Blow!

User's Manual

Please read carefully this manual as it provides how to best use this pedal and gives very important informations.

This pedal must be powered with a 9v negative centre power supply.

Warnings

If your Blow ! Version has the optional phantom power module, please do plug your XLRs and Jacks BEFORE powering on the pedal.

Only turn on the phantom power when your channel strip in the mixing table is muted.

To avoid feedbacks, set the gain to zero before removing the PAD.

Don't plug in any electric guitar or piezo pickups in the input combo XLR-Jack. Well you can do it, but the result will be poor, the pedal is not made for these types of mics.

And most importantly : the PAD is set by default. If you push down the PAD button, it'll be removed!!!

What's the Blow! for?

The Blow! is a preamp for static or condenser mics with a jack effect loop for guitar effects pedals. If you're a singer, saxophone player, trombone or trumpet player, etc. the Blow! will allow you to experiment with guitar pedals without loss in your sound quality.

Guitar pickups being more powerful than dynamic or condenser mics, the preamp part allows to attack the guitar pedals with the same level as a guitar's pickup. The

XLR in and out and the optional phantom power makes this pedal very similar to a direct box but added a preamp and an effect loop.

Technicals specifications

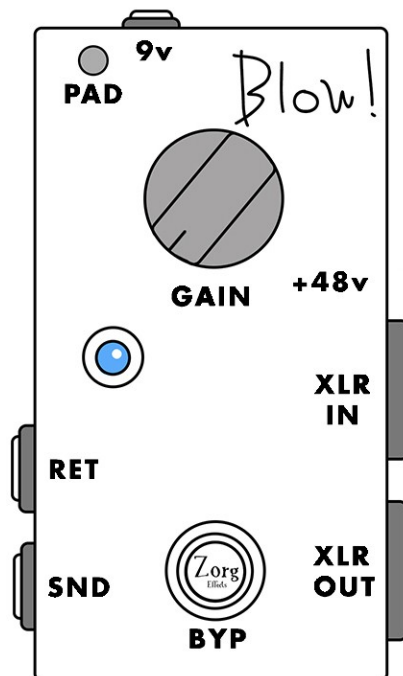Power consumption : 30mA max without phantom. With phantom: 52mA + 10 x mic consumption.

Preamp gain: +6dB to +50dB

Bandwidth: 20Hz – 20kHz.

Pad: -20dB

Output line level (pad off) : +4dBU
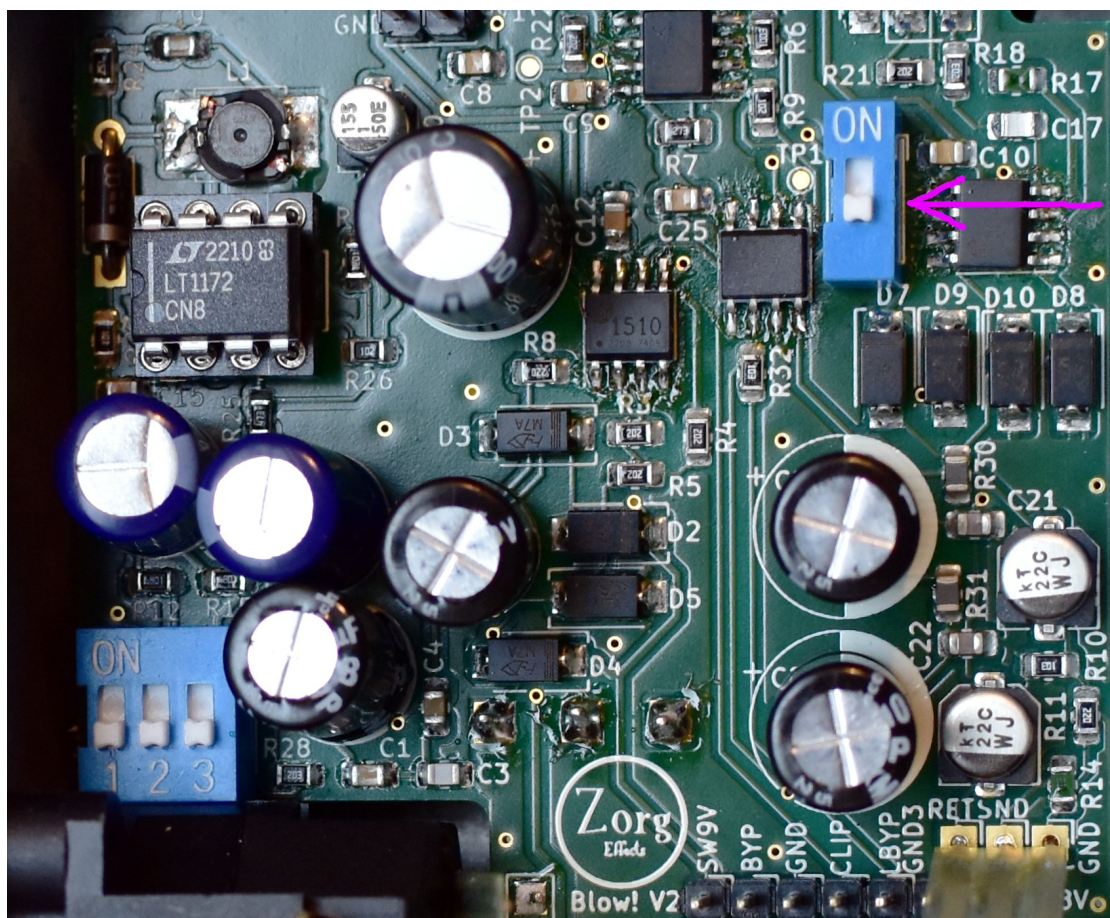
What are these knobs for?

GAIN : This knob allows to set the input gain of the pedal. The gain stage is directly on the pedal's input and is always applied, whether the pedal is in bypass or not. If there's too much gain the pedal can clip and the led will blink green or white. Never set the gain to the maximum. To set a correct gain, first be sure to mute your strip on the mixing table. Then play your instrument the louder you can and push the gain up until the led begins to blink briefly green or white. Then lower the gain a tiny bit until the led don't blink any more when you're playing very loud.

PAD : Beware, because the PAD is set by default. If you push this button down, you'll remove the pad and get a line level output. The signal will be a lot louder if you remove the PAD, so be very careful about feedbacks!!! If you attack the mic input of a mixing table or a sound card it is better to let the PAD set as you may clip their input preamps. If you know what you do or that you sound engineer can plug you into a line input, you may remove the PAD. See section « The sound engineer is hopeless » for more precisions.

Bypass/mute : This footswitch allows to bypass or not the effect loop. If the effect loop is on, the led becomes blue.

Since version 2, the footswitch can also be configured as a mute. In this configuration, when the effect loop is disengaged the XLR output of the pedal will be turned off.

You can change the function of the footswitch by opening the pedal pedal. Find the single small blue switch (purple arrow on the picture below) and turn it off to set the footswitch to the mute function:

+48V : (Optional) Power on or off the phantom supply for condenser mics. The led becomes red when it's powered on. Since the version 2 of the pedal, the switch is inside the pedal. To access it, unscrew the back of the pedal. Then to turn on the phantom power, find the blue triple miniswitch next to the input XLR and set them all up (Fig,1). To turn off the phantom power, set all three miniswitches down (fig, 2)
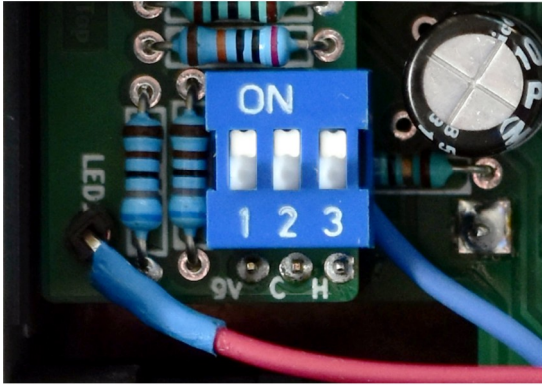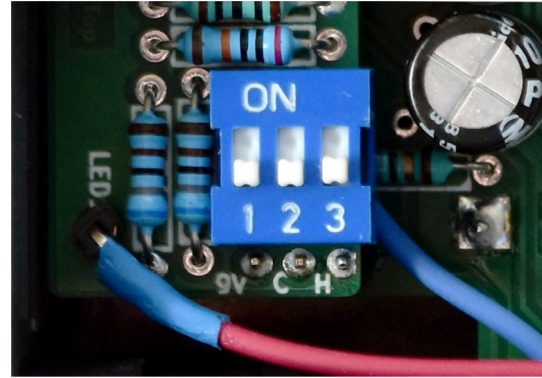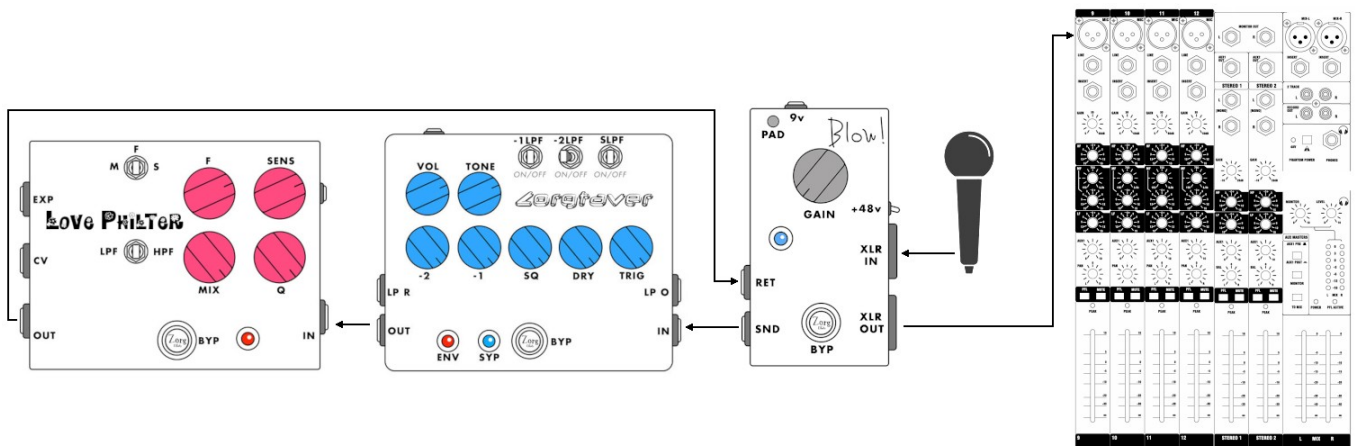

Figure 1

Figure 2

How to plug the Blow ?

XLR IN : Plug your mic here.

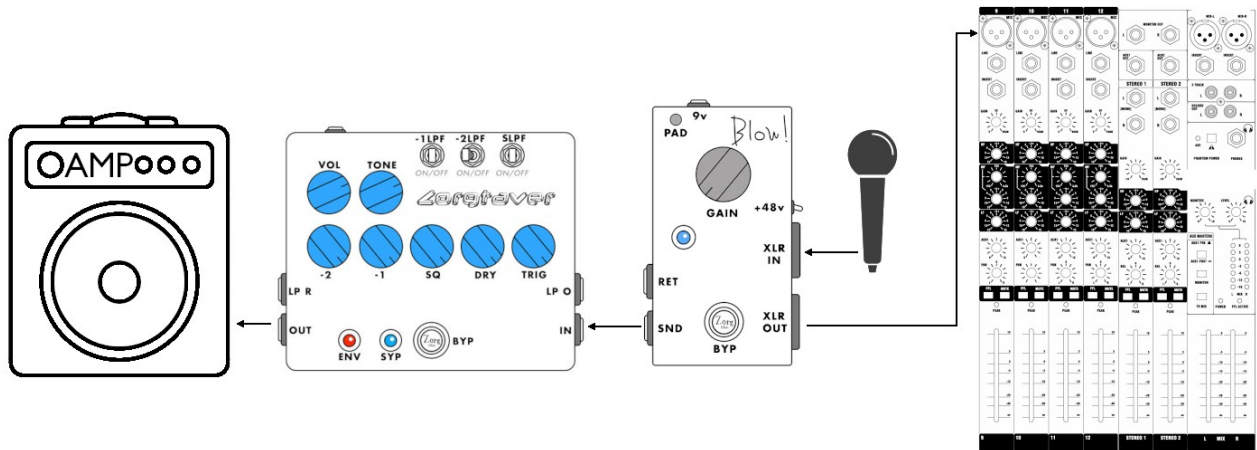**XLR OUT :** That's the output to your mixing table or sound card.

SND : Wire here a jack plug going to your first guitar effect pedal.

RET : Wire here a jack plug arriving from the output of your last guitar pedal.
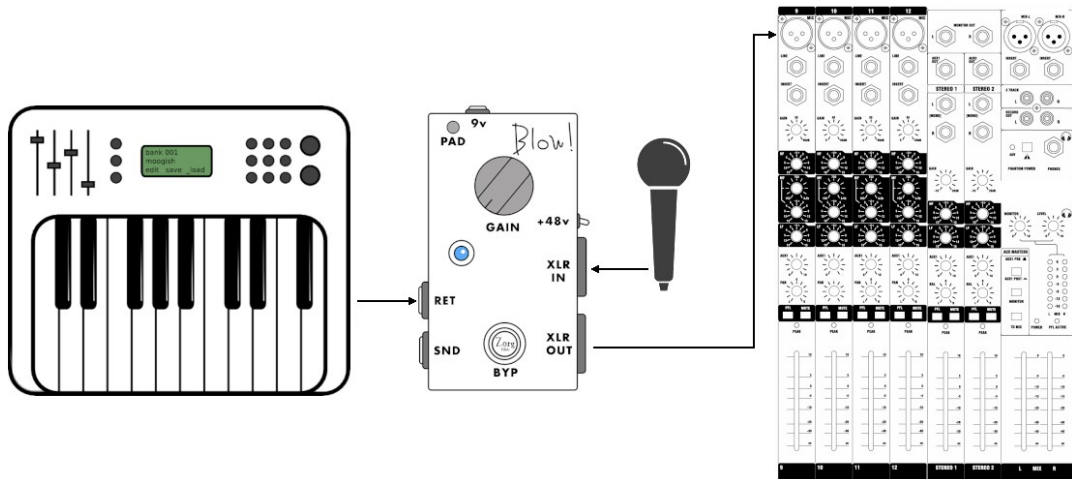
Classic use case :

Alternate use case :

Notes :

- Pluging the XLR out to a mixing table is optional.

- In this configuration the signal sent to the mixing table is running only through the preamp and the pad. No effects will ever be applied. The bypass switch will mute/unmute the amp and effects.

Use as a Di :

Notes :

- The PAD button will aply to the output of the Blow!.

- Don't plug a guitar in RET, the Blow! impedance is wrong for it.

Led's colours

The led can makes many colours. If you have the bypass options and it's off, it does not means that the pedals is off, but that the phantom power is off and the effect loop is bypassed: the signal goes directly to the output after the input's preamp without going in the effect loop.

Blow! Without any option:

Blue: shines when it's powered on.

Red: will blink if the preamp clips.

Blow! With bypass option only:

Blue: shines when the effect loop is on.

Red: will blink if the preamp clips.

Blow! With phantom option only:

Blue: shines when it's powered on.

Magenta: phantom power is on

Light blue: will blink if the preamp clips when phantom is powered off.

White: will blink if the preamp clips when phantom is powered on.

Blow! With full options:

Blue : shines when the effect loop is on.

Green : will blink if the preamp clips when phantom is powered off and Fx loop is bypassed.

Light blue : Case Blue + Green : the pedal sends the signal to the effect loop and is clipping when you play.

Red: The phantom power is turned on, Fx loop is bypassed.

Magenta : Case Red + Blue : the phantom power is turned on and the pedal sends signal into the effect loop.

White: Case Blue + Green + Red : Preamp is clipping, phantom power is turned on, Fx loop is engaged.

The sound engineer is (sometimes) hopeless

Before you got you Blow! A sound engineer would plug the output of your pedal to a direct box and set the input gain on the mixing table. The output signal of you pedal was so low that everything was fine, whatever happened. Also, it's possible that the sound engineer was you...

The Blow ! Will change this behaviour : the sound engineer is no more completly the master of his input gain on the mixing table and it can cause conflicts with the most stressed, incomptent or narrow minded of them. But don't worry, if you're not sure of what you're doing, the best thing is to **let the PAD on**. (See section « what are these buttons »). In this case the Blow ! Will behave like a mic directly plugged in your mixing table.

But the following problems can happen and cause conflicts between you and your sound engineer :

1- If you're plugged into the mic input of a mixing table but your sound engineer find that the signal to noise ratio is not the best (There's this « ssssshhhh » in the P.A). This case can happen with entry level mixing tables. Then, if you Blow ! gain is already near clipping and you can't push it further, you should remove the PAD and backup the gain a bit on the Blow ! And back it completely down on the mixing table to avoid falling in case 2:

2- If you're plugged into the mic input of a mixing table and the PAD is removed. But input of the mixing table clips. There's two solutions : either you lower you gain a bit on the Blow !. Or the sound engineer uses the mixing table's PAD if he has one. But then you can be back to issue #1.

3- Your sound engineer has plugged nothing, and seeing your setup he'd preferred that you remove the Blow ! and rather plug your pedals to a direct box. Explain to him that :
- By default, it output at mic level. (When the PAD is on, and again, the PAD is on by default, if you push down the PAD button, you'll remove it!).
- Or it can output a +4dBu max if the PAD is removed.
If after telling this to him he's still not convinced, then he is incompetent. Try to keep the Blow ! In your setup otherwise you might have to setup right again all your guitar pedals. Then plug it like a mic and don't forget to keep the PAD.

4- Your sound engineer is a nice guy : he plugged you into a line input ! Remove the PAD and discuss with him if your gain level is good enough for him.