Opening NIFF files

The NIFF file converter is only available in Sibelius 2.1 for Windows.

The Notation Interchange File Format (NIFF to its friends) was an attempt by a number of music software companies to create a universal computer file format for notation, in much the same way as MIDI is the universal format for music playback. The format has found support in a number of smaller music notation applications, such as Sharpeye, SmartScore and Lime.

Sibelius's built-in file converter allows you to open NIFF files and save them as Sibelius files.

Opening a NIFF file

NIFF files usually have the file extension **.niff** or **.nif**. To open a NIFF file, simply choose **File ▸ Open** (shortcut ⌘O *or* **Ctrl+O**). After a few moments, the file will open and can be edited, played back, transposed and so on as if you had entered it yourself.

Known problems

As with all file converters, the resulting file in Sibelius may not look exactly like the original file. The purpose of the file converter is to *save you time*, not to convert every score so that it is identical to the original.

- You should ensure that the NIFF files you wish to convert are not stored in a read-only folder, e.g. on CD-ROM. Copy the NIFF files to a folder which can be written to, e.g. your computer's Desktop.
- Different products interpret the NIFF specification differently, so you should expect variable results.
- The most popular package that supports NIFF is probably Lime; however, Lime does not always produce fully standard-compliant NIFF files, particularly in scores which use 'grand staff' (two staves joined by a brace, e.g. piano, organ, harp, etc.) instruments. These files may not open at all, or convert with odd defects.

Supported 'chunks'

The following is an approximate list of the musical and formatting information supported by the NIFF standard. Within the NIFF specification these are normally referred to as 'chunks'. Italicized text refers to chunks not currently supported by the NIFF file converter, and those marked with an asterisk are partly implemented. Specific comments about the way certain chunks are imported into Sibelius are given in parentheses.

- Accidentals
  - Double flat
  - Flat
  - Natural
  - Sharp
  - Double sharp
  - Quarter tone flat
  - Three quarter tones flat
  - Quarter tone sharp
  - Three quarter tones sharp
- Alternative ending graphic (e.g. 1st/2nd time bars).
- *Arpeggio line*
- Articulation
  - Strong accent
  - Medium accent
  - Light accent
  - Staccato
  - Down bow
  - Up bow
  - Harmonic
  - Fermata
  - Arsis sign
  - Thesis sign
  - Plus sign
  - Vertical filled wedge (staccatissimo)

- Double tonguing (two dots)
- Triple tonguing (three dots)
- Snap pizzicato
- *Augmentation dot*
- Barline
- Beam
- *Chord Symbols*
- Clef (several clefs either appear on the wrong line, or the notes are transposed)
  - G Clef
  - F Clef
  - C Clef
  - Percussion
  - Double G Clef
  - TAB
  - 8av/15av markings
- *Custom graphic marking*
- Dynamic
  - pppp
  - ppp
  - pp
  - p
  - mp
  - mf
  - f
  - ff
  - fff
  - ffff
  - sp
  - sf
  - sfz
  - fz
  - fp
  - cresc.
  - crescendo
  - dim.
  - diminuendo
- EPS Graphic
- *Figured bass*
- Fingering
- Formatting information for page/staff
- *Glissando*
- Grace notes*
- *Guitar frame (grid)*
- *Guitar TAB (number)*
- Hairpin
- *Harp pedal diagram*
- Key Signature (cancellation key signatures taking you back to no sharps or flats are not imported)
  - Standard

- *Non-standard* (Not supported by Sibelius)
- Line
- Lyric
- Measure/bar Numbering
- *MIDI Data*
- *NIFF font symbol (Music Font)*
- *NIFF information*
- Notehead
  - Breve
  - Whole
  - Half
  - Filled
  - Open Diamond
  - Solid Diamond
  - X Notehead
  - Open X Notehead
  - Filled guitar slash
  - Open Guitar slash
  - Filled square
  - Open square
  - Filled triangle
  - Open triangle.
- Octave sign*
- Ornament*
  - Mordent
  - Inverted mordent
  - Double long mordent
  - Inverted double long mordent
  - Turn
  - Inverted turn
  - Trill (tr)
  - Trill (2 bumps)
  - Trill (3 bumps)
  - Trill (long wavy line)
  - Long trill with uphook at start
  - Long trill with down hook at start
- *Ossia*
- Page Header
- *Parenthesis/bracket – various*
- *Part information*
- Pedal (piano) – various*
- Pedal (organ) - various
- *Portamento*
- Rehearsal mark (plain/boxed/circled)*
- Repeat sign - various
- Rest
  - Breve
  - Whole

- Half
- Quarter
- Eighth
- Sixteenth
- 32nd
- 64th
- 128th
- 256th
- Slur (currently converted as non-magnetic slurs)
- Staff Grouping/formatting info
- Stem
- *System separation mark*
- *Tag activation/inactivation*
- Tempo marking
- *Tempo marking non-standard*
- Text
- Tie
- Time Signature (common time and cut common produce time signatures of 1/512 and 2/512 respectively)
- *Time Signature non-standard*
- Tremolo
- Tuplet*