

# A fast way to convert BIAB\* songs to MMA songs

Kara Music Production

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\*Band in a box

## 1 What is this about ?

This document has been written for lazy people, like me, who have a lot of BIAB songs and would like to convert these into MMA songs without rewriting all the chords.

## 2 Procedure

### 2.1 What you will need ?

- If you are reading this, I suppose you already have MMA and BIAB. If you don't have BIAB (any version will do) then I can't help you. If you don't have MMA, you can download it from the MMA home site: <http://users.xplornet.com/~bvdp/mma/index.html>.
- To convert the BIAB songs to MMA songs, Mr Alain Brenzikofer has written a Perl script to extract the chords and write them into a MMA song file. You can get his script at [http://www.brenzi.ch/builder.php?content=projects\\\_biabconverter](http://www.brenzi.ch/builder.php?content=projects\_biabconverter).
- Obviously you will need Perl. If you have a Linux box it's probably already installed. To test just open a terminal and type `<perl>`, otherwise refer to the procedure of your linux distribution on how to get it (aptget, rpm manager, etc.) , in the worst case you can download it directly from [www.perl.org](http://www.perl.org).  
If you have a Windows box and you don't know Perl then you won't have it installed—Perl is not part of the standard Windows OS. To get it your best bet (and easiest way to install it) is [www.activestate.com/Products/ActivePerl](http://www.activestate.com/Products/ActivePerl).
- You will also need the special BIAB styles that we have developed and which are available on [www.kara-moon.com](http://www.kara-moon.com). These are simple BIAB styles, which can be loaded with the standard style-loader in BIAB

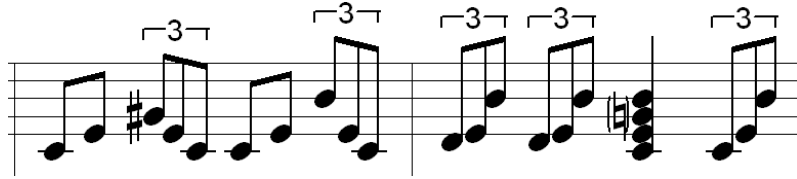
This article doesn't explain how to install Perl on your system or how to use a system terminal (DOS prompt on windows systems), this is way beyond the scoop of this document.

### 2.2 Procedure

The tool that Mr. Brenzikofer has developed is a very nice tool and it does exactly what it promises to do. The problem is that some BIAB styles are quit complicated which give a song where the chords are very difficult to analyze.

This is not a shortcoming of the tool, even humans have sometimes difficulties to analyze exactly the chord that are supposed to be played. Proof of this statement is the number of fake books that are on the market which contain chords that are wrong in some spots.

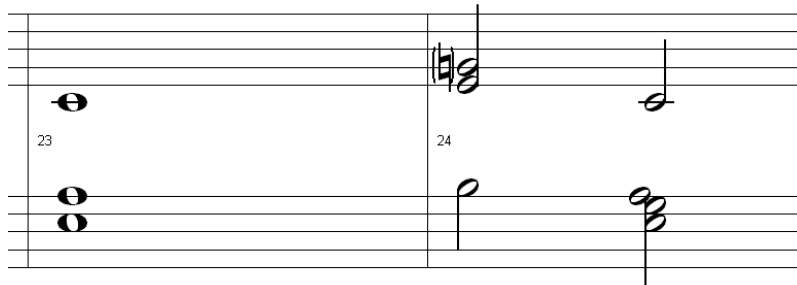
Look at the following picture; this is just 2 bars of a piano track generated by BIAB.



As you can see, the used BIAB style composes a lot of arpeggios and this could make it difficult for the converter to recognize the chords that you want.

To avoid this problem, we at Kara Music Production have developed a utility style that will play only sustained chords on the piano, guitar & string channel and the root of the chord at the bass channel. This will help the converter to recognize the chords in the song.

Using our style 'Sustain4' will give you the following notes. As you can see, here it is easy for you and the converter to recognize which chords to play.



The usage is pretty simple:

- Download the utility style from the kara-moon website and copy in your usual BIAB style directory.
- Load the song you want to convert into BIAB.
- Change the style to our Sustain style. Remember, use Sustain3 for a waltz, Sustain4 for 4/4 songs.
- Now press 'Play' and BIAB will recompose the song using our Sustain style.
- Save the song under a different name. To make things easy you might want to create a new directory for the converted songs.
- Now open a terminal and type `<perl biabconverter yoursong.biabextension>` and the converter software will create for you `yoursong.mma` which you will be able to open with a standard text editor.
- It goes even a bit further: Each time there is a substyle change in the BIAB song, it will insert "Substyle X" as a comment in your MMA song. It is an easy matter for you to replace those comments by the appropriate MMA groove.

## 3 Feedback

This a draft document, if you have ideas to make it better or you want to give other feedback, there two ways to do this.

1. Join our forum at [www.kara-moon.com](http://www.kara-moon.com) and leave a comment in the MMA section. This is the preferred way.
2. You can also send feedback by e-mail to [kara@kara-moon.com](mailto:kara@kara-moon.com)

We want to thank:

- Bob van der Poel for the development of an amazing musicians tool called MMA.
- Alain Brenzikofer for the development of the BIAB converter.
- Bob van de Poel for the feedback on this document.