A guide to the features and functionality of the ToneLib GFX

Welcome to ToneLib GFX

Thank you for using ToneLib GFX! ToneLib GFX incorporates modules with the best emulations of real guitar rig elements achieved with the lightest DSP engine to obtain the best tones with minimal CPU load and shortest latency. Its integrated preset library and IR manager allow you to easily design and manage your built-in library of tones. All is managed within its simple, yet powerful, user interface.

Also note that ToneLib GFX is not just for guitar! The variety of distortions, amps, delays, reverbs, compressors and other effects included in ToneLib GFX by default can be utilized on any types of recordings, for traditional or innovative results.

ToneLib GFX app

Requirements and installation

Ready to get started? The latest version of ToneLib GFX installer for Mac and Windows can be downloaded anytime from tonelib.net/downloads. Please be sure to check the requirements below to make sure your computer and software meet the minimum requirements. Once you have installed ToneLib GFX, follow the steps for installation and authorization.

System requirements

To install and use ToneLib GFX efficiently, your computer and DAW system must meet the following requirements. Note that ToneLib GFX is also available in a form of VST2 or VST3 64-bit plug-in. Therefore, it requires that your host DAW application supports 64-bit plug-ins.

Mac Computers:
- Mac OS X 10.10 and 10.11 & macOS 10.12
- 64-bit AAX Native, Audio Units (AU), VST3 or VST2 host DAW software
- Supported sample rates: 44.1 kHz, 48 kHz, 88.2 kHz, 96 kHz

Windows Computers:
- Windows 7 SP1, Windows 8.1, & Windows 10 (64-bit only)
- 64-bit AAX Native, VST3 or VST2 host DAW software
- Supported sample rates: 44.1kHz, 48kHz, 88.2kHz, 96kHz

Linux Computers (Experimental):
- Ubuntu (version) (64-bit only)
- 64-bit AAX Native, VST3 or VST2 host DAW software
- Supported sample rates: 44.1kHz, 48kHz, 88.2kHz, 96kHz

Minimum Hardware Requirements
- Dual-Core 2.0GHz processor or faster
- 2 Gb of RAM
- 155 Mb of free disk space

Introduction

What is the Standalone App?

ToneLib GFX Standalone App is a self-contained application (Microsoft Windows/Apple MAC OS X/Ubuntu Linux) providing all the functionality of ToneLib GFX without the need for any other software. This is a simple way to get started with computer audio for your guitar, and is also a great tool for practicing and building guitar tones.


ToneLib GFX Standalone App

What is the VST/AU plugin?

ToneLib GFX runs as a VST (Virtual Studio Technology) and AU (Audio Unit) plug-in, allowing you to access ToneLib GFX functionality from within your music production software (sometimes called Digital Audio Workstation software, or DAW software for short).

A helpful analogy for audio plug-ins is to think of them as effects pedals. Effects pedals change the tone of your instrument before the signal reaches your amp. Plug-ins process your track signal similarly, but since they run in real-time in your DAW host software, they are non-destructive, allowing you to continue tweaking their settings all the way up until you do your final DAW project mix-down.
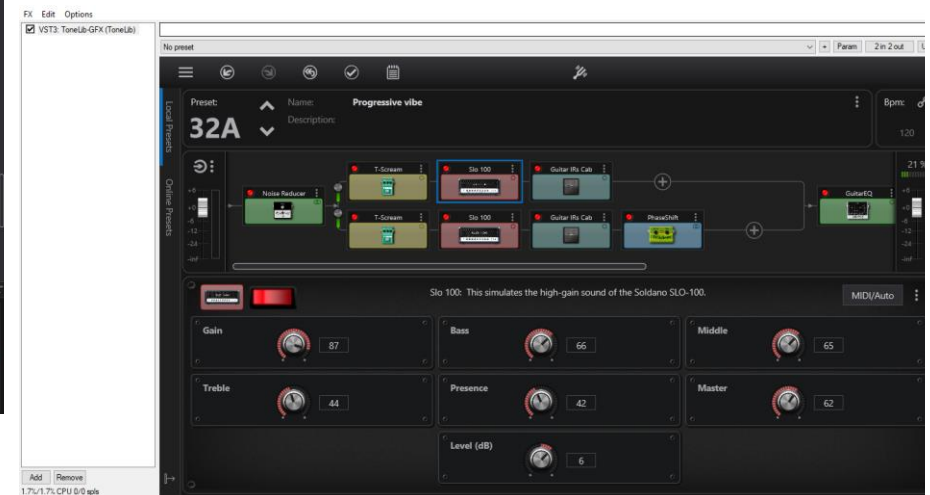

ToneLib VST Plug-in on a Reaper 5 audio track

> ✎ *NOTE:* For the most part, the many host DAW applications on the market work very similarly in respect to how you insert and utilize effects plug-ins. However, each host may have some unique features and settings you'll want to take advantage of, so be sure to read through your host DAW application's user documentation as well

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Getting ready

Preferences

This Manual assumes that you have installed ToneLib GFX and are ready to go. The next step after installing the ToneLib app is managing the settings, which is vital if you want to make your ToneLib GFX experience proper and comfortable. Therefore, at this stage you should go to "Preferences". Here you can find the following sections:
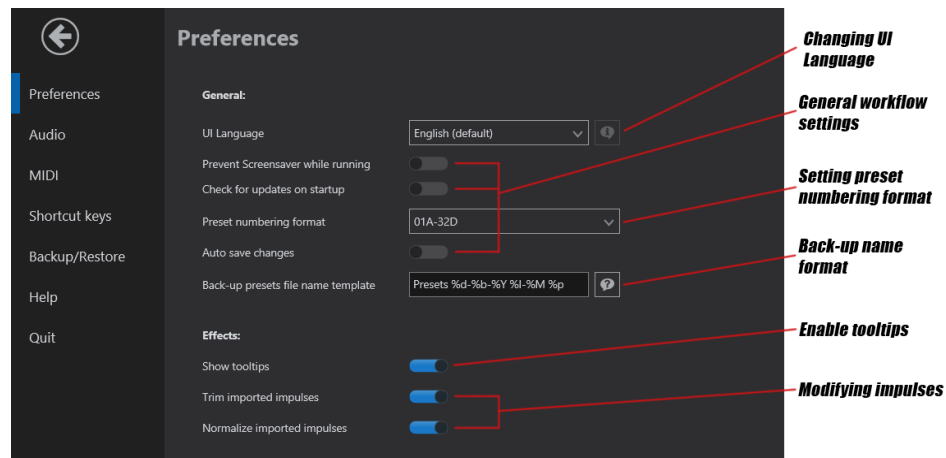
ToneLib GFX – Preferences

Preferences controls

UI Language – allows you to change language of the user interface.

Prevent Screensaver while running – prevent your computer from going into Screensaver mode while running ToneLib GFX.

Check for updates on startup – while enable, ToneLib GFX will automatically check for available updates every time you run the app.

Preset numbering format – allows you to design the form of presets numbering.

Auto save changes – while enable, all the changes in a preset will be saved automatically after switching to another preset.

Back-up presets file name template – allows you to design the name of presets back-ups. You can access all the required information about presets back-ups naming in the "Help" section.

Audio Settings

After finishing modifying the general preferences, you should now head to "Audio". In this section you can choose audio driver (audio technology) and set suitable channels for signal input and output.
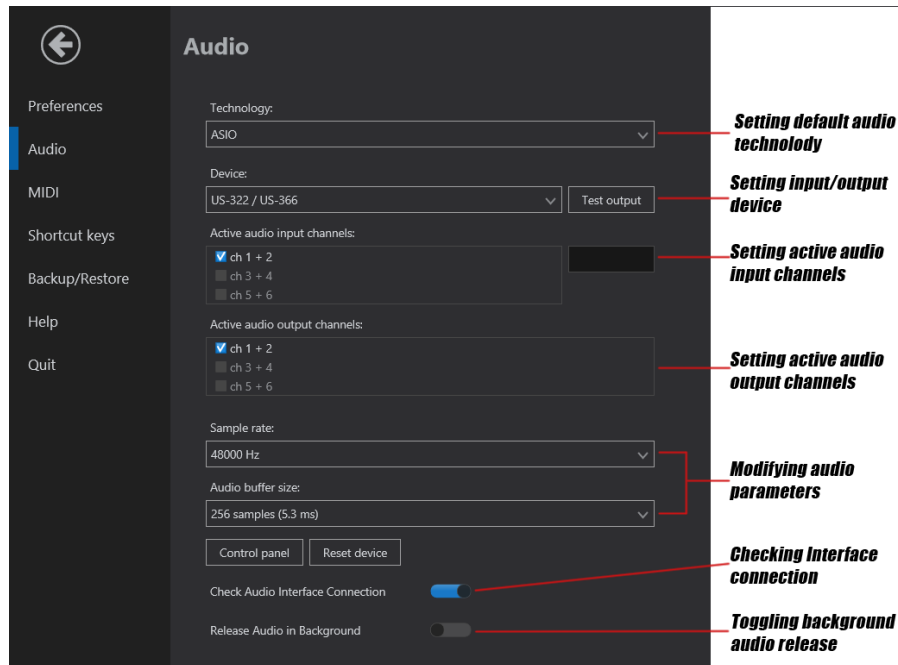
ToneLib GFX – Audio section

> 📌 **NOTE:** It is also important to note that you should pay extra attention while changing "Sample rate" and "Audio buffer size" parameters. Setting these parameters incorrectly may cause undesirable noises and sound delays.

What is Latency?

Since the input signal is being fed round-trip – into your audio interface, through the software and back out your audio interface's outputs – it is subject to some amount of "latency." Latency is the time between when you pluck a note on your guitar and hear the resulting audio output through your monitoring system. Latency is a function of your audio interface and the recording capabilities of your computer system. You can generally get the lowest latency by reducing your buffer size options for your audio interface driver.

> 📌 **NOTE:** It is quite difficult to hear less than 6 ms latency. Consider also that sound travels at roughly 330 meters per second, so even with a physical amp it takes nearly 10 ms for the sound to travel 3 meters from the speaker to your ear.

What is audio buffer size?

The audio buffer size determines how many audio samples your interface will store up before passing a packet of audio data to ToneLib GFX. The bigger the value, the more latency you will suffer through your computer; however, if the value is too small, you are likely to suffer clicks and pops since the computer cannot process one packet of audio data before the next arrives.

What settings should I use?

Usually a good starting point is 256 samples; you might want to lower this to 128 samples if your audio hardware supports it. Pay attention that too low setting can affect ToneLib or the whole computer performance bringing to clicking and crackling, better known as buffer *dropouts*.

MIDI Section

MIDI controllers can make you work with ToneLib GFX even more comfortable, allowing you to assign several app functions to your Foot controller, Drum pad or any MIDI controller you prefer.

To get your MIDI controller ready to work you should do the following:

- Choose an active MIDI controller you need in the devise browser;
- Assign MIDI controls to app functions contained in relevant sections;
- Close Preferences tab – now you're good to use your MIDI.
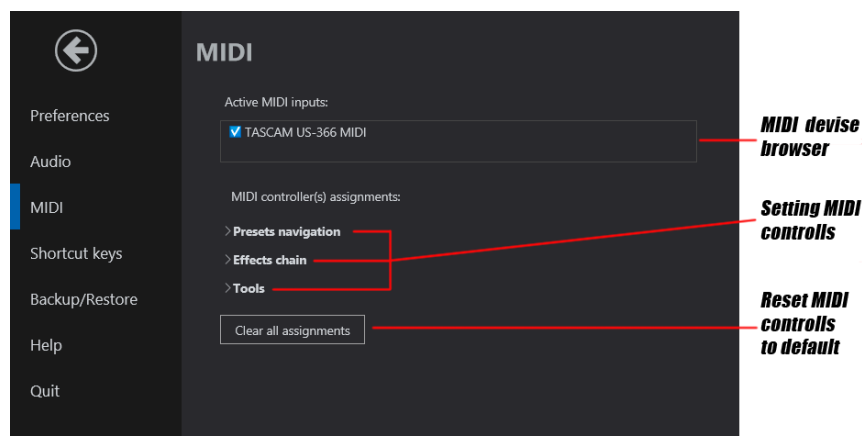
ToneLib GFX – MIDI section

📌 *NOTE:* You can simply reset your MIDI controls anytime by clicking "Clear all assignments". In this case, you can reassign all the controls from the outset.
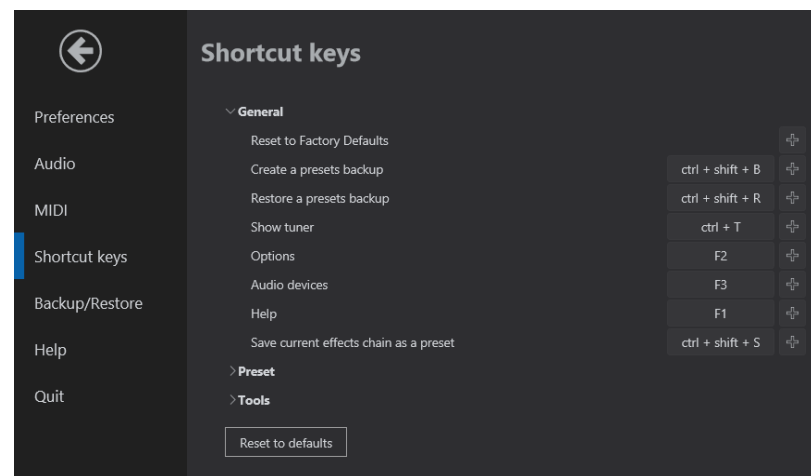
Shortcut keys

ToneLib GFX allows you to assign shortcut keys for most routine operations you deal with while working in the app. To assign these keys, you should go to the relevant section, then choose any keys or key combinations you find convenient for the particular operation. All the operations are divided in three main sections.

General section contains all the main functions you will be dealing with regularly while working in ToneLib GFX.

Shortcuts in the Preset section will come in handy while designing guitar tones and reorganizing preset library.

In the Tools section there are shortcuts which can be help you to control the app during your practice sessions involving backing track, metronome or recording.


ToneLib GFX – Shortcut keys section

Backup/Restore

There may be several situations in which you would like to have a backup of your ToneLib GFX presets. For example, you may want to reinstall your operation system or to move your entire preset library to another device. Or you may just want to be sure that your unique guitar tones are safe. In these cases, you should make a backup, which can easily be imported to the app later on.

You can manage any operations with your preset backups in the "Backup/Restore" section.
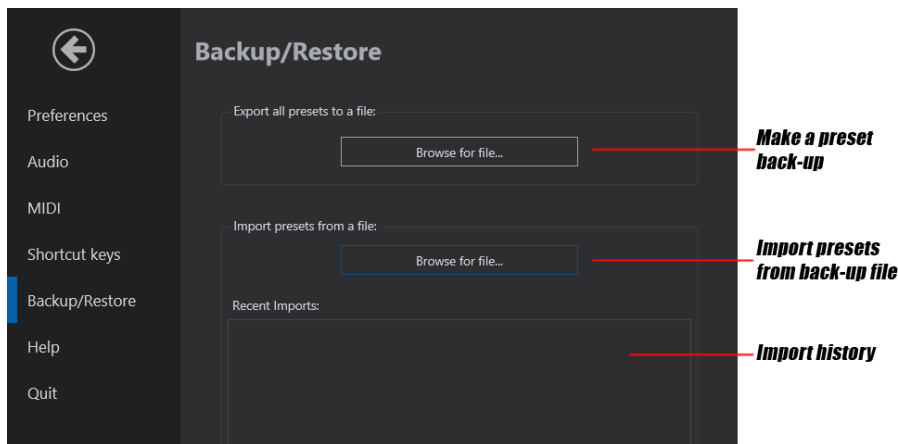
ToneLib GFX – Backup/Restore section

To export all the presets from your Preset Library, you should click "Browse for file…" button on the Export area. Then you will be asked to name your backup file and to choose location for it.

To import presets from a backup, you should click "Browse for file…" button on the Import area and choose a backup file you would like to restore.

> *NOTE:* All the backups that were imported recently will be displayed in the Import history, so you can monitor where your current preset list came from.

Help section

If you have any troubles while running ToneLib GFX or you have any suggestions on how to make ToneLib GFX even better for users, or you want to send your feedback, Help section may come in handy.
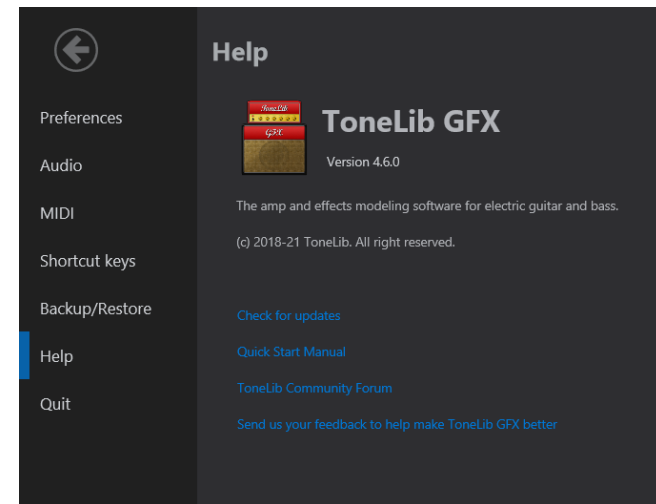
ToneLib GFX – Help section

Here you can find active link to the ToneLib forum, send your feedback, check for the latest versions of ToneLib GFX or look through the Quick-Start guide.

Workflow

ToneLib GFX has a very simple, easy-to-use interface which functions both as a Librarian for your Preset and Impulse Response files and as an Editor to create and design your guitar tones.
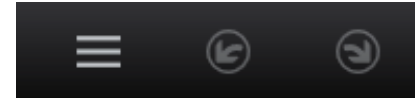
The user interface of ToneLib GFX consists of four main sections: Top Bar, Presets Library, Tone Editor, Components Library and Play-along Manager.

ToneLib GFX – Main Interface Window

Top Bar

Top bar contains all the instruments you may need to navigate in the app interface. On the left side of the bar you can find "Options page" and "Undo/Redo" controls:

ToneLib GFX – Top Bar: Options, Undo/Redo

To open built-in tuner, you should press Tuner icon, which can be found in the middle of Top Bar:

ToneLib GFX – Top Bar: Tuner

Also you can change output level or just mute it completely using the following controls:

ToneLib GFX – Top Bar: Output level

If you have any troubles or questions while running ToneLib GFX you should check Help section. To open Help page, you can press the following button situated on the right of Top Bar:

ToneLib GFX – Top Bar: Help

Presets Library

This is one of the most important sections of ToneLib GFX interface. Here you can find the whole list of your local tone presets or browse for online presets designed by other ToneLib users.

Either you craft your guitar tone yourself or you decided to borrow it from another user – you always will be able to find your favorite tones here once you've saved them in your local library.

You can look through the main controls of this section in the following:

ToneLib GFX – Presets Library

If you decided to search for creative tone decisions among other users, you can always access online library, where ToneLib GFX users can share their achievements in guitar tone design.

To be able to use online library, you have to complete registration on tonelib.net. Once you click on "Online Presets" you will see sign-in form.


ToneLib GFX – Sign-in Form

Here you will have to fill all the registration forms if you already have an account on the web-site or create new account if you haven't done it yet. Follow the instructions you will see on the web-site.

Tone Editor

Tone Editor is where you customize your guitar tones. Here you can find effect chain for selected preset, so you can vary it until your tone is perfect.

You can add new effects, amps or speakers simply by drag-and-dropping them on the chain and then alter their parameters until they sound as you want them to.

Here you can see all the elements of Tone Editor:

ToneLib GFX – Tone Editor
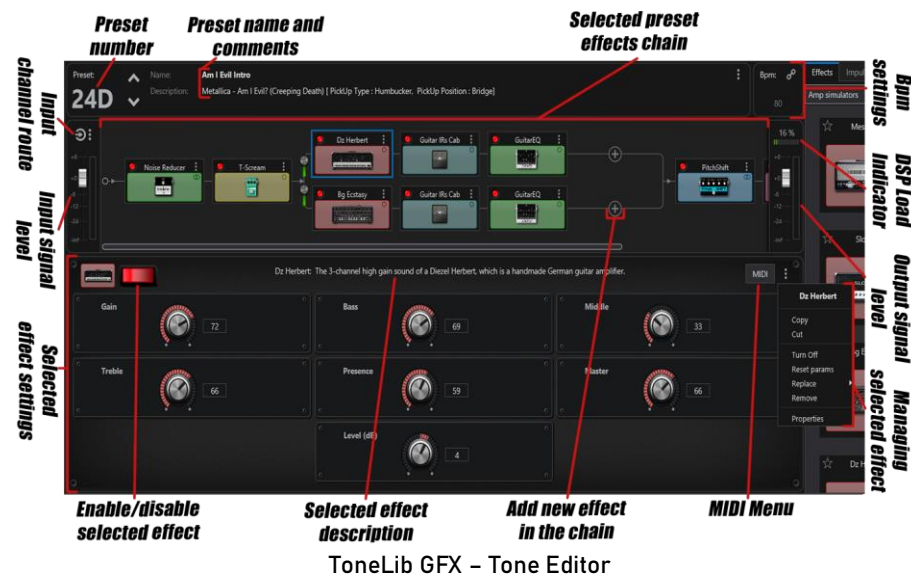
You can easily enable or disable an effect by double-clicking on its icon on the current effect chain panel. Also you can reset input/output level by double-clicking on the related scale.

> ✎ *NOTE:* When you edit the preset title or make any other changes to the preset's settings after initially loading it, be sure to use the Apply Changes or Save to Library options found on the top panel if you wish to retain your changes within a preset that can be utilized by other ToneLib GFX instances.
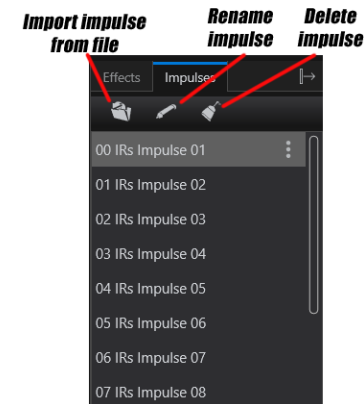
Components Library

In this section you can find all the amps, cabinets and effect pedals you may need while crafting your guitar tone. To add new effect to selected preset chain, just drag-and-drop it to Tone Editor section.
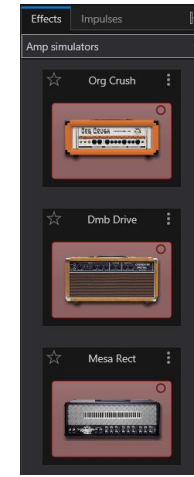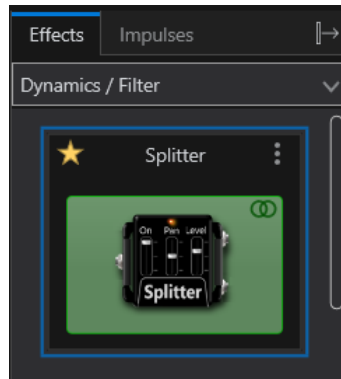

ToneLib GFX – Components Library

If you are not satisfied with default amps' sounds, you can use impulses instead. Go to Impulses tab, then browse for a wav file you want to use as an impulse. Once you add a new impulse to your library, you can add it to your effect chain, just like a common amp.

ToneLib GFX – Components Library: Impulses tab

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Using splitter in effect chains

Starting with 4.3 version, a new element has been added to ToneLib GFX effects palette. Splitter is specially designed to give you the opportunity to diversify the tone you craft, making it more interesting and saturated.

ToneLib GFX – Splitter

As an effect, Splitter can be found in "Dynamics/Filter" section of the components library.

Splitter allows you to divide a serial signal flow of the effect chain into two parallel signal flows, which provides you with an opportunity to customize each branch of the effect chain individually and thus reach thicker and exclusive tone.
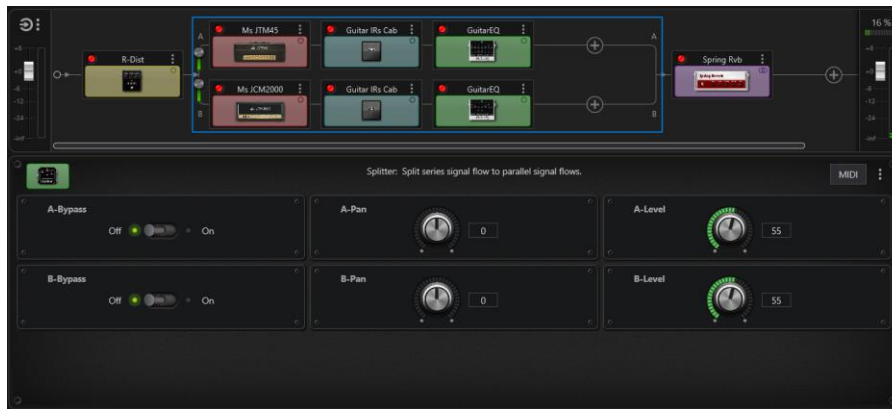
ToneLib GFX – Splitter effect settings

Splitter controls

Following controls can be found on Splitter effect settings panel:

A/B-Bypass toggles allow you to by-pass one of the branches, skipping all the effects situated on a branch in the process of generating the sound output flow.

A/B-Pan knobs allow you to distribute branch output signal across the stereo field.

A/B-Level knobs adjusts the output level of each branch.

> *NOTE:* There are three different ways to by-pass a branch. First you can turn off relevant toggle on the splitter effect settings panel. Also you can turn of the toggle located on the branch, which can be found on the effect chain display. Lastly, branch can be switched to bypass mode by double clicking on it.

It is worth mentioning that you are able to create even more complex effect chains by placing a new splitter on a branch of a splitter already included in the effect chain.

ToneLib GFX – Multi-splitter effect chain

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Play-along Manager

Play-along Manager consists of several tools that can be useful while you're practicing, recording or performing. It includes Rhythm, Backing track and Recording modules.

Rhythm

In this module you can arrange simple rhythm section to play along. It will make you practice routine more interesting and creative.

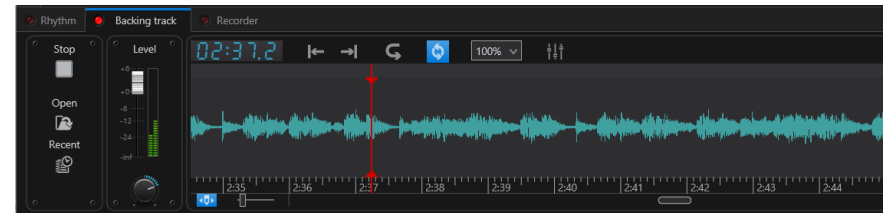ToneLib GFX – Play-along Manager: Rhythm module

Rhythm module supports two modes: it can perform like a metronome or provide you with simple beat available in several music genres.

You can set tempo and time signature yourself to make your practice as efficient as possible.

Also you can control output level to make sure you always can hear you instrument over the rhythm.

Backing Track

If you're working on some particular music peace, backing track feature may come in handy. It allows you to choose any audio track you want to play along to make your practice more efficient and fun.
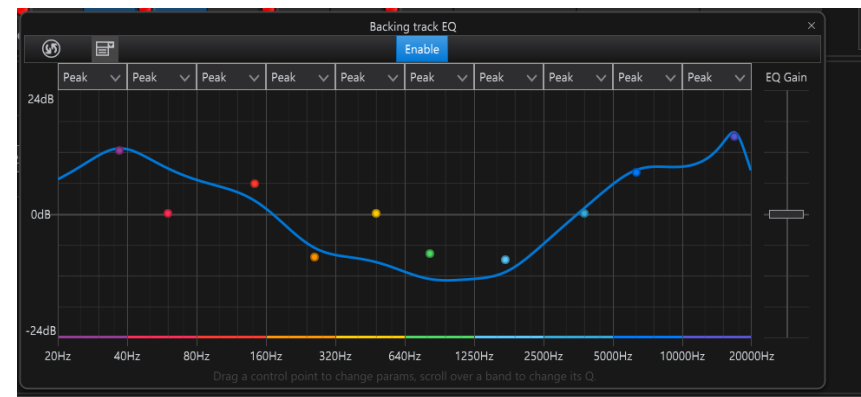

ToneLib GFX – Play-along Manager: Backing track module

> *NOTE:* If you're currently working on some difficult part of a song or an exercise, you can make a loop to concentrate on the particular music fragment to master it.

If you are not satisfied with original backing track, for example, you can't hear your guitar over it, you always can use built-in EQ to change the frequency.
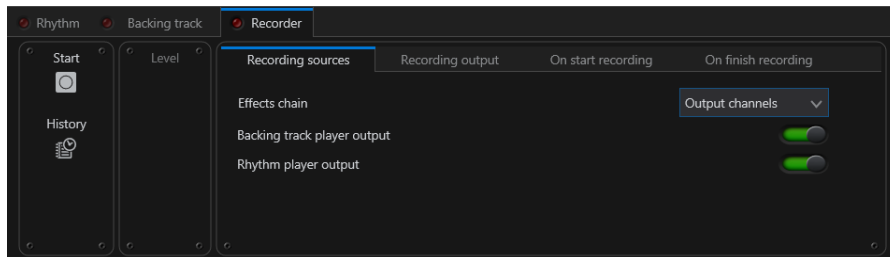

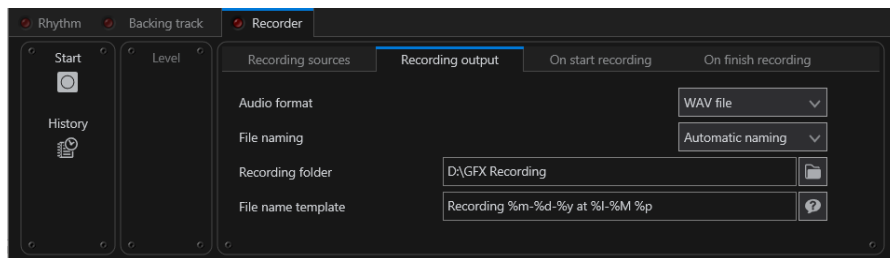ToneLib GFX – Play-along Manager: Backing track EQ

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Recording

ToneLib GFX allows you to record your playing without involving any additional apps. It may be useful if you want to make a backing track yourself or to share your progress with somebody. There are 4 tabs in the recording module.

On the first one you can manage all the outputs you want to hear on your further record. Here you may select the output channel that will be recorded and include backing track/rhythm section on your record.
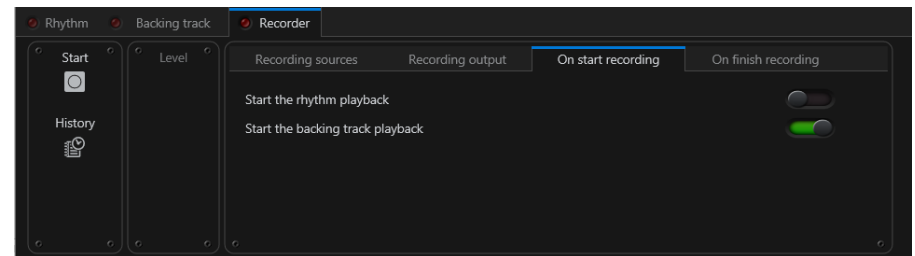

ToneLib GFX –Play-along Manager: Recording tab 1

On the second tab you can choose audio format in which you will be recording and a directory where your record will be saved. Also you can change default naming template to organize your records in the most convenient way.
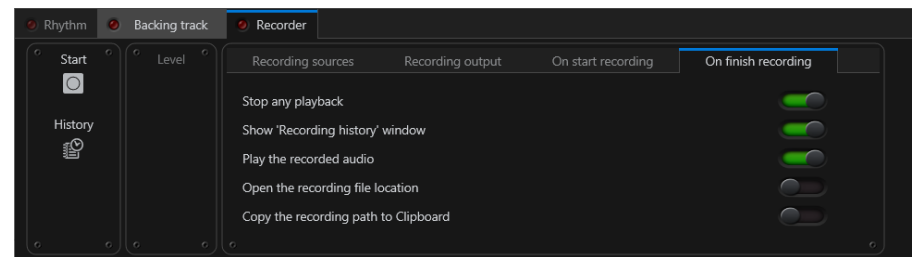

ToneLib GFX –Play-along Manager: Recording tab 2

On the third tab you can find parameters which determines how the app will act at the beginning of the recording.

ToneLib GFX –Play-along Manager: Recording tab 3

On the fourth tab there are several switches which determines how the app will act after the recording process is over.

ToneLib GFX –Play-along Manager: Recording tab 4

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Loop Station

Starting with 4.6.3, ToneLib GFX provides its users with a looper toolkit. Loop Station allows you to build up, layer by layer, a backing track, which can be found useful either for practice, to make it more entertaining, or for solo live performance, to bring it to the next level.
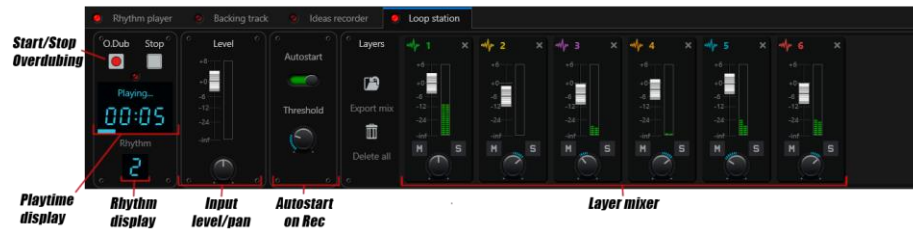
ToneLib GFX –Loop Station Tab

The interface of the Loop Station has two regions: Play/record section, and Layer management section.

Play/record Section

Rec, Play and Stop buttons control the Loop Station player.

ToneLib GFX –Play/record Section controls

> 📌 *NOTE:* Play button will turn into O.Dub (overdub), once at least one layer is presented in the layer mixer section.

Rec. Level and Rec. Pan adjusts the record volume and panorama (stereo position).

The Autostart function lets you automatically turn the recording on. This feature can be found useful when you are about to record the first layer.

Set the Autostart toggle on, then take care not to play any note on your guitar and click Rec to arm the looper and put it in cue. As soon as you'll start playing the guitar, the looper will start recording the first layer.

Once you have the first layer, you can still use the Autostart feature to automatically start the recording of a new layer.

Click Play and prepare to play the guitar while listening to the current layer(s) playing, enable the Autostart to put the looper in cue. As soon as you start playing the guitar, the looper will turn into overdubbing to record a new layer.

Layer Management section

On the Layer Management section, you can find the list of all the current layers in the session. Each layer has its own level and pan controls, allowing you to adjust them in the general mix.

For each layer, there are three buttons:
M: Mute layer;
S: Solo layer;
X: Delete layer.

ToneLib GFX –Play/record Section controls

With these three buttons you can listen to the layers singularly, partially and/or delete them.

At left of the Layers list there are two buttons to manage the content of all layers, together:
Export mix: lets you save all layers mixed in a single audio file.
Delete all: deletes all current layers.

Audition

Starting with version 4.6.4, a new tool, Audition, has been added to the TL GFX toolkit.

The main purpose of Audition is to simplify the process of picking or tuning the guitar sound. Audition allows to record a small piece of music or a riff and then loop it, giving the user the ability to fully focus on the sound design.

When Audition is enabled, any changes in the effects settings will immediately be applied to the sound of the recorded section, thereby letting the user monitor changes in the sound while adjusting the parameters in real time.

Audition button can be found in the top toolbar, next to the Tuner button.

ToneLib GFX –Audition Button

How it works

The first step in working with Audition suggests the user to record a musical fragment on the basis of which he would like to adjust the sound.

To do this, press the Record button. By default, the command to start recording is assigned to the Spacebar hotkey.

You can re-record a musical fragment at any time by pressing the Record button again.

ToneLib GFX –Starting recording

After a fragment has been recorded, the user can start playback by pressing the Play button.

ToneLib GFX –Starting playback

NOTE: When Audition is on, the recorded fragment will sound in the Looper in Ideas Recording. The reason for this is that Audition imitates the input signal.

To stop playing a music loop, press the Stop button.

ToneLib GFX –Stopping playback

NOTE: A musical fragment, recorded in Audition mode, will be saved in a new session after closing and reopening the program until the user decides to re-record it.