Textures™ Granular Synth Engine

The MXR Textures™ Granular Synth Engine pulls your sound apart and weaves it into wondrous new forms. With the power of granular synthesis and dynamics processing, this pedal records what you play and reshapes it into a shifting blend of tones and timbres: shimmering pads, glitched-out rhythms, lush reverberations drifting back through themselves, and much more. It's a sandbox in pedal form, and every grain is yours to shape.

jimdunlop.com/m310

Table of Contents

Basic Operation

1 **REVERSE** button plays sampled grains in reverse. The probability of a grain playing in reverse is adjustable (see Secondary Parameters).

2 **SIZE** knob adjusts the size, or length, of each grain.
Delay and **Auto Freeze** ✳ **modes:** 60 milliseconds to 2 seconds.
Layers™ **mode:** 60 to 500 milliseconds.

3 **TIME** knob
Delay mode: sets the delay time of each grain from 50 milliseconds to 2 seconds.
Auto Freeze ✳ **mode:** same as Delay mode but also sets length of recording before the freeze engages.
Layers™ **mode:** sets the attack, or fade-in, time of each layer.

4 **REGEN** knob
Delay mode: sets the amount of feedback or regeneration. By default, feedback is generated in both the delay output and the grain output. See Secondary Parameters for how to adjust this blend.
Auto Freeze ✳ **mode:** same as Delay mode. Note that no feedback is generated when the buffer is frozen.
Layers™ **mode:** sets the decay, or fade-out, time of each layer.

5 **JACKS**
Input: TRS, allows for stereo input.
Output: TRS, allows for stereo output.
CTR: Expression/tap input or right-channel output.

6 **FOOTSWITCH**
Engage/bypass effect: Tap to turn the effect on or off. Blue LED above footswitch will illuminate when the effect is on.
Freeze: Holding the footswitch will freeze the audio buffer(s) in Delay and Layers™ modes. In Auto Freeze mode, holding the footswitch will unfreeze the buffer.
Scroll presets: To configure preset scroll functionality, hold the footswitch down, and rotate the PITCH knob fully counterclockwise. After configuring, hold footswitch to enter preset scroll mode. Tap footswitch to advance through presets. To exit, hold footswitch again or simply wait for timeout.

Basic Operation (cont.)

7 **MODE** button selects operation mode:
Delay mode: Notes and chords continuously recorded and played back as grains.
Auto Freeze ✳ mode: Sustains each note or chord while continuously processing it as grains according to pedal's other settings. If a new note or chord is played, the pedal will adapt accordingly.
Layers™ mode: Like Auto Freeze mode but will sustain up to four notes or chords at a time. If a fifth is played, it will replace the oldest of the current four.
This button's LED flashes when the effect is frozen.

8 **OVERLAP** knob sets the number of grains to play simultaneously, from 1 up to 30.

9 **MIX** knob sets the output signal blend from full dry to full wet. Mix happens pre-reverb, so even with the MIX knob fully counterclockwise, it's possible to apply reverb to just the dry signal.

10 **PITCH** knob sets the pitch of the grains, from two octaves down to two octaves up.

11 **PRESETS** button selects one of 8 different presets. No need to get overwhelmed—each preset offers a way to experience the best of what this pedal has to offer with the press of a button. For an explanation of how each sounds, and how to create your own, see Presets section.

Power

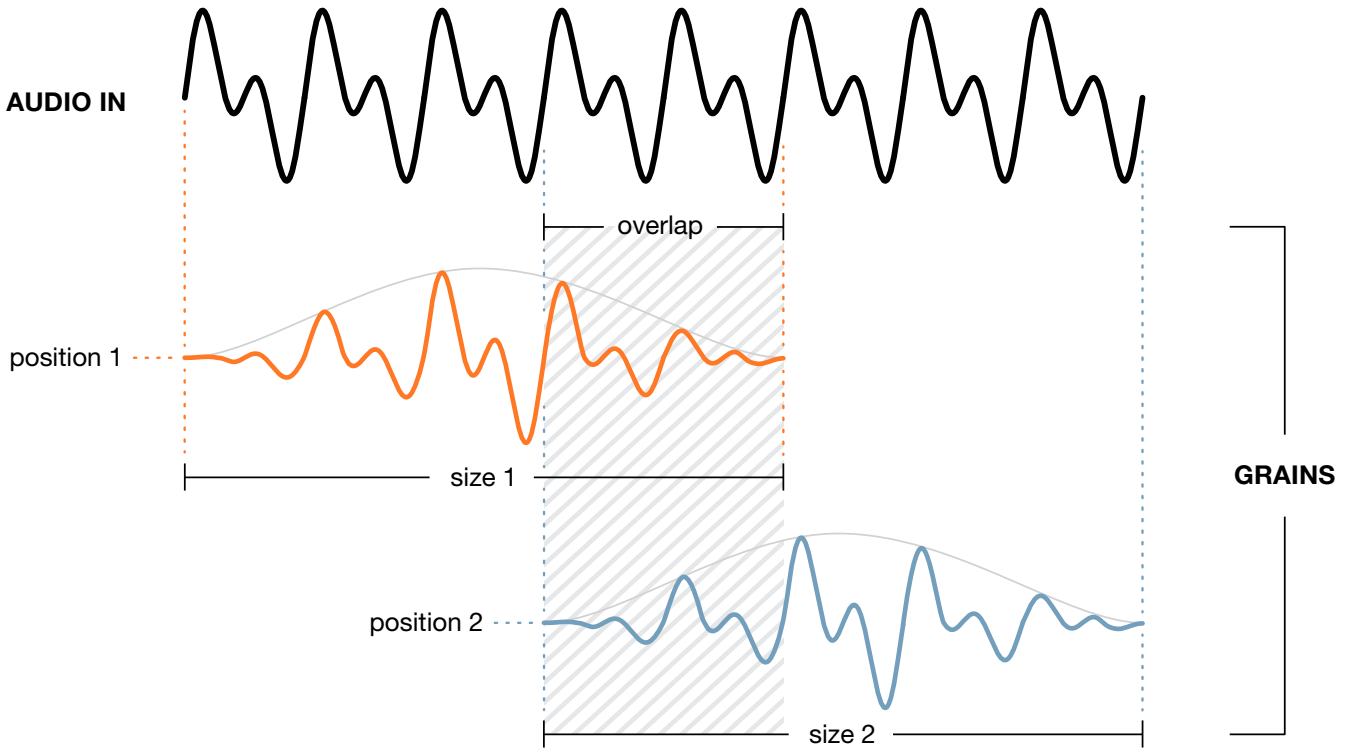
The MXR® Textures Pedal requires a 9-volt (300 mA) center-negative power supply and can be powered by the Dunlop ECB003 9-volt adapter or the MXR® Iso-Brick,™ the Iso-Brick™ Pro, and the Iso-Brick™ Mini Power Supplies.
This pedal cannot be powered by a battery.

Granular Synthesis: How the MXR® Textures™ Pedal Works

On a basic level, the MXR Textures Pedal records your audio input to a buffer (or digital memory, unrelated to buffers used in line drivers or bypass circuits) and plays it back, much like a delay or a looper. But what makes this pedal distinct is how it plays that audio back. With a delay, there is a set time between when audio is recorded and when it is played, but the Textures Pedal chops up that audio and plays it back in smaller segments called grains.

Each grain has a starting position within the recording and a size, which refers to the grain's played length. A grain's size is like a viewing window, opening up the grain to more of the recorded audio as its size increases. A small grain size results in sputtery blips while a large grain size yields full musical passages that are seconds long.

Grains can also overlap with each other. With no overlap, you will only hear one grain at a time. Increasing the overlap will play multiple snippets of the recording back simultaneously, allowing these snippets to interact with each other for a more dense, diffuse effect.



Shaping Playback & Additional Effects

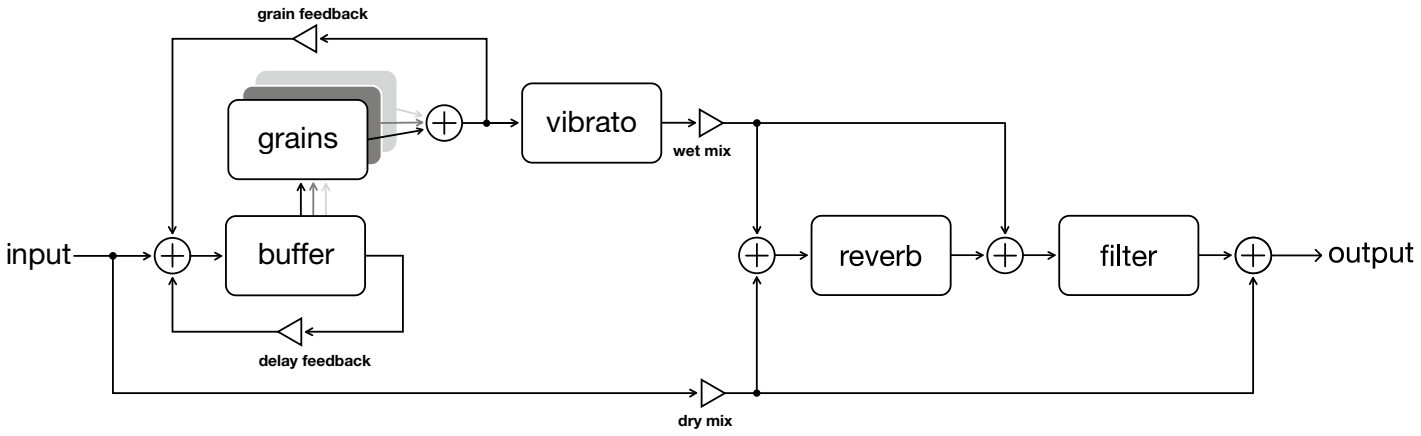
Now imagine manipulating how these grains are played back. We can play them in reverse for a smoothing and smearing effect or at different speeds, stretching or squishing the audio grain for a uniquely textured form of pitch shifting.

We can also play back audio from the buffer and write it back in, just like delay feedback, while the engine continues to read grains that now include the fedback audio. For a more complex sound, we can feed the audio of the grain itself back into the buffer. Bringing in different playback speeds, shifting pitch, creates an effect similar to shimmering reverb.

Digging into the advanced features—see Secondary Parameters—we can randomize some of these functions to create truly adventurous and unpredictable soundscapes.

And if the granular effects weren't enough, the MXR Textures™ pedal also comes with built-in reverb, filter, and vibrato effects to further shape your sound.

Here's what the signal flow looks like internally:



The Modes

Mode selection determines recording and playback behavior. The most basic is Delay mode, where audio is continuously written to the buffer, just like with a delay pedal, while being played back as grains. If we bring dynamics processing into the fold, we get the Auto Freeze and Layers™ modes.

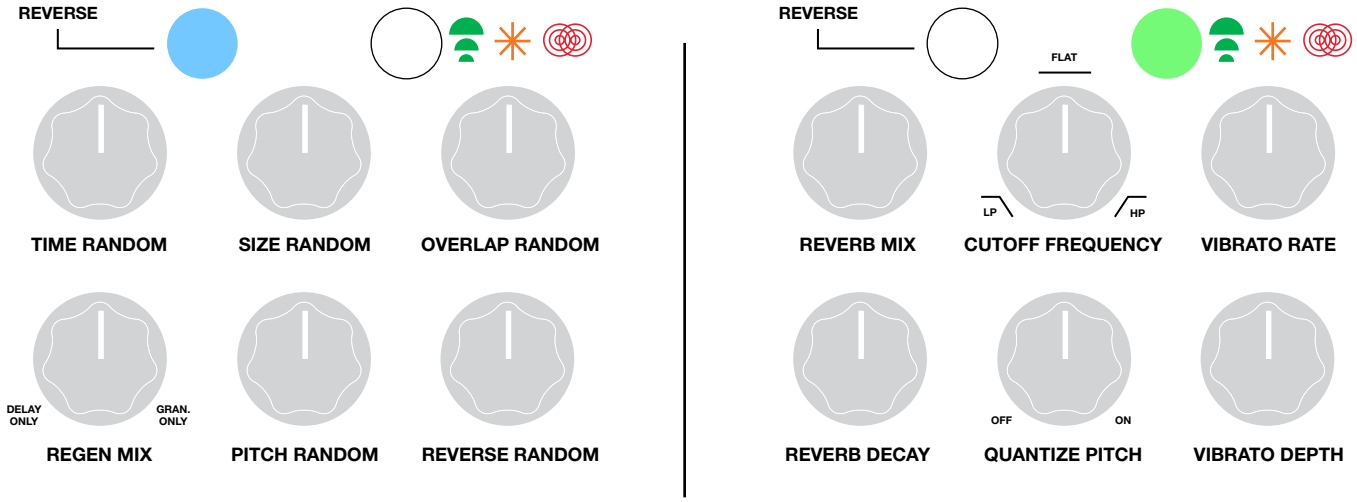
In Auto Freeze mode, audio is recorded into the buffer after played notes are detected. The buffer is then frozen while grains are still being read, resulting in an infinitely evolving pad that sustains as you play.

Layers™ mode is based on the MXR Layers™ Pedal, with four smaller buffers to sample grains from. Notes or chords get recorded to a buffer in succession, and when all four buffers are “full,” a new note or chord will replace the oldest recorded.

Additionally, the volume of each buffer can be shaped with an amplitude envelope, controlling how fast it fades in and out, much like a synth voice. This dynamic sampling and amplitude shaping of four independent grain samplers make for a granular take on the Layers™ Pedal.

Secondary Parameters

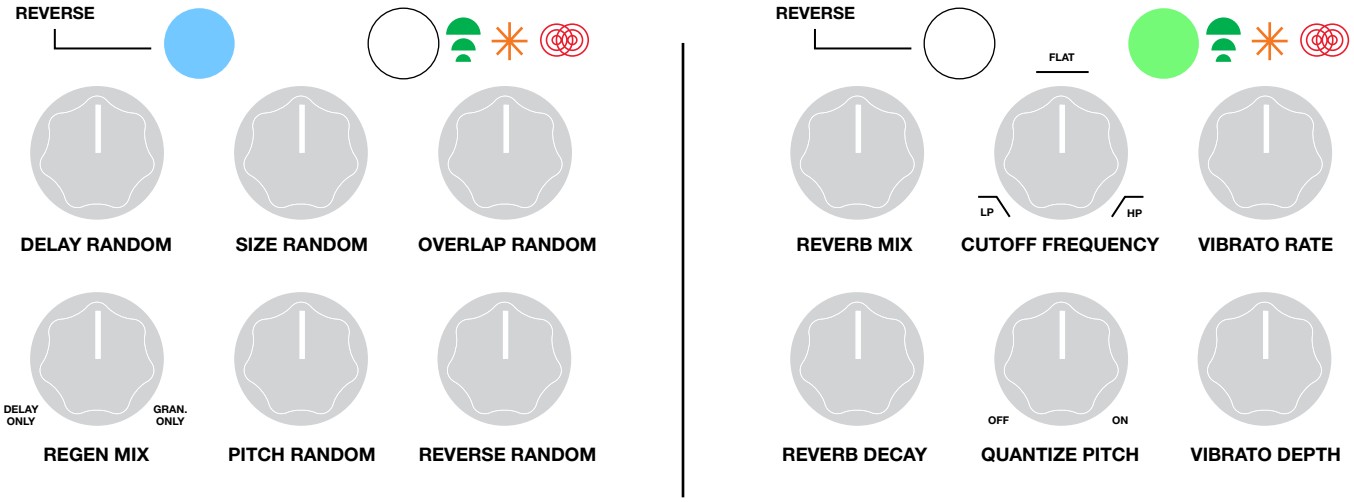
Press and hold either the REVERSE or MODE buttons while changing another control to access an alternate set of options.



CONTROL	REVERSE	MODE
TIME	**TIME RANDOM** Sets the randomness of delay time, or playback position. This control has no effect in Layers™ mode as playback position is tied to grain size.	**REVERB MIX** Sets reverb effect mix. Note that both wet and dry signals go through the reverb effect.
REGEN	**DELAY/GRANULAR REGEN MIX** Sets the mix of straight delay signal (fully counterclockwise) to granular output (fully clockwise) that's recycled for another pass. Feeding back the granular output can result in cascading pitch-shifting effects. This control has no effect in Layers™ mode.	**REVERB DECAY** Sets the reverb effect's decay.
SIZE	**SIZE RANDOM** Sets the randomness of the grain size.	**DUAL FILTER CUTOFF FREQUENCY** Sets the cutoff frequency of a 4-pole dual low/high-pass filter. Below noon, the control gives you a low-pass filter; above noon, a high-pass filter.
PITCH	**PITCH RANDOM** Sets how much and how often the pitch will randomly deviate from the PITCH knob setting at harmonically relevant intervals.	**QUANTIZE PITCH** When on (fully clockwise), the PITCH knob is quantized to 4th, 5th, and octave intervals. Off by default.

Secondary Parameters (cont.)

Press and hold either the REVERSE or MODE buttons while changing another control to access an alternate set of options.

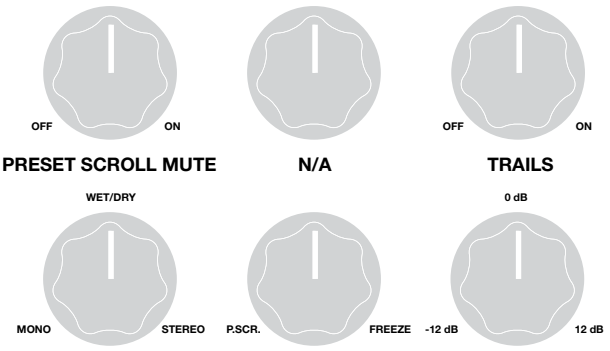


CONTROL	REVERSE	MODE
OVERLAP	**OVERLAP RANDOM** Sets the randomness of grain overlap.	**VIBRATO RATE** Sets the rate of the vibrato effect.
MIX	**REVERSE RANDOM** Sets the probability of a grain playing in reverse, from 10% to 100%. This only takes effect when the REVERSE button is enabled.	**VIBRATO DEPTH** Sets the depth of the vibrato effect.
MODE	**TAP TEMPO** Tap MODE while holding REVERSE to sync parameters to tapped time.	N/A

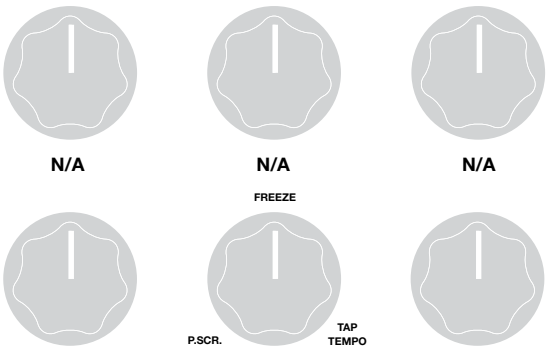
Secondary Parameters (cont.)

There are also a few parameters accessed by holding the FOOTSWITCH or TAP SWITCH.

HOLD FOOTSWITCH TO ACCESS



HOLD TAP SWITCH TO ACCESS

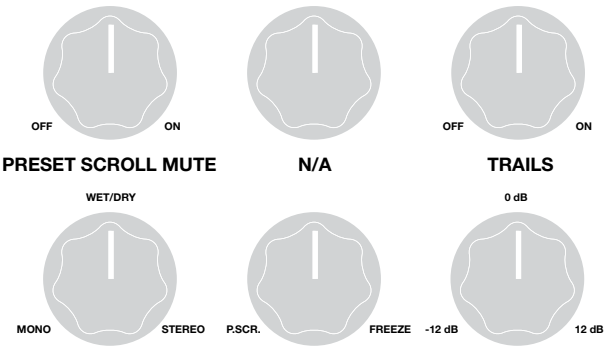


CONTROL	FOOTSWITCH	TAP SWITCH
TIME	**PRESET MUTE SCROLL** **OFF:** Default, fully counterclockwise. Audio neither muted nor cleared when changing presets, creating a “spillover” effect.	N/A
	ON: Fully clockwise. Audio is muted and cleared when changing presets.	
REGEN	**OUTPUT MODE** Selects how the pedal’s output signal is routed to your amp or interface.	N/A
	MONO: Default, fully counterclockwise. True bypass.	
	WET/DRY: 12 o’clock. In this mode, the wet signal is on the left channel (tip) and dry on the right channel (ring). Buffered bypass.	
	STEREO: Fully clockwise. In this mode, the pedal creates a stereo image by randomly panning the grains across the stereo field. The reverb effect will also create a stereo image. Buffered bypass.	

Secondary Parameters (cont.)

There are also a few parameters accessed by holding the FOOTSWITCH or TAP SWITCH.

HOLD FOOTSWITCH TO ACCESS



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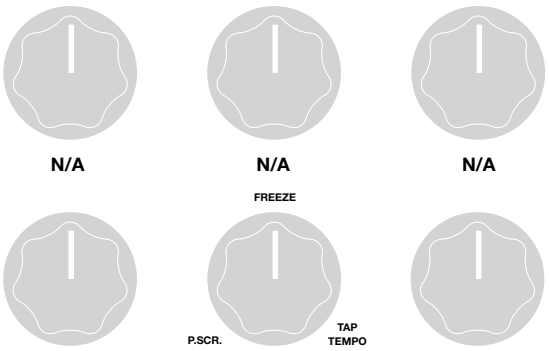

CONTROL	FOOTSWITCH	TAP SWITCH
PITCH	**FOOTSWITCH HOLD MODE** Selects between preset scroll and freeze modes.	**TAP SWITCH MODE** Selects between preset scroll, freeze, and tap tempo modes.
	PRESET SCROLL: Fully counterclockwise. Hold the footswitch to enter preset scroll mode. Press the footswitch to scroll. To exit, simply hold the footswitch again or wait for the mode to timeout.	**PRESET SCROLL:** Default, fully counterclockwise. Press the tap switch to forward scroll and hold the switch to reverse scroll.
	FREEZE: Default, fully clockwise. Hold the footswitch to freeze the audio buffer in Delay and Layers™ modes. In Auto Freeze mode, holding the footswitch will unfreeze the buffer.	**FREEZE:** Noon. Press the tap switch to latch/unlatch the audio buffer freeze. Hold the tap switch to perform a momentary freeze.
		TAP TEMPO: Fully clockwise. Press the tap switch at the desired tempo to sync parameters to tapped time.
OVERLAP	**TRAILS** **OFF:** Default, fully counterclockwise. The effect will mute and clear when the pedal is bypassed.	N/A
	ON: Fully clockwise. Audio will continue playing at current settings when the pedal is bypassed (however freeze, if active, will disengage). Note that the pedal operates in buffered bypass when Trails is enabled.	N/A
MIX	**OUTPUT GAIN** Sets output gain by -/+12 dB. Default noon position is 0 dB.	N/A

Presets

In addition to live mode, which represents current knob settings and automatically saves switch and secondary parameter states, the MXR Textures™ Pedal features eight different presets: four green and four red, indicated by the LED PRESETS display.

Scrolling Through Presets

The onboard PRESET button is the simplest way to select a preset. Press the button to cycle through all green presets and then all red presets—see the table below for an idea of how each sounds. If you adjust a setting while a preset is active, that preset's LED will flash.

You can also use the built-in footswitch or an external switch such as the MXR Split + Tap, connected via the CTR jack, to cycle through presets by foot.
To use the built-in footswitch:

1. Set the Footswitch Hold Mode to Preset Scroll (see Secondary Parameters).

2. Hold the switch until the main LED soft flashes.

Now, the footswitch will scroll to the next preset when tapped. The MODE LED will flash to display the current preset.

3. Hold the switch again to exit preset scrolling or wait for the scroll menu to timeout.

To use an external switch:

1. Connect it to the MXR Textures™ Pedal via the CTR jack.

2. Set Tap Switch Mode to Preset Scroll (default, see Secondary Parameters).

3. In this mode, a "press" will forward scroll, while a "hold" will reverse scroll.

GREEN PRESETS

CRYSTAL CAVE	Regenerative octave loops.
MELODIC KALEIDOSCOPE	Melodies are frozen and played back forward, reversed, and at different octaves.
SEA SYNTH	Warbley polyphonic synth.
OBLIGATORY SHIMMER	Granular shimmering reverb.

RED PRESETS

STUTTER PAD	Polyphonic pad with a bit of glitch. Play with a staccato attack for more percussiveness.
SLOW ATTACK SOUNDTRACK	Slowly evolving pad with random octave blips sprinkled in.
SUB OCTAVE RIPPLE	Quickly cascading sub-octave effect that adds depth and weight.
MELLOW CELLO	Sub-octave pad with vibrato.

Presets (cont.)

Saving a Preset

To save your current settings into a preset:

1. Copy the settings by holding down the preset button for 2 seconds. The preset LEDs will hard flash to confirm.

2. Next, navigate to the preset position you would like to save the settings to. Hold the preset button again for 2 seconds to save the copied settings to that position. The preset LEDs will stop flashing.

3. To exit the copy/save menu without saving, simply alter the current preset. The menu will also eventually time out.

Note: You cannot save a preset into live mode.

Resetting a Preset to Default Setting

To reset a preset to its default setting:

1. Navigate to the preset you would like to reset.

2. Hold the footswitch and preset button together for 5 seconds. The preset LED will quickly hard flash to confirm reset. In live mode, all preset LEDs will flash green after a reset.

Restoring Defaults

1. Hold both the REVERSE and MODE buttons simultaneously for 5 seconds while powering the pedal to restore all default settings.

2. A successful restore is indicated by the Bypass LED flashing quickly several times.

Note: this will clear all settings and presets to their default settings and cannot be undone.

Connectivity

Stereo Input

To operate in Stereo Input mode, remove the MXR Textures Pedal's bottom plate, locate the MONO/ STEREO input switch, and set it to the STEREO (left) position. Putting the pedal into Stereo Input mode will also enable Stereo Output.

Expression/Tap Input

To use the CTR jack with an expression pedal via a TRS cable or external switch via a standard TS patch cable, place the CTR side switch in the TAP/EXP position (towards the OUT jack).

Tap Tempo

Tap tempo can be done in two ways:

1. For onboard tap tempo control, hold the REVERSE button and tap the MODE button at the desired tempo.

2. For external tap tempo control, configure the Tap Switch Mode to Tap Tempo (see Secondary Parameters). Now, the external switch can be used to tap in a desired tempo.

When using tap tempo, the pedal syncs both the delay time/grain position (no effect in Layers mode) and the grain spacing to the tapped tempo. The new grain spacing will overrule the OVERLAP setting until the next time the OVERLAP knob is adjusted.

The synced parameters achieved via tap tempo can be saved to a preset and assigned to an expression pedal—see Saving a Preset and Expression Control.

Stereo and Wet/Dry Output

Stereo and wet/dry output can be done in two ways.

Via the OUT jack with a TRS cable or splitter:

Place the CTR side switch in the TAP/EXP position (towards the OUT jack). The left channel will be on the tip, and the right channel and on the ring.

Via the OUT jack and CTR jack with standard TS instrument cables:

Place the CTR side switch in the AUDIO position (towards the CTR jack) to use the OUT jack for the audio's left channel and the CTR jack as output jack for the audio's right channel.

In this configuration, stereo output uses two standard instrument cables at the OUT and CTR jacks instead of one TRS cable at the OUT jack.

To configure the pedal in Stereo or Wet/Dry output modes, see Output Mode under Secondary Parameters.

Expression Control

Live mode and each preset can store its own expression state. To set a preset's expression behavior:

1. Set all parameters at both the heel and toe positions to your desired settings.

2. Then, sweep the expression pedal to confirm desired behavior.

3. Once expression settings are verified, follow the steps under Saving a Preset.

4. Note that the heel down state is also the preset's state when no expression pedal is connected.

In live mode, expression states are saved automatically and retained while the expression pedal is connected. If the pedal is powered on without an expression pedal connected, the next time an expression pedal is connected, the heel position will be set to the current state of live mode.

Tips & Tricks

A Note on Pitch Shifting, Freezing, and Predictability

When pitch shifting or freezing, certain settings can lead to asynchronous (or out of sync) effects where a grain read jumps from the most recent material to the oldest material, kind of like time traveling with audio.

Sometimes, this can be desirable, but other times you want a more predictable delay or freeze effect. In those situations, it helps to start with the SIZE knob at its lowest setting, and then turn up the knob to taste.

If you're in Delay mode, the audio may start to smear as grains increase their viewing window. And in Auto Freeze mode, grains will begin to "look past" the most recently recorded audio and contain older audio as well.

This effect is less prevalent in Layers mode, as the grain parameters work in lockstep to give each layer based on what was most recently played. However, increasing the SIZE knob after layers have been recorded can lead to some "time traveling".

A Note on Randomization

With no randomization, very small grain sizes with high overlap can lead to an audible ringing effect that sounds like a tone overlaid onto your playing. This is because small grains played in quick succession are playing fast enough to have their own perceivable pitch. It's kind of like when you speed up a tremolo enough, you get a ring modulator.

To help with this, we can randomize size and/or overlap to break up the periodicity and thus reduce the ringing. The Textures™ Pedal comes with default settings for randomizing time, size, and overlap but you can also dial in these parameters to taste (see Secondary Parameters).

Specifications

Input Impedance	1MΩ
Output Impedance	100 Ω
Maximum Input Level	+5 dBV
Noise Floor	-97 dBV
Current Draw	300 mA
Power Supply	9 volts DC center negative

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