

SOFTFOCUS SOFTFOCUS DELUXE



The next step in
shoegaze evolution
has arrived.

OVERVIEW

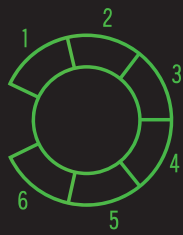
In the late '80s, Yamaha released the FX500, and with it, kick-started the advancement of the shoegaze genre. You see, shoegaze—a genre named for how often the musicians spent looking at their pedals—ran on the layering of distortion, delay, compression and reverb in a time when reliable stompbox versions of these effects were sparse. The FX500 contained 60 patches, one of which contained all of these things; patch 40, Soft Focus. Whether or not Yamaha intended it, this patch fueled the genre's popularity when Slowdive used it to record the pivotal Souvlaki. The rest was history.

We designed our original Soft Focus in 2022, aiming to recapture that sound in a more usable format and removing all the original's problems with headroom, clipping, mixing and setup integration.

We've greatly expanded on our original model with the Soft Focus Deluxe, serving up a full-fledged version of the original patch with five extra programs to dig deeper and fully explore the genre.

The crux of the original Soft Focus sound is a big room reverb with some mild pitch shifting and chorus-style modulation. The rack unit also included light compression and a delay line that existed before and after the reverb, but they weren't included on the original due to technology constraints. However, this has been remedied with the Deluxe model; the delay line has been added back in, delivering a fully-adjustable echo with pulsating reverb swells. You can control the delay time with an expression pedal or with our proprietary CB Tap device (sold separately). Also new to the Deluxe model is five additional programs, each highlighting a different aspect of the Soft Focus, from infinite reverb trails and extra chorus voices to shimmering artifacts and pitch shifting delays. We also fell in love with the idea of using the expression pedal to do volume swells, and so the last program assigns an input level control to the expression jack.

We also added a harmonically rich op-amp distortion to cling onto the spatial effects and add a velvety topnote to the Soft Focus patch. To get the most out of this onboard distortion, we've given you two operating modes, Series and Parallel, each with mode-sensitive mix controls. Series mode places the distortion circuit up front, such that it pushes the spatial engine of the Soft Focus. The Mix knob blends between the entire signal path and your dry signal. Parallel mode runs the distortion in a second channel parallel with the Soft Focus engine, and Mix controls the balance between these two. The distortion circuit is independently footswitchable and can be used by itself when the Soft Focus side is disengaged.



FX40 SOFT FOCUS DELUXE ->



PROGRAM MATRIX

PROGRAM	1 STANDARD SOFT FOCUS	2 LONG REVERB TAILS	3 DEEP MODULATION WARBLE	4 SHIMMER SOFT FOCUS	5 PITCH DELAY WITH STRONG SHIMMER	6 EXPRESSION PEDAL INPUT CONTROL
OVERVIEW	The standard Soft Focus patch from the original unit.	This program takes the standard reverb algorithm and increases the decay time to near-infinite, dramatically increasing the amount of ambience on tap.	Adds an additional voice to the modulation section and expands its capabilities, extending into pitch-bending territory at higher settings.	Compared to the standard Soft Focus, all parameters have been juiced in this program, from the reverb decay to the modulation. A shimmer has been added.	Focusing on the pitch-shifting elements of the Soft Focus patch, this mode adds an octave up to the delay repeats.	The Standard Soft Focus patch returns with expression tied to input volume for lush swells. Unlike other modes, where the expression jack controls delay time, Time and "DLY" Mix controls are swapped here.
MOD	Controls the modulation depth and symphonic mix.		Controls the intensity of the added modulation voice and symphonic mix.	Controls modulation depth and symphonic mix, but this mode has a baseline of elevated mod depth and higher symphonic settings, with much more shimmer available on tap.	Modulation and shimmer are both attached to this control at varying intensities. In Program 5, the Mod is more subtle than its Shimmer counterpart.	Controls the modulation depth and symphonic mix.
VERB	Controls the reverb trail length.	Controls reverb trail length up to as close to infinite as humanly possible.	Controls the reverb trail length, near the decay time of Program 1.			
DELAY	Governs both feedback and delay mix controls simultaneously.				The delay output is now processed through a pitch shifter, and so every delay repeat will be shifted an octave up.	Controls delay time.
TIME	Controls delay time.					In this mode, Time functions as an input level control.
MIX	Blends between wet and dry signals. If the toggle is set to "Parallel" with the distortion engaged, the "dry" side will feature high-gain distortion.					
DISTORTION	Adjusts the wet-dry mix of an op-amp driven high-gain style distortion with fixed gain and volume.					
PARALLEL OR SERIES	In Parallel mode, the high-gain distortion circuit replaces the dry signal path, and the Mix knob now blends between Soft Focus and distortion. In Series mode, the distortion circuit occurs before the Soft Focus, giving you massive distorted reverb and modulation with a full wet-dry blend.					

NOTES/QUIRKS

SERIES MODE:

The Mix control's dry signal origin point is taken after the input preamp resulting in a slight volume bump across the Mix control. The dry signal will never be quieter than the input signal but may experience a slight volume bump depending on the settings, even in bypass.

SWITCH POP:

Allowing bass players to be able to use the Soft Focus Deluxe required beefing up some capacitor values. After plugging in the Soft Focus Deluxe, these capacitors take a little time to charge up and so this introduces some slight switch pop. This will stop after cycling the pedal on and off a couple times.

INFINITE REVERB AND BUFFERED BYPASS:

Program 2 has nearly infinite reverb available, but because the Soft Focus Deluxe is buffered bypass, this infinite verb will remain on after switching the pedal off. Reverb time must be adjusted to kill the reverb trail in bypass.

PROGRAMS AND CONTROLS

Each program highlights and embellishes a different aspect of the original Soft Focus, **please refer to the Program matrix for a detailed description of each control parameter.**

Program 1: Original soft focus

Program 2: Infinite reverb

Program 3: Additional chorus voice and different mod speed range

Program 4: "Shimmer" Soft Focus increases the octave-up mix

Program 5: Octave-up delay driving a more harmonically-rich Soft Focus

Program 6: Expression pedal volume control modification, expression-controlled input volume

TECHNICAL SPECS

Buffered bypass with trails

Current draw: 120mA 9VDC center-negative

Input impedance: 1M Ω

Output impedance: 300 Ω

POWER SUPPLY

The Soft Focus Deluxe runs from 9 to 18 volts using a standard DC center-negative power supply for pedals. Make sure you're using a supply that provides at least 120mA.

Running the Soft Focus Deluxe at 9V will sound great, but if you want a bit more output, a dry signal boost and increased headroom, try any voltage you like up to 18V! The Soft Focus Deluxe does not run on batteries.



More questions?
Email help@catalinbread.com