

# tinyloops.com - Programming the Roland TB-303

 [tinyloops.com/tb303/pattern\\_write.html](http://tinyloops.com/tb303/pattern_write.html)

## pattern write

when the 303 is slaved to a master (eg the TR-606), the RUN/STOP key is disabled on the 303. please use the RUN/STOP key on the master.  
for the benefits of programming the 303 in slave mode, see "realtime recording" below.



## PATTERN WRITE

### ● time mode

#### for STEP TIME RECORDING

functional buttons:



time

- enter the timing of each pitch

: for every STEP in the pattern, choose:

- ♫ play next pitch
- ♫ sustain the last pitch
- ♫ rest (play silence)

after the last STEP in the pattern, the sequencer automatically returns to NORMAL MODE.  
- ♫ can not play an ACCENT or SLIDE  
○ ♫ does not make sense after a rest



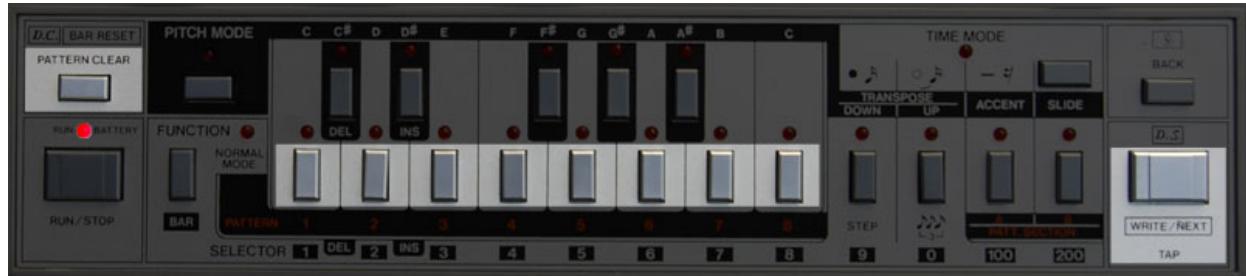
recording

- start realtime recording for TIMING data

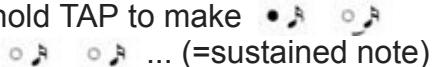
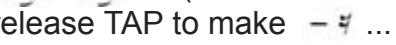
=> see **REAL TIME RECORDING**

## REAL TIME RECORDING

functional buttons:



when you press RUN on the master in **normal, pitch or time** mode, and the TB-303 is slaved, the sequencer starts running without making sound.  
the mode buttons are disabled during RUN.

 RUN	recording	- to clear TIMING data, start metronome and arm TAP button	: press PATTERN CLEAR	- in <b>normal</b> mode *: the sequencer keeps running along with the master, even when PATTERN CLEAR is pressed half-way of the bar. this is very useful when the 303 is slaved to a master.
				- in <b>pitch or time</b> mode: sequencer keeps running, but restarts from the first step of the bar, so it's not perfectly sync with the master any longer. this is useful for when the TB- 303 is in stand alone mode, because the metronome restarts from step 1 of the bar.
		- "one key play" **	: press TAP in time or hold [1..8] + TAP	hold TAP to make  release TAP to make  hold [1..8] + TAP to make all notes sustain
				TAP fires the recording for the current metronome loop. when the metronome then finishes its loop, REALTIME RECORDING is automatically ended and the sequencer starts playing the pattern.

## ● normal mode

### for GENERAL PATTERN SETTINGS

functional buttons:



	pattern	- select	: [1..8], A or B	
		- clear	: hold [1..8] + "PATTERN CLEAR"	clears TIMING data and resets STEP to 4/4, 16 steps.
		- step information	: hold "FUNCTION"	when  lights up the STEP is in 3/4, 15 steps. when  is dim the STEP is in 4/4, 16 steps.
		- set step to 3/4, 12 steps	: hold "FUNCTION" + 	 lights up. keeps TIMING data
		- change nr of steps for 4/4	: hold "FUNCTION" + press STEP <b>1x..16x</b>	clears TIMING data
		- change nr of steps for 3/4	: hold "FUNCTION" + press STEP <b>1x..15x</b>	clears TIMING data
		- reset step from 3/4 to 4/4	: hold "FUNCTION" + press STEP <b>16x</b>	clears TIMING data (same as "pattern clear" but more work)
unsure about all this "timing" stuff? see the <u><a href="#">"sync" explanation</a></u> in the quickresults page, question #5.				



recording

- start  
realtime  
recording  
for TIMING  
data

=> see **REAL TIME  
RECORDING**

### ● pitch mode

for **STEP RECORDING OF NOTE PITCHES**

functional buttons for "change this pitch":



functional buttons for "keep this pitch but change the properties":



for every  
PITCH

: (step 1)  
**choose one  
of these 2**

:

- *to change the pitch:*  
(hold transpose DOWN/UP or none +)  
press [C..C']   
release button(s)

- *to keep the pitch but be able to change  
the properties:*  
hold WRITE/NEXT (+ press  
DOWN/UP, ACCENT, SLIDE or none),  
release WRITE/NEXT button

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(step 2)  
**choose one  
of these 3** :

- *to edit the next pitch:*  
go to step 1
- *to re-edit the above pitch or properties:*  
press BACK to edit the same pitch,  
go to step 1
- *to go back to edit the first pitch of the  
pattern*  
press PITCH MODE,  
go to step 1

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(last step) :

- *to finish editing the pitches and store the  
pitch data:*  
press NORMAL MODE

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 RUN recording - start realtime  
recording  
for TIMING  
data

=> see **REAL TIME RECORDING**

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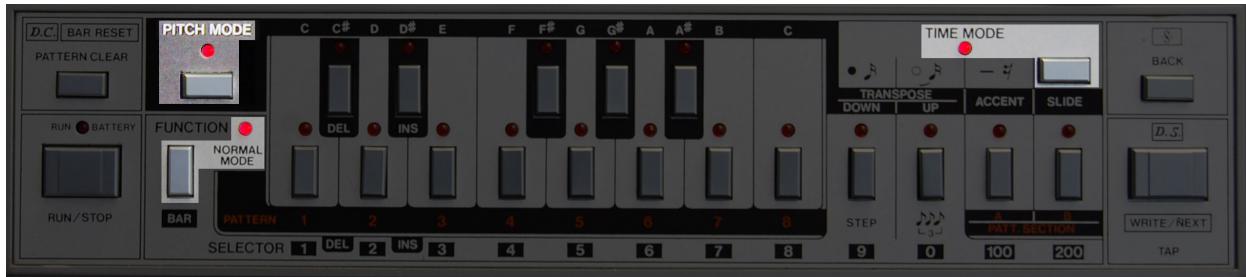
- there are 3 modes during PATTERN WRITE: **NORMAL** mode, **PITCH** mode and **TIME** mode.

#### workflow:

1. set the general pattern settings in **NORMAL** mode (eg pattern length and 3/4 or 4/4 time)
2. create and edit the note pitch sequence (including accents and slides)
  - > in **PITCH** mode (=STEP RECORDING OF NOTE PITCHES)
  - > there is no way to enter the pitches in REAL TIME
3. create and edit the note duration sequence
  - > in **TIME** mode (=STEP TIME RECORDING),
  - > or during **RUN** state (=REAL TIME RECORDING)

#### the different modes:

- the 3 modes can only be changed during STOP state, because they are locked in RUN state.
- the mode selection buttons can be found here:



#### remember:

- pitch data can never be deleted, only TIMING data.
- in other words, you can "overwrite" existing PITCH data, but you can never actually "delete" existing PITCH data.
- after *switching on* the TB-303, all the patterns are filled with 48 random pitches, but you can only use the first 16 pitches in a pattern.
- the ACCENT and SLIDE pitch data is only reset when the PITCH is changed.
- TIMING data are the note durations but **not** the STEP or data.

