



SPL-44

Unofficial MIDI controller for the
Roland SP-404 MKII Creative Sampler and Effector



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Introduction

SPL-44 is an iPad/iPhone controller for the Roland SP-404 MKII Creative Sampler and Effector. The app doesn't make a sound by itself and it's designed to work in tandem with the hardware. By connecting your iOS device to the sampler you can customize your effect parameters and move between effects easily.

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 Roland. We are an independent team of creatives providing creative tools to music lovers to unlock the full potential of amazing music hardware.

Connect your device

Connect your Android or iOS device with an USB cable to the SP-404 MKII. There's a wide variety of cables and adapters available on the market.

- For Lightning cables it's highly recommended to use the ones provided from Apple for the best possible experience.
- For USB cables quality and reliability varies based on manufacturer and model, while they should mostly work, it is recommended to use name-brands like Apple, Delock or Ugreen.

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 USB-C cable to connect the SP-404 MKII to the adapter

Please note that a regular USB-C to Lightning cable is not enough to establish a data connection.

iOS devices with USB-C port

- Use an USB-C to USB-C cable to connect your iOS device directly to the SP-404 MKII

Android devices with Micro-USB port

There are multiple options to establish a data connection:

- Using a direct Micro-USB to USB-C cable to connect your Android device directly to the SP-404 MKII
- Using a Micro-USB to USB-C adapter and a USB-C to USB-C cable
- Using a Micro-USB to USB-A adapter and a USB-A to USB-C cable
- Using a Micro-USB to USB-A cable and a USB-A to USB-C adapter

Android devices with USB-C port

- Use an USB-C to USB-C cable to connect your Android device directly to the SP-404 MKII

Troubleshooting

Once connected, start the SPL-44 application and turn on your SP-404 MKII. The application automatically recognizes the SP-404 MKII and will display the control panels.

If you experience issues with the app recognizing the connected SP-404 MKII make sure you are using the cables recommended for your device above and try to turn your MKII off and on again and if necessary restart the application.

Using the application

Once the connection is established the app automatically opens the main screen with two main sections.

Effect tabs

The selection on the left gives access to the 5 built in effects of the MKII:

- BUS1: Controls FX1 effect
- BUS2: Controls FX2 effect
- BUS3: Controls BUS3 effect
- BUS4: Controls BUS4 effect
- Input: Controls the input effect

You can select effects from the list and edit all parameters of the given effects.

Performance layouts

Performance layouts are control surfaces designed to control multiple effects on a single page.

There are two performance layouts included in the app:

Effect Jam

designed for quick punch in effects in live performances

Mixer

designed for use in DJ mode and gives you access to BUS1 and BUS2 effects laid out in a similar fashion to DJ mixers.

Touch areas

Performance layouts consist of touch areas controlling different effects. Touch areas are configured differently to match the given effect type.

Some touch areas are momentary, meaning they will turn on the effect while touched, but turn it off once released.

In some cases touch areas can also control one parameter of the effect, moving your finger along the longer side of the area will control a given parameter. A good example is DJFX Looper where the horizontal axis controls the Length parameter.

A touch area can set fixed parameters for the given effect. An example is the Low, Mid, Hi touch areas, which all control the Isolator effect but set the 3 parameters of the Isolator effect differently: Low will reduce the high and mid frequencies, Mid will reduce the low and high frequencies, and Hi will reduce the Low and Mid frequencies. These touch areas let you quickly jump between these Isolator “presets” quickly and efficiently in your performance.

Some other touch areas only turn on and off effects. A good example is the Delay touch area, which will use the current setting of the Delay effect that you can freely set up yourself in the BUS1 or BUS2 tabs or directly on the MKII. This lets you set the delay time and feedback level to match your audio content.

Advanced performance layout features

Performance layouts have some subtle features used under the hood that might be useful to understand.

Transitioning between effects: swiping with your finger from one touch area to another is enabled when it makes sense. In Effect Jam you can drag your finger across all the touch areas without ever lifting up your finger. In mixer mode this behavior is disabled for the Isolator related touch areas, so it's harder to mess it up with an accidental touch.

Default Effect associated with performance layouts: each performance layout defines a default effect for BUS1 and BUS2. For Effect Jam the default effect is DJFX Looper. This means that whenever you release your finger the MKII will select the DJFX Looper effect but keeps it turned off. This is important, because DJFX Looper has to fill its recording buffer before it can be turned on.

For now performance layouts are predefined, but in the future we plan to let you design your own.

Credits

SPL-44 has been designed and developed with love in Budapest, Hungary by [@drummachinefunk](#).

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

No SP-404 MKII samplers were harmed during the development of the application.

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<https://drummachinefunk.com>

