CUBASE ESSENTIAL4

Personal Music Production System

steinberg

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Introduction

Welcome!

Welcome to Cubase Essential 4.5! This version adds support for the Advanced Integration Controller CC121 and the Advanced Integration FireWire Interfaces MR816 X/ MR816 CSX together with new features for every Cubase Essential user.

This document lists and describes the features that have been added to or modified in the program since version 4.1.

About the program versions

The documentation covers two different operating systems or "platforms"; Windows and Mac OS X.

Some features and settings are specific to one of the platforms. This is clearly stated in the applicable cases. In other words:

⇨ If nothing else is said, all descriptions and procedures in the documentation are valid for both Windows and Mac OS X.

Key command conventions

Many of the default key commands in Cubase Essential use modifier keys, some of which are different depending on the operating system. For example, the default key command for Undo is [Ctrl]-[Z] under Windows and [Command]-[Z] under Mac OS X.

When key commands with modifier keys are described in this manual, they are shown with the Windows modifier key first, in the following way:

[Win modifier key]/[Mac modifier key]-[key]

For example, [Ctrl]/[Command]-[Z] means "press [Ctrl] under Windows or [Command] under Mac OS X, then press [Z]".

Similarly, [Alt]/[Option]-[X] means "press [Alt] under Windows or [Option] under Mac OS X, then press [X]".

⇨ Please note that this manual might refer to right-clicking, e.g. to open context menus, etc. If you are using a Mac with a single-button mouse, hold down [Ctrl] and click.

Working with the new features

VST Sound

With version 4.5, Steinberg introduced VST Sound, a new version of the SoundFrame media management system that is directly integrated into VST3. VST Sound allows direct integration into the MediaBay to third party manufacturers of plug-ins and instruments, and encompasses all formats and file types previously supported by SoundFrame such as audio, loops, VSTi presets, video, MIDI files and track presets. VST Sound has now replaced SoundFrame, which was part of previous versions of Steinberg applications.

Plug and Play support for ASIO devices

The Steinberg MR816 hardware series supports Plug and Play in Cubase Essential. These devices can be plugged in and switched on while the application is running. Cubase Essential will automatically use the driver of the MR816 series and will re-map the VST connections accordingly.

▪ Please note that Steinberg cannot guarantee that this will work with other hardware. If you are unsure of whether your device supports plug and play, please consult its documentation.

⚠ If a device that does not support Plug and Play is connected/disconnected when the computer is running, it might get damaged.
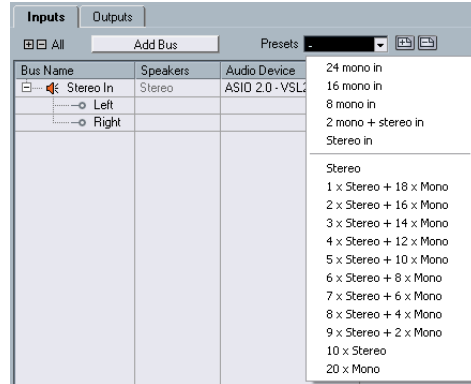
Automatically generated VST Connection presets

In the VST Connections window (opened from the Devices menu), on the Inputs and Outputs tabs, you will find a Presets menu. A number of standard bus configurations are provided by default, and you can also save your own customized setups as presets.

In this version of Cubase Essential, a new type of preset has been added to complement the standard presets as known from the previous program version: On each startup, Cubase Essential will analyze the physical inputs and outputs provided by your audio hardware, and will automatically create presets tailored to your specific hardware configuration.

These hardware-dependent presets can have the following configurations:

▪ one stereo bus
▪ various combinations of stereo and mono busses
▪ a number of mono busses

The Presets menu on the Outputs tab of the VST Connections window, with the standard presets (top) and the automatically generated presets (bottom).

The automatically generated presets make it easy to install and use an audio hardware device very quickly, as it is no longer necessary to manually specify the bus-port assignments for the current device in the VST Connections window every time before you can start working. This is very handy, especially if you have a number of different devices you want to use or if you are working in different studios.

Mac OS X improvements

Retrieving channel names

For some audio cards, it is now possible to automatically retrieve the "ASIO" channel names for the ports of your audio hardware:

1. Open the Device Setup dialog via the Devices menu.

2. On the VST Audio System page, select your audio card on the "ASIO driver" pop up menu.

3. In the Devices list to the left, select your audio card.
The available settings are displayed.

4. In the settings section to the right, click the Control Panel button.
This opens the control panel for your audio hardware.

5. Activate the "Use CoreAudio Channel Names" option.

6. When you now open the VST Connections window to set up the busses in your system, you will find that the port names in the Device Port column correspond to the names that are used by the CoreAudio driver.

⇨ If you want to use the project later on with an earlier version of Cubase Essential, you will have to re-assign the port connections in the VST Connections window.

Port selection and activation

On the settings page for your audio card (opened via the Devices menu, see above), you can now specify which input and which output port should be active. This allows you e.g. to use the Microphone input instead of the Line input or even to deactivate the audio card input or output completely, if required.

⇨ This function is only available for Built-In Audio, standard USB audio devices and a certain number of other audio cards (e.g. Pinnacle CineWave).

Making settings for the hardware

When you click the "Open Config App" button on the settings page for your audio device in the Device Setup dialog, the Control Panel for your audio device will be opened (if applicable). Here, you can make various settings relating to your audio hardware. The available settings depend on the installed hardware, so please refer to the documentation that came with the audio hardware for information.

Remote Devices

On the Device Setup dialog, on the page for your remote device, some (or all) of the following new functions may be available (depending on your remote device):

Option	Description
Reset	This allows you to revert to the factory default settings for the remote device.
Bank	If your remote device contains several banks, you can select the bank you want to use on this pop-up menu. The bank you select here will be the one used by default when Cubase Essential is launched.
Smart Switch Delay	Some of the Cubase Essential functions (e.g. Solo and Mute) support the so called "smart switch" behavior: In addition to regular activation/deactivation of a function by clicking a button, you can also activate the function for as long as the button is pressed. Upon releasing the mouse button, the function is deactivated. This pop-up menu allows you to specify how long a button must be pressed before it goes into "smart switch" mode. When "Off" is selected, the "smart switch" function is deactivated in Cubase Essential.

Key Commands for MediaBay options

Several commands relating to the MediaBay can now be performed using keyboard shortcuts. These are set up in the Key Commands dialog (opened via the File menu).

New key commands are available for the following actions: you can step through presets, open the Presets browser, and use the arrow keys on your keyboard to navigate in the MediaBay windows. Furthermore, you can reset the search criteria or revert to the MediaBay as it was when you launched the program.

⇨ Note that this makes it possible to remote control several of the MediaBay functions.

Routing the metronome click to a VST Instrument

When setting up a metronome MIDI click, you can use a VST Instrument to provide the sound for the click.

1. On the Transport menu, select "Metronome Setup…".

2. In the MIDI Click section, open the MIDI Port/Channel pop-up menu and select a VST Instrument from the list.
Note that the instrument must have been set up in the VST Instruments window. Make sure that Activate MIDI Click is activated.
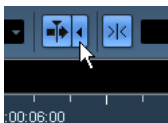
When you now start playback and a sound is selected in your VST Instrument, the metronome click will be heard using the VSTi selected above.

Suspending Autoscroll

On the main toolbar in the Project window, as well as in the various editors, you will find the Autoscroll button. When this button is activated, the display will scroll during playback, keeping the project cursor visible in the window at all times.

When editing parts or events during playback with Autoscroll enabled, you may suddenly "loose sight" of the edited material as the display follows the project cursor.

If you don't want the Project window display to change when editing during playback, you can activate the "Suspend Autoscroll when Editing" button. You will find this button right next to the Autoscroll button.

Suspend Autoscroll when Editing

When this option is enabled, autoscrolling is suspended as soon as you click anywhere in the event display during playback.

Proceed as follows:

1. Open a project that contains audio or MIDI parts/events.

2. Enable both the "Autoscroll" and the "Suspend Autoscroll when Editing" buttons (both buttons turn blue).

3. Start playback.

4. Edit an audio or MIDI part/event of your project (e.g. click and drag it to a different location on its track).
The Autoscroll button will turn orange.

Autoscrolling is now suspended, i.e. when the project cursor moves to the right edge of the Project window, the display will not follow to keep the cursor visible.

As soon as playback stops, or when you click the Autoscroll button again (so it turns blue), Cubase Essential will return to the normal Autoscroll behavior.

New option in the Project Synchronization Setup dialog

In the Project Synchronization Setup dialog, in the MIDI Clock Destinations section in the lower right corner you can find the option "Send MIDI Clock in Stop".

▪ When this option is activated, Cubase Essential will send MIDI Clock signals to the selected MIDI Clock destinations even when Cubase Essential is in Stop mode.
This is, for example, useful if you are working with a keyboard that has a built-in arpeggiator, the tempo of which you are controlling via MIDI Clock messages. This way, the arpeggiator will keep the right tempo even when Cubase Essential is in Stop mode. You may also be able to use this feature with some external drum machines, as it allows you to play the drum patterns in the current sequencer tempo even when Cubase Essential is stopped.

▪ When this option is deactivated, Cubase Essential will send MIDI Clock signals to the selected MIDI Clock destinations only during playback.
In this mode, you will not be able to use the above-mentioned arpeggiator of your keyboard in Stop mode.

⇨ Keep in mind that the MIDI Clock information always refers to the tempo at the current project position.

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