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Soundcraft Signature MTK Recording Guide

This Soundcraft Signature MTK Recording Guide is designed to give an overview on the Signature MTK's multi-track USB functionality and how it can be used for various recording and playback applications. This guide walks through various recording and playback scenarios with different DAWs and explains how to setup your Signature MTK console, your audio drivers, and your DAW.

USB Overview

The Soundcraft Signature MTK consoles feature a USB class compliant ASIO audio interface that records multiple channels up to 48khz, 24-bit audio resolution to any DAW.

The USB port is a standard USB 2.0 connection that is compatible with any MAC® or PC as well as an iPad® (using a Camera Connectivity Kit). The Signature 12 MTK features a 14-in/12-out audio interface whilst the larger 22MTK features a 24-in/22-out audio interface.

For PCs, Soundcraft multichannel USB ASIO/WDM drivers are required (available for download on the Soundcraft website) and are used to adjust settings such as buffer depth and streaming mode. MAC® computers do not require these drivers as the Signature MTK USB audio interface uses Apple® Core Audio drivers.

Installing The Drivers (PC Only)

Soundcraft Multichannel Audio Drivers can be found on the Soundcraft website (www.soundcraft.com) under the respective product page downloads section.

The install package includes WDM and ASIO drivers for low-latency operation. The ASIO drivers include a control panel which is used to configure driver settings for best performance.

Before you install the PC drivers, connect the PC to the chosen console via USB and power up the console. Once the drivers are installed, shortcuts for the control panel are available on the desktop or under all programs- >Harman Pro->Soundcraft->Multichannel USB Audio as well as available in Windows® System Tray.

When the console is connected to the computer, taskbar icons will indicate a device has been detected; clicking the icon will open the appropriate control panel. When the drivers are installed on your PC, you will need to restart your machine for the install process to complete.

NOTE: Additional drivers are not needed for Mac as the Signature MTK uses Apple®’s Core Audio drivers for USB recording and playback.
Finding the Correct Cable

The USB port on the Soundcraft Signature series is a ‘Type B’ connector (the standard type for all peripheral devices). USB host devices use the rectangular ‘Type A’ connector. In order to achieve a connection between console and host machine, a ‘Type A to Type B’ USB cable is required.

*NOTE: USB cable quality can vary. Please ensure your USB cable’s integrity and data transfer rate for optimal performance.*

Navigating the Control Panel (PC Only)

The Soundcraft Audio Driver settings can be found in the Soundcraft USB Control Panel. Within this menu, there are options to adjust the streaming mode of the Signature Series USB audio interface and the buffer size from 64 samples up to 8192 samples. Recommended buffer size will vary depending on application, however higher buffer sizes should be used when monitoring from the DAW is not necessary. For most recording applications, a standard buffer size of 1024 samples is enough to ensure reliable operation and clean audio.

The streaming mode settings modify the behaviour of the USB driver for maximum optimization when set in conjunction with the buffer size setting. A larger buffer size results in higher latency to your DAW but provides a more robust audio stream to your PC. A smaller buffer size reduces the latency to your DAW but can result in audio glitches and errors due to memory and CPU load on your PC. To adjust the buffer size of the USB stream, both the streaming mode and the buffer size settings need to be set correctly corresponding to one another.

For example, setting the streaming mode to ‘Reliable’ and then the buffer size to 1024 samples, the system will then be running at 1024 samples and the audio will be clean. For lower buffer sizes, the streaming mode should be set to ‘Low Latency’ and the buffer size to 128 samples.

A mismatch between Streaming mode and buffer size could cause artefacts in the audio and could corrupt the audio recording. A mismatched buffer setting such as setting the streaming mode to ‘Reliable’ and the buffer size to 64 samples would result in distorted audio in your recording.
To avoid artefacts and to produce a reliable recording you should select the appropriate buffer size for the streaming mode. When a mismatch occurs, a dialogue will appear at the bottom of the control panel menu with instructions of where to go from the current setting to make a compatible setup.

**USB Send and Return Channels**

USB Send and Return channels are numbered according to console channel ledgering, so Signature 12MTK’s input channels 1-12 for example are patched to USB audio channels 1-12 and Signature 22MTK’s input channels are patched to USB audio channels 1-22.

Console channels always send their post-gain, pre-EQ signal to their respective USB channel to be picked up and recorded by the PC/MAC Via USB. The 2-track (Master Left/Right) output uses the last 2 USB channels on each console and is always actively sending post fader level down the USB stream.

Console channels can be set up to receive USB Input and can be engaged per-channel with the USB RTN button located on each channel strip.

This means that channels that have been sent to the DAW for recording can then be returned from the DAW, back through the console, converted to analogue and mixed as a standard input source. This makes things like Virtual soundcheck and playback as easy as hitting the USB return button on the desired console channels. Graphs 1 and 2 show the relationship between the input channels coming from the Mic pre, the USB Send number and subsequently the USB return number for multichannel USB playback.

| Channel 01 | M / L |
| Channel 02 | M / L |
| Channel 03 | M / L |
| Channel 04 | M / L |
| Channel 05 | M / L |
| Channel 06 | M / L |
| Channel 07/08 | M / L |
| Channel 09/10 | M / L |
| Channel 11/12 | M / L |
| Mix LR     | L     |

**GRAPH 1**
M/L: Mic/Line
Input sources on the console are split into Mic and Line input sources. Channel 1 for example features an XLR Mic and ¼” Jack line input and so the check box in Graph 1 is labeled M/L. On channel 9/10 however, the channel strip features a Mic input and a set of stereo line input jacks (split into Left and Right). Mic and L/Mono line input jack are connected to USB channel 9 but the other jack (input 10/Right) is sent down USB channel 10. This needs to be taken into consideration when sending inputs to and from the DAW as a USB send from USB out 9 will be received by the left side of channel 9/10 on the console and USB channel 10 will send down the right side of the stereo channel.

Recording the LR
As you can also see in Graph 1, the USB channels 13 and 14 (23 and 24 on 22MTK) are reserved for the LR stereo signal. This allows the user to record the final mix on the console back into the DAW for an ‘audio mix down’ or analogue summing purpose. The A/D conversion (the process of converting the analogue LR signal to digital) takes place after the analogue summing of the input channel allowing for true analogue summing of the input signals. The signal is sent POST-FADER to the USB and so adequate fader level must be achieved in order to record a reasonable level for processing further.

Graph 2 displays the relationship between the input channels and their corresponding USB channel coming into the console from the DAW. For example, to receive a USB input to channel 6 of the mixer, you must assign the DAW track output to USB channel 6, switch the USB RTN switch ON for channel 6 and then you will be receiving USB audio. Repeat across the console for Multi-track playback.
Stereo Playback

Stereo playback using PC

In order to use the USB port to play standard MP3's or WAV files from your PC, there is a small amount of setup required from the control panel in order to send the stereo file to the appropriate channel on the console.

On the Signature 12 and 22MTK respectively, channels 11/12 and 21/22 are stereo channels that are best suited for stereo playback of things such as interval music or backing tracks from the PC. These channels are excluded from the interval mute function and so will playback even when interval mute is engaged.

To assign stereo playback out of the desired USB channel:

1. Firstly enter the control panel and select ‘Hardware and Sound’ (Or just “sound” depending on your view settings)
2. Select ‘Manage Audio Devices’
3. You will then be presented with a list of output options
   a. From this list, you can select the output that corresponds with the desired playback channel on the console. Ch 11/12 on Signature 12MTK and channel 21/22 on Signature 22MTK.
4. Finally you must enable the USB return option on the consoles playback channel (or the channel number that has just setup).

**NOTE:** All system sounds will also play through the USB audio interface so caution must be taken when navigating the operating system during a performance. These sounds can be turned off in the sounds menu if desired.
Stereo playback using MAC:
To assign stereo playback out of USB channels 11/12 (21/22 on 22MTK):

1. Firstly enter the ‘Audio MIDI setup’ control panel that can be found by the Mac search bar or in the launch pad > other folder.

2. When ‘Audio MIDI Setup’ has opened, you will notice a ‘Soundcraft ‘x’-channel audio driver’ selection on the left column.

3. To assign this device as the default output, right click the selection and click ‘use this device for sound output’.

4. You then need to set the output to USB channels 11/12 (21/22 on 22MTK).
   a. To do this, you need to right click the ‘Soundcraft ‘x’-channel audio driver’ and select ‘configure speakers’.

   b. From this dialogue, you can assign a Left and Right output from the Mac to playback through channels 11 and 12 respectively on the console (21/22 on 22MTK).

5. Finally you must enable the USB return option on the consoles playback channel (or the channel number that has just setup).

NOTE: All system sounds will also play through the USB audio interface so caution must be taken when navigating the operating system during a performance. These sounds can be turned off in the sounds menu if desired.
REAPER®

Multi-track recording using REAPER
After the drivers have been installed on the PC and the console is connected to your chosen machine (PC or MAC) we can begin to setup a project and start recording.

The following steps walk through DAW specific instructions for setting up the recording interface, patching inputs, outputs, enabling record and adjusting sample rate settings from the DAW.

In this example, we will be covering REAPER however we will look into other DAWs in proceeding sections. After you have installed REAPER following the detailed steps from the on screen procedure, you can then start the program.

Once it has loaded, you will be presented with an empty project. Before tracks can be added and recording can begin, you must first assign REAPER to use the Soundcraft Multichannel audio interface.

1. Firstly, go into the options tab at the top of the screen and scroll down to preferences.

2. On the left menu, scroll down to device under the ‘audio’ heading.

3. Select the ‘Audio system’ drop down and select ASIO
   a. If you have more than one ASIO driver installed on your machine, ensure that Soundcraft USB Audio ASIO is selected on the ‘ASIO Driver’ drop down menu.

4. Select the desired range of inputs and outputs under the appropriate drop down menus.
   a. For maximum record and playback facilities on the Soundcraft Signature 12, engage inputs Analogue 1 - Analogue 14 and outputs Analogue 1 - Analogue 12.
   b. Signature 22MTK will require a larger range of inputs such as Analogue 1 - Analogue 24 and outputs Analogue 1 – Analogue 22.

5. Check the request sample rate box and enter your desired sample rate.
   a. 44.1 kHz recording should be entered as 44100 and 48 kHz recording should be entered as 48000.

*NOTE: higher sample rates are not compatible with the Signature series Multi-track consoles.*
6. Close the REAPER preferences screen and return to the blank project.

7. Go into ‘insert’ at the top of the screen and select multiple tracks

8. Enter your desired amount of record tracks in the insert how many tracks box. The maximum is 14 for the Signature 12MTK so for this example we will insert 14 tracks.
   a. The maximum recording channels on the 22MTK is 24, so to record all available input signals, add 24 tracks into REAPER.

9. Next we must assign the channels within REAPER to receive signals incoming via USB FROM the console into the appropriate tracks in REAPER. Go into View at the top of the screen and open up the Routing Matrix.
   a. You will be presented with a Matrix that has Sources down the left column and destinations across the top.
   b. In order to patch 1:1 the console USB sends and REAPER channels we must engage the connection between the source and destination.
   c. Engaging a connection is done simply by clicking in the appropriate box in the grid.

10. Scroll across the top through all of the track names and assign the patches to the desired analogue input.
    a. Track 1 to Analogue 1, Track 2 to analogue 2, Track 3 to analogue 3...
    b. When a patch is made you will see a red circle appear in the desired patch.
    c. You will end up with a diagonal line running from track 1 input 1 to track 14 input 14. (Track 24 to input 24 on signature 22MTK)
    d. After all the patches have been made, exit out of the routing matrix.

11. Open up the mixer view from the View tab by entering View at the top of the screen and selecting Mixer. (It may already be open at the bottom of the screen).

12. Record enable all of your input tracks by engaging the record arm key on each channel fader.

13. At this point, if any input sources are coming into the desk, you will see the channel meters on REAPER begin to show level.
14. When you are ready to record the show, select the master record button by the transport control to begin recording! You will see waveforms starting to appear in the transport window indicating tracks are being recorded and audio is being written to the hard disk.

15. Once you have finished recording, simply press the space bar on your keyboard or press the STOP key on REAPER’s transport section. You will then be prompted with a dialogue requesting an action with your recently recorded audio files. Press SAVE ALL if you wish to keep the audio or DELETE ALL if you wish to try again.

**TIP:** You can always delete unnecessary audio; you can’t make it up the event! We always suggest you keep all takes and audio files until after everything can be reviewed in a different location with a fresh pair of ears. You may have missed the magic take!

### Multichannel playback using REAPER®

Once your project has been created and tracks have been recorded, you can then follow a few more steps to playback the channels from the DAW back through the console. To do this, we must assign the outputs of each channel to the corresponding USB output. In REAPER, this can be done via the convenient routing matrix screen.

1. Firstly, open up the routing matrix via the ‘view’ menu at the top of the screen.

2. Along the top of the grid you can see the possible destinations (USB Outputs) and down the left of the grid you can see the input channels laid out consecutively.
   a. We must first unassign the master output by deselecting the patch that is made by default connecting master output to ‘Analogue 1’ (stereo).

3. Next, find channel 1 on the left hand column and follow across the rows until you can see ‘analogue output 1’. Connect this patch by clicking on the grid in the resulting box.
   a. Then we must repeat the same steps for channel 2 by connecting channel 2 to ‘analogue output 2’.
   b. When all of the channels are patched, you will be left with a diagonal line of patches indicating that the channels within the DAW are patched to their respective USB outputs.

4. Moving back to the console, next we must engage the USB RTN switch located below the input gain control on the console channels.
   a. Once switched, the console channels are ready to receive audio via USB.

5. Before pressing play on REAPER, you must first deactivate the record enable switches located in the DAW channel strips.
   a. This is for safety to avoid recording over your recorded show and also to avoid any chance of feedback loops occurring etc.

6. Once the above steps are complete, you can press play on the transport controls within REAPER and begin mixing the USB signals with the powerful mixing capabilities of the console.
Inserting plug-ins on REAPER
Once the project has been created and the tracks have been setup to send and receive out of the corresponding USB channels of the mixer, you are able to follow a few extra steps in order to use plug-ins inserted into the input channels. On REAPER, the process is quick and easy.

1. Once your tracks are setup to receive and send out of the corresponding USB channels, you then need to enable monitoring on each channel.
   a. This allows the audio to pass through the audio tracks’ channel strip and back out of the USB channel.

2. On each audio channel you need to select the small speaker icon beneath the solo button on each track.
   a. Engaging this button allows for Input record monitoring. You will not notice any audio going through the channel strip until you follow the next step.

3. Finally, on each audio track you need to engage the ‘record enable’ button in order for the audio to pass through the input channels.
   a. After engaging this button on each track, you should notice an input meter on channel begin to show level.

4. You can now click on the rectangular insert points above the fader and the ‘outputs/sends’ section to select your desired plug in insert and effect the input channel. You can use the DAW fader as a ‘return level' back into your console if you need to make any adjustments to the gain structure.

LOGIC

Multi-track recording using LOGIC 9.1.8
Once LOGIC has loaded, you will be presented the LOGIC toolbar at the top of the screen. Before tracks can be added and recording can begin, you must first create a new project.

1. Go into the ‘File’ menu at the top of the screen and select the New option.
   a. You will then be presented with a dialogue to select the preferred new project template based on preference.
   b. We suggest using an Empty project.

2. Once the project has loaded up, you may be prompted to add an audio track. For now, select Create to add a track and get the project started. We will delete this track later.

3. Now we must assign our desired audio interface into LOGIC. To do this, select the ‘preferences’ icon located on the top toolbar of logic and select Audio.
4. Select the output device drop-down and scroll down to select ‘Soundcraft Signature 12 MTK’ (22 MTK if you are using the larger model).
   a. Once the output device has been selected, you can then do the same for the Input device drop-down.
   b. Once both the input and output device has been set to the ‘Soundcraft Signature 12 MTK’, press ‘Apply Settings’ and can exit this dialogue and return to the blank project arrange screen.

5. Next, enter the Settings tab located in Logic’s toolbar section and select the sub heading Audio.
   a. From here, it is possible to select your desired project sample rate under the ‘Sample rate’ drop-down menu.
   b. On a Signature MTK console there will only be options for either 44.1kHz or 48kHz.
   c. Select your desired sample rate and exit the Settings tab returning to the arrange page with your blank project.

   NOTE: higher sample rates are not compatible with the Signature series Multi-track consoles.

6. Now it is time to add the audio tracks for recording. Above the temporary audio track we created earlier, there is a small ‘+’ icon. Select this button and you will be presented with the ‘new tracks’ menu screen.
   a. In the ‘number’ dialogue, we need to type in our desired number of recording channels. For this example, we’ll type in 14.
   b. Make sure that the format is set to ‘mono’ and the Input is set to ‘input 1’. Select the ‘ascending’ box to ensure Logic creates consecutive input patches for the following channels.
   c. Next, we must assign the output range. Select the output drop down box, hold the cursor over output, then over mono and finally, select output 1.
   d. Select the ‘ascending’ box by the output drop down to ensure Logic creates consecutive output patches for the following channels.
   e. Finally, we must select ‘record enable’ on the final check box to automatically record enable all of the DAW tracks.
   f. After the above steps have been followed, you can then select ‘Create’ to add these tracks into the project.

   NOTE: If any input sources are coming into the desk at this point, you will see the channel meters on LOGIC begin to indicate level.
7. When you are ready to record the show, select the master record button by the transport control section to begin recording! You will see waveforms starting to appear in the transport window indicating tracks are being recorded and audio is being written to the hard disk.

8. Once you have finished recording, simply press the space bar on your keyboard or press the STOP key on LOGIC’s transport section.

**Multichannel playback using Logic**

Once your project has been created and tracks have been recorded, you can then follow a few more steps to playback the channels from the DAW back through the console for an analogue style mixing session.

To do this, you must assign the outputs of each channel to the corresponding USB channel of the console. If you followed all of the above steps from the previous procedure, you will already be setup and ready for playback through the console.

**If you DID follow the steps above:**
All that is required by the user is to disable the record enable icon on each DAW track, enable the USB RTN switch on the console channels and to press play on the DAW’s transport controls.

**If you did NOT follow the steps above:**
You can follow the below steps to patch the DAW channels to the correct USB outputs following steps:

1. Open up the Mixer view by pressing either ‘COMMAND+2’ on the keyboard or via the view tab at the top of the screen.
   a. You will then be presented with the Mixer interface; All of the DAW channels are laid out from left to right and above each channel fader and pan control there are 2 dialogue boxes that contain the input and output patch of each channel.

2. Click and Hold the bottom of the two I/O boxes to open up the output selection pop up.

3. Scroll down to outputs, mono and select output 1 (Or the first ‘part of stereo ‘dialogue).

4. Then assign the next tracks output to be mono output 2. Repeat across all recorded channel either to assign the Daw outputs to the mixers USB interface.

5. Once all of the tracks have been patched to their respective outputs, you then need to disable record enable on each input tracks and then press play on Logic’s transport bar.
Inserting plug-ins on LOGIC

Once the project has been created and the tracks have been setup to send and receive out of the corresponding USB channels of the mixer, you are able to follow a few extra steps in order to use plug-ins inserted into the input channels. On Logic, the process is quick and easy.

1. Select the ‘preferences’ icon located on the top toolbar of Logic and select Audio.

2. Check the box that is labeled ‘software monitoring’.
   a. This setting allows audio to pass through the DAW from input to output and will allow the DAW channel to be inserted into the mixer.

3. The next setting we need to adjust is the Buffer Size located in the drop down menu.
   a. In order to achieve minimal latency, we must engage the lowest buffer setting possible.
      We recommend a buffer size of 64 or 128 samples to retain reliability and achieve lowest latency.

   Note: Buffer size determines the amount of latency you will hear in and out of your DAW. When you are recording, you should set the buffer size to a lower amount to reduce the amount of latency for more accurate monitoring. The downside to lowering the buffer size is that it puts more pressure on your computer’s processors and forces them to work harder. The lowest buffer size that can be achieved is dependent on the performance of your computer and the amount of processing employed in your DAW.
   b. Once the buffer size has been set, press Apply and close the dialogue.

4. Next, select record enable on all of the input channels, at this point you should notice the meters begin to show level.

5. Engage USB RTN on the console for all of the input channels you wish to insert plug-ins, you should now notice signal being returned back into the console via the DAW.

6. The signal path is now being sent post gain, through the DAW and back into the console for further processing. You are now able to insert plug-ins into the incoming channels for extra processing via LOGIC.
   a. LOGIC has another setting for even lower latency when monitoring through the DAW.
      This setting disables all high power plug-ins that may be active and be causing extreme latency to achieve the lowest possible delay from input to output. To enable this setting, right click the logic transport bar and check the box that allows for Ultra-low latency operation. This setting can then be enabled/disabled from the transport panel using the ‘speedo’ icon.
ABLETON LIVE LITE

Stereo recording using ABLETON LIVE LITE
After the drivers have been installed on the PC and the console is connected to your chosen machine (PC or MAC) we can begin to setup a project and start recording!

The following steps walk through DAW specific instructions for setting up the recording interface, patching inputs, outputs, enabling record and adjusting sample rate settings from the DAW.

In this example, we will be covering ABLETON LIVE LITE, however the setup also covers ABLETON LIVE and ABLETON SUITE. After you have installed ABLETON LIVE LITE and followed the detailed steps during the install procedure, start ABLETON LIVE LITE.

Once it has loaded, you will be presented with an empty project (or your previously loaded project depending on your settings). Before tracks can be added and recording can begin, you must first assign ABLETON LIVE LITE to use the Soundcraft Multichannel audio interface.

1. First, you must open up the preferences menu – On a Mac this is under the ‘live’ tab at the top of the screen.
   a. From here you will need to assign an ‘Audio Input Device’ As well as an ‘Audio Output Device’. Select the drop down menus and select the Soundcraft Digital option under each drop-down.
   b. Once the audio driver is selected, you will then see the options for sample rate, and buffer sizes appear below. Beneath ‘Audio Output Device’, you will see an option for ‘Input Config’ and ‘Output Config’.
   c. Select ‘Input Config’ and engage the correct stereo pair for the console you have (11/12 or 21/22). You can then select ‘Output config’ and assign the USB return to one of the available USB outputs. Setting these channels to the corresponding Stereo return channels on the mixer would mean that you can playback your recorded files with a simple button press on the consoles USB return.
d. Once these are selected, you can close the window and return to the arrange page.

Note: For familiarity with other DAWs, consider using the “Arrangement View” of ABLETON LIVE LITE over the “Session View” using the view type in the top right of the screen.

e. Once you are in the arrange page, you can then assign an audio track to receive audio from the console. This can be done using the drop down located in the audio track.

f. Turn on input monitoring by engaging the IN beneath the input selection drop down. After doing this, you will then notice input signal appearing on the track meter.

g. Then finally, record enable the track by engaging the record arm button and then select Record on the top navigation bar to begin recording the audio; you will see a waveform appear on arrange page when the audio is recording correctly and the inputs are setup. Finally, press the record button on the navigation bar again to stop the recording process.
Inserting plug-ins on ABLETON LIVE LITE

Once the project has been created and the tracks have been setup to send and receive out of the corresponding USB channels of the mixer, you are able to follow a few extra steps in order to use plug-ins inserted into the input channels. On ABLETON LIVE LITE, the process is quick and easy.

1. Once your tracks are setup to receive and send out of the corresponding USB channels, you then need to enable monitoring on each channel.
   a. This allows the audio to pass through the audio tracks’ channel strip and back out of the USB channel.

2. On each audio channel you need to select ON which is located just beneath the input source selection.
   a. After engaging this button on each track, you should notice an input meter on channel begin to show level.

3. You can now click on ‘Audio effects’ on the left hand side column and begin to drag and drop Audio effects into the track space at the bottom of the arrange page.
   a. Once a plug in is dropped into position, the audio will begin to be affected by the selected plug in. You can use the DAW fader as a ‘return level’ back into your console if you need to make any adjustments to the gain structure.