

Writing a Piece: A Step-By-Step Example

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We are now going to write a piece using Visual Composer. The music we have chosen is an excerpt from the song "Happy Birthday to You".

Opening a new file

1. Press the  key to open the File menu.
2. Choose the command New and press the ↵ key to confirm.
   A new and empty file page is displayed on the screen.

Note that the grid shows four beats per measure. The song "Happy Birthday to You" has three beats per measure. We are therefore going to change the grid accordingly.

Changing the grid

1. Press the  key.
   This opens the Display menu .
2. Press the ↓ key until the command Beats per Measure is highlighted.
3. Press the ↵ key to confirm.
   A dialog box then appears asking you how many beats you want each measure to have.

4. Type the number 3.
   The number 3 is entered into the dialog box.

5. Press the ↵ key to confirm.
   The grid now shows 3 beats per measure.

Everything is now ready for you to enter the song. We are going to begin by entering the melody, after which we will enter the accompaniment.

Entering the melody

The pen is located at the beginning of the 1st measure, on a C. The chosen song begins on the 3rd beat of this measure, on a G . We are now going to move the pen to the 3rd beat and then place it on the G .

1. Press the → key eight times to put the pen on the 2nd dotted line.
   This line marks the beginning of the 3rd beat.

2. Press the ↑ key seven times to place the pen on the G above middle C. Middle C is indicated on the piano keyboard by a grey mark.
   Watch the names of the notes as they change in the box under the title of the piece in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.

3. Hold down the ⇧ key and press the → key three times.
   You have just entered the first note of the melody: a G three ticks long.

4. Release the ⇧ key. Hold it down again and press the → key one more time.
   You have now entered the 2nd note of the melody: a G 1 tick long.

NOTE: Should you make a mistake, you can delete a note by placing the pen to its immediate right and pressing the ⌫ key .

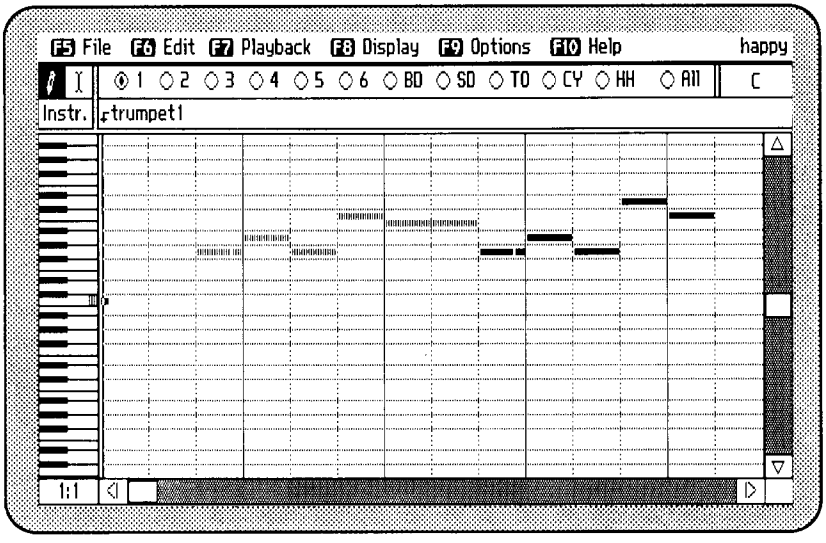
The pen is now placed at the beginning of the 2nd measure, on G .

1. Press the ↑ key twice to move the pen up to A .
2. Holding down the ⇧ key, press the → key 4 times in a row and then let go of the ⇧ key.
   You have entered an A 1 beat long.
3. Press the ↓ key twice to place the pen on G and enter a note 1 beat long (4 ticks).
4. Press the ↑ key 5 times to move the pen to C and enter a note 1 beat long (4 ticks).
5. Press the ↓ key once so that the pen is placed on B and enter a note 2 beats long (8 ticks).

The pen is now placed in the 3rd measure, at the beginning of the 3rd beat. If you have followed the exercise carefully, you will now know how to enter notes of different lengths and at different heights.

All the other notes in this melody will be written in the same way: for a one tick note, press the horizontal arrow key once; for a four tick note, press this key four times. To enter two individual notes of the same pitch, let go of the ⇧ key between the two notes and, after you have pressed it again and are holding it down, continue to write. Visual Composer will show a small gap between these two notes found at the same height.

To finish writing the melody that we began together, add the dashes shown in the following illustration to what you have already entered on the screen.



You will now listen to the song you have entered.

Playing back

1. Press the key.
   This opens the Playback menu.
2. Press the ↓ key in order to highlight the command Play.
3. Press the ↵ key to confirm.
   You will now hear the music you just entered.

   The sound you hear is that of a piano. We are now going to replace this "piano" by a "trumpet" to give the song a different feeling.

Changing the instrument

1. Press the key to ensure that the cursor is at the beginning of the piece.
   The pen is placed on the left edge of the grid.
2. Press the key to choose the Interpretation Data Mode of operation.
   A cursor appears at the left-hand side of the interpretation data bar and the word "Instr." is highlighted in the box placed to the left of this bar.
3. Press the ↵ key to open an edit field.
   A black rectangle – the edit field – appears in the bar where the cursor was. The name of the instrument already chosen, "piano1", is shown highlighted in this rectangle.

4. Type the word "trumpet1" to replace the piano.
   The word "trumpet1" replaces the word "piano1".

5. Press the [↵] key to close the edit field and confirm your instruction.

6. Play back your melody once again.
   It is now played by a trumpet.

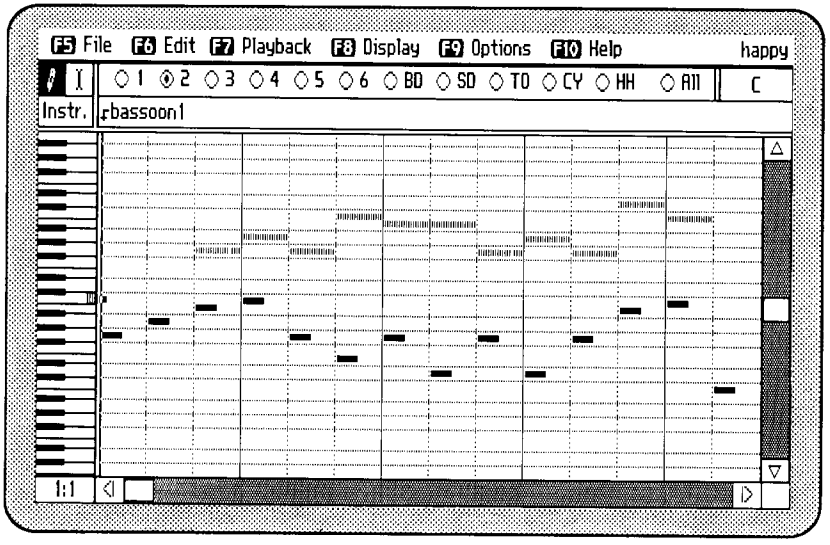
You would probably like this song even better if it had an accompaniment.

Entering the bass line accompaniment

The notes indicated in the following illustration represent the bass line accompaniment. Before you begin to enter these notes, you must change the voice number so that these new notes will not replace the notes already entered.

1. Hold down the [Alt] key and press the [2] key in order to change the active voice.
   The indicator for voice No. 2 is highlighted and the notes entered in voice No. 1 are dimmed.

2. After having re-activated the Write Mode ([F1]), carefully enter the notes in the following illustration:



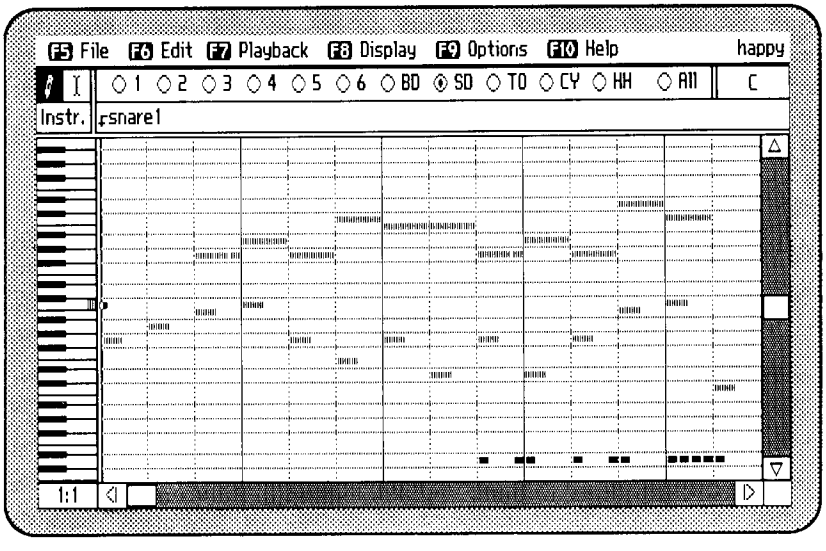
3. Now change the preset instrument (Piano1) to a bassoon (Bassoon1) applying the same method used earlier to change the piano to a trumpet in the first voice.

4. Listen to the results.

To finish off, we are going to add a touch of the snare drum to this piece to liven it up a bit. To enter percussion notes, you must always choose the percussion voice that corresponds to the instrument of your choice.

Entering percussion accompaniment

1. Hold down the [Alt] key and press the [8] key.
   The [8] key corresponds to the snare drum voice, indicated by the symbol SD on the screen. The SD voice indicator is now highlighted and the notes entered in voices No. 1 and No. 2 are dimmed. The name of the instrument displayed in the data bar is now "Snare1".
2. Carefully enter the notes in the illustration below.
3. Listen to the results.



Your piece now has three voices. Before you go any further, it would be a good idea to save this piece to make sure you don't loose all the work you have done.

Saving

1. Press the key.
   This opens the File menu.
2. Press the ↓ key 3 times to choose the command Save.
3. Press the ↵ key to confirm your choice.
   A dialog box will appear asking you to name your piece. The name you choose will be the title of the open file.
4. Type a name.
   This name is entered in the dialog box.
5. Press the ↵ key to confirm.
   Your piece is now saved in a file whose title appears to the right-hand side of the menu bar.