



## AX8 FIRMWARE UPDATE GUIDE

### What is Firmware? Why do I need to update?

Firmware is software that runs like an **operating system** inside your AX8. Firmware uses version numbers like 1.01, 1.02, 2.0, etc. Every AX8 sold by Fractal Audio Systems is shipped with the latest firmware version pre-installed. You can check your version any time by pressing SETUP, UTILITY, and paging to the FIRMWARE screen.

Our products are frequently upgraded via **free free updates** released through online. We add new amps, cabs, effects and features, fix issues, and more. We recommend keeping the firmware in your unit up to date as new versions are released.

Should you encounter any trouble with the update process, please refer to **Troubleshooting & FAQ** (p. 2).

### How do I update my AX8?

Updating the firmware of your AX8 is easy with Fractal-Bot, our free MIDI utility.

**I. Connect AX8 to your Computer** using a standard USB cable (not included). **A DRIVER is NOT required.**



**II. Install Fractal-Bot** (Required only the first time you use it, or when an updated version becomes available).

Download and install Fractal-Bot from our web site at <http://fractalaudio.com/fractal-bot.php>

NOTE: Since the launch of Fractal-Bot, however, we no longer provide support for configuring or using 3<sup>rd</sup> party applications.

**III. Download and Unzip The Firmware... And Read The Release Notes!**

Since you're reading this file typically packaged with firmware, you've probably done this already...

If not, the latest firmware can be found on our web site at <http://fractalaudio.com/support.php>

Firmware is packaged in a **zip archive** that may contain various documents in addition to the actual firmware, which will be a .syx file -- MIDI System Exclusive or "SysEx" file. Extract this .syx file to a location you can easily find when required. Do not double-click the .syx file. Fractal-Bot will prompt for its location when it is needed.

Please read the "Release Notes" included with the firmware download. They'll let you know what's new and alert you to anything you may need to be aware of before updating to the new version.

**IV. Launch Fractal-Bot And Perform The Update**

Fractal-Bot is easy to use. Simply launch the application and proceed through three self-explanatory steps.

For additional information, consult the **Fractal-Bot Manual**, included with the Fractal-Bot download.

Before performing a firmware update, it may be wise to back up the settings of your AX8.

Fractal-Bot's RECEIVE feature provides a convenient and self-guided way to do this.

## Troubleshooting & FAQ

Most firmware update problems are easy to solve once you've identified the source of the trouble.

### How do I know it worked?

You will see a confirmation message on your AX8 when the update is complete.

To check your firmware version at any time, press SETUP, UTILITY (#3) and change to the FIRMWARE page.

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

You can normally upgrade from any firmware version to any other version. When you skip versions it is recommended that you also read the Release Notes for all interim releases included with every firmware release.

### Will updating my AX8 Firmware also update my factory presets?

Updating firmware does not update Factory Presets but feature changes may affect how those presets sound. New Factory Presets, when offered, are released as a separate update on our web site [support page](#). Fractal-Bot can be used to transmit this update in the same way it is used to update firmware.

### Will updating my AX8 Firmware erase or change my customized presets?

Firmware updates do not erase customized presets or change preset data. However, firmware updates may alter the sound of existing presets. Always read the Release Notes included with a given version before updating. Saving presets after a firmware update can render them incompatible with previous versions. It is always wise to back up your AX8 using Fractal-Bot before a major update.

### The firmware update failed mysteriously. What should I do?

If the AX8 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 certain issues.

In the rare event that the AX8 will only boot to a blank screen (sometimes with one or more LEDs frozen) this indicates that the firmware update process has failed. See below for more on this.

## AX8 Failsafe Firmware

The AX8 has a built-in recovery mechanism to protect against firmware update issues.

In the rare event that an error occurs during firmware update and your AX8 XL will not boot, please perform the following steps:

1. Turn the power OFF.
2. Press and hold BOTH the SHIFT and STORE buttons (aka "SETUP").
3. Power the AX8.  
The unit will boot into failsafe update mode and a UTILITY menu will be shown.
4. Press PAGE to select the FIRMWARE page.
5. Start Fractal-Bot and update the firmware as you normally would.

## Contacting Support

If you need additional help, please contact our support team via <http://support.fractalaudio.com>

Customers outside the US or Canada should contact the [official dealer](#) for their region.

<http://forum.fractalaudio.com/forum.php> is very helpful, with members helping members around the clock.