Misa Guitar: Future Design

Considerations

- I am designing for beyond the MVP
  - I know its probably too late for significant changes to the MVP, but thought I could help reimagine the future Misa Guitar interface
- I only spent about 9 hours
  - I don’t have a large data set to base findings on
  - I have not thought through all the workflows
  - I have not done any of the “editing” screens

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1

Research

Who are the users and what did I learn about them?

Methods

In order to learn about what musicians want, I researched users through:

Secondary

- News articles and research analysis
- Exemplars

Primary

- My own experiences
- Usability test with another musician

Target Audience - Guitarists

Misa Guitar is currently focusing on electronic musicians, but targeting **intermediate and up** guitarists is also beneficial:

- Guitarists are multi instrumentalists who already own and seek out new instruments
- Guitarists spend over $413 million/year, and growing
- 90% of guitarists have purchased new gear or instruments an average of 7 times in the past year

http://stringletter.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Acoustic-Guitar-Audience-Demographics-and-Activities.pdf

https://www.statista.com/statistics/440131/us-guitar-market-retail-sales/

Testing with Charlie

Charlie is a multi instrumentalist and full time musician who is currently recording all the instruments and vocals fo his all orgininal album.

Testing with Charlie

Issues

- "No menu" for navigation
  - Wants to see words to understand selections
- Found no interactions other than scene selection bar
- Didn't like many sounds
- "I don't trust it enough to perform"

Opportunities

- Tried Apple finger gestures
- Wants 2 notes per string
- Liked hammer on mode, but couldn't find it or get to it
- Liked the sustain - "I can't really play long notes, so this could help with that."
- Wants just a few sounds to easily switch between

It just kinda feels like a hot potato.
- Charlie

Testing with Myself

I am a multi instrumentalist with a bachelor's degree in jazz guitar. I have recorded 2 of my own original albums, and was a full time musician for 10 years.

Testing with Myself

Issues

- Didn't like most sounds
- Hard to use slider and see patch names
- Couldn't switch between modes nearly fast enough
- No way to access or save key sounds
- Interactions not intuitive

Opportunities

- Liked hammer on mode
- Want to play notes on top of chords on same string
- There could be possibilities for the right hand besides just an x/y axis
  - Strumming
  - Other instruments

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Insights

What are the key findings that guided the design?

Insight 1

Interactions Aren’t Intuitive

- Interactions aren’t **discoverable**
- Users default to **Apple** swipe gestures
- Interactions are hard to do while **playing**
- Lack of clarity causes **anxiety** when interacting
- Users need **onboarding** to help learn

Insight 2

Musicians Want A Few Good Sounds

- Musicians want **better** sounds
  - It should come **preloaded** with some great “scenes”
- The number of sounds can be **overwhelming**
- Generally only use a **FEW good sounds**
- Musicians need **quick access** to their sounds

Insight 3

Musicians Want Features

- Musicians want to **switch modes** quickly
  - Many options need to be **accesible** to be useful
- Users **didn't hit sidebar** selector by accident
- Musicians like the **hammer on** mode
- They want to play **multiple notes** per string

How might we create an interface with **intuitive interactions** that give musicians **quick access** to their favorite **sounds and features**?

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Design

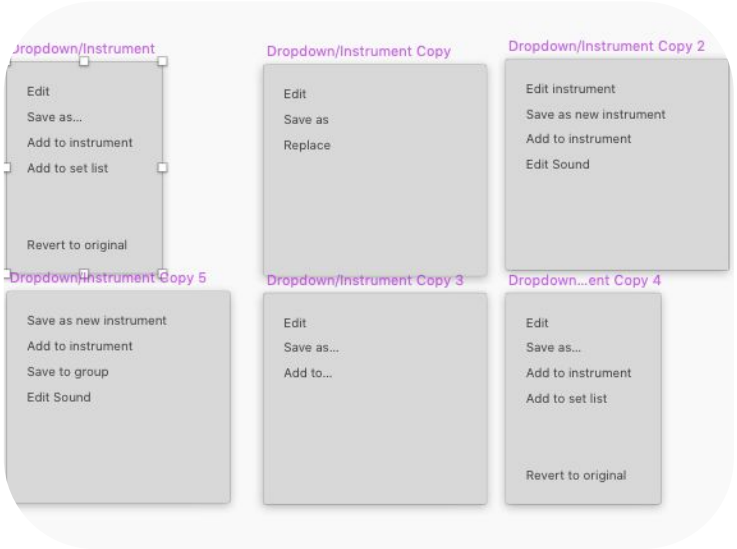
Which concept is best fit?

Ideation

I used the whiteboard to ideate dozens of ways to approch this problem. Along the way, I came up with some new ideas for future features.

Iteration

I also iterated further once I was mocking it up in Sketch. For many elements, like this drop down, I would try many versions of sizes, formats, and wordings.



Design Overview

Top Bar

The top bar can be hidden for users who don't need it, but provides quick access to important features for those who want it.

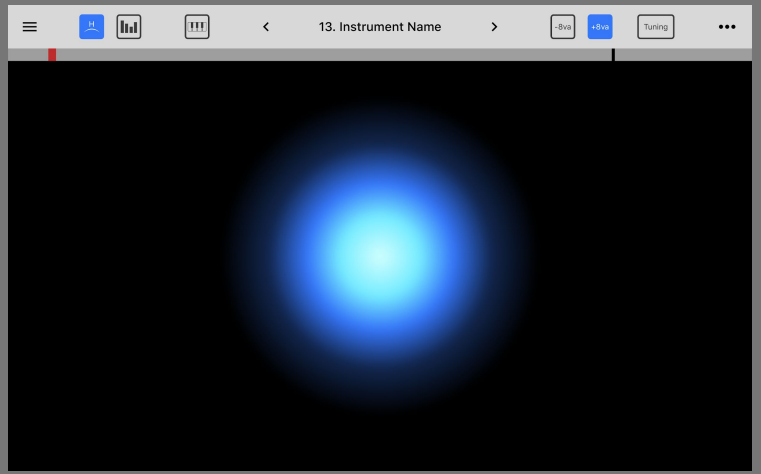
Sidebar Navigation

The sidebar resembles familiar apps and therefore is easy to use and creates a better navigational mental model for users.

Onboarding Gestures

Swipe gestures with 3 or 4 fingers are more intuitive and disoverable for users. In addition, we can use onboarding to teach users.

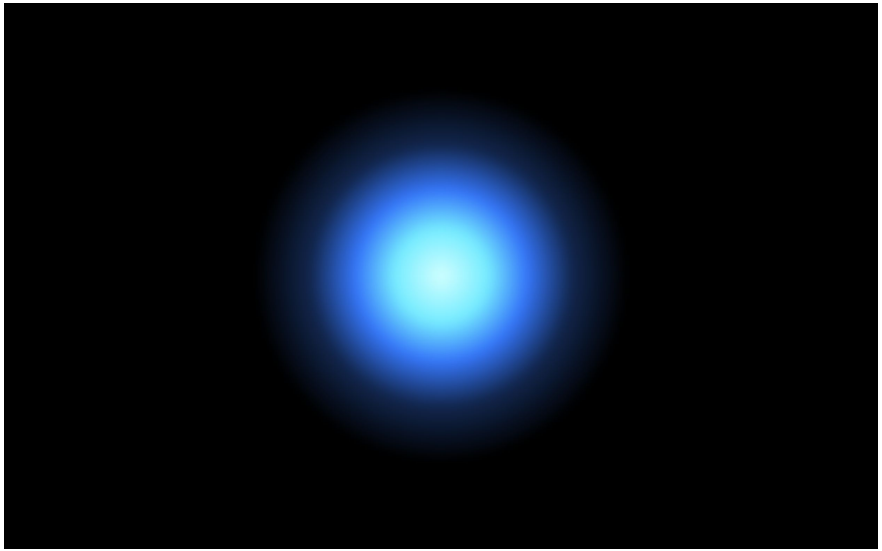
Design



Performance Mode

Users start off in “performance” mode, with nothing on the screen.

(Careful thought should be put into which patch it starts on. It should be universally liked.)



Onboarding Top Bar

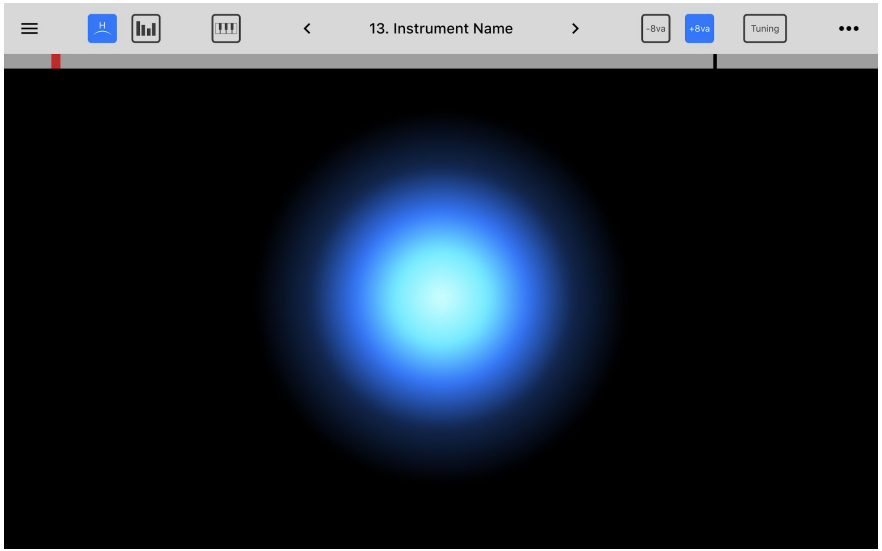
A few seconds after first turning it on users will get an onboarding message to teach them how to view and hide the top bar.

(4 fingers is more familiar, and easier to do than 5, especially when playing.)

Top Bar

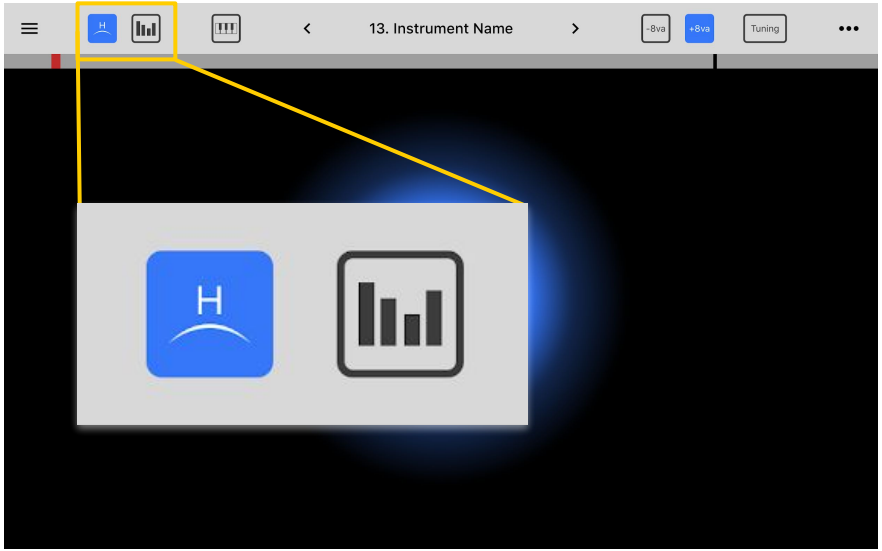
Once swiping with 4 fingers, they will see the top bar.

The top bar has all of the essential quick-tap buttons needed, but can easily be swiped away for those who don't want it.



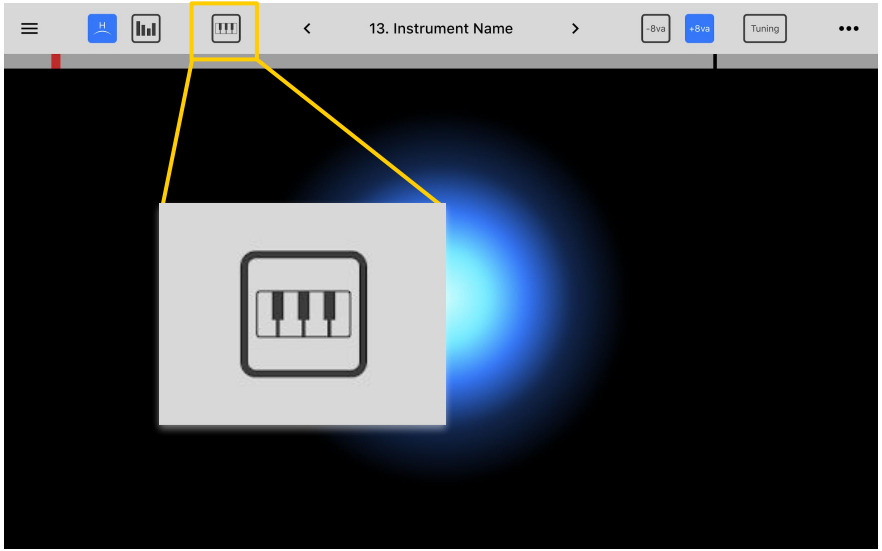
Top Bar - Modes

Using these selectors lets users quickly switch to hammer on or fader mode. If neither is selected, it will be in the default mode.



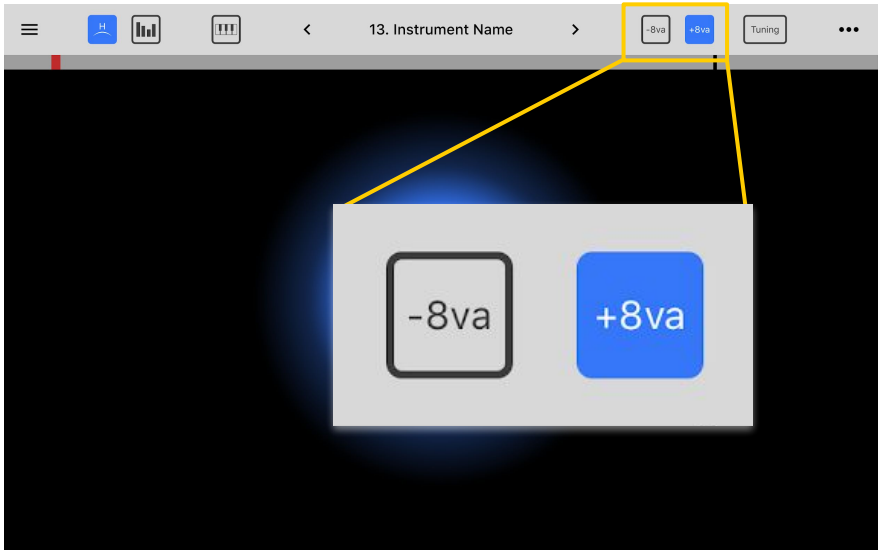
Top Bar - “Piano” Mode

This button allows users to play more than note per string. Performers can use this to play chords with their left hand, and lead lines in their right (like this famous jazz guitarist).



Top Bar - 8va

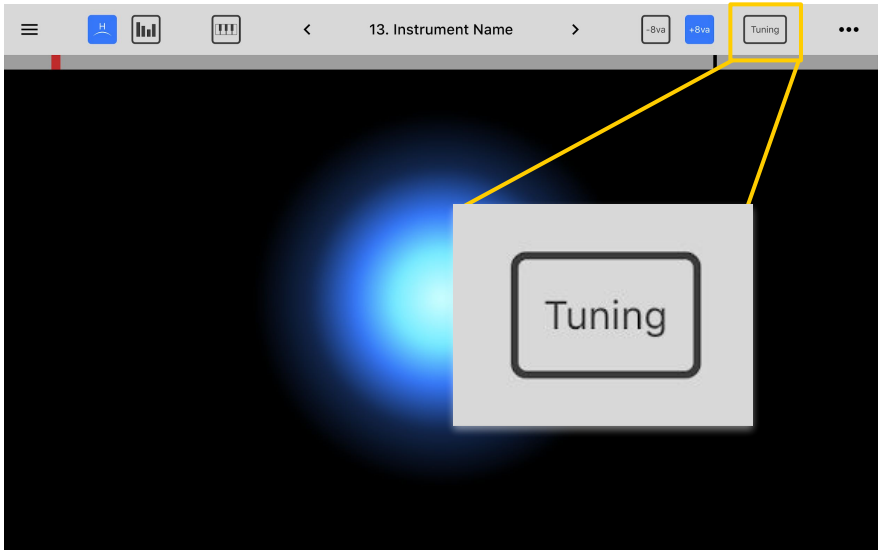
Players can use these selectors to move an actave above or below normal guitar range. When pressed, the button will light up to show it is transposed. Pressing the -8va button to get back to the original pitch.



Top Bar - Tuning

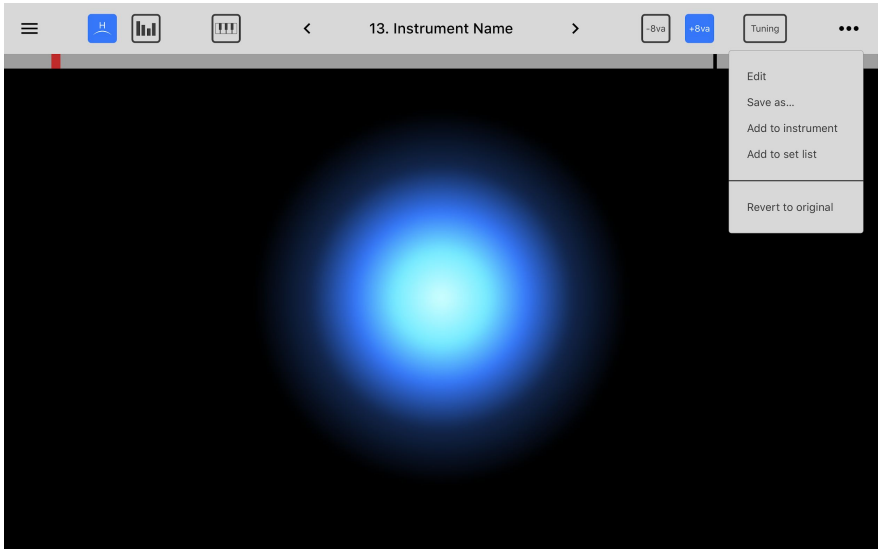
Users can click here to bring up a popup window where there would be many options for interesting tunings.

(This is explored further on page 38)



Dropdown Menu

If a user likes a particular sound, they can click the kebab menu to save it, add it to another instrument or set list, edit it, or return it to the original parameters.

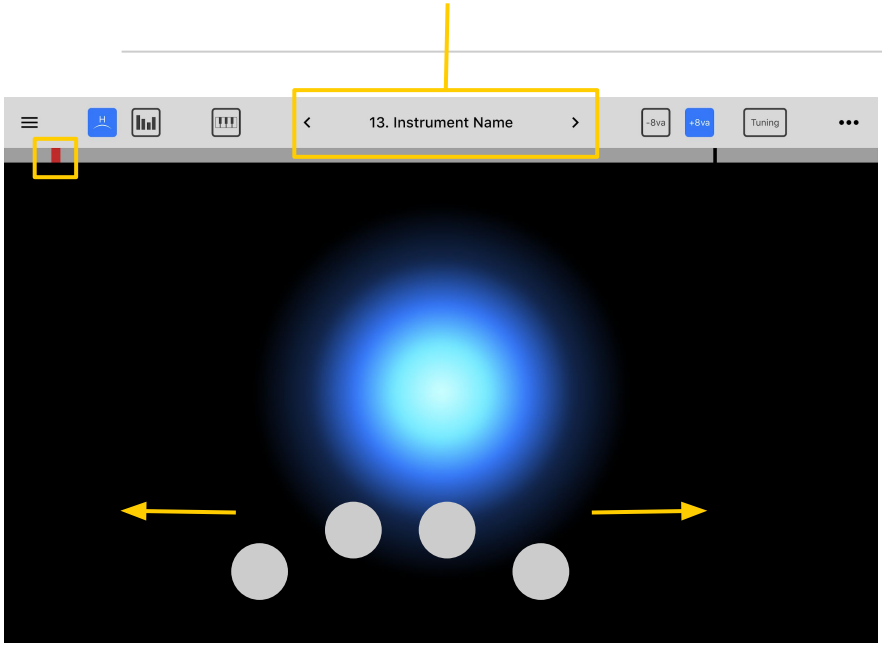


All Instruments

Users can now explore instruments by swiping, draging the bar, or clicking the buttons at the top.

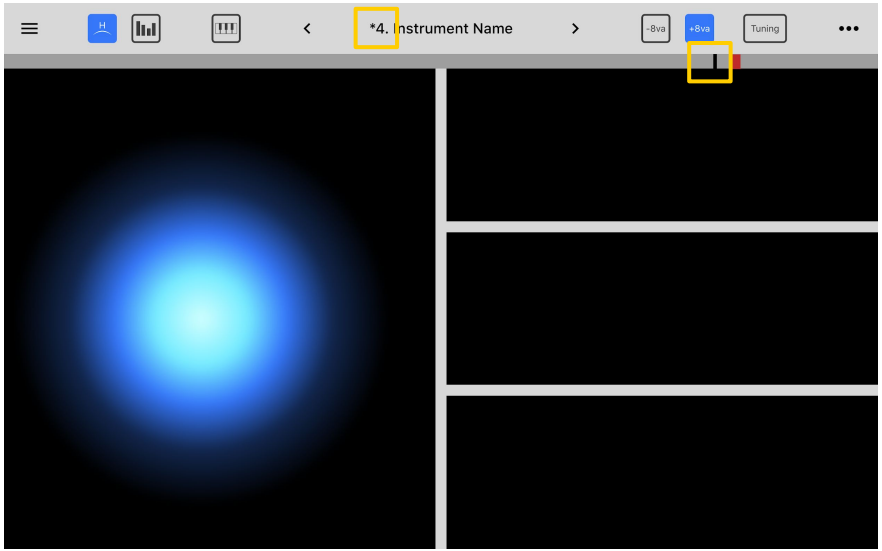
With the intrument selection bar at the top, all interactions are consistent with the left/right motion mental model.

Maybe topping the name would bring up a popup window with a list of all sounds.



Split Screen Instruments

Users see all personally created instruments separated by a black line to the right of the selection bar. Titles start at “1”, with an “*” to mark as custom.

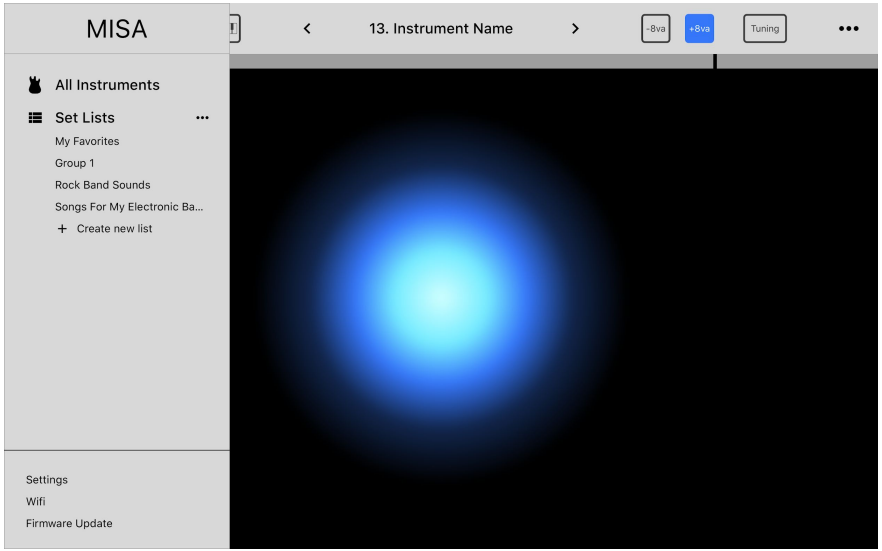


(I have not fully figured out which section the top bar toggles would effect yet.)

Hamburger Menu

Users can then click the hamburger menu to access all of their personal set lists, as well as other settings.

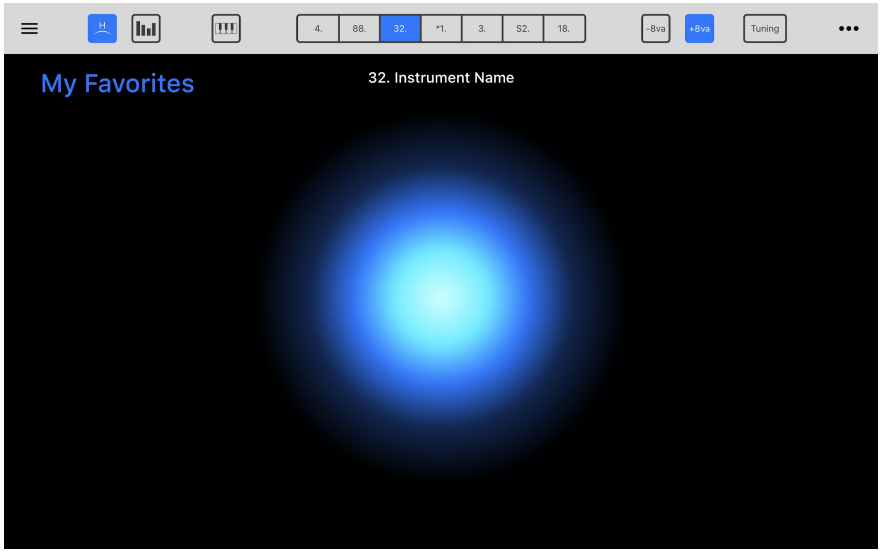
This provides easy, clear, and familiar global navigation.



Set List

After clicking “my favorites,” users see a customizable group of 7 instruments. The set list name instrument names will fade after 2 seconds.

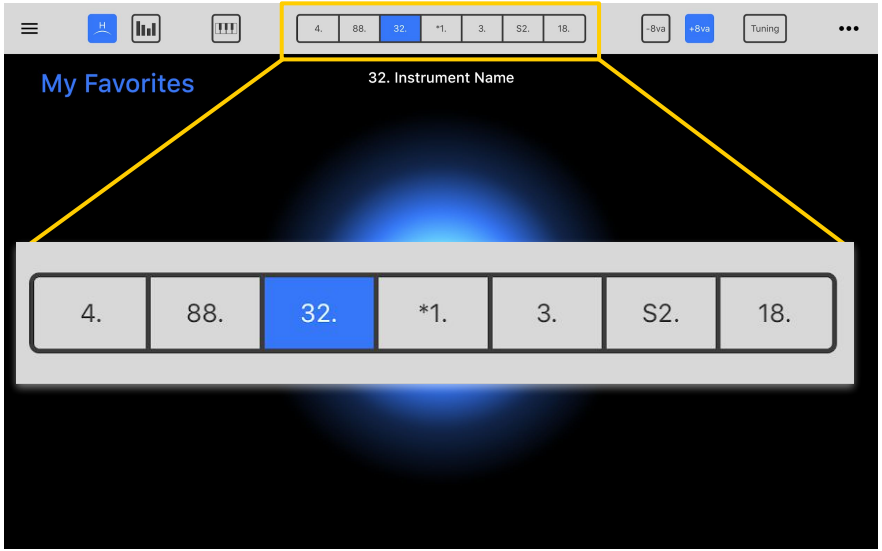
(Onboarding could help explain the set lists here.)



Set List - Top Bar

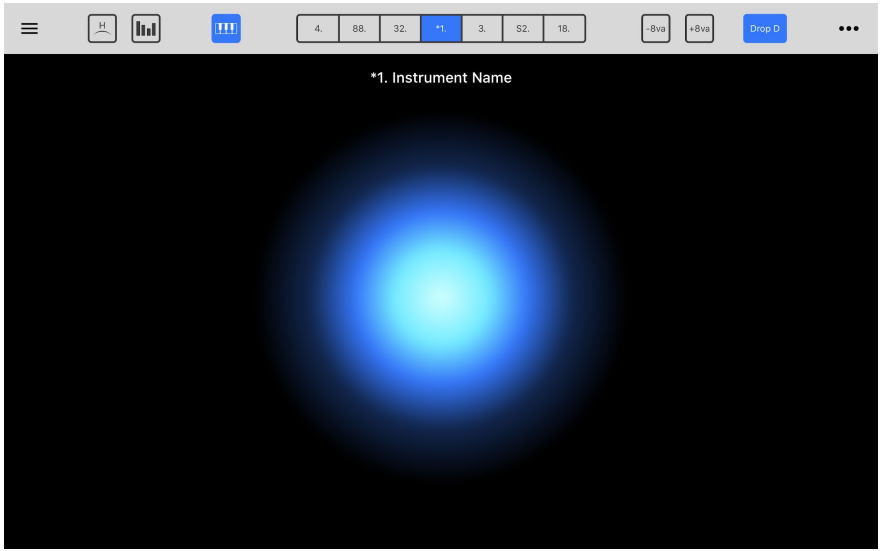
Users can then click the top bar here to quickly switch between the 7 saved instruments.

(The “my favorites” set list should come preset with 7 sounds that have tested positivly with many users.)



Switch Instruments

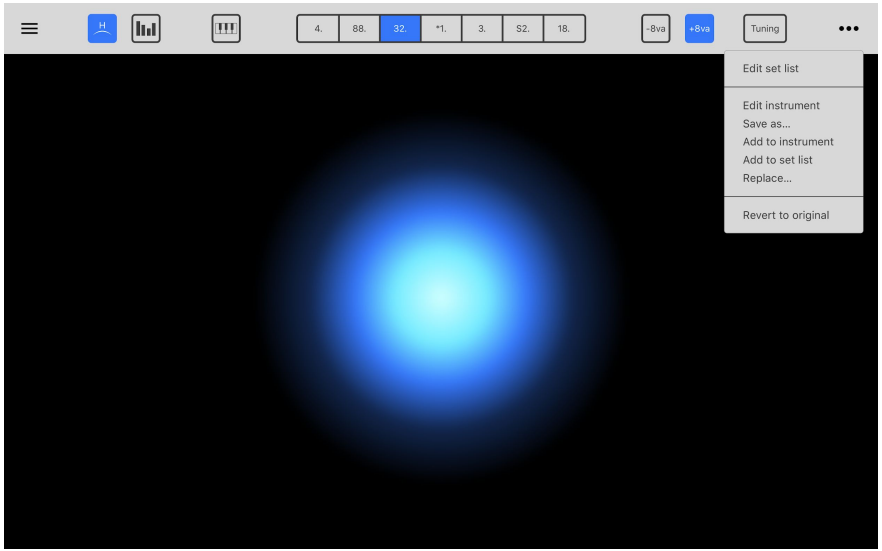
Once a user switches instruments, they will see the full name of that instrument pop up at the top middle. Again, this will fade after 2 seconds.



Users can also switch with the 4 finger side swipe.

Dropdown Menu

Finally, as a user becomes more advanced, they will want to customize and create their own set lists. By clicking the kebab menu, they still see all the instrument options from before, but can also edit the layout of this particular set list.



Summary

Easy Interactions

By adjusting the mental models and changing some interactions, users can easily learn what they want to do, and how to do it.

Button Access

Because of the accessibility of the top bar, users can easily explore sounds when starting, and access features when performing.

Saving Sounds

As users become more advanced, they can easily save favorite sounds into groupings of 7, and switch between groups if needed.

Moving Forward

- Usability test with musicians to confirm
  - The langauge of titles, buttons, and options
  - Whether or not icons are understood
  - Whether the onboarding and interaction redesign helps users learn faster and use more efficiently
- Flesh out the edit, save as, replace workflows
  - Part of this would be working out what the top bar buttons do for instruments with multiple sections

Future Features

Tuning Selection

This feature could be taken beyond the standard “drop” and “open” tunings. This could hybrid tunings (Like 5th&6th string sound down 8va), or pedal steel controls.

Bass or Chords

In the future there could be modes that leave the guitar in “hammer on” mode so players can use the screen to play chords or bass lines in the right hand.

Other Instruments

Similarly, the screen could be used to play other commonly known instruments like a keyboard or drum pad, which could support the left hand melodies.

Thanks!

Any questions ?

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