Change and adjust sounds</u>

External links

- <u>How to change the SoundFont or add another</u>

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Swing

MuseScore is capable of playing back a score using swung eighth notes or swung sixteenth notes.

Set up swing

The recommended way to inform MuseScore (and the humans who will read your music) that a swing feel is intended is to create a **Swing** System Text element.

1. Click the first note

2. Double-click **Swing** in the Text palette
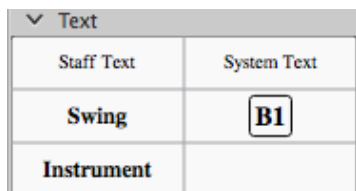
The **Swing** text can be edited, like any other text element, by double-clicking it (see<u>Text editing</u>), and it can be made invisible using the <u>Inspector</u>.

Return to straight rhythm

If you have a score containing both "swing" and "straight" sections, and want this reflected in playback:

1. Insert a **Swing** text item as explained <u>above</u>, attached to the first note or rest of the "straight" section.
2. Change the text as desired—double-click on the item you just inserted and change it to "Straight" (see <u>Text editing</u>).
3. Turn swing off via right-click → `System Text Properties…` → `Swing Settings` → `off`

Swing settings

Swing text settings

Swing settings for an individual **Swing** text marking are available via right-click → `System Text Properties…` → `Swing Settings`. This allows you to define how heavily to swing (i.e., the ratio of the downbeat to upbeat), and whether it's the eighth note or the sixteenth note that is swung.

Global swing settings

By default, in the absence of a **Swing** text element, swing playback is turned off. To turn on swing playback without adding a text element, use the general (score-wide) swing settings in `Style` → `General...` → `Score`.

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>

Synthesizer

Overview

The **Synthesizer** controls MuseScore's sound output. It allows you to:

- Load and organize different sound sample libraries to play back the music
- Apply <u>effects</u> such as reverb and compression
- Adjust overall <u>tuning</u>
- Alter the output volume of both music and the (optional) metronome.

To display the Synthesizer, go to `View` → `Synthesizer`.

The Synthesizer window is divided into four sections/tabs:

- **Fluid**: A software synthesizer that plays SF2/SF3 SoundFont sample libraries.
- **Zerberus**: A software synthesizer that plays SFZ format sample libraries.
- **Master Effects**: Used to apply multi-effects to the score.
- **Tuning**: Used to adjust overall playback tuning.

Synthesizer settings

Set as Default: When you open MuseScore, the Synthesizer always assumes the current default settings. If you want a new default to apply at the next session, change the settings as desired, then press the `Set as Default` button.

Save to Score / **Load to Score**: You can save a particular configuration of settings to an individual score by pressing the `Save to Score` button. When you next load the score, use the `Load from Score` button to transfer the stored settings to the Synthesizer.

Note: Only one set of Synthesizer settings can be in effect at a time—i.e. if multiple scores are open at once, it is not possible to make changes to the Synthesizer in one score and leave other scores' settings untouched.

Note: Changes made in the Synthesizer will not be heard in exported audio files *unless* the Synthesizer settings have been saved to the score with the `Save to Score` button. See also Tuning (below).

SoundFont

A SoundFont is a file containing a set of sounds that MuseScore can use for playback. MuseScore comes with a SoundFont called `FluidR3Mono_GM.sf3`; other SoundFonts can be downloaded from the internet (see this list of SoundFonts). Once a SoundFont has been installed, you can select it to be used for playback and control other aspects of the sound output with the Synthesizer.

By default, the SoundFont `FluidR3Mono_GM.sf3` should be loaded in the Synthesizer:
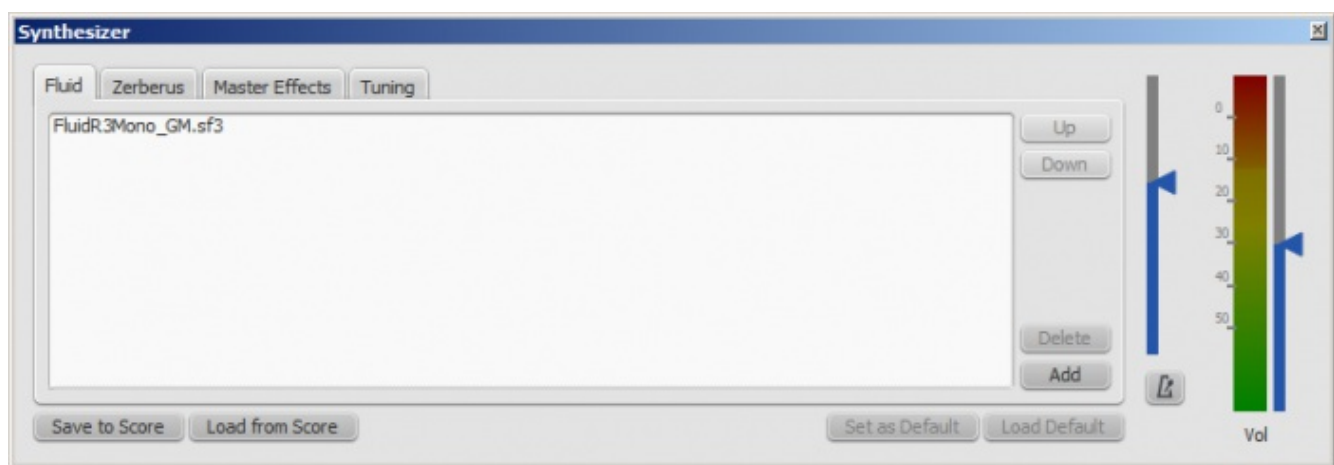
Click the `Add` button to load another installed SoundFont from the SoundFonts directory.

Note: If you have not installed any other SoundFonts, then there will not be any SoundFonts available to load. To use a SoundFont for playback, it needs to be first installed (which is a one-time action) and then loaded in the Synthesizer (which can be done on a case-by-case basis, or set up permanently).

A loaded SoundFont can be removed from the Synthesizer (but not uninstalled) by selecting it in the list and clicking `Delete`, and if multiple SoundFonts are loaded their order can be rearranged with the `Up` and `Down` buttons.

If you have not changed any sounds in the Mixer, then the SoundFont at the top of the list is the one that will be used for playback. However, if you are using the Mixer to play different instruments with sounds from different SoundFonts, playback will only work correctly if you have the same SoundFonts loaded *in the same order* in the Synthesizer. Therefore, if you are using multiple SoundFonts, it is advised to click the `Save to Score` button in the Synthesizer, so that the next time you open that score you can recall the list of SoundFonts loaded (and other Synthesizer settings) with the `Load from Score` button.

Optionally, you can use the `Set as Default` button to change the default Synthesizer settings so you

won't have to load the settings from a score the next time. Otherwise, the Synthesizer will be in its original default settings in your next session with MuseScore.

Volume

At the right in the Synthesizer are two sliders. One controls the playback volume, the other controls the volume of the optional built-in metronome. You can turn the metronome on or off by clicking the button underneath its volume slider. As with all the rest of the Synthesizer controls, any changes made here are temporary unless saved to the score or set as the new default.
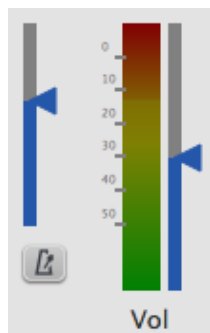
Effects

The **Master Effects** tab of the Synthesizer houses the Zita 1 stereo reverb and SC4 stereo compressor modules. Two slots are provided, "Effect A" and "Effect B," both with a drop-down list of available effects – including the option to set one or both channels to "No Effect." The effects are applied in series: **Effect A → Effect B**.
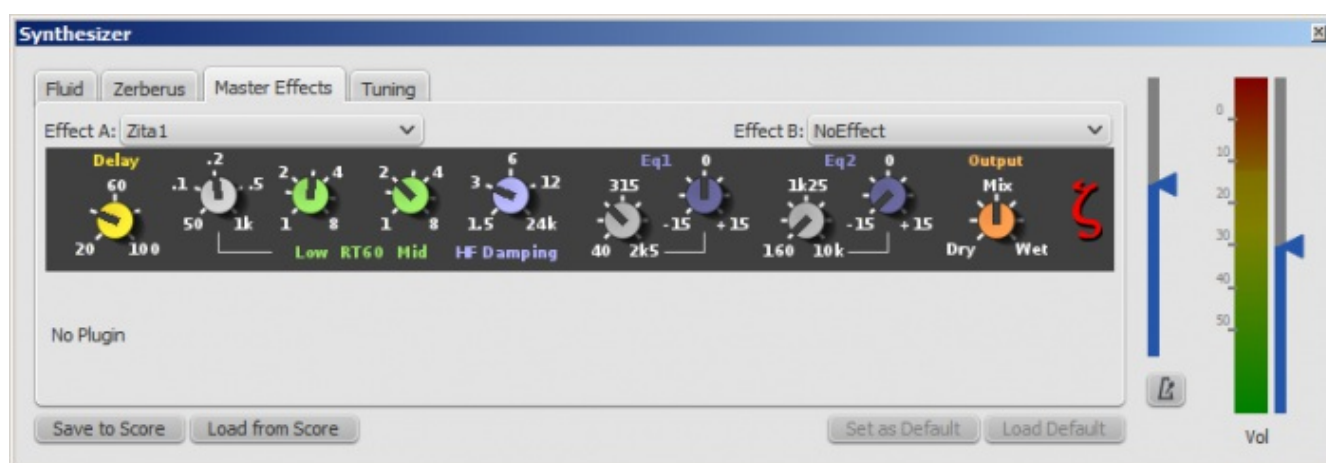
To store an effects configuration as the default option for the synthesizer, click the `set as Default` button. If you subsequently change the effects set-up, you can restore whatever settings you made the defaults by clicking the `Load Default` button.

You can store a particular effects configuration with a score by clicking on the `Save to Score` button, and later load those settings from the score by clicking on `Load from Score`.

Zita 1 reverb

The **Zita 1** stereo reverb module allows you to simulate the ambience of anything from a small room to a large hall. The predelay, reverb time and tone of the reverb can be finely tuned using the controls provided:

- **Delay**: Set a pre-delay for the reverb from 20-100 ms.
- **Low RT60** (Low frequency reverb time): Use the grey control to adjust the center frequency (50–1000 Hz) of the low frequency band which you want to affect: the green control adjusts the reverb time (1–8 secs) of this frequency band.
- **Mid RT60** (Mid-range reverb time): Adjust the reverb time (1–8 secs) of the mid-range frequency band.
- **HF Damping**: Adjusts the high frequency component of the reverb. Increasing this value increases the frequency of the cut-off point and makes the reverb appear brighter and longer.

- **EQ1**: Allows you to cut or boost (-15 to +15) a frequency band (center = 40 Hz - 2 KHz) in the *lower* part of the spectrum.
- **EQ2**: Allows you to cut or boost (-15 to +15) a frequency band (center = 160 Hz - 10 KHz) in the *higher* part of the spectrum.
- **Output**: Controls the amount of effect applied. "Dry" is no effect. "Wet" indicates 100% reverb. "Mix" is a 50/50 balance of wet:dry signal.

Note: EQ1 and EQ2 affect the tone of the reverb only,*not* the dry (unprocessed) signal.

To quickly set up an effects patch, set "Output" to "Mix" and adjust the "Mid RT60" control to the desired reverb time. Then fine tune the effect as explained above.

SC4 compressor

The **SC4** stereo compressor offers the following controls:

- **RMS**: Adjusts the balance between RMS (0) and Peak (1) compression. In the former, the compressor responds to averaged-out levels in the signal; in Peak mode, the compressor responds to peak levels.
- **Attack**: (1.5–400 ms) The length of time it takes for compression to engage fully after the signal exceeds the threshold level.
- **Release**: (2–800 ms) The time it takes for compression to return to zero after the signal falls below the threshold level.
- **Threshold**: (in dB) The signal level above which compression starts to take effect. Lowering the threshold increases the amount of signal that is compressed.
- **Ratio**: The amount of compression applied to the signal above the threshold. The higher the ratio, the greater the compression. Varies between 1:1 to 20:1.
- **Knee**: Allows you to select a range between "soft knee" and "hard knee". The softer the knee, the more gradual the transition between uncompressed and compressed signal.
- **Gain**: Compression tends to lower the volume, so use this control to boost the signal as required.

Tuning

For Concert Pitch instruments, MuseScore uses the A4 = 440 Hz pitch standard by default. To change it, simply enter a new value in the `Tuning` tab of the Synthesizer.
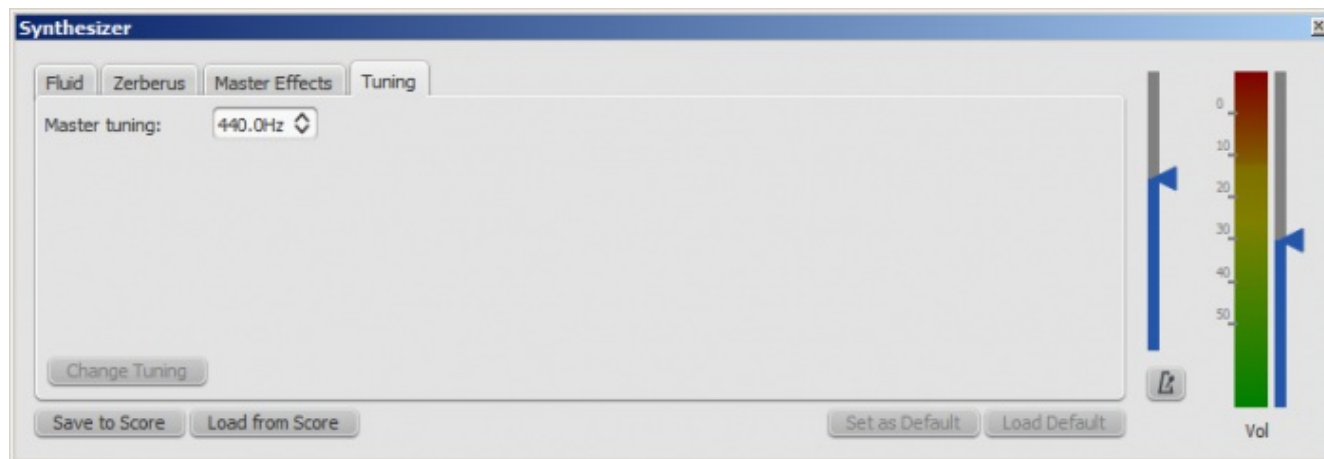
Like all other Synthesizer settings, the master tuning affects playback within MuseScore but does not affect exported audio files (WAV, OGG, MP3) unless the `Save to Score` option is selected.

Change master tuning

Notes: Applies to all scores. Current session only (tuning resets to default on MuseScore exit). Affects playback but doesn't affect exported audio files (WAV, OGG, MP3, and MIDI).

1. `View → Synthesizer`.
2. Click the `Tuning` tab.
3. Enter a new `Master Tuning` value (Minimum value = 300 Hz; Maximum value = 600.0 Hz; Default 440 Hz).
4. Click `Change Tuning`.

Set default tuning

Note: Applies to all scores. Current session and all subsequent sessions (until you change it again). Affects playback but doesn't affect exported audio files (WAV, OGG, MP3, and MIDI).

1. Change the `Master Tuning` as shown above for the current session.
2. Select `Set as Default`.

Change tuning for an individual score

Note: Applies to current score for current session, use the `Save to Score` button, and settings can be recovered in subsequent sessions with `Load from Score`. Affects playback and exported audio files (WAV, OGG, MP3).

1. Change the `Master Tuning` as shown above for the current session.
2. Click `Save to Score`.
3. You will now get this new tuning in exported audio files of the current score, but other scores will export with the default tuning as expected. However, due to a limitation in MuseScore, you need to click `Load from Score` to get the correct tuning on playback.

See also

- SoundFont
- Mixer

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Tempo

Tempo markings can be added to a score in the form of tempo text. Playback tempo can also be temporarily overridden through the Play Panel.

Tempo text

Tempo markings are used to indicate the pace of the music to the person reading the score, and they are also reflected in playback. It is possible to have multiple tempo markings at different points throughout a score.

To add a tempo marking:

1. Select the note or rest where the tempo should be added.
2. Open the **Tempo** palette and double-click a tempo marking style to add it to the selected note or rest. Alternatively, you can drag-and-drop a tempo from the palette directly onto a note or rest. You can also add a tempo from the main menu with `Add → Text... → Tempo Marking` or use the shortcut `Alt+T`, in which case it automatically will derive the note value to be used from the time signature.

Existing tempo markings can be changed by double-clicking the text to enter text edit mode.

A tempo marking's beats per minute can be changed by directly editing the text, if "Follow text" is selected in the Inspector and the tempo text is expressed in the form "note duration = number", as in this example, which includes the information "quarter note = 75":

Andante ♩ = 75

If a tempo marking has been edited and no longer includes that information (for example, simply the word "Andante" with no number associated with it), click once on the marking to select it. Uncheck the "Follow text" checkbox in the Inspector, and you can manually set the number of quarter note beats per minute that the tempo marking represents.
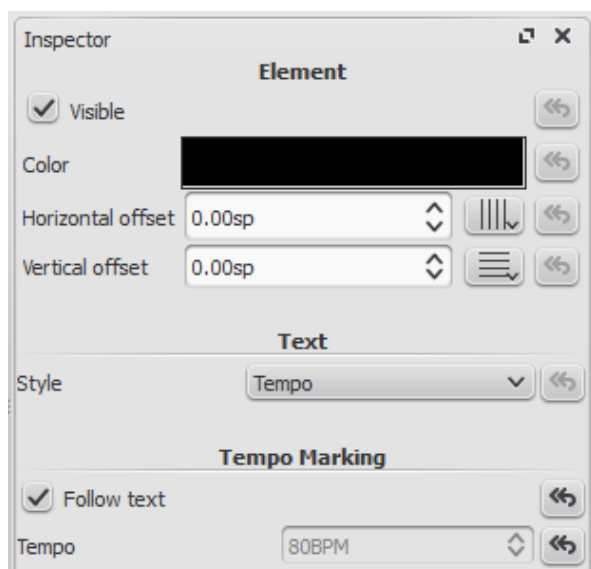
Note: Playback may be faster or slower if the tempo setting in the play panel is at a percentage other than 100%.

Ritardando and accelerando

Gradual tempo changes like **ritardando** ("*rit.*") and **accelerando** ("*accel.*") can be added to the score as system text, but currently don't have any effect on playback. The effect can be achieved, however, by stepping down the tempo using multiple invisible tempo markings. In this example, the tempo is decreased by 10 BPM on the first note of each measure, starting from 110 BPM before the ritardando. Each tempo change is made invisible by unchecking the **Visible** checkbox in the Inspector, so that only the ritardando shows on the printed score.
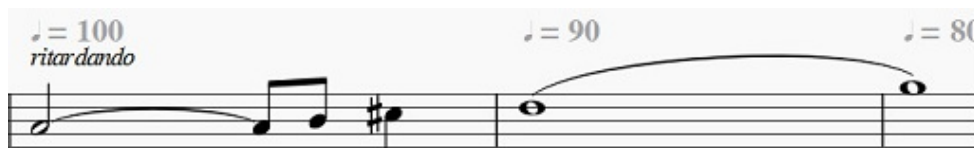
A plugin has been developed to automate this process: TempoChanges (external link)

Fermatas

Fermatas, available in the Articulations and Ornaments palette, have a **Time stretch** property that can be set via the Inspector. By default, this property is set to 1.00. To have MuseScore play back a fermata for twice its normal duration, click on the fermata and set "Time stretch" to 2.00.

Play panel

- Display the play panel: View → Play Panel or F11 (Mac: fn+F11)
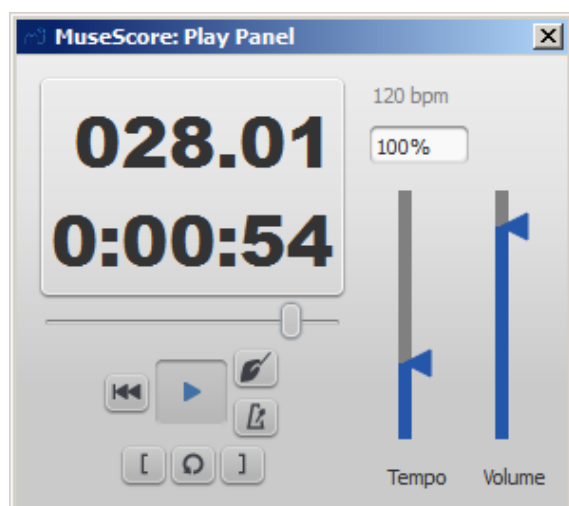
- Change the percentage of the score's actual tempo using the Tempo slider

This setting is not saved in the score and will proportionally override all tempo markings set in the score. If you have multiple tempo markings in the score, the BPM (Beats per Minute) number displayed above the slider will depend on where in the score you are. For example, if you have a tempo of 80 BPM set, and the Play Panel is set to 120% of tempo, the actual tempo of the playback will be 96 BPM, which you can tell by the number displayed above the percentage in the Play Panel.

See also

- Play mode

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Dynamics

Dynamics are symbols indicating the loudness of a note or phrase of music. Symbols can be found in the Dynamics palette in either the Basic or Advanced workspace:

ppp	pp	p	mp
mf	f	ff	fff
fp	sf	sfz	sff
sffz	sfp	sfpp	rfz
rf	fz	m	r
s	z	n	

Note: Overall playback volume of the score can be changed using the volume slider in the Play Panel or Synthesizer.

Add a dynamic

To apply a dynamic to the score, use one of the following methods:

- Select a note and double-click a dynamic symbol in a palette.
- Drag a dynamic symbol from a palette onto a note.

For additional dynamics use the Master Palette (Shift+F9). You can also create a custom palette for future use.

To create a crescendo or decrescendo sign, see Hairpin.

Adjusting playback volume for a dynamic

Click on the dynamic to select it, and adjust its **Velocity** in the Inspector—higher for louder, lower for softer.

Adjusting range for a dynamic

Via the Inspector you can set the range of a dynamic to span a single staff, all staves of an instrument (e.g. both staves of a piano), or the entire system. The default setting is to span the instrument.

List of dynamics in palettes

In the Basic workspace, there are 8 options in the Dynamics palette: *ppp, pp, p, mp, mf, f, ff, fff.*

In the Advanced workspace, there are all of the above plus 15 additional options in the Dynamics palette: *fp, sf, sfz, sff, sffz, sfp, sfpp, rfz, rf, fz, m, r, s, z, n.*

In the Dynamics section of the Master Palette, there are all of the above plus 6 additional options: *pppppp, ppppp, pppp, ffff, fffff, ffffff.*

Edit a dynamic

Any dynamic can be edited after being added to the score, just like standard text. See Text editing.

See also

- Tempo

External links

- Video tutorial: Lesson 10 - Articulations, Dynamics and Text
- Dynamics at Wikipedia

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Text

Many score elements in MuseScore are either wholly text-based—such as staff text, dynamics, tempo, fingering, lyrics etc.— or consist of text in combination with a line—such as voltas, octave lines, guitar barre lines etc.

This chapter covers some of the different classes of text available in MuseScore, and shows you how to format them. Other specific types of text are covered in other chapters:

- *Tempo* (→Sound and playback)
- *Dynamics*— *p*, *mf*, etc. (→Sound and playback)
- *Swing* (→Sound and playback)
- *Instrument change* (→Sound and playback)
- *Repeats and jumps* —DC, Fine, Coda, etc. (→Notation)
- *Figured bass* (→Advanced topics)
- *Frame* text—in vertical, horizontal or *text frames* (→Formatting)
- *Headers and footers* —different from standard text objects (→Formatting)
- *Lines* (→Notation)

Text basics

Add text

To add a text-based element to the score, use one of the following general methods:

- From the main menu, select Add → Text (to create a **title**, for example).

- Select a text element from a palette (to create swing text, for example).

- Press a keyboard shortcut (to create lyrics, for example).

Note: The exact method depends on the type of text you are adding—refer to the relevant pages of the Handbook for details (see Text). For general-purpose **text boxes** attached to staves, see Staff and system text.

Format text

Every text-based element in the score has three levels of formatting:

Text Style

This is the top level of formatting and sets the style for a particular class of text in the score. All staff text, for example has a unique text style, as do tempo markings, lyrics, chord symbols and so on. MuseScore comes with many predefined text styles, which can be customised, but you are also free to create your own.

To edit the text style of an element, go to Style → Text…, or right-click on some text and select Text Style….

Any text style can be applied to any text element. Changing a text style affects all text objects in the score which use that style.

For full details, see Text styles.

Text Properties

This is the next level down in the formatting hierarchy and affects the style of the text in *one* specific text object. To edit the text properties for that object—and no other—right click on the text and select `Text Properties…`. For full details, see Text properties.

Text editing

While editing the actual text in a text element, you can also apply specific formatting to individual characters, using basic formatting options such as **Bold**, *Italic*, font, font size, subscript and superscript. To edit text:

- Double click on the text, or
- Right-click on the text and select "Edit element," or
- Click on the text and press `Ctrl` + `E` (Mac: `Cmd` + `E`).

For full details, see Text editing.

Adjust position of text objects

To adjust the position of a selected text object, either:

- Use one of the following keyboard shortcuts:
  - ←: Move text left 0.1 staff space (one staff space is the distance between two staff lines, as set in Page Settings)
  - →: Move text right 0.1 staff space.
  - ↑: Move text up 0.1 staff space.
  - ↓: Move text down 0.1 staff space.
  - `Ctrl+←` (Mac: ⌘+←): Move text left one staff space.
  - `Ctrl+→` (Mac: ⌘+→): Move text right one staff space.
  - `Ctrl+↑` (Mac: ⌘+↑): Move text up one staff space.
  - `Ctrl+↓` (Mac: ⌘+↓): Moves text down one staff space.
- Adjust the horizontal or vertical offset values in the Inspector.
- Drag the object.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Text editing

Text edit mode

To enter `text edit mode` there are several methods:

- Double click on the text
- Right-click on the text and select "Edit element"
- Click on the text and press `Ctrl+E` (Mac: `Cmd+E`)

Formatting and entry options can then be accessed from the **text toolbar** at the bottom of the window.

Editing commands and keyboard shortcuts

In `text edit mode`, the following commands are available:

- `Ctrl+B` (Mac: ⌘+B) toggles **bold face**
- `Ctrl+I` (Mac: ⌘+I) toggles *italic*
- `Ctrl+U` (Mac: ⌘+U) toggles underline
- `Home End ← → ↑ ↓` moves cursor
- `Backspace` (Mac: `Delete`) remove character to the left of the cursor
- `Delete` (Mac: `→ Delete` or `fn+Delete`) remove character to the right of the cursor
- `Return` start new line
- `F2` (Mac: `fn+F2`) Insert special characters (see below)

Special character shortcuts

In `text edit mode` the following keyboard shortcuts can be used to access certain special characters:

`Ctrl+Shift+B`: Flat
`Ctrl+Shift+F`: Forte
`Ctrl+Shift+H`: Natural
`Ctrl+Shift+M`: Mezzo
`Ctrl+Shift+N`: Niente
`Ctrl+Shift+R`: Rinforzando
`Ctrl+Shift+S`: Sforzando
`Ctrl+Shift+Z`: Z

Symbols and special characters

You can use Special Characters to insert quarter notes, fractions, and many other kinds of special symbols or characters into your text. In the text toolbar, click on the keyboard icon, , or press `F2` (Mac: `fn+F2`) to open the Special Characters dialog:
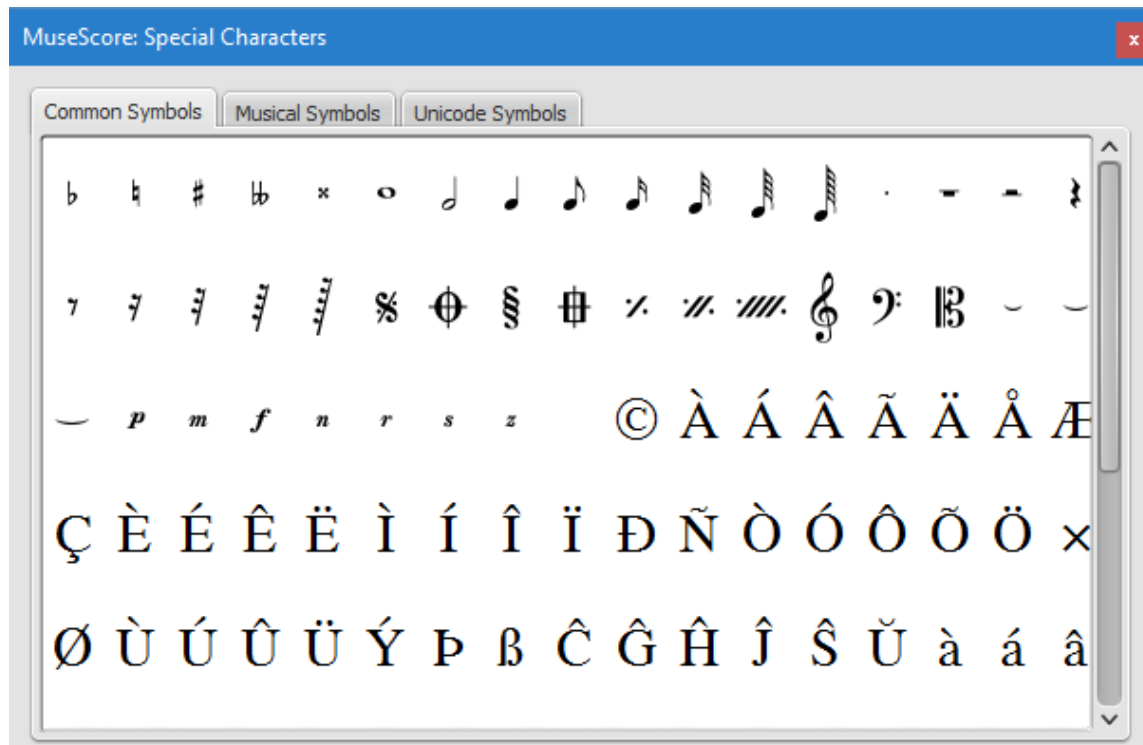
The dialog is divided into 3 tabs: Common symbols, musical symbols and unicode symbols. The musical and unicode tabs are further subdivided into alphabetically-arranged categories.

Double-clicking an item in the Special Characters dialog immediately adds it to the text where the cursor is positioned. Multiple items can be applied without closing the dialog box, and the user can even continue to type normally, delete characters, enter numerical character codes etc., with it open.

Note: It is not possible to display the Special Characters dialog when not in text editing mode, and this

should not be confused with the menu item of the same name in the macOS version of MuseScore.

See also

- Chord symbol
- Lyrics
- Frame
- Edit mode

Text styles and properties

Text styles and text properties

Every piece of text has a basic style. Title text, for example, is centered and uses a large font size; Composer text is smaller and aligned to the right within the top vertical frame. To edit text styles, go to `Style → Text...`, or right-click on some text and select `Text Style...`.

Changes to a text *style* will affect all text that uses that style within a score.

You can also edit the same parameters as are available with a text style by right-clicking on a piece of text and selecting `Text Properties...`

Unlike changes to a text *style,* changes to text *properties* only apply to the single specific piece of text you right-clicked on. The text *style* for the rest of the score remains unchanged, and other text using the same style is unaffected.

During text editing you can make changes that depart from the basic style and may also differ from the specific text properties of a given piece of text. You can revert changes made through text editing (such as font size and italics) with the reset text to style option.
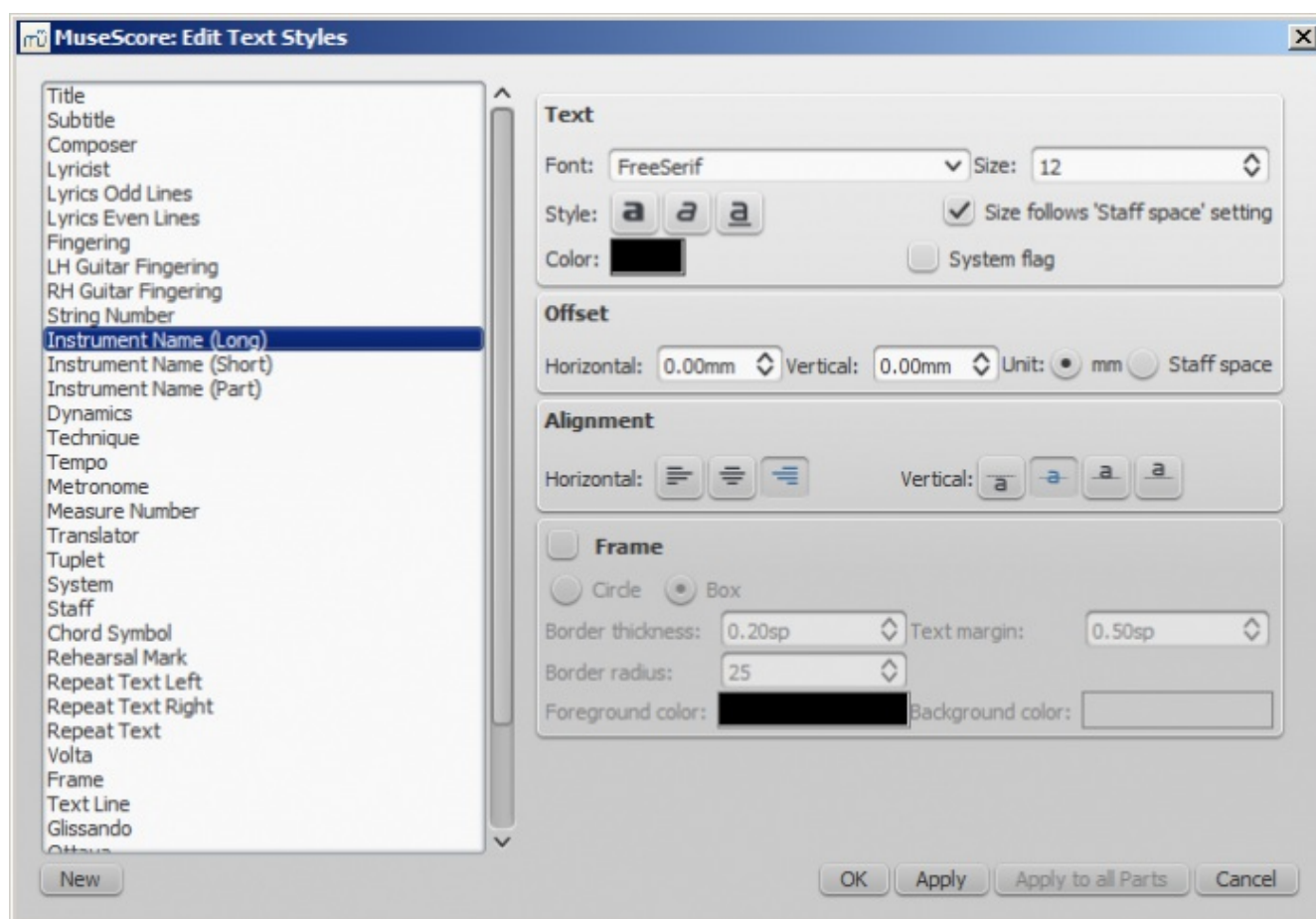
The available options are divided into categories:

- Text

- **Font**: name of the font such as "Times New Roman" or "Arial"
        - **Size**: size of the font in points
        - **Style**: style of the font, italic, bold, underline
        - **Color**: click on the color demonstrated to change
        - **Size follows "Staff space"** setting: whether size follows the distance between two lines in a 5-lines standard staff
        - **System flag**: text applies to all staves of a system.
  - Offset
        - **Horizontal**
        - **Vertical**
        - **Offset Unit**: in mm or Staff space units
  - Alignment
        - **Horizontal**: left, right, center
        - **Vertical**: align top edge of text to reference point, center text vertical to reference point, center text vertical to text baseline or align bottom edge of text to reference point

  - Frame

        - **Frame**: add a frame around the text
        - **Frame Type**: Circle or Box
        - **Border thickness**: thickness of the line of the frame in space units
        - **Border radius**: for box frame, radius of rounded corner
        - **Text margin** : inner frame margin in space units
        - **Foreground color**: of the frame border
        - **Background color**: of the background within the frame.

  Note: Opacity is set by the parameter "Alpha channel" in the colors dialog: a value between 0, transparent, and 255, opaque.

Text types

- **Title, Subtitle, Composer, Poet**: anchored to page
- **Fingering**: Fingerings are anchored to note heads.
- **Lyrics**: Lyrics are anchored to a time position (a note/chord, but not a rest).
- **Chord symbol**: Chord symbols are anchored to a time position.
- **System text**: Applies to all staves in a system. Anchored to a time position.
- **Staff text**: Applies to a single staff in a system. Anchored to a time position.

The distinction between system text and staff text matters for part extraction in ensemble scores. System text will extract to all parts. Staff text will only extract to the part to which it is anchored. For details, see Text.

Create a new text style

1. Go to Style → Text... or right-click on some text and select Text Style...
2. Click on New
3. Set a name
4. Set all properties as desirerd

This text style will be saved along with the score. It will not be available in other scores, unless you explicitly save the style sheet and load it with another score.

Apply options

You can apply to either the score or part you are seeing, if you hit Apply and then OK.
If you are in one of the parts of your score, you also have the option to use the Apply to all parts button before OK, so you don't have to manipulate all parts individually.

Reset text to style

If you have made changes to an individual piece of text and you want to return it to the defined text style for the score, or if you changed the style with an old version of MuseScore and you want the style to correspond to the default text style in MuseScore 2, you can use the **Reset Text to Style** option.

Select the text you want to reset to style and click on Reset Text to Style in the Inspector. If you need

all text from a given style to be "reset", right-click on one, then from the context menu choose `Select → All Similar Elements` first.

Save and load text styles

Text styles (together with all other styles in a document) can be saved as a *style file* and loaded into other MuseScore files. See Save and load style.

See also

- Text editing
- Header/Footer

Staff and system text

For general-purpose text, use **Staff Text** or **System Text**. The difference between these two types of text is whether you want it to apply to a single staff, or the whole system. This matters when extracting parts: staff text will only appear in a part that contains the specific instrument the text is attached to, while system text will appear in all parts. Additionally, if you choose to hide empty staves, any staff text belonging to an empty stave will also be hidden. System text is never hidden by the "hide empty staves" feature.

Staff text

Staff text is general purpose text associated with a particular staff at a particular location in the score. To create staff text, choose a location by selecting a note or rest and then use the menu option `Add → Text → Staff Text`, or use the shortcut `Ctrl+T` (Mac: `⌘+T`). A small text box appears and you can immediately start typing. You can exit the text box at any time (even without typing anything) by pressing `Esc`.

Staff text can, for example, be used to apply indications such as "Solo" or "Pizzicato" to one staff in a score. Depending on what the instructions of the staff text are, MIDI playback of that staff at the text location can be altered to match the instructions by right-clicking on the staff text and selecting `Staff Text Properties…`. See How to change instrument sound (e.g. pizz., con sordino) midway through score.

System text

System text is used when you wish to apply text indications to a whole system rather than just to one staff line. This makes a difference when extracting parts, or if you choose to hide empty staves. To create system text, chose a location by selecting a note or rest and then use the menu option `Add → Text → System Text`, or use the shortcut `Ctrl+Shift+T` (Mac: `⌘+Shift+T`). A small text box appears and you can immediately start typing. You can exit the text box at any time (even without typing anything) by pressing `Esc`.

Chord symbols

To begin adding **Chord symbols** to your score, first select a note or rest and press `Ctrl+K` (Mac: `⌘+K`). This positions the cursor above the staff ready for input.

Enter a chord symbol

Chord symbols can be entered and edited just like normal text. Sharps and flats are entered as follows:

- Sharp: `#`.
- Flat: `b`.
- Double-sharp: `x` or `##`.
- Double-flat: `bb`.

Note: When you exit the chord symbol, the characters you have typed will automatically assume the correct format : a "#" or "b" will turn into a proper sharp or flat and so on. Do not try to use actual flat and sharp signs as MuseScore will not understand those properly.
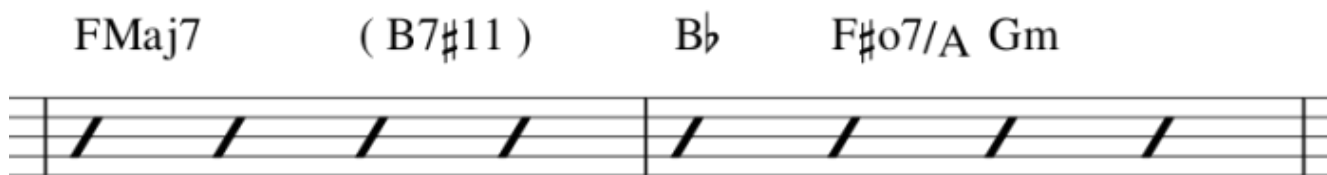
After you have finished entering a chord symbol you can either:

- Exit by pressing `Esc`.
- Move the cursor forward or backwards to continue note entry (see commands below).

Keyboard Commands

The following commands are available for chord symbol entry:

- `Space` move Cursor to next note, rest, or beat
- `Shift+Space` move cursor to previous note, rest, or beat
- `Ctrl+Space` (Mac: ⌘+Space) add a space to the chord name
- `;` move cursor to next beat
- `:` move cursor to previous beat
- `Tab` move cursor to next measure
- `Shift+Tab` move cursor to previous measure
- `Ctrl` plus number (`1` - `9`) move Cursor by duration corresponding to number (e.g.; half note for 6)
- `Esc` exit.

Edit a chord symbol

An existing chord symbol can be edited just like ordinary text. See Text editing.

Chord symbol syntax

MuseScore understands most of the abbreviations used in chord symbols:

- major: M, Ma, Maj, ma, maj, Δ (type `t` or `^` for the triangle)
- minor: m, mi, min, -
- diminished: dim, ° (entered with lowercase letter `o`, shows as ° if using the the Jazz style, as o otherwise)
- half-diminished: ø (type `0`, zero)
- augmented: aug, +

Note that for half-diminished chords, you can of course also enter abbreviations like mi7b5 and they will be rendered that way instead of using the ø.

You can also use extensions and alterations like b9 or #5, sus, alt, and no3. You can indicate inversions and slash chords using notations like C7/E. You can use parentheses and commas within chord symbols, and you can also enclose an entire chord symbol in parentheses.

Chord symbol text

The appearance of **chord symbol** text can be adjusted in the Text Styles window (right click on any chord symbol and select `Text Style…`).

Chord symbol style

Formatting options for **chord symbols** are available in `Style → General... → Chord Symbols, Fretboard Diagrams`. Adjustable properties are listed under the following headings:

Style

MuseScore supports two primary styles of chords symbols: Standard and Jazz. You can select between these using the radio buttons.

In the Standard style, chords are rendered simply, with the font determined by your chord symbol text style.
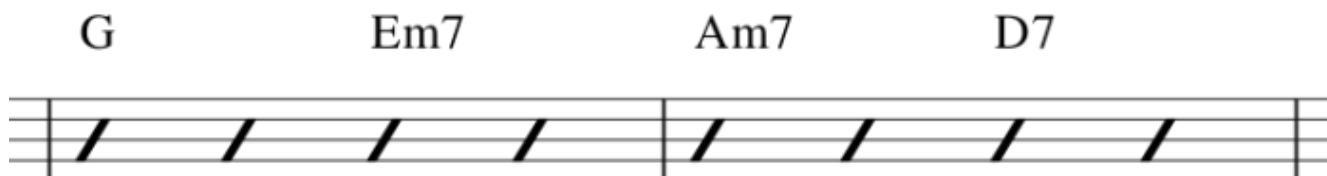
In the Jazz style, the MuseJazz font is used for a handwritten look, and superscript and other formatting techniques are used as well.
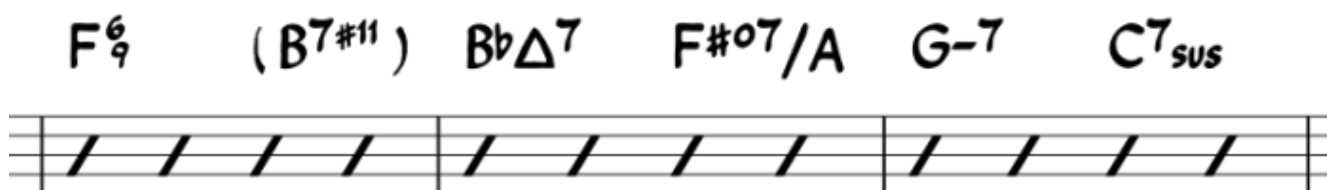
The Jazz style is selected by default if you use any of the Jazz templates.

The third radio button is mostly for compatibility with older scores. You can also use it to specify your own custom chord descriptions files. These can be created by copying one of the standard files and reading the documentation within them on their structure. However, this is for advanced users only, and there is no guarantee these files will be supported in the future.

Note spelling

By default, MuseScore uses letter names for chord symbols. For users in regions where other note naming schemes are used, MuseScore provides the following controls:

- **Standard**: A, Bb, B, C, C#,...
- **German**: A, Bb, H, C, C#,...
- **Full German**: A, B, H, C, Cis,...
- **Solfeggio**: Do, Do#, Reb, Re,...
- **French**: Do, Do#, Réb, Ré,...

In addition, there are options to control capitalization. By default, MuseScore automatically capitalizes all note names as shown above, whether you originally enter those using capital or lower case letters. However, you can also choose other automatic capitalization options:

- **Lower case minor chords**: c, cm, cm7,...
- **Lower case bass notes**: C/e,...
- **All caps note names**: DO, RE, MI,...

You can also turn off the automatic capitalization completely, in which case note names are simply rendered the way you type them.

Positioning

- **Default vertical position**: The height at which the chord symbol is applied *above* the staff (negative values can be used)
- **Distance to fretboard diagram**: If a fretboard diagram is present, this value is the height at which the chord symbol is applied *above* the diagram (negative values can be used).
- **Minimum chord spacing**: The space to leave between chord symbols.
- **Maximum barline distance**: Changes the size of the gap between the last chord symbol in the

measure and the following barline. You only need to adjust this value if there is a continuous problem in the score with overlap between the last symbol in one measure and the first symbol in the next.

Note: In addition to the settings described here, the default position of applied chord symbols is also determined by settings in the <u>Text Styles</u> dialog. The effect is cumulative.

Capo

Enter the number of the capo position at which you want to display substitute chords, in brackets, after all chord symbols in the score.

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Fingering

Fingering symbols for various instruments are found in the Fingering <u>palette</u> in the Advanced workspace.

- **Keyboard** music employs the numbers 1–5 to represent fingers of the left or right hand.

- **Guitar** music uses the numbers 0–4 to represent left-hand fingering (T is occasionally used for the thumb). Right-hand fingering is indicated by the letters p, i, m, a, c. Circled numbers represent instrument strings.

- The last five symbols in the palette are used for **lute** fingering in historical music.

To add a fingering symbol to a note:

- Select a note and double click one of the fingering symbols in a Palette
- Drag and drop a fingering symbol from a palette onto a note

To add fingering symbols to a series of notes:

1. <u>Select</u> the desired notes
2. Double-click a fingering symbol in a palette

When fingering is added to a note, the focus immediately shifts to the symbol, so you can adjust it right away.

Adjust symbol position

Use one of the following methods:

- For fine adjustments (0.1 sp) use the arrow keys; For larger adjustments (1 sp) use `Ctrl+Arrow`
- Change horizontal and vertical offsets in the <u>Inspector</u>
- Drag the symbol using your mouse

To move more than one symbol

1. <u>Select</u> the desired fingering symbols
2. Adjust using the horizontal and vertical offset fields in the <u>Inspector</u>

To restore a symbol to its default position, select it and press `Ctrl+R`

Fingering is a form of text symbol and can be <u>edited</u> and styled like any other. Right-clicking on the symbol gives you a range of options.

Lyrics

Enter lyrics in a score

In order to attach lyrics to music in a score:

1. Enter the notes to which you intend to attach lyrics.
2. Click on the note where you want to start entering lyrics.
3. Type `Ctrl+L` (Mac: `⌘+L`); or from the main menu, select `Add → Text → Lyrics`. Then type the syllable for the first note.
4. Use the following options to continue entering lyrics:
   - Type `Space` (or `Ctrl+→`) at the end of a word to go to the next note.
   - Type a hyphen `-` at the end of syllable to go to the next note. The syllables are connected with a dash.
   - Press `Shift+Space` (or `Ctrl+←`) to move to the previous syllable.
   - Press `↵` to move down to the next lyric line (Note: Don't use the `Enter` key from the numeric keypad!)
   - Press `Up` to return to the above lyric line.
5. Press `Esc` to end lyrics entry.
6. To type a second or further lyric line repeat steps 2 and 3 above, or double-click the first syllable, hit `↵` and type the syllable for the first note, then continue at step 4

Example

Melisma

A **melisma** is a syllable or word that extends over two or more notes. It is indicated by an underline extending from the base of a syllable to the last note of the melisma. The underline is created by positioning the cursor at the end of a syllable and pressing `shift+_`: once for each note in the melisma. See the image below:
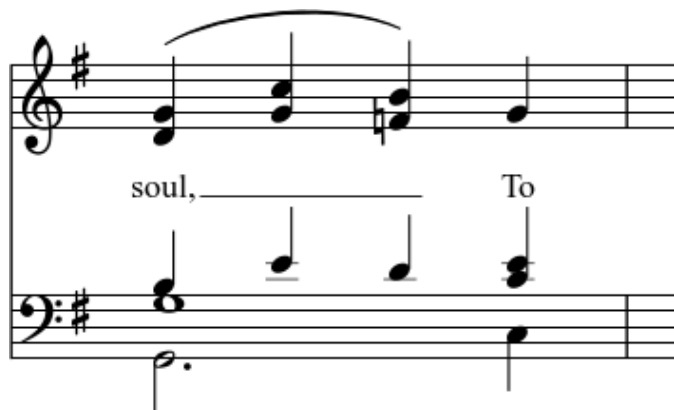
The above lyric was created in the following manner:

1. Type the letters, s-o-u-l, then a comma.
2. At the end of the word, press `shift+___`.
3. Type the letters T-o, then press `Esc.`

For non-last syllables to extend, just use additional dashes `-`, only one of them will show, and the syllable will right-align to the first note, similar to last syllables that got notated with a melisma, see above.

Elision / Synalepha / Lyric Slur

Two syllables under a note can be joined with an elision character, also known as a "lyric slur" or "synalepha".

In the text toolbar, click on the keyboard icon , or hit `F2` to open the Text Symbols palette. The synalepha is the 4th from the end (U+203F ‿ "undertie"). The synalepha will be evenly centered separating the syllables with two spaces and by inserting it after the first. For the "e‿A" example shown above:

1. Type `e`
2. Insert the synalepha using the F2 palette
3. Type `Ctrl+Space` (Mac: `⌥+Space`)
4. Type `A`

Not all fonts include the synalepha character. To find out which fonts on your computer support the synalepha, see "<u>fontlist</u>" (look for any font that shows a tie between "e" and "A" instead of a blank rectangle). The alignment of the character also varies between fonts.

Special characters

Lyrics can be <u>edited</u> as normal text with the exception of a few characters: If you want to add a space, hyphen, or underscore to a single syllable, use the following shortcuts:

*   `Ctrl+Space` (Mac: `⌥+Space`) enters a space ( ) into the lyrics text
*   `Ctrl+-` (Mac: `⌥+-`) or `AltGr+-` enters a hyphen (-) into the lyrics text
*   `Ctrl+Shift+_` (Mac: `⌥+_`) enters an underscore (_) into the lyrics text
*   `Ctrl+↵` (Mac: `⌥+Return`) or `Enter` (from the numeric keypad) enters a line feed into the lyrics text

Adjusting individual lyric lines

The top margin and line height of all lyric lines can be adjusted globally from the menu `Style →` `General... → Page`.

However, the horizontal (and vertical) offset of individual lyric lines can be finely adjusted by right-clicking on a word in the desired line, and using the various selection options available to select all the words that you wish to change. Then adjust using the offset option in the Inspector.

For example, to change the horizontal position of the lyrics in *one* staff only of one particular system: right click on a word in that line, choose `Select → More...`, then tick the boxes labelled "Same Stave" and "Same System". Now use "horizontal offset" in the Inspector to fine tune the line position.

To select lyrics for a range of notes, first select the range of notes (click first note, shift+click last), then right click a lyric and choose Select / All Similar Elements in Range Selection. Now use the Inspector to adjust the lyrics.

Copy lyrics to clipboard

Select `Edit → Tools → Copy Lyrics to Clipboard.`

Paste lyrics from clipboard

To copy and paste lyrics from a text file into a score:

1. Enter the notes in the score to which the lyrics will be attached.
2. Set up your lyrics in a text file, with appropriate spaces, hyphens, line-breaks etc.
3. Copy the lyrics from the text-file.
4. Select the start note in Musescore, and press `Ctrl+L` (Mac: `Cmd+L`) (step 3 under Enter lyrics in a score).
5. Repeatedly applying paste will enter successive words of the lyrics. You may need to enter melismas and make other corrections as you go along.

See also

- Text
- Chord symbol
- How to insert Lyrics
- How to move lyrics
- How to add a block of text to a score

External links

- Video tutorial: MuseScore in Minutes: Lesson 6 - Text, Lyrics and Chords

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Rehearsal marks

Rehearsal marks are used to identify specific points in a score to facilitate rehearsing. They are typically consecutive letters or numbers (A, B, C…, or 1, 2, 3…), or contain the number of the measure they are attached to (though they are generally larger than plain measure numbers, often boldface and/or enclosed in boxes). Whichever you choose, MuseScore can automatically display the appropriate letters or numbers in each rehearsal mark. Rehearsal marks can also be used as bookmarks to which you can instantly navigate when creating a large score (see →below).

Add a rehearsal mark

Manual Placement

The simplest way to add a rehearsal mark is to click on a note (or rest) at the start of a rehearsal section and use the keyboard shortcut `Ctrl+M` (Mac: `Cmd+M`), or use the menu command `Add → Text → Rehearsal Mark`: then enter the desired text yourself.

Automatic placement

Alternatively, select a note, open the Text palette, and double-click the **[B1]** rehearsal mark icon: the correct letter or number is entered automatically, according to the following rules:

1. The first automatic rehearsal mark you create is labelled "A," the second "B," the third "C," and so on. If you want to establish a different format (lower case, number or measure-number), change the first rehearsal mark accordingly before adding the second one. Subsequently-added rehearsal marks follow the format of the previously-added mark.

2. If you add a (palette) rehearsal mark between two existing *alphabetical* marks, a "1" is appended to the name of the new mark: so a mark added between letters "C" and "D" becomes "C1," and so on. Similarly, if you add a new rehearsal mark between two existing *numerical* marks, an "A" is appended: so a mark added between numbers "3" and "4" becomes "3A" and so on. Afterward, you can automatically resequence the rehearsal marks, if required (see →below).

3. To create a series based on measure number, the first rehearsal mark should be altered, before creating a second one, so that it reads the same as the number of the measure it is attached to. (If the number of the rehearsal mark is different from the actual measure number, subsequent

marks will assume a numerical order.)

Automatically resequence rehearsal marks

MuseScore allows the user to automatically re-order a series of rehearsal marks if they have got out of sequence for any reason. Use the following method:

1. Before making a selection, you can, if desired, establish a new format for the rehearsal marks (lower/upper case, number, or measure number) by manually altering the first mark in the range accordingly.
2. Select the range of measures you wish to apply the **Resequence** command to (if there is no selection then the program assumes you wish to resequence all measures).
3. Select `Edit → Tools → Resequence Rehearsal Marks`.

MuseScore automatically detects the sequence based on the *first rehearsal mark* in the selection—all rehearsal marks in the selection are then altered accordingly. The following sequences are possible:

- A, B, C etc.
- a, b, c etc.
- Numerical: 1, 2, 3 etc.
- Numerical: according to measure numbers. This requires the number of the first mark in the series to be equal to the number of the measure it is attached to.

Search for a rehearsal mark

To navigate to a specific rehearsal mark, press `Ctrl+F` (Mac: `Cmd+F`) to open the **Find** bar, then enter the name of the rehearsal mark. The first character of a rehearsal mark must be a *letter* for it to be found: subsequent characters can be letters or numbers.

Note: If the text entered in the Find bar consists only of numbers, the program assumes you are searching for a measure number. See Viewing and Navigation: Find.

Text style

Rehearsal marks are a variety of system text. They will appear on every part and on the score. Multimeasure rests are automatically broken before and after rehearsal marks.

By default, rehearsal marks are bold, in large font size, and enclosed in frames with rounded corners. All aspects of their appearance can be changed globally via the rehearsal mark Text style.

See also

- Text properties

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Formatting

Layout and formatting

You've finished your score and you want to print it out. However, you want to improve how it looks. This page describes many different ways, and how they work together.

Ways to affect layout

- `Layout → Page Settings...`: Change global settings such as page size, how big a "Staff space" is (under "Scaling"), and how big page margins are. Staff space is used in other settings (example: "5.0sp"), so changing "Staff space" will change most other settings.
- `Layout → Increase Stretch, Decrease Stretch`: Adjust spacing—stretch or squash measures you specifically select.
- `Style → General... → Page`: Change global settings that affect how close staves are and systems are, how much margin lyrics have, and so on.
- `Style → General... → System`: Adjust System bracket thickness and distance, or the Brace thickness and distance.

- `Edit → Tools → `<u>`Add/Remove line breaks`</u>: Fix the number of measures per system.
- `Style → General... → Score`: Change score details, such as whether there are multimeasure rests or hidden empty staves.
- `Style → General... → Measure`: Set measure spacing, key to controlling number of measures per line.
- Palette → Breaks & Spacers: Break a line at a particular measure, a page at a particular line, or add space between measures.
- `Style → General... → Sizes`: Set the proportional size of "small" and grace notes. Changing this would be unusual.

Note: Here, options will almost always apply to all objects you refer to in your score, some options may be individually done with <u>inspector and other object properties</u> for one, or a selection of objects...

Layout → Page Settings...

See <u>Page settings</u>.

Layout → Increase Stretch, Decrease Stretch
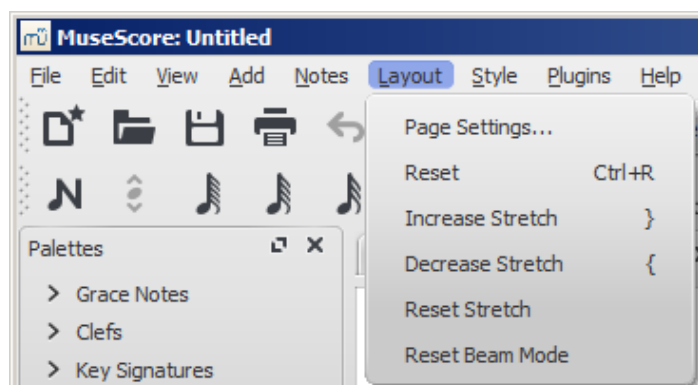
To increase or decrease the horizontal spacing of notes within a measure or measures, you can select the measures you want to affect, then use the "Increase Stretch" command (}) to widen them so that fewer are on a line, or "Decrease Stretch" ({) to squash them to fit more on a line. You can also access the exact same property from <u>Measure Properties</u>, where you can precisely edit the exact percentage of additional space (or negative stretch). To reset a measure's stretch to the default spacing of 1, use the "Reset Stretch" menu command.

Style → General... → Score
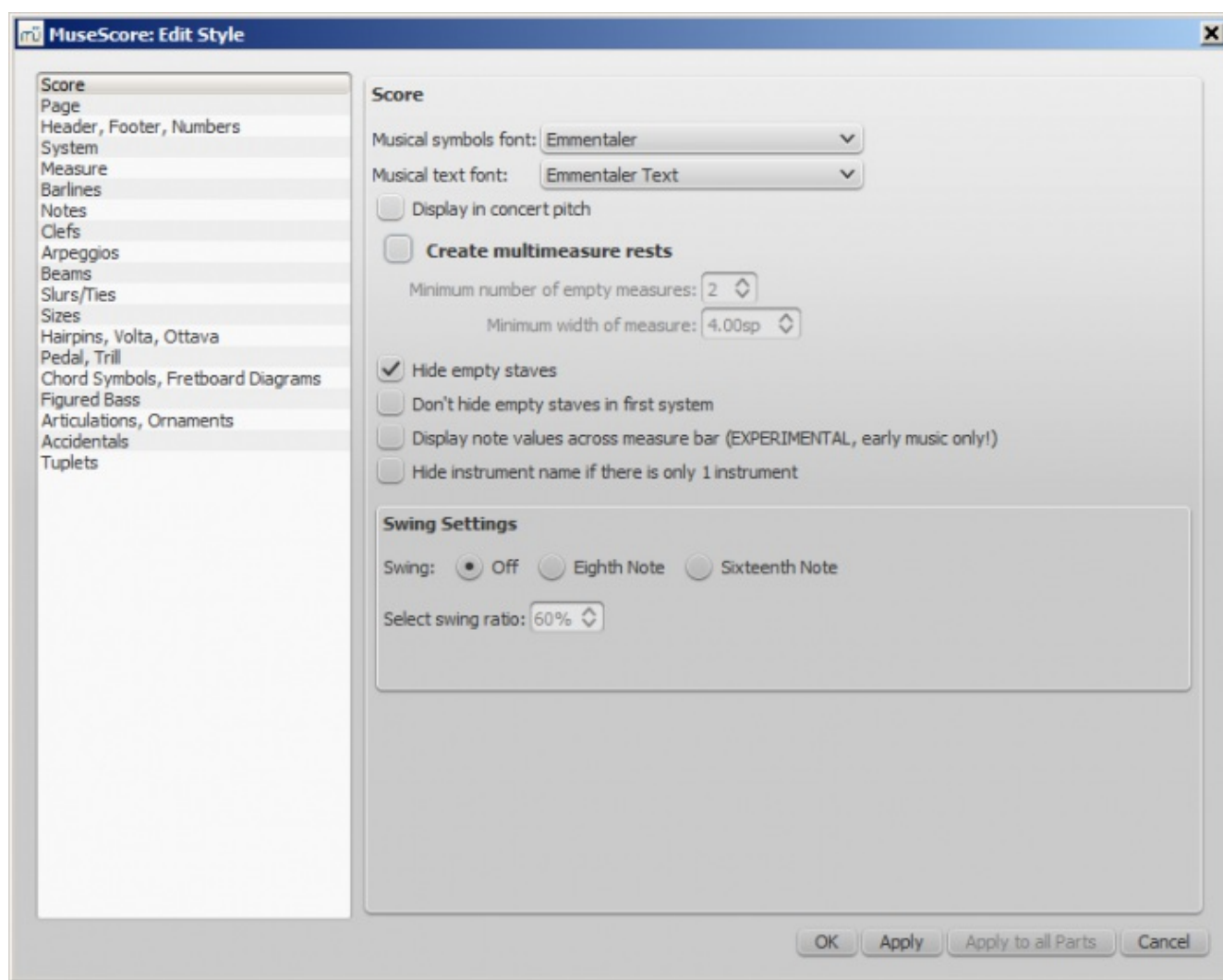
Here you can choose whether to create **multimeasure rests** and whether to **hide empty staves**. Both of these can affect score size greatly; **Hide empty staves** is used for creating **condensed scores**. You can also specify the minimum size and minimal duration for multimeasure rests.

"Hide instrument name if there is only 1 instrument" can also be a good space saver in your parts (or in solo score), as it won't write the instrument name at the beginning of the line.

You can also change the musical font for text and symbols. There are 3 musical fonts available (for symbols used in the staves): Emmentaler, Gonville, and Bravura. There are 4 musical text fonts available (for use in texts like dynamics, tempo markings, etc.): Emmentaler, Gonville, Bravura and MuseJazz. Of these Emmentaler is the default and Bravura the most complete one.

(To change text font and properties see Text style)

Some options are specific to early music, and swing playback.

Style → General... → Page
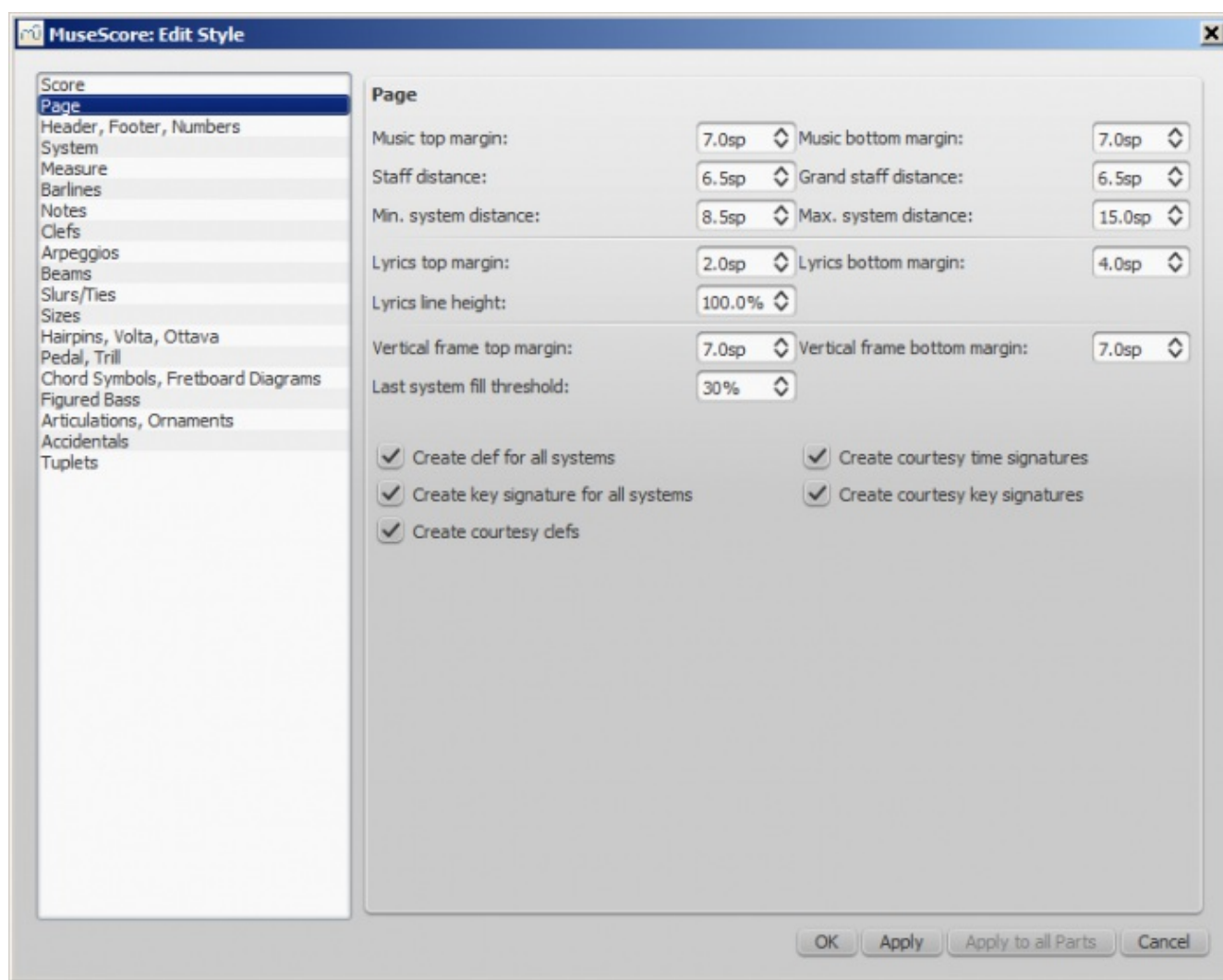
The options available here affect the *overall* layout of your score on the page. You can:

- Adjust the distance between one system and the next, and between staves.
- Change the spacing between lyric lines and adjust the height of their top and bottom margins.
- Change the space at the top and bottom of the page between the music staves and page margins.
- Change the overall top and bottom margins of vertical frames.
- Control the display (on/off) of key signatures, time signatures and clefs including courtesy elements.

Distance to page margins

- **Music top margin**: the distance between the top staff line of the first staff on the page and the top page margin.
- **Music bottom margin**: The distance between the bottom staff line of the last staff on the page and the bottom page margin.

Distance between staves

- **Staff distance**: The space between staves which are not part of a grand staff (see below).
- **Grand staff distance**: The space between staves that share the *same* instrument—such as the piano, organ, or those of a guitar staff/tab pair.

Note: To alter the space above *one particular* staff see Extra distance above staff (Staff properties).

Distance between systems

- **Min. system distance**: The minimum distance allowed between one system and the next.
- **Max. system distance**: The maximum distance allowed between one system and the next.

Lyrics Margins

- **Lyrics top margin**: The height of the margin *above* the *top* lyrics line (in a system).
- **Lyrics bottom margin**: The height of the margin *underneath* the *bottom* lyrics line (in a system).
- **Lyrics line height**: The distance between lyrics line (in a system), expressed as a percentage of the line height associated with the lyrics <u>text style</u>.

Vertical frame margins

- **Vertical frame top margin**: The default margin height *above* a vertical frame.
- **Vertical frame bottom margin**: The default margin height *below* a vertical frame.

Last system fill threshold

- If the last system is longer than this percentage of the page width, it gets stretched to fill that width.

Style → General... → Header, Footer, Numbers
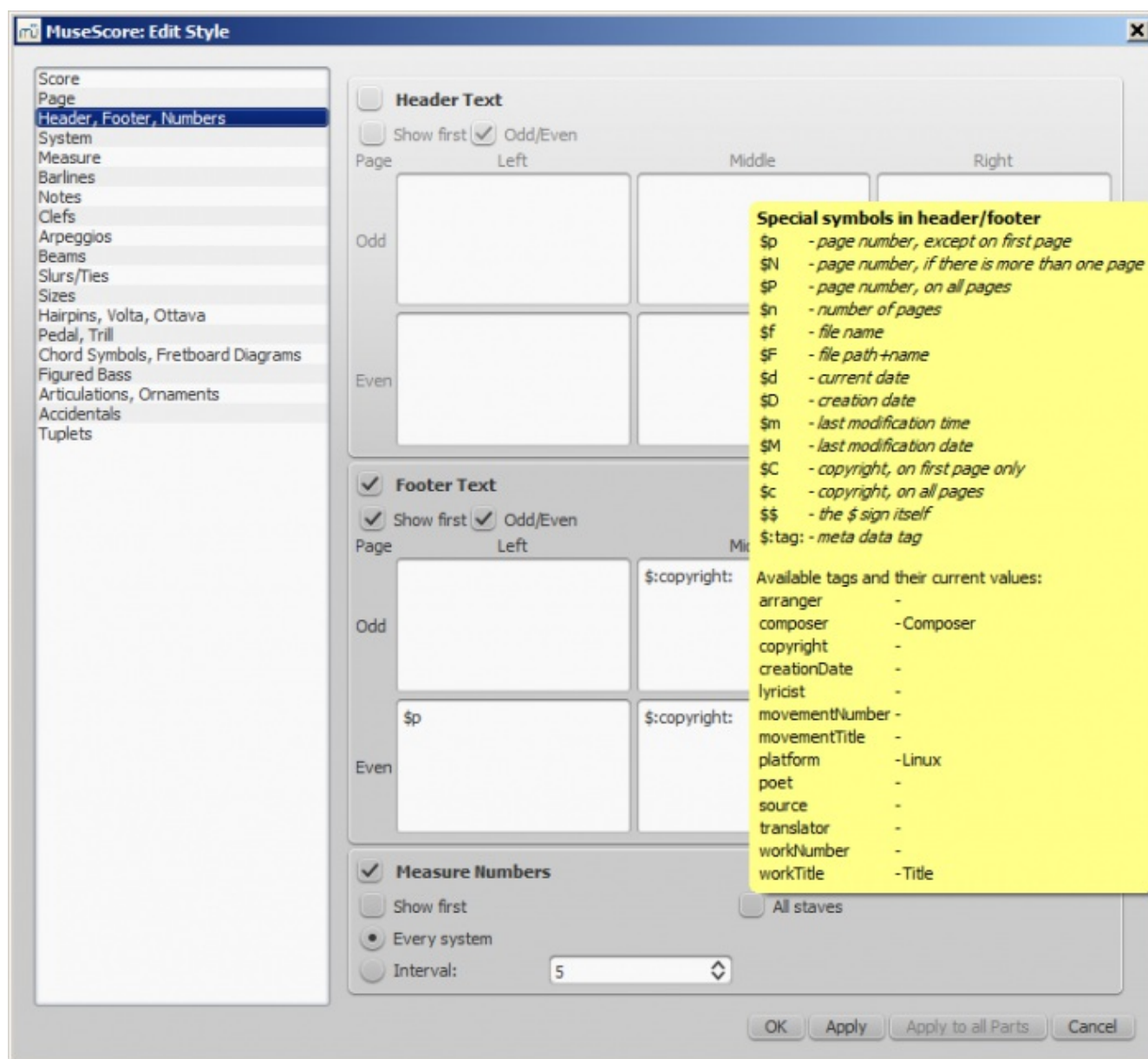
You can show the content of a score's meta tags (see<u>Score information</u>) or show page numbers in a header or footer for your score. To create a header or footer for a score with linked parts, make sure the main score is in the active tab. To create a header or footer for an individual part, that part needs to be the active tab.

If you hover with your mouse over the Header or Footer text region, a list of macros will appear, showing their meaning, as well as the existing meta tags and their content.

You can create different Headers and Footers for even and odd pages, such as putting page numbers on the right for odd-numbered pages and on the left for even-numbered pages.

You can also edit whether and how often measure numbers appear.

Style → General... → System
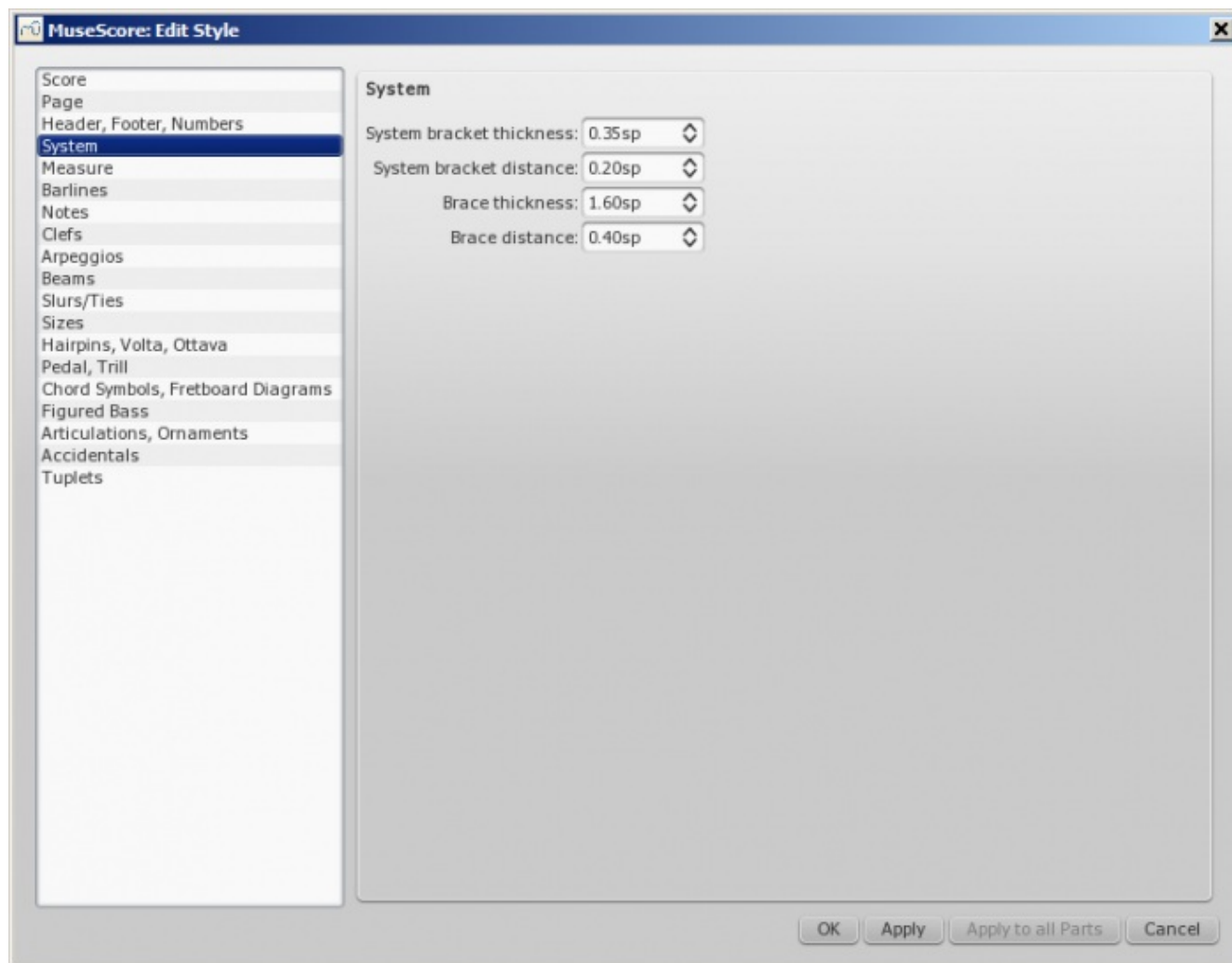
Bracket and Braces
See Bracket

- Distances
  You can set distance between the system and the Brackets and Brace
- Width
  You can set the width of Bracket and Brace.

Style → General... → Measure

See General style: Measure.

Style → General... → Barlines
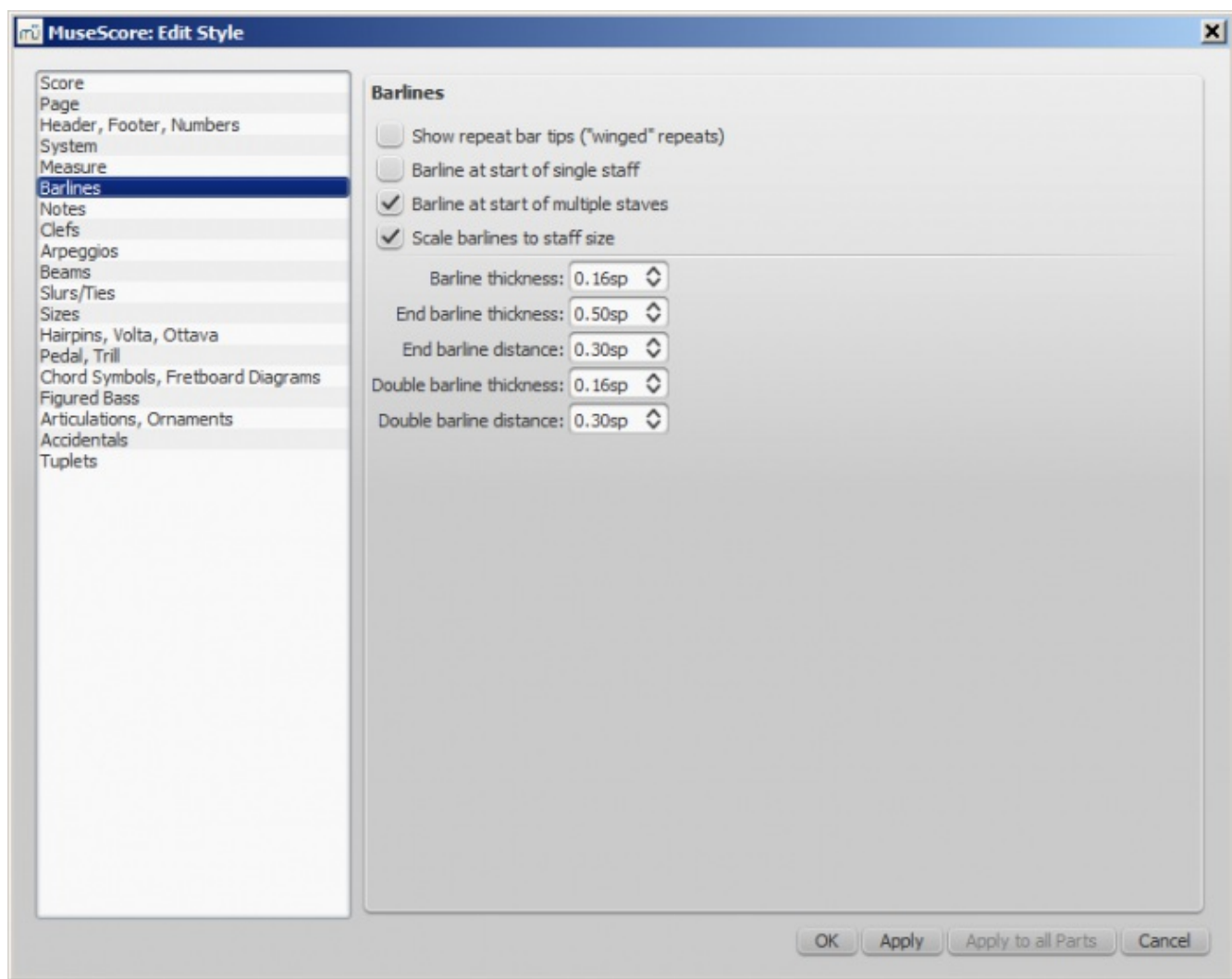
- Control whether to show barlines at the beginning of a staff or multiple staves.
- **Scale barlines to staff size** affects "small" staves only. See Barline adjustment possibilities (external link) for details.
- Control proportion of thickness and distance within double barlines, including repeat barlines.

Palette → Breaks & Spacers

See Breaks and spacers.

Style → General... → Notes
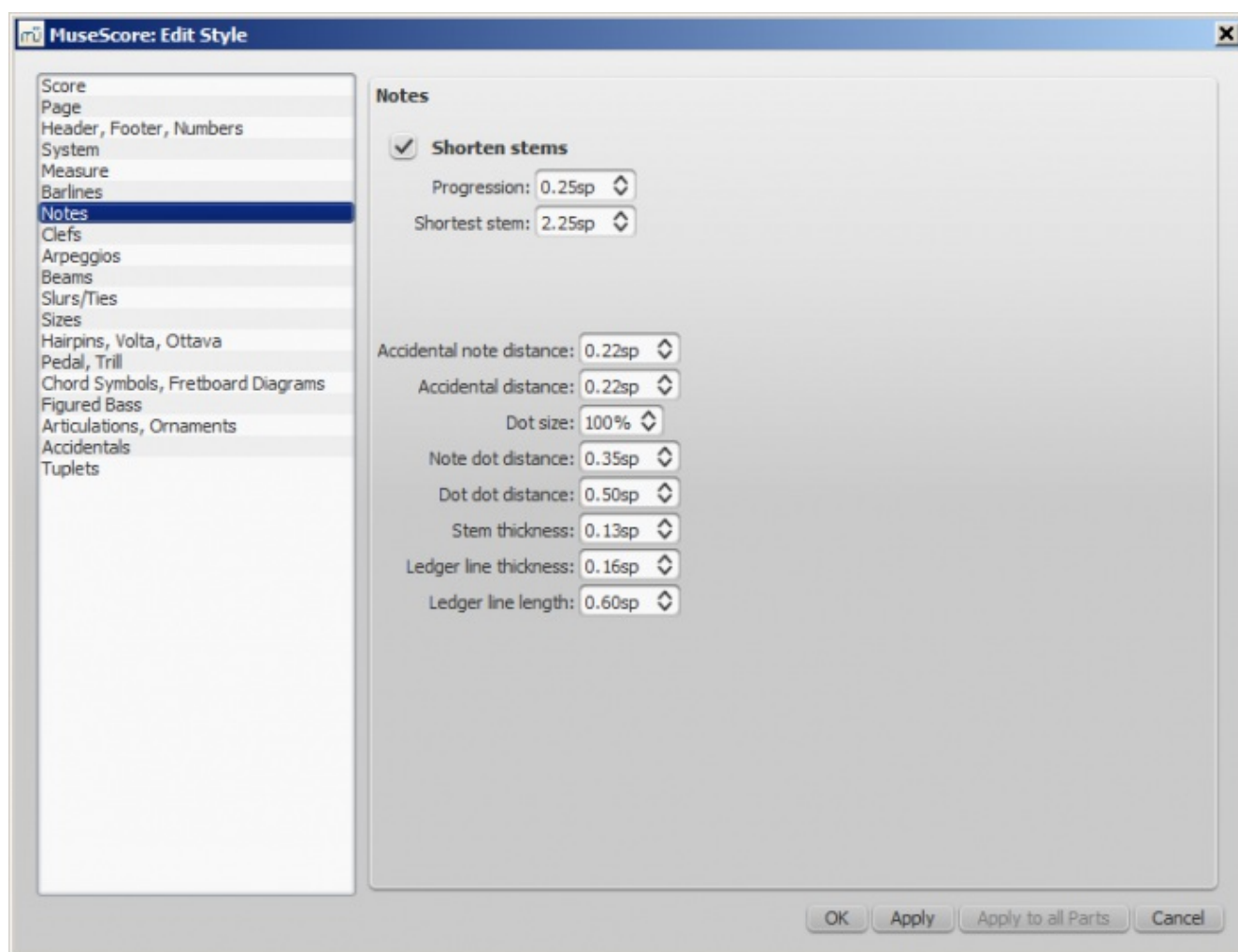
This page can also be accessed direct from the score by right-clicking on any note and selecting "Style…" Here you can adjust the distance and thickness of note-related objects (stems, ledger lines, dots, accidentals). Changing these would be unusual.

Style → General... → Clefs
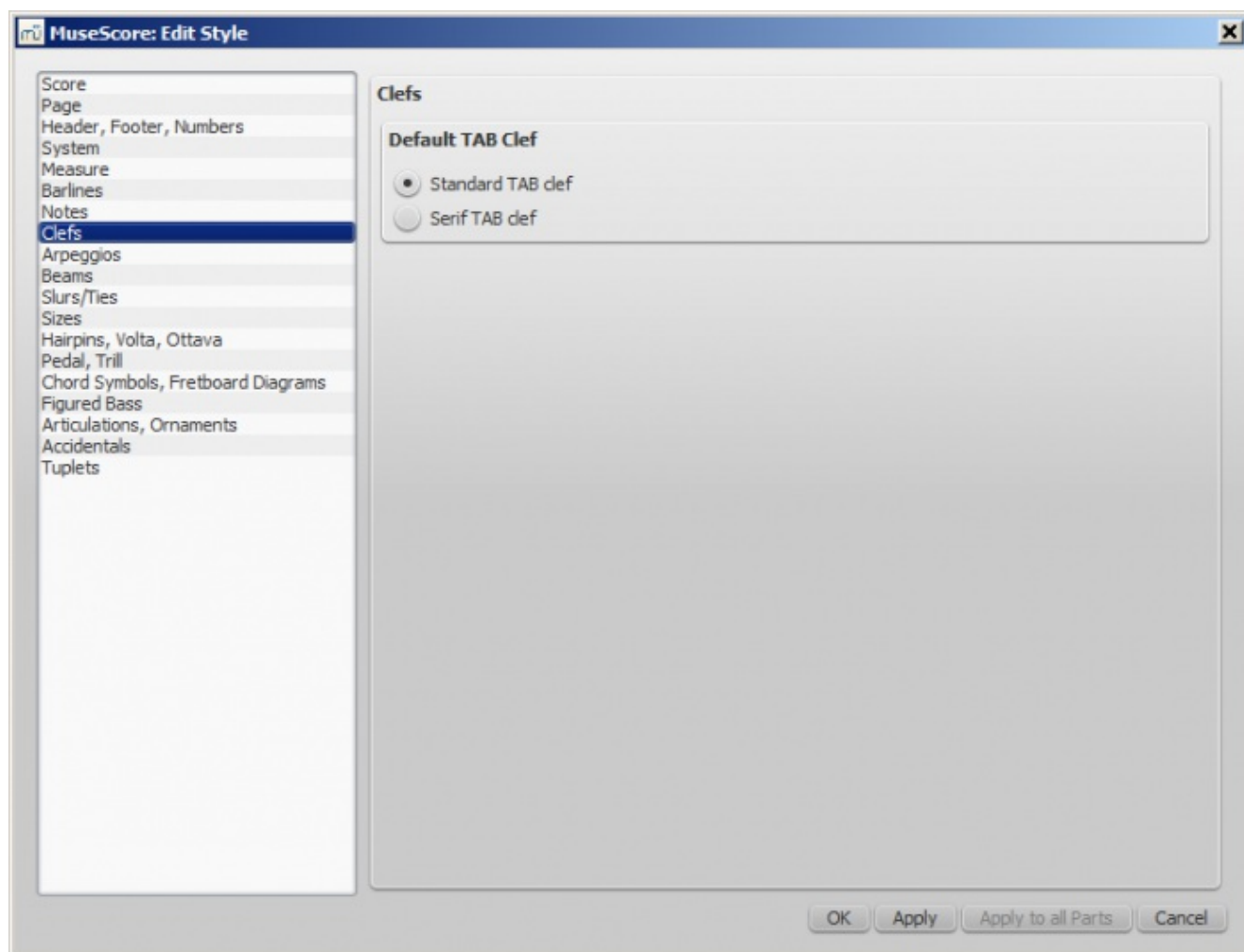
You can choose between Serif and Standard clef for your tablature sheet.

Style → General... → Arpeggios
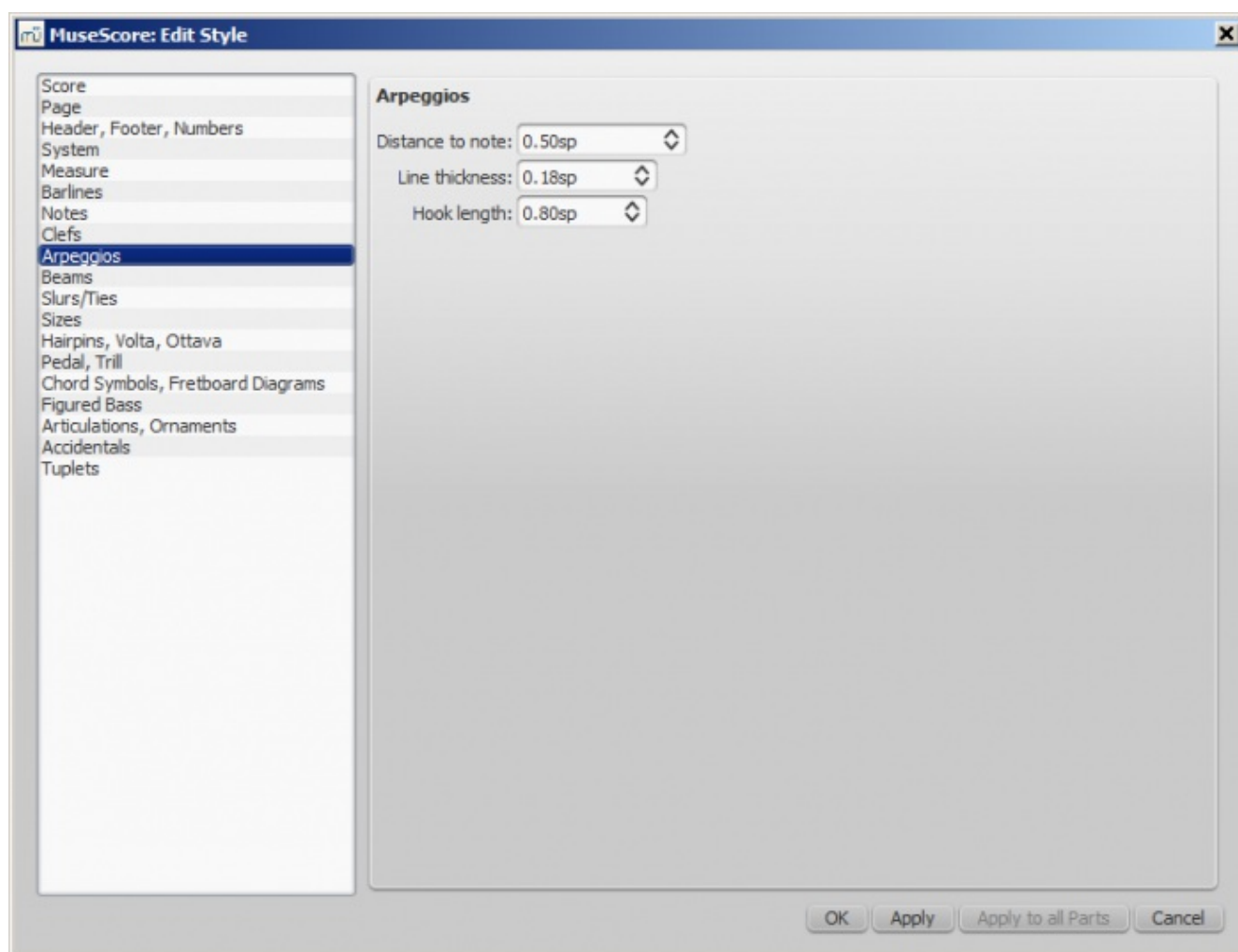
Here you can change the thickness, spacing and hook height of the following arpeggio and strum symbols:

Changes to these properties would be unusual.

Style → General... → Beams
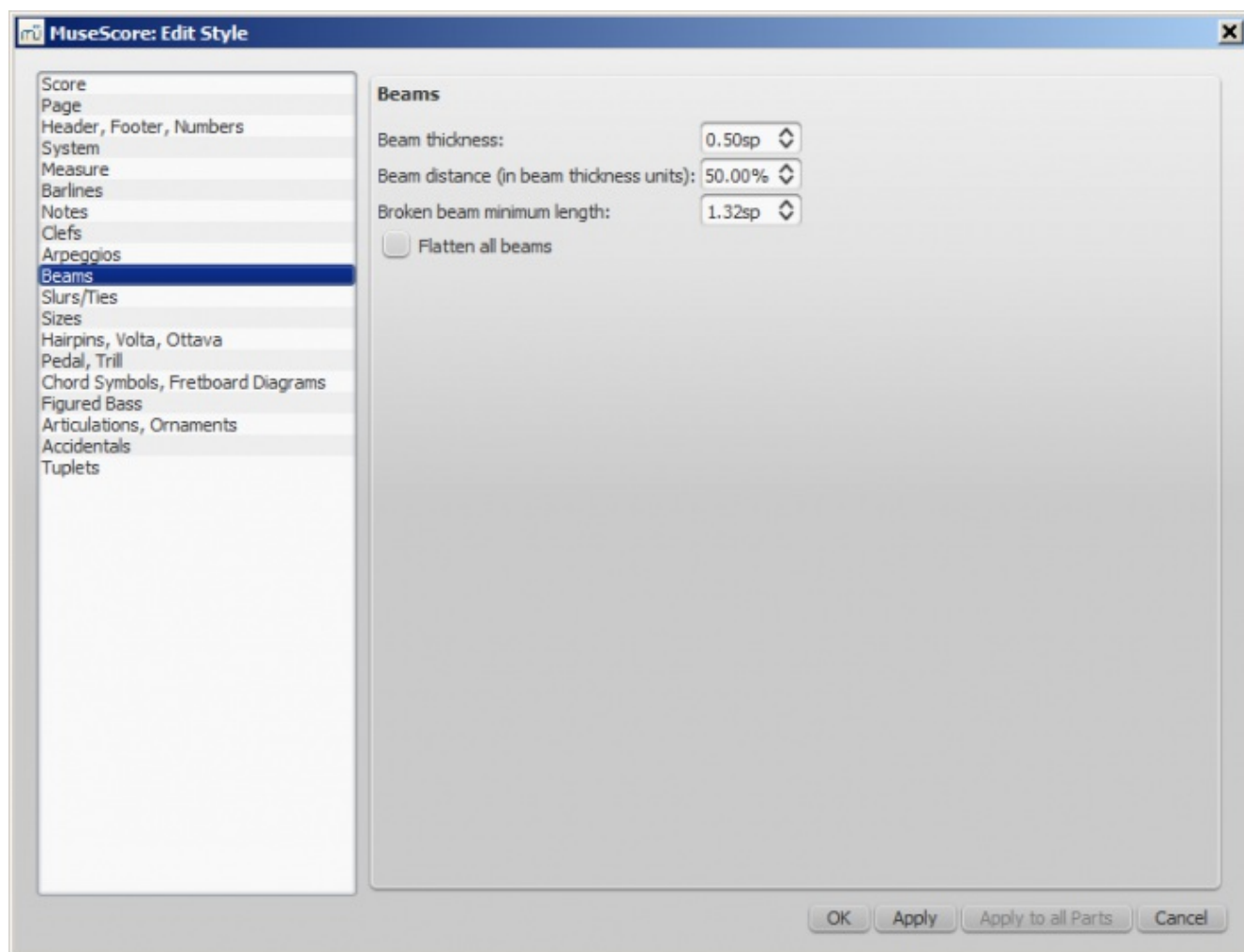
Style → General... → Slurs/Ties
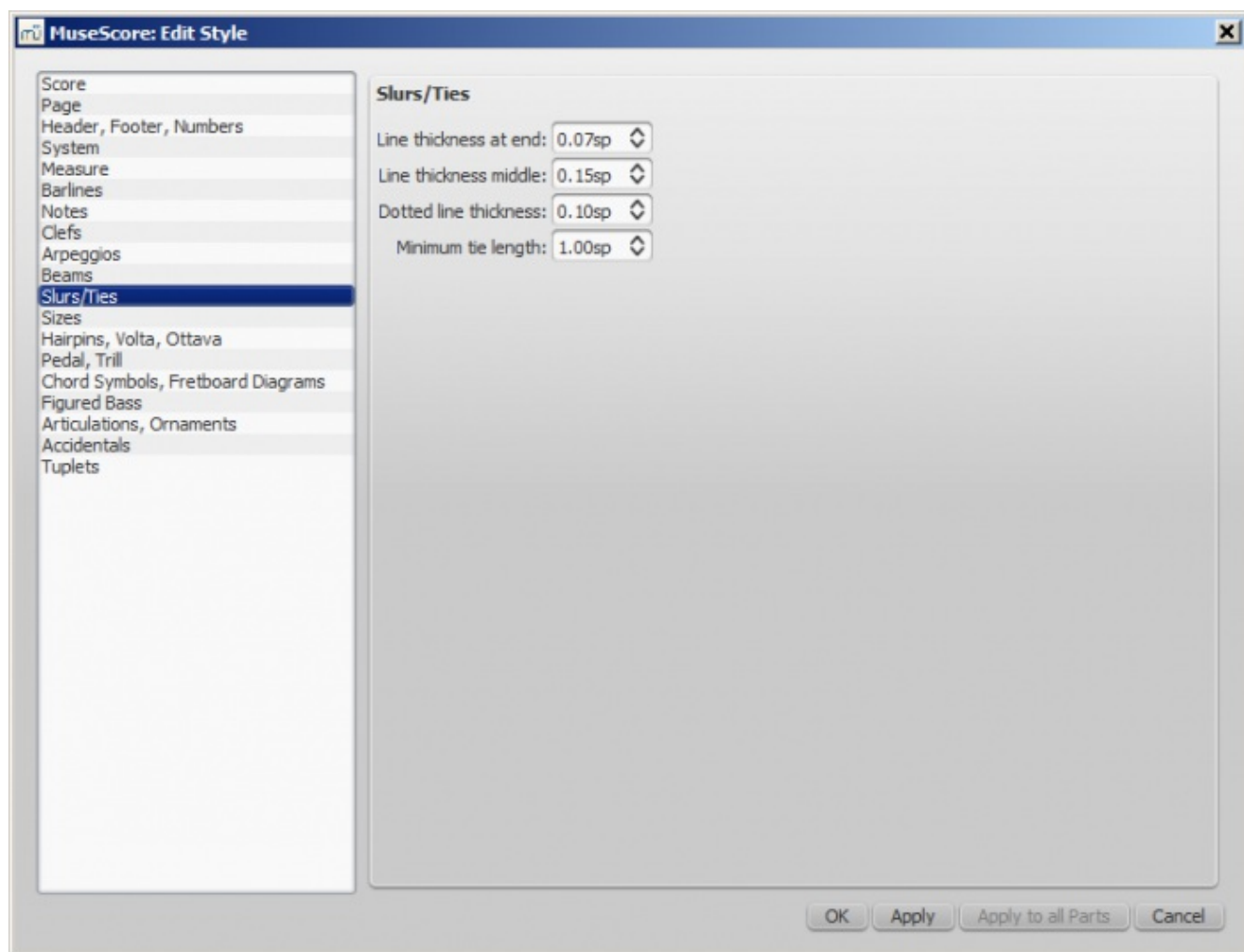
Style → General... → Sizes
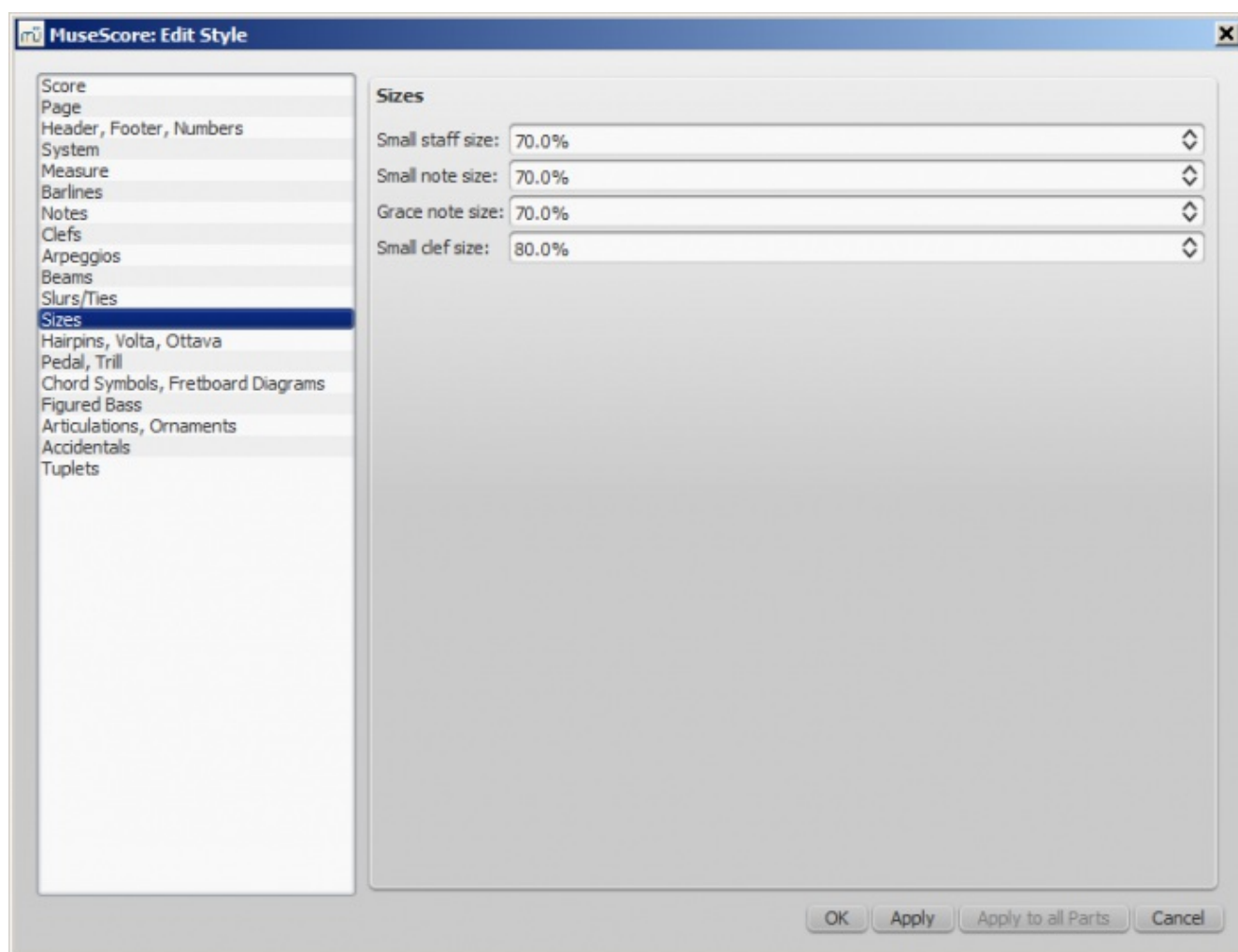
Sets the proportional size of "small" and grace notes, as well as small staves and clefs. Changing this would be unusual.

Style → General... → Hairpins, Volta, Ottava
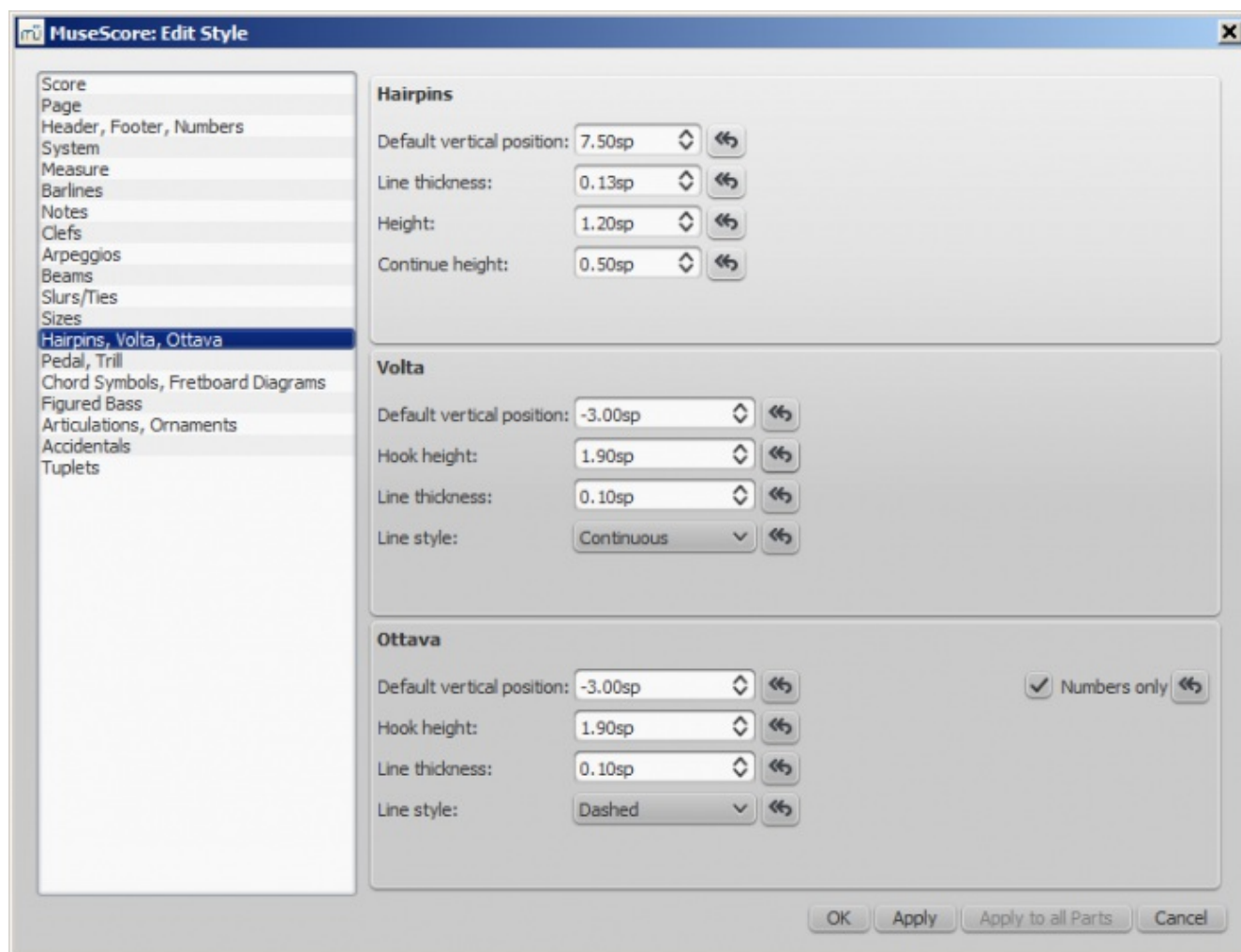
The 🔄 button returns the setting to the original value.

Style → General... → Pedal, Trill
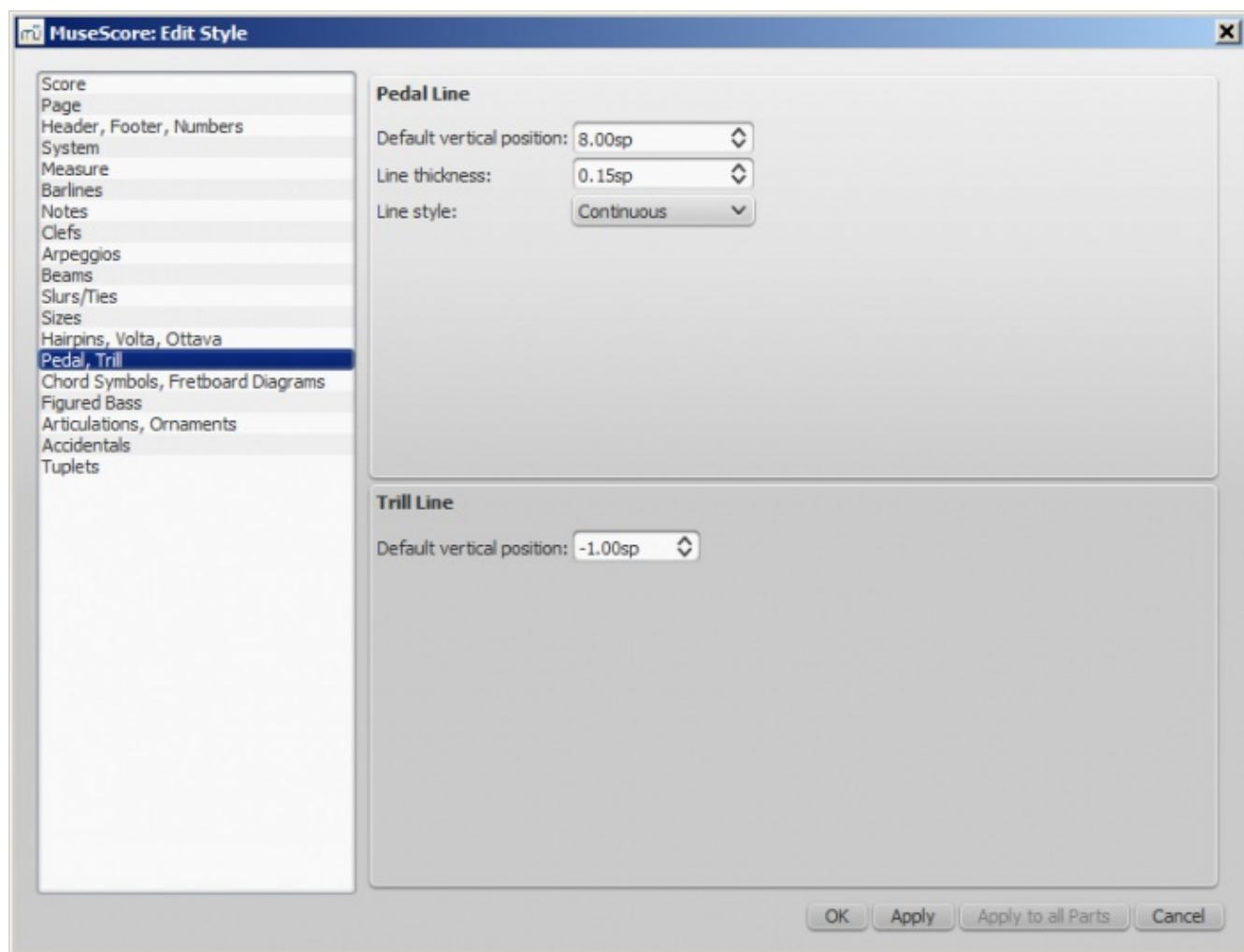
Style → General... → Chord Symbols, Fretboard Diagrams
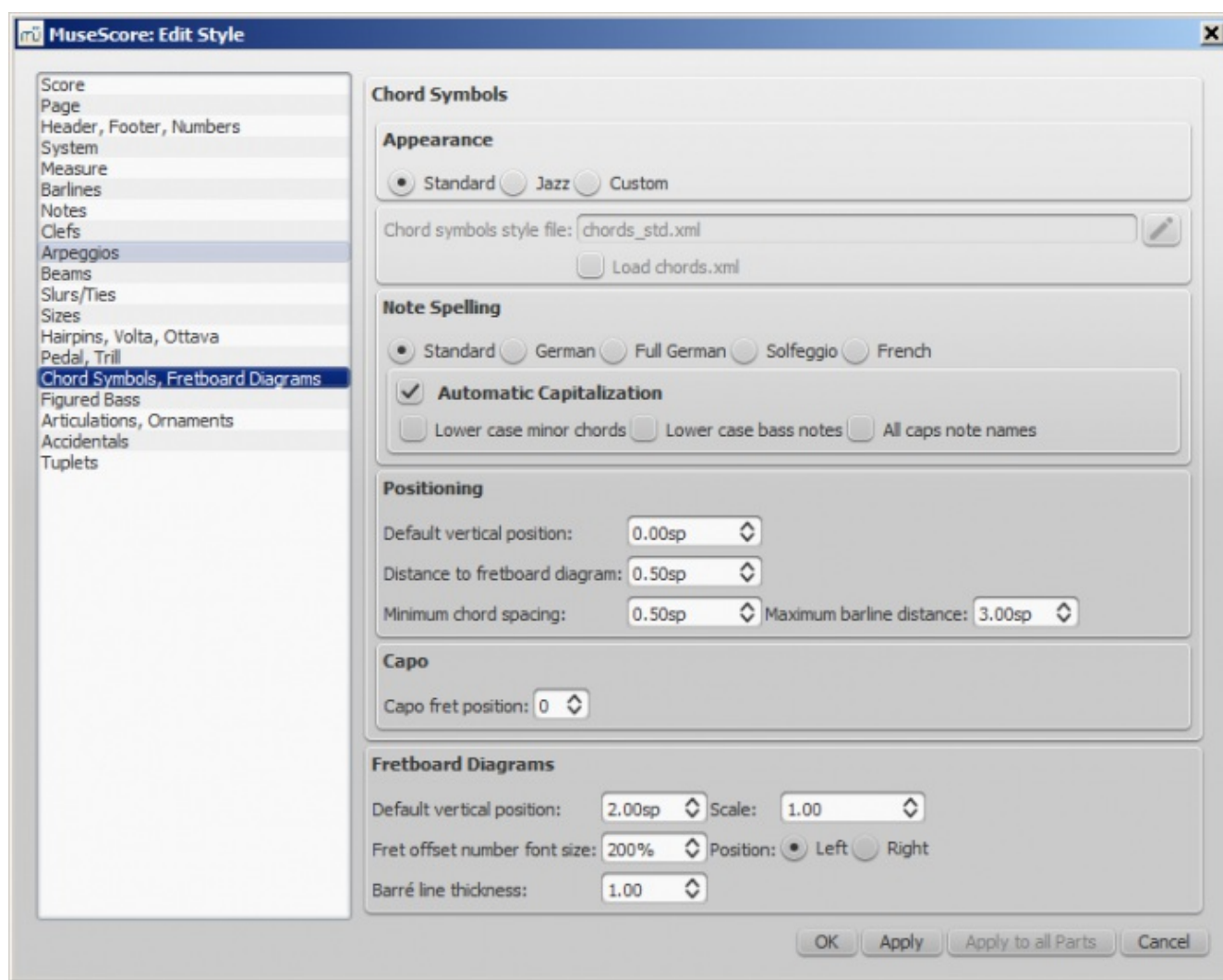
This section allows you to adjust the format and positioning of chord symbols and Fretboard diagrams.

Appearance: Chose a default chord symbol style—Standard, Jazz or Custom.

Note Spelling: Chose the spelling convention for chord symbols and whether to use capital or small letters.

Positioning:

- **Default vertical position**: The default vertical distance in space units (sp.) between a newly-applied chord symbol and the music staff. Negative values may be used.
- **Distance to fretboard diagram**: The distance (in sp. units) from a chord symbol to a fretboard diagram when both are applied to the same location on a staff. This value overrides the above "Default vertical position" setting. The user can chose to place a chord symbol below a fretboard diagram by entering a negative value.
- **Minimum chord spacing**: The minimum space to allow between chord symbols.
- **Maximum barline distrance**: Increases the distance between the final chord symbol in a measure and the following barline. You *may* wish to adjust this value if there is a recurring problem in the score with overlap between the final chord symbol in one measure and the following chord symbol.

Capo: Enter the number of the capo position at which you want to display substitute chords, in brackets, for all chord symbols in the score.

Fretboard diagrams:

- **Default vertical position**: the distance in sp. units from a newly applied fretboard diagram to a staff. A negative value may be used.
- **Scale**: Increase or decrease the size of the fretboard diagram in the score.
- **Fret offset number font size**: Increase or decrease the size of a fret number displayed next to a diagram.
- **Position Left/Right**: Display fret number to the left or right of the fretboard diagram.
- **Barre line thickness**: Make barre lines in fretboard diagrams thicker or thinner.

153

Style → General... → Figured Bass
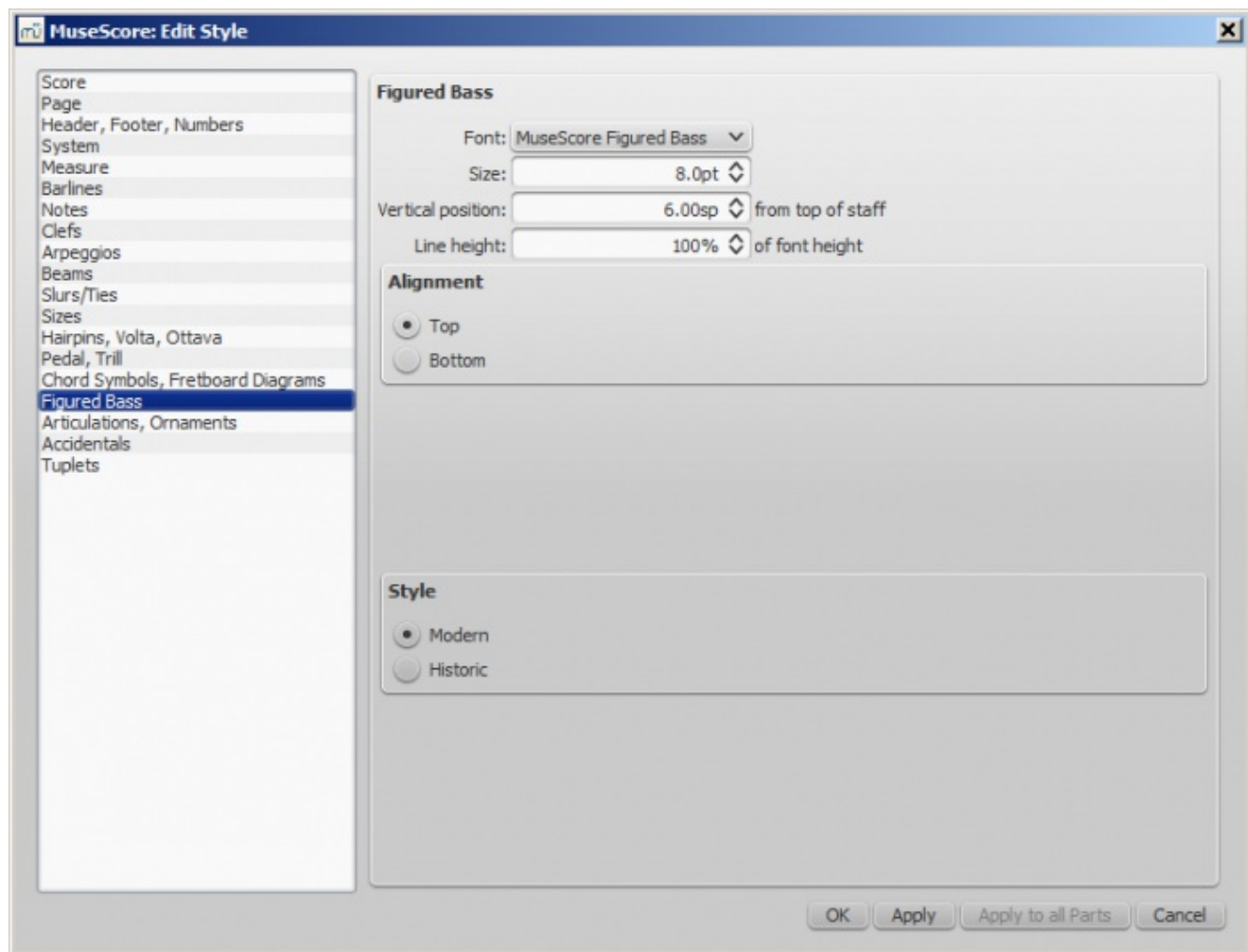
Options about figured bass font, style and alignment.
See also Figured bass

Style → General... → Articulations, Ornaments
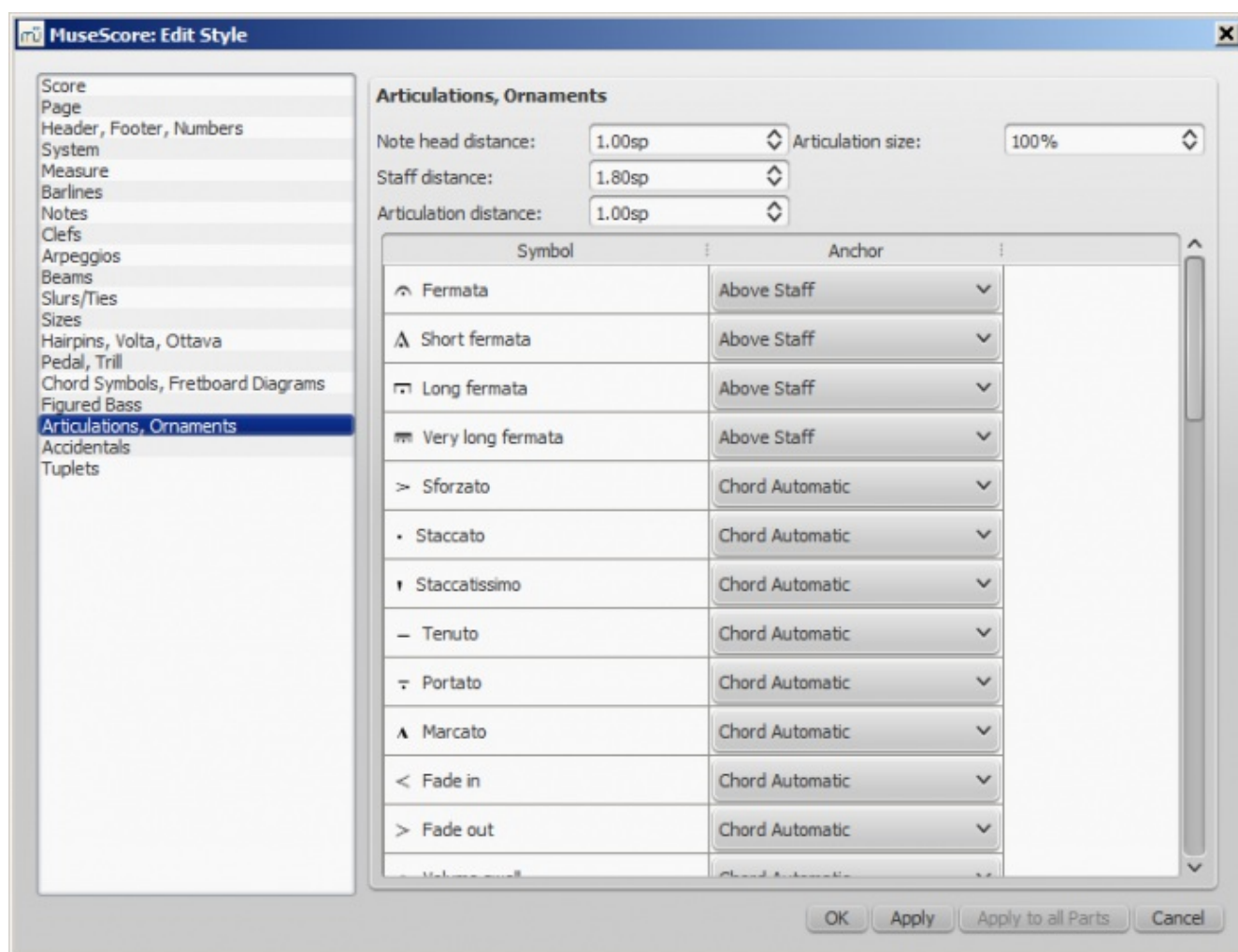
Position of articulation with respect to the notes and staves

Style → General... → Accidentals
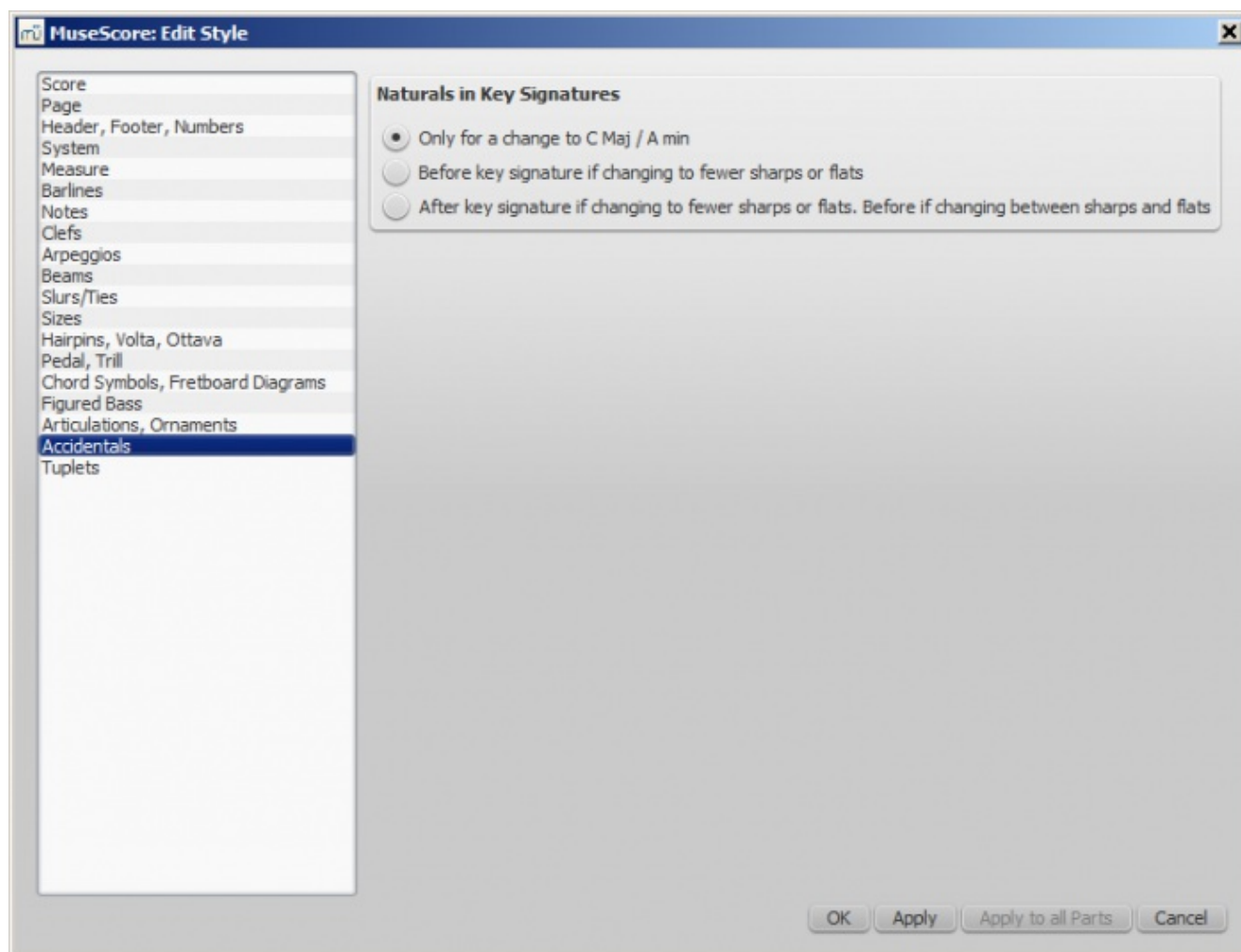
Options about naturals at key signature changes

Style → General... → Tuplets
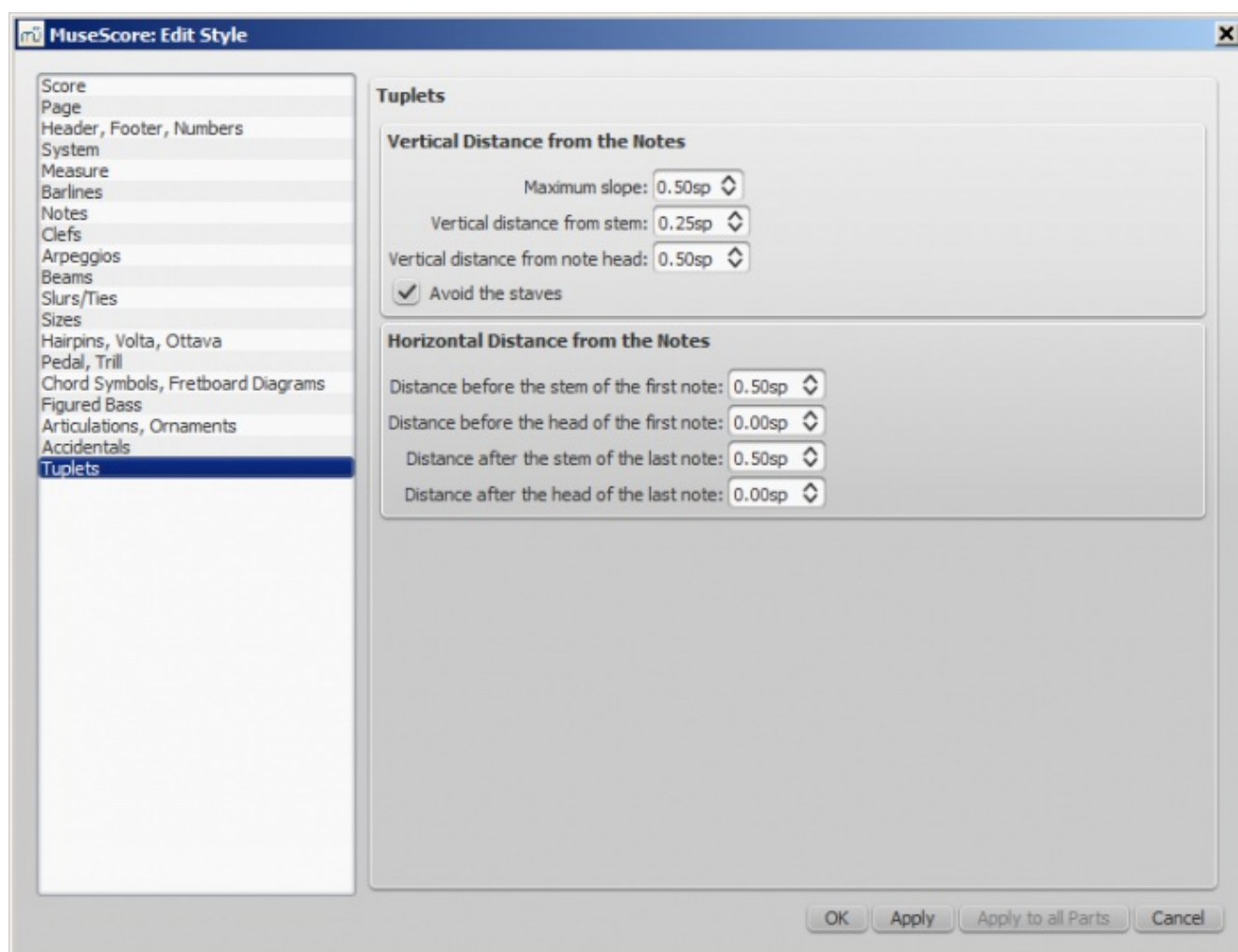
Apply and OK buttons

With the Apply button you can see (without closing the window) what the changes you make are like. OK will save the changes you made in your sheet and close the window.

Apply to all parts in one go

When in a part tab while changing layout and formatting, you can use the Apply to all Parts button to apply all changes (either in Layout → Page Settings.... or Style → General...) to apply the new settings to all parts in just one click.

Save/Load style

It is easy to transfer a complete set of styles (all General Style settings, all text styles, and page settings) from one score to the other using the **Save/Load Style** functions.

To **save** a customized style:

1. Go to Style → Save Style....
2. Name and save the **style file** (the default folder is set in your Preferences). Styles are stored as *.mss files.

Note: You can also define a preferred style for scores and parts in the Score section of MuseScore's Preferences.

To **load** a customized style:

1. Go to Style → Load Style....
2. Navigate to and select the the Style file (.mss) and click Open (or double click on the file).

All existing styles in the score should update automatically.

See also

- <u>To edit spacing between notes</u>
- <u>Tutorial – How to create large-print stave notation (MSN)</u>
- <u>Upgrading from MuseScore 1.x, local relayout</u>

External links

- <u>MuseScore in 10 Easy Steps: Part 10A Layout and Formatting (a video tutorial)</u>
- <u>MuseScore in 10 Easy Steps: Part 10B Layout and Formatting (a video tutorial)</u>

General style: Measure
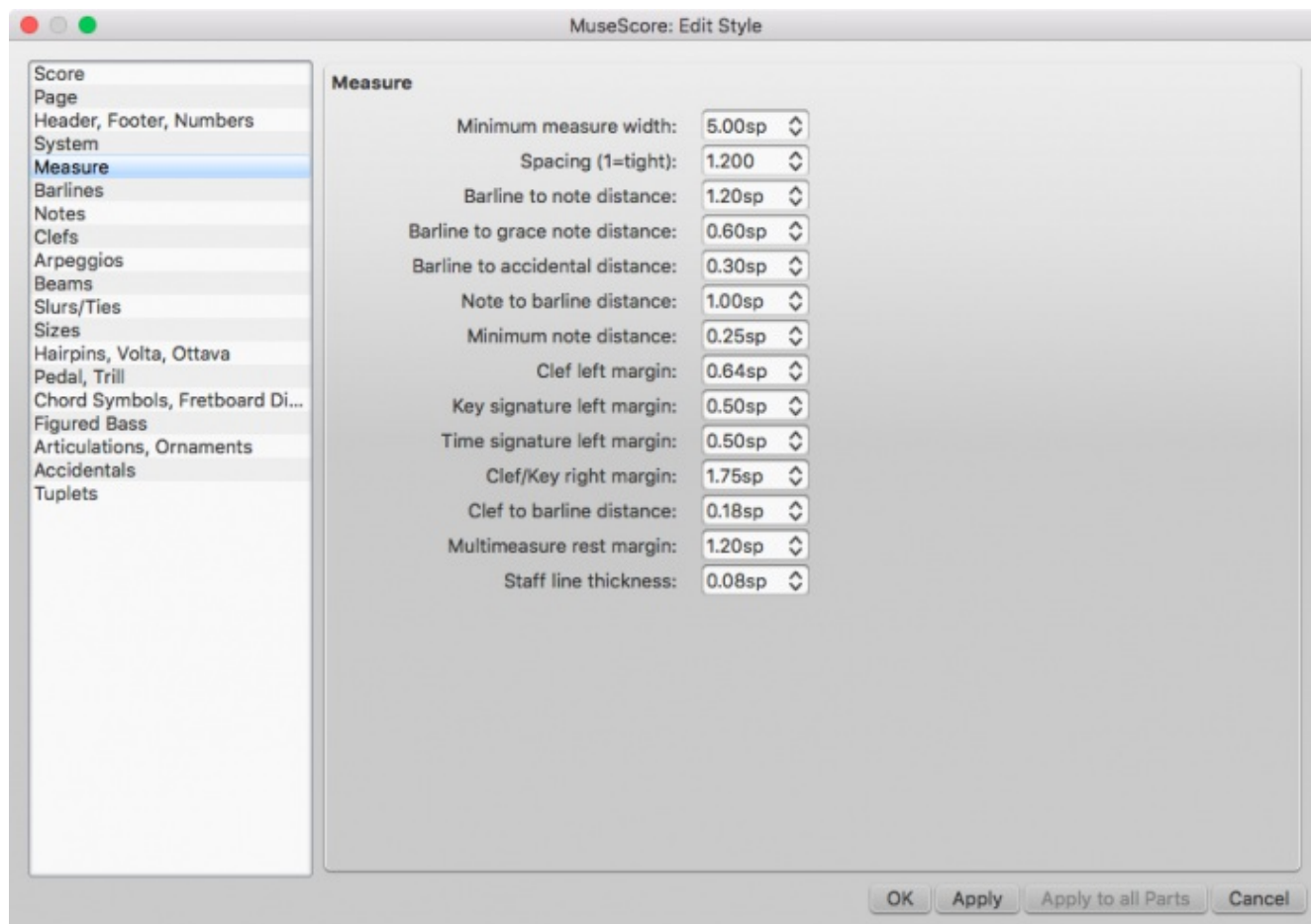
`Style → General → Measure` allows you to adjust the distance between various items within measures.

Note: As you shrink or expand distances between notes and rests, MuseScore will always attempt to keep the elements within each measure relatively spaced according to best engraving practice. In other words, you may specify a certain amount of space between notes, but MuseScore will not apply your change in such a way as to make all notes perfectly equidistant—there will always be less space to the right of shorter notes than longer notes. In addition, elements attached to notes or rests such as fingerings, dynamics, lines, and so forth, will be moved along with the notes or rests they are anchored to when you make changes, so you need not worry about readjusting them separately.

All settings related to measure width and note spacing are **minimum** values. Measures are automatically stretched, if necessary, to justify both margins.

Options

All the parameters here use the **staff space** unit of measurement, abbreviated **sp**. The staff space is the vertical distance from one individual line in a staff to another (so a five-line staff is four staff spaces tall). As the same unit is also used for horizontal measurements, in some cases you may need to rotate the staff space distance 90 degrees in your mind. Measuring using the staff space unit enables proportional scaling of everything in the score if you change the size of the staff. See <u>Page settings: Staff space/scaling</u> for more details.

- **Minimum measure width**
  Sets the minimum horizontal length of measures. In measures containing very little content (e.g., a single whole note or whole measure rest), the measure will only shrink as far as this minimum.

- **Spacing (1=tight)**
  Condenses or expands the space *after* notes or rests. This setting thus affects not only space between notes but also between the last note and the ending barline. For the space between the *beginning* of the measure and the first note or rest, see **Barline to note distance** (below).
  Note: Changes to an individual measure's **Stretch** (under `Layout → Increase Stretch, Decrease Stretch`) are calculated after, and proportional to, the global **Spacing** setting.

- **Barline to note distance**
  Sets the distance between the barline which begins a measure and the first note or rest in that measure. For the initial measures of systems, which start with clefs instead of barlines, use **Clef/key right margin** (below).
  The following two options set the distance between barlines and specific elements that may come between a barline and the first note in a measure, independent of the **Barline to note distance** setting.

- **Barline to grace note distance**
  Sets the distance between a barline and a grace note that occurs before the first actual note in a measure.

- **Barline to accidental distance**
  Sets the distance between a barline and an accidental placed before the first note in a measure.

- **Minimum note distance**
  Specifies the smallest amount of space MuseScore will allow after each note (depending on other factors, *more* space may be allowed).

- **Clef left margin**
  Sets the distance between the very beginning of each line and the clef. (This option is rarely needed.)

- **Key signature left margin**
  Sets the distance between the key signature and the clef preceding it.

- **Time signature left margin**
  Sets the distance between the time signature and the key signature or clef preceding it.

- **Clef/key right margin**
  Sets the distance between the material at the beginning of each line (such as the clef and key signature) and the first note or rest of the first measure on the line. (Note that, although not named in the option, if a time signature is present, it is the element from which the spacing begins.)

- **Clef to barline distance**
  Sets the distance between a barline and a clef change preceding it.

- **Multimeasure rest margin**
  Sets the distance between a <u>multimeasure rest</u> and the barlines on either side.

- **Staff line thickness**
  Sets the thickness of the lines of the staff, which allows you to make the staff thicker and darker, if you need greater visibility on your printouts.

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Page settings

`Layout → Page Settings...` (like `Style → General...`) allows you to change the layout and formatting of a score. The Page Settings dialog controls general formatting options, including **page size**, **printable margins**, and how big a **staff space** is (**Scaling**). Page Settings is the first place to go to make the size of your sheet music bigger or smaller.
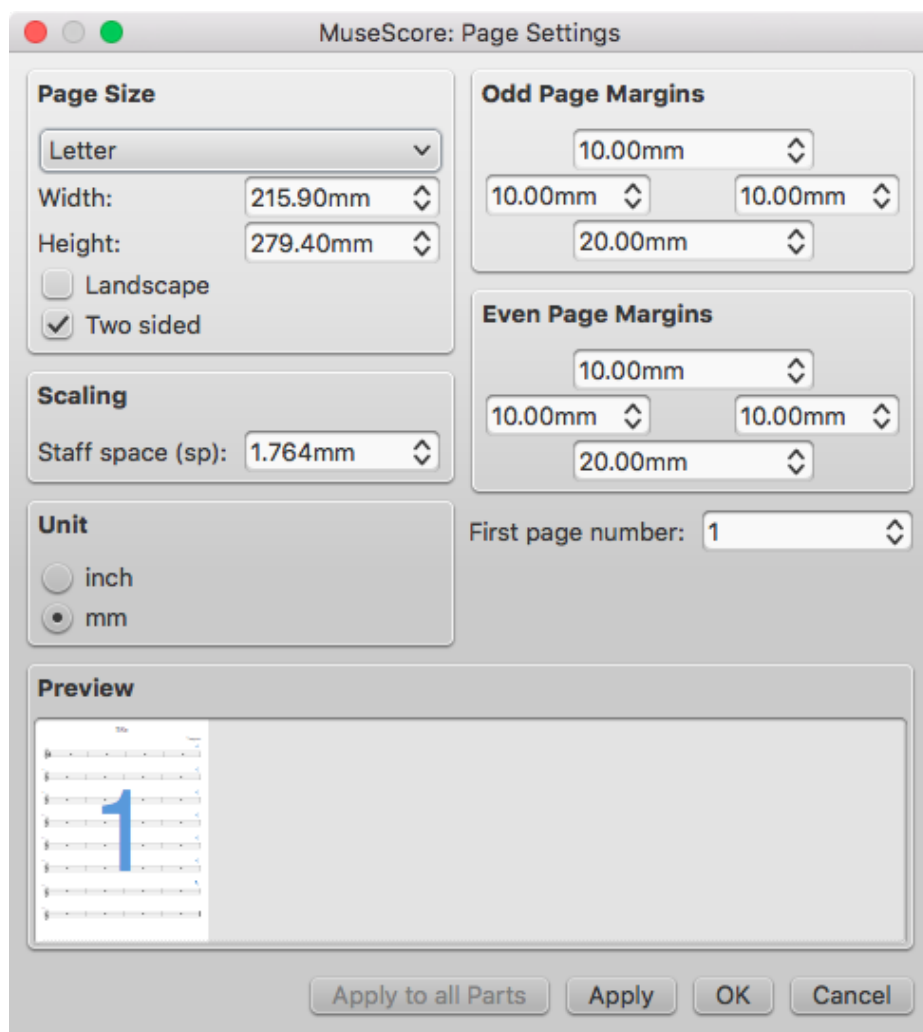
Page size

Here you can select the paper format, either by standard name (e.g., Letter or A4), or by specifying the height and width in either mm or inches (use the radio buttons to choose which unit of measurement to use). The initial default page size depends on your localization—in the United States, Letter size paper is standard.

You can also choose to format your music in **Landscape** orientation (de-select the checkbox to get **Portrait** format), and you can optionally use **Two sided** layout (i.e., book format, with mirror left and right margins for even and odd pages—see below).

Page margins

The **Even Page Margins** and **Odd Page Margins** settings allow you to define the printable area of your pages. Aside from changing the margins around the music on the page, other settings, such as the positions of headers and footers, are calculated relative to the margins defined here.

If the "Two sided" checkbox under "Page Size" is selected, you can set margins differently for mirroring odd and even pages. Otherwise, only one set of margins can be modified, but will apply to all pages.

To display page margins in your score on screen (though not in print), go to `View → Show Page Margins`.

Staff space/scaling

Staff space (**sp**) is the size of the space between two lines of a staff (or one-quarter the size of the full five-line staff). Since notes fit in that space, it also controls the size of note heads, and, in turn, proportionally, the size of note stems, accidentals, clefs etc. Additionally, many other formatting options are defined in terms of **sp** as a unit of measure (e.g., *5.0sp*). Since changing the staff space size has a proportional affect on almost everything, it is also sometimes called **scaling**.

Note: Changing the scaling does not always change the number of systems per page, because system distance can vary between limits set under "Min system distance" and "Max system distance" (see `Style → General... → Page`).

Miscellaneous

First page number sets the number of the first page of the particular score. Page numbers below 1 won't get printed—e.g., setting the first page number to *-1* would result in the first and second page showing no page number, and page number 1 appearing on the third page.

The `Apply to all Parts` button is available when modifying a **part**, rather than the main score (see Part extraction). If you change the page settings of one part and want the rest of the parts to have the same settings, this button will apply the change to all parts in one go.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Breaks and spacers

Page breaks, **line breaks** (system breaks), **section breaks**, and **spacers** are available in the "Breaks & Spacers" palette in the Advanced workspace. They can be applied to either a measure or a frame.

- A **page break** applied to a measure forces the following measure to start on a new page.
- A **line break** forces the next measure to start in a new system.

- A **section break** forces a line break and allows you to create sections within a score (see below).

  (**Note**: To split an existing measure in two, see Measure operations: Split and join.)

- **Spacers** are used to increase the space between two adjacent staves or systems. To apply a spacer or adjust its height, see below. (**Note**: To adjust the space between staves *score-wide*, use the style settings. Spacers are designed for *local* adjustments.)

Adding a break or spacer

To add a break or spacer chose one of the following options:

- Select a measure or frame, then double-click a palette break or spacer symbol (for example, in the Breaks & Spacers palette).
- Drag a break or spacer symbol from a palette onto a measure or frame.
- For *line breaks* only, click on a barline and press `Return` (press again to remove the line break).
- For *page breaks* only, click on a barline and press `Ctrl+Return` (Mac: `Cmd+Return`) (press again to remove the page break).

A break is inserted *after* the marked measure or frame. Blue break/spacer symbols are visible on the screen, but do not appear on printouts.

Adjusting a spacer

To adjust the height of a **spacer** chose one of these options:

- Double-click the spacer and drag the blue end-handle up and down.
- Double-click the spacer and use the ↑ ↓ keys and/or `Ctrl+↑ ↓` to move the end-handle up and down.
- Click (or double-click) on the spacer and adjust the height property in the Inspector.

Deleting a break or spacer

There are times that you may want to remove a break or spacer. To delete a break or spacer:

1. Single click the break or spacer (it will turn into a darker blue to indicate that it is selected)
2. Press the `Delete` key

Section break

A **section break**, as the name suggests, is used to create separate sections within a score. Like a **line break**, it forces the next measure or frame to begin a new system, and can also be used in association with a **page break** if required.

A section break could be used, for example, to divide a piece into separate movements.

Each section can have its own measure numbering independent of the rest of the score. By default, the first measure of a section is numbered "1" (see image below), though like the first measure of the score itelf, the number is not displayed unless configured in the <u>measure properties</u> dialog. The same dialog can be used to change the numbering according to your preference.

If you change Time signature or Key signature at the beginning of the new section, there will be no courtesy signature at the end of the previous measure. See example below:

When you play back the score, the program adds a short pause between each section. In addition, the first *end repeat barline* in a section always sends the playback cursor to the beginning of the section, so a *start repeat barline* is optional.

See also

- <u>Add/Remove Line Breaks tool</u>

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Frames

A **Frame** is a rectangular container for empty space, text or pictures in the score. It can be one of three types:

- <u>Horizontal</u>: Used to create a break in a particular system. It can contain text or pictures.
- <u>Vertical</u>: Inserted above or below a particular system. It can contain text or pictures.
- <u>Text</u>: Inserted above or below a particular system. It can contain one item of text only.

Horizontal frame

Horizontal frames are used to create a break in a system. For example, you can:

- Create a coda, with an adjustable gap separating it from the rest of the score (as in the example below).

- Create an offset at the beginning of the score, where there is no staff name to perform the same function.
- Create an adjustable right margin at the end of a system.

- Create space for some text or image(s).
- Create a space between a 'historical incipit' and the beginning of the modern edition.

To Insert or append a horizontal frame, see Create a Frame.

The height of the frame is equal to the height of the parent system, and its width can be adjusted by double-clicking on the frame and dragging the handle back and forth. Single clicking on the frame allows you to edit several parameters in the Inspector:

Left Gap: ?
Right Gap: ?
Width: Adjusts the width of the frame.

(Note: It is possible to create a 'Negative-width' horizontal frame, by dragging the edit-handle back over the left border of the frame. But this is not a standard feature and once editing is finished you cannot reselect the frame).

To add one or more text objects or images to the frame, right-click on it and select `Add` → `Text` or `Add` → `Image`.

A horizontal frame can also be inserted in a Vertical frame or Text frame by right clicking on the frame and selecting `Add` → `Insert Horizontal Frame`. It is automatically left-aligned and fills the entire vertical frame. Double clicking the frame allows you to adjust the width using the editing handle. To right align, drag it across the vertical frame using the mouse, having made it smaller first.

Vertical frame

Vertical frames provide empty space between, before or after systems, and can contain one or more text objects and/or images. The height is adjustable and the width equals the system width.

You can use a vertical frame to:

- Create an area at the head of a score for Title/Subtitle/Composer/Lyricist text etc (see below).
- Add single- or multi-column lyric text.

To Insert or append a vertical frame, see Create a Frame.

A vertical frame is automatically created at the beginning of a score – showing the title, subtitle, composer, lyricist etc. – when you fill in the information fields provided in the New Score Wizard.

If the score does not have a vertical frame at the beginning, one is automatically created when you right-click on an empty space and select `Text` → `Title/Subtitle/Composer/Lyricist`.

Selecting a frame allows you to adjust various parameters in the Inspector:
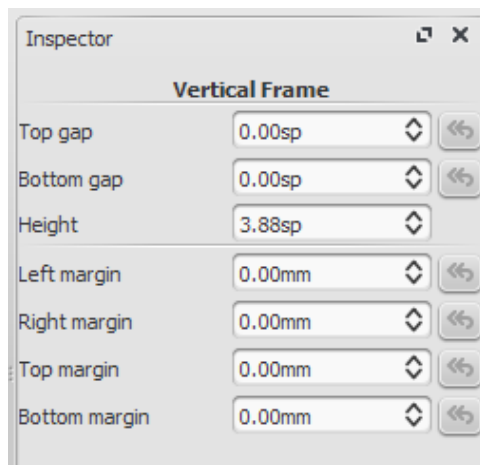
Top Gap: Adjusts distance between frame and element above (negative values not currently supported).
Bottom Gap: Adjusts distance between frame and element below (Negative values can be entered).
Height: Adjusts height of the frame.
Left Margin: Moves left-aligned text objects to the right.
Right Margin: Moves right-aligned text objects to the left.
Top margin: Moves top-aligned text objects downwards (see also `Style → General...` → Page).
Bottom Margin: Moves bottom-aligned text objects upwards (see also `Style → General...` → Page).

Double-clicking the vertical frame allows you to change the height property using the editing handle. This is useful for adjusting space between particular systems.

Right-clicking the frame brings up a menu allowing you to create an object within the frame: this can be text (Text, Title, Subtitle, Composer, Lyricist, and Part name), a picture or a horizontal frame. You can create as many objects as you like within a frame. Each object can be moved and styled independently of the others. Text objects can be positioned inside or outside the frame boundaries.

Each text object created within the frame can be moved by left-clicking and dragging (use the `ctrl` or `Shift` buttons to constrain movement in the horizontal or vertical). You can also click on the text object and make adjustments to color, visibility, horizontal offset and vertical offset in the Inspector. Right-clicking on a text object opens a menu allowing you to apply a unique style to the text ("Text Properties") or to alter the overall style for that class of objects ("Text Style").

Text frame

A text frame looks like a vertical frame – and shares some of its features – but is specifically designed to allow the user to enter text quickly and easily: as soon as the frame is created the user can start typing. Unlike the vertical frame, only one text object is allowed per frame, the height automatically expands to fit the content and there is no height adjustment handle.

To Insert or append a text frame, see Create a Frame.

Selecting the frame (*not* the text object) allows you to edit various parameters in the Inspector:

Top Gap: Adjusts distance between frame and element above (negative values not currently supported).
Bottom Gap: Adjusts distance between frame and element below (negative values can be entered).
Height: Not applicable to text frames.
Left Margin: Moves left-aligned text objects to the right.
Right Margin: Moves right-aligned text objects to the left.
Top margin: Moves top-aligned text objects downwards.
Bottom Margin: Moves bottom-aligned text upwards.

You can also click on the text object and make adjustments to color, visibility, horizontal offset and vertical offset in the Inspector

Create a frame

Frames are inserted into or appended to the score from the **Add** Menu.

To *insert* a frame, select a measure, and make your choice from the `Add → Frames` menu. The frame is

inserted before the selected measure. To *append* a frame to the end of the score, no measure selection is required. Chose the desired frame to append from the `Add → Frames` menu.

Delete a frame

Select the frame and press `Del`.

Apply a break

Line, page or section <u>breaks</u> can be applied to frames as well as measures. Use one of two methods:

- Select a frame and double-click a <u>palette</u> break symbol (for example, in the Breaks & Spacers palette).
- Drag a break symbol from a palette onto a frame.

See also

- <u>How to add a block of text to a score</u>
- <u>Text Properties</u>—put a visual frame (border) around text

External links

- <u>Page Formatting in MuseScore 1.1 - 1. Frames, Text & Line Breaks</u>[video]

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Image capture

Image capture allows to create image snippets out of scores. It can be toggled on/off with the Image capture button, .

In image capture mode, a selection rectangle can be spawned with `shift` + mouse drag.

The selection rectangle can be moved with the mouse, or resized by moving one of the eight handles.

Once you specify the bounding box of the image snippet you want to create, right-click into the rectangle to popup the context menu:
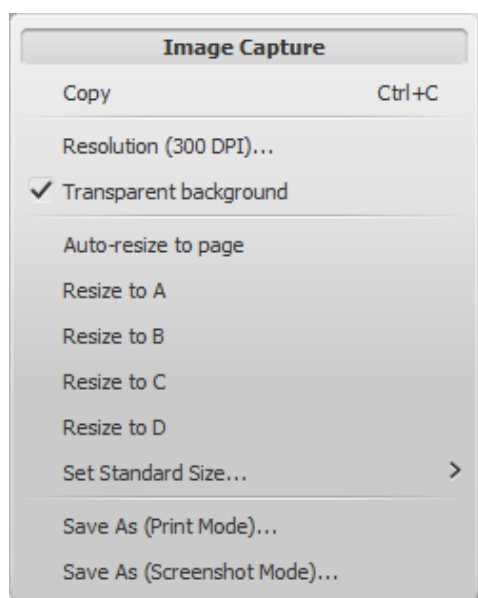
Saving as a PNG file results in this file:

If you save your snippet in "print mode", it will appear as a cut out of the score as it would be printed. In "Image capture mode", the image will look like the score on your screen (including line break markers, etc.), which are not printed (100dpi example):

See also

- Image
- Create an ossia with image capture

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum

Images

You can use **Images** to illustrate scores, or add symbols that are not included in the standard palettes.

To add an image, drag-and-drop an image file either into a frame or onto a note or rest of the score.

Alternatively, right-click into a frame, choose `Add` → `Image`, then pick an image from the file selector.

MuseScore supports the following image formats:

- PNG (*.png)
- JPEG files (*.jpg and *.jpeg)
- SVG files (*.svg) (MuseScore currently does not support SVG shading, blurring, clipping or masking.)

See also

- Image capture
- Custom palettes

External links

- How to create an ossia with image capture

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Align elements

While dragging an element:

- Press `Ctrl` to constrain movement to the horizontal only.
- Press `Shift` to constrain movement to the vertical only.

Snap to grid

Snap to grid is a feature which allows you to *drag* an element in precise steps—useful for exact positioning.
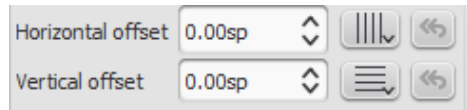
To enable snap to grid, select an element and click one or both of the snap to grid buttons, located to the right of the horizontal and vertical offset fields in the Inspector. You can then *drag* the element in steps equal to the **grid spacing**. The default value is 0.5 sp.

To change the **grid spacing**:

1. Right-click on any of the snap to grid buttons in the Inspector, and select `Configure Grid`.
2. Set values for the horizontal and vertical grid spacing as required. Note that this is a fractional setting.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Advanced topics

Accessibility

Introduction

This document is written for blind and visually impaired users of MuseScore 2.0. It is not intended to provide a full description of all of the features of MuseScore; you should read this in conjunction with the regular MuseScore documentation.

MuseScore comes with support for the free and open source NVDA screen reader for Windows. The features in this document have been tested on Windows with NVDA. There is no support at the moment for other screen readers such as Jaws for Windows, or VoiceOver for macOS, which may work differently, or not at all.

At this point in time, MuseScore 2.0 is mostly accessible as a score reader, not so much as a score editor. This document will focus on the score reading features, with only a brief description of score editing.

Initial setup

When you run MuseScore for the first time, you may want to permanently disable the Start Center window. To do so, go close the Start Center window first, then the Edit menu (`Alt+E`), choose Preferences, and in there, uncheck Show Start Center. Save and close the preferences window.

Finding your way around

The user interface in MuseScore works much like other notation programs, or other document-oriented programs in general. It has a single main document window in which you can work with a score. MuseScore supports multiple document tabs within this window. It also supports a split-screen view to let you work with two documents at once, and you can have multiple tabs in each window. In addition to the score window, MuseScore has a menu bar that you can access via the shortcuts for the individual menus:

- File: `Alt+F`
- Edit: `Alt+E`
- View: `Alt+V`
- Add: `Alt+A`
- Notes: `Alt+N`
- Layout: `Alt+L`
- Style: `Alt+S`
- Plugins: `Alt+P`
- Help: `Alt+H`

Of these, only the File menu is of much interest when using MuseScore as a score reader. Once opening a menu, it may take several presses of the `Up` or `Down` keys before everything is read properly.

There are also a number of toolbars, palettes, and subwindows within MuseScore, and you can cycle through the controls in these using `Tab` (or `Shift+Tab` to move backwards through this same cycle). When you first start MuseScore, or load a score, focus should be in the main score window. Pressing Tab takes you to a toolbar containing a series of buttons for operations like New, Open, Play, and so forth. Tab will skip any buttons that aren't currently active. The names and shortcuts (where applicable) for these buttons should be read by your screen reader.

Once you have cycled through the buttons on the toolbar, the next window Tab will visit is the Palette. This would be used to add various elements to a score, but it is not currently accessible except for two buttons that are visited by Tab: a drop down to select between different workspaces (a saved arrangement of palettes), and a button to create a new workspace.

If you have opened one of the optional windows, such as the Inspector, or the Selection Filter, the Tab key will also visit these. You can close windows you do not need by going to the View menu and making sure none of the first set of checkboxes are selected (the windows that appear before the Zoom settings). By default, only the Palette, Navigator and MuseScore Connect should be selected, and the latter two are not included in the Tab order.

To return focus to the score window after visiting the toolbar, or a subwindow, press Esc. This also clears any selection you may have made in the score window.

The score window

When you first start MuseScore 2.0, an empty example score entitled "My First Score" is loaded by default. If you wish to experiment with editing features, this would be a good place to begin. Otherwise, you will probably want to start by loading a score. MuseScore uses the standard shortcuts to access system commands like `Ctrl+O` (Mac: `Cmd+O`) to open a file, `Ctrl+S` (Mac: `Cmd+S`) to save, `Ctrl+W` (Mac: `Cmd+W`) to close, etc.

If you press `Ctrl+O` (Mac: `Cmd+O`) to load a score, you are presented with a fairly standard file dialog. MuseScore can open scores in its own format (MSCZ or MSCX) as well as import scores in the standard MusicXML format, in MIDI format, or from a few other programs such as Guitar Pro, Capella, and Band-in-a-Box. Once you have loaded a score, it is displayed in a new tab within the score window. You can move between the tabs in the score window using `Ctrl+Tab` (does not apply for Mac).

There are a few interesting things you can do with a loaded score besides reading it note by note. You can press Space to have MuseScore play the score for you. You can use File / Export to convert to another format, including PDF, PNG, WAV, MP3, MIDI, MusicXML, etc. And of course, you can print it via File / Print or `Ctrl+P` (Mac: `Cmd+P`).

If a score contains multiple instruments, it may already have linked parts generated. Linked parts are presented as part tabs within score tabs, but currently, there is no way to navigate these part tabs using the keyboard. The parts would not normally contain information different from the score; they would just be displayed differently (each part on its own page). If a score does not already have parts generated, you can do so through File / Parts, and that dialog is accessible. If you wish to print the parts, you can work around the inability of accessing part tabs individually by using the File / Export Parts dialog, which automatically exports PDF's (or other formats) for all parts in one step.

Score reading

When you first load a score, the score window has the keyboard focus, but there will be nothing selected. The first step to reading a score is to select something, and the most natural place to begin is with the first element of the score. `Ctrl+Home` (Mac: `Cmd+Home`) will do this. You will probably also want to use this, should you ever clear your selection by pressing Esc.

As you navigate between elements, your screen reader should give the name of the selected element (most likely the clef at the beginning of the top staff of your score). You will hear it read the name of the element (for example, "Treble clef") and also give position information (for example, "Measure 1; Beat 1; Staff 1"). The amount of information read is not currently customizable, but we tried to place the most important first so you can quickly move on to the next element before it has finished reading, or just ignore the rest of what is read. Pressing Shift currently interrupts the reading, which might also be useful.

Most navigation in MuseScore is centered around notes and rests only – it will skip clefs, key signatures, time signatures, barlines, and other elements. So if you just use the standard `Right` and `Left` keys to move through your score, you will only hear about notes and rests (and the elements attached to them). However, there are two special navigation commands that you will find useful to gain a more complete summarization of the score:

- Next element: `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Right` (Mac: `Cmd+Option+Shift+Right`)
- Previous element: `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Left` (Mac: `Cmd+Option+Shift+Left`

These commands include clefs and other elements that the other navigation commands skip, and also navigate through all voices within the current staff, whereas other navigation commands such as `Right` and `Left` only navigate through the currently selected voice until you explicitly change voices. For instance, if you are on a quarter note on beat 1 of measure 1, and there are two voices in that measure, then pressing Right will move on to the next note of voice 1—which will be on beat 2— whereas pressing `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Right` (Mac: `Cmd+Option+Shift+Right`) will stay on beat 1 but move to the note on voice 2. Only once you have moved through all notes on the current beat on the current staff will the shortcut move you on to the next beat. The intent is that this shortcut should be useful for navigating through a score if you don't already know what the contents are.

When you navigate to an element, your screen reader should read information about it. For notes and rests, it will also read information about elements attached to them, such as lyrics, articulations, chord symbols, etc. For the time being, there is no way to navigate directly to these elements.
One important note: `Up` and `Down` by themselves, with `Shift`, or with `Ctrl` / `Cmd` are not useful shortcuts for navigation! Instead, they change the pitch of the currently selected note or notes. Be careful not to inadvertently edit a score you are trying to read. Up and Down should only be used with Alt/Option if your intent is navigation only. See the list of navigation shortcuts below.

Moving forwards or backwards in time

The following shortcuts are useful for moving "horizontally" through a score:

- Next element: `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Right`
- Previous element: `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Left`
- Next chord or rest: `Right`
- Previous chord or rest: `Left`
- Next measure: `Ctrl+Right`
- Previous measure: `Ctrl+Left`
- Go to measure: `Ctrl+F`
- First element: `Ctrl+Home`

- Last element: `Ctrl+End`

Moving between notes at a given point in time

- The following shortcuts are useful for moving "vertically" through a score:

- Next element: `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Right`

- Previous element: `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Left`
- Next higher note in voice, previous voice, or staff above: `Alt+Up`
- Next lower note in voice, next voice, or staff below: `Alt+Down`
- Top note in chord: `Ctrl+Alt+Up`
- Bottom note in chord: `Ctrl+Alt+Down`

The `Alt+Up` and `Alt+Down` commands are similar to the `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Right` and `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+Left` commands in that they are designed to help you discover the content of a score. You do not need to know how many notes are in a chord, how many voices are in a staff, or how many staves are in a score in order to move vertically through the score using these commands.

Filtering score reading

Excluding certain elements like lyrics, or chord names while reading the score is possible by using the Selection filter (F6). Uncheck those elements you don't want to read.

Score playback

The Space bar serves both to start and stop playback. Playback will start with the currently selected note if one is selected; where playback was last stopped if no note is selected; or at the beginning of the score on first playback.

MuseScore supports looped playback so you can repeat a section of a piece for practice purposes. To set the "in" and "out" points for the loop playback via the Play Panel (F11):

1. First select the note in the score window where the loop should start
2. Go to the Play Panel and press the Set loop In position toggle button
3. Back to the score window, navigate to the note where you want the loop to end
4. Switch again to Play Panel, and press the Set loop Out position toggle button
5. To enable or disable the loop, press the Loop Playback toggle button

You can also control the loop playback and control other playback parameters, such as overriding the basic tempo of a score, using the View / Play Panel (F11).

Score editing

Score editing is currently not very accessible – too many score elements require intervention of the mouse in order to place objects onto a score. Additionally, visual reference and manual adjustment of the position of various elements is sometimes necessary due to MuseScore's limited support for conflict avoidance of elements.

In contrast, MuseScore does often provide ample default, and a platform to experiment with the basics of note input.
To enter note input mode, first navigate to the measure in which you would like to enter notes, then press "N". Almost everything about note input is designed to be keyboard accessible, and the standard documentation should be good to help you through the process. Bear in mind that MuseScore can either be in note input or normal mode, and it won't always be clear which mode of these you are in. When in doubt, press Esc. If you were in note input mode, this will take you out. If you were in normal mode, you will stay there, although you will also lose your selection.

Customization

You can customize the keyboard shortcuts using Edit / Preferences / Shortcuts. At some point, we may provide a set of special accessibility-optimized shortcuts and/or a way of saving and loading sets of shortcut definitions.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Albums

The Album Manager allows you to prepare a list of multiple scores and save the list as an album file ("*.album"), print all the scores as one long print job with consistent page numbers, or even join the scores into a single new MSCZ score. This is ideal for preparing an exercise book or combining multiple movements of an orchestration.

To open the Album Manager, go to `File → Album...`
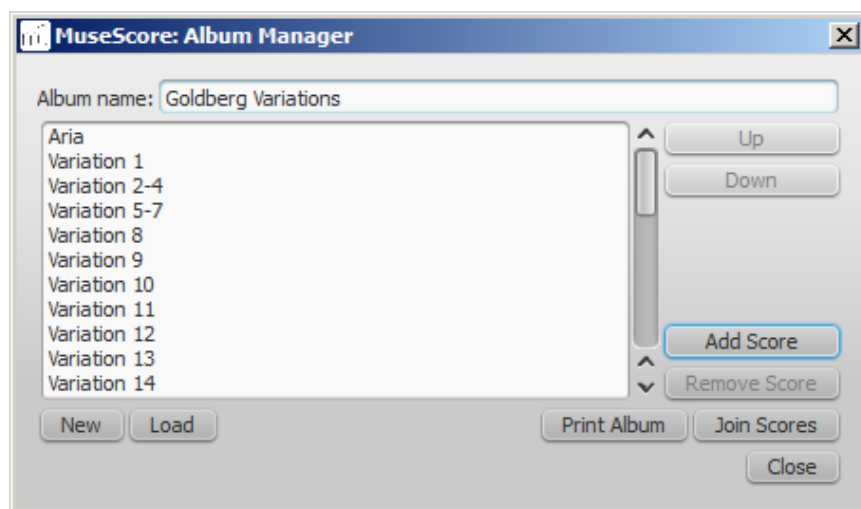
Create album

1. To create a new album, click the `New` button. Fill in a title in the "Album Name:" box at the top.

2. To add scores to the album, click `Add Score`. A file selection dialog will appear and let you choose one or multiple scores from your file system. Click `OK`.

3. The scores you add will appear in a list in the Album Manager. You can rearrange their order by selecting a score and clicking the `Up` or `Down` button.

Load album

If you have previously created an album, you can open it through the Album Manager by clicking the `Load` button. A file selection dialog will appear to let you load the .album file from your file system.

Print album

To print an album as if it were a single document, click `Print Album`. The scores loaded into the Album Manager are printed in the order they are listed in with the correct page numbers, ignoring the page number offset values in `Layout → Page Settings... → First page number` for all but the first score. As the album is printed in one print job, double-sided printing (duplex printing) also works as expected.

Join scores

To combine multiple scores into a single .mscz file, click `Join Scores`. The scores are combined in the selected order into one single score. If not already present, line- and section breaks are added to the last measure or frame of each score in the combined file.
All style settings are taken from the first score, different style settings from subsequent score are ignored.

All the scores should have the same number of parts and staves for this to work correctly, ideally with the same instruments in the same order. If the scores have the same total *number* of instruments but not the same ones, or not in the same order, then the instrument names from the first score will overwrite ones from subsequent scores. If some of the scores have fewer instruments than the first score, then empty staves will be created for those sections. **Any part or staff that is not present in the first score will be lost in the joined score.**

Save album

Upon clicking the `Close` button, you will be prompted to save your album as a .album file. This file is not the same as a <u>joined score</u>; it simply consists of the list of scores. Album files can be loaded into the Album Manager as described <u>above</u>.

Cross-staff notation

In piano scores, it is common to use both staves (bass and treble clef) to write a musical phrase.

This can be entered in MuseScore as follows:

Enter all notes in one staff:
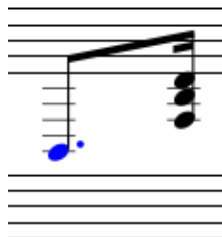
`Ctrl+Shift+↓` moves the selected note, or chord to the next staff (Mac: ⌘+`Shift+↓`.)
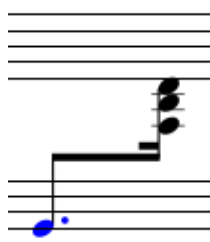
If you want to move the beam, double-click the beam to show the handles. Drag the handles to adjust the layout.

See also

- <u>Barline</u> for cross-staff barlines (i.e. grand staff)
- <u>Edit mode</u>

Early music features

MuseScore 2 offers several specialized functions to create engravings of early music (particularly medieval and renaissance) akin to commercial editions from the 20th century onwards.

Unbarred notation

Since most renaissance music was unbarred (i.e. not divided into measures), having long notes divided up and tied over barlines significantly changes the look of the score. Recognizing large melodic lines and repeated motives could become more difficult. Therefore, MuseScore provides an experimental display method where the note values stay intact. This method can be activated by ticking a checkbox in the `Score` section of the Style dialog, found under `Style → General...`
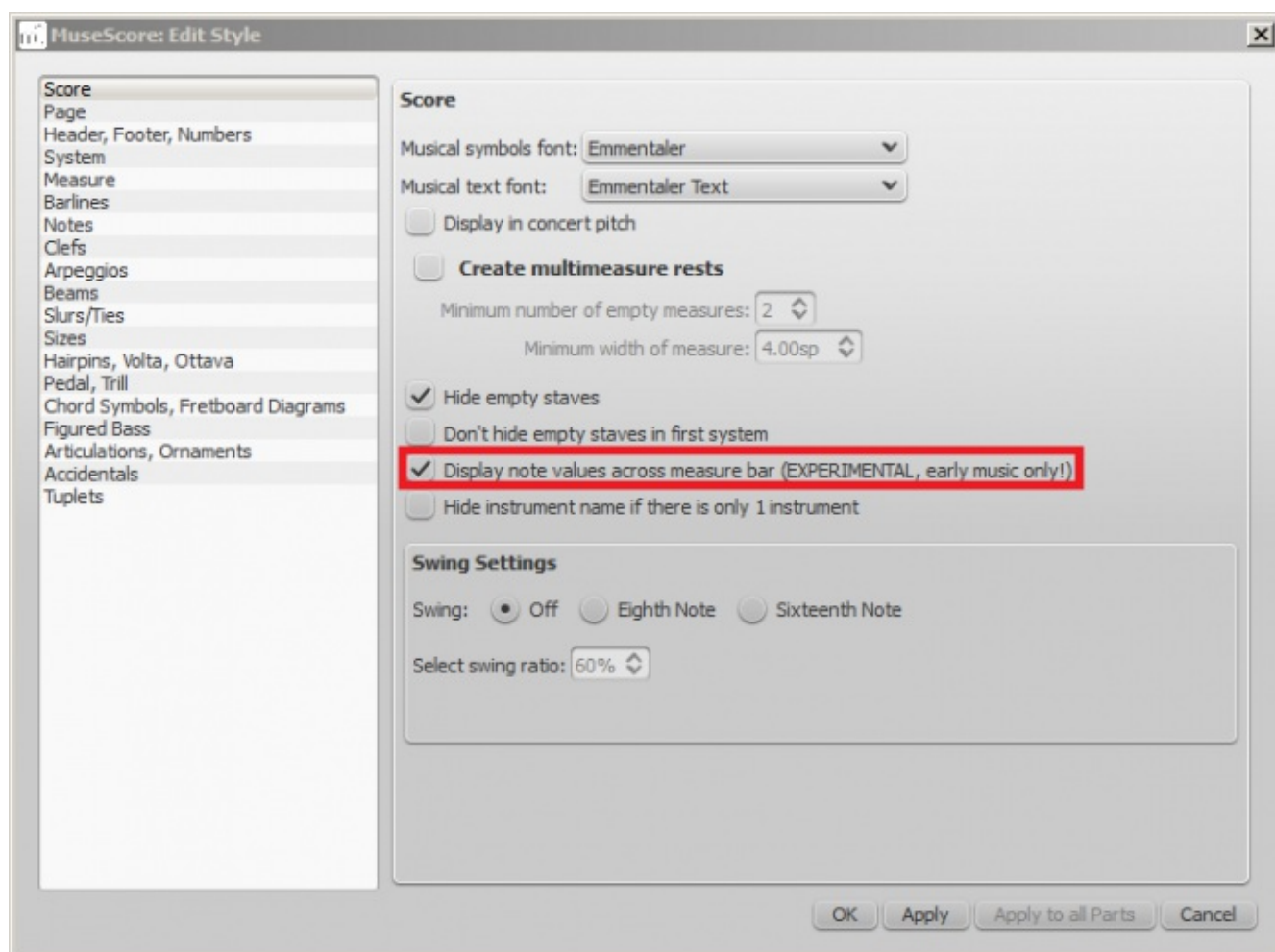
Apply and the display is adjusted immediately.
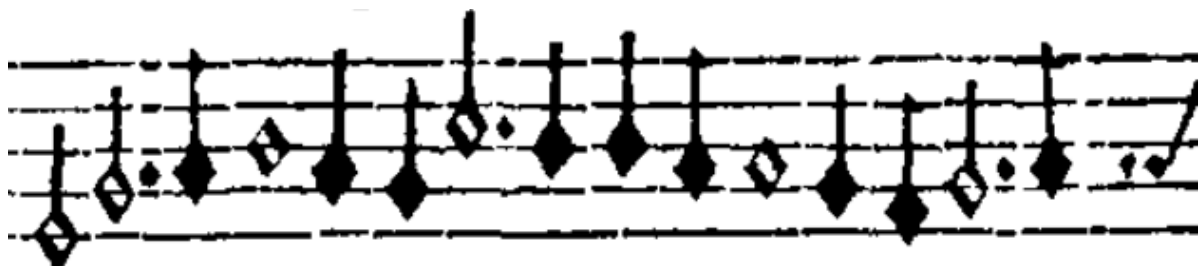
Original notation (De Profundis Clamavi for 4 voices by Nicolas Champion)

Before style Change

After style Change

Note that the feature is still experimental and may contain bugs. The longest supported note value is the longa (a dotted longa is still broken up and tied over).
To get rid of the barlines, just untick the "Show barlines" box in the Staff properties dialog. However, there is another option.

Mensurstrich

Since a complete lack of barlines could make performing the music more difficult for current musicians, many modern engravers settled on a compromise called *Mensurstrich*, where barlines are drawn between, but not across, staves. This is also possible now: double click a barline, drag the lower end to the top of the staff below it, and drag the upper end to the bottom of the current staff. Do this in precision mode (hold down shift). Then deselect the barline and the changes should be applied to the entire staff.

It may be easier to use the Inspector to change the numbers manually. To open the Inspector, press F8 and select a barline. The correct values are:

	Default	Mensurstrich
Spanned staves	1	2
Span from	0	8
Span to	8	0

You may want to set the barlines back to the default values at the end of the score or a section, but remember to hold down ctrl, or else the entire staff will be reset.

Ambitus

Before there was the concept of an absolute pitch, performers were required to transpose vocal music to a singable range for their ensemble on the fly. To aid them, an ambitus was sometimes included, marking the entire range of a voice at the beginning of the piece. The ambitus is located in the palette at the bottom of the Lines section, from there drag it onto a clef. It will automatically detect the range.
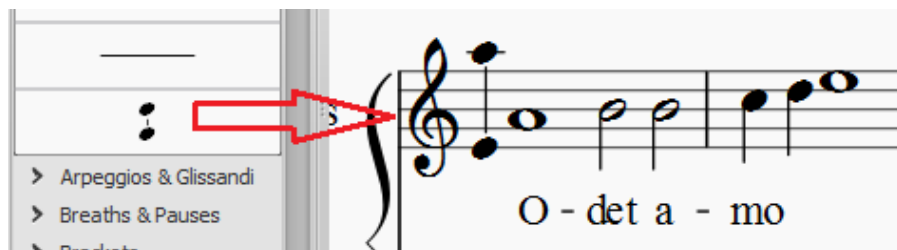
The ambitus will consider all measures of music up until the next section break, beyond which a new ambitus may be applied. It can be adjusted manually or automatically in the Inspector. First select the ambitus to adjust. For manual adjustments edit the top and bottom note values. For automatic adjustment click the Update Range button in the inspector.

Mensural time signatures

In the mensural notation system, time signatures did not define the length of a measure, but the length of breves and semibreves. MuseScore supports mensural time symbols as a display method in the Time signature properties dialog rather than as symbols, but they are just for show, as the proportion of e.g. half notes per whole notes cannot be modified.
One way to make use of these symbols is to replicate when composers of the renaissance had multiple voices in different time signatures simultaneously without using tuplets. Edit the time

174

signature on a per-staff basis, as long as the beginning and end of a measure in all staves match up. If they do not, then consider increasing the size of the measures to the lowest common denominator.

De Profundis Clamavi for 5 voices by Josquin Des Prez

See also

- Measure Operations: Split and join

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Figured bass

Adding a new figured bass indication

1. Select the note to which the figured bass applies
2. Press the Figured Bass shortcut (default `Ctrl+G`; can be changed in Preferences)
3. Enter the text in the editor 'blue box' as required (see below)
4. Press `Space` to move to the next note ready for another figured bass indication (or click outside the editor box to exit it)

With `Space`, the editor advances to the next note, or rest of the staff to which figured bass is being added. To move to a point in between, or to extend a figured bass group for a longer duration, see below *Group Duration*.

`Tab` advances the editing box to the beginning of the next measure.

`Shift+Space` moves the editing box to the previous staff note or rest.

`Shift+Tab` moves the editing box to the beginning of the previous measure.

Text format

Digits

Digits are entered directly. Groups of several digits stacked one above the other are also entered directly in a single text, stacking them with `Enter`:
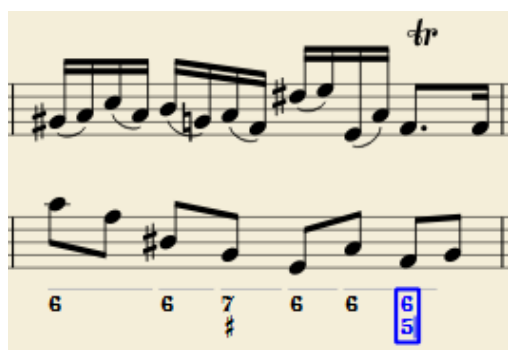
Accidentals

Accidentals can be entered using regular keys:

To enter:	type:
double flat	bb
flat	b
natural	h
sharp	#
double sharp	##

These characters will automatically turn into the proper signs when you leave the editor. Accidentals can be entered before, or after a digit (and of course, in place of a digit, for altered thirds), according to the required style; both styles are properly aligned, with the accidental 'hanging' at the left, or the right.

Combined shapes

Slashed digits or digits with a cross can be entered by adding\, / or + after the digit (combining suffixes); the proper combined shape will be substituted when leaving the editor:
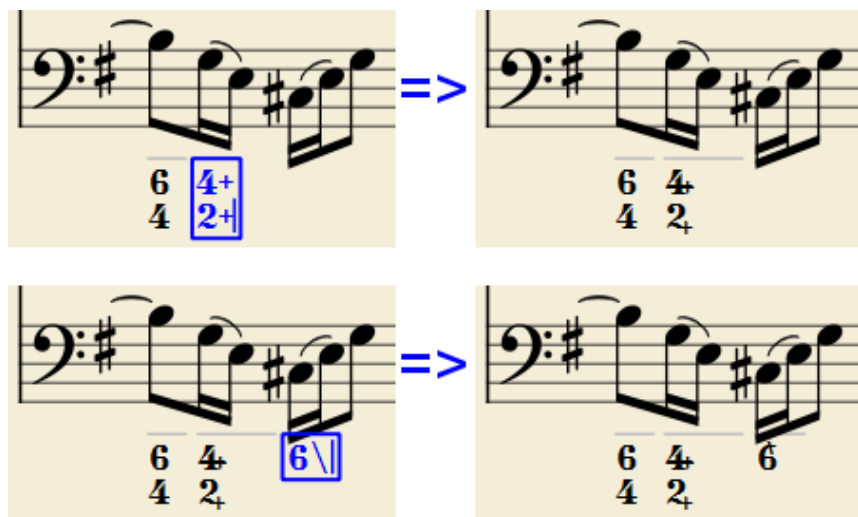
The built-in font can manage combination equivalence, favoring the more common substitution:

1+, 2+, 3+, 4+ result in (or)

and 5\, 6\, 7\, 8\, 9\ result in (or)

Please remember that / can only by combined with 5; any other 'slashed' figure is rendered with a question mark.

+ can also be used before a digit; in this case it is not combined, but it is properly aligned ('+' hanging at the left side).

176

Parentheses

Open and closed parentheses, both round: '(', ')' and square: '[', ']', can be inserted before and after accidentals, before and after a digit, before and after a continuation line; added parentheses will not disturb the proper alignment of the main character.

Notes:

- The editor does not check that parentheses, open and closed, round or square, are properly balanced.
- Several parentheses in a row are non-syntactical and prevent proper recognition of the entered text.
- A parenthesis between a digit and a combining suffix ('+', '\', '/') is accepted, but prevents shape combination.

Continuation lines

Continuation lines are input by adding an '_' (underscore) at the end of the line. Each digit of a group can have its own continuation line:
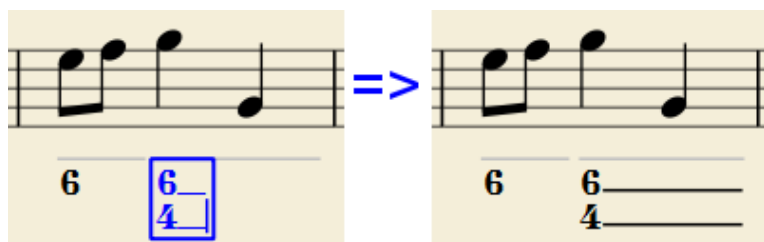
Continuation lines are drawn for the whole duration of the figured bass group (but currently are not continued on following systems, the same as for lyric continuation lines).

'Extended' continuation lines

Occasionally, a continuation line has to connect with the continuation line of a following group, when a chord degree has to be kept across two groups. Examples (both from J. Boismortier, *Pièces de viole*, op. 31, Paris 1730):

In the first case, each group has its own continuation line; in the second, the continuation line of the first group is carried 'into' the second.

This can be obtained by entering several (two or more) underscores "__" at the end of the text line of the first group.

Duration

Each figured bass group has a duration, which is indicated by a light gray line above it (of course, this line is for information only and it is not printed or exported to PDF).

Initially, a group has the same duration of the note to which it is attached. A different duration may be required to fit several groups under a single note or to extend a group to span several notes.

To achieve this, the key combinations listed below can be used; each of them

- advances the editing box by the indicated duration
  AND
- sets the duration of the previous group up to the new editing box position.

Pressing several of them in sequence without entering any figured bass text repeatedly extends the previous group.

Type: to get:

Type:	to get:
Ctrl+1	1/64
Ctrl+2	1/32
Ctrl+3	1/16
Ctrl+4	1/8 (*quaver*)
Ctrl+5	1/4 (*crochet*)
Ctrl+6	half note (*minim*)
Ctrl+7	whole note (*semibreve*)
Ctrl+8	2 whole notes (*breve*)

(The digits are the same as are used to set the note durations)

Setting the exact figured bass group duration is only mandatory in two cases:

1. When several groups are fit under a single staff note (there is no other way).
2. When continuation lines are used, as line length depends on the group duration.

However, it is a good practice to always set the duration to the intended value for the purposes of plugins and MusicXML.

Editing existing figured basses

To edit a figured bass indication already entered:

- Select it, or the note it belongs to and press the same *Figured Bass* shortcut used to create a new one
  or
- Double-click it

The usual text editor box will open with the text converted back to plain characters ('b', '#' and 'h' for accidentals, separate combining suffixes, underscores, etc.) for simpler editing.

Once done, press Space to move to a next note, or click outside the editor box to exit it, as for newly created figured basses.

Style

The Style → General... menu command allows to configure how figured bass is rendered. Select "Figured Bass" in the list on the left side to display the following dialogue box:
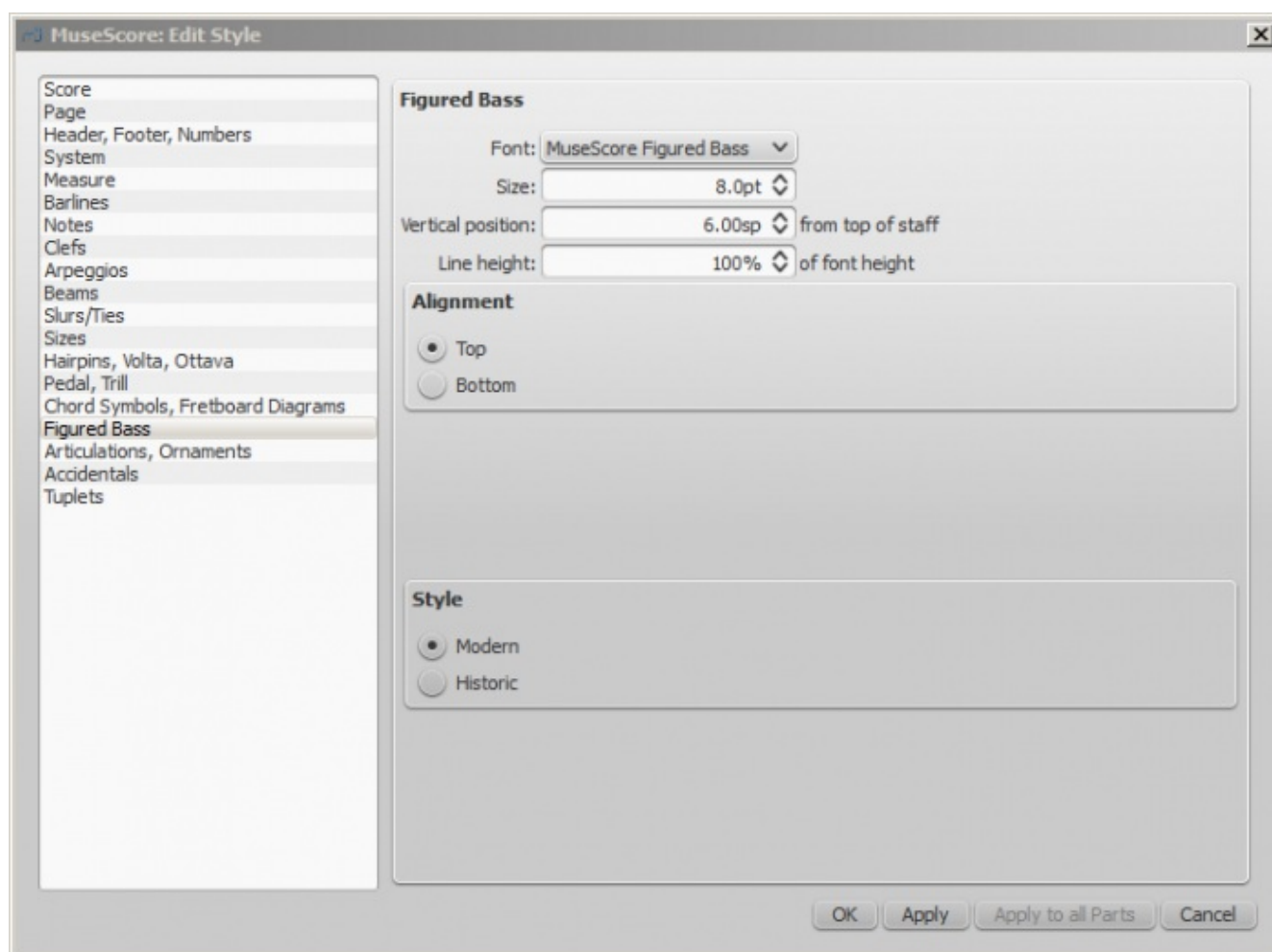
The **Font** drop list contains all the fonts which have been configured for figured bass. A standard installation contains only one font, "MuseScore Figured Bass", which is also the default font.

The **Size** is the size of the font (in points). It is linked to the *spatium* value: for the default *spatium*, the entered value is used; for smaller or larger *spatium* values, a size value proportionally smaller or larger is used.

Vertical Position is the distance (in *spatia*) from the top of the staff to the top margin of the figured bass text. Negative values go up (figured bass above the staff) and positive values go down (figured bass below the staff: a value greater than 4 is needed to step over the staff itself).

Line Height is the distance between the base line of each figured bass line; it is expressed in percent of the font size.

The following picture visualizes each numeric parameter:
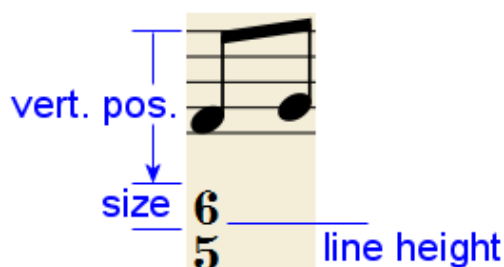
The **Top / Bottom** radio buttons select the vertical alignment: with *Top*, the top line of each group is aligned with the main vertical position and the group 'hangs' from it (this is normally used with figured bass notation and is the default); with *Bottom*, the bottom line is aligned with the main vertical position and the group 'sits' on it (this is sometimes used in some kinds of harmonic analysis notations):

Top   Bottom
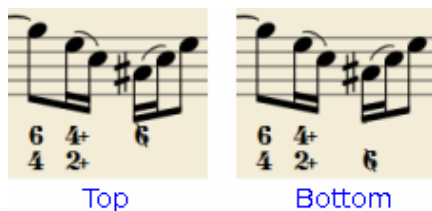
The **Modern / Historic** radio buttons select the typographic style of the combined shapes. The difference between the two styles is shown below:

Modern   Historic
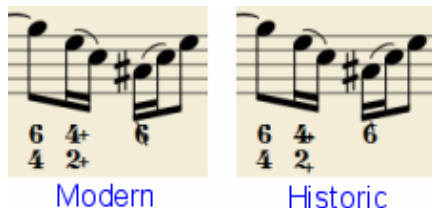
Proper syntax

For the relevant substitutions and shape combinations to take effect and for proper alignment, the figured bass mechanism expects input texts to follow some rules (which are in any case, the rules for a syntactical figured bass indication):

- There can be only one accidental (before or after), or only one combining suffix per figure;
- There cannot be both an accidental **and** a combining suffix;
- There can be an accidental without a digit (altered third), but not a combining suffix without a digit.
- Any other character not listed above is not expected.

If a text entered does not follow these rules, it will not be processed: it will be stored and displayed as it is, without any layout.

Summary of keys

Type:	*to get:*
Ctrl+G	Adds a new figured bass group to the selected note.
Space	Advances the editing box to the next note.
Shift+Space	Moves the editing box to the previous note.
Tab	Advances the editing box to the next measure.
Shift+Tab	Moves the editing box to the previous measure.
Ctrl+1	Advances the editing box by 1/64, setting the duration of the previous group.
Ctrl+2	Advances the editing box by 1/32, setting the duration of the previous group.
Ctrl+3	Advances the editing box by 1/16, setting the duration of the previous group.
Ctrl+4	Advances the editing box by 1/8 (*quaver*), setting the duration of the previous group.
Ctrl+5	Advances the editing box by 1/4 (*crochet*), setting the duration of the previous group.
Ctrl+6	Advances the editing box by a half note (*minim*), setting the duration of the previous group.
Ctrl+7	Advances the editing box by a whole note (*semibreve*), setting the duration of the previous group.
Ctrl+8	Advances the editing box by two whole notes (*breve*), setting the duration of the previous group.
Ctrl+Space	Enters an actual space; useful when figure appears "on the second line" (e.g., 5 4 -> 3).
B B	Enters a double flat.
B	Enters a flat.

180

Type:	_to get:_
♮	Enters a natural.
#	Enters a sharp.
# #	Enters a double sharp.
_	Enters a continuation line.
_ _	Enters an extended continuation line.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

File formats

MuseScore supports a wide variety of file formats, which allows you to share and publish scores in the format that best meets your needs.

You can import files via `File → Open...` and export via `File → Export....` For more details, see Save/Export/Print.

In addition to the formats detailed below, you can save and share your scores on the web at MuseScore.com via `File → Save Online....` See Share scores online.

A note about fonts

MuseScore does not embed text fonts in saved or exported files, except for the FreeSerif and FreeSans font families. If you want to share a MuseScore file with other parties, make sure you are using either of these fonts for your text, or a font that the other parties have installed too. If a system does not have the fonts specified in the file, MuseScore will use a fallback, which may cause your score to appear differently.

MuseScore native format

These are the formats used by `File → Save` or the 💾 button or shortcut (`Ctrl+S`) and `File → Save as...` dialog.

MuseScore format (`*.mscz`)

MSCZ is the standard MuseScore file format and recommended for most uses. A score saved in this format takes up very little disk space, but preserves all the necessary information. The format is a ZIP-compressed version of `.mscx` files and includes any images.

Uncompressed MuseScore format (`*.mscx`)

MSCX is the uncompressed version of the MuseScore file format. A score saved in this format will retain all information, except images. It is recommended for when manually editing the file format (using a text editor).

MuseScore backup file (`.*.mscz,`) or (`.*.mscx,`)

Backup files are created automatically and saved in the same folder as your normal MuseScore file. The backup copy contains the previously saved version of the MuseScore file and can be important if your normal copy becomes corrupted, or for looking at an older version of the score.

The backup file adds a period to the beginning of the file name () and a comma (,) to the end (e.g. if your normal file is called "`untitled.mscz`", the backup copy will be ".`untitled.mscz,`"), and the period and comma need to be removed from the name in order to open the backup file in MuseScore. As it is stored in the same folder as your normal MuseScore file, you may also need to give it a unique name (e.g. changing ".`untitled.mscz,`" to "`untitled-backup1.mscz`").

Note: In order to see the MuseScore backup files, you may need to change your system settings to "Show hidden files". See also How to recover a backup copy of a score (MuseScore 2.x)

Graphics—view and print (export only)

MuseScore can export (via the `File → Export...` command) to the following formats that contain a

visual representation of the score, but cannot be edited or played back:

PDF (`*.pdf`)

Portable Document Format (PDF) is ideal for sharing your sheet music with others who do not need to edit the content. Most users have a PDF viewer on their computer, so extra software won't usually be required to see it.

PNG (`*.png`)

Portable Network Graphics (PNG) is a bitmap image format widely supported by software on Windows, Mac OS, and Linux. The image format is particularly popular on the web. Multi-page scores export a PNG file for every page. MuseScore creates images as they would appear on the printed page. On the export tab in `Edit → Preferences...` (Mac: `MuseScore → Preferences...`), you can set the resolution and whether to use transparent background. **Note:** If you want to create images that show only parts of the score (with or without screen-only items such as frame boxes, invisible notes, and out-of-range note colors), use <u>Image capture</u>.

SVG (`*.svg`)

<u>Scalable Vector Graphics</u> (SVG) can be opened by most web browsers (except Internet Explorer before version 9) and most vector graphics software. However, most SVG software does not support embedded fonts, so the appropriate MuseScore fonts must be installed to view these files correctly.

Audio—listen (export only)

MuseScore can export (via the `File → Export...` command) to the following formats that contain a synthesized audio recording of the score:

WAV audio (`*.wav`)

WAV (Waveform Audio Format) is an uncompressed sound format. This was developed by Microsoft and IBM, and is widely supported by software for Windows, OS X, and Linux. It is an ideal format for use when creating CDs, as full sound quality is preserved. However, the large file sizes make it difficult to share via email or the web.

FLAC audio (`*.flac`)

<u>Free Lossless Audio Codec</u> (FLAC) is compressed audio format. FLAC files are approximately half the size of uncompressed audio and just as good quality. Windows and OS X do not have built-in support for FLAC, but software such as the free and open source <u>VLC media player</u> can play FLAC files on any operating system.

Ogg Vorbis (`*.ogg`)

<u>Ogg Vorbis</u> (external link) is intended as a patent-free replacement for the popular MP3 audio format (which MuseScore also supports—see below). Like MP3, Ogg Vorbis files are relatively small (often a tenth of uncompressed audio), but some sound quality is lost. Windows and OS X do not have built-in support for Ogg Vorbis. However, software such as <u>VLC media player</u> and <u>Firefox</u> can play Ogg files on any operating system.

MP3 (`*.mp3`)

MP3 files are relatively small (often a tenth of uncompressed audio), but some sound quality is lost. To be able to create MP3 files, an additional library, lame_enc.dll (Windows) or libmp3lame.dylib (Mac), needs to be installed. MuseScore will prompt you for its location. You can get it at <u>http://lame.buanzo.org/</u>.

Some Mac users may find MuseScore encounters an error loading the MP3 library, possibly due to that library being a 32-bit library. A 64-bit build that will work with MuseScore is available from <u>http://thalictrum.com/en/products/lame</u> (note that it is necessary to rename the file to libmp3lame.dylib for MuseScore to recognize it).

Share with other music software

The following are musical score formats (like MuseScore's native format, MSCZ), which allow you to import files made with other music notation programs or export files that you can open with other music notation programs.

MusicXML (`*.xml`)

MusicXML is the universal standard for sheet music. It is the recommended format for sharing sheet music between different scorewriters, including MuseScore, Sibelius, Finale, and more than 100 others.

Compressed MusicXML (`*.mxl`)

Compressed MusicXML creates smaller files than regular MusicXML. This is a newer standard and isn't as widely supported by older scorewriters, but MuseScore has full import and export support.

MIDI (`*.mid, *.midi, *.kar`)

Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI) (external link) is a format widely supported by sequencers and music notation software.

MIDI files are designed for playback purposes and **do not contain score layout information about formatting, pitch spelling, voicing, ornaments, articulations, repeats, or key signatures, among other things. To share files between different music notation software, MusicXML is recommended instead.** If you are only interested in playback, use MIDI.

MuseData (`*.md`) (import only)

MuseData is a format developed by Walter B. Hewlett beginning in 1983 as an early means of sharing music notation between software. It has since been eclipsed by MusicXML, but several thousand scores in this format are still available online.

Capella (`*.cap, *.capx`) (import only)

CAP and CAPX files are created by the score writer, Capella. MuseScore imports version 2000 (3.0) or later fairly accurately (2.x doesn't work, while the `*.all` format from 1.x versions is not supported at all).

Bagpipe Music Writer (`*.bww`) (import only)

BWW files are created by the niche score writer, Bagpipe Music Writer.

BB (`*.mgu, *.MGU, *.sgu, *.SGU`) (import only)

BB files are created by the music arranging software, Band-in-a-Box. MuseScore's support is currently experimental.

Overture (`*.ove`) (import only)

OVE files are created by the score writer Overture. This format is mainly popular in Chinese-language environments, such as Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. MuseScore's support is currently experimental.

Guitar Pro (`*.GTP, *.GP3, *.GP4, *.GP5, *.GPX`) (import only)

GP files are created by Guitar Pro.

See also

- Save/Export/Print
- Recovered files

External links {external-links}

- How to recover a backup copy of a score

Fretboard diagrams

Musescore allows you to create **fretboard diagrams** (also known as **chord diagrams**) for any fretted string instrument. You will find diagrams for the most common **guitar** chords (major, minor and seventh) already provided in the Fretboard Diagrams <u>palette</u> in the Advanced workspace.
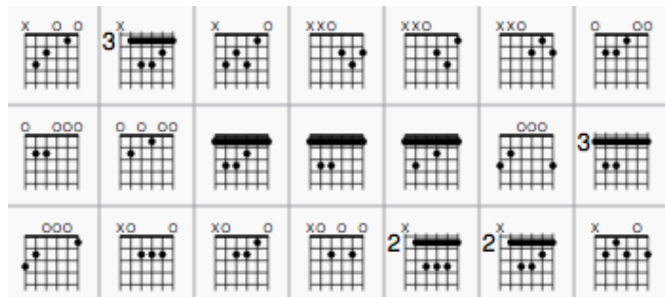
You can customize any fretboard diagram to your liking, and optionally add it back to a <u>custom palette</u> for future use.

Add a fretboard diagram

To add a fretboard diagram to the score, open a <u>palette</u> containing a fretboard diagram (it could be the default Fretboard Diagrams palette in the Advanced workspace, or a custom palette) and either:

- Select a note in voice 1 and double-click the fretboard diagram.
- Drag and drop the fretboard diagram into position on the score.

Edit fretboard (chord) diagram

1. Right-click on the diagram and select `Fretboard Diagram Properties....`
2. Adjust the **number of instrument strings**, using the "**Strings**" spin box at the bottom left of the window.
3. Adjust the **fret position number** using the scroll bar on the right-hand side.
4. Adjust how many frets to display (heightwise) using the **Frets**" spin-box at the bottom right of the window.
5. To place a dot on a string fret, click on that fret. To remove the dot, click on the fret again.
6. Click above the lowest fret to toggle a string between:
   - Open string (**o**),
   - mute/unplayed string (**x**)
   - Off.
7. To create a **barre** or **partial barre**, first make sure the desired fret position is clear of dots. Then click on a fret while holding `shift` (see "step 2" below). Delete the barre by shift-clicking again on the same fret. *Note*: Only one barre can be applied per diagram.

So, for example, to create a full-barre **F#** chord, from a **C** chord:

1. Place the C fretboard diagram on the score, right-click on it to get the Fretboard Diagram Properties window, then click on the relevant fret positions to establish the fingering dots.

2. Set "Frets" to "4" and fret number (right-hand scroll bar) to "2." The diagram should now look like this:
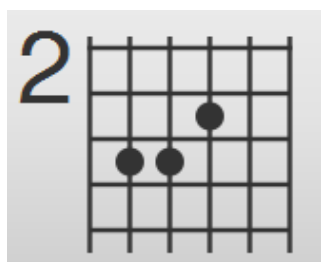
3. Create the barre by using `shift` and `click` on the second fret of the 6th string. Click "OK" to exit and you should get this:
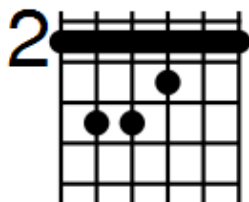
The same principle applies if you want a partial barré. For example, the partial barré in an A7 chord is created by pressing `shift`, then clicking on the 4th string, second fret:
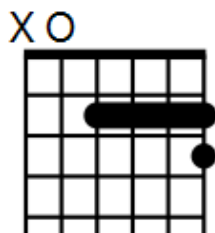
Adjust position, size, color

The size ("Scale"), color and position of a fretboard diagram can be changed by clicking on it and altering the relevant values in the Inspector.

Position can also be adjusted more directly in Edit mode:

1. Double-click on the diagram (or click on it and press `Ctrl+E` (Mac: `Cmd+E`) , or right-click on the symbol and select "Edit element").

2. Press arrow keys for fine positioning (0.1 sp at a time); or press `Ctrl+Arrow` (Mac: `Cmd+Arrow`) for larger adjustments (1 sp at a time).

Fretboard diagram style

Some default properties of fretboard diagrams (barre thickness, vertical position, size etc.) can be adjusted via `Style → General… → Chord Symbols, Fretboard Diagrams`. Any changes made here affect all existing diagrams, as well as those applied subsequently.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Master palette

The **Master Palette** enables you to access all the possible elements that could be added to custom palettes, and, in the case of Time Signatures and Key Signatures, make your own.

Go to `View → Master Palette` or use the shortcut `Shift+F9` (Mac: `fn+Shift+F9`).
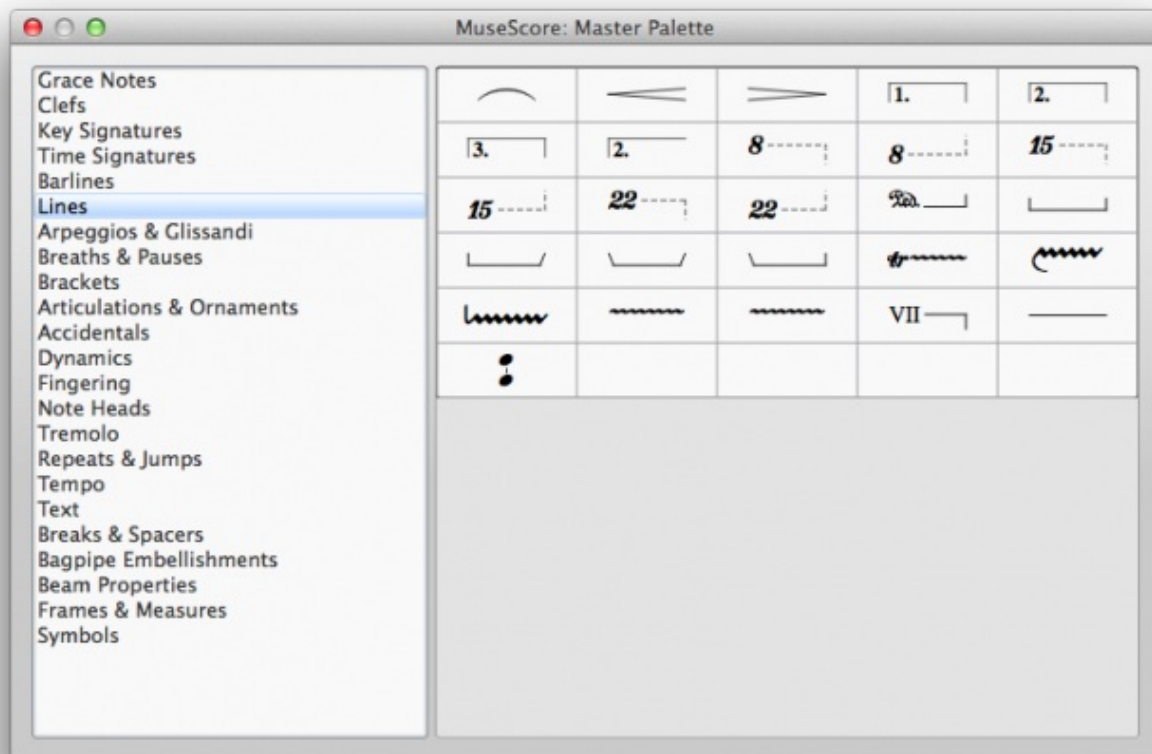
Hovering over an item with the mouse shows a tool tip (a short definition in black on yellow background).

Symbols
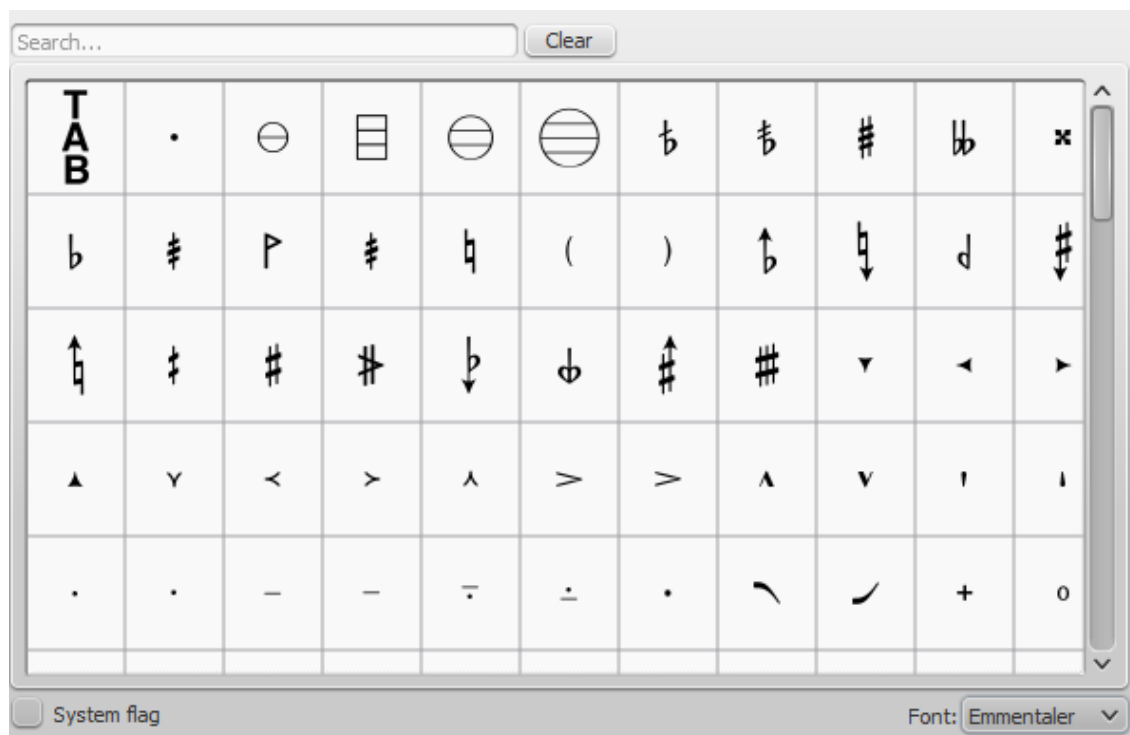
The **Symbols** section of the Master Palette is a large repository of hundreds of musical symbols in addition to those found in the default palettes. You can open it from the Master Palette, or directly from the score by using the shortcut z.

Find a symbol

The symbols are listed under their respective musical font types: use the**font menu** on the bottom right of the box to specify Emmentaler, Gonville or Bravura. You can search for a particular symbol by entering a keyword in the **search box**.

Apply a symbol

Symbols are applied to the score by dragging and dropping, or by selecting a note or rest and double-clicking the symbol. The position can then be adjusted by dragging or by changing the horizontal / vertical offsets in the Inspector. Color and visibility can also be adjusted in the Inspector.

Note: Elements from the Symbols section do not follow any positioning rules (in many cases unlike identical elements from other sections of the Master Palette), nor do they affect score playback.

Connect symbols

Elements from the Symbols section can be connected to each other on the score page, so that they can be moved as one unit:

1. Apply first symbol to the score. Adjust position as required.
2. Double click, or drag-and-drop, a second element onto the first symbol. Adjust position as required.

Drag the first element and the attached element will follow.

See also

- Palettes

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Noteheads

A range of alternative noteheads – in addition to the "normal" – can be found in the**Note Heads** palette of the advanced workspace and via the Inspector (see Change notehead group, below).

Note: The design of the notehead may vary depending on the music font selected (Emmentaler, Gonville or Bravura). Those in the palette are displayed as half notes in Bravura font.

Notehead groups

MuseScore supports a number of notehead styles:

- **Normal**: A standard notehead.
- **Crosshead** (Ghost note): Used in percussion notation to represent cymbals. It also indicates muted and/or percussive effects in stringed instruments such as the guitar.
- **Diamond**: Used to indicate harmonic notes in instruments such as the guitar, violin etc.
- **Slash**: Used to notate rhythmic values.
- **Triangle**: Used in percussion notation.
- **Shape notes**: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti.
- **Circle cross**: Used in percussion notation.
- **Alternative Brevis**: Used in early music notation.
- **Brackets** (Parentheses): When applied, these go round the existing note (or accidental).

Change notehead group

To change the *shape* of one or more noteheads in the score, use one of the following:

- Select one or more notes and double click a notehead in a palette
- Drag a notehead from a palette onto a note in the score.
- Select one or more notes and change the notehead in theInspector, using the drop-down list under **Note → Head group** (not supported for drum staves).

Change notehead type

Occasionally you may need to change the *apparent* duration of a notehead—i.e., *notehead type*—without altering its *actual*, underlying duration:

1. Select one or more notes.
2. Chose one of the following options from the Inspector under **Note → Head type**:
    - **Auto**: Automatic, i.e, apparent duration = actual duration.
    - **Whole**: Whole notehead, regardless of actual duration.
    - **Half**: Half notehead, regardless of actual duration.
    - **Quarter**: Quarter notehead, regardless of actual duration.
    - **Breve**: Breve notehead, regardless of actual duration.

Shared noteheads

When two notes of the same written pitch fall on the same beat, they are either *offset* – arranged side by side – or allowed to *share* the same notehead (the latter is particularly common in classical and fingerstyle guitar music).

Note: The rules governing the default behavior of such unison notes are as follows:

- Unison notes in the same voice do not share noteheads.
- Notes with stems in the same direction do not share noteheads.
- Dotted notes do not share noteheads with undotted notes.
- Black notes do not share noteheads with white notes.
- Whole notes never share noteheads.

Change offset noteheads to shared

Offset noteheads can be turned into shared noteheads in one of two ways:

- Make the smaller-value notehead invisible by selecting it and using the keyboard shortcut v (or unchecking the "Visible" option in the Inspector).
- Alter the notehead type of the shorter-duration note to match the longer one by switching "Head type" in the "Note" section of the Inspector.

Remove duplicate fret marks

In certain cases, a shared notehead, when pasted to a tablature staff, may result in two separate fret marks on adjacent strings. To correct this, make any extraneous tablature notes invisible by selecting them and using the keyboard shortcut v (or by unchecking the "visible" option in the Inspector).

Examples of notehead sharing

1. In the first example below, the notes of voices 1 and 2 share noteheads by default, because they are all black, undotted notes:

2. By contrast, in the next example, white notes cannot share noteheads with black notes, so are offset to the right:
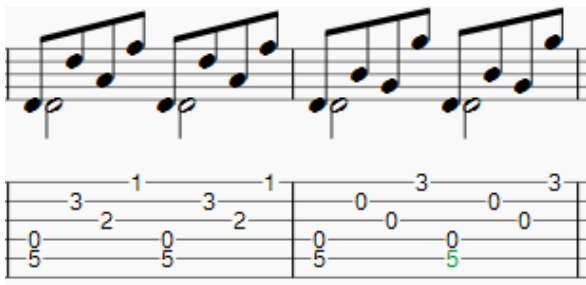
To create a shared notehead, make the black eighth note invisible or change its head type to match that of the white note (as explained above):

External links

Shape Notes at Wikipedia.
Ghost notes at Wikipedia.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Part extraction

If you have written a full ensemble score, MuseScore can create sheet music that shows only the individual part for each musician in the ensemble.

Note: In the current version of MuseScore, it is not possible to split a single staff (that contains two or more voices) into separate parts. So, any instrument that you want to print out a separate part for also needs to have its own staff in the full score.

Set up all parts at once

If you have an orchestral score in which each instrument should be extracted, you can create the parts more easily:

1. Go to `File → Parts...`

2. Click the `New All` button (parts are named with the instrument name, and if needed with an appended "-<number>")
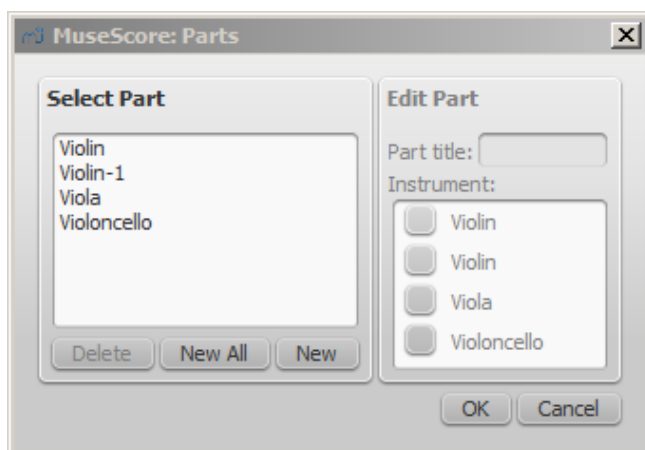
3. Click OK

Now you will see a tab for each part with your score.

Define specific parts

You can define the parts at any point after creating a new score. You only need to define the parts once for each score, but you can make changes if needed. The following instructions use a string quartet as an example, but the same principles apply for any other ensemble.

1. From the main menu, choose File → Parts...
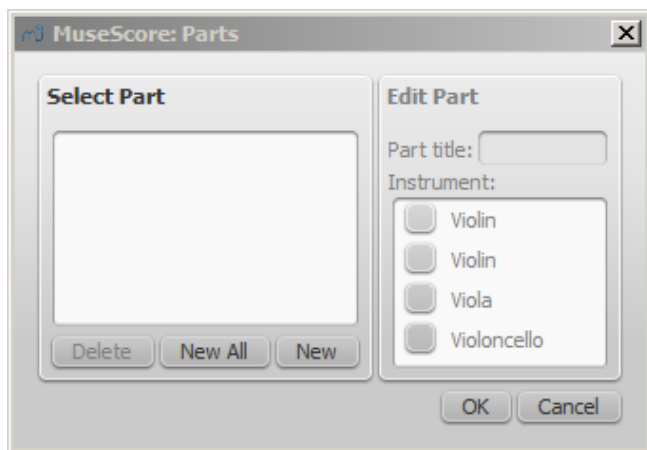
2. In the Parts window click New to create a "part definition"
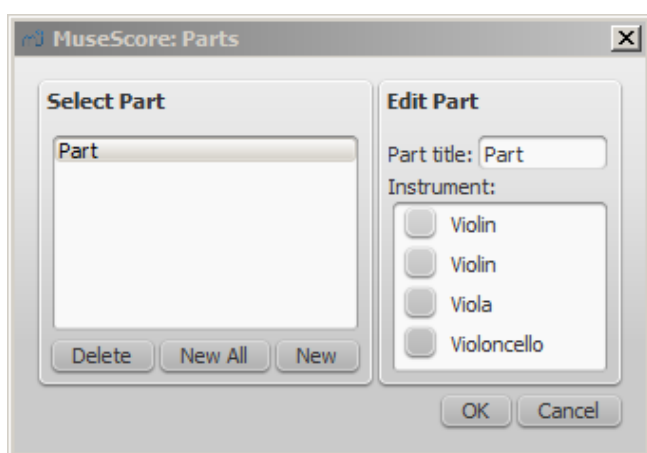
3. In the right pane, type the words you want to use for the "Part title" (this also serves for the corresponding part of the filename when exporting)

4. Pick the instrument that you want to appear in your part by marking the relevant box in the right-hand pane. Usually, you only want one instrument per part, but sometimes you might need a part that includes more than one instrument (such as multiple percussion staves). MuseScore allows you to mark as many instruments per part as you need
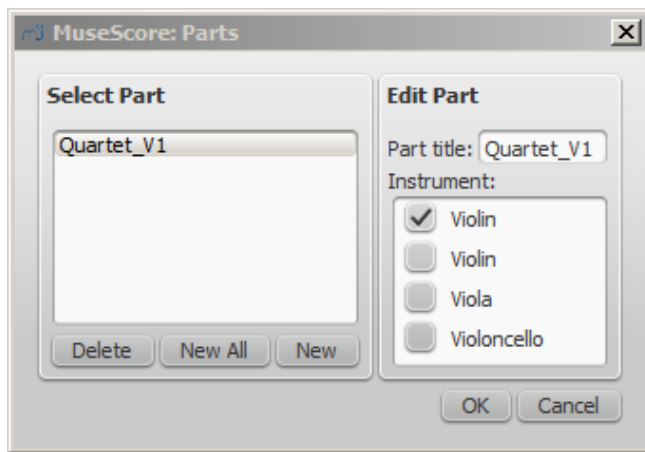
5. Repeat steps two through four (above) for each part as needed
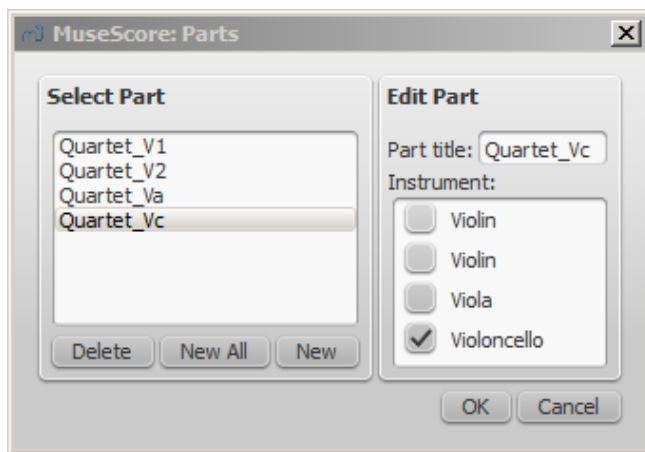
6. Once you're done, click OK to dismiss the Parts window

You have now finished setting up the parts. You do not need to do this again, unless you add or remove an instrument from your full score.

Exporting the parts

1. Go to File → Export Parts...

2. Navigate to the place you want them to be exported to and select the file format (PDF is the default)

3. For filename just enter whatever prefix is useful for all parts, or leave the default (the filename of your score)

4. Click OK

This will generate files with the names "<title>" + "-" + "<part name>.<extension>". In addition, when exporting as PDF, this will also generate "<title>" + "-Score_And_Parts.pdf".

Saving

Parts and score are "linked", which means that any change to the content in one will affect the other, but changes to the layout will not. When you have the parts created, they are saved along with the score (if you open the score you have tabs for the score and every part you created).
You can, however, save each part individually by selecting its tab and use File → Save As...

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum

Plugins

Overview

191

Plugins are small pieces of code that add a particular feature to MuseScore. By enabling a plugin, a new menu option will be appended to the Plugins menu in MuseScore to accomplish a given action on the score or a part of it.

Some plugins come pre-installed with MuseScore—see →below. You can find many more plugins in the plugin repository. Some plugins there work with MuseScore 2; others will only work with older versions of MuseScore, some work with either.
To tell one from the other: for MuseScore 2.0 the plugin code files have an extentsion of `.qml`, for older versions it is `.js`.

Installation

Note that some plugins may require the installation of other components (fonts, e.g.) to work. Check the plugin's documentation for more information.

Most plugins are provided as ZIP archives, so download the plugin's .zip file and uncompress it to one of the directories mentioned below. If a plugin is provided directly as an (unzipped) .qml file, simply download and place into one of these directories.

Once a plugin is installed, it needs to be enabled in the Plugin Manager in order to use it—see →below.

Windows

MuseScore looks for pre-installed plugins in `%ProgramFiles%\MuseScore 2\Plugins` (or `%ProgramFiles(x86)%\MuseScore 2\Plugins` for the 64-bit versions) and in `%LOCALAPPDATA%\MuseScore\MuseScore 2\plugins` on Vista, Seven and 10 or `c:\Documents and Settings\USERNAME\Local Settings\Application Data\MuseScore\MuseScore 2\plugins` (adjusted to your language version) on XP.

To install new plugins, the above folders should *not* be used or modified. Instead you can add other plugins to `%HOMEPATH%\Documents\MuseScore2\Plugins`, or specify a different folder to look for plugins in MuseScore's Preferences.

macOS

On macOS, MuseScore looks for pre-installed plugins in the MuseScore bundle in `/Applications/MuseScore 2.app/Contents/Resources/plugins` (to reveal files in the app bundle, right click on MuseScore 2.app and choose "Show package contents") and in `~/Library/Application Support/MuseScore/MuseScore 2/plugins`.

To install new plugins, the above folders should *not* be used or modified. Instead you can add other plugins to `~/Documents/MuseScore2/Plugins`, or specify a different folder to look for plugins in MuseScore's Preferences.

Linux

In Linux, MuseScore looks for plugins in `/usr/share/mscore-2.0/plugins` and in `~/.local/share/data/MuseScore/MuseScore 2/plugins`.

To install new plugins, the above folders should *not* be used or modified. Instead you can add other plugins to `~/Documents/MuseScore2/Plugins`, or specify a different folder to look for plugins in MuseScore's Preferences.

Enable/disable plugins

To be able to access the installed plugins from the Plugins menu, they need to be enabled in the Plugin Manager:
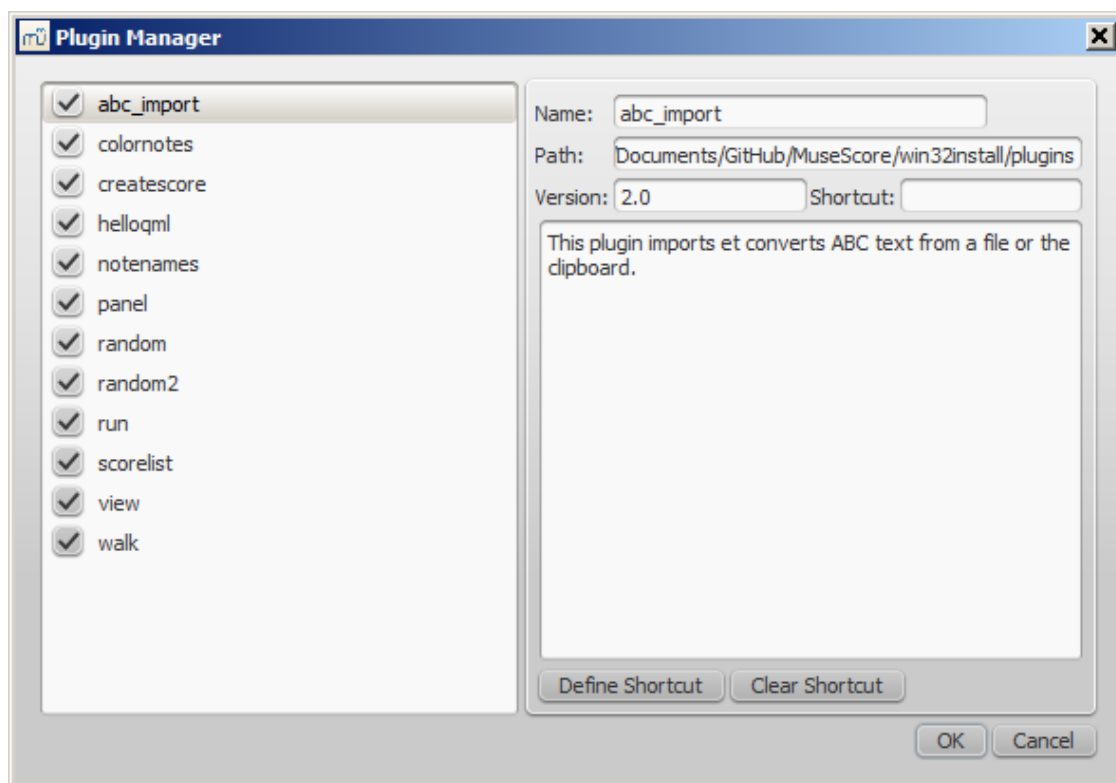
Create/edit/run plugins

It is possible to create new or edit existing plugins and run them via the Plugin Creator:
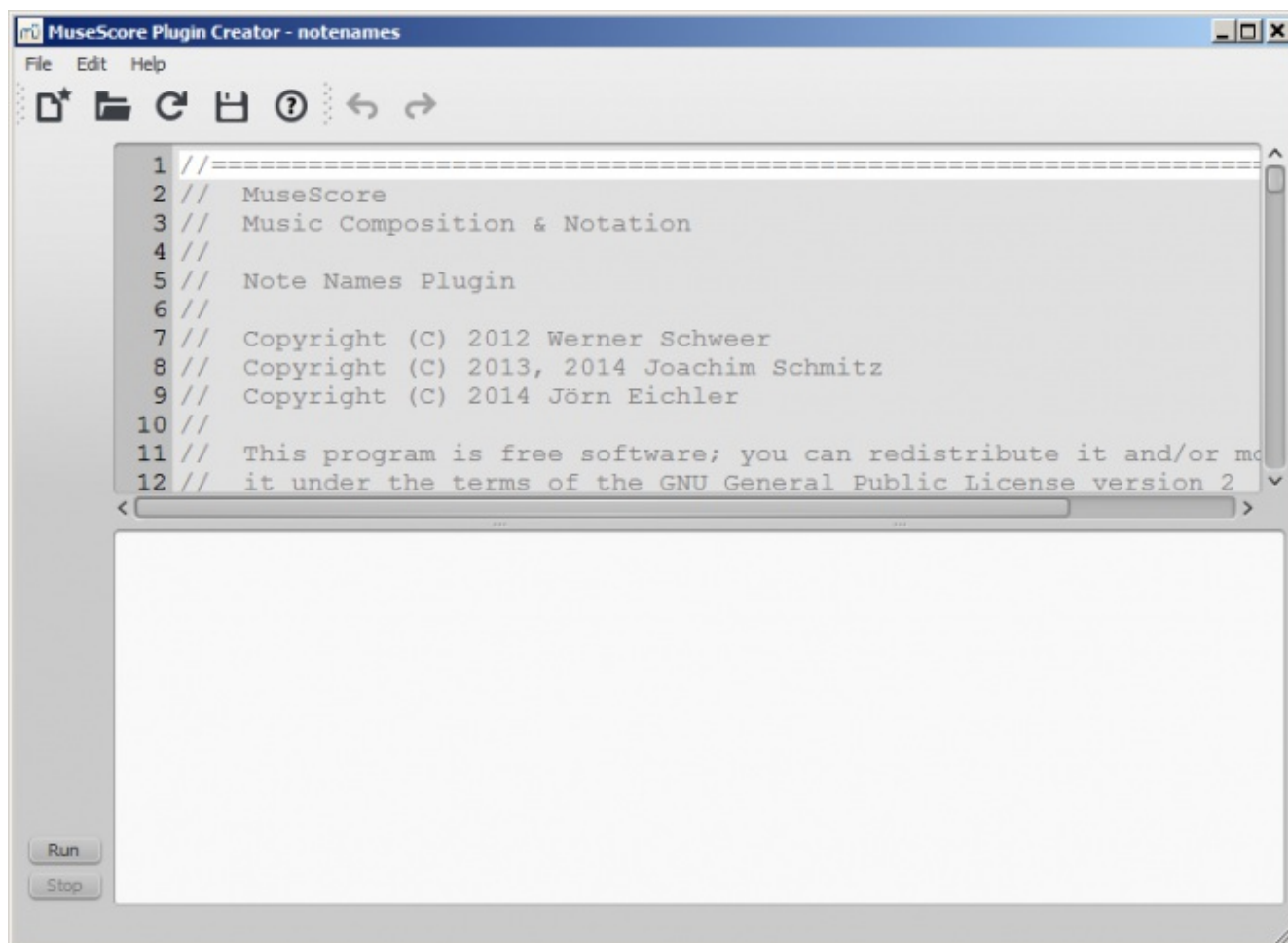
Here also the documentation of all available elements can be found

Plugins installed by default

Some plugins come pre-installed with MuseScore, but they are not enabled by default. See →above to enable plugins.

ABC Import

This plugin imports ABC text from a file or the clipboard. Internet connection is required, because it uses an external web-service for the conversion, which uses abc2xml and gets send the ABC data, returns MusicXML and imports that into MuseScore.

Break Every X Measures

This plugin enters line breaks in the interval you select on the selected measures or, if no measures are selected, the entire score. It is no longer being distributed and has been replaced by `Edit` → `Tools` → `Add/Remove Line Breaks`. If you ever used an early beta version of MuseScore 2, though, you may still see the plugin left over.

Notes → Color Notes

This demo plugin colors notes in the selected range (or the entire score), depending on their pitch. It colors the note head of all notes in all staves and voices according to the Boomwhackers convention. Each pitch has a different color. C and C♯ have a different color. C♯ and D♭ have the same color. To color all the notes in black, just run that plugin again (on the same selection). You could also use the 'Remove Notes Color' plugin for this.

Create Score

This demo plugin creates a new score. It creates a new piano score with 4 quarters C D E F. It's a good start to learn how to make a new score and add notes from a plugin.

helloQml

This demo plugin shows some basic tasks.

Notes → Note Names

This plugin names notes in the selected range or the entire score. It displays the names of the notes (as a staff text) as per MuseScore's language settings, for voices 1 and 3 above the staff, for voices 2 and 4 below the staff, and for chords in a comma separated list, starting with the top note.

Panel

This demo plugin creates a GUI panel.

random

Creates a random score.

random2

Creates a random score too

run

This demo plugin runs an external command. Probably this will only work on Linux.

scorelist

This test plugin iterates through the score list.

ScoreView

Demo plugin to demonstrate the use of a ScoreView

Walk

This test plugin walks through all elements in a score

See also

- Tools

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Preferences

You can customize many of MuseScore's default behaviors via `Edit → Preferences...` (Mac: `MuseScore → Preferences...`).

The Preferences dialog has multiple tabs:

| General | Canvas | Note Input | Score | I/O | Import | Export | Shortcuts | Update |
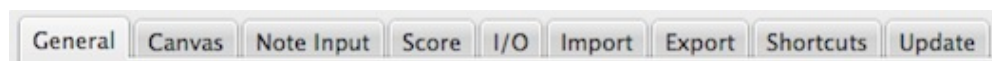
`Reset All Preferences to Default` will reset all preferences to the ones MuseScore had when you installed it.

`Cancel` will close the dialog without applying changes.

General
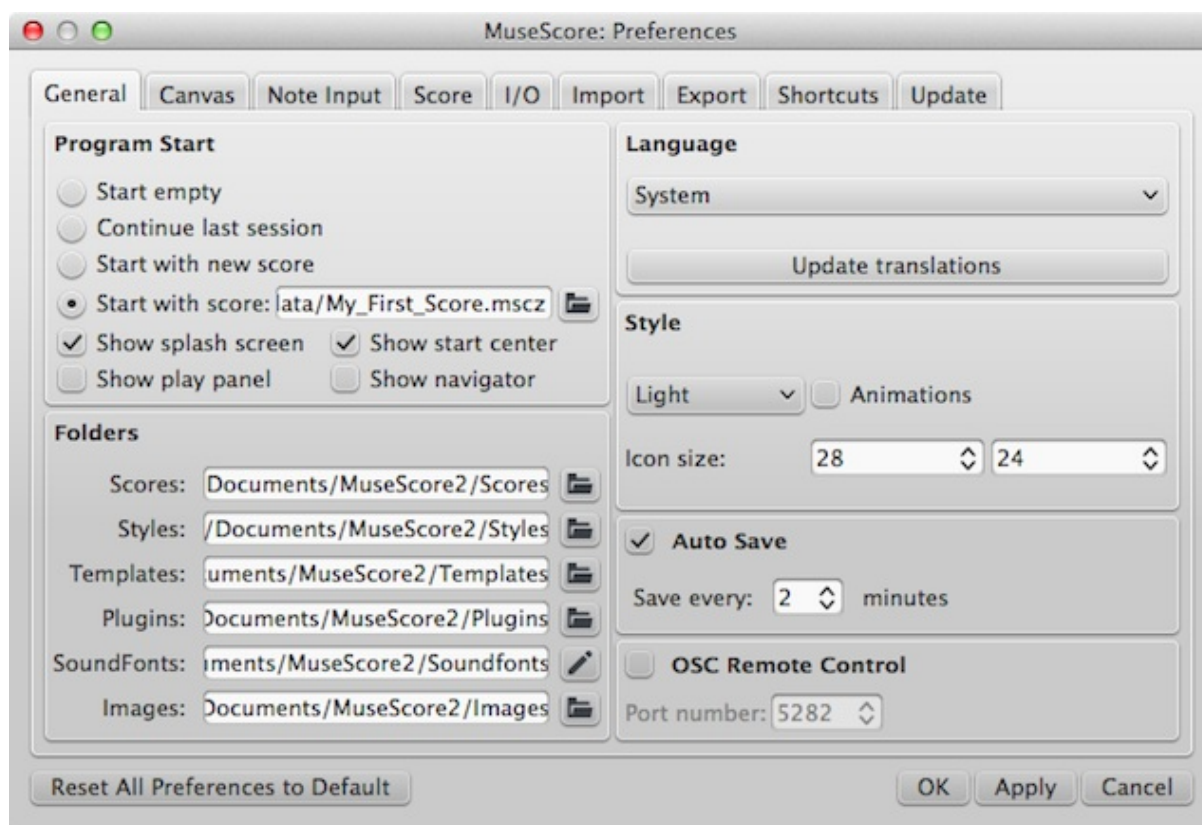
Here you can define:

- Your opening score
- The default folder to search for/save to scores, styles, templates, plugins, SoundFonts, and images
- Your auto save timing
- The languages of MuseScore (translations may be updated from here too)
- The style of your MuseScore windows and size of icons
- The windows to show at startup (Play Panel, Navigator, Start Center)
  Note that language translation updates can also be done via `Help → Resource Manager`

Canvas
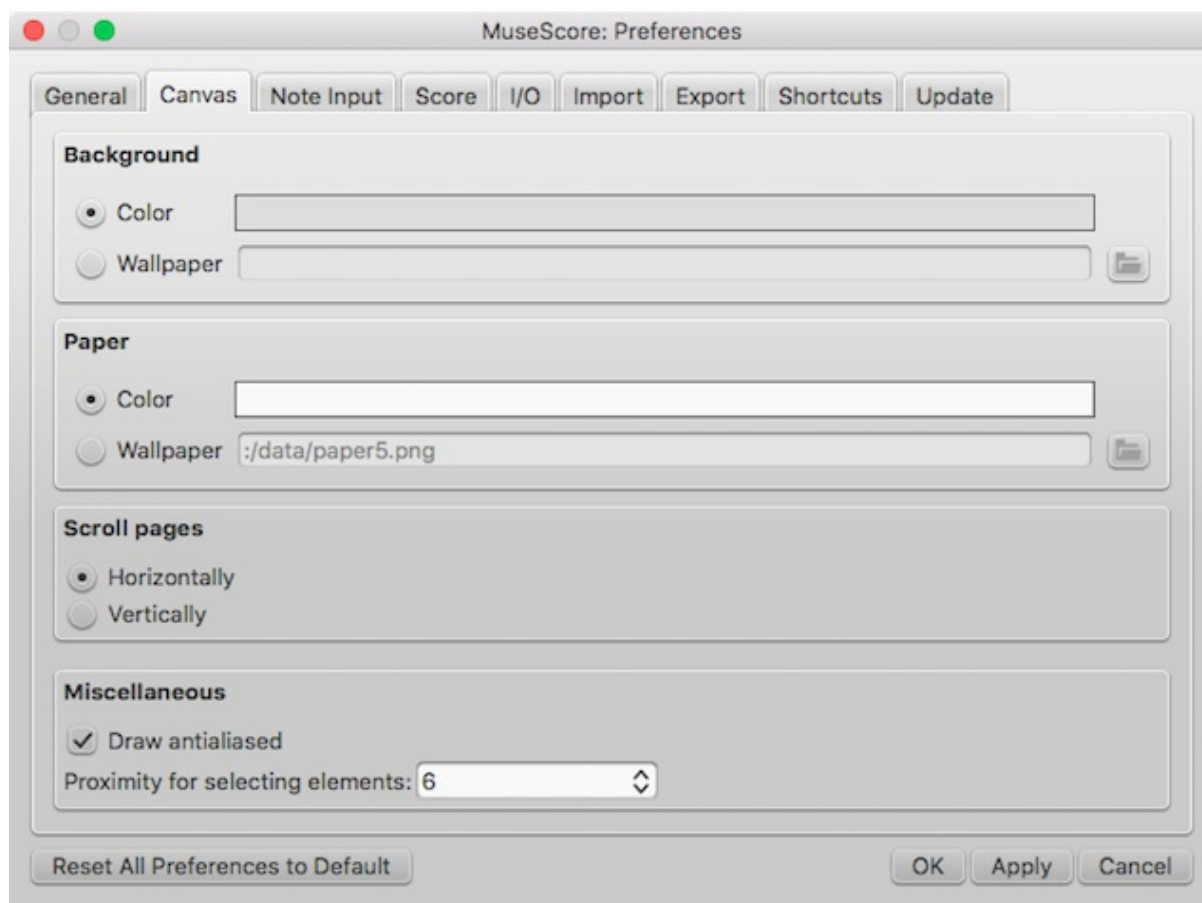
Use Canvas to set your preferred color and wallpaper for the score background and paper.

Under `Scroll Pages`, you can choose whether to display pages of a multi-page score laid out in a horizontal row, or scrolling in a vertical column.

Under `Miscellaneous`, checking `Draw antialiased` (on by default) makes diagonal lines and edges of shapes look smoother (less jagged). `Proximity for selecting elements` controls the distance the mouse may be from an object and still act on it. Smaller numbers require more precision, making it harder to click on small objects. Larger numbers are less precise, making it harder not to click on nearby objects unintentionally. Choose a comfortable working value.

Note input
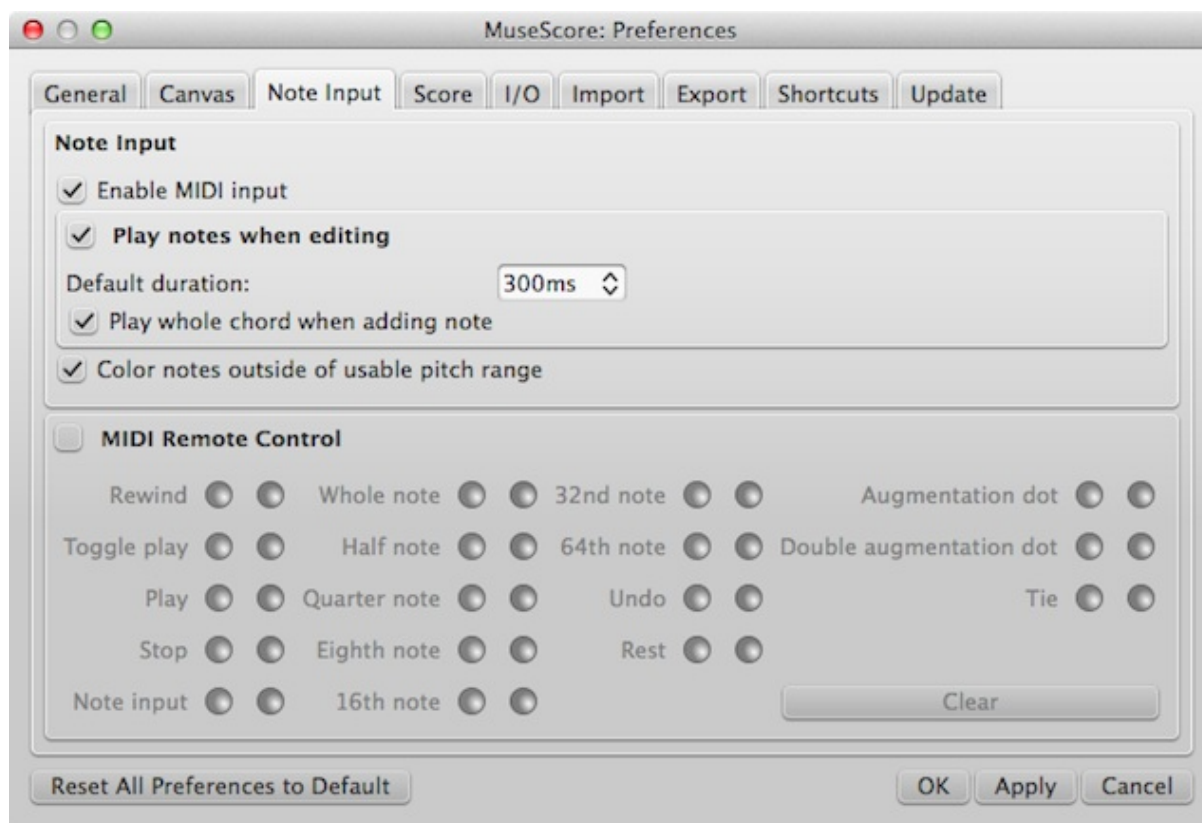
On this tab there are note input and MIDI remote control preferences. Here the following can be set:

- Enter notes via MIDI
- Enable playback on entering a note
- Its playback duration
- Color notes outside the usable pitch range
- MIDI Remote Control settings

Midi Remote Control allows you to enter or leave`note input mode` and also choose the duration for notes and rest directly from the MIDI keyboard as you enter notes into the score via MIDI, without having to use the computer mouse or keyboard at the same time.
The default setting for Midi Remote Control is 'off' with the checkbox blank, and all the option buttons below are grey. In order to set preferences it must be turned on with the MIDI keyboard connected.

To turn on Midi Remote Control click the checkbox, the current status of all Midi Remote Control Key settings is now indicated by the coloured input option buttons:
- Green button is lit only if the MIDI key action is defined by the user.
- Red button is lit only during the preference setting process.
- By default no MIDI key actions are set and all buttons are unlit.

To enable a MIDI key operation: click the red button which lights up and stays lit until you press your chosen MIDI key for that operation and the green button is lit permanently. Once you have defined your key settings you can use the MIDI keyboard to control note input operations. You can verify your key settings by observing the MuseScore Note Input panel while pressing the MIDI keys.

To temporarily deactivate Midi Remote Control: click the Midi Remote Control checkbox, it is un-ticked and all MIDI input key action buttons are greyed. Your selections are always saved between MuseScore sessions so you can deactivate remote control at any time without losing your settings.

IMPORTANT, at the time of writing:-
1. The Clear option turns off all the green buttons for the current MuseScore session but all the user recorded MIDI key settings are retained and will be reloaded on the next session.
2. A MIDI key setting that is activated cannot afterwards be turned off and the green button will always remain lit but it can be overwritten with a different MIDI key by using the red button again.
3. Unfortunately, if the same MIDI key is used accidentally for two (or more) note inputs then both (or all) the associated green buttons stay lit but only one will work. You can fix this as in 2 above.

Score
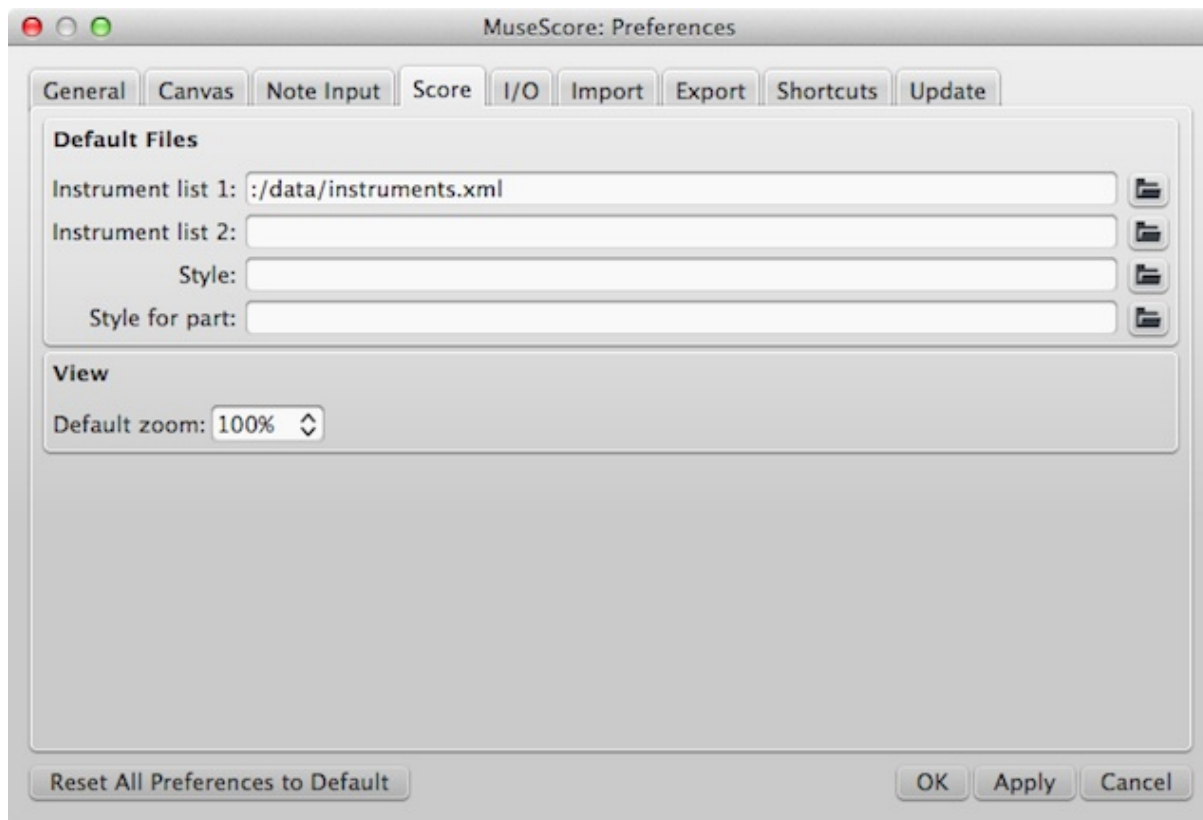
Score preferences include

- Default instrument list files (two may be selected)
- Default style for score and parts
- Default zoom

I/O
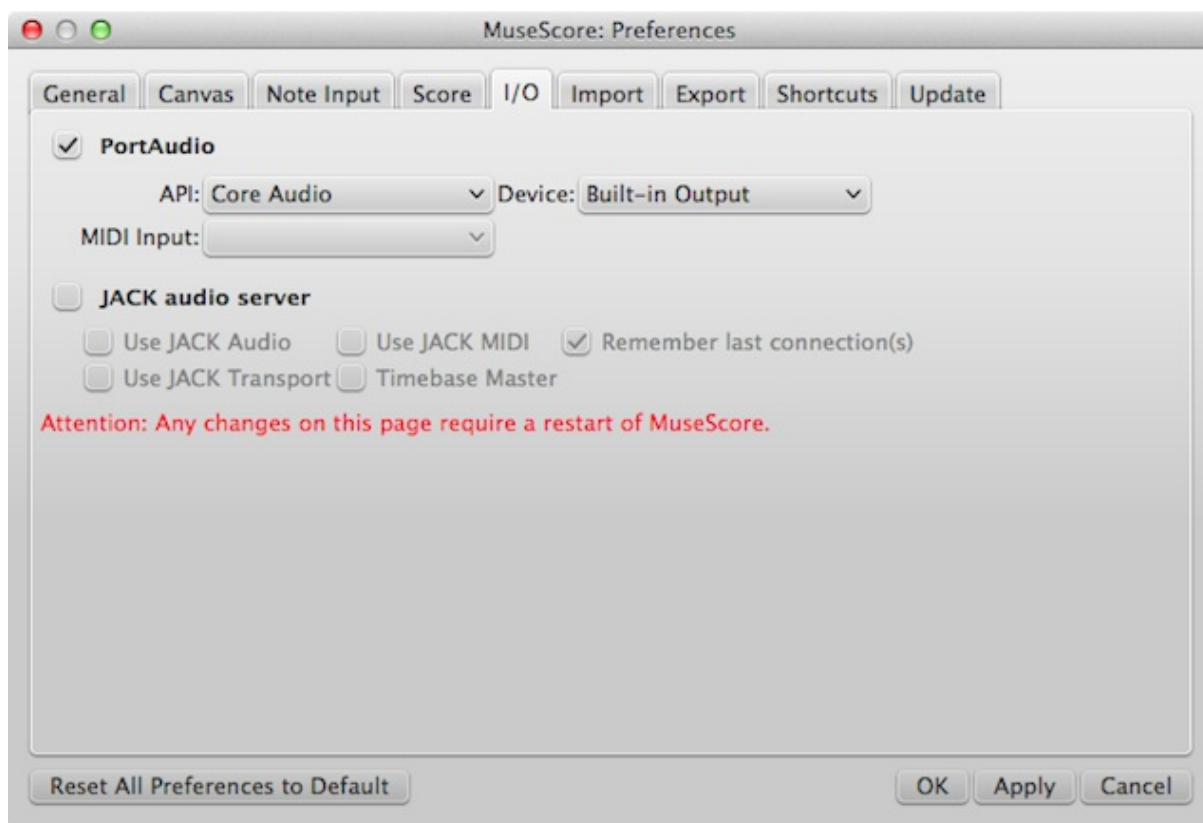
Input/Output preferences enable you to set what device will be used for audio playback (e.g., built-in speakers, USB headset, wireless, etc.), whether to use a MIDI trigger (plugged-in keyboard), and whether to route audio output through JACK.

Import
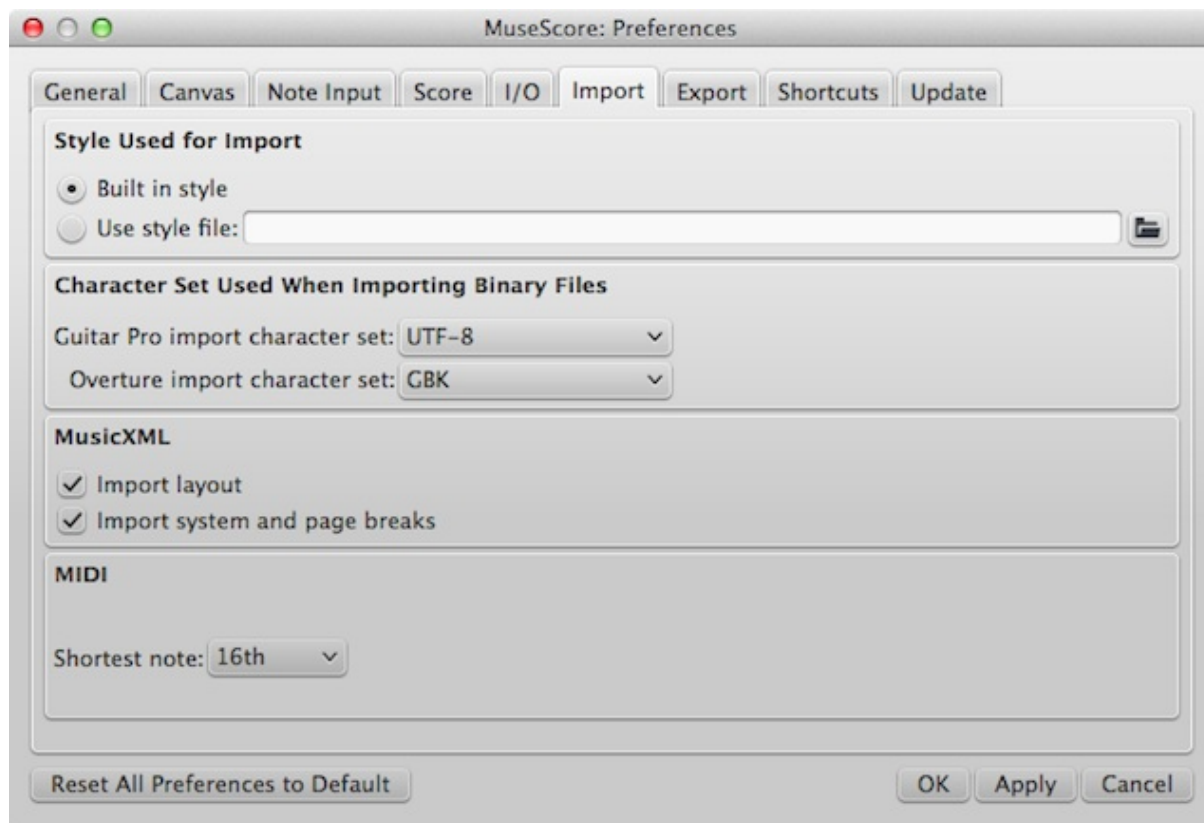
These settings determine how files from other sources are imported:

- Using either the built in MuseScore style or a style you choose
- Guitar Pro and Overture character sets
- MusicXML layout options
- Shortest note in MIDI files

Export
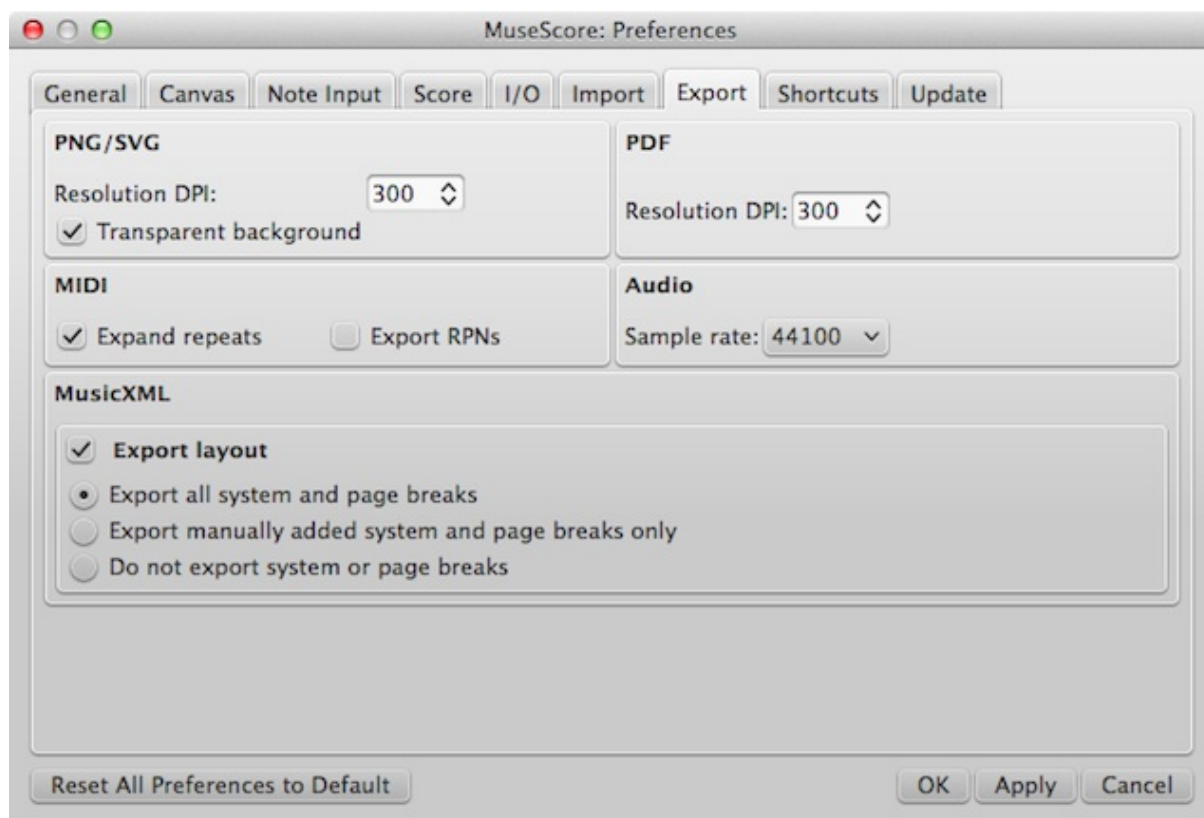
These settings determine how MuseScore files are exported:

- PNG/SVG image resolution (in DPI) and whether to use transparent background
- Whether to expand repeats in exported MIDI files
- Digital audio sample rate
- Whether to export the layout and how to export system and page breaks to MusicXML

Shortcuts
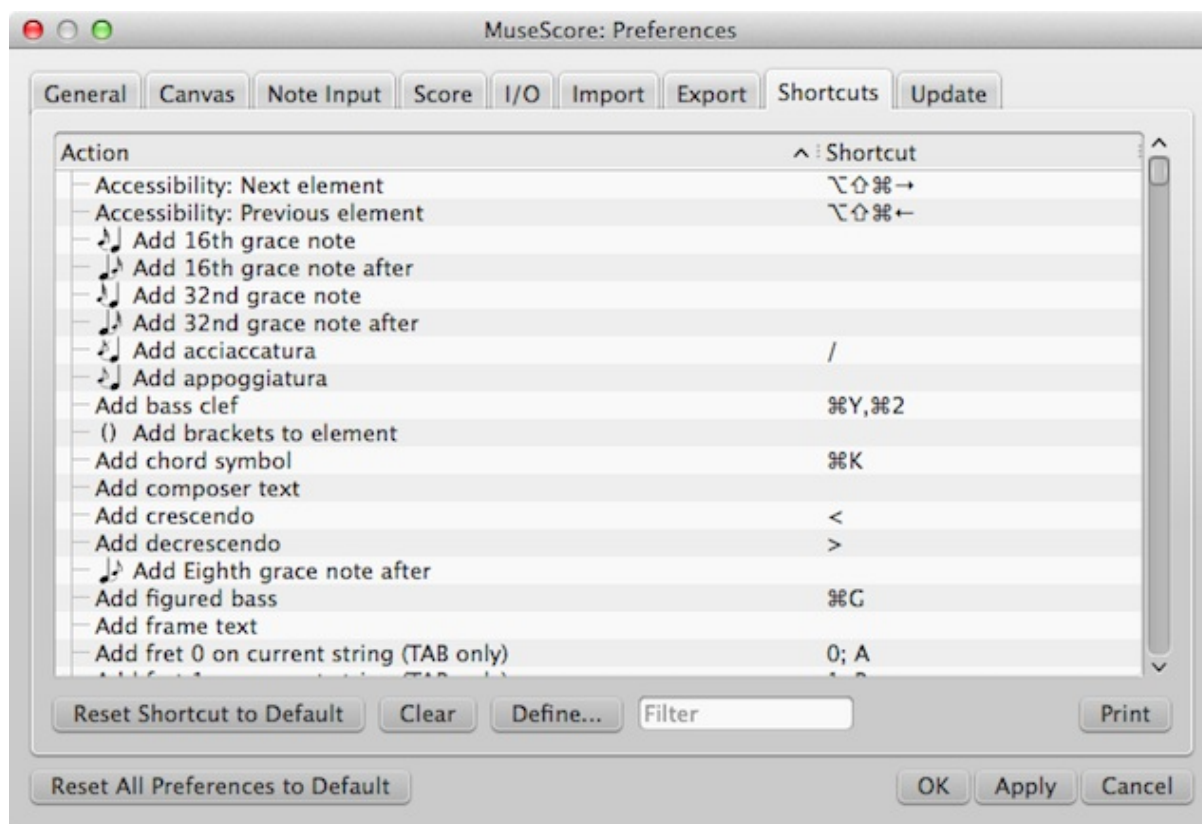
Every action possible with MuseScore is listed, with the associated shortcut if it exists. To define a new shortcut, select an existing entry in the list and click `Define...` (or just double click the entry), then enter the new shortcut using up to four keys. You can also reset any shortcut in the list to its default value, or clear a shortcut you select. Shortcuts listed in preferences appear next to their associated commands in the menus.

Note: Some shortcuts, including default ones, may not work with some keyboards.

The list of shortcuts can be printed out or exported to other media (pdf etc.) using the `Print` button in the bottom right of the window.

Update
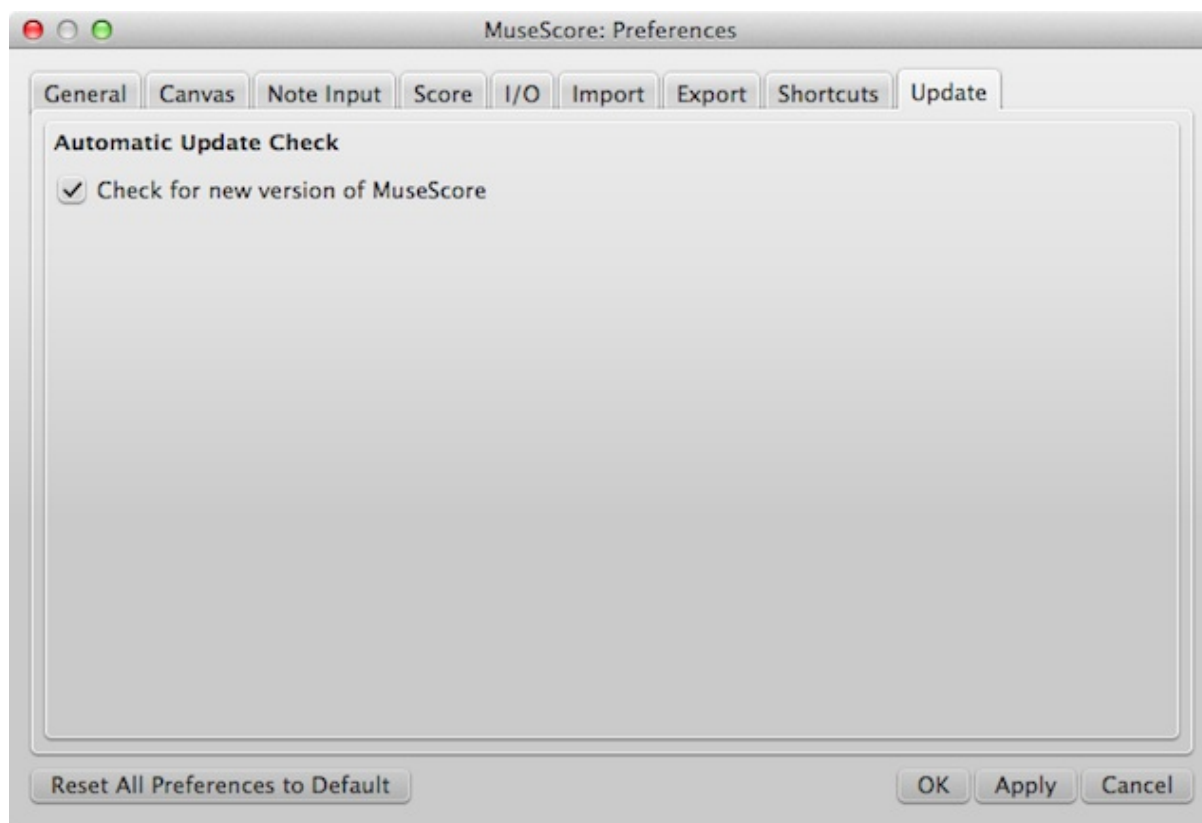
This sets whether MuseScore will check for updates at startup.

Updates may be checked manually in `Help → Check for updates`

See also

- Keyboard shortcuts
- Language settings and translation updates
- Update checking

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Recovered files

If MuseScore or your computer should crash, or if power is lost, a pop-up message upon restarting MuseScore will ask if you wish to restore the previous session.
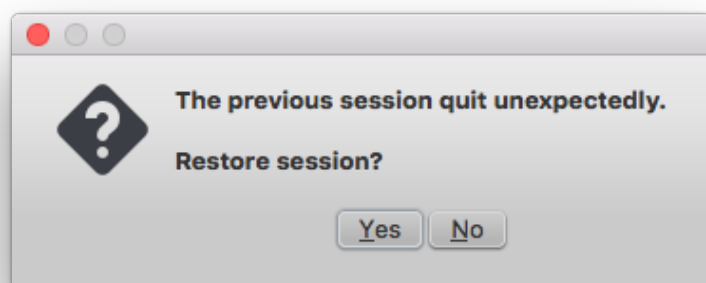
If you click `No`, any work from your previous session will be lost. If you click `Yes`, MuseScore will attempt to recover the files that were open.

Behavior of saving after session recovery

When MuseScore recovers files after a crash, it renames them with the full path name added in front

of the original file name. This very long name will appear in the tab(s) above the active score window. On some operating systems, when a user saves any of these recovered files, it will be saved in the folder in which the program itself is running. **This is not necessarily the same directory in which the scores were saved when they were created. You may not be able to locate the revised file in the usual folder.**

To avoid this, **do not use** "`Save`" the first time you save a recovered file. Use the "`Save As...`" menu item **before** making any revisions to the score, to save each recovered file under either its original name or a new name. This will open a window to allow you to navigate to the correct folder and directory. **This is important in order to ensure that the file is saved to the folder in which you expect to find it later.**

Finding recovered files

In the event that "`Save`" is used instead of "`Save As...`" with a recovered file, you will have to find the files in your computer. The actual location of those files will vary, depending on your operating system, and in which directory MuseScore is installed.

For Windows 7, with a default installation of MuseScore to the x86 program files directory, recovered files are auto-saved to `C:\Program Files (x86)\MuseScore2\bin`.

For Windows 10, look in `C:\Users\[User Name]\AppData\Local\VirtualStore\Program Files (x86)\MuseScore 2\bin`

You may need to run a system-wide search in order to find files saved directly after a session recovery. Use keywords from the original file name as well as wildcards, and specify the date modified.

See also

Save/Export/Print

External links

How to recover a backup copy of a score

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Replace pitches without changing rhythms

If you have a passage where you want a change in notes but not in rhythm, but that is more complicated than a simple transposition of notes, **re-pitch mode** is highly useful. In essence, when in re-pitch mode, new pitches will replace the old ones, following the original rhythm.

Not to be confused with Accidental: Respell pitches

To activate re-pitch mode, use the re-pitch button, [image], next to the Note input button, [image], or use the shortcut `Shift+Ctrl+I` (Mac: `Shift+Cmd+I`).

To reproduce a rhythmical passage with different pitches, select the passage, copy it, and paste it where you want. (If you are in a situation of having written the wrong notes but correct rhythm, no copy and paste is necessary.)

Then click on the first note you want to re-pitch, enter note input mode, and activate re-pitch mode. Begin typing the new pitches. Unlike normal circumstances, where the length of the notes you are entering are based on what length you have selected in the toolbar, in re-pitch mode the rhythm (the notes' length) will stay the same.

See also

- Note input
- Copy and paste
- Transposition
- Introduction to the new 'Repitch Mode'

Score properties

Several meta tags are generated automatically on creation of a score, and more may be created later. These may then be used in a header or footer—see below.

File → Score Properties... (File → Info... in versions earlier than 2.0.3) shows the values of the existing meta tags.

Preexisting meta tags

Every score has the following fields available in Score Properties. Some are automatically filled in on score creation, while others will be empty unless specifically changed. The first four items in the following list are not user-modifiable, and cannot be used in the header or footer (they are not really meta tags).

- **File Path:** The score file's location on your computer.
- **MuseScore Version**: The version of MuseScore the score was last saved with.
- **Revision**: The revision of MuseScore the score was last saved with.
- **API-Level**: The file format version.
- **arranger**: (empty)
- **composer**: As entered in the New Score Wizard (which is also used to fill the composer text in the top vertical frame—**be aware that later changes to one are not reflected in the other**).
- **copyright**: As entered in the New Score Wizard. Copyright info appears as seemingly uneditable text at the bottom of every page of a score, but it can be edited or removed by changing the value here.
- **creationDate**: Date of the score creation. This could be empty, if the score was saved in test mode (see Command line options).
- **lyricist**: As entered in the New Score Wizard (which is also used to fill the corresponding lyricist text in the top vertical frame—**be aware that later changes to one are not reflected in the other**).
- **movementNumber**: (empty)
- **movementTitle**: (empty)
- **originalFormat**: This tag exists only if the score got imported and then contains the format the score got imported from (see file formats).
- **platform**: The platform the score was created on: "Microsoft Windows", "Apple Macintosh", "Linux" or "Unknown". This might be empty if the score was saved in test mode.

- **poet**: (empty)
- **source**: May contain a URL if the score was downloaded from or <u>saved to MuseScore.com</u>.
- **translator**: (empty)
- **workNumber**: (empty)
- **workTitle**: As entered in the New Score Wizard (which is also used to fill the corresponding title text in the top vertical frame—**be aware that later changes to one are not reflected in the other**).

Every *part* additionally has the following meta tag, generated and filled on part creation:

- **partName**: Name of the part as given on part creation (which is also used to fill the corresponding part name text in the top vertical frame—**be aware that later changes to one are not reflected in the other**).

Modify a meta tag

To modify a meta tag of a score with linked parts, make sure the score is in the active tab. To modify a meta tag for an individual part, that part needs to be the active tab. Go to `File → Score Properties` and you can change the current text or fill in the empty field for any of the tags listed.

Add a new meta tag

To add a meta tag to a score with linked parts, make sure the score is in the active tab. To add a meta tag to an individual part, that part needs to be the active tab.

Go to `File → Score Properties...` (`File → Info...` in versions earlier than 2.0.3) and click the `New` button.
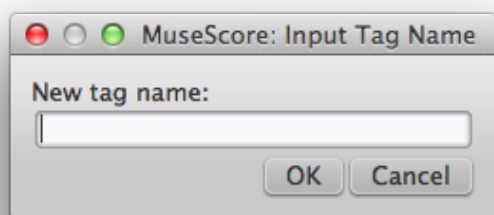
Fill in the name of your new meta tag and click `OK` (or `Cancel`). The meta tag will be added to your tag list. You can then fill in the content of the tag.

Header/Footer

You can show the content of meta tags in a header or footer for your score. To create a header or footer for a score with linked parts, make sure the score is in the active tab. To create a header or footer for an individual part, that part needs to be the active tab.

Go to `Style → General...` to open the Edit Style window and choose `Header, Footer, Numbers` from the sidebar on the left.

If you hover with your mouse over the Header or Footer text region, a list of macros will appear, showing their meaning, as well as the existing meta tags and their content.

You can use these tags (e.g. $:workTitle:) and macros (e.g. $M) in the appropriate boxes to add them to headers or footers.

Click Apply to see how the header or footer looks in the score. Click OK to assign the header or footer to the score or the active part. If a part is in the active tab, you can also click Apply to all parts if you want that and then OK to leave the dialog. Cancel allows you to exit without applying the changes.

See also

- <u>Layout and formatting: Header and footer</u>
- <u>Command line options: Test mode</u>

Staff properties

To display the **Edit Staff/Part Properties** dialog, right-click on any staff line and select `staff Properties...`. This allows you to make changes to the display of a **staff**, adjust its tuning and transposition, change instrument etc.
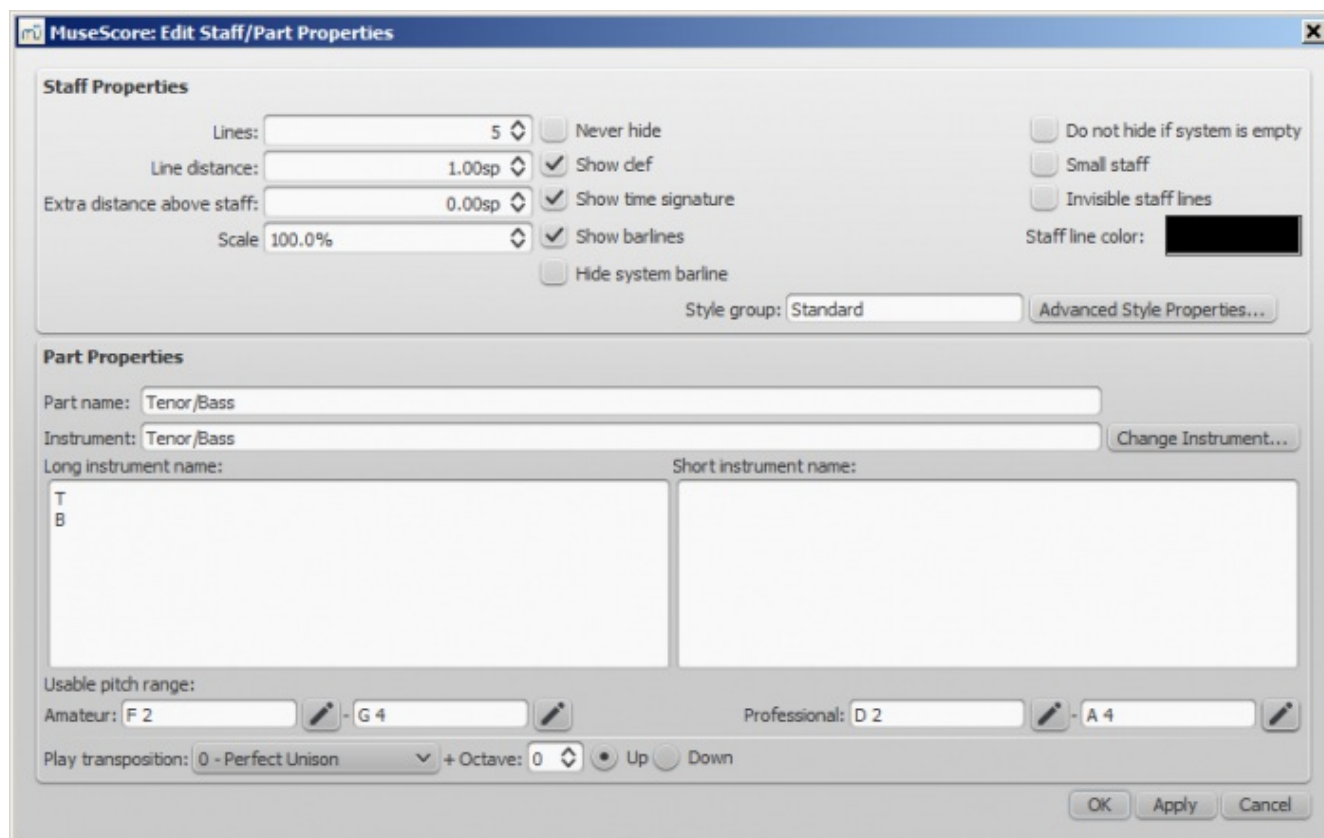
For practical purposes, there are four different staff types:

1a. **Standard staff I**. A pitched staff used for most instruments except fretted, plucked-string ones.
1b. **Standard staff II**. A pitched staff containing a *fretted, plucked-string instrument*, with options to set the number of instrument strings and tuning.
2. **Tablature staff**. A staff containing a *fretted, plucked-string instrument*, which displays music as a series of fret-marks on strings. Also contains options to set the number of instrument strings and tuning.
3. **Percussion staff**. A pitched staff for percussion instruments.

It is possible to change one type of staff into another using the <u>Instruments</u> dialog, as long as the original staff is loaded with the right instrument. For example, in order to change a standard staff to tablature, it must contain a plucked-string instrument. Similarly, to change a standard staff to a percussion staff you need to ensure that it has an appropriate percussion instrument loaded and so on.

Most options in the Staff properties dialog are common to all staves, but each type also has one or two specific options of its own.

Common Staff Properties options

The following options are common to the Staff Properties dialog for all staff types:

Lines
  The number of lines making up the staff
Line Distance
  The distance between two staff lines, measured in *spaces* (abbr.: *sp*). If you set this to a higher

value, the lines are spaced more widely apart; a lower value and they are closer together. It is *not* recommended to change this value for the**standard** group, for which the default distance is 1.0 (instead, change the actual size of the *sp* unit in Page settings); other groups may have different default values (for instance, tablature usually has a line distance of 1.5 sp).

Extra distance above staff
Use this to increase the distance between the selected staff and the one above (in all systems). You can also alter this value directly from the score page: click on an empty space in a staff, press `shift` and drag the staff up or down. (To alter the spacing above just*one* staff line in a particular system, see Breaks and spacers).

Scale
Changes the size of a staff and all associated elements, as a percentage.

Never Hide

Show clef
Whether the staff clef will be shown.

Show time signature
Whether the staff time signature(s) will be shown or not.

Show barlines
Whether the staff barlines will be shown.

Hide system barline
Show/hide barline at left-hand edge of the staff.

Do not hide if system is empty

Small staff
Create a reduced-size staff. You can set the default in`style → General... → Sizes`.

Invisible staff lines
Make staff lines invisible.

Staff line color
Use a color picker to change the color of the staff lines.

Part name
The name of the part. This is also displayed in theMixer and the Instruments dialog (`I`).

Instrument
The instrument loaded in the **Instruments** (`I`) or Select Instrument dialog. The sound associated with this instrument can be changed, if desired, in the Mixer.

Long instrument name
Name displayed to the left of the staff in the first system of the score.

Short instrument name
Name displayed to the left of the staff in subsequent systems of the score.

Usable pitch range
Notes outside this range will be marked in red in the score window, if "Color notes outside of usable pitch range" is ticked in Preferences > Note input.

Play transposition
This option ensures that the staves of transposing instruments display music at the correct written pitch. Set the transpose in term of a musical interval (plus octave if required) up or down. For plucked-string instruments such as the guitar, this property can be used to create the effect of applying a capo.

Plucked-string Staff Properties: specific options

In addition to the common options listed above, the staves of fretted, plucked-string instruments have a few extra type-specific properties:

Number of strings
Displays the number of instrument strings.

Edit String Data…
This button opens a dialog box which allows you to set the number and tuning of strings. See Change string tuning.

Advanced style properties

Clicking the `Advanced Style Properties...` button opens a dialog giving access to advanced options for the staff. The following illustrations show how the dialog looks for the different staff types:

Standard staff:

Percussion staff:

Tablature staff—Fret Marks:

Tablature staff—Note Values:

There are also some buttons:

`Template`

Displays the list of all the staff templates available in the score and which**can be applied to the current staff**.

Note: Each score is initially created with 17 pre-defined staff "templates" (not to be confused with <u>Templates</u>): one standard, three percussion and 13 tablature templates. Each template addresses a specific need, common enough or standardized enough to deserve a specific template; each template can be modified (independently for each score staff) and new templates can be created to accommodate specialized needs.

`< Reset to Template`

Resets all the staff properties to the properties of the selected template.

`Add to Templates`

Adds the current property set to the score as a new template (not yet implemented).

`OK`

Closes the dialog box, accepting the changes.

`Cancel`

Closes the dialog box, rejecting the changes.

Standard and Percussion staff specific items

Show key signature
Whether the staff key signature will be shown.
Show ledger lines
Whether the staff ledger lines will be shown.
Stemless
If checked, staff notes will have no stem, hook or beam.

Tablature staff specific items

Upside down
If not checked, the top tablature line will refer to the highest string and the bottom tablature line will refer to the lowest string (most common case). If checked, the top tablature line will refer to the lowest string and the bottom tablature line will refer to the highest line (used in Italian style lute tablatures).

Fret marks

Fret marks are the numbers or letters used to indicate the location of notes on the fingerboard. The following group of properties define the appearance of fret marks:

Font
The font used to draw the marks. Currently 4 fonts are provided supporting all the necessary symbols in 4 different styles (modern serif, modern sans, Renaissance, Late Renaissance). More fonts (or the possibility to use custom fonts) may be available in the future.
Size
The font size to use, in typographic points. Built-in fonts look usually good at a size of 9-10pt.
Vertical offset
MuseScore tries to place symbols in a sensible way and this value is usually not needed (set to 0) for built-in fonts. If the font has symbols not aligned on the base line (or in some other way MuseScore does not expect), this value allows to move mark symbols up (negative offsets) or down (positive offsets) for better vertical positioning. Values are in *sp*.
Numbers / Letters
Whether to use numbers ('1', '2'...) or letters ('a', 'b'...) as fret marks. When letters are used, 'j' is skipped and 'k' is used for the 9th fret.
On lines / Above lines
Whether marks should be placed **on** the string lines or **above** them.

Continuous / Broken

Whether string lines should pass 'through' fret marks or should stop at them.
Example of numbers on broken lines:
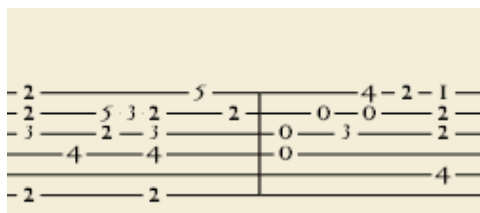
Example of letters above continuous lines:
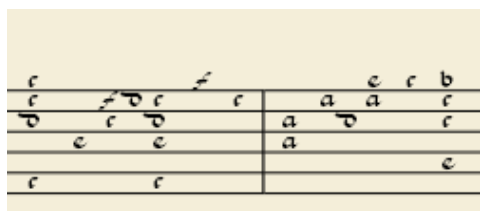
Example of 'upside down' tablature (same contents as number example above):
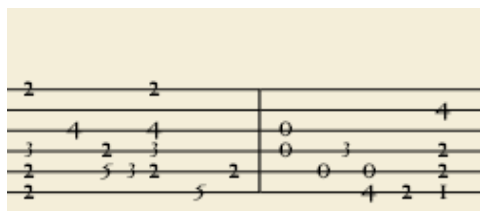
Show back-tied fret marks

If unticked, only the first note in a series of tied notes is displayed. If ticked, all notes in the tied series are displayed.

Note values

This group of properties defines the appearance of the symbols indicating note values.

Font

The font used to draw the value symbols. Currently 3 fonts are provided supporting all the necessary symbols in 3 different styles (modern, Italian tablature, French tablature). More fonts (or the possibility to use custom fonts) may be available in the future. Used only with the *Note symbols* option.

Size

The font size to use, in typographic points. Built-in fonts look usually good at a size of 15pt. Used only with the *Note symbols* option.

Vertical offset

As for Fret Marks above, but referring to value symbols instead. Used only with the *Note symbols* option.

Shown as: None

No note value will be drawn (as in the examples above)

Shown as: Note symbols

Symbols in the shape of notes will be drawn above the staff. When this option is selected, symbols are drawn **only** when the note value changes, without being repeated (by default) for a sequence of notes all of the same value.
Example of values indicated by note symbols:
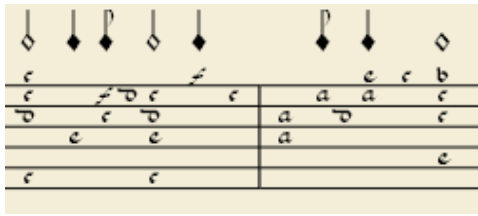
Shown as: Stems and beams

Note stems and beams (or hooks) will be drawn. Values are indicated for each note, using the same typographic devices as for a regular staff; all commands of the standard Beam Palette can be applied to these beams too.
Example of values indicated by note stems:
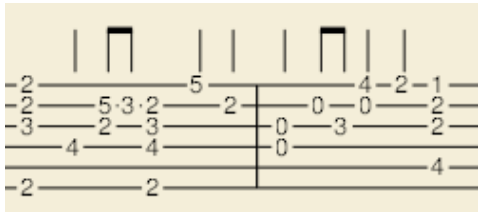
Repeat: Never / At new system / At new measure / Always
Whether and when to repeat the same note symbol, if several notes in sequence have the same value (only available with the *Note symbols* option).
Beside staff / Through staff
Whether stems are drawn as fixed height lines above/below the staff or run through the staff to reach the fret marks each refers to (only available with the *Stems and Beams* option).
Above / Below staff
Whether stems and beams are drawn above or below the staff (only available with the*Stems and Beams* option / *Beside staff* sub-option).
None / As short stems / As slashed stems
To select three different styles to draw stems for half notes (only available with the*Stems and Beams* option / *Beside staff* sub-option).
Show rests
Whether note symbols should be used to indicate also the rests; when used for rests, note symbols are drawn at a slightly lower position. Used only with the *Note symbols* option.

Preview

Displays a short score in tablature format with all the current parameters applied.

Change instrument

You can change any instrument in a score to a different instrument at any time. The following method updates instrument sound, staff name, and staff transposition all at once.

1. Right-click on an empty part of any measure OR on the instrument name and choose `Staff Properties...`
2. Click on `Change Instrument...` (button on the right)
3. Choose your new instrument and click `OK` to return to the Staff Properties dialog
4. Click `OK` again to return to the score

Not to be confused with Mid-staff instrument change.

See also

- How to turn a staff into an ossia

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Tools

A number of useful commands can be found in the `Edit → Tools` submenu.

Add / Remove line breaks

This tool adds or removes line breaks over *all* or *part* of the score:

1. Select a range of measures: if no selection is made, the command is applied to the whole score.

2. Chose `Edit → Tools → Add/Remove Line Breaks…`. The following dialog appears.
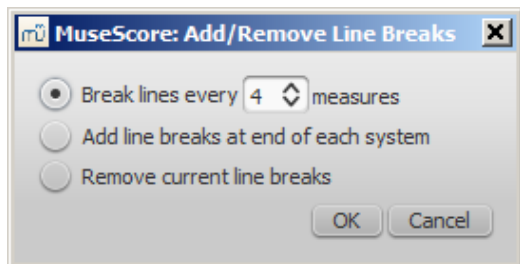
3. Chose one of the following options:

   - Break lines every X (select number) measures.
   - Add line break at the end of each system.
   - Remove current line breaks.
4. Press `OK`.

Explode

The **explode** command allows you to select a passage of music *in a single staff* and split (explode) the chords into their constituent notes. The top note of each chord is retained on this "source staff" while lower notes are moved to subsequent staves. *Explode only affects notes in voice 1.*

Note: This feature is meant to be used on passages containing a single voice only. If the desired passage contains more than one voice, you should, instead, cut and paste each voice to a separate staff with the help of the selection filter.

To explode a section of the score:

1. Make sure all notes to be exploded are in voice 1.
2. Ensure that there are enough staves underneath the "source staff" to receive the exploded notes. Create extra staves if necessary in the Instruments dialog.
3. Chose one of two options:
   - Select a range of measures in the "source staff": this allows all notes to be exploded if there are enough staves available.
   - Select a range of measures that includes both the source staff and also extends downwards to include one or more destination staves: This limits the number of exploded notes to the number of selected staves.
4. Chose `Edit → Tools → Explode`.

Notes: (1) MuseScore will discard the lowest note(s) of any chord that contains more notes than the number of staves in the selection. (2) If a given chord has fewer notes than the number of destination staves, then notes will be duplicated as needed so that every staff receives a note. (3) Any existing music in the destination staves is overwritten. (4) If you select a partial measure, the explode command will automatically expand it to a full measure.

Implode

The **Implode** command works in the opposite way to "explode":

- If *several staves are selected*, all voice 1 notes in underlying staves are copied to the top staff.
- If just *one staff is selected*, all notes in voices 1–4 are combined into voice 1.

Note: Implode works best if the rhythms of selected underlying staves are similar to that of the top staff—the latter providing the rhythmic template for the operation.

Apply implode to multiple staves

1. Select a range of measures in a staff and extend this selection downwards to include the other

staves to be imploded.

2. Chose `Edit → Tools → Implode.`

The voice 1 notes of underlying staves are copied to the top staff in the selection.

Apply implode to a single staff

1. <u>Select</u> a range of measures in the desired staff.
2. Chose `Edit → Tools → Implode.`

All selected notes in the staff are now displayed in voice 1.

Fill with slashes

This command fills the selection with slashes, one per beat. For normal (empty) measures, the slashes are added in voice 1.

If there are already notes in a measure in the selection, the command will put the slashes into the first empty voice it finds. If a measure contains notes in all 4 voices, voice 1 will be filled with slashes, over-writing any existing notes. In voices 1 and 2 the slashes will be centered on the middle line of the staff, in voices 3 and 4 they appear small and above or below the staff. All slashes are set to not transpose or playback.

Toggle rhythmic slash notation

This command toggles selected notes between normal notes and rhythmic slash notation: notes with slash heads, set to not transpose or playback. For notes in voices one or two, the notes are fixed to the middle staff line.
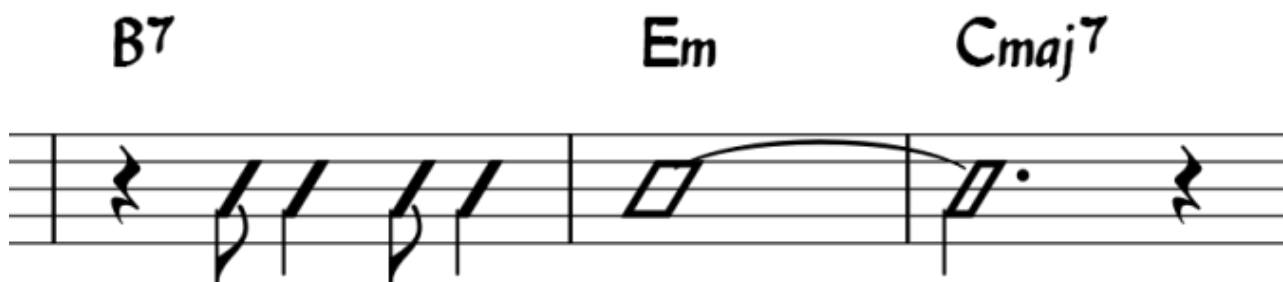
For notes in voices three or four, the notes are fixed above or below the staff and are also marked small (also known as "accent" notation). You may find it helpful to use the <u>selection filter</u> to exclude voices one and two from your selection before running this command, so only the notes in voices three and four are affected.

In percussion staves, the notes in voices 3 and 4 are not converted to small slashes but to small notes above or below the staff.

Resequence rehearsal marks

Rehearsal marks added via the text palette will automatically be labeled with the next letter or number (based on whatever you typed into the first rehearsal mark), but with the menu command `Edit → Tools → Resequence Rehearsal Marks`, you can change all marks at once from letters to numbers (e.g.) or correct marks that have become out of order through use of copy and paste. Select the range of measures you want to apply the command to before running it.

MuseScore automatically detects the sequence based on the first rehearsal mark in the selection—all rehearsal marks in the selection are then altered accordingly.

The sequence can be:

  * a, b, c,
  * A, B, C,
  * numerically simple sequence - 1, 2, 3,
  * numerically corresponding to measure numbers

Copy lyrics to clipboard

This command copies all the lyrics of a score, so you can paste them into another document.

See also

  * Breaks and spacers
  * Rehearsal marks

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

New features in MuseScore 2

For an overview of the new features, see What's New in MuseScore 2, Release notes for MuseScore 2.0, Release notes for MuseScore 2.0.1, MuseScore 2.0.2 Release Notes, MuseScore 2.0.2 is released, MuseScore 2.0.3 Release Notes, MuseScore 2.0.3 is released, and Changes in MuseScore 2.0.
Documentation of new features are available in the chapter they belong to logically (except the one that is referring to upgrading from 1.x) , but for users coming from 1.x here's a collection of links to be able to see at a glance what can be done now...

See also

- Album (→Advanced topics)
- View modes: Continuous view and Navigator (→Basics)
- Copy and paste: Selection filter (→Basics)
- Custom palette (→Advanced topics)
- Early music features (→Advanced topics)
- Figured bass (→Advanced topics)
- Grid-based movement of symbols and staff text (→Text)
- Image capture (→Formatting)
- Inspector and object properties (→Advanced topics)
- Measure operations: Split and join (→Basics)
- MIDI import (→Sound and playback)
- Mid-staff instrument change (→Sound and playback)
- Part extraction (new options available) (→Advanced Topic)
- Rehearsal marks: Automatic next rehearsal mark and Search for a rehearsal mark (→Text)
- Save/Export (→Basics)
- Staff type properties (→Advanced topics)
- Swing (→Sound and playback)
- Tablature (→Advanced topics)
- Workspace (→Basics)
- Master palette (→Advanced topics)
- Layout and formatting (some options have changed, and there is a new "apply to all parts" feature) (→Formatting)
- Break and spacer: Section break (→Formatting)
- Selection modes: Select all similar new options (same subtype)(→Basics)
- Create a new score: start center (→Basics)
- Languages settings and translation updates (→Basics)
- Helping and improve translation (→Support)
- Accidentals: Respell pitches (→Notation)
- Re-pitch mode (→Advanced topics)
- Tools (→Advanced topics)
- Score Information (→Advanced topics)

Upgrading from MuseScore 1.x

How to upgrade MuseScore

Download and install the latest version from the download page as described at Installation. If you want to remove 1.x, check the installation page of the 1.x handbook.

Installing MuseScore 2 won't uninstall 1.x—both versions can coexist peacefully and can even be used in parallel. So this isn't really an upgrade but an installation of a new and different program.

Opening 1.x scores in MuseScore 2

MuseScore 2 significantly improved the typesetting quality to make scores attractive and easier to read. Improvements cover many items such as beam slope, stem height, layout of accidentals in chords and general note spacing. However, this means that sheet music made with MuseScore 1.x looks slightly different from sheet music made with 2.x.

It also means that scores saved with 2.x won't open with 1.x.

To prevent you from accidentally overwriting your 1.x scores, 2.x treats them as an import, which means:

- The score gets marked as being modified, even if you haven't change anything
- On exiting MuseScore you're asked to save the score (as a result from the above)
- MuseScore uses the "Save As" dialog to save it, not the "Save" dialog
- MuseScore uses the score's title to create a default filename rather than taking the old filename

Local relayout

If you did not manually adjust the layout of a 1.x score, then MuseScore uses the 2.x typesetting engine to layout the score. If you *did* touch the layout of the 1.x score, the individual adjustments you may have made should remain after opening it in MuseScore 2.x, but due to slight changes in the

surrounding layout they may still not appear correct in context. If you wish to reset even manual adjustments to use the 2.x typesetting engine throughout, select the complete score with the shortcut `Ctrl+A` (Mac: `Cmd+A`) and reset the layout with `Ctrl+R` (Mac: `Cmd+R`).

Getting the sound from MuseScore 1.x

While the sound in 2.x has been much improved, you may still prefer the sound from MuseScore 1.x. In that case, you can get the 1.x sound in 2.x by downloading the 1.3 SoundFont and add it in 2.x. You can do this in two steps:

1. Download the 1.3 SoundFont named TimGM6mb
2. Install and use the TimGM6mb SoundFont in 2.0

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Support

This chapter describes how to find help using MuseScore: the best places to look, the best way to ask a question on the forums, and tips for reporting a bug.

Helping improve translations

You can help translate the MuseScore software and documentation into your own language, as mentioned in Development / Translating.

Software translation

1. Ask in the forum to improve translation
2. Connect to Transifex/MuseScore http://translate.musescore.org, which will redirect you to https://www.transifex.com/projects/p/musescore
3. Select the language and then the section you want to help with (musescore or instruments)
4. Click on the "translate" button (the button text will depend on your language...)
5. Search for "strings" (informational meaning) you want to translate (you could filter "already translated items")

Here is a technical explanation: Continuous translation for MuseScore 2.0

Website and handbook translation

See Translation instructions

See also

- Language Settings and Update Translation, Update Translation

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

How to ask for support or file bug reports

Before submitting your support request in the forum, please:

- Look for a solution in the Handbook (search the Handbook)
- Check the How Tos, FAQ and Tutorials
- Search the forums of the website to see if someone has already encountered the same problem

If posting in either the issue tracker (for established reports), or forum (for inquiries/discussions):

- Try to reproduce the issue with the latest nightly. You may also view the older and new version history to check whether it has been fixed/implemented already.

- Please include as much of the following information as you know and limit each issue to one report:

  - Version/revision of MuseScore you are using (e.g. version 2.0, revision 2902cf6). Check

`Help → About...` (Mac: `MuseScore → About MuseScore...`).
- ○ Operating system being used (e.g. Windows XP SP3, Mac OS 10.7.5 or Ubuntu 10.10)
- ○ If reporting a bug, describe the precise steps that lead to the problem (where do you click, what keys do you press, what do you see, etc.).
  If you are not able to reproduce the problem with the steps, it is probably not worth reporting it as the developers will not be able to reproduce (and solve) it either. Remember that the goal of a bug report is not only to show the problem, but to allow others to reproduce it easily.
- ○ **Remember to attach the score that shows the problem**—use the "File attachments" option at the bottom of the page, just above the `Save` and `Preview` buttons when you're typing your post.

See also

- How to write a good bug report: step-by-step instructions

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Revert to factory settings

Recent versions of MuseScore have the option to revert back to the standard built-in presets or "factory-settings". This can be necessary if your settings are corrupted. **Warning:** Reverting to factory settings removes any changes you have made to the preferences, palettes, or window settings. This is not a commonly needed procedure; consult the forums first, as there may be a way to solve your problem without resetting everything.

MuseScore 2.0.3 and above

In recent versions it is possible to revert from within MuseScore, providing that MuseScore itself is able to start.
Go to `Help → Revert to Factory Settings`. A warning dialog will appear:
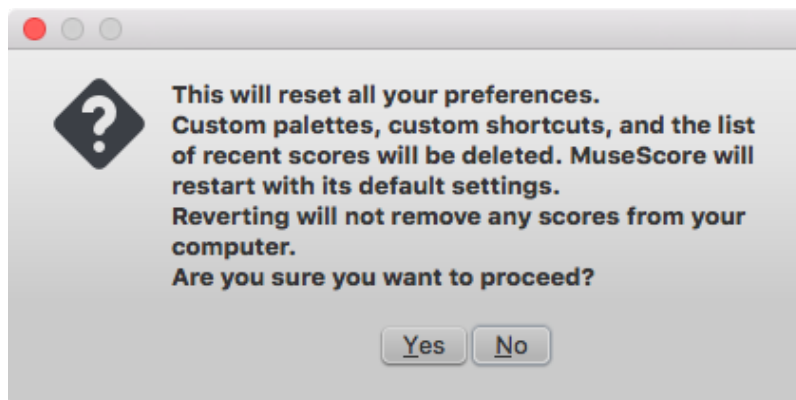
Clicking `Yes` resets all MuseScore's settings as if the program was installed for the first time, and MuseScore will immediately restart. `No` will safely cancel the revert.

MuseScore 2.0 through 2.0.2

In older versions of MuseScore, or in later versions if they do not start, you must run this process via the command line.

Instructions for Windows

1. If you have MuseScore open, you need to close it first (`File → Quit`)
2. Type `Windows key+R` to open the Run dialog (The Windows key is the one with the logo for Microsoft Windows). Alternatively select Start using your mouse.
3. Click `Browse...`
4. Look for MuseScore.exe on your computer. The location may vary depending on your installation, but it is probably something similar to My Computer → Local Disk → Program Files (or Program Files (x86)) → MuseScore 2 → bin → MuseScore.exe
5. Click `Open` to leave the Browse dialog and return to the Run dialog. The following text (or

something similar) should display in the Run dialog

`"C:\Program Files\MuseScore 2\bin\MuseScore.exe"`

For 64-bit Windows, the location is

`"C:\Program Files (x86)\MuseScore 2\bin\MuseScore.exe"`

6. Click after the quote and add a space followed by a hyphen and a capital F: `-F`

7. Press `OK`

After a few seconds, MuseScore should start and all the settings reverted to "factory settings".

For advanced users, the main preference file is located at:

- Windows Vista or later: `C:\Users\<USERNAME>\AppData\Roaming\MuseScore\MuseScore2.ini`
- Windows XP or earlier: `C:\Documents and Settings\USERNAME\Application Data\MuseScore\MuseScore2.ini`

The other preferences (palette, session...) are in:

- Windows Vista or later: `C:\Users\<USERNAME>\AppData\Local\MuseScore\MuseScore2\`
- Windows XP or earlier: `C:\Documents and Settings\USERNAME\Local Settings\Application Data\MuseScore\MuseScore2\`

Instructions for MacOS

1. If you have MuseScore open, you need to quit the application first (`MuseScore → Quit`)
2. Open Terminal (in Applications/Utilities, or via Spotlight search) and a session window should appear

3. Type (or copy/paste) the following command into your terminal line (include the '/' at the front):

`/Applications/MuseScore\ 2.app/Contents/MacOS/mscore -F`

This resets all MuseScore preferences to factory settings and immediately launches the MuseScore application. Note that you cannot quit the Terminal without quitting MuseScore. You can safely quit MuseScore, quit the Terminal, and then reopen MuseScore in the normal fashion, ready to continue using.

For advanced users, the main MuseScore preference file is located at `~/Library/Preferences/org.musescore.MuseScore2.plist`.

The other preferences (palette, session...) are in `~/Library/Application\ Support/MuseScore/MuseScore2/`

Instructions for Linux

The following is true for Ubuntu, and most likely all other Linux distributions and UNIX-style operating systems.

1. If you have MuseScore open, you need to quit the application first (`File → Quit`)
2. From the Ubuntu main menu, choose `Applications → Accessories → Terminal`. A Terminal session window should appear

3. Type, (or copy/paste) the following command into your terminal line (`Ctrl+Shift+V` to paste in Terminal):

`mscore -F`

Or, if you are using the AppImage version, you must first use the `cd` command to change directory to wherever you saved the AppImage. For example, if you saved it to your Desktop:

```
cd ~/Desktop
./MuseScore*.AppImage -F
```

This resets all MuseScore preferences to factory settings and immediately launches the MuseScore application. You can now quit Terminal, and continue using MuseScore.

For advanced users, the main MuseScore preference file is located at
`~/.config/MuseScore/MuseScore2.ini`. The other preferences (palette, session...) are in
`~/.local/share/data/MuseScore/MuseScore2/`

See also

- Command line options

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Known incompatibilities

Hardware incompatibilities

The following software is known to crash MuseScore on startup:

- Samson USB Microphone, driver name "Samson ASIO Driver", samsonasiodriver.dll. More info
- Digidesign MME Refresh Service. More info
- Windows XP SP3 + Realtek Azalia Audio Driver. More info
- Wacom tablet. More info and QTBUG-6127

Software incompatibilities

- Maple virtual cable is known to prevent MuseScore from closing properly.
- KDE (Linux) window settings can cause the whole window to move when dragging a note. Changing the window settings of the operating system avoids the problem.
- Nitro Pro may prevent MuseScore 2 from starting on Windows 10.
- Creative Sound Blaster Z Series ASIO driver may prevent MuseScore 2 from starting on Windows 10.

AVG Internet Security hangs MuseScore

MuseScore requires access to your internet connection with AVG. MuseScore doesn't need an internet connection to function, but if AVG blocks it, MuseScore hangs.

If AVG prompts you, **Allow** MuseScore and check "Save my answer as a permanent rule and do not ask me next time."

If it doesn't prompt you anymore,

1. Open the AVG user interface (right-click on the AVG icon, close to your clock -> Open AVG User Interface
2. Click on *Firewall*
3. Click *Advanced Settings*
4. Click *Applications*
5. Find MSCORE.EXE in the list and double click it
6. Change *Application Action* to **Allow for All**

Font problem on macOS

MuseScore is known to display notes as square when some fonts are damaged on macOS. To troubleshoot this issue:

1. Go to Applications -> Font Book
2. Select a font and press ⌘+A to select them all
3. Go to File -> Validate Fonts
4. If any font is reported as damaged or with minor problems, select it and delete it
5. Restart MuseScore if necessary

In this forum article, a user believes to have found the font "Adobe Jenson Pro (ajenson)" to be the culprit, regardless of not being reported as broken, or problematic as per the above validation, and solved the problem by deleting that font, so this is worth checking too.

Font problem on Linux

If the default desktop environment application font is set to bold, MuseScore will not display the notes properly.
To troubleshoot this issue (gnome 2.*/MATE users):

1. Right-click on your desktop and select Change Desktop background
2. Click on Fonts tab
3. Set Regular style for Application font
4. Restart MuseScore if necessary

For GNOME 3/SHELL users

1. Open the shell and open "Advanced Settings"
2. Click on the Fonts option in the list
3. Set the default font to something non-bold
4. Restart MuseScore if necessary

Save As dialog empty on Linux

Some users reported that the Save As dialog is empty on Debian 6.0 and Lubuntu 10.10.
To troubleshoot this issue:

1. Type the following in a terminal

   ```
   which mscore
   ```

2. The command will answer with the path of mscore. Edit it with your preferred text editor and add the following line at the beginning

   ```
   export QT_NO_GLIB=1
   ```

Launch MuseScore and the problem should be solved.

Do you have an unanswered question? <u>Post it in the forum</u>.

Appendix

Keyboard shortcuts

Most keyboard shortcuts can be customized via `Edit → Preferences... → Shortcuts` tab (Mac: `MuseScore → Preferences... → Shortcuts` tab). Below is a list of some of the initial shortcut settings.

Navigation

Beginning of score: `Home`
Last page of score: `End`
Find (measure number, rehearsal mark, or pXX when XX is a page number): `Ctrl+F` (Mac: `Cmd+F`)

Next score: `Ctrl+Tab`
Previous score: `Shift+Ctrl+Tab`

Zoom in: `Ctrl++` (doesn't work on some systems) (Mac:`Cmd++`) or `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) + scroll up
Zoom out: `Ctrl+-` (Mac: `Cmd+-`) or `Ctrl` (Mac: `Cmd`) + scroll down

Next page: `Pg Dn` or `Shift` + scroll down
Previous page: `Pg Up` or `Shift` + scroll up

Next measure: `Ctrl+→` (Mac: `Cmd+→`)
Previous measure: `Ctrl+←` (Mac: `Cmd+←`)

Next note: `→`
Previous note: `←`

Note below (within a chord or on lower staff):`Alt+↓`
Note above (within a chord or on higher staff): `Alt+↑`

Top note in chord:`Ctrl+Alt+↑` (Ubuntu uses this shortcut for Workspaces instead)

Bottom note in chord: `Ctrl+Alt+↓` (Ubuntu uses this shortcut for Workspaces instead)

Note input

Begin note input mode: `N`
Leave note input mode: `N` or `Esc`

Duration

`1 ... 9` selects a duration. *See also Note input.*

Half duration of previous note: `Q`
Double duration of previous note: `W`

Voices

Voice 1: `Ctrl+Alt+1` (Mac: `Cmd+Option+1`)
Voice 2: `Ctrl+Alt+2` (Mac: `Cmd+Option+2`)
Voice 3: `Ctrl+Alt+3` (Mac: `Cmd+Option+3`)
Voice 4: `Ctrl+Alt+4` (Mac: `Cmd+Option+4`)

Pitch

Pitches can be entered by their letter name (A-G), or via MIDI keyboard. See Note input for full details.

Repeat previous note or chord: `R` (the repeat can be of a different note value by selecting duration beforehand)

Repeat selection: `R` (The selection will be repeated from the first note position after the end of the selection)

Raise pitch by octave: `Ctrl+↑` (Mac: `Cmd+↑`)
Lower pitch by octave: `Ctrl+↓` (Mac: `Cmd+↓`)

Raise pitch by semi-tone (prefer sharp): `↑`
Lower pitch by semi-tone (prefer flat): `↓`
Raise pitch diatonically: `Alt+Shift+↑`
Lower pitch diatonically: `Alt+Shift+↓`

Cycle up through enharmonic spellings: `J`
Cycle down through enharmonic spellings: `Shift+J`
Cycle through spellings in concert pitch only or transposed only: `Ctrl+J` (Mac: `Cmd+J`)

Rest: `0` (zero)

Interval

Add interval above current note: `Alt+[Number]`

Layout

Flip direction (stem, slur, tie, tuplet bracket, etc.): `x`
Mirror note head: `Shift+X`
Increase stretch of measure(s): `}`
Decrease stretch of measure(s): `{`
Line break on barline: `Return`
Page break on barline: `Ctrl+Return` (Mac: `Cmd+Return`)

Articulations

Staccato: `Shift+S`
Tenuto: `Shift+N`
Sforzato (accent): `Shift+V`
Marcato: `Shift+O`

Grace note (acciaccatura): `/`
Crescendo: `<`
Decrescendo: `>`

Text entry

Staff text: `Ctrl+T` (Mac:`Cmd+T`)
System text: `Ctrl+Shift+T` (Mac: `Cmd+Shift+T`)
Tempo text: `Alt+T`
Rehearsal Mark: `Ctrl+M` (Mac: `Cmd+M`)

Lyrics entry

Enter lyrics on a note:`Ctrl+L` (Mac: `Cmd+L`)
Previous lyric syllable: `Shift+Space`
Next lyric syllable: if the current and the next syllables are separated by a '-': `-`, else `Space`
Move lyric syllable left by 0.1sp: `←`
Move lyric syllable right by 0.1sp: `→`
Move lyric syllable left by 1sp: `Ctrl+←` (Mac: `Cmd+←`)
Move lyric syllable right by 1sp: `Ctrl+→` (Mac: `Cmd+→`)
Move lyric syllable left by 0.01sp: `Alt+←`
Move lyric syllable right by 0.01sp: `Alt+→`

Up to previous stanza:`Ctrl+↑` (Mac: `Cmd+↑`)
Down to next stanza: `Ctrl+↓` (Mac: `Cmd+↓`)

For more lyric shortcuts, seeLyrics.

Display

Navigator: `F12` (Mac: `fn+F12`)
Play Panel: `F11` (Mac: `fn+F11`)
Mixer: `F10` (Mac: `fn+F10`)
Palette: `F9` (Mac: `fn+F9`)
Inspector: `F8` (Mac: `fn+F8`)
Piano Keyboard: `P`

Miscellaneous

Toggle visibility on selected element: `V`
Show Instruments dialog: `I`
Toggle multi-measure rests on or off: `M`

See also

- Preferences: Shortcuts

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Known limitations of MuseScore 2.0

While all members of the development team did their best to make the software easy to use and bug-free, there are some known issues and limitations in MuseScore 2.0.

Basics

Save Selection

'Save Selection...' is currently pretty limited: If the selection doesn't contain a clef, time or key signature, the saved score will be in treble clef, 4/4 time signature, and C major key signature, although all pitches are kept, accidentals added as needed, and even irregular measures are kept.

Local Time Signatures

The local time signature feature, which allows you to have different time signatures in different staves at the same time, is very limited. You can only add a local time signature to measures that are empty, and only if there are no linked parts. When adding notes to measures with local time signatures, you can enter notes normally via note input mode, but copy and paste does not work correctly and may lead to corruption or even crashes. The join and split commands are disabled for measures with local time signatures.

Note input

Tablature staff linked with Standard staff

With linked Standard and Tablature staves, if multiple note chords are entered in the Standard staff, each chord should be **entered from its top note to the bottom**, otherwise the fretting automatically assigned note by note in the Tablature staff may be unexpected (Note: This does not apply to a) note input directly in the Tablature staff nor to b) note input in a Standard staff not linked to a Tablature: in both cases entry order is indifferent).

Sound and playback

Instrument change

An instrument change does not change transposition, should any of the instruments involved require that. If this is needed, it is necessary to use different staves and the 'Hide empty staves' option. Actually there is no real instrument change, just a change of the sound on playback, so not only transposition is not taken into account but also the instrument's range, and the part's name is left unchanged.

Mixer

Changing values in the mixer does not mark the score 'dirty'. That means if you close a score you may not get the warning "Save changes to the score before closing?". Changing mixer values are also not undoable.

Layout

Header & Footer

There is no way to edit Header and Footer in a WYSIWYG manner. The fields in Style → General → Header, Footer, Numbers are plain text. They can contain "HTML like" syntax, but the text style, layout, etc. can't be edited with a WYSIWYG editor.

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Command line options

You can launch MuseScore from the command line by typing

`mscore [options] [filename]` (Mac and Linux)
`MuseScore.exe [options] [filename]` (Windows)

`[options]` and `[filename]` are optional.

See also Revert to factory settings for detailed instructions on how and where to find and execute the MuseScore executable from the command line on the various supported platforms.

The following options are available

`-?, -h, --help`
    Display help (doesn't work on Windows)
`-v, --version`
    Displays MuseScore's current version in the command line without starting the graphical interface (doesn't work on Windows)
`--long-version`
    Displays MuseScore's current version and revision in the command line without starting the graphical interface (doesn't work on Windows)

`-d, --debug`
      Starts MuseScore in debug mode

`-L, --layout-debug`
      Starts MuseScore in layout debug mode

`-s, --no-synthesizer`
      Disables the integrated software synthesizer

`-m, --no-midi`
      Disables MIDI input

`-a, --use-audio <driver>`
      Use audio driver: jack, alsa, pulse, portaudio

`-n, --new-score`
      Starts with the new score wizard regardless of preference setting for start mode

`-I, --dump-midi-in`
      Displays all MIDI input on the console

`-O, --dump-midi-out`
      Displays all MIDI output on the console

`-o, --export-to <`*`filename`*`>`
      Exports the currently opened file to the specified`<`*`filename`*`>`. The file type depends on the filename extension. This option switches to the "converter" mode and avoids any graphical interface. You can also add a filename before the `-o` if you want to import and export files from the command line. For example `mscore -o "My Score.pdf" "My Score.mscz"`

`-r, --image-resolution <`*`dpi`*`>`
      Determines the output resolution for the output to "*.png" files in the converter mode. The default resolution is 300 dpi.

`-T, --trim-margin <`*`margin`*`>`
      Trims exported PNG and SVG images to remove surrounding whitespace around the score. The specified number of pixels of whitespace will be added as a margin; use 0 for a tightly cropped image. For SVG, this option works only with single-page scores.

`-x, --gui-scaling <`*`factor`*`>`
      Scales the score display and other GUI elements by the specified factor, for use with high resolution displays.

`-S, --style <`*`style`*`>`
      Loads a style file; useful when you convert with the`-o` option

`-p, --plugin <`*`name`*`>`
      Execute the named plugin

`--template-mode`
      Save template mode, no page size

`-F, --factory-settings`
      Use only the standard built-in presets or "factory-settings" and delete preferences. For details, see <u>Revert to factory settings</u>

`-R, --revert-settings`
      Use only the standard built-in presets or "factory-settings", but do not delete preferences

`-i, --load-icons`
      Load icons from the file system. Useful if you want to edit the MuseScore icons and preview the changes

`-e, --experimental`
      Enable experimental features. See e.g. <u>Layer (experimental)</u>

`-c, --config-folder <`*`pathname`*`>`
      Set config path

`-t, --test-mode`
      Enable Test Mode

`-M, --midi-operations <`*`file`*`>`
      Specify MIDI import operations file

`-w, --no-webview`
      No web view in Start Center

`-P, --export-score-parts`
      Used with -o .pdf, export score and parts

Qt Toolkit Options

`-style= <`*`style`*`>`
`-style <`*`style`*`>`
      Determines the style of the GUI application. Possible values are "motif", "windows" and "platinum". Depending on the platform other styles may be available

`-stylesheet= <`*`stylesheet`*`>`
`-stylesheet <`*`stylesheet`*`>`
      Sets the application stylesheet. The value of "stylesheet" is a path to a file that contains the stylesheet

```
-platform <platformname[:options]>
```
     Specifies the Qt Platform Abstraction (QPA) plugin.
     Example: `MuseScore.exe -platform windows:fontengine=freetype`

See also

- Revert to factory settings
- Layer (experimental)

External links

- http://doc.qt.io/qt-5/qapplication.html#QApplication
- http://doc.qt.io/qt-5/qguiapplication.html#QGuiApplication

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.

Glossary

The glossary is a work in progress, please help if you can. You can discuss about this page on the documentation forum
The list below is a glossary of frequently used terms in MuseScore as well as their meaning.
The differences between American English and British English are marked with "(AE)" and "(BE)", respectively.

Acciaccatura
     A short →grace note.
Accidental
     A sign appearing in front of a note that raises or lowers its pitch. The commonest accidentals are →sharps, →flats or →naturals, but double sharps and double flats are also used. Accidentals affect all notes on the same →staff position only for the remainder of the measure in which they occur, but they can be canceled by another accidental. In notes tied across a →barline, the accidental continues across the →barline to the tied note, but not to later untied notes on the same →staff position in that measure.
Anacrusis (BE)
     See →Pickup Measure.
Anchor
     The point of attachment to the score of objects such as Text and Lines: When the object is dragged, the anchor appears as small brown circle connected to the object by a dotted line. Depending on the object selected, its anchor may be attached to either (a) a note (e.g. fingering), (b) a staff line (e.g. staff text), or (c) a barline (e.g. repeats).
Appoggiatura
     A long →grace note.
Bar (BE)
     See →Measure.
Barline
     Vertical line through a →staff, staves, or a full →system that separates →measures.
Beam
     Notes with a duration of an →eighth or shorter either carry a →flag or a beam. Beams are used for grouping notes.
BPM
     Beats Per Minute is the unit for measuring tempo. See →Metronome mark
Breve
Brevis
     A **double whole note** or **breve** is a note that has the duration of two whole notes.
Chord
     The minimal definition of a chord is a minimum of two different notes played together. MuseScore however calls even a single note a chord internally, with the note describing the pitch, the chord decribing the duration. Chords are based on the choices made by a composer between harmonics of one, two or three (and more) fundamental sounds. E.g. in the chord of C, G is the second harmonic, E the fourth of the fundamental C. Now in C7, the B flat is the 6th harmonic of C and in C Maj7 B is the second harmonic of E and the fourth harmonic of G...
Clef
     Sign at the beginning of a →staff, used to tell which are the musical notes **on** the lines and **between** the lines.
     There are 2 F clefs, 4 C clefs and 2 G clefs: F third, **F** fourth, C first, C second, C third, C fourth, G first, **G** second (known as *treble clef* too).

G first and F fourth are equivalent.

Clefs are very useful for →transposition.

Concert Pitch

Enables you to switch between concert pitch and transposing pitch (seeConcert pitch and Transposition).

Crotchet (BE)

A **crotchet** is the British English term for what is called a**quarter note** in American English. It's a quarter of the duration of a whole note (semibreve).

Demisemiquaver (BE)

A thirty-second note.

Duplet

See →Tuplet.

Eighth note

A note whose duration is an eighth of a whole note (semibreve). Same as British →**quaver**.

Endings

See →Volta.

Enharmonic notes

Notes that sound the same pitch but are written differently. Example: G# and Ab are enharmonic notes.

Flag

See →Beam.

Flat

Sign that indicates that the pitch of a note has to be lowered one semitone.

Grace note

Grace notes appear as small notes in front of a normal-sized main note. A short grace note (→acciaccatura) has a stroke through the stem; a long grace note (→appoggiatura) does not.

Grand Staff (AE)
Great Stave (BE)

A system of two or more staves, featuring treble and bass clefs, used to notate music for keyboard instruments and the harp.

Half Note

A note whose duration is half of a whole note (semibreve). Same as British →**minim**.

Hemidemisemiquaver (BE)

A sixty-fourth note.

Key Signature

Set of →sharps or →flats at the beginning of the →staves. It gives an idea about the tonality and avoids repeating those signs all along the →staff.

A key signature with B flat means F major or D minor tonality.

Koron

An Iranian →accidental which means lower in pitch and it lowers a note by a quarter tone (in comparison to the →flat which lowers a note by a semitone). It is possible to use this accidental in a →key signature.

See also →Sori.

Longa

A **longa** is a **quadruple whole note**.

Ledger Line

Line(s) that are added above or below the staff.

Measure (AE)

A segment of time defined by a given number of beats. Dividing music into bars provides regular reference points to pinpoint locations within a piece of music.

Metronome mark

Metronome marks are usually given by a note length equaling a certain playback speed in →BPM. In MuseScore, metronome marks are used intempo texts.

Minim (BE)

A **minim** is the British term for a**half note**. It has half the duration of a whole note (→semibreve).

Natural

A natural is a sign that cancels a previous alteration on notes of the same pitch.

Operating System
OS

Underlying set of programs which set up a computer, enabling additional programs (such as MuseScore). Popular OSes are Microsoft Windows, macOS, and GNU/Linux.

Not to be confused with a sheet music →System.

Part

Music to be played or sung by one or a group of musicians using the same instrument. In a string quartet, 1st part = Violin 1, 2nd part = Violin 2, 3rd part = Viola, 4th part = Cello, in a choir there might be parts for soprano, alto, tenor and bass. A part has one or more →**staves** (e.g. Piano has 2 staves, Organ can have 2 or 3 staves).

Pickup Measure (→Anacrusis)

Incomplete first measure of a piece or a section of a piece of music.
See also Create new score: Time Signature... and Measure operations: Exclude from measure count.

Quaver (BE)
The British **quaver** is what is called an →**eighth note** in American English. It has an eighth the duration of a whole note.

Quadruplet
See →Tuplet.

Quarter note
A note whose duration is a quarter of a whole note (semibreve). Same as British →**crotchet**.

Quintuplet
See →Tuplet.

Respell Pitches
Tries to guess the right accidentals for the whole score (see Accidentals).

Rest
Interval of silence of a specified duration.

Re-pitch Mode
A way in MuseScore to rewrite a passage with note changes but no rhythm change (see Re-pitch Mode).

Semibreve (BE)
A **semibreve** is the British term for a **whole note**. It lasts a whole measure in 4/4 time.

Semiquaver (BE)
A sixteenth note.

Semihemidemisemiquaver (Quasihemidemisemiquaver) (BE)
An hundred and twenty eighth note.

Sextuplet
See →Tuplet.

Sharp
Sign that indicates that the pitch of a note has to be raised one semitone.

Slur
A curved line over or under two or more notes, meaning that the notes will be played smooth and connected (*legato*).
See also →Tie.

Sori
An Iranian →accidental which means higher in pitch and it raises a note by a quarter tone (in comparison to the sharp which raises a note by a semitone). It is possible to use this accidental in a →key signature.
See also →Koron.

Spatium (plural: Spatia)
Space
Staff Space
sp (abbr./unit)
The distance between two lines of a normal 5-line staff. In MuseScore this unit influences most size settings. See also Layout and Formatting, Layout / Page Settings.

Staff (AE)
Stave (BE)
Group of one to five horizontal lines used to lay on musical signs. In ancient music notation (before 11th century) the staff/stave may have any number of lines (the plural of 'staff' is 'staves', in BE and AE).

System
Set of staves to be read simultaneously in a score.
See also →Operating System (OS).

Tie

A curved line between two or more notes on the same pitch to indicate a single note of combined duration:

- Quarter note + Tie + Quarter note = Half note
- Quarter note + Tie + Eighth note = Dotted Quarter note
- Quarter note + Tie + Eighth note + Tie + 16th note = Double Dotted Quarter note

See also →Slur.

Transposition

A tune can be played in any tonality. There are many reasons to change the tonality of a score:

1. The tune is too low or too high for a singer.
2. The score is written for a C instrument and has to be played by a B Flat one.

3. The score is written for an orchestra and you want to imagine what the horn, the flute and the clarinet are playing.
4. A darker or a more brilliant sound is desired.

- In the first case all the orchestra will have to transpose, which is very difficult without professional musicians. MuseScore can do it very easily for you.
- In the second case the musician must play D when a C is written. If the score is written with a G 2nd Clef, he'll have to think that the staff begins with a C 3rd Clef.
- In the third case the conductor has to transpose all the staves which are not written for C instruments.
- In all cases the key signature must be mentally changed.
- On some instruments (Horns and Tubas for instance) the musicians transpose using alternative fingerings.

Triplet
>See →Tuplet.

Tuplet
>A tuplet divides its next higher note value by a number of notes other than given by the time signature. For example a →triplet divides the next higher note value into three parts, rather than two. Tuplets may be: →triplets, →duplets, →quintuplets, and other.

Velocity
>The velocity property of a note controls how loudly the note is played. This usage of the term comes from MIDI synthesizers. On a keyboard instrument, it is the speed with which a key is pressed that controls its volume. The usual scale for velocity is 0 (silent) to 127 (maximum).

Voice
>Polyphonic instruments like Keyboards, Violins, or Drums need to write notes or chords of different duration at the same time on the same →staff. To write such things each horizontal succession of notes or chords has to be written on the staff independently. In MuseScore you can have up to 4 voices per staff. Not to be confused with vocalists, singing voices like soprano, alto, tenor and bass, which are better viewed as instruments.

Volta
>In a repeated section of music, it is common for the last few measures of the section to differ. Markings called voltas are used to indicate how the section is to be ended each time. These markings are often referred to simply as →endings.

External links

- http://www.robertcarney.net/musical-terms-definitions.htm

Do you have an unanswered question? Post it in the forum.