The Fantom-X Experience

No. 1 in the Fantom-X Workshop Series
About the Fantom-X Workshop Series

The Fantom-X Workshop Series is a collection of booklets describing how to get the most out of some of the exciting features of the Roland Fantom-X family of products. Much of what's discussed in the series also applies to the Fantom-S keyboard and, to a lesser degree, the original Fantom.

Each booklet covers a single topic, with easy-to-follow explanations, procedures and illustrations. Have fun learning to master the Fantom-X in convenient bite-sized pieces.

Other Booklets in the Fantom-X Workshop Series

- The Sounds of the Fantom-X—A tour of the Fantom-X sounds in Patch mode.
- The Rhythms of the Fantom-X—Exploring the pads, drum sounds and rhythms of the Fantom-X.
- The Fantom-X Effects—This booklet helps you get the most out the powerful effects processing in the Fantom-X.
- Recording Music on the Fantom-X—Learn how to record your music in the Fantom-X’s full-featured sequencer.
- Sampling on the Fantom-X—Capture loops, vocals, noises or any other sound with the Fantom-X's advanced sampling capabilities.
- Smart Storage in the Fantom-X—Learn all about the Fantom-X’s storage options for samples and other data.
- Performing with the Fantom-X—Splits, layers, realtime controllers and more make the Fantom-X hot onstage.
- Making a CD of Your Fantom-X Music—Learn how to turn your Fantom-X music into a final audio CD.
- Advanced Fantom-X Recording Techniques—Learn how to use time-based effects, record arpeggios, work with mastering effects and record realtime patch tweaks.

About This Booklet

One of the best things about the Fantom-X is the inspiring way in which all of its elements come together to make the creative process such a complete musical experience.

While each of the other booklets in the series covers one area in depth, we felt there had to be one that brought all of the pieces together. That’s what this booklet is about.

Understanding the Symbols in This Booklet

Throughout this booklet, you'll come across information that deserves special attention—that’s the reason it includes one of the following symbols.

- A note is something that adds information about the topic at hand.
- A tip offers suggestions for using the feature being discussed.
- Warnings contain important information that can help you avoid possible damage to your equipment or yourself.
Getting Ready

You’ll want to listen to the Fantom-X as you go through this booklet, so plug a pair of headphones into the Fantom-X PHONES jack—you’ll need headphones with a 1/4” plug—or connect the Fantom-X's A (MIX) L (MONO) and R outputs to the left and right inputs, respectively, of your mixer or other monitoring system.

For more about connecting the Fantom-X to headphones or your audio system, see your Fantom-X Owner's Manual.

You’ll also need to connect the Fantom-X to a grounded AC power source using the supplied power cord, and then turn the Fantom-X on, of course.

Patch Mode

Press PATCH/RHYTHM. The Fantom-X display looks like this:

We’re referring to a patch as simply a “sound” here so as not to get too caught up in tech details for now. However, a patch can actually be an amazingly complex, multi-faceted thing. To learn more about patches, check out The Sounds of the Fantom-X booklet in the Workshop series.

The Fantom-X also has a Performance mode, designed for working with multiple patches at the same time, and for recording.

If you’ve already stored some of your own patches in the Fantom-X, the patch name you see may be different that the one shown here.

The Basic Fantom-X Tools

Let’s take a moment to get comfortable with the display and the controls you’ll use to get around on the Fantom-X.

The Fantom-X’s Color Display

The display is your window into all Fantom-X operations, providing information and constant visual feedback.

The F Buttons

Beneath the display are eight “F buttons,” labeled “F1-F8.” The buttons interact with what’s on the display, so their functions change depending on what you’re up to. Each F button’s current job is shown on the display directly above the button.

In the Workshop series, when we refer to an F button, we put its current function in parentheses, as in “F1 (Patch List).”
The Cursor Buttons and the VALUE Dial

Many Fantom-X displays contain multiple settings, each of which is called a “parameter.” Before you can change a parameter’s value, you must select it. When a parameter is selected, it’s highlighted, as shown here.

Right now, the patch number “001” is highlighted in blue, and therefore selected.

To select a parameter and change its value:
1. Press the appropriate CURSOR button until the parameter is highlighted.
2. Turn the VALUE dial to choose the desired value.

The VALUE dial

We’ll see how these controls work together in a little while.

The Keyboard and Pads

In a sense, the Fantom-X is like two instruments in one: a synthesizer and a drum machine, and both of these instruments are always available. At any time you can:
- play a patch on the keys.
- play a rhythm set on the drum pads.

(If you’ve had your Fantom-X for much more than a few seconds, you’ve probably already discovered this.)

In Patch mode, the keyboard typically plays a single patch up and down its entire length. The pads, on the other hand, typically play a “rhythm set.” A rhythm set is a special type of patch in which each pad plays its own sound.

If you want, you can play a rhythm set on the keyboard—so that each key plays a different drum or percussion sound—or play a normal patch on the pads—so that the same sound plays on all pads, at different pitches.

Selecting Patches and Rhythm Sets

To Select a Patch for the Fantom-X Keyboard

1. Press F7 (Part Kbd) so “Kbd” turns light blue on the display, if it isn’t already.

Nothing changes when you press F7 if the keyboard part was already selected. In real-world keyboard patch selection, though, the process begins with this button-press.

2. Press F1 (Patch List). The Patch List display appears, as shown on the next page.
3. Press F2 (↓) and/or F1 (↑) to display the type of patch you’d like to select.
4. Turn the VALUE dial to select the desired patch.
5. Press F8 (Select) to confirm your choice.

You can also select patches according to the memory locations in which they’re stored. See the Fantom-X Owner’s Manual to learn more.

For the purposes of this booklet, select the Soft Pad category and Patch USER: 022, named “Motion Pad,” before proceeding.

### To Select a Rhythm Set for the Fantom-X Pads

1. Press F8 (Part Pad) so “Pad” turns light blue on the display.
3. Press F2 (↓) and/or F1 (↑) to display the desired rhythm set bank.
4. Turn the VALUE dial to select the desired rhythm set.
5. Press F8 (Select) to confirm your choice.

For the purposes of this booklet, select the User bank and Rhythm Set USER: 001, named “StudioX Kit1,” before proceeding.

### A Brief Realtime Detour

The current patch, “Motion Pad” responds in interesting ways to the Fantom-X’s realtime controllers. Press F7 (Kbd) and play the keyboard:

- Push the modulation lever located to the left of the keyboard forward, and then release it to hear how vibrato can be added to the sound, and then removed.
- Press ASSIGNABLE beneath the D Beam so it lights, and move your hand up and down over the D Beam to hear what it does to the pitch of the patch’s various elements.
- In the REALTIME CONTROLLERS area, press the button beneath “ASSIGNABLE” repeatedly until the ASSIGNABLE LED lights. Turn the four REALTIME CONTROL knobs as you play—hear how each changes the sound in some way.

The Fantom-X offers extensive realtime manipulation of its sounds. For more, see your Fantom-X Owner’s Manual and the Performing with the Fantom-X booklet in the Workshop series.

When you press the D Beam’s and REALTIME CONTROL knobs’ ASSIGNABLE buttons, the display shows you what the realtime controls are currently programmed to do.
Meet the Beats

The Fantom-X contains a full-featured drum machine, perfect for jamming and songwriting.

1. Press RHYTHM so it lights.

You’ve turned on the Fantom-X’s built-in beat box.

2. Notice how the top two rows of pads are now dark, while the other pads remain lit.

When a pad is lit, it plays a drum or percussion sound.

So, why have Pads 9-16 gone dark? When a pad goes dark, it’s set to play a rhythm pattern.

3. Hit Pad 9—its pattern plays and Pad 9 flashes.

The harder you strike a pad, the louder its rhythm plays.

4. Now strike other unlit pads to hear different patterns.

Rhythm groups allow you to assemble collections of rhythm patterns.

There are built-in rhythm groups and you can create your own, as described in the Workshop series booklet *The Rhythms of the Fantom-X*.

5. Note how the Fantom-X switches between patterns without losing the beat. Mix and match patterns to create your own rhythm arrangements.

6. Find a pattern you like and let it play.

You can press the TEMPO button and turn the VALUE dial to change the rhythm pattern’s tempo if you like. Press F8 (Close) when you’re done.

7. Play along with the pattern on the keyboard. This isn’t just fun—it’s also often a great way to start writing a song.

We’ll leave the rhythm playing for now. However, when you want to stop a rhythm, press RHYTHM again so it’s not lit.

10. Jam a bit to find something you’d like to record. If you’d like to select a different patch, press F1 (Patch List) and do so, as described earlier.

Clearing the Demo Song

When you first purchase the Fantom-X, its demo song loads automatically. To clear it from song memory so you record your own song in the next section of this booklet:

1. Press SONG EDIT.
2. Press F3 (Song Clear) and then F8 (Exec).

You can set the Fantom-X so it doesn’t automatically load the demo at startup. See Page 234 of the *Fantom-X Owner’s Manual*.

Recording a New Idea

The Fantom-X is always ready to record when inspiration strikes. It’s designed to let you record a new idea fast.

1. Press REC, for “RECORD.”

All of the recording-related buttons are grouped together on the Fantom-X panel.
The Realtime Rec Standby window pops open and the Fantom-X metronome starts playing.

You may or may not be able to hear the metronome, depending on how loud your rhythm is. It’s not important in our tutorial, but the metronome’s handy when you’re not playing along with a rhythm. (You can also disable it if you prefer, as described in the Fantom-X Owner’s Manual.)

The parameters in the Realtime Rec Standby window allow you to customize your recording session in a variety of ways. These parameters are described in the Workshop series booklet Recording Music on the Fantom-X.

The Count In parameter is set to 1 MEAS—for “one measure”—so when we proceed to Step 2, you’ll hear four beats of the rhythm pattern go by before you should start playing. At the fifth beat, perform your idea. Ready?

2. Hit PLAY, located just to the left of the REC button. The Realtime Recording window opens.

At Beat 5, you’re on.

3. Once you’ve played the idea, press STOP. That’s it—you’ve recorded your playing.

4. Press RHYTHM to turn off the rhythm pattern.

5. Press RESET, and then PLAY to hear your idea.

We didn’t want to distract you earlier, but when the Realtime Recording window is open, you can rehearse without recording. Once you’ve made a recording, tools in this window also allow you to erase notes and other things in realtime, and re-record, or “punch in,” anything you’d like to fix. These tools are described in the Workshop series booklet Recording Music on the Fantom-X.

## Undoing Your Work

If you’d like to start over again, you can “undo” your recording.

1. Press MENU—a menu pops open in which UNDO/REDO is already selected.

2. Press ENTER.

3. Press F8 (Exec) to complete the Undo procedure.

4. Now that you’re back to Square One, press RHYTHM and hit the desired pad to resume playback of your rhythm pattern, and then repeat the steps in the previous section of this booklet.
About Recording on the Fantom-X

The Fantom-X records your playing in its “sequencer.” A sequencer captures MIDI data that the keyboard and rhythm section produce. When it plays back this data, your performance is reproduced.

The sequencer doesn’t actually record audio—it records MIDI data, instructions that tell the Fantom-X how to recreate your performance. You can do all sorts of things to refine your music by editing this captured MIDI data. You can fix the timing of your performances, add or remove notes, and much more.

While the Fantom-X sequencer doesn’t record audio, its sampler certainly does, as we’ll see later.

Once you’ve recorded something, you can move over to the sequencing area to add more instrumentation, or even sampled vocals. See the Workshop Series’ Recording Music on the Fantom-X to learn more.

The Arpeggiator

The Fantom-X’s built-in arpeggiator produces repeating note patterns called “arpeggios.” These repeating lines can provide the basis for dance grooves, or supply texturing to any other kind of music. The arpeggiator is also great for producing automatically-generated, smart bass lines for any chord.

Before we check out the arpeggiator, turn VALUE to select User: 001 UltimateGrand again.

1. Press ARPEGGIO so it lights.

2. Hold down a handful of notes on the keyboard—listen to how the arpeggiator takes the notes you’re playing and uses them in the currently selected arpeggio.

3. Let go of the keys.

4. Hold down SHIFT and press ARPEGGIO to display the Arpeggiator editing screen.

On this screen, you can select a different arpeggio—referred to as a “style”—or even create your own.

5. If the Style parameter isn’t highlighted, press ▲ until it is.

6. Hold down some notes on the keyboard with one hand.

7. While you’re holding down the notes, turn the VALUE dial to select different arpeggio styles. Listen to how they can do many different things with the same notes.

8. When you’re done experimenting, press ARPEGGIO once more to turn off the arpeggiator.

The arpeggiator uses the same tempo as the Fantom-X rhythm patterns and sequencer, so when you use the sequencer, rhythms and the arpeggiator together, they automatically stay perfectly in time with each other.

To learn about using the arpeggiator with the Fantom-X sequencer, check out the Advanced Fantom-X Recording Techniques Workshop series booklet.
Skip Back Sampling

As you probably know, the Fantom-X contains a powerful sampler. What you may not know is that it’s always listening to what you do on the Fantom-X.

This means that you never need lose a sudden flash of musical brilliance again. When you’ve just played something unexpected and great, the Fantom-X’s powerful Skip Back Sampling can easily retrieve it for you as a new sample.

1. Select a patch you’d like to play.
2. Play anything you like on the keyboard, for about 10 seconds.
3. Press the blue SKIP BACK SAMPLING button. The Fantom-X goes back in time and creates a new sample from the last 10 seconds of your playing.

Skip Back Sampling can be pre-set to grab anywhere from the last 5 to 40 seconds of music. 10 seconds is the default setting.

4. When the Fantom-X has captured your sample, it displays the Assign to Pad screen on which you can select a pad for playing the newly captured sample.

To automatically keep the sample’s tempo in time with rhythms, arpeggios and the sequencer, press F1 (Tempo Sync) so it lights red.

5. You can select any pad by striking it or by pressing ‹, ‚, ‟ or † to highlight the pad onscreen—the currently selected pad turns orange on the display.

Strike a pad to preview what’s currently assigned to it—this’ll help you quickly find the pad you want to use.

7. Once you’ve picked out a pad, press F8 (Exec)—the Fantom-X asks if you’re sure you want to proceed.
8. Press F8 (Exec) again to finish assigning the new sample to the selected pad. Once the process is complete, the Fantom-X takes you to the Sample Edit screen in case you want to refine the sample by editing it.
If you’ve turned on Tempo Sync, press F2 (Sample Param) and set the sample’s original tempo, or “BPM.”

9. Strike and hold down the pad you selected in Step 5 to hear the new sample.

You can work with the sample just as you would any other Fantom-X sample: playing it, or even using it as the basis for a song.

Check out the Sampling on the Fantom-X Workshop series booklet to learn more about sampling.

Skip Back sampling captures not only the sound produced by keyboard, but your rhythms and arpeggios as well.

To avoid losing a sample when you turn off the Fantom-X, you must save it. To learn how to save a sample, see the Workshop series’ Sampling on the Fantom-X.

The End

We hope you’ve enjoyed this brief tour of the Fantom-X. Check out the other Workshop series booklets, as well your Fantom-X Handbook and Owner’s Manual. We’re confident you’ll have a great time with the powerful, inspiring Fantom-X.

For the latest Fantom-X updates and support tools, visit the Roland U.S. Web site at www.RolandUS.com. If you need personal assistance, call our amazing Product Support team at 323-890-3745.