

Driving A Live Set With Keyboard Shortcuts Only

≈40 Guests

This guide walks through a typical case: a mobile DJ playing a private party or a small club night for about forty people, without a MIDI/HID controller on the booth — just the laptop keyboard. It shows how to use the 14 fixed keyboard shortcuts to run a full set (windows,...

DjMirror Pulse User Manual Series

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: The Example Set

Chapter 2: Concepts In Two Minutes

Chapter 3: Step By Step

Chapter 4: Putting It Together: What Your Hands Should Do

Chapter 5: Test It Before The Event (2 Minutes, No Audience Needed)

Chapter 6: Doing It From Hardware Later (Same Actions, No Re-Learning)

Chapter 7: Troubleshooting

Chapter 8: Quick Recipe Card (Print Me)

It uses only what the product already provides; reference material lives in [docs keyboard/README KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS](#) (full reference), [MIDI HID CONTROLLER GUIDE](#) (the same actions from hardware) and [VISUALIZERS GUIDE](#) (what masks and styles actually change on screen).

Chapter 1: The Example Set

Moment of the night	What the audience sees	Shortcuts you will use
Setup / doors	App window on the projector, UI chrome visible	<code>Ctrl+W</code> (fullscreen)
Welcome / dinner	Artist card with the host's name, calm background video	<code>Ctrl+Right</code> / <code>Ctrl+Left</code> , <code>Ctrl+R</code> , <code>Ctrl+Up</code> / <code>Ctrl+Down</code>
Warm-up	Same playlist, first mask and style	<code>Ctrl+F1</code> / <code>Ctrl+F2</code> , <code>Ctrl+F3</code> / <code>Ctrl+F4</code>
Dance sets	Style + mask + video changes on transitions	All visual shortcuts combined
Speeches / toast	Artist card back on screen	<code>Ctrl+R</code>
End of night	Back to windowed, quit	<code>Ctrl+W</code> , <code>Ctrl+Q</code>

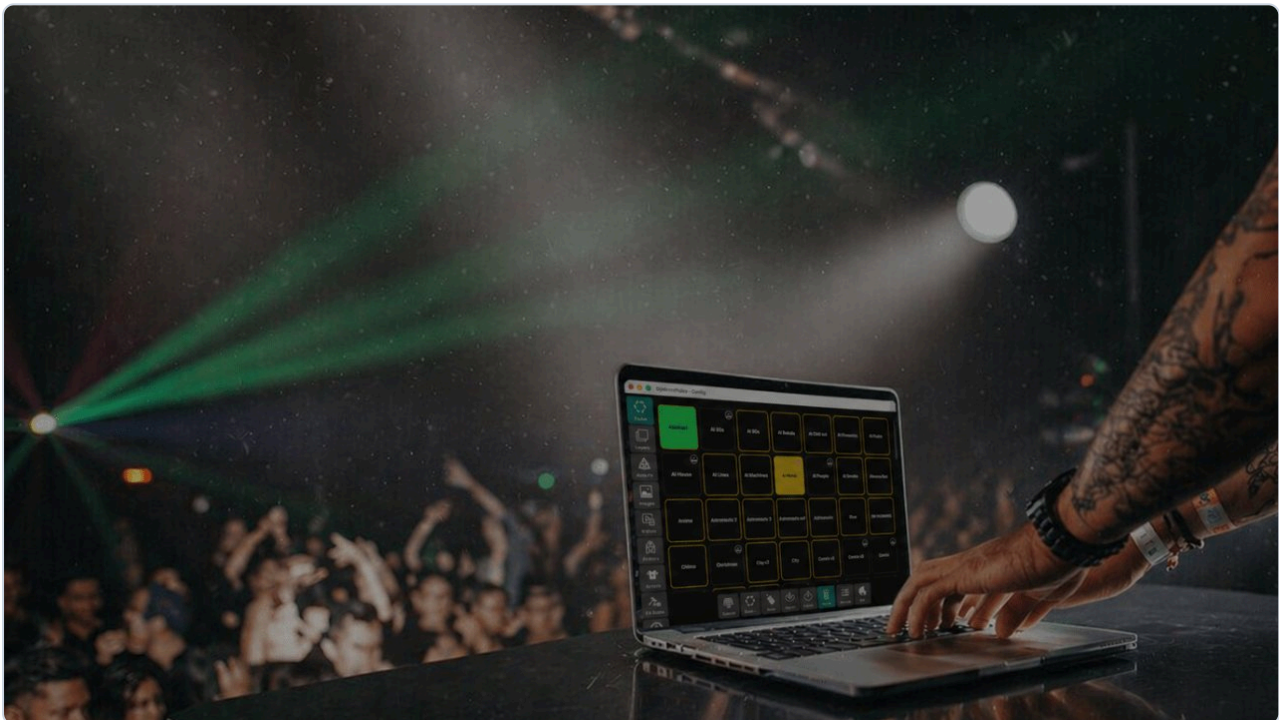


Figure 1: keyboard only on the booth — no controller needed.

Nothing here needs a controller, a second screen, or NDI/Spout. If you later add a MIDI/HID controller, the same actions apply: every shortcut action (`playlistStep`, `maskStep`, style, artist) can be mapped to a button, fader or pad — see the MIDI & HID guide.

Goals for a room this size

1. The audience must **never see the application chrome**: go fullscreen before the doors open.
2. One hand stays free (drinks, microphone, mixer): every action is a **single `Ctrl` combination**.
3. Transitions look intentional: change **style + mask + video** as a deliberate chain, not random key mashing.
4. The artist card never stays hidden by accident: know the **visibility timer reset** by heart.

Chapter 2: Concepts In Two Minutes

- **Application-wide, `Ctrl`-only.** All 14 shortcuts use the `Ctrl` modifier (never `Alt`, `Meta` or `⌘` on macOS) and work anywhere in the app — no need to click a panel first. They are **case-insensitive** (`Ctrl+W` = `Ctrl+w`). Implemented as Qt `Shortcut` with `Qt.ApplicationShortcut` context.
- **Focus is required.** The DjMirror Pulse window must have OS focus (click it once). If a shortcut does nothing, focus was stolen by another app — not a bug in the shortcut.
- **Two windows.** `Ctrl+W` drives the **main** window; `Ctrl+S` drives the **separate** (second-screen) window. `Ctrl+F` toggles the main window's frame, but only in windowed mode (fullscreen is always frameless).
- **Wrap-around lists.** Styles and masks cycle and wrap: past the last style comes the first one again. There is no "style 0" to get stuck on.
- **Artist timer.** `Ctrl+Right` / `Ctrl+Left` step through the artist list **and** reset the artist card + marquee visibility timer. `Ctrl+R` resets the timer **without** changing artist — the "bring the card back" key.
- **Video playlist.** `Ctrl+Up` / `Ctrl+Down` step through the background video playlist (previous / next). They control the background video view only.
- **Fixed set.** Shortcuts are currently **hardcoded** — there is no remapping UI. To get the same actions on hardware buttons, map them in **Settings** → **MIDI/HID/OSC Controller** instead.

Chapter 3: Step By Step

Step 1 – Go fullscreen before anyone looks at the screen

Press **Ctrl+W** once. The window chrome disappears and the visuals fill the projector.

- Pressing **Ctrl+W** again returns to windowed mode: the window is resized to **half its current dimensions and centered** — handy for reaching Settings between sets without dragging corners.
- Second screen? **Ctrl+S** toggles the **separate window** fullscreen/windowed (windowed = 80 % of that screen, centered). **Ctrl+F** hides/shows the main window frame — windowed mode only. **Ctrl+I** toggles the FPS indicator: useful during setup to confirm rendering headroom, hide it before doors.
- Do this **before the doors open**. The audience should never see panels, cursors or window borders.
- On laptops where **F1–F4** are media/brightness keys, check the **Fn-lock** now (hold **Fn** if needed) — you will need **Ctrl+F1** ... **Ctrl+F4** later and you do not want to discover the Fn key mid-drop.

Step 2 – Put the right artist on screen

Shortcut	Effect
Ctrl+Right	Next artist (also resets card + marquee timer)
Ctrl+Left	Previous artist (also resets timer)
Ctrl+R	Reset timer only — card reappears if hidden, artist unchanged

Rehearse this chain: **Ctrl+Right** three times (watch the card change), wait for the card to auto-hide, then **Ctrl+R** (card comes back). That is the exact move you will use when the host grabs the microphone.

Step 3 – Learn the two visual axes: masks and styles

Masks are **shape overlays** on the output; styles are **saved visual themes** (colors, layers, behavior).

Shortcut	Effect
Ctrl+F1 / Ctrl+F2	Previous / next mask
Ctrl+F3 / Ctrl+F4	Previous / next style (wraps around)

Practice the transition double-hit: **Ctrl+F4** then **Ctrl+F2** (next style + next mask). Fired together on a phrase change, it reads as one deliberate visual cut. Reverse it (**Ctrl+F3** + **Ctrl+F1**) to step back if you overshoot — both lists wrap, so you can always come around again.

Step 4 – Drive the background video without the mouse

Shortcut	Effect
Ctrl+Up	Previous video in the playlist
Ctrl+Down	Next video in the playlist

These control the **background video view** only. Step through the whole playlist once during soundcheck so there are no surprises (vertical phone clips, black intros) during the set.

Step 5 – Know the two exit keys and when NOT to press them

Shortcut	Effect	Warning
Ctrl+W	Toggle main-window fullscreen / windowed	Safe anytime, but never mid-drop — the resize is visible
Ctrl+S	Toggle separate (second-screen) window fullscreen / windowed	Windowed returns at 80 % of screen size, centered
Ctrl+F	Toggle main-window frame (windowed mode only; fullscreen is always frameless)	No effect in fullscreen
Ctrl+I	Toggle FPS indicator overlay	Monitor-only, audience never needs it
Ctrl+Q	Quit immediately	No confirmation. Keep this key away from fat-finger range during the set

If your laptop keyboard puts **W** and **Q** next to each other (most do), train yourself: **fullscreen = Ctrl+W with the left hand only before the set; nothing near Q while dancing.**

Chapter 4: Putting It Together: What Your Hands Should Do

Moment	Hands	Result
Doors (empty room)	Ctrl+W	Fullscreen, clean projection
Guests arrive	Ctrl+Right × n to the host, Ctrl+Down to a calm loop	Correct name, calm video
Card hides itself	Ctrl+R	Card back, same artist
Warm-up → dance	Ctrl+F4 + Ctrl+F2 , Ctrl+Down	New style + mask + video in one phrase
Overshot the style	Ctrl+F3 (or keep going — it wraps)	Previous style, no panic
Speech / toast	Ctrl+R (card back), leave masks alone	Room attention on the name, visuals calm
Break / emergency	Ctrl+W to windowed for Settings, Ctrl+W back after	Audience sees at most one clean toggle
End of night	Ctrl+W , then Ctrl+Q	Windowed, quit

Chapter 5: Test It Before The Event (2 Minutes, No Audience Needed)

1. Click the DjMirror Pulse window once (focus), press **Ctrl+W** — confirm fullscreen with no chrome.
2. **Ctrl+Right**, **Ctrl+Left** — confirm the artist card changes and the timer resets (card reappears).
3. Let the card auto-hide, press **Ctrl+R** — confirm it comes back without changing artist.
4. **Ctrl+F2**, **Ctrl+F1**, **Ctrl+F4**, **Ctrl+F3** — confirm masks and styles cycle and wrap at both ends.
5. **Ctrl+Up**, **Ctrl+Down** — confirm the background video steps through the playlist.
6. If any of **Ctrl+F1**–**F4** adjusts brightness/volume instead: hold **Fn** or flip Fn-lock, repeat step 4.
7. On macOS: open **System Settings** → **Keyboard** → **Shortcuts**, confirm no OS entry steals your combos.

Print the reference card (§8) and tape it to the laptop lid — under stage lighting you will not read a PDF.

Chapter 6: Doing It From Hardware Later (Same Actions, No Re-Learning)

Every shortcut action exists as a mappable controller action for when you buy a controller:

Shortcut	Controller action equivalent
<code>Ctrl+F1</code> / <code>Ctrl+F2</code>	<code>maskStep</code> with <code>previous</code> / <code>next</code>
Video step	<code>playlistStep</code> on <code>videoPlaylist</code> with <code>previous</code> / <code>next</code>
Style / artist recall	<code>style</code> / <code>artist</code> with the saved name
Timer reset habit	No direct equivalent — map a spare pad to <code>style</code> re-fire or just keep <code>Ctrl+R</code> on the keyboard

Keyboard and controller can be used **simultaneously**: keep `Ctrl+R` and `Ctrl+W` on the keyboard even after mapping everything else to pads. See `MIDI_HID_CONTROLLER_GUIDE.md` §9 for a worked DDJ example.

Chapter 7: Troubleshooting

Symptom	Likely cause	Fix
Shortcut does nothing	DjMirror Pulse window not focused	Click anywhere on the DjMirror Pulse window first
Shortcut intercepted (e.g. browser/VPN hotkey fires)	Another app registered a global hotkey	Quit or rebind the other app's global hotkeys
Ctrl+F1 - F4 change brightness/volume	Laptop Fn/media keys	Hold Fn while pressing, or enable Fn-lock
macOS combo does nothing	macOS system shortcut conflict	System Settings → Keyboard → Shortcuts , disable overlapping entries
Shortcuts stopped mid-session	Focus lost to another window	Click DjMirror Pulse to refocus; restart app if it persists
Want different key bindings	Shortcuts are fixed in 6.9	Use a MIDI/HID controller mapping instead (any button → same action)
Ctrl+Q quit the app mid-set	Fat-finger next to Ctrl+W	Keep left hand anchored; never reach across the Q / W pair while dancing

Chapter 8: Quick Recipe Card (Print Me)

- **Before doors:** **Ctrl+W** → fullscreen (**Ctrl+S** for the second screen). Check Fn-lock for **F1** – **F4**. **Ctrl+I** to check FPS, then hide it.
- **Artist:** **Ctrl+Right** / **Ctrl+Left** to pick · **Ctrl+R** to bring the card back.
- **Look:** **Ctrl+F3** / **Ctrl+F4** styles · **Ctrl+F1** / **Ctrl+F2** masks · chain style+mask for transitions.
- **Video:** **Ctrl+Up** / **Ctrl+Down** through the background playlist.
- **After:** **Ctrl+W** to windowed · **Ctrl+Q** to quit (no confirmation — careful!).
- **If dead:** click the window (focus) → retry → check Fn / macOS conflicts.
- All **Ctrl**, case-insensitive, application-wide. Fixed set in 6.9 — hardware mapping is the customization path.