

# PERCEPTION NEURON UNITY HANDBOOK

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Perception Neuron Unity Integration 0.2.7 Noitom Technology Co., Ltd June, 20th, 2017 <a href="https://www.neuronmocap.com">www.neuronmocap.com</a>

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This document should help you get familiar with real-time motion capture data reading inside the game engine Unity 3D. It explains how to install the motion capture streaming software Axis Neuron as well as how to load and use the real-time BVH data in Unity.

Keep in mind that this the first release and a few things may be a little rough around the edges. We'll keep improving and adding features to the integration.

If you find bugs or need help, the official forums at <a href="https://neuronmocap.com/forum">https://neuronmocap.com/forum</a> are a good starting point.

If you're looking to extend your real-time Perception Neuron experience then have a look at the Noitom Hand Interaction SDK.

## **OVERVIEW**

This chapter is intended to give you an overview of how Perception Neuron works and how we get the motion data into the game engine.

Perception Neuron is an inertial sensor based motion-capture system. That means each sensor, called Neuron, measures its own orientation and acceleration using a gyroscope, a magnetometer and an accelerometer. On top of this each Neuron also does its own drift correction. The measured data is then sent to the hub which gathers all the data from every connected Neuron. The hub then sends that data either over USB or Wi-Fi connection to a computer that is running the Axis Neuron software and that has established a connection with the hub. Axis Neuron in return does a few complex algorithms, data optimization and drift correction to reconstruct a human skeleton with 59 bones from the sensor data received by the Neurons. This skeleton data is then being broadcast over local network in binary float values. After this point is where the Unity integration comes into play as it will connect to the broadcast and turn the binary values into usable numbers for the game engine. This is basically how all the magic is happening.

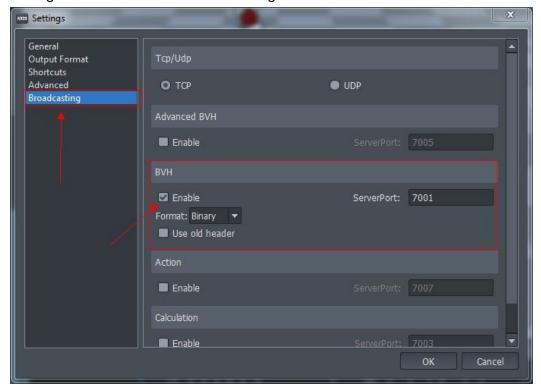
Here's some more interesting information:

- → The data stream to the game engine is identical regardless if you use recorded or live motion data. This allows you to record certain actions and use them to test before putting on the full system and doing a live test.
- → You can have multiple actors at the same time inside Axis Neuron and have them all streamed into Unity.
- → The data stream is based on the BVH structure including header information and body dimension data is available from Axis Neuron via a command interface.
- → Because motion-data is streamed over network the computer running Axis Neuron doesn't necessarily have to be the same computer running Unity.

The following chapters will help you getting started with using Perception Neuron in Unity.

## **INSTALLING AXIS NEURON**

- 1. Start the installer of Axis Neuron for either x86 or x64 depending on your system.
- 2. After completing the installation start Axis Neuron.
- 3. Next we need to turn on the BVH data streaming. Go to the menu File and click on Settings. Then Click on the Broadcasting tab.



- 4. Click on BVH to turn on the BVH data streaming service.
- 5. That's it! Axis Neuron is setup to stream recorded or real-time motion data to Unity.

Note: If you get the error: "The program can't start because MSVCP110.dll is missing from your computer" when trying to start Axis Neuron, then download and install the Visual C++ Redistributable by Microsoft:

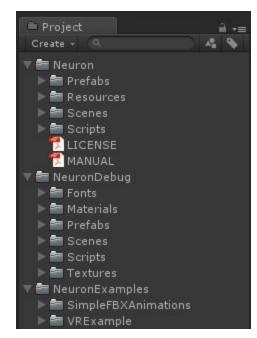
http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=30679

## HOW TO GET THE INTEGRATION INTO UNITY

- 1. Start Unity and load your project in which you want to use Perception Neuron.
- 2. Load the file: "PerceptionNeuron\_UnityIntegration.unitypackage" by double clicking it or going to the menu Assets -> Import Package and then click on "Custom Package...".
- 3. Click on Import.
- 4. You now have the integration in Unity.

## STRUCTURE OVERVIEW

The SDK package is divided into the following structure:



#### Neuron

The core scripts and components of the Perception Neuron Unity integration.

#### NeuronDebug

The source files for the Perception Neuron Debug Viewer.

#### **NeuronExamples**

**SimpleFBXAnimations** - A simple example of how to use exported animations from Axis Neuron directly inside Unity.

**VRExample**- A simple example of how to use Perception Neuron with a VR HMD.

## **CORE SCRIPTS OVERVIEW**

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronDataReaderManaged.cs

C# managed version for receiving BVH data from Axis Neuron.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronConnection.cs

NeuronConnection manages connections with Axis Neuron using NeuronDataReaderManaged.cs. You can connect to multiple instances of Axis Neuron and each connection will be mapped to a NeuronSource instance.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronSource.cs

NeuronSource manages instances of NeuronActor with two dictionaries called activeActors and suspendedActors. NeuronSource monitors the latest timestamp update inside NeuronActor in the OnUpdate method and use a threshold to judge if any actor is lost (number of actors in Axis Neuron has changed or the connection was lost completely). When this happens NeuronSource will add or remove actors between the two dictionaries and notify NeuronActor.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronActor.cs

Data class to store only the most recent motion data frame, also provides methods to parse the received motion data which is received as float values from the network. NeuronActor also saves mocap info and provides methods to register callbacks when it was resumed or suspended by NeuronSource.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronInstance.cs

Base class for all kinds of instances for receiving motion data. Inherits from UnityEngine.MonoBehaviour. NeuronInstance provides callbacks for state changes and the receiving of mocap info from a NeuronActor instance which was bound to this instance by connect or other methods. This class is not intended to be used directly, but can be inherited to provide custom methods to apply motion data, handle states change and mocap info.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronAnimatorInstance.cs

Inherited from NeuronInstance. Provides custom methods to apply Neuron motion data to the transform components of the bones bound in the Unity animator component. Needs a humanoid skeleton setup to work properly.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronAnimatorPhysicalReference.cs

Data class for initialization and cleanup of a reference skeleton used for motions based upon Unity's rigidbody component. Used by NeuronAnimatorInstance if physics toggle is enabled.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronTransformsInstance.cs

Inherited from NeuronInstance. Provides custom methods to apply Neuron motion data directly to transform components. Use this for non-humanoid skeletons or skeletons with more bones then the default setup used in Unity.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronTransformsPhysicalReference.cs

Data class for initialization and cleanup of a reference skeleton used for motions based upon Unity's rigidbody component. Used by NeuronTransformsInstance if physics toggle is enabled.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronHelper.cs

Contains definitions for Neuron bones and several helper functions.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/NeuronInstancesManager.cs

For each NeuronActor, NeuronInstancesManager keep exactly one NeuronAnimatorInstance. Used in NeuronDebugViewer.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/BoneLine.cs

Utility class using a line renderer to draw bone lines.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/BoneLines.cs

Utility class for Neuron editor to add or remove BoneLines.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/BoneRigidbodies.cs

Utility class for Neuron editor to add or remove Rigidbodies.

#### Assets/Neuron/Scripts/Mocap/FPSCounter.cs

Utility class to calculate the FPS (Frames-Per-Second).

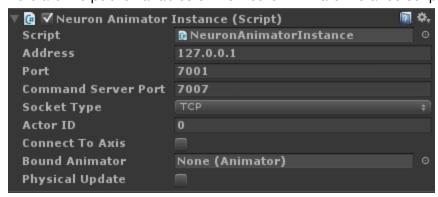
## **USAGE EXAMPLE**

The motion data from Perception Neuron works best when paired with an animator component. You will need a humanoid skeleton and you need to make sure your rig is defined as humanoid in the import settings of the model. Also make sure your avatar mapping is correct. Hint: if you rigged your model with our skeleton example, there is a bone mapping template you can use to get the correct mapping. It can be found in:

Neuron/Resources/NeuronSkeletonMapping.ht

The next step is to attach the NeuronAnimatorInstance.cs script on the model. You can use your own code and functions for this. The NeuronAnimatorInstance just serves as a good example. If you want to use the complete bone structure you should use NeuronTransformInstance.cs instead. The reason there are two different scripts is explained in greater detail in the next chapter.

Here are the public variables of the NeuronAnimatorInstance script explained:



**Address** is the IP address of the machine running Axis Neuron. If it's the same computer the address should be 127.0.0.1. You can use this stream motion data from any other computer in the same network. In this case change the address accordingly.

**Port** is the port number associated with the BVH data stream output setting in Axis Neuron. No need to change this if you didn't change it inside Axis Neuron.

**Command Server Port** is the port number to listen for commands. This is used to request bone size settings from Axis Neuron. Note that this feature is not yet fully implemented in this version of the Unity integration.

**Socket Type** is the socket type to be used for that data stream. This should be identical to your setting in Axis Neuron.

**Actor ID** is the id number for the actor you want to use. If you have more than one actor connected in Axis Neuron this id number will increase. Default is 0 which is the first actor. **Connect To Axis** means the script will connect to Axis Neuron and apply the motion data. You can use this toggle to starts/stop the data stream.

**Bound Animator** the Animator component this instance should use for the received motion data. You can use this if you don't want to keep the script on the same GameObject as the animator component.

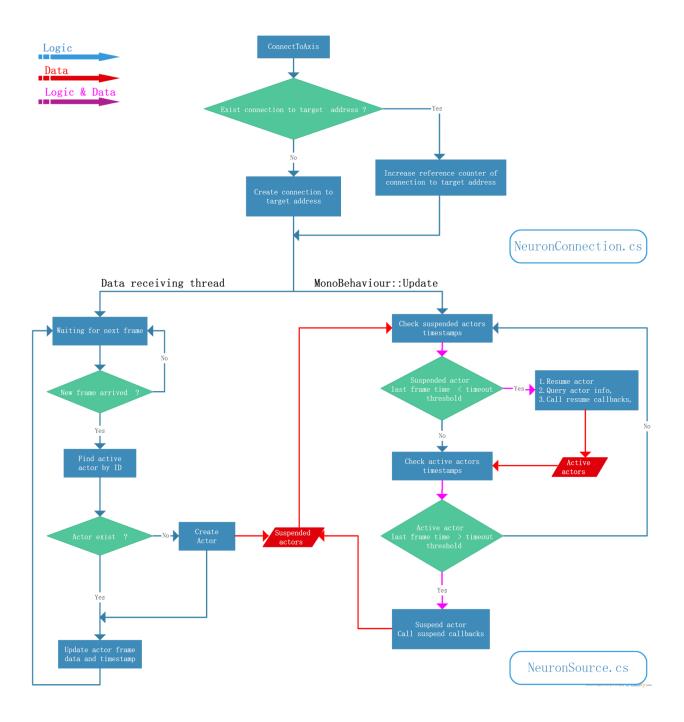
**Physical Update** tells the instance if it should use rigidbody functions provided by Unity to move and rotate each bone. The default method is to apply the received float values directly to the transform components of each bone.

For the NeuronTransformInstance it's basically the same script with two differences. Since we can't use the Humanbodybones references provided by Unity's humanoid skeleton system to get the transform components we have to traverse and find them ourselves. For this we use the **Root** and **Prefix** variables. Root is the parent transform component of the hip bone. Prefix is the starting naming convention for each bone. In our skeleton setup the prefix is "Robot\_" because all our bone names start with "Robot\_". The script will then search for Robot\_Hips, Robot\_RightUpLeg, Robot\_LeftUpLeg and so on.

Regardless of whether you use the transform or animator instance method the motion data pipeline always works the same way:

- 1. Axis Neuron will broadcast the motion data when BVH output is turned on in the settings. In this case it doesn't matter if it's a recorded raw file or real-time. We recommend you to do recordings of your intended real-time interactions and play them back as this will help greatly with development.
- 2. Once Unity is running and we've established a successful connection to the data stream, with the address and port specified, the integration will always make the most recent motion values available.
- 3. If we're not using physics to move the bones we'll update each bone on every new frame being rendered with the currently available data.
- 4. If we're using physics update the bone updates will happen inside Unity's FixedUpdate loop to stay consistent with Unity's physics system.

See the following flow-chart for a more detailed overview:



## **NEURON SKELETON TOOLS**

We programmed a nifty tool to help you with configuring and making changes to your avatar. Its called Skeleton Tools and can be found in the menu Neuron -> Skeleton Tools.



First thing to make sure is that you select your GameObject that either has a NeuronAnimatorInstance or NeuronTransformInstance script attached to it. This will provide the tools script with the right interface to work with.

The following settings allow you to various things such as:

- → Adding/removing of rigidbody components.
- → Adding/removing of bone lines. (Bone lines are a great tool for debugging and can also be added to instantiated reference skeleton, when using physics update, during runtime). The render order setting defines which line to render ontop of eachother if you have multiple bone lines.

## HOW TO CONFIGURE A NEW SKELETON

The following is a guide for how to configure a new character model to receive real-time motion data by Perception Neuron. Before we start you need to be aware of a few things:

- 1. Your model needs to be rigged on a humanoid skeleton.
- 2. The bones of your rig can not have any existing rotations in them and their axis orientation needs to be identical with Unity's axis system.
- 3. Your model needs to be rigged in a T-Pose.
- 4. If you're model is not rigged with our skeleton setup you can only use real-time motion data without displacement for now.

If you don't consider the points mentioned above the applied motion from the integration will look wrong. Please make sure to correct those issues. Worst case suggestion is to rig your model on the included skeleton template found at: Neuron/Resources/Models/Template Bone Structure.fbx

- 1. Import your model into Unity.
- 2. In the Project tab in Unity click on your model and then click on the Rig tab in the inspector windows.
- 3. Set your Animation Type to Humanoid, then click on Apply.
- 4. Next click on Configure to check the bone mapping. Usually Unity will find the right bone references for almost all the humanoid skeleton so its good check them.
- 5. If your model is using our skeleton setup go to step 6, otherwise go to step 7.
- 6. Click on Mapping and then click on Load to load our template file that fixes the mapping for you.
  - a. In the new window navigate to Neuron/Resources and load the file NeuronSkeletonMapping.ht.
    - (Hint: see the appendix for an example of the correct configuration.)
- 7. Make sure you have all the right bones mapped to the correct body segments inside each of the tabs for Body, Head, Left and Right Hand.
- 8. Click on Apply and then on Done.
- 9. Load the scene you want to use your model in.
- 10. Click and drag your model into the Hierarchy tab to load it into the scene.
- 11. Select your model in the Hierarchy tab and click on Add Component in the inspector window.
- 12. In the search field type "Neuron Anim" and select the script "Neuron Animator Instance".

- 13. Adjust the settings of the Neuron Animator Script according to your own setup. To make the script to automatically connect to Neuron Axis when you hit Play then enable the toggle "Connect To Axis".
- 14. Make sure you have Neuron Axis running and playing a recorded animation in loop or a live actor connected to it. Also make sure you turned on BVH data streaming in the Neuron Axis settings.
- 15. Click on Play in Unity to see the motion being applied to your new model.

## **NEURON DEBUG VIEWER**

The Neuron Debug Viewer serves both as a tool to test the data stream inside Unity and as an example how to use the integration. Its a great tool to measure the connection to Axis Neuron on local as well as over Wi-Fi/Lan connections. The following section explains its functions and how to use them.



- The first input field is the IP address followed by the field for the port number. Adjust these for whatever settings you use inside Axis Neuron or which ever IP you want to connect to. (Hint: 127.0.0.1 is the local IP address.)
- The next checkbox is used to determine whether to use UDP or TCP (default) socket method.
- Actor [+] will create a new actor who will try to connect to the IP address and port specified above. You can use this to connect to multiple computers running Axis Neuron. If there are more than one actors connected within Axis Neuron, these actors will also be created inside Unity.
- Actor [-] button will remove the last connected actor.
- [Clear] button will remove all connections and actors.
- VSync toggle will turn enable/disable VSync.

The text below the buttons will display some information about the received data.

Top left corner will display the current frame rate.

The text at the bottom left will show the last 10 console messages from Unity.

#### Camera controls:

- Left-Click will move the camera relative to the current rotation.
- Right-Click will rotate the camera around the current center.
- Mouse-Wheel will zoom in or out.

#### The keybindings are as follows:

• C = Toggle ViewMode

There are two view modes: One camera or split-screen with two additional cameras fixed to each hand. This is useful to debug finger movements.

• T = Switch Between Instances

If there are more than one actor in the scene you can switch the camera target using this key.

• L = Toggle Motion Trails

Motion Trials are used to visualize the movement of the limbs. These are very helpful to see jitter and lag in the received data. There are three modes:

- 1. No trails are shown.
- 2. Trails for hand and feet are shown.
- 3. Trails for all the fingers are shown.
- G = Show/Hide Vertical Grid

This will show hide the vertical Grid.

• H = Follow/Unfollow Actor

This will make the camera follow or stop following the current actor.

- F = Toggle FPS display
- SPACE = Show/Hide this info

Show or hide the whole UI.

• BACKSPACE = Reset camera position

This will reset the camera position and rotation.

## **HMD INTEGRATION**

Getting any HMD synced up with the Perception Neuron integration can be a bit tricky. Here is how we got it done and what we found out to be working the best. There are three core rules worth mentioning:

- The rotation tracker of the HMD should always have priority. Don't overwrite its rotation values with something else and don't use the head rotation values from the Perception Neuron system.
- 2. Don't use the positional tracking of the HMD.
- 3. Never parent the HMD cameras or GameObjects to the skeleton setup.

Inside the examples folder there is an example called: **VRExample**. It contains a simple script and a scene showing you how to combine our system with any virtual reality HMD. The example script works in the following ways:

- On every new frame we position the VR Camera Rig to the same position as the head target object.
- This target object is an empty GameObject inside the Head skeleton hierarchy. We use the target object to provide an easy way to define an offset and to set the correct position on the head.
- Since we never change the rotation of the VR Rig you need to reset its tracker once you have the HMD on your head. This way the rig will be aligned correctly with your virtual body. Make sure you're facing forward in a T-Pose manner when resetting the VR tracking. Press the R key on your keyboard to do so.

## **KNOWN BUGS**

If you use a bone setup where the rotation of each bone pivot is not zeroed out the motion from Perception Axis will be incorrect. You have to use a rigged model with all bone pivots pointing in the same direction and without any rotation values on the bones. If this isn't the case with the model you want to use the best and simplest solution is to reskin your model on the bone setup provided in the FBX file: **Robot Bone Structure.fbx** 

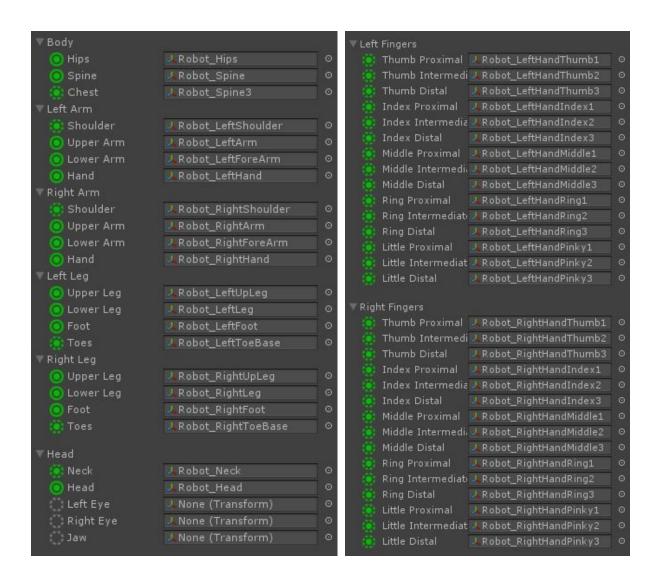
For some unknown reason the position of one upper leg bone can get corrupted when using imported FBX files to drive another model via the Animation Controller. If this happens configure the avatar of the model you're using and click on Reset below the Pose editing menu.

You can not change the names of the bones inside Unity if you're using the Animator component to drive the skeleton. If you want to change the names of the bones you have to do it in you modelling software and export the model again.

If you find any other bugs or problems please report them to me at: <a href="mailto:tobias@noitom.com">tobias@noitom.com</a>

Thank you!

### APPENDIX A: NEURON SKELETON MAPPING



# APPENDIX B: SKELETON BONES

The skeleton setup we use consist of the following 59 bones:

1.	Hips	31.	RightHandRing2
2.	RightUpLeg	32.	RightHandRing3
3.	RightLeg	33.	RightInHandPinky
4.	RightFoot	34.	RightHandPinky1
5.	LeftUpLeg	35.	RightHandPinky2
6.	LeftLeg	36.	RightHandPinky3
7.	LeftFoot	37.	LeftShoulder
8.	Spine	38.	LeftArm
9.	Spine1	39.	LeftForeArm
10.	Spine2	40.	LeftHand
11.	Spine3	41.	LeftHandThumb1
12.	Neck	42.	LeftHandThumb2
13.	Head	43.	LeftHandThumb3
14.	RightShoulder	44.	LeftInHandIndex
15.	RightArm	45.	LeftHandIndex1
16.	RightForeArm	46.	LeftHandIndex2
17.	RightHand	47.	LeftHandIndex3
18.	RightHandThumb1	48.	LeftInHandMiddle
19.	RightHandThumb2	49.	LeftHandMiddle1
20.	RightHandThumb3	50.	LeftHandMiddle2
21.	RightInHandIndex	51.	LeftHandMiddle3
22.	RightHandIndex1	52.	LeftInHandRing
23.	RightHandIndex2	53.	LeftHandRing1
24.	RightHandIndex3	54.	LeftHandRing2
25.	RightInHandMiddle	55.	LeftHandRing3
26.	RightHandMiddle1	56.	LeftInHandPinky
27.	RightHandMiddle2	57.	LeftHandPinky1
28.	RightHandMiddle3	58.	LeftHandPinky2
29.	RightInHandRing	59.	LeftHandPinky3
30.	RightHandRing1		

This is the complete structure of our skeleton model. If we use the humanoid skeleton in Unity we skip some of them resulting in 51 bones remaining. However we need to include the data of the bones we skip in the following bones for the correct values. We skip all the InHand bones and two of the spine bones.

# APPENDIX C: BINARY DATA SEQUENCE

On the next two pages you'll find a complete graph of the whole sequence of the binary data received from Axis Neuron. It is a one-dimensional float array with different ordering and length depending on whether you're using displacement data or not.

	NO DISPLACEMENT			WI	WITH DISPLACEMENT							
	Po	sition		Rotation		P	Position			Rotation		
Bone	X	Υ	Z	Υ	X	Z	X	Y	Z	Υ	X	Z
Hips	0	1	2	3	4	5	0	1	2	3	4	5
RightUpLeg				6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11
RightLeg				9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
RightFoot				12	13	14	18	19	20	21	22	23
LeftUpLeg				15	16	17	24	25	26	27	28	29
LeftLeg				18	19	20	30	31	32	33	34	35
LeftFoot				21	22	23	36	37	38	39	40	41
Spine				24	25	26	42	43	44	45	46	47
Spine1				27	28	29	48	49	50	51	52	53
Spine2				30	31	32	54	55	56	57	58	59
Spine3				33	34	35	60	61	62	63	64	65
Neck				36	37	38	66	67	68	69	70	71
Head				39	40	41	72	73	74	75	76	77
RightShoulder				42	43	44	78	79	80	81	82	83
RightArm				45	46	47	84	85	86	87	88	89
RightForeArm		000000000000000000000000000000000000000		48	49	50	90	91	92	93	94	95
RightHand				51	52	53	96	97	98	99	100	101
RightHandThumb1				54	55	56	102	103	104	105	106	107
RightHandThumb2				57	58	59	108	109	110	111	112	113
RightHandThumb3				60	61	62	114	115	116	117	118	119
RightInHandIndex				63	64	65	120	121	122	123	124	125
RightHandIndex1				66	67	68	126	127	128	129	130	131
RightHandIndex2				69	70	71	132	133	134	135	136	137
RightHandIndex3				72	73	74	138	139	140	141	142	143
RightInHandMiddle		0.0000000000000000000000000000000000000		75	76	77	144	145	146	147	148	149
RightHandMiddle1				78	79	80	150	151	152	153	154	155
RightHandMiddle2				81	82	83	156	157	158	159	160	161
RightHandMiddle3				84	85	86	162	163	164	165	166	167
RightInHandRing				87	88	89	168	169	170	171	172	173
RightHandRing1				90	91	92	174	175	176	177	178	179
RightHandRing2				93	94	95	180	181	182	183	184	185
RightHandRing3				96	97	98	186	187	188	189	190	191
RightInHandPinky				99	100	101	192	193	194	195	196	197
RightHandPinky1		000000000		102	103	104	198	199	200	201	202	203
RightHandPinky2				105	106	107	204	205	206	207	208	209
RightHandPinky3				108	109	110	210	211	212	213	214	215

LeftShoulder	111 112	113	216	217	218	219	220	221
LeftArm	114 115	116	222	223	224	225	226	227
LeftForeArm	117 118	119	228	229	230	231	232	233
LeftHand	120 121	122	234	235	236	237	238	239
LeftHandThumb1	123 124	125	240	241	242	243	244	245
LeftHandThumb2	126 127	128	246	247	248	249	250	251
LeftHandThumb3	129 130	131	252	253	254	255	256	257
LeftInHandIndex	132 133	134	258	259	260	261	262	263
LeftHandIndex1	135 136	137	264	265	266	267	268	269
LeftHandIndex2	138 139	140	270	271	272	273	274	275
LeftHandIndex3	141 142	143	276	277	278	279	280	281
LeftInHandMiddle	144 145	146	282	283	284	285	286	287
LeftHandMiddle1	147 148	149	288	289	290	291	292	293
LeftHandMiddle2	150 151	152	294	295	296	297	298	299
LeftHandMiddle3	153 154	155	300	301	302	303	304	305
LeftInHandRing	156 157	158	306	307	308	309	310	311
LeftHandRing1	159 160	161	312	313	314	315	316	317
LeftHandRing2	162 163	164	318	319	320	321	322	323
LeftHandRing3	165 166	167	324	325	326	327	328	329
LeftInHandPinky	168 169	170	330	331	332	333	334	335
LeftHandPinky1	171 172	173	336	337	338	339	340	341
LeftHandPinky2	174 175	176	342	343	344	345	346	347
LeftHandPinky3	177 178	179	348	349	350	351	352	353