





# ROLAND SYNTHESIZER CHRONICLE 2010



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▶▶▶▶▶

▶ 1973

**SH-1000**

This 1VCO analog synthesizer's claim to fame is being the first mass-production synthesizer made in Japan. It had a selection of preset tones to choose from, and control functions to give the user freedom when producing sounds. It carried a price tag of ¥165,000 in Japan.

▶ 1974

**SH-3**

1VCO analog synthesizer making full use of control functions. There are two types — the SH-3 and SH-3A (photo) — which differ slightly in terms of appearance and internal construction. Additive synthesis oscillation creates a distinctive meaty sound.

**SH-2000**

This preset-only analog synthesizer [1VCO] is equipped with aftertouch. Although Roland analog keyboard synthesizers have 1V/1oct VCOs, this one uses Hz/V.

▶ 1975

**SH-5**

Roland's first 2VCO analog synthesizer. The huge one-piece case blew away keyboardists at the time. This synth was also the first to have pitch bender levers.

▶ 1976

**SYSTEM-100**

This system consisted of a small 2VCO synthesizer, expander, mixer, analog sequencer, and a pair of speakers (photo showed the basic model 101 synth). It was possible to purchase each unit separately.

**SYSTEM-700**

The first — and only — modular synth to be made in Japan. It included 9VCO, 4VCF, 5VCA, 4ENV, 3LFO, mixer, analog sequencer, effects processors, and more. The full system was priced at ¥2,650,000 in Japan.

▶ 1978

**SH-1**

A 1VCO analog synthesizer with a basic circuit design derived from Roland's System-700. In addition to being the first synth to incorporate a sub-oscillator, it was also the first to use a molded plastic case.

**SH-7**

This 2VCO analog synthesizer was released as the successor to the SH-5. The case was made somewhat smaller, and it could play two voices, taking advantage of the two VCOs.

**SH-09**

A number of cost-cutting measures were applied to the SH-1. The result was this 1VCO analog synthesizer, the first to sell for below ¥100,000 in Japan. This synth played a major role in popularizing synthesizers in Japan.

**SYSTEM-100M**

A version of the System-700 aimed more at the general consumer. This compact modular synthesizer was made up of various modules and a rack with built-in power supply (a 32-key and 49-key keyboard was available).

▶ 1979

**SH-2**

The meaty sound of 2VCO + 1 sub-oscillator made this analog synthesizer quite popular. As with the SH-09, a price of under ¥100,000 in Japan propelled this synth's popularity. It's a coveted classic.

**JUPITER-4**

Roland's first polyphonic analog synthesizer (4 voices). The 4VCO sound in unison mode is superb, and it also has built-in user sound memory function. The synth carried a price tag of ¥385,000 in Japan at the time.

**PROMARS**

This is the monophonic version of the Jupiter-4 with 2 VCOs. As with the Jupiter-4, it had eight user sound memories and 10 preset sounds.

▶ 1981

**JUPITER-8**

A deluxe 8-voice polyphonic analog synthesizer with 64-sound memory. Its smorgasbord of features, including key split, patch preset, and auto arpeggio, earned this synth global praise and legendary status.

▶ 1982

**JUNO-6**

This 6-voice polyphonic analog synthesizer used a DCO per voice to generate sound. Built-in chorus effects increased the range of sounds that could be produced. This synth also had a key transpose feature.

**SH-101**

A 1VCO analog mono synth available in three color variations; modulation grip was also an option. The synth could run on batteries, allowing it to be slung on a shoulder strap and worn like a guitar.

**JUNO-60**

A Juno-6 with newly added memory functions for 56 sounds. Roland's proprietary DCB interface standard was used for exchanging control information with external devices.

▶ 1983

**JUPITER-6**

Scaling down the Jupiter-8 to 6-voice polyphony, coupled with creative tweaking by Roland's engineers, allowed the Jupiter-6 to hit the market at half the price of the Jupiter-8. It also made news with its highly stable oscillator and MIDI terminal.

**JX-3P**

This MIDI-capable, 2DCO per voice, 6-voice polyphonic analog synthesizer was released at the same time as the Jupiter-6. A PG-200 sound programmer [could be placed on the upper right on the panel] was also available.

▶ 1984

**JUNO-106**

This 1DCO per voice, 6-voice polyphonic analog synthesizer was the successor of the Juno-60. Equipped with 128-sound memory and MIDI, it would become a favorite of dance and techno artists. Recently, this synth has enjoyed a revival.

**MKS-30**

A 2U-rack version of the JX-3P. Although the JX-3P's MIDI receive channel was fixed to ch. 1, the MKS-30 has programmable channels. The PG-200 sound programmer for the JX-3P could also be with this model.

**MKS-80**

2U-rack size, 8-voice polyphonic version of the Jupiter-6. Nicknamed the Super Jupiter, it stood out for its ability to play a wide range of sounds, from musical instruments to special effects. The MPG-80 sound programmer was also available as an option.

**JX-8P**

An upgraded version of the JX-3P, the JX-8P analog synthesizer featured 6-voice polyphony and two DCOs per voice. A separately sold PG-800 sound programmer was also available.

▶ 1985

**JUNO-106S**

This JUNO was equipped with stereo speakers; other than that, the specs were completely identical to the JUNO-106. As a common feature in this time — internal sound memory could be backed up to a cassette tape.

**α JUNO-1**

Pronounced "alpha JUNO-1", this was a low-cost model in the Juno series. It had 49 keys, and a specially designed sound-generator IC. Although it had 6-voice polyphony and 128 sound memory, it was below ¥100,000 in Japan — quite an appealing combination.

**α JUNO-2**

A step up from the α JUNO-1, the α JUNO-2 had 61 keys. The JUNO series was always popular for its string and bass sounds, and still is to this day. The PG-300 programmer, common to the α JUNO-1 and -2, was also available.

▶ 1986

**JX-10**

This 76-key, DCO-type analog synthesizer incorporated 2 JX-8P sound generators. With 12-voice polyphony, this synth was nicknamed the Super JX. The PG-800 sound programmer could be used with it.

**MKS-70**

A rack version of the JX-10, this model could also use the same PG-800 sound programmer as the JX-10. Equipped with three different effects — portamento, delay, and chorus — it also had a memory cartridge slot.

**MKS-50**

This rack-mounted model of the α JUNO series made it possible to add portamento, detune, and other parameters to patches. It was equipped with chord memory, and could also use the PG-300.

▶ 1987

**D-50**

Equipped with the Linear Arithmetic [LA] synthesis, this was Roland's first digital synthesizer. It also had a digital filter/effects processor. One of Roland's best-selling models, this synthesizer also excelled at analog-style sound.

**D-550**

This rack-mounted version of the D-50 synth also had an LA sound generator. Creating sounds was made simple by using a PG-1000 external controller that enabled manipulation of edit parameters in real time.

▶ 1988

**D-10**

Although this digital synthesizer was reasonably priced, it borrowed the D-50's LA sound generator, and also had multitimbral capability and rhythm machine functions. It had seven types of digital reverbs, and the first built-in ROM player.

**D-110**

A stand-alone version of the D-10 sound generator, this sound module fit in a 1U rack. In addition to its main stereo output, it also had six individual outputs.

**D-20**

This model contained the same basic features of the D-10 but added a sequencer capable of 9-track multi-recording and a 3.5-inch floppy drive. The sequencer supported real time recording method.

▶ 1988

**U-110**

A simple-playback sound module with a DC-PCM sound generator. In addition to a wide range of built-in musical instrument tones, it could hold up to four memory cards at once. By combining these, users could create custom sounds.

▶ 1989

**U-20**

This keyboard used the RS-PCM sound generator, which retained compatibility with the U-110's tone data. It was distinguished by a unique system of operation, with sound patches that managed tone data, and keyboard patches that managed MIDI data.

**D-5**

The greatest feature of the D series was an onboard LA sound generator. With a chase function and arpeggiator at a price of ¥99,800 in Japan, this synthesizer offered outstanding cost performance.

**U-220**

Employing the RS-PCM sound generator system, this upper model of the U-110 aimed at even higher sound quality. Preset tones were increased from 99 in the U-110 to 128 in U-220, and an onboard effects processor provides built-in chorus and reverb.

▶ 1990

**D-70**

This synthesizer used Advanced LA synthesis, which is an evolved form of LA synthesis. It had a built-in DLM function that could generate a variety of wave data for synthesizing. This innovation created an infinite range of sound creation possibilities.

▶ 1991

**JD-800**

This digital synth employed a large number of sliders on the panel to allow real-time control of all parameters with an analog feel. Each Patch could consist of up to four Tones for creating fat sounds.

**JX-1**

While low priced, this playback keyboard had the ultimate selection of preset sounds, from acoustic instruments to analog synthesizers. It also had an edit function with eight parameters.

▶ 1992

**JV-80**

With eight parameter sliders, this PCM synthesizer could be operated with an analog feel. This was the first synth compatible with the best-selling SR-JV80-Series expansion board.

**JV-30**

The lower model of the JV-80, this 16-part multitimbral synthesizer captivated users with its 189 high-quality, built-in PCM tones and ease of operation. Editing filter, envelope generator, and vibrato was possible.

**JV-880**

This PCM sound module, with the high-quality sound and functionality of the JV-80, was made to fit into a compact 1U rack-size. In addition to four main and sub outputs, the module has a Preview function that allowed users to check tones without using any other equipment.

**JW-50**

This workstation had an onboard GS sound generator with a built-in 16-track sequencer. In addition to a backing function as a composition-support tool, the JW-50's ease of editing tones made for an appealing instrument.

▶ 1993

**JV-1000**

This workstation featured a refined version of the JV-80 sound generator, with a built-in MC-50MKII sequencer engine. Expansion boards made this workstation expandable up to 993 patches, and 56 voices.

**JV-35**

This model offered superb cost performance. While low priced, it allowed expansion boards to be installed, adding extra sounds and voices. The separately sold VE-JV-1 provided the synth-engine equivalent of the JV-1000.

**JV-90**

The JV-1000 synthesizer with the sequencer removed, the JV-90 was based on the concept of expandability. Expansion boards could be used to expand the number of voices and sounds as needed.

**JV-50**

This model featured the same functions as the JV-35, with a built-in SMF player. As with the JV-35/90, it was based on the JV-series concept of expandability, capable of up to 56 voices.

**JD-990**

This sound-generator module achieved the operability of the JD-800 via a large-screen display. In addition to enabling ring modulation and oscillator sync, it was equipped with an FXM function and eight multi-effects processors.

▶ 1994

**JV-1080**

This synthesizer module featured 64 voices and 16-part multitimbral specs. Nicknamed the Super JV, the module could carry four wave expansion boards simultaneously, enabling up to 1,741 patches that spanned a wide range of music genres.

▶ 1995

**XP-50**

This workstation featured the sound generator of the JV-1080, and a sequencer with loop recording and quick play. It also featured Realtime Phrase Sequence [RPS].

**XP-10**

This XP-series model was aimed at the more affordable price range. Equipped with 16-part multitimbral GM/GS sound generator, it also incorporated a newly developed arpeggiator with 30 different styles, a Combination Palette, and more.

▶ 1996

**XP-80**

The top model in the XP series, this synthesizer was based on the XP-50 with many refinements added on, plus 76 keys with weighted action. The sequencer memory could hold about 60,000 notes, three times that of the XP-50.

**JP-8000**

This 8-voice synthesizer offered an impressive array of knobs and sliders to manipulate its analog modeling synthesis engine. It had a built-in Motion Control function that allowed operations on the panel to be recorded and played back.

▶ 1997

**JV-2080**

This sound module became so popular, it was considered a world standard. With features such as 640 patches and 16 multitimbral parts, it represented the pinnacle in sample-playback synthesis at the time.

▶ 1998

**XP-60**

This model compressed the features of the XP-80 into a compact 61-key body. All operations conformed to the XP-80. New expansion boards went on sale at the same time, increasing the appeal of this instrument even further.

**JX-305**

The playability of a keyboard was added to the functionality of the MC-505 Groovebox, which was a hit product at the time. The main appeal of the model was easy operation with inspiring realtime operation.

**JP-8080**

This rack version of the JP-8000 sound generator upped the power even more. Built-in Unison and Voice Modulator, an increase in polyphony from 8 to 10, and external audio input were some of the features that distinguished this module.

▶ 1999

**XP-30**

The last model in the XP-Series. Although the sequencer was removed in order to lower the price, it boasted a full lineup of features, including 1,406 patches and an arpeggio function.

**JV-1010**

This compact half-rack module inherited the rich preset sounds of the JV-1080 and 2080. Able to hold one SR-JV80-Series expansion board, it could handle up to 1,151 patches.

▶ 2000

**RS-5**

While reasonably priced, this synthesizer contained the same high-quality sounds as the JV/XP/XV series. It was also easy to operate, with knob controls for LFO, filter, and other parameters.

**XV-88**

The XV-88 was the full-sized keyboard model of the XV series. This 128-voice synthesizer was equipped with an 88-key, hammer-action keyboard. It could hold up to four expansion cards (two SRX series and two SR-JV80 series).

**XV-3080**

This 2U-rack synthesizer module had the same sound generator as the XV-88. It could hold up to two SRX-series and four SR-JV80-series sound expansion boards.

**XV-5080**

The top-of-the-line XV module. It had the highest-performance sound generator of its time, as well as a smorgasbord of attractive features, including Matrix Control and sample playback via SIMM.

▶ 2001

**Fantom**

A new breed of workstation with a large graphical LCD and centralized control of its numerous functions. This 76-key workstation featured professional XV-5080 quality sounds and a wide range of realtime performance functions.

**XV-5050**

This 64-voice, 16-part sound module fits the high sound quality of the XV-5080 into a 1U-rack size. Editing software is also included that allows all parameters to be controlled via computer.

▶ 2001

**SH-32**

After 20 years in retirement, the "SH" prefix was revived. This ambitious product integrates the traditional panel interface to evoke images of the first SH-series, plus programmable arpeggiator and many other new features.

▶ 2002

**XV-2020**

The XV-2020 synthesizer module put Roland's acclaimed XV sounds in a half-rack unit with USB and GM2 compatibility. It offered two SRX expansion boards, 16 multitimbral parts, and three effects processors.

▶ 2003

**V-Synth**

The V-Synth integrated Variphrase technology, allowing realtime control of waveform pitch, time, and formant for organic and animated sounds. It also offered analog-modeling synthesis, COSM filtering, and the unique TimeTrip Pad.

**Fantom-S**

This 61-note workstation keyboard offered seamless integration of audio and MIDI with advanced sampling features such as realtime time-stretching and Skip Back Sampling, plus a Dynamic Pad Bank, mastering effects, and USB file exchange.

**RS-70**

With a fresh collection of quality sounds, a Loop Sequencer, and friendly Direct Access buttons for instantly selecting patches, the RS-70 introduced a new level of performance power for live or song production at an attractive price.

**RS-50**

A scaled-down version of the RS-70, this live-performance synthesizer provided great Roland sounds and performance-friendly features including Phrase/Arpeggio Generator and Multi Chord Memory to the entry-level market.

▶ 2009

**VariOS / VariOS-8 / VariOS 303**

Thanks to its open-ended hardware/software system, VariOS could emulate Roland's most popular synths. VariOS 8 imitated Roland's vintage Juno and Jupiter, and VariOS 303 emulated the classic TB-303, without draining the host computer's CPU.

▶ 2004

**Fantom-X7**

The Fantom-X Series were the first "Giga-Workstations", providing nearly 1GB of wave memory when fully expanded with four SRX cards. They also offered 128-voice polyphony, eight stereo audio tracks, and a large color LCD.

▶ 2010

**JUNO-D**

Budget priced yet big on features, the Juno-D offered 640 of new patches, a world-class array of expressive multi-effects, realtime performance controllers, and tools for groove creation and composition.

**Fantom-XR**

The stunning sound of a Fantom-X workstation in a 1U rack module, the Fantom-XR provides room for over 1GB of sounds when fully expanded with six SRX cards and DIMMs for user sampling.

**Fantom-Xa**

For musicians who craved Fantom power, but wanted a more cost-effective way to Fantomize their rig, the Fantom-Xa was the answer — a multifaceted sampling workstation with a 16-track sequencer and affordable price tag.

**SH-201**

This 49-key analog-modeling synthesizer provides the famous Roland Super SAW waveform. It also has an External Input for manipulating audio, a D Beam, and plentiful knobs and switches for realtime control.

**JUNO-G**

For songwriters and performers, the JUNO-G synth offers a 16-part MIDI sequencer with four companion stereo audio tracks, plus a powerful Fantom-X-quality sound engine, 128-voice polyphony, and SRX expansion.

▶ 2007

**V-Synth GT**

Onboard dual-core engine supercharges Elastic Audio Synthesis with revolutionary Articulative Phrase Synthesis, which models the performance behavior and nuance of acoustic music instruments, plus Vocal Designer.

**SonicCell**

With its dual SRX expansion bay, built-in USB audio interface, and ability to play SMFs and WAV/AIFF/MP3 files, SonicCell puts the power and legendary sound quality of a Roland hardware synthesizer on the desktop.

▶ 2008

**JUNO-STAGE**

Decked out with an extra-large display, USB backing-track functionality, a Click output for drummers, performance knobs, hands-free patch select, master MIDI control, and more, the 76-key JUNO-STAGE offers onstage power at a great price.

**Fantom-G7**

The Fantom-G series redefines the boundaries of playability and creativity with its advanced sound engine, revolutionary ARX SuperNATURAL expansion bay, large-sized color LCD, powerful 152-track audio/MIDI sequencer, and more.

▶ 2009

**AX-Synth**

The battery-powered AX-Synth is an eye-catching 49-key remote keyboard with a high-quality sound generator onboard. It's self-contained and equipped with powerful, solo-oriented sounds from Roland's latest generation of synths.

**JUNO-Di**

A traveling musician's dream, the JUNO-Di is lightweight, can run on batteries, and is easy to use. It's packed with 1,000+ great sounds, has a friendly control panel for easy editing, and a Song Player for larger-than-life performances.

▶ 2010

**V-Combo VR-700**

With a legendary Virtual Tone Wheel organ and dedicated harmonic bars onboard, plus banks of essential ensemble sounds, the V-Combo melds an entire rig into one convenient instrument for easy transport and fast setup.

**Lucina AX-09**

This 37-key ultra-light synth is designed to fit all musicians — even kids. It's loaded with 150 excellent sounds, all easily selectable with the onboard category buttons, and features a USB Audio Player function for jam-along fun.

**GAIA SH-01**

Affordable yet powerful, the GAIA SH-01 is a high-performance value with old-school charm. The triple-stacked engine provides massive virtual-analog synthesis under the control of hands-on knobs, sliders, and buttons.