CHORDBOT MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

Chordbot's main view consists of (from top to bottom): a **section control bar**, a **chord table** and a **command bar**. Songs are created by adding chords to the chord table and played back using the instrument tracks selected in the instrument mixer.

The chords in the chord table are split into two parts: A smaller left part that indicates what position the chord has in the song and a larger right part that describes the chord's properties (root note, type, duration, etc.).

Clicking the left part of a chord to makes it the **active chord**. Clicking the right part of the chord opens the chord editor. The chord that is currently active is indicated by a darker background color.

The left part of the command bar at the bottom of the screen lets you start and stop playback, add/remove chords and access the **File/tools menu**. The right part lets you

access the [Instrument mixer](#) and the [Tempo selector](#).

The section control bar at the top of the screen lets you create different [song sections](#) (intro, verse, chorus, etc.) and navigate between them. Using song sections is optional, but can be helpful when creating longer songs since they let you reuse and repeat sections.

PLAYBACK CONTROLS

Click the play button on the command bar to start playing the song. The song will always start from the currently **active chord**, so if you want to start at a specific chord you simply select that chord by clicking on its left side before pressing play.

While the song is playing you can also **seek to a specific chord** by pressing the left side of the chord. Pause the song by pressing the pause button (only visible when the song is playing).

It is possible to edit the chords while the song is playing. After making a change the song will either resume from the the changed chord, the previous chord, or the beginning of the section, depending on the **Chord edit mode** [setting](#).

Tip: Press and hold the play button to rewind the song to the beginning.

ADDING/REMOVING CHORDS

Click the add button (+) in the command bar to insert a new chord **after** the currently active (darker) chord. Click the remove button (-) to remove the active chord.

EDITING CHORDS

Click the right part of a chord to open the **chord editor**. The chord editor lets you edit the following properties:

- ▶ Root note (C, Eb, F#, etc.)
- ▶ Chord type (Min, Maj7, Dim, etc.)
- ▶ Chord duration (4/4, 2/4, etc.)
- ▶ Bass note (slash chords: C/B, Am/G, etc.)
- ▶ Octave and inversion

The chord editor consists of two tables:

At the top is the root note table which lets you select the root note of the current chord (the note upon which the chord is built). Click **Flat** or **Sharp** in the top right corner to show flat or sharp notes.

Below the root note selector is a scrollable list of chord types. The chords are loosely organized by type with major chords (mostly) in the first row, minor chords in the second and seventh/extended chords on the third. Other chord types are ordered more by convenience than by any particular system.

At the bottom right of the chord type table is a **Silence** chord type. Choosing this chord type is equivalent to inserting a rest for the duration of the chord.

Click the **Length: X/X** button to bring up the **Chord duration** menu. This menu will let you select the chord's duration in quarter notes (beats in common time).

Note: The duration only controls for how long the chord is played, it does not control the rhythm of the chord or the time signature of the song. These properties are instead decided by the instrument tracks used in the Instrument mixer. Most instrument tracks are however designed for the time signature 4/4 and will consequently sound best with durations that are even multipliers/divisors of 4 (2/4, 4/4, 8/4...).

From the duration selection menu you can either press the **Back** button to return to the chord edit menu, or press **Close** button to return to the main screen.

By default you will hear a preview of the active chord when you change one of its properties. This can be turned off by toggling **Chord preview** in the settings.

SLASH CHORDS

A slash chord is a chord with a custom bass note, written out in the form X/Y (C/B, F/E, etc.) where X is the root note and Y is the custom bass note. Click the second button from the left ("Bass: X") on the chord edit menu to open the **Bass note** menu and set a custom bass note.

If the bass note you want to set is already part of the chord you might get better results changing the chord's inversion instead.

Note: Some instrument tracks do not support slash chords. In these cases you will need to add a separate bass track to get the specified bass note.

OCTAVES / INVERSIONS

The inversion of a chord describes the order in which the notes of the chord are stacked (basically which note is put lowest). By default Chordbot will try to select the inversion that results in the least amount of movement from the previously played chord. This usually gives a smooth progression, but in some cases this might not be optimal or desired. In these cases you can select both the octave and the inversion of the chord manually:

Click the third button from the left ("Inv: X") on the chord edit menu to open the

Inversion selector submenu. The inversion selector lets you select the octave (low, mid or high) and the inversion of the current chord. The number of inversions possible depend on the number of notes in the chord. A three note chord has three possible inversions in each octave, while a four note chord has four inversions per octave.
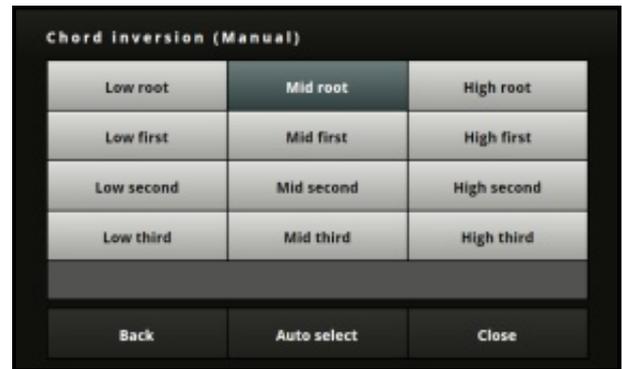
Click the button **Auto select** if you have set an inversion manually but want to revert to automatic selection.

Note: Setting an octave / inversion manually will recompute the inversions for all the following chords that are set to auto select.

INSTRUMENT MIXER

Clicking the **Mixer** button in the bottom right corner of the main screen brings up the **instrument mixer**. The instrument mixer lets you combine tracks of comping patterns played on different instruments to create a complete arrangement. The instrument mixer also lets you set the master reverb and chorus level of the current song.

You can either have a separate mixer setup (instrument arrangement) for each section in the song, or one global setup that applies to all sections. Toggle the mode you want to use by setting the **edit mode** switch at the top right of the instrument mixer to either **All sections** or **Current section**.

Click the **Reverb** or **Chorus** buttons to set the master effect levels of the song or section.

You can use up to eight instrument tracks per section. Click an empty track to add a new instrument, or click an existing track to change its settings. This will bring up the **instrument selector** menu.

The instrument selector consists of three lists that lets you select (from left to right):

- ▶ Instrument type
- ▶ Specific instrument/comping pattern
- ▶ Volume level

There are over 350 comping patterns split over seven instrument types. Select an instrument type in the leftmost list to show all the corresponding comping patterns in the middle list. Select a comping pattern in the middle list to change the current track or to add a new one to the mixer setup.

Patterns are grouped and named either by specific instrument (FM, Rhodes, etc.) or playing style (picked, strummed, etc.). The first patterns in a group are usually very simple, consisting of notes that are just played and held over a number of beats, while later patterns will generally be more complex.

Most patterns are intended for songs in 4/4 time, but there are a few that will work also for other time signatures. These patterns usually have their recommended time signature written out in the pattern name. Simple patterns like 'Piano > Hammered 01' will probably work well for any time signature. There are also a number of metronome tracks for other time signatures at the bottom of the drum pattern list.

Use the **Solo on/off** switch in the top right corner to listen to the current track only (mutes all other tracks). Click the **Remove track** button to remove an existing track from the mixer setup. Click the **Back** button to return to the mixer, or the **Close** button to return to the main screen.

Note: There is currently an empty instrument type called **Legacy** that is reserved for future deprecated or replaced tracks. Disregard this for now.

MIXER PRESETS

Pressing the **Presets** button brings up a list of mixer presets. Presets are prearranged combinations of instrument tracks that can be used to quickly try out different comping styles. Click a preset to load its predefined tracks into the mixer.

Most of the presets are imported from earlier versions of Chordbot where there were only prearranged styles and no track mixing capabilities. The original preset names were kept for legacy reasons, but unfortunately these are not always very descriptive. Not every style from the old version is available as a preset, but all the tracks that they were made up of are still there. If there is a particular style that you are missing from a previous Chordbot version you can use this list to find out what tracks you need to combine to recreate it.

There is currently no way to save custom presets (coming in a future update), but you could achive a similar effect by saving mixer setups in empty songs for later reuse.

SETTINGS

Click the **File/Tools** [...] button on the main screen and then click the **Settings** button on the bottom left to show Chordbot's settings menu. The following settings can be changed:

- **Loop songs**
  Decides if songs stop or restart after playing to the end.
  Default: On

- **Count in**
  Decides how many count in beats that are played before the song starts.
  Default: Off

- **Chord preview**
  Decides if changes of chord properties are previewed while paused.
  Default: On

- **Chord edit mode**
  Decides from what chord playback should resume after being changed.
  Default: Resume from active chord

- **Concert pitch**
  Decides what reference pitch that should be used for Concert A.
  Default: 440 Hz

- **Export mix**
  Decides if exported WAV files should be mixed in mono or stereo.
  Default: Stereo

SELECTING A TEMPO

Press the tempo button (XXX bpm) near the bottom right of the main screen. A list of tempos from 40 - 399 beats per minute will appear. Click one of the tempos to select it.

SONG SECTIONS

This feature can be used to group parts of your song in reusable and repeatable sections (intro, verse, refrain, etc.).

The section control bar at the top of the main screen consists of a label with the name and position of the active section to the left and two navigation buttons to the right. The navigation buttons lets you navigate between different sections while pressing the label opens the **section editor**.

The section editor shows a list of all sections in the order they will be played. Sections can either be original or repeated. An original section is a section with new material while a repeated section simply repeats a previous original section.

To add a new (original) section:
Click the position where you want to insert the new section and click the button **Add**

(the new section will be inserted after this position). Enter a name for the new section (ex: verse, refrain, etc) and click OK.

To repeat an existing section:
Click the section you want to repeat, then click the button **Repeat**. Click the position where you want to insert the repeated section.

A repeated section is linked to the original section it is repeating. Editing a repeated section changes the original and vice versa. Repeated sections can't be placed before the original section on which they are based.

To remove a section:
Click the section you want to remove and click the button **Remove**. Removing an original section also removes the repeated sections that are linked to it.

To rename a section:
Click the section you want to rename and click the button **Rename**. Enter a new name and click OK.

To copy a section:
Click the section you want to copy and click the button **Copy**. Click the position where you want to insert the copied section.

The difference between a repeated and a copied section is that changes made to a copied section will not affect the original.

If you want to loop just the current section while working on it you can enable **Section looping** at the top right of the section editor.

SAVING A SONG

Press the File/Tools button […] on the command bar and select **Save**. Enter a name for your song and press the **Save** button.

To save changes to an existing song, repeat the above procedure **without** changing the original name.

To save the current song as a new song, repeat the above procedure and give the song a new name.

Chordbot automatically saves its current state when closed and restores it the next time it is started so your last changes should persist between sessions regardless of whether you saved them or not.

(Saving is disabled in the lite version)

LOADING A SONG

Press the **File/Tools** button […] on the command bar and select **Open**. A list of your saved songs (and demo songs) will appear in alphabetical order. Select the song you want to open and click the button **Open** to load the song.

When loading a song in paused mode the file menu will close automatically. When loading a song during playback the file menu will remain open for quick previewing of songs.

DELETING A SONG

Press the **File/Tools** button […] on the command bar and select **Open**. Select the song you want to delete and click the button **Delete**. Confirm that you want to delete the song.

TRANSPOSING SONGS

Press the **File/Tools** button […] and select **Transpose**. Select the number of semitones you want to transpose your song with. Transpositions are made upwards (+) or downwards (-) in a one octave range. Transposing a song up by 11 semitones is the equivalent by transposing down 1 semitone.

If you want Chordbot to play in a different octave you should use the inversion selector to lower or raise the octave of the first chord of the song instead (subsequent chords will follow automatically).

SONG-O-MATIC

Chordbot's song generator Song-O-Matic can help you create a chord progression to get you started on a new song. Many of the generated progressions might sound cheesy or just plain bad, but once in a while Song-O-Matic actually manages to create some useful progressions. The Song-O-Matic function can be accessed through the **File/Tools** menu and has three settings:

Plain Pop
Creates a standard pop progression harmonized with simple safe chord types.

Justified Jazz
Creates a standard jazz progression harmonized with common safe jazz chord types.

Schoenberg Surprise
Generates a semi-random progression and harmonizes it with a wider range of more risky chords.

(This feature is disabled in the lite version)

COPY/PASTE

To copy a range of chords:

- ▶ Select the first chord in the sequence you wish to copy
- ▶ Click the **File/Tools** button [...], select **Copy/Paste**, then select **Copy from selected chord**
- ▶ Select the last chord in the sequence you wish to copy
- ▶ Click the **File/Tools(¹)** button and select **Copy to selected chord**
- ▶ Select the position where you want to paste the sequence
- ▶ Click the **File/Tools** button and select **Paste after selected chord**

(¹) When a copy/paste procedure has been initiated pressing the File/Tools button will bring you straight to the Copy/Paste menu.

EXPORT & BACKUP

Click the **File/Tools** button [...] and select **Export** to open the export menu.
Chordbot can export files in the following formats:

- ▶ MIDI - Lets you edit your song further in any MIDI-sequencer (GarageBand, Cubase, etc.)
- ▶ WAV - Standard audio format that can be played back in most audio players
- ▶ Chordbot song - A native JSON-based format that can be used to share songs with other Chordbot users (both iOS & Android)
- ▶ Backup - Lets you backup and transfer your song library to other devices
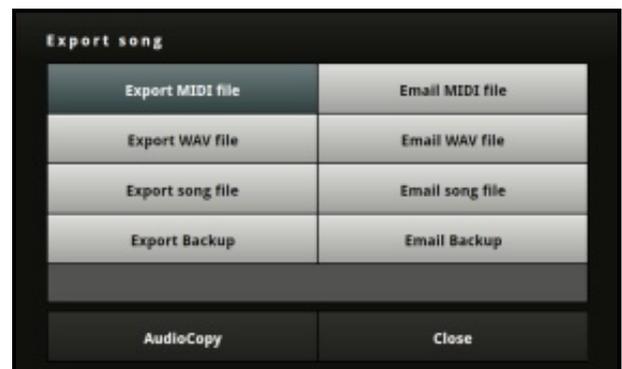
The exported files can either be sent by mail or placed in a directory where they are accessible from your PC/Mac. On Android the files are placed in the **chordbot** folder on the SD-card (or data partition) of your phone/tablet. On iOS the files are available in iTunes under [Device name] > Apps > File sharing > Chordbot.

On iOS you can also use the **AudioCopy** button to export audio files to other AudioCopy compatible apps. On Android clicking the AudioCopy button lists all installed apps that are capable of opening the exported WAV-file. (The Android version doesn't really use the AudioCopy protocol but uses similar functionality built into the OS).

(These features are disabled in the lite version)

OPENING EXPORTED SONGS / BACKUPS

Importing Chordbot files (song files or backups) back into Chordbot works in pretty much the same way as when opening attachements or files on a Mac or PC: Open the file in a file manager, mail client or web browser and choose Chordbot in the 'Open with' dialog. You will be asked to confirm the import, after which the imported song/songs will be added to your current song library.

Extra clarification:
You can not open exported files from inside of Chordbot. You must open the files externally and let the operating system trigger the import.

Android:
Depending on your file manager Chordbot might not be listed as an option in the 'Open with' dialog. If this is the case you should try using AntTek Explorer instead. Opening through Dropbox does work, but for some reason only on the second attempt (this might have changed). Opening files as attachments through Gmail or the default Android mail client requires you to save the file to the device before opening it: Click the three vertical dots to the right of the file name and select **Save**, then click the file name to open the file.

iOS:
Both the default mail client and Dropbox will first preview Chordbot files as plain text. When this happens just click the **Open** icon in the top right corner and choose to open the file in Chordbot.

Importing files does not overwrite any existing songs.

HELP/FEEDBACK

If you need help or if you have feedback/suggestions for future versions, please contact:

support@chordbot.com

Thanks for using Chordbot!