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It's your own default

Tutorial by Jerry McPherson



Let's come up with some new defaults for our amps and effects. That way when you create a new device, it's already set with your personal settings.

Start with an empty preset by clicking the "new" button located in the "Preset List" area. Now go to "Rack Components" view and double click on the Plexi amp. You'll get both the amp head and

cabinet component. Notice that the amp knobs are all set to 12 o'clock. Not a great tonal starting point, but we can fix that:

First, click on the amp's drop-down menu to the right of the field name. In the menu you'll see a list of presets with "Default" at the top of the list and "save" at the bottom.

Even if the default title is already showing in the window, select the "Default" preset from the list. Click on the same arrow again for the drop-down menu and this time you'll see "overwrite" and "delete" added to the menu list.

Experiment with the Plexi settings. For a Les Paul style guitar, I had to turn down Volume II to keep the tone from being dark and "tubby" sounding. Once you get the knobs set to your liking, click on the arrow that gives you your drop-down menu and go down to "Overwrite". Click/release the mouse and there you have it.

Now any time you call up a Plexi amp you'll get your own personal settings. This can be performed on any rack components that allow you to save templates.



For my own templates that I come up with (and for favorite factory templates), I add a space before the name. That way when I view the pull-down menu, they appear at the top of the list. This is a real time saver as you build your own library of settings to add with what is there from the factory settings.

Spending a little time creating your own defaults and component templates on both amp and effect modules will allow you to quickly put together a rack of your own individual sounds in no time at all.

Backup your settings:

Notice also that, in the Guitar Rig folders, if you navigate to "Internal -> Component Templates -> Plexi Amp", your default settings and templates will appear as a unique looking icon. It would be a good idea to duplicate those Component Template folders with your own defaults and presets to another drive or CD-R to backup your work.

GUITAR RIG and Delay Setups

Tutorial by Jerry McPherson

There is so much flexibility in Guitar Rig that is just waiting to be tapped into. Here a couple of tips for using delays in GUITAR RIG.



I had a couple of issues when routing guitar signals through the Quad Delay. One, when you bypass it your delays cut off abruptly; and two, as you increase the dry/wet mix you lose overall gain.

A work-around for these problems involves using a **Split Mix and a**

Volume Pedal component: First drag or double click on a Split Mix component and set the crossfade mix to 50/50. Next drag a Volume Pedal down between the Split B and Split Mix. Now drag a Quad Delay down between the Volume pedal you just created and the Split Mix. Set the Quad Delay dry/wet mix wide open to wet only.

Notice as you increase the Volume pedal with a mouse or external controller, it adds delay without affecting the dry signal level. The Volume pedal is now the send for the delay.

Now you can go to the controller section of GUITAR RIG and assign a controller to "bypass" the delay. When you bypass the delay, your delay will now trail off without getting abruptly cut off.

Filter the delays



Add a Wah component

While we're in this delay mode, here's another tip to try out. I collect vintage (and new) guitar pedals. One of my favorites was a little known Korg Toneworks 301 dl Dynamic Echo. It had a Hi-Fi/Lo-Fi knob that was basically a filter on the wet signal of the delay. I have used that on a ton of sessions where I wanted the guitar to provide more atmosphere and ambience.

Using this same idea of the Split Mix/Delay I've brought in a Wah component in GUITAR RIG to filter the delays.

In my rig, I usually place this 301 dl setup before the amp, followed by a normal delay after the amp. The 301 dl I use for just for when the song needs a little sonic interest and vibe. Enjoy!

Oxygen 8 your Rig

Tutorial by Jerry McPherson



Assign all your parameters

One of the unique features of Guitar Rig is how easily it can be controlled by external hardware and software. As a plug-in, it's parameters can be automated by your sequencer. By using the learn function in the Controller page, delay times, distortion amounts, cabinet types, etc. can be switched or altered in real time. You can use Bradshaw type foot controllers for instant effect on/off's. You can use a MIDI control surface for editing.

One way I control Guitar Rig (especially on the road) is with an Oxygen 8 keyboard by M-Audio. They are affordable, bus powered, and portable-perfect for your mobile rig! You can use all twenty five keys to bypass effects, toggle between parameter values, trigger TapeDeck transports, step thru presets and banks, etc. You also have eight rotary knobs, pitch and mod wheels, and a data slider that can be assigned to just about anything you can think of to control in Guitar Rig. Best of all, the keyboard connects with one USB cable, and you're set!

In Guitar Rig, go to the "Audio + MIDI settings" (File ->), and in the MIDI section you should see the Oxygen 8 as a choice. Make sure it is enabled.

Now go to the Controller section in the Left View. Create a controller (scroll down the Rack Controls window, click "Add Controller"), click on the "Learn" button, and play a note on the keyboard. It should recognize your controller and display the value in that controller window.

Go over to the right and click on "Not assigned" to open the drop down menu: It will lay out a spread of parameters to control (will only display parameters for components which are already active in your rig).

Another method to assign controllers:

An alternative way to assign controllers is: Right click (Mac: ctrl + click) the desired knob in the rig (e.g. the Amp volume) to open the context menu; now select "Learn". Then press a key or move a controller on the Oxygen 8 and the parameter is assigned to whatever you just moved. After that you'll find a new entry in the "Rack Controls" window of the "Left View" where the settings can be edited.



Controller settings

to kick in more distortion or delay etc.

Remember even a MIDI note can control parameter values in GUITAR RIG. By adjusting the "handles" on the maximum and minimum values, you can go between two values on a parameter. This is great for using a footswitch (or MIDI note in this example)



Go BIG: CPU-friendly Bypass mode

If you create an effect or amp in GUITAR RIG but put them in bypass mode, you'll notice that it doesn't put any drain on the CPU meter.

Because of this I'll usually create a really big rig, keep effects that I'm not using in bypass mode, then use the Oxygen 8 to kick effects in and out.

Save your controller setups:



Saving your settings

The best part is that you can save all your controller setups depending on whether you are using GUIATR RIG with a footcontroller, keyboard or MIDI control surface. Your setups can include live versus studio applications. Then when you switch controllers (say an Oxygen 8 back to the NI Kontrol) you simply load the appropriate setup that you created previously. How's that for flexibility! And for all you control freaks: try using the Oxygen 8 and the Kontrol together for total domination!

Programming Hints for GUITAR RIG

Tutorials by Jerry McPherson

Programming sounds for amp modelling software can be a tricky, slippery process when you are trying to copy the sound of some of your favorite amp/effects setups. I usually keep reference files handy of some of my favorite vintage guitar/amp combinations so I can A/B it with whatever I'm programming.



Tapdecks One and Two

GUITAR RIG has simplified this with the TapeDecks that appear at the top and bottom of the rack. These can be a great tool for programming, as well as learning parts, playing with loops and jamming.

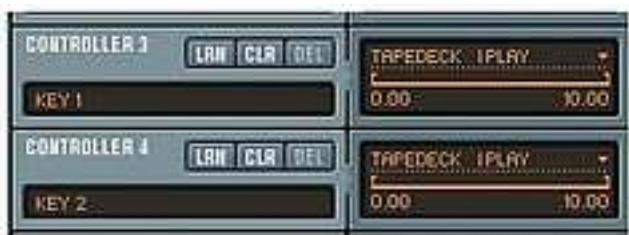
For me the ultimate A/B approach to programming software based amp modelers is to have two soundfiles for direct comparison:

One, a DI guitar file; and second, that same guitar going through an amp and miked up. The DI file is what I'll process with a plug-in, while the file of the recorded amp is what I'll use as an A/B reference. Sometimes on sessions I'll take an old guitar, like my '67 Gretsch Tennessean, run it thru a DI box and take that directly into ProTools on a mono track.

The engineer will keep that muted. Most DI boxes have a parallel out that allows you to come directly out of the DI and into an amp or rig. The signal passes directly thru the box with no coloration. The amp is miked up and recorded, as is the DI sound that has been muted. After the session is over I can have the

engineer burn me a CD of the files- both the DI and the amp sounds.

I import these files into my computer, apply an amp plug-in on the DI, and use the file of the amp to A/B against the plug-in sound. With Guitar Rig this is easy. I can load the DI file into TapeDeck One, load the miked up amp file into the bottom TapeDeck Two and create an amp setup like what I am trying to emulate.



Control the tape decks with a key

Rig, you have your hands free for tweaking out sounds. (A lot of times I program on plane flights where I have a lot of time to kill.)

Now when I hit play on the top TapeDeck, I hear the guitar processed through Guitar Rig. Playing the bottom TapeDeck I can hear the real amp as my comparison. It makes it so much better when you can reference a real amp miked up in a great studio with top quality mic preamps and processing. Also, if you are not having to actually play the guitar, but rather let TapeDeck play it through Guitar



Rig it up

I was recently out at Dark Horse Recording Studios in Franklin, TN doing a record date. On a break we set up a DI box and the engineer

recorded me strumming a bit. The DI sound file is my early 70's gold-top Les Paul into a Countryman DI box and straight into Pro Tools HD. I ran out of the Countryman amp out 1/4" jack into an old MXR Dyna Comp, into a Vox AC-15, and out of that into a 2-12" speaker cabinet loaded with Celestion Vintage 30's. The AC-15 was a reissue that Vox made up until a few years ago. It uses an AC-30 front end into an AC-15 power section. (Why do manufacturers discontinue their best sounding stuff? I digress.) I've used it on a TON of sessions and it always sounds great in the track. I also use two early sixties JMI Vox AC-30's. The amp file is this rig miked with a Shure 57 into an API mic pre with no EQ and into Pro Tools HD.

Load the soundfile "**DarkHorse DI Ref.AIF**" into TapeDeck One. Notice that where you set the TapeDeck One output level affects how much it drives the front end of the amp model. I typically set it at 3 o'clock.

Now load the soundfile "**DarkHorse Amp Ref.AIF**" into TapeDeck Two with the output set all the way up.

Load the "**DarkHorse.bnk**" I've included into GUITAR RIG. The first preset under Vox Amps is the Dark Horse setup. This is the preset I came up based on the gear we were using that day in the studio. Notice how the cabinet size affects the EQ of the amp sound. Play around with the Graphic EQ and amp settings.

If you come up with an Amp/Cabinet/EQ that you feel "nails" the amp reference sound, I'd like to check it out. Preset banks can be uploaded to the GUITAR RIG Users library.

The great thing about programming sounds this way is that you can A/B your virtual rig against a sound that already sonically worked in the studio. I can't tell you how many times I've tried programming a sound off the top of my head and when I got it into the studio it was way too bassy or way too thin. If you try to get a sound to be huge by itself, a lot of times it ends up not fitting in the track once bass and drums are added.

It never ceases to amaze me how different a guitar sound is solo'd versus in the track with all the other instruments. It's surprising what sonically "pokes" thru a track.

Have fun programming!

Dualing Rigs

Tutorial by Jerry McPherson

A great feature of Guitar Rig is the ability to set up two independent rigs with two separate inputs, separate gain controls and the ability to send the outputs to independent mono channels or blend them together in a stereo L & R output. This makes it perfect for jamming, writing, or performing with a friend. You may have an instrument with two outputs. I use a Parker guitar that has separate magnetic and piezo pickup outputs. This way I can set up an acoustic signal chain for the piezo, and an amp chain for the normal guitar pickups.



Piezo pickup to split A

Magnetic pickup to Split B

First you must set the Rig Kontrol pedal for two channel mode. The mode switch is located on the back of the Kontrol and must be pushed in. The down side of this is now the Kontrol pedal can't send out controller messages. For preset changes and expression pedal control you'll have to use another MIDI pedal. In Guitar Rig you'll need to go to the top of the rack to the input section and select

“Both” so that Ch. 1 and Ch. 2 will now be routed to Guitar Rig. Create a Split module, and activate the “dual” mode. Now anything that you drag between Split A and B will be the effects chain for Input 1. Anything placed between Split B and Split Mix will be the effects chain for Input 2. The TapeDecks are stereo recorders so your two inputs can be recorded, for example, with TapeDeck One and they will be routed to their respective effect chains.

If you are jamming with a friend and want to have separate outputs, you can pan them hard left and right with the pan pots on the Split Mix. They will now show up as mono left and right outs. Enjoy!