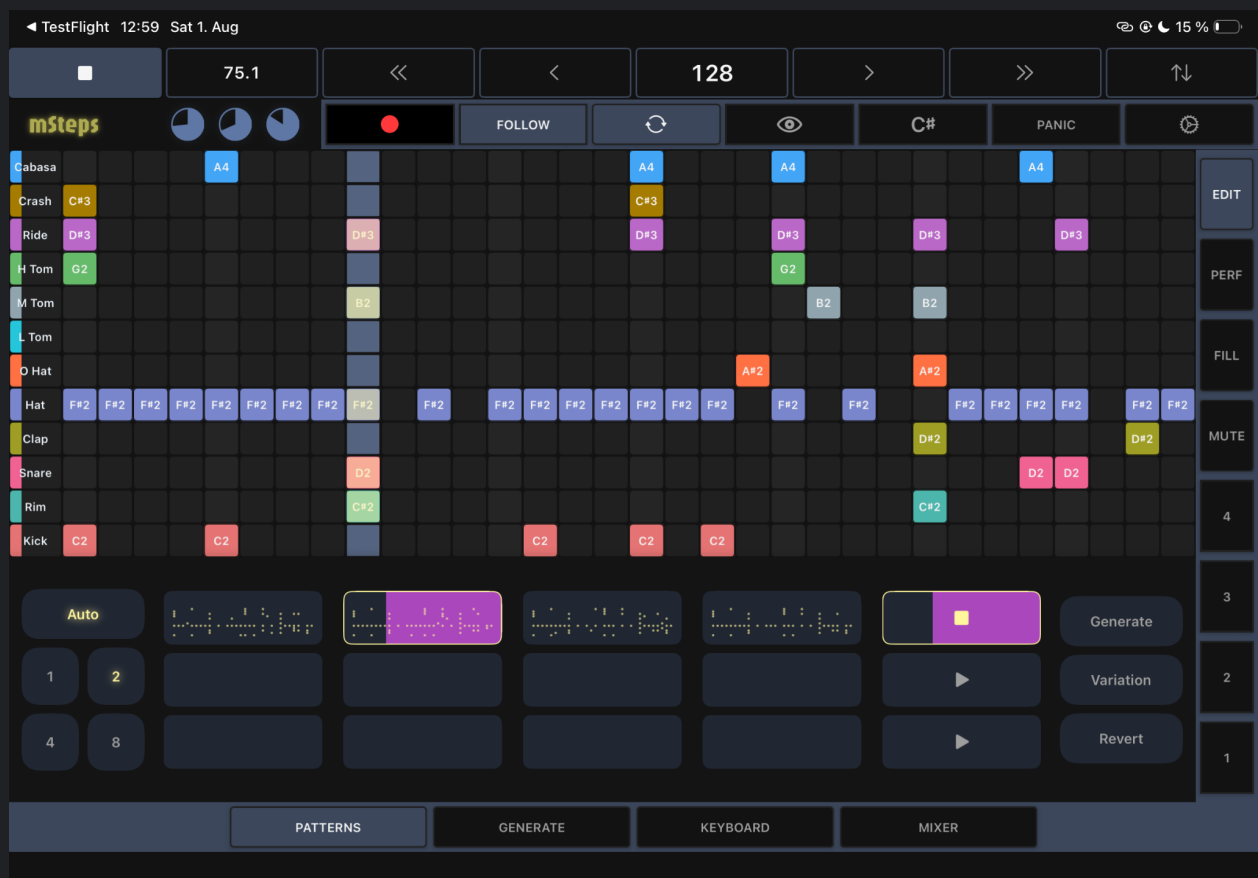




mSteps - User Manual

Version 1.0.x · Axart Labs · axart.net
A generative MIDI step sequencer for iPad

1. Introduction

What you can do with mStep

- You can generate instantly 12-track, 2-bar patterns in various music styles: hip-hop (trap), house, techno, rap, dubstep, drum'n'bass
- In addition to the style, you can control the density and intensity level of every pattern generated
- You can lock the tracks you want to keep and regenerate the rest
- You can generate variations (mutations) of existing patterns
- You can set the variation level from XS to L
- You can perform all patterns live, individually or as part of a scene (12 patterns, 3 scenes in total)
- You can enable auto-mutation which creates a new variation of the playing patterns every x cycles (1, 2, 4, 8)
- You can edit every lane in detail: add/remove steps, change the lane length (1-32 steps), change the step size (e.g. 1/8T), set the step velocity, offset, gate (duration), ratchet (repeat) etc.
- You can set a fixed pitch for every lane OR flexible (individual pitch for every step)
- You can use the built-in virtual keyboard (including tie steps) or add steps via MIDI
- You can control various parameters via MIDI with the embedded MIDI learn feature

mSteps is a MIDI-only plugin; it makes no sound of its own. Route its MIDI output to any instrument: a drum plugin, a synth, or external hardware.

Formats: AUv3 MIDI effect (Logic Pro, AUM, Cubasis, Loopy Pro, and other AUv3 hosts) and standalone app.

Requires: iPad, iPadOS 15.6+.



2. The Main Screen

The interface is divided into four primary regions:

1. **Top Toolbar** — Transport, global controls, and settings (§4).
2. **Side Toolbar** — Performance controls: modes, fill, and mutes (§5).
3. **Upper Screen** — The step editor or the performance screen when PERF is active.
4. **Lower Screen** — Four tabs: Patterns, Generate, Keyboard, and Mixer.

3. Top Toolbar

Left to right:

- **MIDI step record** — Captures live keyboard input directly into the pattern.
- **FOLLOW** — Toggles the playhead-follow behavior, keeping the active step visible across pattern changes.
- **Auto-mutation** — Toggles the auto-mutation behaviour of the sequencer.
- **Eye** — Toggles the visibility of each step's MIDI note.

- **Pitch mode** — Toggles the pitch view mode between sharp or flat-basis.
- **PANIC** — Sends "all-notes-off" on all MIDI channels to stop hanging notes.
- **Settings (Gear)** — Presents the Setting menu.

4. Side Toolbar

Available in every tab, these are your primary live-performance controls:

- **EDIT / PERF** — Switches the upper screen between the Step Editor and the **Performance Screen**, which features 8 assignable MIDI CC sliders.
- **FILL** — Momentary performance tool. It applies a fill-like mutation when held.
- **MUTE** — Global momentary mute.
- **Mute Groups 1-4** — Four assignable groups for instant track drops and transitions.

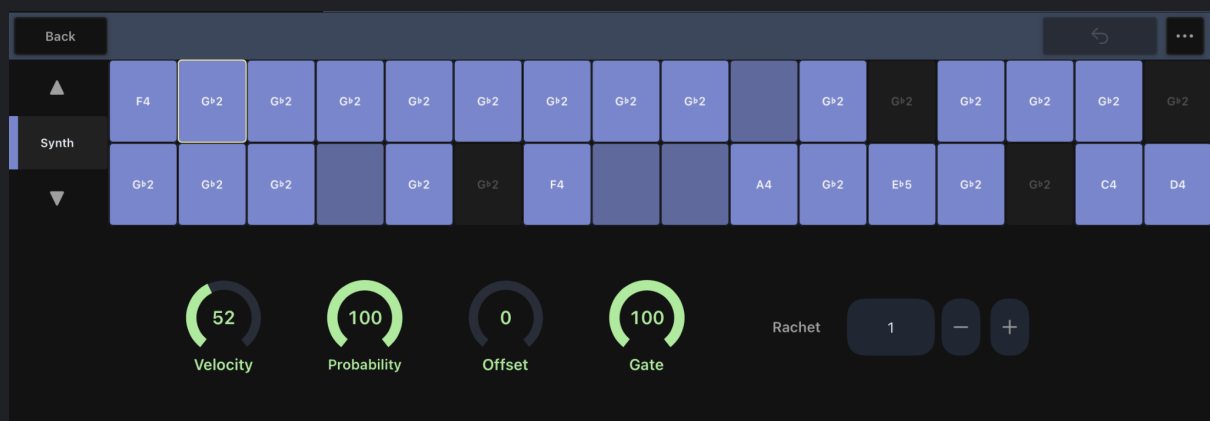
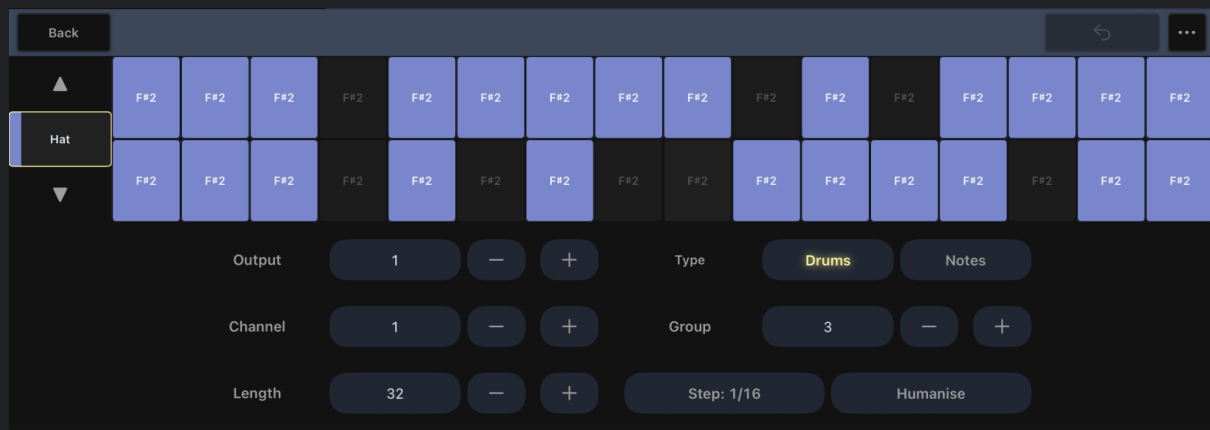


5. Step Editor

The main grid features one row per track (lane) and one column per step.

- **Tap a step** — Toggle a step on or off.
- **Hold a step or the lane title** — Opens the **Step Detail Editor**.

Each lane supports independent lengths and step sizes, allowing for complex **polymetric** patterns (e.g., a 16-step kick against a 12-step hi-hat).



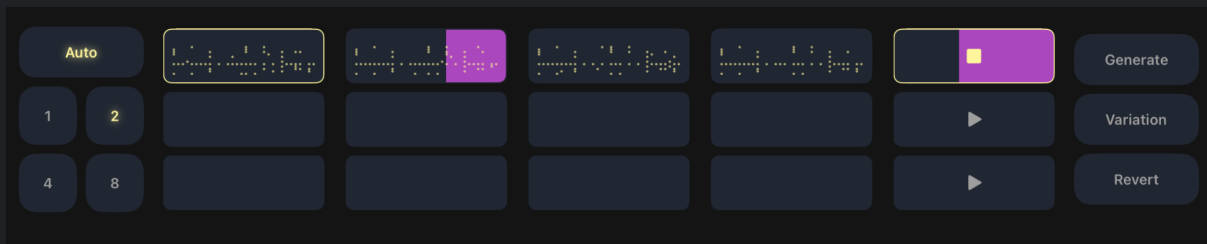
6. Step Detail Editor

Per Lane Controls:

- **MIDI output** — mSteps has 8 individual outputs.
- MIDI channel
- **Length & Step Size** — Rhythmic duration of the lane.
- **Type** - Drums sets the lane to a fixed pitch while Notes allows for individual pitches on every step.
- **Group** — The mute group, controlled in the Side Toolbar.

Per Step Controls:

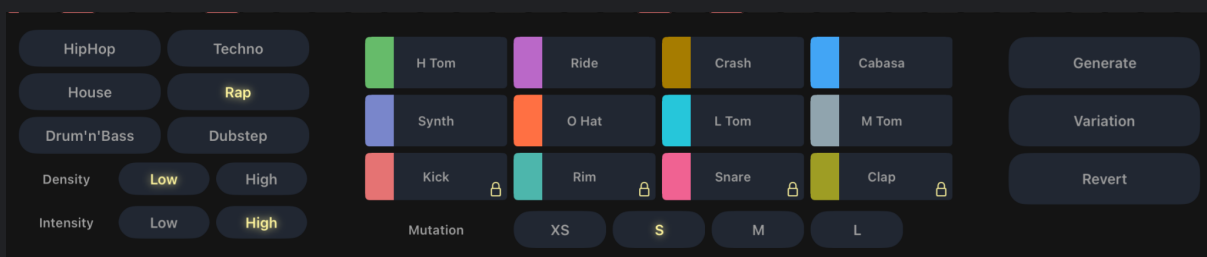
- **Velocity** — The MIDI velocity.
- **Probability** — The chance a step triggers on each pass.
- **Offset** — Micro-timing shifts for humanized swing.
- **Gate** — The duration of the MIDI note.
- **Ratchet** — Number of retriggers within a single step.



7. Patterns Tab

Organizes 12 patterns into **3 scenes × 4 patterns** with real-time mutation and generation options.

- **Pattern Slots** — Tap a slot to queue a switch. Switches are quantized to the pattern boundary (be default 2 bars of 4/4).
- **Scene Buttons** — Launch an entire row of patterns simultaneously.
- **Real-time mutation** (“Auto”) — Toggles the real-time mutation which will generate a new version of the playing pattern every x repeats (1, 2, 4, 8). The amount of the mutation can be set in the “Generate” tab (below).
- **Variation** — Quickly create a new iteration of the current pattern. The amount of variation can be set via the parameter “Mutation” in the Generate tab.
- **Revert** — Restores the pattern to its state before the last mutation or generation.

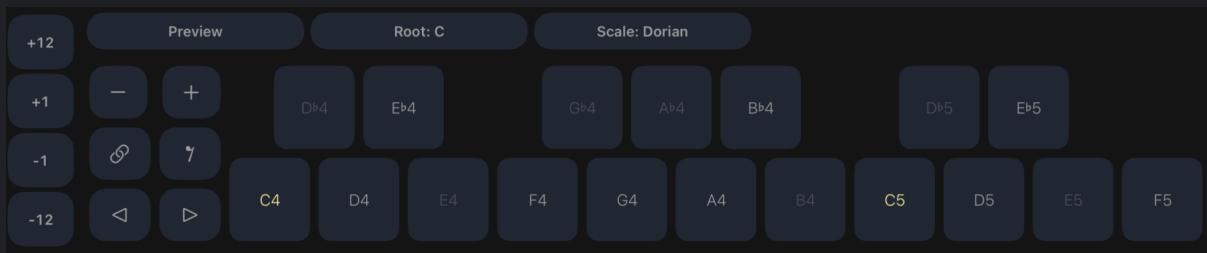


8. Generate Tab

The generative engine of mSteps.

- **Genre** — Style selection.
- **Density & Intensity** — Adjust how busy the pattern is and the velocity energy.
- **Track Locks** — Protect specific lanes from being changed during regeneration.

- **Lane Modes** — Toggle between **Drums** (GM-locked) and **Melodic** (free pitch) lane types.



9. Keyboard Tab

An in-app virtual keyboard.

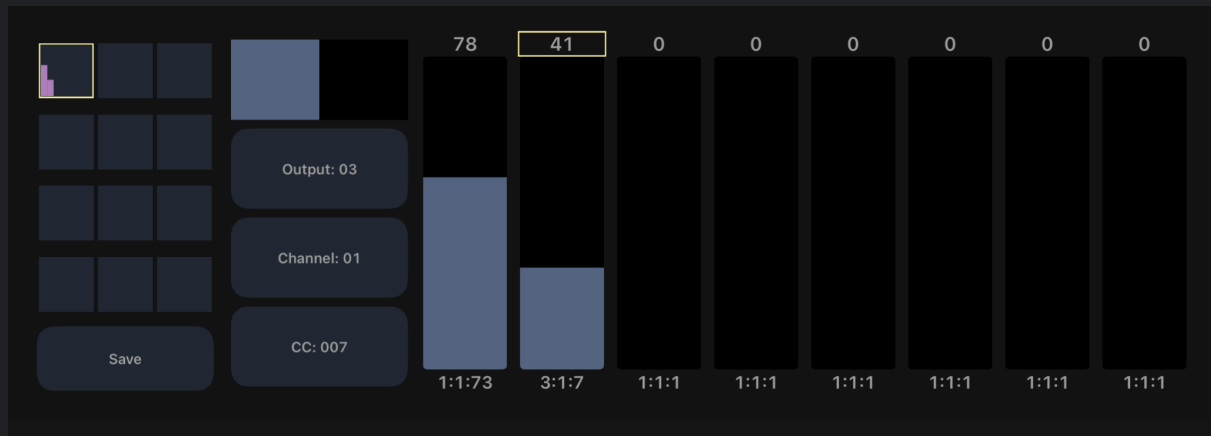
- **Preview mode ("Preview")** — preview notes without editing the pattern.
- **Root note/Scale** — When selected, the keyboard highlights the notes that belong to the root note/scale combination. However, all notes are still accessible..



10. Mixer Tab

Control the live output of your tracks:

- **Volume** — MIDI velocity scaling for each track.
- **Mute/Solo** — Standard mixer controls.



11. Performance Screen (PERF)

Replaces the step grid with 8 assignable **MIDI CC sliders** for hands-on control. Each slider can be assigned to an output, a channel and a MIDI CC controller number.

- **12 Snapshots** — Save and morph between states. The duration of the morph can be adjusted with the slider next to the snapshot thumbnails.

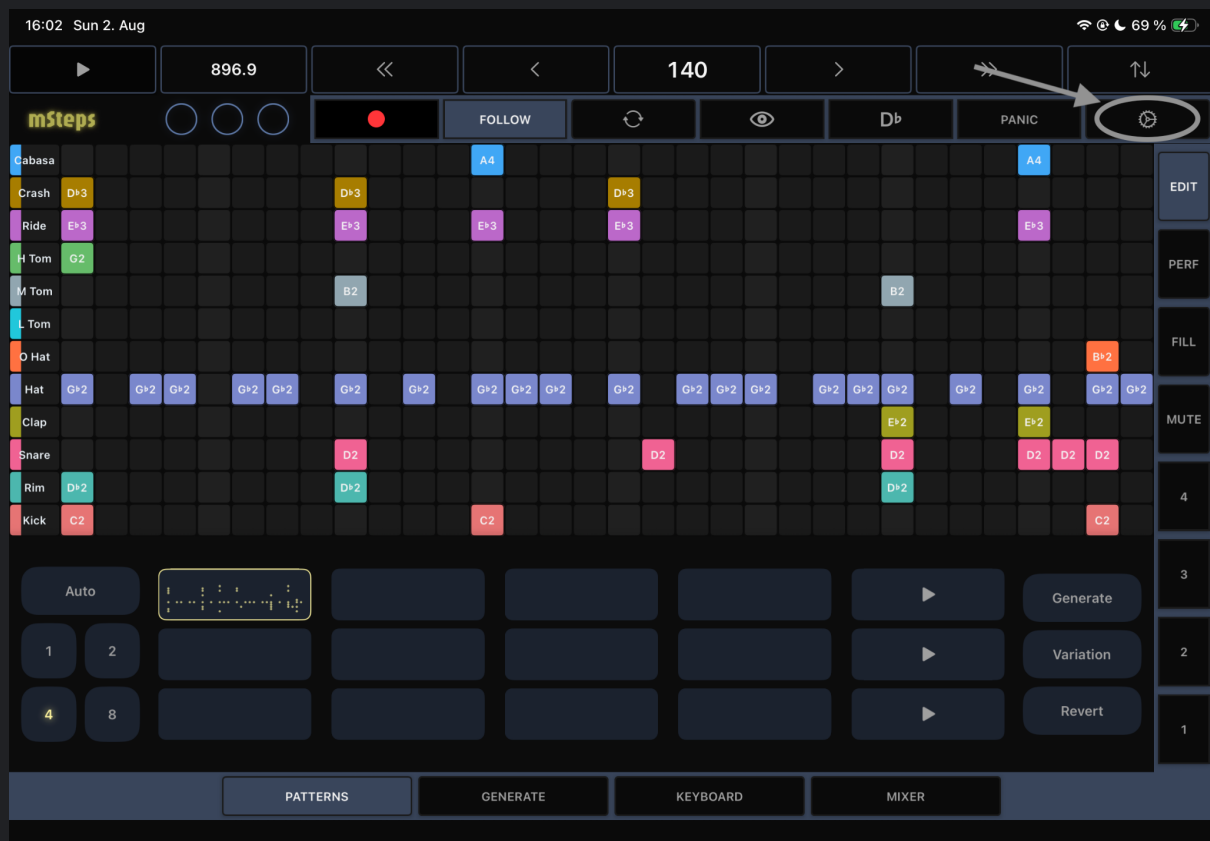


12. MIDI Learn Mode

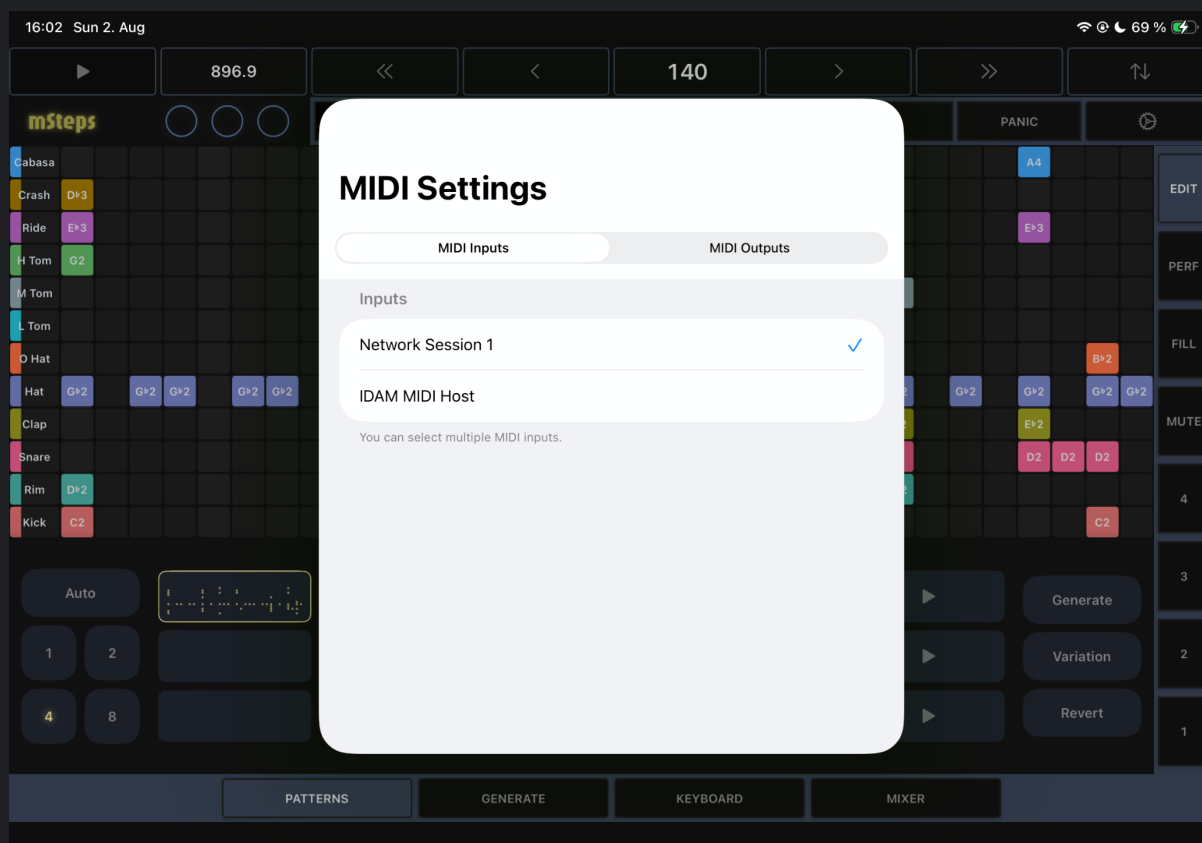
Enables MIDI control of various components, including patterns, scenes, mute groups, fill, mute and auto-mutation. Open the “Settings” menu to enable the MIDI Learn mode.

13. MIDI routing (standalone version)

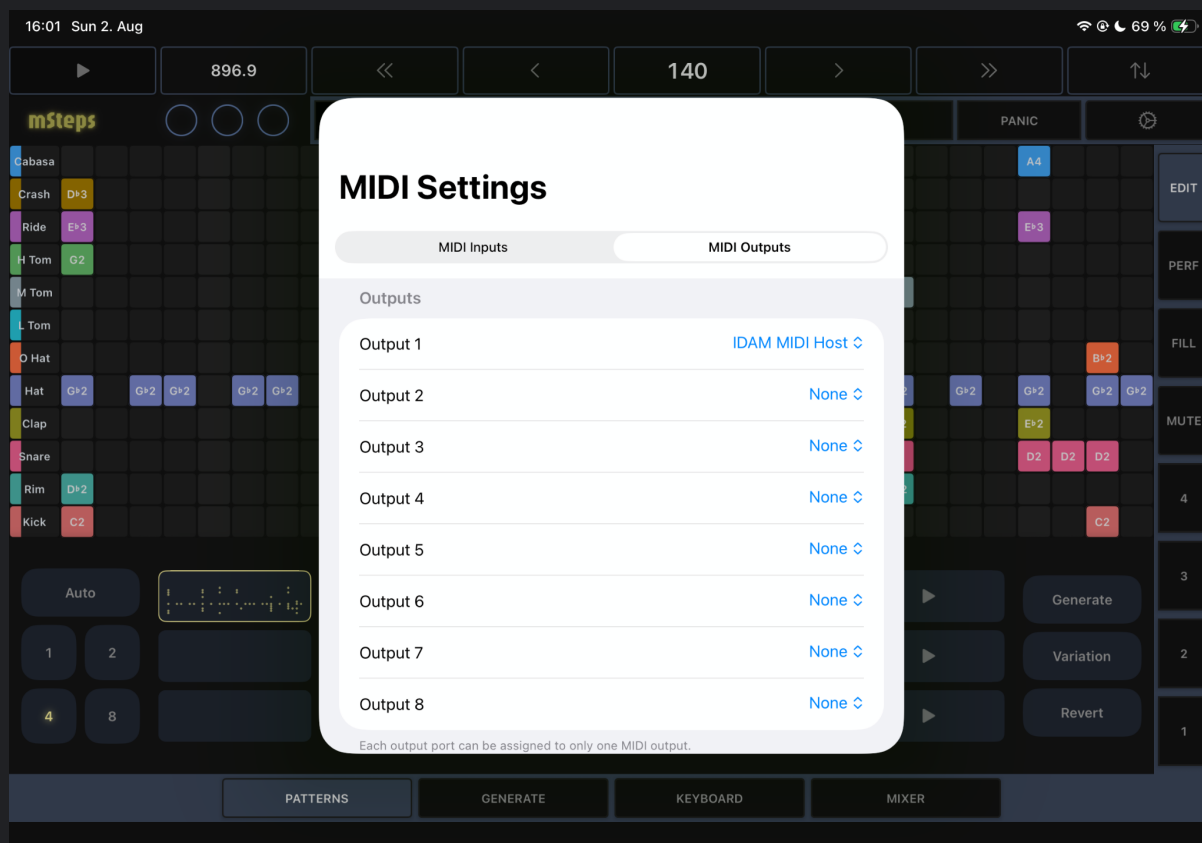
mSteps standalone version offers flexible MIDI routing (inputs/outputs) via its I/O menu:



From there you can select MIDI inputs (multiple selection is possible):



You can also assign each one of mStep's virtual outputs to any of the available MIDI outputs:



13. Contact us

Questions, suggestions or comments?
axart.net/contact-us or hello@axart.net