

M-Audio Fast Track USB & Magix Music Maker

Quick Start

(Ten easy steps to becoming a Rock Star)

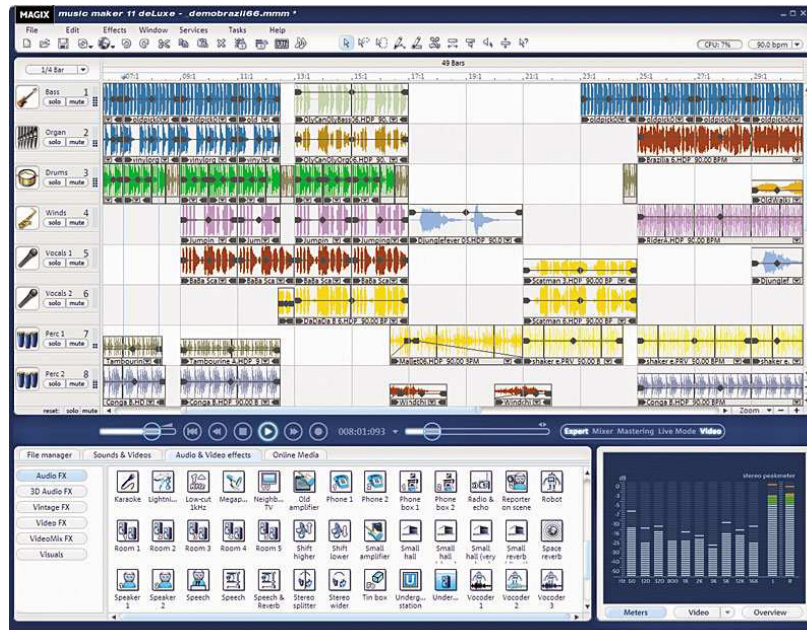
By Martin Zinaich
7/24/2006

Introduction:



M-Audio's Fast Track is a USB Musical Interface designed for recording to your Personal Computer. Fast Track USB has an input for instruments like guitar, bass and keyboards, plus a microphone input for recording vocals or other acoustic sounds. The included GT Player Express software gives you killer effects and virtual stomp boxes.

http://www.m-audio.com/products/en_us/FastTrackUSB-main.html



Magix's Music Maker deluxe allows creation of soundtracks for CDs, presentations, and websites, or simply for the joy of making music. It is a very capable recoding software package offering numerous features.

<http://site.magix.net>

Together these two products offer a wide array of functions and features at a very reasonable cost. The trick is setting them up to work together. There is no easy step-by-step documentation and that is why I'm writing this quick start. So if you want to spend more time making music and less time setting up to make music... read on – or is that Rock On!

Requirements:

This quick start was put together using the following hardware and software:

M-Audio Fast Track Audio 5.10.00.5080
 M-Audio Fast Track Firmware 1.0.1.9
 Magix Music Maker 10 DeLuxe 10.00
 AMD Athlon XP +2900 CPU
 USB 2.0

Step 1

If not already installed, install Magix Music Maker. Make sure you can run it and load a sample file. If everything works unload Magix Music Maker.

Next we need to start with the Fast Track USB drivers and software. Download the latest driver and software package from <http://www.m-audio.com/index.php?do=support.drivers>. All the latest Fast Track drives include the D-Sound GT Player Express VST. (Note: Virtual Studio Technology is an audio plug-in architecture allowing you to add effects to your music without ever leaving the digital domain.) We need this to get our modeling “Stomp Boxes” available in the Magix recording software. Install the software and drivers for Fast Track. After installation you may want to verify the following file and location on your PC “C:\Program Files\VSTplugins\DSound\GT Player Express VST.dll”. Your VST path may differ and to find your default VST path do the following:

To determine the default directory for VST plug-ins on your machine:

1. Open the Windows Registry Editor: choose Start > Run, type regedit in the Open text box, and click OK.
2. Navigate to HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE/Software/VST.
3. Click on the string VSTPluginsPath. The value listed for this string is the default location for VST plug-ins on your machine.
4. Close the Registry Editor.

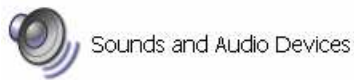
Step 2

Now plug in your Fast Track USB device to a USB port on your PC. Please note for a real time experience with minimal latency you will need to have a fast computer with USB 2.0 ports. Once the unit is plugged into the PC you should see it power up (blue light on device lights up) and the computer should recognize the device (follow the installation instructions that came with Fast Track if you have any problems). To verify all is recognized go to Control Panel (Start Menu / Settings / Control Panel). You should see an M-Audio device icon:

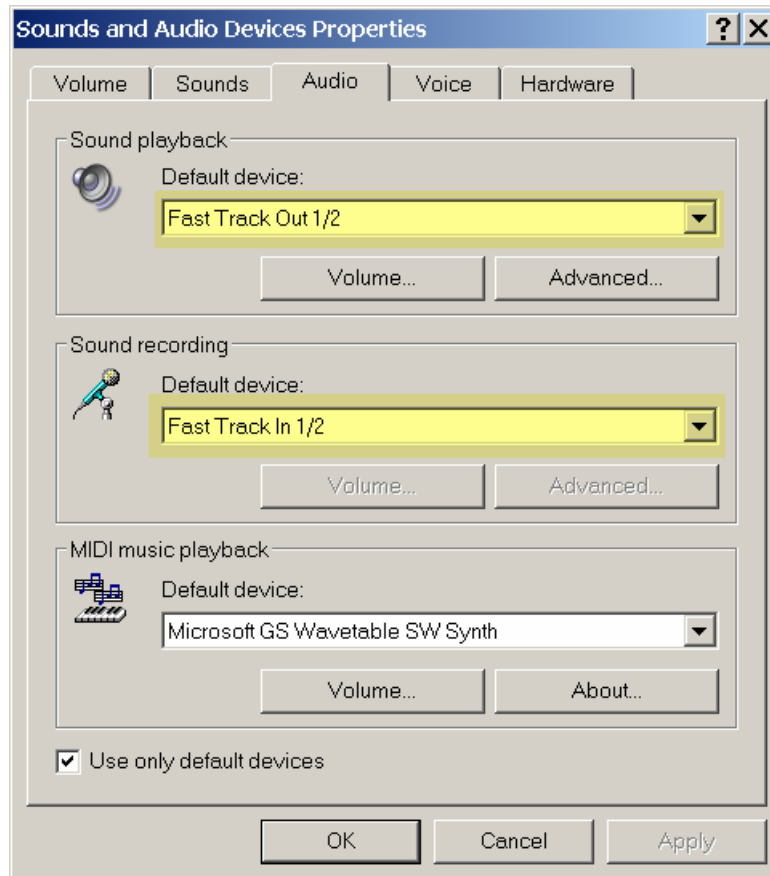


M-Audio Fast Track USB

In this icon you can adjust the performance settings for Latency. Now open the “Sounds and Audio” icon:



In this icon under the Audio Tab you should see and set both “Sound Playback” and “Sound Record” to the Fast Track device as follows:



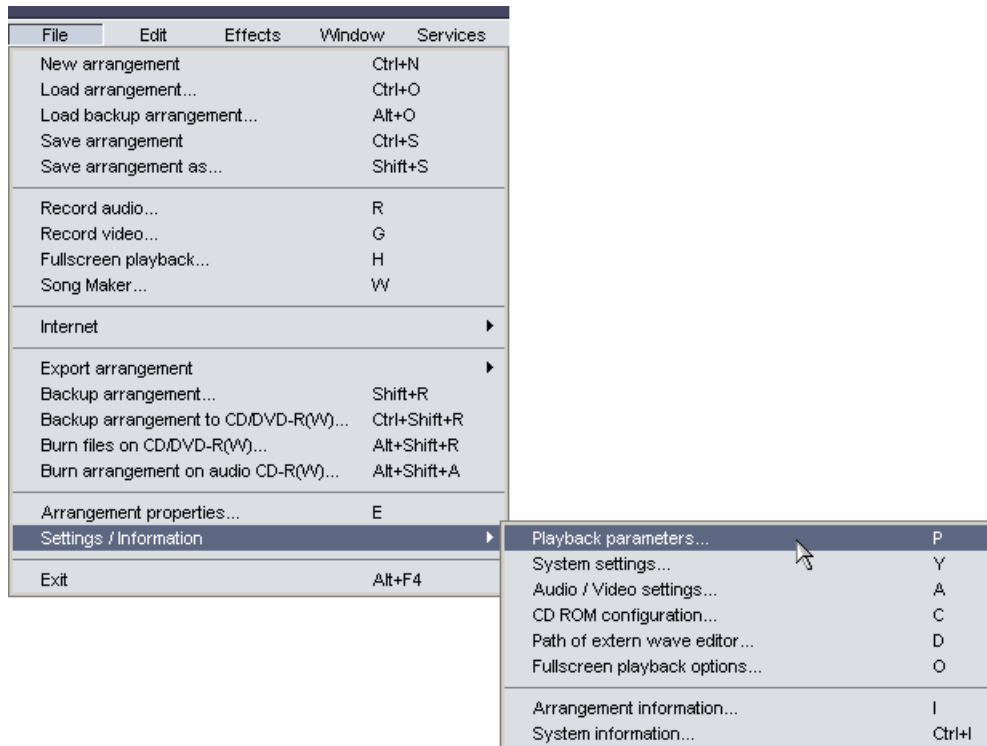
It is important that you set the Sound Playback to the Fast Track device and not your PC speakers. You can not record using the modeling and play back a backing tack in Magix at the same time unless you use the Fast Track device for both record and playback.

Step 3

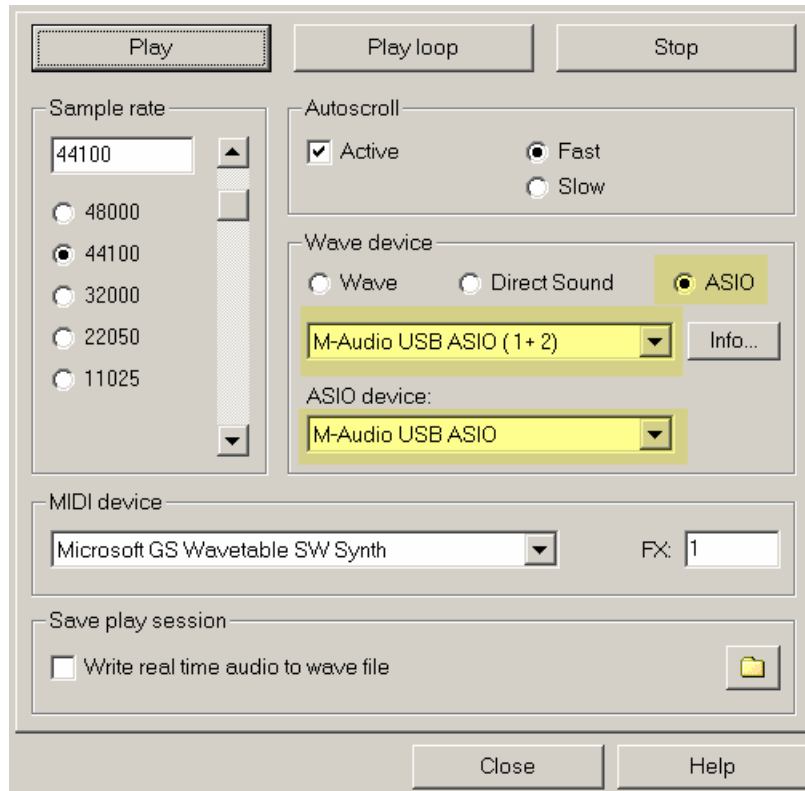
Finish the hardware configuration by plugging an instrument and headphones into the fast track device. If you are going to use a guitar (highly recommended!), plug it into the guitar port on the back of the device and set the line level button next to the port for guitar. Also for guitar set the “mic input” knob on the front of the device to full counter clockwise (off); set the “mix control” full counter clockwise (Input); press out the monitor button (Stereo); adjust the output button for a comfortable level. Once adjusted you should hear the raw sound of your guitar. If you do hear your guitar adjust the “Mix” control fully clockwise (PlayBack). The Playback feed is what we will use to hear a backing track and the GT-Player Express Stomp Boxes via Magix Music Maker in the following steps.

Step 4

Start Magix Music Maker and set the “Playback Parameters” using the File pull down menu in Magix:

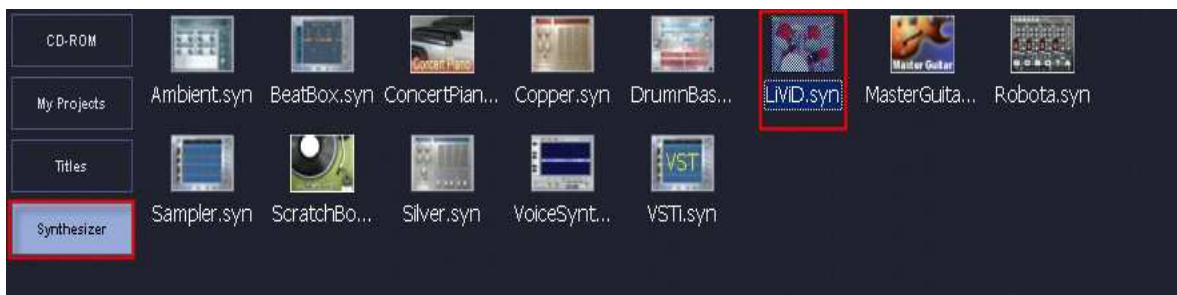


Set the WAV device to Fast Track ASIO as follows:



Step 5

Now let's create a backing track inside of Magix to play along with as we test the modeling effects of D-Sound. For this quick start I am using Magix Music Maker 10 Deluxe and this might vary slightly depending on the version you are using. Inside of Magix's file manager windows select the "Synthesizer" box and then the LiVID drum set as follows:



Pick a rhythm type and save:



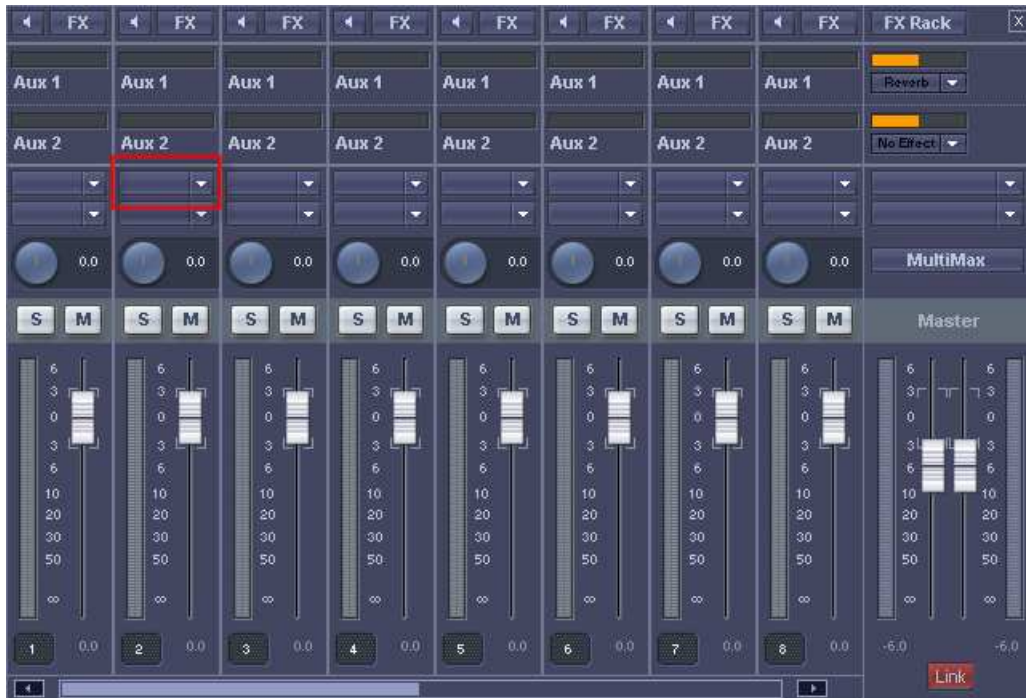
You should now have a drum beat on the first track:



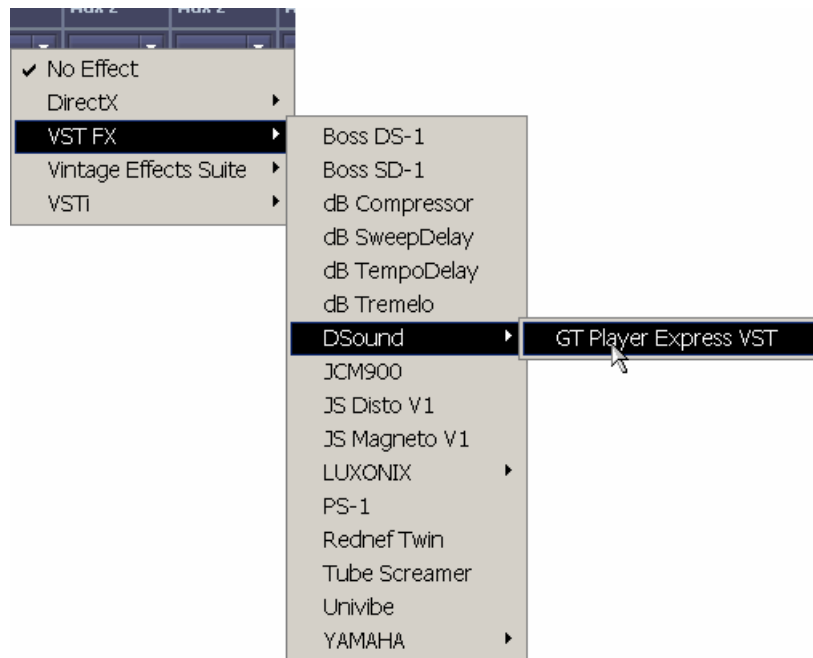
Step 6

We are finally ready to use the VST and start playing through the Stomp Boxes. It is important to note that you can only use the Stomp Boxes if you are either recording or playing back in Magix. This is why we created a backing beat and as you will see we can play back and record through our Stomp Boxes at the same time.

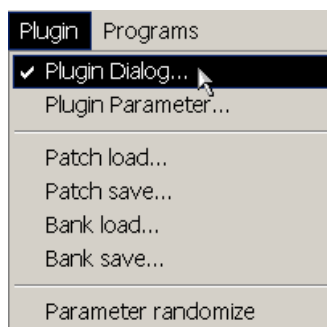
Open the “Mixer” in Magix and select Track 2’s channel effect pull down as follows:



This should open the VST selection and list all available VST's installed on your PC. We are looking for the DSound GT Player Express:



Click GT Player Express and you should see a VST Window. Change this Window to the Dialog view if needed by clicking on the “Plugin” pull down:



You should now see the Graphical GT Player Express. Find a program by turning the wheel and then select it by clicking the “load” button:



You can now close this window and you'll note “GT Player” is listed on Channel 2's channel effect:



Step 7

To be able to listen to this model (effect) you need to turn on Channel 2's live monitoring which activates the "low latency" ASIO monitoring. Click the speaker button on channel 2 to activate "low latency" monitoring. Instead of the objects, the channel now plays the audio signal arriving at the sound card's input – through all the channel's effects and without latency! This also applies to the AUX and master effects.

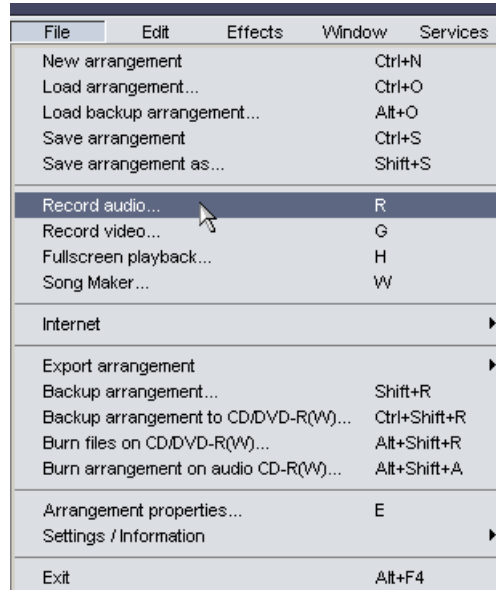


Press the Magix Play button to start the drum track and to listen to your guitar via the Stomp Box:

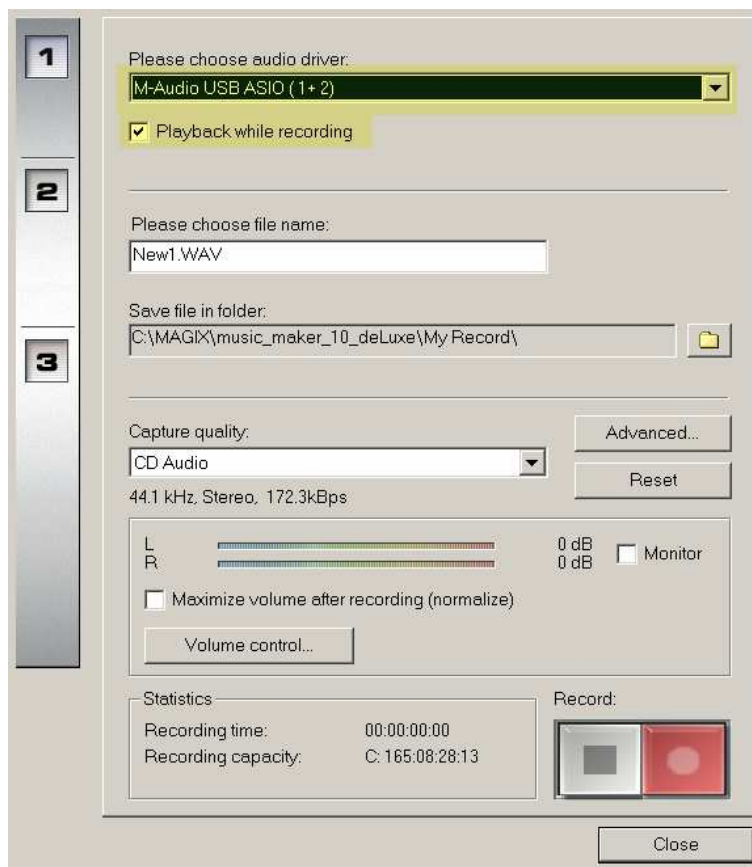


Step 8

Now the only step left is to record yourself. From the File pull down menu select the Record Audio option:



Next select the “M-Audio ASIO” driver and check off “Playback while recording”.
Click Record when you are ready!



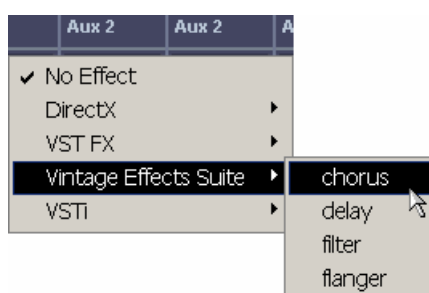
Step 9

Have fun! Write great songs! If you hit it big and this quick start helped you I expect a Backstage Pass when you tour!

Step 10

Don't forget about Magix's own Stomp Boxes (as well as other VTS effects) all work great using Fast Track and Magix's live monitoring.

From a channel effects pull down (See Step 6 above) select the following



You have access to Magix's vintage effects stomp boxes

