np.LiveDeck
User's Manual

LiveDeck is a **Max 4 Live audio effect** and **Live API utility** tool that features a three-band equaliser, a combo-filter (*LP/HP*), a simple limiter, and an advanced looper section (*with 8 hot cue slots*), that always controls the currently playing audio clip on given track in Session View.

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OVERVIEW

LiveDeck was created by drawing inspiration from DJ mixers and CD players and introducing some of their features in Ableton Live's Session View and clip looping.

LiveDeck is an *Audio Effect* and is intended to work with *audio clips*, but since an Audio Effect can be applied on MIDI Tracks as well, some of its functions might still work with MIDI clips, however it is not considered intended use and hence there might be some unexpected results.

Audio clips on track need to be launched from a clip slot in *Session View* and must be **warp**ed in order for Looper Section to work properly.

Using LiveDeck as **only** an Audio Effect *without* utilising the Live API Looper is a valid use case for *MIDI Track*s or *Grouped Track*s in Ableton Live, since the audio effects part of the device is universally applicable to any incoming audio signal on any track (*MIDI/Audio/Group*).
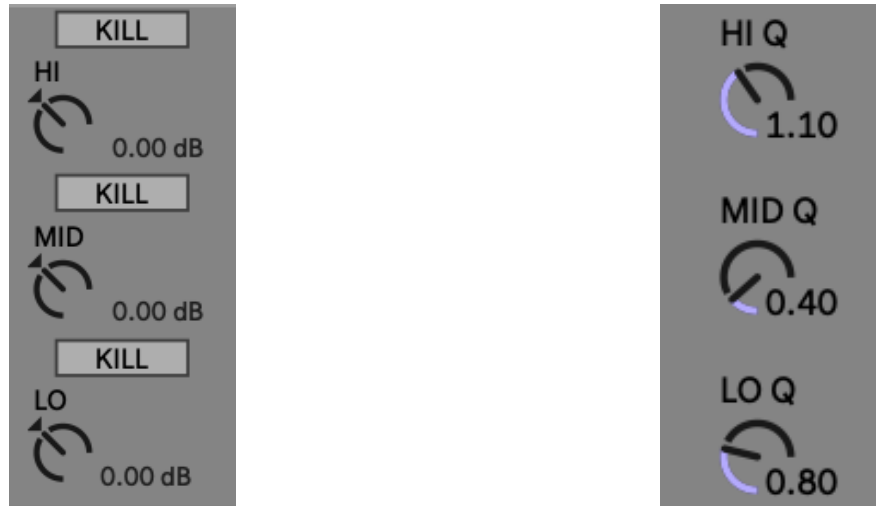
All GUI elements are MIDI mappable, automation-enabled and have an InfoView description.

AUDIO EFFECTS

THREE-BAND EQ

While EQ band frequencies are not adjustable by the user, a selection of built-in presets are available to choose from that resemble mixers from well-known manufacturers around the world.

The Q values for each band are adjustable by the user, but their default values are 0.8 0.4 and 1.1 for LO-MID-HI respectively. This section can be found by expanding the device width by clicking on the + icon in the bottom right corner of the interface.
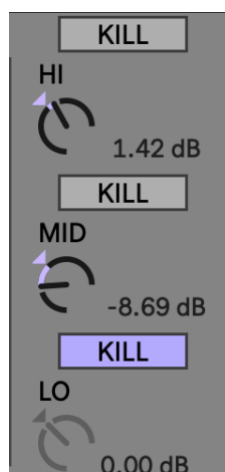
GAIN DIALS

The Gain dials adjust a relative gain applied to their respective EQ bands with having the value zero in the middle of the dials. Turning the dial clockwise results in a boosted gain, turning the dial counter-clockwise results in a reduced gain on given EQ band.

The applied range of the Gain dials is from -24 dB to +12 dB.

KILL SWITCHES

There is a KILL switch for each band, enabling it will apply -60 dB to the LO band, -36 dB to the MID band and -48 dB to the HI band and will deactivate the respective Gain dial(s).

Disabling the KILL switch will send out the current value from its respective Gain dial.

EQ Presets

Similar to other DJ software, LiveDeck enables the user to select between the built-in EQ presets to choose the LO, MID and HI band frequencies. The user can select from the following presets:
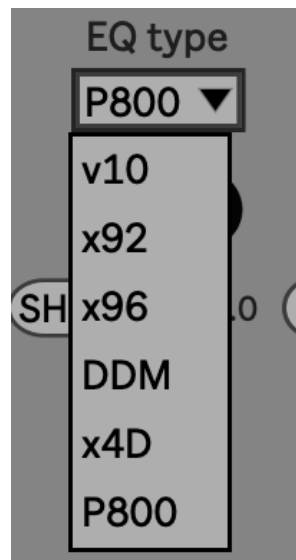

v10 - This EQ preset references a DJ mixer from a well-known Japanese manufacturer.
The three bands are the following: *LO 200 Hz / MID 1200 Hz / HI 2 kHz*

x92 - This EQ preset references a DJ mixer from a well-known British manufacturer.
The three bands are the following: *LO 250 Hz / MID 2000 Hz / HI 2.5 kHz*

x96 - This EQ preset references a DJ mixer from a well-known British manufacturer.
The three bands are the following: *LO 180 Hz / MID 1100 Hz / HI 3 kHz*

DDM - This EQ preset references a DJ mixer from a well-known German manufacturer.
The three bands are the following: *LO 330 Hz / MID 1400 Hz / HI 4.2 kHz*

x4D - This EQ preset references a DJ mixer from a well-known British manufacturer.
The three bands are the following: *LO 120 Hz / MID 1400 Hz / HI 10 kHz*

P800 - This EQ preset references a DJ mixer from a well-known Japanese manufacturer.
The three bands are the following: *LO 70 Hz / MID 10 kHz / HI 13 kHz*

COMBO-FILTER

The device features a Combo Filter that is controlled by a single dial.

COMBO-FILTER OVERVIEW

The Combo Filter is inactive when the dial is in the middle position and/or has the value of zero. The Combo Filter is also subject to the "Filter" switch state (*this is for easier MIDI mapping purposes*).
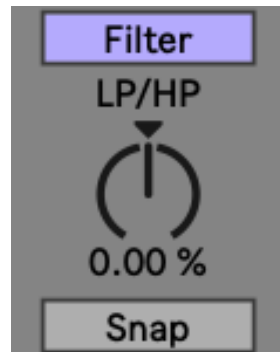
Turning the LP/HP dial counter-clockwise will apply a Low-Pass Filter to the incoming audio signal sweeping the Cutoff Frequency down from 8500 Hz to 20 Hz.

Turning the LP/HP dial clockwise will apply a High-Pass Filter to the incoming audio signal sweeping the Cutoff Frequency up from 0 Hz to 8500 Hz.

The LP/HP filter end frequencies can't be adjusted by the user in the current version.

SNAP MODE

The user can enable "**Snap**" to automatically retract the dial (*in 10 ms*) to the value of zero, effectively switching the filter off with a mouse/touchpad click release.

Please note that this only works with a mouse or touchpad cursor and nothing else!

LIMITER

There a simple built-in limiter that only serves to limit the end signal at zero dB. The user can enable or disable the limiter and can select from the two available response modes - *Punchy* and *Smooth*.

Punchy response yields extremely short attack and release times, useful for transparent limiting, or to create loudness. However, if overused, intermodulation distortion may result.

Smooth response uses longer attack and release times. The result is still a fast look-ahead limiter, but with less intermodulation distortion and less punch.
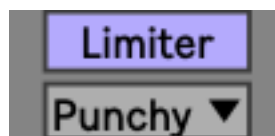
LOOPER

LOOPER OVERVIEW

LiveDeck functions as a powerful dynamic Live API utility tool that enables the user to loop specific parts of the currently playing audio clip of the given Audio Track in Session View.

*Note: audio clips have to be warped, otherwise looping for the clip is disabled by Live.*

Since the device always asks the Live API for the currently playing clip on the Track, mapping a MIDI controller to the GUI provides the user with a dynamic clip looper with 8 hot cue slots to use for DJ setups.
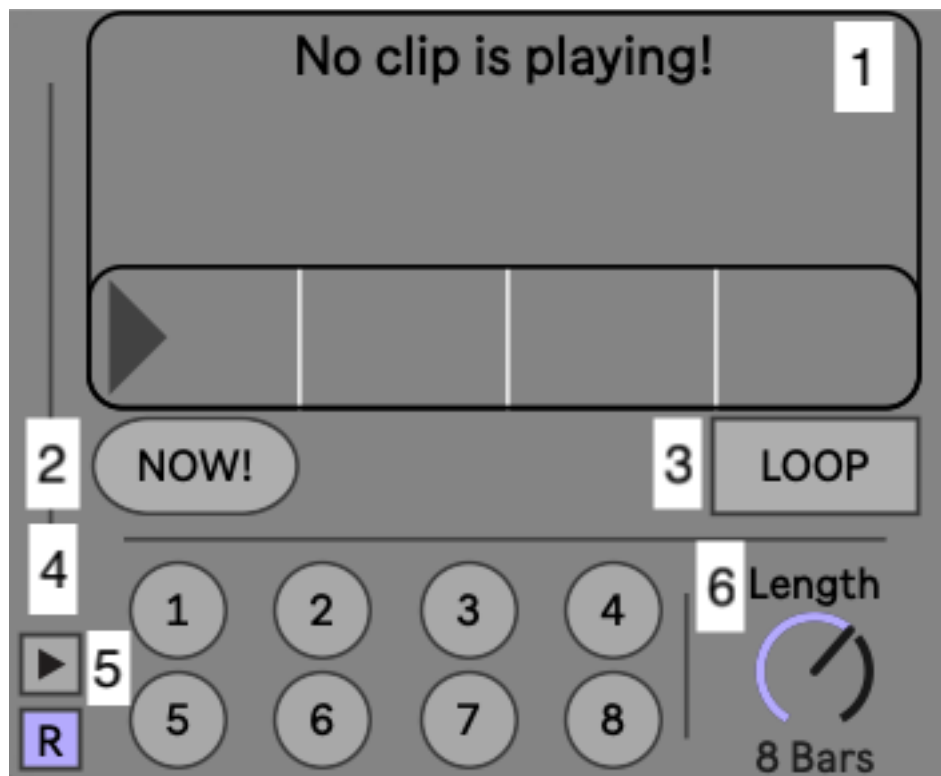
1 – Clip display
2 – NOW button
3 – LOOP switch
4 – CUE mode selectors
5 – CUE slots
6 – Loop length

CLIP DISPLAY
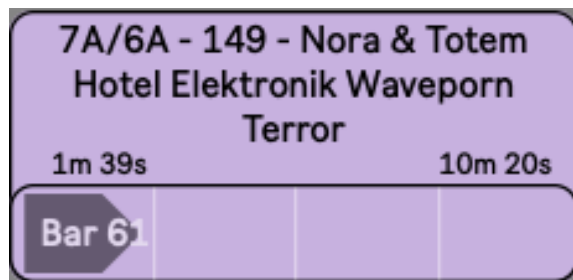
Displays clip colour
Displays clip name and length
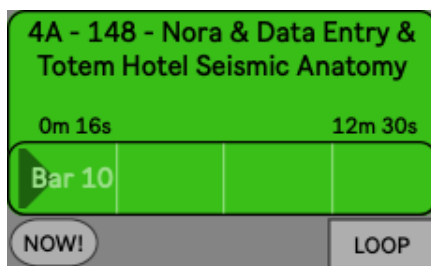Displays elapsed/remaining time
Displays total clip time

PROGRESS BAR
Displays Playhead (in Bars)
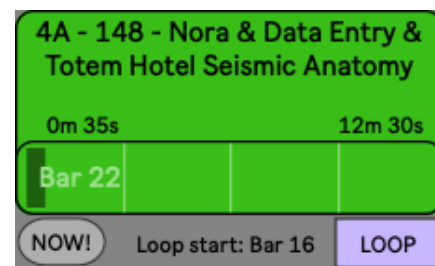Displays CUE points (if any)

PROGRESS BAR

The Progress Bar features a pointy end if looping is OFF and displays a solid colour.

The Progress Bar is rectangular and is blinking intermittently if looping is ON.

Looping is OFF

Looping is ON

LOOP SWITCH

The LOOP switch toggles clip looping off and on. In Live, looping within a clip is only enabled if said audio clip is warped. Toggling the LOOP switch on its own doesn't set any start or end points for the loop, this simply enables or disables looping within the clip altogether.

NOW BUTTON

The NOW button is used to set a starting point for the loop and turn looping on immediately. The loop is always subject to the predefined length (see below). The behaviour of the NOW button IS NOT subject to the CUE Store Mode (see below) and always sends the trigger when the NOW button is PRESSED down.

The current time will be measured in BARS and will always be rounded **downwards** (*i.e. hitting NOW after Bar 71 but any time before Bar 72 will set the loop start to Bar 71 even if the point in time would be closer to Bar 72*).

The starting position of the loop is displayed in Bars.

LOOP LENGTH

The length of the loop can be defined by adjusting the Length dial. There are 12 values that can be selected (indexed from zero) and the measure is displayed separately (i.e. "2 Bars").

The reason for this is that Ableton Live doesn't allow adjusting the range of MIDI mapping to a parameter that has "enumerated" values, which might be useful if the user would like to narrow down the Loop Length range when adjusting it with a potentiometer or slider on a MIDI controller.
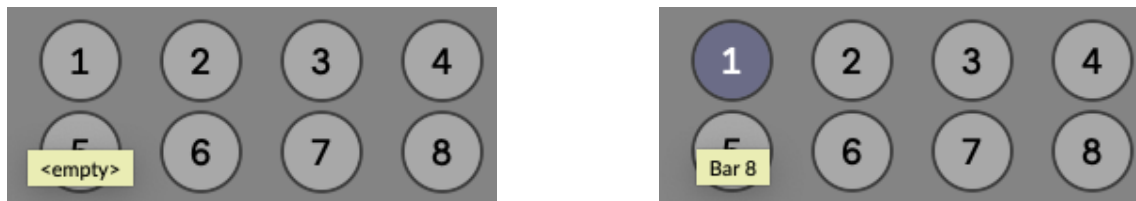
CUE SLOTS

The device features a total of 8 HOT CUE slots in which the user can store a point in time to jump to. The CUE buttons are subject to CUE Store Mode and CUE Launch Mode settings.

If the CUE button is grey, it has no value stored inside. Hovering with the mouse shows a pop-up labelled <empty> if there is no CUE point stored.

If the CUE button is purple, it has a value stored inside. Hovering with the mouse shows not only a pop-up with the stored CUE point displayed, but also shows a blinking line in the Progress Bar to indicate the location of the stored CUE point.

Changing the currently playing audio clip on track results in all CUE points being deleted.

The starting point for the warped clip might not equal to the starting point of the loop by default if looping is turned on; as a result of this if the user jumps back to the beginning of the clip (*restarting playback*) launching a stored CUE slot might result in the playhead not jumping to the loop start point immediately (*This is the same behaviour as if you were doing this with a mouse in the clip view in Live as well*).

Launching the CUE point WITHOUT jumping back to clip start (*restarting playback*) however results in the playhead jumping back and forth to the previously stored CUE point; "hot cue"-s are stored as the playhead progresses over a certain point in time; therefore, it can indeed then jump back and forth on the timeline when launching the respective CUE button.

CUE STORE MODE

Toggle between the two available modes; if the PLAY icon is lit, storing a new CUE point will also turn looping ON immediately, if it's unlit, it won't loop, but only store a CUE point.

It is turned OFF by default.

CUE LAUNCH MODE

if **P** is displayed, CUE points will send out their triggers when the button is PRESSED.
If **R** is displayed, CUE points will send out their triggers once the button is RELEASED.

It is set to RELEASE by default.

DELETING A CUE POINT

The user can delete a stored CUE point by holding the SHIFT key on the keyboard and clicking on the CUE button you want to delete. If you're using a MIDI controller for your performance, there is a SHIFT button that is MIDI mappable that functions the same as holding the key on your keyboard.

DEVICE UPDATER

The user can look for the latest available version number stored on the server by holding the SHIFT key and clicking on the NP logo on the device. This will ask for the version number stored on server and compare it against the local version number. Shall the local number be lesser than the one on server, an update prompt will ask the user if they want to update.

Clicking *Yes* results on a browser window opening the product page from where the latest version is available for download.

Note: Internet connection is required.

FAQ & TROUBLESHOOTING

DEVICE IS ON BUT THERE IS NO SOUND

Check if *KILL switch*es are active; they can apply such a harsh filtering to the sound that little to no amplitude can pass by (i.e. if all 3 KILL switches are ON under certain EQ presets).

Check if *Combo-Filter dial* isn't set to an extreme end-value such as -100% or +100%; this can result in the filtered sound consisting only of 20 Hz and below *(-100%)* or 8500 Hz and above *(+100%)*, therefore little to no spectral range is passed through as an end result.

Check if controlled *Audio Clip* has enough amplitude/volume set and/or if there is an envelope or other modulation source that controls said parameter.

Try *switching LiveDeck off and on* again; turning it off results in the device unmapping from any clip and defaults the access to the Live API altogether.

THERE IS NO CLIP LENGTH SHOWN

Check if currently playing clip is indeed an audio clip. LiveDeck should also display the length of unwarped audio clips as well. Please note that looping is not available for unwarped clips.

PRESSING THE LOOP BUTTON MAKES THE PLAYHEAD JUMP BACK IN TIME

In Live if the playhead in the clip is past the loop end point, turning the loop on once again results in such behaviour.

PRESSING THE LOOP BUTTON DOESN'T RESULT IN ANYTHING

Check if currently playing clip is indeed an audio clip; check if said audio clip is indeed warped. Looping in a clip is only available if said audio clip is warped.

FEEDBACK

If none of the FAQ & Troubleshooting sections provide you with a solution and/or you're experiencing non-documented behaviour, please do let me know in an email at ino@norapatches.com and add the word "feedback" somewhere in the subject field.