HANDBELLS

Handbells

An Impact Soundworks Instrument
for Kontakt Player 7.10.7+
Instrument Version 1.0.0

Product Manual

Introduction

Handbells captures the beautiful sound of a vintage Schulmerich handbells choir, with a full three-octave range, plus nearly two octaves of handchimes.

Artisans at the Philadelphia-based Schulmerich company have been building handbells for nearly 200 years. This particular set that we have sampled is decades old, with tremendous character and beauty. We were struck by the beauty of these handbells and took great care to capture their distinctive fullness and warmth. We also wanted to make sure that our virtual version was incredibly easy to use and customize to your taste without sacrificing the sound of the original bells. With just a few clicks, you can manipulate the tone however you want: from a bright, soft shimmer to a more dynamic, percussive performance. Furthermore, a built-in toggle allows you to choose between two types of damping.

When you think of handbells, you likely imagine them ringing out in a grand church hall. Indeed, you could use our **Handbells** laconically, adding your favorite majestic reverb to a beautiful set of soft bells to evoke magic and wonder in your tracks. *You may notice that even when playing rapid passages, the bells sing out with crystal clarity!* But beyond the obvious, there is so much more you can do with them, thanks to the quality of these intimate recordings: synthy 80s vibey soundtracks, contemplative spacey soundscapes, unique aural textures, and endless other possible directions.

We hope you enjoy **Handbells** as much as we do!

— The Team at Impact Soundworks

Installation

Please see our installation guide here.

User Interface

Handbells & Handchimes

The **Handbells** instrument library comes with two separate patches (*i.e.,* `.nki` files): **Handbells** (the main patch) and **Handchimes**. Aside from the difference in sound between the two (and the fact that they have different background images), the only notable differences are that **Handchimes** does not have the *Damp* controls *(see page 5)*, does not have any keyswitches, and has a slightly different playable range *(see page 9)*. This manual will be showing all controls and settings pertaining to **Handbells**; aside from the previously mentioned exceptions, these can all be applied to **Handchimes** as well.

The **Handbells** UI has two page-selecting tabs at the top left: `MAIN` and `MIXER/FX`.

Page 1: `MAIN`

Soften Adds a dynamic EQ and filter to soften up and control some of the more present frequencies common to handbells and handchimes.

Body Adds midrange and lo-mid frequency to the sound, widening the 'body' of the bell tone, resulting in more rich and pronounced harmonics.

Mic Blends from a mono large diaphragm condenser mic (Neumann U87) to a stereo pair of small diaphragm condenser 'pencil mics' (Earthworks QTC30).

Air Adds a light convolution reverb, custom for this instrument library.

Playback

Settings

Sample Offset Cuts into the beginning of the samples for more smooth playback, and less 'strike' sound.

Release Time Determines how long the instrument rings out after the played note is released.

Release Retrigger Retriggers the note(s) when the played note ends.
NB: This can be used to emulate a shake of the bell!

Damp

NB: This section is only enabled if the 'Damp' toggle is pressed.

Damp Toggles damping on or off. *'Damping', in this case, refers to how the performer dampens the note after it has been played; it does not mute the initial hit of the bell.*

Thumb Sets the type of damping to *thumb*, meaning the performer slowly stifles the sound by pressing their thumb against the bell. *This takes effect after the played note is released.*

Shoulder Sets the type of damping to *shoulder*, meaning the performer quickly stifles the sound by resting the bell on their shoulder. *This takes effect after the played note is released.*
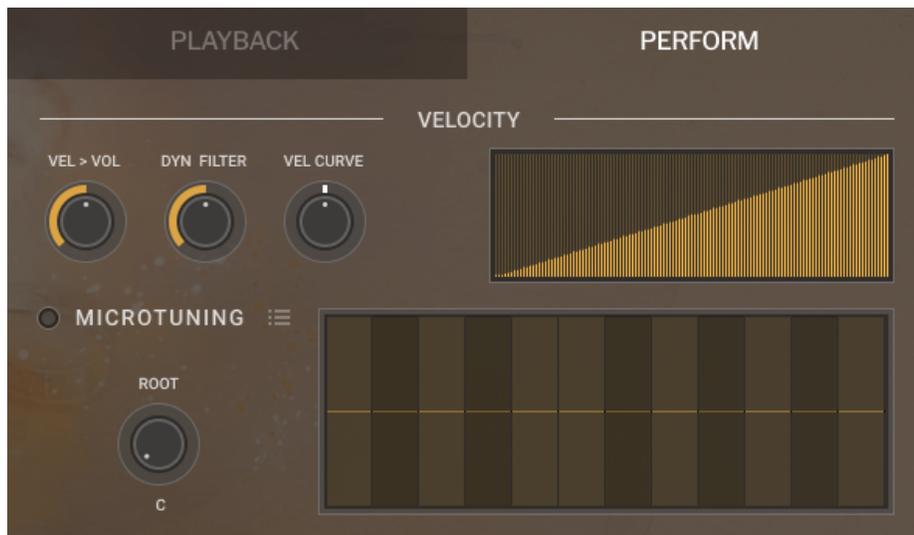
Release

Time	Determines the fade out duration of damped release samples.
Volume	Controls the overall volume of the release samples.

Scale

Locks playback to a selected scale, relative to the root note selected on the Perform tab.

Perform

Velocity

Vel > Vol	Controls the degree to which Volume is controlled by note Velocity.
Dyn Filter	Applies custom frequency filtering to smooth out timbral differences between the different dynamic layers.
Vel Curve	Controls the shape of the curve of the Velocity response.

Microtuning

Enable Microtuning	Toggles Microtuning on or off.
Microtuning Menu	Allows the selection of a stock Microtuning preset, based on the Root Note.
Root Note	Selects the Root Note for both Microtuning and Scale Lock (*see page 5*).
Microtuning Grid	Draw microtuning offsets, in cents, chromatically from the Root Note.

Page 2: `MIXER/FX`

Global FX Enabled

Directly to the right of the `MIXER/FX` tab (and visible on both the `MIXER/FX` and `MAIN` page views), this button toggles whether the full custom FX rack processing is enabled.

Effects Rack

The Effects Rack section has two page-selecting tabs at the top right: `INS` and `SEND`. For each:

Rack Toggle

The button on the top-left toggles whether the respective page's effects chain is enabled.

Initialize Insert FX Chain	Resets `INS` page to default.
Save Insert FX Chain	Saves custom Insert FX chain in `INS` page.
Load Send FX Chain	Loads custom Send FX chain into `SEND` page.

Bullet Menu (`SEND`)

Load Insert FX Chain	Loads custom Insert FX chain into `INS` page.
Initialize Send FX Chain	Resets `SEND` page to default.
Save Send FX Chain	Saves custom Send FX chain in `SEND` page.
Load Send FX Chain	Loads custom Send FX chain into `SEND` page.

Effects Slots (1 through 8)

Selects a DSP effect. The selected effect's controls (selectable via `click`ing) will appear at the bottom area of the UI. The button to the left of each slot toggles whether that effect is enabled.

Effect Controls

If an effect is selected, the area at the bottom of the UI shows that effect's controls.

Die

Randomizes values in the selected effect's controls.

Presets Bullet Menu

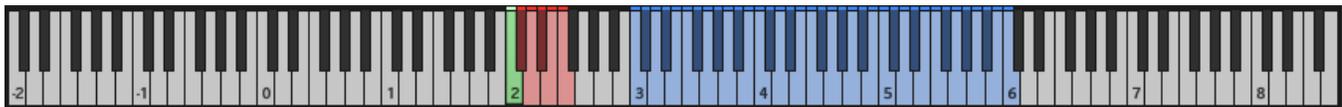|	
Initialize Current FX	Resets the selected effect's settings to default.
Save FX Preset	Saves custom values for the selected effect as a preset.
Load FX Preset	Loads custom values for the selected effect as a preset.

Master

Pan Knob

Controls the stereo panorama of the master output.

Volume Slider

Controls the volume of the master output.

The Keyboard

Handbells has a range of `C2` to `C6`, with a main (melodic) playable range of `C3` to `C6`.

`C2`	Sustain
`C#2`	Martele
`D2`	Martele Lift
`D#2`	Mallet
`E2`	Mallet Muted
`F2`	Pluck
`C3` to `C6`	Main playable range

**Handchimes** does not have any keyswitches. It has a playable range of `F3` to `C6`.

Setup & Tweaking

## Tips for Getting the Most out of the User Interface

➔ **NB:** *As of Kontakt 8, the View menu shows the new Kontakt 8 view by default and hides the following options. Please enable 'Classic View' to follow along with this guide!*

➔ Almost all controls can be MIDI-learned by (1) right-`click`ing the UI and (2) selecting 'MIDI Learn'. You will then need to move the control of your choice (*i.e.*, fader, knob, *et al.*) on your MIDI control surface or in your DAW to establish the link.

   Pro tip: Once you MIDI-learn something, you should save your modified version of that NKI so you won't have to do it again!

➔ You can view Help Text by hovering over controls in the **Handbells** UI. The Help Text will appear at the bottom-left of the Kontakt UI plug-in window. You can go to the Panels drop-down menu by `click`ing the `VIEW` tab at the top-right of the plug-in window and ensure 'Info' has been checked:
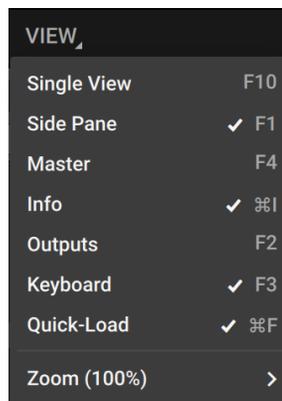
➔ The colorful Kontakt virtual keyboard, seen in our videos, is a Kontakt feature and not specific to **Handbells**. To enable the virtual keyboard, simply press **F3** on your computer (*not* MIDI!) keyboard. Alternatively, you can go to the Panels drop-down menu by `click`ing the `VIEW` tab at the top-right of the plug-in window and ensure 'Keyboard' is checked:
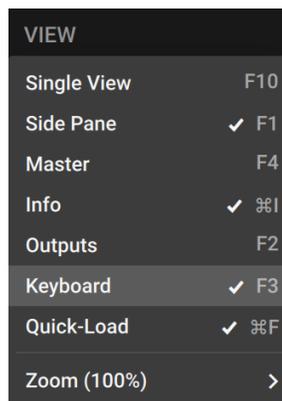
➔ **Handbells** is fully NKS Compatible and features quite a few existing host-automatable controls. If you have a Komplete Kontrol keyboard or use the Komplete Kontrol application, you will be able to benefit from this functionality!

Credits & Acknowledgements

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Troubleshooting

Having trouble with **Handbells**? Use it in a project you want to tell us about? Drop us a line via our **Contact page** (but be sure to read the **FAQ** first!)

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