

El Clapo

User's Manual



Intro

Thank you for installing El Clapo. This is our first in a series of sampling plugins. It is designed to give you full control over the sound of your clap tracks. With 3 different mic positions, and a whole bunch of layers, round robins and El Clapos, you can get realistic groups of any size.

System Requirements

Mac: 10.6 or higher
Windows: XP or higher

RAM: 2GB

Hard Drive Space: 150mb

Available Formats

This plugin is available in both 32 and 64 bit versions of each format (except RTAS, which is 32 bit only). It is available in the following formats:

Mac	VST2, VST3, AU, RTAS, AAX Native
Windows	VST2, VST3, RTAS, AAX Native

Installation

Windows: Download and run the installer. During the installation, you can choose which formats you would like to install.

Registration

The first time you run El Clapo, it will ask you for your username and serial number. You can find this information in your downloads page. If you do not have a serial number and you would like to demo the plugin you can press "Continue Trial" to use the plugin in trial mode.

Downloads page URL: <http://www.bozdigitallabs.com/my-account/downloads/>

Trial Mode

When El Clapo is in trial mode, you can use all of the plugin's functionality. The only difference is that it will not save its settings when you close and reopen the plugin. The preset save function is also disabled, but the default presets will still load.

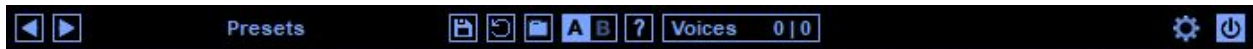
Background

El Clapo is the first in a series of sample plugins. It was born out of a sort of frustration of not being able to find a simple clap plugin that could be dialed in to sound the way I wanted it. Some clap samples sound great, but they are buried deep in larger percussion libraries, and they almost always seem to take a back seat to the rest of the samples. What started out as a simple plugin ballooned into what El Clapo is today; a complete factory for claps of any group size.

The Controls

For quick reference, El Clapo provides a short description of each control when you hover your mouse over any knob or button. This manual will give you a more in depth understanding of what these controls do.

Header Bar



Presets

El Clapo comes equipped with its own preset menu. To save a preset, just hit the 'Save' icon next to the preset menu, type the name of the preset and hit *enter*. If you enter a name of an existing preset, the old preset will be overwritten.

Presets can be organized into sub menus by sorting them into folders in your finder/explorer window. Note that the preset menu only supports one layer of sub folders, so if you put presets inside a folder that is inside a folder, the preset scanner will not find them.

Presets are shareable across formats, computers and operating systems. This means that if you save a preset in your DAW in OSX, you can send that preset file to a friend who uses a different DAW on Windows and it will work exactly the same.

Next to each preset control is a "Reset" button, which resets the controls to their default settings.

For convenience, you can scroll through the presets by hitting the next/previous buttons.

A/B Bank

This lets you quickly compare different settings in the plugin without losing your knob settings. As you make changes to the knobs on the plugin, those changes are saved into whichever bank is selected. Switch banks to change all the values to what is stored in the other bank. Note that

when you first open the plugin, all changes are stored to both banks until you switch banks for the first time.

Voices

This label shows how many voices are being played. It's broken up into two different labels, Raw and Generated. The raw label shows how many single raw clap samples are being played at once. As this number gets higher, the plugin will use more CPU. The number on the right shows how many generated samples are being played. This number will stay low in order to save CPU cycles.

Advanced

This will open up some advanced controls for adjusting behind the scenes settings.

Plugin Enable

This switch enables/bypasses the entire plugin. The plugin's background will turn dark when it is disabled. Nothing is worse than adjusting a knob and wondering why it isn't doing anything, only to find out the plugin is bypassed.

Note: There is a small delay introduced by El Clapo, which pretty much any modern DAW will compensate for. The plugin won't introduce strange comb filtering. When you bypass the plugin here, it will retain that delay and continue reporting the delay amount to your DAW. This makes it so you can switch the bypass on and off without the plugin popping as the DAW tries to realign the delay. This also means that there is an ever so slight amount of CPU power being used when this plugin is activated but bypassed with this switch. If you want to bypass the plugin completely, you can use your DAW's bypass switch.

Locating Samples

When installing, the plugin should save the location of the samples so that it knows where to look when it is opening. When loading, the screen will be dark and a message will show indicating that the samples are loading. It should take just a few seconds to load the samples.

If the plugin cannot find the samples, just click the "Locate Samples" button and browse to the folder on your computer where the samples are saved. Just select one of the samples (it doesn't matter which one) and the plugin will load the rest and save the location so it knows where to find them next time it opens.

The Engine

In order to be able to play back 150 samples with multiple mic positions, El Clapo needs to do some background work to prevent your CPU from getting murdered. As the crowd size gets larger, rather than just playing back a whole bunch of samples, El Clapo will build a new set of samples in the background. These new samples can be played back with very minimal CPU.

While the samples are being built, the sample building meter will be red, showing the progress. The plugin will still let you play claps while this is happening, but the CPU hit will be pretty heavy, especially if your crowd size is large. This allows you to preview the sounds as you adjust them, but if you need to preserve CPU, it's best to wait for it to generate the new samples.



MIDI Control

You can trigger the claps using MIDI. Any MIDI note below middle C will trigger the entire group clapping. Any note below middle C will trigger the same sound. Middle C and above will trigger single claps. Each of these claps are multi-layer, multi round robin, and each note plays a different clap sample.

When Velocity Mode is set to “Static” (see Advanced Controls), the velocity of the claps will be controlled by CC1 (modwheel). When set to “Velocity Sensitive” the velocity of the note will be controlled by the velocity of the MIDI.

Clap Button

The clap button lets you trigger the claps with a mouse click. The higher you press the button vertically, the louder the velocity of the clap will be.

Claps

This knob sets the number of El Clapos in the crowd, ranging from 1 - 150.

Slop

Determines how sloppy the El Clapos are. When set to 0%, all claps will trigger at the same time. As the slop goes up, more timing variation will be applied to each clap, making it sound more natural.



As the slop value gets higher, the number of clappers who clap before the beat also goes up. In order to make sure that quantized MIDI data doesn't slip behind the beat, delay compensation is reported to the DAW to make sure it stays on beat even when sloppy.

Note: nobody ever really wants to hear about it, so I'll write it up here. Getting the timing

distribution set up correctly was quite a bit more work than we expected. Just randomly applying delay to each clap did not sound natural. We put more work into determining how “off” people are when the clap than we thought should be necessary, but it was critical for getting the crowd to sound natural.

Mixer Panel

El Clapo was recorded from 3 different mic positions: Close, Mid, and Room. The Close and Room knobs let you control how much of each microphone is used.



Close

This is a mix knob that blends between the close mic and the mid mic. The close mic provides a stronger snap, while the mid mic gives a little bit of room ambience.

Room

This knob mixes between the stereo room samples and the close/mid blend.

Important: For a realistic sound, it helps to consider what kind of mic setup you would have for different crowd sizes. A single person, or even a small group of people, clapping close to a microphone is common. You can get a very natural sound using just a blend of the close and mid mics on a small group.

As the group size gets larger, a typical recording will no longer use spot mics, but will move the microphone farther back, and the mic blend in the plugin should reflect this. This is simple to test for yourself by bringing the crowd size to 50 people and setting it to purley close mic. It won't sound like a crowd, because you've probably never heard a crowd clapping when each person was 2 feet away from the microphone. As the crowd gets larger, you should put more emphasis on more distant mics if you are going for a natural sound.

Master

Output gain of the plugin.

Solo

The Close and Room mix knobs have solo buttons, which solo the channel. When a channel is

soloed, it's gain is brought up to 100%.

FX

This toggles the extra channel FX option for the close and room mics. The Close/Mid and Room channels both have a dedicated FX section with compression, eq and width control, for further dialing in your sound.

Compressor

The Compressor has all the standard compression controls. The threshold is controlled by the fader on the left. Attack, Release and Ratio knobs control how hard the compressor will work. The mix knob allows you to blend in the uncompressed sound with the compressed for parallel compression.

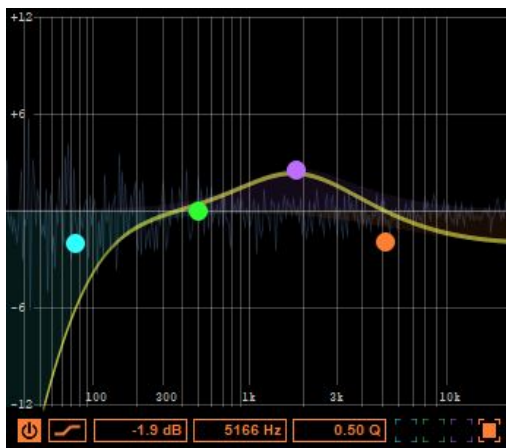


Width

Controls the stereo width of the channel.

EQ

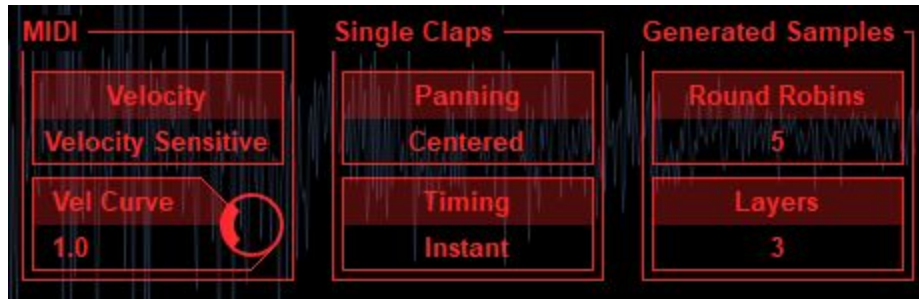
This 4 band Equalizer equalizes the current channel. The bands can be controlled by dragging the dots, or by adjusting the values in the bar below the EQ. You can select which band the bar represents by hovering over a dot, or selecting the band in the checkbox on the right.



Each band lets you choose between High Pass, Low Pass, Low Shelf, High Shelf, Bell, Bandpass and Notch.

Advanced Controls

The advanced controls can be shown by clicking the gear icon in the top right of the plugin.



MIDI

Lets you choose between Velocity Sensitive and Static Velocity. When set to “Velocity Sensitive,” the loudness of the clap will be controlled by the velocity of the MIDI note. It will also give you a “Velocity Curve” control. Set this to 1 for a linear mapping. Set it higher if you want louder claps even at lower velocities, and set it lower if you want quieter claps, even at higher velocities.

Single Claps

The single claps are the clap samples that are played when you play a note above middle C. When Panning is set to *Centered*, all the single claps will be panned to the center. When it is set to Panned, each clap will be panned randomly on the stereo field.

Timing

When set to instant, the single claps will play as soon as you send it MIDI data. When set to Sloppy, it will apply some timing variation when it receives MIDI data. This allows you to play multiple keys at once while retaining a natural sound.

Generated Samples

When you have larger sized crowds, El Clapo will generate a new set of multi-layer, round robin samples to cut down on the CPU required to play back a bunch of samples at once. These settings let you control how many round robins and layers these generated samples will have. In general, having more layers will make it sound more natural at different velocities, while having more round robins will prevent “machine-gunning.” In general, the more round robins and layers it has, the better it will sound, but the longer it will take to generate these samples.

Step Sequencer

Rather than using MIDI to trigger the claps, you can use the built in step sequencer to play back patterns.

Play Step Sequencer - When this switch is enabled, the live pattern will play back when your DAW is playing. The tempo will automatically sync with the tempo of your DAW, and sync to the measure of playback.

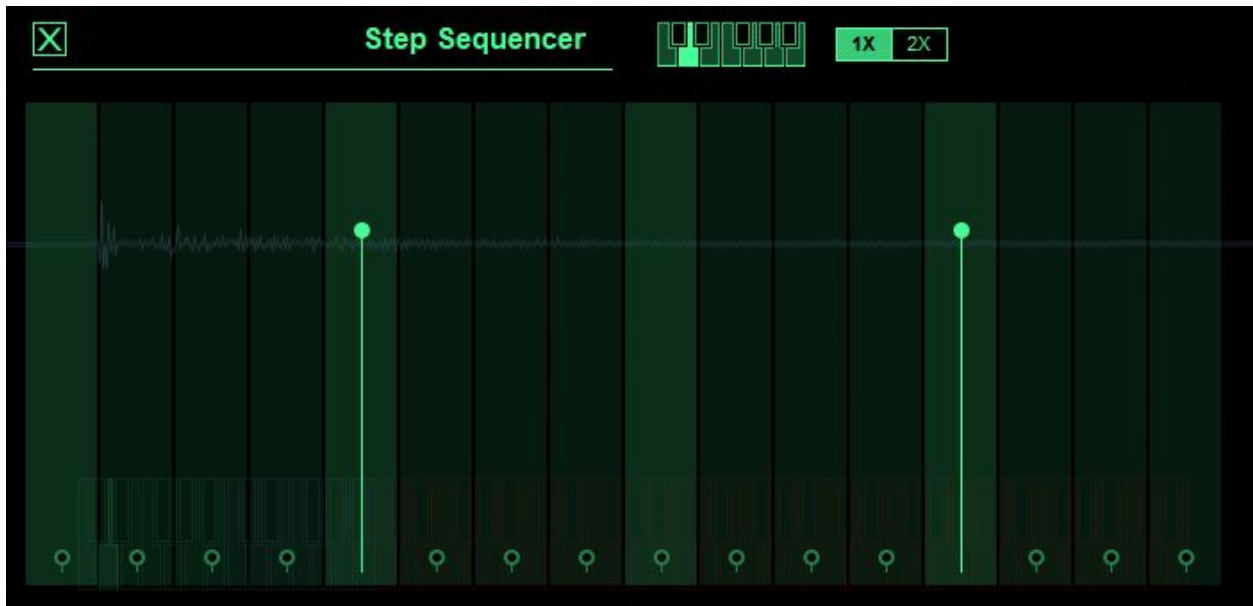


Show Step Sequencer - Click this button to show the step sequencer controls.

Pattern Chooser - MIDI notes C2-B2 let you choose between 12 different editable patterns. You can change these through MIDI, automating the control, or clicking on the small keyboard icon.

Speed - Choose between 1x and 2x pattern speed. At 1x, the pattern time will match up with the length of a single measure in your DAW.

For each pattern, you can adjust the velocity of each beat. Click and drag to adjust the velocity of each beat. To enable or disable a beat, just right click on the step.



Credits

Plugin concept and design: Boz Millar

Thank you

A quick thank you is in order for everybody who helped out making this plugin. Thank you to all of our beta testers who had to put up with all the changes we made since the first demo. A huge thanks to the CockOS team (<http://www.cockos.com/>) and Oliver Larkin (<http://www.olilarkin.co.uk/>) and Tale (<http://www.martinic.com/combov/>) for putting together a great set of tools for creating plugins, and putting up with all our stupid questions.

Contact

If you ever run into issues or have any questions, you can send an email to support@bozdigitallabs.com.

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