AudioSwift Surround Controller for Pro Tools - User Guide

This user guide will show how to configure a trackpad and Magic Mouse as a surround controller for Pro Tools using AudioSwift. If it's your first time working with AudioSwift, please watch the installation and overview tutorial or download the AudioSwift User Guide before continuing. Visit audioswiftapp.com for more information.

1.1 Introduction

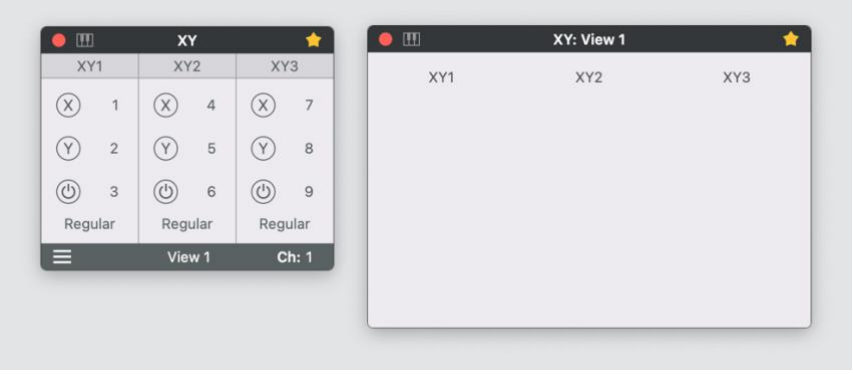
AudioSwift for macOS transforms your trackpad and the surface of a Magic Mouse into MIDI controllers. By taping the trackpad with a four or five finger tap gesture, or by pressing a hotkey for the Magic Mouse, we activate AudioSwift to send MIDI using touches on the surface of the device. After we finish, we press the *Esc* key.

AudioSwift comes with different controller modes and tools we can use for mixing, add expression to virtual instruments, make beats, MPE and more. One of these controller modes is the XY Mode, and now it has the option to set a trackpad or Magic Mouse as a wireless touch controller for the surround panner in Pro Tools, to speed up the mixing workflow.

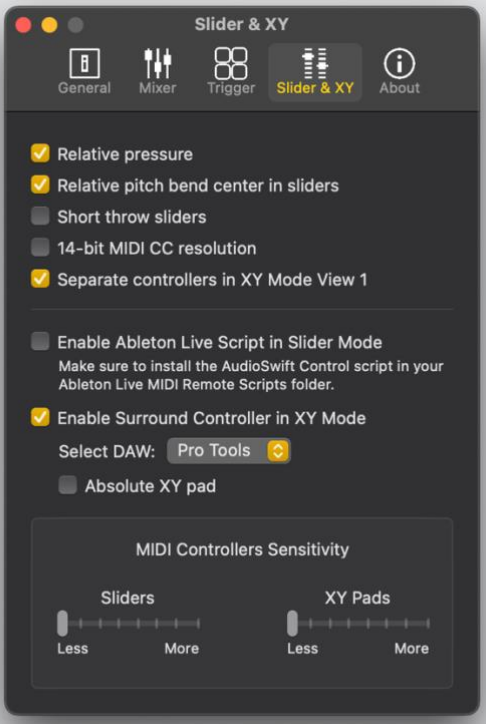
All parameters in the surround panner can be controlled from the trackpad and Magic Mouse except Height and Size. This is due to a limitation with the SurroundPanner protocol that AudioSwift uses to connect to Pro Tools. We'll work with different views for the trackpad and Magic Mouse via key shortcuts depending on the parameters we need to control.

1.2 Configuration

Download the latest AudioSwift Beta version from the website and launch it. Open the Console window by clicking *AudioSwift > Show Console* and change it to the XY Mode. Let's enable the star button on the top right to keep the window always on top. Also click *AudioSwift > Show Trackpad* to open the trackpad window and enable its star.



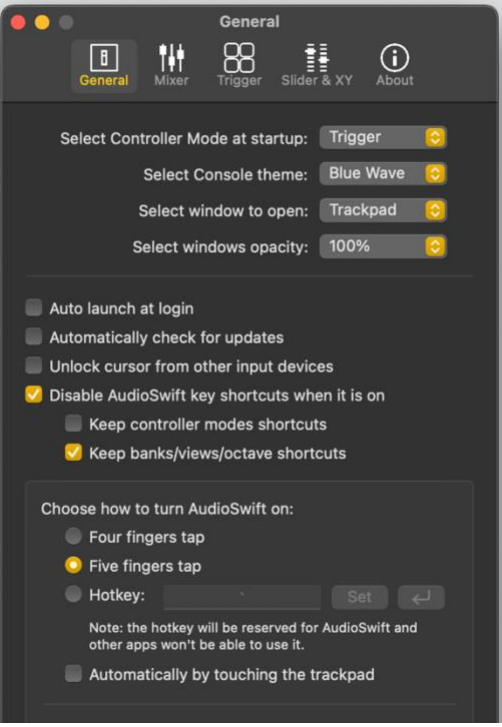
Go to the *AudioSwift > Preferences > Slider and XY* tab and click *Enable Surround Controller in XY Mode*. Notice that by enabling the surround option, it automatically checks the option for *Separate controllers in XY Mode View 1* and keeps *14-bit MIDI CC resolution* unchecked. Leave both like that.



Select *Pro Tools* as the DAW. The XY pads work with Relative MIDI by default. Change it to Absolute by enabling *Absolute XY pad*. Don't choose Absolute if you're using a Magic Mouse. The behavior is different between these two options, and we'll explain why later.

Under MIDI Controllers Sensitivity reduce both Sliders and XY Pads to minimum for a start. You can later increase it to your taste. Close the window.

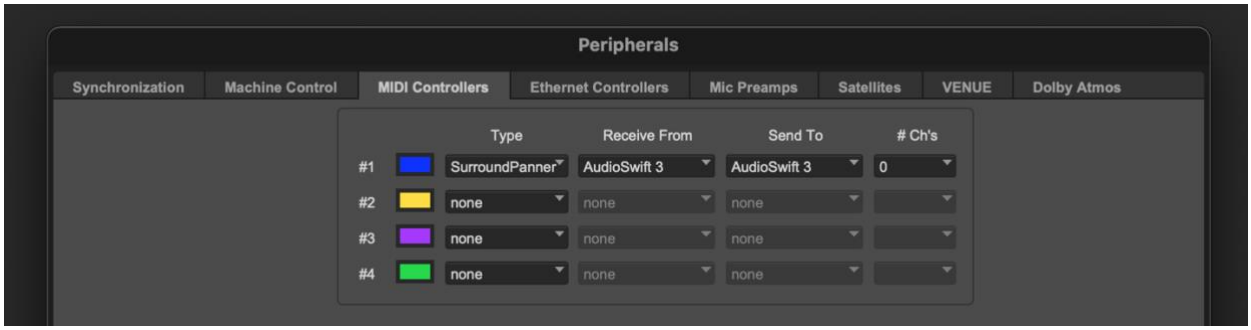
There's a key shortcut to enable and disable the surround controller while working in the XY Mode by pressing *CONTROL + OPTION + COMMAND + S*. The Console and Trackpad windows will change to the Surround Controller mode.



If you're going to use a Magic Mouse as the controller, go to *AudioSwift > Preferences > General Tab > Choose how to turn AudioSwift on.* Change it to HotKey and set the key shortcut to turn AudioSwift on and off.

If you're already using the Mixer Mode with Pro Tools, skip the following step: go to *AudioSwift > Preferences > General Tab*, check *Disable AudioSwift key shortcuts when it is on* to be able to continue using the space bar from Pro Tools, but also click *Keep banks/views/octave shortcuts* because we need to use keys from *Z* to *Period* in AudioSwift.

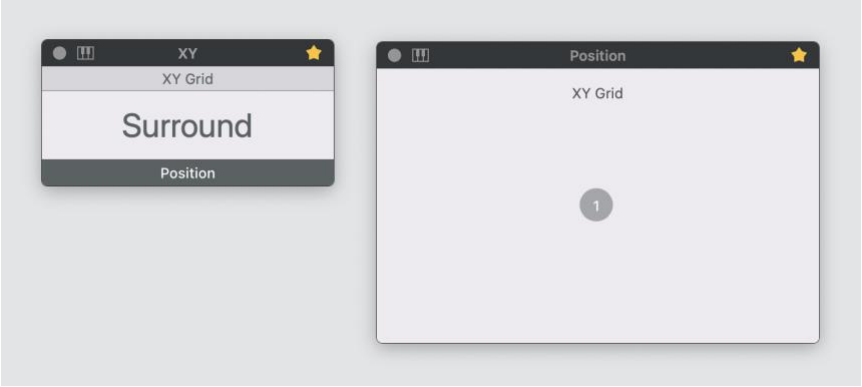
On Pro Tools, go to *Setup* > *Peripherals* > *MIDI controllers*. Add a *SurroundPanner* in *Type* and choose *AudioSwift 3* in both columns *Receive From* and *Send To*. Check out the color assigned to this controller (in this case it's blue). Click *OK*. The controller is now configured.



1.3 Working with the Surround Controller

With a Pro Tools surround project, let's open the surround panner of a mono track. Pro Tools assigns the surround controller to the panner. We'll see the color of the controller highlighted in both track's output and panner's upper section (blue highlight in this case).

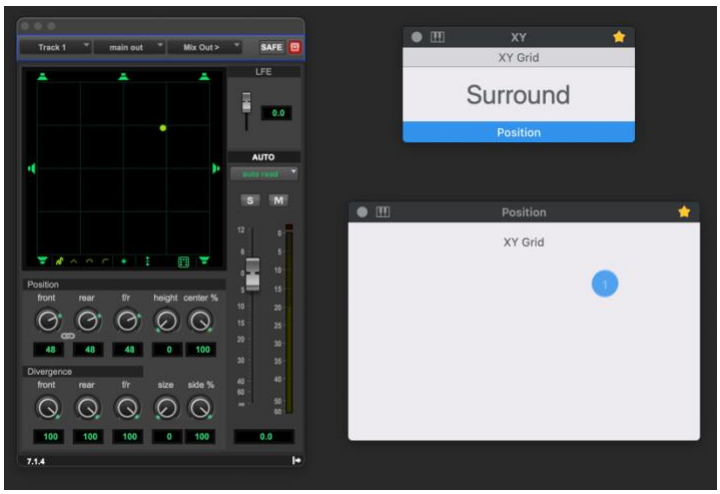
The Console and Trackpad windows show the current view and parameters we are controlling. By default, we are on View 1 in the Position Section. We can control the XY Grid.



Let's turn on AudioSwift with a four or five finger tap gesture if you're using a trackpad, or with the hotkey if you're using a Magic Mouse. We'll go through the different views by pressing their corresponding key shortcuts. The following process is the same using a trackpad or touching the surface of the Magic Mouse.

1.3.1 View 1 - Position - XY Grid

Press *Z*. The whole surface is an XY pad, and it controls the position of the Pan Location cursor in the XY Grid. With only one finger, touch the trackpad or the surface of the Magic Mouse and the cursor will move with the finger. Depending on if you chose Absolute or Relative MIDI for the XY pad in the Preferences window, the cursor would move accordingly. Relative MIDI requires the Front and Rear to be unlinked.



To constraint the vertical movements, keep pressing the *OPTION* key while moving the finger. To constraint the horizontal movements, press the *SHIFT* key. NOTE: this is different than the default *SHIFT* and *CONTROL* key shortcuts used in the XY mode when the Surround Controller option it not enabled.

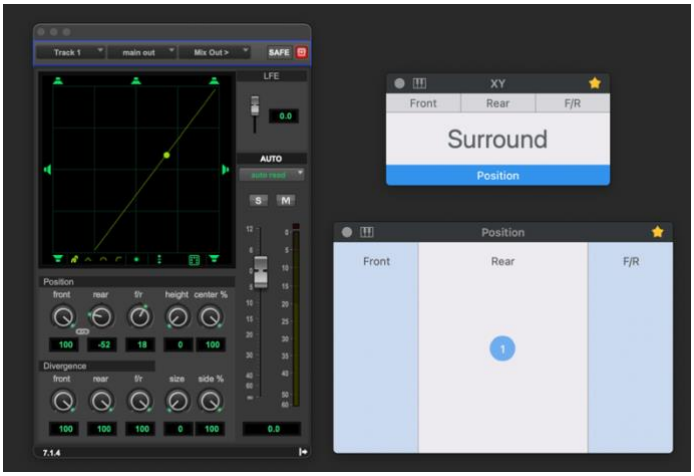
Notice that leaving the XY pad in Relative MIDI the movement of the cursor is not precise. This is due to a limitation of the SurroundPanner protocol in Pro Tools and how it responds with Relative MIDI; it jumps in values of 8. For fine tuning, keep pressing *COMMAND* key while touching the surface.

Choosing Absolute MIDI in the Preferences window will give more precision, but the movements won't be relative. If you're using a Magic Mouse, don't choose Absolute MIDI because the device doesn't allow to reach the corners of the XY Grid.

View 1 is the only one that is touch sensitive when writing automation in Touch mode with Pro Tools. This means that the parameters will stay in its position until the finger is lifted from the trackpad, and then it will return to its previous position.

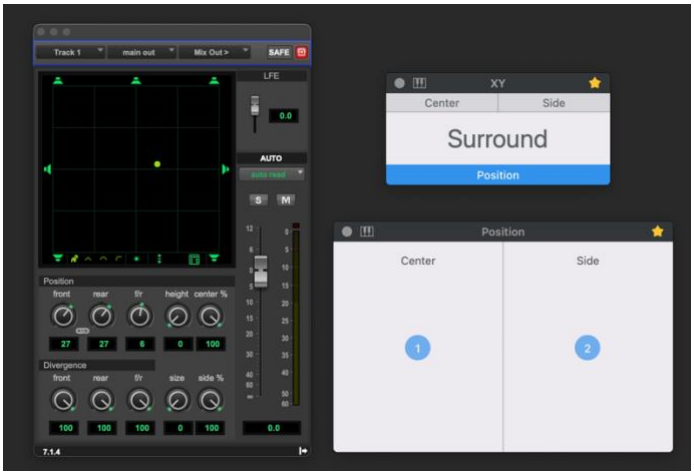
1.3.2 View 2 – Position - Front, Rear & F/R

Press *X*. The surface is divided in two sliders on both sides and a center XY pad that only responds to vertical movements. This view controls the Front, Rear and F/R in the Position section using Relative MIDI. The three parameters can be changed at the same time using different fingers. For fine tuning, press *COMMAND* while touching the surface.



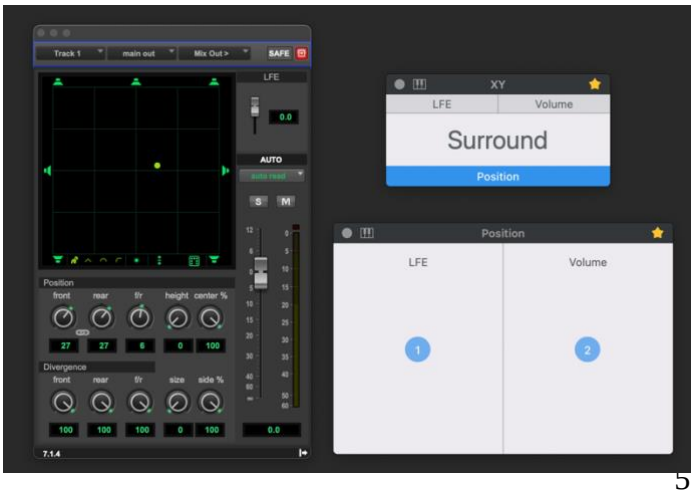
1.3.3 View 3 – Position – Center & Side

Press *C*. The surface is divided in two XY pads with only vertical movements allowed, to control Center and Side in Relative MIDI. Use *COMMAND* for fine tuning.



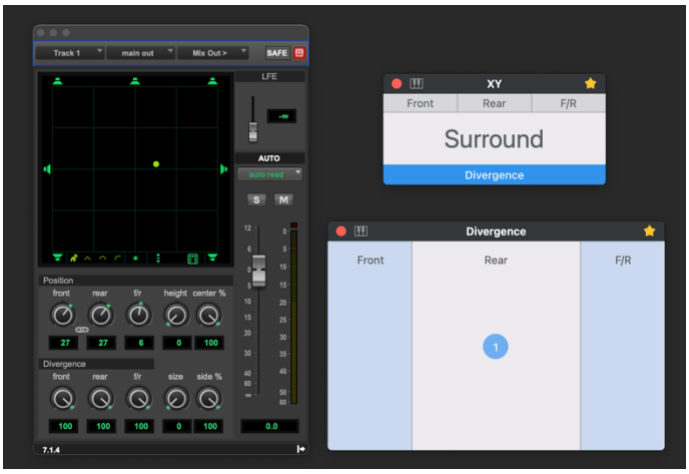
1.3.4 View 4 – Position – LFE & Volume or XY Grid & Volume

Press *V*. Again, this view has two XY pads constrained to vertical movements and controls LFE and Volume. Use *COMMAND* for fine tuning. Alternately, press *SHIFT* + *V* and half of the surface is for the XY Grid, while the other half is for the Volume.



1.3.5 View 5 – Divergence – Front, Rear & F/R

Press *B*. Here we have three zones like in View 2 but this time controlling the Front, Rear and F/R of the Divergence section. Use *COMMAND* for fine tuning.



1.3.6 Additional Key Shortcuts

Press *N* to get control of the right channel when working with unlinked stereo tracks. We'll see an *(R)* after the *Position* or *Divergence* labels in the Console and Trackpads window. All the views will now control the right channel parameters. Press *N* one more time to get control again of the left parameters or in case you change to another mono track panner.

Press *M* to open and close the surround panner.

Press *PERIOD* to control the surround panner of the next track and press *COMMA* for the previous track. Click the output of the track or use these two key shortcuts to focus the surround controller to a particular track panner. Selecting a track with the pointer won't focus the surround controller. Always verify the focused panner with the highlighted color before using the surround controller.

1.4 Tips

When using a trackpad plus a secondary input device like a mouse or trackball, you can set the trackpad to turn AudioSwift on automatically by just touching its surface. Go to *AudioSwift > Preferences > General Tab > Choose how to turn AudioSwift on* an enable *Automatically by touching the trackpad*. After this, you only need to tap the trackpad once with a four or five finger tap gesture, and AudioSwift will then recognize it is the controller. Be careful with this option, because any touch with the hand will activate AudioSwift and move a parameter.

Always try to turn off AudioSwift with the *Esc* key if you're not going to change any surround parameter. This is to avoid accidental changes when you want to move the cursor.

Alternately you can set AudioSwift to be turned off automatically after a second if no fingers are touching the surface. Go *AudioSwift > Preferences > General Tab > Choose how to turn AudioSwift off* and enable Automatically after 1 second.

When using a Magic Mouse as a surround controller, try to only touch the upper surface with your fingers and try to not rest the palm of your hand. If you still need to, keep the palm resting below the Apple logo,

Choose which windows will appear when calling AudioSwift or select None in *AudioSwift > Preferences > General Tab > Select window to open.*

Configure AudioSwift in Mixer Mode to use the trackpad as a mixer controller for quick access to faders and automation.