



# AKAI MPD218 USB MIDI Controller with 16 MPC Drum Pads User Guide

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# AKAI

**AKAI MPD218 USB MIDI Controller with 16 MPC Drum Pads**



## Introduction

### Box Contents

- MPD218
- USB Cable
- Software Download Cards
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**Important:** Visit [akaipro.com](http://akaipro.com) and find the webpage for MPD218 to download the MPD218 Editor Software and Preset Documentation.

### Support

For the latest information about this product (system requirements, compatibility information, etc.) and product registration, visit: [akaipro.com](http://akaipro.com).

For additional product support, visit: [akaipro.com/support](http://akaipro.com/support).

### Quick Start

1. Use the included USB cable to connect MPD218's USB port to an available USB port on your computer (powered on).
2. On your computer, open your digital audio workstation (DAW).
3. Select MPD218 as the controller in the Preferences, Device Setup, or Options of your DAW.

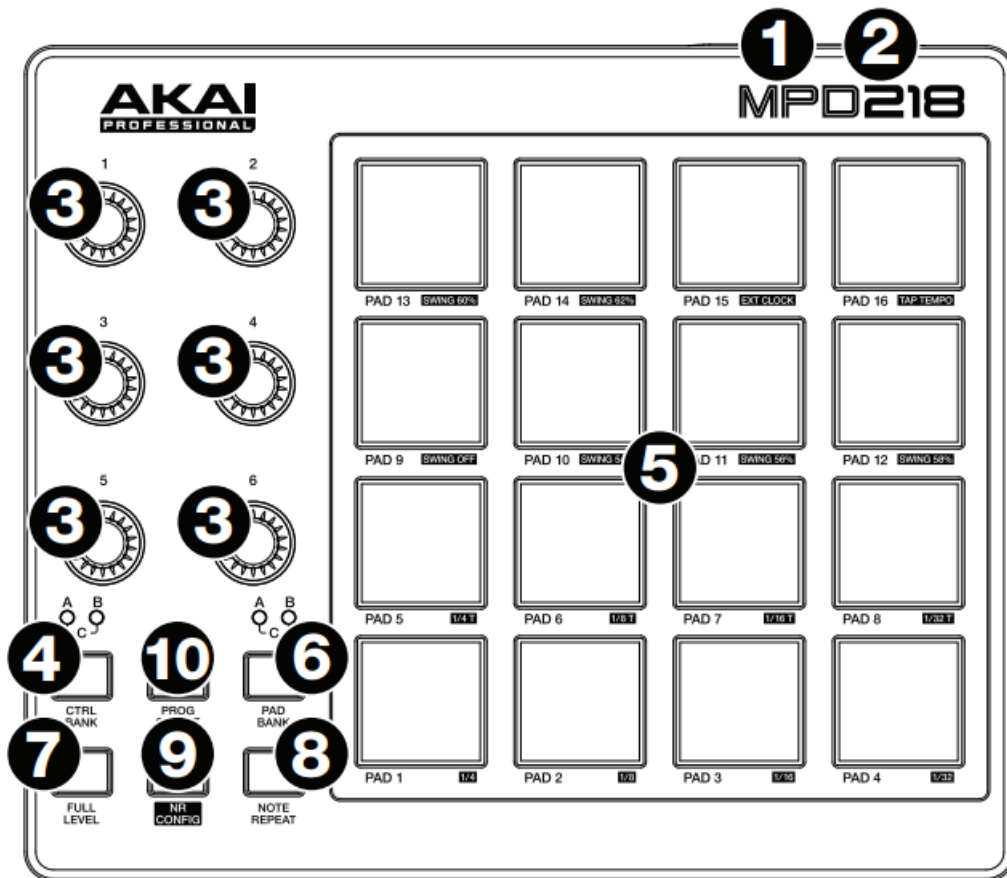
**Tip:** You can use MPD218 with a MIDI-controllable iOS app. To do this:

1. Press and hold the Note Repeat button.
2. Connect your iOS device (powered on) to MPD218's USB port using an Apple iPad Camera Connection Kit

(sold separately).

3. After MPD218 powers on, release the Note Repeat button.

## Features



1. **USB Port:** Use a standard USB cable to connect this USB port to your computer. The computer's USB port provides ample power to MPD218. This connection is also used to send and receive MIDI data to and from your computer.
2. **Kensington®**  
**Lock:** You may use this Kensington lock slot to secure the MPD218 to a table or other surface.
3. **Potentiometers:** Use these 360° knobs to send continuous controller messages to your software or external MIDI device.
4. **Control Bank (Ctrl Bank):** Use this button to select one of three independent banks of potentiometers. This lets you control up to 18 independent parameters.
5. **Pads:** Use these pads to trigger drum hits or other samples in your software or external MIDI sound module. The pads are pressure- and velocity-sensitive, which makes them very responsive and intuitive to play.
6. **Pad Bank:** Use this button to select one of three independent banks of pads. This lets you access up to 48 different pads (16 pads across 3 pad banks).
7. **Full Level:** Press this button to activate Full Level Mode in which the pads always play at a maximum velocity (127), no matter how hard or soft you hit them.
8. **Note Repeat:** Press and hold this button while striking a pad to cause the pad to retrigger at a rate based on the current tempo and Time Division settings.  
**Tip:** You can sync Note Repeat to an internal or external MIDI clock source. See the description for Note Repeat Configuration (NR Config) to learn how to do this.

9. **Note Repeat Configuration (NR Config):** Press this button and then press a pad to select its secondary function (printed next to the pad number).

**Important:** While holding this button, the pads will not send any of their normal MIDI messages.

- **Pads 1–8:** Press one of these pads to determine Time Division, which determines the rate of the Note Repeat feature: quarter notes (1/4), eighth notes (1/8), 16th notes (1/16), or 32nd notes (1/32). On Pads 5–8, the T indicates triplet-based time division.
- **Pads 9–14:** Press one of these pads to select the amount of Swing: Off, 54%, 56%, 58%, 60%, or 62%.
- **Pad 15 (Ext Clock):** Press this pad to set MPD218's clock source (external or internal), which will determine the rate of its time-related features. When lit (external), MPD218 will use your DAW's tempo. When off (internal), MPD218 will use its own tempo, which you can set with Pad 16, which will flash at the current tempo.
- **Pad 16 (Tap Tempo):** Press this pad at the desired rate to enter a new tempo. MPD218 will detect the new tempo after 3 taps. The pad will flash at the current tempo if you hold NR Config and if MPD218 is using its internal clock.

10. **Program Select (Prog Select):** Press and hold this button and then press a pad to select the Program with the same number as the pad. A Program is a pre-mapped layout of pads, which can be useful for specific situations (using a General MIDI drum set or using a specific melodic scale).

**Important:**

While holding this button, the pads will not send any of their normal MIDI messages. Visit [akaipro.com](http://akaipro.com) and find the webpage for MPD218 to download the MPD218 Preset Documentation.

## Technical Specifications

<b>Pads</b>	16 velocity- and pressure-sensitive pads, red-backlit 3 banks accessible via the <b>Pad Bank</b> button
<b>Knobs</b>	6 360° assignable potentiometers 3 banks accessible via the <b>Control Bank</b> button
<b>Buttons</b>	6 buttons
<b>Connections</b>	1 USB port 1 Kensington lock
<b>Power</b>	via USB connection
<b>Dimensions</b> (width x depth x height)	9.4" x 7.9" x 1.6" 23.9 cm x 20.1 cm x 4.1 cm
<b>Weight</b>	1.65 lbs. 0.75 kg

## Trademarks and Licenses

- Akai Professional is a trademark of inMusic Brands, Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries.
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- IOS is a registered trademark of Cisco in the U.S. and other countries and is used under license.

- Kensington and the K & Lock logo are registered trademarks of ACCO Brands.
- All other product or company names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

## FAQs

Is the MPD218 compatible with popular digital audio workstations (DAWs)?

Yes, the MPD218 is compatible with most major DAWs, including Ableton Live, FL Studio, Logic Pro, and more. It can be easily integrated into your music production setup.

Does it come with any software?

Yes, the MPD218 includes free software downloads, such as MPC Beats, which is a powerful beat-making software, as well as a selection of virtual instruments and plugins.

What types of controls does the MPD218 offer besides the drum pads?

In addition to the drum pads, the MPD218 features six control knobs and three control buttons that can be assigned to various MIDI parameters for hands-on control of your music software.

Is the MPD218 bus-powered?

Yes, the MPD218 is bus-powered, which means it can be powered directly via the USB connection to your computer, eliminating the need for an external power source.

How many drum pads does the MPD218 have?

The MPD218 has 16 drum pads in total.

What are MPC-style drum pads?

MPC-style drum pads are velocity-sensitive pads that are known for their responsive and tactile feel, similar to those found on Akai's MPC series drum machines and controllers.

What is the Akai MPD218 USB MIDI Controller?

The Akai MPD218 is a USB MIDI controller designed for music production and beat-making. It features 16 MPC-style drum pads and various controls for MIDI programming.

Can you use the MPD218 for live performances?

Yes, the MPD218 is commonly used for live performances, as its responsive drum pads and assignable controls make it suitable for real-time music production and beat triggering during live shows.

Does it have any built-in sounds or a sound generator?

No, the MPD218 does not have its own sound generator. It relies on your computer or external MIDI instruments and software for generating sounds.

Is the MPD218 portable?

Yes, the MPD218 is a compact and lightweight MIDI controller, making it highly portable and suitable for both studio and on-the-go music production.

Can you program and customize the MIDI assignments of the controls?

Yes, the MPD218 allows you to customize MIDI assignments for the pads, knobs, and buttons, so you can tailor it to your specific workflow and software.

### Video-Introducing MPC Beats



[Download This Manual PDF AKAI MPD218 USB2/MIDI Controller with 16 MPC Drum Pads User Guide USB-MIDI-Controller-2.mp4](#)

### Reference

[AKAI MPD218 USB MIDI Controller with 16 MPC Drum Pads User Guide-Device. report](#)

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### References

- [User Manual](#)