Notation Express User Guide - Sibelius

Notation Ex*press*

Congratulations on purchasing Notation Express, the fastest way to use Sibelius!
Before we get going, here's some Q & A about what you are and aren't allowed to do.

License Q & A

Can I use Notation Express on more than one computer?

Yes! A purchase entitles one person (you) to use it on one computer at a time, on as many computers that you personally use. Unless you have extra limbs, that should suffice nicely.

Can I use Notation Express on both the Stream Deck console and the iOS app?

Yes! Your purchase entitles you to use Notation Express on both devices. You must purchase the Stream Deck console and subscribe to the Stream Deck Mobile iOS app separately.

Can my buddy who shares my computer use Notation Express?

No! Well, there's no way to technically prevent it. But please ask your buddy to purchase his own copy.

My buddy wants to use my copy of Notation Express. Can I send it to him?

No! He should purchase his own copy. Let's all be buddies!

OK. Can I change the default Notation Express profile — move icons around, add my own shortcuts, actions, etc.?

Yes! That's the beauty of it — it's totally customizable for your own use. You can change it straight away or keep the original handy and duplicate it for your own use. If you need to, you can always re-import the default Notation Express profile again.

So, once I do that, can I send that profile to my buddy?

No! Please don't share any profile derived from the Notation Express profile, unless your buddy has already purchased Notation Express, too — then it's OK.

Now that we're all clear on that, it's time to set up Notation Express!

Notation Express and Notation Express XL

This documentation guide refers both to the "original" version of Notation Express and Notation Express XL.

The original version of Notation Express uses a 5x3 grid and is designed to work with the Stream Deck console and the Stream Deck Mobile app for iOS devices.

Notation Express XL uses an 8x4 grid and is designed to work with the Stream Deck XL console.

At the time of this writing, Notation Express XL does not work with the Stream Deck Mobile app for iOS devices.

The setup, installation, and method of use of both products is the same. However, Notation Express XL includes many additional functions that take advantage of the extra buttons.

When applicable, in this guide those instructions will be denoted by this icon: **XL**

Notation Express installs a custom keyboard shortcut profile for use with Sibelius. The same profile works for both the original and XL versions. If you have an earlier version of Notation Express and wish to use the XL version, you should run the installer to ensure that the shortcut profile is updated.

Be aware that running the Notation Express installer will restore your shortcut profile to Notation Express defaults. If you have customized your keyboard shortcut profile after installing Notation Express, it is advised that you make a copy of your profile and save it before running the Notation Express installer. You can then modify the Notation Express shortcut profile with any custom shortcuts if you wish.

If you are fortunate enough to have both a Stream Deck and a Stream Deck XL, or even the Stream Deck Mobile app on your iPhone or iPad and a Stream Deck XL, it is possible to use both products simultaneously to supercharge your workflow even more.

Set up

Setup is a straightforward 3-step process and should only take a matter of minutes.

1. Install the Notation Express Stream Deck Profile

If you haven't done so already, download and install the Stream Deck desktop app from:
https://elgato.com/gaming/download

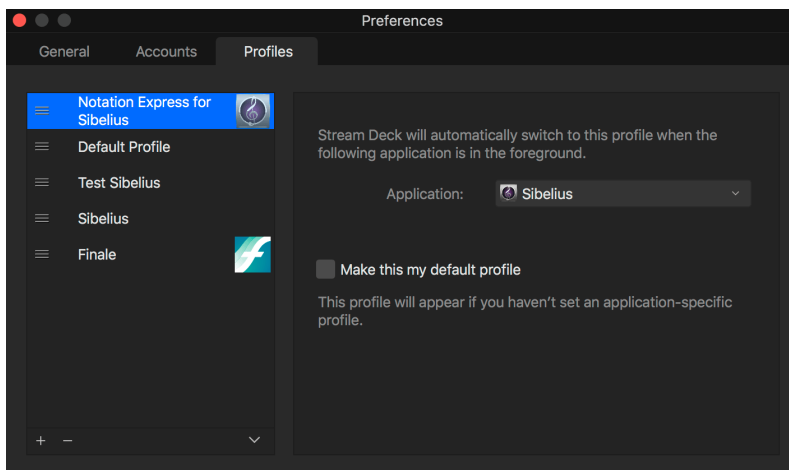If you're using the Stream Deck console, connect it to your computer via the attached USB cable.

If you're using Stream Deck Mobile on iOS, be sure that that your phone/tablet and your PC are on the same wireless network. Download the iOS app here and purchase a subscription if you haven't done so already:

https://itunes.apple.com/app/elgato-stream-deck-mobile/id1440014184?ls=1&mt=8&at=11lJDT

Launch the Stream Deck app on your desktop. Follow the instructions to pair your devices.

Double-click the **Notation Express for Sibelius.streamDeckProfile** file (**XL** : **Notation Express XL for Sibelius.streamDeckProfile**) from the installation packet you purchased. This will import the Notation Express profile into the Stream Deck desktop app.

In **Application:** select **Sibelius** so that Stream Deck will automatically switch to **Notation Express** when Sibelius is in the foreground.

Do this for each device (console or iOS device) you want to use Notation Express with (keep in mind that your purchase only allows one user per purchase).

2. Install the Notation Express supporting files for Sibelius

Quit Sibelius if it is running.

Double-click the **Notation Express for Sibelius - Stream Deck** installer (**.pkg** on Mac or **.exe** on Windows). If you have purchased Notation Express and Notation Express XL at the same time, you need only run the installer once.

This will install the Sibelius shortcut file and required plug-ins into the appropriate folders on your computer. You're almost done!

3. Set up Sibelius

Launch Sibelius.

Copy the trill transfer document

Open the **Notation Express trills.sib** file from the installation packet you purchased.

Copy and paste the first three bars of that file into any Sibelius file you're working in. This will copy over the "trill-to" symbols and lines used in Notation Express into your file. You can delete the bars in your destination file once you've done that, and the symbols will remain.
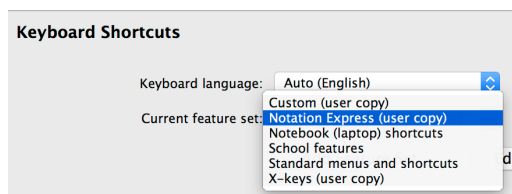

You may wish to export your house style and use this in the future.

Choose the Notation Express keyboard shortcut feature set

Finally, go to **File ▸ Preferences ▸ Keyboard Shortcuts**.

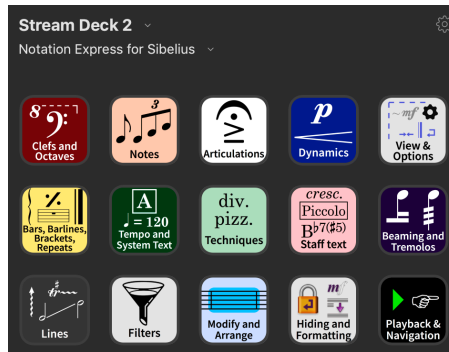In **Current feature set:** select **Notation Express (user copy)**

Click **OK**.

Using Notation Express

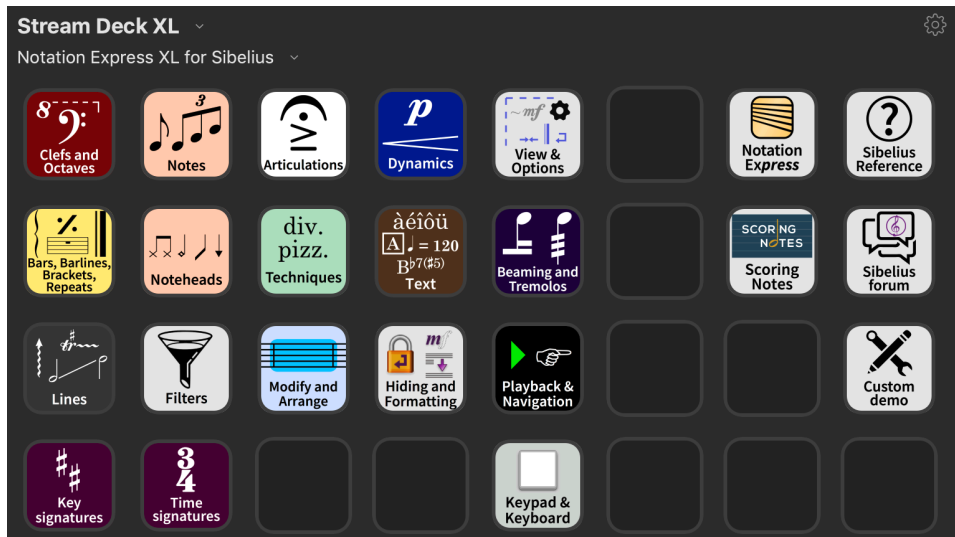Using Notation Express is as simple as pushing a button, literally!

All of the top-level buttons are folders that contain commands. The commands are generally self-explanatory, but if you have any questions about how they work or what they do, consult the **Sibelius Reference**.

Certain folders contain subfolders with more commands. Here is the folder structure:

- Home screen
    - Clefs and Octaves
    - Notes
        - Note Input
        - Noteheads
        - Tuplet utilities
    - Articulations
    - Dynamics
    - View & Options
        - More View, Options & Zoom
    - Bars, Barlines, Brackets, Repeats
        - Repeats
    - Tempo and System Text
    - Techniques
    - Staff text
    - Beaming and Tremolos
    - Lines
    - Filters
        - More Note Filters
    - Modify and Arrange
    - Hiding and Formatting
    - Playback and Navigation

Subfolders are indicated by a red border around the button. Folders on the main screen do not have a red border. Filters are indicated by a blue border.

XL Here is the folder structure for Notation Express XL:

- Home screen
    - Clefs and Octaves
    - Notes
        - More notes
    - Articulations
    - Dynamics
    - View & Options
    - Bars, Barlines, Brackets, Repeats
    - Noteheads
    - Techniques
    - Text
        - Characters & Diacritics
        - Music characters
    - Beaming and Tremolos
    - Lines
    - Filters
    - Modify and Arrange
    - Hiding and Formatting
    - Playback and Navigation
    - Key signatures
    - Time signatures
    - Keypad & Keyboard

XL The home screen of Notation Express XL also has quick buttons to the Sibelius Reference (when Sibelius is in use), the official Sibelius help forum, the Notation Express web site, and the Scoring Notes blog. There is also a sample Custom demo folder.

Quick tip!

Most sub-folders are arranged at the same position on the screen as the enclosing folder. For instance, to quickly get to **More Note Filters** from the home screen, double-tap on the **Filters** button.

Certain other actions are organized similarly: Double-tap on **Techniques** to enter **Other Technique** text; Double-tap on **Staff text** to enter **Other Expression text**; Double-tap on **Lines** to enter **Other line**.

XL In Notation Express XL, the arrangement is different in certain places. For instance, double-tap on the **Filters** button to bring up the **Advanced Filter**; Double-tap on **Text** to get to **Characters & Diacritics**.

Where's Key Signature / Time Signature / Symbols / etc.?

There are a few very basic Sibelius commands not programmed into Notation Express.

For example, the following commands are not programmed into Notation Express and instead can easily be accessed from a computer keyboard:

A-G = note names
K = Key Signature
T = Time Signature
Z = Symbols ("Z"ymbols)

The reason for this was twofold: 1.) The limited space on the Stream Deck meant that certain items were not included, and 2.) It is not easy to program access to the symbol galleries via Sibelius shortcuts. Of course, you can modify the Notation Express profile to suit your needs and add these commands and others if you wish.

XL The Notation Express XL profile includes folders for **Key signatures** and **Time signatures**.

Can I use my existing keyboard shortcuts with Notation Express?

The Notation Express profile is based on the default Sibelius shortcuts, although many more have been added. If you use the default Sibelius shortcuts, you can continue to use them just as before, and also use Stream Deck. If you have modified the default Sibelius shortcuts, you can either modify them to work with the Notation Express profile, or easily change the shortcuts in the Notation Express profile to match yours (making sure that they don't conflict with other shortcuts in use). In the latter case, you may not wish to use the **Notation Express** feature set in **Keyboard Shortcuts**, and use your own instead.

Icon Pack

In developing Notation Express, additional icons were created that didn't make the cut for the Notation Express profile. These are contained in the **Icon Pack** included in your download. Feel free to customize your own Notation Express profile by adding these icons to your profile or replacing existing ones. You'll need to define an appropriate shortcut in both the Stream Deck app and in Sibelius.

XL The Icon Pack is not included in Notation Express XL, since most of these items (and many more) are programmed directly into Notation Express XL.

Troubleshooting

If the Notation Express actions don't do anything or trigger the wrong action, try going to **File** (in the Ribbon) ▶ **Preferences** ▶ **Keyboard Shortcuts** and click on any item in the **Tab or category** list. Also, be sure that in **Current feature set**, **Notation Express (user copy)** is selected. Then click **OK**. Sometimes after installing plug-ins, the shortcut assignments get corrupted, and this fixes it.

If the above doesn't work, you may need to delete the Notation Express feature set from Sibelius and re-install it. It's not difficult, don't worry! Just follow these instructions:

- Go to **File** (in the Ribbon) ▶ **Preferences** ▶ **Keyboard Shortcuts**
- Click **Edit Feature Sets…**
- Select **Notation Express (user copy)**
- Click **Delete**.
- Click **OK** and **OK**.
- Quit Sibelius.
- Run the **Notation Express for Sibelius – Stream Deck .pkg** or **.exe** again.
- Launch Sibelius and follow the above instructions to set your feature set again:
  - Go to **File** ▶ **Preferences** ▶ **Keyboard Shortcuts**
  - In **Current feature set:** select **Notation Express (user copy)**
  - Click **OK**.

Notation Express has only been tested on English language setups. You may be able to modify it to work with other languages on your own.

Notation Express is built for the latest version of Sibelius Ultimate (2020.1 at this writing). Use with earlier Sibelius versions is not recommended nor supported.
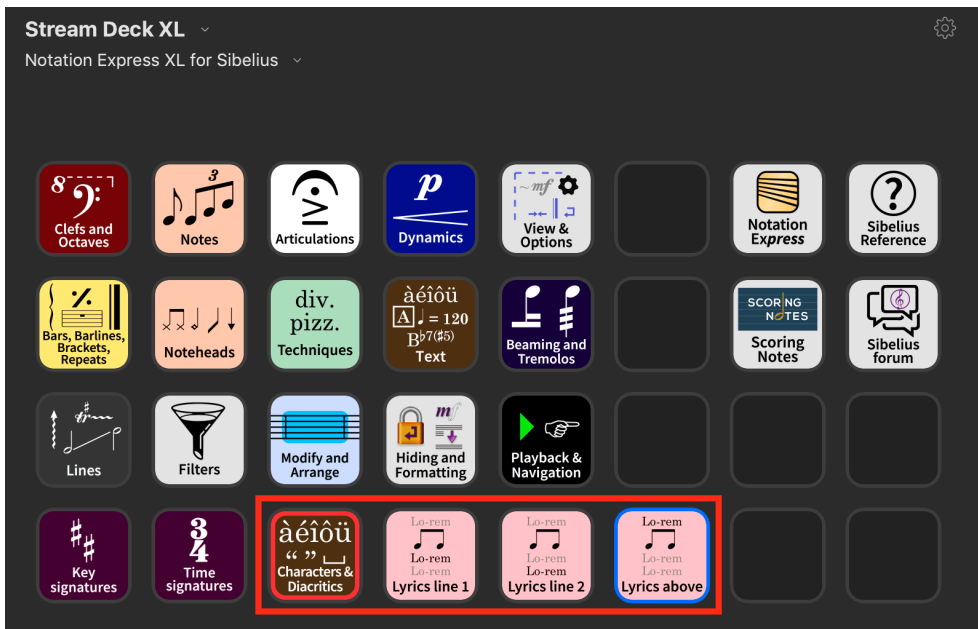
XL Notation Express XL usage

There are many functions unique to Notation Express XL. Here are some highlights.

XL *Copy, paste, and rearrange icons*

You'll notice several blank buttons on the home screen and in many of the subfolders. This is a feature, not a bug! This way, you can fully customize your home screen with the most frequently used functions, and you can rotate these in and out depending on your project, without disrupting the core Notation Express XL arrangement.

To do this, in the Stream Deck desktop app, simply select the folder or function you wish to copy, press ⌘-**C** on Mac or **Ctrl+C** on Windows to copy the item(s), and press ⌘-**V** on Mac or **Ctrl+V** on Windows to paste the item(s) to the home screen (or wherever else you like).

For instance, if you are working with lyrics a lot, you might want easy access to those buttons and the **Characters & Diacritics** folder on the home page:
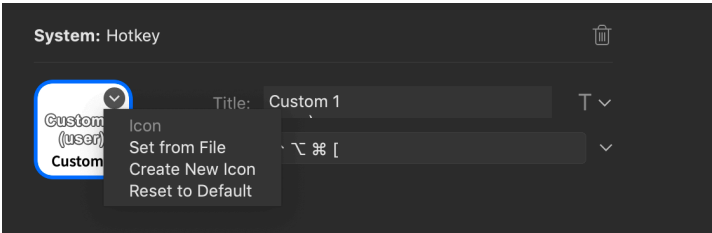

A **Custom demo** folder is provided on the Home screen, as an example of a folder set up for a particular project that uses functions from several folders.

XL **Setting custom articulations**

Sibelius allows you to define three custom articulations in your document in addition to the standard ones. To do this, follow the directions in the Sibelius Reference, section **4.22 Articulations**.
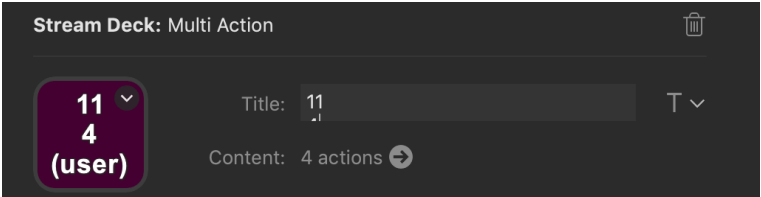
Once you define these articulations, you can quickly use them in Notation Express XL. The shortcuts are already programmed for you, but if you like, you can change the title to remind you of the articulation you defined, or even replace the icon with one you design yourself.
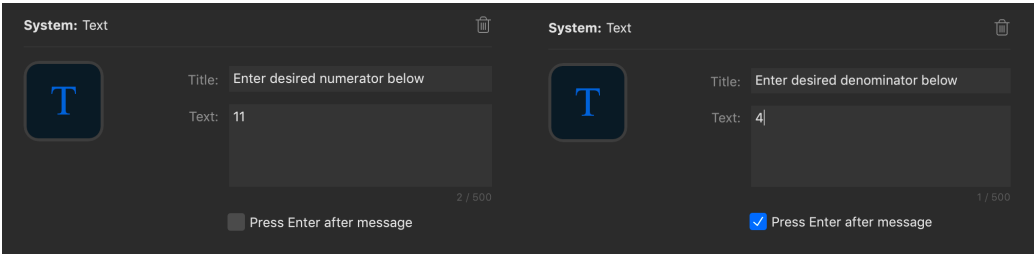

XL **Setting custom time signatures**

Notation Express XL includes the most popular time signatures, but you can easily program many more, using the provided buttons.

To do this, first change the **Title** field to display your desired time signature:
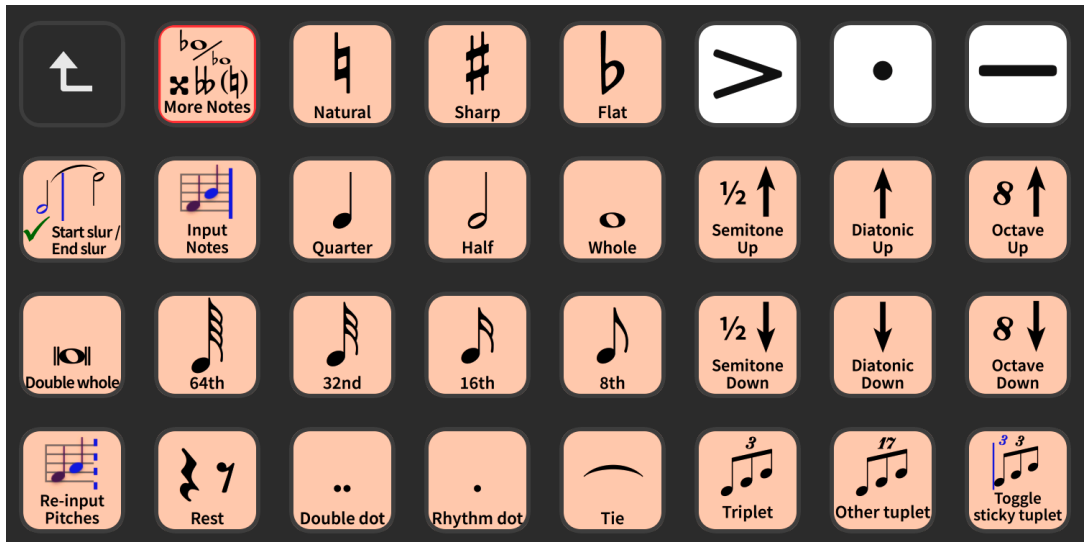

Then click on the right arrow to customize the **Multi Action** sequence. Specifically, enter your desired numerator and denominator, replacing the placeholder **X** and **Y** values.

XL *The Notes folder*

The **Notes** folder is significantly different in Notation Express XL. Not only does it include the most common functions used when entering notes, it includes the most common articulations.

XL *Keypad & Keyboard*

The **Keypad & Keyboard** folder includes a full numeric keypad as well as other keys not easily found on a laptop or small keyboard. This can be useful if you need to use these keys but don't have a full-size keyboard handy.

XL *Subito dynamic*

The **sub.** button (located in the **Dynamics** folder) works in a unique way compared to the other functions. It is designed to be applied to a dynamic that is already selected. This way, you can, for instance, press the **ff** button to create *ff*, then immediately press the **sub.** button to modify that dynamic, creating a singular *ff sub.* item in your score. Try it!

More information and updates

Notation Express: http://notationexpress.com
Stream Deck: https://www.elgato.com/en/gaming/stream-deck
Stream Deck Mobile: https://www.elgato.com/en/gaming/stream-deck-mobile