



Getting Started with GarageBand

To use Apple's GarageBand software you don't need to know how to read music, you just need to know how to read! In [Mary Plummer's](#) new Apple-certified book and companion DVD you get 20 hours of step-by-step lessons designed to turn you into a master musician—no experience required. In this excerpt, Plummer takes you on a quick interface tour and shares a few keyboard shortcuts sure to have you making beautiful music in no time.

Working with the Interface

GarageBand is powerful enough to record and mix a professional-sounding music demo, yet simple enough that anyone can use it right out of the box.

Over the years, I've worked with many frustrated musicians who bought their first computers and software specifically to try recording their own music. Unfortunately, instead of finding inspiration and a new creative tool, they got more frustrated because the software was way too complicated.

That was before GarageBand. This software is different. You don't have to be a computer major or audio engineer to record music. You don't even have to be a musician. If you can click a mouse, you can turn your Mac into a basic recording studio—it's really that simple.

Exploring the GarageBand Window

One of the many advantages of GarageBand is the simplicity of the interface. As with all the iLife applications, GarageBand uses one window as the base of operations. This window is your recording studio.

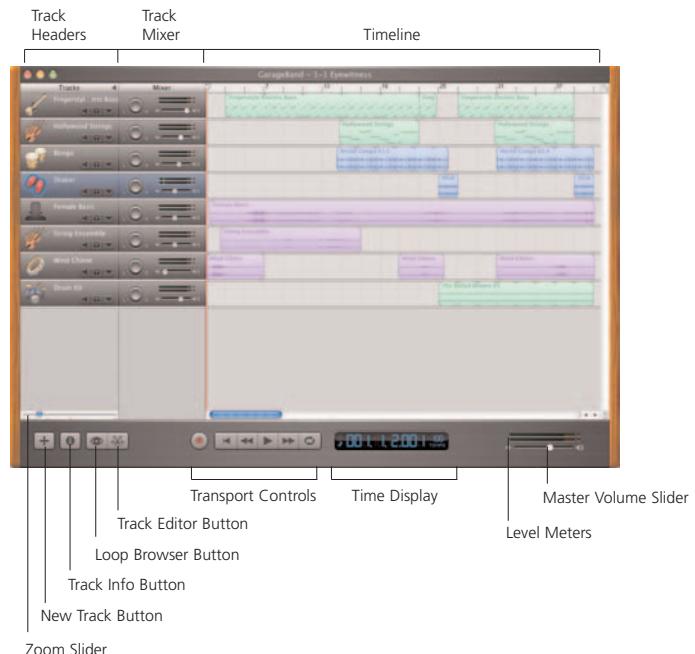
Let's take a quick tour of the GarageBand window.

- Track headers—Show the instrument icon and name to the left of each instrument track. The track headers also include a Mute button to silence a track and a Solo button to silence all other tracks.
- Track Mixer—Includes a Volume slider to adjust the track volume and a Pan wheel to adjust the position of the track in the left-to-right stereo field.
- Timeline—Acts as your music recording and arranging workspace. The Timeline is made up of horizontal tracks for each individual instrument. The Timeline graphically represents linear time from left to right using a Beat Ruler at the top of the window. The far-left edge of the Timeline represents the beginning of a song.
- Zoom slider—Can be used to zoom in to or out of the Timeline.
- New Track button—Adds a new track in the Timeline.
- Track Info button—Opens the Track Info window.
- Loop Browser button—Opens the Loop Browser.
- Track Editor button—Opens the Track Editor.
- Transport controls—Provide the standard recording and playback buttons to navigate in the Timeline, including Record, Go to Beginning, Rewind, Fast Forward, and Cycle.



[Apple Training Series: GarageBand](#)
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- Time Display—Shows the song's tempo and current playhead position in musical time or absolute time.
- Master Volume slider—Can be used to adjust the output volume level of the song.
- Level meters—Indicate the output volume level of a song. The level meters include red warning lights if levels are clipping (too loud).



>>Tip

If you're using a laptop or a large studio display, the Zoom button is a very useful tool to maximize the size of your workspace. Also, any time you can't see the entire window because part of it is off-screen, you can click the Zoom button to bring the entire window into view.

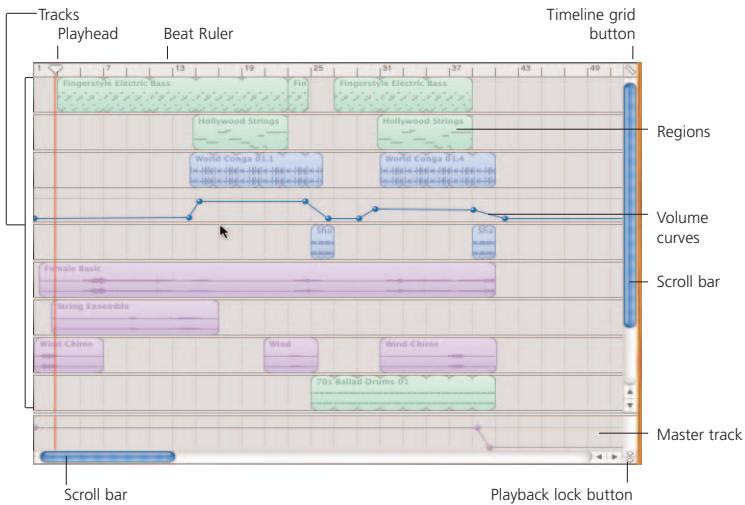


Exploring the Timeline

The Timeline is the largest portion of the GarageBand window. It contains tracks where you can record both Software Instruments and Real Instruments. You can also add loops of prerecorded musical parts and arrange the different regions to create a finished song.

The Timeline includes the following controls:

- **Playhead**—Shows exactly what part of the song is currently playing. The playhead is a white triangle (with a red vertical line underneath) on the Beat Ruler. You also use the playhead to determine where to cut, copy, and paste music regions within the Timeline.
- **Beat Ruler**—Shows musical time in beats and measures. Click anywhere in the Beat Ruler to move the playhead to that position.
- **Tracks**—Contain recordings of the Real Instrument or Software Instrument parts. They can also contain loops of prerecorded musical parts from the Loop Browser called Apple Loops. Each track separates the individual instruments to arrange a song.
- **Timeline grid button**—Lets you choose the note value of the Timeline grid, or you can choose Automatic so the value will change as you zoom in and out of the Timeline.
- **Regions**—Display the individual musical parts that are either prerecorded loops or parts that you record using Real Instruments and Software Instruments. Each prerecorded loop, Software Instrument, or Real Instrument part you record is represented in the Timeline as a differently colored region. Regions can be moved, copied, cut, and pasted, as well as extended or looped, in the Timeline. Software Instruments and Apple Loops can be edited and transposed in the Track Editor.



- **Volume curves**—Graphically represent the volume within a track. You can dynamically change the volume of a track for different parts of a song using control points along the volume curve.
- **Master track**—Lets you change the volume and effects for the overall song. You can dynamically adjust the volume curve in the Master track just as you can for individual tracks, but adjustments to the Master track affect all of the tracks in the Timeline.
- **Playback Lock button**—Locks (gangs) the playheads in the Timeline and Track Editor together, or unlocks them to show different sections of the song at the same time.
- **Scroll bars**—Let you see a different part of the song in the Timeline. Click and drag the horizontal scroll bar to move horizontally in the Timeline. Use the vertical scroll bar to move vertically.

Keyboard Shortcuts

Spacebar	Play/pause
Right arrow	Move forward by one measure
Left arrow	Move back by one measure
Home or Z	Go to beginning
Ctrl left arrow	Zoom in
Ctrl right arrow	Zoom out
Cmd-E	Open Track Editor
Cmd-L	Open Loop Browser

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