

Mellotron Sample Library v1.1

Groups and the included sounds of the downloadable version of the Mellotron Sample Library, v1.1.

Accordion group

Accordion - Mellotron mkII
Fr Accordion - Mellotron mkII

Guitar group

AccGuitar - Mellotron mkII
Guitar - Mellotron mkI
Mandola - Mellotron mkI
Mandolin - Mellotron mkII
Rock Guitar - Mellotron mkII

Misc group

HarpsBrass - Mellotron mkI
WineGlasses - Mellotron M400

Organ group

ChurchOrgan - Mellotron mkI
ChurchOrgan - Mellotron mkII
Hammond C3 - Mellotron M400
Hammond - Mellotron mkI
Hammond - Mellotron mkII
Organ - Mellotron mkI
Organ - Mellotron mkII
PipeOrgan - Mellotron M400
RevOrgan - Mellotron mkI
Tibia - Mellotron mkI
Tibia - Mellotron mkII

Piano group

Clavichord - Mellotron M400
Harpsichord - Mellotron mkII
Piano - Mellotron mkII

Strings group

2 Violins M300
3 Violins - Mellotron mkII
16 Violins - Mellotron M400
Solo Cello - Mellotron M400
Solo String - Mellotron M300
Solo Viola - Mellotron M400
Solo Violin M300
String Section 1 - Mellotron M400
String Section 2 - Mellotron M400

Tuned Percussion group

Celeste M300
Celeste - Mellotron M400
Marimba - Mellotron mkI
Slow Vibra - Mellotron M300
TubularBells - Mellotron M400
Vibes No Vib - Mellotron M400
Vibraphone - Mellotron mkII

Wind 1 group

2 Brass - Mellotron M400
2 Saxes - Mellotron M400
AltoSax - Mellotron M400
BassFlute - Mellotron M300
Bassoon - Mellotron M400
Brass - Mellotron mkII
Clarinet - Mellotron M300
Clarinet - Mellotron mkI
EnglHorn - Mellotron M400
Flute - Mellotron mkII

Wind 2 group

MutedBrass - Mellotron mkII
Oboe - Mellotron M400
Recorder - Mellotron M400
Tenor Sax - Mellotron mkI
Tenor Sax - Mellotron mkII
Trombone - Mellotron mkII
Trombone - Mellotron mkI
Trumpet - Mellotron mkI

Voice 1 group

4VoiceFemChoir - Mellotron M400
4VoiceMaleChoir - Mellotron M400
8VoiceChoir - Mellotron M400
BoysChoir - Mellotron M400
MaleSoloVoice - Mellotron M400
MixCustChoir - Mellotron M400

Some of the Sample Instruments in the Nord Wave Flash memory comes from the legendary Mellotron, a classic keyboard instrument that changed the music history. We are very proud to be able to incorporate the first part of the Mellotron Soundbank for the Nord Wave.

Please visit our website at www.clavia.se for further news on the release of additional sound banks for the Nord Wave.

What about those sounds?

The original sounds from the various Mellotron models could be called the very first sample library, before anyone even knew what these words were going to mean. These sounds have a very distinct and wonderful quality to them - earthy, organic and different are words that come to mind.

The sounds in the Nord Wave library originates from the master tapes that Clavia has licensed. These tapes were then used to create original soundbanks for a brand new Mellotron, manufactured with original tape heads, capacitors, electronics etc. And from this brand new, exquisite instrument, the sounds were recorded using state of the art technology.

After many hours of editing and looping with the Nord Wave Manager, the samples finally made it to a Nord Wave, and then to this CD.

The idea of using the vintage master tapes instead of sampling a vintage instrument is to faithfully recreate the original sounds the way they used to be, and is a natural step in Clavia's long striving effort to make the sounds of classic keyboard instruments available to keyboard players once again.

Condensed Mellotron Story

Tape replay keyboard instruments were invented in the late 1950's by Harry Chamberlin. In the early 1960's one of his employees took a Chamberlin Musicmaster 600 (a dual-manual machine with 36 sounds) to the UK. This became the blueprint of the Mellotron MkI. It had the same basic layout as the Chamberlin 600 with 2 manuals, the left one having rhythm tracks to be played as a background, and the right one having lead sounds like strings, flute and lots of organ sounds.

It was basically intended to be a home organ, like a home entertainment center where someone without music skills could sound like an orchestra. Unfortunately it was very hard to play rhythms like that, even for trained musicians, and together with some technical flaws and bad engineering it wasn't too much of a success - many of the first series of instruments had to be taken back to the factory and upgraded from MkI to MkII. Luckily young and creative professional musicians had become interested in the Mellotron, and the MkII became extremely popular amongst pop/rock groups in the late 1960's: Manfred Mann, Beatles, Rolling Stones, Moody Blues, King Crimson and others.

The Mellotron company later created the M400, a smaller instrument very similar to the one used in this presentation. This instrument was used on the road and in the studio during the 1970's by Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, Genesis, Yes, Deep Purple, Aerosmith, Wings, David Bowie, Kraftwerk and others. During later years it has been used by Oasis, Primal Scream, Radiohead, Smashing Pumpkins, Red Hot Chili Peppers, U2, Nelly Furtado, Air, REM, Manic Street Preachers etc. Through the extremely successful music of these groups and artists the Mellotron sound has been widely spread, and even though most people don't know that it's a Mellotron, they've heard it's sound.

History of the Mellotron sounds

The MkI instrument had two 35 key manuals, the left one having 6 banks of rhythms and fills and the right one lead sounds. The tapes were 3/8" 3-track just like the Chamberlin 600. The recordings for the Mellotron MkI were made during 1962 and 1963 and were supervised by big band leader Eric Robinson, who also had substantial involvement in the Mellotron company. They consisted of 18 rhythms and fills sounds and 18 leads sounds. There were also some more rhythms and fills recorded that were not used for the MkI.

When the MkI was upgraded into the MkII the decision was made to re-record many of the sounds. The only lead sounds that were kept were the Flute, the Vibraphone and the French Accordion. Also the 3 Violins sound from the Chamberlin 600 was used in a slightly eq'd form, and ironically this became by far the most widely used Mellotron sound. Among the rhythms the Afro Cuban was replaced by the Cuban, the Slow Fox Trot and the Samba was re-recorded, the rhythms 6/8 tempo in F and Twist in C were added and numerous of the fills were changes.

During 1966 the decision was made to create an entirely new single-manual instrument that was named the M300. It had a 52 key A-C keyboard making another re-recording of all sounds necessary. The left 17 keys mostly had rhythms and fills and the remaining 35 lead sounds. The machine had 2-track 1/4" tape and 6 banks.

These recordings were made during 1966 and 1967. The only sounds that covered the whole keyboard were the strings, the piano and the organ sound. The M300 was produced between 1968 and 1970 and towards the end, some of the sounds were replaced. The string sound was changed and the Bossa Nova, the Medium Foxtrot and the low part of the strings were replaced with Pop1 and Pop2 rhythms and a 6/8 tempo rhythm. The leader of these recordings was also in this case Eric Robinson.

In 1970 the M400 Mellotron was created. It had a single manual 35 key G-F keyboard, meaning that the MkI and MkII sound libraries could be used. The machine used 3-track 3/8 tape and had interchangeable tape frames. That meant that the sound library could be expanded according to taste. This instrument was also the first Mellotron specifically made for professional musicians.

The new sounds for the M400 library were recorded during the 70's, but of course some MkII sounds were still used, most notably the 3 Violins, the Flute and the MkII Brass. The most well known sound introduced with the M400 was the 8 Voice Choir, even giving the Mellotron company a sales boost.

Original soundlist with comments

Mk I Lead sounds

15 original sounds, 18 total:

MkI Clarinet
 MkI French Horn
 MkI Marimba
 MkI Trombone Very different from MkII
 MkI Hammond Organ
 (MkI French Accordion Same as MkII)
 (MkI Flute Same as MkII)
 MkI Acoustic Nylon Guitar
 MkI Piano Very different from MkII
 MkI Tenor Sax Very different from MkII
 MkI Harpsichord/Trumpet+trombone split
 MkI Reverb Organ
 MkI Mandolin Mandola-like
 MkI Organ
 (MkI Vibraphone Same as MkII)
 MkI Trumpet
 MkI Tibia Organ
 MkI Church Organ

MkII Lead sounds

18 sounds:

MkII Flute Beatles, Stones, Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, ABBA, Chili Peppers, etc
 MkII 3 Violins Led Zeppelin, Moody Blues, Stones, etc, etc
 MkII Acoustic Steel Guitar
 MkII Trombone Beatles
 MkII Organ 1
 MkII French Accordion
 MkII Rock Guitar
 MkII Brass Genesis, King Crimson, Moody Blues, Stones, Beatles
 MkII Piano
 MkII Muted Brass Moody Blues
 MkII Harpsichord
 MkII Accordion Genesis
 MkII Organ 2
 MkII Tenor Sax
 MkII Vibraphone Gracious
 MkII Mandolin Beatles
 MkII Tibia Organ
 MkII Church Organ

M300 Lead sounds

7 sounds:

M300 Strings David Bowie
 M300 2 Violins Barclay James Harvest
 M300 Solo Violin
 M300 Slow Vibraphone
 M300 Bass Flute
 M300 Clarinet
 M300 Celeste

M400 Lead sounds

25 sounds:

M400 Solo Cello Oasis, King Crimson, Chili Peppers etc.
 M400 Solo Viola
 M400 16 Violins Air
 M400 String Section I
 M400 String Section II
 M400 8Voice Choir Radiohead, Genesis, Chili Peppers, Tangerine Dream etc.
 M400 4Voice Female Choir
 M400 4Voice Male Choir
 M400 Mixed Custom Choir
 M400 Male Solo Voice
 M400 Boys Choir
 M400 Pipe Organ
 M400 Oboe Tangerine Dream
 M400 English Horn
 M400 Bassoon Tangerine Dream
 M400 Alto Sax Tangerine Dream
 M400 Clavichord
 M400 2Brass
 M400 2Saxes
 M400 Recorder
 M400 Wine Glasses
 M400 Vibes w/o Vibrato
 M400 Tubular Bells
 M400 Celeste
 M400 Hammond C3

A total of 65 different sounds.