

AKAI
professional

A R I A

software by GARRITAN

www.akaipro.com

INTRODUCTION

This Quickstart Manual is intended to give you a brief overview of Aria – software designed by Garritan for use with the Akai EWI USB. In this manual, you'll find instructions on how to set up the EWI USB with Aria and an outline of its capabilities.

SOFTWARE OVERVIEW

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

To use Aria, your system must meet the following requirements:

PC

- 2.8 GHz, Pentium 4/Athlon 4 processor (or better)
- Windows 2000 (XP or Vista recommended)
- 1.2 GB free hard drive space required
- 1GB RAM required (2 GB RAM recommended)
- 7200 RPM hard drive speed
- DVD-ROM drive required for installation
- 1024 x 768 (or better) monitor resolution
- ASIO-compatible sound card

MAC

- 2.0 GHz, PowerPC G5 processor (or better)
- Mac OS X 10.4 (or higher)
- 1.2 GB free hard drive space required
- 1GB RAM required (2 GB RAM recommended)
- 7200 RPM hard drive speed
- DVD-ROM drive required for installation
- 1024 x 768 (or better) monitor resolution

INSTALLING THE SOFTWARE

1. Insert the software DVD (included) into your computer's CD/DVD drive. The setup window should open automatically.
2. Double-click on **Setup** and follow the on-screen instructions to install the software. (We recommend closing all other open applications before beginning the installation process.)
3. Once installation of both the software and samples have successfully completed, you may open the software. (No additional driver installation is needed. The computer will install all the necessary drivers automatically.)
 - **Windows (XP or Vista):** You can find the software application in the **Program Files** folder or, if you chose to create shortcuts, on the **Desktop** or in the programs listed in the **Start Menu**.
 - **Mac:** You can find the software application in the **Applications** folder.

GET STARTED!

After installing the software, you're ready to begin playing! Below is a quick explanation of how to start making music on the EWI USB with the software.

1. Connect the EWI USB to your computer using a standard USB cable (included). The Status LED on the EWI USB should light up, indicating the computer recognizes it.
2. Find the software – titled "Akai EWI USB" – in the appropriate location:
 - **Windows (XP or Vista):** You can find the software application in the **Program Files** folder or, if you chose to create shortcuts, on the **Desktop** or in the programs listed in the **Start Menu**.
 - **Mac:** You can find the software application in the **Applications** folder.
3. Go to the **Tools** menu, then **Preferences**. Then, under "Input MIDI Devices" check the appropriate box:
 - **Windows XP:** Select "USB Audio Device." If you have other USB audio devices connected to your computer, you may have to determine which one is the EWI USB.
 - **Windows Vista and Mac:** Select "EWI USB."
4. Be sure you have selected the Output MIDI Device, Audio Device, and any other settings appropriate for your computer and audio setup.
5. To find an instrument sound to play with the EWI USB, click on the **Instrument** field of first channel (which should be labeled "empty"). Select an instrument from the drop-down menu. You should see the pitch range of the instrument highlighted on the virtual **Keyboard** at the bottom of the window.
6. Adjust the parameter settings to the right (in the **Mix**, **Controls**, and **Reverb** tabs) to your preference.
7. Play the EWI USB by blowing into the mouthpiece. As the note plays, you should see corresponding key on the **Keyboard** at the bottom of the window.

IMPORTANT! *Plugging in the EWI USB automatically recalibrates its keys, rollers, and plates. To avoid interfering with this process (and causing it to play out of tune), hold the EWI USB only by its plastic casing near the top while plugging it in.*

If you experience problems when connecting the EWI USB through a USB hub, we recommend connecting the EWI USB directly to your computer.

For a more in-depth explanation of the software's features, continue reading the rest of this manual.

MENU

FILE

Load: Select this to choose an .aria file to load in the software. An .aria file contains previously saved instruments and parameter settings – that is, the sounds you assigned to each channel along with their volume levels, reverb levels, etc. Loading an .aria file allows you to recall those previously saved settings conveniently. You can also load .aria files by dragging the file itself over the software window.

Save As...: Select this to save the current instruments and parameter settings as an .aria file. You can conveniently restore these settings in the future by loading the file. (**Note:** Saving will only save the instrument "definition" files, not the actual sound samples themselves. When loading an .aria file, those samples will have to be available in order to recreate the sound you want.)

Save As Default: Select this to set the current software settings as the default. The next time you open the software, these instruments and parameter settings will be automatically recalled.

TOOLS

■ Preferences

Input MIDI Devices: Select the EWI USB from this menu to use it with the software.

- **Windows XP:** Select "USB Audio Device." (If you have other USB audio devices connected to your computer, you may have to determine which one is the EWI USB.)
- **Windows Vista and Mac:** Select "EWI USB."

Output MIDI Devices: Select the appropriate Output MIDI Device from this menu.

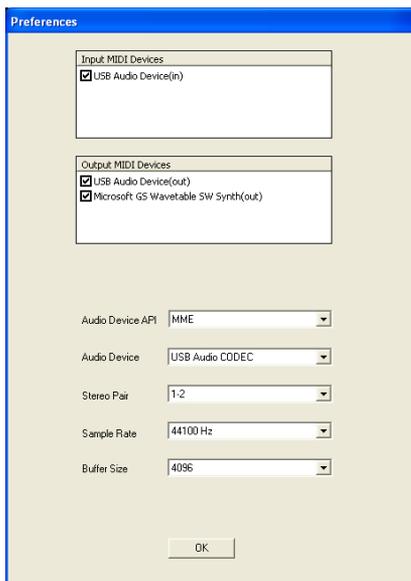
Audio Device API: Select the appropriate API (application programming interface) for the EWI USB.

Audio Device: Select the appropriate Audio Device from this menu.

Stereo Pair: Select the stereo outputs through which you will hear the audio.

Sample Rate: Select your desired sample rate from this drop-down menu. Depending on the sound card and driver you are using, various sample rates are available, but the default is 44.1 kHz.

Buffer Size: Select your desired buffer size from this drop-down menu. In general, keep this setting as low as possible to reduce latency (the delay between when you play the note and when the note sounds in the software). Smaller buffer sizes will give a faster response but lower fidelity sound. Larger buffer sizes will give you a slower response with higher fidelity sound.



■ EWI Configuration

A Note About MIDI and Some Useful Terms:

MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) is not actual music or audio signal but data being transferred. This data is a series of “event messages” – in this case, from the EWI USB to the Aria software – that controls what note is being played, what is happening to that note depending on the parameters you select, and what parameters those are.

The EWI USB and Aria software were designed to be easy to use, even for players who have never used MIDI before, but here are a few useful MIDI terms that might help you understand this section and how the EWI USB works:

SysEx: “SysEx” stands for “System Exclusive” – a file (.syx) containing preset data such as MIDI channels, controller numbers, parameter settings, etc. SysEx files can be saved and loaded to recall that preset data. In the case of the Aria software, the data includes the kinds of settings in this **EWI Configuration** section.

CC: “CC” stands for “Continuous Controller” – a MIDI message sent from your EWI USB containing a controller number and a numerical value. This tells the Aria software how to respond whenever you blow into the EWI USB’s mouthpiece or bite the mouthpiece. Some common CC assignments include volume, panning, portamento (note “glides”), modulation, and expression. Advanced MIDI users can freely experiment with CC assignments, but for your convenience, the default CC assignments for the EWI USB are the most “intuitive” for a wind instrument.

Aftertouch: When you blow into the EWI USB’s mouthpiece, it sends a MIDI message to the software to sound a note (a “Note-On” message). Aftertouch is the MIDI data that is sent *after* you start blowing and *while* the note is being played. Aftertouch is often used to control volume, vibrato, and other parameters. Some instruments in Aria use Aftertouch while others don’t. See **Breath CC2** under **Controller Configuration** for more information.

These buttons appear on all three screens:

Reset: Restores the default **Setup Controls**, **Performance Controls**, and **Controller Configuration**.

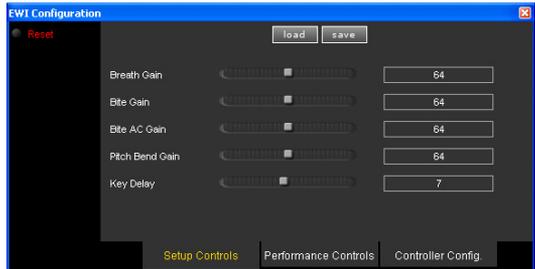
Load: Click this button to load a Sysex file, which will import previously saved controller settings to your **EWI Configuration**. Note that you can load any Sysex file (that includes settings for a breath controller), not just ones you have saved with this software.

Save: Saves the current **Setup Controls**, **Performance Controls**, and **Controller Configuration** as a Sysex file for future use. You can also use this Sysex file in other MIDI programs, not just this software.

Note: You do not have to click the “Save” button to keep these settings in this session. The **EWI Configuration** settings will be in effect once you close the window. If you want to use these settings in a future session, though, you should save them, just in case.

Setup Controls:

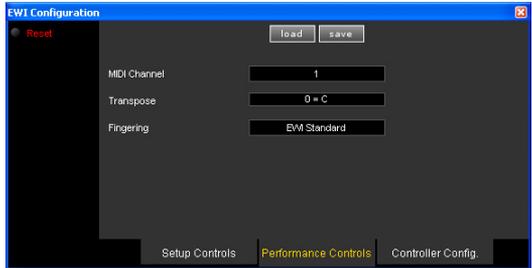
- **Reset:** Restores the default **EWI Configuration**.
- **Load:** Loads a previously saved SysEx file that contains Setup Control data only (i.e. the settings from this Setup Controls tab).
- **Save:** Saves the current Setup Control data as a SysEx file. This will save only the settings in this Setup Controls tab. Because Aria can save so many different SysEx files (which affect different settings), be specific when naming your saved files so you can recognize what kinds of settings (and, therefore, where you can load it) in the future.
- **Breath Gain:** Determines the gain level of the EWI USB’s breath sensor in the software. A higher setting will result in greater sensitivity to your breath.
- **Bite Gain:** Determines the gain level of both of the bite sensor’s CC assignments *except* for “Pitchbend Up-Down” and “Pitchbend Down-Up,” which is controlled by the **Bite AC Gain** (below). You can select your **Bite CC1** and **Bite CC2** assignments in the **Controller Configuration** (below).
- **Bite AC Gain:** Determines the gain level of the bite sensor’s CC assignments “Pitchbend Up-Down” and “Pitchbend Down-Up.” If “Pitchbend Up-Down” or “Pitchbend Down-Up” are not being used, this setting will have no effect. All other bite sensor CC assignments are controlled by the **Bite Gain** (above). You can select your **Bite CC1** and **Bite CC2** assignments in the **Controller Configuration** (below).
- **Pitch Bend Gain:** Determines the gain level of the EWI USB’s pitch bend plates’ controls in the software. A higher setting will result in greater pitch bend sensitivity. You can select your **Pitchbend Up Control** and **Pitchbend Down Control** in the **Controller Configuration** (below).



- **Key Delay:** Since the EWI USB is electronic and responds to fingering input much faster than an acoustic instrument, you may find it plays extra notes. This **Key Delay** setting determines the reaction time of the EWI USB's note keys. A higher setting will result in a slower key response. (For beginners, we recommend a higher setting to reduce the number of note "glitches." Most intermediate players can play much cleaner with a setting of 10–12.)

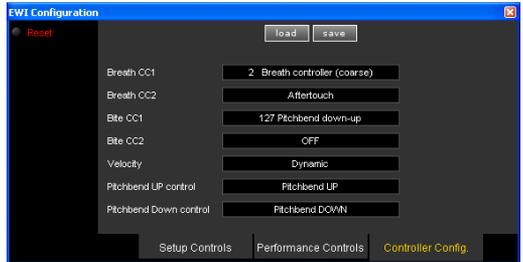
Performance Controls:

- **Reset:** Restores the default **EWI Configuration**.
- **Load:** Loads only the Performance Control data only from a previously saved SysEx file. If the file was saved in Aria, it will contain both Performance Control and Controller Configuration data, but only the Performance Control data will load here.
- **Save:** Saves the current Performance Control and Controller Configuration data together as a SysEx file. This will save only the settings in the Performance Controls and Controller Configuration tabs. Because Aria can save so many different SysEx files (which affect different settings), be specific when naming your saved files so you can recognize what kinds of settings (and, therefore, where you can load it) in the future.
- **MIDI Channel:** When an instrument's channel is set to its own number (instead of -OMNI-), match this **MIDI Channel** with that number to hear that instrument. The number of the **MIDI Channel** setting *must* match the number of the instrument's channel in order for you to hear it. (Any channels set to -OMNI- will be heard regardless of the **MIDI Channel** setting.) See **Channel** under the CHANNELS OVERVIEW section (below) for more information.
- **Transpose:** Transposes the notes played by the EWI USB, essentially changing the "concert" key. You may transpose as much as an octave higher (+12 semitones) or an octave lower (-12 semitones). This makes it easier to play music written for an instrument in a different key.
- **Fingering:** Determines the fingering configuration of the EWI USB in the software. See the **FINGERING CHARTS** in the EWI USB Quickstart Manual for more information.



Controller Configuration:

- **Reset:** Restores the default **EWI Configuration**.
- **Load:** Loads only the Controller Configuration data from a previously saved SysEx file. If the file was saved in Aria, it will contain both Performance Control and Controller Configuration data, but only the Controller Configuration data will load here.
- **Save:** Saves the current Performance Control and Controller Configuration data together as a SysEx file. This will save only the settings in the Performance Controls and Controller Configuration tabs. Because Aria can save so many different SysEx files (which affect different settings), be specific when naming your saved files so you can recognize what kinds of settings (and, therefore, where you can load it) in the future.
- **Breath CC1:** Determines what MIDI data the EWI USB's breath sensor sends. The default is "Breath Controller (coarse)." The software is set to have its instruments respond to this setting, so if you change this, the instruments in the software will not respond correctly.
- **Breath CC2:** Determines what MIDI data the EWI USB's breath sensor sends. The default is "Aftertouch." Some of the instruments in the software are set to respond to Aftertouch, so if you change this, the instruments may not respond correctly.
- **Bite CC1:** Determines what MIDI data the EWI USB's bite sensor controls (see **Performance Controls** above). The default is "Pitchbend Down-Up" (vibrato).
- **Bite CC2:** Determines what MIDI data the EWI USB's bite sensor controls (see **Performance Controls** above). The default is "OFF."
- **Velocity:** Specifies the velocity of notes sent from the EWI USB to the software (that is, how hard the "attack" of a note is – not volume). The default is "Dynamic."
- **Pitchbend Up Control:** Determines what MIDI data the EWI USB's pitch bend-up plate controls. The default is "Pitchbend Up."
- **Pitchbend Down Control:** Determines what MIDI data the EWI USB's pitch bend-down plate controls. The default is "Pitchbend Down."



Note: More advanced MIDI users might experiment with the CC assignments while using the EWI USB in other software. But for beginners, we recommend sticking to the default configurations in Aria (especially the default **Breath CC1** and **Breath CC2** assignments) since they are the most "intuitive" to use with the EWI USB.

CHANNELS OVERVIEW



1. **Channel:** Click here to select either -OMNI- or the number for the corresponding channel.
 - **Channel Number** (CHN:01, CHN:02, CHN:03, or CHN:04): You can have up to four instruments loaded in the window and play only one at a time with the EWI USB. To do this:
 - 1) Load an instrument into the channel, then click on the **Channel** field and select its number.
 - 2) Go to the **Tools** menu, then **EWI Configuration**, then **Performance Controls**.
 - 3) Click on the **MIDI Channel** field and select the same number as the **Channel** you want to hear.
 For instance, if you have the third channel set to its number (CHN:03), you must set the **MIDI Channel** to “3” in order to hear that that it. (See **Performance Controls** above for more information.)
 - **OMNI:** All channels with -OMNI- selected will sound on all MIDI channels. You can load instruments into multiple channels with -OMNI- selected to hear them sound simultaneously when you play the EWI USB.
2. **Instrument:** Click here to assign an instrument to the corresponding channel. The instruments will be grouped by “family” (Woodwinds, Brass, Strings, etc.) in submenus. Choosing “Empty” will remove an assigned instrument from that channel. Choosing “Import” will allow you to load an .sfz file (a sample) to use as an instrument sound. Choosing “Reload” will restore the default parameter settings for that instrument (see the PARAMETER WINDOWS section below).
3. **Channel Selector:** Click on the gray circle to the right of the **Instrument** field to select that channel. If an instrument is assigned that channel, you should see its pitch range represented on the virtual **Keyboard** at the bottom of the window, and any applicable parameters will be shown in the right half of the window.
4. **Parameters:** This area has four different tabs (MIX, CONTROLS, REVERB, and ABOUT) that contain the various parameters (volume, panning, reverb, etc.) that you can adjust. See the PARAMETER WINDOWS section below for more information.
5. **Keyboard:** The bottom of the window features a virtual **Keyboard**. When a channel with an instrument assigned to it is selected, a section of the keyboard will be highlighted (the rest will be tinted) to indicate the range of notes that can be played on that instrument setting. Notes that are sounding will be tinted within the highlighted section.
6. **Pedals:** To the right of the **Keyboard** are its pedals. These pedals serve the same function as those on an acoustic piano (from left to right):
 - The **soft** or *una corda* pedal: Softens the notes being played when pressed.
 - The **sostenuto** pedal: Sustains only the notes that are being played when the pedal is pressed.
 - The **damper** pedal: When pressed, this is the equivalent of a piano’s damper pedal, which sustains any notes being played *and* raises the dampers on all the piano’s strings, allowing all other notes to resonate sympathetically with the note(s) being played.
7. **Audio Recorder:** These controls allow you to record your performance on the EWI USB and save it as an audio file on your computer (.WAV for PC users, .AIFF for Mac users). See the AUDIO RECORDER section below for more information.

PARAMETER WINDOWS

Note: All virtual knobs in the software can be adjusted by holding down the left-click button of your mouse and moving it up or down (rather than circular, in the direction of the knob). Release the button to set the level. An orange line around the knob will indicate how far it is turned, and a box next to it will give a measurement reading.



MIX

Volume (Vol): This knob controls the volume level of the corresponding channel.

Panning (Pan): This knob controls the left-to-right balance of the audio of the corresponding channel. The percentage reading in the box next to the knob will indicate how much louder the audio is on the right ("R") or left ("L"). When in the center position, the box will show a "C."

Reverb: This knob controls the amount of reverb applied to the corresponding channel. You can set the kind of reverb you want in the REVERB window (see REVERB section below).



CONTROLS

The parameters available in this window will vary from instrument to instrument, but these are a couple of the most common ones:

Volume: This knob indicates the volume level (post-parameter) of the corresponding channel.

Transpose: Transposes the pitch played in the software by the number of semitones specified here. Click the box to show a menu of possible transpositions. The default is "0," meaning the note you play on the EWI USB will sound that note in the software. You may transpose up to an octave higher (+12 semitones) or lower (-12 semitones). (**Note:** This only transposes the instrument played in that channel in the software – not the key of the EWI USB. To change the "concert" key of the EWI USB, adjust the transposition by going to the **Tools** menu, then **EWI Configuration**, then **Performance Controls**.)



REVERB

Presets: Click this box to select a reverb preset from a drop-down menu. The reverb parameters will jump to their preset positions. You can adjust the individual reverb parameter knobs yourself, as well.

Status: Click this box to activate and deactivate reverb. The parameter knobs will remain in their respective positions.

■ Reverb Parameters

Decay: Determines the “decay time,” or how long the reverb will trail off.

Diffusion: Determines how far apart the echoes from the reverberating sound are. The greater the degree of diffusion, the less space there will be between the echoes.

Size: Determines the size of the “virtual room” in which you are playing. Higher settings will create longer reverb, emulating the acoustics of a larger room.

Pre-Delay: Determines how soon the reverb begins after the note sounds. Pre-delay is often what determines our perception of space in a room.

Width: Determines the width of the reverb’s stereo image. “0%” is mono while “100%” is wide stereo. We recommend setting this close to 100%.

Quality: Determines the quality of the reverb. In general, higher is better, but higher settings require higher CPU usage. If there is too much demand on your CPU, reduce this setting.

Variation: Creates a new variant of the same room (as defined by the “Size” setting). Adjust this to fine tune the sound of the reverb.

Reverb Level: Determines the volume level of the reverb. This will not affect the volume level of the original sound.



ABOUT

This screen displays the version of the software and its copyright information as well as “live telemetry” from the underlying software engine. The information in the left-hand column indicates the software’s current CPU usage. The right-hand column contains the software’s current MIDI events and settings. You may adjust some of the settings in this window by clicking on the box to reveal a drop-down menu:

Dyn Max: Determines the threshold for RAM usage by the software. The default is “256 MB.”

Pre-Caching: Determines how many samples of an instrument the software will process before playing them. A higher setting will result in a slower response, though you should increase this setting if you are using a slower computer. The default is “32 Kb.”

Quality: Determines audio quality of the playback and recording. The default is “Normal (Hermite).”

Tuning System: Determines the tuning system of the instrument in the software. There are different tunings for regions throughout the world, but to start, we recommend the default, “International 440.”

Inst. Poly: Determines the amount of polyphony (multiple notes sounding simultaneously) the software can play. A higher setting will allow for greater polyphony but also increase CPU usage. The default is “32.”



AUDIO RECORDER

The Audio Recorder at the bottom of the screen allows you to record the EWI USB through the software.



1. Record
2. Stop
3. Name File

To record your playback to an audio file:

1. Click "Name File."
2. Specify where you want to save the file.
3. Make a name for the file you want to record. (If you are using a PC, it will be recorded as a .WAV file. If you are using a Mac, it will be recorded as an .AIFF file.)
4. Once you have created a file name, that name should appear next to the buttons. Click "Record" to begin recording.
5. When you are done recording, click "Stop" to stop the recording and save your file.
6. The audio file will be saved to the specified location. To record a new file, click "Name File" again.

CONTACT / SUPPORT INFORMATION

Please visit the Akai Professional website (<http://www.akaipro.com>) regularly for additional information, news, and updates on the EWI USB or its software or firmware.

For additional technical support:

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www.akaipro.com