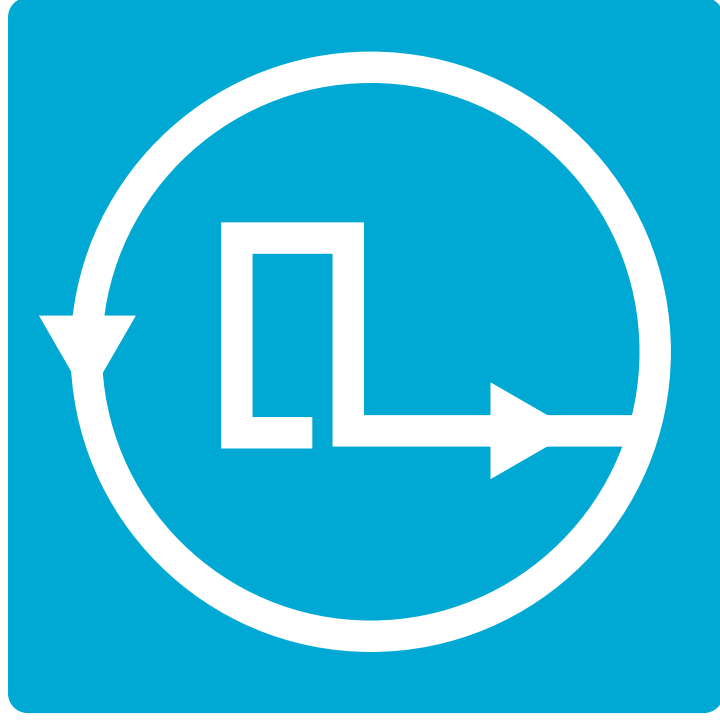


# Picoloop Manual

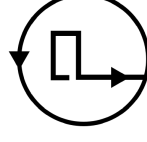




# Picoloop Tutorial (PC version)

Welcome to **Picoloop**!

**Picoloop** is a synth and a step sequencer made by Yozy. In this tutorial, we'll make a tour of the basic functionalities of **Picoloop**. The commands described here are adapted for the usage on PC.



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## Other commands

Volume	
<code>(ESC)+↑</code>	Increase volume
<code>(ESC)+↓</code>	Decrease volume

Get `picoloop` at  
<https://github.com/yoyz/audio/>

---

Made by Garvalf (<http://garvalf.online.fr>)  
with the textallion word processor and the  
txt2tags syntax.

<b>Ctrl</b> + ←/→	insert or delete value (shift patterns)
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<b>PSH menu</b>	
<b>Ctrl</b> +↑	Increase the track size (16 steps block)
<b>Ctrl</b> +↓	Decrease the track size (16 steps block)
<b>Ctrl</b> +→	Increase the track size (1 step)
<b>Ctrl</b> +←	Decrease the track size (1 step)
<b>TAB</b> and <b>Backspace</b>	Navigate into the new steps (-16 or +16)

## Starting

First, get **Picoloop** at <https://github.com/yoyz/audio/>

Compile it yourself, if needed (instructions are provided in the readme). You can also tweak some parameters, found in the Master.h file, before the compilation, such as the MAX\_PATTERN\_BY\_PROJECT variable to increase the pattern slots. The Windows and PSP binaries can be found in the [Releases](#) tab.

The requirements for starting the application are:

- The picoloop binary itself (called "picoloop" or "PatternPlayer\_#####" after you've just compiled it, you can rename it if needed)
- the font.ttf file
- optionally the patch/MDADrum/ folder if you want to get some electronic drums
- the bank/ folder to store your creations.

Run the **Picoloop** binary. You will be presented to a setting panel. Navigate with ←, →, ↑ and ↓ and choose the color theme (palette) you prefer.

Then make sure the AudioOutput matches your soundcard. Eventually make it select and display "default".

```

Current palette : 4
Current Bank   : 0
> AudioOutput  : 1/1 : default
MidiOutput     : 0/1 : Midi Through 14:0
MidiInput      : 0/2 : Midi Through 14:0
MidiClockMode  : Internal
  
```

To exit this panel and start making music, validate with **(Ctrl)**. In the case it crashes, it might be because the soundcard configuration was not correct. Restart the binary and select another card setting.

## L/S menu

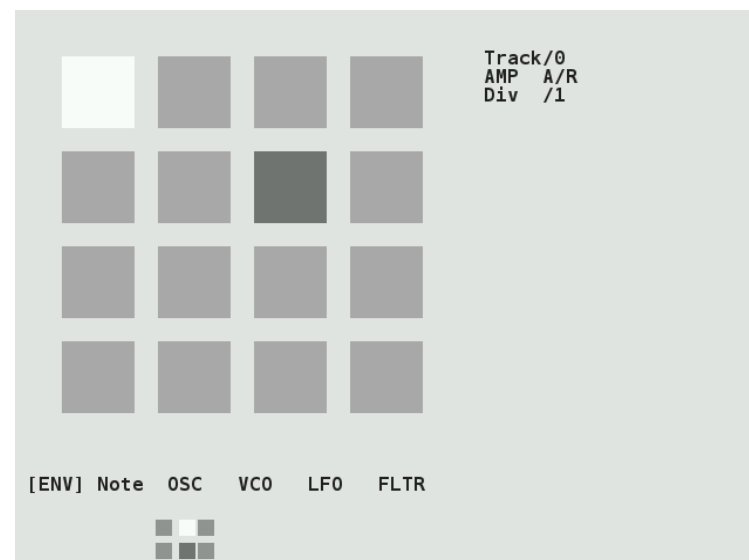
Bank	
<b>(Alt)</b> + ↓	Save the current track on the selected slot
<b>(Ctrl)</b> + ↓	Save your current pattern (group of 4 tracks)
<b>(Alt)</b> + ↑	Load a track (replace current)
<b>(Ctrl)</b> + ↑	Load a 4 tracks pattern

Song position (order list)	
<b>(Ctrl)</b> + ↑	Define Loop start position
<b>(Ctrl)</b> + ↓	Define Loop end position
<b>(Alt)</b> + ↑/↓	Change the values
<b>(Alt)</b> + ←/→	copy value left or right

<b>Backspace</b>	go to the previous 16 step on the same track
<b>ESC</b>	call menu2 or menu1

<b>Edit mode</b>	
<b>← / →</b>	select next step
<b>↑ / ↓</b>	select step+4, step-4
<b>Alt</b>	enter a note in a step, it works as a cut/paste
<b>Ctrl</b> + <b>←/→/↑/↓</b>	edit the current step
<b>Ctrl</b>	do nothing
<b>TAB</b>	go to the next 16 step on the same track
<b>Backspace</b>	go to the previous 16 step on the same track
<b>ESC</b>	call menu2 or menu1
<b>Enter</b>	cycle between the different parameters

You will be presented to the **Picoloop** main window.



With this color scheme, the 16 steps are in light grey. The moving dark grey cursor is the current sounding note. The cursor for edition is in white and you cannot move it right now (you're in *Menu mode*). Below the 16 steps is the menu. It displays:

[ ENV ] Note OSC VCO LFO FLTR

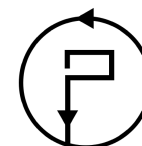
Move left or right to select the parameter you want to use.

## Entering notes

At the moment, select Note with the **(Alt)** key. Now you are in *Edit mode*, and you can navigate within the 16 steps with the ←, →, ↑ and ↓ arrows. Insert your first note with the **(Ctrl)** key. It will be a C2.

You can change the value of this note by holding **(Alt)** and typing on the arrows. ← or → for decreasing or increasing 1/2 tone, ↑ or ↓ for increasing or decreasing 1 octave. Make it for example G2. Now select other empty cases and type **(Ctrl)** for adding more notes and **(Alt)** for changing their values. Delete an existing note with **(Ctrl)**. The next note entered with **(Ctrl)** will be the previous value which was deleted (delete an A3, next one will be A3 then).

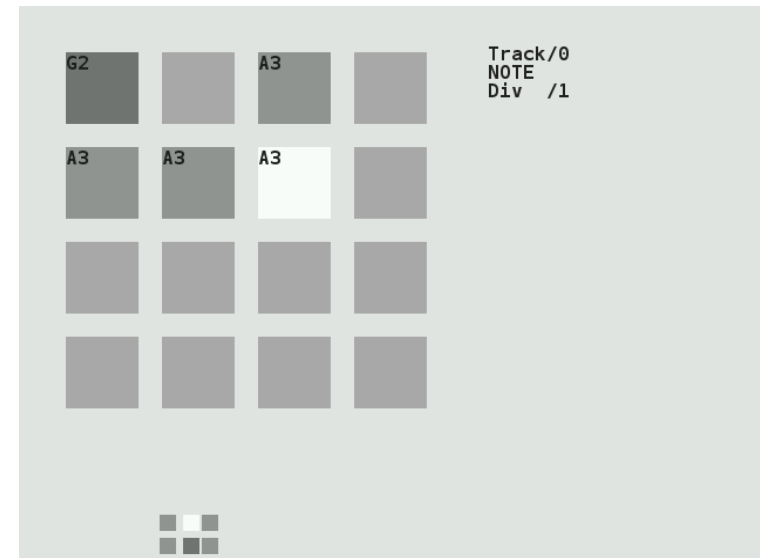
## Picoloop Memo (PC version)



Menu mode	
← / →	move backward/forward in the menu
↑ / ↓	select the track from 0 to track 3
<b>(Alt)</b>	do nothing
<b>(Ctrl)</b> + ←/→/↑/↓	edit all step at once
<b>(Ctrl)</b>	enter the edit mode
<b>(TAB)</b>	go to the next 16 step on the same track



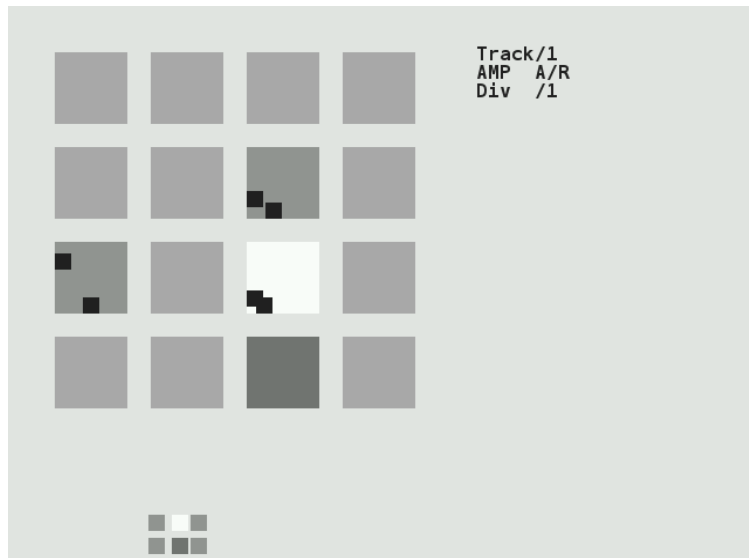
- 0303 : based on Open303, a free, open source emulation of the Roland TB-303 synthesizer. Needs high resources.
  - Csynth : Cursynth, a soustractive synth with 2 oscillators. Needs high ressources.
  - PBS : PBSynth, another soustractive synth with 2 oscillators (lightweight).
  - Pdrum : Picodrum, for making rythms (kicks, hats, snares...)
  - OPL2 : FM synthesis  
On some less powerful machines, the high ressources engines are not enabled.
- Refer to the picoloop README for all the parameters or experiment yourself.



There are 4 tracks which can play together. To change the current working track, go back to the menu with the **(ESC)** key. Use the ↑ and ↓ arrows to select the track. It will display Track/0, Track/1 etc. Now you can enter more notes in this other track.

To change the sound of the current notes, select ENV in the menu, and validate with **(Alt)**, the menu will disappear, meaning you can enter notes or change values. In the ENV parameters, you can alter the sound with **(Alt)**

+ arrows. Try to play with the two parameters. You end up with something like that:



Now if you type the **Enter** key, you'll access more parameters, which you can change in a similar way. In this mode, you alter parameters for individual notes, if you want to change all the inserted notes for the current track, exit the *edit mode* with the **ESC** key, and use **Ctrl** + arrows to change all the steps together.

Attack/Release, and after pressing **Enter** you'll get Decay/Sustain, one more press on **Enter** and it's Trig/Amplification). Note: on some engines, ENV is replaced by A/R.

But we can also change the whole engine, using the "MAC" menu in *menu2*. The different engines are (from up to down):

- Psynth (default) : PicoSynth, soustractive synth with 2 oscillators (lightweight).
- SID : emulation of the MOS SID 6581/8580 soundchip (found on Commodore C64 8-bit computers), based on the resid engine
- Mdrum : MDA Drumsynth (you need the patches in the picoloop/patch/MDADrum/ folder)
- Mdiout : midi out
- Tsynth : Twytch/Helm. Needs high ressources.

time to time. On Linux / Unix systems, you can use a script like this from the command line:

```
zip -r bank_picoloop_`date +%Y-%m-%d_%H:%M` .zi
```

To record your music, you can either (obviously) plug a recorder to the line-out of your computer or device, but you can also set this environment setting before starting picoloop:

```
export DUMP_AUDIO=1 && picoloop
```

## Exploring new horizons

As we've seen earlier, we can change the pitch value (note) of a step, but also some parameters such as ENV (enveloppe), OSC (oscillator), VCO (a kind of mixer), LFO and FLTR (filter). If you press **Enter** while in a parameter menu, you can also get more parameters related to the first one (for example in the ENV menu, you'll get first

## Saving and loading music

Now it's time to save your first work!

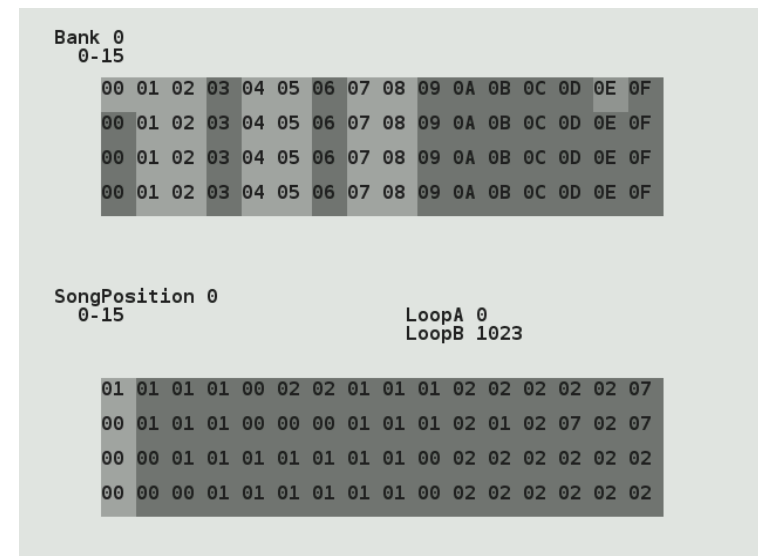
Exit the *edit mode* with **ESC** if you're still in it, and type again **ESC** to enter the second menu (*Menu2*).

It will display:

```
L/S [ BANK ] PSH MAC FX BPM
```

Select L/S (*Load/Save*) and enter the menu with **Alt**.

It will look like this:



This screen is for saving individual patterns, but also to organise them into a whole song.

The menu on top represents your tracks. The cursor on this screenshot is on the top 0E column. To save an individual track, select an empty slot and type **(Alt) + ↓**. Now the slot will be lighter (with this grey theme). To save all the 4 tracks (one pattern), type **(Ctrl) + ↓**, the whole column will be lighter.

To reload you tracks later, select a column and type **(Ctrl) + ↑**. To load an individual slot, type **(Alt) + ↑**. Beware, there is no warning so it might erase your current work.

Now you can assemble your tracks with the order list (under the Song Position label). Go into this list with the **(Enter)** key.

You can define Loop start position with **(Ctrl) + ↑**. As soon as you define this, the song will start to play. And you can define Loop end position with **(Ctrl) + ↓**. Change the values of the list with **(Alt) + ↑/↓**

Important:

1. When you're in the order list, your changes are saved only when you exit it to the pattern editor with **(ESC)**. If you close **Picoloop** before doing this, your changes won't be saved!

2. When you're in the pattern editor, the data are written in a buffer, and you must save the current pattern in the track grid before playing your song from the order list (otherwise the changes in the pattern won't be saved). You can only save the pattern in the same row as the pattern number you've worked in. For example a pattern in the Track/1 can only be saved in the second row in the track grid (tracks are starting from 0, Track/0 is the first one, Track/1 is the second one)

Each bank is for storing a different project (=song).

There is no option for backing up a bank you're working on, so it can be a good idea to backup your whole bank/ folder from