

A Beginner's guide to K-Shoot Mania

I'm writing this guide partly because it's a little easier to direct people here than having to answer a million questions and give out a million download links and partly because I have yet to find a guide like this that consolidates all the most important information on what to do if you are new. I hope you, the reader, find this at least a little useful.

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Possible future sections:

- Intro to the editor / links to editor resources
- Hand positioning / technique for controller play?
- Intro to how to do crossovers / weird patterns?
- Glossary of KSM / SDVX / Generic rhythm game terms?
- Pattern repository?
- Maybe putting something about KSM alternatives lol

PART ONE: GAME SETUP

Hopefully if you are reading the guide you already have downloaded the game, but maybe not, so here we go.

The game can be downloaded from the official [K-Shoot Mania website](#). Click on “Download” at the top right, then make sure you get the full version, not the updater. K-Shoot also has an [english site](#) now



Alternatively, here are some direct links to download the game:

[CURRENT VERSION](#) (1.71b as of August 27 2020)

Just download the most recent version unless you want the old ones for some reason

[VERSION 1.65](#)

[VERSION 1.64e](#)

[VERSION 1.50](#) (the last version that supports negative bpm gimmicks)

Now that you downloaded the game, hopefully it runs.
But if it doesn't,

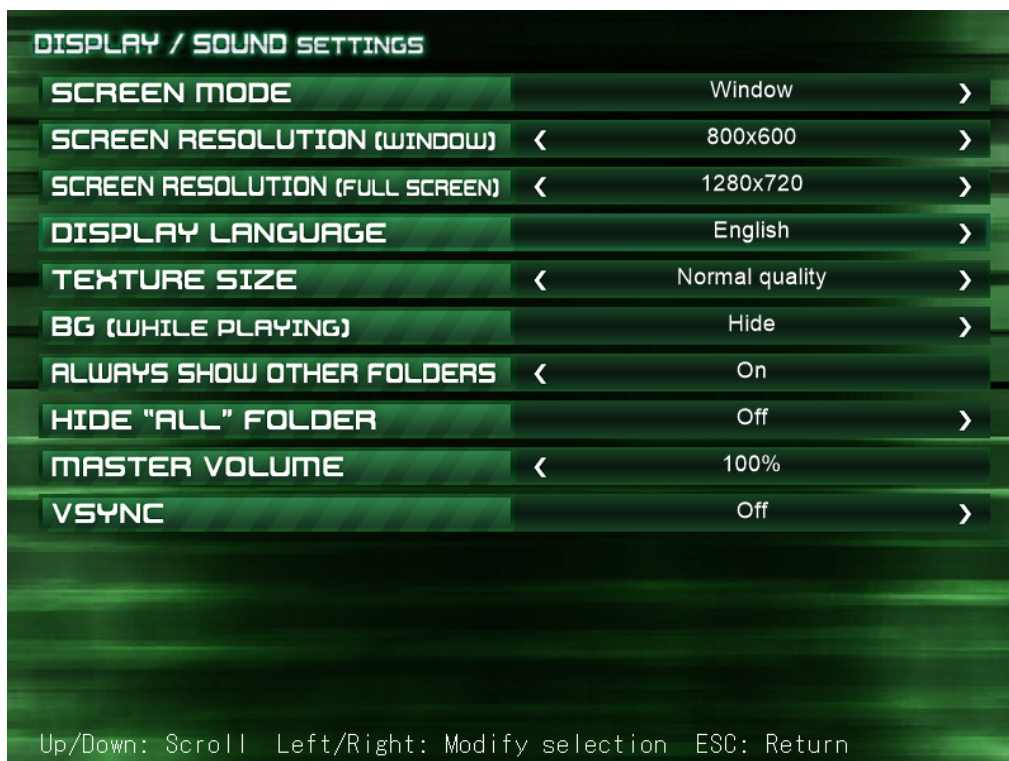
1. Make sure you have Visual C++ 2010 and 2013 runtimes installed
2. Make sure you have DirectX installed
3. Make sure you have speakers/headphones plugged in
4. Check the [K-Shoot Mania troubleshooting guide](#)

In case this guide goes down, I'll list some common errors here.

Error	Solution
Error 12	File reading failed. Try extracting the game again. Make sure you downloaded the full version and not the updater.
Error 13	Image reading failed. Some images used in the skin are missing from your "imgs" folder. Copy over the missing files from a new download / extraction of the .zip file.
Error 38	Missing DLL files. You either didn't copy them over during installation or you didn't install Visual C++ redistributables.
Black screen when playing song, but music can be heard	Install DirectX
Black screen when going into song select from main menu	The song select takes a long time to load because it loads all of the songs in the currently selected folder into memory. Give it some time. This is why using the "ALL" folder is not recommended.

Game Settings:

The first thing you're probably going to want to do is change the language. The option to change the display language between English, Japanese, Korean, Simplified Chinese, and Traditional Chinese is in the DISPLAY / SOUND SETTINGS menu.



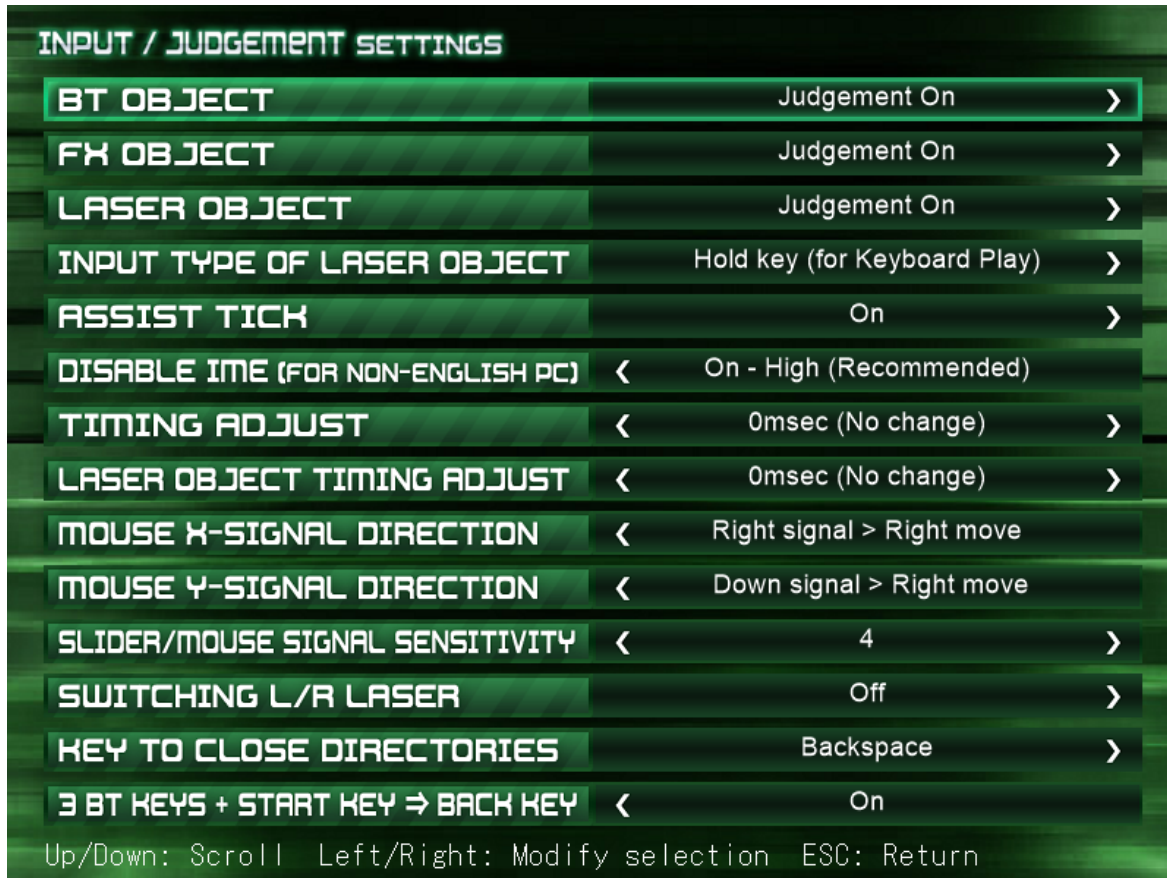
These settings are all pretty self explanatory so I'll just explain a few.

BG (WHILE PLAYING):

Changes the animation that plays behind the track during a song

HIDE "ALL" FOLDER:

Gives you an extra folder in the song select that contains all of your songs. Not recommended to use as it takes a long time to load and may crash the game if your memory is not large enough (not confirmed)



BT, FX, and LASER OBJECT:

Toggles whether or not the game actually shows or judges your hits for the different object types during gameplay. Leave them all as “Judgement On”.

INPUT TYPE OF LASER OBJECT:

These are the most common ones you will use

- Hold key (use this for keyboard play)
- Slider Signal (use this for Turbocharger *might need some confirmation)
- Mouse X/Y Signal (use this for SVSE5)

ASSIST TICK:

Plays a “tick” sound when a BT note or FX chips must be pressed in game. Settings for this seem bugged so you might have to check in-game to see if it’s really on or off.

TIMING ADJUST:

A negative offset means the notes will come earlier. A positive offset means the notes will come later. You can hit FX-L to see your offset on the results screen of a chart. Play a chart you are comfortable with multiple times and take an average of that number to get a general offset for you.

MOUSE X/Y SIGNAL DIRECTION:

Pretty self explanatory. Use this if you use a controller and your inputs are reversed for some reason.

SLIDER/MOUSE SIGNAL SENSITIVITY:

This can vary from controller to controller but a general range is around 15-40. Play around and see what gives you the best control of lasers without missing or breaking free of them.

SWITCHING L/R LASER:

Poor translation, it just switches the keybindings for the left and right lasers, not the appearance of the lasers in game or anything like that.

KEY TO CLOSE DIRECTORIES:

Determines what key is used to close the folders in the song select screen.

3 BT KEY + START KEY => BACK KEY:

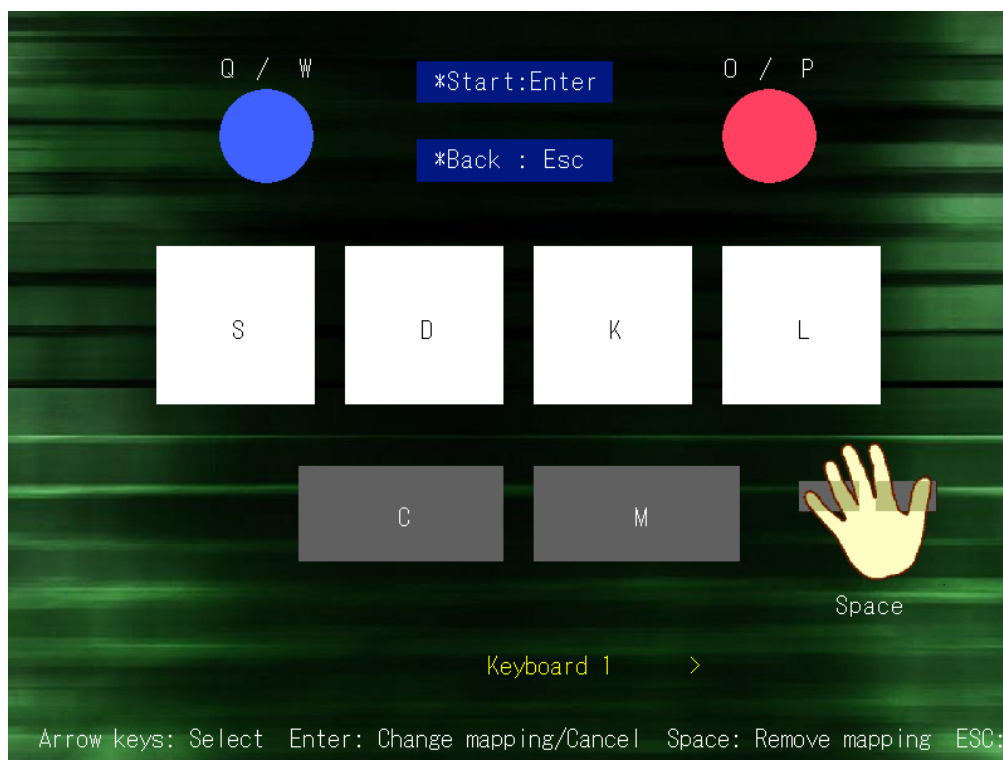
Pressing 3 BT’s and the start is the same as pressing back. Pretty useful if you use a controller since there is no back button on the controller.



These are the HISPEED types that can be changed in song select. This determines how fast notes scroll down the screen. The first 2 are the most common and the only settings used in real SDVX. These settings here just toggle whether or not they will be available to turn on in the song select.

- **Type X0.5 - 9.9** will multiply the BPM value of the song and give you that as your HISPEED. This is how SDVX arcade works when you hold the start button and turn the knob
- **Type 25 - 2000** will set a base value for your HISPEED and will change during a song if the song has variable BPM (most people tend to use this one). This is like double tapping start and turning the knob in arcade.
- **Type C** will have a constant speed no matter what even if the BPM changes mid song. It also negates stops. Don't use this setting if you want to get the full KSM / SDVX experience (you're a cheater if you use this btw)
- **Type M** adjusts the HISPEED to make this value the highest number present in the chart. (ie M800 set on song that starts at 120bpm and gets up to 400bpm will start at 240 HISPEED at 120bpm and 800 at 400bpm)
- **Type A** Takes the mean of the BPM to get HISPEED

I personally recommend using type 25-1000. It is the most consistent gameplay-wise and gives the full experience of the game.



This is obviously where you set up your key configuration. It's a little unintuitive, so I'll try to explain the best I can.

It is set up to look like a SDVX controller. Navigate with arrow keys, select with enter, then press the button you want to use. Clear the current binding with space. Pretty simple, it even tells you this at the bottom of the screen.

If you navigate down to the bottom and press left and right, you can see there is actually 4 screens of bindings: Keyboard 1 & 2 and Gamepad 1 & 2. Contrary to its name, this is not for multiple keyboards. It is not for multiplayer, which KSM does not even support. Think of it as "alternative keybindings". Higher level charts require you to control the right side buttons and knob with your left hand and vice versa. Moving your hand

across the entire keyboard is a bit cumbersome, so people map 2 sets of controls: one full set for each hand / side of the keyboard.

There's lots of keybindings you can use and ultimately it is up to you to determine what works best, but hopefully this picture should give you a general idea of what I am talking about when I say you set up a full set of controls for each hand.



The left side key bindings go on keyboard 1, and the right go on Keyboard 2. Or vice-versa, it really doesn't matter. They are alternative bindings, so they function the same.

Of course, if you play with a controller you just bind the keys as normal. Some controllers function as keyboards and some function as gamepads, so that is why those options exist in the settings. Check with the manufacturer's notes, they probably say how to use it.

While in song select, you can press BT-A, B, C, or D to bring up different options menus. You control the settings in these menus by using the arrow keys or knobs.



BT-A

Judgement/Display changes the function of objects in the game

On : Normal, you should probably just leave it here forever

Off : You won't be penalized for missing the object, but sound effects won't trigger for FX or Lasers unless you do the inputs

Auto: The objects are hit automatically. You will gain gauge and sound effects will play.

Hide: The objects won't show up at all in gameplay at all

These settings are only really useful for practicing one aspect of the game, so don't play with them Off / Auto / Hide all the time, please



BT-B

Eff. Rate:

This changes the function / difficulty of the gauge (health bar) on the right in gameplay.

Normal gauge starts at 0% and you have to fill it to at least 70% by the end of the song in order to pass. You gain gauge for hitting notes on time (critical), gain a little bit for hitting notes offbeat (near), and lose gauge for missing notes. You don't lose instantly if it drops to 0% during the song.

Hard starts at 100% and you lose instantly if it ever drops to 0% during the song. You gain less per note hit and lose more per note missed than Normal gauge.

Easy is like Normal, but easier. Not recommended to ever use, Normal is easy enough.

Turn:

Mirror makes all the left objects appear on the right and vice-versa.

Random randomizes what column the objects appear in.



BT-C

Assist Tick:

Plays a “tick” sound when a BT note or FX chips must be pressed in game. We covered this earlier in the settings so turn it on / off in both places if you want it set on / off just to make sure.

Auto Sync:

Changes your offset automatically to match the timing of your hits. The Low, Mid, High is for sensitivity. Not really recommended to find your offset setting. Just play a song normally and press FX-L at the end to see your offset.

FAST/SLOW:

This will show the word FAST or SLOW when you hit a near depending on how you hit it

Noteskin:

Changes the look of the notes. Doesn't work on all skins so just leave it on Default.

Movie:

Turns the background animation on/off



BT-D

Press right or left arrow to switch HISPEED types and up and down to increase / decrease the value. You can also press up and down arrow during gameplay to adjust HISPEED. Remember, though, you must enable the HISPEED setting you want to use in the options menu before it will show up for selection here.

Also, while in song select you can press both FX buttons at the same time to toggle level grouping on and off. It looks like the image below. You can also press FX-L or R to jump one letter / level grouping up or down.



Help! My FPS counter is super low!

Unfortunately, it's the sad truth that the game runs like garbage. Here's a few things you can do to make it a little better.

1. Swap between Fullscreen and Windowed
2. Decrease Resolution
3. Lower Texture quality
4. Hide / Turn off Backgrounds
5. Turn off V-sync
6. Disconnect extra USB devices

Additionally, charts that use lasers that extend beyond the normal track (a feature introduced in SDVX III) will run noticeably worse than others.

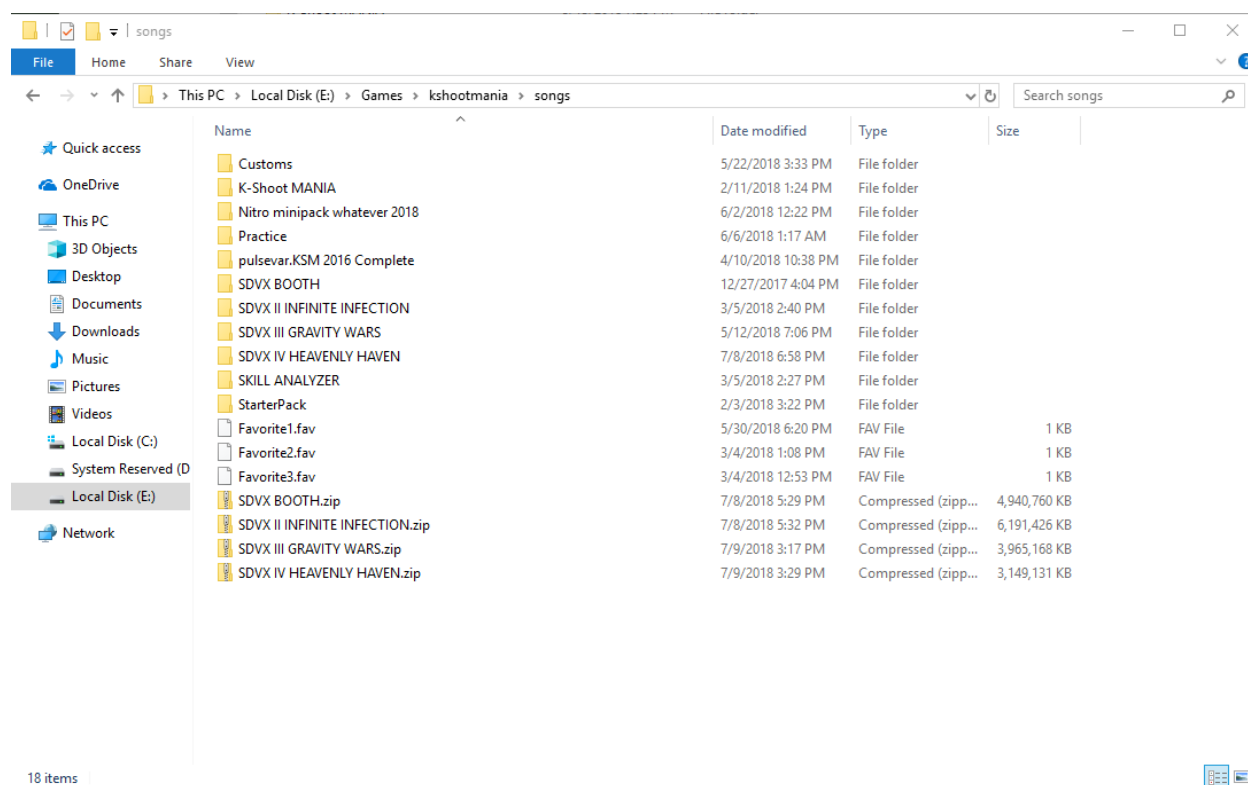
This is everything you should need to know to start playing, any other questions may be covered in the FAQ.

PART TWO: GETTING SONGS

The game includes 3 songs to start out with and you can download some more songs through the “INPUT GATE” in the main menu, but most songs must be downloaded externally and placed in the songs folder.

When downloading songs, you can put the individual song folders into the “kshootmania\songs” folder, but I highly advise against this.

Create song grouping folders within the “kshootmania\songs” folder, such as “kshootmania\songs\Customs” like in the image below.



Sometimes, K-Shoot doesn't work well with symbols in filenames, so if you add some charts and they crash the game when you load them, try taking them out or re-naming the files / folders to see if the problem is solved.

SDVX I, II, and III

(levels have been converted to SDVX IV 1-20 scale, some charts may have errors)

https://mega.nz/#F!Z2AiElx!_KEGpExLcWRRi2dxqEm8uw

SDVX IV

http://www.mediafire.com/file/bw3hzymbabun6z/SDVX_IV_Complete.zip/file

(↑ This should be a complete set of all converts for SDVX IV, or at least the higher difficulties for each song. If you find you are still missing some, check the other links. The song levels in this folder have been updated for the SDVX V re-ratings ↑)

https://mega.nz/#F!F8whhaBL!ZKAHHNgmsmKnud_14UrjxQ

(↑ This is the reddit link that gets updated sometimes, I believe run by t3s ↑)

https://mega.nz/#F!oZBBwbDB!y6UfWrGhCFEEIBSf_u7NoA

(↑ This is a reupload of some guy's charts, not sure who ↑)

<https://mega.nz/#F!0DpHmCwY!7601gt4C3TcX1ZbEmNUvbw>

(↑ Another convert folder by a bunch of people including Phoenix, Ted_the_Red, Local, Xanthor, Goodall, rdt01, t3s, & many others that I probably missed ↑)

SDVX V

<https://mega.nz/#F!RGBHIC6S!fbm3n3HfFAHGDQdADMgOnQ>

Mediafire mirrors if mega is unavailable *(all SDVX IV scale levels, not updated for V):*

[SDVX BOOTH](#)

[SDVX II](#)

[SDVX III](#)

[SDVX IV \(last updated July 9th, 2018\)](#)

USER-MADE CUSTOM CHARTS

(too many creators to list, just look at "effected by:" on the charts, it should say)

[K-Shoot Mania "official" charts](#)

[KSM Haven](#)

[KSH_Share](#)

[pulsevar.KSM](#)

[NTUMG](#)

[Volte](#)

[Nautica](#)

Other sources of custom charts:

- Youtube -- You can go on Youtube and search for something along the lines of "kshoot custom" or "KSM [insert song title here]" and you may get some results. There isn't always a download link in the description or comments, but from what I have seen, the creators are usually pretty kind and will provide a .ksh file for you to use. They usually won't provide song files or jacket images to avoid copyright.
- Discord -- There are a couple KSM / SDVX discord servers that have custom content on them.

A final note about song folders:

It is well known that loading folders in the game can be very slow, especially when they are several GB in size. As of 1.66c, there is a way to tell the game to cache your folders that only appears in the japanese documentation. Place a file in the pack folder of your choice (not individual song folders) with the name "conf.ini" and have the only text in the file read "cache=1". When you open the folder the next time in kshoot, the game will create a 57 MB cache file and a 1 KB cacheinfo file for that folder in your ./cache/songs directory. I am unsure of whether the cache will update if new song folders are added to the pack, as I have only tested with complete folders. If you don't understand what I mean by making a conf.ini file, just download [this](#) and place it in your pack folder

PART THREE: CUSTOM SKINS

Like most rhythm game simulators, a lot of people don't really like default skin. If you do, perfect, just skip this section.

There are lots of places that you can look to download custom skins. As with most things, Google is your best friend here. But, I'll list some common places that have some skins.

- Reddit -- On the [K-Shoot Mania subreddit wiki](#), there's a few skins listed. They are all pretty solid choices.
- Facebook -- *Really?* Yes really. There's a [K-Shoot Facebook group](#) you can join and there is quite a bit of custom content on there.
- Discord -- Just like getting custom songs, there are a couple KSM / SDVX discord servers that have custom content on them.
- Youtube -- Just like getting custom songs, lots of people make demo videos for their skins on Youtube, so you may find some skins on there if you go looking a bit. [Here's an example](#), I gotta plug my boy rdt01 for his flawless skin

(will write skin swapping tutorial later)

PART FOUR: FAQ

Q: What's all this about "new scale", "new levels", and "SDVX IV scale"?

A: SDVX I, II, and III all rated charts' difficulties on a 1-16 scale. This led to a lot of higher leveled charts to be really far apart in actual difficulty despite only being one or two levels away numerically. Konmai expanded the range to 1-20 when SDVX IV was released, so they went back and changed the levels of all of the old charts from the previous games. This is why you see some charts' levels referred to as "new scale", "old level", "SDVX IV scale" or any other variation of these. Only songs level 13+ are affected. Hopefully this visual can help you understand a little bit better.

Old Level	New Level
13	13
	14
14	15
	16
	17
15※	18※
	19※
	20
16※	

Q: Some of these higher leveled charts still feel like they are rated incorrectly. Didn't you say that they fixed all that with the new scale?

A: The scale obviously isn't perfect, so there are some discrepancies within levels. Charts that are more dependent on different aspects of the game will obviously be easier for some people than others. Also, 1-20 is still a pretty small range so there will be minor differences (although some are not so minor...) between difficulties of charts within a difficulty rating. Refer to the [tier list for charts level 15+ made by the japanese community](#) if you want a little better idea of how hard a chart is.

Q: What are all those symbols / colors on the tier list you just showed me?

A:

Yellow Background	Balanced difficulty (Button + Laser)
Blue Background	Button-heavy chart
Red Background	Laser-heavy chart
This symbol → ✕	“Personal difference” It’s hard for some people and easy for some people e.g. freaky freak [GRV]
【← These brackets →】	“Sight read killer” There’s patterns in the chart that make it hard to play the first time through
Red Text	“New Song”
Blue Text	“Change Difficulty Level” It means they changed where it is on the tier list
超個人差 (first column after last tier)	“Super personal difference” Even harder or easier for some people than the personal difference ones e.g. Daiuchuu Stage [EXH], Booths of Fighters [EXH]
未分類 (second column after last tier)	“Uncategorized”
變更議論中 (third column after last tier)	“Changing debate”

Q: What amount of HISPEED should I use?

A: HISPEED is a setting that will vary from person to person. Start at 400-500 if it's your first time playing and move the value up in increments of 25 until charts become comfortable to read. Once you have a set HISPEED it is recommended to keep that value set. If you start to find a majority of charts are becoming too dense to read as you move up in difficulty, consider raising it again. Most higher level players 600-1000.

Q: How do I improve? I'm not getting better!

A: The number one piece of advice to give to players who are not improving is to play more! To be more specific play as many different charts at your clear level as you can. Sight reading and exposing yourself to more patterns is key to improving your reading and general skill. If you have a set level that you are comfortable playing at, try pushing yourself by playing a level higher than normal every now and then, but don't go too crazy or it can have the opposite effect. You could also go back and occasionally try to upscore and get low near/error counts on easier charts. This will help build consistency and timing. Play different types of charts as well. If you suck at lasers, play laser charts. If you suck at buttons, play button charts.

Q: What are "courses"?

A: If you are familiar with SDVX, they function like the SKILL ANALYZER. Courses are a set of 3 songs in a row. The gauge used for these songs is neither Normal nor Hard, but rather somewhere in between. You start at 100% and lose if you drop to 0%, but the gauge is less punishing for misses than Hard. Additionally, your % from the current song will carry over to the next in the course. Courses are almost always used as a way to judge skill in some way. More detailed info about SDVX SKILL ANALYZER courses can be found [here](#).

Q: Should I get a controller?

A: This is entirely up to you, my friend. Most people will agree that the game is more fun on controller, considering it is meant to be played with one, but that doesn't mean that you have to use one. You can play the hardest charts on a keyboard. It's really up to you whether you think playing on a controller is easier / more fun.

Q: Alright, I want a controller. Where do I get one?

A: You have a few options. If you want to buy one, there are two main controllers that people use. [YuanCon](#) is maybe the best nowadays, idk. The [SVSE5](#) (Sound Voltex Standard Edition 5) made by dj dao (gamo2) is very popular and almost always available. The [Turbocharger+](#) is made by VIRGOO and is also pretty popular. It isn't always available, though, and the customer service is known to be a bit like talking to a brick wall. Other options include the [Pocket Voltex](#), which is more of a niche controller, the [official KONAMI controller](#), which you can only buy from resellers and super expensive. You can also build your own if you have a little bit of experience with soldering, programming, woodworking, etc.

Q: I think I can build my own. Where do I start?

A: There's a bunch of online guides about this already, so i'll just link a few.

- https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BypoxWOrYu_yS1lIU5pckpaLXM/view?usp=sharing (credit: Oni-ChiChi)
- <https://mon.im/2016/07/70-sdvx-controller.html>
- <https://consandstuff.github.io/>
- <https://sdvxdiy.github.io/>

Q: The audio in the game is messed up after playing a few charts.

A: Try disabling Fast Startup in your windows settings

PART FIVE: COMMUNITY INFO

Like all niche rhythm games, this game only exists because of the community.

There's the subreddit, the Facebook group, and a few discord servers. Chances are you came from one of these, but feel free to join all of them.

Subreddit: www.reddit.com/r/kshootmania

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/internationalksm/>

Discord: <https://discord.gg/aT2p93e>

give me more discord invite links please

PART SIX: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Some of these have already been linked earlier in the guide, but i'll consolidate them all down here so you don't have to hunt for links.

SDVX Tier List:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1cFltguBvPpIBem-x1STHnG3k4TZzFfyNEZ-RwsQszoo/edit#gid=0>

This is great for seeing what makes a chart difficult, and the relative difficulty of the chart compared to others in its level grouping.

SDVX.IN:

www.sdvx.in

Amazing resource to view SDVX charts to analyze for patterns or to transcribe for making converts.

EDITOR TUTORIAL:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yizDemXj29zTPOawjSKhMATJpL0LF6Lo9TJJee7uZFw/edit>

Great tutorial written by Nitro, it covers pretty much all of the functions of the editor. Just know that using REAPER for FX is not needed as of version 1.6, but it is still pretty useful for finding BPM, cutting music, and making minor adjustments to the song audio

This guide was written by grumpybutter and Ted_the_Red. Thanks for reading. Did I miss something? Broken link? Should a link be added/changed? Did I miscredit someone? Do you want to help me write more of this guide to improve it further?

Pm me on discord grumpybutter#3778 and I'll give you edit permission or whatever