

Ztar troubleshooting

The instrument will not power-up:

*If the display is **not** lit or only dimly lit:*

Make sure you have a good MIDI cable with wires connecting **all 5 pins** end-to-end.

Make sure you have the correct DC adapter and it is working. Our instruments require 9VDC @ 500mA.

Make sure you are plugged into the correct MIDI connector.

Make sure the power switch is ON.

*If you see the display **is** lit, the instrument is getting power.*

The little black squares across the top line are normal.

If no characters appear on the display and you know for certain that your DC wall adapter is a good one, then the onboard CPU is not running or there is a problem in the display. Call the factory in that event.

The instrument powers-up but I don't hear any music when I play it.

Make sure the volume hasn't turned off for the channel you're using. Turn your volume knob a bit to reset the volume. Make sure any pedals or other devices that are programmed for Volume messages are plugged in correctly and are turned up.

Make sure the Ztar and the Synth are set to the same channel(s).

Make sure your synth has a patch/sample assigned to the channel you're using.

If the MIDI monitor light is blinking on your synth then you're sending MIDI from the Ztar.

The Keys, Expression Pads, Triggers, or any other velocity-sensing devices on the Ztar do not respond to a light touch.

And when they do respond it seems the sound is too loud or the velocity is too high.

If you adjust the R20 Trimpot mounted on the CPU card inside of the Ztar you can lower the minimum Sensing level of the instrument to optimize the bottom end of your dynamic range. If the instrument is made somewhat too sensitive it will tend to glitch in response to various 'noise' factors in the environment. If the r20 trimpot is turned all of the way clockwise for maximum sensitivity the instrument will lock up entirely and may fire random notes or other MIDI messages. Just turn the pot back the other way a bit to bring the Ztar back to operation.

String Triggers vibrate excessively:

If the strings are vibrating excessively it sounds like they are loose. Either the clamping screw is not clamping or the tensioning screw is not tensioning. When

the strings are tensioned properly you can make sure they are properly seated over the felt damper by the absence of any buzz or hard 'click' when you pick the string. It's natural sound should be fairly deadened offering very little sense of any pitch. You should be able to adjust the tension from 'no tension at all' to something much tighter than any real guitar.

The String Triggers seem to respond unevenly.

Try the trimpot adjustments described in the manual. They really do affect the performance. They are adjusted at the factory to make the strings as sensitive as possible without triggering from simply touching them. Also, be aware of the muting function that is always active on the Strings. If your hand is resting on the strings or the tailpiece screws while you're picking the notes may clip or simply not play. In general, the muting function and fingerpicking styles will be affected by changes in humidity and the dampness of your skin. You may find that picking and muting are sluggish when you first pick up the instrument on a given day but that everything picks up after you play for a bit when your hands have warmed up. Aren't electronics great?!

A fingerboard Key seems to be jammed. What can I do?

Lay the instrument upside-down on your lap. Gently slap the back of the neck to dislodge any crumbs that may have fallen into a key slot. Do **not** spray any solvents or lubricants into the fingerboard or dig around the keys with sharp objects.

The StringTriggers seem to play low-volume notes when I just barely touch them or sometimes play by themselves:

The string trimpots are set too 'hot'. You can tell when you just touch the strings and they play without plucking them. You want them to mute when you touch them lightly. Also if they're too hot you'll hear ghost notes in particular with fingerstyle as the finger and the nail can generate two notes on one stroke.

1) Have you tried to adjust the StringTrigger Gain trimpots in the back of the instrument? What happened? Less gain should make the response less 'jumpy'. To some degree this seemed to be a problem with the larger strings.

2) The guitar strings we use are .038". The gauge isn't too critical but the very light strings will be a bit less sensitive and very heavy (bass) strings will be sensitive but with some loss of dynamic range.

3) If you pick one string and another one rings then the gain on the other one is too high. Turn it down with the trimpot adjustment.

With a StringTriggered Ztar how do I get my add-on KeyTrigger option to trigger individual strings like a guitar?

Your add-on TriggerPads are programmed as Pads 1-6 in the Sensor menu. When you power up the Ztar they will be playing the ChordTrigger function which is the default assignment for all of the Pads. These add-on KeyTriggers will be programmed as Pads#1-6. The StringTriggers are listed in the menu as 'Triggers' and are programmed independently of the Pads. In order to make the add-on TriggerCap respond like Triggers, program them to 'SingleKey' Re-Trigger' which allows any pad or sensor to trigger whatever is fretted for the programmed channel on the fingerboard. So for instance, if the entire fingerboard is set to Channel #1 and you set Pad#1 to Re-Trigger MIDI Channel#1 then whatever you have fretted on the fingerboard will trigger when you touch just the one pad. And if you want to emulate the six StringTriggers instead, you would assign the fingerboard to six channels, one per string as in the '6-String' ROM-preset, and then assign each of the TriggerPads to Re-Trigger the corresponding channels, 1 through 6. It's best to save this configuration into a User Preset for easy recall later.

Sometimes while I'm playing the sound will disappear or one sound in a multi-layered patch will disappear. It's really annoying. What can I do?

Occasional random volume glitches occurred in older ztars. I would've thought yours was too new for this but maybe not. The problem was solved in new units with our current CPU card. We can upgrade your card or you can call the factory for instructions to fix this yourself if you have some electronics experience.

If you're not using a volume pedal, take a bare 1/4" stereo plug and short together the tip and ring of the plug. When you insert this into the volume pedal jack it will appear as if the pedal is installed and is full on. Another solution is to simply "no assign" the volume pedal if you're not using it; assuming that when this problem occurs, it's channel #1 that disappears because that is the default channel assignment for the volume pedal and volume knob.

Another solution is to assign the offending sensor to Volume Down instead of Volume Up. Then if there is a glitch to a very small value, the volume will go the other direction.

Or, assign it to ModWheel and if there's a glitch you'll get a mysterious vibrato.

In general, only MIDI messages can emanate from the controller. And, the controller can only send what it's programmed to send. So if there's a synth problem and you believe the controller is at fault, look around in the Sensor-

menu to see what is assigned to what. Disable or change the assignment to a Sensor you suspect to be the offender. This should isolate the problem.

Whenever I put the menu-cursor over a screen-value, the number will immediately scroll all the way to the end of the list. Also there seems to be a steady stream of MIDI messages going to my synth. What's up?

The joystick is stuck one way or the other. Maybe just a little. It may be out of adjustment or defective. Its internal cable connector may have fallen off which is possible if you've been fooling around in there. See if you can move the joystick to make the problem stop. If not, call the factory.

I tried to program something to the Joystick and soon found that some of the sounds I was using disappeared. I changed to another onboard preset like "6-STRING" but only some of the sounds were working and only part of the fingerboard will play notes. What happened? Is there any way to reset the instrument?

Some of the presets have the Joystick programmed to do channel crossfades. Crossfade works by changing the volume settings on at least two MIDI channels. If you shut off the volume to a MIDI channel and then leave the preset that sent the message, you may have no way to turn it back on, without returning to that preset.

- 1) Hit PANIC to clear all CC messages. This is a MIDI 'reset'.
- 2) Notice in the FRETBOARD/MIDI menu the setting, 'P&V Enable'. If you turn this ON for your active zones and save this as a new preset to a USER location, then when you select it, it will automatically reset the Volume for those Zones.
- 2) Use a MIDI monitor program in your PC, like MidiOx (freeware) or Cakewalk to see what you're actually sending.

Also, the defaults in the Ztar are the fingerboard usually to Channel#1 and the Triggers (when they're not triggering the fingerboard) and Pads to Channel #10. Probably you've turned off the volume on Ch#1. Check the MIDI monitor LED on the front of your synth to see if the synth is receiving MIDI.

When I hit PANIC! It drives one of my synths crazy! Lots of random notes seem to fly out!

The Ztar Panic! Function takes the brute force approach and sends a Note-Off to every note on every channel. Then it resets every ContinuousController on every channel. This is over 2000 MIDI messages going out at a pretty good clip and which can overrun the input data buffer of some older synths causing the synth to choke on the data then play out a crush of notes or crash completely. We did this because not all synths support AllNotesOff and other less complete Note-Off

broadcast routines might miss some random clinkers. There haven't been enough complaints to warrant changing the software.

The instrument is supposed to have the NeckSensor bend control and I can't get it to work. At the risk of being insulting, is it even installed on the instrument? If it is, where are the parameters to turn it on and off and set sensitivity levels?

The Neckstrip is hard to see sometimes as it's just a very thin strip on the thumb-side of the fingerboard where the side dots appear, and it's just the width of the fingerboard thickness and side-dotted so you might not notice it. You program it in the Sensor-menu as 'NeckStrip'. Just scroll through the list of sensors until you see the name toward the end of the list.

My joystick seems to be always on a little. It's bending the pitch and I can't use the screen-editor either.

- 1) Change the DC power supply, wall-wart.
- 2) Check the MIDI cable to the ztar.
- 3) Make sure the stick is moving freely and doesn't have rough spots in its travel. If it does, remove the cap, or the entire stick (you'll have to open the back to do that) and investigate for the presence of a foreign obstruction.
- 4) The stick may have worn out and we can send out another one or you can return the ax and we'll replace it here.

