



# COLOSSAL BASS II USER GUIDE

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# 1 FEATURES

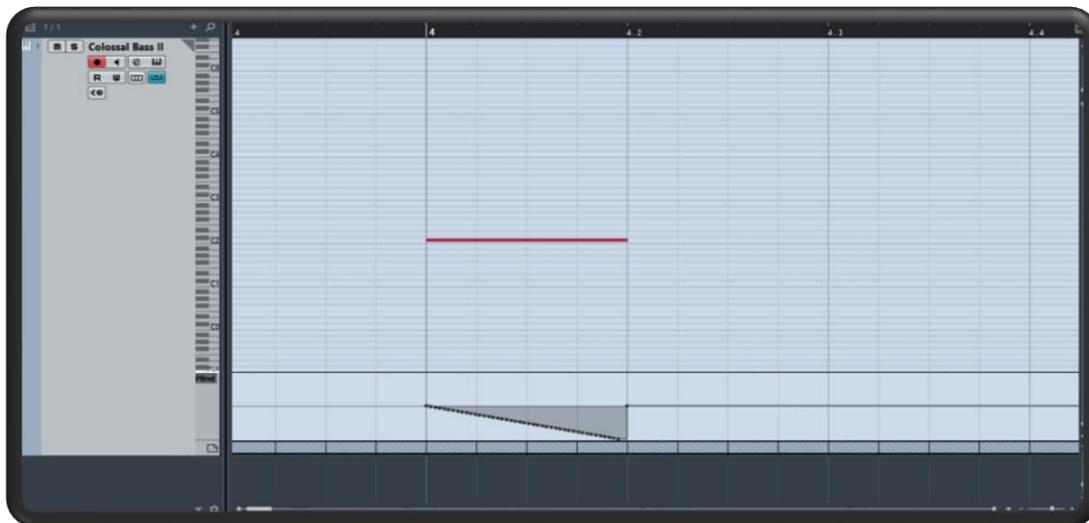
## 1.1 Overview

Colossal Bass II offers several new features, including velocity humanization, instrument mode selection, slides and more. We spent a lot of time carefully tuning the new velocity humanization and instrument mode selection algorithms, and the result is perhaps the most realistic MIDI bass instrument yet. Slides can now be used by the respective keyswitch, and can be sped up or down by using your DAW's MIDI pitchbend automation.

### 1.1.1 Bends

Bends work the exact same between Colossal Bass I & II. To create a bend, you will need to access the pitchbend section of your DAW's MIDI editor. If you are unsure how to view the pitchbend editor, please refer to your DAW's operation manual.

Once your MIDI editor is in pitchbend view, create a new point at the start of the note, and one at the position where the bend will come to an end. Between the two new points, create a curve to shape the bend to your liking. Here I made two points at the start and end, and used the Line Tool in Cubase to create a simple downwards bend. **\*\*Always remember to set the last point back to a value of 0, so the notes following the bend don't become flat/sharp.\*\***



## 1.1.2 Humanize Velocity

When used appropriately, the all-new velocity humanization algorithm included in Colossal Bass II can yield stunningly realistic results. By default, this feature is enabled and set to a value of 10. The algorithm works by taking its value and adjusting the velocity of each MIDI note to a new, randomized value that can be either higher or lower than the original velocity value for a particular MIDI note.

For example, if every MIDI note on a track was set to the maximum velocity of 127, enabling velocity humanization and setting it to a value of 10 would then randomize those velocities to any number between 127 and 117, since 127 is the maximum value for any MIDI note. However, if all MIDI notes on a track were set to a velocity of 117, and the velocity humanization algorithm was enabled with a value of 10, then each MIDI note would be given a new, randomized value between 107 and 127.

## 1.1.3 Instrument Mode

The Instrument Mode feature gives you the ability to define a speed in milliseconds with which the Colossal Bass II NKI will begin to play in alternate picking mode. By default, this is set to 175ms, and acceptable values range from 0-600ms. Any two notes that play back with less than this millisecond value of time between them will be alternate picked, while any notes that are slower than the millisecond value you set will be only down picks. This feature includes a display above it to indicate the current instrument mode.

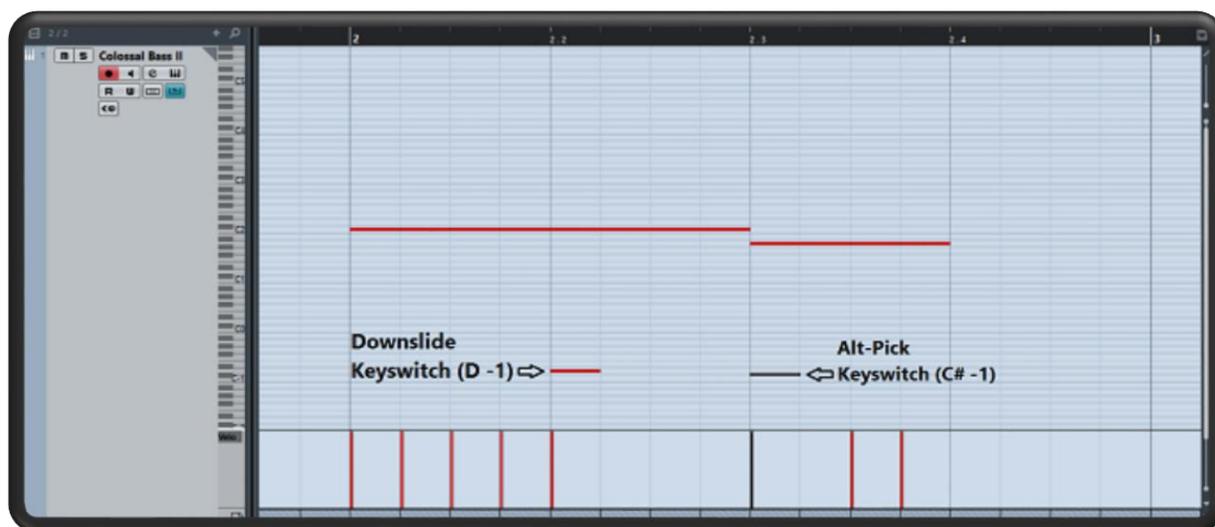
*Note: The Instrument Mode display will always show as "Alt – Down" or "Alt – Up" depending on the note. If a certain range of notes are slower than the Instrument Mode millisecond value that you set, they will be played as down picks only, but will still display as "Alt – Down". The only time the display will change to "Down Picking" is when using the keyswitch for down picking only mode. In this case, regardless of the Instrument Mode's millisecond value, all notes will be played as down picks until reaching a point which the alternate picking keyswitch is set again.*

## 1.1.4 Keyswitches

Colossal Bass II uses MIDI keyswitches to determine the playback mode. The possible playback modes are alternate picking (default), down picking only, downslides, or upslides. Refer to the table below for the keyswitch pertaining to each mode.

Playback Mode	Keyswitch Note
Down Picking	C -1
Alternate Picking	C# -1
Downslides	D -1
Upslides	D# -1

To use a keyswitch, simply add the corresponding MIDI note to your MIDI track, and **all notes following the keyswitch** will use the playback mode for the keyswitch you set until it is changed again. In many cases, you may want to set a keyswitch at the start of a particular MIDI note (e.g. the beginning of a riff). Adding a keyswitch MIDI note on top of a note that is used for the bass performance itself is perfectly fine, as a keyswitch note alone will not produce any sound. These notes are strictly for changing the playback mode. It is also worth noting that the length of a keyswitch MIDI note does not change how it is read by the Colossal Bass II NKI. The NKI will immediately switch to the mode set by a keyswitch upon reaching it on the MIDI track, so there is no need to stretch the length of a keyswitch to span the entire section of a single playback mode.



1.1.4 Example of using keyswitches to create a downslide for a single note, then returning to alt-picking mode.

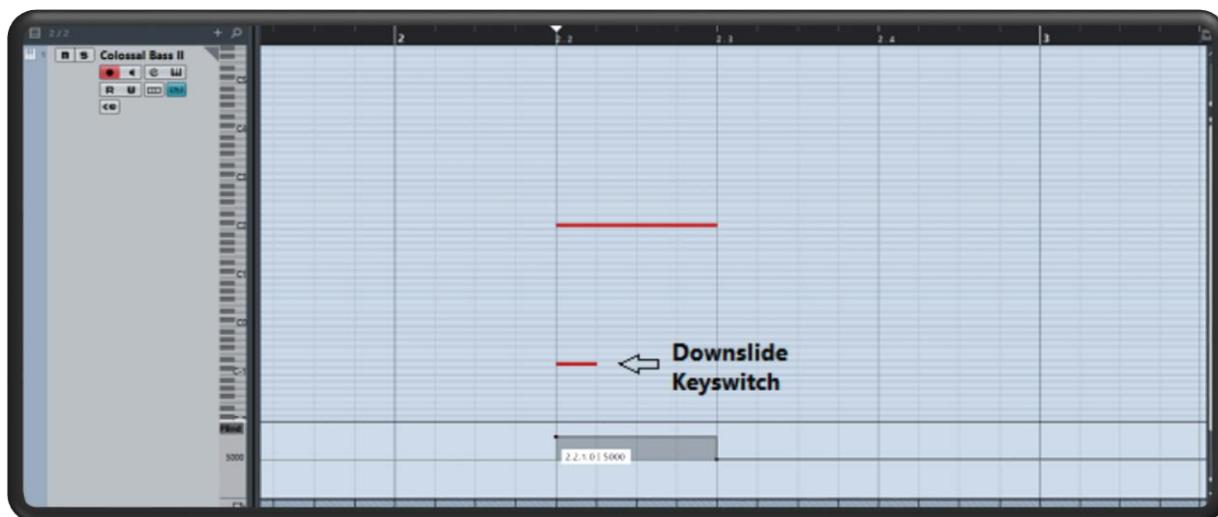
## 1.1.5 Slides

Slides in Colossal Bass II can be easily adjusted to their correct speed through pitchbend automation. To adjust the speed of a slide, you will need to access the pitchbend section of your DAW's MIDI editor. If you are unsure how to view the pitchbend editor, please refer to your DAW's operation manual.

Slides are accessed from keyswitches, and there are two separate keyswitches relevant to slides (one for downslides and one for upslides). If you are unsure how to use keyswitches, please refer to the Keyswitches section above.

To adjust the speed of a slide, use the pitchbend editor in your DAW to add a **static value** that is either higher or lower than 0 to speed up or down the slide, respectively. **If you automate this value to a ramp or curve, your slide will be changing speeds drastically each time the value is incremented or decremented.** If you set a pitchbend value of 5,000 to a slide, that will act as 1 static speed. For another example, if you set the first half of a slide's length to a pitchbend value of 4,000, and the second half to a value of 8,000, it will react the same as if you played a downslide on a real bass guitar from the 10<sup>th</sup> fret, and doubled your slide speed once reaching the 5<sup>th</sup> fret. In most cases, this can give a less than desirable result.

It is important to note that for slides **only**, the pitchbend automation you set will only adjust the slides speed, not the pitch. In the example below, I have increased the slide speed to a value of 5,000.



## 2 USING THE INSTRUMENT

### 2.1 Loading the NKI into Kontakt

Once you have Kontakt loaded on a track, open Kontakt and select the “Files” tab in the top left area of the file browser, then browse to the location on your computer where you saved Colossal Bass II. Browse to the NKI’s folder, and double click on the Colossal Bass II NKI that you’d like to open. Colossal Bass II will now be fully loaded and ready to use.

2.1 The 'Files' tab, NKI's folder, and NKI selection to load



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## 2.2 Frequently Asked Questions

**Q.** When trying to open a Colossal Bass II NKI, I receive an error from Kontakt telling me that there are samples missing.

**A.** If you encounter this error for any reason, simply click the “Browse for Folder” button inside the error window, and browse to the location on your computer where the Samples folder is saved (inside the main Colossal Bass II folder). This should resolve any issues about missing samples.

**Q.** Colossal Bass II stopped playing any sound from Kontakt.

**A.** If you are using the free Kontakt Player, you will be limited to 15 minutes of playback. For these users, I recommend you export the bass MIDI after loading Colossal and adjusting your settings, and then reimport it back into your session on a new audio track. This is also a good idea for users with the full version of Kontakt, as it will help reduce CPU load from your session.

**Q.** I get an error while loading a Colossal Bass II NKI telling me that memory is running low and I should purge samples.

**A.** If you are using a 32-bit version of your DAW and are working inside of a large session, it’s possible that you may encounter this error. Since 32-bit programs are limited to only 4GB of RAM (which ends up much less after system RAM is accounted for) and the Colossal Bass II NKI’s are roughly 700MB, a large session could result in you receiving this error. The best solution is to save the bass MIDI, open it in a new session, load Kontakt and your Colossal Bass II NKI of choice, and then export the audio to be imported into the main session as an audio track later.

**Q.** What do the abbreviations in each Colossal Bass II NKI name mean?

**A.** The “B7K” NKI was made using a Darkglass Microtubes “B7K” Preamp for drive. “BSN” patch was carefully modeled after the bass tone from Circa Survives “Blue Sky Noise” album, which was a modified ProCo Rat with an LM308 chip. Lastly, “PSA1” was created using the Sansamp PSA1 plugin. All 3 patches were sent through a Sansamp RBI bass preamp for their low end.

## 3 DI PROCESSING TIPS

### 3.1 Overview

One method that works very well for processing the Colossal Bass II DI NKL, is splitting the bass signal into two separate tracks to handle the processing for low end and any drive/distortion separately. This section will briefly cover some processing tips using this method, but is not intended to act as a mixing guide and won't go into too much detail.

#### 3.1.1 Processing the Low End

For the low end track, I tend to low pass pretty aggressively to get rid of low mids that would just end up being problematic, difficult to tame/balance and muddy in the long run. The go to range for this low pass is anywhere from 200hz to 400hz. My typical chain for the low track would look something like Sansamp RBI reamp (similar plugin versions exist, such as the TSE BOD and the Pod Farm Bass Overdrive plugin)>EQ (aggressive low pass)>Compression (fast attack/release, anything from -10 to -20GR isn't too uncommon for me)>anything extra such as additional EQ/bass enhancement etc.

The goal for this track is to balance the low end and keep it under control. Compression should not always be your only means of achieving a balanced low end.

#### 3.1.2 Adding Drive

Next step is to add some drive/distortion. For this track, the type of drive/distortion that I apply plays a huge role in deciding how aggressive I want to set the high pass. Regardless, high passing all lows/low mids out is a no brainer. With that said, my typical high pass for this track can be anywhere from 800hz to 1,500hz. Some of my favorite options for bass drive include: Sansamp PSA1 (hardware or plugin), UAD Nigel, Pod Farm Bass Overdrive, TSE X50. Compression for this track doesn't need to be too aggressive, as a more dynamic drive track can be essential after all of the balancing done to the low track. Adding a cab impulse on this track can be pretty cool, too.

### **3.1.3 Final Touches**

Once you have the low and drive tracks sounding how you want them, it's a good idea to send them to a group buss for a bit of extra processing together. A little compression here can really add some glue when used properly. Mild limiting can help balance things a bit more. Sometimes you may find that once you apply the two tracks together, it adds a bit too much to a certain frequency range, so further EQ here can improve the tone and get it sitting nicely. Any EQ done at this stage should be subtractive, if anything.