



SL950

Unofficial sample librarian for the AKAI S900 and S950 digital samplers



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Introduction

SL950 is an iOS / Android sample librarian and program editor for the AKAI S900 and S950 digital samplers. The app doesn't make a sound by itself and it's designed to work in tandem with the hardware. By connecting your device to the sampler you can customize your programs and samples.

Disclaimer

Use the app at your own risk. Delta Seven Kft. cannot be held responsible for any damage occurring while using the app.

Although we are doing extensive testing with our own units and with our testers there's always a possibility of something going wrong.

Drum Machine Funk is not affiliated with AKAI Professional. We are an independent team of creatives providing creative tools to music lovers to unlock the full potential of amazing music hardware.

Hardware limitations

Please read the following paragraphs carefully to get most out of the SL950 application.

The application is designed to help you prepare programs for your sampler and it is not intended to be used as a real time control panel while the sampler actively plays back an arrangement.

The reason for this is the way the AKAI S900 and S950 were designed back in the 80s. Microprocessors were limited and slow compared to today's standards thus they were not designed to handle many operations at once, such as playing back samples and updating programs or sample parameters simultaneously.

For data transfer the application uses the MIDI connection. Compared to today's standards of USB throughput MIDI data transfer is extremely slow. While the sample time is limited on these samplers data transfer still might take a significant amount of time, even up to minutes. Be patient and accept the fact that we are dealing with 80s technology here.

We recommend that you always stop your sequencer or DAW while making adjustments to your programs. When a parameter of a program is changed the whole program has to be transferred to the sampler. A program might have many keygroups, each taking up the same amount of data, so the transfer of a program with 32 keygroups will take roughly 8 times the duration of the transfer of a program with 4 keygroups.

We recommend that you use the application as a preparation step when working with the sampler, chopping up breaks or preparing keygroups is much faster using the application. We found incredible value when preparing our programs and we hope you too find this feature compelling.

After preparing the programs it's best to do the final adjustments on the sampler itself, because from the front panel a parameter change doesn't involve the transfer of the whole program back and forth.

These limitations have been imposed on us by the past, but we are still grateful for the vision and insight of AKAI engineers of the 80s to provide the means of controlling these amazing devices.

Connect your device

Connect your Android or iOS device with an USB to MIDI cable to the sampler.

We tested the app with the [ESI Midimate EX](#) and the iConnectivity MIO10 MIDI patchbay and highly recommend these two manufacturers and their products.

iOS devices with Lightning port

- Use the [Apple Lightning to USB Camera Adapter](#) to connect to the Lightning port of the iOS device
- Use an USB-A to MIDI cable to connect the sampler

Please note that a regular USB-C to Lightning cable is not enough to establish a data connection, iOS devices with lightning ports require the Apple Lightning to USB Camera Adapter

iOS devices with USB-C port

- Use an USB-C to USB-A adapter to connect the USB-to-MIDI cable to your iOS device

Android devices with Micro-USB port

There are multiple options to establish a data connection:

- Use a micro-USB to USB-A adapter to connect the USB-to-MIDI cable to your Android device

Android devices with USB-C port

- Use an USB-C to USB-A adapter to connect the USB-to-MIDI cable to your Android device

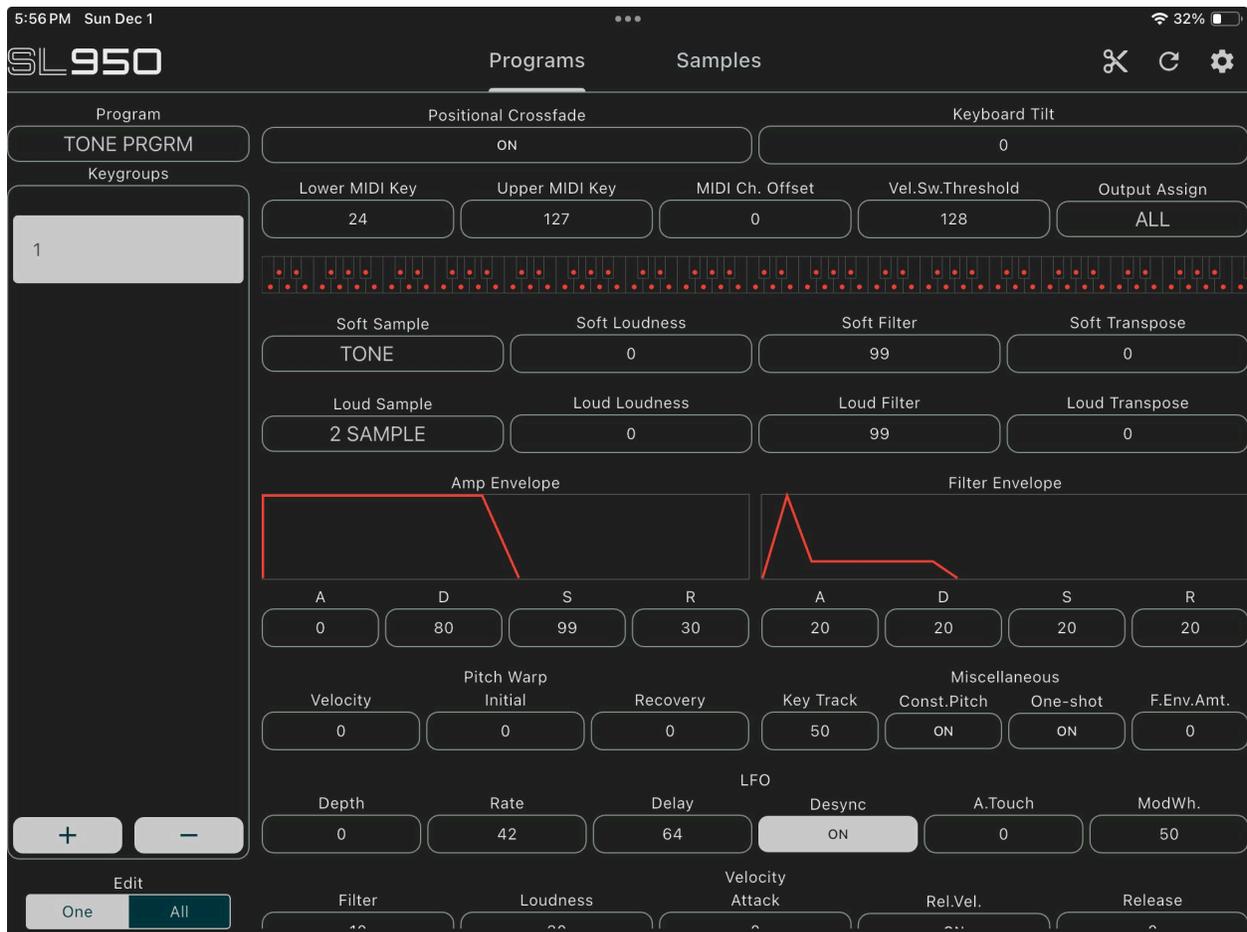
Troubleshooting

- Connect the sampler to your mobile device and turn on the sampler and start the SL950 application
- Press the settings icon to select the MIDI input and output devices
- Input and output devices should be different, in the case of the ESI MidiMate EX you should select Port 1 for input and Port2 for output, or vice versa depending on which MIDI cable you connected to your samplers MIDI in and MIDI out
- Close the settings dialog and press the refresh button
- If everything is set up correctly the application should display the current programs in the sampler

- If you still see an empty screen, try connecting the MIDI cables the other way around, or change the selection in the settings dialog
- Press the refresh button again and wait for the app to display the programs

If you experience issues with the app recognizing the connected MIDI cables make sure you are using the cables recommended for your device above and try to turn your sampler and on again and if necessary restart the application.

If everything goes well you should see something like this:



Example: SL950 is displaying the parameters of the default TONE program

Editing programs

- By selecting the Programs tab on the top you can edit the programs currently loaded in the sampler
- You can select the edited program and keygroup on the left for tablet devices, or on the top for mobile devices
- By tapping and dragging on any parameter and vertically dragging you can change the value of the parameter
- Once you release your finger the parameter will be transferred to the sampler and the program will be updated

Editing sample parameters

- By selecting the Samples tab on the top you can switch to the samples view.
- You can select the edited sample on the left for tablet devices or on the top for mobile devices
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Credits

SL950 has been designed and developed with love in Budapest, Hungary by [@drummachinefunk](#).

Many thanks to [@fifilooksdown](#) for helping with the application design.

No S900 and S950 samplers were harmed during the development of the application.

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<https://drummachinefunk.com>

