midnight music .com.au

How to use the Sibelius Ideas panel

by Katie Wardrobe

www.midnightmusic.com.au

Music technology workshops and online courses for teachers

About Midnight Music: hands-on training and online courses 3
About the Ideas panel 3
What is the Ideas panel? 3
What is an idea? 3
Uses for Ideas 3
Opening the Ideas panel 4
Using Ideas from the provided Library 4
What is the Ideas library? 4
Searching for an Idea 4
Listening to Ideas 4
Pasting an idea into your score 4
Adding an idea into the Ideas panel 5
Editing Idea information 5
Name 6
Tags 6
Colour 6
The detailed view 6
Viewing more information 6
Help! The ideas panel is not displaying the ideas I think it should be! 6
Clearing the search field 6
Accessing your ideas in any score 7
Adding ideas to the general ideas library 7
Creating a "shortlist" of Library ideas 7
Turning off Library access 7
Sharing ideas 8
Score 8
Export 8
Import 8
Contact details 9

About Midnight Music: hands-on training and online courses

Katie Wardrobe is a music technology trainer and consultant with a passion for helping music educators. She runs hands-on workshops and online courses through her business **Midnight Music** and focuses on incorporating technology into the music curriculum through a range of creative projects.

Online courses and workshops include:

- Sibelius Beginner
- Sibelius Advanced
- Sibelius in the Classroom (Projects for students)
- Sibelius Scanning and MIDI Files (coming soon)
- iPads in Music Education
- Interactive Whiteboards in the Music Classroom
- Music Technology for the Terrified
- GarageBand, Acid, Mixcraft, Audacity and more

For more information, visit www.midnightmusic.com.au

Sibelius: Using Ideas

About the Ideas panel

What is the Ideas panel?

The Ideas panel in Sibelius is a fantastic feature with lots of uses. Most people don't even know it exists! The Ideas panel is Sibelius's version of a loop library: a collection of notation "snippets" that you can use in your scores.

Capture an idea in a score you're working on and store it for later. Think of it as a digital manuscript notepad that is always at hand.

What is an idea?

An idea is a musical fragment. Ideas can be one or two notes, or multiple bars in length. An idea can also consist of a single stave, or multiple staves.

Uses for Ideas

You could use the Ideas panel to:

- Keep a compositional scrapbook
- Find a drum pattern to use in your score
- Rebuild a song from a series of short "building blocks"
- Create an accompaniment to a 3- or 4-chord pop song – each chord is provided as an Idea

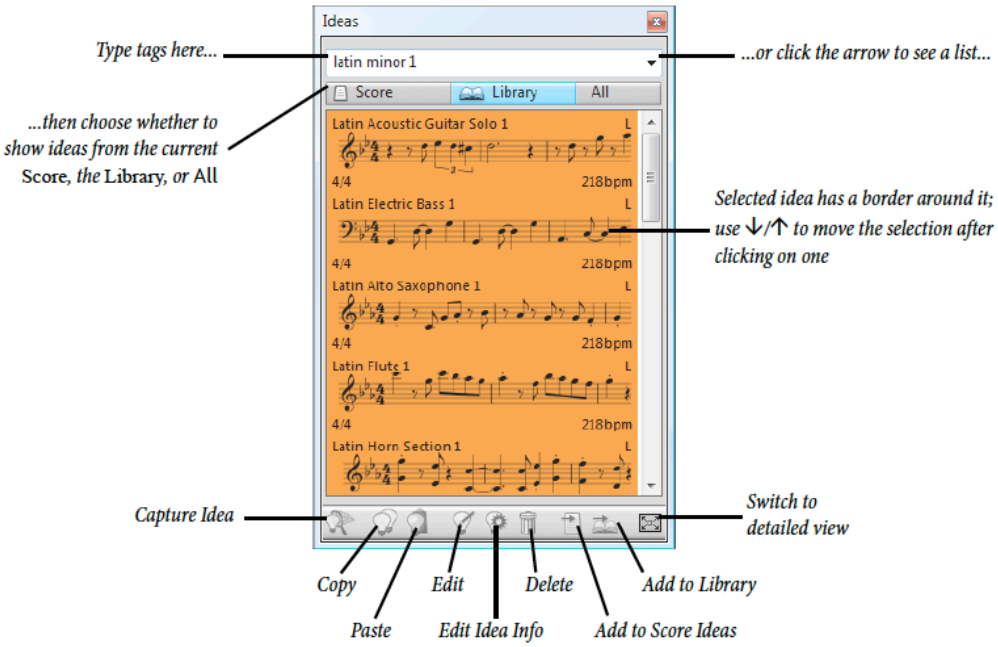
If you're a teacher, you can utilise the Ideas panel to provide students with partially made files to work on. Students can also utilise the Ideas panel by saving compositional snippets for later use in the same score, or in another score altogether.

If you're a composer or arranger, you can use Ideas to keep your best musical ideas at hand, in every score.

Opening the Ideas panel

To open the Ideas panel:

- Sibelius 5 & 6: click on **the light bulb icon** on the right side of the Toolbar (top of the screen)
- Sibelius 7: go to **View > Panels > Ideas**



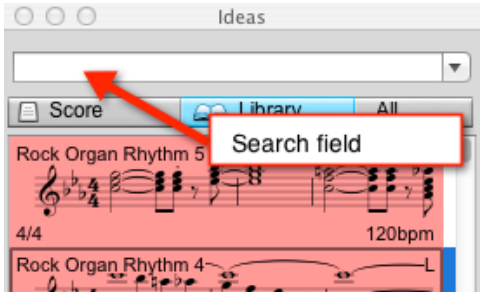
Using Ideas from the provided Library

What is the Ideas library?

Sibelius comes with more than 2000 provided ideas. They cover a range of musical genres and instruments.

Searching for an Idea

To search for an idea to use in your score, type a few search terms ("tags") into the empty box at the top of the Idea panel. You can specify:



- Musical genre (ie. jazz, latin, rock, classical)
- Key (ie. major or minor)
- Instrument (ie. bass, drums, flute)
- Mood (ie. happy, sad)

Once you've typed in a search term (or a few terms), press **Return**

Listening to Ideas

You can "audition" an idea by clicking on it and holding the left mouse button down. The idea may take a moment to start and once it does, it will play as a loop.

Pasting an idea into your score

When you find an idea you like, you can paste it into your score:

- Select the bar or rest in your score where you're like to paste the idea
- Select the idea in the Ideas panel

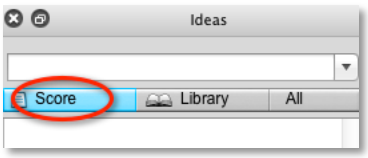
- Click on the Paste idea button at the bottom of the Ideas panel

The Idea will appear in your score and Sibelius will transpose it, adjust the instrument sound

Adding an idea into the Ideas panel

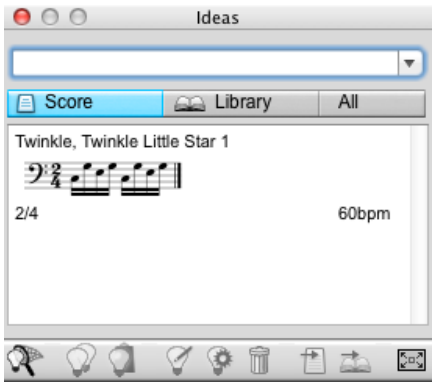
To capture an idea:

- Select some music in your score
- Press **Shift+I**



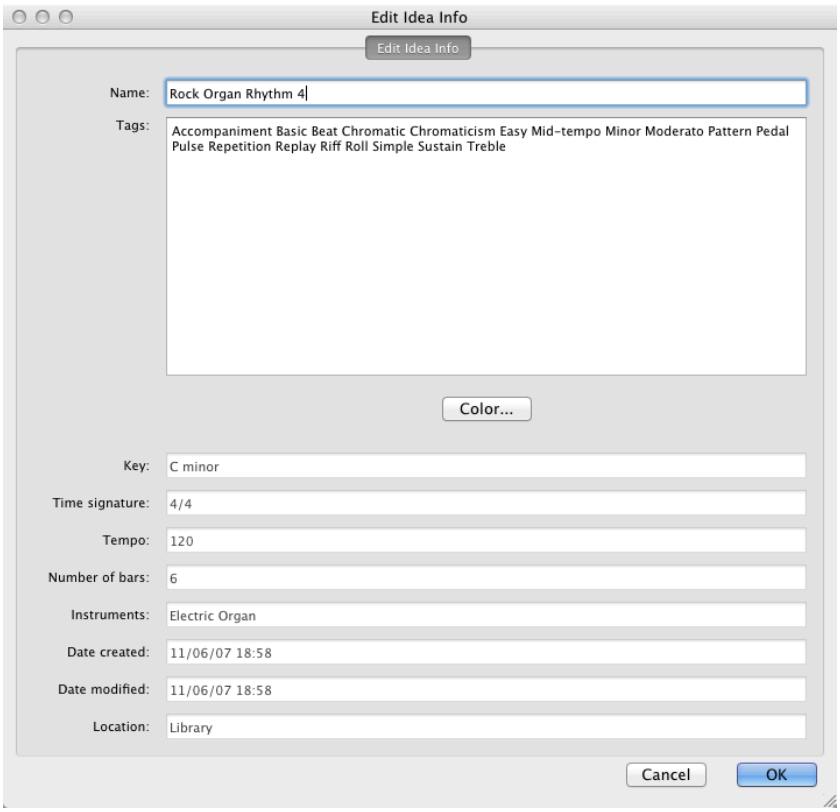
The idea will appear in the list of **Score** ideas. Click on the word **Score** at the top of the Ideas panel to see the idea you just captured.

Sibelius assigns your idea with a name (taken from the file name of the score you're working on) and a number. Both of these can be changed if necessary.



Editing Idea information

To edit the information associated with an idea, select the idea and click on the **Edit Idea Info** button.



Name

Sibelius automatically assigns a title to your idea, but you can edit it if you wish.

Tags

Tags are little pieces of information that you can use to describe each idea. Adding tags allows you to easily find an Idea later on. You might like to tag you ideas with descriptive words such as minor, major, happy, sad, accompaniment, complex, swing, energetic, fill and so on.

Tags should be separated by spaces.

Sibelius automatically tags each idea with some information, including

- Key signature
- Time signature
- Tempo
- Length of the idea, in bars
- Instruments used in the idea
- Creation date
- Modification date
- You can search for ideas

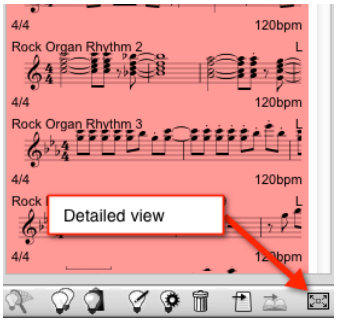
Colour

It can be useful to colour-code ideas. You can colour-code by genre, mood, instrument or form, or by any other grouping you think is appropriate. Click on the **Color** button and choose a colour.

The detailed view

Viewing more information

Click on the **Detailed View** button to see your idea in full, plus extra information at a glance (like number of bars, tempo, key and time signature).



Help! The ideas panel is not displaying the ideas I think it should be!

Clearing the search field

If you have used the search field to find ideas, you'll need to clear it if you want to view the complete list of Score ideas or Library ideas again.

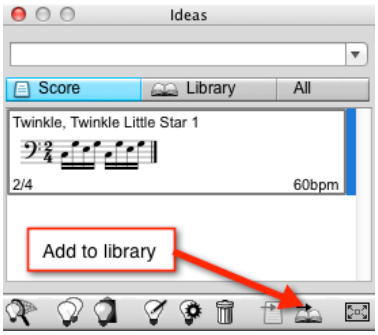
If there's something already entered in the search field, select it and press **Delete**. Then press **Return** to clear it completely. Even if it doesn't look as though there's anything in the search field, placing the cursor in the search box and pressing **Return** can help to clear it once and for all.

Accessing your ideas in any score

Adding ideas to the general ideas library

If you want to be able to access an idea in any score, you will need to add it to the Library:

- Select an idea in the **Score** ideas list
- Click on the **Add to library** button



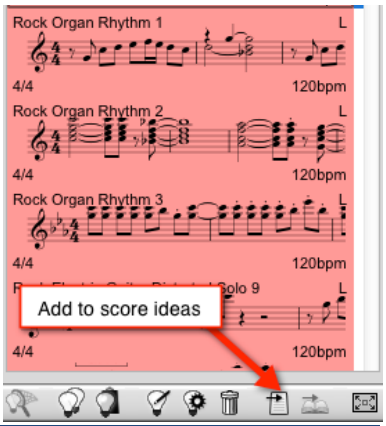
Creating a "shortlist" of Library ideas

Sometimes you might want to give students access to a *few* ideas from Sibelius's library, but not necessarily to the entire collection of 2000 ideas.

Create a shortlist of ideas as follows:

- Type a musical genre into the search field (ie. Latin)
- Audition the ideas and when you find one you want to include on your shortlist, select it and click the **Add to score ideas** button. Sibelius will move a copy of the idea across to the Score ideas collection
- Repeat for any other ideas you want to include in the shortlist

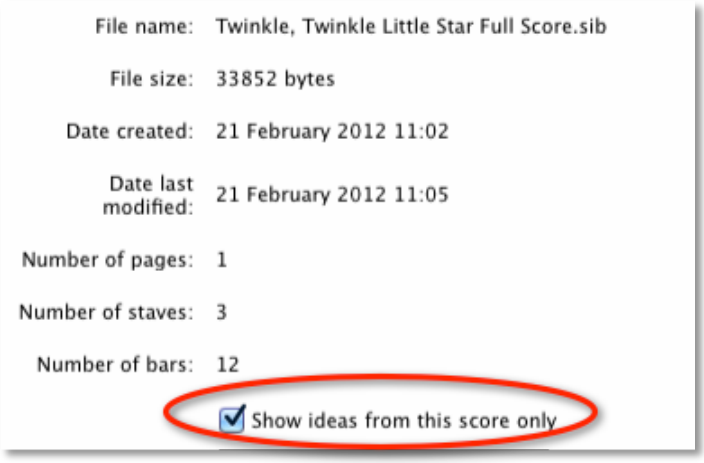
When you have completed your shortlist, you may want to disable access to the full library of ideas (see below).



Turning off Library access

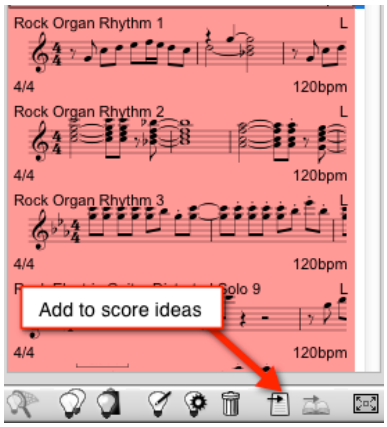
You can limit access to Ideas from the current score only (so that students can't access Sibelius's library of Ideas):

- Sibelius 5 & 6: go to **File > Score Info** and click on the **Ideas** tab
- Sibelius 7: go to **File > Info**
- Check the **Show ideas from this score only** box



Sharing ideas

Score



The simplest way to share ideas is to save the ideas in a score and then distribute that score.

You'll need to ensure that the ideas appear in the list of **Score Ideas** in the ideas panel, so if you want to include any of the ideas that currently live in the Library, first move them across to the Score ideas list:

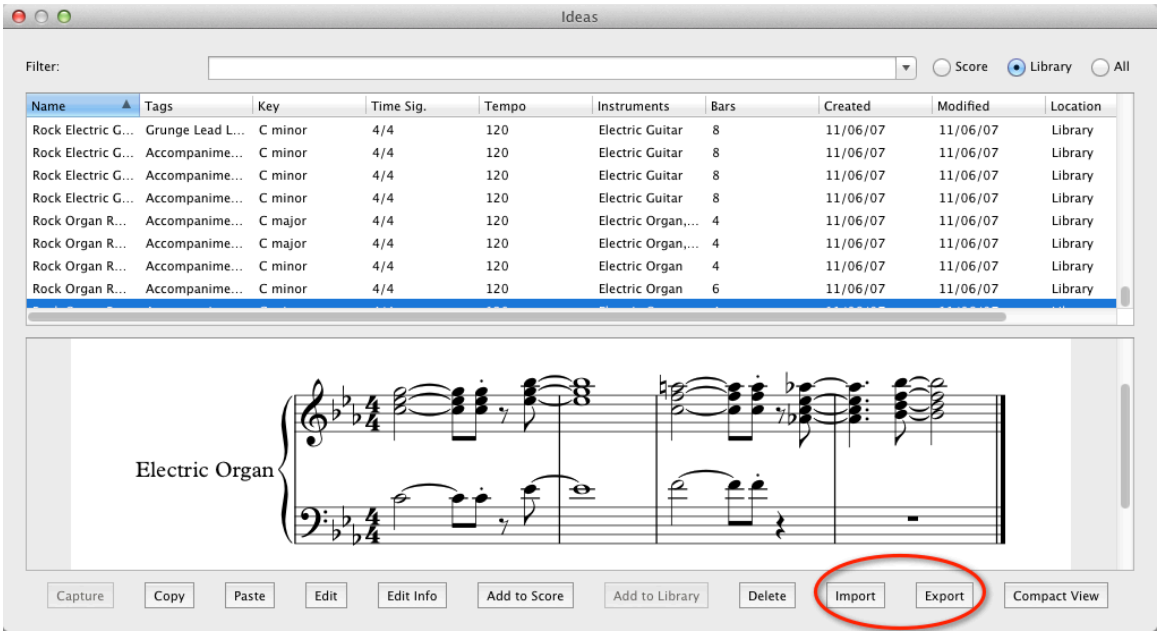
- Select the idea in the Library
- Click the **Add to Score** button
- Repeat for each idea you want to save in the score

Export

Alternatively, you can export a selection of ideas from a score, which can then be imported into a different score.

To export a selection of ideas:

- Switch to **Detailed** view
- Select the ideas you want to export – Shift-click to select a continuous range of ideas in the list, or Ctrl-click (Command-click) to select multiple individual ideas
- Click the Export button at the bottom of the window
- Give the collection a filename and choose the location to save it to
- You will end up with a **.ideas** file



Import

To import ideas into your library:

- First make sure you're in **Detailed** view

- Click the **Import** button
- Locate the **.ideas** file you wish to import
- A dialog will appear asking you to specify whether the ideas should be added to the Library or just to the score you have open

Contact details

- Face-to-face training (Australia)
- Online music technology courses

Email: katie@midnightmusic.com.au
Website: www.midnightmusic.com.au
Facebook: www.facebook.com/midnightmusic
Twitter: www.twitter.com/katiesw1