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Roland A-88MK2

Roland A-88MKII 88-Key MIDI Keyboard Controller User Manual

Model: A-88MK2

1. INTRODUCTION

The Roland A-88MKII is an 88-key MIDI keyboard controller designed for musicians and producers. It features a hammer-action keyboard and integrates modern connectivity and control options for studio and live performance environments.

Key features include:

- Unmatched playability with Roland's PHA-4 keyboard.
- Durable construction using wood and premium materials.
- Eight RGB-lit assignable knobs, eight RGB-lit pads, and three pedal inputs.
- Three customizable zones, onboard arpeggiator, and chord memory.
- Thin design suitable for modern studio setups.
- Control application for deep customization and instant recall.
- USB-C connectivity and bus power.
- MIDI 2.0 ready (future update).



Figure 1: Roland A-88MKII 88-Key MIDI Keyboard Controller. This image displays the full view of the Roland A-88MKII, highlighting its 88-key layout, the control panel on the left with RGB-lit knobs and pads, and the overall sleek black design.

2. SETUP

Follow these steps to set up your Roland A-88MKII MIDI Keyboard Controller:

1. **Unpacking:** Carefully remove the controller from its packaging. Retain all packaging materials for future transport or storage.
2. **Placement:** Place the controller on a stable, flat surface. Ensure adequate space for connections at the rear and comfortable playing.
3. **Power Connection:** The A-88MKII can be powered via USB-C bus power. Connect a USB-C cable from the controller to your computer (PC, Mac, or compatible device). If using an external power adapter (sold separately), connect it to the DC IN jack and then to a power outlet.
4. **MIDI Connection:**
 - **USB-C:** For MIDI communication and power, connect the USB-C cable to your computer.
 - **Traditional MIDI:** If connecting to external MIDI hardware, use standard MIDI cables to connect the MIDI OUT port of the A-88MKII to the MIDI IN port of your MIDI device.
5. **Pedal Connection:** Connect sustain, expression, or other compatible pedals to the designated pedal input jacks on the rear panel.
6. **Driver Installation:** For optimal performance, visit the Roland website to download and install the latest drivers for your operating system (PC/Mac). For iOS devices, ensure your device is compatible and has the necessary apps.
7. **Software Configuration:** Open your Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) or music software. Configure the software to recognize the Roland A-88MKII as a MIDI input device. Refer to your software's manual for specific instructions.

3. OPERATING THE CONTROLLER

The A-88MKII offers various controls for expressive performance and deep integration with your music software.

3.1 Keyboard and Playability

The 88-key PHA-4 Standard keyboard provides a realistic piano feel, suitable for a wide range of musical styles. Velocity and aftertouch sensitivity can be adjusted via the control application for personalized response.

3.2 Control Panel

The left-hand control panel features:

- **RGB-lit Assignable Knobs (8):** These knobs can be assigned to control various parameters in your DAW or virtual instruments. The RGB lighting provides visual feedback on their status or assigned function.
- **RGB-lit Pads (8):** These pads are ideal for triggering samples, drums, or clips. They are also assignable and offer visual feedback.
- **Pitch Bend/Modulation Lever:** Standard lever for expressive control over pitch and modulation.
- **Octave Buttons:** Adjust the keyboard's octave range up or down.
- **Zone Buttons:** The controller supports three customizable zones, allowing you to split or layer sounds across the keyboard. Refer to the control application for detailed zone configuration.
- **Arpeggiator:** Activate the onboard arpeggiator to generate rhythmic patterns from held notes. Parameters like tempo, step, and gate time can be adjusted.
- **Chord Memory:** Store and recall chord voicings for quick access during performance or composition.

3.3 Control Application

For advanced customization and management of the A-88MKII, download and install the dedicated control application from the Roland website. This application allows you to:

- Assign MIDI CC messages to knobs and pads.
- Configure keyboard velocity curves and aftertouch response.
- Set up and manage the three customizable zones.
- Save and recall custom setups (scenes) for different projects or performances.
- Update firmware.

4. MAINTENANCE

Proper care will ensure the longevity and optimal performance of your Roland A-88MKII.

- **Cleaning:** Use a soft, dry cloth to wipe the surface of the controller. For stubborn dirt, slightly dampen the cloth with water. Avoid abrasive cleaners, solvents, or waxes, as these can damage the finish.
- **Dust Protection:** When not in use, cover the keyboard with a dust cover to prevent dust and debris from accumulating on the keys and controls.
- **Environmental Conditions:** Avoid exposing the controller to direct sunlight, extreme temperatures, high humidity, or excessive vibrations.
- **Transportation:** If transporting the controller, use appropriate protective cases to prevent physical damage.
- **Cable Management:** Ensure all cables are connected securely and are not under strain. Avoid bending cables sharply.

5. TROUBLESHOOTING

If you encounter issues with your A-88MKII, refer to the following common troubleshooting steps:

- **No Power/No Lights:**
 - Ensure the USB-C cable is securely connected to both the controller and your computer.
 - If using an external power adapter, verify it is correctly connected and the power outlet is functional.
 - Try a different USB-C port or cable.
- **No Sound/MIDI Output:**
 - Check your DAW or music software's MIDI input settings to ensure the A-88MKII is selected as an active input device.
 - Verify that the correct instrument track is armed for recording or receiving MIDI data.
 - Ensure the volume levels in your software and audio interface are appropriately set.
 - If using traditional MIDI, check cable connections and the receiving device's MIDI input settings.
- **Keys or Controls Not Responding:**
 - Restart your computer and the A-88MKII.
 - Ensure the latest drivers are installed.
 - Check for any conflicting software or MIDI routing issues in your DAW.
 - Perform a factory reset if necessary (refer to the control application or Roland support for instructions).

- **Connectivity Issues (USB-C):**

- Try connecting the controller to a different USB-C port on your computer.
- If using a USB hub, try connecting directly to the computer.
- Ensure your operating system is up to date.

If problems persist, consult the Roland support website or contact customer service for further assistance.

6. SPECIFICATIONS

Feature	Detail
Model Name	A-88MK2
Brand	Roland
Number of Keys	88
Keyboard Type	PHA-4 Standard (Progressive Hammer Action with Escapement)
Connectivity Technology	USB-C, MIDI IN/OUT
Hardware Interface	USB Type C
Compatible Devices	PC, Laptop, Tablet, Smartphone (PC/Mac/iOS)
Supported Software	Ableton Live (and other DAWs)
Special Features	RGB-lit controls, Three customizable zones, Onboard arpeggiator, Chord memory, USB-C bus power, MIDI 2.0 ready
Material Type	Wood (for key construction)
Item Weight	35.9 pounds
Product Dimensions	60.39 x 17.48 x 10.83 inches

7. WARRANTY AND SUPPORT

For information regarding the product warranty, please refer to the warranty card included with your purchase or visit the official Roland website. Roland provides customer support and resources, including driver downloads, firmware updates, and FAQs.

Roland Official Website: www.roland.com

For technical assistance or service inquiries, please contact Roland customer support directly.

