



SONIC FORGE

Install, sound setup, SoundFonts & editing

Standalone app + VST3 plug-in for Windows 10/11 (x64)

Mulula VGM Loop - Lovacbeats

Everything you need is already inside the package: the program, the FluidSynth engine and a General MIDI SoundFont.

Quick start: sound in one minute

SONIC FORGE plays its music through **FluidSynth**, a software synthesizer, using a **SoundFont**: a single file that holds the recorded instrument sounds (piano, bass, strings, drum kits ...). Both are already **bundled** in the Standalone app and in the VST3 plug-in, so there is nothing extra to download.

1. Unzip **SONIC_FORGE_Windows_x64.zip** anywhere (for example your Desktop).
2. Double-click **Install SONIC FORGE.bat**. When Windows asks for administrator permission, click **Yes** (this places the VST3 in the standard plug-in folder).
3. Open **SONIC FORGE** from the Desktop shortcut.
4. First launch only: click **Options** (top-left, callout 1) and choose your audio output device (your audio interface or speakers), then close the window.
5. Press **GENERATE** (3), then the **Play** button or the Space bar (4). You should hear all five tracks.



1 Options (audio device) - 2 Sound & Settings (SoundFont) - 3 Generate - 4 Play / Pause - 5 Instrument of a track - 6 Preview the instrument - 7 Loaded SoundFont (green/grey = OK, red = problem)

What is in the package

Item	What it is
Standalone\SONIC FORGE.exe	The standalone application.
Standalone\libfluidsynth-3.dll, SDL3.dll, sndfile.dll	The FluidSynth sound engine (keep them next to the .exe).
Standalone\SoundFonts\GeneralUser-GS.sf2	The bundled General MIDI SoundFont (about 31 MB, 259 instruments + drum kits).
VST3\SONIC FORGE.vst3	The plug-in. FluidSynth and the SoundFont are inside the bundle (Contents\x86_64-win and Contents\Resources\SoundFonts).
Install SONIC FORGE.bat	One-click installer (app, shortcuts, VST3).
SONIC_FORGE_SoundFont_Guide.pdf	This guide.
Licenses\	Licence texts for FluidSynth, GeneralUser GS and the other components.

Where the installer puts things

Part	Installed to
Standalone app	%LOCALAPPDATA%\Programs\SONIC FORGE (+ Desktop and Start Menu shortcuts)
VST3 plug-in (all DAWs)	C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3\SONIC FORGE.vst3
VST3 plug-in (your user)	%LOCALAPPDATA%\Programs\Common\VST3\SONIC FORGE.vst3
Your projects, presets, exports	Documents\SONIC FORGE\ (Projects, Presets, Exports, SoundFonts, Styles)

Installing by hand (no script)

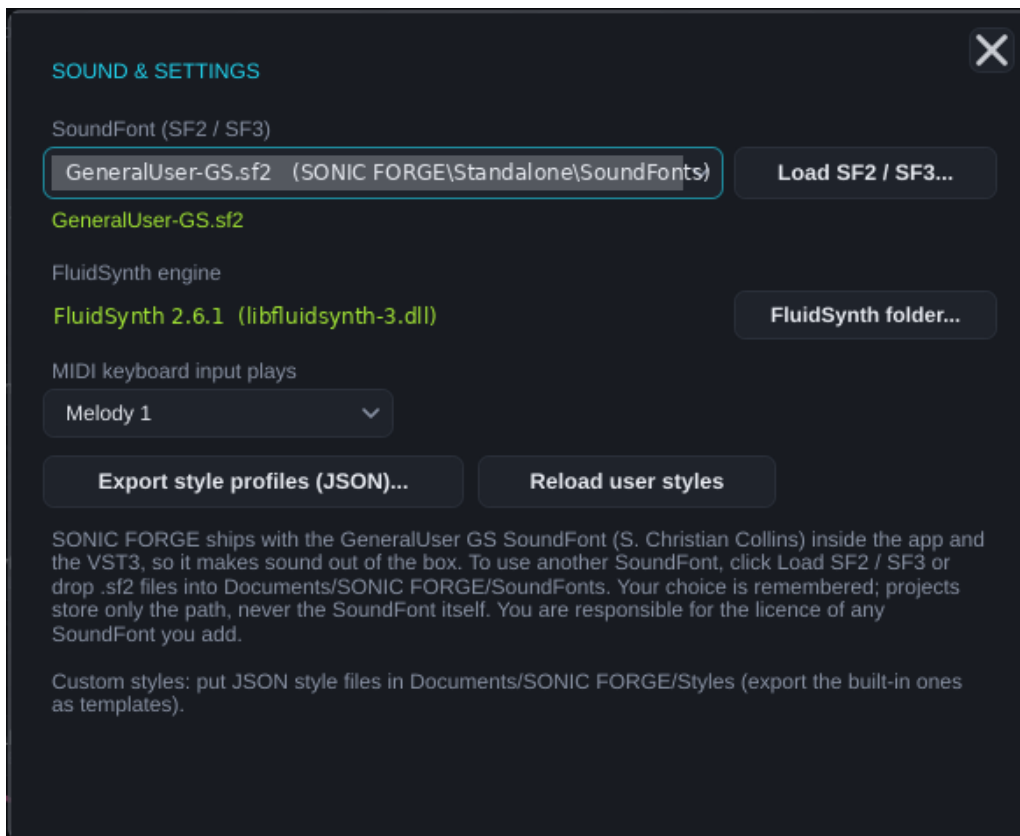
- Copy the whole **Standalone** folder anywhere and run **SONIC FORGE.exe** from it. Keep the DLLs and the **SoundFonts** folder next to the .exe.
- Copy the whole **SONIC FORGE.vst3** folder into **C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3**.
- No installation of FluidSynth or of a SoundFont is ever required: both travel inside the app and the plug-in.

Using the VST3 in your DAW

1. Rescan plug-ins (Ableton: Preferences > Plug-ins > Rescan; FL Studio: Plugin manager > Find plugins; REAPER: Preferences > Plug-ins > VST > Re-scan).
2. Add **SONIC FORGE** on an instrument / MIDI track.
3. Press Play in your DAW: SONIC FORGE follows the DAW tempo and position and loops the arrangement.
4. To bring notes into your DAW, use the per-track **MIDI** export buttons and drag the .mid files into the project.

Managing SoundFonts

Click the **gear** icon (callout 2) to open **Sound & Settings**. The top section shows which SoundFont is loaded and lets you switch to another one. Your choice is remembered for the next launch, and every project stores the path of the SoundFont it was made with (never the SoundFont itself, so project files stay small).



Ways to load a different SoundFont

- **Load SF2 / SF3...** - browse to any .sf2 or .sf3 file on your computer.
- **The drop-down list** - shows every SoundFont SONIC FORGE found automatically (see the search order below).
- **Drop files in the SoundFonts folder** - copy .sf2 files into **Documents\SONIC FORGE\SoundFonts** and they appear in the list next time you open Settings.

How SONIC FORGE finds SoundFonts

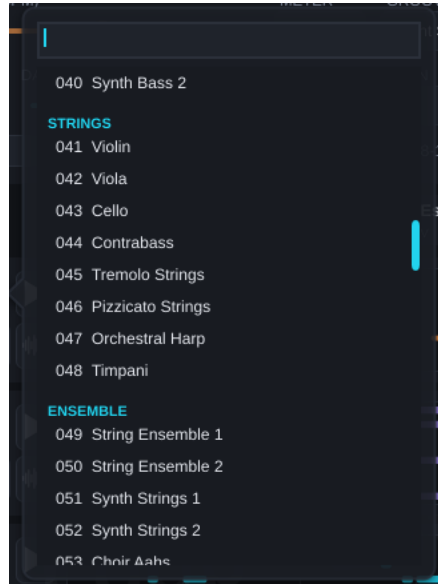
At start-up it uses, in this order: the SoundFont saved in the project you open, the last one you chose, then the first one found in these folders:

#	Folder
1	SoundFonts folder next to SONIC FORGE.exe (bundled GeneralUser GS)
2	Inside the VST3 bundle: SONIC FORGE.vst3\Contents\Resources\SoundFonts (bundled GeneralUser GS)
3	Documents\SONIC FORGE\SoundFonts (your own SoundFonts)
4	C:\Program Files\MuseScore 4\sound and C:\soundfonts, if they exist
5	Recently used SoundFonts

If a project points to a SoundFont that no longer exists, SONIC FORGE tells you, keeps playing with an available one, and you can pick another in Settings.

Choosing instruments

Each of the five tracks has its own instrument (callout 5). Click it to open a searchable list of all 128 General MIDI programs grouped by family; the drum track lists drum kits instead (Standard, Room, Power, Electronic, TR-808, Jazz, Brush, Orchestra). Changing an instrument never changes the notes. Use the play arrow (callout 6) to audition it.



If a SoundFont does not contain the selected program, SONIC FORGE automatically uses the first instrument of the same family (or the standard drum kit), so a track never goes silent.

Good free General MIDI SoundFonts

SoundFont	Notes	Licence (check the file you download)
GeneralUser GS 2.0 (bundled)	Balanced, small (31 MB), great drums. Default in SONIC FORGE.	Free for any music, private or commercial; redistribution allowed.
FluidR3_GM	Classic FluidSynth GM bank, ~140 MB.	MIT
MuseScore General (.sf3 / .sf2)	Installed with MuseScore; SONIC FORGE finds MuseScore 4's copy automatically.	MIT
Your own SF2 libraries	Any GM-compatible .sf2 works. Non-GM banks play, but program numbers may map to other sounds.	Depends on the vendor

SF2 vs SF3

SF2 files hold uncompressed samples and always work. SF3 files are compressed (Ogg Vorbis); they load only if the bundled FluidSynth was built with compressed-sample support. If an SF3 fails to load, use the SF2 version of the same SoundFont.

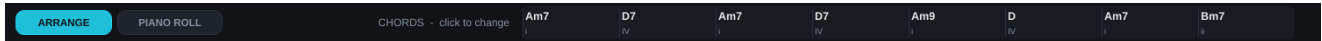
Licences

You are responsible for the licence of every SoundFont you load or share. Many SoundFonts found online forbid redistribution or commercial use. The bundled GeneralUser GS is free for music creation, including

commercial releases; its licence text is in the Licenses folder.

Changing the chords (any part of the song)

The chord strip above the tracks shows one chord symbol per chord with its function (I, ii, IV ...). **Click any chord** to open the chord menu:

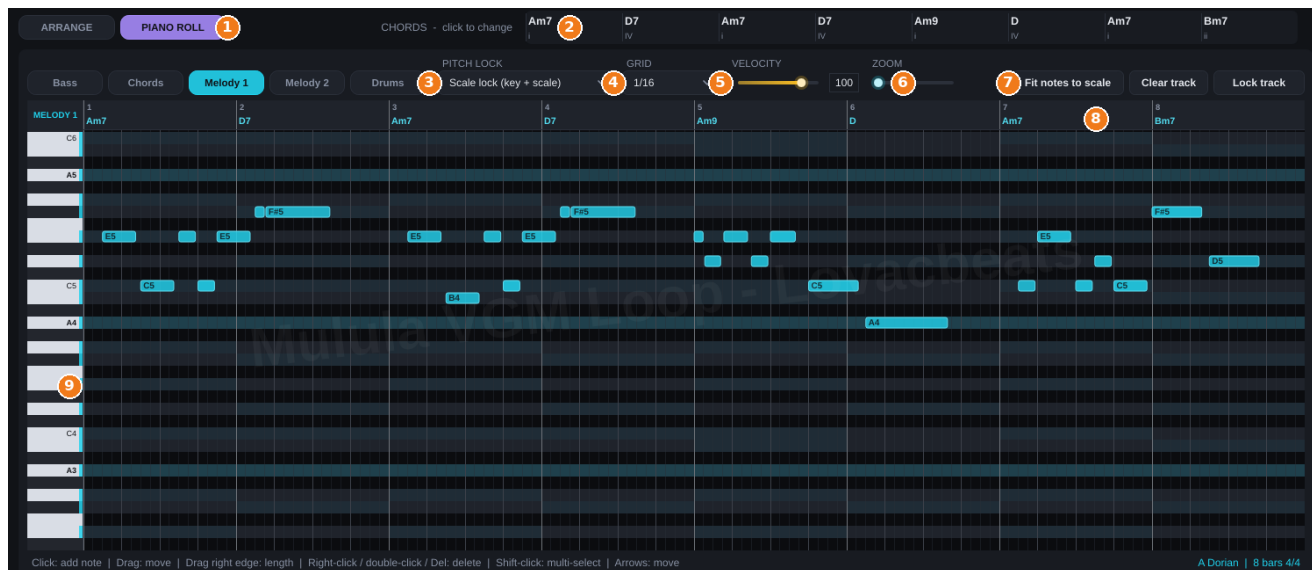


- **Pick another chord of the key** - the seven chords of the selected key and scale are listed with their symbols.
- **Colour** - triad, 7th, 9th, add9, 6th, sus2, sus4 or 7sus4 on the same chord.
- **Any chord (borrowed / chromatic)** - any root with maj, min, 7, maj7, m7, dim, m7b5, sus or aug.
- **Split chord in two / Merge with next chord** - change how long each chord lasts.
- **New progression for bars X-Y** - re-harmonise one **part of the song**: first drag across the bars in the chord strip (this sets the loop range, e.g. bars 5-8 for a chorus), then click a chord and choose a progression. Without a range it applies to the whole song.
- **Unlock chords + rebuild progression** - go back to automatic progressions.

After every change, Bass, Chords, Melody 1 and Melody 2 are re-generated so they follow the new harmony, and the **Chords** lock is switched on so GENERATE keeps your progression. Tracks you locked (or edited in the piano roll) are never touched. Ctrl+Z undoes any change.

Piano roll: edit notes locked to the scale

Click the **PIANO ROLL** tab (or press Tab, or double-click a track's preview) to edit the notes of any track.



#	Control
1	ARRANGE / PIANO ROLL tabs.
2	Chord strip - click a chord to change it (see above).
3	Track to edit: Bass, Chords, Melody 1, Melody 2 or Drums (drums show one row per drum sound).
4	Pitch lock: Scale lock keeps every new or moved note on the chosen key + scale; Chord tones of each bar allows only the notes of the chord playing in that bar; Free allows any note. Rows outside the scale are dark.
5	Grid: note start / length step (1 bar to 1/32, triplets).
6	Velocity for new notes; releasing the slider also sets the selected notes.
7	Fit notes to scale (moves wrong notes to the nearest allowed note), Clear track, Lock / Unlock track.
8	Bar numbers and the chord of each bar; click here to move the playhead.
9	Keyboard - click a key to hear it; the coloured edge marks notes of the scale.

Mouse and keys

- Click an empty spot to add a note (drag to set its length). Drag a note to move it; drag its right edge to change its length.
- Right-click or double-click a note (or press Delete) to remove it. Shift-click selects several notes; Ctrl+A selects all.
- Up / Down arrows move the selection one scale step (Shift = a fifth up/down); Left / Right move by one grid step.
- Mouse wheel scrolls, Shift+wheel scrolls sideways, Ctrl+wheel zooms.
- An edited track is locked automatically so GENERATE does not overwrite your notes - use Unlock track to allow it again.

Troubleshooting: no sound?

Symptom	What to do
Play moves but nothing is heard (Standalone)	Click Options (top-left) and choose the correct output device. Check the master volume slider and that the tracks are not muted.
Red text next to 'SoundFont:' at the bottom	The SoundFont could not be loaded. Open the gear > Sound & Settings and pick GeneralUser-GS.sf2 from the list, or use Load SF2 / SF3.
'FluidSynth library not found'	The three DLLs must sit next to SONIC FORGE.exe (or inside the .vst3). Re-copy the Standalone folder from the package, or point Settings > FluidSynth folder... to the folder holding libfluidsynth-3.dll.
Plug-in is silent in the DAW	Press Play in the DAW (the plug-in follows the host transport). Make sure the whole SONIC FORGE.vst3 folder was copied, then rescan plug-ins.
Crackles or dropouts	Raise the audio buffer size (Options > Audio buffer size, or in your DAW's audio settings).
WAV export is silent	Same causes as above; the export also reports a warning when the result is silent or clipping.
Wrong-sounding instruments	The loaded SoundFont is not General MIDI. Switch back to GeneralUser GS.

Exports

WAV and MIDI files go to **Documents\SONIC FORGE\Exports** by default. Change the folder in **Export > Export settings... > Choose folder....** Every exported WAV and MIDI file carries the watermark 'Mulula VGM Loop - Lovacbeats' as file metadata (the audio itself is not altered).