

Ultra-Thin Bluetooth / USB MIDI Controller Keyboard

Ukey^{Air} 25/37

Quick Start Guide

artesia^{PRO}

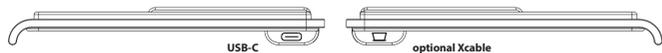


Introduction

Congratulations on your purchase of **Xkey Air 25/37**, a professional ultra-thin USB and Bluetooth MIDI controller keyboard with polyphonic aftertouch for Mac, PC and mobile devices that provides everything you need to control software synthesizers, DAWs / sequencing software, notation software, other MIDI equipment and much more, wherever you go! **Xkey Air** comes as a 25-key or 37-key version and it works as a standard class compliant wired USB MIDI controller using the included cable or fully wireless and operated from the integrated battery with Bluetooth.

Getting Started

To start using **Xkey Air 25/37**, it can be a good idea to connect it via cable first. Connect it to your computer using the included USB cable. The USB-C port of **Xkey Air 25/37** is located on the right under the keys. This is important also to charge the internal battery of **Xkey Air 25/37** since it always does that when it is connected via USB cable.



No drivers are required (plug-and-play). This powers the keyboard and is used to transfer MIDI data to your computer. For the default and more common USB connector ("type A"), a cable is included. For "type C" a different cable or adapter is needed (not included). You will also need an adapter if you want to connect **Xkey Air 25/37** to a phone or tablet via a cable, although this where you'd typically will use. For instance, some Apple devices that do not yet have USB-C connectors, require the Apple Lightning to USB 3 Camera Connector while some Anroid devices require a so-called "USB OTG" adapter. Please double check the manual of your phone

or tablet on how to connect USB accessories if you are unsure or contact our technical support.

Please note that this document covers the setup and the various built-in functions. It is not intended to be an introduction to MIDI. If you are new to MIDI, a good start is usually the manual of your DAW or notation or sequencing software. In addition there are a lot of details about MIDI online, i.e. a good technical resource and great starting point is www.midi.org and various online forums and user groups.

Bluetooth Connection

When you have verified that **Xkey Air 25/37** works well using a cable connection, you can also start linking it via Bluetooth to your devices. In Bluetooth mode **Xkey Air** works best with devices such as iPhone or iPad as well as Mac computers with macOS. You can also connect it to Windows PCs, but there optional third party drivers like the Korg BLE-MIDI driver and/or the optional Bluetooth receiver dongles CME WIDI BUD / CME WIDI BUD Pro that would be recommended to ensure stable operation and full integration into your software and apps.

Using it with iPad or iPhone, you can pair it directly from within Bluetooth MIDI enabled apps like GarageBand or our Xkey Plus utility. Simply go to the device settings, select pair and push the connect button on the backside of **Xkey Air 25/37**.

With macOS, you need to launch the *Audio MIDI Setup* utility that is in your *Applications > Utilities* folder. In the *MIDI Studio* section is a small Bluetooth icon in the upper right corner that allows you to find and connect Bluetooth MIDI devices like **Xkey Air 25/37**. Simply turn on the keyboard and push the connect button on the backside. macOS will now always remember your **Xkey** and you

can use it all MIDI compatible software. To remove the connection, you can delete it from the list of Bluetooth devices in the *System Configuration > Bluetooth* settings.

With Windows, you can also link **Xkey Air** as a Bluetooth device in the *Bluetooth Device* list panel (Windows 10 and 11). To find it, start typing Bluetooth in the search field of Windows. However, even though this connection has been made, most MIDI software will not yet be able to use **Xkey Air** now. To solve this issue, it is best to install a third party driver like the Korg BLE-MIDI driver that you can easily find online. It is also possible to have a more permanent connection via CME WIDI BUD or CME WIDI BUD Pro.

Software

Since **Xkey Air 25/37** is MIDI controller that only sends MIDI data such as "Note On", "Note Off", "Pitch", "Velocity", etc., it cannot generate any sounds on its own. The sounds will be created by the software running on your Mac, PC or mobile device, usually so-called virtual instruments. The important information is that **Xkey Air 25/37** works with every common and major MIDI compatible software - if your app understands MIDI, it will work with **Xkey**!

Under Windows, macOS or Linux, **Bitwig Studio 8-Track** is a very powerful DAW that not only supports MIDI and virtual instruments but can be the center of a professional recording studio. With iOS (iPad / iPhone), **Cubasis LE** from Steinberg or Garage Band from Apple are just two of many powerful MIDI applications. For Windows, macOS and iPad we also provide a powerful editor software **Xkey Plus** that is strongly recommended to be used since it allows changing of various settings such as the velocity and aftertouch curve or to check the **Xkey** status and update the firmware. It is available for download via <http://en.esi.ms/133>.

Frequent Topics

One of the most common topics in our technical support, especially with Windows users, is the issue of latency, i.e. the delay between hitting a key and hearing sound. Please note that this latency is not caused by **Xkey Air 25/37**, but by your audio interface / soundcard and its driver. Any virtual instrument software generates the sound after you touch one of the **Xkey** keys. This sound is then sent out through your audio interface or sound card and that can cause a delay that is sometimes too high to play in realtime. The best solution to achieve low latency is to use a professional quality audio interface with low-latency drivers and to make sure the virtual instrument and DAW is correctly setup. Latency is also an issue when using Bluetooth, at least that is a common thought. However, the Bluetooth MIDI protocol used by **Xkey** is, unlike Bluetooth audio connections, able to provide such low latencies that is actually a non-issue. If you are not sure about and of this, please contact our technical support.

Another frequent topic is that you cannot hear any sound when using **Xkey Air 25/37**. As it does not generate the sound by itself, a virtual instrument or DAW with synthesizer plugin or any other app that supports MIDI and plays sounds is required. Above are some suggestions on what to use, however since **Xkey** works with any MIDI compatible app, the options are virtually endless. Please use our online support resources if you are unsure or contact our technical support describing what you want to do.

Main Functions

Xkey Air 25/37 does not only have (based on the model) 25 or 37 full-sized fully velocity sensitive keys with polyphonic aftertouch, it also provides function buttons on the left that provide important controls:

OCTAVE +

The **OCTAVE +** and **OCTAVE -** buttons allow you to move the octave range played by the 25 / 37 keys up or down. If you press the minus button, all sounds will be played one octave lower and if you press the plus button, all sounds will be played one octave higher. If you press both buttons at the same time, the octave range will be reset to the default setting.

OCTAVE -

If you hold both **OCTAVE +** and **OCTAVE -** while you plug in your USB cable to a computer, **Xkey Air 25/37** will be reset to the factory default.

MODULATION

The **MODULATION** button sends the MIDI modulation controller data. This button is pressure sensitive, so the data being sent depends on how strong you push the button.

PITCH BEND +

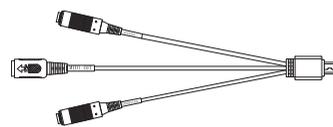
The **PITCH BEND +** and **PITCH BEND -** buttons allow you to pitch the sound up or down via the MIDI pitch bend controller data. These buttons are pressure sensitive, so the data being sent depends on how strong you push either button.

PITCH BEND -

SUSTAIN

The **SUSTAIN** button allows you to enable or disable the MIDI sustain functionality. When the button is pressed down, sustain mode will be activated and when you release the button, sustain mode is disabled again.

The optional **Xcable** connects to the left side of **Xkey Air 25/37**. It provides a **MIDI** output with 5-pin DIN connector and two 1/4" connectors for a **SUSTAIN**



and an **EXPRESSION** pedal - a great feature to connect **Xkey Air** to other equipment!

Please note that the **Xcable** is indeed optional and not included with **Xkey Air 25/37** by default. You can purchase it from **ESI / Artesia Pro** retailers around the globe and if you are unsure, contact us.

General Information

If something is not working as expected, please don't simply return the product and use our technical support options via our websites www.esi-audio.com, www.artesia-pro.com or contact your local distributor. **Xkey Air 25/37** might appear simple, but it is a highly professional product with a lot of features and configuration options that might get some time to get used to and to setup everything for your individual needs. Please especially check our extensive Knowledge Base with Frequently Asked Questions and technical details in the support section of the ESI site.

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Manufacturer Info: ESI Audiotechnik GmbH, Mollenbachstr. 14, D-71229 Leonberg, Germany and Artesia Pro Inc, P.O. Box 2908, La Mesa, CA 91943, USA.