

# OctaFM Reference Manual v1.1

for Windows and Mac, Live 11+12 Suite, Push 3 (stand-alone) and, (not covered here) Move in Control Mode

Reference Manual by Borenstein

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This manual has been inspired by the Ableton Live Reference Manual, with the aim of making it easier for Ableton Live users to read.

# Contents

## Main information

1.1	Device Overview .....	4
1.2	System Requirements .....	5
1.3	Installation Ableton Live .....	5
1.4	Installation Push 3 Standalone .....	6

## Controls

2.1	Device controls and functions .....	7
2.2	Adding global effects .....	8

## Push 3 Standalone

3.1	Device overview .....	9
3.2	Navigating macros .....	10

# Main information

## 1.1 Device overview

OctaFM is an eight voice FM-based instrument- and drum rack for Live 11 and 12 Suite, Push 3 controller and standalone and Move in control mode. OctaFM uses no audio samples, instead it utilises Live's Operator synth for each of the eight voices, giving hands on control of real FM drum-synthesis. Additional to the eight drum voices, OctaFM offers eight global effects, that can be step-sequenced and that is velocity sensitive, meaning you can apply less or more of the effects on a per-step basis (dry/wet of the effect by increasing or decreasing the velocity of a step). Ableton's Operator synth is very light on the computers (and Push standalones) CPU, meaning that it runs smoothly with low latency. Additionally OctaFM offers four midi-randomisation effects, that can add alternative grooves and triggers to your sequence for endless exploration.

Included in your purchase is three separate versions of OctaFM, with sixteen, eight or two controllable macros (tweakable parameters). OctaFM 16 offers the broadest control of sound design, with one or more tweakable parameters per drum voice. OctaFM 8 offers eight controllable macros, one per drum voice, and each macro simultaneously control between 1-3 effects each. This version is great for Push 3 (controller and standalone) as well as Ableton Move in control mode. Using OctaFM 8 with Push 3 Standalone, turns Push into a fully fledged hardware FM groovebox, utilising all of Push's eight endless encoders. This manual also goes into detail on how to work with OctaFM inside of Push 3 Standalone. OctaFM 2 has two controllable macros, one for the kick and one for all of the remaining drum voices. This is great for quickly going from very mild to very wild sonic results. As a bonus, we also included a version of the rack without the FM voices, where you can add your own drum audio samples or stock Live synths as you wish, whilst still having access to the eight global effects and midi randomisation.

Each of the OctaFM versions have several macro variations (presets) for both the sounds and midi, that quickly bring great results and changes the mood of the device. The purchase includes a master project with several example sequences for each of the three main OctaFM versions (OctaFM 16, 8 and 2) as well as a short-hand guide for the device, built into Live.

## 1.2 System Requirements

- Live Version: 11 / 12 with Max for Live
- Operating System: Windows, Mac

## 1.3 Installation for Ableton Live

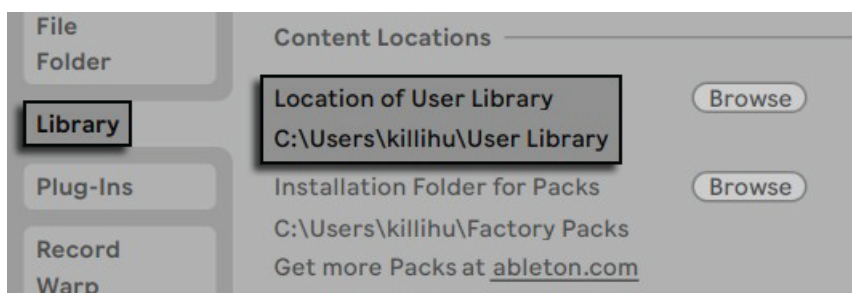
The purchase provides both a master Live project, complete with all the devices loaded as well as midi clips in session-view, as well as the individual devices, that you can add manually to your User Library (OctaFM 16, OctaFM 8, OctaFM 2 and OctaFM FX only).

Unzip the ZIP file and either:

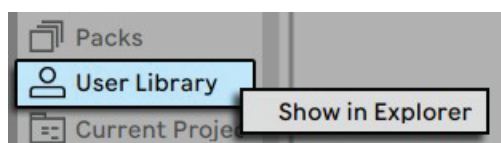
1. Drag the main OctaFM project folder "*OctaFM project folder*", that contains the Live file (.als) and some additional information, to where you usually save live projects. Note that OctaFM requires no samples, and is built using Ableton Live 11 Suite stock devices only.
2. Drag the four OctaFM devices into your Ableton Live User Library.  
*User Library > Presets > Instruments > Instruments Rack*

There are two ways to find where your User Library is located:

1. Go to Preferences – Library – Location of User Library

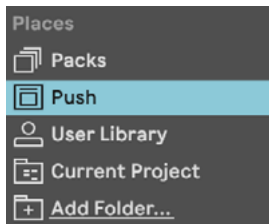


Or [right-click] on the User Library in the Browser – Show in Explorer

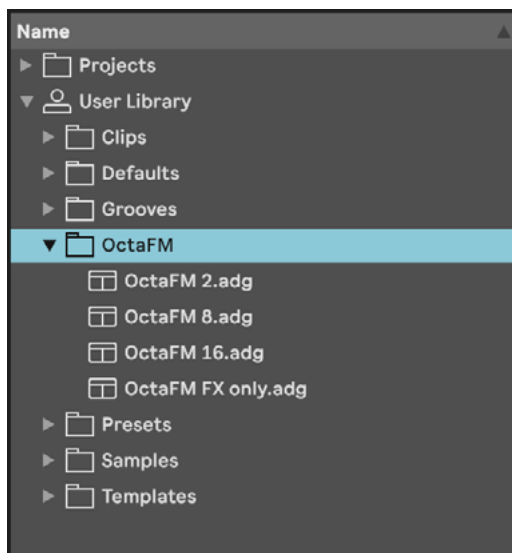


## 1.4 Installation for Push 3 Standalone

Unzip the ZIP file.



Inside Ableton Live, navigate to your Push folder, located under "Places" on the left-hand side.



Inside the Push folder, open the User Library folder and from the unzipped folder, drag the folder called "OctaFM". This will add all four OctaFM versions to your Push 3 Standalone.

Once the previous steps are completed, you can, if you wish, also add the master OctaFM project (*OctaFM project folder.als*) to Push 3 Standalone. Drag the .als file from the unzipped folder, to the "Projects" folder, inside of the Push folder (see the top section of the image above).

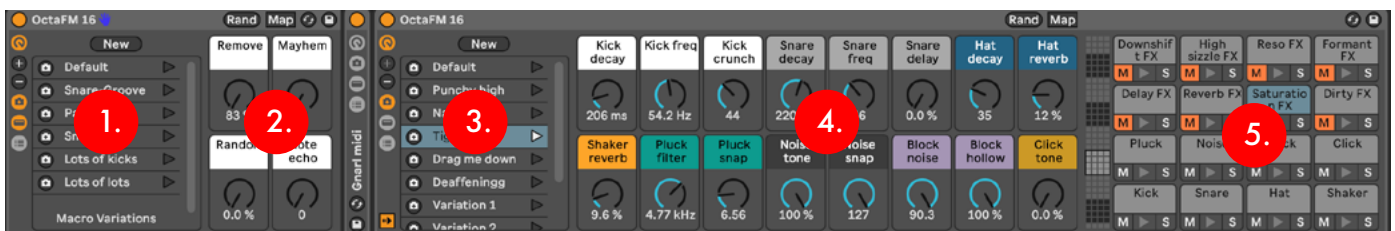
**!-Note:** It is important that you follow the steps of adding the individual devices to Push 3 Standalone, as only adding the master project (.als file), would not allow you to access the different OctaFM versions individually in future projects.

# OctFM controls

## 2.1 Device controls and functions

**!-Note:** For demonstration purposes, we will use OctaFM 16, with 16 sound macros, but the same applies to both OctaFM 8 and OctaFM 2. The main differentiator is the number of macros, and therefore the amount of individual control of the sound sources.

OctaFM overview:



### 1. Midi presets (macro variations)

Presets for midi-randomisation

### 2. Midi randomisation controls

**Remove:** Subtracts elements from the groove, leaving a scaled-back version with less triggers and no kick - great for adding small pauses from the main groove.

**Mayhem:** Uses a chord-midi effect to move through Hirajoshi scales, adding intense randomisation to the pattern.

**Random:** Adds classic randomisation to the sequence with each note having more or less chance of adding extra triggers at a random interval

**Note echo:** Creates "echos" of the sequenced notes at a random interval, affecting timing, pitch, velocity, probability and more.

### 3. Sound macro presets

The presets have descriptive names, where you can drastically change the feel of the sound engines - from booming bass to short and snappy hits.

### 4. Instrument macros

Macros for controlling the drum voices. Here you can shape each sound based on a set of fixed parameters such as decay and frequency. The parameters vary from sound to sound.

### 5. Drum and FX pads

Pads for each of the eight drum voices as well as each of the eight global effects. The Global effect pads are purposefully muted to only affect the dry/wet of the effects without outputting any sound. This section is for overview of the available pads.

## 2.2 Adding global effects

Global effects are sequenced inside of Live's piano roll, directly above your sequence of the drum voices.

In your sequence you can read the name of each global effect above the drum notes. Add notes as you would normally with a drum sequence.

The screenshot displays the piano roll interface. The top portion, highlighted with a red box and labeled 'Global FX', contains a sequence of effect notes including 'Reverb FX', 'High sizzle FX', 'Downshift FX', 'Dirty FX', 'Saturation FX', and 'Reverb FX'. The bottom portion, highlighted with a blue box and labeled 'Drum trigs', shows a sequence of drum notes such as 'Click', 'Block', 'Noise', 'Pluck', 'Shaker', 'Hat', 'Snare', and 'Kick'. The piano roll is set to a 16-step grid.

This close-up view shows the global effect notes in the piano roll. The notes are: High sizzle FX, Downshift FX, Dirty FX, Saturation FX (with a velocity value of 41), Reverb FX (highlighted in green), and Delay FX. The notes are placed on a piano roll grid.

Use velocity to apply less or more of the wanted effect (dry/wet value).

**0 velocity** = no effect applied (fully dry).

**127 velocity** = maximum effect applied (fully wet).

Click an FX note and drag vertically while pressing the Alt (Win) / Cmd (Mac) key to change.

**Tip 1:** Especially for the more tonal drum voices, playing with velocity can create great variations that alter the melodic/pitched characteristics of the sound.

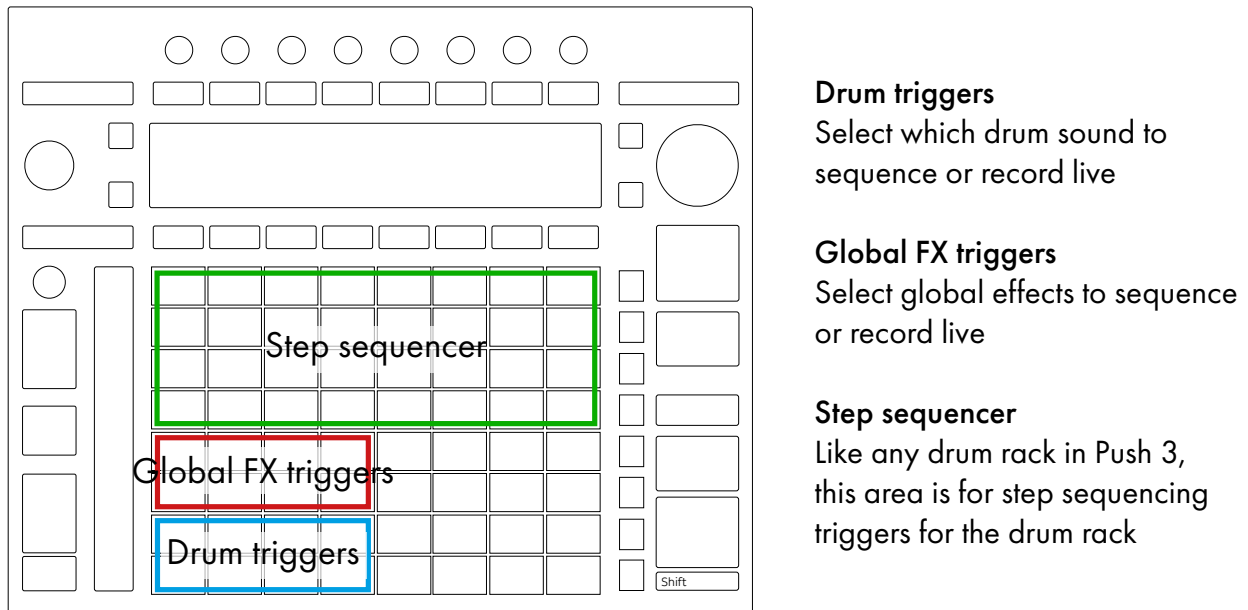
**Tip 2:** There are more midi sequences that you can drag and drop, located in the master project, on the left hand side, under Places > Current Project > MIDI > OctaFM\_MIDI\_Patterns

# OctaFM on Push 3 Standalone

## 3.1 Device Overview

Running OctaFM on Push 3 Standalone, turns the device into a fully fledged FM groovebox with endless possibilities. Note that you can use Push 3 Controller version as well as Push 1 and 2 to sequence and play with OctaFM, like you would with any other drum rack based instrument.

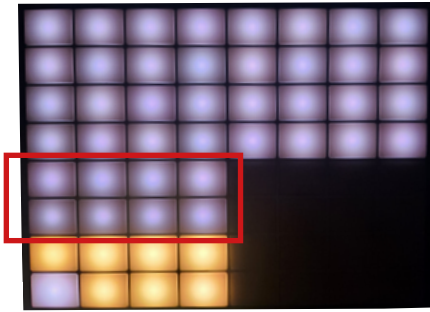
The layout and controls of OctaFM on Push 3, functions as any other drum rack would, with pads for finger drumming and selecting sounds, as well as a sequencing area.



Just like regular drum pads, the global FX pads can be played live, to directly apply global FX. Depending on how hard you push, less or more of the global FX is applied. This way you can easily create variation or add tension, even combining several effects at once.

**Tip 3:** Use Push 3's built in parameter lock function: 1. select a drum or FX pad > 2. hold down a trigger in the sequence > 3. whilst holding the trig down, adjust any parameter (sound macros, midi macros etc.) and the changed parameters will lock specifically on that step.

**Tip 4:** Parameter lock the macro for "Block", using OctaFM 8, or the "Block Hollow" macro on OctaFM 16, to create melodic, rhythmical changes throughout your pattern.



**Note:**

The Global FX pads have no distinct colour. This is because they are intentionally muted, to only output send/return data without triggering any sound.

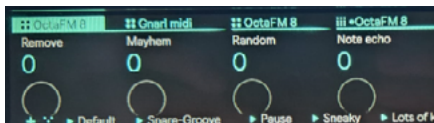
## 3.2 Navigating macros on Push 3

OctaFM is built up of several layers of instrument and effects, and it can therefore be a bit confusing to navigate to the right page. The following is a visual demonstration on how to navigate OctaFM 8 and OctaFM 16, inside of Push 3 Standalone.

### OctaFM 8

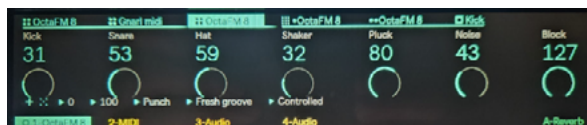
**Midi controls**

First tab: 4 macros



**Instrument controls**

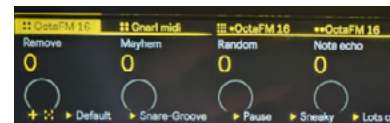
Third tab, 8 macros



### OctaFM 16

**Midi controls**

First tab: 4 macros



**Instrument controls**

Third AND fourth tab, 8 + 8 macros, divided across the two pages

