

Axe-Edit 1.0

Operation Manual



1 Introduction

1.1 Thank You for Choosing Fractal Audio Systems

We created this application for you, the Axe-Fx community. It is our commitment to provide you with the best in musical instrument processors and products. Axe-Edit is free, bound only by the terms of the EULA, offered to help you get the most from your Axe-Fx. We appreciate your patience, feedback, and support as we strive to make our products the best they can be.



Thank you also to our dedicated team of beta testers. Your tireless dedication is a pillar of our community.

Special thanks to Sean Strickland, Steve Oldridge, Scott Peterson, Patrick Voes, Antoine Rachlin, Jake Paland, Brian Stegall, Jason Marr, Buddy Gill, Jason Marr, Jochen and Friedlieb with G66.eu, our many artists, and you.



1.2 Before you Begin

Although Axe-Edit is tested extensively, it is a young application at version 1.0. We recommend that if possible, you backup any custom presets and settings before using this software with your Axe-Fx II, Ultra, or Standard. If you are using the Axe-Fx II, you might simply use the onboard backup ROM to create a backup copy of your own presets (see your manual for details). Ultra or Standard users can dump presets manually to a SysEx utility. Don't worry if you can't do this; one of the first steps in using the application will typically back up all of your user presets to your computer hard drive.



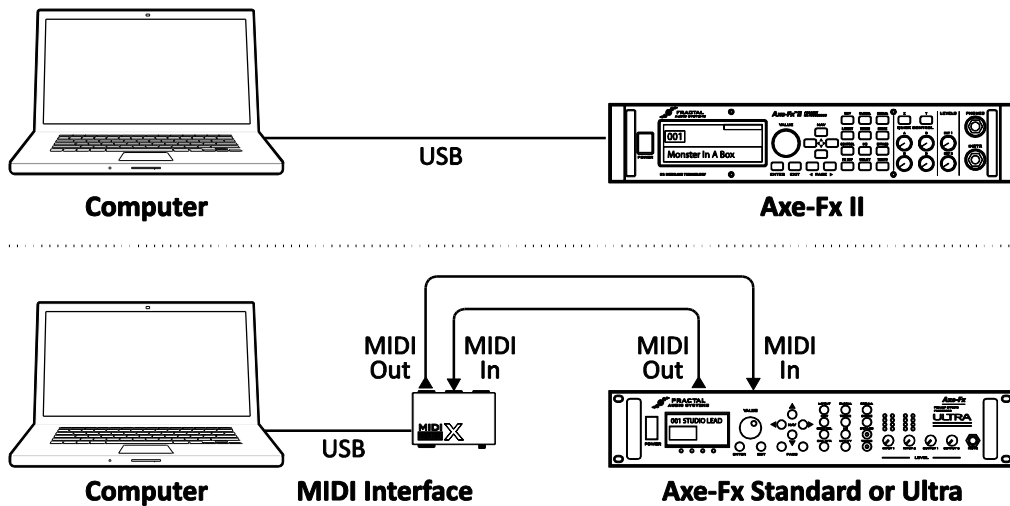
If you are upgrading from a beta version to the 1.0 release, it is strongly recommended that you uninstall the previous version before installing Axe-Edit 1.0

2 Getting Started

2.1 Making Connections



Axe-Edit requires that you connect your Axe-Fx to your computer. Axe-Fx II owners should [download and install the Axe-Fx II USB driver for their operating system](#) and verify that the Axe-Fx II is successfully connected to the computer via USB (see the driver documentation for more details). Standard/Ultra owners must connect using a 3rd party MIDI Interface (typically the M-Audio MIDIsport 2x2 Anniversary Edition). Refer to the connection diagrams below:



Connection Diagrams for Axe-Fx II via USB and Standard/Ultra via a 3rd party MIDI Interface

2.2 Installing the Software

Axe-Edit is available as a free download from our web site: <http://www.fractalaudio.com/axe-edit>
Check to ensure you have the latest version before installing.

- ▶ Review minimum supported requirements:



MAC OS X: 10.5.7+ (2x4 USB Audio support).

CPU / Memory: Intel Core 2 @ 1.6GHz or better, 512MB memory. 1GB+ Recommended.

USB: There are no caveats with OS X other than USB 2.0 compatibility (all modern Macs offer this).



WINDOWS OS: 32- or 64-bit versions of Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7 (with latest Service Pack).

CPU / Memory: Intel Core 2 @ 1.6GHz (or AMD equivalent) or better; 1+ GB RAM.

USB: Chipset dated Jan 2006 or later. (See <http://www.ayre.com/usb-192-windows.htm>).


- ▶ Double click the installer file and proceed through the steps to completion, being sure to review the README information displayed near the end.
- ▶ If it does not launch automatically when the install completes, start Axe-Edit manually. It will be found in your Start Menu (Windows) or Applications folder (Mac).


2.3 Selecting a Workspace

The first time you run Axe-Edit, the program will prompt you to select a **Workspace** directory. The workspace is where Axe-Manage will store and look for your personal files (such as banks, presets, cabs, block settings, temporary files, and more).

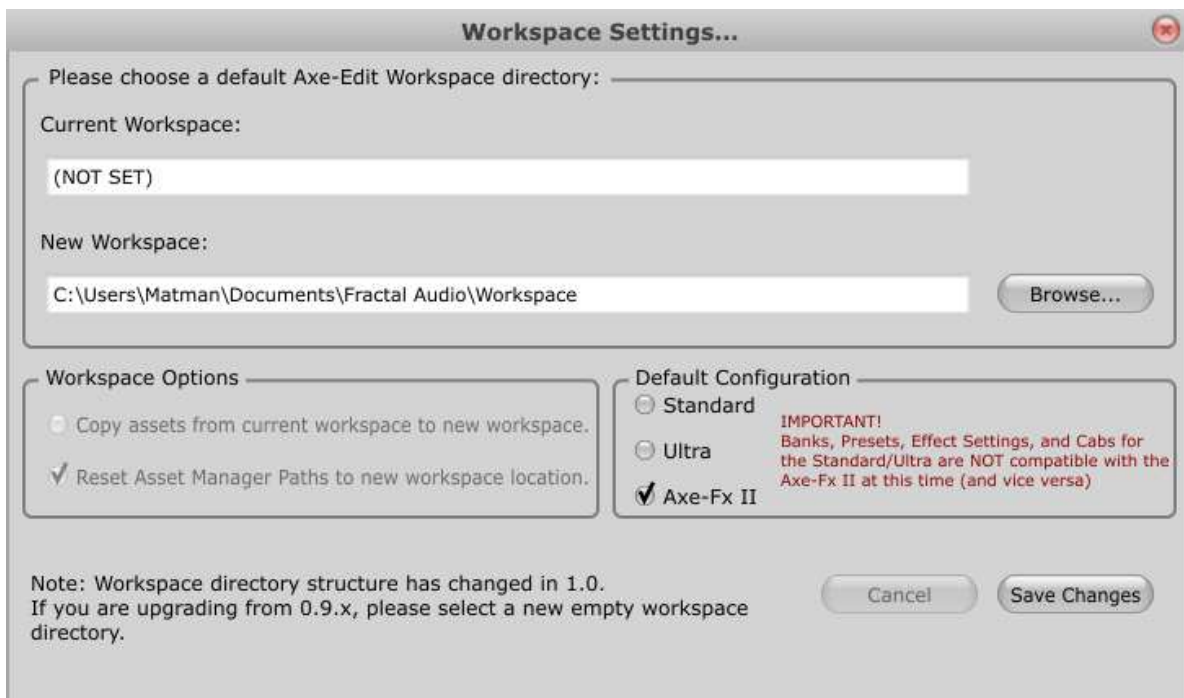
Axe-Edit will suggest using **Fractal Audio/Workspace** beneath your personal **Documents** folder. You may change this location, but for best performance, it is strongly recommended that you use a local drive.

A set of subfolders will be created automatically beneath the workspace you specify (The appendix covers these structures and what they contains.) It is important that you do not delete or modify these folders.

 **IMPORTANT:** The Workspace Settings dialog also prompts you to select a **Default Configuration**, whether **Axe-Fx II**, **Ultra**, or **Standard**. Choose according to the model you will be working with. You can later change the configuration of your installation at any time by selecting SETTINGS | CONFIG in the Axe-Edit main window. (Note: You can change the model at any time via the **Config** submenu of Axe-Edit Settings.)

 If you are upgrading from a previous version of Axe-Edit, the installer may be able to detect your current workspace and, should you choose, copy any assets (banks, presets, cabs, block settings) to a new location.

To set your Workspace and Default, press the **Save Changes** button.



Select Workspace Settings

2.4 MIDI Settings

Axe-Edit must also be setup with the correct Input and Output ports to communicate with your connected Axe-Fx

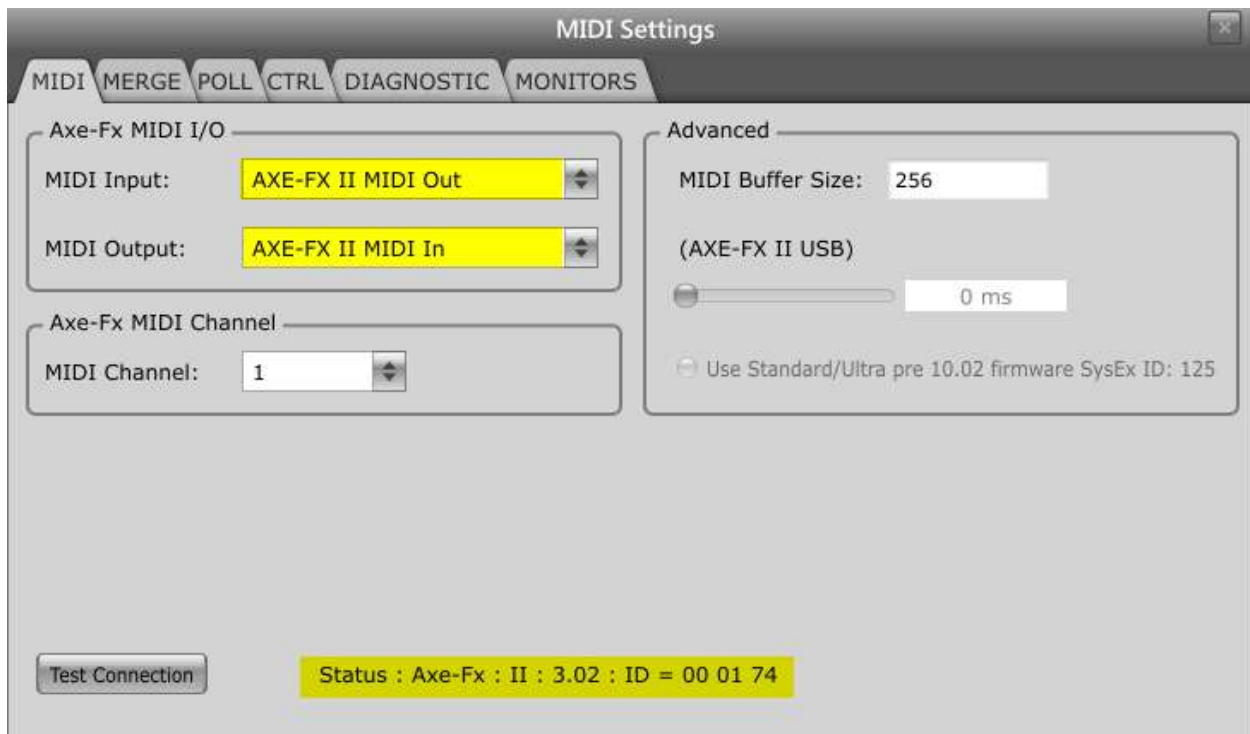
*** Reminder:** Axe-Fx II Users must have the Axe-Fx II USB Driver Installed for the correct ports to be available in the Input/Output dropdowns. Your 3rd party MIDI Interface, used to connect an Axe-Fx Ultra or Standard, may also require driver installation. Please see the manufacturer's documentation.

To set MIDI Ports:

- ▶ Bring up the **MIDI Settings** from the settings menu (highlighted in blue, below).
- ▶ Select the appropriate **MIDI Input** and **MIDI Output** ports based on how you have your Axe-Fx connected.
Note: The names of Axe-Fx II ports may vary from one system to another!
- ▶ Once you select the correct ports, your Axe-Fx should be detected automatically. The **Status** message at the bottom of the Audi/MIDI Settings screen will change from **Status: Not Connected** to show details about your connected hardware, including the model, firmware version, and SysEx ID.
- ▶ If you see **Hardware Not Detected** or another error, check settings and press the **Test Connection** button. If you experience continued difficulty connecting, please see Troubleshooting on p. 19



The MIDI Settings Dialog



Note: Axe-Fx II Port name may vary. (The screenshot was made in Windows 7).

Notes on SysEx ID and other Advanced MIDI Settings

Typically, no other setting changes are required on the **Audio/MIDI Settings** screen. In some cases, however, you may need to modify the default settings:

- If you have changed the MIDI Channel of your Axe-Fx, you will need to change Axe-Edit's **Axe-Fx MIDI Channel** setting to match.
- An Axe-Fx Ultra/Standard with firmware older than 10.02 generally requires the "Pre 10.02 SysEx ID" to be changed to "125," to match the setting found under UTILITY:MIDI:SYSEX ID on the Axe-Fx.
- Some 3rd party MIDI Interfaces may require different Buffer Size or Delay settings if they don't work correctly with default settings. See Troubleshooting on p x.x

MIDI Loopback Test

The MIDI Loopback test (on the **diagnostic** page) is used only during troubleshooting to check a computer MIDI Interface. The test should normally *fail* when you have an Axe-Fx connected.

3 Using Axe-Edit

3.1 Basic Orientation

The Axe-Edit Suite has two main components, **Axe-Edit**, used to view, edit, and save presets, and **Axe-Manage**, used to organize, manage, and share presets, banks, cabs, and effect block settings. Axe-Edit is further divided into functional areas, the **Control Unit**, **Grid Editor**, and **Effects Editor**. **Axe-Manage** is launched in a separate window (or windows) and is detailed in **Section 4**, below.



3.2 Select an Axe-Edit Source

The first step to using Axe-Edit is to select a **source**. Your source selection tells Axe-Edit where to look for presets to open and edit. Once you select a Source, any preset *within* that source may be opened for editing with just one or two clicks.

The source dropdown menu (shown at right) offers several choices, detailed below: Axe-Fx, Bank File, Preset Folder, and Axe-Change.



Axe-Fx	Bank File	Preset Folder	Axe-Change
When you select the Axe-Fx source, presets are read directly from the memory of a connected Axe-Fx. Changes are likewise saved directly back to the hardware. See Sync Axe-Fx Presets, below, for an additional step that is required when working with the Axe-Fx source.	A Bank is a bundle of 128 presets stored on your computer in one file (example: MyShowBank.syx). When you select the Bank File source, Axe-Edit prompts you to select a valid bank. Presets are read from and saved back to this file.	Axe-Edit can open individually saved preset files (example: “Studio Lead.syx”). When you choose the Preset Folder source, Axe-Edit prompts you to select the folder which contains the preset(s) you want to work with and automatically opens the first one (alphabetically).	Axe-Change is our online preset repository. It works like a remote folder containing the presets that have been uploaded by members of the Fractal Audio Community. Note: Axe-Change is offline as of Aug 2011. Watch our web site for news on its imminent re-launch.

Additional detail about the current source will be shown directly above the main **Preset Name Area**.




When you exit and restart Axe-Edit, the program will re-open the source you had been working with previously. To disable this behavior, un-check **Settings : Application : Workspace : Smart Startup**.

3.3 Sync Axe-Fx Presets

Whenever you start Axe-Edit and select the **Axe-Fx** source, it is recommended that you **sync** the software to your connected hardware. This quick process allows Axe-Edit to display preset names correctly in its **Preset Selector Menu**, so you can select entries by their names instead of their numbers.

When you **Sync**, Axe-Edit receives preset data from the Axe-Fx, downloading to a local **cache** and storing it on your computer (**Workspace: Axe-Fx: Bank A, B or C**). The Sync utility also offers the option to **backup** your presets to **Workspace**:

Utilities : Backups. The sync process is one way from the hardware to the software; it never modifies your Axe-Fx.

- ▶ To sync, click on the Preset Selector Menu. 
- ▶ Choose **Sync Banks from Hardware...**
- ▶ Select desired options and press the SYNC button.

Syncing Axe-Edit also makes preset names available to **Axe-Manage**. Likewise, Axe-Manage operations which retrieve preset data from the Axe-Fx will also Sync Axe-Edit.

Presets can also be synced individually by retrieving them to edit or requesting them through Axe-Manage.

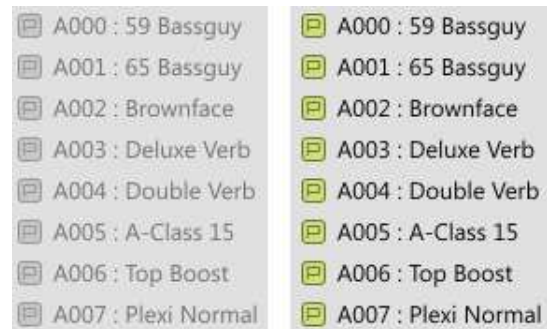
Why Are My Preset Names Grayed Out?

Preset data is **cached** to be retained even after you quit Axe-Edit¹, but Axe-Fx preset names and icons are grayed out each time you exit and re-start the program. This is to remind you to re-sync to get the latest data while still providing names from the last sync as a point of reference.

In many cases, you will have made no changes outside of Axe-Edit, so the grayed names offer a perfectly viable way to work even without re-syncing. It is always possible, however, that the presets in a connected Axe-Fx may have been modified while it was disconnected, in which case a re-sync upon launching Axe-Edit could be critical.



The Sync and Backup Dialog

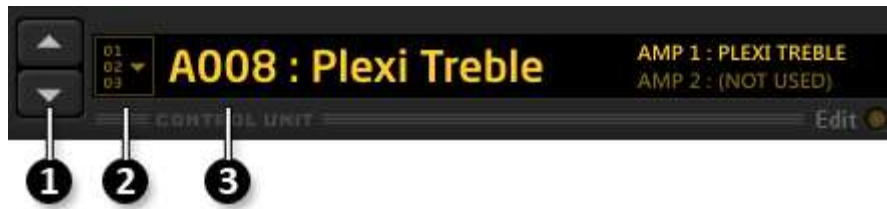


Grayed and Synced (aka "Known") Presets

¹ It is also possible to manually delete the preset files in the cache, located in the Workspace beneath the Axe-Fx node.

3.4 Select a Preset for Editing

Once you have selected a source, you are ready to load and edit presets from within that source. There are three ways to load presets in Axe-Edit:



1. The **Up and Down arrow buttons** advance to the next and previous presets in the current source
2. The **Preset Selector Menu** lists presets in the current source for direct selection. (Note that Axe-Fx presets 000-383 are subdivided into three banks, a distinction which does not appear at all on the hardware)
3. Preset numbers may be entered directly after clicking the **Preset Number Area** of the main display.

3.5 Editing: Basic Parameter Changes

Once a preset is loaded, it will appear in the **Grid Editor**. Selecting a block highlights its outline and displays its parameters in the **Effect Editor**. In the example below, the AMP1 block is selected. Note also the icon and name of the effect shown in the upper left of the editor panel when it is selected.



Use the mouse to edit any knob, switch, list box, or control. Sound changes are heard on the Axe-Fx in realtime. You can also click in the box above a knob to enter parameter values numerically from the keyboard. Double click any knob to set it to its default value.



Page Select Buttons (shown at left) enable full access to effects with too many parameters to fit on a single screen. The example here shows buttons for the five pages of the AMP block of the Axe-Fx II.

3.6 Working with the Grid

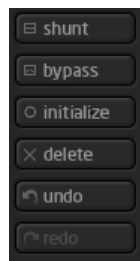
The Axe-Edit Grid Editor makes it possible to perform all of the grid operations possible on the Axe-Fx, with additional capabilities like copy/paste, drag and drop, and more.

3.6.1 The Block Menu

To insert a block, or change one block into another, right/control-click the desired location to display the Block menu (shown at right) and select the desired block or action.

- ▶ **Bypass** Bypasses or un-bypasses the selected block
- ▶ **Shunt** inserts a shunt at the selected location
- ▶ **Delete** removes the selected block or shunt and leaves a “hole”
- ▶ **Disconnect** removes all connector cables both to and from the block.
Note: As on the Axe-Fx, blocks in the first/last rows remain connected to input/output.
- ▶ **Edit Cut/Copy/Paste** perform the actions you would expect. It is even possible to copy and paste blocks from one preset to another!
- ▶ **Settings** enables you to save to or recall from your library of saved effect block settings.
See section x.x below for more on this feature.
- ▶ **Amp** through **Wah** provide direct access to insert any block at any location.
To change one block into another, just insert the new over the existing.

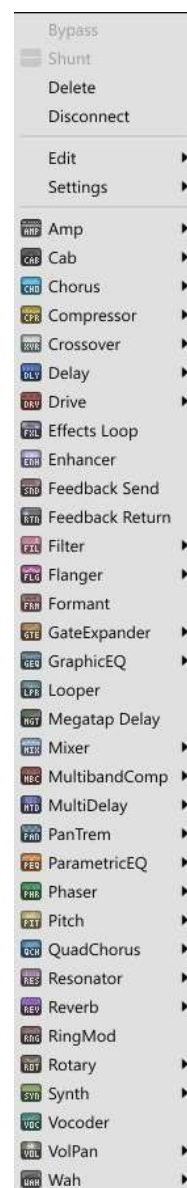
You will also find dedicated buttons left of the grid for key actions.



- ▶ **Shunt, Bypass, and Delete** perform the same functions as the corresponding menu items. Clicking **Delete** with no selection will clear the entire preset.
- ▶ **Initialize** returns the selected block to default settings. Clicking Initialize with no selection will initialize the entire preset.
- ▶ **Undo/Redo** provide some level of “oops” protection for grid operations. Please note that these will NOT work for parameter edits – only grid operations.

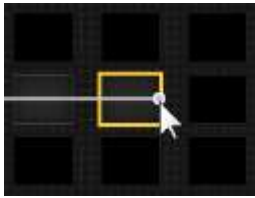
Finally, there are some shortcuts for grid/block operations:

- ▶ **Double-click** any block to bypass/un-bypass it.
- ▶ **Drag and drop** any block to move it on the grid.
- ▶ Hold **ALT/Option** during Drag and Drop to SWAP
- ▶ Hold **Control** during Drag and Drop to COPY
- ▶ **Control + C/X/V** work for Cut/Copy/Paste. **Control + I** = Initialize. **Control + Z** = Undo. **Control + Y** = Redo.
- ▶ The **Delete** key can be used to remove a block.
- ▶ **Row/column handles** (shown below) allow you to move entire rows/columns at once. Note that these operations will break certain connector cable configurations, requiring you to recreate them manually.



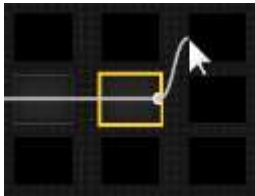
3.6.2 Creating Connector Cables

Axe-Edit allows you to create connector “cables” between grid blocks using drag and drop.



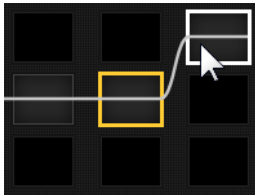
To **create** a connection between blocks, mouse over the starting block to reveal its connector, shown as a small circle at the edge of the block.

Note: You can also click on a block and click the “**Cable**” button left of the grid.



Drag to the grid space or block you want to connect to.

As on the Axe-Fx, the block or space must be in the next column to the right.

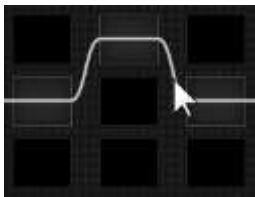


Release the mouse button to create the connector cable. If you connected to an empty grid location, a shunt will be created automatically.

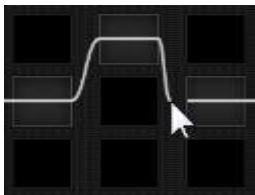


You can also make straight runs through multiple columns.

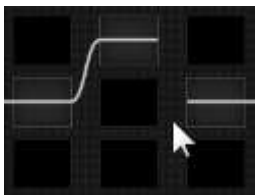
3.6.3 Removing Connector Cables



To **remove** a cable, mouse directly over it.



Click and drag to break the connection.




Release the mouse button and the cable will be removed.

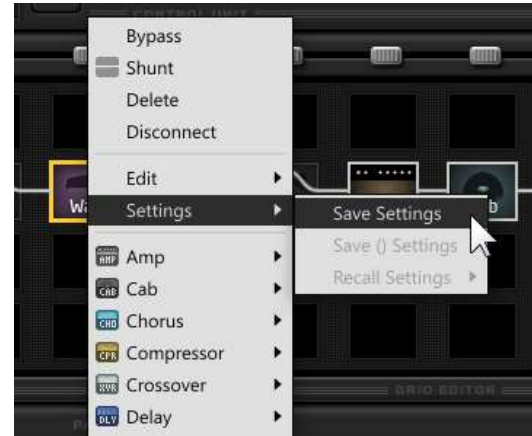
Remember, there are also Block Menu and Grid button shortcuts to **disconnect** all cables in and out of a selected block.

3.7 Saving and Recalling Blocks

The “Save/Recall Block” feature allows you to build a library of your favorite effect block settings—whether amps, cabs or effects—and then recall these at any time in any preset. You might, for example, have a favorite WAH that you like to use again and again, or a particular AMP you’ve dialed in to taste. Now, you can place these into any preset with just a few clicks.

Note: This is similar to but very different from the **Global Blocks** feature of the Axe-Fx II. Here, there is *no link* between the original and the library entry. This is more of an imprint than an original.

 **Note:** Modifier assignments and settings will be saved with the block, but the settings behind internal controllers modifier (such as LFOs, Envelope, or Sequencer) will not. A future version may include the ability to save internal controllers.



To create a saved block:

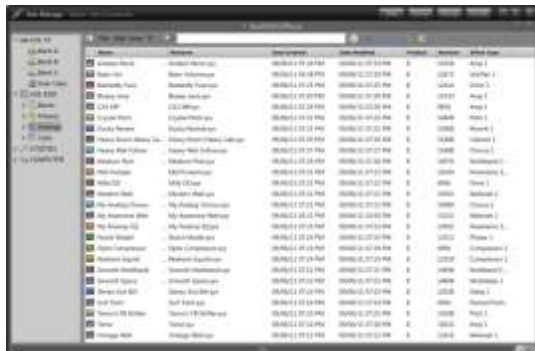
- ▶ **Right/Control Click** the block that you want to save.
- ▶ Choose **Blocks > Save Block** from the Block menu
- ▶ You will be prompted to **name** the block setting before saving. The name will help you identify it later when you use the Recall function.

To recall a saved block setting:



- ▶ **Right/Control Click** where you want to place the saved block. This might be a block of the same or different type or even an empty space.
- ▶ Choose **Blocks > Recall Block** from the menu. Drill down into the block type and click the entry you want to recall. It will appear on the grid.
- ▶ The new block will appear on the grid.

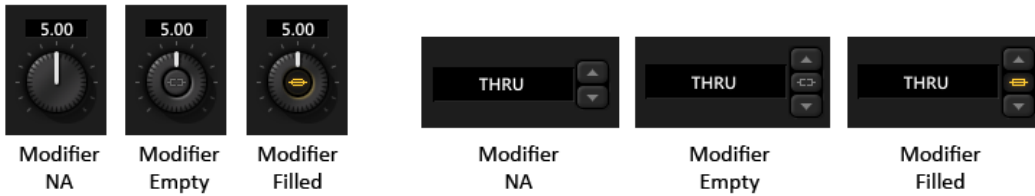
Managing Saved Blocks

Axe-Manage provides a complete system for managing saved blocks. You can rename, delete, copy, share and back up items in your library. See section x.x on page x for more information.




3.8 Working with Modifiers

Modifiers link Axe-Fx parameters to **controllers**, allowing sound features to be automated or remotely controlled in real-time. Axe-Edit provides a complete editor for modifiers, allowing you to not only select sources but edit mappings and other settings as well. Just as on the Axe-Fx itself, the modifier symbol  indicates those parameters which can have modifiers. It appears on knobs, switches, dropdown menus, and sliders. When a modifier is assigned to a parameter, the symbol not only changes like it does on the Axe-Fx,  but also changes color, glowing yellow. The illustration below shows how modifiers appear on an Axe-Edit knob and a dropdown.




To create, view, or edit a modifier, right/control click on the modifier symbol in Axe-Edit to show the **Parameter Modifier** dialog. Here, you will find the familiar controls and display from the Axe-Fx Modifier screen. The graph accurately shows curves as you dial in Start, Mid, End, and Slope.

 **IMPORTANT** The modifier “dot,” which shows the current value of a modifier’s source, does not accurately reflect what actual modifier values or action in the Axe-Fx.



Depending on the source, the dot may or may not move on the screen in Axe-Edit, but even if it does it will not be in sync with the hardware. If you need to watch the dot to create your preset, look at the Axe-Fx!

3.9 Controllers

 The controllers button to the left of the grid loads an editor panel where all of the **Internal Controllers** of the Axe-Fx can be viewed and edited for the current preset. You’ll find LFOs, ADSRs, Sequencer, Envelope, and (for the Axe-Fx II) Manual, with all their parameters.



4 Saving Changes

The easiest and most straightforward way of saving changes is to press the SAVE button in Axe-Manage. But what’s being saved, and to where—depends on your current SOURCE selection (see **Select an Axe-Edit Source** on p. 7.)



- When SOURCE is set to **Axe-Fx**, pressing SAVE will commit changes by storing the current preset to the Axe-Fx.

IMPORTANT: The Axe-Edit SAVE button requires you to follow “normal” workflow for the Axe-Fx source. The SAVE button cannot store a preset into a numbered location other than that shown in the software, and an error will be displayed if you try to SAVE after changing the hardware to another preset. If this happens, change the Axe-Fx back to the preset which matches the number shown in Axe-Edit. Then, in Axe-Edit, choose SAVE AS: Refresh to Hardware before pressing the SAVE button.

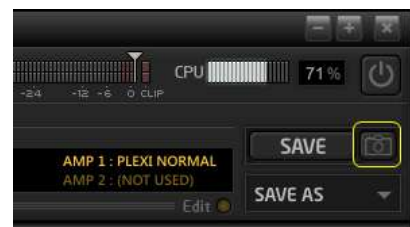
- When the SOURCE is **Bank File**, pressing SAVE will commit the changed preset by saving the entire bank to your computer. *Nothing is saved to the Axe-Fx when you press SAVE while working with a Bank File source!*
- When the SOURCE is **Preset Folder**, SAVE commits changes by saving the individual preset file to your computer. *Nothing is saved to the Axe-Fx when you press SAVE while working with a Preset Folder source!*

4.1 Save to New Location

All three SOURCES allow you the option of **Save to New Location**. This allows you to select an alternate location in the current source. For instance, you might open Axe-Fx preset 000 and then save it into 010.

4.2 Snapshots

Notice the small camera button to the right of the SAVE button. This creates a SNAPSHOT which saves a copy of your current edit in any source to a special utility folder. These provide an “UNDO-like” capability or allow you to create comparison or “safety” checkpoints while you work.



To find the files created by the snapshot button, look in **Axe-Manage** under **UTILITIES: Snapshots**

4.3 Exporting

The SAVE AS menu for every source includes an option to EXPORT the current edit to a standalone preset file on your computer. Exported presets can be easily emailed or otherwise transported to another system.

5 Axe Manage

5.1 Getting Around

Coming Soon

5.2 Managing the Axe-Fx

Coming Soon

5.2.1 Working with Presets


Coming Soon


5.2.2 The User Cabs View (*Axe-Fx II specific information*)


The Axe-Fx II has 50 User Cab Slots. These can be viewed in Axe-Edit by clicking **User Cabs** under **Axe-Fx** in the tree.


Axe Edit has the ability to read and display the names of User Cab IRs located in your hardware. This will happen automatically when you connect, but you can manually request cabs using the option **FILE: Get from Axe-Fx : All Cabs**.

The Cabs view shows columns by default: the first contains a **status** icon. Like the preset icons in other view, this indicates whether or not saved or unsaved changes have been made.

 A gray icon means you have made no changes to a User Cab during the current Axe-Edit session.

 A red icon means you have unsaved changes to a User Cab.

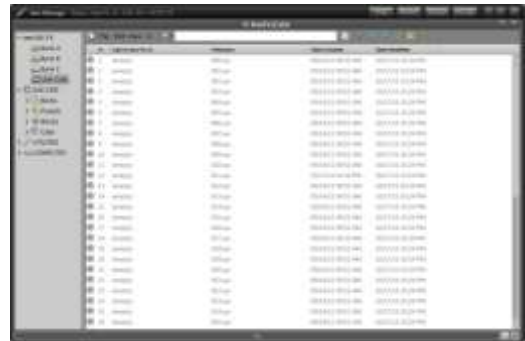
 A green icon means you have saved changes to a User Cab during the current session.

 *Note: A "session" ends when you Quit or restart Axe-Edit.*

The **(#)** column shows the number of the cab slot.



The **Cab Name** column shows the name of the cab in a cab slot.

The **File Name** column shows the name of the (cached) cab IR file for the current slot.
(Axe-Manage automatically creates empty files to correspond to empty slots.)



5.2.3 Sending User Cab IRs to the Axe-Fx

This tutorial assumes that you have copied your cab files and folders to the default cabs folder, located at **\documents\Fractal Audio\Workspace\Axe-Edit\Cabs**.

1. Begin with the **Axe-Fx : User Cabs** view selected (see **The User Cabs View**, p. 15).
2. Right/control click on the **Axe-Edit : Cabs** and choose “**New view here**”.
3. This multi- view allows you to copy/paste or drag and drop cabs from your hard drive to the memory slots on the Axe-Fx.
4. After you have populated the IR files into the **Axe-Fx User Cabs** view, select **FILE: Send to Axe-Fx: Changes Only**. The icons for cabs which have been transferred will turn from  gray to  green to indicate successful transfer.
5. Other Send to Axe-Fx options, such as right clicking an individual cab and choosing Send to **Axe-Fx Selected Cab** are self-explanatory.

Appendix

5.3 Uninstalling Previous Versions

To uninstall a previous version of Axe-Edit, simply delete Axe-Edit from your Applications folder (Mac) or use the uninstaller provided in Control Panel/Add Remove Programs (Windows).

You may also wish to remove the **Settings File**, which stores custom information about your installation.



Mac:

~/Library/Preferences/Fractal Audio/Axe-Edit.settings



Windows:

C:\Documents and Settings\\Application Data\Fractal Audio\Axe-Edit\Axe-Edit.settings

You may wish to remove or rename an older workspace directory, where user files such as banks, presets, settings, and cabs will be found. These are typically found in the **/Fractal Audio/** folder beneath your personal **documents** directory.

5.4 The Workspace

The structure of the workspace, found in the **Fractal Audio** folder of your **documents**, is as follows. You should not delete or rename folders in the workspace, but it is possible to create subdirectories, either through finder/explorer or using Axe-Manage.

Folder	Notes
AxeChange	The folder beneath which all Axe-Change related files and folders exist.
/Cabs	
/Blocks	
/Keepers	
/Presets	
AxeEdit	The folder beneath which all Axe-Edit-related files and folders exist.
/Banks	
/Cabs	
/Blocks	
/Presets	
AxeFx	The folder beneath which all Axe-Fx-related files and folders exist.
/Bank A	
/Bank B	
/Bank C	
/User Cabs	
CnP	Not a user folder. Used for temp files during copy/paste operations.
Temp	Not a user folder. Used for temp files.
Utilities	The folder beneath which all Utilities-related files and folders exist.
/Backups	Home to Bank Backups created by Axe-Edit (“Sync & Backup”) (“Copy to Backups”)
/Cache	
/Favorites	Not used by the current version of Axe-Edit
/Limbo	
/Snapshots	