

FOCUS TIME

Installation, Bank Setup, Quick Start, and Effect Guide

FOCUS TIME is a curve-driven sample instrument and effect sequencer. Load a sample or multisample, activate effect tabs, and draw time-based curves that transform the sound as the playhead moves through the pattern.

This manual describes the B99M2 contest-maintenance build.

1. Installation

WINDOWS INSTALLATION

1. Close your DAW.
2. Copy the FOCUS TIME.vst3 file into this folder:

C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3\

3. Reopen your DAW.
4. If FOCUS TIME does not appear, open your DAW's plug-in manager and rescan VST3 plug-ins.
5. If your DAW has blocked or blacklisted the plug-in, use its Reset Blocklist, Clear Cache, or Rescan option.

MAC INSTALLATION

1. Close your DAW.
2. Copy the FOCUS TIME.vst3 file into one of these folders.

For the current user only:

~/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3/

For all users:

/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3/

3. Because this version is not signed or notarized, macOS may block it.
4. Open Terminal.
5. If you installed the plug-in in your user folder, copy and paste this exact command into Terminal, then press Return:

```
xattr -cr "$HOME/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3/FOCUS TIME.vst3"
```

6. If you installed the plug-in in the system-wide folder, copy and paste this exact command instead:

```
sudo xattr -cr "/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3/FOCUS TIME.vst3"
```

7. If Terminal asks for your password after using sudo, type your normal Mac login password and press Return.

Nothing will appear while you type the password. This is normal.

8. Reopen your DAW and rescan plug-ins.
9. If macOS still blocks the plug-in, open:

Apple menu

System Settings

Privacy and Security

Scroll down and look for a message saying that FOCUS TIME was blocked.

Click Open Anyway if that option appears.

Then reopen your DAW.

EASIEST MAC METHOD IF THE COMMAND DOES NOT WORK

1. Open Terminal.
2. Type this, including the space at the end:

xattr -cr

3. Drag the actual FOCUS TIME.vst3 file from Finder into the Terminal window.
4. Press Return.

This automatically inserts the exact file path.

MAC TROUBLESHOOTING

If the plug-in still does not appear:

1. Make sure the file is actually inside one of these folders:

~/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3/

/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3/

2. Make sure the filename in the Terminal command exactly matches the actual file name.
3. Restart the DAW.
4. Rescan plug-ins.
5. Check the DAW's failed plug-in list, blacklist, or plug-in manager.
6. Restart the Mac if necessary.

BANK INSTALLATION

1. Open FOCUS TIME.
2. Open the preset browser.
3. Click Import Bank.
4. Select the .ftbank file.
5. FOCUS TIME will install the bank and open its preset folder.

MAC BANK LOCATION

The imported bank will normally be installed here:

~/Documents/FOCUS TIME/Banks/Bank Name/

Inside that folder will be:

Bank.xml

Presets

Samples

WINDOWS BANK LOCATION

The imported bank will normally be installed here:

C:\Users\Your User Name\Documents\FOCUS TIME\Banks\Bank Name\

Inside that folder will be:

Bank.xml

Presets

Samples

IMPORTANT BANK NOTE

Do not separate the Presets folder from the Samples folder.

The presets use the samples stored inside the same bank folder.

If you move or delete the Samples folder, the presets may no longer find their audio.

3. Installing a FOCUS TIME Bank

A portable FOCUS TIME bank uses the `.ftbank` extension. It contains the presets and the audio files required by those presets.

Importing a bank

1. Open FOCUS TIME.
2. Open the preset browser.
3. Click ****Import Bank****.
4. Select the `.ftbank` file.
5. FOCUS TIME extracts and installs the bank.
6. The browser opens the imported bank's preset folder.

Bank location on macOS

```
```text
~/Documents/FOCUS TIME/Banks/<Bank Name>/
```
```

Bank location on Windows

```
```text
C:\Users\<Your User Name>\Documents\FOCUS TIME\Banks\<Bank Name>\
```
```

Each installed bank contains:

```
```text
<Bank Name>/
├── Bank.xml
├── Presets/
│ ├── Preset 1.ftp
│ ├── Preset 2.ftp
│ └── ...
└── Samples/
 ├── Sample 1.flac
 ├── Sample 2.flac
 └── ...
```
```

The presets use portable paths that point to the bank's own `Samples` folder. You should not need to locate every sample manually.

Do not separate the `Presets` and `Samples` folders inside an installed bank.

4. Exporting a Portable Bank

Use ****Export Bank**** when you want to distribute a preset collection together with its required samples.

1. Open the preset browser.
2. Select the folder containing the `.ftp` presets you want to package.
3. Click ****Export Bank****.
4. Choose the name and destination for the `.ftbank` file.
5. Wait for scanning, audio conversion, copying, and packaging to finish.

During export, FOCUS TIME:

- scans the selected presets;
- reads their saved sample paths;
- collects the required audio;
- avoids copying the same sample repeatedly;

- converts compatible WAV/AIFF files to lossless FLAC;
- rewrites the exported preset copies to use portable bank-relative paths;
- packages the bank into one `.ftbank` file.

Your original presets and source audio files are not replaced.

5. Loading Audio

Browser or Load control

Use the normal sample-loading control to choose a supported audio file.

Drag and drop

Drag a supported audio file directly onto the plug-in window.

Supported formats may include:

```
```text
WAV
AIFF / AIF
FLAC
MP3
```
```

Dropping several supported files can invoke the multisample/keymap workflow.

6. Playback Modes

Standalone

The loaded source plays and loops without requiring MIDI.

Use Standalone for:

- drum loops;
- evolving textures;
- self-running rhythmic transformations;
- designing presets before using MIDI.

MIDI Gate

MIDI notes play the loaded source like a sampler. Note-off begins the normal release behavior.

Use MIDI Gate for:

- melodies;
- bass lines;
- chords;
- controlling note length from MIDI.

MIDI Trigger

A MIDI note triggers playback without depending on how long the key remains held.

Use MIDI Trigger for:

- one-shot playback;
- triggered phrases;
- samples that should continue after a short MIDI note.

7. Core Workflow

1. Load a sample.
2. Choose Standalone, MIDI Gate, or MIDI Trigger.
3. Select a routing mode.
4. Activate one effect tab.
5. Draw a simple curve.
6. Watch the playhead cross the curve.
7. Right-click the tab and use ****Solo**** to hear that effect by itself.
8. Add more effects gradually.

The horizontal direction of a curve represents time. The vertical direction changes the value or intensity assigned to that effect.

When learning the plug-in, use one tab at a time.

8. Launch Timing

Launch determines when an armed effect becomes active.

Now

Activates immediately.

Loop

Waits until the full pattern or sample cycle wraps.

Musical divisions

Options such as:

```text  
1/2  
1/4  
1/8  
1/16  
1/32  
```

activate at the next matching tempo-grid boundary. These divisions use musical timing rather than fractions of a long sample.

A blinking tab is armed and waiting for its launch boundary.

9. Routing Modes

Routing changes how active effect layers interact.

Parallel

Effects process alongside one another and are combined.

Use it for:

- clear layered transformations;
- hearing several effects independently;
- preserving definition.

Series

Effects feed through one another.

Use it for:

- stronger transformations;
- one effect reshaping another;
- more complex and less predictable results.

Bed + Series

Maintains a supporting layer while other effects interact in series.

Use it for:

- retaining body underneath aggressive effects;

- combining clarity with deeper processing.

Loop Sends

Uses a more loop-oriented send arrangement.

Use it for:

- feedback-like textures;
- evolving combinations;
- more experimental processing.

Routing is saved and recalled with presets.

10. Right-Click Controls and Solo

Right-click an effect tab to access additional controls.

Depending on the tab, the menu may include:

- Solo / Unsolo;
- Enable / Turn Off;
- Volume Line;
- Clear Curve;
- tab-specific secondary curves or routing options.

Use **Solo** while creating presets or demonstrating the effects. Solo makes it much easier to hear what one layer contributes before combining it with the others.

11. Ghost Lines

Ghost lines are visual references to curves drawn on other tabs.

They do not create audio.

Use ghost lines to:

- line up transitions;
- make several effects peak together;
- prevent every effect from becoming intense at the same time;
- coordinate complex presets without repeatedly switching tabs.

12. Effect Guide

Warp

Warp reads from a displaced position behind the normal playhead.

The curve controls how far backward through the loop the effect reaches.

Gentle changes can sound like:

- tape drag;
- turntable slipping;
- doubling;
- timeline bending.

Sudden steps can create:

- backward jumps;
- stutters;
- local repeats.

A rapidly changing displacement may make the playback appear to reverse because the effective read position moves backward faster than the normal playhead advances. Warp is therefore not simply an on/off Reverse switch. It is a moving time-position displacement effect.

Tip

Begin with a shallow curve. Large changes can become extreme very quickly.

Stretch

Stretch produces long, smeared, atmospheric transformations of the source.

Use it for:

- ambient beds;
- frozen-feeling textures;
- stretched percussion;
- slow transitions;
- spectral clouds.

Very high slowdown values may greatly reduce rhythmic definition. That is often the intended result.

Tip

Start with one long, gradual curve rather than many sharp movements.

Formant

Formant changes the apparent vocal or resonant character of the sound without behaving exactly like a normal pitch shifter.

Use it for:

- making a sound appear larger or smaller;
- throat-like motion;
- vowel-adjacent colour;
- animated spectral movement.

The Formant secondary line is separate from the Harmonic Spread curve.

Repeat

Repeat captures and repeats short sections.

A flat repeat block repeats the material without a progressive pitch movement.

Drawing a repeat block at an angle can make the repeated slice rise or fall in pitch.

Use it for:

- ratchets;
- fills;
- accelerating transitions;
- rising or falling repeats;
- rhythmic glitch effects.

Tip

Combine shorter repeat divisions with angled blocks for dramatic end-of-bar fills.

Tape

Tape produces slowdown, drag, and recovery effects.

Use it for:

- tape stops;
- turntable-style slowing;
- unstable speed movement;
- transition effects.

Delay

Delay is designed to reach beyond a conventional clean echo.

As the curve becomes more intense, the effect can move toward:

- shorter delay times;
- stronger wet input;
- comb filtering;
- metallic ringing;
- near self-oscillation.

The feedback design allows high-feedback textures while using saturation to help restrain runaway levels.

Tip

Use brief deep sections of the curve for delay throws. Keeping the entire curve extreme can quickly become dense.

Scrape

Scrape generates a synthetic resonant friction layer.

It may resemble:

- scraping metal;
- rubbing glass;
- bowed material;
- mechanical friction;
- granular grit.

Sparse peaks can add physical accents. A continuous curve can create a sustained abrasive surface.

Tip

If Scrape is difficult to hear, use its output control rather than raising the entire plug-in output.

Vowel

Vowel reshapes the sound with vowel-like resonances.

Use it for:

- vocal movement;
- talking-loop effects;
- animated filtering;
- rhythmic spectral motion.

Frequency Shift

Frequency Shift moves every frequency by a fixed number of hertz. It is different from musical pitch shifting.

Near the center, very small movements can create:

- beating;
- phasing;
- tremolo;
- gate-like pulsing.

Larger shifts create increasingly inharmonic and metallic results.

Metallic mode

Metallic mode intensifies the effect with a more aggressive combination of saturation, cross-channel grit, and feedback.

Use Metallic mode for:

- bells;
- clangs;
- industrial textures;
- harsh stereo movement;
- resonant metallic effects.

Tip

The smallest values near zero are often the most rhythmically useful.

Spring

Spring is designed more like a black-hole spring effect than a realistic room or guitar spring.

Its modulated and dispersive feedback network can produce:

- warped tails;
- apparent gravitational pulling;
- pitch-sag impressions;

- stretched and darkened resonances;
- enormous unstable spaces.

The perceived pitch movement comes from changes inside the modulated delay network rather than a simple pitch-shifter control.

Tip

Try a slow slope across the curve to hear the virtual space appear to grow, bend, or fall.

LFO

LFO creates periodic modulation.

Depending on its destination and settings, it can produce:

- vibrato;
- pitch bending;
- filter movement;
- tremolo;
- slow sweeps;
- rhythmic pulsing.

Tip

For vibrato, begin with a small depth. Larger depth values become obvious pitch bends rather than natural vibrato.

Harmonic

Harmonic generates an additional harmonic layer.

The main Harmonic curve controls how many harmonics are added over time:

- lower curve values add fewer harmonics;
- higher curve values extend farther into the harmonic stack.

Other controls shape the generated layer:

- ****Spread**** changes how closely the partials follow the natural harmonic series;
- ****Character**** changes their tonal emphasis;
- ****Decay**** controls how long they ring;
- ****Wet**** controls the audible level of the generated harmonic layer;
- ****Balance**** shifts emphasis between lower and higher harmonics;
- ****Random**** introduces controlled variation;

- the separate ****Spread curve**** animates harmonic spacing over time.

Tip

Solo Harmonic, begin with a conservative Wet level, and then raise the main curve gradually. Add the Spread curve only after the basic harmonic layer is clear.

13. Master Clear

Master Clear is intended to return the curve system to a genuinely blank state.

It clears:

- top-tab curves;
- Repeat blocks;
- volume lines;
- Grains/Gear curves;
- ghost-display data;
- Formant's secondary line;
- Harmonic Spread;
- active Solo state.

Use Master Clear before building a preset from scratch.

14. Preset Compatibility

The maintenance build includes corrections for:

- routing-mode recall;
- embedded preset-name recall;
- older preset tab migration;
- older Harmonic curve placement.

When loading an older preset, verify the sound before overwriting the original file. Saving a backup copy is always recommended.

15. Troubleshooting

The plug-in does not appear on macOS

1. Confirm that the VST3 bundle is in the correct VST3 folder.
2. Remove the quarantine attribute using the Terminal command above.
3. Restart the DAW.

4. Rescan plug-ins.
5. Check the DAW's blocklist or failed-plug-in list.

A tab is blinking but produces no sound

Check the Launch setting. The tab may be waiting for Loop or a tempo-grid boundary.

All tabs are off and there is no sound

This can be normal in the effects-only workflow. Activate an effect tab to hear its processed layer.

A bank preset cannot find its sample

Confirm that the complete bank remains inside:

```
```text
Documents/FOCUS TIME/Banks/<Bank Name>/
```
```

and that the bank still contains both:

```
```text
Presets/
Samples/
```
```

Reimport the original `.ftbank`` if files were moved or deleted.

Audio crackles

Try:

- confirming that the correct maintenance build is installed;
- removing duplicate older copies of the plug-in;
- restarting the DAW;
- testing one effect tab at a time;
- increasing the DAW's audio buffer;
- checking whether an extreme feedback setting is producing deliberate high-frequency artifacts.

The Keymap window is hidden

If the host places the Keymap window behind the plug-in, move or minimize the main editor to locate it. Window-front behavior may differ between hosts.

16. Suggested First Session

1. Load a one-bar drum loop.

2. Select Standalone.
3. Set Launch to Now.
4. Activate Warp and draw one shallow step.
5. Solo Warp.
6. Disable Warp and activate Repeat.
7. Draw one flat repeat block, then angle it.
8. Try Frequency Shift very close to zero.
9. Enable Metallic mode briefly.
10. Solo Spring and draw one slow slope.
11. Finish with Harmonic at a conservative Wet level.
12. Unsolo and combine two or three effects.

FOCUS TIME becomes easier to understand when each layer is learned separately.

17. Safety and Feedback Warning

High-feedback Delay, Metallic Frequency Shift, Spring, Harmonic, and layered Series routing can produce sudden resonances or level increases.

Begin at a moderate monitoring level.

Reduce the plug-in output or the DAW channel level before experimenting with extreme settings.