
Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by syrusate - 2006/04/10 01:33

Im having the hardest time deciding what keyboard to buy. Im looking at either an Access Virus kb/kc or a Nord Lead 3.

Ive owned a virus b & a nord lead 2 before. But its been a while so I dont really remember fully what theyr like. And as far as the Nord 3 goes, there is no place around for me to play one.

I just want a keyboard that will fit well with my setup. They both have goods and bads. I like how strong the nord is without fx, but with the virus I dont have to buy external fx.

anyone with ideas, suggestions, or what not would be great.

thanks

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by Thunder - 2006/04/10 01:45

I don't have any experience with virus synths, but I can certainly vouch for the NL3. Now, I personally prefer real analog, but the features available on the Nord are really cool. Two of them being the rotary LED's (this ends up completely revolutionizing patch recall) and the morph function.

As far as the effects go, I never really find the quality of internal synth effects to be very great (haven't heard the virus effects though). Being able to flexibly route your effects internally is the other side of that coin, but for master fx I like to use external gear or even plug ins.

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by syrusate - 2006/04/10 01:54

Yeh fx arent the most important to me. I guess its mainly the sound. Ive learned rhe Monomachine has a bright kind of sound, well so far. Im afraid that the nord will fit well with it, but not add a new dimension of sound. The virus, and some artists ive heard like Tycho, seem to pull real Boards of Canada, muddy, dreamy kind of sounds out of it. Which would leave perfect room for the MNM.

I also plan on getting a Micro-q once Waldorf gets going again, seems like the nord would butt heads with that one as well.

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by Array - 2006/04/10 02:37

I also plan on getting a Micro-q once Waldorf gets going again, seems like the nord would butt heads with that one as well.

Why wait for Waldorf to get going again? Buy a used Q, instead of a NL3 or Virus, and never look back!
:-D

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by sensorium - 2006/04/10 03:26

I have to agree that the lack of internal effects is not a big deal with the NL3. I've yet to hear a synth with record worthy internal effects (including the virus). The best thing about the NL3 is the interface. It inspires me to create more than any other synth I own and programming is a breeze. I have so many synths collecting dust because the interface is less than

inspiring. My MicroKorg, for example, has become my vocoding unit. The Nord is so intuitive you be creating cool sounds in a flash. Less programming time = more time to create music. The morph groups are huge. You can assign the mod wheel, key location, or velocity to change any of the settings. Create a sequence in your DAW then add off-set sign waves to control mod wheel and velocity and never look back.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by syrusate - 2006/04/10 04:10

sensorium - do you have any samples you could share of your nord 3 playing warm, mellow pads and what not? Most of what ive heard is bright and sharp. Im more interested to see if it can do nice warm oberheim pads.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by sensorium - 2006/04/11 03:24

Here's an unmastered track I did. All synth parts are the NL3 except for the acid part at the end (FR Revolution).

http://www.elektron-users.com/uploads/finished_mix_mix.mp3

But if all you want are good Oberheim or Moog sounds you should get a real analog. Nothing beats the warmth. This unit is the poop and it has oberheim and moog filters.

www.studioelectronics.com (SE1-X)

http://www.studioelectronics.com/images/se1x_523.jpg

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by kuniklo - 2006/04/11 04:24

I've got a Virus TI and Nord Lead 3 right now and can mostly echo the other sentiments in this thread:

Virus Pros:

1. Pretty flexible architecture. Analog-style and digital oscillators, good filters.
2. Excellent onboard effects.
3. 16-part multitimbral.

Virus Cons:

1. Darker, murkier, less lively sound.
2. Interface is kind of obtuse. Lots of poking around in menus. TI is better than C but still fiddly.

Nord Pros:

1. Fantastic, bright lively sound.
2. Best interface on any synth ever.
3. Morph system encourages really *playing*.

Nord Cons:

1. No onboard effects.
2. Only 4-part multitimbral.
3. Far fewer modulation options.

All things considered I lean towards the Nord because I prefer it's sound and I *love* the interface. For me the whole point of a hardware synth is the interface and the Virus isn't that great in that respect. I'd probably just use softsynths instead.

Here's a simple track I did recently using just the Nord and some drums:

<http://www.caddr.com/music/T.mp3>

I don't know the Q but from what I've read about it might be a great middle ground in between the Nord and the Virus.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by syrusate - 2006/04/11 05:37

I would love a Se1-x, hell even an Atc-1. Might be something I get down the road. First thing is a keyboard.

I liked the song sensorium, looks like the nord 3 can do pads, im not sure if the 2x could pull off some of the same pads or not. It would really help my wallet if it could.

I talked to a guy today that said if I want those creamy warm pads, to get an Alesis Ion. I like the demos of what it can do, but its ugly as hell, and im not too comfortable with Alesis' products.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by kuniklo - 2006/04/11 05:42

The Nord can definitely do pads.

I'd strongly recommend the NL3 over the 2. The interface is so much better. The 2 is still a very nice synth though.

I hated the interface on the Ion and didn't think it sounded all that special but it might be worth trying one first hand. Most Guitar Centers have demo models.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by syrusate - 2006/04/11 05:46

yeh I was told that the Nord 3 can do pad, but theyr not warm or nostalgic sounding. Liks Boards of Canada would do. But its looks like the song you posed - kuniklo, has some cool lil pads in it. Im starting to lean more towards Nord 3 again.

I would like to stay as far as possible from the Ion.

Do you have any other examples of the nord doing thick, warm creamy nostalgic pads?

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by kuniklo - 2006/04/11 06:04

Do you have any other examples of the nord doing thick, warm creamy nostalgic pads?

Not handy, but you can dial up those kinds of sounds pretty quickly on the Nord. If you're in the bay area then Robotspeak in San Francisco has Nord's in stock usually.

What would you say is your level of expertise in synth programming? I'd definitely recommend the Nord over the Virus if you're still in the learning stages.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by syrusate - 2006/04/11 06:15

Well as far as programming goes, I know a good amount. My main problem is lack of time, patience, and wanting more hands on. Im sick of working with the computer, so I want something that I can move, and program easily. It seems like the nord is this synth.

I went to robotspeak a bit ago. Played with the Monomachine, bought one now, played with the evolver, but I didnt see a nord lead 3. There might have been a 2x there. If there is a 3, I might head down there to play with it again.

The virus is cool, I had the "b" tabletop at one point, but there are too many menus, and to be honest 4 parts is all I need.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by kuniklo - 2006/04/11 06:18

syrusate wrote:

Well as far as programming goes, I know a good amount. My main problem is lack of time, patience, and wanting more hands on. Im sick of working with the computer, so I want something that I can move, and program easily. It seems like the nord is this synth.

Sounds like the Nord might be perfect for you then. Nothing beats it for hands-on instant gratification.

I know what you mean about getting sick of working on a computer. I've been messing around with a bunch of hardware sequencers recently to get away from staring at the screen all the time.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by syrusate - 2006/04/11 06:32

Yeh, im sure ill still use the computer to a certain extent. But what i would like to do is have the right gear so that I can use a laptop to run ableton live, and just add some vst's and sampler. The rest would be taken care of by my Monomachine, Maybe Nord 3, some kind of analog bass and effects. Nice small setup.

I know what bass sounds I like, fx as well. My main problem is trying to find my main keyboard. I just need to find some demos of the Nord 3 making warm, creamy pads. Imalso gonna check and see if Robotspeak has one to play with.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by poor_badger - 2006/04/14 00:31

I'm a big fan of the modulation possibilities of the Virus (used to have a KB) and I didn't find the interface too daunting - always better to have a knob/slider/button for everything but considering...

Having said that, I think I prefer the Nord's - just a sense of analog rawness.

Having said that, have you considered a Roland Juno 106? Not very versatile but lush pads (with great chorus) and put it into unison mode for some nice lead lines ala BOC w/ an SH-101. Think they go for ~\$400. Check out BOC for the lead lines and maybe William Orbit for pads & more lead.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by ggoodwin - 2006/04/14 00:35

kuniklo wrote:

Nothing beats it for hands-on instant gratification.

Except the Moog Voyager ;-)

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by kuniklo - 2006/04/14 00:37

ggoodwin wrote:

kuniklo wrote:

Nothing beats it for hands-on instant gratification.

Except the Moog Voyager ;-)

The Voyager is cool but the Nord beats it for two reasons:

1. Rotary leds always show you exactly what's going on. Change a patch on the Voyager and you have no idea.
2. A bunch of interesting settings on the Voyager are buried in menus so you have to dig around.

The Voyager sounds great but I'd still give the Nord the nod for best interface.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by emminor9 - 2006/04/14 10:31

Nord + quality effects is all you need (and love) :-)

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by syrusate - 2006/04/14 11:27

Im still thinking of the nord. Do you have other pad samples that you can share? Id really like to hear more of what this beast can do.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by kuniklo - 2006/04/15 00:47

syrusate wrote:

Im still thinking of the nord. Do you have other pad samples that you can share? Id really like to hear more of what this beast can do.

I don't have any more Nord pad samples handy but it can certainly do a great job with basic rich pad sounds. The Virus is actually a better choice for pads I think since the dark sound is more suited for pads and you have a lot more modulation possibilities and onboard effects.

=====

Re: Need help, Virus or Nord?

Posted by - 2006/05/01 21:49

another vote for the nord lead 3. I'm running the rack version. As for making it sound 'warm' ...all you have to do is EQ it in your mixer, or via your computer & your host/editor/sequencer of choice. Usually to create sounds & tapestries one would use a combination of A soundsource {a synth} , creative EQ {via mixer or recording gear/software} and effects {hardware & software}. The nord lead 3 is the first module, that is a raw but awesome synth. You can do the rest with whatever gear you have.

not only that, the sheer scale of simultaneous modulation possibilities available with the nord lead3 make it a canvas for inventive use. also, if you ever get plogue or maxmsp (or any other modular environment for midi processing) the lead3 will have a new lease of life.

for example, with these modular environments you can make patches that modulate certain parameters when they receive a certain note - as well as playing the note. This way you can turn it into a percussive monster, or some kind of beautiful pad fairy if you use sustained notes. There's no limits, because the nord lead3 makes modulating every parameter simultaneously easy, by only controlling a few of the morph controls which in themselves would only require one CC to control...and each morph can control something like 27 parameters....all of which is shown on the interface via the leds.

as a raw synth Nord lead3 is ace, just add your own EQing to give it some warmth, do some sound layering via some wave editors, use your own reverbs and effects even free ones.....the lead is the bomb. Its great as it is, but when you get into morphing and using it as a synth controlled by MAX it really really stands out. Dont ask me for examples of patches as I just got the lead and I havent bought maxmsp yet! but all this is possible...

I have a sherman filterbank, and the nord lead3 sounds like sex when played through it. Just pick up a nordlead3 and use your own effects.

wow what a rant

=====