

BLACK BOX™

Amps | Effects | Drums | Recording Interface

▶ Quick Start Guide

This guide is intended to help get you started quickly. In order to achieve optimal usage of your new Black Box we recommend that you carefully study the enclosed product manual, either after completing the process described in this guide or before.

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HELLO FROM ROGER LINN

Thank you for purchasing the Black Box, a very exciting product created collaboratively by Roger Linn Design and the great folks at M-Audio. You may know of me from having invented the first digital drum machines in the 1980s, or from my MPC MIDI Production Center products with Akai in the 1990s. But you may not know that I'm also a guitarist, and my passion for guitar sound led to my more recent creation of the award-winning AdrenaLinn beat-synced guitar effects processor (www.rogerlinndesign.com.) Now I'm very proud to combine many of the best parts of AdrenaLinn with M-Audio's considerable expertise in computer-centric products. The result is the Black Box.

What is the Black Box? It's a superb amp modeler combined with a unique effects processor that syncs to an internal drum machine. Plus, it's a complete digital audio interface to your computer. The beat-synced effects are the part I enjoy most: tremolo, flanging, delay—even looped sequences of filtered tones or arpeggiated notes and more—all playing in perfect sync to the beat or your recording software! I think you'll find—as others have—that the Black Box will lead you down a path of new musical ideas and head-turning recordings.

On behalf of all the creative minds at both M-Audio and Roger Linn Design, I'd like to welcome you to the brave new world of the Black Box!



INTRODUCTION

This Quick Start Guide is provided to get you up and running quickly by providing most of the basic information you need to know to get started using the Black Box. **THIS IS NOT THE COMPLETE MANUAL.** Please see the Black Box PDF manual on the included CD-ROM for a more detailed description of all the Black Box's remaining functions, such as "pedal programming" and software driver installation, etc.

IMPORTANT!

Audio equipment should **ALWAYS** be powered on and off in a certain order. The power amp which feeds your speakers should **ALWAYS** be turned **ON LAST** and turned **OFF FIRST**. If you turn other pieces of audio equipment on while they are connected to the powered speakers, loud transient pop noises will occur which can damage your hearing and your speakers. Always turn on all of your other audio devices that are connected to your powered speakers **BEFORE** you turn on your powered speakers. The same is true for turning things off. **ALWAYS** turn off your powered speakers **BEFORE** you turn off any other equipment connected to them. Following this simple rule will ensure that both your ears and your speakers will function normally for a long time to come.

HOOK IT UP AND START JAMMING NOW

To start having fun immediately, follow the simple instructions below. For more detailed information, please read the rest of this guide.

Quick Setup

1. Plug the main 1/4" outputs on the back of the Black Box into a pair of powered speakers and/or plug a pair of headphones in the front.
2. Plug your guitar in the front of the Black Box and turn up your guitar's volume.
3. Set MIX knob on the right-side top of the Black Box to hard left "Input" setting.
4. Start playing and turn up the Guitar Input level knob until the clip light only comes on when you play hard.
5. Turn up the right-side top Output Level knob to taste.

Getting Sounds

- Use the Preset Up and Down buttons try out different effect presets.
- Press the Start/Stop button to hear the drum machine.
- Use the Drumbeat Up and Down arrow buttons to select different beats.
- Use the Tap Tempo button to set the tempo of the drum machine.

To modify any parameters that make up each preset:

Amp - Press the Amp button and then use the 4 rotary controls below the LCD display to adjust the settings that make up the guitar amp sound.

FX - Press the FX button and then use the 4 rotary controls below the LCD display to adjust effects settings.

Delay - Press the Delay button and then use the 4 rotary controls below the LCD display to adjust the sound of the audio delay.

Utility - Press the UTIL button and then use the 4 rotary controls below the LCD display to adjust settings for preset volume, Guitar/Drum balance, expression pedal assignment and tempo.

INPUT/OUTPUT CONTROLS

These are the four knobs on the right side of the Black Box.

Guitar input level knob controls the amount of incoming guitar signal.

Mic input level knob controls the amount of incoming mic signal.

Mix input/playback level knob controls how much of the guitar and drum sounds you hear versus how much output from the computer you will hear.

Output level knob controls the overall unit volume output.

WORKING WITH PRESETS

A preset is a unique combination of all the settings that affect the guitar sound, including guitar amp models, effects and delay. There are 100 fixed factory presets (0-99) followed by 100 editable user presets (0-99). To browse the presets, press the preset up and preset down keys. Hold either button to quickly scroll through the presets. The number and 6-character name of the currently active preset will always appear in the LCD display after a preset is selected.

To edit the settings that comprise a preset, you'll use the AMP, FX, DELAY and UTILITY buttons. When one of these buttons is pressed, the lower part of the LCD display will show different parameter name sets in each of the four lower sections of the display that can be adjusted using the 4 rotary controls below the display.

Note that unless you store the preset after you make any changes, your changes will be lost when you select a different preset. To remind you to save, the word EDIT will appear in the display whenever you change any of the preset's parameters, reminding you to store the preset.

ADJUSTING THE AMP

When you press AMP, the 4 rotary controls will show the functions AMP, DRIVE, AMP BASS and AMP TREBLE in the bottom of the LCD:

Amp - This knob (#1) is used to select one of 12 guitar amplifier simulations.

Amp Drive - This knob (#2) lets you control the amount of distorted overdrive for the selected amp.

Amp Bass - This knob (#3) lets you control the amount of low frequency signal for the selected amp.

Amp Treble - This knob (#4) lets you control the amount of high frequency signal for the selected amp. (For a complete list and descriptions of the AMP models, please refer to the PDF manual.)

ADJUSTING THE EFFECTS

The Black Box has 43 different effects that you can use. Effects 1-32 are normally beat-synced to the internal drum machine tempo and can also lock to incoming MIDI Clock tempo. This assures that your effects are always in perfect time with the drum machine or your DAW session. For a complete list, refer to the PDF manual.

When you press FX, the 4 rotary controls will show the following in the bottom of the LCD:

Effect - This knob (#1) is used to select one of 43 effect types.

FX Speed or FX Freq - This knob (#2) controls either the FX SPEED or FX FREQUENCY, depending on which effect is selected:

- **FX Speed** controls the speed of modulation effects (effects that move up and down over time) and ranges from 0-99 (fixed speeds of .1 second through 10 cycles per second), followed by 12 tempo-synced speeds from every 8 measures to every 1/32 note triplet.
- **FX Freq** (frequency) controls the “brightness” of the effect for Filter Tremolo, Random Filter or Filter Sequence effects. “0” is the lowest frequency setting, which creates a deep tone. The highest setting is “99” which creates a very bright tone.

FX Depth or FX Key - This knob (#2) controls either the FX DEPTH or FX KEY, depending on which effect is selected:

- **FX Depth** controls how far up and down the effect moves over time. A setting of 0 means gives no movement; a setting of 99 gives maximum movement. A setting of ‘-99’ gives maximum negative movement; for example, this will cause the Auto Wah effect sweep down instead of up when you play a note.
- **FX Key** only appears when the Arpeggiator effect is selected, It allows you to transpose the arpeggio sequence to a different musical key in semitone steps from 0 to 99.

Wet/Dry - Wet/Dry is a balance control between the effected and unaffected signal. 0 is no effect (effect is bypassed) and 99 is full effect.

ADJUSTING THE DELAY

The Black Box has a dedicated Delay effect. The delay time can be either a fixed time or synced to the internal drum machine (or incoming MIDI Clock). For a complete description of the delay feature, please refer to the PDF manual. Push the Delay menu key to bring up the four Delay menus:

Delay Time - This parameter value sets the time between your original signal and the delayed signal. There are 100 fixed delay times (0-99), followed by 19 beat-synced settings from every 2 measures to every 1/32 note triplet.

Delay Repeats - This parameter value sets the amount of repeats in your delayed signal.

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Delay Volume - This parameter value simply sets how loud the delayed signal is compared to your original signal.

Drums to Delay/Input - This is a special feature that allows you to send the Drum machine signal to the Delay effect (settings DLY 00 to DLY 99) or directly into the input path of the Black Box (settings INP 00 to INP 99).

ADJUSTING THE UTILITIES

Pressing the UTIL key brings up the four Utility menus in the LCD:

Preset Volume - This controls the volume of any individual preset. Note that this actually controls the output of the amp model and will have no effect if the amp processing is bypassed.

Guitar/Drums Mix Balance - This controls the relative balance between the two signals. Note that this is the only one among the 16 parameters that is not remembered when a preset is saved. Instead, this is a “global” parameter, meaning that it stays as you set it even after you change presets.

Expression Pedal Assign - This allows you to assign the function of the expression pedal. (For more information please refer to the PDF manual.)

Tempo - This control speeds up or slows down the drum machine and beat-synced effects.

STORE

If you make any changes to a preset, the EDIT icon will show on the LCD. This is to remind you that you must store your changes to keep them. If you change presets before you save your changes, they will be lost. To store a preset:

1. Quickly press the PRESET UP and DOWN arrow keys simultaneously. (The preset number and the 1st three characters of the preset name will blink.)
2. To select the destination preset, use the PRESET UP or PRESET DOWN buttons. (Note that you can only save to a user preset; if the original preset was a factory preset, the same preset number in the user bank will be automatically selected for you.)
3. If you want to, you can rename the preset before saving it. Use the first 3 rotary controls to rename the 1st 3 characters, respectively, of the preset name. Then, turn the 4th rotary control one position to the right. (This will cause the last 3 characters to blink.) Now you can use the 1st three rotary controls to change characters 4-6 of the preset name.
4. To save the preset, again quickly press the PRESET UP and DOWN arrow keys simultaneously. A BEEP will be heard to confirm the save.

TUNER

Quickly pressing the Utility and Delay buttons simultaneously will engage the Black Box's built-in instrument tuner. This is a tuner sensitive enough for any guitar or bass. Play a note and it will be displayed in the LCD with arrows to either side. More arrows on the left side indicator that the note is flat; more arrows on the right side indicate that it is sharp. When there are equal arrows displayed on both sides (two on either side of the note) then you are perfectly in tune for the note displayed. Quickly pressing the Utility and Delay buttons simultaneously again will exit the tuner function.

WORKING WITH THE DRUM MACHINE

There are 100 fixed drumbeats numbered 0 to 99. To change from one drumbeat to another, press the DRUMBEAT UP and DOWN arrow keys. The number and name of the currently active drumbeat will appear after it is selected, and will remain showing in the display for 1.5 seconds. After that, the LCD will revert to whatever the display was showing previously. To view the active drumbeat, press both the DRUMBEAT UP and DOWN arrow buttons simultaneously; the active drumbeat number and name will appear for 1.5 seconds.

Tap Tempo - This button allows you to enter the tempo for the drum machine by tapping. As the effects are beat-synced to the drum machine, this also sets the tempo of the effects. The drums do not need to be playing for the effects to lock to the tempo.

Start/Stop - This button will start and stop the drum machine. When in play mode, the tempo LED will blink at the current tempo. When in stop mode, the LED will be dark.

(For a complete list of the drumbeat presets, please refer to the PDF manual).

INTERFACING WITH THE COMPUTER

Minimum Computer System Requirements

If you intend to use your Black Box as an audio interface with your computer, please make certain that your computer meets these minimum requirements:

Windows

- Pentium III – 500 MHz or higher
- 128 MB RAM
- Windows XP (SP1) with DirectX 9.0b or higher
- Onboard USB connection or installed USB-interface PCI card

NOTE: The Black Box is not supported under Windows 98, Windows ME or Windows 2000.

Mac OS

- Macintosh G3/G4* 500 MHz or higher
 - OS X 10.3.7 or later, 512 MB RAM
 - Onboard USB connection or installed USB-interface PCI card
- *G3/G4 accelerator cards not supported

Connecting Your Hardware to the Computer

The Black Box is a class-compliant device for both Windows XP (SP1) and Mac OS 10.3.7 and above. This means that there are no M-Audio software drivers required to be installed on your computer to achieve minimum functionality. Minimum functionality means that you will be able to record the processed guitar sound in most standard DAW applications, including Ableton Live Lite 4 GTR. To start using the Black Box as a class-compliant device simply connect it to your computer via USB and power it on.

Note that unless drivers are installed to enable further functionality, the DAW application will not have access to the dry guitar or the XLR mic input. Your unit will also not be able to lock to incoming MIDI Clock from a DAW. You will not be able to save and load presets to the computer. You will also not be able to update your unit. You can always start by running the unit as a class-compliant device and then install the drivers later to obtain these other features. However, be sure that your Black Box is not connected to your computer via USB when you install the drivers.

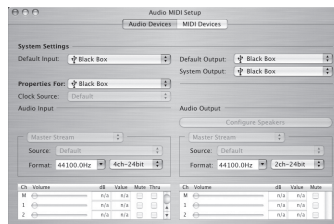
Windows Sounds and Audio Devices Setup

In your Windows XP control panel, double-click on the Sounds and Audio Devices icon. You should see the properties dialog below. If the Black Box does not show up automatically, use the drop down menus to select it. If the device is not shown available on the menu, restart your computer and try again.



Macintosh Audio MIDI Setup

On the Mac, open Audio MIDI Setup in your Applications folder. You should see the screen below. If the Black Box does not show up automatically, use the drop down menus to select it. If the device is not available, restart your computer and try again.



FRONT PANEL CONNECTORS

- Plug your headphones in to the jack with the headphone icon.
- Plug your guitar into the Guitar Input jack.



REAR PANEL CONNECTORS

- Plug dynamic microphones in to the Mic input.
- Use the Balanced Outputs to connect to powered speakers or an analog mixer.
- Use a 75-ohm S/PDIF cable to record from the S/PDIF digital output.
- Connect an expression pedal, like the M-Audio EX-P, to the Expression pedal jack to control functions like wah effects.
- Connect a momentary pedal, like the M-Audio SP-1, to the P1 and/or P2 jacks to control functions like Start/Stop.
- Connect the USB connection on the Black Box to your computer with the included USB cable.
- Only use the 9V AC 1000ma power supply included in the package. Using an improper power supply can damage your unit.



IF YOU HAVE NO SOUND:

- Be sure your Input/Playback knob is set appropriately and that your output level knob is turned up. Also make sure that you are plugged in to the proper input jack and the input level knob is turned up.
- If you can hear drums, but no guitar or you can hear guitar but no drums, check the GTR/DRM BAL parameter in the Utility menu. A setting of P50 will only provide guitar sound. A setting of D50 will only provide drum sounds. Any setting in between will play a little of both. A middle setting of EQU means that that output of the drums is equal in volume to the output of the guitar effect. A setting of SEP means the drum signal will come out of one output, while the guitar effect signal will come out of the other.

CONTACT

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about this or any M-Audio product, we invite you to contact us by using the following information:

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WARRANTY

Warranty Terms

M-Audio warrants products to be free from defects in materials and workmanship, under normal use and provided that the product is owned by the original, registered user. Visit www.m-audio.com/warranty for terms and limitations applying to your specific product.

Warranty Registration

Thank you for registering your new M-Audio product. Doing so immediately both entitles you to full warranty coverage and helps M-Audio develop and manufacture the finest quality products available. Register online at www.m-audio.com/register to receive FREE product updates and for the chance to win FREE M-Audio gear



