

# Using miditext

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The MIDI-to-textmidi translator

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# 1 Overview

The `miditext` program translates a binary standard MIDI file into a text file in textmidi language. A file in textmidi language can be edited and processed with text tools and macro processors such as `m4`. Textmidi files can then be re-translated into MIDI using `textmidi`. The goal of `miditext` and `textmidi` together is to permit the specification of any musical events that are permitted by the MIDI 1.1 spec's chapter on Standard MIDI Files. SysEx (system exclusive) is also supported, as are all three filetypes (single track, multitrack and multi-sequence).

The textmidi language is described in the info page for `textmidi`.

No attempt is made in textmidi to support either MIDI show control or machine control.

## 1.1 What is miditext?

The program `miditext` reads a standard MIDI file and converts it to a text file, which is in the textmidi language. Each item in the text file corresponds to an item in the binary MIDI file, more or less.

`miditext` does not record or play over a MIDI interface.

## 1.2 History

`miditext` was developed in 2003 and improved in 2020 and 2021 in order to add support for more of the MIDI specification.

## 2 Invoking miditext

### 2.1 Options

```
miditext [-i|--midi] midi_input_file [-o|--textmidi textmidi_output_file
[-a|--answer] [-q|--quantize musical_ratio in quotes] [-l|--lazy] [-h|--help]
[-V|--version] [-v|--verbose]
```

**-h, --help**

Print the options summary.

**-v, --verbose**

Write some informative messages to the screen. Errors are printed regardless.

**-V, --version**

Print the version of `miditext`.

**-i, --midi *midi\_input\_file***

The input file: a MIDI file.

**-o, --textmidi *textmidi\_output\_file***

The output file, in textmidi text language.

**-q, --quantize *num***

A musical rhythm ratio (in quotes to satisfy most command shells) to use as the common divisor of all rhythmic durations. For example “1/16” would force all durations to be divisible by a sixteenth-note.

**-l, --lazy**

Will attempt to output track data in textmidi’s LAZY mode, an abbreviated text representation.

**-a, --answer**

If the output textmidi file already exists, ask before overwriting it.

### 2.2 Invocation Examples

The following command will read the MIDI file `prelude.mid` and convert it to the text-based textmidi language.

```
miditext --midi prelude.mid --textmidi prelude.txt
```

The following converts `prelude.mid` into `prelude.txt`, and attempt to write using the abbreviated LAZY mode representation.

```
miditext --midi prelude.mid --textmidi prelude.txt --lazy
```

The following converts `prelude.mid` into `prelude.txt`, and coerces rhythms to be divisible by a thirty-second note. If the file `prelude.txt` exists, the user will be asked whether to overwrite it.

```
miditext --midi prelude.mid --textmidi prelude.txt --quantize “1/32” --answer
```

### 3 Installation

This program was prepared for builds using GNU autoconf tools. Unpack the archive. Move to the directory created for the program. Run the configure script and run make.

```
./configure  
make
```

Make yourself superuser (root), or use sudo to run install targets:

```
make install  
make install-info
```

## 4 Known Bugs

Although the DETAIL mode representation should be accurate, if `--lazy` is selected, and if a track in the MIDI file has overlapping note events with asynchronous start and stop times, the LAZY mode representation may not be accurate.

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## 6 Bibliography

- *The Complete MIDI 1.0 Detailed Specification*. Document version 96.1. Second edition. 1995. Los Angeles. The MIDI Manufacturers Association.



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