

Finale in the classroom

Contact Tim B. Blann – tblann@sbcglobal.net

(This demonstration is with Finale Ver. 2008.)

In many ways Finale controls MUSIC in the same way a Word Processor controls WORDS.

**Some of their functions are identical.*

While it will play back your songs, its principle strength is the printed result. If you wish to create accompaniment tracks with maximum control over the resulting sound, it is my opinion that you are better off using sequencing software such as “Cakewalk” or “Performer”. There are several lower-cost Finale products, so visit their website www.makemusic.com to see what they offer. You might consider “Allegro” and “Notepad” is free, but not very powerful. Of special interest is their practice software (Smart Music) and a performance assessment feature. There are a few other high end notation software products such as *Sibelius* competing with Finale.

***Common Shortcuts**

- **Copy** (Control + C) First highlight blocks of measures to copy.
- **Cut** (Control + X) (same as above)
- **Paste** (Control + V) First highlight measures into which you will paste.
- **Undo** (Control + Z) will undo changes, even multiple times.
- **Redo** (Control + Y) will redo changes as above.
- **Save (often!)** (Control + S) to protect your work!
- **Update Layout** (Control + U) – this command may be unique to *Finale* - refreshes the screen and updates changes you have made. If something doesn't look right, perform this command. Your program may already be set to automatically update the layout after changes. (Re-draw the screen – Cntrl + D has the same effect.)

Using Finale

File Maintenance:

If you plan to store large numbers of music files, it is helpful to create appropriately named folders or sub-folders for music in the same category. This can be done with your Windows utilities such as Explorer, My Computer, or in the *Finale* “save” menu.

- Finale will import MIDI files, and by default saves them as a unique Finale file with the MUS ending. The Finale version must be current with or newer than file it is opening. You can specify the program to save as MIDI files or even a sound file *.WAV.
- From the “File” menu use “New” **Default Document, Templates and Wizard**. (Hint) You can save templates of your own design in a folder of your templates for future use.

Entering Notes Once the basic staff layout has been determined you can use:

Simple Entry Tool with mouse (refer to “Simple Entry Tool”) should probably only be used in the absence of a MIDI keyboard: it is by far the slowest method.

Speedy Entry (with MIDI keyboard) is great for non-keyboardist or for entering complex music, especially when you already know what you want to see on the page. A “two-handed” method-one hand on the MIDI keyboard, one hand on the computer's numeric keypad – can be learned with great results.

Hyperscribe - (with MIDI keyboard) is effective for person with keyboard skills. Music on multiple staves (e.g. piano) can be difficult if the “left hand/right hand split point” constantly changes. Some enter music in small “chunks” (i.e. 4 measures at a time) and edits immediately. Remember that you are simply entering data and not a “musical” performance. Stay with the metronome.

- Set Record mode and split point
- Set Beat value and tempo. (Slower tempos help with “latency” – computer lag.)

- Set Quantize (smallest note you want *Finale* to recognize). Sixteenth or shorter values increase latency problems.
- Click on a measure to begin and play steadily with the metronome.

Scanning - Talk to Robert Craig.

Layers

- “Layers” are independent lines of music on the same staff. They are designated by the 1 – 4 lower left hand corner of the screen. Notice how color changes to represent the layers. You can Hide or Show layer with the view control. An example of using layered music would be an SATB score on two staves where the Soprano part moves independently of the Alto.

Playback

- Use the playback controls to listen to your creation. This is helpful in discovering mistakes. (Hint – for a better “rendition” disable all the “Playback Options” under “Playback” settings. On the “playback transport” use the “speaker” icon to get to these settings.) Hint: Hold the Control key and click on a measure for an instant playback from that spot. Click on the staff to stop the performance.

Editing the musical score once the notes are entered.

Make sure the Tools Palettes you need are visible. Add or remove Palettes under the “Window” menu. Remember that there are two views of the page available: **Page and Scroll view** (toggle with “Cntrl + E”). *Finale 2008* defaults to a “**Record View**” that I don’t use much.

Main Tool Palette

- **Staff Tool** - affects staff controls, brackets, displays, etc. (Hint) right click a staff handle to manipulate certain attributes such as name of staff, brackets, etc.
- **Key Signature tool** – sets key display and controls transpositions
- **Time Signature tool** - sets the time signature
- **Clef Tool** – allows choice of clef for a particular staff
- **Measure Tool** can add, insert measures, and change the bar line style (i.e. double, normal, ending.)
- **Simple Entry Tool** - allows a choice of note values that can be clicked into the score on the proper line or space.
- **Speedy Entry Tool** - edit notes and change their values, flip stems, hide notes, etc. These commands are helpful to me: When “cursor” is on desired note “9” changes the note enharmonically, “*” adds a convenience accidental then “p” puts a parenthesis around it. Other numbers will change the value of the note:
- **Hyperscribe tool** (for using a MIDI keyboard) – my preferred way of entering notes.
- **Tuplet Tool** - for creating triplets
- **Smart Shape** - slurs, crescendos, etc.
- **Articulation Tool** – accents, staccato marks, etc.
- **Expressions tool** adds dynamics and other expressions
- **Repeat tool** is used for repeats, DS, DC, Coda, Endings, etc.
- **Chord Tool** – add chord symbols (Hint) They are transposed also!
- **Lyrics Tool** – adds song lyrics
- **Text Tool** - This function is to insert text (Title of the piece or special instructions) into the music. Don’t confuse with “Lyrics” (Hint: Cntrl + Shift + period or comma changes font size. This combination of keys also changes the size of any highlighted text in word processors such Microsoft Word. Red text indicates free floating, green indicates text linked to a measure.
 - **Mass Edit (among many things) can be used to** Copy and Paste, Rebar Rebeam, Resize, Explode/Implode music. (Hint – in “page view” highlight a measure or group of measures and use the up or down arrows to “bump” them to a different line.)
 - **Percent Tool** - changes the size of everything on the page.

- **Page Layout Tool** – edits the appearance of your music on the printed page.

Entering Lyrics

- Click on the “Lyrics” icon
- **Edit Lyrics** feature – This menu allows you to specify unlimited number of “verses”, “choruses”, and “sections” for maximum flexibility in where you can place the lyrics. You can also adjust font and size, etc. with this tool. It works just like any word processor so use “copy and paste” from other sources for a very quick way to get in the lyrics. REMEMBER You must place hyphens at the syllable breaks.
- **Type into score** (one way, but slow) Click on a note and start typing using a space or hyphen to break the syllables.
- **Click Assignment** (faster) After entering the lyric in the “Edit Lyrics” menu, specify the lyric to be assigned and click on each note the lyric is to show. (Fastest way) In Click assignment use Control click on the first note with a lyric lays out the lyrics. Then use “shift lyrics” for adjustments.

Change to Page view (Control + E) then:

- Click the “**Page Layout**” icon and the **Page Layout** menu appears
- “Space Systems Evenly” – does that, but may make take more pages than you wish to print. (Highlight everything and use Control + 4)
- “Fit Music” – specifies number of measures per system
- “Avoid Margin Collision” – allows margins to overlap. Thus negative values can be entered to “squeeze” music together. Make sure this option IS NOT checked.
- “Systems” – “Edit Margins” is where the negative value can be entered in “distance between systems”. Remember to “select all” when using this feature. Only select the top system when adjusting distance from the top.

How I use Finale in the church music application.

- Print hymns arrangements and other songs at my desk printer and make notes for the musicians conveniently.
- Transpose accompaniments for vocalists. (Usually lowering music.)
- Compress music from other sources to fewer pages.
- Transpose music for smoother flow. (key relationships)
- Create modulations and transitions between songs so everybody can play.
- Save in Acrobat PDF format and e mail to someone a piece of music they can print themselves.
- Copy a line (i.e. a descant) and transpose for an instrument, or the entire score so all instruments have something to play.

In the classroom: (your ideas)

- Create warm-ups (Example: *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*)
- Transpose accompaniments for better range.
- Instrumental & Choral Arranging (Finale templates available for most formats)
- Sight Singing practice
- Make use of Finale instructional templates such as Kodály, Boomwhackers, Flashcards, etc.