



An Impact Soundworks Sample Library  
Powered by Native Instruments Kontakt 5 Player

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## INTRODUCTION

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Welcome to **Shreddage II: Absolute Electric Guitar**. This virtual instrument was designed to be a true successor to our original **Shreddage** electric rhythm guitar library, released in 2010 and used by thousands of composers and producers all over the world. With that release, our goal was to create an easy-to-use set of DI rock & metal guitar sounds, pushing the envelope of realism and establishing a new standard for electric guitar samples. We were content to focus strictly on rhythm playing, with the idea that perhaps other virtual instruments would service for lead playing.

However, as useful as the original **Shreddage** was, our users overwhelmingly desired a true sequel: an instrument that would take the incredible realism of **Shreddage** and apply it to a comprehensive library capable of lead playing as well. Other libraries have attempted this challenge, but through our own experiences and the words of our users, we discovered common problems: bloated memory and CPU usage, limited range, incomprehensible mapping and keyswitches, overly complex scripting, and a lack of attention to detail & realism.

**Shreddage II** is our answer to the challenge of total guitar sampling. It is a complete instrument with elegant scripting, intuitive mapping, and incredible depth. And while it excels at rock & metal playing (both lead and rhythm alike), it is also well-suited for many other genres thanks to its clean tone and huge range. We couldn't be prouder of this release, and hope that it will bring you inspiration, joy, productivity, and of course, brutal guitar sounds!

# OVERVIEW

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The vast majority of **Shreddage II** is contained within a single titular patch, "Shreddage II". The "Shreddage II FX" patch contains a large variety of neck slides, pick scrapes, and other guitar effects that are not tonal and typically used as a transition into a phrase. These FX are organized starting at **C2**.

The main **Shreddage II** patch contains all important articulations, triggered by standard MIDI note input and modwheel. These articulations include:

- \* Sustained single notes and powerchords (1-5-1)
- \* Aggressive sustained single notes
- \* Palm muted single notes and powerchords, with up to 5x layers (very muted -> half-muted)
- \* Staccato single notes and powerchords
- \* Four types of single note vibrato: subtle fingered, heavy fingered, whammy bar, and smooth
- \* Powerchord vibrato
- \* Tremolo picking
- \* Pinch harmonic squeals with wide, heavy vibrato
- \* Portamento slides for single notes
- \* Hammer-on and pull-off legato transitions
- \* Full chokes (all strings muted)
- \* Unpitched and pitched release noises
- \* Fret / finger squeaks
- \* Unison bends

**Shreddage II** contains extensive options for customizing the tone and triggering of these articulations, which will be discussed in a later section (**Interface & Options**). Almost all articulations can be turned ON or OFF. Nonetheless, there are some basic principles of the library that never change.

**Single note** articulations are mapped from **G2** to **E7**.

**Powerchord** articulations are mapped from **C-1** to **E2**.

**Fret squeaks** are triggered by pressing **F2**.

**Full chokes** are triggered by pressing **F#3**.

**Release noises** are triggered automatically at the end of notes (but have adjustable volume).

**Hammer-on, pull-off and portamento** articulations are only triggered by overlapping (legato) notes.

**Vibrato** articulations are triggered (crossfaded) by the mod wheel (CC1).

**Pitch bends** can be performed with the standard pitch wheel.

**Unison bends** are performed with CC11 by default.

There are also pre-mapped **keyswitches**, which are as follows. If some of the terms used don't make sense, make sure to check this manual's section on **Interface & Options**.

**C-2**: Set stroke (picking) direction to alternating down/up.

**C#-2**: Set stroke direction to downstrokes only.

**D-2**: Set stroke direction to upstrokes only.

**D#-2**: Set vibrato type to Fingered - Light.

**E-2**: Set vibrato type to Fingered - Heavy.

**F-2**: Set vibrato type to Whammy.

**F#-2**: Enables or disables DI line noise.

**G-2**: Resets the round robin sequence. (Useful at the beginning of a riff prior to rendering.)

**G#-2**: Enables "let ring" mode - all notes will ring out indefinitely.

**A-2**: Disables "let ring" mode.

**B-2**: Reset string preference.

**C-1**: Force playing on string 1 (**E**).

**C#1**: Force playing on string 2 (**B**).

**D1:** Force playing on string 3 (**G**).  
**D#1:** Force playing on string 4 (**D**).  
**E1:** Force playing on string 5 (**A**).  
**F1:** Force playing on string 6 (**E**).  
**F#1:** Force playing on string 7 (**A**).

## ARTICULATIONS

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We spent a long time carefully analyzing live guitar recordings and performances to determine which playing techniques should be captured. Below you will find detailed descriptions for the included playing techniques, and basic tips on using them. Keep in mind that most articulations can be switched ON or OFF, and their velocity mapping can be changed. The information below assumes the articulation is on, and the user is playing within the proper velocity range.

### SINGLE NOTE SUSTAINS

The bread-and-butter articulation of **Shreddage II** is simply a single note on a single string being picked with an up or down stroke. These are used in every kind of rhythm and lead riff, and can be combined to create chords. We made sure to capture the full sustain of each note, as well as the authentic 'attack' of the pick hitting the string.

### AGGRESSIVE SINGLE NOTE SUSTAINS

These are always triggered in the upper 1/4 (25%) of the sustain velocity range. For example, if sustains are mapped from velocity 60-100, aggressive or 'hard' sustains will trigger at 90-100. As the name implies, these have extra bite and brightness, particularly useful for emphasizing certain notes in a riff, or for screaming high notes.

### POWERCHORD SUSTAINS

In **Shreddage II**, all powerchords use 1-5-1 fingering. For example, playing the lowest powerchord on string 7 (low A) triggers a recording of **A-E-A: A** on string 7, **E** on string 6, and **A** on string 5. This fat, heavy sound is the hallmark of the **Shreddage** guitar family! It is excellent for many types of rhythm riffs, particularly when interspersed with muted notes.

### SINGLE NOTE AND POWERCHORD PALM MUTES

A palm mute is played by using the palm of the picking (right) hand to push against one or more strings. The result is a severe reduction in the brightness and sustain of each note. As palm mutes are critical in many kinds of rhythm riffs, in particular rock/metal "chugs" and aggressive fast parts, we sampled up to 5 different palm mute levels. The lowest level, corresponding with the lowest velocities, is heavily muted, whereas the highest level (higher velocities) is barely muted at all.

Palm mutes tend to sound best when played on the lower strings and lower frets. Riffing with palm mutes on strings 1 and 2 can quickly create a killer thick sound when sent through hi-gain amp settings.

### SINGLE NOTE AND POWERCHORD STACCATOS

These short notes have the fullness of a normal sustain, but are quickly cut off by muting the string. Due to the way they are picked, their tone is slightly darker than a normal sustain. Experiment with using staccatos in the place of short single notes for rhythm riffs.

### VIBRATO

Four kinds of vibrato are included in **Shreddage II**, selectable via keyswitch or in the user interface (UI). All four are triggered using the mod wheel. This can be done in the middle of a note to crossfade from a sustain to vibrato. Fingering Light & Heavy vibrato is produced by quickly moving the string with the left hand, whereas Whammy vibrato uses the mechanical whammy bar, producing (at times) a more dramatic effect. Smooth vibrato is actually a simulated mode using Kontakt's LFO; as the name suggests, it has a very smooth and clean sound.

Powerchord vibrato is limited to either whammy or smooth types.

## TREMOLO PICKING

A classic technique in a variety of genres from surf rock to heavy metal. 'Trem picking' involves rapidly picking the same note with alternating down and up strokes. In **Shreddage II**, this is not synced with any particular tempo, but is simply played as fast as the guitarist was able! This can be used in lead or rhythm parts to add extra flair.

## PINCH SQUEALS

By using a specific hand position, a guitarist can pick a note and bring out mostly the harmonics (overtones) as opposed to the root pitch (fundamental). This high-pitched sound is often enhanced with vibrato, which we captured in the form of this articulation. Pinch squeals are screaming, dramatic, and excellent for adding flair to a riff, particularly on longer notes or the highest note in a riff. They won't sound like much unless sent through a hi-gain amplifier, however!

## HAMMER-ON AND PULL-OFF

When playing a series of notes, guitarists do not often pick each one individually. Instead, when ascending in pitch on the same string, a "hammer-on" is used: once the string is struck, a finger on the left hand is used to hit the next fret, causing a slight attack and change in pitch. The opposite, a "pull-off", involves fingering several notes on the same string. By quickly releasing the finger on the highest fret, the lower pitch comes through. These techniques are used quickly and seamlessly in many riffs and phrases.

Triggering them in **Shreddage II** is a simple matter of overlapping two notes within two semitones. There are numerous options involving hammer-on and pull-off articulations available in the Legato page of the UI.

## PORTAMENTO SLIDES

A continuous slide (aka glissando, portamento) is performed by striking a note and then literally sliding the left hand along the frets of the string. This technique can be used to dramatically hit a low or high note, or at the end of a phrase (usually downward in pitch). Slides in **Shreddage II** are triggered the same way as hammers/pulls, by overlapping two notes; by default, the two legato techniques are in separate velocity ranges.

For example, holding E3 then playing and holding B3 will produce an authentic slide from E3 to B3. The destination note, B3, will then be sustained as long as you hold the note. However, a very useful technique is NOT holding the destination note long enough for it to be heard. The result will produce only the sound of the slide, and nothing else - a very handy effect!

As with hammers, there are extensive customization options for slides in the Legato page of the UI.

## FULL CHOKES

By heavily palm muting all strings, then quickly strumming all strings, this sound is produced. Its largely non-pitched quality is handy for chugging rhythms and intro riffs. Full chokes are always triggered on **F#2** and the velocity played changes where the strings are strummed (which in turn changes the tone of the choke).

## RELEASE NOISES

Many types of subtle noises are produced when a guitar string is played and released. In **Shreddage II**, we've captured two categories of noises: pitched and unpitched. Pitched noises are triggered when sustain notes are stopped. These are matched properly to the pitch of the note that was played. Unpitched noises include a large variety of random sounds captured from actual performances. Each type of noise is automatically triggered upon release of most articulations, and volume controls are available in the Engine page of the UI.

## FRET SQUEAKS

Quickly moving the left hand from one fret to another creates a high-pitched 'squeak'. We captured many variations of this sound and have mapped them to **F2**. Generally, it makes sense to write your guitar part first, and then pepper it with fret squeaks once you've figured out your rhythms and pitches. We recommend using them sparingly; try adding them shortly before the start of a new note, several steps higher or lower in pitch than the previous note.

## EXTRA PICK NOISE

By quickly strumming several muted strings leading up to the string that is intended to be played, an extra heavy pick noise is perceived. This common technique adds extra emphasis to high notes in a lead part. If this articulation is enabled and the user triggers the proper velocity for it, it will actually DELAY the played note by ~35ms while adding the extra pick sound.

## UNISON BENDS

A common technique while playing two notes on two separate strings is to pitch bend the note on the lower string without bending the higher note. This technique, called a 'unison bend', is commonly done by 1 or 2 semitones. You can execute unison bends in **Shreddage II** by using **CC11** (customizable in the 'Engine' page). **CC11** will bend the *lowest currently played note* up to two semitones, without affecting any other currently played notes!

# THE SCRIPT

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**Shreddage II** is powered by an advanced script created using the KSP (Kontakt Script Processor). This section of the manual will describe how this script functions (descriptions of user-editable controls can be found in the following **Interface & Options** section).

Note: Disabling the script, or attempting to edit any groups/mapping options, **is not recommended!** If you do decide to try and make some edits, we strongly encourage you to save a backup copy of the patch (or save your installation files).

## STRING & FRET SELECTION

To truly capture the wide range of tones possible with a guitar, it is necessary to sample each fret on each string of the guitar. An E3 played on String 7 (Low A String) is the same pitch as an E3 played on String 6 (E String), but the resulting tones are distinct. Likewise, when a chord of several notes is played, each note must be placed on a different string realistically.

When using **Shreddage II**, you need not worry about picking which string or fret to use. The script intelligently determines where to place each incoming note based on what you've already been playing. For example, playing two or more note at once will result in each note being placed on a different string. The rules used to determine fret and string placement involve looking at (a) strings that currently have held notes, (b) the string/fret of the previous note, and (c) the input pitch.

By default, **Shreddage II** will avoid placing two notes on the same string unless the MIDI sequence forces it. Notes will generally attempt to be placed using a set of preset 'sweet spots' for each string (generally within the 2nd through 7th frets or so). If the previous note has a high fret position, the script will attempt to avoid making large leaps in fret position on the next note. Likewise, adjacent strings are always considered before jumping more than one string, where possible.

Fretting behavior can be changed in a multitude of ways, as explained later in the manual.

## STROKE DIRECTION / CHORD THRESHOLD

The default playing style of **Shreddage II** alternates between down and up strokes. This can be changed in two ways: one, by using keyswitches or the UI to select down- or up-stroke only mode. Two, by playing a series of notes within the 'chord threshold'. This user-configurable option, set to 150ms by default, will normalize stroke direction to the direction of the first played note.

Just as a real guitarist strumming a chord will strum all notes either down or up, the chord threshold feature is designed to detect when the user is playing a strummed chord and ensure all notes in the chord use the same stroke direction.

## ROUND ROBINS

A 'round robin' refers to a unique recording of a given pitch and articulation. **Shreddage II** contains up to 8 round robins (RRs) per articulation and pitch. This means that playing the same note and velocity over and over will trigger a different recording each time, virtually eliminating the 'machine gun effect'. This can be further enhanced using the Anti-Repetition control.

RRs are selected using a pre-determined 'seed' of random numbers. This ensures that rather than hearing the same short sequence (1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4) over and over, you will hear a dynamic, non-repetitious order.

By selecting **Guitar 2** instead of **Guitar 1**, the same seed is used, but at a different starting point. Thus, with two patches on the same MIDI channel using separate guitars, a true double-tracked sound can be achieved.

The **Reset RR** button can be used to reset RR sequence position.

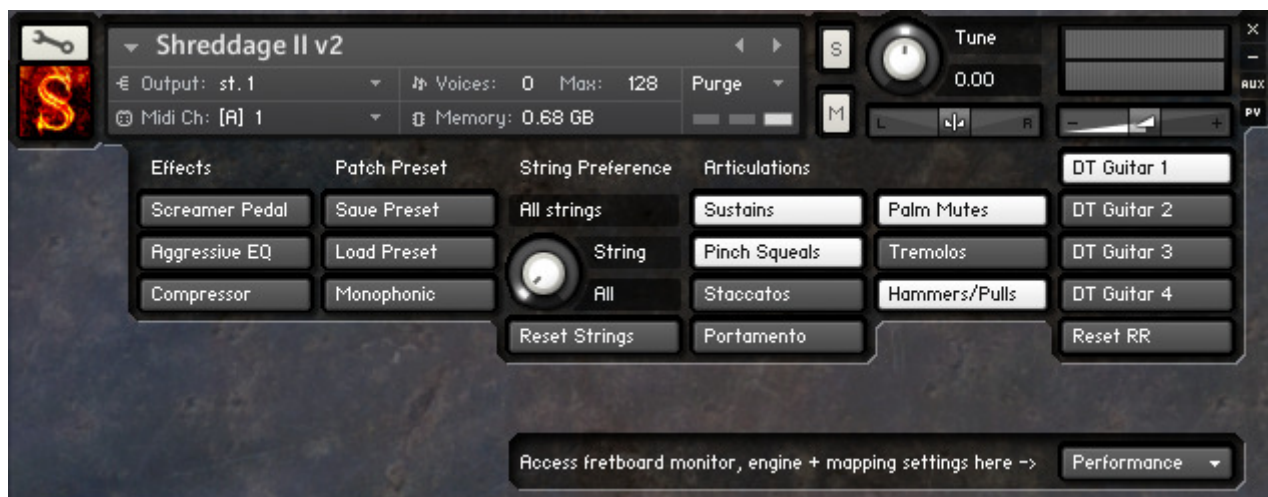
## INTERFACE & OPTIONS

Whereas the original Shreddage had a rather minimal (but effective) set of controls, **Shreddage II** features a wide variety of customization options and added features. Whether you just want to make some basic adjustments or significantly tweak dozens of advanced options, everything is easily accessible from the user interface.

This manual will go through each and every page of the UI, and every control. Note that you can switch pages of the UI by clicking the dropdown menu in the bottom-right of the interface (defaulting to "Performance" page).

**Note: By hovering the mouse over ANY control in the UI, help text will appear within Kontakt itself!**

### Performance Page (Default)



### Screamer Pedal

Adds a distortion pedal to the signal chain modeled after the classic "Tube Screamer" pedal. This effect is very useful in thickening up the sound before it is sent through an amplifier like ReValver.

### Aggressive EQ

Adds a custom EQ curve to the signal chain that adds more 'bite' and reduces bass thickness. Using this control will make the base guitar tone similar to that of the original Shreddage.

### Compressor

Adds a heavy compressor to the signal chain that emphasizes pick sound and attack transient. Useful for clean tones in particular.

## Patch Preset

If you've created a patch that you like, you can click "Save Preset" to save it to your computer as an .NKA file. You can then use "Load Preset" to load it again in any project.

## Monophonic

Enables monophonic mode, where only one note is sounded at any given time. Useful for leads. Note that the **Chord Threshold** knob (explained later) WILL allow for chords in monophonic mode, as long as they are played within the threshold. To totally disable chords, set the Chord Threshold to 0.

## String Preference Knob

Sets the script's string preference. If any single string (1-7) is selected, the script will make all attempts to play notes on that string, unless the input notes are beyond the pitch range of the string. Note that the keyswitches from B-2 to F#-1 can also control this knob.

## Reset Strings

Resets the virtual hand/fret position and all notes on all strings. This is useful if, for some reason, you've encountered an issue with a stuck note.

## Articulation Buttons

These buttons enable or disable the articulations within **Shreddage II**. The "Articulations" page of the UI can be accessed to customize velocity mapping of these articulations as well.

## DT Guitar 1, 2, 3, 4

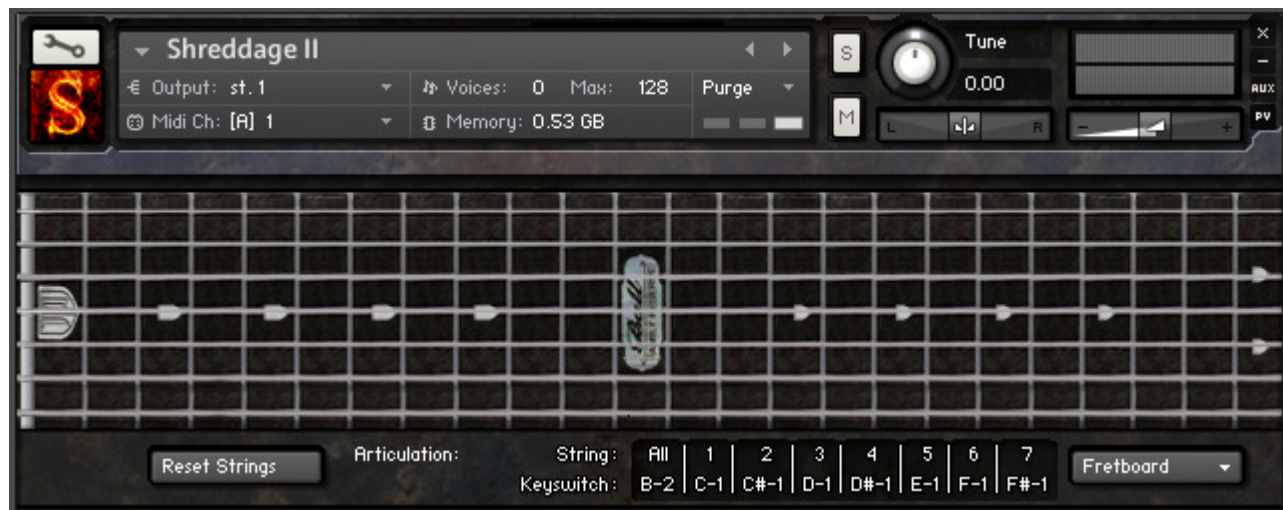
Shreddage II is built for double-tracking and even quad-tracking. These buttons allow you to define one instance of the patch as the first guitar, another instance as the second guitar, etc. Guitars 1 & 2 use separate round-robin sequences, and thus separate recordings. Guitars 3 & 4 use clever zone transposition to simulate additional guitars.

**IMPORTANT:** When using quad-tracking, Guitars 1 & 2 CANNOT use the Anti-Repetition feature in the Engine page.

## Reset RR

Resets the round robin sequence. Useful if your double-track instances get out of sync (just press this button on each instance).

## Fretboard Page



This page displays a virtual fretboard monitor. When notes are played, you will see which strings and frets are being triggered. "v" represents a downstroke while "^" represents an upstroke. "H" and "P" represent hammer-

on and pull-off respectively, while "0" denotes playing on an open string. The **Reset Strings** button on this page serves the same function as on the Performance Page.

## Articulations Page



### Articulation Buttons

Just like on the performance page, these buttons can be used to enable or disable any articulation.

### Numeric Velocity Ranges

Each articulation has a corresponding "Min" and "Max" velocity range. This represents the range at which the articulation is triggered. For example, setting sustains to min = 70 and velocity = 100 will ensure that sustains only trigger when velocities 70 through 100 are played. If there is a gap in the velocity range (for example mutes = 50-60, sustains = 70-100), then any notes played in the gap will trigger a 'dead' note sound.

For legato articulations, the velocity range is based on the destination note, NOT the origin note. For example, let's say portamentos are set to trigger at velocities 1-59. You play and hold A2, then play A3. You must play A3 at velocity 1-59 to trigger legato. The velocity of A2 is not relevant.

## Engine Page



### Velocity Scaling

This menu allows you to scale incoming velocities. "Light" and "XLight" scales input velocity upward, while "Heavy" and "XHeavy" scale input downward.



### **Picking Mode**

Controls stroke direction. By default, alternating down and up strokes are used. However, many rhythm riffs benefit from using only downstrokes. This control can also be accessed via keyswitch (**C-2 through D-2**).

### **Vibrato Type**

Switches between the types of vibrato described earlier. Can be accessed via keyswitch (**D#2 through F-2**).

### **Envelopes - Sus Rls**

Controls the release time of sustained articulations. This is useful if you want to sequence particularly tight parts; by decreasing this knob and increasing the volume of release noises, you can emphasize the end of each note further. Increasing the release time can be useful for dreamy or atmospheric guitar parts.

### **Envelopes - Mt Decay**

Controls the decay time of palm mute articulations. Decreasing this knob effectively makes mutes 'tighter', eg. they will not sustain and hold out for as long. Volume decay occurs as soon as you press a note.

### **Envelopes - Mute Rls**

Controls the release time of palm mute articulations, much like the Sus Rls knob.

### **Chd Threshold (Chord Threshold)**

Controls the threshold time, in milliseconds, used to detect chord strums. This script function is described earlier in the manual.

### **TuneVari (Tune Variation)**

Controls the amount of randomly-added tune humanization in each played note. Since real guitars (and real guitarists) do not play perfectly in-tune with every note, this control can be useful for added realism.

### **Anti-Repetition**

Enables extra Kontakt-generated round robins by means of pitch shifting notes +2/-2 semitones from the played note. Not much reason to disable this, really!

### **Keyswitch Latch**

When enabled, keyswitches such as string selection will stay active even when the keyswitch note is released. When disabled, the keyswitch must be **held** to stay in effect.

### **Split MIDI Ch**

If Shreddage II is set to OMNI input in Kontakt, this switch will send MIDI notes from different channels to different strings on the virtual guitar. This is particularly useful for some MIDI guitar controllers. MIDI Channel 1 = String 1, MIDI Channel 2 = String 2, and so forth.

### **Palm Release**

When enabled, release noises will play back on short articulations like palm mutes. When disabled, they won't!

### **Tapping Mode**

When enabled, forces incoming notes to use hammer-ons only, emulating the two-hand tapping playing style.

### **Rls Noise**

Controls the volume of unpitched release noises.

### **Pitch Rls**

Controls the volume of pitched release noises, which are only triggered at the ends of sustained notes.

## DI Line Noise

Enables a constant loop of line noise/ground hum. Useful for extra realism in a render.

## Extra Pick

Enables the additional pick sound articulation, as described earlier.

## LineNoise

Controls the volume of the DI line noise, if enabled.

## ExtraPick (Noise)

Controls the volume of extra pick noise, if enabled.

## Legato Page



## Legato Articulations

These controls are the same as on the Articulations page - they're just added here for convenience.

## Hammer Settings - Range

Controls the maximum range (in semitones) where hammer-ons or pull-offs will be triggered while playing legato. For example, if this knob is set to 2 semitones, then hammers/pulls will only be triggered within one whole step on the keyboard. Playing 3 or more semitones would trigger normal articulations, even while playing legato.

## Note Realism

When enabled (by default), the script will intersperse hammer-on and pull-off playing with sustain articulations. This is because in most situations, a guitarist could only play two or perhaps three hammers or pulls in a row before needing to pick the string again. Disabling this control will allow you to play as many hammers or pulls as you want!

## Vol Realism

As with note realism, this control is enabled by default. It decreases the volume of successive hammer-on and pull-offs realistically. Disabling it will keep these articulations at full volume no matter how many times in a row they are triggered.

## Portamento - Slide In

Sets the FADE-IN time of the portamento slide sample. The sequence of events in a portamento articulation is as follows: the user plays a note (ex. A3). When portamento is triggered (ex. A4), the script starts to fade out the first note (A3) and fades in a transition sample of A3->A4. Then, the script crossfades this transition sample with the destination note (A4).

### Portamento - Trans. XF

Sets the crossfade time between the transition (slide) sample and the destination note.

### Portamento - Sus. Out

Sets the fade-out time for the original sustained note (the origin note for the slide).

### Slide Vol

Sets the volume level for the slide transitions.

### Port Spd

Controls the SPEED of slide transitions. If you change this from the default value of 100%, you will likely need to change the other portamento settings to taste as well.

### Cross Porta (Portamento)

When enabled, allows for slides from one string to another. This is technically not realistic, but it sounds great, and in some cases will allow for slides that wouldn't normally be possible. We recommend keeping this control active unless you are an advanced user willing to manipulate string selection carefully!

### Port Vol Realism

When enabled, the volume of portamento slides and their destination note will be decreased based on how long the origin note was held for.

## Engine 2 Page



*All new in Shreddage 2 v2!*

### FretMin

Sets the MINIMUM fret preference for fret selection. For example, a minimum of 3 means the script will prefer not to play on frets below the 3rd on any given string.

### FretMax

Sets the MAXIMUM fret preference for fret selection. For example, a maximum of 15 means the script will prefer not to play on frets above the 15th on any given string.

### HandRange

Sets the reach of the 'virtual hand' used on the fretboard. A larger range is useful if you are holding one note and want to hit notes outside that fret on other strings.

**FretRst (Fret Reset)**

Sets the fret position reset time after all held notes have been released.

**PB Range (Pitchbend Range)**

Sets the depth / range of the pitch bend wheel/controller in semitones.

**Tranpose**

Transposes the entire instrument a given number of semitones (all MIDI note input will be transposed).

**Rls. Min**

Sets minimum threshold (in milliseconds) of note length needed for release noises to trigger.

**Rls. Max**

Sets maximum threshold (in milliseconds) of note length needed for release noises to trigger.

**PickLen**

Controls the length of the extra pick attack noise, if that articulation is enabled.

**S.VibSpd (Smooth Vibrato Speed)**

Sets the speed (frequency) of the smooth vibrato mode.

**Vel -> Volume**

When enabled, maps velocity to volume. Useful for clean parts - make sure your Articulation mapping is sensible!

**Chord Priority**

When enabled, overlapping notes within the Chord Threshold will play polyphonically regardless of legato settings. Playing outside the threshold will trigger legato as normal.

## TECHNICAL DETAILS

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The guitar used for **Shreddage II** was a Musicman JP12 seven-string guitar, recorded DI through an Avalon U5 into an RME HDSPE interface at 24/44.1. **7,915** 24-bit mono WAV samples comprise the final library, clocking in at nearly 5 gigabytes (uncompressed).

## CREDITS

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## TROUBLESHOOTING & FEEDBACK

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Have you used **Shreddage II** in a project recently? Got an awesome track you'd like to share? Drop us a line ([admin@impactsoundworks.com](mailto:admin@impactsoundworks.com)) and we might post it on our website! Or, tell the world at our Facebook page here: <http://www.facebook.com/ImpactSoundworks>

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For any technical support issues regarding the library, don't hesitate to email [support@impactsoundworks.com](mailto:support@impactsoundworks.com).

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