



Palimpsest

A short guide · Everything stays on your computer. Nothing is sent anywhere, and no internet is needed.

1 STARTING

1. Open **Palimpsest** like any other app. The first time, it asks you to **start a new songbook** or **open one** you already have.
2. A new songbook is one folder, usually **Documents › Songbook**. Palimpsest remembers it and opens it every time after that.
3. There's nothing to save when you finish: every song is saved the moment you click **Save song**. Just quit.

To use a different songbook, choose **File › Open Songbook...**

To see your song files, choose **File › Show Songbook Folder**.

2 ADDING A SONG

1. Click **+ New song** and fill in the title, key, capo, tempo, section and status.
2. Type or paste the words. Put each chord in **square brackets** just before the word it falls on, and each part name on a line of its own:


```
[Verse 1]
[G]Put each chord in [C]brackets

[Chorus]
[C]Move the [G]key and sing
```
3. To repeat a chorus later, just write **[Chorus]** again on its own line.
4. Songs in other apps or documents? On the Songs page, **Bring in songs...** reads them in; other writers' songs are marked as theirs.
5. Add the song's **lowest and highest sung notes** (like A2 and D4) and its page will show which keys suit your voice.
6. **Played with a capo?** Choose it under **Capo** and write the chords as the shapes you play; the key is how it sounds. On the song's page, the **Capo** buttons show the easiest shapes for any key; point at a chord for its **diagram**.
7. Click **Save song**, or press **⌘S**.

3 BACKING UP YOUR SONGS

Everything lives in **one folder**, your songbook folder (**File › Show Songbook Folder**):

- 📁 **songs** – one plain text file per song
- 📁 **set lists** – one file per set list
- 📁 **PDFs** – the PDFs you've saved
- 📁 **deleted songs** – songs you've deleted
- 📄 **sections.txt, settings.txt** – your sections and settings

1. **To back up**, copy the whole **Songbook** folder to a USB stick or external drive, or into iCloud Drive, OneDrive or Dropbox. Doing this after each writing session is a good habit. Time Machine (Mac) or File History (Windows) back it up for you as well.
2. **To restore**, copy the Songbook folder back onto your computer, then choose **File › Open Songbook...** and pick it.
3. **Deleted a song by mistake?** Drag its file from **deleted songs** back into **songs**.

Your song files open in any text editor (TextEdit, Notepad), so they're readable even without Palimpsest. In iCloud Drive, OneDrive or Dropbox the folder is on all your computers (open it on each with **File › Open Songbook...**), and changes show up by themselves.

HANDY KEYS

+ / -	Move a song up or down in key
E	Edit the song you're looking at
Space · Page Down	Performance view: next screen, then the next song (works with most foot pedals)
← / →	Performance view: previous or next song in the set
Esc	Leave full screen, then close the performance view

EACH PLAYER'S VIEW **PRO**

Choose **View** on a song's page, in the performance view or when printing: words only for a singer, chords only for bass and keys, Nashville numbers, or chords written for B♭, E♭ and F instruments. Each device keeps its own. Pro chord diagrams add ukulele, mandolin, piano and tunings.



Palimpsest Pro

Page 2 · Tools for recording and releasing your songs. Everything on page 1 stays free.

4 UNLOCKING PRO

In **Settings**, paste your licence key (it starts with **PAL1**) and click **Unlock**; a **PRO** badge appears at the top. It's checked on your computer, offline, and kept in **settings.txt**. If it ever ends, nothing you made is lost. Free has a taste of these tools: recordings on 3 songs, words-only and chords-only views, one set for the band.

5 RECORDINGS

1. On a song's page, click **Recordings**, then **+ Add recordings...**, or drag sound files onto the page. They're copied into **Songbook > recordings**; your originals stay put.
2. **Details**: a recording's name, notes and **main recording** tick (Space plays it). **Measure** finds its tempo, key, loudness and sung range. **Split into parts** (Studio, desktop app) separates voice, guitar and the rest; the player's **Parts** leaves any out.
3. **Press ►**: the player stays along the bottom as you move around. Click the waveform to jump or drag across it to loop; **Speed** slows it in the same key. The arrow folds it; **Return** goes to the start; ? lists every key.
4. The page moves through the words as it plays. **Press M** as each part begins to keep it in step and light the part up. Point at a mark for × to remove it; **Undo** takes it back.
5. Press **Chords** on the player: the chords move along in a strip as it plays, and **Compare** sets them beside the song's own, to copy in. **Practice** changes the key, loops a part, counts you in and speeds up each time round.

Removing a recording moves it to deleted recordings; nothing is erased.

6 VERSIONS AND PROOF

Every save is kept in the **versions** folder. **Versions**, on a song's page, shows what changed and brings an old line or version back. Name the important ones, print a **Record of authorship**, and add an independent timestamp (only a fingerprint is sent). Free shows the last 3.

7 SEND TO DAW AND BACK

1. On a song's page, click **Send to DAW**, choose your program (Logic, GarageBand, Ableton, Cubase or Reaper), check the tempo and click **Save the MIDI file**.
2. You get a **MIDI file** (tempo, key, markers, chords, bass and any melody) and a **words and chords** file, in **Songbook > DAW exports**.
3. **From a DAW...** brings in a melody, tempo and markers, or chords (Studio: a folder of stems).

8 LOGIC PACKS

In a recording's **Details**, **Make a Logic pack** gives a new folder in **Songbook > Logic packs** with the recording and a MIDI file that follows its tempo. In Logic, open the .mid and put the .wav at bar 1.

9 WRITERS & RELEASES

Writers & releases keeps a song's society details, releases and pitches. **Ready for release?** (Studio) checks the master and cover and prints a release sheet. **Co-write** (Studio, desktop app), on a song's page, writes it live with someone in the room, online or through a shared folder; each line keeps its writer.

10 ON STAGE

► **Start** counts you in; then the words scroll in time with a marked recording or the song's **Length**. Set lists take breaks and a length; **Set** shows what still fits. **Second screen** shows a monitor or the audience's words.

11 MIDI PEDAL AND CUES

Turn on MIDI in **Settings**, click **Learn** and press the pedal for each job. **MIDI cues**, on a song's page, change sounds, effects or lights as it starts, at any part and as it ends.

12 SEND A SET TO THE BAND

On a set list, **Send to the band** makes one .zip file with the set and its songs. Your band opens it in Palimpsest, free, with **Set lists > Bring in a band pack**. Send it again after a change; their own edits are kept. It can be locked with a password.



Palimpsest Producer

Page 3 · Producing other artists. The artists themselves need nothing: they review free.

13 ARTISTS

Artists, at the top, lists everyone you produce. Each has a book of their own: their songs, recordings, sessions and set lists, in **Songbook › artists**. Click one to open their book; the name at the top shows whose book you're in, and **×** brings you back to your own. Their songs stay theirs: never in your record of authorship or your band packs.

14 SESSIONS AND INVOICES

In an artist's book, **+ A session** keeps the day: where, who was there, the songs, what was recorded, the gear and settings, the hours and other costs. **Make an invoice...** turns the sessions not yet invoiced into an invoice to print or save as a PDF; your name, address and payment details come from **Settings › Invoices**. Tick **Paid** when it's paid.

15 CREDITS

In **Writers & releases**, **Credits** holds who produced, engineered, mixed and mastered the song, and who played and sang. They go onto its release sheet.

16 MIXES

On a song's page, **Recordings › Mixes & reviews** shows Mix 1, Mix 2... in order, each with what changed and its stems; nothing is overwritten. Tick **At the same loudness** and **Switch at the same moment**, then play one mix after another to compare them fairly. The approved mix becomes the main recording.

17 REVIEWS

Send for review... on a mix: a private link (through your relay), a file to email, your shared folder, or listening together live. The artist listens, comments at moments in the song and approves; their replies come back to the mix. A reply file comes in with **Bring in a reply...**

18 BOUNCES

Settings › Bounces watches the folder you bounce into. A new bounce named after a song ("Fire Road mix") becomes its next mix; one that says what it is ("Fire Road vocals") becomes a stem of the latest mix. Anything it can't place waits on the Artists page.