

# Avid Sibelius Comparison Guide

This table identifies differences in features and functionality between the three tiers of Sibelius® on macOS and Windows: Sibelius First, Sibelius Artist, and Sibelius Ultimate.

Features that are not currently available with Sibelius for mobile on iPad or iPhone are called out in **bold**.

**Sibelius First** A great introduction to working with the Sibelius software line. It supports up to four staves in a score and provides sufficient capabilities for most of your basic music notation needs. If you need more fully featured functionality, you can upgrade to Sibelius Artist or Sibelius Ultimate anytime through your Avid Master Account.

**Sibelius Artist** Great for students and skilled amateurs. It supports up to 16 staves and provides all the tools you need to create professional looking scores for music of moderate complexity.

**Sibelius Ultimate** A must for professionals and educators. It lets you create as many staves as the music demands, and it is extensively customizable, so you can make even the most complex music look perfect.

General	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Lets you...	Create simple scores with up to 4 staves—can open scores with more than 4 staves for review, but are read only	Create professional-quality scores and compose simple to moderate music—up to 16 staves; and can open scores with more than 16 staves for review, but they are read only	Compose, arrange, and publish professional-quality scores and parts of any size and complexity with as many staves as you need; create notation worksheets and exercises for education; and more
Availability	Register for free download	Subscribe monthly or annually, or purchase and own a perpetual license	Subscribe monthly or annually, purchase and own a perpetual license (educational discount available), trade-up from other notation software, or get network licensing
Number of computers a single copy can be installed on	N/A	Can be installed on an unlimited number of devices by a single user; but only one device is active at a time using Cloud Licensing in Avid Link. Additionally, one device can be designated as offline if needed. Sibelius for mobile can be used on a maximum of five devices under a single account.	
Software updates and support	Download the latest update as it becomes available	Access all new releases and Standard support through a subscription or renewable 1-Year Software Updates + Support Plan (included with a new perpetual license) <b>Your Avid Master Account also unlocks Sibelius for mobile features.</b>	
AudioScore and PhotoScore (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Includes Audio Score First and PhotoScore First	Includes AudioScore Lite and PhotoScore Lite	

Notation	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Accidentals	Normal and double only	Normal and double only bracketed	Normal, double, quarter-tones, bracketed
Metadata (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Common ones only		Full set
Bar numbers	Limited		Full range of formats
Special Barline types	Dashed, Double, Start Repeat, End Repeat, and Final only	All	
Bars, irregular	No	No, except pick-up bars	Yes
Cross-staff beams (keyboard music)	No		Yes (not on Sibelius for mobile)
Beam/rest groupings	Fixed		Customizable
Brackets and braces	Fixed		Customizable
Change transposition of transposing instruments	No		Yes
Chord symbols appearance and MIDI/text input	Limited preset options		Fully customizable
Chord symbol AI-assisted auto-complete	No	Yes	
Cues	No		Yes
Dotted notes: single, double, triple	Single dotted	Yes	
Guitar chord diagrams	Limited		Yes
Guitar scale diagrams	No		Yes
Guitar tab	Basic only		Full
Instruments (Common only on iPad for all tiers)	Common only	Common, jazz, and world instruments only, with fixed number of staves	Full customizable range
Jazz articulations: falls, scoops, doits, and plops	No	Yes	
Custom lines	No		Yes
Rhythmic note values: 512th note (7 beams) to double breve (4 times duration of whole note)	32nd note to breve (twice duration of whole note)	All	
Custom Noteheads	No		Yes
Ossia staves	No		Yes

Notation	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Page numbers	Automatic		Customizable
Special symbols	No		Yes
Split multirests in parts	No		Yes
Staves	Up to 4	Up to 16 per system	Unlimited
Stemlets (half-stems) and feathered beams	No		Yes
Tuplets	Duplets (2:3) to sextuplets (6:4)	Duplets (2:3) to nonuplets (9:8)	Any (such as 2, 7, 44:31, and even nested tuplets)

Playback	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Advanced notation interpretation	No		Yes
Edit MIDI data (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Includes Sibelius Sound Libraries (single 900 mb sound library for all tiers on iPad)	No	Sibelius Sounds (10 GB library) provides high-quality samples for most common instruments	Sibelius Ultimate Sounds (36 GB library) provides a full range of professional-quality orchestral, jazz, pop, marching band, and percussion
Loop playback (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Half-speed playback (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Espressivo 2.0 (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Presets only	Customizable rhythmic feel
Live Tempo (tap tempo) (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Limited—playback only		Record, edit, clear, and play back Live Tempo
Playback markings on specified repeats (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Playback of hairpins	Fixed		Adjustable (Fixed on iPad)
Playback of ritardandi and accelerandi)	Fixed		Adjustable (Fixed on iPad)
Playback fermatas	Fixed		Adjustable (Fixed on iPad)
Words that affect playback (such as legato)	Fixed		Editable (Fixed on iPad)

Utilities	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Annotate (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Yes		
Arrange: automatic arranging and orchestration (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Comments (sticky notes)	Yes		
Compare different scores or versions (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Copy and paste to Word and other programs	No	Low resolution (96 dpi) only (text only on Sibelius for mobile)	Yes (text only on Sibelius for mobile)
Display timecode (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Single format	Customizable format
Edit Dynamic Parts	No	Limited	Full
Edit word menus (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Export a log of changes to a score (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Export lyrics as text file (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Yes	
Filters for editing similar objects (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Quick filters only	Yes
Find (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Focus on staves	No		Yes
Graphics export (for creating worksheets and other content) (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Highlight music (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Yes		
Ideas Hub (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	300 library ideas included and lets you capture your own ideas (editing not supported)	2,000+ library ideas included, and lets you capture and edit your own ideas and add to a score and/or the library
Import MusicXML files	Yes		
Instrument changes	No		Yes

Utilities	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Join scores together (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Keyboard shortcuts	Fixed		Customizable (Fixed on Sibelius for mobile)
Lyric verses allowed	2	5	Unlimited
Lyrics from text file (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Note input options (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Fixed	Limited	Full
Panorama scroll view (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Yes		
Paper and desk textures (not on Sibelius for mobile)	40		Over 60
Part extraction (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Paste as Cue	No		Yes
Plug-ins (not on Sibelius for mobile)	None	38 included	Over 140 included
Inspector window to edit individual objects (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Full
Rehearsal marks	No	Default only	Fully customizable
Repeat structures	Fixed	Customizable	Fully customizable
Rulers (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Score Starter: (40 genre-specific templates) (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Yes		No
Score Subsets	Can view and edit, but cannot create or delete		Create, delete, view, and edit
Slide notes and rests	No	Yes	
Special page breaks (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Timeline window (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Swap voice (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Versions (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Latest (head) version only	Save, view, and print only	Yes

Utilities	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Video, including timecode and hit points (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Add video, add/edit hit points	Yes
Viewing options for Magnetic Layout, page margins, note colors, full screen, and more (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Worksheet Creator (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes

Publishing	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Advanced layout features (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Auto Layout options (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Edit fonts (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Limited	Full
Edit staff types (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Edit text styles (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Engraving rules (hundreds to edit) (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Headers/footers	No	Yes	
House Style import/export (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Import only	Yes
Intelligent Rests	No	Yes	
Magnetic Layout	Fixed		Fully customizable (Fixed on iPad and iPhone)
Manage Dynamic Parts (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Manuscript papers (preset score layouts)	Includes a few, but you cannot create your own		Includes many, and you can create your own (Fixed on iPad and iPhone)
Multiple staff size (not on Sibelius for mobile)	Fixed		Fully customizable
Note spacing rules	Fixed		Fully customizable (Fixed on iPad and iPhone)

Publishing	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Reset position/design of objects	Limited		Yes
Set default object positions (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No		Yes
Staff spacing	Fixed	Manual adjustment only	Yes

Export and Share	Sibelius First	Sibelius Artist	Sibelius Ultimate
Audio recording export	N/A	WAV, AIFF, and MP3 (not on Sibelius for mobile)	
Graphics file export (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	PDF export only	Standard bitmap and vector formats (SVG, PNG, JPG, BMP, TIFF, GIF, and PDF)
MIDI file export—Type 0 and Type 1 any device (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Yes	
MusicXML file export (compressed or uncompressed) (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Yes	
Previous version export (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Yes	
Publish directly to ScoreExchange.com (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Yes	
Sibelius   Cloud Sharing (not on Sibelius for mobile)	10 scores	20 scores	Unlimited (up to 1 GB storage)
Video file (Export score as) (not on Sibelius for mobile)	No	Yes	

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## **Keypad in Sibelius First, Sibelius Artist, and Sibelius Ultimate**

Sibelius First, Sibelius Artist, and Sibelius Ultimate each provide six Keypad layouts: Common notes (F7), More notes (F8), Beams/Tremolos (F9), Articulation (F10), Jazz articulations (F11), and Accidentals (F12). However, not all options available with Sibelius Ultimate are available with Sibelius Artist and Sibelius First.

The Keypad also lets you select which voice in a staff you want to add or edit notes. While Sibelius Artist and Sibelius Ultimate let you work with up to four voices on a staff, you are limited to two voices with Sibelius First.

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## **Sibelius First, Sibelius Artist, and Sibelius Ultimate and the Ribbon**

The contents of the Ribbon differ between Sibelius First, Sibelius Artist, and Sibelius Ultimate. For instance, the Parts tab is only available in Sibelius Ultimate. Similarly, Sibelius First and Sibelius Artist provide fewer options in each tab than Sibelius Ultimate.

**On iPad and iPhone, supported Ribbon commands are accessible using Command Search.**