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# FM3 FIRMWARE UPDATE GUIDE

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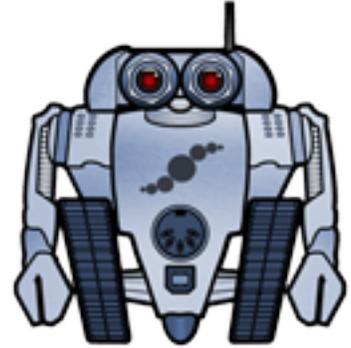
## FRACTAL-BOT

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. Follow the on screen instructions to install the update.
  - ▶ 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.
  - ▶ **NOTE: Fractal-Bot has the capability to install two files: Firmware and DynaCabs. If you've already installed the current DynaCab file during a previous update, you don't need to re-install it again every time you update the main firmware. Check the Release Notes if you're not sure.**
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 be 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?

**Q:** I'm seeing an error message about DynaCabs on the front panel of my unit.

**A:** Please visit our <https://support.fractalaudio.com> and search for "DynaCabs"

**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: "**yyymmdd-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. Please visit <https://www.fractalaudio.com/getting-help/> 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>