



AUTO-KEY 2

USER GUIDE

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Introducing Auto-Key 2



What is Auto-Key 2?

Auto-Key 2 is an automatic key, scale, and tempo detection plug-in, designed to enhance your Auto-Tune workflow and save valuable time in the studio.

After automatically detecting the key, scale, and tempo of your music, Auto-Key will send that information to one or more compatible instances of Auto-Tune.

What Kind of Audio is Appropriate for Auto-Key?

Auto-Key 2 is designed to analyze polyphonic (multi-voice) audio to determine its key, scale, and tempo information. For that reason, we don't recommend using Auto-Key directly on the vocal tracks you're planning to process with Auto-Tune, or on monophonic (single-voice) instrument tracks.

Instead, we recommend placing Auto-Key on your project's **master output bus, mix bus, or master stereo output** only.

Which Versions of Auto-Tune are Compatible with Auto-Key

Some versions of Auto-Tune, which were released before Auto-Key was developed, won't respond to messages from Auto-Key.

However, if you're using one of those versions, you can still use Auto-Key to detect the key of your music, but you'll need to manually set the Key and Scale parameters in that version of Auto-Tune.

Please visit [this](#) knowledge base article for a full list of Auto-Key compatible plug-ins.

Quick Start

Activation Instructions

Before we can use Auto-Key, we need to activate our license first using the Auto-Tune Central application. Please follow the steps below, or watch our [instructional video](#) to get started:

Step 1: Install Auto-Tune Central

Visit our website [here](#) to download the latest installer for Auto-Tune Central. After downloading, run the installer.

After installation is complete, you can find Auto-Tune Central in your computer's applications folder:

MacOS

/Applications

Windows

C:\Program Files\Antares Audio Technologies

Step 2: Open Auto-Tune Central and Log In

Enter your email address and password to log in.

If you purchased your plug-in or subscription through [antarestech.com](#), navigate to the "Plug-Ins" tab to install and manage your products.

If you purchased through a third party, please follow the steps below.

Step 3: Navigate to the Redeem a License Tab

In the top banner of Auto-Tune Central, select "Redeem a License." Enter your 25-digit registration code, then select "Redeem and Activate."

Step 4: You're all set!

Now you're ready to use Auto-Key 2 in your DAW! Navigate to the "Plug-Ins" tab to install and manage your products.

For the latest DAW Compatibility information, please visit [this page](#) on our website.

Step 5: Open Auto-Key In Your DAW

Below, you'll find instructions on how to insert Auto-Key onto a track in various compatible DAWs:

Pro Tools

Choose an empty insert slot on one of your audio tracks, instrument tracks, or buses. Then select Auto-Key from the pop-up menu in either the "Effects" Category or Antares Manufacturer list.

Logic Pro

Choose an empty insert slot on one of your audio tracks, instrument tracks or buses and select Auto-Key from the pop-up menu. You will find Auto-Key in:
Audio Units > Antares section (named Auto-Key 2).

Ableton Live

In either Session or Arrangement View, select the track you would like to place Auto-Key on by clicking the track name.

At the top left of Ableton's interface, click on the Plug-in Device Browser icon. From the plug-ins list, double-click Auto-Key, or drag it onto the track.

Cubase

Choose an empty insert slot, for example in the Mixer, and select Auto-Key from the menu that appears.

Studio One

Click the '+' button next to the Inserts tab of an audio track, and select 'Auto-Key 2' from the drop-down menu. Alternatively, drag and drop the plug-in from the Antares Effects folder.

Reaper

Click the 'FX' button next to the track name of an audio track, and select 'Auto-Key 2' from the EQ or Dynamics category.

Digital Performer

In the Digital Performer Mixing Board, click an empty insert slot to open the Insert Effects list. Select Auto-Key 2 from the list, or use the search bar to locate it quickly.

Overview of Detection Methods

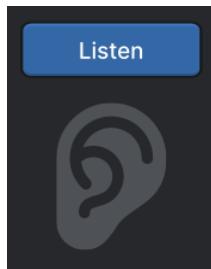
Auto-Key 2 features three detection methods visually laid out in individual columns. After detection is complete, you can send key and scale information to all compatible instances of Auto-Tune with the [Send to Auto-Tune](#) button.

In **Listen Mode**, Auto-Key will listen to incoming audio in real time, and is the default mode upon instantiation. This is the default mode in Auto-Key 2.

File Mode analyzes audio from a pre-existing file that you navigate to after clicking the 'Use File' button, or by dragging and dropping a compatible audio file into the Auto-Key plug-in window.

Manual Mode is for manually selecting the key and scale of your track from a dropdown menu. This is useful for instances where you already know the key and scale of your track, and want to quickly send that information to multiple instances of Auto-Tune at once.

Listen Mode



In **Listen Mode**, Auto-Key analyzes audio in real time. For best results, play back a portion of audio that best represents your track's primary chord progression.

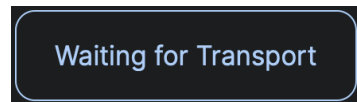
Step 1: Open Auto-Tune

Open one or more instances of Auto-Tune in your project. Be sure that Auto-Key detection is enabled for each instance.

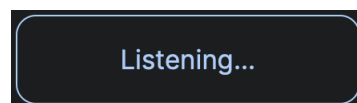
Some plug-ins have an Auto-Key option in their Preferences, while others contain a dedicated Auto-Key button in their GUI.

Step 2: Open Auto-Key

Open an instance of Auto-Key on the master output bus.



When Auto-Key is loaded and in Listen Mode, you will see the plug-in display "waiting for transport" until you start playback.



While Auto-Key analyzes the audio, the plug-in will display a message that says "Listening...".

Once the detection is complete, the **Central Display** will be populated with the audio's key, scale, and tempo.

Step 3: Begin Playback

As the track plays, Auto-Key will analyze the audio, then display a variety of information in the **Central Display**, including the track's key, scale, tempo, and relative key.

Be sure to play back at least 5 seconds of audio to allow Auto-Key enough time to detect the key and scale of the track. Once the key and scale have been detected, you may click the **Send to Auto-Tune** button even if the tempo hasn't finished being detected.

To analyze the audio again, (on a different portion of the song, for example) you can click the Listen button again to repeat the process.

Note: *Tempo detection may take up to 10 seconds or longer to be detected.*

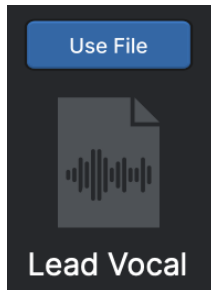
Step 4: Send to Auto-Tune

Click the [Send to Auto-Tune](#) button. The Key and Scale parameters of compatible Auto-Tune instances will be set to the key and scale that Auto-Key has detected.

Step 5: Automate Key Changes (Optional)

New in Auto-Key 2 is the ability to automate key changes! For more information, see the [Automation Tutorial](#).

File Mode



In addition to analyzing the audio on your tracks in real time, Auto-Key can also analyze an audio file located elsewhere on your hard drive using **File Mode**.

Step 1: Open Auto-Tune

Open one or more instances of Auto-Tune in your project. Be sure that Auto-Key detection is enabled for each instance.

Some plug-ins have an Auto-Key option in their Preferences, while others contain a dedicated Auto-Key button in their GUI.

Step 2: Open Auto-Key

Open an instance of Auto-Key on any track in your project.

Step 3: Analyze File

Click the 'Use File' button, navigate to the desired file, then click Open. Auto-Key will analyze the entire audio file and display the detected key, scale, and tempo in the [Central Display](#).

Alternatively, you can drag and drop an audio file directly into the Auto-Key 2 interface. File Mode is compatible with the following audio file formats:

- .mp3
- .flac
- .wav
- .aiff

After analyzing an audio file, Auto-Key will then display the name of the file you have used underneath the 'Use File' icon.

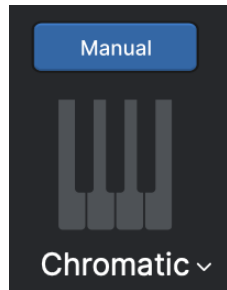
Step 4: Send to Auto-Tune

Click the [Send to Auto-Tune](#) button. The Key and Scale parameters of compatible Auto-Tune instances will be set to the key and scale that Auto-Key has detected.

Step 5: Automate Key Changes (Optional)

New in Auto-Key 2 is the ability to automate key changes! For more information, see the [Automation Tutorial](#).

Manual Mode



If you already know the key and scale of your music, you can use Auto-Key in **Manual Mode** to conveniently set the Key and Scale parameters for all compatible instances of Auto-Tune in your project.

Note: *[Tempo](#) and [Reference Frequency](#) will not be detected in Manual Mode. In this case, these fields will be set to their default values of --- BPM, and A=440 Hz respectively.*

Step 1: Open Auto-Tune

Open one or more instances of Auto-Tune in your project. Be sure that Auto-Key detection is enabled for each instance.

Some plug-ins have an Auto-Key option in their Preferences, while others contain a dedicated Auto-Key button in their GUI.

Step 2: Open Auto-Key

Open an instance of Auto-Key on the master bus in your project.

Step 3: Choose Scale

Click on the **Manual** button set Auto-Key to Manual Mode and switch to a chromatic scale by default. Alternatively, open the drop down menu and select a key/scale to automatically switch to Manual Mode.

In addition to the 12 Major and 12 Minor keys, Auto-Key 2 now features a Chromatic scale option.

Step 4: Send to Auto-Tune

Click the [Send to Auto-Tune](#) button. The Key and Scale parameters of the compatible Auto-Tune instances will be set to what you've chosen from the Auto-Key Scale Menu.

Step 5: Automate Key Changes (Optional)

New in Auto-Key 2 is the ability to automate key changes! For more information, see the [Automation Tutorial](#).

Global Controls

Auto-Tune Central



Click on the Antares Logo to open **Auto-Tune Central**, a separate application used for managing license activations, installing plug-ins, and more.

Settings



The **Settings** button opens the [Settings and Preferences](#) menu.

Bypass



Click the **Bypass** button to disable Auto-Key in your DAW. When bypassed, the Bypass button will appear de-illuminated.

After sending information to Auto-Tune, it is recommended to bypass Auto-Key to save on CPU power. (You can leave Auto-Key on an insert slot in your DAW if you want to make any adjustments later.)

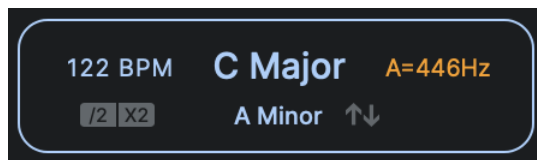
Send To Auto-Tune



Clicking the **Send to Auto-Tune** button will update the Key and Scale settings of all compatible Auto-Tune instances in the project.

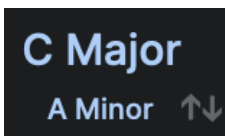
Some plug-ins have an Auto-Key option in their Preferences, while others contain a dedicated Auto-Key button in their GUI.

Central Display



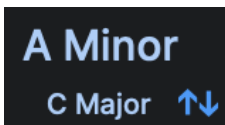
After successful detection using Listen Mode or File Mode, the **Central Display** will display a variety of information about your audio in a single centralized location.

Key/Scale



This is the key/scale that was detected from audio or selected manually. It is the key and scale that will be sent to Auto-Tune when you click the [Send to Auto-Tune](#) button.

Relative Key/Scale



Note that in cases where two scales share the same set of notes, known as *relative major* and *relative minor* scales, Auto-Key may sometimes identify the 'wrong' key (e.g. C major instead of A minor).



In scenarios like this, use the **Relative Key Swap** button to switch to the key you feel is most appropriate for your track, then you can send it to Auto-Tune.

Reference Frequency/Detune Display



In addition to detecting the key and scale of your track, Auto-Key also analyzes the tuning of the track to determine its reference frequency.

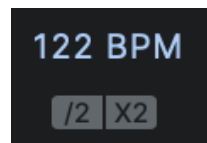
Most modern music is tuned so that the A above middle C is equal to 440 Hz, but this is not always the case.



If the detected tuning is not at the normal A = 440 Hz standard, the color of the display will change to orange.

If you're using a version of Auto-Tune that includes a Detune parameter, set it to match the reference frequency that Auto-Key detects.

Tempo Display

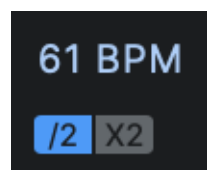


The **Tempo Display** shows the tempo (beats per minute) detected in the live audio or audio file. Please keep the following workflow caveats in mind:

- The tempo detection range is from 60 BPM to 240 BPM
- Tempo detection works best on audio files that are at least 10 seconds long
- 'Half' time and 'double' time tempos may be detected incorrectly
 - For example, a file at 40 BPM might still be detected as 80 BPM
- The tempo detection algorithm works best on tracks with well articulated downbeats
- Arrhythmic content, noise, and silence may decrease the accuracy of tempo detection

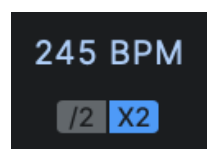
Note: Tempo detection is “display only” in the sense that it is displayed in Auto-Key to aid in a variety of workflows, but cannot be sent nor received by any existing Antares plug-ins.

/2 Tempo Button



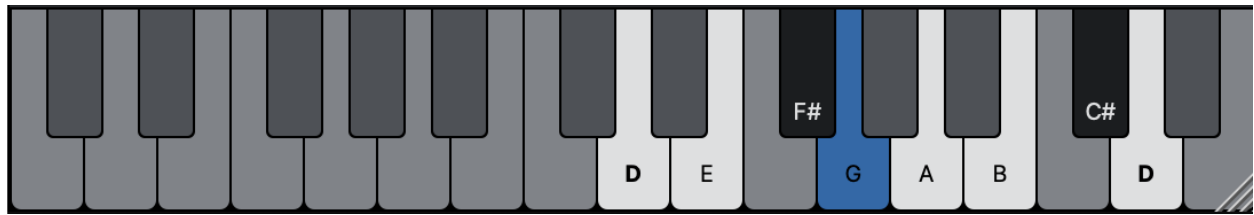
Click the **/2** button to halve the detected tempo. To return to the original tempo readout, click the button again.

X2 Tempo Button



Click the **X2** button to double the detected tempo. To return to the original tempo readout, click the button again.

Keyboard



The **Keyboard** shows the notes of the detected or selected scale by greying out the notes outside of the scale.

Notes contained in the currently detected/selecting scale are all labeled, with the root note marked in bold. This will help you learn the given scale's root note, and which notes it contains.

Click on any key on the Keyboard to highlight it in blue and play the note.

Note: For some hosts, the note will only be audible when the transport is currently playing back.

Automation Tutorial

This tutorial will walk you through the steps required to automate key changes using Auto-Key 2.

Note: *This tutorial provides a general guideline of the steps needed to automate key changes using Auto-Key 2. For DAW-specific automation instructions, please refer to your DAW's documentation.*

Step 1: Start From the Top

Set the transport in your host to the beginning of your song.

Step 2: Set Automation to Write

Set the host channel containing Auto-Key 2 to automation “write” mode.

Step 3: Set First Key

With automation writing enabled within the host, adjust the key in [Manual Mode](#) to the key of the song that is used at the beginning.

Step 4: Send the First Key

With automation writing enabled within the host, click the [Send To Auto-Tune](#) button.

Step 5: Move to the Key Change

Set transport to the spot in the song with the key change.

Step 6: Set the Next Key

With automation writing enabled within the host, adjust the key in [Manual Mode](#) to match the new key of the song.

Step 7: Send the Next Key

With automation writing within the host, click the [Send To Auto-Tune](#) button. If there is another key change in your song, repeat Step 5 – Step 7. Once all key changes have been automated, move on to Step 8.

Step 8: Set Automation to Read

Set the host to read back the automation moves you have recorded.

After completing the above actions, your Auto-Key plug-in will:

- Set itself to the song's initial key at the beginning of the song, then send that key to all compatible instances of Auto-Tune.
- Set itself to the new key at the appropriate time of the song, then send that key to all compatible instances of Auto-Tune.

Settings and Preferences

The **Settings and Preferences Menu** allows you to customize your experience with Auto-Key 2. After making your selections, you may save them as default for all future instances of Auto-Key 2.

Appearance

Appearance determines the theme of the Auto-Key GUI. Options include:

- Light
- Dark
- System

If 'System' is selected, Auto-Key will follow the Appearance settings of your Mac or PC.

Use OpenGL

Auto-Key uses OpenGL for improved graphics on computers with compatible graphics card hardware. Most modern computers support OpenGL, so we recommend leaving this enabled for best performance.

To improve performance, OpenGL is disabled by default on Mac. On Windows, OpenGL is enabled by default.

If you notice poor CPU or graphics performance when working with Auto-Key, try disabling this preference.

Save All Settings As Default

Check this box to set the default settings for any new instances of Auto-Key.

View Tooltips

Tooltips are helpful hints that pop up when you hover over one of the controls in Auto-Key. If you don't want to see them, you can turn them off [here](#).

View Help Topics

Click to open the Auto-Key 2 Help Page in your web browser. This article contains tutorial videos, answers frequently asked questions, and will direct you to other relevant articles in the Antares Knowledge Base.

Reset Window Size

The Auto-Key plug-in window is completely resizable, and stays sharp at any size. Click and drag the plug-in window from the bottom right corner to resize the GUI to your liking.

Use this setting to reset the window size back to its default size.

Version Number

The version number of Auto-Key currently installed on your computer will be displayed at the bottom of the Settings and Preferences menu. This can be helpful for troubleshooting in case you run into any issues.

Powered by zplane

We've partnered with [zplane.development](#) to bring state-of-the-art Key, Scale, and Tempo detection technology to Auto-Key 2.

Key and Scale detection 2 is powered by [TONART v3](#).

Tempo detection is powered by [AUFTAKT v4](#).