

A simple guide to use Singular Sound's BB
Manager and BB MIDI Editor for the
BeatBuddy
by
Luis Lugo

GENERAL INFORMATION:

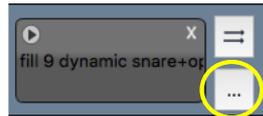
1. The Singular Sound Forum (<https://forum.singularsound.com>) is a good place to ask questions and find information from SS reps and users, as well as free BB songs and additional drum sets (some with Bass, pianos, etc.) created and shared by the participants

DISCLAIMER:

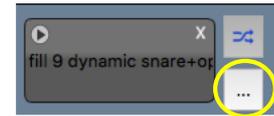
1. These tips are based on the MacOS versions of the BB Manager and BB Editor but should work the same on the Windows version. This presentation focuses primarily on the usage of the BB Editor
2. This document is not meant to be a comprehensive manual so questions about installing the BB Manager and other Singular Sound products should be addressed to them.
3. The purpose of this document is to show some basic and not so basic aspects of the current BB Manager and the current BB Editor, bearing in mind that some of this information is likely to become outdated when the new BB Manager is finished by SS (which will not include the BB Editor as part of it but as a separate revamped software, later down the road, as per SS most recent declarations)
4. You can opt not to upgrade to the new BB Manager, when ready, if you still want to use the current BB Editor (my case)

The BB MANAGER: The Basics

- The “**Synchronize Project**” function (**File** menu) does not work on the MacOS version. The Project must always be saved locally and exported (**File > Export**) to the SD card after edits are made
- Hoovering the mouse/cursor pointer over most icons and menus provides useful description/usage information
- The BB Manager only accepts a constant Tempo within a song (Advanced: It can be varied via an external MIDI controller or a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) using dedicated MIDI CC messages)
- At least one Main part is required to save a song. Intro, Fill, Transition, Accent Hit and Outro are optional.
- Transitions are **forced** to have same time signature as its corresponding Main part. Main, Fill, Intro and Outro parts can have different time signatures.
- Apart from the File menu, you can click on the “**Project Explorer**” strip, below the virtual BB Pedal, to open the location of the active project or to load a different project
- A temporary Drum Set and Tempo can be selected on the strip at the top, for testing purposes, but these won't be saved unless set them as **Default Drum Set** and **Default Tempo** on the BB Manager screen (box on the right)
- The BB Manager virtual BeatBuddy responds to clicks & holds and it works just like the real pedal. The virtual external pedal only seems to play Accent Hits with the Left switch.
- **TIP:** Several Fills can play sequentially:



or randomly:



The BB MANAGER: The Basics

- **Left Click** on any part to import an existing MIDI file (.mid) into the part
- **Right click** on any part to access the following menu:
 - **Play** Same function as the arrow icon. Plays the part once.
 - **Copy/Paste:** Copy and paste unto another part (empty or existing) within the same song or unto any other song. Can Undo (command+Z on Macs)
 - **Edit:** Open the part on the BB Editor (a MIDI editor)
 - **Export MIDI file:** Export the part as a MIDI (.mid) file. This file can then be uploaded into a DAW, edited and imported back into a part of a BB song.

The BB MANAGER: The Basics

The screenshot shows the BB Manager software interface. At the top, the menu bar includes 'BBManager', 'File', 'Edit', 'Songs', 'Drumsets', 'MIDI Editor', 'Tools', 'Useful Links', and 'Help'. The main window title is 'BeatBuddy Manager'. On the left, there is a 'Virtual Machine' section with a 'Virtual BB' icon and a 'Virtual external pedal' icon. Below this is a 'Project Explorer' window showing a list of songs and drumsets. The main workspace is a grid of drum patterns, with a 'Temporary' label pointing to a specific cell. A 'Saved' label points to a 'Blondes- Whats Up' drumset in the Project Explorer. A yellow arrow points from the 'Temporary' label to the 'Saved' label. A blue box contains the text: 'Left-Click + hold + drag to move the song. Single Left click to change the name'. The interface also shows a 'Drumset' dropdown menu set to 'Vintage Ludwig', a 'Player' dropdown set to 'BPM', and a 'Tempo' control.

Virtual Machine

Virtual BB

Virtual external pedal

Project access

Project Explorer - Performance Reference 3.bbp*

Songs Drum Sets Undo/Redo

- 58 Neil Young
- 59 Pink Floyd
- 60 Santana
- 61 Stevie Wonder
- 62 Sting
- 63 The Beatles
- 64 The Rolling Stones
- BASIC GENERIC CONTENT---
- Ballad-mini
- Blues
 - Blues 1
 - Blues 2
 - Blues 3- 6/8
 - Blues 4- 6/8
 - Blues 5- 6/8
 - Blues 6- 6/8
 - Blues 7- 6/8
 - Blues 8- 12/8
 - Blues 9- 12/8
 - Blues 10- 12/8
- Brushes Beats
- Brazilian
- Country
- Drum & Bass
- Funk
- Hand Percussion BB Mini
- Hip Hop
- Jazz
- Latin
- Marching
- Metal
- Odd Time
- Oldies
- Pop

Default- Blues 2

Default Tempo: 118

Default Drum Set:

Blondes- Whats Up

Default Tempo: 65

Temporary

Saved

Left-Click + hold + drag to move the song.
Single Left click to change the name

Play Stop Drumset Vintage Ludwig Player: BPM Tempo

Beats - 1 REPERTORIO INGLES

Main Drum Loop Drum Fill Transition Fill Accent Hit

+ Song

Intro Fill

ES- beat 2a straight 8 x JES- fill 5 half bar clas BLUES- fill 6 half bar BLUES- fill 12 full kit fill 2 build up w toms+op -A_cus_crash-16-v1-nor

JES- beat 2b straight 8 JES- fill 11 full kit dynar S- fill 21 full kit w ghost BLUES- fill 16 full kit - fill 19 full kit strong ope -A_cus_crash-17-v1-nor

Outro Fill

+ Song

Whats Up - intro fill

Whats Up - verse Whats Up - fill 1 Whats Up - trans fill 1 -A_cus_crash-17-v1-nor

Whats Up - chorus Whats Up - fill 2 Whats Up - trans fill 2 -A_cus_crash-17-v1-nor

Whats Up - verse Whats Up - fill 1 Whats Up - trans fill 3 -A_cus_crash-17-v1-nor

Whats Up - chorus Whats Up - fill 3 Whats Up - fill 4 Whats Up - trans fill 2 -A_cus_crash-17-v1-nor

The BB MANAGER: Creating your own songs from SS factory beats

1. Start by exporting the SS song to a directory on your computer: Select the file (one Left click) chose **File > Export > Song** from the top menu.
2. Create your own folder on the BB Manager by placing and Left clicking the mouse pointer anywhere (or where you want it to be) within the **Songs** window on the left. Then go to the top menu and chose **Songs > New Folder**. A “New Folder” entry appears.
3. Now go to File > Import > Song on the top menu and look for the song you just exported and select it. Left click once on its name to change it. **Warning:** Avoid most non-alphabetic on Folder/song names to be safe (dots, slashes, commas, #, etc., are known to cause all sorts of problems.

The BB MANAGER: Copying song parts from SS factory beats unto another existing song

1. **Right click** on the part you want to copy and select **Copy** (or use the corresponding MacOS/Windows hot key)
2. Go to the song where you want to copy it to and **Right click** again on a blank or existing beat and select **Paste**. Save the project.

The BB EDITOR: The basics

NOTE 1: This piece of software was presumably outsourced by Singular Sound and they do not offer much assistance or support. I have found it usable and with some good features –some unknown to many users. The following instructions and tips come mostly from my own experience.

NOTE 2: Volume is expressed in MIDI language as **Velocity** values, between 1 and 127

NOTE 3: Using **Quantization** (left menu) is required to greatly simplify the editing process. This destroys the subtle timing imperfections introduced by the Singular Sound drummer who created the beats or present in an imported MIDI file done by you or someone else. However, the BB algorithm introduces subtle variations of the sound samples, in character and tiny volume differences, to also make it sound more realistic.

Accessing and preparing the BB Editor (see following image):

- Right click on any part and select **Edit**
- Open the part, say **NO** to the pop-up window and then hit **Quantize**, on the left menu. If you select YES instead, you can still use the Quantize button afterwards. I'm not sure why the quantization done by selecting YES at the pop-up window is different from the one done by the Quantization button, but I prefer the latter. The top strip information changes to bars and divisions as a function of the Time Signature selected
- As in the BB Manager, Tempo and drum sets can be **temporarily** changed to build and test the beats
 - NOTE: velocity information for certain instruments not included in the currently selected drum set are displayed in red as "**Not supported**". Using the appropriate drum set will sort this out

The BB EDITOR: The basics

The screenshot displays the BB Editor interface. At the top, the menu bar includes BBManager, File, Edit, Songs, Drumsets, MIDI Editor, Tools, Useful Links, and Help. The main window is titled "BeatBuddy Manager" and shows a "Playback - Blues 2" session with a tempo of 100 BPM. A MIDI piano roll is visible, showing a sequence of notes for various instruments. A warning dialog box is open, stating: "WARNING! This MIDI pattern was likely recorded from live performance and is not quantized. To simplify the editing process, we highly recommend to quantize it now. Quantized patterns will be shown in a music notation form in the editor header. Right now you can only see note offsets in logical ticks instead. TIP: You can always quantize the pattern later via 'Quantize' button! Quantize MIDI pattern now? [No] [Yes]".

On the left, the "Project Explorer - Performance Reference 3.bbp" shows the current editing context: "Editing Main Loop (Part 1) of Blues 2". The "Time Signature" is 4/4 and the "Total Bars Count" is 4. The "Quantize" button is highlighted with a red box. The "Visual style" section includes options for "Draw borders", "Show values (0-127)", and "Use colors". The "Player indicator" is set to "In the center".

On the right, the "Project Explorer - Performance Reference 3.bbp" shows the "Now editing:" section with the same context. The "Time Signature" is 4/4 and the "Total Bars Count" is 4. The "Quantize" button is highlighted with a red box. The "Visual style" section includes options for "Draw borders", "Show values (0-127)", and "Use colors". The "Player indicator" is set to "In the center".

At the bottom, a zoomed-in view of the MIDI piano roll shows the first four bars of the loop. The first bar is labeled "Bar 1 (of 4)" and the fourth bar is labeled "Bar 4 (of 4)". The piano roll shows notes for various instruments, including Shaker, Splash 2, Crash Cymbal 2, Cowbell, Splash 1, Tambourine, Ride C. Bell, Ride Cymbal, Tom 1, Tom 2, Tom 3, Foot Hi-Hat, Tom 4, Hi-Hats Closed, Handclaps, New Snare, Cross Stick, Kick Drum, Metronome, and Snare. The notes are color-coded and have numerical values (ticks) displayed below them. A red arrow points from the "Quantize" button in the top-left panel to the piano roll.

The BB EDITOR: The basics

To enter velocity (volume) values:

Left Click on the little square divisions, drag the cursor up and release when the desired* value is reached. You can also type a value between 1 and 127 while holding the Left mouse button pressed. *Unfortunately, the desired value can only be heard after playing the whole part

TIP: Experiment with different Drum Sets (at the top)

The screenshot displays the BeatBuddy Manager software interface. On the left, there is a 'Virtual Machine' section showing a virtual BeatBuddy device. Below it, the 'Project Explorer' shows the current project: 'Performance Reference 3.bbp*'. The 'Now editing:' section indicates 'Editing Main Loop (Part 1) of Blues 2'. The 'Time Signature' is set to 4/4, and the 'Total Bars Count' is 4. There are options for 'Visual style' (Draw borders), 'Velocity display' (Show values 0-127), 'Color scheme' (Use colors), and 'Player indicator' (In the center).

The main area is titled 'Playback - Blues 2' and features a 'Play' button, a 'Stop' button, a 'Drumset' dropdown menu set to 'Standard', and a 'Player' speed control set to 100 BPM. Below this is a musical notation staff showing a sequence of notes. The central part of the interface is a grid for editing drum parts. The grid has 16 rows of drum parts and 16 columns of time steps. The rows are labeled on the left: 82 - Shaker, 59 - Splash 2, 57 - Crash Cymbal 2, 56 - Cowbell, 55 - Splash 1, 54 - Tambourine, 53 - Ride C. Bell, 51 - Ride Cymbal, 50 - Tom 1, 49 - Crash Cymbal 1, 48 - Tom 2, 46 - Hi-Hat Open, 45 - Tom 3, 44 - Foot Hi-Hat, 43 - Tom 4, 42 - Hi-Hats Closed, 39 - Handclaps, 38 - New Snare, 37 - Cross Stick, 36 - Kick Drum, 33 - Metronome, and 1 - Snare. The '42 - Hi-Hats Closed' row is currently selected. The grid contains various colored squares representing drum hits with numerical velocity values. A 'Velocity' pop-up window is visible over the grid, showing a vertical scale from 0 to 127 (MAX) with a blue circle indicating the current value of 99. The scale has markers at 100, 75, 50, 25, and OFF.

The BB EDITOR: The basics

To resize the display horizontally :

Place the mouse pointer at the top, at the separation between two divisions until a double arrow appears. Drag the pointer right to increase the width. In the presence of a very narrow subdivision, drag very slowly to avoid huge lateral width increments on the regular divisions.

The screenshot shows the BeatBuddy Manager interface. On the left is a 'Virtual Machine' window with a 'BEATBUDDY' device. The main area is 'Playback - Blues 2' with controls for 'Play', 'Stop', 'Drumset' (Standard), and 'Player: 100 BPM'. A grid of drum parts is visible, with a red circle highlighting a double-headed arrow at the top of a cell. A blue arrow points to a horizontal bar at the bottom of the grid with the text 'Horizontal bar appears'.

Project Explorer - Performance Reference 3.bbp*

Now editing:
Editing Main Loop (Part 1) of Blues 2

Time Signature: 4 / 4

Total Bars Count: 4

Quantize

Visual style: Draw borders

Velocity display: Show values (0-127)

Color scheme: Use colors

Player indicator: In the center

Apply Cancel

82 - Shaker
59 - Splash 2
57 - Crash Cymbal 2
56 - Cowbell
55 - Splash 1
54 - Tambourine
53 - Ride C. Bell
51 - Ride Cymbal
50 - Tom 1
49 - Crash Cymbal 1
48 - Tom 2
46 - Hi-Hat Open
45 - Tom 3
44 - Foot Hi-Hat
43 - Tom 4
42 - Hi-Hats Closed 73 32 73 36 73 30 73 30 73 29 73
39 - Handclaps
38 - New Snare
37 - Cross Stick 123 120
36 - Kick Drum 97 108 80 101
33 - Metronome
1 - Snare

Horizontal bar appears

The BB EDITOR: The basics

To create subdivisions or splits:

Place the mouse pointer at the top, at the center (where the note image is) of a division, **Left Click** to select it and drag the pointer to another division to highlight the group that is to be split into smaller parts, and release. **Right Click** on any of the division selected to bring up a pop up window on which you can select the amount of splitting. Bear in mind that sometimes this window may appear grayed out, depending on the time signature and the number of divisions selected. You can also Merge or change subdivisions into larger groups.

The screenshot displays the BeatBuddy Manager software interface. On the left, there is a 'Virtual Machine' section showing a BeatBuddy hardware device. Below it is the 'Project Explorer' for 'Performance Reference 3.bbp'. The main area is titled 'Playback - Blues 2' and shows a drum set editor with a grid of notes. A context menu is open over a selected group of notes, offering options: 'Merge', 'Split to 2', 'Split to 3', 'Split to 4', 'Split to 5', 'Split to 6', 'Split to 8', and '(Length = 1/4)'. The 'Split to 8' option is highlighted. The interface includes controls for 'Play', 'Stop', 'Drumset' (Standard), 'Player' (100 BPM), and 'Tempo'. The drum set list on the left includes: 82 - Shaker, 59 - Splash 2, 57 - Crash Cymbal 2, 56 - Cowbell, 55 - Splash 1, 54 - Tambourine, 53 - Ride C. Bell, 51 - Ride Cymbal, 50 - Tom 1, 49 - Crash Cymbal 1, 48 - Tom 2, 46 - Hi-Hat Open, 45 - Tom 3, 44 - Foot Hi-Hat, 43 - Tom 4, 42 - Hi-Hats Closed, 39 - Handclaps, 38 - New Snare, 37 - Cross Stick, 36 - Kick Drum, 33 - Metronome, and 1 - Snare. The grid shows various notes with numerical values and color coding (green, orange, blue) indicating different drum parts and their timing.

The BB EDITOR: The basics

To Delete, Move or Copy velocity (volume) information between instruments:

Right Click over an instrument's name and select from the options provided in the pop up window.

The screenshot displays the BeatBuddy Manager software interface. On the left, there is a 'Virtual Machine' section showing a BeatBuddy device and a 'Project Explorer' section for 'Performance Reference 3.bbp'. The main area is titled 'Playback - Blues 2' and features a 'Drumset' dropdown set to 'Standard' and a 'Player' set to '100 BPM'. A large grid-based editor shows various drum instruments with notes and velocity values. A context menu is open over the '57 - Crash Cymbal 2' instrument, listing options: 'Clear all notes', 'Move all notes to ...', 'Copy all notes to ...', and 'Toggle instrument names'. The menu also lists other instruments in the set, such as '82 - Shaker', '59 - Splash 2', '56 - Cowbell', '55 - Splash 1', '54 - Tambourine', '53 - Ride C. Bell', '51 - Ride Cymbal', '50 - Tom 1', '49 - Crash Cymbal 1', '48 - Tom 2', '46 - Hi-Hat Open', '45 - Tom 3', '44 - Foot Hi-Hat', '43 - Tom 4', '42 - Hi-Hats Closed', '39 - Handclaps', '38 - New Snare', '37 - Cross Stick', '36 - Kick Drum', '33 - Metronome', and '1 - Snare'. The grid shows notes for various instruments with velocity values like 73, 25, 34, 75, 30, 73, 29, 30, 73, 32, 73, 29, 76, 29, 79, 32, 79, 32, 78, 25, 76, 29, 78, 12c, 80, 101, 11E, 90, 11c, 11E, 12c, 85, 111, and 89.

The BB EDITOR: The tricks

To create a part with a time signature other than 4/4, from scratch (follow the steps in this order):

1. Open the Editor Right-Clicking on the blank part
 2. Left Click on the two “**Time Signature**” buttons to select what you need
 3. Left Click on “**Quantize**”
 4. Add a velocity value on the first division of the first bar, on any instrument (I use the Kick)
 5. Ignore the Tempo information at this stage
 6. Left Click on “Apply” to exit the Editor
 7. Enter the Editor again and proceed to build your beat. Select the **Tempo** needed
 8. Left Click on “**Total Bars Count**” to add more bars
 9. Left Click on “Apply” again to exit the Editor
 10. Left Click on **File > Save Project** to save the song
- **NOTE:** *Changing the Time Signature of an existing beat will result in weird results and even in collapsing the BB Manager altogether*

The BB EDITOR: The tricks

To add an accent hit on a Fill or Transition so that it plays superimposed at the beginning of the same or the next Main part, respectively (see next picture):

1. Open the part, say **NO** to pop-up window and then hit **Quantize**
2. Add an extra bar using “**Total Bars Count**”
3. Add (Left Click and drag up to a desired velocity value) the accent hit in the first division of the extra bar
4. Click again on “**Total Bars Count**” to return to the original number of bars via the little down arrow. This will collapse the last bar and display a **red vertical line** to indicate that the bar exists and has information.
5. Click on “Apply” to exit the Editor. You’ll need to **save** the song from the BB Manager to keep these changes
6. “**Cancel**” will exit the Editor reverting the changes made
7. Undo (command+Z on a Mac) works fine while in this screen.

NOTE: According to the software algorithm, a **red vertical line** at the end of the last visible bar indicates that there is or there are more bars to the right, which are collapsed or hidden from view. Increasing the “**Total Bars Count**” values will display the next bar(s).

However, importing a MIDI file created by external sources sometimes will display such red line **even when there are no additional hidden bars**. This may or may not cause a problem by muting certain instruments in the first division of the next part, to which I have no explanation. The solution for this is to hit “**Quantize**” or add and remove a bar. Singular Sound and outsourced personnel could not provide an explanation.

So, if you find that the next part after a transition exhibits a quick mute on the Kick or Snare or a choke on a Cymbals, Hi Hats, etc., this is probably the culprit.

The End