Get Started

flowfal

Introduction

To use Flowfal you will need:

- Ableton Live Version 10 or higher, running on Mac or Windows
- Either the Suite edition or the Standard edition with the Max for Live upgrade
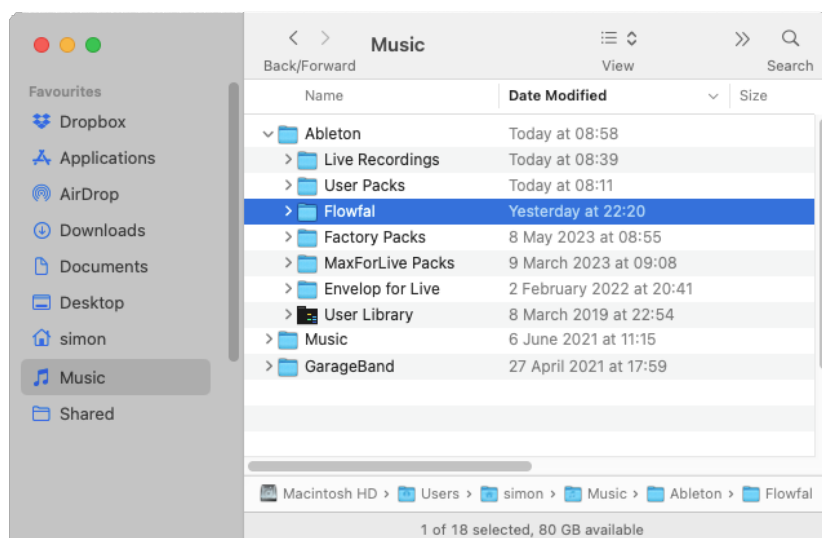
You will also need one or more of the following:

- Apple iPhones running iOS 11.0 or later
- Apple Watches running WatchOS 8.0 or later
- Android phones running Android 5.0 or later
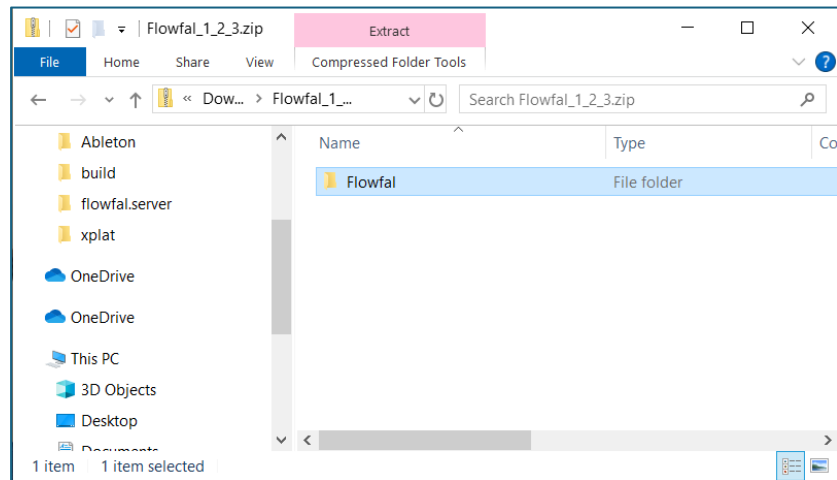- Android Wear OS watches running Android 6.0 or later

Installing Flowfal

Mac: Install Files

- Stop Live if it is running
- In a Finder window find the Flowfal_1_4_2.zip file you downloaded in this release
- Double click on the Flowfal_1_4_2.zip file and a single Flowfal folder will be created in the same place the Flowfal_1_4_2.zip file is located, and a new Finder window will be opened showing this
- Open a second Finder Window and navigate to where Ableton files are kept on your machine: normally this will be /Users/my_name/Music/Ableton
- This Ableton folder will contain folders called Factory Packs and User Library
- If you are upgrading from a previous version of Flowfal then delete any existing Flowfal folder in /Users/my_name/Music/Ableton folder by right clicking on the Flowfal folder and selecting Move to Bin or Move to Trash
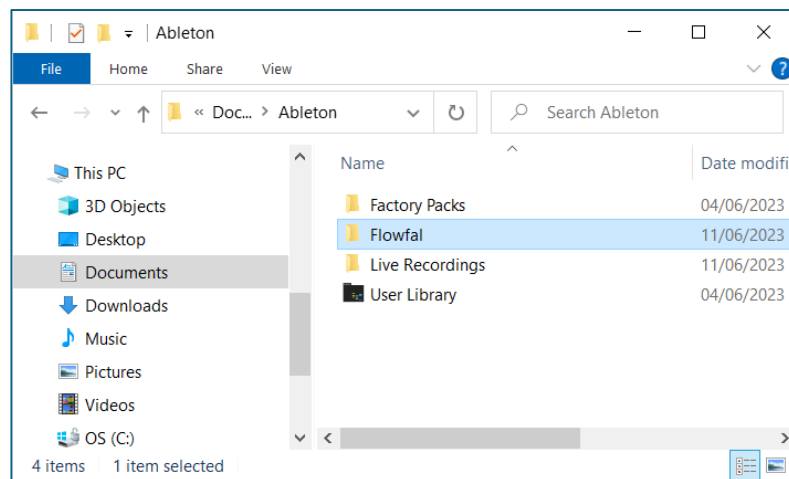- Drag the new Flowfal folder created in step 3 into the /Users/my_name/Music/Ableton folder

Windows: Install Files

- Stop Live if it is running

- In File Explorer find the Flowfal_1_4_2.zip file wherever you downloaded this release

- Double click on the Flowfal_1_4_2.zip file to open it. The File Explorer window should now just show a single Flowfal folder

- Open a second File Explorer Window and navigate to where Ableton files are kept on your machine: normally this is /This PC/Documents/Ableton

- This Ableton folder will contain folders called Factory Packs and User Library

- If you are upgrading from a previous version of Flowfal then delete any existing Flowfal folder in /This PC/Documents/Ableton folder by right clicking on the Flowfal folder and selecting Delete to remove it

- Now drag the new Flowfal folder from the window opened in step 3 to the /This PC/Documents/Ableton folder

Windows: Install Bonjour Services

Flowfal on Windows requires Apple Bonjour services to be installed - this is the code that allows the Flowfal clients to discover a Flowfal sever on the local network.

Note you only have to follow this step the first time you install Flowfal. If you are upgrading from an earlier version of Flowfal and you have already installed the Bonjour Services you don't need to install them again.

Install Bonjour from the Apple website: Apple Bonjour Print Services

Mac & Windows: Create a Shortcut

- If this is the first time you are installing Flowfal you can create a shortcut in Ableton so you can find the Flowfal plug-ins easily:

- Start your version of Live

- On the left hand side under Places click the Add Folder link

- Add the Flowfal folder you have just created in the Ableton folder

- When you click on this shortcut you should now be able to see all of the Flowfal plug-ins

Download A Flowfal Client

To use Flowfal you will need the Flowfal App running on one or more devices.

On your phone, or watch, download the Flowfal client using the download buttons, or click on these links: AppStore or Google Play.

Supported devices are:

- Apple iPhones running iOS 11.0 or later

- Apple Watches running WatchOS 8.0 or later

- Android phones running Android 5.0 or later

- Android Wear OS watches running Android 6.0 or later

They will automatically find any Flowfal server that is running, as long as the device is connected to the same WiFi network as the Mac or Windows PC running Ableton Live with Flowfal installed.

Intro Tutorial

Now that Flowfal is installed, a good place to start is the Intro Tutorial. You can also find this on the Flowfal Website or as a video on YouTube.

This tutorial gives a general overview of Flowfal, with some ready-made sounds you can play using a phone or smartwatch.
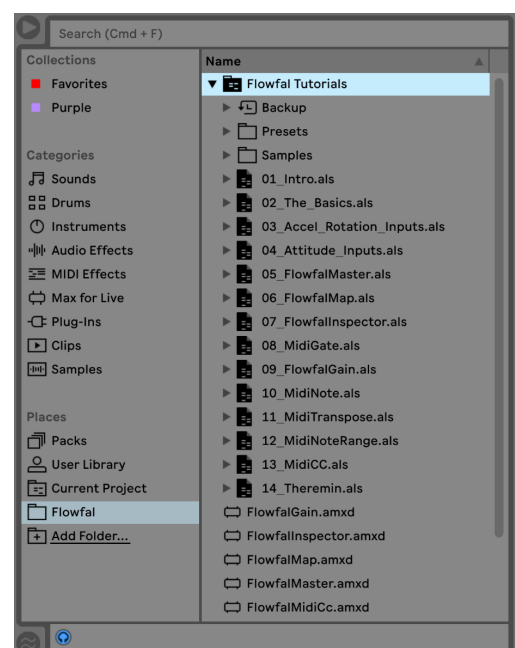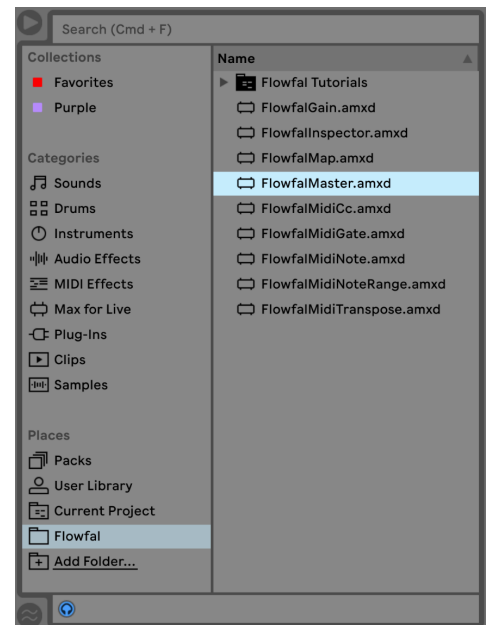
Open The Tutorial

Expand the Flowfal Tutorials folder that will be visible when you select Flowfal from the Places list on the left-hand side of Ableton Live.

Open the 01_Intro.als Ableton Set and a simple demo set will appear containing three tracks.

Start the track running

For this tutorial we need to have the track running so that clips making the sounds are producing audio.

Press the play button top centre to start the track running. You will not hear any sound at this stage.

Start a Flowfal Client

Start the Flowfal app on your Apple or Android phone and it should find the Flowfal server running inside the demo set and connect to it. You will now see a choice of several channels you can select. Click on one of the channels to select it, or No Sound for no channel selected.

Flowfal Clients use WiFi to connect to the Flowfal server. WiFi must be enabled on the device, and it must be connected to the same local network that the Mac or PC running Ableton is also connected to. A normal home or work WiFi network works fine for general use, but in a performance situation we would recommend setting up your own private WiFi router to guarantee a good connection speed.
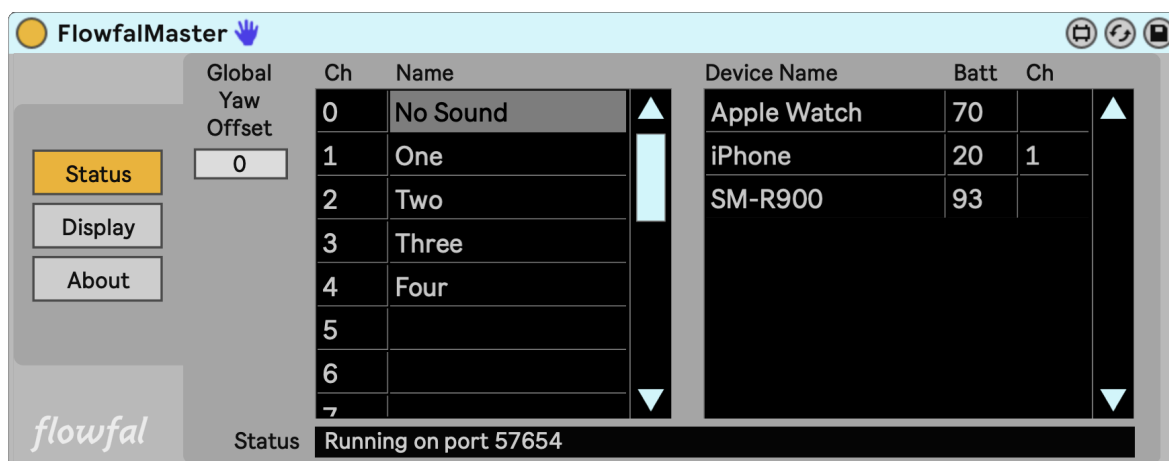
Optionally you can start the Flowfal app on other phones if you want to connect multiple devices. You will see that only one device can control a given channel at any time.

Channel One: Pad

Moving the phone in any direction will cause the Pad sound on track one to be audible.

If you look at the plug-ins section of Track One you will see there are three Flowfal plug-ins on this track.

FlowfalMaster is the master controller for the Flowfal system. This allows you to control what the names of the channels are, and it shows what client devices are connected. Only include one of these plug-ins in a set.
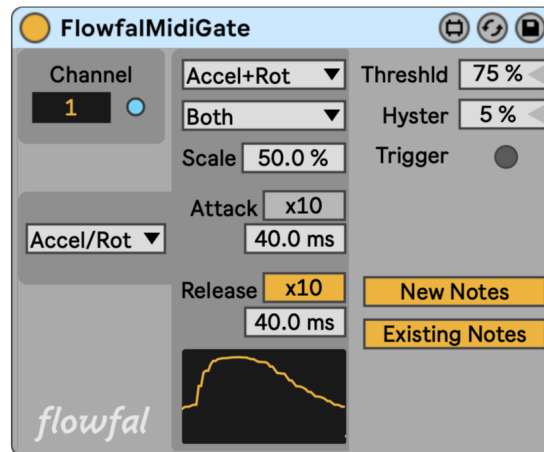

FlowfalInspector allows you to see what the current movement being sent to the selected channel is.

FlowfalGain takes movement information from a number of sources and uses that to control the gain of the signal passing through it. In this case it is set to use a combination of Acceleration and Rotation magnitude to control the level of the Pad sound that is playing all the time on this track.

Channel Two: Mallet

Moving the phone in any direction will cause bursts of an arpeggio to be played. In addition, if you "roll" the device clockwise or anticlockwise you will notice the cut-off frequency control of the sampler changes. So, as well as movement triggering sounds, the motion of the device can affect the sounds as they are still playing as well.

On this track the [FlowfalMidiGate](#) plug-in is gating the arpeggio notes playing in the clip on this track. These notes are then played by the sampler.
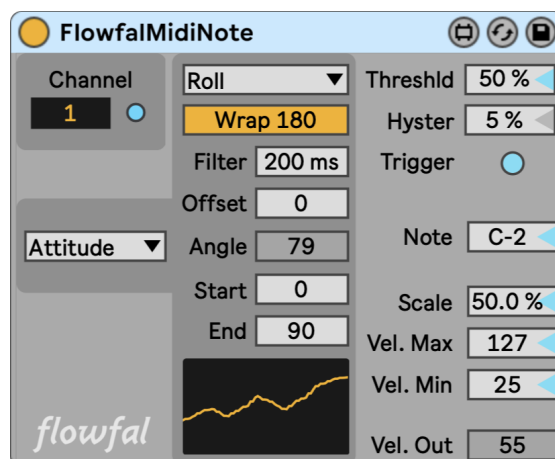

In addition, the [FlowfalMap](#) plug-in is taking the "roll" position of the device and mapping that to the sampler's frequency control.

Channel Three: Perc

Holding the phone flat and moving it up and down will cause a set of different percussion sounds to be played. Notice that the hits only play when you move the phone down (as if hitting a drum) and no note is played on the up stroke. If you move the device to point in different directions clockwise or anticlockwise you will notice the tiggered sound changes.

On this track the [FlowfalMidiNote](#) plug-in is producing a MIDI note when movement is detected. The trigger input for this is a combination of Rot Y and Accel Z to make control responsive to drum like hits. Also note that the filter in this input and the attack and release filter values are turned right down so that the input is responsive to small hit movements.

After this the [FlowfalMidiTranspose](#) plug-in is taking the "yaw" position of the device and transposing the MIDI note based on the position of the device. This then triggers samples from a small drum kit.

Further Information

You can find more information about each of the plugins and further tutorials on the [Flowfal Website](#).