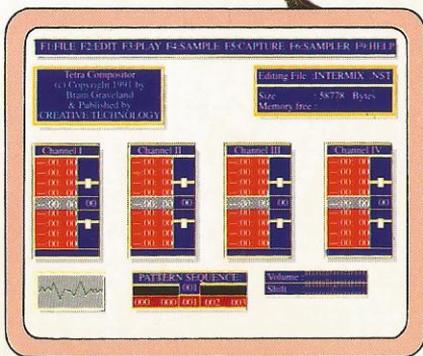


**SOUND
BLASTER**

TETRA

COMPOSITOR



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TETRA COMPOSITOR

User Manual

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TETRA COMPOSITOR

Chapter 1 Introduction

INTRODUCTION...
I never read manuals.

So you want to start off with the Tetra Composer right away? Well, it's not a bad idea, but you should at least read this manual first. It will help you get the most out of the program.

- 1) To start, press the [F1] key.
- 2) If you encounter any problems, refer back to this manual before calling for technical support.

INTRODUCTION...

I never read manuals

So you want to start off with the Tetra Composer right away? This is the least you need to do: (If you are not familiar with PC operations, refer to the next chapter for detailed instruction and setup.)

- 1) Make sure you have a correct configuration
- 2) Check the corporate package.
- 3) Complete your registration card and mail it to:

Creative Technology Pte Ltd

75 Ayer Rajah Rd #02-04

Singapore 0513

- 4) If you have some spare time, read any Addendum for updated information.
- 5) **Backup your distribution disks. You can install Tetra Composer to your harddisk ONCE ONLY!**

- 6) Installation: A:> INST-HD

Enter the drive you wish to install Tetra Composer. Password needed.

```
C:>           cd \Tetra  
C:\Tetra>    TCSetup
```

If using CGA, C:\Tetra> CGA

- 7) To start: C:\Tetra> Tetra

- 8) Press the [F1] key

- 9) If you encounter any problems, refer back to this manual before calling for technical support.

How to Use this Manual

Be it a musician or not, a computer expert or a newcomer, this manual is designed such that you get what you need to know in the shortest time possible.

THE STRUCTURE

There are six main categories:

INTRODUCTION, briefly describes Tetra Compositor

INSTALLATION AND SETUP, shows how to put Tetra Compositor up and running on your PC.

BASICS, holds the key to playing and composing Tetra Compositor.

TUTORIALS, so you can understand Tetra Compositor better!

ADVANCE TOPICS, unleashes your creativity to its fullest.

APPENDICES, contains summaries, troubleshooting and other necessary references.

A TYPICAL LAYOUT

Throughout this manual, you should observe four main formats:

BODY CONTENT Explains the overall content of its headlines.

Tips and Ticks Elaborate technical or musical terms; provide additional information and alternatives, etc.

WARNING!

You must take note when this appears as it warns you of discrepancies that may affect or destroy your valuable information.

When you are ready

Summarizes whatever you should have learned in the main content before you go to the next chapter.

TYPOGRAPHIC CONVENTIONS

For quick reference, observe these conventions:

After the sign ► Instruction to be executed on keyboard.

After TO A routine to be carried out.

About Tetra Compositor

Is Tetra Compositor a sequencer? Or is it a sampler?

Both. It is a recording studio! You can now sample sounds; record voices, write music; create special effects and rhythms... all with Tetra Compositor. (Imagine the amount of money you have already saved by getting Tetra Compositor!)

Is Tetra Compositor difficult to learn?

No. Its capabilities and power have been made so accessible with pull down menus that even a computer novice can run it with ease in no time.

How many channels are there in Tetra Compositor?

Four. Do not be deceived by its only four channels as it has the ability to

sample multiple sounds eg. chords, and could easily be as good as those with 16 channels!

How many instrument sound can I have?

Your PC's storage capacity is your limit. You can even create and store instruments (ie. samples in Tetra Compositor) on diskettes and retrieve whenever needed.

Can I import songs from other formats?

Tetra Compositor can read file formats of .SD4, .NST and .MOD directly without having to go through a conversion program!

What makes Tetra Compositor different from other music software?

Tetra Compositor uses a whole new concept of transforming any voice into an instrument sound, subsequently modifying its pitch with instant playback. Each sampled voice can then be placed on any part of a sequence - a feature which no other sequencers can offer. Great as a rhythmic tool!

TETRA COMPOSITOR

Chapter 2 Installation and Setup

INSTALLATION AND SETUP...

Well, what's next

Now that you have read the INTRODUCTION, you may wish to carry on...

System Requirement

THE "MUST-HAVE"

Computer	IBM XT, AT or any fully compatibles
Operating System	Dos 3.0 or above
System Memory	512 K (640 K recommended)
Disk Drive	Hard Disk with at least 1.5 MB of free space
Display	CGA, EGA or VGA

THE "MAKE-PERFECT"

Sound Blaster	1.5; Pro or MCV
Mouse	Microsoft Mouse or compatibles
Microphone	General

Inside the Tetra Composer's Package

Your Tetra Composer package should contain:

- . Registration and Warranty Card
- . Tetra Composer disks 1 - 4
- . User's Manual
- . Addendum Note

Installing Tetra Composer

WARNING! Tetra Composer can only be installed once. So, BE SURE TO MAKE A BACKUP COPY and never use Tetra Composer directly from your original diskettes.

TO backup...

When DOS prompt appears on the screen,

- ▶ Type DISKCOPY A: B:
- ▶ Press the [ENTER] key

Tips and Ticks

If you only have 1 external drive

- ▶ Type DISKCOPY A: A: instead.

Follow DOS prompts to switch diskettes CAREFULLY!

When DOS prompts to place diskettes,

place Tetra Composer's original diskette 1 in Drive A
and a blank diskette in Drive B

When done, DOS will ask whether you want to copy another.

- ▶ Type Y

This time,

place Tetra Composer's original diskette 2 in Drive A
and a new blank diskette in Drive B

Do the same procedure until you have backuped all diskettes and labeled them accordingly. Keep your original diskettes in a safe place and use the backup copy instead.

TO install hard disk...

WARNING! Your hard disk must have enough disk space. (Minimum 1.5Mb) Failing to do so may caused installation to halt abruptly.

Place Tetra Composer Disk 1 in Drive A

- ▶ Type INST-HD
- ▶ Press [ENTER]

Tetra Composer then prompts you to type in the drive that you wish to install TC to.

- ▶ Type [your drive]
- ▶ Press [ENTER]

A password is required at this point. Refer to this manual for correct answer.

When correct password is entered, Tetra Compositor will prompt you to change the diskette.

Tetra Compositor will be installed even if you have not entered the correct password. But you will soon find that it is just a demo version when you cannot save a song. Delete the demo version and re-installed again.

After installation is completed, you will find yourself in C:\TETRA, ready to start the most exciting journey of Tetra Compositor...

Starting Tetra Compositor

Alas, you have to tell Tetra Compositor your choice of sound of course, i.e. using Sound Blaster or internal speaker.

TO setup...

- ▶ Type TCSETUP
- ▶ Press [ENTER]

When prompted,

- ▶ Type 1 for Sound Blaster
- ▶ Type 2 for internal speaker

If the Sound Blaster is chosen, you will have to answer another.

- ▶ Type 1 for default DMA setting
- ▶ Type 2 if you have changed its setting

For those having a CGA display, at C:\Tetra

- ▶ Type CGA

Now, you are starting for real!

TO start...

- ▶ Type TETRA
or TETRA_XT for XT computers
- ▶ Press [ENTER]

and now, enter the Tetra Compositor's main screen.

All the songs are found in the Song Directory.

TO load a song...

- ▶ Press the [F1] key

When a pull down menu appear,

- ▶ Use the [↑] or [↓] keys

to scroll to SONG directory.

- ▶ Press [ENTER]

A list of songs with file extension of .NST will appear. Choose a song and

- ▶ Press [ENTER]

TO playback a song...

- ▶ Press [F3]

Have fun!

When you are ready

If you have follow through this chapter, you should have:

- . DISKCOPY a backup copy of Tetra Composer
- . INST-HD in sub-directory C:\Tetra of your hard disk
- . TCSETUP your Tetra Composer to suit your hardware
- . TETRA to the Tetra Composer's main screen
- . PLAYBACK songs

TETRA COMPOSITOR

Chapter 3 Basics

BASICS... important issues

Nothing can be fully mastered without first establishing a good foundation. This chapter introduces Tetra's compositor screen architecture and the concepts of building a song.

TETRA COMPOSITOR

Basics

BASICS... Important issues

Nothing can be fully mastered without first establishing a good foundation. This chapter introduces Tetra Compositor's screen architecture and its concept of building a song.

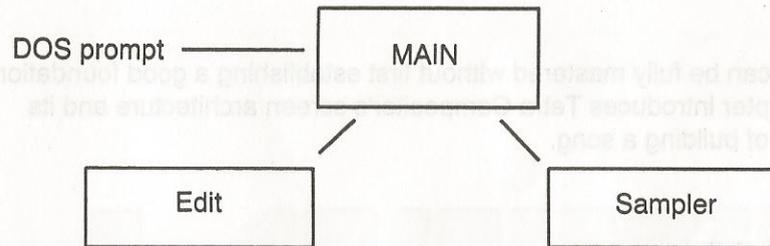
Type of Screen

Tetra Compositor works simply on three major screens namely:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| The Main Screen | A screen which you enter when first started. It manages files and playbacks; converts and loads samples; provide on screen help and paths to the other screens. |
| The Edit Screen | It is on this screen that you can create songs and sequences; change instruments and do other fine polishing to a song. |
| The Sample Editor | A screen that makes use of microphone to record, mix, alter and save samples. |

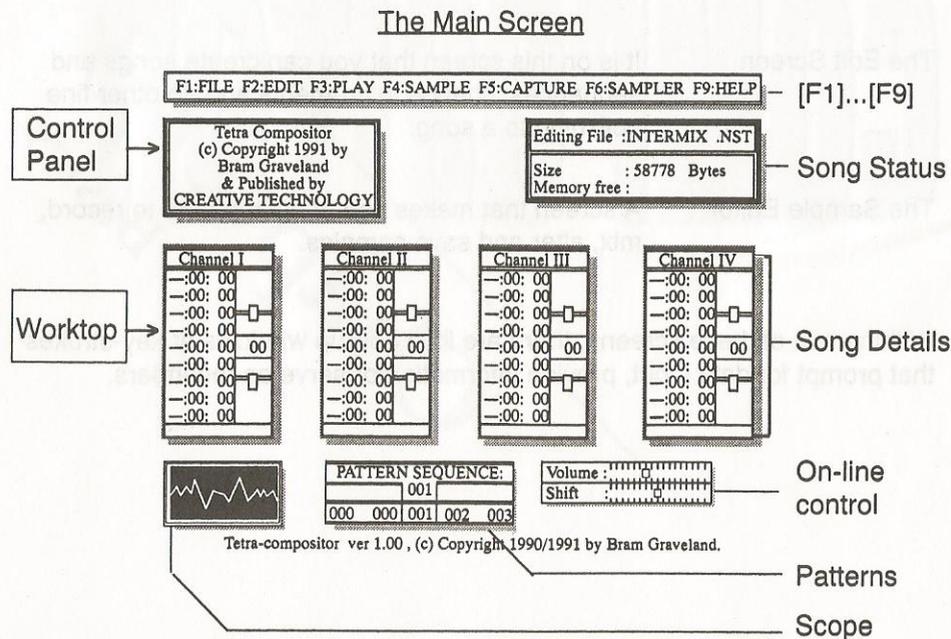
Within each of these screens, there are little pop-up windows at key-strokes that prompt for data input, provide information or serve as reminders.

The following diagram shows a relation between the three screens:



THE MAIN SCREEN

The main screen consists of a **control panel** and a **worktop**.



The Control Panel

Each of these functions leads to other screens or pop-up windows when executed.

- What you see** [F1] ... [F9]
- What you don't see** [F10] Quit
[Ctrl-I] Rename song
[Ctrl-L] Load Samples
[Ctrl-D] Delete Samples

THE CONTROL PANEL

[F1] : FILE	Enters File Manager
New Save Write to Drive C: [...] xxxxx.NST xxxxx.MOD	Create new song Save existing song Save song to a different name Change drive Change directory Tetra's Song File Tetra loads other song file format
[F2] : EDIT	Enters the edit screen (see The Edit Screen)

Tips and Ticks

[Ctrl-x] where x represents a letter of the alphabet

- ▶ Press and hold the [Ctrl] key
- ▶ Type x

<p>[F3] : PLAY while playback, No. of Instrument No. of Pattern Current position Current pattern Estimated Time</p>	<p>Starts playback Total instruments used in song Total patterns used in song Refers to current standing pattern position Indicates which pattern sequence is used Estimated time taken to play song</p>
<p>[F4] : SAMPLE [name] 0001</p>	<p>Display a list of Instruments Each instrument carries a 4-digit identity</p>
<p>[Ctrl-L]</p>	<p>Loads a sample for use in Edit Screen (works simultaneously with [F4] only) TO load sample <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Press [F4] for pop-up window ▶ Use [↑] or [↓] to choose sample ▶ Press [Enter] to select When sampled sound is played, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Press [Ctrl-L] another pop-up window appears ▶ Use [↑] or [↓] to go to blank slot ▶ Press [Enter] </p>

Tips and Tricks

In any function that prompt for an input, enter a value and

- ▶ Press [Enter] to proceed

To abort operation,

- ▶ Press [Esc]

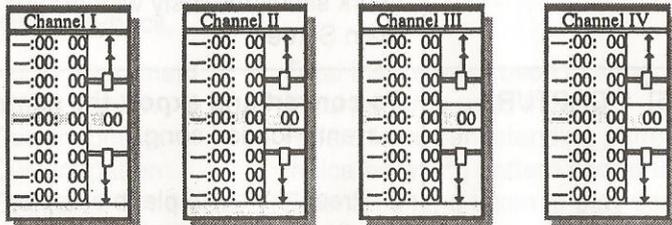
<p>[Ctrl-D]</p>	<p>To remove samples (work simultaneously with [F4] of Main Screen)</p>
<p>[F5] : CAPTURE</p>	<p>To convert and export the samples of currently loaded song. ▶ Press Y to place samples into the current sample listing.</p>
<p>[F6] : SAMPLER</p>	<p>Enters the sampler screen requires the Sound Blaster. (see The Sampler Screen)</p>
<p>[F9] : HELP</p>	<p>Provides on-line help ▶ Use [PgUp] or [PgDn] to move within help screen.</p>
<p>[F10] : QUIT</p>	<p>Exits Tetra Composer</p>
<p>[Ctrl-I]</p>	<p>Name or rename current song</p>

The Worktop

There are four aspect of the Main Screen's worktop:

1. The Song Channels

There are 4 identical song channels on the main screen. Each channel contains micro information of the notes, octave, instrument, speed and volume. During playback, the information changes accordingly through a vertical time zone.



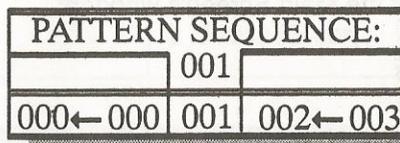
You can choose to play all 4 channels or only selected channels.

TO mute

- ▶ Use [1] to [4] for channels 1 to 4 respectively

2. Pattern sequence

A song is usually made up of a few sections. These sections can occur one after another, interchange places or be repeated. Tetra Composer has called each of these sections a pattern. Patterns are linked together in a pattern sequence that look like this:



3. The Scope

Located at the left bottom corner, it moves accordingly to changes of sound magnitude in a song during playback.

4. The On-line Control

It allows control over volume:

TO control volume

- ▶ Use [←] or [→]

TO transpose

- ▶ Use [↑] or [↓]

THE EDIT SCREEN

The Edit Screen is similar to the Main Screen as it also has a panel control and a worktop. While the Main Screen performs most macro functions, the Edit Screen controls the micro details.

The Control Panel

Only four functions are displayed here:

<p>[Alt-F1] : Instrument</p> <p>01> Instrument1 02> Instrument2 etc.</p>	<p>Instruments that have been loaded from the [F4] Main Screen.</p> <p>A standard format used in this window. The 2-digit number before instrument is the code input for the Edit Screen's worktop.</p>
<p>[Alt-F2] : Pattern</p>	<p>When executed, a cursor will appear in the pattern sequence box. You can add, change, link patterns in here.</p>
<p>[Alt-F3] : Playback</p>	<p>Serves the same function as playback in the Main Screen except that it plays back at the cursor's position.</p>

[Alt-F4] : Copy Block

This is the function to copy a selected block within one channel to another place within the same channel; to another channel; or to another song.

The Worktop

In this worktop, you can input notes, change instruments or add other effects to the song.

1. SONG CHANNELS

When you enter the Edit Screen, a cursor would appear at the first channel, ready for further instructions.

TO move within song channels

- ▶ Use [↑] or [↓] to scroll within the same channel
- ▶ Press [Tab] or [→] to jump to next column or channel

There are three columns in each channel:

Channel I	Channel II	Channel III	Channel IV
:00: 00 ↑	:00: 00 ↑	:00: 00 ↑	:00: 00 ↑
:00: 00 ↑	:00: 00 ↑	:00: 00 ↑	:00: 00 ↑
:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □
:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □
-:00: 00 00	-:00: 00 00	-:00: 00 00	-:00: 00 00
:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □
:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □
:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □
:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □	:00: 00 □

Tips and Ticks

When the [F1] to [F10] key is pressed, you are in fact changing the sample's frequency (ie. speed of vibration), thus causing it's pitch to change. Therefore, if you have chosen a voice instead of a music note as a sample, pressing [F1] to [F10] may produce hilarious result.

The Note-Input column

Function keys are used to input notes:

TO input notes

- ▶ Use [F1] to [F7] for notes C to B
- ▶ Use [F8] to [F10] for 1st, 2nd, 3rd octave

Using the left shift or the right shift of the keyboard produces different effect:

TO Input accidentals

- ▶ Use [shift-F1] to [shift-F7] for C to B

The Instrument Column

Tetra Compositor uses a 2-digit number to represent an individual instrument. A cross reference is obtained by pressing the [Alt-F1] key - the Instrument window. You can experiment with different pitches in the Instrument window before entering its code.

- ▶ Press [Alt-F1] for the instrument window

The instruments listed are as such:

Tips and Ticks

Accidental - a sign to raise or lower note by half a tone.

(#) - an accidental sign to **raise** note by half a tone.

The 2-digit code

Name of Instrument

01	>	Instrument1
02	>	Instrument2

- ▶ Use [↑] or [↓] to scroll for instrument
- ▶ Press [Enter] to select instrument
- ▶ Use [1] to [+], for different pitch in ascending order

The Effects Column

When you want some of the notes to be extremely loud; or you want to create an effect of an ending by slowing down; or you wish to jump to a next section abruptly, this is the column to put your message.

TO set volume

- ▶ Type Vxx where xx is any 2-digit between 00 to 63, 00 being the softest to 63 the loudest

TO set speed

- ▶ Type Sxx where xx is any 2-digit between 00 to 12, 00 being the fastest and 12 the slowest

TO transpose

- ▶ Type Txx where xx is any 2-digit between 00 to 12, each increment is a half tone with default at 06 when no value is entered.

TO break

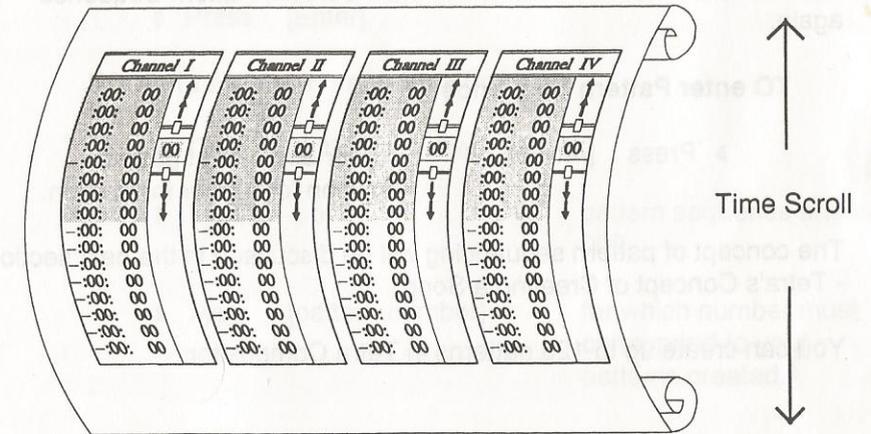
is to ignore the rest of a pattern from the point of entry

- ▶ Type B No value is required.

The Time Zone

Music is like all living things which travels through time. It is classified here as a Time Zone. Only with this can all voices or channels be co-ordinated.

The time zone is sub-divided into 64 rows of time division. The screen you see only shows part of them. The complete picture can be envisaged as in the following diagram:



Notes and information added on separate channels will be synchronised according to its order of appearance - the higher row being played first and down to the next row etc. The edit function of each channel allows independent shift of notes:

TO shift notes from current cursor position down

- ▶ Press [Ins]

Shifting notes from current cursor position upward would mean deleting the current note subsequently shifting the rest of the notes upward:

TO delete note and shift rest of notes upward

- ▶ Press [Del]

TO scroll

- ▶ Use [↑] or [↓], [PgUp] or [PgDn]

2. PATTERN SEQUENCE

If you have not grasped using the Pattern Sequence window, the topic, the Main Screen, refer back to the Main Screen, Pattern Sequence again.

TO enter Pattern Sequence

- ▶ Press [Alt-F2] cursor appears at pattern position for further instruction.

The concept of pattern sequencing will be discussed in the next section - Tetra's Concept of Creating a Song.

You can create up to 128 patterns in Tetra Composer.

A sequencing order telling its current sequence number

PATTERN SEQUENCE:		
	001	
000←	000	001 002← 003

Tips and Ticks

A **pattern** in the Pattern Sequence (in capital letter), is a one module noun which is not to be confused with a sequence (in small letter), which consists of patterns that are linked together.

TO create a new pattern at the current sequence position

- ▶ Type N
- ▶ Press [Enter]

You then find yourself back to the Song Channels.

TO browse through sequence for a specific pattern

- ▶ Type [←] or [→]
- ▶ Press [Enter]

TO build a pattern sequence from 001

- ▶ Type [pattern number]
- ▶ Type + or - pattern sequence shows 002
- ▶ Type [pattern number] for which number must correspond to your patterns created.

... Repeat the procedure until end

- 3. The Scope The same as that in the Main Screen
- 4. The On-line Control

The volume and transposition can be controlled during playback, like that in the Main Screen.

Tips and Ticks

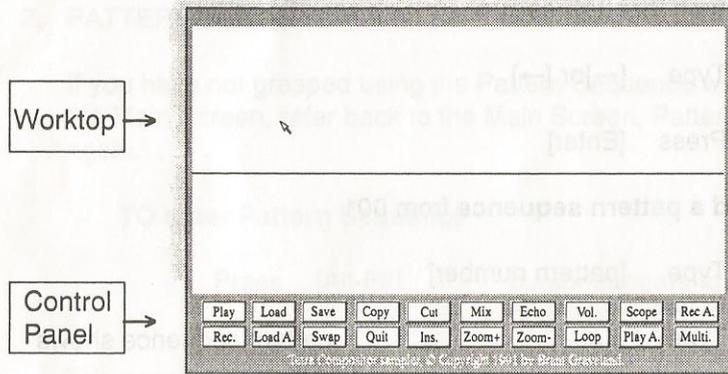
A **pattern sequence number** is just a series of numbers that runs consecutively.

A **pattern number** is however an absolute number of that pattern.

THE SAMPLER EDITOR SCREEN

When you see a simple screen that has a horizontal line cutting across, and two rows of keys at the bottom of it, it means you have entered the Sample Editor Screen. Basically, the structure of the Sampler Editor screen is similar to the other 2 screens:

1. The Control Panel
2. The Worktop



The Sample Editor works with either the keyboard or a mouse.

A mouse pointer is represented by a little arrow on the screen. You can move it in all directions and click on the mouse's left button to select the function keys.

If you do not have a mouse, an 8x8 keyboard cursor would appear instead.

TO move around with the keyboard cursor

- ▶ Use [↑], [↓], [←] or [→], [Home], [End], [PgUp] or [Pg Dn]
- ▶ Press [Enter] to select function keys.

You can speed up the keyboard cursor movement.

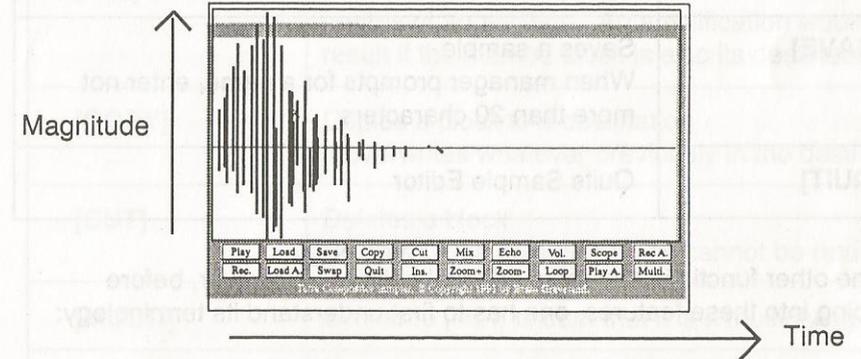
TO change keyboard cursor's speed

- ▶ Use [1] to [9] 1 being the fastest and 9 being the slowest

The Worktop

The worktop is a 64kB window with an x-axis representing time, and a y-axis representing the sound magnitude.

A sample when loaded on the screen, may look like the one shown in the following diagram:



There are 3 choices of recording time you can choose from:

- ▶ Type G for a recording of 5 seconds
- ▶ Type U for a recording of 8 seconds
- ▶ Type Q for a recording of 16 seconds

The Control Panel

Samples can be loaded, edited, recorded or saved by selecting one of the function keys on the screen. The function keys are briefly described as follows:

These functions encompasses the functions of a manager:

[LOAD.A]	Loads a sample This will overwrite an existing sample entirely
[LOAD]	Loads a sample into a selected block This will only overwrite a selected area
[PLAY.A]*	Plays the entire screen
[PLAY]*	Plays only a selected block
[LOOP]	Plays entire screen or selected block repeatedly
[SAVE]	Saves a sample When manager prompts for a name, enter not more than 20 characters
[QUIT]	Quits Sample Editor

The other functions shows its editorial abilities. However, before going into these features, one has to first understand its terminology:

[ACTION] - The function itself. It is an action that is about to be performed.

A block - A shaded area spanning from the left to the right of the screen. It shows the enclosure of a selected area.

Mouse - Click and drag horizontally for a start and an end of a block

Keyboard - **▶** Press and hold [Enter] or [Ins]
▶ Use [→] or [←] to select block

A destination - Marks the beginning of transformation that is caused by performing [ACTION].

Mouse - Click RIGHT mouse button to select destination

Keyboard - **▶** Press [INS] to select destination

[REC.A]*	Records an entire sample
[REC]*	Records over a block It overwrites whatever there was in the area
[VOL]	Reduces entire or block's volume Decreases current volume by 1/10 each time it is activated
[MIX]	Mixes a block or a whole with the destination by means of an addition. An amplification would result if the marked block is also its destination.
[COPY]	Copies a block to a destination It overwrites whatever previously in the destination
[CUT]	Deletes a block Be careful; as deleted portion cannot be retrieved.
[MULTI]	Similar to [MIX] except that it is a multiplying factor
[INS]	Inserts a block to a destination Pushes whatever in destination to the right of screen. Anything exceeding it would be cut off.
[ECHO]	Scales down the magnitude of a block to a destination. If destination is not empty, addition would occur with the scaled down block and the destination.
[ZOOM+]	Magnifies from destination onwards
[ZOOM-]	Reverses [ZOOM+]'s action
[SWAP]	Inverts a block horizontally to a destination

[SCOPE]	Activates the waveform viewer
----------------	-------------------------------

* You could choose to play or record at a different sample rate:
 - for Sound Blaster 1.5 or MCV

▶ Use Q to U, Q being the lowest of 4kHz
 A to H H being the highest of 13kHz

- for Sound Blaster Pro

▶ Use Q to U, Q being the lowest of 4kHz
 A to J, H being the highest of 23kHz
 Z to V

To have a better understanding of creating a sample, see Advance Topics.

Tetra's Concept of Creating a Song

The theory of creating a substance from an atom to a molecule is being applied to the Tetra Compositor, this time, with a creator - yourself!

A sample...

A **sample** is the simplest form created by recording an external sound through a microphone. This external sound is not limited to just musical sound. It could be a human voice, a sound effect or a collective sound, like a chord or a string section, etc.

The pitch, or frequency of a sample could be changed (see Edit Screen, pg) to form a note. Many notes could then be combined and synchronised in such a way to form a **pattern**.

A pattern...

In a **pattern**, you could concurrently run 4 samples together - which is referred to as 4 channels, or change samples 64 times on each individual channel. However, with so many combination of putting notes, one can't just jumble them up and hope for something nice to happen. But why? What exactly is lacking here is the precise feeling of time, which is referred to here as the **time factor**...

Time

Time is about the most important issue in the world of sequencing. When you listen to a song, you want to feel its rhythm, sing with it or dance with it. Even when a special noise or sound effect comes in, it has to come in at the right timing, or otherwise, it becomes an unwelcome interruption.

Most other sequencing software use absolute music figure, like a note value of a quarter-note, a half-note, etc. to depict timing. In Tetra Compositor however, the absolute value (a quarter-note, a half-note..) does not exist. What it has here is:

1. A "jigsaw puzzle" - a matter of putting jigsaws, in this case, notes together at the right places.
2. A **relative time**
3. The undermining samples

Constructing a pattern with the time factor

As mentioned before, there is no absolute note value. When a note is entered into the pattern, it could mean any value depending on the other incoming notes.

When you are ready

By now, you should be able to:

- . differentiate between the Main's, the Edit's and the Sampler Editor's Screens
- . construct a song with Samples, Patterns and Sequences

AT THE MAIN SCREEN

- . [F1] ... [F10] to LOAD, SAVE, PLAY, QUIT
- . use worktop to control VOLUME, TRANSPOSITION

AT THE EDIT SCREEN

- . [Alt-F1] ... [Alt-F4] to INSTRUMENT, PLAY, PATTERN, COPY
- . use worktop to EDIT notes, instruments and effects

AT THE SAMPLER EDITOR SCREEN

- . use mouse to MOVE in screen, CLICK for [ACTION]
- . use [↑], [↓], [←] or [→], [Home], [End], [PgUp] or [Pg Dn] to MOVE,
- . use [1] to [9] to MOVE FASTER, [ENTER] for [ACTION]

TUTORIALS ... Learning made easy!

The tutorials are classified into topics. So, if you wish to skip tutorials, you may do so at any point.

Begin from an Existing Song File

TETRA COMPOSITOR

Chapter 4 Tutorials

When the song is loaded, the song is ready to be played.

Playing the song...

1. Start playback.

Press

[F3]

Notice that the data in the Song Channels scrolls accordingly to playback.

If you are using the Sound Editor, make sure you have an external speaker hooked to your Sound Board.

TUTORIALS ... Learning made easy!

The tutorials are classified into topics. So, if you wish to skip tutorials, you may do so at any point.

Begin from an Existing Song File

This section is based on a song loaded from the sub-directory of \TETRA called \SONG. The name of the song is "GREEN"

Playing around with your keyboard

Loading a song...

1. At Main Screen,
 - ▶ Press [F1] to access to File Manager
2. Select \SONG directory,
 - ▶ Use [↑], [↓] to go to [SONG]
 - ▶ Press [Enter]
3. ▶ Use [↑], [↓] to select "GREEN.NST"
 - ▶ Use [Enter]

When the song is loaded, the pull-down menu will disappear and the song is ready to be played.

Playing the song...

1. Start playback,
 - ▶ Press [F3] Notice that the data in the Song Channels scrolls accordingly to playback

If you are using the Sound Blaster, make sure you have an external speaker hooked to your Sound Blaster.

Pausing the song...

1. Pause playback,

- ▶ Press [Pause] Now the data in the Song Channel stopped. This is to enable you to view the parameters

2. Resume playback,

- ▶ Press [Enter] The song continues from where you have stopped.

Transposing the song...

1. Transpose up,

- ▶ Use [↓] Notice a leftward shift of position at the On-line Control and a change to a lower key.

2. Transpose down

- ▶ Use [↑] This time a change to higher key, and a shift to the right in position at the On-line Control

Changing the volume...

1. Raise volume,

- ▶ Use [→] The volume is louder

2. Lower volume,

- ▶ Use [←] The volume is softer this time

The Volume On-line Control's position moves accordingly.

Mute Playback...

1. Mute channels,

- ▶ Press 1 Channel I disappears indicating the channel has been muted
- ▶ Press 2 Now, channel II disappears as well
- 3 is for channel III and 4 is for channel IV.

2. Playback muted channel

- ▶ Press 1 This time, channel 1 appears
- ▶ Press 2 Channel II also returns

Stopping song...

1. Stop playback

- ▶ Press [ESC] The playback stops

So far, your tutorial only covers the main screen. Now let us go to the Edit Screen.

Entering Edit Screen...

- 1. ▶ Press [F2] The menu changes and a cursor appears at Channel I

Playing notes...

- 1. ▶ Play [F1] to [F7] Observe the first column carefully. The notes change from C-1 to D-1 .. B-1

You have played all the notes at the same cursor position, thus causing the previous note to be replaced by your new input.

2. Play the notes again, this time,

- ▶ Play [F1]
 - ▶ Move [↓] one step,
 - ▶ Play [F2]
 - ▶ Move [↓] next step, etc.
- Until [F7]

3. Playback song

- ▶ Press [Home] to start song from beginning
- ▶ Press [Alt-F3]

Bravo! You have created a series of notes along with the song.

Changing parameters...

1. Change instrument,

- ▶ Use [→] to move to the next column, i.e. the instrument column
- ▶ Type 2 over the current instrument 1.

Instrument changes from guitar1 to cliop

2. Playback song,

- ▶ Press [Alt-F3] Notice a change of sound

You may try other numbers to experiment with other instruments

3. Change effects,

- ▶ Use [→] to move to the effects column

▶ Type T12 to transpose Channel I up

▶ Playback

- ▶ Press [Alt-F3] Notice the "out-of-key" sound. Well, you have changed only channel I without changing the rest of the channels.

This shows that transposition works independently for individual channels.

4. Move to next channel,

- ▶ Use [Tab] to jump to next channel

This time, put in speed effect.

▶ Type S02 to speed up the song

▶ Playback

- ▶ Press [Alt-F3] Wow, the song is definitely running

5. There are other effects that you could try on:

- ▶ Press [E] Volume
- ▶ Press [T] Transpose
- ▶ Press [S] Speed
- ▶ Press [B] Stops a song pattern abruptly

Working with Patterns...

1. Enter pattern sequence,

- ▶ Press [Alt-F2] A cursor appears at the pattern sequence's window

Moving around...

1. ▶ Type → many times
Observe all the numbers carefully

Notice that only the uppermost number runs consecutively up.

2. ▶ Type ← many times

The uppermost number eventually returns to 001.

What you have done is to add or delete sequence numbers through sequence that has been created in the song.

3. Exit pattern sequence

▶ Press [Esc]

Writing to a filename...

1. ▶ Press [Esc] Until you are at Main Screen

2. ▶ Press [F1] for File Manager

3. ▶ Use [↑] or [↓] to go to [Write to:]

▶ Press [Enter]

When Tetra Compositor prompts for a name:

4. ▶ Type Tutorial

▶ Press [Enter]

Tips and Ticks

When entering a + sign, be sure to press and hold the shift key.

Creating a Song From Scratch

There are many ways of creating a song. You could load an existing song and edit from it, or you could copy part of a song to load into your new song. Rhythm is one part that could be appropriately loaded into a new song. It is therefore advisable to put all parts of a rhythm section on one channel, since you can only copy a single channel at a time.

In this part of the tutorials, you will learn to choose your own instruments, creating patterns and linking them.

Starting a new song..

1. At Main Screen,

▶ Press [F1]

▶ Use [↓] to [SAMPLE] directory

▶ Press [Enter]

You enter the [SAMPLE] directory so that you can access to the instrument listing that is provided with the Tetra Compositor.

2. ▶ Use [↑] to [NEW] file

▶ Press [Enter]

This opens to an entirely new file.

TO CHOOSE INSTRUMENTS FOR NEW SONG

Selecting and loading Instrument samples...

1. Sample listing,

▶ Press [F4]

► Use [↑], [↓] Select an instrument you like

► Press [Enter] You should hear the sound of the instrument sample you have selected.

3. Load instrument.

► Press [Ctrl-L] Notice a pull-down window

► Use [↑], [↓] to the number you wish to place your selected sample

► Press [Enter] The pop-up window disappears

If you wish to load more instrument, repeat procedure no.3 again.

You can hear different pitches of the sample to make sure it is the correct sample you want.

4. ► Press [F4] Pull-down window appears

► Use [↑], [↓] Select a sample

► Type 1 to + Sample changes in pitch

Removing samples...

1. From pull-down window,

► Press [F4] for pull-down window

► Use [↑], [↓] Select a sample you wish to delete

► Press [Ctrl-D] to delete sample

WARNING!

There is no way of restoring deleted samples here.

2. From loaded samples

► Press [F4] for pull-down window

► Use [↑], [↓] Choose WIPE

► Press [Enter] Nothing happens at this moment

► Press [Ctrl-L] for loaded samples in the pop-up window

► Use [↑], [↓] Choose sample to WIPE

► Press [Enter] Window disappears

MUSIC INPUT

Using Edit Window to write song...

1. The Edit Screen,

► Press [E2] to mark

2. Input notes,

► Use [F1] to [F7] for notes C-1 to B-1
[F8] to [F10] for changing octave
[Shift-F1] to [Shift-F7] for half tones

3. Enter instrument,

► Press [Alt-F1] for instrument listing. Check for number of the instrument you wish to use

► Press [ESC] to exit instrument listing

► Type [instrument number]

4. Add Effects,

► Type	V00 .. V64	Volume
	T00 .. T12	Transpose
	S00 .. S12	Speed
	B	Stops a song pattern abruptly

Sometimes you may wish to repeat a section or copy a section over to another place:

Copying block...

1. Start of block,

- Use [↑] , [↓] to select the first note to copy
- Press [spacebar] to mark beginning

2. End of block,

- Use [↓] to select the last note to copy
- Press [spacebar] to mark end

3. Copy block

- Use [↑] , [↓] , [←] or [→] to select destination
- Press [Alt-F4]

Patterns

What you have entered so far will go into pattern number 1. If you wish to create another pattern, you must go to [Alt-F2] to create:

Creating patterns...

1. ► Press [Alt-F2]

The cursor will appear at the Pattern Sequence's window.

2. Create new pattern,

- Press + Pattern number should read 002 this time
- Press [Enter] Cursor is back to channel 1

4. Input notes

After you have complete pattern 002, repeat the procedure for creating more patterns. When done, you have to go back to Pattern Sequence's window to link them.

Linking patterns...

Let's assume that you have created 3 patterns and want to link them in this order:

To play	-	Pattern 001	first
	-	Pattern 002	second
	-	Pattern 001	third
	-	Pattern 003	fourth
	-	Pattern 001	last

1. ► Press [Alt-F2]

When you enter the Pattern Sequence window, the sequence number is not on 001,

2. Go to Sequence number 001,

- Use [←] or [→]

3. Enter pattern number,

▶ Type 001

4. Go to Sequence number 002,

▶ Use

Continue adding the pattern numbers until you have reached Sequence number 005.

What it should look like in -

Pattern column

Sequence column

What it should look like in -	Pattern column	Sequence column
Play pattern 001 first	001	001
Next play pattern 002	002	002
Back to pattern 001	001	003
Then play pattern 3	003	004
Lastly, play pattern 1	001	005
When finished, playback song	001	-
	002	-
	003	-
	004	-
	005	-

Fine Tuning

When you enter a song from scratch, you are bound to edit and improve on it. If the song you have entered uses all the 4 channels, it would be extremely difficult for you to locate minor errors when all 4 channels play together. Thus, you need to use the muting feature to "cover-up" some of the channels.

Muting channels while playback...

1. ▶ Press 1 On-screen channel 1 disappears.
Sound of channel 1 too is muted.

For channel 2 to channel 4

▶ Press 2, 3 or 4 respectively

Retrieving muted channels...

1. ▶ Press 1 On-screen channel 1 now appear.
Sound is back too.

▶ Press 2, 3 or 4 to retrieve channel 2, 3 or 4

On the otherhand you could slow down playback's speed so that you have enough time to glance while playback. Do so by adding a temporary slower speed at the Effects Column. (Parameter is S00 ... S12)

When finished, playback entire song.

When you are ready

This is your last topic about the Main Screen and the Edit Screen before going on the the Advance Topics.

Try figuring out what these codes mean. If these looks foreign to you, go back to the Basics or the Tutorials again.

- . [F1] , [Song] , [Sample] , [New] , [GREEN.NST]
- . [F2] , C to B - [F1] to [F7] , [Alt-F3]
- . [F4] , [Ctrl-L] , [1] to [+], [01>BDRUMS]
- . [spacebar] , [↓] , [spacebar] , [Alt-F4]
- . [V00 .. V63] , [S00 .. S12] , [T00 .. T12] , [B]
- . [Alt-F2] , [+] or [-]

Advance Topics... Where Next?

TETRA COMPOSITOR

Chapter 5 Advance Topics

Why? What? How? These are the questions you should ask yourself when you are about to start a new project. The Tetra Composer is a powerful tool that can help you create professional-quality music for your projects. This chapter will guide you through the various features and options available in the software, so you can get the most out of your investment. We will cover everything from basic playback to advanced editing techniques, ensuring you have a solid understanding of the program's capabilities. By the end of this chapter, you should be confident in your ability to use Tetra Composer effectively for all your music production needs.

Advance Topics... What a Feat!

You are already an expert if you have follow all the chapters until now, though not completly untill you have mastered the Advance Topics.

The Sampler Editor

In this chapter we shall deal with the logistics of creating and editing a sample in the Sampler Editor. It is impossible to cover all logistics of sound in just one topic. This section is meant only as a guideline to shorten the path to constructing a sample you want.

You will also learn how to import other song file formats.

WHAT YOU SHOULD NEED

You would not be able to enter the Sampler Editor's Screen if you do not have a Sound Blaster. Beside the Sound Blaster, you need:

1. A microphone - Otherwise you cannot record a sample from an external source.
2. A mouse - Optional. You could also use the PC's keyboard.

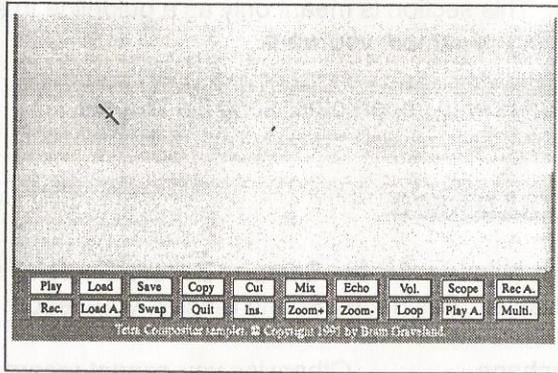
WHY NEED SAMPLER EDITOR

A sample, in the Tetra Compositor, is simply an instrument. Many samples have been included with this software. All you need to do is to call these samples from the Main Screen's display [F4], load into your song and playback. What if you could not find any sample that suits your composition? Well, you could always use a "sound-like" sample. But that is certainly not the ultimate solution. Now by including a Sampler Editor with the Tetra Compositor, you could well be achieving an ultimate solution, i.e. you must know how to use it!

EDITING AND ENHANCING SAMPLES

All the function keys has been explained in the previous chapter, Basics (pg. 3-14).

Ideally, if you could record any sound, you do not need to do any editing at all, since the recorded sample will definitely sound like the real one. In actual fact, if you want an echoing sound, are you able to find a real one, or do you have to go to a cave to record a sound to get an echo effect? Under these circumstances, the edit functions could come in handy.



The Sampler Editor's Screen

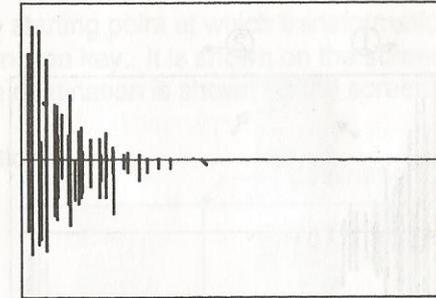
There is no sample shown on the screen when you first enter the Sampler Editor's Screen. The entire screen is also shaded in grey (block) by default.

To load an existing sample,

Using mouse Click [LOAD.A]

Using keyboard ▶ Use [↑], [↓], [←] or [→] to go to [LOAD.A]
 ▶ Press [Enter]

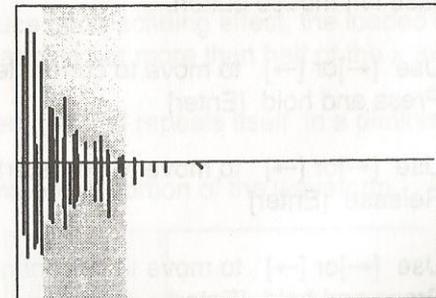
When Tetra Compositor prompts for a sample number, refer to Appendix B for an appropriate instrument, type its 4-digit corresponding number and press [Enter].



The above diagram shows a sample waveform that has a reducing amplitude. The amplitude is greatest at the beginning. When the sample is played, it will first begin with a strong attacking sound, subsequently dying off. Not all samples have this type of waveform. However, the relationship between the type of sound and its magnitude is always linear, i.e. the greater the magnitude, the louder the sound. This is important when you wish to select a block for editing.

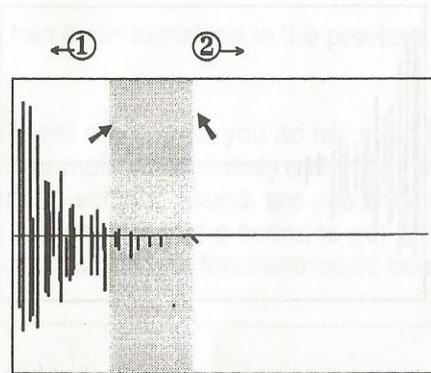
The following section is a step-by-step explanation on the terminology of the screen.

A Block



A block is an enclosure of a section within the time span. It is shown on the screen as a grey or shaded zone. A block can cover the entire screen. (which is the Tetra's default.)

Resizing a Block



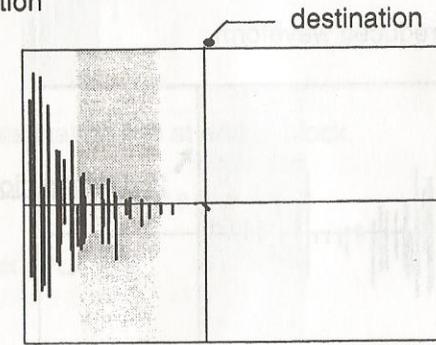
- Mouse :**
1. Use left button to click and hold anywhere along the current left line.
 2. Drag horizontally across the x-axis to a new start of block. Release left mouse button.
 3. Use left button to click and hold anywhere along the current right line.
 4. Drag horizontally across the x-axis to a new end of block. Release left mouse button.

- Keyboard :**
1. **▶** Use [←] or [→] to move to current left line.
▶ Press and hold [Enter]
 2. **▶** Use [←] or [→] to move to new start of block
▶ Release [Enter]
 3. **▶** Use [←] or [→] to move to current right line.
▶ Press and hold [Enter]
 4. **▶** Use [←] or [→] to move to new end of block
▶ Release [Enter]

A Destination

A destination is the starting point at which transformation occurs after selecting an edit function key. It is shown on the screen by a red vertical line. By default, no destination is shown on the screen.

TO Mark a destination



- Mouse :**
1. Click on the right mouse button

- Keyboard :**
1. **▶** Press [Ins]

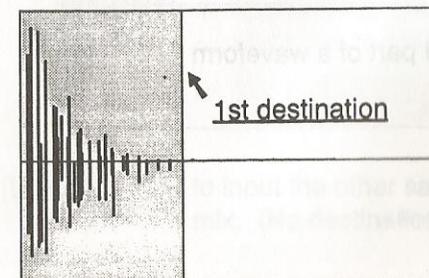
Some Effects of Editing

Echoing...

Note: To produce good echoing effect, the loaded sample must be short spanning not more than half of the x-axis.

An echo is felt when a sound repeats itself in a diminishing manner.

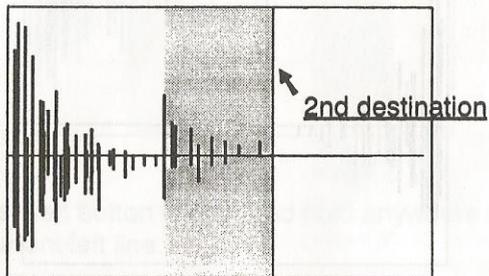
1. Select the entire portion of the waveform.



2. Select a destination that immediately follow end of block.
3. Select [ECHO]

What you get is a similar waveform that is reduced in magnitude. An echo would not sound real if it is only echoed once.

4. Select the reduced waveform.



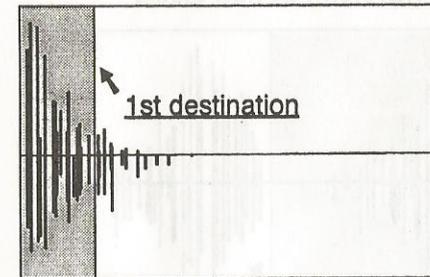
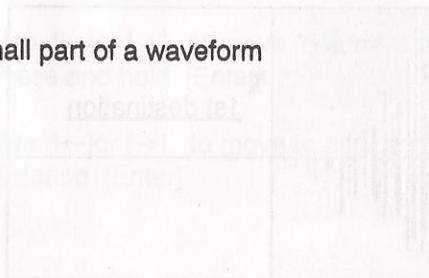
5. Select a new destination, this time, immediately follow the end of new block.
6. Select [ECHO]

There is no absolute number of times an echo should produce. Listen to it and do a few more echoes if necessary. When you are satisfied with its sound, REMEMBER to save your new sample.

Tremelo...

A tremelo is a rapid repetition of a sound. You can use it to create a "machine-gun" effect.

1. Block a small part of a waveform

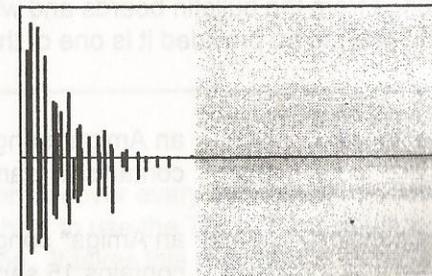


2. Place destination line at end of block.
3. Select [INS] a few times
4. Playback [PLAY.A]

Mixing...

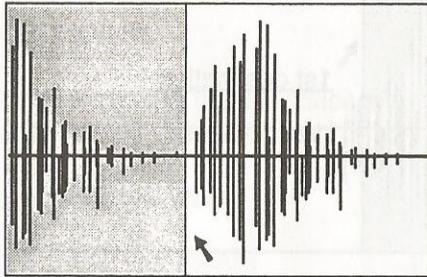
You can mix two samples together. To achieve a pure effect, one has to experiment for a good combination of samples. If one of the samples is too loud or complex, it may cover up the other sample totally.

1. Load a sample on the screen.
2. Select any block that will not include the waveform.



3. Use [LOAD] to input the other sample that you wish to mix. (No destination is required.)

4. Select the shorter waveform as new block.



5. Place destination immediately after new block.
6. Choose [MIX]
7. Use [CUT] to delete first sample, since you have mix it with the 2nd one.
8. Playback [PLAY.A]

The best way to understand the Sampler Editor is not to read about them but to experiment and hear its resultant sample playback.

OTHER FILE FORMATS

If you have previously used other software to compose your songs, or have downloaded some songs from the bulletin boards and wish to use it in the Tetra Compositor, you may do so provided it is one of the file formats listed below:

1. Files with extension, .NST/ an Amiga* song file format which .SD4 contains 31 samples.
2. Files with extension, .MOD/ an Amiga* song file format which .SD2 contains 15 samples.

TO load any of this format, use the Main Screen display function [F1] to load as usual. After editing, you must save in Tetra's Format.

Conclusion

Care has been taken to cover every aspects of the Tetra Compositor. However, knowing how to use the Tetra Compositor is not enough to produce a good song. It takes lots of patience, experience, experimenting and discovering to completely understand this software. Listen to all the songs provided with the Tetra Compositor. You'll know whether it is worthwhile spending your time for!

4. Select the shorter waveform as new block.



5. Place destination immediately after new block.

6. Chances (MIX)

7. Use [CUT] to delete first sample, since you have mixed it with the 2nd one.

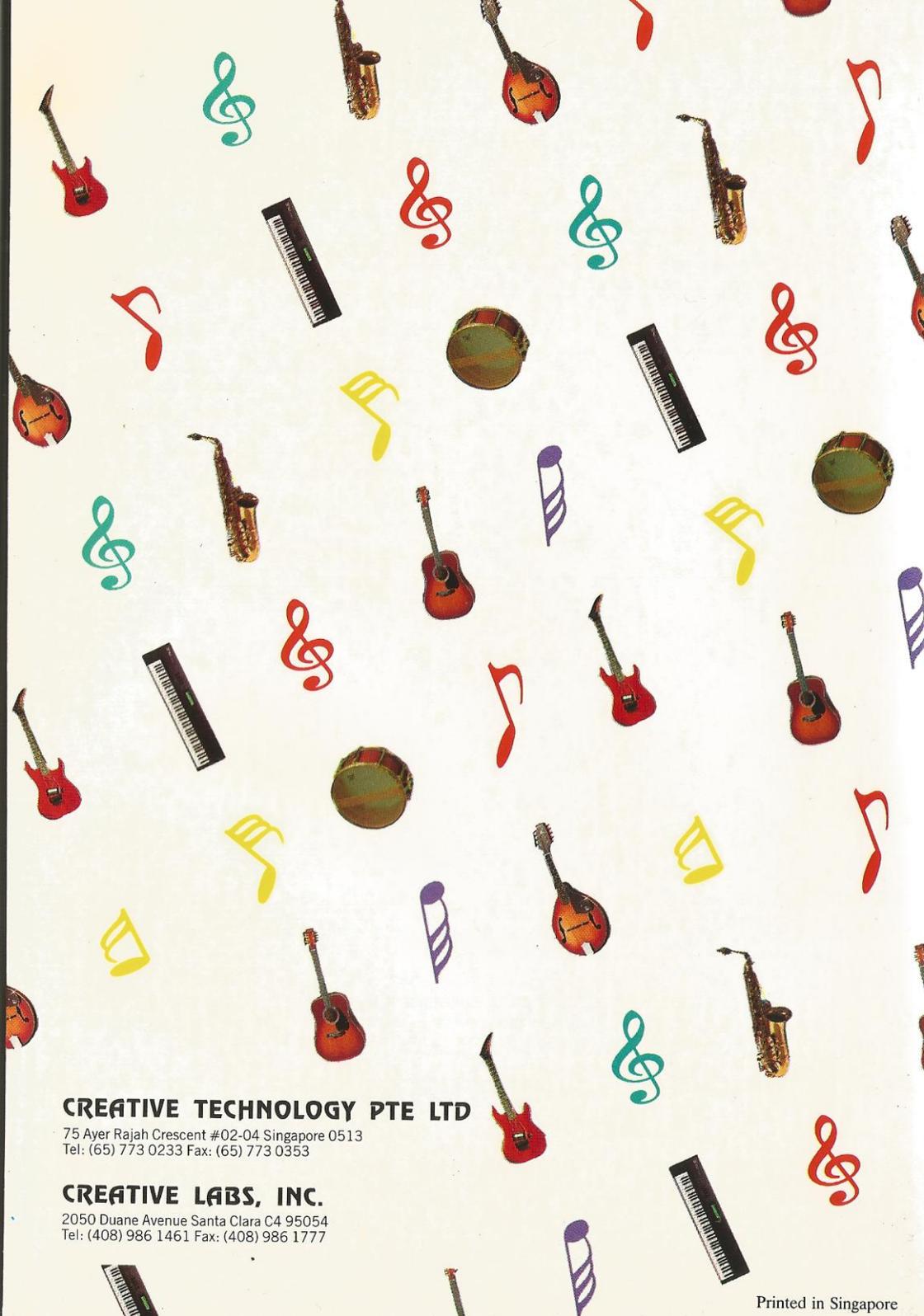
8. Playback (PLAYA)

The best way to understand the Sampler Editor is not to read about them but to experiment and hear the resultant sample playback.

OTHER FILE FORMATS

If you have previously used other software to compose your songs, or have downloaded some songs from the bulletin boards and wish to use it in the Tera Composer, you may do so provided it is one of the file formats listed below.

Files with extension .MIDI or .MID are standard MIDI files which can be imported into the Tera Composer. Care has been taken to cover every aspect of the Tera Composer. However, knowing how to use the Tera Composer is not enough to produce a good song. It takes lots of patience, experience, experimenting and discovering to completely understand this software. Listen to all the songs provided with the Tera Composer. You'll know whether it is worth while spending your time for it. To load any of this format into the Main Screen display, click on the 'Load' button in the Main Screen display. After editing, you must save in Tera's Format.



CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY PTE LTD

75 Ayer Rajah Crescent #02-04 Singapore 0513
Tel: (65) 773 0233 Fax: (65) 773 0353

CREATIVE LABS, INC.

2050 Duane Avenue Santa Clara C4 95054
Tel: (408) 986 1461 Fax: (408) 986 1777