

Kick-Ass Brass!



VIRTUAL HORN SECTION PLUG-IN LIBRARY GUIDE

Foreword

"Thank you for purchasing this AMG Kick-Ass Brass! Virtual Instrument plug-in! It may not apply but we probably also owe you our thanks for your patience too as this instrument has been a long time coming and many of you have probably been using one of the native versions of this library since it's initial release in 2001. What our existing users know however is what you are about to discover if you're new to Kick-Ass Brass! - it's been well worth the wait!"

AMG's roots have always been very firmly set in loop-based sample libraries since our inception in the late 80s. Although our libraries always shared a hallmark of quality usually reserved for more 'high brow' developers interested in imitating real-World instruments, our interests always lay in innovating and inspiring using performance loops. It was partly because we got our buzz from doing a particular library well and then being able to switch tack and tackle something completely different to always keep things fresh. However I have to admit it might partly have been that we always thought trying to create the 'perfect piano' was just impossible as everyone always had their own idea what that actually sounded like. We managed to maintain this MO for a dozen years or so, until we first heard what later became Kick-Ass Brass! The first time we heard this library on an Akai S5000 we knew that this was the library to change all that.

What's happened since has proved these first impressions were dead right. Not only has Kick-Ass Brass! received universal acclaim in the music press, including a 5-star review from Sound On Sound, but more importantly we've never had a single customer come back with anything but the highest praise. Not that we're deluded enough to think Kick-Ass Brass! is the 'perfect brass' library, actually far from it, it has a rawness that makes it what it is - not only an authentic-sounding horn library but one with balls!

Despite spending painful years evolving the library from its birthplace on the Akai with its multi-adjustable tuning settings to more contemporary softsampler formats it was the obvious candidate for a plug-in even though it meant that it made all the previous incarnations redundant. The opportunity to make one, new, improved, definitive version of Kick-Ass Brass! was irresistible! Two years later and it's finally done! It could, should and would have been sooner but the results justify the time taken and this ultimate incarnation of Kick-Ass Brass! will be used all over the World for many years to come - although it sounds so good most people will never realise it!

There are plenty of great 'orchestral' brass libraries out there but despite the 'copy cats' trying to rush release modern brass libraries to rival Kick-Ass Brass! all they've managed to achieve so far are the usual inferior, derivative efforts that only serve to underline how good this library really is. So, despite its late arrival, you still have something very unique here. Kick-Ass Brass! has an innovative and inspiring quality typical of any AMG release making it a worthy of its place in our evolution as AMG's very first virtual instrument."

2. Introduction

You are about to discover the library we believe to be the highest quality and most relevant to modern music on the market today!

The library is based around the 5 key brass instruments used in modern horn section line-ups:

Bb Trumpet - Taylor London Standard Model

Alto Sax - Selmar Super 80 II

Tenor Sax - Selma Super 80 II

Baritone Sax - Selmar Super 80 II

Trombone - Conn 88h

All the instruments have been pristinely recorded in a dead room with little or no ambience using a Neumann U89, Neve Pre-amp and edited in Protools for a true and natural sound. Some of the samples have been looped where necessary.

3. Instruments & Variations

Having a choice of instruments allows the user to create a variety of brass arrangement styles. Funky JB horns would use the tenor, alto and bone to create a funky, reedy sound (3 piece). Modern soul horns would use trumpet, tenor and bone (3 piece). Fuller rock arrangements would sound best with four or even five. You pick the line-up you need for your track, you're in control!

As any one instrument can produce an infinite amount of different sounds and dynamics, we have concentrated on capturing only the sounds you'll need to faithfully reproduce a horn section. However there is enough choice of samples to program a sax, trombone, trumpet, or muted trumpet solo. There are an average of 17 different samples per note of each instrument, and we have sampled at least every tone (or semitone in some cases) of the full range of each instrument giving the user complete control of each instrument. The philosophy behind Kick Ass Brass is to give each user a natural and effective library which allows you to program detailed and complex brass arrangements utilising all the aspects of each instrument. A great deal of care has gone into the recording process of this library all instruments have been recorded without any processing to capture the true and natural sound of each instrument. Every effort has been made to make realism at the forefront of this library. Played as a unison section you can hear each instrument subtly shifting in and out of tune slightly which creates a natural chorus effect just as a real section would. To make all the tunings perfect using 'Autotune' would only detract from the realism that this library brings and would ultimately sound like something synthetic from a keyboard.

Each instrument is presented in a number of different variations and often in 'economy' versions that are cut down to reduce memory issues if necessary.

Main Program

Many of these variations are velocity switching. In the main program for each instrument there are 3 samples - MF, FF, and SLR or slurred notes. The SLR samples are in the medium velocity range (around 75-110). These samples may sound strange in isolation, but are intended to be slurred on to the end of the previous note. This allows you to run up a scale starting with a loud velocity and following with legato slurred notes in quick succession. The effect is very realistic. If you try this with the saxes, you can often hear the clicks of the keys being depressed. However if you start a new note or phrase with this type of sample it will sound odd as the natural attack part of the sound and breathiness will be missing.

Expression

These variations have a very funky and expressive sound, with a quick vibrato and a hard edge. It sounds particularly good on the saxes as a performance program in its own right!

Vibrato

This program is similar to the expression program, but with longer notes and a slightly softer tone. The vibrato is gradually introduced during the duration of the note.

Slides

These samples have a different type of attack. The note has been slurred up from the semitone below. It adds extra expression to a lick or phrase. Sounds fantastic on the saxes!

Stabs

These variations have short and long stabs x-switched. For extra punchy stabs, use these!

Rips and Falls

These variations consist of 3 different samples that have been x-switched at different velocities. The soft velocities produce a 'Rip' up the scale to the desired note. There are 2 different length of 'Falls' to select from using medium and hard velocities. Listen for the breath and key clicks on the saxes- Awesome!

Swells

We have recorded 5 different lengths of swells, so you should be able to find 1 that matches your tempo well. These are very exciting and the long swells are great for dark moods, or sinister suspense chords.

Ends

These variations are great notes for endings, usually sustained with vibrato followed by a fall. Don't forget you can use these samples anywhere, not just for endings!

Trills + Shakes

Off the wall trills and shakes on selected ranges of the instruments.

4. Sections

In addition to the variations of the individual instruments the Kick-Ass Brass! library also includes a number of sections that bring these together for you.

Ensemble Sections

These multis have been preset to help you write some simple horn arrangements very quickly and easily. There are some simple 2 octave brass ensembles where the trumpet has been typically voiced 1 octave higher than the trombone or saxes. For a really full sounding unison section we have included a 3 octave version where the trombone has been dropped an octave below the saxes. You can mix and match the instruments to create the brass sound you always dreamed of!

Solo Instrument Sections

To make the most out of Kick-Ass Brass! we would recommend using more than one instance of the plug-in and utilising the Solo Instrument multis. This allows you to program complex horn arrangements using different harmonies or voicings.

As each of these sections uses all 8 parts you will have instant access to almost all of the variations available to each instrument. This will give you the chance to program incredibly real sounding parts by switching between variations within a musical phrase. Try setting your VST instrument track to receive on all midi channels, record a phrase with your keyboard set to transmit on midi channel 1. Then you can bring the instrument to life simply by changing the midi channel of selected midi notes, allowing you to switch between the main program, expression, vibrato, slides, stabs, rips, falls and swells during a musical phrase. Experiment with the variations, have fun, and let your creative juices flow!

A typical horn arrangement might consist of Trumpet, Tenor Sax and Trombone. In this case you would need 3 instances of the plug-in running - e.g. Trumpet on instrument 1, Tenor on instrument 2 and Trombone on instrument 3.

Yet again, you can decide which combination of instruments to use, the only restriction being the amount of free memory available in your computer. Once the part is written you could 'freeze' the track or create an audio mixdown if memory is an issue, but remember we have included economy versions of the variations to help you too in case your situation requires this. Obviously, as time goes by and technology progresses, memory limitations are going to become less and less of an issue for most users.

5. Economy Variations

We have included economy versions of the variations to help with memory issues. They will help you when you are running the solo section in multiple instances of the plugin or when you are running out of 'free' memory. The economy variations span 2 octaves of the instruments' ranges. i.e. the top 2 octaves of the trumpet, and the bottom 2 octaves of the saxes and trombone. Details of all the variations key ranges are available from our website.

6. Memory

We recommend having 1 gigabyte of memory for best use of Kick-Ass Brass!, but you can make do with as little as 500 megabytes by using the economy variations. If you experience dropout or delays when playing of Kick-Ass Brass!, it will be due to the fact that your computer has run out of free memory and has started to use virtual memory. If you are having problems with memory, then start using economy variations.

5. Updates & Upgrades

We used some advanced data compression systems on this library but still had to omit some non-essential instrument variations from the final line-up. These might be made available to download from www.samples4.com at some point in the future so please visit regularly to see what's available. We also intend to offer new downloadable sections and possibly FX to expand your existing library as well. You're also welcome to submit any sections you create yourself and are particularly proud of for us to check out. Further down the line we might well be offering completely new instruments as upgrades in one form or another. Kick-Ass Brass! has taken years to evolve to this point and we plan to continue it's evolution for many more to come.

Kick-Ass Brass! Library Listing

116 Instrument Variations

Alto Sax (E Expression) - C#3-C#5
Alto Sax (E Full Program) - C#3-D5
Alto Sax (E Slides) - F3-C#5
Alto Sax (E Swells 1) - E3-C#5
Alto Sax (E Swells 2) - E3-C#5
Alto Sax (E Swells 3) - E3-C#5
Alto Sax (E Swells 4) - E3-C#5
Alto Sax (E Swells 5) - E3-C#5
Alto Sax (E Vibrato) - C#3-C#5
Alto Sax (Ends) - D4-D#6
Alto Sax (Expression) - C#3-Bb5
Alto Sax (Full Program) - C#3-D6
Alto Sax (Mixed Stabs) - C#3-C#6
Alto Sax (Rips+Falls) - F#3-G#6
Alto Sax (Shakes) - E5-D6
Alto Sax (Slides) - D3-F6
Alto Sax (Swells 1) - E3-Bb5
Alto Sax (Swells 2) - E3-Bb5
Alto Sax (Swells 3) - E3-Bb5
Alto Sax (Swells 4) - E3-Bb5
Alto Sax (Swells 5) - E3-Bb5
Alto Sax (Vibrato) - C#3-C#5
Baritone Sax (E Expression) - C2-C4
Baritone Sax (E Full Program) - C2-C4
Baritone Sax (E Slides) - C#2-C4
Baritone Sax (E Swells 1) - C2-C4
Baritone Sax (E Swells 2) - C2-C4
Baritone Sax (E Swells 3) - C2-C4
Baritone Sax (E Swells 4) - C2-C4
Baritone Sax (E Swells 5) - C2-C4
Baritone Sax (E Vibrato) - C2-C4
Baritone Sax (Ends) - C3-G#4
Baritone Sax (Expression) - C2-C4
Baritone Sax (Finish) - C3-A4
Baritone Sax (Full Program) - C2-A4
Baritone Sax (Mixed Stabs) - C2-G#4
Baritone Sax (Rips+Falls) - D2-G#4
Baritone Sax (Slides) - C#2-A4
Baritone Sax (Swells 1) - C2-A4
Baritone Sax (Swells 2) - C2-A4
Baritone Sax (Swells 3) - C2-A4
Baritone Sax (Swells 4) - C2-A4
Baritone Sax (Swells 5) - C2-A4
Baritone Sax (Vibrato) - C2-A4
Mute Trumpet (Expression) - E2-Bb4
Mute Trumpet (Falls) - E2-Bb4
Mute Trumpet (Full Program) - E2-D5
Mute Trumpet (Rasps) - Bb2-A4
Mute Trumpet (Vibrato) - E2-Bb4
Mute Trumpet (Vibrato 2) - E2-D5
(Please note that the Vibrato 2 variation is played with a different mute and will sound slightly different from the other muted trumpet variations. It is a performance patch on its own and is not intended to be programmed alongside the others.)
Tenor Sax (E Expression) - Bb2-G#4
Tenor Sax (E Full Program) - G#2-G#4
Tenor Sax (E Slides) - D3-G#4
Tenor Sax (E Swells 1) - E3-G#4
Tenor Sax (E Swells 2) - E3-G#4
Tenor Sax (E Swells 3) - E3-G#4
Tenor Sax (E Swells 4) - E3-G#4
Tenor Sax (E Swells 5) - E3-G#4
Tenor Sax (E Vibrato) - Bb2-G#4
Tenor Sax (Ends) - B4-B5
Tenor Sax (Expression) - Bb2-G#4
Tenor Sax (Full Program) - G#2-G#5
Tenor Sax (Mixed Stabs) - G#2-Bb5
Tenor Sax (Rips+Falls) - F#3-E3
Tenor Sax (Shakes) - B4-C#6
Tenor Sax (Slides) - D3-G#4
Tenor Sax (Swells 1) - E3-Bb5
Tenor Sax (Swells 2) - E3-Bb5
Tenor Sax (Swells 3) - E3-Bb5
Tenor Sax (Swells 4) - E3-Bb5
Tenor Sax (Swells 5) - E3-Bb5
Tenor Sax (Vibrato) - Bb2-F#5

Trombone (E Expression) - E2-E4
Trombone (E Full Program) - E2-E4
Trombone (E Slides) - F3-E4
Trombone (E Swells 1) - E2-E4
Trombone (E Swells 2) - E2-E4
Trombone (E Swells 3) - E2-E4
Trombone (E Swells 4) - E2-E4
Trombone (E Swells 5) - E2-E4
Trombone (E Vibrato) - F3-E4
Trombone (Expression) - E2-D#5
Trombone (Full Program) - E2-E5
Trombone (Mixed Stabs) - E2-D#5
Trombone (Rips+Falls) - F3-D5
Trombone (Slides) - F3-D#5
Trombone (Swells 1) - E2-C#5
Trombone (Swells 2) - E2-D5
Trombone (Swells 3) - E2-D5
Trombone (Swells 4) - E2-D5
Trombone (Swells 5) - E2-D5
Trombone (Vibrato) - F3-C5
Trumpet (E Expression) - C#3-D5
Trumpet (E Hard) - C#3-D5
Trumpet (E Slides) - C#3-D5
Trumpet (E Soft) - C#3-E5
Trumpet (E Swells 1) - E3-C#5
Trumpet (E Swells 2) - E3-D5
Trumpet (E Swells 3) - E3-D5
Trumpet (E Swells 4) - E3-D5
Trumpet (E Swells 5) - E3-D5
Trumpet (E Vibrato) - C#3-C#5
Trumpet (Ends) - Bb3-C#5
Trumpet (Expression) - E2-D5
Trumpet (Hard) - E2-D5
Trumpet (Mixed Stabs) - E2-D5
Trumpet (Rips+Falls) - F3-D#5
Trumpet (Slides) - E2-C5
Trumpet (Soft) - E2-C5
Trumpet (Swells 1) - E2-C#5
Trumpet (Swells 2) - E2-D#5
Trumpet (Swells 3) - E2-D#5
Trumpet (Swells 4) - E2-D#5
Trumpet (Swells 5) - E2-D#5
Trumpet (Trills) - D#4-C#5
Trumpet (Vibrato) - E2-C#5

15 Sections

4 Piece 3 Oct
4 Piece Section 1
4 Piece Section 2
Alto (Economy)
Alto
Baritone (Economy)
Baritone
Muted Trumpet
Saxes
Tenor (Economy)
Tenor
Trombone (Economy)
Trombone
Trumpet (Economy)
Trumpet

44 FX Programs

Very Long Delay
Big Room
Cathedral
Church
Crazy Dub 3
Crazy Dub 4
Crazy Dub 2
Crazy Dub 1
Doubler
Fast Rotor
Heavy Flange
Large Hall
Long Delay 2
Long Delay 1
Long Dub
Med Delay
Medium Chorus
Medium Dub
Medium Flange
Medium Hall
Medium Room
Mild Chorus
Mute 1
Mute 2
Mute 3
Mute 4
Mute 5
Mute 6
Mute 7
Short Delay 2
Short Delay 1
Short Dub 2
Short Dub 1
Slap delay
Slow Flange
Slow Rotor
Stereo delay 1
Stereo Delay 2
Stereo delay 3
Stereo Delay 4
Thick Chorus
Thick Flange
Tiled Room
Tripler

Trumpets - Tom McNiven

Saxes - Andor Jensen

Trombone - Alec Philips

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Support & Inspiration

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Matt @ AMG for his unrivalled support and vision.*

*AMG would like to add their thanks to the two STEVES for their great talent and hard
work and Dave at Muon for his sterling efforts and making it all possible.*

*We'd also like to dedicate 'our baby' to all our children, not only Byron & India but
especially Roberto who Dave produced faster than this plug-in and
Steve Cooke's forthcoming bairn who almost did the same.*

*Londoners and their great City, the many friends we left in the UK
and our new ones in the States who helped us survive this last year.*

Health, Happiness and Peace in this crazy World.