

Earthquake Distortion Device — Quick Start

MEMORY MULTIBAND SATURATOR · VST3 · AU · AAX · MACOS & WINDOWS

The idea

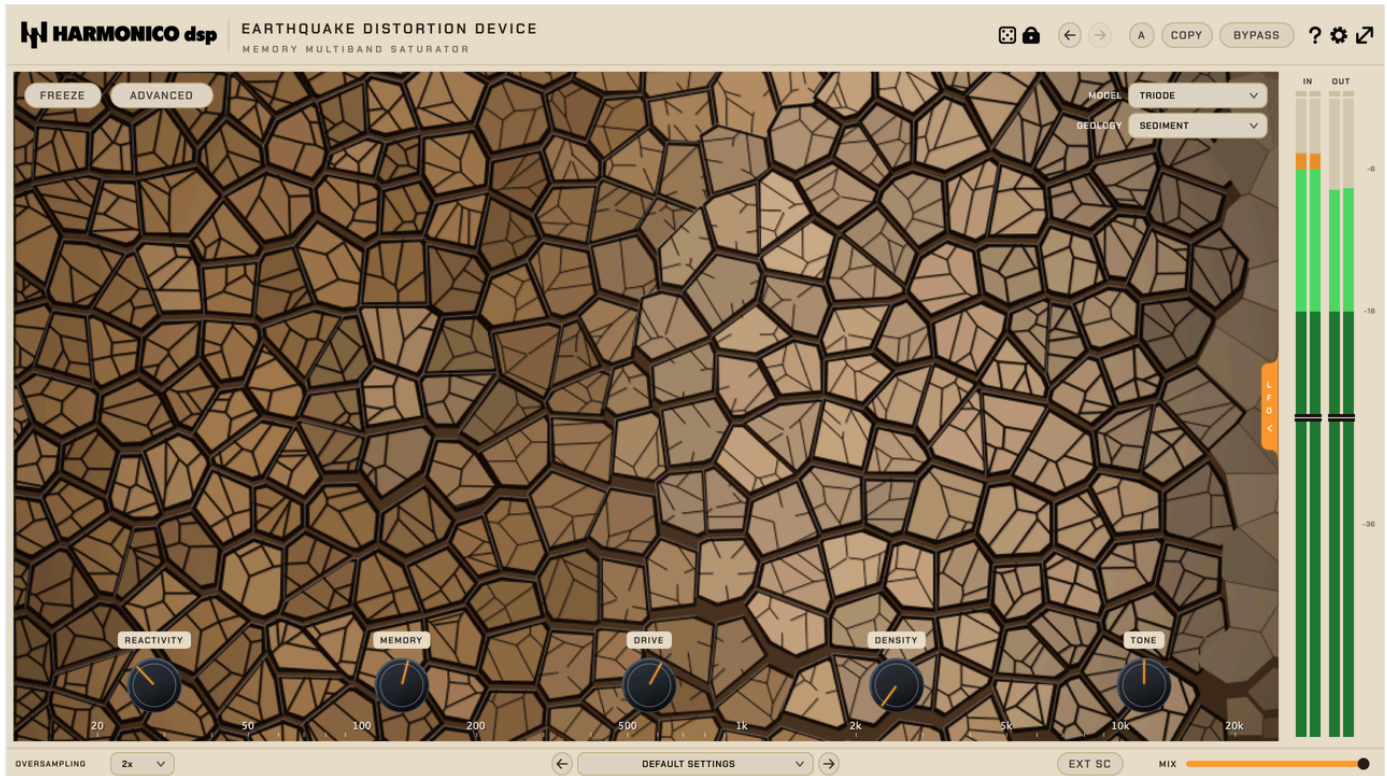
Earthquake Distortion Device splits your signal into frequency bands and drives each through a saturation model. What sets it apart is **memory**: a clay *terrain* accumulates the spectral energy of your signal over time and **fractures** where energy piles up. That damage gates how hard each band is driven — so an identical input saturates *differently* depending on what came before. The distortion has a memory (hysteresis), like real material fatiguing under stress.

How the chain works. The saturation stage adds *per-band distortion deltas* on top of your intact dry — an un-fractured terrain adds nothing. The result then runs **in series** through the model's colour stage and the **Density** output clipper, which compacts peaks whether the terrain is broken or not. So: fully transparent at rest only with **Density at 0**; out of the box (Reactivity 0.25, Density 0.5) you get gentle peak compaction even before anything fractures.

Install & activate

1. Run the installer (**macOS .pkg / Windows**). It installs VST3, AU (mac) and AAX. 2. Open the plug-in in your DAW — it's **fully featured for 14 days**. 3. To activate: click the **gear icon** → **Import License...** → select the **.license** file from your purchase email. Unlocks instantly, offline.

The interface



- **Top bar** — Model, Geology, Freeze, A/B, Copy, Bypass, gear (settings), IN/OUT meters.
- **Centre** — the living *terrain*. It fractures where spectral energy builds up.

This is a **visualisation**, not a control — read it to see what the memory is doing.

- **Bottom knobs** (left → right) — Reactivity, Memory, Drive, Density, Tone.

The **ADVANCED** pill (top-left, next to Freeze) reveals Propagation, Tilt and Bias.

- **Bottom bar** — Oversampling, preset menu, Ext SC, Mix.

Controls

Model	The saturation character — 12 models (see below).
Geology	The ground material — it doesn't replace your knobs, it <i>modulates the terrain laws</i> (fracture threshold, heal/fracture speed, how far shocks spread). See the four grounds below.
Reactivity	How easily the terrain fractures — turns energy sensitivity up and the fracture threshold down (things break sooner). Default is low (0.25): raise it to wake the plug-in up. Not a speed control.
Memory	How long damage persists (the hysteresis) — this is your time-evolution / character knob.
Propagation (ADVANCED)	How far a fracture spreads to neighbouring bands. Low = localised; high = the whole spectrum reacts together.
Tilt (ADVANCED)	Weights <i>where</i> the action lands along the spectrum (bass-weighted ↔ treble-weighted); centre is neutral.
Drive	Drive into the saturation — the main "how much".
Density	Serial output clipper on the whole signal (not added harmonics): unity at small signal, only the peaks get shaved — lowers the crest, densifies and glues. Works even with an idle terrain; 0 = fully transparent.
Tone	Brightens/darkens only the added harmonics (never the dry) — lighten the distortion without thinning the fundamental.
Bias (ADVANCED)	Shapes the curve's asymmetry — adds even-harmonic content (analog-style thickness).
Freeze	Locks the current terrain so it stops evolving — for a fixed texture.
Ext SC	Fracture the terrain from an external sidechain instead of the input.
Oversampling	1× / 2× / 4× / 8× — higher internal rate for cleaner highs on aggressive settings (more CPU).

Mix

Dry/wet (parallel saturation). Auto-gain is on by default (gear menu) — that's why level stays steady as you push Drive.

The four grounds (Geology)

- **Sediment** — neutral default, your baseline identity.
- **Basalt** — hard: breaks rarely but intensely, stays local, long memory (great for "only the loud hits break up").
- **Ice** — cracks on a whisper and chains across bands (brittle, cascading).
- **Sand** — wide, shallow, almost no memory (soft, diffuse colour).

The 12 models

- **Triode · Tape · Transistor · Pentode · Transformer** — warm/analog family, subtle → thick.
 - **Fuzz** — hard clip: extreme, torn, almost square-wave, aggressive and raw.
 - **Wavefold** — folding, synth-like harmonic richness.
 - **Waveshape** — Chebyshev polynomial shaping (adds specific harmonics), not folding.
 - **Rectifier** — full-wave (octave-up flavour).
 - **Sinkhole · Fractal · Lorenz** — experimental / chaotic shapers for sound design.
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LFOs & modulation

Two assignable **LFOs** live in the drawer on the right edge (click the **LFO** tab).

- **ASSIGN** — click, then click any knob to route the LFO to it (several targets

per LFO are fine). **CLEAR** removes the routing; the modulation rings on the knobs show depth at a glance.

- **RATE / DEPTH / PHASE** — speed (free Hz or synced divisions), amount, offset.
- **SYNC** — locks the LFO to the **host transport**: cycles land *on the beat*

during playback (PHASE shifts the downbeat), so what you hear is what bounces.

- LFO routings are **saved with presets and the A/B slots**, and cleared by

DEFAULT SETTINGS.

Quick recipes

- **Bus glue & warmth** — Model *Transformer* + **Sand** geology, Drive low (~0.3), Mix ~45 %. (Or *Tape*, Drive ~0.45, Mix ~65 %.)
 - **Drums that break only on accents** — Model *Transistor* or *Triode* + **Basalt** geology (Basalt's high threshold is what makes only the loud hits fracture — not low Propagation).
 - **Evolving texture (sound design)** — Model *Lorenz*, Reactivity ~0.6, Memory high, Drive ~0.6, then **Freeze** to lock a moment. (Reactivity must be up or there's nothing to freeze.)
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Tips

- **Reactivity wakes it up** (default 0.25), then **Memory** gives it character. Reach for those two first.
 - If it feels harsh, raise **Oversampling** to 4x.
 - Use **Basalt** (or lower Reactivity) to break only on loud hits; **Ice** to make everything crackle.
 - Level jumping as you push Drive? **Auto-gain** is on by default — you can disable it in the gear menu.
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Specs & support

VST3 · AU · AAX — macOS & Windows. 14-day full trial. Questions? See the **contact page** on harmonicodsp.com.

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