Disaster Area Designs
DMC-6D Quick Start Guide
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Thank you for purchasing a DMC-6D controller! The DMC-6D is a compact MIDI controller designed to help you get the most out of your live looping or DAW rig. The DMC-6D comes factory-programmed with firmware designed to send MIDI messages that you can then map to perform a variety of tasks in Ableton Live or your DAW. Using the DMC-6D, you can launch clips, activate effects, mute tracks, or control the transport in your software application.

Let's Get Started!

Open the box containing your DMC-6D. You should have the pedal and a 10-foot USB cable. To connect your DMC-6D to your DAW or software application, you can use either the 5-pin DIN MIDI interface or USB MIDI. If you're using USB MIDI, the DMC-6D is "class-compliant" and will connect without drivers to most computers and to the Apple iPad (using the Camera Connection Kit.) If you need to update the firmware in your DMC-6D, you may need to install a driver on Windows systems only.
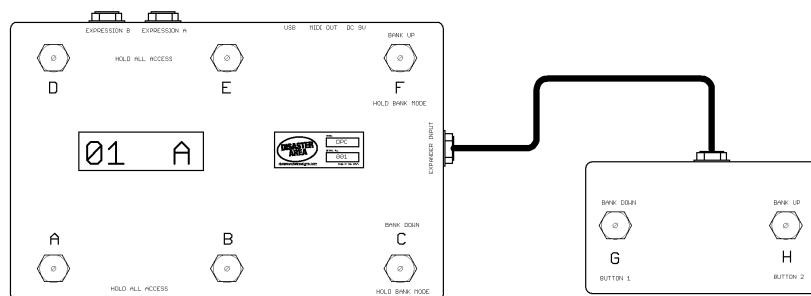
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If you're using the DIN MIDI port, you'll need a USB interface to use with your computer. Disaster Area recommends the M-Audio MIDISPort Uno interface. Check your device's documentation to get it set up. Connect the DIN MIDI output on the DMC-6D to your MIDI interface. If you're using DIN MIDI, you'll also need a 9V power supply capable of supplying 64mA, center pin negative.

For now, try plugging the USB cable in to both your computer and the DMC-6D. You should see the DMC scroll "DISASTER AREA" and then stop in Bank 1. Your computer may take a few moments to recognize the hardware and install the drivers, but after that you should be able to go into the Audio / MIDI setup (Mac) or Device Manager (Windows) and see the "Disaster MIDI" device. You're ready to rock!

Please note that the DMC-6 display may lag behind button presses on some computers if there are no MIDI applications running. That's normal and nothing to worry about – once you start your DAW or other MIDI client application everything will be fast again.

DMC-6D Buttons and Connections

NOTE: The DMC-7D controller is identical to the DMC-6D except that the "H" button is located both on the expander switch jack and on the far right button of the controller.
The DMC-8D is the same as the DMC-6D with G and H buttons on the far right of the controller.

The DMC-6D has six footswitches and three ¼" jacks. The footswitches in the front row are A, B, and C from left to right. The back row has the D, E, and F switches. Pressing any of these buttons will cause the DMC-6D to send out a MIDI note. While you are in Bank 01, the buttons will send MIDI notes 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 for buttons A-F.

To change banks, just press-hold the C or F switches at the far right of the controller. The display will start blinking, indicating that the DMC is ready to change banks. Press C to go down, or press F to go up one bank. You can press-hold the bank buttons to scroll rapidly. Once you reach the bank you want, just tap any button other than the bank buttons – A, B, D, or E.

There is one extra bank you can access from any other bank – the "All Access" bank. To enter All Access, just press-hold any non-bank button: A, B, D, or E. When the controller is in the All Access bank, the display will show "ALL" in the bank indicator. The All-Access bank sends MIDI notes 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 for buttons A-F.

The Expander Switch

The red jack on the DMC-6D is a tip-ring-sleeve (TRS) jack that is designed to connect to the Expander switch. The Expander Switch has three different operating modes, so read about them here to decide which would work best for you. If you're not using the Expander Switch, you can disable this input in the Setup menu.

Mode A – two extra buttons. In this mode, the Expander Switch always sends the same two MIDI notes: Button 1 will send MIDI note 126, and Button 2 will send MIDI note 127. These are useful for functions that you want all the time, like the Stop button or a Tap Tempo command.

Mode B – bank up and down. In this mode, the Expander Switch will change the bank on the DMC-6D. Tap Button 1 on the Expander Switch to go down one bank, or press Button 2 to go up one bank.

Mode C – eight-button mode. In this mode, the Expander Switch adds two extra buttons *per bank!* The Expander Switch buttons will now act as Buttons G and H for the selected bank. Note – in eight-button mode, each bank has eight different notes but there are now only 15 banks total. This is due to a limitation in the number of possible MIDI notes.

Mode 4 – four-button mode. In this mode, the expander switch is disabled and the far right buttons mimic the "Mode A" functionality. Each bank contains only four messages, and buttons C and F send MIDI notes 126 and 127 in all banks.

Expression Pedals

 The two black jacks on the rear panel of the DMC-6D are tip-ring-sleeve expression pedal inputs. Expression A is on the right, B is on the left when viewing the DMC-6D display.

Tip = 0-5V signal
Ring = 5V
Sleeve = Ground

The expression inputs are compatible with the Roland EV-5, the Mission EP-1, and many other popular expression pedals. If you're not sure about a particular expression pedal, please feel free to contact us at Disaster Area Designs.

The Expression pedals send MIDI CC, which can be configured in the Setup menu.

The Setup Menu:

The DMC-6D will run a power-on test, during which time the display will scroll "*di SAStEr ArEA.*" To configure the unit, press and hold Button F during the power-on test. The display will scroll "*SEtUP.*"

Configuration Options: Tap Buttons A, B, D, or E on the DMC-6D to select a setting. Tap Button C or Button D to increase or decrease the current value. Press-hold Button E to save – the display will flash "*SAUE.*"

Button A – Expression Pedal Input A – "*A*"
        OFF – Disables Expression Input A
        1 - 127 – Expression Input sends MIDI CC 1-127
Button B – Expression Pedal Input B – "B"
        OFF – Disables Expression Input B
        1 - 127 – Expression Input sends MIDI CC 1-127
Button D – MIDI Channel "C"
        1 - 16 – DMC-6D sends MIDI messages on indicated channel
Button E – Extender Switch Input – "S"
        OFF – Disables Extender Switch input
        A – Extender Switch sends MIDI notes 126 (tip) and 127 (ring.)
        b – Extender Switch increases and decreases DMC-6D bank
        C – Sets DMC-6D to "8-Button Mode." Extender Switch sends "*9*" and "*H*" messages in each bank. In this mode, the DMC-6D has 15 banks of 8 messages, rather than 20 banks of 6.
        4 – Sets DMC-6D to "4-Button Mode." Extender Switch is disabled. Each bank sends only 4 messages, buttons C and F send MIDI notes 126 and 127 in all modes.