

Submersible Music PC MAC

KitCore Deluxe 2 \$125



Distinctive drum beats based on real drum performances, and all without breaking the bank? Sounds good to us!

> Submersible produce two distinct products: DrumCore and KitCore. The latter is the simpler of the two and is now at v2, which is a free upgrade for v1 users, and, as before, comes in regular and Deluxe versions. We're reviewing Deluxe, which includes over 100 drum kits and more than 3000 MIDI files. The regular edition has eight kits and 400+ MIDI files, so given the \$50 price difference, Deluxe is a no-brainer.

KitCore is a plug-in-only instrument requiring a VST, RTAS or AU host. Submersible call it a "MIDI drum instrument and groove library", which should give you an idea of where its emphasis lies. Unlike some virtual drum instruments, you won't find a self-contained kit production environment with EQ, compression and editable features for all the sounds. In fact, for each of the 48 pads (24 drums and 24 percussion), you simply get volume, pan and pitch parameters. However, what you do get is a massive selection of recorded grooves and beats performed by 13 drum and percussion luminaries, including big names like Matt Sorum, Michael Shrieve, Terry Bozzio, Luis Conte and Sly Dunbar, with complete kits to match. You can also buy further KitPacks to expand your library.

Get your groove on

You can buy KitCore and use it simply as a sample playback device, and, because it's General MIDI compatible, it's easy to use with drum editors and external controllers. However, that would require you to program your parts from scratch, and the real joy here comes from the included MIDI patterns. Crucially, you drag these as MIDI clips into your host software, so there's no frustrating learning curve.

New in v2 is a groove browser, so you can run your existing track and audition patterns in sync. These are arranged by style and drummer, with further subcategory filters, eg, Straight 16ths. You can also queue playback, so a loop plays out in full before the next one kicks off.



Although onboard mixing options are limited, you can route sounds to specific outputs, which, depending on how your host copes with multi-out instruments, gives you more freedom. The downside is that there's no control over the kit sounds themselves, which already include room ambience as part of the samples.

One final element (and new for v2) is the LiveDrummer parameter. This affects the way KitCore responds to MIDI velocities, and the simple plus/minus slider alters the dynamics of the performance. In use, we found it was more marked with some kits and patterns than others.

Overall, KitCore Deluxe offers a different experience to other drum kit plug-ins, enabling quick beat creation, courtesy of its many drummer-sourced patterns. At times, its limitations may annoy you, but there's always the more full-featured DrumCore if you need greater flexibility and more options but with the same kind of authentic drummer-sourced content. However, for simplicity, KitCore is hard to beat and is excellent value for money. **cm**

Contact www.submersiblemusic.com
Info Download version, \$99

System requirements

PC 800MHz CPU, 512MB RAM, 3GB HD space, Windows XP/Vista, VST/RTAS host

Mac 400MHz CPU, 512MB RAM, 3GB HD space, OS X 10.3, AU/VST/RTAS host

Test system

Mac Apple Mac Pro dual 3GHz, 3GB RAM, OS X 10.5.5, Logic Pro 8

Alternatively

Toontrack EZdrummer cm102 >> 9/10 >> £109
Expandable drum kit plug-in with 8000+ MIDI files and virtual mixer

Steinberg Groove Agent 3 cm119 >> 7/10 >> £215
Style-specific patterns and a simple but powerful interface

Verdict

For Easy to use
Beats and kits from pro drummers
Expandable
Very affordable
Easy on CPU and drive space

Against Limited sonic flexibility
Can't import/browse user MIDI loops
No import of own kit sounds

It's not for control freaks, but for no-nonsense, quality beats on tap, KitCore Deluxe is right on the money

8/10

KitCore vs DrumCore

KitCore is a MIDI-based system, and although its sampled kits and MIDI rhythms are sourced from famous drummers, it's not quite the same as using fully sampled loops.

Even so, because you drag the MIDI loops into your host software, there's enormous flexibility for modifying them while retaining the fundamental features that made you pick them in the first place. Operationally, it runs as a plug-in instrument within a host application,

making integration very easy.

DrumCore, on the other hand, includes all the MIDI loops and kits of KitCore, but is really all about genuine audio kit loops, sampled at incremental tempos. It also enables you to import your own WAV or AIFF kit samples and MIDI loops. The latest version, DrumCore 3, is imminent, and perhaps the most vital new feature is RTAS/AU/VST support - previously, DrumCore was a standalone ReWireable app only.