



AXE-FX II FIRMWARE UPDATE GUIDE

What is Firmware? Why do I need to update?

Firmware is technically software. It runs like an **operating system** inside your Axe-Fx II. Firmware is tracked using version numbers: 1.0, 2.0, etc. Every Axe-Fx II we sell is shipped with the latest version installed. You can check your version any time by pressing the UTILITY button on your Axe-Fx II and paging to the FIRMWARE screen.

Our products are upgradeable, and we are committed to continual improvement. The **free updates** we release are highly anticipated by our customers. We add new amps, cabs, effects and features, upgrade sound capabilities, fix issues, and more. We recommend keeping the firmware in your Axe-Fx II up to date as new versions are released. Should you encounter any trouble with the update process, please refer to **Troubleshooting & FAQ** (p. 2).

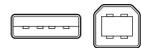
BEFORE YOU BEGIN, please disconnect anything that could interfere with the update: MIDI Cables, the MFC-101, anything in the Axe-Fx II PEDAL jack. Also QUIT any software applications which could try to communicate with your Axe-Fx II, including Axe-Edit, Cab-Lab, other MIDI utilities, digital audio workstations, music players, etc.

How do I update my Axe-Fx II?

Updating the firmware of your Axe-Fx II is easy with Fractal-Bot, our free MIDI utility. Before you can use it however, you'll need to install a driver to enable communication between your computer and the Axe-Fx II, install Fractal-Bot itself, and download the firmware update file (if you haven't done so already).

I. Install the Axe-Fx Driver (This step is required only the first time you connect to a particular computer.)

- Download the driver for your operating system from the support page of our web site:
<http://fractalaudio.com/support.php>
- Connect your Axe-Fx II to your computer using a standard USB cable (not included).
IMPORTANT! Be very careful not to insert a USB cable into the MFC jack of the Axe-Fx II or damage could occur.
- Power on the Axe-Fx II.
- Install the Driver you downloaded, following any on-screen instructions.



II. Install Fractal-Bot (Required only the first time, or when an updated version becomes available).

Download and install Fractal-Bot from our web site at <http://fractalaudio.com/fractal-bot.php>

NOTE: 3rd party applications such as [Snoize SysEx Librarian](#) (OS X) or [MIDI-OX](#) (Win) can also be used to update firmware. Since the launch of Fractal-Bot, however, we no longer provide support for configuring or using these applications.

III. Download and Unzip The Firmware... And Read The Release Notes!

Since you're reading this file typically packaged with firmware, you've probably done this already...

If not, the latest firmware can be found on our web site at <http://fractalaudio.com/support.php>

Firmware is packaged in a **zip archive** that may contain various documents in addition to the actual firmware—a MIDI System Exclusive or "SysEx" file. Extract this .sys file to a location you can easily find when required. Do not double-click the .sys file; Fractal-Bot will prompt you for its location when it is needed.

Please read the "Release Notes" included with the firmware download. They'll let you know what's new and alert you to anything you may need to be aware of before updating to the new version.

IV. Launch Fractal-Bot And Perform The Update

Fractal-Bot is easy to use. Simply launch the application and proceed through three self-explanatory steps. For additional information, consult the **Fractal-Bot Manual**, included with the Fractal-Bot download.

Before performing a firmware update, it may be wise to back up the settings of your Axe-Fx II. Fractal-Bot's RECEIVE feature provides a convenient and self-guided way to do this.

NOTE: Firmware updates will frequently be accompanied by new versions of the **Axe-Fx II Factory Presets**. These will be available on our web site [support page](#) and can also be installed using Fractal-Bot.

Troubleshooting & FAQ

Most firmware update problems are easy to solve once you've identified the source of the trouble.

How do I know it worked?

To check your firmware version at any time, press UTILITY and change to the FIRMWARE page.

Can I skip versions to go from a very old firmware version to a much newer one?

You can always upgrade from any version to any other version. When you skip like this it is recommended that you also read the Release Notes for all interim versions, all of which are included with every firmware release.

Will updating my Axe-Fx II Firmware also update my factory presets?

Updating firmware does not update Factory Presets. Updated Factory Presets, when offered, are released as a separate update on our web site [support page](#). Fractal-Bot can be used to transmit this update in the same way it is used to update firmware.

Will updating my Axe-Fx II Firmware erase my customized presets?

Firmware updates do not erase customized presets. However, firmware updates may alter the sound of existing presets. Always read the Release Notes included with a given version before updating. Saving presets after a firmware update can render them incompatible with previous versions. It is always wise to back up your Axe-Fx II using Fractal-Bot before a major update.

The firmware update failed mysteriously. What should I do?

If the Axe-Fx still boots normally, just try the update again. If successive failures occur, please delete and re-download the update file before trying again. Trying a different USB port or cable can also solve certain issues.

After updating, my Axe-Fx will no longer boot.

Don't panic. Please disconnect USB, MIDI, and MFC-101 cables and try to boot the unit while holding down the RECALL button. If this works to get the unit started, please try the update again.

In the rare event that the Axe-Fx will only boot to a blank screen (sometimes with one or more LEDs frozen) this indicates that the firmware update process has failed. See below for more on this.

Axe-Fx II XL Failsafe Firmware

The Axe-Fx II XL (introduced March 2014) has a built-in recovery mechanism to protect against firmware update issues. (The original and Mark II models do not include this feature).

In the rare event that an error occurs during firmware update and your Axe-Fx II XL will not boot, please perform the following steps:

1. Turn the power OFF.
2. Press and hold **BOTH** "Page" buttons: 
3. While holding both Page buttons, turn the power ON. Once the unit boots release both buttons. The unit will boot into failsafe update mode and a UTILITY menu will be shown.
WARNING: Do NOT execute any of the <ENTER> functions on the TEST screen or data loss may occur!
4. Select the FIRMWARE page if it is not already selected. The display will read "Version 0.00".
5. Start Fractal-Bot an update the firmware as you normally would.

If you require assistance, or your unit is NOT an Axe-Fx II XL, please contact support (see below).

Contacting Support

If you need additional help, please contact our support team via <http://support.fractalaudio.com>

Customers outside the US or Canada may also contact the [official distributor](#) for their region.

Our forum at <http://forum.fractalaudio.com/forum.php> can also be a valuable resource, with members helping members around the clock.