
Idiots guide to transferring Sibelius files to the MPP.

1. Introduction

This method was devised using MPP software 4.0.11 and Sibelius 5v2. Whilst I feel sure it should work for other versions of Sibelius I can not be sure of results using previous versions of the MPP software only ever having had version 4.0.11. In addition this document is based on using Win XP Pro/SP2. Unfortunately I have never owned a Mac or have access to one so I don't know what the procedure would be on a Mac.

The term "Idiots Guide" is not meant in any way to be deprecating! Not everybody is computer literate so I have written this out in a step-by-step format. I have placed a "tick box" alongside each instruction which you can tick as you do it in case you get called away to answer the phone or make the wife a cup of tea or anything else!

This results in what may appear to be a quite long-winded document but the procedure, once you get the hang of it is actually quite quick.

My experience in transferring some 700+ files to the MPP has shown that the main criteria in getting good results lies in how you prepare the Sib file **before** printing it to the MPP.

Sample .fh files showing my results can be found here:

http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/MusicPadUsers/files/_Sample%20Sib5v2%20to%20MPP%20files/

2. Set up the MPP Printer Driver.

- [] Click on “Start/Settings/Printers and Faxes”
- [] Right click on the Freehand Printer and select “Properties”
- [] At the bottom of the screen click on “Printing Preferences”
- [] In the “Paper” window select “MusicPad Pro”

In the “Units” box tick “Pixel,” make the Width 766 and Height 1022

- [] Set “Orientation” to Portrait
- [] Set “Resolution” to CUSTOM Resolution max.
- [] Untick “Force printer DPI”
- [] Set Horizontal & Vertical Resolution to 92 DPI

Click on “File Formats” at the top of the box.

- [] Set “Intensity” to 100 and tick “Smooth”

[] If you wish to print Colour in your files (as I do) then tick “24 bits”, otherwise tick “8 bits greyscale”.

Click on “Profile Manager” at the top of the box.

- [] Click on “Add current settings as a new profile”

[] Enter a name such as “MPP_Sibelius” or anything else you want to call it, enter any comments you want to make in the description box.

[] Click on Save. This has saved your settings as whatever you called them above and can be reloaded at any time by clicking the arrow at the side of the box saying “Select and use an existing profile”.

- [] A better solution is to click on “Start/Settings/Printers and Faxes”

[] Right click on the Freehand Printer and select “Set as default printer”. A tick will appear on the printer icon indicating it is the default printer. (If the Freehand printer IS already the default printer it will have this tick on it and you won’t see the option to set as default printer.) This ensures that whenever you open the MPP the Freehand Printer will automatically be selected.

3. Prepare your Sib file.

Open Sibelius

Open the file you wish to print to the MPP

Most Important! Click on “File/Save As” and save as “MPP_(filename)”. This will enable you to play around with this file without changing your original file. I also recommend creating a new Directory to save these files in calling it something like “MPP_Sib files”. If, in the future you wish to change something in the music you can then use this file and re-print it to the MPP without having to open your original file and set it up all over again.

Having saved your file as above, click on “Layout/Document Setup”

Tick “Points”

Change “Staff size” to 28 (More about this in a moment)

Set “Width” to 766 and “Height” to 1022

Set ALL page margins to 20

Set Top Staff margin to 90 and Bottom Staff margin to 70

If you are not using Instrument names set them to 0, otherwise just accept the defaults for now. You can alter them later if necessary.

Click OK.

Your music will now look different to what it did! Before going on to other adjustments a word about the staff size. This is the most critical adjustment in the Document setup. The more notes there are in a line of music the lower you will need to make the Staff size. At size 28 the Staff lines will be well defined and the notes large but fairly close together. At lower Staff sizes the Staff lines become thinner and the notes smaller but spaced-out more. I find Staff sizes between 24 and 28 work well for most music. Below Staff size 24 the Staff lines begin to break up and notes appear jaggy and not centred properly on the lines or in the spaces. Above Staff size 28 the notes become too large and cramped together. Try altering the Staff size one step at a time (up and down) to see the effect on your music. After a while you will be able to look at a piece of music and know immediately the best Staff size to use!

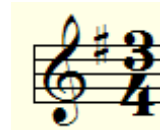
There are other adjustments you can make to improve things further.

Click on “House Style/Edit Text Styles”

Here you will need to edit the Font size and Vertical position for the Title, Subtitle and Composer.

Other Font sizes that may need changing are things like Bar numbers, Chord symbols (if using them,) Lyrics, Copyright notices, Page numbers, Rehearsal marks, Repeat (D.C/D.S.To Coda), Technique text, Expression text, Metronome marks etc. In short, anything that doesn't look right!

One other thing I find that **always** needs changing is the Time Signature as shown here. On my system the Time Signature is always larger than the Staff! (I don't know if this is peculiar to my system.) However if this happens to yours it can be altered as follows:



Click on “House Styles/Edit Text Styles”

Scroll down to and highlight “Time Signatures” then click “Edit”

Set the “(absolute)” column to 24 points for Score and Parts and tick the ‘Keep absolute’ boxes.

Click Ok, click Close

[] Now click on “House Style/Default Positions”

[] On the left side of the box make sure “Text styles” is ticked, scroll down and highlight “Time Signatures”.

[] In the “Creating Object” box set Horizontal position for Score and Parts to 0 and the Vertical position to 1.

[] In the “Creating Text” box tick “Above middle of staff”

[] Click OK

[] Finally click on “Layout/Reset design” and the Time Signature should now appear perfectly.



By now your file should be looking more like the original but we’re not finished yet. Does it look a bit cramped? Try the following:

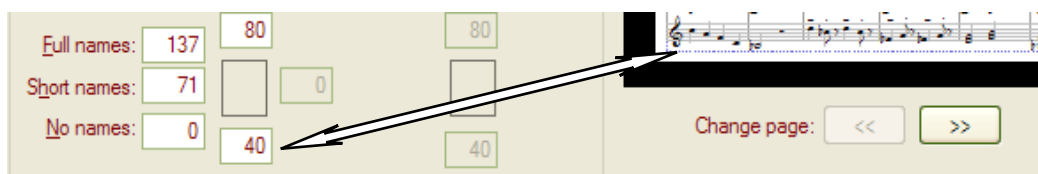
[] Click on “House Styles/Engraving Rules”

[] Click on “Staves”

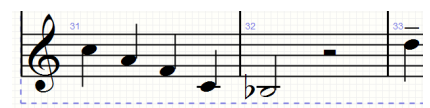
[] Try changing the “spaces between staves” setting. A change of as little as .25 can make a big difference. Also whilst on Staves set the Justification to 65%. Experience has shown this gives the best even spacing between systems.

In the past I have always tried to fit my music on no more than two pages in order to avoid having page turns and always used 8 bars per line with Start repeats always at the left of a line of music and End repeats at the right of a line resulting in 10 bars on some lines! To achieve this in Sib often meant using a Staff size of 5 or 6mm producing very small and difficult to read notation! However, with the advent of the MPP page turns are no longer a nuisance thanks to the page-turning facilities, especially with the use of the foot pedal (more about this later). You can therefore get even better reproduction on the MPP by reducing the number of bars per line at the expense of extra pages. I now use either 8, 6 or even 4 bars per line using system breaks and page breaks. (RTFM if unsure of how to do this!)

[] Is there too much space between the bottom line of music and the bottom margin? If so click on “Layout/Document Settings” and decrease the number in the bottom margin box. When you change the number it will not show the change in the page graphic until you click one of the other boxes so click the top margin box to see your change. (No, I don’t know why this happens.)



Continue decreasing the bottom margin in this way until the bottom line is just above the margin then click OK.



[] When you are satisfied with the appearance of your score highlight it all by holding down the Control key and triple clicking in the first bar. (This will put a double blue box around the whole score.)

[] Hold down the Control key AND the Shift key and press the letter N. This will re space the music evenly on each line.

[] With the score still highlighted click on “Layout/Align staves” and click OK in the dialog box that appears. This will align the staves on each page.

[] Finally, with the score still highlighted click on “Layout/Reset space above Staff” followed by “Layout/Reset space below Staff”.

4. Printing to the MPP

Having prepared your score as above it's now time to transfer it to the MPP to see how it looks. First look at the top border of Sibelius where it says "Sibelius" and the name of your file. Is there an asterisk after the filename? If there is, this indicates that you have made some changes that haven't been saved so click on the Floppy disk symbol to save them and the asterisk will disappear. If no asterisk mark then all changes have been saved to the file.

Click on the Printer icon and Sib's Print dialog will appear.

If you made the Freehand printer your default printer it will be showing in the Printer Name box.

*If you have not made the Freehand printer your default printer (or do not wish to do so) then go to **Section 2. Set up the MPP Printer Driver**, set up the Printer Driver according to the instructions given and in particular make sure you save the settings as a Profile as instructed.*

When you click on the Sibelius Printer Icon you will then need to select the Freehand printer in the Printer Name box, click on the Properties button alongside it, select "Profile Manager" in the Freehand Printer Properties dialog that appears, click on the arrow at the side of the "Select and use an existing profile" box, select your saved profile and finally click on OK.

In the "Page Range" box tick "All"

In the Format box tick "Fit to paper" "Normal" and "All". (Always check the "Fit to paper" box as I find that sometimes Sibelius doesn't always tick it automatically.)

Click OK and the Freehand "Import Options" dialog box will appear.

To print in Colour Untick the "Convert to grayscale" box, to print in black & white tick it

Tick "Automatically crop pages", "Detect Staff lines", "Detect systems" and "Use smooth scaling"

If necessary change the "Prepare music for" box to "MusicPad Pro"

Click on the Browse button and decide where you want to save your file. Overwrite the "freehand.fh" with whatever you want to call your file.

If you want, you can fill in the Title, Composer, Copyright and Instrument details or you can fill these in later when you are satisfied with the result using the Score info in the MPP. (Which is what I usually do.)

Click on OK

Your file will be transferred, the MPP Manager will appear in Browser mode with an iconised representation of your file on the left.

Click on "View/View Options" and click on "**Don't enlarge score**". *It is not necessary to enlarge the score as we have already set the music and the printer to 766x1022. Allowing it to enlarge can cause distortion.*

Click on the "U-turn" arrow at the top of the page and your file will appear full size.

Click on "Edit Cropping". The score will now be surrounded by margin lines consisting of alternate dots and dashes and a small "Edit Cropping" dialog box will appear at the top. Drag all four margin lines to the edges of your score.

If you only have a single page in the score the button in the "Edit Cropping" box called "Apply to all sheets" will be greyed out meaning it is unavailable. Click on OK.

If you have more than one page in the score the button in the “Edit Cropping” box called “Apply to all sheets” will be in black meaning it is available so click on that.

You will get a message box asking “Are you sure you want to apply this cropping rectangle to all pages in the score?” Click on “Yes”

[] Click on “File/Save”

Now check your score carefully. Are the notes too close together? If so you need to reduce the Staff point size slightly and/or decrease the number of bars per line. Is the system spacing OK? If not you can decrease the Staff point size and/or the increase the Staff spacing. One thing I have NOT been able to overcome is the jaggedness of hairpins. If anybody finds a way of doing so I would like to know about it!

If you are satisfied with the appearance click on “Edit/Score Info” and fill in the details if you didn’t do so previously.

Finally click on “File/Close”. A message will appear asking if you want to save your changes. If you’re satisfied with the result click “Yes”, then click on “File/Refresh Collection” and the file will be recorded in the Browser.

If you’re not satisfied with the result click “No”, go back into Sib, make your changes and repeat the above.

Once you have finished in Sibelius and have some settings you are happy with you can save yourself a lot of work on the next file by saving your settings as a House Style.

[] Click on “House Styles/Export House Style”

[] Give your House Style a name and click OK

[] Tip: If you precede the name with a \$ sign it will appear at the top of the list of House Styles saving you from having to scroll down the list..

[] The next time you open a file in Sibelius, do a “Save As” as mentioned previously then click on “House Styles/Import House Style” and import your saved House Style.

I have four different House Styles which I use depending on the complexity of the music.

5. Making a Dual Pedal.

As stated previously one of the joys of the MPP is the page-turning capability. The current methods of doing page turns are not however to my personal satisfaction for the following reasons.

[a] I am an Accordion player (No jokes please - I've heard them all before!). Sitting with a heavy accordion strapped to your chest and having to lunge forward to tap the screen then get your hands back on the keyboard without missing a beat is not exactly ideal. Further aggravated for me due to the fact that I have breathing problems (Emphysema). I can imagine this being a problem for other musicians as well. Flautists, Clarinetists, Violinists etc.

[b] So use the foot pedal instead. Again not ideal because you have to programme multi page music with Repeat cuts. Easy enough to do but when you get to the end of the programmed repeats you still have to click on the screen to go back to the beginning when you want to repeat the whole thing. This happens often on a gig where you play a dance tune but no-one gets up to dance till you've nearly finished it so you have to repeat it all again.

I therefore opted for a Dual pedal system instead. Right pedal - page forward, Left pedal - page back, and no need to program repeats. This is very easy to implement but is more expensive than buying the Freehand Solo pedal.

You will need:

Two Boss FS-5U foot pedals and one Hosa CMP-159 cable (or equivalent).



The cable is simply two ¼ inch mono jacks to a ½ inch stereo jack plug.



These items are freely available from shops (guitar shops usually) and on-line (Try a Google). Approximate cost around 60 to 75 GB pounds depending on where you buy.

Assembly is a doddle. The two pedals have “Tongue and groove” type sides enabling them to be slotted together to form a single pedal. Join them together, plug the Red ¼ inch plug to the right hand box and the Grey ¼ inch plug to the left hand box, fit the ½ inch jack to the MPP - Job done!

There is an alternative pedal, the Boss FS-6, which is slightly cheaper.

This is a single unit Dual pedal. My objection to this one is that it relies on a 9v battery to operate and guess what? Sooner or later the battery will go flat on the one night you forgot to carry a spare with you! Ain't that the way?!



The choice is yours if you decide to go for Dual Pedaling

6. Creating the Page Turn Graphic.

This may or may not appeal to you.

I personally like to have an indication of when a page turn is due. The correct musical way of doing this is to write “V.S” at the point of the page turn. This stands for “Verso Subito” which translates to “Turn the page quickly!”

Two snags with this. [a] The text V.S. can easily be missed, particularly in a crowded or busy piece of music and [b] it gives no indication of whether to page forward or backward.

I therefore use graphic symbols which stand out more obviously. They are actually a pair of spectacles with a left or right pointing arrow to indicate the direction of the page turn.



These are easy to set up in Sibelius. If you're interested the procedure is as follows:

- [] Open your file in Sibelius.
- [] Click on “House Styles/Edit House Styles”
- [] Scroll down to “Auto page break warnings” and double click on it
- [] Set the “absolute” point size to 24 and tick the “Keep absolute” boxes, click OK, click Close
- [] Click on “House Styles/Edit Symbols”
- [] Scroll to the bottom on the screen and double click an empty box
- [] In the “Name” box type “PageForward” (or anything else you fancy.)
- [] Click on the arrow in the “Music font” box and select “Auto page break warnings”
- [] In the map scroll down to the Spectacles (14 down, right hand column). The spectacles will now appear on the Staff in the “Position” box.
- [] In the “Extra Symbols” box click on “Add”. This brings the symbols dialog back up.
- [] Scroll around till you find the right pointing arrow and double click it. This adds the arrow to the spectacles though you may not see it clearly as it will be behind the spectacles.
- [] Click continuously on the “Up” arrow in the “Position” box till you get the arrow about one space above the spectacles. Then click the “Right” arrow to move it where you fancy it.
- [] Click OK - all done.

Repeat this procedure again calling it “PageBack” (or whatever) and using the left pointing arrow.

To use the symbols in the your music simply press the letter “Z” on the keyboard to bring up the symbols menu, select which symbol you want and click in the music where you want to put it. If you want to colour it, right click the symbol and select “Color” then choose your colour.

As said, this idea may or may not appeal to you. Some may think it gimmicky some may find it useful. Personally I like ‘em!!!!!!

7. Transferring whole books.

Like a lot of other musicians I have a pile of my music in books, ala “Fake Book” style, all created in Sibelius. These can be transferred to the MPP just as easily as a single piece.

Before doing so I add a blank page before page 1 then use Plain Text to create an alphabetical listing of the contents with page numbers.

After printing to the MPP select “View/View Options” and click on “Don’t enlarge score”.

Also follow the instructions given in Section 4. Regarding the bottom line of music and cropping.

Click on “View/Page Navigation Toolbar”.

Click “File/Save”

When you open your book you will have the pages icons at the bottom of the screen and page 1 will be the Index, making it very easy to find and go to a particular tune. Using this method enables you to use the MPP the same way you did with your paper books but easier.

One slight drawback is that the tunes being within a book will not be listed individually in the Browser. If you want them to show in the Browser you will of course have to print each tune to the MPP as well. Remember when the Sibelius print dialog comes up to untick “All” and tick “Pages” instead and enter the page numbers you want to print.

8. Summary

So there you have it. My suggestions on producing good Sibelius to MPP transfers.

Having ploughed your way through this document it may seem long-winded to do but that is only because of the manner in which I have written it. I assure you that when you have done it a few times it becomes quite quick and easy.

I hope you have found this information useful or at least that it gives you food for thought on improving your own transfers. If nothing else it should make interesting reading!

In order of criticality I would list the following as the most important in achieving good results.

- [1] Staff size (Layout/Document setup)
- [2] Stave spacing (House Style/Engraving Rules/Staves)
- [3] Decreasing number of bars per line
- [4] Re-adjusting Font sizes where needed.

I would be interested in hearing from users of other versions of Sibelius as to whether this method works for them. So far it has been found to work on Sibelius v4.1.5 as well as 5v2.

Please post your comments on the forum.

UK forum:

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/MusicPadUsers/>