

DIALED IN

A GREAT WAY
TO BACK UP

Output Rev Plugin

By Norman Weinberg

My first thought about Rev was: "Why didn't anyone think of this before?" The elevator pitch behind Rev is "backward sounds," but this plugin goes way beyond just hitting the reverse button on your favorite sampler.

Rev's patches are divided into four different banks (what Output Sounds called "engines"): Instruments, Loops, Rises, and Timed Instruments. You load a single bank into your DAW and then select individual patches by clicking on a subcategory and the specific patch. And there are a lot of patches supplied with Rev. In all, Rev delivers over 1,000 presets in 14 GB of audio content.

Each of the four engines sports a different look and feel, but there's a good deal of common ground among them. The best shared element? When Rev's audio effects are in "trigger mode," you can turn them on and off by sending a MIDI note number that corresponds to the particular effect you want to control (C0 = lo-fi, C#0 = rage, and so on). The result is that you can "play" effects in much the same way as you can play notes. This is really hip in live performance when you're using an electronic kit or a button controller such as PUSH. Other common elements among engines are the stutters, filters, and envelope controls. These are either on the "Layer" pages or the main page, depending on the engine you use. Stutters are of two different types: volume and pitch. For each, you can control the amount, the gate, and the rate of stutter. You can also choose to make these stutters sync to tempo or control them freely.

Each patch in the Instruments engine consists of two different layers, and there are controls on the front panel for setting the mix volume, the pan position, and the tuning of each layer. There are also trigger controls that affect the sound in various manners: lo-fi, rage, stack, filter, delay, reverb, and equalize. When you click on any of these toggles, the programming parameters appear on the right side so you can make minor (or not so minor) adjustments to the



patch as a whole. For example, turning on the toggle for lo-fi brings up the parameters of bits, rate, noise, and color. Clicking on the delay toggle offers adjustments of time, feedback, pan, and wet/dry mix.

There's also a global setting for the sample start time. This moves the beginning of the sound further into the sample. The result is often a quicker attack than might normally be heard when simply playing a sound backward. In fact, adjusting the sample start time allows each patch to serve multiple functions. It can turn a lush, beautiful pad sound into a powerful lead. While it's nothing more than a simple adjustment, I found it to be very effective.

With the Timed Instruments engine, notes are played by durations rather than freely. When you play a note, it will make its backwards swell and "hit" on the note value you select. Options include quarter-, half-, and whole-notes. For example, selecting a quarter-note duration and playing on beat 1 will result in a swell from beat 1 into beat 2 with the note's attack hitting right on that second beat. As you might expect, this engine is always locked into sync with your DAW. You can create some very hip, throbbing

beats with this feature. I can't think of any other piece of software that will let you do this so easily.

The Loops engine is notable in that each note within a two-octave span plays a different loop (24 loops per patch). You can't really play melodies or lines with this engine, but you can combine different pitched and unpitched loop patterns together to create hybrid textures. Even though each "patch" consists of independent loops, they have enough common elements so that their sounds, rhythms, and frequency content seem to work together well. Some may wish there were more than the 15 factory patches in this loop engine. But remember that each patch has 24 unique loops, making 360 total loops that can be tweaked with the copious effects "played" in real time.

The Rises engine is very similar to the Loops engine, as each patch gives you 24 different sounds. Presets in this engine are classified either with or without tails (fades after the main hit), and in terms of their duration, such as quarter-note, two bars, and so on. And the front panel lets you play these rises at their normal speed, half speed, and double speed. All in all, you should easily be able to fit your favorite rise styles into any composition. 

PRICE \$199.00



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