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# FM3 FIRMWARE UPDATE GUIDE

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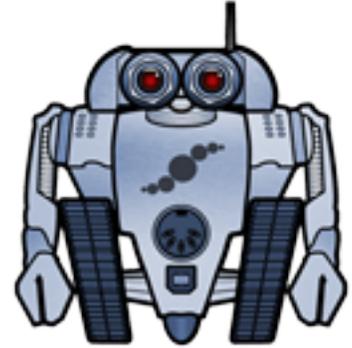
## FRACTAL-BOT

Fractal-Bot is required for **firmware updates**. It can also be used to **back up** your unit prior to updating. The program displays step-by-step instructions.

Fractal-Bot is built-in to **FM3-Edit**. Find it at <https://www.fractalaudio.com/fm3-edit>  
A standalone version is also available on our web site.

To use Fractal-Bot on a Windows PC, you will need to install a **driver**, available here: <https://www.fractalaudio.com/fm3-downloads>

Computers running MacOS do NOT require a driver to communicate with the FM3.



## FIRMWARE

Firmware is like the operating system of your FM3. It is tracked using **version numbers** like 1.00, 2.00, etc. Every FM3 is shipped from the factory with the latest firmware version installed. You can check your version any time by pressing the **SETUP** button (Push-knob **E**) on the **Home** page. The version is displayed at the top of the **Setup** menu.

## UPDATING

*NOTE: Before performing a firmware update, it is wise to back up your FM3 (see next page).*

Fractal-Bot makes updates easy. Before you begin, please QUIT any other audio or MIDI software applications such as a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation), Cab-Lab, MIDI utilities, etc. Then follow these steps:

1. **Launch Fractal-Bot.** It will automatically check for any updates to itself first.
2. When you select your device in **Step 1**, Fractal-Bot checks for new firmware and guides you through installation.
3. Please read any included **Release Notes**. These will let you know what's new and alert you to anything to be aware of before upgrading to the new version.
4. After file transmission is complete, the FM3 still needs time to process the update. Watch its front panel display, which will eventually instruct you to power off, wait 5 seconds, and then power on again.
5. You can verify that the upgrade worked by checking the installed version. Press the **SETUP** button (Push-knob **E**) on the **Home** page. The version is displayed at the top of the Setup menu.

*NOTE: Firmware updates will occasionally be accompanied by new Factory Presets. These will be offered separately and can also be installed using Fractal-Bot.*

**OPTIONAL MANUAL INSTALLATION:** Besides automatic updates, you can also **manually download** firmware from our web site. The firmware itself is a MIDI System Exclusive or "SysEx" file but will typically be in a zip archive also containing various documents. Extract the **.syx** file to a location you can easily find. **Do not double-click the .syx file**. Instead, go through the three steps of Fractal-Bot and browse to the extracted **.syx** file during step 2, "Choose a File to Send". Send the file and then see Step 4 above.

**FORCING REINSTALLATION:** In you already have the latest version installed but want to re-install it for any reason, hold Cmd (Mac) or Ctrl (Win) while selecting your device in Fractal-Bot. Similarly, if you Cmd/Ctrl click the blue "Ready to Install" prompt, you can save the downloaded file to a location of your choosing.

## **FIRMWARE Q&A**

**Q:** Can I skip versions to go from a very old firmware version to a much newer one?

**A:** Yes. It can be important to read the **Release Notes** for versions that you skipped (always included).

**Q:** Can I downgrade from a newer firmware to an older one?

**A:** Yes, but newer presets are not compatible with older firmware. You'll need to restore a backup of presets compatible with the older firmware version you're installing, or find the older factory preset files.

**Q:** Will updating my firmware erase my custom presets or user cabs?

**A:** No, updating firmware never erases your presets or cabs but we still recommend making a backup before you update. Also, updates may alter the sound of existing presets. Always read the Release Notes when updating.

**Q:** The firmware update failed mysteriously. What should I do?

**A:** If the unit still boots normally, just try the update again. If successive failures occur, please delete and re-download the update file before trying again. Trying a different USB port or cable can also solve issues.

**Q:** After updating, my unit will no longer boot normally.

**A:** Mishaps during firmware updates are rare but can occur. In the event that your FM3 will not boot normally after an update, the FM3 has a built-in recovery system known as the "Emergency Boot Loader" which you can use to get back up and running again:

1. Power down the unit and wait five seconds.
2. Power on holding both **PAGE LEFT** and **PAGE RIGHT** buttons down until the **Emergency Utility** appears.
3. Update as you normally would using **Fractal-Bot**.

## **BACKING UP**

Fractal-Bot automates the backup process. Select the **RECEIVE** tab and follow the built-in instructions. Here are some things to consider when using Fractal-Bot:

- ▶ The hardware doesn't emphasize this distinction, but presets are divided into **banks**, each containing 128 presets. To backup all of your presets, be sure to backup ALL of the preset banks.
- ▶ A backup of the **SYSTEM** includes all of the custom settings in the **Setup** menu: Foot Controller, Global, I/O, MIDI/Remote, and Tuner settings.
- ▶ User Cabs can also be backed up individually or as "**cab banks**".
- ▶ In Fractal-Bot, you must specify a location for the backup files. It is wise to prepare this in advance. We recommend a consistent naming system for backup folders: "**yymmdd-FM3-Xpx**" (two digit year, two digit month, two digit day, product name, firmware version that was installed when the backup was created). Example: **211004-FM3-4p01** (Backup created October 4, 2021 for an FM3 running firmware 4.01)

## **GETTING HELP**

Our **forum** is a source of great help including product Q&A, tutorials, and more. Fractal Audio staff join in the conversations, and response times can be very fast. Find it at <https://forum.fractalaudio.com>.

You can get support directly from Fractal Audio at: <https://support.fractalaudio.com> or internationally via our dealers listed at <https://www.fractalaudio.com/international-ordering>.

Our **wiki**, maintained by members of the Fractal Audio community, is also an excellent resource: <https://wiki.fractalaudio.com>