

MintySynth By Example

By Benjamin Holt

Here is one basic, reasonably efficient, workflow I've come up with for programming songs on the MintySynth; it's just a starting point, by all means experiment and find what works well for you.

I've annotated the steps below with the control notation I came up with for my [quick reference card](#); briefly:

+ = "together" (usually first-one-first), **|** = hold button, **.** = press button, **w** = wheel, **x-y** = "choose one of" (here sometimes "do each"), **↑/↓** = full up/down

- Turn the MintySynth on to start fresh.
- Use the mixer to turn down all four parts (**|5+w1-w4 ↓**) to quiet the initial tones; it's good that the synth has some output by default, but I just turn that off to get it out of the way.
- Switch to live mode (**.1+.5**, see the yellow LED start blinking.) Aside, when switching between live and programming modes, I think of "throwing" the LED: **.1+.5** sends the tempo blinks from the red (near button 1) to the yellow LED (near button 5) and vice-versa to switch back (though when going to program mode you also choose which part, **.1-.4**)
- Choose voices to be your palette for the programmed parts. (**|1-|4+w1**)
- Switch to programming part 1 (**.5+.1**, see the red LED start blinking again.) and turn part 1 back up. (**|5+w1 ↑**)
- Select one of your voice buttons (**.1-.4**) (though you can go back and change the part's voice later.)
- Perhaps choose a scale. (**|1+w5**)
- Hold button 1 and sequence the first measure of part 1. (**|1+w1-w4, ↓** turns that note

off, ↑ takes the "reference note" see [Pitch Wheel Quirks](#))

- Skip measure 2 for now and hold button 3, nudge each wheel and return it to position to sequence the same thing in. ($|3+w1-w4$)
- You can now similarly sequence measures 2 & 4 for an A-B-A-B structure or do different things for A-B-A-C ($|2+w1-w4$, $|4+w1-w4$) (of course, you can also program all different sequences, too.)
- Experiment with tempo ($w1$), duration ($w3$), envelope ($w4$), modulation ($|5+w5$, ↓ to turn back off), etc. **Don't touch $w2$!** It will change one of the notes you just programmed to something weird; see [Pitch Wheel Quirks](#).
- Use the mixer to turn part 1 down (more or less, depending on how much you want to keep hearing it) and turn part 2 up. ($|5+w1$ ↓, $|5+w2$ ↑)
- Switch to programming part 2. ($.5+.2$)
- Repeat with the other parts you want to program; if you have a system like bassline in part 1, percussion(ish) in part 2, melody in part 3, etc. it's easier to build and work with. ($.5+.3$)
- The mixer is your friend; use it to solo parts, mute others, "check in on" the whole, whatever helps you hear what you're doing. ($|5+w1-w4$)
- If you want, you can "really" sequence part 4 or treat it like a rhythm track and just program which notes you want to sound, since live mode takes over the pitch. ($.5+.4$)
- Switch to live mode ($.1+.5$) and reprogram your bank of voices for more options. ($|1-|4+w1$)
- Jam! Experiment! Have fun! For more about live mode, see the [Quick Start](#)
- Don't be shy with the mixer here either; build parts in, drop some drops, cut parts that are sounding repetitive for a while, keep things lively. ($|5+w1-w4$)