TriplePlay UTILITY Manual

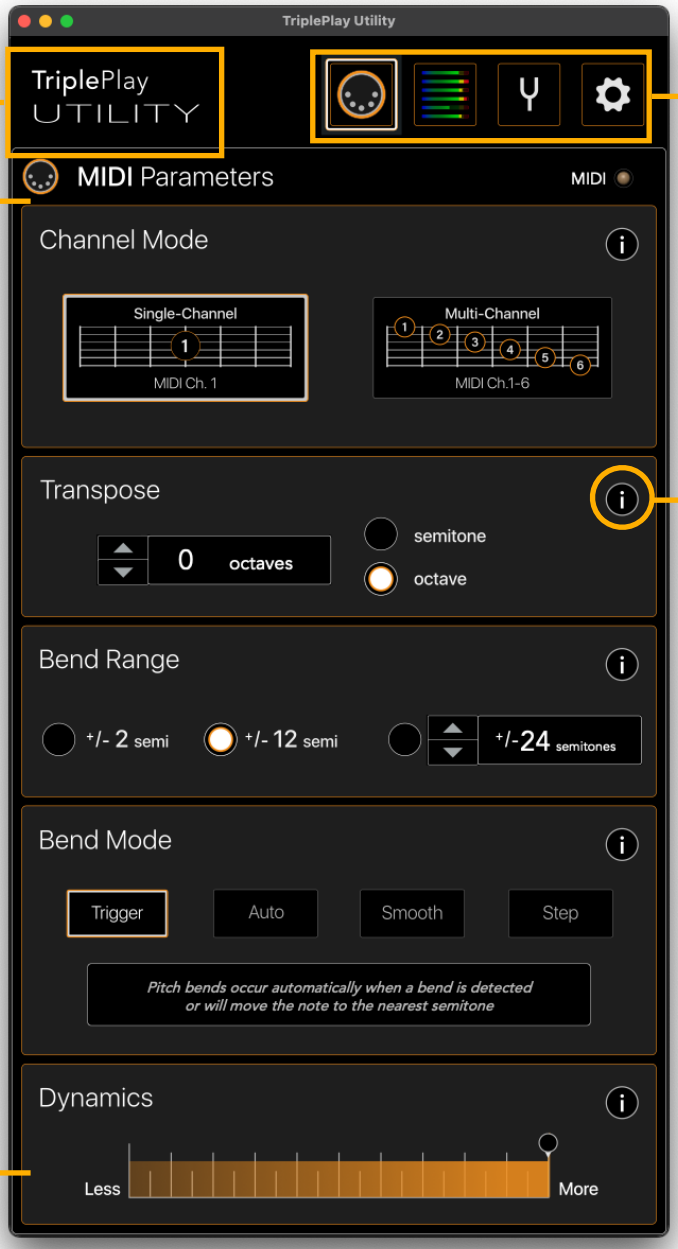
v 1.0.1

TriplePlay Utility Manual

Contents:

TriplePlay Utility Overview

TriplePlay Utility is an application for Mac and PC that controls the MIDI functions of all TriplePlay devices allowing you to connect and play any virtual instrument or hardware synth quickly and easily without hassle. TriplePlay Utility automatically saves settings to the controller allowing the ability to play synths without using any TriplePlay software.



'About' page icon

Main window icons - Shows the parameters and settings for the selected icon in the Main window area

Info icon - Shows information about the specific area

Main window area - Shows all parameters and settings for the selected Main window icons

How do TriplePlay devices work with the TriplePlay Utility App?

TriplePlay Utility controls the Basic Mode functionality (the start-up/power-on state) of any TriplePlay MIDI Guitar controller. TriplePlay Utility saves the state of the controller automatically, making it easier than ever to connect to any synth and play it with ease.

There are a plethora of virtual instruments and synths, all of which may function differently, and often require adjustments to the MIDI settings to perform correctly with TriplePlay devices. The TriplePlay Utility removes all of the guess work and provides a way to access the TriplePlay controller parameters quickly without hindering the creative music production process.

Note Exceptions: Though all parameters changed with the Utility App are saved to the controller and persist when turned ON/OFF, the following will override the settings on the TriplePlay controller:

- When connected to the TriplePlay Host software
- When connected to the Connect iOS App
- When booted into Hardware Mode

(The TriplePlay controller Sensitivity settings will always persist when connected to any of the TriplePlay applications.)

TriplePlay Compatibility

TriplePlay Utility will install on computers with:

1. Windows 10 or higher
2. Mac OS X 10.10 Yosemite and higher

TriplePlay Utility is compatible with these TriplePlay devices:

1. TriplePlay Wireless
2. TriplePlay Connect
3. TriplePlay Express
4. TriplePlay FC-1?

TriplePlay Utility Best Use Cases

DAW Production - TriplePlay Utility is best utilized when using a DAW such as Logic or Pro Tools for music production, film scoring, or game scoring. The Utility app runs as a standalone application and can be used simultaneously with a DAW or any other application that accepts MIDI. This allows you to adjust MIDI settings as needed in real-time.

Transcription - The Utility App is also very useful when using transcription programs like Sibelius and Finale. Most transcription tools have Mono Mode (Multi-Channel Mode) capabilities which allow for receiving 6 MIDI channels in order to create accurate tablature markings by playing only chords.

TriplePlay Utility Programs Basic Mode

Basic Mode is the state of the controller when powered ON. Previously, Basic Mode was a static set of parameters pre-programmed in the TriplePlay controller. Now, TriplePlay Utility unlocks those parameters and allows you to set them on-the-fly. You can use the TriplePlay Utility app along side any DAW, standalone MIDI software, or external synth. Because the Utility also saves the state of the controller parameters automatically, the Utility app can later be disconnected from the TriplePlay controller and the controller will continue to function using the parameter set that was last programmed.

Definitions of terms used in this manual

1. Synth - any MIDI instrument including virtual instrument plugins, keyboard synths, or synth modules.
2. Sound - the synth's preset/patch or loaded instrument
3. Hex-pickup - this is the hexaphonic pickup attached to the TriplePlay controller that fits underneath the strings as explained in the installation instructions.
4. Utility or Utility App - refers to the TriplePlay Utility software application

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Do This First!!!

The TriplePlay controller is a universal device that can attach to most electric and acoustic steel-stringed guitars. The universal nature of the controller requires a few key setup procedures in order to optimize the pitch detection. Make sure to follow the procedures listed below for the best pitch tracking.

Check the Spacing between the Hex-pickup and Strings

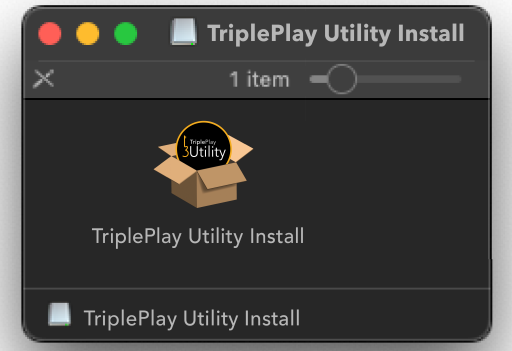
Once the installation of the controller onto the guitar is complete (for installation instructions, please see the Quick Start Guide included with your controller), check the spacing between the hex-pickup and the strings with the "guitar shaped" spacer tool (included with your controller). The lip of the tool should slide between the strings and the hex-pickup such that the tool is nearly touching the underside of the string while resting on the pickup. This should equal about a 1mm distance between the strings and the pickup for every string. Check every string individually and if needed, use the small included screwdriver to adjust the pickup height until the spacing described above is achieved.

TriplePlay Utility App Installation

How to download the TriplePlay Utility App

- TriplePlay Utility is available as a free download to all TriplePlay customers on our website here: www.fishman.com/TriplePlay/UtilityDownload
- Create a TriplePlay Account - If you haven't already done so, we recommend creating a TriplePlay account. A TriplePlay account will give you added benefits including access to download the TriplePlay Host Software and a free version of SynthMaster One from KV331.

Installing the TriplePlay Utility App



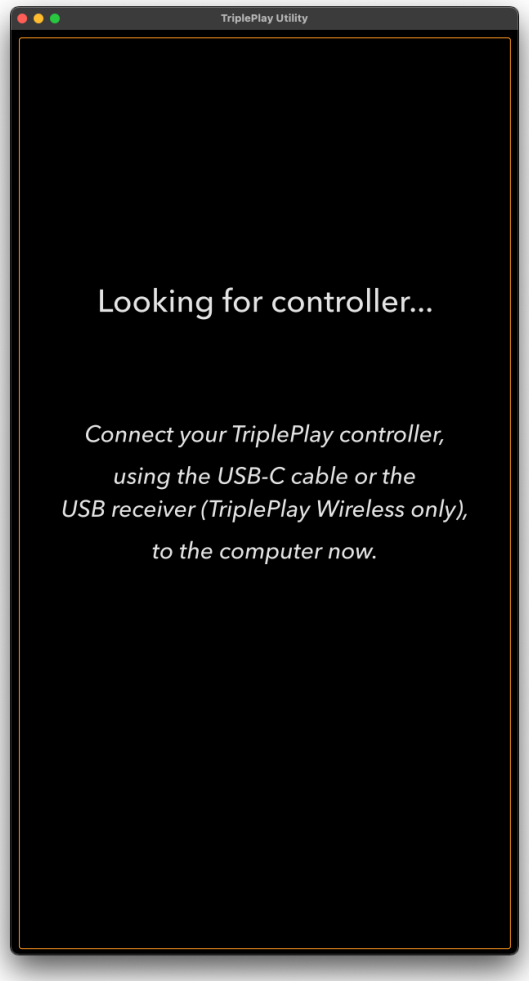
- Once the TriplePlay Utility is downloaded, double-click the TriplePlay installation file. Open your 'Downloads' folder, or wherever the file was saved, and double-click the TriplePlay installation file.
- Follow the installation procedure and click 'Finish' when done.
- After the installation is complete, open the TriplePlay Utility App to get started.

Connecting the TriplePlay controller to the computer

- **TriplePlay Wireless** - plug the USB wireless receiver to a USB port on the computer, switch the controller to the 'ON' position, then verify the controller and receiver are paired (check Quick Start Guide for more information).
- **TriplePlay Connect** - connect the included USB cable to the controller and then to a USB port on your computer.
- **TriplePlay Express** - connect the included USB-C cable to the controller and then the computer. If your computer does not have a USB-C port, use the included USB-C to USB-A adapter.

TriplePlay Utility App Startup

When the TriplePlay Utility starts, the app will first determine whether or not a TriplePlay controller is detected and which type of TriplePlay controller is detected. If you have not done so, connect your TriplePlay controller now.



When in doubt, hit the Info button!

Each parameter in the TriplePlay Utility has an Info button that gives a complete explanation of the parameter and how to use it. MIDI can seem complicated and overwhelming to the beginning MIDI guitar artist. The Info button gives clarity to the complications and helps you set the controller correctly the first time.

TriplePlay Utility App Startup

Once the controller is detected, at the top, the main window shows a set of icons for navigating between different sets of parameters that control the TriplePlay controller. The icons shown are described below.

About TriplePlay Utility

Shows information about the TriplePlay Utility App

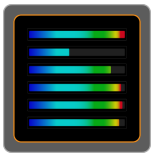
TriplePlay Wireless Battery Indicator (TriplePlay Wireless only not shown when Connect or Express are connected)

MIDI Parameters

Shows all MIDI Parameters to control how MIDI data is transmitted

Tuning

Shows guitar tuner and controls to set the Open String Tuning of guitar



Controller Optimization

Shows all options for optimizing the controller MIDI detection

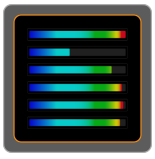
Settings

Shows all controller data and custom programming controls

TriplePlay Controller Setup

The first thing you should do is click the ‘Controller Optimization’ icon and adjust the Sensitivities.

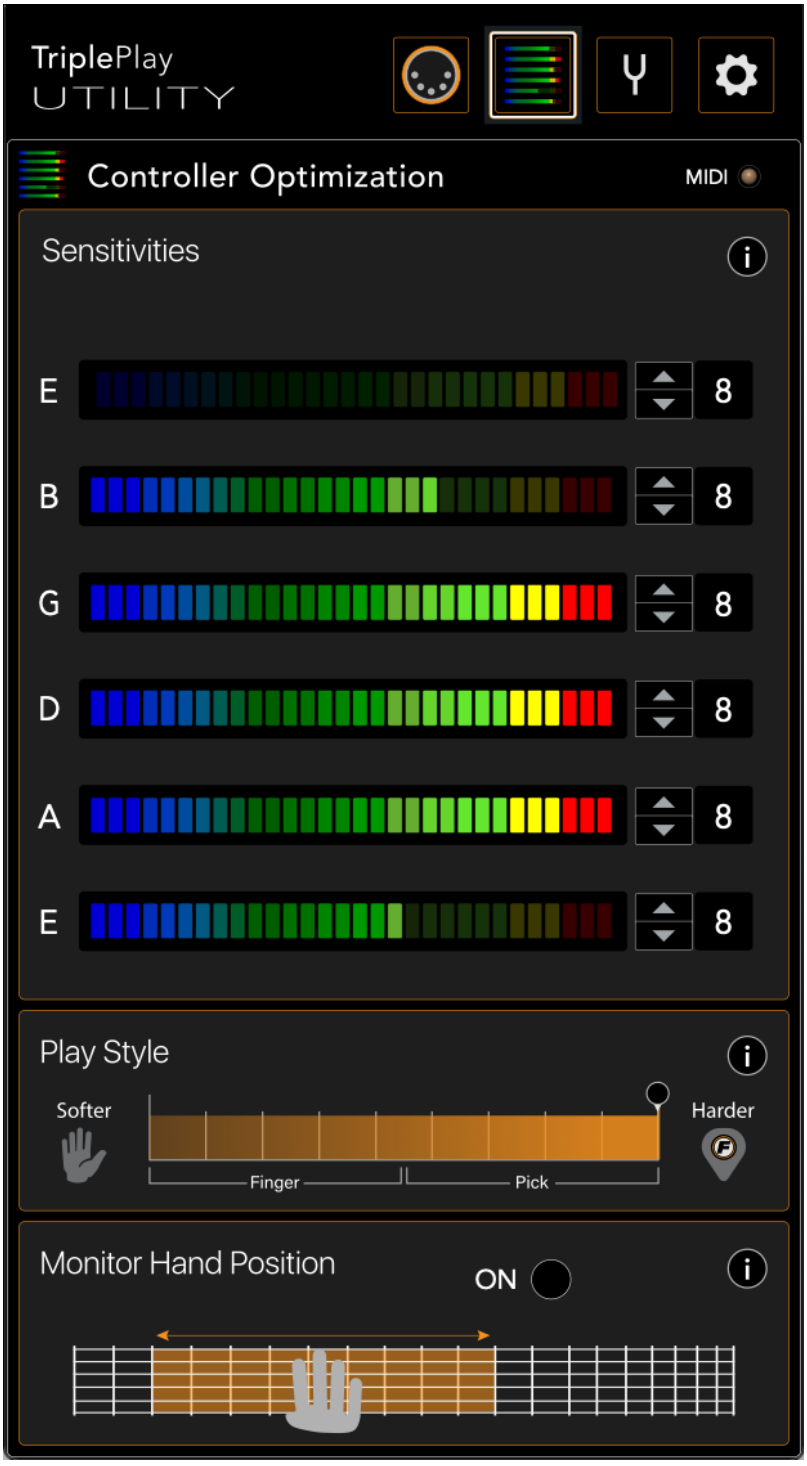
Once the TriplePlay Utility app is started, click the optimize button on the top menu bar to show the ‘Controller Optimization’ window. *See the ‘Controller Optimization’ section in this manual for more information*



Controller Optimization

Controller Optimization

The Controller Optimization area will optimize the controller for the best possible pitch tracking



Sensitivities

The response of the individual pickups of the TriplePlay hex-pickup

Play Style

How playing style affects the response of the hex-pickup

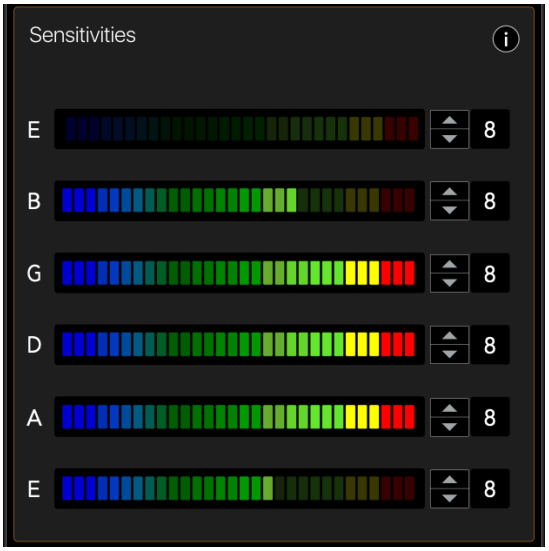
Monitor Hand Position

Determines the position of the hand to eliminate ‘ghost’ notes

Sensitivities

The Sensitivities area allows you to adjust the signal strength on the hex-pickup for the individual strings on the guitar. This optimizes the precision of pitch tracking and dynamic response for each string. For the most accurate performance, we highly recommend setting the string sensitivities properly before trying to use the controller. Once the setup process is complete, the controller will retain the settings until changed. By default, the Sensitivity settings for all strings are set to a value of 8 (1-16).

Sensitivities Setup - Play a single string at a medium to hard strength, then adjust the value up or down by clicking the up/down arrows until the meter is peaking between the 2 lines marked 'target level'. Do this for every string until completed.



Adjust Pickup Height if Needed - The relationship between the hex-pickup and the sensitivity settings is the key to capturing the most accurate performance. If the pickup is too close to the strings, the pitch of the notes will act erratically, sometimes playing completely wrong notes. If the pickup is too far from the strings, the controller will have trouble detecting any notes and could play wrong notes.

- Adjust the height of the hex-pickup to be **closer** to the strings if the following is true.
    - Any/All values of the sensitivities are at or near the highest value (16)
      and
    - The meter is peaking below the 'target level' area

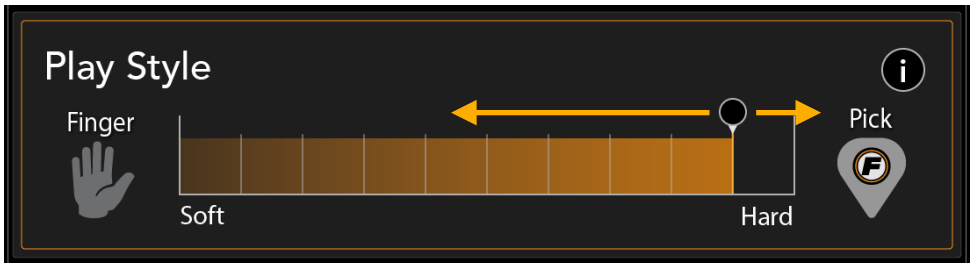
- Adjust the height of the hex-pickup to be **farther** from the strings if the following is true.
    - If the values of the sensitivities are at or near the lowest level (1)
      and
    - The meter is pinned in the red

Play Style

How you play your guitar will affect the accuracy of pitch tracking. We recommend adjusting this setting as necessary by connecting and playing a synth, then moving the slider until you achieve the best tracking for each note you play.

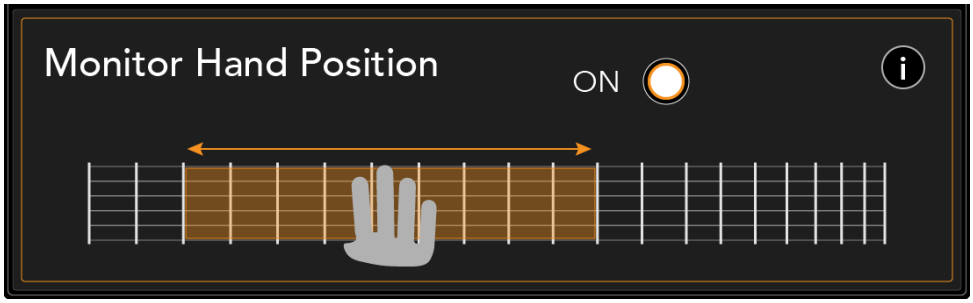
Move the slider towards the ‘Pick’ icon if you play with a pick and adjust if needed.

Move the slider towards the ‘Finger’ icon if you play with your fingers and adjust if needed.



Monitor Hand Position

When this option is turned ON, notes that are 5 frets or more above or below your hand on the fret board will not play. As your hand moves around the fret board, the exclusive playing area will follow the hand.

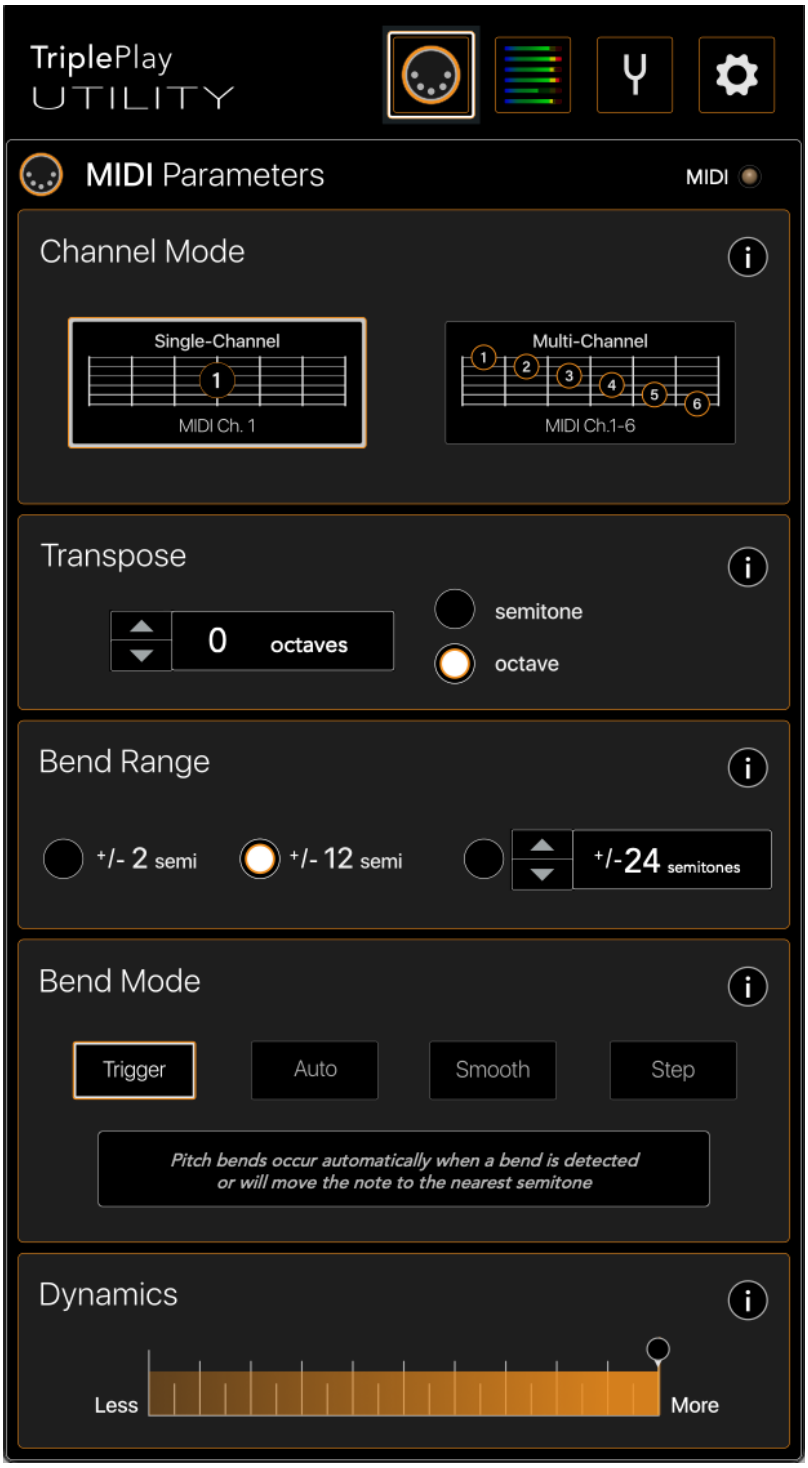


What are Ghost notes?

Ghost notes are random notes that occur due to a harmonic frequency detected by the controller that is louder than the fundamental frequency, causing the controller to trigger a note usually much higher than the fundamental note.

MIDI Parameters

The MIDI Parameters area determines how the controller sends MIDI to a synth



Channel Mode

Number of MIDI Channels used to transmit MIDI data to a synth

Transpose

Transposes the MIDI notes up/ down by semitone or octave

Bend Range

Amount of Pitch Bend to the synth *(must match synth bend range)*

Bend Mode

How bending a string will change a MIDI note

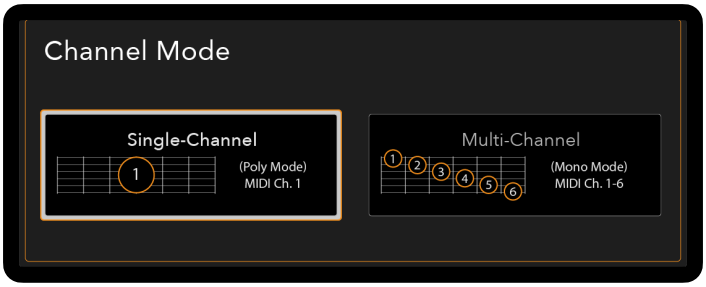
Dynamics

Response of dynamic performance to MIDI velocity

Channel Mode

The very first block on the page is the MIDI Channel Settings area. This setting determines the number of MIDI channels sent to a connected synth. There are 2 different modes that the TriplePlay controller uses.

Select the Channel Mode needed by clicking or touching

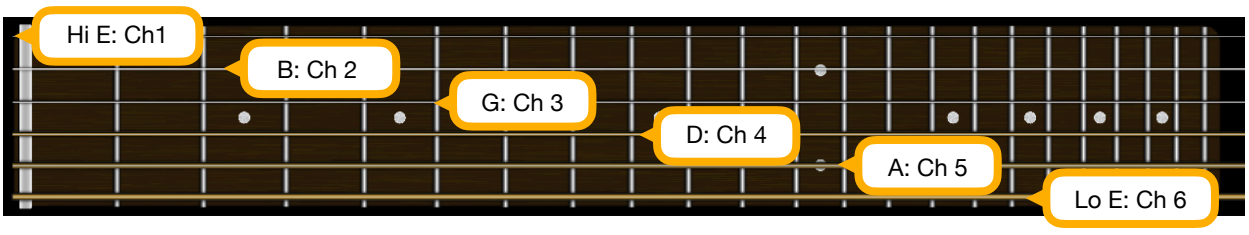


- **Single Channel Mode** *(Poly Mode)* - Single channel mode sends all notes from the TriplePlay hexaphonic pickup to a synth over MIDI channel 1. This is the simplest mode to use for most VST plugins and hardware synths. The majority of virtual instrument plugins and hardware synths receive MIDI on a single channel.

Single Channel Mode: All Strings on MIDI Channel 1

- **Multi-Channel Mode** *(Mono Mode)* - Multi-Channel Mode sends notes from the 6 individual strings on the guitar over separate MIDI channels, MIDI channels 1-6. This mode is meant for more advanced users connected to a synth that can receive multiple MIDI channels. Some virtual instrument plugins can receive multiple MIDI channels to play multiple instruments(multi-timbral synth), or to play a single instrument with multiple MIDI channels(multi-channel synth).

Multi-Channel Mode: MIDI Channel per string for MIDI Channels 1-6



Channel Mode *(continued)* - Channel Settings Tips

- Use Single Channel Mode for most synths - most VST synths are single channel synths meaning they can only receive MIDI from one channel at a time, even if there's an option for 'All' or 'Omni'.
- Do not use 'All' or 'Omni' - We recommend NOT using MIDI 'All' or 'Omni'. Setting the MIDI channel for a DAW or a synth to 'All' or 'Omni' can interfere with the multiple MIDI channels used for data transmission by the controller.
- Use Multi-Channel/Mono Mode when connected to a 'multi-timbral' synth. Load 6 instances of the same instrument in a multi-timbral synth, each instance set to an individual MIDI Channel for each string, using MIDI channels 1-6. If different instruments are needed on different strings, load the same instrument instance for the number of strings it is needed matching the MIDI channels to the specific strings.

Transpose

The Transpose area allows for transposition of the MIDI notes detected from the guitar. The Utility offers 2 different ways for transposing the MIDI notes, by semitone or by octave. This becomes very useful when the sound played is either out of the note range of the guitar or if the desired timbre of the sound requires transposition.
Use the arrows to transpose the MIDI notes up or down. Transposition will occur in semitone intervals. If you wish to transpose by octave intervals select the option "transpose by octave" then use the arrows to transpose up or down by octave.

Reasons for Transposition:

- One example of a need for transposition is a bass that sounds too high when playing from the guitar. Transpose down until it plays at the appropriate range.
- Another example might be a Flute sound that is out of range of the guitar strings allowing only one or a few of the guitar strings to trigger the sound, which would require a transposition up until it plays at the appropriate range.

Bend Range

What is Pitch Bend Range?

Pitch Bend Range is a MIDI value that sets the number of semitones the pitch of a note will move when Pitch Bend is executed. This has been traditionally linked to the Pitch Bend Wheel on a MIDI keyboard and is often depicted the same way in virtual instruments.

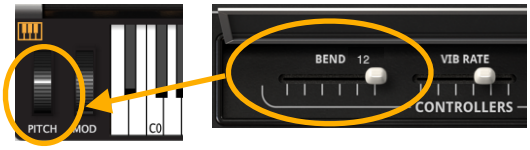
How to use this parameter…

IMPORTANT NOTE: *This parameter can produce wild and unpredictable notes, while bending strings, if not set properly.*

Match this parameter to the pitch bend range of the connected virtual instrument or synth preset.

Hardware synth example:
Bend Range - usually in menu/MIDI settings

Virtual synth example:
Bend Range - Most virtual synths have this option.



Where do you find the Pitch Bend Range setting?

Hardware synth: The Pitch Bend Range setting for a hardware synth is usually in a system menu, commonly found by pressing a 'Menu' button and navigating to the 'MIDI Settings' page. Refer to the manufacturers synth manual for more information. The most commonly used pitch bend ranges for virtual instruments and synths are +/-2 semitones and +/-12 semitones.

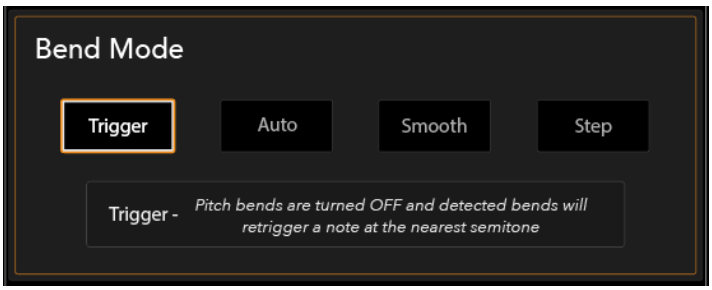
Virtual instrument: The Pitch Bend Range setting for a virtual instrument in a settings menu in the plugin, but many plugins do not have a pitch bend range setting, in which case the range will most likely be +/-2 semitones or the instrument may not bend at all. Refer to the software manufacturers virtual instrument manual for more information. The most commonly used pitch bend ranges for virtual instruments and synths are +/-2 semitones and +/-12 semitones.

What if the Pitch Bend Ranges does not match?

If the pitch bend range of the TriplePlay controller does not match the connected synth, the sound will not bend the same as your playing. For example, if the controller is set incorrectly to +/-2 semitones, while the synth is set to +/-12 semitones, bending a string will produce notes that bend uncontrollably over 12 semitones. If the controller is set to +/-12 semitones, while the synth is set to +/-2 semitones, bending a string will produce little to no pitch bending.

Bend Mode

Pitch Bend Mode determines how the controller will interpret string bends. Each mode, when selected, will have a description of the bending behavior in the box underneath each button. There are 4 different modes to choose from. You may need to choose a different mode for each preset in the synth.



Bend Mode Types

- **Trigger** - Pitch bends are turned OFF and detected bends will re-trigger a new note at the nearest semitone. Bending the strings will not bend the notes, but will re-trigger new notes at every semitone increment, whether bending the string or sliding up and down the neck of the guitar.

- **Auto** - Pitch bends occur automatically when a bend is detected or will move the note to the nearest semitone. Slides up and down the neck of a guitar will increment notes in semitones. Subtle tuning and intonation problems are forced to be in tune, while deliberate bends are still respected. Overall Auto bend mode will sound more in tune than Smooth bend mode, but vibrato techniques will not work as well. This is the easiest mode to use if you want to bend notes while staying more accurately in tune.

- **Smooth** - Pitch bends are always ON. While this mode may seem ideal, it requires very good intonation and a well tuned guitar. If you are a very accurate player, this mode may be the best setting for you.

- **Step** - Pitch bends are turned OFF and detected bends will glide the note to the nearest semitone without re-triggering a new note. This mode is very similar to Trigger, but depending upon the type of instrument/synth played, Stepped can provide more natural results.

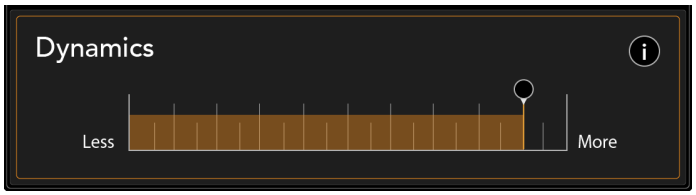
Bend Mode Tips

- **No need for bends** - If you do not care about bending strings, use 'Trigger' mode, which is the easiest and most compatible mode for all synths and virtual instruments. Also, it is common to use 'Trigger' mode for percussive instruments, like piano or drums, where the instrument doesn't bend at all.

- **Bending Strings** - If you want to bend the sound, the best mode to start with is 'Auto', which will determine when or when not to bend a note automatically. If you're an advanced player, you can also use 'Smooth' mode, which is most often used with instruments that need vibrato, such as a solo violin.

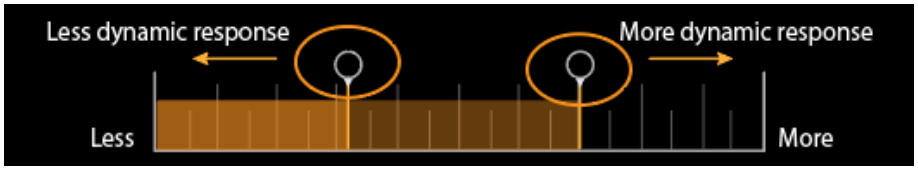
Dynamics

When an instrument is played, the different strengths of playing contribute to the various volume levels of notes in a musical phrase. This is called dynamics and are translated by the TriplePlay controller into MIDI velocity values, which will determine how loud or soft a synth will sound.



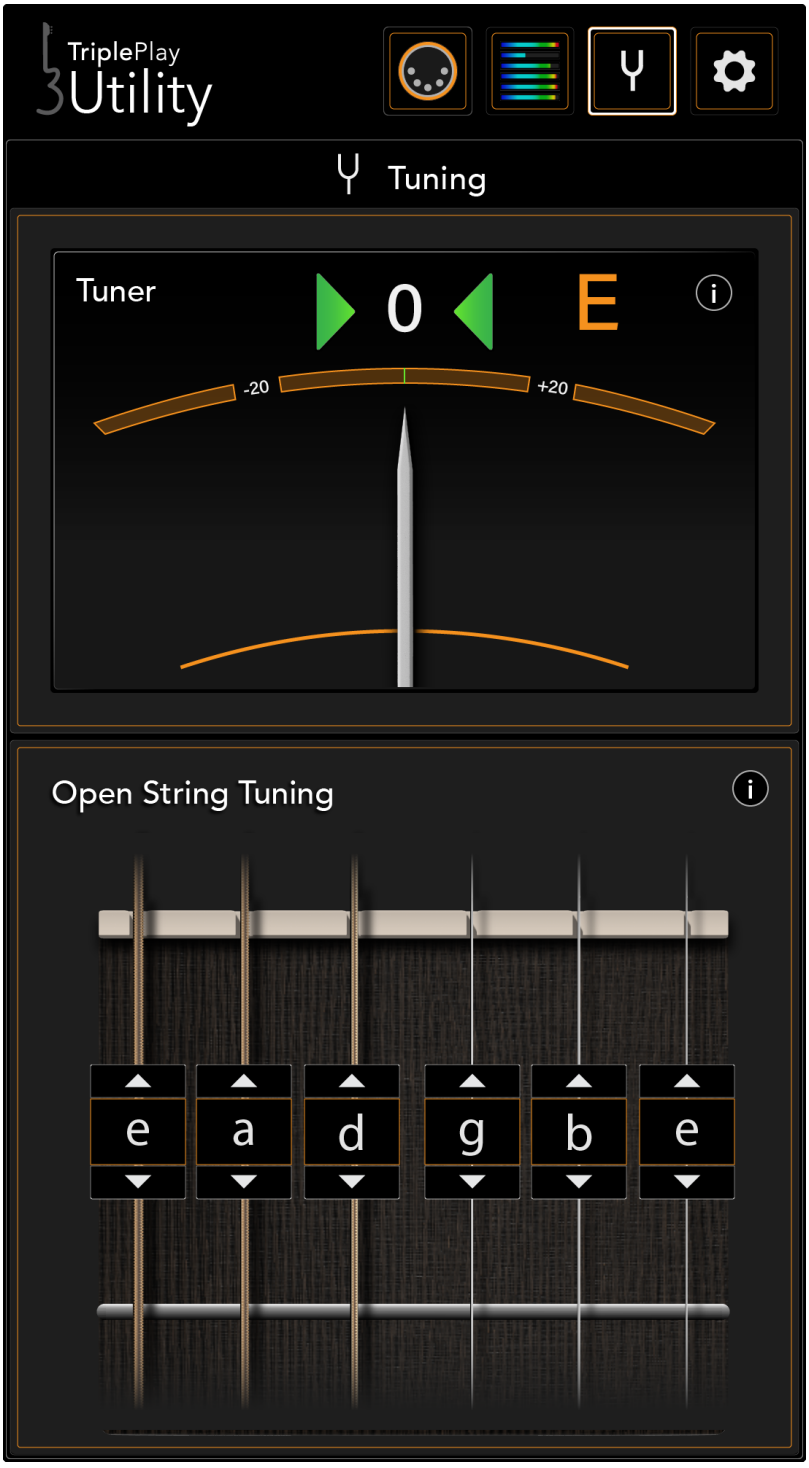
How to use this parameter

Adjust this parameter to limit the amount of dynamic contrast between loudly and softly played notes. Move the slider completely to the right ('More') for full dynamic response and to the left ('Less') for less dynamic response.



Tuning

The Tuning area helps tune and optimize the pitch tracking of the guitar



Tuner

Use this to tune your guitar

Open String Tuning

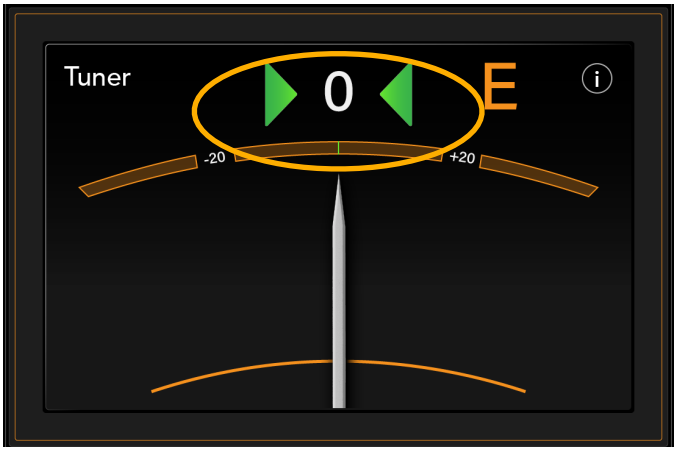
Optimizes the TriplePlay controller's ability to track the pitch

Tuner

It's important to tune your guitar for the best pitch tracking. We recommend tuning your guitar before using the TriplePlay controller.

How to Tune

Play a single string, then adjust tuning for that string until the 'needle' sits consistently at '0' and both 'green arrows' light on either side.

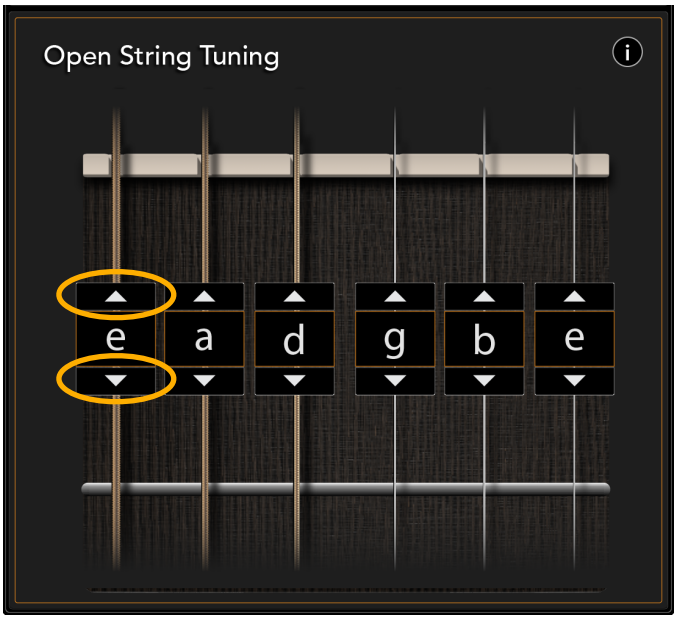


Open String Tuning

To optimize the pitch tracking of the controller, set each string to the tuning of your guitar. This will ensure that the controller is tracking the pitch in the most efficient way.

Adjusting Open String Tuning

Click the 'Up/Down' arrows until the notes shown for each string match the tuning of the guitar.



Important Note: This is not MIDI tuning. It does not rep itch the MIDI notes that are transmitted. This control is specifically meant to optimize the pitch tracking in the controller.

Settings

The Settings area is where to find software updates, firmware updates, Fishman Support, and custom controller programming.

TriplePlay Software/Controller Info

Find information for the TriplePlay controller, Utility software updates, controller firmware updates, and Fishman Support in this area

Device Programming

Custom program TriplePlay devices in this area

TriplePlay Software/Controller Info

The TriplePlay Software/Controller Info are contains all of the TriplePlay device info, software info, updates, and links to the Fishman Website and Fishman Support. This is a very useful area for learning more about your controller and the latest features available as well as a quick way to pass on information about your device to support should you have an issue.

TriplePlay Software/Controller info area

1 **Software/Firmware Updates** - You will be automatically notified if there is a new software version, but you can always check for the latest version by clicking on the button “Check for Updates”.

2 **Device Info** - This shows the firmware version, software version, and serial number for your TriplePlay devices and the Utility application.

3 **Fishman Website** - Click the button “Go to Fishman.com” to head directly to the Fishman website and check out more information about TriplePlay or many of the other Fishman products.

4 **TriplePlay Support** - For any issues with your TriplePlay devices or TriplePlay software, click the “TriplePlay Support” button, which will take you directly to a TriplePlay Support page to fill out info about your controller, software, and the issue that you are experiencing.

Device Programming

The Device Programming area allows you to create custom button configurations on your controller. All custom programming will save to controller automatically and persist when the controller is turn back ON. For example, you could program buttons to transpose the MIDI notes Up/Dn octaves.

Default Programming - The controller buttons come pre-programmed with useful functions. The default programming is as follows:

TriplePlay Wireless

Up button - Program change *(Bank 0, starting from program 0)* +1 increment
Down button - Program change *(Bank 0, starting from program 0)* -1 decrement
Enter button - Pitch Bend Mode: Trigger *(bends OFF)*
Back Button - Pitch Bend Mode: Auto *(bends ON)*

TriplePlay Express

Up button - Program change *(Bank 0, starting from program 0)* +1 increment
Down button - Program change *(Bank 0, starting from program 0)* -1 decrement
Simultaneous *(both Up/Down buttons)* - Pitch Bend Mode: switch between Trigger and Auto

TriplePlay Connect

Up button - Program change *(Bank 0, starting from program 0)* +1 increment
Down button - Program change *(Bank 0, starting from program 0)* -1 decrement
Simultaneous *(both Up/Down buttons)* - Pitch Bend Mode: switch Trigger and Auto

Custom Programming - To create your own custom programming, click on the button press type you wish to program, then scroll up or down to choose a programming option from the pop-up list. It's that simple!

Custom Programming

Click and scroll to choose a programming option. Choosing an option automatically saves to the controller.