

Support Center

[Home](#) › [LIQUID NOTES](#) › [How to write an ideal arrangem...](#)

How to write an ideal arrangement for Liquid Notes.

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This article talks about the track type analysis and the harmonic analysis used in Liquid Notes, and how they expect the input (MIDI file) to be for optimal results.

Quick answer: Liquid Notes expects a 'clean' arrangement that enables it to clearly identify track types for different musical functions and correct separation of notes to perform the harmonic analysis upon.

Writing an arrangement for Liquid Notes

Liquid Notes is built on a sophisticated harmonic analysis that is capable of reading your arrangement like an expert composer does. Methods and techniques are built in to correctly analyze every part of your arrangement, however the machine has only limited capabilities to correct errors by itself - which is different from a human being.

To get the best results from the harmonic analysis with Liquid Notes, please consider the items from the checklist below when writing your arrangement.

Checklist item #1: Ensure a “vertical split”

When you write music, you normally have different instruments or tracks, that each have their “musical functions”: some play the melody, others play percussive parts, some have an accompanying role, and so on. This is also important to Liquid Notes: when you import a MIDI file, it classifies the contained tracks by its musical function into melody, chord, bass, or percussion tracks. The track classification influences the harmonic analysis and also determines how the notes of each track are changed when you make chord substitutions later on.

Therefore, an important rule to get better results with Liquid Notes is to split your arrangement into tracks that you can broadly categorize as being a melody, chord, bass, or percussion track.

To clarify this further, consider first this extreme example of a mixed arrangement:



This “mixed arrangement” contains all notes in a single track. This would be very confusing for Liquid Notes - wouldn't it be for you, too?

Liquid Notes instead likes input that is split up like this:

Isn't this also nicer for you to work with?

Fortunately, when writing music, you'll probably split up your tracks like this anyway, because you'll want different sounds or instruments playing all those different notes. For example, you'll have a synth lead playing your melody, some pads sounding the chord notes, and an electronic bass playing the bass line.

A more likely case could be something like this:

Here, you got strings that also play a short part of the melody starting in the third measure. As mentioned before, Liquid Notes' algorithms can process this better when you have separate chord and melody tracks, so in this case it's also better to split up the tracks:

Checklist item #2: Ensure a “horizontal split”

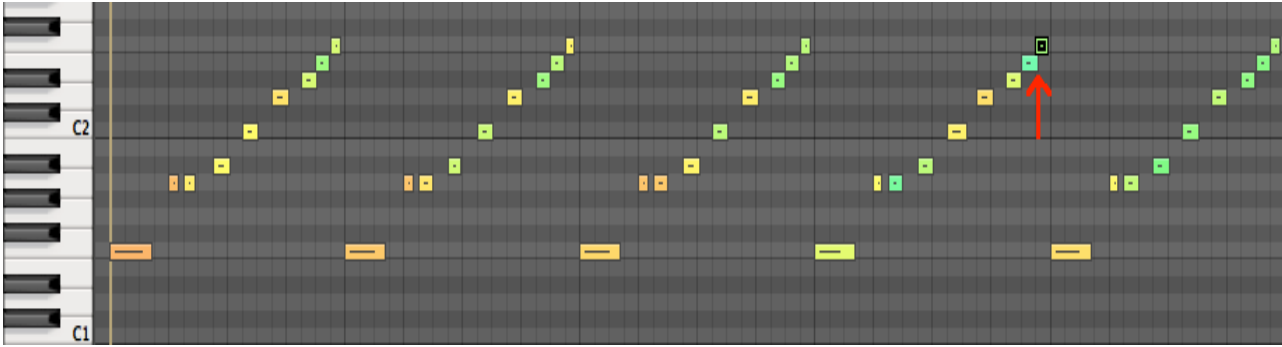
When recording or editing your music in your sequencer, it helps that there are clean boundaries between your chords. In some cases, overlapping chord notes can introduce additional chords in Liquid Notes where you don't want them.

The following is a screen shot from a bass line recorded and edited in Apple Logic Studio:

Notice that in the fourth repetition, the last note overlaps very little onto the first note of the next repetition (see: red arrow). When the entire arrangement is rather complex, it can happen that tiny overlaps like these

cause additional chord boxes in Liquid Notes' editing view, which you probably are not expecting in this case.

To prevent this, ensure that there are clean boundaries - no overlapping notes - between your chords. In the following screen shot, the note in question has been shortened a little bit (see: red arrow):



Checklist item #3: Name your tracks properly

The track names play an important role during track classification. Make sure that your tracks that are melodies don't have "Chords" in their name and vice versa. This would confuse Liquid Notes, leading it to expect chord and melody parts within a track.

Note: The track type analysis will show you its results of classification before performing the harmonic analysis. You may at that point correct any wrong classification there may be.

Further recommended reading

Here are some additional tips with a short description for each item that we highly recommend reading. You may encounter either of these issues when importing a MIDI arrangement / clips into Liquid Notes. Hence, please study each of these articles carefully as it helps you prevent making common mistakes, and makes working with Liquid Notes so much more pleasant.

Click on the highlighted links for the articles to open in a new window:

- **Add a distinct chord track**

Liquid Notes expects a distinct chord track, i.e. a track with a clearly detectable set of chord like notes, in your arrangement or scene. Find information in this article on how to add such a chord track, or mark it as such - <http://re-compose.desk.com/customer/portal/articles/1606825-i-get-an-error-message-%22no-chord-track-found-in-the-arrangement%22-when-opening-a-project->

- **No chords detected in MIDI file**

Liquid Notes expects at least one track containing two overlapping notes on different pitches that outline a harmonic structure which then can be analyzed by its harmonic analysis. Find information in this article add a distinct chord, melody and bass track to your music project for optimal results with the analysis - <http://re-compose.desk.com/customer/portal/articles/1588228-i-get-an-error-message-%22could-not-open-file---no-chords-detected-in-midi-file%22-when-opening-a-project->

- **Combination of chords and melody parts**

Liquid Notes expects chord and melody parts to be split into separate tracks to be able to correctly perform the harmonic analysis (see also above). Find here additional information on splitting tracks into melody and chord parts.

<http://re-compose.desk.com/customer/portal/articles/1590810-i-get-an-error-message-%22the-track-s-of-the-composition-seem-s-to-be-%22-when-opening-a-project->

- **Remove silence at the front of your piece**

Liquid Notes generates a chord box also for notes in your imported MIDI file that don't start with the first measure. Should there be a long phase of silence (pause) at the beginning of your piece this will produce a large chord box at the beginning of your project in Liquid Notes, which is cumbersome to work with. Find information in this article on how to prevent this - <http://re-compose.desk.com/customer/portal/articles/1647649-the-first-chord-box-is-too-large-and-has-mostly-no-midi-events-in-it->

Need Help?

Should you require assistance, reach out to us at support@re-compose.com!

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