Using the Gap Before Bar plugin in Sibelius 7.5 or later

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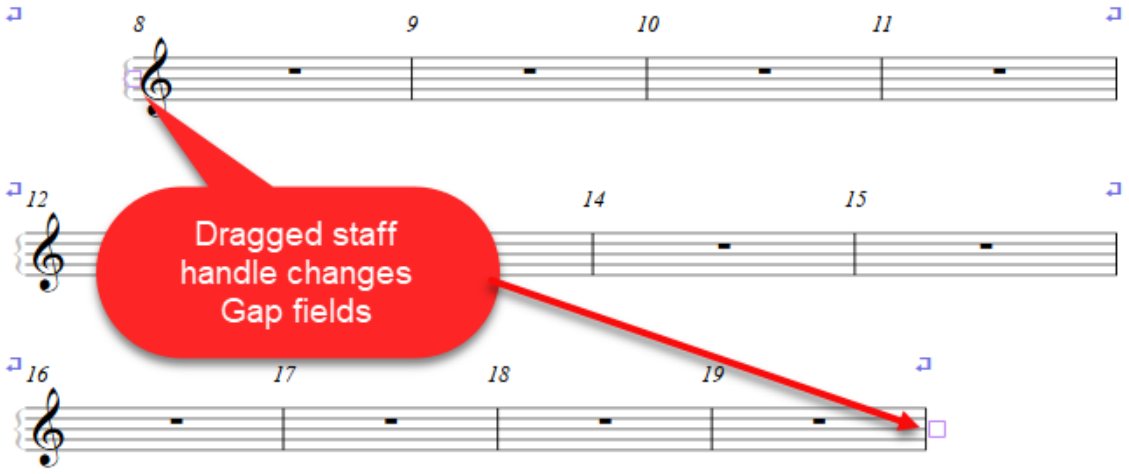
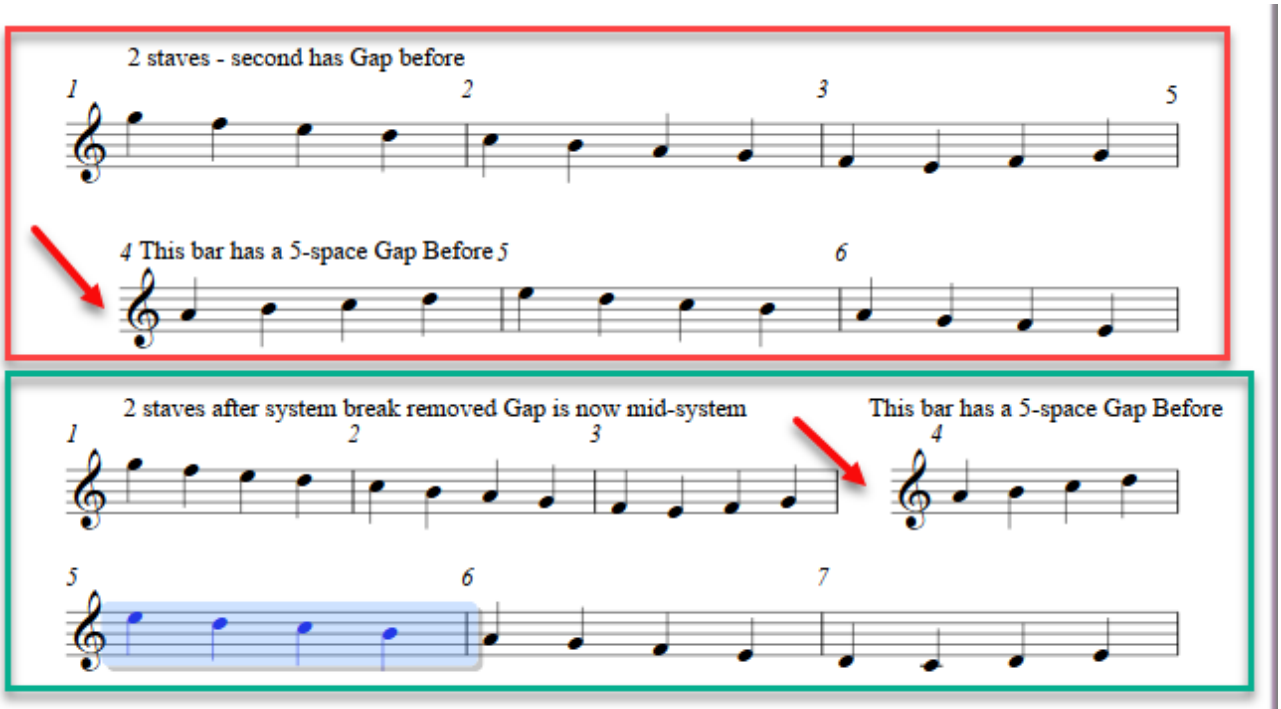
The Gap Before Bar plugin was written in Sibelius 7.5 to provide a quick way to erase all unwanted gaps in a score. It has been updated to give more flexibility in tracing and deleting gaps, and also provides a new mechanism to change gaps in the first bar of each selected system of bars.

There are 2 properties of a bar that are activated when you drag the handles on either the first bar or the last bar in a system to change the width of that system. **GapBefore** changes when you drag the handle of the first bar in the system. **GapAfter** changes when you drag the handle of the last bar in the system using the mouse or arrow keys.



The **Gap Before Bar** plugin allows you to trace, reset to 0, or change the values of the **GapBefore** and **GapAfter** fields in selected bars. It is often used to remove unwanted gaps that appear when a score is converted from MusicXML, or when bar margins have been dragged, and then the score is reformatted. You can process the current active score only, or all currently open scores, or all the scores in a folder.

Note that adding or removing gaps in the full score will not affect the parts (and parts do not affect the full score). The current version of **Gap Before Bar** will let you process the score and all parts separately or together.



Bar with Gap Before Bar set before and after reformatting

Changing **GapBefore** in a bar that is not at the start of a system is a way to produce a score with gaps between bars, as for a split before a coda. This is often desirable, but if it happens as a result of reformatting, as in the example, it can be confusing.

Uses for **GapBefore** and **GapAfter** are described in the *Sibelius Reference* in the sections *Systems indented at the left-hand/right-hand side* under the heading *Staves*.

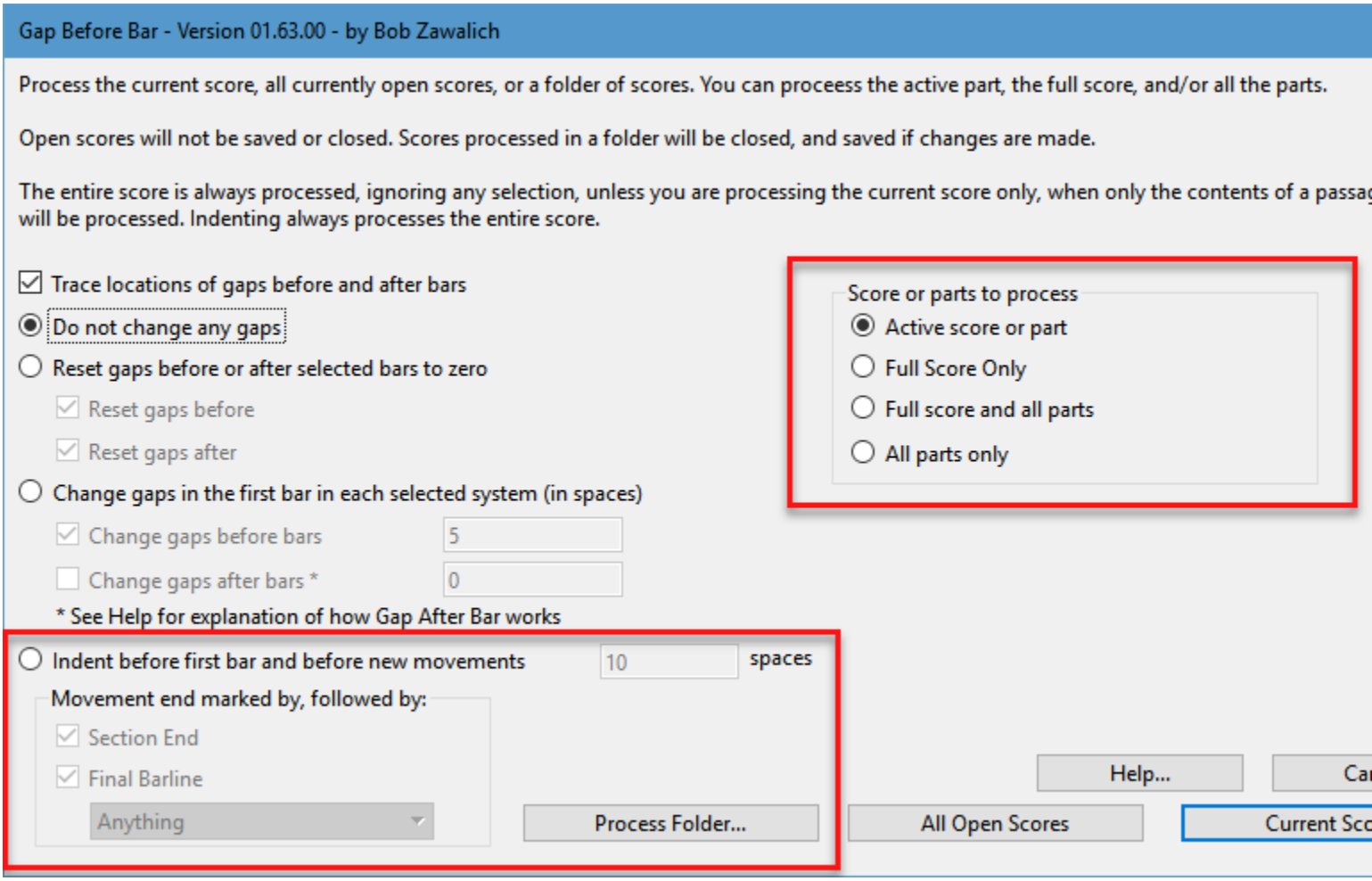
The plugin can process the current score, all open scores, or all the scores in a folder. It ignores the selection and processes the entire score unless you are only processing the current score. In that case the plugin will process only the bars in a passage selection.

Changing Gap Before and GapAfter without using the plugin

You can view and change the **GapBefore** value of any bar in a system by selecting that bar and changing the value of **Gap Before Bar** in the **Bar** panel of the **Inspector**. **GapAfter** can only be changed by dragging the handle of the bar at the end of the system, and there is no way, except in a plugin, to inspect the current **GapAfter** value of a bar.

You can change or remove **GapBefore** for a selected bar in the **Inspector**. If the first bar in a system has **GapBefore** set you can reset the value to zero by selecting the dragging handle or the initial barline of the staff and choosing **Appearance > Design and Position > Reset Position**. Reset **GapAfter** by selecting the dragging handle after the last bar in the system and using **Reset Position**. If you enable **View>Invisibles>Handles** it will be easier to select the desired handles.

Using the Gap Before Bar plugin

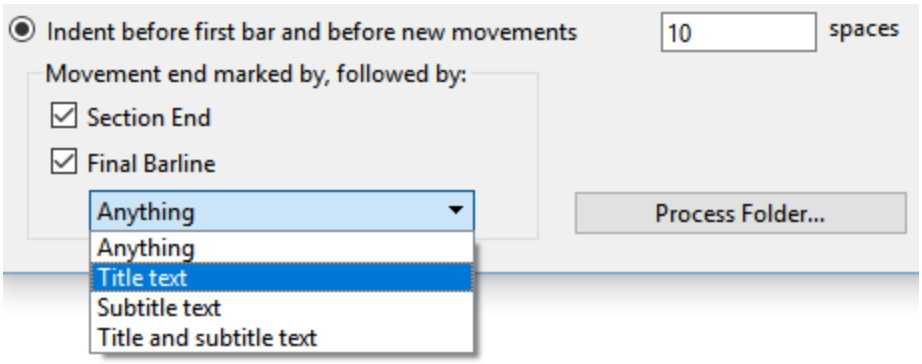


This plugin can process the currently active score, all open scores, or a folder of scores. For each score processed it can process the active score or part, the full score, the full score and all parts, or all parts only. It ignores the selection and processes the entire score unless you are only processing the current score. In that case the plugin will process only the bars in a passage selection. *Changing the gaps in the full score will not change gaps in any parts*, so if you want parts to be affected you need to run the plugin in a part of use one of the options that process all parts. Changing one part will not affect other parts or the full score.

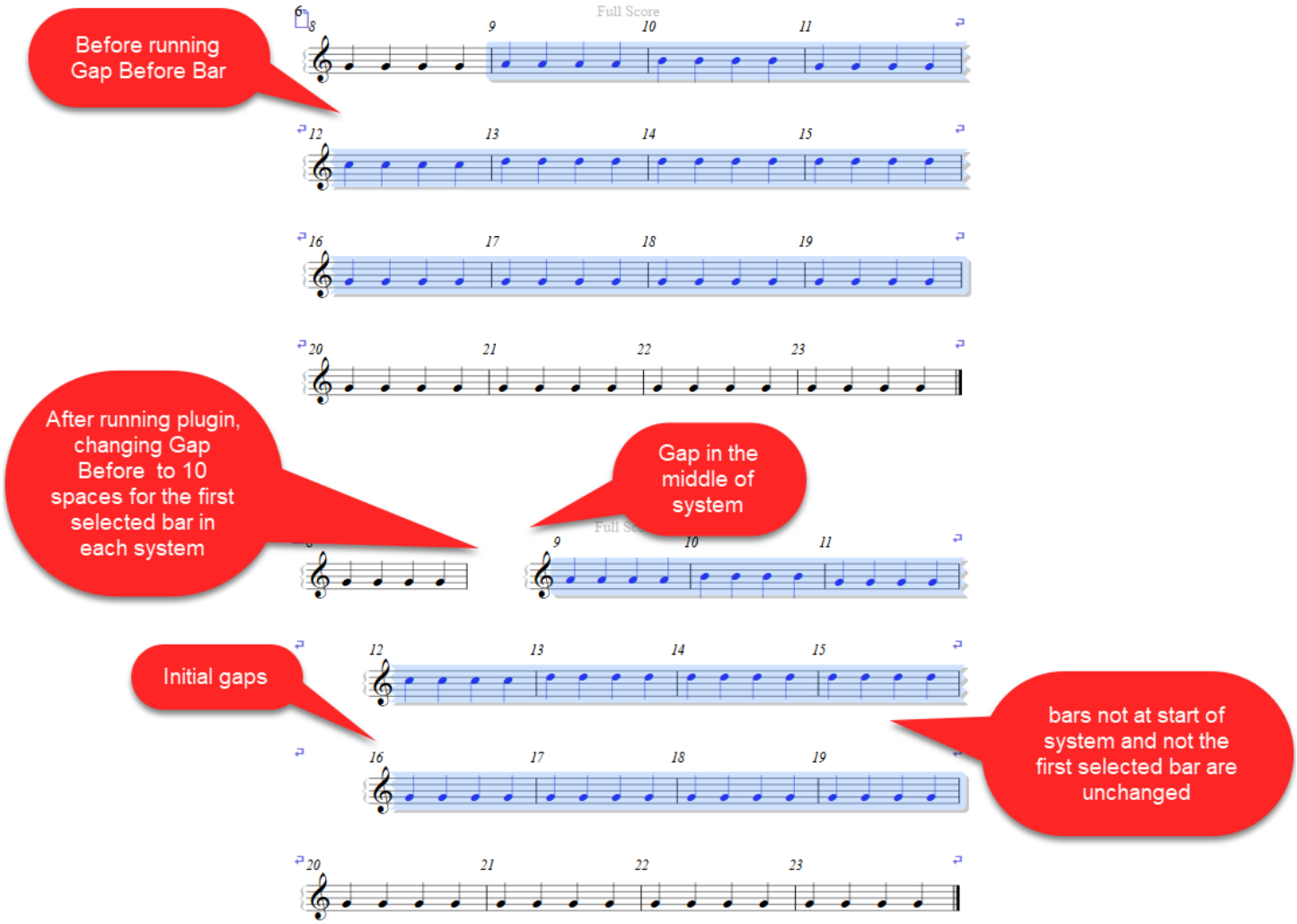
The **Gap Before Bar** plugin can trace non-zero **GapBefore** and **GapAfter** values in any selected bars, so you can see it a score has any unexpected gaps. It can also change the gap values. **Reset gaps** and **Change gaps** behave differently, so be sure to understand how they work, and which bars they affect.

Reset gaps before or after selected bars to zero will zero out the **GapBefore** or **GapAfter** fields in **all selected bars**. If you use **Process Folder** or **All Open Scores**, the entire score will be selected, and all bars will be cleared. If you use **Current Score**, only the bars in the passage selection will be reset. If you want to reset the entire current score, select the entire score before running the plugin.

Indent first bar and before new movements will put gaps of the specified size into the first bar of a score or part, and into any bars following bars marked as ends of movements. It always ignores the selection.
Here are some options you can use to tell the plugin what you use to mark the start of a movement.



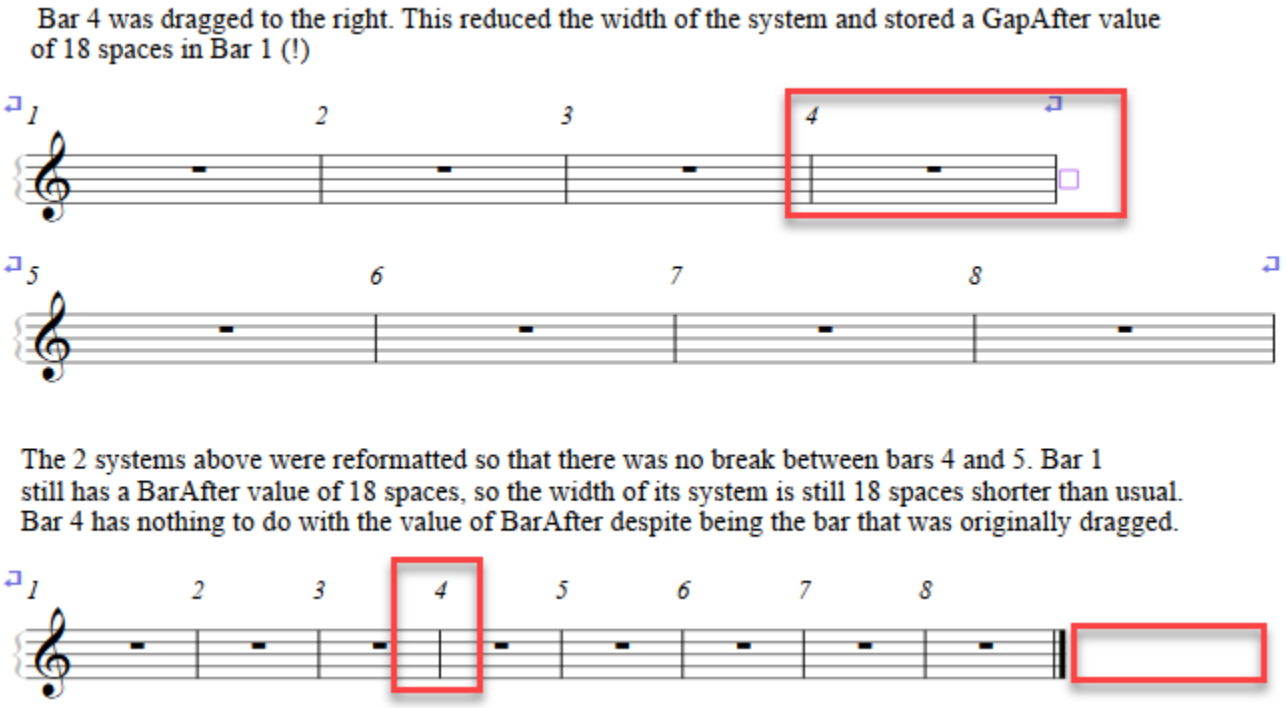
Change gaps in the first bar in each selected system will only put new values into **the first selected bar in each system.**



One peculiarity of **GapAfter** is that it is always stored in the first bar of the system, even though you drag the last bar in the system to change it. Since **GapAfter** has no effect unless it is a property of the first bar in a system, **the plugin will only change GapAfter for a passage selection that starts with the first bar in a system**. It applies the **GapAfter** change to the first bar, even though the effect will appear as a change in the margin of the last bar in the system. To see this, make a passage selection of the first bar in a system that has several bars. Run the plugin and change **Set gap after bars** to 10 spaces. You will see the width of the system shrink 10 spaces to the left.

If multiple systems are selected, the plugin will change the settings in the first bar of each selected system after the first system.

If bars with non-zero **GapBefore** or **GapAfter** are moved by layout changes so they are not the first bar in a system, unexpected and undesired gaps may appear in the system, as shown in the first example above and this example showing reformatting when **GapAfter** is set.



You can change or remove **GapBefore** for a selected bar in the **Inspector**. If the first bar in a system has **GapBefore** set you can select the dragging handle or the initial barline of the staff and choose **Appearance > Design and Position > Reset Position**. Reset GapAfter by selecting the dragging handle after the last bar in the system and using **Reset Position**. If you enable **View>Invisibles>Handles** it will be easier to select the desired handles. You can also use this plugin to change or reset gaps anywhere in the score. Select the entire score and reset both **GapBefore** and **GapAfter** to 0 to remove all gaps.