USER MANUAL

SSD 5.5

SLATE AUDIO

Steven Slate Drums 5, or SSD5.5 is the next generation of virtual drum plugins. It consists of a drum sampler and an instrument sample library.

SSD5.5 has a vast instrument library with over 400 instruments in it, ranging from acoustic drums, to percussion, to electronic drum samples.

Drum instruments are made up off 24bit multi-mic WAV samples packed into our proprietary format with revolutionary lossless compression. This allows us to decrease the size of instruments up to 3 times by saving Hard Disk space and RAM.

SSD5.5 Drum Instruments have up to 24 smoothly changing velocity layers, which are drum hits sampled from softest to hardest hits, and up to 12 alterations (round-robin hits). Round-robin are multiple hits within one velocity layer. The purpose of alternating hits is to make the samples sound more realistic and natural. Typically with alternating hits it's impossible to detect sampled drums, because the hits are not repeating, eliminating the common "Machine-Gun" effect. The "Machine-Gun" effect is the most common complaint regarding using sampled drum instruments.

In addition to our very detailed drum samples, SSD5.5 sampler is the only sampler on the market with intelligent playback, which is physically modelled after real life acoustic drums and drumming. While all other virtual drums use the classic approach to samples playback called the "polyphonic playback", which is just samples playing independently and stacking up until they reach polyphony voice limit, the SSD5.5 sampler models the behaviour of real drum kit. Samples in SSD5.5 interact with each other and do not stack up like they would in polyphonic playback. Every new hit depends on all the previous hits and on what kit pieces are playing at the moment.

Depending on the type of drum and library, the SSD5.5 instruments may have different amounts of mics in each instrument. For example, the Deluxe 2 library has up to two direct mics per shell. This means:

The Kick would have "Kick In" and "Kick Out" samples, and the Snare would have "Snare Top" and "Snare Bottom" samples, etc

The SSD5.5 instrument library has different categories, including instruments from previous versions of Steven Slate Drums, so users can always have access to their favourite sounds, even from first versions of Steven Slate Drums

- **SSD 5.5 Designer:** Designed by the man himself, Steven's Designer drum kits are the multi-stylist's secret weapon. These kits feature Steven's OG One-Shot snare samples

that have been used in top records for over a decade. These 13 new Designer presets include both vintage and modern kits, some of which include Steven's famous OG One-Shots. Many of the samples featured in these kits have been processed with vintage analog gear, allowing them to sound great out of the box.

- **SSD5 Deluxe 2**: These are the most detailed instruments with more velocities, alternating hits and articulations. A wide array of improvements have been implemented from previous versions of Steven Slate Drums. The samples are unprocessed with the exception of slight EQ and compression. All the overheads are unprocessed (except for a mellow highpass). The room mics are only processed with light and subtle compression as well as a gentle mid cut, which allows them to sit much better in the mix. Aesthetically, the drum samples can be thought of as much more raw, rather than processed.
- **SSD5 Deluxe 1**: The sample pack recorded for SSD4. They were the first Steven Slate samples with almost no processing. The only processing is a small mid cut in some of the samples.
- **SSD5 Classic Vol.1 and Vol.2**: The old Steven Slate samples. Unlike newer samples, they don't contain overhead mics. They contain one mono direct mic, and one stereo room mic. The samples are fairly heavy processed, however, they provide a lot of room to sculpt and shape their sound.
- **SSD5 Classic Signature**: Older Steven Slate Drums samples with similar characteristics as Vol.1 and Vol.2, however these drum tones are significant in the fact that they are modelled after famous drum sounds that can be recognized on various hit records.
- **SSD5 Electronic**: A set of SSD5 samples that consist of electronic drum sounds.

Sampler

The SSD5.5 Sampler is a simple, powerful, and effective drum sampler for the SSD5.5 sample library.

The sampler has two global sections (Pic 1):

1. **Navigation**: Switch sections as well as do some basic operations. There is also a display for memory usage and Snare Mode
2. **Functional Controls and Settings**: For some sections the right panel will be split into a top and bottom section, where top may have browser, or functional controls for

instruments mics and articulations, and bottom panel, which displays virtual drum kit, or mixer depending on the section selected at the moment.

Pic 1 (SSD5 Sampler)

Operation

- **Drag-and-Drop** to load instruments into pads and virtual drums and to remap in drop MIDI grooves to DAW from the groove player.
- **Double-Click** button to load kit preset, or to reset a control (such as knob, or fader)
- **Right-Click** on the virtual drums to remove instruments.
- **^⌘+Left-Click** (Cntl-Cmd+Click) virtual instrument to remove instrument. Additionally for knob/fader fine-tune as well as selecting groups of faders in Mixer. It can also be used on the ADSR screen to copy mics settings.
- **⌥+Left-Click** (Alt+Left Click) to reset controls such as knobs, or faders. It can also be used on the ADSR screen to paste mics envelope parameters.

Create

The top section contains the SSD5.5 sample browser. The bottom section displays the virtual drums graphic (Pic 2).

Pic 2 (Construct Kit)

1. **Instruments and Kits**: Switches the view in the browser between individual SSD5.5 Instruments, and entire Kit Presets.
2. **Refresh**: This refreshes your library. If you install a new expansion pack or add grooves and are not seeing the content in the browser, use the refresh icon to update your sample library.
3. **Audition**: When browsing on INST view, this allows auditioning the samples before they're loaded into the kit.

4. **Instrument and Samples:** This allows you to switch between instruments and samples (One Shots).

5. **Clear and Save**: Clear removes all instruments and samples loaded at the moment, resets the mixer, and will start from a default setting. Save saves your kit preset to recall it in other sessions or instances.

Note: Instruments such as Hi-Hats, and Rides are very large files. Loading time is dependent upon disk speed.

Loading Individual Instruments: Drag instruments from the browser and drop them onto the desired virtual drum, or side slot. SSD5.5 includes a vast array of drum samples. Using blending and layering allows for an infinite number of possibilities. For example, blending two different Snares will create the equivalent of new Snare sound. It's very easy to layer drums with SSD5.5 even if they are from different expansion packs.

| LIBRARY	Inst	Kits	⟲	DRUM TYPE	DRUM NAME	🔊
Blackbird				01 Kicks	Snare Gth 5 GSS	
Chris Lord–Alge				02 Snares	Snare Lwg 5 BLA	
David Bendeth				03 Toms	Snare Lwg 5 LBR	
SSD 5 Classic Signature				04 Hats	Snare Pearl 5 CSM	
SSD 5 Classic Vol.1				05 Rides	Snare Pearl 6.5 MMC	
SSD 5 Classic Vol.2				06 Crashes	Snare Pmr 6 VSD	
SSD 5 Deluxe 1				07 Splashes	Snare Pmr 6 VTT	
SSD 5 Deluxe 2				08 Chinas	Snare Snr 6 ART	
SSD 5 Electronic				09 Percussion	Snare Snr 6 PLS	
SSD 5 OG One Shots				10 Sfx	Snare Tma 6.5 SCM	
Terry Date						

Pic 3 (Inst Browser)

Preset Kits: SSD5.5 includes a wide variety of pre-mixed, fully assembled, diverse preset kits. To load a preset kit into SSD5.5, double click on the desired Kit Preset.
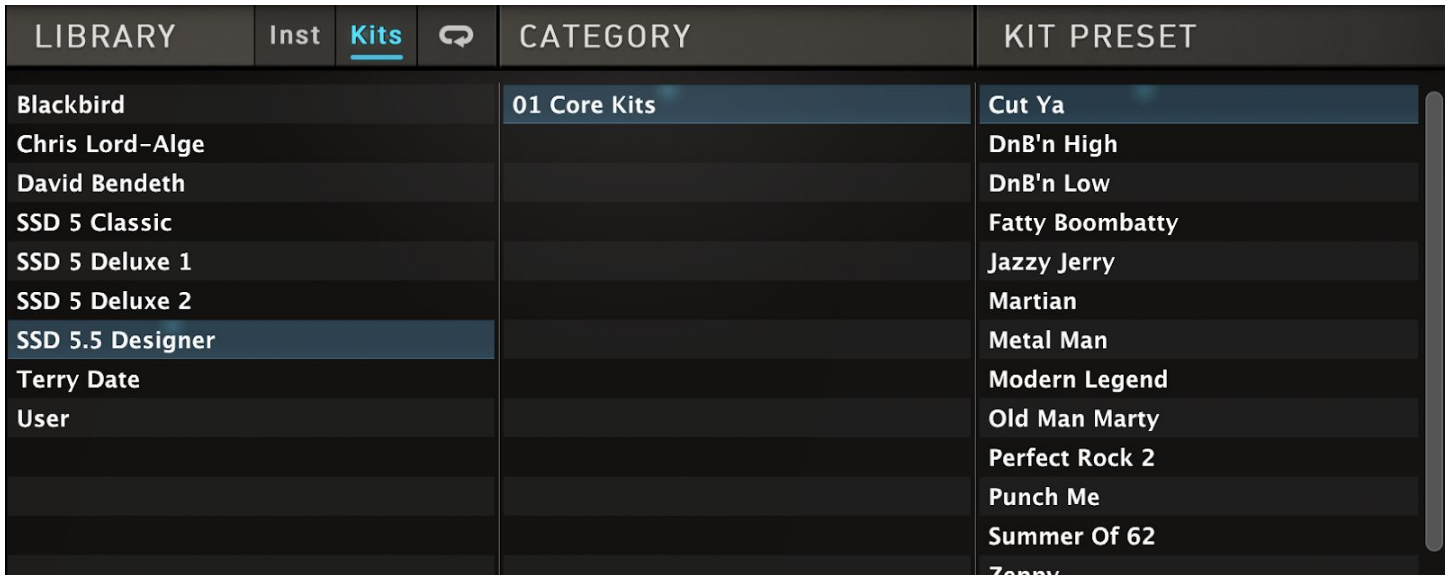
Pic 4 (Kit Browser)

One Shot Samples: SSD5.5 can load 16 and 24 bit 44.1 kHz WAV files. The OneShotSamplesData folder is automatically selected as your SSD5.5 includes two preinstalled WAV samples. Additional folders with your own One Shot WAV samples can also be added. One-Shot samples are displayed by selecting "Samples" on the left side menu (#4 in Pic 2).
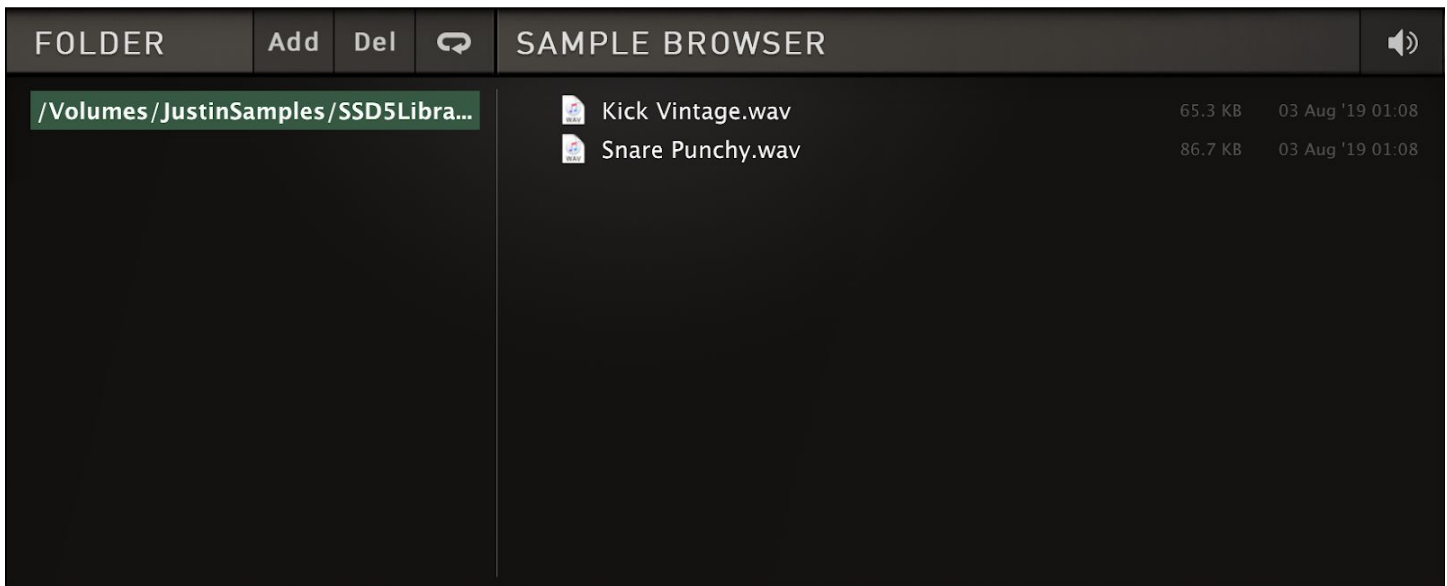
Pic 5 (Samples Browser)

WAV samples can be dragged and dropped in a similar fashion as SSD5.5 Instruments. Samples can be loaded in the pads located under the browser. It's very important to remember that after a One Shot sample is loaded, they'll need to be mapped to their corresponding MIDI notes in the Articulation panel, and not in the Map section. Refer to the Map section (Articulation Mapping) for more information.

Edit

Pic 6 (Edit Instrument)

To edit the Instrument, select the instrument below on the virtual drum kit or side slots. The name of the instrument and an image of the virtual drum will be displayed in the left corner of the top panel (Pic 7).

Pic 7 (Instrument Adjustments)

1. **Instrument Volume:** This parameter adjusts the volume of the entire instrument. When an Instrument is adjusted in the Mix section, only the ability to change volume is possible, not the volume of all the mics in one particular instrument. This setting helps you adjust the volume of the entire Instrument.
2. **Instrument Tune:** Changes the pitch of the selected instrument.
3. **Instrument Phase:** Flips the phase of the entire Instrument. This gives you more flexibility when setting up phase.

*NOTE: With other similar products, users only have the possibility of flipping phase only on select microphones, such as direct microphones, OH or Room. This flips the phase of **all** the instruments at the same time. SSD5.5 allows phase adjustment on individual microphones.*

Articulations

Pic 8 (Articulations)

Articulation Name: This section displays the name of the current articulation. By clicking on an articulation name, the articulation is auditioned. The articulation is also auditioned at different velocities depending on the location in which the name bar is clicked. The articulation is *softer* on the left side, and *harder* to the right.

Articulation Volume: Adjusts the volume for each articulation separately. This option allows for fine tuning for the volume of any articulation available in the instrument, such as the Hi-Hat *pedal*, or the Snare *Sidestick*.

Dynamics
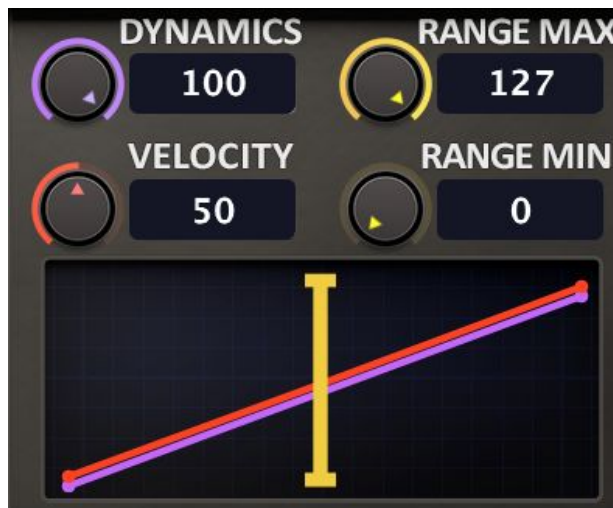
Pic 9 (Dynamics)

Dynamics: Allows adjustment of the volume spread between *soft* hits and *hard* hits. This allows quick control of the volume intensity of soft hits samples without adjusting the physical MIDI velocity values within the MIDI region in the timeline. This flexible feature allows for quick modification of dynamic perception while mixing.

Velocity Curve: The Velocity Curve shifts the velocity inside the plugin after receiving data from your MIDI track. It aids in adjusting the velocities that are being triggered.

*Example: A Velocity value of **50** provides the exact velocities for 0-127 (64=64 and 112=112). At a Velocity value of **80**, the MIDI velocity **64** on your MIDI track will be ≈ **85** in SSD5.5 and will trigger the intensity **globally** across the articulations for the instrument.*

Range Max/Range Min: Determines the *hardest* and *softest* allowed velocity in the instrument that can be triggered. This can help you adjust the character of the instrument and tailor it to the specific genre, or style.

Example: When searching for a gentle vintage sound, set "Range Max" to 105. This forces the instrument to scale back louder hits above 105 to a maximum velocity of 105 (127=105) . The same applies in the opposite direction if you set the "Range Min" to 35, your intensity will be scaled a bit higher (0=35). Limiting the velocity range will not decrease dynamic range. The samples' volume will be scaled accordingly, preserving the entire dynamic range of the mic.

Microphone panel
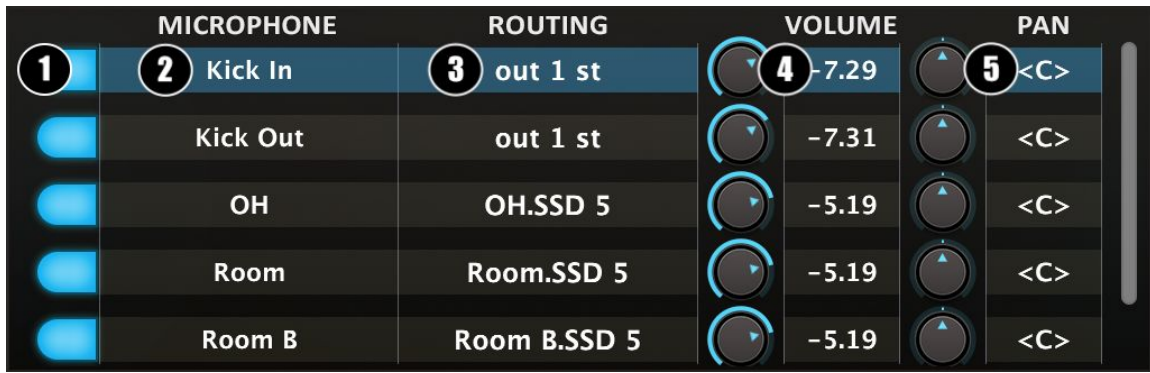
Pic 10 (Microphone section)

1. **On/Off**: Enables or disables the individual articulation.
2. **Name**: Name of articulation inside the instrument. Clicking the name will highlight the articulation in brown.
3. **Routing**: You can adjust the routing of individual mics. This will open up the possibility of sending various instruments into various Slate Rooms or seperate outputs to adjust individually throughout your DAW via Multi-Out (see Mixer Routing).
4. **Volume:** Corresponds to individual microphone volume.
5. **Pan:** Adjusts the proportion between the left and right channel in the stereo field.

ADSR

ADSR (**A**ttack, **D**ecay, **S**ustain, **R**elease) - The SSD5.5 Sampler is the *only* sampler currently on the market that allows the **curve shape** for *each* section of the curve to be adjusted. This

allows users to shape the sound of the instrument in *thousands* of different ways, opening up endless possibilities for sound design.
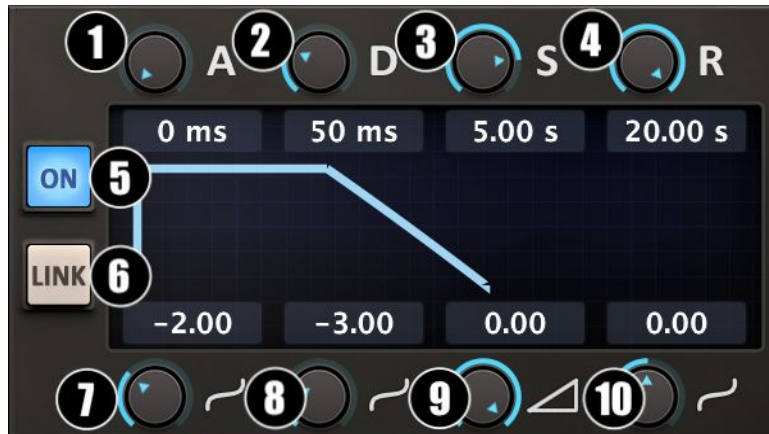
Pic 11 (ADSR Envelope)

1. **Attack:** Controls the Attack *time* on the instrument curve.
2. **Decay:** Controls the Decay *time* that shapes the signal before reaching the Sustain phase. Combining this with the Decay Curve setting allows users to shape drum sounds similar to transient processors, or compressors.
3. **Sustain:** Controls the *time* of the sustain.
4. **Release:** Controls the *time* of release; similar to using a fade out.
5. **On/Off:** Enables the ADSR envelope.
6. **Link**: Links all the mics. ADSR will be the same for all mics within the instrument.
7. **Attack Curve:** Controls the *shape* of the attack opening a wide array of possibilities.
8. **Decay Curve:** Controls the *shape* of the decay; similar to dynamic processors.
9. **Sustain Volume:** Controls the *volume* in the sustain phase.
10. **Release Curve:** Controls the shape of instrument release; similar to a fade out curve.

Note: ADSR settings can be copy and pasted from one instrument articulation to another. To copy the curve settings, hold ^ (Ctrl) and click on the curve display. Then the other instrument, hold ⌥ (PC-ALT) and click on the curve display to paste the settings. This manipulation copies and pastes the curve of all the mics in the original instrument, instead of just one microphone.

Mix

Pic 12 (Mix)

The Mix section allows you to easily mix and route your microphones into a DAW.

Select the desired mixer strip to view and edit the corresponding instrument. The top section of the Mix section mirrors the Edit section, displaying the same instrument editing parameters.

To select multiple mixer strips, select the strip headers while holding ^ (Ctrl).

The mix strips contain standard channel strip parameters that are seen in all popular DAWs:

Microphone Name
Library Name
Volume Fader
Pan Knob
Solo Button
Mute Button
Phase Flip

Routing Destination: Allows routing the instrument signal to multiple output sources. This utilizes the Multi-Out feature, which allows routing channels in SSD5 to individual channels in your DAW. Multi-Out allows access to external plugin processing in the DAW.

Aux Channels: Signal can be routed internally inside of SSD5.5 using Aux Channels. Aux Channels can be created and deleted using the "Add" and "Del" buttons.

Mix Color Coding
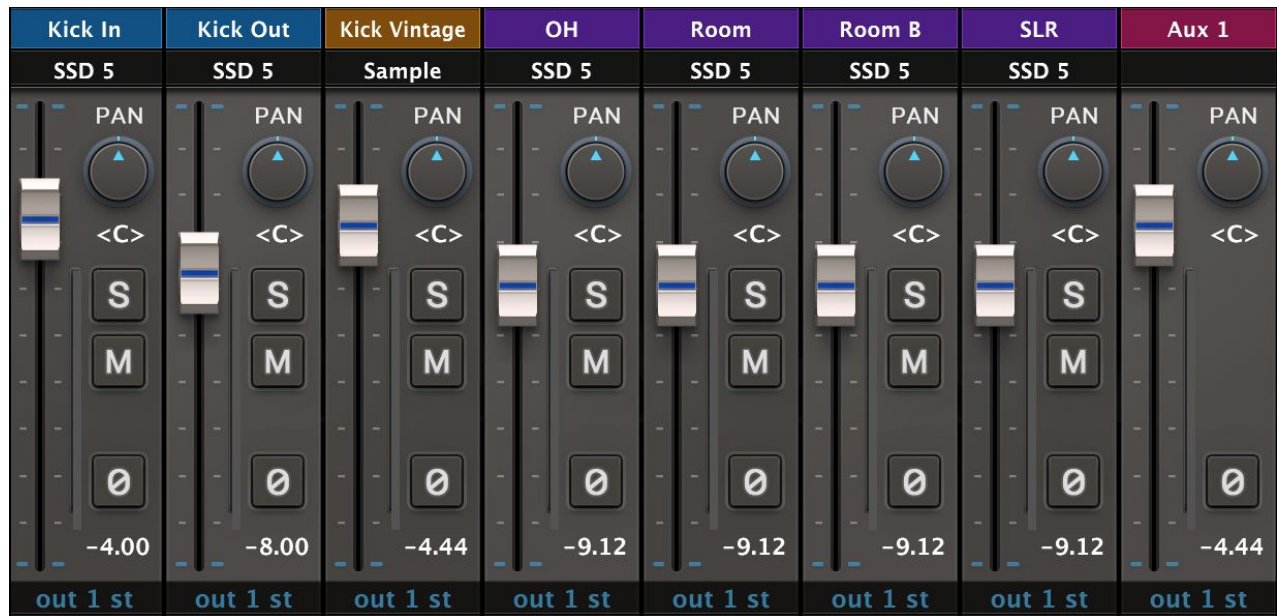
Pic 13 (Color Coding)

Blue	**Purple**
Direct/Close Mics	Ambient Mics
Gold	**Maroon**
One-Shot samples	Aux Channels

Mixer Routing

Routing can be achieved either manually, via selecting outputs for each mic, or automatically using Routing Presets. Using Multi-Out provides flexibility and unlocks the possibility to achieve the most powerful and detailed drum sound.

SSD5 has the possibility of 16 stereo and 16 mono outputs, for a total of 48 total routing channels. However, the track count is dependent on your DAW's limitations, such as Logic Pro X, which only allows for 16 individual outputs.

Manual Routing: Select on the output name on the bottom of each mixer strip, then select the desired output.

Routing Presets: Select the current routing preset, and choose the desired preset. (Pic 14)
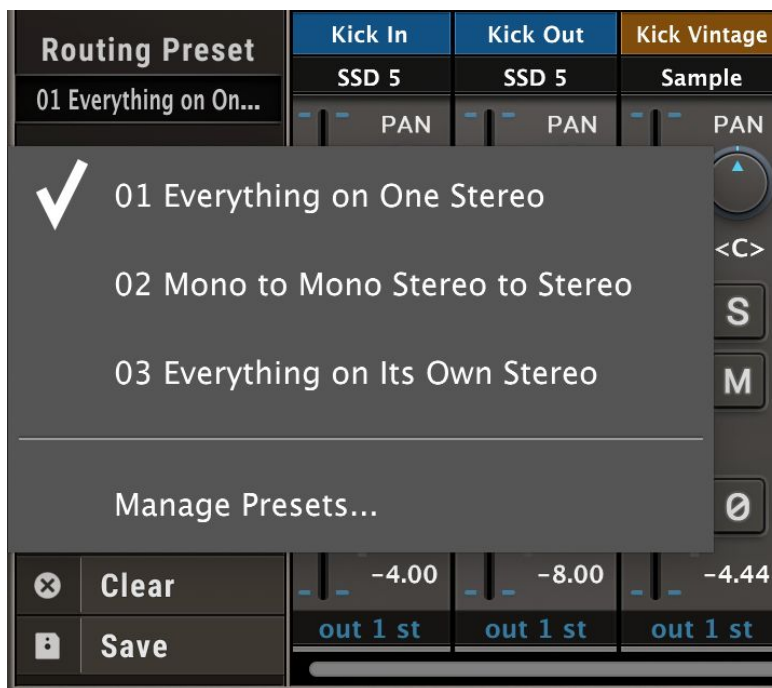
Pic 14 (Routing Presets)

Routing Preset: Select a desired preset, or choose "*Manage Presets…*". Routing presets can be saved and loaded using *"Manage Presets..."* in the Routing Preset dropdown menu.

SSD5.5 routing doesn't allow *just* the ability to route mics into the DAW, but *also* route them inside SSD5.5 as well. For example, if you're using primarily **Deluxe 2** instruments, *except* for the *Snare*, you'll have Room A and B available, while **Classic** and **Deluxe 1** instruments have just one room mic. If you have a snare sound consisting of Deluxe 1 and Classic samples, you can route the Deluxe 1 room channel into Room A and the Classic room into Room B using the Microphone panel.

SLR Channel: The bleed from the kick and toms into the snare bottom mic. It can be routed as you wish, but is routed by default into the same output as your direct snare mic, in order for all the bleed to be present (similar to real acoustic drums recordings).

Map

Pic 15 (Map)

MIDI mapping has been completely redesigned in SSD5.5 and has been simplified from previous versions. Mapping can be done in both the Map section, and the Articulation panel (found in both Mix and Edit sections). As explained below, mapping in each of these sections is used for different purposes and achieves different results.

Map: Mapping in the Map section will perform global MIDI mapping that will be applied to all kits and will not change when the kit is changed.

Articulation Panel: Mapping in the Articulation panel will apply MIDI mapping *only* to individual articulations, and exclusively applies to the current kit. Mapping in the Articulation panel will be reset when a new preset is loaded, or a new instrument is loaded in its place.

Map Section preset functions:

- **Factory Reset:** Resets mapping to factory default.
- **Set as Default:** This sets the current preset as default when a new instance of SSD5.5 is loaded.
- **Save Preset:** Save the current mapping preset.
- **Load Preset:** Loads a mapping preset.

Map Section

In the SSD5.5 Map section, articulations can be MIDI Learned, dragged and dropped, or manually set to a specific note.

Drag and Drop: Just as in previous versions of Steven Slate Drums, an articulation can be dragged and dropped to a different MIDI inside the Map section.

Right Clicking: Right clicking on a MIDI note or articulation allows modifying the MIDI note with a dropdown menu containing MIDI notes, or Articulation, depending on which section is right clicked.

If a MIDI note is right clicked in the "Note" section, a menu of articulations will appear, the articulation can be remapped to another artiucaltion's MIDI note.

If an articulation is right clicked in the "Articulation in SSD5" section, the articulation can be remapped using a flat list of MIDI notes

Stacking: When an articulation displays "(stacked)" at the end of its name, multiple articulations (with identical articulation names) from different instruments are currently mapped to the MIDI note. For example, if you have multiple Snare Center articulations loaded into SSD5.5, they will by default, be mapped to the same MIDI note, and will be "(stacked)". If

you wish to "unstack" the stacked articulations, this can be done by modifying the mapping in the Articulation panel, which is located in both Mix and Edit sections.

MIDI Learn: MIDI Learn is the newest feature in SSD5.5. To modify the mapping of an articulation with MIDI Learn, click "MIDI Learn" to the right of the desired articulation, and input the MIDI note on your MIDI controller that you wish to remap. When MIDI Learn is clicked, a dialog box will appear, indicating to trigger a MIDI note, and will disappear when a MIDI note is detected or when the "Cancel" button is clicked.
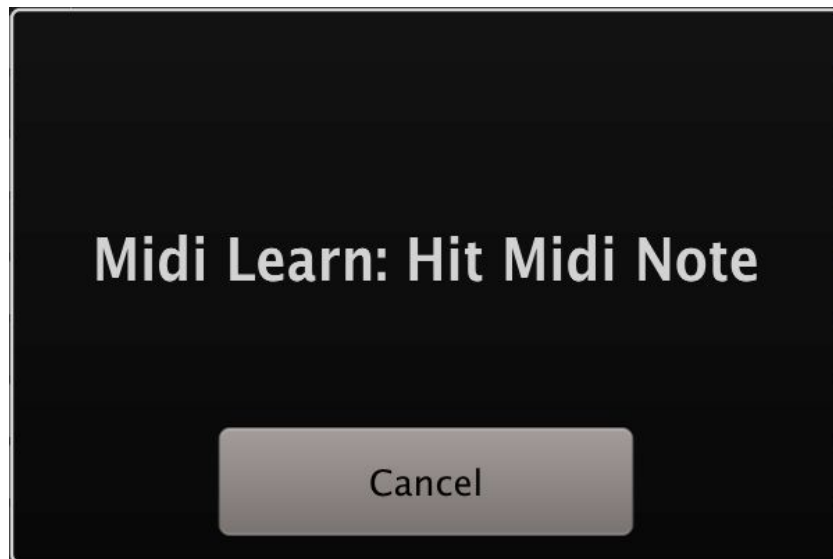
Pic 16 (MIDI Learn dialog)

Modified/Unmapped Notes: An articulation will be displayed either in Yellow, if it's been modified, or Red if another articulation was mapped on top of it, meaning it's no longer mapped to *any* MIDI note:

Articulation panel
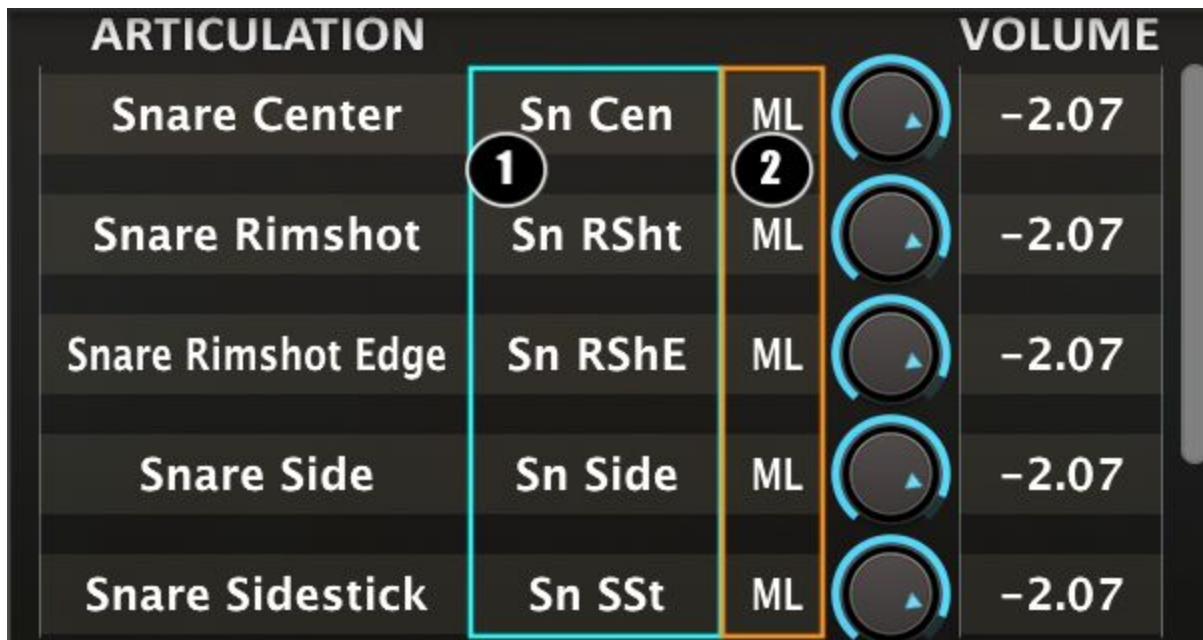
Pic 17 (Articulation mapping)

Individual Articulations can be remapped in respect to their corresponding Instrument in the Articulation panel.

1. **Manual Mapping:** Right click on the Articulation note to manually remap an articulation. When right clicked, an articulation menu (just like in Map) will appear.
2. **MIDI Learn Mapping:** Just as in Map, an articulation can be remapped using MIDI learn in the Articulation panel by clicking "ML". A MIDI Learn dialog will appear until a MIDI note is detected, or until "Cancel" is clicked.

Note: One Shot samples *must* be mapped in the Articulation panel, as they're not intended to be mapped in the Map section.

Grooves

Pic 18 (Grooves)

The **Grooves** section of SSD5 will assist you in creating the *perfect* drum track.

The SSD5.5 Core library contains 10 different styles to choose from, as well as a collection of basic grooves. Grooves are broken down to song sections, such as *Intro, Verse, Chorus, etc..*

Playback section

- **Follow Host:** Syncs the groove to the tempo and grid of your DAW and allows the groove player to playback when your DAW is in playback mode.
  Note: Grooves will not playback when "Follow Host" is enabled while your DAW is not in playback mode.
- **Autoplay:** Plays back the groove when selected
- **Play:** Plays the selected groove
- **Stop:** Stops the currently playing groove
- **Loop**: Loops the current groove
- **1/2x:** Toggles groove playback at half speed
- **1x**: Toggles groove playback at normal speed
- **2x**: Toggles groove playback at double speed
- **Dynamics:** Adjusts the overall dynamics of the selected groove

Grooves can also be dragged and dropped into your DAW's timeline for additional editing and arranging.

Note: Speed and Dynamics applies to playback, as well as to MIDI velocities, when dragged and dropped into your DAW's timeline.

3rd Party Grooves: 3rd party grooves can be used inside SSD5.5. To load your own grooves, or grooves from another drum library, follow the included folder hierarchy by adding .lib ->.sng -> .prt as shown below:
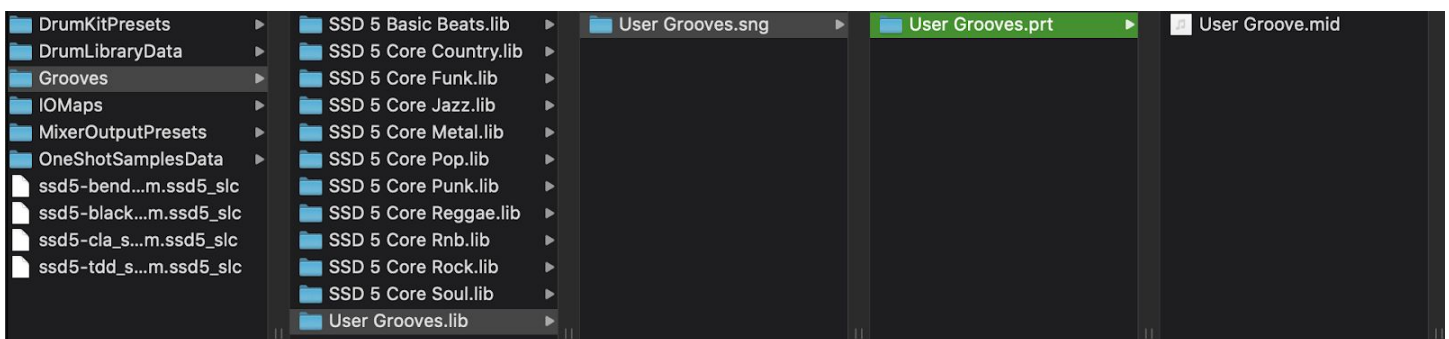
Pic 19 (User Grooves)

Settings

Pic 20 (Settings)

1. **View**: Select between Cells View and Kit View. Cells View displays virtual drums as in which you can load instruments. Kit View displays a virtual drum kit with Kick, Snare, Toms (4), Hi-Hat, Splash, Crashes (2), Ride and a China. On either side of the virtual drum kit in Kit View, there are 20 additional slots (10 on each side) for loading additional SSD5.5 instruments.
2. **Version Number**: Displays the version of the SSD5.5 Sampler.
3. **Base Directory**: Manually select the folder that contains your SSD5Library folder. This is done automatically in the Slate Audio Center.
4. **License Files**: The SSD5.5 Sampler houses all of our expansion packs. Our expansion packs come with personalised license files. Your license files will be automatically downloaded from the Slate Audio Center and linked here.

5. **Drumkit Detail**: Determines the number of alterations (or round robin hits) will be utilized into your RAM for each instrument. The purpose of this setting is to save memory if needed.
6. **Resampling Quality**: Sets the quality of resampling while working in a sample rate other than 44.1 kHz. "Maximum" is recommended if CPU power is not an issue.
7. **Disk Streaming:** Allows the sampler to read the drum instruments from your hard drive, instead of fully loading them into your RAM. **Streaming Buffer Size** determines the amount of each instrument that is cached into memory. The disk streaming feature allows for saving memory, but is not recommended unless memory space is at a premium. Even with fast hard drive speeds, it is possible to have some sound drop outs due to high hard drive load.
8. **UI Scale:** Changes the size of the sampler interface, or GUI, to either 100%, 125% or 150%.
9. **Master Volume:** Determines the overall sampler's output volume.
    *Note: This setting is **not** saved in custom presets, and is **global** to every single instance of SSD5.5 (even in other sessions)*
10. **Ambient Mic Volume:** Determines the amount of ambient layering present in the audition path. Usually ambient mics will be much lower in volume than direct mics, but inside the instrument the mics are relatively similar in volume. Lowering their volume in this section lets you find the comfortable balance between direct mics and ambient mics for audition instruments in the browser.