Four Tracker – User Manual

Nov 3, 2026 · Ronnie

Four Tracker is a sample tracker with 1 to 16 tracks in the style of ProTracker and FastTracker 2, built for playing live: you switch between patterns with the keys of a MIDI keyboard while the music keeps running. It runs as a standalone Windows program, with VST3 effects on every track and on the master, and as a VST3 plugin, in 32-bit and 64-bit. It also has a built-in synth and can play external synths over MIDI.

This manual is for version 0.5.4 and for anyone getting started with the program. Button and page names are written exactly as they appear on screen.

Getting started

Install Four Tracker with **FourTracker-Setup-0.5.4-share-fx.exe** (from the website or GitHub Releases), start it, and the built-in demo song is ready to play.

Standalone program

1. Run the installer. It installs the program (64-bit, and 32-bit if you tick it), the VST3 plugin, this manual and the Four Tracker Sample Pack. Start **Four Tracker** from the Start menu.
2. If Windows shows "Windows protected your PC", click **More info** → **Run anyway**. The program is not signed.
3. Open the **MIDI / AUDIO** tab, choose your sound card and tick your MIDI keyboard.
4. Press **C-2** on the keyboard, or **Enter** on the computer keyboard, to start the demo song.

As a plugin in a music program (host)

Format	File	Copy to
VST3, 64-bit	`Four Tracker.vst3`	`C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3`
VST3, 32-bit	`Four Tracker.vst3` (from `dist\32-bit`)	`C:\Program Files (x86)\Common Files\VST3`
VST2	`Four Tracker.dll`	The VST folder your host scans

Use the version that matches the host: a 32-bit program can only load 32-bit plugins. Load Four Tracker as an **instrument** on a track, and route your MIDI keyboard to that track.

First start

- The standalone program always starts with the demo song. Your MIDI and audio settings are remembered.
- The first time, it creates `Documents\Four Tracker\Demo` with **Demo Song.ftm** and the demo sounds as WAV files.

- As a plugin, the song is saved inside your host project and comes back when you open the project.

The screen

The screen has three fixed parts: the title bar at the top, the control row below it and the tabs at the bottom. The middle area changes with the tab you pick.

Title bar shows the status, for example `PLAY 00:01A>01` : pattern 00 is playing at row 1A, and pattern 01 is waiting to take over. It also shows EDIT/JAM, octave and spacing. Short messages such as "SAVED" appear here for a few seconds. On the right are **REC / STOP** (record your jam, in the standalone program only), **– MASTER +** (the volume of all tracks) and **– TRACKS +**, and in the FX version the **FX** button.

Control row

Field	What it does
PATTERN + PREV/NEXT	Picks pattern 00–3F. While playing, the chosen pattern is queued.
INSTRUMENT + PREV/NEXT	Picks the instrument (01–10) that the keys play and write with. Its name is shown on the right.
LOOP ON/OFF	ON: the pattern starts over when it ends. OFF: playback stops at the last row.
SPEED	Ticks per row (1–31). Lower = faster rows. Default 6.
BPM	Tempo (32–255). Default 125.
OCTAVE	Octave of the lower key row, 0–7 (default 4). Set it to 2 and Z writes C-2. F1 / F2 change it too.
SPACING	How many rows the cursor moves after you write a note, and with the up / down arrows, 0–32 (default 1). F6 / F7 change it too.
EDIT	Red = the keys write notes into the pattern. Grey = the keys only play the sound.
CHORD	Red = held keys go to the next tracks: one note per track, written on the same row in EDIT mode.
HEX / DEC	Shows row and pattern numbers in hex (00–3F) or decimal (00–63).

Change a value box by dragging up/down with the mouse, with the mouse wheel, or by double-clicking and typing a number. Hold Shift for big steps.

Tabs at the bottom

Tab	Contents
INSTRUMENTS	Load samples and set up instruments
SAMPLE EDIT	Trim, loop and process samples

Tab	Contents
SONG / PATTERN	Start/stop, pattern length, new/load/save module
BLOCK	Cut, copy and paste tracks and whole patterns
MIDI / AUDIO	MIDI keys, switch mode and sound card
(track icon, far right)	The main view with the channel strips, the effect lists and the pattern

In the main view, each of the 4 tracks in view (CH1–CH4, CH5–CH8 ...) has a small waveform, a level meter, the VOL, PAN and PITCH boxes, and **MUTE** and **SOLO** buttons. They light up red when they are on. With SOLO on one or more channels, only those channels are heard; MUTE wins over SOLO. Both are saved in the module.

Tracks: 1 to 16

A new song has 4 tracks, and you can have up to 16. The pattern always shows 4 tracks at a time.

- **– TRACKS n +** in the title bar: **+** adds one track and jumps to it. **–** removes the last track. If that track has notes, press **–** a second time to confirm.
- **The track bar** under the pattern: **◀ / ▶** go to the previous or next 4 tracks, or click a group (TRACKS 1-4, 5-8, 9-12, 13-16) to jump to it. The group you see is lit.
- **Tab** and the arrow keys also move on to the next tracks, and the view follows the cursor.
- The channel strips and the effect lists always show the 4 tracks in view.
- The number of tracks is saved in the module.

Playing live with a MIDI keyboard

C-2 starts and stops playback, and each key from **C#2** upwards picks one pattern.

Key	Does
C-2 (MIDI 36)	Start / stop
C#2	Pattern 00
D-2	Pattern 01
D#2	Pattern 02
E-2	Pattern 03
... and so on	up to pattern 3F (63)
C-6 (MIDI 84)	Fade out / fade back in

- **While stopped:** a pattern key picks which pattern C-2 will start. Pattern 00 is picked at start-up.

- **While playing:** a pattern key switches pattern without restarting. When the switch happens depends on the switch mode below.
- Pressing the key of the pattern that is already playing cancels a waiting switch.
- The START/STOP PATTERN buttons on the SONG / PATTERN page and **Enter** on the computer keyboard do the same as C-2.
- The start/stop key can be moved on the MIDI / AUDIO page (LEARN). The pattern keys move with it.
- **Fade: C-6** fades all tracks out over FADE bars (default 4). They stay silent while the song keeps playing, until you press C-6 again: then they fade back in over the same time. Pressed half way through a fade, it turns round. The title bar shows FADE OUT, FADED OUT or FADE IN and the level. STOP / START bring the full volume back. The fade key can be moved (FADE OUT LEARN on the MIDI / AUDIO page); it wins over a pattern key on the same note.

Switch modes (PATTERN SWITCH)

Example: pattern 00 has reached row 10, and you press D-2 for pattern 01.

Mode	What happens	Good for
NEXT ROW (LEGATO) – default	Switches on the next row and carries on from row 11 of pattern 01. Notes that are ringing keep ringing.	Quick, seamless switches
NEXT BEAT (LEGATO)	As above, but waits for the next beat (every 4th row: 12, 16, 20 ...).	Switches that always land in time
END OF PATTERN	Pattern 00 plays to its last row, then pattern 01 starts at row 0.	Safe switches at whole phrases
RESTART AT ROW 0	Switches at once and starts pattern 01 from the top.	A hard cut as an effect

For live use, NEXT ROW or NEXT BEAT are the most natural.

Writing patterns

Turn **EDIT** on (the button turns red, or press Space), place the cursor and play notes on the computer keyboard.

The pattern

A pattern has 1 to 16 tracks (4 in a new song) and 64 rows by default (1–256, set on the SONG / PATTERN page). Each cell reads `NOTE INS CCPP`, for example `C-4 01 0C40`:

Part	Example	Meaning
NOTE	`C-4`	The note. `---` = nothing, `===` = note off. C-4 plays a sample at its own pitch.
INS	`01`	The instrument (01–10). `00` = keep the instrument already on the channel.
CC	`0C`	Effect number (see Effect commands).

Part	Example	Meaning
PP	`40`	Effect parameter, in hex.

The row numbers on every 4th row are brighter (a beat), and every 16th row is shaded (a bar).

Notes from the computer keyboard

The keys are laid out like a piano over two octaves:

Keys	Notes
`Z S X D C V G B H N J M`	C, C#, D, D#, E, F, F#, G, G#, A, A#, B (lower octave)
`Q 2 W 3 E R 5 T 6 Y 7 U I`	C to C of the octave above
`1` or `` ` ``	Note off (===)

- **F1 / F2** (or the OCTAVE box) move the octave down/up, from 0 to 7, so notes can go all the way down to C-0. **F6 / F7** (or the SPACING box) change the spacing, 0–32: how many rows the cursor jumps after each note and with the up / down arrows.
- With EDIT off, the keys just play the selected instrument. A sample without a loop plays to its end; a looped sample loops while the key is held. Holding a key does not retrigger the sound.
- In the instrument and effect columns, type hex digits `0–9` and `A–F`.

Chords (CHORD)

Turn on **CHORD** (under EDIT in the control row) to hold several note keys at once. The first key goes to the track the cursor is on, the next key to the track to the right, and so on. It works for samples, SYNTH 1, SYNTH 2 and MIDI instruments (one MIDI note per key).

- With EDIT off, the notes are only heard, each on its own track, through that track's VOL, PAN, MUTE, SOLO and effects.
- With EDIT on, the chord is written on the cursor's row, one note per track, and the cursor moves on after the first note.
- There is no wrap-around: on the last track only the notes that fit are used. Add tracks with **+** for bigger chords.

Moving and editing

- Arrow keys move the cursor (up / down jump SPACING rows, Shift+arrows mark one row at a time); Tab / Shift+Tab jump between channels; PgUp/PgDn move 16 rows; Home/End go to the first/last row.
- **Delete** clears the field (or the marked area), **Insert** inserts an empty row in the channel, **Backspace** deletes a row.
- **Ctrl+Z** undoes and **Ctrl+Y** redoes pattern edits.
- Click a cell with the mouse to move the cursor there; drag to mark an area.
- When the cursor lands on a cell with an instrument number, that instrument becomes the selected one (INSTRUMENT box), so the next notes use it.

Effect commands

The effect column uses the FastTracker 2 numbers; 00–0F are the classic ProTracker commands that OctaMED also uses. `x` and `y` are the two hex digits of the parameter, `xx` is the whole byte. A parameter of 00 on most slides and portamentos reuses the last value.

CC	Effect	Parameter
00	Arpeggio	xy: plays note, note+x, note+y semitones in turn
01	Portamento up	xx: speed
02	Portamento down	xx: speed
03	Tone portamento	xx: speed of the slide to the new note
04	Vibrato	x: speed, y: depth
05	Tone portamento + volume slide	xy: as 0A
06	Vibrato + volume slide	xy: as 0A
07	Tremolo	x: speed, y: depth
08	Set panning	xx: 00 left, 80 centre, FF right
09	Sample offset	xx: start at xx × 256 frames
0A	Volume slide	x: up, y: down (per tick)
0B	Jump to pattern	xx: pattern number
0C	Set volume	xx: 00–40
0D	Pattern break	xy: continue at row xy (decimal)
0E 1x / 2x	Fine portamento up / down	x: amount
0E 4x / 7x	Vibrato / tremolo waveform	0 sine, 1 ramp, 2 square
0E 5x	Set finetune	x: 0–F, 8 = none
0E 6x	Pattern loop	0: set loop start, x: repeat x times
0E 8x	Set panning, coarse	x: 0 left – F right
0E 9x	Retrigger	x: every x ticks
0E Ax / Bx	Fine volume up / down	x: amount
0E Cx	Note cut	x: at tick x
0E Dx	Note delay	x: start the row x ticks late
0E Ex	Pattern delay	x: hold the row x extra rows
0F	Speed / BPM	01–1F: speed, 20–FF: BPM
10	Global volume (Gxx)	xx: 00–40

CC	Effect	Parameter
11	Global volume slide (Hxy)	x: up, y: down
14	Key off (Kxx)	xx: at tick xx
19	Panning slide (Pxy)	x: right, y: left
1B	Multi retrigger (Rxy)	x: volume change, y: interval in ticks
1D	Tremor (Txy)	x+1 ticks on, y+1 ticks off
21 1x / 2x	Extra fine portamento up / down	x: amount

Example: `C-4 01 0C20` plays instrument 01 at half volume; `--- 00 0F08` sets the speed to 8 on that row.

Sound commands (filter, distortion, accent)

Four sound commands change the sound of a channel while the pattern plays. They work on synth instruments and on samples. The value `vv` is a normal number from 00 to 64, not hex.

Command	What it does	Values
`0Xvv`	Filter cutoff	00 = closed, 64 = fully open
`0Zvv`	Filter resonance	00 = none, 64 = most
`0Yvv`	Distortion	00 = clean, 64 = most drive
`0Vvv`	Accent: the note starts louder with the filter opened up, settling over about 150 ms	00 = off, 64 = most

- **Typing them:** in the effect column, type `0`, then the letter **X**, **Z**, **Y** or **V**, then the two digits. Example: `C-4 09 0X20` plays instrument 09 with the filter well closed.
- **Sweeps:** put a row of `0X` commands with rising values under each other (`0X10`, `0X20`, `0X30` ...). The filter glides between them, so it doesn't step or click.
- **How long they last:** a command stays on its channel until the next command of the same kind, or until playback is started again. Then the instrument's own settings take over.
- **Back to normal:** `0X64` opens the filter, `0Z00`, `0Y00` and `0V00` turn the others off.

Instruments page

There are 16 instrument slots, 01–10 (hex). Pick a slot in the list on the left or in the INSTRUMENT SLOT grid, then press **LOAD** to put a sample in it.

Loading samples

- **LOAD** opens a file dialog. It remembers the last folder you loaded from until the program is closed, on both this page and SAMPLE EDIT.
- Select several files at once to fill consecutive slots, starting at the selected one.
- You can also drag audio files from Windows onto the window.
- Supported formats: WAV, AIFF, FLAC, Ogg Vorbis and MP3, mono or stereo, up to 2 minutes. Amiga samples from ProTracker and OctaMED disks also load: IFF 8SVX (.iff, .8svx, including Fibonacci-compressed and stereo files, with their loop and name; they always load at full volume, like in ProTracker) and raw signed 8-bit samples (.raw, .smp, .sam, .snd or no extension), which are played at 16574 Hz like ProTracker's C-3.
- **DISCARD** empties the selected slot.
- Double-click a slot to hear it. With EDIT off, the computer keys also play the selected instrument.
- Double-click the name field at the top to rename the instrument.

Settings

Setting	Range	What it does
VOLUME	0–64	The instrument's own volume
TRANSPOSE	−48 to +48	Shifts the pitch in semitones
FINE TUNE	−128 to +127	Fine pitch, 1/128 of a semitone per step
LOOP	ON/OFF	Repeats the loop area set on SAMPLE EDIT while the note plays
PING PONG	ON/OFF	The loop plays forwards and backwards in turn
REVERSE	ON/OFF	Plays the whole sample backwards without changing the file

SAMPLE INFO shows length (frames), sample rate, bit depth, channels and size. The bar under the settings shows the file the sample came from.

Built-in synth (SYNTH 1)

Any instrument slot can be a small synth instead of a sample. On the Instruments page, set **SOURCE** to **SYNTH 1** (the other choices are SAMPLE, SYNTH 2 and MIDI).

Setting	What it does	Range
SINE, TRIANGLE, SAW, SQUARE, NOISE	The waveform: one looping cycle, like the chip sounds in Amiga modules. C-4 plays middle C.	–

Setting	What it does	Range
ATTACK, DECAY, RELEASE	The envelope, in milliseconds	ms
SUSTAIN	The level a held note stays at until a note-off (`===`), a new note or `ECx` . 0 gives plucked notes that die away by themselves.	0–64
CUTOFF	Resonant low-pass filter	0–127, 127 = open
RESONANCE	How much the filter rings	0–127
DISTORTION	Drive into a soft clipper, level-matched so it doesn't just get louder	0–64, 0 = clean
ACCENT	Each note starts louder with the filter opened up, settling over about 150 ms, like the accent on a TB-303. Easiest to hear with the cutoff partly closed.	0–64

- Moving a slider is heard at once, also on notes that are already playing.
- Sliders: click or drag, mouse wheel for fine steps, double-click resets.
- All effect commands work on a synth as on a sample. The sound commands `0X` , `0Z` , `0Y` and `0V` change it from the pattern (see Sound commands).
- Setting SOURCE back to SAMPLE brings back the sample the slot had before it became a synth or MIDI (as long as no other sample was loaded); a slot that never had one is cleared so you can load a sample.
- Synth settings are saved in modules and in host projects.

MIDI LEARN: knobs on your MIDI keyboard

Each synth slider can follow a knob on your MIDI keyboard, also while the pattern plays and when another instrument is selected.

1. Right-click a synth slider and choose **MIDI LEARN**. The slider shows a red **LEARN**.
2. Turn a knob on your MIDI keyboard. The slider now shows the knob, for example **CC 74**, and follows it.
3. Each synth slot has its own knobs, so two synths can be played with different knobs.
4. One knob moves one slider only. Learning a knob that is already in use takes it away from the old slider.
5. Right-click → **FORGET KNOB** removes the knob from a slider.
6. The knobs listen on the MIDI CHANNEL set on the MIDI / AUDIO page, and are saved in the module.

SYNTH 2

SYNTH 2 is a bigger synth with two oscillators, an LFO and its own chorus, delay and reverb, played with round knobs. On the Instruments page, set **SOURCE** to **SYNTH 2**.

Patches

- ◀ / ▶ step through the patches. **PATCHES** opens the list: TRANCE, ITALO DISCO, 80S and YOUR PATCHES.
- There are 26 factory patches, for example supersaw, pluck, gated pad, acid bass, hoover, octave bass, brass, poly stab, choir, space bell, Juno pad and sweep pads.
- **SAVE PATCH** saves the knobs under a name in `Documents\Four Tracker\Synth 2 Patches`, one `.ft2patch` file per patch. The files can be copied or shared with others.

The knobs

Group	Knobs	What they do
OSC 1	WAVE, PW	Saw, pulse, triangle or sine. PW shapes every wave (and OSC 2 too): pulse width on PULSE, a shifted second saw on SAW, a skewed peak on TRI, phase distortion on SINE. 50 % is the plain wave.
OSC 2	WAVE, SEMI, FINE, MIX	Also noise. SEMI −24 to +24 semitones, FINE ±50 cents, MIX from OSC 1 to OSC 2.
FILTER	CUTOFF, RESO, ENV AMT, F.DECAY	Resonant low-pass with its own envelope: ENV AMT opens the filter at each note, F.DECAY closes it again.
LFO	SHAPE, SYNC, RATE	Sine, triangle, saw or square. SYNC: FREE (uses RATE), 1/16, 1/8, 1/4, 1/2, 1 BAR, 2 BARS, 1 PATT, 2 PATT.
AMP	ATTACK, DECAY, SUSTAIN, RELEASE	The volume envelope.
LFO TO	PITCH, PWM, FILTER	How much the LFO moves the pitch, the PW (on every wave) and the filter.
CHORUS	MIX	A wide, moving chorus.
DELAY	TIME, FEEDBACK, MIX	Ping-pong echo. TIME is in notes (1/16 to 1 BAR) at the song's tempo.
REVERB	SIZE, MIX	Room size and how much reverb.

- With SYNC the LFO follows the tempo and starts with the pattern. **1 PATT** or **2 PATT** gives one slow sweep over one or two whole patterns.
- The chorus, delay and reverb run on the track the synth plays on, so echoes and reverb ring on after the note.
- Drag a knob up or down (Shift = fine), use the mouse wheel, or double-click to go back to the default.
- **Right-click a knob → MIDI LEARN** works on every knob, the same way as on SYNTH 1.
- The sound commands `0X`, `0Z`, `0Y` and `0V` work on SYNTH 2 too.
- The knobs, the patch name and the MIDI knobs are saved in the module.

MIDI instruments

A slot can play an external synth or another program instead of making sound itself. On the Instruments page, set **SOURCE** to **MIDI**: the slot's notes are sent out as MIDI.

- **MIDI CHANNEL** (1–16) is the channel the notes are sent on. **PROGRAM** is optional and is sent before the first note.
- **Standalone:** choose the MIDI output device on the MIDI / AUDIO page.
- **Plugin:** the notes go to the host. Route the track's MIDI output to another instrument there.
- C-4 is MIDI note 60. Transpose and the channel's PITCH move it.
- Velocity comes from the volume: the `0C` command and the channel's VOL.
- A note-off is sent by `===`, a new note on the channel, `ECx`, `K` / `14xx`, or stopping.

Sample Edit page

Sample Edit shows the selected instrument's waveform, where you set the playable part, the loop and make destructive edits.

Markers in the waveform

- **S** and **E** (start and end) set which part of the sample is played. Drag them, or type values in START / END.
- The light area marked **LOOP** is the loop. Drag its edges, or drag the bar at the top to move the whole loop. LOOP START / LOOP END take exact values.
- Click to place the cursor (CURRENT POS). Drag to select an area. Shift+click extends the selection.
- While a sound plays, a white line shows where it is.

Buttons

Button	What it does
SET START / SET END	Moves S or E to the cursor
SET LOOP	Makes the selection the loop (or cursor → end) and turns LOOP on
PLAY LOOP	Plays only the loop, until pressed again
LOOP MODE: FORWARD / REVERSE	The loop runs forwards, or backwards
CUT / COPY / PASTE	Cuts or copies the selection; pastes at the cursor
FADE IN / FADE OUT	Fades the selection, or the whole sample if nothing is selected
NORMALIZE	Raises the level so the loudest point is at full scale
REVERSE	Turns the selection (or whole sample) backwards for good
MIX	Mixes another slot's sample in (see below)

Button	What it does
RE-SAMPLE	Turns a pattern, or part of it, into a sample in this slot (see below)
ZOOM +/–, FIT, SCROLL	Zooms in, out, shows all, and scrolls. Ctrl+mouse wheel also zooms.

You can also play the sample from the computer keys on this page: hold a key and a looped sample keeps looping until you let go. CUT, PASTE, FADE, NORMALIZE and REVERSE change the sample itself; there is no undo for these, so save a module first.

MIX two samples

MIX works like in OctaMED: pick another slot from the list, and its sample is mixed into this one from the cursor, or from the start of the selection.

- The mixed-in sample keeps its own pitch and can make this sample longer.
- The result is stereo if either sample is stereo.
- It is scaled down only if the result would clip.

RE-SAMPLE: a pattern becomes a sample

Pick an empty instrument slot, go to SAMPLE EDIT and press **RE-SAMPLE**. In the window you choose:

Setting	What it does
PATTERN	Which pattern to play (the one in view to begin with)
WHOLE PATTERN / ROWS	All of it, or FROM ROW – TO ROW
USE BLOCK	Takes the rows and tracks of the block you marked in the pattern
ALL TRACKS / CHOOSE TRACKS	All tracks, or only the ones you tick in the 16 squares
ENDING: LOOP	Exactly as long as the rows, and loops without a seam: the rows are played twice and the second time is kept, just as you hear the pattern when it loops. The loop is set over the whole sample.
ENDING: CUT	Exactly as long as the rows, cut off at the end
ENDING: RING OUT	Longer: reverb, delay and long notes ring out after the last row (up to 4 seconds, until it is silent) – for one-shots, fills and endings
NORMALIZE	Turns the loudest point up to just under full scale

Enter re-samples, **Esc** cancels. The sample is stereo, at the program's sample rate, taken before MASTER volume (turned down only if it would clip), and named like `RS P02 ALL` or `RS P02 1+3`. It is rendered in the background, so a song that is playing isn't disturbed. VST effects and MIDI instruments are not in the sample; SYNTH 1, SYNTH 2 (with its chorus, delay and reverb) and all samples are. If the slot isn't empty, the button says **RE-SAMPLE (REPLACE)**.

Keyboard on the waveform

Click the waveform first. A white frame shows that it is active. Then:

Keys	Action
Ctrl+A	Select the whole sample
Ctrl+C / Ctrl+X / Ctrl+V	Copy, cut and paste. Paste goes in at the cursor.
Delete	Remove the selection without touching the clipboard
Esc	Clear the selection

Clicking elsewhere on the page, or changing page, turns this off, so the keys play notes again.

Song / Pattern page

This page starts and stops playback and saves your work as a module: one `.ftm` file with all patterns and all samples.

Button	What it does
START PATTERN	Starts the selected pattern from row 0
STOP PATTERN	Stops playback
NEW MODULE	Asks: **Empty** (clears every pattern and sample), **Demo song** (loads the built-in demo) or **Cancel**
LOAD MODULE	Opens a `.ftm` module, or an old `.ftps` pattern set
SAVE MODULE	Saves everything to a `.ftm` file
LOAD PATTERN	Loads a single pattern (`.ftpat`) into an empty pattern, with its instruments
SAVE PATTERN	Saves the pattern in view as a `.ftpat` file, with the instruments it uses
PATTERN LENGTH	Rows in the current pattern, 1–256 (default 64)

What a module holds: all 64 patterns, all samples, instrument settings, speed, BPM, loop, the channel mixer and, in the FX version, the VST effects (each one's settings, ON/OFF and the chaining). Loading a module, NEW MODULE or the demo song replaces the effects in use. MIDI mapping and sound card settings are not part of it; they belong to the program.

- Old `.ftps` pattern sets hold patterns only. Loading one keeps the samples you already have.
- You can drag a `.ftm` file onto the window to load it.
- LOAD and SAVE start in `Documents\Four Tracker`. The demo is in `Documents\Four Tracker\Demo`, with its sounds as WAV files in `Samples`.
- **The standalone program does not remember the song when it closes** – it always starts with the demo. If the song has changes that aren't saved (since the last SAVE, LOAD or NEW),

closing the program asks first: **Save...** (saves the module, then closes), **Don't save** or **Cancel**. As a plugin, the song is stored in the host project.

Single patterns (.ftpat)

A pattern file holds one pattern together with the instruments and samples it uses, so it sounds the same in any song and on anyone's computer – to share with others, or to keep a fill, a beat or a break for later.

- **SAVE PATTERN** saves the pattern in view, in `Documents\Four Tracker\Patterns`.
- **LOAD PATTERN** puts it into the pattern in view if that is empty, otherwise into the next empty pattern (the view goes there). It never writes over a pattern, and **Ctrl+Z** takes it out again.
- Its instruments go into empty slots and the notes are renumbered to match. A sound that is already in the song is used again instead of loaded twice. If there aren't enough empty slots, it says so and changes nothing.
- **Your song keeps its own SPEED and BPM**: tempo commands (Fxx) in the pattern are taken out. A pattern with more tracks than the song adds tracks.

Block page

F3 cuts, F4 copies and F5 pastes, as in ProTracker: with **Shift** it works on one track (channel), with **Ctrl** on the whole block.

Keys	Button	Works on
Shift+F3 / F4 / F5	CUT / COPY / PASTE TRACK	The channel the cursor is in, all rows
Ctrl+F3 / F4 / F5	CUT / COPY / PASTE BLOCK	The whole pattern: all tracks, all rows (64 rows = 4 bars). Paste also takes the pattern length.
Ctrl+X / C / V	–	A marked area (Shift+arrows or mouse drag)

TRANSPOSE TRACK moves every note in the track the cursor is in, in the pattern in view, a note or an octave at a time:

Keys	Button	Moves the notes
Shift+1	UP NOTE	One note (semitone) up
Shift+2	DOWN NOTE	One note down
Ctrl+1	UP OCTAVE	One octave (12 notes) up
Ctrl+2	DOWN OCTAVE	One octave down

Instruments, effects and note-offs stay as they are, and the other tracks are not touched. If a note would go below C-0 or above B-7, nothing is changed and the title bar says so. **Ctrl+Z** undoes a transpose. The keys work on every page with the pattern, also when EDIT is off.

To make a variation of pattern 00: stand in 00 and press **Ctrl+F4**, switch to 01, press **Ctrl+F5**, and edit the copy. **Ctrl+Z** undoes a paste. The buttons on this page do the same as the keys; in

some hosts Ctrl+F4 is taken by the host, so use the button there.

VST effects

The standalone program (FX version) can put three VST3 effects on each track and three on the master. Inside a host, use the host's own effects instead.

Finding your effects

1. Press **FX** in the title bar, or **F8**, to open the VST EFFECTS page.
2. The standard VST3 folder is there from the start. **ADD FOLDER** adds another folder; sub-folders are searched too.
3. Press **SCAN**. Instruments are left out of the list.

On a track

- Under each channel strip are three lists, **FX1**, **FX2** and **FX3**. The sound goes through FX1, then FX2, then FX3.
- **E** opens the effect's own window. **ON / OFF** switches the effect on and off (bypass).
- The lists don't keep the keyboard, so Enter still starts and stops the pattern after you pick an effect.

On the master

The last row on the VST EFFECTS page, **MASTER**, has three effects for the whole mix – for example a compressor, an EQ or a limiter over the whole song. They come after all the tracks and their chaining, and before MASTER volume and FADE OUT.

Chaining tracks

Under the pattern, each track has a list: **CHn > OUT** or **CHn > INTO CHx FX**.

- Pick **CH2 > INTO CH1 FX**, and CH2's sound goes on through CH1's effects after its own. One reverb or delay can then be shared by several tracks.
- Chains can be longer, for example CH3 into CH2 into CH1. A loop is refused.
- Removing a track, or **NEW MODULE → Empty**, removes its effects and chaining.

Good to know

- The effects, their settings and the chaining are saved in the module (SAVE MODULE), so each song keeps its own. Loading another module, NEW MODULE or the demo song replaces them. If a module uses an effect that isn't installed on this computer, the title bar names it and the rest loads.
- The folders and the scanned list belong to the program and come back next time. The program always starts with the demo song and no effects: load your module to get its effects back.
- The 64-bit program loads 64-bit effects only, and the 32-bit program 32-bit effects only.
- If an effect crashes the program while a module is loading, the next start names it on the VST EFFECTS page. Take it out of the module (or update the effect) before you load the module

again.

- **Free effects:** the Four Tracker Effects Bundle (on the website) installs five effects made for Four Tracker, in the same look: Breakbeat Processor, FX Processor, FX Processor 2, Dynamics Processor and Graphic EQ. They follow the tracker's tempo.

MIDI / Audio page

The left half sets up the MIDI keys, the right half the sound. These settings are remembered between sessions and are not part of a module.

MIDI IN

Setting	What it does
START/STOP KEY	The key that starts/stops (default C-2). The pattern keys start one key above it. Type a note name (C-2, C#3) or a MIDI number.
LEARN	Press LEARN, then a key on your MIDI keyboard: that key becomes start/stop.
MIDI CHANNEL	OMNI listens on all channels, or pick 1–16.
MIDI START/STOP	ON: MIDI Start/Stop messages from a sequencer or clock also start and stop playback.
PATTERN SWITCH	When a new pattern takes over (see Playing live).

The black box shows which key does what, and highlights the last key you pressed – a quick way to check that the keyboard is reaching the program.

AUDIO

- **MASTER**: overall output level, 0–100. The same control is in the title bar on every page (MASTER, next to TRACKS): click - / +, drag the number, use the mouse wheel, or double-click for 80.
- **FADE OUT**: the fade out key (default C-6; LEARN, then press a key) and how long the fade lasts, 1–16 bars (default 4).
- **Standalone:** choose the driver type (ASIO, WASAPI or DirectSound), the output device, sample rate and buffer size, and tick which MIDI inputs to use. ASIO appears only if the program was built with the ASIO SDK. A smaller buffer gives a faster response to the keys but needs more from the computer.
- **Plugin:** the host owns the sound card and buffer. **FOLLOW HOST TEMPO** ON makes the tracker use the host's BPM instead of its own.

REC: recording your jam

In the standalone program, **REC** and **STOP** in the title bar (or **F3** and **F4**) record everything you hear while you jam: the tracks, their VST effects, the master effects, MASTER volume and FADE, the pattern switching from the MIDI keyboard and CHORD. It goes straight to a file in the

background, so a long jam neither fills the memory nor makes the sound stutter. The REC button turns red and shows the time.

STOP ends the recording and opens a menu:

Choice	What it does
SAVE AS MP3 (320 KBPS)	Small file, good for sharing
SAVE AS FLAC (LOSSLESS)	The full quality, about half the size of WAV
SAVE AS WAV (24-BIT)	The full quality, uncompressed
LISTEN	Opens the recording in your computer's player
THROW AWAY AND RECORD AGAIN	Made a mistake? Take it again
THROW AWAY	Deletes the recording

- Jams are saved in `Documents\Four Tracker\Recordings`, with a name like `Jam 2026-11-02 21-30`.
- While a recording waits to be saved, the STOP button says **SAVE** and opens the same menu. REC asks before it throws an unsaved recording away.
- If the program closes before a recording is saved, it is kept as `Unsaved jam <date>.wav` in the same folder.
- Sound from external MIDI synths is not in the recording, because it doesn't go through Four Tracker.
- As a plugin there is no REC: the host records the track.

Keyboard shortcuts

Keys	Action
Enter	Start / stop
Esc	Stop
Space	EDIT on / off
Z S X D C V … / Q 2 W 3 E …	Play or write notes (two octaves)
1 or `	Note off (note column)
0–9, A–F	Instrument and effect digits
F1 / F2	Octave down / up
F6 / F7	SPACING down / up (0–32)
F3 / F4	REC / STOP: record your jam (standalone program)
Numpad + / –	Next / previous instrument

Keys	Action
Arrows, Tab, Shift+Tab, PgUp, PgDn, Home, End	Move the cursor. Up / down jump SPACING rows.
Shift + arrows	Mark an area
Delete / Insert / Backspace	Clear field / insert row / delete row
Ctrl+X / C / V	Cut / copy / paste the marked area
Shift+F3 / F4 / F5	Cut / copy / paste the track
Shift+1 / Shift+2	Transpose the track a note up / down
Ctrl+1 / Ctrl+2	Transpose the track an octave up / down
Ctrl+F3 / F4 / F5	Cut / copy / paste the whole block
Ctrl+A	Mark the whole pattern
Ctrl+Z / Ctrl+Y	Undo / redo
F9 / F10 / F11 / F12	Tracks / Instruments / Sample Edit / MIDI-Audio page. F8 opens the VST EFFECTS page.

Troubleshooting

Problem	Try this
No sound	On MIDI / AUDIO, check the output device and that MASTER is above 0. Check that no channel says MUTE and that VOL is above 0.
The MIDI keyboard does nothing	On MIDI / AUDIO, tick the keyboard under the MIDI inputs (standalone). Press a key: LAST KEY should change. Check that MIDI CHANNEL is OMNI or the keyboard's channel.
C-2 is not where I expect	Keyboards number octaves differently. Use LEARN and press the key you want as start/stop.
Typing does not write notes	Turn EDIT on (red), and put the cursor in the note column.
Sound crackles or lags	Choose ASIO if you have it, or raise the buffer size on MIDI / AUDIO.
My song was gone after restarting	The standalone program always starts with the demo song. Save with SAVE MODULE (it asks when you close with unsaved changes), and load the `.ftm` file again.
There is no REC button	REC is in the standalone program only. In a host, record the track in the host.
A loaded pattern plays at the wrong tempo	It plays at your song's SPEED and BPM on purpose (tempo commands are taken out). Change SPEED / BPM if you want its original tempo.

Problem	Try this
A re-sampled loop has a bump at the loop point	Use ENDING: LOOP, not CUT or RING OUT.
The plugin does not show up in the host	Check that you copied the right version (32-bit host needs the 32-bit plugin), into the folder the host scans, and run a plugin rescan. Older hosts may only support VST2 (`Four Tracker.dll`).
Ctrl+F4 closes a window in the host	The host uses that key. Use the CUT/COPY/PASTE BLOCK buttons on the BLOCK page.
"Windows protected your PC"	Click More info → Run anyway. The program is not signed.