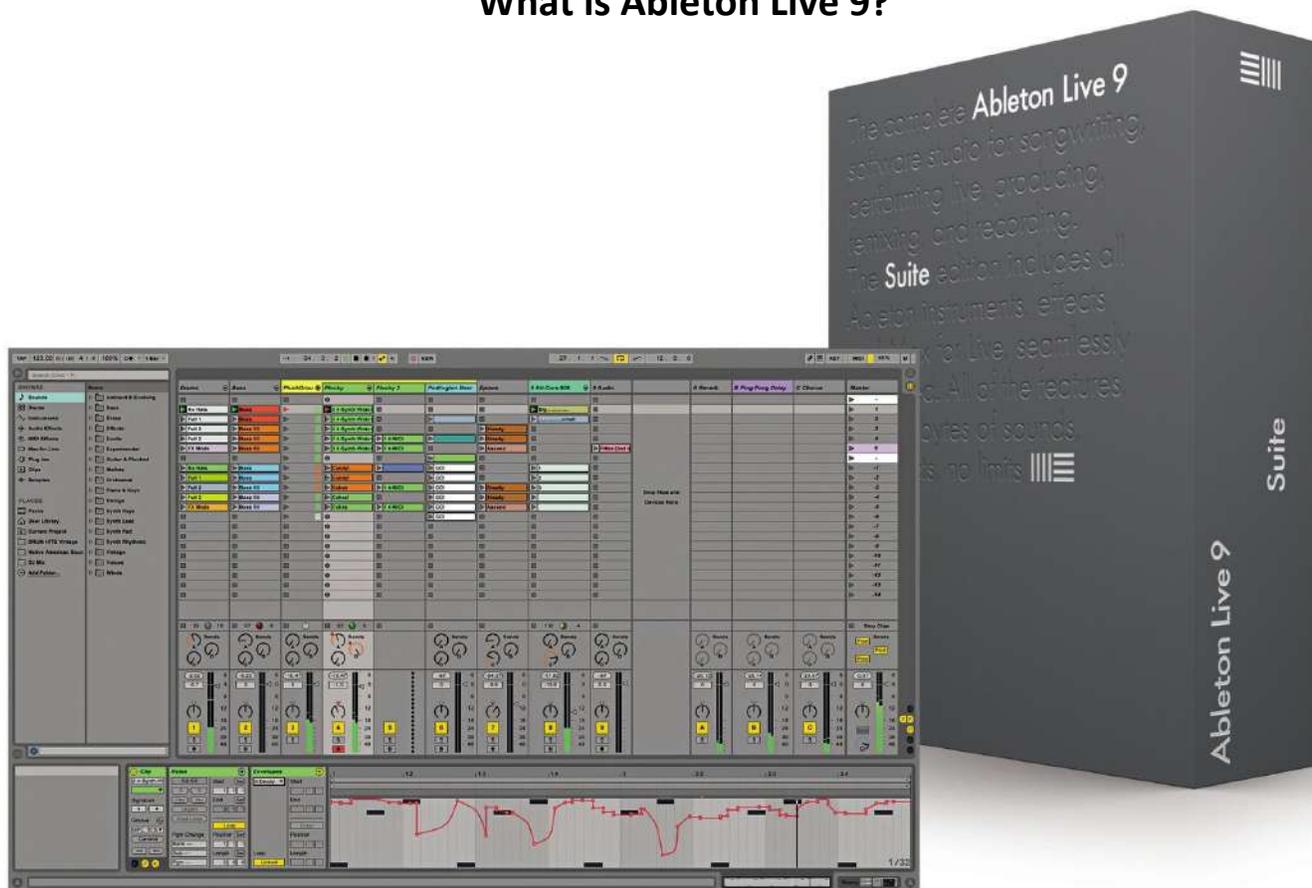




# Ableton Live 9 Basics

## What is Ableton Live 9?

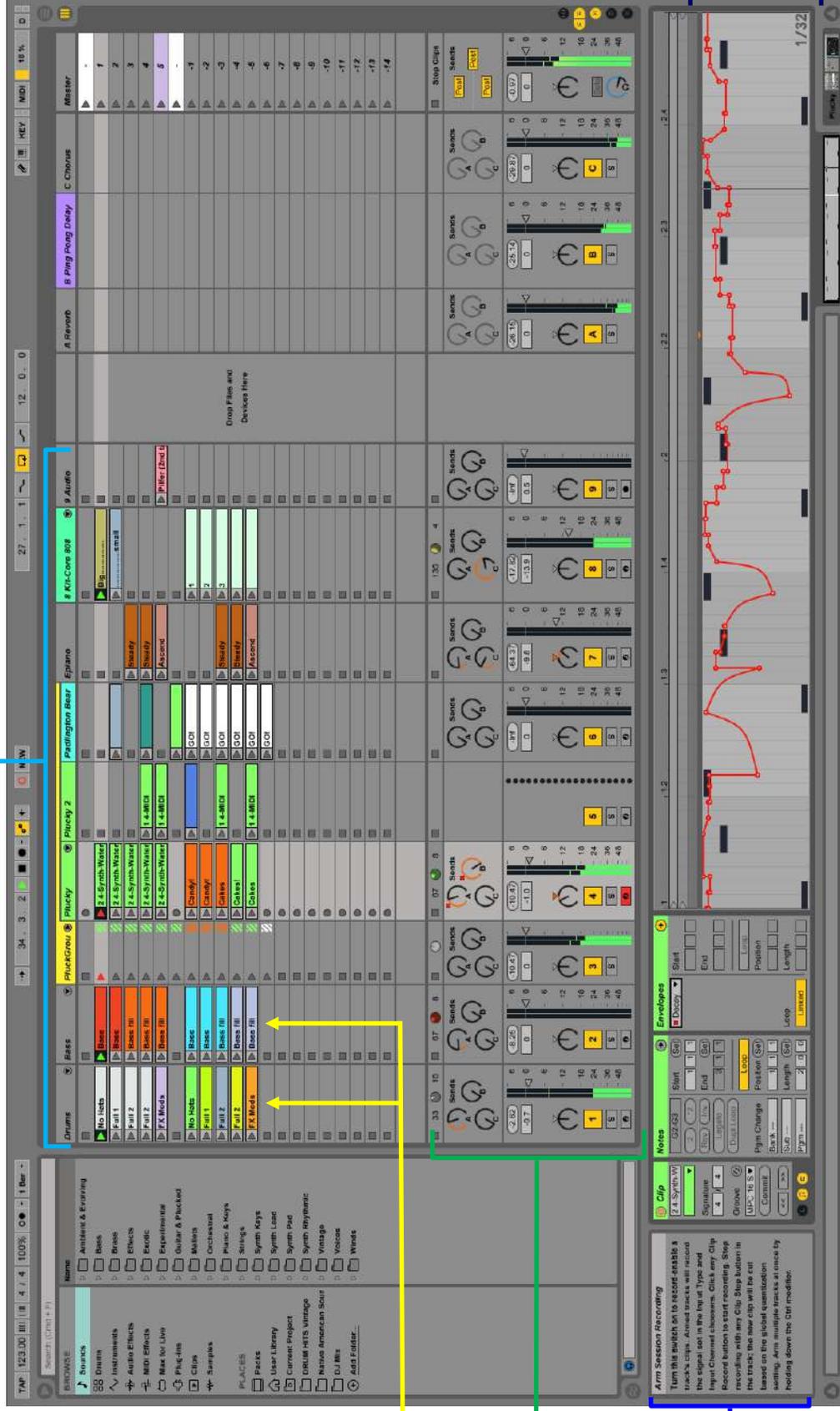


Ableton Live 9 is a digital audio workstation (DAW), or a computer software used in combination with a Midi Board or Launch Pad to create musical ideas, turning them into finished songs, and even taking them onto the stage.

Live comes with a set of interactive lessons to take you step by step through the key features of the program. The lessons are organized in a table of contents, which can be opened directly in the program via the Help menu.

There are three different versions of Live: Intro, Standard, and Suite. They share common features, but Standard and Suite have additional features, instruments, Packs, and effects. The version in the DCS is Suite, which contains 3000+ sounds, 11 software instruments, 36 audio effects, 8 MIDI effects, and 21 Max for Live devices.

# The Workspace



**Browser** - the place where you interact with your library of musical assets such as sounds, instruments, and effects.

**Live Set** - The type of document that you create and work on in Live.

**Clips** - The basic musical building blocks of Live, they are a piece of musical material: a melody, a drum pattern, a bassline or a complete song.

**Devices & Mixer** - Contains controls for editing clips' volume, crossfade, etc.

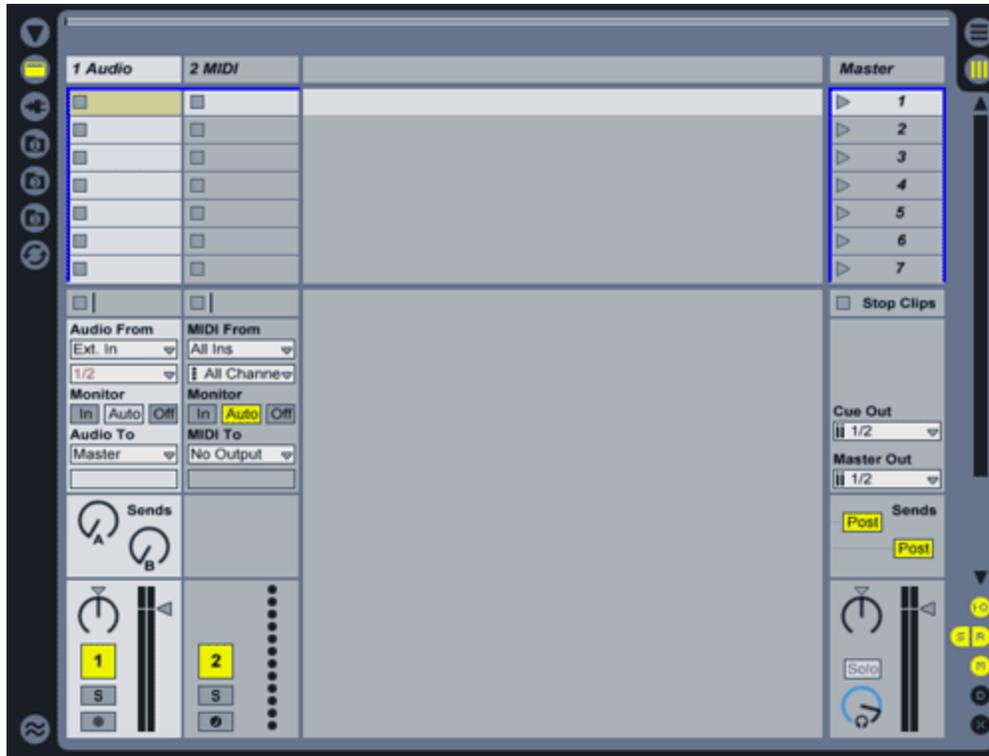
**Info View** - Whenever your mouse hovers over a section or item in Ableton, information appears in this box.

**Clip View/MIDI Editor** - The Clip View is where clip properties can be set and adjusted. To bring up the MIDI Editor, double-click a MIDI clip

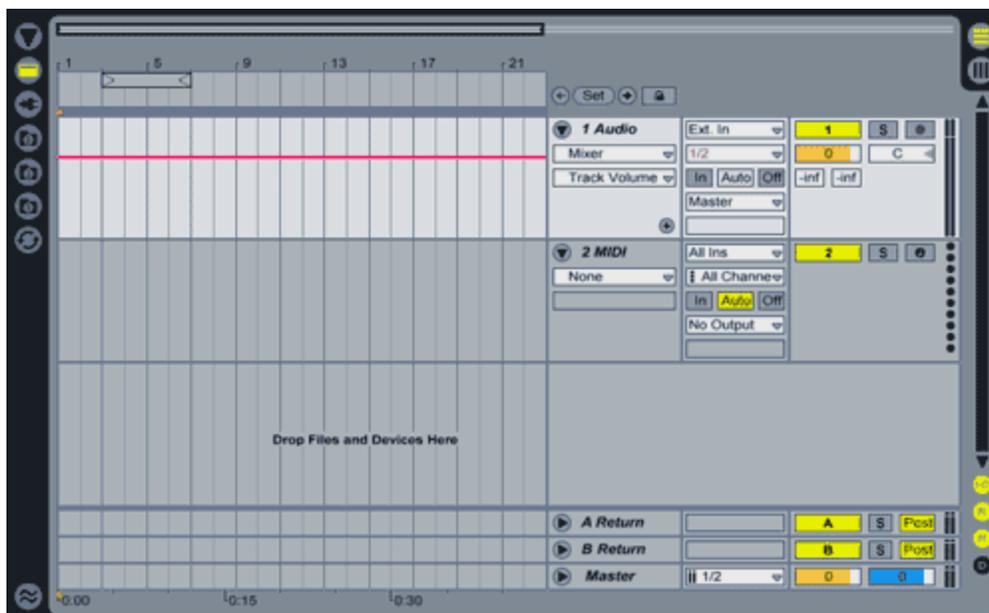
There are two different views in Ableton: Session View and Arrangement view. They can be toggled/switched by selecting this icon in the upper-right hand corner of the page, or by pressing the TAB key.



**Session View** is used primarily for jamming and coming up with ideas, playing live, or whenever the length of a certain part is not known in advance or needs to react to other players.



**Arrangement View** is mainly useful for arranging and producing, be it an original work or creating a remix. Anything along a fixed timeline with a set beginning and end.



# Setup

## Saving First:

- If just using the basic instruments and packs that come with Ableton, select **File > Save Live Project As >** Select a file location and name the file.
- If using third party packs/instruments, self-made recordings, etc.: Select **File > Collect All and Save.** Select “Yes” on all of the options. The file will be bigger but it will contain all aspects of your project.

## Audio Quality:

- Select **Options > Preferences > Audio >** set the **In/Out Sample Rate** to **48000**  
**Note:** Output buffer size varies by computer. The better the computer, the higher the buffer size can be. The higher buffer size on a not-so-great computer means more latency/delay between hitting the key and the note being heard. But if the buffer size is too low, the audio will become distorted.

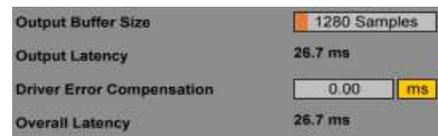
Use the test tone to determine what settings are best for your computer.

- Select the **Record** tab > set **File Type** to **WAV** and set **Bit Depth** to **24**



**Note:** The higher the Bit Depth, the higher quality of audio. It is recommended that you start in 24 bit and then export in 16 bit when you are done. You can always start large and compress later.

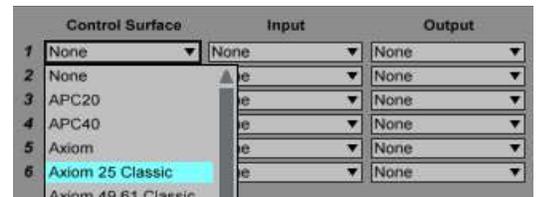
- Select the **Audio** tab and set the **Buffer Size** to 1280 samples



**Note:** The higher the buffer size, the more latency/delay will be present when hitting a key. It is recommended to set the buffer size to 1280 when composing, and to 512 when mixing/editing. If the buffer size is too low, there will be distortion/dropping out.

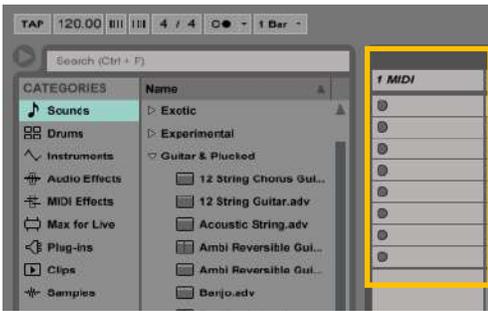
## MIDI Board Setup

- Ensure the **Axiom Oxygen 25** board is plugged into the computer.
- Select **Preferences > MIDI Sync >** Set the **Control Surface** to **Axiom 25 Classic**, and set **Input**, and **Output** to **Axiom**
- Under **MIDI Ports** ensure that **Track** is set to **on** so the MIDI board can talk to Ableton.



MIDI Ports			
	Track	Sync	Remote
▷ Input: Axiom_25_Classic Input (Axiom 25)	On	Off	Off
▷ Input: Axiom 25 (Port 2)	On	Off	Off
▷ Input: Axiom 25 (Port 3)	On	Off	Off

# Composing Music

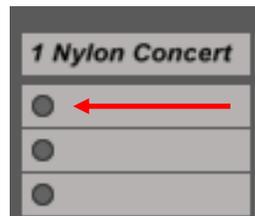


- Go over to the Live's Browser and left-click the **Sounds** or **Instruments**. A sample will play demonstrating the sound.
- Once you have found an instrument or sound, left-click, hold, and drag it to the first MIDI track



- Ensure that the Clock Icon in the **Devices and Mixer Board** is **red**  
This "arms" the track and ensures it is ready to receive input from the MIDI board

- Test the keys on the MIDI board. Once you're ready to record, click once on the circle underneath the instrument



- Once finished composing the track, press either the Stop icon at the top, or use the keyboard shortcut Spacebar to stop the composition.
- To playback what you have just composed, press the Spacebar

- You can layer tracks by adding more MIDI tracks to the right or left of your current track. Right-click the top portion of the MIDI track and select Insert MIDI track



- You can play all of these tracks at the same time by selecting the Master play icon on the far right of the workspace.



- To hear only one track, select the **S** icon in the Mixer area of the track you would like to hear. This mutes all other tracks in the workspace.



## Audio Effects

- Live comes with many audio effects that you can apply to your composition.
- To apply an audio effect, select Audio Effects and drag-and-drop one of your choice onto the workspace.
- The Mixer board at the bottom has changed, allowing you to edit certain aspects of the effect. Left-click one of the attributes such as Volume, hold, and drag the mouse up and down to change the volume of the effect.

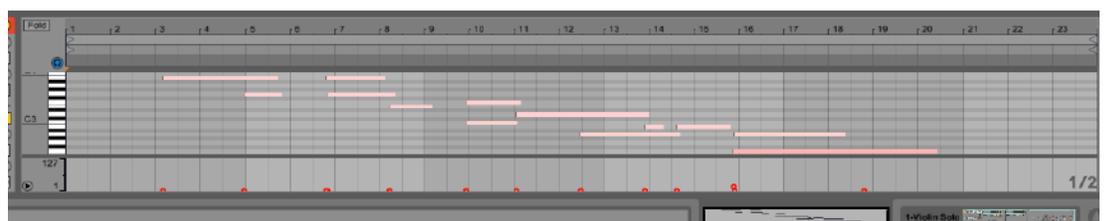


## Editing Notes

- You can edit previously played notes by selecting the **Clip View Selector** at the bottom right corner of the workspace

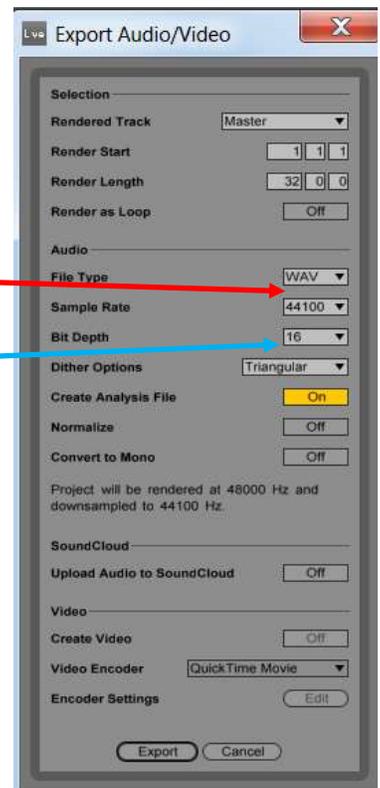


- This will cause the **MIDI Note Editor** to appear and you can click-and-drag the notes to change them.



# Exporting Audio

- Once your composition is complete, select **File > Export Audio/Video**
- Ensure that **File Type** is set to **WAV**
- Ensure that **Bit Depth** is set to **16**
- Select **Export**, name the file, select a location, and select **Save**.



All done!



## Additional Resources:

- **Lynda.com**  
"Ableton Live 9 Essential Training"  
- <https://www.lynda.com>
- **Ableton.com**  
Ableton Live 9 Manual  
- <https://www.ableton.com/en/manual/welcome-to-live/>
- **Youtube.com**  
"The Beginners Guide to Ableton Live 9"  
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFI-WRYUSp8>