

# The Plugin Import House Style Settings And Restore

*Bob Zawalich April 12, 2026*

## Import House Style Settings And Restore

This plugin imports a custom House Style that defines Bar Objects (text, lines, symbols...) or instruments that are not defined in a destination score.

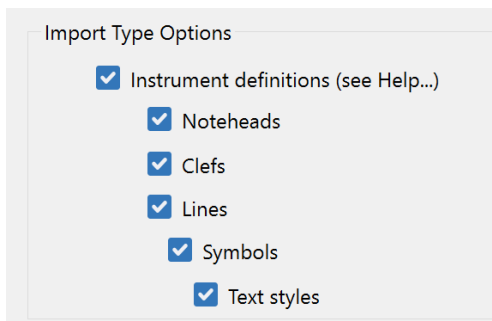
It restores House Style Settings by

- exporting a temporary House Style from the destination score, then
- importing settings from the custom House style, and finally
- importing the same settings from the temporary House Style.

It is important to note that **you cannot use this plugin to modify the properties of existing instrument or object styles**. It will only add new definitions to a score.

It will only run in Sibelius Ultimate 2020.9 or later.

The main dialog allows a user to specify a custom House Style to import. It is similar to the **Appearances > Import House Style** window but with fewer options.



I recommend that the custom House Style be as similar as possible to the House Styles present in the destination score and have only a few new definitions so you can easily verify what has changed. That is not required, but why take chances?

The plugin exports a temporary House Style containing settings from the from the destination score, imports some Import Type Options from the custom House Style, and then imports the same Import Type Options using the temporary exported House Style.

If the custom House Style was very different from the styles in the destination score, the second import would restore all the settings that were previously there, but would keep any definitions that had not been in the score.

In this example, the plugin is importing Text Styles, Line Styles, Symbols, Noteheads, and Instrument Definitions from a custom House Style. The score that is the source of the new styles looks like this:

Full Score Full Score 1

## Custom Instrument Text Symbol Notehead

The image shows a music score with two staves. The top staff is for Piano, and the bottom staff is for Acoustic Guitar All E. The Piano staff has a custom dashed line with the text 'rit\_gap\_Custom.' and a custom notehead using a '?' symbol. The Acoustic Guitar staff is a tablature instrument with all strings set to E. Red callouts identify these custom elements: 'Custom Line', 'Custom Notehead using custom symbol', 'Custom symbol', 'Custom Text Style', and 'Custom Instrument'.

This score was a simple Piano Instrument to which I added

- A custom dashed line with added text (in text style **Tempo**, based on **Plain Text**, which in this score is **Times New Roman**).
- A custom circled text style in green. based on **Plain Text**, which in this score is **Times New Roman**).
- A custom "?" symbol
- A custom notehead style whose noteheads use the custom "?" symbol
- A custom guitar tablature instrument where all the strings have E for an initial pitch.

I used **Appearance>House Style >Export** to export a House Style named **Custom Instrument Text Symbol Notehead**.

I created another new score that looked very different, namely a big band score in a handwritten text style and used the plugin to import my new House style.

FULL SCORE

**BIG BAND FOR IMPORTING HOUSE STYLE**

1  
(COMPOSER)  
ARRANGED BY (ARRANGER)

ALTO SAX 1

ALTO SAX 2

TENOR SAX 1

TENOR SAX 2

BARITONE SAX

TRUMPET 1

TRUMPET 2

TRUMPET 3

Note the handwritten text style

Since I wanted to import an Instrument Definition, I needed to import all the **Import Type Options**. The options higher in the list generally require that all the lower option will be imported as well:

Import House Style Settings And Restore - Version 01.05.02

This plugin imports object type style definitions from a House Style, while changing as little as possible in the destination score.

\*\*\* It will only import types not already defined in the destination \*\*\*.

This dialog lets you select a House Style and which types of object styles to import. Import the smallest number of types to avoid possible unintended changes. Importing a type option at the top of the list will also import any types below that type. Importing anything except Text will also import Text, for example, and the dialog will enforce these dependencies.

New plugin... can generate a command line for Execute Commands or a new plugin that will run this plugin with the saved dialog settings.

House Styles to Import

- Banjo\_Chords\_Notation\_To\_Tab\_Test\_Full\_Score
- CircleHalfWhole
- Custom\_Instrument\_Text\_Symbol\_Notehead**
- Default\_Score\_2\_Tech\_12
- Default\_Score\_2\_Full\_Score
- Full Score
- Georgia\_On\_My\_Mind\_Bob2
- Georgia\_On\_My\_Mind\_Bob2\_Full\_Score
- Handwritten
- Headless Stemless Opus Times
- House Style DS change test
- Jazz Inkpen2
- Jazz Opus (Times)
- Jazz Reprise
- Keyboard Helsinki (Georgia)
- Keyboard Inkpen2
- Keyboard Opus (Arial)
- Keyboard Opus (Georgia)
- Keyboard Opus (Times)

Import Type Options

- Instrument definitions (see Help...)
- Noteheads
- Clefs
- Lines
- Symbols
- Text styles

Help... New plugin...

Cancel OK

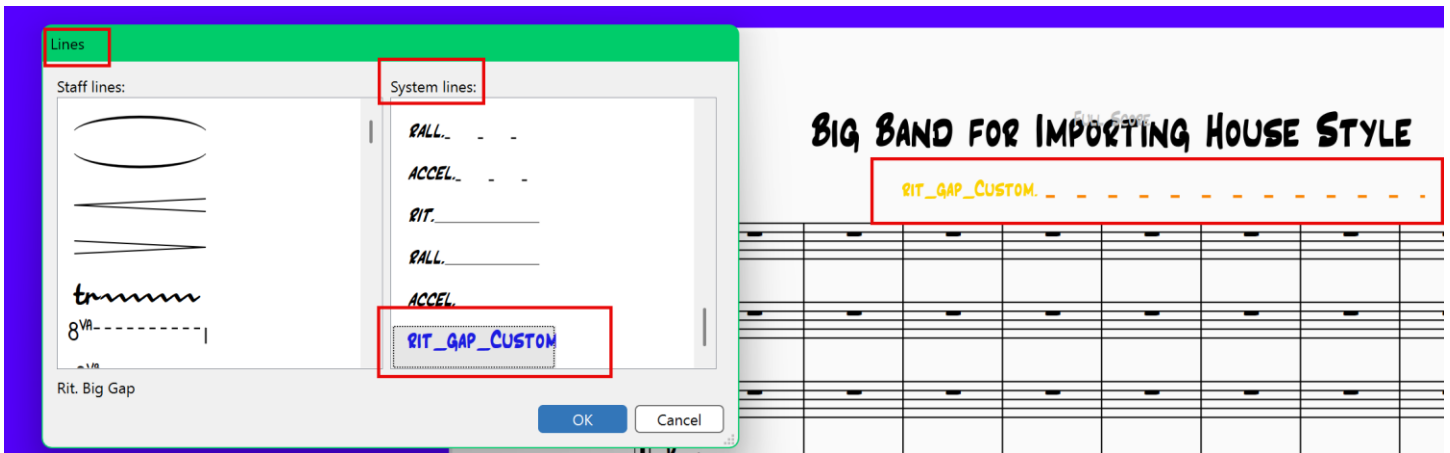
If this were imported using **Appearance>House Style>Import**, I would expect to see the text completely changed. But not this time. There was no immediate visible change. I then looked in the destination score's **Lines** and found **rit\_gap\_custom**, which I could add to the score. Observe that the text style used in the line, which had been **Times New Roman**, the style of **Tempo** text, is now **Inkpen 2 Script Std**.

It is important to understand how House Style importing works. When the plugin imported the house style **Custom\_Instrument\_Text\_Symbol\_Notehead\_Tempo**, text based on **Plain Text**, would have changed to **Times New Roman**, and the score would look completely different.

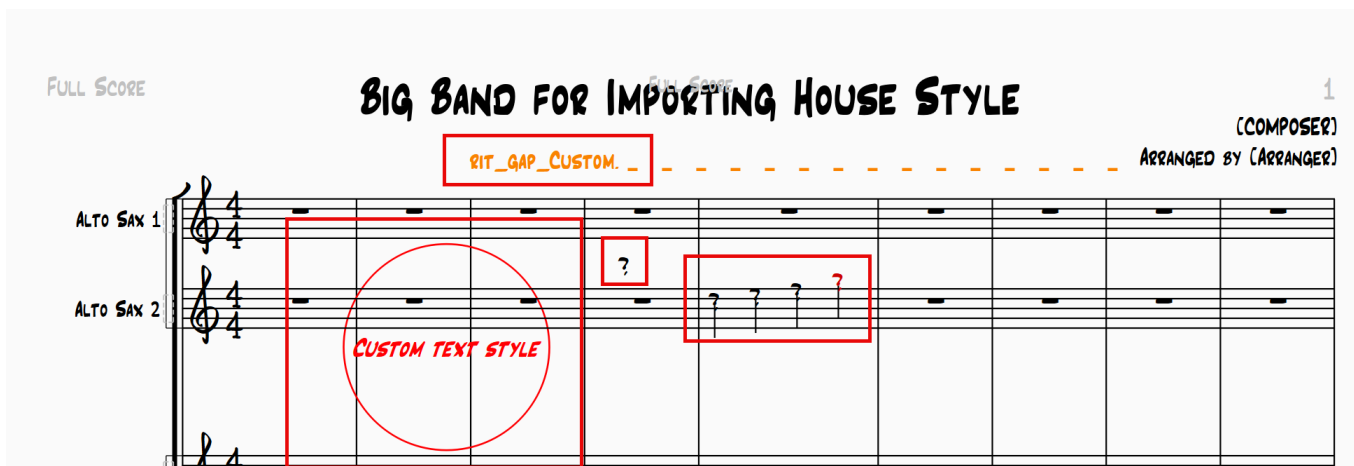
But the plugin first exported a temporary House Style from the Big Band Score, and after importing the custom House Style it imported the same properties from the temporary House Style, This reset **Plain Text** to use **Inkpen 2 Script Std.** We now have a new **Line** defined in the score, but because **Tempo** text is derived from **Plain Text**, the text in the line is in **Inkpen**.

Ponder that for a moment, then read on.

This is really the essence of how this plugin works to add new definitions with minimal disturbance to the appearance of the destination score.



We can look in the Big Band score and find new definitions for the custom text style, symbol, and notehead, all of which retain the original **Plain Text** font, which is what the plugin is designed to do.



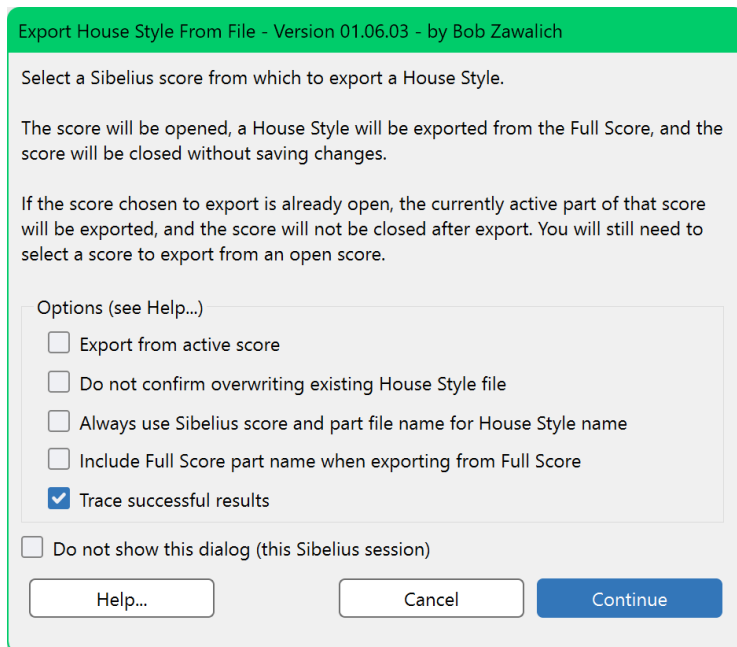
We have imported new object definitions but avoided the disruption that usually happens when a House Style is imported. Ta da!

## Using the plugin **Export House Style From File**

If you find that you need a custom House Style to import, you can open a score that contains the definitions you want, use **Appearance>House Styles>Export**, and then use that House Style as the custom House Style in **Import House Style Settings And Restore**.

That can be awkward if you want to run **Import House Style Settings And Restore** from another plugin or from a macro in **Execute Commands**.

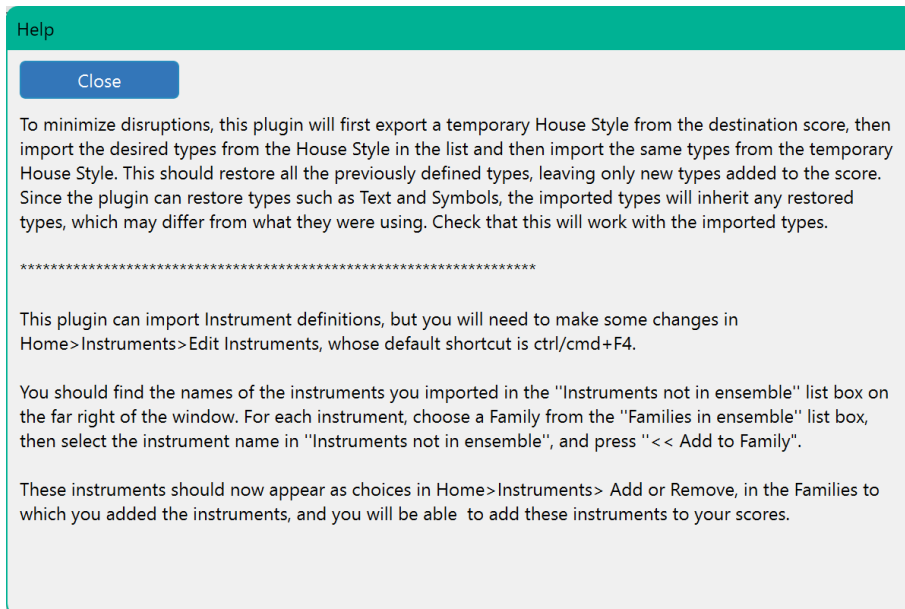
**Export House Style From File** can be used to temporarily open a score using its file name, export a House Style from that score, then close the score it opened.



For more details, see the document **The Plugin Export House Style From File**.

## Instrument Definition Issues

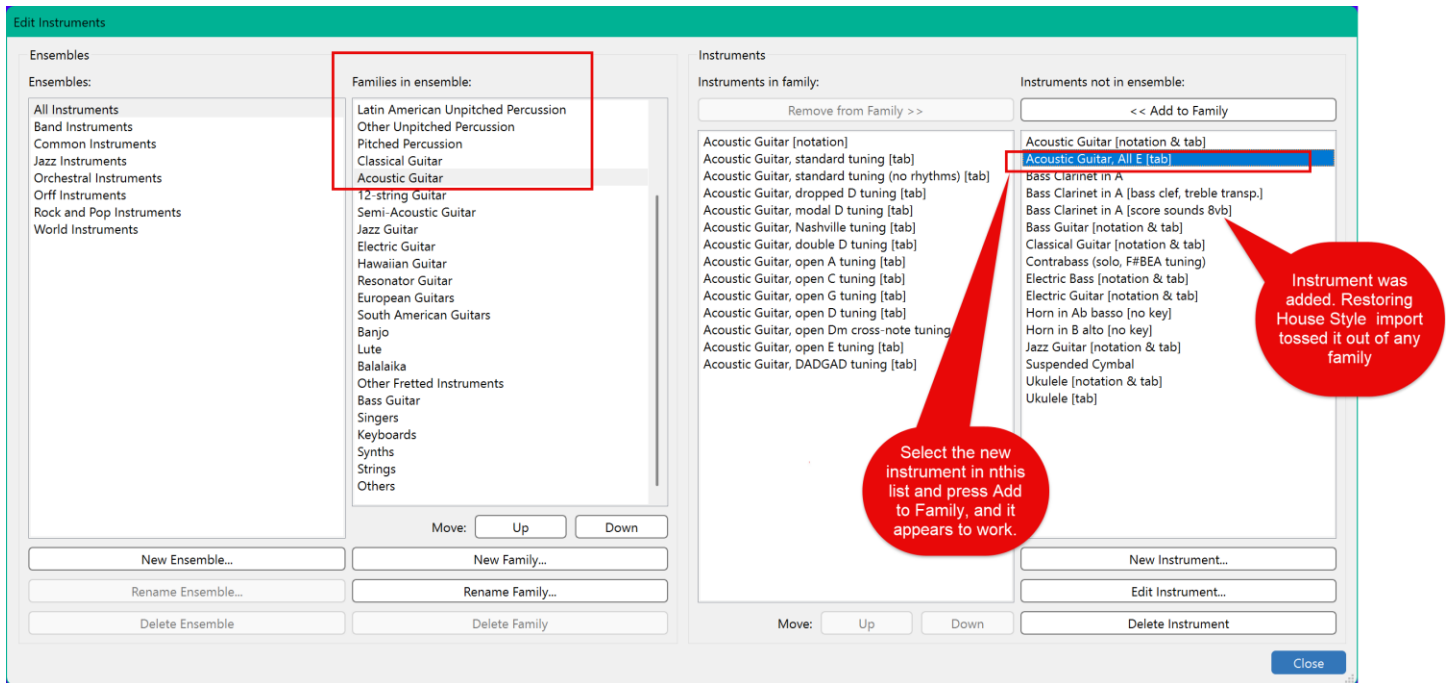
Though I have had very good results with importing **Bar Object** definitions. I have found that you can import Instrument Definitions, but some weird but fixable things happened, as described in the **Help** dialog.



These problems are not unique to the plugin. The same thing happens any time you import a House Style containing new Instrument Definitions and then import a second House Style.

- Instrument Definitions are imported if the option is chosen, but the import of the second (restoring) House Style takes the new instrument out of any Instrument Family. This is not unique to the plugin, and I have reported it as an error to Sibelius.
- If you go to **Home>Instruments>Edit Instrument** after running the plugin, you should find any new instruments in the group "Instruments not in ensemble". Selecting an appropriate family from the 2<sup>nd</sup> list box, then pressing **Add to Family** seems to give a usable instrument. Not satisfactory, but usable.

Here is what **Edit Instrument** looks like after importing **Instrument Definitions** with the plugin. After adding the added instrument(s) to a family, the imported Instruments will be available for use.



## New Plugin: Generating a plugin or command from the dialog settings

One important use of this plugin having other plugins or **Execute Commands** macros import special definitions into a score, which previously required setting up a **Data Score** that contained the definitions.

Once the source House Style and Import Type options are set up, you can press New Plugin..., and it will either create a new plugin that will run **Import House Style Settings With Restore** using the settings present in the dialog, or create a "Command Line" that can be run as a command in **Execute Commands**.

You will pretty much never have to do anything with the command line except to run it. It is the **New Plugin...** plugin that determines what goes into the command line, but here is an example of what it actually does:

```
RunPluginEntry_cu(ImportHouseStyleSettingsAndRestore.plg, API_ProcessSelection, Clef, yes, House, Custom Instrument Text
Symbol Notehead, Instrument, yes, Line, yes, Notehead, yes, Symbol, yes, Text, yes)
```

It runs a command in the cmdutils plugin called **RunPluginEntry\_cu**. This needs the name of the plugin to run (**ImportHouseStyleSettingsAndRestore**), an entry point in the plugin to call (**API\_ProcessSelection**), and a list of parameters for that call. Each parameter has 2 parts, a **name**, and a **value**, and each pair represents a control in the plugin dialog.

For this plugin most controls are checkboxes, which will have the value **yes** or **no**, but the parameter **House** contains the name of the House Style to import.

When the command line is run in **Execute Commands** or in a plugin, it will call **Import House Style Settings And Restore** with these settings, and the called plugin will run without putting up a dialog.

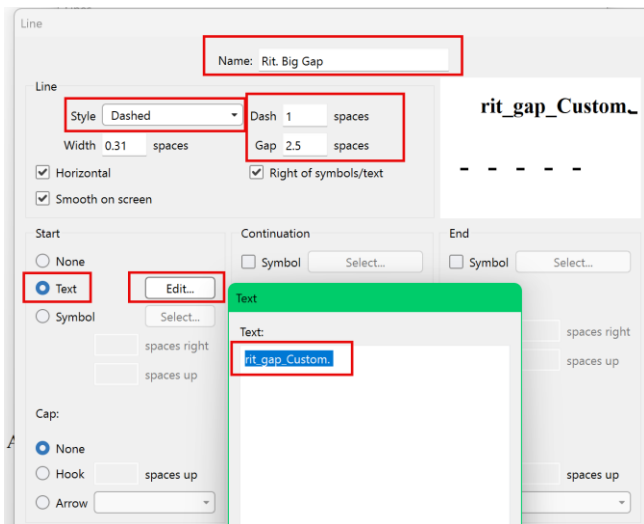
## Appendix 1: History and motivation for this plugin

There are 2 approaches I have used in plugins to add new object definitions to a score

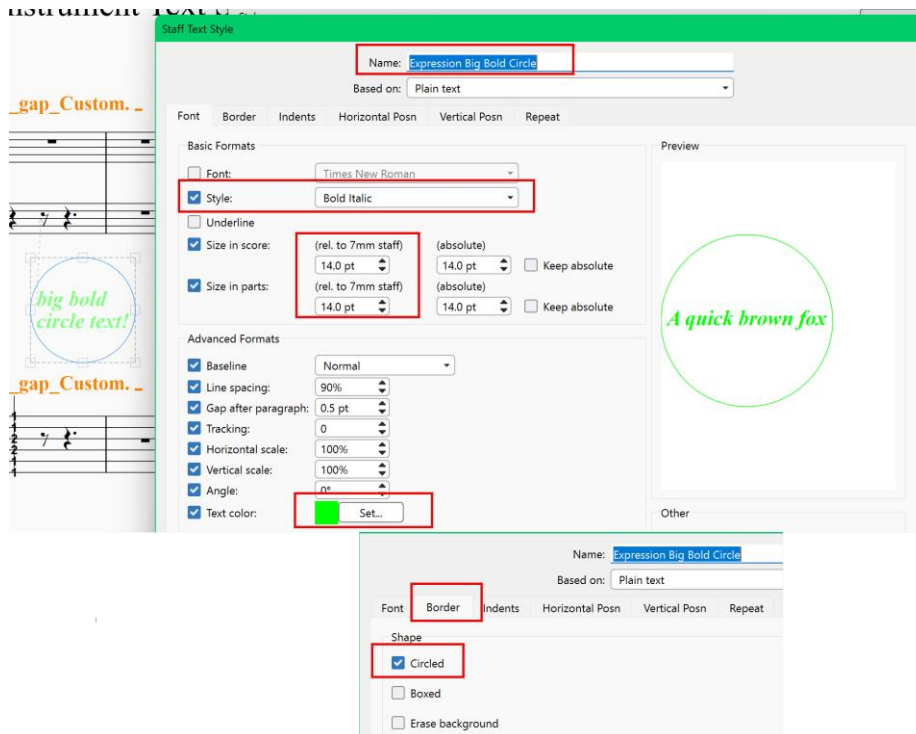
1. Make up a data score containing bar objects with the desired styles. Install the score as Manuscript Paper.
  - Have a plugin that knows the structure of the data score (one object per bar, etc.) Use **File New** to create a temporary copy of the Manuscript Paper file of the data score and copy the desired objects from the data score. Paste them into your score, then delete the pasted objects.
  - As long as the styles of the objects do not match names in the destination score, the definitions will come across without disturbing the aggregate house styles/definitions in the destination score.
  - This is somewhat laborious and there have been issues with Ribbon disabling of some tabs after the data score is opened and closed.
  - **Tuplets Over Barlines** does this, as does **Colored Notehead Styles**. This was pretty much a last (or only) resort.
2. Since plugins have gotten the ability to export a House Style from a score (in 2020.9), I have tried a different approach:
  - Create and install a custom House Style with desired definitions to be imported
    - Export a temporary House Style from score so the original settings can be restored
    - Import the custom House Style, importing as few properties as possible (you will always need at least Text and usually Symbols too).
    - Import the exported temporary House Style, importing the same settings imported from the custom House Style.
    - Delete the temporary House Style.
  - This procedure is done in the plugin **Note Attached Arpeggios**, with modifications. Because it wants to replace an existing line style, it does not restore all the properties.
  - Restoring the original House Style will **reset everything except definitions that had not existed in the score before**, so it will not replace existing settings with the same name. It should add new definitions to the score that imports the House Style.

## Appendix 2: Details of custom objects in sample score

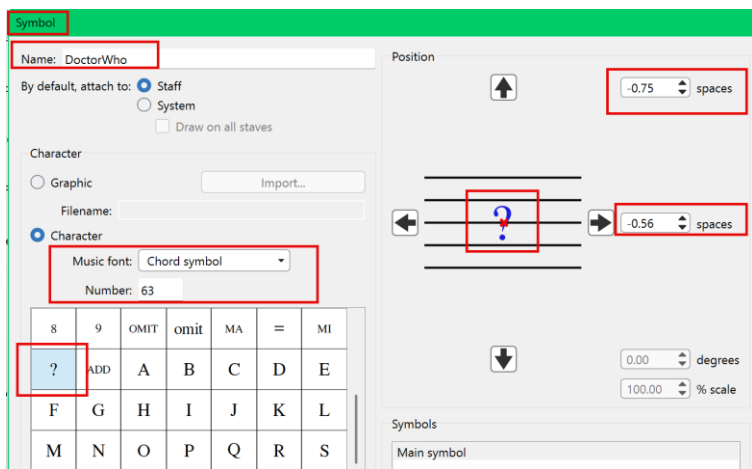
### Custom Line:



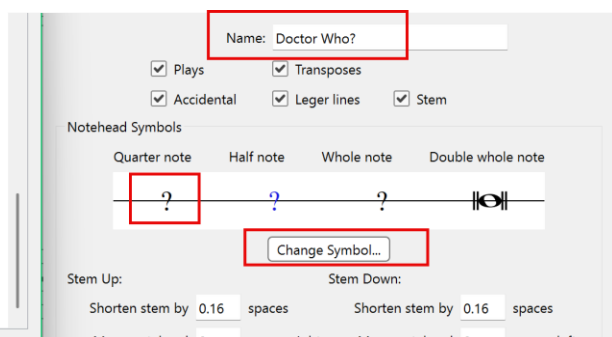
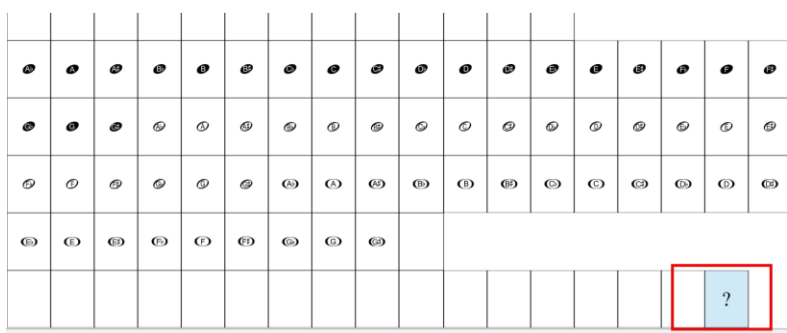
### Custom Text:



### Custom Symbol:



### Custom Notehead using custom symbol:



### Custom Instrument Definition:

